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#### ABSTRACT

In Colorado, 8,663 high school seniors from 132 high schools in 91 districts (more than half the districts in the state) participated in a study that posed the following questions: What motivates today's students in school? and How prepared are these students for their future? The study found the following: (1) high school seniors are motivated by classroom instruction that includes a chance to apply active, hands-on lessons and solving real world problems; (2) they are motived by teachers who are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject and use humor related to the subject; (3) students are motivated to learn when they are interested in the subject, like the teacher, and see how the class relates their career interests; (4) 65 percent of the students are bored in school half or more of the time, and only 20 percent find lectures motivating, but few consider dropping out; (5) students who had had career experiences (such as job shadowing, a job connected to a class, an internship, or a written academic and career plan such as required by School-to-Career across Colorado) -- about 80 percent of the students--were more likely to go on to postsecondary education, select a college based on a career area of interest, and select a college major; (6) students with career experiences also were more likely to know their career interests and abilities, to be excited about the future, and to be less bored with school. (The survey is included with this research report.) (KC)

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# Colorado High School Senior Survey 1999

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1999 What Works? Colorado High School Senior Survey



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# Purpose of the Colorado High School Senior Survey

Improving **student achievement** and providing experiences to young adults so they can make important college, career and life decisions are important aspects of today's education. Based on the requests from local school districts and communities the 1999 What Works? Colorado High School Senior Survey was developed.

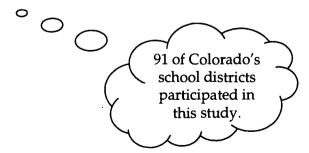
Seniors from 132 High Schools participated in this study.

Two important questions were posed in this study.

- ➤ What motivates today's students in school?
- ➤ How prepared are these students for their future?

Student respondents were in high schools ranging from a population of approximately 50 to 3,500 students.

The following report provides the first reflections from **8,663** high school seniors regarding their school experiences and plans for the future.





999 What Works? Colorado High School Senior Survey

# What Works

## **♣** Student Motivation

Educators have long struggled to find the "formula" or best model to maximize student abilities and potential. From research during the seventies and eighties, it is now generally accepted that student motivation is one factor that has a positive impact on achievement.

# High school seniors are motivated by classroom instruction that includes . . .

A chance to apply active, hands-on lessons (74%).

Solving real world problems (61%).

"...there weren't a lot of boring lectures, but rather hands-on activities and lessons that actually apply."

### High school students are motivated by teachers who ....

Are knowledgeable (78%) and enthusiastic (80%) about the subject.

Use humor related to the subject (88%).

### Students are motivated to learn when they ...

Are interested in the subject (96%).

Like the teacher (79%).

See how the class relates to their career interests (62%).

"I liked US History.
The teacher was
awesome and it was
very relevant to my
career plans."

#### However...

65% of the students are bored in school half or more of the time.

Few consider dropping out.

Only 20% find lectures motivational.

"I thought about dropping out but decided I would rather be bored than stupid."



# What Works

# **♣** Career Development and Plans for the Future

Through the implementation of School-to-Career across Colorado, more students have the opportunity to access a broad array of career development experiences. Therefore, it is now possible to study the impact of these on motivation and future plans.

### Students with More Extensive Career Experiences

Comparisons were made between students who did and did not have one or more of the following experiences:

- job shadowing,
- a job connected to a class or school,
- a written academic/career plan,
- participation in a mentorship program,
- working towards certification,
- participation in an internship or apprenticeship program.

About one fifth (1,654) of the sample did not have any of these experiences. The demographic information on ethnicity, gender, grades and participation in school activities did not differ between those with these career experiences and those without.

## 

Go on to post-secondary education (54%) with three or more career experiences compared to 43% without these career experiences.

Select a college based on a career area of interest (40%) with two ore more career experiences as compared to 28% without.

Select a college major – 38 % with two career experiences, 43% with 3 or more as compared to 28% without.

"After my internship at the Molly Brown House and a great history teacher, I am going to major in anthropology and history specializing in museum studies."



"I found I liked

Physics because it

applied to the career

I want to pursue, becoming a pilot."



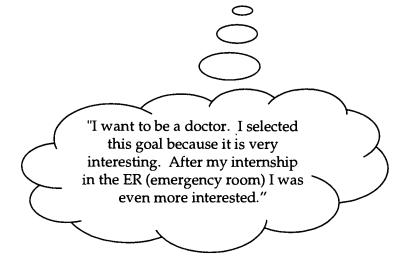
### 

- ➤ Know their career interests and abilities when they have had two or more career experiences (51%) as compared to 36% without.
- > Are excited about their future when they have had
  - more than three career experiences (Over 75%)
  - two or three experiences (50%)
  - no experience (43%).

"I want to be a chef in a large hotel because I went on a job shadow."

"I want to be an engineer. Math comes easy to me and I have shadowed engineers."

- > Students with three or more career experiences are 11% less likely to be bored in school than those without.
- ➤ Only 111 students reported that they were never bored in school.
- ➤ 42% of students with 2 or more career experiences reported they are never bored or only bored once in a while as compared to 29% without.





### **Demographics**

Sample

Over half the school districts in Colorado (52%) participated in this study. Respondents included rural, urban and suburban high schools and districts from every region of the state. The size of the participating K-12 school districts had a student population that ranged from 100 to those with over 65,000. There were 132 high schools that responded. The 8,663 respondents came from high schools ranging from a population of approximately 50 to 3,500 students.

### **Student Respondents**

Ninety five percent of the sample was 17 and 18 years old with equal male and female representation.

Seventy two percent were Caucasian.

Sixty five percent reported B's or better with 21% having mostly A's.

	Count	Percent
Number of surveys Comp	pleted:	
	8663	100.0
AGE		
16	110	1.4
17	4249	52.9
18	3393	42.2
19	260	3.2
20	22	.3
21	3	. 0
Total	8037	100.0
GENDER		
Male	4069	49.3
Female	4184	50.7
Total	8253	100.0
ETHNICITY		
White	6059	71.6
Hispanic	1302	15.4
Black	392	4.6
Native American	83	1.0
Asian	242	2.9
Other	388	4.6
Total	8466	100.0
GRADES		
Mostly As	1789	21.0
Half As & Bs	2221	26.0
Mostly Bs	1530	17.9
Half Bs & Cs	1776	20.8
Mostly Cs	766	9.0
Half Cs & Ds	378	4.4
Mostly Ds or below	70	.8

mot = 1	8530	100 0

STATE DEMOGRAPHICS FOR ALL HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS						
<u>Gender</u>	Count	<u>Percent</u>				
Male	20,174	50.4%				
Female	19,902	49.6%				
Ethnicity						
American Indian	355	1%				
Asian	1222	3%				
Black	1846	4.6%				
Hispanic	5534	13.8%				
White	31,119	77.6%				
Total	40,076	100%				



# High School Experiences

The respondents were asked what types of additional experiences they had participated in during high school. Results show that 98% of the respondents participated in one or more of the listed activities.

"I ended up liking theater class. I didn't think I could act but I learned that acting is not all there is to a career in the theater."

#### During high school, have you . . .

	Count	% of Cases	% Responding
Taken advanced placement Classes	3923	45.3	46.3
Participated in varsity or intramural athletics	4726	54.6	55.8
Had a job connected to school or a class	1902	22.0	22.5
Had a job related to a career interest area	2467	28.5	29.1
Had a job not connected to School	6095	70.4	71.9
Been involved in student Government	1427	16.5	16.8
Participated in theatre or musical performances	3045	35.1	35.9
Worked as volunteer or in community service	5024	58.0	59.3
Participated in clubs	4371	50.5	51.6
Number responding	8472	97.8	100.0

"I want to be in law, government or politics because of my internship and involvement in student council."





# **♣** More High School Experiences

The majority of the participating seniors were bored in class half or more of the time. However, students rarely skipped class. Over half responded that either never or only once in a while worked for a better grade.

"My desire to graduate overcame my boredom and distractions."

#### During High School, How Often Did You

	Once in	Half of	Most of	
Never	Awhile	the time	the time	Total
		2040	1.000	0.00
				8609
4.4	52.1	23.8	19.7	100.0
guested?				
253	2175	2230	3936	8594
2.9	25.3	25.9	45.8	100.0
111	2856	3332	2302	8601
1.3	33.2	38.7	26.8	100.0
2661	5004	631	298	8594
31.0	58.2	7.3	3.5	100.0
out?				
	1097	211	161	8591
82.9	12.8	2.5	1.9	100.0
	petter grade? 376 4.4  quested? 253 2.9  111 1.3  2661 31.0  out? 7122	Detter grade?  376 4485 4.4 52.1  Quested? 253 2.9 25.3  111 2856 1.3 33.2  2661 31.0 58.2  out? 7122 1097	Detter grade?  376	Detter grade?  376



## **♣** Motivation

There are many things that help motivate students to learn. The Survey looked at motivation from three perspectives, personal influence, the role of the teacher and classroom instruction.

"I hated math but I ended liking algebra because my teacher applied it to real life."

#### I am motivated to learn . . .

	Count	*
Then I		
Am interested in the subject	8215	95.9
Like teacher	6753	78.8
Can seek help	2654	31.0
See the relationship to real world	4766	55.6
See how the class relates to my career interests	5300	61.9
Understand the content's importance	4184	48.8
Then the Teacher  Is knowledgeable about the subject	6598	77.6
	6500	77 (
Takes a personal interest in me	. 5265	61.9
Sets high achievement standards	3611	42.5
Shows concern about my education	5632	66.2
Shows enthusiasm about the subject	6802	80.0
Encourages everyone to participate	4816	56.6
Danish and the studently managering	5122	60.2
Remembers the student's perspective		

"I liked the class because the teacher was enthusiastic about the subject, joked around with the students and encouraged everyone to participate."





"I found that I liked calculus class. I can actually use the stuff I learned."

### When the class instruction includes . . .

	Count	8
Completing worksheets	2366	27.8
Solving real life problems	5222	61.2
Setting the subject within the context of life	3966	46.5
Getting involved in community project(s)	2901	34.0
An atmosphere that encourages thinking	4838	56.7
Examples that make the content relevant	3913	45.9
Technology	3813	44.7
Homework	1274	14.9
Variety in how materials are presented	4978	58.4
Listening to lectures	1726	20.2
Active, hands-on chances to apply lesson	6306	74.0
Letting us have assignment choices	4257	49.9
Tests on reading assignments, lectures	1065	12.5
Field trips	6642	77.9
Watching videos	5797	68.0
Applying the lesson in the community or a business	ss 3159	37.1
Number responding	8622	100

" I enjoyed the class because there were a lot of activities to keep me busy so I didn't just sit there and get bored."



# The Career Information or Experiences in High School Helped Me . . .

		Count	₹ 
	Decide to continue education after graduation	4302	52.2
	Select a school based on career goals	3267	39.7
	Identify a college major	3187	38.7
	Decide to go directly to work after graduation	883	10.7
	Know my career interests and strengths	4166	50.6
	Identify a job based on career interests	2748	33.4
Or			
	Information or experience in high school		
	was not available	938	11.4
	Career information or experiences didn't help	1100	13.4
	Total responding	8361	100.0

# **♣** Career Development

"I plan to be a pharmaceutical sales representative because I went on a job shadow."

Ninety percent of the seniors who responded indicated that they had learned about jobs in a class and 85% had learned how subjects are used outside the classroom. About two-thirds had competed a project in which they learned about jobs and had done college planning with a counselor. Half indicated that they would like to do an internship or an apprenticeship.

"I am interested in art. My counselor told me about careers in commercial art."





Have You Ever . . .

			Vould Like	-
	Not Done	Done	To Do	Total
Learned about jobs in class				
Count	235	7751	626	8612
8	2.7	90.0	7.3	100.0
Learned how subjects are used				
outside of class				
Count	424	7291	897	8612
8	4.9	84.7	10.4	100.0
Toured a workplace	•			
Count	962	4923	2727	8612
<del>ક</del>	11.2	57.2	31.7	100.0
Job-shadowed				
Count	1215	4122	3275	8612
·	14.1	47.9	38.0	100.0
Taken a career interest inventory				
Count	1714	4176	2722	8612
ફ	19.9	48.5	31.6	100.0
Done a project in which you learned about jobs				
Count	1332	5888	1392	8612
96	15.5	68.4	16.2	100.0
Gone to career fair				
Count	1452	4877	2283	8612
8	16.9	56.6	26.5	100.0
Done college planning with a counselor				
Count	1042	5959	1611	8612
કૃ	12.1	69.2	18.7	100.0
Done career planning with a counselor				
Count	1979	3937	2696	8612
8	23.0	45.7	31.3	100.0
Developed an academic or career plan				
Count	2119	3633	2860	8612
8	24.6	42.2	33.2	100.0
Met with a mentor				
Count	2066	3600	2946	8612
8	24.0	41.8	34.2	100.0
Worked toward certification				
Count	2613	2614	3385	8612
ક	30.3	30.4	39.3	100.0
Done an internship or apprenticeship				
Count	2343	1982	4287	8612
Counc				



# ♣ Differences Between Students with Career Experiences and Those without

Comparisons were made between students who did and did not have one or more of the following experiences: job shadowing; a job connected to a class or school, a written academic/career plan, participation in a mentorship program; working towards certification; participation in an internship or apprenticeship program.

"I have worked on a farm for the last two years and enjoy it more than anything else."

About one fifth (1,654) of the sample did not have any of these experiences. The demographic information on ethnicity, gender, grades and participation in school activities did not differ between those with these career experiences and those without. Of those who had one or more of these career experiences, the students were less inclined to be bored in class. These students were more inclined to:

- pursue post-secondary education
- select a college/school based on their career goals
- select a college major
- know their career interests and strengths
- be less bored in school

"I selected dentistry because I like science and math. After my internship I feel I made the right choice."

Additionally, students with these career experiences are more excited about their future and more comfortable with their career plan than their counterparts with out these experiences.

"I have decided on a career with the airlines through my job shadowing and I also learned a lot from the career fair."



Comparisons Between Students With Selected Career

**Experiences and Those Without** 

The following tables provide the data on students with one or more of the selected career experiences compared with those who did not have these experiences.

"I plan to be an engineer. I selected this through a college class and an internship."

Students with one or more career experiences are more likely to continue their education after high school.

Number of career experiences	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Number going on to post secondary education	709	977	911	727	483	376	119
Percent	43%	48%	49%	54%	56%	54%	66%

Students with one or more career experiences are more likely to select a college/school based on career goals.

Number of career experiences	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Number selecting a school based on career	463	668	746	598	399	305	88
Percent	28%	33%	40%	44%	46%	44%	49%

Students with one or more career experiences are more likely to identify a college major.

Number of career experiences	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Number selecting a major	454	661	713	581	368	318	92
Percent	27%	32%	38%	43%	42%	46%	51%

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Students with one or more career experiences are more excited about the future.

"I plan a career in finance because I enjoy people and math comes easy to me."

Number of career experiences 2 3 6 0 1 4 5 Number excited about the future 713 1054 1093 857 597 472 136 59% 43% 51% 63% 69% 68% 76% Percent

Students with one or more career experiences are more likely to know their career interests and strengths.

Number of career experiences	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Number who know strengths/interests	589	905	959	763	490	362	98
Percent	36%	44%	51%	57%	57%	52%	54%

Students with one or more career experiences are more comfortable with a career plan.

Number of career experiences	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Number comfortable with career plan	804	1137	1035	817	505	408	109
Percent	49%	56%	56%	61%	58%	59%	61%



# Students with one or more career Experiences are less unclear about their future.

"After my internship at Big Brothers Sisters, I decided I wanted to make this my career."

Number of career experiences	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Number unclear about their future	393	380	336	190	108	83	18
Percent	24%	19%	18%	14%	13%	12%	10%

# Students with three or more career experiences are less likely to be bored in school.

Number of career experiences	0	1_	2	3	4	5	6
Number <u>never</u> bored or only bored once in a while	478	697	652	506	320	239	75_
Percent	29%	34%	42%	38%	37%	35%	42%

Number of career experiences	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Number who feel bored in class half or most of the time	1162	1345	1200	837	541	445	104
Percent	72%	65%	65%	67%	63%	65%	58%

"I thought about dropping out because I was bored with school and wasn't really serious."



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### Plans for the Future

Over half of the senior respondents are excited about their future and are comfortable with their career plans. Almost all of these youngsters are taking numerous steps to facilitate their future plans. Most students are about to and/or plan to finish high school, read about a career, take the ACT or SAT, learn about schools or colleges offering a major of interest and gain experience in a paid job.

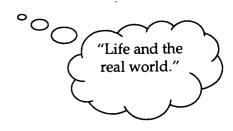
#### Optimism About the Future

"Learning about careers helped me see my strengths and weaknesses."

	Count	8
Am excited about future	4922	60.2
Am comfortable with career plan	4815	58.9
Am concerned, unclear about future direction	1508	18.4
Don't have enough information	709	8.7
Total responding	8374	100.0

The survey asked, I would feel better if
I knew more about . . .









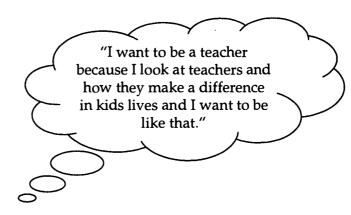
### Steps for the Future

	Done, Doing		Have Not	
	Or Plan To	Do Necessary	Considered	Total
Finish school & graduate				
Count	8424	10	17	8451
₹ *	99.7	.1	. 2	100.0
Do an internship				
Count	4866	1154	1889	7909
8	61.5	14.6	23.9	100.0
Read about a career				
Count .	6857	751	515	8123
<b>%</b>	84.4	9.2	6.3	100.0
Save money				
Count	8072	125	122	8319
8	97.0	1.5	1.5	100.0
Take classes				
Count	7401	340	383	8124
8	91.1	4.2	4.7	100.0
Take ACT or SAT				
Count	7446	419	359	8224
8	90.5	5.1	4.4	100.0
Learn about schools or col	leges			
Count	7659	304	224	8187
£	93.6	3.7	2.7	100.0
Explore schools offering ma	ajor of inter			
Count	7338	419	379	8136
g.	90.2	5.1	4.7	100.0
Apply to specialized schoo	1			
Count	3310	2574	2000	7884
8	42.0	32.6	25.4	100.0
Apply to 2-yr college				
Count	2695	2687	2321	7703
· 8	35.0	34.9	30.1	100.0
Apply to 4-yr college				
Count	6489	786	772	8047
8	80.6	9.8	9.6	100.0
Apply for scholarships				
Count	6576	732	773	8081
8	81.4	9.1	9.6	100.0
Apply for apprenticeship				
Count	2730	2167	-2750	7647
8	35.7	28.3	36.0	100.0
Enlist in military				
Count	941	3502	3358	7801
, courre	12.1	44.9	43.0	100.0
Set up job interviews	12.1	11.5	10.0	
Count	5296	1347	1295	7938
&	66.7	17.0	16.3	100.0
Gain experience in paid jo		17.0	20.0	
Count	7235	359	456	8050
e Count	89.9	4.5	5.7	100.0
Get skill certification	05.5	3.5	J.,	
	4740	1109	1886	7735
COUNT				
Count %	61.3	14.3	24.4	100.0



1999 What Works? Colorado High School Senior Survey





# **♣** Future Data Analysis

The size and depth of the database lends itself to multitude of different analyses. This report provides the basic level of statewide analysis. Further evaluation is needed to determine the underlining motivational factors. Additionally, several of the questions on the survey were open-ended. These questions focused on motivation, career goals and school improvement. A plethora of qualitative data has been generated. The analysis of this data will be conducted this summer. A more complete look at the statewide data will be published this fall.

# **♣** Survey Design Process

This Survey was designed through a multi-level process. A design team was convened. Representatives included educators from the state, regional and local levels and educational and university researchers. The items included on the instrument were designed to answer two major questions: What motivates students in school? and How prepared are students for their future? After a review of the literature and much discussion, a draft form of the Survey was reviewed by a panel of experts including, regional and local coordinators and the design team. Additionally, the instrument was piloted through two focus groups of high school seniors.

# COLORADO CLASS OF '99: WHAT WORKS? SURVEY

To learn from you -as high school seniors- what has worked for you in certain educational

instructions:	Use a No. 2 pencil or				mark.
	Ex	AMPLE: 1	2 3 AND	XYZ	
_	Student background in If you have any question	formation is opt	tional.	ey administrator.	
STUDENT BACI	KGROUND INFORMATION	ON [Please m	ark (X) the appro	opriate boxes.]	
DATE OF BIRTI	H Day	Year		☐ MALE	☐ FEMALE
☐ WHITE	☐ HISPANIC ☐ B	LACK 🗆 NA	TIVE AMERICAN	☐ ASIAN/PACIFIC IS	SLANDER
1. During hi	gh school, have you	— [Mark (X) a	all that apply.]		
□ Participa □ Had a jo □ Had a jo	lvanced placement cla ited in varsity or intra b connected to school b related to career int b not connected in an	mural athletics I or a class. erest area.	s. 🗆 Partio □ Work □ Partio		usical performances. r in community service
2. During hi	gh school, what kind	d of grades ha	ave you receive	d— [Please mark (X	one box.]
☐ Mostly A'☐ Half A's &		☐ Mostly E☐ Half B's☐ Mostly €	& half C's	☐ Half C's & ☐ Mostly D's	
3. During hi	gh school, how ofte	n did you— /	Mark (X) one for	reach question.]	
		Never	Once in awhile	Half of the time	Most of the time
	k for a better grade?				
Feel bored in	when requested?				
Cut or skip cl					
Think about d					
If you thou	ght about dropping o	ut, why did yo	u stay in school?		
	<u> </u>			<u> </u>	



**Purpose:** 

and career development areas.

			•	
				• .
STC99020000000000000000000000000000000000	000000	00000000	00000000000	0000000
4. Have you ever— [Mark (X) all that apply.]	٠.	<b>:</b>		
	ONCE	MORE THAN ONCE	FOUND IT HELPFUL	I'D LIKE TO*
Learned about jobs or careers in class?		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		
Learned how academic subjects are used outside the classroom or in business/work?				
Taken a tour of a workplace to learn about the industry & careers?				
Followed someone around at their job (job-shadowed)?				
Taken a career interest inventory (e.g.'Discover')?				
Worked on a class project in which you learned about jobs or a career area?				
Gone to a career fair?				
Done college planning with a counselor?				
Done career planning with a counselor?			,	
Developed your own written academic/career plan?				
Met with a mentor (person to support you toward your future goals)?				
Worked toward certification?				
Done an internship or apprenticeship?				
· · ·	*if yo	ou have <u>not</u> partic	ipated in this activity, l	out <u>wish</u> you cou
5. When are you most motivated to learn? [M	ark (X) all	that apply.]		
When I	When t	he class instr	uction includes	
☐ Am interested in the subject.		pleting works		
☐ Like the teacher.		ing real life pro		
☐ Can seek additional help.		•	within the context	of life.
☐ See how the class relates to the 'real world.'		-	a community proj	
☐ Know the class relates to my career interests.		F	t encourages think	
☐ Understand the importance of the content.		. •	e the content relev	•
□ Other .		nology (comp		
When the teacher		nework.		
☐ Is knowledgeable about the subject.	_		material is present	ed
☐ Takes a personal interest in me.		ning to lecture	•	-u.
☐ Sets high standards for achievement.		•	hances to apply a le	esson.
☐ Shows concern about my education.			ignment choices.	
☐ Shows enthusiasm about the subject.			ssignments &/or le	rtures
☐ Encourages everyone to participate.		l trips.	osignificints ox/or let	.cui c3,
Remembers the students' perspective.		ching a video.		
		~ TIUCU		

Class of '99

Applying lesson in community/ business.

□ Other \_\_\_\_\_ .



□ Other \_\_\_\_\_.

☐ Uses humor (related to subject).

	liking this class?	· *	
<del></del>			
<u>.</u>			
			٠, ١
What careers interes	ted you during		
ddle School?		·	
e 9 <sup>th</sup> -11 <sup>th</sup> grades?		<u> </u>	
. 0			4. T. T. T.
			499 - 9
			· *
What is your current	career (life) goal?		
			1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1
		<u> </u>	
Why did you select t	his goal?		•
٠.			
		٠.	
nelped me: Decide to go to colleg	e/school after graduation.	☐ Decide to go directly	to work after graduation.
	l based on career goals.	☐ Know my career interest	
Identify a college major	-	☐ Identify a job based o	
	л.	identity a job based o	ii a career interest.
Other			·
Other	_	rmation or experience in hi n/experiences did not help	=
Other	☐ The career informatio		me.
Other   1 / 2   1 / 4   4   4   4   4   4   4   4   4   4	The career information out your future after high future because I have clear my career plan based on use I am unclear about my tugh information to make g	n/experiences did not help h school? [Mark (X) all the ar goals and I know I can re my interests and abilities. future direction.	me.

	NOW	LATER	NECESSARY	CONSIDERED
_				
	□.			
		۰ 🗖		
		. 🗆		
			· 🗆	



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