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## 2017 End of Course Survey of the True Grit Program



## Method

Following the Spring 2017 semester at Pikes Peak Community College, 298 students participated in an assessment of the *True Grit* program taught by Charmas and Janice Lee. This report summarizes the participant responses obtained through a survey instrument consisting of both multiple choice (Likert-scaled) and free response questions designed to assess program effectiveness, evaluate the relevancy of program content, and support a decision with respect to the continuance of the True Grit program.

The scaled responses are presented in their raw form and displayed side-by-side where practicable applicable for ease of viewing. The free form qualitative responses were thematically coded and tracked in a qualitative analysis program<sup>1</sup>. These thematic response frequencies are provided along with first person verbatim quotations to supplement the graphical information displays.

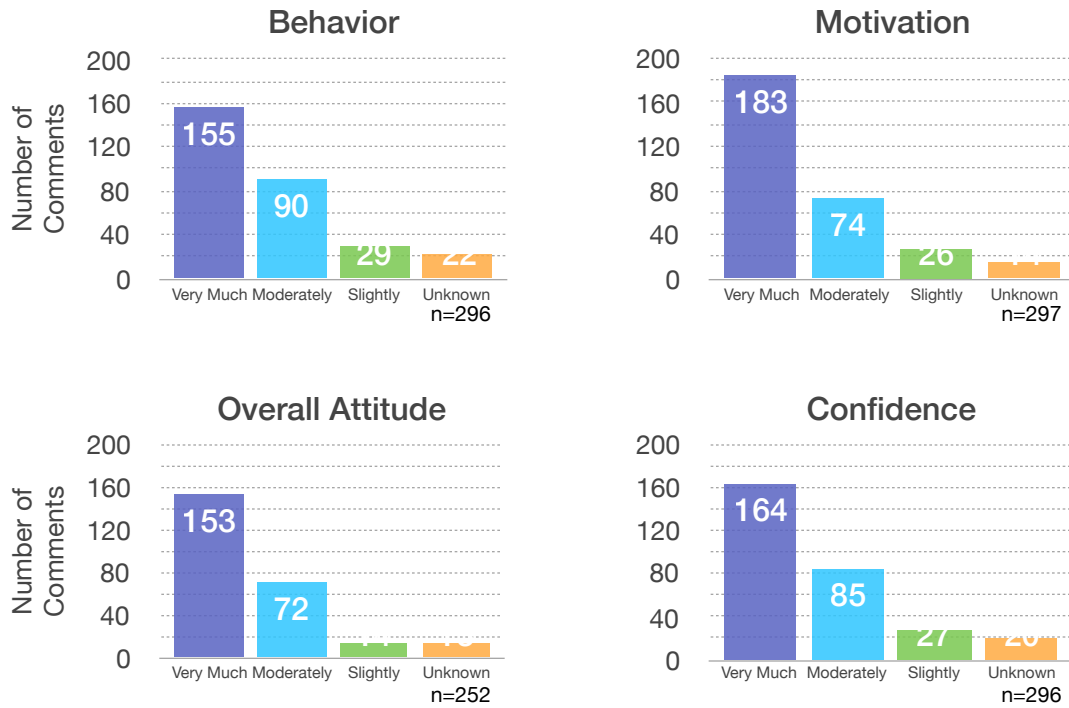
## Student Responses

Q1: *How effective was the True Grit program in influencing your behaviors?*



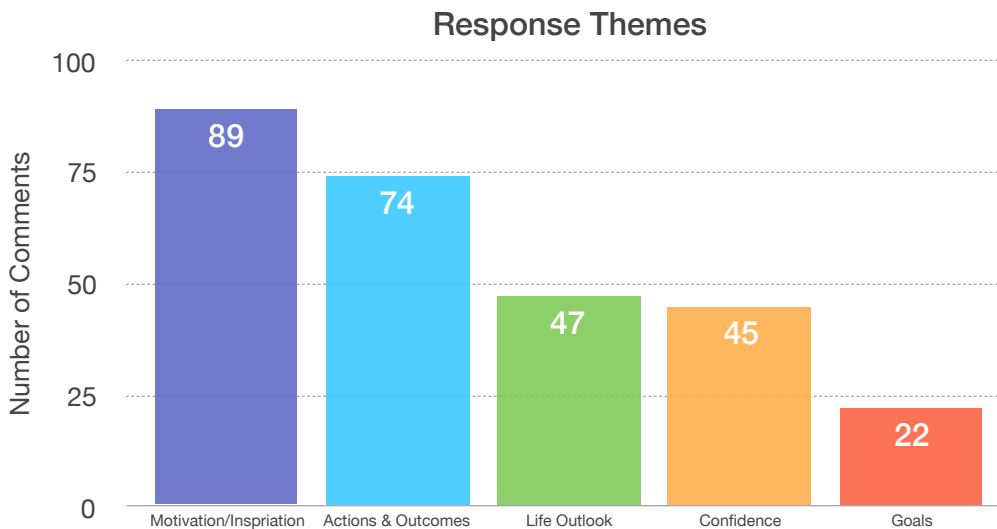
<sup>1</sup> MAXQDA12

Q1: Continued.



Q2: Please describe how the True Grit program impacted your life, either in or out of the classroom. (n=288)

A coded thematic analysis of the responses revealed 331 comments about the True Grit program—95.5% of which were positive. Five major themes emerged as represented in the following chart with the number of comments per area depicted.



Similar to the 2016 True Grit study, *motivation* emerged as the most prolific theme as was applied to students' views of life both in and out of the classroom. 27% of comments concerned attitudinal change largely focused around motivation and inspiration. Some examples follow:

*"Before I had no motivation but now I strive to succeed and fight for the things I want."*

*"True Grit helped me both in and out of the classroom. It was very effective in motivating me and showing me the value of my worth."*

*"I come to class more often and have a positive attitude towards everything."*

*I already did really well in school, but it really helped with my attitude and confidence outside of class."*



Responses concerning *actions and outcomes* comprised 22% of the comments and indicated program participants both contemplated the impact of their actions as well as implemented changes in their lives with positive results.

*"Well I quit smoking, so I think that is great."*

*"I woke up one day and the think-say-do got me out of bed when I did not want to."*

*"It made me decide to take chances, and now I have a job because I took the chance to ask."*

Participants reported (14% of comments) a change in their *outlook on life*, to include fundamental self-image adjustments.

*"It taught me how to put myself first."*

*"The program helped me maintain and improve my self-worth."*

*"The True Grit program has really helped me to check any negative behavior that I may have had. I'm more aware of how to maintain a positive attitude towards my life."*

True Grit participants reported *confidence* improvements (14% of comments). Several students linked confidence with a reduction in risk aversion.

*"Gave me the confidence to get through my classes and not to give up on them."*

*"It made me decide to take chances."*



*“Before meeting Coach Lee my confidence level was very low. Everyday I work on my confidence and have come a long way since the first class.”*

Lastly, students provided comments on goals. These comments were often related to the confidence to achieve them.

“Influenced me to complete my dream of starting my own business.”

“Instead off being confused with my path this allowed me to slow down, see what I want in life, and how to get there.”

“Help(ed) me realize my goals, and procrastinate less.”



### **Analysis:**

This survey revealed that students improved their level of self-awareness, set goals, and were motivated to action with elevated risk acceptance and a reduction in fear. Students reported True Grit program proved beneficial both in an out of the classroom with one participant reporting the program influenced potentially life-extending behavior (smoking cessation).

This survey showed a high-level of participant support for the True Grit program. While some students expressed initial skepticism at being required to take the program, almost all students found value in it. Of the 4.5% of students who did not think the program led to self-improvement, not one participant commented negatively on the program.

As the results of this survey were self-reported, independent quantitative measures are recommended for future study and verification of the program’s efficacy.



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## End of Course Survey of the True Grit Program



### Method

From 4-5 April 2016, 73 students and three teachers participated in an assessment of the *True Grit* program at Pikes Peak Community College.

This report summarizes the participant responses obtained through a survey instrument consisting of both multiple choice (Likertscaled) and free response questions designed to assess program effectiveness, evaluate the relevancy of program content, and support a decision with respect to the continuance of the True Grit program.

The scaled responses are presented in their raw form and displayed side-by-side where practicable applicable for ease of viewing. The free form qualitative responses were thematically coded and tracked in a database. The appearance frequencies are provided along with first person verbatim quotations to supplement the graphical information displays.

In the case of instructor surveys, the three responses received were insufficient for meaning collation and trend assessment. As an alternative, these surveys were viewed in the context of supporting or not supporting the student surveys with teacher comments provided to support the viewpoint of individual instructors with classes participating in both True Grit.

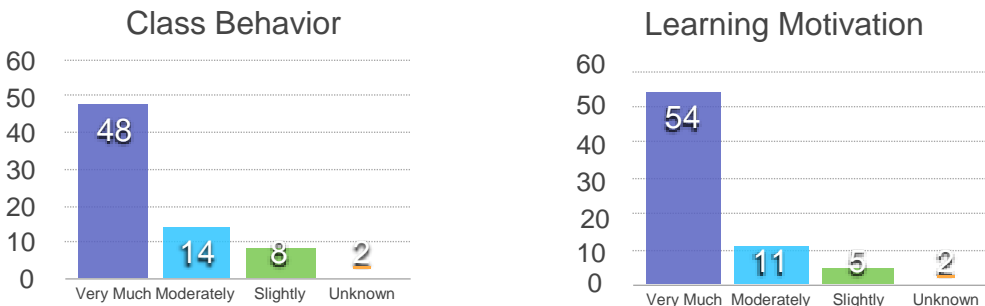
### Student Responses

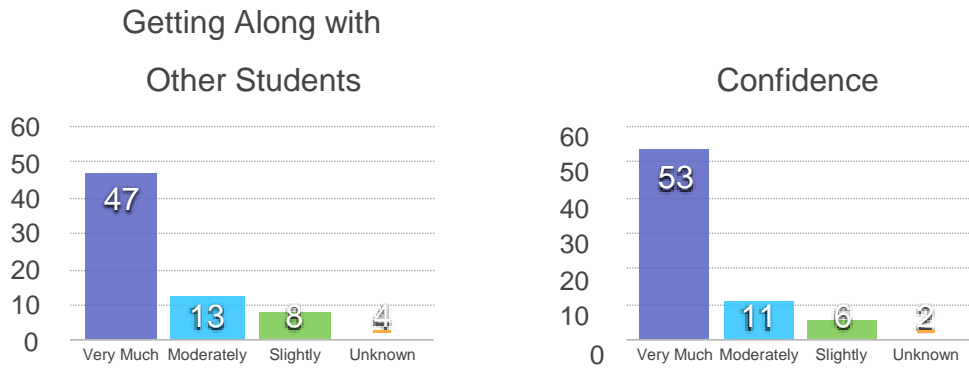
Q1: *How effective was the True Grit program in influencing your behaviors?*



Note: n=72 on all Q1 responses except for class participation where n=73.

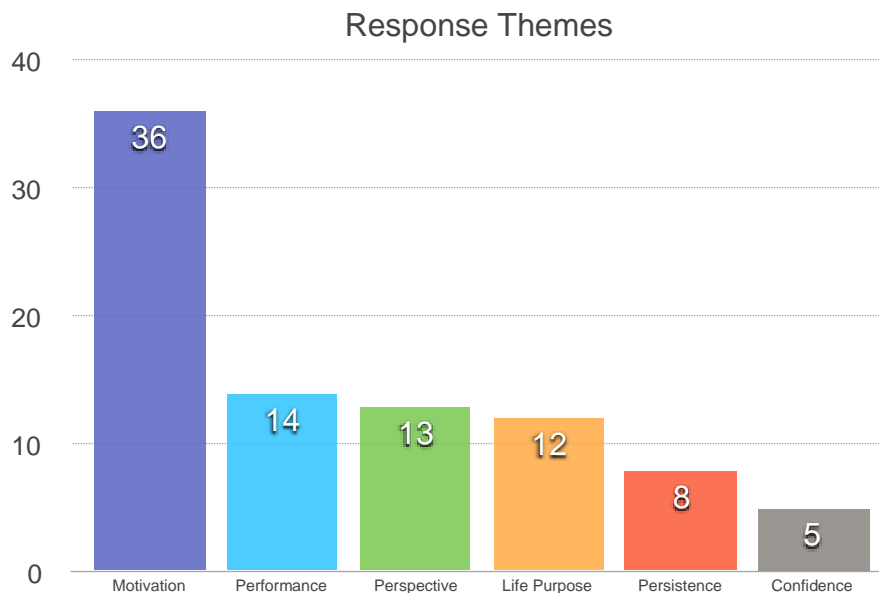
Q1: Continued. Learning Motivation





Q2: Please describe how the True Grit program impacted your life, either in or out of the classroom. (n=67)

Six themes emerged from this analysis and are depicted by frequency in the following chart.



*Motivation* emerged as the most prolific theme as was applied to students' views of life both in and out of the classroom. Some examples follow:

*"It gave me more motivation to try at everything."*  
*"Motivation to move forward and take what I want for my life. Passion!"*  
*"It's been a great motivational tool with school."*

*Performance, Life Purpose, and Perspective* were present in similar frequency as students expressed changes in how they accomplished tasks, reevaluated life goals, and gained a new worldview.

*“It has made me realize some things that are holding me back and shown me how and what I can improve.”*

*“True Grit really helped me understand what my purpose was.”*

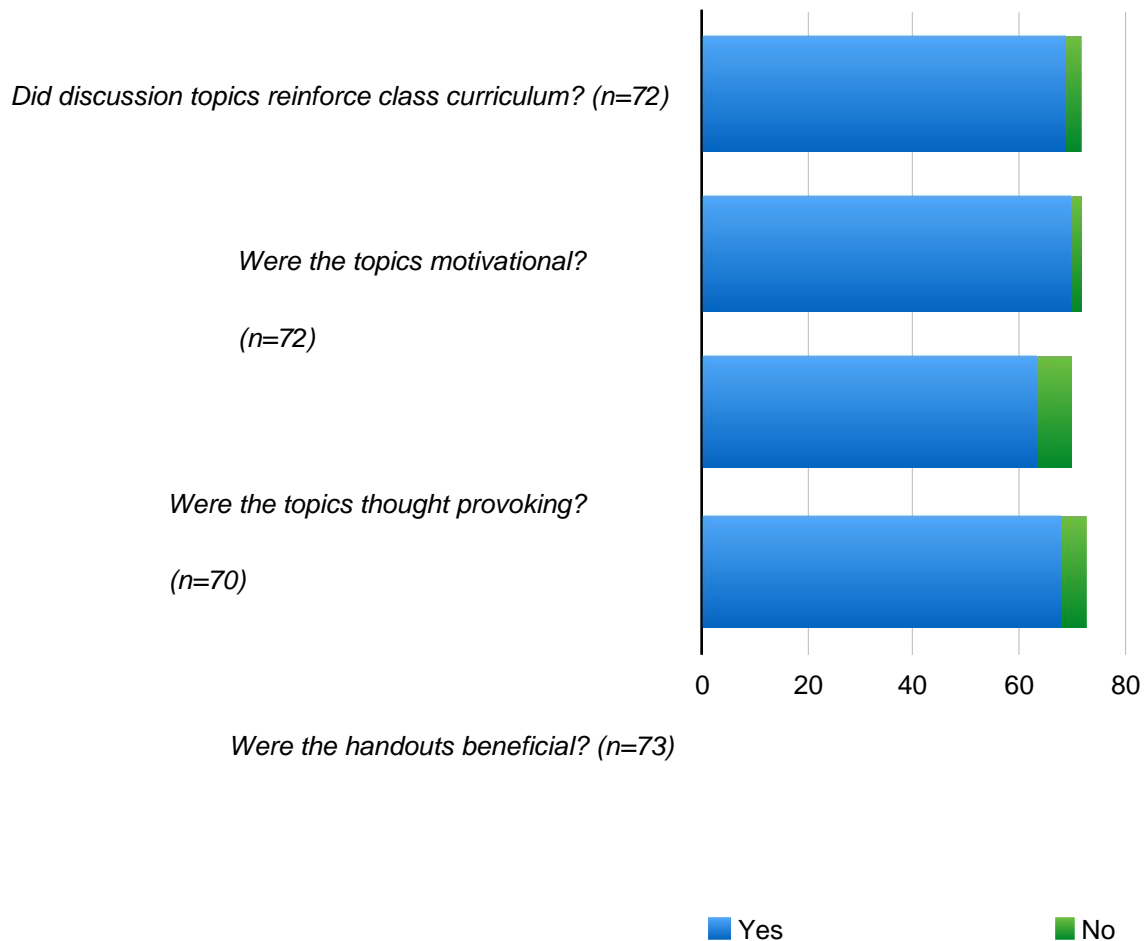
*“I gained a new perspective on how to look at things in life.”*

Finally, students made comments which could be categorized as reflecting increased *persistence* and *confidence* resulting from the True Grit program.

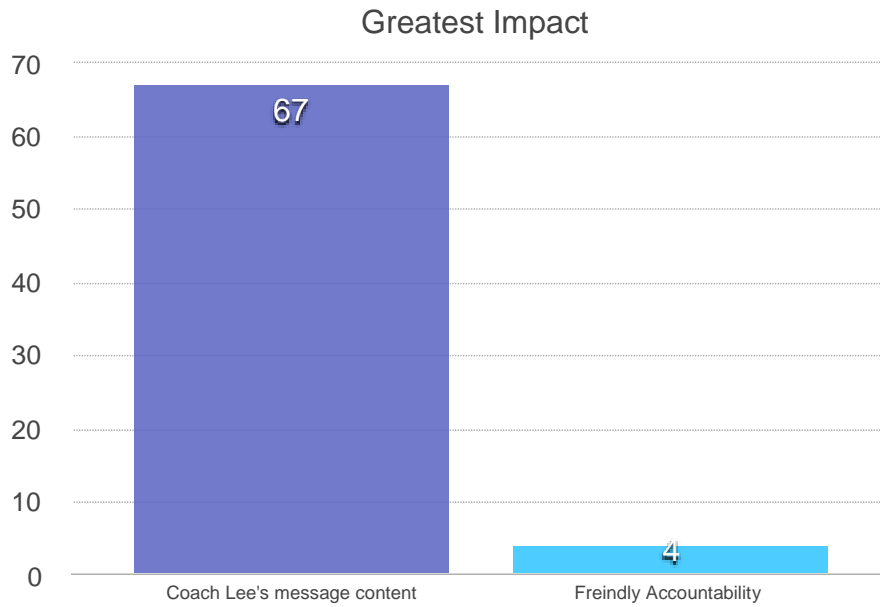
*“It impacted me a lot, build (sic) my confidence more.”*

*“At the age of 44 I still wonder everyday if I can do this...I don't care if it takes me 10 years to finish I will.”*

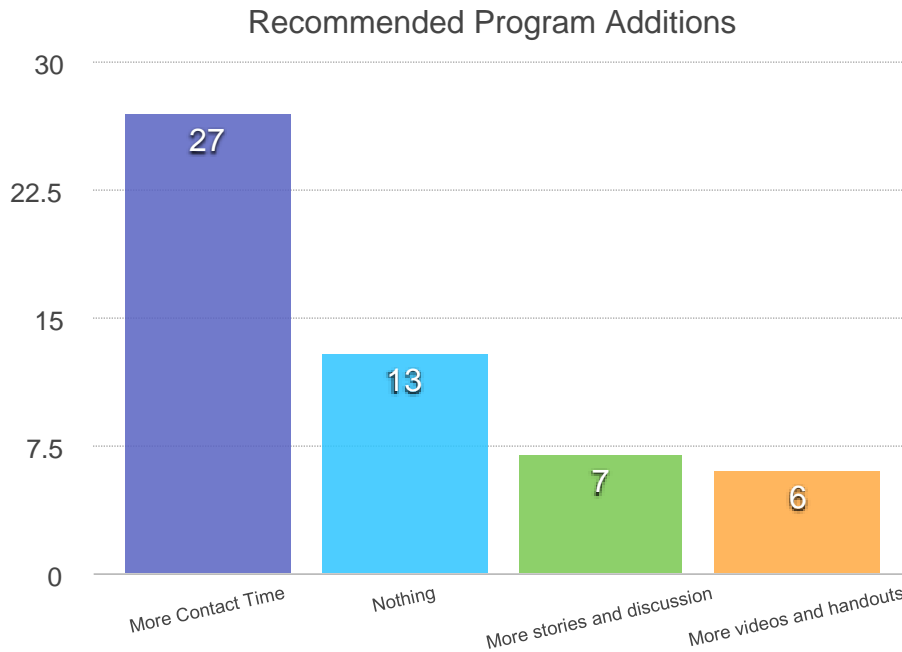
Q3: *Answer the following program content related questions.*



Q4: *Which component of the True Grit program had the greatest impact? (n=71)*



Q5: *What would you like to see added to the program? (n=57)*



The majority of responses to this question asked for additional contact time with Coach Lee, either in the form of more contact sessions, increased time during the existing sessions, or both. Or than the second theme of not changing anything, students requested more content in terms of stories and discussions and takeaways in the form of videos and handouts. Salient





felt bad because she did not like to compare her relative lack of success with Coach Lee's.

### **Teacher Surveys:**

With only three teacher surveys submitted, it was not practical to report trends with the exception of overall support for the True Grit program and a desire that the program's content be coordinated with the curriculum of the class.

Selected comments included:

*"The key area in which True Grit has helped has been in developing confidence & motivation."*

*"I would like to see a clear collaboration opportunity to insure the content connects well and to manage overlap better."*

*"My students loved the True Grit class visits. They looked forward to them every week." "More class visits PPCC wide speaking so all the campus can benefit."*

### **Analysis:**

This survey showed a preponderance of support from both students and faculty for the True Grit program. Students reported increased levels of motivation and performance, a heightened self-awareness and sense of purpose, and a desire to continue when presented with both academic and life obstacles. From a faculty perspective, instructors supported the program in its current form with the addition of topic coordination between True Grit and course curriculum. Both students and faculty supported continuance of the program and recommended expansion of the program.



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## Helen Hunt Survey Analysis



## Helen Hunt Survey Analysis

**Program Background:** The Achieving Competitive Excellence ( A.C.E.) program was designed to equip the elementary and middle school student with the confidence, knowledge, skills and ability to develop their own personal plan for success; setting ambitious, yet achievable, goals in the classroom, personal lives, at home and within the community. This program focused on low-income at promise youth. All participants were either on reduced or free lunch and were currently involved in the (Beyond the School Bell Program) at Helen Hunt Elementary school.

**Desired outcomes:** Through this mind-body step-wise approach we expect the participant to recognize their self-worth, increase overall productivity and increase self-esteem and pride. In addition we believe that if the exercises/drills are applied routinely participants may improve cognitive function i.e. Concentration or attentiveness, concept learning, critical thinking and memory. Participants may also demonstrate improvements in personal mastery, the ability to master their thoughts, behaviors and actions, while recognizing performance barriers, including but not limited to; attitude, negative self-talk, current biases, as well as the current filter in which they view the world.

### Evaluation Method

Results will be measured through teacher surveys, feedback or evaluation forms, classroom indicators.

*The program initially begin with 52 students ranging from K-5<sup>th</sup> grade. After the 3<sup>rd</sup> contact it was determined that the most appropriate grade to implement the instruction was 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup>. The data below reflects 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.*

**Data Analysis:** Teachers completed 25 surveys (Teacher Survey – 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers [21<sup>st</sup> CCLCs]) after students in the 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade had completed the program. These surveys were distributed as shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

### *Distribution of Surveys*

Grade	# of Students Taking Survey
3rd	12
4th	8
5th	5

In every grade and category, teachers assessed some students as *needing no improvement*. Assuming the program did not induce a regression in these students' behaviors, the program's effectiveness was only measured on students who had demonstrated room for improvement at the start of the program. The following sparkline charts in Figure 1 show a snapshot of the program's impact in 10 assessed performance areas. Full size versions of charts showing the distribution of charts are shown in Annex A.

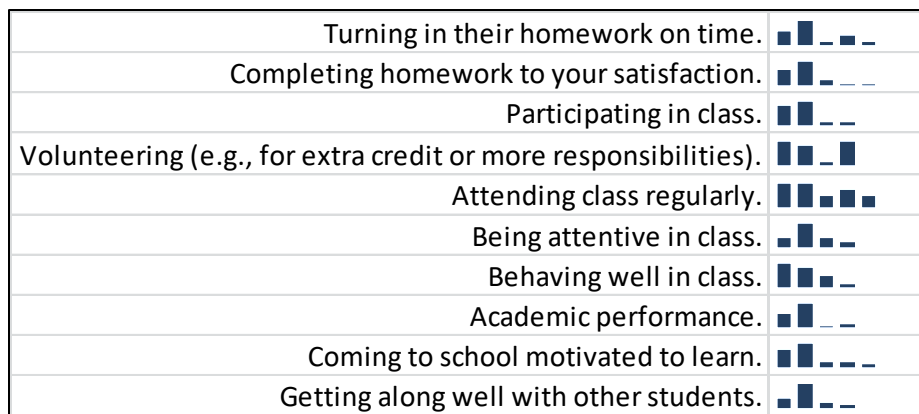


Figure 1. Sparkline of assessed are

**Findings:** The survey results indicate positive changes were observed in all measured areas following exposure to the program. Although this project constituted a small sample size; when compared against the U.S. Department of Education’s 21<sup>st</sup> CCLCs afterschool program, the program at Helen Hunt produced markedly better results. James-Burdumy, Dynarski, and Deke (2008) reported that teachers reported student behaviors of 1,055 students following an average of 81 days of contact time in the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. Analysis of this data indicated student performance and desirable behaviors actually decreased after exposure to the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program compared against a control group of 880 elementary school students. In comparing the A.C.E program at Helen Hunt Elementary to the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC, the A.C.E program produced better results in less time at less cost, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2.

Comparison between A.C.E and 21<sup>st</sup> CLCC Afterschool Programs

Program	A.C.E	21 <sup>st</sup> CCLC
Contact Days	61 hours over five months.	81 days over two years (James-Burdumy et al. (2008)
Cost per student/day	\$1.79	\$3.98 participant per day (Zhang & Bryd, 2006)
Behavioral Impact	Positive	Negative
Academic Impact	Positive	Negative

**References**

James-Burdumy, S., Dynarski, M., & Deke, J. (2008). After-school program effects on behavior: Results from the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program National Evaluation. *Economic Inquiry*, 46(1), 13-18. doi:10.1111/j.1465-7295.2007.00074.x

Zhang, J. J., & Byrd, C. E. (2006). Successful after-school programs: The 21st century community learning centers. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 77(8), 3-6,12.

## Annex A

