

2009 OREGON GEAR UP SURVEY

**Prepared by
Dr. Eve McDermott**

September 2009

**Center for School, Family and Community
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2008–09 Oregon GEAR UP Surveys

In July 2008, Oregon was awarded a six-year statewide GEAR UP grant by the U.S. Department of Education. Directed and managed by the Oregon University System (OUS), 12 clusters with a total of 20 schools and approximately 1,450 seventh-graders participated in the first year (2008–09) of the grant. Of these students, 58.1 percent participate in the schools' free and reduced-price lunch program.

Oregon GEAR UP believes that postsecondary education is possible for all Oregon students, regardless of economic background. Oregon GEAR UP brings this message to middle and high schools, students, their parents, and the community through early college and career awareness activities, scholarships, financial aid information, and improved academic support to help raise the expectations and achievements of all students.

Education Northwest (formerly the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory) evaluation team worked with Oregon University System (OUS) staff to develop an evaluation plan to meet the requirements of the Annual Performance Report (APR) for the federal government and to provide formative evaluation information for the programs.

Survey Respondents

Students. Students who responded to the 2009–10 survey were in grades 7–12 and the majority come from households where neither parent attended college. Almost half of the students were in middle school grades seven and eight. Student respondents were split evenly between males and females. Most of the students were white (71 percent) or Hispanic (17 percent).

Parents. The largest parent groups represented were white females and parents with children in middle school. Over 70 percent of the parent respondents were female, with 86 percent of the parents identifying themselves as white, 8 percent as Hispanic/Latino, and 6.6 percent as American Indian or Native Alaskan. Approximately 50 percent of the parents reported that either the mother or father had attended college.

Educators. Well over half (63.7 percent) of the educators who responded to the survey were teachers. The respondents had a wide range of years of experience; 47 percent have been working at their current school more than five years. Over 90 percent of the teachers identify themselves as white. Over half of the educators have at least a master's degree.

Educators were asked what experiences would be most helpful for students in improving their chances in succeeding in postsecondary education. The top three rated strategies were visiting a college/college student shadowing, financial aid awareness and financial planning, and tutoring in academic subject(s). The professional development topics educators thought would be most helpful to prepare students for college were instructional strategies to help at-risk students reach high standards, strategies for improving student

learning, strategies for increasing parental/community involvement, and knowledge of funding opportunities for students to pay for postsecondary training.

Educators who taught middle school or high school were asked how academically challenging were the core subject classes: English, science, math, and history/social science. In all subject areas in both middle school and high school the most popular response was “not challenging.” Students agree that the school does not provide challenging classes for students. Additionally, both groups agree that students are not necessarily encouraged to take challenging classes that will prepare them for college.

Close to 60 percent of parents and educators disagree that the school gives students information about what it takes to go to college. Of the parents surveyed, a third felt they did have enough information about college preparation. Parents of students who were juniors and seniors were more confident about having the information needed about college preparation. Of the three types of postsecondary school options, all students were most familiar with entrance requirements for four-year colleges. Parents and, in particular, parents of juniors and seniors were more familiar with entrance requirements to community colleges. For all groups surveyed only about a third were familiar with the entrance requirements to technical, trade, or business institutions.

The majority of students and parents reported that they are having conversations at home about requirements for attending college. In general, most students are familiar with the SAT test; 61.2 percent are either planning to take it or have taken the test.

The majority of the educators surveyed spend some time each month on GEAR UP activities; 45 percent reported spending no time at all.

Parents consistently reported that they discuss school work with their children more than once a week. The majority of students surveyed indicated they spend one hour on homework each day. The majority of parents surveyed indicated that students spend a little less than an hour to an hour a day on homework. When this question is broken out for students by grade level, over 83 percent of the juniors and seniors reported spending one hour to no time on homework each day. In general, the high school students are more likely to report no homework than are middle school students. Approximately 80 percent of the parents and students surveyed indicated they have a computer at home with Internet access.

Educators generally reported that at least 50 percent of the students are capable of completing a college prep curriculum, but less than 50 percent will attend some postsecondary education. Over 63 percent of the students and the parents reported that they expect students to complete a four-year degree or higher, where only 11.6 percent educators reported this expectation. Of the students surveyed, two-thirds (67.4 percent) reported that their teachers expect them to go to college, and over 80 percent of the students reported that their parents expect them to go to college. Over half of the seniors surveyed indicated they had applied to a four-year college, and an additional 19.6 percent had applied to a two-year college.

One-third of the students surveyed indicated that they sometimes talk to their friends about going to college, another 20 percent talk to friends about college often or almost always. Most students surveyed reported that at least two of their best friends will go to

college. Both students and parents who were surveyed agreed that since they began GEAR UP their interest in college has remained the same or increased.

Parents generally feel welcome at their student's school, 62 percent selecting almost always, and 19 percent selecting often. Over three-quarters of the parents have not attended a college site visit with their child.

Students, parents, and educators were asked about why a student would be struggling in school. The students' top three reasons were: "The student does not try hard enough," "The student has problems outside of school," and "The student does not get along with teachers." Parents agreed with students that the top reason for struggling was that a student did not try hard enough. The next two reasons of importance for parents were: "Parents do not get involved enough in their child's schooling" and "The school does not understand the student's home life." Educators had four responses that were selected at least 70 percent of the time: "The student misses too much school," "Parents do not get involved enough in their child's schooling," "The student does not try hard enough," and "The school does not understand the student's home life."

According to the *Oregon University System 2008 Fact Book*, the average cost for an academic year including tuition, books, housing, food, and personal expenses is \$18,500 (<http://www.ous.edu/factreport/factbook/>). The survey asked parents and students about how much it costs to attend a four-year public college in Oregon. The majority of students and parents selected \$20,000 or higher. Parents selected \$30,000 most frequently.

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INTRODUCTION

In July 2008, Oregon was awarded a six-year statewide GEAR UP grant by the U.S. Department of Education. Directed and managed by the Oregon University System (OUS), 12 clusters with 20 schools with a total of approximately 1450 seventh-graders participated in the first year (2008–09) of the grant. The average free and reduced-price lunch participation for these schools is 58.1 percent.

The first year of the grant started with a cohort group of seventh-graders who will move to the eighth grade in the second year when a new cohort of seventh-graders will join the program. All cohort groups formed in this fashion will be served by the GEAR UP program throughout the grant. However, only the first cohort group of seventh-graders who started in 2008–09 will reach the 12th grade by the end of this six-year grant in 2013–14. Over 8,700 students and their parents will be served through this six-year GEAR UP grant.

The Oregon GEAR UP Program is a six-year statewide effort to work with low-income serving middle and high schools to provide meaningful academic enrichment activities that result in systemic school improvement. The goal is to ensure that Oregon’s low-income students are prepared for, pursue, and succeed in post secondary education. The following schools have been selected to participate in the program.

District	Schools	Town
Lincoln County	Taft 7-12 School	Lincoln City
North Marion	North Marion Middle and High Schools	Aurora
Brookings-Harbor	Azalea Middle and Brookings-Harbor High	Brookings
South Lane	Lincoln Middle, Kennedy High School and Cottage Grove High	Cottage Grove
South Umpqua	Coffenberry Middle and South Umpqua High	Myrtle Creek
Sweet Home	Sweet Home Junior and High Schools	Sweet Home
Three Rivers	Fleming Middle and North Valley High	Grants Pass
Bend/La Pine	La Pine Middle and High Schools	Bend
Morrow	Irrigon Junior/Senior High School	Irrigon
Glendale	Glendale Jr. Sr. High	Glendale
Klamath County	Lost River Jr. Sr. High	Merrill
Stanfield	Stanfield Secondary	Stanfield

Beginning with the class of 2014, students will be eligible for GEAR UP scholarships. Students who have participated in required GEAR UP activities, enroll in an accredited college anywhere in the United States, and submit an application through the Oregon Student Assistance Commission will be eligible for these awards.

Scholarships will be renewable for up to four years and award amounts will vary based on several factors, including the number of eligible students and the value of the Pell grant at the time of award. The scholarships will be no less than the minimum Pell grant, which was \$535 in 2009–10, but is expected to increase significantly for the next several years.

Oregon GEAR UP believes that postsecondary education is possible for all Oregon students, regardless of economic background. Oregon GEAR UP brings this message to middle and high schools, students, their parents, and the community through early college and career awareness activities, scholarships, financial aid information, and improved academic support to help raise the expectations and achievements of all students.

The Education Northwest evaluation team worked with Oregon University System (OUS) staff to develop an evaluation plan to meet the requirements of the Annual Performance Report (APR) for the federal government, as well as to provide formative evaluation information for the programs. Education Northwest (formerly named NWREL) developed surveys in consultation with OUS staff; these included student, parent/guardian, and educator surveys, as well as Spanish versions of the student and parent/guardian surveys. The student, parent, and educator surveys were available in hardcopy as well as online versions (Surveys are available on the Oregon GEAR UP website at <http://gearup.ous.edu/gusaccess/surveys.php>). The student and parent/guardian surveys included the required APR questions. Most surveys were conducted in the spring, by March 15, in time for compilation and inclusion in the April submission of the OUS Annual Performance Report. Administration of the surveys was encouraged. This is the first year of the grant. The goal was to have baseline data from students in all grades 7–12, parents, and all educators to use for comparison in future years. No attempt was made to draw a random sample; the extent to which responses are representative for all GEAR UP participants depends on the level of success in reaching a large number of the participants.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

There are 20 schools in Oregon that are part of the statewide GEAR UP program. The number of schools that participated in administering the surveys and the total number of survey respondents, by survey, is shown in Table 1. The level of participation varied greatly by school. Appendix A lists the number of 2009 survey respondents by school.

Table 1.
Number of participating schools by survey

	No. of Schools	No. of Respondents
Student survey	18	4219
Parent survey	14	1111
Educator survey	16	359

Profile of Survey Respondents

Students. Students who responded to the 2009–10 survey were in grades 7–12 and the majority come from households where neither parent attended college (Table 5). Almost half of the students were in Middle School grades 7 and 8 (Table 2). Student respondents were split evenly between males and females (Table 3). Most of the students were white (71 percent) and Hispanic (17 percent) (Table 4).

Many of the student respondents are first generation college-bound students (Table 5). Less than 40 percent reported that either their mother or their father had attended college.

Parents. The largest parent groups represented were white females and parents with children in middle school (Table 2 and 3). Over 70 percent of the parent respondents were female, with 86 percent of the parents identifying as white, 8 percent identifying as Hispanic/Latino, and 6.6 percent identifying as American Indian or Native Alaskan (Table 4). Approximately 50 percent of the parents reported that either the mother or father had attended college (Table 5). A majority of the parent respondents had some college experience. The percentage of parents with some college education may be helpful to keep in mind when considering responses to the survey.

Table 2.
What grade are you (or your child) in?

	Student (n = 4219)	Parent (n = 1111)
No Grade		5%
Grade 7	29.9%	35.9%
Grade 8	19.8%	29.0%
Grade 9	13.8%	10.1%
Grade 10	13.3%	5.9%
Grade 11	13.2%	9.2%
Grade 12	10%	5%
Total	100%	100%

Table 3.
Are you . . . ?

	Student (n = 4219)	Parent (n = 1111)
Male	52.1%	21.6%
Female	47.9%	72.8%
Total	100%	94.40%

Table 4.
How do you describe yourself?

	Student (n = 4219)	Parent (n = 1111)	Educator (n = 359)
American Indian or Alaska Native	12%	6.6%	1.1%
Asian	2%	.9%	.3%
Black or African American	2.5%	.6%	0
Hispanic or Latino	16.9%	8.1%	3.6%
White	71.4%	86.1%	90.6%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1.9%	1.2%	0
Multiethnic/multiracial	2.8%		1.7%
Other ethnicity	5.3%	3%	.9

Table 5.
Did any of your family members attend college or get a college degree?

(Responses = Yes, No, or Not sure)

Percent Yes	Student (n = 4219)	Parent (n = 1111)
Mother/female guardian	39.9%	55.2%
Father/male guardian	30.8%	43.6%
Brother or sister	23.9%	26.8%
Grandparents	27.7%	38.3%

Educators. Well over half (63.7 percent) of the educators who responded to the survey were teachers (Table 6). The respondents had a wide range of years of experience; however, slightly more than three-quarters (76 percent) had been working in the schools for more than five years, and 47 percent have been working at their current school more than five years (Tables 7 and 8). Most of the educators primarily taught in core subject areas (Table 9). Over 90 percent of the teachers identify themselves as White. Over half of the educators have at least a Master’s Degree (55.9 percent see Table 10). Table 11 indicates that most of the teachers teach across the grade levels, and it is not uncommon for them to work with middle school as well as high school students.

Table 6.
What is your current position in your school?

	Frequency	Percent
Teacher	228	63.7
Counselor	17	4.7
Administrator	21	5.9
Secretary	20	5.6
Library/Media Specialist	6	1.7
Paraprofessional	40	11.2
Other	27	7.3
Total	359	100.0

Table 7.
How many years have you been working in education?

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 year	6	1.7
1–5 years	80	22.3
6–10 years	72	20.1
11–20 years	119	33.1
Over 20 years	82	22.8
Total	359	100.0

Table 8.
How many years have you been working at this school?

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 year	45	13.0
1–5 years	144	39.9
6–10 years	71	19.7
11–20 years	79	21.9
Over 20 years	20	5.5
Total	359	100.0

Table 9.
If applicable, what subject do you teach at your current school?
(Please pick one subject area you teach most often)

	Frequency	Percent
Math	47	13.3
English	42	11.9
Science	28	7.9
Social Studies	28	7.9
Not applicable (I do not teach)	86	24.3
Other	123	34.7
Total	354	100.0

Table 10.
Please indicate the highest level of education you have obtained

	Frequency	Percent
Bachelors Degree	27	7.5
Some graduate work	81	22.4
Master's Degree	198	54.8
Doctorate Degree	4	1.1
No Response	50	13.9

Table 11.
What grade levels are the students whom you work with or teach?

Grade	Frequency	Percent
7	210	58.2
8	212	58.7
9	208	57.6
10	208	57.6
11	205	56.8
12	202	56

SURVEY OUTCOMES

Highlights from the 2009 surveys are discussed below. The tables of results present the percentage of responses to a given question (the number of respondents for each question is also presented as *n*). Some questions were asked of all three groups: students, educators, and parents; these results are presented together for comparison.

Evaluation and Survey Framework

The mission of GEAR UP is to significantly increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. The aim is to help communities create new or expanded existing school programs and provide educational opportunities for students. Additionally, GEAR UP prompts local schools, community-based organizations, private industry, and institutions of higher education to work in partnerships to help students and their parents gain necessary knowledge and bolster academic programs in their schools.

The program will address academic rigor, linking educational and career choices to course taking behaviors, opportunities for students to explore career interests, family and community engagement, and information about applying to and paying for college.

The Oregon GEAR UP Planning and Evaluation Rubric has five dimensions: Rigor, Right Classes, Relevance to Career, Relationships, and the Reality of Affordability. What follows is a brief discussion of each of these dimensions. The full Oregon GEAR UP Planning and Evaluation Rubric is in Appendix B. Survey questions were based on this framework.

- **Rigor:** ensuring that all students have access to a challenging curriculum that adequately prepares them for life beyond high school
- **Right classes:** informing students of the coursework needed to successfully pursue the postsecondary training of their choice
- **Relevance:** supporting students' exploration of their career ambitions
- **Relationships:** supporting peer networks, engaging families, and developing positive relationships with students
- **Reality of affordability:** helping students and their families understand the myriad ways to pay for postsecondary education

This model is based on the findings of a white paper entitled "Reclaiming the American Dream." See http://www.bridgespan.org/kno_articles_americanream.html for additional information.

Rigor: Academic Preparation

According to “Reclaiming the American Dream”, research synthesis, the most effective way to drive effective academic preparation in high school is to set a rigorous college preparatory curriculum as the default for all students and provide the support necessary for them to pursue it. Anything less, by definition, defeats the purpose of a college-going culture (Bedsworth, Colby, Doctor 2006).

TEACHING AND LEARNING. Improve the quality of teaching and learning through professional development.

Educators were asked what experiences would be most helpful for students in improving their chances in succeeding in postsecondary education. All of the suggested success strategies were rated as helpful by close to 40 percent of the educators. The top three rated strategies were visiting a college/college student shadowing (78.9 percent), financial aid awareness and financial planning (73.4 percent), and tutoring in academic subject(s) (63.7 percent). Table 12 shows the full results for this question.

Table 12.
What types of experiences during grades 7–12 would be helpful for your students in improving their chances for attending and succeeding in postsecondary education? Check ALL that would be most helpful.

	Frequency	Percent
Visiting a college/college student shadowing	285	78.9
Financial aid awareness and financial planning	265	73.4
Tutoring in academic subject(s)	230	63.7
Mentoring	222	61.5
Study skills classes	220	60.9
Visiting a job site/job shadowing	215	59.6
College prep curriculum	212	58.7
Tutoring for SAT, ACT, or other college entrance exams	205	56.8
Workshop/counseling on college preparation	192	53.2
Dual enrollment (e.g., AP, Tech Prep, Running Start)	180	49.9
Summer programs	142	39.3
Social skills classes	136	37.7
Other _____	13	5.3

Additionally, educators were asked which professional development topics they would find most helpful to prepare their students for college. The top four choices were instructional strategies to help at-risk students reach high standards (59.1 percent), strategies for improving student learning (49 percent), strategies for increasing parental/community involvement (47.6 percent) and knowledge of funding opportunities

for students to pay for postsecondary training (40.4 percent). Educators see that parent involvement and financial aid awareness are critical in supporting their student’s goals in achieving success in postsecondary educational pursuits. Table 13 shows the complete response to this question.

Table 13.
Educator: Which professional development topic would most help you prepare your students for college or other postsecondary options?

Professional Development Topic	Percent
Instructional strategies to help at-risk students reach high standards	59.1
Strategies for improving Student Learning	49.0
Strategies for increasing parental/community involvement	47.6
Knowledge of funding opportunities for students to pay for post-secondary training	40.4
Behavioral management strategies	37.0
Opportunities to vertically align curriculum with the grades below and above me	33.4
Instructional technology development	30.6
Strategies for negotiating home and school cultural differences	27.6
Peer mentoring strategies	27.0
Content development (i.e., math, reading, and writing)	26.2
Ways to monitor and analyze student learning	25.1
Opportunities to horizontally align curriculum with other at my grade level	20.1
Ways to apply the state or national standards in my content area	16.2
PASS teacher training	8.4
Other professional development topic	4.7

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT. Curriculum aligned between middle and high school to ensure a seamless and effective transition for students.

A clear majority of the teaching faculty responded that they use the Oregon State Standards as a guideline for teaching; only eight did not. (Table 14). Fewer educators were convinced that their curriculum was totally aligned from middle school to high school. Over three quarters (76.2 percent) responded that the curriculum was mostly or moderately aligned between middle school and high school (Table 15). Additionally, 69.8 percent of the educators disagreed that their school provided professional development for teachers to align curriculum between middle and high school (Table 16).

Table 14.
Do you use Oregon state standards for your content areas as guidelines for teaching?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	243	67.3
No	8	2.2
Not applicable (I do not teach)	101	28

Table 15.
In your opinion, how aligned is curriculum in core subjects between middle and high school?

	Frequency	Percent
Very aligned	13	3.6
Mostly aligned	102	28.3
Moderately aligned	173	47.9
Not at all aligned	47	13

Table 16.
To what extent do you agree with the following statements based on your experiences in school this year?

For Educators: My school . . .	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
Provides professional development for teachers to align curriculum between middle and high school.	15.7	69.8	11.6

Educators who taught Middle School or High School were asked how academically challenging were the core subject classes: English, science, math, history/social science. In all subject areas in both middle school and high school the most popular response was “not challenging.” See Tables 17 and 18 for full details.

Table 17.
If you teach MIDDLE SCHOOL students, please answer the following question:
How academically challenging are the following subjects in your middle school?
Check only ONE for each subject.

Subject	Very Challenging	Somewhat Challenging	Not That Challenging	Not Challenging	Don't know
English (n = 180)	6.6	.3	2.8	28.8	11.1
Science (n = 184)	6.1	.3	3.0	30.7	8.6
Math (n = 182)	6.4	.3	1.9	24.4	16.3
History/Social Studies (n = 183)	7.2	.3	5	30.2	6.4

Table 18.
If you teach HIGH SCHOOL students, please answer the following question:
How academically challenging are the following subjects in your high school?
Check only ONE for each subject.

Subject	Very Challenging	Somewhat Challenging	Not That Challenging	Not Challenging	Don't Know
English (n = 192)	8	.6	2.8	24.1	10.8
Science (n = 197)	6.4	.6	3.0	24.7	10.5
Math (n = 195)	7.2	.3	1.4	21.3	15.5
History/Social Studies (n = 196)	7.5	.6	5	25.5	6.9

Educators were asked how challenging they thought the curriculum at their school was this year compared to last year. For both middle school educators and high school educators their response was split between “Somewhat more rigorous and college bound oriented this year” and “No change from last year”. The two ratings combined for the middle school educators was 50.2 percent, and 48.5 percent for the high school educators. See Tables 19 and 20.

Table 19.
If you teach MIDDLE SCHOOL students, please answer the following question:
How challenging is your middle school’s curriculum this year compared with last year?
Check only ONE.

	Frequency	Percent
More rigorous and college-bound oriented this year	16	4.4
Somewhat more rigorous and college-bound oriented this year	71	19.7
No change from last year	74	20.5
Less rigorous and college-bound oriented than last year	2	.6
Totals	163	45.2

Table 20.
If you teach HIGH SCHOOL students, please answer the following question:

	Frequency	Percent
More rigorous and college-bound oriented this year	19	5.3
Somewhat more rigorous and college-bound oriented this year	74	20.5
No change from last year	65	18
Less rigorous and college-bound oriented than last year	2	.6
Totals	160	44.4

Right Classes

“More than 90 percent of students currently entering high school say they expect to attend college. By putting students in courses that do not prepare them for college, however, schools effectively make the choice for them and dash their dreams. Moreover, as the recent ACT study demonstrates, a college preparatory curriculum is the same curriculum that will prepare students for a successful working life. To offer students any curriculum less than this not only fails the objective of preparing a student for college, but also fails to prepare them for life and work.

“A default college prep curriculum for all students is the most straightforward way to fix the problem. Schools need to take steps to ensure that students understand early in their school careers (eighth grade or earlier) what curriculum is necessary to prepare them for college-level work and future careers.

“In a true college-going culture, discussions of grades, class schedules, academic progress, and the like would all revolve around the requirements for college, whether or not students are on track to achieve that goal, and, if there are any deficiencies, what steps will help them get back on track.” (Bedsworth, Colby, Doctor 2006).

INFORMING and PLANNING. Inform students and their families about college entrance requirements and how to apply, and ensure that students have the information necessary to take the right courses for their chosen academic/career path.

Students and educators surveyed both disagree that the school provides challenging classes for students (82 percent students and 71.8 percent educators). Additionally both groups disagree that students are encouraged to take challenging classes that will prepare them for college (students disagree 67.3 percent and educators 72.5 percent).

Table 21.
To what extent do you agree with the following statements based on your experiences in school this year?

Students	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
My school provides challenging classes for students.	17.2	82.8	NA
Teachers and/or counselors in my school encourage me to take challenging classes that will prepare me for college.	32.6	67.3	NA
Educators			
Provides challenging classes for students.	3.8	71.8	21.3
Encourages students to take appropriately challenging classes that will prepare them for postsecondary education.	5.5	72.5	19.4

The parents and educators have very similar perceptions about how much information the school makes available to students and parents about what it takes to go to college. Close to 60 percent of parents and educators disagree that the school gives students information about what it takes to go to college (parents 59.7 percent disagreement, educators 59.9 percent). Likewise, over 63 percent of both groups surveyed disagree that the school provides parents with information one what it takes to get their children to college (parents disagree 64.3 percent, and educators disagree 63.1 percent). This information is presented in Table 22.

Table 22.
To what extent do you agree with the following statements based on your experiences in school this year?

For Parents: My child's school . . .	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
Gives students information on what it takes to go to college.	27.6	59.7	12.7
Gives parents information on what it takes to get their children to college.	28	64.3	7.6
For Educators: My school . . .	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
Gives students information on what it takes to go to college.	6.1	59.9	32.1
Gives parents information on what it takes to get their children to college.	14.4	63.1	19.9

When asked specifically about whether students or parents had spoken to someone at their school about what courses needed to be taken in high school to prepare for college, the majority of students agreed with this question, and there was even more agreement with the older students. All students had a 59 percent agreement, and students in 11th and 12th grades had a 69 percent agreement. Three fourths of the parents reported that they had not spoken to someone at their child's school about what courses their student needed to take in high school in order to prepare for college. Parents of juniors and seniors were in a similar situation. See Table 23.

Table 23.
Has anyone from your school or GEAR UP ever spoken with you about the courses (and college requirements) that you (your child) will need to take in high school in order to prepare for college?

	All Students (n = 4219)	All Parents (n = 1111)	Grades 11–12 Students (n = 935)	Grades 11–12 Parents (n = 154)
Yes	59%	21.2%	69%	27%
No	41%	75.7%	31%	73%

Of the parents surveyed, a third overall felt they did have enough information about college preparation. Parents of students who were juniors and seniors were more confident

about having the information about college preparation, 60.5 percent of the parents surveyed responded yes to this question. See Table 24.

Table 24.
Parent: Do you have enough information about college preparation?

	All Parents (n = 1111)	Grades 11–12 Parents (n = 152)
Yes	33.4%	60.5%
No	64.4%	39.5%

Of the three types of postsecondary school options, all students were most familiar with entrance requirements for four-year colleges (61.1 percent of students said yes to this question). Parents and, in particular, parents of juniors and seniors were more familiar with the entrance requirements to community colleges (all parents answered 54.7 percent yes, juniors' and seniors' parents answered 67.6 percent yes). For all groups surveyed only about a third were familiar with the entrance requirements to technical, trade, or business institutions.

Table 25.
Parent: Are you familiar with the entrance requirements for each of these types of schools?

	% Answering Yes		
	Students	Parents	Parents grades 11 and 12
4-year colleges	61.1	45.6	60.3
Community colleges	57.2	54.7	67.6
Technical, trade or business institutions	31.2	38.8	36.1

The majority of students and parents reported that they are having conversations at home about requirements for attending college. Parents are discussing going to college with their children. As students become juniors and seniors the percentage of students and parents who report having these conversations about attending college increased. See Table 26.

Table 26.
Student: During the past year, have you discussed the requirements for getting into college with any adults in your household?
Parent: Have you talked with your child about attending college?

	Student (n = 4219)	Parent (n = 1111)	Grades 11–12 Students (n = 939)	Grades 11–12 Parents (n = 153)
Yes	59.6%	73.1%	71%	85%
No	37.1%	24.1%	29%	15%

In general, most students are familiar with SAT, 61.2 percent of the students are either planning to take it or have taken the test. Most students are not as familiar with the other tests. See Table 27.

Table 27.
Student: Have you taken or are you planning to take the following tests?

All Students (n = 4219)	Never heard of test	No, do not plan to take test	Yes, I have already taken it	Yes, I plan to take it	Total
PSAT	44.4%	8.7%	17.8%	29.1%	100%
SAT	28.1%	7.7%	7.2%	54%	100%
ACT	49.2%	11.8%	5%	34%	100%
AP or IB	66.6%	12.7%	2.4%	18.3%	100%
SAT II	54%	13.9%	1.3%	30.8%	100%
ASVAB	62.9%	15.7%	6.9%	14.5%	100%

The majority of the educators surveyed spend some time each month on GEAR UP activities; only 45 percent reported spending no time at all. The most frequent responses were one hour a month, followed by two to four hours a month. Complete results are shown in Table 28

Table 28.
Educator: How many hours do you spend monthly on GEAR UP activities?

Hours	Frequency	Percent
None	148	45.1
1 hour	64	19.5
2–4 hours	56	17.1
5–8 hours	33	10
9–16 hours	14	4.3
17 or more hours	13	4
Total	328	100

EMPOWERING. Create a school environment, policies, and teacher expectations that support all students pursuing a postsecondary education

Much like the students and parents of Garrison Keillor’s fictional Lake Wobegon, Oregon GEAR UP students rank themselves above average, as do their parents. Students and parents who were surveyed gave students an A or B academic rating. (Students ranking themselves A or B = 69.7 percent; parents ranking their students A or B = 75.2 percent). See Table 29.

Table 29.
How would you rank your student academically?

	Student (n = 4219)	Parent (n = 1111)
A student	25.5%	38.1%
B student	44.2%	37.1%
C student	24.4%	16.7%
Below C student	5.9%	5.7%

Parents consistently reported that they discuss school work with their children more than once a week. See Table 30.

Table 30.
How many times a week do you discuss school work with your child?

	Parent (n = 1111)	Grades 11–12 Parents (n =157)
More than 5 times	22.8%	11%
3–5 times	33.3%	28%
1–2 times	35.4%	41%
Never	7.2%	13%

The majority of students surveyed (62.8 percent) indicated they spend an hour on homework each day. The majority of parents surveyed (68.6 percent) indicated that students spend a little less than an hour to an hour a day on homework (Table 31.) When we break out this question for students by their grade level (Table 32 and Figure 1.), we see that over 83 percent of the juniors and seniors report spending one hour to no time on homework each day. In general, the high school students are more likely to report no homework than are the students in middle school.

Table 31.
How much time do you (your child) spend on homework each day?

	% Student (n = 4219)	% Parent (n = 1111)
3 or more hours	4.9	4.2
2 hours	19.2	16.5
1 hour	62.8	34.9
Less than an hour	NA	33.7
None	13.1	5.9
Don't Know	NA	4.8
Total	100.0	100.0

Table 32.
Student: How much time do you spend on homework by grade level?

	3 or more hours	2 hours	1 hour	None	Total No.
Grade 7	62	232	828	97	1,219
%	5.1	19.0	67.9	8.0	100.0
Grade 8	28	188	512	72	800
%	3.5	23.5	64.0	9.0	100.0
Grade 9	18	87	378	84	567
%	3.2	15.3	66.7	14.8	100.0
Grade 10	21	101	325	94	541
%	3.9	18.7	60.1	17.4	100.0
Grade 11	42	101	308	89	540
%	7.8	18.7	57.0	16.5	100.0
Grade 12	32	77	202	95	406
%	7.9	19.0	49.8	23.4	100.0
Total Hours	203	786	2,553	531	4,073
Percent	5.0	19.3	62.7	13.0	100.0

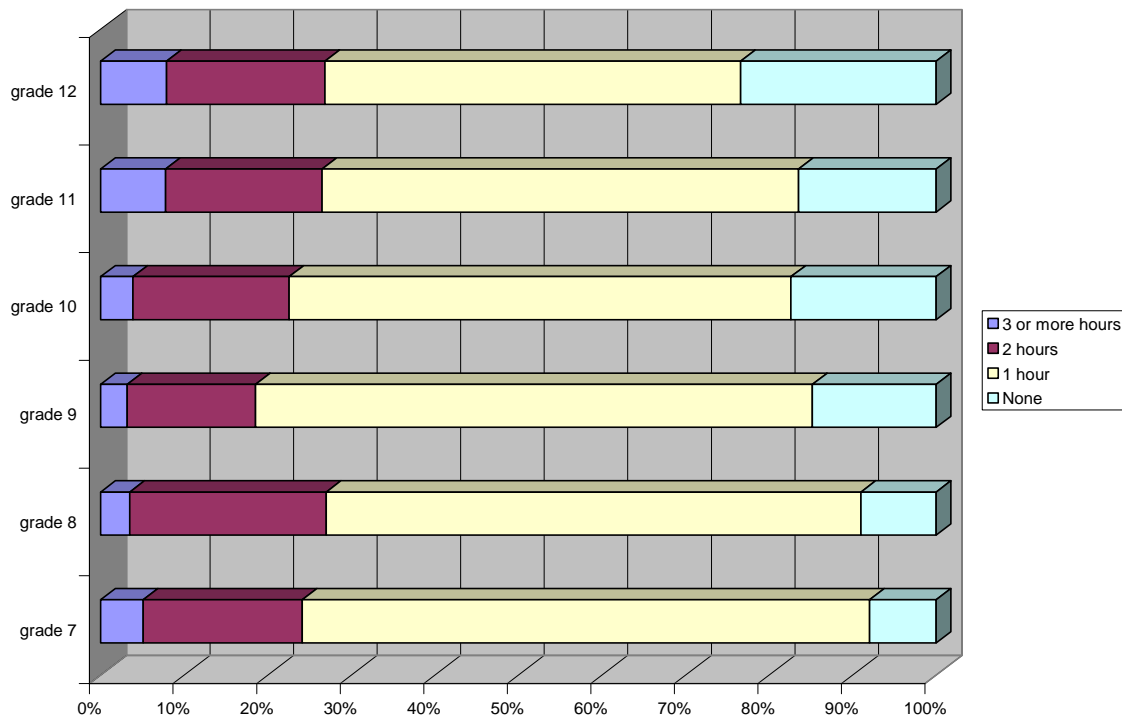


Figure 1. Hours spent on homework by grade level

Students are most likely to complete their homework in the classroom (72.8 percent) or at home (78.5 percent) (Table 33). Students report that they get help from their parents (44.5 percent), a teacher at school (43.4 percent), and/or a classmate/friend (40.7 percent). Juniors and seniors are more likely to report that no one helps them with their homework (44.5 percent). Help with homework is shown in Table 34. Approximately 80 percent of the parents and students surveyed indicated they have a computer at home with Internet access (Table 35).

**Table 33.
Student: Where do you complete your homework?
(Check all that apply)**

	All Students (n = 4219)
Classroom	72.8%
Study hall	15.3%
After school program	5.3%
Home	78.5%
Other	6.3%

Table 34.
Student: Who usually helps you with your homework?
(Check all that apply)

	All Students (n = 4219)	Grades 11–12 Students (n = 1270)
A teacher at school	43.4%	37.2%
A GEAR UP tutor/mentor	1.3%	1.5%
Mother, father, or guardian	44.5%	18.6%
Other adult in home	7.2%	2.2%
Brother or sister	19.2%	10.6%
Classmate or friend	40.7%	37.6%
Someone else	2.2%	4.7%
No one	29.2%	44.5%

Table 35.
Do you have a computer at home? Do you have Internet access?

Percent Yes	Student (n = 4219)	Parent (n = 1111)
Computer at home	86.8%	87.4%
Internet access at home	79.8%	82.8%

Educators’ expectations for their students are a bit of a mixed bag. Educators have higher expectations that their students have the capability to complete a college prep curriculum than they do that they will go on to college. Educators generally report that at least 50 percent of their students are capable of completing a college prep curriculum, but less than 50 percent will attend college ,(see Table 52) (Table 36). The students and parents surveyed have higher expectations about completing a four-year degree than the educators. Over 63 percent of the students and the parents reported that they expect students to complete a four-year degree or higher, but only 11.6 percent of educators reported this expectation (Table 37). Of the students surveyed, two-thirds (67.4 percent) reported that their teachers expect them to go to college, and over 80 percent of the students reported that their parents expect them to go to college (Table 38). Over half of the seniors surveyed indicated they had applied to a four-year college, and an additional 19.6 percent had applied to a two-year college (Table 39).

Table 36.
Educators: What percent of your students are capable of completing a college prep curriculum? And what percent of your students go on to college?

Percentage of students	% of Students Educators think are Capable of Completing College Prep	% Of Students Educators think Will go on to College
none	.6	1.8
10%	7.9	11.1
20%	12.0	20.2
30%	12.0	23.5
40%	5.0	12.3
50%	10.6	15.1
60%	11.1	8.4
70%	15.0	3.6
80%	13.8	3.3
90%	8.8	.3
100%	3.2	.3

Table 37.
What is the highest level of education that you expect your child or your students to obtain?

	Student (n = 4219)	Parent (n = 1111)	Educators (n = 359)
4-year college degree or higher	64.1%	63.5%	11.6%
Some college	11.4%	13.4%	26.5%
2-year college degree	12.8%	9.6%	22.4%
1-year trade school	2.5%	2.7%	7.3%
High school diploma	7.6%	8%	32%
GED	1%	.5%	0
Less than high school	.6%	.1%	.3%

Table 38.
Student: Do you think your teachers expect you to go to college?
And do you think your parents expect you to go to college?

	Teachers expect you to go to college?	Parents expect you to go to college?
Yes	67.4%	83%
No	5.1%	5.3%
Not sure	27.4%	11.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Table 39.
Seniors: Have you applied to any colleges for next year?

	2009 Grade 12 Students (n = 413)
Yes, applied to 4 year college	53.9%
Yes, applied to 2 year college	19.6%
No, but I plan to apply	34.1%
No, does not plan on attending	8.2%
Total	100.0%

Relevance to Career

“A student who makes this connection between college and his or her life goals is six times as likely to attain a degree as one who doesn’t. A recent survey by Public Agenda found that 77 percent of college students say they are attending college because the jobs they want require it.

“It also implies a need for more career-awareness information, which could come in the form of curricula, coordinated internship programs, or career guidance.” (Bedsworth, Colby, Doctor 2006).

CAREER AWARENESS. Provide students with opportunities to explore their career interests, and engage business and community partners in the process.

Only 30 percent of the parents surveyed agreed that the school provided students career awareness activities. A majority of students did agree that they have become more aware of career options because of GEAR UP (Table 40).

Table 40.
Parents: To what extent do you agree with the following statements based on your experiences in school this year?

Parents: My child's school . . .	% Agree	% Disagree	% Don't Know
Provides students with opportunities to participate in career awareness activities, such as job shadowing, career fairs, and career and counseling classes.	31.9	57.8	10.3
Students:			
I have become more aware of various career options because of GEAR UP.	57.6	42.4	

Relationships

“A low-income student’s chances of completing college are likely to increase when friends value learning and plan to attend college themselves. Schools need to provide social support and reinforce college-going norms within peer groups. The value of strengthening links between postsecondary education and the “real world” is reinforced by the fact that parents taking time to visit a postsecondary institution with their child also had a positive impact on going to college and success. This implies that the most successful college access programs will target as many high school students as possible (i.e., they will be whole-school models).

This means ensuring that students and their families have access to information early (before high school) and consistently regarding college requirements, financial aid availability, and other general college-awareness information such as the benefits of a college education and links to the real world.” (Bedsworth, Colby, Doctor 2006).

PEER NETWORKS. Develop peer networks that encourage college-going aspirations.

One-third of the students surveyed indicated that they sometimes talk to their friends about going to college, another 20 percent talk to friends about college often or almost always (Table 41). Most students surveyed reported that at least two of their best friends will go to college (Table 42). Both students and parents who were surveyed agreed that since they began GEAR UP their interest in college has remained the same or increased (Table 43).

Table 41.
Students: How often do you talk to your friends about going to college?

How often do you have conversations about college with friends/	Frequency selected	Percent
Almost always	139	3.3
Often	764	18.1
Sometimes	1471	34.9
Rarely	923	21.8
Almost never	808	19.2
No response	114	2.7
	4219	100%

Table 42.
Students: Think about your 4 best friends (the friends you feel closest to). How many of your best friends do you think will go to college?

No. of your 4 best Friends that will go to college?	Frequency	Percent
0	129	3.2
1	375	9.3
2	1018	25.2
3	1178	29.2
4	1333	33.1

Table 43.
Since you began GEAR UP has your (your child's) interest in college . . . ?

	Student (n = 4219)	Parent (n = 1111)
Increased	24.2%	22.5%
Stayed the same	71.8%	65.6%
Decreased	4.0%	1.5%
Do not know	NA	10.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

PARENT, FAMILY and COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT. Involve family and the broader community in supporting students’ academic pursuits.

Over two thirds of parents indicated they had attended at least three activities at their student’s school in this past year (Table 44). Over three quarters of the parents have not attended a GEAR UP event at the school (Table 45). Parents generally feel welcome at their student’s school, 62% selecting almost always, and 19% selecting often (Table 46). Over three quarters of the parents have not attended a college with their child (Table 47).

Table 44.
Parent: How many times have you attended an activity at your child’s school during the past year?

	Parent (n = 1111)	Grades 11–12 Parents (n = 153)
More than 5 times	44.8%	39.1%
3–5 times	24.3%	31%
1–2 times	21.9%	24.3%
Never	7.6%	0.1%
Total	98.60%	100.0%

Table 45.
Parent: Have you attended any GEAR UP events?

	Parent (n = 1111)
Yes	15.1%
No	78.2%

Table 46.
Do you feel welcome at you student’s school?

	Parent (n = 1111)
Almost always	62.7%
Often	19%
Sometimes	13.2%
Rarely	2.5%
Almost never	0.7%

Table 47.
Parents: Have you visited a college with your child?

	Parent (n = 1111)	Grades 11–12 Parents (n = 155)
Yes	20.7%	24%
No	76.2%	76%

Educators were asked how their school has succeeded in involving parents in their school. The majority of educators indicated the following activities involved parents: parent/teacher conferences (86.1 percent), facilitating communication with phone and e-mail (72.9 percent) and extracurricular school events (not including athletic programs) (65 percent). See Table 48.

Table 48.
Educator: How has your school succeeded in involving parents in your school?
Check ALL that apply.

	Frequency	Percent
Through parent/teacher conferences	311	86.1
Through facilitating communication between parents and teachers (e.g., phone and email access)	263	72.9
Through extracurricular school events (not including school athletic programs)	235	65.1
Through providing parents with tools/ideas on how to support their child in school	136	37.7
Through formalized parent involvement programs	112	31
As volunteers to help students in academic activities	89	24.7
As teachers' helpers	49	13.6
Has not succeeded in involving parents	32	8.9
Through parental involvement professional development for teachers	31	8.6
Has not attempted to involve parents	7	1.9

PERSONALIZATION. Personalize education through school policy and relationships with teachers and counselors.

The majority of students agreed with the following statements: “I feel safe in the school”; “I feel respected by my teachers”; “My parents are actively involved in my learning”; “My teachers are truly interested in my learning”; “I have received adequate help from my teachers for my academic classes”; “I feel comfortable talking with my teachers”; “I feel I belong to this school”; “Hands-on experiences provided by this school are very helpful for my learning.” The only statements that majority of students disagreed with were, “This school helps me get a clear sense of what I would like to do in the future.” “Provide Financial planning” and Encourage me to take College Prep Classes”. See Figure 2.

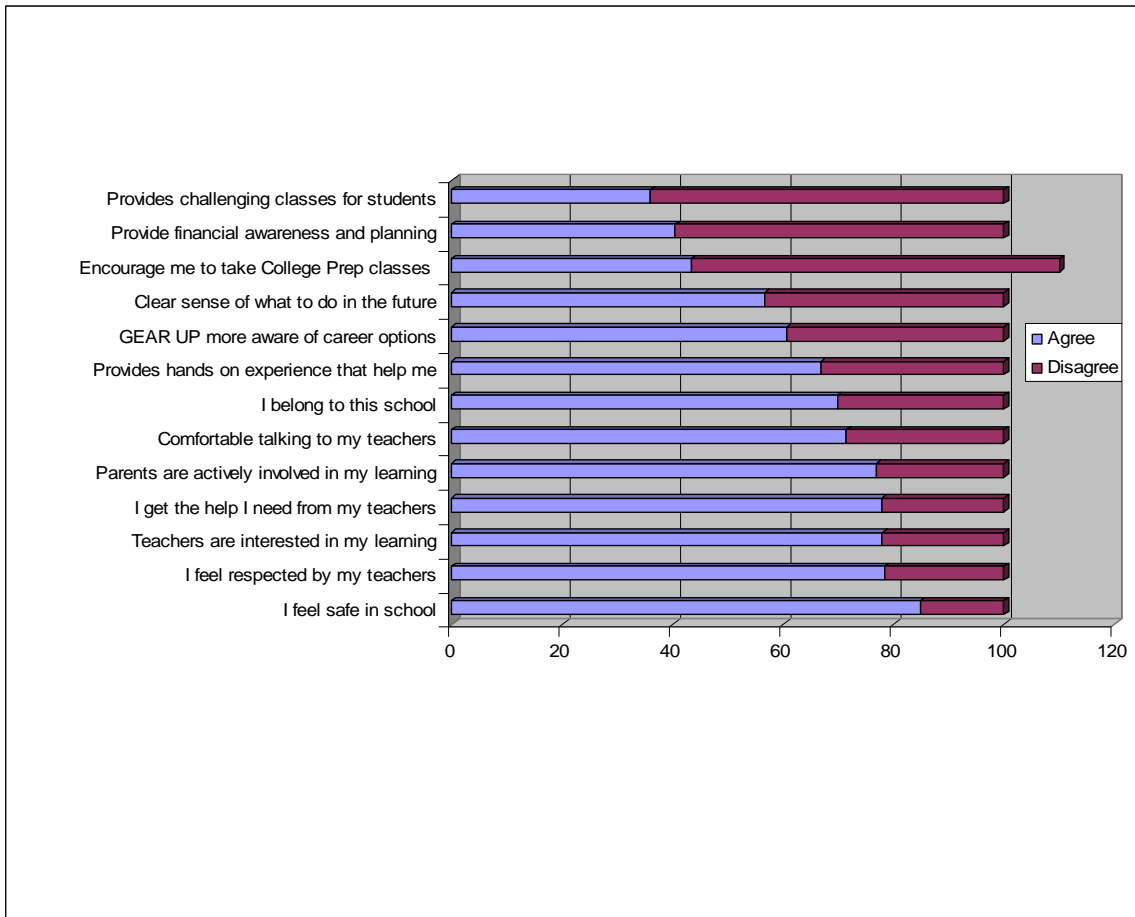


Figure 2. Students: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements based on your experiences in school this year?

Educators report that they are involved most frequently with “Providing information on financial aid and scholarships available for postsecondary education”; “Providing

information and counseling about college choices”; and “Helping to familiarize students with college environments.” Educators were the least likely to report “Provide direction and extra instruction for at risk students” and “Counsel students to take more rigorous courses.” See Figure 3 for complete details. The 18 counselors surveyed reported that they did academic counseling; none reported providing personal/social counseling or college/career/financial counseling.

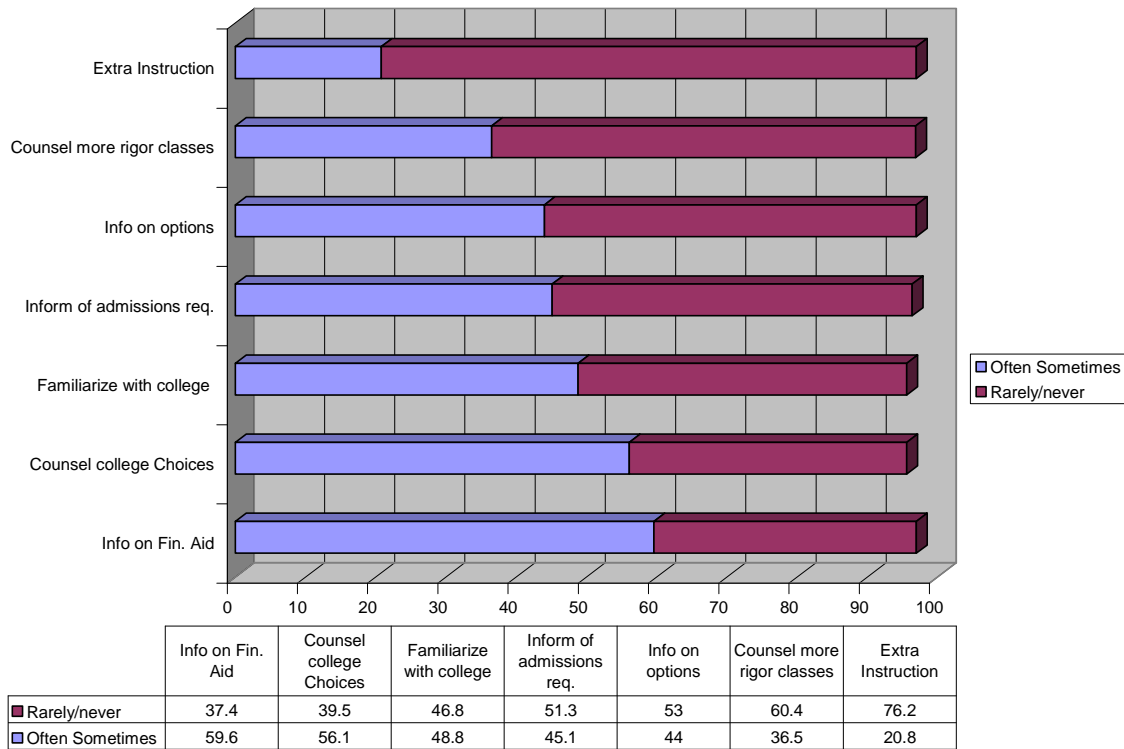


Figure 3. Educators: To what extent have you been involved in the following activities in your school?

Students, parents, and educators were asked why a student would be struggling in school. The student’s top three reasons were: “The student does not try hard enough,” “The student has problems outside of school,” and “The student does not get along with teachers.” Parents agreed with students that the top reason for struggling was that a student did not try hard enough. The next two reasons of importance for parents were: “Parents do not get involved enough in their child’s schooling” and “The school does not understand the student’s home life.” Educators had four responses that were selected at least 70 percent of the time: “The student misses too much school,” “Parents do not get involved enough in their child’s schooling,” “The student does not try hard enough,” and “The school does not understand the student’s home life.” See Table 49 and Figure 4 for detailed information.

Table 49.
In your opinion, if a student is struggling in school, it is usually because . . .
. (Check all that apply). Responses shown in percents

	Student	Parent	Educator
The student does not try hard enough	72.9	64.3	74.70
The student has problems outside of school	51.6	11.9	56.5
The student does not get along with teachers	42	32	32
Parents do not get involved enough in their child's schooling	40.9	53.8	86.4
Classes are too challenging	37.3	20.9	9.7
The student has too many family or work responsibilities	29.4	15.1	42.6
The school does not understand the student's home life	28.2	37.1	71.3
The student does not get along with other students	28.1	21.7	29
The student does not get any personal attention in the school	19	25.1	24
Classes are not meaningful or relevant	18.3	15.2	29.2
Teachers do not try hard enough	12.1	20.6	12
The student does not feel safe in the school	10.4	9.9	6.7
Classes are not challenging enough	10.2	17.4	12.5
Teachers' low expectation for their students in the school	10.1	13.5	13.1
The student misses too much school		16.7	84.7

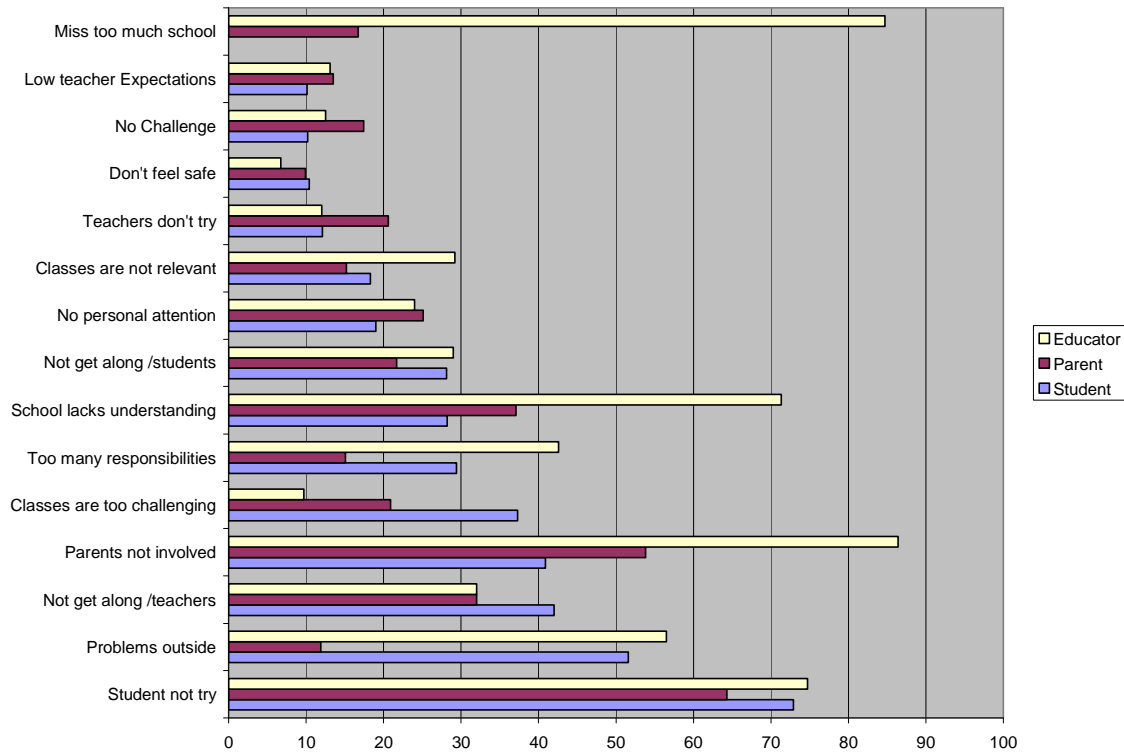


Figure 4
If a student is struggling it is usually because . . .

Reality of Affordability

“Low-income students who attended financial-aid information sessions and subsequently applied for financial aid were much more likely to attend and complete college, presumably because they understood both the true cost of college and the types of aid available to them. A school that successfully institutes a college-going culture needs to ensure that its students are well informed about the costs of college, the types of aid available to them, and the knowledge that many students take loans to pursue higher education (and are able later to repay them).

“Successful examples include standard practices such as information sessions or even requiring students to apply for aid. But some schools are also experimenting with more creative methods such as working with students on building financial planning skills, which can help all students, including those who do not eventually attend college, as well as highlighting the financial tradeoffs associated with not obtaining a college degree.” (Bedsworth, Colby, Doctor 2006).

STUDENT AWARENESS. Provide financial aid information to students, families, teachers, and counselors.

According to the *Oregon University System 2008 Fact Book*, the average cost for an academic year including tuition, books, housing, food and personal expenses would be

\$18,500 (<http://www.ous.edu/factreport/factbook/>). The survey asked both parents and students about how much it costs to attend a four-year public college in Oregon. The majority of students and parents selected \$20,000 or higher. Parents selected \$30,000 most frequently. See details in Table 50.

Table 50.
About how much do you think it costs (including tuition, books, housing, and food) to attend a 4-year public college in Oregon? Check only one.

Estimated annual cost of 4-year public college in Oregon	% Student	% Parent
\$5,000	2.3	1.4
\$10,000	5.9	6.1
\$15,000	12.6	14.7
\$20,000	23.3	23.5
\$25,000	26.7	19.2
\$30,000	26.4	30.5
No Response	2.7	4.7

The majority of students, parents and educators surveyed all disagreed that the school provided parents or students opportunities to participate in financial-aid awareness and planning activities for college. See Table 51.

Table 51.
To what extent do you agree with the following statements based on your experiences in school this year?

Student	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
My school provides students with opportunities to participate in financial aid awareness and planning activities for college education.	28.7	71.4	
Parents: My child's school . . .	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
Provides parents with opportunities to participate in financial aid awareness and planning activities for their children's college education.	35.2	58	6.7
Provides students with opportunities to participate in financial aid awareness and planning activities for their college education.	36.8	55.2	7.9

For Educators: My school . . .	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
Provides students with opportunities to participate in financial aid awareness and planning activities for college education.	14.4	53.7	29.1
Provides parents with opportunities to participate in financial aid awareness and planning activities for their children's college education.	19.7	54	23.3

PARENT, FAMILY, COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND SUPPORT. Parents, family, and community members understand how to pay for college and support students in doing so.

When asked “What is the main reason you would not continue your education after high school,” more than 30 percent of students and parents agreed that their students would definitely go on to college. The second order response for students and parents was that it would cost too much, with students selecting this response 31.6 percent of the time and parents selecting it 27.4 percent of the time. Educators’ top reason was that students were not interested, selecting this response 25.8 percent of the time. Their second reason chosen for students not continuing was it cost too much (23.5 percent). Table 52 has the full range of responses to this question for all three groups surveyed.

Table 52.
What is the main reason you would not continue your education after high school?

	% Student (n = 4219)	% Parent (n = 1111)	% Educator (n = 359)
I am definitely going to go	32.6	35.9	.6
It costs too much	31.6	27.4	23.5
I need to support myself	5.9	5.9	17.8
I want to join the military service	8.2	4.3	1.4
College is too far from home	1.2	0	.9
My grades are not good enough	6.5	4.3	3.4
I am not interested	4.1	10	25.8
I need to take care of family	2.3	1.3	1.1
I want to work	4.5	3.5	10.9
Some other reason	3.1	3.7	14.6
	100.0	96.3	100.0

A small majority of parents surveyed indicated that they know how to help their child apply for financial aid; interestingly, the parents of juniors and seniors were less informed in how to help their student apply for financial aid (Table 53). The majority of students and parents have not spoken to someone at the school about financial aid. About half of the juniors and seniors have spoken to someone at the school or GEAR UP about availability of financial aid to pay for college (Table 54). A majority of students and parents think that they could definitely or probably afford a public four-year college using financial aid, scholarships and family resources (Table 55).

Table 53.
Parent: Do you know how to help your child apply for financial aid for college?

	All Parents (n = 1111)	Grades 11–12 Parents (n = 156)
Yes	51.5%	42.7%
No	45.8%	57.3%

Table 54.
Has anyone from your school or GEAR UP ever spoken with you about the availability of financial aid to help you pay for college?

	All Students (n = 4219)	All Parents (n = 1111)	Grades 11–12 Students (n = 940)	Grades 11–12 Parents (n = 156)
Yes	36.3%	14.9%	51%	16%
No	63.7%	82.8%	49%	84%

Table 55.
Do you think that you could afford to attend a public 4-year college using financial aid, scholarships, and your family's resources?

	All Students (n = 4219)	All Parents (n = 1111)	Grades 11–12 Students (n = 948)	Grades 11–12 Parents (n = 156)
Definitely	15.4%	16.1%	15.3%	19.2%
Probably	42.3%	34.9%	42%	35.3%
Not sure	28.7%	34.3%	25.4%	28.2%
Probably not	10.4%	11.8%	13.5%	14.7%
Definitely not	3.2%	2.9%	3.6%	2.5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

APPENDIX A

Survey Respondents by Survey Type and School

School	Student	Parent	Educator
Azalea Middle	88	27	16
Brookings-Harbor High			
Coffenberry Middle	201	182	24
Cottage Grove High	1		
Fleming Middle	294	9	
Glendale Junior/Senior High	157	28	14
Irrigon Junior/Senior High	243	58	30
Kennedy Alternative	6		
LaPine Middle	178	81	24
LaPine High	368		38
Lincoln Middle	314	112	26
Lost River Junior/Senior High	44	35	24
North Marion Middle	279	9	17
North Marion High	446		28
North Valley High	54		8
South Umpqua High	13	24	24
Stanfield Secondary	177	38	15
Sweet Home Junior	321	254	14
Sweet Home High	514	209	19
Taft 7–12	461	45	43
No designation			1
Total	4219	1111	365

APPENDIX B

Oregon GEAR UP Planning and Evaluation Rubric

GOAL 1. RIGOR for all students: Provide appropriately rigorous courses for all students		
Objective 1.1 EQUITY: Explore the equitable availability of courses for all students, particularly those from low-income backgrounds		
Early Steps	Growing Innovation	New Paradigms
Attempts are made to provide open enrollment to most courses. However, some students still face barriers to enrolling in rigorous courses, and forms of tracking still exist. Growing awareness of how equity issues impact student learning and opportunities.	All course offerings are aligned with college admission requirements, barriers to course enrollment are mostly removed. Policies, practices, and support systems provide rigorous opportunities for nearly all students.	School structure and culture fosters challenging and relevant learning opportunities for students from all cultural, racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, linguistic, and special needs backgrounds. There are no students assigned to low-achieving classes. Demographics of individual classes reflect demographics of the entire school. Each student receives unique support and academic preparation to achieve college-readiness. All students have equal access to highly challenging coursework that is relevant and connected to real life experiences. Sample Strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students provided with multiple college-prep options during their high school career • Regular tutorial periods help all students access additional support • Every student provided with an adult mentor • Summer school provided for enrichment and remediation • Strategic use of distance learning tools • Rigorous performance standards are upheld for all students in all classes • Professional development explicitly addresses issues of equity in the classroom • A rigorous college-preparatory curriculum for all students • Dual credit programs are offered.
Objective 1.2 TEACHING AND LEARNING: Improve the quality of teaching and learning through professional development.		
Early Steps	Growing Innovation	New Paradigms
Teachers have limited repertoire of instructional strategies. Many teachers rely heavily on direct instruction strategies such as lectures and text-based activities. Curriculum tends to be broad and shallow.	Teachers learn and use a variety of effective instructional practices. Curriculum becomes more focused and in-depth.	School has adopted and consistently employs a variety of engaging and effective teaching strategies. Learning goals and expectations are clearly articulated and understood by all students. Curriculum supports in-depth study. Teachers are knowledgeable about cultural, racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, linguistic, and special needs characteristics that affect learning and capitalize upon students' backgrounds when designing curriculum to meet individual learning needs. Sample Strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize teaching strategies such as differentiated instruction, project-based learning, community-based or service learning • Exhibitions or public demonstrations of learning • Internship and mentorship programs • Staff meetings regularly used for discussions and demonstrations of best practices • Professional development provides opportunities to learn effective teaching strategies • Students' cultural, linguistic, and historical knowledge are incorporated into curricula / school activities • Postsecondary and high school staff collaborate, align coursework, team teach

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand that cognitive development depends on repeated exposure to inquiry-based and problem-solving learning over time; design courses and teaching to contribute to these skills
Objective 1.3 CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT: Curriculum aligned between middle and high school to ensure a seamless and effective transition for students.		
Early Steps	Growing Innovation	New Paradigms
Some alignment with standards, some teachers begin to engage students in complex problems or projects.	Curriculum increasingly aligned with standards. Academic challenge is growing but remains uneven throughout the school.	<p>Instruction is aligned with state and district standards and community expectations to prepare students for post-high school education. Students actively explore, research, and solve complex problems to develop a deep understanding of core academic concepts. Students are given multiple opportunities to engage in sophisticated and reflective learning experiences</p> <p>Sample Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curricular mapping used to ensure alignment with local and state standards and expectations Course sequences carefully articulated with lower grades to eliminate gaps and overlapping Students supported to produce work that approaches industry standards Courses regularly pursue depth over breadth Courses aligned with college courses, articulation agreements allow for college credit to be transcribed Middle/high school teacher teams facilitate understanding of competencies students need for success in high school college-preparatory and advanced level courses.

GOAL 2. RELEVANCE: <i>Link students' career aspirations with their educational goals</i>		
Objective 2.1 CAREER AWARENESS: Provide students with opportunities to explore their career interests, and engage business and community partners in the process		
Early Steps	Growing Innovation	New Paradigms
A few classrooms build employer partnerships in school- and work-based settings, but connections mostly limited to guest speaking appearances.	Community and employer partners provide most students with at least one in-depth learning interaction each school year.	<p>Community and employer partners develop rich learning experiences for all students and staff and reap tangible rewards from their relationships with students and the school. Partners actively work to bring school vision to fruition. Partners have opportunities to influence curriculum and program development. Partners receive regular updates on key curriculum and policy changes.</p> <p>Sample Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work-based learning, student internships, and job shadowing Employer and community partners work with teaching teams to develop community-based projects Employer and community partners regularly serve as audience members for student exhibitions Student internships and projects target real needs of employers and community organizations School communication plans target employer and community partners Integrated use of career information system

GOAL 3. RIGHT CLASSES: All students understand early in their school careers what curriculum is necessary to prepare them for college-level work and future careers.

Objective 3.1 INFORMING and PLANNING: Inform students and their families about college entrance requirements and how to apply, and ensure that students have the information necessary to take the right courses for their chosen academic/career path.

Early Steps	Growing Innovation	New Paradigms
<p>Few students and parents understand the full impact of class choices on college and career access. Few students and parents know the class requirements for graduation and college entrance.</p>	<p>School is aware that some community subgroups are not informed about the importance of class choices. Efforts are made to educate students, family, and community about the impact of class choice, and graduation and college entrance requirements.</p>	<p>Students and parents from all cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic, special needs, and socioeconomic backgrounds are informed about graduation and college entrance requirement as well as the importance of making informed class choices. School staff talks to students and parents about the importance of class choice. Sample Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All school personnel coach students to take the right classes • 8th grade requires that 5-year plans are made for all students, with parents involved • Integrated use of career information system in planning course selection • All school newspapers and communications offer options for translation into different languages • Parent volunteers coach peers on the importance of college and choosing the right classes • Student panel made up of recent graduates now attending college informs students of the importance of academic preparation for college • Special service announcements educate the community about class choice

Objective 3.2 EMPOWERING: Create a school environment, policies, and teacher expectations that support all students pursuing a postsecondary education

Early Steps	Growing Innovation	New Paradigms
<p>Few school staff members believe that all students are capable of completing a college-prep curriculum. Few staff members believe that a majority of students have the skills to be successful in college. Many students believe that college is only for a select few.</p>	<p>Teacher expectations are changing, with more staff recognizing that college is an option for all students. More students see themselves as college students.</p>	<p>All students expected to take a college-prep curriculum. All students are expected to achieve at high levels. All students understand that college is possible, even for those students who don't come from traditional college-going families. School and community create open and explicit dialogue regarding issues of student achievement, equity, diversity and empowerment. Sample Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and faculty verbalize that college preparation is a goal for every student • A rigorous core curriculum is the norm for all students • All students have access to the type of curriculum that will prepare them for college • School reaches out to underrepresented parent and community groups, gathers their views, and uses them • Postsecondary institutions help to create high expectations and clear pathways to postsecondary education

GOAL 4. RELATIONSHIPS: Foster relationships that encourage students’ academic success

Objective 4.1 PEER NETWORKS: Develop peer networks that encourage college-going aspirations.

Early Steps	Growing Innovation	New Paradigms
<p>A college-going culture does not exist in the school. Peer groups are not used to assist or encourage students to stay in school, excel academically, or prepare for college.</p>	<p>There is a growing realization of the importance of peer networks on a student’s decision to go to college. Steps have been identified for creating a school-wide college-going culture.</p>	<p>An overall college-going culture pervades the school. College access programs target as many students as possible (whole-school model). Peer student supports are in place. Structures have been developed that facilitate supportive relationships for students with caring adults and peers. Sample Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structures provided that allow students to know each other well • Foster the development of peer connections through advisory groups, project teams, and student clubs centered around academics and college attendance • Recent graduates serve on panels that address the importance of preparing for and pursuing postsecondary education • Peers used as tutors (college or high school students) • Recent graduates at local colleges give tours to students

Objective 4.2 PARENT, FAMILY and COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT: Involve family and the broader community in supporting students’ academic pursuits.

Early Steps	Growing Innovation	New Paradigms
<p>Parents are welcome in the building. Notification of events is sent in home language. Parents involved primarily on “booster” level, still may not connect to curricular issues or school change process.</p>	<p>Some parents aware of school change plans. Parental involvement extends to governance and limited instructional connections. Some parents aware of school change plans. Parents attend informational events with students.</p>	<p>Parents and community members from all cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic, special needs, and socioeconomic backgrounds are involved in all aspects of the school. Parents understand the vision and are active partners in curriculum design, student learning plans, school improvement, and school decisions. School understands and respects the various cultural communities represented in the building and tap into values that support student achievement and college aspirations. Sample Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek guidance from families about what information and resources they need in order to support their children’s college aspirations. • Communication plans target parents from all racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural backgrounds • Parents are active and meaningful participants in school governance bodies • Parent representatives serve in key roles on committees throughout the school and are voting members on school decision making bodies • Parents partner with students and school staff to develop student learning plans for all students • Parents go on college site visits • Schools actively engage community through forums, town hall meetings, and visits to community organizations and events • Community groups are used as a method of distributing school information

Objective 4.3 PERSONALIZATION: Personalize education through school policy and relationships with teachers and counselors.

Early Steps	Growing Innovation	New Paradigms
Some structured attempts at grouping or creating long-term adult contacts may be in place such as advisory programs or limited small learning communities.	Advisories, teaming, and small learning communities provide connections for a majority of students.	<p>Student interests and passions drive learning opportunities. Students from all cultural, racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, linguistic, and special needs backgrounds develop meaningful, long-term connections to peers and adults. Mentors guide students to develop a post-high school plan. Sample Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School staff visits the homes of incoming 9th grade students to welcome them to the school • Enrollment limits used to maintain small size • Course offerings based on student interests • Every student paired with adult mentor • Use of small or personalized learning environments • School staff, including counselors, given time to help each student develop an academic program that meets their needs and prepares them to meet postsecondary goals

GOAL 5. REALITY OF AFFORDABILITY: Address perceived and real affordability concerns of students and families.

Objective 5.1 STUDENT AWARENESS: Provide financial aid information to students, families, teachers, and counselors.

Early Steps	Growing Innovation	New Paradigms
College affordability seen as a significant barrier to attending a postsecondary institution by most students and their families as well as school staff.	There is growing awareness among underrepresented students of the actual cost of attending college and the various methods of paying for it.	<p>Students from all cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic, special needs, and socioeconomic backgrounds understand the means available to them to pay for postsecondary education. College affordability is not seen as a barrier to attending college. Sample Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide help with college applications, financial aid forms, and applying for loans and grants • School curriculum addresses college affordability/paying for college • College partners provide information on paying for college • Work with students to build financial planning skills • Students understand the cost-benefits of attaining a postsecondary education

Objective 5.2 PARENT, FAMILY, COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND SUPPORT: Parents, family and community members understand how to pay for college and support students in doing so.

Early Steps	Growing Innovation	New Paradigms
Parents and community are uninformed or misinformed about the cost of college and how to pay for it. Education around paying for college is left to the student or school.	Parents receive information in their home language on paying for college. Parents attend informational sessions with their students.	<p>Parents, family, and community members understand the options available to pay for college and are active participants in helping students plan and pay for college. Parents, family and community members are resources for students and each other. Parents help plan the FAFSA evenings. Sample Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community partners support financial aid nights • Local college financial aid directors are available to parents and students • Financial planning is available for parents and students • Local scholarships are available to students • Students supported in creating individual development accounts and other forms of savings • Bi-lingual scholarship information is readily available early in high school