



Wisconsin
Evaluation
Collaborative

July 2021

Academic and Career Planning Survey

for the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction | 2020-21



About the Authors

Grant Sim

Grant Sim is a Researcher at the Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative, specializing in mixed methods program evaluation of educational initiatives at both the state and district levels. He holds a master's degree in public affairs from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Robin Worth

Robin Worth is a Researcher with the Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative specializing in qualitative methods of evaluation and focusing on Career Readiness Initiatives. She holds a Ph.D. in Second Language Acquisition from the University of Wisconsin–Madison with an emphasis in foreign language pedagogy and qualitative classroom research.

Brie Chapa

Brie Chapa is a Data Analyst with the Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative. She holds a B.S. in Secondary Mathematics Education from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

About the Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative

The Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative (WEC) is housed at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. WEC's team of evaluators supports youth-serving organizations and initiatives through culturally responsive and rigorous program evaluation. Learn more at <http://www.wec.wceruw.org>.

Contact

GRANT SIM
GRANT.SIM@WISC.EDU

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank all the participants in the survey for their time, perspectives, and expertise as well as the Academic and Career Planning team at the Department of Public Instruction and Wisconsin's Cooperative Education Service Agencies (CESAs).

Copyright Information

Copyright © 2021 by Grant Sim, Robin Worth, and Brie Chapa

All rights Reserved

Readers may make verbatim copies of this document for noncommercial purposes by any means, provided that the above copyright notice appears on all copies. Any opinions, findings, or conclusions expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the funding agencies, WCER or cooperating institutions.

Contents

5 Introduction

6 Respondent Demographics

7 Covid-19 and Remote Instruction

11 Stakeholder Awareness and Engagement

14 ACP Implementation

25 ACP Curriculum

30 Summary

A-1 ACP Survey 2020-21

Academic and Career Planning Survey

Introduction

As part of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) Academic and Career Planning (ACP) evaluation, Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative (WEC) evaluators within the Wisconsin Center for Education Research fielded a survey to ACP coordinators or principals of schools with any of grades 6 through 12. The purpose of this survey was to gather information related to ACP implementation during the 2020-21 school year. Specific areas of interest were perceptions of ACP awareness and knowledge, ACP component implementation, ACP curriculum, continuous improvement of ACP, and how COVID-19 and remote instruction affected ACP.

WEC opened the survey on January 26, 2021 and sent it to school staff representing 1,228 ACP schools in Wisconsin. The survey closed on March 5, 2021. Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) staff provided contact information for ACP coordinators at each school. Where information about a school's ACP coordinator was not available, the survey was distributed to that school's principal. A total of 495 schools responded, with 361 completing the full survey, for a response rate of 40 percent and a completion rate of 73 percent. Table I shows counts of respondents and a response rate by CESA.

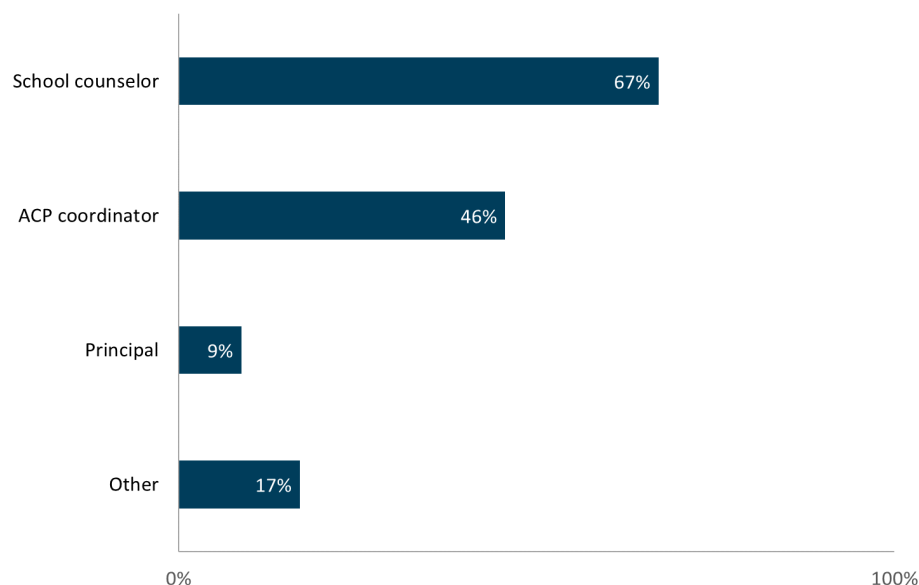
For reference, each of the tables and figures in this report provides the exact number of respondents to the item(s) displayed. In order to analyze responses to open-ended questions, the response data was coded and categorized thematically. [The Appendix](#) contains the survey instrument.

Table I: Respondents by CESA Region
N=495

CESA REGION	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	RESPONSE RATE
CESA 1	98	38%
CESA 2	50	27%
CESA 3	28	42%
CESA 4	33	49%
CESA 5	50	51%
CESA 6	58	43%
CESA 7	44	41%
CESA 8	25	42%
CESA 9	27	49%
CESA 10	26	38%
CESA 11	38	41%
CESA 12	18	46%

Figure 1: Role of Respondents

N=467



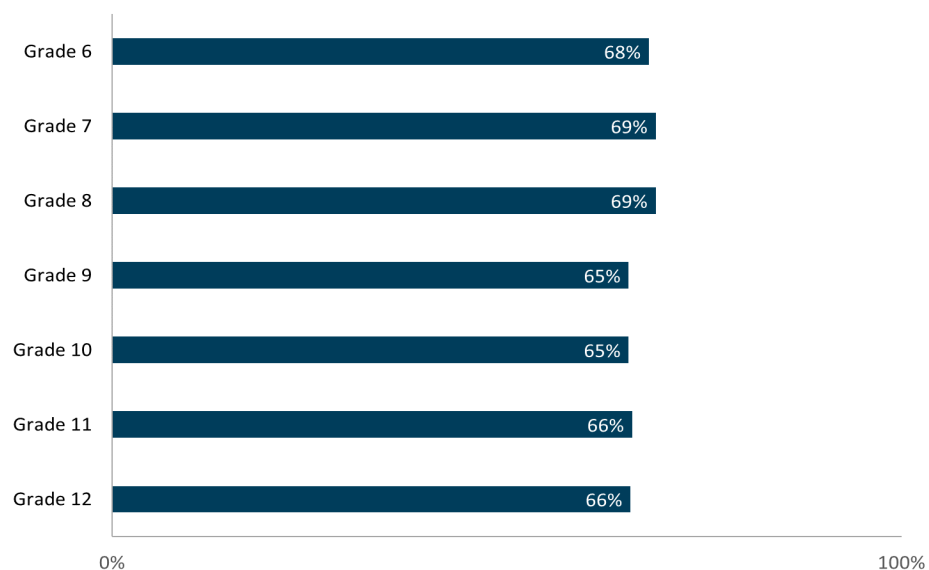
Respondent Demographics

This section of the report provides information on the survey respondents to give context to results. Overall, responses to the survey came from 279 districts across the state. Figure 1 provides information on the role of the respondent and shows that a majority of respondents were school counselors. Last year, the largest category of respondents was school principals (56 percent), so this change in respondents' roles may impact perceptions reported, and consequently the interpretations of year-to-year findings.

To further examine the types of schools in which respondents worked, the survey asked respondents which grade levels their schools serve. Figure 2 shows the breakdown of responses to this item. Approximately 65 percent worked in a school serving high school grades (9-12) and approximately 70 percent worked in a school serving middle school grades (6-8).

Figure 2: Grades Served in Respondents' School

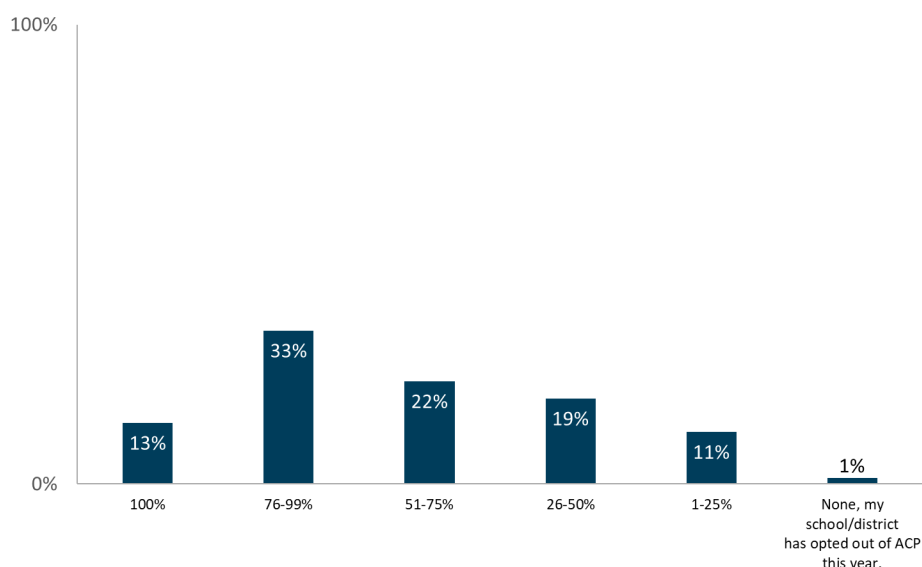
N=469



Covid-19 and Remote Instruction

Figure 3: Percentage of Usual ACP Programming Completed

N=453

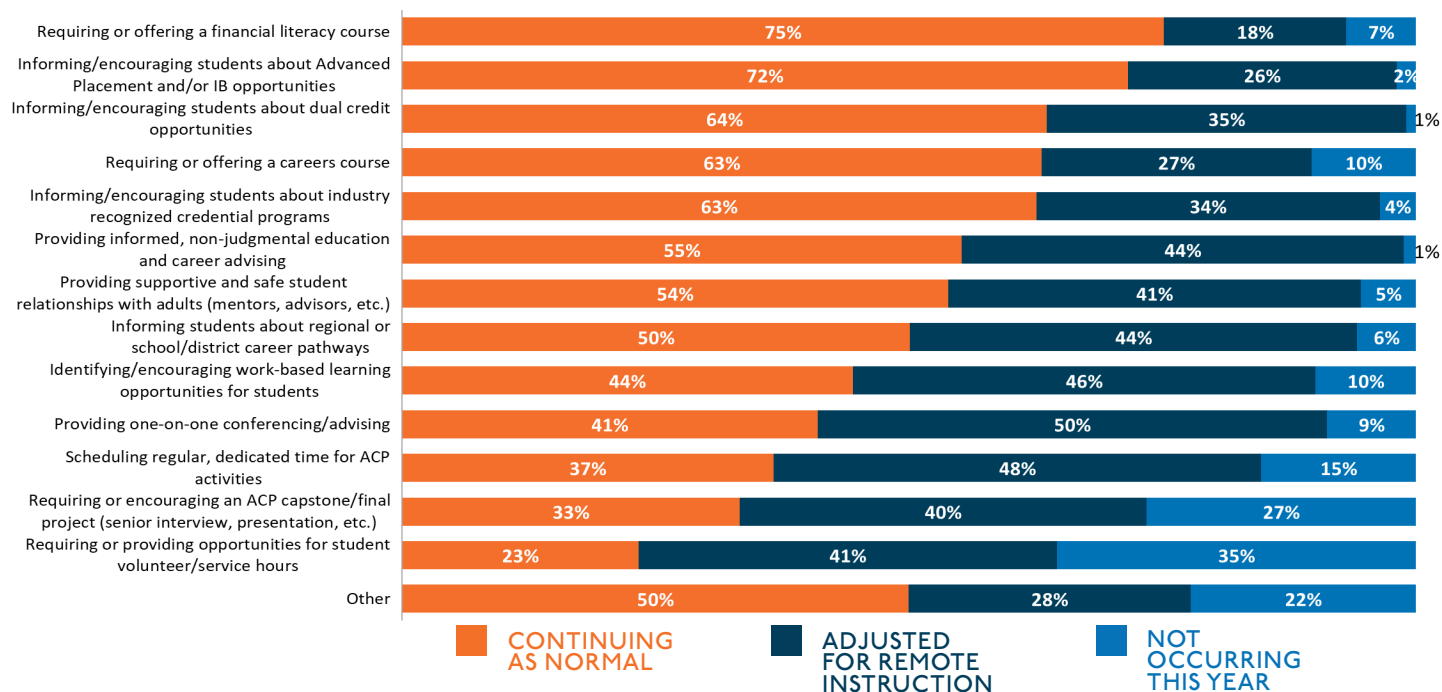


The survey elicited information on how schools adapted their ACP programming to meet the needs of their students during the COVID-19 pandemic. As shown in Figure 3, 87 percent of respondents indicated that they completed less of their usual ACP programming during the 2020-21 school year, with 1 percent of respondents noting that their school or district opted out of ACP entirely for the year.

The survey also asked respondents how COVID-19 impacted various ACP activities occurring in their schools. As shown in Figure 4, many ACP activities integrated into school courses continued on as normal, while schools either adjusted or discontinued activities occurring outside of courses such as one-on-one conferencing, ACP final projects, regular ACP time, or service hours.

Figure 4: COVID-19 Impact on ACP Activities

N=207-425



Those respondents mentioning “other” activities specified the following:

- Continuing as normal: career classes, utilizing Xello
- Not occurring this year: field trips, career day, college tours, career fairs, college fairs, community day, reality day, school banquet

Respondents were also asked how their schools had adjusted their ACP program for remote instruction. Of 288 respondents providing information, the most frequently mentioned themes were as follows:

- Certain activities have become virtual (n=138)
- Different expectations for in-person vs. remote students (who tend to have fewer requirements) (n=80)
- School doing hybrid instruction (both remote and in-person) and/or students can choose between virtual and in-person activities (n=56)
- Reduced expectations and/or implementation (n=41)
- Doing mostly the same ACP program as previously, but virtually (n=38)
- Conferences done remotely, by Zoom, phone, etc. (n=31)
- Doing mostly the same ACP program as previously, in person (n=25)
- Some activities postponed or cancelled (n=24)
- Using primarily Xello for ACP programming (n=22)
- Dedicated ACP time eliminated or other schedule changes (n=20)
- Implementing only senior projects and/or other graduation requirements (n=5)
- More integration of ACP activities into other curricular areas (n=5)
- Moved ACP to advisory/homeroom period (n=5)
- All ACP activities on hold (n=4)
- Most ACP activities on hold (n=3)

While responses overall indicate a switch to remote/virtual implementation to some extent and/or a reduction in ACP implementation, several respondents noted benefits of remote ACP delivery. Specifically, **of those respondents reporting that conferences (one-on-one or with families) were being conducted virtually, many also noted that participation had increased and they intended to continue this practice post-pandemic.** A few respondents reported integrating ACP activities into other curricular areas or content courses, which, if continued, could potentially lead to a more school-wide culture of ACP. Similarly, several of those who reported moving ACP activities to advisory or a homeroom period did so to ensure that students had sufficient supervised time to complete these activities.

One school saw a change due to the cohort model necessary for hybrid instruction—increased ACP time and subsequent positive side effects:

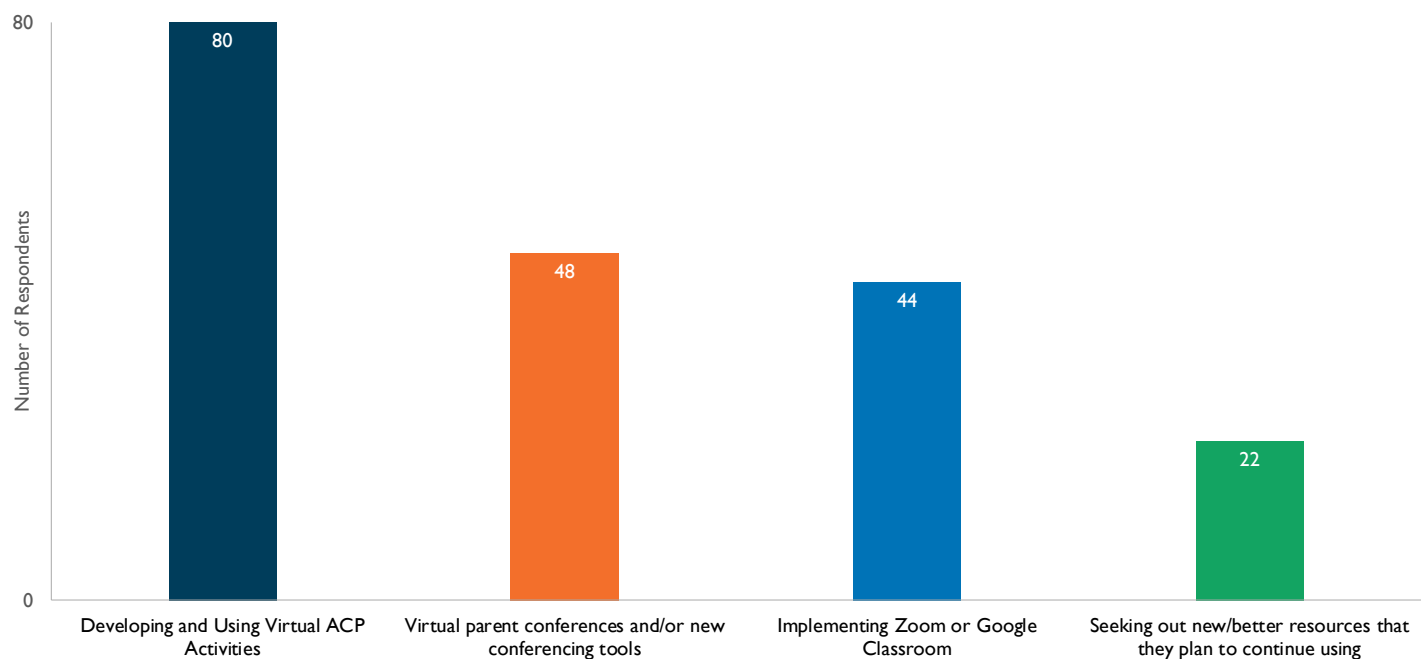
“One benefit to COVID is that our students are in two cohorts and each come two days per week. To simplify scheduling, students attend their Advisory/ACP time every day they are present instead of once per week. This has helped both the relationships between students and staff grow, as well as the buy-in of our staff since ACP is a daily occurrence.”

The finding from this unanticipated, natural “mini-experiment” could be leveraged as anecdotal evidence of the value of regularly occurring dedicated ACP time, and with a “dosage” of more than once per week. Similarly, another respondent reported,

“We have seen much benefit from meeting daily rather than two times per month like we regularly do. We are considering extending ACP/mentor time as we move into the future.”

In addition to being asked how programs had adjusted for remote instruction, respondents were asked to describe any new or innovative ACP practices they had developed due to the COVID-19 pandemic that they planned to continue using in the future (N=257). Figure 5 shows the most common responses.

Figure 5: Innovative ACP Practices Continuing in Future



Virtual Mock Job Interviews: “Offering virtual mock job interviews with community members. Students have the opportunity to complete phone/video mock job interviews due to not allowing visitors into our building. This is relevant to today’s job seeking world and will continue.”

Parent Remote Access to Conferences: “Offering the chance for parents to join our 8th grade ACP Conferences remotely. We have completed 65% of our total conferences and have had 92% parent attendance so far. This is an increase from the traditional in person conferencing.”

Google Apps: “Pretty much everything created and learned this year we would like to continue as it adds another route to the traditional paper-pencil/in-person only method and allows for greater flexibility, opportunity and awareness for students and parents. Therefore, in addition to in-person contact, we would like to continue the practices we set up as far as Google forms, Google Classrooms, Google Meets, screencasts, Flipgrids, Message Builder, DocHub and the Google Slides notebook.”

About ten percent (n=24) of respondents to this question indicated that they had no new practices and/or were implementing ACP in face-to-face instruction as usual. Less commonly mentioned themes included:

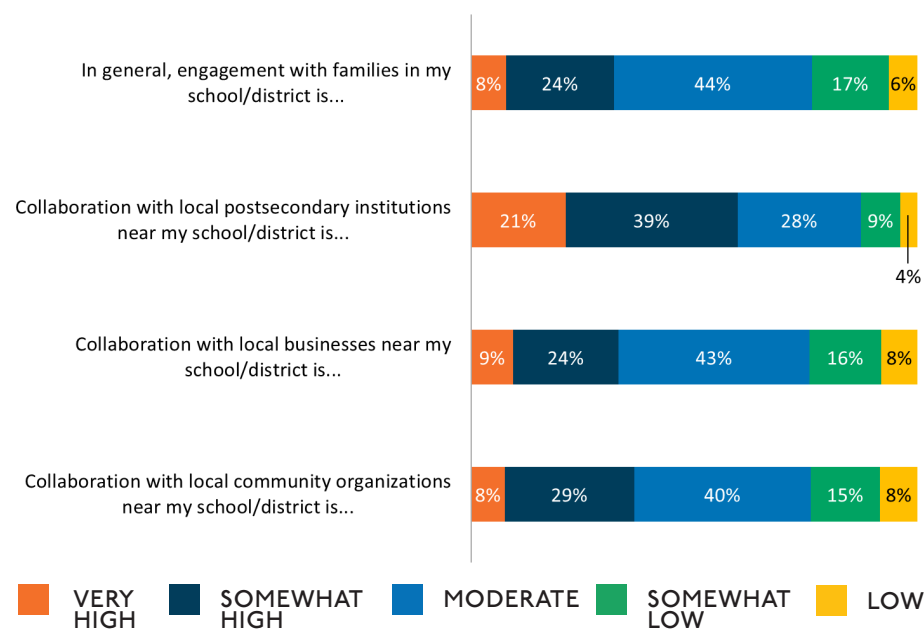
- Using more videos (n=19)
- Meeting for ACP/advisory more frequently, involving more staff in ACP, increasing ACP delivery (n=16)
- Recording lessons to be used across multiple classrooms/ instructors (n=13)
- Using Xello more (n=12)
- Refined, improved, deepened website, other communication measures for ACP (n=11)
- Doing less ACP, or only those activities deemed most important (n=8)
- More self-paced, personalized activities (n=7)
- Cancelled events such as fairs and campus tours (n=6)
- Added, increased Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) instruction (n=5)
- Have gone completely virtual (n=5)
- Live broadcasts that students and families can access (n=3)
- Virtual counseling (n=2)

Some of these less commonly mentioned practices, such as the pre-recording of video lessons, using live broadcasts to reach both students and families, improving communication efforts, and increasing SEL instruction, likely merit further investigation. Specific to the idea of creating pre-recorded ACP lessons delivered across multiple teachers and/or classrooms, one respondent believed that not only was there consistency among messaging but that it was “great for equity.” Another intended to continue to use recorded lessons “to reach more students quicker and allow for more time for personalized attention to each student.” Virtual counseling was another intriguing area: as one respondent reported, “We created a virtual counseling office and the students love it.” More in-depth information likely could be learned from our partners in Student Services.

Stakeholder Awareness and Engagement

Figure 6: Perceptions of ACP Engagement and Collaboration with Families and District Partners

N=363-393



The next major section of the survey examined perceptions of ACP engagement with key school and community stakeholders. One key aspect to ACP infrastructure development is engagement and collaboration with families in the district as well as stakeholders within the community such as nearby postsecondary institutions, local businesses, and local community organizations. Figure 6 shows the perceived level of engagement and collaboration with these stakeholders and Figure 7 shows the perceived level of stakeholder knowledge regarding district ACP efforts. As seen, respondents indicated the highest levels of collaboration with postsecondary institutions (60 percent very high or somewhat high) and the lowest levels of collaboration with families (32 percent very high or somewhat high). In terms of stakeholder knowledge, a majority of respondents indicated that these stakeholders had moderate or somewhat low knowledge of school or district ACP implementation.

Figure 7: Perceptions of Family and District Partner Knowledge of ACP

N=317-378

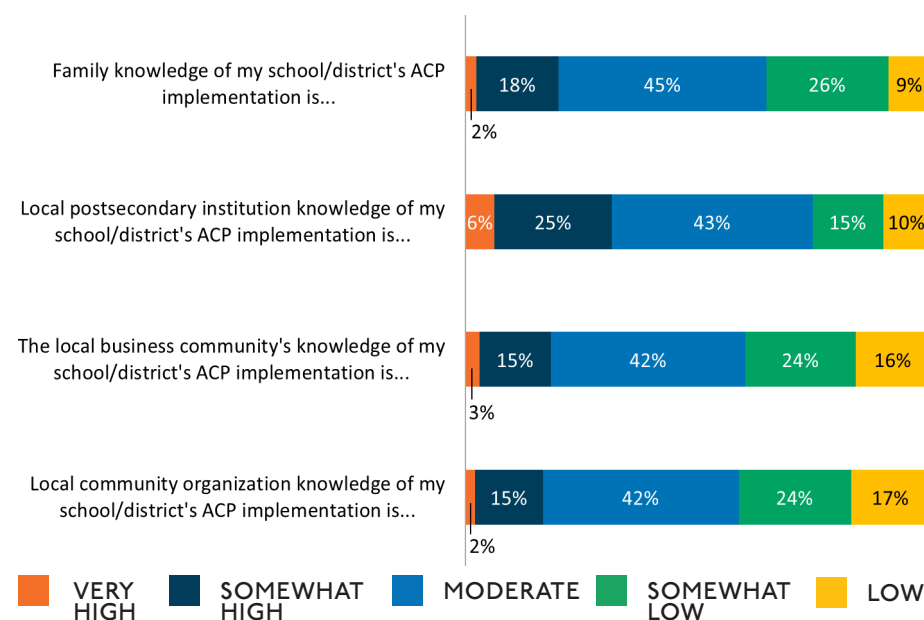
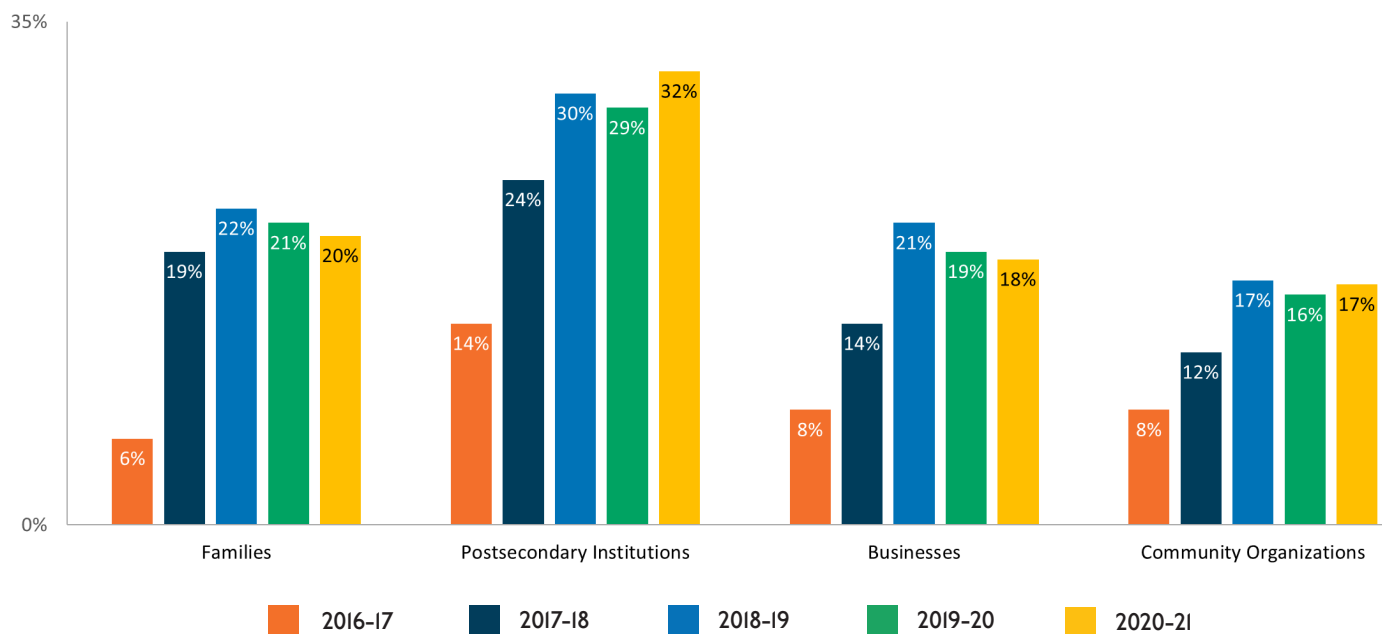


Figure 8: Percentage of Responses with Very High or Somewhat High Stakeholder Knowledge of ACP Implementation, 2016-17 through 2020-21



The 2016-17 through 2019-20 surveys also included these same items. As seen from Figure 8, which shows the proportion of respondents indicating very high or somewhat high knowledge of ACP implementation for various stakeholders, there was a large increase in stakeholder knowledge between 2016-17 and 2018-19 before somewhat leveling off over the last two years.

Due to the similar scaling on the items related to stakeholder collaboration and knowledge, this report also provides stakeholder engagement indices for these two areas. These indices are derived from categorizing responses of “Very high” as a 5 through “Very low” as a 1 and averaging the responses across the relevant items. The resulting indices range from 1 to 5. Across all respondents, the average engagement index for collaboration is 3.3 (somewhat high to moderate), and the average engagement index for stakeholder knowledge is 2.8 (moderate to somewhat low). Since these same items were asked on the previous four annual surveys, this report also provides a comparison of the index scores over time.

Figure 9 shows the box plots for the collaboration indices in 2016-17 through 2020-21 while Figure 10 shows the box plots for knowledge indices. From 2016-17 through 2018-19, these measures generally improved slightly. Perceptions of stakeholder knowledge have stayed relatively stable since 2017-18 while perceptions of stakeholder collaboration have dropped slightly in 2020-21, possibly due to limitations imposed by COVID-19 and/or the change in the make-up of respondents by role.

BOX-PLOT GUIDE

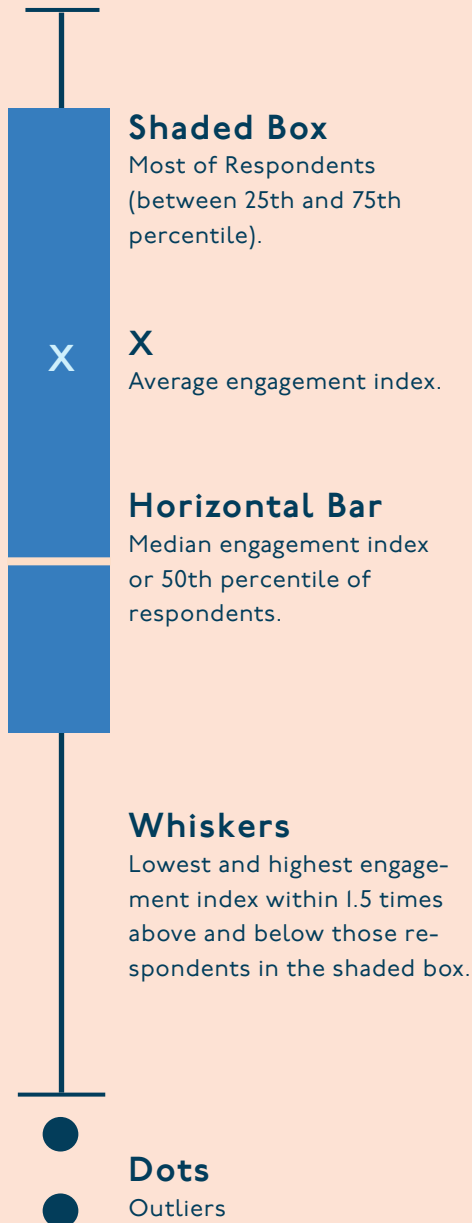


Figure 9: ACP Engagement Indices for Stakeholder Collaboration, 2016-17 through 2020-21

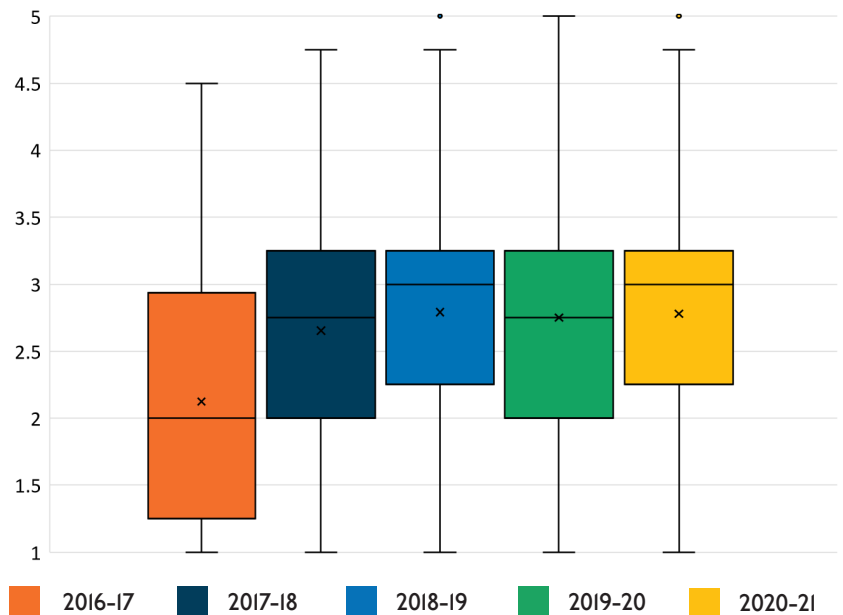
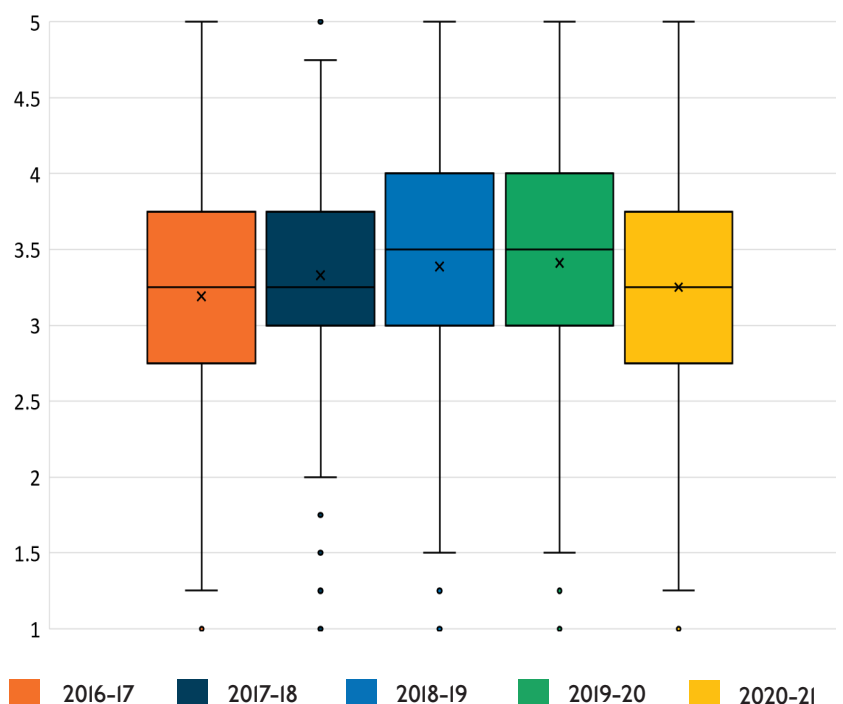


Figure 10: ACP Engagement Indices for Stakeholder Knowledge, 2016-17 through 2020-21



ACP Implementation

Another area of focus on the survey this year, and similar to surveys since full implementation began in 2017-18, was the level of implementation for certain ACP practices. The survey asked about a wide variety of these practices, which fell into seven larger categories: culture, structure, and prioritization of ACP; family engagement; student advising and mentoring; curriculum; career-based learning; postsecondary opportunities; and connections to student goals. Figure II shows the proportion of respondents indicating the level of implementation of ACP practices related to culture, structure, and prioritization: institutionalized, implemented, initiated, or not yet started. Respondents reported that most practices had similar levels of implementation compared to last year with the exception of administrative engagement in ACP, which showed a slight decline in the percentage of institutionalized or implemented responses.

This again may be due to the impact of COVID-19 and/or the differing sample of respondents. Areas with high levels of implementation included provision of equitable access (80 percent institutionalized or implemented) and scheduling regular, dedicated time for ACP activities (71 percent institutionalized or implemented). **The area with the lowest level of implementation, for the third year in a row, was full staff participation with less than half responding that this practice was institutionalized or implemented. This remains an area for ACP improvement.**

Figure II: ACP Practices and Level of Implementation, Culture, Structure, and Prioritization of ACP

N=387-389

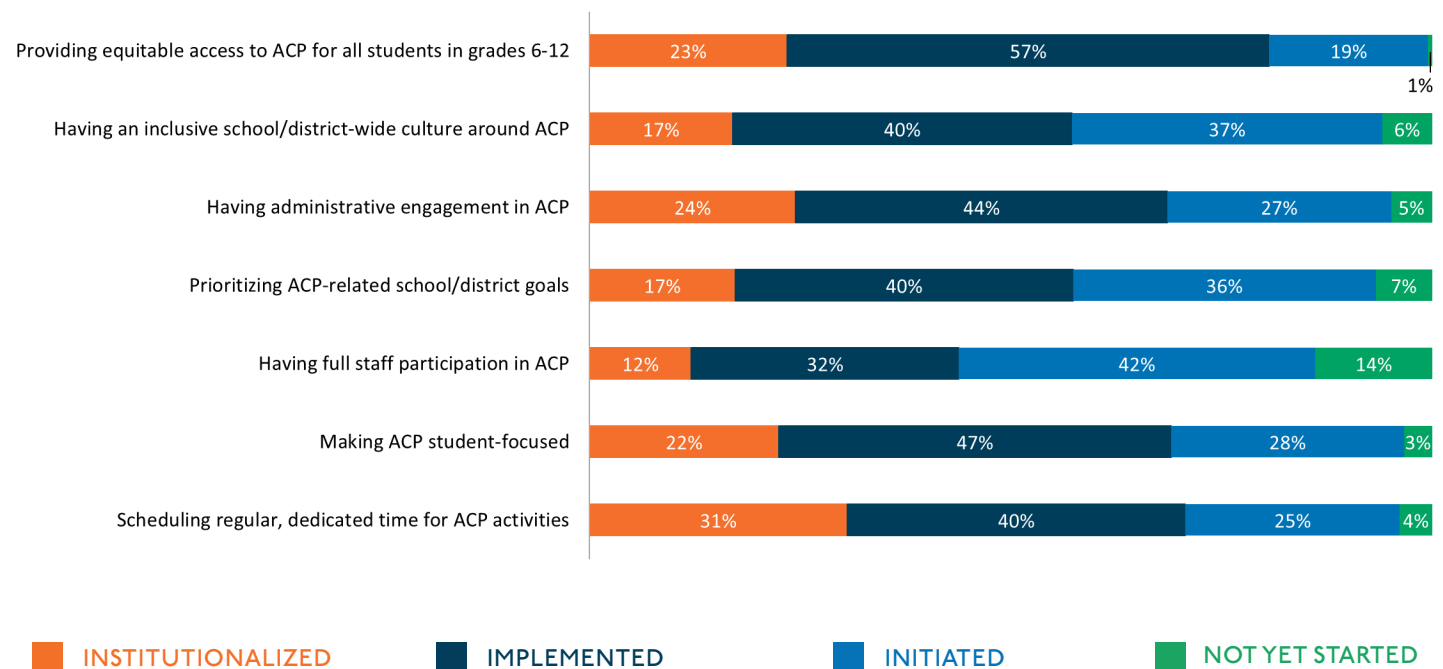


Figure I2: ACP Practices and Level of Implementation, Family Engagement

N=387-388

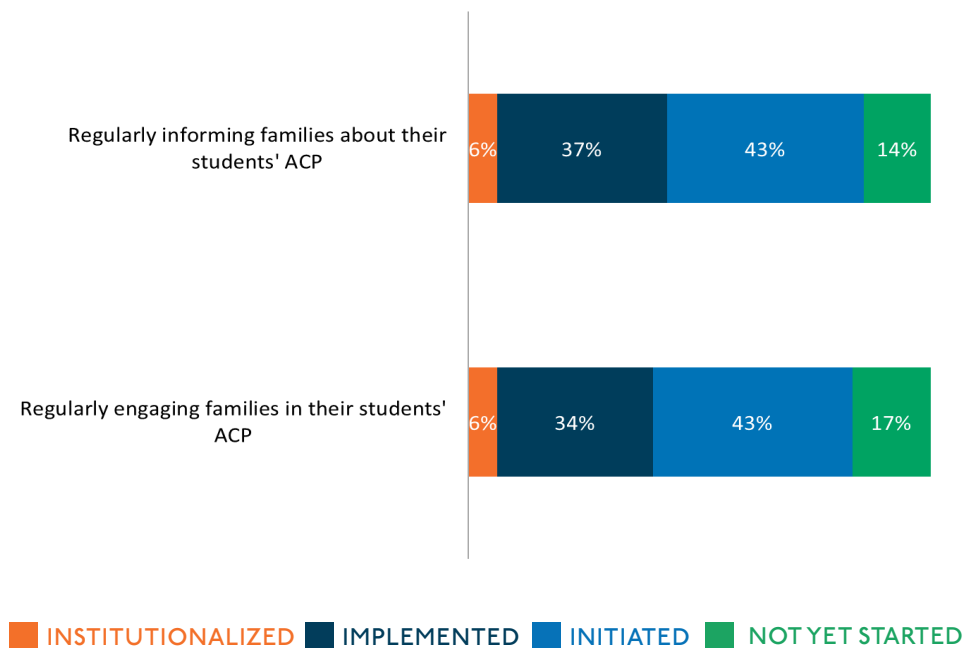


Figure I2 shows the results from the implementation items related to family engagement. Unlike ACP culture and structure, a plurality of respondents indicated that ACP practices around family engagement were at the initiated level. Although this area still has the lowest perceived levels of implementation across all practices, perceptions of implementation have increased slightly over the last two years. To further strengthen district ACP programs, family engagement should continue to be a focus for improvement.

Figure I3: ACP Practices and Level of Implementation, Student Advising and Mentoring

N=387-389

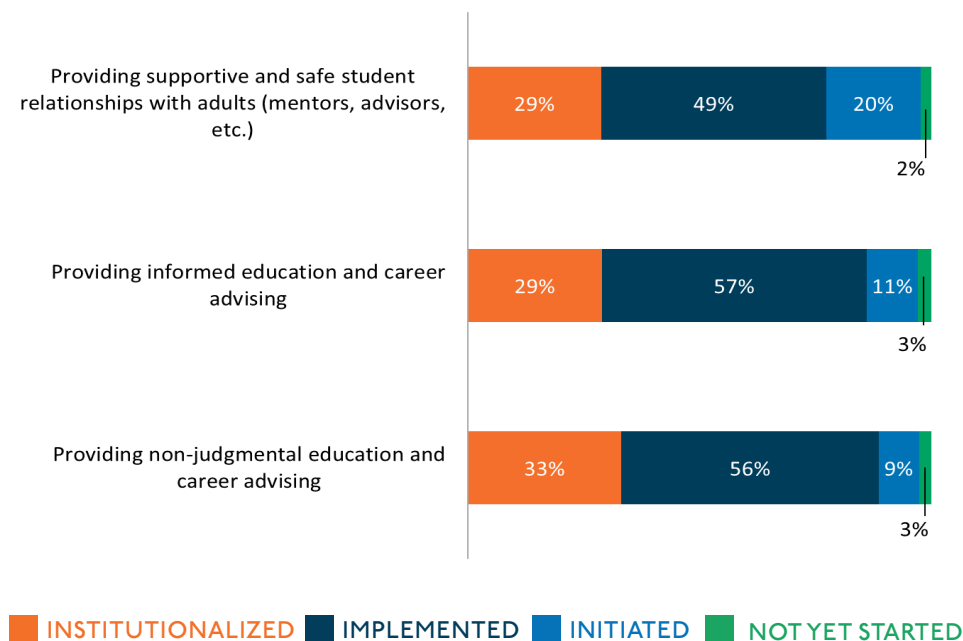


Figure I3 shows the results from the implementation items related to student advising and mentoring. All three of these practices were reported to have high levels of implementation with more than 75 percent of respondents indicating that they were either institutionalized or implemented, even greater than last year's reported implementation levels.

Figure 14: Practices and Level of Implementation, Curriculum

N=387-390

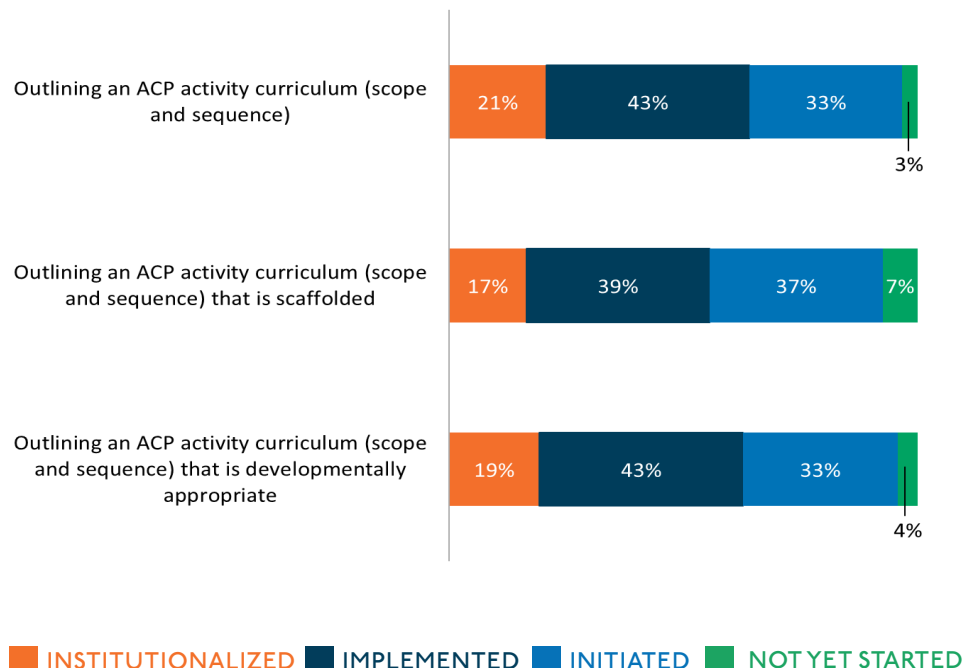


Figure 14 shows the results from the implementation items related to ACP curriculum. As shown in this figure, a large majority of respondents described these practices as implemented or initiated, approximately the same as last year.

Figure 15: ACP Practices and Level of Implementation, Career-Based Learning

N=387-389

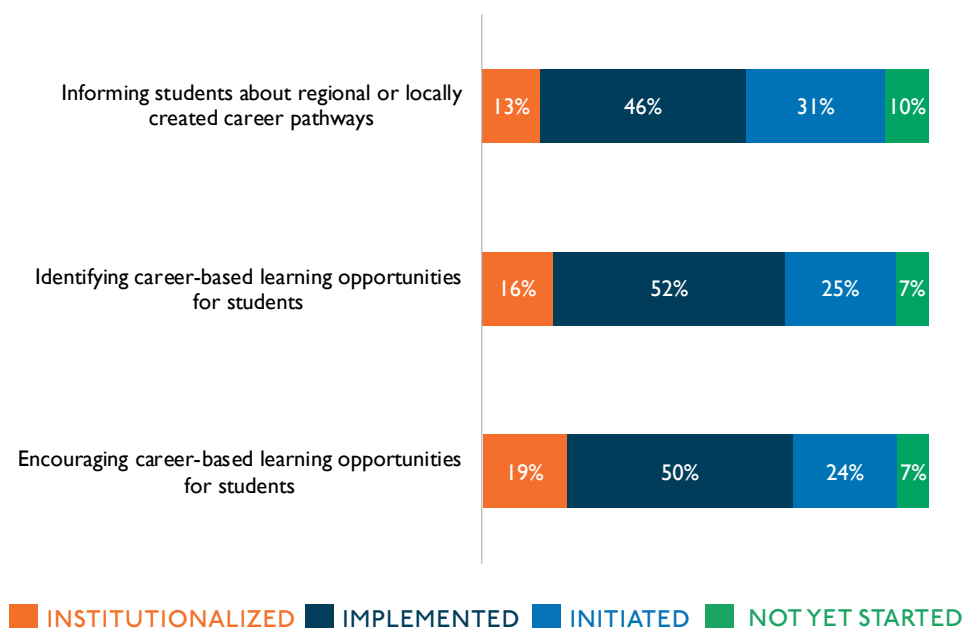


Figure 15 shows the results from the implementation items related to career-based learning and pathways. As seen, over two-thirds of respondents indicated that identifying and encouraging career-based learning opportunities were implemented or institutionalized, while 59 percent reported the same for informing students about career pathways. These results show a slight decrease in implementation from last year.

Figure 16: ACP Practices and Level of Implementation, Postsecondary Instruction Opportunities

N=385-386

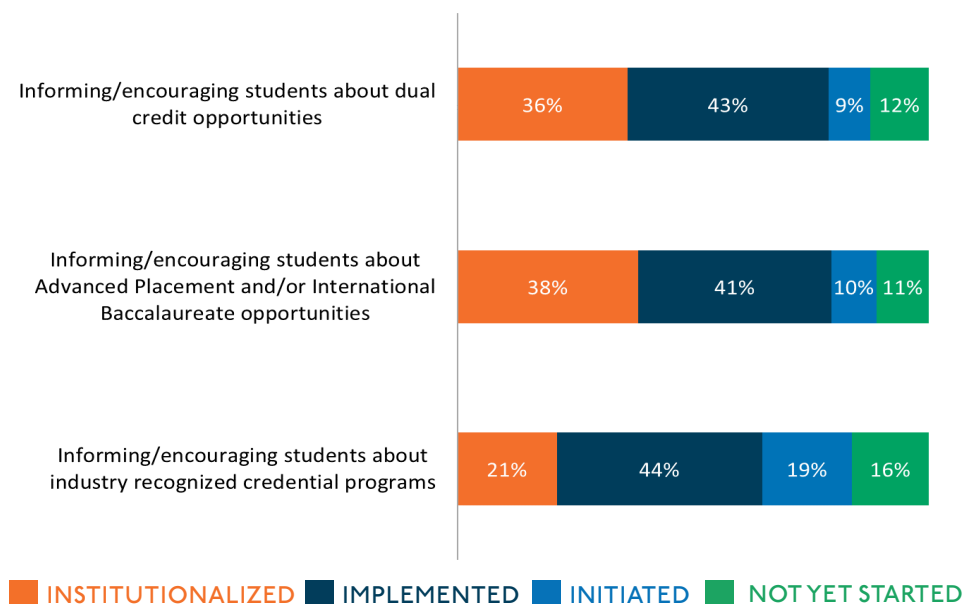


Figure 16 shows the results from the implementation items related to opportunities to engage in postsecondary level instruction. These practices had generally high perceived levels of implementation, with close to 80 percent of respondents indicating either institutionalized or implemented practices in informing/encouraging students about dual credit and AP and/or IB opportunities. These levels have been similar since the start of ACP implementation. Approximately two-thirds of respondents indicated institutionalized or implemented levels of informing or encouraging students about industry recognized credential programs, approximately the same as last year.

Figure 17: ACP Practices and Level of Implementation, Connections to Student Goals

N=385-386

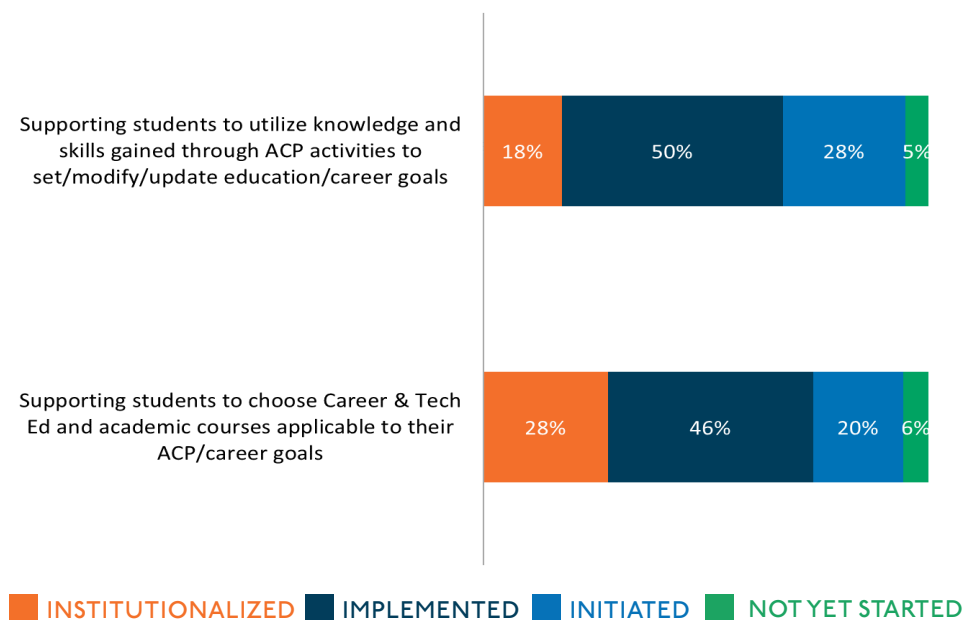
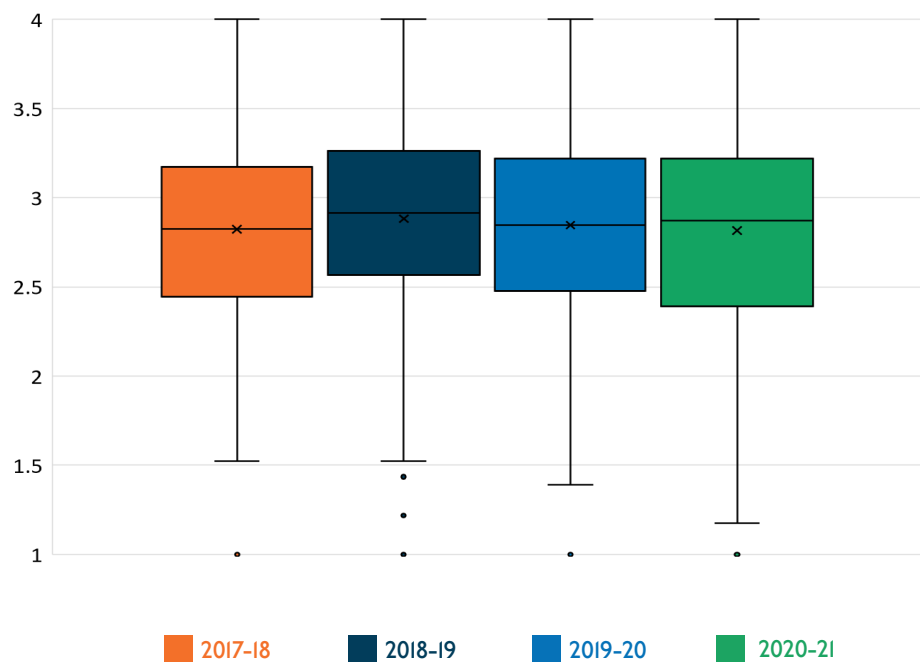


Figure 17 shows the results from the implementation items related to connections to student goals. Approximately two-thirds of respondents indicated that supporting students to set, modify, and update education and career goals was at the institutionalized or implemented level, while approximately three-quarters of respondents indicated the same for supporting students to choose courses related to their goals. These levels of implementation represent a slight decrease from last year.

Figure 18: ACP Implementation Indices, 2017-18 through 2020-21

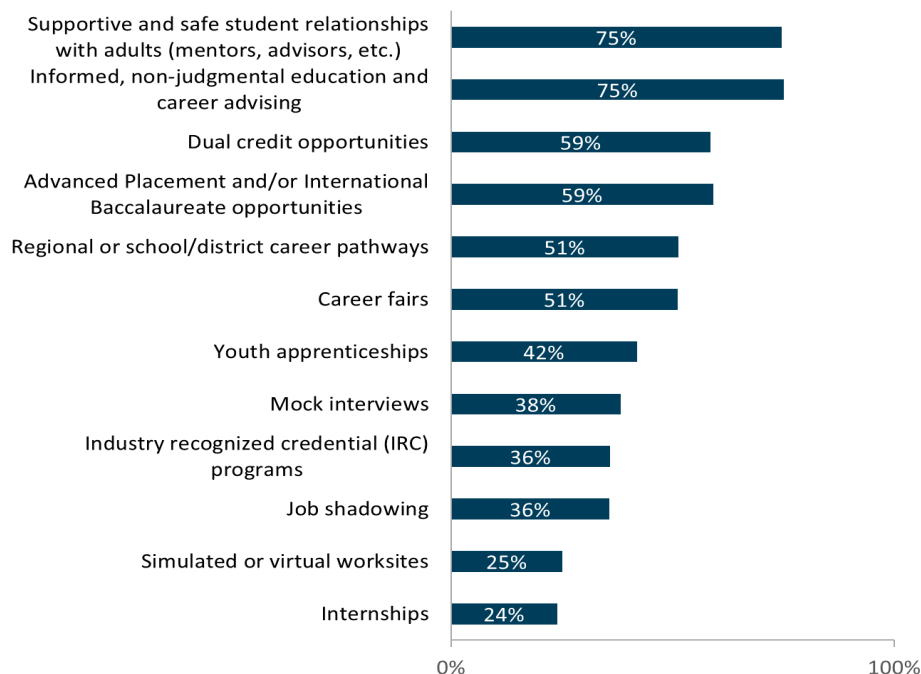


Since all of the implementation items in this section had the same scale, this report provides a final index related to overall implementation. Unlike the previous indices, which have scales from 1 to 5, this index has a scale from 1 (not yet started) to 4 (institutionalized). As Figure 18 shows, the average of this implementation index is 2.81 (implemented). While this average index score is similar to the previous three years of implementation, the distribution of implementation appears more similar to the first year of ACP than the previous two, possibly representing the altered or reduced ACP services provided to students due to COVID-19 and/or varying perceptions related to a different sample of school personnel.

Continuing from last year's survey were items intended to address the availability of key ACP activities and opportunities, to determine the possible reasons for limited opportunities to students for those activities, and how decisions were made in situations of limited opportunities. These items are intended to shed light on the equitable provision of opportunities to students.

Figure 19: ACP Opportunities and Level of Provision to All Students

N= 362-378



To inquire about the provision of ACP opportunities, the survey asked respondents to rate their level of providing sufficient opportunities to interested students in different areas. Figure 19 shows that, according to respondents, supportive and safe student relationships with adults and informed, non-judgmental education and career advising were provided most frequently to all interested students. Conversely, respondents reported that job shadowing, simulated or virtual worksites, and internships were provided least frequently.

The survey followed up with these respondents to ask for reasons they were unable to provide all students with opportunities. Table 2 shows the breakdown of responses for each activity. The most frequently indicated reasons were challenges associated with COVID-19, the availability of activities in the area, and insufficient staff capacity to support the activity. These barriers signal potential equity concerns with respect to the distribution of services.

Table 2: Reasons for Not Providing ACP Opportunities

ACP OPPORTUNITY	N	INSUFFICIENT FUNDING	AVAILABILITY OF ACTIVITIES IN YOUR AREA	INSUFFICIENT STAFF CAPACITY TO SUPPORT ACTIVITIES	CHALLENGES CONNECTED TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC	OTHER
Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate opportunities	132	6%	20%	17%	7%	60%
Career fairs	173	7%	24%	21%	69%	12%
Dual credit opportunities	133	6%	23%	17%	14%	57%
Industry recognized credential (IRC) programs	211	8%	30%	26%	19%	41%
Informed, non-judgmental education and career advising	85	2%	18%	54%	54%	7%
Internships	262	3%	47%	13%	37%	29%
Job shadowing	225	5%	37%	23%	57%	20%
Mock interviews	215	5%	27%	34%	47%	21%
Regional or school/district career pathways	172	5%	33%	41%	41%	19%
Simulated or virtual worksites	255	9%	40%	24%	37%	24%
Supportive and safe student relationships with adults (mentors, advisors, etc.)	91	4%	16%	48%	69%	7%
Youth apprenticeships	197	2%	35%	14%	40%	33%

Note: Respondents were able to indicate more than one reason; the total may be greater than 100 percent.

For each of the categories of activities in the previous two questions, respondents were invited to share “other” reasons for not providing the activity in question to all students. For most items, the majority of reasons was that the activity was not appropriate for their school or grade level (virtual, middle or elementary). Remaining “other” reasons included lack of time, lack of industry connections, and lack of sufficient transportation.

The next question in this area asked respondents to report the mechanisms by which funding allocations and decisions were made when demand exceeded available opportunity. Respondents were able to indicate more than one mechanism for determining allocations. As seen in Table 3, the most frequently indicated allocation mechanism was recommendations, followed by first come, first served and course history.

Respondents were also able to specify “other” determinants for funding allocation and decision-making for each listed activity. After eliminating responses indicating that the practice was not appropriate for their school or grade level, other decision-making criteria included student interest, student availability, and a student’s current course or grade level.

Table 3: Determinants of Allocation of ACP Opportunities

ACP OPPORTUNITY	N	RECOMMENDATIONS	FIRST COME	COURSE HISTORY	ATTENDANCE	DISCIPLINE	GPA	CLASS STANDING	LOTTERY	OTHER
Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate opportunities	101	20%	14%	32%	4%	1%	28%	15%	0%	43%
Career fairs	127	23%	41%	8%	6%	6%	4%	3%	1%	37%
Dual credit opportunities	96	30%	13%	32%	10%	4%	29%	11%	0%	42%
Industry recognized credential (IRC) programs	154	35%	15%	22%	8%	3%	10%	5%	1%	45%
Informed, non-judgmental education and career advising	67	61%	28%	9%	10%	9%	4%	3%	0%	18%
Internships	186	44%	19%	15%	10%	8%	6%	2%	0%	42%
Job shadowing	162	33%	38%	11%	8%	7%	5%	1%	0%	38%
Mock interviews	157	23%	32%	14%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	41%
Regional or school/district career pathways	126	36%	34%	34%	6%	6%	6%	5%	0%	28%
Simulated or virtual worksites	183	30%	30%	13%	4%	3%	4%	2%	1%	42%
Supportive and safe student relationships with adults (mentors, advisors, etc.)	71	75%	21%	7%	13%	14%	7%	3%	0%	17%
Youth apprenticeships	147	46%	18%	30%	12%	6%	9%	3%	1%	38%

Note: Respondents were able to indicate more than one outcome measure; the total may be greater than 100 percent.

The survey also included items continuing to examine dedicated ACP time in schools and districts. Those respondents who indicated that their school or district had initiated, implemented or institutionalized “scheduling regular, dedicated time for ACP activities” (see Figure II above) were asked how schools utilize their dedicated ACP time.

Table 4 provides results from an item that asked how schools organized their dedicated ACP time. As seen, a vast majority (88 percent) used a grouping of a single grade of students. Slightly more than a fifth of respondents indicated using multi-grade groupings.

Table 4: Organization of Dedicated ACP Time

N=234

ORGANIZATION	PERCENTAGE
Single grade groupings (all students in the same grade)	88%
Mixed grade groupings (students are in different grades)	21%
Similar career interest or career clusters groupings	18%
Random groupings	10%
Alphabetical groupings (students are assigned based on last name)	8%
Some other strategy for grouping or sorting	6%

Note: Respondents were able to indicate more than one organization; the total may be greater than 100 percent.

Other grouping strategies identified included:

- No dedicated ACP time (n=2)
- Splitting up students who may have conflicts (n=2)
- Students are allowed to sign up for ACP activities/opportunities
- Students are grouped with their 3rd hour teacher and rotate every 9 weeks
- By course
- During homeroom
- By lunch period
- Students work with counselors individually and in groups
- Staff select students based on strength of relationship
- Individual courses emphasize ACP more than others

The survey also asked respondents to indicate some other characteristics of their dedicated ACP time. Table 5 shows that a majority of respondents indicated that their ACP time was required for all students regardless of ability (83 percent) and that students typically had the same ACP teacher all years of school (64 percent).

Table 5: Characteristics of Dedicated ACP Time

CHARACTERISTIC	N	PERCENTAGE
ACP time is required for all students, regardless of ability	227	83%
Students typically have the same ACP (advisory, homeroom) teacher all years of high school	228	64%
Students earn credit for ACP time	230	15%
Students earn a grade for ACP time	231	14%

Note: Respondents were able to indicate more than one characteristic; the total may be greater than 100 percent.

Two other items related to implementation of ACP were new to this year's survey. One item asked about district implementation of ACP programming in earlier grades (Kindergarten through fifth grade). Roughly half of respondents indicated that their district implemented some form of ACP programming in any of grades K-5 (N=350), although approximately 30 percent of respondents were not sure. Another item asked respondents to identify the one area of ACP that they were most proud of (Table 6). One-quarter of respondents indicated that they were most proud of dedicated ACP time.

Table 6: ACP Areas of Pride

N=342

ACP AREA	PERCENTAGE
Dedicated ACP time	25%
Student engagement	19%
Career-based learning opportunities	14%
Local postsecondary engagement	9%
Community/local business engagement	7%
Alignment/integration with CTE	5%
Staff engagement	5%
ACP final project/capstone	4%
Family engagement	3%
Alignment/integration with core courses	2%
Other	6%

Other areas of pride identified by respondents were as follows:

- Conferences: student-led, individual, junior year, other (n=5)
- Specific activities, components such as self-interest explorations, career guidance lessons, Careers and Life Skills course, Career Day, career and budget project (n=5)
- Collaboration between stakeholders, broad involvement (n=3)
- Nothing (n=2)
- Attention to details (n=1)
- Branding (n=1)
- District Career Academy Director (n=1)

ACP Curriculum

Continuing from last year's survey were questions related to how schools deliver their ACP-related curriculum and/or scope and sequence. The first of these items asked respondents which ACP practices were supported in their high school. Figure 20 displays the results from this item, showing that over three-quarters of respondents indicated that their school supported resume building, one-on-one conferencing or advising, a financial literacy course, job shadowing, or mock interviews. Less than half of respondents indicated their high school supported an ACP capstone or final project. For respondents indicating their school supported these practices, the survey followed up by asking about characteristics of these practices. As seen in Table 7, a majority of respondents indicated that financial literacy courses, careers courses, and ACP final projects were graded for credit or required for graduation.

Figure 20: Supported ACP-Related High School Practices

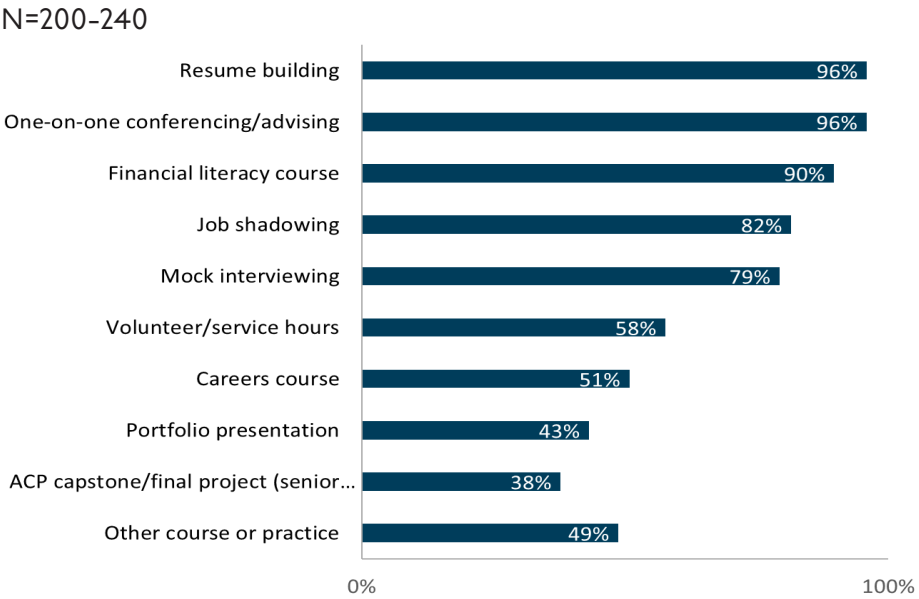


Table 7: Characteristics of ACP-Related High School Practices

CHARACTERISTICS	N	REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION	GRADED AND/OR FOR CREDIT	NEITHER
Financial literacy course	217	76%	44%	10%
Careers course	122	33%	44%	33%
ACP capstone/final project (senior interview, presentation, etc.)	90	37%	34%	33%
Resume building	234	13%	37%	53%
Portfolio presentation	103	28%	22%	55%
Mock interviewing	189	13%	30%	60%
Volunteer/service hours	138	33%	6%	64%
Job shadowing	197	6%	13%	82%
One-on-one conferencing/advising	229	11%	3%	86%
Other course or practice	9	22%	22%	67%

Respondents who indicated “Other course or practice” were asked to identify these items. Responses were as follows:

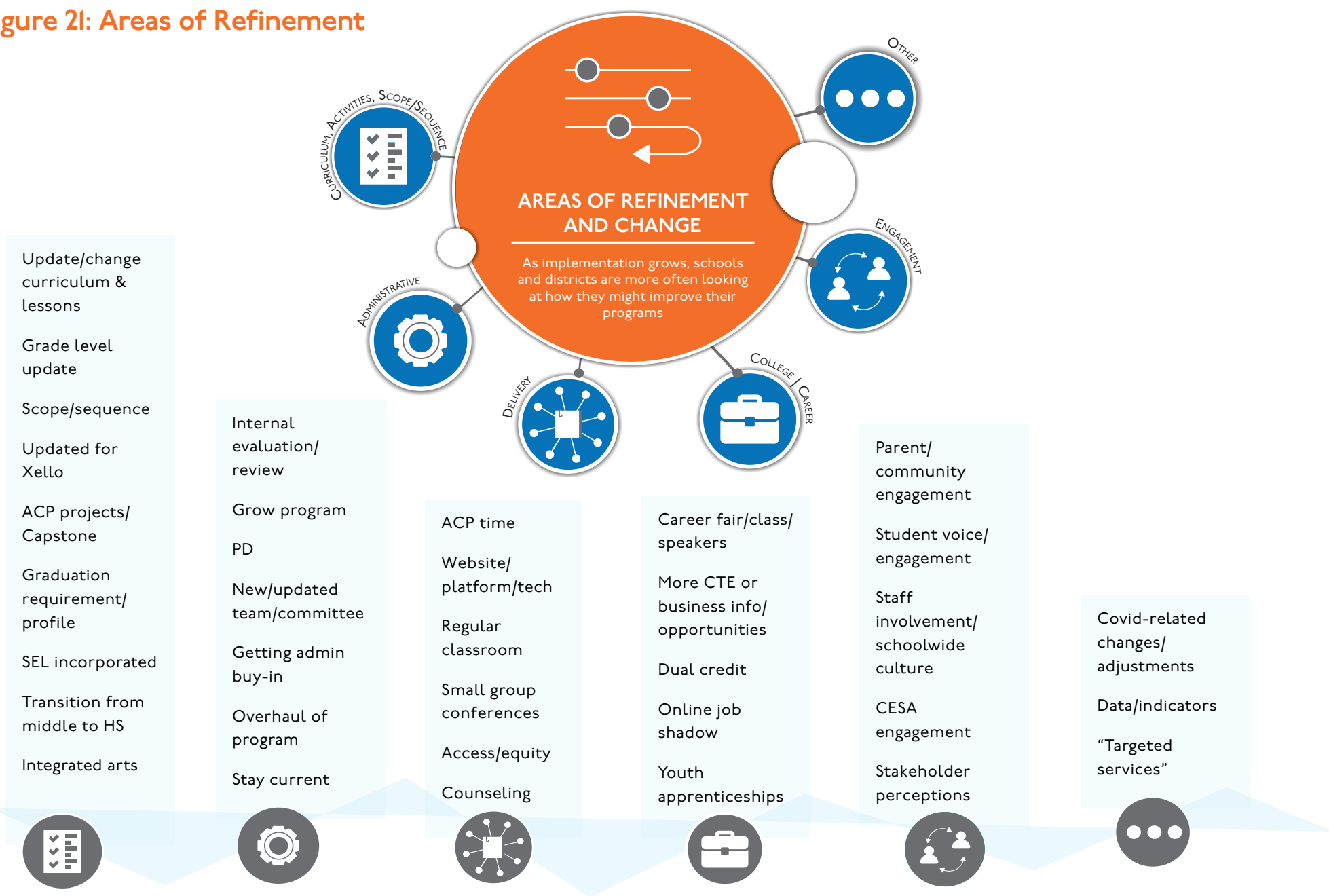
- Career-related courses (n=4)
- Specific classes (n=3)
- Xello lessons (n=3)
- College prep activities (n=2)
- Implementation in core content areas (n=2)
- Reality Check, Reality Day (n=2)
- Conferences (n=2)
- Office services (n=1)
- Place-based learning (n=1)
- School-to-work (n=1)
- Tutoring (n=1)
- Youth Apprenticeship (n=1)

Respondents also noted that several of these activities were required for graduation, specifically Reality Day and projects in core content courses.

Continuous Improvement

The final section of the survey involved items related to school efforts toward ACP continuous improvement. Approximately 43 percent of respondents indicated that their ACP program includes program evaluation, continuous improvement, or a refinement component, and 31 percent of respondents indicated that they were not sure. Respondents were asked to specify changes in their ACP program resulting from evaluation or other refinement processes in the past one to two years. Respondents (N=113) provided considerable information, suggesting that as implementation continues and grows across the state, schools and districts are more often looking at how they might improve and refine their programs. Figure 21 shows the specific areas of refinement and change reported by respondents.

Figure 2l: Areas of Refinement



Finally, this year, the survey asked respondents about the information they would most like to learn from the annual statewide evaluation of ACP. Forty percent of those completing the full survey (N=145) contributed ideas covering a broad range of themes. Categories of responses are as follows:

Learning from Other Districts/Schools

- ACP success in a large, urban district
- What other middle schools are doing; middle school strategies
- Learning about/from other small/rural districts' ACP programs
- Best practices; model schools
- What other schools struggle with and how they overcame struggles
- How other schools embed ACP into regular required curriculum
- How others implement K-5 ACP

Implementation and Activities

- Implementing ACP remotely; implementing during COVID
- How to implement a portfolio requirement, senior capstone project, or other final project
- Building in time for advisory; scheduling strategies; "dosage"
- Lesson planning; ideas for activities
- Job shadowing, internships, especially for rural areas and/or students under 18
- Xello and Inspire
- Industry-recognized credentials, regional career pathways and labor statistics

Buy-in and Culture

- Increasing buy-in; building an all-school culture of ACP
- Strengthening an ACP program; increasing student buy-in

Engaging Stakeholders

- How to engage local businesses and other organizations; organizing career fairs
- How to increase family engagement

Evaluation and Supports

- How ACP is evaluated at the state level; seeing evaluation results
- Local evaluation strategies; a rubric for self-evaluation
- A statewide ACP curriculum
- ACP checklist of what should be in a school's plan and what to review each year
- How to get more funding for ACP
- Jumpstarting ACP after COVID

“Learning from others” was a commonality among many of the themes. This finding has been identified throughout the six years of evaluation and reinforces the value of continuing to foster opportunities for districts to share resources and lessons learned. More generally, a number of the themes identified have been (or continue to be) investigated, addressed, and developed, with resulting annual reports, addenda, survey reports, special briefs, and numerous tools from DPI, CESA partners, and WEC, suggesting that increased dissemination of resources may be in order.

A few respondents were interested in additional state-mandated requirements surrounding ACP, including,

“DPI-mandated graduation requirements for ACP components such as personal finance, CTE, CCR, etc. Updated District School Report Cards that accurately reflect ACP.”

Furthermore, some specific feedback indicates that districts want to know more about the overall impact of ACP. For example, one respondent wrote,

“How has the state measured whether or not ACP mandatory implementation has had a positive effect on students?”

This survey item yielded a considerable amount of information and permitted a glimpse inside the thinking of ACP coordinators and other leaders regarding which ACP issues may most concern them. Findings from this item should help to inform future surveys as well as the ongoing evaluation in general.

Summary

With COVID-19 impacting the 2020-21 school year, many schools made changes to their ACP programming to account for the unique challenges the pandemic posed. Eighty-seven percent of respondents indicated that their school did not implement all of their regular ACP programming this year as a result of COVID-19, with schools either adapting or stopping many ACP practices. Yet many respondents reported new practices or innovations brought on by the pandemic that they hope to continue after a return to more normal instruction.

Overall, in comparison to previous years' survey results, it appears that stakeholder engagement in and collaboration with ACP activities remained stable or decreased slightly, perhaps as a result of COVID-19 restrictions or the differing perspectives of this year's sample. Perception of implementation levels remained similar, on average, across all categories over the last few years. Areas of improvement for ACP implementation include family engagement and increasing levels of full-staff engagement.

Findings from this year's survey also suggest that there is continued room for improvement in the ACP activity opportunities offered to students. Some newer ACP activities, such as "virtual or simulated worksites," were unfamiliar to some respondents, suggesting a need for additional awareness building. When schools could not offer opportunities for all of their students, reasons included insufficient staff capacity, the availability of activities in the area, and challenges related to COVID-19. Consequently, schools made decisions regarding which students received those opportunities using a wide range of decision mechanisms. As with last year, recommendations, course history, and first come, first served were the most frequent, with mentions of additional mechanisms such as "age," "need," "class standing," and "parental involvement." It continues to seem likely that in at least some cases, these decision-making processes may be vulnerable to creating inequitable opportunity gaps. Further research is being undertaken to better understand these factors and address them.

This year's survey also included items related to the ways in which schools deliver their ACP-related curriculum and/or scope and sequence. While implementation results show that over 96 percent of schools reported scheduling regular, dedicated ACP time, ACP curriculum is also delivered through one-on-one conferencing, financial literacy and other required or specialized courses, and by means of job shadowing. Results also suggest that some of these activities are tied to accountability (either required for graduation or graded). Finally, over 40 percent of schools reported using some sort of evaluation or continuous improvement process to refine their ACP programs, and made numerous and varied changes to their ACP programs as a result.

New questions this year showed that about half of responding districts are implementing ACP in grades K-5, indicating that schools see value in starting implementation earlier than required, which may suggest a need for guidance and resources in this area. Similarly, dedicated ACP time, student engagement, and work-based learning opportunities were cited most frequently as areas of pride, supporting the idea that ACP continues to become further embedded in the cultures of many schools. More evidence of investment in ACP can be gleaned from the findings on the information schools would like to learn from the statewide evaluation of ACP. Themes centering on impact, measurement, improvement, and learning from each other all suggest commitment to the philosophy of ACP. Although areas for improvement have been identified, DPI and its partners should be encouraged that the importance of ACP continues to grow within Wisconsin's schools and districts. Consequently, the findings from these and other questions should continue to inform future evaluation efforts and the development of support and resources.

Appendix A:

ACP Survey 2020-21

As a part of the evaluation of Academic and Career Planning (ACP), the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison is asking for your assistance in reporting your school's experiences implementing ACP. The goal of this survey is to gather feedback from ACP coordinators regarding experiences and perceptions of ACP implementation in 2020-21 when working **with any of grades 6-12**. Aggregated feedback will be shared with DPI so their ACP team can better support districts in this work. **Please keep in mind that your individual responses, identities, and school and district names will be kept confidential at all times.** This survey should take about 15 minutes to complete. Please answer questions as they pertain to any of grades 6-12, as relevant to your position. Thank you for your participation in this important process. If you have questions about this survey or the ACP evaluation, please email the Principal Investigator, Robin Worth, at robin.worth@wisc.edu.

Which of these grades does your school serve? (Select all that apply)

- Grade 6
- Grade 7
- Grade 8
- Grade 9
- Grade 10
- Grade 11
- Grade 12
- None of the above

What is your role in your school? (please select all that apply)

- Principal
- ACP coordinator
- School counselor
- Other

COVID-19 AND REMOTE INSTRUCTION

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and potential changes to remote instruction, what percentage of your usual ACP program will be completed this school year?

- 100%
- 76-99%
- 51-75%
- 26-50%
- 1-25%
- None, my school/district has opted out of ACP this year.

How are the following activities/components impacted this year by COVID-19?

	CONTINUING AS NORMAL	ADJUSTED FOR REMOTE INSTRUCTION	NOT OCCURRING THIS YEAR	NOT APPLICABLE
Providing supportive and safe student relationships with adults (mentors, advisors, etc.)				
Providing informed, non-judgmental education and career advising				
Informing students about regional or school/district career pathways				
Identifying/encouraging work-based learning opportunities for students				
Informing/encouraging students about dual credit opportunities				
Informing/encouraging students about Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate opportunities				
Informing/encouraging students about industry recognized credential programs				
Scheduling regular, dedicated time for ACP activities				
Providing on-on-one conferencing/advising				
Requiring or encouraging an ACP capstone/final project (senior interview, presentation, etc.)				
Requiring or providing opportunities for student volunteer/service hours				
Requiring or offering a financial literacy course				
Requiring or offering a careers course				
Other				

How has your school adjusted its ACP program for remote instruction?

Please describe any new or innovative ACP practices you have developed due to the COVID-19 pandemic that you plan to continue using in the future.

STAKEHOLDER AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT

Please rate the following statements about engagement and collaboration with families and school/district partners related to ACP.

	VERY HIGH	SOMEWHAT HIGH	MODERATE	SOMEWHAT LOW	VERY LOW	DON'T KNOW
In general, engagement with families in my school/district is...						
Collaboration with local post-secondary institutions near my school/district is...						
Collaboration with local businesses near my school/district is...						
Collaboration with local community organizations near my school/district is...						
Family knowledge of my school/district's ACP implementation is...						
Local post-secondary institution knowledge of my school/district's ACP implementation is...						
The local business community's knowledge of my school/district's ACP implementation is...						
Local community organization knowledge of my school/district's ACP implementation is...						

ACP INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION

At what level is your school/district implementing the following practices related to ACP?

	INSTITUTIONALIZED	IMPLEMENTED	INITIATED	NOT YET STARTED
Providing equitable access to ACP for all students in grades 6-12				
Having an inclusive school/district-wide culture around ACP				
Having administrative engagement in ACP				
Prioritizing ACP-related school/district goals				
Having full staff participation in ACP				
Making ACP student-focused				
Regularly informing families about their students' ACP				
Regularly engaging families in their students' ACP				
Providing supportive and safe student relationships with adults (mentors, advisors, etc.)				
Providing informed education and career advising				
Providing non-judgmental education and career advising				
Scheduling regular, dedicated time for ACP activities				
Outlining an ACP activity curriculum (scope and sequence)				

At what level is your school/district implementing the following practices related to ACP? (Cont'd)

	INSTITUTIONALIZED	IMPLEMENTED	INITIATED	NOT YET STARTED
Outlining an ACP activity curriculum (scope and sequence) that is scaffolded				
Outlining an ACP activity curriculum (scope and sequence) that is developmentally appropriate				
Informing students about regional or locally created career pathways				
Identifying career-based learning opportunities for students				
Encouraging career-based learning opportunities for students				
Informing/encouraging students about dual credit opportunities				
Informing/encouraging students about Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate opportunities				
Informing/encouraging students about industry recognized credential programs				
Supporting students to utilize knowledge and skills gained through ACP activities to set/modify/update education/career goals				
Supporting students to choose Career & Tech Ed and academic courses applicable to their ACP/ career goals				

At what level is your school/district able to provide opportunities to students in the following areas:

	TO ALL STUDENTS INTERESTED	TO MOST STUDENTS INTERESTED	TO ABOUT HALF OF STUDENTS INTERESTED	TO LESS THAN HALF OF STUDENTS INTERESTED	TO NO STUDENTS
Supportive and safe student relationships with adults (mentors, advisors, etc.)					
Informed, non-judgmental education and career advising					
Regional or school/district career pathways					
Career fairs					
Job shadowing					
Mock interviews					
Simulated or virtual worksites					
Youth apprenticeships					
Internships					
Dual credit opportunities					
Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate opportunities					
Industry recognized credential (IRC) programs					

For the following items, for which reasons are you unable to provide all students with opportunities? (select all that apply)

	INSUFFICIENT FUNDING	AVAILABILITY OF ACTIVITIES IN YOUR AREA	INSUFFICIENT STAFF CAPACITY TO SUPPORT ACTIVITIES	CHALLENGES CONNECTED TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC	OTHER*
Supportive and safe student relationships with adults (mentors, advisors, etc.)					
Informed, non-judgmental education and career advising					
Regional or school/district career pathways					
Career fairs					
Job shadowing					
Mock interviews					
Simulated or virtual worksites					
Youth apprenticeships					
Internships					
Dual credit opportunities					
Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate opportunities					
Industry recognized credential (IRC) programs					

*You indicated "Other" in the question above for the following items. Please describe other reason(s) for not being able to provide students with opportunities:

**OTHER REASONS FOR
BEING UNABLE TO
PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH
OPPORTUNITIES**

Supportive and safe student relationships with adults (mentors, advisors, etc.)	
Informed, non-judgmental education and career advising	
Regional or school/district career pathways	
Career fairs	
Job shadowing	
Mock interviews	
Simulated or virtual worksites	
Youth apprenticeships	
Internships	
Dual credit opportunities	
Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate opportunities	
Industry recognized credential (IRC) programs	

How does your school/district determine the allocation of student opportunities when unable to meet all demand? (select all that apply)

	RECOMMEND- ATIONS	FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED	COURSE HISTORY	ATTEND- ANCE HISTORY	DISCI- PLINARY HISTORY	GPA	CLASS STANDING	LOTTERY	OTHER*
Supportive and safe student relationships with adults (mentors, advisors, etc.)									
Informed, non-judgmental education and career advising									
Regional or school/district career pathways									
Career fairs									
Job shadowing									
Mock interviews									
Simulated or virtual worksites									
Youth apprenticeships									
Internships									
Dual credit opportunities									
Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate opportunities									
Industry recognized credential (IRC) programs									

*You indicated "Other" for the following items. Please describe the other decision-making factor(s):

	DECISION-MAKING FACTOR
Supportive and safe student relationships with adults (mentors, advisors, etc.)	
Informed, non-judgmental education and career advising	
Regional or school/district career pathways	
Career fairs	
Job shadowing	
Mock interviews	
Simulated or virtual worksites	
Youth apprenticeships	
Internships	
Dual credit opportunities	
Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate opportunities	
Industry recognized credential (IRC) programs	

DEDICATED ACP TIME

Please indicate the qualities of your school's dedicated ACP time in grades 9-12, as applicable. Again, this may occur in a homeroom, advisory period, or some other course or meeting dedicated fully or in part to ACP activities.

Is your school's dedicated ACP time organized by....(select all that apply)

- Single grade groupings? (all students in the same grade)
- Mixed grade groupings? (students are in different grades)
- Similar career interest or career clusters groupings?
- Alphabetical groupings? (students are assigned based on last name)
- Random groupings?
- Some other strategy for grouping or sorting?

Please describe the other grouping or sorting strategy:

In your school...	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Do students typically have the same ACP (advisory, homeroom) teacher all years of high school?			
Do students earn credit for ACP time?			
Do students earn a grade for ACP time?			
Is ACP time required for all students, regardless of ability?			

ACP CURRICULUM

Which of the following ACP-related practices or activities does your high school implement/support?

	YES	NO
Job shadowing		
Mock interviewing		
Portfolio presentation		
Resume building		
One-on-one conferencing/advising		
ACP capstone/final project (senior interview, presentation, etc.)		
Volunteer/service hours		
Financial literacy course		
Careers course		
Other course or practice		

Please indicate whether the following practices or activities are graded or required for graduation: (select all that apply)

	REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION	GRADED AND/OR FOR CREDIT	NEITHER GRADED/FOR CREDIT NOR REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION
Job shadowing			
Mock interviewing			
Portfolio presentation			
Resume building			
One-on-one conferencing/advising			
ACP capstone/final project (senior interview, presentation, etc.)			
Volunteer/service hours			
Financial literacy course			
Careers course			
Other course or practice			

As the COVID-19 pandemic has led many universities and colleges to implement test-optional admissions policies, how has your school changed ACT preparation and recommendations for score submission, if at all?

- No change (offer the same ACT preparation as in prior years)
- No change (do not offer ACT preparation)
- Offer updated ACT preparation informing students about test-optional policies
- Stopped offering ACT preparation
- Other _____

ADDITIONAL ACP COMPONENTS AND INFORMATION

Does your school/district ACP effort include a program evaluation, continuous improvement process, or other refinement component?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

Please describe what you have changed in your ACP program due to evaluation or other refinement processes in the past 1-2 years and why.

Does your district implement any ACP-related programming in any of the grades K-5?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

What is the one area of ACP that you are most proud of?

- Staff engagement
- Student engagement
- Family engagement
- Community/local business engagement
- Local postsecondary engagement
- Alignment/integration with core courses
- Alignment/integration with CTE
- Dedicated ACP time
- Career-based learning opportunities
- ACP final project/capstone
- Other _____

What would you or your school be interested in learning from our statewide ACP evaluation?

CONTEXT

Finally, please answer the following questions about where you work so that we may better understand your responses. Please remember that your individual responses to this survey are confidential and will not be shared with or seen by anyone but the Wisconsin Center for Education Research staff.

Which CESA region is your school/district located in?

Please select the district and school you work in.

District Name

School Name

