



High School and Beyond: Families' Feelings on Student Preparedness



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Abstract and Introduction

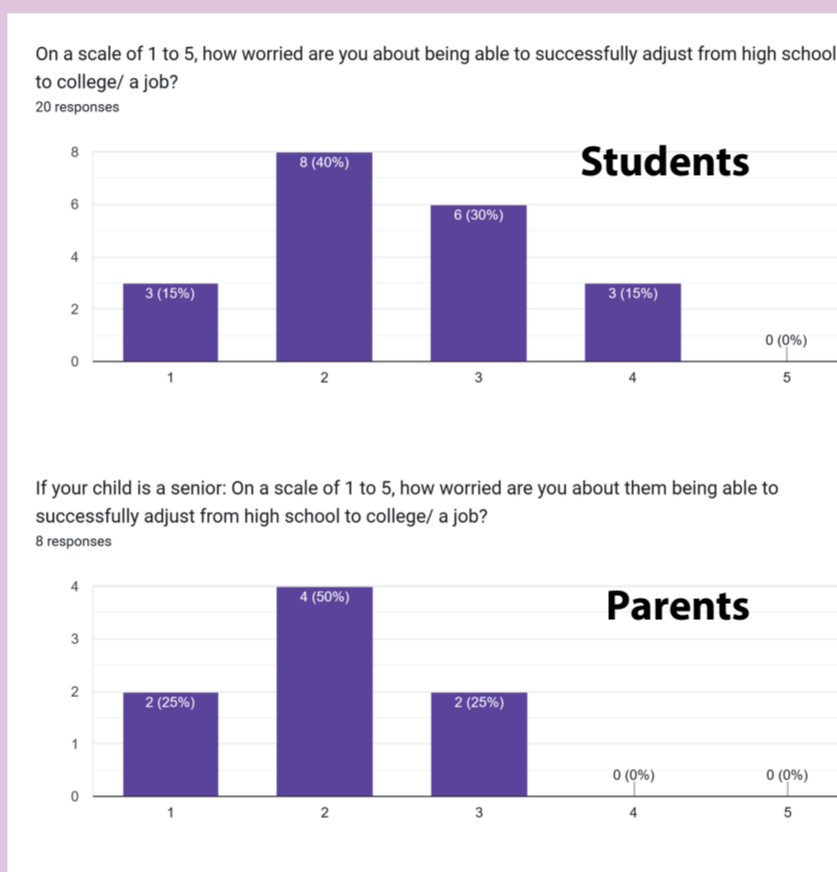
Transitioning from high school to college (or other future plans) is a critical period in which students face a plethora of changes, from moving out of their families' homes to navigating new social and professional environments [1]. It is a demanding, stressful time for which many students may not be properly prepared. They may not have developed essential interpersonal and life skills or lack adequate social and institutional supports to successfully make this transition [2]. Currently, Fort Bend ISD offers various resources such as college and career readiness counselor at each campus, offers AVID classes intended to help students to reach college, and CTE classes. This research endeavors to understand if that is enough, and if not, what may be done to improve student readiness for the transition.

Methodology

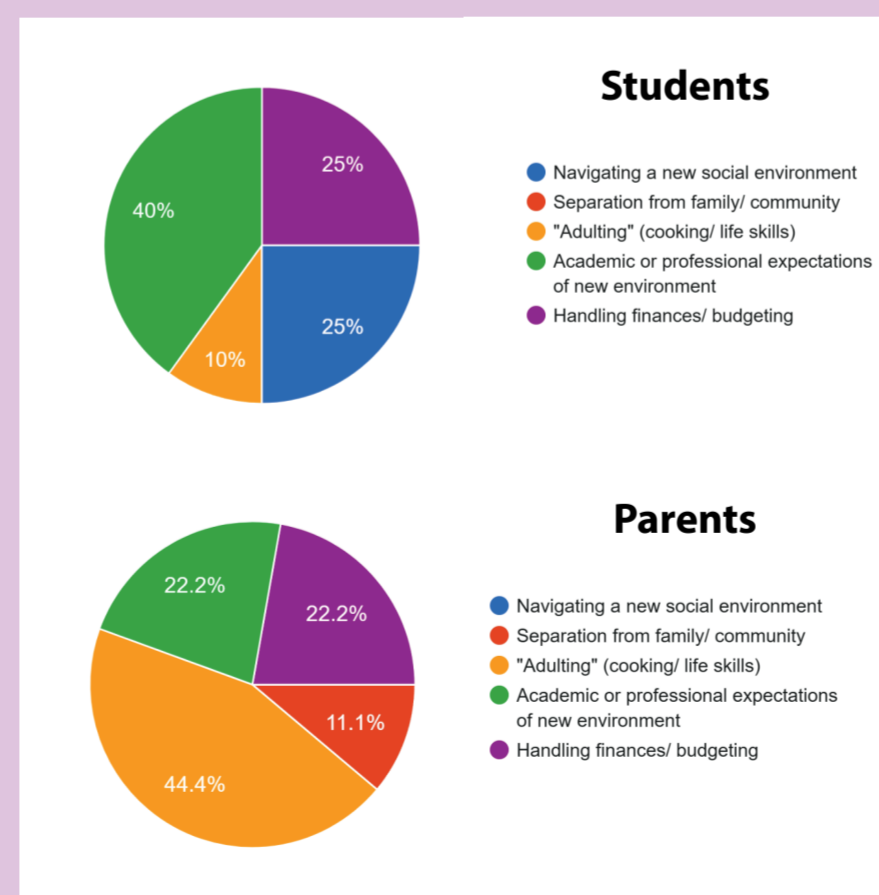
In order to measure perceptions of student preparedness and effectiveness of school resources in supporting seniors through the transition, a survey was sent to both parents and students. There were three categories of questions: general information (campus and plans), perception of readiness, and resource evaluation. Open-ended and multiple-choice questions were asked to collect quantitative and qualitative data on opinion, while allowing for nuance in opinion. Both parents and students were asked the same questions (excepting wording changes to refer to "your readiness" for students and "your student's readiness" for parents) to allow for ease of comparison.

Results

Worried about transitioning?



LEAST prepared for?



Findings

In general, both students and parents expressed relatively high confidence, with students on average rating their level of worry about the transition at 2.45 out of 5 and parents rating their worry on average at 1.6 out of 5. Parents seem to be more confident overall than students, and they believe schools are more helpful in preparing students than students do. Areas of confidence also differed: parents thought students were most prepared for future academic rigor, while students were most worried about academics. Students felt confident in their social and "adulthood" abilities, but parents were most worried about their students' life skills. The most helpful resources were the college and career counselors and AP classes.

Discussion

One key limitation is an oversampling of Ridge Point families: results then reflect a specific school, not the whole district. School resources also differ, as one school (Ridge Point) may have a great college counselor, while another like Dulles may offer many rigorous APs, making a homogenous assessment difficult. However, this research can be used as starting point for district and school officials to assess their transition supports for graduate, expand resources identified as helpful, and improve those that students and parents found lacking. Future research should study how resources are viewed by certain demographics (like Opportunity Youth [3]) and how specific resources, like CTE courses, prepare students for alternate, non-college pathways to more fully understand the transition.

References

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