

Aspirations Report

HIGH SCHOOL (N=36)
EDSTAR ANALYTICS, INC

Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| Introduction..... | 2 |
| Grade Level Distribution | 2 |
| Post-High School Aspirations | 2 |
| Career Interests | 3 |
| Educational and Career Preparation | 4 |
| Conclusion..... | 4 |
| Recommendations | 5 |

Introduction

This report provides an overview of a survey conducted among high school students to understand their current academic status, future educational aspirations, career interests, and preparation for their post-high school life. The survey collected responses on various aspects, including career interests, educational and career preparation, and general interests and preferences.

Grade Level Distribution

The survey included participants from different high school statuses, providing a diverse perspective on the aspirations and plans of students at various stages of their high school journey. The distribution of students' high school statuses highlights the participation across a range of grade levels, offering insights into the aspirations and concerns of students as they progress through high school.

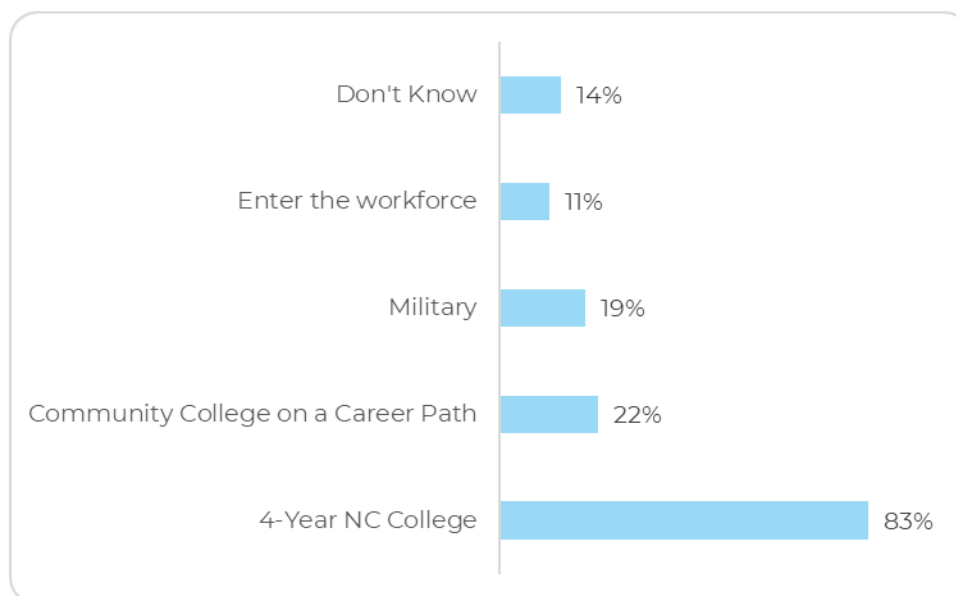
- Freshman: 9 Students
- Sophomore: 8 Students
- Junior: 13 Students
- Senior: 2 Students
- Unknown Grade: 4

This distribution indicates a higher participation rate from Sophomores and Juniors, offering a glimpse into the perspectives primarily of mid-high school students.

Post-High School Aspirations

The post-high school ambitions of students demonstrate a significant preference for continued education, especially at 4-Year Colleges in North Carolina, with 83% of students indicating this choice. The fact that students were able to select multiple interests and often did so suggests a level of uncertainty about their exact path forward. Figure 1 shows students' post-secondary aspirations.

Figure 1. Post-High School Aspirations

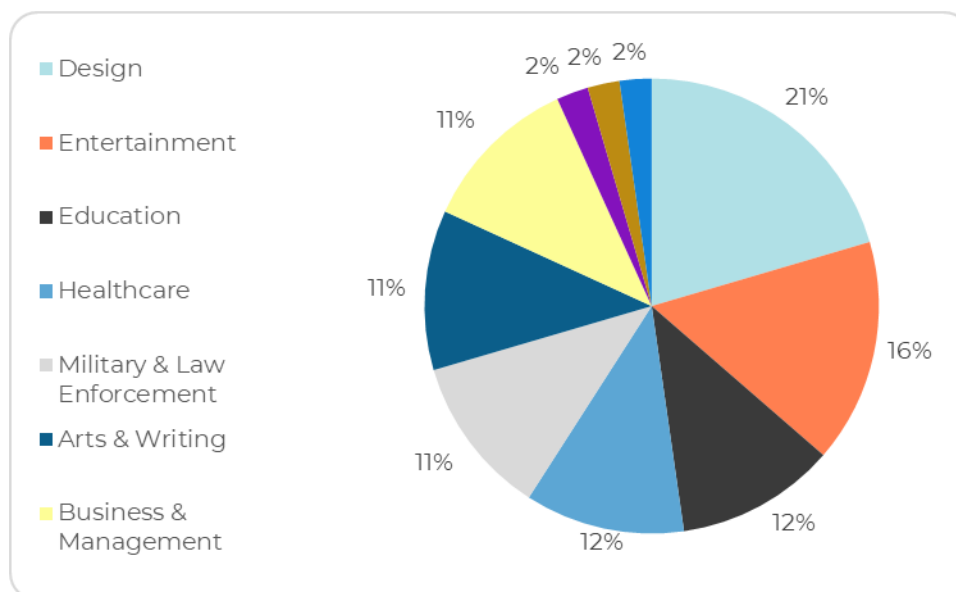


Career Interests

High school students often have career aspirations that reflect a mix of creativity and ambition, but sometimes they show a limited understanding of the broader job market. This discrepancy may be due to a lack of exposure to the full spectrum of career opportunities. The survey data can guide educational programs aimed at mentoring and tutoring these students to provide more comprehensive career education.

- **Popular Career Choices:** Many students showed a strong preference for careers in Design, Entertainment, Education, Healthcare, Military & Law Enforcement, Arts & Writing, and Business & Management.
- **Disparities in Career Knowledge:** There are significant gaps in interest for certain fields such as Science & Technology, Culinary, and Law, suggesting limited exposure or understanding. These findings indicate the need for targeted efforts to broaden students' career awareness and provide more detailed insights into these less popular fields.

Figure 2. High School Students' Career Aspirations



Educational and Career Preparation

Feedback from students on their educational and career planning reveals a proactive approach to mapping out their future paths. The interest in both four-year universities and community colleges underscores the value placed on higher education for achieving career objectives. Additionally, some students' consideration of military service and immediate workforce entry highlights the diverse strategies they employ to gain preparation and access job opportunities.

The need for support mechanisms such as tutoring and mentoring is evident, with 53% of survey participants enrolled in remedial math classes and nearly a third expressing interest in STEM careers. This points to a critical need for targeted educational interventions to bridge gaps and prepare students for these ambitious career paths. The Foundations of Math courses are designed for students who have previously scored below grade level in math, and it is essential for mentors to verify that students enrolled in these courses had indeed scored below grade level previously.

Conclusion

This survey has highlighted the diversity in student aspirations, emphasizing the need for comprehensive educational and career planning. As students navigate their high school years, their evolving interests and the complexities of the future job market underline the essential role of continuous mentoring and guidance. Such support is crucial in helping students discover the wide range of career opportunities available to them and understanding the

pathways to achieve these careers. By providing dedicated mentorship, students can gain a clearer understanding of the steps needed to reach their desired career goals, whether in entertainment, law enforcement, graphic design, business management, or other fields. This approach ensures that students are better prepared to make informed decisions about their futures, facilitating a successful transition from high school to post-secondary education and the workforce.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this survey, several recommendations emerge to address the gaps in student knowledge and support their educational and career planning:

1. **Increase Awareness of Graduation Requirements:**

- It is crucial that students understand the specific number of credit hours required to graduate. Mentoring should provide clear, accessible information about graduation requirements, including the necessary coursework and credits needed to obtain their diploma.

2. **Improve Understanding of GPA Calculations:**

- Students need a better understanding of how GPAs are calculated, particularly the difference between weighted and unweighted GPAs. Some students reported unweighted GPAs as being higher than weighted GPAs.

3. **Enhance Knowledge of Standardized Testing:**

- Many students reported ACT scores outside the possible range, indicating a lack of understanding of the scoring system. Providing detailed information about standardized tests, including scoring ranges and the implications of these scores for college admissions, will help students accurately assess their performance and preparedness.

4. **Strengthen College and Career Readiness Programs:**

- Given that 53% of students surveyed are enrolled in remedial math classes and many express interest in STEM careers, targeted educational interventions are necessary. Mentors should check that students are not in remedial courses when they should be in standard or more advanced courses. Services should include additional tutoring and mentoring, particularly in math

and science, to bridge gaps and prepare students for college-level coursework and STEM fields.

5. Provide Comprehensive Career Counseling:

- Students' aspirations reveal a mix of career interests, with some areas underrepresented. Comprehensive career counseling can help students explore a broader range of career options, understand the job market, and make informed decisions about their future paths.

6. Verify Remedial Course Enrollment:

- Ensure that students enrolled in remedial courses like the Foundations of Math have accurately been placed based on their previous performance. Mentors should verify that students in these courses have previously scored below grade level to ensure appropriate support.

By implementing these recommendations, educational programs can better support high school students in navigating their academic and career paths, ensuring they are well-prepared for post-secondary education and beyond.