



UD x St HOPE Leadership Academy | Contract Closeout Debrief Report

Report Details

St HOPE Leadership Academy: Contract Closeout Debrief Report, October 13, 2026

Client	St HOPE Leadership Academy
Current contract	October 2025 to September 2026
Years working together	2 yrs 5 months
Communities served	Community School District: 05 Grades Served: 6th - 8th
Services provided	Canvassing, Digital Marketing, Events
Reporting period covered	November 2025 to September 2026
Data sources	St HOPE Dashboard Enrollment Summary Dashboard St HOPE Meta Ads Campaign Debrief

The Big Picture

Digital and Canvassing Outreach reached **1,108 families**, and **45 applications submitted** and **20 enrollments** have been confirmed so far. Digital outreach generated the majority of engagement with 815 total leads (19 applications and 14 enrollments), while field canvassing contributed 293 leads (26 applications and 6 enrollments).

Goals vs. Results (across all services)

UD exceeded its lead generation target by reaching 102% of the projected goal (1,108 actual vs. 1,079 projected), while securing 79 submitted applications (37% of the 212 application goal).

Measure	Projected	Actual	Prior year (if applicable) May 2024 - Sept 2025
Leads generated	1,079 Digital: 857 Canvassing: 222	1,108 Digital: 815 Canvassing: 293	1,243 Digital: 883 Canvassing: 360
Applications	212 Digital: 146 Canvassing: 66	79 Digital: 53 Canvassing: 26	56 total

Commented [1]: I'd like to confirm this breakdown with MP



Measure	Projected	Actual	Prior year (if applicable) May 2024 - Sept 2025
Enrollments	No Target	20 Digital: 14 Canvassing: 6	6 total
Lead-to-application rate	Digital: 15% Canvassing: 30%	7%	4.5%
App-to-enrollment rate	No Target	25% Digital: 26% Canvassing: 23%	11%

Lead goals are projections based on planned scope, available information, market conditions, and anticipated client participation. They are not guaranteed outcomes.

Results by workstream

Workstream	Key result	Strongest location, message, or tactic
Canvassing	● Leads collected: 293 ● Applications Processed: 26 ● Conversion rate: 8.9% ● Leads per shift: 2.3	Top Zip codes ● 10027: 167 of 293 leads (57%) ● 10039: 31 leads ● 10030: 31 leads ● 10037: 22 leads ● 10035: 20 leads
Digital marketing	● Leads: 815 ● Applications Processed: 53 ● Total Spend: \$67,222.10 ● Cost Per Lead: \$82.48 ● Impressions: 3,967,830 ● Reach: 2,617,976	A single long-running evergreen ad drove 60% of total leads for the year, but switching to Meta's Advantage+ creative in July improved both volume and cost efficiency (\$74.87/lead). Newer static graphics introduced in May and June delivered the best overall performance, achieving the account's lowest cost per lead (\$45.23–\$54.62) and highest click-through rates.
Events	● (Aug 29, 2026)	● Back to School event (Aug 29, 2026)



Workstream	Key result	Strongest location, message, or tactic
	13 leads 5 shifts, 2 Paper apps (Aug 3, 2026) 3 shifts, 7 Leads, , 1 Paper App	National Night Out (Aug 3, 2026)

Month	Shift goal	Shift actual	Shift %	Lead goal	Lead actual	Lead %	App goal	App actual	App %
Feb 2026	20	11	55%	40	28	70%	10	1	10%
Mar 2026	20	22	110%	40	55	138%	10	4	40%
Apr 2026	—	10	—	—	26	—	—	5	—
May 2026	10	10	100%	—	21	—	—	0	—
Jun 2026	10	9	90%	—	18	—	—	6	—
Jul 2026	10	4	40%	20	9	45%	4	2	50%
Aug 2026	24	26	108%	48	56	117%	10	4	40%
Sep 2026	12	28	233%	24	59	246%	—	4	—
Oct 2026*	20	6	30%	40	19	48%	—	0	—
Total	126	126	100%	212	226	107%	34	11	32%

ZIP	Canvassing records (HubSpot)	Share of total %
10027	169	56.80%
10030	32	10.50%
10039	30	10.50%
10037	23	7.50%
10035	20	6.80%
10026	15	5.10%
10031	2	1.40%
10032	1	0.70%
10455	1	0.30%
Total	293	100.00%



2. Overall Insights + Positive Signals

Strategic digital marketing and targeted field canvassing combined helped to surpass lead generation expectations, capturing 1,108 leads total leads and secured 79 applications.

What worked:

1. **Digital Marketing.** New static creatives introduced in May and June outperformed the evergreen creative and drove the lowest cost per lead for the campaign at around \$45.23 and \$54.62 respectively.
2. **Targeted Field outreach in Zip Code 10027.** This zip code yielded 169 of the total canvassing leads collected.
3. **Event Support.** Canvassing outreach focused at events yielded the majority of the paper applications collected in the field towards the end of the contract.

3. Challenges + Key Recommendations

#	Challenge + what the data shows	Key recommendation	Owner
1	One set of evergreen creative was reused for several campaigns from November through June.	Increase total creative in rotation Running 2–3 creative variants concurrently and shifting spend toward whichever is currently cheapest would avoid relying on any single ad for that long again.	Client
2	The average cost per lead was \$84.78 showing clear creative fatigue.	Shift more budget toward static graphics and Advantage+. Both approaches outperformed the long-running evergreen creative once tested, but arrived late (May–July). Give static graphics a dedicated budget instead of relying on Advantage+ to allocate it.	Client
3	<i>Opportunity (no challenge):</i> A single zip code generated 169 canvassing leads, significantly outperforming all other target areas.	Leverage high-performing routes in the top zip code as a blueprint to optimize street canvassing.	UD
4	<i>Opportunity (no challenge):</i> In-Person community events proved to be one of the top	Partner closely with the client on targeted events where field outreach can maximize community spaces that yield both high lead and paper applications.	UD



#	Challenge + what the data shows	Key recommendation	Owner
	drivers for paper applications collected during field outreach.		
5	<i>Leverage new website messaging and develop into outreach pillars</i>	Develop stronger canvassing + digital materials to speak to the unique offerings of St HOPE. Rotate in additional flyers to highlight seasonal approach (pre/post lottery)	UD
6	<i>Collect more parent response data</i>	Currently our team (when phone banking) receives more data around why a family refuses application rather than why they applied. We could incorporate data collection on the digital and canvassing lead form asking "what interests you most about St HOPE." We believe this will 1) give us a data informed approach to which messaging to use in our ads/flyers and 2) queue up more successful follow up calls.	UD/St HOPE
7	<i>Feed negative data back into digital audience</i>	When families refuse or don't answer, we can import them back into our digital audience to ensure we don't waste money retargeting them	UD
8	<i>Ongoing applicant engagement</i>	Underdog is considering if there are monthly or every other month opportunities for us to conduct phone/text outreach to each application post-lottery to 1) invite them to events 2) share updates 3) gather input or 4) support with registration in order to garner more excitement and commitment to enrolling in the fall	UD
9	<i>Mailer + return envelop/application</i>	We'd like to replicate another school's success with this tactic.	UD

Commented [3]: YES!

Thank you for your partnership with Underdog Strategies. We look forward to building on the lessons and successes from this recruitment cycle.



Discussion on Upcoming Proposal

1. Looking back

- Which result from this cycle mattered most to you and your leadership?
 - How flexible and how much UD adapts
 - UD is not a one size fits all and is able to adapt to different clients based on their specific needs by getting to know each client as best as they can
- What should we do more of, and what should we change?
 - Add spanish speaking outreach associate to follow up with SPANISH canvassing and digital leads

2. Goals for next year

- Enrollments grew from 6 last year to 20 this year. Should next year's goals focus on enrollments? If so, what number would feel like a win?
 - Continued growth and have a sense of what a realistic number for enrollment would be given the scope of St HOPE (being in central Harlem and being a middle school)
- How many seats are you hoping to fill, and do any grades need extra focus?
 - 130 and 160 for total enrollment
 - Currently the gap is 70-100 with 8th graders who are graduating

3. Outreach mix and budget

- Digital brought in about three-quarters of our leads, and canvassing brought in our in-person conversations. How should we balance the two next year?
 - Getting leads through the website and having them be directed into the dashboard
 - Meta, Google and a 3rd option (Spotify or 3rd party)
 - Would not recommend Bus Shelters as that is more brand awareness
 - MP to provide Ali with how much spend to allocate for attempting a new tactic for AN to come up with a proposal
- Zip code 10027 was our strongest area for canvassing. Should we build on that area, expand into new neighborhoods, or both?
 - Might be where there is more housing but that is where a lot of current enrollments in general are coming from rather than school zip of 10030
 - Continue to focus on 10027 but still go out in other areas of Harlem that have foot traffic
- Community events like Back to School and National Night Out produced strong in-person applications. Which events are already on your calendar for next year?
 - MP to get us any upcoming events such as Turkey Drives or Toys so we can get them on the calendar as soon as possible
- Is next year's budget likely to be about the same, higher, or lower? Are there funding cycles we should plan around?
 - MP will have answer by next Thursday definitively



- Similar amount to build on for now, but may have more budget
- Breakdown budget by season (Nov-Jan, etc)

4. Working together

- Fresh ad creative made a big difference this year - the new photos will be great and possibly enough to get us through the year, but we may want to budget for 1-2 school visits to capture more content.
 - Have team member or Ali come out to get testimonials from parents during parent teacher conferences or other event
 - Do a raffle for parents who participate by rating and giving testimonial on GreatSchools
 - AI agent search (asking Gemini and ChatGPT) “Tell me about St HOPE”, it will generate based off what websites say so it would be great to have families provide their testimonial on websites and rate the school
- Can we use your new website messaging in our flyers and ads? What do you most want families to know about St HOPE this cycle?
 - safe , students are supported and seen for who they are
 - Principal and staff knows every student’s name by the second day of school
 - HS placement session recently where current families keep stating that they wish St HOPE had a high school of their own
 - Love the small school and attention that each family gets
 - Parents know that drama will get “squashed” quickly
 - Students get into great high schools

5. New ideas

- After the lottery, would regular calls or texts to families be helpful? These could cover event invitations, school updates, and registration help.
 - Applicant calls to be kept in house but would like to explore add on of getting testimonials
 - Any successful initiatives at other schools, MP would be interested in reviewing to do at St HOPE and trying to squeeze into budget
- Would you be open to piloting a mailer with a return application envelope?
- Is there anything you’d like us to try that we haven’t yet?

6. Next steps

- Who else should weigh in on next year’s proposal?
- When would you like to receive it, and when should the new contract start?
 - Starting in November
 - AN to send proposal by end of next week
- Would you like one recommended plan or a few options at different budget levels?