Empowering High School Communities to Evaluate Their Programs Through Alumni Surveys

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SAP

Researchers

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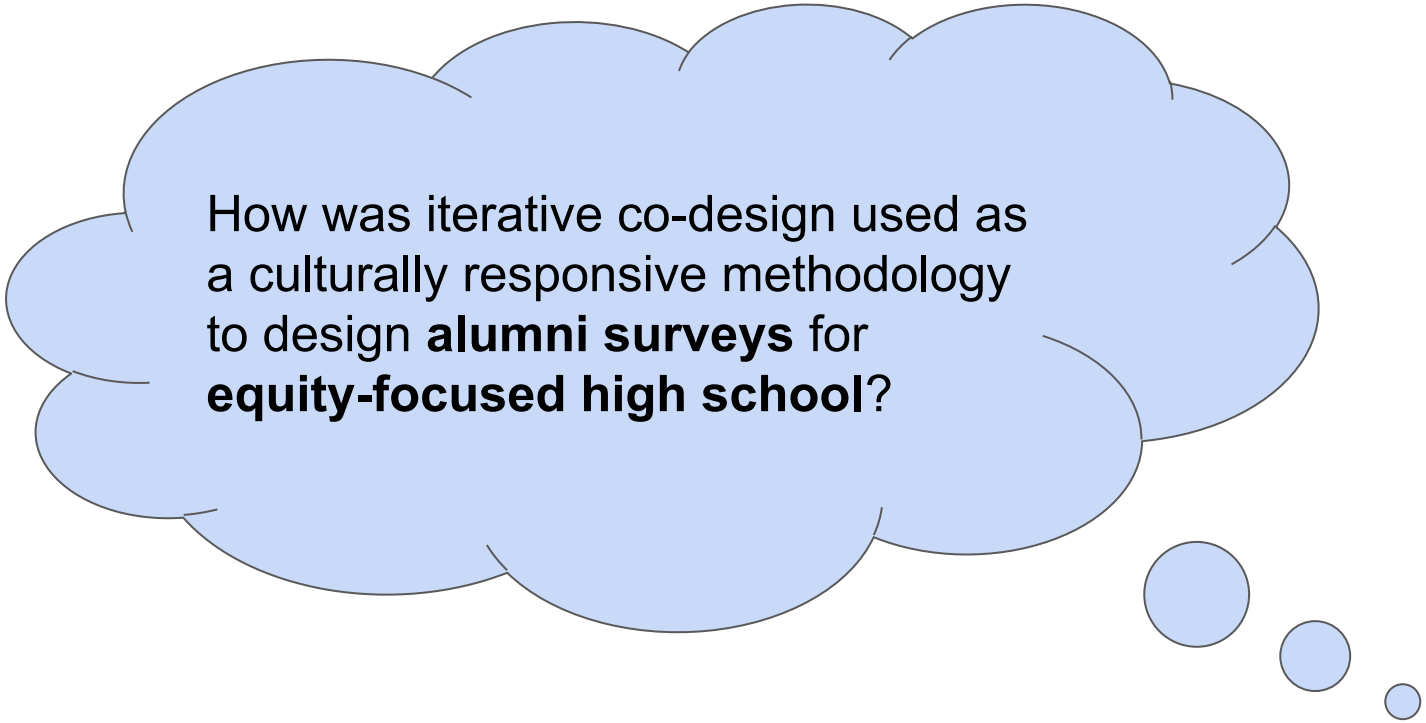
Central Question



Overview

1. Background
2. Activities
3. Strategies & Learnings
4. Main Takeaways
5. Future Work

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Alumni Connections: Insights for Tomorrow

1. Born out of a funder's desire to evaluate their Early College High School program's impact on partnering schools through the use of alumni surveys

2. Designed to pay explicit attention to power-dynamics between researcher and practitioners in education research practice partnerships (RPPs)

3. Each school community designed their survey for their purposes, with researcher support

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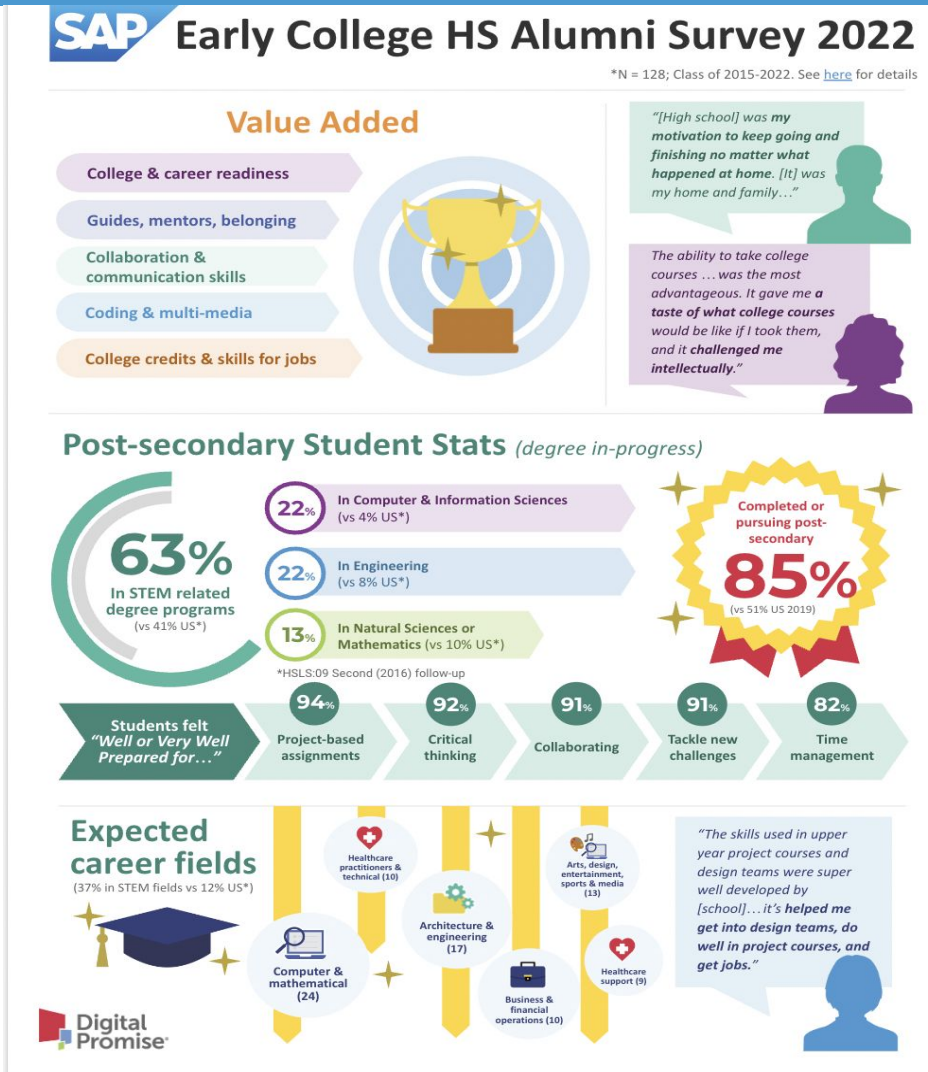
Alumni survey school characteristics

School pseudonym	*Boston*	*Bay Area 1*	*Vancouver*	*NYC*	*Bay Area 2*
Race/ethnicity of student population	Predominantly Black and Latinx	Predominantly Latinx and Black, with substantial minority of Asian and White	Predominantly Asian and White	Predominantly Black with substantial minority of Latinx and White	Predominantly Latinx and White, with substantial minority of Asian
Title I school?	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Key features	Community college classes in grades 9-12	Sequential courses in media technology and/or CS	Emphasis on project based learning	Community college classes in grades 13-14	College and career prep w/ a focus on technology and mentorship
Survey design participation	Full	Full	Full	Limited	Full

Sample Product:



Activities

1 Forming Design Teams

- ☐ Build Trust & Relationships
- ☐ Prioritize Meaningful Representation

2 Co-Design Meetings

- ☐ Position Community as Experts
- ☐ Create Space for Challenging Ideas

3 Implementation & Future Work

- ☐ Anticipate Barriers
- ☐ Trust the Process

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Forming Design Teams: Strategies and Learnings

1. Build Trust & Relationships
    a. Establish shared understanding and goals around equity
    b. Meet community members before project kick-off

2. Prioritize Meaningful Representation
    a. Provide a wide range of stakeholders: *students, alumni, teachers, administrators, parents, community partners*
    b. Resist rushing the process
    c. Position youth & adults as equally valuable design partners

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Design Meetings: Strategies and Learnings

- Position Community Members as Experts
  - Always allow for questions, ideas, and aspirations
  - Examples:
    - “Can we broaden our focus beyond STEM?”
    - “Should we make this language more accessible for our students?”
    - “Since we’re still early on in the process are we in the position to determine what questions to keep or remove?”

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Design Meetings: Strategies and Learnings

- Create Space for Challenging Ideas
  - Example: Adapting Survey Questions
    - "Reflecting on things now, what challenges did you experience in high school that were beneficial to you? What challenges did you experience that were not beneficial?"

      vs.

    - "To the extent you are willing to share, please describe any challenges you experienced in high school that severely impeded your ability to learn and thrive."
    - "Were there any ways that [insert name of pathway program] could have or did support you with these challenges?

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Implementation and Future Work: Strategies and Learnings

- Anticipate Barriers
  - Programs sometimes found it difficult to use the findings collected to reflect on current practices and find space for healing beyond “further connecting with alumni.”
  - Solution: Build-in strategies for future data use in initial conversations

- Trust the Process
  - When community members are the drivers of a process that means going at their pace sometimes

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Main Takeaways

1. Authentic Co-Design is not Rushed or Forced

2. There is Untapped Knowledge Everywhere

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What Comes Next?

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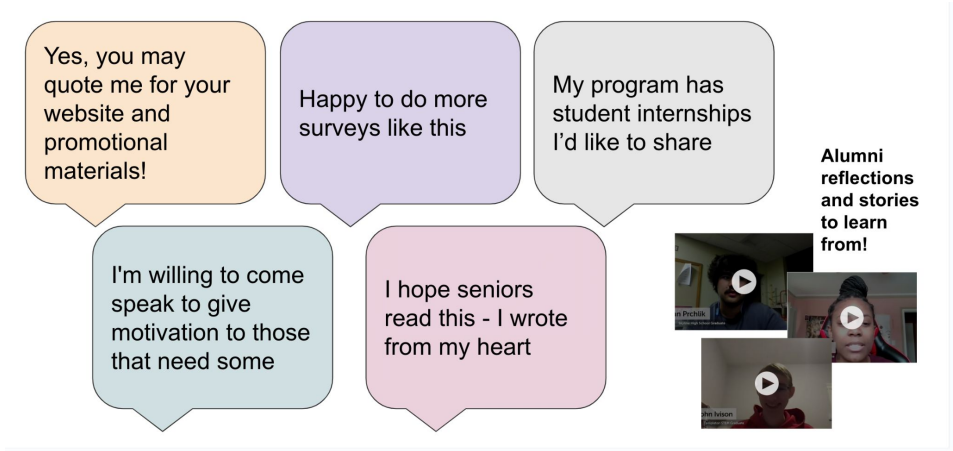
Using the Survey Results for Healing

We’re focusing on the following three aspects:

1. Strength identification
2. Program improvement
3. Make use of existing networks



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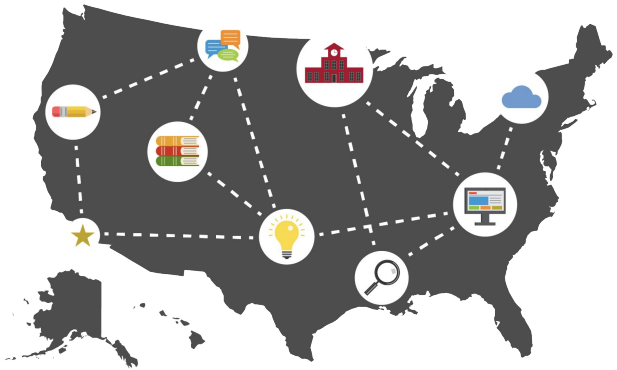
Sustainability and Scalability

Alumni Survey Design Toolkit:

1. Simplified survey for graduating seniors
2. Guidance for LinkedIn usage and profile creation
3. Instructions on how to repeat the design process independently
4. Sample survey questions



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Questions?

For more information:
bit.ly/AlumRefs

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