

Friends of Simon Program Evaluation 2022-2023

Authored by Jenna-Leigh Di Nardo, MEd.
July 2023

Draw Forth All...

“We ourselves learn as we teach, and we redesign Friends of Simon in light of our experience conducting instruction. Our mission is summarized by the phrase, **Draw Forth All**, which combines the Latin root of the word education (“to draw forth”) with the moral commitment of Nobel Laureate and SFU honoree, Bishop Desmond Tutu, specifically his call to serve and honour all people.

Teaching is often seen as the transmission of knowledge, in the manner of filling up empty minds. *Education, however, is a process that builds on the prior experience of the learner and evokes new learning through engagement, questioning, and acknowledgement of the individual.*”

- Paul Shaker, Professor Emeritus; founder of Friends of Simon

“I think providing the right environment, having a physical activity aspect, and listening to the students is very important in building trust between tutors and students. As a Friends of Simon student myself, I was able to open up and engage myself because I trusted my tutors at the time. I believe that a student will respond better if he/she trusts the tutors.”

FOS 2022-2023 Tutor, and former FOS Student

Contents

Introduction p. 5

Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation Report p. 5

Scope p. 5

Methodology p. 6

Program Overview p. 7

FOS Logic Model p. 7

FOS Core Principles and Values p. 9

FOS Sites p. 10

 FOS Site Coordinators p. 10

Program Staff and Operations p. 10

The Tutors p. 12

 Community Projects p. 15

The 2022-2023 Friends of Simon Program Evaluation p. 16

Context: The FOS Program this year p. 17

The Results p. 21

FOS Student Participants p. 21

Tutor and Site Coordinator Perspectives p. 25

The Results: FOS Sites p. 27

The Results: FOS Tutors p. 28

Conclusion p. 29

Appendix 1 p. 30

A hand is shown holding a paper flower with alternating light blue and light pink petals. The background is a blurred indoor setting, possibly a classroom or office.

Friends of Simon Evaluation Report 2022-2023

“I believe that my work as a tutor does give me clarity about my future career goals. I am planning on becoming an elementary school teacher with a focus on TESL and I feel like through the FOS program I have been able to develop skills such as building connections and how to help ELL learners along with so much more.”

Friends of Simon Tutor

Introduction

The Friends of Simon (FOS) Program recruits, prepares and assigns university students as literacy and numeracy tutors in the Lower Mainland, particularly with newcomer K-12 students. With our cooperating sites, Friends of Simon works to increase school success through after-school programs in small group and individualized settings. Instruction is based on current trends in pedagogy and tutors receive their training and supervision from members of the Faculty of Education who themselves are involved in educational research.

Friends of Simon is an SFU Faculty of Education outreach project supported by the United Way British Columbia (UWBC), David Mowfaghian Foundation, The Gadhia Family, Porte Industries, Vancouver Foundation, Vancity Credit Union, City of Vancouver, North Growth Foundation, Ted Rogers Scholarship Fund, William and Nona Heaslip Foundation, Employees of Rogers BC, Dr. Steve Marshall, SFU Surrey-TD Community Education Centre (CEC), Heritage Education Funds, and Canadian Scholarship Trust Plan.

Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation Report

This evaluation will report on the process and outcomes gathered for the Friends of Simon Program for the 2022-2023 school year. The report consists of three main sections: the introduction, the program overview and, commencing on page ##, the annual evaluation.

Annual evaluations are conducted for the FOS Program to assess the provision of literacy and numeracy tutoring and mentorship at sites in Burnaby Port Moody, and Surrey, with the goal of supporting continuous program improvement.

This evaluation has five objectives:

1. To provide an overview of 2022-2023 FOS program implementation.
2. To identify FOS inputs, outputs, and outcomes.
3. Provide funders and other relevant community stakeholders with a clear picture of the impact that the FOS Program has had on participants and tutors.
4. To analyze the strengths and challenges of the FOS program.
5. To provide recommendations that will assist with future planning decisions and increasing the efficiency and impact for the FOS Program.

Scope

This evaluation covers a timeframe from September 2022 to June 2023. It contains information about each tutoring site, the students enrolled in the program, the Friends of Simon staff members who coordinate the program, and the tutors engaged in supporting the students.

Methodology

The 2022-2023 evaluation was created in collaboration with FOS staff and tutors who assisted with the data collection. Research methods were designed to be consistent with the objectives stated above.

The evaluation data collection methodology included a mix of qualitative and quantitative data. As the FOS program is an after-school tutoring program, it is difficult to determine a fully causal effect between this program and a quantitative increase in literacy and mathematics levels in students - for this reason an emphasis is placed on the collection of qualitative data, with associated quantitative data where available, The following table outlines the data collection methods utilized in this evaluation report.

Data Collection Methodology for the 2022-2023 Program Evaluation		
Stakeholder Information	Data Collection Method	Assessment
Sites	Site list	To determine program geographic locations and distribution of elementary, middle school and secondary programs, as well as other sites (libraries).
Program participants and tutors	Attendance records for students and tutors	Attendance at each site tracked as well as tutoring levels to assess contact hours, numbers of sessions and tutor/ student ratios.
Program participants and tutors	Student registration numbers and tutors assigned for each site.	To determine the program size and tutor/student ratio.
Program participants	Student surveys - School's Out for elementary survey, and FOS middle/ high school survey	To assess program impact for students.
Program participants	Through discussion and interviews with site coordinators and tutors.	Characteristics of student demographics such as birth country, and immigration status
Parents of participants	Parent surveys	To determine program impacts from the parents' perspective.
Tutors	Focus group	Focus group (7-10 participants) conducted with tutors to gather feedback and stories from tutors on the program impacts.
Tutors	Tutor survey	To gather feedback from tutors on the program impacts and the support they received to be effective tutors
Lead tutors	Lead Tutor Report Analysis	Review staff synopsis of Lead Tutor reports for themes and issues (when available)
Site co-ordinators and site staff	Surveys	Surveys conducted to gather impressions about the program impacts and estimations of demographic info.
Former tutors	Review communications from former tutors	To determine longer term benefits of being a tutor for Friends of Simon.

Program Overview

The Friends of Simon (FOS) Program is offered to elementary, middle and high school students generally between the ages of 6 to 15. The program targets refugee, immigrant, or ELL (English Language Learner) children, and those who face barriers to learning and academic achievement. FOS tutoring sessions offer a combination of homework assistance, engaging literacy and numeracy activities, and social and physical activity.

FOS programming was offered at 15 public schools, one library and one welcome centre in the region this year. Both the New Westminster Welcome Centre and the Surrey Libraries TD Community Engagement Centre represent an alternate program format that is funded through Mosaic and the SFU Surrey TD Community Engagement Centre.

FOS Program Logic Model

The following logic model shows inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes for the FOS Program in 2022-2023.

Friends of Simon Logic Model	
Inputs	Major Donors: - United Way British Columbia - David Mowafaghian Foundation - The Gadhia Family - Porte Industries - Vancouver Foundation - Vancity Credit Union - City of Vancouver - North Growth Foundations - Ted Rogers Scholarship Fund - William and Nona Heaslip Foundation - Employeeds of Rogers BC, Dr. Steve Marshall, SFU Surrey-TD Community Engagement Centre (CEC) - Heritage Education Funds - Canadian Scholarship Trust Plan
	Tutors, Staff, and Consultants - 33 of Tutors - 1 Program Director - 2 Program Coordinators - 2 Program Assistants - 1 External Program Evaluator
	On-Site Contributions At 16 sites, the following are provided: - Supervisory staff (site coordinators)
	In Kind Support - SFU Legal, Human Resource, and Budgetary support - SFU Program support - SFU Financial Aid

Friends of Simon Logic Model	
Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. After-school homework in-person programs with academic, physical, and social activities provided by tutors to support immigrant, refugee and at-risk populations. 2. The team of tutors (with youth, multilingualism, and diversity as assets), develop mentoring relationships with the students to support their learning goals, cultural transitions, and personal development. 3. Tutors provide targeted and personalized assistance on-site with academics, literacy and numeracy. 4. Tutors model a strong academic self-concept and provide linkages to the post-secondary environment. 5. Tutors receive innovative training to equip themselves with the pedagogical skills required for FOS work. 6. Tutors work in a team environment that supports experiential learning and increasing effectiveness.
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of children participating in Friends of Simon Programs - Number of tutors participating in Friends of Simon Programs - Number of sites offering Friends of Simon Programs - Number of tutoring sessions and contact hours per year - Attendance rates at each site - Ratio of students to tutors at each site - Number of tutor training sessions offered per year
Immediate Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student who participate in FOS can make constructive use of their afterschool time. 2. FOS students build healthy relationships with young adults. 3. FOS students improve their self-esteem and become more optimistic. 4. FOS students improve their academic achievement, academic self-concept, and school engagement. 5. FOS tutors develop skills and knowledge through training and experience to support vulnerable students academically, socially and emotionally.
Intermediate Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FOS students respond positively to tutor role modeling, which is reflected in their decision making about their future. 2. Families feel supported in helping their children achieve their maximum potential and become productive engaged citizens. 3. Tutors develop a sense of belonging on campus and clarity about future professional pathways.

FOS Core Principles and Values



FOS Sites

This year, Friends of Simon operated at 16 sites in the cities of Burnaby, New Westminister, Port Moody and Surrey, all located in the Metro Vancouver Lower Mainland region. Friends of Simon sites are carefully selected to ensure that the limited program resources are allocated to the municipalities, neighbourhoods, and school with the highest of needs.

Friends of Simon is delivered over the course of three terms at most sites: Fall (September to December), Spring (January to April) and Summer (May to June).

Site Coordinators

Each of the FOS sites are supported by a staff member, called a site coordinator, who provides program supervision, provides snacks, and ensures that the tutoring environment remains safe and welcoming. Frequently the site coordinators share background information about students (when both relevant and appropriate), and handle any disciplinary issues when they arise. Site coordinators are often Settlement Workers (SWISS), but could also be principals, vice principals, English Language Learner teachers or youth workers.

Program Staff and Operations

Friends of Simon is supported by a team of exceptional staff based at Simon Fraser University. In general, the staff members administer and provide quality control and improvement to the FOS program. Currently, FOS has the following staff positions and personnel:

- Program Director: Dr. Kris Magnusson, Dean of Education (Pro Tem), Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University
- Program Coordinators: Angela Flumerfelt and Kanwal Neel
- Program Assistants: Rea Chatterjee and Brianna Condilenios

Staff members undertake the responsibilities outlined below to ensure the program runs both efficiently and effectively.

Friends of Simon Staff Responsibilities	
Responsibility	Details
Selection, scheduling and training of tutors	Advertising for, screening, selecting, and training suitable tutors Placing tutors in sites
Liaising with partner agencies and sites	Selecting program sites Meeting with and gathering feedback form site coordinators and sponsoring agencies Addressing emerging issues, problems and questions related to the program

Friends of Simon Staff Responsibilities	
Responsibility	Details
Managing budgets	Tutor payment, travel reimbursements, meetings and resources
Program quality control and assessment	<p>On-going site visits to observe and report on site and tutor quality</p> <p>Gathering feedback and information to improve services to sites</p> <p>Contracting with an external evaluator to design data collection methods and report on program impact and improvements</p> <p>Assisting with data collection and data dissemination to the external evaluator for analysis</p> <p>Evaluating effectiveness of training sessions</p> <p>Ongoing formative assessment of tutor effectiveness</p>
Education and sharing of best practices	<p>Organizing and delivering tutor training sessions and gathering suitable resources for tutors</p> <p>Maintaining an online tutor site/community (Canvas site) for tutors to interact, share and provide feedback on their experiences within the FOS program</p>
Program Outreach and Sustainability	<p>Identifying funding sources for program sustainability</p> <p>Identifying opportunities to expand and enhance the program to meet the needs of additional communities an/or target groups</p> <p>Outreach to the media and community partners to increase the FOS profile in the community</p> <p>Managing FOS website and social media accounts</p>

The Tutors

FOS tutors are undergraduate students attending Simon Fraser University. Recruitment is taken from a range of spectrum of faculties, including but not limited to Computer Science, Education, English, History, and the Sciences. On average, the tutors work two shifts a week, with some tutors opting for 3 shifts a week. Tutors are also offered the opportunity to substitute at sites when a tutor is not available for their shift. They are paid \$17 to \$19 an hour. Tutors receive compensation for both travel to sites and training.

The tutors provide assistance with homework and support activities for improvement in literacy and numeracy proficiency, in addition to mentoring, role modelling, and developing connections to Canadian culture for newcomers. These hands-on experiences allow the tutors to gain valuable experience in a teaching environment by working with a vulnerable population of students who face a number of obstacles to literacy and numeracy.

Tutor Preparation

During the course of the academic year, tutors are offered the opportunity to attend a series of in-person training sessions, occurring on Saturday mornings. This past year, tutors engaged at nine separate training sessions of 3 hours in length, with an additional half hour for Lead Tutors at the end of each session.

Topics included in the training sessions this past year included:

- Relationship Building
- Literacy Support
- Numeracy Support
- Classroom Management
- Stealworthy Ideas
- Differentiated Instruction and Universal Design for Learning
- Building Inclusive Communities
- Child Protection
- Suicide Prevention
- Making a Place for Everyone
- Mental Health Wellness
- Cultivating Connections

The tutors are encouraged to share their own experiences and learn from those experiences and those of their peers. All training sessions included an opening snowball activity as a warm-up, announcements, and feedback from the Lead Tutor reports. These reports offer an opportunity to explore specific behaviour management situations at each session. Tutors were welcome to arrive a half hour early to enjoy a prepared breakfast or lunch before each training session

Regular segments of these sessions included “Read Aloud”, and Stealworthy Ideas, where the tutors shared their best literacy and numeracy activities with the group.

FOS tutors are required to attend the training sessions, and are grateful for these training opportunities. It was acknowledged repeatedly in the tutor focus groups that these sessions helped prepare them for their experiences at school sites, and offered a good network of friendship to connect with peers and learn from each other's experiences. Training sessions this past year were held at the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University.

Literacy and Numeracy Activities

FOS tutors prepare both literacy and numeracy activities for every tutoring session they lead. These activities are student-centered, adaptable, varied and multi modal to reach a wide range of learners. Activities involve a spectrum of approaches that assist the development of all forms of language, literacy, and numeracy, while encouraging both expression and movement, involving the students' active use of language to communicate. This approach to working with immigrant, ELL and underachieving students is consistent with current literature, and with strategies recommended by the British Columbia Ministry of Education. These literacy and numeracy activities include group games, facilitated discussions, and both board and card games. The tutors must establish that they are well prepared for an array of scenarios, including having appropriate activities for both smaller and larger than anticipated groups of students. The tutors also spend a substantial amount of time during these sessions with homework assistance. As the COVID 19 pandemic continues to subside, tutoring sessions involved a growth in the amount of physical activities offered to the students following the literacy and numeracy activities.

Ongoing Tutor Support

Tutors receive ongoing support through the following supports:

- An SFU Online Canvas site where tutors can find information such as necessary forms, readings, schedules and training session dates. Tutors are also able to communicate with each other as well as staff members, find substitute tutors when they are not available to attend a specific site, and plan social events. Lead tutor reports are also submitted through the Canvas site portal.
- Peer training sessions both in-person and online via Canvas.
- FOS staff site visits
- Connecting via email or telephone with staff
- From Lead Tutors at the tutoring sites

Lead Tutor Reports

After each session, a Lead Tutor is asked to record attendance numbers, any arising site issues, and any other feedback from their experiences. They submit this information in a Lead Tutor report, which staff members often respond to. The majority of these reports attest to positive strategies that the tutors utilize at their sites. When a lead tutor remarks on a particularly effective strategy used by a tutor during their shift, staff members will often share these comments with that tutor. This helps to promote teamwork within the tutor group. In addition, staff members monitor tutor attendance using these reports. If patterns emerge, a staff member will contact that particular tutor to see what can be done to remedy the situation.

Site Visits

The program coordinators partake in multiple site visits throughout the course of the school year. Site visits are advantageous in helping to monitor tutor performance, connecting in-person with site coordinators, understanding the challenging situations that tutors may face, and conducting informal assessments about both student needs, and tutor/student ratios. The program coordinators ensure they visit each of the tutoring sites at least once per term, and problematic sites are visited more regularly. In-person site visits resumed this past school year.

“Each week I try to talk with students and to work with them on their homework if they need help, I try asking them about their lives without getting too deep but still letting students know that I care about them and more than anything else I prioritize creating a safe space for all students within the sites I work at.”

FOS Tutor, 2023

Below: FOS tutors with Program Coordinator Kanwal Neel at a hiring drive at Simon Fraser University Burnaby Campus.



Community Project: A Snapshot of Six Sites

Tutors continued to lead community projects in the school sites during the 2022-2023 school year. Tutors would brainstorm with their school tutoring groups to come up with a feasible idea they could undertake as part of their time with the school communities. The projects centered on bettering their school community in some way, and leading through action.

<p style="text-align: center;">Cameron Community School</p> <p>“The original idea of doing a garbage clean up or clean sweep around the school was decided during our training session when we brainstormed ideas for a community project. The tutors and I decided that a clean sweep would be an enjoyable activity for the students as they love outside time, and it is important for youth to know ways to improve their environment and the harmful impacts of littering.” (Gurkirian)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Chaffey-Burke Elementary</p> <p>“The students voted on creating paper flowers, so I spent the next week finding materials, finding stencils for students to use and creating instructions with pictures. We wanted to create something in which the students could write kind messages and hand them out to people to make their day better. Some students used this opportunity to show they loved people in their lives or say thank you to their teachers.” (Miranda)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Green Timbers Elementary School</p> <p>“We thought about how the kids love to make crafts and make their own letters/ envelopes during our session...we thought that getting the kids to write about what they like about their teachers and how much they appreciate them would be perfect” (Sophia)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Gilmore Community School</p> <p>“I discussed with my team of tutors what would be best to implement for this project, and they came up with the idea that we have them write appreciation letters to their teachers.” (Mohammad Z)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Maywood Community School</p> <p>“I asked for ideas from my team of tutors, and it was brought up that we should want students to write appreciation letters to the community. The project was executed with total success. Children wrote beautiful and thoughtful letters and handed them out to their teachers which put a smile on their face” (Mohammad Z)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Surrey Community Education Centre</p> <p>“A penpal idea was mentioned and I concluded...that it would be a great initiative for the CEC students to take on as there is both a Monday session and a Thursday session at this site. Having two different groups of students at the same site gave a great opportunity for creating penpals between the students.” (Grace)</p>

The 2022-2023 Friends of Simon Program Evaluation

This section will offer a comprehensive evaluation of the Friends of Simon (FOS) program for the 2022-2023 year. The evaluation opens with precise information and outputs for the program this year, and will then focus on outcomes for student participation, FOS sites and FOS tutors.



Context: The FOS Program this Year

Friends of Simon had a cumulative total of **440 students** registered student participants at the tutoring sites during the 2022-2023 school year.

Cumulative Enrollment Data	
Program	Number of Participants Enrolled in 2022-2023
Elementary and Middle School	331
Secondary School (8 - 12)	109
Combined Total	440

*Note: These numbers include data from the New Westminster Welcome Centre.

Site Information

The table below described the basic program outputs at each of the 16 FOS sites this year, including total enrolment, attendance, and number of tutoring sessions.

Site	Total no. of students enrolled	Average no. of students/ session (Fall Semester - October 11- December 19)	No. of tutors/ session	Average no. of students/ session (Spring Semester - January 19- June 19)	No. of tutors/ session	No. of 2022-2023 sessions (Fall and Spring)
Burnaby School District						
Cameron Community School	21	11	2.75	13	2.6	31
Chaffey-Burke Elementary School	18	12	3	15	3.75	20
Edmonds Community School	25	9	3	11	3.67	28
Gilmore Community School	17	11	3.67	10	3.3	29
Kitchener Elementary School	12	8	2.67	8	2	23
Maywood Community School	17	10	2.5	10	2.5	24
Morley Elementary	17	12	3	10	2.5	29
Burnaby Central High School	16	7	1.75	6	1.5/2*	25
Burnaby North High School	30	15	3.75	11	2.2	20
Byrne Creek Secondary	22	11	2.75	11	2.75	22
Cariboo Hill Secondary	14	8	2.67	8	2.67	24

Site	Total no. of students enrolled	Average no. of students/ session (Fall Semester - October 11- December 19)	No. of tutors/ session	Average no. of students/ session (Spring Semester - January 19- June 19)	No. of tutors/ session	No. of 2022-2023 sessions (Fall and Spring)
Moscrop Secondary	16	-	-	12	4	18
Port Moody						
Moody Middle	23	12	2.4	10	2	25
Surrey						
Community Engagement Centre (Mondays)	58	17	4.25	17	4.25	24
Community Engagement Centre (Thursdays)	56	17	4.25	17	4.25	28
Green Timbers Elementary	18	10	3.3	14	3.5	24

*Note: The two ratios reflects Burnaby Central’s placement of 3 tutors instead of 4 from May-June 2023

Attendance

Attendance data gathered for the in-person FOS program over the course of the 2022-2023 school year indicates average fluctuations for most host sites. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to subside, the FOS program was held entirely in person this year.

Total number of FOS tutoring sessions for the 2022-2023 school year: **363 sessions**

Total number of individual student tutoring sessions for 2022-2023 school year: **4,751 unique tutoring sessions.**

Attendance rates, as showcased in the table above, illuminate the student participant satisfaction with the FOS program. A return to in-person programming has assisted the demand for additional spots for more students to attend.

Student Demographics

Due to School District policy about disclosing students’ personal information, and the reluctance of students to disclose this information themselves, detailed demographic information is no longer collected for FOS. Site coordinators, tutors and site visited indicated that participating students, as a majority, recently have moved to Canada as either immigrants or refugees (both government assisted and refugee claimants). Frequently, they are English Language Learners (ELL), and are usually Permanent Residents or recent immigrants with Canadian citizenship. These students are from a

range of countries, including but not limited to Afghanistan, Armenia, Chile, China, Egypt, Eritrea, India, Iran, South Korea, Sri Lanka and Ukraine.

Out of a combined total of 440 students who attended FOS throughout the 2022-2023 school year:

- 90% are newcomers to the country
- 5% are of Indigenous descent
- 30% have exceptionalities
- 80% from low income/facing socio-economic barriers

Some students come from backgrounds of low socio-economic status, which has had impacts on their ability to learn at schools. Others have an assortment of learning challenges and difficulties, as well as socio-emotional challenges. Some sites do report Indigenous student participants accessing the FOS program.

Tutor Demographics and Characteristics

During the 2022-2023 school year, 26 undergraduate students were employed with the FOS program at the start of the school year. This number grew to 43 tutors throughout the entire school year. A majority of the tutors hired indicated that they wish to enter the education workplace sector following their undergraduate studies. Often, these tutors have experience as immigrants themselves, and speak a wide range of diverse languages. The majority of FOS tutors are female. Most tutors are between 19 and 24 years of age.

Key Activities

FOS Site Coordinators and tutors have identified the top activities for achieving positive academic, social and emotional changes for the participating students. These activities are:

1. Developing a mentoring relationship: Overwhelmingly elected as the most important part of being an FOS tutor, this is particularly important when working with a vulnerable student population, which takes time to cultivate.
2. Encouraging group learning and activities for verbal, social, mental and physical engagement: FOS tutors recognize that the FOS program needs to incorporate a wide selection of activities to keep students engaged and meet multiple needs.
3. Individual on-to-one tutoring time: The potential for effective individualized assistance increases when tutors have time to work one-to-one with students each week.
4. Providing the opportunity to practice English in a safe environment (reading and conversation): FOS tutors work hard to create a safe space where students can practice, make mistakes, ask questions and learn without worry.
5. Numeracy and literacy activities: The tutors diligently work to prepare a number of activities for their sessions each week.

The Results: FOS Student

Participants

Student Surveys: Elementary Student Feedback

The United Way “School’s Out” survey was used this year for feedback from participating elementary and middle school students. Overall, the survey results showed that students continue to make progress under the guidance of the FOS tutors across tutoring sites.

Statistics of note from the School’s Out survey show increases in students feeling comfortable telling others how they feel (92%), a feeling of belonging (90.5%), the belief that volunteering is important (95%), and the ability to try again after failing at something (97%), by the end of the school year.

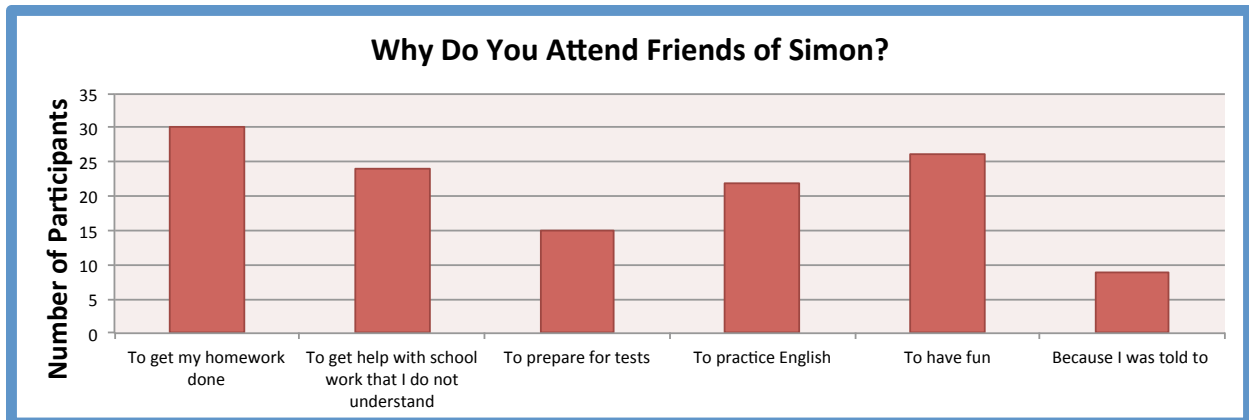
The results of the United Way School’s Out Survey as included in this evaluation report as Appendix 1 on page 28.

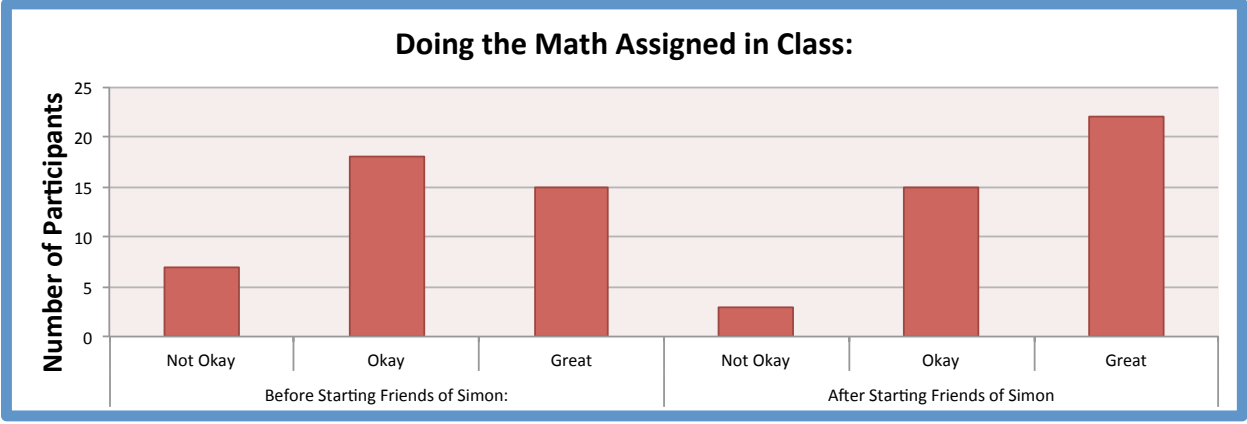
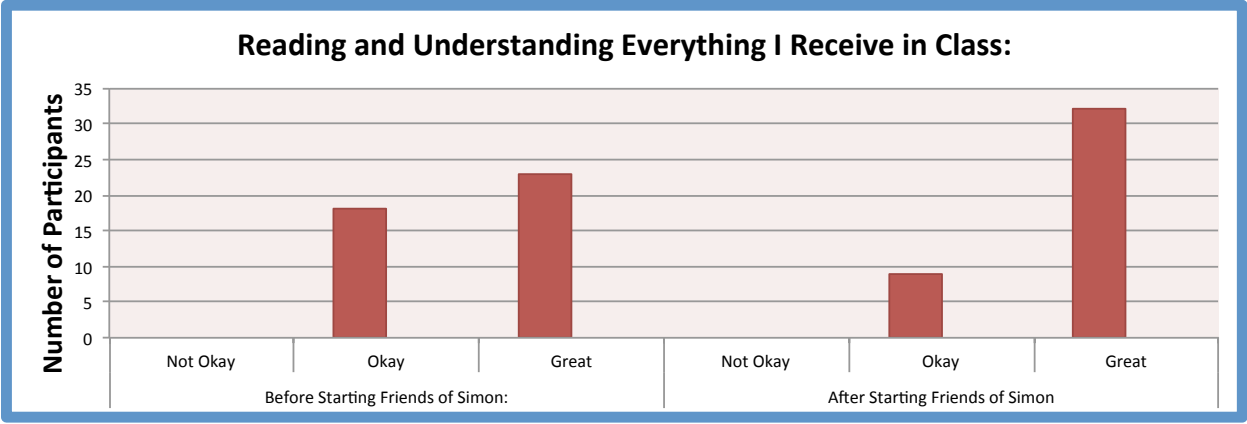
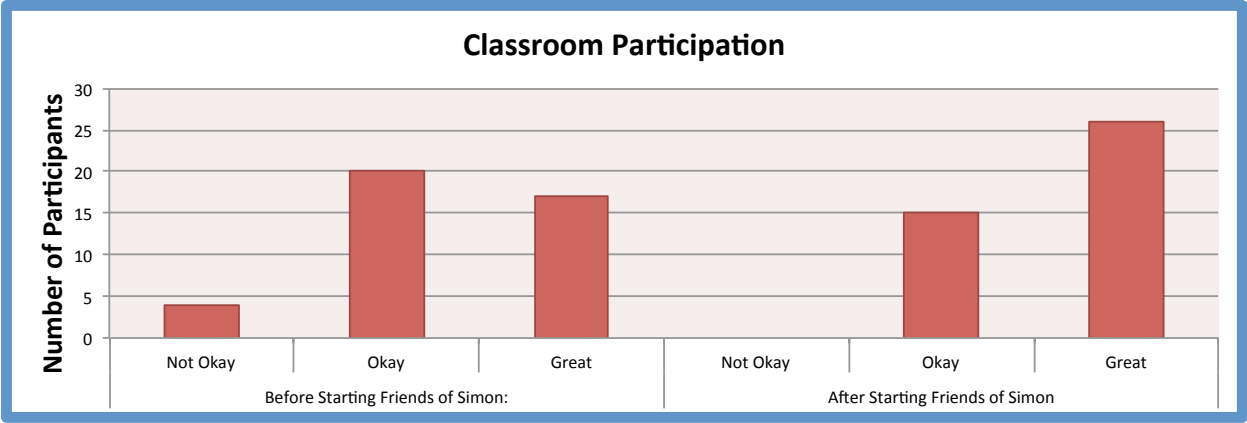
Student Surveys: High School Feedback

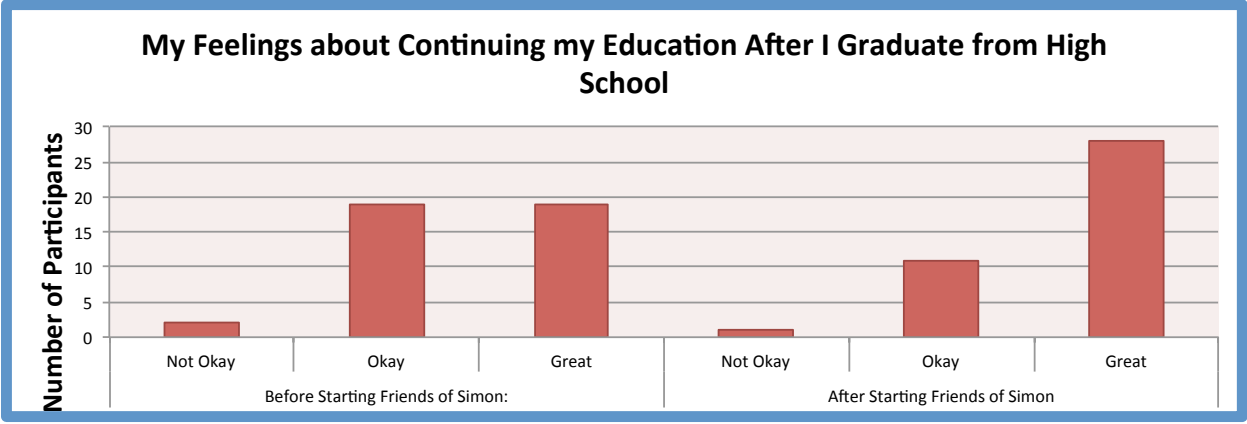
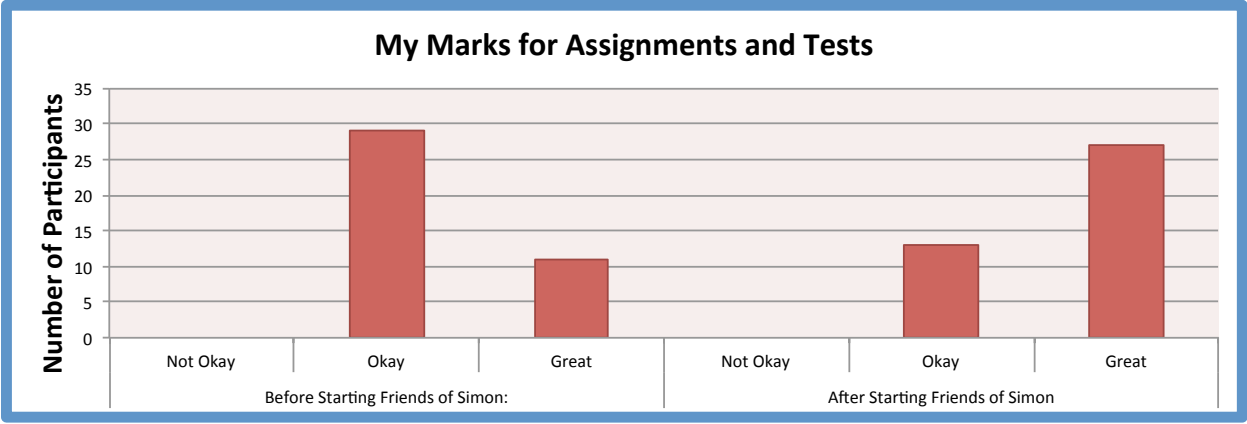
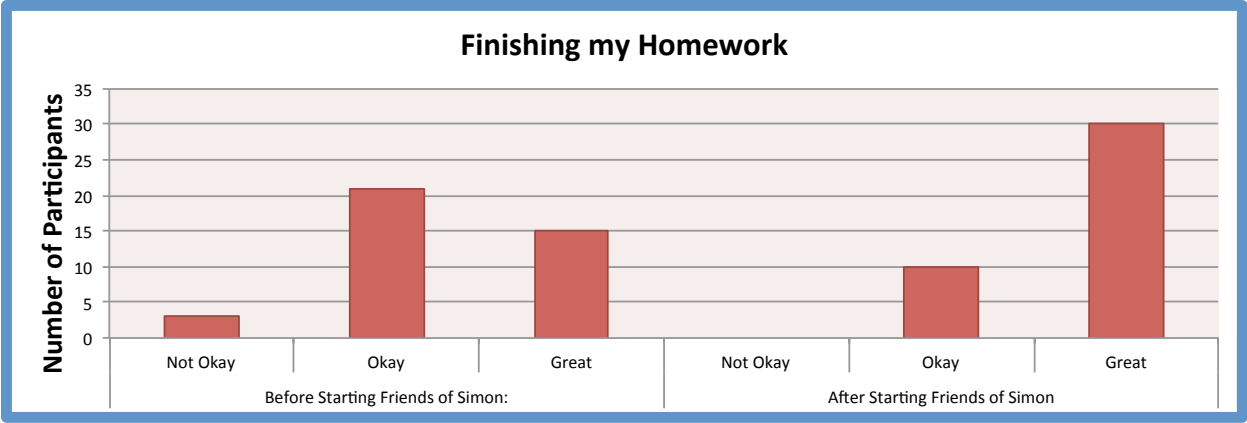
High school students from 5 sites responded to the “Friends of Simon Student Feedback Survey”. High school students continue to show growth in all areas, those of note being increases in understanding readings from class, finishing homework, and feelings about both being a part of their school community, and their feelings about the future.

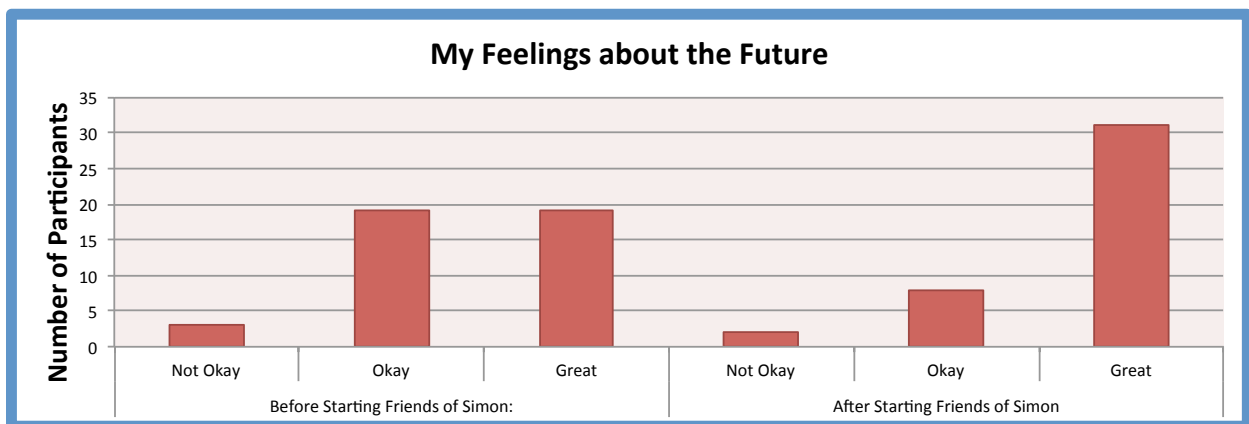
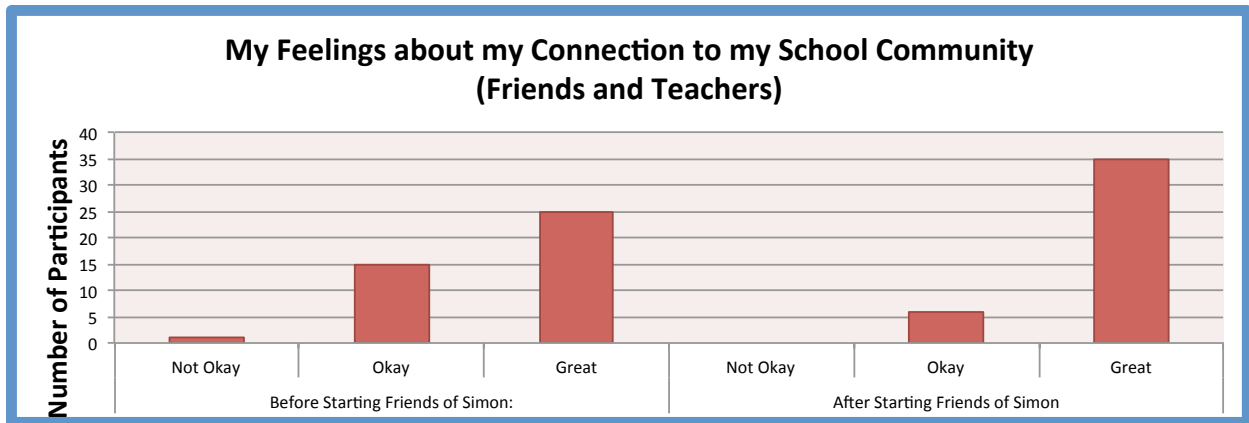
Data from high school sites is included below.

Student Surveys: High School Feedback









Parent Perspective

This year, parent surveys were returned from 35 elementary student parents, and 21 secondary student parents.

Elementary Parent Perspectives

The majority of parents surveyed (86%) say that their elementary school child enjoys attending the FOS program weekly. An overwhelming 94% indicated that FOS is helping their child do better in school.

In response to the question “How has FOS helped your child this year” on the Parent Survey, the highest scoring category that the FOS program helped with was reading and writing and/or math skills that the tutors assist with. Other high scoring categories were growth in students’ confidence at school, and understanding the school system better.

“My son never likes to leave on Mondays!”

Comment from Parent in Elementary Student Survey

Parent comments included a high degree of praise for the tutors' efforts in their child's academic success. Parents indicated their great appreciation of the one-on-one tutoring their children receive, and frequently shared the joy their children brought home to them after the program. Parent suggestions indicated that they would like to see more programming time with FOS tutors for their children during the course of the week, and that more children could be offered the opportunity to attend the program.

Secondary Parent Perspectives

The majority of secondary student parents surveyed (90%) indicated that their child enjoys attending the FOS program, and 86% said that the program was helping their child do better in school.

In response to the question "How has FOS helped your child this year?" on the Parent Survey, the highest scoring category that the FOS program helped with was helping with homework. Other high scoring categories were growth in students' confidence at school, and helping students do better on tests and exams.

"Please keep the program, it is really very helpful"

Comment from Parent in Secondary Student Survey

Few parent comments for suggestions were received, however the majority of the received comments indicated the parents desire for the FOS program to continue, and praise for the tutors in helping their child.

Tutor and Site Coordinator Perspectives

Tutors provided insight into their roles in the schools through both a focus group, and individualized surveys. Site coordinators were interviewed as part of school site visits that occurred during the months of May and June 2023.

Tutors indicated that the best part of their time with the students is building on their connections. Tutors returning to the program, and to specific school sites made special note of seeing the progress of the students over not just the length of one school year, but over the course of a number of years. Changes observed include but are not limited to growth in English language acquisition and fluency, as well as social-emotional growth, and increases in both academic progress, and interest in new subject areas. Site coordinators highlight similar gains in the students, in particular the increases in language proficiency, as well as growth in student friendships and homework support.

Constructive Use of Afterschool Time

All of the site coordinators praised the tutors for their approach with the students in providing a safe space for afterschool activities that was not as rigid as the regular school day. A number of site coordinators touched on the usefulness of having young tutors in the schools to connect with, and the ability to connect with other adults outside of their teachers. Site coordinators frequently spoke of the value of the program in their

schools, as many of the families accessing the program work long hours and often do not have the time in their schedules to assist their children with homework. Due to these efforts, and the fact that the FOS program is offered free of charge, the demand for more students to access the program remains high.

Building Healthy Relationships with Young Adults

Site coordinators spoke in high praise of the tutors for their efforts in building connections with students. It was frequently mentioned that tutors who speak the same first language as the students is quite helpful, as it allowed students who were struggling with the English language an opportunity to express themselves in a safe setting. Site coordinators noted that the tutors provide good role modelling to the students. While the time allotted to each site per week is limited, students generally look forward to their time with the tutors each week. The majority of the tutors commented on the importance of building a safe space for the students to still be students, and to not add additional stress into their lives. 100% of the tutors indicated that developing a mentoring relationship with each student was most important in helping to achieve social and emotional change in students.

Building Self Esteem and Confidence

Tutors report of working with students who are both lacking in confidence and self-esteem, as well as students who have plenty of both. The tutors themselves report a higher level of self-esteem gained over the course of the school year as they continue to learn and build on strategies to help their students. Site coordinators spoke highly of the growth seen in both the students and the tutors, and the willingness of the tutors to take and build on suggestions from the site coordinators when dealing with difficult situations.

Engagement in the Learning Process

FOS is a highly sought out program at all of the sites that were visited. Site coordinators spoke of the demand of the program from new members to the school community due to the results produced in the students. Tutors note that the variety of both literacy and math activities used throughout the year provide opportunities for students to both learn and socialize. Tutors note their abilities to adapt and adjust activities for students who may be struggling in one subject area or another, and frequently make use of the FOS Canvas page to share new strategies or ideas for learning. The learning process here is two-fold: the tutors impart their own learning onto the students, who in turn are able to use the tutor-taught skills in their own academic efforts in the classroom. When necessary, site coordinators will share relevant information about specific students to the tutors to assist with this process.

“Yes - when you spend time with them regularly, they feel better someone is there.”

FOS Tutor 2023, in response to the question “Does FOS improve hope and confidence levels in students?”

Academic Improvement

Tutors note that 1-1 time with students continues to be the most helpful in assisting students with academic improvement. This was evident during all of

the school site visits, as the tutors showed themselves to be dedicated and diligent when working with students on homework and prepared tutoring activities. 100% of tutors indicated that FOS does help students improve academically, and the activities they prepare are beneficial. Both tutors and site coordinators indicated that the biggest improvements seen in the students are their increases in comprehension of the English language.

Transition to a New Culture

The majority of the tutors felt that the FOS program assisted with a transition to the Canadian culture, however, not without some challenges. Tutors spoke of how their ability to communicate with students in their first language helped them build relationships and mitigate any cultural misunderstandings, such as learning opportunities stemming from making off-colour comment, and negative treatment of their peers from other cultures. A concerted effort was broadly made for students to learn more about the Canadian culture without discouraging the students' own cultures.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Overall, tutors are aware that they are working with diverse groups of students with a wide range of mental health needs. The tutors overall feel they have been adequately prepared to handle the range of needs that presents while working with students, nevertheless, they do indicate they would like additional training to better assist students with mental health needs. Tutors credit the training sessions they have had as a group as beneficial to helping these students, and also communicate strategies on how to handle specific situations in the online Canvas platform.

The Results: FOS Sites

At all FOS locations, the site coordinators spoke of great impact of having the tutors work with vulnerable students in their communities. Often the site coordinators are Settlement Workers In Schools (SWISS) and have experienced the immigrant experience themselves. Their own work with newcomer families stems from their desire to assist others who are attempting to navigate this process themselves, and consider their own role in school communities as important.

Site coordinators spoke of diligence of the tutors at each of the sites, and frequently the role modeling they provide the students. Site coordinators frequently mentioned that the students see the tutors as friends, and that they keenly await the arrival of the tutors for their weekly visits. It was also mentioned that having tutors who speak the same first language as the students is helpful, both in terms of communication as well as English language development. This has allowed the tutors to create strong bonds with the students in the populations they serve. Site coordinators also shared their praise for the FOS staff members who assist the tutors

“We love having the FOS tutors here!”
- Teacher at Chaffey-Burke site

All site coordinators mentioned the value of the FOS program in their communities, and inquired if more could be offered to their populations in terms of both additional tutors and more time slots for additional students to participate. As both new immigrants and refugees join these school communities, programs like FOS continue to be in high demand to reach these newcomer populations. Some site coordinators expressed an interest in seeing more tutors with strengths in math and science, in addition to a request to potentially recruit more tutors with a wider range of language comprehension, in particular for students who have emigrated from African countries.

The Results: FOS Tutors

Overall, in both the focus groups and tutor surveys, tutors report a high level of satisfaction in their roles. The tutors were in agreement that the training sessions, as well as the sharing of strategies and building of a community that they can access for support has been integral in their roles in the schools. FOS provides a valuable employment opportunity for undergraduate students who plan to enter the education sector, in addition to providing a meaningful opportunity to give back to communities who value and appreciate their efforts. Tutors who indicated that they do not plan to enter a career in education spoke of the invaluable experiences they have had as tutors, and the stepping stones that FOS offers them. The majority of the 2022-2023 tutors ranked their experience with FOS as a 10/10.

Most of the tutors ranked their experience with FOS this past school year as both positive and valuable. Some of the words the tutors used to describe their experience included enjoyable, exciting, enlightening, expansive, eventful, valuable, fulfilling, adventurous, rewarding, interesting, meaningful, constructive, fun and wonderful. Often, their own experiences as ESL learners helped give them necessary insight into helping the students at their sites.

Tutors, in their written reflections as well as evidenced during site visits, take great pride in their efforts with these students. The spoke of their confidence as they grew in their roles as tutors, especially those who have been part of this program for a number of years. Of frequent mention was the growth they witnessed in the students, specifically in terms of their levels of confidence, as well as language development.

Tutors were candid about both their training sessions as well as the online community of support offered through the Canvas page. They also spoke highly of both the program coordinators as well as the program assistants who they know they can reach out to at any time for assistance and guidance. Tutors

“I believe that our work has directed my future career goals. Working in some occupation that will benefit marginalized children and give them an equitable opportunity to thrive is something FOS has instilled in me that I will work towards.”

FOS Tutor, 2023

credited the training sessions as the most helpful part of FOS, as the sessions provided necessary support and strategies they continue to use at their sites.

Conclusion

Friends of Simon continues to achieve its mandate of serving in multicultural settings and contribution to the school success of newcomer students at the elementary, middle school and high school levels. Participating school communities continue to benefit from the FOS program, and students continue to show high levels of achievement as a result of their time with the tutors. As immigrants and refugees continue to access the program for their children, the program continues to remain in high demand with vulnerable populations.

The FOS program successfully re-implemented itself within schools this past year, as part of the changing dynamics surrounding the COVID 19 pandemic. This return was greatly evidenced by the tutors, the site coordinators, and often, the students



themselves accessing the program. Attendance levels attest to the effectiveness and value of the FOS program.

Tutors continue to benefit from the practical workplace experience that FOS provides them, which can be applicable to students who wish to enter the education sector, as well as those who wish to pursue employment in other areas. Above all, FOS provides an opportunity to give back to communities, an important feature of the job that many tutors mentioned. Most tutors indicated that FOS provides them a sense of belonging within the SFU campus community.

APPENDIX 1

United Way Survey Responses