



The State of Postsecondary and Career Advising in Texas: Results of the Texas OnCourse Survey

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OVERVIEW

In May 2015, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 18 with overwhelming support to bolster the college and career advising available to students in middle and high schools. A central component of HB 18 established a statewide initiative to train counselors and advisers in Texas public secondary schools about educational pathways and career opportunities available to students, especially as a result of House Bill 5 in 2013. This initiative, now called Texas OnCourse, aims to streamline student pathways to postsecondary success by providing high quality professional development and resources to counselors and advisers, creating instructional resources to help middle school students prepare for success in high school and beyond, and developing technological tools using Texas’ statewide longitudinal data system that can support effective advising.

The purpose of this survey was to generate a baseline understanding of how many and which individuals are providing postsecondary and career advising to students as well as the training, resources, and tools available to support counselors and advisers. For the purposes of this

survey, “counselors” are individuals certified by the state of Texas to work as professional school counselors, while the term “advisers” refers to individuals who provide post-secondary and/or career advising to students but are not certified counselors. This includes individuals who may or may not be employed by the district or campus but provide advising to students who attend that district or campus.

The survey included two parts: Part I was completed by a staff member with strong knowledge of the counseling and advising services available at the district level. Examples of these individuals include: Director of Counseling and Guidance, Director of College and Career Readiness, Director of CTE, Superintendent, or Deputy/Assistant Superintendent. Part II was completed by counselors and advisers working in middle schools or high schools.

We welcome questions and feedback regarding the survey results. For more information regarding this survey or the Texas OnCourse initiative, you are welcome to contact Matt Giani, PhD, Research Scientist for Texas OnCourse, at matt.giani@austin.utexas.edu.

GLOSSARY

House Bill 5

A law passed in the 83rd Texas legislature, which established the new Foundation High School Program as the default graduation program for all students entering high school beginning in the 2014-2015 school year and created five endorsement options: Arts and Humanities, Business and Industry, Public Service, STEM, and Multidisciplinary.

Reality Check

Reality Check is an online application tool designed to educating middle and high school students about career and lifestyle options.

SOCRATES

The SOCRATES web-based labor market planning tool helps identify key growth industries in a region and determine critical occupations worthy of regional educational and training investments.

State Training Inventory

The State Training Inventory is a compilation of Texas education and workforce training providers, their programs, contact information, labor market information, enrollment and graduation data where available.

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) Dashboard

The THECB dashboard is the warehouse for higher education data in the state of Texas.

Texas Student Data System (TSDS)

The TSDS is a statewide system for collecting and reporting data for publicly funded schools in Texas.

Texas P-20 Public Education Information Resource (TPEIR)

TPEIR is a longitudinal data warehouse that links students from pre-kindergarten through enrollment and graduation from Texas colleges.

Texas Work Prep

Texas Work Prep Learning Management System (LMS) is designed and hosted by the Texas Workforce Commission. It was built to manage the delivery of job search content and resources and to facilitate user-friendly and timely access to learning more about getting, and keeping, the job of one's choice.

Texas Industry Profiles

The Texas Industry Profile is a website that provides industry-based information and regional analysis tools to assist local workforce and economic development professionals better understand the Texas regional industry structure and workforce dynamics.

Texas Consumer Resource for Education and Workforce Statistics (Texas CREWS)

Texas Crews is an interactive dashboard tool providing comparative information about Texas public 2-year and 4-year postsecondary institutions.

Texas Career Alternatives Resource Evaluation System (Texas CARES)

Texas CARES is a multi-media career information system designed to help students and jobseekers interactively address education and career exploration questions.

TRACER

Tracer is the name for the Labor Market and Career Information Department (LMCI) of the Texas Workforce Commission. TRACER provides statistics and analyses on the dynamics of the Texas labor market and information products designed to support informed educational and career decisions.

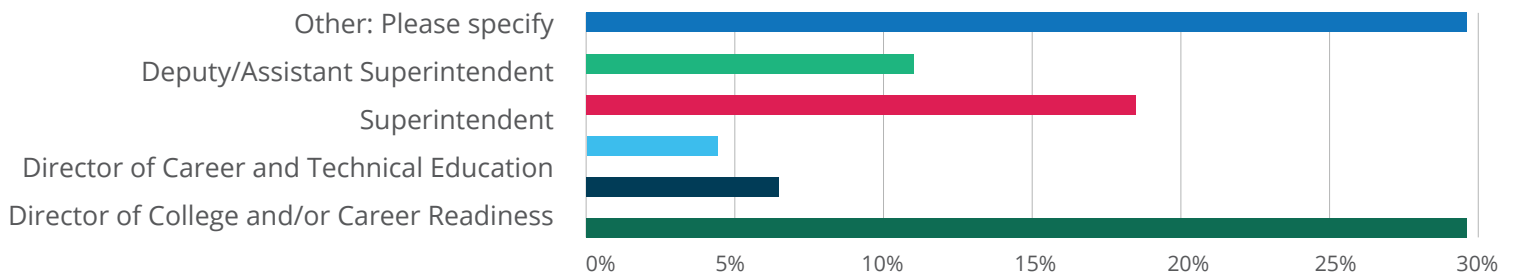
PART I – DISTRICT RESPONDENTS

The general purpose of the district-level survey was to generate a baseline understanding of the training, resources, and tools available throughout districts to counselors and advisers, as well as the tools and resources that district-level professionals use to support postsecondary and career advising efforts. Most district-level respondents represent professionals and administrators who work in positions at the central office who have first-hand knowledge of the career and college counseling program within their district, but do not work directly as school counselors and/or advisers. The 30% of respondents who specified “other” as a job title represent positions of District Principals, Lead Counselors, etc. Of the

1,517 respondents to the survey, 296 (19.5%) represented educator professionals at the district level.

District officials reported varying numbers of certified school counselors and advisers employed by the district. The plurality of districts (42%) employed between 1-4 counselors, with 5-9 counselors being the next most common range (13%). Approximately 8% of districts reported less than 1 counselor full-time equivalent (FTE), and roughly 7% reported 100 or more counselors being employed in the district. Postsecondary advisers were predictably less common, given the absence of statutory requirements for the employment of advisers in schools.

Figure 1: Job Titles of District-Level Respondents

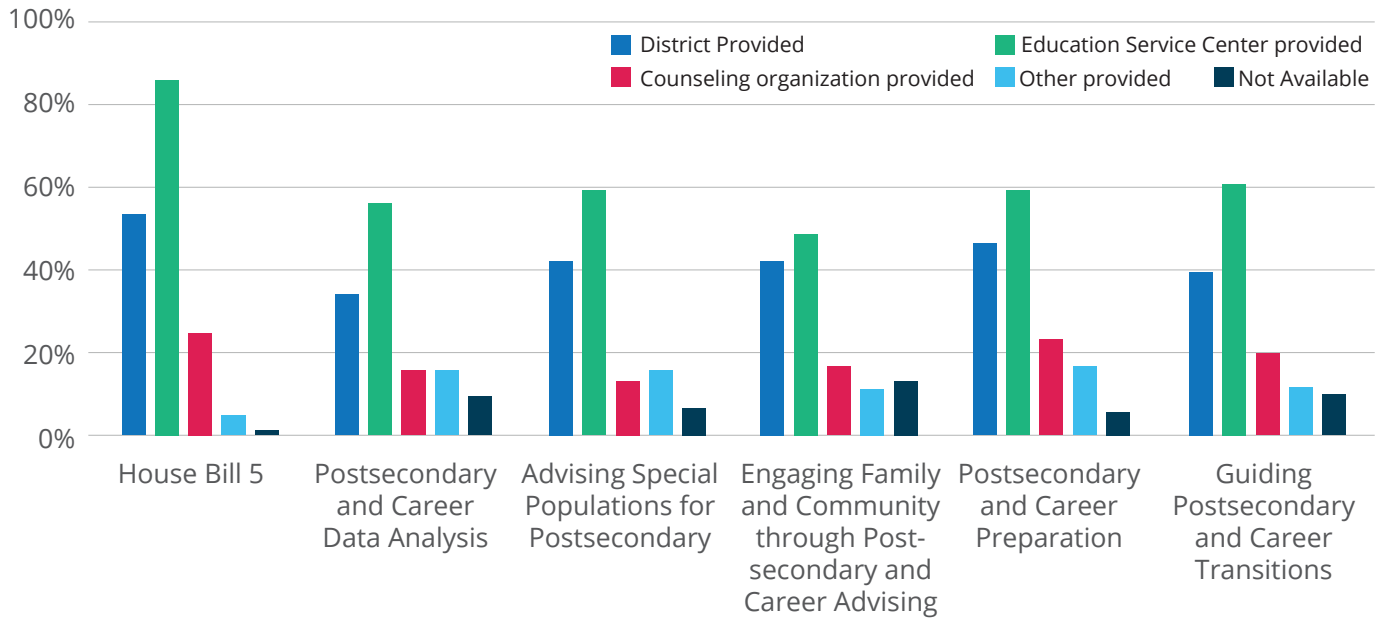


Training for Postsecondary Advising

According to the district respondents, training related to postsecondary and career advising is widely available to counselors and advisers. More than 85% of respondents reported at least one provider of training for each of the five sub-topics shown in Figure 2. Importantly, approximately 99% of respondents reported that training related to House Bill 5 was available to counselors and advisers in their district. The primary professional development training site for school counselors and advisers is the Education Service Centers (ESC). Over 85% of all district-level respondents

indicated that the ESC offers professional development and training directly related to House Bill 5 (graduation plans and endorsements), and roughly 50-60% of respondents reported that the ESCs provide training in the other five sub-topics. In contrast, just over 53% of respondents reported that the district provides training on House Bill 5, and between 36-47% indicated that the district provides the other types of training. Fewer than 25% of respondents indicated that the source of training occurs through counseling organizations at the national, state, or local levels.

Figure 2: Availability of Training Related to Postsecondary and Career Advising, by Provider and Topic Area



Respondents who indicated that specific topics of professional development were available were also asked about the available delivery modes of the training. For each topic of professional development, over 90% of respondents indicated that training was available either in-person alone or both in-person and on-line. It was much less common for respondents to indicate that online training alone was the designated mode of delivery.

The survey also asked if a needs assessment had been

conducted at the district-level within the past five years to determine the training and professional development needs of counselors. Just over 22% indicated that their district had completed a related needs assessment, whereas half of all respondents indicated that their school district had not conducted a needs assessment. The remaining 27% of respondents were unsure whether a needs assessment had been conducted. Thus, attempts to formally evaluate the training and professional development needs of advising professionals are limited throughout the state.

Technological Tools and Resources

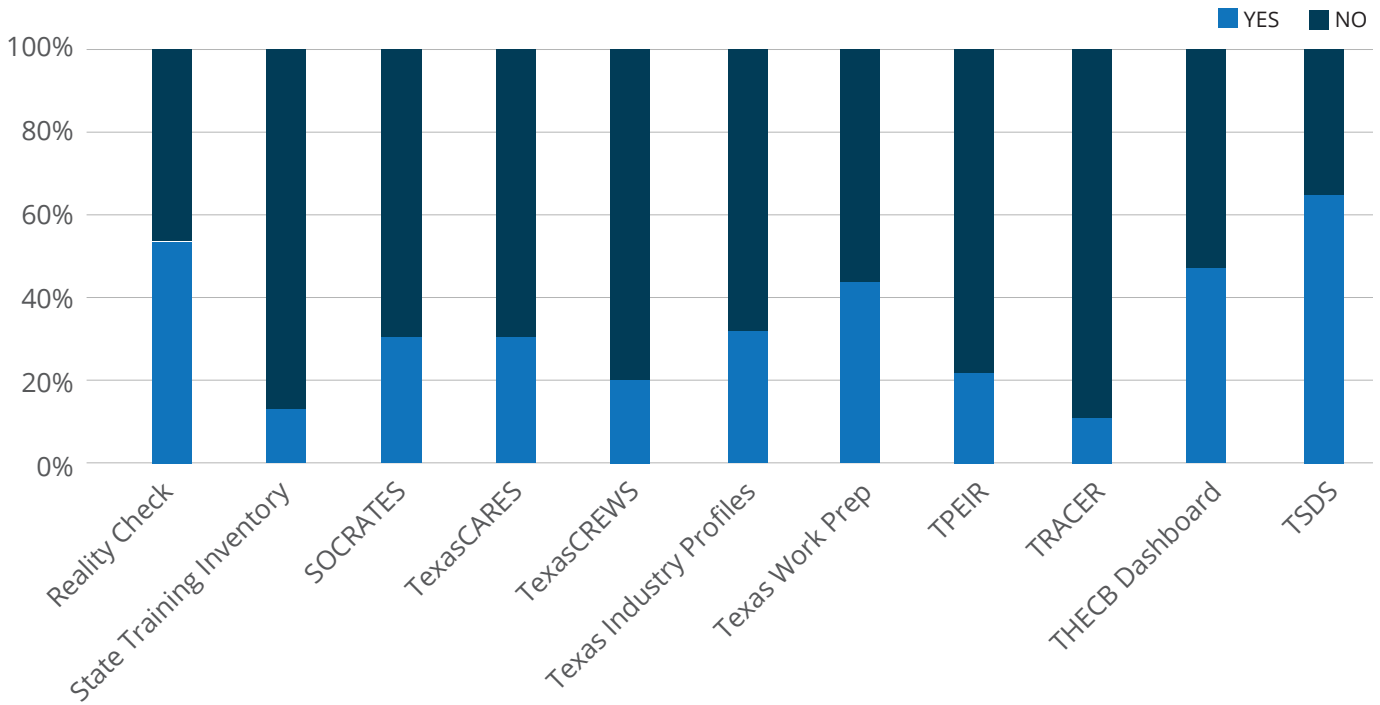
The survey inquired into respondents' familiarity with and use of a number of technological tools that have been created by Texas' state agencies, in particular TEA, THECB, and TWC. The primary function of each tool differs; some tools provide data on the employment outcomes of college graduates, others provide information on local labor market conditions, and others track the postsecondary and labor outcomes of high school graduates. Many of the tools were also created with workforce development professionals in mind rather than educators per se. Nevertheless, these tools can aid in helping educators understand the

types of postsecondary and employment opportunities for which they're preparing their graduates.

As shown in Figure 3, the level of familiarity with tools related to postsecondary and employment data is relatively low for district representatives. The most well-known data tool is the Texas Student Data System (TSDS), a new statewide system of data collection, management, and reporting being developed and implemented by TEA. However, approximately one-third of respondents were not familiar with this data tool, and less than 45% of respondents were

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Figure 3: District-Level Familiarity with Data Tools



familiar with any of the other tools created by the state agencies. Overall, district respondents did not report a high degree of familiarity with these tools.

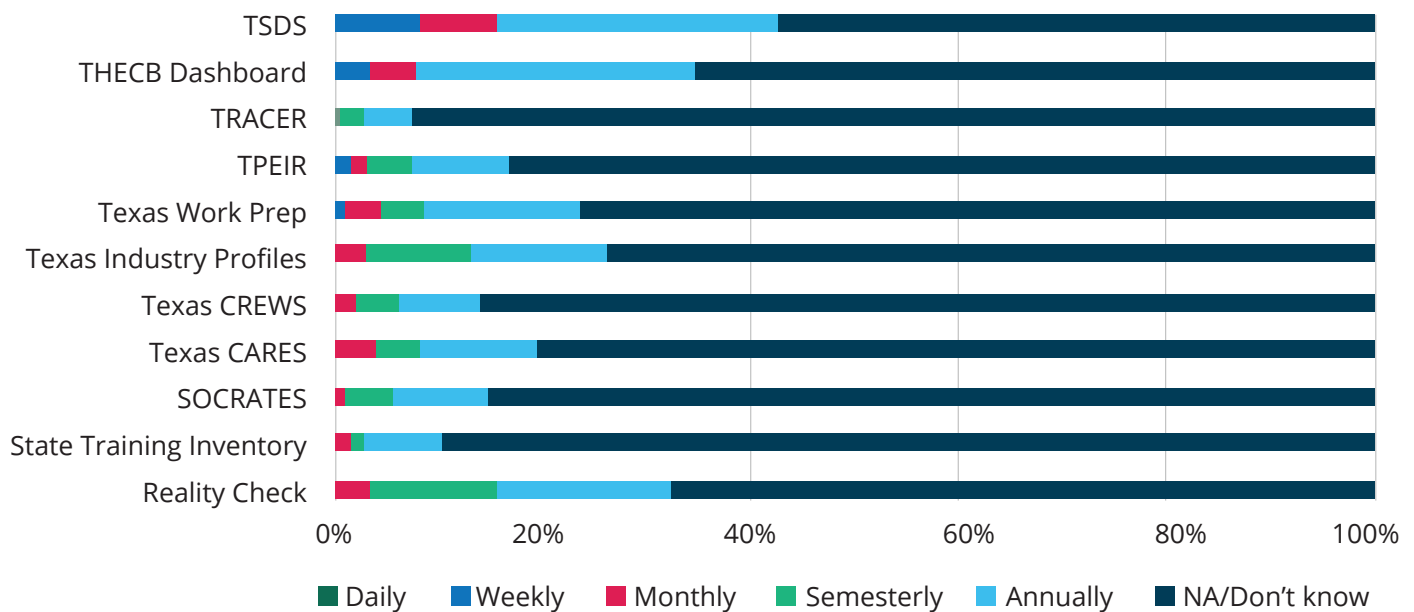
The previous question was followed by another which asked respondents the frequency with which they utilize these data tools. Figure 4 shows that tool utilization is considerably lower than even familiarity with the tools. For each data tool, no more than 10% of respondents indicated that they use the tools daily or weekly, and TSDS was the only tool for which 20% or more of respondents indicated at least semesterly use. Overall, there is limited utilization of these data tools among district respondents, and the frequency of utilization is also quite low.

Instead of inquiring about familiarity with and use of particular data tools, we also asked respondents whether they have access to any tools that have certain functions. Specifically, we asked district leaders whether they have the ability to track the postsecondary and employment outcomes of their high school graduates. Just over half (52.8%) of district-level respondents indicated that the district has the ability to track the postsecondary outcomes of graduates, and only 6.2% reported being able to track students' employment outcomes. The data tool(s)

used for this purpose is unique to each district, with some indicating use of the National Clearinghouse and/or the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) dashboard, others reporting use of Naviance or Career Cruising tools, and others indicating use of the Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) report. Other data tool examples include Apply Texas reports, LifeTracks, OneLogos, Campus 2 Careers, alumni surveys, and data gathered from colleges and universities. Some district-level respondents reported the use of informal measures such as "word of mouth, maintaining contact with graduates," or "paper forms completed by the counselor."

Respondents reported a wide variety of data needs relative to postsecondary outcomes of graduates. Many respondents expressed the need for more complete data, such as information that goes beyond matriculation, and includes percentages of students requiring remediation, college completion rates, time to complete, and information from students regarding the effectiveness guidance they received. Automaticity and accessibility was also reported as a data need by several respondents – tracking students more quickly and simply was cited as a current need. Several respondents also expressed the desire to have more explicit workforce and career data and information about employment training

Figure 4: District-Level Frequency of Use of Data Tools



needs, workforce outcomes, certifications earned, military enrollment, and unemployment numbers.

Some expressed doubt about the accuracy of current data. For example, one respondent wrote:

“I would like to know ACCURATELY how many of our students actually pursue a continued education (career prep, tech prep, or college) and how many are successful in their pursuits. I would like to know for those who are not successful, how far they were able to go before quitting – for example – average years of college completion, including toward an associate’s degree.”

One respondent echoed skepticism about the reliability of current data and said:

“The post-secondary outcomes reporting presently available here in Texas is dreadfully unreliable and behind the times.”

A few lamented the fact that any data available would be helpful, which is indicative again of the disparate level of data needs and use across Texas districts. A few respondents spoke to the special circumstance that impact rural

and small districts. For example, one said:

“We need information on how our students do statewide after graduation. We are so small, the state stopped reporting to us. Only local community college reports to us informally.”

There were a few responses that reflected deficit perspectives about students. One example includes a respondent who said:

“We have very few graduates who care about the outcomes of the postsecondary issues.”

There were many respondents who shared that while quality data may exist, it is not always easy to analyze and use. Most respondents indicated that the amount of data isn’t the barrier as much as finding data tools that work for districts in a streamlined and efficient manner. Several respondents indicated that understanding the why behind student trajectories needs to be examined through qualitative methods by asking students why they pursue their chosen pathways. An important finding from the study shows that almost 94% of district-level respondents reported not having the ability to track employment outcomes of graduates.

PART II – SCHOOL COUNSELOR AND ADVISER

The general purpose of the school-level survey was to generate a baseline understanding of the current training, resources, and tools available to professionals who work in the area of postsecondary counseling and advising. School counselors are individuals certified by the state of Texas to work as professional school counselors, while advisers provide postsecondary and/or career advising to students but are not certified counselors. This includes individuals who may or may not be employed by the district or campus but provide advising to students who attend that district or campus. Specifically, the school-level survey was intended to be completed by all counselors and advisers working in middle schools or high schools in the district.

School Counselor and Adviser Backgrounds and School Contexts

Of the school counselors and advisers who participated in the survey, over 99% hold a bachelor's degree. Almost 89% of respondents hold a graduate degree (master's or doctoral) and about 73% hold a Texas school counselor certification. School counselors and advisers serve varying sizes of student populations and have varying numbers of certified school counselors working at their schools. A majority of respondents work in schools that serve 1,000 students or more.

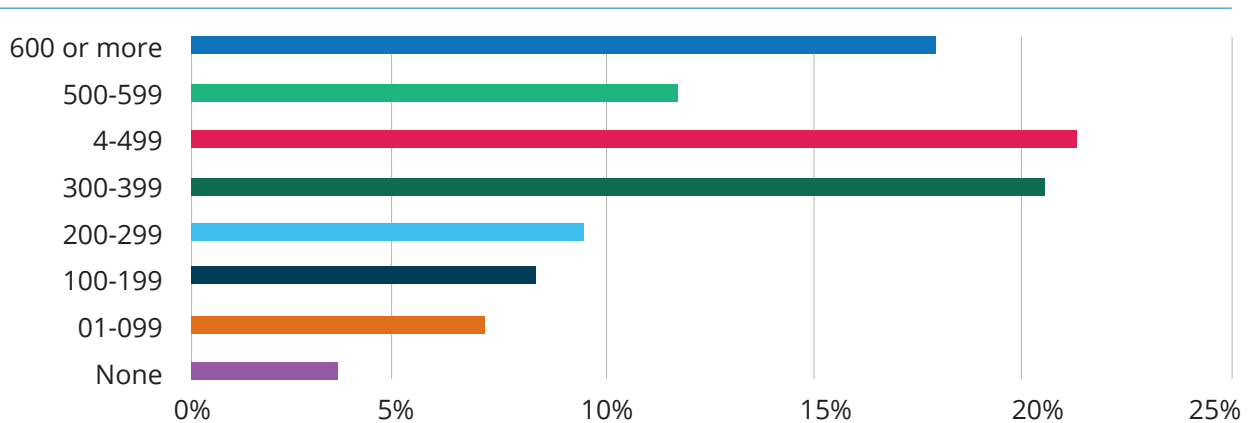
The ratio of school counselor or advisers to students remains high across the state. Over 70% of school counselors and advisers reported working with more than 300 students for the purposes of college and career advising, above the 250:1 threshold recommended by organization such as the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). About 17% of school counselors and advisers reported having more than 600 students in their caseload for career and college advising. While counselors and advisers

indicated providing services to students in grades 11 and 12 at the highest level (over 90%), well over half indicated working with students in grades 9 and 10.

A majority of school counselors and advisers indicated that their primary work responsibilities include both postsecondary and career advising. Respondents who selected "other," described a range of job responsibilities such as classroom teacher, testing coordinator, course scheduler, administration, and activities such as helping students with college applications and scholarships.

The most commonly reported method used to assign students to school counselors and advisers was through alphabetical assignment followed by grade-level assignment. A few respondents indicated that student assignment for counseling services is based on career pathways, endorsements, or program plan selection, but this was not a typical arrangement.

Figure 5: Range of Students by Individual School Counselor or Adviser

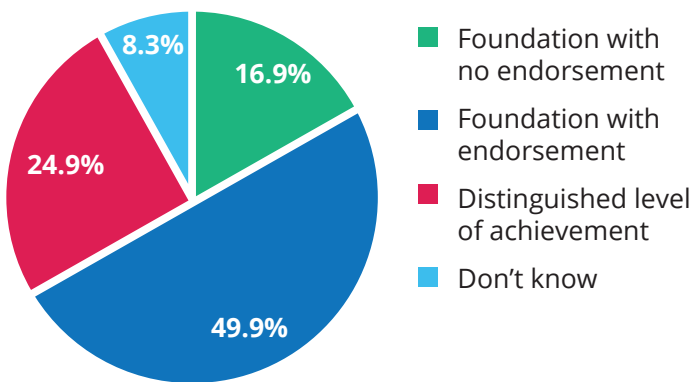


House Bill 5: Graduation Plans and Endorsements

As a result of House Bill 5, new graduation requirements have directly impacted the work of school counselors and advisers. A primary purpose of this survey was to ascertain the tools and resources leveraged by counselors and advisers to implement best practices related to advising students for both high school course planning related to graduation plans, and also for postsecondary career and college advising. The following summary describes the results of the survey related to high school graduation plans and endorsements.

Students who entered high before the 2014-15 school year have the option to graduate under the new Foundation High School Program or the existing Minimum High School Program, Recommended High School Program, or Distinguished Achievement Program. Counselors and advisers must maintain knowledge about the different graduation plans in order to appropriately and adequately advise students as to their options about these graduation plans.

Figure 6: Default Graduation Plan Offered by School



Counselors and advisers were asked whether their school offered a default graduation plan, and 53% of respondents indicated their school did have a default plan. Among counselors who indicated their school has a default graduation plan, less than a quarter offer the distinguished level of achievement as the default and slightly less than half offer the foundation with endorsement plan as default. A concerning finding is that approximately one in six counselors indicated that the foundation plan with no endorsement was the default, even though HB5 specifies that all entering ninth grade students must select an endorsement.

Additionally, one in twelve counselors and advisers who responded that their school does have a default graduation plan did not know what the default was.

Counselors and advisers must learn and maintain a high-level understanding of another aspect of high school graduation plans that resulted from House Bill 5—endorsements. A student may earn an endorsement by successfully completing the curriculum requirements for the endorsement: four credits in mathematics, four credits in science, and two additional elective credits. The five endorsement areas include STEM, Business and Industry; Public Services; Arts and Humanities; and Multidisciplinary Studies.

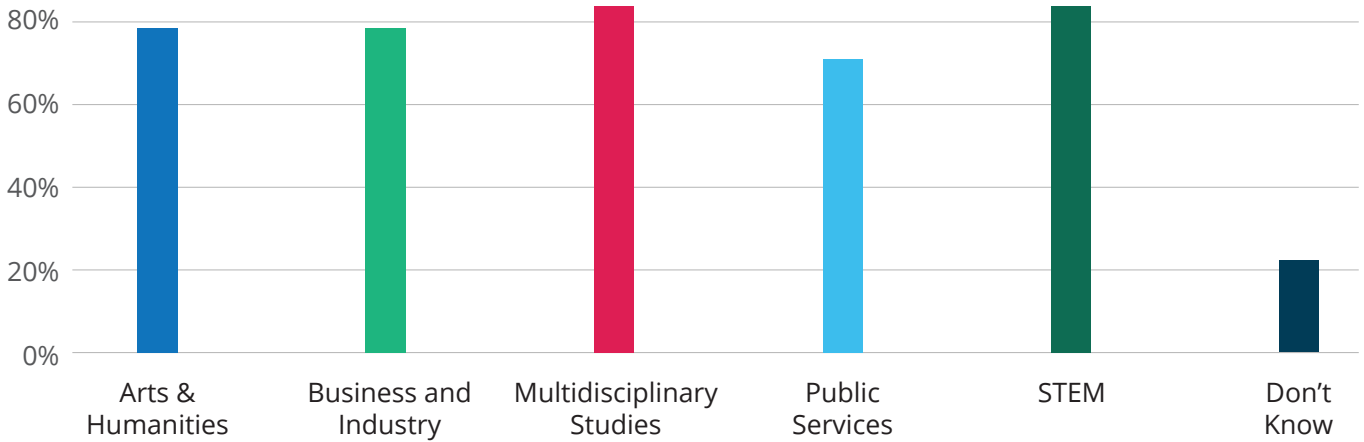
Each school district must make available to high school students courses that allow a student to complete the curriculum requirements for at least one endorsement. A school district that offers only one endorsement curriculum must offer the multidisciplinary studies endorsement curriculum. Just over 40% of school counselors and advisers indicated that a default graduation endorsement exists at their corresponding high school. The remaining respondents indicated that either they did not know or that no default plan exists at this time. The primary default graduation endorsement offered by Texas schools represented in this survey is multidisciplinary studies. Regarding offering graduation endorsements, each of the endorsements was available for more than 75% of the campuses in which counselors and advisers worked.

Counselors and advisers were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with statements about graduation plans and endorsements. A specific question asked:

To what extent do you agree with the statement that students at your school understand the implications of the graduation plans and endorsements they will choose? Students who understand these implications know that only students who graduate with the Distinguished Level of Achievement diploma are eligible for automatic admission under the top 10%, are aware of the career opportunities available in their area that are aligned with particular

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Figure 7: Percentage of Schools Offering Each Type of Endorsement



endorsements, and are familiar with the postsecondary programs of study aligned with their endorsements.

There were mixed responses to this question with just under half agreeing or strongly agreeing that students understand the implications of graduation plans specifically related to the ten percent plan as well as related postsecondary and career opportunities. Over one-third of counselors and advisers disagree or strongly disagree that students understand the implications of graduation plans. Counselors and advisers were also asked to express level of agreement with parents' level of understanding of the implications of graduation plans and endorsements. Only a little more than one-third of respondents agree that parents understand the implications of the graduation plan and selection of endorsement on postsecondary options.

House Bill 18 also mandated that middle schools offer instruction to students in grades seven and eight related

to preparing for high school, college, and a career. Despite low levels of perceived student and parent understanding of the implications of House Bill 5 graduation plans on postsecondary planning, over 94% of survey respondents who worked at middle school campuses indicated that their school provides instruction in grades seven or eight that helps students prepare for high school, college, and a career. House Bill 18 also mandated that such instruction include certain topics. Respondents who indicated that their school provides such instruction were asked whether it covered the topics outlined in House Bill 18. Specific areas of training most often cited for inclusion in related instructional programs include the creation of a high school graduation plan, endorsements, and career exploration.

Regarding instructional delivery approaches, counselors and advisers indicated several ways that schools provide this instruction to middle school students, such as through existing career and technical courses, as part of an exist

Figure 8: Perceived Level of Parent or Student Understanding of the Implications of Graduation Plans

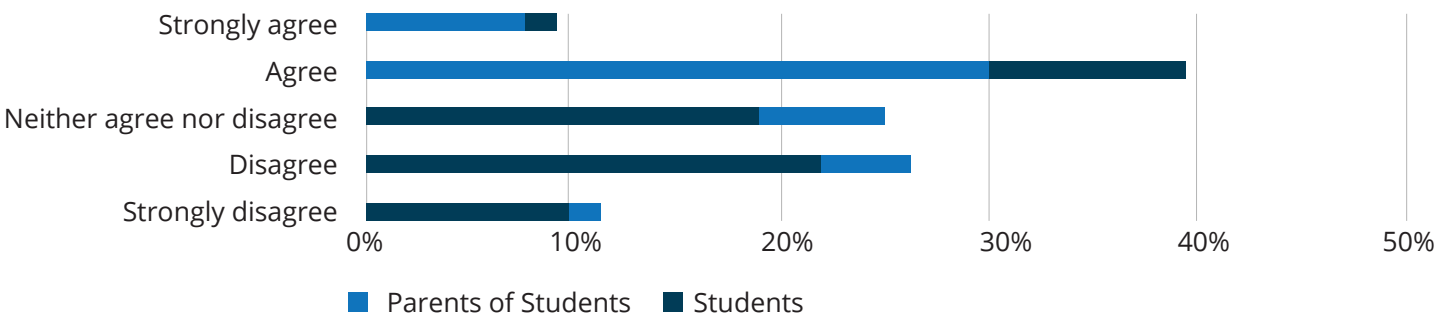
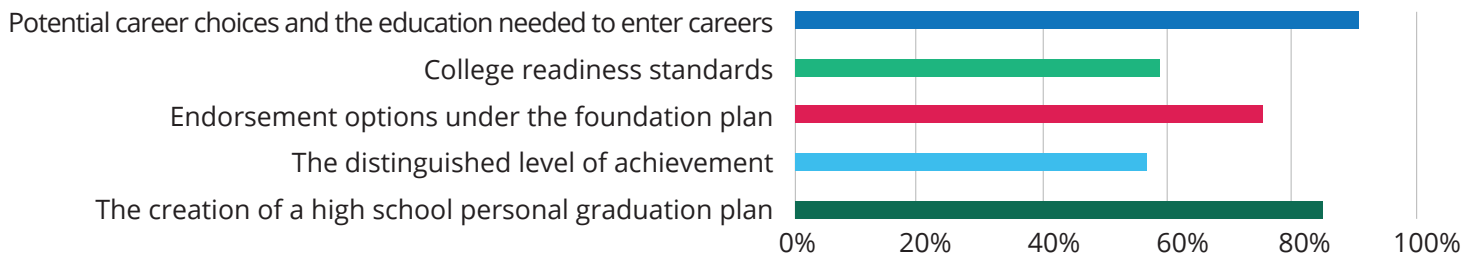


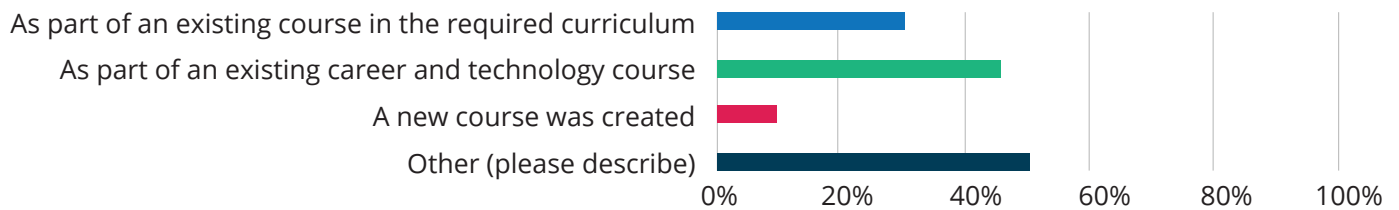
Figure 9: Instruction Related to Career and College Readiness Provided to 7th and 8th Graders



ing course in the required curriculum, and as specialized courses tailored for the express purpose of helping students prepare for postsecondary careers and college experiences. The most common response to delivery approaches was “other,” and the most prevalent description given to describe the type of training was “guidance lessons.” Some other types of responses included online

technological resources such as Naviance and Career Cruising, and holding informational meetings for parents and students. Results of the survey showed that there is shared responsibility for delivering instruction related to postsecondary advising. More than 60% of respondents shared that teachers hold this responsibility followed by certified counselors.

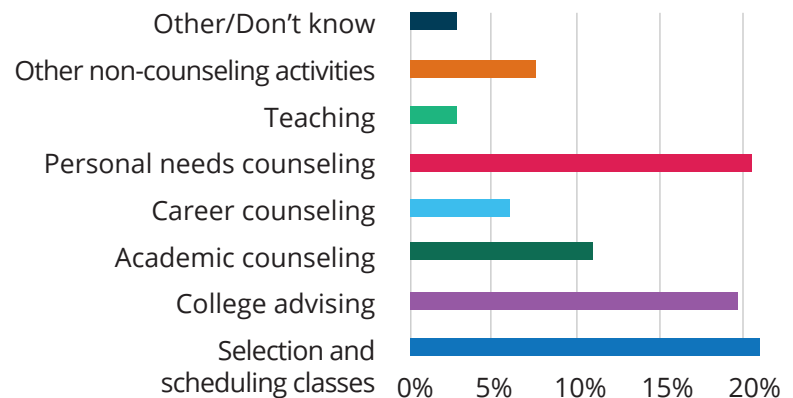
Figure 10: Instructional Deliver Approaches for Postsecondary Advising



Time Use

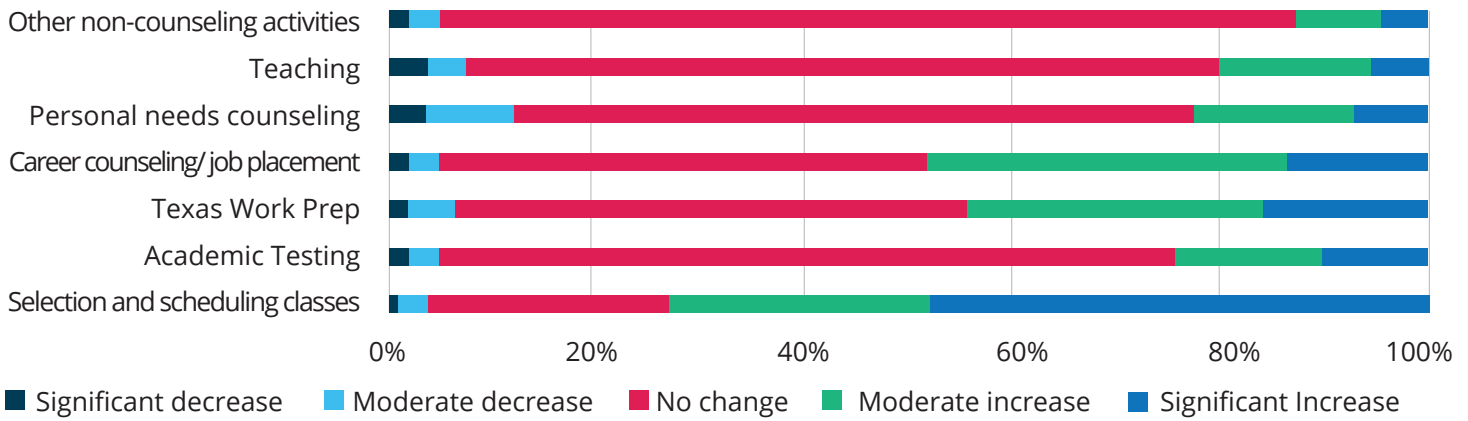
Time use refers to the way counselors and advisers reported their use of time while at work. Respondents were asked to consider their average workload in a typical week and estimate the percentage of time devoted to specific types of work tasks. The three areas of time that account for the majority of counselor and adviser time, on average, include course scheduling, college advising, and personal-needs counseling. Personal needs counseling includes supporting students with disciplinary, social, and psychological issues. The task named “other non-counseling activities” refers to schoolwide responsibilities such as bus duty, hall duty, lunch duty, and substitute teaching.

Figure 11: School Counselor and Adviser Average Percentage of Time Spent on Aspects of Work



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Figure 12: How House Bill 5 Impacted Time Required for Different Activities



Training and Professional Development for Postsecondary Advising

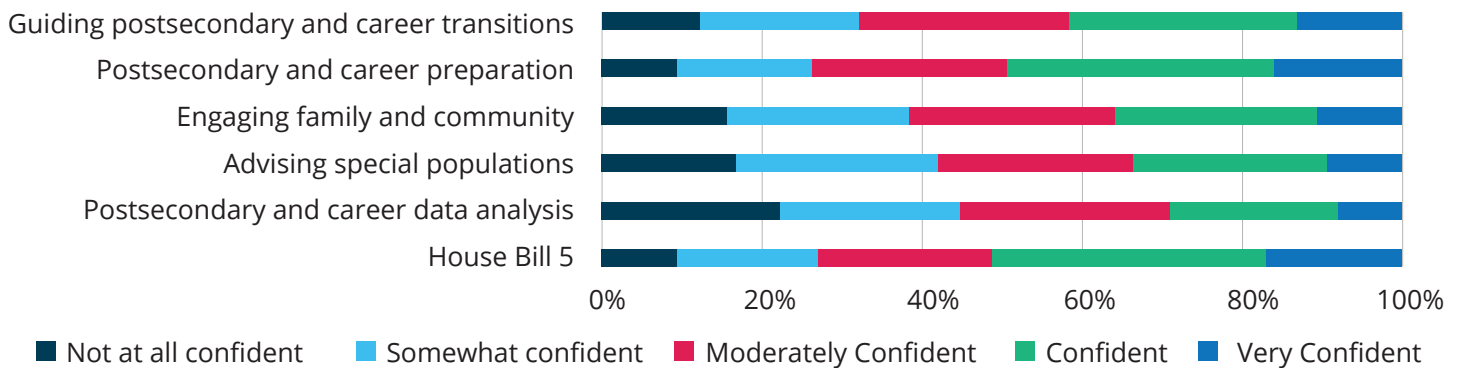
Postsecondary topics were divided into five general areas for the purpose of more fully understanding the instructional approaches used by schools in postsecondary and career advising. These include: House Bill 5 (graduation plans and endorsements); postsecondary and career data analysis; advising special populations for postsecondary; engaging family and community through postsecondary advising; and postsecondary and career preparation. The most common providers of related professional development include the school district, the region service center, and counseling organizations.

Across all five topic areas, the most commonly reported mode of delivery was in-person training, followed by a combination of in-person and on-line. Counselors

and advisers reported having the most confidence in the topic of House Bill 5 and postsecondary and career preparation. However, only slightly more than half of respondents said they were confident or very confident in their knowledge and skills related to House Bill 5. They reported the least amount of confidence in the area of data analysis, with less than 30% being confident or very confident in their knowledge of analyzing postsecondary and career data.

Overall, districts are the most common provider of training for counselors and advisers related to postsecondary issues. Education service centers provide the next level of support, but were reported much less frequently. Counseling organizations were also cited as a source of professional development. House Bill 5 was the most common area

Figure 13: Reported Level of Confidence in Knowledge of Postsecondary Topics



of training provided to counselors and advisers. Related to House Bill 5, almost half of all respondents indicated that the training was most often delivered at the district level. The education service center also contributes to this type of training. Less than ten percent of respondents indicated that there was no known training for House Bill 5 at their school. Topics related to postsecondary and career preparation was the second most prevalent instructional offering at the district level.

The most common type of training delivery is offered face-to-face, followed by a combination of face-to-face and online. Online training modules offered as stand-alone training were the least common type of training delivery reported. This finding is congruent with their expressed preferences for training as well. Respondents overwhelmingly reported a preference for training via face-to-face interactions over online courses or webinars.

Technological Tools, Resources, and Time Use

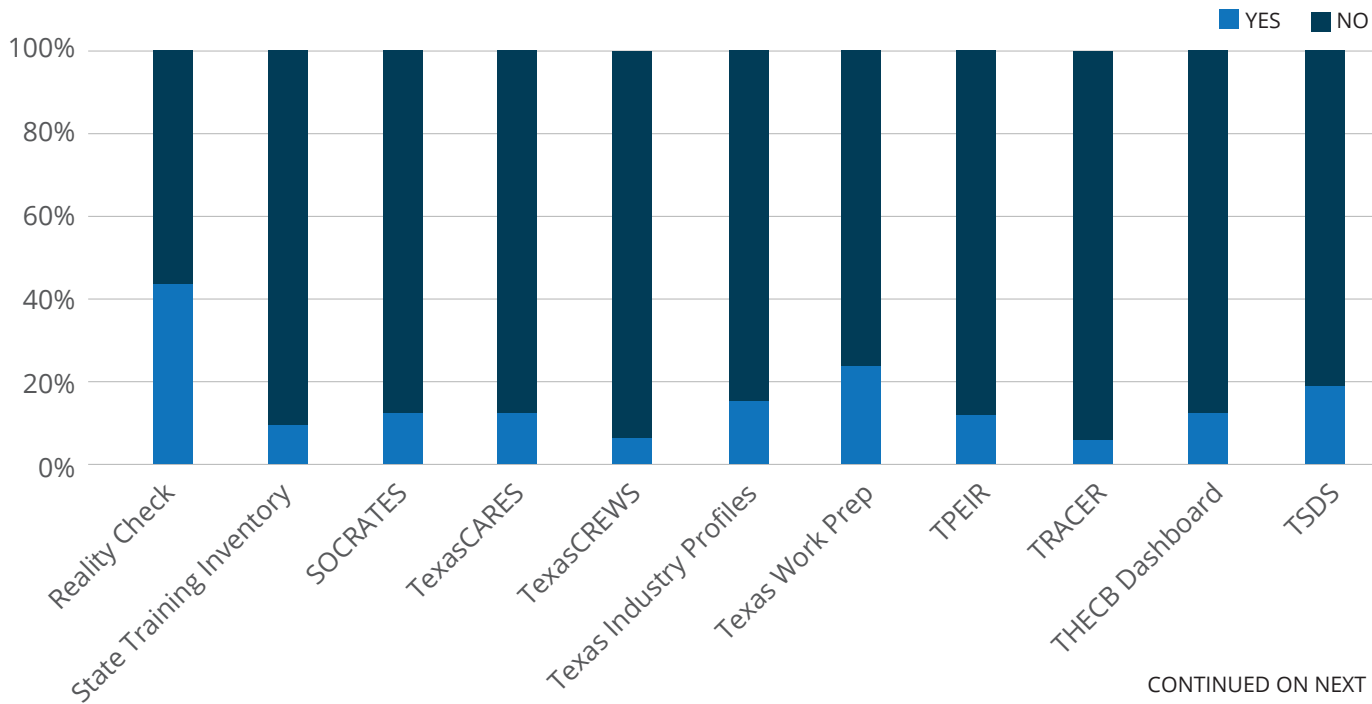
There was general agreement regarding the value of technological tools to assist in the advising process. Over 80 percent of counselors and advisers either strongly agreed or agreed that technological tools make their advising more effective, and 13 percent somewhat agree that technological tools help them to provide more effective counseling and advising to students.

When counselors and advisers were asked to share the resources (websites, manuals, guides, etc.) most frequently used to support their college advising efforts, the most common responses included: Advise Texas; Apply Texas;

Career Cruising; College Board; College for All Texans; Naviance; FAFSA; Princeton Review; and Reality Check.

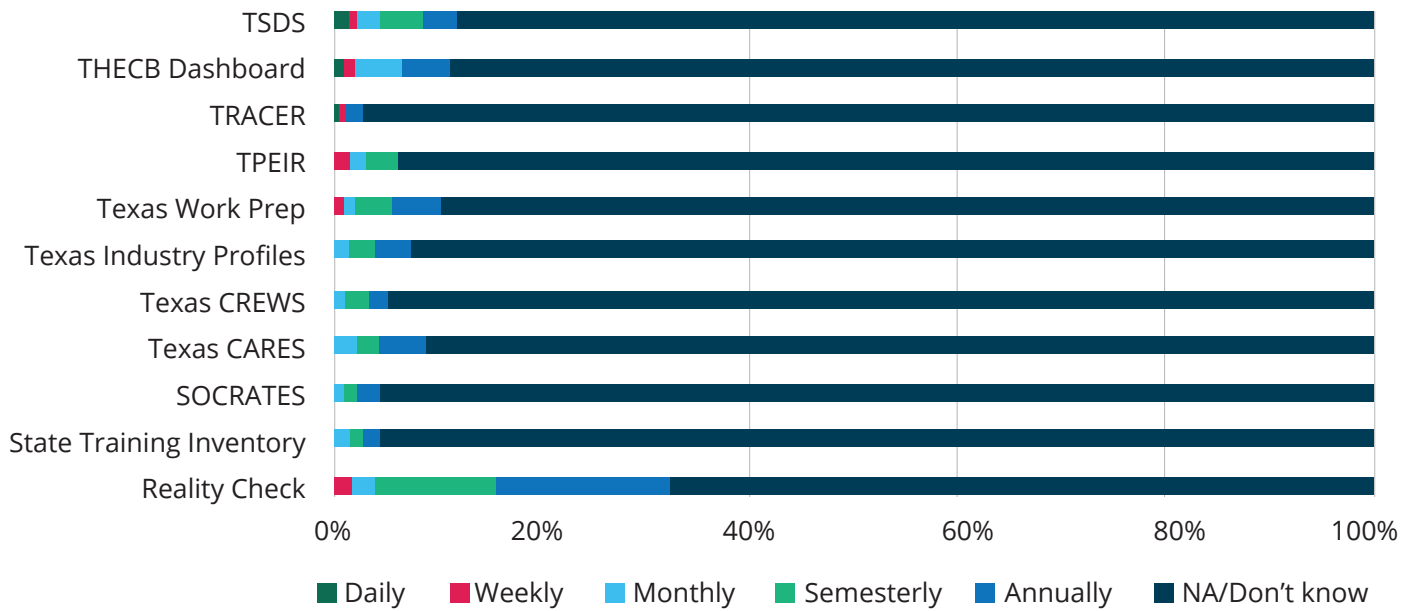
Texas state agencies have created several data tools specifically related to postsecondary and career advising and planning (see Glossary). These data tools are largely unknown and unused by counselors and advisers. Reality Check is the most familiar data tool and is also the most used by counselors and advisers. The Texas Student Data System (TSDS), the THECB Dashboard, and Texas Work Prep are the next most widely known and used data tools, but the frequency of use is still very limited. Apart from

Figure 14: Counselor and Adviser Familiarity with Data Tools Created by Texas State Agencies



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Figure 15: Counselor and Adviser Frequency of Use of Data Tools Created by Texas State Agencies



Reality Check, less than 15% of counselors reported using any of the data tools created by the state agencies.

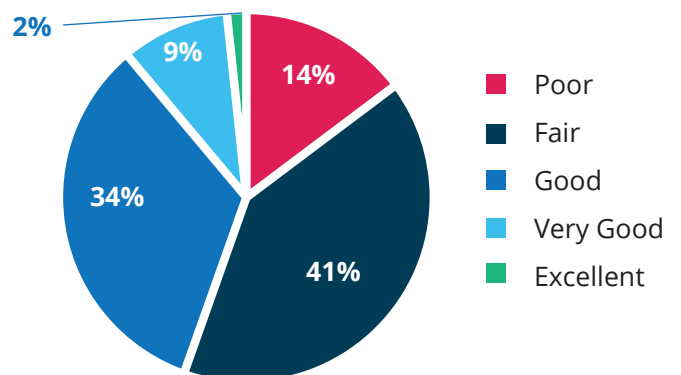
Some respondents indicated that their school or district pays for proprietary data tools related to post-secondary college advising. The two most common proprietary data tools include Naviance and Career Cruising. The most common examples that counselors and advisers gave for the “other” category include Sure Score, Bridges, EduThings, and Choices 360.

Respondents were also asked about their knowledge of industries in their area as a way to gauge their ability to provide effective and relevant career guidance to students, particularly those wishing to work in their region after high school. Overall, counselors and advisers rated their knowledge of the industries that have the greatest job demands in their region as low. Counselors and advisers listed additional data and information that would be helpful to provide more effective career counseling. The most common responses included: job and educational requirements; certification requirements; careers with high demand/pay; and common regional career paths. One respondent wrote,

“It would be helpful to know if the students who completed their post-secondary studies actually entered a field related to their studies. If so, it would be helpful to know how this was achieved. If not, it would be helpful to know why they decided to pursue a career in a completely different field. I would also want to know if students completed internships or co-ops prior to deciding on a particular career.”

Similar to the level of knowledge regarding career options, respondents in the survey indicated a low level of knowledge about the different branches of the military and how to assist students to enlist in the various branches. Over half reported poor to fair levels of knowledge and just over half reported good levels of knowledge regarding assisting students with information about postsecondary opportunities in the military.

Figure 16: School Counselor and Adviser Self-Rating of Knowledge of Regional Industry Demands



More than half of counselors and advisers reported that their campus does not have the ability to track post-secondary outcomes of graduates. Respondents who indicated that their campus has the capacity to track students longitudinally named Naviance as the most common data tool to assist in data tracking. National Student Clearinghouse was also mentioned as a data tracking tool used for this purpose.

Counselors and advisers listed additional data and information about the postsecondary outcomes of graduates that would be helpful in providing more effective college counseling and advising. Common responses included:

matriculation data from out-of-state schools; retention rates after one year; undergraduate completion rates; and employment outcomes. One respondent wrote, “If the student did not complete their post-secondary studies, it would be helpful to know what resources actually assisted them in completing their post-secondary education.”

School counselors and advisers indicated less efficacy in their ability to track the career and employment outcomes of students after they graduate from high school. The limited number of respondents who indicated an ability to track employment outcomes of graduates reported using surveys, direct contact, and SalesForce.

Conclusion

House Bill 5 significantly altered the curricular pathways available to Texas high school students, with a primary goal of ensuring students are gaining the academic and technical skills needed to make successful transitions into postsecondary and employment in fields aligned with their educational and career aspirations. Given the novelty of House Bill 5, it is unsurprising that educators, students, and families are still learning about these new curricular pathways. Nevertheless, the results of the Texas OnCourse survey highlight some critical areas of concern related to the implementation of House Bill 5 requirements.

Less than half of counselor and adviser respondents to the survey agreed or strongly agreed that their students understood the new graduation plans and endorsements associated with House Bill 5, and less than 40% agreed that the parents of their students understood these implications. These figures mirror counselors and advisers’ perceptions of their own knowledge – only slight more than half of respondents reported that they were confident or very confident in their knowledge of House Bill 5. This is despite the fact that training or professional development on House Bill 5 is available to educators in nearly every district represented in the survey. While professional development on House Bill 5 is available, there appears to be a disconnect between the mechanisms for transmitting that training and the dissemination of information related to House Bill 5 to students, parents, and educators.

Although the novelty of House Bill 5 may be contributing to the gaps in knowledge about its implications, equally concerning are counselors and advisers’ knowledge on other crucial topics related to college and career advising.

Less than half of the sample reported they were confident or very confident in any of these topics asked about in the survey: guiding postsecondary and career transitions, postsecondary and career preparation, engaging family and community through advising, advising special populations for postsecondary access, and postsecondary and career data analysis. The gap in knowledge related to career advising is particularly acute. More than half of respondents related their knowledge of regional industry demands as poor or fair, while only 11% rated their knowledge as very good or excellent. It will be difficult to achieve House Bill 5’s goal of better aligning educational pathways with workforce needs given these knowledge gaps.

One possible explanation for these gaps is that tools and resources do not exist which could help to address them. However, a number of tools and resources created by Texas state agencies do in fact exist which are designed to provide information on a number of these topics. Yet the results of the survey demonstrated limited awareness of these tools and even more limited utilization of them in advising efforts.

Overall, the results of the Texas OnCourse survey reinforce the need to experiment with new mechanisms for providing training to our educators who provide advising and to disseminate tools, resources, and information that can better equip educators to provide their students with effective postsecondary and career advising. To learn more about Texas OnCourse’s approach to streamlining student pathways to college and career success through improving college and career advising in secondary schools, visit www.TexasOnCourse.org.

Texas OnCourse

Preparing Texans for College & Careers

Visit TexasOnCourse.org for more resources:



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