

The **Harvard Extension School Poetry in America National Pilot** — provided talented, high-striving 11th and 12th grade students in Title 1, underserved high schools the opportunity to take a Harvard Extension School online college credit-bearing course in their high school classrooms (including as a dual enrollment option).

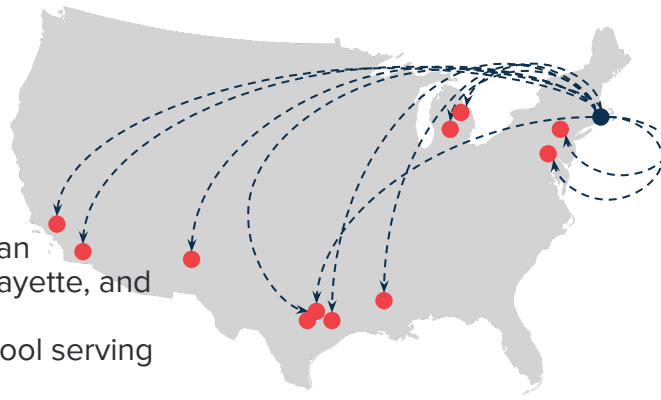
“Democratizing access to higher education in our nation has never been more critical. Harvard’s leadership in offering a college credit-bearing course to talented students in Title 1 high school classrooms is game-changing.”

– Arne Duncan, Former U.S. Secretary of Education; *National Education Equity Lab* Advisory Board member

PILOT PHASE 1: PROOF OF CONCEPT DEMONSTRATED

11 CITIES

- New York City
- Los Angeles
- San Diego
- Meriden, Connecticut
- Flint and Pontiac, Michigan
- Baton Rouge, Lafitte, Lafayette, and Opelousas, Louisiana
- Gallup, New Mexico (school serving Navajo students)



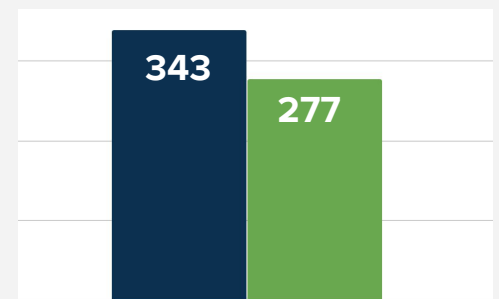
25 TITLE I HIGH SCHOOLS

Collectively serving over **92%** students of color & **84%** students eligible for reduced or free lunch.

Source: CCD Public school data 2016-2017.

89% of the 277 students who completed the course **PASSED** and received **4 Harvard Extension School COLLEGE CREDITS** — providing the opportunity to make college more affordable and accessible.

- **476 students initially enrolled** in summer 2019, 133 students were prevented from starting due to systems and logistics challenges¹. **343 were able to start the course.**
- **Twenty-five percent (25%)** of students earned an **A range grade** and **(38%)** earned a **B range grade**, as graded by Harvard Teaching Fellows².
- **Ninety-six percent (96%)** of students indicated that the course **should be offered to students like them at their school**³.
- **One-hundred percent (100%)** of participating districts **asked to participate in future course offerings.**



81% Retention Rate

Of the 343 who started, 23 students dropped the course and 43 students were counseled to withdraw.

¹The three primary reasons students could not start were: scheduling conflicts (58), Grade breakdown: C:21%; D:7%; F: 10% -- 40% of grades system login issues (16), and school administration-level decisions by four schools were machine graded.
²Response rate on exit surveys: 65%.
³Response rate on exit surveys: 65%.

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE PILOT

- 1 Rigorous & Engaging College Credit-Bearing Course** — *Poetry in America The City: From Whitman to Hip Hop* developed and delivered by Harvard Professor Elisa New.
- 2 University Teaching Fellows (TF)** — TFs were hired by the Harvard Extension School, and selected by the Harvard Professor. Pilot TFs all hold, or are currently pursuing, a graduate degree or similar certification, or have requisite teaching experience in the course subject area. The TFs provided consistency and reliability to the grading process. There is a substantial pool of qualified candidates interested in being TFs, and 40% of grading was automated.
- 3 Classroom Supervising Teachers** — Schools selected teachers to lead classroom discussions, remind students of deadlines, and communicate with TFs regarding student progress. Supervising Teachers had no access to grades.
- 4 One-on-one College Mentors** — 100% of students were offered a one-on-one college mentor (through the Equity Lab's partnership with the Common Application) to support students in navigating the application and financial aid process.
- 5 Funding from School Districts & Others** — School districts and states provided funds to cover student enrollment at the Extension School's reduced price for pilot students. Philanthropic partners provided additional funds where needed.
- 6 Open Feedback Channels & Continuous Improvement** — Students, Supervising Teachers, Principals, and Teaching Fellows were continually engaged in feedback sessions to share their experience to improve the model.

ADDITIONAL OUTCOMES

Of students who responded to the exit survey (65%),

- **Eighty-one (81%)** stated that this course **helped them better prepare for college.**
- **One-hundred (100%)** who received Ds and 56% who failed also stated this course **helped them better prepare for college.** *Primary reasons cited: better understanding the effort required to succeed in college, improved writing skills, and learning the importance of asking for/getting help.*

KEY ELEMENT:

The opportunity to earn college credit is important.

Students and district leaders expressed that a primary reason for providing and taking this course is the opportunity for students to receive college credit.

IMPORTANT FINDING:

Tech access was not a barrier to entry for students.

All schools were able to provide students with adequate Internet and computer access during the school day. Almost all students were able to access the course outside of school; for those who could not, the National Education Equity Lab provided computers and/or hotspot devices to students.

*"I learned how to push myself, and work and think, in ways I never had to before...and I learned that I **can do college-level work**. Teachers had told me that, but now I see it and believe it and want more. **In that way, this class probably changed my life.**"*

- Pilot Student from Gallup, New Mexico

*"I'm not exaggerating when I say that this has been **one of the best experiences of my teaching career**, and I've been teaching for twenty-three years. I drove home in tears (happy tears) more than once because **I was so proud of what my students had accomplished** and so inspired by how well things had gone that day in our class."*

- Supervising Teacher from Flint, Michigan