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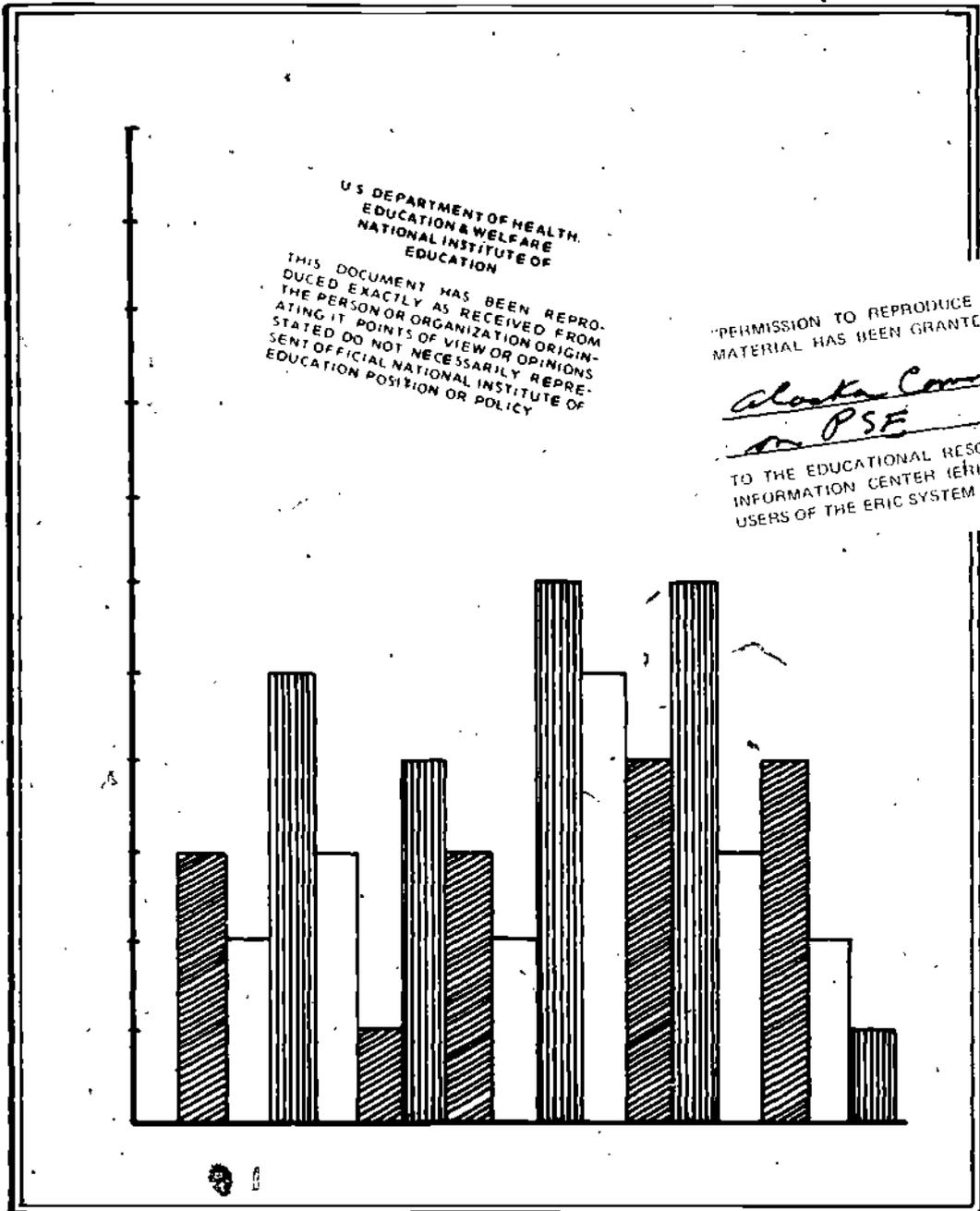
ABSTRACT

A survey of high school seniors was conducted in Alaska to provide a profile of Alaskan seniors and their postsecondary plans. A written questionnaire, consisting of 17 questions, was sent to all public secondary schools identified as having a twelfth grade and to all senior correspondence students. Responses represented 47 of the 51 districts, and 68 of the 96 schools with a twelfth grade. Of the total 5,123 seniors identified, 2,499 returned the questionnaire. Four types of variables of questions were included: demographic characteristics of the student, high school experiences, postsecondary plans, and detailed plans of respondents planning or pursuing some type of postsecondary education. Two specific questions that were analyzed are: how seniors planning to attend differ from those who are not, and where seniors planning to go to college intend to go and what factors enter into that choice. Seniors were found to be quite satisfied with their high school experiences, but a large number feel in need of additional assistance or education in deciding on a career or education, improving mathematics skills, expressing their ideas in writing, and improving reading skills. The great majority of seniors who plan to pursue education at a postsecondary level plan to leave Alaska. A sample survey form is appended. (SW)

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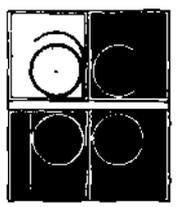


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ALASKA High School Seniors SURVEY REPORT

1977-78

Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education



ALASKAN HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS SURVEY REPORT

August 1978

Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
Pouch F
Juneau, Alaska 99811

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INTRODUCTION

Alaskan high school seniors taking pre-college aptitude tests in 1975 and 1976 indicated that their first choice for college attendance was the State of Washington - not Alaska.¹ Alaskans applying for undergraduate state student loans for 1977-78 elected to use 67% of those loans for undergraduate programs "outside."² A survey of Anchorage high school students, conducted by the University of Alaska - Anchorage, reported that 73% of the students wanted to go "outside" for college.³

What are the causes of this exodus from Alaska by those persons seeking education beyond high school? To date, no one really knows, but a number of theories are offered annually. These theories include: students want to see other parts of the country; Alaskan program offerings are too limited; the state loan program encourages students to leave the state; college "campus life," including fraternal organizations and major inter-collegiate athletic programs are unavailable in Alaska; the only resident public institution is in Fairbanks, which is costly and in a somewhat inclement environment; the quality and reputation of some institutions is higher in the Lower 48; and parental influence encourages students to non-Alaskan institutions.

¹Alexander E. Hazelton. "Highlights of the 1976 Alaskan High School Seniors Scholastic Aptitude Test Results". Alaska Department of Education Report, November, 1976.

²"State of Alaska Student Loan Program Annual Report: 1976-77". Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education, December, 1977.

³Mel Carter. "Anchorage High School Student Survey". University of Alaska - Anchorage. January, 1978.

If some of these often-posed theories were found to be accurate, there could be very important implications for postsecondary planning in Alaska. However, until the time of the University of Alaska Anchorage survey, little valid information was available on this question of student choice. The results of the Anchorage survey, which included high school students at all levels, revealed that the largest single factor for students wanting to leave the state for schooling was simply the "desire to get away from home".⁴

In an attempt to garner more information on this issue, the Alaskan Commission on Postsecondary Education, in cooperation with the Alaska Department of Education and with the assistance of the University of Alaska and the Alaska Association of Secondary School Principals, conducted a statewide survey of high school seniors. The survey went to every institution in the State which offered education at a twelfth grade level. The results of the survey are presented in this report.

⁴Ibid.

METHODOLOGY 4

A written questionnaire, consisting of seventeen questions, was sent to all public secondary schools identified as having a twelfth grade and to all senior correspondence students. The questions were of a check-list-response type (see copy of questionnaire in Appendix A). With the exception of two school districts (Juneau, which would not participate, and Bethel which failed to respond), the responses were geographically representative of the state. Responses represented 47 of the 51 districts (92%) and 68 of the 96 schools with a twelfth grade (71%). Of the total 5,123 seniors identified, 2,499 (49%) returned questionnaires.

Four types of variables (or general groupings) of questions were included. These were:

1. those describing demographic characteristics of the student (sex, race, primary home language, size of city, etc.);
2. those describing the high school experiences of the students (evaluation of certain school experiences, and identification of possible areas of weakness);
3. those describing the postsecondary plans of the respondent (occupational choices, college intentions, post-high school plans, etc.); and
4. those describing the more detailed plans of that group of respondents planning on pursuing some type of postsecondary education.

Further analysis of selected groups of respondents was somewhat limited statistically due to the small sample sizes in certain cells, therefore regression analysis and factor analysis of selected questions (which was originally intended) had to be foregone. Two general, questions were explored further.

1. How do those seniors who are planning to continue schooling at a postsecondary level differ from those who are not? Do differences occur relative to:

- a. urban vs. rural communities,
- b. race of respondent,
- c. English being the primary spoken language in the home of the respondent,
- d. sex of respondent,
- e. respondent's rating of high school experience,
- f. respondent's reported need for additional training or education, and
- g. respondent's work experience.

2. Of those seniors planning to continue their education at a postsecondary level, where do they intend to go and what factors enter into that choice?

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A. Demographic Data

The demographic data indicate that the questionnaire results are highly representative of the general senior population. Of those students responding 51% were male and 49% female; 75% were caucasian, 15% were Alaskan Native, 3% were Black, and small percentage (one or less) were American Indian, Oriental, Hispanic, or other; 93% of respondents come from homes where English is the primary language; and only 3% of the respondents had no work experience. (Details of these results are in Appendix B, Tables 15-19.

B. High School Experience

Senior ratings. Respondents were asked to rate various aspects of their high school experiences, from outstanding to bad or not provided, on a scale from one to seven (average being 4.0). The results, presented in Table 1, indicate that the seniors were very satisfied with their high school experiences, in fact, all activities listed were rated above average by most respondents (i.e., average rating of less than 4.0).



TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY SELECTED
HIGH SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS AND AVERAGE
RATING OF EACH CHARACTERISTIC

| Characteristic | Average Rating | Outstanding/ Excellent | | Good/Average | | Not So Good/ Bad | | Total |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|------|--------------|------|---------------------|------|-------|
| | | NO. | % | NO. | % | NO. | % | |
| Variety of Courses | 3.4 | 481 | 20.8 | 1469 | 63.3 | 368 | 15.9 | 2318 |
| Quality of Instruction | 3.1 | 529 | 22.8 | 1564 | 67.3 | 171 | 7.4 | 2324 |
| Counseling and Guidance Services | 3.0 | 892 | 39.4 | 1017 | 44.9 | 356 | 15.7 | 2265 |
| Library Facilities | 3.1 | 798 | 35.2 | 1157 | 51.1 | 310 | 13.7 | 2265 |
| Special Help | 3.3 | 539 | 27.6 | 1091 | 55.7 | 327 | 16.7 | 1957 |
| Programs for Outstanding Students | 3.3 | 524 | 28.1 | 1000 | 53.5 | 344 | 18.4 | 1868 |
| School Rules and Regulations | 3.8 | 408 | 18.0 | 1228 | 54.1 | 633 | 27.9 | 2269 |
| Discipline | 3.7 | 413 | 18.7 | 1273 | 57.5 | 526 | 23.8 | 2212 |
| Promotion Policy | 3.6 | 263 | 14.0 | 1284 | 68.7 | 323 | 17.3 | 1870 |
| Assignment of Grades or Marks | 3.3 | 522 | 22.8 | 1524 | 66.7 | 239 | 10.5 | 2285 |
| Laboratory Facilities | 3.5 | 521 | 24.6 | 1157 | 54.5 | 443 | 20.9 | 2121 |
| Athletic and Recreation Facilities | 2.9 | 920 | 41.6 | 1050 | 47.5 | 244 | 11.0 | 2214 |
| Vocational Training | 2.8 | 923 | 42.8 | 1029 | 47.7 | 206 | 9.5 | 2158 |
| Overall High School Experience | 3.1 | 601 | 25.8 | 1562 | 67.2 | 163 | 7.0 | 2326 |

C. Postsecondary Plans

Occupational Choice. A list of 338 occupations was offered to the seniors, and the students were to select their first and second choices. These occupations were grouped into eighteen major categories, but still the response rate was so small that little inference could be made. Therefore, only the top five occupational choices are listed here. The general field of Business and Commerce received the largest response rate for both first and second choices, but the specific fields of Secretarial Studies and Automobile Repair were the most popular among the seniors. The first and second choices of the seniors were (in descending order):

| <u>First Choice</u> | <u>Second Choice</u> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Business Administration | Automobile Repair |
| Secretarial Studies | Secretarial Studies |
| Automobile Repair | Heavy Equipment Operating |
| Law | Accounting |
| Accounting | Business Management |

Post High School Plans. The seniors were given eleven possible choices of post high school activities and were asked to indicate what they felt was most likely for them. Over half indicated plans to attend a two- or four-year college, and over sixty percent planned some type of formal postsecondary educational training. The most popular choice of the seniors was to attend a four-year college, and the least popular choice was to be a full time homemaker (however, the sex of the respondent could effect this choice greatly). As can be seen in Table 3, over twenty percent of the seniors were uncertain as to what they would do after high school.

Not unexpectedly, the characteristic receiving the highest percentage of negative responses was School Rules and Regulations. It is interesting to note that the characteristic receiving the lowest percentage of negative responses was the Quality of Instruction. Those characteristics felt by the greatest number of seniors to be outstanding or excellent were Vocational Training and Athletic and Recreational Facilities, and Counseling and Guidance Services. Those characteristics receiving the fewest outstanding and excellent ratings were Promotion Policy, School Rules and Regulations, and Discipline.

Areas of Improvement. The seniors were asked if they felt they needed more assistance in four selected areas. A surprising number of seniors (over a third in all areas but one) felt in need of further assistance in math, career planning, and writing skills. (See Table 2).

TABLE 2
SENIOR EXPRESSED NEED FOR
FURTHER ASSISTANCE IN SELECTED AREAS

| Type of Assistance | Needed | | Not Needed | | Total |
|---------------------------------|--------|------|------------|------|-------|
| | NO. | % | NO. | % | |
| Expressing Ideas in Writing | 868 | 34.7 | 1631 | 65.3 | 2499 |
| Improving Reading Skills | 778 | 31.1 | 1721 | 68.9 | 2499 |
| Improving Math Skills | 999 | 40.0 | 1500 | 60.0 | 2499 |
| Deciding on Career or Education | 1004 | 40.1 | 1495 | 59.9 | 2499 |

TABLE 3
DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY
MOST LIKELY ACTIVITY AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

| Activity ⁶ | Number | Percent |
|-----------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Attend a 4-Year College | 867 | 34.7 |
| Attend a 2-Year College | 236 | 9.4 |
| Attend a 2-Year , then 4-Year College | 167 | 6.7 |
| Attend Public Technical School | 103 | 4.1 |
| Attend Private Business or Trade School | 229 | 9.2 |
| Enter Apprentice Training | 137 | 5.5 |
| Become Full-Time Homemaker | 24 | 1.0 |
| Join Military | 61 | 2.4 |
| Become Full-Time Employed | 164 | 6.6 |
| Just Take Things As They Come | 235 | 9.4 |
| Don't Know | 189 | 7.6 |
| No Response | 87 | 3.4 |
| Total | 2499 | 100.0 |

D. Postsecondary Educational Plans

Those seniors who planned on pursuing education beyond high school were asked to respond to a series of questions related to those plans. Throughout these questions, the number of students responding varied greatly. For example, 1,602 seniors indicated they planned to attend a postsecondary educational institution after high school, yet, when asked in what state they would pursue such education, 1,998 students responded. Similarly,

618 students indicated attendance in Alaska, while 866 indicated specific Alaskan institutions. For the purposes of this report, it shall be assumed that such results indicate a "what if" interpretation by the Seniors (i.e., what if you were going to school - then when would you attend? What if you were to attend in Alaska - which school would you go to?)

State of Attendance. Nearly one third of the seniors indicated that they would pursue postsecondary educational programs within Alaska (30.9%). The remaining 69.1% would leave the state for their education. This result is in keeping with other in-state/out-of-state attendance indicators. Contrary, however, to the information obtained by standardized pre-college admissions tests, the first choice of attendance is Alaska - not Washington. This distribution by state is presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4
DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY
INTENDED STATE OF POSTSECONDARY ATTENDANCE

| State | Number | Percent |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Alaska | 618 | 30.9 |
| Washington | 200 | 10.0 |
| California | 154 | 7.7 |
| Oregon | 131 | 6.6 |
| Colorado | 88 | 4.4 |
| Hawaii | 76 | 3.8 |
| Idaho | 34 | 1.7 |
| Utah | 23 | 1.2 |
| Other | 674 | 33.7 |
| Total | 1198 | 100.0 |

Alaskan Attendance. When asked which institution in Alaska the students planned to attend, nearly thirty percent (29.9) indicated the University of Alaska - Anchorage. The second most popular choice, as indicated in Table 5, was Anchorage Community College. In fact, of those persons selecting a two or four-year in-state college, over sixty percent (64.4) would go to an institution in Anchorage. It should be remembered that the seniors of Juneau and Bethel are not included in the survey. Hence, the low response rate for Juneau-Douglas Community College, University of Alaska - Juneau, and Kuskokwim Community College are probably more a result of omission rather than reflecting student choice from those areas. However, the University of Alaska - Juneau and Juneau-Douglas Community College seem to have little drawing power from other portions of the State.

TABLE 5

DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY
CHOICE OF ALASKAN POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION

| Institution | Number | Percent |
|-------------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Anchorage Community College | 189 | 21.8 |
| Juneau-Douglas Community College | 2 | .2 |
| Kenai Peninsula Community College | 16 | 1.8 |
| Ketchikan Community College | 9 | 1.0 |
| Kodiak Community College | 6 | .7 |
| Kuskokwim Community College | 4 | .5 |
| Matanuska-Susitna Community College | 11 | 1.3 |
| Northwest Community College | 0 | - |
| Sitka Community College | 4 | .5 |
| Tanana Valley Community College | 6 | .7 |
| Community College Sub-Total | 247 | 28.5 |
| University of Alaska - Anchorage | 259 | 29.9 |
| University of Alaska - Fairbanks | 178 | 20.6 |
| University of Alaska - Juneau | 2 | .2 |
| University Center Sub-Total | 439 | 50.7 |
| Alaska Methodist University | 7 | .8 |
| Inupiat University | 12 | 1.4 |
| Sheldon Jackson College | 2 | .2 |
| Private College Sub-Total | 21 | 2.4 |
| University of Alaska - Extension | 17 | 2.0 |
| Business Trade School | 142 | 16.4 |
| Total | 866 | 100.0 |

Reasons for Institutional Choice. The question of why the seniors chose to attend a particular institution was next posed. Nineteen possible reasons were offered, and the students were to pick the five top which influenced their decision for choosing the institution they indicated. The number of students ranking the reasons at each of the five levels is presented in Table 6, but since this can be somewhat confusing to interpret, an average ranking was determined for each reason. The reasons are listed in Table 6 in descending order of rank. A number of interesting inferences may be drawn from these results. Clearly the least influential reason for a student's choice (of the nineteen listed) was the encouragement of college representatives. This could mean either that college representatives are not actively recruiting or that, if they are recruiting, the recruiting techniques are not very effective.

The reputation or prestige of the school is felt to be the most influential determinant followed quite closely by the availability of particular programs. Closeness to home and religious atmosphere were also highly influential in the decisions of the seniors. It should be noted, however, that by weighting the reasons in the manner of averaging response ranks the best interpretation would be, for example, of those students who felt religious atmosphere was any determinant at all (at least of the top five), a high number felt it to be very important. This interpretative caution is added since an alternative weighting system could produce different results.

TABLE 6

REASONS FOR SELECTING
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

| Reason | Average Ranking | Rate of Influence | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| | | First | Second | Third | Fourth | Fifth |
| Reputation of School | 2.054 | 280 | 122 | 75 | 43 | 50 |
| Availability of Program | 2.059 | 334 | 183 | 100 | 68 | 47 |
| Close to Home | 2.069 | 290 | 142 | 83 | 65 | 39 |
| Religious Atmosphere | 2.190 | 62 | 29 | 16 | 18 | 12 |
| Geographic Location/Climate | 2.533 | 161 | 182 | 142 | 76 | 59 |
| Parental/Relative Encouragement | 2.643 | 116 | 105 | 98 | 76 | 51 |
| Low Tuition and Living Expenses | 2.692 | 96 | 119 | 100 | 72 | 52 |
| Availability of Financial Aid | 2.714 | 51 | 103 | 68 | 46 | 36 |
| Availability of Job While in School | 2.736 | 70 | 98 | 94 | 62 | 40 |
| Intercollegiate Athletic Program | 2.777 | 40 | 47 | 52 | 33 | 25 |
| Parents Attended Same School | 2.885 | 9 | 13 | 15 | 5 | 10 |
| Wanted to See Lower 48 | 3.113 | 31 | 33 | 29 | 36 | 39 |
| Encouragement of Teachers | 3.160 | 19 | 28 | 25 | 31 | 28 |
| Friends also Attending | 3.206 | 37 | 60 | 69 | 56 | 69 |
| Intramural Athletics | 3.366 | 13 | 27 | 25 | 31 | 25 |
| Availability of Campus Housing | 3.524 | 14 | 21 | 50 | 57 | 45 |
| Student Organizations | 3.756 | 7 | 7 | 14 | 30 | 28 |
| Sororities/Fraternities on Campus | 3.792 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 8 |
| Encouragement of College Reps. | 4.576 | 2 | 15 | 11 | 9 | 22 |

Continuing with the example of religious atmosphere; if the number of individuals selecting each of the reasons is used without averaging, religious atmosphere would rank tenth, of the nineteen, rather than fourth as in Table 6.

Further analysis, relating reasons to actual choices is presented later in this report.

E. Financial Aid Information

Since the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education administers the Alaska State Loan Program and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education Student Exchange Program, an attempt was made to see how familiar the seniors were with the availability of these programs. Based upon a total of 1,998 seniors planning some form of postsecondary education, nearly half reported they were unfamiliar with any of the financial aid programs listed. As can be seen in Table 7, the Alaska State Loan Program is the program with which most students were familiar, followed by the Basic Educational Opportunities Grant (BEOG) Program and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Grant Program. From the high percentages of intended utilization of assistance programs with which the students were familiar (also presented in Table 7), it would appear that these students needing assistance are able to at least gain information on the programs.

TABLE 7
 SENIOR FAMILIARITY AND INTENDED
 USE OF SELECTED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

| Financial Assistance Program | Familiar With | | Intend to Use | |
|------------------------------|---------------|------------|---------------|---------------------|
| | NO. | % of 1,998 | NO. | % of Those Familiar |
| BEOG | 284 | 14.2 | 239 | 84.2 |
| GSL | 135 | 6.8 | 99 | 73.3 |
| Alaska State Loan Program | 461 | 23.1 | 416 | 90.2 |
| WICHE | 77 | 3.9 | 36 | 46.8 |
| Native Corporations | 82 | 4.1 | 87 | 106.1 |
| CETA | 91 | 4.6 | 32 | 35.2 |
| BIA | 204 | 10.2 | 183 | 89.7 |
| None | 931 | 46.6 | 894 | 96.3 |

F. Differences Between Seniors Planning Postsecondary Education and Those Not.

Size of Community. As the size of the community, in which the high school is located, increases, the percent of seniors planning on attending a two or four-year college also increases. Also, as can be seen in Table 8, the percent of seniors who are undecided about their post high school plans is inversely related to the size of the community. The smaller the community, the larger the proportion of undecided seniors.

A number of factors could effect these particular results. First, the larger the community, the more likely there is a college or extension center located nearby. This would increase the senior's awareness of

educational opportunities available after high school and could tend to raise the proportion of seniors planning further education and lower the percentage who are undecided. A second factor could be the counseling staff available in the larger high schools and communities. This influence may not be as great since there appeared to be no difference in how urban vs. rural seniors rated their counseling services. A third influencing factor could be the socio-economic characteristics of a rural vs. urban community. The type of employment opportunities available; the education and training level of community members, the general community life style could all effect the plans of a graduating senior. A great deal more detail, than was provided through this survey, would be needed to adequately draw any meaningful conclusions from this finding.

Race. Black and Oriental seniors indicated substantially greater intentions of going to college after high school. Caucasians were far behind, and Alaskan natives still farther behind. These data are presented in Table 9 and graphically in Figure 1.

The percentage of seniors who are undecided as to their post high school plans was heaviest among American Indians, Alaskan Natives, and Hispanics. Here again, the reasons for these differences would need further study before explanations could be offered. It is quite interesting to find that the Black seniors, with 68% planning college attendance, had the lowest undecided rate, followed by the Oriental seniors, with 67% planning college attendance.

TABLE 8

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY
POSTSECONDARY PLANS AND SIZE OF COMMUNITY

| Post High School Plans | Community Size | | | | | | Total |
|----------------------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------|
| | Under 500 | 500- 999 | 1,000- 4,999 | 5,000- 19,999 | 20,000- 49,999 | 50,000 Plus | |
| Four-Year College | 22% | 24% | 30% | 33% | 31% | 44% | 35% |
| Two-Year College | 13 | 10 | 10 | 8 | 11 | 9 | 9 |
| Two-then Four-Year College | 3 | 9 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 7 |
| Technical School | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| Business or Trade School | 9 | 6 | 9 | 11 | 12 | 8 | 9 |
| Apprentice Program | 12 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 5 |
| Homemaker | -- | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Military | 3 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Full-Time Job | 7 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 7 | 7 |
| Undecided | 29 | 29 | 25 | | 23 | 14 | 21 |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

TABLE 9

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY
POSTSECONDARY PLANS AND RACE

| Post High School Plans | Alaska Native | Black | American Indian | Oriental | Caucasian | Hispanic | Other | All Races |
|----------------------------|------------------|-------|--------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-------|--------------|
| Four-Year College | 20% | 52% | 12% | 61% | 37% | 41% | 34% | 35% |
| Two-Year College | 13 | 10 | 12 | 3 | 9 | 6 | 9 | 10 |
| Two-then Four-Year College | 4 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 7 | -- | 6 | 7 |
| Technical School | 3 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 4 | -- | 6 | 4 |
| Business or Trade School | 10 | 10 | 4 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 9 |
| Apprentice Program | 10 | -- | 16 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 5 |
| Homemaker | 1 | 3 | -- | -- | 1 | -- | 2 | 1 |
| Military | 3 | 3 | -- | 3 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 2 |
| Full-Time Job | 6 | 6 | 8 | -- | 7 | 12 | 6 | 7 |
| Undecided | 30 | 8 | 36 | 9 | 19 | 23 | 21 | 20 |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

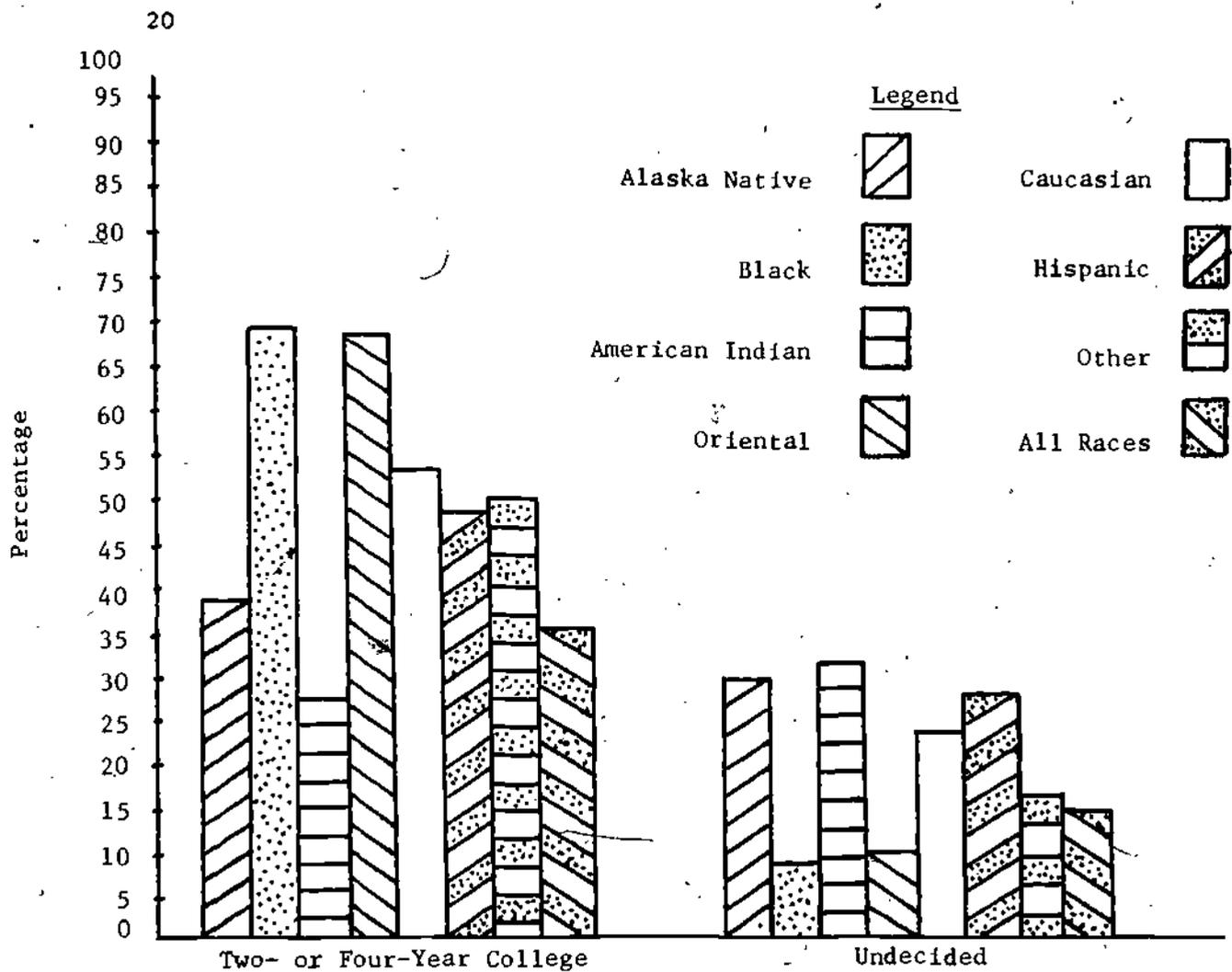


Figure 1. Distribution of Seniors Going to College or Undecided by Race.

English as Primary Language in Home. Although differences did occur between those seniors coming from homes in which English is the primary spoken language and those coming from homes where another language is primary, the differences were not large enough to be significant. For example, 52% of Primary English and 48% of non-English planned college attendance.

In an effort to better identify those students from non-English homes, a cross-tabulation on the basis of race was run. The results of this cross-tabulation, presented in Figure 2, indicated that those seniors coming from homes in which English is not the primary spoken language were most often Alaskan Natives. The Alaskan Natives and the Oriental seniors were the respondents which indicated the largest proportion of non-English homes.

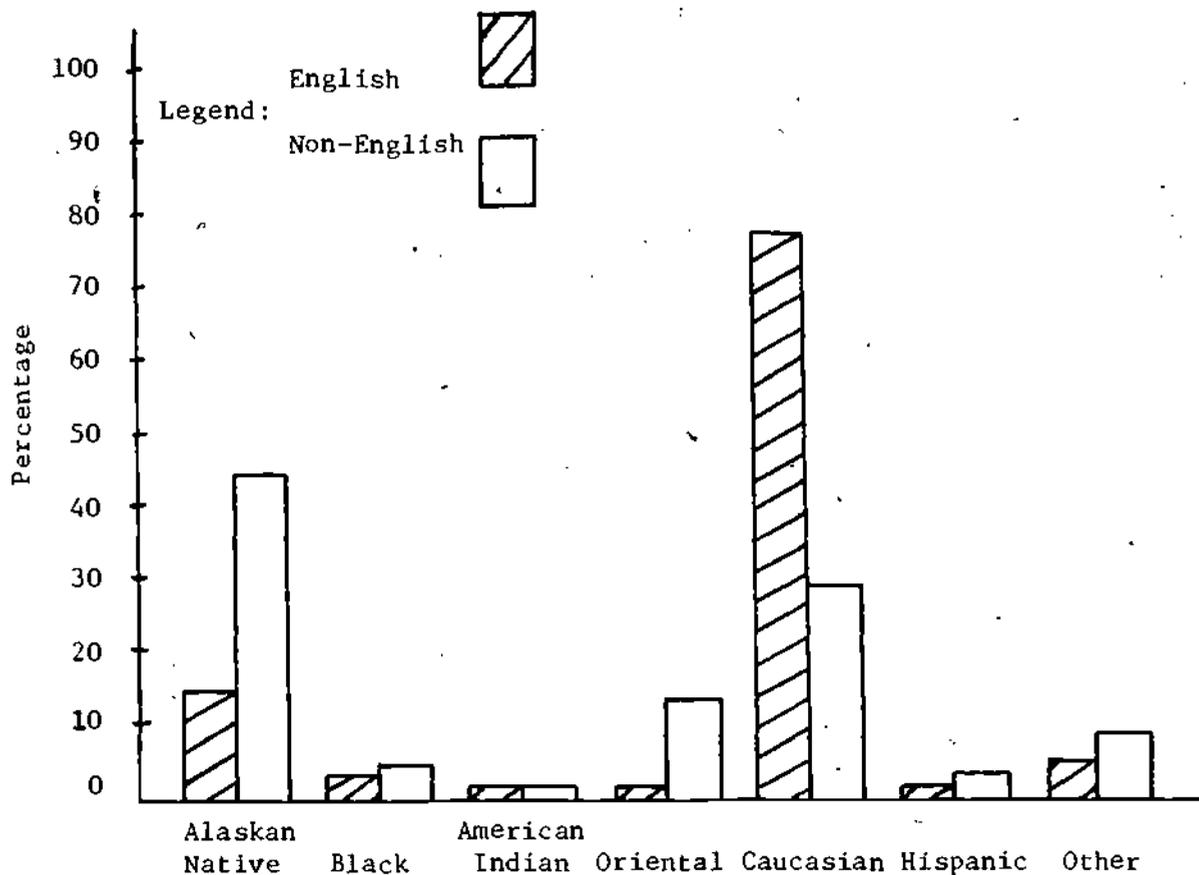


Figure 2. Distribution of Seniors by Race by Primary Home Language.

Sex of Respondent. With regard to postsecondary educational plans, the sex of the respondent seemed to make little difference. As can be seen in Table 10, however, the female seniors indicated a higher propensity for attending a two or four-year college than did the male seniors (56% as compared to 46%). The only other post high school plans which reflected much of a difference between the males and females were technical school attendance and apprentice program participation, with both having a slight preference by the male seniors.

TABLE 10

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY
POSTSECONDARY PLANS AND SEX

| Post High School Plans | Male | Female | Total |
|----------------------------|------|--------|-------|
| Four-Year College | 32% | 38% | 35% |
| Two-Year College | 8 | 11 | 9 |
| Two-then Four-Year College | 6 | 7 | 7 |
| Technical School | 6 | 2 | 4 |
| Business or Trade School | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| Apprentice Program | 8 | 3 | 5 |
| Homemaker | -- | 2 | 1 |
| Military | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| Full-Time Job | 6 | 7 | 7 |
| Undecided | 21 | 20 | 21 |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Ratings of High School Experiences. Not too surprisingly, those seniors who rated their overall high school experiences as outstanding or excellent were most likely to plan collegiate attendance and were least likely to be undecided about their post high school plans. Those who rated their experiences as not so good or bad were least likely to plan to go on to college and slightly more likely to plan to work full-time after high school. (See Table 11)

TABLE 11
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY
POSTSECONDARY PLANS AND RATING OF HIGH SCHOOL

| Post High School Plans | Overall Rating of High School | | | Total |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------|
| | Outstanding/ Excellent | Good/ Average | Not So Good/ Bad | |
| Four-Year College | 48% | 33% | 25% | 35% |
| Two-Year College | 9 | 10 | 9 | 9 |
| Two-Then Four-Year College | 6 | 7 | 6 | 7 |
| Technical School | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| Business or Trade School | 6 | 10 | 14 | 9 |
| Apprentice Program | 4 | 6 | 5 | 5 |
| Homemaker | 1 | 1 | -- | 1 |
| Military | 2 | 2 | 6 | 2 |
| Full-Time Job | 7 | 6 | 10 | 7 |
| Undecided | 14 | 21 | 20 | 21 |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Need for Additional Training or Education. As reported earlier, substantial numbers of seniors felt they needed more help in career counseling and math. Of those students planning on attending a two or four-year college, this feeling of need was also reflected; however, nearly a third of these seniors also felt the need for improved writing and reading skills. Those students planning to attend a technical or business or trade school or enter apprenticeship training were the least likely to feel the need for additional help in planning their future, while, not unexpectedly, those still undecided about post high school plans, reflected the greatest need for such assistance. The results of cross-tabulation are presented in Table 12.

TABLE 12

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS' BY
POSTSECONDARY PLANS AND NEED OF ADDITIONAL EDUCATION

| Post High School Plans | Need of Addition Assistance In | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|------|-----------------|
| | Writing | Reading | Math | Career Planning |
| Two-or Four-Year College | 38% | 32% | 44% | 39% |
| Technical, Trade, Business, Apprenticeship | 36 | 34 | 39 | 34 |
| Homemaker, Military, Job | 35 | 31 | 36 | 41 |
| Undecided | 26 | 26 | 34 | 49 |

G. Determinants Effecting Senior Choices of Postsecondary Educational Institutions.

The seniors were asked not only if they planned to attend a postsecondary educational institution, but also where they intended to enroll and why they made their particular choice. Additionally, through cross-tabulation of responses to other items in the questionnaire, a number of correlational variables could also be tested.

Occupational Choice. Since a large number of students had indicated (as reported earlier) that the availability of programs was a very important determinant in selecting a postsecondary educational institution, a cross-tabulation was run between planned occupational choice and institution of planned enrollment. Unfortunately, the sample sizes and cell sizes were so small that little conclusive information could be inferred. Looking only at those seniors indicating Alaskan attendance, we found little pattern relating occupation choice to college selection. In fact, most fields were fairly evenly distributed between community colleges and university centers or were heavily skewed toward business, trade, or technical schools.

Principal Determinants. The two principal reasons for students to leave Alaska for a postsecondary educational program (or at least plan to leave) were program availability and reputation or prestige of the institution which they planned to attend.

This was particularly true of those students planning to attend an institution in California or Colorado. As reported in Table 13, the two principal California determinants were reputation and prestige of the school (32%) and availability of a desired program of study (21%); while the two principal Colorado determinants reversed those to be, availability of a program of study (31%) and institutional reputation and prestige (20%).

TABLE 13

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY
STATE OF PLANNED ATTENDANCE AND REASON FOR ATTENDING

| State of Attendance | Principal Reason for Selection of Institution | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|-------|
| | Program Availability | Reputation/Prestige | Climate/Location | Close to Home | Other |
| Alaska | 19% | 8% | 4% | 32% | 37% |
| All Out-of-State | 21 | 21 | 12 | 11 | 37 |
| Washington | 27 | 22 | 11 | 11 | 29 |
| California | 21 | 32 | 16 | 3 | 28 |
| Oregon | 23 | 18 | 15 | 8 | 46 |
| Colorado | 31 | 20 | 15 | 1 | 33 |
| Hawaii | 19 | 10 | 32 | 3 | 36 |

Climate and location unquestionably play a large role in determining where Alaskan seniors plan to go to school (as many persons have hypothesized), especially for those heading for Hawaii, but the fact remains that 42% of seniors listed their main reason for leaving the state as either program

availability or reputation and prestige of the institution. For those students planning to remain in Alaska, the principal reason was closeness to home (32%), followed by program availability, low tuition and living expenses, and parental or relative encouragement.

Looking closer at the Alaskan institutional selections and eliminating closeness to home as the determining criteria, one finds that the same pattern of decision-making apparently holds true for all institutions, except the University of Alaska-Fairbanks, as for selecting to remain in-state rather than leaving. For the University of Alaska-Fairbanks, institutional reputation and prestige play a large factor. As can be seen in Table 14, of those Alaskan seniors who reported that institutional reputation and prestige was their principal basis for post-secondary institutional selection, 35% chose the University of Alaska-Fairbanks as their institution of preferred attendance, followed the University of Alaska-Anchorage and Anchorage Community College. Also, in Table 14, one finds that these same institutions are selected by 67% of the seniors who report their principal determinant as being availability of program.

TABLE 14

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS REPORTING
PROGRAM AVAILABILITY or INSTITUTIONAL REPUTATION AS
PRINCIPAL SELECTION DETERMINANT BY SELECTED ALASKAN INSTITUTION

| Alaskan Institution | Program Availability | Institutional Reputation/Prestige |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Anchorage Community College | 21% | 19% |
| Juneau-Douglas Community College | * | -- |
| Kenai Peninsula Community College | 1 | 2 |
| Ketchikan Community College | -- | -- |
| Kodiak Community College | * | -- |
| Kuskokwim Community College | * | -- |
| Matanuska-Susitna Community College | * | -- |
| Northwest Community College | -- | -- |
| Sitka Community College | -- | 1 |
| Tanana Valley Community College | 2 | 2 |
| Community College Sub-Total | 27 | 24 |
| University of Alaska-Anchorage | 24 | 25 |
| University of Alaska-Fairbanks | 22 | 35 |
| University of Alaska-Juneau | -- | -- |
| University Center - Sub-Total | 46 | 60 |
| Alaska Methodist University | * | 2 |
| Inupiat University | -- | 1 |
| Sheldon Jackson College | 3 | 2 |
| Private College Sub-Total | 4 | 5 |
| University of Alaska-Extension | 2 | -- |
| Business or Trade School | 21 | 11 |
| Total | 100% | 100% |

* Response indicated, but less than 1%.

SUMMARY REMARKS

A great deal of data was collected as a result of this survey, however, due in part to survey design, in part to non-participation of certain districts, and in part to the lack of a historical comparative base, definitive conclusions and certain specific analyses results were unable to be determined. With the planned annual continuation of the senior survey, a much better profile of Alaskan seniors and their postsecondary plans will be obtained.

For the present we can make a few general observations:

1. Alaskan high school seniors are quite satisfied with their high school experiences.

2. A large number of seniors feel in need of additional assistance or education in deciding on a career or education, improving mathematics skills, expressing ideas in writing, and improving reading skills.

Although high school counseling and guidance services are rated favorably, it would appear that more emphasis on assisting the student in planning postsecondary activities should be considered.

3. The trend for Alaskans to look "outside" for their postsecondary educational needs does not appear to be abetting. The great majority of seniors who plan to pursue education at a postsecondary level, plan to leave Alaska.

4. The reasons for the seniors' choices of an educational institution or whether to remain in Alaska or not (for postsecondary attendance) are not nearly so haphazard or idyllic as many persons have predicted. Whether it is based upon faulty information, lack of information, or fact, Alaskan seniors feel their academic choices are better out of state. Desired postsecondary educational programs are felt to be more available (or better in the case of duplicative offerings) out-of-state than in, and the prestige and reputation of the out-of-state institutions is felt to be higher than that of Alaskan institutions. This coupled with the apparent ineffectiveness of institutional recruiters has strong implications for Alaskan schools. (As a note: it would be interesting and possibly quite revealing to determine upon what basis these opinions have been formed -- peers, counselors, teachers, parents, school catalogues, etc.)

5. The private business and trade schools appear to be quite effective in recruiting and in meeting the needs of Alaska students. These schools rated quite highly on program availability (i.e., the students wishing such training knew where it is to be sought) and were among the very few to receive favorable responses to institutional representatives.

6. Since such comparative data are unavailable from the university system, it is impossible to determine whether or not the actual attendance patterns of the Alaska seniors reflect the intentions indicated through the survey; however, it would appear that contrary to total student numbers, the university centers within Alaska have a stronger drawing power among the high school seniors than do the community colleges within Alaska.

To conclude that further study is needed seems to be a pattern of all survey research, but it is obvious that in this case, such a conclusion is quite justifiable.

If we are to plan effectively for the utilization of Alaska's postsecondary educational resources, more information must be made available. The results of this survey form the very minimal foundation for further study and planning. We must discover what Alaskans need and desire in the form of postsecondary education and which methods of delivery are practical and feasible. Alaska expends more per capita for postsecondary education than any State in the union, it is past time to begin effective planning for these expenditures.

APPENDIX A

1977-78 ALASKAN HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR SURVEY

1977-78 ALASKAN HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS SURVEY

This year, for the first time, three agencies have coordinated their efforts to find out a little more about you and what you intend to do with your life the first few years after high school. And although that is the main purpose of this survey, in order to make your answers more meaningful, we also need to ask a few other questions about you, your high school, and the community you live in. The results of the survey will be used to plan for the growth and development of postsecondary education* in Alaska, to coordinate and plan for better financial aid services for Alaskan postsecondary students, and to provide information to your school district through your high school counselors, principal, and teachers.

Your cooperation is appreciated. Please answer every question. (In most cases all you need to do is place a check in the appropriate box).

*NOTE: Postsecondary education is defined as any organized educational, learning experience beyond high school.

* * * * *

1.0 What is your sex:

- 1.01 Male
 1.02 Female

2.0 How do you describe yourself?

- 2.01 Alaska Native
 2.02 Black
 2.03 American Indian
 2.04 Oriental
 2.05 Caucausian
 2.06 Hispanic
 2.07 Other

3.0 Which of the following categories best describes the size of the community in which you live?

- 3.01 Less than 50 population
 3.02 100 - 499
 3.03 500 - 999
 3.04 1,000 - 4,999
 3.05 5,000 - 19,999
 3.06 20,000 - 49,000
 3.07 50,000 or more

4.0 Listed below are a number of characteristics of your high school which you are asked to rank based on how beneficial they have been to you. That is, how well did they contribute to your experience as a student? Were you satisfied that you were "getting your money's worth"? Please use the following ranking scale and place the appropriate number in the box provided by each characteristic listed. Please use your own experience for the ranking, not what you have heard from others.

- 1 . . . Outstanding (not much room for improvement)
- 2 . . . Excellent (but could make at least one suggestion for improvement)
- 3 . . . Good (but not all of my experiences were satisfying)
- 4 . . . Average (okay, or so-so, but nothing to get excited about)
- 5 . . . Not so good (school tried to provide this for me, but it didn't seem to work out very well)
- 6 . . . Bad (this was really bad, but still better than nothing)
- 7 . . . Not provided, or no experience with this

- | | | |
|--------------------------|------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4.01 | Variety of courses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4.02 | Quality of instruction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4.03 | Counseling or guidance services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4.04 | Library or learning center facilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4.05 | Special help for students needing it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4.06 | Special programs or facilities for outstanding students |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4.07 | School rules and regulations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4.08 | Discipline |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4.09 | Promotion policy or practice. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4.10 | Assignment of grades or marks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4.11 | Laboratory facilities or special equipment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4.12 | Athletic or recreational facilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4.13 | Vocational training (industrial, business, home economics, etc.) |

5.0 Using the same scale as above, indicate your satisfaction with your overall high school experience.

6.0 Using the attached list, select the item that represents your first choice of an occupation.

7.0 Do the same for your second choice of an occupation.

8.0 Is English the language most frequently spoken in your home?

- | | | |
|--------------------------|------|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 8.01 | Yes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 8.02 | No |

9.0 Please indicate your work experience by checking as many items listed below as apply.

- 9.01 Held a regular part-time job (for example, waitress, sales clerk, delivered newspapers, etc.)
 9.02 Held a full-time job during the summer
 9.03 Earned money by selling goods (magazines, craft items, etc.) or services (baby-sitting, snow-shoveling, lawn mowing, etc.)
 9.04 Participated in work-study, or distributive education or cooperative work program while in high school
 9.05 Started my own business
 9.06 Supervised the work of others
 9.07 Managed the financial affairs of a business or organization.
 9.08 No work experience at all

10.0 In which of the following areas do you think you need some more assistance?

- 10.01 Expressing ideas in writing
 10.02 Improving reading speed or comprehension
 10.03 Improving math skills
 10.04 Deciding on a career or occupation, or educational plans

11.0 Do you intend to take any of the following examinations this year?

ACT (American College Testing Program)

- 11.01 Yes
 11.02 No

SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test)

- 11.03 Yes
 11.04 No

12.0 What are you most likely to do after high school?

- 12.01 Attend a four-year college
 12.02 Attend a two-year college
 12.03 Attend a two-year college and then transfer to another institution
 12.04 Attend a public technical school
 12.05 Attend a private business or trade school
 12.06 Get into an apprentice training program
 12.07 Attend a private business or trade school
 12.08 Become a full-time homemaker
 12.09 Join the military
 12.10 Get a full-time civilian job
 12.11 Just take things as they come for awhile, then decide
 12.12 Get into a trade upon apprenticeship program
 12.13 Don't know yet

If you plan to go on to some form of postsecondary education such as business school, college, technical school, trade school, etcetera, please answer the remaining questions. Please answer this section even if you only think you may go on for more schooling after high school. Otherwise, skip the rest of this survey.

13.0 In which state do you plan to attend a postsecondary institution?

- 13.01 Alaska
- 13.02 California
- 13.03 Colorado
- 13.04 Hawaii
- 13.05 Idaho
- 13.06 Oregon
- 13.07 Utah
- 13.08 Washington
- 13.09 Other

14.0 If you plan to attend a postsecondary institution in Alaska, please indicate which one.

- 14.01 Anchorage Community College
- 14.02 Juneau-Douglas Community College
- 14.03 Kenai Peninsula Community College
- 14.04 Ketchikan Community College
- 14.05 Kodiak Community College
- 14.06 Kuskokwim Community College
- 14.07 Matanuska-Susitna Community College
- 14.08 Sitka Community College
- 14.09 Tanana Valley Community College, Fairbanks
- 14.10 University of Alaska, Anchorage
- 14.11 University of Alaska, Fairbanks
- 14.12 University of Alaska, Juneau
- 14.13 Alaska Methodist University
- 14.14 Sheldon Jackson College
- 14.15 Inupiat University of the Arctic
- 14.16 Business school, technical institute, or trade school
- 14.17 Extension center near home

15.0 Regardless of where you are going on to school, why do you think you made that choice? Please indicate your most important reason by placing a 1 in the appropriate box. If you had a second important reason, please place a 2 in the appropriate box, and so on through 5. Do not indicate more than five reasons.

- 15.01 Reputation or prestige of the school program
- 15.02 Availability of program
- 15.03 Availability of student financial aid
- 15.04 Close to home
- 15.05 Geographic location/weather, climate
- 15.06 Low tuition and living expenses

-Continued-

- 15.07 Availability of jobs while in school
- 15.08 Availability of campus housing
- 15.09 Intercollegiate athletic program
- 15.10 Intramural athletics and other recreational activities
- 15.11 Sororities/fraternities on campus
- 15.12 Student organizations
- 15.13 Encouragement from parents/relatives
- 15.14 Encouragement from teacher/counselor/principal
- 15.15 Encouragement from college representative
- 15.16 Religious atmosphere
- 15.17 My friends will be there
- 15.18 Because one or both of my parents went there
- 15.19 Because I wanted to see at least part of the Lower 48

16.0 Please indicate which of the student financial assistance programs you are familiar with to the point you understand how they work.

- 16.01 BEOG (Basic Educational Opportunity Grant Program)
- 16.02 GSL (Guaranteed Student Loan Program)
- 16.03 Alaska State Student Loan Program
- 16.04 WICHE (Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education Student Exchange Program)
- 16.05 Native Corporation Student Financial Aid
- 16.06 CETA (Comprehensive Employment Training Act)
- 16.07 BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) Financial Assistance
- 16.08 None of the above

17.0 Which of the following sources of financial assistance do you intend to use?

- 17.01 BEOG
- 17.02 GSL
- 17.03 Alaska State Student Loan
- 17.04 WICHE
- 17.05 Native Corporation
- 17.06 CETA
- 17.07 BIA
- 17.08 None of the above

APPENDIX B
RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

TABLE 15
DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY SEX

| Sex | Number | Percent |
|-------------|--------|---------|
| Male | 1,265 | 51 |
| Female | 1,231 | 49 |
| No Response | 3 | -- |
| Total | 2,499 | 100 |

TABLE 16
DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY RACE

| Race | Number | Percent |
|-----------------|--------|---------|
| Alaska Native | 381 | 15 |
| Black | 63 | 3 |
| American Indian | 25 | 1 |
| Oriental | 33 | 1 |
| Caucasian | 1,877 | 75 |
| Hispanic | 17 | 1 |
| Other | 86 | 3 |
| No Response | 17 | 1 |
| Total | 2,499 | 100 |

TABLE 17

DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY SIZE OF COMMUNITY

| Size of Community | Number | Percent |
|-------------------|--------------|------------|
| Less than 50 | 16 | -- |
| 51 - 499 | 196 | 8 |
| 500 - 999 | 186 | 7 |
| 1,000 - 4,999 | 545 | 22 |
| 5,000 - 19,999 | 495 | 20 |
| 20,000 - 49,999 | 131 | 5 |
| 50,000 or more | 888 | 36 |
| No Response | 42 | 2 |
| Total | 2,499 | 100 |

TABLE 18

DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY PRIMARY HOME LANGUAGE

| Primary Spoken Home Language | Number | Percent |
|------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| English | 2,314 | 93 |
| Other | 94 | 3 |
| No Response | 91 | 3 |
| Total | 2,499 | 100 |

TABLE 18
DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY WORK EXPERIENCE

| Type of Work | Yes | | NO | | TOTAL | |
|---------------------------|-------|----|-------|----|-------|-----|
| | NO. | % | NO. | % | NO. | % |
| Part-Time Job | 1,855 | 74 | 644 | 26 | 2,499 | 100 |
| Summer Job | 1,706 | 68 | 793 | 32 | 2,499 | 100 |
| Sales Person | 1,398 | 56 | 1,101 | 44 | 2,499 | 100 |
| Work Study, Coop | 669 | 27 | 1,830 | 73 | 2,499 | 100 |
| Self-Employed | 170 | 7 | 2,329 | 93 | 2,499 | 100 |
| Supervised Others | 660 | 26 | 1,839 | 74 | 2,499 | 100 |
| Managed Financial Affairs | 261 | 11 | 2,238 | 89 | 2,499 | 100 |
| No Work Experience | 63 | 3 | 2,436 | 97 | 2,499 | 100 |