

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND THEIR
FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

by

Deborah L. Trahey

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction

Ferris State University
School of Education
College of Education and Human Services
March, 2014

©2014 Deborah L. Trahey
All Rights Reserved

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND THEIR
FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

by

Deborah L. Trahey

Has been approved

March, 2014

APPROVED:

Dr. Frederick Ennis _____, Chair

Dr. Amy Kavanaugh _____, Member

Courtney Emerick _____, Member

Supervisory Committee

ACCEPTED:

Director, School of Education

Non-Exclusive License to Publish

I, Deborah L. Trahey, grant Ferris State University a non-exclusive license to publish my Capstone Portfolio, Project, and/or Thesis in electronic format which will be available on Ferris State University's website. I understand I have received an educational benefit by completing my Capstone Portfolio, Project, and/or Thesis, and that I will receive no monetary compensation.

I understand by granting Ferris State University a non-exclusive license to my Capstone Portfolio, Project, and/or Thesis, I am retaining the copyright to my work which means I can republish the work. If I republish the work, I must notify the second publisher that my Capstone Portfolio, Project, and/or Thesis has been previously published and the publication must include a note giving credit for the first publication to Ferris State University's website.

I warrant that the Capstone Portfolio, Project and/or Thesis that I have submitted is an original work which has never been published and that it is not a copy, reproduction, or rendering of another person's copyrighted work.

I further warrant that I have a copyright to the Capstone Portfolio, Project and/or Thesis that I submitted to Ferris State University and that I have the right to grant a license to my original work.

I agree to hold Ferris State University, its board, employees, and agents harmless for any losses, claims, damages, awards, penalties or injuries, including reasonable attorney fees, which arise from any claim by a third party of an alleged copyright infringement for the work submitted to the University for publication on Ferris State University's website if a court of law determines that I do not have a copyright to that work I submitted to Ferris State University for publication.

Full Name (typed or printed): Deborah L. Trahey

Capstone Portfolio, Project or Thesis Title: Students' Perceptions on Parental

Involvement and Their Future Aspirations

Date Completed: February 16, 2014

Degree Sought: Master of Education in
Curriculum and Instruction

Student Signature:

Date: _____

Capstone Advisor Signature:

Date: _____

Please return this form to: College of Education and Human Services
Ferris State University
1349 Cramer Circle, BIS-611 Big Rapids, MI 49307

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to survey eighth grade students at Armstrong Middle School to determine their perceptions regarding parental involvement both in and out of school and their future aspirations. The project included a survey designed to illicit information about students' demographics, perceptions of parental involvement in and out of school, and the students' future aspirations.

The research survey was completed in the winter, 2011 semester. Frequencies and percentages were calculated on the student profile questions and the researcher also used a general cross sectional analysis where applicable in order to report trends in different groups.

The researcher discovered that the grades a student earns generally depends on the parents' education levels. Parents who at least graduated from high school tended to have students that earned higher grades. Whereas, parents that did not finish high school had students who earned lower grades. In addition, parental involvement both in and out of school also correlated positively with the parents' education levels. All parents regardless of education levels encouraged their students to do well in school. Most students, no matter the grades earned, planned to further their education. Students also had high expectations for their future irrespective of parental involvement and were confident they could achieve their future goals.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	i
LIST OF TABLES.....	v
LIST OF FIGURES.....	ix
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	2
Purpose of the Study.....	3
Research Questions.....	3
2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	4
Introduction.....	4
Parental Involvement at School.....	5
Parental Involvement at Home.....	6
Future Aspirations.....	8
Summary.....	12

3 DESIGN OF THE STUDY	13
Description of Research Methodology	13
Research Design.....	13
Pilot Study.....	14
Selection of the Subjects.....	14
Instrumentation	15
Field Classroom Procedures	16
Analysis.....	17
4 RESULTS	18
Background Information of the Students	18
Parent Involvement at School	29
Parent Involvement at Home	47
Future Aspirations.....	58
5 CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS.....	72
Conclusions.....	72
Recommendations.....	77
Implications.....	78
Limitations	79

REFERENCES	80
APPENDIX.....	85
A. HSRC Approval Letter.....	85
B. Approval Letter From Kearsley Community Schools.....	87
C. Recruitment Letter to Participate as a Subject	89
D. Informed Consent to Participate Form.....	90
E. Eighth Grade Student Questionnaire	92

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1 Students' Opinions if AMS Encourages Parental Involvement in the Classroom.....	29
2 Students' Opinions if AMS Encourages Parental Involvement in Sports, Arts, and Other After School Activities	30
3 Students' Opinions if AMS Gives Parents/Guardians the Opportunity for Meaningful Roles in Their Children's Education.....	30
4 Students' Opinions if AMS Regularly Contacts Parents/Guardians About Their Children's Education	31
5 Students' Opinions if Parents/Guardians at AMS Take an Interest in Their Children's Education	31
6 Students' Opinions if Parents/Guardians at AMS Have Adequate Supervision for Their Children After School	32
7 Students' Opinions if Parents/Guardians at AMS Discipline Their Children	32
8 Students' Opinions if Parents/Guardians at AMS Set Academic Standards for Their Children to Meet	33
9 Students' Opinions if Parents/Guardians at AMS Show Respect for Teachers and Administrators	33
10 Students' Opinions if Parents/Guardians at AMS Check to See if Their Children's Homework is Completed	34

11	Students’ Opinions of How Much Input Parents/Guardians Should Have Regarding How Often Homework is Assigned at AMS	34
12	Students’ Opinions How Much Input Parents/Guardians Should Have Regarding Grade Calculations at AMS	35
13	Students’ Opinions How Much Input Parent’s/Guardians Should Have Regarding the Types of Extra Curricular Activities Offered at AMS	35
14	Students’ Opinions How Much Input Parents/Guardians Should Have Regarding Student Discipline at AMS	36
15	Students’ Opinions How Involved Their Parents/Guardians are with Their Education	36
16	Students’ Opinions Of How Involved They Want Their Parents/Guardians to be in Their Education	37
17	Students’ Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Attend Extra Curricular Activities at AMS	37
18	Students’ Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Meet with a Teacher or School Administrator	38
19	Students’ Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Communicate with a Teacher or School Administrator	38
20	Students’ Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Help with Homework	47
21	Students’ Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Helped with Homework in Elementary School	48
22	Students’ Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Check to See that Homework is Done	48
23	Students’ Opinions if Parents/Guardians Give Consequences for Not Completing Homework.....	49
24	Students’ Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Help to Find a Place to Study	49

25	Students’ Opinions How Often Parents/Guardians Encourage Them to do Well in School	50
26	Students’ Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Talk with Them About School	50
27	Students’ Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Encourage Them to Further Their Education.....	51
28	Students’ Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Encourage Them to Pursue Their Dreams	51
29	Students’ Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Help Them to Understand High School Requirements	52
30	Students’ Opinions How Likely That They Will Work Full-Time Right After High School	58
31	Students’ Opinions How Likely That They Will Further Their Education Past High School	58
32	Students’ Opinions How Likely That They Will Complete Their Education at a Technical School or Community College.....	59
33	Students’ Opinions How Likely That They Will Complete Their Education at a Four Year University	59
34	Students’ Opinions How Likely That They Will Complete Their Education by Attending Graduate School, Law School, or Medical School	60
35	Students’ Opinions How Likely That They Will Enlist in the Military	60
36	Students’ Opinions How Likely it is That Their Parents/Guardians Will Support Their Job/Career Choice	61
37	Students’ Opinions How Likely That They Will Leave Michigan to Pursue a Career/Job	61
38	Career Clusters Students Would Be Interested in Pursuing.....	62
39	Students’ Opinions If They Have High Expectations for Their Future	62
40	Students’ Opinions If They Expect to Have a Rewarding Career/Job.....	63

41	Students' Opinions If They Believe That They Have Equal Opportunities as Others to Succeed	63
42	Students' Opinions of How Confident They Are That They Will Achieve Their Future Goals.....	64

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1 Students' Grades of Mostly A's and Percentage of Parents//Guardians at Various Education Levels.....	21
2 Students' Grades of Mostly A's and B's and Percentage of Parents//Guardians at Various Education Levels.....	21
3 Students' Grades of Mostly B and C's and Percentage of Parents//Guardians at Various Education Levels.....	22
4 Students' Grades of Mostly C's and D's and Percentage of Parents//Guardians at Various Education Levels.....	22
5 Students' Grades of Mostly D's and F's and Percentage of Parents//Guardians at Various Education Levels.....	23
6 Students' Grades of Mostly A's and the Amount of Time Spent on a Computer Daily.....	23
7 Students' Grades of Mostly A's and B's and the Amount of Time Spent on a Computer Daily.....	24
8 Students' Grades of Mostly B's and C's and the Amount of Time Spent on a Computer Daily.....	24
9 Students' Grades of Mostly C's and D's and the Amount of Time Spent on a Computer Daily.....	25
10 Students' Grades of Mostly D's and F's and the Amount of Time Spent on a Computer Daily.....	25

11	Students' Grades of Mostly A's and the Amount of Time Spent on Homework each week.....	26
12	Students' Grades of Mostly A's and B's and the Amount of Time Spent on Homework each week.....	26
13	Students' Grades of Mostly B's and C's and the Amount of Time Spent on Homework each week.....	27
14	Students' Grades of Mostly C's and D's and the Amount of Time Spent on Homework each week.....	27
15	Students' Grades of Mostly D's and F's and the Amount of Time Spent on Homework each week.....	28
16	Students' Grades of Mostly A's and How Involved They Want Parents/Guardians in Their Education.....	39
17	Students' Grades of Mostly A's and B's and How Involved They Want Parents/Guardians in Their Education.....	40
18	Students' Grades of Mostly B's and C's and How Involved They Want Parents/Guardians in Their Education.....	40
19	Students' Grades of Mostly C's and D's and How Involved They Want Parents/Guardians in Their Education.....	41
20	Students' Grades of Mostly D's and F's and How Involved They Want Parents/Guardians in Their Education.....	41
21	Students' Grades of Mostly A's and How Often Parents/Guardians met with Teachers or School Administrators.....	42
22	Students' Grades of Mostly A's and B's and How Often Parents/Guardians met with Teachers or School Administrators.....	42
23	Students' Grades of Mostly B's and C's and How Often Parents/Guardians met with Teachers or School Administrators.....	43

24	Students' Grades of Mostly C's and D's and How Often Parents/Guardians met with Teachers or School Administrators.....	43
25	Students' Grades of Mostly D's and F's and How Often Parents/Guardians met with Teachers or School Administrators.....	44
26	Students' Grades of Mostly A's and How Often Parents/Guardians Talked with Teachers or School Administrators.....	44
27	Students' Grades of Mostly A's and B's and How Often Parents/Guardians Talked with Teachers or School Administrators.....	45
28	Students' Grades of Mostly B's and C's and How Often Parents/Guardians Talked with Teachers or School Administrators.....	45
29	Students' Grades of Mostly C's and D's and How Often Parents/Guardians Talked with Teachers or School Administrators.....	46
30	Students' Grades of Mostly D's and F's and How Often Parents/Guardians Talked with Teachers or School Administrators.....	46
31	Students' Grades of Mostly A's and How Often Parents/Guardians Helped with Homework.....	52
32	Students' Grades of Mostly A's and B's and How Often Parents/Guardians Helped with Homework	53
33	Students' Grades of Mostly B's and C's and How Often Parents/Guardians Helped with Homework	53
34	Students' Grades of Mostly C's and D's and How Often Parents/Guardians Helped with Homework	54
35	Students' Grades of Mostly D's and F's and How Often Parents/Guardians Helped with Homework	54
36	How Often Parents Checked for Homework Completion and the Percentage of Students receiving Consequences for Not Completing It	55
37	Percentage of Parents Who Did Not Finish High School and How Often They Encouraged Their Children to do Well in School.....	55

38	Percentage of Parents Who Finished High School and How Often They Encouraged Their Children to do Well in School.....	56
39	Percentage of Parents Who Attended a Vocational or Community College and How Often They Encouraged Their Children to do Well in School	56
40	Percentage of Parents Who Graduated From a Four Year University and How Often They Encouraged Their Children to do Well in School	57
41	Percentage of Students Who do Not Know Their Parents' Education Levels and How Often They Encouraged Their Children to do Well in School.....	57
42	Students' Grades of Mostly A's and How Likely They are to Further Their Education past High School	64
43	Students' Grades of Mostly A's and B's and How Likely They are to Further Their Education past High School	65
44	Students' Grades of Mostly B's and C's and How Likely They are to Further Their Education past High School	65
45	Students' Grades of Mostly C's and D's and How Likely They are to Further Their Education past High School	66
46	Students' Grades of Mostly D's and F's and How Likely They are to Further Their Education past High School	66
47	Students' Grades of Mostly A's and Their Perception of High Expectations for the Future	67
48	Students' Grades of Mostly A's and B's and Their Perception of High Expectations for the Future	67
49	Students' Grades of Mostly B's and C's and Their Perception of High Expectations for the Future	68
50	Students' Grades of Mostly C's and D's and Their Perception of High Expectations for the Future	68
51	Students' Grades of Mostly D's and F's and Their Perception of High Expectations for the Future	69

52	Students' Report of Parents Rarely Involved in Their Education and Their Confidence Level of Achieving Future Goals	69
53	Students' Report of Parents Sometimes Involved in Their Education and Their Confidence Level of Achieving Future Goals	70
54	Students' Report of Parents Often Involved in Their Education and Their Confidence Level of Achieving Future Goals	70
55	Students' Report of Parents Always Involved in Their Education and Their Confidence Level of Achieving Future Goals	71

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Armstrong Middle School is part of the Kearsley Community Schools located in Flint, Michigan. The district is 36 square miles and comprises the townships of Genesee, Davison, and Richfield, as well as, the cities of Burton and Flint. In the 2009-2010 school year, there were 3,237 students enrolled, including 111 School of Choice students (T. Corchado, personal communication, July 20, 2010). Due to the economy in Michigan, the Kearsley district student population has decreased and School of Choice students help to increase the student numbers.

Armstrong Middle School consists of sixth grade through eighth grade and approximately 840 students attend Armstrong. At each grade level, students are assigned to a cluster. Both 6th and 7th grades have three clusters with approximately 90 students each. Eighth grade consists of two clusters with approximately 120 students each.

The Kearsley district, like many school districts in Michigan, has seen student counts drop over the last several years. New students that do move into the district appear to be a different clientele than what Kearsley has historically serviced. Some of the new students include School of Choice students, students who do not reside in the district, but are granted permission to attend school in the district. Many of the School of

Choice students come from the neighboring Flint Community School district or local charter schools. Armstrong Middle School is particularly affected by the School of Choice students as sixth grade ends Flint Community Schools' elementary program and many parents do not want to send their student onto junior high in the Flint district.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Teachers at Armstrong Middle School recognize that a change is occurring in Kearsley's clientele. More students come to class unprepared, do not complete assigned work, challenge authority, and show little respect for adults, the school, or themselves. Parental support is mixed. Telephone calls to parents often go unanswered or parents promise change in their child's behavior, but the behavior stays the same.

In order for teachers to address the needs of Kearsley's changing clientele, information about the students is needed. Teachers need to know more about their students in order to help the students learn. Particularly, teachers need to understand how students perceive parental involvement in their education and what students' future aspirations are.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to survey eighth grade students at Armstrong Middle School in order to determine their perceptions regarding parental involvement in their lives both in and out of school and their future aspirations. The study was designed to contribute to the literary work of sharing middle school students' perceptions of parental involvement and their plans after high school.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the profile of the eighth grade students in this school? (Q 1-16)
2. What is the perception of the students regarding the involvement and participation of their parents in school activities? (Q 17-35)
3. What is the perception of the students regarding parental activities at their home?
(Q36-45)
4. What are the self-reported future plans of the students in this grade? (Q 46-58)
5. What is the relationship between selected demographic variables and students' attitudes toward parental involvement and their future aspirations?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Finding better ways to motivate, educate, and move students toward higher aspirations in academics are never ending. With each new generation entering the doors of academia, new theories are practiced in an effort to set this group apart from its predecessors, surpassing what previous generations learned and accomplished. One revolving theory appears to be the role that parents play in a student's education. There are many components to parental involvement in a student's academic career, from volunteering in classrooms, to helping with homework, to selecting courses, to contacting teachers, and to participating in school activities. Does a student's perception of parental involvement in any of these components affect a student's future aspirations and attitude towards school or is this parental involvement concept another flavor of the month program designed to appear to improve education? A review of the literature shows mixed results regarding the types of parental involvement.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AT SCHOOL

Using data on 21,835 students from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Keith, T., Keith, P., Bickley, and Singh (1992) found that a student's perception of parental involvement is much more significant relative to student achievement than a parent's perception of their involvement. In addition, Keith et al. (1992) found when parents were involved in assisting with nightly homework, Eighth grade students' achievement tests showed positive results. Furthermore, when parents were involved in their student's future educational plans, those students experienced a positive effect on academic achievement (Keith et al., 1992). However, in the same study when parents communicated with the school or participated in their student's school activities, these types of involvement did not affect academic achievement (Keith, et al., 1992). This research suggests that when students perceive parents to be involved in their education, only certain aspects of involvement produce positive academic effects.

In another study done by Ricker (2007) a student's perception of the educational expectations the parents held for that student also had a positive effect on how the student valued education. The value of education, as perceived by the student, related to the student's perception of parents giving out special privileges for attaining good grades or denying privileges for earning poor grades (Ricker, 2007). In Ricker's (2007) study, students who perceived that parents held high work expectations achieved higher grades. However, a student's perception of parental involvement again, only had an impact in certain areas. With ninth grade students, there was little correlation between a student's

perception of how much a parent helped with homework and the student choosing to spend more time on homework. (Ricker, 2007).

Other research studies support parent involvement regarding school as a positive indicator for student achievement. Hill, Ramirez, and Dumka (2003) found that students that had clearly defined goals reported have a strong or very strong supportive family network.

In Hill and Tyson's (2009) meta-analytical assessment, it indicated that with the exception of help with homework, achieving academic success was highly correlated with parents' involvement with their student's education. This correlation was also especially strong with parent involvement and academic socialization at the middle school level (Hill & Tyson, 2009). At this time in adolescence, socializing with peers is a primary skill developed and nurtured.

PARENTAL INVOLVMENT AT HOME

Outside of school, parental involvement also affects a student. Aspects of the home environment can refer to anything that affects a student physically, emotionally, intellectually, or spiritually (Muola, 2010). A significant positive relationship was found regarding environmental factors and motivation towards academic achievement. In this study, students whose parents created a learning environment, complete with a designated learning area, experienced higher academic achievement (Muola, 2010).

In another study conducted on elementary and middle school students, Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, and Sandler (2007) found that parental involvement at home

decreased each year in elementary school through early middle school, although parental school involvement continued to remain high. Home involvement motivators for parents revolved around social contexts including requests by students for help and the perception other people have of those parents (Green, et al., 2007). In addition, the parents' personal beliefs on parenting, time, and energy available, were also contributing motivating factors for parental involvement at home (Green et al., 2007).

Furthermore, as Cotton and Wikelund's report (1989) indicated the most effective forms of parental involvement at home are active forms rather than passive forms of involvement. These would include directly working with a student on activities, discussing future plans, and choosing outside activities to enrich a child's experience outside of school (Cotton & Wikelund, 1989). This indicates that parental involvement at home contributes positively to the well being of a student.

While parents, teachers, and the rest of the education community continue to look for improvements in motivating, educating, and moving students toward higher aspirations, the concept of parental involvement cannot be overlooked. The research shows that parental involvement in school is closely linked to a student's academic achievement and future educational plans. In addition, a parent's level of involvement in the home also plays a role in contributing to a student's success. It is interesting to note the commonalities throughout many of the studies indicating that not all types of parental involvement are seen as positive in the eyes of a student. Nevertheless, in an effort to improve student academic performance and future endeavors, the effects of parental involvement on students can be essential.

FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

Students in school today have a host of expectations that did not exist 30 years ago. Not only are the students expected to know more information at an earlier age, how and where to use that information, but also based on that information what career path they choose for the future. The mind of a young adolescent is still maturing, yet a student is asked early in their academic career what it is that they want to do when they graduate from high school. Sometimes knowing that goal sets forth a path of academic achievement. Other times it creates a track for future uncertainty. Nonetheless, the future aspirations of students play an important role in their lives. What affects students' aspirations and can parents and educators work to mold the future aspirations of students?

According to Sirin, Diemer, Jackson, Gonsalves, and Howell, (2004) aspirations are the educational and vocational dreams that students have for the future. Even at the middle school level, students begin their career decision making when choosing what high school curriculum to pursue (Akos, Lambie, Milsom, & Gilbert, 2007). As students select that path, they perceive a career to be more accessible based on facts gathered and the values and beliefs of others that shaped the student's aspirations over time (Akos, et al., 2007). Students often consult with peers for guidance in career decisions rather than educational experts, possibly making career choices that are much more limiting (Mau, 1995). What students need, however, is guidance in career planning at the middle school level because young adolescents lack the ability to form plans for the future completely (Peterson, Long, & Billups, 1999). In one study done at the middle school level, males had more goals than females; however, the females understood the requirements for how

to achieve goals much stronger than the males (Hill, Ramirez, & Dumka, 2003). In order to be successful in career planning, students need self-awareness and self-knowledge, including an accurate picture of interests, abilities, values, and talents, as well as, a vision of the future. Marjoribanks (2002) indicates that career aspirations are also influenced by interpersonal skills, self-reliance, self-control, a student's self-concept, and their level of maturity. Once students have defined goals, they are less likely to perceive barriers to achieving those goals (Hill et al., 2003). Those components, along with parental understanding of the educational process equip students for choosing future aspirations successfully (Akos et al., 2007). When there is a disconnect between career aspirations and the academic track needed to prepare the student, poor educational planning results. Even at the middle school level, students that are undecided or not involved in the career development process, risk being ill prepared with career aspirations (Akos et al., 2007).

For example, in a sample of 812 eighth grade students in North Carolina, Akos et al. (2007) found that 60% of the students were preparing for a college experience following high school and 34% planned to pursue some type of post secondary education and training. Keeping this educational track, it is estimated that 95% of the students will leave high school fully prepared to pursue their future aspirations (Akos et al., 2007).

A student's background can also play a role in a student's future aspirations. Gottfredson (2002) refers to systemic variables as having a direct impact on a student's future aspirations. Systemic variables include a student's socio economic status, ethnicity, race, the family's level of engagement in education, the parents' attained

education level and the family's own aspirations for their children. In addition, in another study, students of Mexican descent cited a lack of money as an obstacle to achievement in the future (Hill et al., 2003).

Burks (1994) states that the background differences of students, especially the socio economic status of students affects the academic track students follow and ultimately students' future aspirations. When academic tracks are not rigorous, future career opportunities for students are limited thus repeating the cycle of a lower socio economic status. Students' socio economic status shape their occupational self-concept and decision making involving future aspirations (Rojewski & Kim, 2003).

In addition, to a student's background, research also shows that student behavior in school affects future aspirations. Hill et al. (2004) found that behavior problems correlate with educational achievement and ultimately future aspirations. The lower the expectations the student has for future aspirations, the lower the grades and more behavior problems experienced (Hill, 2004). Furthermore, in an exploratory study done with Mexican immigrants, Mexican Americans, African Americans, and Euro-Americans Hill et al. (2003) found that Euro-American and African American students recognized that not working in school is a barrier within their control to achieving future aspirations. In addition, Akos et al. (2007) found that behavior, attendance, and ability tracking affected student performance dictating and limiting future career aspirations as early as elementary school.

Moreover, schools play an important role in how students visualize their future aspirations and it begins with the school environment. Wang and Holcombe (2010)

found that positive school experiences are associated with a student's school engagement. Teachers who are willing to engage their students by offering praise and constructive improvement as opposed to praising goal mastery found students more motivated for school success (Wang & Holcombe, 2010). Furthermore, without the fear of humiliation, students' confidence increased in their ability to learn (Wang & Holcombe, 2010). The environment that teachers set initially paves the way for students' success in school and the future ambitions for which they strive. Additionally, students' perceptions of teachers' responsiveness and supportive social environment play a significant role in student motivation much more than academic competence suggesting students internalized the student/teacher relationship (Marchant, Paulson, & Rothlisberg, 2001).

From a counseling perspective, both counselors and principals take on leadership roles assisting students in understanding the curriculum and how course choices today affect academic and training choices in the future (Stone & Clark, 2001). Counseling should promote the academic and career development of all students by looking at career paths early on and discussing factors to promote successful attainment of that career path (Akos et al, 2007). In addition, research shows that academic tracking discourages academic and career aspirations (Smith-Maddock, & Wheelock, 1995). Those in a position to advise students need to consider how academic choices expand or restrict future options (Stone & Clark, 2001). Counselors and other school personnel who discriminate students based on educational placements diminish future aspirations (Rojewski & Kim, 2003).

SUMMARY

A review of literature pertaining to students' perceptions of parental involvement provide insight to the positive role that certain types of parental involvement play in students' lives. Parents who take an active role in their students' academic careers enable their students to recognize the importance of an education thus setting a path toward academic achievement. In addition, a student's future aspirations are affected by more than just how that student perceives his future. The role that the school environment, the teachers, the administrators, and the counselors play cannot be overlooked. The success that a student experiences in school paves the way for students to achieve and set forth worthy ambitions for the future.

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This study's design was a one-shot case study as described by Campbell and Stanley (1966). It describes Armstrong Middle School eighth grade students' perceptions of parental involvement and their future aspirations.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This research used a survey as the instrument for data collection. The research design is intended to determine eighth grade students' perceptions regarding parental involvement in their lives both in and out of school and their future aspirations. The 58 questions and statements asked were used to build a student profile and describe Armstrong Middle School eighth grade students' perceptions of parental involvement and their future aspirations. The survey was developed based on research from Dr. Katherine Manley from Ferris State University, Francis Antosca from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, and from Vanessa Ricker of Miami University. A panel of experts evaluated the questions for reliability and validity.

PILOT STUDY

A teacher, Dawn Anderson, reviewed the survey to identify any difficulty in understanding the questions or statements. Constance Reilly, a business writer, proofread the survey for typographical, grammar, and spelling errors. The pilot study was conducted to identify any mistakes, problems, or difficulties in understanding the questions or statements of the survey. Four students ranging from 14 years old to 16 years old completed a paper copy of the survey. Each student assessed the difficulty of the survey items and there were no questions found that were difficult to understand. The survey took between 10 and 15 minutes to complete.

SELECTION OF THE SUBJECTS

The researcher explained the research project, its purpose, and discussed the survey with the Assistant Superintendent of Personnel. Next the researcher obtained permission from the Assistant Superintendent to conduct the survey. Students at Armstrong Middle School in Cluster 8 received a letter explaining the research project, its purpose and the survey. A letter was sent home approximately two weeks before the survey explaining the research project, its purpose, and the survey. An informed consent to participate was included for students and parents to sign and return agreeing to be a participant in the survey. Students had approximately two weeks to return the consent form. Only students who returned a signed consent form were surveyed.

Cluster Eight students were chosen because the researcher teaches in that cluster. The cluster is representative of the eighth grade population at Armstrong Middle School because cluster placements are made to balance the mix of students regarding academics, behavior, and gender. The survey was completed in the students' math or Algebra classes. Approximately 50 students completed the survey. Surveys were completed on the same day. Students who were absent and consented to the survey completed the survey when they returned to school.

The population of the survey sample is split evenly between males and females. About 25% of the students in Cluster Eight participate in the middle school band program. Less than half of the students participate in an after school sports or club.

INSTRUMENTATION

The instrument consisted of 58 questions or statements divided into four sections. Section one of the survey contained 16 multiple-choice background questions (items 1-16) to establish a student profile. Section two of the survey (items 17-35) contained statements regarding parental involvement at school using a Likert type answer format. Section three of the survey (items 36-45) contained statements regarding parental involvement at home using a Likert type answer format. Section four of the survey (items 46-58) contained statements regarding the student's future aspirations using a Likert type answer format.

FIELD CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

The research survey was completed in the winter, 2011 semester in the students' math classes at Armstrong Middle School. Students took the survey using Survey Monkey, an online survey software program. The researcher reserved a bank of computers at the Learning Center for each math class that completed the survey. Each computer was set to the homepage of the survey so students began taking the survey immediately after receiving directions. The researcher tracked the absent students so and the survey was completed when those students returned. Students were read the following instructions:

This is a survey to gather information regarding Armstrong Middle School eighth grade students' perceptions about parental involvement in and out of school and their future aspirations. Your answers to the survey will remain confidential. Read each question or statement and mark your response. There is no right or wrong answer. You will not be graded on this survey. If you are unsure of how to answer a question or you do not want to answer a question or statement, you may skip it. If you feel uncomfortable taking the survey, you may stop at any time; there is no penalty for not finishing the survey. This survey is not timed. When you have completed the survey, close out your browser and finish yesterday's math assignment.

ANALYSIS

The student survey answers were entered into an Excel spreadsheet for analysis. Frequencies and percentages were calculated on the student profile questions (items 1-16) and on the statements throughout each section of the survey. The researcher also used a general cross sectional analysis where applicable in order to report trends in different groups. The aggregate data was presented using charts to report the frequency of items visually. The characteristics of high and low academically performing students were reported in terms of parents' educational levels, parental involvement, and students' future aspirations. Based on the analysis, the researcher inferred Armstrong Middle School eighth grade students' perceptions on parental involvement and their future aspirations.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Eighth grade students at Armstrong Middle School in the Kearsley School District were surveyed in April, 2011. The survey contained several questions designed to create a profile on the students' backgrounds, parental involvement in school, parental involvement at home, and future aspirations.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE STUDENTS

The first section of the survey contained 16 questions related to the self-reported demographics of the students. Fifty-two students participated in the survey, 50% were females and 50% were males. Their ethnic backgrounds consisted of: 81% identified themselves as Caucasian, 10% as African Americans, and two percent as either Hispanic, Asian or other. A majority (88%) of the students live in the Kearsley School District. The remaining 12% live in surrounding school districts. Over half of the students (54%) have attended Kearsley their entire academic career, while 40% have attended Kearsley between 2-8 years. Only two percent of the students have attended for just one year and for three percent of the students, this is their first year in Kearsley.

Questions were asked to gain an understanding of how students spend their time outside of school. More than half of the students (52%) go to bed on a school night before 10:00 p.m. Thirty-eight percent of the students go to bed between 10:00 p.m. and

11:00 p.m. Only 10% of the students go to bed after 11:00 p.m. Watching television occupies a portion of the students' time with 42% of the students watching more than three hours of television a day. Students watching one half hour to two hours of television daily make up 40% of the population. Only 15 % of the students watch less than one hour daily and two percent do not watch television at all. Computers and computer related games account for another chunk of the students' time. Forty-five percent surveyed spend three or more hours daily on a computer. More than half (52%) clock in less than one half hour to two hours of computer time a day. Four percent of those students surveyed do not spend any time on a computer. Seventy-three percent of the students participate in extracurricular activities.

Elective classes (Art, Band, Choir, Physical Education) were the favorite classes (35%) for this group surveyed. Other popular classes included math (31%) and Social Studies (19%). The majority of students (38%) spend between one and three hours each week on homework. Twenty-nine percent spend less than an hour while 19% spend three to seven hours a week on homework. At the extreme ends, 10% did not spend any time on homework and only 2% spent more than seven hours a week on homework. The types of grades students usually earned included: mostly A's 17%, A's and B's 38%, B's and C's 33%, C's and D's 8%, and D's and F's 2%. Two percent of the students did not record what their grades were.

More than half of the students' (52%) biological parents are married and 65% of these couples both work outside the home. Eight percent of the students surveyed have neither parent working. Completing an education varied for both parents or guardians.

Female parents or guardians who did not complete high school accounted for 4% of the population, 15% graduated from high school, 10% attended a vocational school or community college, and 35% graduated from a four year college. One quarter of the students surveyed did not know the education level of their female parent or guardian. The education of the male parent or guardian included 10% who did not complete high school, 29% graduated from high school, 12% attended a vocational school or community college, and 19% graduated from a four year college. Twenty-seven percent of the students surveyed did not know the education level of their male parent or guardian.

The demographic data were then used to perform a general sectional analysis in order to identify trends. The following analysis pertains to the demographic information that the students provided.

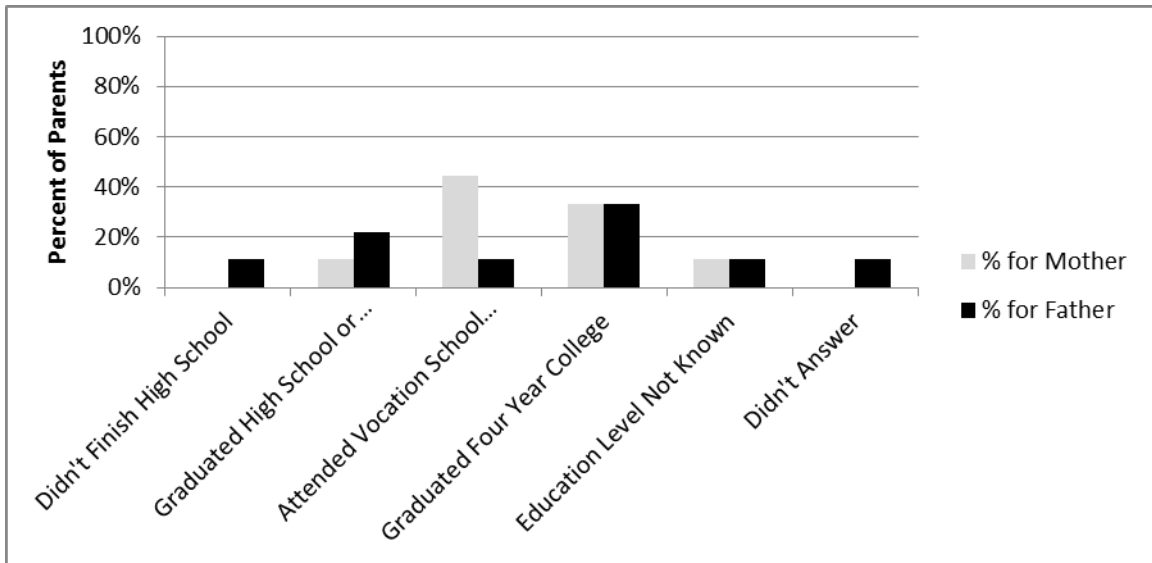


Figure 1 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's for grades and the percentage of parents/guardians at various educational levels achieved.

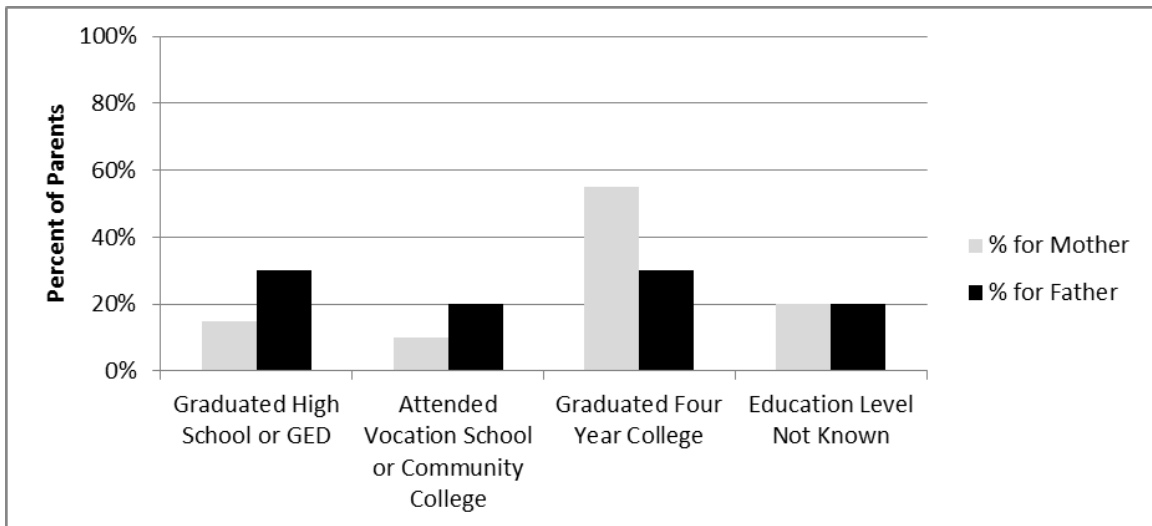


Figure 2 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's B's for grades and the percentage of parents/guardians at various educational levels achieved.

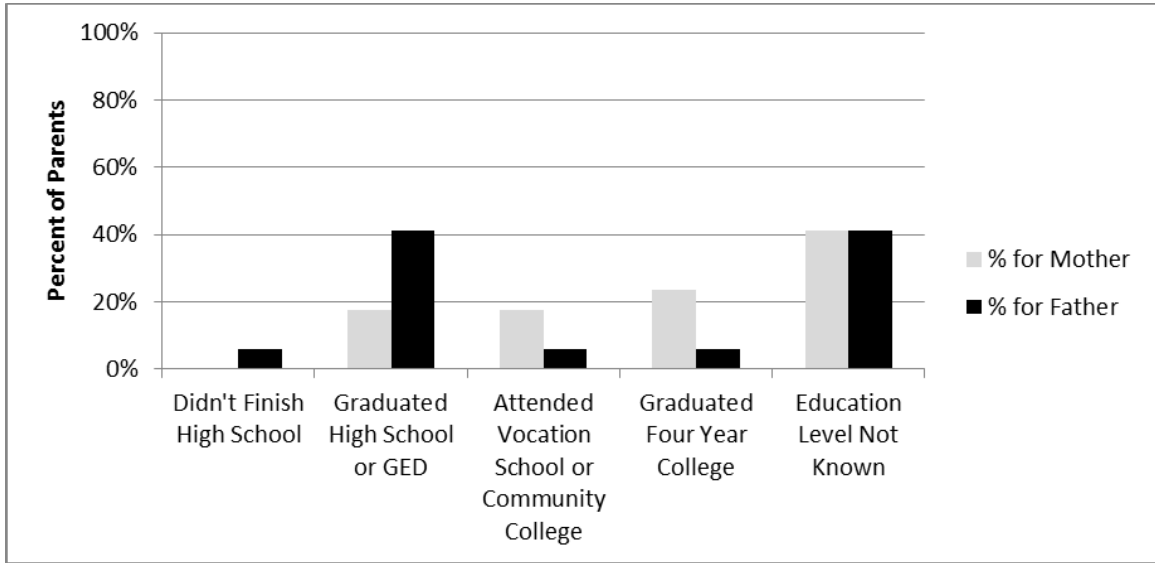


Figure 3 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly B's and C's for grades and the percentage of parents/guardians at various educational levels achieved.

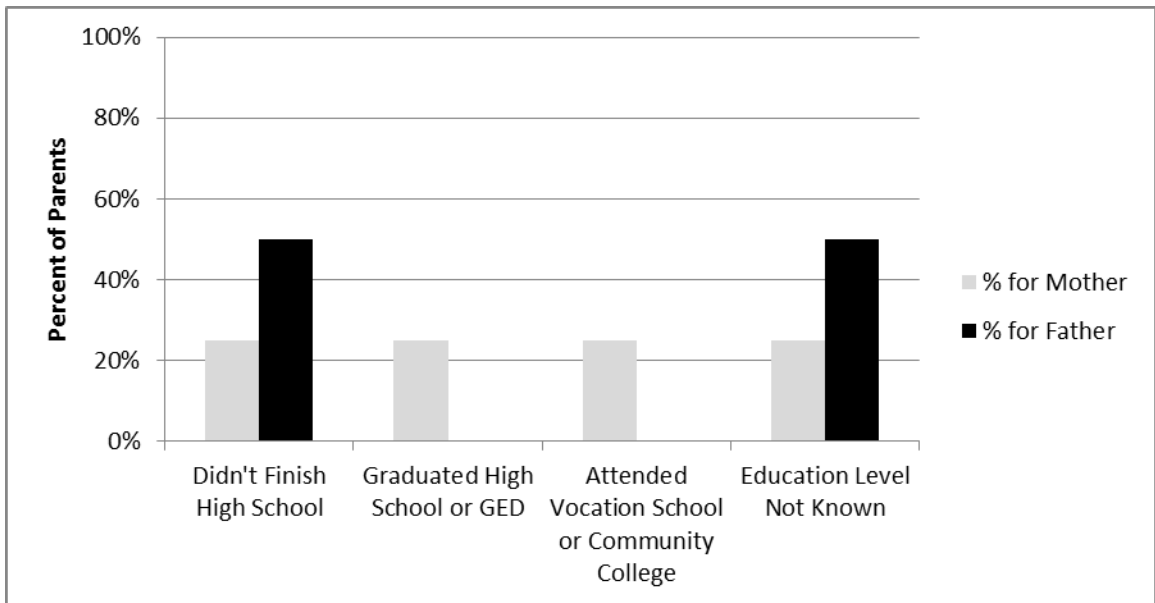


Figure 4 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly C's and D's for grades and the percentage of parents/guardians at various educational levels achieved.

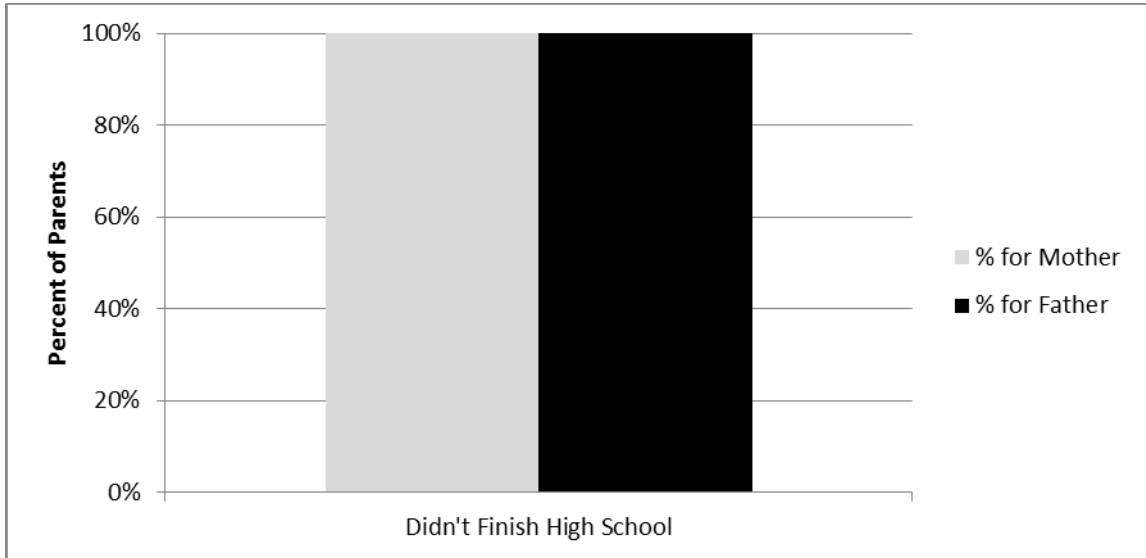


Figure 5 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly D's and F's for grades and the percentage of parents/guardians at various educational levels achieved.

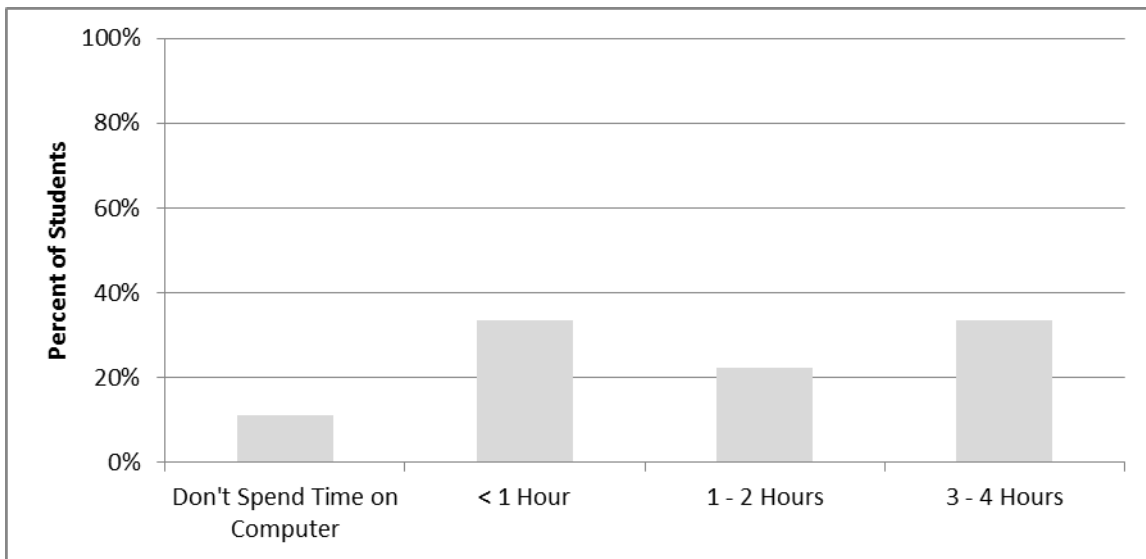


Figure 6 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's for grades and the amount of time spent on a computer daily.

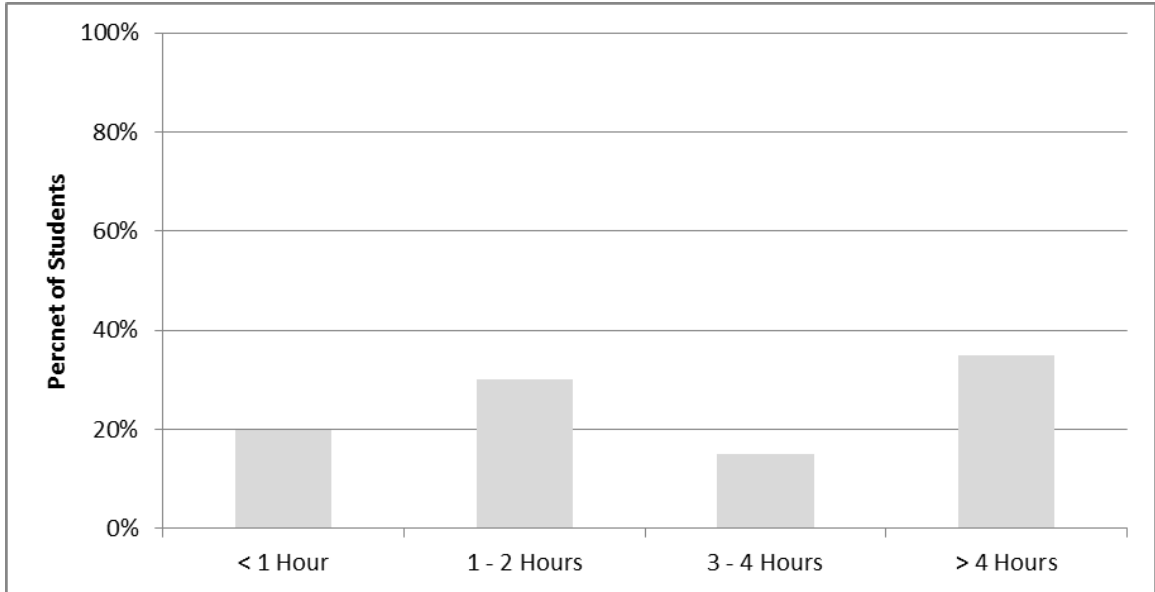


Figure 7 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's and B's for grades and the amount of time spent on a computer daily.

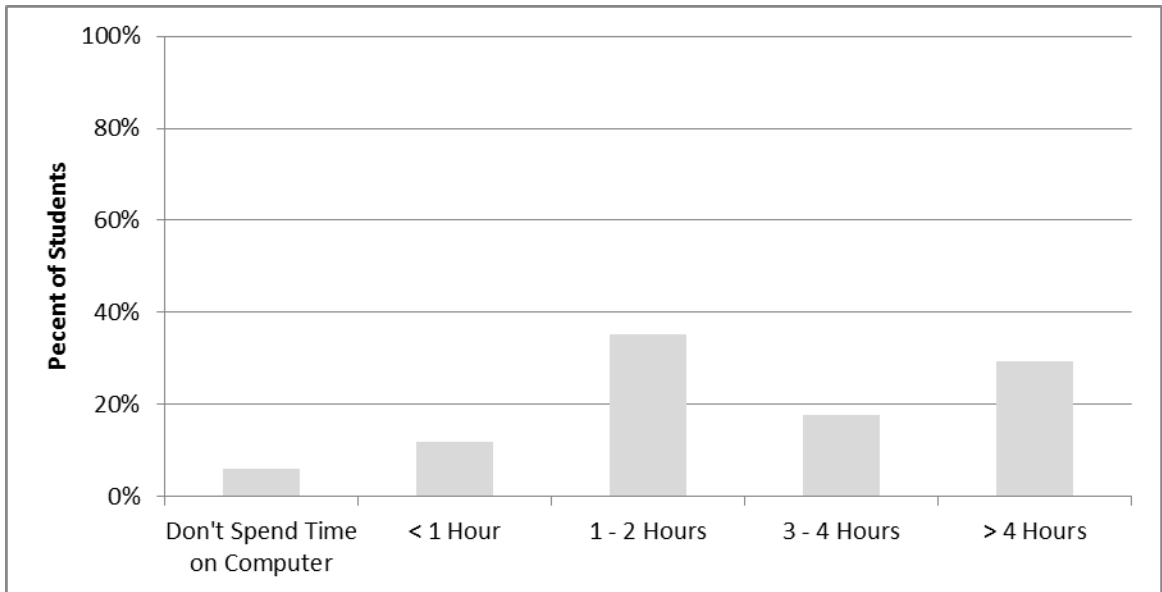


Figure 8 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly B's and C's for grades and the amount of time spent on a computer daily.

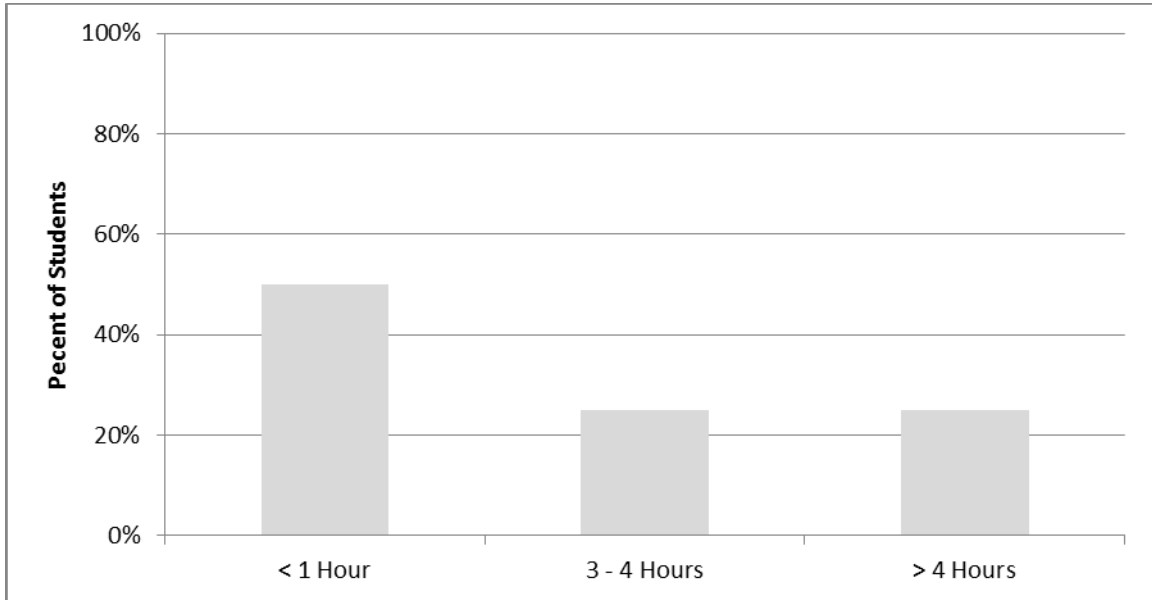


Figure 9 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly C's and D's for grades and the amount of time spent on a computer daily.

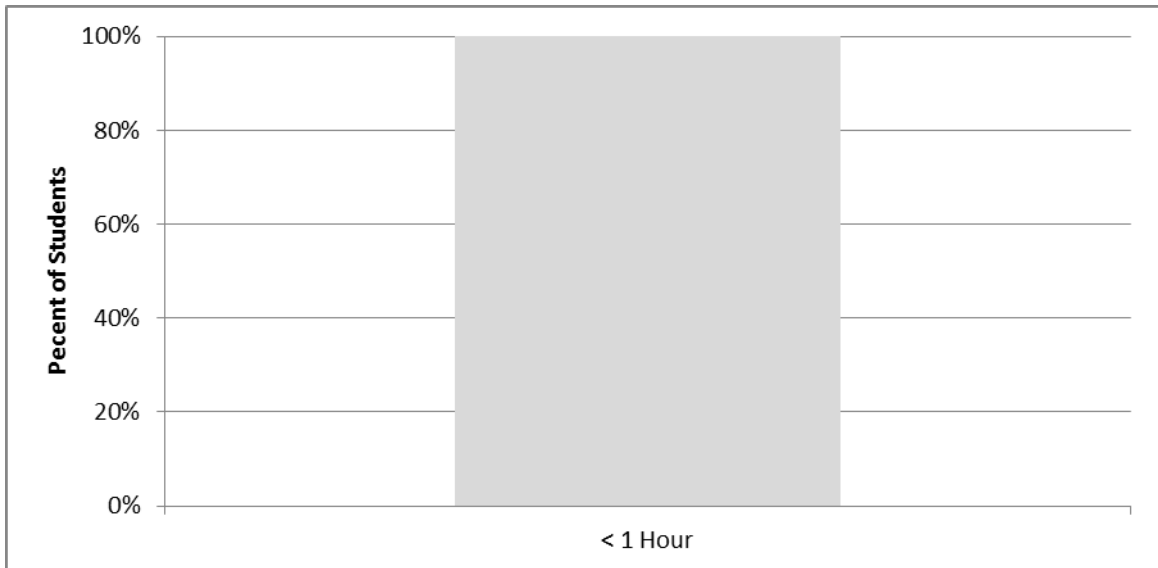


Figure 10 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly D's and F's for grades and the amount of time spent on a computer daily.

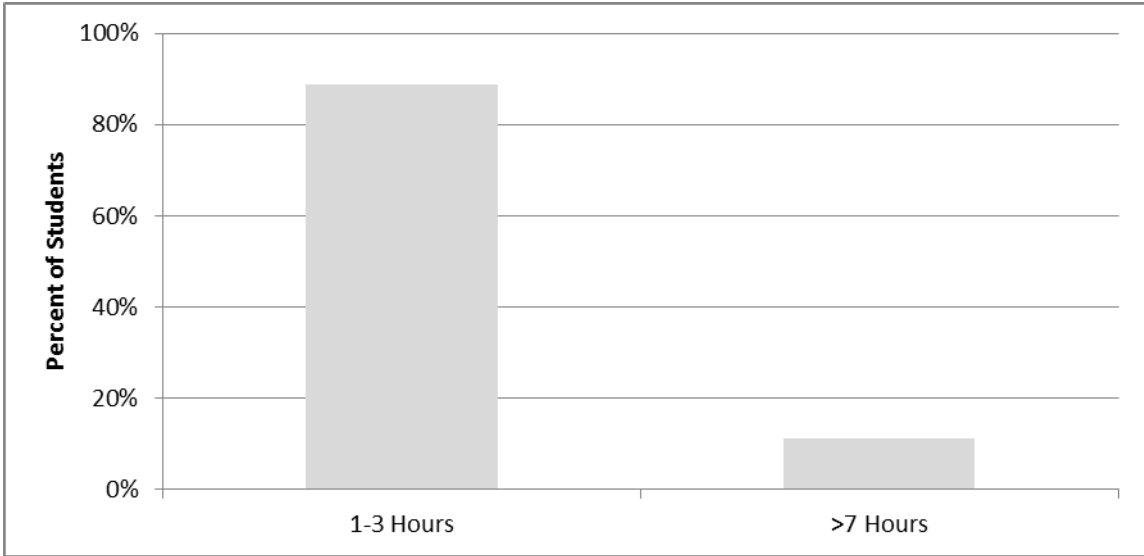


Figure 11 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's for grades and the amount of time spent on homework each week.

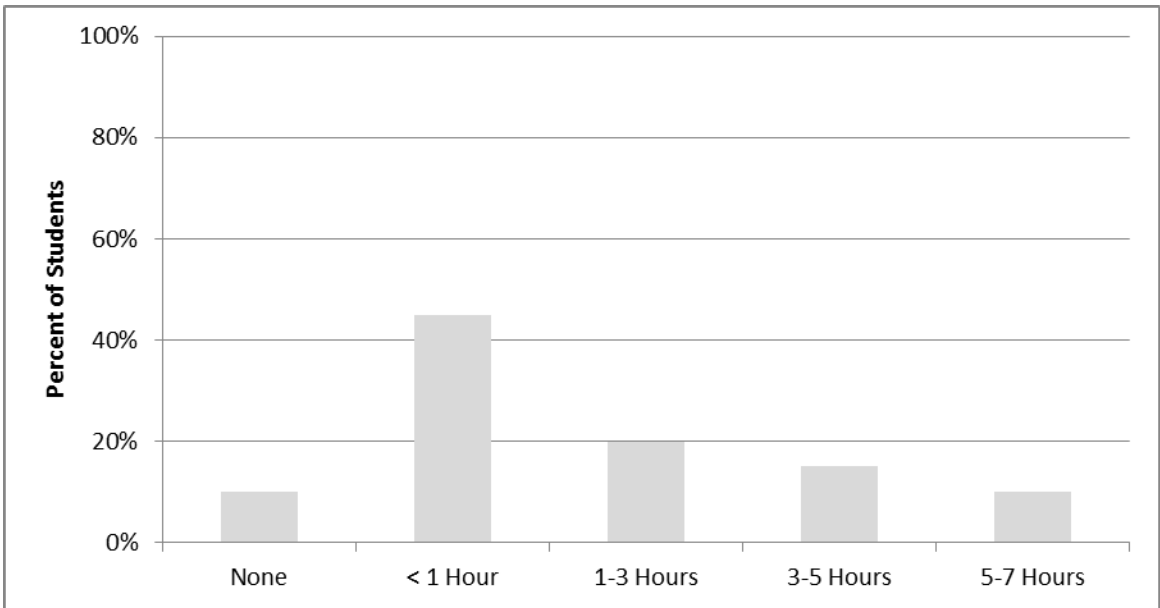


Figure 12 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's and B's for grades and the amount of time spent on homework each week.

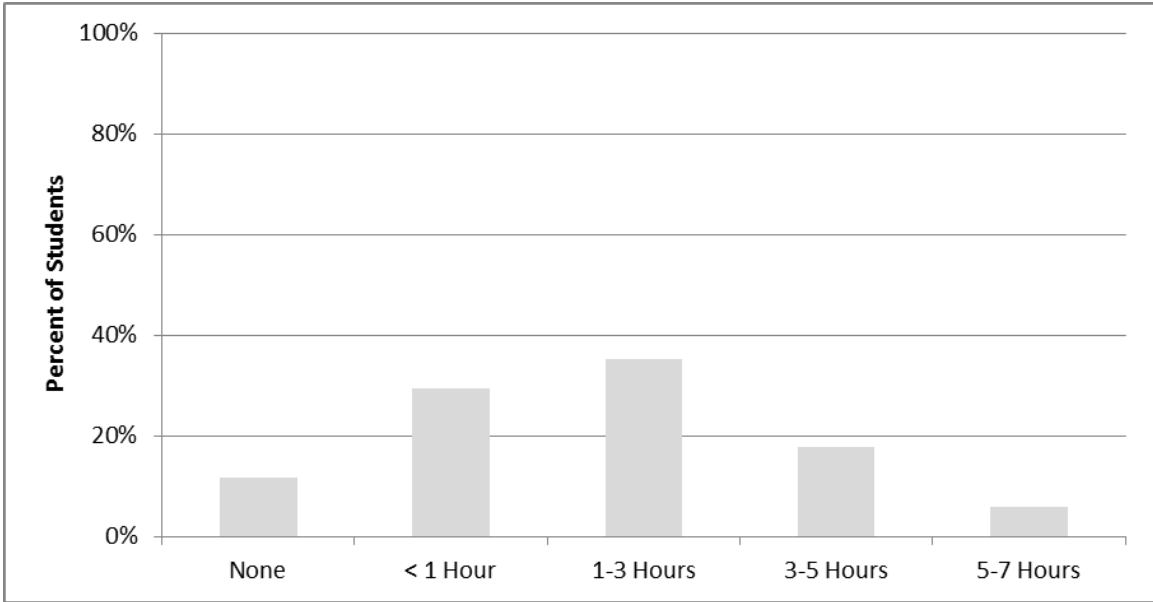


Figure 13 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly B's and C's for grades and the amount of time spent on homework each week.

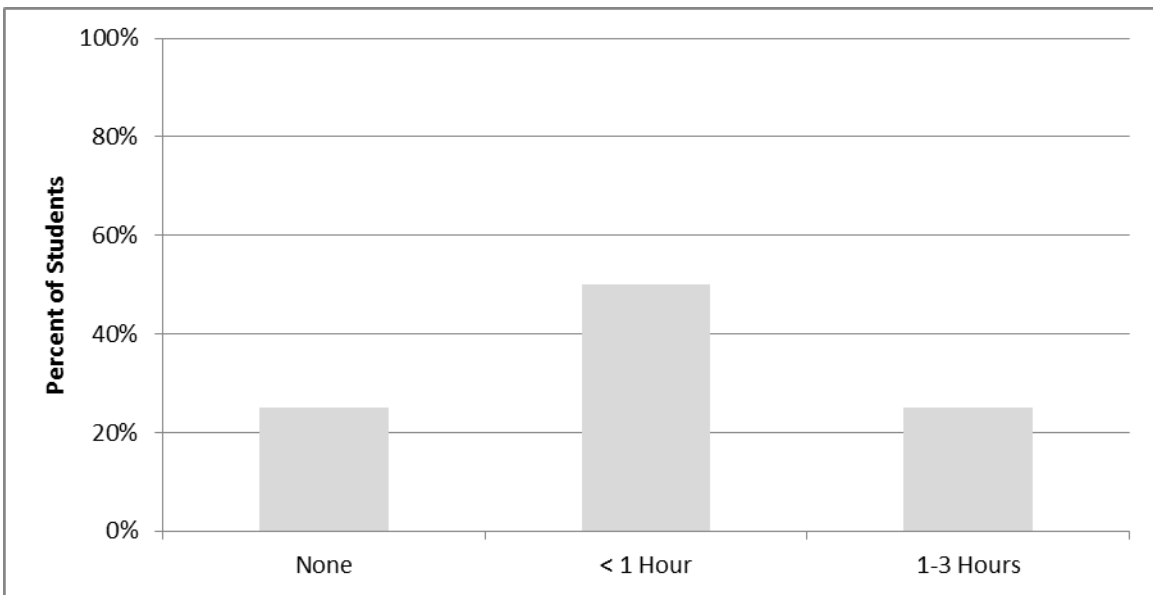


Figure 14 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly C's and D's for grades and the amount of time spent on homework each week.

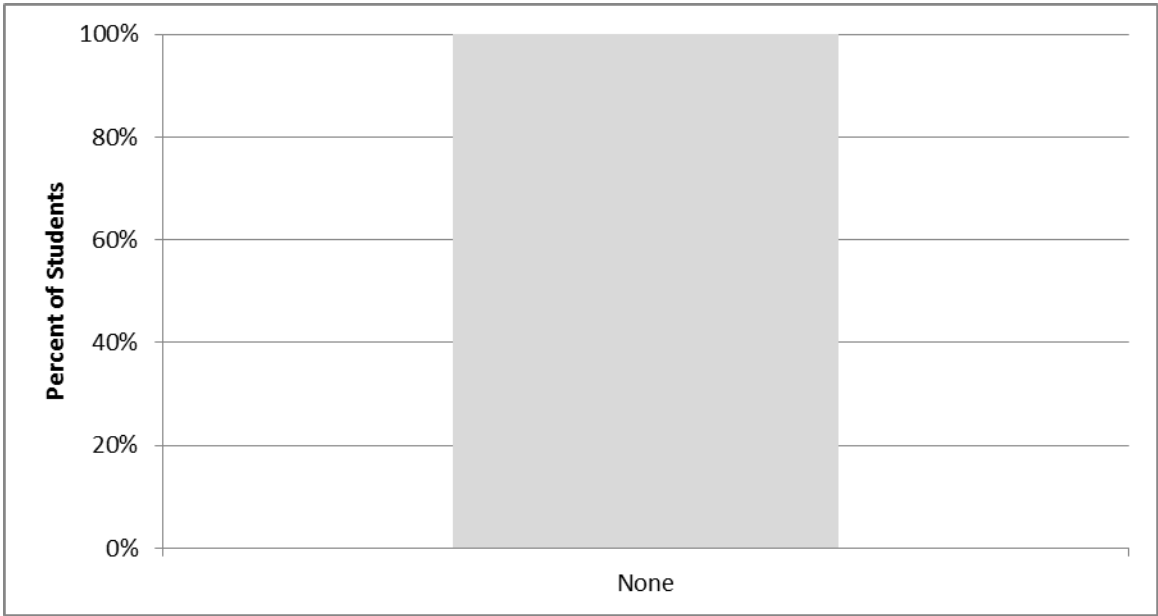


Figure 15 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly D's and F's for grades and the amount of time spent on homework each week.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AT SCHOOL

The second section of the survey contained 19 questions related to the students' perceptions of parental involvement in school. The following is a breakdown of the results including frequencies and percentages (rounded to the nearest percent) answered.

Table 1

Students' Opinions if AMS Encourages Parental Involvement in the Classroom

Options	No	%
Strongly disagree	3	6
Disagree	13	25
Neither agree nor disagree	10	19
Agree	24	46
Strongly agree	1	2
Didn't answer	1	2

Note. AMS = Armstrong Middle School

Table 2

Students' Opinions if AMS encourages parental involvement in sports, arts, and other after school activities

Options	No	%
Strongly disagree	3	6
Disagree	10	19
Neither agree nor disagree	11	21
Agree	28	39
Strongly agree	6	12
Didn't answer	2	4

Note. AMS = Armstrong Middle School

Table 3

Students' Opinions if AMS Gives Parents/Guardians the Opportunity for Meaningful Roles in Their Children's Education

Options	No	%
Strongly disagree	1	2
Disagree	8	15
Neither agree nor disagree	11	21
Agree	29	56
Strongly agree	2	4
Didn't answer	1	2

Note. AMS = Armstrong Middle School

Table 4

Students' Opinions if AMS Regularly Contacts Parents/Guardians About Their Children's Education

Options	No	%
Strongly disagree	7	14
Disagree	9	17
Neither agree nor disagree	8	15
Agree	22	42
Strongly agree	3	6
Didn't answer	3	6

Note. AMS = Armstrong Middle School

Table 5

Students' Opinions if Parents/Guardians at AMS Take an Interest in Their Children's Education

Options	No	%
Strongly disagree	1	2
Disagree	3	6
Neither agree nor disagree	9	17
Agree	30	58
Strongly agree	8	15
Didn't answer	1	2

Note. AMS = Armstrong Middle School

Table 6

Students' Opinions if Parents/Guardians at AMS Have Adequate Supervision for Their Children After School

Options	No	%
Strongly disagree	3	6
Disagree	7	14
Neither agree nor disagree	13	25
Agree	24	46
Strongly agree	4	8
Didn't answer	1	2

Note. AMS = Armstrong Middle School

Table 7

Students' Opinions if Parents/Guardians at AMS Discipline Their Children

Options	No	%
Strongly disagree	3	6
Disagree	10	19
Neither agree nor disagree	14	27
Agree	18	35
Strongly agree	5	10
Didn't answer	2	4

Note. AMS = Armstrong Middle School

Table 8

Students' Opinions if Parents/Guardians at AMS Set Academic Standards for Their Children to Meet

Options	No	%
Strongly disagree	2	4
Disagree	8	15
Neither agree nor disagree	13	25
Agree	22	42
Strongly agree	5	10
Didn't answer	2	4

Note. AMS = Armstrong Middle School

Table 9

Students' Opinions if Parents/Guardians at AMS Show Respect for Teachers and Administrators

Options	No	%
Strongly disagree	2	4
Disagree	4	8
Neither agree nor disagree	8	15
Agree	26	50
Strongly agree	11	21
Didn't answer	1	2

Note. AMS = Armstrong Middle School

Table 10

Students' Opinions if Parents/Guardians at AMS Check to See if Their Children's Homework is Completed

Options	No	%
Strongly disagree	6	12
Disagree	16	31
Neither agree nor disagree	6	12
Agree	16	31
Strongly agree	3	6
Didn't answer	5	10

Note. AMS = Armstrong Middle School

Table 11

Students' Opinions of How Much Input Parents/Guardians Should Have Regarding How Often Homework is Assigned at AMS

Options	No	%
No input	4	8
A little input	5	10
Some input	24	46
A significant amount of input	10	19
Parents should have input into each decision	7	14
Didn't answer	2	4

Note. AMS = Armstrong Middle School

Table 12

Students' Opinions How Much Input Parents/Guardians Should Have Regarding Grade Calculation at AMS

Options	No	%
No input	6	12
A little input	9	17
Some input	13	25
A significant amount of input	18	35
Parents should have input into each decision	4	8
Didn't answer	2	4

Note. AMS = Armstrong Middle School

Table 13

Students' Opinions How Much Input Parents/Guardians Should Have Regarding the Types of Extra Curricular Activities Offered at AMS

Options	No	%
No input	3	6
A little input	4	8
Some input	22	42
A significant amount of input	17	33
Parents should have input into each decision	4	8
Didn't answer	2	4

Note. AMS = Armstrong Middle School

Table 14

Students' Opinions How Much Input Parents/Guardians Should Have Regarding Student Discipline at AMS

Options	No	%
No input	5	10
A little input	8	15
Some input	19	37
A significant amount of input	17	33
Parents should have input into each decision	2	4
Didn't answer	1	2

Note. AMS = Armstrong Middle School

Table 15

Students' Opinions How Involved Their Parents/Guardians are With Their Education

Options	No	%
Not at all involved		
Rarely involved	4	8
Sometimes involved	14	27
Often involved	15	29
Always involved	18	35
Didn't answer	1	2

Table 16

Students' Opinions of How Involved They Want Their Parent/Guardians to be in Their Education

Options	No	%
Not be involved in your education		
Become less involved in your education	9	17
Remain as involved as they are now	28	54
Become more involved in your education	7	13
Don't know	7	13
Didn't answer	1	2

Table 17

Students' Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Attend Extra Curricular Activities at AMS

Options	No	%
Never	4	8
Rarely	6	12
Sometimes	7	13
Often	12	23
Always	22	42
Didn't answer	1	2

Note. AMS = Armstrong Middle School

Table 18

Students' Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Meet With a Teacher or School Administrator

Options	No	%
Never	6	12
Rarely	24	46
Sometimes	16	31
Often	1	2
Always	2	4
Didn't answer	3	6

Table 19

Students' Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Communicate With a Teacher or School Administrator

Options	No	%
Never	10	19
Rarely	23	44
Sometimes	10	19
Often	4	8
Always	3	6
Didn't answer	2	4

The demographic and parent involvement in school data were used to perform a general sectional analysis in order to identify trends. The following analysis pertains to the parent involvement in school data that the students provided.

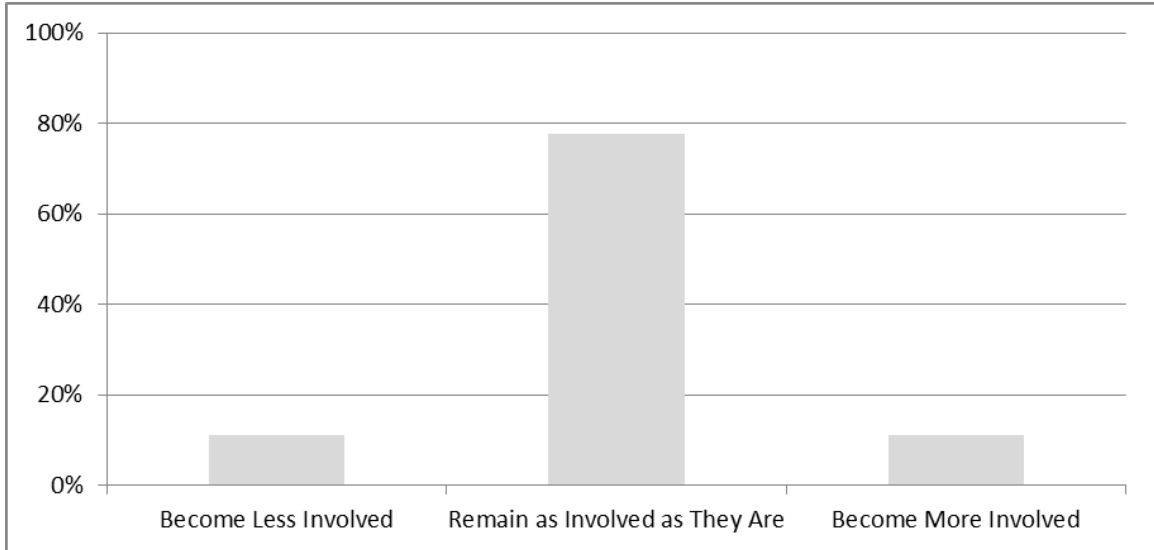


Figure 16 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's for grades and how involved they want their parents/guardians in their education.

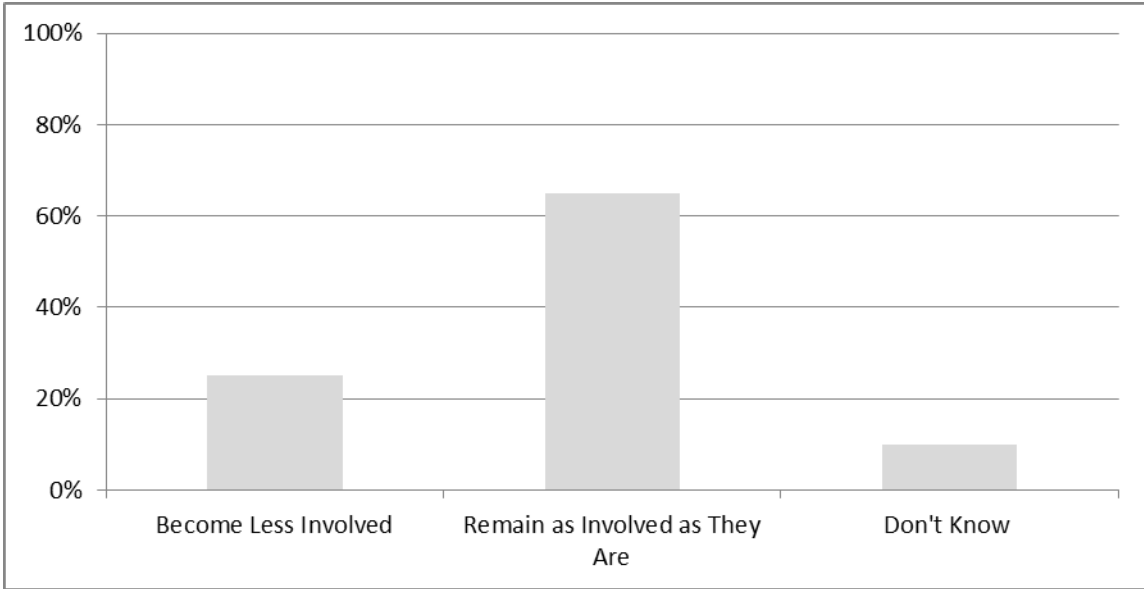


Figure 17 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's and B's for grades and how involved they want their parents/guardians in their education.

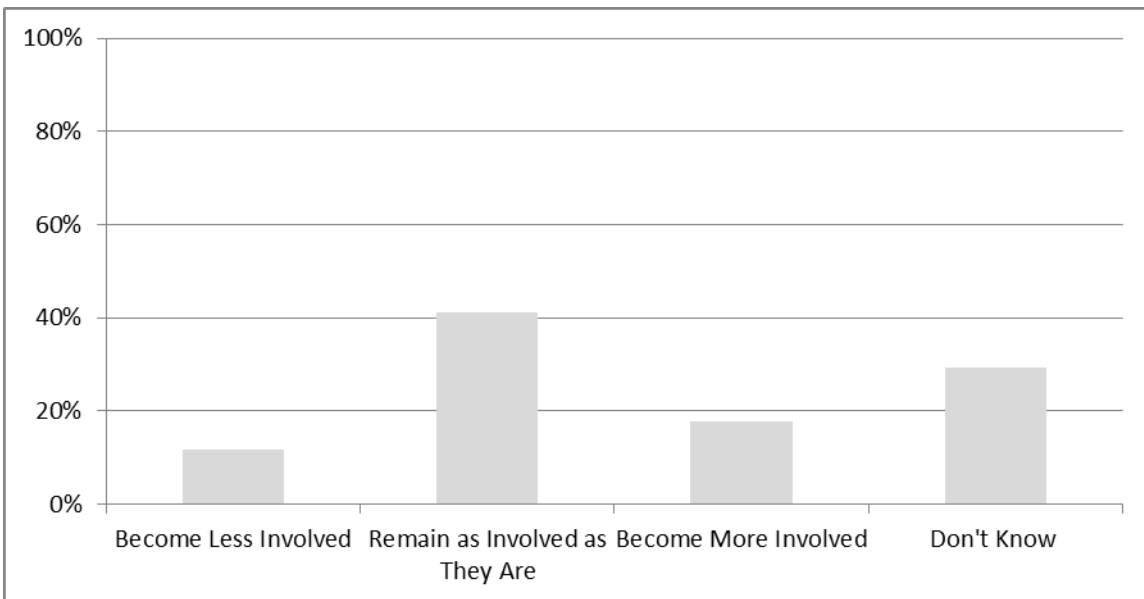


Figure 18 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly B's and C's for grades and how involved they want their parents/guardians in their education.

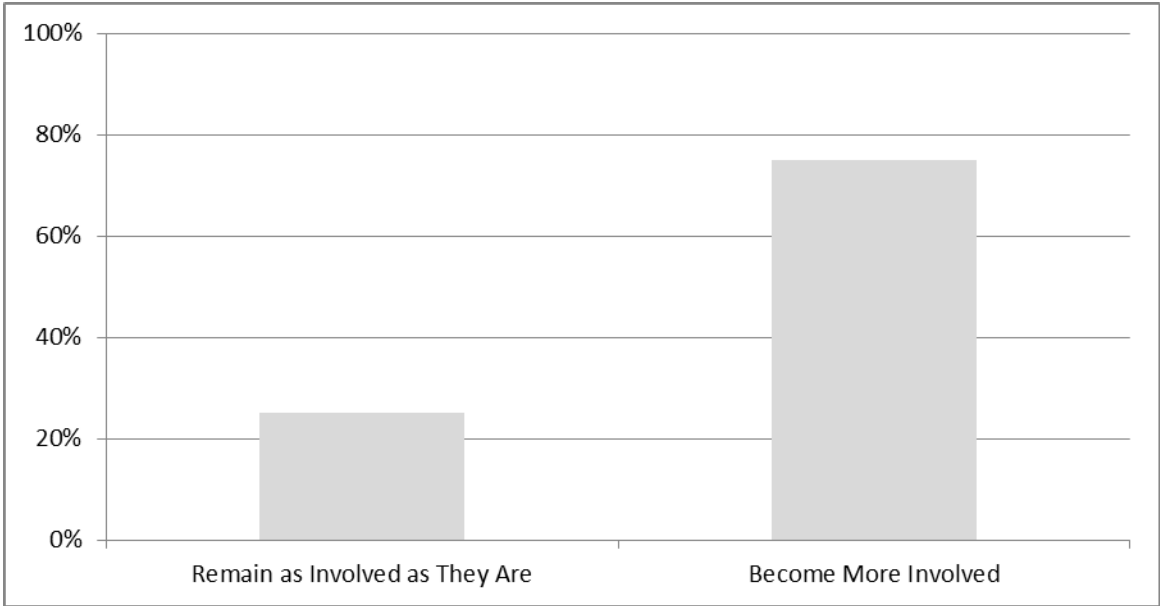


Figure 19 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly C's and D's for grades and how involved they want their parents/guardians in their education.

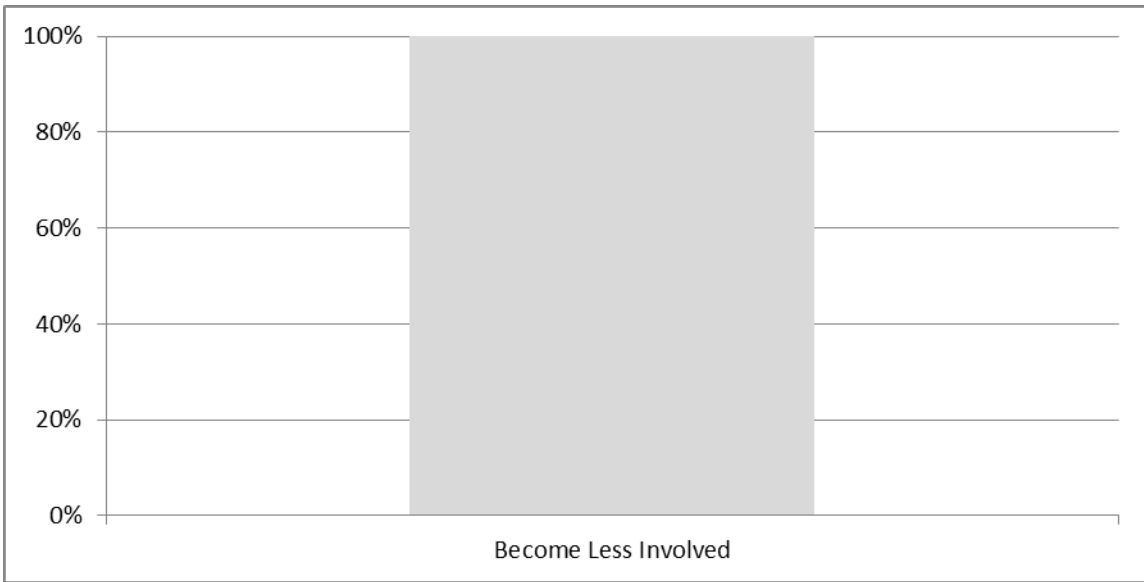


Figure 20 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly D's and F's for grades and how involved they want their parents/guardians in their education.

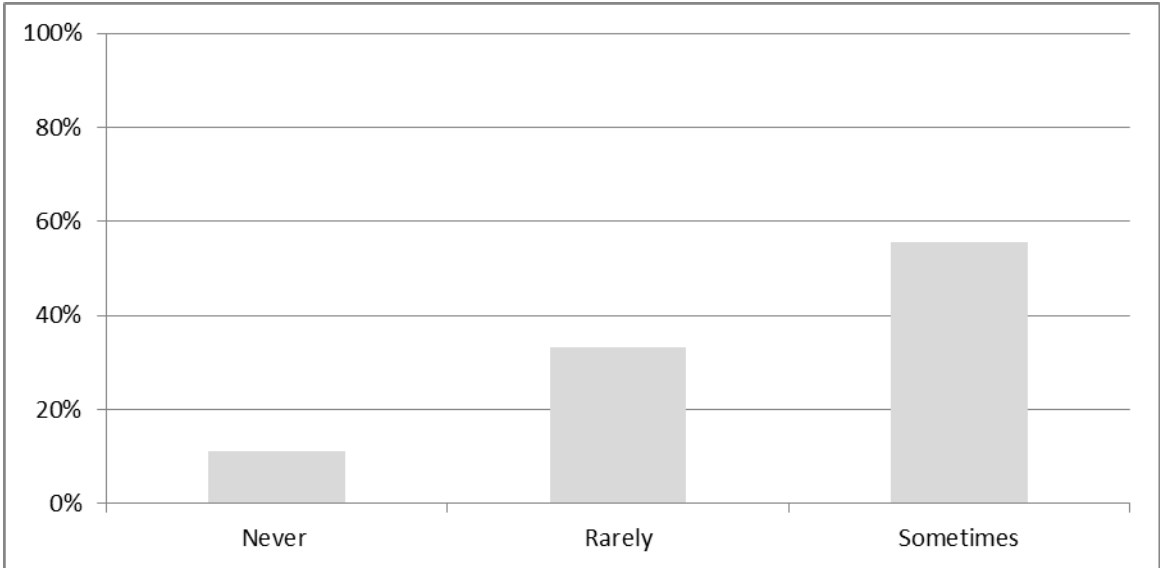


Figure 21 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's for grades and how often parents/guardians met with teachers or school administrators.

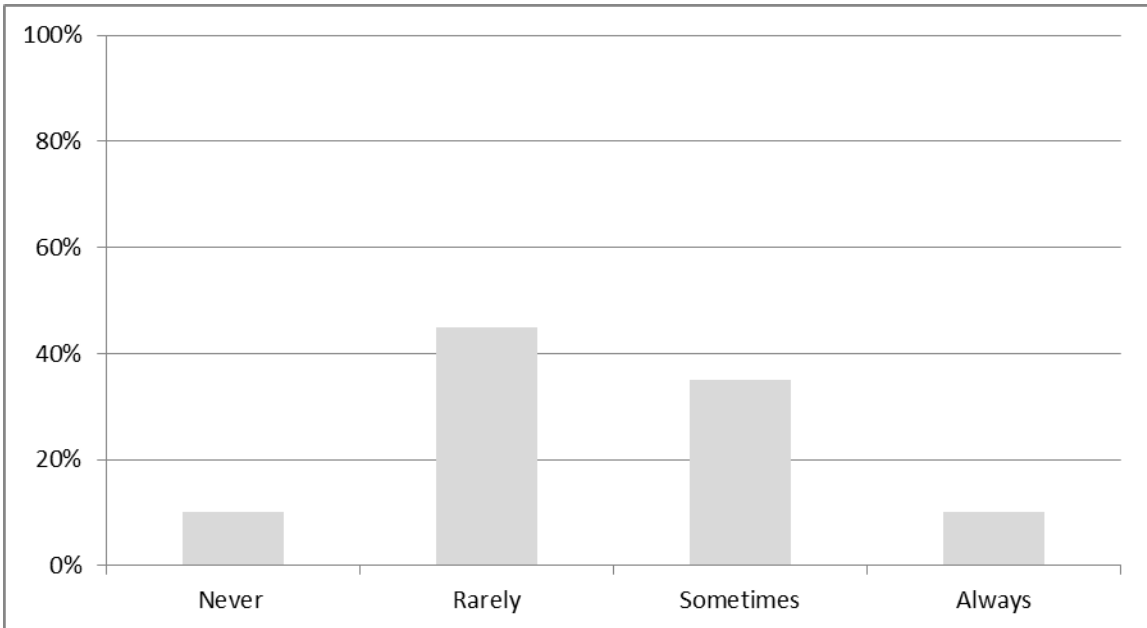


Figure 22 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's and B's for grades and how often parents/guardians met with teachers or school administrators.

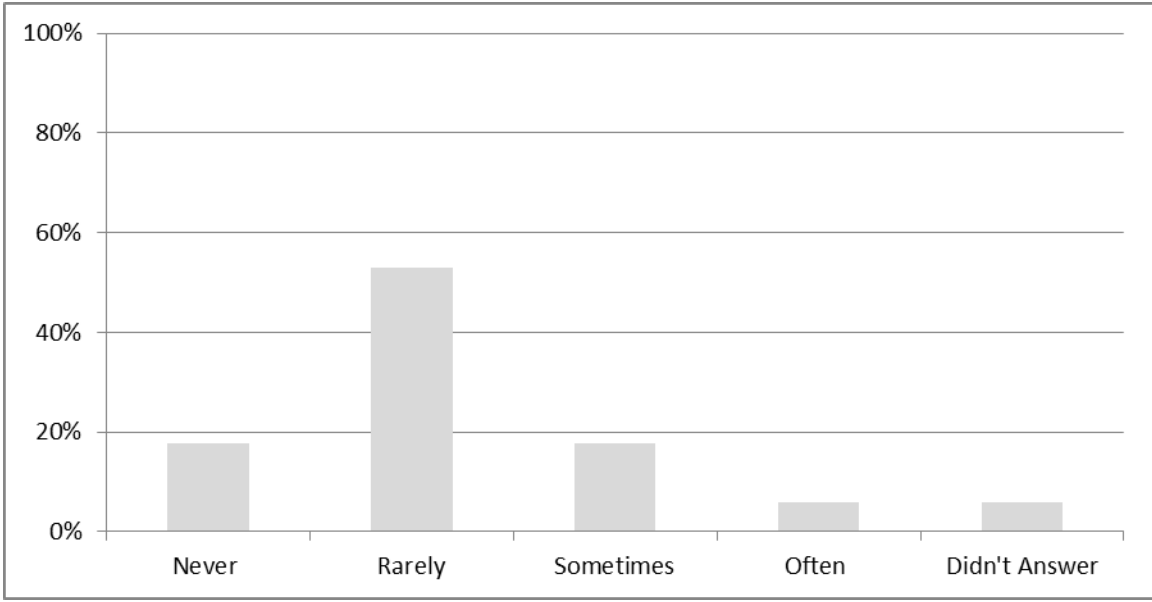


Figure 23 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly B's and C's for grades and how often parents/guardians met with teachers or school administrators.

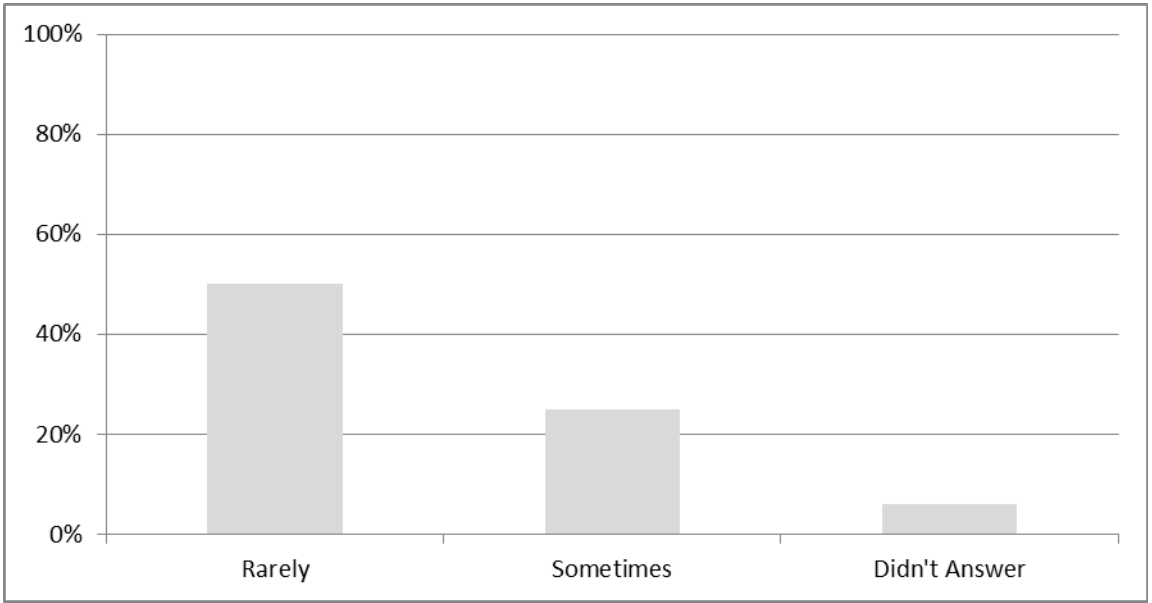


Figure 24 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly C's and D's for grades and how often parents/guardians met with teachers or school administrators.

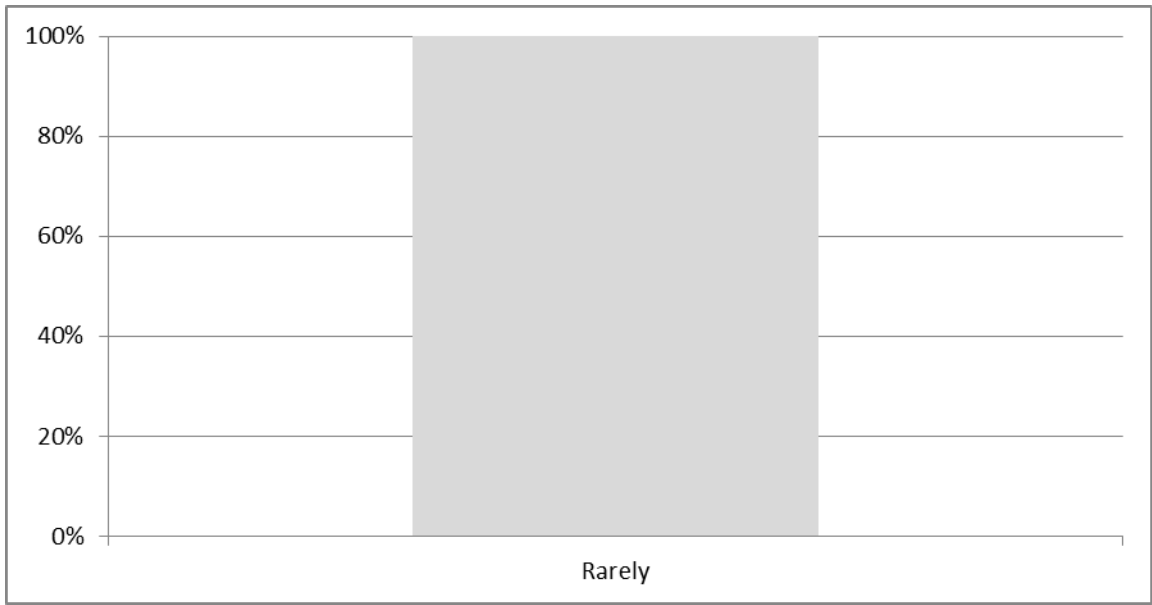


Figure 25 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly D's and F's for grades and how often parents/guardians met with teachers or school administrators.

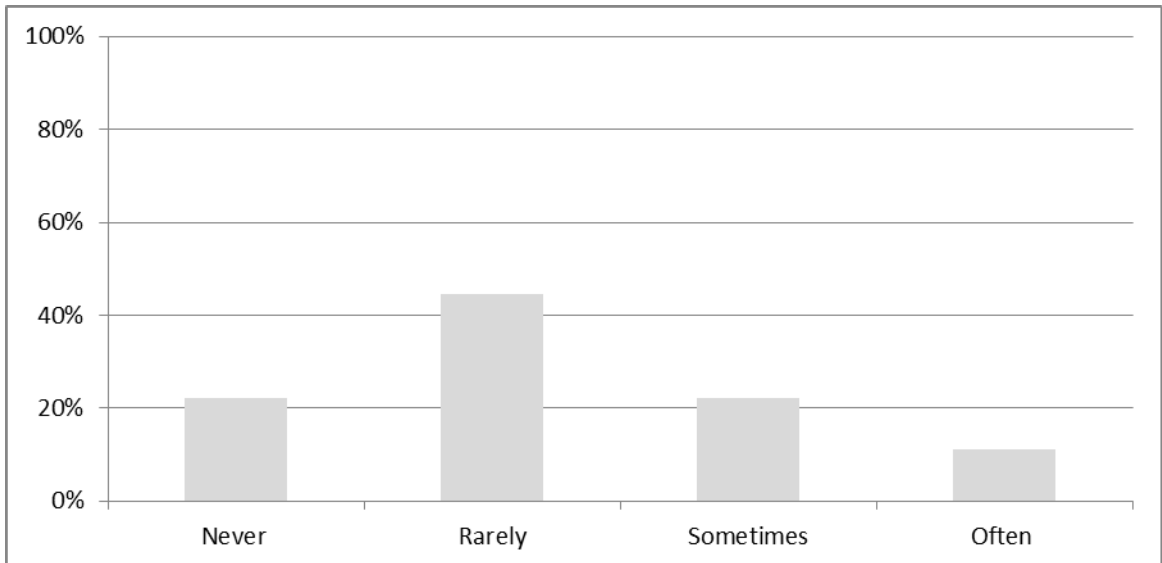


Figure 26 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's for grades and how often parents/guardians talked with teachers or school administrators.

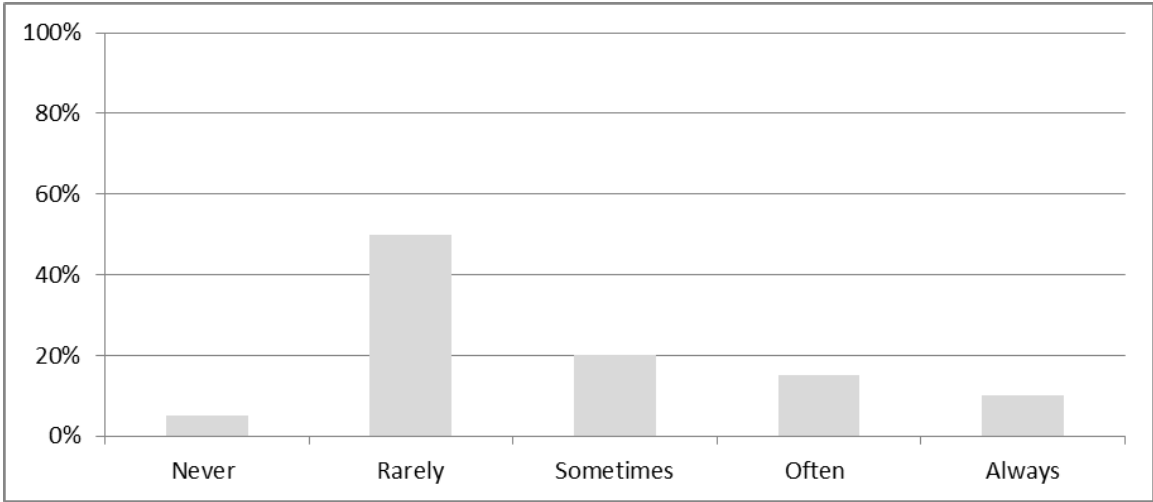


Figure 27 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's and B's for grades and how often parents/guardians talked with teachers or school administrators.

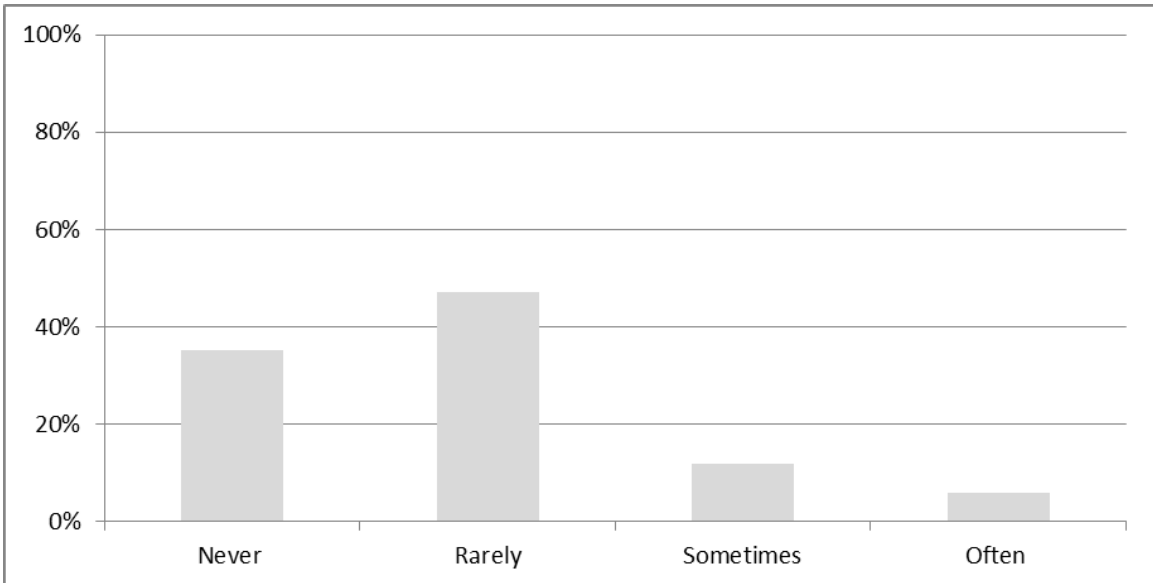


Figure 28 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly B's and C's for grades and how often parents/guardians talked with teachers or school administrators.

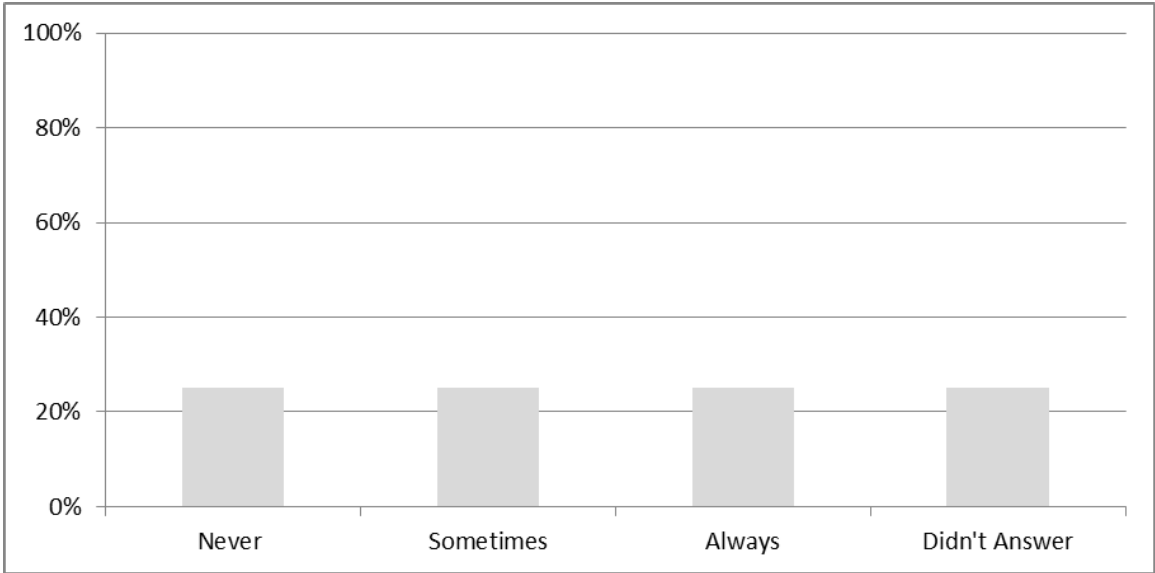


Figure 29 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly C's and D's for grades and how often parents/guardians talked with teachers or school administrators.

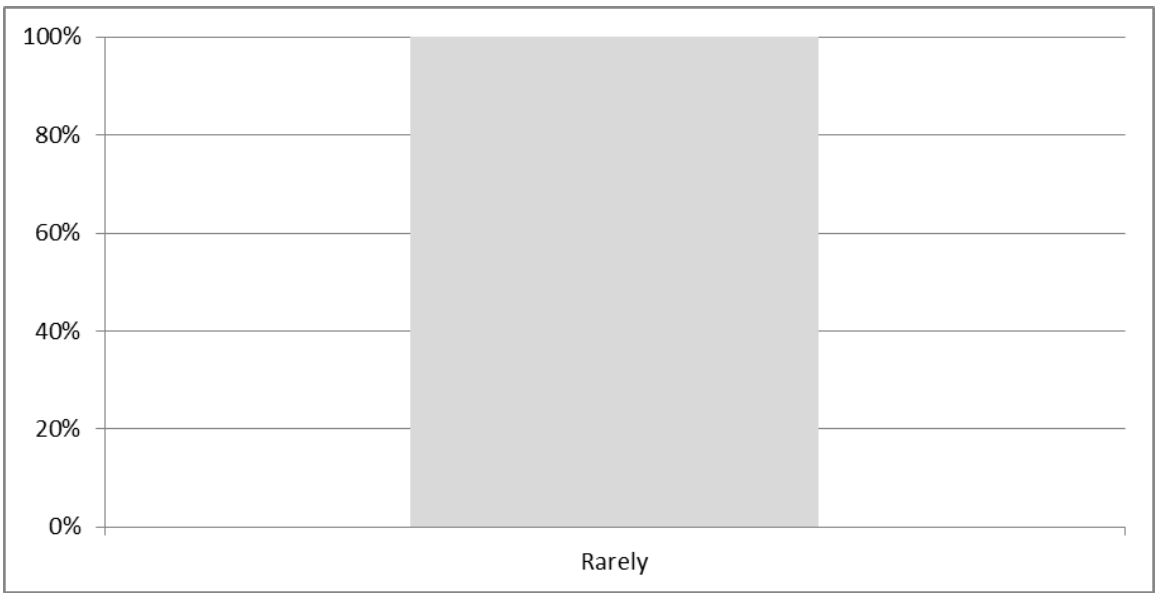


Figure 30 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly D's and F's for grades and how often parents/guardians talked with teachers or school administrators.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AT HOME

The third section of the survey contained 10 questions related to the students' perceptions of how involved their parents were at home with their education. The following is a breakdown of the results:

Table 20

Students' Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Help With Homework

Options	No	%
Never	8	15
Rarely	12	23
Sometimes	19	37
Often	6	12
Always	4	8
Didn't answer	3	6

Table 21

Students' Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Helped With Homework in Elementary School

Options	No	%
Never	6	12
Rarely	5	10
Sometimes	13	25
Often	15	29
Always	11	21
Didn't answer	2	4

Table 22

Students' Opinions How Often Their Parents/Guardians Check to See That Homework is Done

Options	No	%
Never	16	31
Rarely	9	17
Sometimes	11	21
Often	6	12
Always	8	15
Didn't answer	2	4

Table 23

Students' Opinions if Parents/Guardians Give Consequences for Not Completing Homework

Options	No	%
Yes	9	17
No	24	46
Sometimes	17	33
Didn't answer	2	4

Table 24

Students' Opinions How Often Parents/Guardians Help to Find a Place to Study

Options	No	%
Never	13	25
Rarely	11	21
Sometimes	12	23
Often	9	17
Always	5	10
Didn't answer	2	4

Table 25

Students' Opinions How Often Parents/Guardians Encourage Them to do Well in School

Options	No	%
Never	2	4
Rarely		
Sometimes	6	12
Often	11	21
Always	31	60
Didn't answer	2	4

Table 26

Students' Opinions How Often Parents/Guardians Talk With Them About School

Options	No	%
Never	6	12
Rarely	12	23
Sometimes	9	17
Often	10	19
Always	11	21
Didn't answer	4	8

Table 27

Students' Opinions How Often Parents/Guardians Encourage Them to Further Their Education

Options	No	%
Never	3	6
Rarely	3	6
Sometimes	4	8
Often	14	27
Always	24	46
Didn't answer	4	8

Table 28

Students' Opinions How Often Parents/Guardians Encourage Them to Pursue Their Dreams

Options	No	%
Never	2	4
Rarely	6	12
Sometimes	12	23
Often	11	21
Always	17	33
Didn't answer	4	8

Table 29

Students' Opinions How Often Parents/Guardians Help Them to Understand High School Requirements

Options	No	%
Never	7	13
Rarely	9	17
Sometimes	8	15
Often	10	19
Always	16	31
Didn't answer	2	4

The demographic and parent involvement at home data were used to perform a general sectional analysis in order to identify trends. The following analysis pertains to the parent involvement at home data that the students provided.

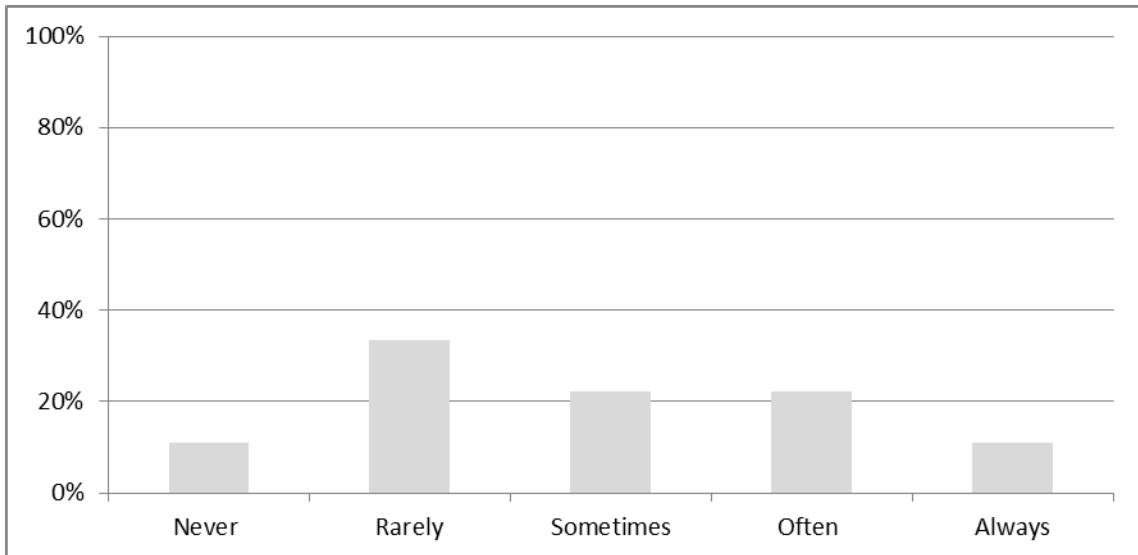


Figure 31 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's for grades and how often parents/guardians helped with homework.

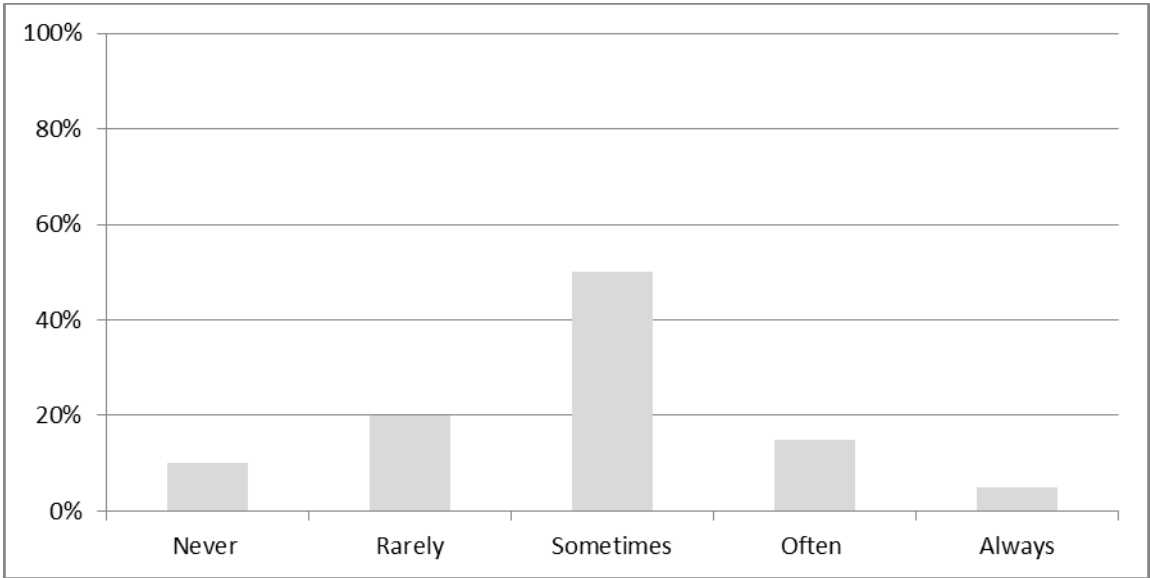


Figure 32 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's and B's for grades and how often parents/guardians helped with homework.

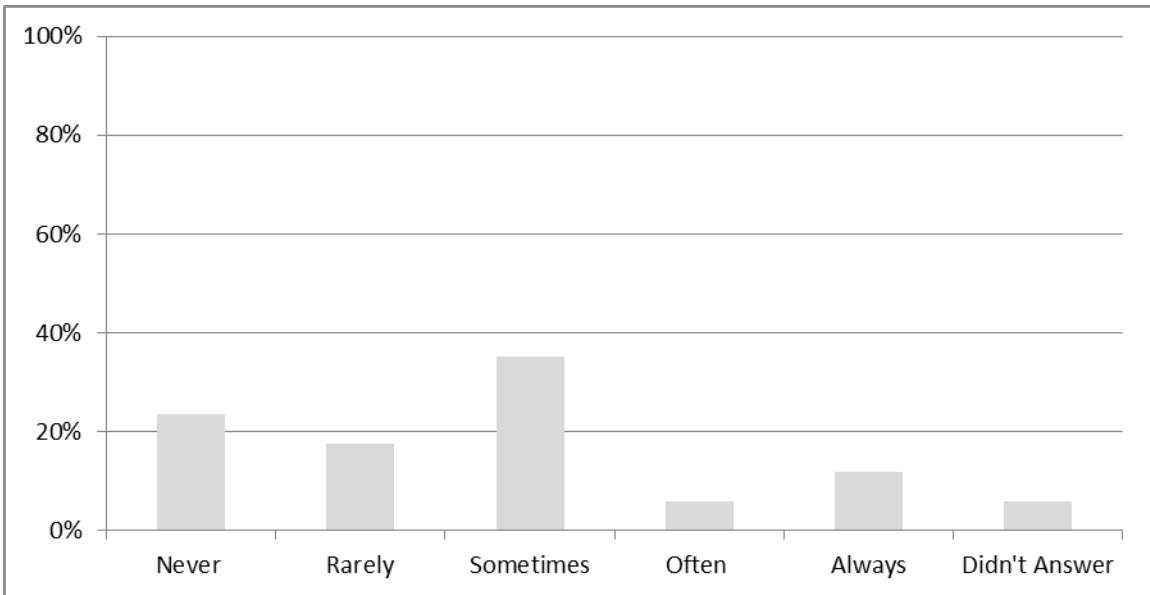


Figure 33 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly B's and C's for grades and how often parents/guardians helped with homework.

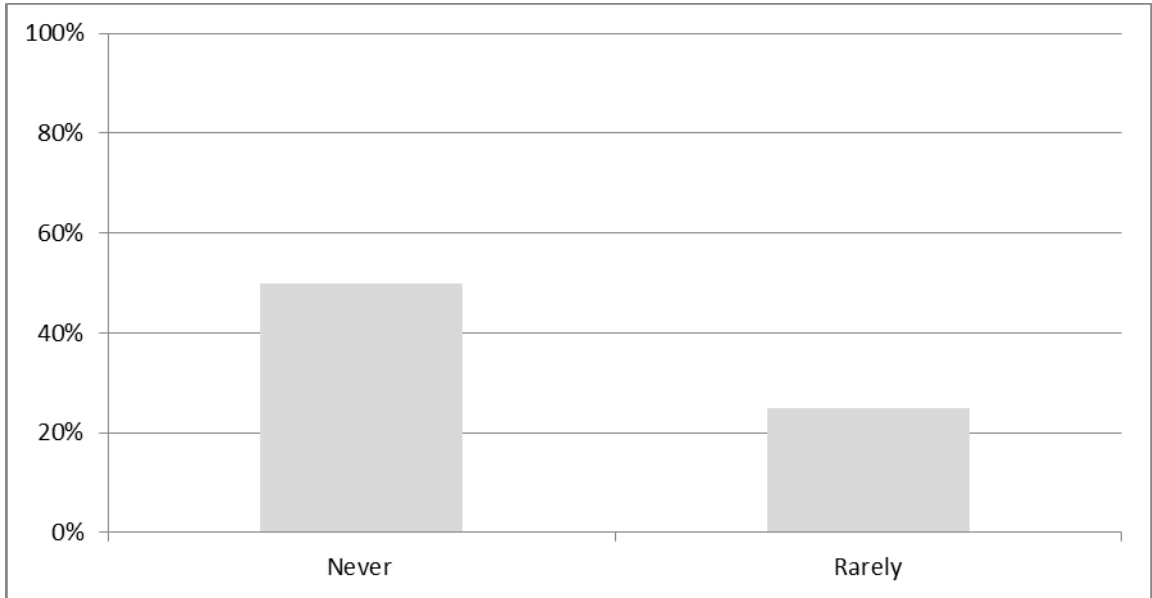


Figure 34 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly C's and D's for grades and how often parents/guardians helped with homework.

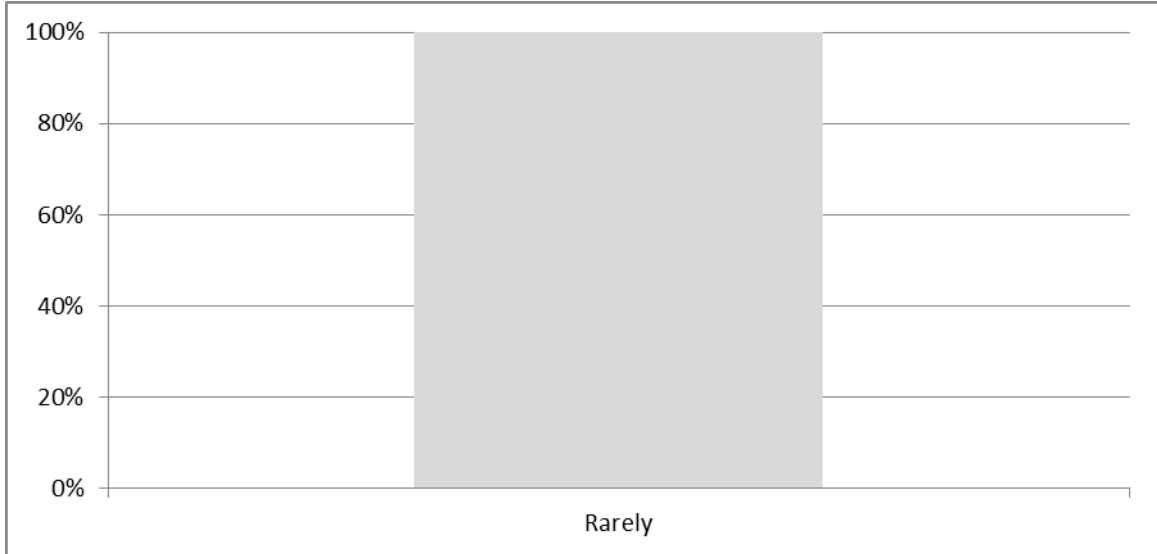


Figure 35 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly D's and F's for grades and how often parents/guardians helped with homework.

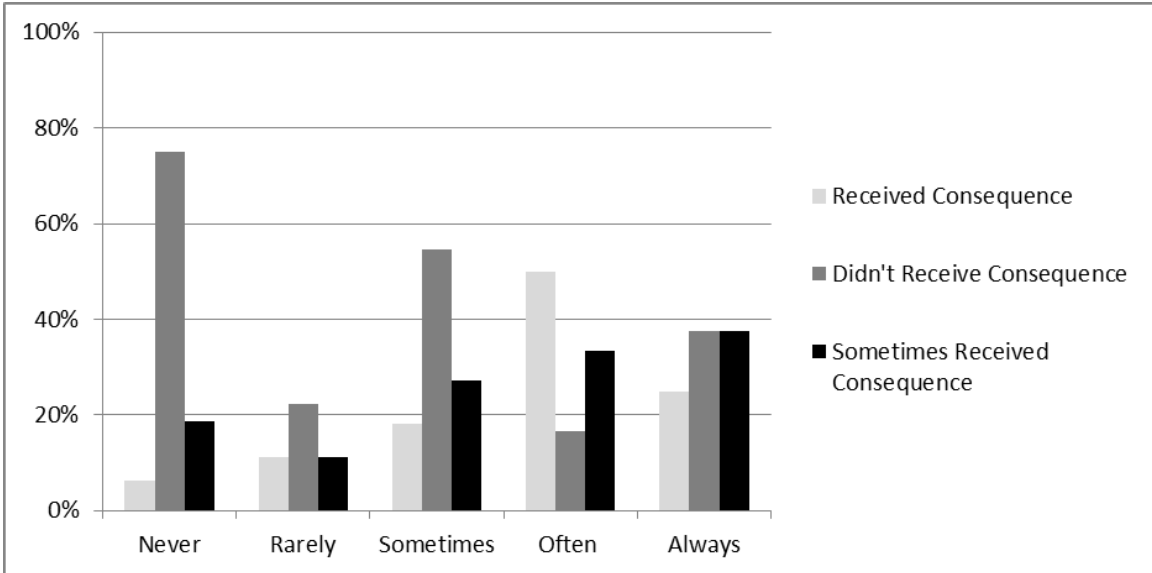


Figure 36 This figure illustrates how often parents checked to see if homework was completed and the percentage of students that received consequences for not completing it.

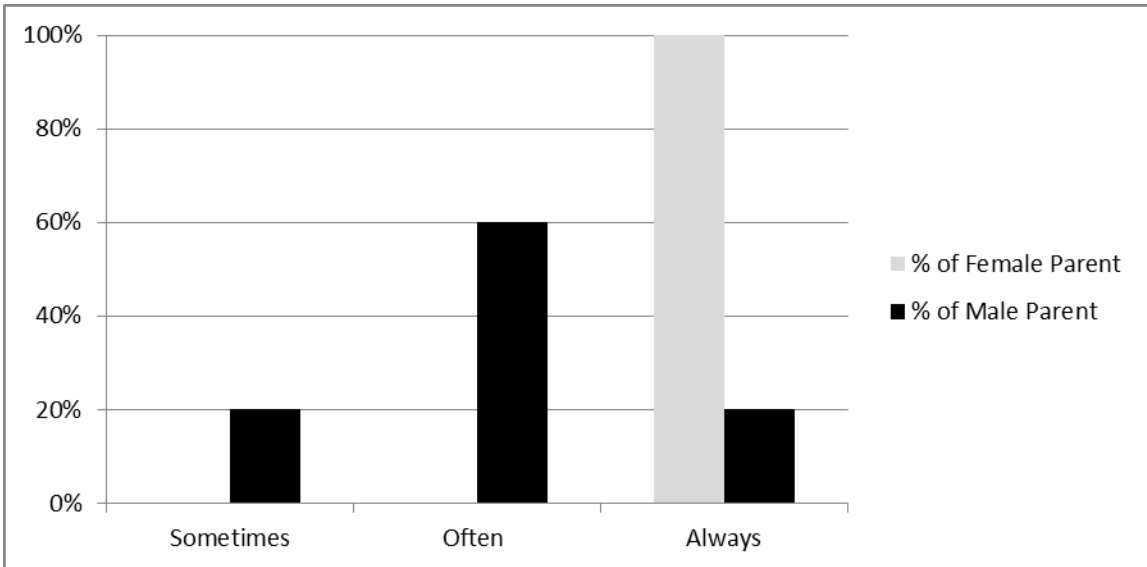


Figure 37 This figure illustrates parents/guardians who did not finish high school and how often they encouraged their children to do well in school.

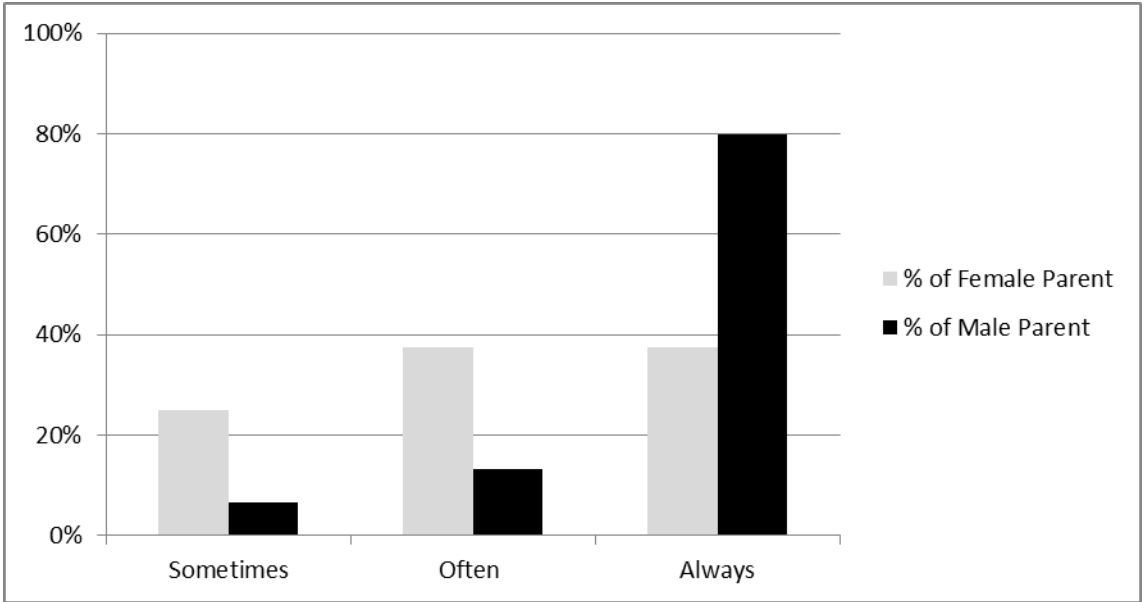


Figure 38 This figure illustrates parents/guardians who finished high school and how often they encouraged their children to do well in school.

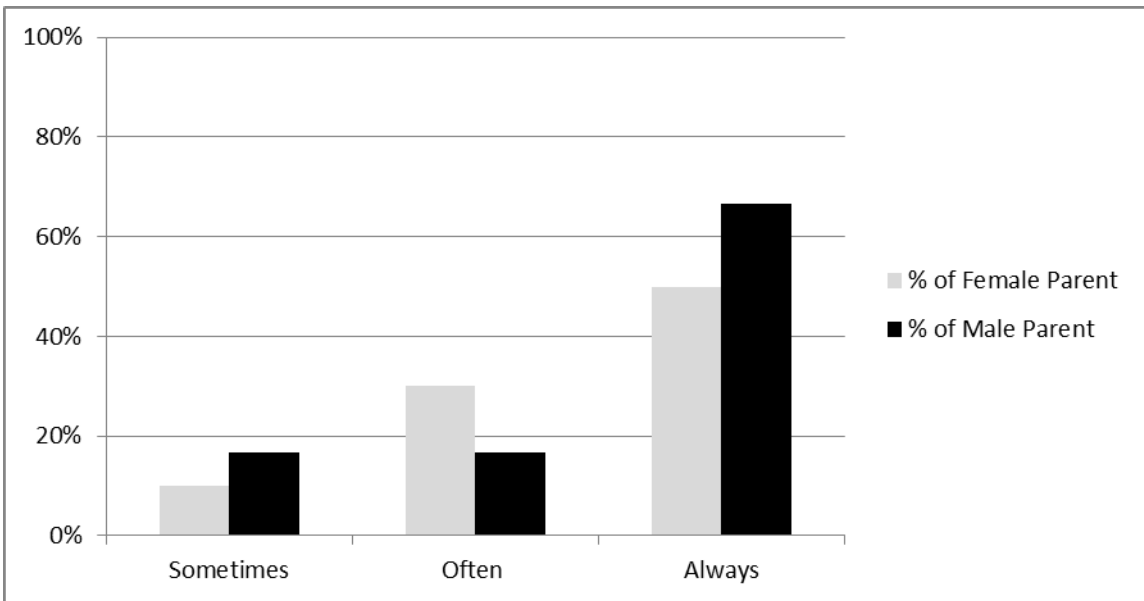


Figure 39 This figure illustrates parents/guardians who attended a vocational school or community college and how often they encouraged their children to do well in school.

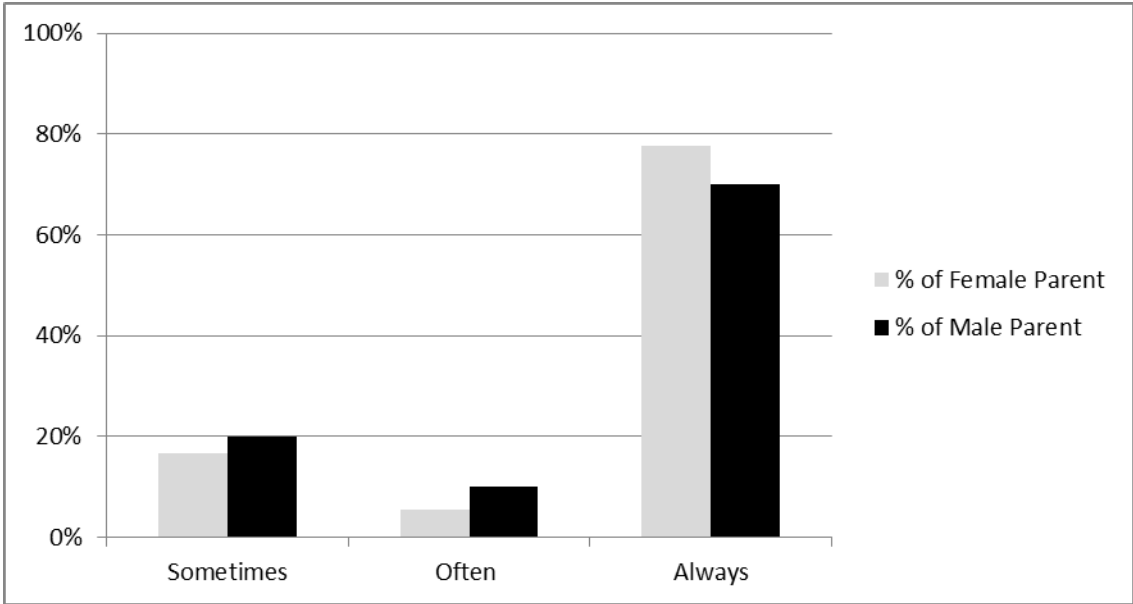


Figure 40 This figure illustrates parents/guardians who graduated from a four year college and how often they encouraged their children to do well in school.

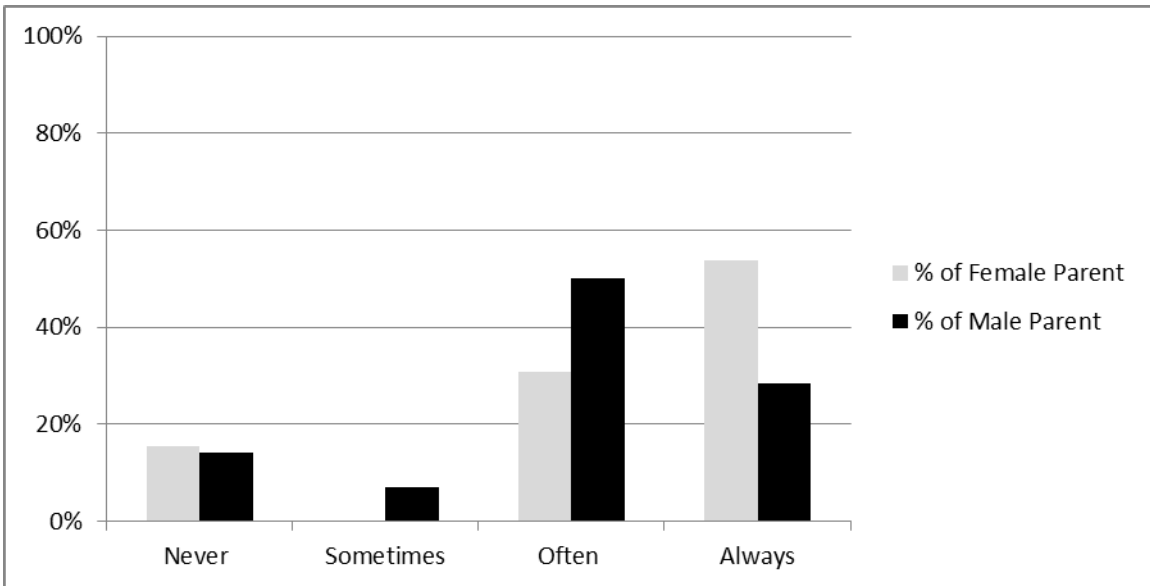


Figure 41 This figure illustrates students who do not know their parents' education levels and how often they encouraged their children to do well in school.

FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

The final section of the survey contained 13 questions related to the students' future aspirations. The following is a breakdown of the results:

Table 30

Students' Opinions How Likely That They Will Work Full-Time Right After High School

Options	No	%
Highly unlikely	6	12
Unlikely	6	12
Unsure at this time	19	37
Likely	11	21
Highly likely	8	15
Didn't answer	2	4

Table 31

Students' Opinions How Likely That They Will Further Their Education Past High School

Options	No	%
Highly unlikely	1	2
Unlikely	1	2
Unsure at this time	5	10
Likely	9	17
Highly likely	34	65
Didn't answer	2	4

Table 32

Students' Opinions How Likely That They Will Complete Their Education At A Technical School Or Community College

Options	No	%
Highly unlikely	5	10
Unlikely	9	17
Unsure at this time	20	38
Likely	10	19
Highly likely	6	12
Didn't answer	2	4

Table 33

Students' Opinions How Likely That They Will Complete Their Education At A Four Year University

Options	No	%
Highly unlikely	1	2
Unlikely		
Unsure at this time	8	15
Likely	19	37
Highly likely	22	42
Didn't answer	2	4

Table 34

Students' Opinions How Likely That They Will Complete Their Education By Attending Graduate School, Law School, or Medical School

Options	No	%
Highly unlikely	5	10
Unlikely	3	6
Unsure at this time	15	29
Likely	13	25
Highly likely	14	27
Didn't answer	2	4

Table 35

Students' Opinions How Likely That They Will Enlist In The Military

Options	No	%
Highly unlikely	22	42
Unlikely	9	17
Unsure at this time	8	15
Likely	8	15
Highly likely	3	6
Didn't answer	2	4

Table 36

Students' Opinions How Likely It Is That Their Parents/Guardians Will Support Their Job/Career Choice

Options	No	%
Highly unlikely	3	6
Unlikely	4	8
Unsure at this time	7	13
Likely	9	17
Highly likely	27	52
Didn't answer	2	4

Table 37

Students' Opinions How Likely That They Will Leave Michigan To Pursue A Career/Job

Options	No	%
Highly unlikely	2	4
Unlikely	3	6
Unsure at this time	17	33
Likely	12	23
Highly likely	15	29
Didn't answer	3	6

Table 38

Career Clusters Students Would Be Interested in Pursuing

Options	No	%
Business management & administration	8	15
Health sciences	7	13
Science, technology, & mathematics	7	13
Information technology		
Other career cluster not listed	28	54
Didn't answer	2	4

Table 39

Students' Opinions If They Have High Expectations For Their Future

Options	No	%
Strongly disagree		
Disagree	1	2
Neither agree nor disagree	3	6
Agree	18	35
Strongly agree	28	54
Didn't answer	2	4

Table 40

Students' Opinions If They Expect To Have A Rewarding Career/Job

Options	No	%
Strongly disagree		
Disagree	1	2
Neither agree nor disagree	6	12
Agree	22	42
Strongly agree	21	40
Didn't answer	2	4

Table 41

Students' Opinions If They Believe They Have Equal Opportunities As Others To Succeed

Options	No	%
Strongly disagree		
Disagree	2	4
Neither agree nor disagree	3	6
Agree	24	46
Strongly agree	21	40
Didn't answer	2	4

Table 42

Students' Opinions Of How Confident They Are That They Will Achieve Their Future Goals

Options	No	%
Not at all confident	1	2
Not very confident	1	2
Neither confident nor unconfident	3	6
Somewhat confident	12	23
Very confident	33	63
Didn't answer	2	4

The demographic and future aspirations data were used to perform a general sectional analysis in order to identify trends. The following analysis pertains to the future aspirations data that the students provided.

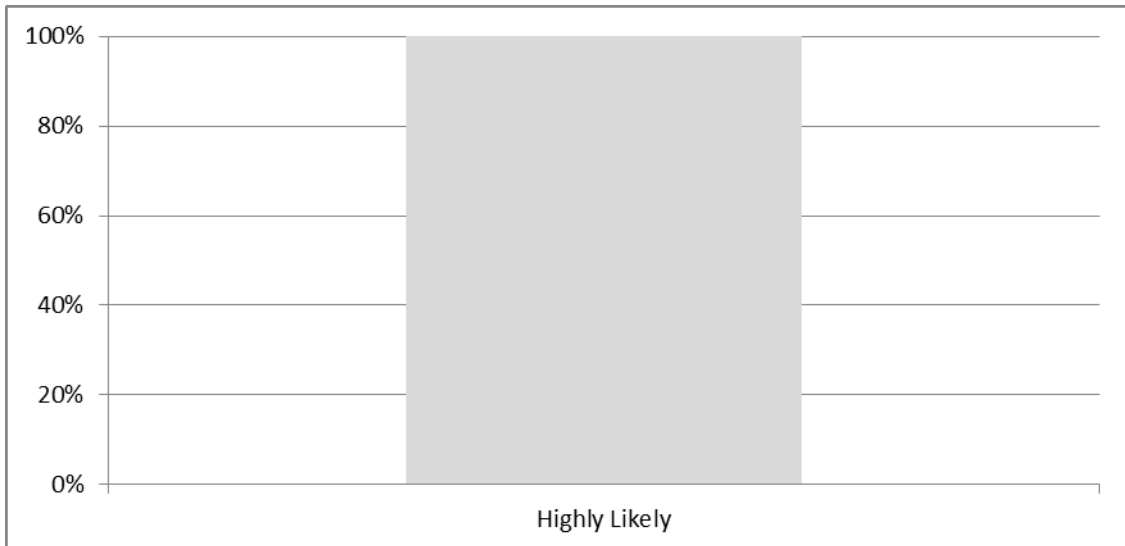


Figure 42 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's for grades and how likely they are to further their education past high school.

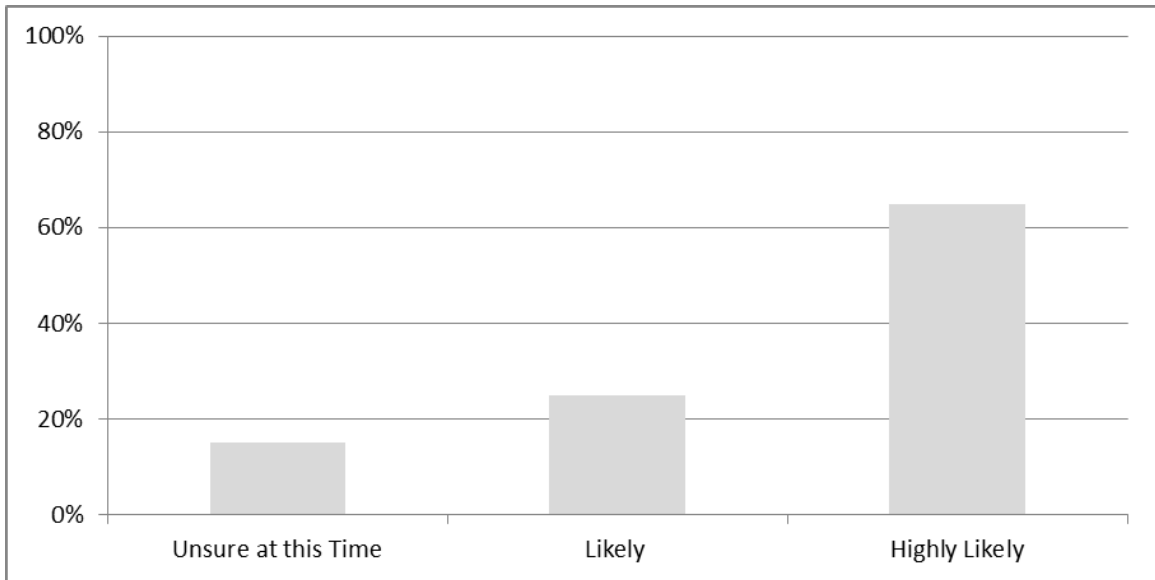


Figure 43 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's and B's for grades and how likely they are to further their education past high school.

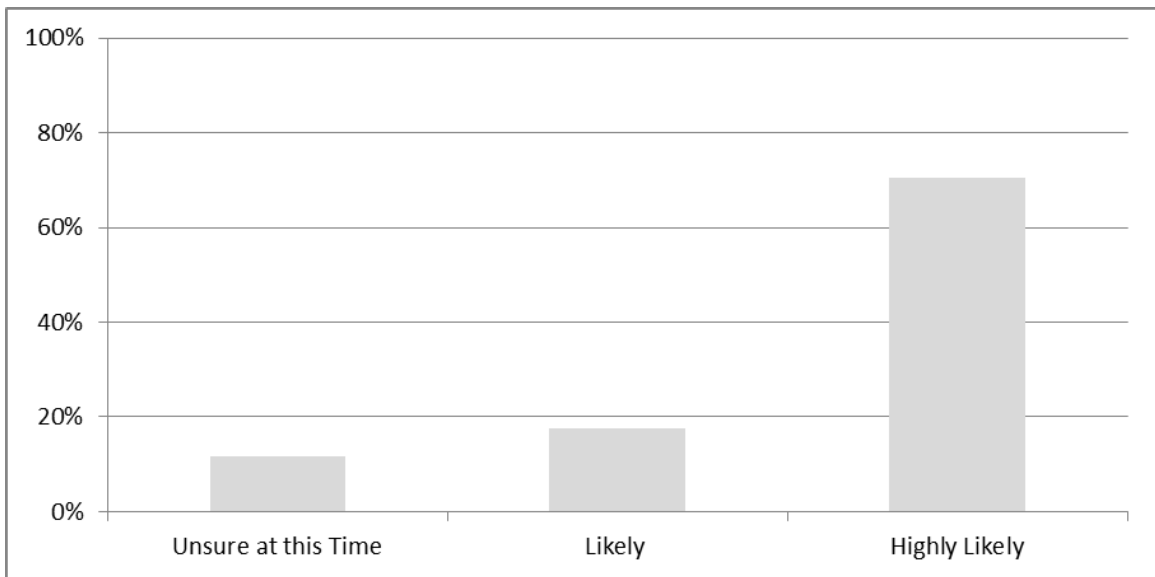


Figure 44 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly B's and C's for grades and how likely they are to further their education past high school.

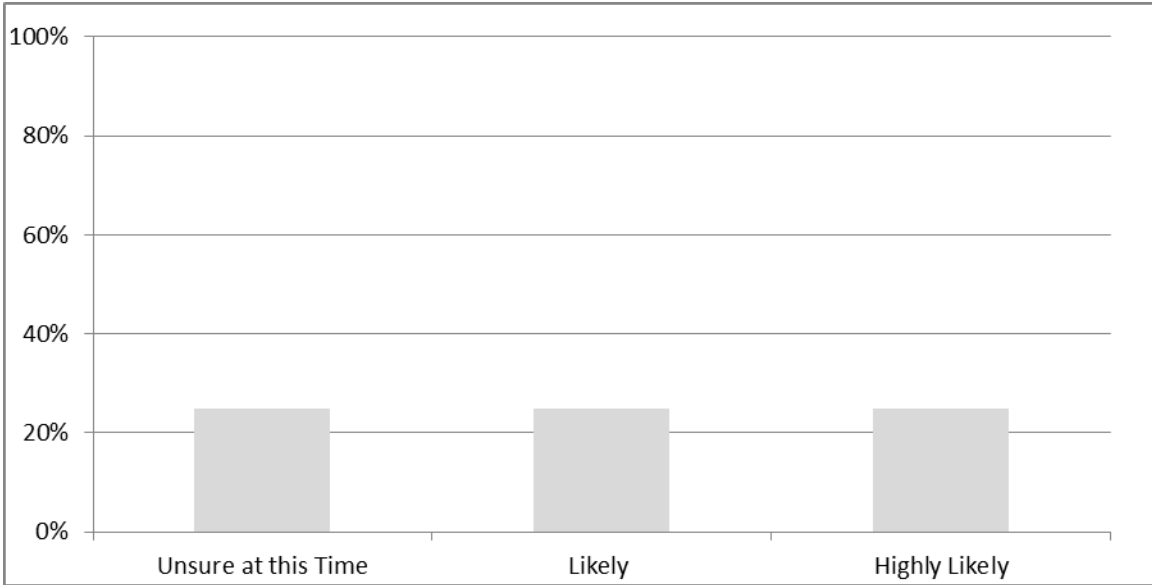


Figure 45 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly C's and D's for grades and how likely they are to further their education past high school.

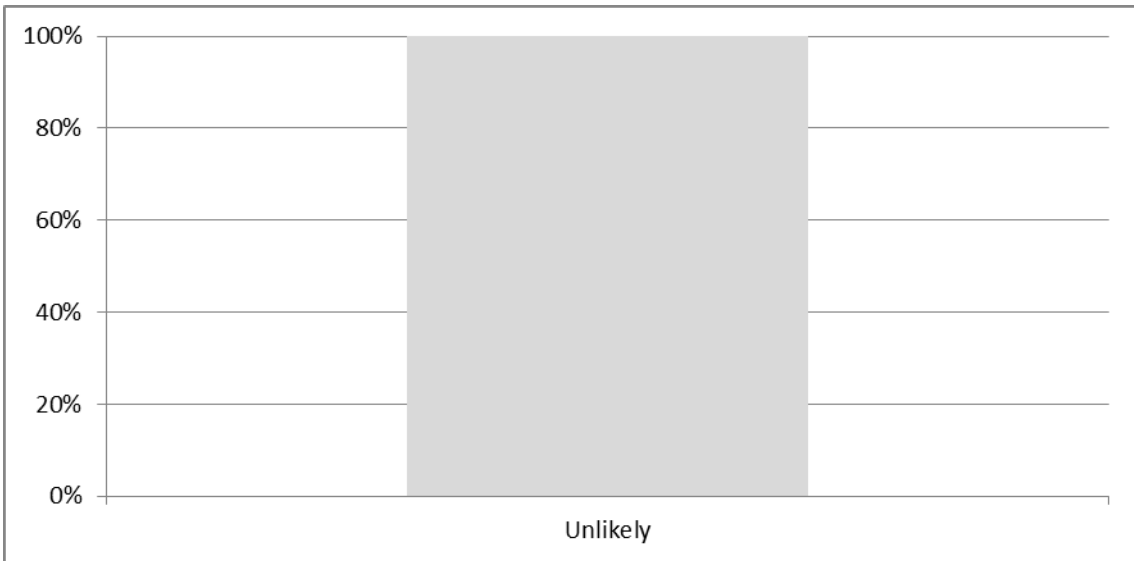


Figure 46 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly D's and F's for grades and how likely they are to further their education past high school.

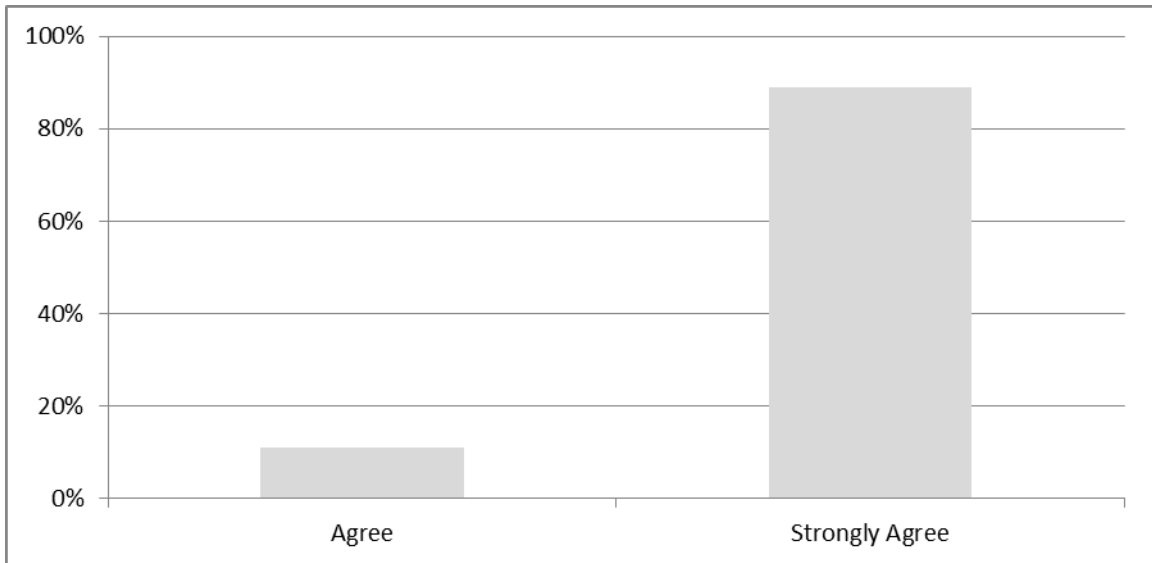


Figure 47 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's for grades and their perception of high expectations for their future.

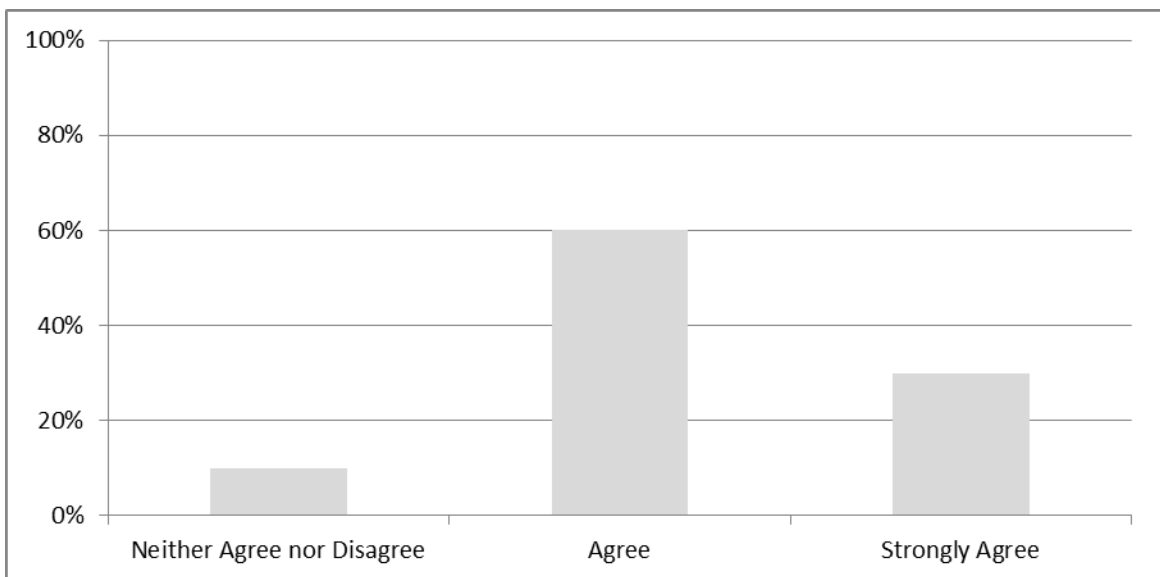


Figure 48 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly A's and B's for grades and their perception of high expectations for their future.

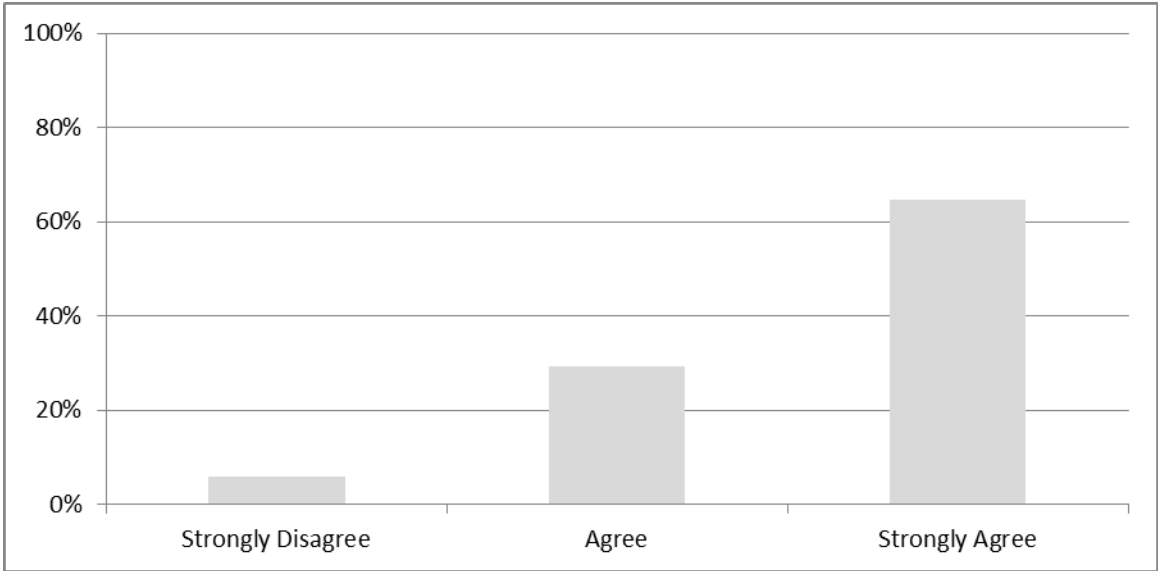


Figure 49 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly B's and C's for grades and their perception of high expectations for their future.

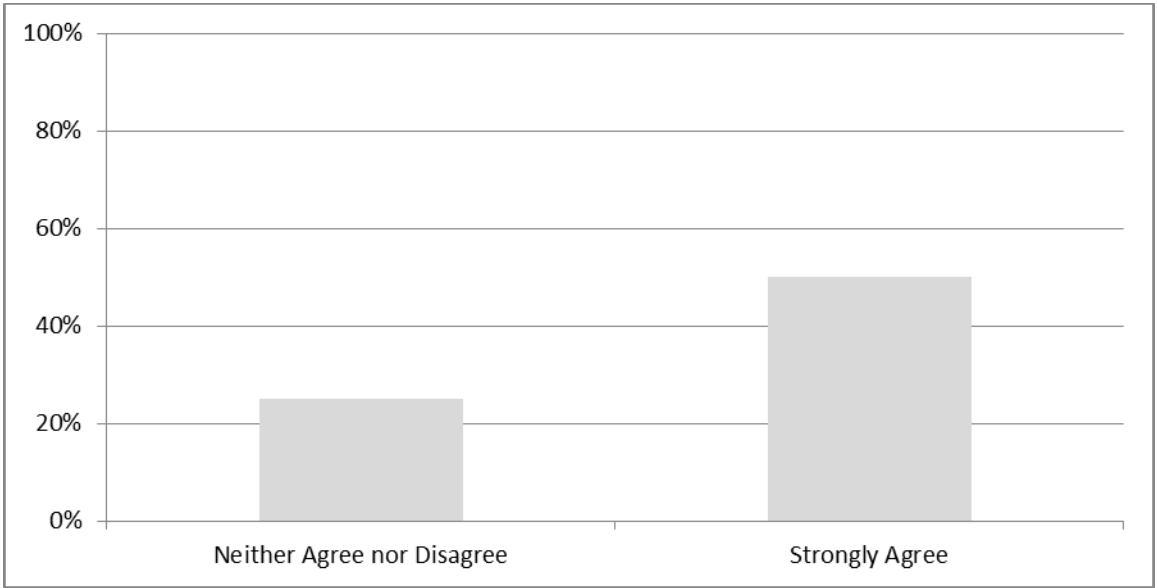


Figure 50 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly C's and D's for grades and their perception of high expectations for their future.

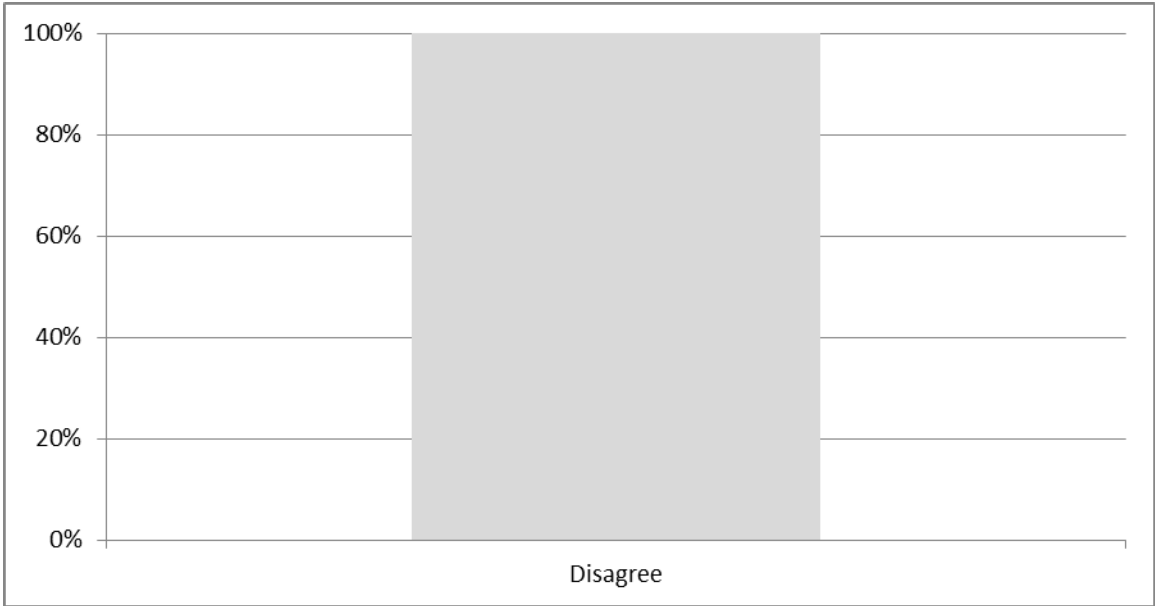


Figure 51 This figure illustrates students who reported earning mostly D's and F's for grades and their perception of high expectations for their future.



Figure 52 This figure illustrates students who reported parents who are rarely involved in their education and their confidence level of achieving future goals.

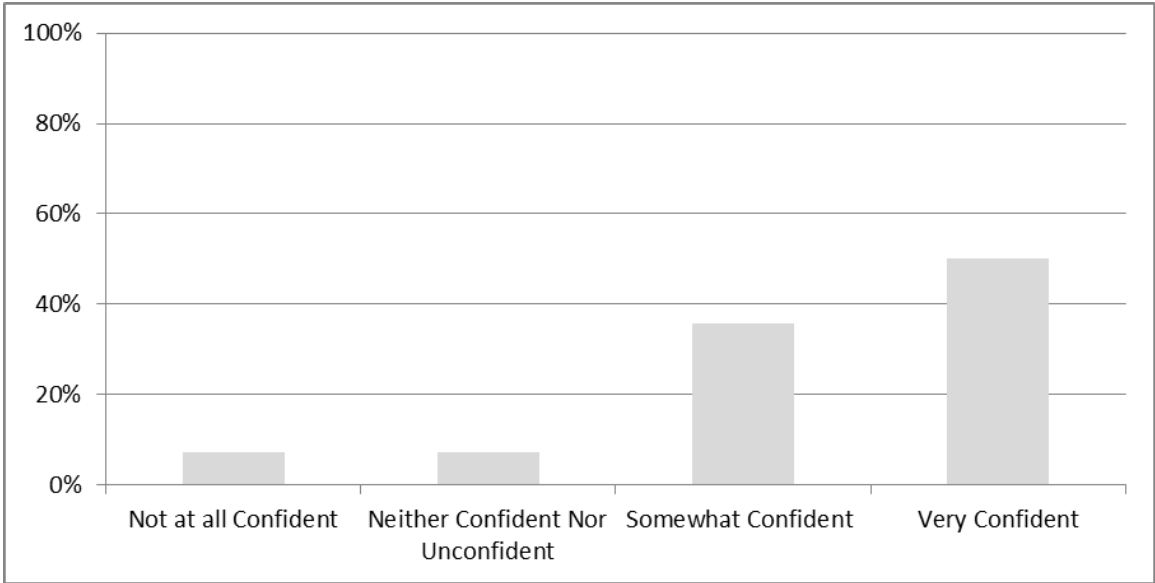


Figure 53 This figure illustrates students who reported parents who are sometimes involved in their education and their confidence level of achieving future goals.

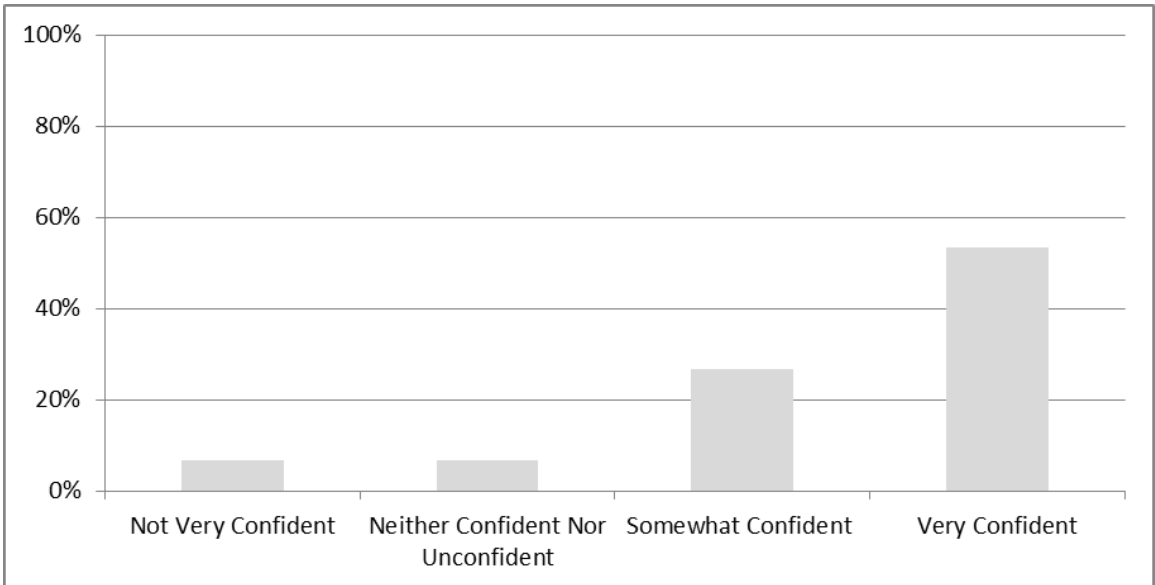


Figure 54 This figure illustrates students who reported parents who are often involved in their education and their confidence level of achieving future goals.

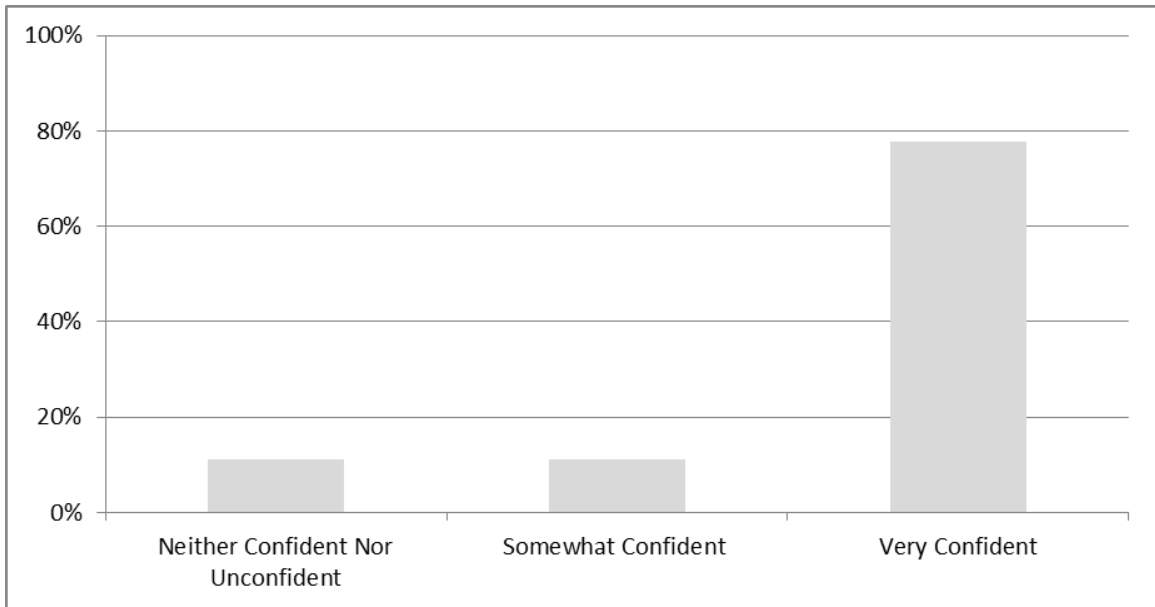


Figure 55 This figure illustrates students who reported parents who are always involved in their education and their confidence level of achieving future goals.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

The main purpose of this study was to survey eighth grade students at Armstrong Middle School in order to determine their perceptions regarding parental involvement in their lives both in and out of school and their future aspirations. It is important to recognize that the information gathered in this study is from the perspective of a student and that no parent influenced how the students answered the questions. This study is important because it provides first-hand knowledge of parents' involvement in a student's education as perceived by that student.

CONCLUSIONS

Relationship Between Students' Grades and Parents' Educational Levels

Of the 52 students who participated, the study found evidence to support that parents' educational levels correlate with the grades that students earn. For example, students who reported earning grades of mostly A's and students who reported earning grades of A' and B's had a high percentage of parents that graduated from a four year college 66% and 85% respectively for both sets of parents. As students report earning grades of B's and C's and C's and D's, their parents' education levels begin to drop. However, a majority of those parents did graduate from high school. For the one student

in the survey that reported earning grades of D's and F's, both parents are reported as not finishing high school. This can suggest that the lack of value placed on education is now generational.

Relationship Between Students' Grades and Computer Time

The findings also suggest that there does not appear to be a relationship between grades and the amount of time spent on a computer. The design of the question did not indicate whether the time spent on a computer was school related or entertainment related. As a result, all student subgroups (based on grades earned) clocked similar computer time. It is interesting to note that the one student who reported grades of D's and F's and parent educational levels of not graduating from high school indicated that less than one hour a day is spent on a computer, pondering the idea that perhaps the home lacks the financial means or sophistication to own a home computer or even know where public computers are available.

Relationship Between Student Grades and Time Spent on Homework

Information gathered on the grades earned and the amount of time spent on homework each week suggests mixed results. A majority of students who reported grades of mostly A's and mostly A's and B's spent less than three hours a week completing homework. This could suggest that these students are naturally bright and do not need as much time studying as other students. However, it is unclear if these students finish the work in class thus eliminating the need for homework. Students who reported grades of mostly B's and C's spent the most time out of all students completing homework. It is unknown if these students need the extra time because they must work harder to learn the

material or because they do not make the most of their class time. One begins to see the drop in grades and the drop in study time with the students that reported earning grades of C's and D's with 75% of those students spending less than one hour each week on homework. It was not surprising that the one student who reported grades of D's and F's reported spending no time on homework.

Relationship Between Students' Grades and Parental Involvement at School

The study supports previous research that parental involvement at school is important to students. Students who reported grades earned of mostly A's or mostly A's and B's are satisfied with their parents' current involvement in their education. Most students who reported grades earned of mostly B's and C's want parents to remain as involved as they are or become more involved. A plea for parental help comes from the group of students earning C's and D's with 75% of those students wanting parents to become more involved. The lone student earning D's and F's prefers his parents to become less involved in his education. It is unclear the role they currently play because their student is earning such poor grades.

The findings of the study indicate that across the board a majority of parents rarely meet with teachers or school administrators. This may be due to the nature of the middle school schedule making it difficult for working parents to meet early in the morning, during the school day, or asking teachers to wait until the evening to meet with parents. Similar results were noted for how often parents talked with teachers or administrators. Only students who reported grades earned of C's and D's recorded higher

percentages in the sometimes meet (25%) and always (25%) meet categories possibly indicating a parental concern for the student's progress.

Relationship Between Students' Grades and Parental Involvement at Home

How often parents help with homework showed differences based on the grades the students earned. Students who earned mostly A's and mostly A's and B's have a similar distribution. Parents either: often helped, sometimes helped, or rarely helped these students complete homework. This could suggest that either the students are capable of completing work on their own or that parents want to be absolutely sure of their students' completion of homework to maintain those high grades. Students who earned grades of B's and C's had recordings in all five categories of homework completion with the majority falling in the sometimes category. Recordings of never and rarely help with homework were recorded for the students with grades of C's and D's and D's and F's possibly indicating that the parents' lack of furthering their own educations impede their ability to help with homework.

How often parents check to see that their student completed homework is another avenue for parental involvement. Giving the consequences for completing or not completing homework is part of the parenting role. The study's results showed that 75% of parents never gave a consequence for completing homework because those parents never checked to see that homework was complete. Parents that sometimes checked, or often checked, or always checked are scattered if the student received a consequence for not completing homework, sending a mixed message of the importance of homework.

It is natural for parents to want to see their children succeed and go farther in life than they did. The survey's findings support this notion. Across all parental educational levels, a majority of parents either always or often encouraged their students to do well in school. Whether the parent did not finish high school and feels the effects of a lack of education or whether the parents graduated from a four year college, this group of parents overwhelmingly encouraged their students to do well in school.

Relationship Between Students' Grades and Future Aspirations

There is evidence to support that students recognize the importance of furthering an education past high school. Whether it is for a financial reason or to become a learned person, with the exception of one group, all students of various grades earned recognize the importance of furthering an education. For students who earned mostly A's or mostly A's and B's, they are good with learning and school works for them. For students earning mostly B's and C's, they recognize the need for higher education to make it. Even students who reported earning grades of C's and D's, they also acknowledge what higher education can do. Not surprising, the student who reported earned grades of D's and F's indicated that education past high school is unlikely. The education setting is not a fit for this student.

What the future holds for these students is exciting as almost all of the categories of students based on grades strongly agree or agree that they have high expectations for their future. The one student who reported earned grades of D's and F's disagrees that he has high expectations for his future, a common thread throughout all of his identifiable information.

Relationship Between Students' Future Aspirations and Parental Involvement

Finally, the study found that parents' involvement in their student's education had little to do with the student's confidence level of achieving future goals. Across the board, the majority of students were very confident or somewhat confident that they would achieve their future goals. This supports previous research by Hill et al. (2008) stating that once students have defined goals, they are less likely to perceive barriers to achieving those goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers and school administrators must be the catalyst for change regarding increasing parental involvement in students' lives and helping students succeed in achieving their future aspirations. To help parents become more involved in their student's education, teachers and school administrators need to make it easier for parents to meet and talk with them. Technology is all around us and it should be harnessed to help communicate with parents through texting, video conferencing, Skype, and social media. In addition, many parents had poor school experiences and are hesitant to come to the school building, let alone be involved at school. Buildings need to consider hosting conversation nights where parents, teachers, and administrators come together to discuss ways to stay involved in a student's education.

Parents can participate more in their student's education by creating a ritual of sitting down with their student discussing the school day and checking to see that homework is completed. When homework is not completed, each and every time,

parents must follow through on consequences, so that the student learns the importance of not only learning, but also following through on responsibilities.

How schools can catch the mostly D's and F's students from falling through the cracks is also of importance. Teachers and school administrators need to research best practices and find ways to address the needs of these students. An education is just as important for these students. They need to pursue some type of post high school education and the educators around them might be the only chance these students have at becoming confident and successful about learning and about their future.

Finally, school districts need to look for ways to keep students on the path of goal setting so that they can achieve any future endeavor. Teaching goal setting should begin in the elementary years, honed in the middle school years, and finessed during a student's high school career. It is exciting to see students have high expectations for their future and confidence in achieving goals. Educators need to make sure that students are equipped with the skill set and drive to continue reaching for goals even when faced with setbacks.

IMPLICATIONS

This information is valuable to teachers, school administrators, and parents. It provides evidence, based on parental involvement, that students today are well aware of the value parents place on education. That parental value can then affect the value that students place on their education. Teachers and school administrators can use this information to help guide students whose parents provide little involvement in their student's education so that the student is getting guidance from a trusted known adult.

The study is also pertinent because it may open parents' eyes to their misconception of their parental involvement in their student's education. It gives them time to make changes to help guide the student through the remainder of their K-12 academic years.

This study provides for future research of the same subjects as they proceed through high school to measure if their perceptions of parental involvement and their future aspirations change as they mature and become more independent from their parents.

LIMITATIONS

Although the survey was given to Cluster 8 students who are a representative sample of the eighth grade population at Armstrong Middle School, due to the low numbers of participants, (52) these results may not represent the entire eighth grade population. In addition, grades earned were self-reported and may not have been accurate. Some students chose not to answer every question which affected the general sectional analysis for reporting trends. Finally, there is no way to determine if a student understood what a question was asking ensuring that the question was answered appropriately.

REFERENCES

- Akos, P., Lambie, G., Milsom, D., & Gilbert, K. (2007). Early adolescents' aspirations and academic tracking: An exploratory investigation. *Professional School Counseling, 11*, 57-64. Retrieved from <http://psychologyandeducation.edublogs.org/files/2010/11/11-1-57-Akos-xevpcc.pdf>
- Burks, L. C. (1994). Ability grouping level and achievement. *The School Community Journal, 4*, 11-24. Retrieved from <http://www.adi.org/journal/ss94/BurksSpring1994.pdf>
- Campbell, D. T., & Stanley, J. C. (1966). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Cotton, K. & Wikelund, K.R. (1989). *The schooling practices that matter most*. (Contract Number 400-86-0006). Retrieved from the Office of Education Research and Improvement website: <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/3/cu6.html>
- Gottfredson, L. (2002). Gottfredson's theory of Circumscription, compromise and self-creation. *Career Choice and Development*. Retrieved from <http://www.udel.edu/educ/gottfredson/reprints/1996CCtheory.pdf>
- Green, C., Walker, J., Hoover-Dempsey, K., & Sandler, H. (2007). Parents' motivations for involvement in children's education. An empirical test of a theoretical model of parental involvement. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 99*, 532-544. Retrieved from <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/peabody/family-school/papers.html>

- Hill, N.E., Castellino, D.R., Lansford, J.E., Nowlin, P., Dodge, K.A., Bates, J.E., & Pettit, G.S. (2004). Parent academic involvement as related to school behavior, achievement, and aspirations: Demographic variations across adolescence. *Child Development, 75*, 1491-1509. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2004.00753.x/full>
- Hill, N.E., Ramirez, C., & Dumka, L.E. (2003). Early adolescents' career aspirations: A qualitative study of perceived barriers and family support among low-income, ethnically diverse adolescents. *Journal of Family Issues, 24*, 934-959. Retrieved from <http://jfi.sagepub.com/content/24/7/934.full.pdf+html>
- Hill, N. E., & Tyson, D. (2009). Parental involvement in middle school: A meta-analytic assessment of the strategies that promote achievement. *Developmental Psychology, 45*, 740-763. Abstract retrieved from <http://psycnet.apa.org/?&fa=main.doiLanding&doi=10.1037/a0015362>
- Keith, T., Keith, P., Bickley, P., & Singh, K. (1992, April). *Effects of parental involvement on Eighth grade achievement: LISREL analysis of NELS-88 data*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA.
- Marchant, G., Paulson, S.E., Rothlisberg, B.A. (2001). Relations of middle school students' perceptions of family and school contexts with academic achievement. *Psychology in the Schools, 38*, 505-519. Doi: 10.1002/pits.1039

- Marjoribanks, K. (2002). Family contexts, individual characteristics, proximal settings, and adolescents' aspirations. *Psychological Reports, 91*, 769-779.
- Mau, W. (1995). Educational planning and academic achievement of middle school students: A racial and cultural comparison. *Journal of Counseling and Development 73*,(5). 518-526.
- Muola, J.M. (2010). A study of the relationship between academic achievement motivation and home among standard eight pupils. *Education Research & Review, 5*(5). 213-217. Retrieved from <http://www.academicjournals.org/ERR2/PDF/Pdf%202010/May/Muola.pdf>
- Peterson, G.W., Long, K.L., & Billups, A. (1999). The effect of three career interventions on the educational choices of eighth grade students. *Professional School Counseling, 3*(1), 34-42. Retrieved from <http://www.umass.edu/schoolcounseling/uploads/Research%20Brief%201.2.pdf>
- Ricker, V. (2007). *A child's perception of parental involvement and the effects on academic achievement*. (Master's thesis). Retrieved from http://etd.ohiolink.edu/etd/view.cgi?acc_num=miami1196462693
- Rojewski, J. & Kim, H. (2003). Career choice patterns and behavior of work-bound youth during early adolescence. *Journal of Career Development, 30*, (2). 89-108. Retrieved from <http://jcd.sagepub.com/content/30/2/89>

- Siren, S.R., Diemer, M.A., Jackson, L.R., Gonsalves, L. & Howell, A. (2004). Future aspirations of urban adolescents: A person-in-context model. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 17, 437-456. Retrieved from http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/media/users/lec321/Sirin_Articles/Sirin_2004.pdf
- Smith-Maddock, R. & Wheelock, A. (1995). Untracking and students' futures: Closing the gap between aspirations and expectations. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 77(3), 222-24.
- Stone, C.B., & Clark, M.A. (2001). School counselors and principals: Partners in support of academic achievement. *NASSP Bulletin*, 85 (46). 46-53.
DOI: 10.1177/019263650108562407
- Wang, M.T., Holcombe, R. (2010). Adolescents' perceptions of school environment engagement and academic achievement in middle school. *American Educational Research Journal*, 47, (3). 633-662. Doi: 10.3102/0002831209361209

APPENDIX A

HSRC Approval Letter

Human Subjects Research Committee (HSRC)

Connie Meinholdt, Ph.D. - Chair

820 Campus Drive

Ferris State University

Big Rapids, MI 49307

(231) 591-2000

To: Dr. Frederick Ennis & Ms Deborah Trahey
From: C. Meinholdt, HSRC Chair
Re: HSRC Applications #100902 (Title: Students' perceptions of parental involvement, future aspirations and attitudes towards school life)
Date: September 2nd, 2010

The Ferris State University Human Subjects Research Committee (HSRC) has reviewed your application for using human subjects in the study, "Students' perceptions of parental involvement, future aspirations and attitudes towards school life" (#100902) and determined that it is exempt – 1C from committee review. This exemption has an expiration date three years from the date of this letter. As such, you may collect data according to procedures in your application until September 3rd, 2013. However, we request that you use the committee e-mail address (HumanSubjectsResearchComittee@ferris.edu) on consent letters and other documents in place of my faculty e-mail address. Thank you for your assistance.

Finally, it is your obligation to inform the HSRC of any other changes in your research protocol that would substantially alter the methods and procedures reviewed and approved by the HSRC in this application. Your application has been assigned a project number (#100902) which you may wish to refer to in future applications involving the same research procedure. Thank you for your compliance with these guidelines and best wishes for a successful research endeavor. Please let me know if I can be of future assistance.

APPENDIX B

Approval Letter From Kearsley Community Schools



KEARSLEY

Community School District

Where pride, tradition and
excellence meet.

4396 Underhill Drive • Flint, MI 48506 • (810) 591-8000 • Fax (810) 591-8421 • www.kearsley.k12.mi.us

September 21, 2010

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Kearsley Community Schools has reviewed Deb Trahey's research project on *Students' Perceptions on Parental Involvement, Future Aspirations, and Attitudes Toward School Life*.

After reviewing the documents submitted by Ms. Trahey, we support her project including the student survey with parental consent to participate.

Sincerely,

Patti Yorks
Director of Personnel
810-591-7608

Board of Education

Richard Hill, *President*
Thaddeus J. Shegos, *Vice President*
Theresa Koprowski, *Secretary*
Richard Putvin, *Treasurer*

Jeffery Natzke, *Trustee*
Dr. Chad Boggs, *Trustee*
Steven Gibson, *Trustee*

Administration

Jeffry Morgan, *Superintendent of Schools*
Marsha Davis, *Director of Curriculum & Instruction*
Patti Yorks, *Director of Personnel*

APPENDIX C

Recruitment Letter to Participate as a Subject

February 2011

Dear Parent:

I am writing to you as a graduate student seeking a Master of Education Degree from Ferris State University. For my thesis, I am completing a research project on Students' perceptions on parental involvement and their future aspirations. The purpose of the thesis is to understand students better in order to help them learn.

Since your student is enrolled in Cluster 8 for the 2010-2011 school year, I am requesting your student's participation in the survey. I am interested in your student's opinions regarding parental involvement in and out of school and their future aspirations.

Participation in this study requires approximately 10 minutes of your student's time. Students who agree to participate will complete the survey in their math class. Individual identity will be protected in this research project and all answers will remain confidential. The research will result in a written report and presentation by the researcher; however, no identifying information will be revealed. The survey responses will be the sole property of the researcher.

I hope that you will agree to your student's participation in the survey. Although there is no tangible reward for participating, students may find it helpful to share their perceptions on parental involvement and their future aspirations. I appreciate your consideration in assisting me with my thesis. Please complete the attached consent form and return it to school by March 11, 2011.

Thank you for your time and please contact me with any questions at 810 591 9929.

Sincerely,

Deborah Trahey
Cluster 8 Math Teacher
Principal Researcher

APPENDIX D

Informed Consent to Participate Form

Informed Consent to Participate as a Research Subject

Project Title: Students’ Perceptions on Parental Involvement and Their Future Aspirations.

Researcher: Deborah Trahey

Purpose of Research: The purpose of this study is to survey Eighth grade students at Armstrong Middle School in order to determine their perceptions regarding parental involvement and their future aspirations.

Expected Duration of the Study: The survey is expected to take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Procedure: This research will use a survey design as the instrument for data collection. During a math class, students will complete the survey in the Learning Center online using Survey Monkey, an online survey software program.

Participation: The subjects in this research freely consent to participate. Participation is voluntary, students can choose not to participate at all, can refuse to answer certain questions or can discontinue answering the survey at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which the student may otherwise be entitled.

Confidentiality: No record of participation in this study will be disclosed to others. All answers to the survey will remain confidential. Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. All results will be reported in aggregate form.

Anticipated Risks: No risks are anticipated with connection to this research.

Benefits to the Participants: No monetary or other tangible rewards are offered for completing the survey. However, students may find it helpful to share their perceptions on parental involvement and their future aspirations in order to assist teachers in helping students learn.

Contact Person for Questions or Issues: If a research related injury occurs, or if you have any questions about the research study, contact Deborah Trahey, 810 591 9929, 6161 Hopkins Flint Michigan 48506. Questions regarding the rights of the subject may be addressed to Dr. Connie Meinholdt, Chair, Human Subject Research Committee, Ferris State University, Big Rapids, MI 49307, 231 591 2759. Email: humansubjectsresearchcommittee@ferris.edu

Consent to Participate: I have voluntarily agreed to participate in this research study. The research named above has adequately answered all questions that I have about the research, procedures and my participation. I understand that the researcher named above will be available to answer any questions throughout the study. I also understand that I may refuse to participate or voluntarily terminate my participation in this research at any time without penalty or negative consequences. The researcher may also terminate my participation in the research should she determine it is in my best interest. I understand that the results of the research may be obtained by contacting the researcher, Deborah Trahey, 810 591 9929, 6161 Hopkins Flint, MI 48506.

Signature of Participant Date

Signature of Parent/
Legal Guardian Date

Signature of Researcher, Deborah L. Trahey Date

APPENDIX E

Eighth grade Student Questionnaire

Eighth grade Student Questionnaire

SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Are you
 - Male
 - Female

2. What best describes your ethnic background?
 - Caucasian/White
 - Hispanic
 - African American
 - Asian
 - Other

3. In what district do you live?
 - I live in the Kearsley School district
 - I am a School of Choice student and live in the Flint School district
 - I am a School of Choice student and live in the Genesee School district
 - I am a School of Choice student and live in a different school district
 - I do not know what school district I live in

4. I have attended the Kearsley School district
 - This is my first year
 - 1 year
 - 2-4 years
 - 5-8 years
 - My whole life (including Kindergarten)

5. What time do you typically go to bed on a school night?
 - Before 9:00 pm
 - 9:00 pm - 10:00 pm
 - 10:00 pm - 11:00 pm
 - 11:00 pm - 1:00 am
 - After 12:00 am

6. On a typical weekday, how many hours do you watch television?
 - I don't watch television
 - Less than 1 hour
 - 1 to 2 hours
 - 3 to 4 hours
 - More than 4 hours

7. On a typical weekday, how many hours do you spend on a computer or computer related game (DS2, Gameboy)?
- I don't spend time on a computer
 - Less than 1 hour
 - 1 to 2 hours
 - 3 to 4 hours
 - More than 4 hours
8. Are you involved in extracurricular activities (sports, club, or volunteer work) during the school year?
- Yes
 - No
9. What is the current marital status of your biological parents?
- Married
 - Never married
 - Divorced, widowed, or separated
 - Not married, but living in a marriage like relationship
 - Don't know
10. Do the parents/guardians that you live with work outside of the home?
- 1 parent/guardian is employed
 - Both parents/guardians are employed
 - Neither is employed
11. For most of the time do you live with
- Both your mother and your father
 - One parent and a step parent
 - With father only
 - With mother only
 - With another adult/guardian
 - Other
12. How far in school did your mother or female guardian go?
- Did not finish high school
 - Graduated from high school or earned a GED
 - Attended a vocation school or community college
 - Graduated from a four year college
 - I do not know her education level

13. How far in school did your father or male guardian go?
- Did not finish high school
 - Graduated from high school or earned a GED
 - Attended a vocation school or community college
 - Graduated from a four year college
 - I do not know her education level
14. What is your favorite school subject?
- English
 - Math
 - Social Studies
 - Science
 - Electives (Art, Band, Physical Education, Choir)
 - Other
15. What grades do you usually get?
- Mostly A's
 - Mostly A's and/or B's
 - Mostly B's and/or C's
 - Mostly C's and/or D's
 - Mostly D's and/or F's
16. About how many hours do you spend on homework *each week*?
- None
 - Less than 1 hour
 - Between 1 and 3 hours
 - Between 3 and 5 hours
 - Between 5 & 7 hours
 - More than 7 hours

SECTION TWO: PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL

17. In your opinion, does your school do a good job of encouraging parental involvement in the classroom?
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
18. In your opinion, does your school do a good job of encouraging parental involvement in sports, arts, and other after school activities?
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
19. In your opinion, does your school give parents/guardians the opportunity for meaningful roles in their child's education?
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
20. In your opinion, does your school regularly contact parents/guardians about their children's education?
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
21. In your opinion, do parents/guardians at your school take an interest in their children's education?
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree

22. In your opinion, do parents/guardians at your school have adequate supervision for their children after school?
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
23. In your opinion, do parents/guardians at your school discipline their children?
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
24. In your opinion, do parents/guardians at your school set an academic standard for their children to meet?
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
25. In your opinion, do parents/guardians at your school show respect for teachers and administrators?
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
26. In your opinion, do parents/guardians at your school check to see that their children's homework is done?
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree

27. How much input should parents/guardians have regarding how often homework is assigned at your school?
- No input
 - A little input
 - Some input
 - A significant amount of input
 - Parents should have input into every decision
28. How much input should parents/guardians have regarding how grades are calculated at your school?
- No input
 - A little input
 - Some input
 - A significant amount of input
 - Parents should have input into every decision
29. How much input should parents/guardians have regarding the types of extra-curricular activities offered at your school?
- No input
 - A little input
 - Some input
 - A significant amount of input
 - Parents should have input into every decision
30. How much input should parents/guardians have regarding student discipline at your school?
- No input
 - A little input
 - Some input
 - A significant amount of input
 - Parents should have input into every decision
31. How involved are your parents/guardians with your education?
- Not at all involved
 - Rarely involved
 - Sometimes involved
 - Often involved
 - Always involved

32. Would you like your parents/guardians to:
- Not be involved in your education
 - Become less involved in your education
 - Remain as involved as they are now
 - Become more involved in your education
 - Don't know
33. How often do your parents/guardians attend any play, sports event or concert at your school?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always
34. How often do your parents/guardians meet with a teacher or school administrator one-on-one?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always
35. How often do your parents/guardians talk on the telephone or email a teacher or school administrator?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always

SECTION THREE: PARENT INVOLVEMENT AT HOME

36. While you are in middle school, how often do your parents/guardians help you with your homework?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always

37. While you were in elementary school, how often did you parents/guardians help you with your homework?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always
38. How often do your parents/guardians check to see if your homework is done?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always
39. Do your parents/guardians give consequences for not completing your homework?
- Yes
 - No
 - Sometimes
40. How often do your parents/guardians help you find the time and a place to study?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always
41. How often do your parents/guardians encourage you to do well in school?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always
42. How often do your parents/guardians talk with you about your school life?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always

43. How often do your parents/guardians encourage you to further your education?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always
44. How often do your parents/guardians encourage you to pursue your dreams?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always
45. How often do your parents/guardians help you understand future high school requirements?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always

SECTION FOUR: FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

46. How likely is that you will work full-time right after high school?
- Highly Unlikely
 - Unlikely
 - Unsure at this time
 - Likely
 - Highly Likely
47. How likely is that you will further your education past high school?
- Highly Unlikely
 - Unlikely
 - Unsure at this time
 - Likely
 - Highly Likely

48. How likely is it that you will complete your education at a technical school or a community college?
- Highly Unlikely
 - Unlikely
 - Unsure at this time
 - Likely
 - Highly Likely
49. How likely is it that you will complete your education at a 4-year university?
- Highly Unlikely
 - Unlikely
 - Unsure at this time
 - Likely
 - Highly Likely
50. How likely is it that you will further your education by attending graduate school, law school, or medical school?
- Highly Unlikely
 - Unlikely
 - Unsure at this time
 - Likely
 - Highly Likely
51. How likely is it that you will enlist in the military?
- Highly Unlikely
 - Unlikely
 - Unsure at this time
 - Likely
 - Highly Likely
52. How likely is that your parents/guardians will support your job/career choice?
- Highly Unlikely
 - Unlikely
 - Unsure at this time
 - Likely
 - Highly Likely
53. How likely is it that you will leave Michigan to pursue your career/job?
- Highly Unlikely
 - Unlikely
 - Unsure at this time
 - Likely
 - Highly Likely

54. Of the following, which career clusters would you be interested in pursuing?
- Business Management & Administration
 - Health Sciences
 - Science, Technology & Mathematics
 - Information Technology
 - Other career cluster not listed _____
55. I have high expectations for my future.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
56. I expect to find my future job or career rewarding.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
57. I believe that I will have the same opportunities as others to succeed in life.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
58. How confident are you that you will achieve your goals for the future?
- Not at all confident
 - Not very confident
 - Neither confident nor unconfident
 - Somewhat confident
 - Very confident

Thank you for taking the time to take the survey!