

Enhancing Bridge Programs to Increase College Access and Success

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Overview

- **Background and context**
- **Program spotlight**
 - LaGuardia CC's GED Bridge program
- **Discussion**

Today's labor market increasingly requires some college or training

- However, students face multiple barriers to college access and success:
 - 21 percent of U.S. adults lack a high school credential, barring most of them from college entry;
 - Few students in adult education achieve GED; and
 - Even those with a high school credential arrive at college unprepared to succeed - only 12 percent of GED holders complete one year of college, and only 3 percent earn an AA.

Bridge programs help prepare students for college and training

- **Key programmatic features include:**
 - College-prep curriculum
 - Transition supports for college entry
 - Direct connections to postsecondary education
 - Career preparation
 - Managed enrollment and participation supports

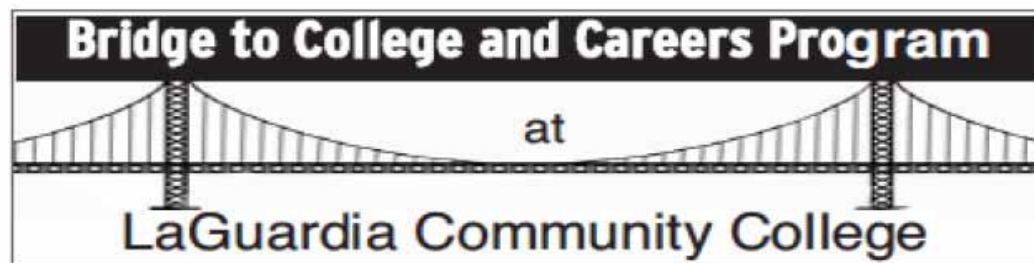
NEW-YORK



Manhattan

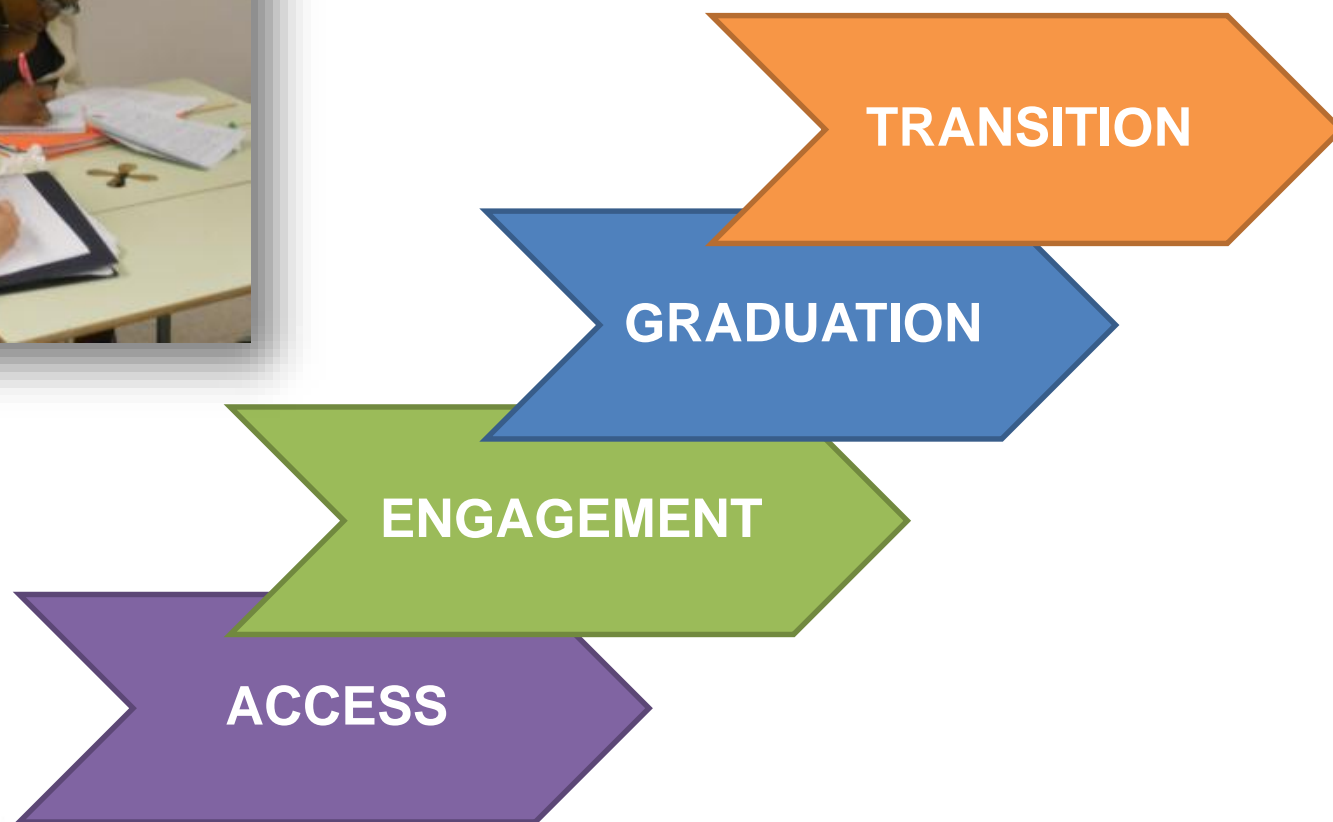
Queens

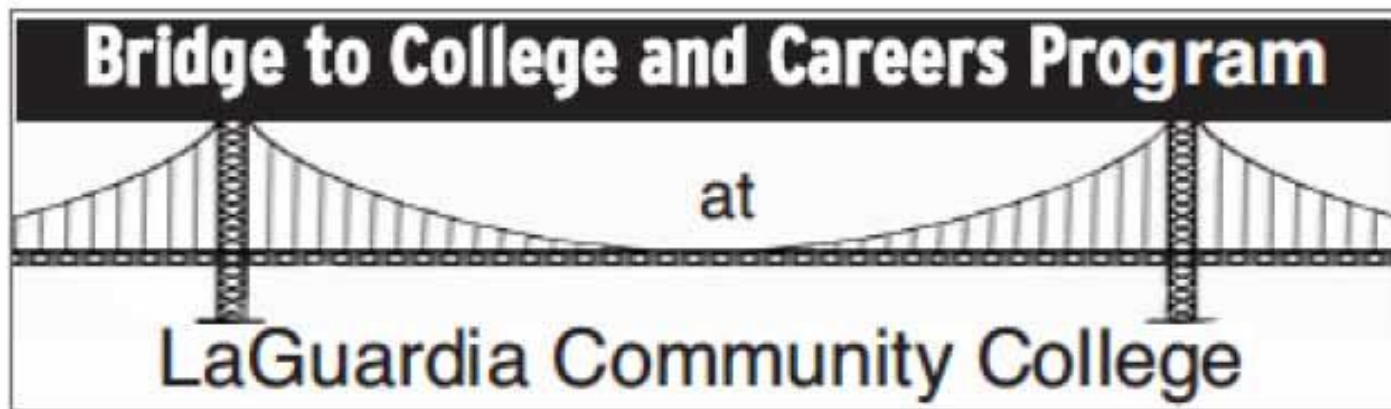
- Large, urban campus in the most diverse US county
- Students from 160 countries and speak 125 languages
- 80% of students report annual incomes of \$25,000 or less
- 20% of nearby residents lack a high school diploma



www.laguardia.edu/pcap

LaGuardia's Bridge Program Goals





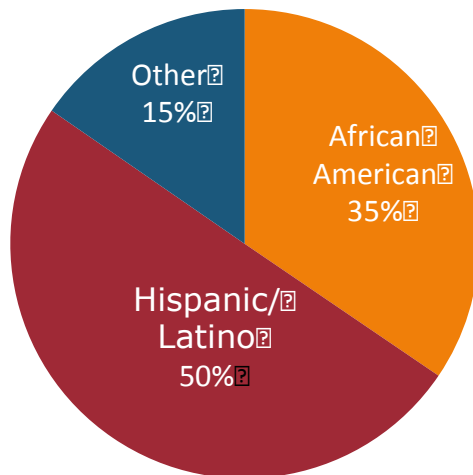
Bridge to
Healthcare
Careers

Bridge to
Business
Careers

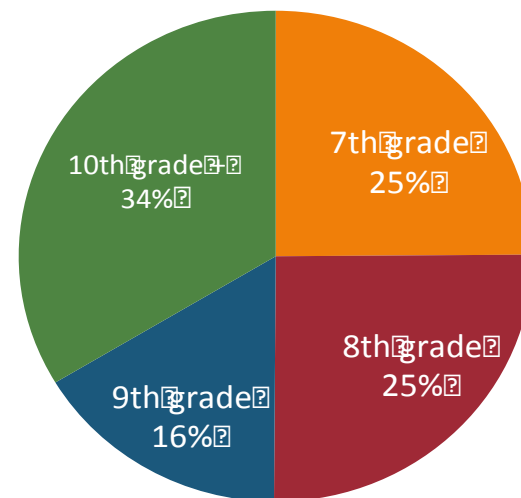
Bridge to
Science
Careers

Who is a Bridge Student?

Race/Ethnicity



Reading Grade Level Equivalent T.A.B.E.



38% employed
 53% receive public assistance
 67% female
 Average age: 26

What is the Bridge Program Model?

- Managed enrollment vs. open enrollment
- Comprehensive admissions process
- 7th grade reading level and above (TABE)
- 12 week/ 6 week cycle with a year-long model
- 108 hours of in-class instruction over 12 weeks; 9 class hours per week
- Part time program for students
19 and over who need to earn high school equivalency
- Career focused contextualized curriculum

Contextualized instruction is a sector-focused approach to HSE and PSE preparation that uses authentic materials from a career area to build basic skills.



Contextualized Curriculum: Moving Beyond Test Prep

- Build academic and non-cognitive college & career readiness skills
- Explore key concepts in a discipline/career sector
- Develop academic persistence
- Build aspirational culture



What does the Bridge curriculum look like?

College and Career Exploration

- Career Narratives
- Goal Setting
- PSE planning & research

Healthcare

- Nutrition
- Patient Care
- Epidemics and Infection Control

Business

- Entrepreneurship
- Professional Ethics
- Basic Economic Principles

Science

- Cells and Genetics
- The Scientific Method
- Evolution

How does the Bridge program support PSE Transitions?

- Integrated College and career exploration curriculum
- Group and individualized advisement
- Financial aid and application support
- Alumni speakers & mentors



What are the key Bridge Program design elements?

- Full time instructor and advisement support model
- Intensive teacher training & ongoing professional development
- Subject matter expert input for curriculum design
- Build strong partnerships to promote successful transitions



Bringing it to Scale

- Focus on standards based instruction vs. test preparation
- Implementation of common high impact learning strategies
- Ongoing professionalization of the field
- Braided funding models



The Evaluation Design

- Small scale study that began in summer 2010
- Uses a random assignment research design
 - GED Bridge program, either to the Business or Health class
 - GED Prep class
- Studying the implementation and impacts of the GED Bridge program
- Evaluation and program funded by the Robin Hood Foundation and MetLife Foundation

What is GED Bridge being compared to?

	GED Prep	GED Bridge
CURRICULUM	GED textbooks, standard practice tests	Contextualized curriculum with original lessons
CLASS TIME	60 hours over 9 weeks	108 hours over 12 weeks
TRANSITION COUNSELING	None beyond general college resources	In-class and individualized counseling

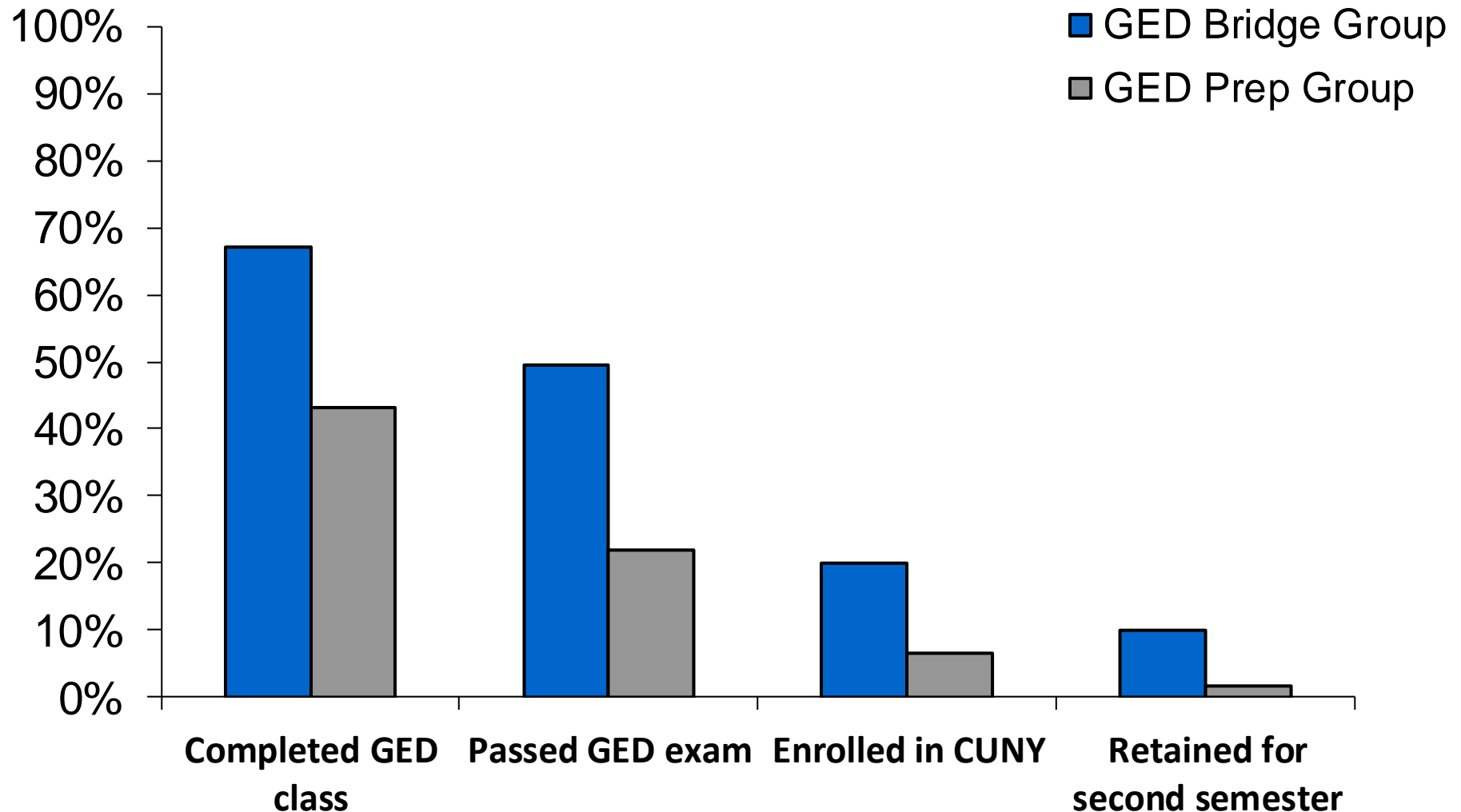
GED Bridge has a well-designed curriculum, and strong instruction and student support

- Strong and coordinated leadership and instruction
- Adherence to program goals in curriculum and assignments
 - Assignments are future-oriented with a focus on business and health fields
- Emphasis on student engagement, retention, and relationships
- Students from wide variety of backgrounds and experiences with prior GED classes

GED Bridge students are more engaged and have a greater sense of direction

- Differences in Bridge and Prep students' reported experiences:
 - Personal attention from teachers and staff
 - Understanding of financial aid, pre-requisites, and career/college options
 - Confidence about taking and passing the GED
 - Intention to enroll in post-secondary education

Higher GED pass rates and post-secondary enrollment rates for those in GED Bridge



What's Next?

- Findings indicate that there are ways to make the GED exam more relevant and a better conduit into college.
- LaGuardia's program is unique but colleges can adopt the approach and create their own program.
- Further rigorous testing of similar contextualized GED transition models is needed.
- Policy brief and video available at www.mdrc.org.

Research and Professional Development

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