

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	Richards 2014	District 2014
Continue my education	100.0%	94.7%
Attend college or technical school without working	19.2%	22.5%
Attend college or technical school while working full time	9.6%	12.5%
Attend college or technical school while working part time	77.0%	59.7%
Work full time only	0.0%	6.1%
Work part time only	0.0%	2.8%
Enlist in the military	2.0%	3.4%
No plans/ not sure yet	0.0%	4.7%
Other	3.9%	2.8%

About 77% of Richards 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 Richards Class of 2014. Where available, data are presented from previous senior classes to compare with previous years' responses. This year, 52 Richards students in the Class of 2014 completed the survey, for an overall response rate of 100%.

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?

	Richards 2014	District 2014
This summer	0.0%	7.5%
This fall	100.0%	84.8%
Next spring	0.0%	8.7%

All Richards seniors indicated they planned to enroll in a postsecondary institution in Fall 2014. About 96% planned to attend a 4-year college or university.

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

	Richards 2014	District 2014
A 4-year college or university	96.2%	58.2%
A 2-year college or university	0.0%	12.7%
A 2-year community college and then transfer to a 4-year college	3.9%	32.1%
A private career or trade school	0.0%	2.5%

Nearly half of Richards seniors planned to attend other postsecondary institutions. Almost 16% indicated they planned to attend University of Texas-San Antonio.

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

	Richards 2014	District 2014
Austin Community College (ACC)	5.9%	34.8%
Texas State University	9.8%	12.0%
University of Texas-Austin	5.9%	8.7%
University of Texas-San Antonio	15.7%	4.2%
Texas A&M University	3.9%	5.9%
St. Edward's University	2.0%	2.2%
Blinn College	0.0%	2.4%
University of North Texas	9.8%	2.6%
Texas Tech University	0.0%	2.9%
Stephen F. Austin University	0.0%	1.2%
Other	49.0%	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 4% of Richards 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 14% of Richards seniors were interested in health sciences.

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

	Richards 2014	District 2014
Business	13.5%	14.1%
Health sciences	13.5%	18.1%
Natural sciences and mathematics	13.5%	6.1%
Engineering	11.5%	11.7%
I do not know	11.5%	7.9%
Social sciences	9.6%	3.3%
Law, public safety, corrections, and security	7.7%	5.3%
Visual and performing arts	7.7%	7.4%
Human services	5.8%	3.2%
Computer and information sciences	3.9%	5.1%
Education	3.9%	4.2%
Communication	1.9%	4.2%
Agricultural sciences and technologies	0.0%	2.8%
Architecture	0.0%	1.6%
Hospitality and tourism	0.0%	1.6%
Humanities	0.0%	1.9%
Office skills	0.0%	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	Richards 2014	District 2014
Financial (e.g., can't afford to attend school, need income from working, etc.)	0.0%	17.4%
Academic (e.g., grades/test scores aren't high enough, don't feel academically prepared for college, etc.)	0.0%	8.4%
Personal obligation (e.g., child care or family responsibilities)	0.0%	7.1%
Personal preference (e.g., don't like school, career goals do not require college, etc.)	0.0%	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)	0.0%	32.9%
Other (please specify)	0.0%	10.8%

All of Richards indicated they planned to pursue further education immediately after high school.

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

School status	Richards 2014	District 2014
Less than high school	17.3%	22.8%
High school or earned a GED	25.0%	19.6%
Some college	21.2%	12.9%
Associate degree (2-year)	7.7%	6.12%
Bachelor's degree (4-year)	19.2%	20.3%
Master's degree	5.8%	8.6%
Professional degree (e.g., MD, JD, etc.)	1.9%	3.6%
Doctorate degree (e.g., PhD, EdD, etc.)	1.9%	2.3%
Don't know or does not apply	0.0%	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).

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

Level of education	Richards 2014	District 2014
High school or earned a GED	1.9%	7.6%
Some college	0.0%	6.0%
Associate degree (2-year)	0.0%	6.4%
Bachelor's degree (4-year)	51.9%	37.7%
Master's degree	25.0%	15.7%
Professional degree (e.g., MD, JD, etc.)	9.6%	6.2%
Doctorate degree (e.g., PhD, EdD, etc.)	9.6%	8.0%
I am not sure	1.9%	12.4%

All of Richards seniors expected to earn a bachelor's degree or better during their lifetime, while approximately 96% of Richards 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	Richards 2014	District 2014
High school diploma	0.0%	3.9%
Industry license or certification (e.g., trade school, technical/community college)	0.0%	3.8%
Associate degree	0.0%	9.5%
Bachelor's degree (4-year)	40.4%	39.3%
Advanced degree (e.g., master's, doctoral, medical, law degree)	59.6%	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>	Richards	District
	2014	2014
Talking to you about homework	63.5%	68.1%
Making sure you completed your homework	55.8%	64.6%
Asking you about what you're learning in school	59.6%	64.6%
Helping you decide what classes to take	46.2%	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	42.3%	57.0%
Communicating with your teachers (e.g., teacher conferences, email, and phone calls)	44.2%	46.4%
Attending school meetings	63.5%	44.8%
Attending school events (e.g., sports, performances)	69.2%	56.2%
Volunteering at your school	32.7%	28.3%
Joining and participating in the PTA	23.1%	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	Richards	District
	2014	2014
Never	38.5%	25.5%
Rarely	15.4%	15.6%
Sometimes	13.5%	23.1%
Often	32.7%	35.9%

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

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

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

Teacher help	Richards	District
	2014	2014
Would be willing to give you extra help with your school work if you needed it	96.2%	90.1%
Would be willing to help you with a personal problem	90.4%	74.7%
Cares about how you're doing in school	98.1%	81.4%
Would be willing to write you a letter of recommendation for a job or college	98.1%	84.7%
Knows what you will be doing next year	88.5%	67.5%
Would be willing to help you even after you graduate	86.5%	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>	Richards 2014	District 2014
I can do even the hardest schoolwork if I try.	98.1%	91.8%
I enjoy doing my schoolwork.	46.2%	56.3%
I feel/felt well prepared for STAAR/EOC.	88.6%	78.8%
I try hard to do my best work.	96.2%	91.3%
I feel successful in my schoolwork.	92.3%	89.2%
My teachers push us to think hard about the things we read.	96.2%	86.1%
My teachers push everyone to work hard.	100.0%	88.8%
I can reach the goals I set for myself.	100.0%	96.3%
My homework helps me learn things I need to know.	86.5%	77.2%
My schoolwork makes me think about things in new ways.	74.5%	70.7%
My teachers connect what I am learning to life outside of class.	84.6%	68.4%
I have fun learning in my classes.	90.4%	75.4%
I like to come to school.	73.1%	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 Richards seniors were community service, sports, and academic clubs. Approximately 96% of seniors participated in community service activities outside of school. About 65% participated in school-affiliated sports. Almost 60% of seniors indicated they participated in school-affiliated academic clubs.

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	59.6%	11.5%	28.9%
Theater/drama	75.9%	19.2%	1.9%
Dance	86.5%	11.5%	1.9%
Sports	35.3%	25.5%	39.2%
Academic clubs/UII competitions	40.4%	19.2%	40.4%
Speech/debate	73.1%	19.2%	7.7%
Student government	82.4%	15.7%	2.0%
Career and technical student organizations	94.2%	5.8%	0.0%

Note. UII 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	65.4%	11.5%	23.1%
Theater/drama	92.2%	7.8%	0.0%
Dance	92.2%	3.9%	3.9%
Sports	51.9%	23.1%	25.0%
Providing routine care for family members	65.3%	8.2%	26.5%
Community service	3.9%	0.0%	96.2%
Environmental projects/activities	45.1%	13.7%	41.2%
Boy/Girl Scouts	84.3%	9.8%	5.9%

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	
	Richards 2014	District 2014
Did not work	53.9%	41.0%
Less than 20 hours	23.1%	28.0%
20 hours or more	23.1%	31.0%

The majority of Richards seniors indicated they did not work at a paid job during their senior year of high school.

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	
	Richards 2014	District 2014
None	1.9%	10.5%
1 to 5 hours	13.5%	40.4%
6 to 10 hours	30.8%	23.1%
11 to 15 hours	34.6%	11.5%
16 to 20 hours	13.5%	8.1%
More than 20 hours	5.8%	6.4%

On average, Anderson seniors indicated they studied 6 to 15 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	Richards 2014	District 2014
Teamwork	98.1%	90.8%
Creative thinking	98.1%	90.3%
Problem solving	100.0%	92.7%
Conflict resolution	98.1%	87.6%
Personal health/fitness	98.1%	81.1%
Time management	94.2%	83.7%
Technology	100.0%	84.8%

“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).

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

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). Seniors were 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 good or excellent	Richards 2014	District 2014
English language arts	96.2%	82.9%
Mathematics	94.2%	70.2%
Science	84.6%	71.2%
Social studies	84.6%	77.6%
Career and technical (CTE)	82.6%	73.5%
Computer/Technology	81.3%	66.8%
Performing/Fine arts	71.4%	73.8%
Foreign language	52.9%	59.6%

The types of instruction Richards seniors rated lowest are performing/fine arts and foreign language.

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

Table 19. The number of Richards seniors who rated a CTE course *fair* or *Poor* (by course). Seniors were allowed to select more than one course.

CTE Course	Richards 2014	District 2014
Audio/visual production	25.0%	21.7%
Graphic design or photography	25.0%	15.1%
Web development	25.0%	15.2%
Engineering	0.0%	17.9%
Animation or video game design	0.0%	18.1%

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 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 17% of Richards CTE seniors rated CTE courses *fair* or *poor*.

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

	Richards 2014	District 2014
Other	40.0%	15.4%
The teacher was not an expert in the subject area.	20.0%	30.5%
Class projects were not interesting.	20.0%	33.1%
The course was too difficult.	20.0%	18.2%
The teacher did not explain things in a way that I could understand.	20.0%	29.0%
The teacher did not respect students' ideas and suggestions.	20.0%	12.0%
The teacher did not keep us busy—time was wasted.	0.0%	18.0%
A lot of time was spent on topics unrelated to the class.	0.0%	14.8%
The course was too easy.	0.0%	23.6%
The teacher did not manage classroom discipline well.	0.0%	25.3%

Also note, the CTE Summary Report lists the reasons AISD seniors rated CTE courses low by course type.

Two seniors responded other. Their responses were:

- “My school/principal didn’t put much attention to the area of dance or things that were not hard content. I just don’t choose the media pathway for web development and such.”
- “We went over these subjects a little as required.”

Technology Access and Use

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

Access	Richards	District
	2014	2014
No computer	1.9%	4.7%
No computer, but Internet access (e.g., cell phone, iPad, or iPod)	5.8%	10.0%
Computer, no Internet	3.9%	4.1%
Computer with Internet access	88.5%	81.2%

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

Percentage answering yes	Richards 2014	District 2014
College search	100.0%	72.6%
College visit sign up	96.2%	56.2%
Counselor-directed activities (e.g., Personality Type Questionnaire or Explore Careers)	94.2%	65.1%
Class rank and GPA inquiry	92.3%	84.2%
Resume building	86.5%	36.5%
Career exploration	84.6%	50.5%

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

Richards seniors indicated they mostly used Naviance to search colleges, sign up for college visits, complete counselor-directed activities, and to check their class rank/GPA.

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.

Most of Richards seniors indicated they had been thinking about college for as long as they can remember or since middle/junior high school. Of the seniors who indicated they did not start thinking about college until high school, only about 2% indicated they did not start thinking about college until their junior year 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	Richards	District
	2014	2014
As long ago as I can remember	38.5%	36.8%
In elementary school	9.6%	8.2%
In middle school / junior high	36.5%	21.7%
In high school	15.4%	30.4%
Never thought of college as an option	0.0%	2.8%

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

Grade	Richards	District
	2014	2014
9 th Grade	9.6%	24.4%
10 th Grade	3.8%	23.9%
11 th Grade	1.9%	36.1%
12 th Grade	0.0%	15.6%

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

Type of preparation	Richards 2014	District 2014
Completed and submitted the FAFSA	100.0%	67.8%
Took college entrance tests (e.g., SAT, ACT, THEA, COMPASS, ASSET)	100.0%	66.6%
Took test prep class for the PSAT, SAT, ACT, etc.	98.1%	40.0%
Visited one or more colleges or technical schools	98.1%	60.1%
Met with the school counselor or college/career advisor to discuss college plans/processes	96.2%	52.8%
Took one or more Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate classes	96.2%	51.1%
Completed and submitted a scholarship application	94.1%	48.8%
Ordered and submitted a transcript to a college or trade/ technical school.	94.1%	59.2%
Attended one or more college fairs	90.4%	44.8%
Met with a college representative or recruiter at my high school	90.4%	43.3%
Participated in ACC College Connections (ACC Application Process)	45.1%	35.0%
Completed or are currently enrolled in ACC courses	15.4%	36.0%
I have done nothing to academically prepare for continuing my education	0.0%	17.2%
I have not completed any activities to prepare for continuing my education	0.0%	16.0%
I have not completed any forms to prepare for continuing my education	0.0%	16.0%
Took other college level courses (e.g., Texas State, Texas Tech, TSTC)	0.0%	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	Richards 2014	District 2014
Talked to you about career and/or college options	90.4%	80.9%
Talked to you about finances	88.5%	66.9%
Talked to you about your responsibilities as an adult	88.5%	75.3%
Talked to you about what a career and/or college would be like	69.2%	64.1%
Helped you with financial aid (FAFSA and/or scholarships)	80.8%	56.8%
Helped you complete applications for colleges or trade/technical schools	42.3%	41.6%
Encouraged you to apply to several different colleges	71.2%	54.0%
No one in my family talked to me about or helped me with these things.	0.0%	5.0%

On average, Richards seniors indicated that teachers helped them by pushing their academic abilities, encouraging them to continue their education, helping them write college essays, and encouraging them to take AP/honors courses. School counselors helped them by encouraging them to continue their education, encouraging them to take AP/honors courses, and helping them select courses needed for work or college. College and career advisors helped by encouraging them to continue their education after high school, encouraging them to apply to multiple schools, and helping them apply for college and write their college essays.

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	32.0%	46.0%	64.0%	20.0%
Push your academic abilities further (e.g., challenging courses, science fair or summer learning, extra credit work)	78.9%	30.8%	44.2%	7.7%
Take AP / honors courses	67.3%	48.1%	63.5%	9.6%
Take dual credit or articulated credit courses	26.0%	20.0%	32.0%	52.0%
Get information about careers and/or occupations you might want to pursue	46.2%	34.6%	61.5%	13.5%
Continue your education after high school	75.0%	55.8%	88.5%	1.9%
Apply to multiple schools	38.5%	32.7%	86.5%	1.9%
Decide what school to attend	32.7%	23.1%	67.3%	26.9%
Fill out applications for postsecondary education	32.7%	32.7%	78.9%	3.9%
Write college application essays or personal statements	69.2%	32.7%	78.9%	5.8%

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.	63.5%	98.1%
I tried to talk to this person and wasn't able to meet with him/her.	1.9%	1.9%
I never tried to meet with this person.	34.6%	0.0%

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	19.2%	80.8%	0.0%
4-year	0.0%	7.7%	92.3%
Business/technical/vocational school	93.3%	7.7%	0.0%

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	17.3%	80.8%	1.9%
4-year	0.0%	21.2%	78.9%
Business/technical/vocational school	92.0%	8.0%	0.0%

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 87% of Richards' 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	Richards 2014	District 2014
Scholarships and/or grants	96.2%	69.5%
Loans	82.7%	41.9%
Family or personal savings	75.0%	65.1%
Tuition and fees exemption (e.g., military, foster care, adoption, deaf, blind)	5.8%	10.5%
Working during the school year	82.6%	61.8%
Working during the summer	86.5%	63.7%
I don't know	0.0%	4.1%

The majority of Richards seniors indicated they planned to pay for college through scholarships and/or grants, working during the school year and summer, student loans, and family and personal savings.

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

Source of information	Richards 2014	District 2014
Senior economics class	26.9%	19.9%
Financial Aid Saturday events	23.1%	18.2%
Talked to school counselor/college and career advisor/Project ADVANCE staff	94.2%	50.3%
Information from a college or university (e.g., website, brochures)	76.9%	38.8%
College recruiter	23.1%	20.6%
U.S. Department of Education or FAFSA websites	50.0%	25.2%
Parents or other adults	78.9%	64.7%
Social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, etc.)	7.7%	11.9%
None of these	0.0%	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	Richards 2014	District 2014
Easy	32.7%	26.8%
Some parts easy, some parts difficult	59.6%	47.4%
Difficult	7.7%	11.1%
I did not apply for financial aid	0.0%	14.8%

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

Reason	Richards 2014	District 2014
I do not need financial aid to attend college	0.0%	22.0%
My parents were not willing to submit private financial information	0.0%	7.9%
My family did not think we would qualify or be eligible for financial aid	0.0%	22.6%
I do not plan to go to college	0.0%	16.2%
I did not know about the financial aid process	0.0%	31.3%

On average, Richards seniors indicated they learned about financial aid from school counselors, college and career advisors, their parents, and through media from colleges or universities.

All Richards seniors indicated they applied for financial aid.

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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