

FROM PRE TO POST: PUTTING THE DATA PIECES TOGETHER

Pullias Center for Higher Education

OCTOBER 2016



Greetings! You are receiving this report because you are participating in the Pullias Center for Higher Education's grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education First in the World (FITW) program. As you know, the grant explores the role of games and digital media on college-going outcomes for California high school students. This document provides a snapshot of why your school's participation is critical to enhancing understandings about technology use in the college access space.

Beyond implementing the Mission: Admission intervention on select high school campuses, the USC research team is collecting robust mixed methods data about the college culture and digital infrastructure of participating schools. This study is unique in its focus and scope and has the attention of the U.S. Department of Education.

Your school is among a select group of "treatment" schools in the randomized controlled trial study (a rigorous research design preferred by the U.S. Department of Education). Whether your school illustrated high engagement with the actual Mission: Admission intervention or not, your participation in the research component of the study is invaluable to our efforts to learn about the implementation of digital initiatives at a school-wide level.

In 2015, your juniors took a pre-Challenge survey to assess their levels of college-going efficacy, college-going interest, and college knowledge. The data portrayed on pages 3 and 4 of this document represent a snapshot of students prior to engaging with the intervention. More than 4,000 students from over 30 schools across California responded to the survey. The data are aggregated across the entire participant sample.

The post-Challenge surveys your students will take during the first three weeks of November 2016 will capture: changes in efficacy, interest and knowledge over time – in response to the intervention when applicable. The post-surveys will close out this important phase of the project and we sincerely appreciate your support in ensuring high response rates among students.

On page 5, we share data about teachers' college information sources. These data are aggregated from surveys taken by over 500 teachers from more than 58 participating treatment and control schools.

This is an interim report. We are particularly excited about collecting and analyzing the post-Challenge surveys in order to better inform the field AND so that we can provide you with detailed accounts of what your students feel and know about college, as well as your students' actual college-going outcomes (please see page 6 for details).





Why Study Digital Tools for Learning About College?



92% of teens go online everyday, and **24%** say they are online "almost constantly"



African-American and **Hispanic** youth report more frequent Internet use than white teens.

71% of teens use more than one social networking site or platform.



Instagram



Facebook



Snapchat

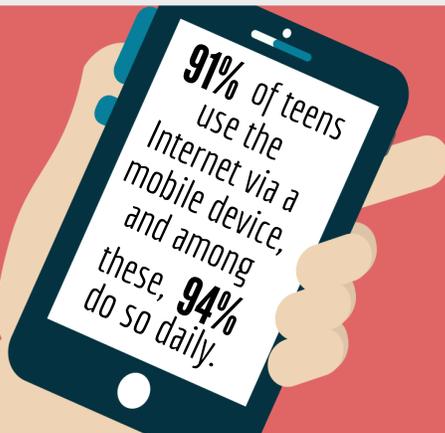
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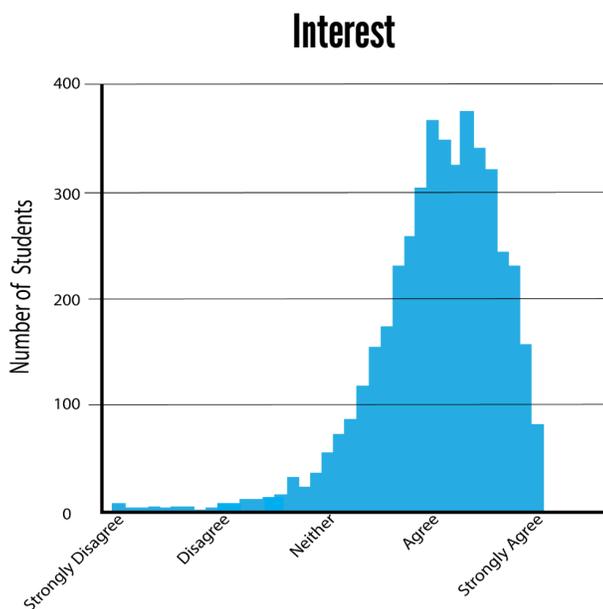
Most Popular and Frequently Used Social Media Platform Among Teens



A typical teen sends and receives **30 texts** per day.

These data are from the Pew Research Center's 2015 report on Teens, Social Media, & Technology. The full report can be downloaded at <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/04/09/teens-social-media-technology-2015/>.

How Do Your Students Feel About College?



Interest

On the survey, 18 of the questions identify students' interest in going to college. We measured student interest by asking students about how often they engage in college preparation activities and seek out information about college. On the pre-Challenge survey, students indicated how interested they were in a host of college-related behaviors on a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating low interest and 5 indicating high interest. As you can see, most students were very interested in going to college.

Self-Efficacy

In a second section of the survey, 10 of the questions measure students' college-going efficacy including students' confidence that they can successfully complete college-related goals, such as applying to college, completing the FAFSA, and requesting letters of recommendation. In the pre-Challenge survey, students indicated how confident they were in successfully completing these behaviors on a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating low confidence and 5 indicating high confidence. As you can see, there is a lot of variability in how confident students are about getting accepted to college. Comparing our findings for interest and efficacy, we can see that while students are very interested in going to college, many are unsure of whether they can get into college. Subsequent data collection (please see our outside evaluator involvement on page 6) will be able to tease out if students' actual college behaviors matched their aspirations and plans.

What Do Your Students Know About College?

Through a 23-item measure, we are able to assess students' college-related knowledge. The measure consists of questions about how to approach time management, request letters of recommendation, write application essays, sign up for college entrance exams, and identify sources of funding for college. On average, second-semester juniors answered around 65% of the questions correctly. Taken together with findings about interest and efficacy, we can see that while students are very interested in college, many lack the knowledge and confidence to pursue post-secondary education options.

Please note that we will be able to offer nuanced feedback on specific items from all three measures after we analyze your students' responses on the post-Challenge surveys.

What Questions Do Students Have About College?

The Mission: Admission research team at USC teamed up with Get Schooled to ask teens, what are your top college application questions. We got thousands of responses, ranging from questions about the application process, to queries about financial aid, to students seeking advice about how to stand out as a stellar applicant. We know that teachers are often an integral part of students' college application process, providing help in the form of writing letters of recommendation, answering questions, or giving advice about personal statements, scholarship applications, and more.



Can you play on a sports team without a scholarship?

How many [applications] should we do?

Where would I even start for an application to a college?

What's the difference between a college and university?

How do you even get a scholarship?

How can I find information about different colleges or universities?

What is the process of transferring from a Cal State to a UC????

How does financial aid work?

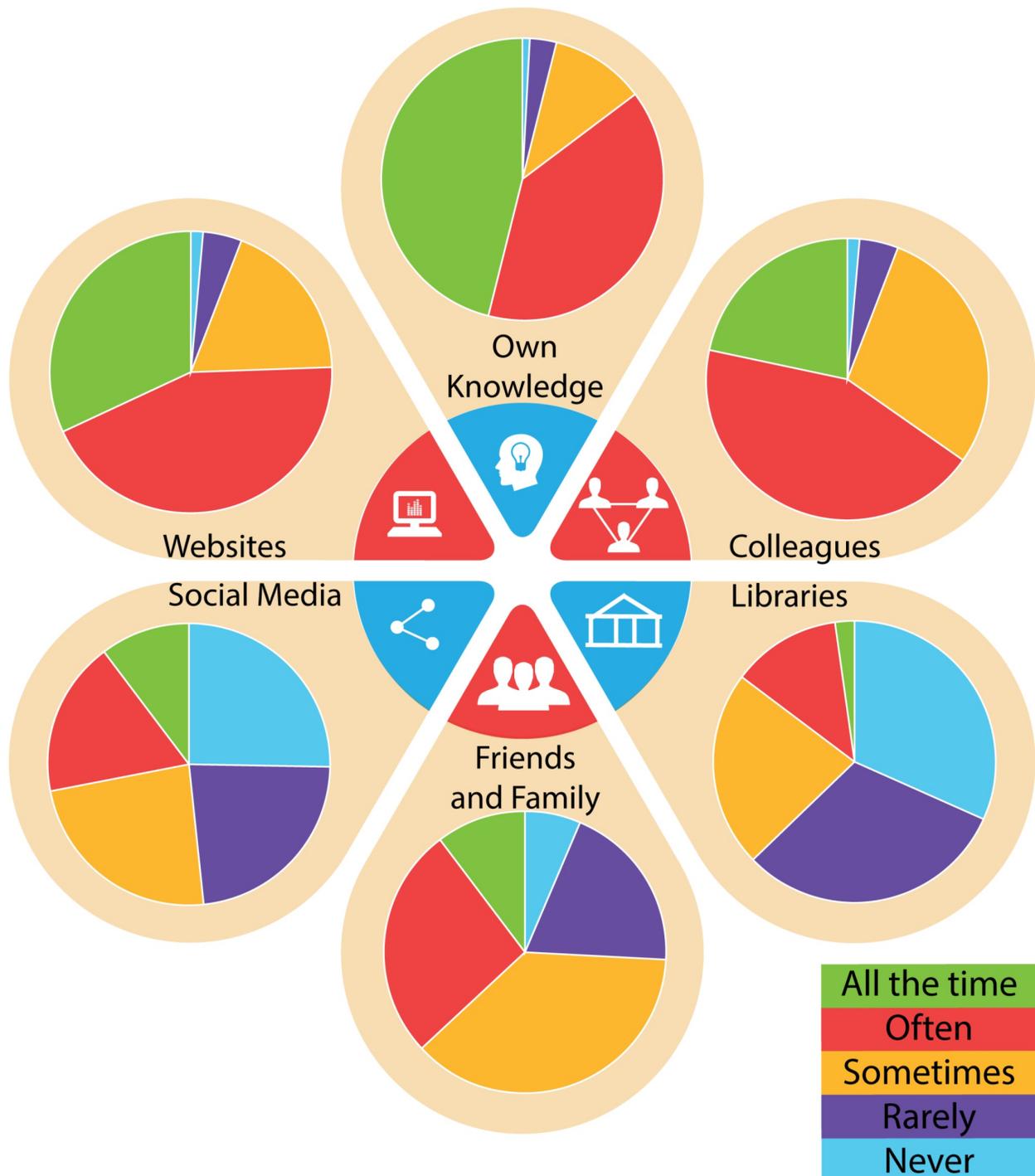
Who should you ask to write letters of recommendation?

Do colleges accept late applications?



Where Do Teachers Get Their Information About College?

When students have questions about college, often teachers are an important and consistent point of contact. But, where do teachers get their knowledge? We asked over 500 teachers from 58 schools to reflect on six common sources of information. This graph illustrates how often teachers draw upon those sources. The three sources teachers report using most often are: (1) their prior knowledge, (2) websites, and (3) colleagues (other teachers).



Why Encourage Your Students to Take the Post-Challenge Survey?

We are happy to report we had a high rate of participation for the pre-Challenge survey your juniors took in early 2015. After the Challenge is complete and students in your school take the post-Challenge survey, we look forward to sharing individualized reports with your school. Our ability to share rich data with you about your students' college interest, efficacy, and knowledge – as well as their digital practices – depends on your students' participation in the post-Challenge survey. The survey is available right now and is open through Friday, November 18th. By having a high rate of participation from your seniors on this survey, you can expect to receive tailored reports from USC containing information about a number of useful metrics:

- Changes in your students' college interest, efficacy, and knowledge between their junior and senior year – and in response to engaging with the Mission: Admission tools (if applicable)
- What areas of college knowledge your graduating class of 2017 excels at and has room to improve on, helping you identify areas to target in future years
- Data about how your students use technology in their daily lives
- Data about how your students use digital tools to learn about college
- Information about how your school compares to the aggregate of all participating schools on measures of college interest, efficacy, knowledge, as well as in regards to technology use

To take the post-Challenge survey, students will need three things:

1. Computers or cell phones connected to the Internet
2. Their 10-Digit SSID number (the same number they used for the pre-Challenge survey)
3. 20 minutes of class time to complete the survey

LINK TO SURVEY: <http://tinyurl.com/mission-admission-survey>

Second data opportunity: As per federal guidelines, we are working with an outside evaluator, Augenblick, Palaich & Associates (APA), to measure the impact of the intervention on tangible educational outcomes. APA will be tracking FAFSA/Dream Act and college enrollment data (in conjunction with the California Student Aid Commission and your school district) and college application data (with your school support through a data upload in the spring) for your graduating seniors. The individualized reports that can be generated from this data will identify your students' college-going strengths, as well as areas for improvement.

As always, thank you for your time and support,

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