

MOSAIC OF ACCESS ON CAMPUS

A Visual Representation of the Complexities of Access

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INTRODUCTION

The Center for Accessible Academic Resources (CAAR), works to create an inclusive learning experience for all Salem State students. Located in the Frederick E. Berry Library, CAAR's office offers students academic and campus accommodations, disability access, Peer Tutoring, and Supplemental Instruction (SI). By collecting and analyzing data on student familiarity and participation in different programs offered by CAAR, the project aims to visualize student engagement levels using interactive art boards. Each interaction is represented by a colorful piece of glass tile that allowed measurable insights into student awareness. The findings will guide further outreach strategies and can improve the visibility of CAAR on campus.

INTERNSHIP PROJECT OBJECTIVE

- The project's objective was to assess and enhance the awareness of the CAAR office on campus and its academic support services through interactive engagement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a proactive framework for creating inclusive classes. The findings reveal a crucial paradox: while professional development successfully increases faculty knowledge and comfort with UDL, there is still significant institutional and attitudinal resistance preventing its widespread adoption. It identifies the specific barriers and necessary support structures required to realize UDL's potential, effectively outlining the path toward greater equity (Moretini et al., 2025). One source uses a mixed-methods approach to analyze the actual experiences associated with the current accommodation model at a university. The evidence shows the importance of a proactive approach of Universal Design instead of a reactive approach. The research is crucial because it shows that while university academic accommodations may be legally correct, the system fails culturally as students still face significant stigma that harms their interactions with faculty and peers. This finding highlights a need to move beyond mere compliance to address the negative social experience of students with disabilities. By demonstrating the need to integrate Universal Design principles directly into curriculum and assessment design to mitigate stigma and benefit all learners (Edwards et al., 2022)

MATERIALS & METHODS

PREPARATION & MATERIALS

- Order colorful glass tiles, 3 wooden boards, and adhesive film.
- Developed 15 questions regarding the main services of CAAR (Disability Services, Academic accommodations, peer tutoring, and SI). Printed questions and designated 5 questions to each board.
- Each printed question was taped to a box of tiles allowing students to read the question, and if they answered 'yes,' they placed the specific color tile on the board.



MATERIALS & METHODS

TABLING LOCATIONS

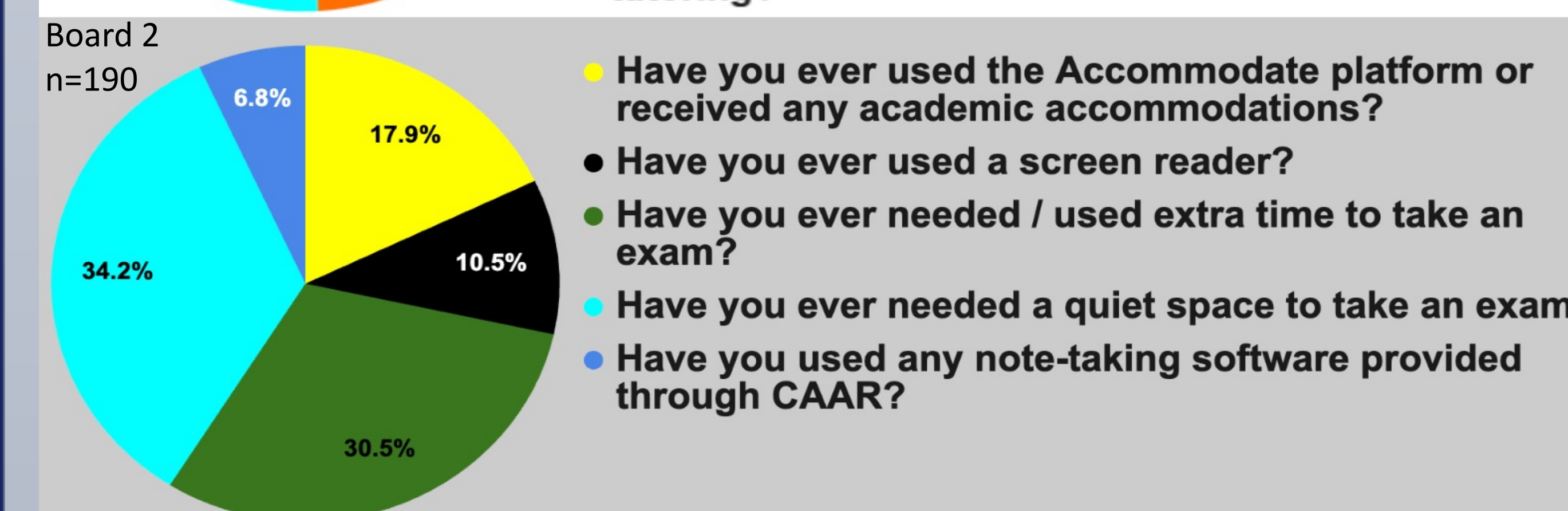
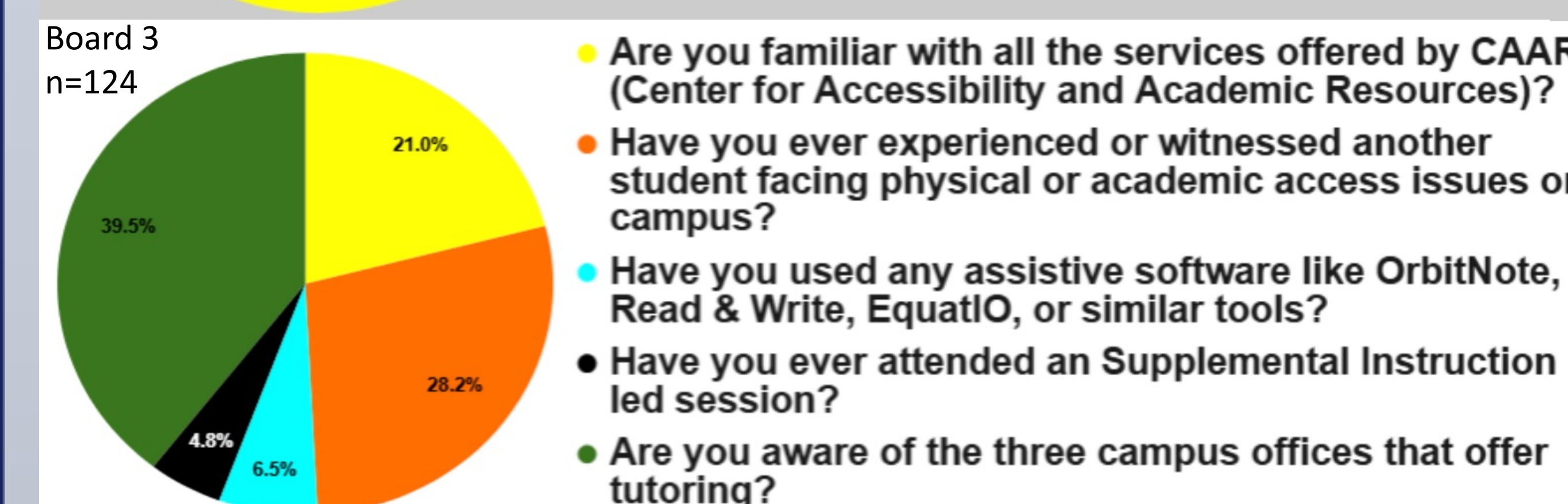
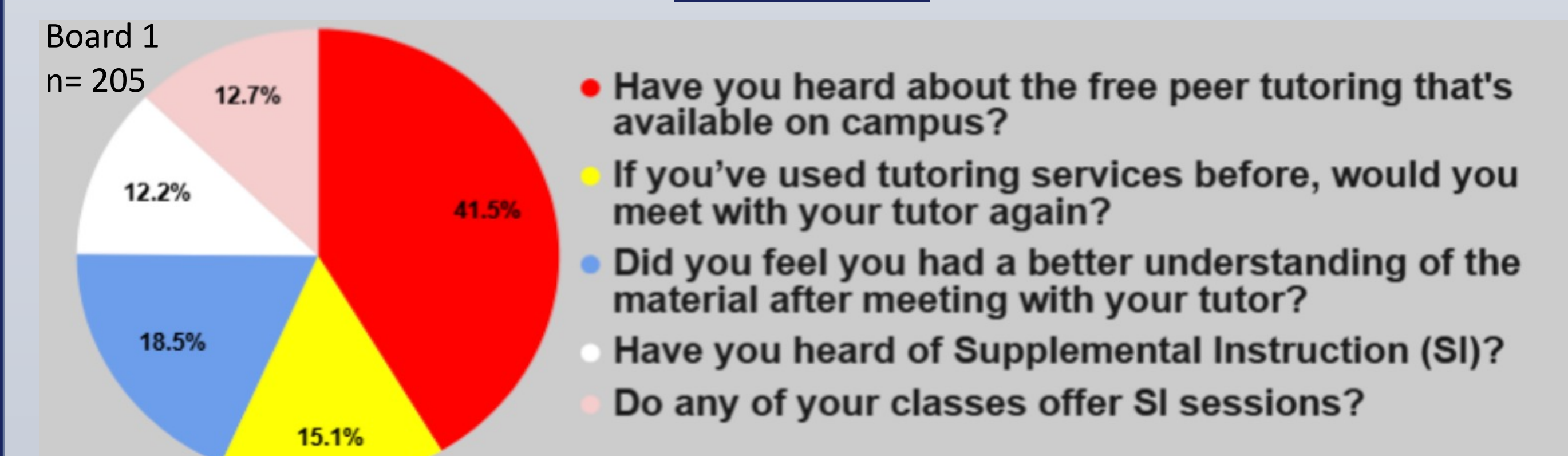
- The Frederick E. Berry Library, Meier Hall, the Viking Dining Hall, the Harrington Building, and the O'Keefe Sports Complex.

METHODS

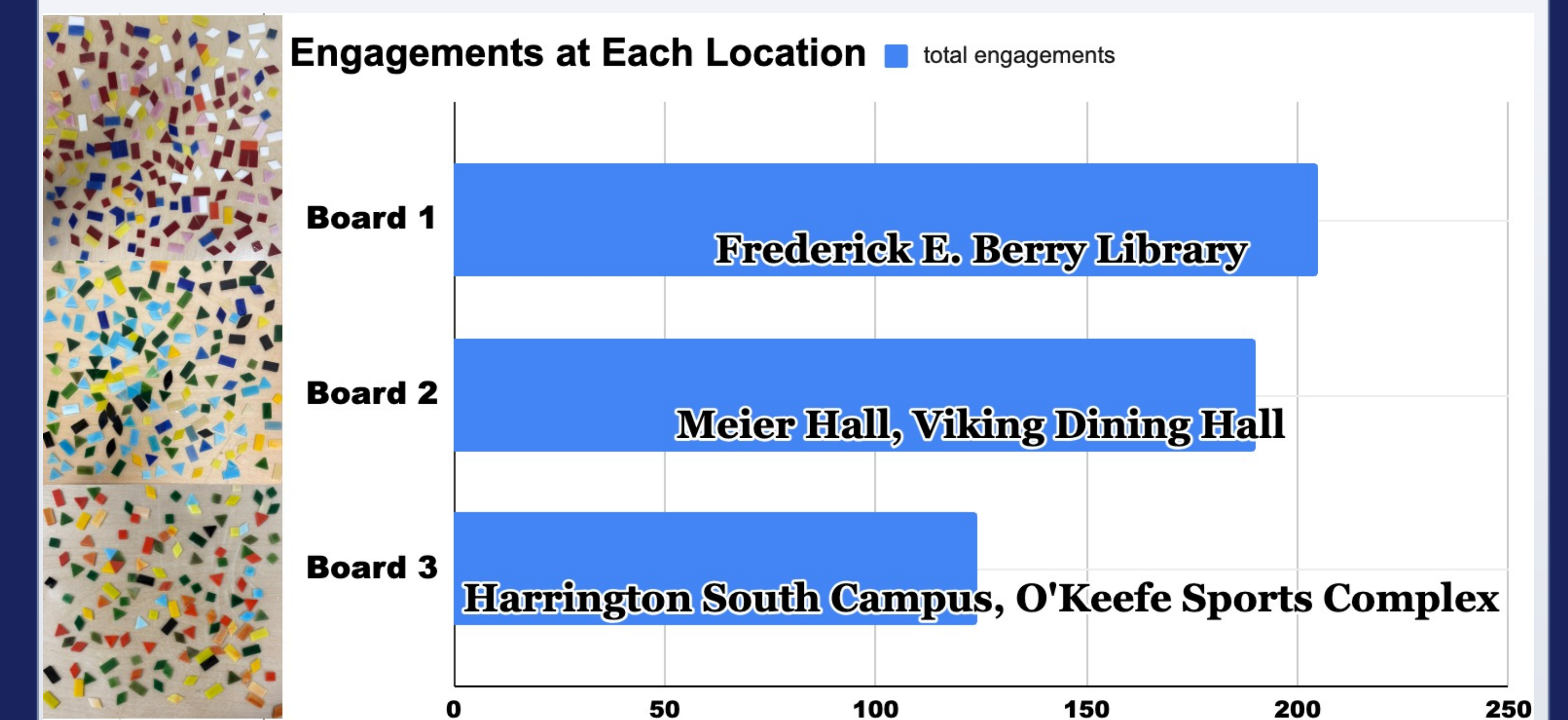
- One board and a set of 5 questions was set up at each location alongside the corresponding colorful glass tiles.
- Each tile placed by a student answering 'yes,' represents one student engagement, as some students used multiple services.
- Per the 5 questions, the appropriate QR codes and printouts were set up. Students who answered 'no,' were offered QR codes, printouts on CAAR, and answers to any questions regarding the organization.



RESULTS



RESULTS

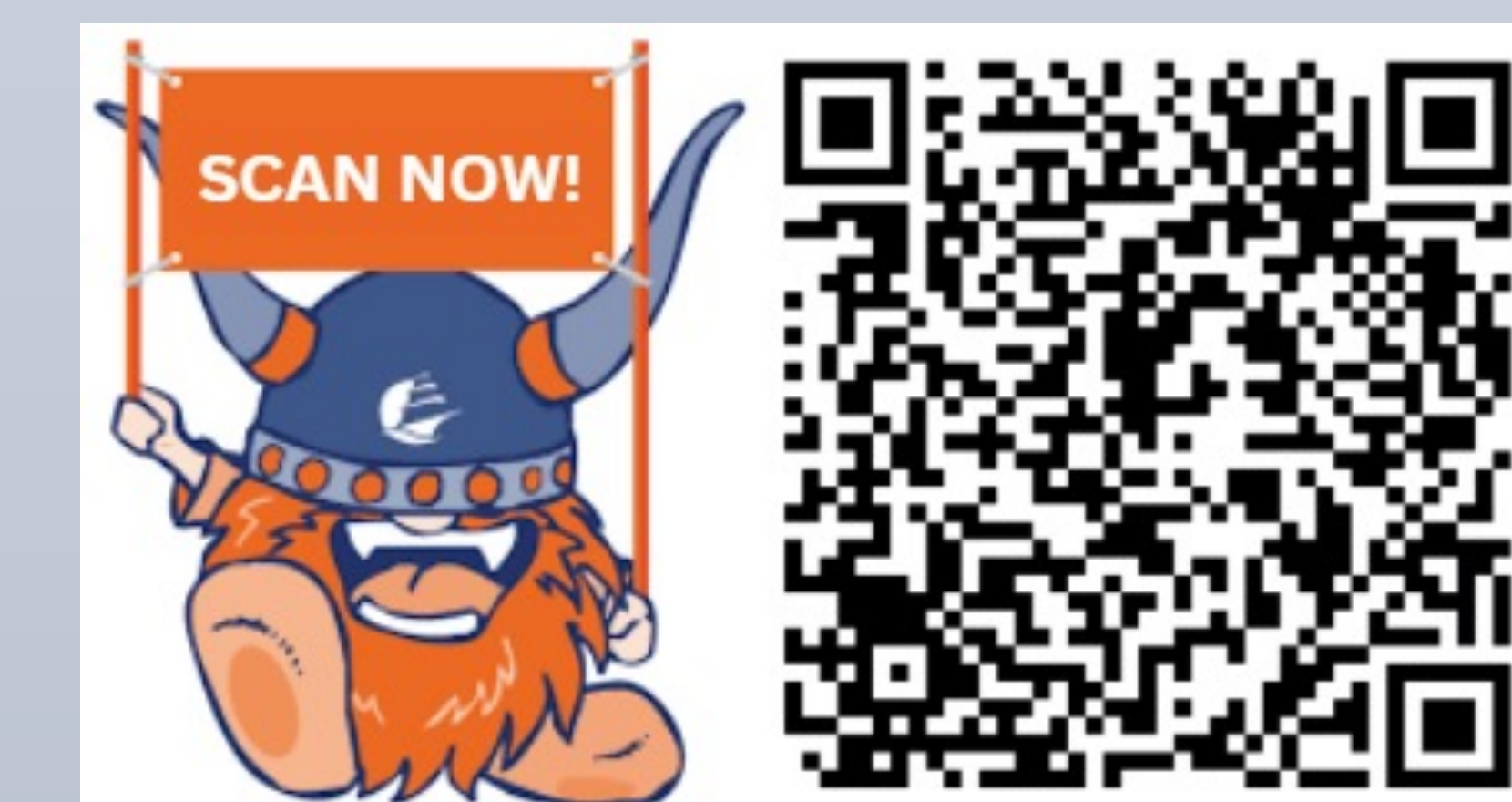


CONCLUSIONS

After leaving the board in the CAAR office for further participation, the tiles displayed student awareness and use of CAAR's services. Board 3 still lacked tiles, so white tiles were added after the fact for purposes of grouting for the art. Across all the locations on campus, student engagement showed a strong familiarity with tutoring but expressed lower awareness of specific accommodations, assistive technologies, and the broader range of CAAR resources.

Engagements varied by site, with academic buildings generating the highest participation. Students often hesitated to place a tile down if they were with a friend, especially at the O'Keefe Sports Complex. In fact, students who used more than one service made a point to joke about needing the service emphasizing the shame students feel when needing or utilizing CAAR's services. The project highlighted the strengths and gaps in students' current understanding of CAAR and the stigma on campus surrounding its services. The interactive method allowed for capturing engagement data in real time and initiating conversations about academic resources and their accessibility to students.

REFERENCES



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