

DATA POINT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Public High School Students' Use of Graduation, Career, or Education Plans

This report uses data from the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSLs:09). HSLs:09 is a nationally representative, longitudinal study of more than 23,000 students who were first surveyed in fall 2009, when they were in the ninth grade, and then again in spring 2012, when most were in the eleventh grade. The 2012 administration also included a survey of the students' school counselors. This report includes data for all public school students and public high school counselors who participated in the 2012 follow-up.

To help high school students align their curricula with career goals, some schools require that their students have a curriculum plan, variously referred to as a graduation, career, or education plan. This Data Point examines the use of such plans in public high schools, as of 2012.

The HSLs:09 2012 follow-up asked school counselors whether their school required students to have a graduation, career, or education plan and, if so, how students were assigned to a specific plan.

The school counselors of most public high school students reported that their school requires a graduation, career, or education plan.

School counselors of about three-quarters of public high school students (72 percent) reported that the school requires students have a graduation, career, or education plan (figure 1). The nature of this requirement varies across schools, however.

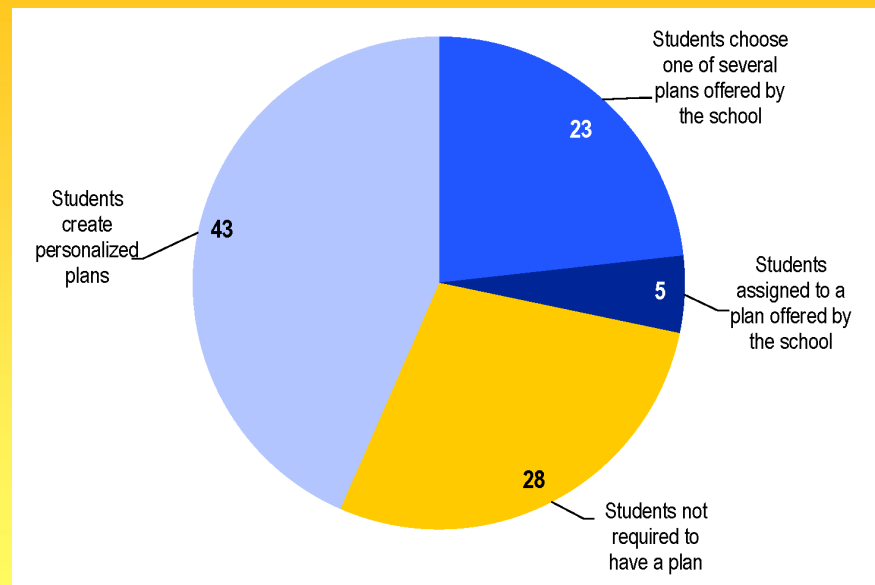
The counselors of about 4 out of 10 public high school students reported that students are asked to create their own plan.

The school counselors of 43 percent of students reported that students in their school are asked to create a personal-

ized graduation, career, or education plan. Counselors of fewer students, 23 percent, reported that students are asked to choose a plan from among those offered by their school, and counselors of only 5 percent of students reported that students are assigned to a plan by their school.

The HSLs:09 2012 follow-up also asked students directly whether their school had asked them to develop a graduation, career, or education plan. Confirming counselor reports, 44 percent of students reported that their school had asked them to develop such a plan (figure 2).

FIGURE 1. Percentage distribution of fall 2009 public school ninth-graders as of 2012 whose school counselors reported various requirements for graduation, career, or education plans: 2012



NOTE: Standard errors for estimates can be found at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/h155.asp>. Detail may not sum to total because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSLs:09), First Follow-up Restricted-Use Data File.

To learn more about the data collection used in this report, visit <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/hsls09>. For questions about content or to view this report online, go to <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2017111>.

Students who reported that their school had asked them to develop a graduation, career, or education plan were also asked whether they submitted their plan to their school and whether they met with school staff at least once a year to review their plan.

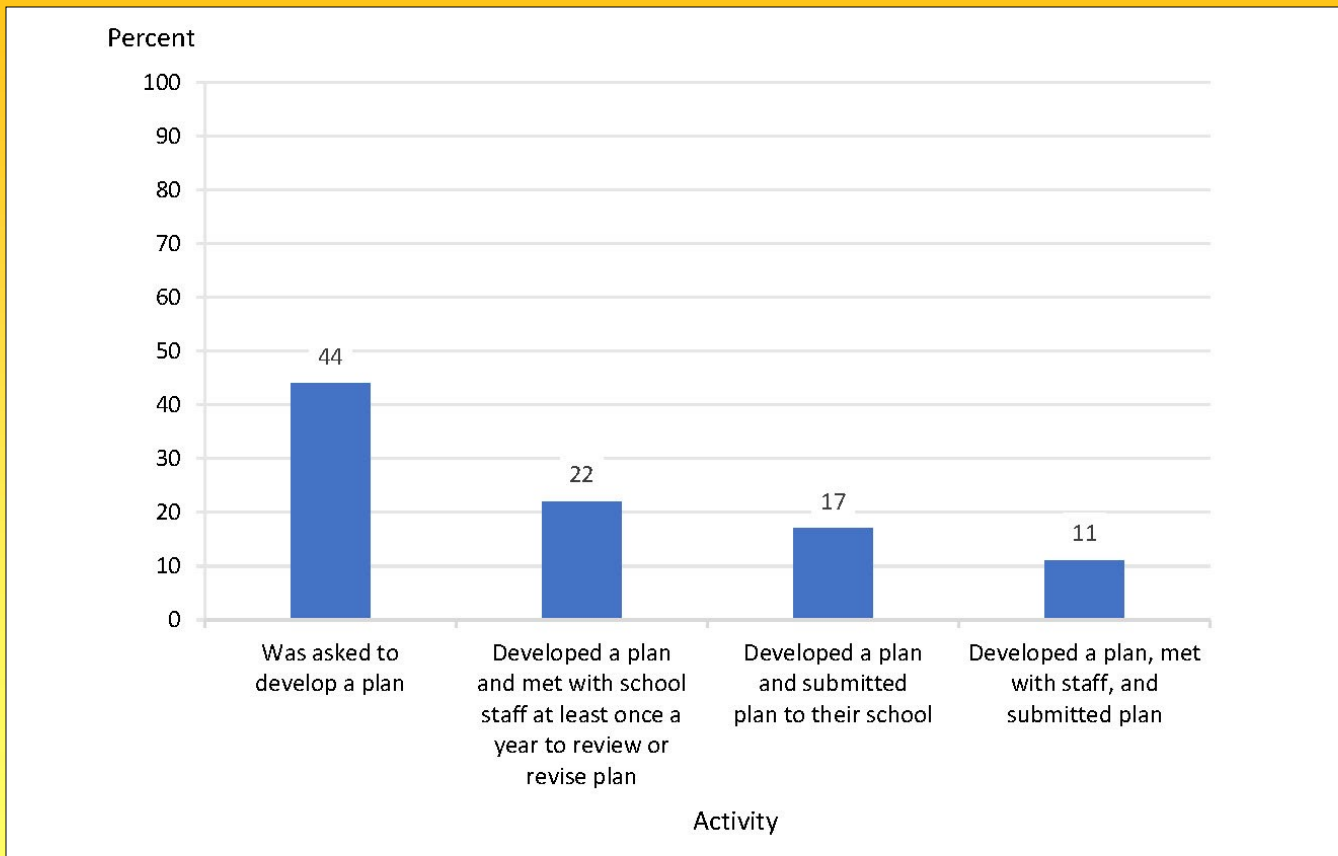
Although 44 percent of public high school students were asked to develop a plan, fewer students submitted their plan to their school or

reviewed the plan with school staff at least annually.

Only 39 percent of the public high school students who were asked to develop a plan submitted their plan to their school, and only about half (51 percent) of the students who were asked to develop a plan met with school staff to review or revise the plan (not in figures; see <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/h171.asp>).

Thus, only 17 percent of *all students* reported that they developed a plan that they submitted to their school, and only 22 percent of all students developed a plan and met with school staff at least once a year to review or revise their plan (figure 2). Overall, 11 percent of all students reported that they did all three—they developed a plan, submitted their plan to their school, *and* met with school staff at least once a year to review or revise the plan.

FIGURE 2. Percentage of 2009 public school ninth-graders as of 2012 who reported various activities concerning the development and use of a graduation, career, or education plan: 2012



NOTE: Standard errors for estimates can be found at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/h171.asp>.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSL:09), First Follow-up Restricted-Use Data File.

This National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Data Point presents information on education topics of current interest. It was authored by Lisa Hudson of NCES. Estimates based on samples are subject to sampling variability, and apparent differences may not be statistically significant. All stated differences

are statistically significant at the .05 level. In the design, conduct, and data processing of NCES surveys, efforts are made to minimize effects of nonsampling errors, such as item nonresponse, measurement error, data processing error, or other systematic error.