

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, and Support

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

Postsecondary plans	2012	2013	2014
Continue my education	96.8%	95.0%	94.7%
Attend college or technical school without working	.	.	22.5%
Attend college or technical school while working full time	.	.	12.5%
Attend college or technical school while working part time	.	.	59.7%
Work full time only	.	.	6.1%
Work part time only	.	.	2.8%
Enlist in the military	4.3%	3.8%	3.4%
No plans/ not sure yet	3.9%	3.9%	4.7%
Other	4.1%	2.6%	2.8%

Note. The response options changed in 2014.

Approximately 60% of AISD seniors who indicated they would 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 the entire AISD Class of 2014. Where available, data are presented from previous senior classes to compare with this year's responses. In total, 3,874 students in the Class of 2014 completed the survey, for an overall response rate of 92%. The ethnic and gender distribution of the district survey sample closely resembled that of the district's senior class, indicating the results can be considered representative of the entire senior class population. Campus-level survey results are provided in separate reports and will be available online in September 2014.

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

	2014
This summer	7.5%
This fall	84.8%
Next spring	8.7%

Approximately 85% of AISD seniors indicated they planned to enroll in a postsecondary institution in Fall 2014. Nearly 60% planned to attend a 4-year college or university and almost 32% 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?

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

About 35% percent of AISD seniors planned to attend Austin Community College, 31% indicated they planned to attend other postsecondary institutions, and 12% indicated Texas State University as their college of choice.

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

	2014
Austin Community College (ACC)	34.8%
Texas State University	12.0%
University of Texas-Austin	8.7%
University of Texas-San Antonio	4.2%
Texas A&M University	5.9%
St. Edward's University	2.2%
Blinn College	2.4%
University of North Texas	2.6%
Texas Tech University	2.9%
Stephen F. Austin University	1.2%
Other	31.0%

A gap year usually describes a year that a student takes off between high school and college. Although gap years are common practice in Europe, they are increasing in popularity in the United States. Gap years offer an opportunity to travel, explore different interests, and gain experience and maturity before beginning college.

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

Table 5. If you are not planning to pursue further education, what are your primary reasons? (Select all that apply.)

Reason	2014
Financial (e.g., cannot afford to attend school, need income from working)	17.4%
Academic (e.g., grades/test scores are not high enough, do not feel academically prepared for college)	8.4%
Personal obligation (e.g., child care or family responsibilities)	7.1%
Personal preference (e.g., do not like school, career goals do not require college)	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)	32.9%
Other (please specify)	10.8%

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

Table 6. Select the one area that best fits what you plan to study.

	2014
Health sciences	18.1%
Business	14.1%
Engineering	11.7%
I do not know	7.9%
Visual and performing arts	7.4%
Natural sciences and mathematics	6.1%
Law, public safety, corrections, and security	5.3%
Computer and information sciences	5.1%
Education	4.2%
Communication	4.2%
Social sciences	3.3%
Human services	3.2%
Agricultural sciences and technologies	2.8%
Humanities	1.9%
Hospitality and tourism	1.6%
Architecture	1.6%
Trade and industrial	1.5%
Office skills	0.2%

According to the [Austin Chamber of Commerce July 2014 MSA Job Market Report](#), 18% of the available job offerings in this period were in computer and mathematical occupations. **Only 5% of AISD 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. Likewise, health-related certifications were the majority of the certifications posted by employers. **Approximately 18% of AISD seniors were interested in health sciences.**

Interest in and demand for educational careers were well-matched. Other certifications in demand by local education institutions, such as AISD and the University of Texas System, include English as a second language (ESL) and special education (SPED). **Four percent of AISD seniors indicated an interest in the education field.**

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

School status	2013	2014
Less than high school	25.8%	22.8%
High school or earned a GED	22.9%	19.6%
Some college	.	12.9%
Associate degree (2-year)	4.0%	6.12%
Bachelor's degree (4-year)	20.6%	20.3%
Master's degree	9.1%	8.6%
Professional degree (e.g., MD, JD)	.	3.6%
Doctorate degree (e.g., PhD, EdD)	.	2.3%
Don't know or does not apply	.	3.8%

Note. Only mother's educational level is reported (for the purpose of comparisons across years. 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). Response options for this question changed in 2014.

Parental education level influences children's academic achievement, educational aspirations, and success in the workforce (Dubow, Boxer, & Huesmann, 2009; Foundation for Child Development, 2014). Of AISD seniors whose mother's educational level was some college or better, 89% had aspirations for postsecondary education, and 84% of these indicated their parent/guardian expected them to achieve an associate's degree or better. Almost 75% percent of *all* AISD seniors indicated their parents expected them to achieve an associate's degree or better.

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

Level of education	2013	2014
High school or earned a GED	24.4%	7.6%
Some college	21.6%	6.0%
Associate degree (2-year)	.	6.4%
Bachelor's degree (4-year)	.	37.7%
Master's degree	19.4%	15.7%
Professional degree (e.g., MD, JD)	8.5%	6.2%
Doctorate degree (e.g., PhD, EdD)	.	8.0%
I am not sure	.	12.4%

On average, expectations for highest level of educational attainment differed depending on AISD seniors' personal expectations and their perceptions of their parents/guardians' expectations.

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

Level of education	2013	2014
High school diploma	4.9%	3.9%
Industry license or certification (e.g., trade school, technical/community college)	3.6%	3.8%
Associate degree	10.5%	9.5%
Bachelor's degree (4-year)	42.44%	39.3%
Advanced degree (e.g., master's, doctoral, medical, law degree)	38.54%	43.5%

Approximately 83% of AISD seniors expected to earn a bachelor's degree or better during their lifetime, while approximately 68% of AISD seniors indicated their parents expected them to achieve the same level of education.

According to Perna and Titus (2005), the odds of enrolling in a 2- or 4-year college, relative to not enrolling, increased with the frequency with which parents discussed education-related topics (e.g., grades) with their children. Furthermore, Perna and 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>	2013	2014
Talking to you about homework	67.8%	68.1%
Making sure you completed your homework	63.6%	64.6%
Asking you about what you're learning in school	64.1%	64.6%
Helping you decide what classes to take	54.8%	55.3%
Talking to you about how you're doing in your classes	78.8%	79.9%
Rewarding you when you do well in school	55.5%	57.0%
Communicating with your teachers (e.g., teacher conferences, email, and phone calls)	45.5%	46.4%
Attending school meetings	43.0%	44.8%
Attending school events (e.g., sports, performances)	55.0%	56.2%
Volunteering at your school	27.3%	28.3%
Joining and participating in the PTA	19.5%	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	2012	2013	2014
Never	.	28.5%	25.5%
Rarely	.	14.7%	15.6%
Sometimes	.	21.6%	23.1%
Often	.	35.1%	35.9%

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

Most seniors indicated they knew at least one teacher who supported them in their high school academics and postsecondary aspirations.

Figure 1. 2014 Parent Connect/Gradespeed Use

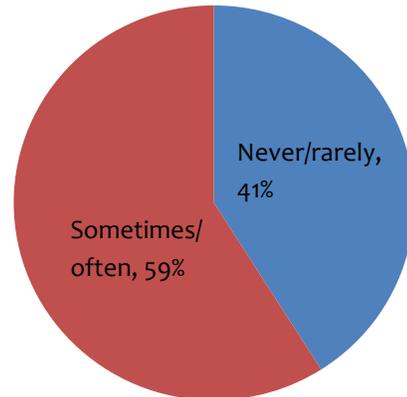


Table 12. Indicate if you know at least one teacher who would do the following:

Teacher help	2012	2013	2014
Would be willing to give you extra help with your school work if you needed it	90.2%	85.0%	90.1%
Would be willing to help you with a personal problem	77.5%	71.7%	74.7%
Cares about how you're doing in school	84.8%	76.8%	81.4%
Would be willing to write you a letter of recommendation for a job or college	87.1%	77.8%	84.7%
Knows what you will be doing next year	69.1%	63.1%	67.5%
Would be willing to help you even after you graduate	70.3%	61.8%	66.3%

Persistence and Motivation

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>	2012	2013	2014
I can do even the hardest schoolwork if I try.	90.6%	91.4%	91.8%
I enjoy doing my schoolwork.	55.8%	58.4%	56.3%
I feel/felt well prepared for STAAR/EOC.	.	.	78.8%
I try hard to do my best work.	90.4%	90.0%	91.3%
I feel successful in my schoolwork.	88.8%	88.0%	89.2%
My teachers push us to think hard about the things we read.	83.5%	82.6%	86.1%
My teachers push everyone to work hard.	86.8%	85.9%	88.8%
I can reach the goals I set for myself.	94.3%	94.5%	96.3%
My homework helps me learn things I need to know.	76.1%	75.6%	77.2%
My schoolwork makes me think about things in new ways.	69.2%	70.4%	70.7%
I have fun learning in my classes.	75.2%	67.0%	75.4%
My teachers connect what I am learning to life outside of class.	65.0%	74.6%	68.4%
I like to come to school.	70.7%	69.8%	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.

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 spent studying were found to be key determinants of college attainment and success (Bailey, Jenkins, & Leinbach, 2005). When teachers had high expectations and provided an interesting and engaging learning environment, students' self-esteem, confidence, and academic performance improved (Brophy, 2008; 2010).

Extracurricular Activities

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	63.5%	18.2%	18.4%
Theater/drama	72.8%	21.3%	5.9%
Dance	77.8%	14.2%	8.0%
Sports	41.5%	25.1%	33.4%
Academic clubs/UIIL competitions	57.2%	22.4%	20.3%
Speech/debate	69.1%	29.0%	1.9%
Student government	79.2%	17.9%	2.9%
Career and technical student organizations	82.2%	12.2%	5.6%

Note. UIIL 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	68.3%	13.0%	18.8%
Theater/drama	85.4%	11.2%	3.4%
Dance	83.1%	10.4%	6.5%
Sports	46.4%	20.1%	33.5%
Providing routine care for family members	73.9%	11.3%	14.8%
Community service	36.2%	29.0%	34.8%
Environmental projects/activities	68.5%	19.4%	12.1%
Boy/Girl Scouts	89.4%	5.2%	5.4%

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 extracurricular activities participated in most by AISD seniors were sports and community service. Approximately 50% to 60% of seniors participated in sports—in and out of school—at some point during high school. More than 60% of seniors participated in community service (out of school) at some point during high school.

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		
	2012	2013	2014
Did not work	22.0%	47.3%	41.0%
Less than 20 hours	.	25.2%	28.0%
20 hours or more	.	25.5%	31.0%

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

The percentage of AISD seniors who indicated they worked 20 or more hours during their senior year increased almost 6 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		
	2012	2013	2014
None	3.8%	10.9%	10.5%
1 to 5 hours	49.2%	41.8%	40.4%
6 to 10 hours	29.3%	21.9%	23.1%
11 to 15 hours	10.5%	12.0%	11.5%
16 to 20 hours	.	6.2%	8.1%
More than 20 hours	.	5.8%	6.4%

On average, AISD seniors indicated they studied 1 to 10 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 somewhat well or very well	2012	2013	2014
Teamwork	91.2%	90.8%	90.8%
Creative thinking	92.0%	90.7%	90.3%
Problem solving	92.7%	92.6%	92.7%
Conflict resolution	86.5%	87.3%	87.6%
Personal health/fitness	82.7%	82.7%	81.1%
Time management	83.6%	84.4%	83.7%
Technology	87.0%	86.9%	84.8%

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

"Twenty-first-century skills" is a term that 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:

Percentage who responded good or excellent	2012	2013*	2014
English language arts	81.6%	81.7%	82.9%
Social studies	79.5%	77.1%	77.6%
Performing/fine arts	72.8%	74.2%*	73.8%
Career and technical (CTE)	62.4%	61.7%*	73.5%
Science	68.7%	69.4%	71.2%
Mathematics	68.6%	69.7%	70.2%
Computer/technology	66.3%	67.2%	66.8%
Foreign language	59.9%	60.0%*	59.6%

While the good or excellent ratings for quality of instruction remained constant in other subject areas, CTE ratings increased by about 11 percentage points from 2012 to 2014.

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

*2013 results were recomputed to exclude the seniors who did not take particular courses.

Percentages for foreign language, performing/fine arts, and CTE were most affected by the change in computation.

Technology Access and Use

Table 19. Which of the following describes your computer and Internet access at home?

Access	2012	2013	2014
No computer	5.2%	4.9%	4.7%
No computer, but Internet access (e.g., cell phone, iPad, or iTouch)	5.3%	8.7%	10.0%
Computer, no Internet	5.4%	4.6%	4.1%
Computer with Internet access	84.1%	81.8%	81.2%

Table 20. Have you ever used Naviance/Family Connection for the following activities?

	Yes
Class rank and grade point average inquiry	84.2%
College search	72.6%
Counselor-directed activities (e.g., Personality Type Questionnaire or Explore Careers)	65.1%
College visit sign up	56.2%
Career exploration	50.5%
Resume building	36.5%

AISD 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.

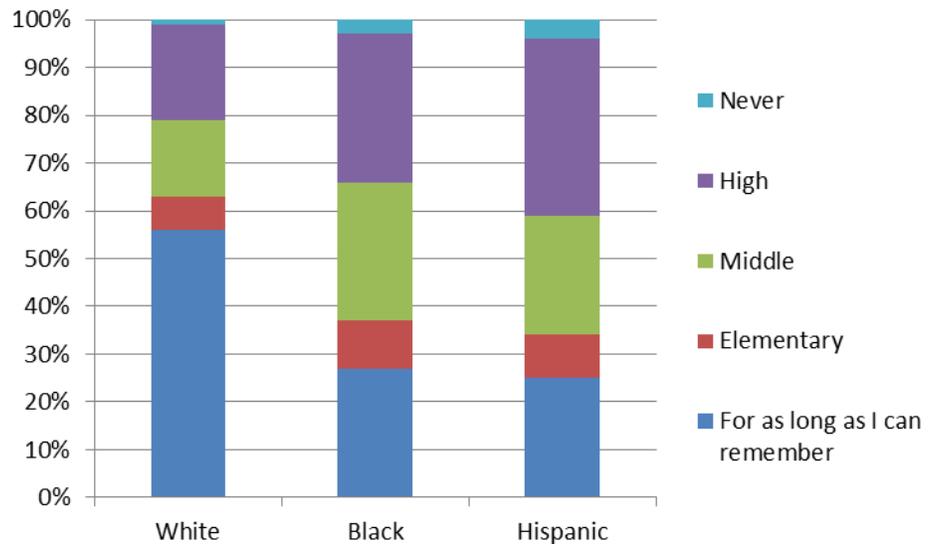
Overall, almost 40% of AISD seniors have been thinking about college for “as long as [they] can remember.” Approximately 30% of seniors indicated they started thinking about college while in high school. About 52% percent of that group indicated they did not start thinking about college until their junior or senior years of high school.

Table 21. At what time in your life did you start thinking about college as a possibility after high school?

Time frame	2012	2013	2014
As long ago as I can remember	38.7%	36.8%	36.8%
In elementary school	8.6%	8.3%	8.2%
In middle school / junior high	20.8%	21.6%	21.7%
In high school	29.3%	30.4%	30.4%
Never thought of college as an option	3.0%	2.8%	2.8%

AISD seniors’ responses regarding when they started thinking about college varied by race. Almost 60% of White seniors indicated they had been thinking about college for “as long as [they] can remember;” compared to 27% and 25% of Black and Hispanic seniors, respectively. Approximately 20% of White seniors did not start thinking about college until high school; compared to about 31% of Black seniors and 37% of Hispanic seniors.

Figure 2. Thinking About College, by Race



Of the Hispanic and Black seniors who did not start thinking about college until high school, about 56% and 50%, respectively, did not start thinking about college until their junior and senior years of high school.

Table 22. How did you prepare for your education after high school? (Select all that apply.)

Type of preparation	2012	2013	2014
Took college entrance tests (e.g., SAT, ACT, THEA, COMPASS, ASSET)	73.5%	65.9%	66.6%
Completed and submitted the FAFSA	58.2%	64.0%	67.8%
Visited one or more colleges or technical schools	57.8%	55.7%	60.1%
Ordered and submitted a transcript to a college or trade/ technical school.	55.9%	54.8%	59.2%
Took one or more Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate classes	53.9%	50.0%	51.1%
Met with a college recruiter at my high school	47.0%	41.3%	43.3%
Took test prep class for the PSAT, SAT, ACT, etc.	46.1%	38.6%	40.0%
Completed and submitted a scholarship application	44.8%	45.0%	48.8%
Met with the school counselor/ADVANCE staff to discuss college plans/processes	44.5%	56.2%	52.8%
Attended one or more college fairs	43.9%	39.1%	44.8%
Completed or are currently enrolled in ACC courses	40.3%	36.8%	36.0%
Participated in ACC College Connections	35.6%	36.2%	35.0%
Took other college level courses (e.g., Texas State, Texas Tech, TSTC)	8.8%	5.6%	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 23. 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	2012	2013	2014
Talked to you about career and/or college options	80.8%	80.1%	80.9%
Talked to you about finances	72.2%	67.0%	66.9%
Talked to you about your responsibilities as an adult	79.1%	74.2%	75.3%
Talked to you about what a career and/or college would be like	70.6%	66.2%	64.1%
Helped you with financial aid (FAFSA and/or scholarships)	56.1%	55.0%	56.8%
Helped you complete applications for colleges or trade/technical schools	48.3%	40.1%	41.6%
Encouraged you to apply to several different colleges	61.7%	53.6%	54.0%
No one in my family talked to me about or helped me with these things.	7.5%	6.0%	5.0%

Table 24. 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 and career advisor
Yes, this person was available and I talked to him/her.	64.8%	72.0%
I tried to talk to this person and wasn't able to meet with him/her.	13.7%	7.7%
I never tried to meet with this person.	21.5%	20.3%

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.

On average, AISD seniors indicated that teachers helped them by pushing their academic abilities, encouraging them to take advanced coursework and continue their education, and assisting them with writing their college essays. School counselors helped them select the courses needed for college admissions and encouraged them to continue their education after high school. College and career advisors helped them by encouraging them to continue their education, encouraging them to apply to multiple schools, and assisting them with the college application process.

Table 25. 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 and career advisor	None of these
Select courses needed for work or admission to college	17.9%	39.2%	34.2%	31.5%
Push your academic abilities further (e.g., challenging courses, science fair or summer learning, extra credit work)	55.5%	26.1%	17.3%	25.5%
Take AP / honors courses	42.8%	26.3%	12.0%	38.4%
Take dual credit or articulated credit courses	24.5%	27.5%	19.1%	46.2%
Get information about careers and/or occupations you might want to pursue	28.3%	25.2%	35.5%	33.8%
Continue your education after high school	44.9%	38.6%	42.5%	24.0%
Apply to multiple schools	22.3%	23.9%	41.2%	36.2%
Decide what school to attend	19.4%	17.3%	30.2%	49.1%
Fill out applications for postsecondary education	17.7%	19.1%	41.1%	39.0%
Write college application essays or personal statements	42.4%	17.0%	32.0%	33.8%

Applications to Postsecondary Institutions

Table 26. Percentage of Seniors Who Indicated They Submitted at Least One Application to a Postsecondary Institution

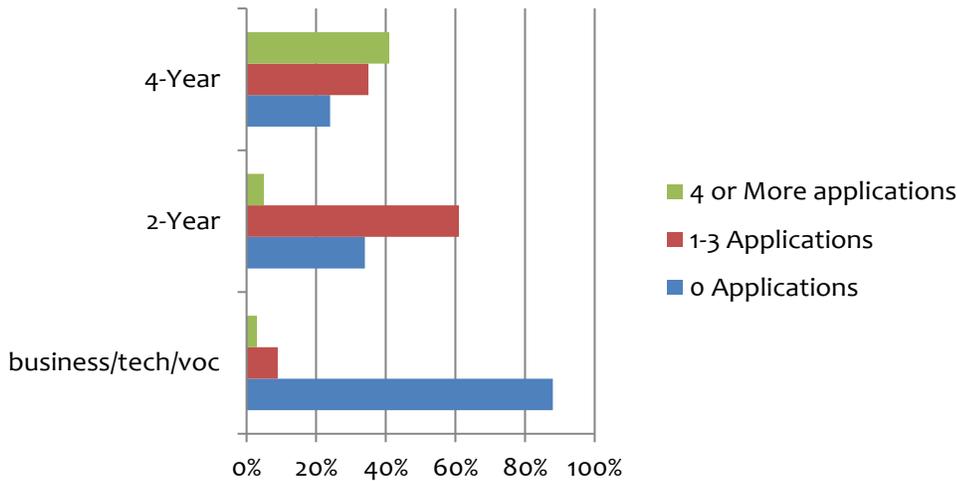
Institution Type	2012	2013	2014
2-year	73.0%	51.2%	65.7%
4-year	78.5%	60.0%	70.8%
Business/technical/vocational school	10.1%	6.8%	12.8%

Table 27. Percentage of Seniors Who Indicated They Were Accepted to at Least One Postsecondary Institution

Institution	2012	2013	2014
2-year	61.7%	59.8%	57.4%
4-year	67.1%	66.0%	60.3%
Business/technical/vocational school	6.9%	7.7%	10.6%

Garland (2008) found students who submitted applications to four or more institutions were significantly more likely to become enrolled than were students who submitted fewer applications. About 41% of AISD seniors who planned to attend 4-year institutions indicated they submitted 4 or more applications, while about 61% of seniors who planned to attend a 2-year institutions indicated they submitted 1-3 applications.

Figure 3. Number of Applications, by Institution Type



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. About 72% of AISD’s Class of 2014 who were enrolled in a postsecondary institution during the Fall semester after high school graduation completed a FAFSA (Looby, 2013).

Table 28. How do you plan to pay for your education after high school? (Select all that apply.)

Source	2012	2013	2014
Scholarships and/or grants	67.2%	58.7%	69.5%
Loans	40.8%	35.1%	41.9%
Family or personal savings	58.7%	51.1%	65.1%
Tuition and fees exemption (e.g., military, foster care, adoption, deaf, blind)	9.6%	8.3%	10.5%
Working during the school year	56.4%	51.9%	61.8%
Working during the summer	59.2%	54.2%	63.7%
I don't know	5.6%	5.5%	4.1%

About 70% of AISD seniors indicated they planned to pay for college through scholarships or grants. Approximately 65% indicated they planned to use family or personal savings to pay for college. More than 60% indicated they planned to work during the summer or school year to pay college expenses.

Table 29. Where did you learn about options for paying for your education after high school? (Select all that apply.)

Source of information	2013	2014
Senior economics class	19.1%	19.9%
Financial Aid Saturday events	19.1%	18.2%
Talked to school counselor/college and career advisor/Project ADVANCE staff	54.9%	50.3%
Information from a college or university (e.g., website, brochures)	35.7%	38.8%
College recruiter	18.6%	20.6%
U.S. Department of Education or FAFSA websites	24.6%	25.2%
Parents or other adults	61.7%	64.7%
Social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook)	.	11.9%
None of these	7.6%	8.3%

Note. This question was changed in 2013, which precluded comparison with prior years' results. FAFSA is Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

Table 30. How easy has it been for you and your parents to understand the process of applying for financial aid?

Degree of ease	2012	2013	2014
Easy	21.8%	26.3%	26.8%
Some parts easy, some parts difficult	47.4%	47.9%	47.4%
Difficult	13.2%	10.6%	11.1%
I did not apply for financial aid	17.5%	15.2%	14.8%

Table 31. If you did not submit a financial aid application, why not?

Reason	2012	2013	2014
I do not need financial aid to attend college	19.3%	22.7%	22.0%
My parents were not willing to submit private financial information	6.4%	7.2%	7.9%
My family did not think we would qualify or be eligible for financial aid	18.8%	16.6%	22.6%
I do not plan to go to college	16.2%	13.7%	16.2%
I did not know about the financial aid process	39.2%	39.9%	31.3%

On average, AISD seniors indicated they learned about financial aid from their parents, school counselors, and college and career advisors. About 15% of seniors indicated they did not apply for financial aid. Approximately 45% of these students reported they did not need financial aid or did not think they would be eligible for financial aid. One-third of seniors indicated they did not submit a financial aid application because 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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