



Futures for Kids Evaluation Study

FINAL REPORT

Domini R. Castellino
David Rabiner

Program Evaluation Unit
Center for Child and Family Policy
Duke University

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Executive Summary

Futures for Kids (F4K) is an online tool that allows students a safe and fun way to explore and find careers that match their unique interests and abilities. The website features online mentoring, interactive career counseling, newsletters, skill and career matching support, links to a wide assortment of educational opportunities, and powerful search engines to help students and their families easily navigate the information and make good decisions. F4K is currently being implemented in several school systems across the state of North Carolina (NC). In July 2005, F4K was awarded \$500,000 from the General Assembly of NC to expand F4K to additional school systems.

This report summarizes results of an independent evaluation of the F4K program that was conducted by the Program Evaluation Services Group at Duke University's Center for Child and Family Policy. The primary goal of this evaluation was to assess how experiences with F4K impacted students' knowledge of careers, their attitudes toward education and careers, and their confidence and readiness to make decisions about their educational and career futures. The utility of F4K in helping educators assist students in educational and career planning was also of interest.

Four schools, two middle and two high schools, from Durham and Scotland counties participated in the evaluation. The study consisted of a series of classroom sessions using the F4K web portal. Four lesson plans were administered by classroom teachers approximately one week apart. The lesson plans were developed to familiarize students with the F4K portal, assist students with career exploration, facilitate connections between students and employers, and aid in developing 4-year graduation plans.

Data collection consisted of three main parts; 1) a brief questionnaire which was administered following each lesson plan, 2) a more extensive survey administered at the end of the program and, 3) a questionnaire given to educators who have implemented F4K in their school. The data were subsequently provided to researchers at the Center for Child and Family Policy at Duke University for processing and analysis.

Based on analysis of student data, each of the four sessions appeared to be very successful. The data indicated that the F4K lessons were most useful in helping students to explore and learn about various career options. Results of the evaluation survey indicated that the overwhelming majority of students very much enjoyed and benefited from the F4K sessions. Most respondents found F4K easy to use and an interesting way to learn about careers. Most students also reported that they plan to continue to use F4K in the future to help with both career exploration and to find a job placement or apprenticeship. Further, the majority of students either agreed or strongly agreed that after using F4K, they felt more knowledgeable, confident, and excited about their educational and career future. One student indicated, "It helped me decide what I want to do when I graduate from school. It makes me feel more confident." Some differences emerged within the data with high school students and students from the more rural county scoring higher on some survey items. Educators reported that F4K helped them deliver career planning resources and helped them assist students with educational plans. Based on all the data collected for the current investigation, the overall assessment of F4K is a very positive one.

Overview

Futures for Kids (F4K) is an online tool that allows students a safe and fun way to explore and find careers that match their unique interests and abilities. It provides students, their families, and educators with useful information on hundreds of careers and the interactive technology permits businesses to connect with their potential workforce while also providing support in the form of mentors, internships, scholarships and training. The mission of F4K is to "...bridge the gap between the hopes and dreams of our students and the workforce development needs of our communities."¹ F4K attempts to achieve their mission primarily through integrating a computer portal system in middle and high school classrooms. The website features online mentoring, interactive career counseling, newsletters, skill and career matching support, links to a wide assortment of educational opportunities, and powerful search engines to help students and their families easily navigate the information and make good decisions. F4K is currently being implemented in several school systems across the state of North Carolina.

Staff at F4K set out to evaluate the utility of their program and contracted independent researchers at Duke University's Center for Child and Family Policy to conduct an evaluation study. The purpose of this study was to collect initial information on the impact of F4K on students as well as educators. Specifically, the primary goal of the study was to assess how experiences with F4K impacted students' knowledge of careers, their attitudes toward education and careers, and their confidence and readiness to make decisions about their educational and career futures. The utility of F4K in helping educators assist students in educational and career planning was also of interest.

In selecting schools for the study, a sampling of schools from both urban and rural districts was desired. Individual schools were selected based on interest from both school administration as well as from the teachers and school counselors who would actually be using the program. Four schools from two North Carolina counties; Durham and Scotland, were ultimately selected and agreed to participate in the evaluation study. In one county, staff had previously received F4K training. In the other county, staff had not received any prior training on F4K. In this instance, F4K personnel helped to facilitate the lesson plans in the classroom.

The study consisted of a series of classroom sessions using the F4K portal. Four lesson plans were administered approximately one week apart². Lesson plans for each session were developed by F4K staff and subsequently provided to the classroom teachers. Teachers completed the lesson plans with their students. In some cases, F4K staff helped facilitate the lesson plans.

Data collection consisted of three main parts; 1) a brief questionnaire which was administered following each lesson plan, 2) a more extensive survey administered at the end of the program and, 3) a questionnaire given to educators who have implemented F4K in their school. Survey instruments were developed by the Duke University research team, based on consultation with F4K staff and review of the F4K portal. Data collection was done in the classrooms by school personnel. Surveys were given to students by their teachers following each F4K session. Students were informed that their responses to the survey would remain anonymous and that it was important for them to provide their honest feedback about the F4K program. Upon completion by the students,

¹ Futures for Kids Newsletter, Spring 2005

² Because lesson plan 4 dealt with completing students' 4-year graduation plans, only middle school students completed lesson plan 4. For this session, high school students received an employer presentation.

teachers collected all surveys and data were either mailed to F4K or picked up by F4K staff each week. The data were subsequently provided to researchers at the Center for Child and Family Policy at Duke University for processing and analysis.

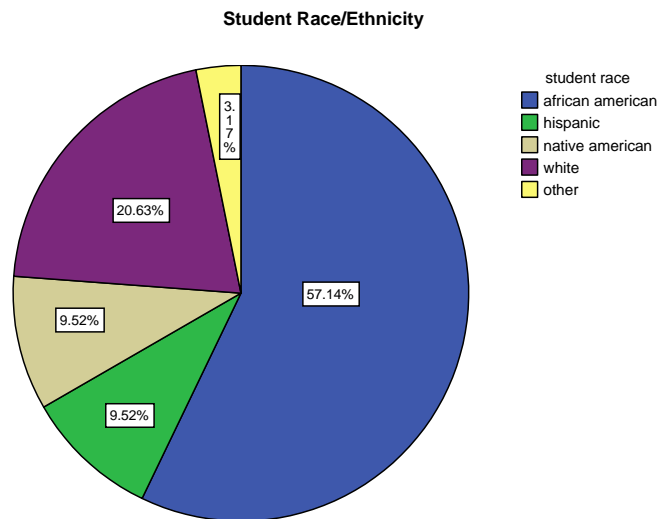
Demographics of the Sample

Two middle and two high schools participated in the evaluation study. Demographic data on these schools can be found in Table 1 below. School personnel, such as the school guidance counselor, in each participating school determined which classes would be most appropriate for participating in the evaluation study. Those classrooms were then asked to participate. Data were obtained from 114 total students; predominately African American, approximately half female and half male³ (See Graph 1).

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participating Schools

| School | County | Total | American Indian/ Alaskan | Asian | Black | Hispanic | White |
|---------------|----------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|-------|----------|-------|
| Neal Middle | Durham | 813 | 0 | 4 | 589 | 82 | 138 |
| Southern High | Durham | 1,471 | 2 | 14 | 1,048 | 114 | 293 |
| Carver Middle | Scotland | 550 | 72 | 1 | 252 | 8 | 217 |
| Scotland High | Scotland | 206 | 13 | 13 | 825 | 13 | 767 |

Graph 1. Ethnic Composition of Participating Students



³ Data are based on 3 of the participating schools. One middle school did not report demographic data.

Lesson Plan Surveys

Lesson plan surveys were based on individual lesson plans developed by Futures for Kids. The lesson plans were developed to familiarize students with the F4K portal, assist students with career exploration, facilitate connections between students and employers, and aid in developing 4-year graduation plans. Each survey consisted of five (5) questions intended to evaluate the utility of each particular F4K portal session that was given that day. Responses to questions were obtained on a 4-point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (4) for four of the five questions on the survey. The last question on the survey which asked the students for an overall rating of that particular day’s session was scored on a 3-point scale ranging from (1) “not at all useful” to (3) “very useful”⁴. A copy of all lesson plans and their corresponding survey can be found in Appendix 1.

Lesson 1

Lesson 1 was designed to introduce students to the F4K portal and have them explore various career options. After spending time researching various careers on the F4K portal, students were asked to gather information on their favorite three careers such as the type of work involved, information about the employment outlook and wages, as well as the educational requirements for each career.

Lesson 1 appeared to be quite successful based on student responses. Specifically, 94 percent of students either agreed or strongly agreed that the session was useful in helping them to explore different careers they might be interested in. Ninety three percent either agreed or strongly agreed that the F4K session helped them understand the educational requirements for careers they might be interested in. Similarly, 90 percent of students agreed or strongly agreed that the F4K session that day provided useful information on careers that they did not know before. And, 88 percent of students agreed or strongly agreed with both statements that the session helped them realize what they need to do to obtain the types of jobs they want and that the F4K session made them more excited about their own future career. More specific data for each question can be found in Appendix 2.

Lesson 2

Lesson 2 was designed to help students learn more about their favorite careers and connect with other students interested in similar careers as well as employers in the field. The students were asked to do this by replying to postings on the Career Discussions section of the F4K portal and by posting a new topic on the discussion boards. This section of the portal allows students to read and participate in ongoing discussions and to ask questions of career coaches at various companies.

Lesson 2 was also rated positively but not quite as positively as lesson 1. Eighty eight percent of students agreed or strongly agreed that the session was useful in helping them gather information regarding their favorite careers. The majority (77%) agreed or strongly agreed that participating in the discussion boards helped them to feel more connected to other students interested in similar careers. Fewer students rated the session as helping them to learn more about employers (73%) and feel connected to employers (64%). Although the responses to these two questions were not quite

⁴ This question was not included in lesson plan survey 1.

as positive as the others, the overwhelming majority of the students nonetheless found the session to be useful. Ninety five percent of students gave the session an overall rating of either somewhat or very useful. More specific data on each question can be found in Appendix 3.

Lesson 3

Lesson 3 involved a game called the “Career Chameleon”. The purpose of this game was to help students become aware of careers that interest other students as well as themselves and for students to practice their verbal and nonverbal communication skills. After researching career information on the F4K portal, students were asked to give a one-minute presentation on three separate careers; one favorite career and two careers they would not like to have. The rest of the class then had to guess which career was the students’ favorite.

Lesson 3 was rated very positively by the students. For each question, at least 86 percent of the students responded that they either agreed or strongly agreed that the lesson was useful. Specifically, 89 percent agreed or strongly agreed that the day’s session helped them gather information on careers of interest. Ninety percent reported that they received interesting information on careers that they did not know much about before. The session also helped the students feel comfortable with communicating their career interests as evidenced by the 86 percent who responded that they either agreed or strongly agreed with that statement. Ninety one percent of the students reported that the session was a fun way to learn about different careers. More specific data on each question can be found in Appendix 4.

Lesson 4

Lesson 4 was designed to help middle school students complete their 4-year graduation plan. Based on the top three favorite careers that the students had selected in previous sessions, the students worked on the F4K portal to select courses coinciding with their particular career pathway. Once the students selected enough credits to graduate, their individual graduation plans were printed for review with their parents and counselors for accuracy.

Because lesson 4 pertained to students completing their 4-year graduation plan, only middle school participants completed the lesson plan 4 survey (N=54). The majority of students also rated this session positively. Eighty percent responded that they either agreed or strongly agreed that the lesson was useful in helping them complete their 4-year graduation plan and that it made them more excited about their high school courses. Seventy nine percent thought the session made them feel more at ease about starting high school. Similarly, 78 percent of students reported that the session helped them understand how their education was preparing them for their future career. Overall, 93 percent rated lesson 4 as either somewhat or very useful. More specific data on each question can be found in Appendix 5.

Overall Summary of Individual Futures for Kids Lessons

In sum, each of the four sessions appeared to be very successful. Lesson 1 received the highest overall mean rating but all mean scores were very similar. In relation to specific items, the students scored the statements pertaining to career exploration the highest while those related to employers the lowest. These data indicate that the F4K lessons were most useful in helping students to explore and learn about various career options. The particular area where students regarded F4K as less

useful was in relation to learning about and connecting with specific employers. This is an area in which it would be important to make improvements.

Evaluation Survey

The evaluation survey was designed to assess students’ overall experiences with the F4K portal sessions. The 33-item survey asked students to rate the usefulness of each section of the F4K portal as well as to rate how F4K has influenced their career knowledge, attitudes, confidence, and readiness to make educational and career decisions.

Results of the survey indicated that the overwhelming majority of students very much enjoyed and benefited from the F4K sessions. Most respondents (96%) found F4K easy to use and an interesting way to learn about careers (94%). Further, 81 percent of students reported that they planned to continue to use F4K in the future to help with both career exploration and to find a job placement or apprenticeship. Eight-five percent of students would recommend F4K to their friends.

Of particular interest are students’ responses to questions in which students were asked to rate their knowledge, confidence and attitudes regarding education and careers after using F4K. Those questions and their responses are reported in Table 2. As seen in Table 2, the majority of students either agreed or strongly agreed that after using F4K, they felt more knowledgeable, confident, and excited about their educational and career future.

Table 2. Sample of Evaluation Survey Items and Responses

| Survey Question | Percentage of students who either agreed or strongly agreed with each question |
|---|--|
| After using F4K, I know more about different about career options | 95 |
| After using F4K, I feel more confident about making career decisions | 89 |
| After using F4K, I feel more confident about getting job/apprenticeship | 88 |
| After using F4K, I am more excited about graduating from high school | 88 |
| After using F4K, I understand what to I need do to get kinds of jobs I want | 91 |
| After using F4K, I feel more ready to make educational decisions | 86 |
| After using F4K, I feel more ready to make career decisions | 86 |
| F4K has made me more excited about my career future | 83 |
| F4K has helped me understand how education is related to careers | 84 |
| F4K has helped me realize I need to do well in school to get kinds of jobs I want | 91 |

Student Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Question 32 on the survey was an open-ended question that asked students to describe specifically how F4K has helped them. The following quotes provide an overview of students’ responses.

“It helped me decide what I want to do when I graduate from school. It makes me feel more confident.”

“I have learned many new things about the career of my choice.”

“It helped me by giving me the exact career options as well as the level of education needed and the amount of pay I can expect.”

It helped me to do better in school and at home and studying.”

It has showed me new jobs that I didn’t know before.”

“It helps me see different careers.”

“Futures for Kids has helped me because it showed me ways to get into college.”

One student responded by simply saying, “with everything”.

Question 33 was also an open-ended question that asked if students had ideas for changes to make F4K more helpful. Many students either did not respond or responded “no” to this question. The responses that were received included; more guest speakers, more career options, a little more detail about jobs, and different colleges on the website. One student responded, “No, it helped so much for me and my parents.”

Comparison of Middle School and High School Students’ Responses

One question not addressed in the above results is whether there were any differences in how middle and high school students perceived F4K. To address this issue, independent samples t-tests were performed on the survey items to determine if any significant differences existed between middle and high school participants. Several significant differences did emerge. On all of the following items, high school students reported higher mean scores than middle school students. These results suggest then that overall, high school students found F4K easier to use, they were more likely to plan to continue to use it, they felt more relaxed communicating with the career coaches, they felt that the career coaches provided useful information on jobs and education, and they reported that the career coaches helped them explore career options they would not have thought of. Table 3 represents the data from these analyses.

Table 3. Significant Differences among Middle and High School Students on Survey Items

| Item | Middle School M (SD) | High School M (SD) | t statistic | df | Significance Level |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-----|--------------------|
| F4K easy to use | 3.24 (.61) | 3.51 (.57) | 2.49 | 114 | p<.01 |
| Plan to continue to use F4K to explore career options | 2.89 (.82) | 3.25 (.91) | 2.21 | 113 | p<.05 |
| Felt relaxed communicating with career coaches | 2.82 (.75) | 3.20 (.75) | 2.72 | 114 | p<.01 |
| Career coaches provided useful info on jobs | 2.91 (.82) | 3.26 (.77) | 2.38 | 114 | p<.05 |
| Career coaches helped explore options I would not have thought of | 2.83 (.85) | 3.15 (.79) | 2.06 | 112 | p<.05 |
| Career coaches helped with info regarding education | 2.92 (.76) | 3.28 (.71) | 2.58 | 112 | p<.01 |

Additional independent samples t-tests were performed on the survey items to determine if any significant differences existed on the items according to school location; urban versus rural. Several significant differences did emerge. On all of the following items, students from the more urban county (i.e., Durham) reported higher mean scores than those from the more rural county (i.e., Scotland). Table 4 represents the data from these analyses.

Table 4. Significant Differences between Durham and Scotland Counties on Evaluation Survey Items

| Item | Durham M (SD) | Scotland M (SD) | t statistic | df | Significance Level |
|--|------------------|--------------------|-------------|-----|--------------------|
| After F4K, I know more about career options | 3.50 (.56) | 3.24 (.62) | 2.27 | 113 | p<.05 |
| Plan to continue to use F4K to find job/apprenticeship | 3.09 (.70) | 2.78 (.94) | 2.04 | 114 | p<.05 |
| Career finder helped narrow job interests | 3.31 (.59) | 3.05 (.81) | 1.97 | 114 | p<.05 |
| F4K helped understand what skills are needed for jobs | 3.34 (.67) | 3.05 (.90) | 1.93 | 112 | p<.06* |

* approaching significance

These results indicate that overall, urban students more so than rural students felt that after using F4K they know more about career options, that F4K helped them understand what skills are required for certain jobs, that the career finder survey helped them narrow their career interests, and that they plan to continue to use F4K in the future.

Overall Summary of Evaluation Survey

The high percentages of positive responses reported in the evaluation survey indicate that the overwhelming majority of students felt as though they benefited from using F4K. Students indicated that they felt more confident, excited and ready to make decisions; that they knew more about various careers and career options; and that they enjoyed using F4K and planned to continue to use F4K in the future.

Educator Surveys

The educator survey was designed to obtain information from educators in the school system who have used F4K. The goals were to find out how educators assisted students with career planning prior to F4K, what difficulties they had experienced in helping students with career planning prior to F4K, and to obtain their assessment of how F4K was helping them and their students with career planning.

Of the 19 surveys sent by F4K to educators who have used the F4K portal, 10 completed surveys were received by the Duke research team. The respondents included 4 School Counselors, 5 Career Development Coordinators and 1 GEAR UP School Coordinator. Three middle school and 7 high school educators completed the surveys. The responses are summarized as follows.

In response to question 1, *“How did you assist students with career planning prior to F4K?”*, a variety of answers were reported. A number of educators listed CFNC, NC Careers, Bridges, and the Kuder on-line interest, skills, and values assessment. Other responses included individual meetings with students, informal questionnaires, and classroom guidance sessions. One high school Career Development Coordinator said, “F4K forced me to use technology in my instruction. This has built my confidence tremendously with regards to providing effective teaching.”

Only middle school educators were asked question 1a, *“How did you assist students with their 4-year education plans prior to F4K?”* Responses ranged from educators simply discussing what “track” students may want to be in in high school to using materials provided by DPS and CFNC.

In response to question 2, *“What difficulties have you experienced assisting students with career planning?”*, many educators indicated that time was a big factor, both lack of time with individual students and lack of time to assist students with career planning due to other curriculum and job responsibilities. Other responses included lack of resources and up-to-date information and problems with CFNC.

Only middle school educators were asked question 2a, *“What difficulties have you experienced assisting students with their 4-year education plan?”* Responses included having students understand the importance of their choices on their future, students tend to be overwhelmed with so many choices and that students are not sure of what course of study they want to enter so it’s difficult to choose the appropriate courses.

In response to question 3, *“How has F4K helped you deliver career planning resources?”* educators reported that F4K was a fun, exciting and easy way to “match up” students, the career coaches and mentors were helpful, F4K helped with assessment, exploration, and job opportunities. One middle school educator reported, “Futures for Kids has been terrific. It is so computer friendly. The website itself is student friendly. When the student answers the career finder questionnaire, they are so amazed of all the careers that pop up. It is very helpful in choosing their pathways because the top 3 pathways are given.” Another educator, a high school counselor indicated that, “The students sometimes think they already know what they want to do, but after visiting the Futures for Kids website, they have a different take on things.” A high school counselor stated, “The beginning survey is quick and gives results that students can “try on” as soon as they take the survey and read the list of careers resulting. For students who have no idea and/or have not even thought about careers yet this is a great beginning.”

Only middle school educators responded to question 3a, *“How has Futures for Kids helped you assist students with their 4-year education plan?”* One school counselor stated, “It has been just magnificent in assisting students with their 4-year education plan. When the students do their drop down screen according to their pathways all the electives from that particular school are given. It is very helpful when students see what core courses they can select.” Similarly, another educator said, “F4K is making the selecting of 4-year plans much easier...Revisions and updates are easy to make. These tasks are a disaster for documents that are on NCR paper.”

In response to question 4, *“What is most useful part of F4K for students?”*, responses included having up-to-date accurate career information all in one location, the career inventory, the 4-year graduation plan, a growing interest in connecting with the career coaches, and the results are fast.

In response to question 4a, *“What is most useful part of F4K for educators?”*, one educator indicated “It allows for classroom instruction, individual exploration, record keeping, planning, research, and links to other career resources.” Another educator stated, “The educator portal is remarkable, I can also view students education plan and edit the plan if the student and I see necessary. I love the list of resources that assist with information to parents about the program and explains what his/her child is doing.” Other responses included the career finder, the 4-year plan, and being easy to match all students’ interests.

In response to question 5, *“Describe a specific instance in which you’ve seen a student have a positive experience using F4K”*, several positive experiences were reported. They include the following:

“Soon after I was first introduced to F4K, I presented it to an after school program in a middle school. Students had a great time navigating around the site. At 4:00 I suggested to the last student that there that her mother might be waiting to pick her up to go home. She went to check and came back with her mother. It was after 5:00 before I could get BOTH of them to leave.”

“I had a parent tell me that her son suggested she use F4K.org because she had just resigned from her job in order to find a less stressful one and was not sure what to do next. They took the survey and explored options for her!”

“There was one young man who knew he wanted to be an architect. He explained to me that F4K confirmed and reinforced his plans. He shared numerous points and information he had discovered using F4K. He showed how he had saved information in his locker. He was very happy about his experience; I can still see his grin.”

I remember one time when a student wanted to be an airline pilot and he viewed the video; he quickly changed his mind because the speaker in the video stated that you are responsible for over 120 people. That made him choose a different career and even asked could he retake the career finder.”

In response to question 6, *“What would you like to see differently with F4K?”*, responses ranged from having more job/internship postings, more interactive lesson plans, and more careers for kids to email. One Career Development Coordinator wanted a learning style inventory as part of the assessment given that all students do not learn in the same manner. This person also stated that “I would like to see F4K spread across the state of NC so that every student would have the F4K advantage.” Another educator reported, “I would like to see them (F4K) get additional funding to hire educators who have worked in the trenches and funding to solve technical issues”. A middle school counselor responded to this question by saying, “ I can not say of anything I would want to see differently...I absolutely love to work with my rising 9th graders on F4K.org. Thank you so much for designing a friendlier program and keep up the fantastic work!”

In sum, all the educators who used F4K and responded to the survey rated the program highly. Based on their responses, F4K has helped educators to deliver career planning resources and has helped them assist students with educational plans as well. Moreover, the educators also described seeing students have positive experiences using F4K.

Summary

Based on all the data collected for the current investigation, the overall assessment of F4K is a positive one. Analyses revealed that each of the four F4K sessions appeared to be very successful. The data indicated that the F4K lessons were most useful in helping students to explore and learn about various career options. In contrast, the particular area where students did not rate the sessions quite as high was in relation to connecting with employers, although even here, ratings suggested that the majority of students found this aspect of F4K useful. However, this does appear to be an area that would be important to strengthen and expand in the future. Results of the evaluation survey indicated that the overwhelming majority of students very much enjoyed and benefited from the F4K sessions. Most respondents found F4K easy to use and an interesting way to learn about careers. The majority of students reported that they plan to continue to use F4K in the future to help with both career exploration and to find a job placement or apprenticeship. Further, most students either agreed or strongly agreed that after using F4K, they felt more knowledgeable, confident, and excited about their educational and career future. Some differences emerged within the data with high school students and students from the more rural county scoring higher on some particular items. Educators reported that F4K helped them deliver career planning resources and helped them assist students with educational plans.

Based on all the data collected for the current investigation, the overall assessment of F4K is a very positive one, and these results support the value of continuing to expand the number of students across NC with access to F4K. In future evaluations of the program, it will be important to supplement the survey data collected here with objective indicators of whether students who participate in F4K make better grades, are more likely to complete high school, and, ultimately, experience greater success in identifying and attaining their career goals.

Appendix 1

Lesson Plans and Surveys

Lesson Plan #1

Futures for Kids' Student Portal Career Comparison

NAME: _____ SCHOOL: _____

| | FAVORITE CAREER 1 | FAVORITE CAREER 2 | FAVORITE CAREER 3 |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Career Title ⇨ | | | |
| <p>Work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the career (what work is done in this career?) • Predominant work location? • Working conditions? <p>Facts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number employed? • Employment outlook (rate of growth)? • Wages? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Entry Level – Average <p>Related occupations?</p> <p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What high school courses would prepare you for this career? • What is the NC Career Pathway? • High School Diploma, OJT, Community College, Tech School, University, etc.? • Degree, diploma, certificate? • Major? • Certifications, Licenses, etc.? <p>Tuition Cost</p> | | | |

Futures for Kids Lesson Plan Follow-Up #1

1. The Futures for Kids session today was useful in helping me to explore different careers that I might be interested in.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

2. The Futures for Kids session today was useful in helping me to understand the educational requirements for careers that I might be interested in.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

3. The Futures for Kids session today gave me useful information on careers that I did not know before.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

4. The Futures for Kids session today helped me to realize what I need to do to get the kinds of jobs I want.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

5. The Futures for Kids session today has made me more excited about my future career.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Futures for Kids' Evaluation Lesson Plan #2

1. Go to www.f4k.org and log on to your **F4K Students** account using your login and password. If you forgot your password, click on **FORGOT PASSWORD** and answer your password hint question. If you forgot your login, ask the teacher or counselor who is facilitating the session to look it up for you. Please do not open another account.
2. If **MY MESSAGES** is blinking in your locker, click on it to see if you have new messages.
3. If you did not identify your top three careers using the career comparison worksheet in the last session, please do that now.
4. Click on **MY FAVORITE CAREERS** to see if you saved at least your top three careers in your locker. If you did not do that, click on **Self-Guided Career Search** and find the top three careers that you listed in the career comparison worksheet. Click the **Favorites** box beside your careers to save them to your locker.
5. Go to **MY FAVORITE CAREERS** and rank your careers based on your career explorations so far. You can delete careers from your locker anytime by un-checking the **Favorite** block in **My Favorite Careers**.
6. Click on the **NC Pathway** for your top career. If you find other related careers in which you are interested, click on them and explore the **Career Details** for them. You can add more careers from this pathway to your locker.
7. Click on your top ranked career in **MY FAVORITE CAREERS**.
 - a. If you have not viewed a video for this career, please do that now, if there is one available for it.
 - b. Click on **Career Discussions** for this career.
 - c. Notice the careers that are listed for this discussion board at the top of the page.
 - d. If there are postings on this discussion board, click on several of them; the latest are at the bottom.
 - e. Reply to at least one of the postings.
 - f. Click on **Post A New Topic** and ask your own question. Highlight your question in the subject box.
 - g. Click the **Add to My Discussions** box at the top of the page to save this discussion to your locker.
8. Go back to **My Favorite Careers** and click on your top career again.
 - a. Click on **Employers**. If there are employers listed for this career, click on the company names to find out more about them.
 - b. Click on the careers the companies have in which you are interested.
 - c. Click on the **Career Discussions** for your career interest to join a discussion with a career coach at this company.
 - d. If there are postings on this discussion board, click on several of them; the latest are at the bottom.
 - e. Reply to at least one of the postings.
 - f. Click on **Post A New Topic** and ask the career coach at this company something about your career interest at their company and/or if they do job shadowing or site tours in which you could participate.

- g. Click the **Add to My Discussions** box at the top of the page to save this discussion to your locker.
9. Repeat items 7 and 8 for your next two top careers.
 10. Remember to check your messages and discussions in your locker every time you visit your F4K account.

Futures for Kids Lesson Plan Follow-Up #2

1. The Futures for Kids session today was useful in helping me to gather information about my Favorite Careers.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

2. The Futures for Kids session today helped me feel more connected to other students who are interested in similar careers by reading and/or posting on the discussion boards.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

3. The Futures for Kids session today was useful in helping me to learn more about employers for my favorite careers.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

4. The Futures for Kids session today helped me feel more connected to employers.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

5. Overall, I would rate today's Futures for Kids session as:

Very Useful Somewhat Useful Not at all Useful

Futures for Kids' Lesson Plan #3

Please ask your students to go www.f4k.org and log on to their F4K **Students** account using their login and password. If they forgot their password, they can click on **FORGOT PASSWORD** and answer their password hint question. If they forgot their login, you can look up their login and password in your Educator Portal account. Please do not let them open another account.

Remind your students to check their locker for new postings to their saved discussion boards and for new messages. MY DISCUSSIONS and MY MESSAGES should be blinking if there are new postings.

Career Chameleon: The Game Show of Cover-ups

*A **chameleon** is a person given to often expedient change in ideas or character; one that is subject to quick or frequent change especially in appearance.*

The purpose of the game is for students to:

- Be made aware of careers that interest other students, and careers that interest them personally
- Practice acting skills, public speaking skills and other nonverbal and verbal communication skills

The game should be played rapidly – each student has one minute to make his or her presentation, and scoring by the class takes only a few seconds after each presentation.

Materials needed:

- Access to F4K Student Portal
- A stopwatch, clock or some other way to time students' one-minute presentations
- A funny noisemaker to signal when time is up
- A class roster to keep track of each student's score as the game progresses
- A copy of the Career Chameleon Worksheet for each student (included)
- A copy of the Super Scoring Tower Sheet for each student (included)

Step by Step:

1. Starting with the number one, write a number on each Super Scoring Tower Sheet. Later, when you call out that number, that student will deliver his or her presentation to the class.
2. Introduce yourself as the game show's host. Explain to students that: "After doing some career research with the F4K Student Portal, you will each have one minute to tell the rest of our class about three careers. One career is your favorite. The other two are careers you would not like to have."
3. "After your one-minute presentation, the audience (the rest of your classmates) must guess which career is your favorite. You do not want them to guess correctly. One way to send them down the wrong trail is to look excited about a career you would not want. Don't look too excited about the career you really would like. You get 10 points for every person who doesn't guess your favorite career, and I – your host – get to award extra points for really terrific presentations."

4. Hand out the worksheets. Your students should have identified their favorite career in a previous session, but ask students to use F4K Student Portal to find two careers they know they would NOT like to have.
5. After each student has one "would like" and two "would not like" careers, give students one minute to fold their Super Scoring Tower sheet. By folding neatly, then unfolding and taping or gluing the flap, they should be able to make a freestanding triangular tower to display their selection: one, two or three.
6. Welcome your students to the new career game show, Career Chameleon. Everyone in the class gets a turn being the challenger.
7. As you call out their numbers, each challenger stands at the front of the classroom and addresses the audience. He or she has one minute to talk about three careers.
8. The audience must guess which of the three careers the challenger really likes most. Students turn their Super Scoring Tower toward the front of the classroom to indicate which of the three careers they think is the challenger's favorite career.
9. The challenger announces what his or her favorite career really is -- one, two or three -- and earns 10 points for every person in the class who did not guess the correct favorite career.
10. As the host, you can award extra points for strong, engaging presentations (this is an incentive for students to put more effort into their time at the front of the class).
11. After all students have taken a turn as the challenger, you can announce the winner. And the prize? He or she gets to keep their highly collectible Super Scoring Tower! (Everyone else should hand them in, so the class can reuse these handy items next time you play Career Chameleon.)

Futures for Kids Lesson Plan Follow-Up #3

1. The Futures for Kids session today was useful in helping me to gather information on careers that I am interested in.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

2. The Futures for Kids session today gave me interesting information about careers that I did not know much about before.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

3. The Futures for Kids session today helped me feel comfortable with communicating my career interests.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

4. The Futures for Kids session today was a fun way to learn more about different careers.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

5. Overall, I would rate today's Futures for Kids session as:

Very Useful Somewhat Useful Not at all Useful

Futures for Kids' Lesson Plan #4

1. Please ask your students to go www.f4k.org and log on to their F4K **Students** account using their login and password. If they forgot their password, they can click on **FORGOT PASSWORD** and answer their password hint question. If they forgot their login, you can look up their login and password in your Educator Portal account. Please do not let them open another account.
2. Remind your students to check their locker for new postings to their saved discussion boards and for new messages. MY DISCUSSIONS and MY MESSAGES should be blinking if there are new postings. Give them some time to read their messages and respond to any new discussion board postings.
3. Make sure that students have saved at least three (3) favorite careers to their locker and that they have ranked them with most favorite being #1. Give them some time to do that if they have not done so already.
4. Click on MY 4-YEAR GRAD PLAN in their locker.
5. Make sure their top three Favorite Careers are displayed in the Grad Plan.
6. The Career Pathway and Course of Study windows will be automatically populated based on what is most appropriate for their #1 Favorite Career. They can change any of these fields at this time if they want to.
7. Click the high school they plan to attend, and the 4-Year Graduation Plan template will display for that school.
8. Select the core courses they will need to take in grades 9-12 based on the graduation requirements for their selected course of study as indicated in the notes under the Subject Area titles.
 - a. If they choose the College University Prep course of study, make sure they select two years of the same foreign language and a math with Algebra II being the pre-requisite.
9. Select Pathway Courses available at their high school with an emphasis on choosing those related to their top Career Pathway. Each pathway course is prefixed with three-digit codes that indicate the pathway in which that course falls. The codes appear beside the titles of all of the pathways in the Career Pathway drop-down window. They can select up to three pathway courses per year. The arts courses will appear in the pathway drop-down windows.
 - a. If they choose the College Tech Prep course of study, make sure they select four courses in the same CTE pathway to include a second level course.
 - b. If they choose the Career Prep course of study, they can select 4 credits in CTE, ROTC, or in an arts education pathway to include an advanced course in that pathway.

10. Select Additional Courses for grades 9-12. Math, science, English (language arts), social studies, and health & PE electives available at their high school will be listed in all three Additional Course windows. They can select up to three courses per year.
11. Check to see if they have registered for enough credits to graduate and have selected a course for every class period available at their school.
12. Print their Grad Plans for review with parents and counselors for accuracy.

Futures for Kids Lesson Plan Follow-Up #4

1. The Futures for Kids session today was useful in helping me to complete my 4-year graduation plan.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

2. The Futures for Kids session today made me feel more at ease about starting high school.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

3. The Futures for Kids session today made me more excited about my high school courses.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

4. The Futures for Kids session today helped me understand how my education is preparing me for the kind of career I want.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

5. Overall, I would rate today's Futures for Kids session as:

Very Useful Somewhat Useful Not at all Useful

Futures for Kids Evaluation Survey

We want to learn what working with Futures for Kids was like for you and how we can make it more helpful. Please read each question below carefully and answer the questions as honestly as you can by checking the choice that best describes how you feel. Your answers will remain completely confidential – no one will know what you said. Your honest opinions about Futures for Kids will be most appreciated. Thanks!

General

1. Futures for Kids was easy to use.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

2. Futures for Kids was an interesting way to learn about different careers I might want to have.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

3. After using Futures for Kids, I know more about different career options.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

4. After using Futures for Kids, I feel more confident about making decisions about my future career.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

5. After using Futures for Kids, I feel more confident about getting a good job or apprenticeship.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

6. After using Futures for Kids, I feel I can make better decisions about my future.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

7. After using Futures for Kids, I am more excited about graduating from high school.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

8. After using Futures for Kids, I understand what I need to do to get the kinds of jobs I want.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

9. After using Futures for Kids, I feel more ready to make decisions about my education.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

10. After using Futures for Kids, I feel more ready to make decisions about my future career.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

11. Futures for Kids has made me more excited about my career future.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

12. Futures for Kids has helped me to understand how education is related to careers.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

13. Futures for Kids has helped me realize that I need to do well in high school to get the kind of job I want.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

14. I plan to continue to use Futures for Kids to help me explore career options.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

15. I plan to continue to use Futures for Kids to help me find a job placement or apprenticeship.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

16. I would recommend Futures for Kids to my friends.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Career Finder and Survey

17. The career finder provided useful information on careers that I was interested in.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

18. The career finder helped me to explore information on careers that I didn't know much about before.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

19. The career finder survey was helpful in narrowing my job interests.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

20. The career finder survey helped me to discover job options that I wasn't aware of before.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Career Coaches

21. I felt relaxed communicating with the career coaches.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

22. The career coaches provided useful information regarding jobs.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

23. The career coaches helped me narrow my career interests.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

24. The career coaches helped me explore career options I would not have thought of for myself.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

25. The career coaches helped me with information regarding my education.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Employer/Company Information

26. Futures for Kids helped me to connect with employers I might work for.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

27. Futures for kids helped me to get a job or apprenticeship.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

28. Futures for Kids helped me to understand what skills are needed for certain jobs.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

For Middle School Students Only

29. Futures for Kids has helped me with decisions about my 4-year graduation plan.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

30. Futures for Kids has helped me understand how my 4-year graduation plan is related to my future career.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Open-ended

31. Do you plan on going to college? Yes No

32. Please describe specifically how Futures for Kids has helped you (for example with your school plans, career exploration, or job/apprenticeship search).

33. Do you have any ideas about changes to Futures for Kids that would make it more helpful?

Please complete the following:

School name: _____ Your position/title: _____

Please list the demographics of your school's student population in percentages:

African American _____ Asian _____ Hispanic _____ Native American _____ White _____ Other _____

Futures for Kids Middle School Educator Interview

We at Futures for Kids would like to better understand how educators assist their students with career planning. Please answer the following few questions about your experiences. We would also like to get your feedback on Futures for Kids. ***Your answers will remain completely confidential.*** We appreciate your honest opinions and thank you for taking the time to answer our questions.

1. How did you assist students with career planning prior to Futures for Kids?
 - 1a. How did you assist students with their 4-year education plans prior to Futures for Kids?
2. What difficulties have you experienced in assisting students with career planning?
 - 2a. What difficulties have you experienced in assisting students with their 4-year education plans?
3. How has Futures for Kids helped you deliver career planning resources to students?
 - 3a. How has Futures for Kids helped you assist students with their 4-year education plans?
4. What do you feel is the most useful part of Futures for Kids for your students?
 - 4a. What do you feel is the most useful part of Futures for Kids for educators who are assisting students with career planning?
5. Please describe one or more specific instances in which you've seen a student have a positive experience using F4K (for example, connect with a prospective employer; show interest in a potential career they may not have otherwise thought of, etc).
6. What would you like to see differently with Futures for Kids?

Please complete the following:

School name: _____ Your position/title: _____

Please list the demographics of your school's student population in percentages:

African American _____ Asian _____ Hispanic _____ Native American _____ White _____ Other _____

Futures for Kids High School Educator Interview

We at Futures for Kids would like to better understand how educators assist their students with career planning. Please answer the following few questions about your experiences. We would also like to get your feedback on Futures for Kids. ***Your answers will remain completely confidential.*** We appreciate your honest opinions and thank you for taking the time to answer our questions.

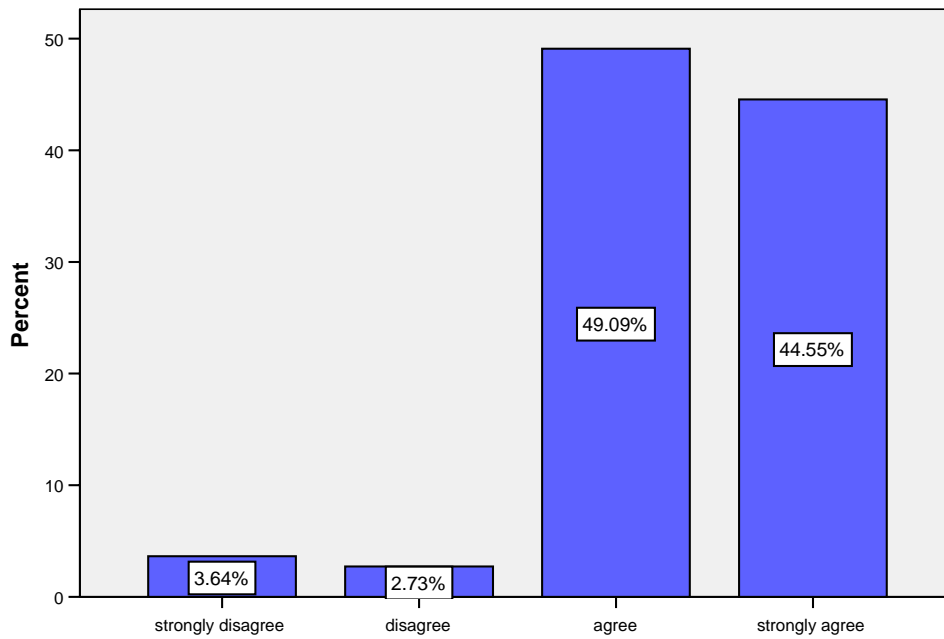
1. How did you assist students with career planning prior to Futures for Kids?
2. What difficulties have you experienced in assisting students with career planning?
3. How has Futures for Kids helped you deliver career planning resources to students?
4. What do you feel is the most useful part of Futures for Kids for your students?
 - 4a. What do you feel is the most useful part of Futures for Kids for educators who are assisting students with career planning?
5. Please describe one or more specific instances in which you've seen a student have a positive experience using F4K (for example, connect with a prospective employer; show interest in a potential career they may not have otherwise thought of, etc).
6. What would you like to see differently with Futures for Kids?

Appendix 2

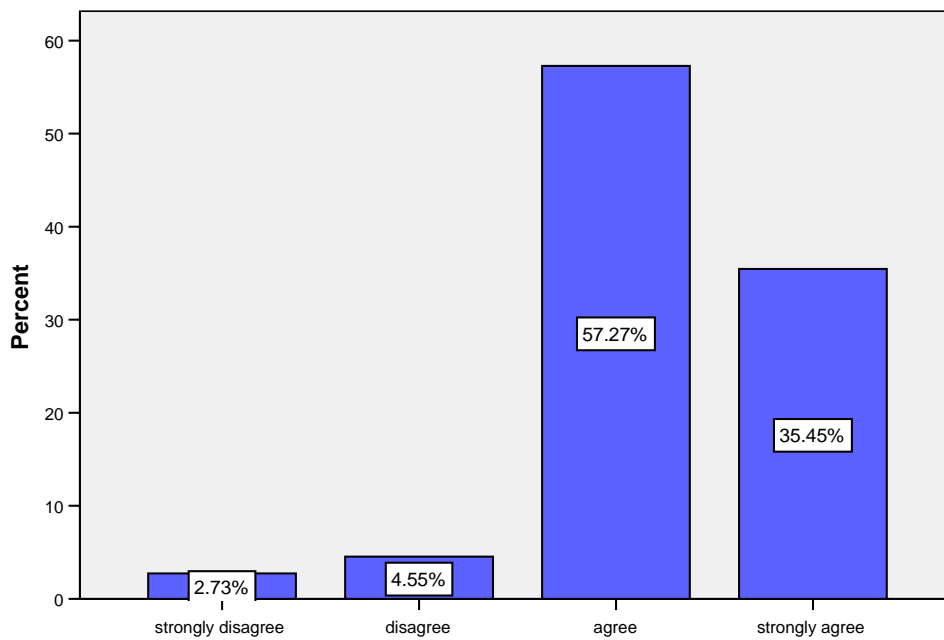
Lesson 1 Survey Responses

Each question began by asking the following: “The Futures for Kids session today...”

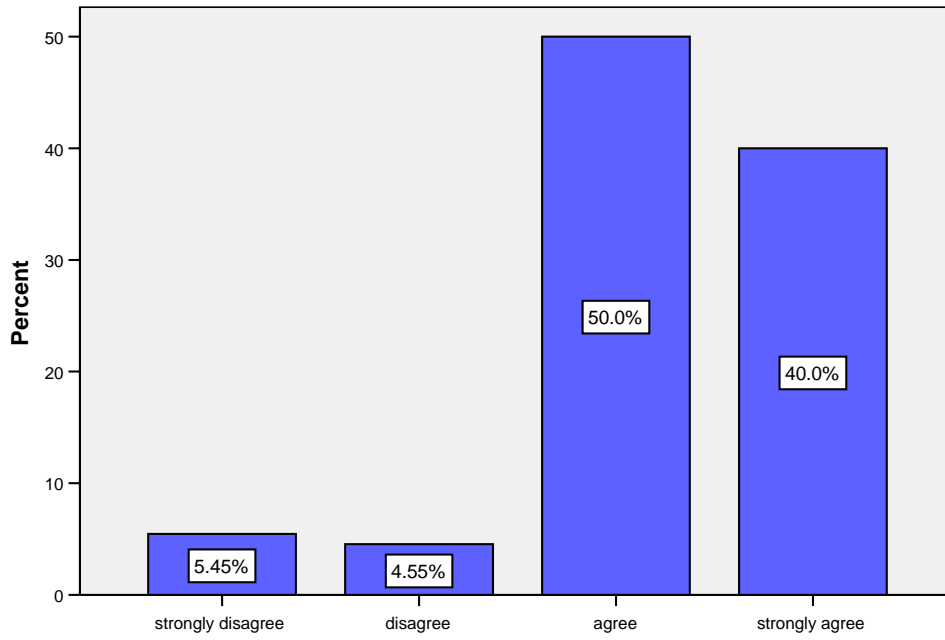
was useful in helping explore different careers



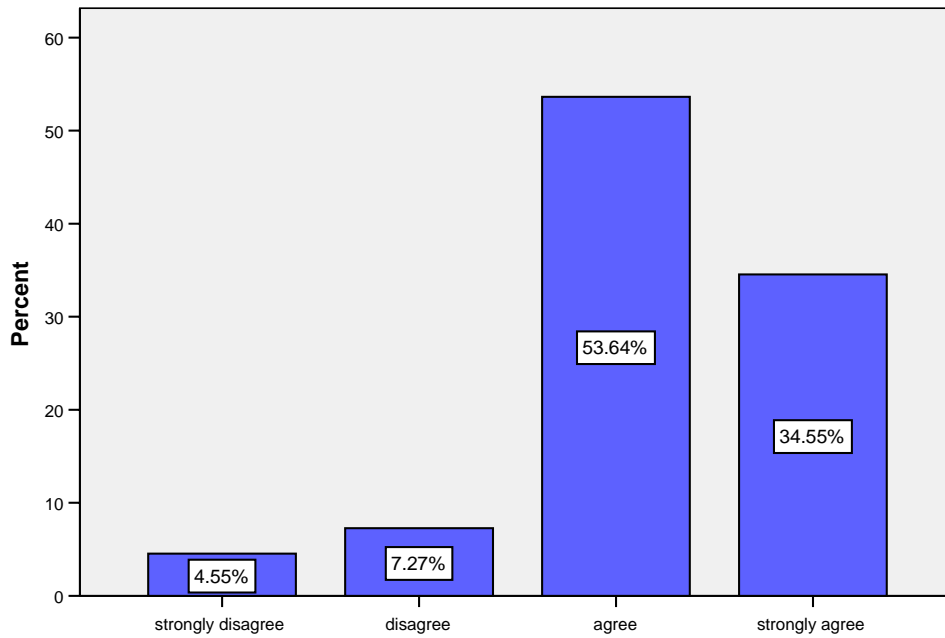
was useful in helping understand educational requirements



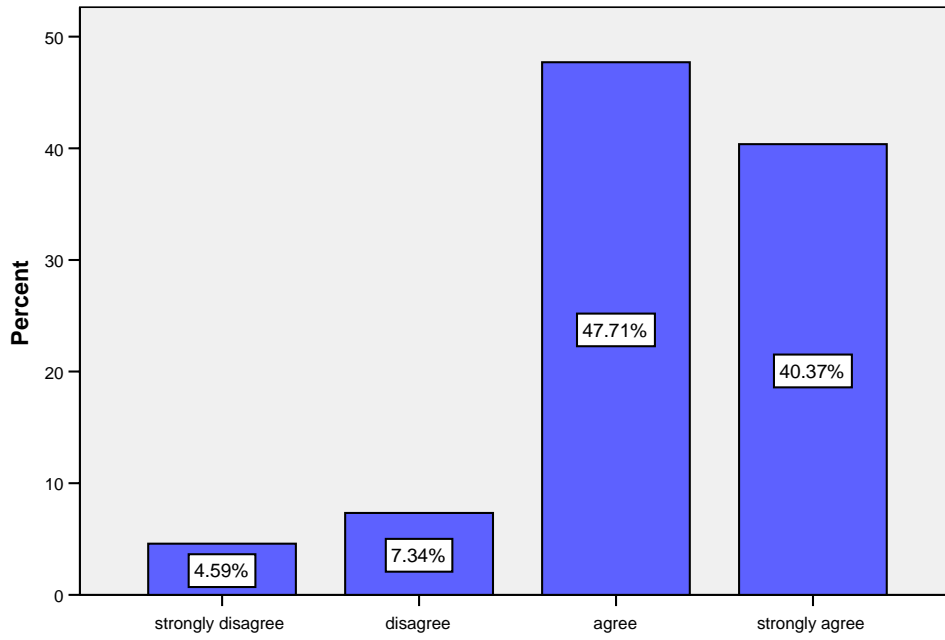
gave useful information on careers I did not know



helped me realize what I need to do to get jobs I want



made me more excited about future career

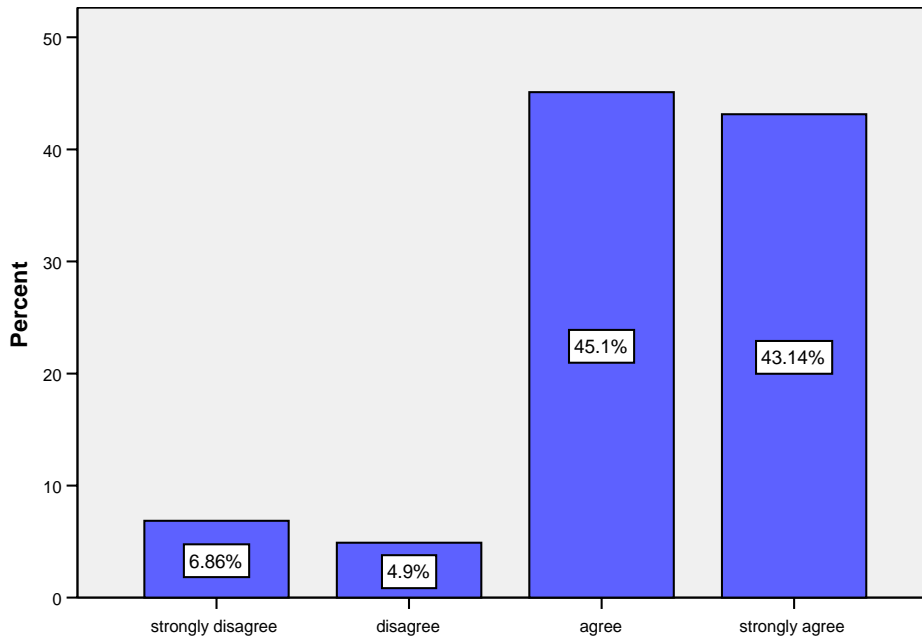


Appendix 3

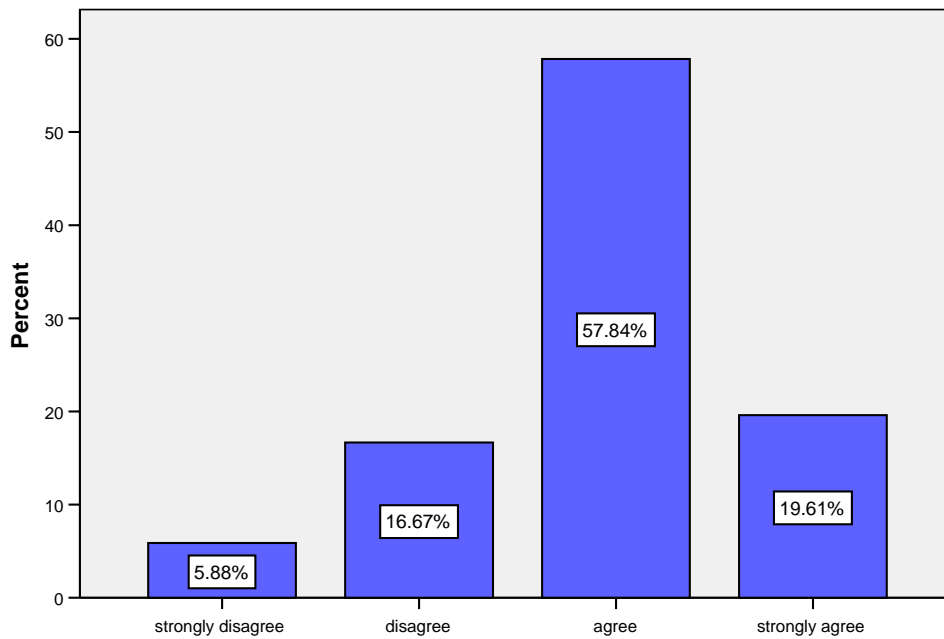
Lesson 2 Survey Responses

Each question began by asking the following: “The Futures for Kids session today...”

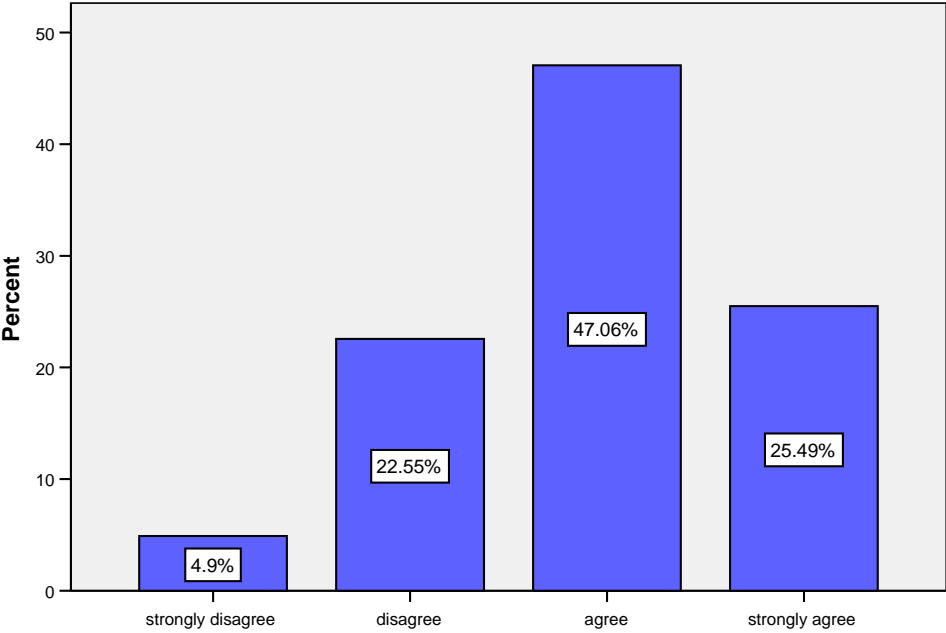
was useful in helping gather information about my favorite career



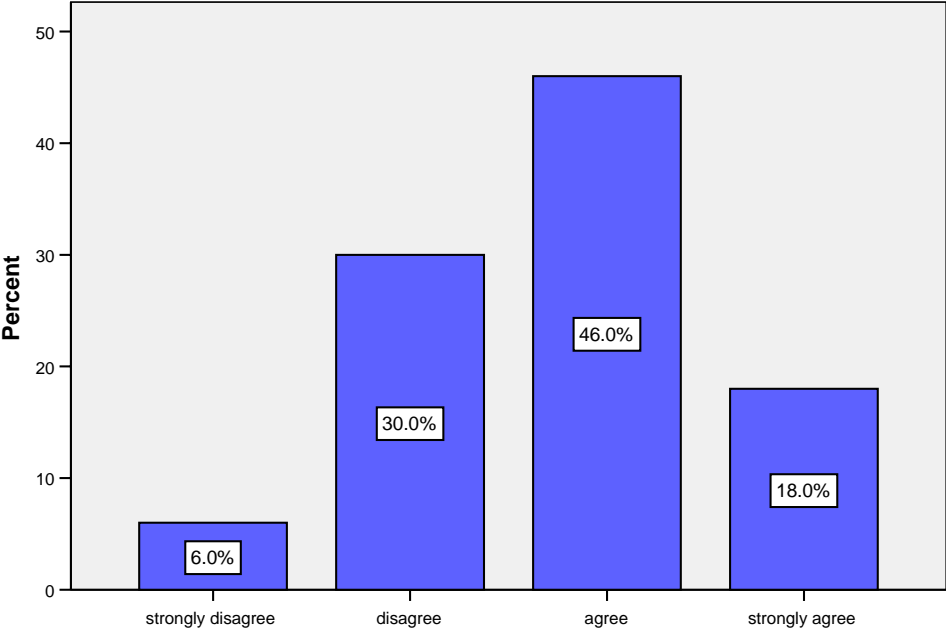
helped me feel connected to other students through discussion boards



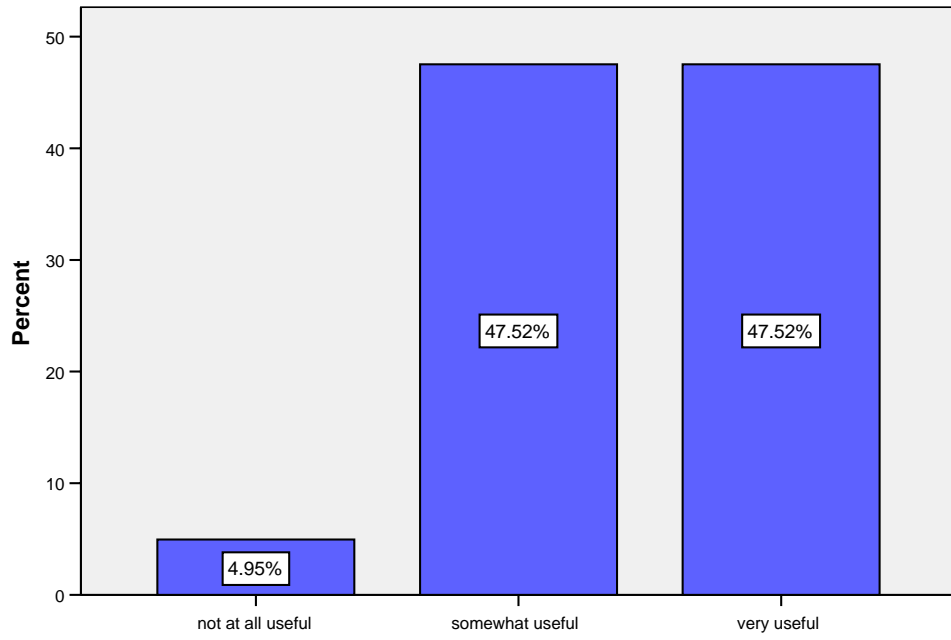
was useful in helping learn more about employers



helped me feel more connected to employers



overall rating

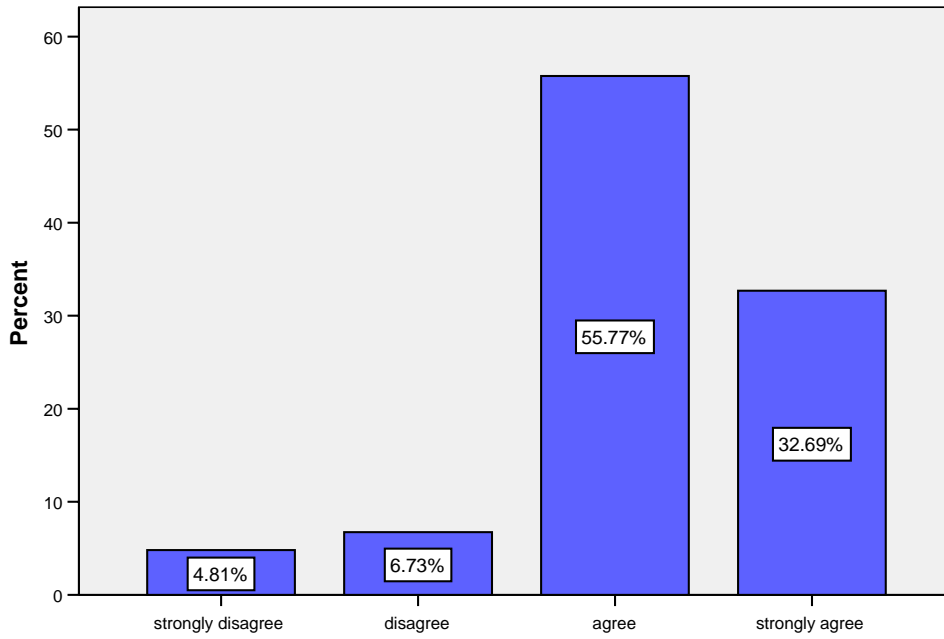


Appendix 4

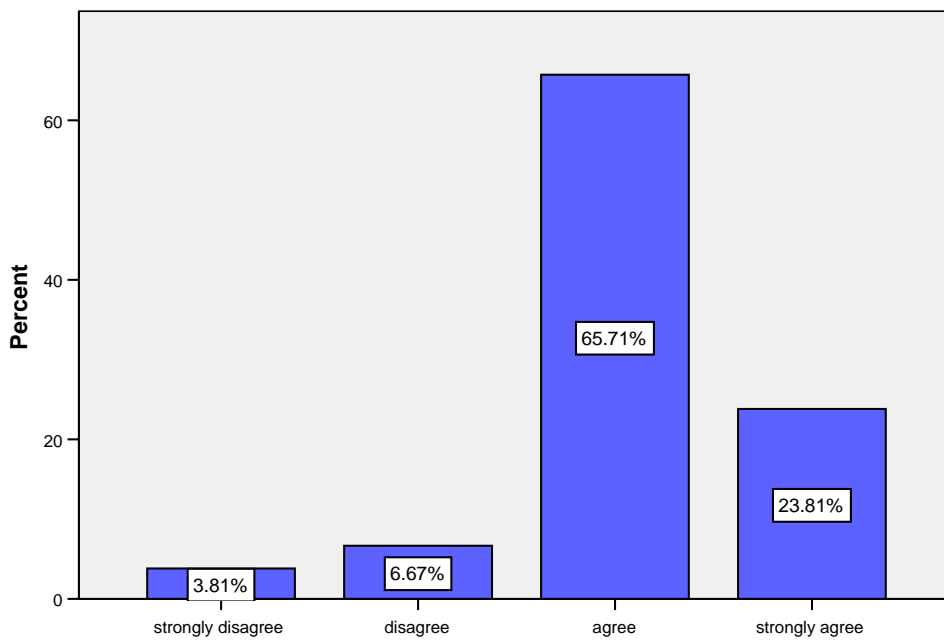
Lesson 3 Survey Responses

Each question began by asking the following: “The Futures for Kids session today...”

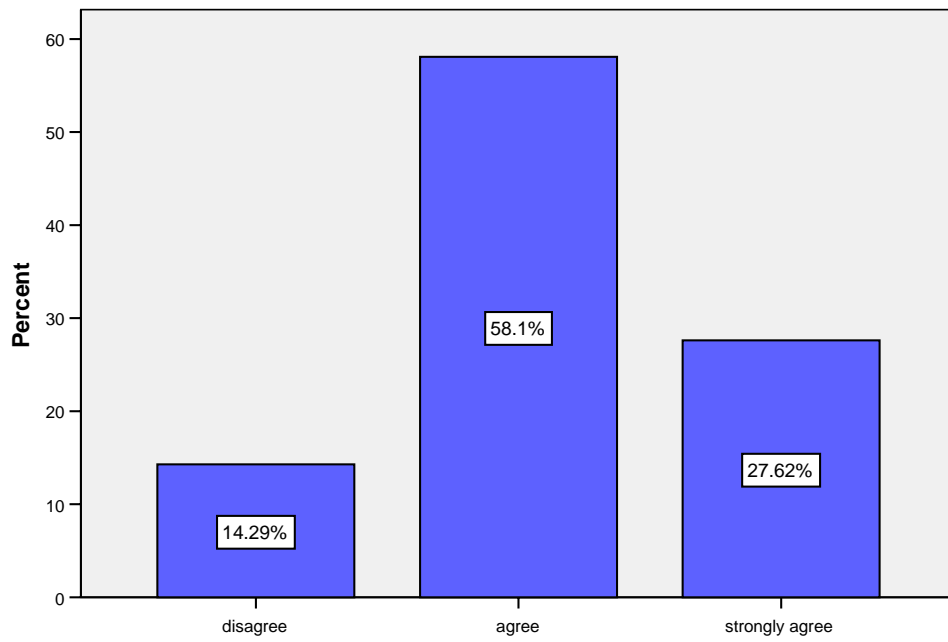
helped me gather information on careers I'm interested in



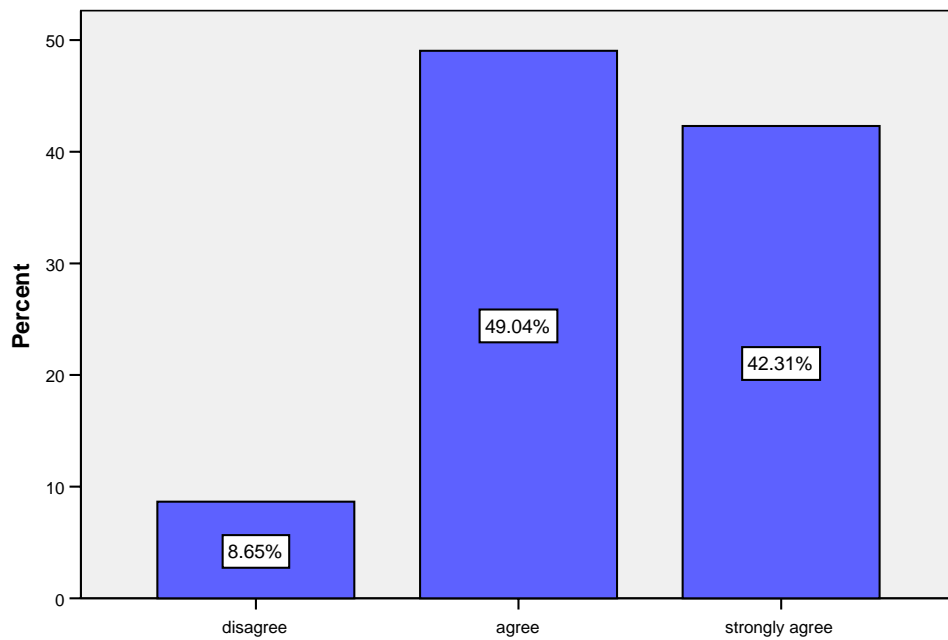
provided information on careers that I did not know about before



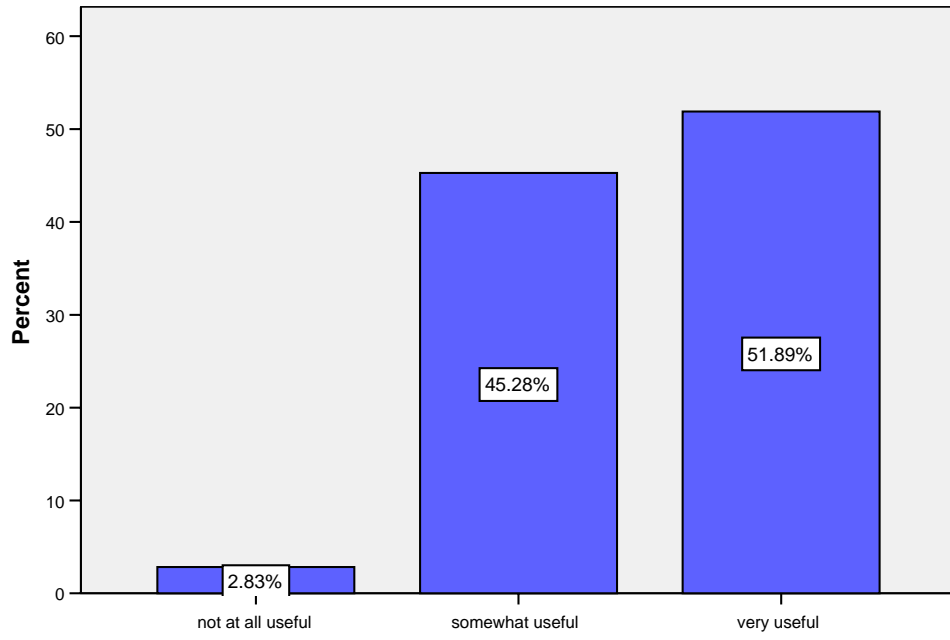
helped me feel comfortable communicating career interests



was a fun way to learn about different careers



overall rating

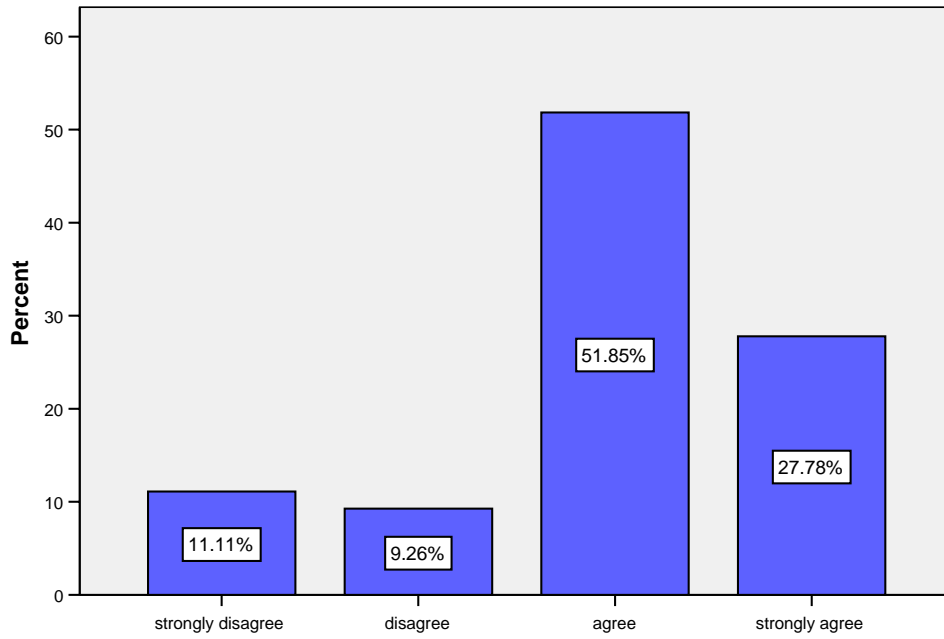


Appendix 5

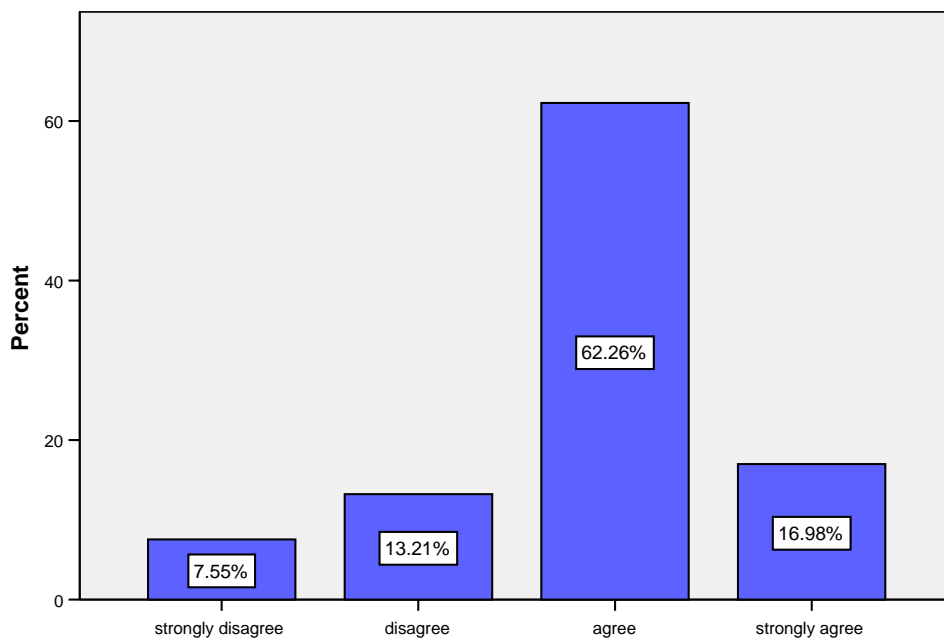
Lesson 4 Survey Responses

Each question began by asking the following: “The Futures for Kids session today...”

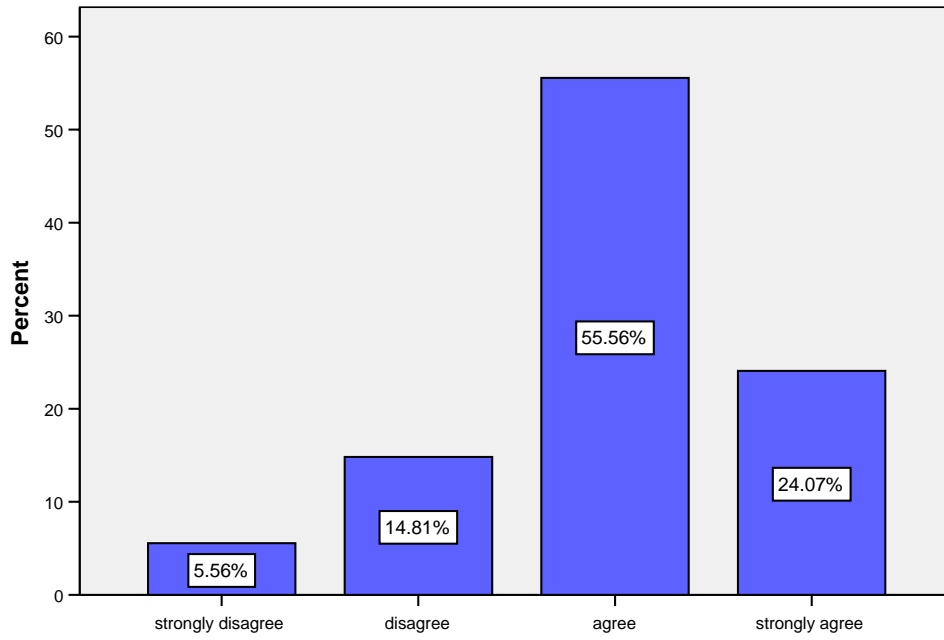
useful in completing 4-year graduation plan



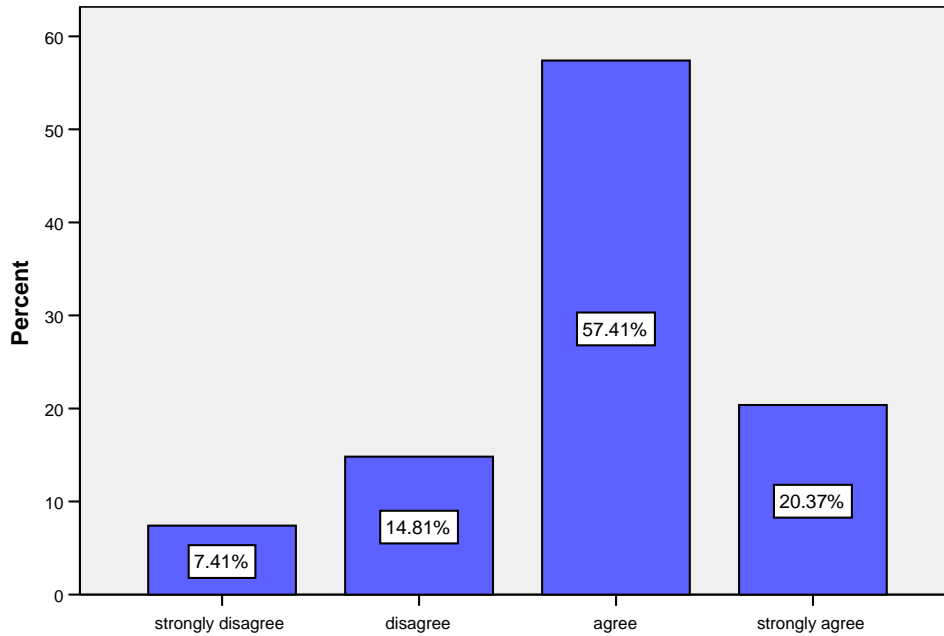
made me feel at ease about starting high school



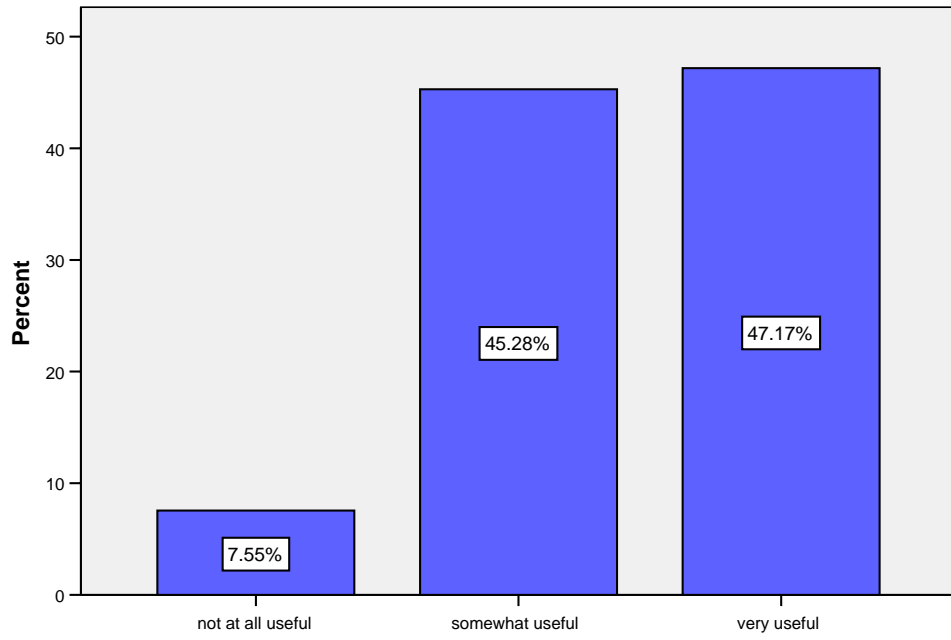
made me excited about high school courses



helped me understand how education is preparing me for career



overall rating





**Bridging the gap between research
and public policy to improve the
lives of children and families**

Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy
Duke University
Box 90264
Durham, North Carolina 27708-0264
919.613.7319
www.childandfamilypolicy.duke.edu

Kenneth A. Dodge, Director

Center for Child and Family Policy

The **Center for Child and Family Policy** brings together scholars from many disciplines, policy makers and practitioners to address problems facing children in contemporary society. The Center is a national leader in addressing issues of early childhood adversity, education policy reform, adolescent substance abuse prevention and youth violence and problem behaviors. We bridge the gap between research and policy by assisting policy makers in making informed decisions based on sound evidence and research.

The Center supports a variety of research studies in child and family policy and provides comprehensive program evaluation services to local, state and federal policy makers, nonprofits organizations and foundations.

The interdisciplinary Center for Child and Family Policy is led by Kenneth A. Dodge, Ph.D. and housed within the Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina.

Center for Child and Family Policy publications and policy briefs are available at www.childandfamilypolicy.duke.edu.