Results of the Senior Exit Survey, 2015-16

1.   What is the purpose of this report?

This report examines the results of the Senior Exit Survey, which is administered annually to all graduating high school students, pursuant to state requirements. The Senior Exit Survey in its sixth administration replaces the Graduate Exit Interview. The purpose of this study is fivefold: (a) examine seniors' attitudes toward high school, (b) explore seniors' postsecondary plans, (c) investigate seniors' chosen fields of study, (d) determine the credentials they plan to attempt, and (e) ascertain their immediate employment expectations.

2.   Which populations were targeted for this survey?

All twelfth grade students enrolled in traditional and charter high schools within the District were included in the state-developed survey of post-secondary plans, except those enrolled in special education centers, the educational alternative outreach program, the juvenile justice center, and centers for special instruction. Students who indicated they were eligible to receive a diploma or certificate of completion were asked additional questions concerning their post-secondary plans.

3.   How were the data for this report collected and analyzed?

Data to conduct this analysis were obtained from responses to the Senior Exit Survey, an online survey administered through Survey Gold 8.0. The survey was accessed through links provided on the District's main Web page and on the Student Portal between April 1 and June 9, 2016. Open-ended "other" responses were assigned into categories. The analysis of the survey data was otherwise limited to descriptive statistics.

4.   To what extent did students respond to the survey?

Overall, 84.6% of the targeted seniors (n=21,589) responded to the survey, representing 89.9% of the students (n=19,444) who attended the traditional schools and 58.3% of the students (n=2,145) who attended the charter schools. This high rate of return indicates that the results obtained may be generalized to all high school seniors in the M-DCPS.

- Traditional-school response rates ranged from a low of 52.2% to a high of 100.0% and averaged 90.1%.
- Charter-school response rates ranged from a low of 0.0% to a high of 100.0% and averaged 61.4%.

5. What were seniors' perceptions of high school?

Seniors were asked to select the most helpful aspects of their high-school education from a list of attributes. The number and percentage of seniors that selected each option is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Most Helpful Aspects of Preparation for Life After High School

Aspect	n	%
Personal growth	10,077	49.2
College information	8,603	42.0
Advanced/ special coursework	7,085	34.6
After school activities	6,625	32.3
Counseling	5,915	28.9
Academic assistance/tutoring	5,905	28.8
College Assistance Program (CAP Advisor)	5,869	28.7
Sports/recreation	4,880	23.8
Variety of coursework	4,360	21.3
Other	481	2.3
Total	20,481	100.0

Note. Percentages are based on multiple responses and may total to greater than 100. Non-responsive comments (n=382) are excluded.

- Aspects of high school most often cited as the most helpful were personal growth, 49.2% and college information, 42.0%. Also cited as most helpful by around one-third of the respondents were advanced coursework and the College Assistance Program.

6. What were seniors' postsecondary plans?

Table 2 lists the number and percent of the seniors who reported each of the following postsecondary plans, using categorizes provided by the State.

Table 2. Institution Seniors Report Planning to Enter Upon Finishing High School

Institution	n	%
Florida private junior college	69	0.3
Florida private college or university	972	4.5
Florida public community college	8,445	39.1
Florida public college or university	8,308	38.5
Florida technical, trade, or other institution	384	1.8
Out of state community college	197	0.9
Out of state college or university	1,676	7.8
Out of state technical, trade, or other institution	52	0.2
The military	764	3.5
None of the above[a]	632	2.9
Not applicable[b]	93	0.5
Total	21,589	100.0

[a]Eligible to receive a Standard Diploma, Special Diploma, Certificate of Completion, or Special Certificate of Completion, but did not select any of the above choices. [b]Not eligible to receive a Standard Diploma, Special Diploma, Certificate of Completion, or Special Certificate of Completion.

- Over 90% of the seniors reported planning to attend college, with over 80% planning to attend in-state, as indicated by the post-secondary plan selected from the categories provided by the State.
  - 38.5% of the seniors reporting planning to attend a public college or university in Florida.
  - 39.1% of the seniors reported planning to attend a public community college in Florida.
- The majority of students not planning to attend college reported planning to either enlist in the military, 3.5% of respondents, or attend vocation school, 2.0% of respondents.

The above categories may not accurately reflect seniors' actual choices due to the fact that many institutions historically recognized as community colleges currently offer bachelor degrees in certain fields of study. Therefore, a series of questions was developed locally to better understand seniors' post-secondary plans.

7.   What do seniors plan to do upon competing high school?

This locally developed question provided clarity as to whether or not seniors would be furthering their education upon finishing high school. Students who selected "Not applicable" (e.g., not eligible to receive a diploma, see Table 2, previous page) were excluded.

- 99.2% of the seniors reported planning to further their education (n=20,695) either directly, or during/after serving in the military.
- 0.8% of the seniors reported not planning to further their education (n=169).

All of the results that follow pertain to the groups of college-bound seniors identified through the locally developed questions, as opposed to the categories developed by the State.

8.   What institutions do seniors plan to attend?

Table 3 lists the number and percent of the seniors who reported planning to attend each of the following institutions by degree-granting authority, and the pace at which they plan to attend them.

- Of those seniors who reported planning to further their education, 43.8% reported planning to attend Miami-Dade College, and 16.9% reported planning to attend Florida International University.

- Of those seniors who reported planning to further their education, 8.2% reported planning to attend either the University of Florida, Florida State University, or the University of Central Florida.

- Of those seniors who reported planning to further their education, 67.1% reported planning to do so on a full-time basis, while 20.7% reported planning to do so part-time; 12.2% reported being unsure at what pace they would be doing so.

Table 3. Institution of Attendance/Status

Name	n	%
(Awards Bachelor or higher degree)		
Miami Dade College	9,141	43.8
Florida International University	3,525	16.9
University of Florida	676	3.2
Florida State University	603	2.9
University of Central Florida	436	2.1
Broward College	410	2.0
Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU)	335	1.6
University of Miami[a]	257	1.2
Bethune-Cookman University[a]	218	1.0
Florida Atlantic University	177	0.8
Santa Fe College	160	0.8
Barry University[a]	155	0.7
Dade Medical College[a]	147	0.7
University of South Florida	143	0.7
Florida Memorial University[a]	122	0.6
Airforce Academy	118	0.6
Valencia Community College	115	0.6
City College[a]	108	0.5
Art Institutes (all locations)[a]	101	0.5
Tallahassee Community College	98	0.5
Florida Gulf Coast University	89	0.4
American University[ab]	83	0.4
Nova Southeastern University[a]	75	0.4
St. Thomas University[a]	72	0.3
New York University[ab]	67	0.3
Johnson and Wales University[a]	65	0.3
Florida Southwestern University	55	0.3
Full Sail University[a]	55	0.3
Advanced Software Analysis (ASA) Institute[ab]	49	0.2
Florida National College[a]	46	0.2
New World School of the Arts	46	0.2
Clark Atlanta University[ab]	44	0.2
College of Central Florida	43	0.2
Keiser University[a]	41	0.2
Naval Academy	39	0.2
University of California	37	0.2
Boston University[ab]	35	0.2
Georgia State University	32	0.2
Columbia University[ab]	31	0.1
Miami International University of Art and Design[a]	31	0.1
University of West Florida	31	0.1
Florida Institute of Technology[a]	30	0.1
Harvard University[ab]	29	0.1

(table continues)

4

Table 3, continued

Name	n	%
(Awards Bachelor or higher degree)		
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	25	0.1
Stetson University[a]	25	0.1
Edward Water University[a]	24	0.1
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University[a]	23	0.1
Boston College[ab]	22	0.1
Cornell University[ab]	22	0.1
Duke University[ab]	22	0.1
New College of Florida	22	0.1
College of Business and Technology[a]	21	0.1
Amherst College[ab]	20	0.1
ITT Technical Institute[a]	20	0.1
Johns Hopkins University[ab]	20	0.1
University of Tampa	20	0.1
(Does not award Bachelor or higher degree)		
George T. Baker Aviation	72	0.3
Robert Morgan Educational Center	63	0.3
Miami Lakes Educational Center	56	0.3
Lindsey Hopkins Technical Education Center	54	0.3
Beauty Schools of America[a]	49	0.2
Florida Career College[a]	42	0.2
Universal Technical Institute[a]	21	0.1
Other	1,798	8.7
Total[c]	20,858	100.0
Full Time	14,157	67.1
Part Time	4,372	20.7
Unsure	2,582	12.2
Total	21,111	100.0

Note. Institutions are public unless marked; institutions chosen by fewer than 20 students are included in "Other." [a]Private non-profit/for profit institution. [b]Out-of-state institution. [c]Students who indicated they had not chosen an institution or did not know which one they would be attending (n=253) are excluded.

9. What fields of study do seniors plan to pursue?

Table 4 lists the number and percent of seniors who reported planning to pursue each of the listed fields of study.

- A total of 12.3% of the seniors who planned to further their education, reported planning to study Business, Management, Accounting, Finance and Support Services.
- Nursing, reported by 8.1% of the seniors who reported planning on furthering their education, was the second most popular field of study.
- Criminal Justice/Criminology, and Forensic Science; Medicine, Medical Technology, Radiology and Related Services; Biology, Biochemistry, Biological and Biomedical Sciences; and Engineering, Engineering Technologies and Related Fields were each reported by over 6% of seniors.

Table 4. Seniors' Planned Fields of Study

Field	n	%
Business, Management, Accounting, Finance and Support Services	2,588	12.3
Nursing	1,706	8.1
Criminal Justice, Criminology, and Forensic Science	1,443	6.9
Medicine, Medical Technology, Radiology and Related Services	1,347	6.4
Biology, Biochemistry, Biological and Biomedical Sciences	1,289	6.1
Engineering, Engineering Technologies and Related Fields	1,268	6.0
Visual Arts, Performing/Theater Arts, Fine Arts, Graphic Design and Related Fields	1,052	5.0
Psychology, Cognitive Science and Neuroscience	834	4.0
Computer Science, Information Systems, Network and Support Services	715	3.4
Health Professions and Related Programs	573	2.7
Law, Legal Professions and Related Fields	472	2.3
Advertising, Marketing, and Public Relations	465	2.2
Sports and Athletic Training	451	2.2
Journalism, Communication, Communication Technology/Technicians, Film, Broadcasting, Mass Media, Television and Support Services	422	2.0
Education	419	2.0
Computer/Video Game Development and Design	412	2.0
Animal Health and Veterinary Science	378	1.8
Dentistry, Dental Hygiene and Related Services	331	1.6
Architecture and Related Services	311	1.5
Culinary Services, Cosmetology, Hairstyling, Personal and Related Services	306	1.5
Pharmacy and Pharmacology	304	1.4
Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Support Services	300	1.4
Computer Technology, Drafting, and Support Services	269	1.3
Fire Protection, Administration/Technology, Emergency Medical Technology, Paramedics and Related Fields	254	1.2
Aviation, Avionics and Aerospace Technology	251	1.2
Political Science, Politics and Public Administration	239	1.1
Mechanic and Repair Technologies/Technicians	209	1.0
Anatomy and Physiology	190	0.9
Law Enforcement, Security and Homeland Security and Related Fields	188	0.9
Hospitality and Tourism	159	0.8
English, English Literature, and Letters	154	0.7
Economics	143	0.7
Physical Sciences, Chemistry and Related Fields	135	0.6
Social Work	125	0.6
Apparel Design, Fashion, and Merchandising	119	0.6
Agriculture, Agriculture Operations, and Related Sciences	84	0.4
Marine Science and Fisheries	84	0.4

(*table continues*)

Table 4, continued

Field	n	%
Dietetics and Nutrition	76	0.4
Exercise Science, Physiology	72	0.3
Mathematics and Statistics	68	0.3
Liberal Arts and Sciences Studies and Humanities	65	0.3
History	64	0.3
Social Sciences	61	0.3
Science Technologies/Technicians	54	0.3
Construction Trades	53	0.3
Military Technologies and Applied Sciences	51	0.2
Conservation and Wildlife	47	0.2
Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics	45	0.2
Mental Health and Counseling	45	0.2
Human Services	37	0.2
Area, Ethnic, Cultural, Gender, and Group Studies	34	0.2
Natural Resources and Conservation	28	0.1
Philosophy and Religious Studies	25	0.1
Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences	21	0.1
Other	135	0.6
Total	20,970	100.0

Note. Seniors who indicated they "did not know" or were "undecided" for choice of major or provided unresponsive comments (n=141) were excluded. Cells with fewer than 20 students are included in "Other."

10. Which industry certifications do seniors plan to earn?

Industry certifications provide evidence of mastery in a particular discipline, and are earned beginning in high school. Seniors were asked which, if any, additional certifications they planned to earn while furthering their postsecondary education. Table 6 lists the number and percent of seniors who reported planning to earn each of the following industry certifications.

- The industry certifications that the greatest percentage of seniors planned to acquire was Medical Administrative Assistant, 19.5%, followed by Computer Operating Systems, 15.8%.
- Certification as an Emergency Medical Technician and/or a Web Designer/Publisher was a planned acquisition by over 10% of seniors who reported planning to further their education.

Table 6. Industry Certifications Seniors Plan to Earn

Industry Certification	n	%
Medical Administrative Assistant (CMAA)	2,208	19.5
Computer Operating Systems (e.g., Windows, Apple, Linux)	1,788	15.8
Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)	1,304	11.5
Web Design/Publishing	1,160	10.2
Culinary Arts/Management	1,009	8.9
Networking/Network Administration	1,002	8.8
Automotive Technician	993	8.8
Pharmacy Technician	976	8.6
Computer Aided Design (e.g., AutoCAD)	969	8.5
Veterinary Assistant (CVA)	621	5.5
EKG Technician (CET)	601	5.3
Front Desk Supervisor	485	4.3
Food Protection Manager (ServSafe)	405	3.6
Bookkeeping	270	2.4
Other	62	0.5
Total	11,344	100.0

Note. A total of 9,767 seniors who reported planning to further their education, indicated they did not plan to earn any industry certifications.

11. What credentials do seniors plan to earn?

Survey items were provided to determine which credentials seniors planned to earn as their ultimate educational goal. Table 5 lists for the number and percent of seniors planning to finish their studies at the certificate, associate, bachelor, master, specialist, and advanced degree levels.

Table 5. Highest Planned Credential

Credential	n	%
Certificate/license in a skilled trade/vocation	980	4.6
Associate degree	1,245	5.9
Bachelor (e.g., B.A. B.B.A., B.F.A., B.S, B.T.)	5,363	25.4
Master (e.g., M.A., M.B.A., M.F.A., M.S.)	7,380	35.0
Specialist (e.g., Ed.S)	525	2.5
Advanced, Doctoral, or higher (e.g., D.C., D.D.S, D.V.M, J.D. (Lawyer), M.D., Pharm.D., O.D., Ph.D.)	5,618	26.6
Total	21,111	100.0

- Nearly 90% of the seniors who reported planning to further their education, planned to pursue a Bachelor or higher degree; with the largest group, 35.0%, planning to earn a Master degree; and 26.6% planning to pursue an Advanced degree.
- Only 10.5% of the seniors who reported planning to further their education, reported planning to earn a Certificate/License or an Associate.

12.   Where did seniors learn about financial aid?

Table 7 lists the number and percent of seniors that reported discussing financial aid in various circumstances.

- A total of 43.3% of the seniors who reported planning to further their education heard about financial aid at a classroom presentation, while 38.0% received that information in a classroom presentation.
- A total of 23.6% of the seniors who reported planning to further their education heard about financial aid from their College Assistance Program advisor, while 24.9% heard about financial aid from the school counselor.

Table 7. Where Seniors Learned about Financial Aid

Venue	n	%
Assembly/school event	9,143	43.3
Classroom presentation	8,013	38.0
Family/peer classmate discussions at home, neighborhood, or school	6,349	30.1
College visit/meeting	5,762	27.3
Internet (Web site, search engine, e-mail)	5,443	25.8
Meeting with school counselor	5,263	24.9
Meeting with College Assistance Program (CAP) advisor	4,982	23.6
Flyers, phone calls	1,941	9.2
Media center presentation	1,698	8.0
School meeting not listed above	886	4.2
My Career Shines	334	1.6
Total	21,111	100.0

13.   In which branch of the armed services did seniors plan to enlist?

The branch of the armed services that seniors indicated that they would be joining upon completing high school are listed in Table 8.

Table 8. Branches of the Military

Branch	n	%
Army	438	27.7
Air Force	380	24.0
Marines	324	20.5
Navy	294	18.6
Coast Guard	88	5.6
National Guard	50	3.2
Merchant Marines	10	0.6
Total	1,584	100.0

Note. Seniors who indicated they did not know or provided unusable comments (n=36) were excluded.

- Around half of the seniors who reported planning to join the military, planned to join either the Army or the Air Force, with similar percentages choosing each branch, followed by those planning to join the Marines or Navy.

14. What were the principal reasons seniors gave for not furthering their education upon completing high school?

Table 9 separately lists the number and percentage of respondents who selected each of the choices that follow for seniors not attending college who indicated they would and would not be enlisting in the military.

Table 9. Reasons Seniors Gave for not Furthering their Education Upon Completing High School

| | Enlist in Military | | | |
| | Yes | | No | |
Reason	n	%	n	%
Don't need it for what I want to do	8	13.8	81	19.5
Will defer till later	3	5.2	76	18.3
Not interested	17	29.3	60	14.5
Prefer to work only	3	5.2	60	14.5
Plan to make some money first	5	8.6	30	7.2
Don't feel academically ready	4	6.9	27	6.5
Too expensive	3	5.2	22	5.3
Illness/disability	0	0.0	20	4.8
Family obligations	2	3.4	12	2.9
Applied but was not accepted	1	1.7	4	1.0
Prefer military training	12	20.7	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0	23	5.5
Total	58	100.0	415	100.0

Note. Non-responsive comments from military (n=0) and non-military respondents (n=5) were excluded.

- Of those seniors planning to enlist in the military, 29.3% indicated they were "Not interested" in furthering their education, while 20.7% indicated that they "Prefer[red] military training." An additional 13.8% indicated that furthering their education was not needed for what they wanted to do.
- Of those seniors not planning to enter the military, "Don't need it for what I want to do" and "Will defer to later" were each cited as reasons by over 18% of respondents, while "Not interested" and "Prefer to work only" were each cited by 14.5% of respondents.
- Around 5% of responding seniors cited expense as the primary reason they would not be furthering their education.

15. To what extent did seniors plan to work after completing high school?

Seniors were queried about the extent they planned to work upon completing high school, and whether or not they knew the place where they would be working. Table 10 compares the responses of students who were identified as college-bound; vocational, certificate, career-bound; and students who planned to immediately enter the workforce.

- Nearly 40% of the seniors who reported planning to further their education, reported planning to work 20-39 hours per week, a higher percentage than the seniors who reported not planning to further their education.
- Around two-thirds of the military bound seniors planned to work 20 or more hours per week, while fewer than half of non-military bound seniors did so, regardless of whether or not they planned to

further their education.

- Except for seniors who planned to enlist in the military, most students who wanted to work, did not know where they would be doing so.

Table 10. Seniors' Plans for Work after High School by Group

	Military				Non-Military			
	Further Education		Not Further Education[a]		Further Education		Not Further Education	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Hours								
Not planning to work	221	16.8	74	24.0	5,860	30.0	169	40.2
1-4	21	1.6	9	2.9	263	1.3	6	1.4
5-19	179	13.6	33	10.7	4,048	20.7	44	10.5
20-39	504	38.4	96	31.2	7,255	37.1	94	22.4
40 or more	387	29.5	96	31.2	2,123	10.9	107	25.5
Place								
Not planning to work	221	16.8	74	24.0	5,860	30.0	169	40.2
Yes	600	45.7	142	46.1	5,558	28.4	120	28.6
No	491	37.4	92	29.9	8,131	41.6	131	31.2
Total	1,312	100.0	308	100.0	19,549	100.0	420	100.0

Note. Includes (n=250) military respondents who indicated they would defer their education while serving

16.   What are the principal conclusions of this report?

This report presented the results of the sixth annual administration of the Senior Exit Survey, which examined seniors' attitudes toward high school, explored their postsecondary plans, investigated their chosen fields of study, determined the credentials they planned to earn, and ascertained their immediate employment expectations. Almost 85% of M-DCPS graduating seniors completed the survey, of which nearly all reported planning to further their education upon completing high school. Most students rated personal growth, college information, and advanced course offerings as helpful in preparing them for life after graduation. The vast majority of seniors reported planning to attend a public college in Florida. Business and related fields; and Nursing were the two most popular fields of study chosen by the seniors who reported planning to further their education. Most students reported planning to work after high school whether or not they also planned to continue their education. Despite intending to be employed, less than half of seniors who reported planning to work knew where they would do so.