

Findings from the 2017 Graduate Survey

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each spring the Department of Research and Evaluation (DRE) surveys the nearly 8,000 young people graduating from Prince George's County Public Schools to gather their opinions about their high school experiences and to find out what they plan to do next. Beginning last April and continuing through the month of June, the *Class of 2017 Graduate Survey* was administered electronically to all twelfth grade students and was available for them to complete from any internet-connected device at all times. Here are the key findings:

- **Participation:** Nearly 91% of students participated in the survey with all socio-demographic groups being well-represented and responding in proportions similar to that of the graduating class as a whole.
- **Quality of Instruction:** More than half of the students graduating from PGCPS in 2017 described as good or excellent the quality of instruction they received in each of five core subject areas. English instruction received the highest marks with nearly 80% describing it as good or excellent, whereas only 60% of graduates felt that way about the math instruction they received.
- **Academic Advising:** Students' perceptions of the quality of academic advising they received throughout high school were generally positive. Fifteen percent of respondents gave it a rating of excellent and about 43% characterized it as good.
- **Preparation for Post-High School Life:** Between 58 and 72% of graduates felt their high school did at least a good job of preparing them to meet some of the challenges they will face in the years to come, with nearly 41% of graduates expressing the opinion that their high school did a good job of preparing them for college and another 18% believing that it was excellent.
- **Immediate post-high school plans:** Nearly one-half of the PGCPS class of 2017 plans to attend a four-year college, and about 23% expect to enroll in a two-year college. Another 12% will develop job skills while serving our country in the military (7.2%) or participating in an apprenticeship or job-training program (4.6%), while about 8% will seek full-time employment.
- **Four-year college aspirants:** Among the 3,575 graduates of the PGCPS class of 2017 who plan to attend a four-year college, more than 73% applied to at least three schools. Among

those who applied to college (3,317), more than 90% had been offered admission to at least one school; 75% of college applicants had been offered admission to the school they plan to attend. Nearly 83% of four-year college aspirants had applied for financial aid and 39% had been offered a scholarship. About one-half plan to attend one of 10 public colleges or universities within the state of Maryland, including approximately one-third choosing one of three schools—Bowie State University, University of Maryland at College Park, and Morgan State University. Academic offerings, available financial aid, and academic reputation were key factors in choice of school.

- ***Two-year college aspirants:*** Among the 1,683 graduates who are planning to attend a two-year college, almost three-fourths (1,214) had applied to at least one school, with more than 78% of those having been offered admission to at least one school, and 65% indicating it was to the school they planned to attend. More than 55% had applied for financial aid, and nearly 11% indicated that they had received a scholarship. Prince George’s Community College is the preferred two-year college among PGCCPS graduates, with nearly 60% saying that is the school in which they intended to enroll. The availability of their preferred major combined with the ability to transfer credits to a four-year college and affordability were influential factors in choice of school. Approximately 26% of students bound for a two-year college indicated that they chose a two-year school because they did not feel prepared for a four-year school.