



# Long Beach GEAR UP Student Survey Results

August, 2022

The Long Beach GEAR UP program aims to increase high school graduation and college enrollment among the students of the Norwalk La Mirada Unified School district. Long Beach GEAR UP began serving more than 1,600 students in sixth and seventh grade (837 and 767 students, respectively) during 2021-22. Nearly two-thirds of the students are of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity, and nearly one-quarter are classified as Limited English Proficiency (LEP). During the first year of the program, nearly 90% of the students participated in at least one GEAR UP service. The most commonly utilized services were workshops (83%), primarily about careers, college systems, and A through G courses; and mentoring presentations and activities (79%).

## Educational aspirations and expectations

Students were surveyed during spring of 2022, to gather information about their baseline knowledge and opinions regarding education and planning for their future; 76% of students responded to the survey. Among other topics, students were asked about their aspirations and expectations for their education. Nearly half the students indicated they would like to complete at least a four-year degree, and another 12% would like to attain a two-year degree or certificate. Of students who would like a four-year degree or higher, 36% ( $n=168$ ) do not think they will do so.

The survey asked respondents to select reasons they might not enroll in college; they could select more than one response. The most common reasons selected overall were:

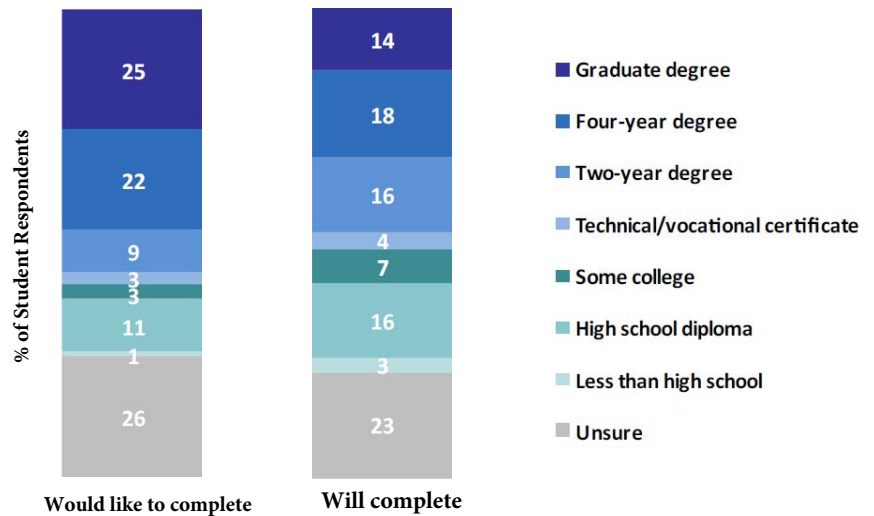
- *It costs too much/I cannot afford it* (33%)
- *My grades are not good enough* (30%)
- *I want/plan to work in a job that doesn't require more education* (21%).

Additional reasons selected were *I need to work* (15%), *Family or health issues* (12%), and *I want to join the military* (10%).

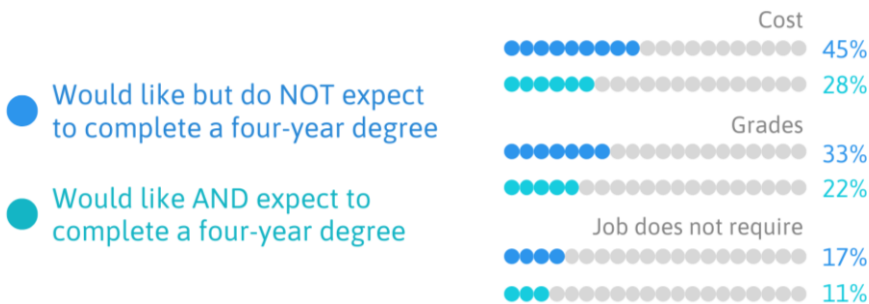
Responses for the three most common reasons were examined in relation to their educational aspirations and expectations.

Among students who indicated they would like to earn a four-year degree or higher, reasons for not attending college were compared between those who *do* and *do not* expect to do so. The most common responses were generally similar. However, they were selected substantially more often among the students who do not expect to earn the four-year (or higher) degree they would like.

Educational aspirations and expectations



Reason might not go to college

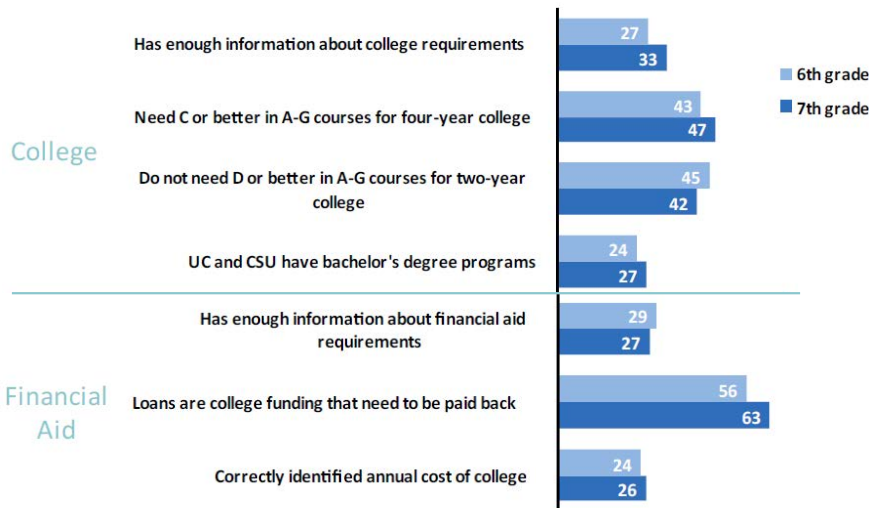




### Knowledge about college and financial aid

Several survey questions were asked to assess perceptions of college and financial aid knowledge, as well as actual knowledge. Students were asked if they felt they had enough information about these subjects; at most, 33% of students

*College and financial aid knowledge*



indicated they did. However, nearly half the students correctly answered questions about A through G course requirements, and the majority knew that loans needed to be repaid. Only approximately one-quarter of students were able to correctly respond that both UC and CSU systems offer bachelor's degrees, or to identify the cost of college. There was no consistency in the extent to which sixth or seventh graders were more likely to answer correctly among these items. Note that students who did not answer these questions correctly often also did not answer incorrectly; there were large percentages of responses of *I don't know* when that response was an option. Given that this was a baseline survey, the level of

knowledge was expected to be low; Long Beach GEAR UP will incorporate this information when planning the extent to which students need to learn about the various topics. Responses to these survey items will be re-examined as students progress through the program.

### Long Beach GEAR UP Services

Students were asked to indicate how helpful they thought various GEAR UP services would be in helping them in school or preparing for their future. More than half the students responded that each service would be *helpful* or *very helpful*. Approximately three-fourths of students responded in this way about financial aid information, resources to catch up or move ahead in school, college and career exploration activities, and tutoring.

*Helpfulness of services*

