

Title: Intentional Systems for Creating Equitable Outcomes for Foster and Black Students



February 4, 2026

Open Door Webinar





Welcome



Marcie Poole

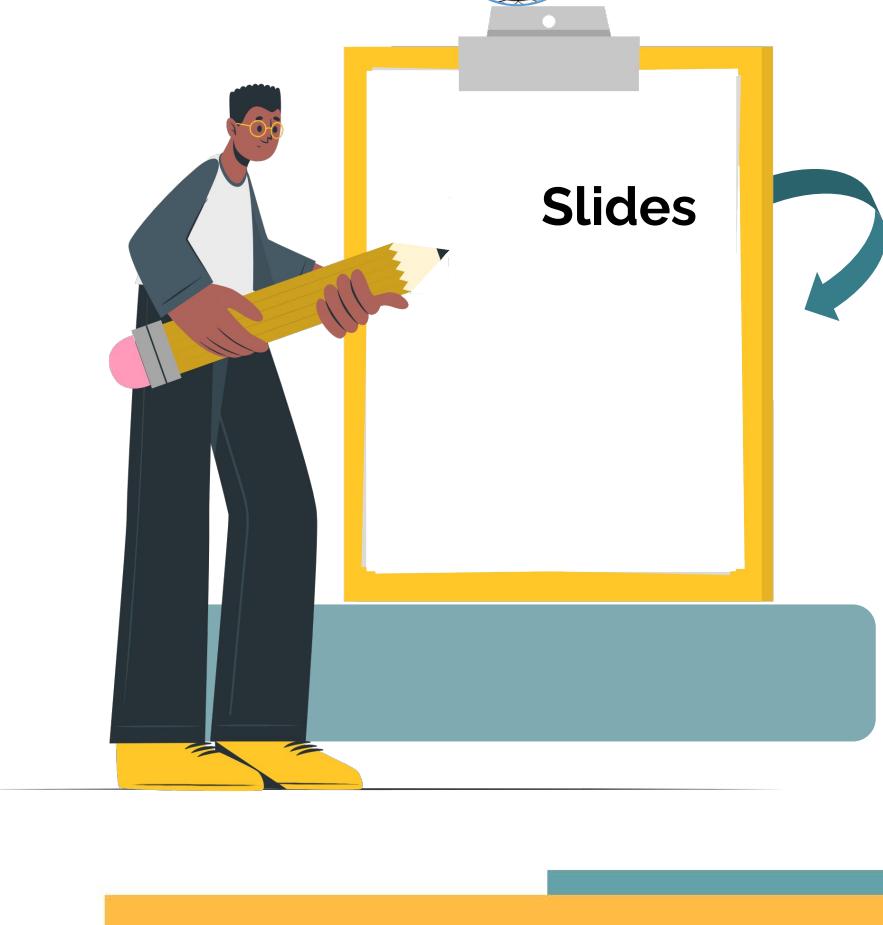
Senior Advisor, CCEE

- Recording & slides will be posted on CCEE's website
- Slides will be linked in the chat
- **Questions:** Please use the Q&A feature to type your questions



Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Victor Valley's Journey
- Tools & Resources
- Q & A
- Feedback



Presenters



Dr. Ratmony Yee
Assistant Superintendent,
Victor Valley Union
High School District



Dr. Aleka Jackson
Heritage Coordinator, HS,
Victor Valley Union
High School District



Dr. Ebony Purcell
Principal,
Victor Valley Union
High School District



Tiffany Hampton
Director, Student Services,
Victor Valley Union
High School District



Jennifer Longueira
Thrive Coordinator, HS,
Victor Valley Union
High School District



Diana Chapero
Counselor,
Victor Valley Union
High School District



Alycia Garcia
Thrive Coordinator, MS,
Victor Valley Union
High School District



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Victor Valley's Journey



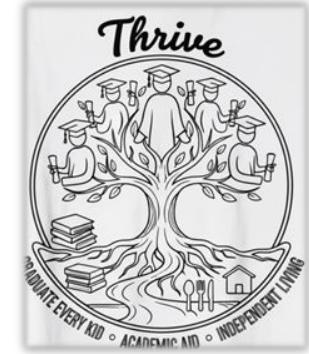
Introducing the THRIVE Program

What It Is

- THRIVE is a year-long A-G elective that supports foster and housing-insecure students through academic monitoring, personal skill-building, and college readiness.
- THRIVE focuses on supporting students' mental health, personal skill development, and academic readiness to ensure long-term success in school and beyond.

How It Works

- THRIVE is a first period support class that provides students dedicated time to address academic needs, access mental health resources, learn their foster youth rights, communicate with social workers, attorneys, and school staff, and access food supports as needed.
- THRIVE reduces barriers to learning by creating structured time and adult support for students to stabilize immediate needs while building academic readiness and self-advocacy skills



Being in foster care does not define a young person's future—opportunity, support, and persistence do.

THRIVE in High School

THRIVE

- Students in THRIVE begin each morning by addressing basic needs, engaging in academic work, accessing mental health support, communicating with social workers, reviewing grades and assignments, seeking homework assistance, and receiving support in communicating academic concerns to teachers when needed.
- We support students by connecting them to programs with classroom presentations and visits such as ILP, Next Up, Job Corp, Teen 311, Military Recruiters, Police Explorers, College/Career Center just to name a few.



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THRIVE in Middle School



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THRIVE

- Middle school students in THRIVE are part of a classroom environment similar in some ways to an Advisory period. They begin the day with snacks and access to items meant for addressing basic needs. Class time often includes grade checks, study time, social/emotional check-ins, peer support, or referrals to other support offered on campus. Students communicate more freely with their THRIVE peers and offer a unique (& necessary) camaraderie.
- THRIVE at this level is focused on helping students navigate their rights and responsibilities, maintain grades, and learn how to self-advocate in academic and personal situations.



IT TAKES A VILLAGE



"Thrive has helped me get better grades, I stay in class more often"
-Jasmine C

"I wouldn't have graduated if I didn't have THRIVE."
-Laney

"It helps with my mental health and I was able to be more of a social butterfly"
-Anna

"You have a person to go to. School feels calm."
-Chris

"I have friends who understand my problems"
Natalie

"I have time to get my work done"
-Angelique

Hear from the students:

- **THRIVE is built on the belief that student success requires a collective effort.**
- THRIVE creates connections across campus, ensuring students have trusted adults, access to academic and attendance interventions, coordination with child welfare services, and timely referrals to mental health resources.
- Its strength lies in **shared** ownership and consistent collaboration, creating a school culture where students are supported, known, and given real opportunities to succeed.

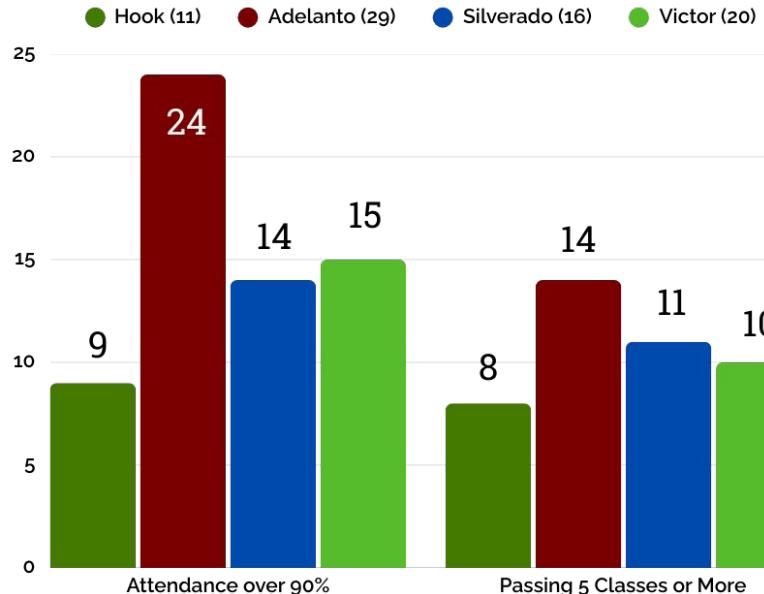


THRIVE Data: Attendance & Grades

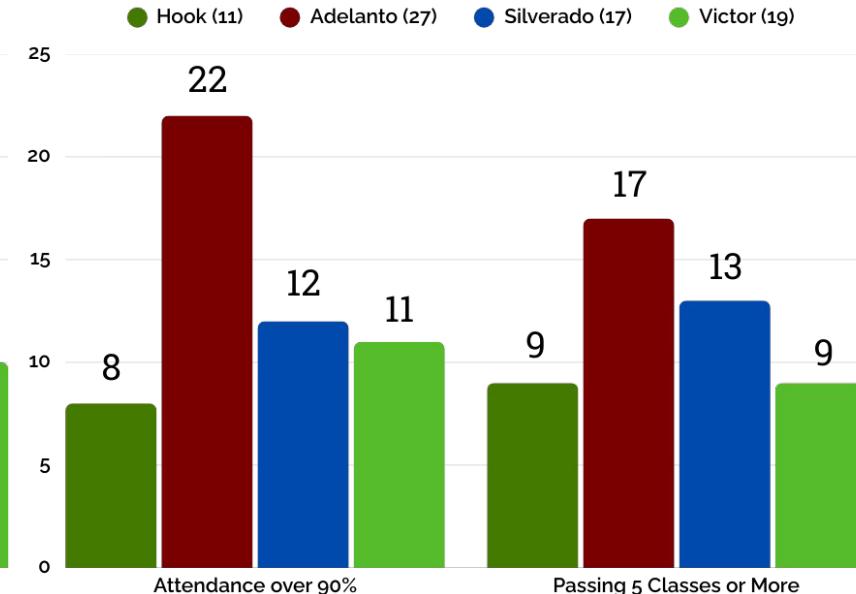


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Quarter 1



Quarter 2

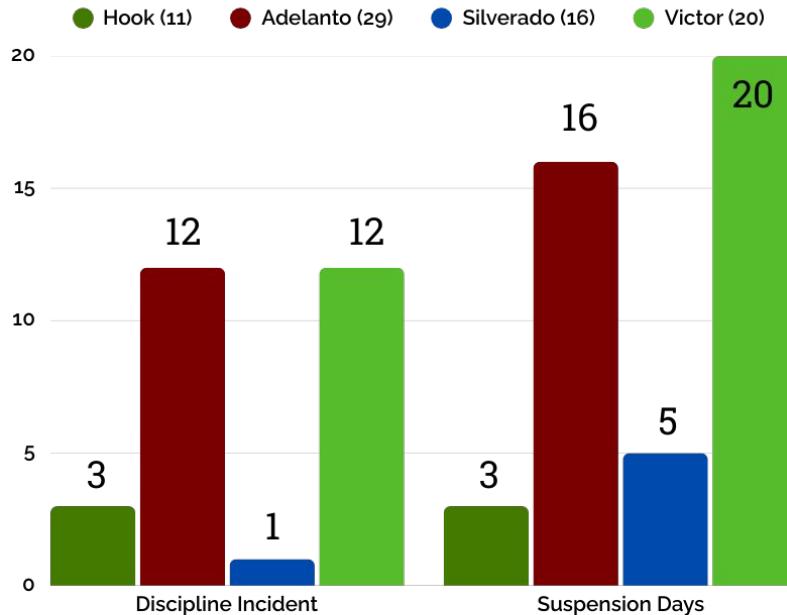


THRIVE Data: Discipline & Suspension

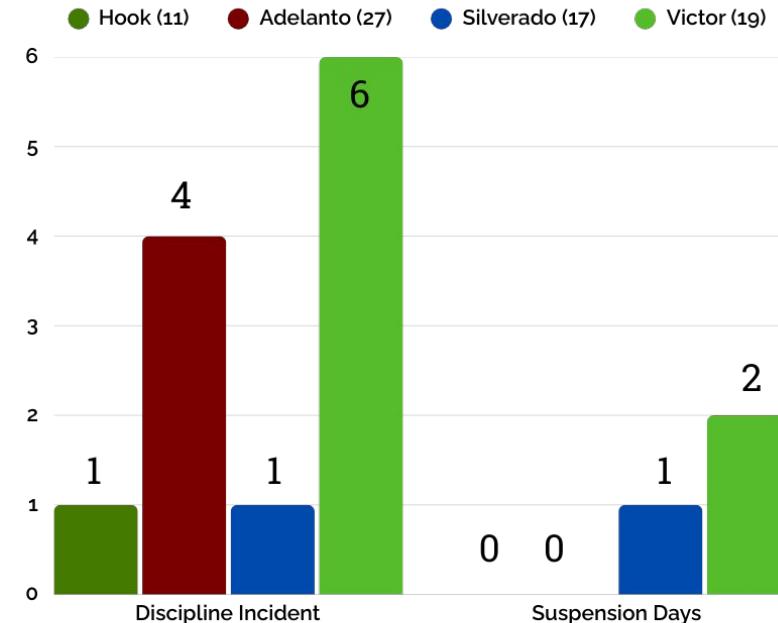


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Quarter 1



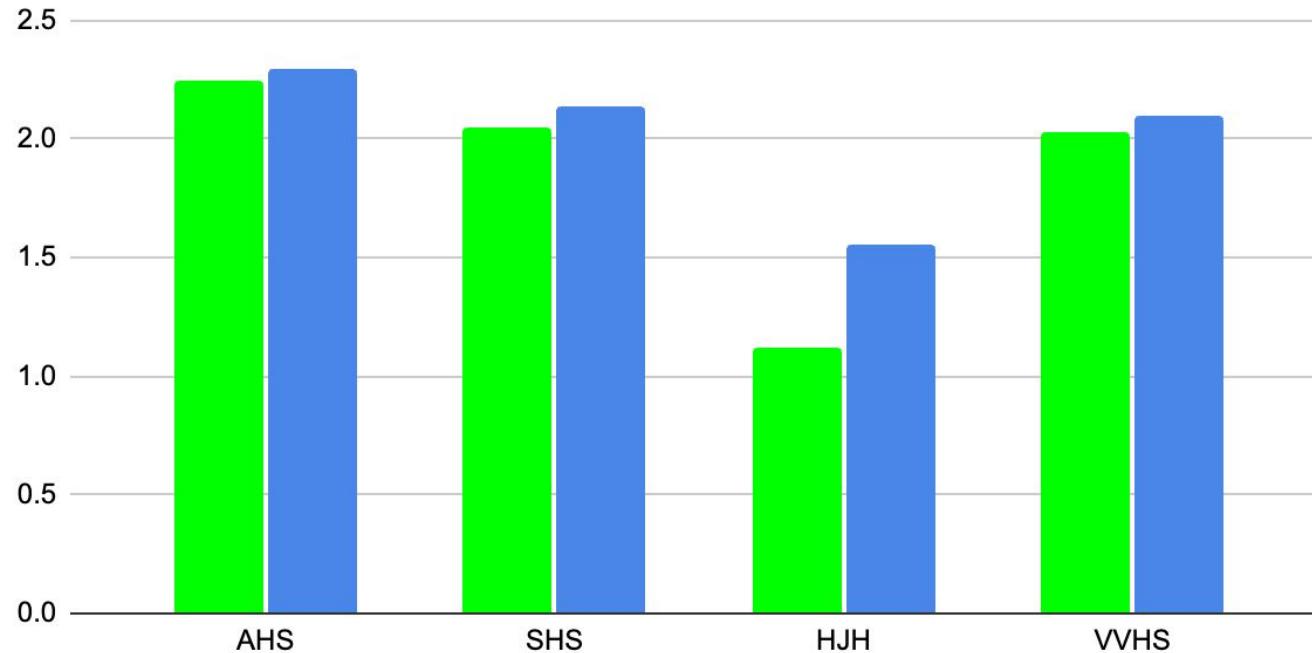
Quarter 2





Thrive Average Student GPA

■ Spring 24-25 ■ Fall 25-26



Introducing the Heritage Program

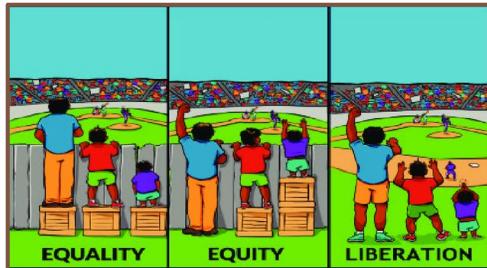


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What It Is

- A district-wide equity initiative for Black students in grades 10–12
- Focused on A-G completion, college access, and cultural affirmation



How It Works

- Education of all stakeholders around A-G expectations and pathways
- Transcript analysis and student leveling to identify need early
- Systemic changes in practice to increase equity and access
- Advocacy for A-G aligned courses and resources
- Continuous refinement of existing systems
- Increased student connectedness and belonging

Every student leaves high school with a plan!



Heritage Classification Model

TRANSCRIPT ANALYSIS

Student Levels

- **Level 1:** On-track for A-G completion
- **Level 2:** High potential, minor academic gaps
- **Level 3:** On-track to graduate, not A-G
- **Level 4:** At risk of not graduating

How Students Are Supported

- Students receive targeted support based on level of need
- Classification is used to guide action, not label students
- Greatest focus on Levels 2 and 4

The Culture of Heritage

- Review schedules/suggest changes to counselors for class changes to meet A-G
- Monthly Workshops:
 - Grading period meetings with coordinator
 - College readiness (major, time management, resources on campus)
 - Financial aid/college scholarship workshops
 - Career preparation (career apps/resume/mock interviews/headshots)
 - Financial Literacy Workshops
 - Use of AI Apps
 - Cultural Identity Workshops
- Academic support resources/Tutoring/Advocating
- ACT/SAT test registration
- Ongoing advocacy/monitoring/capacity building
- College Visits/Black College Expo/HBCU college tour
- Cultural enrichment activities, (Museum visits, trips, events and performances)
- Engaging, relevant guest speakers
- University/Community College Application Completion/FAFSA Completion
- Scholarships
- Quarterly celebrations (10th-12th graders)
- Senior Celebration



Culture as a Strategy



Academic and Postsecondary Structures

- Schedule review and advocacy to meet A-G requirements
- Regular grading period meetings with Heritage coordinator
- Academic support, tutoring, and ongoing advocacy
- ACT/SAT registration and college application completion

Cultural and Identity-Affirming Experiences

- College visits, Black College Expo, and HBCU tours
- Cultural enrichment activities and relevant guest speakers
- Monthly workshops on college readiness, financial aid, careers, financial literacy, culturally rooted identity mentoring

Belonging and Celebration

- Quarterly student recognition and celebrations
- Senior Celebration and public affirmation of postsecondary plans



Family Engagement

- Quarterly parent meetings
- Parent Kick-Off
- FAFSA Night
- HBCU Trip
- College Send-Off
- Heritage Newsletter
- DAAPAC collaboration





Addressing Systemic Barriers Through the Heritage Program

Countering Educational Disparities

- College Prep Resources
- Access to AP/Dual Enrollment Classes
- Mentorship and Guidance Counseling

Countering the Perception Gap

- Benefits of Higher Education
- Visible Representation in Higher Education and Careers

Countering Economic Factors

- Breaking down Costs of Higher Ed/Award Letters
- Perceptions of Viable Career Paths with Higher Education
- Comparing Employment Opportunities without a Degree

Fostering a Culture of Educational Achievement

District Initiatives and Systemic Changes

- Putting District Resources behind Programs that work to improve equity
- Policy changes that address systemic issues

Addressing Systemic Barriers:

Countering Educational Disparities

College Prep Resources

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Fostering a Culture of Educational Achievement

- District Initiatives and Systemic Changes
- Putting District Resources behind Programs that work to improve equity
- Policy changes that address systemic issues



 Systemic change is necessary to counter long-standing educational disparities.



Heritage Data

Site	2023 African American A - G Percentage	2024 Heritage A - G Percentage	2024 African American A - G Percentage	2025 Heritage A - G Percentage	2025 African American A - G Percentage
AHS	30.5%	64%	54.36%	55.55%	41.05%
SHS	21.4%	54.7%	45.65%	77.78%	55.26%
VVHS	23%	45.9%	35.50%	60.27%	46.38%



Heritage and AA students prepared for college .

Students accepted to Historically Black Colleges and Universities



Enrollment at HBCUs	2022-23 Graduates	2023-24 Graduates	2024-25 Graduates	2025-26 Graduates
AHS	3	2	4	1
SHS	0	4	5	
VVHS	0	4	2	



Tools and Resources



Tools & resources

How to Replicate Heritage in Year One:
Building an Equity Model for A-G Readiness

- 1. Assess & Analyze:**
Conduct **transcript** reviews to identify A-C gaps and place students into tiered support levels.
- 2. Develop Intervention Plans:**
Create targeted supports for each level: academic tutoring, counseling, monitoring.
- 3. Engage Families:**
Host workshops, **FAFSA nights**, and information sessions to equip and involve parents.
- 4. Provide College Exposure:**
Organize campus tours and HBCU visits to inspire postsecondary aspirations.
- 5. Monitor & Refine:**
Track progress, collect data, and adjust strategies based on outcomes.

Goal: Increase A-G completion rates and college access through early, data-driven intervention.

A graphic of three yellow arrows pointing upwards, positioned next to the goal statement.

THRIVE Resource Folder



https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1AUjukrkScWHoktlgN-3qC2pRCtGxnEK6?usp=drive_link



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Questions



Thank You



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Please take a few minutes to fill out our Zoom feedback survey.