

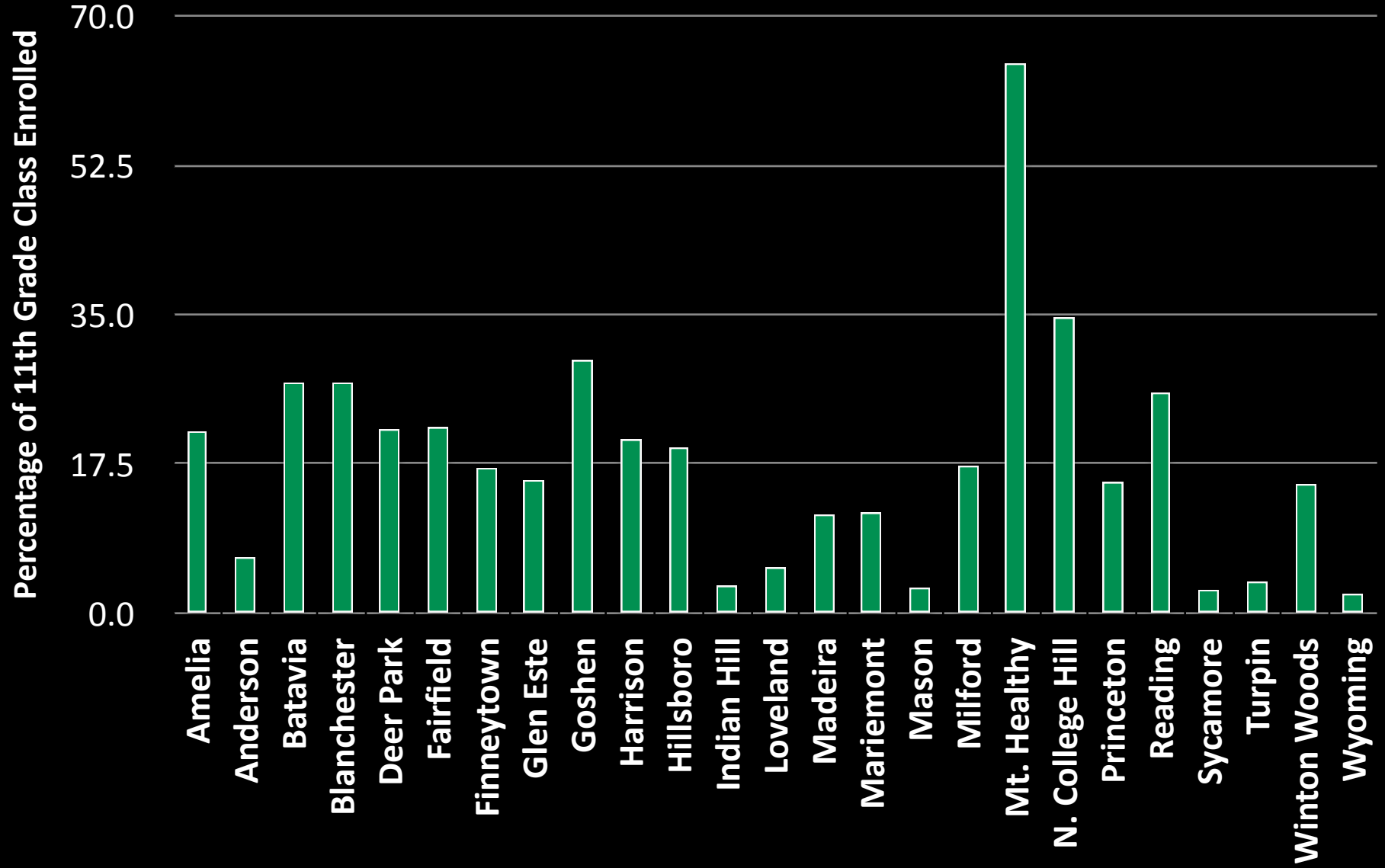


"The greatest Oaks have been little acorns."

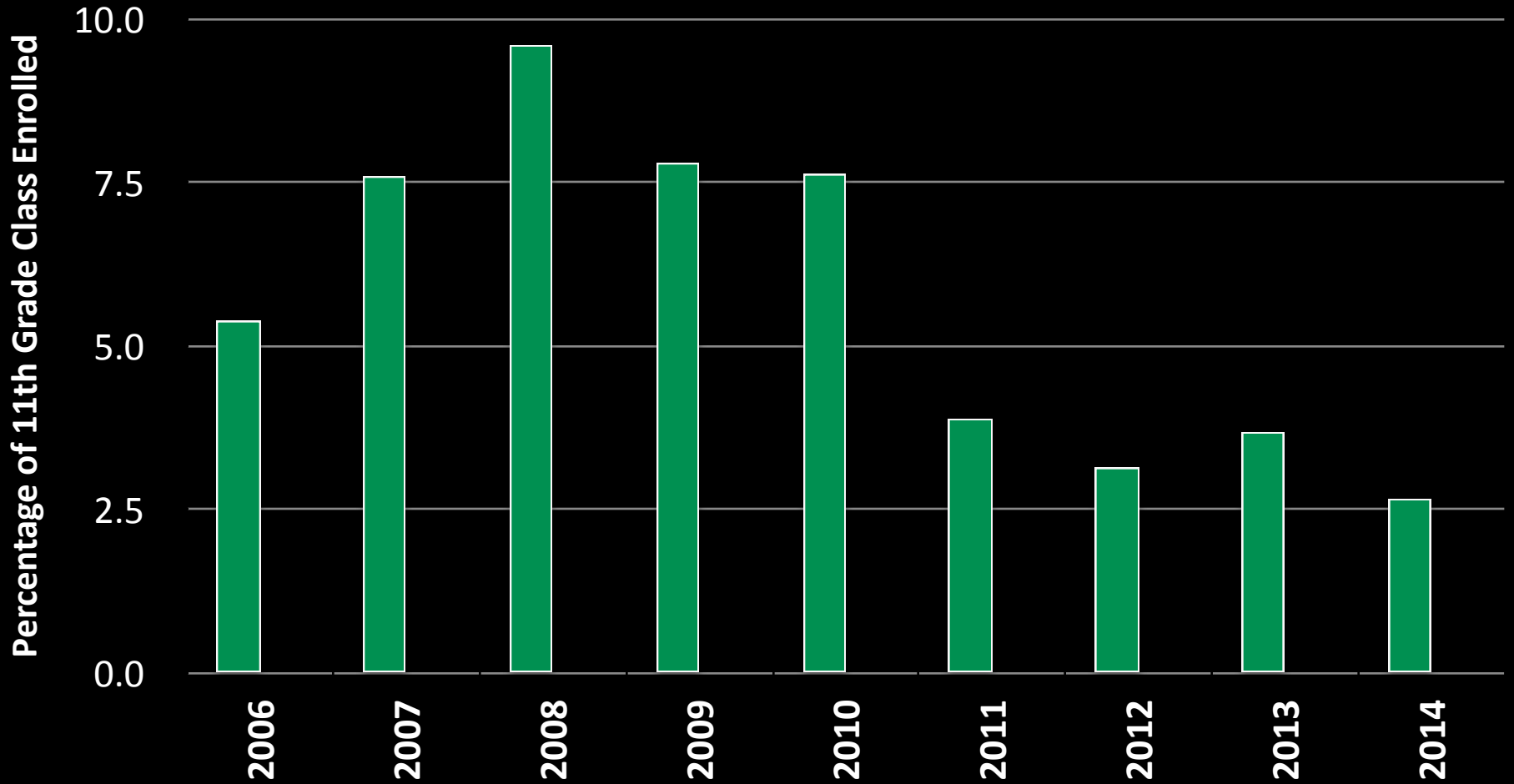
Thomas Fuller, 1732

SYCAMORE ADVISORY COMMISSION PRESENTATION - JULY 2015

2014 Great Oaks Enrollment by District



Sycamore High School Enrollment at Great Oaks - 2006 through 2014



Research Methodology

Meetings with:

Frank Forsthoefel

Doug Mader

Sycamore High School Guidance Team

Jon Wiedlich - Vice President of Marketing, Great Oaks

Great Oaks Career Advisor Team

Focus Groups with:

Sycamore Junior High School Students

Sycamore High School Students

Sycamore High School Students Enrolled at Great Oaks

Surveys conducted with:

EH Greene Parents

Junior High School Parents

Sycamore High School Parents

Conversations with other districts: Forest Hills, Loveland, Milford, Mt. Healthy

Review of Great Oaks marketing materials

When you think of vocational school, what comes to mind?

“Kids who aren’t college material.”

“Low wage jobs for students with lower cognitive function.”

“My children are not going to attend vocational school. I want them to have a four year education at a university.”

“Hourly job, low opportunity for advancement.”

“A band-aid of an education.”

“Not for my kids.”

“Instead of finishing high school.”

“Not very smart.”

What programs are offered at Great Oaks?

- Automotive Technology - Collision
- Automotive Technology - Mechanics
- Aviation Maintenance Technician
- Commercial and Residential Electricity
- Construction Framing and Finishing Technologies
- Cosmetology
- Culinary Arts and Hospitality Services
- Dental Assisting
- Firefighting/Emergency Medical Service
- Heating, Venting and Air Conditioning
- Industrial Diesel Mechanics
- Law Enforcement
- Masonry
- Nursing
- Veterinary Assisting
- Welding

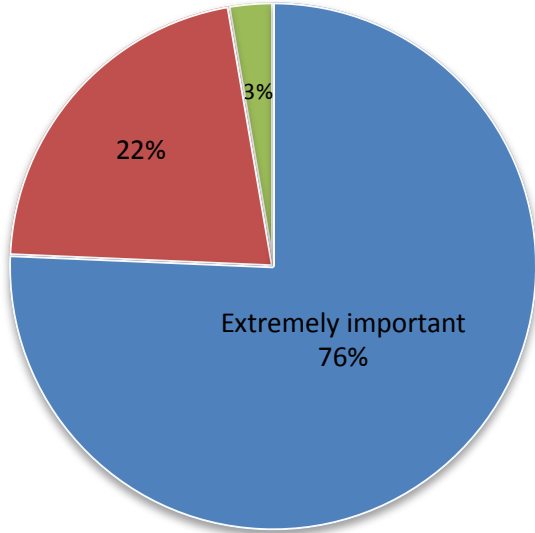
What programs are offered at Great Oaks?

- Computer Service and Networking
- Digital Arts and Design
- Early Childhood Education
- Engineering Technology and Robotics
- Health Technology
- Sports Rehabilitation and Therapy
- Surgical Technology

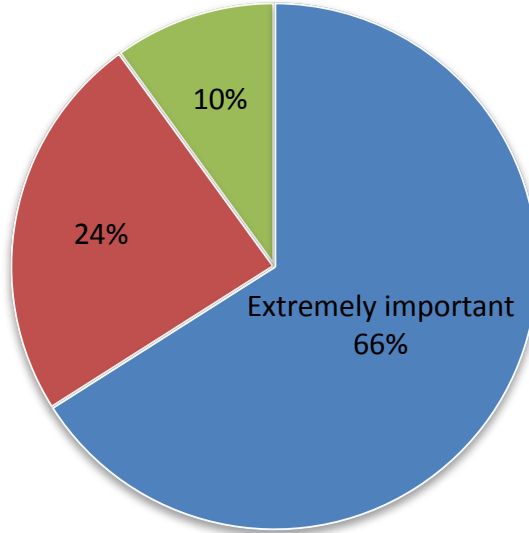
Parents survey:

How important is it to you that your child attend a 4-year college or university?

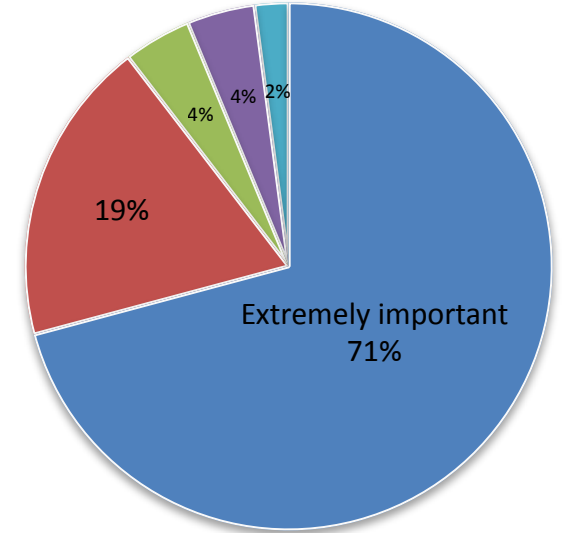
EH Greene



Sycamore Jr. High



Sycamore High School

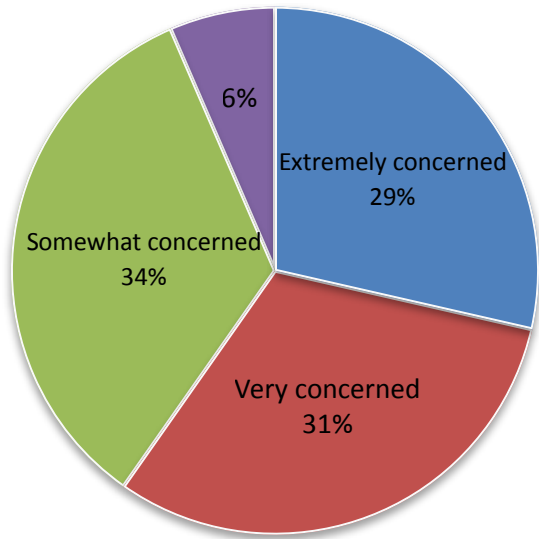


- Extremely important
- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not so important
- Not at all important

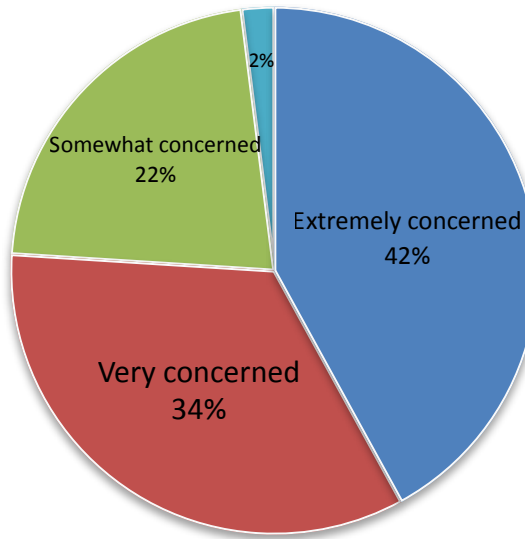
Parents survey:

How concerned are you about the financial burden of college?

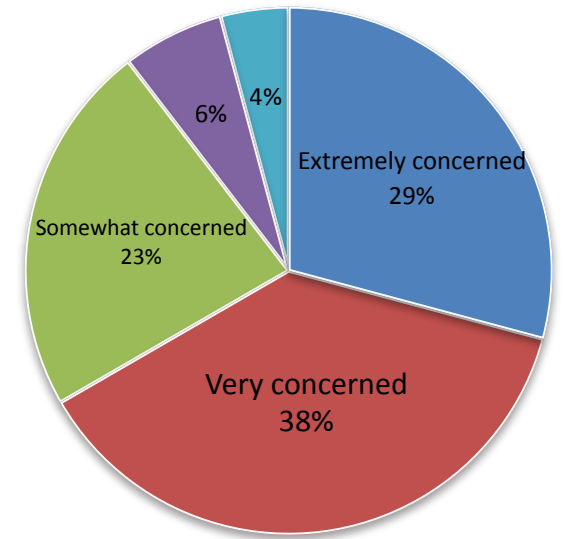
EH Greene



Sycamore Jr. High



Sycamore High School

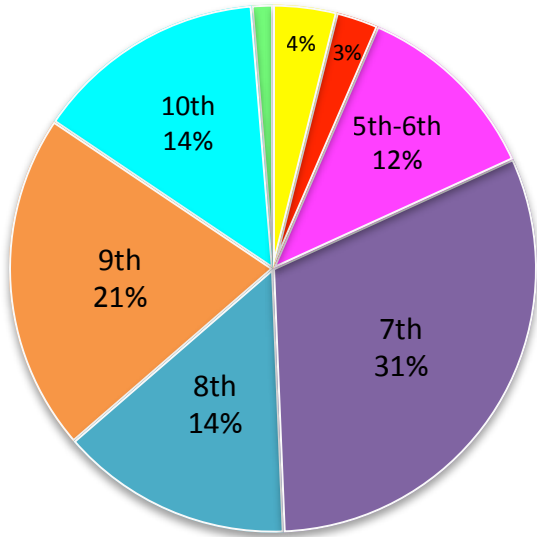


● Extremely concerned ● Very concerned ● Somewhat concerned ● Not so concerned ● Not at all concerned

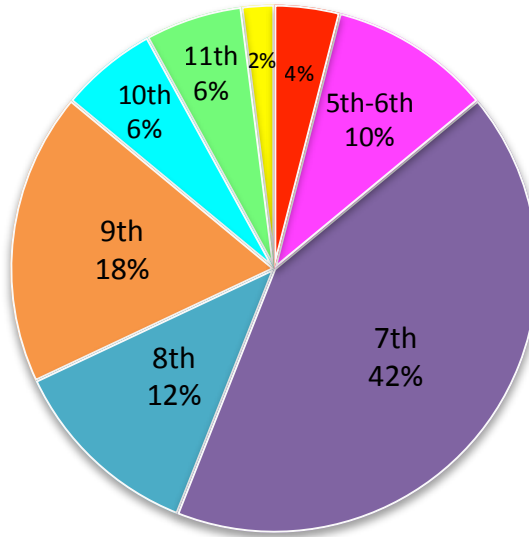
Parents survey:

At what grade level should Sycamore Schools begin talking to students about career options?

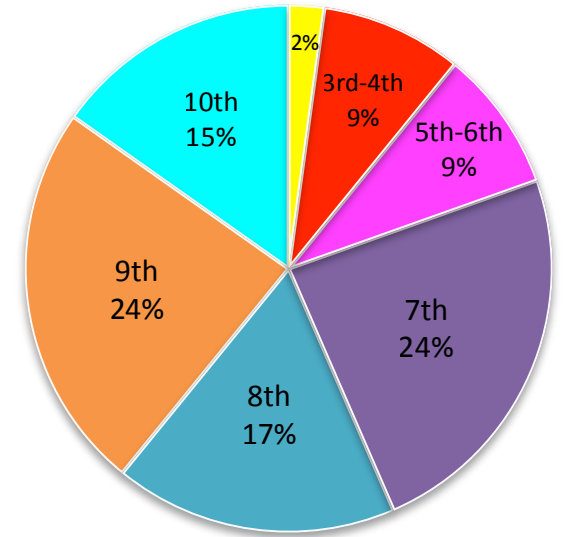
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Junior High



Sycamore High School

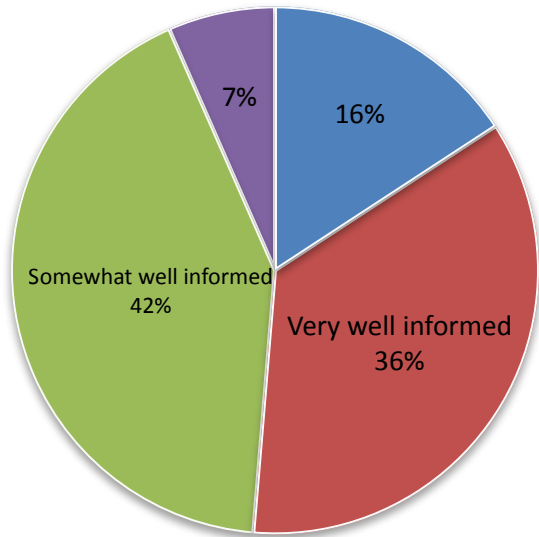


● 1st-2nd ● 3rd-4th ● 5th-6th ● 7th ● 8th ● 9th ● 10th ● 11th ● 12th

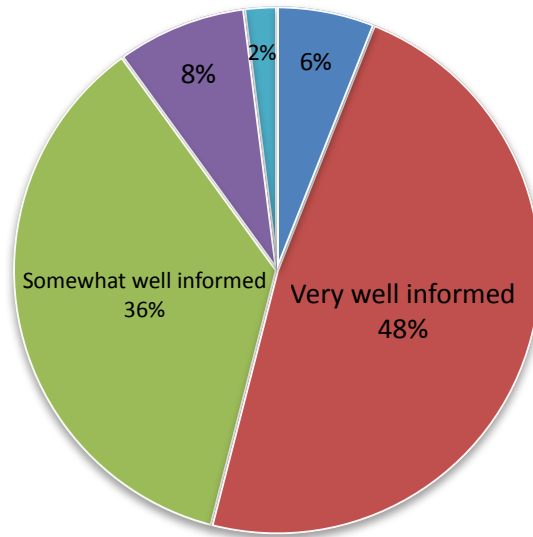
Parents survey:

How well informed are you about educational opportunities available at Sycamore Community Schools?

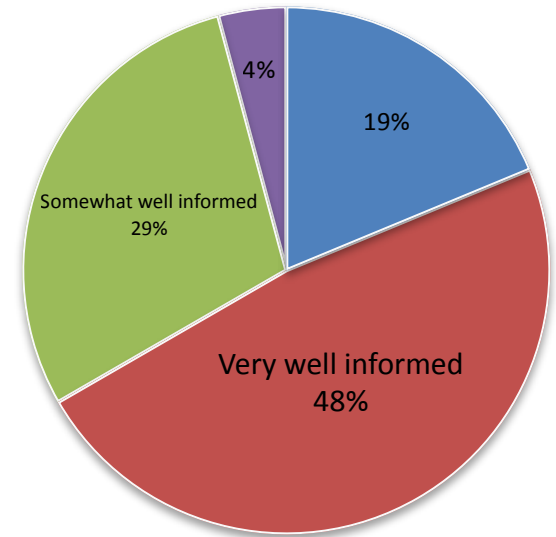
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Sycamore Jr. High



Sycamore High School

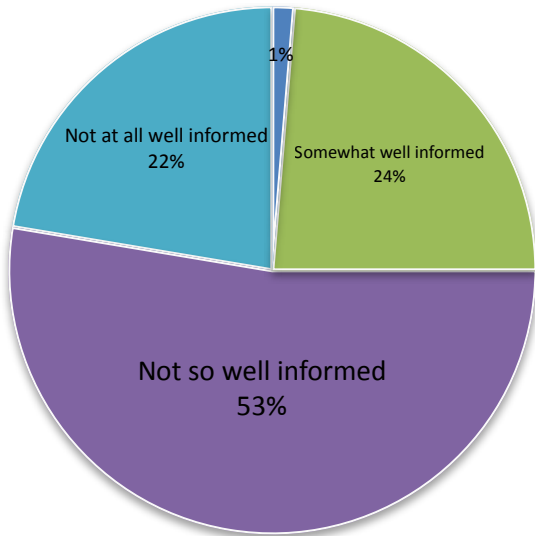


● Extremely well informed ● Very well informed ● Somewhat well informed ● Not so well informed ● Not at all well informed

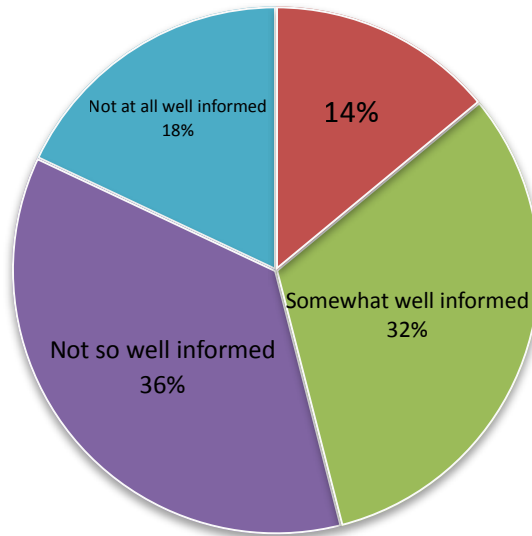
Parents survey:

How well informed are you about educational opportunities available at Great Oaks career campuses?

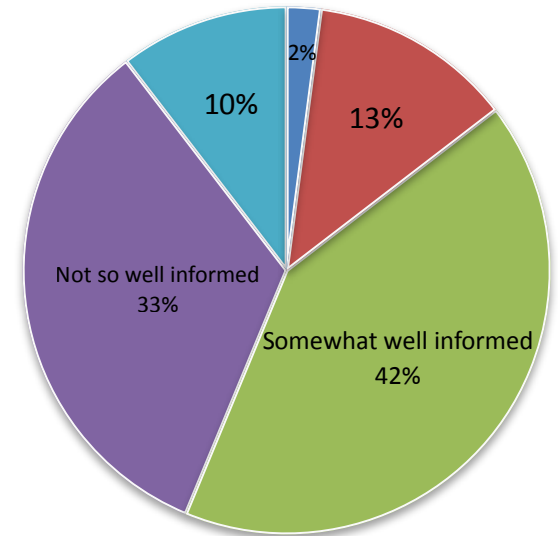
EH Greene



Sycamore Jr. High



Sycamore High School

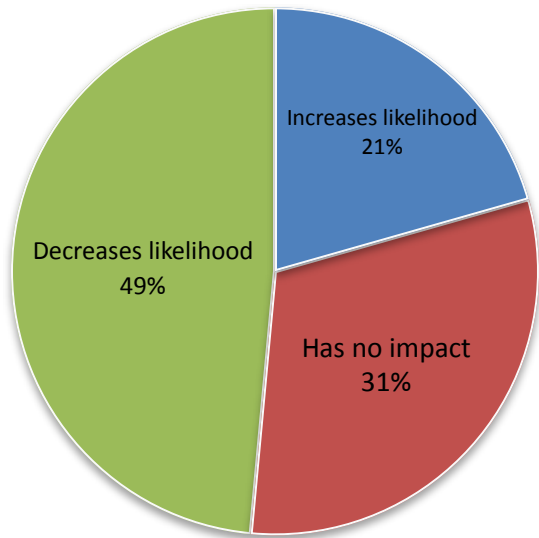


● Extremely well informed ● Very well informed ● Somewhat well informed ● Not so well informed ● Not at all well informed

Parents survey:

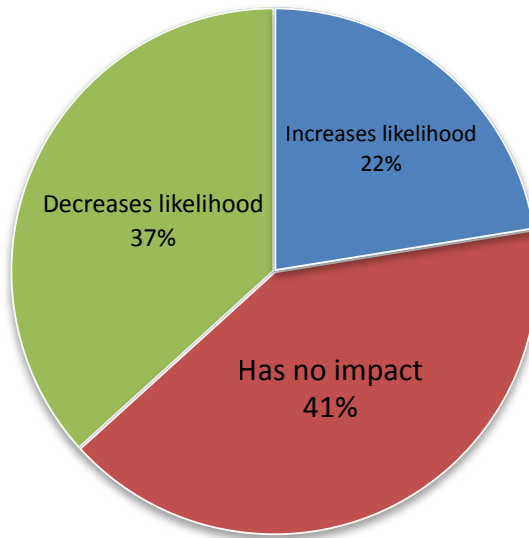
What impact does enrollment in a Great Oaks education program have on a student's future attendance of a 4-year college or university?

EH Greene



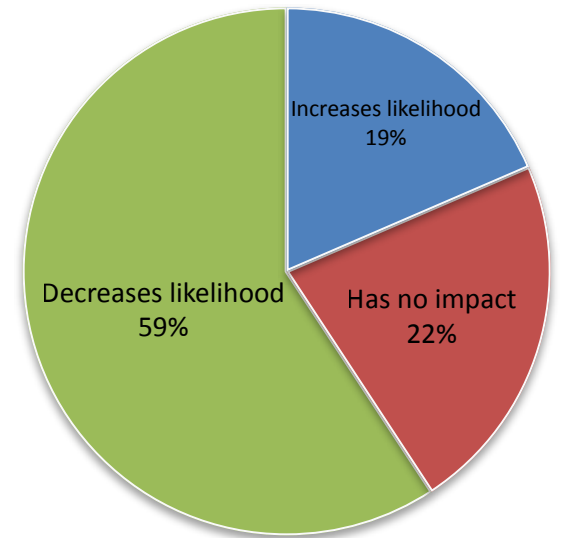
● Increases likelihood

Sycamore Jr. High



● Has no impact

Sycamore High School

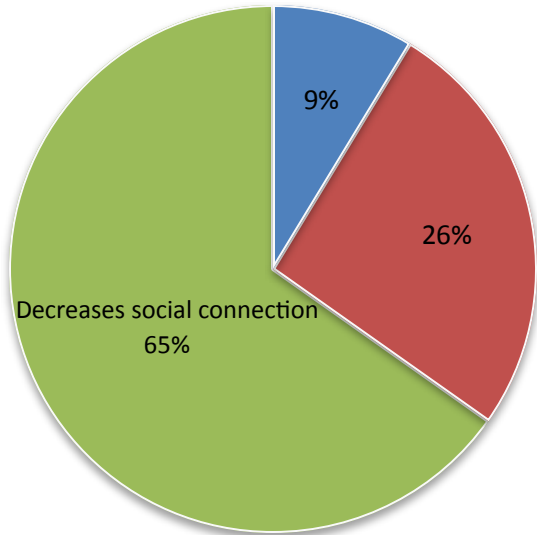


● Decreases likelihood

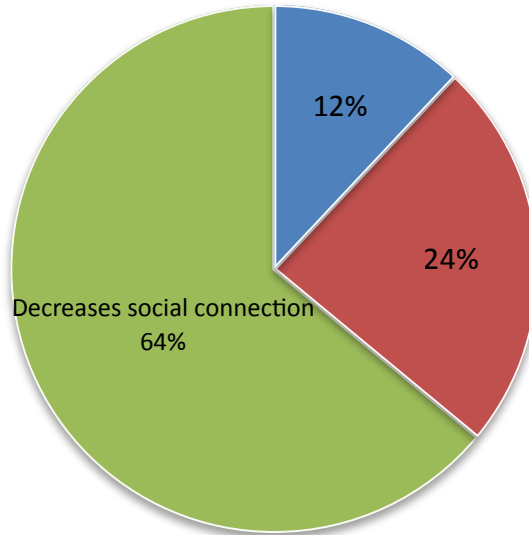
Parents survey:

What impact does enrollment in a Great Oaks education program have on a Sycamore student's social connection at Sycamore Schools?

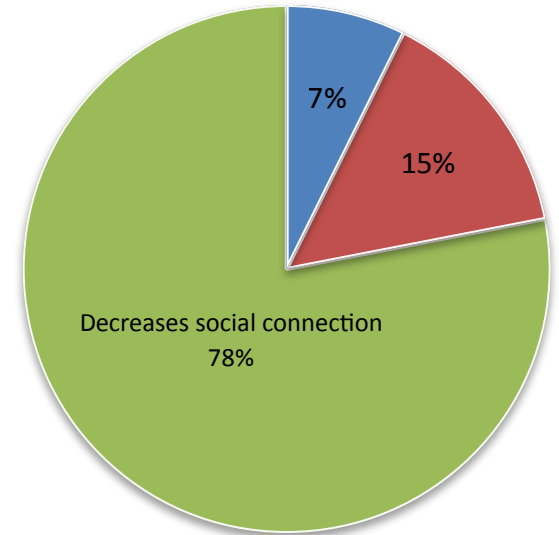
EH Greene



Sycamore Jr. High



Sycamore High School



● Increases social connection

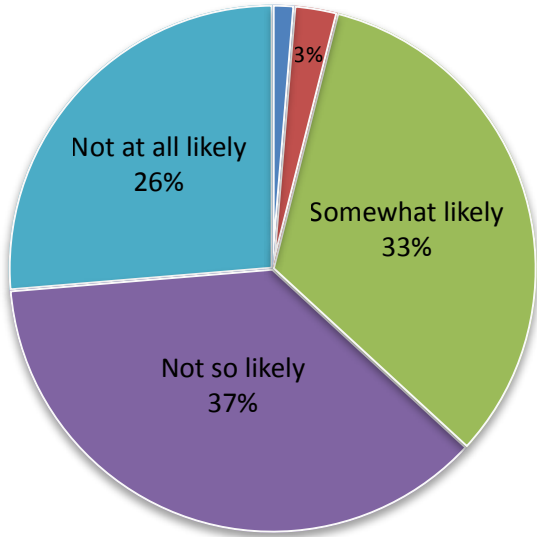
● Has no impact on social connection

● Decreases social connection

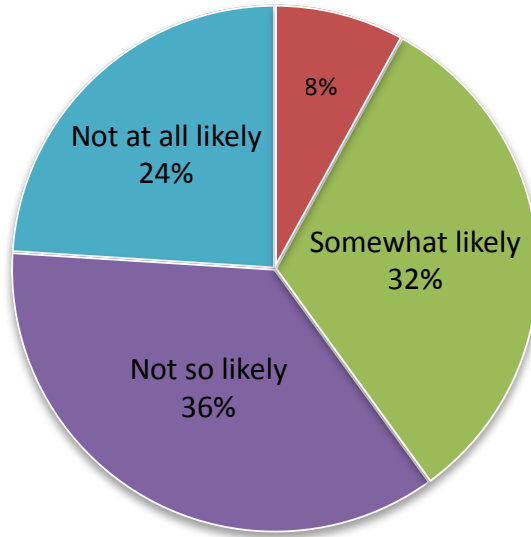
Parents survey:

How likely are you to recommend that your child explore Great Oaks career campus programs?

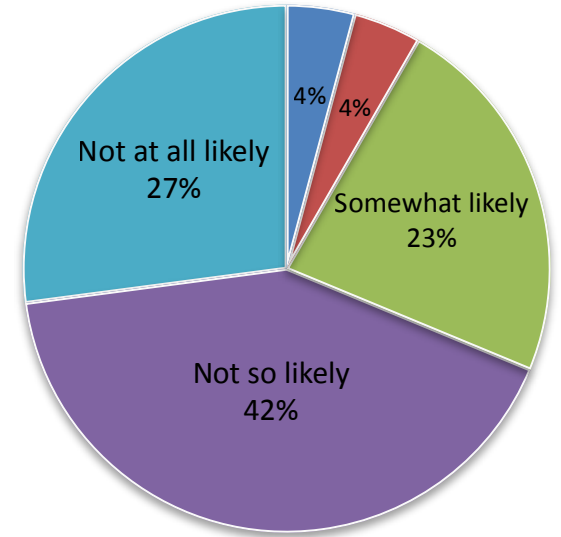
EH Greene



Sycamore Jr. High



Sycamore High School



● Extremely likely

● Very likely

● Somewhat likely

● Not so likely

● Not at all likely

Focus group with Sycamore Jr. High students

Key Takeaways:

- More than 50% feel they already know what they want to do as a career
- All are planning to attend college
- All believe their parents want them to attend college
- All believe their parents give good advice and their advice is important
- None of the students participating knew about Great Oaks
- All students thought their parents would be open to them exploring Great Oaks
- All felt splitting their day at their day at Great Oaks would have a significant impact on friendships and extracurricular activities and that would weigh heavily on their decision to enroll
- All use some form of social media (Facebook/Twitter/Instagram) but are not connected to Sycamore Schools' social media outlets

Focus group with Sycamore High School students

Key Takeaways:

- Nearly all students feel they know what they want to do as a career
- All intend to attend a 4-year college or university
- Parents are key (and appreciated) advisors in course selection process
- Jr. High assembly featured only one professional (firefighter) which turned off students
- Students not familiar with range (and number) of programs offered at Great Oaks
- Single word to describe Great Oaks: independent, vocational, awesome, utilitarian
- Single word to describe 'type of student that attends Great Oaks: focused, commitment, one-track-minded, organized, more sure of themselves

Focus group with Sycamore High School students

Key Takeaways:

- Social (feeling of leaving friends/Sycamore community) is key to weighing decision of enrolling at Great Oaks
- All felt enrolling at Great Oaks would make it easier to get into college - would look good on a resume
- All said they respect students for deciding to enroll at Great Oaks
- 50% believed that parents would be open to them exploring enrollment at Great Oaks

Focus group with Sycamore High School students enrolled at Great Oaks

Key Takeaways:

- 100% know what they want to do for a career - matches what they are studying at Great Oaks
- 8th grade field trip was a key introduction to Great Oaks - students thought not continuing field trip is a major concern
- Scariest part of enrolling at Great Oaks was transitioning to a new program
- All students in focus group expressed that they felt 'different' from typical Sycamore kids - felt like they didn't fit in
- Discussion about there being 'a lot of drama' at Sycamore High School and that at Great Oaks, students are focused on their future, they don't worry about what they are going to wear, social status, etc.
- Feeling that 'typical Sycamore student' would not fit in at Great Oaks

Focus group with Sycamore High School students enrolled at Great Oaks

Key Takeaways:

- Students no longer feel a connection to Sycamore High School (unless enrolled in half day Great Oaks program)
- Students no longer think of themselves as Sycamore students
- None of the students could name the principal at Sycamore High School
- Do not believe that Sycamore students respect students at Great Oaks
- Their friends were upset when they initially told them they were interested in enrolling at Great Oaks - felt like they would be losing them as friends
- Very few still have friends at Sycamore High School
- Students expressed that some teachers/guidance counselors tried to push them away from decision to enroll at Great Oaks
- On a scale of 1-10 (10 being best) most rate their decision to enroll at Great Oaks as a 10

Focus group with Sycamore High School students enrolled at Great Oaks

Key Takeaways:

- Feel that the best way to make students aware of Great Oaks is to have current Great Oaks students from Sycamore talk to them - all said they would be happy to speak to students - all are very proud of Great Oaks
- Feel it would be smart for interested students to have an opportunity to shadow different labs at Great Oaks for more than just a brief period during a field trip before making their decision
- All feel that enrolling at Great Oaks will make it easier for them to get into college - feel experience at Great Oaks will look impressive on their resume
- Nobody feels limited to what college they could attend because they enrolled at Great Oaks
- Feel parents need to know that Great Oaks can help students attend college and gain college credits - not the vocational school that they remember from when they were in high school

Focus group with

Sycamore High School students enrolled at Great Oaks

Key Takeaways:

- Unlike students enrolled full time at Sycamore High School, most students enrolled at Great Oaks do not connect socially via social media
- One word to describe 'typical Sycamore student' - hectic, shallow, preppy, prissy, stuck-up, mean
- One word to describe 'typical student enrolled at Great Oaks' - relatable, idealistic, alternative, driven, smart, ambitious, determined, motivated
- Feel like the academic course teachers at Great Oaks teach them better and teach content that will be more necessary for life after high school - never have to ask "when am I going to use this?"
- Feel like they wasted part of the day at Sycamore in non-relevant classes - but do not feel like they waste any of their day at Great Oaks - including academic courses

Key Findings

- Parents identify Great Oaks with the vocational school of their generation and are generally uninformed about their programming and the impact that it will have on their child. They are generally learning about Great Oaks too late - often sophomore year of high school.
- Parents believe that it is very important for their children to attend a 4-year college or university and believe that enrolling at Great Oaks will cause them to be less likely to do so.
- Students believe that enrolling at Great Oaks will distance them from their friends, extracurricular activities and the Sycamore Schools community. Social distance belief is shared by parents.
- The social impact of enrolling at Great Oaks is a major aspect heavily weighed by students considering enrollment even if are interest in the career opportunities offered at Great Oaks.
- Sycamore students that enroll at Great Oaks often see themselves as not fitting in socially or academically at Sycamore Schools. They are often looking for a fresh start at a new setting.

General Recommendations

1. Increase awareness of Great Oaks amongst students, parents and staff
2. Diffuse stigma associated with Great Oaks
3. Reduce negative social impact of enrollment at Great Oaks

Recommendations

1. Increase awareness of Great Oaks amongst students

Tiered introduction to Great Oaks with connections occurring between grades 7-10
(integrated within Aviator Flight Plan)

- 7th Grade: Introduce Great Oaks as an option in high school - show introductory marketing video
- 8th Grade: Tour of Great Oaks by all 8th grade students
- 9th Grade: Sycamore High School Students enrolled at Great Oaks to visit 9th grade students and share information about their experience
- 10th Grade: Great Oaks career specialist addresses to all Sycamore High School sophomores - introduced by principal (continuing current practice)
 - Allow sophomores interested in Great Oaks to shadow programs at Great Oaks campus
- Post short videos featuring Sycamore High School students enrolled at Great Oaks via Sycamore School social media (connects with students/parents/staff)

Recommendations

1. Increase awareness of Great Oaks amongst parents

- Spur early awareness of Great Oaks within Sycamore district - such as brief appearance by Great Oaks marketing representative at Elementary PTO meetings
- Produce statistics and case studies showing college readiness and success by Sycamore High School students who currently attend or recently graduated Great Oaks
- Communicate periodically to parents about ways to guide their child in career exploration and include information about Great Oaks
- Integrate Career Night with Great Oaks speakers at High School.
- Post link to Great Oaks website on Sycamore Schools web site and on parent portal
- Short video of Great Oaks for incoming Junior High Parents

Recommendations

1. Increase awareness of Great Oaks amongst Sycamore Schools staff
 - 15-minute presentation by Great Oaks marketing representative during August Jr. High and Sycamore High School in-service for teachers, guidance counselors and administrators
 - Provide opportunity for interested staff members to take a tour of Great Oaks campus

Recommendations

2. Diffuse stigma associated with Great Oaks

- Present statistics and case studies that identify Great Oaks as a path to a 4-year college or university education - including opportunities for college credit
- Market programs not traditionally offered in previous generations of vocational school, such as digital arts and engineering programs
- Promote satellite programs at Sycamore High School (DECA) as being offered via Great Oaks
- Ensure that Sycamore literature doesn't color view of Great Oaks - such as labeling as 'traditional' vs. 'non-traditional' educational paths

Recommendations

3. Reduce negative social impact of enrollment at Great Oaks

- Identify that some students considering Great Oaks may feel disconnected socially at Sycamore. Ensure that Great Oaks consideration is more of a career decision and less of a 'fresh start' for students feeling uncomfortable as SHS
- Look for ways to incorporate Sycamore students enrolled at Great Oaks in ways that value their career education - such as inviting Sports Rehabilitation and Therapy students to intern with SHS athletic teams
- Highlight achievements by Sycamore students enrolled at Great Oaks with social media posts that can be viewed by their fellow classmates
- Work with Great Oaks to better develop and promote half day enrollment program - students take academic subjects at SHS and then head to Great Oaks for career specialized courses and labs.