

High School Senior Exit Survey Highlights

Austin Independent School District

Spring 2017

About the Survey

The 15th annual Austin Independent School District (AISD) High School Exit Survey (HSES) was administered online to seniors in every AISD high school during May 2017. In total, 3,605 high school seniors completed the survey for a response rate of 85%.

Table 1

Overall, 85% of AISD seniors completed the survey in Spring 2017.

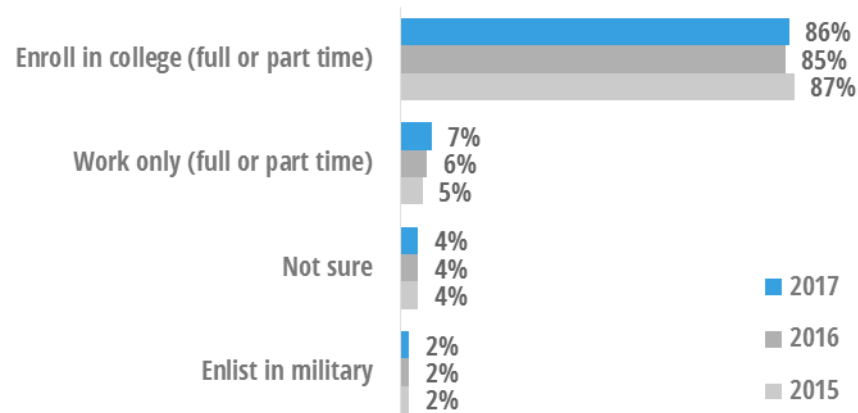
	# of Seniors	# Responded	% of Seniors who completed the survey
Akins	530	491	93%
Anderson	488	463	95%
Austin	453	388	86%
Bowie	649	355	55%
Crockett	309	266	86%
Eastside	127	125	98%
Garza	124	82	66%
LASA	245	243	99%
LBJ	167	160	96%
Lanier	276	232	84%
McCallum	362	319	88%
Reagan	228	212	93%
Richards	47	47	100%
Travis	250	222	89%
Total	4,255	3,605	85%

Postsecondary Plans

Each year on the survey, at least 85% of AISD's seniors indicated they planned to enroll in college the year after graduation. However, there is a gap between college intentions and enrollment. The postsecondary enrollment rate in the first year after high school graduation for AISD seniors in 2016 was 64% (National Student Clearinghouse, 2017).

Figure 1

Most AISD seniors planned to enroll in college in the year after high school.



In 2017, most AISD seniors who were planning to enroll in college in the year after graduation intended to attend a school within the Austin area. Seniors planned to pursue careers that were consistent with the occupational needs reported by the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce (June 2017).

Top 3 Postsecondary Institutions

Austin Community College (35%)
 University of Texas at Austin (10%)
 Texas State University (8%)

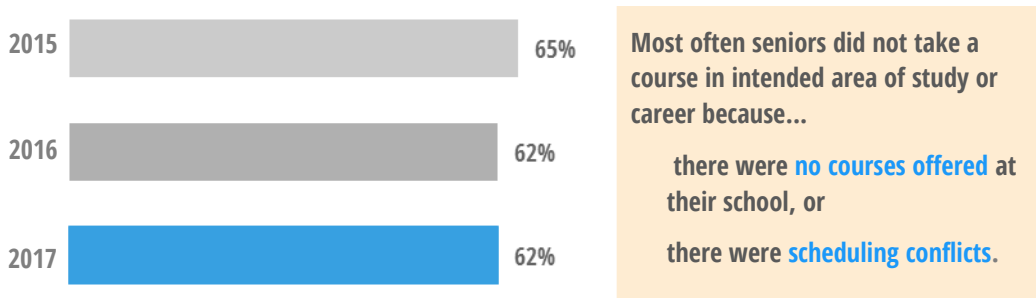
Top 3 Career Areas

Health Sciences (18%)
 Business (12%)
 Engineering (10%)

College and Career Preparation

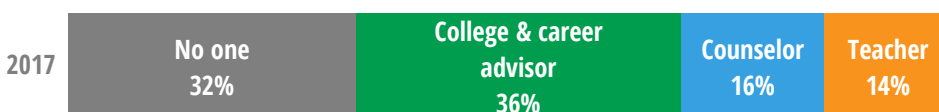
About 97% of AISD seniors considered going to college; however, 28% of them had not started thinking about the possibility until high school. Waiting until the senior year in high school is often too late to begin preparing for college. Key college preparation components include: a) a rigorous academic curriculum; b) academic, college, and career counseling; (c) extracurricular activities; (d) family and community engagement; e) mentoring; and f) financial planning.

Figure 2
 Over half of AISD seniors took a course in the area they planned to study or have a career.



About 65% of AISD seniors met with a counselor and/or college and career advisor during their senior year for various reasons. Seniors reported that the college and career advisors on each high school campus were the primary resources for financial aid assistance. However, 32% of seniors reported that no one helped with the submission of financial aid applications.

Figure 3
 College and career advisors on each high school campus were the primary resources for financial aid assistance for college.



Career and Technical Education

The career and technical education (CTE) program at AISD prepares students to have the academic and technical skills needed for a college education and/or entry-level work in a career pathway. High school students become CTE concentrators by taking two or more courses for three or more credits in a particular career pathway. Each career pathway combines technical training with academics around an industry theme. AISD high schools offer more than 20 CTE career pathways, such as health science, culinary arts, and engineering. In the Class of 2017, 27% of all seniors were CTE seniors.

CTE Survey Results

CTE and non-CTE seniors had similar expectations as to the highest degree they would earn; however, 72% of CTE seniors had taken a course in the area they planned to study or have a career, compared with 62% of non-CTE seniors.

CTE and non-CTE seniors applied to 4-year colleges at about the same rate. However, a higher percentage of CTE than of non-CTE seniors applied to 2-year colleges.

Parent education levels indicated by CTE seniors were lower than were those indicated by non-CTE seniors. Of CTE seniors, 31% indicated their mother had less than a high school education, compared with 23% of non-CTE seniors.

CTE seniors started thinking about college as a possibility after high school later than did non-CTE seniors: 34% started thinking about college once in high school, compared with 29% of non-CTE seniors.

In 2017, almost 60% of seniors received text messages to support their preparation for college, and 93% found them helpful. To extend outreach for college and career preparation, the district's college and career advisors from each high school sent text messages to juniors and seniors to remind them about important college enrollment tasks they needed to complete. The personalized text messages reminded students to: use their intended college's website to access important paperwork, register for orientation and/or placement tests, complete housing forms, etc. Messages also included assistance for completing the FAFSA or interpreting financial aid award letters and tuition bills. Students could request follow-up assistance by responding to the text message and be connected with a counselor. Text messaging focused on completing college preparation tasks has positively influenced the college-going rates of students across the nation who participated in similar programming.

Top 3 Most Helpful Text Message Topics

- Writing and editing essays (42%)
- Addressing family issues related to college (40%)
- Deciding where to go to college (35%)

Top 3 Areas of Text Message Influence

- Feelings about the college application process (77%)
- How often senior talked to counselor and/or college advisor (76%)
- Decision and/or actions about college (76%)

Family Support

Parent involvement at home and at school has been associated with higher rates of student achievement, graduation, and college enrollment. Parents play a strong role in student decisions about college attendance. The likelihood of students enrolling in college has been found to increase with the frequency with which parents discussed education-related topics (e.g., grades) with their children. The frequency of parent-initiated contact with the school about academic issues were particularly important for African American students.

Figure 4

Most seniors report their parents were involved in their school experiences.

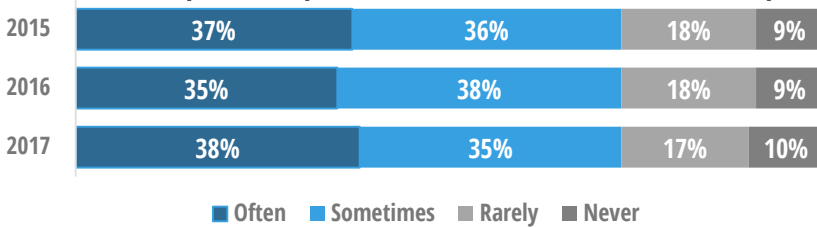
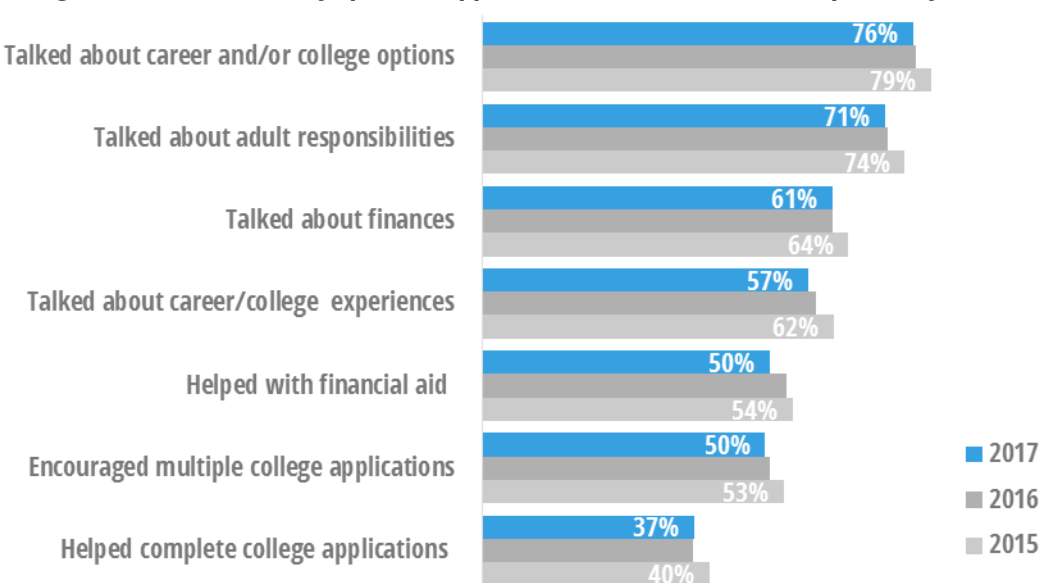


Figure 5

A slight decrease in the ways parent support their students has been reported by seniors in the past two years.



Other High School Experiences

Students have many demands on their time outside of the school day, and many must find a balance between work and school life. Researchers consistently found students who worked long hours had significantly lower academic achievement, attendance, and educational aspirations than those who did not work. They also were less engaged in extracurricular activities and were less likely to enroll in college. Researchers also assert that homework can considerably increase academic performance at the high school level.

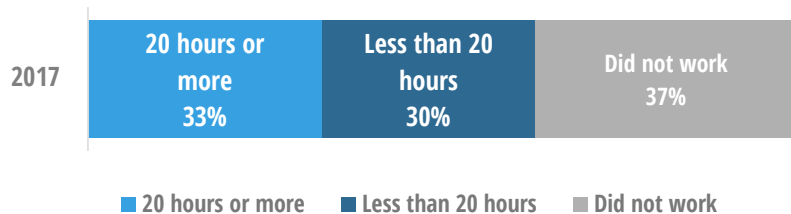
Figure 6

About half of all seniors studied more than 5 hours per week, and their time spent studying in 2017 was consistent with prior school years.



Figure 7

Consistent with prior school years, approximately 60% of AISD seniors worked during their senior year of high school, and many did so to help with family expenses and to save money for college.



Primary Reasons Students Worked

- To have my own money (53%)
- To help my family with bills (23%)
- To save money for college (19%)

More Information

The HSES 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 Core Belief One: All students will graduate college-, career-, and life-ready. For more information about district and campus results, please go to the full online survey report found at www.austinisd.org/dre.

References

National Student Clearinghouse (2017, April). *Student Tracker for High Schools, Aggregate Report* for Austin Independent School District provided by the National Student Clearinghouse.

Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce (2017, June). Austin Job Postings Report, June 2017 accessed at <https://www.austinchamber.com/blog/job-report-june-2017>

AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Karen Looby Ph.D.

Department of Research and Evaluation



1111 West 6th Street, Suite D-350 | Austin, TX 78703-5338
 512.414.1724 | fax: 512.414.1707
www.austinisd.org/dre | Twitter: @AISD_DRE

July 2017

Publication 16.36