

Office of the Superintendent of Schools
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

April 19, 2002

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jerry W. Weast, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Postsecondary Plans of Graduating Seniors in the Class of 2001

Attached is a summary of the findings from the survey of postsecondary plans of graduating seniors in the Montgomery County Public Schools Class of 2001. Results from the Class of 2001 are very similar to those from recent graduating classes. The few exceptions include:

- The percentage of seniors who reported plans to enter part-time employment unrelated to their high school courses increased slightly, from 16% to 20%.
- Slightly fewer graduates planned to attend 4-year colleges full-time in 2001 (61%) than in 2000 (66%).

Each high school already has received detailed results for its students. Results are used by career counselors to assist students and parents of students in making postsecondary plans.

If you have questions concerning the survey or the results, please contact Dr. James Griffith in the Office of Shared Accountability at 301-279-3845.

JDW:jeg

Attachment

Copy to:
Executive Staff
High School Principals
Dr. Boykin
Dr. Larson
Dr. Griffith

April 2002

Postsecondary Plans of Graduating Seniors in the Class of 2001

Prepared by:
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Montgomery County Public Schools
Rockville, Maryland

What Was the Purpose of the Survey?

Since 1983, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has gathered information from graduating seniors regarding their postsecondary education plans. Results are used by high school counselors to advise sophomores and juniors regarding their postsecondary school plans. Parents of students also use results to help their children make decisions about their future school and career plans.

Who Participated?

The MCPS senior survey asked seniors to list postsecondary colleges and universities they applied to, whether they were accepted/rejected, and whether they received financial aid. Of 8,606 eligible seniors in 2001, 7,286 (85%) completed the survey (see Table 1). The completion rate was similar to those in previous years.

Highlights of Results

What Were Seniors' Plans after High School?

Table 2 contains the percentages of seniors who reported various plans after high school graduation. Graduating seniors could respond to each of the questions relating to their postsecondary college and work plans (e.g., planning to attend college, planning to work, or both).

Many of the graduating seniors planned to attend college, primarily 4-year colleges and to attend full-time. Nearly two-thirds of the seniors (61%) planned to attend 4-year colleges full-time. This percentage was slightly lower than in 2000. A small percentage of students (5%) planned to attend 4-year colleges part-time. About one-quarter of the seniors planned to attend 2-year colleges either full-time (17%) or part-time (7%). Few seniors planned to enter trade, business, or technical schools full-time and part-time (about 3%); enter employment full-time either related (2%) or unrelated to their high school curriculum (6%); or enter military service full-time or part-time (4%). Only about 3% of the seniors were undecided about their future plans.

A substantial percentage of seniors (20%) reported planning to enter part-time employment unrelated to their high school courses. This percentage was slightly up from 2000. For the most part, these graduates were those who planned to attend 2-year colleges full-time and part-time and reported plans for working part-time in areas unrelated to their high school coursework (respectively, 31% of those planning to attend 2-year colleges full-time and 27% of those planning to attend 2-year college part-time). Additionally, among the small number of graduates who planned to attend trade, business, or technical schools, a substantial percentage planned to work part-time in areas unrelated to their high school coursework (23% of those attending programs full-time and 32% of those attending the programs part-time). Finally, many graduates who planned to attend 4-year colleges also planned to work part-time in areas unrelated to their high school coursework (respectively, 19% of those planning to attend 4-year colleges full-time and 19% of those planning to attend 4-year colleges part-time).

How Many Colleges and Universities Did Seniors Apply to?

Fewer graduates applied to postsecondary colleges and universities in 2001 than in 2000, even though the class of 2001 was larger (see Table 3). Additionally, a slightly smaller percentage of graduates applied to at least one college or university (from 79% in 2000 to 76% in 2001). The average number of colleges and universities applied to remained the same, about 3 colleges and universities.

To Which Colleges and Universities Did Seniors Most Frequently Apply?

Table 4 shows colleges and universities most frequently applied to by seniors in the class of 2001. Over the survey years, the list of colleges and universities most frequently applied to has changed slightly from year to year. For example, in each of the survey years 1999, 2000, and 2001, the first 10 colleges and universities were the same: University of Maryland - College Park, Montgomery College, University of Maryland - Baltimore County, Towson University, Pennsylvania State University, Salisbury State University, Frostburg State University, Virginia Polytechnic University, University of Delaware, and James Madison University. The number of seniors applying to the most frequently applied to universities varied slightly from 2000, thereby affecting the rank order of colleges and universities.

New entries to the 25 top colleges and universities applied to in 2001 included University of Maryland – Eastern Shore, University of Wisconsin – Madison, Harvard University, and St. Mary’s College. Two universities no longer ranked among the top 25 universities; these included West Virginia University, and University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill.

How Do Acceptance Rates of MCPS Graduates Compare with Those Nationally?

Table 4 lists the number of seniors applying to specific colleges and universities, acceptance rates of MCPS seniors (based on self-report), and acceptance rates of all freshmen applying to specific colleges (based on data in Profiles of American Colleges, 2001).

For the top colleges applied to, MCPS applicants' acceptance rates were generally higher than the national rates of freshmen applying. Exceptions included Towson University and American University for which MCPS acceptance rates were lower than the national acceptance rates.

Table 4 also reports the percentage of MCPS seniors who applied to a particular college and received financial aid from that college. The percentages of MCPS seniors who reported being accepted and having received financial aid from colleges and universities ranged from 16% (University of Wisconsin - Madison) to 63% (New York University). For several years, New York University has been among the top colleges applied to and has provided the highest percentages of MCPS graduates with financial aid

Finally, Table 4 reports the average Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) scores and the weighted and unweighted grade point averages (GPAs) of MCPS seniors who applied and reported being accepted at the colleges and universities. These data help students, school staff, and parents to make decisions about applying to colleges and universities.

TABLE 1
Completion Rates for Senior Surveys

<u>Survey Year</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>
N of Graduating Seniors Who Completed Surveys	6,827	6,896	7,047	7,286
% of the Graduating Class Who Completed Surveys	89.3%	89.1%	85.6%	84.7%

Note: Percentages are based on all seniors enrolled in the survey year.

TABLE 2
Seniors' Plans for Their Future

<u>Survey Item</u>	Seniors Who Completed Surveys	
	<u>2000</u> % (N = 7,047)	<u>2001</u> % (N=7,286)
What will you do next year?		
Attend 4-year college		
Full-time	65.9	60.7
Part-time	3.8	4.5
Attend 2-year college		
Full-time	15.8	17.4
Part-time	6.6	7.0
Attend trade, business, technical school		
Full-time	1.7	1.6
Part-time	1.4	1.6
Enter employment unrelated to high school trade/business/technical courses		
Full-time	5.7	6.0
Part-time	16.2	19.5
Enter employment related to high school trade/business/technical courses		
Full-time	2.1	1.9
Part-time	5.9	5.5
Enter military service, full-time and part-time	3.3	4.3
Undecided	3.6	3.2

Note: Respondents were allowed to answer each postsecondary plan separately. Therefore, column percentages may exceed 100.0%.

TABLE 3
Number of Postsecondary School Applications

<u>Survey Year</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>
N of applications	14,621	16,589	16,014
Mean N of applications ^a	2.7	2.9	2.9
Median N of applications ^a	2.0	2.0	2.0
N of students who applied to at least one postsecondary school	5,347	5,557	5,511
% of total graduating class who applied to at least one postsecondary school	78%	79%	76%

^a Based on only those graduates who had applied to at least one college or university.

TABLE 4
Universities/Colleges Applied to Most Frequently:
Number Applying, Acceptance Rates, Financial Aid, Average Total SAT Scores, and GPA

2001 Rank Order (based on N applying)	2000 Rank Order (based on N applying)	University/College	2001						
			N Applying	% Applicants Accepted^a		% Financial Aid^b	Average Total SAT^c	GPA^d	
			MCPS	Nationally			Wght	Unwght	
1.	1	Univ. of Maryland - College Park	1856	78%	54%	51%	1261	3.9	3.4
2.	2	Montgomery College - all campuses	1345	Open admissions		32%	933	2.7	2.6
3.	3	Univ. of Maryland - Baltimore Co.	558	75%	69%	58%	1191	3.7	3.3
4.	4	Towson University	518	63%	69%	44%	1114	3.6	3.2
5.	5	Pennsylvania State University	328	90%	49%	25%	1224	3.9	3.4
5.	6	Salisbury State University	328	78%	57%	39%	1100	3.4	3.1
7.	7	Frostburg State University	209	83%	77%	41%	1009	3.1	2.9
8.	9	Virginia Polytechnical Univ.	207	80%	70%	34%	1221	3.9	3.4
9.	8	University of Delaware	201	76%	63%	42%	1190	3.8	3.4
10.	10	James Madison University	192	77%	65%	24%	1193	4.0	3.5
11.	12	University of Michigan	189	65%	59%	25%	1365	4.3	3.7
12.	14	University of Pennsylvania	177	28%	23%	39%	1367	4.5	3.7
13.	11	George Washington Univ.	158	68%	49%	53%	1241	4.0	3.5
13.	13	New York University	158	56%	32%	63%	1342	4.2	3.6
13.	18	Georgetown University	158	32%	23%	44%	1401	4.4	3.7
16.	16	Cornell University	153	47%	33%	38%	1434	4.4	3.8
17.	15	American University	147	71%	74%	52%	1188	3.8	3.3
18.	21	Johns Hopkins University	153	52%	28%	51%	1422	4.4	3.7
19.	17	University of Virginia	145	36%	34%	39%	1395	4.4	3.7
20.	22	Washington University	140	46%	34%	36%	1435	4.5	3.7
21.	19	Boston University	134	69%	55%	35%	1270	4.0	3.5
22.	--e	Univ. of Maryland – Eastern Shore	123	72%	N/a	45%	866	2.7	2.6
23.	--e	Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison	121	73%	68%	16%	1314	4.0	3.5
24.	--e	Harvard University	119	18%	11%	43%	1481	4.3	3.7
25.	--e	St. Mary's College	116	88%	65%	66%	1240	3.9	3.4

Note. N/a means percentage not available.

^a MCPS acceptance rates are based on self-reported acceptance. Acceptance rates for all freshmen applicants in 2001 are taken from Profiles of American Colleges, 24th edition, 2001.

^b Percentage of applicants *accepted* who said that they received financial aid.

^c Average (mean) highest total SAT for MCPS students who applied and *were accepted to the college*.

^d Unweighted and weighted GPA for MCPS students who applied and *were accepted to the college*.

^e Dashes indicate not among the universities/colleges most frequently applied to in 2000.