

For this report, we present survey data from the Los Angeles Unified School District's annual School Experience Survey (SES), including a new high school counselor module developed by our team and implemented by LAUSD as part of the SES, and from a survey we developed and administered to organizations that provide college access services to Los Angeles students. We also present interview data from interviews our research team conducted with school district and charter leaders and school counselors. This appendix describes each of these data sources and our analytic samples.

### LAUSD'S School Experience Survey (SES)

LAUSD administers its School Experience Survey (SES) annually to staff, students, and parents. For the 2015-16 school year, we drafted a new high school counselor survey module and a short set of college-related questions for teachers, which LAUSD incorporated into its annual SES staff survey. On the staff survey, all staff answer general questions and then principals and teachers have historically branched off to answer additional sets of questions that are pertinent to their respective roles. For this project, our high school counselor survey module provided an additional set of survey questions for counselors. This report draws most heavily on data from the new high school counselor survey module, though we also present data from the teacher and principal sections of the staff survey, as well as from the student surveys, for a subset of questions relevant to college access.

#### **SES Survey Administration and Data Cleaning**

In 2015-16, LAUSD administered the staff SES survey online, via a publicly available LAUSD web page. To ensure that staff felt comfortable revealing their opinions, staff did not have to log in to take the survey, nor were they assigned a unique identifier. As a result of not having a survey record unique to each staff member, staff members were not able to begin the survey and save what they had completed to continue later where they had left off. In addition, staff members could (either intentionally or unintentionally) take the survey more than once, and people who were not LAUSD staff could, in theory, take the survey posing as school staff. We did not see evidence in the data that the survey had been compromised by non-LAUSD staff taking the survey. We did, however, see multiple survey records that could have belonged to the same staff member. This pattern seemed to be most commonly generated when staff started the survey in multiple browser tabs or used the refresh or back button on their browser, because in those instances, the survey software would

spontaneously generate an additional survey record.

Without unique identifiers for each staff member, we could not definitively identify which records were duplicates (i.e., multiple records from the same respondent). To try to detect potential duplicate records, we identified individuals from the same school whose responses were identical or similar on select questions.<sup>58</sup> Three members of the research team conferred about possible duplicates in each sample and identified likely duplicates. We then kept each individual's most complete survey record and dropped the others.

### **SES Survey Analytic Samples**

We restricted the staff and student survey analytic samples used in this report to include only traditional schools and affiliated charter schools that serve 9th-12th grade students. We focused on schools that serve high school students because our study focuses on high school supports and we designed the counselor survey module for high school counselors.<sup>59</sup> We excluded survey responses from “non-traditional” high schools, including continuation, home & hospital, special education, opportunity, and community day schools because we suspected that approaches to college readiness in those schools would differ considerably from approaches in more typical LAUSD high schools.<sup>60</sup> And we did not include survey responses from independent charter schools because most independent charter schools do not opt to take the LAUSD surveys, and counselors from only two (out of 80) independent charter high schools participated in the counselor module of the SES survey.<sup>61</sup>

To ensure that the counselor data had adequate coverage across our topics of interest, we included counselors in our analytic sample only if they answered at least 80% of the required questions on the counselor survey. We also included schools in our counselor analyses that had at least one counselor respondent.

For analyses of the teacher and principal SES data, we included teachers and principals if they answered all of the specific questions of interest for this report (14 survey questions for teachers, 9 for principals). We then excluded schools from our teacher and principal analyses if no teachers or principals responded from that school.<sup>62</sup> For data from the student SES survey, we used publicly-available, school-level data from 2014-15 as well as student-level data from the 2015-16 school year.

Appendix Table 1 shows how the schools in our four analytic samples differ from 1) all schools in LAUSD boundaries that serve high school students and 2) all “traditional” non-charter and affiliated charter schools that serve high school students. According to the California Department of Education, in 2014-15 there were 268

schools in the LAUSD boundaries that served high school students. Of those schools, 124 were senior high schools, span schools, or affiliated charters. Our analytic sample of counselor data includes 112 (or 90%) of those schools.<sup>63</sup> Our analytic samples of teacher, principal, and student data include 99%, 81%, and 93% of those schools, respectively. Appendix Table 1 shows that our analytic samples are very similar, in terms of demographics and academic indicators, to the set of traditional non-charter and affiliated charter schools in the district.

Appendix Table 2 describes the counselors included in the analytic sample. Most of the respondents in our sample (84%) listed their primary staff role as “counselor,” though our sample also included staff who listed their primary roles as teachers or principals but also reported that they provided counseling services.<sup>64</sup> Nearly two-thirds of respondents (63%) said that they provided at least some college counseling. Most of the counselors identified as Hispanic/Latino/a (43%) or white (23%), with 12% identifying as African American, 11% as multi-ethnic, and 10% as Asian Pacific Islander.<sup>65</sup> Four out of five counselors reported having at least three years of experience in their current position, with nearly half (45%) reporting over ten years of experience. Counselors had shorter tenures at their current schools, however, with 17% at their current school for less than a year and another 20% for one or two years.



**Appendix Table 1: Comparison of all high schools in LAUSD boundaries, traditional schools and affiliated charter schools, and analytic samples of schools**

School Characteristics	All schools serving HS students (N=268)	All trad'l non-charter and affiliated charter schools serving HS students (N=124)	Analytic Samples			
			Counselor SES school level sample (N=112)	Teacher SES school level sample (N=123)	Principal SES school level sample (N=101)	Student SES school level sample (N=115)
% Free or reduced price lunch eligible	75	75	75	75	76	75
% African American students	10	8	8	8	9	8
% Hispanic students	78	79	80	80	79	80
Avg # of 9th-12th graders	733	1,114	1,169	1,123	1,075	1,155
Cohort graduation rate	82	80	80	80	79	80
A-G completion rate	43	43	44	43	43	44
<b>School Type</b>						
% Senior high school (non-magnet)	58	78	79	79	77	79
% Span (Non-magnet)	12	9	8	8	9	8
% Senior high school (magnet)	4	9	9	9	9	9
% Span (magnet)	2	4	4	4	5	4
% Continuation high school	15	0	0	0	0	0
% Special education center	4	0	0	0	0	0
% Community day school	3	0	0	0	0	0
% Opportunity school	2	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Charter Type</b>						
% Independent	30	0	0	0	0	0
% Affiliated	1	2	3	2	3	3
<b>Grade Configuration</b>						
% K-12	5	4	4	4	5	4
% 6-12	8	5	4	5	6	4
% 9-12	72	84	86	85	82	84
% Other	14	7	6	7	7	7

**Appendix Table 2: Characteristics of counselors included in analytic sample**

	Percent
<b>Primary Role at School</b>	
Counselor	84
Principal	2
Teacher	9
Other administrator	4
School administrative assistant	0
Provide college counseling	63
<b>Race</b>	
African American (not Hispanic)	12
American Indian or Alaska Native	0
Asian or Pacific Islander	10
White (not Hispanic)	23
Hispanic or Latino/a	43
Other/Multi-ethnic	11
<b>Years in Current Position at Any School</b>	
Less than one year	7
1-2 years	14
3-5 years	10
6-10 years	25
Over 10 years	45
<b>Years in Any Position at Current School</b>	
Less than one year	17
1-2 years	20
3-5 years	21
6-10 years	16
Over 10 years	26

N=447. Sample restricted to counselors in traditional and affiliated charter schools that serve high school students. These 447 counselors represent the 112 schools included in the school level analytic sample.

## External Service Provider Survey (ESPS)

The purpose of the external service provider survey was to collect information about the types of organizations that provide college access services to K-12 students who live and/or attend school within the LAUSD attendance boundaries, and about the types of services these organizations provide.

### ESPS Survey Administration and Data Cleaning

To construct a sampling frame for the ESPS survey, we tried to identify all organizations that seemed to 1) serve K-12 students within the LAUSD attendance boundaries, and 2) provide college access services. Appendix Table 3 shows the sources we used to create this sampling frame.

**Appendix Table 3: Sources used to construct sampling frame for external service provider survey**

Source	Years Included
NCAN and SoCal CAN members	2015
Education Policy Institute's Handbook of Pre-College Outreach Programs	2012*
Federal TRIO, GEAR UP, and College Access Challenge Grant grantees	2008-2015
Partnering organizations listed in federal GEAR UP grantee project abstracts	2010-2015
LAUSD Beyond the Bell partner organizations	2015
Current LAUSD college access related vendors	2015
College community outreach programs	2015
Publicly listed student college outreach organizations on local university websites**	2015

\*EPI's Handbook was published in 2012 and was the most recent edition.

\*\*We reviewed the websites of any university whose zip code (per IPEDS) matched the Los Angeles County master zip code directory.

We attempted to contact each organization in the frame to obtain contact information for a specific staff member. If we were unable to obtain contact information for a staff member after three attempted calls over the course of a month, or if there was no identifiable staff person to answer questions related to the college access services the organization was meant to provide, we removed the organization from our sampling frame. We also discovered, in the course of conducting the survey, that a few organizations were no longer functioning and removed those organizations from the sampling frame. The final sampling frame included 127 organizations.

We administered the survey online and followed up with potential respondents by phone. We contacted each organization at least three times by phone to request their organization's participation. Eighty-six organizations participated in the survey, for a response rate of 68%.<sup>66</sup>

### **ESPS Analytic Sample**

For the ESPS sample used in this report, we excluded organizations that participated in the survey but did not serve students in the LAUSD attendance boundaries (4 organizations).<sup>67</sup> We also excluded organizations that did not provide college access services (which we defined as preparation for or information about the SAT or ACT, college information or counseling, financial aid information or counseling, services related to college readiness or enrollment during the summer between high school graduation and college, or services intended to improve college persistence) during

the 2015-16 academic year (5 organizations). We also excluded organizations that provided services *only* to college students or did not provide direct services to students, parents, or school staff (1 organization).<sup>68</sup> Our final analytic sample includes 76 organizations.

Appendix Table 4 describes the organizations included in the ESPS analytic sample. About three-quarters (74%) of organizations identified as non-profits and 30% as higher education institutions.<sup>69</sup> The majority of organizations (82%) offer their services at schools, while about half (49%) offer services on college campuses. The majority of organizations provide academic supports (83%), SAT or ACT information or preparation (87%), college information or counseling (100%), and/or financial aid information or counseling (95%). About half provide assistance during the summer between high school and college (51%) and provide supports to college students (53%). Nearly all of the organizations serve high school students (95%) and target low-income (96%) and first-generation students (93%).



**Appendix Table 4: External provider survey analytic sample**

	Percent
<b>Organization Type</b>	
Non-profit	74
Higher education institution	30
For-profit company	4
Foundation	1
<b>Operates a TRIO Program</b>	22
Talent Search	3
Upward Bound	14
Gear Up	8
<b>Where Services are Provided</b>	
School sites	82
College campus	49
Organization's office/facility	39
Community center	14
<b>Services Offered</b>	
Academic services	83
SAT/ACT information or preparation	87
College information or counseling	100
Financial aid information or counseling	95
Summer services between HS graduation and college enrollment	51
Services while students are enrolled in college	53
<b>Grade Levels Served</b>	
Elementary grades	4
Middle school grades	37
High school grades	95
<b>Populations Served</b>	
Gifted and talented students	37
Students with high academic potential	62
Students who are struggling academically	55
Low-income students	96
First-generation students	93
Underrepresented minorities	88
Undocumented students	61
English language learners	53

Data from ESPS survey. N=76. Percentages are not mutually exclusive.

## District and Charter Leader Interviews

To gather general information about district and charter management approaches related to college readiness, and in preparation for our survey development process, we interviewed district level staff from a range of local districts and central office departments, and leaders from charter organizations. These interviews were not intended to provide a comprehensive picture



of college readiness efforts in LAUSD and charter schools, but rather to highlight general approaches for further exploration in our surveys and school visits. Our sample included twelve central office staff members, four local district leaders, and five individuals affiliated with charter organizations. The interviews lasted an average of forty-five minutes and covered the college readiness topics most applicable to each participant's area of responsibility (e.g., if the participant primarily worked on instructional efforts we focused our interview questions on academic supports or strategies). Given that we only interviewed a small, volunteer sample of staff whose roles involved circumscribed aspects of college readiness, our interview data may not be representative of all district and charter leaders' perspectives. We selected quotes and other examples from our district and charter leader interviews to illustrate trends we found in the quantitative survey data.

## Qualitative Counselor Data

To understand school counseling in more depth, we used survey data and district and charter leader interview data to identify high schools that had a range of internally or externally provided college readiness services and varied in their school size and demographic characteristics. We selected four traditional and two charter schools and interviewed nine counselors, including one college advisor, from those schools. Our interviews typically lasted about an hour and focused on the services offered at the school, how counselors collaborate with and coordinate external service providers, best practices, and challenges counselors face in supporting students through the college application and enrollment process. Given that we interviewed a small sample of counselors, within the small sample of schools we selected, the interview data are not intended to be representative but rather to help elaborate our findings from the counselor survey. We selected quotes and other examples from our school counselor interviews to illustrate trends we found in the quantitative survey data.

Counselors' responses to open-ended questions in the districtwide SES counselor survey provided additional data for our analyses and quotes that were used to illustrate patterns. See Appendix Table 2 for information on the sample of counselors who participated in the survey.

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<sup>58</sup> We identified records from the same school with identical responses on a subset of questions about demographics, position, and school environment. We then reviewed open-ended responses, where variation might suggest different respondents but identical or nearly identical responses might suggest duplication. We kept the most complete version of records identified as duplicates.

<sup>59</sup> If staff members indicated that “counselor” was one of their roles and that they provided counseling services to high school students, the survey prompted them to answer the questions in the new high school counselor module.

<sup>60</sup> In 2014-15, 9.2% of 12th graders who attended school within the LAUSD attendance boundaries, and 5.6% of 9th-12th graders, attended continuation, home and hospital, special education, opportunity, and community day schools. We suspect that the approach to college readiness used in these schools differs from more typical high schools in part because they allocate counseling staff using a different metric than in traditional schools and in some cases are governed by different academic policies (LAUSD, 2016c). The extent to which continuation, community day, opportunity, and home and hospital schools differ in their college readiness practices from more traditional high schools warrants further investigation.

<sup>61</sup> LAUSD encourages staff at its schools, and at affiliated charter schools, to participate in the survey. In contrast, independent charter schools must opt in to participate in the survey and most do not.

<sup>62</sup> We cannot estimate a counselor response rate for the survey because we do not have data on the population of LAUSD staff who counsel high school students. We estimate that the individual-level teacher response rate for our analytic sample is 81% of all teachers in non-charter and affiliated charter high schools (based on CDE 2014-15 staffing data).

<sup>63</sup> Of the twelve traditional schools not included in our analytic sample, nine had no counselor respondents and three had partial counselor respondents whom we excluded because those counselors completed less than 80% of the applicable required survey questions.

<sup>64</sup> The beginning of the survey asked respondents what position they held at the school and then directed them through modules associated with those roles (i.e., teacher, principal, etc.). Later in the survey, respondents were asked if they held any additional roles at their school. Teachers or principals who also provided counseling were then directed through the counselor module along with staff who primarily identified as counselors.

<sup>65</sup> Note that the school experience survey did not ask respondents to report their gender, so we are not able to describe the gender distribution of high school counselors in Appendix Table 2.

<sup>66</sup> We counted an organization as participating in the survey if the survey respondent for that organization answered more than 80% of the applicable required questions.

<sup>67</sup> Because we used publicly available information to identify the population of external service providers, a small number of organizations that we thought served students living in the LAUSD attendance boundaries or provided college access services told us on the survey that they did not. We were able to confirm this only after they completed portions of the survey.

<sup>68</sup> For example, we excluded organizations that provided general online resources such as FAFSA information or SAT practice questions. We did not exclude organizations that provided personalized services that were administered online.

<sup>69</sup> Note that organization types are not mutually exclusive.

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