

Parent Education to Increase Percent of Low-Income Students Meeting A-G Requirements

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INTRODUCTION

Despite our advisor and guidance system, only about 37% of low-income students in PAUSD are meeting A-G requirements and are deemed “college ready,” according to the California School Dashboard. This problem has negatively impacted our low-income population within PAUSD because it makes it significantly harder than their high-income peers to receive a college education and furthermore rise out of poverty.



Parent education and involvement is crucial for student success, and it is necessary for the school and community to work in conjunction with families to increase involvement and education (Write and Smith). The GEAR UP study similarly found that “increased social support and communication between peers, families, school counselors, teachers...” benefitted student success. For a real difference to be made, parents and faculty must work together to help students, with families informed and educated on important topics (Oh, 2018).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

WHAT? A survey asking 6 questions about current understanding and comfort with A-G requirements as well as helpfulness of one-on-one meetings and parent nights.

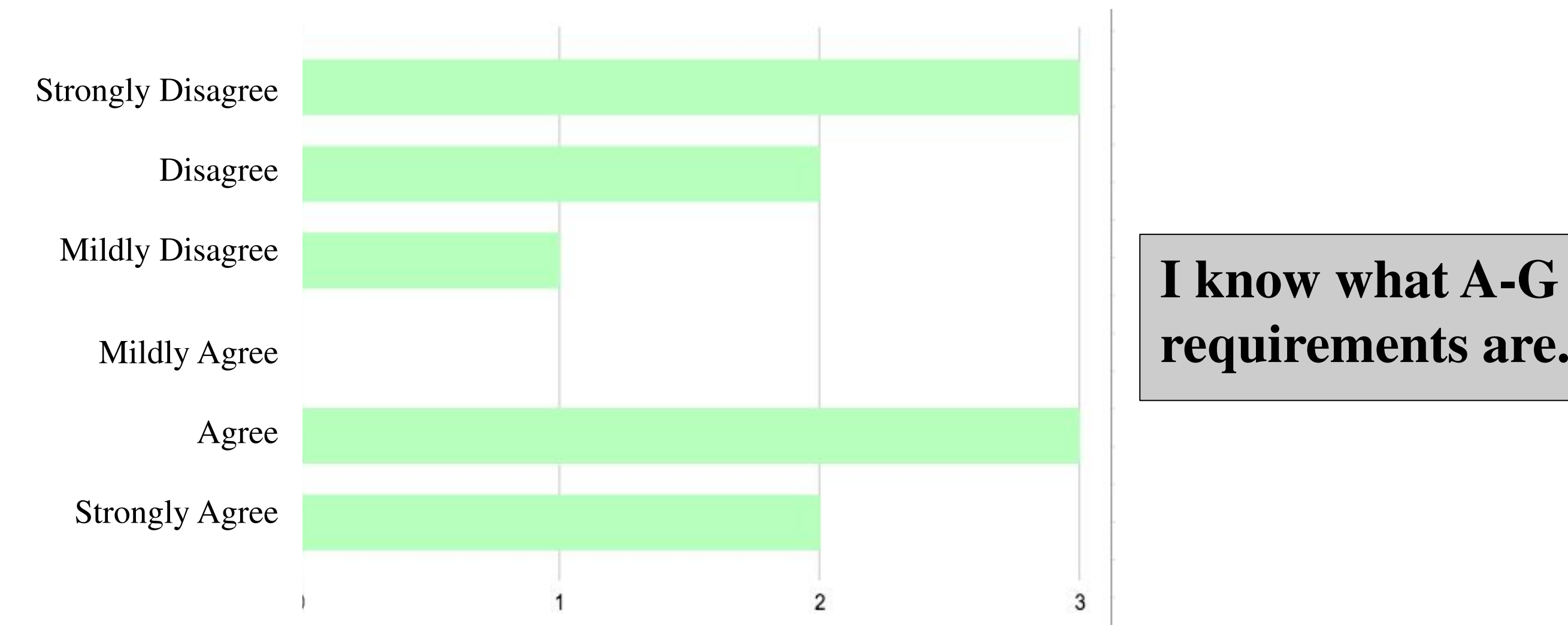
WHO? The survey was given to parents of low-income eighth graders in PAUSD.

HOW? The survey was administered over the phone by the middle school Student Success Coaches who already have relationships with the families. To protect anonymity the names were changed to Parent A, for example.

WHEN? The surveys were given throughout February, before course selection.

NEXT... Descriptive and inferential statistics were used on the quantitative data to find statistically significant information on parents self reported feelings toward and knowledge of A-G requirements. The matched pairs survey compares how parents feel towards parent nights versus one on one meetings and more generally it will assess if parents want information on A-G requirements at all.

DATA AND FINDINGS



I feel comfortable helping my child select their courses.



Individual Meetings provide me with useful information



REFERENCES

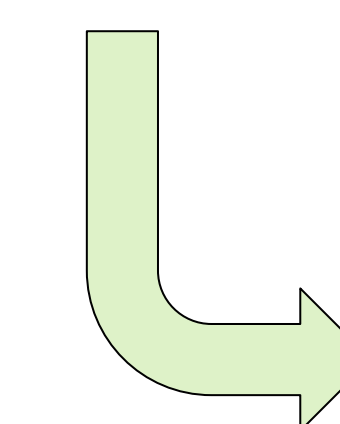
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CONCLUSIONS AND ANALYSIS

This research aimed to explore whether individual meetings could help with parent self-reported comfortability with A-G requirements, with the prediction that they would in turn raise the percent of low-income students meeting A-G requirements. From the surveys administered to 11 low-income PAUSD families, the distributions for those who knew what A-G requirements are and feel comfortable helping their child choose courses varied with answers all along the board. However, when you disaggregate the four families who feel least comfortable with A-G requirements (answering either *strongly disagree* or *disagree* that they know what A-G requirements are), the following results are most telling:



all said they “strongly agree” that individual meetings provide useful information—and one of those families also “strongly disagreed” that parent nights provide them with useful information.

It appears that the parents who are least comfortable with A-G requirements and helping with course selection all feel they need relationships and one-on-one meetings, which the research in the lit review points to a possible correlation to raising the rate of low-income students meeting A-G requirements.

IMPLICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The next step is for Palo Alto Unified School District to implement one-on-one meetings for the low-income population on A-G requirements, beginning with eighth grade families. The district now has feedback from this parent population, 100% of which at least agree that one-on-one meetings are beneficial, which is much higher than the percent agreeing that parent nights are beneficial.

The next step for research would be to explore the connection between parents who feel uncomfortable with A-G requirements and how they view parent nights and individual meetings, as this research data found similarities but was a small sample size. Also, conducting in depth interviews could prove useful to further expand on the survey results.