

MAKING COLLEGE AN ACHIEVABLE DREAM: FOUNDATIONS AND RESULTS



MISSION PROMISE
COMUNIDAD PROMESA DE LA MISION
NEIGHBORHOOD

Introduction

College attendance and completion have an unparalleled impact on a student's future earning potential, social mobility and long-term financial stability. Students from low-income communities and from first-generation families often face substantive challenges getting into and completing college. The Mission Promise Neighborhood (MPN) is a collaborative initiative to improve student readiness and college completion for children in San Francisco's Mission District, a historically vibrant Latino immigrant community that is home to persistent disparities in academic opportunity and achievement.

At four MPN target schools, robust family-engagement teams spearhead the effort to engage all students and families in their role as academic partners. The gains to date include increased graduation and college enrollment rates. The strategies include:

- **The MPN Family Success Coach, MPN-funded Community School Coordinator** and school Family Liaison work with community-based organizations to customize college awareness to each school.
- **College fairs, bilingual career panels and field trips** give students multiple opportunities to explore their future options.
- **A college-access partner**, embedded in the high school, integrates college-related content into classroom instruction and schoolwide activities.

More students at John O'Connell HS graduate

John O'Connell High School is one of four MPN target schools — and the only target high school — selected, based on historical disparities in student enrichment and achievement. Since 2012, the first year of MPN, the graduation rate has increased by nearly 20 percent. While there have been concurrent improvements in the college enrollment rate, a significant gap remains between those graduating and those enrolling in college.¹

The MPN neighborhood-wide survey reflects the school trend, as 82 percent of parents of young adults report that their child graduated from high school but only 56 percent are enrolled in a two-year, four-year or vocational program [1].

68%

percent of students at Everett Middle School plan on going to a two- or four-year college after graduating high school (School Climate Survey).

71%

percent of students at John O'Connell High School plan on going to a two- or four-year college after graduating (School Climate Survey).

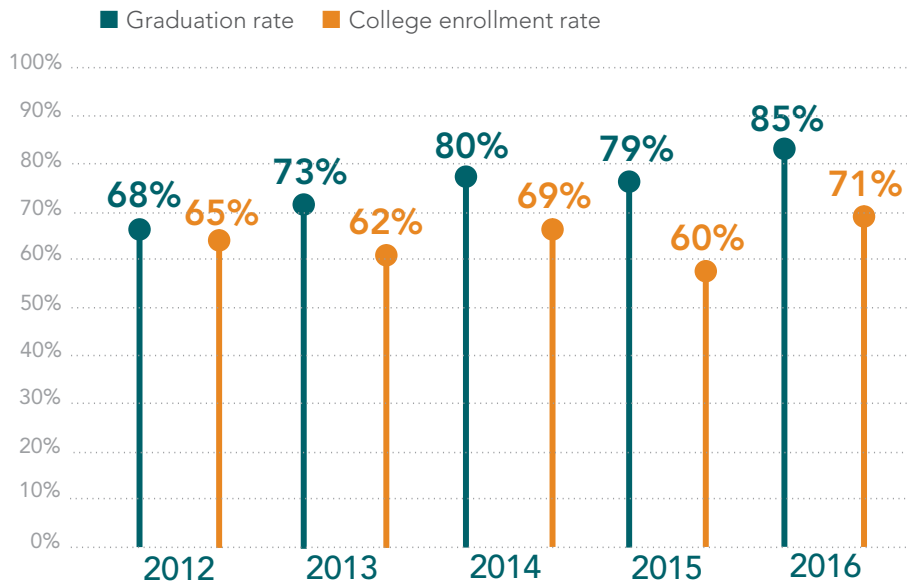
79%

of all students say that they are confident they will attend college (School Climate Survey).



¹ Data tracks John O'Connell graduates enrolling in two- or four-year colleges.

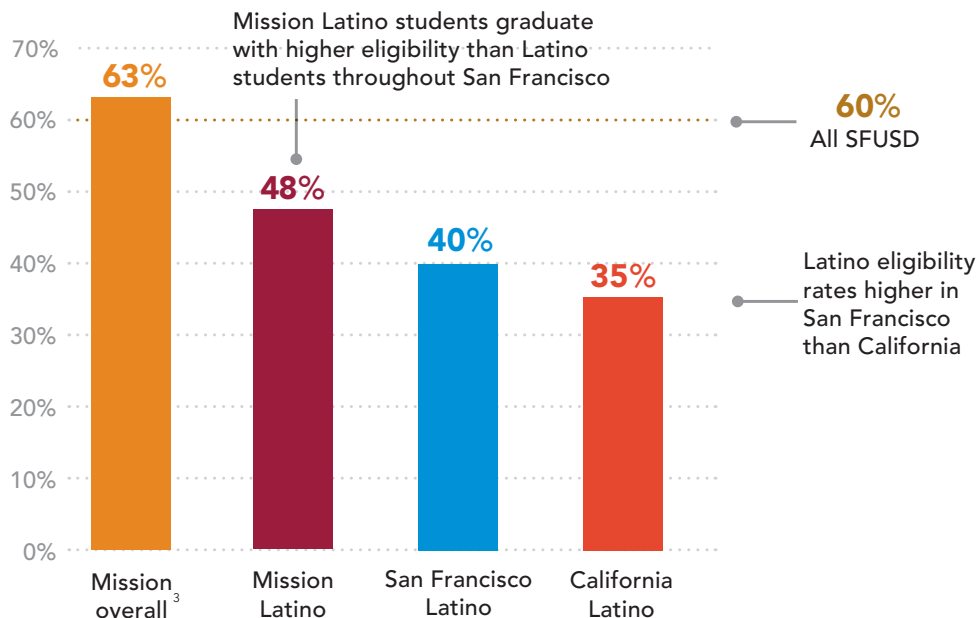
Rate of graduation and college enrollment at John O'Connell HS



Data source: SFUSD Administrative Data and National Student Clearinghouse.

Less than 50 percent of Latino students that graduate high school in the Mission are eligible to apply to California State Universities or the University of California system. Students at O'Connell HS most frequently named not having the money to pay for college as a barrier to attending college (51 percent), but 29 percent of students also cited not having done well enough in high school to be able to attend. **In fact, the average eligibility rate for Latino students in Mission District schools is significantly lower than both the overall Mission District and SFUSD rates.** Math and language arts proficiency rates reflect a persistent academic opportunity gap, as low grades disqualify students from four-year college eligibility.² When asked about the importance of various factors on college attendance, the vast majority cited the importance of completing the A-G requirements (92 percent) and enrollment in AP courses (76 percent), but only 46 percent indicated that getting good grades would be important for getting into the college of their choice.

Rates of CSU/UC eligibility in the 2014-2015 academic year [2]



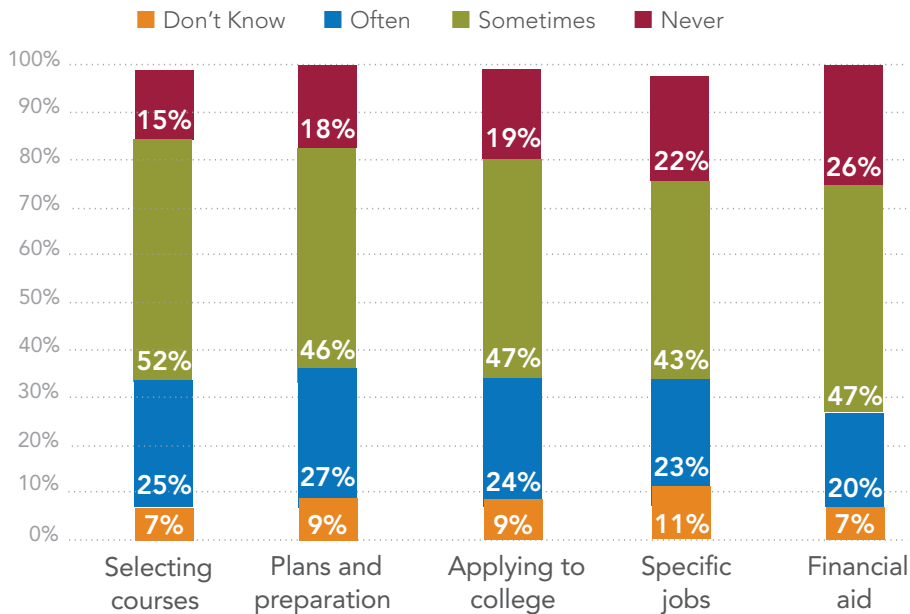
² Students must earn a letter grade of C- or better in all A-G requirement courses to be CSU/UC eligible.

³ Mission District high schools include John O'Connell HS (MPN target school), SF International HS and Mission HS.

Students want to go to college

Despite the gap between graduation and college enrollment rates, and the challenges that students in the Mission District face, many students are hopeful and planning for college. Most MPN students report that they plan on going to college after graduating from high school, and 79 percent report that they are confident they will attend college [3].

Parents have conversations with their children about college and career



One-quarter of parents have attended a program or workshop about helping their child prepare for college — yet almost one-quarter of parents reported that they have never discussed financial aid opportunities with their high school students.

Parents help their children think about and plan for college

The 2016 MPN Survey found that most Mission parents talk with their children about plans and preparations for applying to college. One-quarter of parents have attended a program or workshop about helping their child prepare for college. Still, one-quarter of parents reported that they have never discussed financial aid opportunities with their children in high school. Students' perceptions at MPN target schools mirror this finding, as students say that their parents discuss the importance of attending college (77 percent) and believe that attending college is important (86 percent); however, over half of students at O'Connell HS perceive that not having enough money to pay for college could prevent them from attending.

MPN contributes to college-going culture

MPN includes a spectrum of evidence-based programs⁴ that support partner programs' presence at target schools four to five days per week, working both in and out of the classroom.

MPN partners collaborate with target-school staff to reduce financial barriers to college attendance. Research has found that children with dedicated college savings accounts are seven times more likely to attend college than those who do not have such an account, even if the amount saved is small [4]. To date, 780 students in focus schools have a college savings account.

- San Francisco Office of Financial Empowerment hosts **Kindergarten 2 College**, a college savings account for each incoming SFUSD kindergarten student.
- Starting in elementary school, **Mission Graduates** and MPN staff lead families in engaging and fun

⁴ Evidence base was determined through the use of the [What Works Clearinghouse](#).

college-awareness activities for students, with the result that families learn ways to make the most of their college savings accounts.

Staff and partners lead career exploration, academic preparation and support enrollment in high schools with best-fit academic pathways.

As a result, 86 percent of seniors completed the FAFSA in the 2015-2016 school year, 86 percent of seniors applied to city college and 90 percent of four-year eligible seniors applied to a university.

- **Seven Tepees** and **Mission Graduates** work at schools five days per week, integrating programming into high school classroom instruction, student clubs and after-school programming to reach all students.
- School partners provide a **College and Career Seminar** for sophomore students, **ACT prep** for juniors, and ongoing **college and financial aid application support** for seniors.
- Partners, **Community School Coordinators** and school counselors collaborate to provide **trips to college campuses, career fairs** and **connections to summer programs**.

The MPN Scholarship Fund celebrates four-year, college-bound students who demonstrate financial need, community service and academic achievement. In 2016, the fund awarded a scholarship to four seniors upon graduation, and will do so again in 2017.

Looking Ahead

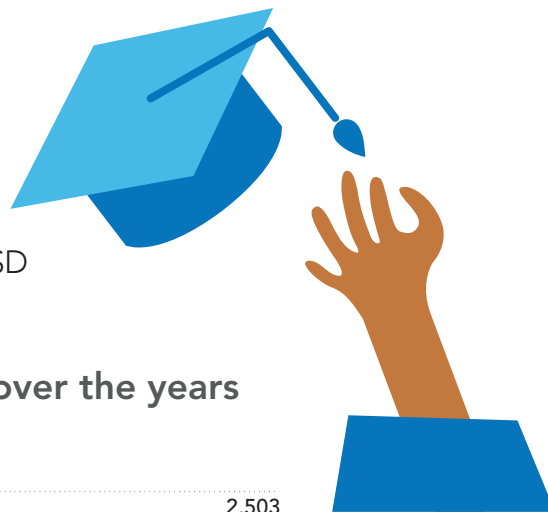
While SFUSD performs marginally better than the state of California at graduating Latino students who are eligible for college, Latino students are still consistently graduating with lower rates of college eligibility than their peers. If this trend continues, with the current enrollment, approximately 2,400 more Latino students will exit SFUSD with limited college prospects.

Evaluation Methods

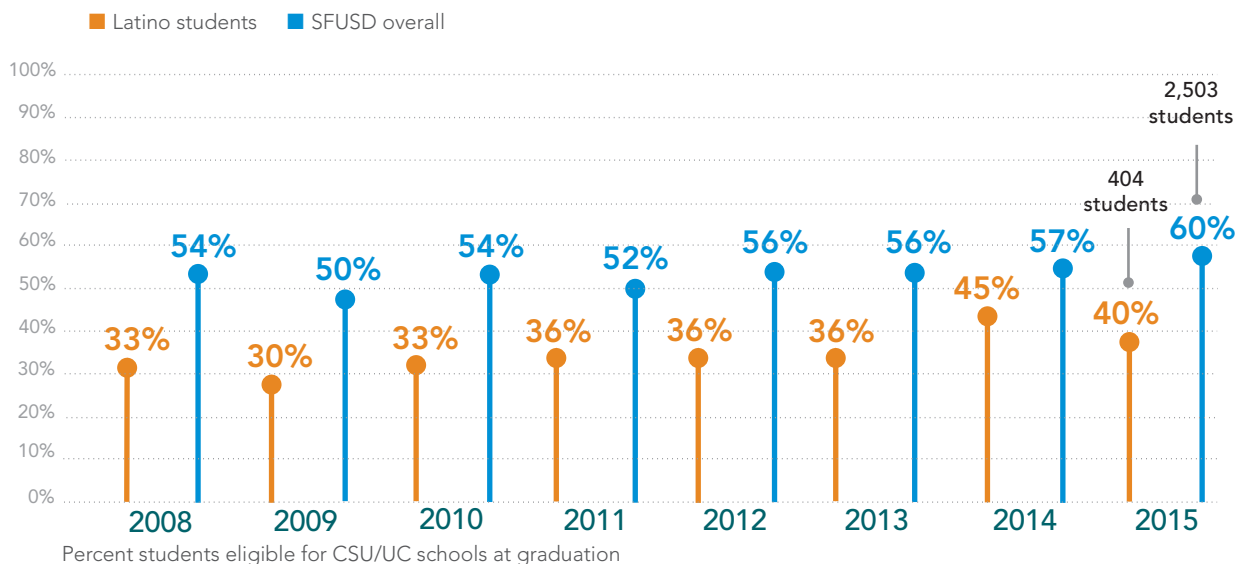


Neighborhood Survey
The MPN Survey is conducted every two years, and targets parents of children who live in or attend school in the Mission District. The survey asks parents a variety of questions related to health, income and education.

School Climate Survey
MPN administers a School Climate Survey each year to students enrolled at Everett Middle School and John O'Connell High School (MPN target schools). In 2016, 81 percent of the combined student body responded about their academic aspirations, barriers and health-related behaviors.



The gap in CSU/UC eligibility has remained constant over the years



In MPN schools, close collaboration has yielded higher graduation rates, and students who graduate eligible to enroll in a four-year university receive the information and support needed to get there. Across the Mission District, schools must now look to increase college eligibility rates. O'Connell HS will host summer school in 2017 to increase access to rapid credit recovery for students who are traditionally deprioritized for enrollment. This fall, Mission Graduates will hire an additional staff member to support O'Connell HS alumni who are enrolled in two- and four-year colleges, the first SFUSD high school to expand college access support to promote college persistence.

References

- [1] [Mission Promise Neighborhood \(2017\). The Story of the Mission Promise Neighborhood Community: Results & Trends from the 2014 and 2016 MPN Neighborhood Survey.](#) Mission Promise Neighborhood and Mission Economic Development Agency.
- [2] [California Department of Education Data Reporting Office, Dataquest. Academic Year 2014-2015.](#)
- [3] [Mission Promise Neighborhood \(2016\). 2014 to 2016 Mission Promise Neighborhood School Climate Survey: Understanding the Experiences of Students in San Francisco's Mission District.](#) Mission Promise Neighborhood and Mission Economic Development Agency.
- [4] Assets and Education Initiative. (2013). Building Expectations, Delivering Results: Asset-Based Financial Aid and the Future of Higher Education. In W. Elliott (Ed.), Biannual report on the assets and education field. Lawrence, KS: Assets and Education Initiative (AEDI).

About Mission Promise Neighborhood

The Mission Promise Neighborhood is a citywide community partnership that was created to support kids and families living, working and attending school in the Mission District. It brings together schools, colleges, community organizations and community leaders to help kids graduate and families achieve financial stability.

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