
Senior Exit Survey Report 2021

Anoka-Hennepin
School District

Prepared by the Department of
Research, Evaluation and Testing



ANOKA-HENNEPIN
SCHOOLS
A future without limit

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Introduction

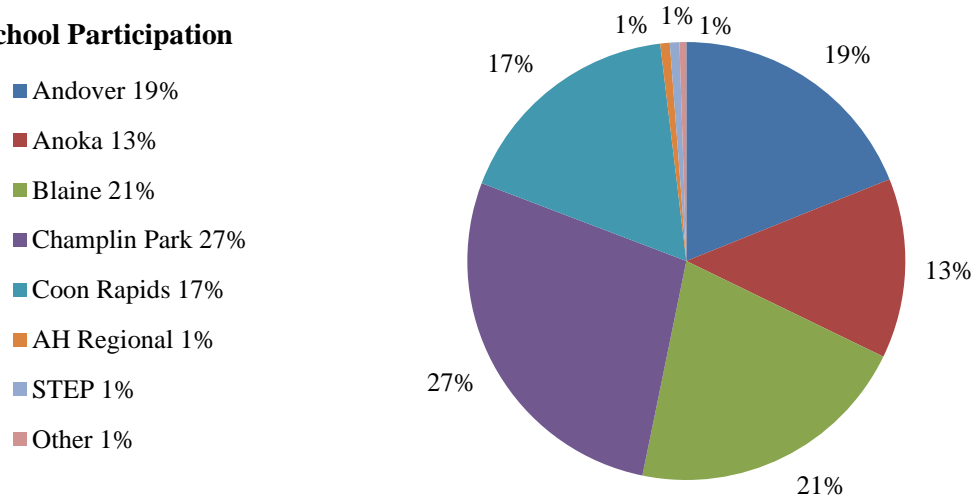
This summary highlights student responses to the Senior Exit Survey. The objective of the Senior Exit Survey is to provide an opportunity for all seniors to evaluate school programming and provide feedback on their educational experiences prior to their graduation. Students' perceptions of their educational experiences are useful for systems improvement. Summaries are shared with the Superintendent, Associate Superintendents, Curriculum and Instruction personnel, building-level administration and staff, and other district constituents.

The Senior Exit Survey has been administered to seniors annually since its inception in 2011. For the second time, the survey was administered online this year between May 3rd and May 17th. Students generally complete the anonymous survey in 15-30 minutes. The questionnaire consists of 21 questions, some of which ask respondents to rate several items, relating to students':

- post-secondary plans,
- educational aspirations,
- participation in college-and-career-readiness activities,
- evaluation of their high school, and
- demographic information.

There were 1,067 seniors who completed the survey. This is just over one hundred more students than the prior year. These students represented each high school as well as the district's alternate programs.

High School Participation



This summary aggregates student responses from the survey. Some item responses are disaggregated by school for comparison.

Key Findings

Note: Findings could be significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, thus changes should be interpreted with caution.

- In past years, teachers administered the survey during their advisory class, although starting in 2020 students were sent a link and asked to take the survey online. Students again completed the survey online in 2021.
- Ninety percent of students reported having attended their current high school for part or all of four years.
- In 2021, 67% of students reported participating in advanced courses, an increase of 9% since 2017.
- A total of 80% of seniors reported that they took the ACT, a drop of 14% from 2020.
 - Eight percent of students reported completing the SAT, a decrease of 1% from 2019.
- The percentage of students or parents who participated in FAFSA/financial aid presentations and ACT/SAT prep courses increased slightly after a continued decline over time.
 - The percentage of students or parents participating in FAFSA/financial aid presentations has declined 4% since 2017, however, the percentage of students reporting completing the FAFSA has increased 6% since that time.
 - The percentage of those who participated in paid ACT/SAT prep courses also declined by 6% over time since 2017, and in 2021 the number of students who reported taking the ACT was down to 80%.
- The percentage of seniors who planned to attend a 4-year college in the fall increased 1% since last year and is currently at 59%, the highest rate reported since 2011, the first time the survey was distributed. The percentage of students who indicated that a 4-year degree was their highest level of educational aspiration increased by 6% to 44%, also the highest it's been since the survey's inception.
- This 2021 cohort of 12th grade students who were 9th graders in 2018 were more likely to aspire to complete a 4-year degree as seniors (44%) than as freshmen (34%). Eighty percent of seniors reported being extremely confident or very confident that they could attain their educational goals, an increase of 12% compared to their freshmen year.
- Students continue to report, as in previous years, that financial issues and difficulty of college courses were the greatest potential barriers for reaching their educational goals.
 - Similar to 2020, female students reported significantly greater concerns than students overall about *financial issues* as being a potential barrier in achieving their college/career goal.
 - Similar to 2019 and 2020, Asian students in general, reported being significantly more concerned than students overall about all five potential barriers in achieving their college/career goal.
- Students' overall average rating of services provided by their high school is 2.7 (equivalent to a B-). All items except *exposure to technology* were rated lower in 2021 than in 2020.
 - Asian students, Hispanic students, and Black students rated their schools significantly lower as compared to students overall in the area of *relationships with teachers*. White students rated their schools significantly higher in the areas of *relationships with teachers* compared to students overall.
 - Students at Anoka High School rated their school significantly higher on *variety of learning opportunities* compared to students overall.
 - Students at Champlin Park High School rated their school significantly higher than students overall in the area of *personally relevant course content*.

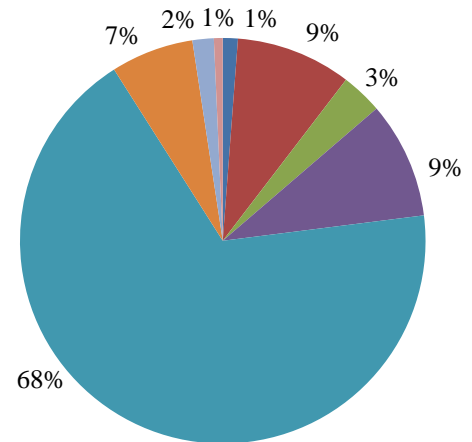
- Students at Andover High School rated their school significantly lower than students overall in the area of *incorporation of life skills*.
- In general, students who self-reported having a lower GPA (self-reported 2.0 or lower) rated several services provided by their schools significantly lower than students with a higher GPA (self-reported as 3.0 or higher).
- The percentage of students who reported feeling connected to their high school decreased from 65% in 2020 to 55% in 2021.
 - Students who reported not feeling connected to their high school assigned a significantly lower letter grade to their high schools in all areas related to services provided, as compared to students overall.
- When rating their schools in various areas, seniors assigned a higher letter grade to their high schools as 12th graders than they had as 9th graders in the area of *relationships with teachers*, *exposure to technology*, and *helpful feedback*. The shift in ratings of *relationships with teachers* was the most drastic from freshman to senior years, moving from 21% of 9th graders to 44% of seniors rating this category as an “A”.

Demographics

Of the 2021 survey respondents, 62% identified as female, 36% as male, 1% identified with an option not listed, and 1% preferred not to answer (0.4% did not respond to this item). Until 2020, students who completed the survey were fairly evenly distributed between male and female genders. Students self-reported their ethnic background as the following:

Ethnicity

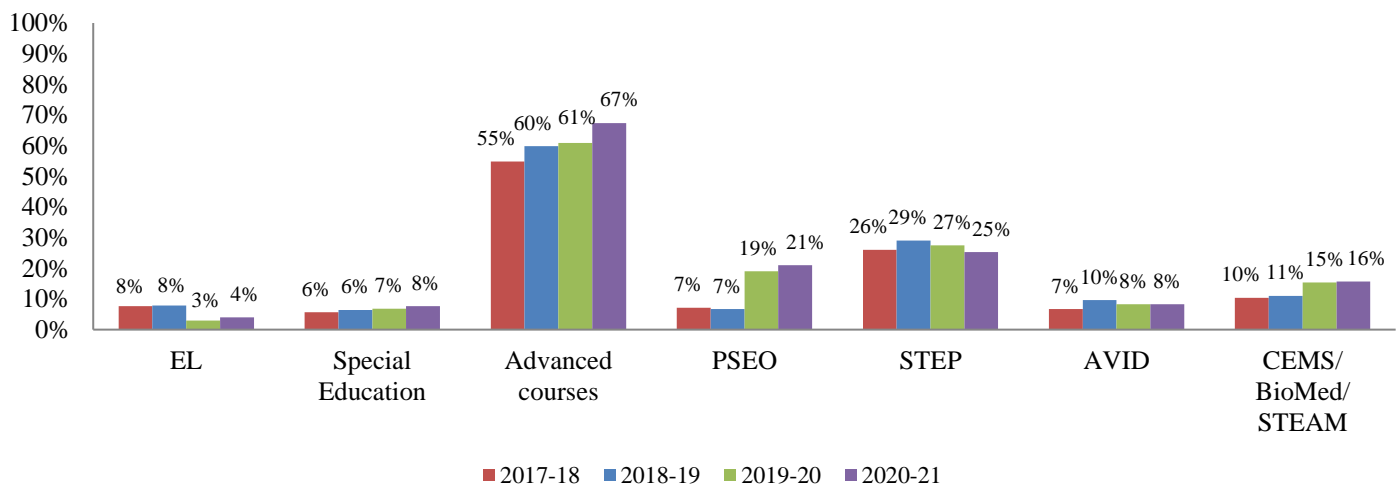
- American Indian/Native Alaskan 1%
- Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander 9%
- Hispanic 3%
- Black 9%
- White 68%
- Multi-racial 7%
- Option not listed 2%
- No response 1%



Ninety percent of responding seniors attended their high school for part of or all of four years in 2021. This is consistent with reports from 2020.

Participation in special programming. The percentage of students who reported participating in special programming increased across all programs except for *STEP* (down from 27% in 2020 to 25% in 2021). Sixty-seven percent of students reported participating in *advanced courses*, an increase of 6% since 2020. The percentage of students who reported participating in *PSEO* increased from 19% in 2020 to 21% in 2021.

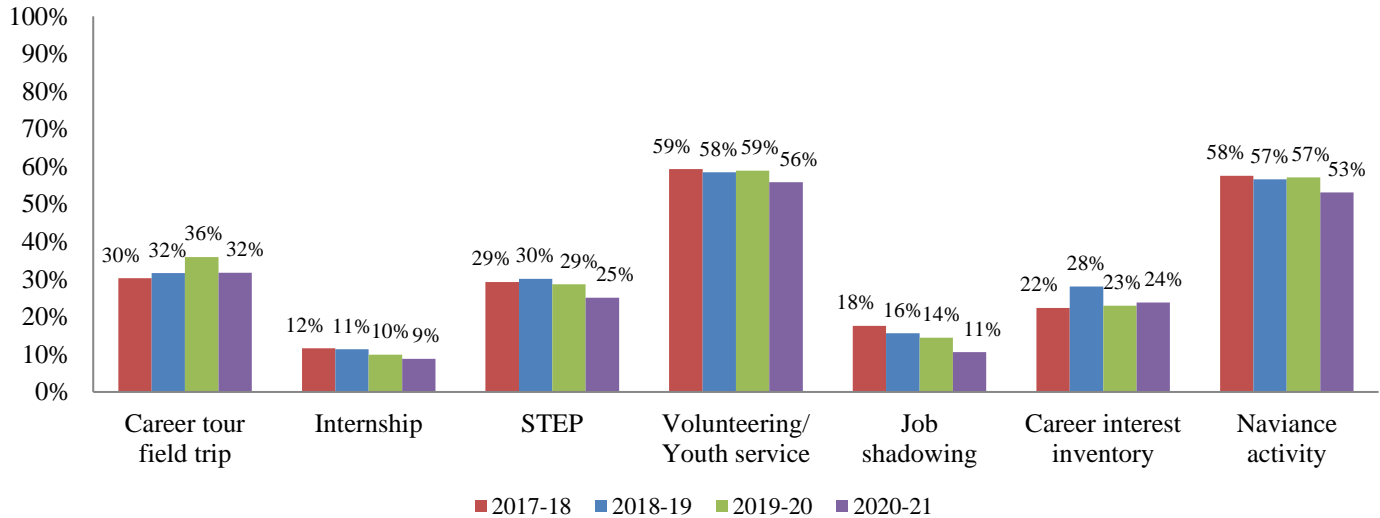
Participation in special programming



Note: Students were able to choose more than one response option for this item. CEMS/BioMed/STEAM was offered only at Blaine and Coon Rapids High Schools.

Participation in career activities. In 2021, the percentage of students reporting participating in activities decreased in all areas except participation in the *career interest inventory* (24%). Student participation in the following activities decreased by about 4% between 2020 and 2021: *career tour field trip* (36% to 32%), *STEP* (29% to 25%), and *Naviance activity* (57% to 53%). One item, *job shadowing*, has dropped 7% over the last four years from 18% in 2017-18 to 11% in 2020-21.

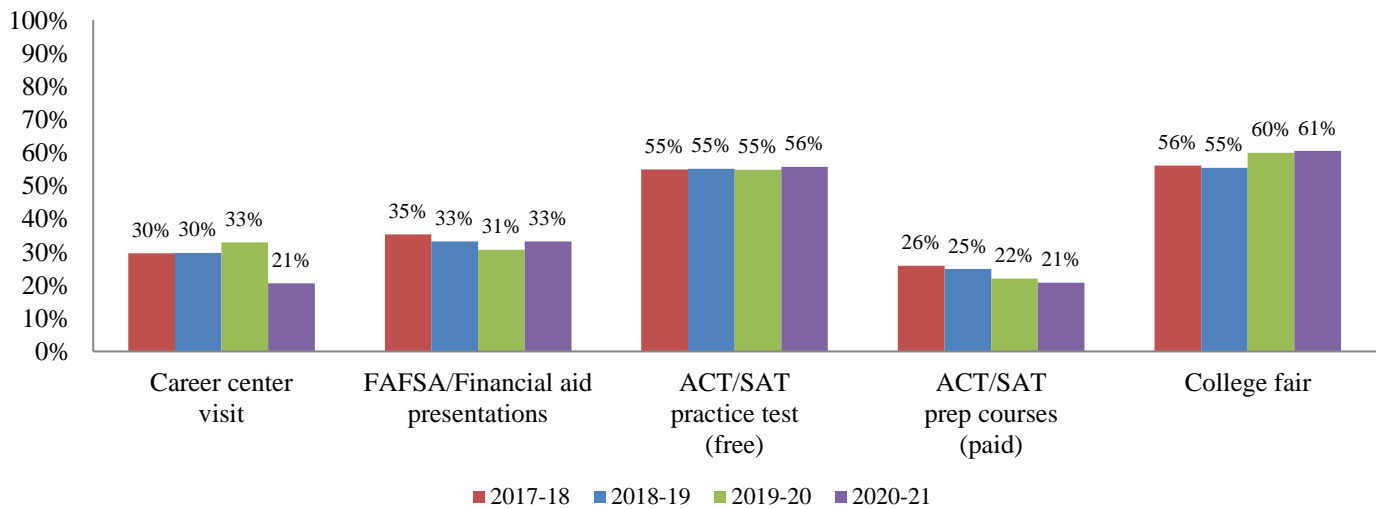
Participation in various activities



Note: Students were able to choose more than one response option for this item.

Student or parent participation in college and career activities. The percentage of students or parents taking part in *career center visits* (currently at 21%) decreased 12% since last year. The percentage of those who participated in *ACT/SAT prep or practice test* (56% in 2021) has remained relatively stable since 2018. The percentage of students or parents who participated in *FAFSA/Financial aid presentations* (33% this year) had steadily declined in prior years, with a slight uptick in 2021. The percentage of those who participated in *ACT/SAT prep courses* has declined by 5% over time since 2018.

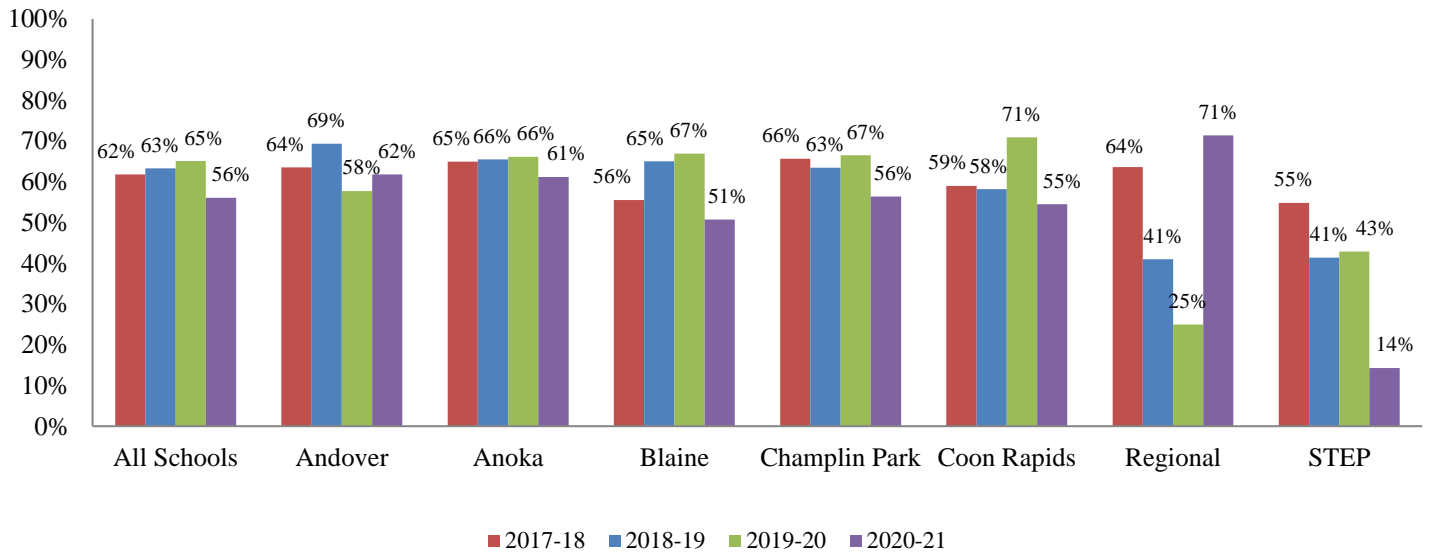
Student or parent participation in various activities



Note: Students were able to choose more than one response option for this item.

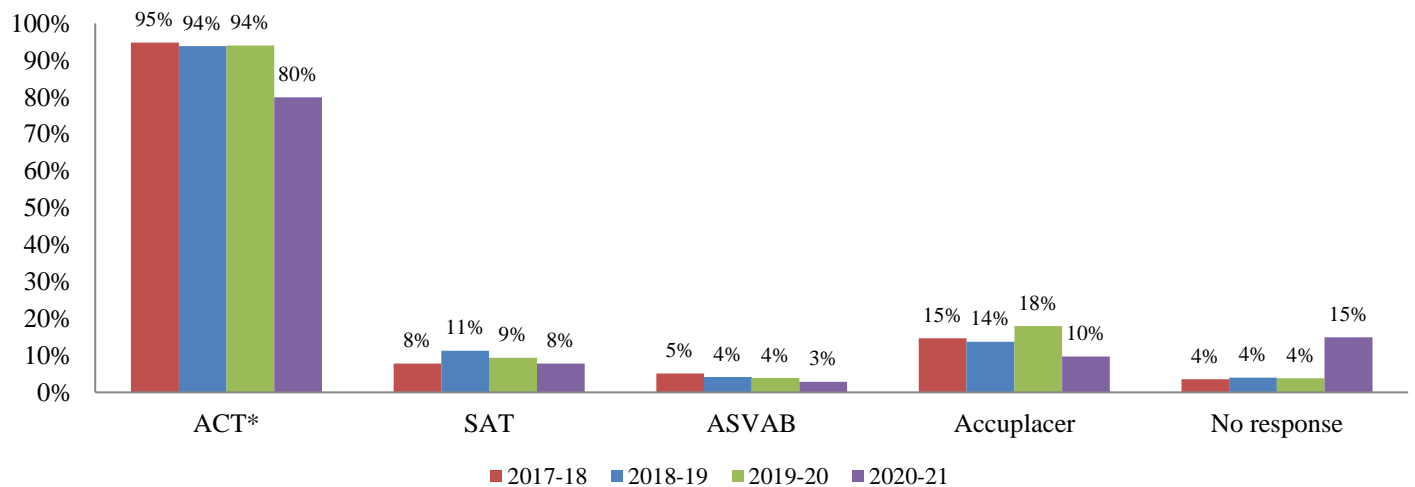
Connection to high school. Overall, 56% of seniors reported that they felt connected to their high school, a decrease of 9% since 2020. However, the percentage of students who reported feeling connected at Andover High School increased by 4% since 2020. After a spike in 2020, students from Coon Rapids High School reported connectedness levels 16% lower in 2021. Blaine High School also decreased by 16% from 2020 to 2021. Regional High School increased by 46% from 2020 to 2021, and STEP decreased by 29%, however, it is important to keep in mind that the numbers of respondents at these sites are considerably lower than at traditional high schools, making their reported connectedness more variable across years.

Percentage reporting feeling connected to their high school



College entrance exams. The percentage of students reporting taking the ACT (80%) dropped by a large margin during 2021. A larger group of students (15%), compared to previous years, provided no response to this item. Some contextual factors related to COVID-19 may have influenced the percentage of students taking the ACT, such as this cohort’s school day opportunity for taking the ACT was offered during the fall of their senior year instead of spring of their junior year, which is when it is typically offered.

College entrance exams taken

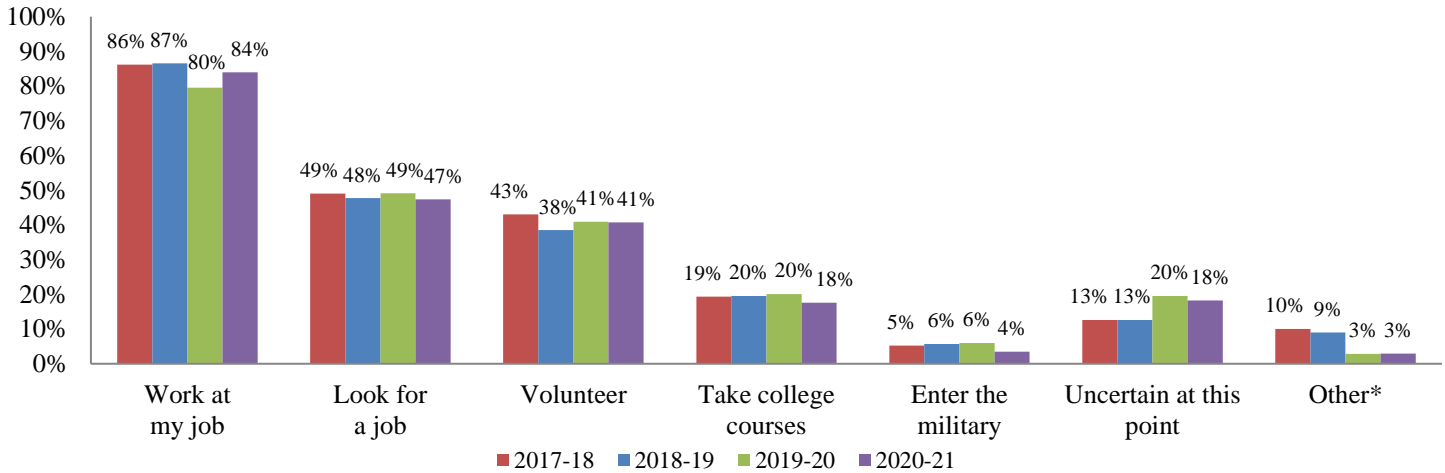


Note: Students were able to choose more than one response for this item.
 *The ACT is offered free of charge during the school day.

Future Plans and Goals

Summer plans. The percentage of students who plan to work at their jobs over the summer has increased by 4% since last year and remains the highest reported activity. The percentage of students who plan to volunteer over the summer maintained the same rate as last year. The percentage of those who were uncertain at the point of participating in the survey about their plans for the following activities over the summer decreased by 2%. Additionally, students who planned to look for a job, take college courses, and enter the military decreased by 2% from 2020 to 2021.

Plans over summer

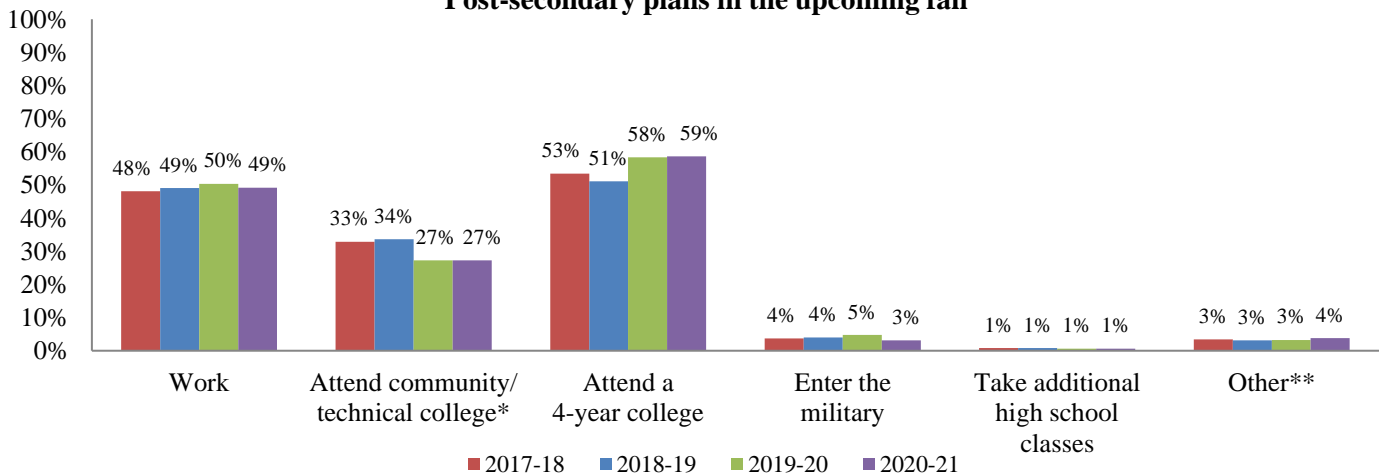


Note: Students were able to choose more than one response option for this item.

**The 'Other' responses included vacation/travel, military training, participate in sports, and relax/hang out/have fun.*

Post-secondary plans. The percentages of students reporting each of the potential post-secondary plans for the upcoming fall have remained relatively consistent with last year. The percentage of students reporting plans to attend a 4-year college in the fall increased by 1% since 2020. The percentage of students reporting plans to attend a community/technical college was consistent with last year. The percentage of students planning to enter the military or workforce decreased slightly from the previous year.

Post-secondary plans in the upcoming fall



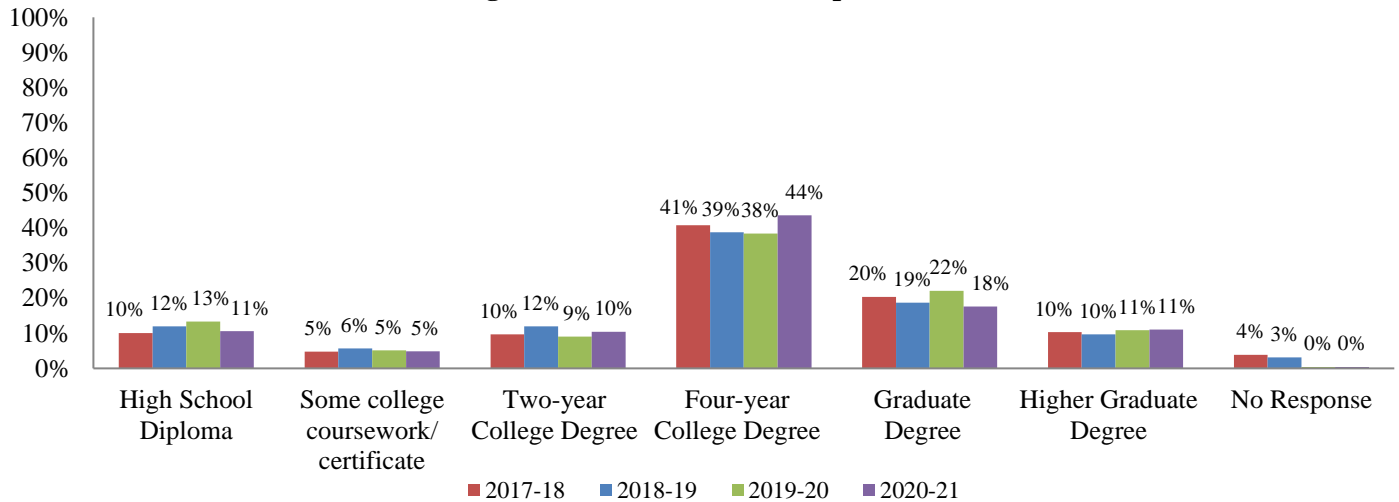
Note: Students were able to choose more than one response for this item.

**In 2020, the response options related to attending a community college and/or a technical college were combined into one. As a result, the percentages from the previous years were summed together.*

***The 'Other' responses included taking a gap year, going to trade schools, attending Pathways, along with replications of the responses offered.*

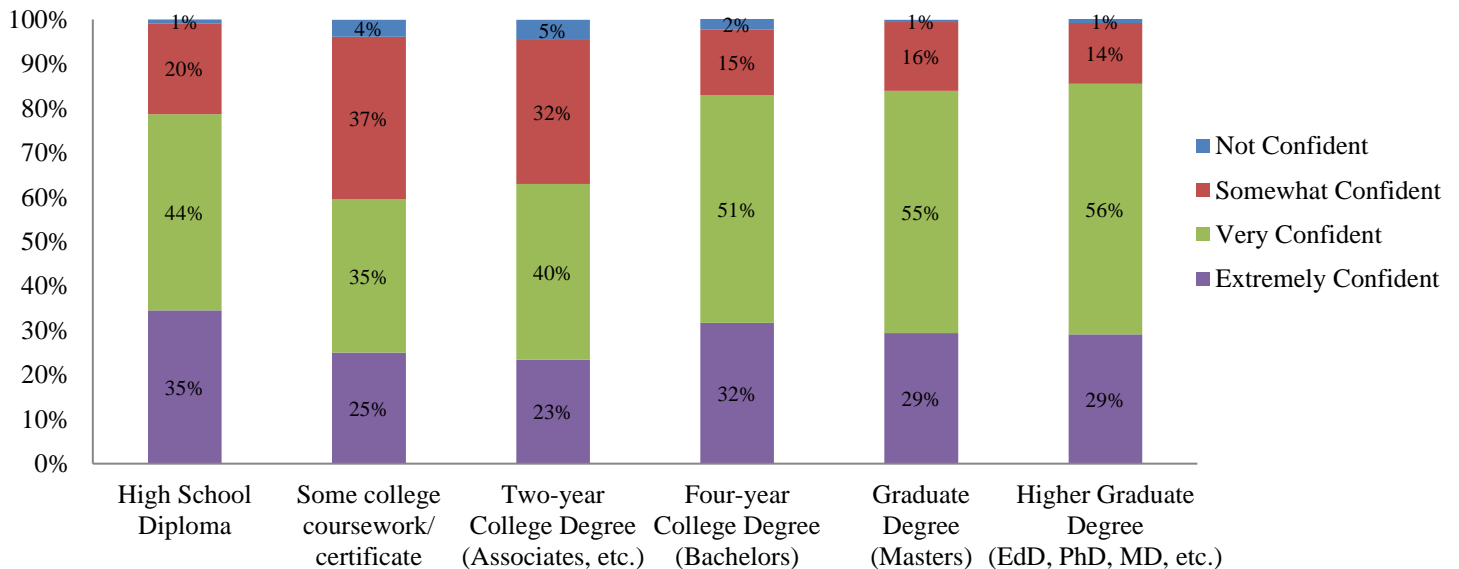
Educational aspirations. Eighty-eight percent of students reported aspirations for some level of post-secondary education, slightly higher than percentages reported by students in 2020. Seventy-three percent of seniors reported that their highest level of educational aspiration included obtaining a 4-year degree or higher, an increase of 5% since 2019. This is the highest rate since the first survey distribution in 2011.

Highest level of educational aspirations



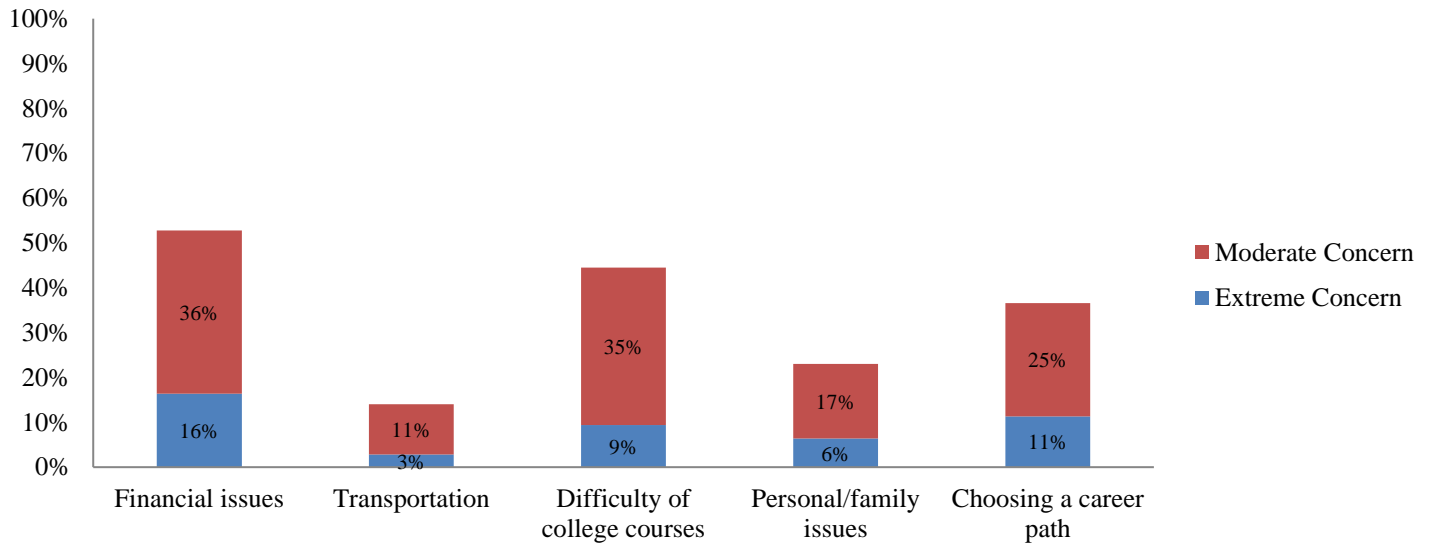
Confidence in reaching educational goals. Overall, the percentages of students reporting being very confident or extremely confident that they will achieve the level of education they aspire to has decreased since 2020. The percentage of students pursuing a four-year college degree or higher reported being either extremely confident or very confident about reaching their goals at greater rates than those not pursuing a four-year college degree or higher. Students who planned to earn a higher graduate degree (EdD, PhD, MD, etc.) were the most confident (85%) in achieving their goals.

**Relationship between two questions:
'At this point in your life, what is the highest level of education you plan to achieve?' and
'How confident do you feel that you will achieve your ultimate educational goal?'**



Barriers to reaching goals. Students were most concerned (including both moderate and extreme concerns) about *financial issues* (53%) as a potential barrier for reaching their educational goals, followed by *difficulty of college courses* (44%), and *choosing a career path* (36%).

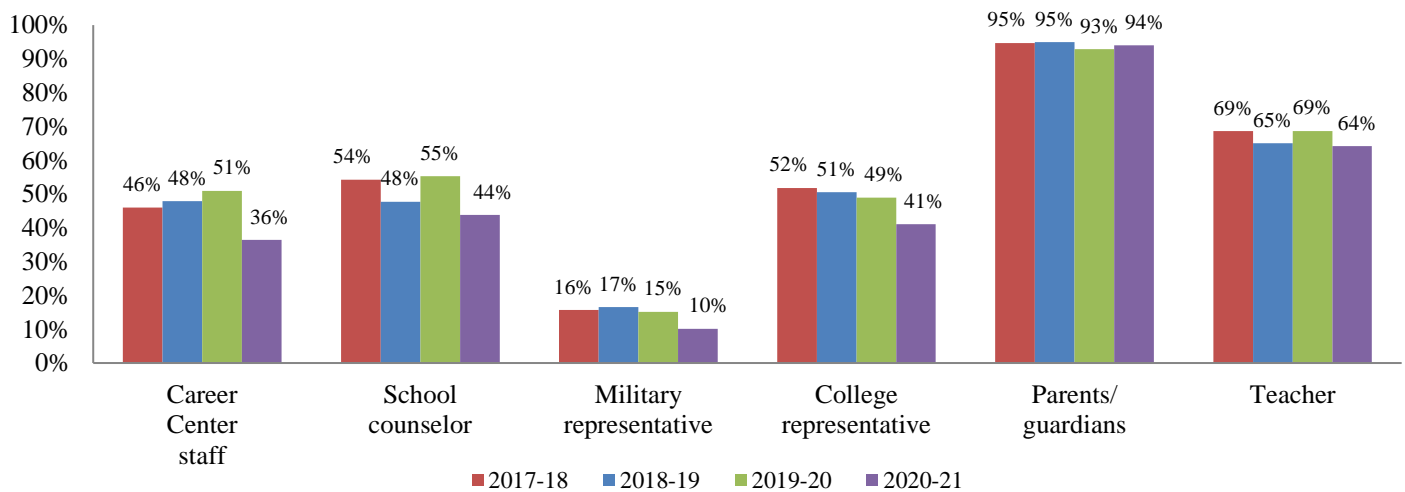
Potential barriers for reaching educational goals



Note: Each item was rated separately.

Career and college support. The vast majority of seniors (94%) reported talking to their *parents/guardians* about career and/or college planning. Sixty-four percent of seniors reported finding support from their *teacher*, a 5% decrease since 2020. There was an 11% decrease from 2020 in the percentage of students reporting consulting with *school counselors* (44%). Following a steady increase in the percentage of students reporting having talked to *Career Center staff*, the rate dropped 15% in 2021 to a rate of 36%.

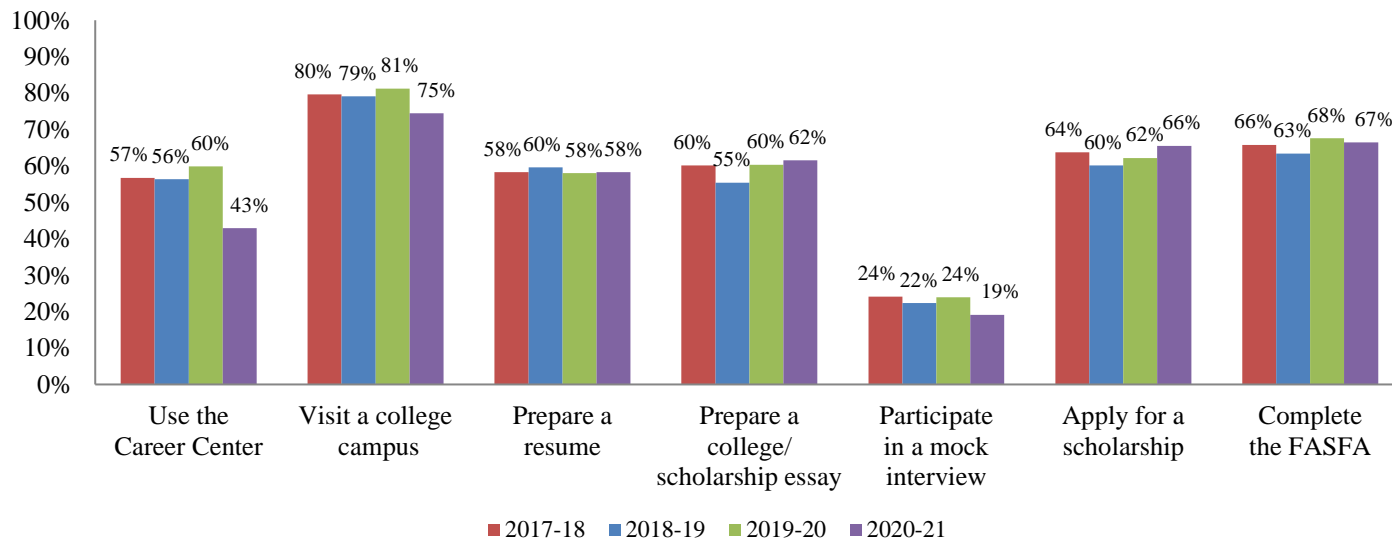
Talked about career and/or college planning with others



Note: Students were able to choose more than one response for this item.

Career and college planning. The percentage of students who reported having *prepared a resume* (58% in 2021) while in high school and having *completed the FASFA* (currently at 67%) maintained similar level to 2020. The percentage of students reporting having *applied for a scholarship* (66% from 62%) and *preparing a college/scholarship essay* (from 60% to 62%) increased since 2020. The percentage of students who *used the career center* (from 60% to 43%), *visited a college campus* (from 81% to 75% in 2021), and *participated in a mock interview* (19% from 24%) decreased since 2020, with the largest drop in those who used the career center (17% decrease). *Visiting a college campus* remains the activity with the highest percentage (currently at 75%) of student participation, despite having declined in the last year.

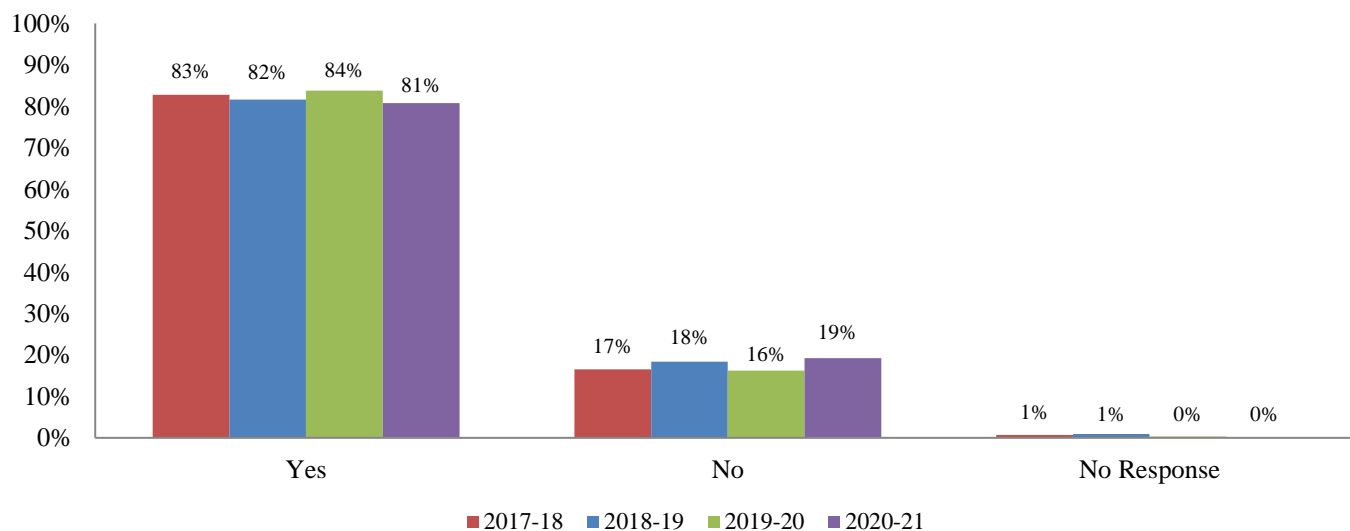
Participation in career and/or college planning opportunities



Note: Students were able to choose more than one response for this item.

College application. Eighty-one percent of seniors reported submitting at least one college application in 2021. This percentage has remained fairly consistent since 2018.

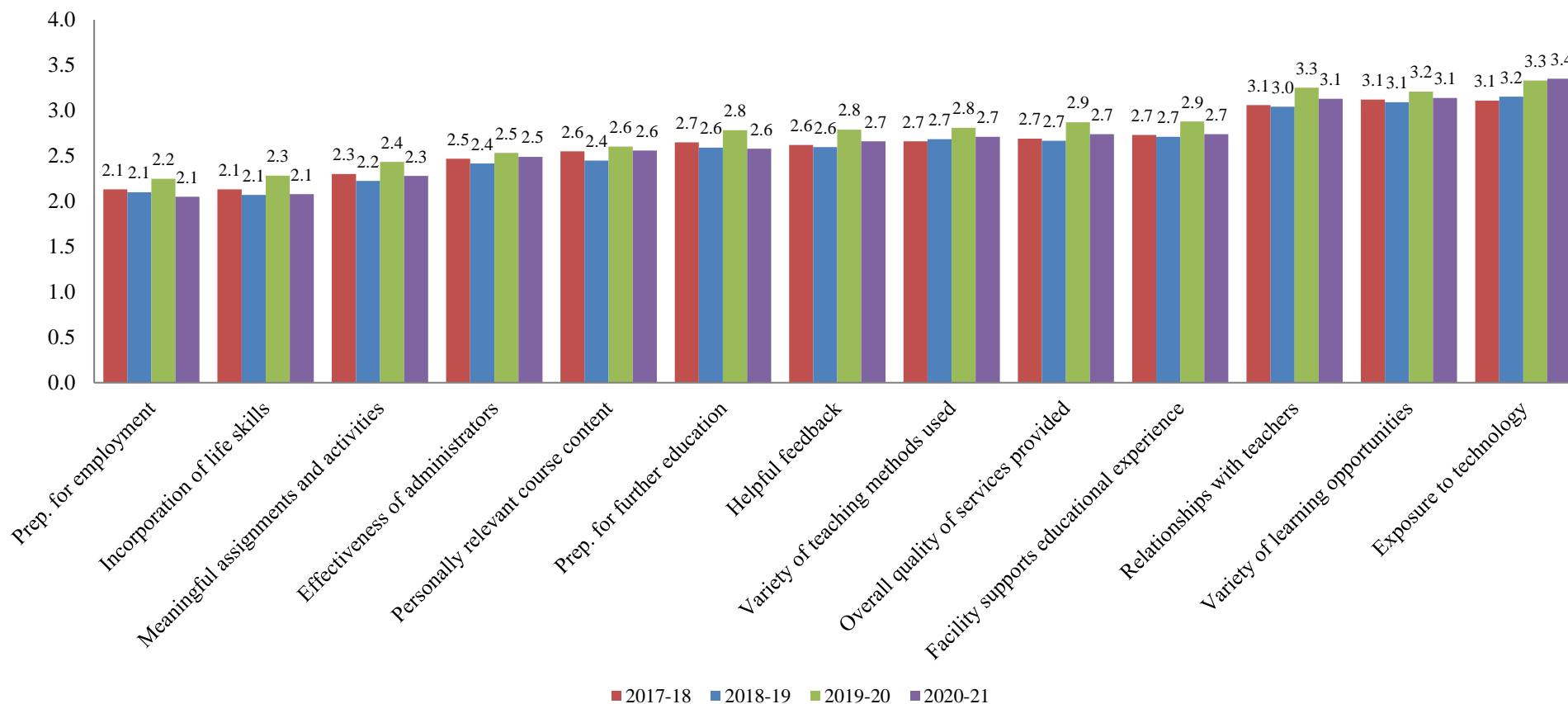
Submission of college application



Perceptions of the High School Experience

Students assigned a letter grade to their high school based on their experiences in several domains. The average across all areas as rated by students is 2.7 (equivalent to a B-). Students rated all areas, except *exposure to technology*, lower than in 2020. *Exposure to technology* (3.4) continues to be the highest rated item. Areas with the greatest decreases* from 2020 to 2021 are *preparation for employment* (2.1), *incorporation of life skills* (2.1), and *preparation for further education* (2.6). The lowest rated areas were *preparation for employment* (2.1) and *incorporation of life skills* (2.1), which have both consistently been rated lowest across time.

**Average letter grade assigned to high school
(A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, and F=0)**

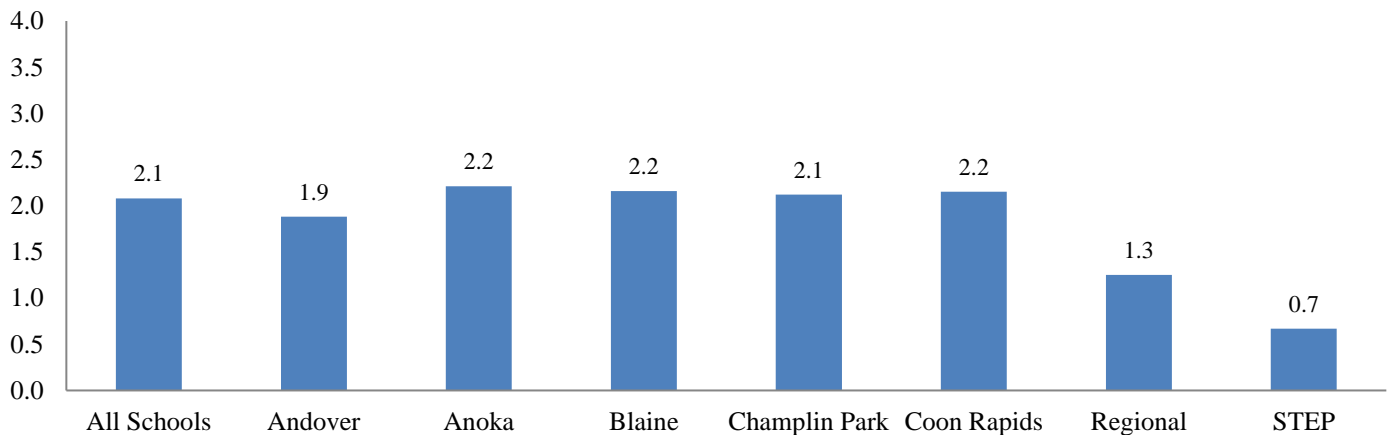


* Note: Due to rounding of the rating of an item in a single year, calculated differences between two years on the graphic may identify different items than actual differences in ratings across years.

In this section, three items from the previous page have been disaggregated by building for the following reasons: item with the greatest difference across schools, item with the lowest difference across schools, the highest rated item, and the item representing the overall quality of services.

Incorporation of life skills. Student ratings of their high school on the item *incorporation of life skills* ranged from 1.9 to 2.2 at the traditional high schools. Among all items on the previous page, this item showed the greatest range in responses between traditional buildings.

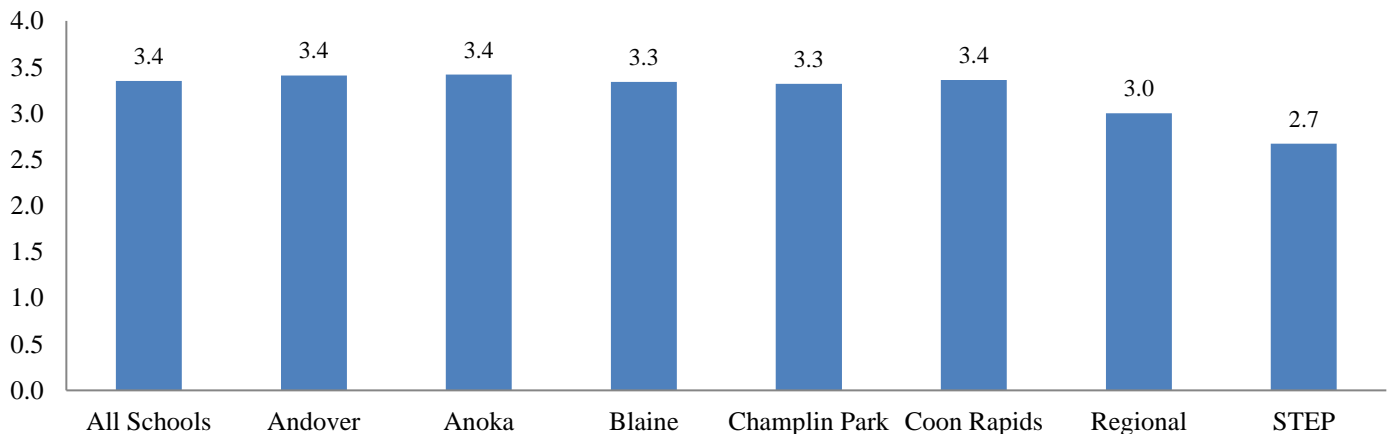
Incorporation of life skills
(A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, and F=0)



Note: Respondent counts for Regional and STEP are considerably lower than for the traditional high schools.

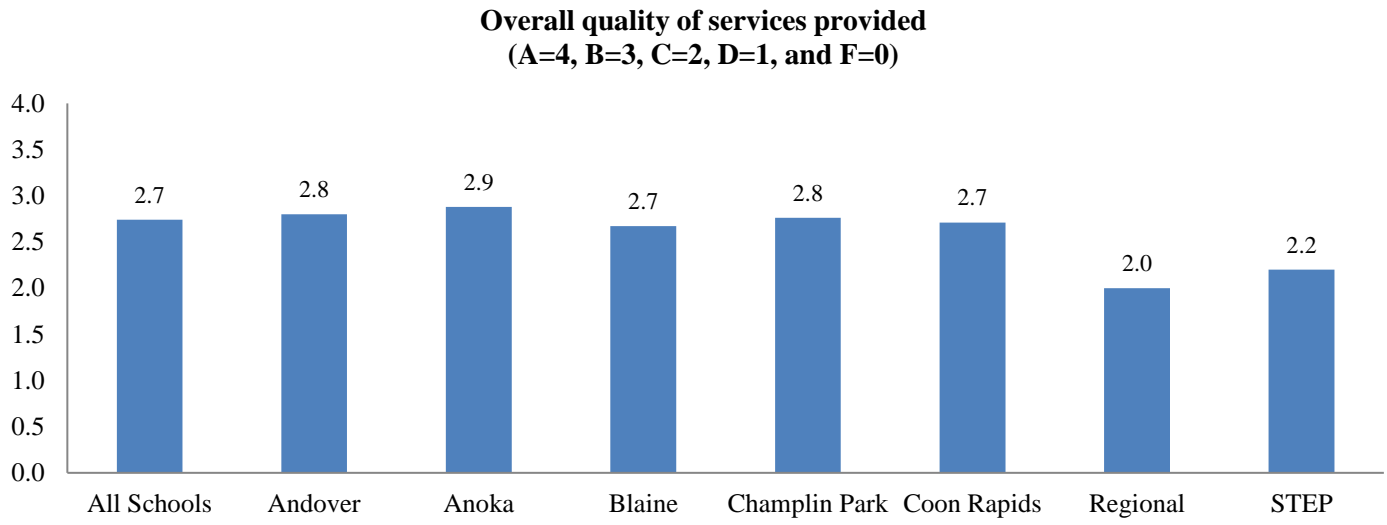
Exposure to technology. At the traditional high schools, student ratings of *exposure to technology* ranged from 3.3 to 3.4. Among all ratings on the previous page, this item has steadily increased in the district over time, from 2.8 in 2012 to 3.4 in 2021, making it the highest rated item in 2021. This item also showed the least variation in responses between traditional buildings.

Exposure to technology
(A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, and F=0)



Note: Respondent counts for Regional and STEP are considerably lower than the traditional high schools.

Overall quality of services. The final graph in this section shows how students rated the overall quality of the services provided. Student ratings of *overall quality of services provided* ranged from 2.7 to 2.9 at the five traditional high schools.



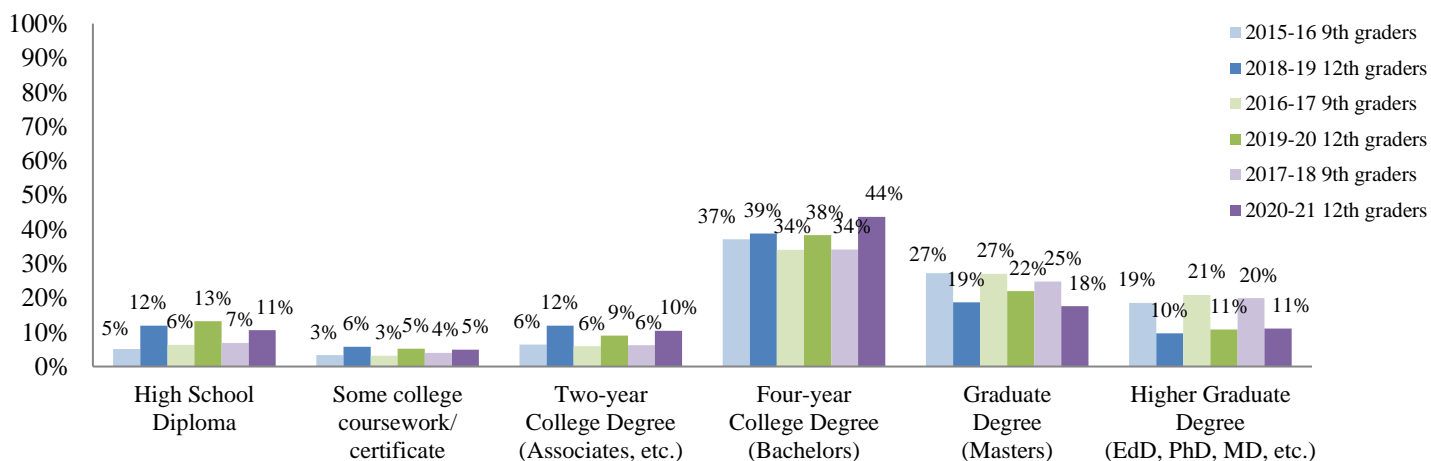
Note: Respondent counts for Regional and STEP are considerably lower than the traditional high schools.

Ninth Grade Responses Compared to 12th Grade Responses

The following graphs compare responses to like items between the Ninth Grade Transition Survey and the Senior Exit Survey that was administered to the same cohort in 2018 as ninth graders and 2021 as 12th graders. In the graphs below, cohorts of students are displayed in different shades of the same color.

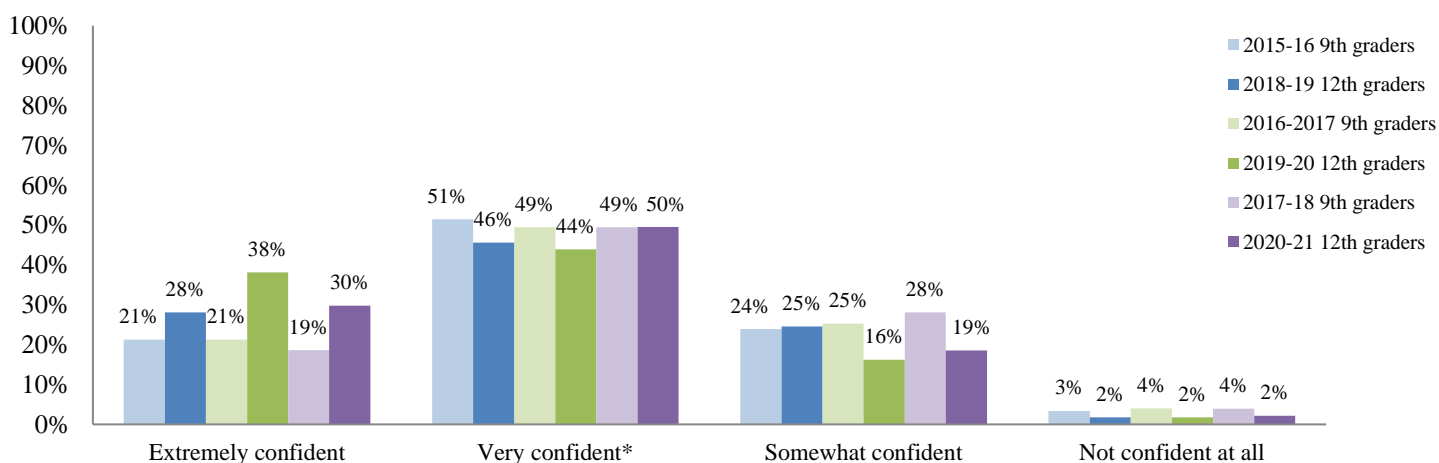
Changes in educational aspirations. The percentage of students in all cohorts reported higher educational aspirations towards a high school diploma, some college/coursework, a two-year degree, or a four-year degree as seniors than as freshmen. In the most recent cohort and over prior cohorts, the percentage of students who reported that their highest level of educational aspiration was a graduate degree or higher decreased from reports as freshmen compared to reports as seniors. The most recent cohort's largest discrepancy between 9th grade and 12th grades was in aspirations to obtain a four-year degree, with 10% more students reporting this aspiration as seniors than when they were freshmen.

Highest level of educational aspirations



Changes in confidence in reaching educational goals. A greater percentage of students reported being extremely confident in attaining their educational goal as seniors than as freshmen, an increase of 11% from freshman year to senior year for the latest cohort of students. The percentage of students who reported being not confident at all decreased 2% from their freshmen to senior year in 2021.

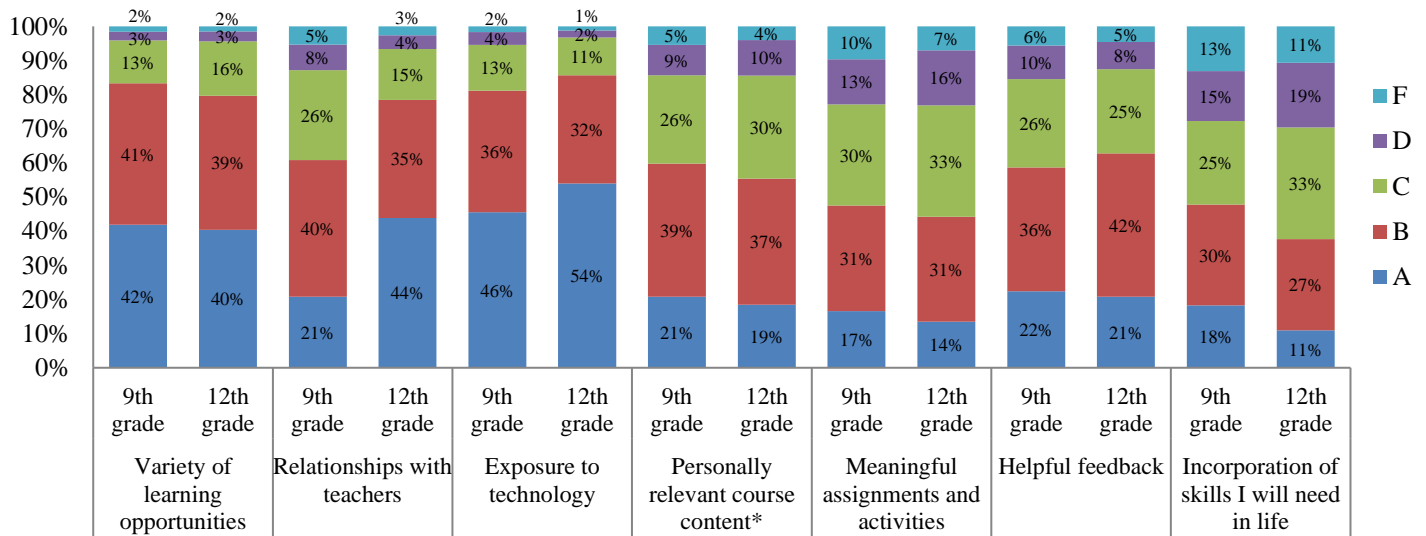
Confidence in attainment of educational goal



* Prior to 2020, 'Very confident' was the response option for students as 12th graders. 'Confident' was the response option for these same students as 9th graders. Beginning in 2020, these scales were aligned.

Changes in evaluations of high school. The class of 2021 assigned a higher average letter grade to their high school as seniors than they did as freshmen in the areas of *relationships with teachers*, *exposure to technology*, and *helpful feedback*. The same cohort assigned a similar letter grade to their high school in the areas of *variety of learning opportunities*, and a slightly lower letter grade as seniors in the areas of *personally relevant course content*, *meaningful assignments and activities*, and *variety of learning opportunities*.

Comparison of 9th and 12th grade responses to overlapping survey items



* 'Personally relevant course content' was the item for these students as 12th graders. 'Course content that I can relate to' was the item for these same students as 9th graders.

This report was generated by the Research, Evaluation and Testing department of the Anoka-Hennepin School District. For further information, please visit the RET website, www.ahschools.us/ret, or call (763) 506-1000 and request the RET department.