

**Rural Seventh Graders' Academic Performance  
and Post-High School Education Plans:  
Major Factors Derived from Survey Data**

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# INTRODUCTION

Seventh grade is a crucial year in the lives of school children. They are transitioning from elementary education into secondary education at the same time that they are developing into adolescents. Seventh graders' educational and career plans are influenced by many variables: family, friends, experiences, present coursework, and their own aspirations and dreams. What do seventh graders' make of all the influences? Which factors influence them the most as they begin their secondary school years? What educational plans do they have early in the seventh grade?

## Perspectives of Study

Adolescence is characterized by emotional, physical, cognitive, and social transformations. As patterns of thoughts or choices emerge, youth begin to gain a picture of "who they are," which is essential for school to have meaning and purpose. Schools can help facilitate that transformation by providing an environment conducive for students to learn how to usefully and productively manage their time, energy, and efforts in ways that are meaningful to them for the future and yet enjoyable in the present (Quaglia & Perry, 1993). Educators can try to influence aspirations with inspiration, realism, and respect (Sizer, 1996). Schools can achieve this, according to Sizer, by attracting "interesting" staff with aspirations of their own, keeping schools small to allow more than casual interactions, making time for students to pursue interests, providing role models from the community, and being flexible. Quaglia and Cobb (1996) state that youth are pressured toward uniformity by social groups and schools can combat this mindset by fostering environments that encourages diversity, excellence, and risk taking among students.

Cobb, McIntyre, and Pratt (as cited in Quaglia & Perry, 1993) report that rural youth believe that their parents are more supportive of them taking full-time jobs, attending vocational schools, or joining the armed services rather than going to college. In addition, Walberg and Greenburg (1996) note that rural youth also face economic decline, limited work opportunities, and increased isolation, yet youth may be a rural community's greatest asset. When youth migrate from hometowns, rural communities suffer a loss of talent and vitality crucial to the development or maintenance of a desirable future for these communities (Ley, Nelson, & Beltyukova, 1996). Factors affecting outmigration include limited economic opportunities, lack of faith in a community to sustain favorable economic conditions, and a willingness of rural youth to look elsewhere. All of these, combined with overall lower aspirations for postsecondary education, make it difficult for rural youth to achieve career and economic success within a rural state such as West Virginia.

According to Kampits (1996), rural youth have significantly higher graduation rates from high school than urban youth, yet they are less likely to pursue college degrees. In addition, rural youth are less likely than more affluent youth to enroll in more demanding college-preparatory courses and are less likely to graduate from high school with firm plans for the future. She challenges educators to focus on the needs of the students.

## **Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose of this study was to listen to rural students' voices about their present schoolwork and educational plans for the future and discern, via factor analyzing their survey responses, what they view as the most important factors in their academic performance and post-high school plans.

The first objective was to access the 2001-2002, 2002-2003, and 2003-2004 school year data from AEL's work with Fairmont State and the West Virginia Department of Education on their respective Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR-UP) grants. AEL staff conducts baseline surveys of seventh graders and their parents for both five-year grants concerning their awareness of, interest in, and aspirations for students' postsecondary education.

The second objective was to inspect these rural seventh grade student survey items and break them down into variables for exploratory factor analyses. The third objective was to conduct the exploratory factor analyses on the aggregated data file to determine the best solution of factors emerging from the data.

The fourth and final objective was to study the factors emerging from the factor analyses, name the factors, and discuss their potential for future research/study.

Different from research seeking to confirm aspects of a theory already developed and espoused, this study sought to begin to develop a theory of educational and career planning by early adolescents in a rural state. As such, this study follows in the tradition of grounded theory, as explained by Glaser and Strauss (1967), who describe processes for the "discovery of theory from data--systematically obtained and analyzed in social research" (p.1). "Grounded theory is derived from data and then illustrated by characteristic examples of data," they continue (p.5).

## METHODS

This section presents explanations of the setting of the study, the surveys employed to collect the data, and the data analysis methods.

### Context of Study

This study was based on data from seventh-grade student surveys for the 2001-2002, 2002-2003, and 2003-2004 school years. This included three years of data for students in the Fairmont State Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR-UP) project and two years (2001-2002, 2002-2003) for students in the West Virginia Department of Education GEAR-UP project.

These seventh graders live in 17 county school districts in West Virginia. All 55 county school districts in West Virginia are classified as rural and, thus, are in the Appalachian Regional Commission (n.d.) area. GEAR-UP is a program of the U. S. Department of Education, started in 1999. The five-year GEAR-UP partnership grants focus on encouraging disadvantaged youth to have high expectations, stay in school, and take rigorous courses to prepare them for college.

### Student Survey

Seventh graders' completion of baseline surveys when they began their GEAR-UP activities is the source of data for this study. Appendix A is a copy of the seventh grade survey for the 2003-2004 school year in the Fairmont GEAR-UP project. This survey is typical of those used in both GEAR-UP projects for all three years.

The development of items to be factor analyzed from the seventh-grade survey requires explanation. The 90 survey questions were organized into the major sections of school and work, knowledge about college plans for the future, aspirations, and background (demographics). Over half (n=55) of the 90 items had interval or near-interval level response options including all 42 items in the aspirations section which had a 5-point, Likert-type response option of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The remaining items had nominal or categorical response options. Here, each response option was converted to a "present/not present" dummy variable. In the end the decomposition of the 90 survey items yielded a large set of 197 variables for the factor analyses.

The aggregated dataset contained a total of 9,734 seventh graders. Of these, 51% (n=4,790) were female and 49% (n=4,600) were male. There were 344 cases in which gender was not supplied by the respondent. Unfortunately, due to missing values, there was much attrition in viable cases for the factor analyses. Each respondent had to respond to every variable to be included in the listwise analyses. Missing values were not imputed to the data set. Upon inspection of the frequencies of responses (thus omissions) for each variable, the researchers decided to drop any variable with 1,000 or more omissions. Eight variables were eliminated, leaving 189. Consequently, there were 3,144 viable cases in the factor analyses.

## **Data Analyses**

Using SPSS, version 11.5 statistical software, factor analyses employing oblique rotation with Kaiser correction were performed on the rural, seventh-grade survey data. Nonorthogonal Oblique (Oblimin) rotation was selected because the survey items were correlated. Decomposing the 90 survey questions by their response options (explained above) yielded a large group of 189 variables for the factor analyses. Factors were generated using two methods: (1) by setting the eigenvalue at 1.00 with no delimiter on the number of factors (unrestricted) and (2) by limiting the number of factors (restricted or “forcing”) to 15, based on the results from the first method. In order to be included in a factor, items had to have pattern/structure coefficients at least at the .300 level. For items with pattern/structure coefficients at or above .300 on multiple factors, they were included only in the factor with the highest coefficient so that each factor contained discrete items.

## FINDINGS

### Unrestricted Factor Analysis Results

As expected for a file of 189 variables, there were many factors with eigenvalues over 1.00 as the result of the unrestricted exploratory factor analysis. A total of 48 factors with eigenvalues above 1.00 explained 56% of the total variance. However, only the first 15 factors had eigenvalues above a rounded 2.0. Thus, the second method of forcing 15 factors in the factor analysis was deemed most appropriate.

### Restricted Factor Analysis Results

As a result of computing the factor analysis by forcing 15 factors, 13 eigenvalues were over 2.00 (range after rotation was 18.00 to 1.96) and together they explained 34% of the total variance. Thus, while the amount of total variance explained drops in the restricted method, the results are clearer and more understandable. However, one factor (#14) consisted of a single variable and was dropped.

Table 1 displays the variance explained for each component in the restricted (n=15) model principal components analysis. The data in Table 1 clearly shows that first factor explains almost a third of the variance and the second factor explains about half of that amount of the variance. From the third factor on, each explains relatively little of the total variance.

Table 2 displays this pattern matrix coefficients for the forced 15 factor model after oblique rotation. The order of the items within each factor (not the survey item numbers) are in the first column and the pattern coefficients for each component, from largest to smallest, comprise the remaining rows. The accepted criterion of for reporting pattern coefficients equal to or greater than .300 was used in constructing the table. The number of survey variables for each factor ranged from 24 to 1. Again, the size of the first factor in terms of the number of items included (n=24) is shown in the table. Factors 11 and 13 consist of all negative values, denoting low scores on those survey items. Also, the single item in factor 14 was a negative value: This factor was omitted because it consisted of a single item.



Table 1: Restricted Model Principal Components Analysis Variance Explained

Component Number	Total Eigenvalue	Percent of Variance	Cumulative Percent
1	17.994	9.521	9.521
2	8.631	4.567	14.087
3	4.810	2.545	16.643
4	3.997	2.115	18.747
5	3.608	1.909	20.565
6	3.185	1.685	22.341
7	2.974	1.574	23.914
8	2.849	1.507	25.421
9	2.642	1.398	26.819
10	2.416	1.279	28.098
11	2.290	1.212	29.309
12	2.239	1.185	30.494
13	2.090	1.106	31.600
14	1.968	1.041	32.641
15	1.955	1.034	33.675

Table 2: Pattern Matrix Coefficients for Restricted Model  
Factors After Oblique Rotation

Item Number Within Each Factor	Factor Number in Order of Largest to Smallest Variance														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	.739	.704	-.722	.713	.636	.671	.683	.744	.522	.784	-.639	.619	-.590	-.391	.726
2	.738	.694	.711	.688	.514	.665	.678	.670	.475	.758	-.620	.612	-.573		.722
3	.716	.653	.666	.673	.498	.619	.673	.660	.472	.662	-.596	.580	-.464		.454
4	.709	.627	.660	.667	.486	.611	.635	.641	.467	.660	-.586	.534	-.311		.449
5	.704	.615	.647	.653	.467	.609	.634	.628	.460		-.482	.503	-.301		.352
6	.701	.613	.611	.631	.462	.598	.574	.595	.429		-.452	.445			
7	.694	.590	.556	.628	.449	.542	.533	.589	.424		-.451	.409			
8	.694	.584	-.484	.514	.426	.503	.520	.495	.403		-.442				
9	.658	.578	.467	.502	.425	.494	.512	.424	.374						
10	.638	.562	-.400	.487	.409	.449	.511		.344						
11	.637	.520		.439		.399	.478		.339						
12	.594	.462		.421		.314	.476								
13	.582	.312				.305									
14	.574														
15	.568														
16	.515														
17	.499														
18	.482														
19	.474														
20	.472														
21	.440														
22	.436														
23	.424														
24	.415														

**Note:** Factor 14 was omitted since only one item had a pattern matrix coefficient at or above .300. Subsequently, Factor 15 was relabeled as Factor 14.

## **Naming the Factors**

Inspection of the items in each of the 14 resultant factors led to tentative names for the factors. They are, in factor order:

1. Teacher/school/self-attitudes
2. History academic performance
3. Post-high school education plans
4. Math academic performance
5. People providing post-high school education information
6. English academic performance
7. Science academic performance
8. Importance of others to educational plans
9. Leadership
10. Homework time
11. High school course selection influences
12. Favorite subject reasons
13. Plans for math/science courses in high school
14. Resources for college (location and computer)

## DISCUSSION/IMPLICATIONS

Comments about several of the factors are warranted. The first and largest factor (eigenvalue of 18.00) contains 24 items, all from the aspirations section of the survey. These items ask the seventh graders to rate their level of agreement on items about their teachers, their school, and themselves. The second, fourth, sixth, and seventh factors all deal with questions regarding how well they are doing in specific subjects (history, math, English, and science, respectively) plus reasons why they feel they are not doing well in those subjects. Each of these academic performance factors is comprised of 12 variables derived from 3 survey questions. The third factor consists of variables derived from 10 survey questions dealing with going to college, the importance of education beyond high school, how far in schooling students think they will go, and how much schooling they think their mother and father want them to get.

Interestingly, the fifth, eighth, eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth factors are each comprised of variables drawn from the responses to an individual survey question. For example, the survey item generating the eighth factor is question number four: "How important to you is what each of the following people think you should do about your education?" There were 12 choices (parent, grandparent, brother or sister, etc.), each of which was converted into a variable, and the response options were "Not important," "Some importance," and "Very important."

### Implications

The importance of this study rests in the contribution that rural seventh graders' voices make, via their survey responses, to identifying factors involved in their academic performance and educational planning for high school and beyond. With these factors identified, models of educational planning and choice can be developed and tested empirically. For example, the factor of post-high school plans could serve as the dependent variable in a multiple regression or path analysis model and the remaining 13 factors could be independent or predictor variables. Thus, a theory of educational choice or planning for rural seventh graders can be developed.

Another important aspect of this study is the factors that did not emerge from the survey of rural seventh graders. Four variables have been identified by various researchers as appearing to influence student aspirations. These variables are gender, income (family's), race/ethnicity, and culture (Mau, 1995; Mau & Bikos, 2000; Mau, Hitchcock, & Calvert, 1998; Ramos & Sanchez, 1995; Trusty, Robinson, Plata, & Ng, 2000; Van Hook, 1993; and Wahl & Blackhurst, 2000). Three of these four variables (excluding culture) were asked as part of the seventh grade survey, yet none emerged in the final set of 14 factors. A logical extension of the above suggestion would be to add the variables of gender, income (family), and race/ethnicity into the multiple regression or path analysis models and observe their effects. This could aid in our understanding of these variables for these rural seventh graders' perceptions and educational plans and in the development of the theory of educational planning.

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**APPENDIX A:**

**Fairmont State College: GEAR-UP Partnership Grant;  
2003-2004 7th Grade Student Survey**

Fairmont State College:  
GEAR UP Partnership Grant

**2003-2004  
7th Grade Student Survey**

Please respond to all items by completely filling in the circle for each selected response.

Like this:  Not like this:

Identification Code:												
Student	Social	Security No.	Co.	Sch.								
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9

**School and School Work**

- Who usually helps you with your homework? *(Select all that apply.)*

<input type="radio"/> Parent or guardian	<input type="radio"/> Friend
<input type="radio"/> Grandparent	<input type="radio"/> Teacher
<input type="radio"/> Brother or sister	<input type="radio"/> GEAR UP staff (mentor, tutor)
<input type="radio"/> Other family member	<input type="radio"/> Some other person
  
- Compared with other students, how hard do you think you work in school?
 

<input type="radio"/> Not nearly as hard	<input type="radio"/> Harder
<input type="radio"/> Not as hard	<input type="radio"/> Much harder
<input type="radio"/> About the same	
  
- What type of student do you consider yourself to be?
 

<input type="radio"/> Poor	<input type="radio"/> Good
<input type="radio"/> Fair	<input type="radio"/> Excellent
  
- How important to you is what each of the following people think you should do about your education?
 

	<i>Not Impt.</i>	<i>Some Impt.</i>	<i>Very Impt.</i>
a. Parent or guardian	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Grandparent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Brother or sister	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Other family member	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Friend	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. Teacher	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Guidance counselor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. Principal or assistant principal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
j. Coach	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
k. GEAR UP staff (mentor, tutor)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
l. Some other person	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



5. I am doing well (a grade of A or B) in each of these subjects:    **Yes**    **No**    **Not Taking**
- |            |                       |                       |                       |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| a. English | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b. History | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c. Math    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d. Science | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

6. If you are not doing well in a particular subject, why not?  
(*Select all that apply for each subject.*)
- |                                     | <i>Eng.</i>           | <i>His.</i>           | <i>Math</i>           | <i>Science</i>        |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Have a C or D                       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Subject is too hard                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Subject is boring                   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Don't do well on tests              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Don't do all the assignments        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Don't like the teacher              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Don't understand the subject        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Don't like the subject              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Don't pay enough attention in class | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Don't study hard enough             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other                               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Don't know                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

7. Which subjects do you think you need help with? (*Select all that apply.*)

- |                               |                                      |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> English | <input type="radio"/> Science        |
| <input type="radio"/> History | <input type="radio"/> Social Studies |
| <input type="radio"/> Math    | <input type="radio"/> Spelling       |
| <input type="radio"/> Reading | <input type="radio"/> Other          |

8. What is your favorite subject in school?

- |                               |                                      |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Art     | <input type="radio"/> Reading        |
| <input type="radio"/> Band    | <input type="radio"/> Science        |
| <input type="radio"/> English | <input type="radio"/> Social Studies |
| <input type="radio"/> History | <input type="radio"/> Spelling       |
| <input type="radio"/> Math    | <input type="radio"/> Other          |

9. What makes that subject your favorite? (*Select all that apply.*)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> It's fun or cool        | <input type="radio"/> I like the activities |
| <input type="radio"/> It's easy to understand | <input type="radio"/> It's challenging      |
| <input type="radio"/> I like the teacher      | <input type="radio"/> I like the subject    |
| <input type="radio"/> I am good at it         | <input type="radio"/> Other                 |

10. Which of the following courses do you plan on taking in high school? (*Select all that apply.*)

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Algebra   | <input type="radio"/> Foreign language |
| <input type="radio"/> Calculus  | <input type="radio"/> Physics          |
| <input type="radio"/> Chemistry | <input type="radio"/> Trigonometry     |

11. For each of the following subjects, about how many hours each day do you spend on homework?

	0	½	1	1½	2	2½	3	Not Taking
a. English	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Science	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Math	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. History/Social Studies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. All other subjects combined	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Yes	No
12. I think I have good study skills.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. I would be interested in attending an after-school tutoring program.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. I think I have the ability to go to college.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. In school, I participate in sports.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. In school, I participate in clubs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. In school, I participate in student government.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. I use a computer for school projects.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. I have taken a computer class at school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. I use a computer at home.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. If you have a computer at home, do you have Internet access?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. I plan to be living in West Virginia when I'm 30.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. I plan to be working in West Virginia when I'm 30.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. I would be interested in having a "college-type" mentor or buddy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Knowledge about College

	Yes	No
25. Have you ever talked with your school counselor or someone else at your school about the entrance requirements for college (i.e., GPA, ACT scores, or other college requirements)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. Do you have an idea of what courses you should take in high school to prepare you for college?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27. Have you heard of the following types of schools?	Yes	No
a. Two-year or community college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Four-year college or university	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Vocational, trade, or business school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. Do you think a person with a college degree typically earns more money in one year than a person who does not have a college degree?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

29. How much do you think it costs for one year of tuition at a four-year public college in your state? (This estimate should not include food, housing, or book expenses.)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Up to \$1,000       | <input type="radio"/> \$15,001 - \$20,000 |
| <input type="radio"/> \$1,001 - \$5,000   | <input type="radio"/> \$20,001 - \$25,000 |
| <input type="radio"/> \$5,001 - \$10,000  | <input type="radio"/> \$25,001 - \$30,000 |
| <input type="radio"/> \$10,001 - \$15,000 | <input type="radio"/> More than \$30,000  |

30. How important to your future is getting an education beyond high school?

- |                                     |                                      |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Don't know    | <input type="radio"/> Some important |
| <input type="radio"/> Not important | <input type="radio"/> Very important |

## Plans for the Future

31. What do you want to be when you grow up?

- |   |  |                                       |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Actor/actress             | <input type="radio"/> Doctor             | <input type="radio"/> Pilot           |
| <input type="radio"/> Architect                 | <input type="radio"/> Engineer           | <input type="radio"/> Police officer  |
| <input type="radio"/> Artist                    | <input type="radio"/> Lawyer             | <input type="radio"/> Race-car driver |
| <input type="radio"/> Athlete (any sport)       | <input type="radio"/> Mechanic           | <input type="radio"/> Scientist       |
| <input type="radio"/> Astronaut                 | <input type="radio"/> Military           | <input type="radio"/> Singer/musician |
| <input type="radio"/> Beautician                | <input type="radio"/> Model              | <input type="radio"/> Teacher         |
| <input type="radio"/> Chef                      | <input type="radio"/> Nurse              | <input type="radio"/> Truck driver    |
| <input type="radio"/> Computer/video technician | <input type="radio"/> Pharmacist         | <input type="radio"/> Veterinarian    |
| <input type="radio"/> Construction worker       | <input type="radio"/> Photographer       | <input type="radio"/> Other career    |
| <input type="radio"/> Designer/decorator        | <input type="radio"/> Physical therapist | <input type="radio"/> Don't know      |

Yes No

32. Do you think you will continue your education after high school (that is, go to college or attend a trade school, etc.)?

33. Before entering the seventh grade, had you ever heard of GEAR UP?

34. From whom do you get most of your information about your options for continuing your education after high school? (*Select all that apply.*)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Parent or guardian                         | <input type="radio"/> Teacher                          |
| <input type="radio"/> Grandparent                                | <input type="radio"/> Guidance counselor               |
| <input type="radio"/> Brother or sister                          | <input type="radio"/> Principal or assistant principal |
| <input type="radio"/> Other family member                        | <input type="radio"/> Coach                            |
| <input type="radio"/> Friend                                     | <input type="radio"/> GEAR UP staff (mentor, tutor)    |
| <input type="radio"/> Religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi) | <input type="radio"/> Some other person                |

35. How far in school do you think you will get?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Less than high school graduation                    | <input type="radio"/> Two-year college degree (associate)                |
| <input type="radio"/> High school graduation                              | <input type="radio"/> Four-year college degree (bachelor)                |
| <input type="radio"/> Certificate program (less than 2-year college pgm.) | <input type="radio"/> Six-to-ten-year college degree (master, doctorate) |

36. What is the main reason you would not continue your education after high school?
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> No reason, I definitely will go        | <input type="radio"/> I want to join the military     |
| <input type="radio"/> It costs too much or I can't afford it | <input type="radio"/> Don't want to be away from home |
| <input type="radio"/> Don't need college for planned job     | <input type="radio"/> Just don't like school          |
| <input type="radio"/> My grades are not good enough          | <input type="radio"/> I want to start a family        |
| <input type="radio"/> I'm just not interested                | <input type="radio"/> Some other reason               |
| <input type="radio"/> I need or want to work                 | <input type="radio"/> Don't know                      |
37. Do you think you will be able to afford to attend a four-year college or university after high school?
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Definitely can't afford it | <input type="radio"/> Probably can afford it               |
| <input type="radio"/> I doubt if I can afford it | <input type="radio"/> Definitely will be able to afford it |
| <input type="radio"/> I'm not sure               |  |
38. During the past year, have you discussed academic requirements for attending a four-year college with any adults in your household?
- |                       |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|                       | Yes                   | No                    |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
39. Have any of your family members attended college?
- |                              |                       |                       |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|                              | Yes                   | No                    |
| a. Mother or female guardian | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b. Father or male guardian   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c. Grandparent               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d. Brother or sister         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
40. How much education do you think your father or male guardian wants you to get?
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Less than high school graduation                    | <input type="radio"/> Two-year college degree (associate)                |
| <input type="radio"/> High school graduation                              | <input type="radio"/> Four-year college degree (bachelor)                |
| <input type="radio"/> Certificate program (less than 2-year college pgm.) | <input type="radio"/> Six-to-ten-year college degree (master, doctorate) |
41. How much education do you think your mother or female guardian wants you to get?
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Less than high school graduation                    | <input type="radio"/> Two-year college degree (associate)                |
| <input type="radio"/> High school graduation                              | <input type="radio"/> Four-year college degree (bachelor)                |
| <input type="radio"/> Certificate program (less than 2-year college pgm.) | <input type="radio"/> Six-to-ten-year college degree (master, doctorate) |

## Background

- |  |   |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|--|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|  | <i>Male</i>   | <i>Female</i>         |                       |                       |                       |
| 42. What is your gender?                               | <input type="radio"/>   |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|  | 11  | 12                    | 13                    | 14                    | <i>Other</i>          |
| 43. How old are you?                                   | <input type="radio"/>   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 44. How do you describe yourself?                      |   |                       |                       |                       |                       |
| <input type="radio"/> American Indian or Alaska Native | <input type="radio"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander |                       |                       |                       |                       |
| <input type="radio"/> Asian                            | <input type="radio"/> White                                     |                       |                       |                       |                       |
| <input type="radio"/> Black or African American        | <input type="radio"/> Biracial                                  |                       |                       |                       |                       |
| <input type="radio"/> Hispanic or Latino               | <input type="radio"/> Multiracial                               |                       |                       |                       |                       |

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 45. How many brothers do you have?                        | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 46. How many sisters do you have?                         | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 47. Counting yourself, how many people live in your home? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |

## Aspirations

Use the following scale to indicate your level of agreement for each of the following items:

1 = Strongly Disagree (**SD**)    2 = Disagree (**D**)    3 = Don't Know (**DK**)    4 = Agree (**A**)    5 = Strongly Agree (**SA**)

	<i>SD</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>DK</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>
48. I need more education or training after high school to get a satisfying job.	1	2	3	4	5
49. I want to make some money immediately after high school.	1	2	3	4	5
50. I plan to continue my education after high school, no matter what my career.	1	2	3	4	5
51. I can get a satisfying job without further education after high school.	1	2	3	4	5
52. Continuing my education after high school might help me decide what to do.	1	2	3	4	5
53. I am anxious to begin my career as soon as possible after high school.	1	2	3	4	5
54. The opinions/plans of friends help me make decisions for after high school.	1	2	3	4	5
55. Getting a job right after high school might help me decide what I want to do.	1	2	3	4	5
56. I won't be able to afford to continue my education after high school.	1	2	3	4	5
57. The opinions/plans of family help me make decisions for after high school.	1	2	3	4	5
58. I can take control of situations.	1	2	3	4	5
59. I know what I want and I go after it.	1	2	3	4	5
60. I am a good leader.	1	2	3	4	5
61. I can select the best way to solve a problem.	1	2	3	4	5
62. I do what I say I will.	1	2	3	4	5
63. I usually have fun in class.	1	2	3	4	5
64. I am a positive role model to other students.	1	2	3	4	5
65. Teachers care about my problems and feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
66. Teachers respect my thoughts.	1	2	3	4	5
67. I seek solutions to complex problems.	1	2	3	4	5
68. I have a strong caring relationship with an adult.	1	2	3	4	5

1 = Strongly Disagree (**SD**)    2 = Disagree (**D**)    3 = Don't Know (**DK**)    4 = Agree (**A**)    5 = Strongly Agree (**SA**)

	<i>SD</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>DK</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>
69. Teachers care about my success in class.	1	2	3	4	5
70. I believe I can always improve.	1	2	3	4	5
71. Teachers expect me to succeed.	1	2	3	4	5
72. I am confident in my ability to do well.	1	2	3	4	5
73. I take action on causes I believe in.	1	2	3	4	5
74. Teachers value my opinions.	1	2	3	4	5
75. I accept responsibility for my actions.	1	2	3	4	5
76. I am proud of my school.	1	2	3	4	5
77. Teachers help me to succeed.	1	2	3	4	5
78. I put forth the necessary effort to reach a goal.	1	2	3	4	5
79. Teachers support me when I try something new.	1	2	3	4	5
80. My courses help me to understand what is happening in my everyday life.	1	2	3	4	5
81. Teachers tell me I do a good job when I try my best.	1	2	3	4	5
82. I am eager to learn new things.	1	2	3	4	5
83. Teachers make learning exciting.	1	2	3	4	5
84. I have a teacher who is a positive role model for me.	1	2	3	4	5
85. Teachers allow me to explore topics I find interesting.	1	2	3	4	5
86. I am not usually bored in school.	1	2	3	4	5
87. Teachers expect me to be a good decision maker.	1	2	3	4	5
88. Anyone can succeed if they work hard enough.	1	2	3	4	5
89. I have opportunities to decide for myself what I learn about in school.	1	2	3	4	5
90. Teachers encourage me to ask questions.	1	2	3	4	5
91. I like my school.	1	2	3	4	5
92. School is a good place to be.	1	2	3	4	5
93. I like to lead others.	1	2	3	4	5
94. Other students look to me for direction.	1	2	3	4	5
95. I am in control of my life.	1	2	3	4	5
96. I like to make decisions for myself.	1	2	3	4	5