

The Neighborhood Camp Fair

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Abstract

Participation by primary and secondary school students in STEM enrichment programs can increase a student’s GPA and affinity for STEM topics (Bradford et. al 2021, Galvez et. al 2024). However, there exists a need to connect and engage underrepresented students with STEM enrichment programs. Therefore, the Neighborhood Camp Fair aims to connect STEM programs with students attending Title I schools in Tallahassee, FL. Some ways the project tries to connect with students include creating colorful posters, distributing them to local Title I schools and community centers in Tallahassee, and participating in local STEM nights at schools. Additionally, we also worked to determine the effectiveness of previous Camp Fairs. To do this, we analyzed information from previous attendees of the Camp Fair and organized it into an excel sheet. The results of this analysis showed that most students who attended the Camp Fair left interested in attending a STEM program in the future. Because of this increase, this project suggests that the Neighborhood Camp Fair is successful in connecting underrepresented students with free STEM programs. In the future, additional work is needed to continue to promote the Neighborhood Camp Fair and continue to connect students in Tallahassee with STEM programming.

Background and Introduction

- Previous experiments completed (Bradford et. al 2021, Galvez et. al 2024, Kwon et. al 2021, Lehmeidi Dong et. al 2023) have found that participation in STEM immersion programs have led to higher GPAs, higher assessment scores, and improved attitudes towards STEM subjects.
- It can be difficult for families to find STEM immersion programs for their children, especially those in underserved communities.
- There is no one clear way or research that shows how to best connect underserved families with STEM immersion programs for their children.
- The Neighborhood Camp Fair in Tallahassee, Florida is one program that works to engage underrepresented students in Tallahassee with free and low-cost STEM programs.
- This program brings vendors from all over Tallahassee to one event hosted by a local school, where families can visit and learn more about programs that are available to their children.
- In our research, we also wanted to determine the effectiveness of previous Camp Fairs. Were children and families engaged with and interested in the programs presented to them? Was the Camp Fair itself accessible so as many families as possible could attend?



Figure 1. (left) Posters developed to advertise the Neighborhood Camp Fairs in 2025, for the March 1 and March 22 Events.

Methods

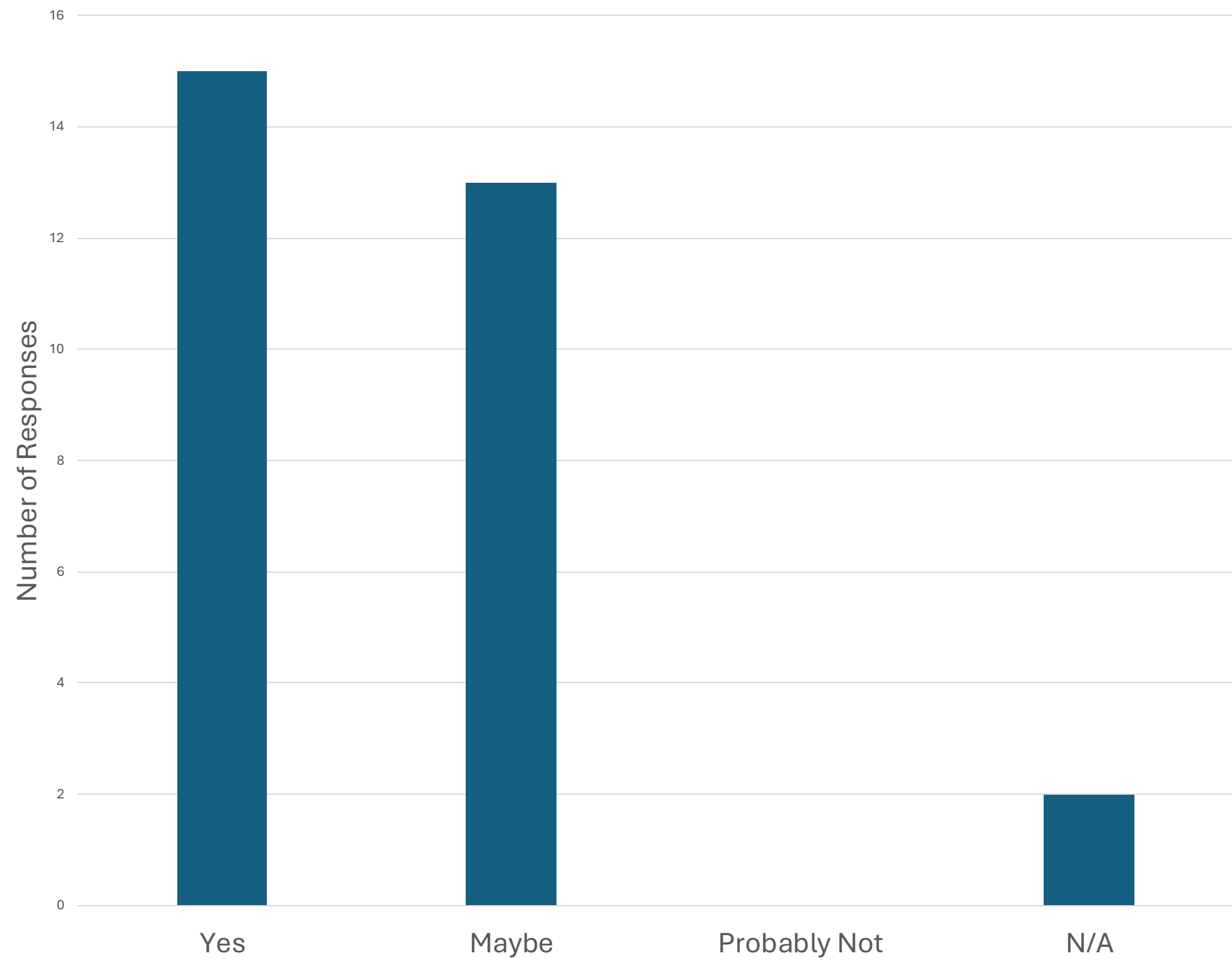


Figure 2. The results of exit survey question 3, which asks attendees if they planned to sign up for any of the programs represented at the event.



Picture 1. Participants of the Neighborhood Camp Fair.

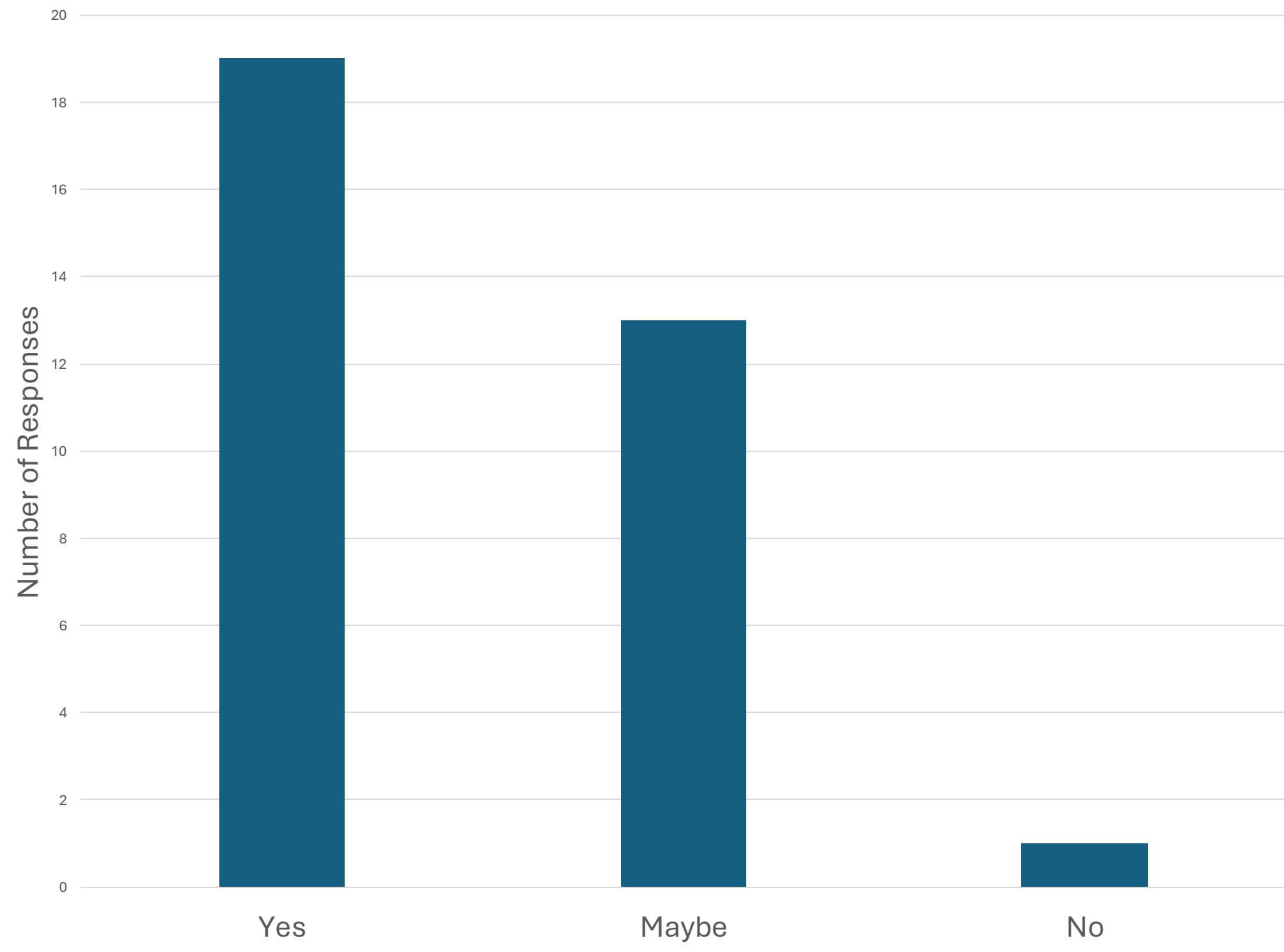


Figure 3. The results of exit survey question 6, which asks attendees if they planned to attend the Neighborhood Camp Fair in 2025.

- To increase engagement with the Camp Fair, flyers were developed and delivered to every Title I school in Tallahassee, as well as to Teen Centers and Libraries. (Figure 3)
- We determined the effectiveness of the Neighborhood Camp Fair by analyzing post-attendee surveys from last year’s Camp Fair.
- We looked at the responses to “are you planning to sign up for any of the camp or internship programs represented at the event?” Answers were either “Probably not,” “Yes – for one or two weeks, maybe more,” or “Maybe – for one or two weeks.”
- We also looked at the responses to whether attendees planned to go to the next year’s Camp Fair. Answers were either: “Yes,” “Maybe,” or “No.”
- We compiled the data and counted the responses in a Google Sheet to see how many students we engaged with STEM programs through the Camp Fair (Figures 1 and 2).

Results

- Aiming to determine the best way to connect underserved K-12 students in Tallahassee with free or reduced-price STEM programs, after analyzing the 2024 data, we found that attendees of the Neighborhood Camp Fair leave interested and engaged with a STEM program.
- In two surveys performed on two different days, out of 30 participants, 28 said that they were “maybe” or “definitely” interested in registering for a program that they found at the Camp Fair. This calculated to an 93.3% interest rate in STEM programming facilitated by the Camp Fair.
- Additionally, in these surveys, there was an interest in attending Neighborhood Camp Fair. Out of 33 participants, 32 responded “maybe” or “yes” to whether they plan to attend the 2025 Camp Fair.
- This is significant as these surveys suggest that the Camp Fair is achieving its goal of connecting and engaging students in Tallahassee with STEM programs.
- This data is limited by its response rate; not everyone who attended the Camp Fair responded to the survey, so the actual interest rate could differ.

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Resources

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