



## **2023 Summer Bridge Program Student Survey Outcomes**

In the summer of 2023, 298 students from historically marginalized schools and community-based organizations in Trenton, Newark, and Ewing, New Jersey participated in the Princeton-Blairstown Center's (PBC) Summer Bridge Program. For the eighth year in a row, PBC offered academic enrichment and leadership development programs designed to lessen summer learning loss; build critical 21<sup>st</sup> Century social emotional learning (SEL) skills such as communication, cooperation, teamwork, problem solving, and healthy risk-taking; and help students form positive, supportive relationships with peers and adults. Each of these intended outcomes is grounded in peer-reviewed research that demonstrates the importance of these short-term outcomes for long-term outcomes, such as success in school, employment, and other arenas. Each group participated in this intensive, educational experience of 5-days/4-nights during a separate week at the 268-acre Blairstown Campus near the Delaware Water Gap.

PBC measured outcomes using 1) the work products/fruits of the academic components; 2) feedback from leaders and teacher/staff chaperones connected with the partner schools/organizations; and 3) a research-based assessment developed with the American Camp Association (ACA) as part of a National Research Study conducted by Philliber Research Associates that gauges students' self-perceptions/attitudes and changes in these.

**The student surveys showed positive results**, particularly given that most students are continuing to suffer from academic and developmental deficits that are a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Students were asked to answer a series of questions around demographic information as well as questions around SEL skills including teamwork, problem solving (perceived competence), responsibility, and affinity for nature.

Overall, it is clear that after their experience at the Summer Bridge Program, 72-87% of the students felt their SEL skills or appreciation of/comfort in the natural world increased.

### **Other significant findings that resulted from this 5-day session at Blairstown:**

- 63% of the students rated their time with PBC Blairstown as an "8, 9 or 10" for the "best time ever."
- 72% of the students felt more confident they could be a good leader.
- 79% of the students felt they could be more effective in helping a group be successful.
- 79% of the students felt more tolerant toward others with opinions different from their own.
- 75% of the students felt better able to cooperate with others.
- 76% enjoy the freedom of the outdoors.

For more information, here is the data:

Two hundred and sixty-two (88%) students completed the student surveys, which were administered electronically on Kindle Fire tablets via Survey Monkey.

### **Gender**

53% identified as a female

40% identified as a male

7% identified as non-binary, prefer to self-describe, or prefer not to say

### **Age**

7% were 9 years old

11% were 10 years old

14% were 11 years old

14% were 12 years old

14% were 13 years old

15% were 14 years old

17% were 15 years old

8% were 16 years old or older

### **Racial/Ethnic Identity**

63% identified as African American

24% identified as Latino/a/x

7% identified as Other

3% identified as Biracial

2% identified as Caucasian

1% identified as Asian

On a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 = absolutely the worst and where 10 = the best time ever):

**26% rated their week with PBC a 10**

**14% rated their week with PBC a 9**

**23% rated their week with PBC an 8**

14% rated their week with PBC a 7

7% rated their week with PBC a 6

7% rated their week with PBC a 5

3% rated their week with PBC a 4

1% rated their week with PBC a 3

1% rated their week with PBC a 2

4% rated their week with PBC a 1

On a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 is absolutely the WORST and 10 is the BEST time ever), rate how your facilitator listened to you and helped you be part of the group:

**64% rated their facilitator's listening and helping skills as a 10**

**11% rated their facilitator's listening and helping skills as a 9**

**8% rated their facilitator's listening and helping skills as an 8**

6% rated their facilitator's listening and helping skills as a 7

2% rated their facilitator's listening and helping skills as a 6

3% rated their facilitator's listening and helping skills as a 5

1% rated their facilitator's listening and helping skills as a 4

1% rated their facilitator's listening and helping skills as a 3  
1% rated their facilitator's listening and helping skills as a 2  
3% rated their facilitator's listening and helping skills as a 1

For each of the following statements, e.g., "I can be a good group leader," the first part of each question asks the student to respond how true this statement is for him or her now (i.e., at the end of the program). Then the second part asks, "Is the statement more or less true today than before attending Blairstown?" This gauges how the student perceives the effects of the Summer Bridge experience.

## TEAMWORK

1. I can be a good group leader.

- 38% said this was true.
- 18% said this was somewhat true.
- 21% said this was a little true.
- 23% said this was false, somewhat false, or a little false.

Is the statement more or less true today than before attending Blairstown?

- **30% said it was more true they could be a good leader.**
- **17% said it was somewhat more true they could be a good leader.**
- 25% said it was a little more true they could be a good leader.
- 28% said it was a little less, somewhat less, or a lot less true they could be a good leader.

2. I can help a group be successful.

- 46% said this was true.
- 20% said this was somewhat true.
- 19% said this was a little true.
- 15% said this was false, somewhat false, or a little false.

Is the statement more or less true today than before attending Blairstown?

- **39% said it was more true they could help their group be successful.**
- **21% said it was somewhat more true they could help their group be successful.**
- 19% said it was a little more true they could help their group be successful.
- 21% said it was a little less, somewhat less, or a lot less true they could help their group be successful.

3. I can appreciate opinions that are different from my own.

- 45% said this was true.
- 24% said this was somewhat true.
- 18% said this was a little true.
- 13% said this was false, somewhat false, or a little false.

Is the statement more or less true today than before attending Blairstown?

- **35% said it was more true they could appreciate opinions that are different than their own.**
- **25% said it was somewhat more true they could appreciate opinions that are different than their own.**

- 19% said it was a little more true they could appreciate opinions that are different than their own.
  - 21% said it was a little less, somewhat less, or a lot less true they could appreciate opinions that are different than their own.
4. I can cooperate with others.
- 45% said this was true.
  - 23% said this was somewhat true.
  - 18% said this was a little true.
  - 14% said this was false, somewhat false, or a little false.

Is the statement more or less true today than before attending Blairstown?

- **31% said it was more true they could cooperate with others.**
- **22% said it was somewhat more true they could cooperate with others.**
- 22% said it was a little more true they could cooperate with others.
- 25% said it was a little less, somewhat less, or a lot less true they could cooperate with others.

5. I know I can get along with other people in a small group.

- 53% said this was true.
- 18% said this was somewhat true.
- 14% said this was a little true.
- 15% said this was false, somewhat false, or a little false.

Is the statement more or less true today than before attending Blairstown?

- **43% said it was more true they could cooperate with others.**
- **16% said it was somewhat more true they could cooperate with others.**
- 19% said it was a little more true they could cooperate with others.
- 22% said it was a little less, somewhat less, or a lot less true they could cooperate with others.

### **PROBLEM-SOLVING CONFIDENCE**

1. When I have a problem, I look for the things that might be causing it.

- 34% said this was true.
- 19% said this was somewhat true.
- 24% said this was a little true.
- 23% said this was false, somewhat false, or a little false.

Is the statement more or less true today than before attending Blairstown?

- **19% said it was more true they could look for things that might cause a problem.**
- **23% said it was somewhat more true they could look for things that might cause a problem.**
- 26% said it was a little more true they could look for things that might cause a problem.
- 32% said it was a little less, somewhat less, or a lot less true they could look for things that might cause a problem.

2. When I have a problem, I stop and think about options before making a decision.
  - 32% said this was true.
  - 17 said this was somewhat true.
  - 25% said this was a little true.
  - 26% said this was false, somewhat false, or a little false.

Is the statement more or less true today than before attending Blairstown?

- **28% said it was more true they could stop and think about options before making a decision.**
- **14% said it was somewhat more true they could stop and think about options before making a decision.**
- 22% said it was a little more true they could stop and think about options before making a decision.
- 36% said it was a little less, somewhat less, or a lot less true they could stop and think about options before making a decision.

3. When I have a problem I choose a realistic plan.

- 34% said this was true.
- 18% said this was somewhat true.
- 20% said this was a little true.
- 28% said this was false, somewhat false, or a little false.

Is the statement more or less true today than before attending Blairstown?

- **20% said it was more true they could choose a realistic plan.**
- **19% said it was somewhat more true they could choose a realistic plan.**
- 25% said it was a little more true they could choose a realistic plan.
- 36% said it was a little less, somewhat less, or a lot less true they could choose a realistic plan.

4. When I have a problem I make good choices about what to do.

- 32% said this was true.
- 26% said this was somewhat true.
- 23% said this was a little true.
- 19% said this was false, somewhat false, or a little false.

Is the statement more or less true today than before attending Blairstown?

- **26% said it was more true they could make good choices about what to do.**
- **23% said it was somewhat more true they could make good choices about what to do.**
- 24% said it was a little more true they could make good choices about what to do.
- 27% said it was a little less, somewhat less, or a lot less true they could make good choices about what to do.

5. After dealing with a problem I consider how it worked.

- 35% said this was true.
- 16% said this was somewhat true.
- 22% said this was a little true.
- 27% said this was false, somewhat false, or a little false.

Is the statement more or less true today than before attending Blairstown?

- **29% said it was more true after dealing with a problem they could consider how it worked.**
- **20% said it was somewhat more true they could consider how it worked.**
- 24% said it was a little more true they could consider how it worked.
- 27% said it was a little less, somewhat less, or a lot less true they could consider how it worked.

### **AFFINITY FOR NATURE**

1. I like being in nature.

- 31% said this was true.
- 14% said this was somewhat true.
- 20% said this was a little true.
- 35% said this was false, somewhat false, or a little false.

Is the statement more or less true today than before attending Blairstown?

- **27% said it was more true they liked being in nature.**
- **18% said it was somewhat more true they liked being in nature.**
- 17% said it was a little more true they liked being in nature.
- 38% said it was a little less, somewhat less, or a lot less true they liked being in nature.

2. I want to spend time outdoors.

- 37% said this was true.
- 13% said this was somewhat true.
- 21% said this was a little true.
- 29% said this was false, somewhat false, or a little false.

Is the statement more or less true today than before attending Blairstown?

- **31% said it was more true they wanted to spend time outdoors.**
- **19% said it was somewhat more true they wanted to spend time outdoors.**
- 20% said it was a little more true they could wanted to spend time outdoors.
- 30% said it was a little less, somewhat less, or a lot less true they wanted to spend time outdoors.

3. I enjoy the freedom of being outside.

- 51% said this was true.
- 14% said this was somewhat true.
- 18% said this was a little true.
- 17% said this was false, somewhat false, or a little false.

Is the statement more or less true today than before attending Blairstown?

- **40% said it was more true they enjoy the freedom of being outside.**
- **16% said it was somewhat more true they enjoy the freedom of being outside.**
- 20% said it was a little more true they enjoy the freedom of being outside.
- 24% said it was a little less, somewhat less, or a lot less true they enjoy the freedom of being outside.

4. I am comfortable in the outdoors.

- 29% said this was true.
- 22% said this was somewhat true.
- 17% said this was a little true.
- 32% said this was false, somewhat false, or a little false.

Is the statement more or less true today than before attending Blairstown?

- **32% said it was more true they are comfortable in the outdoors.**
- **17% said it was somewhat more true they are comfortable in the outdoors.**
- 17% said it was a little more true they are comfortable in the outdoors.
- 34% said it was a little less, somewhat less, or a lot less true they are comfortable in the outdoors.

5. I feel connected to the natural environment.

- 31% said this was true.
- 20% said this was somewhat true.
- 15% said this was a little true.
- 34% said this was false, somewhat false, or a little false.

Is the statement more or less true today than before attending Blairstown?

- **27% said it was more true they feel connected to the natural world.**
- **21% said it was somewhat more true they feel connected to the natural world.**
- 21% said it was a little more true they feel connected to the natural world.
- 31% said it was a little less, somewhat less, or a lot less true they feel connected to the natural world.

*These responses still need to be compared against the national norms for the American Camp Association's Youth Outcomes Battery.*