BREAKTHROUGH CINCINNATI EVALUATION REPORT 2018

Breakthrough Cincinnati

WE BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Breakthrough Cincinnati provides an academic enrichment experience for highly motivated underserved middle and high school students that prepares them for college and inspires the next generation of teachers.

Operating since 1992, the organization's vision is to create an empowering educational experience that results in equitable access to higher education for students and prepares a diverse cadre of college students for education sector roles, enabling all of participants to achieve their full potential as learners, leaders, and agents of change in their communities.

Students experience an integrated curriculum that spurs academic gains, increased confidence, and the desire to take on leadership roles, which collectively result in 90% of students graduating on time from high school and enrolling in college. College-age Teaching Fellows gain valuable practical skills through the preservice teaching experience and report that Breakthrough Cincinnati is the formative experience that has spurred 76% of them to pursue careers in the field of education.

This report is a summary of findings from a robust evaluation framework implemented in the summer of 2018. The program served 216 rising 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th grade students from 57 schools at two sites in Cincinnati.

The designer of Breakthrough Cincinnati's academic curriculum and principal evaluator is Allison Lester, a doctoral candidate in Educational and Community-Based Action Research at The University of Cincinnati's College of Education, Criminal Justice, and Human Services.

"My children developed a strong passion for learning and have developed awesome friendships. They love their teachers and BTC staff."
-Parent

2018
EVALUATION REPORT

This report is an overview of key results in student (academic and socio-emotional),Teaching Fellow (training and professional development), and overall program evaluation at Breakthrough Cincinnati (BTC) during 2018.

The results from this comprehensive evaluation will drive a robust continuous improvement process and plan.

RESULTS

- Students grew academically an average of 26% in Social Studies, 21% in Language Arts, 25% in Science and 28% in Mathematics.
- 75% of students' in need of socio-emotional support showed growth on the post-assessment.
- Teaching Fellows reported a 60% increase in confidence and preparedness over the course of the summer.
- Teaching Fellows grew by an average of 14% between pre- and post-observations, moving from a "novice" rating to "proficient-mastery" rating.

Student
ACADEMICS

Pre- and Post- academic assessments were administered during the first and last week of the summer program. Each assessment is aligned to the curriculum used by Teaching Fellows (TFs) and the Ohio Learning Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. Assessments are modeled after the state-wide assessments for each subject and grade, and totaled to 100 points.

The Pre-assessment is used by TFs to assess the prior knowledge of students and adjust the curriculum and teaching. The Post-assessment is used to evaluate teaching effectiveness and academic growth.

Interventions
- Students share learning needs and modalities with the TF during first week.
- TFs create individualized student plans based on academic and learning modalities needs.
- TFs receive professional development and instructional coaching to ensure targeted academic objectives are met.
- TFs design hands-on learning experiences with the support of their Instructional Coach (IC) so that students can apply content knowledge in an engaging format.
- TFs conduct ongoing progress monitoring using formative assessments (e.g., quizzes, exit tickets, and project rubrics) and one-on-one check-in conversations to evaluate student gains and needs.
- Students engage in experiential (e.g., Career Days and College Fair) and project-based learning sessions to implement content knowledge in a practical, real-world setting.

Total Academic Growth

Total Pre and Post Assessment Scoring
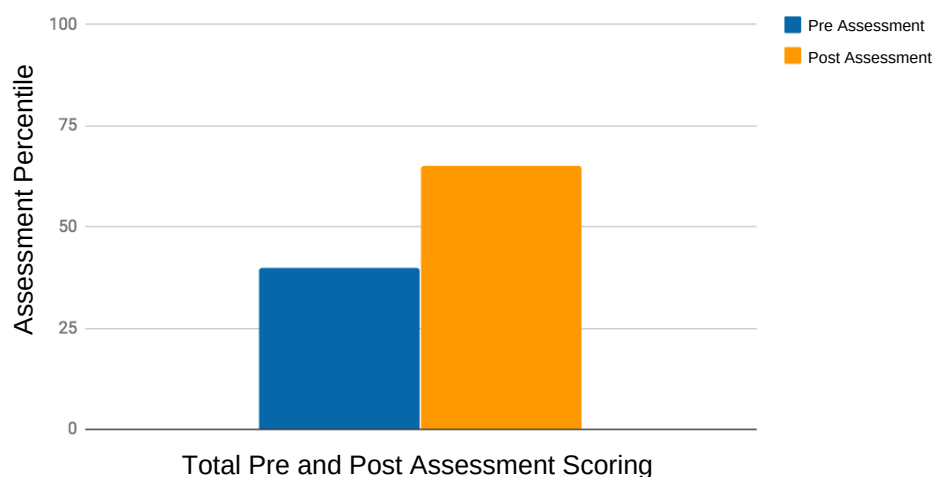
Total Academic Growth by Subject

Pre and Post Assessment Scoring Per Subject
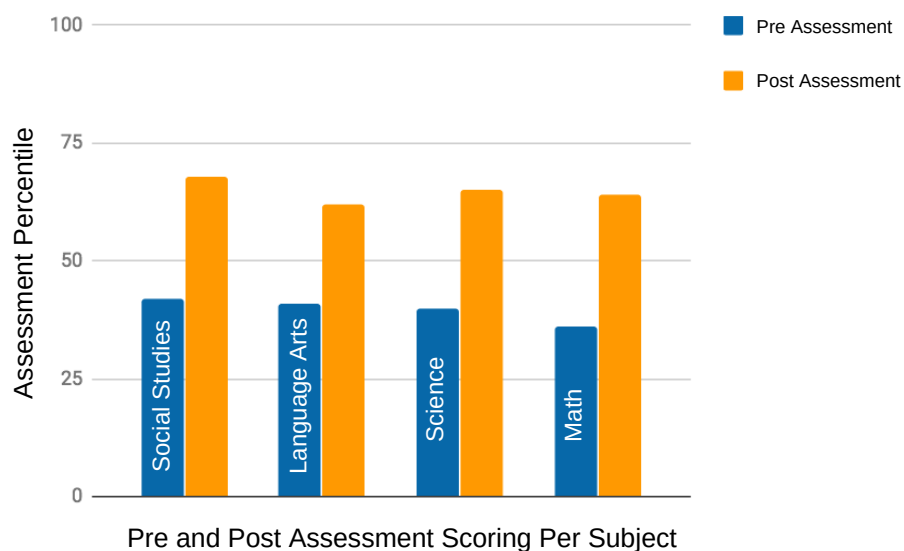
RESULTS
- Total average academic growth across all subjects was 25%.
- Total average Social Studies growth was 26%.
- Total average Language Arts growth was 21%.
- Total average Science growth was 25%.
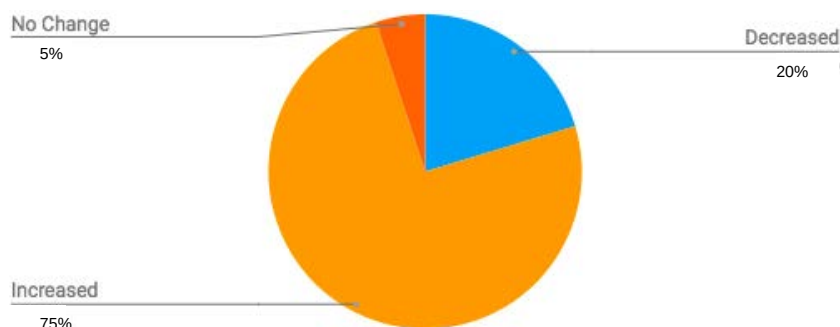- Total average Math growth was 28%.

Student
SOCIO-EMOTIONAL

BTC collected information on the socio-emotional development of students using the Interpersonal and Social Empathy Index (ISEI) and Devereaux Students Strengths Assessment (DESSA). These instruments measure the perspective-taking, self–other awareness, emotional regulation, social-awareness and relationship skills, goal-directed behavior, personal responsibility, decision-making, and optimistic thinking. Pre- and post-screenings are used to understand and develop interventions that strengthen students' social-emotional development.

Students Identified as High-Need ISEI Results Post-Intervention

No Change 5%
Decreased 20%
Increased 75%

Interventions

- TFs receive training on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma-informed care.
- TFs use the pre-ISEI to identify students with high-need underdeveloped interpersonal and social empathy skills to develop individualized plans.
- TFs receive professional development and instructional coaching to ensure targeted socio-emotional learning objectives are met.
- Students engage in daily mindfulness activities in the classroom and during Community Meeting Time.
- Students and TFs engage in weekly restorative circles to proactively build relationships and skills, supporting one another and collectively addressing challenges.
- TFs and the Dean of Students consciously reach out to students in need of additional socio-emotional support.
- TFs use DESSA mid-summer to progress monitor and evaluate student gains and needs.

RESULTS

- 28% of students were identified as high-need in socio-emotional development.
- 75% of students' in need of socio-emotional support showed growth on the post-assessment.
- Some students indicated a decrease in socio-emotional development on the post-assessment which may have been caused by an initial rating inflation and resulting in a more accurate rating on the post-assessment.

"Breakthrough is important to me because it sets the growth mindset and positive attitude while still having fun but also learning at the same time."
-Student

Teaching Fellows
PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

TRAINING

One of BTC's goals is to inspire and train the next generation of teachers and educational leaders. The intensive two-week training includes professionalism and policies, staff relationship and culture building, diversity and inclusion, trauma-informed care and mindfulness interventions, teaching strategies (including classroom culture, lesson planning techniques, and curriculum support).

Prior to training, 80% of TFs identified as feeling unprepared and 20% of TFs identified as feeling prepared. Of those identified as prepared, all stated they were returning TFs. On the post-assessment 85% of TFs reported feeling prepared.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The **Teacher Excellence Rubric (TER)** is an observational assessment used to review lesson preparation and teaching practice. ICs use the TER to provide TFs with the ongoing feedback that serves as the foundation for instructional improvement plans.

The TER has 5 content areas:

- Lesson organization and preparation
- Preparing students for learning
- Building and practicing academic skills
- Maintaining a trauma-informed caring classroom community
- Teacher presence and nonverbal communication

Interventions

- ICs use Pre-TER to assess teaching quality and co-develop instructional improvement plans with TFs.
- ICs conduct daily classroom observations and provide weekly feedback on all TF lesson plans.
- ICs lead weekly professional development sessions to support in-practice needs.
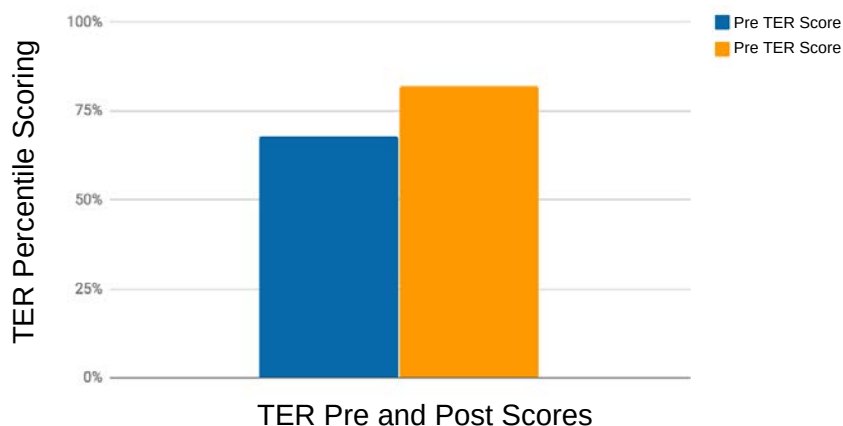- ICs meet with TFs weekly to provide one-on-one coaching.

Pre-Training TF Preparation

Prepared 20.6%

Unprepared 79.4%

Post-Training TF Preparation

Unprepared 15.0%

Prepared 85.0%
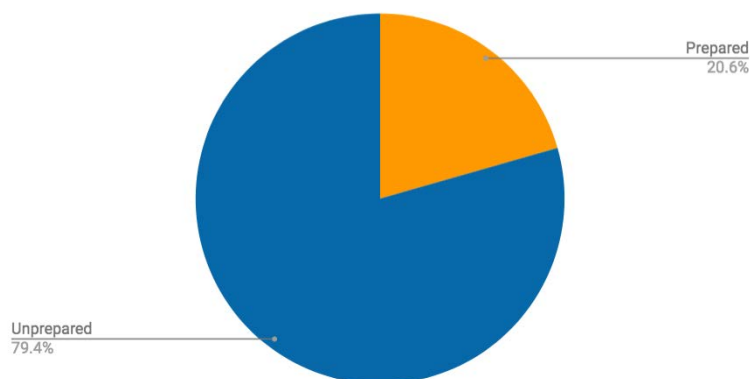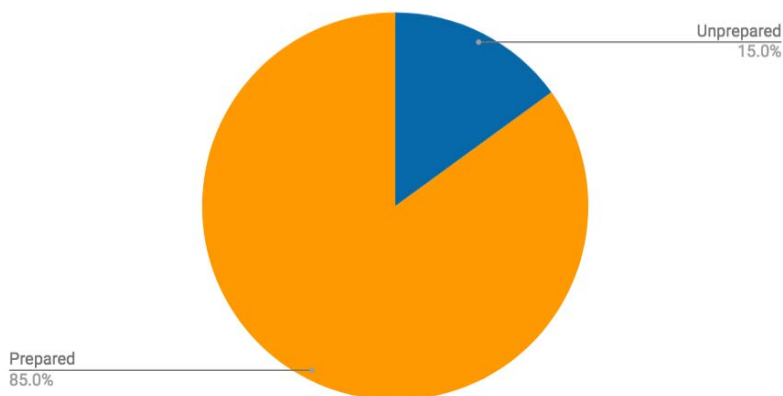
Total Average TF TER Pre- and Post- Assessment

Pre TER Score
Pre TER Score

TER Percentile Scoring

TER Pre and Post Scores

RESULTS

- Average Pre-TER (taken during the first and second week of teaching) was 68% (151/220 points), or "novice" in preparation and teaching effectiveness.
- Average Post-TER (taken during the fifth and sixth week) was 82% (182/220 points), or "proficient-mastery" in preparation and teaching effectiveness.
- Total average growth was 14%.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

Breakthrough Cincinnati's continuous improvement plan seeks to bring gradual, ongoing improvement in programming through constant measurement, review and action. The foundation of this process is the data that serves as the basis for this report, the observations of leadership staff, and feedback from our students, faculty, and families.

The following is a sample of survey responses from the program's participants that align with the data and observations collected. The BTC staff have developed robust action plans and outcomes to strengthen the program in 2019 and beyond.

Students
- Expand project-based learning
- Expand hands-on Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) learning opportunities
- Expand service learning and community engagement
- Extend program and class time
- Offer more field trips

Teaching Fellows
- Provide training in mental health support
- Schedule more time with ICs during training
- Provide more opportunities for written feedback during programming

Families
- Offer more connection points for students and families during the school year
- Provide tips on college applications and admissions
- Expand opportunities for parent/family involvement
- Offer mental health support during program

EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS INVENTORY

BTC's evaluation framework involves the collection of data using various instruments to help identify strengths and needs, provide meaningful real-time data that improves efficiency, effectiveness, performance, accountability, and outcomes. The inventory below includes all summer evaluation instruments used in 2018 for BTC students, TFs, and families.

Student

- **Academic Pre and Post Assessments** are tests in Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, and Science, given to students to assess academic progress from the beginning to the end of the program. Assessments are aligned to the Ohio Learning Standards and Next Generation Science Standards.
- **Formative Assessments** are used as progress monitoring tools to assess students' academic performance, rate of improvement or responsiveness to instruction, and effectiveness of instruction.
- **Interpersonal and Social Empathy Index (ISEI) Pre and Post -** measures the affective response, perspective-taking, affective mentalizing, self–other awareness, emotion regulation, and contextual understanding. Data is used to identify students who need additional socio-emotional support.
- **Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) -** measures eight key socio-emotional competencies identified in the research literature as essential to a child's success in school and life: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, goal-directed behavior, personal responsibility, decision-making, and optimistic thinking. Data is collected mid-summer and used to evaluate all students' socio-emotional progress and develop or refine intervention plans.
- **Student-Led Conferences are** a meeting with a student, the family and teachers during which the student shares a portfolio of work and leads a discussion of progress. The student facilitates the meeting from start to finish. The structure builds students' sense of responsibility and accountability for their own learning, and helps to hone their understanding of what it means to meet learning targets.
- **Mid-summer check-ins** offer TFs and administrative staff the opportunity to check in with students via one-on-one conversations, written reflections, and group discussions.
- **End of Summer Surveys -** is a questionnaire for students to reflect on their academic and socio-emotional learning during the program. Data is used to identify programming strengths and needs.

Teaching Fellows

- **Group Level Assessment** is a qualitative and participatory large group method to identify relevant needs and priorities, develop shared vision and goal setting, and create action plans.
- **Pre and Post Training Survey** assesses the quality and effectiveness of training and teacher preparation. Data is used to identify strengths and needs of training, and guide professional development sessions.
- **Teacher Excellence Rubric** is used by ICs to review TF lesson preparation and teaching practice, and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. TERs are used to develop growth plans and goal setting.
- **Mid-Summer Check-ins** are conducted by Administrative staff and the Dean of Faculty via one-on-one conversations, written reflections, and whole group discussions with TFs.
- **End of Summer Site and Collaborative Survey -** is a questionnaire for TF's to reflect on their experience and provide any suggestions for program improvement. Data is used to identify programming strengths and needs.

Family

- **Orientation Group Level Assessment** is a qualitative and participatory large group method to identify relevant needs and priorities, develop shared vision and goal setting, and create action plans.
- **Mid-Summer Survey** is a questionnaire for parents to provide information about their experience in the program so far. Data is used to identify areas of strengths and need during the program and to make any adjustments or improvements to programming.
- **End of Summer Survey -** is a questionnaire for parents to reflect on their child's experience during and after the program, and provide any suggestions for program improvement. Data is used to identify programming strengths and needs.

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We are

Breakthrough Cincinnati. We believe in the power of young people. Through hardwork, determination, and discipline, we can achieve our goals. We are Breakthrough Cincinnati.

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