NJ4S Evaluation
Preliminary Phase 1 Findings
October 1, 2024

Agenda

Quantitative Findings

- Year One Accomplishments

Qualitative Findings
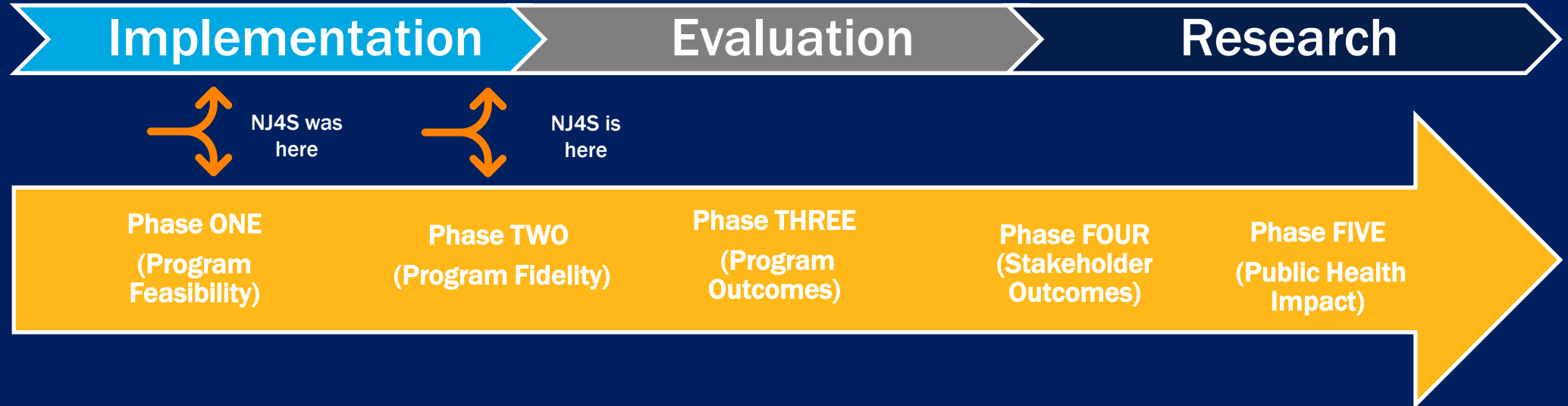
- Lessons Learned from 5 Hubs

Discussion and Early CQI
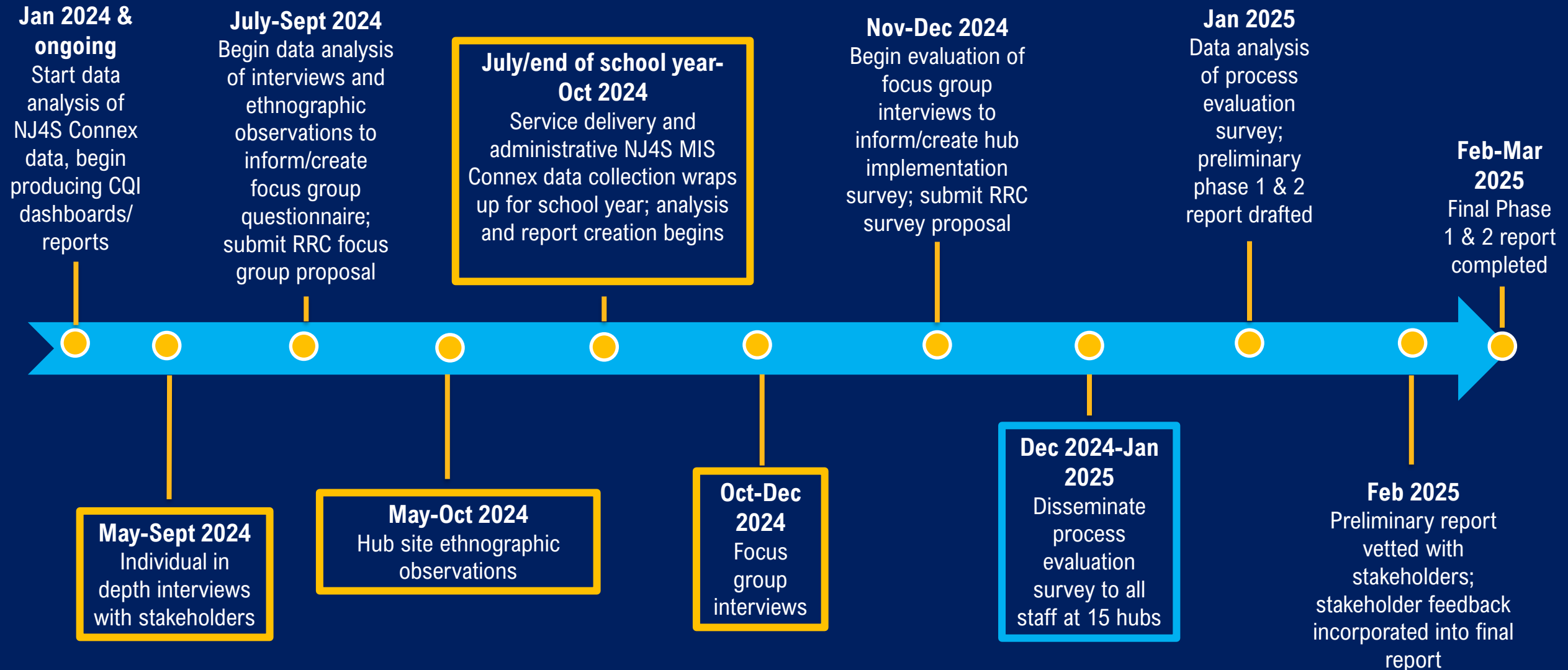
ARE NJ4S Phase 1 & 2 Research Aims and Questions

Evaluation Aims:

- Assess the extent of the NJ4S Hubs' reach, if they are effectively meeting the program demands with delivered services and begin to assess if the services are being equitably provided
- Assess the extent to which NJ4S Hubs have been able to develop delivery practices that lead toward the development of strong program fidelity

Research Questions:

1. How many participants received each tier of NJ4S services, who are the participants and their demographics?

2. How many NJ4S services were provided, what are the services and service/delivery attributes?

3. To what extent are districts/schools engaged in NJ4S?

4. Does it appear that NJ4S services are equitably delivered/accessed and reaching stakeholders across the state?

5. How satisfied are stakeholders with NJ4S?

6. Are NJ4S services being implemented with fidelity and what are the promising implementation practices, challenges, gaps and/or adaptations made that contribute to or impede success?

7. To what extent does NJ4S utilize appropriate, culturally competent methods and recruitment to those receiving and needing services?

8. To what extent are NJ4S providers adhering to evidence-based programming in delivering EBPs?

Year One: Phase 1 & 2 ARE Evaluation Progress

Jan 2024 & ongoing
Start data analysis of NJ4S Connex data, begin producing CQI dashboards/ reports

July-Sept 2024
Begin data analysis of interviews and ethnographic observations to inform/create focus group questionnaire; submit RRC focus group proposal

July/end of school year- Oct 2024
Service delivery and administrative NJ4S MIS Connex data collection wraps up for school year; analysis and report creation begins

Nov-Dec 2024
Begin evaluation of focus group interviews to inform/create hub implementation survey; submit RRC survey proposal

Jan 2025
Data analysis of process evaluation survey; preliminary phase 1 & 2 report drafted

Feb-Mar 2025
Final Phase 1 & 2 report completed

May-Sept 2024
Individual in depth interviews with stakeholders

May-Oct 2024
Hub site ethnographic observations

Oct-Dec 2024
Focus group interviews

Dec 2024-Jan 2025
Disseminate process evaluation survey to all staff at 15 hubs

Feb 2025
Preliminary report vetted with stakeholders; stakeholder feedback incorporated into final report

Lessons Learned from Five Hubs

Hub Selection Criteria

| Cultural Diversity | Level of NJ4S Engagement | Student Factors | Geographic Diversity | Neighborhood Type | School Needs Index |

5 sites for Phase 1 and 2 Evaluation

| Hudson | Essex | Monmouth | Gloucester, Cumberland and Salem | Burlington |

Phase 1 and 2 : Five Hub Activities

Phase 1 & 2 Evaluation Activities (Summer 2024)									
Hubs	Observations			Interviews					
	Advisory Boards	Tier 1 Event	Tier 2 EBPs	Students	Caregivers	Educators	Advisory Members	Community Members	Hub Staff & Leadership
Hudson	X	X	XX	X	X	X	X	X	XX
Essex	X	X	XX	X	X	X	X	X	XX
Monmouth	X	X	XX	X	X	X	X	X	XX
Burlington	X		XX		X	X		X	XX
GSC	X	X	X (Oct 3rd)		X	X	X	X	XX
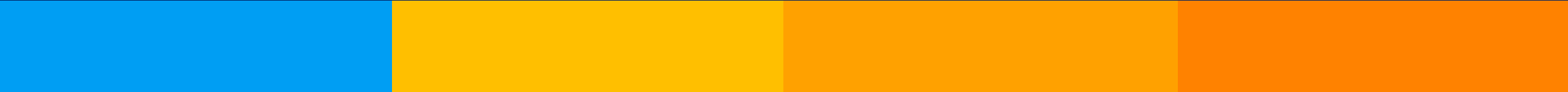
NJ4S School Reach and Tier 1 Events

Year One: NJ4S Reach

NJ4S Schools Reached
April 2024

691

View Report (NJ4S Schools Reached_growth _JH)

NJ4S Schools Reached
Current

793

Reach = School Rep Access
View Report (NJ4S Schools Reached_JH)
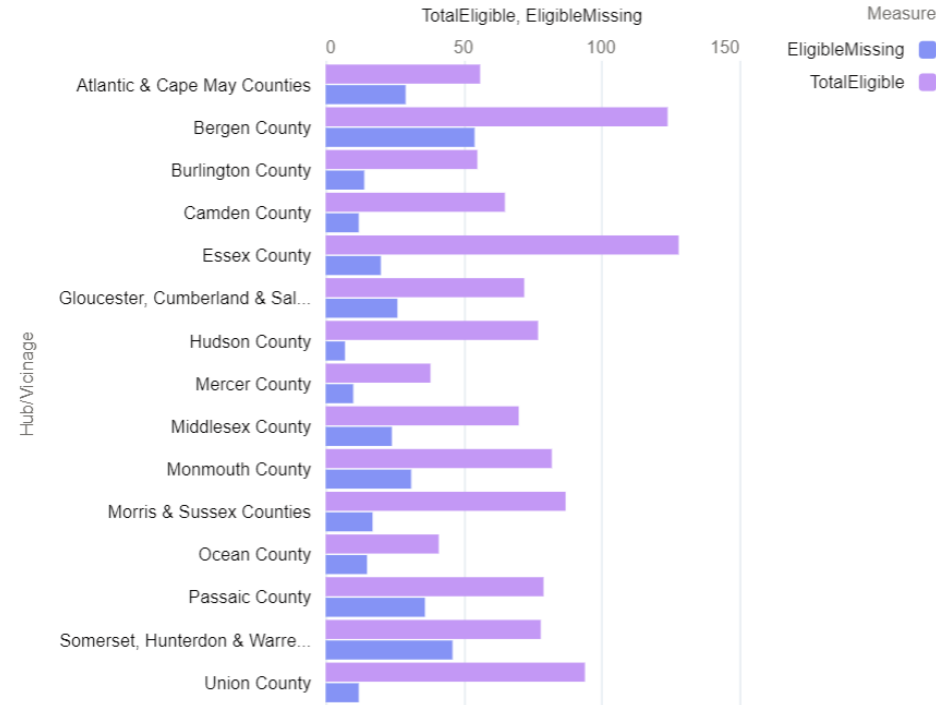
NJ4S Districts Reached
April 2024

362

View Report (NJ4S Schools Reached_growth _JH)

NJ4S Districts Reached
Current

411

Reach = Districts with school reps
View Report (NJ4S Schools Reached_JH)

NJ4S Schools Not Reached
by Hub

TotalEligible, EligibleMissing

Measure
EligibleMissing
TotalEligible

Hub/Vicinage

- Atlantic & Cape May Counties
- Bergen County
- Burlington County
- Camden County
- Essex County
- Gloucester, Cumberland & Sal...
- Hudson County
- Mercer County
- Middlesex County
- Monmouth County
- Morris & Sussex Counties
- Ocean County
- Passaic County
- Somerset, Hunterdon & Warre...
- Union County

View Report (NJ4S Schools Not Reached_DB)

1,146 Eligible Schools
596 Eligible Districts

Since spring, 2024:
- **14.76% increase in number of schools reached**
- **13.54% increase in number of districts reached**

Note: Data from August 2023 to April 2024 for Time 1, and September 2024 for Time 2

Year One: NJ4S Tier 1 Accomplishments

Tier 1 Events & Attendance

NJ4S hubs delivered **Tier 1** services to more than 200,000 duplicated participants

NJ4S Tier 1 Events

3,599

View Report (ARE NJ4S Tier 1 by Hub)

Tier 1 Service Sessions

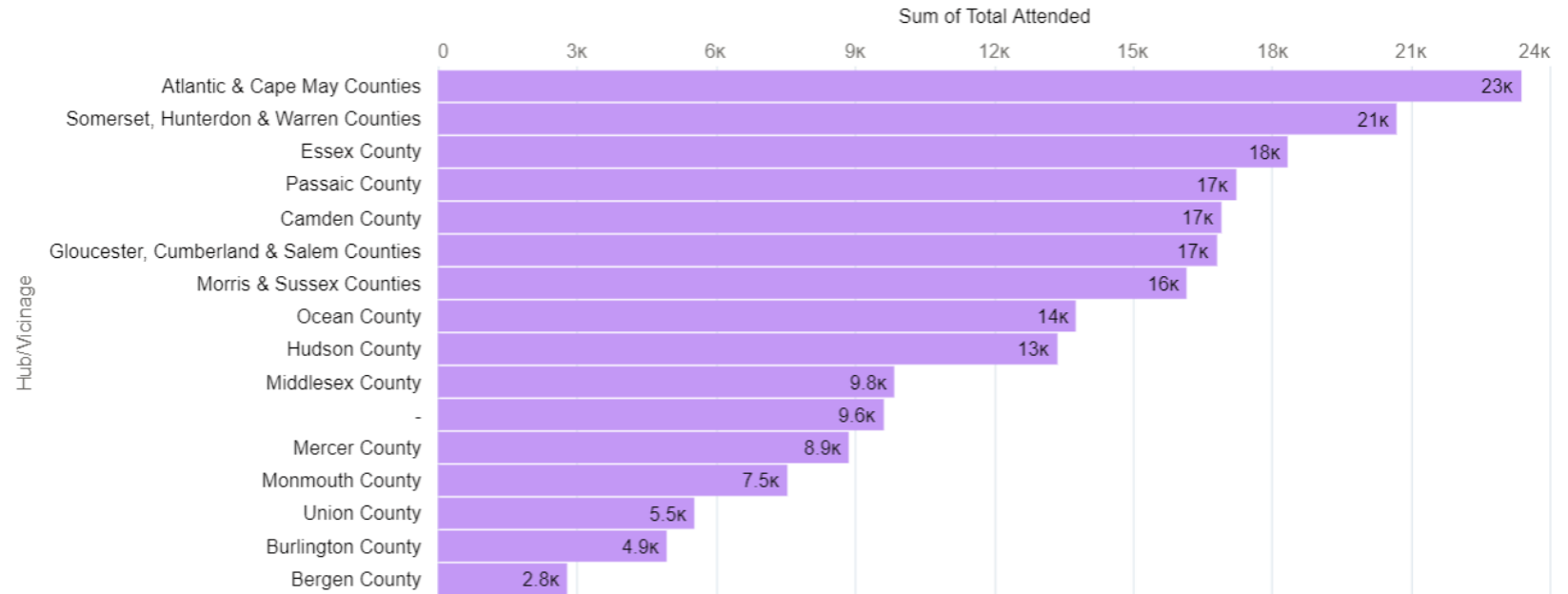# 5,535

Concurrent or consecutive sessions per service
View Report (ARE NJ4S Tier 1 by Hub)

NJ4S Tier 1 Attendance
by Hub

Sum of Total Attended

Hub/Vicinage	Sum of Total Attended
Atlantic & Cape May Counties	23к
Somerset, Hunterdon & Warren Counties	21к
Essex County	18к
Passaic County	17к
Camden County	17к
Gloucester, Cumberland & Salem Counties	17к
Morris & Sussex Counties	16к
Ocean County	14к
Hudson County	13к
Middlesex County	9.8к
-	9.6к
Mercer County	8.9к
Monmouth County	7.5к
Union County	5.5к
Burlington County	4.9к
Bergen County	2.8к

"-" = Virtual events not attributed to a Hub
View Report (ARE NJ4S Tier 1 by Hub)

August 2023 to August 2024

Engagement & Outreach Efforts

Qualitative Findings

- Numerous in-person visits and phone calls to school reps
- Explanation of NJ4S merits and Tier 1 services
- Community engagement

Interview Quotes

- "…one of the most important things that we did **to support our schools**…early on was we sent them [scheduling coordinators] out to schools…**they went to school districts and** …brought a computer and **put up NJ connex and navigated through everything**." Hub Leadership.

- "And I just felt like they **[NJ4S hub] really wanted a lot of school districts** as much as possible **to take advantage of the services** and to **get the word out**." Advisory Committee Member and Educator

Tier 1 Merits

- Meeting with NJ4S hub leadership the first time..."… **the way** that **we could partner** as a non-school based community organization **felt very limited**. And so **we were very glad** when, a few months later, she reached out to us and said, hey, **we've kind of expanded the way that we can engage**." Community Partner

Community Engagement

- "In the Community where we overlapped, **we have a hard time with parent engagement**." Community Partner

- "**Maximizing the local relationships** to really **do the groundwork**, so there's **more work needed**." Community Partner
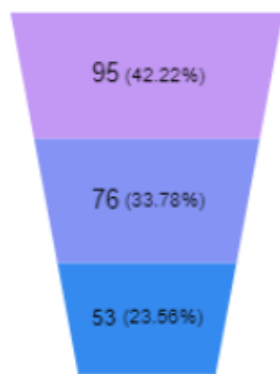
NJ4S Applied Services (Tier 2 and 3 Engagement)

Year One: NJ4S Engagement

Schools and Districts Engaged
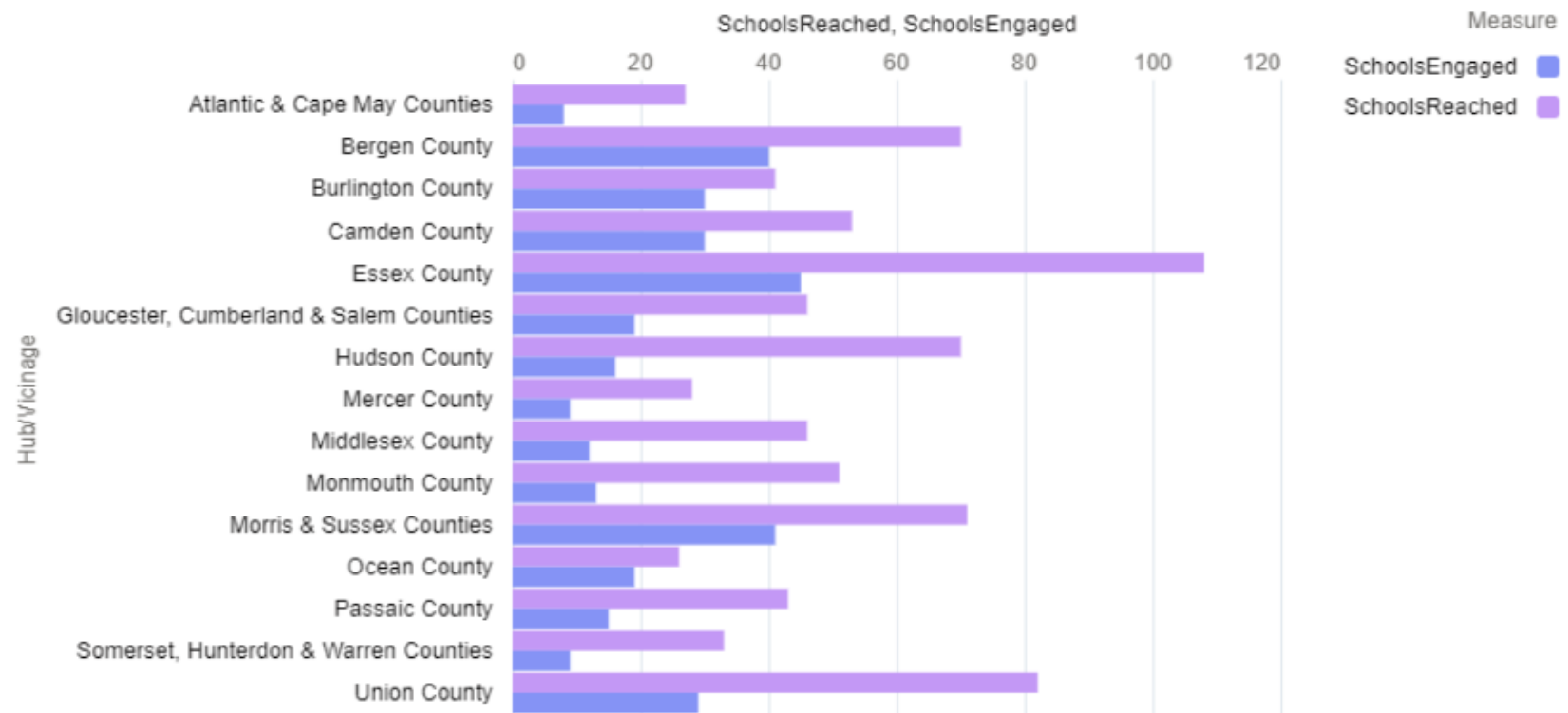
NJ4S Districts Engaged
by Need

DistrictswithApps: 225

School District Need Level
- - (blue)
- High Need
- Low Need
- Moderate Need

95 (42.22%)

76 (33.78%)

53 (23.56%)

View Report (3b. NJ4S Schools Engaged_Need)

NJ4S School Reach & Engagement
By Hub

SchoolsReached, SchoolsEngaged

Measure
- SchoolsEngaged
- SchoolsReached

Hub/Vicinage:
- Atlantic & Cape May Counties
- Bergen County
- Burlington County
- Camden County
- Essex County
- Gloucester, Cumberland & Salem Counties
- Hudson County
- Mercer County
- Middlesex County
- Monmouth County
- Morris & Sussex Counties
- Ocean County
- Passaic County
- Somerset, Hunterdon & Warren Counties
- Union County

View Report (NJ4S Reach_Engage_db)

Note: Data from August 2023 - September 2024

Year One: NJ4S Hub Intervention and Referrals

Tier 2 & 3 Applications	Tier 2 & 3 Services Delivered	Service Referrals	Applications Waitlisted
1,584	**1,179**	**756**	4
View Report (Tier 2 & 3 Applications)	View Report (NJ4S Tier 2 & 3 Service Delivery_JH)	View Report (NJ4S Community Referrals_JH)	View Report (NJ4S Waitlisted Applications_JH)
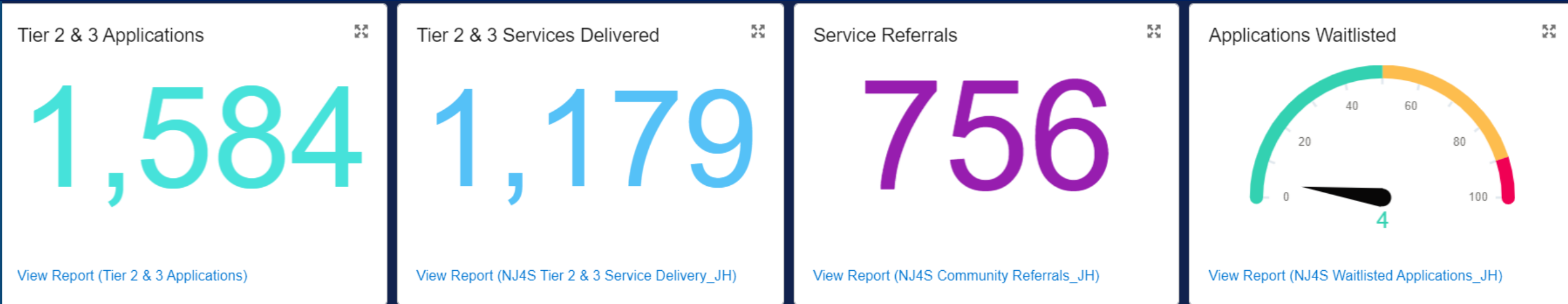
Engagement Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) provide a snapshot of NJ4S program performance

- **Applications** reveals applicants assigned to a Tier 2 or 3 Hub intervention
- **Services Delivered** shows applicants who started *at least* 1 session of a hub intervention
- **Service Referrals** highlights effective community collaboration
- **Applications Waitlisted** gauges NJ4S resources and wait times

Note: Data from August 2023 - September 2024

Year One: NJ4S Tiers 2 & 3 Accomplishments

Tier 2 & 3 Services & Attendance

Tier 2 Services Delivered
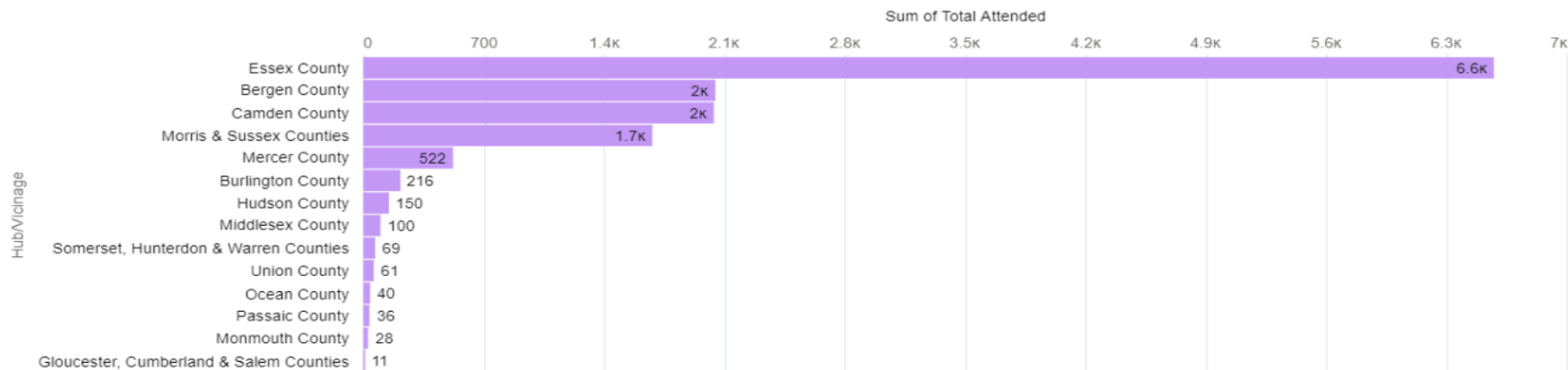
263

View Report (7a. T2_Unduplicated_Attendance_DB)

T2 Unduplicated Attendance

14к

View Report (7a. T2_Unduplicated_Attendance_DB)

Tier 2 Unduplicated Attendance
by Service Category
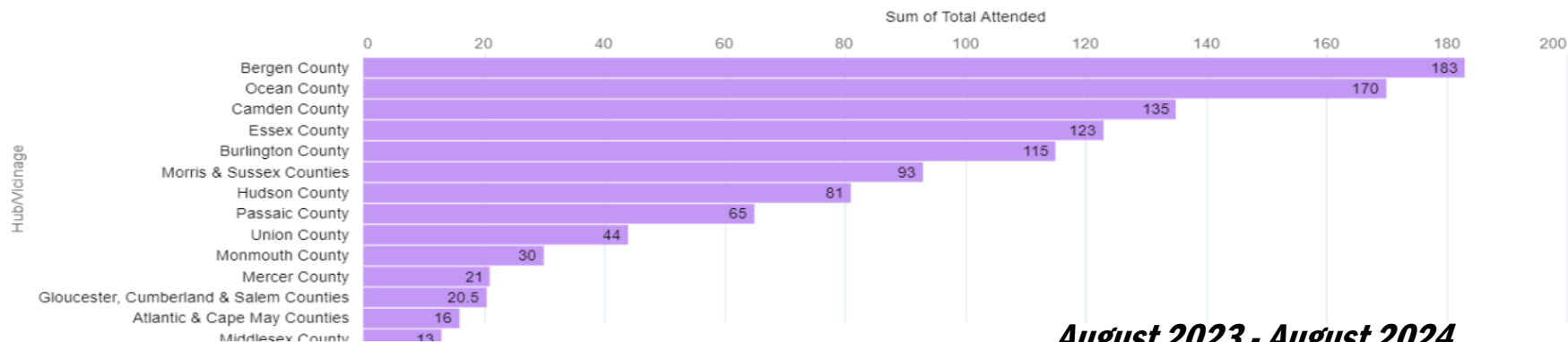
Sum of Total Attended

Hub/Vicinage	Value
Essex County	6.6к
Bergen County	2к
Camden County	2к
Morris & Sussex Counties	1.7к
Mercer County	522
Burlington County	216
Hudson County	150
Middlesex County	100
Somerset, Hunterdon & Warren Counties	69
Union County	61
Ocean County	40
Passaic County	36
Monmouth County	28
Gloucester, Cumberland & Salem Counties	11

View Report (7a. T2_Unduplicated_Attendance_DB)

Tier 3 Services Delivered

842

View Report (7b. T3_Unduplicated_Attendance_DB)

T3 Unduplicated Attendance

1.1к

View Report (7b. T3_Unduplicated_Attendance_DB)

Tier 3 Unduplicated Attendance
by Hub

Sum of Total Attended

Hub/Vicinage	Value
Bergen County	183
Ocean County	170
Camden County	135
Essex County	123
Burlington County	115
Morris & Sussex Counties	93
Hudson County	81
Passaic County	65
Union County	44
Monmouth County	30
Mercer County	21
Gloucester, Cumberland & Salem Counties	20.5
Atlantic & Cape May Counties	16
Middlesex County	13

View Report (7b. T3_Unduplicated_Attendance_DB)

August 2023 - August 2024

Reception of NJ4S by Schools

- Varies based on school perception of whether NJ4S will last as a program and school experience with other programs
- Requires significant outreach and relationship building by Hubs

- Upon entry into the school…we approach the security booth and…[are instructed] to sign in. She [the guard] then yells out **"NJ4S is here"** and her tone of **voice carries with it warning**

- At a middle school in a rural area, upon entry the 'guidance secretary' stood to **shake hands with warmth**, introducing themselves and **saying 'welcome'**

- "…**Some schools** were like, Oh my gosh, **here we go**…umm, **I don't sign up for anything the first year** and we'll talk next year" Hub Leadership

Environmental Considerations

- Schools in bustling areas vs. schools in underdeveloped areas
- Impact on NJ4S experience and perception
- Encouraging hope vs. feeling like punishment

Observations

- The session took place in a yellow painted room with **framed inspirational posters on the wall, bright flower** window clings and a few potted plants on the window ledge.

- Near the school is a 502 Grocery Deli, Privilege Food, Liquor, Ocean Towers, three oversized garbage bins, a Firehouse, a store-front Church, and **a beautiful mural** of diverse children along the **outside of the school**…**closer** there is another **Liquor store called Fulton…and an older man drinking a bottle of beer**.

- The area was quite rural with **flush greenery**, farm fields spaced far between large well-manicured homes…[**closer to**] **the school**, there was a somewhat **run down restaurant** across the street and **a few sparse businesses** scattered here and there.

NJ4S Evidence-Based Programming (EBP)

Year One: NJ4S Evidence-Based Programming
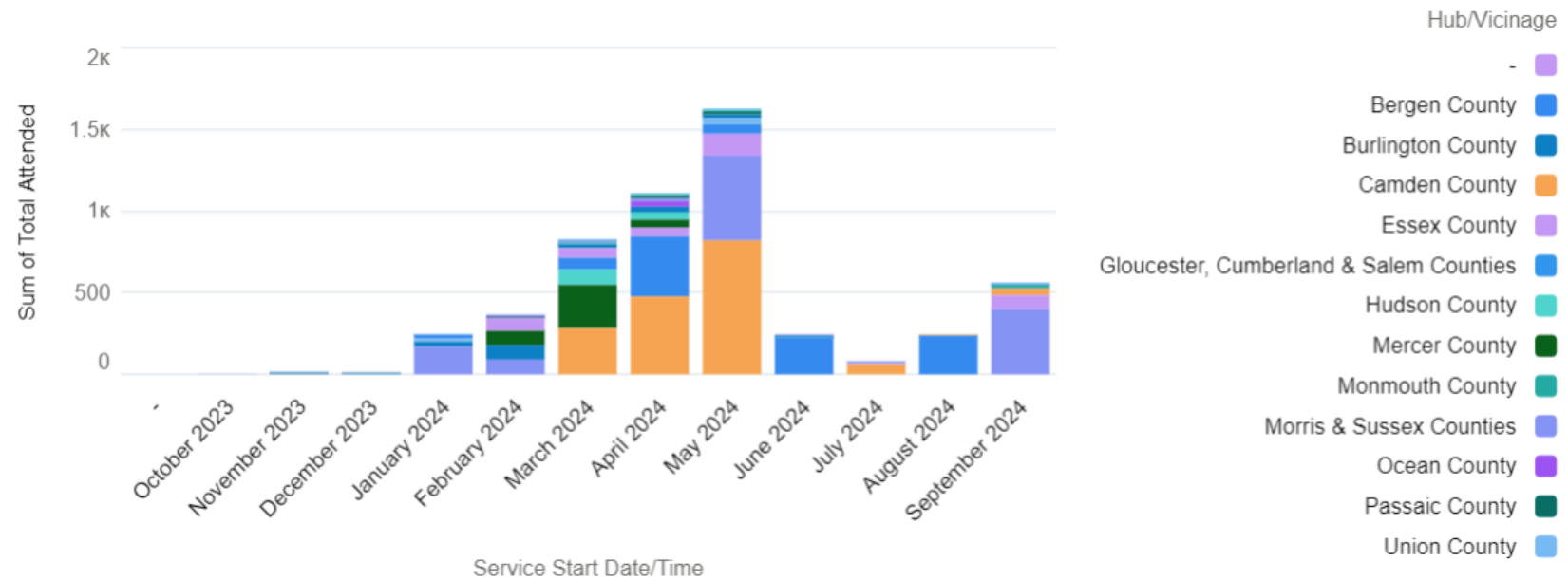
EBP Attendance

NJ4S EBP Attendance
Unduplicated

5.4K
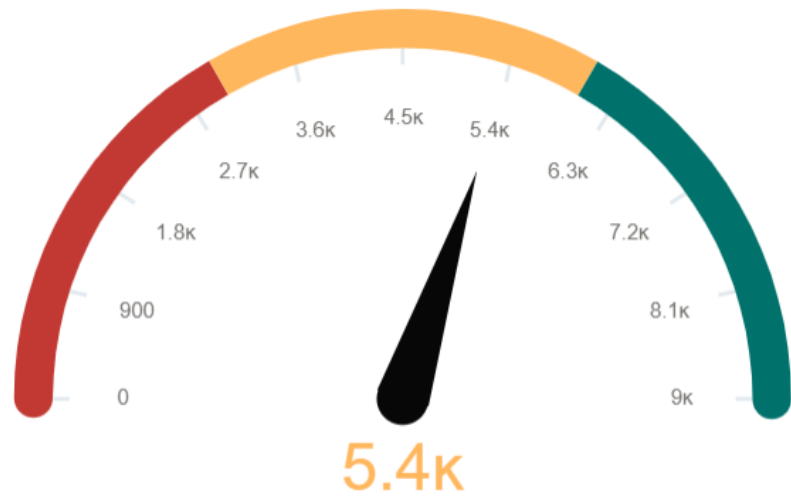
View Report (6b. NJ4S EBPs_Delivered_DB)

NJ4S EBP Attendance
Unduplicated

Hub/Vicinage
- -
- Bergen County
- Burlington County
- Camden County
- Essex County
- Gloucester, Cumberland & Salem Counties
- Hudson County
- Mercer County
- Monmouth County
- Morris & Sussex Counties
- Ocean County
- Passaic County
- Union County

Service Start Date/Time

View Report (6b. NJ4S EBPs_Delivered_DB)

Note: Data from August 2023 - September 2024

EBP Content & Delivery

Characteristics of Strong EBPs
- Facilitator balance between presenting the EBPs, while also making room to address organic questions that stem from the participants

Mixed Findings
- Other facilitators focus strictly on delivering EBPs and may feel unsure about addressing issues participants raise
- Yet, other hub facilitators innovate and do not stick closely to the EBP, preferring to an open discussion

"[The Hub Director] talked about how prevention is that ability to kind of stick to the framework, right. And so it's tough to, you know, do true evidence-based programming if we have like a **one-off event**, right? We need those **follow up series**"
 –Community Member

"I've heard it mentioned about whatever is being offered has to be evidence based. **Evidence based is such a high strict standard like clinical standard**. I'm like, where are these coming from.""

Engaging Tier 1 Services & EBPs

Qualitative Findings

- Tier 1 and EBPs Services that tended to hold stakeholder attention and engagement included elements of genuine human connection, a mix of presented material and hands-on games or activities that included touch
- Engagement started with flexibility and adaptability in selecting EBPs to address the specific and diverse needs of different communities and schools.

Observation and Quote

- **First Drum.** Mr. D.'s first attempt at the collective drum circle was focused on **getting everyone to be in rhythm together** and sustain a beat with their buckets. He explained the goal and how **it would feel *MAGICAL* if everyone nailed it perfectly**. –Tier 1 Observation

- "I think **[Hubs] being able to determine the evidence-based programs that fit our needs is very unique to us**. While there might be some overlap, you know [Another Hub] might not be seeing the same issues that we're seeing. –Staff Leadership

- **ACT II:** This next part of the session involves reading a poem "Who Cries for the Little Boy?" that is featured in the 2002 movie, Antwone Fisher. There was also a **group trust fall**–EBP Observation

Cultural & Community Inclusiveness

Year One: NJ4S Community Networking

Community Network Dot Plot Matrix

Hub Community Networks by Sector
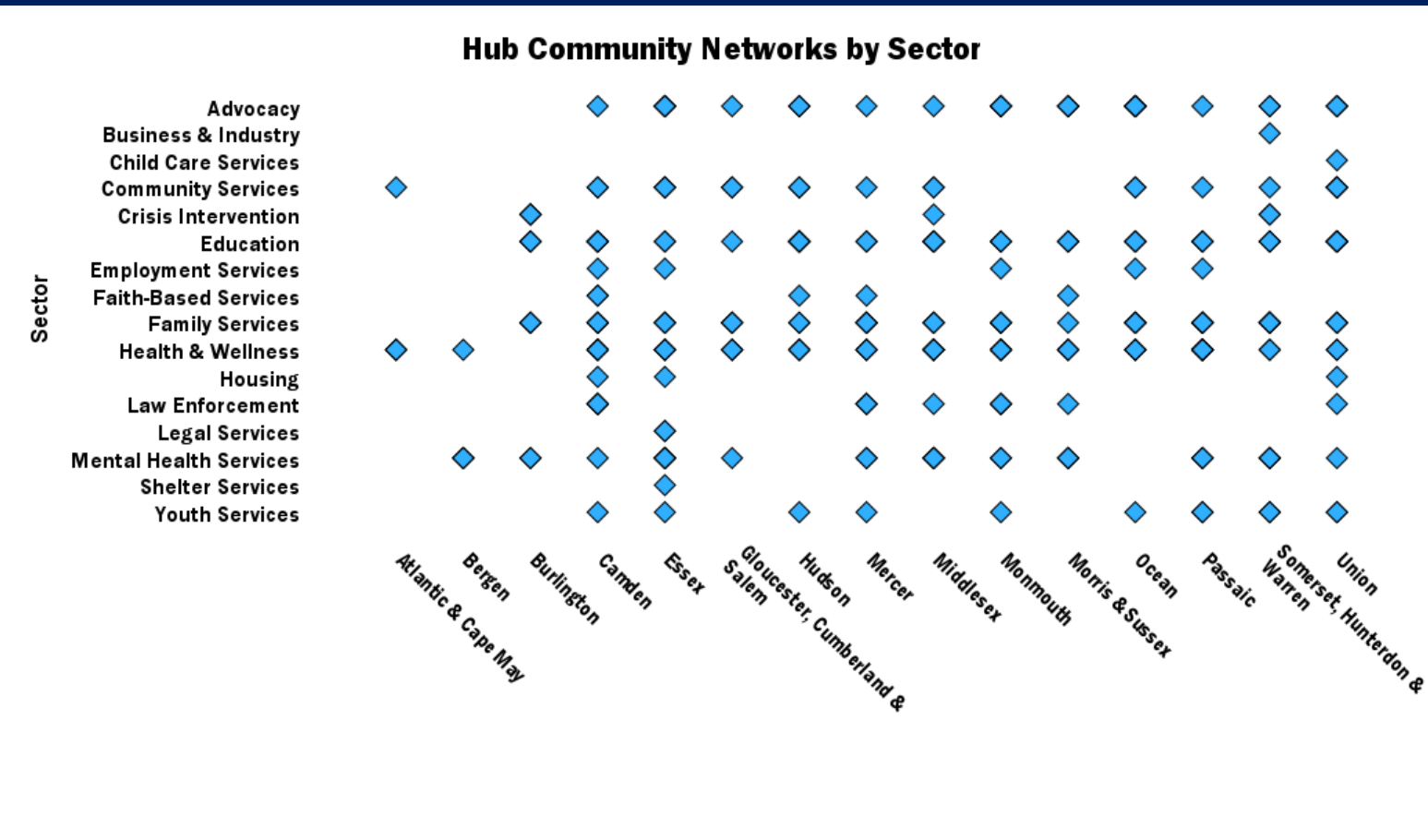
Connex Referral Findings

- 15 hubs collaborated with 248 community spokes across 16 sectors.

- 756 external referrals were made on behalf of 443 applicants from 112 schools.

- Referrals mostly for counseling/intensive support: 693.

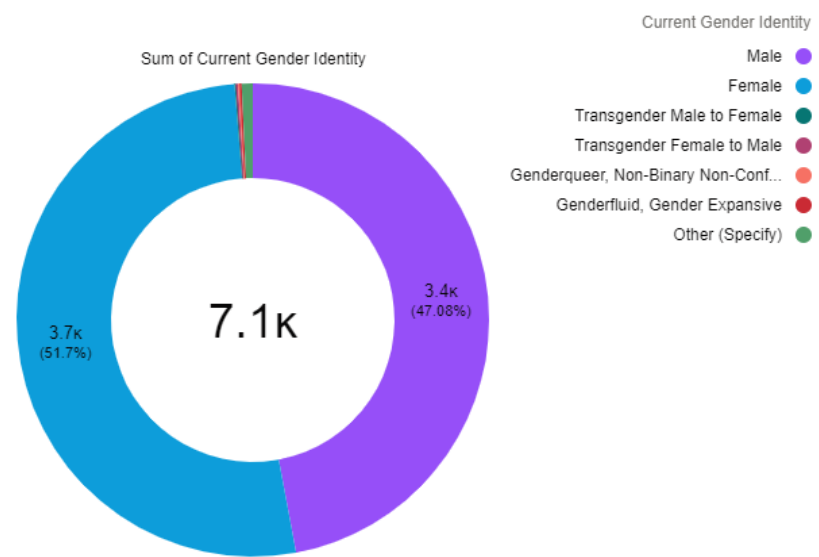- 91% of referrals were assigned a hub intervention as well.

Note: Data from August 2023 – September 2024
Sector chart information comes from the Hub RFP Program Documents, Project Narrative, Section A, Community Organization and Fit
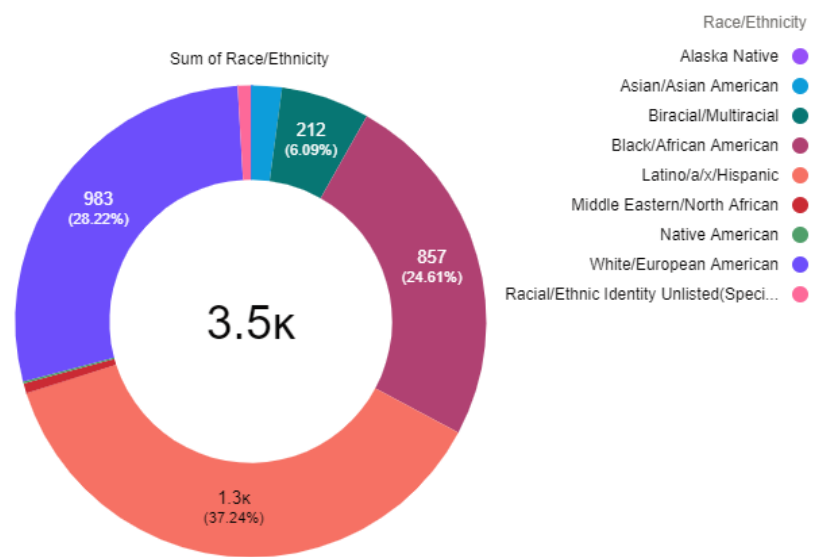
Year One : NJ4S Reach Demographics

Participant Demographics
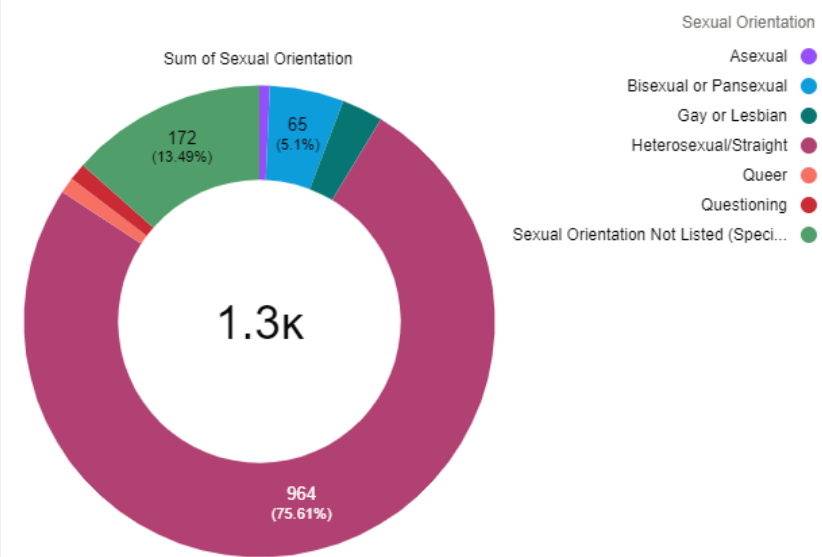
NJ4S Demographics-Gender

Sum of Current Gender Identity

7.1ᴋ

3.7ᴋ (51.7%)
3.4ᴋ (47.08%)

Current Gender Identity
- Male ●
- Female ●
- Transgender Male to Female ●
- Transgender Female to Male ●
- Genderqueer, Non-Binary Non-Conf... ●
- Genderfluid, Gender Expansive ●
- Other (Specify) ●

View Report (ARE NJ4S Tier 2 & 3 Demo_Gender)

NJ4S Demographics-Race/Ethnicity

Sum of Race/Ethnicity

3.5ᴋ

212 (6.09%)
983 (28.22%)
857 (24.61%)
1.3ᴋ (37.24%)

Race/Ethnicity
- Alaska Native ●
- Asian/Asian American ●
- Biracial/Multiracial ●
- Black/African American ●
- Latino/a/x/Hispanic ●
- Middle Eastern/North African ●
- Native American ●
- White/European American ●
- Racial/Ethnic Identity Unlisted(Speci... ●

View Report (ARE NJ4S Tier 2 & 3 Demo_RE)

NJ4S Demographics-Sexual Orientation

Sum of Sexual Orientation

1.3ᴋ

172 (13.49%)
65 (5.1%)
964 (75.61%)

Sexual Orientation
- Asexual ●
- Bisexual or Pansexual ●
- Gay or Lesbian ●
- Heterosexual/Straight ●
- Queer ●
- Questioning ●
- Sexual Orientation Not Listed (Speci... ●

View Report (ARE NJ4S Tier 2 & 3 Demo_SO)

Key Findings

Underreporting Demographics
- Reported demographics represent less than half of the participants engaged in NJ4S services
- Low numbers may suggest a need for more inclusive and supportive practices or reluctance to survey participant demographics

Diverse population served
- 38% Latino/a/x Hispanic participant

Note: Data from August 2023 - September 2024

Facilitator Reflection

- Facilitators reflect the group's makeup (race, ethnicity, culture, gender, age)
  - If not reflective, at least aware and accommodating

Importance of Understanding

- Facilitators need to understand students' stories and build trust
- Sharing personal stories to engage participants

- A hub staff member mentioned that their hub is making an effort to be **more inclusive of Spanish-speaking stakeholders** by translating documents and facilitating more Spanish-speaking sessions

- A hub staff member noted instances where facilitators **accommodated the special needs of students** by speaking softly with groups of students who are **sensitive to sound** and explaining pre- and post-test questions to students who had a **lower level of functioning**

- A student on the **importance of understanding**: "You really sometimes have to just **go to the students' level**… and like, try to understand them as much as possible… That's how you're going to understand their story and understand their case. And like, **that's how they will trust you**."

Facilitator/student relationship

- Strength: Many observed facilitators had a **great connection and rapport** with the students (e.g., boys council's eyes lit up when seeing their facilitator)

- Gap: An educator noted that there is sometimes a **disconnect between facilitators and students**, leading to school staff in the room having to be the person who makes what the facilitators say relatable to the students in the room

Stakeholders' Satisfaction with NJ4S
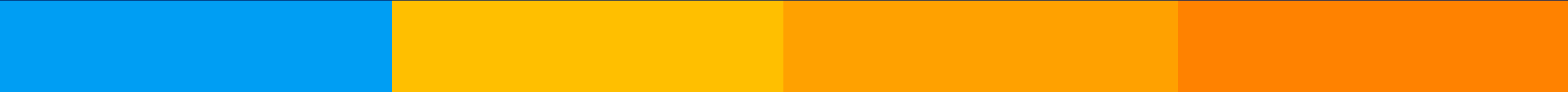
Stakeholders' Opinion of NJ4S

Qualitative Findings

- Stakeholders tended to rate the program highly, at least 3 participants, an educator, parent, and youth rated the program 10 out of 10.
- Passionate and competent hub staff have been noted by many stakeholders
- For youth, the best aspects include that NJ4S de-stigmatizes conversations around mental health with parents and in the school environment.
- For providers and community members, the value of NJ4S was an expansion of holistic services, but a gap was noted for younger stakeholders in need of early prevention

Interview Quotes

- When asked to rate the staff, a parent and advisory board member said, "They're all great people. I mean the one thing I will say is everyone has a heart for not just children, but the community, fairness, justice, equality… It's interesting to be in a room of people who all have the same heart, you know?"

- "I can't say enough good things [about my child's NJ4S clinician. She] is **professional, respectful, courteous, caring**. … My daughter really likes her and appreciates her… **The program is fantastic**... I think it's a great resource and I think it can help so many people." - Parent

NJ4S Gaps

- "As far as sexual health, substance abuse, mental health, all of the different core areas, **we have to start before 6th grade**." –-Several participants across all stakeholder roles

Students on Why They Need NJ4S

- Importance of NJ4S support for student wellness and connection
- Prevention Needs: Bullying, violence, physical abuse, fatigue from technology, mental health

Interview Quotes

- One student noted "Sometimes **students will be struggling, and they don't have family at home** that really understands them or takes the time to understand them. So, **these services can really push for the support that youth need.**"

- Another student noted that NJ4S is **"getting people to understand themselves better,** while also having another person's view on what they should and shouldn't do, and to make them more comfortable."

- Another student said she received a lot of help with **"problem solving."**

Issues In the Community

- "I feel like a lot of people don't have somebody to actually go to and talk about what they're struggling with…and students need **closure** like they're **not alone** in what their struggling with."

Key Takeaways

Qualitative key preliminary findings:

- Reception varies by school
- Engagement and outreach efforts require pounding the pavement
- School environment impacts reception of NJ4S
- EBP delivery ranges from strict adherence with little engagement to abandonment of EBP fidelity in favor of full engagement
- Main community needs include mental health, violence prevention, bullying, abuse, technology fatigue, teen pregnancy
- Stakeholders rated the program highly and students reported a definite need for NJ4S services

Quantitative key preliminary findings:

- Growth in the number of schools and districts reached over time shows positive momentum, suggesting that current outreach strategies are effective.
- Less than half (42%) of the reached schools are actively engaged
- >200,000 participants attended Tier 1 events
- >15,000 participants attended across Tier 2 and 3 applied services
- Tier 2 Participants represent >92% of attendees in applied services
- 38% of Tier 2 attendance was in EBPs

Continuous Quality Improvement

What have we done with the data?

Hub Debrief – Brainstorming Activity

Presented challenging, real-life scenarios and asked, "How could facilitators respond?"

Scenario 1: In a life skills class, a facilitator asked: "What makes you angry?" A student responds, "Fake people and liars," and another student responded, "You mean like you?"

Hub 1:

- "The challenging scenarios point to **training opportunities**, specifically around **group management** and **facilitation** (e.g., presentation skills, learning who you are as a manager, and the nurtured heart approach)."

Hub 2:

- Hub 2 holds time during **staff meetings** for **professionalism and ethics** where they discuss appropriate conduct around students and how to **manage different sized groups**.

Hub Debrief (cont.)

"Do you have any ideas for how to address the need for facilitators to understand how to read a room, be nimble, and address issues that arise organically from the group? (any training on the art of facilitation or humility?)"

Hub 3:

- Held mock presentations during which they **reenacted difficult exchanges**, some of which revolved around **cultural humility and understanding**.

- "The goal is to allow students to express what they need to express and to **be inquisitive** (e.g., "can you tell me more about that"). This allows the student to discuss what they want and provides facilitators with an opportunity to learn more about it, **even if it makes them uncomfortable.**

Hub 4:

Scenario 2: A student disclosed that their mom told them, "if someone hits you, you hit back."

- "Facilitators **shouldn't tell the student they are wrong** but walk them through the consequences of each decision and **explore both sides of their options**. Hopefully, this will lead them to make what we feel is the best decision."

SIT Small Group Feedback

FCP led a small group discussion with **directors and assist. directors from 5 hubs** experiencing similar issues, with their successes appearing differently in Connex. Discussion was around **school engagement and its barriers** and how to get NJ4S through school doors.

Attendee Question: "Is there guidance on what to do with schools that are limited in offering space and time during the school day for EBPs?"

Hub 1:

- "We try to utilize health classes as a way to build NJ4S into the **preexisting structure of the school.**"

Hub 2:

- "In a beautiful world….. I wish for a **Wellness Period/Block** that all schools need to offer students a place where either the school or external providers can come in and focus on topics on wellness."

Presenter Contact Information

Thank you and see you in the next phase!

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