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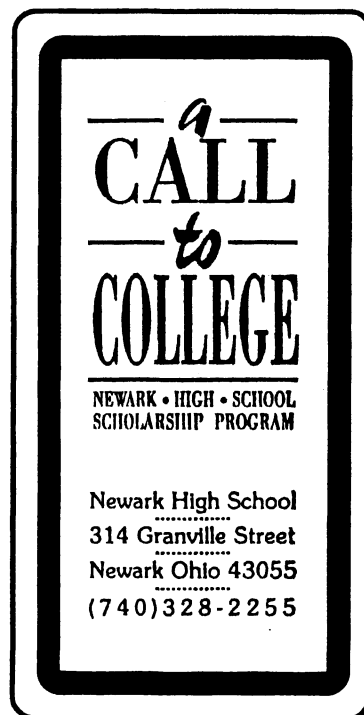
Should and Can *A CALL TO COLLEGE*  
Initiate an Early Awareness Program at the  
Newark City School Elementary and/or  
Middle School Levels?

A Needs Analysis and Feasibility Study  
Conducted by Janet Schultz

March-July 2008

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## Executive Summary

This study was undertaken from March to July 2008 on behalf of the non-profit college access organization, A CALL TO COLLEGE (ACTC). Its primary purpose was to identify the major roadblocks to successful college aspiration and attendance specific to the children and families in the Newark City School (NCS) system. Information and data related to college aspiration, preparation and knowledge in NCS was gathered using two methods: direct interviews and survey instruments. A total of 36 internal and external stakeholders were interviewed. Over 90% of all elementary, middle and high school classroom teachers, key staff (guidance counselors, social workers, etc.), half of all 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and over 350 parents completed surveys for the study.

The project generated a great deal of valuable data. For the purposes of this report, the four dimensions of college access identified and defined by the Ohio Board of Regent's Division of Educational Linkages & Access provided a lens through which to view the data and a systematic way to narrow the study's focus. The four dimensions were: aspiration, academic preparation, affordability and availability. The data gathered through both surveys and interviews were reviewed and grouped by these categories and then analyzed. The analysis revealed behaviors, skills, knowledge, attitudes and activities critical to successful college access that were in need of supplementary attention. By category, the most significant findings were:

### **Aspiration**

- ❖ Pervasive generational poverty in NCS families undermines the primacy of high school graduation and college attendance. In addition, many families, although perceived by their children to be supportive of their education, lack the social and cultural capital needed to help their children to find and stay on the path to post-secondary education.
- ❖ The NCS students surveyed fell a full 10% below the national norm for college aspiration. Their responses also revealed an underdeveloped sense of goal setting and an inability to connect classroom learning with careers.
- ❖ Although parents were not worried about their child acquiring the education and skills necessary to become a successful adult, they did overwhelmingly name career exploration and college advising as two activities that would add to their child's education the most positively.
- ❖ Teachers, staff and community stakeholders expressed unequivocal concern about the lack of family engagement in the educational process and its negative impact on the development of academic aspiration in their children.

### **Academic Preparation**

- ❖ The great majority of both parents and students surveyed felt that NCS teachers and staff held high expectations. However, from the perspective of the school system, the expectation threshold set by students and families was not remotely high enough.



Thus, there existed a serious disconnect between the two groups regarding an acceptable standard for effort and rigor.

- ❖ The student survey revealed a pronounced and broad-based reluctance by students to take on challenging assignments and classes.
- ❖ Teachers and staff felt strongly that students did not engage in adequate learning activities outside of school. Student survey answers confirmed this opinion. Reported time spent on homework, reading for fun and doing school and community activities was much less than time spent on television, video games and socializing with friends.
- ❖ Teachers and staff also expressed significant discontent with the students' awareness and utilization of educational resources in the Newark community. The students' responses did indicate a need to take better advantage of what Newark offers. However, in some areas, the students' level of experience exceeded the teachers' perceptions. In others, like attending events or activities on the high school campus, the frequency was surprisingly low.
- ❖ Teachers and staff considered poor school attendance a major barrier to academic preparation and success. In their opinion, the dissolution of bussing has further aggravated this problem.

#### **Affordability**

- ❖ All three surveys and many of the individual interviews identified the lack of "college knowledge" and poor to absent financial planning and information as two particularly large college access hurdles in NCS.
- ❖ Even though students felt their parents were supportive of their schooling, this perceived support did not extend to parents helping them pay for college in the future.
- ❖ Ohio is not an exceptionally affordable place for a student to pursue a higher education due to inadequate state financial support. This fact is further compounded when the student comes from a low-income family.

#### **Availability**

- ❖ Educational options are numerous and available for Newark and Ohio residents. This dimension of the college access pathway is not a barrier to students and families in NCS.

After a thorough analysis of the findings, the study then identified the most pressing needs relative to college awareness, aspiration and attendance. They were: career education and planning, college knowledge, academic mastery and parent engagement. The major challenges to moving forward will be sustainable capacity building on the part of ACTC, adapting the organization's mission and current structure to new programming and staffing needs and the precarious state of NCS finances. The opportunities presented by extending ACTC outreach into early awareness are numerous and compelling. They include: the sheer and urgent need on the part of the school system and the city, the recent increased state and national emphasis on college access, the excellent possibilities to forge new and effective local partnerships, the additional opportunities to enlarge the ACTC funding base and the growth of the organization's reach and already strong reputation.

# Introduction and Context

*From the time a child is born it is difficult to imagine a parent or guardian from any social class, any racial or ethnic group, any gender, or any age who does not hope for all the good in life for that child.*

-From Equity 2000: A Systemic Education Reform Model

The opening quote expresses an unspoken yet deeply held belief shared by the vast majority of adults entrusted with raising a child. Most beginnings naturally generate this sense of unconditional optimism and high expectations. There are few things more uplifting than to watch a child learn, grow and strive to reach his or her full potential. For some children, however, the promise with which they entered the world is greatly compromised over time by the hard and very limiting realities of their day-to-day circumstances. Among other outcomes, these difficulties often negatively affect their educational achievement and dampen aspiration. In most cases, these children simply have fewer resources and less support to help them find and navigate the road to school success. Although extensive research shows underserved<sup>1</sup> students hope to graduate from high school and go to college at nearly identical rates to students from middle- and high-income families, there nonetheless exists a wide gap in post-secondary attendance and completion between disadvantaged and advantaged students.

The barriers that prevent underserved students from actualizing their dream of college attendance are varied, cumulative in effect and often complex to address. In 2002, the Ohio Board of Regent's Division of Educational Linkages & Access formulated a systems approach to understanding college access. In their approach, they define and divide system requirements, as well as access barriers, into four main categories: aspiration, academic preparation, affordability and availability. (Appendix A). As one can see, this model identifies over 30 different barriers among the four main categories. At first look, the system requirements and potential barriers listed by the Access Pathway model can appear overwhelming. However, understanding and addressing the network of attitudes, beliefs, opportunities, preparation and resources that operate in these four important dimensions are critical to successful college access outreach.

In order to be competitive in the global, knowledge-based economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as well as improve the chances of enjoying "all the good in life", parents, educators and entire communities must do everything in their power to convey to each and every elementary, middle and high school student that the successful completion of some form of post-secondary education is a *necessity*, not just an option. As the Access Pathway model implies, the economic advancement of Ohio and an improved quality of life for its citizens are two critical outcomes of college access and success. Twenty-five to fifty years ago preparing just a third of young people for college still managed to grow the local, state and national economy because the remaining two-thirds could earn a

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<sup>1</sup> The adjective "underserved" is defined as low-income students, students who are the first generation in their families to attend college, underrepresented minorities and students with disabilities.

comfortable living wage by farming or in factory work. This educational paradigm was particularly prevalent in Newark with its large industrial base surrounded by productive farmland. Today, however, it is widely accepted that most future jobs will require education and technical skills beyond high school and the diminished agricultural/manufacturing model can no longer even sustain, less than grow, a community like Newark.

This study was undertaken to identify the primary roadblocks to successful college access specific to the Newark City School (NCS) system. Accordingly, information was gathered by asking those directly involved or partnering with NCS: teachers, staff, students, parents and selected community agencies and institutions. Thus, perspectives from the constituencies who have firsthand knowledge and much at stake inform the study's final recommendations. Lastly, and very importantly, the following assumptions undergird this entire report:

- ❖ The individual, family and community benefits of increasing students' educational aspiration and attainment in the county's largest school system far outweigh the necessary investment of human and financial resources.
- ❖ The school system and A CALL TO COLLEGE (ACTC) are equal and supportive partners who agree that solutions will be found only through collaborative, informed and sustainable action.
- ❖ Shaping and guiding the lives of underserved students and their families require extraordinary passion, energy, commitment, creativity and an open mind.
- ❖ Every single employee in the school system and all members of the community have the capacity and opportunity to be a part of the solution.
- ❖ High drop out and low college-going rates in NCS are not tied to new, sudden or isolated factors. These two concerns have persisted over a long period of time and cannot be attributed to any one source.
- ❖ To find effective solutions, the school, the students, their families and the community at large must all take ownership of the challenges, feel a sense of urgency and act jointly.
- ❖ Regardless of actions taken, results will not be immediate. Only deliberate, long-term interventions can achieve significant and meaningful improvement.
- ❖ Gains made at one level may be lost at the next unless a systemic P-12 approach is developed. Such an approach requires clearly articulated and shared system-wide goals, effective top-down, middle-out, bottom-up communication and coordinated, coherent action between the primary and secondary levels.
- ❖ Consistent with its organizational mission, any early outreach conducted by ACTC will focus on the educational ceiling (college<sup>2</sup>) and not the floor (high school graduation<sup>3</sup>).

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<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this report, "college" means a program leading to a post-secondary credential: bachelor's degrees, associate's degrees, and high-skill certificates.

<sup>3</sup> ACTC recognizes that timely and successful graduation from high school is a rate-limiting step for increasing college-going percentages.

## Scope and Methods

Following approval of the study by NCS leadership and the ACTC board, the project was designed and carried out between March 15 and May 30, 2008. Information and data related to college aspiration, preparation and readiness in NCS was gathered using two methods: direct interviews and survey instruments. The core purpose of both the interviews and surveys was to determine which behaviors, skills, knowledge, attitudes and activities correlated with successful college access might need supplementary attention in NCS. A secondary intention was to uncover any additional barriers unique to the school system, its students, families and the Newark community. Although opinions from Newark High School (NHS) personnel were included in the study, the investigation targeted constituents in the elementary and middle schools much more intensively.

### Interviews

A total of 36 internal and external stakeholders were interviewed: 10 employees of community agencies or institutions, plus 26 NCS administrators and staff members, including 9 building principals, 5 elementary/middle school social workers and 3 middle school guidance counselors. Some of the individuals interviewed exclusively engage in direct student services. Others supervise those responsible for direct student services. All interview participants and their affiliations are listed in the table in Appendix B-1.

Every NCS interviewee was asked the following set of questions:

1. How long and in what capacity have you been employed in the school system?
2. Are there any sustained and effective college awareness/readiness initiatives currently in place with which ACTC can assist, or avoid, so as to not duplicate efforts?
3. What are the consequences of the failed levies in terms of loss of resources, programs, course offerings, etc. that you feel helped enhance college aspiration and readiness?
4. In terms of early college awareness, what challenges and opportunities did redistricting and the new grouping of grade levels bring about?
5. Who should interventions target, what is the optimal age, what should the focus of the outreach be and what are the best modes of delivery?
6. What are the most effective ways to reach families with the message that education is a priority and “college pays”?
7. In your opinion, in what ways could the OSU-N faculty and staff be the most help in supporting teaching and learning in the NCS P-12 system?<sup>4</sup>

Individuals interviewed who interact with NCS on behalf of an agency, institution or organization were asked the following set of questions:

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<sup>4</sup> This question was asked at the request of the Civic Engagement Committee headed by Dr. Katey Borland of OSU-Newark. Responses for the question are listed separately in Appendix B-3.

1. In what ways do you currently interact or partner with NCS?
2. What are the primary goals of your outreach with NCS?
3. Would you be interested in expanding partnership opportunities, and if so, what are the challenges that expansion presents for your organization?
4. From your perspective, what are the biggest barriers to college aspiration, preparation and readiness facing NCS students and families?

Detailed, written notes were taken during each meeting. Responses were summarized and categorized. A selection of responses is listed in Appendix B-2.

### Surveys

Three survey instruments were developed: teacher/staff, student and parent. (Appendices C-1, C-2, C-3). Although different groups were targeted and the survey formats varied, every effort was made to focus the prompts on attitudes, attributes, skills, activities and behaviors pertinent to college aspiration and awareness. Most of the teacher/staff surveys were taken at the Late Arrival May staff meeting in each individual building. The remaining handful was either done following an interview or at a pre-arranged small group meeting. Over 90% of NCS classroom teachers participated in the survey. Principals also facilitated the administration of the student surveys by arranging for teachers in their buildings to give classes at selected grade levels the survey prior to May 22. About one half of all NCS fourth, sixth and eighth grade students were surveyed. (Fourth graders attend elementary school and sixth and eighth graders attend middle school.) Parent surveys were collected by book bag or on site at NCS events. With the book bag method, teachers distributed the survey in class and asked students to bring it home to a parent. The student was instructed to return the completed survey to class by a designated date. Donated college-related items (t-shirts, pens, stuffed animals, ball caps, etc.) were provided as incentives for the students. On-site collection consisted of surveying parents who were in attendance at various May school events: concerts, PTO meetings, assemblies, etc. The table below lists the number of surveys collected by category:

Surveys Collected by Category	
Teacher/Staff	
Elementary Teachers	136
Middle School Teachers	91
High School Teachers	96
NCS Staff (all levels)	24
TOTAL teacher/staff	347
Student	
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Students	290
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Students	235
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Students	215
TOTAL Students	740
Parent	
TOTAL Parents	355

# Findings

Given the range of questions posed, the large number of students, teachers and parents surveyed, and the variety of people interviewed, this study had generated a great deal of valuable data. For the purposes of this report, the four dimensions of college access mentioned in the introduction provided a lens through which to view the data and a systematic way to narrow the study's focus. Even though the report targeted questions that addressed aspiration, academic preparation, affordability and availability, there exists additional data that can be examined for other purposes at a later date if ACTC or NCS so desires. Responses to every prompt in all three surveys are included in Appendices D-F.

## Aspiration

For the first time in its history, 50% of all students enrolled in NCS this year qualified for free or reduced lunch. To put that figure in context, statewide 32% of students are eligible. NCS is among the 11% of Ohio school districts defined as high poverty<sup>5</sup>. In addition, recent figures from the Ohio Department of Taxation and Cleveland-based economist, George Zeller, rank Newark 527 out of 612 Ohio school districts in median family income. Research shows that college access and success are highly correlated with a student's socioeconomic status and parents' educational attainment. Thus, the high percentage of low-income and first-generation families in NCS presents a significant barrier to the development of college aspirations.

Over half of the individuals interviewed for this study also mentioned a pervasive Newark culture that undervalues the importance of education. Many felt this attitude further compounded socioeconomic issues. In response to how to best increase educational aspirations among younger NCS students, one principal of an elementary school commented: "We must help them redefine the word 'success'. To many of our children and families, simply surviving day-to-day means success. There is a negative and unreachable context to the word 'college'. We need to help them understand all the forms that post-secondary education can take, why it is important and that with some planning and effort, it is possible for many." Another principal added: "Parents must become part of the solution to increasing aspiration. A common language between the school and families has to be developed."

Survey results do lend support to aspects of these anecdotal comments. On the one hand, 73% of all parents surveyed strongly agreed with the statement: "A person who attends college will have greater career and income options." However, despite holding this opinion, only 64% strongly agreed with the statement: "I expect my child to graduate from college". Thus the majority of participating parents seem to have a sense that attending college will increase the quality of their child's life in terms of income and career options, but whether they are conveying this feeling with real conviction to their child, or modeling it by their actions, are two different questions. It is also interesting to

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<sup>5</sup> High-poverty districts are those systems whose free or reduced lunch levels exceed the national average of 38%.

note that nearly 44% of the 4<sup>th</sup> graders surveyed did not even know whether one of their parents attended college.

Even more striking was the student response to the prompt: “Do you plan to attend college?” Only 78% of the students surveyed answered that question affirmatively. Nearly 18 percent chose “Don’t Know” and 4 percent said “No”. Polls and surveys conducted in the last five years by multiple studies have typically found that between 88-90% of all young people, irrespective of socioeconomic background or age, say they plan to attend college. Thus the NCS students surveyed fell a full 10% below the national norm for college aspiration.

To further investigate if and how students process their future educationally, responses to seven separate student survey questions were grouped together and their composite responses analyzed as a unit. Prior to running this analysis, a special statistical test validated that each question could indeed be examined jointly, thus assuring the data reviewed would be reliable. The seven questions related to aspirations/goal setting and analyzed together were:

1. I work as hard as I can to do well in school.
2. I set goals for myself.
3. I pick the most difficult assignments or classes when given a choice.
4. School and classes make me think about possible careers.
5. I talk about what I want to do in the future with friends and family.
6. My parents have high expectations of me.
7. My parents want me to attend college.

The combined mean score of all seven of these questions was a 3.9 out of 5.0, meaning it fell in a range between not sure and agree. Compared to other individual items, as well as other groupings that assessed qualities like family engagement, the mean score for this aspiration/goal setting grouping was lower than any other mean, with the exception of one other question. The family engagement question grouping (see below) showed a combined mean score of 4.2 out of 5.0 (falling between agree and really agree).

1. My parents talk about school with me at home.
2. My parents encourage me to do my homework and be ready for school.
3. My parents have high expectations of me.
4. My parents want me to attend college.
5. My parents will help me pay for college.

So even though the majority of the students surveyed perceived their parents as very supportive of and engaged in their schooling, the students don’t seem to be successfully translating that support into goal setting and future aspirations. A number of interviews also commented on this issue. One elementary school principal noted: “I feel the vast majority of our parents want to do the right thing, but their lives are often consumed by the tyranny of the urgent. Thus it can be hard for them to model planning and goal

setting for their children. Getting kids to think about the future has to be a deliberate focus at school. Making progress in this area will also be an evolution, not a revolution.”

It is also interesting to note that the majority of people interviewed tied aspirations and goal setting to career exploration and planning, regardless of the child’s year in school. Many felt that a good number of NCS children have little or no concept of the difference between an occupation and a job. One administrator suggested that a goal of early awareness outreach should be “weaving in activities that give the academic and extracurriculars in school a broader context and purpose. We need to better connect school to careers, expose kids to a wide array of occupations and emphasize the long term impact of education on career opportunities.” Students seem to agree with this sentiment. With the exception of one other question on the student survey, the largest unsure or negative student response was associated with the prompt: “School and classes make me think about possible careers.”

Interestingly, only 23% of parents said that they “worry a lot” about their child having the education and skills to be a successful adult, a statement that could be interpreted to mean that parents feel comfortable that their children will earn a living in a career of their choosing. However, by far the largest number of all parents surveyed did choose “career exploration” (45%) as an activity that would most add to their child’s education positively.

How do teacher/staff responses to prompts about student aspiration and goal setting, as well as questions regarding family engagement, compare to the parent and student surveys? Teacher/staff opinions were markedly more one-sided than those analyzed in either the student or parent surveys. The majority of teachers and staff hold particularly critical opinions about how well NCS students demonstrate the skills, behaviors and attitudes related to developing high levels of aspiration. Their assessment of how parents foster school engagement is even more critical. To gain an overall sense of how teachers judged student and family educational aspirations, the following prompts were grouped and analyzed together:

1. Students aspire to a high school diploma.
2. Students aspire to post-secondary education/college education.
3. Students understand that their academic achievement now is correlated to their chances of attending college later.
4. Students have ample exposure to and practice at goal setting.
5. Students understand that selecting the most rigorous course possible increases their college readiness.
6. Students understand the importance of math concepts to their long-term academic and career success.
7. Parents have high educational expectations for their children.
8. Parents believe that a college education is the best financial investment they can make for their children.
9. Parents understand that post-secondary education greatly increases their child’s future career and income options.



Examined as a unit, these nine questions resulted in a mean score of 2.9 out of 5.0 (falling in between disagree and neutral).

A second grouping of teacher/staff survey questions focused on the concept of family engagement in the educational process:

1. Parents have high expectations for their children.
2. Parents emphasize school readiness activities at home.
3. Parents take advantage of opportunities to interact with their child's school and staff.
4. Parents believe that a college education is the best financial investment they can make for their children.
5. Parents understand that post-secondary education greatly increases their child's future career and income options.
6. Parents are aware of the different ways to finance college.
7. Parents plan for college financially.

The results of this set of prompts uncovered even harsher opinions of how NCS educators view the level of family involvement in the schooling process. The combined mean score related to teacher/staff perceptions of family engagement was extremely low (2.3 out of 5.0). A total of 316 teacher/staff surveys were valid for the family engagement grouping listed above<sup>6</sup>. Remarkably, only two teachers/staff members selected agree for ANY of the questions in this grouping and not one single individual chose strongly agree. Overall, questions related to family engagement received by far the most negative ratings of any prompts on the teacher/staff survey. In addition, 28% of all open response comments on the teacher/staff survey suggested parent education or engagement as a way to increase college awareness and readiness in NCS. (Appendix D-2) This suggestion was the most frequently named, along with career education (25%) and college knowledge (26%).

Finally, interviews with both NCS employees and community stakeholders reinforced this heightened concern about engaging families in their child's school life in meaningful and effective ways. Several directors of community agencies said that their resources could be even more beneficial if they could convince more parents to plug into their services on behalf of their children. However most added that placing blame or pointing fingers was neither productive nor a way forward. One elementary school administrator summed it up: "When one works in a school system that has a low percentage of college-educated parents and a high-percentage of students living in poverty, then our educational mission has to be two-pronged. As a school system we must make extra efforts to help parents understand exactly how they can support their child's education. Equally as important, extra efforts have to be made to educate teachers and staff on how to best communicate with parents whose life skills and experiences may be vastly different than theirs. We must embrace the fact that engaging parents is a two-way street and the key to our ultimate success or failure."

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<sup>6</sup> If a survey respondent leaves any one of the questions under review blank, then his/her survey is discarded for that particular analysis.

## Academic Preparation

High expectations, engaged teachers and learners, demanding coursework, mastery of the material, and parental involvement are all cornerstones of successful academic preparation. One administrator defined an effective education as a process that has three necessary components: rigor, relevance and relationships.

Surveys revealed that a clear majority of both parents and students felt that NCS teachers and staff did have high expectations. Three out of four parents surveyed marked agree or strongly agree when asked the prompt “Newark City School teachers and staff hold high expectations of my child/children”. Students reacted even more strongly than parents to the expectation question on their survey. A remarkable 88% of the students surveyed circled agree or really agree when responding to the prompt “Teachers and staff expect a lot out of every student”. In addition, very few parents or students disagreed outright with these prompts (less than 4% and 5% respectively). It is also interesting to compare the students’ view of teacher/staff expectations to their view of parent expectations. Nearly 18% of all students surveyed were either not sure or disagreed with the statement: “My parents have high expectations of me”. In contrast, less than 12% felt that way when asked to assess teacher/staff expectations.

So from the perception of the customer (students and parents), the college access system requirement of high expectations appears to be met. However, from the perspective of the service provider (the school system), the expectation threshold set by students and parents is simply too low. Thus students and parents are measuring educational expectations with a yardstick that has a much less demanding scale than that used by teachers and staff. As a result, the two critical constituencies, families and educators, again bump into the thorny issue of finding a “common language”.

One other result on the student survey also speaks to the notion of high academic expectations and rigor, or lack thereof. When asked, “I pick the most difficult assignments or classes when given a chance”, an astounding 71% of all students responded negatively: not sure (34.2%), disagree (23.3%) or really disagree (13.7%). Thus, less than 30% of the students felt this statement described their academic behavior. Research has clearly shown that students who take the most challenging coursework and push themselves in school attend college at much higher rates and are more successful once there. This correlation holds up regardless of socioeconomic background, level of parents’ education or even the students’ high school grade point average. Thus, finding ways to encourage students to stretch themselves and embrace difficult tasks, in addition to consistently reinforcing such behaviors, would seem to be a critical ingredient of any early awareness outreach done in NCS.

Only 10% of teachers and staff surveyed agreed with the statement “Students engage in adequate learning activities outside of school”. What do students think? On their survey, students were given a list of activities and asked to self-report how many hours they spent each day at that activity. Analysis of this section of the student survey does seem to substantiate the teachers’ concern about how students spend their time outside of school.

The first table below summarizes 4<sup>th</sup> grade student responses. The next two tables list only middle school student responses, breaking them down by gender. For easier comparison, activities were assigned a positive, neutral or negative influence on school success and grouped together by that category. It is understood that these groupings are subjective. In some cases, the same activity could be either a positive or a negative school influence. For example, “hanging out with friends” could impact school differently depending on the activity of the group. (i.e. playing chess versus a drinking game). The actual order and definitions of the activities can be seen in Appendix C-2.

Influence on School Success	Out of School Activity	ALL 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Students				
	TIME SPENT (Hours/day)	None	>0-1	1-2	2-3	3+
positive	Doing homework	11%	61%	22%	5%	1%
positive	Talking with family	9%	48%	25%	10%	8%
positive	Doing school activities	51%	22%	15%	7%	5%
positive	Doing community activities	45%	22%	20%	7%	7%
positive	Reading for fun	40%	40%	13%	5%	4%
neutral	Chatting or surfing on-line	53%	20%	12%	10%	5%
neutral	Hanging out with friends	12%	18%	32%	18%	19%
negative	Talking on the phone	48%	40%	9%	3%	1%
negative	Watching television	11%	33%	25%	20%	12%
negative	Playing video games	35%	31%	20%	7%	7%

Influence on School Success	Out of School Activity	6 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade BOYS				
	TIME SPENT (Hours/day)	None	>0-1	1-2	2-3	3+
positive	Doing homework	21%	58%	17%	4%	0%
positive	Talking with family	7%	44%	28%	10%	10%
positive	Doing school activities	33%	24%	29%	8%	7%
positive	Doing community activities	51%	22%	15%	9%	3%
positive	Reading for fun	62%	20%	12%	3%	2%
neutral	Chatting or surfing on-line	24%	37%	20%	11%	9%
neutral	Hanging out with friends	4%	19%	24%	18%	34%
negative	Talking on the phone	20%	46%	22%	7%	5%
negative	Watching television	2%	23%	38%	16%	21%
negative	Playing video games	9%	31%	25%	12%	24%

Influence on School Success	Out of School Activity	6 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade GIRLS				
	TIME SPENT (Hours/day)	None	>0-1	1-2	2-3	3+
positive	Doing homework	9%	54%	33%	3%	1%
positive	Talking with family	5%	30%	31%	17%	18%
positive	Doing school activities	27%	25%	22%	17%	9%
positive	Doing community activities	35%	32%	17%	10%	5%
positive	Reading for fun	50%	30%	14%	4%	5%
neutral	Chatting or surfing on-line	17%	26%	21%	18%	17%
neutral	Hanging out with friends	4%	19%	24%	22%	32%
negative	Talking on the phone	12%	35%	26%	9%	18%
negative	Watching television	5%	30%	40%	16%	10%
negative	Playing video games	51%	33%	11%	4%	1%

Middle school girls are clearly outpacing middle school boys when it comes to engaging in positive learning activities. Girls reported doing significantly more homework each night, reading more for fun, being more engaged in school/community activities and spending more time talking with family members. On the negative side, middle school girls spend much more time talking on the phone. Surprisingly, girls also reported spending more time on-line and hanging out with friends than do the boys. The two major non-school time commitments of middle school boys were watching television and playing video games. Nearly a quarter of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys surveyed reported spending three or more hours a day playing video games, compared to 1% of the girls. Television habits for the boys were just as unbalanced: 21% of the boys reported watching television three or more hours a night versus 10% of the girls.

The 4<sup>th</sup> grade students might have had a more difficult time reliably answering this section due to the cognitive skills involved (segmenting, ordering, timekeeping, etc.). Nonetheless, the data does give a general impression of where the 4<sup>th</sup> graders spent the most time each day: hanging out with friends and watching television. They did spend less time, by their own perception, talking to family than did the older students. They reported doing about as much homework as the middle school students did and they claimed to spend more time each day reading for fun. Of course, around 48% of all students surveyed reported never reading for fun. To put the reading habits of these Newark children in context, a 2003 survey for the National Center for Education Statistics found that among all racial groups nationally, 30% of eighth graders reported never doing leisure reading. Thus, the results of this survey showed the Newark children questioned here to be reading for fun much less frequently than national norms.

Nearly 80% of teachers and staff surveyed did not agree with the statement “Students are aware of and visit educational resources in the Newark community”. Do student survey responses support this opinion? In the final section of their survey, students were asked

whether they have participated in certain activities or had particular life experiences. The activities listed were available in Newark and were for the most part educationally oriented. The two life experience questions were posed to ascertain a general feel of how much students have experienced outside of Newark. The middle three columns in the table below summarize the responses of ALL students to this survey section. The last column calculates how much more experience, if any, the middle school students have had with these activities compared to the elementary school students. Of course, it is not statistically valid to compare the growth or decline of the “yes” responses between the middle and elementary school students, since we are not tracking the same students longitudinally. However, this calculation does present a simple snapshot of how much more 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students report accessing educationally-oriented resources/experiences than do 4<sup>th</sup> grade students.

ACTIVITY or EXPERIENCE	All 4 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Responses			Difference between Middle and Elementary Student “yes” responses
	% YES	% NO	% NOT SURE	
Attended a summer camp	36%	60%	4%	+21%
Checked books out of the Newark Public Library	82%	16%	2%	+12%
Been to a museum in Newark	42%	48%	10%	+11%
Attended a performance at a Newark theatre	48%	45%	7%	+14%
Been to Dawes Arboretum	50%	39%	11%	+34%
Visited a college campus	56%	38%	6%	+29%
Attends church	63%	35%	2%	-4%
Attended activities or events at the high school	55%	40%	5%	+16%
Visited another city larger than Newark	87%	7%	6%	+8%
Traveled to another state outside of Ohio	78%	17%	5%	+31%

Quite a few individuals interviewed remarked that they felt NCS students rarely experienced anything outside of Newark. As we can see by the chart above, the majority of students did report having had the opportunity to visit another city larger than Newark and a state outside of Ohio. A clear majority of students also seemed to be well aware of and using the Newark Public Library. However, in terms of taking advantage of the other educational resources in Newark, it was more of a coin toss; half had and half had not.

Perhaps the most surprising finding was the fact that nearly 40% of the middle school students reported never having stepped foot on the high school campus for an activity or an event (or not remembering if they had). Significant research indicates that one of the most crucial transition points in the school funnel is from middle school to high school. Familiarity, intentional orientation and generating a sense of excitement about “the next step” make that transition much more seamless and effective. Since many younger students do not seem to be seeking out the high school campus on their own, and because a number of administrators at all levels mentioned currently having “a very reduced and superficial” orientation in place, this issue might merit further discussion and increased attention by NCS.

Finally, no discussion of student academic preparation is complete without an analysis of a school system’s attendance patterns. The ultimate barrier to successful academic preparation is poor school attendance. A student cannot be academically prepared and make progress toward successful high school graduation and college access if he or she repeatedly misses school. Thus, chronic and unexcused absenteeism is the most obvious indicator of student disengagement from the educational process.

Attendance was a frequent topic of conversation in many interviews, especially with those staff members whose schools had higher percentages of low-income students. Many felt that the dissolution of bussing, necessitated by the failed levies, had greatly increased absenteeism, although several mentioned it was a concern even when bussing existed. One principal did empathize: “With gas prices and the economy, some families, even very responsible ones, are forced to make hard choices: use the gas to get to work or use the gas to get their kids to school. Oftentimes they cannot afford to do both, especially toward the end of the work week.”

Teacher/staff survey results also voiced clear concerns about attendance. More than 72% of all teachers and staff surveyed agreed or strongly agreed when responding to the statement “Poor student attendance is an issue”. The intensity of concern on the part of the teachers and staff increased with grade level; a logical trend given that poor attendance has cumulative repercussions. The table below shows the breakdown of teacher/staff response to the attendance question by grade level:

<b>Teacher/Staff response to: “Poor Student Attendance is an Issue”</b>					
<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
Elementary School	25%	41%	14%	17%	3%
Middle School	23%	44%	17%	14%	1%
High School	50%	37%	8%	5%	0%

## Affordability

The perception that college *can* be affordable is a critical prerequisite to motivating students to strive for post-secondary education. However, in the majority of school systems with high percentages of low-income and first-generation families, misperceptions about costs, underdeveloped financial literacy skills, the lack of knowledge about choices and the limited understanding of the financial aid process create enormous barriers to college access and success. All three surveys and many of the individual interviews identified the lack of “college knowledge” and poor to absent financial planning as two key issues that present a particularly large hurdle in NCS.

The data generated by the parent survey clearly indicated that anxiety about affording college and other educational expenses was present in high doses. Compared to the other six “worry questions” (see Appendix F), the prompt that elicited “worry a lot” the most frequently was “Being able to pay for my child’s future educational expenses”. 51% of all parents chose “worry a lot” as their response and another 42% answered “worry some”. Thus only 7% of all parents felt paying for future educational expenses was “not a worry”. These percentages even exceeded parents’ concerns for protecting their child from drugs and alcohol and reducing the negative influence of other kids on their child (41% “worry a lot” response for both questions).

In addition, the parental response to the prompt “I am aware of the different ways to pay for college” also revealed uncertainty. Only half of the parents agreed with that statement, while 31% answered somewhat agree, 14% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed. This uncertainty makes sense for several reasons. Approximately 52% of the parents surveyed never went beyond high school educationally, and of the remaining parents who did attend college in some fashion, only 53% of them actually utilized financial aid. They simply lack firsthand experience.

The teacher/staff assessment of parents’ college financial savvy also uncovered real concerns. Only 6% agreed with the statement “Parents are aware of the different ways to finance college”. Just over 64% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement and almost 30% marked neutral. Large numbers of teachers and staff members also felt that parents are not planning financially for college. Over 77% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “Parents plan for college financially” and about 21 percent marked neutral to that question.

A second concern regarding the perception of affordability was revealed by the student survey. As mentioned in an earlier section, and as shown by many of their survey responses, students in general felt that their parents were quite supportive of their education. However, one student survey question regarding parents was strikingly less positive: “My parents will help me pay for college”. Only 39% of the students agreed to some extent with that statement; 49% said they were not sure; 20% disagreed to some extent.

This expressed financial uncertainty on the part of students has major repercussions regarding their perception of college affordability. According to Hossler, et al.<sup>7</sup> one of the most significant influences on student aspiration is perceived parental support and encouragement. The authors define three components of parental involvement: influence, encouragement and support. Parental influence is simply the verbal signals they send to their children about college and the child's future: do they talk about college at home, do they discuss finances, do they express expectations about location or quality of the school? Parental encouragement has three separate aspects: supportive attitude, consistent, long-term encouragement and congruence between their plans and their child's. Parental support can be described by action-oriented activities that support the child's college aspirations. Visiting campuses together and putting aside money for college would be two such activities. Thus, for this particular question, parents' actual actions speak much louder than their words. If students do not see supportive financial actions (starting a college savings account, budgeting, making sacrifices, etc.), then more than likely students will doubt whether college can ever be affordable since they perceive they are "on their own".

The third and final concern about affordability is an issue completely out of the hands of NCS students and families: the state of Ohio's meager investment in higher education. In 2004 in their national report card on higher education, the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education awarded Ohio the grade of F for post-secondary affordability. Tuition and fees at Ohio's four- and two-year public colleges and universities range from 46% to 53% higher than national averages. Ohio's steeper prices result from the fact that state funding for higher education has been traditionally much lower, forcing Ohio colleges and universities to rely more heavily on raising tuition and fees.

Even though current state leaders are acting aggressively to address the issues, these funding imbalances still negatively and disproportionately affect low-income students. For example, a low-income family must spend on average 86% of their income for college expenses at an in-state, 4-year public college, even AFTER financial aid is taken into account. A student from a middle-income family attending the same school spends on average 25% of their family income and a student from a high-income family spends only 11%.<sup>8</sup> So in the end, a low-income student and family could do everything right – put aside money, apply for financial aid and scholarships, get good grades – yet they still might run into this hard reality: given the current funding priorities in Ohio, college does not always turn out to be affordable for all. Fortunately qualified NCS students who have unmet need due to inadequate institutional, state and national higher education funding attend one of the few high schools in Ohio that has a non-profit organization (ACTC) committed to helping them make college more affordable by awarding Last Dollar Grants.

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<sup>7</sup> Hossler, D., Schmit, J., & Vesper, N. (1999). *Going to college: How social, economic, and educational factors influence the decisions student make*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

<sup>8</sup> National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education (NCPPE) (2004). *Measuring up: The state report card on higher education – Ohio*.



## Availability

The Access Pathway (Appendix A) identifies five system requirements for the dimension of availability: a college within 30 miles; distance learning opportunities; articulation and transfer agreements; tuition reciprocity agreements and the ability to have grants and financial aid follow the student. The good news for the students and families moving through NCS is that being a resident of Licking County (or Ohio for that matter) puts them at a distinct advantage when considering the concept of post-secondary availability. Three good and very different post-secondary options exist within 10 miles of nearly every Newark resident: Central Ohio Technical College, Ohio State University-Newark and Denison University. Expanding the geographical limit to include contiguous counties increases the college options tenfold. As a matter of fact, Ohio ranks third nationally in total number of two- and four-year post-secondary institutions, trailing only California and New York. In short, options are more than available, especially considering that 80% of all graduating high school seniors choose to continue their education in Ohio.

Using distance learning for continuing education beyond high school is not as common in Ohio as in some other states (Colorado, Arizona, Florida). This trend makes sense given that brick and mortar institutions are so accessible and numerous in Ohio, thus perhaps reducing the demand for virtual education. However, access to the technology that supports services like distance learning, on-line applications, podcasts, teleconferencing, etc. is critically important. The parent, student and teacher/staff surveys were somewhat inconclusive as to whether NCS students have adequate access to the Internet and technology. In the student survey, 83% of all students indicated they have a computer at home and 79% said their computer had access to the Internet. Disaggregating the data and looking at elementary and middle school students separately revealed that Internet access was more prevalent in the homes of middle schoolers (85%), than it was in homes with elementary-aged children (68%). As seen in the table below, teachers were very mixed in their response to the statement "Students have adequate access to technology and the Internet". As with their opinions on attendance, high school teachers appeared to be more dissatisfied with the technology issue than were the primary school teachers.

<b>Teacher/Staff response to: "Students have adequate access to technology and the Internet."</b>					
<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
Elementary School	8%	41%	22%	23%	6%
Middle School	15%	28%	23%	26%	7%
High School	2%	34%	26%	25%	14%

Just over 20 of the respondents on the teacher/staff survey took the time and effort to write comments in the margin next to the technology question to the effect: “at school not at home”. Nine additional respondents wrote: “both at school and at home”. So it appears that some teachers and staff could be underestimating how many of their students actually do have computers and access to the Internet at home. Of course having access to technology does not automatically imply it is being used for educational purposes. Additionally it appeared that other teachers felt technology access was also not adequate at school.

Interview comments were not any more conclusive. The problem of inadequate technology was brought up in only four interviews, with two of those interviews being with personnel who worked in older buildings. One social worker did mention that her building was designed to be wireless, but glitches in the system seemed to be preventing teachers from actively using it. Again having access to technology and using it effectively are not necessarily linked.

Finally, another big plus in the availability column is the fact that Central Ohio Technical College, Denison University and OSU-Newark all have had track records of investing both financial and human resources in the local school systems through special programs, outreach and volunteer hours. The more visible each of these institutions is within NCS, the more aware Newark families and students will become of all the good post-secondary options available right in their backyard.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Imagine filling a large barrel that has multiple holes at different heights with water and being asked to do that task in a prescribed period of time with just a few buckets and using a water source that is not nearby. Of course it can be done, but watching water run out can build frustration, the effort required is enormous, teamwork is a necessity and extra hands would be a godsend. The barrel, of course, represents any school system that serves a high percentage of low-income, first-generation students and families. The holes represent all the additional junctures where at-risk children can lose their way educationally. The paucity of buckets and the great distance to the water source represent the strained resources with which many underserved school systems must operate. The entire task represents motivating young people who face additional barriers and difficulties to attend college. No one effort can plug all the holes, but what this study attempted to do was identify which ones were losing the most water relative to college awareness, aspiration and attendance.

Thankfully during the course of this project, open doors and open minds were the norm. This attitude existed despite the fact that the investigation took place at one of the busiest times of the school calendar, and in a year of major financial and organizational transition for NCS. Thus, as a result of informative, frank and broad-based discussions, in addition to an exceptionally high level of participation in the survey instruments, this study was given a remarkable opportunity to thoroughly and systematically explore the need for early college awareness in the Newark City School system. What then do the findings tell us about the most pressing needs, the challenges and opportunities that exist in addressing those needs and if so desired, the best way to move forward?

### The Needs

**Career Education and Planning:** All three surveys and the majority of interviews pointed to a definite need for a more intentional and long-term emphasis on career awareness. Career education was the third most common outreach activity mentioned in the open response section of the teacher/staff survey. In addition, it was the most frequent suggestion made in all the interviews. All four guidance counselors who were interviewed stressed the need to insert more career education in both the primary and secondary grades. They, and others, mentioned that losing consumer education and economics to budgetary cuts created gaps in the delivery of career education at both the middle and high school levels. Others argued that filling those gaps was difficult given more pressing priorities like behavioral issues, testing and credit recovery. There was also some question as to who was responsible for covering career awareness and connecting it to the academic program.

From the perspective of parents, the need for career education was equally clear. When given a choice of eight activities often employed by school systems and college access organizations to bolster school success and college-going rates, parents selected career

exploration by far the most frequently. The table below shows the responses to all nine choices on that parent survey prompt:

<b>Parent response to:            “In your opinion, which of the following activities would add to your child/children’s education positively?”</b>	
ACTIVITY	Selected by Parent (Frequency %) <sup>9</sup>
Career Exploration	45%
College Advising	30%
Tutoring	27%
Leadership Development	23%
Mentoring	20%
After School Programs	19%
Field Trips	18%
Summer Camps	8%
NONE OF THESE	.01%

It was clear by their surveys that students felt they had positive role models. A convincing 86% of all students circled agree or really agree when given the prompt “I have people I look up to in my life”. However, those teaching and guiding them in the school system did not share this belief. Thus, from the perspective of the students, introducing a more systemic and sustained exploration of careers will simply expose them to *more* good role models. From the viewpoint of NCS educators, career education outreach will expose the students to *better* role models. Regardless of the different ways each side viewed this issue, the study revealed that students, parents, teachers, staff and community stakeholders unanimously agreed that career awareness and planning was beneficial, important and greatly needed. They also believed that elementary school was not too soon to start.

**College Knowledge<sup>10</sup>:** Too few NCS elementary and middle school students aspire to college and more Newark families should have the strong expectation that their child will attend college. The data confirmed these statements. The majority of parents seemed to connect college with increased career options and a chance at earning a better income. However, given the current low graduation and college-going rates in NCS, this superficial understanding must be turned into a deeper, more urgent desire by early, systematic and sustained college awareness. Every opportunity must be taken to educate

<sup>9</sup> The total will add up to 200% because each parent was given the option to select two activities. Not listed here are the 10% of parents (39) who circled only one option.

<sup>10</sup> The author, Joel Vargas, coined the term “college knowledge” in the paper, *College Knowledge: Addressing Information Barriers to College*. The Education Resources Institute (TERI). 2005. He defined college knowledge as all the information, social and cultural capital needed to aspire to, be qualified for, apply to and attend college.

and excite both parents and students about the transformative power of education and lay out the steps for attaining post-secondary success. Several recent studies establish that being exposed to college information early, especially if delivered prior to 8<sup>th</sup> grade, stimulates planning for college as well as provides motivation for students to maintain grades and engage in productive, educationally-oriented activities. It also must be understood and accepted that those students who are less likely to have the initial knowledge and encouragement to find their way to post-secondary education rely more heavily on schools for such information and support. Unfortunately, in schools where the need for this knowledge is the greatest, oftentimes college advising takes a back seat to more immediate concerns like course scheduling, disciplinary issues, state-mandated testing and administrative work. Thus, it often takes reprioritizing tasks, more intentional and collaborative planning, and/or assigning college counseling responsibilities to designated individuals to develop a college culture within an underserved school system.

**Academic Mastery:** Hossler, et. al.<sup>11</sup> break down the process of going to college into three stages: predisposition, search and choice. College access organizations that engage in early awareness outreach are primarily focused on influencing the predisposition stage and the early steps of the search stage. In their large longitudinal study of underserved students in Indiana, Hossler and his colleagues found student academic success played a significant role in the formation of plans to attend college. Thus, research reinforces common sense: if students do not experience school success in their younger years, why would they want to continue the activity once they arrive at an age where further education becomes non-compulsory? Indeed, the authors discovered that next to parental encouragement, student achievement was the best predictor of college aspirations.

So if a desired outcome were to increase college-going intentions, then actions to raise academic achievement in younger students through tutoring or after school programs would be a worthwhile and effective investment. Assisting with these efforts might be particularly helpful in NCS where half of the students surveyed self-reported their grades as lower than a B average (includes those who responded “Don’t Know”). The table below shows how the self-reported grades break down:

<b>Student response to: “What have most of your grades been up to this point?”</b>		
Mostly A’s	16%	50%
Mixed A’s and B’s	30%	
Mostly B’s	4%	
Mixed B’s and C’s	25%	50%
Mostly C’s	3%	
Mixed C’s and D’s	12%	
Mostly D’s	3%	
Below D	2%	
Don’t Know	6%	

<sup>11</sup> Hossler, D., Schmit, J., & Vesper, N. (1999). Ibid.

Further evidence that increasing academic mastery might impact college aspiration in younger NCS students can be gleaned from looking at the academic profile of just those students who responded “Don’t Know” or “No” to the prompt: “Do you plan to attend college?” If a lack of academic success dampens college aspirations then one would expect this cohort to have lower self-reported grades. In fact, they do; 77% of the students who did not respond “yes” to the college intention question reported their grades as B- or lower. Also 85% of this same group said they did no or less than one hour of homework a night.

Finally, supplemental tutoring and additional emphasis on school success might encourage more NCS students to embrace challenging classes and assignments. Clearly the students’ responses to the question “I pick the most difficult assignments or classes when given a chance” indicated a reluctance to stretch academically. Ambition and drive might be nurtured in a greater number of children if they have more opportunities for academic success. Also the goals of college, a better job and a more satisfying career can be repeatedly presented as end rewards.

**Parent Engagement:** One of the most important issues to confront with early college awareness outreach in NCS is also the most complex and energy intensive one to attack: how to better engage a larger number of parents in their child’s formal education. The vast majority of college access research indicates that the single most critical predictor of post-secondary plans is the amount of encouragement and support parents give their children. Beneath the statistics generated by the teacher/staff survey, as well as in between the lines of some of the comments made in individual interviews, lies a palpable tension between hope and frustration regarding how NCS educators perceived parental support. Most enter the teaching profession because of the idealistic allure of being in a position to shape and change young lives. Therein lies the hope. After some time in the trenches, many perceive a lack of family support for education and they feel this apathy hinders the student’s engagement in the learning process. Therein lies the frustration. Understanding and a common language between educators and families must bridge the gap between idealistic hope and pessimistic frustration.

Enlisting parents as allies, rather than viewing them as obstacles, and integrating family education and support into early awareness will only serve to strengthen the outreach’s overall impact. This action is perhaps easier said than done because for low-income and first-generation families college is a total black box that entails financial sacrifices, sustained discipline and breaking out of deeply ingrained family patterns. It is no wonder then that the process can provoke parent resistance that can in turn impede students’ plans. However, if parents without college experience could be introduced to this opportunity in a non-judgmental, relevant and supportive way, they could potentially add valuable monitoring and guidance to their child’s educational aspirations. In addition to disseminating the nuts and bolts of the college search process, parent engagement initiatives should also address the issues of how to afford college and basic financial literacy. Even if their child does not choose post-secondary education, having a better handle on how to budget and save money would provide tools that could be usefully applied to many other areas in their lives.

## The Challenges

This study has uncovered a number of compelling needs specific to college awareness and aspiration in younger NCS students and their families. One challenge will be to determine which gaps (if any) should be attended first and whether additional program components should be added over the long term. A second challenge, albeit a creative and exciting one, will be to develop or choose the delivery vehicles that most effectively address the prioritized needs. A third challenge, and perhaps the hardest, will be to decide what needs really *shouldn't or can't* be addressed by the organization. Underlying all of these challenges are issues related to mission, capacity building and NCS finances.

Up to this point in its history, ACTC has had an unshakeable hold on a very defined mission: diminish the financial barriers preventing qualified NHS graduates from accessing and completing college by providing need-based Last Dollar Grants and information on the financial aid process. This narrow focus, the exceptionally frugal use of resources and its committed, skilled staff have allowed the organization to deliver these services consistently and effectively, despite personnel changes within the high school and regardless of the school system's financial ups and downs.

The fiscal challenges for NCS are in a word, formidable. Recent NCS austerity measures have also impacted ACTC. For example, severely restricting home mailings and the late arrival/early dismissal policy have reduced the organization's channels of communication and made advising appointments more difficult to arrange. If ACTC were to embark on new early awareness initiatives, its leadership must, in the words of management guru, Jim Collins, "confront the brutal facts".<sup>12</sup> Some of the brutal facts about the school system pertinent to early awareness expansion include:

- ❖ Even if the August special levy passes, NCS will still have to operate a number of its services at levels that just meet the minimum state requirements. In other words, belt-tightening measures are in no way a thing of the past. Thus the school system might have to continue policies that could in the long run undermine college-going rates (reduced foreign language offerings, less direct communication with parents, fewer course offerings, larger class sizes, etc.).
- ❖ Whereas redistricting has allowed NCS to qualify for additional state dollars and add Title 1-funded support services to a greater number of its buildings, each elementary and middle school now has a more even distribution of low-income students, making the need for college awareness dispersed equally among all the schools. Thus, it makes less sense (and would not be fair) to focus programming on just certain buildings. If an initiative is undertaken, a commitment must be made to do it across the board.

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<sup>12</sup> Jim Collins, *Good to Great: Why some companies make the leap...and others don't* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.). 2001.

- ❖ During the course of this study, NCS administration and teachers have made the following priority explicitly clear: the school system is single-mindedly focused on meeting and exceeding “adequate yearly progress” on state-mandated testing. NCS cannot spare classroom time for anything that distracts them from achieving this ultimate goal. Thus, testing must be the tail that wags the curriculum, especially in grades 3-8. This priority throws a small wrench into early awareness programming. Whatever programming direction ACTC takes, if it does involve any classroom time during the portion of the school year set aside to prepare for testing, the outreach must align with the academic content standards for that grade level.
- ❖ NCS is currently operating under “corrective action” by the state in order to address testing achievement in one student sub-group: students with disabilities. Being under corrective action is extraordinarily time-consuming. Attending to this process will have to be a prime focus for the school system, leaving less time to consider and begin new programs.
- ❖ Finally, anticipate some wariness and resistance on the part of the foot soldiers to any new initiatives, particularly if “an add-on” is perceived. The morale of an organization can be a fragile thing, especially if bad news appears to constantly outweigh good news and the hardships seem interminable. Personnel in school systems certainly and understandably are not immune to developing battle fatigue.

From the perspective of ACTC, the main challenge of moving forward with early awareness programming will be addressing the funding, sustainability and organizational structure questions. Based on its original mission, providing Last Dollar Grants must remain the overarching priority of the organization. In the short- to mid-term view, expanding into early awareness will not affect Last Dollar Grant needs, but it will necessitate additional resources for staff and programming expenses. Considering the long-term implications, if the initiative does encourage more NHS students to graduate and pursue post-secondary education, then the demand for Last Dollar Grants could also grow. Can projections be made by overlaying what the literature tells us about the ability of early awareness programs to increase college-going rates with how ACTC determines eligibility for Last Dollar Grants and what the future classes of NHS seniors might look like? First, it is helpful to review what goals and outcomes typically characterize early awareness work.

Traditionally there are a few general ways that the success of early college awareness outreach is measured, normally compared against a control group:

1. Track the academic achievement of a targeted cohort by using cumulative grade point averages or standardized test scores.
2. Track the class selection of a targeted cohort relative to the number of advanced, honors or AP classes taken.
3. Track the number of seniors who apply and successfully attend college (college-going rate).



Hard data on the first two outcomes are very scarce. Many college access programs have difficulty maintaining an accurate database, especially to measure the first strategy listed above. The few organizations that have successfully compiled longitudinal data have shown very little ability to increase the academic achievement of targeted students with just their intervention alone. However, a number of college access programs have indeed been able to significantly move the needle relative to increasing college-going rates (aspiration). Some have reported even doubling those rates in certain subsets of students.

With an understanding of what the literature reports, several Last Dollar Grant expenditure scenarios were computed using the following available NCS and ACTC data: NHS grade point averages, class size trends and the typical number of students academically and financially eligible for a Last Dollar Grant. This data was overlaid against two unknown variables: high school graduation and college-going rates. These scenarios, their assumptions and the resulting financial projections are detailed in Appendix G.

### The Opportunities

*Challenges are what make life interesting;  
overcoming them is what makes life meaningful.*

- Joshua J. Marine

Even though the challenges are varied and plentiful, the list of opportunities is nonetheless quite compelling and equally as long. The timing appears right from nearly all vantage points: ACTC, NCS, the city of Newark, the state of Ohio and nationally. ACTC has recently expanded its operations to include junior advising and done so quite successfully. In addition, the organization has received four significant grants in the past two years for capacity building: an *Ohio College Access Best Practice Implementation Grant* (\$25,000) to start a College Resource Center, an *Invest in Success Grant* (\$20,000) geared toward helping juniors take the ACT test, an *OCAN/Suddes Group Matching Grant* (\$40,000) to recognize outstanding fundraising and a *Lindorf-Warner Memorial Donor Advised Fund Planning Grant* (\$50,000) for the development of an Early Awareness Program. Thus, ACTC is enjoying remarkable momentum, in large part due to staff continuity and capability, organizational longevity, financial strength and strong board leadership.

The NCS superintendent and ACTC board president have forged, in a relatively short period of time, a very productive and forward-thinking partnership. Their synergy provides the necessary credibility and impetus for ACTC and NCS to move ahead with early college awareness initiatives. One other potentially positive by product of an expanded partnership between the school system and ACTC is that a sustained early awareness effort, if outcomes are tracked carefully and longitudinally, could supply valuable data to inform future grant proposals by NCS. In addition, this work could help NCS better define exactly who drops out, what factors are the most influential in the decision and whether the students who choose to leave school share certain

characteristics. Schools and interested partners cannot adequately address and attempt to solve a drop out problem without an accurate, quantitative and data-informed account of it. Finally, in terms of NCS, despite the valiant efforts of many, the statistics and headlines trumpet the fact that the needs are grave and the time is now.

Newark is a city with noteworthy educational, cultural and civic resources. However, despite its unique and positive attributes, the city has not gained any significant economic traction in the last twenty to thirty years. Many would argue that Newark will continue to struggle until a larger portion of its population breaks the destructive cycle of generational poverty by valuing and seeking out higher education. Fortunately, all of the external stakeholders who were interviewed for this study, and no doubt many others who were not contacted, are eager to help Newark residents realize a brighter future through increased education.

The state of Ohio also recognizes that an educated citizenry ultimately powers its economic engine. In the current administration, significant attention and resources have been directed toward college access and success. Government leaders seem determined to raise the state's ranking for bachelor degree attainment and appear sensitive to the various barriers that low-income and first-generation students confront on the path to college. This renewed emphasis could provide additional funding opportunities for post-secondary institutions, consortiums and educationally focused non-profits who seek to diminish obstacles to higher education access and success through new and creative initiatives. Finally, the impending change in leadership at the national level brings fresh hope that education will again be put on the country's front burner, a directional shift from which all college access groups could greatly benefit.

Of the 35 college access organizations recognized by the Ohio College Access Network (OCAN), only six have been in operation longer than ACTC. Thus, at both the state and local level, many view ACTC as a pioneer of the college access movement and a model of efficient and effective service delivery. Possessing a strong organizational brand and having cultivated an excellent reputation among many critical constituencies nicely position ACTC to "dream new dreams".

Although expansion into early awareness programming will require increased expenditures, the move will also generate significant opportunities to *raise* additional resources. Outreach to younger children will more than likely energize and excite not only current ACTC supporters, but it will also attract new donors who care deeply about early childhood education. In addition to broadening its donor base, extending its services to the elementary and middle schools will raise awareness and understanding of what ACTC is and does among a wider array of NCS employees. Thus the new direction could have a positive and compounding effect on name recognition and widen the reach of the organization's meaningful work. Finally, many granting agencies prefer to support new initiatives or ventures that build capacity. For this reason, early awareness outreach opens up additional opportunities for ACTC to pursue extramural funding.

During the course of this investigation, it became quite clear that many established local agencies and institutions think very highly of ACTC and are eager to pursue mutually beneficial partnerships with them. Although ACTC has been extraordinarily successful as a relatively self-contained organization, it recognizes that given the right situation, the results of two or more groups working together can oftentimes be much greater than the simple sum of their individual efforts. There is rarely a downside to sharing resources and expertise. Again with respect to grant writing, agencies are extremely attracted to problem solving through creative and effective partnerships. ACTC is in the fortunate position of having many good partnership opportunities close at hand: Central Ohio Technical College, Denison University, OSU-Newark, C-TEC, the Newark Public Library and Big Brothers/Big Sisters, just to name a few. Indeed the timing does appear right from many perspectives and for many reasons.

### Next Steps

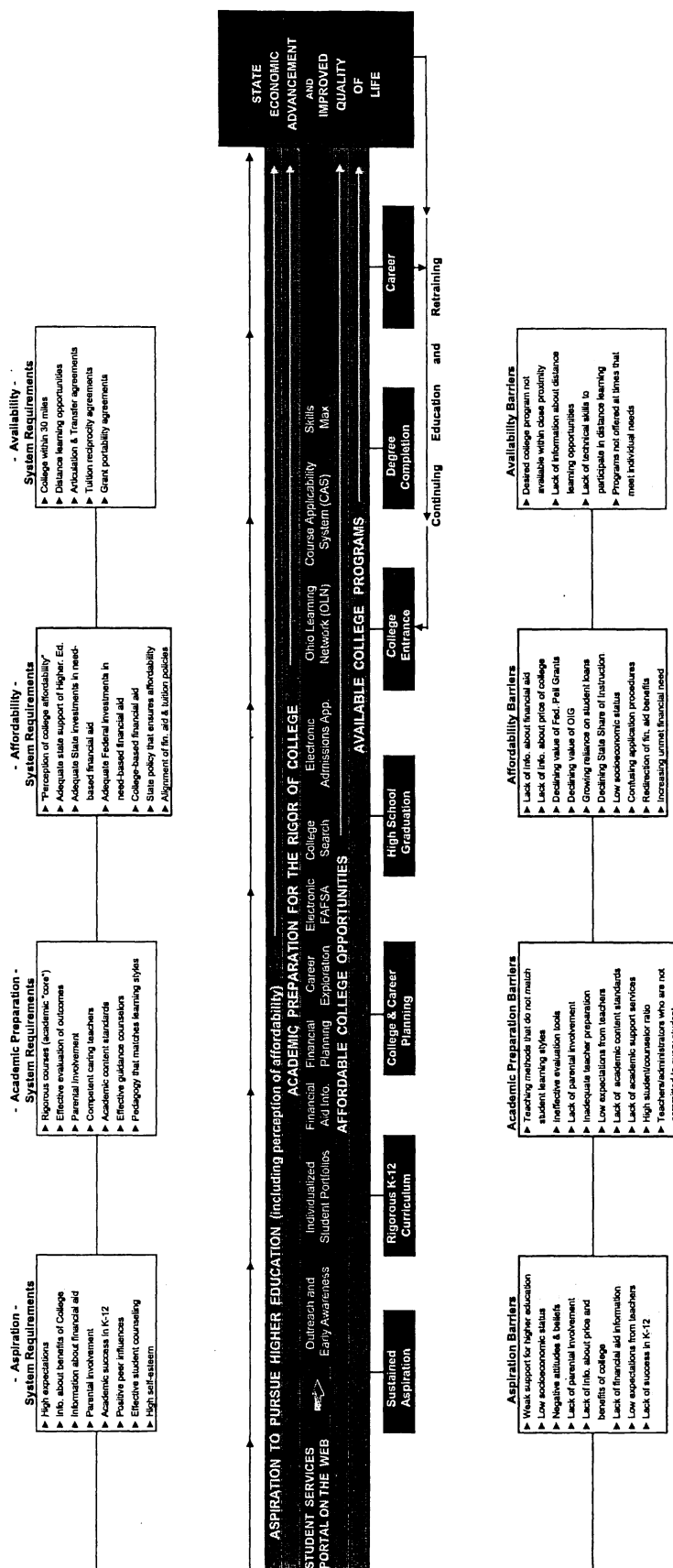
If the leadership of ACTC and NCS feel the results of and conclusions drawn by this study warrant future action, then the next steps would benefit from the same informed and targeted deliberations. A planning phase with a predetermined timeline could be carried out with the goal of prioritizing the needs, outlining possible interventions, and drafting a short-, mid- and long-term implementation schedule. A small advisory committee chaired by ACTC and consisting of a cross-section of elementary, middle and high school representatives, could be formed to discuss and draft this action plan. Concurrently, ACTC stakeholders can decide upon the optimal way(s) to insure sustainability (capital campaign, growing donor base, grant writing, pursuing partnerships, etc.). Regardless of how the elements of a planning phase are constructed and executed, any future steps will have the distinct advantage of being informed by the large, inclusive and reliable set of findings contained within this study.

## **APPENDIX A: The Access Pathway**

In 2002, T. Rudd of the Ohio Board of Regents' Division of Educational Linkages & Access created the diagram on the next page. A copy can be found at the following website: [regents.ohio.gov/OhioAccess/pdfs/accesspathway.pdf](http://regents.ohio.gov/OhioAccess/pdfs/accesspathway.pdf)



## The ACCESS PATHWAY



## APPENDIX B-1: Table of Interviews

NAME	POSITION	AFFILIATION
Dr. Keith Richards	Superintendent	School System
Dr. Katey Borland	Professor, OSU-Newark	Community
Robin Somers	Admissions, OSU-Newark	Community
Mike Robertson	Admissions, COTC	Community
Michele Doran	Center for Service-learning, Denison University	Community
Dana Herreman	Director of Curriculum & Staff Development	School System
Bobbie Reaves	Federal and State Programs	School System
Linda Price	Supervisor of Social Services	School System
Dr. Karl Sandin	Professor, Denison University	Community
Tara Houdeshell	Admissions and Aspire Program, COTC	Community
Tara Boyer	Literacy Curriculum Coach, NHS	School System
Tom Bowman	Assistant Principal, NHS	School System
Elizabeth Crist	Social Worker, John Clem & Hillview ES	School System
Rita Jones	Social Worker, Cherry Valley & McGuffey ES	School System
Amy Geforos	Social Worker, Heritage and Wilson MS	School System
Christina Johnson	Social Worker, Carson ES	School System
Mary K. Barickman	Social Worker, Ben Franklin ES	School System
Petrea Coehlo	NCS Program Manager, Big Brothers/Big Sisters	Community
Kristina Nixon	Program Coordinator, Big Brothers/Big Sisters	Community
Jesse Truett	Principal, NHS	School System
Debra Jones	Guidance Counselor, Liberty MS	School System
Kay Harrison	Guidance Counselor, Wilson MS	School System
Beth Wiley	Guidance Counselor, Heritage MS	School System
Maura Horgan	Assistant Principal, NHS	School System
Kim Suriano	Assistant Principal, NHS	School System
Mindy Vaughn	Principal, Cherry Valley ES	School System
Les Richards	Principal, Heritage MS	School System
Babette Wofter	Outreach Coordinator, Newark Public Library	Community
Steve Stahley	Principal, Miller ES	School System
Ellen Cooper	Principal, Legend ES	School System
Martha Harmon	Principal, McGuffey ES	School System
Sara Brlas	Principal, Carson ES	School System
Diane Henry	Principal, Liberty MS	School System
Barb Quackenbush	Principal, Hillview ES	School System
Beth Bronkar	Career Development Coordinator, C-TEC	Community
Michelle Lott	Head of Guidance, NHS	School System

## **Appendix B-2: Selected Responses to NCS and Community Stakeholder Interview Questions**

### **School System Interviews**

#### *1. How long and in what capacity have you been employed in the school system?*

- The average tenure of the 26 school system employees interviewed was 10 years, with the range of experience between 1 to 30 years.

#### *2. Are there any sustained and effective college awareness/readiness initiatives currently in place with which ACTC can assist, or avoid, so as to not duplicate efforts?*

- Lunch Buddy programs in Carson ES, Hillview ES and Ben Franklin ES through Big Brothers/Big Sisters in partnership with Boeing and Denison
- ClemReads program through Big Brothers/Big Sisters staffed by community volunteers
- After school programs in Carson and Ben Franklin funded by an Ohio Department of Education grant to provide homework help and intervention
- Selected schools do field trips, primarily with PTO funding (Legend, Liberty, Miller)
- National Junior Honor Society at Wilson (and occasionally at Heritage) has sponsored college trips to Denison, OSU-Newark
- Collaborations with Beth Bronkar, Career Development Coordinator at C-TEC to implement OCIS (Ohio Career Information System) in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and in early high school. The goal is to develop an Independent Academic Career Plan (IACP) for every 8<sup>th</sup> grader.
- Adopt-a-school mentoring program with State Farm and Wilson MS
- Selected schools have daytime tutoring initiatives in place with OSU-Newark students, faculty and staff as volunteers (Cherry Valley) with an activity reward for children who participate (a trip to COTC to do a forensic lab)
- Middle school trip to C-TEC

#### *3. What are the consequences of the failed levies in terms of loss of resources, programs, course offerings, etc. that you feel helped enhance college aspiration and readiness?*

- Cutting certain classes and departments that focused on career and life skill areas (Business Education, Consumer Education, etc.).
- Dropping French in MS and dropping Latin and German at HS
- Late Arrival and Early Release at the high school. Helps those students who hated jumping through the obligatory hoop of a full complement of classes their senior year. Now they only need to be at school for the bare minimum number



of classes required to graduate. This option clearly does not promote college readiness.

- Dropping bussing has worsened attendance and increased truancy at all levels.
- Fewer course offerings at the high school level, especially those that used to appeal to male students.
- Administrative positions at the high school are at the bare minimum. Dropping the Dean of Student position has reduced the amount of time devoted to student-related issues and meant one less adult presence.
- Budget cuts have created an information vacuum. Mailing at least certain things home (grade cards, NCS newsletter) seem absolutely necessary for good communication with families. Progress Book is a nice tool to have, but for the kids who are in the need of the most oversight, many of their families do not go on-line to monitor grades.
- Field trips are at a bare minimum at most schools, unless they have a healthy PTO budget.
- Orientation to the high school is not extensive, nor well attended. The transition from ES to MS and from MS to HS requires more attention and resources.
- Cutting teaching positions has increased class sizes, especially in the elementary schools, which in turn has negatively affected the classroom learning environment.
- There seems to be less focus at the eighth and ninth grade levels on what courses to take to be college bound and talking the students through the major issues of transition to high school.
- Losing the Alternative Academy hurt our ability to serve at-risk high school students.
- Discontinuing the high school mentorship program (upper class students mentor 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and ease their transition to the high school campus) has been a loss.

4. *In terms of early college awareness, what challenges and opportunities did redistricting and the new grouping of grade levels bring about?*

- With only 12 total buildings and three levels, we have reduced transition issues.
- There is greater socioeconomic mixing in each building now. Although it might be harder for the buildings that were accustomed to having more middle- to high-income kids, it levels the playing field. It will be good for the students and teachers to be exposed to more socio-economic and racial diversity.
- Redistricting has increased opportunities for state funds and services.
- Teacher turnover and staff reshuffling in buildings have hurt continuity of programming. Several of the most underserved buildings have ended up with the largest number of inexperienced teachers.
- Traditions in NCS were greatly impacted by redistricting. Students and families relate more to a particular elementary or middle school building,

new buildings (and new names) are coming on line, those ties are being weakened.

- Some kids in certain buildings have a long way to go to get to their school, but are not quite far enough to qualify for busing. Many of those kids are from our most underserved families, where transportation issues are the biggest concern.

*5 .Who should interventions target, what is the optimal age, what should the focus of the outreach be and what are the best modes of delivery?*

- Focus on the middle school years. This is where we have the biggest social and academic concerns. It is also where kids hit a “point of no return” with regard to entering high school with the hope of succeeding.
- No matter what outreach you do and when you choose to do it, ALL students should be allowed to participate and each building should have the opportunity to be involved.
- Focus on the kids who are in the middle of the bell curve. With those kids on the high end, they are going to make it no matter what. With the kids on the low end, their issues are usually so overwhelming (basic needs, abuse, psychological issues) that college is truly not a possibility for them. The needle can be moved most effectively with those students in the middle.
- Target those kids in early middle school who might be seen to be at-risk but show promise as evidenced by test scores and teacher recommendations.
- Elementary school is the best time to start with Newark kids. We need to catch their attention early and often. I think 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> grade would be ideal and the focus should be connecting school with careers.
- I think it would be great for every student to enter middle school with a career-tracking folder and have this portfolio travel with the student to high school, adding to it each passing year.
- There should not be chosen buildings or selected kids. College awareness and readiness are important concepts for all students in NCS to absorb and learn.
- The outreach must work with the entire family. Starting in elementary school would be the most productive time. Emphasize problem solving skills and high expectations. Be relentless in promoting the theme of education and success.
- With whatever interventions are done, character education should be incorporated.
- It would be best to begin in 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> grade and build the program up from there. I think that all students deserve to be exposed to these activities and concepts. The process introducing it to the school system should be slow, deliberative, well conceived and inclusive.
- In middle school class time is just too tight. We cannot afford to give up much so I would suggest having the interventions at lunch, after school or based in study halls. Perhaps we could insert it into a base period, if we begin that next year?

- Outreach needs to be equitable – work with all kids and all families. Building the vocabulary for college early is by far the best – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is not too early to reach out to students and parents.
- Our music programs work because they provide a framework of relationships, work toward specific goals, teach the discipline of practice and have dynamic, passionate teachers as role models. A college outreach program should try to emulate this model by emphasizing the same concepts.
- Do broad, conceptual college awareness with younger students (K-3) and then transition to a planning and skills focus from 4<sup>th</sup> grade on.
- Despite the difficulties, the most effective outreach should be woven into the curriculum. For example, the social studies OAT has a section on entrepreneurship that could allow ACTC to weave career education in.
- Starting small is okay and a focus on careers and occupations is desperately needed – especially in young students. Our kids only know the jobs they are exposed to on a daily basis and that is a very small universe.
- I would target the intervention to the middle to upper half of students. I think the main focus should be leadership and ethics development, not just academics. Our students really have underdeveloped leadership skills and make poor choices once in high school.
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade is an ideal time for outreach and I feel that access to field trips are very beneficial for our students. Those trips and activities should have a career and occupation focus and expose the kids to a greater range of adult role models.

6. *What are the most effective ways to reach families with the message that education is a priority and “college pays”?*

- A part of the outreach should include financial literacy and explaining the planning required to make college a possibility.
- Find some good parent role models who have come from the community and have “worked their way up the ladder” with the help of post-secondary education. Ask them to be an advisory panel on how to best engage other parents. What strategies, approaches and activities would they suggest? Would they be volunteer parents to help lead these efforts?
- Part of the program focus could be to encourage the parents of the students to either start school or go back and finish their degree. Give them college information as well as their children.
- Reactivate PTO’s in schools that don’t currently have a functioning one.
- Evening workshops that explain the financial aid process and impart the nuts and bolts of financial planning. Perhaps locate these sessions in “non-threatening” buildings (the public library, at a church, a local restaurant) and in close proximity of the families most in need. Increase attendance with incentives like drawings for educational savings bonds, free budgeting help offered by local bankers, gas cards, etc.

- Do short, targeted “college access public service announcements” at school events that draw parents. Set up informational tables there with brochures about financial aid, affording college, financial planning.
- Help train teachers on the most effective way to communicate “college” to low-income and first-generation families. Use Ruby Paine’s work as a model.

### **Community Stakeholder Interviews**

#### *1. In what ways do you currently interact or partner with NCS?*

- Assist with verifying Last Dollar Grant calculations.
- Assist with financial aid workshops for seniors and families.
- Run ASPIRE summer program which serves local at-risk and low-income kids, some of whom are from NCS
- Work with Tech Prep initiatives at the high school
- Several of our student service groups work directly with Newark school buildings: at Carson, Ben Franklin and Hillview, we partner with BB/BS to provide a Lunch Buddy Program; at Heritage we provide a Friday mentorship program; we work with America Reads in 5 buildings.
- East End Revisioning Project has interacted with school personnel from Heritage and Carson schools.
- Community mentorship matched with certain participating schools
- Have made efforts to start Lunch Book Discussions at the high school
- Train NCS personnel (teachers, counselors) in OCIS, Ohio Career Information System. Work as a liaison for career development in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and up.

#### *2. What are the primary goals of your outreach with NCS?*

- *See above.*

#### *3. Would you be interested in expanding partnership opportunities, and if so, what are the challenges that expansion presents for your organization?*

- We are always looking for additional funding to help make even more community mentoring matches. The need for mentoring and additional role models in NCS is great, but we have funding limitations.
- We would love to be more of a presence in NCS, both for our school year initiatives and to help advertise our extensive summer reading program offerings for children. It can be cumbersome to have to connect with each building separately to do this outreach. It would be great to have a single point person. We would be more than willing to do more either in the schools or host events at the public library for school groups.
- Our students find the service work they do in Newark very rewarding. Many engage in it for four continuous years. Sometimes staff turnover at the principal level or changes in guidance, can throw a hitch into the transition to the start of the new school year. We used to have more after school program

offerings, but transportation for the kids was somewhat of an issue, so the programs were not always well attended. We hope to continue what we are currently doing and are very interested in helping with other needs that the school system identifies.

4. *From your perspective, what are the biggest barriers to college aspiration, preparation and readiness facing NCS students and families?*

- Lack of social and cultural capital on the part of parents and families. Many do not know much about college, why it is so important and how to get there.
- Persistent poverty and all of its attending issues: excessive mobility, lack of basic needs, poor health habits, unstructured home lives, etc.
- Academic mastery in the elementary schools must be a focus so that students don't enter MS or HS woefully behind and under prepared.
- The school system lacks the resources for the "extras" that could help excite students about what the future might hold: field trips, guest speakers, special projects, etc.

### **APPENDIX B-3: NCS Interview Responses to OSU-Newark Civic Engagement Strategic Planning Committee Question**

*In your opinion, in what ways could the OSU-Newark faculty and staff be the most help in supporting teaching and learning in the NCS K-12 system?*

- Literacy Tutors: We need more volunteers – especially males.
- Mentoring: Having more exposure to educated role models and career choices.
- Target adult learners meaning the parents of our children. We need to increase the value placed on education in the adult role models of our children.
- Curricular support is problematic due to the necessity of schools meeting very specific standards and benchmarks on yearly testing. There is currently poor alignment of what skills and subjects college might value and what skills and subjects mandatory testing assesses at the primary and secondary levels.
- A yearly summer program on OSU-N campus run by OSU-N personnel and targeting Newark Middle School 6-8<sup>th</sup> graders who have academic potential, but due to family, economic and personal issues, are at-risk.
- Relaying “teaching with technology” methods and advancements that colleges are using, but might not be known about or available in NCS.
- Students cannot advance successfully unless they master skills. Underperforming students at all levels overwhelm NCS. Supplemental tutoring by educated adults from the Newark campus would be a godsend.
- Set up a mentor system with OSU-N faculty and NCS teachers who have less than 5 years experience in the profession. Develop some type of pathway and professional development that would allow teachers in NCS to make progress toward a master’s degree at OSU-N.
- Tutoring support would be a huge help given the large pool of possible volunteers that work at OSU-N on a daily basis near many of the NCS buildings.
- Access to their facilities (science labs, art studios) for our teachers who conduct advanced classes.
- OSU-N expertise could be tapped to help productively fill our late arrival professional development time.
- OSU-Newark could work with particular departments in the middle and high schools across grade levels, particularly in math and science. Discussion of best teaching practices and new subject area initiatives, for example, done with a departmental focus.
- Help NCS develop a more effective program for system-wide character education.
- Work through our Math and Literacy Coaches to assist with the “train the trainer” model that currently operates. If any curricular outreach is done, it would need to be segmented by an ES, MS and HS focus, plus aligned with benchmark testing, to be worthwhile.
- Look at the district’s new strategic plan and determine which goals are the most addressable by OSU-Newark resources and expertise.
- Through the use of distance-learning and tele-conferencing technology connect OSU-N faculty to NCS buildings that have that capacity to do both curricular initiatives and professional development for specific MS and HS departments.

- Enhance and grow our current tutoring services with additional volunteers.
- Best practices for teaching math and science at the ES, MS and HS levels.
- Conduct more regular and hands-on campus visitations to expose our younger students to college.
- Helping provide experts and more resources with parent education is key. Offering “know about college” evening classes for parents in the NCS buildings.
- Let OSU-N interested parties spend some quality time observing “day-to-day” life in the ES, MS and HS trenches to get a grasp of how our daily issues are so different than those in the post-secondary universe. Only after that effort can a common language and effective goals be developed between the two worlds.

## Appendix C-1: Teacher/Staff Survey Instrument

### TEACHER/STAFF SURVEY

A *CALL TO COLLEGE*, Newark High School's non-profit, community-based advising and scholarship program, is exploring the possibility of expanding its services to younger students in Newark City Schools. The information you provide in this survey will help greatly in this effort. Your responses will be anonymous and remain confidential. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Janet Schultz at [jtorreyschultz@gmail.com](mailto:jtorreyschultz@gmail.com) or 328-2255.

Thank you in advance for sharing your expertise and opinions.

### Background Information

1. Circle your current position in NCS:      Classroom Teacher                      Staff
2. In what building(s) do you work?
3. How many years have you worked in NCS?
4. Have you worked in another school system?              Yes              No
5. If yes, what school system(s)?
6. Do you or have you had children attend NCS?              Yes              No

### Survey

Thinking of the NCS students/parents with whom you interact **as a whole**, and using the scale **as it is defined below**, please react to the following statements. Circle the response that best captures your opinion. If you do not have an opinion, or the statement is not applicable to your situation, please leave it blank:

<b>Strongly agree</b> (75% or more)	<b>Agree</b> (over half)	<b>Neutral</b> (just half)	<b>Disagree</b> (less than half)	<b>Strongly disagree</b> (25% or fewer)
--	-----------------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--

1. Students aspire to a high school diploma.  
Strongly agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree
2. Students aspire to post-secondary/college education.  
Strongly agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree
3. Students understand that their academic achievement now is correlated to their chances of attending college later.  
Strongly agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree
4. Students have ample exposure to and practice at goal setting.  
Strongly agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree



5. Students understand that selecting the most rigorous courses possible increases their college readiness.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
6. Students understand the importance of math concepts to their long-term academic and career success.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
7. Students connect educational goals with career interests.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
8. Students have adequate positive role models.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
9. NCS holds high expectations of all students.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
10. There is time and opportunity to give students extra help if it is needed.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
11. Students understand why they take standardized assessments.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
12. Assessment results are used to inform students and their parents of the student's progress toward high school/college readiness.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
13. Poor student attendance is an issue.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
14. Students engage in conversations about their futures with peers and parents.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
15. Students support the academic achievement of other students.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
16. Students engage in adequate learning activities outside of school.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
17. Students have adequate access to technology and the Internet.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
18. Students are aware of and visit educational resources in the Newark community (libraries, Dawes , The Works, colleges, theatres, etc.).  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

19. Girls and boys perform equally well in school.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
20. Parents have high educational expectations for their children.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
21. Parents emphasize school readiness activities at home (finishing homework, reading, getting ample sleep, etc.).  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
22. Parents take advantage of opportunities to interact with their child's school and staff.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
23. Parents believe that a college education is the best financial investment they can make for their children.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
24. Parents understand that post-secondary education greatly increases their child's future career and income options.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
25. Parents are aware of the different ways to finance college.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree
26. Parents plan for college financially.  
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

**Open Response** (please use back of page if necessary<sup>□□</sup>)

If given the resources and the time, how would you try to increase college awareness and readiness in NCS elementary/middle school students and their families?

## Appendix C-2: Student Survey Instrument

### STUDENT SURVEY

A *CALL TO COLLEGE*, Newark High School's college advising and scholarship program, wants to get to know younger students better. In order to learn more about you this survey asks questions about your school experience, how you spend your time outside of school and your interactions with teachers, friends and family. Thank you for thinking hard about each question, being as accurate as you can and helping with this project!

### PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE ANSWER THAT BEST FITS.

1. What grade are you in?	4	6	8
---------------------------	---	---	---

2. What school do you attend?

Ben Franklin ES  
Cherry Valley ES  
Carson ES  
Legend ES

Miller ES  
John Clem ES  
McGuffey ES  
Hillview ES

Heritage MS  
Liberty MS  
Wilson MS

3. Are you a	boy?	girl?
--------------	------	-------

4. What have most of your grades been up to this point in school? (Circle only one answer)

Mostly A's  
Mixed A's and B's  
Mostly B's

Mixed B's and C's  
Mostly C's  
Mixed C's and D's

Mostly D's  
Below D  
Don't Know

5. Do you have a computer at home?	Yes	No
------------------------------------	-----	----

6. If yes, does your computer have Internet access?	Yes	No
---	-----	----

7. Did either your mother or father attend college?	Yes	No	Don't Know
---	-----	----	------------

8. Do you plan to graduate from high school?	Yes	No	Don't Know
--	-----	----	------------

9. Do you plan to attend college?	Yes	No	Don't Know
-----------------------------------	-----	----	------------

10. About how many hours in a normal day do you spend doing each of the following? Circle one answer per line.

Doing homework	None	0-1	1-2	2-3	3+
Watching television	None	0-1	1-2	2-3	3+
Chatting or "surfing" online	None	0-1	1-2	2-3	3+
Hanging out with friends	None	0-1	1-2	2-3	3+
Talking with family members	None	0-1	1-2	2-3	3+
Playing video games	None	0-1	1-2	2-3	3+
Talking on the phone	None	0-1	1-2	2-3	3+
Doing school activities (like choir, sports, band, student council)	None	0-1	1-2	2-3	3+
Doing community activities (like scouts, church, little league, dance)	None	0-1	1-2	2-3	3+
Reading for fun	None	0-1	1-2	2-3	3+

Circle the response that comes closest to how you feel about each of the following statements. Circle only one answer per question.

11. I work as hard as I can to do well in school.

Really Agree      Agree      Not Sure      Disagree      Really disagree

12. I set goals for myself.

Really Agree      Agree      Not Sure      Disagree      Really disagree

13. I pick the most difficult assignments or classes when given a choice.

Really Agree      Agree      Not Sure      Disagree      Really disagree

14. School and classes make me think about possible careers.

Really Agree      Agree      Not Sure      Disagree      Really disagree

15. I have people I look up to in my life.

Really Agree      Agree      Not Sure      Disagree      Really disagree

- |   |              |       |          |          |                 |
|---|--------------|-------|----------|----------|-----------------|
| 16. Teachers and staff expect a lot out of every student.                 | Really Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Really disagree |
| 17. Teachers give me extra help, if I need it.                            | Really Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Really disagree |
| 18. I think math is a very important subject in school.                   | Really Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Really disagree |
| 19. I support my friends when they do well in school.                     | Really Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Really disagree |
| 20. I talk about what I want to do in the future with friends and family. | Really Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Really disagree |
| 21. My parents talk about school with me at home.                         | Really Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Really disagree |
| 22. My parents encourage me to do my homework and be ready for school.    | Really Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Really disagree |
| 23. My parents have high expectations of me.                              | Really Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Really disagree |
| 24. My parents want me to attend college.                                 | Really Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Really disagree |
| 25. My parents will help me pay for college.                              | Really Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Really disagree |

- |  |     |    |          |
|--|-----|----|----------|
| 26. I have attended a summer camp.                           | Yes | No | Not Sure |
| 27. I have checked books out of the Newark Public Library.   | Yes | No | Not Sure |
| 28. I have been to a museum in Newark.                       | Yes | No | Not Sure |
| 29. I have attended a performance at a Newark theatre.       | Yes | No | Not Sure |
| 30. I have been to Dawes Arboretum.                          | Yes | No | Not Sure |
| 31. I have visited a college campus.                         | Yes | No | Not Sure |
| 32. I attend church.   | Yes | No | Not Sure |
| 33. I have attended activities or events at the high school. | Yes | No | Not Sure |
| 34. I have visited another city larger than Newark.          | Yes | No | Not Sure |
| 35. I have traveled to another state outside of Ohio.        | Yes | No | Not Sure |

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH!**

## Appendix C-3: Parent Survey Instrument

### PARENT SURVEY

**WHO is doing the survey?** A *CALL TO COLLEGE*, Newark High School's community-supported advising and college scholarship program.

**WHY is it being done?** A *CALL TO COLLEGE* would like to encourage every Newark elementary and middle school student to have high school and college graduation as goals.

**WHAT do we hope to learn?** A *CALL TO COLLEGE* wants to know what parents think and value in terms of their children's education and future.

If you have any questions, please contact Janet Schultz at 328-2255  
YOUR OPINION MATTERS TO US – THANKS FOR PARTICIPATING!

**Please read the following statements. Circle the response that best describes how you feel. "Somewhat agree" means you think the statement is true about half the time. Please circle only ONE response.**

1. Newark City School teachers and staff hold high expectations of my child/children.  
Strongly agree      Agree      Somewhat Agree      Disagree      Strongly disagree
2. My child/children receive(s) extra help if it is needed.  
Strongly agree      Agree      Somewhat Agree      Disagree      Strongly disagree
3. I am aware of and feel welcome at school events and meetings for parents.  
Strongly agree      Agree      Somewhat Agree      Disagree      Strongly disagree
4. I expect my child/children to graduate from high school.  
Strongly agree      Agree      Somewhat Agree      Disagree      Strongly disagree
5. I expect my child/children to graduate from college.  
Strongly agree      Agree      Somewhat Agree      Disagree      Strongly disagree
6. A person who attends college will have greater career and income options.  
Strongly agree      Agree      Somewhat Agree      Disagree      Strongly disagree
7. I am aware of the different ways to pay for college.  
Strongly agree      Agree      Somewhat Agree      Disagree      Strongly disagree

**In your opinion, which of the following activities would add to your child/children's education positively? Please circle up to two. If you feel none would be helpful, or are necessary, circle NONE OF THESE.**

Career Exploration	Field Trips	Summer Camps
After School Programs	Tutoring	Leadership Development
College Advising	Mentoring	NONE OF THESE

**Please tell us how much you worry about each of the following statements:**

9. Having enough time and energy to stay involved in my child/children's school life.  
Worry a lot      Worry some      Not a worry

- |  |             |            |             |
|--|-------------|------------|-------------|
| 10. Feeling that my child/children will have the education/skills needed to be a successful adult. | Worry a lot | Worry some | Not a worry |
| 11. Juggling the demands of work, day-to-day living and family.                                    | Worry a lot | Worry some | Not a worry |
| 12. Finding positive activities for my child/children to do outside of school.                     | Worry a lot | Worry some | Not a worry |
| 13. Reducing the negative influence of other kids on my child/children.                            | Worry a lot | Worry some | Not a worry |
| 14. Protecting my child/children from drugs and alcohol.   | Worry a lot | Worry some | Not a worry |
| 15. Being able to help pay for my child/children's future educational expenses.                    | Worry a lot | Worry some | Not a worry |

**PLEASE CIRCLE THE ANSWERS THAT BEST FIT. This information is confidential and anonymous.**

1. How many children do you currently have attending a Newark elementary and/or middle school?
- 1                      2                      3                      4 or more

2. What school(s) do they attend? (Circle all that apply)

Ben Franklin ES  
Cherry Valley ES  
Carson ES  
Legend ES

Miller ES  
John Clem ES  
McGuffey ES  
Hillview ES

Heritage MS  
Liberty MS  
Wilson MS

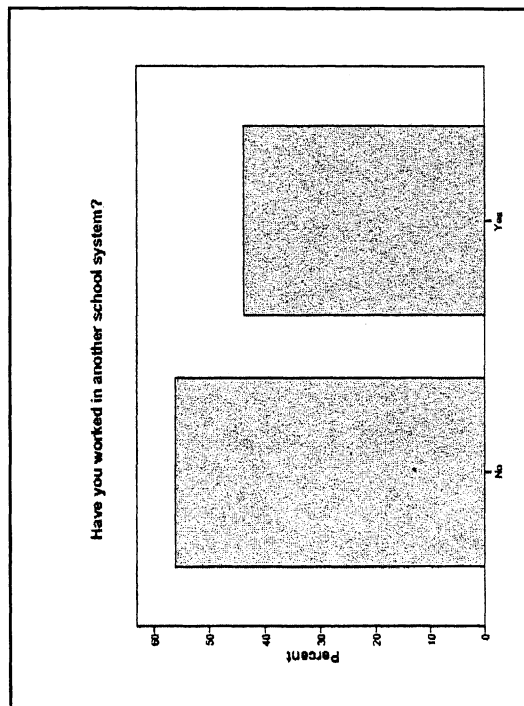
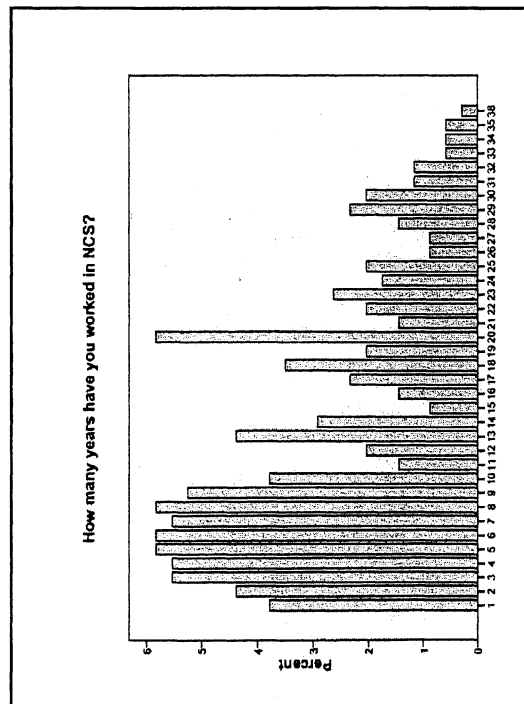
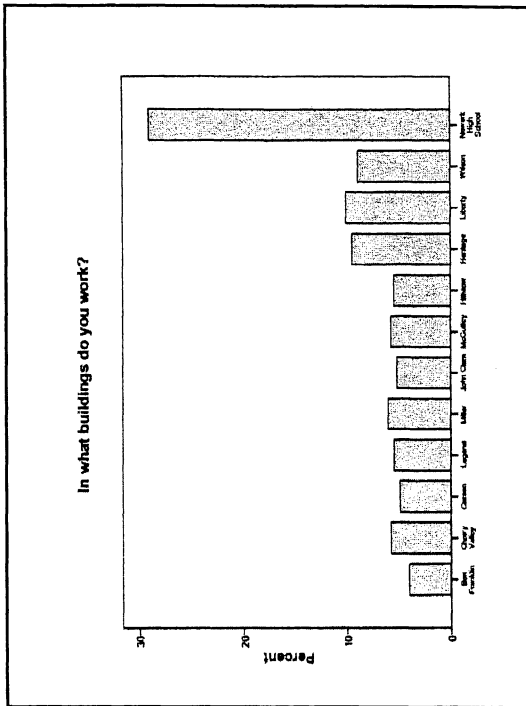
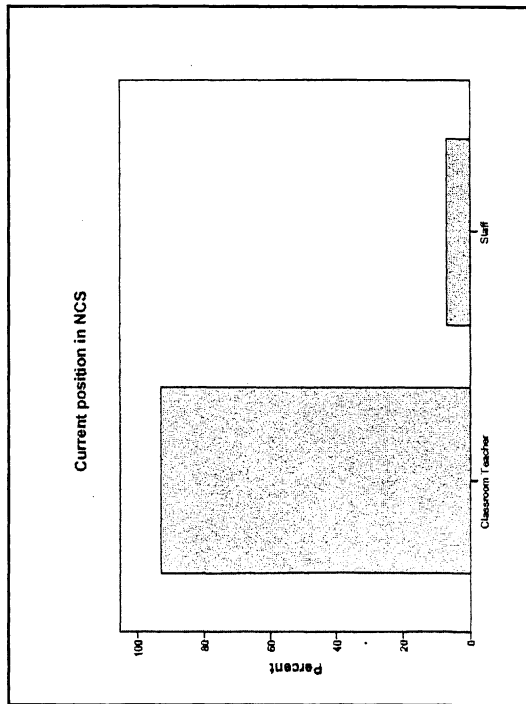
3. Are you the                      Mother?                      Father?                      Other?
4. Are you a single parent?                      Yes                      No
5. Does your family qualify for free and reduced lunch?                      Yes                      No                      Don't Know

6. Circle the response that best describes each parent's level of education:

Father	Mother
Some high school	Some high school
High school diploma or GED	High school diploma or GED
Some college	Some college
2-year college degree or certification	2-year college degree or certification
4-year college degree	4-year college degree
Master's degree	Master's degree
PhD or advanced professional degree	PhD or advanced professional degree

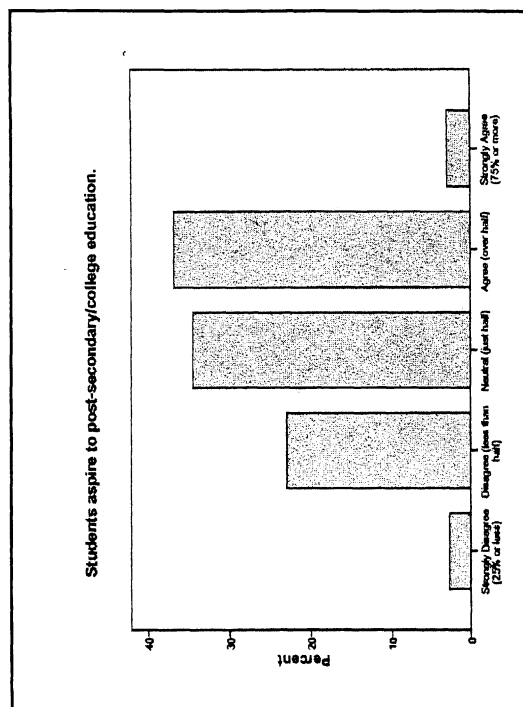
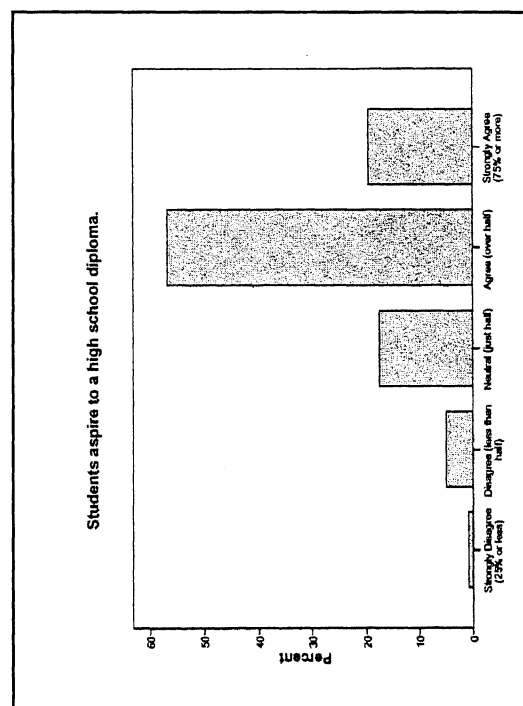
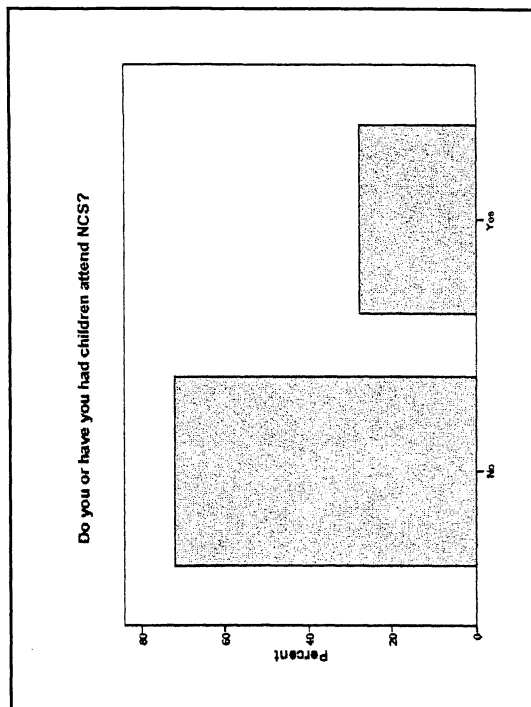
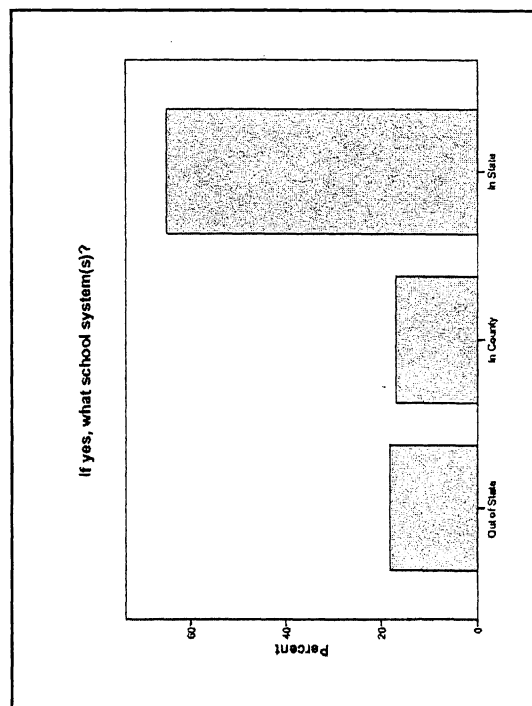
7. If a parent(s) attended college, was financial aid used (loans, grants, scholarships, etc)?
- Yes                      No

# APPENDIX D-1: Teacher/Staff Survey Data



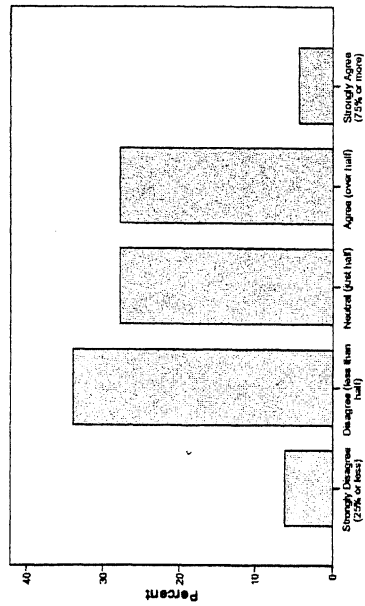


# APPENDIX D-1: Teacher/Staff Survey Data (continued)

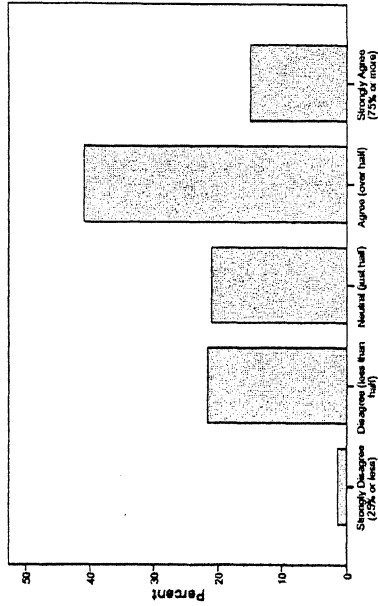


# APPENDIX D-1: Teacher/Staff Survey Data (continued)

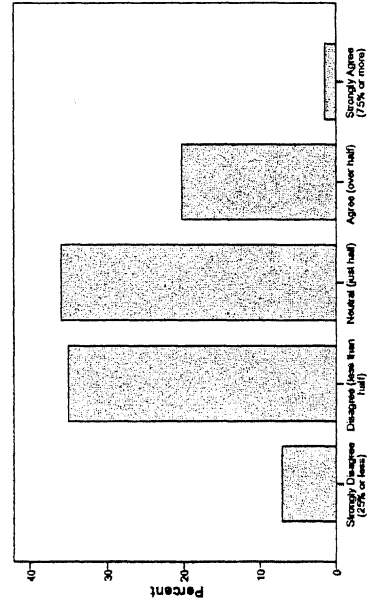
Students understand that their academic achievement now is correlated to their chances of attending college later.



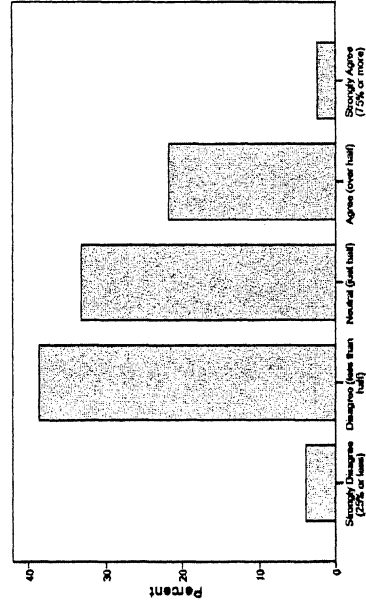
Students have ample exposure to and practice at goal setting.



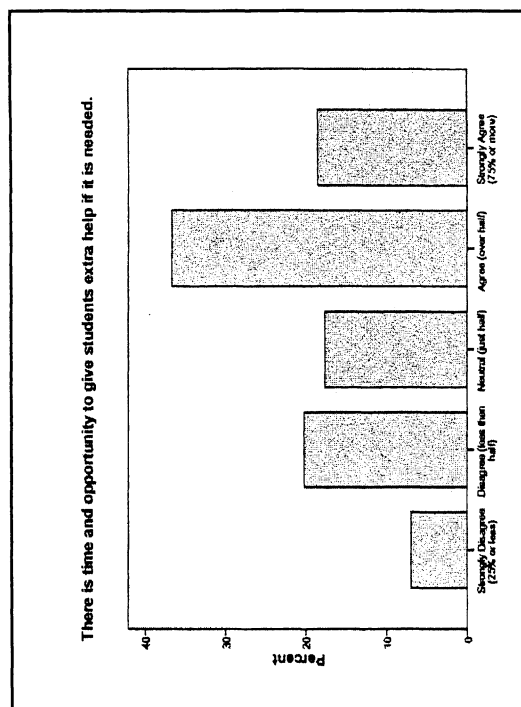
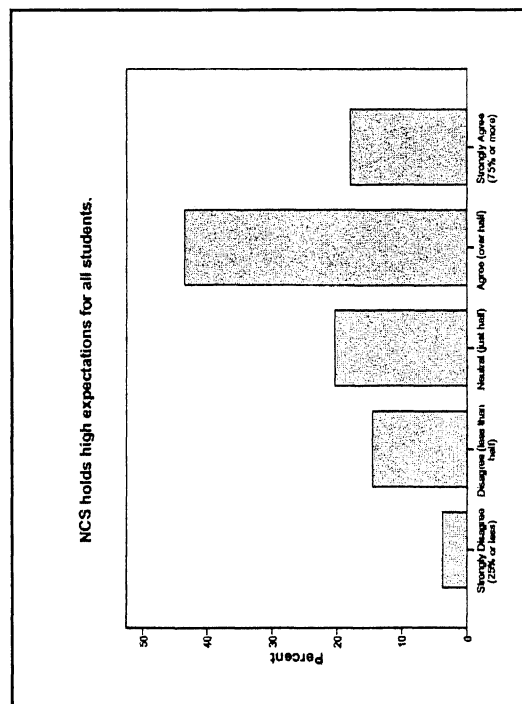
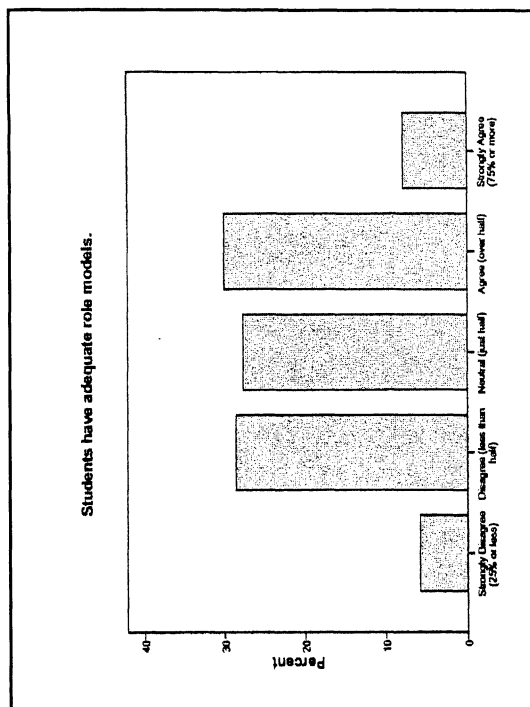
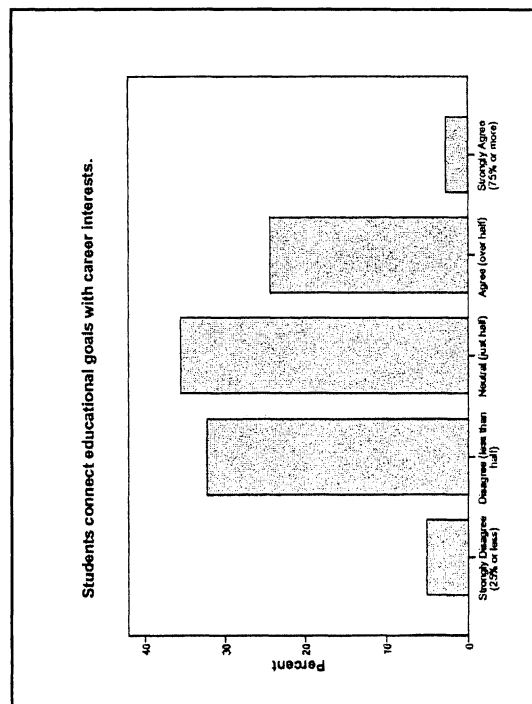
Students understand that selecting the most rigorous courses possible increases their college readiness.



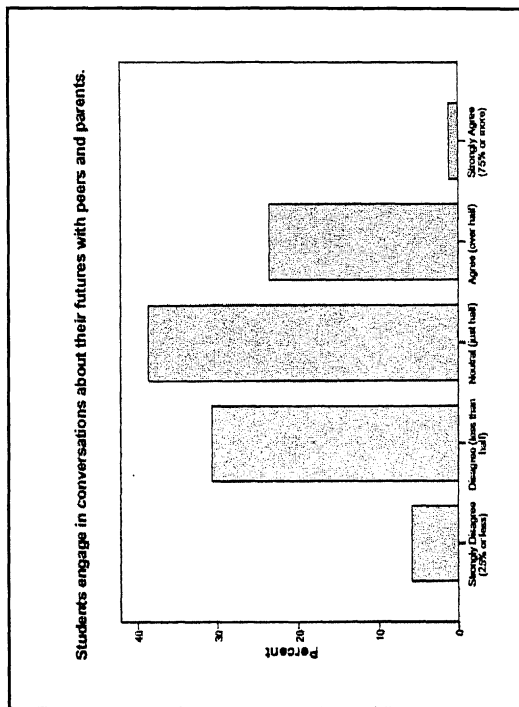
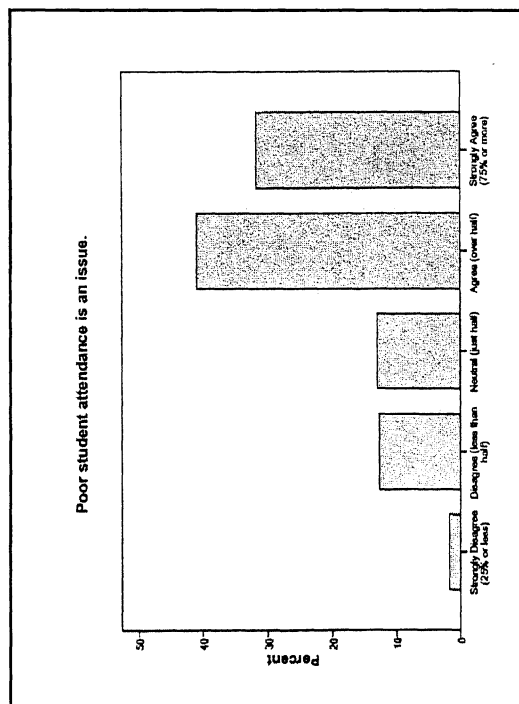
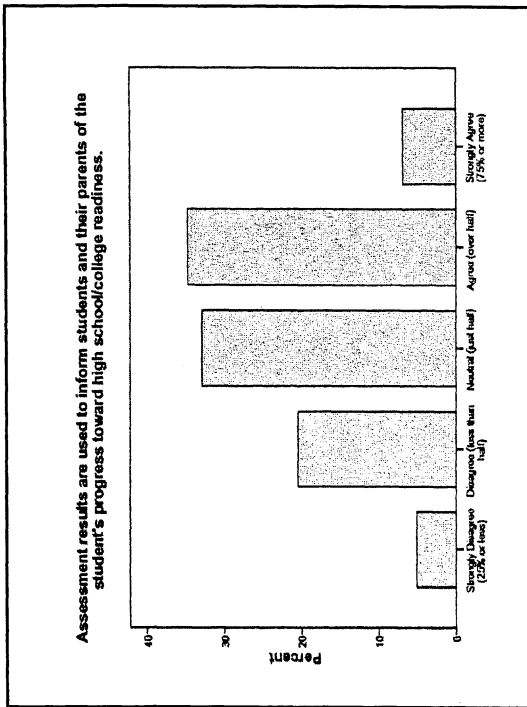
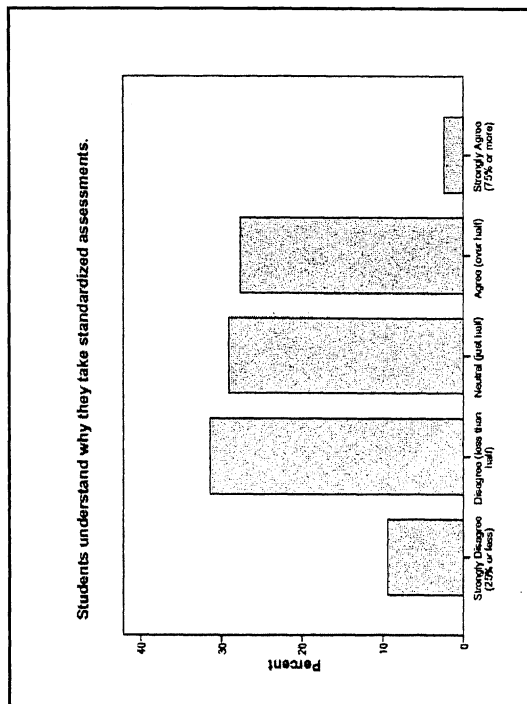
Students understand the importance of math concepts to their long-term academic and career success.



# APPENDIX D-1: Teacher/Staff Survey Data (continued)

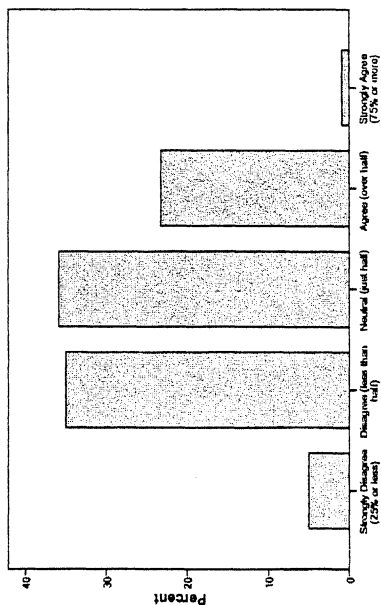


# APPENDIX D-1: Teacher/Staff Survey Data (continued)

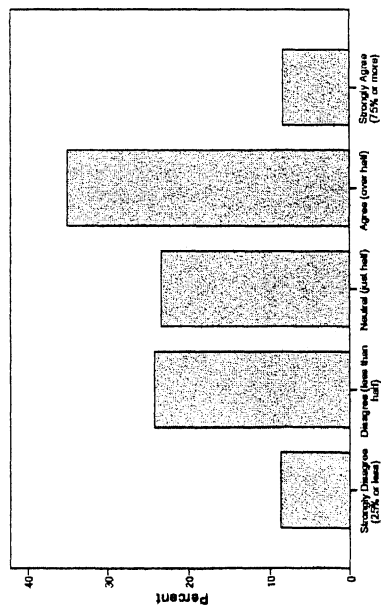


# APPENDIX D-1: Teacher/Staff Survey Data (continued)

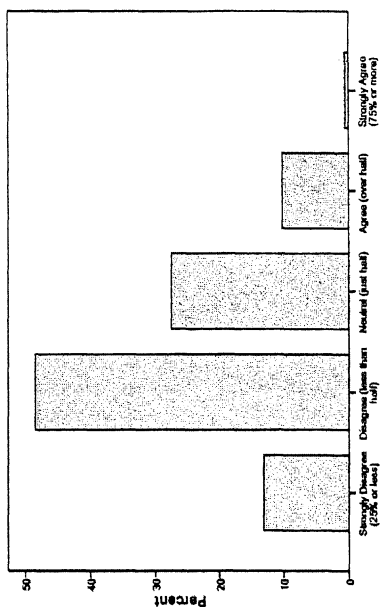
Students support the academic achievement of other students.



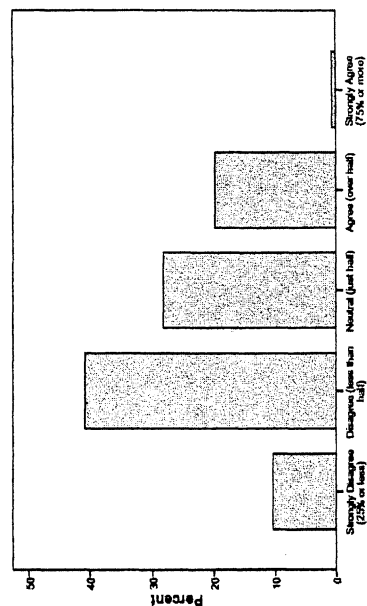
Students have adequate access to technology and the Internet.



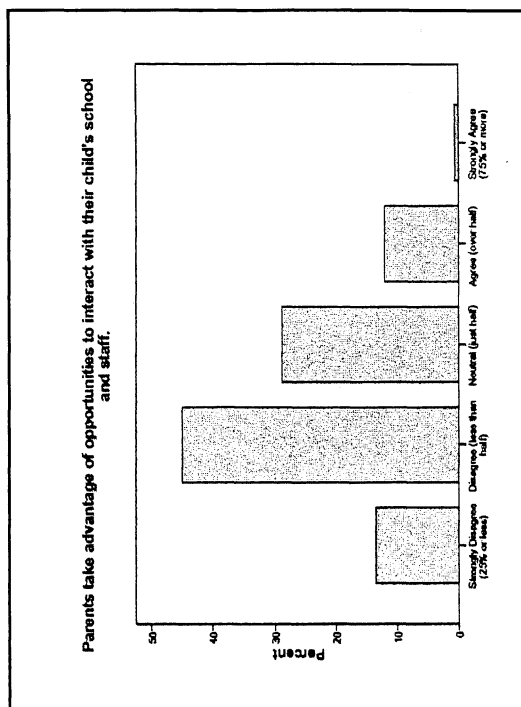
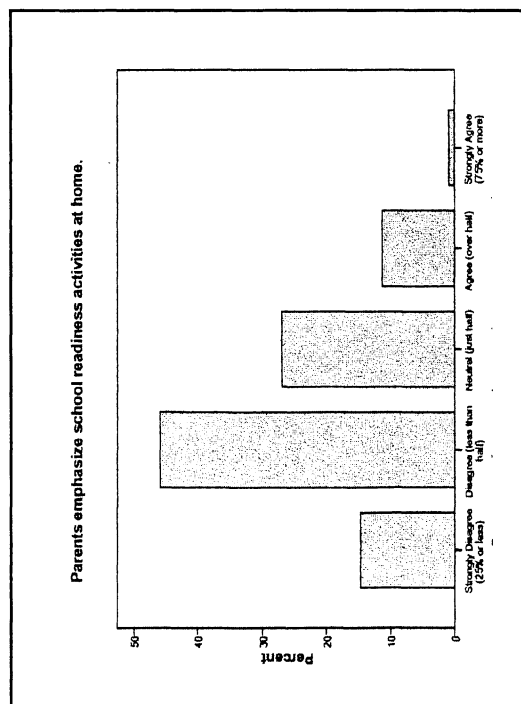
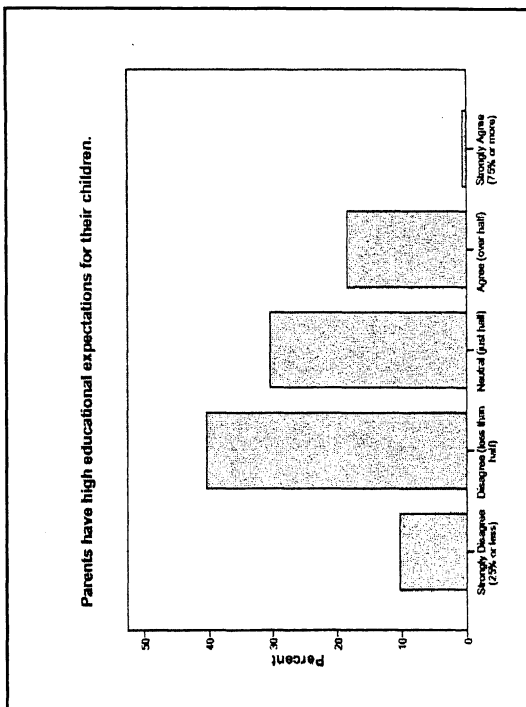
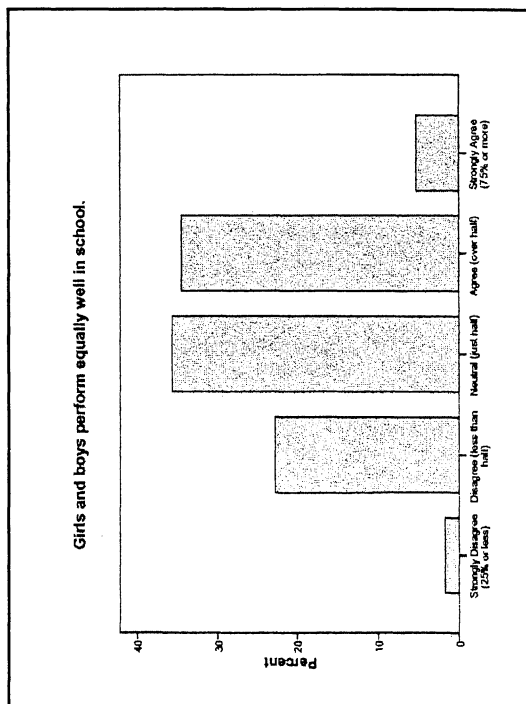
Students engage in adequate learning activities outside of school.



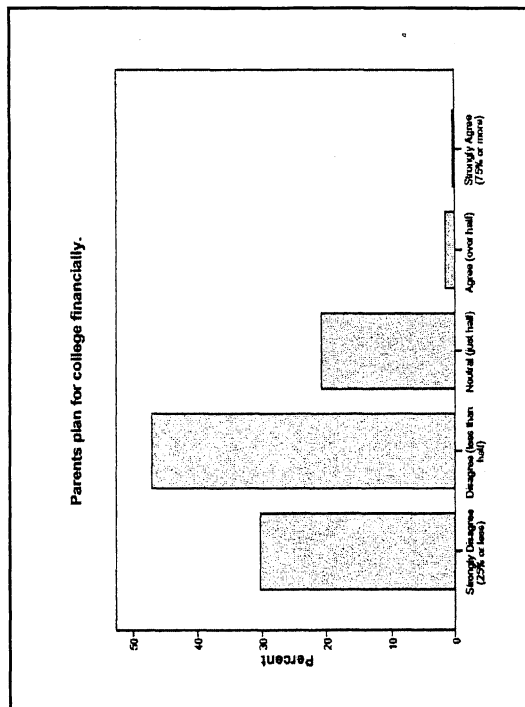
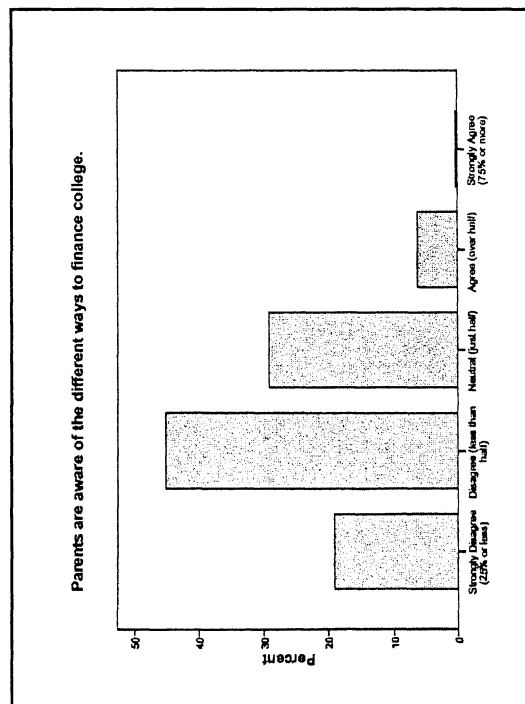
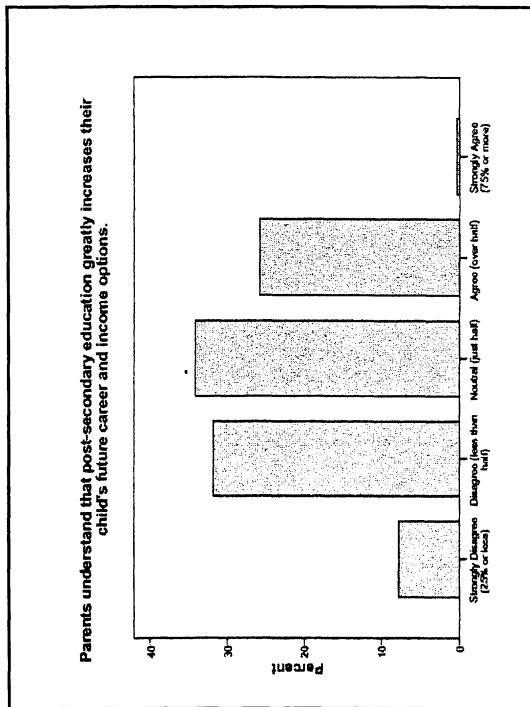
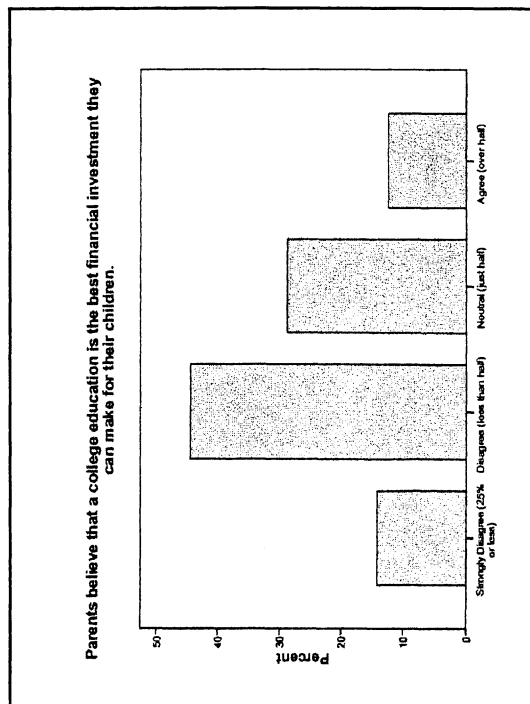
Students are aware of and visit educational resources in the Newark community.



# APPENDIX D-1: Teacher/Staff Survey Data (continued)



# APPENDIX D-1: Teacher/Staff Survey Data (continued)



## APPENDIX D-2: Teacher/Staff Survey Open Response Comments

*Open Response Question: If given the resources and the time, how would you try to increase college awareness and readiness in NCS elementary/middle school students and their families?*

Key: Career Education (CE)  
Early Awareness (EA)  
Mentoring/Role Models (M)  
Student Focus (SF)

College Knowledge (CK)  
Financial Education (F)  
Parent Educations (PE)  
Technology (T)

Course Selection (CS)  
High Expectations (HE)  
Extracurriculars (E)

### HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER/STAFF SURVEY OPEN RESPONSE COMMENTS:

- Parent/student education for basic goal setting. Keeping an agenda, organization, importance put on education at K-3 grades. *PE, EA*
- I believe the parents in our community need a greater sense of the necessity of education. *PE*
- Target middle of the road kids. *SF*
- More parent education. Prepare students for differences between high school and middle school. *PE, HE*
- Guest speakers into classroom. Build career units into elementary literacy curriculum. *CE, M*
- Guidance counselors should be talking to each student, possibly in English class, beginning freshman year. They should hold college prep assemblies for students and/or parents during schools and/or in the evening to explain the steps in the college process. *CK*
- Open informational meetings or workshops on current statistics, successful practices, financial aid, tech education options. I fear apathy/attendance would hamper this effort though. *CK*
- College reps should speak to classes. *CK*
- Parent workshops. *PE*
- Work primarily with students – they seem to be the only influencer with regard to their parents. Parents don't seem to react to information that is sent home or show up to a meeting, so convince the kids first, then have them try to reach their parents. *SF, PE*
- We must, as an entire system, have high expectations for all. We as a school do little to constantly enforce the procedures necessary to ensure high expectations. *HE*
- Guidance needs to stress post-secondary options more and earlier on. A Call to College does a great job with the whole financial thing. *CK, F*
- Educate the parents. It all begins in the home. *PE*
- Teach foreign language in elementary and middle school. *CS*
- I would start emphasizing the process as early as kindergarten. We also need to start teaching foreign language in lower grades because we are in a global economy. Not every career involves math. *CS, EA*
- Higher expectations where academics and behavior are concerned. Students need to be held responsible in BOTH areas from day ONE. *HE*
- Doing activities to teach students that college is affordable and college loans are not that much per month. Maybe there could be activities showing how much a college diploma can increase your life long earnings? It's BOTH the parents and the students who need to learn these facts. *F, PE*
- Mentor program between middle school and high school teachers. Short-term goal needs to be complete high school diploma. *M*
- Early release and late arrival has really hampered how much time we have to give students extra help. I would give students something to hold onto. I think that they need to know that it matters personally to their teachers every year that they stay in school. I hope every teacher, every year gives each student some tangible evidence (a heart cut in two when they drop out of school) to show that each student's education matters and it is personal to us. *M*
- Meetings with parents and their students. *PE*
- Constant reinforcement from teachers and staff about the importance of going to college. "When you graduate and attend college... You will need this when you go to college..." *CK*
- Have students discuss jobs they are interested in and explain the role of school in those jobs. *CE*
- Have a family college visit day where parents and students go to local colleges and look at programs that might interest the student. *CK*
- Show alternative careers and support 2-year certification programs also. NCS do not see/live enough to know what jobs are out there and what training is available. *CE, CK*



- PARENTS must be involved in every stage of the educational process. *PE*
- I would have a corps of local NHS college students visit all the elementary/middle schools. The younger we can reach them, the better. Perhaps this will make them understand the importance of establishing an early (4<sup>th</sup> grade) academic foundation. *EA, M*
- Expand ACTC to MS. Create opportunities to expose, mentor, and inspire younger kids toward college. *EA*
- At least once a year every school should have “preparing your child for the future” sessions free to parents and send info home with all students. Kids should attend assemblies about planning for the future beginning in early elementary school. If you wait until HS or MS, it is too late. *EA, PE*
- Conduct college visits for every family in middle school. *CK*
- Maybe have college students interact with the students for the whole school year. Successful college students can relate more closely and talk up the importance of school. *M*
- A summer or spring college program modeled on Upward Bound. Students need to spend time on a college campus. *CK*
- MANDATORY parental/teacher/ guidance counselor meetings. Parents should interact more with the guidance staff all through out MS and HS. *PE*
- Begin parent education about college EARLY ON – well before HS. Total support of instrumental music early on. Students who participate in band and orchestra usually have better grades and are college-bound! ☺ *PE, EA, E*
- Try and have family issues and counseling activities available. Many kids can’t succeed in school due to homes with abuse, neglect, etc. *PE*
- Have students take classes according to their college major if possible. However we don’t have enough classes to offer due to \$\$! ☹ *CS*
- Help students understand the importance of getting any kind of training after high school, NOT just a 4-year degree. Promote “take your child to work day”. *CE*
- More prevention and less reaction. Kudos to ACTC to starting with Juniors! *HE*
- Both through the guidance office and through ACTC we need to make kids aware of what is required to prep for college. *CK*
- More multi-media, interactive career presentations in ES and MS. *CE*
- I think exposure (classroom speakers, etc.) from adults in career fields that students might be interested in could open eyes to the NEED for an education beyond HS. College grads could explain to kids how college works. *CE, CK*
- Post statistics by year of the number of students who go to college and the average salaries by year for college graduates compared to HS Grads or even dropouts. *CK*
- Have college resource people available at ES/MS open houses and P/T conferences. *CK*
- Hold higher expectations and reinforce student’s individual work ethic and responsibility for their own learning. *HE*
- Going to college is a process with steps and I am not sure that NCS talks about that much in MS and HS guidance. *CK*
- Have speakers who are NCS grads come back to MS and ES to talk with students and parents about college and how important education is. They need to see people “like them who came from where they come from”. *M, CK*
- I think presenting the idea to kids at a young age that education matters, now and later, and that there is a connection between effort at school and what opportunities you have after high school. For some of these kids, I am not sure if the word career is a *realistic* aspiration. *EA, CE*

### MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER/STAFF SURVEY OPEN RESPONSE:

- Speakers, former students – also people who have made mistakes (dropouts, prisoners, etc.) *M, CK*
- My greatest concern is kids who are motivated get all the praise, encouragement and support from NCS. I have had 2 children graduate. One at the top of the class another who struggled and lacked self-motivation. We ended up being the motivation that said you can and will graduate. The big issue I see is staff saying: “They are old enough to care and if they don’t, then they can fail.” Teachers need to care and pour their heart and efforts into the kids who do not care. Newark pays us to care. There is no excuse for the number of 9<sup>th</sup> graders not earning enough credits. We MUST revamp our thinking and our teaching. *HE*
- More career exploration, goal setting, vocational training skills opportunities for kids in 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades. By the time they reach HS it is too late. A part of our guidance efforts? *EA, CE*
- Have workshops in school and after school for students and parents to discuss all of the questions above. Discuss different careers that are in demand. *PE, CE*
- Somehow this information needs to be drilled into the parents at least 4 times a year. And throughout their child’s academic/school career so as to mold a new thought process about college and the importance of education. Every time there is a program at school, this can be emphasized. *PE, CK*
- I would plan the learning environment around career and employability skills. Many kids will not have a JOB, let alone go to college. Behavior + attitude = rewards + consequences. *CE, HE*
- Have a career day to fire up kids to life’s possibilities, followed by a financial seminar for parents to find out how to afford college for their kids. *CE, F*
- Have college students who come from areas such as ours come to talk to students about how they made it work. *M*
- Presentations with data, etc. *CK*
- As a part of NJHS it was enlightening for the students to have a tour of Denison. This would be a good experience for all of our kids. *CK*
- Let them understand that they can get the money with high grades and extra-curricular activities. *F, HE*
- I think students as young as 6<sup>th</sup> grade need to hear a talk about doing well in school, choosing classes and the importance of continuing their education. *EA, HE*
- When would we have the time to talk about college? We have to prepare for TESTS!
- I am more concerned that students come to middle school with middle school readiness! *EA*
- Goal setting. Emphasize the future. Parent information meeting to help them realize the importance of their role in their child’s life and education. *PE, CS*
- Money needs to be used for UPDATED TECHNOLOGY!!! *T*
- Have successful former students return and talk to them. *M*
- I think there needs to be information sessions with parents and students beginning at a very young age. Students get behind educationally in ES and can never get caught up. Parents need to know that even their earliest educational experiences are important to college and their future in general. *PE, EA*
- Link standards/ goals to higher education; try to teach how each subject relates to every day life! *HE*
- Parents need to be aware and want to help better their kids. *PE*
- By having more interaction with successful role models from the community, students could be inspired and understand that middle school is a stepping-stone for their future. Too many students have a negative experience with school. However, they need to know that college can be different. *M*
- Guest speakers from HS to share the importance of GPA and how it works and how it is calculated. Explain the importance of GPA at MS (especially last quarter of 8<sup>th</sup> grade) for eligibility w/sports. Explain the activities available at the HS which are based on GPA eligibility criteria. *M, HE*
- Do projects that focus on different colleges and ones that might specialize in areas that individual students are interested in pursuing. *CK, CE*
- Offer classes/info during orientation or PT conferences related to college process. Offer possibly a “college prep” type course in place of study halls (in which the time is not used well anyway). *CK*
- Parent education needs to begin at the Pre-K level. This process needs to involve both parenting skills and intervention services available. We have a generational problem where parents aren’t working so students do not see a value in education. *PE, EA*
- Students with multiple disabilities and their families plan for their futures differently than those without significant impairments.
- Community service and increased parent involvement at school. *PE*

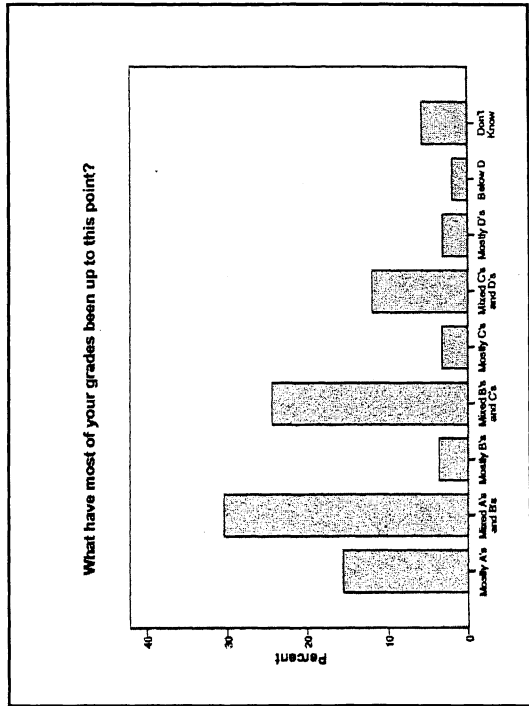
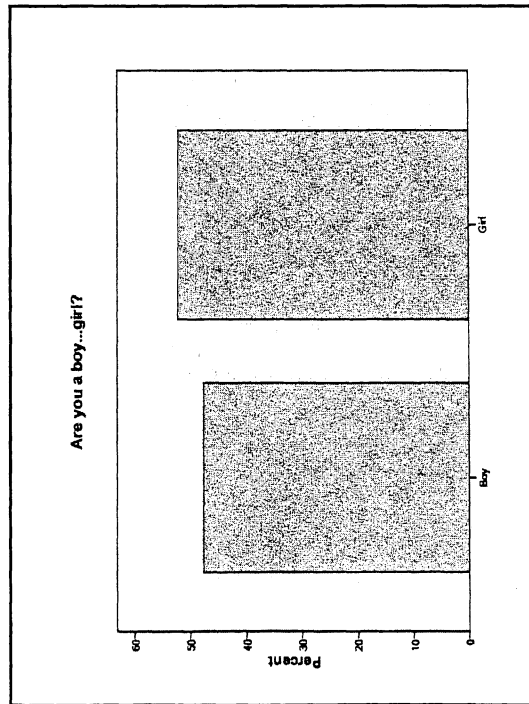
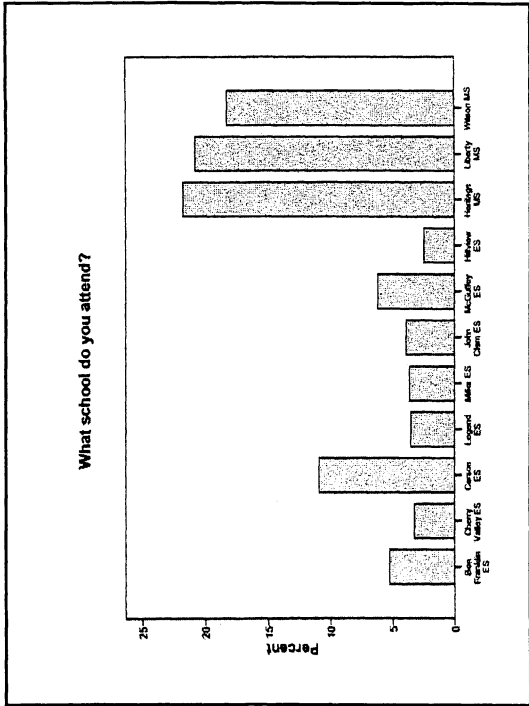
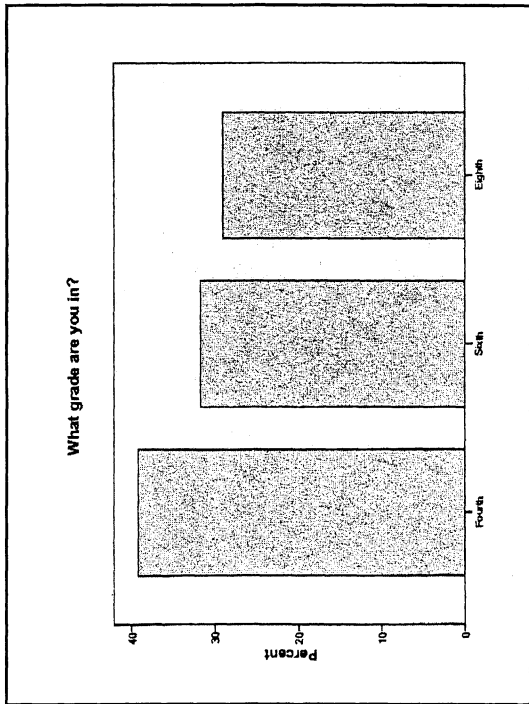
- Tell parents they MUST talk to their child!! *PE*
- More interaction between (coached or trained) older students and middle school students. *M*
- Bring in guests/speakers who have had success that relates to the common Newark family. *M*
- Parenting classes. *PE*
- Inadequate access to updated (and working) technology is a big issue for our kids, both at home and at school. *T*
- More exposure to colleges through visits. *CK*
- Incorporate more career awareness from the Licking County area into ALL courses. *CE*
- We need to do more career planning and discussing what it takes to get to the career of choice. *CE*
- Planned program with career fairs. *CE*
- Comment on girls and boys performance question: I think girls tend to have more success in our building (Liberty), but I think that teachers can do more to reach boys.
- I think I would survey the students about how they view “going to college”. I would try to bring in other professionals from other fields who have used their education to become who they are today. Let’s face it – most kids only see TEACHERS as professionals who go to college! *CE, M*
- Have college students and staff in the building to talk to students and parents. *CE, M*
- Begin career awareness in elementary schools. *M*
- Begin talking about college earlier (in ES). Connect education to the future. *CE, EA*
- I really have no idea. As a teacher and resident of Newark, I feel both frustrated and disappointed that the trend of HS graduation and parent support is what it is. *PE*
- Elect a president who knows how to fund education! Have AP level/college courses; higher level math; science courses that match other nation’s (Germany, Japan, etc.) Have a world-class curriculum with sophisticated technical and vocational course, plus work options. *CS*
- Bring in more NHS alumni who are in college to work with small groups to talk about goals, grades, college, etc. *M*
- More talk by more people about career options. *CE*
- Have job fairs at middle school so students can see expectations for various careers. *CE*
- Incorporate career planning elective courses at the MS level – use a unified arts rotation. *CE*

#### **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER/STAFF SURVEY OPEN RESPONSE:**

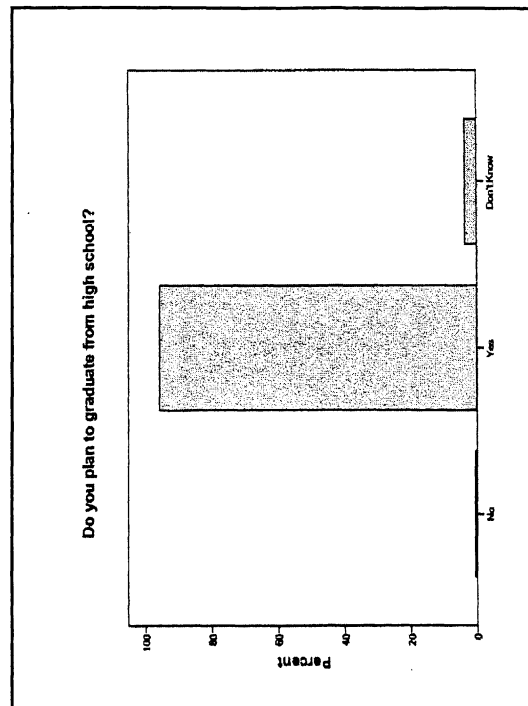
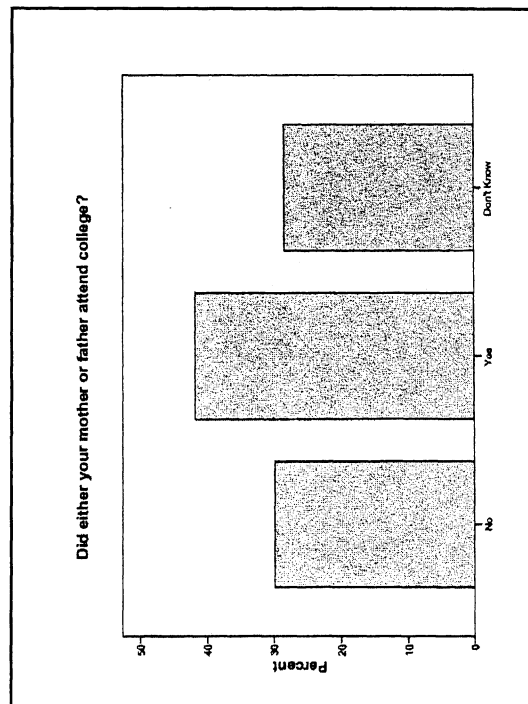
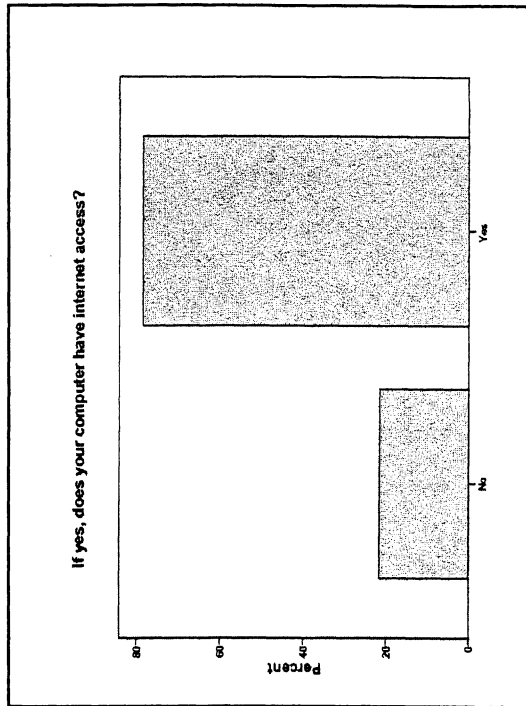
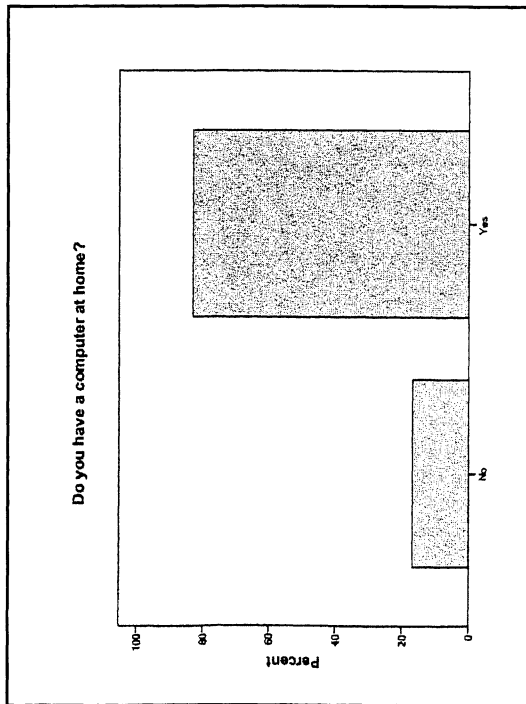
- I think college students should come to the elementary school and talk about the experiences they have had. Students should tour campuses like Denison and OSU-Newark campus. *M, CK*
- I would prepare a meeting with parents and a financial institution to help them find the best way to start a savings plan. *PE, F*
- I am already talking to students about the importance of retaining what they learn. We talk often about college. *CK*
- Focus on higher education needs to start in ES with both parents and students. *EA*
- I would encourage the students to strive to do their best to develop good study habits. I would encourage the parents to start saving for the cost of college. They say that money is available, but it is not as easy to get for those in the middle class. *PE, F*
- I would do a career day where we would invite outside occupations and allow students to “study” what they do and what college degree they need to aspire in order to be successful. I think there are many jobs that students would be interested in, but do not know about them (scientific fields, etc.). *CE*
- A program to encourage parents to begin “talk” of college, the expectation of going to college and a brief overview for parents about financial resources for paying for college. *PE, F*
- Work through parents. *PE*
- Have OSU-N or COTC do an assembly with parents invited to increase awareness about academic opportunities and financial aid that is available. *PE, F*
- Career day. On site career/job visits. *CE*
- At this stage, parents are NOT thinking about college. If I bring it up, they think I’m crazy and that I am not focusing on my job (and interfering with the child beyond my responsibilities). *PE*
- I teach kindergarten and parents should have some info starting then. *PE*
- Have information available. Train teachers about Call to College (many NCS employees have no idea what it is). Do in-service during school day. *CK*
- Guest speakers plus handouts and brochures. *M*
- It starts with education the parents. Parents need to want to know, but our parents don’t. *PE*

- Educate parents. Expose students at an early age to alternative educational paths once they graduate (e.g. COTC, journeyman professions, vocational school, college, etc). Once students are exposed, discuss at an early age the means in which this dream can become a reality – especially financially. *PE, CE*
- Trips to OSU-N or COTC. Show students that college is attainable here in Newark. *CK*
- Visits to and or partnerships with local colleges. Middle school unit making students aware of different post-secondary school options and fields of study (using internet, guest speakers, alumni who come back, etc.) *CK, N*
- Some sort of teaching about job choices and preparation for those jobs would be helpful. *CE*
- Examples of what they are learning and how it applies to real life. *CE*
- Programs/presentations about post-secondary and career opportunities. *CK, CE*
- Seminars for parents. *PE*
- Mentors. *M*
- Let them know it needs to start in kindergarten. *EA*
- Give students more opportunities to interact with the community (field trips, guest speakers, etc.). *CE, M*
- Guidance department should be available to present lessons on career/post-secondary options. *CE*
- Summer programs to boost learning. Consequences for absent/non-productive students. *HE*
- At the ES level, they need role models and volunteers from the professional, college-educated sector. We need to integrate discussions of careers into existing curriculum. Funding for school trips (especially for those that extend beyond the school day). Students need to see opportunities that exist outside of the small world of Newark, Ohio. *CE, M*
- Celebrate students' academic success more and discuss importance of education with parents. *PE, HE*
- Some parents don't know what college does for kids. They don't think that far ahead. Many families have had no experience with college, thus they need to be educated/encouraged. *PE*
- We need to put \$ and staff time into catching those kids who fall through the cracks. Those that don't meet bench marks, but do not qualify for special education. *SF*
- Give students incentives and examples of successful citizens and motivational speakers. *SF*
- Start showing parents how to save \$\$ beginning in Kindergarten. Have students do career activities early on! Teach children how they get to a career path, (4 year college, technical college, high skills certificate, etc.) *F, CE*
- Start conversations as early as kindergarten. I think they are ready and will get excited. If that excitement is promoted each year, it could have long-term effects. *EA*
- Have coaches and fine arts teachers talk in the elementary schools. Bring in NHS grads who went to college and who attended that elementary school. *E, M*
- Where would you get the time? We don't have any to spare!
- How do we get parents to realize that schoolwork and nightly practice are as important as the extracurricular activities? *PE*
- I would take them on field trips to local colleges and expose them to college life. I would encourage NCS alums to visit schools, talk about their careers and explain how they got there. I would create an economics curriculum ("Game of Life") for ES students that would have them receive different jobs and incomes. Then they can attempt to buy a house, car, groceries with the money. I would do more to explain to kids from low-income families that they can receive grants and scholarships to great schools if they work hard, get good grades and participate actively in school and their community. *CK, M, F*
- Smaller class sizes (under 25) for more individualized attention. Parent information sessions on how to save and prepare for college. More strict attendance policies (MANY students are dismissed early for appointments, etc. on a routine basis with no effect on their attendance record). Parents need to be made aware that just because a high school education was "good enough" for them does not mean it's still adequate for their children's future careers in a global economy. *PE, HE*
- Start earlier with college/university/tech schools having them meet with parents and students. Need to make them more aware of needs and requirements. *EA, CK*
- Bring in recruiters and people from the community who emphasize post-secondary education at every grade level. *EA, CK*
- We could try to discuss what is available and the importance of college during PT. With elementary children this is very hard. *EA, CK*

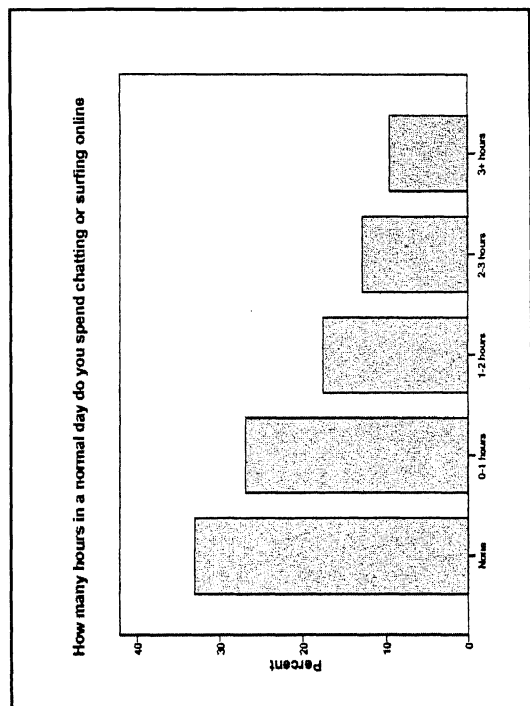
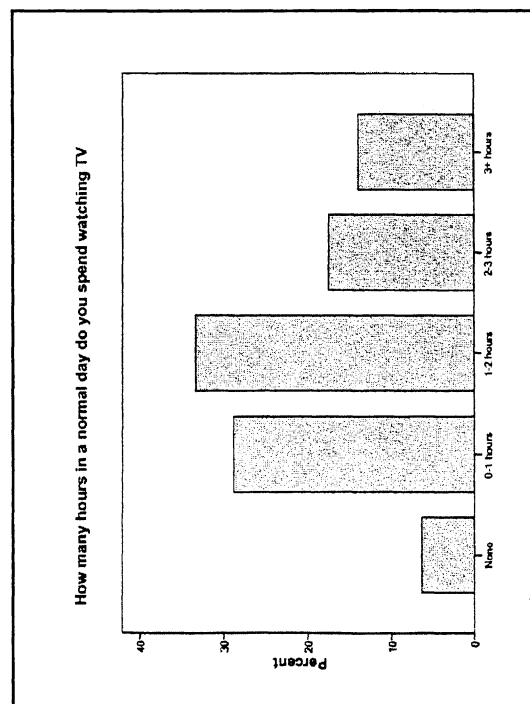
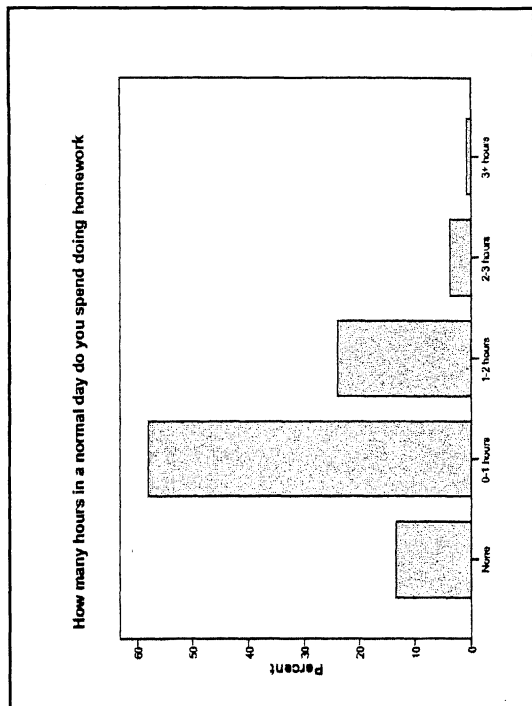
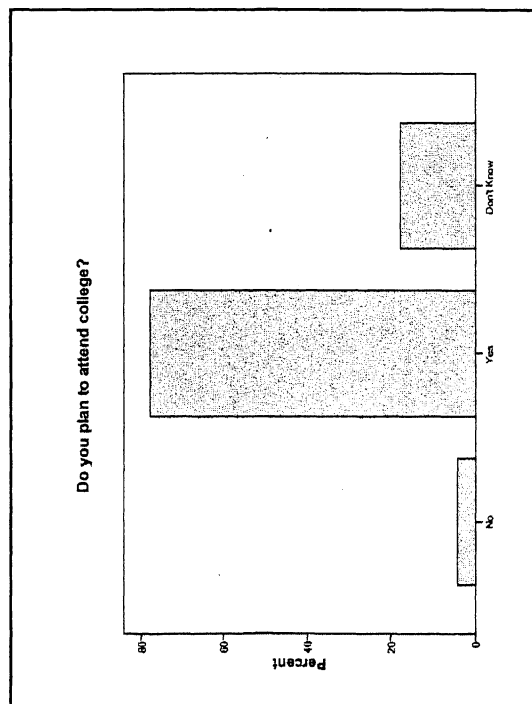
# Appendix E: Student Survey Data



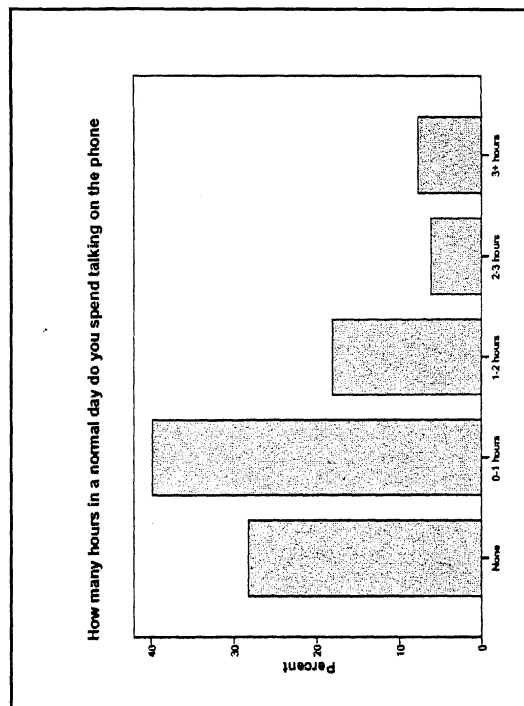
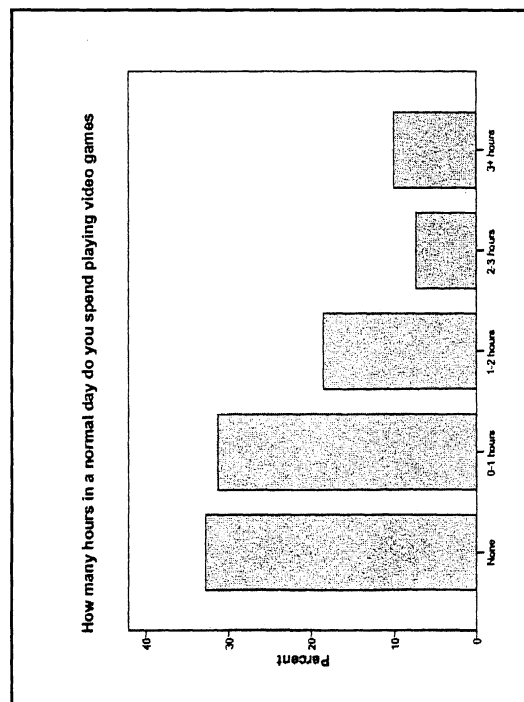
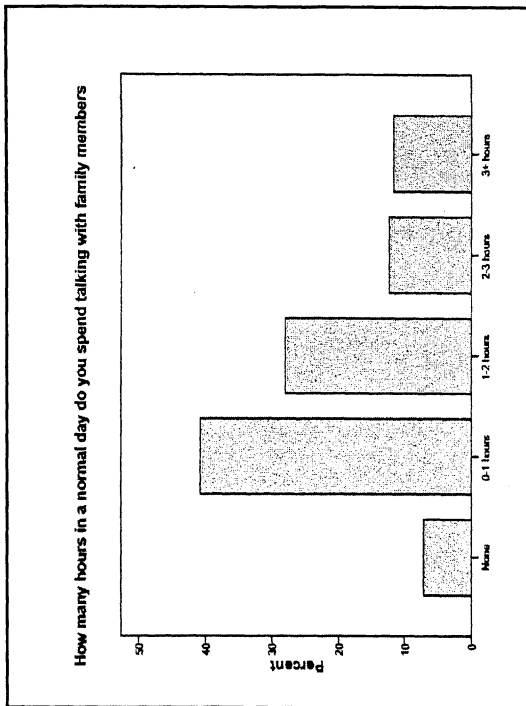
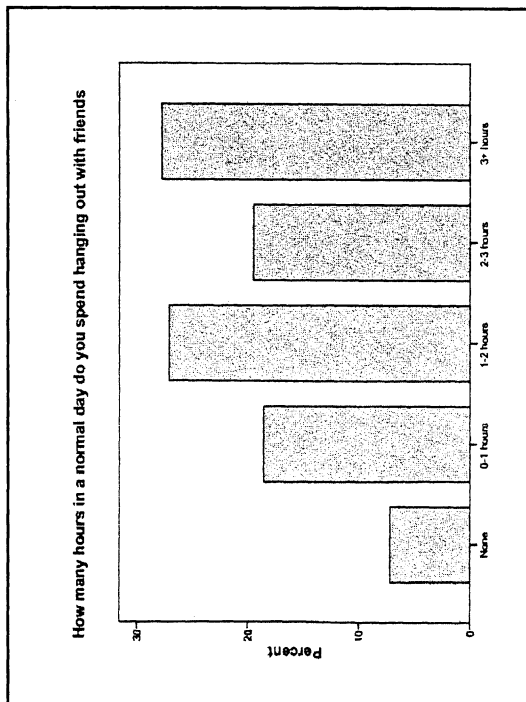
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## Appendix E: Student Survey Data (continued)

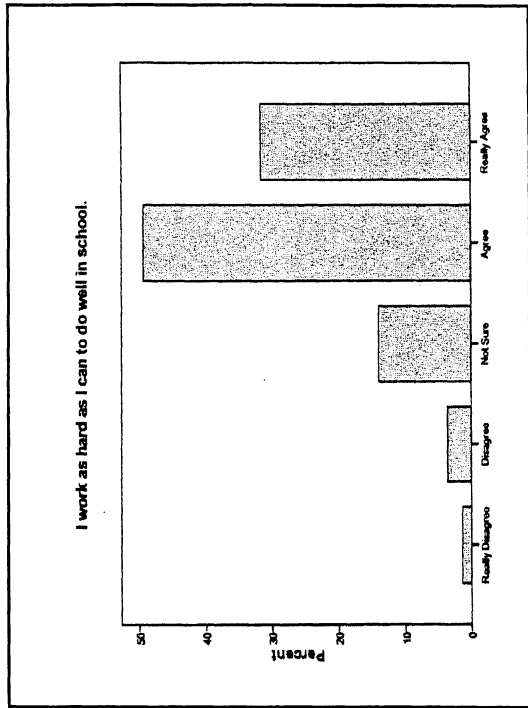
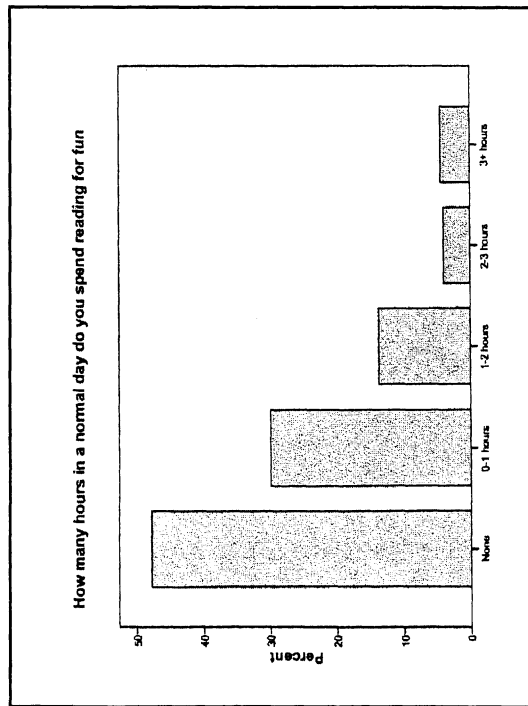
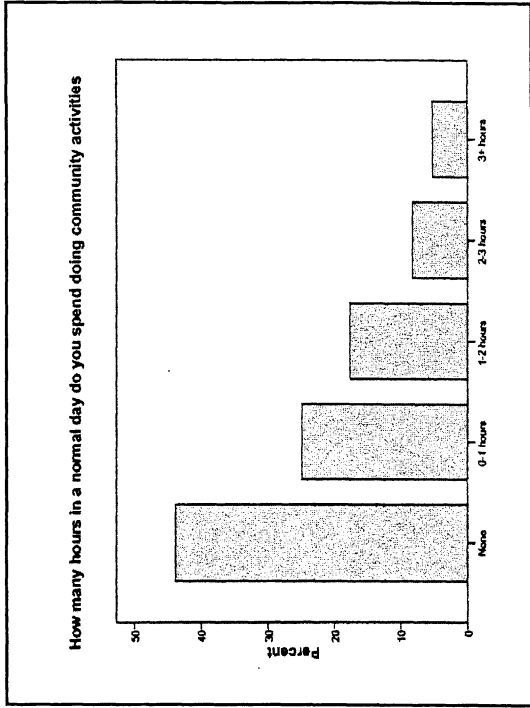
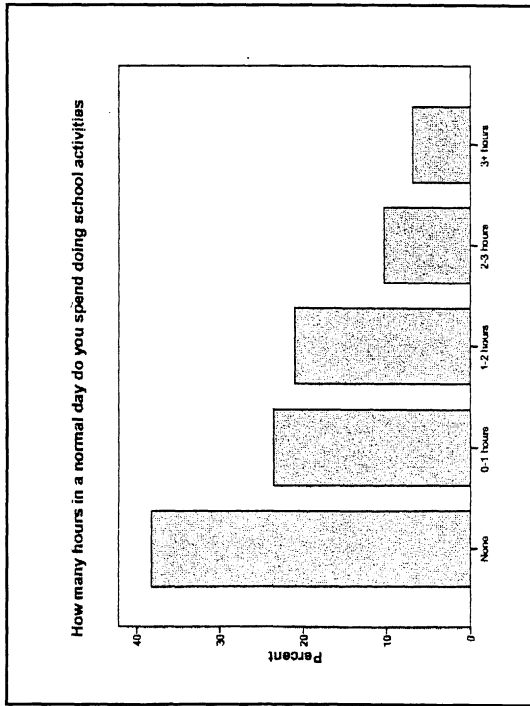


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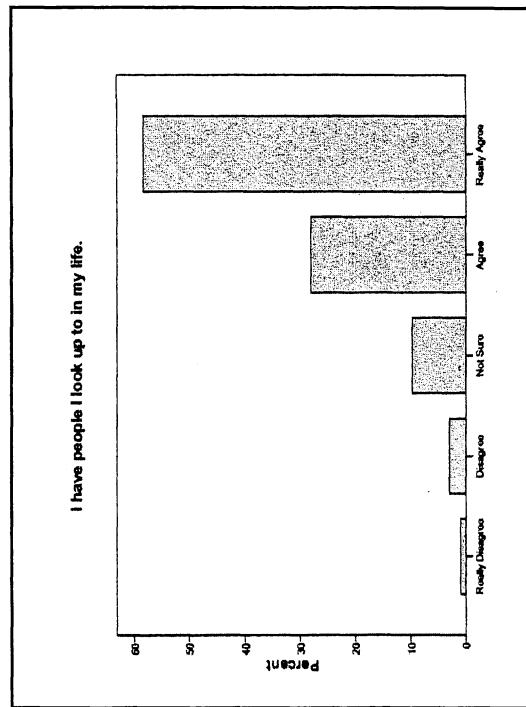
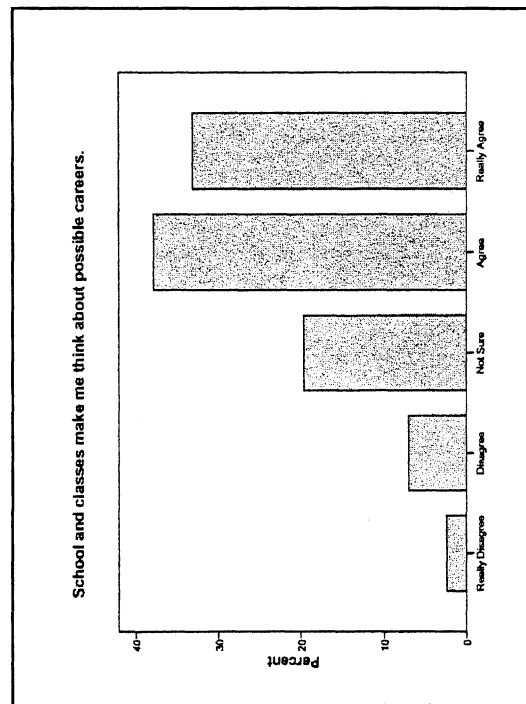
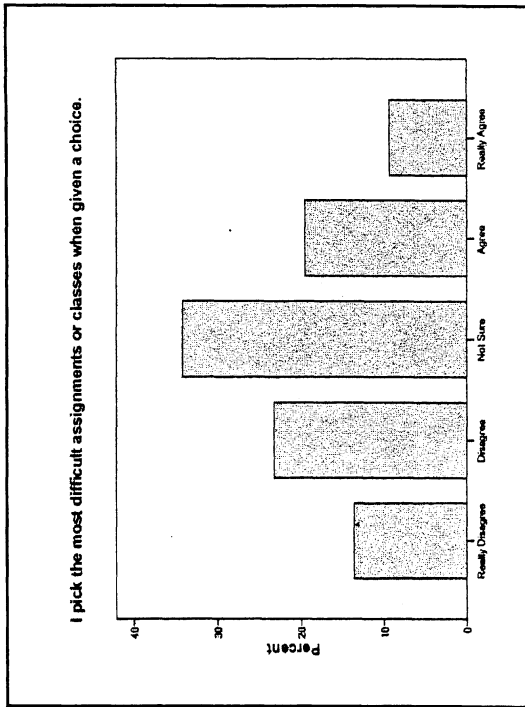
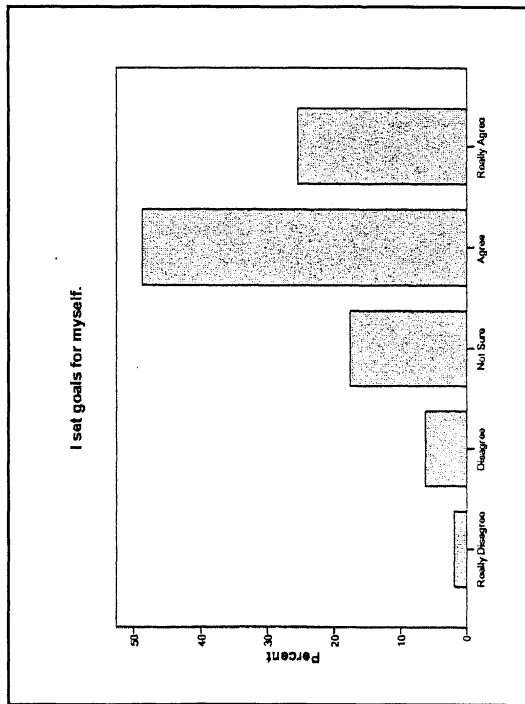




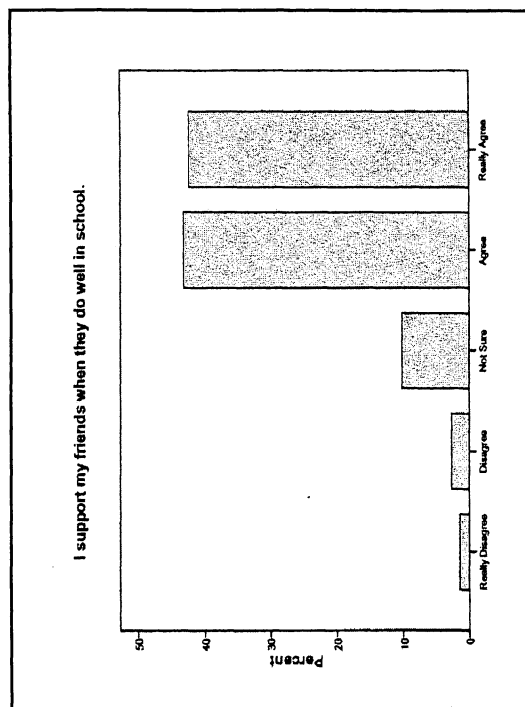
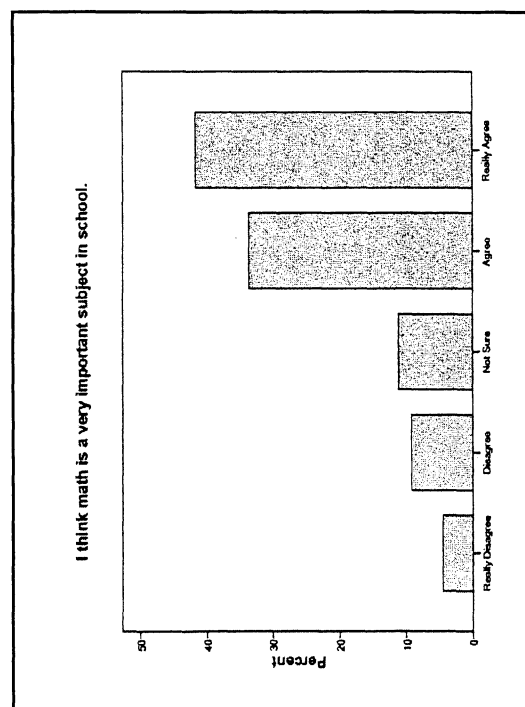
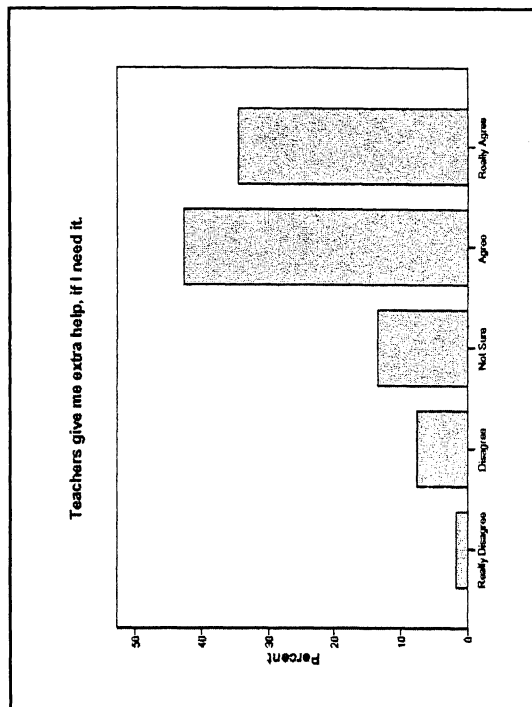
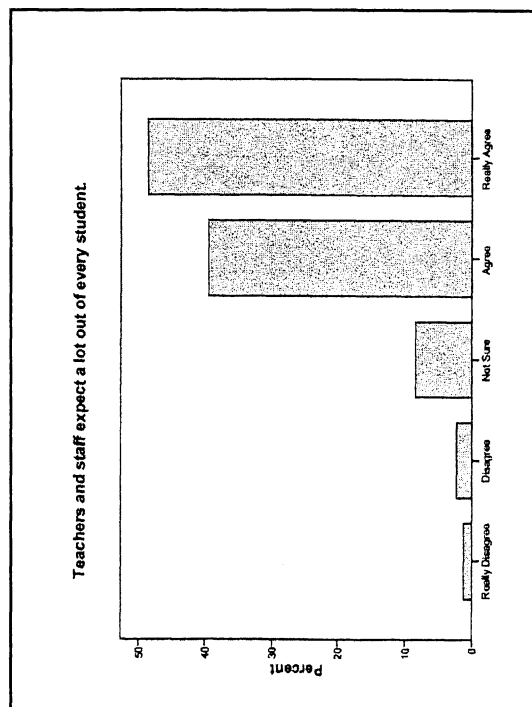
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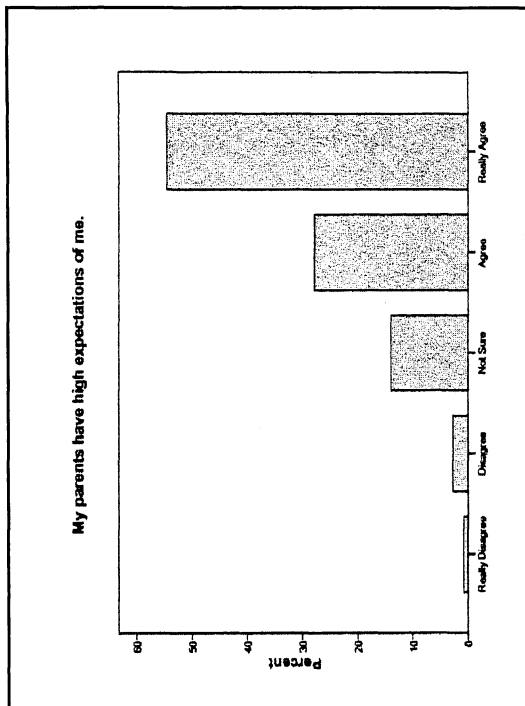
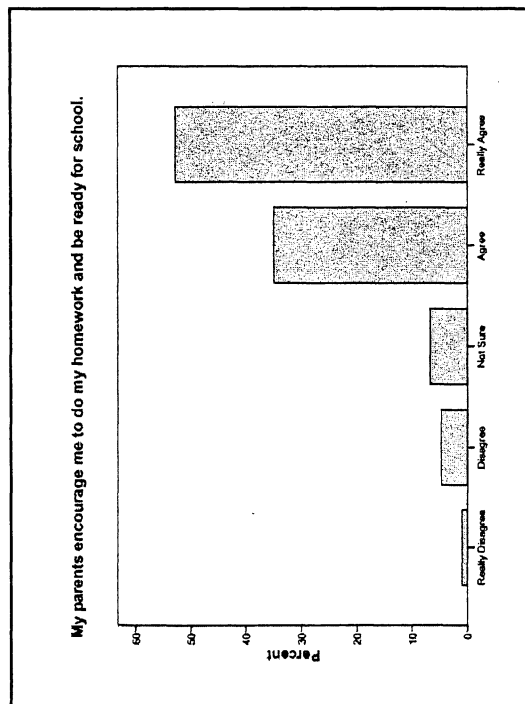
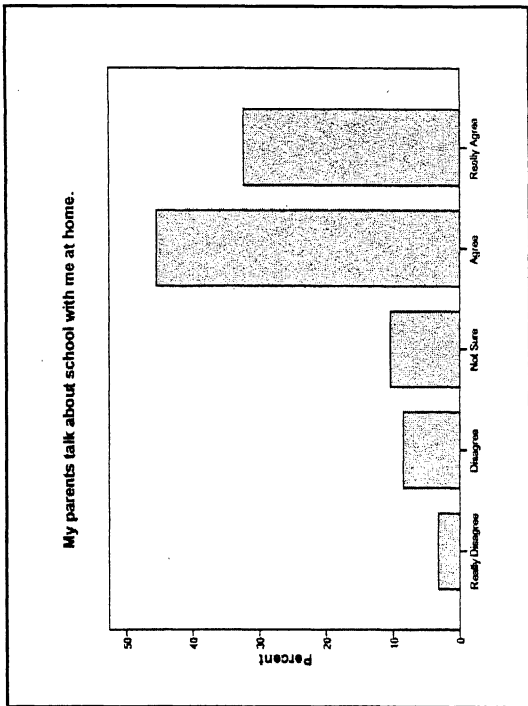
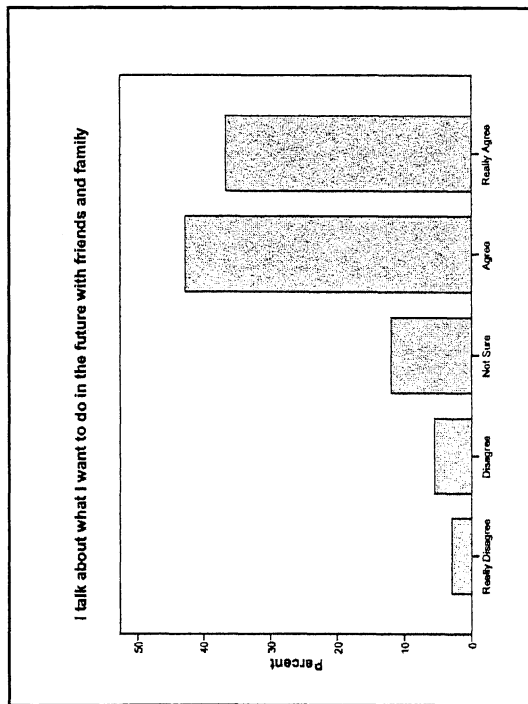
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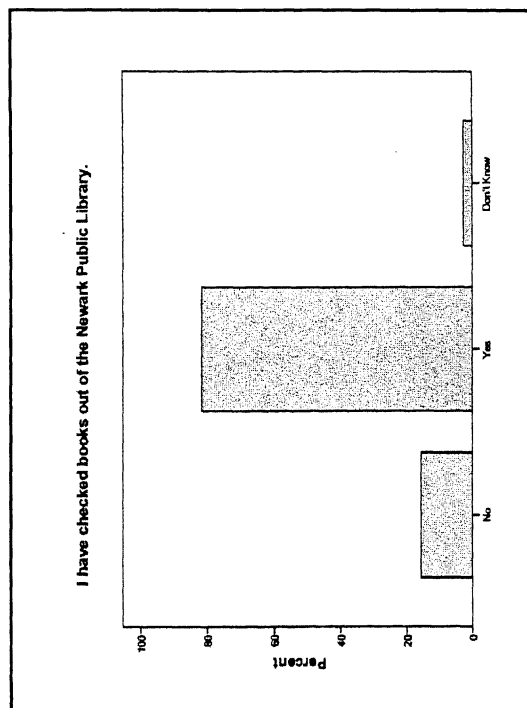
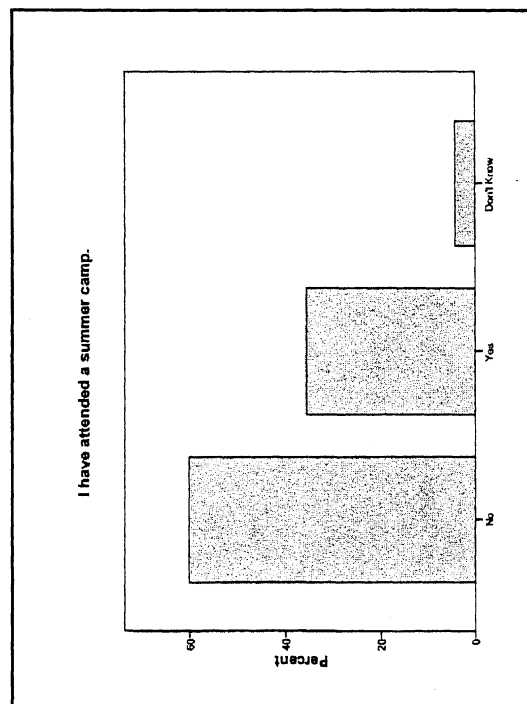
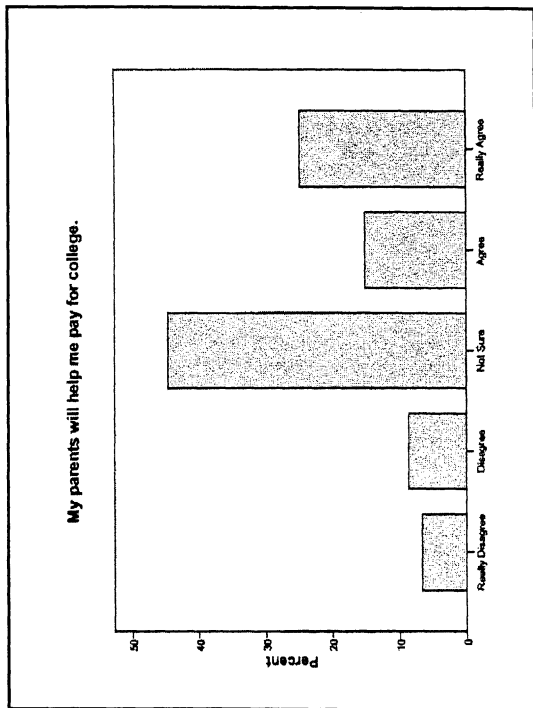
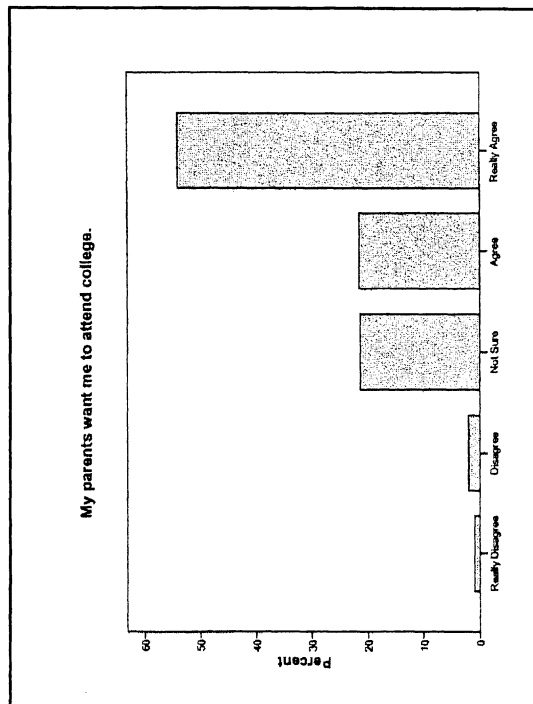
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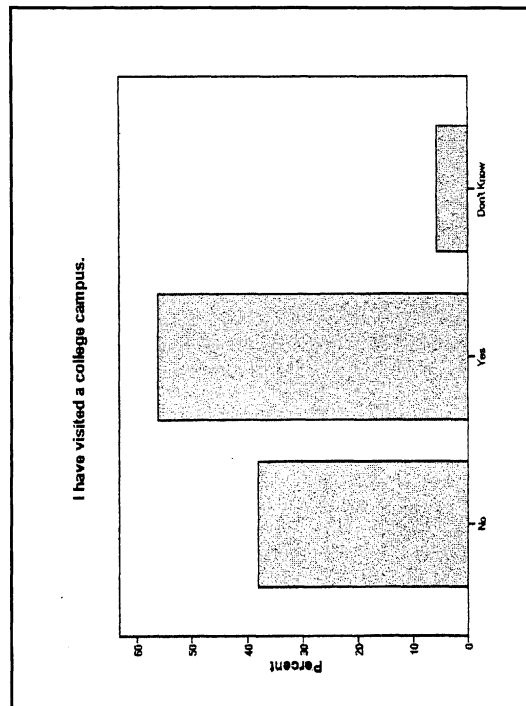
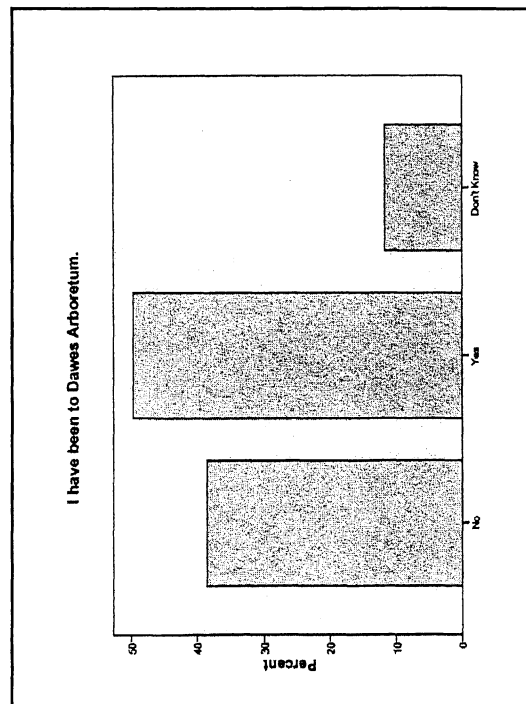
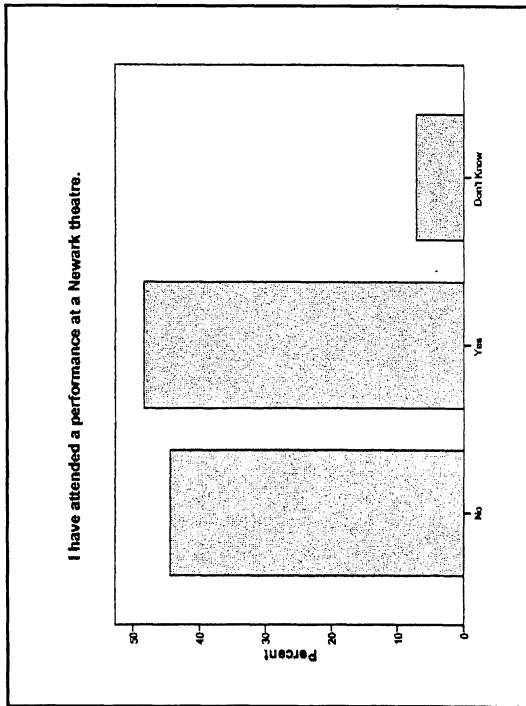
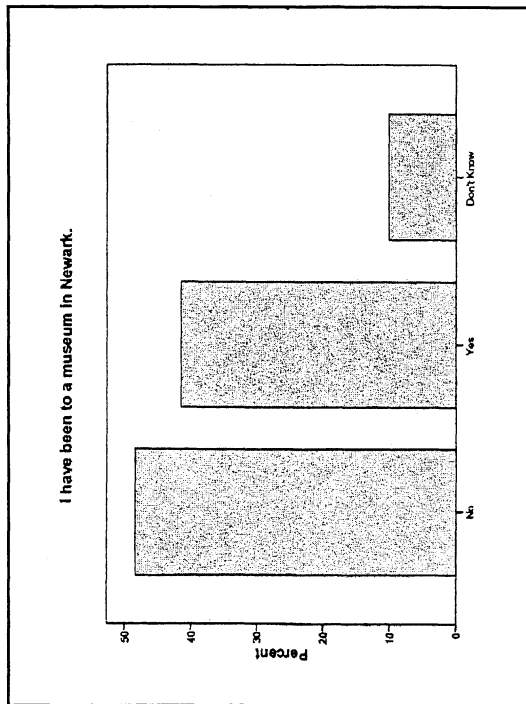
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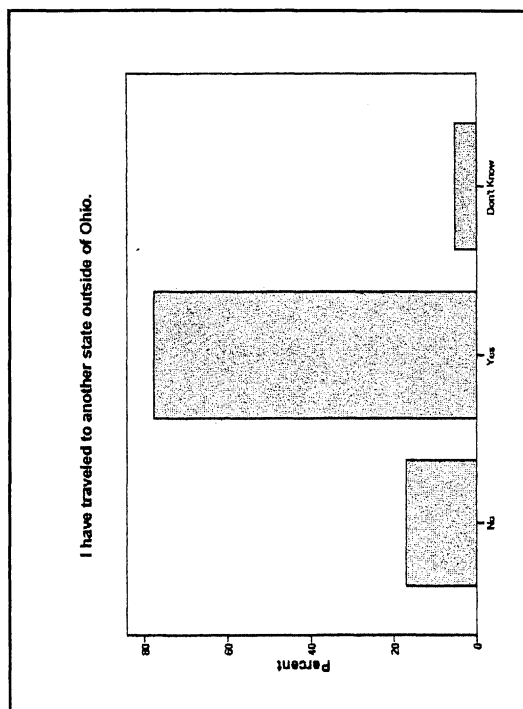
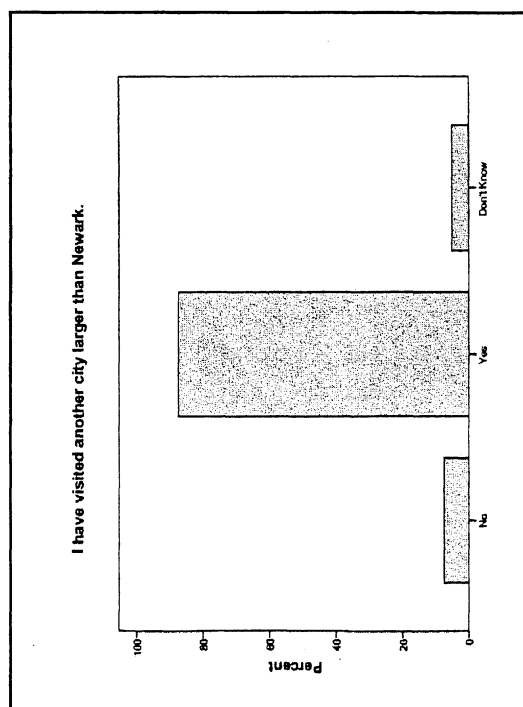
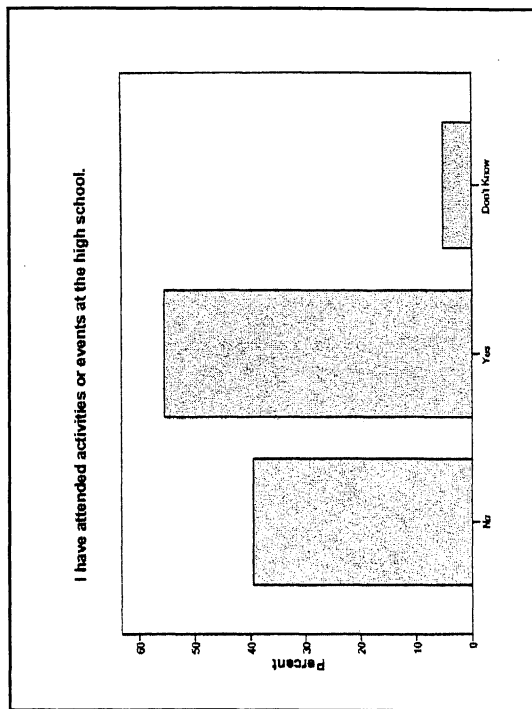
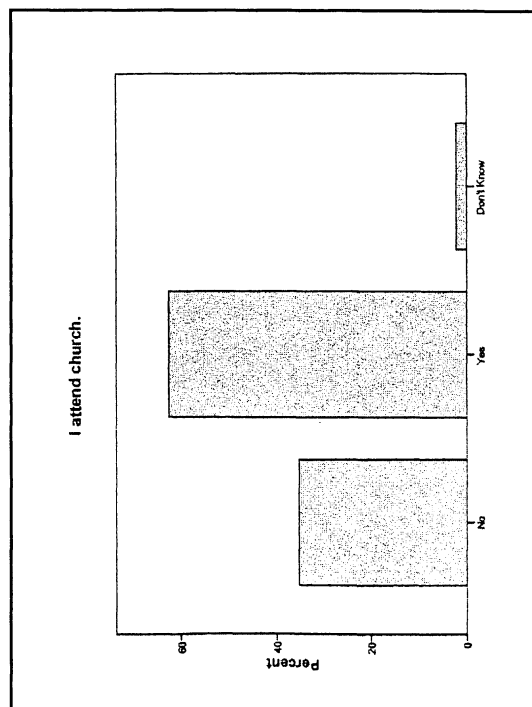
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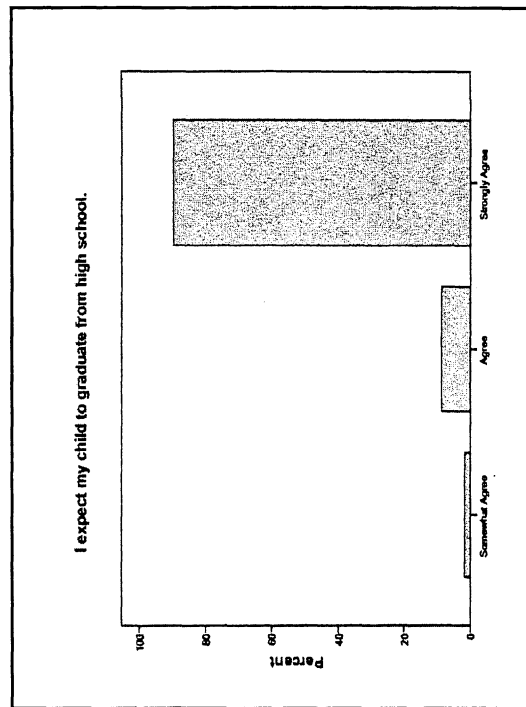
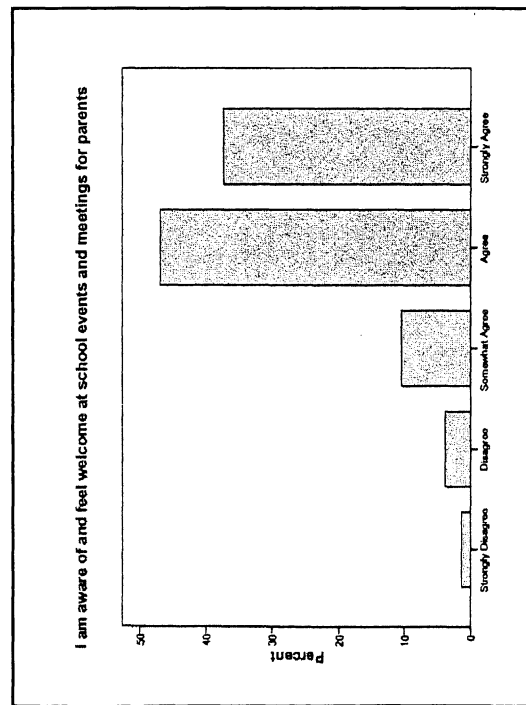
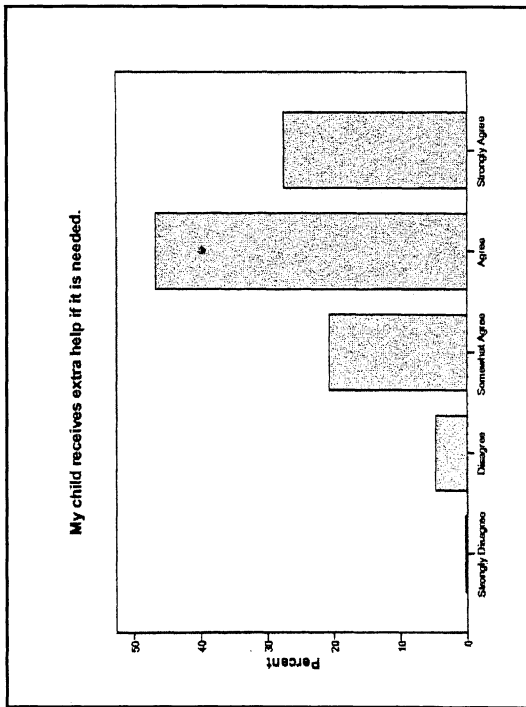
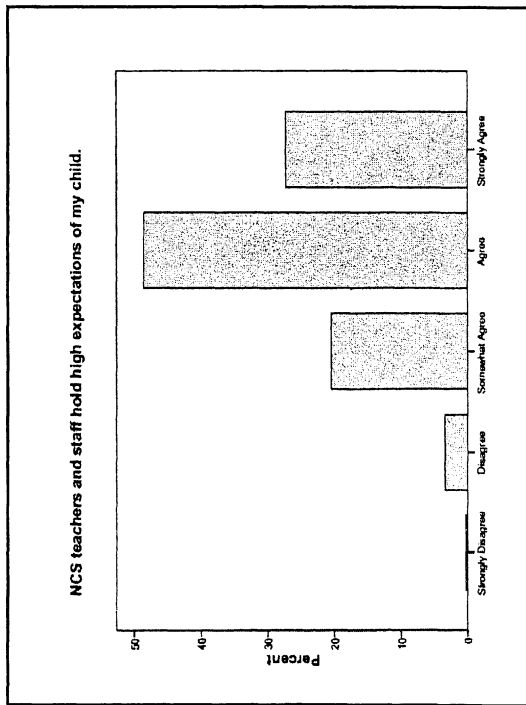
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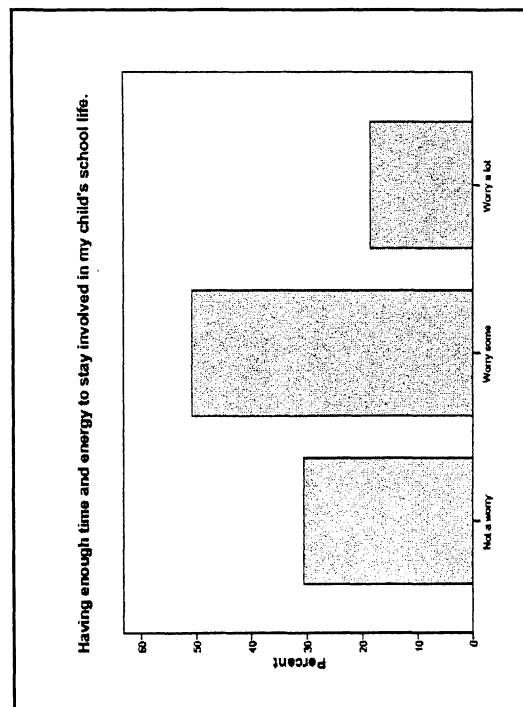
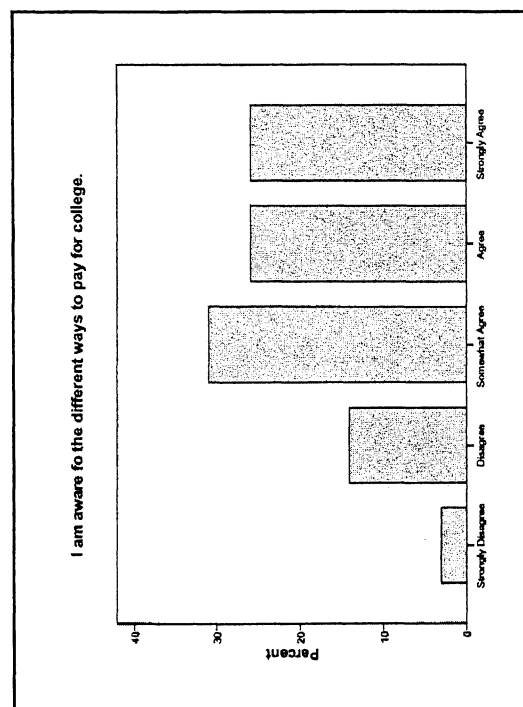
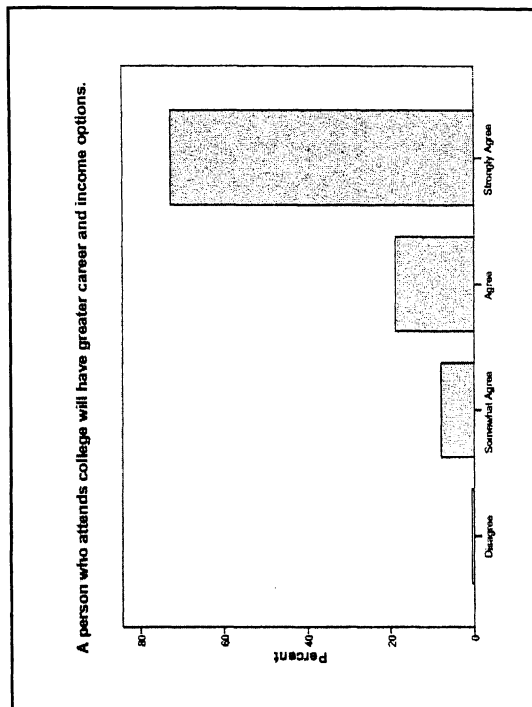
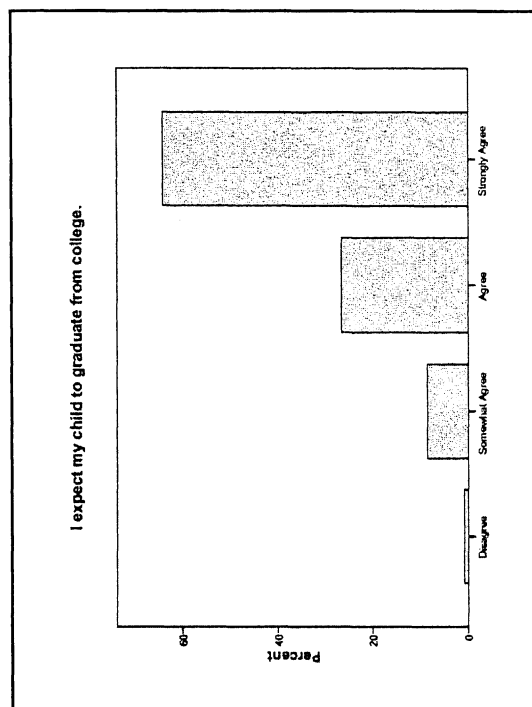


## Appendix F: Parent Survey Data

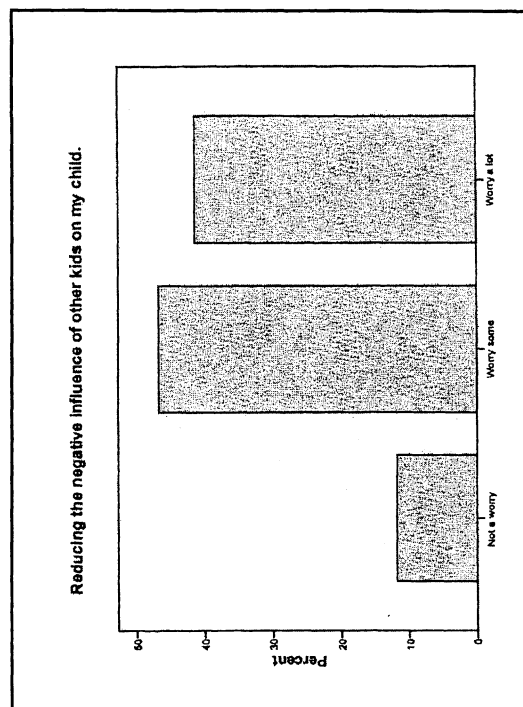
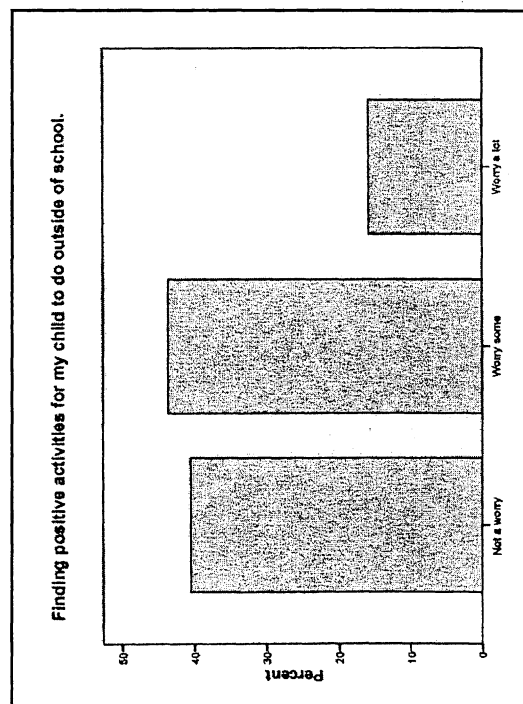
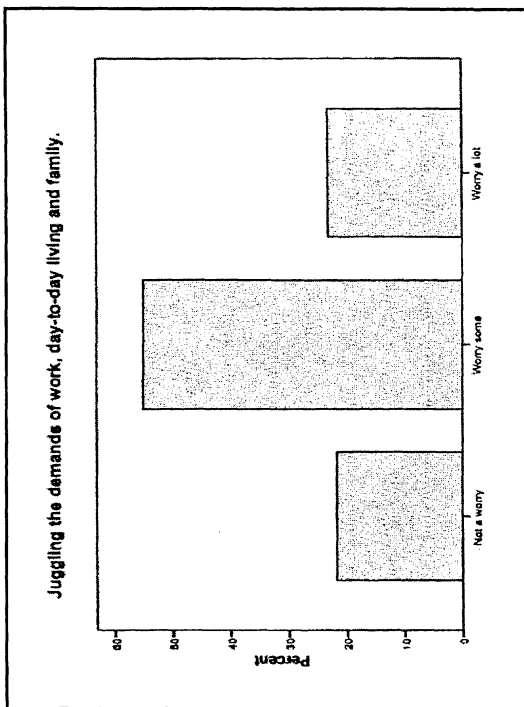
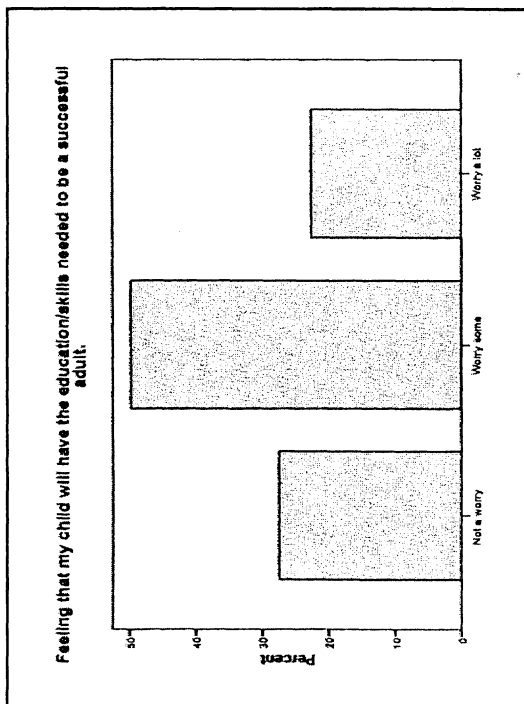




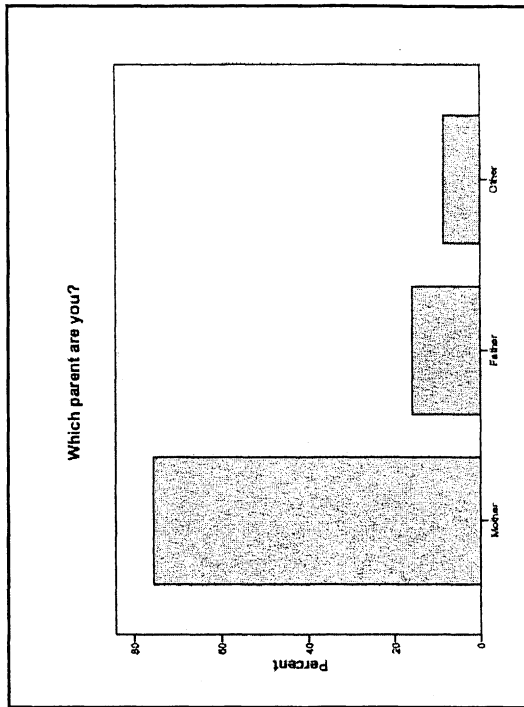
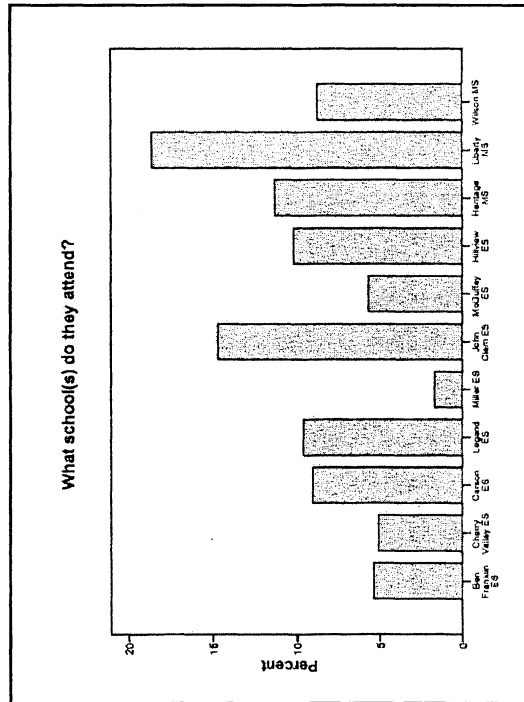
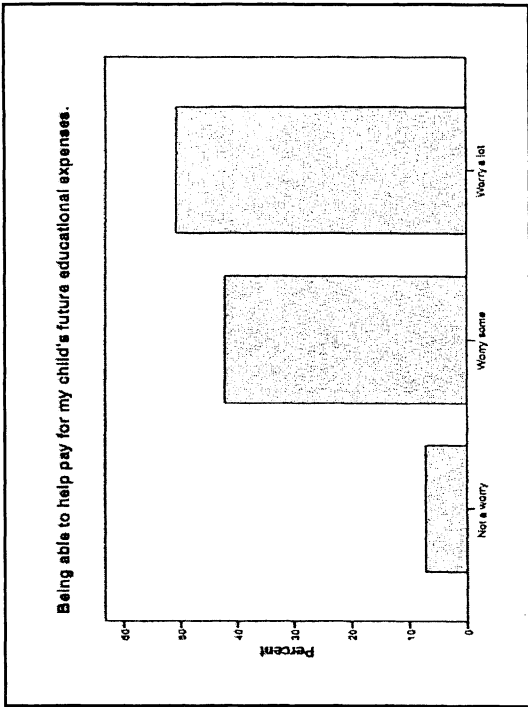
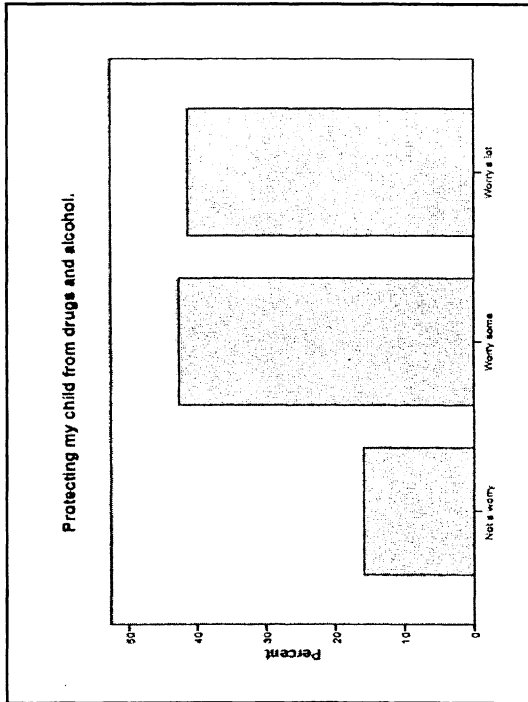
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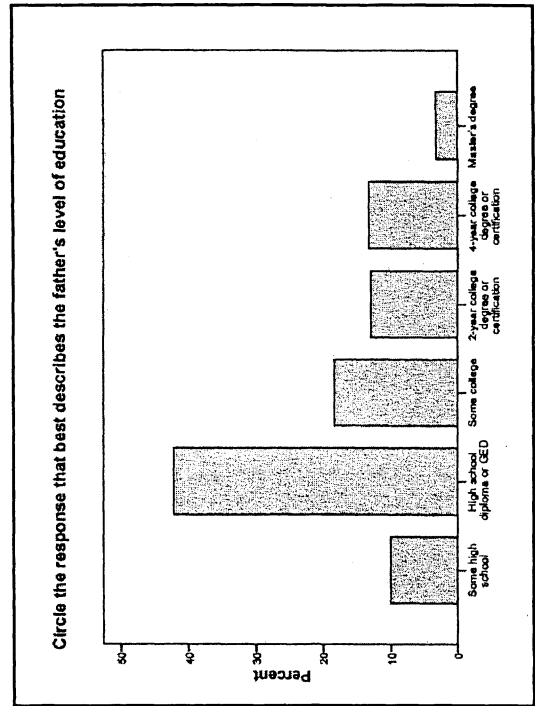
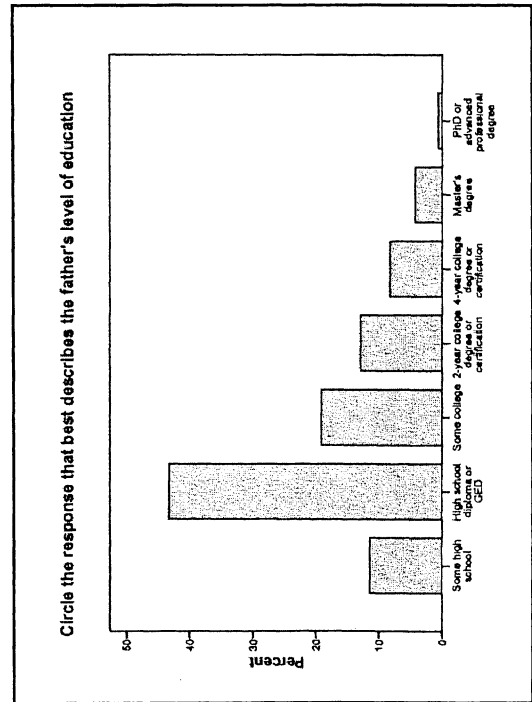
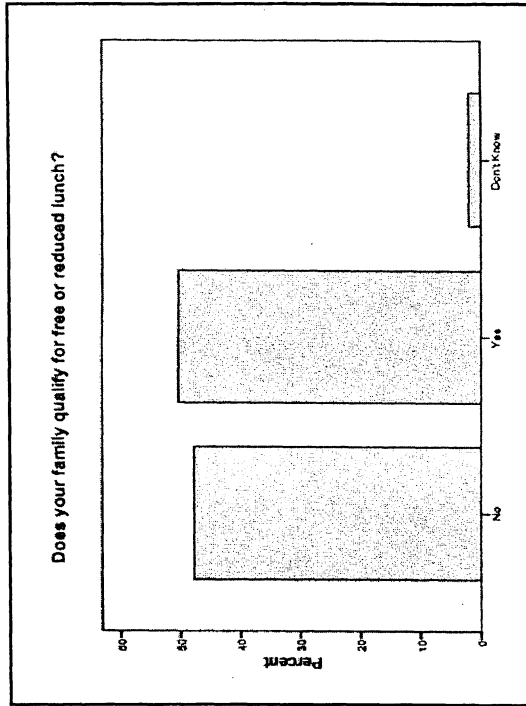
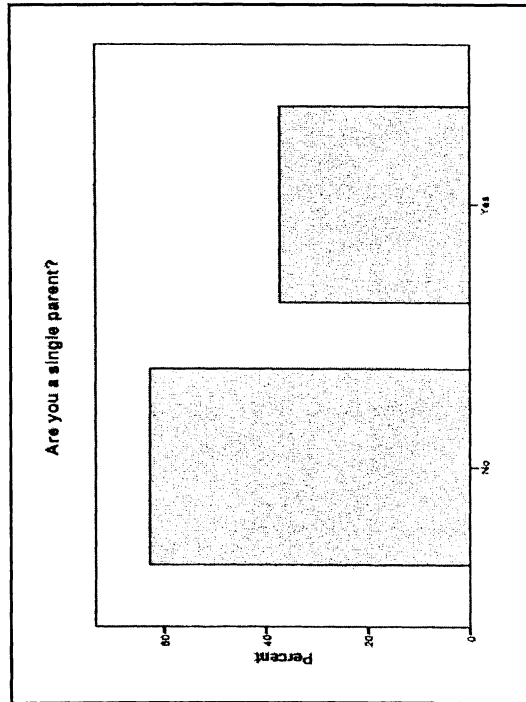
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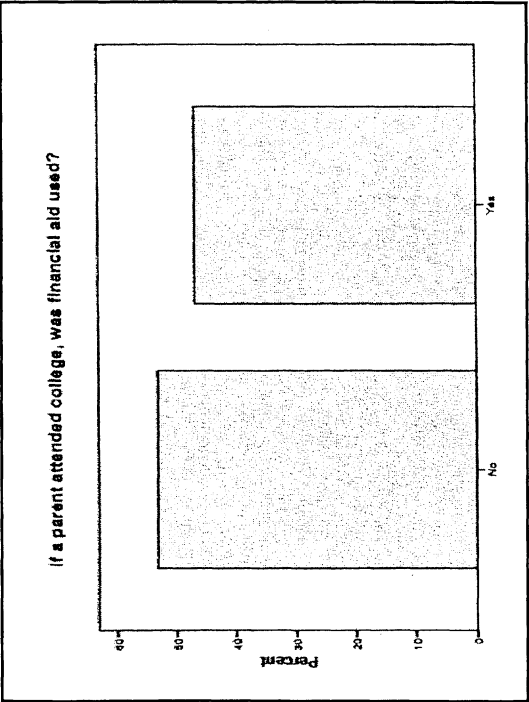
# Appendix F: Parent Survey Data (continued)



# Appendix F: Parent Survey Data (continued)



Appendix F: Parent Survey Data (continued)



## Appendix G: How Sustained Early Awareness Programming Might Impact Last Dollar Grant (LDG) Expenditures--Possible Scenarios

### Assumptions:

1. All data used in this section are taken from the past 5 years (2002-07)
2. The reported 2- and 4-year college-going rate (CGR) in NHS has been 60%. (Source: high school profile produced by NHS guidance department)
3. The 5-year average graduation rate for NHS is 74% (Source: Ohio Department of Education, 2002-2007), thus the adjusted average CGR for all students entering NHS is 44% (.74 x .60).
4. Since research shows early awareness programming to be more effective in increasing college-going rates rather than academic achievement (grade point averages, test scores, etc.), the average g.p.a. of graduating seniors will be held constant with past trends. The percentage of seniors at or above the 2.5 g.p.a. eligibility threshold for a LDG in the NHS Classes of 2007 and 2008 was 56%. (Source: NHS transcripts).
5. For those students who applied for a LDG, the conversion rate to receive a grant was 57%. Since more qualified low-income students might apply to college as a result of early awareness programming, and because college costs can be expected to rise and outpace family income, it will be assumed that the LDG conversion rate will increase 10% (from the current average 57% to 67%).
6. Renewal rates for LDGs will stay constant with past trends (51% in second year; 71% in third year; 86% in fourth year).

Given these assumptions, what might be expected if the NHS Class of 2016 (current 4<sup>th</sup> grade class), and the classes that follow, have the benefit of sustained early college awareness programming? The current approximate size of the Class of 2016 is 482 students. A 2.5% net attrition (moving out of the district will exceed moving into the district) over the course of the students' 8 years in NCS is also calculated into each graduation scenario and the class sizes shown below.

### **Approximate size of current 4<sup>th</sup> grade class (Class of 2016) = 482**

The size of class when the Class of 2016 becomes graduating seniors:

- ❖ With a 74% graduation rate projected = 345
- ❖ With a 80% graduation rate projected = 374
- ❖ With a 86% graduation rate projected = 403
- ❖ With a 92% graduation rate projected = 431

Projected Number of Class of 2016 LDG Recipients Using 4 Graduation Scenarios and 4 College-going Rates (CGR)										
Possible Graduation Rates	Class of 2016 Graduation Size	Total # Eligible To apply For LDG <sup>13</sup>	Total # of LDG Apps If CGR <sup>14</sup> Were To <b>↑</b> by 15% To 50%	# of LDG's Awarded <sup>15</sup>	Total # of LDG Apps If CGR were To <b>↑</b> by 25% To 55%	# of LDG's Awarded	Total # of LDG Apps If CGR were To <b>↑</b> by 50% To 66%	# of LDG's Awarded	Total # of LDG Apps If CGR were To <b>↑</b> by 100% To 88%	# of LDG's Awarded
Low (74%)	345	193	97 <sup>16</sup>	65 <sup>17</sup>	106	71	127	85	170	114
Mid (80%)	374	209	105	70	115	77	138	92	184	123
High (86%)	403	226	113	76	124	83	149	100	199	133
Dream (92%)	431	241	120	80	132	88	159	107	212	142

<sup>13</sup> Multiplying class size by .56 equals the total number of students eligible to apply for a LDG. The rate of .56 is the typical percentage of graduating NHS students who have a 2.5 or higher g.p.a., thus are academically eligible to receive a LDG.

<sup>14</sup> CGR = College-going rate (baseline = 44%)

<sup>15</sup> The number of LDGs awarded is reached by multiplying the number of applications by the assumed conversion rate of .67

<sup>16</sup> The numbers in the shaded boxes represent the projected number of students who want to attend college and apply for a LDG.

<sup>17</sup> The numbers that are in bold and italics represent the total number of LDGs awarded.

To get a sense of how some of the numbers would add up to actual dollars, below and on the next page are financial projections using two of the possible graduations rates from the previous table. Each calculation is made assuming a 50% increase in the college-going rate, from the current baseline of 44% to 66%. For these projections, it will also be assumed that the number of students in each class stays the same and the actual number of Last Dollar Grant applications will remain constant for the four class years. In addition, the number of renewals is figured using the historical rates mentioned earlier in the assumptions.

Projected LDG expenditures using 80% graduation rate and a 50% increase in CGR to 66%						College Year
NHS Graduation Year	2016	2017	2018	2019		
LDG Applications Total Eligible \$ Granted	138 92	138 92	138 92	138 92 \$92,000	Freshman	
LDG Applications Total Eligible \$ Granted	70 60	70 60	70 60 \$60,000		Sophomore	
LDG Applications Total Eligible \$ Granted	50 43	50 43 \$43,000			Junior	
LDG Applications Total Eligible \$ Granted	43 32 \$32,000				Senior	
Total Projected LDG expenditures = \$227,000						



Projected LDG expenditures using 86% graduation rate and a 50% increase in CGR to 66%						
NHS Graduation Year	2016	2017	2018	2019		
LDG Applications	149	149	149	149	Freshman	
Total Eligible	100	100	100	100		
\$ Granted				\$100,000		
LDG Applications	76	76	76		Sophomore	
Total Eligible	65	65	65			
\$ Granted			\$65,000			
LDG Applications	54	54			Junior	
Total Eligible	46	46				
\$ Granted		\$46,000				
LDG Applications	46				Senior	
Total Eligible	39					
\$ Granted	\$39,000					
Total Projected LDG expenditures = \$250,000						

Obviously, if the “perfect storm” hit (graduation rate at 92% and a doubling of the college-going rate to 88%), the potential LDG expenditures would be quite significant (\$355,000). However, given the weighty challenges faced presently by NCS and the fact that no college access program can boast of doubling college-going rates in the entire student body, such a scenario would be most likely impossible. Even the two projections shown here are extremely optimistic and probably represent best-case scenarios in their own right. Thus if more modest, and perhaps realistic, gains are made in the college-going rates (15-25% increases), and even assuming future graduation rates exceeding 80%, the organization’s growing endowment and any future fundraising efforts will more than likely be able to absorb the increase in Last Dollar Grant expenditures.