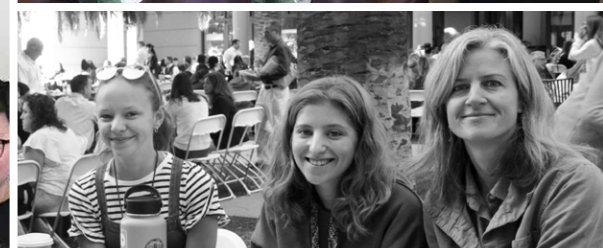


CHALLENGE SESSIONS



2018 ANNUAL REPORT

15TH ANNIVERSARY



We could not be more grateful for the wealth of support Challenge Success has received over these past 15 years!

As we celebrate this milestone anniversary year, it is clear that in partnership with you, our supporters, we have developed an impactful program model and achieved a sustained momentum for growth. Your support is beyond meaningful and has allowed us to extend our reach in promoting student well-being and engagement with learning to significantly more schools, families, and students across the country. We are excited by what's to come!

2018 key highlights include:

» **FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

- Focused investment in our infrastructure, program delivery, and operating resources, yielding a 55% increase in our combined program and development revenue

» **SCHOOL PROGRAM**

- Delivered programs to 100 new schools, representing a 30% growth in schools reached, bringing our total cohort to nearly 500 schools in 31 states
- Solidified our presence in the East Coast by hosting our first School Conference in Boston and making invaluable connections within communities across the Northeast

» **RESEARCH**

- Offered a new parent survey tool as a companion diagnostic to our longstanding student survey
- Published our 4th white paper, *A "Fit" Over Rankings: Why College Engagement Matters More Than Selectivity*, which debunks college rankings and explains what really matters — college fit and engagement

» **DEVELOPMENT**

- Celebrated our 15th anniversary with our largest fundraising event to date
- Built a growth partner donor cohort committed to substantial 3-year giving

As we head into 2019, we continue to invest in our research, program services, and growth strategy, and respond to the significant need for our school change model. We are inspired by the deep care and concern that educators and families have for their students, just as we are inspired by you — our partners in this important work.

With appreciation,



Charlene Margot
Board Chair



Kathy Koo
Executive Director

KIDS ARE NOT NUMBERS



We believe that every child should be valued for their own interests, talents, and unique path to success. However, with the current overemphasis on grades, test scores, and selective college admissions, it's easy to forget that ***kids are not numbers***. This narrow definition of success works against what we know about healthy child development and effective education, leaving many kids feeling stressed out or marginalized.

Emphasizing the need to look beyond numbers, we partner with schools and families to embrace a broad definition of success and implement research-based strategies for school reform that promote student well-being and engagement with learning.

IN 2018, WE PROVIDED



45,000+
student surveys

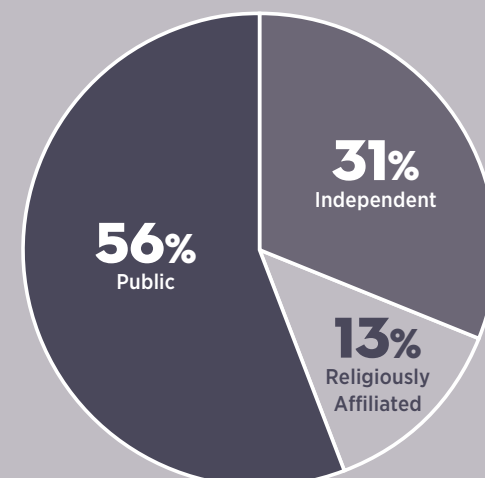
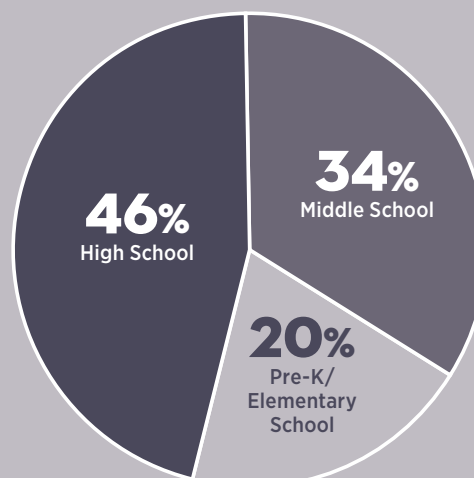


50+
professional development workshops



60+
parent education events

IN 2018, WE SERVED 180 SCHOOLS



A WELL-BALANCED PERSPECTIVE ON COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

In October 2018, we released our highly anticipated white paper, *A “Fit” Over Rankings: Why College Engagement Matters More Than Selectivity*. From the results of our Challenge Success survey, which we have administered to more than 100,000 high school students across the country, we find the college admissions process is one of the top stressors for teenagers.

We wrote this paper to address the pressure and anxiety surrounding college admissions and to clear up some common misconceptions. We know that many students are advised to find the “right fit” college, but in our experience, students don’t necessarily know how to follow that advice, and many become consumed with the idea that they need to be admitted to a highly selective college in order to secure long-term “success.”

The paper explores three main questions:

- » **WHAT DO COLLEGE RANKINGS REALLY MEASURE?**
- » **ARE STUDENTS WHO ATTEND MORE SELECTIVE COLLEGES BETTER OFF LATER IN LIFE?**
- » **WHAT IS “FIT” AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?**

A *“Fit” Over Rankings* synthesizes key research in order to address many of the important questions and concerns we hear from students, parents, and schools about the college admissions process. The review of research shows:

- » **TRADITIONAL COLLEGE RANKINGS ARE PROBLEMATIC.**
Their precision and objectivity are exaggerated, and they don’t tell the whole story of a college’s quality.
- » **HIGHER SELECTIVITY DOES NOT MEANINGFULLY IMPROVE STUDENTS’ LONG-TERM OUTCOMES.** Attending a more selective school has only a minimal relationship to future income, and will not lead to more learning, job-satisfaction, or well-being.
- » **WHAT YOU DO IN COLLEGE MATTERS WAY MORE THAN WHERE YOU GO.** Whichever college you attend, it’s your engagement, not the name of the school, that matters.

Download the white paper at www.challengesuccess.org/resources/research/white-papers/

**“RANKING SYSTEMS
GENERALLY USE DATA THAT
ARE EASY TO GATHER, NOT
NECESSARILY DATA THAT ARE
THE MOST MEANINGFUL.”**

—A *“Fit” Over Rankings*



*“We can do better by our students,
not just by changing college
admissions to be more equitable,
but by changing the narrative around
success and scarcity in our culture.
There are many kinds of success,
and many roads to get there. If our
definition of success costs us the
health, well-being, engagement,
and emotional development of
our children, we should
reconsider that definition.”*

—Lead White Paper Researcher

A WELL-BALANCED PERSPECTIVE ON COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

(CONTINUED)

There are more than 4,500 colleges in the United States, so we encourage families to look beyond rankings in their college search, and instead seek a school where students can participate fully in academic, civic, and social life in order to thrive both during the college years and beyond.

The college admissions process can be stressful, but we hope the white paper findings help to reduce the anxiety and pressure associated with rankings and selectivity, as there are many potential good options for every student.

WHAT DO THESE FINDINGS MEAN FOR THE HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE?

Knowing that engagement is what matters in college, it makes all the more sense for schools and students to focus on building **habits of engagement in high school**. Unfortunately, misconceptions about the importance of college selectivity and rank often contribute to an unhealthy high school climate. Our white paper gives educators and families the research-based perspective they need to regain power over the college admissions process. It allows schools to focus on what really matters — school reform policies, like those included in our SPACE framework, that are proven to improve student well-being and engagement with learning. Ultimately, we hope that the paper will positively influence the high school journey, and that students will feel compelled to seek out enriching academic and extracurricular opportunities that will bring meaning to their experience, rather than focusing solely on metrics in their college pursuit.

THE WHITE PAPER APPEARED IN 30+ PUBLICATIONS INCLUDING:



Forbes



Inc.



BizEd

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

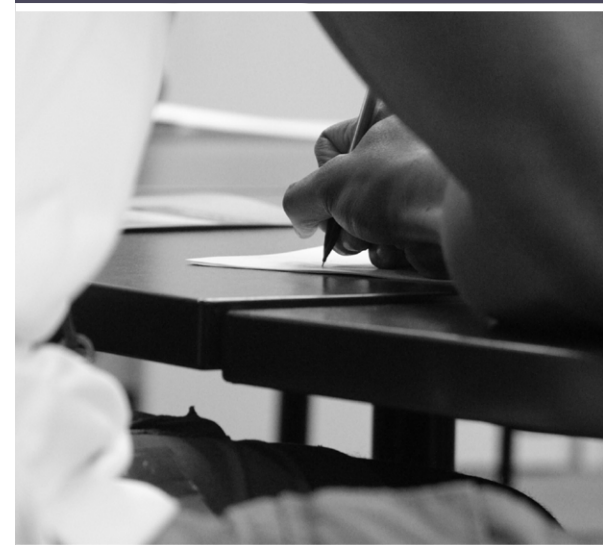
PsychologyToday

QUARTZ

life hacker

“We need this now, more than ever, and destructive rankings only serve to shift the conversation away from addressing the hopes and fears of students and their parents. We must now take this information, consider the arbitrary metrics and manipulation of data, and as the authors suggest, embrace the notion that ‘selectivity and prestige are not a one-way ticket to financial success, let alone a happy and fulfilling life.’”

—Director of College Counseling



“This is incredible work ... it really is the single best collection of research on the topic that most makes our kids (and their parents) sick.”

—Head of School

IN PARTNERSHIP

In 2018, 30 new schools joined our year-long program to implement policies and practices that increase academic engagement and student well-being. Challenge Success Partner Schools sent multi-stakeholder teams of educators, parents, and students to our annual conferences and worked with our staff throughout the school year using our SPACE framework to guide school reform initiatives.

"I don't think that in my 28 years I've ever had these kinds of discussions in faculty meetings. It's powerful."

—Principal

"... I feel like I'm in a rat race that if my kid is not doing all these things, that he might be disadvantaged. I am part of the problem and this is a fantastic opportunity to be part of the solution."

—Parent

"I'm not sure we've ever given students the power to have their voice heard. This is the first time we provided a safe, comfortable way."

—Administrator



"Hearing all of the different perspectives — student, parent, teacher, and administrators has been really interesting and valuable in terms of making changes. I think our team truly values the work that we are doing in an effort to improve student well-being. I also feel heard within the group when I express an opinion."

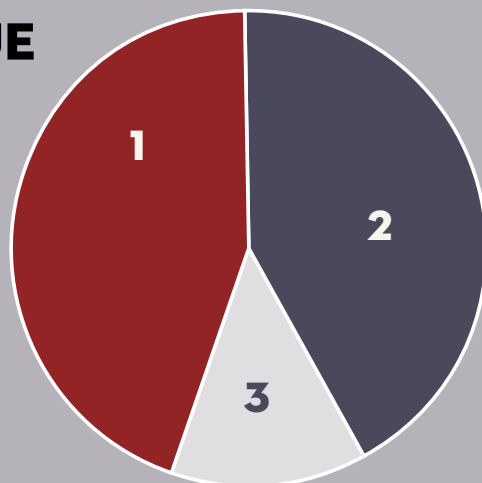
—Teacher

"The most valuable part of being on this team for me is that it's a place and a group of people where I feel as though not only is my voice heard, but I also have a voice for those who tend to stay quiet and not speak up about the changes that they want to see in our community."

—Student

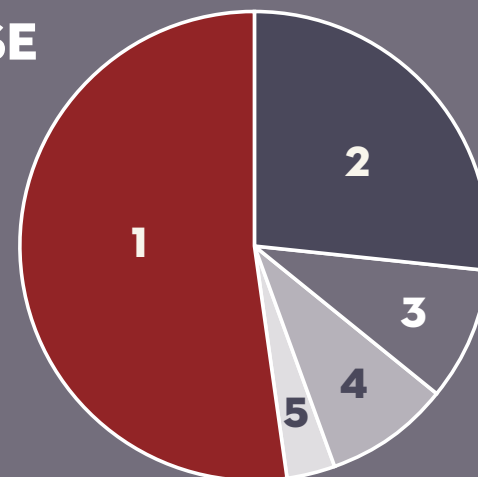


REVENUE



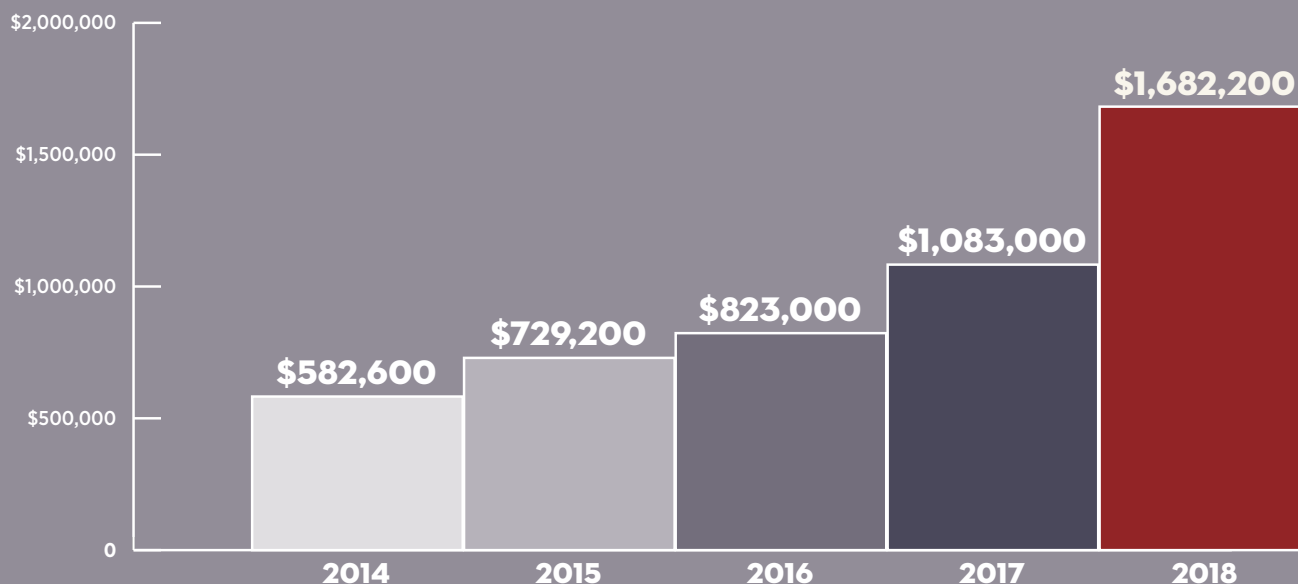
1	School Program	45%	\$751,700
2	Donations	42%	\$708,900
3	Research & Survey	13%	\$221,600
Total		100%	\$1,682,200

EXPENSE



1	School Programs	52%	\$806,400
2	Research & Survey	27%	\$410,200
3	Development	9%	\$139,400
4	Admin & Benefits	9%	\$135,600
5	Marketing/IT/Other	3%	\$47,400
Total		100%	\$1,539,000

GROWTH IN REVENUE



*Numbers reflect the combined balance of 501(c)(3) funds and the limited net earnings from the Challenge Success project at the Stanford Graduate School of Education.

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

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& Andy Chen
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