

Introduction to Results for the Class of 2014

The purpose of this survey was to monitor high school students' perceptions of their high school experience. Results are used to improve the campus environment and program supports for students. Survey results also are used in the monitoring of the district's strategic plan *Goal 3: All students will graduate ready for college, career, and life in a globally competitive economy*. The report is organized into the following categories: postsecondary aspirations, parental engagement, and support; persistence and motivation; extracurricular activities; work and study time; instructional quality; technology access and use; postsecondary preparation and advising; applications to postsecondary institutions; postsecondary financial literacy; acronym key; and references.

Postsecondary Aspirations, Parental Engagement, & Support

Table 1. By this time next year, what do you plan to be doing? (Select all that apply.)

Postsecondary plans	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
Continue my education	95.4%	90.2%	94.7%
Attend college or technical school without working	.	14.3%	22.5%
Attend college or technical school while working full time	.	15.8%	12.5%
Attend college or technical school while working part time	.	59.6%	59.7%
Work full time only	.	7.1%	6.1%
Work part time only	.	2.5%	2.8%
Enlist in the military	7.5%	5.7%	3.4%
No plans/ not sure yet	3.3%	6.2%	4.7%
Other	4.4%	3.5%	2.8%

Note. Response options changed in 2014.

Nearly 60% of Akins seniors who indicated they will continue their education after high school planned to work part time while attending college.

About this survey. The 12th annual Austin Independent School District (AISD) High School Exit Survey was administered online to seniors in every AISD high school during Spring 2014. On each campus, Project ADVANCE facilitators primarily were responsible for ensuring all seniors were given the opportunity to complete the survey. Special education chairs at each campus may have provided eligible special education students with guidance and assistance in completing the survey.

This report contains the results for Akins Class of 2014. Where available, data are presented from previous senior classes to compare with previous years' responses. This year, 407 Akins students in the Class of 2014 completed the survey, for an overall response rate of 82.6%.

The overall response rate for the District was 92% (N = 3874). The district-level [Class of 2014 High School Exit Survey Report](#) is available online.

Table 2. When do you plan to start going to college, university, or career/trade school?

	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
This summer	9.6%	10.2%	7.5%
This fall	78.3%	81.6%	84.8%
Next spring	12.0%	8.7%	8.7%

Approximately 82% of Akins seniors indicated they planned to enroll in a postsecondary institution in Fall 2014. Nearly 47% planned to attend a 4-year college or university and about 41% planned to attend a 2-year community college and then transfer to a 4-year college.

Table 3. What type of institution do you plan to attend after high school?

	Akins 2014	District 2014
A 4-year college or university	46.5%	58.2%
A 2-year college or university	16.5%	12.7%
A 2-year community college and then transfer to a 4-year college	40.5%	32.1%
A private career or trade school	2.6%	2.5%

Almost 50% of Akins seniors planned to attend Austin Community College, almost 20% planned to attend Texas State University, and about 19% indicated they planned to attend other postsecondary institutions.

Table 4. Which college, university, or career/trade school do you plan to attend in the fall?

	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
Austin Community College (ACC)	52.7%	49.5%	34.8%
Texas State University	20.3%	19.7%	12.0%
University of Texas-Austin	8.3%	4.3%	8.7%
University of Texas-San Antonio	3.5%	2.5%	4.2%
Texas A&M University	7.2%	10.0%	5.9%
St. Edward's University	1.9%	1.8%	2.2%
Blinn College	2.9%	1.0%	2.4%
University of North Texas	1.0%	2.2%	2.6%
Texas Tech University	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%
Stephen F. Austin University	0.0%	0.4%	1.2%
Other	20.6%	18.6%	31.0%

According to the [Austin Chamber of Commerce July 2014 MSA Job Market Report](#), 18% of the available job openings were in computer and mathematical occupations. Specifically, almost 50% of the top 10 available job openings in our MSA were software developers-applications, web developers, network and computer systems administrators, computer systems analysts, and computer user support specialists. Only about 8% of Akins seniors indicated they were interested in studying computer and information sciences.

Registered nurses jobs also were among the largest available job openings in the region and were difficult to fill. Approximately 21% of Akins seniors were interested in health sciences.

Table 5. Select the one area that best fits what you plan to study.

	Akins 2014	District 2014
Health sciences	21.3%	18.1%
Business	13.8%	14.1%
Engineering	10.7%	11.7%
Law, public safety, corrections, and security	8.4%	5.3%
Computer and information sciences	7.5%	5.1%
Human services	5.8%	3.2%
I do not know	5.5%	7.9%
Visual and performing arts	5.5%	7.4%
Agricultural sciences and technologies	4.9%	2.8%
Natural sciences and mathematics	3.8%	6.1%
Education	3.2%	4.2%
Communication	2.9%	4.2%
Architecture	2.0%	1.6%
Social sciences	1.7%	3.3%
Hospitality and tourism	1.4%	1.6%
Humanities	1.0%	1.9%
Office skills	1.0%	0.2%
Trade and industrial	0.0%	1.5%

Note. The percentages in the first column are presented in descending order.

Table 6. If you are not planning to pursue further education, what are your primary reasons? (Select all that apply.)

Reason	Akins 2014	District 2014
Financial (e.g., can't afford to attend school, need income from working, etc.)	22.8%	17.4%
Academic (e.g., grades/test scores aren't high enough, don't feel academically prepared for college, etc.)	10.5%	8.4%
Personal obligation (e.g., child care or family responsibilities)	7.0%	7.1%
Personal preference (e.g., don't like school, career goals do not require college, etc.)	12.3%	23.2%
Gap year (e.g., want to take some time off from school to do other things, but plan to enroll in college after a year)	33.3%	32.9%
Other (please specify)	14.0%	10.8%

One-third of Akins seniors indicated they would take a year off from school to pursue other things before enrolling in college.

Note. The response options for this question changed in 2014, which precluded comparisons with prior years' results.

Table 7. How far did your **mother** go in school?

School status	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
Less than high school	35.0%	28.3%	22.8%
High school or earned a GED	33.7%	31.4%	19.6%
Some college	.	17.4%	12.9%
Associate degree (2-year)	5.3%	5.7%	6.12%
Bachelor's degree (4-year)	7.3%	9.4%	20.3%
Master's degree	2.8%	2.5%	8.6%
Professional degree (e.g., MD, JD, etc.)	.	1.0%	3.6%
Doctorate degree (e.g., PhD, EdD, etc.)	.	1.0%	2.3%
Don't know or does not apply	.	4.0%	3.8%

Parental education level influences children's academic achievement, educational aspirations, and success in the workforce (Dubow, Boxer, & Huesmann, 2009; Foundation for Child Development, 2014).

Note. Only mother's educational level is reported. Mothers and fathers tend to have similar educational levels. Therefore, mother's educational attainment may serve as a proxy for parental education (Foundation for Child Development, 2014). Also note, the response options for this question changed in 2014.

Table 8. What is the highest level of education **your parents/guardians expect** you to achieve?

Level of education	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
High school or earned a GED	12.4%	7.7%	7.6%
Some college	.	8.7%	6.0%
Associate degree (2-year)	10.8%	8.7%	6.4%
Bachelor's degree (4-year)	40.4%	36.6%	37.7%
Master's degree	.	13.7%	15.7%
Professional degree (e.g., MD, JD, etc.)	.	5.2%	6.2%
Doctorate degree (e.g., PhD, EdD, etc.)	.	9.0%	8.0%
I am not sure	10.5%	10.5%	12.4%

On average, expectations for highest level of educational attainment differed depending on Akins seniors' personal expectations and their perceptions of their parents/guardians' expectations. Approximately 81% of Akins seniors expected to earn a bachelor's degree or better during their lifetime, while approximately 65% of Akins seniors indicated their parents expected them to achieve the same level of education.

Table 9. What is the highest degree **you expect** to earn during your lifetime?

Level of education	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
High school diploma	7.2%	2.8%	3.9%
Industry license or certification (e.g., trade school, technical/community college)	5.8%	4.8%	3.8%
Associate degree	13.7%	12.0%	9.5%
Bachelor's degree (4-year)	39.1%	43.4%	39.3%
Advanced degree (e.g., master's, doctoral, medical, law degree)	34.2%	37.1%	43.5%

According to Perna and Titus (2005), the odds of enrolling in a 2- or 4-year college, relative to not enrolling, increases with the frequency with which parents discussed education-related topics (e.g., grades) with their children. Furthermore, Perna & Titus found the positive relationship between the frequency of parent-initiated contact with the school about academic issues and the odds of enrolling in a 4-year college were particularly important for African American students.

Table 10. During high school, to what extent were your parents involved in the following school-related activities?

Percentage who responded either <i>sometimes</i> or <i>often</i>	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
Talking to you about homework	67.0%	69.7%	68.1%
Making sure you completed your homework	62.4%	68.8%	64.6%
Asking you about what you're learning in school	55.5%	63.9%	64.6%
Helping you decide what classes to take	47.8%	58.1%	55.3%
Talking to you about how you're doing in your classes	77.4%	77.8%	79.9%
Rewarding you when you do well in school	50.8%	60.3%	57.0%
Communicating with your teachers (e.g., teacher conferences, email, and phone calls)	44.7%	56.5%	46.4%
Attending school meetings	36.5%	39.4%	44.8%
Attending school events (e.g., sports, performances)	49.9%	51.2%	56.2%
Volunteering at your school	20.9%	23.5%	28.3%
Joining and participating in the PTA	9.9%	10.1%	18.5%

Note. Response options were *never*, *rarely*, *sometimes*, and *often*.

Table 11. To what extent did your parents use Parent Connect/Gradespeed to monitor your grades?

Use	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
Never	34.7%	21.2%	25.5%
Rarely	14.8%	12.7%	15.6%
Sometimes	18.7%	25.3%	23.1%
Often	31.9%	40.8%	35.9%

Note. The question was changed in 2013, which precluded comparisons with prior years' results.

Most Akins seniors indicated they know at least one teacher who supported them in their personal lives, high school academics, and postsecondary aspirations.

Table 12. Indicate if you know at least one teacher who would do the following:

Teacher help	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
Would be willing to give you extra help with your school work if you needed it	85.4%	86.0%	90.1%
Would be willing to help you with a personal problem	70.0%	68.6%	74.7%
Cares about how you're doing in school	77.9%	74.5%	81.4%
Would be willing to write you a letter of recommendation for a job or college	77.5%	76.0%	84.7%
Knows what you will be doing next year	62.6%	58.0%	67.5%
Would be willing to help you even after you graduate	61.2%	56.4%	66.3%

Persistence & Motivation

Students' precollege behavior and experiences are important factors in determining their persistence in postsecondary education settings. Motivation to learn, effort, and amount of time students spend studying were found to be key determinants of college attainment and success (Bailey, Jenkins, & Leinbach, 2005). When teachers had high expectations and provide an interesting and engaging learning environment, students' self-esteem, confidence, and academic performance improved (Brophy, 2008; 2010).

Table 13. Seniors were asked to indicate feelings about their persistence, motivation, and interactions with teachers.

Percentage who responded either <i>sometimes</i> or <i>always</i>	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
I can do even the hardest schoolwork if I try.	90.9%	94.7%	91.8%
I enjoy doing my schoolwork.	58.8%	61.4%	56.3%
I feel/felt well prepared for STAAR/EOC.	.	77.5%	78.8%
I try hard to do my best work.	91.3%	94.0%	91.3%
I feel successful in my schoolwork.	87.6%	92.1%	89.2%
My teachers push us to think hard about the things we read.	80.8%	84.2%	86.1%
My teachers push everyone to work hard.	83.9%	89.1%	88.8%
I can reach the goals I set for myself.	94.6%	97.0%	96.3%
My homework helps me learn things I need to know.	75.9%	80.6%	77.2%
My schoolwork makes me think about things in new ways.	70.0%	71.0%	70.7%
My teachers connect what I am learning to life outside of class.	64.4%	68.5%	68.4%
I have fun learning in my classes.	73.8%	73.1%	75.4%
I like to come to school.	70.5%	65.1%	69.3%

Note. Response options were *never*, *not a lot*, *sometimes*, and *always*. STAAR is State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness. EOC is end of course.

Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities provide intellectual and social development opportunities for students. According to a study conducted by Stearns and Glennie (2009), schools that provided more extracurricular activities and had more student participants had better academic outcomes in terms of students performing at grade level and staying in school than did schools that provided fewer such activities. Participation in extracurricular activities was also linked to higher aspirations for college, college attainment and graduation, and better occupational status (Barber, Eccles, & Stone, 2001; Darling, Caldwell, & Smith, 2005).

The extra-curricular activities participated in most by Akins seniors were sports and community service. Nearly half of seniors participated in sports—in and out of school—at some point during high school. Approximately 55% of seniors participated in community service (out of school) at some point during high school.

Table 14a. Please indicate the number of years of high school in which you participated in each of these **school-affiliated extracurricular activities**.

In school	Did not participate	1-2 years	3-4 years
Music	70.0%	18.6%	11.9%
Theater/drama	70.5%	25.58%	3.9%
Dance	81.1%	14.4%	4.5%
Sports	44.5%	24.9%	30.5%
Academic clubs/UIIL competitions	72.1%	14.9%	13.1%
Speech/debate	66.3%	33.4%	0.3%
Student government	80.8%	17.1%	2.1%
Career and technical student organizations	75.5%	17.2%	7.3%

Note. UIL is University Interscholastic League.

Table 14b. Please indicate the number of years of high school in which you participated in each of the **extracurricular activities outside of school**.

Outside of school	Did not participate	1-2 years	3-4 years
Music	76.2%	12.2%	11.8%
Theater/drama	81.3%	15.4%	3.3%
Dance	84.7%	11.7%	3.6%
Sports	50.1%	18.6%	31.3%
Providing routine care for family members	69.2%	11.7%	19.2%
Community service	45.5%	26.4%	28.2%
Environmental projects/activities	77.9%	14.1%	8.1%
Boy/Girl Scouts	94.3%	4.2%	1.6%

Work and Study Time

Table 15. Please indicate the average number of hours per week you worked at a paid job during your senior year.

Work time	Percentage who worked during senior year		
	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
Did not work	49.8%	43.9%	41.0%
Less than 20 hours	31.5%	17.6%	28.0%
20 hours or more	18.8%	38.5%	31.0%

Note. This question was changed in 2013, which precluded comparisons with prior years' results.

The percentage of Akins seniors indicating they worked 20 or more hours during their senior year has increased almost 20 percentage points from last year.

A study conducted by Marsh and Kleitman (2005) found that compared with those who did not work, students who worked longer hours had significantly lower academic achievement, attendance, and educational aspirations. They were less engaged in extracurricular activities. They also were less likely to enroll in college. As well, seniors who worked longer hours were more likely to save their earnings for postsecondary enrollment and were less likely to be unemployed 2 years after high school.

Table 16. How many hours per week did you typically spend studying, doing research, or completing homework assignments outside of class?

Study time	Percentage who studied each week		
	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
None	15.0%	12.2%	10.5%
1 to 5 hours	45.3%	48.8%	40.4%
6 to 10 hours	20.7%	18.2%	23.1%
11 to 15 hours	8.7%	9.5%	11.5%
16 to 20 hours	4.2%	5.0%	8.1%
More than 20 hours	6.1%	6.5%	6.4%

On average, Akins seniors indicated they studied 1 to 5 hours each week. [Penn State](#) and [University of Michigan-Flint](#) recommend a 2:1 study time/course load ratio; whereby students spend at least 2 hours studying for every 1 hour of class time.

Instructional Quality

Table 17. How well did your high school help you to actively develop knowledge and skills in the following areas?

Percentage who responded <i>somewhat well</i> or <i>very well</i>	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
Teamwork	93.0%	91.2%	90.8%
Creative thinking	90.6%	92.3%	90.3%
Problem solving	92.5%	93.5%	92.7%
Conflict resolution	89.8%	91.0%	87.6%
Personal health/fitness	84.1%	82.8%	81.1%
Time management	84.0%	86.0%	83.7%
Technology	88.0%	87.3%	84.8%

Note. Response options were *not well*, *somewhat well*, and *very well*.

“Twenty-first-century skills” is a term which generally refers to competencies such as collaboration, digital literacy, critical thinking, and problem-solving (Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2011).

Researchers have found that students are important sources of information about what happens in classrooms. Students’ responses are generally reliable, valid, and stable over time at the classroom level (Ferguson, 2010). Each year, seniors are asked to rate the quality of instruction they received in different types of courses.

Table 18. Rate the quality of instruction you feel you received in the following areas.

Percentage who responded <i>good</i> or <i>excellent</i>	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
English language arts	77.1%	78.3%	82.9%
Social studies	74.5%	77.3%	77.6%
Performing/Fine arts	68.7%	68.6%	73.8%
Career and technical (CTE)	59.6%	79.3%	73.5%
Science	60.6%	69.5%	71.2%
Mathematics	73.9%	76.3%	70.2%
Computer/Technology	67.3%	77.0%	66.8%
Foreign language	60.0%	63.0%	59.6%

Note. Response options were *excellent*, *good*, *fair*, and *poor*.

Good or excellent ratings for quality of instruction in CTE have increased by about 20 percentage points from 2013 to 2014.

Table 19. Percentage by course of Akins seniors who rated a CTE course *fair* or *poor*. Seniors were allowed to select more than one course.

CTE course	Akins 2014	District 2014
Agriculture or animal science	32.2%	18.9%
Health science	31.0%	24.7%
Animation or video game design	30.5%	18.1%
Engineering	25.4%	17.9%
Education	23.7%	15.1%
Audio/visual production	20.3%	21.7%
Finance	19.0%	12.0%
Graphic design or photography	19.0%	15.1%
Computer programming or networking	18.6%	21.2%
Business management	17.0%	26.5%
Criminal justice or law enforcement	17.0%	13.1%
Marketing	17.0%	10.3%
Web development	17.0%	15.2%

Note. Some CTE courses may have higher enrollment than others. A higher percentage of seniors rating a particular CTE course Fair or Poor may be due to the higher enrollment in the course. Therefore, results should not be compared between courses. Also note, when data were analyzed, it was found that seniors responded to items for CTE courses they had not taken. This list includes only courses offered at the campus.

Because overall ratings for CTE courses had been found consistently lower than were those for other courses, this year, seniors who rated CTE instruction *fair* or *poor* were asked to identify the types of CTE courses they rated *fair* or *poor*. They were also asked to provide reasons why they rated the courses low. Approximately 21% of Akins CTE seniors rated CTE courses *fair* or *poor*.

The top 4 CTE courses rated *fair* or *poor* by Akins seniors were agriculture, health science, animation, and engineering.

Overall, the top 3 reasons Akins seniors indicated they rated CTE courses low were class projects were not interesting, courses were too difficult, and teachers did not explain things well.

Table 20. Please tell us what it was about the CTE instruction that was *fair* or *poor*.

	Akins 2014	District 2014
Class projects were not interesting.	36.2%	33.1%
The course was too difficult.	32.8%	18.2%
The teacher did not explain things in a way that I could understand.	31.1%	29.0%
The course was too easy.	25.9%	23.6%
The teacher did not manage classroom discipline well.	25.3%	25.3%
The teacher was not an expert in the subject area.	22.4%	30.5%
Other	17.2%	15.4%
A lot of time was spent on topics unrelated to the class.	15.5%	14.8%
The teacher did not respect students' ideas and suggestions.	12.1%	12.0%
The teacher did not keep us busy—time was wasted.	10.3%	18.0%

Note. The CTE Summary Report lists the reasons AISD seniors rated CTE courses low by course type.

Technology Access and Use

Table 21. Which of the following describes your computer and Internet access at home?

Access	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
No computer	5.4%	4.3%	4.7%
No computer, but Internet access (e.g., cell phone, iPad, or iTouch)	9.5%	12.5%	10.0%
Computer, no Internet	5.8%	5.6%	4.1%
Computer with Internet access	79.3%	77.5%	81.2%

Table 22. Have you ever used Naviance/Family Connection for the following activities?

Percentage answering yes	Akins 2014	District 2014
Class rank and GPA inquiry	88.1%	84.2%
College search	72.8%	72.6%
Counselor-directed activities (e.g., Personality Type Questionnaire or Explore Careers)	62.4%	65.1%
College visit sign up	54.0%	56.2%
Career exploration	51.0%	50.5%
Resume building	33.8%	36.5%

Akins seniors indicated they mostly used Naviance to check their class rank/GPA, to search colleges, and to complete counselor-directed activities.

Note. This item changed from “how frequently do you use” (2013) to “have you ever used” (2014).

Postsecondary Preparation and Advising

“Middle school is the crucial stage” at which parents and students should begin to think about preparing for college (Cunningham, Erisman, & Looney, 2007). By the time a student reaches junior year of high school, it may be too late to acquire the necessary coursework and GPA for admission to college.

Approximately one-third of Akins seniors indicated they did not start thinking about college as a possibility until high school. More than 50% of that group indicated they did not start thinking about college until their junior or senior years of high school.

Table 23. At what time in your life did you start thinking about college as a possibility after high school?

Time frame	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
As long ago as I can remember	28.0%	26.5%	36.8%
In elementary school	8.5%	12.5%	8.2%
In middle school / junior high	23.3%	25.3%	21.7%
In high school	37.2%	32.8%	30.4%
Never thought of college as an option	3.1%	3.0%	2.8%

Table 24. What grade were you in when you started thinking about college as a possibility after high school?

Grade	Akins 2014	District 2014
9 th Grade	14.7%	24.4%
10 th Grade	31.0%	23.9%
11 th Grade	39.5%	36.1%
12 th Grade	14.7%	15.6%

Table 25. How did you prepare for your education after high school? (Select all that apply.)

Type of preparation	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
Took college entrance tests (e.g., SAT, ACT, THEA, COMPASS, ASSET)	64.8%	65.6%	66.6%
Completed and submitted the FAFSA	73.8%	64.0%	67.8%
Visited one or more colleges or technical schools	41.4%	55.2%	60.1%
Ordered and submitted a transcript to a college or trade/ technical school.	47.6%	54.8%	59.2%
Met with the school counselor/ADVANCE staff to discuss college plans/processes	61.9%	50.9%	52.8%
Completed and submitted a scholarship application	39.2%	45.0%	48.8%
Took one or more Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate classes	42.8%	42.6%	51.1%
Completed or are currently enrolled in ACC courses	32.6%	40.2%	36.0%
Met with a college recruiter at my high school	40.9%	39.3%	43.3%
Attended one or more college fairs	29.1%	38.3%	44.8%
Participated in ACC College Connections	37.7%	36.2%	35.0%
Took test prep class for the PSAT, SAT, ACT, etc.	30.0%	34.7%	40.0%
I have not completed any activities to prepare for continuing my education	20.8%	17.9%	16.0%
I have done nothing to academically prepare for continuing my education	22.7%	16.5%	17.2%
I have not completed any forms to prepare for continuing my education	15.6%	15.2%	16.0%
Took other college level courses (e.g., Texas State, Texas Tech, TSTC)	3.1%	3.2%	5.7%

Note. SAT is Scholastic Aptitude Test. ACT is American College Testing. THEA is Texas Higher Education Assessment. COMPASS is American College Testing Computer-adapted Placement Assessment and Support. ASSET is American College Testing placement exam for students in community/technical education. PSAT is Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test. TSTC is Texas State Technical College.

Table 26. Which of the following did a family member help you with to prepare for life after high school? (Select all that apply.)

Form of help	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
Talked to you about career and/or college options	75.5%	76.2%	80.9%
Talked to you about finances	62.6%	63.0%	66.9%
Talked to you about your responsibilities as an adult	71.7%	72.0%	75.3%
Talked to you about what a career and/or college would be like	59.1%	55.8%	64.1%
Helped you with financial aid (FAFSA and/or scholarships)	54.0%	50.9%	56.8%
Helped you complete applications for colleges or trade/technical schools	28.7%	28.3%	41.6%
Encouraged you to apply to several different colleges	49.8%	42.7%	54.0%
No one in my family talked to me about or helped me with these things.	6.8%	7.2%	5.0%

On average, Akins seniors indicated that teachers helped them by pushing their academic abilities, encouraging them continue their education, and helping them write their college essays. School counselors helped them by encouraging them to continue their education after high school. College and career advisors helped them by assisting with the college application process, encouraging them to continue their education, encouraging them to apply to multiple schools, and assisting them with selecting courses needed for work or college admissions.

Table 27. Indicate whether the following people helped you with or encouraged you in any of the following activities (select all that apply).

Activity	Teacher	School Counselor	College & Career Advisor	None of These
Select courses needed for work or admission to college	12.3%	34.3%	42.5%	31.7%
Push your academic abilities further (e.g., challenging courses, science fair or summer learning, extra credit work)	47.5%	29.3%	20.2%	28.8%
Take AP / honors courses	36.1%	31.8%	10.7%	42.5%
Take dual credit or articulated credit courses	19.5%	35.7%	26.5%	42.2%
Get information about careers and/or occupations you might want to pursue	30.4%	24.7%	39.3%	28.3%
Continue your education after high school	46.2%	40.9%	46.7%	19.8%
Apply to multiple schools	23.3%	19.7%	46.0%	35.0%
Decide what school to attend	17.5%	17.0%	30.9%	50.5%
Fill out applications for postsecondary education	15.6%	19.7%	50.6%	32.0%
Write college application essays or personal statements	42.0%	15.0%	32.7%	34.8%

Table 28. Were your school counselors and/or college and career/Project ADVANCE advisors available to talk to you about college and careers?

Availability	School Counselor	College & Career Advisor
Yes, this person was available and I talked to him/her.	66.0%	78.5%
I tried to talk to this person and wasn't able to meet with him/her.	17.7%	10.0%
I never tried to meet with this person.	16.4%	11.7%

Garland (2008) found that students' interactions with a school counselor and/or college advisor influenced the likelihood that those students would become enrolled in a postsecondary institution.

Applications to Postsecondary Institutions

Table 29. Percentage of Applications per Institution Type

Institution type	0 applications	1-3 applications	4 or more applications
2-year	31.2%	64.0%	4.8%
4-year	40.4%	37.9%	21.7%
Business/technical/vocational school	90.1%	8.4%	1.5%

Garland (2008) found that students who submitted applications to four or more institutions were significantly more likely to become enrolled than were students who submitted fewer applications.

Table 30. Percentage of Acceptances per Institution Type

Institution type	0 acceptances	1-3 acceptances	4 or more acceptances
2-year	40.7%	56.2%	3.1%
4-year	50.5%	38.7%	10.8%
Business/technical/vocational school	91.4%	7.1%	1.5%

Postsecondary Financial Literacy

The completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is important to entering and completing postsecondary education, especially for economically disadvantaged students. Students who completed the FAFSA were found 50% more likely to enroll in a 4-year college than were those who had not. Approximately 59% of Akins' Class of 2014 who were enrolled in a postsecondary institution during the Fall semester after high school graduation completed a FAFSA (Looby, 2013).

Table 31. How do you plan to pay for your education after high school? (Select all that apply.)

Source	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
Scholarships and/or grants	71.2%	72.3%	69.5%
Loans	51.4%	44.5%	41.9%
Family or personal savings	50.3%	51.6%	65.1%
Tuition and fees exemption (e.g., military, foster care, adoption, deaf, blind)	12.8%	9.7%	10.5%
Working during the school year	63.9%	70.2%	61.8%
Working during the summer	66.3%	62.2%	63.7%
I don't know	4.9%	6.0%	4.1%

About 72% of Akins seniors indicated they planned to pay for college through scholarships or grants. Approximately 70% and 62% indicated they planned to work during the school year or during the summer, respectively, to pay college expenses.

Table 32. Where did you learn about options for paying for your education after high school? (Select all that apply.)

Source of information	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
Senior economics class	24.1%	21.0%	19.9%
Financial Aid Saturday events	26.0%	25.0%	18.2%
Talked to school counselor/college and career advisor/Project ADVANCE staff	71.4%	56.8%	50.3%
Information from a college or university (e.g., website, brochures)	32.4%	35.9%	38.8%
College recruiter	17.9%	21.5%	20.6%
U.S. Department of Education or FAFSA websites	23.6%	28.3%	25.2%
Parents or other adults	55.2%	62.9%	64.7%
Social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, etc.)	.	13.6%	11.9%
None of these	6.0%	8.6%	8.3%

Note. This question was changed in 2013, which precluded comparison with prior years' results.

Table 33. How easy has it been for you and your parents to understand the process of applying for financial aid?

Degree of ease	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
Easy	28.7%	31.3%	26.8%
Some parts easy, some parts difficult	47.7%	46.2%	47.4%
Difficult	14.3%	10.4%	11.1%
I did not apply for financial aid	9.3%	12.1%	14.8%

Table 34. If you did not submit a financial aid application, why not?

Reason	Akins 2013	Akins 2014	District 2014
I do not need financial aid to attend college	8.0%	10.9%	22.0%
My parents were not willing to submit private financial information	18.4%	10.9%	7.9%
My family did not think we would qualify or be eligible for financial aid	21.1%	20.0%	22.6%
I do not plan to go to college	13.2%	21.7%	16.2%
I did not know about the financial aid process	39.5%	37.0%	31.3%

On average, Akins seniors indicated they learned about financial aid from their parents, school counselors, and college and career advisors.

About 12% of Akins seniors indicated they did not apply for financial aid. Nearly 11% indicated they did not need financial aid to attend college. About 20% indicated they did not think they would be eligible for financial aid. Approximately 37% reported they did not know about the financial aid process.

Acronym Key

The following acronyms are used in the High School Exit Survey summary reports. Where relevant, acronyms have a link to an external URL.

Acronym	Definition
ACC	Austin Community College
ACT	American College Testing
AP	Advanced Placement
ASSET	American College Testing (ACT) placement exam for students in community/technical
COMPASS	American College Testing (ACT) Computer-adapted Placement Assessment and Support
EOC	End of Course exam
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
GPA	grade point average
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
PSAT	Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)
SAT	Scholastic Aptitude Test
STAAR	State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness
TAKS	Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills
THEA	Texas Higher Education Assessment
TSTC	Texas State Technical College
UIL	University Interscholastic League

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