



## Research Brief

### Summer Quest Program 2007

*The conclusions presented in this report represent the perspective of the Department of Postsecondary Education researchers, and are not meant to be the final determinant of the nature nor quality of the program. We hope they may encourage improvement within and discussion around the program.*



Prepared by the Chicago Public Schools Department of Postsecondary Education

## Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
I. Demographic & Academic Summary of 2007 Summer Quest Participants.....	4
II. Summer Quest Pre-Questionnaire.....	7
III. Summer Quest Post Questionnaire.....	19
IV. Group Discussion.....	34
V. Student Interviews.....	35
VI. Student Essays.....	38
VII. Appendix.....	41

## **Executive Summary**

### **The Summer Quest Program**

Summer Quest is a summer enrichment program presented by the Department of Postsecondary Education. It provides mid-tier and upper-tier Chicago Public Schools students in Grades 7-11 access to numerous pre-established summer programs around the country. Students must have a grade point average of 2.5 or above for academic programs. There are some opportunities for students with grade point averages from 2.0 to 2.5. Students spend one to six weeks on college campuses, elite college prep school campuses, arts institutions, and at top outdoor leadership schools. The Summer Quest experience is meant to provide both academic and social enrichment, and to encourage students to aspire to meaningful postsecondary endeavors.

CPS students in the seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh grades are encouraged to apply to Summer Quest. The program requires a two-step application process. In 2007, three-hundred-ninety two students completed the initial Summer Quest applications in early March. In subsequent months, those applicants who were accepted in this first phase applied to specific summer enrichment programs. Since Summer Quest works with many institutions, admission qualifications, applications and deadlines for the second phase of applications do vary. Sixty-eight students from forty-six different high schools and elementary schools attended fifty different Summer Quest Programs.

The programs are funded by both Summer Quest and scholarships provided by the summer program partner. This covers eighty to ninety percent of the program costs. CPS families are required to make a minimal contribution based on family need and length of the program.

Once all students return from their summer programs, they are asked to attend a “Summer Quest Wrap-Up Session” in early September. They are given the opportunity to celebrate their accomplishments and reflect on their summer experiences. Students were asked to bring essays about their experience to the session, as well as photos from their programs. Eighty-one students attended the Wrap-Up where they interviewed each other about their experiences and recorded their responses. They were also given a questionnaire to fill out.

### **Program Administration**

The Chicago Public Schools administers the Summer Quest Program through its Department of Postsecondary Education. The department serves as a postsecondary resource for students, parents and school staff as it works to increase the college-going rate among CPS students. CPS has a system wide goal to increase the percentage of its graduates that attend college from about 47% in 2004 to 64% (the national average) by 2010. The Department of Postsecondary Education is working to reach this goal through various programs including Summer Quest.

### **Purpose of the Report**

The Department of Postsecondary Education’s research unit is presenting this report to document the Summer Quest participants’ experiences, and to begin to understand the

participants themselves. We would like to have a strong knowledge-base of students' summer program experiences and their own perceptions of these experiences. More specifically, we would like to learn about Summer Quest participants' views concerning their postsecondary educations. This all may inform the way the program is implemented in the future, the way the program is marketed, and the way that information about the program is disseminated to students and their families. This report may also aid in the development of a program evaluation in future years.

### **Organization of Report**

The report includes basic information describing the Summer Quest participants, and then is divided into six sections:

- Demographic & Academic Data
- Pre-Questionnaire
- Post-Questionnaire
- Discussion Groups
- Student Interviews
- Student Essays

The results are reported graphically when possible. Examples are provided for categories developed by the researcher. In certain cases, text is provided to further explain the data.

### **Methodology**

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected in order to evaluate the Summer Quest Program. In many instances qualitative data is presented quantitatively in order to show the percentage of students who responded in similar ways. All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. The questionnaires included both open-ended and multiple choice/check the box questions. The student interviews and student essays provided the bulk of the qualitative data.

### **Coding Scheme for Open-Ended Questions**

A researcher conducted a content analysis to develop categories for coding responses for each open-ended item as well as responses drawn from the discussion groups, student interviews, and student essays. This was done inductively. After the researcher went through the students' responses and developed a sense of what type of responses to expect, categories were developed and then the responses were read through a second time and counted. When a student's response fell into two categories, it was coded for each of them. For example, the response, "I am now more knowledgeable about the field of engineering, and feel a lot more confident" would be coded under the categories, "Gained a skill specific to program" **and** "Increased self-confidence and independence." There is not, therefore, a one-to-one relationship between respondents and responses. Percentages are determined, however, based on the number of respondents.

## Summary of Results

This report highlights what students enjoyed about their experiences, what challenges they faced, what skills they learned and how they view college now that they have completed their Summer Quest experience. In general, students seem to have enjoyed both social and academic aspects of their programs, as well as learned more about college from their experiences.

### Views of College

The Summer Quest Pre and Post-Questionnaires provide significant insight into students' college plans. Most students reported they plan to earn a bachelors OR an advanced degree. The questionnaire asked students to list three specific colleges they plan to attend. Only 12% of students wrote down *only* Illinois schools in the pre-questionnaire. That percentage remained the same in the post-questionnaire. Twenty-six percent of students wrote down *only* out of state schools in the pre-questionnaire. That number rose slightly to 28% in the post-questionnaire. Many students wrote down at least one out-of-state school. In terms of selectivity, a majority of students wrote down at least 1 highly selective school, 23% listed only highly selective schools in the pre-questionnaire and 31% in the post-questionnaire.

The reasons they gave for listing the colleges they did were overwhelmingly based on the programs or services offered. Recommendations from teachers or counselors also play a major role in determining which colleges students would like to attend. And finally, students often considered a college's size and setting.

Although many items in the questionnaire asked students about their views on college directly, students would often mention college in their responses when they weren't asked to do so specifically. This occurred often in the student interviews and in the essays. When describing what they learned about themselves in their essays, for example, they often described how their perception of college and their future careers had been enhanced.

### Personal, Social and Academic Experiences

When asked how their Summer Quest programs changed them, students overwhelmingly described aspects of personal growth, often in terms of social skills. Academic advancement was also often cited. Interestingly, students overwhelmingly described making close friendships as a highlight. Their challenges often overlapped with their highlights and included academic and social challenges. When describing what students learned about themselves, aspects of their personalities and their abilities were most often mentioned.

## I. Demographic & Academic Summary of 2007 Summer Quest Participants

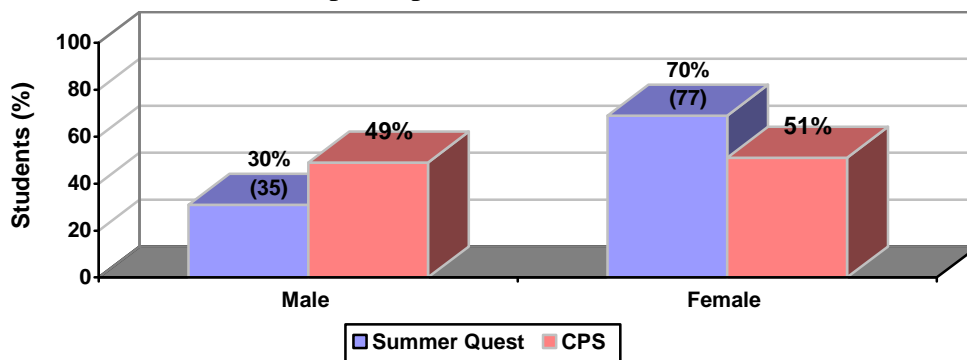
Total number of students admitted into Summer Quest programs	175
Total number of Summer Quest participants	150
Attended an academic SQ program	117
Attended a non-academic SQ program	33

### Notable Comparisons

In most demographic categories, the breakdown of Summer Quest participants is fairly proportionate to CPS students.

- With gender, however, this is not the case. Only about a third of Summer Quest participants were male.
- A much larger percentage of Asian students attended Summer Quest than Asian students that attended CPS in 2007.
- The proportion of students attending Summer Quest receiving free/reduced lunch is less than the proportion of those students in CPS.
- Seven percent of students with disabilities attended Summer Quest, while 18% of CPS students have disabilities.

Chart 1: Sex of Summer Quest participants & CPS students for 2007<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> The number shown in the parenthesis below the percentage is the frequency of responses. Includes CPS students listed as 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders in the 2006-2007 academic year.

Chart 2: Race/ethnicity of Summer Quest students & CPS students for 2007

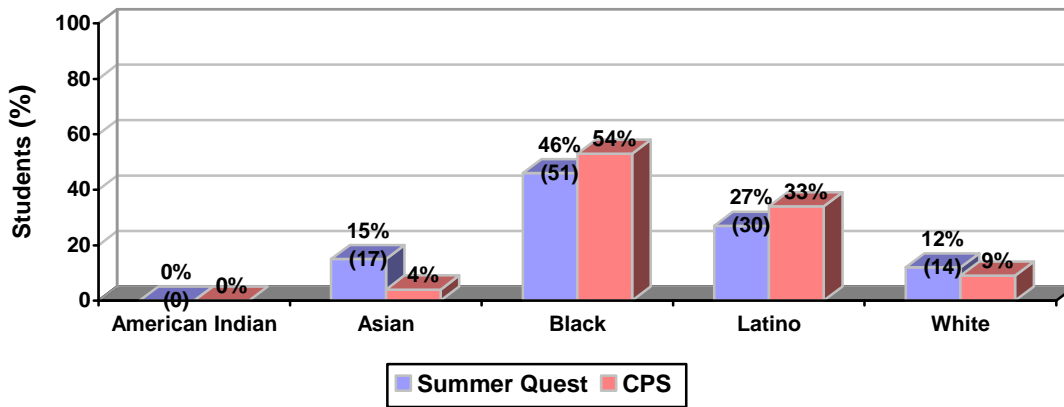


Chart 3: Summer Quest participants & CPS students for 2007: disability status, receiving free/reduced lunch, in bilingual education<sup>2</sup>

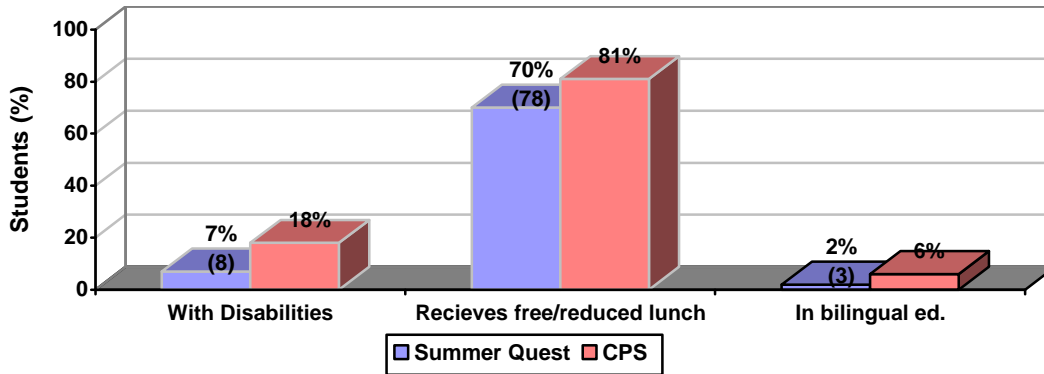


Chart 4: High school type of **only** Summer Quest participants in 2007<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Includes all physical and cognitive disabilities.

<sup>3</sup> Please see appendix for the specific high schools represented.

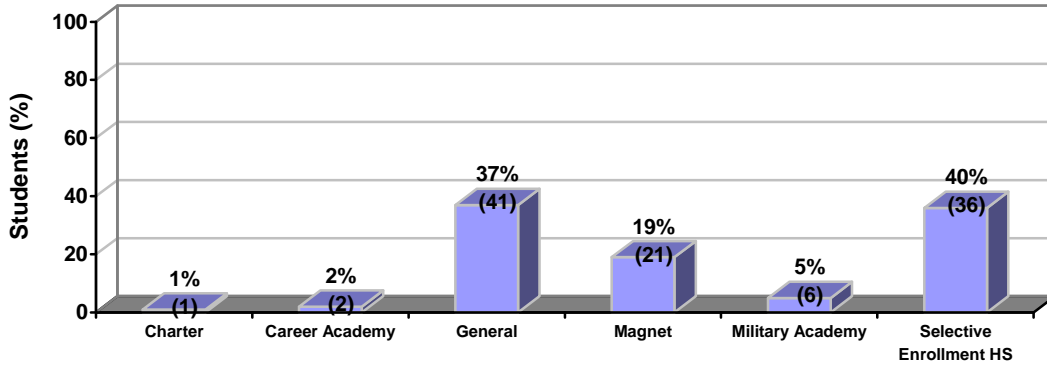
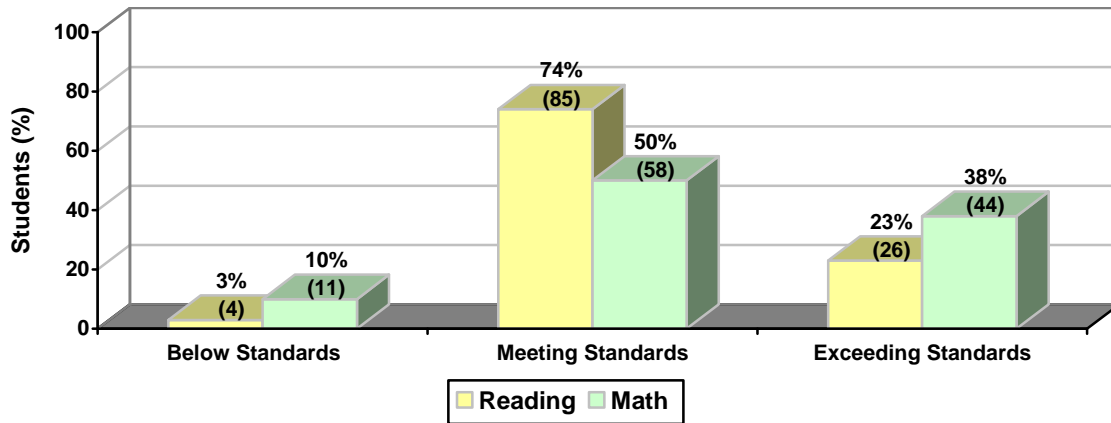


Chart 5: ISAT results for **only** Summer Quest participants



## II. Summer Quest Pre-Questionnaire

The Pre-Questionnaire is meant to gauge students' impressions prior to their summer program experience. The 2007 pre-questionnaire included twelve questions, three of which were open ended. Four of the twelve questions were not single questions, however. They were set up as a category of statements that students were asked to give their perception on. Pre-questionnaires were only analyzed if the student had completed a follow-up post-questionnaire. The following is a report of the students' responses.

### Summary of Survey Respondents

Ninety-four questionnaires were analyzed for this report.

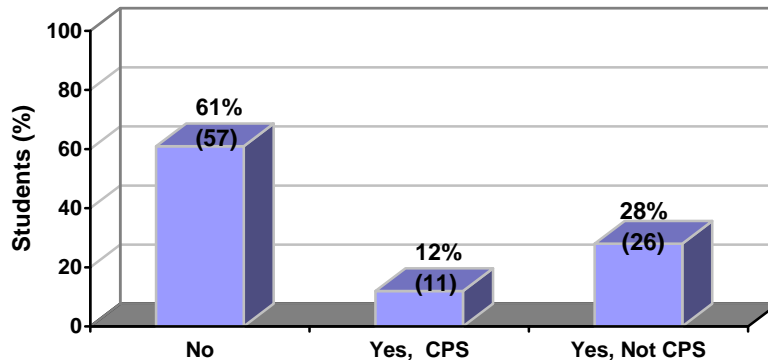
### Methodology

Frequency distributions were used to analyze non-open ended questions as well as the "top three colleges" question. For questions that asked about how much worry students' associated with the program, a continuum scale was used. For general opinions on college, the application process, and success, an agreement scale was used. The remaining open ended questions were coded into categories developed from the trends seen in student responses. Categories were NOT provided in the questionnaire. A frequency distribution was then used to analyze those responses.

### Analyzing the Responses

Percentages are calculated out of the population of students who submitted surveys. All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number which, in some instances, accounts for whole group percentages to be greater or less than one-hundred. Also, since students were able to put down more than one response for some questions, the sum of the percents may be greater than one-hundred.

### **Have you participated in a summer program before?**



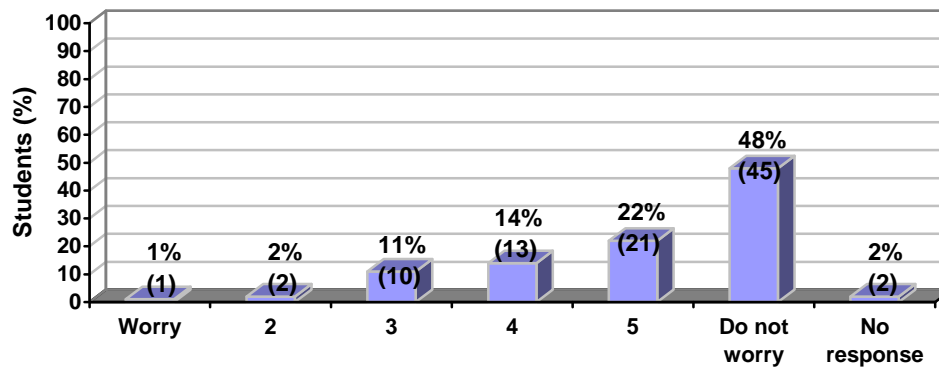
## What do you hope to get out of the Summer Quest experience?

Table 1: Number of responses that fell into developed categories

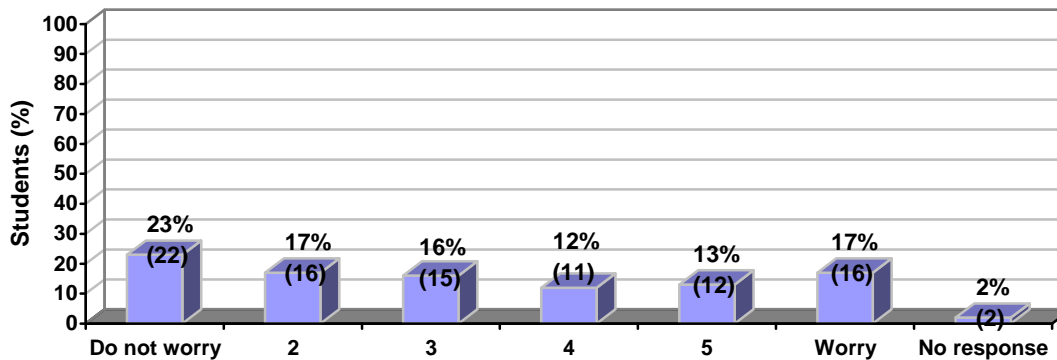
	Number of Students	Percent of Students
Prepare for college	11	12%
Experience college life	18	19%
Help in college choice	0	0%
Help with future/career plans	4	4%
Gain knowledge	40	43%
Improve academic/social skills	2	2%
Self-advancement	10	11%
Experience new/different city	3	3%
Meet new people	25	27%
Have fun	12	13%

## In going to your summer program, how much do you worry about:

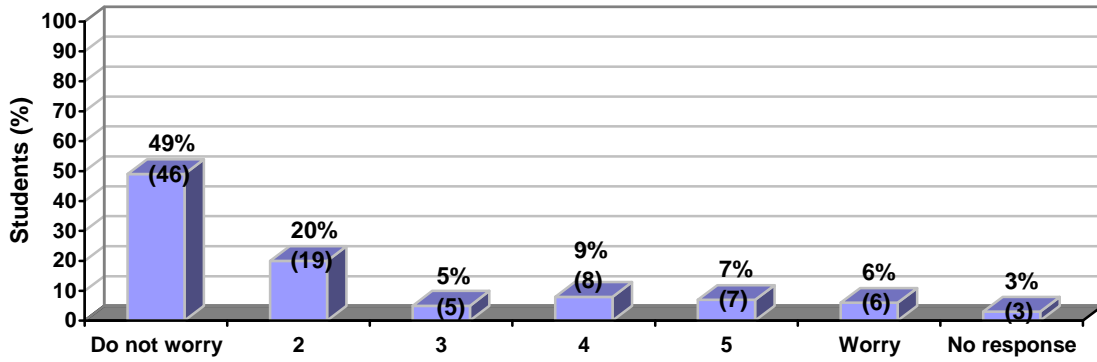
### Being away from your family?



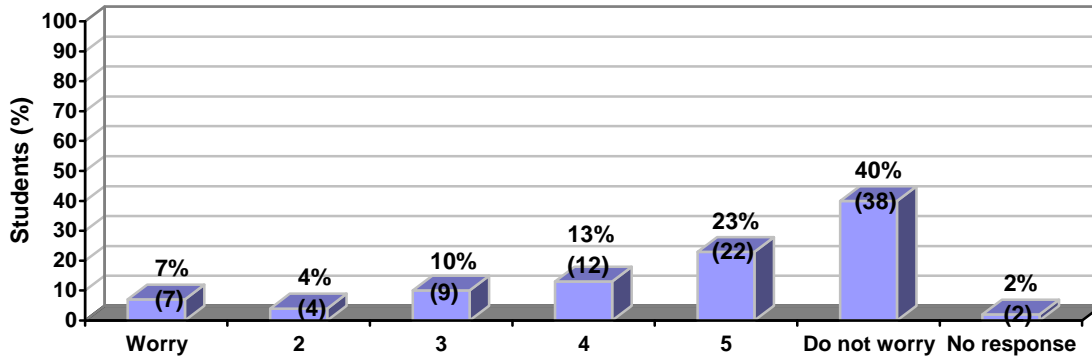
### Succeeding in class work?



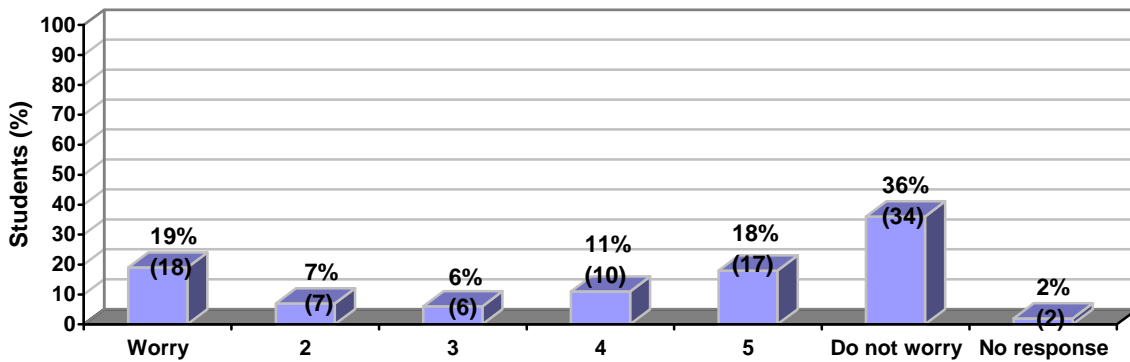
**Staying in a dorm?**



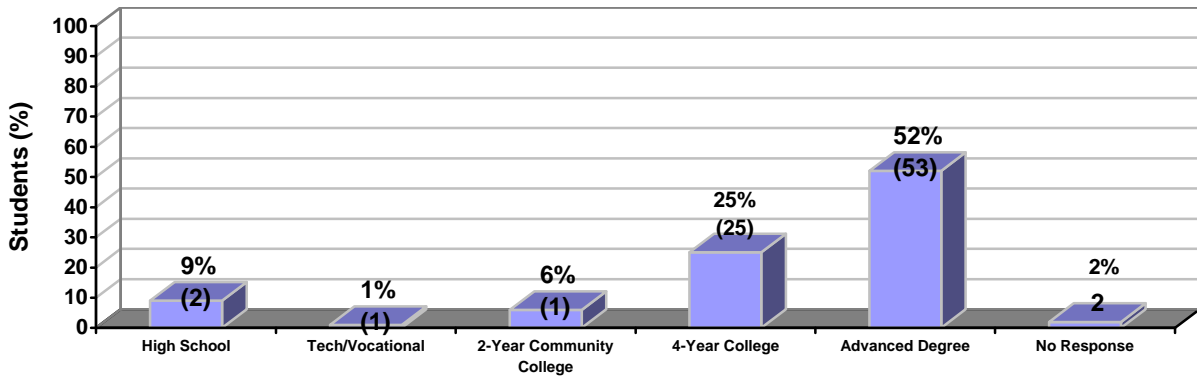
**Meeting new people?**



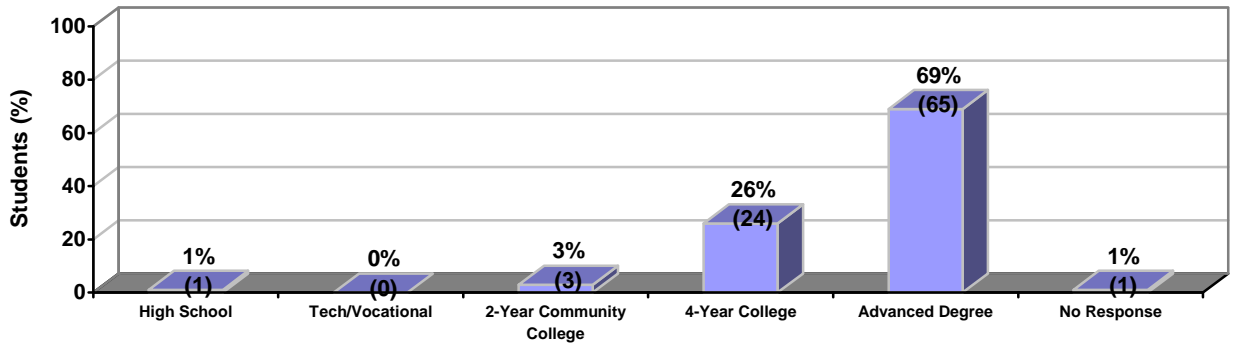
**Successfully completing the program?**



**How much education does your mother or female guardian want you to get?<sup>4</sup>**

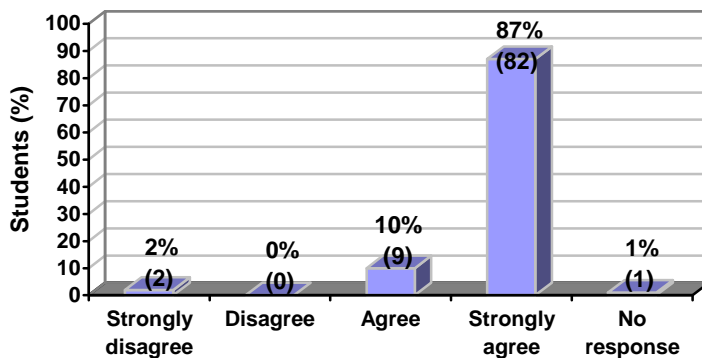


**What is the highest level of education you *hope* to get?**



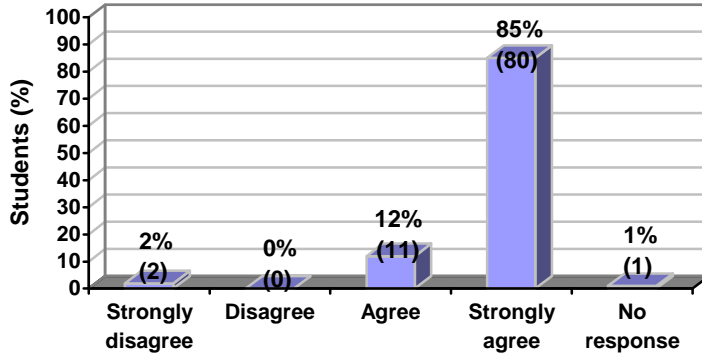
**Academic preparation for college**

**I will work hard to make sure I get into college.**

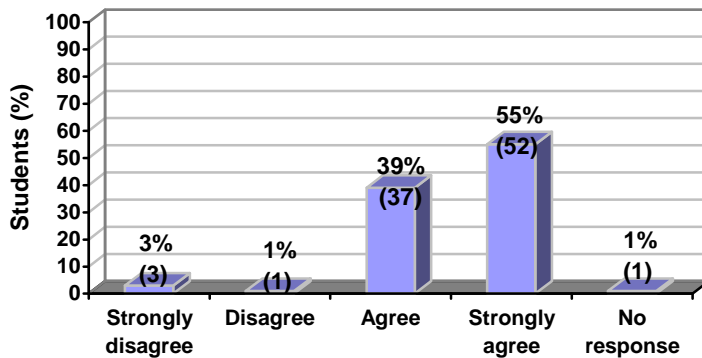


<sup>4</sup> When a student marked more than one option, we recorded only the highest level of education indicated regardless of any notes written on the survey (i.e., “or,” “maybe”).

**I know that doing my best while in high school will help me get into the college that I want.**

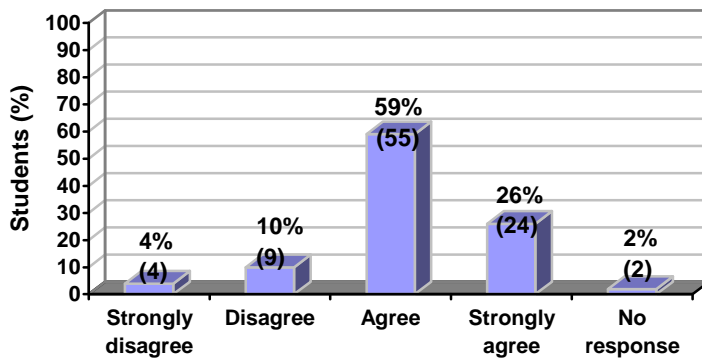


**I feel that once I graduate high school, I will be prepared to do well in college.**

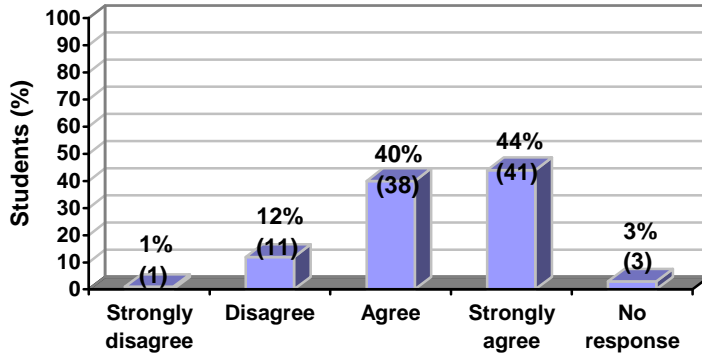


**Knowledge about college search/application process**

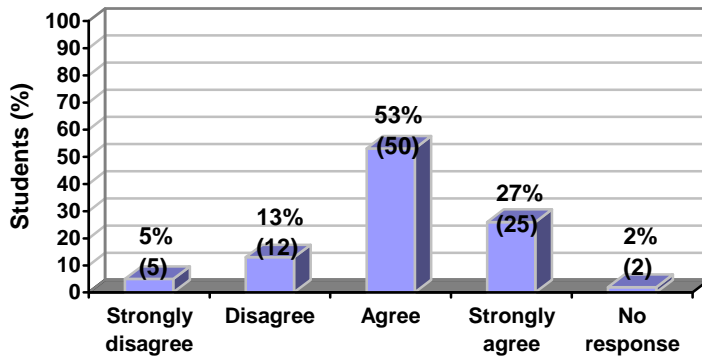
**I know how to research schools in order to find the perfect college for me.**



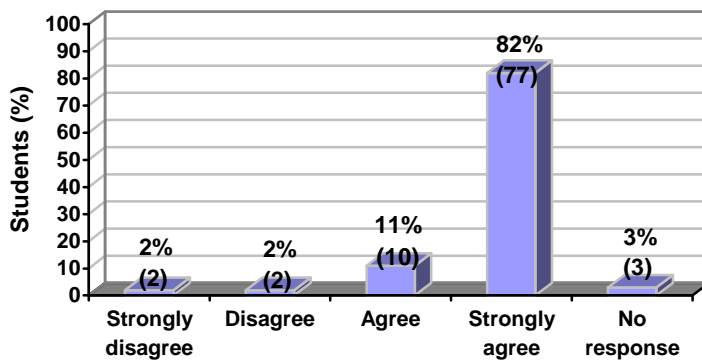
**During my search process, I will feel comfortable talking to professors, coaches, and other personnel at potential colleges.**



**I feel comfortable with the college application process.**



**I know that meeting deadlines is an essential part of the college application process.**



**I have someone in my life who I know will help me go through the search and application process.**

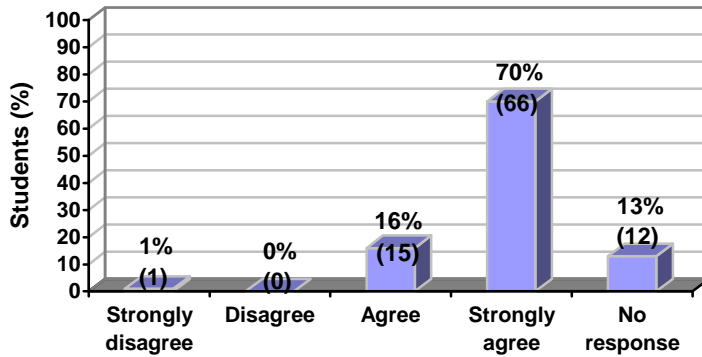
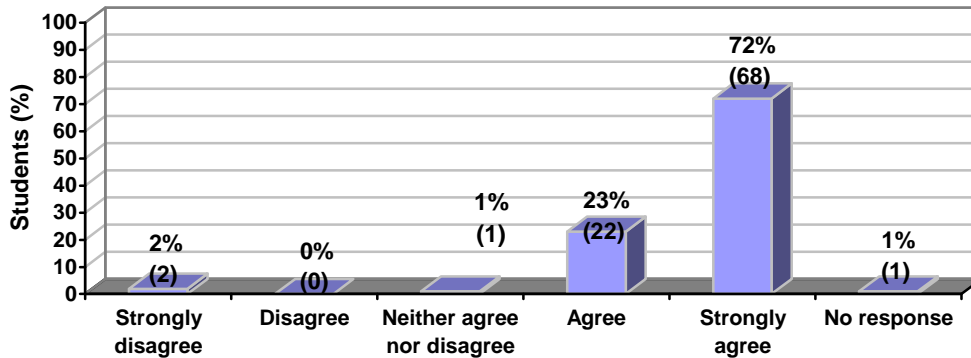


Table 2: Number of students who mentioned someone in their life who will help them in the college search and application process

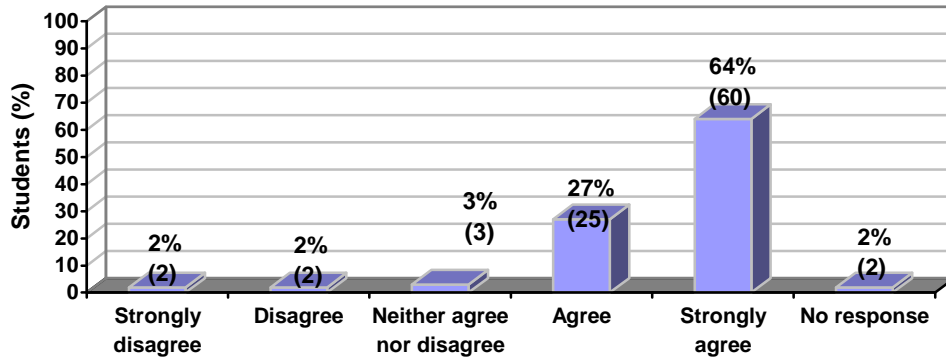
Person	Number of Students	Percentage of Students
Parent	63	67%
Relative	32	34%
Teacher	27	29%
School counselor	36	38%
Friend	22	23%
Other	1	1%

**Feelings about college**

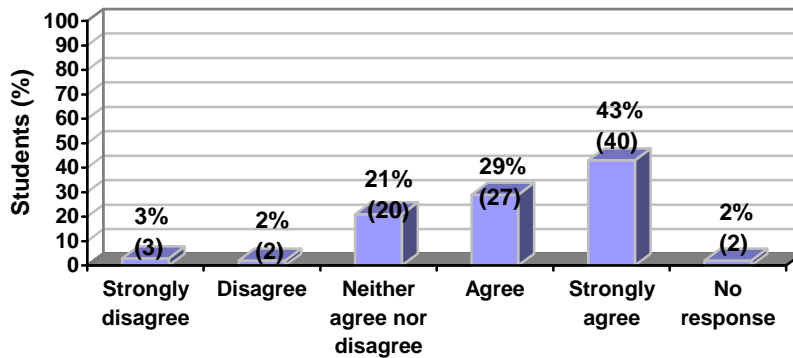
**Going to college is important to me.**



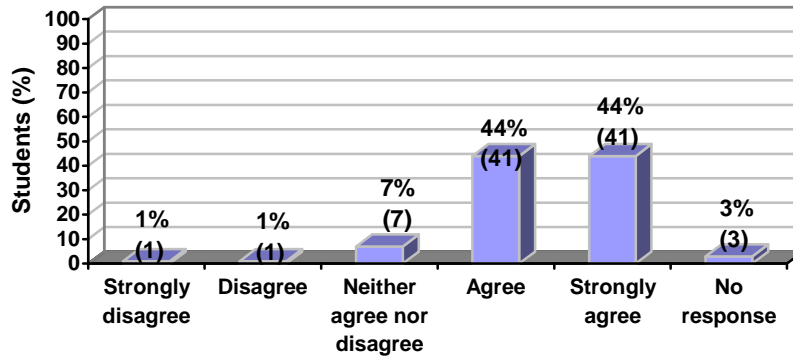
**I was interested in going to college before applying for this program.**



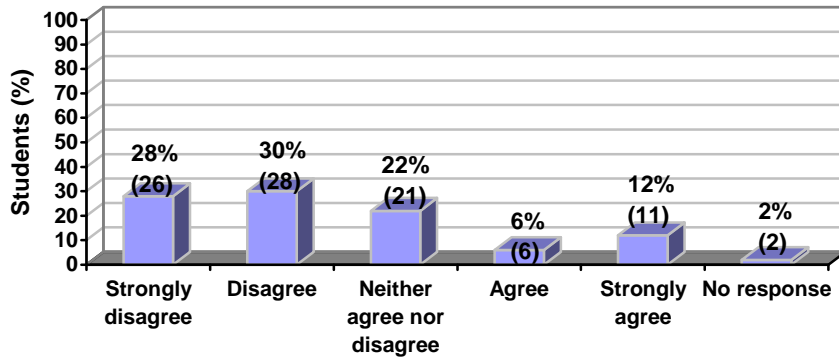
**I am even more interested in going to college after applying for this program.**



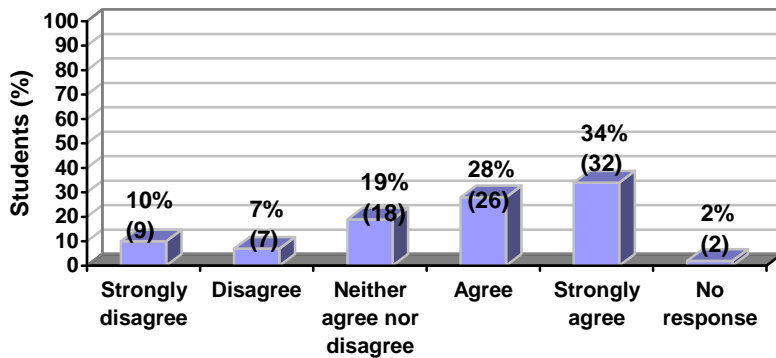
**I know I will succeed in college.**



**I know I will succeed if I choose to work instead of go to college.**



**I know I will succeed no matter what I do in life.**



**Please explain your outlook on college. How do you feel about it? Is it important to you?**

Responses for this question were overwhelmingly similar among almost all of the students. As a result, codes were not developed. Generally, students expressed that college was important to them because it offers opportunities for employment and success. Some students mentioned being nervous and excited for college. Three students mentioned college as a place to “find yourself.” One student mentioned that college was important because of the social benefits higher education offers.

**Please describe your plan after graduating high school (attending college, going into the workforce, etc.). Why are you choosing this path?**

Again, responses were very similar among almost all of the students and codes were unnecessary. All but two students plan on going to college immediately following graduating high school. The other two students plan on working/volunteering in their potential field of study for a specific amount of time, then beginning college.

The second part of this question was answered similarly to the previous question. Thus, we can report again that students chose these paths because it is important to them and leads to a career and success.

Please list up to three colleges where you have thought about applying to.

Chart 1: Number of colleges that students wrote down

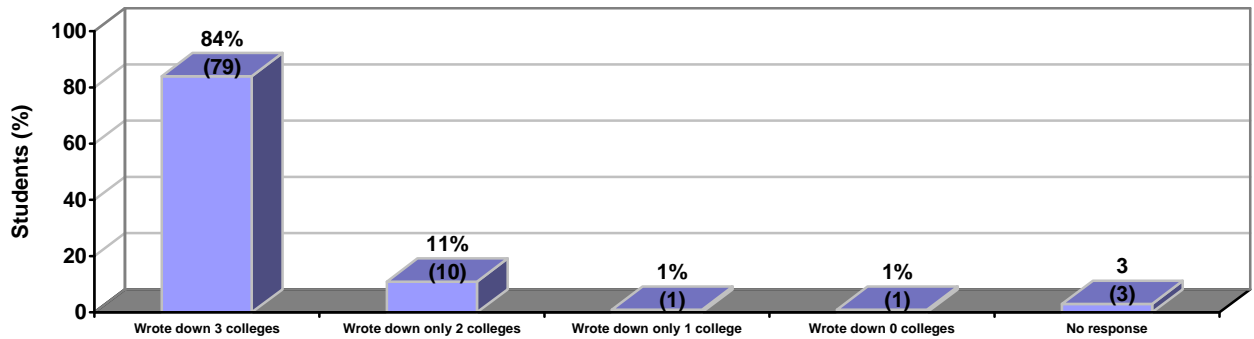


Chart 2: Number of schools students chose in Illinois

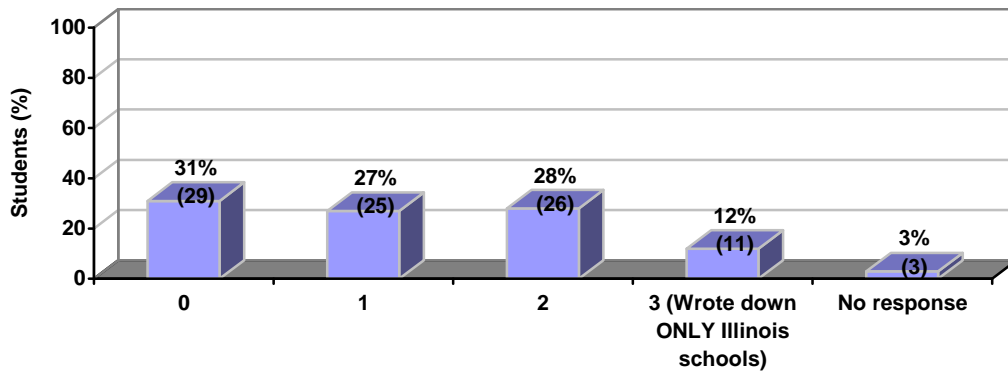
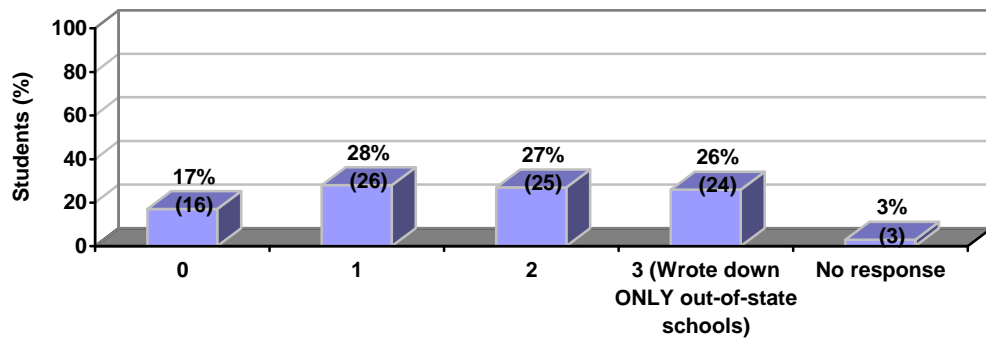
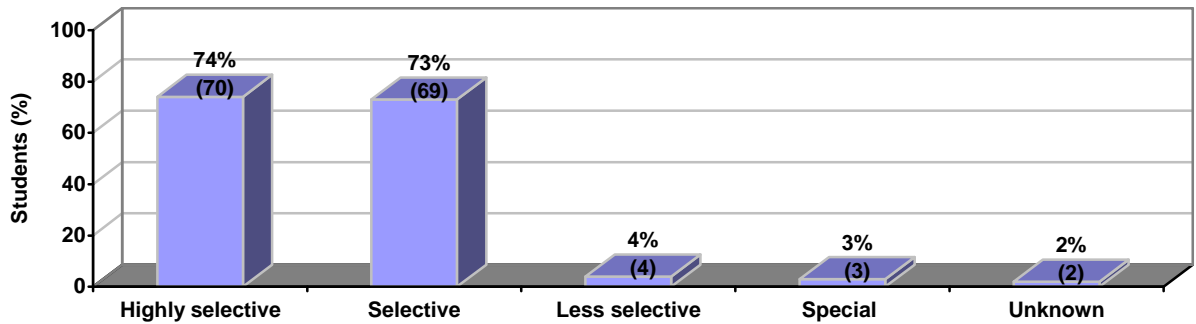


Chart 3: Number of schools students chose out-of-state

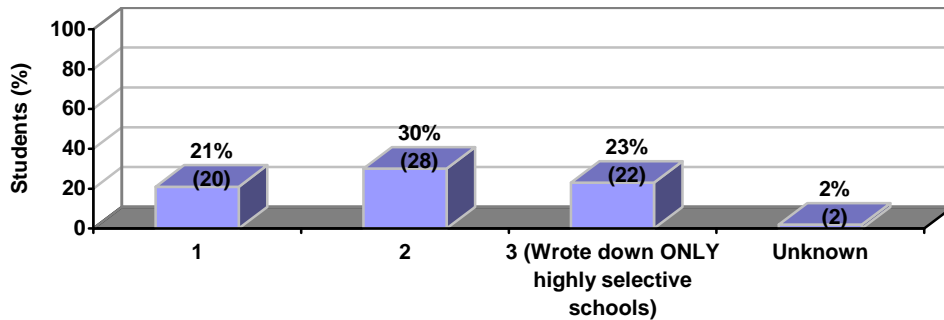


**Chart 4:** Selectivity (number of students who chose **at least one** of the following types of schools)

Selectivity rankings are taken from *Barron’s Profiles of American Colleges* 27<sup>th</sup> edition, 2007. As the categories are displayed here, “most competitive” & “highly competitive” are grouped as **highly selective**; “very competitive” & “competitive” are grouped as **selective**; and “less competitive” & “non-competitive” are grouped as **less selective**.



**Chart 5:** Number of students who wrote down one, two or three highly selective schools



**Think about your top choice and select the 3 most important reasons this is your top school.**

Table 3: Number of students who marked each category

	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percent of Students</b>
<b>Program/Services Offered</b>		
Specific academic program	62	66%
Athletic program	17	18%
Student support services	6	6%
Religious affiliation	0	0%
<b>Personal</b>		
<b>Connection/Recommendation</b>		
Recommendation from teacher/counselor	20	21%
Recommendation from parent/relative	17	18%
Recommendation from other adult	7	7%
A friend goes/went there	5	5%
A relative goes/went there	9	10%
<b>Physical Attributes</b>		
Size of school	29	31%
Being close to home	15	16%
Being far away from home	20	21%
Urban setting	22	23%
Non-urban setting	0	0%
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
Social life	15	16%
Cost	13	14%
Racial/ethnic composition of school	8	9%
Recruited by schools	7	7%
Have a good chance of being admitted	11	12%
Other	4	4%
No response	1	1%

### **III. Summer Quest Post-Questionnaire**

The Post-Questionnaire is meant to gauge students' impressions of their summer program experiences. The 2007 questionnaire included fourteen questions, seven of which were open ended. Four of the fourteen questions were not single questions, however. They were set up as a category of statements that students were asked to give their perception on. Post-Questionnaires were only analyzed if the student had completed a pre-questionnaire. The following is a report of the students' responses.

#### **Summary of Survey Respondents**

Ninety-four questionnaires were analyzed for this report.

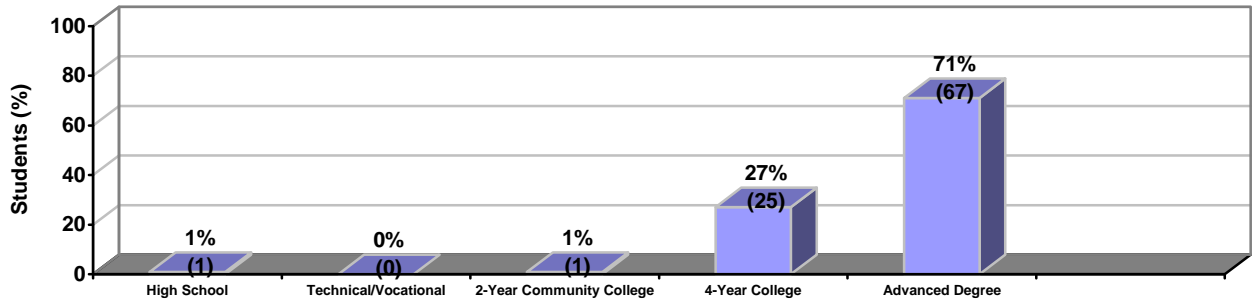
#### **Methodology**

Frequency distributions were used to analyze non-open ended questions as well as the "top three colleges" question. For questions that asked about how much worry students' associated with the program, a continuum scale was used. For general opinions on the college and the application process, and success, an agreement scale was used. The remaining open ended questions were coded into categories developed from the trends seen in student responses. Categories were NOT provided in the questionnaire. A frequency distribution was then used to analyze those responses. Two questions gained similar answers and were coded and analyzed together. The last question on the questionnaire was not analyzed as it merely asked for any additional comments. Comments mainly consisted of reiterated responses, notes of gratitude, or were left blank.

#### **Analyzing the Responses**

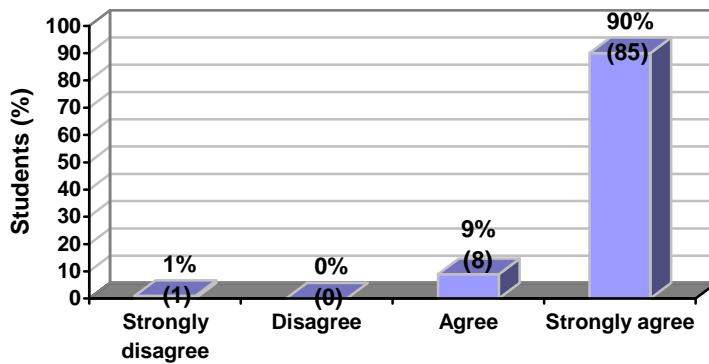
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What is the highest level of education you *hope* to get?

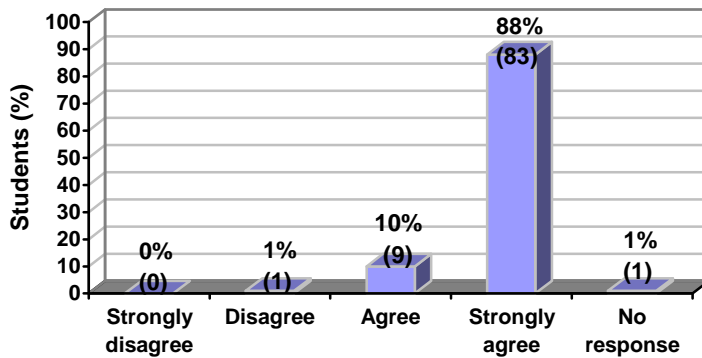


Academic preparation for college

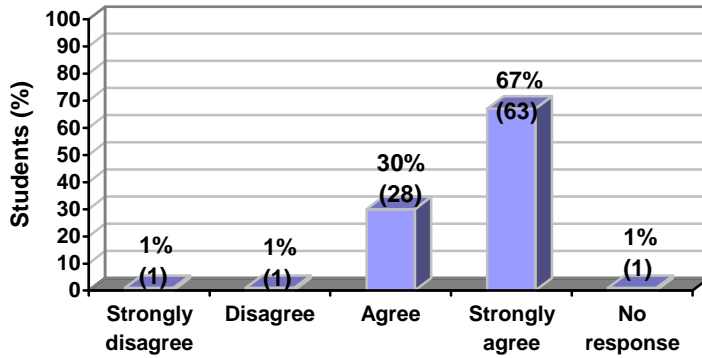
I will work hard to make sure I get into college.



I know that doing my best while in high school will help me get into the college that I want.

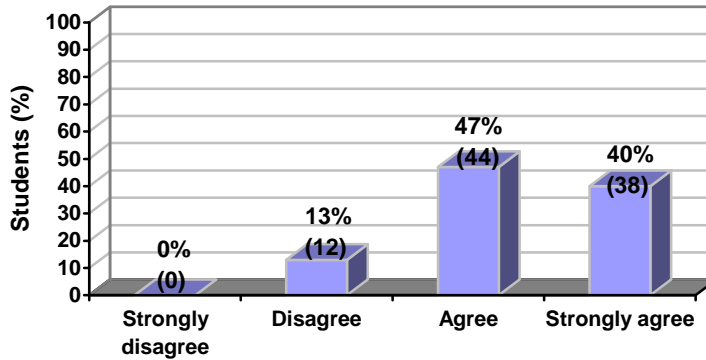


**I feel that once I graduate high school, I will be prepared to do well in college.**

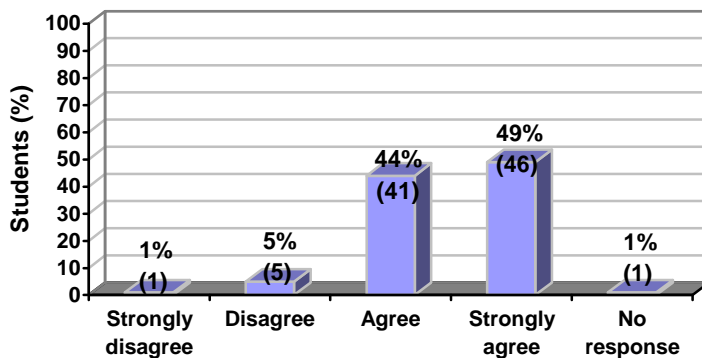


**Knowledge about college search/application process**

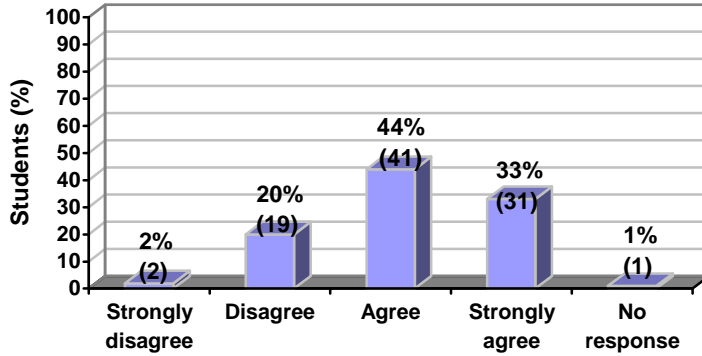
**I know how to research schools in order to find the perfect college for me.**



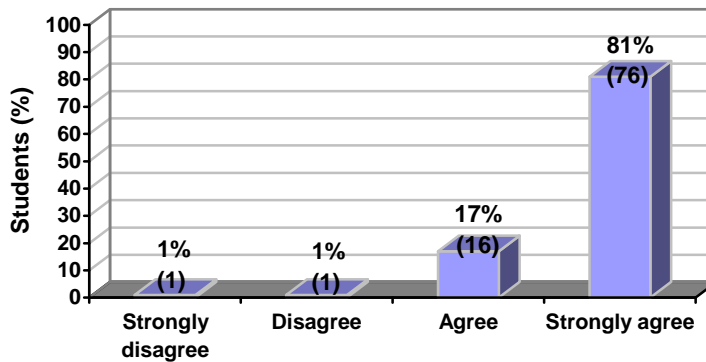
**During my search process, I will feel comfortable talking to professors, coaches, and other personnel at potential colleges.**



**I feel comfortable with the college application process.**



**I know that meeting deadlines is an essential part of the college application process.**



**I have someone in my life who I know will help me go through the search and application process.**

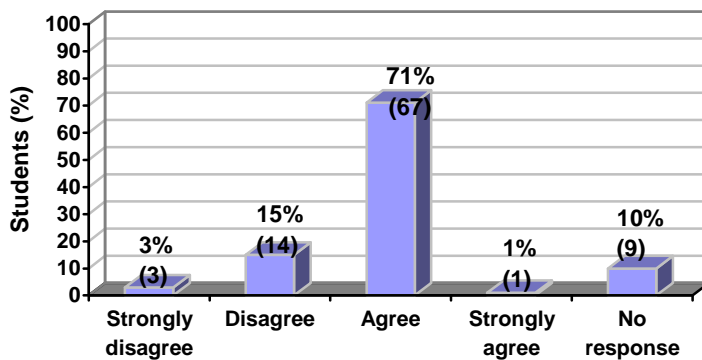
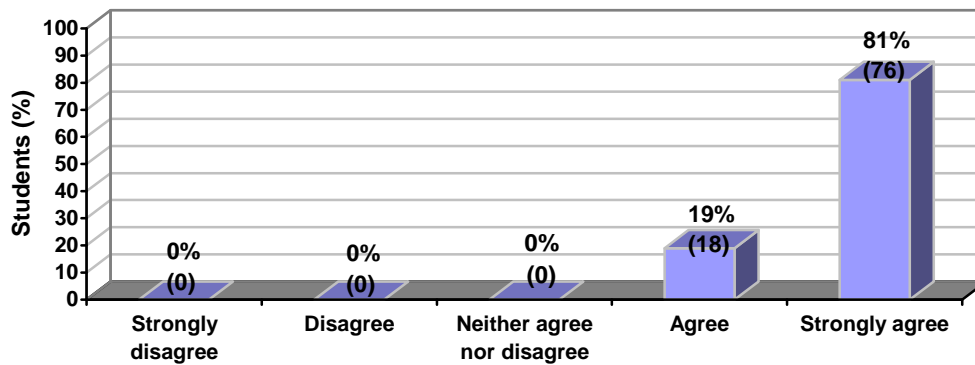


Table 1: Number of students who mentioned someone in their life who will help them in the college search and application process

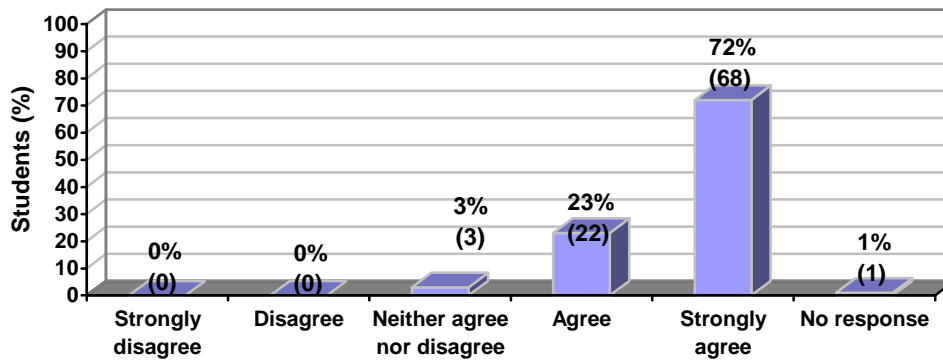
Person	Number of Students	Percentage of Students
Parent	57	61%
Relative	26	28%
Teacher	28	30%
School counselor	38	40%
Friend	16	17%
Other	1	1%

**Feelings about college**

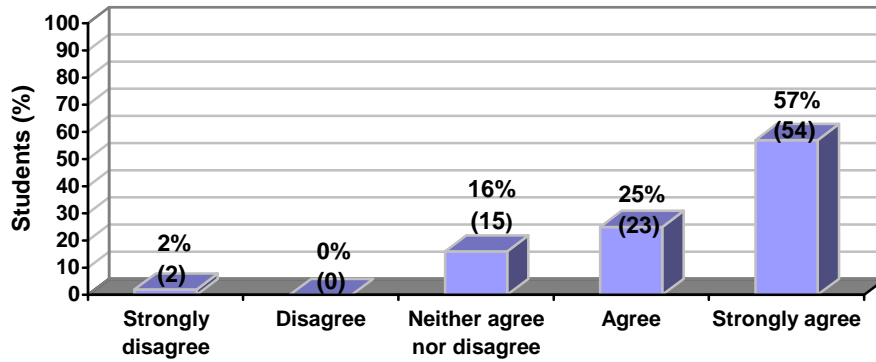
**Going to college is important to me.**



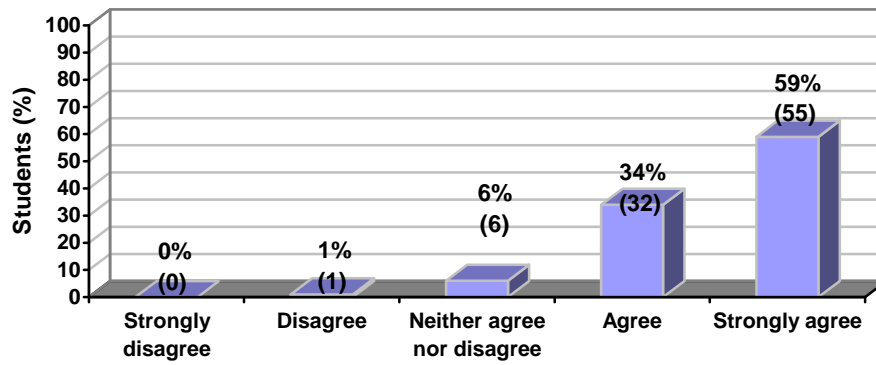
**I was interested in going to college before applying for this program.**



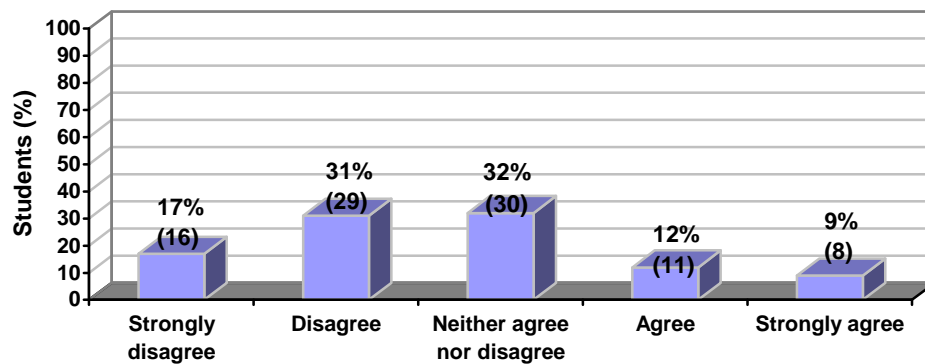
**I am even more interested in going to college after applying for this program.**



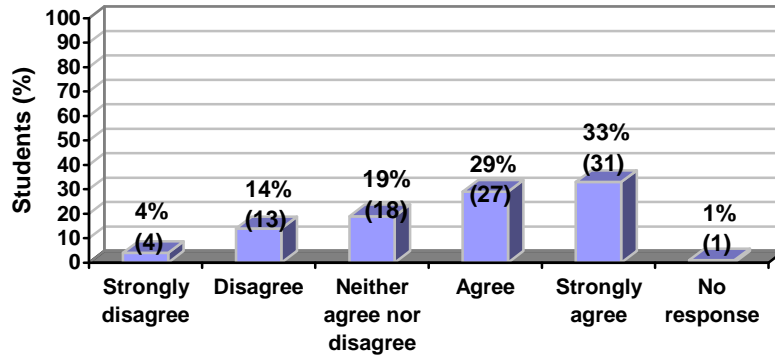
**I know I will succeed in college.**



**I know I will succeed if I choose to work instead of go to college.**



**I know I will succeed no matter what I do in life.**



**Please explain your outlook on college. How do you feel about it? Is it important to you?**

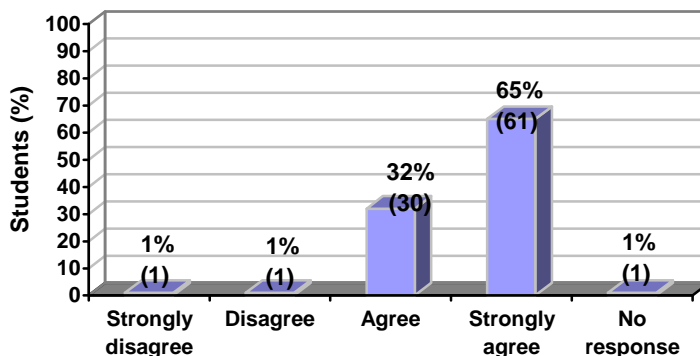
Responses to this question do not differ from the responses gathered from the pre-questionnaire. Again, an overwhelming amount of students said that college was important in order to succeed in the future.

**Please describe your plan after graduating high school (attending college, going into the workforce, etc). Why are you choosing this path?**

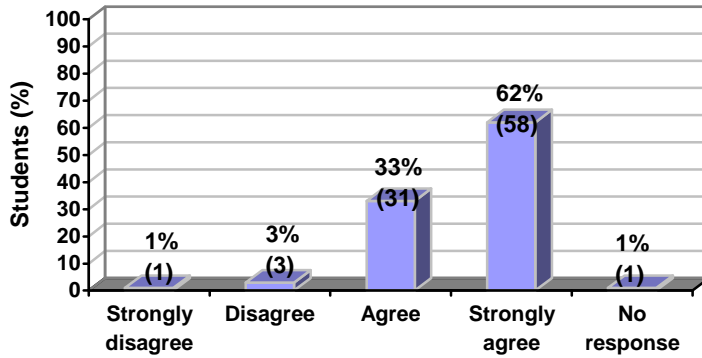
Responses to this question do not differ from the responses gathered from the pre-questionnaire.

**After completing this program...**

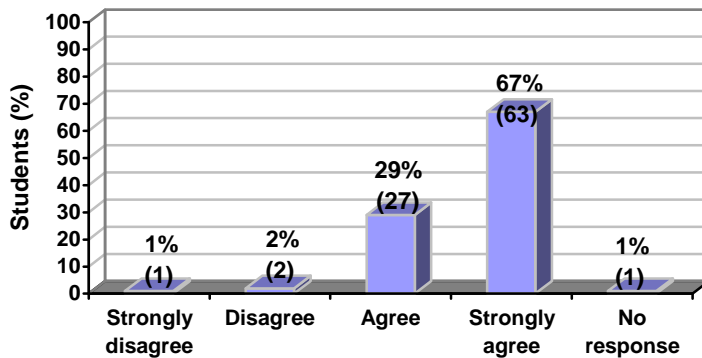
**I have become more confident.**



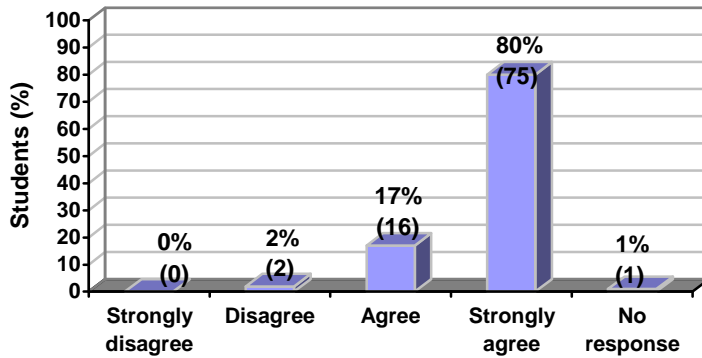
**I have a better sense of who I am or who I want to be.**



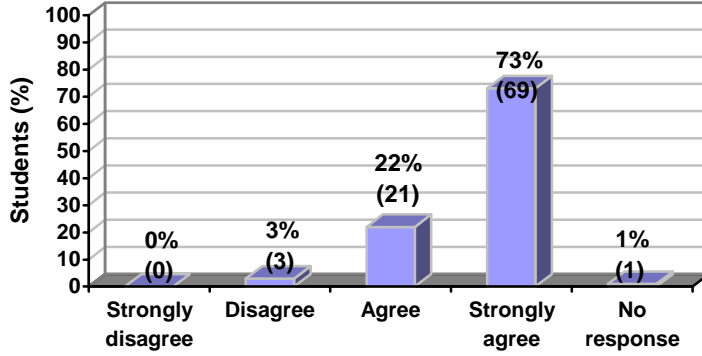
**I am more self-reliant.**



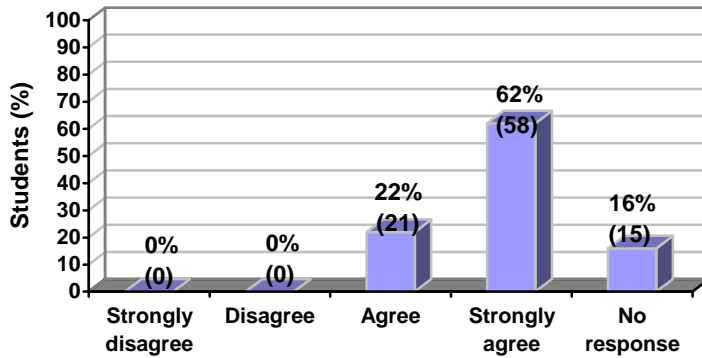
**I have realized that going to college is important to me.**



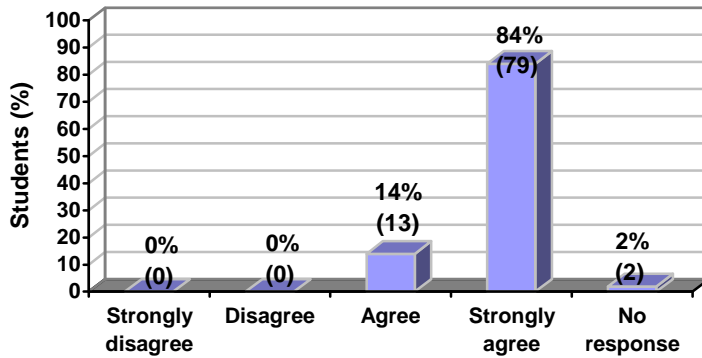
**I am even more interested in going to college.**



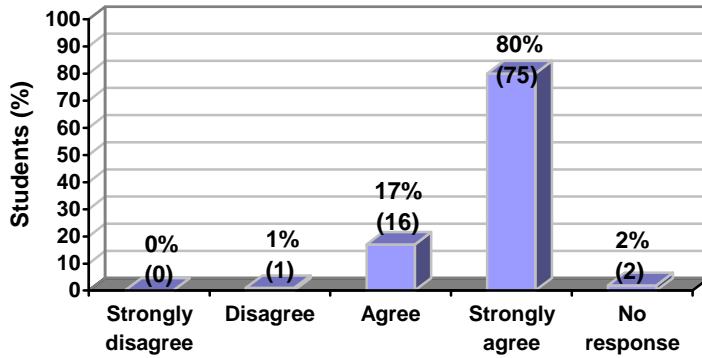
**I have a positive outlook on life.**



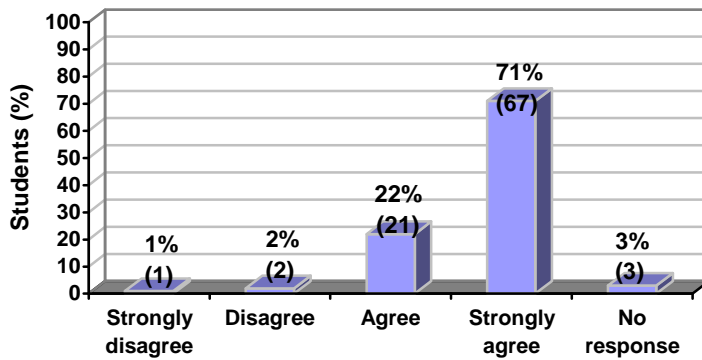
**I am motivated to go to college.**



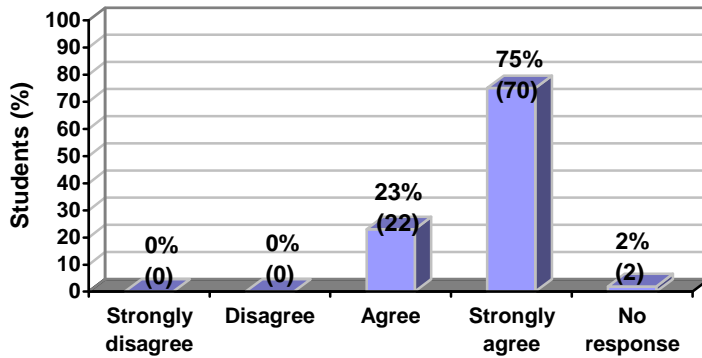
**I have been exposed to new social environments.**



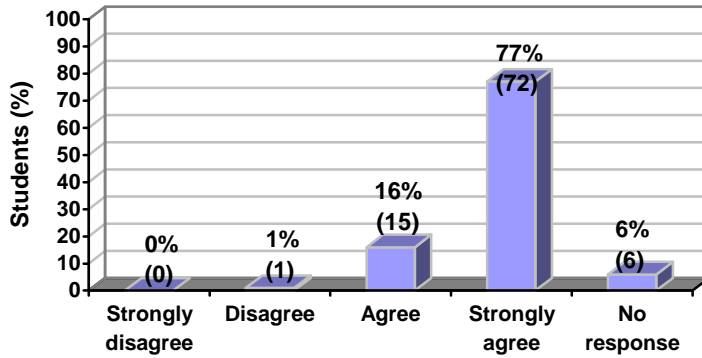
**I have become more comfortable when in new social environments.**



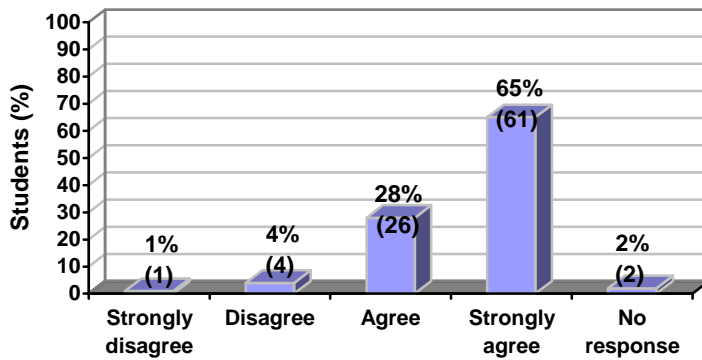
**I have been challenged and pushed to conquer new intellectual experiences.**



**I feel inspired when I think about the opportunities I will have through higher education.**



**I feel more confident as a leader.**



**List up to three colleges where you have thought about applying to.**

Chart 1: Number of colleges that students wrote down

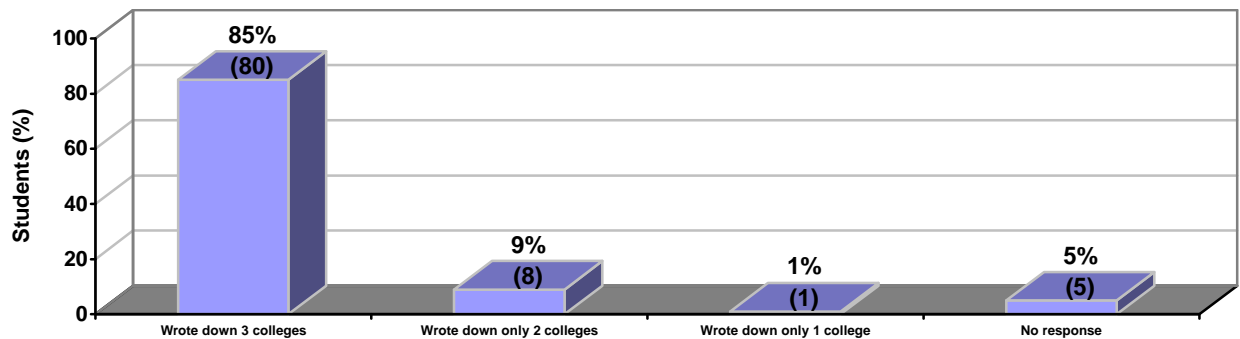


Chart 2: Number of schools students chose in Illinois

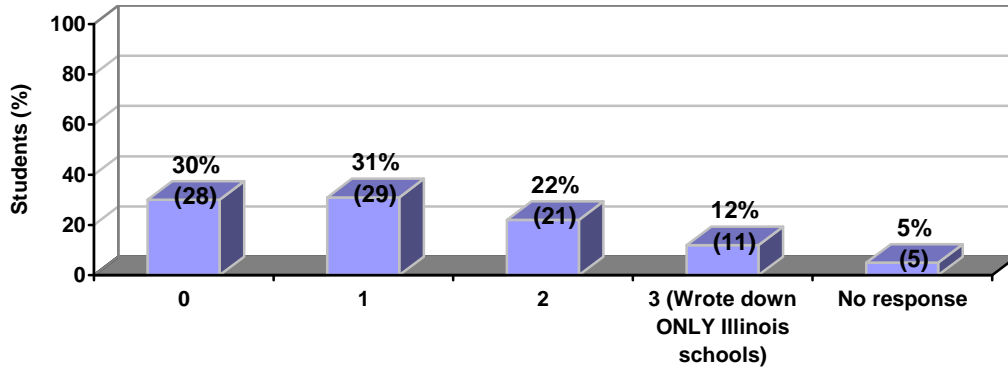


Chart 3: Number of schools students chose out-of-state

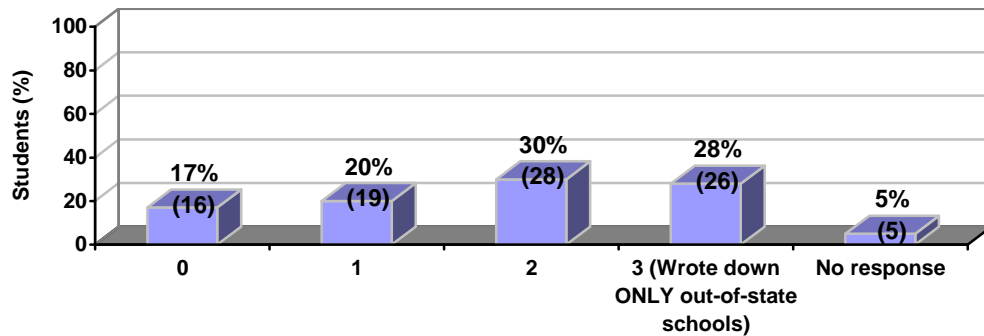
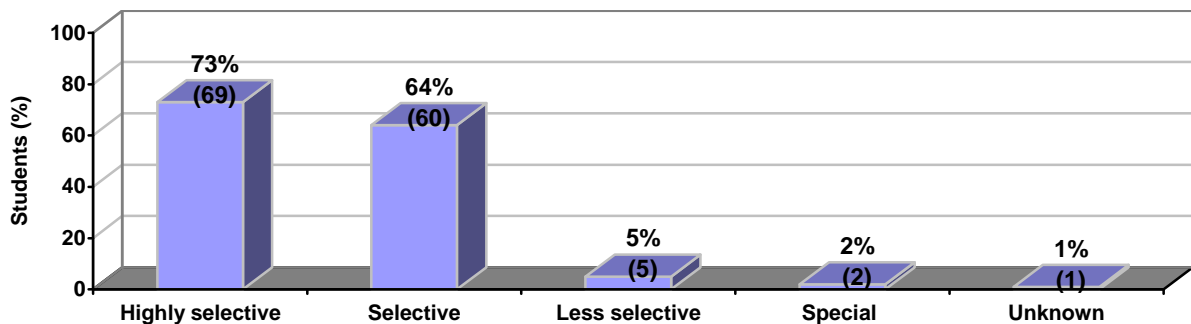
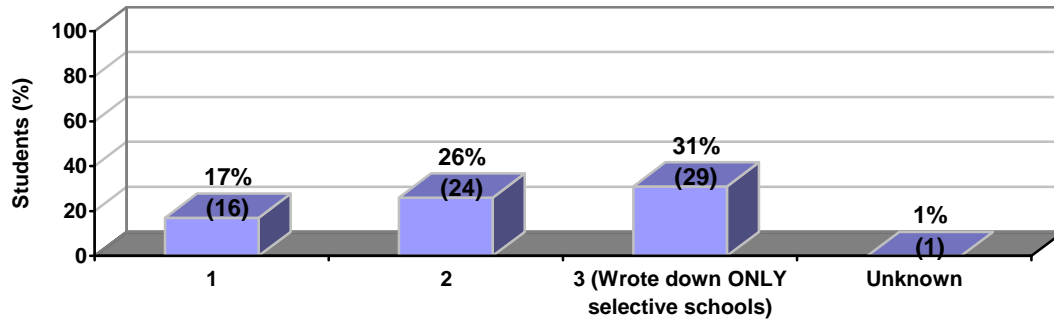


Chart 4: Selectivity (number of students who chose **at least one** of the following types of schools)

Selectivity rankings are taken from *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges* 27<sup>th</sup> edition, 2007. As the categories are displayed here, “most competitive” & “highly competitive” are grouped as **highly selective**; “very competitive” & “competitive” are grouped as **selective**; and “less competitive” & “non-competitive” are grouped as **less selective**.



**Chart 5: Number of students who wrote down one, two or three highly selective schools**



**Think about your top choice and select the 3 most important reasons this is your top school. Select only 3.**

**Table 2: Number of students who marked each category**

	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percent of Students</b>
<b>Program/Services Offered</b>		
Specific academic program	57	61%
Athletic program	9	10%
Student support services	4	4%
Religious affiliation	0	0%
<b>Personal</b>		
<b>Connection/Recommendation</b>		
Recommendation from teacher/counselor	11	12%
Recommendation from parent/relative	18	19%
Recommendation from other adult	2	2%
A friend goes/went there	5	5%
A relative goes/went there	3	3%
<b>Physical Attributes</b>		
Size of school	16	17%
Being close to home	14	15%
Being far away from home	25	27%
Urban setting	16	17%
Non-urban setting	0	0%
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
Social life	20	21%
Cost	15	16%
Racial/ethnic composition of school	8	9%
Recruited by schools	4	4%
Have a good chance of being admitted	13	14%
Other	5	5%
No response	1	1%

## What did you get out of your Summer Quest experience/how did it change you?<sup>5</sup>

Table 3: Number of students who mentioned each of the following

	Number of Students	Percent of Students
<b>Led to Personal Growth</b>		
Increased self-confidence/independence	58	62%
Increased self-awareness	18	19%
Gained new perspective/more open-minded	9	10%
Grew more responsible/mature	13	14%
<b>Led to Academic Advancement</b>		
Increased work ethic	4	4%
Gained a skill specific to program	18	19%
Grew intellectually	20	21%
<b>Changed Perception of College</b>		
Feel better prepared for college	19	20%
Affected college plans	3	3%
Increased desire to go to college	6	6%
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
Had fun	3	3%
Made friends	25	27%
Experienced diversity/cultural awareness	5	5%
Other	4	4%

### Examples

The category “Feel better prepared for college” included responses such as, “It made me realize how hard college is going to be, but it prepared me,” “I have acquired the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in college,” “I got experience being in a college environment,” and “It brought me a greater understanding of college life and living on my own...I feel more self-reliant.”

The category “Gained new perspective/more open-minded” included responses such as “I’ve come to realize people have many different opinions and I shouldn’t judge,” “I learned how to adapt and live with people that are different from me,” and “It changed my habit of having pre-conceived notions and judgments about people...I am much more open-minded about different religions and cultures now.”

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<sup>5</sup> These responses were taken from two separate questions as both seemed to invoke similar responses from students.

## How did your Summer Quest experience affect your future career and/or education plans?

Table 4: Number of students who mentioned each of the following

	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percent of Students</b>
Interest(s) realized	43	46%
Better understanding of specific subject	4	4%
New/different college choice	15	16%
Realized college is possible	2	2%
More excited to go to college	7	7%

### Examples

The category “Interest(s) realized included responses such as, “I figured out that I want to pursue a fashion career,” I’ve thought more about acting and not just being behind the scenes,” It helped my future plans become more clear to me,” and “It taught me that I don’t want to work with animals and that I do want to stay in school until I get my PhD.”

The category “New/different college choice” included responses such as “I wanted to go away from home, but after the Summer Quest experience I thought that I would stay close to home,” “It gave me another school to consider,” “Summer Quest opened my eyes to a whole new world of opportunities within one of the nation’s top universities,” and “Now I know what school I want to go to.”

## How did your summer program change your approach to school this year?

Responses to this question were not categorized into codes because almost all students felt that they will work harder in school. More specifically, some students mentioned they will take more challenging classes, get more involved, take school more seriously, become more organized and focused, have more confidence when it comes to schoolwork, and put more emphasis on preparing for college.

Some examples of student responses are, “I’ve tried a lot harder to get good grades and turn in my homework,” “I feel rejuvenated and more driven for the school year,” “It helped me concentrate more on school,” “I don’t wait to do reports now,” “I feel like I have to do better because I realized that it is extremely competitive out there,” “My summer program allowed me to use all the techniques and training I had received from my journalism program and place it into my school newspaper,” “I learned I need to take the college application process more seriously,” “I need to start applying for financial aid and scholarships,” and “Now that I know how college life is going to be I am not in a rush to pick any college, but am going into detailed research.”

## **IV. Group Discussion**

During the Wrap-Up session, students broke into groups and discussed the following questions: “What did you gain/learn from your summer program?” “How can you let others in your school know about Summer Quest?” and “Given your summer experience and what you’ve learned, what do you plan to do differently this year in school?” Responses were not written down, only discussed among the students. Thus, no analysis exists for this part of the Wrap-Up session.

## V. Student Interviews

At the Wrap-Up, students also broke into pairs to conduct interviews. They were instructed to ask each other about the highlights and challenges of their Summer Quest programs and to record each other's answers.

### Analyzing the Responses

Percentages are calculated out of the population of students who attended the Wrap-Up (eighty-one students). Since students were asked to put down more than one response for some questions, the sum of the percents may be greater than one-hundred.

### **Describe the top 2 highlights of your Summer Quest program<sup>6</sup>**

Table 1: Number of students who mentioned each of the following

	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percent of Students</b>
<b>Non-Academic Highlights</b>		
Friendship	40	43%
Recreational/extracurricular activity	35	38%
Being away from home	13	14%
Being in a new location	12	13%
<b>Academic Highlights</b>		
Preparing for college	9	10%
Classes	25	27%
Activity related to class	31	34%
Culminating event project	0	0%
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
Fun	2	2%
Personal achievement	8	9%
Other	5	5%

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<sup>6</sup> Most students wrote down two highlights, but a few wrote down more than two and some students wrote down only one highlight. All responses are recorded. If one response overlapped two categories, then it was recorded in BOTH categories.

## What was your most difficult challenge of the summer?

Table 2: Number of students who mentioned each of the following

	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percent of Students</b>
Academic difficulties	40	43%
Social difficulties	17	18%
Physical difficulties	7	8%
Being away from home	17	18%
Location	4	4%
Other	10	11%
No response	4	4%

### Examples

The category “Academic difficulties” included responses such as “Keeping up with the work and understanding Chemistry,” “Finding time in the classroom to finish projects,” “Dealing with the stress of all the research and assignments we received,” “Going to class from 9-3 everyday in the summer,” and “Trying to do work and everything in such a short time.”

The category “Social difficulties” included responses such as “Meeting new people,” “Being able to adapt to a new environment,” “Being shy around big groups of people,” and “Dealing with students who were not there for a learning experience.”

## Explain how you overcame this challenge.

Table 3: Number of students who mentioned each of the following

	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percent of Students</b>
Studying	10	11%
Talking/asking questions	16	17%
Time management	13	14%
Having support/friends	16	17%
Become more involved	8	9%
Staying focused/not giving up	22	24%
Other	11	12%
No response	4	4%

## **Examples**

The category “Talking/asking questions” included responses such as “I sat with the teacher and she explained the problem,” “Calling the project manager to spend additional time [with me],” “I asked the people in my camp and they taught me how to do [my laundry].”

The category “Became more involved” included responses such as “Being open to ideas and trying new things allowed me to become more comfortable with things that were unfamiliar,” “By not being shy,” “Made myself meet new people,” and “By becoming more social and getting to know people.”

## VI. Student Essays

When students came back from their summer programs, they received letters asking them to compose an essay reflecting on their experience. The instructions stated: “Type a 1-2 page essay. Your essay must include: the name of the program, what you studied or did and describe something you learned about yourself while you were there.” The essays were collected at the Summer Quest Wrap-Up session.

### **Summary of Survey Respondents**

A total of seventy-eight essays were analyzed in this report.

### **Analyzing the Responses**

Given that this question has two major components: describe “what you studied or did” and “something you learned about yourself,” the nature of the essays varies a considerable amount. Some students focused their attention on the first part of the question and spent less time discussing the second part of the question, and vice versa. Even among those who primarily wrote about what they did, there was wide variation. Some students described the daily events of their program, the attractions they visited, or the location and environment they experienced. Others gave a brief summary of what they did and wrote about all that they learned from their program, including academic lessons that enriched them. Responses to the two parts of the question also often overlap and hence further complicate our analysis. Therefore, reporting comprehensively on what students did or studied is not possible. Further, we were already able to develop a good sense of what students learned and did from the other Wrap-Up components.

Generally, an overwhelming trend in the students’ essays was the mention of gaining or improving time management skills. In addition, learning to be independent was another skill a majority of students mentioned.

### **Results**

Taking the factors described above into account, some clear patterns can be identified in terms of what students wrote they learned about themselves. Certain topics occurred repeatedly. Specifically, students often commented on:

*(Listed in order from the most often mentioned to the least often mentioned)*

1. Personality of self
2. Perception of college
3. Ability to succeed
4. Perception of career goals

In order to better understand these topics, an explanation of the responses that fall into these categories, and some examples of these topics follows.

## Explanation of Categories & Examples

### Personality of self

This category describes instances where students mentioned things about their own personality or mind set that were either just realized or grew stronger.

“One night, I was ready to give up and go home...but I wanted to make my donor proud of what he had invested his money [in]...People had faith in me, but I also need faith in myself. At the end of the summer, I had received the highest marks in Expository Writing and Reading and Study Skills.”

“I learned that when I change my mindset to allow me to be more positive and open to new opportunities, what results is that I take risks and start moving out of my comfort zone. I learned from then on that fears should never decide your actions and that only you can.”

“[My experience] made me realize that I can be a stranger to a new environment if I let my fears of a language barrier and culture stand in my way of becoming who and what I need to become.”

“I was able to assert myself as an independent person and prove that I could function well on my own.”

“Living on my own was really a great experience for me. I learned not to rely on my parents for everything and I learned from my mistakes.”

“I am a relatively shy person...for the first few days of our discussions, I didn’t talk. Finally, I realized it was silly for me to just sit there so I started asserting myself more.”

### Perception of college

This category includes statements that reflect a student’s greater understanding of what college is like as well as the location/type of college they want to attend.

“I came to the conclusion that [college] was soon to be a reality. This experience made me start thinking about what school I want to go to and what I want to do with my life. I cannot wait for college.”

“Before this camp, I was scared of going off to college on my own and [being] away from home. Now it is something I am looking forward to and know that I will continue to push myself throughout high school.”

“As I go through the stressful application process, I can look back on my Brown experience and happily picture myself on a college campus with hard working intelligent and fun peers, taking eye-opening courses...I can’t wait!”

“This program also gave me the opportunity to experience life on a college campus and, although it proved difficult at times, I am glad for the opportunity because when I move onto college, I will have less anxiety and be more prepared.”

### Ability to succeed

This category includes responses that specifically mention the student realizing the capability of succeeding at school work, goals they set for themselves and different accomplishments in general.

“Camp gave me the opportunity to explore different study mechanisms. Instead of waiting until the last minute to do my research assignments, I would do them beforehand so I could work on other projects. I was able to overcome my procrastination through my love of debate and want to learn.”

“Time allocation should be considered a student preparation goal in itself. Learning to organize my time based on the course schedule is a skill that I plan to extend usage to in my later life.”

“I was scared to admit to my teachers that I wasn’t getting [the material]. I asked a mentor for help and she taught me how to live on a schedule and go for help. I realized that surviving in college is by setting a schedule and balancing. I learned to achieve my goals in a healthy manner.”

“The most rewarding part of my summer experience is the inspiration I got from meeting people my age who are also interested in art...seeing some of the work of students really amazed me...and motivated me to practice more.”

### Perception of career goals

This category includes responses concerning students’ realizations of what careers will best suit them as well as specific mentions of intended areas of study.

“I concluded that I will most likely enter a field of engineering, possibly architectural engineering, or perhaps sustainable engineering. I would love to enter that field because I would put my knowledge to good use, design sustainable housing worldwide, and feel like I’m giving back to the world community. I would truly leave my fingerprint. With the background of my experience and a whole new set of resources, I am ready to tackle my dream.”

“It really made me excited about the fashion industry and helped me realize that I want to be in a fast paced, exciting, starlit industry and made me realize that I love art.”

“Being at Ball State and being an active participant in the workshops has guided me to desire journalism even more.”

## **VII. Appendix**

- 1. Summer Quest programs that students attended**
- 2. High schools represented**
- 3. Pre-Questionnaire**
- 4. Post-Questionnaire**
- 5. Discussion group rubric**
- 6. Student interview rubric**

## Summer Quest Programs

### AFS Intercultural Programs

The Art Institute of Chicago, IL (3)  
Summer High School Workshop, Ball State University, IN  
Summer in New York City, Barnard College, NY (3)  
Summer Forensics Institute, Bradley University, IL (2)  
Brown Summer High School, Brown University, RI (4)  
Bryn Mawr College, PA  
Summer Enrichment Program, Chicago State University, IL  
High School Summer Institute, Columbia College, IL (7)  
Summer Program, Columbia University, NY  
Concordia Language Villages, MN (16)  
Cornell Summer College, Cornell University, NY (3)  
Summer at Dartmouth, Dartmouth University, NH  
Summer Experience at Earlham, Earlham College, IN (3)  
Summer Academy, Elmhurst College, IL (2)  
Entrepreneur Camp, Entrenuity Summer Camp, IL (3)  
Philips Exeter Academy, NH (4)  
Exploration Summer Program, Yale University, CT (2)  
Georgetown Summer School, Georgetown University, DC  
Harvard Summer School, Harvard University, MA (4)  
Summer Honors Program, Indiana State University, IN (2)  
Summer Program, Indiana University, IN (3)  
Interlochen Arts Camp, MI  
IU Olympiad Summer, Indiana University, IN  
Junior States of America, CA  
Life Ride, Outdoor programs, IL (13)  
Miami University Summer Debate Institute, Miami University, OH (4)  
Miami Junior Scholars, Miami University, OH  
University of Michigan Debate Camp, University of Michigan, MI  
MSOE Summer Programs, Milwaukee School of Engineering, WI  
Meet the Wilderness, Outdoor programs, CO (15)  
NHSI, Northwestern University, IL (4)  
Northern Illinois University, IL (5)  
NMH Summer Session, Northfield Mount Hermon School (5)  
Open Roads, IL (2)  
Summer Session, Phillips Academy, MA (2)  
GERI, Purdue University, IN (2)  
The Road Less Traveled, Outdoor programs, IL (2)  
Shedd Aquarium High School Marine Biology, IL  
Sisters Under Sail, NJ  
Biomedical Summer Science Program, Spelman College, GA  
Summer Program, Saint Mary's College, IN  
Stanford University, CA  
University of Texas National Institute in Forensics, University of Texas, TX (2)  
The Taft School, CT  
Summer College, University of Delaware, DE  
RAP, University of Illinois, IL  
University of Michigan, MI (4)  
University of California, Berkeley, CA  
University of California, Los Angeles, CA  
Summer Science, University of Southern California, CA (2)  
Youth Opportunities Summer Camps, University of Wisconsin Green Bay  
Vassar College, NY (2)  
Summer Programs, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, MA

<sup>7</sup> The number in parenthesis refers to the number of students who attended the program. Only one student attended programs that have no number indicated.

## High Schools Represented

Amundsen High School (2)  
Anderson  
Blaine  
Bogan Technical High School  
C.E. Hughes  
Chicago Math and Science Charter School  
Chicago Virtual Charter  
Clark Magnet High School (7)  
Corkery (2)  
Crane Technical High School  
Curie Metro High School (2)  
Darwin (2)  
Douglass Academic School  
Dyett High School  
Farragut Career High School (3)  
Fort Dearborn  
Harlan Community Academy  
Hyde Park Academy  
James G. Blaine  
Jones College Prep High School (11)  
Juarez Community Academic High School (5)  
Kennedy High School  
Kenwood Academy High School (3)  
Lakeview High School (3)  
Langston (2)  
Lincoln Park High School (8)  
Lindblom Math and Science High School (3)  
Little Village  
Louis Pasteur Elementary (8)  
Mather High School  
Morgan Park High School (3)  
North-Grand High School (4)  
Northside College Preparatory High School (12)  
Otis  
Payton College Preparatory High School (16)  
Peck Elementary  
Phoenix Military Academic High School (5)  
Prussing (2)  
Ray (2)  
Rickover Naval Academy  
Robeson High School  
Roosevelt High School  
School of Leadership High School

Sumner Elementary  
Tilton  
Turner Drew  
Urban Prep Charter High School  
Von Steuben Metropolitan High School (14)  
Wells High School (2)  
Williams Prep Med (9)  
Whitney Young Magnet High School

# Summer Quest Pre-Questionnaire

*We want to ask you a few questions before you begin your Summer Quest program. Please take a few moments to complete this questionnaire.*

Last name \_\_\_\_\_ First name \_\_\_\_\_

Student id \_\_\_\_\_

Birth date \_\_\_\_\_

Grade that you will start in the fall \_\_\_\_\_

Current school name \_\_\_\_\_

Summer Quest Program chosen \_\_\_\_\_

1). Have you participated in a summer program before? **CHECK ALL THAT APPLY**

\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_ Yes, a summer program provided by CPS

\_\_\_ Yes, a summer program NOT provided by CPS

Name and location of program \_\_\_\_\_

Dates attended \_\_\_\_\_

2). What do you hope to get out of the Summer Quest experience?

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*Statements below in the left and right columns represent two ends of a continuum. Please circle the number that is closest to your feelings.*

3). I...

Worry about being away from my family                      1   2   3   4   5   6   do not worry about being away from my family

Do not worry about succeeding in class work                      1   2   3   4   5   6   worry about succeeding in class work

Do not worry about staying in a dorm                      1   2   3   4   5   6   worry about staying in a dorm

Worry about meeting new people                      1   2   3   4   5   6   do not worry about meeting new people

Worry about successfully completing the program                      1   2   3   4   5   6   do not worry about successfully completing the program

Are there any other aspects of your summer program that worry you? Explain.

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4). How much education does your mother or female guardian want you to get? **CHECK ONLY ONE**

- Graduate from high school
- Graduate from a technical/vocational school
- Graduate from a two-year community college
- Graduate from a four-year college or university
- Advanced degree (i.e., M.D., M.A., J.D., M.B.A., Ph.D.)

5). What is the highest level of education you *hope* to get? **CHECK ONLY ONE**

- Graduate from high school
- Graduate from a technical/vocational school
- Graduate from a two-year community college
- Graduate from a four-year college or university
- Advanced degree (i.e., M.D., M.A., J.D., M.B.A., Ph.D.)

*Using the scale provided, please tell us how you feel about the following:*

- 1=Strongly disagree
- 2=Disagree
- 3=Agree
- 4=Strongly agree

6). Academic preparation for college

- I will work hard in school to make sure I get into college.
- I know that doing my best while in high school will help me get into the college I want.
- I feel that once I graduate high school, I will be prepared to do well in college.

*Using the scale provided, please tell us how you feel about the following:*

- 1=Strongly disagree
- 2=Disagree
- 3=Agree
- 4=Strongly agree

7). Knowledge about college search/application process

\_\_\_ I know how to research schools in order to find the perfect college for me.

\_\_\_ During my search process, I will feel comfortable talking to professors, coaches, and any other personnel at potential colleges.

\_\_\_ I feel comfortable with the college application process.

\_\_\_ I know that meeting deadlines is an essential part of the college application process.

\_\_\_ I have someone in my life who I know will help me go through the college search and application process.

This person is my: \_\_\_Parent \_\_\_Relative \_\_\_Teacher \_\_\_School counselor \_\_\_Friend  
\_\_\_Other\_\_\_\_\_

*Using the scale provided, please tell us how you feel about the following:*

1=Strongly disagree

2=Disagree

3=Neither agree nor disagree

4=Agree

5=Strongly agree

8). Feelings about college

\_\_\_ Going to college is important to me.

\_\_\_ I was interested in going to college before applying for this program.

\_\_\_ I am even more interested in going to college after applying for this program.

\_\_\_ I know I will succeed in college.

\_\_\_ I know I will succeed if I choose to work instead of go to college.

\_\_\_ I know I will succeed no matter what I do in life.

9). Please explain your outlook on college. How do you feel about it? Is it important to you?

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10). Please describe your plan after graduating high school (attending college, going into the workforce, etc.). Why are you choosing this path?

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11). Please list up to 3 colleges you have thought about applying to.

a). School name \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_

b). School name \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_

c). School name \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_

12). Think about your top college choice and select the 3 most important reasons this is your top school. **SELECT ONLY 3**

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being far away from home              | <input type="checkbox"/> Being close to home        | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious affiliations       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recruited by schools the school       | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban setting              | <input type="checkbox"/> Racial/ethnic composition of |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specific academic program             | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-urban setting          | <input type="checkbox"/> Social life                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost admitted                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Athletic program           | <input type="checkbox"/> Have a good chance of being  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Size of the school                    | <input type="checkbox"/> A relative goes/went there |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A friend goes/went there              | <input type="checkbox"/> Student support services   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation from parent/relative   |   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation from teacher/counselor |   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation from other adult       |   |   |

# Summer Quest Post-Questionnaire

*We want to ask you a few questions now that you have completed your Summer Quest program. Please take a few moments to complete this questionnaire.*

Last name \_\_\_\_\_ First name \_\_\_\_\_

Student id \_\_\_\_\_

Birth date \_\_\_\_\_

Grade that you will start in the fall \_\_\_\_\_

Current school name \_\_\_\_\_

Summer Quest Program attended \_\_\_\_\_

1). What did you get out of your Summer Quest experience?

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2). What is the highest level of education you *hope* to get? **CHECK ONLY ONE**

\_\_\_ Graduate from high school

\_\_\_ Graduate from a technical/vocational school

\_\_\_ Graduate from a two-year community college

\_\_\_ Graduate from a four-year college or university

\_\_\_ Advanced degree (i.e., M.D., M.A., J.D., M.B.A., Ph.D.)

*Using the scale provided, please tell us how you feel about the following:*

1=Strongly disagree

2=Disagree

3=Agree

4=Strongly agree

3). Academic preparation for college

\_\_\_ I will work hard in school to make sure I get into college.

\_\_\_ I know that doing my best while in high school will help me get into the college I want.

\_\_\_ I feel that once I graduate high school, I will be prepared to do well in college.

*Using the scale provided, please tell us how you feel about the following:*

1=Strongly disagree

- 2=Disagree
- 3=Agree
- 4=Strongly agree

4). Knowledge about college search/application process

\_\_\_ I know how to research schools in order to find the perfect college for me.

\_\_\_ During my search process, I will feel comfortable talking to professors, coaches, and any other personnel at potential colleges.

\_\_\_ I feel comfortable with the college application process.

\_\_\_ I know that meeting deadlines is an essential part of the college application process.

\_\_\_ I have someone in my life who I know will help me go through the college search and application process.  
 This person is my: \_\_\_ Parent \_\_\_ Relative \_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_ School counselor \_\_\_ Friend  
 \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Using the scale provided, please tell us how you feel about the following:**

- 1=Strongly disagree
- 2=Disagree
- 3=Neither agree nor disagree
- 4=Agree
- 5=Strongly agree

5). Feelings about college

\_\_\_ Going to college is important to me.

\_\_\_ I was interested in going to college before applying for this program.

\_\_\_ I am even more interested in going to college after applying for this program.

\_\_\_ I know I will succeed in college.

\_\_\_ I know I will succeed if I choose to work instead of go to college.

\_\_\_ I know I will succeed no matter what I do in life.

6). Please explain your outlook on college. How do you feel about it? Is it important to you?

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7). Please describe your plan after graduating high school (attending college, going into the workforce, etc.). Why are you choosing this path?



10). Think about your top college choice and select the 3 most important reasons this is your top school. **SELECT ONLY 3**

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being far away from home              | <input type="checkbox"/> Being close to home        | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious affiliations       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recruited by schools the school       | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban setting              | <input type="checkbox"/> Racial/ethnic composition of |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specific academic program             | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-urban setting          | <input type="checkbox"/> Social life                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost admitted                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Athletic program           | <input type="checkbox"/> Have a good chance of being  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Size of the school                    | <input type="checkbox"/> A relative goes/went there |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                           |   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A friend goes/went there              | <input type="checkbox"/> Student support services   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation from parent/relative   |   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation from teacher/counselor |   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation from other adult       |   |   |

11). How did your Summer Quest experience change you? Explain.

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12). How did your Summer Quest experience affect your future career and/or education plans?

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13). How did your summer program change your approach to school this year?

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14). Is there anything else that you would like to tell us about your Summer Quest experience?

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# Summer Quest Wrap Up Meeting *2007*

## Group Discussion

### Instructions

- (1 min) Collect white post-questionnaires  
Collect colored student interview sheet.  
Write students names below.
- (5 min) Ask students to introduce themselves and give their:
  - Name, high school, grade, name of their program, where it is located and how long it was
- (10 min) Discussion Question I
  - Ask each student to answer this question before opening up for discussion
  - Write as much as you can
    - **What did you gain/learn from your summer program?**
- (10 min) Discussion Question II
  - **How can you let others in your school know about Summer Quest?**
- (10 min) Discussion Question III
  - **Given your summer experience and what you've learned, what do you plan to do differently this year in school?**
- (5 min) Thank you notes
  - Ask each student to write 3- 5 thank you notes.

### Student Names (first and last)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

Summer Quest Wrap Up Meeting *2007*

Student Interviews

Your Name\_\_\_\_\_

Partner's Name\_\_\_\_\_

Directions

1. Introduce yourself to your partner and tell one another your: your high school, grade, name, summer program and location of summer program.
2. Take turns posing the questions below to each other.
3. Write your responses

Interview Questions

Describe two highlights of your Summer Quest Program

My Answers



What was your most difficult challenge of the summer?

My Answers

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Explain how you over came the challenge in question II.

My Answers

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Think back to your conversation with your partner, what did you find most interesting or memorable about what he/she said and why

What I thought was interesting about what my partner said

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