

**RESULTS OF THE AISD HIGH SCHOOL EXIT SURVEY  
CLASS OF 2009**



Austin Independent School District  
Department of Program Evaluation

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# Austin Independent School District

## Department of Program Evaluation

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### RESULTS OF THE AISD HIGH SCHOOL EXIT SURVEY

#### CLASS OF 2009

The sixth annual Austin Independent School District (AISD) High School Exit Survey was administered online to seniors in every AISD high school during Spring 2009. Facilitators on each campus, primarily Project ADVANCE counselors, were responsible for ensuring that all graduating seniors were given the opportunity to complete the survey. Most seniors completed the survey online; however, some seniors at Austin, McCallum, and LBJ were unable to do so due to inadequate computer facilities. These seniors completed a paper version of the survey, and the facilitator entered their responses into the survey database by hand.

This report contains the results for the entire AISD Class of 2009. Where available, longitudinal data are presented to allow for a comparison with 2009 responses. Arrows beside results indicate statistically meaningful changes from one year to the next; the direction of the arrow indicates the direction of change.<sup>1</sup> In total, 3,365 seniors in the Class of 2009 completed the survey. With a few exceptions, the ethnic and gender distribution of the district survey sample once again closely resembled that of the district’s senior class, indicating the results can be considered representative of the entire senior class population (for more details see Appendix).

The report is structured as follows. First, a brief summary of key findings from the 2009 High School Exit Survey is provided. This summary is followed by a selection of open-ended student comments that capture the predominant themes that emerged from the student comments. Last, the detailed, item-specific results for each question from the survey are presented.

**Table 1. High School Exit Survey Response Rates, Classes 2007-2009**

	2007	2008	2009
All high schools	82.0%	74.8%	78.8% ↑

Seniors’ responses were organized into seven general topics areas: Open-Ended Comments; Postsecondary Intentions and Family Support; High School Experiences, Campus Climate, and Civic Engagement; Instruction and Technology; Postsecondary Preparation and Advising; and Final Thoughts. Some of the significant findings from the 2009 High School Exit Survey are presented in the following pages.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix B for the formula used to determine statistical significance.

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR THE CLASS OF 2009

### POSTSECONDARY INTENTIONS AND FAMILY SUPPORT

- Ninety-three percent of seniors reported plans to continue their education within a year of graduation, a statistically insignificant increase over prior years. However, the percentage of students who reported they were planning to enter the military increased significantly for the Class of 2009, compared with results for the Class of 2008 (3.9% and 2.8%, respectively).
- The percentage of students who reported they intended to work part time or full time decreased significantly from 2008 to 2009.
- Among those students who indicated they did not intend to continue their education after graduation, the most common reason provided was that they could not afford to attend school (33%). This was a dramatic increase (16 percentage points) compared with data from the Class of 2008.
- Seniors from the Class of 2009 reported lower levels of parental involvement for each measure of how frequently parents participated in school-related activities. The declines were particularly pronounced in the frequency with which parents volunteered at school and participated in school leadership activities. However, the response options for this item were modified from the Class of 2008 survey; thus, it is indeterminate whether these declines are an artifact of this change.

### HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCES, CAMPUS CLIMATE, AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- Nearly 60% of graduating seniors reported participating in sports during high school; this was the highest participation rate for any type of extracurricular activity. On average, seniors spent more time per week participating in sports than in any other activity.
- Approximately two-thirds of graduating seniors worked during the summer and/or during their senior year. Among those who were employed during the summer or the school year, the majority worked 16 or more hours per week. The percentage of students who reported they worked more than 16 hours per week during the summer or school year increased markedly from 2008 to 2009.

### INSTRUCTION AND TECHNOLOGY

- Graduating seniors rated the quality of instruction they received in writing, mathematics, science, foreign languages, science, social studies, computer/technology, and performing/fine arts similarly to the rating given by seniors in the Class of 2008. For each of these subject areas, at least 64% of respondents rated the quality of instruction as *Good* or *Excellent*.
- Compared with previous graduating classes, significantly fewer seniors in the Class of 2009 reported using a computer once a week or more at home. Also, seniors in the Class of 2009 were less likely than were seniors in previous years to report using a computer to communicate with teachers and to participate in online communities (e.g., Facebook).
- Approximately 33% of seniors reported their parents used GradeSpeed/ParentConnect to monitor their grades.

### **POSTSECONDARY PREPARATION AND ADVISING**

- Compared with previous graduating classes, fewer seniors in the Class of 2009 reported feeling well prepared to meet their college and career goals.
- Significantly more students in the Class 2009, compared with seniors in the Class of 2008, took the following steps to prepare for continuing their education:
  - Visited college campuses
  - Completed Austin Community College (ACC) courses
- However, significantly fewer students in the Class 2009, compared with seniors in the Class of 2008, completed the following steps:
  - Took the PSAT examination
  - Attended college fairs
  - Took college entrance tests
  - Took test prep classes
  - Ordered and submitted transcripts
- More seniors in the Class of 2009, compared with seniors in the Class of 2008, reported having applied to business/technical/vocational school.
- The college preparation program in which the largest percentage of seniors participated was ACC College Connections, followed by Project ADVANCE. The percentage of students who indicated they had participated in Project ADVANCE decreased significantly from 2008 to 2009.
- More students (8 percentage points) in the Class of 2009, compared with seniors in the Class of 2008, indicated they did not apply for financial aid.
- For members of the Class of 2009, future college/career goals was the most important factor that encouraged them to finish high school, followed by parental expectations.

### **ADDITIONAL RESULTS**

- Compared with the Class of 2008, fewer seniors in the Class of 2009 reported their future college/career goals as the factor that motivated them the most to stay in school and graduate.
- More seniors in 2009 than in 2008 said their parents' expectations were the main factor that kept them going until graduation.

### **SUMMARY AND SYNTHESIS OF KEY FINDINGS**

Several important patterns emerged from the analysis of responses to the 2009 High School Exit Survey. First, the percentage of seniors who reported that they worked 16 or more hours a week during the summer prior to their senior year or during their senior year jumped sharply, from 45% to 50% and 35% to 44%, respectively. Further investigation is required to explore how increased participation in the workforce impacted student academic performance and, ultimately, their preparedness for enrolling in a postsecondary institution. Second, and potentially related to the increased percentage of students working more hours, the percentage of students who reported completing many of the prerequisites for transitioning to a postsecondary institution declined.

However, these declines corresponded to an increase in the percentage of students who had taken Austin Community College (ACC) courses and who had applied to a business/technical/vocational school.

Last, the cost of education emerged as a factor influencing postsecondary enrollment plans. Although the percentage of students who planned to continue their education remained stable, the most common reason for foregoing continuing education cited by students who did not plan to pursue further education was postsecondary education often seemed unaffordable. Further, the most common reason seniors did not complete a FAFSA was they were unaware of the financial aid process (36%). This finding suggests high school and district staff should bolster financial aid awareness campaigns to ensure seniors are aware of the myriad postsecondary funding opportunities available.

The continuing development of the High School Advisory program for the 2009-2010 school year was undertaken, in part, to counteract this lack of awareness. The Advisory program, functioning optimally, is tailored to closely monitor students' progress in navigating the process of applying to a postsecondary institution. A more comprehensive and detailed evaluation of the High School Advisory program can be found in the 2008-2009 Student Advisory Evaluation, which can be found here: <http://www.austinisd.org/inside/accountability/evaluation/reports.phtml>



## INDIVIDUAL ITEM RESPONSES FOR ALL AISD HIGH SCHOOLS

### OPEN-ENDED COMMENTS

The responses in this section are to the question “What is the ONE thing that you especially want the administration of AISD to know?”

Fifty percent ( $n = 1,688$ ) of seniors provided comments<sup>2</sup>; of these, 26% were negative, 23% were positive, and the remainder were neutral or difficult to categorize as unambiguously negative or positive. In line with open-ended comments from prior years, many seniors in 2009 complained about the dress code and lunch options (e.g., limited food choices and quality of food). In addition, students at several campuses reiterated the complaints made by previous classes about the condition of their school. Furthermore, several students asked simple questions about preparing for college, revealing unfamiliarity with the college application process. Many students also expressed unhappiness with the how the advisory program operated in their school. Another common thread among respondents was their gratitude towards campus staff for their support throughout their high school tenure. Lastly, many seniors complained about the strict rules governing cell phone and Internet use on their campuses.

#### Advisory Period

Seniors’ reports about advisory period were overwhelmingly negative, a finding consistent with 2008 responses. In 2009, 45 students referenced the Advisory program in their open-ended comments. Only 4% of their responses were categorized as positive. Seniors felt the time devoted to advisory was poorly used. According to one senior, “Community Seminar has proved to be a waste of school funds. It has not, in my experience, helped make new friends or understand the college application process at all.” Another student said, “Get rid of seminar. I love my seminar teacher, but nobody I talk to gets anything out of it. It’s just a waste of 25 minutes and cuts back our time for lunch.” Yet another stated, “The newly enforced advisory class for freshmen through seniors seems a bit unnecessary [*sic*]. Advisory has been somewhat unproductive and not fulfilling of the expectations that AISD has set for it. My personal advisory teacher was better than most, and he did make the weekly period as enjoyable as possible for us. However, many of my friends complained of the lack of enthusiasm and interest by the teachers of these classes. Advisory is good for freshmen and sophomores, who might need help adjusting to high school, but I don’t think that it is completely necessary [*sic*] for upperclassmen to participate in.”

#### Building and Physical Environment

Many seniors criticized the condition of the bathrooms and other facilities. One senior remarked, “The bathrooms really need remodeling.” Another student said, “Better facilities!!!!!!\_x000D\_, Especially BATHROOMS!”

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<sup>2</sup> All quotes are taken directly from the survey. Examples are given to illustrate common themes.

### **College Readiness and Preparation**

Many seniors posed basic, fundamental questions about the steps necessary to prepare and attend college. For instance, one student wrote, “i need help. im just tryn to get out of highschool college is the best choice right now but idk where to start.” Another student inquired, “How would i know if college is right for me?” Another student recommended starting the preparation process earlier: “Get more information out for students so that people could know more when applying. And get the information out earlier then senior year.” Lastly, one student stated, “Provide more information about college to regulars classes.”

### **Technology Restrictions**

Many students objected to what they considered to be excessive rules controlling technology and cell phone use. According to one student, “The strict rules with cell phones and ipods are absolutely ridiculous. One should not have to turn in a cell phone for two days AND pay money to get it back for the first offense. A student should not have to give the phone to the office for X amount days after already being suspended for the issue.” Another student wrote, “Chill the HELL out over outdated school rules. We’re a new generation and you need to adapt.” Yet another student wrote, “The rules regarding electronics are silly, and I’m pretty sure you guys know that.” Lastly, one student wrote, “Well being a student like all others I am irritated by all the rules that have been bestowed upon the student body. Such as the Ipod rule. If it is during an off period or nothing is being done in the class at the time I find it FULLY acceptable to be able to use an Ipod. DURING lectures and busy work I completely understand that it is distracting. Other than this I see no reason for the rule. This, with a lot of other rules, is much of an annoyance to all of us. The only thing I have to say is when these rules are being considered think to yourselves ‘How will this rule benefit the student?’ If you cannot think of anythig [*sic*] then the rule should not be in place.”

### **Support from Campus and District Staff**

A common sentiment expressed by respondents was their appreciation for the assistance and support campus and district staff provided. According to one student, “I’d want the administration of AISD to know that they’ve done a great job in providing me and my fellow classmates with numerous scholarship opportunities.” Another student wrote, “One thing that i [*sic*] would want the sdministration [*sic*] of AISD would be that the school is trying there [*sic*] best.” In addition, another student wrote, “I’m grateful that there were teachers at my school who were available at all times to help me out when I needed it. I had teachers who were more than willing to write me recommendation letters for any scholarships and college applications.”

**POSTSECONDARY INTENTIONS AND FAMILY SUPPORT**

**Table 2. Within a Year After Graduating from High School, What do you plan to do? (Item 6)**

	2007	2008	2009
Continue my education*	89.0%	92.2%	93.1%
Go into the military	2.6%	2.8%	3.9% ↑
Be a full-time parent	2.2%	2.2%	1.7%
Work full-time	13.2%	13.5%	11.7% ↓
Work part-time	35.5%	41.1%	32.9% ↓
No plans	5.6%	2.4%	2.3%

*Note.* Respondents could select more than one option, so percentages may not total 100%.

\* Item was recoded to match longitudinal data. In 2008, this was two items: “Attend a school or college for a business, technical, trade, or vocational certificate” and “Attend a college or university for a degree.” The percentage represents all students who chose either or both options.

**Table 3. If you are not Planning to Pursue Further Education at This Time, What are Your Primary Reasons? (Item 7)**

	2007	2008	2009
Cannot afford to attend school	30.6%	16.9%	33.0% ↑
Childcare or family responsibilities	9.8%	14.9%	11.4%
Don't like attending school	22.4%	19.4%	17.6%
Grades/test scores aren't high enough	23.0%	16.5%	21.6%
Don't feel academically prepared	15.8%	13.7%	17.0%
Need income to support myself	34.4%	21.8%	28.4%
Need income to support others	10.4%	6.0%	10.8%
Other	16.8%	22.6%	12.9% ↓

*Note.* Respondents could select more than one option, so percentages may not total 100%.

**Table 4. If you are not Planning to Pursue Further Education at This Time, do you Intend to Pursue it at a Later Time? (Item 8)**

	2007	2008	2009
Probably or definitely yes	61.7%	59.2%	66.2%
Maybe	20.6%	19.3%	24.1%
Probably or definitely no	6.2%	10.5%	4.2% ↓
Don't know	11.5%	11.0%	5.6% ↓

*Note.* Response options were collapsed for ease in reporting.

**Table 5. To What Extent Were Your Parents Involved In The Following School-Related Things? (Item 9)**

<i>*Percentage who responded parents were involved at least Occasionally</i>	2007	2008	2009	
Volunteering at your school	38.6%	40.0%	30.3%	↓
Working with you on homework or school projects	54.8%	54.6%	46.8%	↓
Helping you decide what classes to take	60.1%	60.2%	53.4%	↓
Attending school meetings	57.4%	54.9%	45.9%	↓
Communicating with your teachers	59.6%	60.6%	52.1%	↓
Participating in school leadership opportunities	.	29.0%	17.9%	↓
Attending athletic events	.	58.8%	51.5%	↓
Attending academic events and competitions	.	36.9%	25.4%	↓
Attending performance events	.	53.3%	45.0%	↓
Joining and participating in the PTA	.	27.1%	16.5%	↓

*Note.* Missing values, denoted by a period, indicate the item was not included on the respective year's survey.

\*Percentages represent the number of students reporting parents were involved at least *Occasionally*. Response options were *Never*, *Rarely*, *Occasionally*, and *Often*. In 2008, *Consistently* was an additional response option; in 2009, it was removed. Thus, results may not be equivalent between years.

**Table 6. How Far Did Your Parents Go In School? Indicate Your Mother And Father's Highest Level Of Education. (Item 12)**

	Mother 2007	Mother 2008	Mother 2009	Father 2007	Father 2008	Father 2009	Sibling 2007*	Sibling 2008*	Sibling 2009	
Did not finish high school	17.4%	18.6%	19.2%	18.5%	17.9%	19.6%	.	.	11.2%	
Graduated from high school or earned a GED	22.1%	17.4%	19.2%	19.6%	16.9%	17.4%	.	.	22.9%	
Attended a 2-yr community/junior college or vocational/technical school, but no degree	9.4%	8.6%	7.6%	6.9%	6.5%	4.7%	↓	.	10.3%	
Graduated from a 2-yr community/junior college or vocational/technical school	5.4%	5.4%	4.9%	4.6%	3.9%	3.9%	.	.	3.6%	
Attended a 4-yr college, but did not complete a degree	7.1%	28.1%	7.1%	↓	6.6%	26.3%	7.1%	↓	.	8.0%
Graduated from college	19.8%	0.0%	21.1%	↑	17.5%	0.0%	19.6%	↑	.	15.5%
Completed a Master's degree or equivalent	10.6%	12.1%	10.6%	12.1%	12.5%	11.7%	.	.	3.5%	
Completed a Ph.D., M.D., or other advanced professional degree	3.1%	3.8%	3.9%	5.4%	6.4%	7.1%	.	.	1.4%	
Don't Know or Does Not Apply	5.2%	6.0%	6.4%	8.6%	9.6%	9.0%	.	.	23.6%	

Note. Missing values, denoted by a period, indicate the item was not included on the respective year's survey.

\* New response option in 2009

**HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCES, CAMPUS CLIMATE, AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

**Table 7. How Many Different High Schools Have You Attended? (Item 3)**

	2007	2008	2009	
1	76.1%	77.6%	70.1%	↓
2	16.8%	16.8%	18.4%	
3 or more	7.2%	5.6%	11.5%	↑

**Table 8. Please Indicate The Number Of Years Of High School In Which You Participated In Each Of These Extracurricular Activities. (Items 13 & 15)**

<i>*Percentage who reported at least 1 year of participation</i>	2008	2009	
<i>In school</i>			
Music	35.1%	33.6%	
Theater	20.4%	18.6%	
Dance	23.2%	22.1%	
Sports	58.8%	57.9%	
UIL academic competitions	18.8%	20.0%	
Speech/debate	21.2%	20.9%	
Student government	16.4%	16.3%	
Career and technical student organizations	.	14.5%	
<i>Outside school</i>			
Music	30.3%	30.5%	
Theater	11.7%	7.9%	↓
Dance	17.0%	15.0%	↓
Sports	52.0%	50.9%	
Community service/volunteering	57.1%	62.1%	↑
Environmental project/activities	25.4%	28.0%	↑
Boy/Girl Scouts	8.9%	8.0%	
Family care	19.8%	22.4%	↑

*Note.* Missing values, denoted by a period, indicate the item was not included on the respective year's survey.

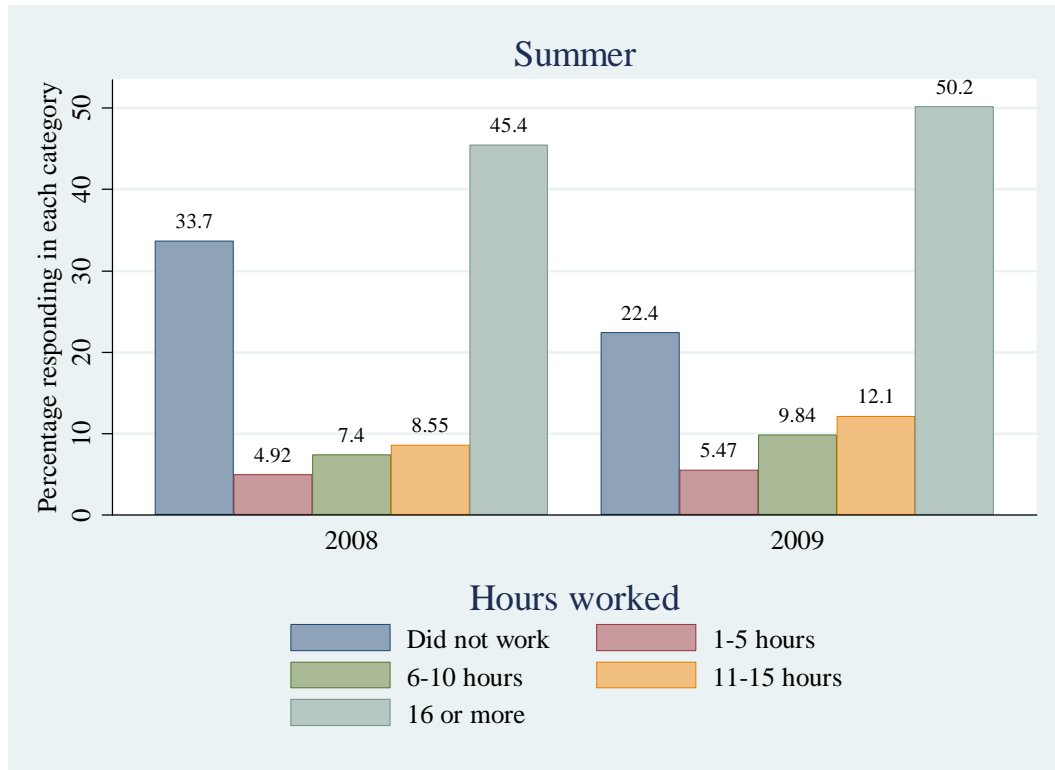
\*Respondents could select more than one option, so percentages may not total 100%. Percentages refer to seniors who reported at least 1 year of participation.

**Table 9. For Each of These Extracurricular Activities, did you Spend More Than 10 Hours per Week During Your Senior Year on Them? (Items 14 & 16)**

<i>*Percentage of seniors indicating they spent more than 10 hours per week on each activity.</i>	2009
<i>Inside school</i>	
Music	8.0%
Theater	3.2%
Dance	3.8%
Sports	23.4%
UIL academic competitions	2.3%
Speech/debate	1.3%
Student government	0.9%
Career and technical student organizations	2.3%
<i>Outside school</i>	
Music	6.6%
Theater	1.5%
Dance	2.9%
Sports	19.1%
Community service/volunteering	6.3%
Environmental project/activities	1.8%
Boy/Girl Scouts	0.6%
Family care	7.2%

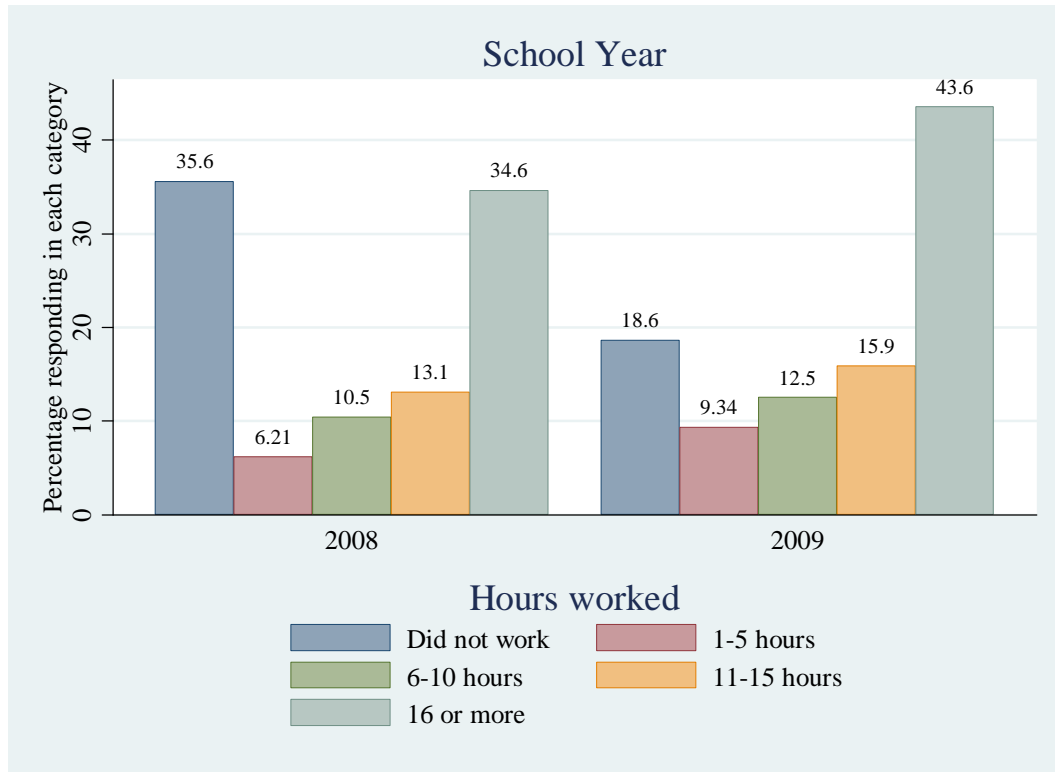
\* Respondents could select more than one option, so percentages may not total 100%. Percentages refer to seniors who reported at least 1 year of participation.

**Figure 1. Now Indicate the Number of Hours per Week That you Have Worked During Last Summer. (Q18a)**





**Figure 2. Now Indicate the Number of Hours per Week That you Have Worked During Last School Year. (Q18b)**



**Table 10. Please Indicate The Number Of Years Of High School That You Have Been Employed (Either During The Year Or During The Summer). (Item 17)**

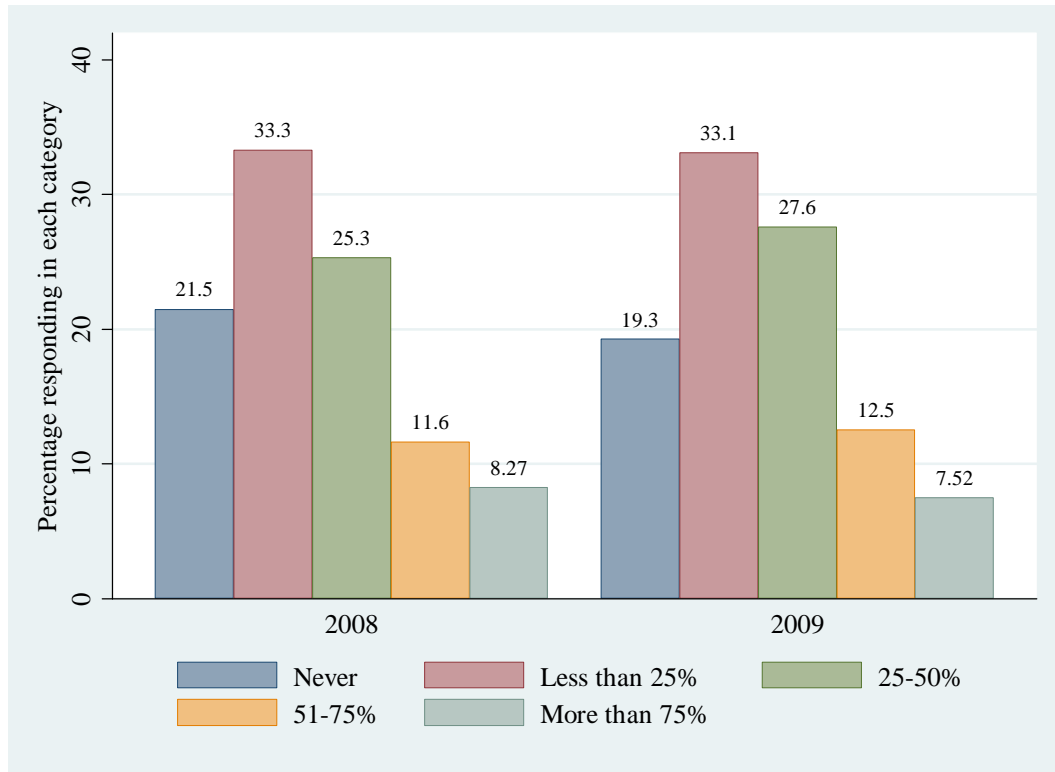
	2008	2009
0	24.4%	27.9% ↑
1	28.2%	26.8%
2	26.2%	24.5%
3	13.7%	12.9%
4	7.5%	7.9%

*Note.* This item was new to the High School Exit Survey in 2009.

**Figure 3. Thinking Back on Your Years in High School, how Many Hours per Week did you Typically Spend Studying, Doing Research, or Completing Homework Assignments Outside of Class? (Item 19)**



**Figure 4. On Average, What Percentage of Your Study, Research, and Homework was Done Without Distractions (e.g., television, music, IM, texting, phone calls)? (Item 20)**



**Table 11. Please Mark The Item That Best Indicates How You Feel: (Items 21a-21k)**

<i>*Percentage who responded Strongly agree or Agree</i>	<b>2009</b>
I feel safe at my school	78.7%
My classmates show respect to each other	50.9%
The consequences for breaking school rules are the same for everyone	41.1%
Adults at this school listen to student ideas and opinions	53.1%
My homework helps me learn things I need to know	58.6%
I know how I am doing in school	82.9%
My teachers expected me to do my best work	83.0%
My classes were rigorous and challenging	59.6%
My high school coursework has been relevant to my life	47.4%
There is at least one adult at my school who I can go to if I have a problem	78.0%
My teachers are fair to everyone	45.3%

\*Response options include *Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, and Don't know*. Percentages reflect the number of students who responded *Strongly agree* or *Agree*. Response options changed from 2008. Therefore, longitudinal data were not available.

**Table 12. Please Answer the Following Questions About Your Civic Engagement. (Items 4 & 5)**

	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	
Are you registered to vote?*	38.5%	51.0%	35.1%	↓
Have you voted in any school board, city, county, state, or national election?*	31.1%	23.3%	19.4%	↓
Will you register to vote after your 18th birthday?***	.	77.3%	77.3%	

*Note.* Missing values, denoted by a period, indicate the item was not included on the respective year's survey.

\* Only asked to students who were 18 years old or older

\*\* Only asked to students who were not 18 years or older at the time they completed the survey

**INSTRUCTION AND TECHNOLOGY**

**Table 13. How well did Your High School Help you to Actively Develop Knowledge and Skills in the Following Areas? (Item 22)**

<i>*Percentage who responded Somewhat well or Well</i>	2007	2008	2009
Teamwork	.	88.6%	89.7%
Creative thinking	90.8%	90.6%	91.7%
Problem solving	92.9%	91.5%	92.0%
Conflict resolution	84.6%	82.8%	84.1%
Personal health/fitness	78.5%	78.6%	81.0% ↑
Time management	.	80.8%	81.2%
Technology	.	84.6%	84.2%

Note. Missing values, denoted by a period, indicate the item was not included on the respective year's survey.

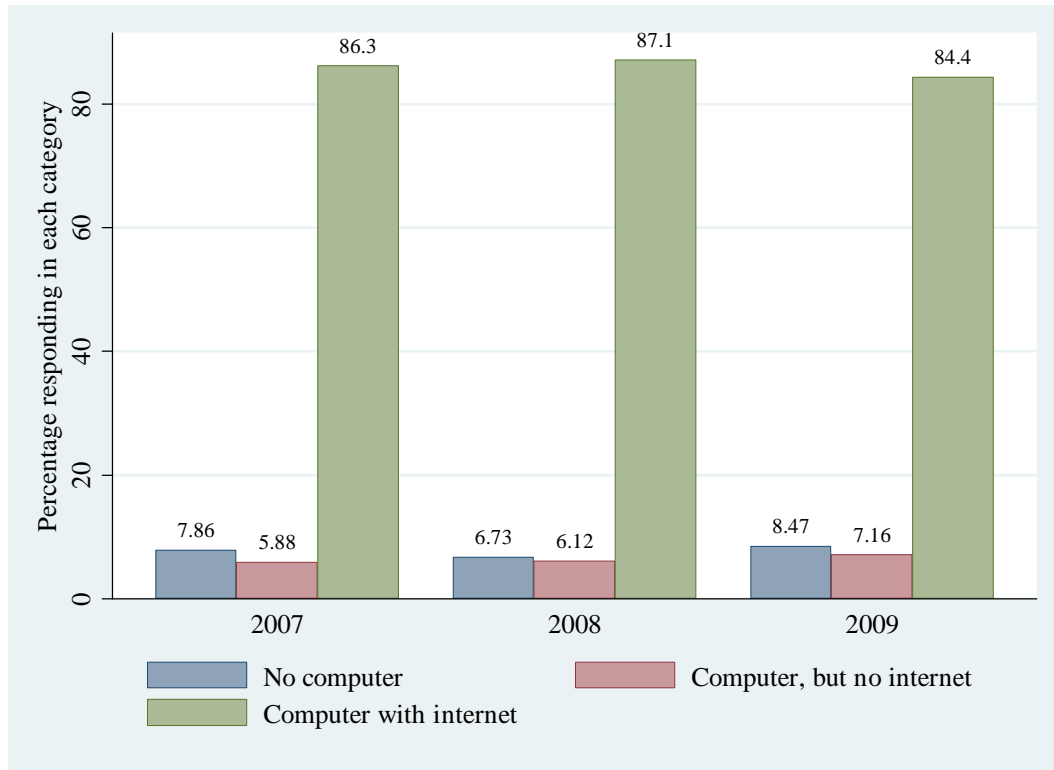
\*Responses were *Not well*, *Somewhat well*, and *Very well*. Percentages indicate the number of students who responded *Somewhat well* or *Well*.

**Table 14. Please Rate The Quality Of Instruction That You Feel That You Received In The Following Areas: (Item 23)**

<i>*Percentage who responded Good or Excellent</i>	2007	2008	2009
Writing	82.6%	81.2%	81.6%
Mathematics	71.3%	70.7%	70.8%
Science	68.9%	69.5%	69.8%
Social Studies	84.2%	82.8%	82.0%
Computer/Technology	71.0%	71.8%	70.2%
Foreign Language	64.5%	63.9%	64.3%
Performing/Fine Arts	72.2%	73.8%	73.0%

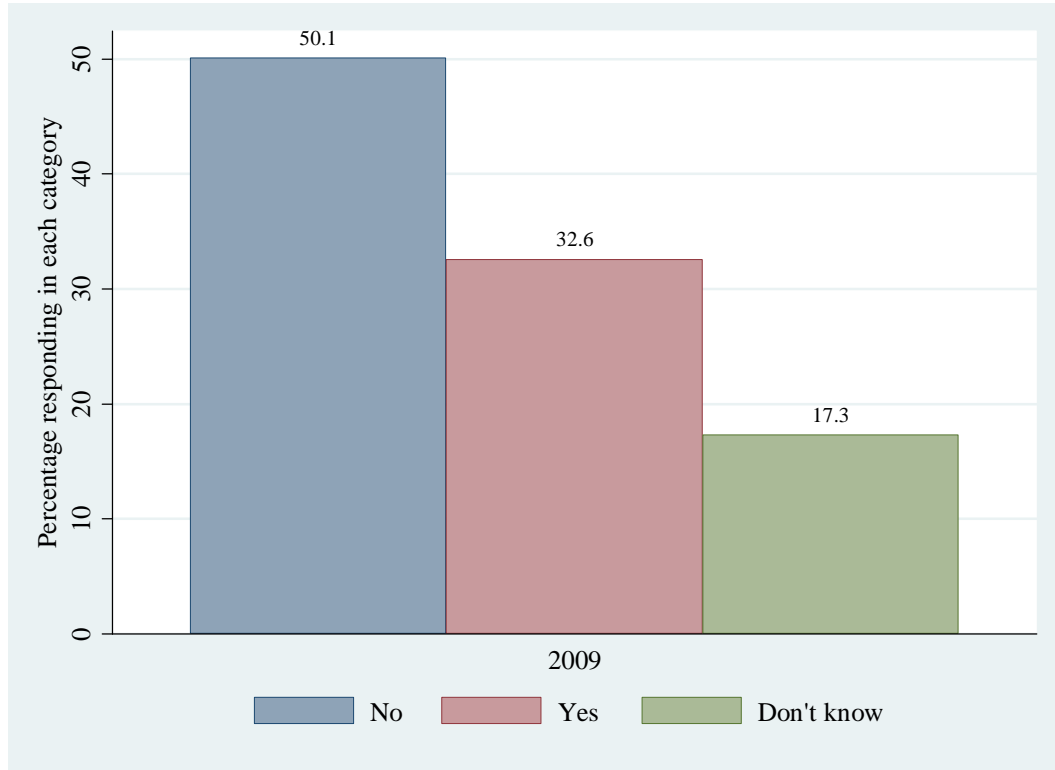
\* Responses were *Poor*, *Fair*, *Good*, and *Excellent*. Percentages are of the number of students reporting *Good* or *Excellent*.

**Figure 5. Which of the Following Describes Your Computer and Internet Access at Home?  
(Item 24)**



Note. This item was recoded to match longitudinal data. In prior years' surveys, students were asked to indicate the type of Internet service they had at home.

**Figure 6. Do Your Parents use ParentConnect/GradeSpeed to Monitor Your Grades?  
(Item 27).**



*Note.* This item was new for 2009.

**Table 15. How Frequently Do You Use a Computer...(Item 25)**

<i>*Percentage who responded At least once a week or more</i>	2007	2008	2009
At home?	86.4%	86.7%	83.9% ↓
At school?	70.8%	74.0%	73.1%
To present material in class, for example, using PowerPoint	22.6%	23.5%	22.0%
To type a paper or class assignment?	57.2%	55.3%	53.5%
To search the Internet to complete class-related assignments?	62.3%	61.6%	62.7%
To research college/career choices?	50.5%	50.6%	51.0%
To complete online forms or applications for college/employment?	43.4%	44.0%	43.4%
To communicate with teachers (e.g., email, IM, etc.)?	18.1%	20.8%	17.8% ↓
To communicate with friends (e.g., email, IM, blog, Facebook, etc.)?	74.1%	74.8%	72.5% ↓
To monitor grades/progress in school?	.	.	29.4%

*Note.* Missing values, denoted by a period, indicate the item was not included on the respective year's survey.

\*Responses were *Never*, *Less than once a week*, *Once or twice a week*, *Every day*, and *Almost every day*. Reports prior to 2008 indicated item means; in 2009, percentages represented the number of students reporting *At least once a week* or more.

**Table 16. Indicate How Much You Agree With Each Of The Following Statements About Technology Use At School: (Item 26)**

<i>*Percentage who responded Agree or Strongly agree</i>	2008	2009
My teachers effectively use the technology resources that are available.	85.7%	89.8% ↑
I would like to use more electronic communication with my classmates as part of my schoolwork.	79.8%	82.3% ↑
I would like to use more electronic communication with my teachers.	73.2%	76.0% ↑
I would like to use more online resources.	82.1%	84.0% ↑

\* Responses were *Strongly disagree*, *Disagree*, *Agree*, *Strongly disagree*, and *Don't know/Unsure*. Percentages are of the number of students who said *Agree* or *Strongly agree*.



**POSTSECONDARY PREPARATION AND ADVISING**

**Table 17. At What Time In Your Life Did You Start Thinking About College As A Possibility After High School? (Item 29)**

	2007	2008	2009
As long ago as I can remember	39.1%	40.5%	38.7%
In elementary school*	12.0%	8.5%	7.6%
In middle/junior high school	21.0%	21.9%	21.0%
In high school	25.3%	26.9%	30.9% ↑
I've never thought about college as an option after high school	2.5%	2.3%	1.8%

\* Item changed from 2007 surveys, when it was “When I was a child.”

**Table 18. High School Preparation For Post-Graduation Opportunities (Item 30a-D)**

<i>*Percentage who responded Somewhat well or Well</i>	2007	2008	2009
How well prepared were you to plan your high school course selections?	88.7%	91.2%	91.2%
How well prepared were you to meet your college and career goals?	86.9%	88.4%	86.1% ↓
How well prepared have you been for the college/technical/vocational school application process?	84.6%	83.4%	82.0%
How well informed are/were you about obtaining financial aid for education after high school (whether or not you applied)?	84.2%	81.6%	81.0%

\* Response options were *Not well*, *Somewhat well*, and *Very well*. Percentages reflect the number of students who responded *Somewhat well* and *Well*.

**Table 19. How did you Prepare for Continuing Education? (Check all That Apply) (Item 32)**

	2007	2008	2009	
Took the PSAT examination	57.9%	67.9%	63.1%	↓
Took AP/IB classes	45.3%	48.6%	47.2%	
Visited campuses	44.0%	51.8%	55.8%	↑
Attended college fairs	44.4%	48.6%	45.3%	↓
Completed and submitted a FAFSA	41.3%	49.3%	48.6%	
Completed and submitted a scholarship application	30.8%	41.6%	40.3%	
Took college entrance tests	65.6%	72.4%	68.1%	↓
Took test prep classes	38.2%	41.7%	38.9%	↓
Completed ACC courses	23.3%	29.4%	33.1%	↑
Ordered and submitted transcripts	40.3%	50.3%	47.7%	↓
Other college-level courses	.	.	5.4%	

*Note.* Respondents could select more than one option, so percentages may not total 100%. Missing values, denoted by a period, indicate the item was not included on the respective year's survey.

**Table 20. In Which Of The Following College Preparation Programs Did You Participate While In High School? (Item 33)**

	2008	2009	
Project ADVANCE	26.1%	17.9%	↓
AVID	8.9%	8.8%	
ACC College Connections	17.1%	18.0%	
College Forward	3.0%	3.5%	
Con mi MADRE	3.0%	1.9%	↓
Talent Search/Trio	2.6%	2.6%	
Upward Bound	1.8%	1.3%	
Breakthrough	1.5%	1.3%	
Immigrant College Access	.	2.3%	
I did not participate in any programs like this	41.6%	41.3%	
Other	4.9%	3.0%	↓

*Note.* Missing values, denoted by a period, indicate the item was not included on the respective year's survey.

**Table 21. If You Participated In One Or More College Preparation Programs, What Did You Get Out Of It? (Item 34)**

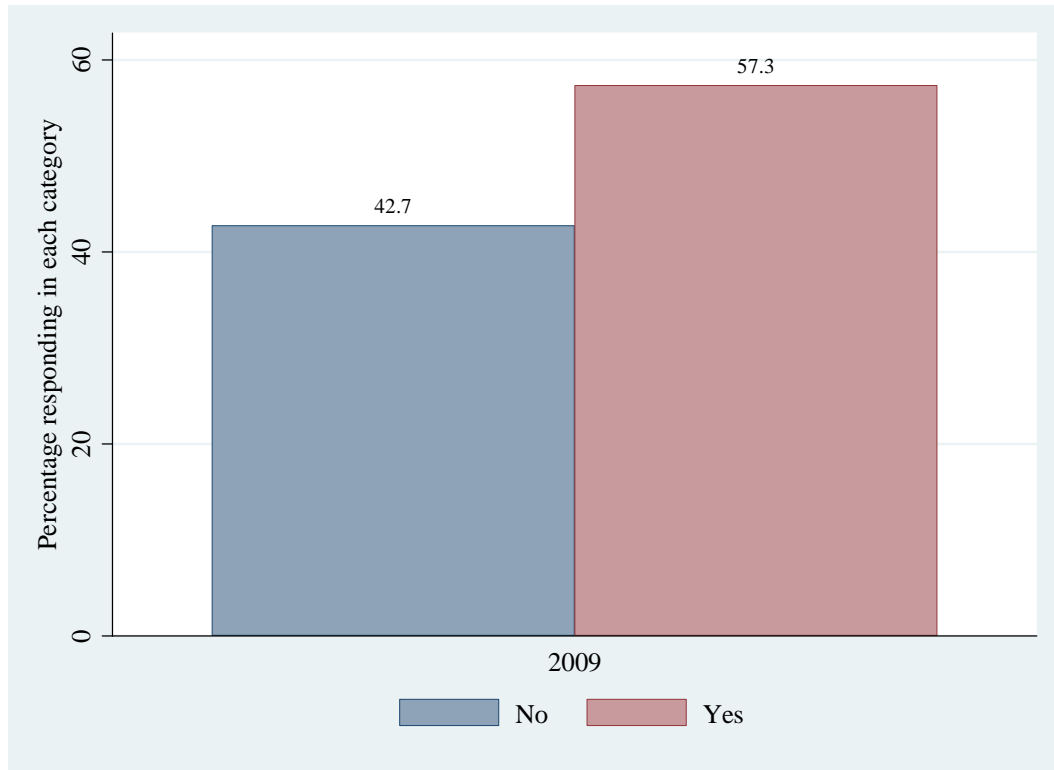
	2008	2009	
They encouraged me to attend school regularly	35.3%	31.8%	↓
They helped me choose the HS courses to prepare for college	31.8%	28.5%	↓
They explained the financial aid process to me	37.9%	33.2%	↓
They were available to help with school-related issues	29.1%	26.2%	↓
They helped me deal with personal issues	18.7%	15.4%	↓
They helped me believe that college was right for me	33.4%	30.9%	
They helped me apply to college	47.3%	38.7%	↓
Other	8.6%	1.9%	↓

**Table 22. Have you Applied to the Following Types of Postsecondary Institutions? (Items 35, 36, and 37)**

	2007	2008	2009	
Have you applied to a 2-year college	49.8%	41.4%	41.3%	
Have you applied to a 4-year college?	69.1%	63.9%	62.7%	
Have you applied to a business/technical/vocational school?	13.7%	6.5%	13.6%	↑

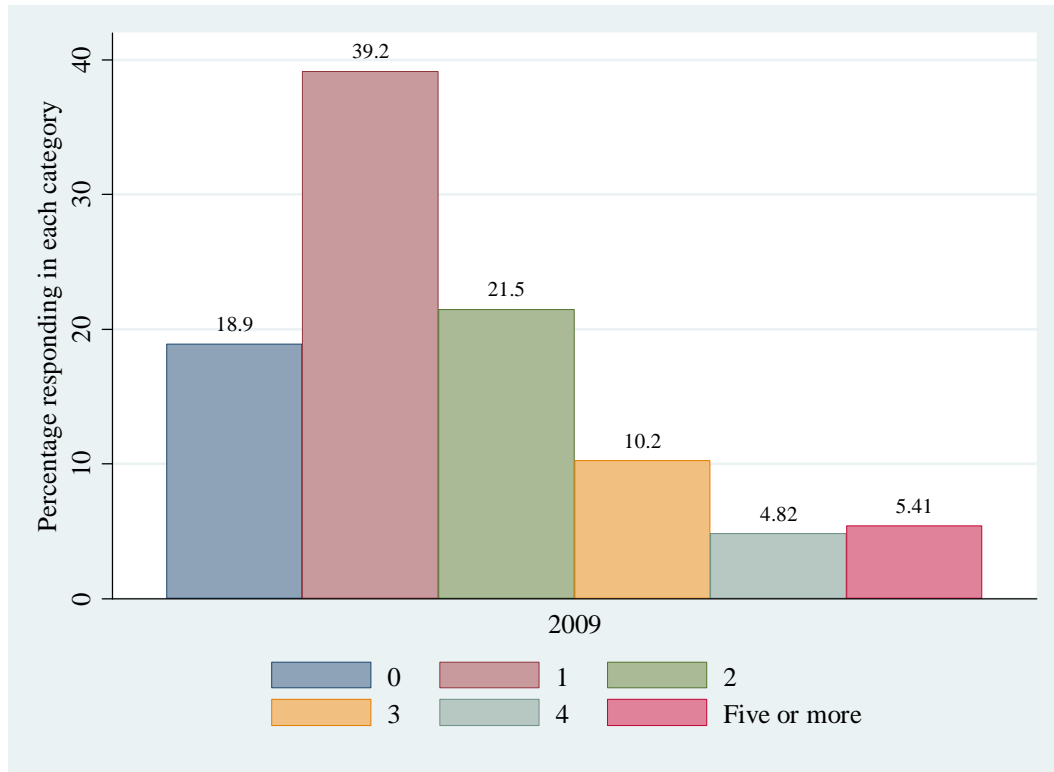
*Note.* On the 2009 survey, students were asked to indicate the number of schools to which they had applied, whereas in 2008, students were only prompted to indicate whether they had applied.

**Figure 7. Will you be the First of Your Siblings (Brothers or Sisters) to Attend College?  
(Item 10)**



*Note.* This item was reworded for the 2009 survey. In past years, we asked students if they were the first person in their family to attend college. For 2009, we asked students separately about their siblings and parents. Therefore, no longitudinal data were available for this question.

**Figure 8. How Many Siblings (Brothers or Sisters) do you Have who are Either Enrolled in College or Live With you (Item 11)**



Note. This item was new to the 2009 survey.

**Table 23. How Easy Has It Been For You And Your Parents To Understand The Process Of Applying For Financial Aid? (Item 45)**

	2008	2009
Difficult	11.8%	12.8%
Some parts easy, some parts difficult	36.2%	43.8% ↑
Easy	38.1%	22.2% ↓
Did not apply for financial aid	13.9%	21.2% ↑

**Table 24. How Do You Plan To Pay For Your Education After High School? (Item 46)**

	2008	2009
Scholarships and/or grants	54.7%	56.3%
Loans	63.7%	38.0%
Family or personal savings	56.8%	49.5%
Working during the school year	47.0%	46.4%
Working during the summer	45.4%	48.2%
I don't know	14.8%	14.6%

*Note.* Respondents could select more than one option, so percentages may not total 100%.

**Table 25. Which Of The Following Did A Family Member Do To Help You Prepare For Life After High School Graduation? (Item 43)**

	2009
Encouraged you to apply to several different colleges	57.0%
Talked to you about what college would be like	62.9%
Helped you complete college applications	42.0%
Helped you find scholarships	34.2%
Helped you complete a FAFSA	45.6%
Helped you decide which college to attend	53.0%
Helped you write college essays/personal statements	29.6%
Did not help	14.2%

*Note.* This item was new in 2009.

**Table 26. If You Did Not Submit A Financial Aid Application, Why Not? (Item 47)**

	2009
I do not need financial aid to attend college	23.4%
My parents were not willing to submit private financial information	6.6%
My family did not think we would qualify for or were eligible for financial aid	23.8%
I do not plan to go to college	9.8%
I did not know about the financial aid process	36.4%

*Note:* This item was new in 2009.

**Table 27. Which Of The Following Campus Staff Helped You With Any Of The Activities Listed Below: (Item 42)**

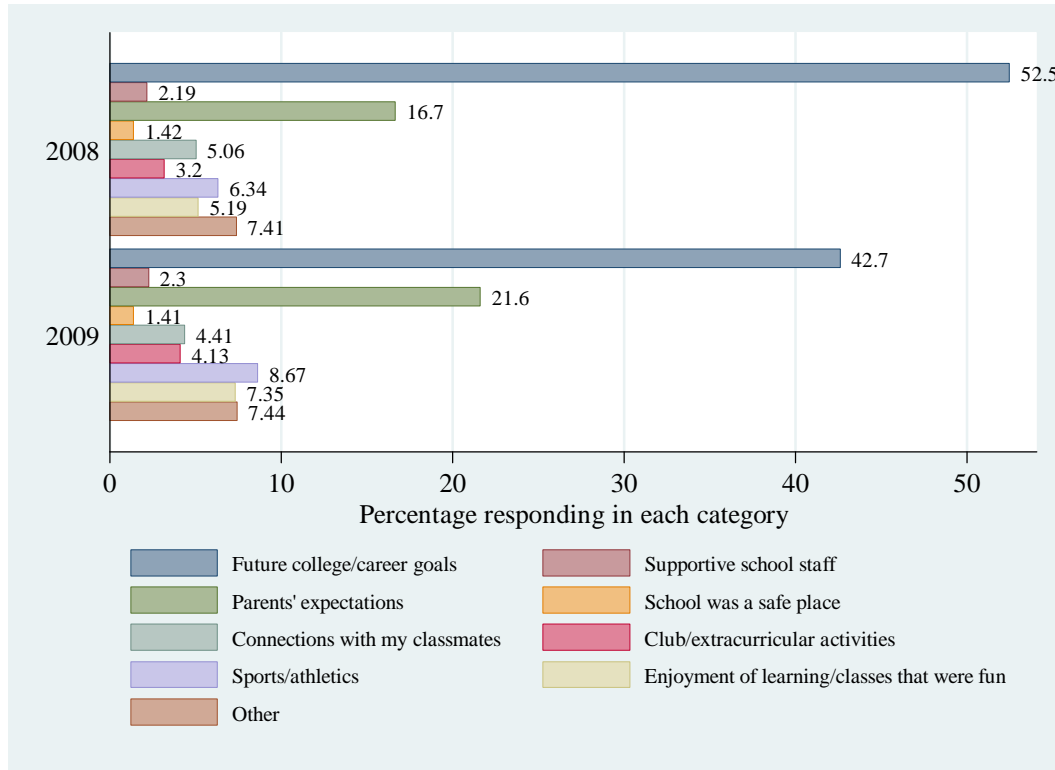
	School counselor	Advisory	Teacher	Advance Facilitator	AVID Staff	Early College Start Advisor
Selected courses for work or college	48.3%	12.7%	28.0%	21.7%	4.2%	11.9%
AP/honors courses	35.5%	11.1%	47.6%	10.4%	3.8%	3.2%
To continue education	47.4%	22.6%	53.9%	26.2%	5.9%	9.8%
Talked about colleges/schools	37.6%	16.3%	37.1%	26.4%	4.7%	7.5%
Discussed careers	33.4%	16.7%	33.9%	24.1%	4.8%	7.5%
Encouraged to apply to multiple schools	37.5%	16.2%	34.4%	26.8%	4.9%	5.2%
Helped complete applications for college	25.2%	10.1%	20.3%	26.0%	3.7%	5.7%
Helped find scholarships	24.3%	9.7%	19.4%	26.2%	4.0%	4.1%
Helped choose college	22.7%	9.5%	22.8%	19.4%	3.0%	4.3%
Helped plan for college expenses	21.2%	10.2%	16.9%	21.7%	3.7%	4.5%
Helped with college application essays or personal statements	21.3%	9.2%	36.2%	19.9%	3.7%	3.8%

*Note.* The design of this question changed from what it was in 2008. In past years, students were asked to rate each type of staff member according to their effectiveness in one of the above college preparation domains. On the 2009 survey, students were asked to indicate whether any of these staff members had helped them with any of the activities listed above.



**ADDITIONAL RESULTS**

**Figure 9. What Is The *One Thing* That Was Most Important To Keeping You Going Through School All The Way To Graduation? (Item 48)**



**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A: DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSE RATES AND SAMPLE COMPOSITION, BY CAMPUS**

**Table A.1. Response Rate and Respondent Demographic Characteristics**

	Seniors enrolled	*Seniors not eligible for survey	**Final number of seniors eligible	Surveys completed	Initial response rate (% of all seniors enrolled)	Corrected response rate (% of eligible seniors)
Akins	526	0	526	282	53.61%	53.61%
Anderson	453	37	416	404	89.18%	97.12%
Austin	472	24	448	424	89.83%	94.64%
Bowie	619	0	619	547	88.37%	88.37%
Crockett	374	47	327	325	86.90%	99.39%
Garza	161	3	158	87	54.04%	55.06%
Eastside Memorial	105	6	99	94	89.52%	94.95%
Lanier	311	29	282	271	87.14%	96.10%
LASA	198	0	198	192	96.97%	96.97%
LBJ	206	20	186	145	70.39%	77.96%
McCallum	358	29	329	299	83.52%	90.88%
Reagan	189	18	171	112	59.26%	65.50%
Travis	299	23	276	183	61.20%	66.30%
All high schools	4,271	236	4,035	3,365	78.79%	83.40%

*Note.* Response rates were calculated based on denominators for both “all seniors” and “all eligible seniors.”

\* “Seniors not eligible for survey” refers to seniors who were not eligible to participate in the survey because they were failing the 12<sup>th</sup> grade, would not be graduating until the following school year, or were determined to be cognitively unable to take the survey. Final lists of survey respondents were provided by survey administrators.

\*\* “Final number of seniors eligible” represents the adjusted response rate denominator. It includes all seniors eligible to participate, excluding those who were deemed ineligible for the reasons described above.

**Table A.2.**

	Asian		African American		Hispanic		White		Male		Female	
	Survey respondents	All seniors	Survey respondents	All seniors	Survey respondents	All seniors	Survey respondents	All seniors	Survey respondents	All seniors	Survey respondents	All seniors
Akins	2.84%	3.04%	8.16%	10.08%	68.79%	66.16%	20.21%	20.53%	43.26%	47.91%	56.74%	52.09%
Anderson	6.68%	6.40%	7.18%	8.61%	20.30%	22.74%	64.85%	61.37%	50.00%	49.67%	50.00%	50.33%
Austin	0.47%	0.64%	5.66%	6.36%	38.44%	40.47%	54.95%	52.12%	49.53%	51.06%	50.47%	48.94%
Bowie	7.31%	6.79%	4.57%	4.36%	29.07%	30.53%	59.05%	58.32%	51.19%	51.53%	48.81%	48.47%
Crockett	1.85%	1.87%	15.08%	14.97%	57.23%	56.15%	25.85%	27.01%	50.15%	49.47%	49.85%	50.53%
Eastside Memorial	1.06%	0.96%	19.15%	18.27%	79.79%	80.77%	0.00%	0.00%	46.81%	48.08%	53.19%	51.92%
Garza	1.15%	0.62%	5.75%	8.70%	28.74%	32.30%	64.37%	58.39%	57.47%	52.17%	42.53%	47.83%
Lanier	4.06%	3.86%	8.49%	9.32%	79.70%	78.78%	7.38%	7.72%	43.54%	45.34%	56.46%	54.66%
LASA	13.02%	12.63%	10.42%	10.10%	22.40%	21.72%	54.17%	55.56%	53.13%	53.03%	46.88%	46.97%
LBJ	0.00%	0.00%	58.62%	55.34%	40.00%	43.20%	1.38%	1.46%	37.93%	42.72%	62.07%	57.28%
McCallum	2.34%	2.51%	20.74%	23.46%	25.75%	26.26%	50.50%	47.21%	47.83%	48.32%	52.17%	51.68%
Reagan	0.89%	1.06%	43.75%	35.45%	55.36%	62.96%	0.00%	0.53%	39.29%	44.44%	60.71%	55.56%
Travis	0.55%	0.67%	13.66%	13.71%	81.42%	80.60%	4.37%	5.02%	53.01%	51.17%	46.99%	48.83%
All high schools	3.86%	3.49%	12.99%	13.89%	44.25%↓	47.03%	38.63%↑	35.36%	48.44%	49.18%	51.56%	50.82%

*Note.* To assess the representativeness of the respondents relative to the population of 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students enrolled during the Spring 2009 semester, a difference in proportions test was conducted. A down arrow denotes statistically significant underrepresentation, while an up arrow identifies statistically significant overrepresentation.

**APPENDIX B: TECHNICAL MATTER PERTAINING TO SAMPLE REPRESENTATIVENESS**

To assess whether the demographic makeup of respondents was a close representation of the district and campus student population, an equality of proportions test was employed using the <prtest> command in Stata 10.1. This method was chosen over a T-test due to the binary structure of the variable interest, namely the decision to respond or not respond to the survey. The formula for determining the test statistic using this technique is:

$$z = \frac{\hat{p}_1 - \hat{p}_2}{\sqrt{\hat{p}\hat{q}\left(\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}\right)}}$$

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