About This Report

The Youth Cash Transfer Program evaluation report was created prior to our rebrand and reflects work conducted under our previous name, My New Red Shoes.

In May 2025, we transitioned to our new identity — mBOLDen Change. While our name has changed, our mission remains rooted in the same core values: equity, dignity, and a bold commitment to advancing opportunity for children, families, and communities impacted by economic inequality and injustice.

This report documents a pivotal chapter in that ongoing journey. Whether alleviating the impact of poverty through guaranteed income or meeting urgent needs through emergency cash transfers, our solutions are co-created with partners and program participants.

As mBOLDen Change, we carry this commitment forward — continuing to back bold, community-led solutions that center those most impacted and working to build the systems and support structures that equity demands.

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Now operating as mBOLDen Change

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My New Red Shoes

Youth Cash Transfer Program

A cash transfer initiative for economically disadvantaged youth

Evaluation Report prepared by Program Evaluation & Insight

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the 2023-2024 school year, My New Red Shoes piloted an innovative guaranteed income program to examine the impact of providing regular, unconditional cash transfers, along with case management services, to socioeconomically disadvantaged high school students from East Palo Alto, California.

Several important findings were observed in this evaluation:

- Increased student motivation
- Improved GPA for the majority of students
- Enhanced goal attainment
- Development of financial literacy skills
- Feelings of self-pride and independence
- Connection to essential services and supports
- Positive trust and engagement with community programs
- Post-graduation enrollment in college or vocational training for most participants
- Families connected with services also reported increased trust in community programs

The evaluation found that both the cash incentive and case manager support were equally important to the students' success. While initial motivation was driven by the cash, students became internally motivated as they experienced success and began to see it as achievable.

It is important to note that the students in this pilot had faced prolonged economic exclusion and complex challenges, including mental health issues, educational gaps, and learning differences. Given the one-year duration of the program, there was not enough time to fully address these challenges or make larger academic gains. However, the improvements achieved are meaningful, considering the severity of the obstacles and the limited timeframe.

This initiative demonstrates significant potential for positively impacting economically excluded youth. The program's effectiveness, particularly over a longer period of a student’s high school career, is likely to increase if extended. Both the cash incentive and case manager support were crucial to the positive outcomes observed.

Overview:

The Youth Cash Transfer Pilot is an innovative guaranteed income program supporting high school students experiencing poverty. Participants receive unconditional monthly payments along with comprehensive services, including academic counseling, financial inclusion support, and case management. The program also establishes a bank account for each student. The program was co-created with students and their families, and funded by My New Red Shoes, a nonprofit committed to "creating a just and equitable society where every child thrives." This program advances the organization's efforts to meet children's basic needs, foster financial stability, and invest in opportunities that empower their future. It is one of the few undertaken where youth under the age of 18 are the primary recipients of guaranteed income.

The Youth Cash Transfer Pilot Program was implemented at Menlo Atherton High School during the 2023-2024 school year with 16 participants[1]. The school has a diverse student population from some of the most affluent and poorest families in Silicon Valley. All participants were linked to a single case manager who set goals with them, had regular check-ins, connected them and their families with services, and provided other support. Each student received an unconditional payment of $200 per month, deposited into a bank account established as part of the program. Students who achieved a predetermined goal that they had set with the case manager also received a one-time payment of $1000 at the end of the school year.

My New Red Shoes partnered with Program Evaluation & Insight, a woman-owned evaluation consultancy, to conduct a thorough evaluation of this program. Program Evaluation & Insight specializes in using a mixed methodology approach to assess how programs and interventions are impactful, and has experience evaluating initiatives in the youth mentorship and foster care fields.

This evaluation examined student, parent, and case manager perceptions of the program across several areas, including its impact on student motivation and success, student and family well-being, skill acquisition, and perceptions of community programs. This evaluation also explored whether the income, case manager support, or a combination of both had the greatest impact. The data collection instruments used to gather data to examine these domains are listed below:

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS[2]:

- **Student Survey**: Administered once, toward the end of the school year, the survey included scaled questions (e.g., rating agreement with statements), check-box questions, and open-ended questions. It assessed students' perspectives on challenges faced, perceptions of the

[1] 15 were high school seniors; 1 was a junior.

[2] The original data collection plan also called for student absence data. However, after discussion with the case manager and staff at My New Red Shoes, it was decided not to pursue this, as absence data is difficult to interpret for the purposes of this evaluation. For example, if a student attends one or two class periods but skips for the remainder of the day, they may be counted as present. The reverse also applies, where students who attend all but one or two periods may be counted absent.

program and case manager, confidence, independence, services utilized, motivation, and other relevant topics.

- **Case Management records:** The case manager kept records to document student meetings. The records documented the goals set with students, services referred to them, progress made toward their goals, and other relevant areas.
- **Financial transaction records:** De-identified records were obtained from the community partner financial institution where student accounts were held. These records provided aggregate data on spending across broad categories during the program, covering the period from August 2023 to June 2024.
- **Parent interviews:** Eight parents were interviewed at the conclusion of the program regarding their perceptions of the program, their child's and family's challenges, services utilized, goals for their child, and other topics. Interviews were conducted in Spanish or English, based on the interviewee's preference.
- **Student interviews:** Seven students were interviewed at the conclusion of the program about their perceptions of the program, their goals, challenges, and other areas.
- **Case manager interview:** The case manager was interviewed at the end of the program to gather insights into the program's impact, student and family challenges, progress made, and additional topics.
- **Student final GPA data:** The case manager collected the final GPA data for all students.
- **Follow-up data on student status:** Three months after graduation, the case manager followed up with participants to determine whether they had enrolled in college, vocational training, job training programs, were employed, or were engaged in both work and education.

SAMPLE SIZES:

Data collection instrument	Sample Size
Student survey	16
Parent interviews	8
Student interviews	7
Case Manager interview	1
Case management intake form	15
Case management ongoing form[3]	39
Monthly Financial data	August 2023-June 2024

METHODOLOGY:

Each data source was analyzed individually using the methods outlined below. Once the analysis of each source was completed, findings were reviewed to

[3] The case manager met with students as needed, resulting in varying frequencies of meetings for different students. In total, the case manager conducted 39 follow-up meetings with the 16 participants.

identify common themes across data sources.

- **Student survey:** Average scores were calculated for all scaled items. Responses to open-text questions were analyzed for recurring themes. Frequencies were calculated for check-box items.
- **Case management records:** Average scores were calculated for scaled items. Open-text responses were analyzed for recurring themes, and check-box items were tallied for frequency.
- **Financial records:** Transactions were categorized according to the codebook provided by the financial institution, and then aggregated by category over time.
- **Parent, Student and Case Manager interviews:** Detailed notes were taken of each interview and these notes were analyzed for recurring themes.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:

Finding #1: Students and their families historically faced numerous challenges that hindered academic success.

Finding #2: Students were highly satisfied with, and motivated to succeed by participating in the Youth Cash Transfer Pilot Program. In particular, the students identified the two-prong support of the income plus case manager support as being equally important program elements.

Finding #3: The case manager reported that the cash program helped students experience a cycle of success, where students were initially motivated by the money, but then became internally motivated by their own achievements.

Finding #4: Students reported learning crucial financial skills through participating in the program, such as budgeting and saving money.

Finding #5: Both students and parents reported that the program increased students' sense of independence.

Finding #6: Students primarily spent the funds on essentials, including food, family bills, personal items and transportation.

Finding #7: Participation in the program improved students' and parents' perceptions of community programs, and both expressed deep gratitude for the opportunity.

Finding #8: The case manager was a vital source of emotional and practical support, earning the trust of students and connecting them and their families with necessary services.

Finding#9: The case manager also provided significant support to students' families by linking them with additional services.

Finding #10: The case manager acted as a bridge between the school, families, and teachers, fostering relationships and creating a support network for students.

Finding #11: Students demonstrated positivity towards school, hope for their futures, and long-term goals.

Finding #12: All seniors in the program graduated from high school, with one-third meeting their GPA goals and nearly 40% improving their final GPA from the previous year.

Finding #13: As of September 2024, 80% of seniors from the 2023-2024 school year were enrolled in college or a vocational or technical training program.

Finding #14: Key elements of a successful case manager include good listening skills, following through on promises, consistency, a non-judgmental perspective, transparency, and other important qualities.

FINDINGS IN DETAIL:

Finding #1: Students and their families historically faced numerous challenges that hindered academic success.

Students, their families, and the case manager consistently reported that participants faced significant challenges throughout their lives, which impacted their ability to succeed in school. This theme emerged in both student and parent interviews, as well as in the case manager's account. The challenges spanned various areas, including financial hardship, homelessness, mental health issues, domestic violence, learning differences, and the difficulty of starting high school online during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Parent interviews:

- "Moving here was a huge challenge for our family, because my kids didn't speak English and I didn't speak English. I also became so sick from cancer that I almost died."
- **"**I moved in with my mom and she had no space. **We set up tents outside in the yard on the church campus property. We were homeless for about a half a year."**
- "Last year my husband hit my second son and broke both jaws . . . And so we called the police and took my son to the ER."
- **"**Financially we're always trying to make it. **The pandemic really hurt us. Even though I work, we're still struggling because it's so expensive to live here."**
- "The challenge was that my son didn't have a father."
- "My son struggles with understanding the reason why he is in foster care and not with his parents.This has taken a toll on him."
- **"My daughter didn't speak the language . . .** sometimes, there are words in English that are at a higher level than she understands."
- "At first I didn't think Menlo Atherton High School was a very good school because there were many things that my kids didn't understand and I didn't know how to get them help. The level here is much higher than at Cesar Chavez Middle School. I was frustrated because I didn't think they could understand everything and pass everything."
- **"Sometimes their grades are low because they don't understand everything. They weren't taught a lot in middle school."**

Student interviews:

- **"It was challenging to start high school during Covid, on the computer. I didn't know how to run the computer or do my homework."**
- "For me the things that were challenging were learning English, and starting a new school."
- **"What was challenging for me was feeling part of the community.** I've seen a lot of people who were different from me, and felt like I didn't fit in."

Case manager interview:

- **"Many parents from these families never went to college or even graduated from a high school.**

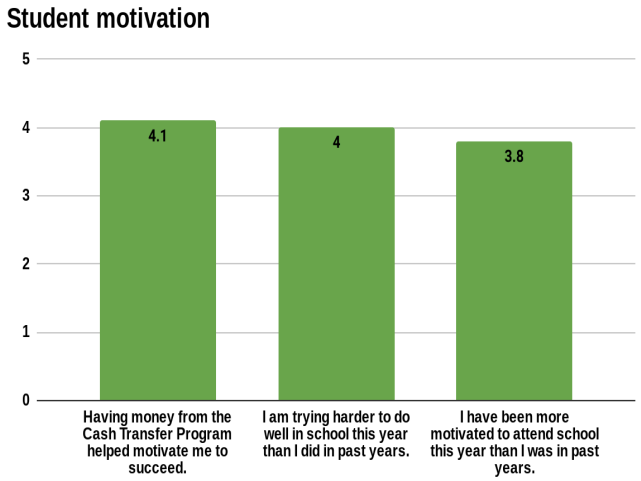
Education wasn't as big of an expectation for these families. Some students don't see how education can lead to success in the future."

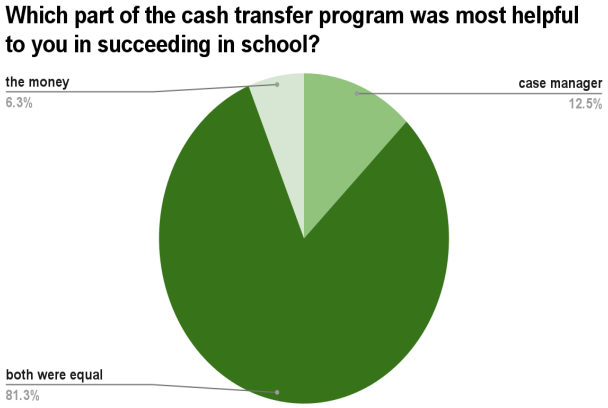
- "I had two seniors this year who experienced homelessness. I worked with them and their families. **One student had lived in their home for 14 years, for most of their life, and they were evicted from their home. They struggled without having a home, and having to share a tent with their family.** Now the student didn't have space to do their homework or access to wifi. They also felt embarrassment and shame, sleeping on the ground. They didn't have clean clothes and were embarrassed to come to school."
- **"Sometimes a student's home life can be difficult for supporting learning. For example, everyone might share one room and the student can't focus on their homework."**
- "For some students, Menlo Atherton High School had a higher academic standard than the middle school they come from. **There are so many gaps in their education, and it's difficult for them to stay engaged and learn the material. Some of the struggling students also have culture shock being with wealthy students who are high achievers."**

Finding #2: Students were highly satisfied with, and motivated to succeed by participating in the Youth Cash Transfer Program. In particular, the students identified the two-prong support of the income plus case manager support as being equally important program elements.

100% are Very Satisfied with the program

Students were also asked to rate their agreement with statements about motivation and effort on a 5-point scale, from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." **On average, students agreed that participating in the program positively impacted their motivation.**





Results from the parent and student interview data *mirror* these results. As the following quotes illustrate, parents described how the program motivated their children to succeed in school:

Parent interviews:

- **"**Now with this program, **he is motivated to do better in school."**
- "Yes, in particular, **the program motivated her to get good grades.** It motivated her to keep studying."
- "**This semester he has had the highest grades that he's ever had.**"

Student interviews:

- **"I also set a 3.0 GPA goal, and I'm doing well. I have a 3.1 or 3.2. I'm determined to have above a 3.0 GPA. I applied to two scholarships this past week."**
- "My goal has been to maintain my GPA higher than 3.0. I'm almost at my goal. **I'm on track to graduate."**
- "My goal is to get a 2.7 GPA and graduate. **I've been more focused and better at turning in missing assignments** and staying on track."
- **"It helped me to keep going and not give up."**

Finding #3: The case manager reported that the cash program helped students experience a cycle of success, where students were initially motivated by the money, but then became internally motivated by their own achievements.

- **"**There are students who were just aiming for high school graduation, but this program gave them an extra incentive to push for something better than a D or D-. Many students did not have that. And **it's a domino process – the students saw that they were succeeding and became more motivated. It changed their mindset when they saw their grades were higher. It changed how they felt about school and made it more pleasurable to be here, knowing they were doing well. It also helped with relationships with parents and teachers.** Before they had a lack of motivation because of the cycle of failure.**"**A few students made huge improvements. I saw some students who used to struggle with showing up for school getting more As and Bs. This was the first time they've had those grades in their high school career. I think **the money motivated them at first, but then they began to see how education and success benefits them.** It helped them make that connection."

Finding #4. Students reported learning crucial financial skills through participating in the program, such as budgeting and saving money.

This theme emerged consistently across the student survey, parent interviews, student interviews, and financial records. Some interviewees also noted how having a bank account was helpful in learning financial skills.

Student survey:

- "**Participating in a cash transfer program helped me learn more about money,** by giving me "x" amount of money to spend every month."

- "**It helped me achieve overall spending habits and save money for college.**"
- "I haven't touched the money, **I've been saving it. I'm going to college, and it will help me then."**

Student interviews:

- **"It kept me accountable to saving money.** I put some money aside, and so right now I've saved a lot of money. **I've learned about budgeting through this program."**
- **"I feel like it helped me understand money more.** There were times I knew I had to save a certain amount of money for a special event, and I put it aside. **I have been saving it in case of an emergency."**

Parent interviews:

- "She is organized now, and has to think of how much money she has. **She is learning to budget.**"
- "**It's also teaching her how to have money, and to keep track of money and use the banking system**."
- "It helped her see the value of money. **She's thinking of opening a savings account."**
- "It also gives her motivation to earn money, and to save money. It also teaches her how to save. **When she was a kid she'd put money in an envelope or piggy bank but is now learning about the banking system**."

Financial records:

It is also evident that most students saved a portion of the money they received, **with nearly half saving more than $100.**

Amount of Money Saved	Percent of students with this amount
0-$100[4]	53%
$101-500	27%
$501+	20%

Finding #5. Both students and parents reported that the program increased students' sense of independence.

Across the student survey and parent and student interviews, it was clear that having the money from the Youth Cash Transfer Program helped students feel a sense of pride and independence. **A sense of independence is developmentally crucial for youth, particularly for youth who are about to become adults.**

Student interviews:

- "**It makes me more independent,** instead of being dependent on my parents by having this money, because I don't have to ask for money to pay for things I need."
- "Sometimes my parents would ask me if I could buy them something. **It helped me feel responsible**."
- **"It makes me feel proud, like a reward for my hard work. This makes me more confident."**

Parent interviews:

[4] Some students had minimal amounts remaining in their accounts (less than $30). However, any student with a balance greater than $0 was included in this category.

- **"He feels good having his own money; he is independent and proud."**
- "Enrolling her in a cash program has helped me because **it helps her become more organized and independent.**"
- "**Her dreams are growing** because she sees what she can do with the money, and **it makes her feel more independent and competent."**

Finding #6. Students primarily spent their money on essentials, including food, family bills, personal items and transportation.

The student survey, interviews, and financial records indicate that students primarily spent their money on essentials such as food, personal items, and transportation. For instance, **financial records show that 51% of the funds were spent on food.** The table and charts below show the breakdown of student spending from August 2023-June 2024:

Category	Percent of total transactions
Food	50.6
Retail	17.1
Transportation	14.3
Withdraw money	10.6
Misc. Needs (laundry)	2.6
Recreation	1.8
Clothing	1.4
School supplies	1.4
Miscellaneous	<1

The financial data are complemented by findings from the student survey, student interviews, and parent interviews.

Student Survey:

The table below shows the most frequently selected choices by students:

Used money for	Percent that selected
Food	**80%**
Helping family	**67%**
Personal items	**47%**
Saved the money	**33%**
Transportation	**33%**
School expenses	**27%**
Utilities	**13%**

Parent interviews:

- "Sometimes he pays things for me, and I'll tell him that I'll pay him back. He volunteers to buy gas or milk for the house."
- "Now he doesn't ask me to buy him pencils or books anymore."
- **"Sometimes I can't buy her some things for school, and she can have some money for herself to buy things that she needs. "**
- "It pays for gas, food, and personal things for her like shampoo, lotion and deodorant. She can now buy her own things."
- **"The things I can't buy her for school, this money helps her.** And when she sees me struggling with

something she pays for it, like the phone bill. She helped me pay half of my rent, and that was a life saver. I'm very grateful for that."
- "The money has been a support for us. **This money helps him buy his own necessities, and helps me, too. It helps me save money because he has his own money.**"
- "He helped me buy food a few times."

Student interviews:

- **"It helped me help my mom with rent and groceries, utility bills, phone bills, things like that**."
- "It helped me buy food and gas. **Sometimes I didn't have money for food before.**"
- "This program helped me on a daily basis, it really impacted me. **It really helped me in certain areas that I was struggling in, like getting regular access to food.**"
- "When nobody is home all weekend, **I'm able to buy food instead of being hungry all day** waiting for someone to come home and bring food. We don't have a fridge at home."
- "I've mostly spent it on hygiene items and food."

Finding #7: ***Participation in the program improved students' and parents' perceptions of community programs, and both expressed deep gratitude for the opportunity.***

Parent interviews:

- "It makes me think well of services. It makes me feel good having your support. **I am more confident that my child won't leave school. These programs are necessary for the community.** It is amazing to know that these types of programs exist."
- "That these programs exist is wonderful for kids, it's very necessary."
- "Thank you for choosing my daughter and giving her the opportunity."
- "More than anything it lets us know about all of the opportunities that are available in the school and in the community. In particular, a lot of parents don't know about these programs and services, and **this tells us that there is support out there for us."**
- "This is a blessing for us, like a gift for the students to incentivize them to reach their goals. **It's like a hope, it's a support,** there's always help there for someone."
- **"I have a good feeling about community services."**

Student interviews:

- "It puts more of an importance to programs like this, in my opinion."
- "It makes me feel like these types of programs are good for people because they help."
- "This program specifically made me think about how kind people are, they're actually giving money out to students. There's so much help out there and not enough people take advantage of it. Not everyone gets this opportunity, but I'm grateful that I am in this program."

Finding: #8. The case manager was a vital source of emotional and practical support, earning the trust of students and connecting them and their families with necessary services.

Results from the student survey and interviews show that the case manager played a pivotal role in the students' success.

Student survey:

- "Yes, the case manager was able to help me. **He's always been supportive, and has been there when I needed it."**
- "With the challenges I faced, the case manager was definitely a support in my difficult journey with high school."
- "**He helped me see life and my future in a different way from what I thought it would be like.** He also helped me remind myself about school and what comes first, like my academics, and achieving the goals he helped me create for my future. He **also helped me think of ways to focus better in school, and block out things that aren't related to school** during school hours."
- "**The case manager helped connect me with a therapist."**
- "With the case manager I was able to get through hard obstacles like trigonometry and homework in general."
- **"He has impacted my life by helping me see life differently and to know to never give up no matter what the situation I'm in."**
- "Working with the case manager impacted me in a very positive way because of the support. **I looked at him as a mentor because of how many new opportunities he presented me with.** He introduced me to academic-based field trips to learn about different jobs, and also fun field trips to different places like the beach and bowling."
- "Yes, **he has helped me through my struggles in balancing school and life, and just being there to give me the advice every student needs, and really just not giving up on me."**

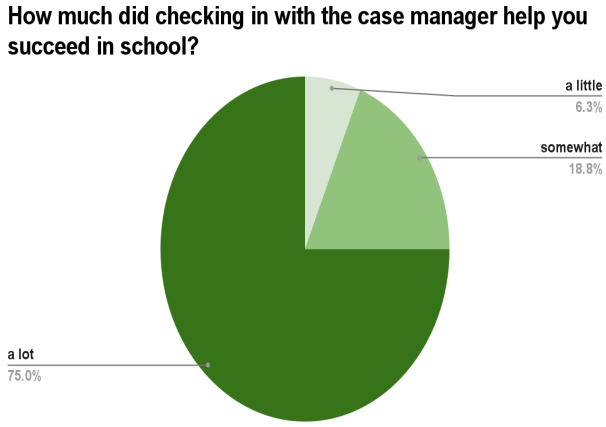
Student interviews:

- "The case manager's check-ins at the beginning of the year were helpful, **just knowing that someone at school is checking in on me was helpful.**"
- "**The case manager has connections to services. He also asks about work and home and school, and how the day is going.** He's not a teacher or a counselor, he's a friend."
- **"**The case manager is someone who I can talk to, he can help me."
- "**If the case manager sees me going downhill he says 'we need to talk,' and motivates me to keep going to school."**
- "I got help here from the case manager to keep going and to keep on track. **Every time I would struggle I wouldn't want to talk to my teachers because I was scared. He would help me get the courage to talk to my teachers.** I used to not ask for help, but now I've learned this skill. I didn't interact with my teachers, but now I do. He also

taught me how to email my teachers appropriately."

- "We did monthly and weekly check-ins about my grades and short-term and long-term goals. **He helped me set goals that I can reach. He has helped keep me accountable.**"
- "The case manager gave me motivation - **at first I didn't want to go to college, I wanted to go into the military. The case manager and AVID talked to me about going to college first, and one of the main reasons I'm going is because the case manager helped me** a lot."
- "My goal is to go to college. **Talking to the case manager helped me go through with applying. I'll be going next year.**"

Student survey:



Finding#9: The case manager also provided significant support to students' families by linking them with additional services.

Parent interviews:

- "I came to the case manager in the beginning of the year and asked for help, the boys had nothing. We had no backpacks or school supplies. **The case manager got us backpacks and school supplies, and helped me get them situated with classes. He also helped us by connecting us to services like second harvest where we could reach out and get food boxes. He also connected me with someone to help me get housing.** The eviction put a hit on my credit, but his contact was willing to give me a chance."
- "**I stopped working for 2 months because of a family emergency, and the case manager connected me with a program to help me pay my rent."**
- "The case manager has **helped connect me with utility bill payment help, and academic support for my child**."

These findings align with the case manager's records, which show that he regularly connected many students with tutoring and academic advising. He also linked some students to mental health services, food assistance, and other basic needs.

Finding #10: The case manager acted as a bridge between the school, families, and teachers, fostering relationships and creating a support network for students.

Parent interviews:

- "If the case manager hadn't been here I can't imagine what it would have been like. The case manager pushes him. **I'm the cheerleader at**

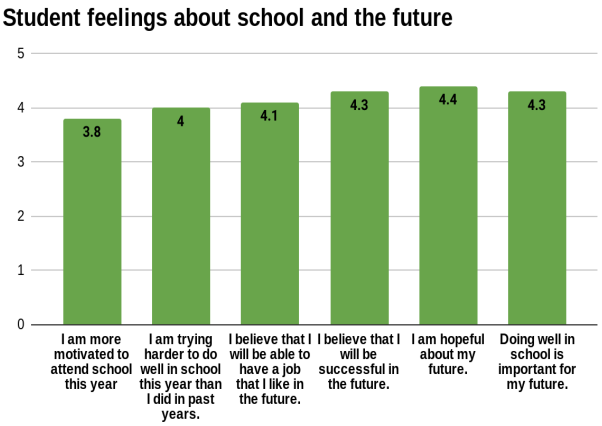
home and the case manager is the cheerleader at school."

- "The case manager is always talking to me and to the twins, and this makes them feel like they're not alone. And **I know how they're doing because the case manager tells me how they're doing. These calls are very important. I need to know what is happening with my kids.**"
- "I only talk with the case manager. I don't talk to anyone else. I am comfortable with him. **It's important to me that I have someone who I trust who I can speak to.**"
- "The case manager calls me and lets me know how my daughter is doing, and what her grades are in math, biology, English, and other classes. This helps me get her academic support. I studied in university but things are different here. **He works with me and then I work with her, and then she works with him. It's a circle."**
- "I am comfortable with the case manager. His help has helped so much, academically, everything. He knows more than me, and how things work. **He gives me notice that something is happening, and then I work with my daughter and her grades start going up."**
- "The case manager will call me about something and I'll say 'I trust you.' **I trust the case manager with my boys because my boys speak so highly of him. My boys trust him**, and my boys are not easy to form trust with."

Case manager interview:

- "Relationship building with students, school staff and families is hugely important to being a successful case manager, because **collaboration is key to supporting the student**."
- "Following through and being reliable are important. **The staff know that when the student struggles that I'm someone who they can reach out to.** The English teacher knows that if she reaches out, more than likely the assignments will get done. She knows I'll follow through with students and families."

Finding # 11: Students demonstrated positivity towards school, hope for their futures, and long-term goals.



Student interviews:

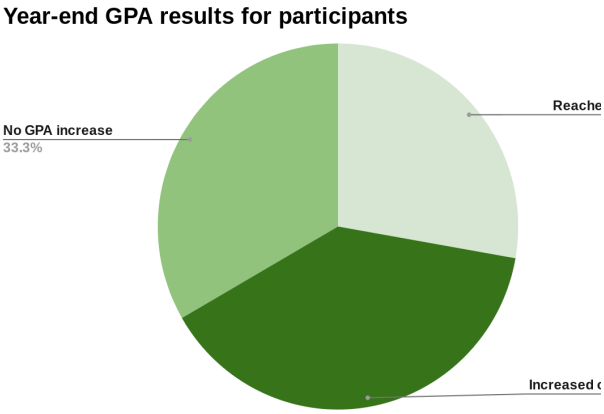
- "**I want to learn a trade skill.** I'm going to a program to become an HVAC technician."
- "**I want to go to a 4 year college, SJSU.** I want to study criminology."
- **"I want to go to community college** and major in business, and then go to a 4 year college."

- **"I'm going to college. I want to study biology and become a doctor."**

Finding #12: All seniors in the program graduated from high school, with one-third meeting their GPA goals and nearly 40% improving their final GPA from the previous year.

100% of program participants graduated, compared to a graduation rate of 83.8% for all socioeconomically disadvantaged students attending Menlo Atherton High School

[5]



Finding #13: As of September 2024, 80% of seniors from the 2023-2024 school year were enrolled in college or a vocational or technical training program.[6]

80% of participants who graduated in May of 2024 were enrolled in college or a vocational training program as of September 2024.

100% were enrolled in college, training, or were working.

Finding #14: ***Key elements of a successful case manager include good listening skills, following through on promises, consistency, a non-judgmental attitude, transparency, and other important qualities.***

The case manager outlined key factors that contributed to success in his role:

- "**Relationship building** with students, school staff and families."
- **"Being as realistic as possible**, and telling them what I think. I don't sugarcoat things."
- **"Being consistent, providing supports and offering supports consistently.** Reminding them that I am here to support them."
- "Following through on action items we come up with."
- **"Students just want to be seen and acknowledged for who they are. I get to know them for who they are."**

The case manager noted that understanding the cultural backgrounds of students, as well as speaking the parents' and students' native language, was also crucial for gaining the trust of both students and their families.

[5] The information about the graduation rate for socioeconomically disadvantaged students pertains to 2022-2023, and was found on www.ed-data.org

[6] One program participant was in 11th grade during the 2023-2024 school year, so these data don't include her.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Results from this evaluation **demonstrate the program's success across multiple domains:**

- Increased student motivation
- Improved GPA for the majority of students
- Enhanced goal attainment
- Development of financial literacy skills
- Boosted feelings of self-pride and independence
- Connection of students and families to necessary services and supports
- Positive feelings of trust towards community programs and supports for both students and families

While these impacts may seem modest, their importance should be underscored, particularly given that they were achieved within just one school year amongst students who have faced complex challenges. **These results highlight the program's potential for long-term change, especially if extended across multiple years of a student's high school experience.**

As illustrated in the report's theory of change, the Youth Cash Transfer Program—through guaranteed income payments and case manager support—provides students with the following supports:

- Connecting students and families with services to meet basic needs, allowing students to focus on academics without worrying about essential resources.
- Linking students with mental health services, tutoring, and additional support to address educational or emotional barriers.
- Offering emotional support through the case manager.
- Bridging the gap between families and schools, fostering stronger partnerships to support student success.
- Bridging the gap between students and teachers by facilitating communication and teaching students how to engage with their teachers.
- Providing students with an unconditional monthly stipend to help meet basic needs, foster independence, and teach skills like budgeting and saving.

With these supports in place, students achieve the following short-term outcomes:

- Improved school attendance
- Timely assignment submission
- Higher grades
- Increased confidence and independence

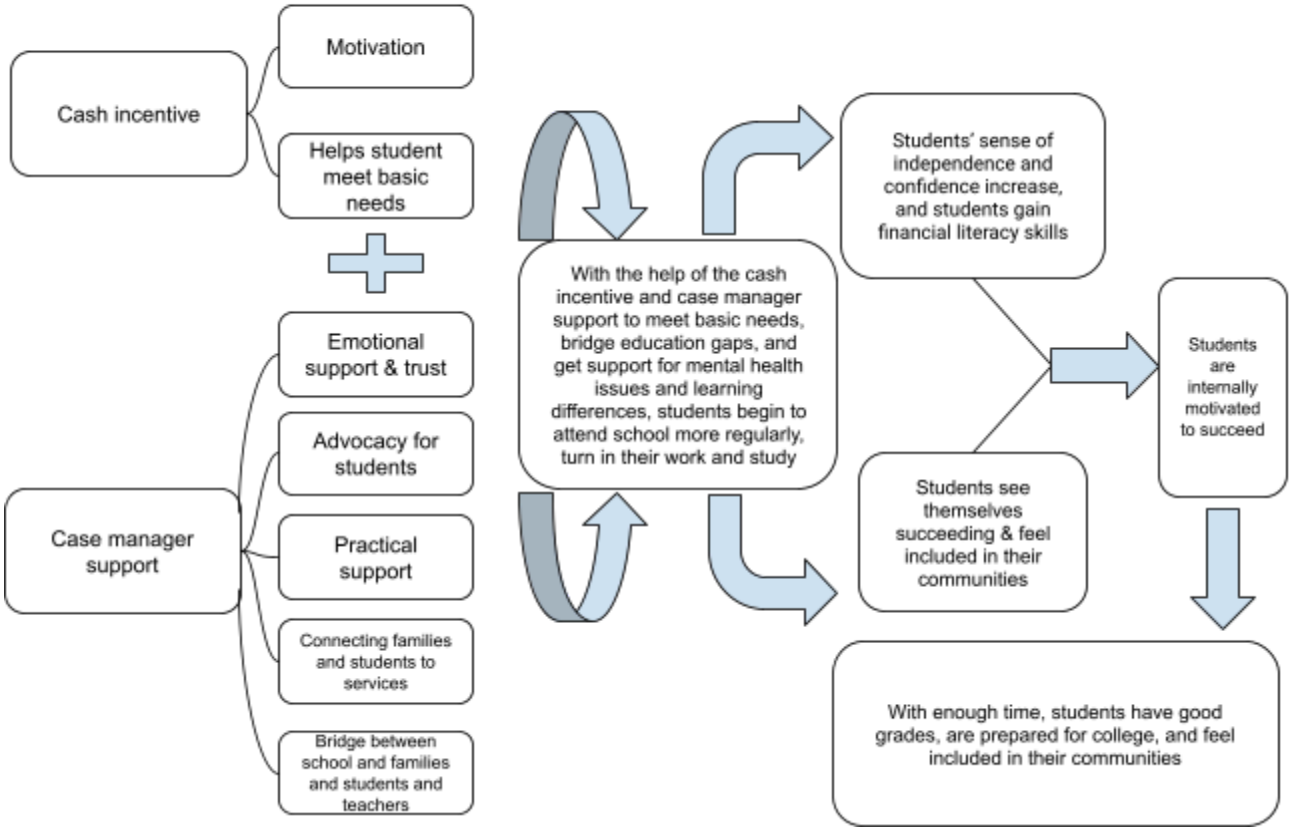
Once these short-term effects are realized, students begin to see themselves succeeding and enter a "cycle of success." **As they experience success—often for the first time—they become increasingly motivated from within, driven by the belief that success is possible.**

Recommendations:

- Consider funding this initiative for multiple years of students' high school careers.
- Consider providing enough funding so that a larger group of students can participate. Not only will this extend the benefits to a larger group of students, but it will allow for additional research into the impact of this initiative.
- Consider establishing a set of non-subjective inclusion criteria for the program based on factors such as: GPA from the previous year; whether the student qualifies for free and reduced price lunch, or the zip code of the students' residences. If non-subjective inclusion criteria are established, it will allow for comparison of outcomes to a similarly matched group of students who are not program recipients.[7]
- Consider administering a survey to the students at both the beginning and end of their participation in the program, so that change across time can be measured for relevant variables.

[7] Appropriate permissions to obtain data for both participants and non-participants will have to be obtained.

Youth Cash Transfer Program Theory of Change



APPENDIX

The table below outlines the important elements of a successful guaranteed income initiative for youth:

Component	Important factors
Unconditional Regular Income	Enough to meaningfully meet at least some of the target population's needs. It is recommended that the amount is set based on input from the population or key informants.
Case Manager Support	The case manager should be someone who is familiar with the student population's culture, and who ideally speaks the native language of the students and their parents. The qualities this person should possess are: 1) able to listen well; 2) able to adopt a non-judgmental perspective; 3) communicate in a transparent style with students and families; 4) skilled at building rapport with a wide variety of people such as students, parents, school staff and others; 5) able and willing to consistently follow-through on all agreements.
Established bank accounts	Many students reported learning to budget and save money by having a bank account that was established for them by the program. Each student should receive their money in the form of direct deposit into a bank account established by the program. This gives students experience with the banking system, as well as the opportunity to learn budgeting skills.
Incentives for students	Incentives, such as providing snacks, play a significant role in allowing the case manager to welcome students and build rapport, as it can be an initial draw for students who are in the relationship-building phase with the case manager.[8]

[8] This information comes from the case manager