



**Urban and Community
Studies Institute**

**A SURVEY OF THE CAREER ASPIRATIONS OF THE HIGH SCHOOL
CLASS OF 2019, ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT, NEW
BRUNSWICK**

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Introduction

In May 2019, UNB Saint John in cooperation with the New Brunswick Anglophone South School District and the fourteen anglophone high schools in southwestern New Brunswick, conducted a survey of the career aspirations of the High School Class of 2019 in our region.

Fifty-one percent of the Grade 12 student body completed the survey (969 students of 1909).

Table 1 Survey Sample and Completion Rate

	School	Enrolled*	Completed surveys	Completion rate
1	Harbour View	228	63	28%
2	Saint John	220	83	38%
3	St. Malachy's	235	140	60%
4	Simonds	190	106	56%
5	Belleisle Bay	35	32	91%
6	Hampton	147	87	59%
7	Kennebecasis Valley	253	142	56%
8	Rothsay	132	58	44%
9	Sussex	206	85	41%
10	Campobello	12	9	75%
11	Fundy	77	47	61%
12	Grand Manan	26	18	69%
13	Sir James Dunn	26	22	85%
14	St. Stephen	122	77	63%
	Total	1909	969	51%

*From 2018-19 Department of Education statistics¹

The respondents were 50 percent female; 49 percent male; and 1 percent who self-identified as gender independent. Ninety-eight percent of the students indicated that they expected to graduate in June 2019.

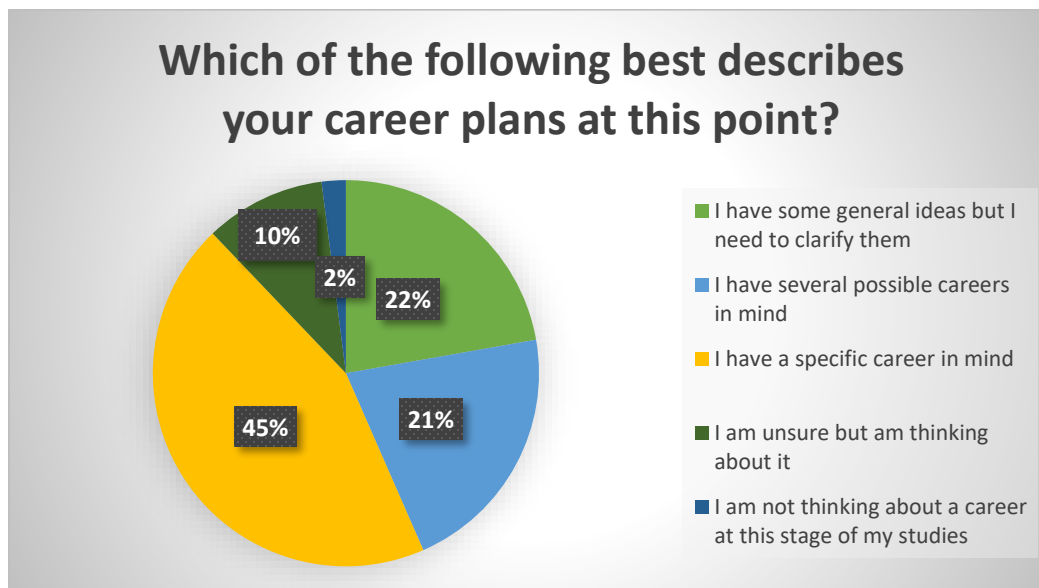
The majority of students reported doing well academically in their senior year, with 69 percent indicating that their grade point average was between 80 – 100 percent, and another 24 percent saying their grade average was in the range of 70 – 79 percent. Only one percent indicated that their marks were below a 60 percent average.

I. Career Aspirations

The Class of 2019 seems to have a pretty strong sense of direction in terms of where they want to go with their careers. As they stood on the threshold of their adult life, forty-five percent said they had a specific career in mind.

¹ Policy and Planning Division, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Province of New Brunswick (March 2019) *Summary Statistics School Year 2018-19*, Table 22 Enrolment of School by Grade, September 30, 2018, pp 62-63 (retrieved at <https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/ed/pdf/K12/StatisticalReports-RapportsStatistiques/SummaryStatistics2018-2019.pdf>, May 1, 2020.

Figure 1 Career Plans at this Point



When asked “At this stage in your life, what career do you think you want? What do you want to do?” members of the Class of 2019 voiced a wide range of aspirations.

Table 2. Career Aspirations

Occupational Field	%
Agriculture, fishing, forestry and hunting	1.0
Retail Trade	1.0
Construction trades (carpentry, plumbing and electrical)	2.65
Other trades (<i>mechanic and welder most frequently cited – 33% of all trades</i>)	10.23
Transportation (<i>all in aviation</i>)	0.64
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	25.39
Engineer	5.11
Computer Systems Design	4.75
Scientist	4.47
Psychologist	3.01
Lawyer	2.56
Accountant	1.64
Veterinarian or veterinarian technician	1.64
Other	2.19
Management and Business (unspecified)	6.03
Education	7.31
Childcare	1.83
Health care and social assistance (<i>most frequently cited: nursing or doctor</i>)	19.18
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	8.40
Accommodation and Food Services	1.19
Protective services	5.94
Other services (<i>aesthetician or hair stylist</i>)	1.37
Other	1.27
Don't know	6.58

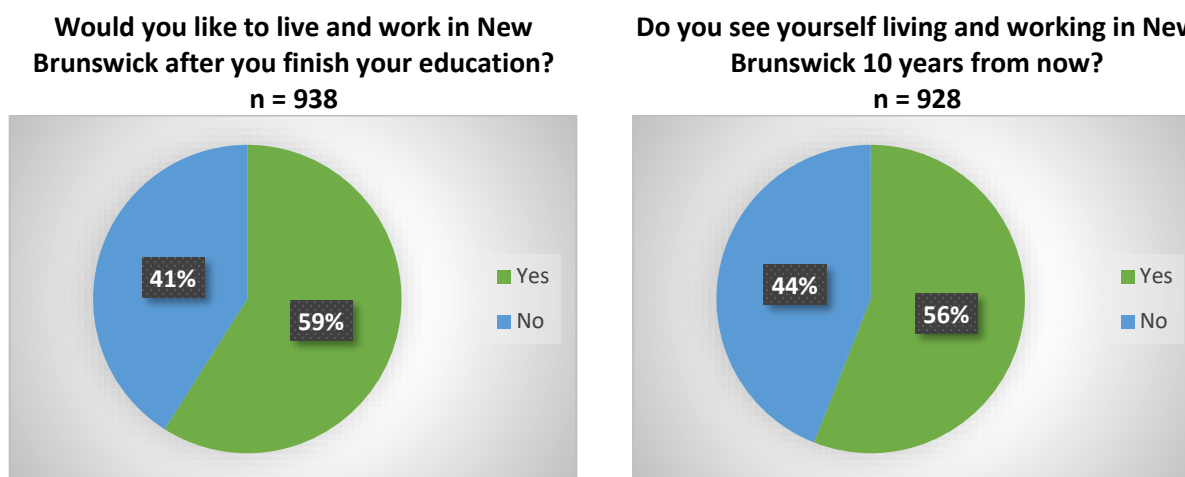
The majority (84 percent) felt the right schools and training opportunities were available to them in New Brunswick to allow them to reach their career objectives. Sixteen percent felt they were not.

Seventy-six percent of the Class of 2019 said that yes, they feel they can pursue the career they want in New Brunswick. Twenty-four percent of students surveyed said that they do not feel they can pursue the career they want in New Brunswick.

Asked “Would you like to live and work in New Brunswick after you finish your education?” 59 percent said yes. Forty-one percent said no.

Fifty-six percent of students said they saw themselves living in New Brunswick ten years from now.

Figure 2. Plans to stay or leave New Brunswick after graduation



One of the objectives in surveying soon-to-be-graduating high school students in 2019 was to see how their perceptions of the post-secondary educational opportunities available to them, their career prospects, and their future in the region compared with those of young people surveyed by the Saint John Community Foundation in 2012.² The comparative responses of these two groups of young people to questions on this topic are set out in Table 3 below.

In comparing the results of the two surveys, some differences in the composition of the sample and the questions asked should be noted. Most significantly, the 2019 UNB survey included all Grade 12 students in the Anglophone South School District, whereas the 2012 *Vital Signs* survey focused on the Saint John region, but included all high school students aged 13 – 18 as well the francophone school and alternative education centres in the city. In the 2012 survey, young people were asked about opportunities in the Saint John region and to imagine a future specifically in the Saint John region. In the 2019 survey, we asked them if they could imagine a future for themselves anywhere in New Brunswick.³

² Greater Saint John Community Foundation (April 2013) *Youth Vital Signs Results: The Saint John Region*, pg.2 (accessed at <https://thecommunityfoundationsj.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Youth-Vital-Signs-2013.pdf>, May 19, 2020).

³ The November 2012 *Vital Signs* survey included students aged 13 - 18 from 11 Saint John area high schools and learning centres: Belleisle Bay High, First Steps Housing, Hampton High, Harbour View High, Kennebecasis Valley High, Rothesay, Saint John, Samuel de Champlain, Simonds, St. Malachy's, and Woodlawn Learning Centre. It will be noted that this list includes 3 centres not included in the 2019 survey (First Steps, Woodlawn Learning Centre and Samuel de Champlain, the francophone

Table 3. Comparison: Class of 2019 and 2012 Vital Signs Survey

	Class of 2019 Responded 'YES'	Vital Signs 2012* Responded 'YES'
Are the right schools and training opportunities available in New Brunswick for you to get the education and training you want after high school?	84%	67%
Do you feel you can pursue the career you want in New Brunswick?	76%	46%
Would you like to live and work in New Brunswick after you finish your education?	59%	n/a
Do you see yourself living and working in New Brunswick ten years from now?	56%	32%

* In the 2012 survey, students aged 13 – 18 were asked about opportunities, their career prospects and their future in the *Saint John region*. In the 2019 survey, Grade 12 students were asked about opportunities, their career prospects and to imagine a future for themselves anywhere in *New Brunswick*.

As illustrated in Table 4 below, most members of the Class of 2019, regardless of where they lived, felt that the right schools and training opportunities are available in New Brunswick for them to get the education and training they want. Likewise, neither gender nor whether they attended a school located in an urban, suburban or rural area seemed to affect their perception of whether or not they could pursue the career they want in New Brunswick. The majority felt they could.⁴

However, when asked “Do you see yourself living and working in New Brunswick 10 years from now?” students from suburban schools responded differently than their peers at urban and rural schools. While the majority of students attending urban and rural schools saw themselves living and working in New Brunswick ten years from now, students attending suburban schools were almost equally divided between those who saw themselves living in New Brunswick ten years from now, and those who imagined a future for themselves somewhere else.

The divergence between male and female students on this question was even wider. Roughly half (49%) of young men graduating from high school in the region thought they would be living outside the province in ten years time. More young women imagined themselves living in New Brunswick in ten years (62 percent), with 38 percent imagining a future for themselves elsewhere.⁵

high school in the region), and that the 2019 survey of Grade 12 students included five high schools not included in the 2012 survey (Fundy, Campobello Island, Grand Manan, St. Stephen, and Sussex).

Note the difference in the geographical scope of the questions asked: the 2012 *Vital Signs* survey asked about educational and career prospects in the Saint John region, the 2019 UNB survey asked about perceptions of educational and career prospects in New Brunswick as a whole.

⁴ For the purposes of this survey, participating schools were categorized as follows: schools located in the urban centre of Saint John (Harbour View High, Saint John High, St. Malachy’s High, and Simonds High); suburban schools (Kennebecasis Valley High and Rothesay High); and schools in rural areas which included those in small towns and villages with fewer than 4500 residents (Belleisle Bay High, Hampton High, Sussex High, Campobello High, Fundy High, Grand Manan Community School, Sir James Dunn Academy, and St. Stephen High).

⁵ The number of gender independent students in the sample is too small to allow any general conclusions to be drawn about their perceptions as a group. Of the 7 gender independent students who answered this question, 4 saw themselves living in New Brunswick 10 years after high school graduation, 3 did not.

Table 4. Class of 2019 perceptions of educational opportunities and career prospects in New Brunswick (%)

	Are the right schools and training opportunities available in New Brunswick for you to get the education and training you want after high school?		Do you feel you can pursue the career you want in New Brunswick?		Do you see yourself living and working in New Brunswick ten years from now?	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
ALL STUDENTS	84%	16%	76%	24%	56%	44%
Male	82%	18%	76%	24%	51%	49%
Female	85%	15%	76%	24%	62%	38%
Gender Independent*	67%	33%	62%	38%	57%	43%
Urban	83%	17%	76%	24%	57%	43%
Suburban	84%	16%	76%	24%	49%	51%
Rural	85%	15%	76%	24%	59%	41%
Living in Canada ≤ 5 years**	72%	28%	50%	50%	43%	57%

*The number of gender independent students who completed the survey is very small ($n \leq 13$), so drawing conclusions from averaged results is difficult.

** Living in Canada ≤ 5 years: $n = 54$.

We were also interested in knowing if Grade 12 students who had been born in another country and had been living in Canada for five years or less imagined a future for themselves in New Brunswick. The number of students in this category who completed the survey was small (n=54). Of this group, 43 percent imagined themselves living and working in New Brunswick ten years from now, while 57 percent did not.

It is interesting to note that when asked “Would you like to live and work in New Brunswick after you finish your education?” 59 percent of all students surveyed responded “Yes.” However, a slightly lower percentage (56 percent) said that they could see themselves living and working in New Brunswick ten years from now.

Why some students felt they cannot pursue the career they want in New Brunswick

The 24 percent of students who said they did not feel they could pursue the career they want in New Brunswick gave various reasons. Several common themes emerge from their responses:

The belief that there are few or no jobs in their chosen field in New Brunswick

“I don’t feel I will be able to get a good job because of where I live.”

“No jobs here, dude.”

“The job market isn’t there and pay is too low to be able to live well.”

“New Brunswick doesn’t have space programs.”

They felt they would have better career opportunities in bigger places

“Because there would be so many better opportunities for nursing in other places than New Brunswick.”

“I can’t work with big companies in NB.”

“Bigger cities = Bigger opportunities.”

“I’d have to move to a bigger city. Somewhere I have access to places to sell my art.”

“Because I want to go to a more urbanized and populated area. I think I can help more people that way.”

A belief that New Brunswick is poor and the economy is stagnant or in decline

“There is no chance to start here.”

“I’m concerned about the job market and the stagnant economy.”

“Yes and no. I think I can find a career here, but I do not want to stay in Atlantic Canada. It seems very poor. No resources.”

“Because it’s a dying economy.”

Training in their chosen field is not available in New Brunswick so they must leave the province

RCMP training, veterinarian medicine, filmmaking and other careers in the arts, sports management and architecture were mentioned by more than one student.

A generalized dissatisfaction with life in New Brunswick and maybe a feeling they have outgrown it.

“It’s too small and not enough happens.”

“There is nothing here.”

"Champ of NB isn't world champ."

"Because only losers live here."

"Because nobody has heard of it."

"It doesn't feel me."

and

A desire to venture out and see the world

"I could stay but am choosing not to."

"I want to live and work in a bigger city."

"I want to be able to travel and gain experiences."

"NB is too small. It's isolated from the international community."

"There are other places I want to live and explore but I might come back."

"Because I need to go to New York."

Whether to stay or leave New Brunswick after finishing their education

When asked *"Would you like to live and work in New Brunswick after you finish your education?"* 59 percent of the students who answered this question responded *"Yes"* and 41 percent said *"No"* (n = 938 for this question out of a total of 969 students who completed the survey).

When asked why or why not, they gave various reasons.

Among those who said they wanted to stay in New Brunswick, by far, the most frequently cited reason was to be close to family. The next most popular answer was because it is home, and the third most mentioned reason was New Brunswick's natural beauty.

"There are plenty of jobs to pursue here so why bother going somewhere else to get a job?"

"Because there is a lot of potential here to do big things."

"I would like to work in NB after graduation because I feel I can make a positive difference within my province."

"Well, I feel like there is a need for more family medical practitioners and most of my family is in New Brunswick."

"It's my home. It's the place that has impressed my very soul."

"Because it is one of the cheapest, safest places to live in Canada."

"Although we have a weak economy, I feel at home in NB and wish to raise a family here."

"Yes, because our economy has so much farther to grow."

Among those who said they did not want to stay in New Brunswick, the most common reason given was that they felt there were no opportunities for them in the province. The next most popular answer was a desire to live in a bigger place, and the third most mentioned reason was a desire to travel and experience other places.

"Why stay in one place your entire life?"

"No, because it's a big world out there and I'd like to see it."

"I just want to see how I could do somewhere else."

"Want to explore our planet while it's still somewhat decent."

"Nobody lives in NB."

"I would like to remain connected to NB after, but I need a bigger city vibe for permanent living."

"Ever since I have moved to NB, I've never felt like it's home."

"New Brunswick is on a path to destruction with bankruptcy and I don't want to go down with the ship."

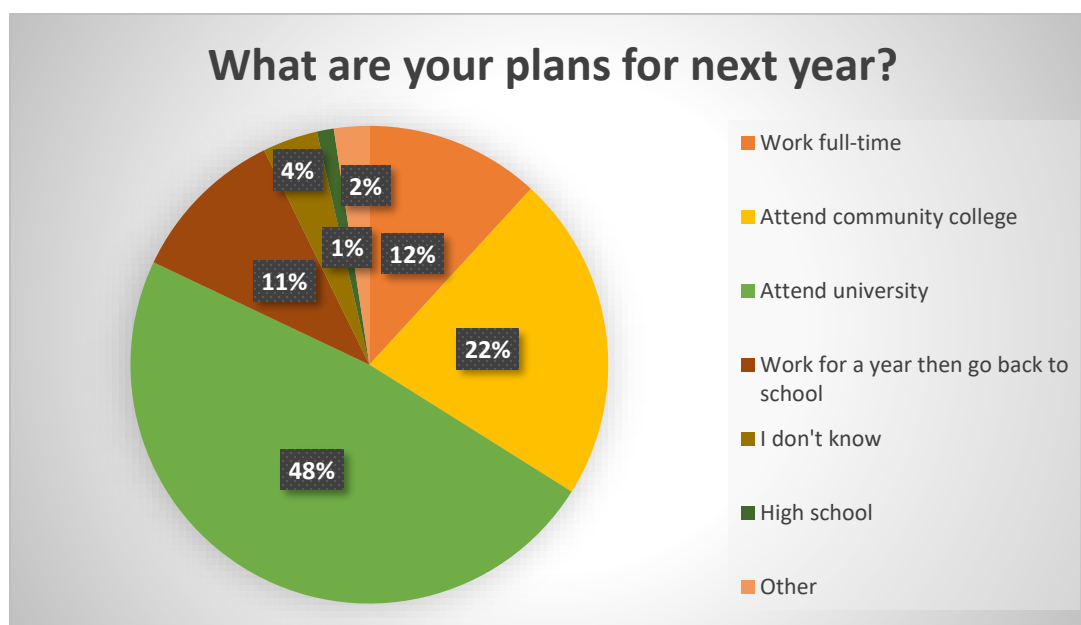
About 10 percent of students who responded to this question expressed uncertainty.⁶

"I'm not sure if I can find my future living here...I'm just not sure."

II. Immediate Plans

Students were also asked about their plans for the year after high school graduation. Almost half (48 percent) indicated that they planned to attend university. Twenty-two percent said they intended to go to community college next year. Another 23 percent said they were going to work full-time next year, either for a year or so before going back to school (12 percent), or with no plans for further training. A small number (0.6 percent) planned to join the armed forces. Four percent of students said that they did not yet know what they were going to do the year after graduation.

Figure 3. Plans for Next Year



⁶ n = 797 in response to the question "Why or why not" out of a total of 969 students who completed the survey.

These responses generally accord with those given by students to the question “What do you think you are most likely to do after high school?” in the province-wide *Grade 12 Exit Survey* conducted by the New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in April 2019.⁷ However, the UNB survey found that more high school seniors in the Southwest NB region reported plans to start working full-time directly after high school with no plans to return to school (12 percent in the region versus 2.1 percent province-wide). Fewer Southwest NB region students stated an intention to join the military (0.6 percent in the region versus 2.5 province-wide).

Twenty-seven percent of students throughout New Brunswick surveyed in the 2019 Provincial *Grade 12 Exit Survey* said they were most likely to attend college after graduation (either NBCC or another private or community college) as compared to 22 percent in the Anglophone South School District (Southwest region of NB) who said they planned to attend college the following year. However, when comparing these responses, it should be noted that in the UNB survey, 4 percent of students responded “I don’t know” to the question “What are your plans for next year?” This was not an option on the Department of Education survey, where they were asked what they were most likely to do rather than what they were going to do.

Parental influence on post-secondary education choices

The UNB survey of the Class of 2019 asked students about their parents’ education to see what if any correlation might exist between parental educational attainment and their children’s post-secondary educational objectives. As Table 5 below indicates, there is a strong correlation between parental university education and a young person’s intention to attend university.

Table 5. University Experience of Parents and Student’s Plans to Attend University

University Experience of Parents	Going to University Next Year
Parents have no degree	35.0%
One parent has degree	61.6%
Both parents have degree	72.7%
Total	48.1%

As Table 6 below illustrates, students with university-educated parents were also less likely than the rest of their peers to choose to continue their post-secondary education at community college.

Table 6. University Experience of Parents and Student’s Plans to Attend Community College

University Experience of Parents	Going to Community College Next Year
Parents have no degree	26.07%
One parent has degree	18.72%
Both parents have degree	14.44%
Total	22.21%

⁷ Policy and Planning Division, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Province of New Brunswick (July 2019) *2019 Grade 12 Exit Survey Anglophone Sector* (Retrieved at <https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/ed/pdf/K12/StatisticalReports-RapportsStatistiques/Grade12ExitSurvey2019.pdf>, May 19, 2020)

We wondered if the same correlation between parental educational experience and a students' post-secondary education choices held true for students with community-college educated parents. That seems to be the case. As Table 7 below illustrates, students with one parent who attended community college (and therefore, for the majority, a second parent or guardian with another post-secondary educational experience) were slightly more likely than the group as a whole to elect to attend university next year, and about as likely as the rest of their peers to choose to go on to community college. However, students with both parents who completed community college were less likely than the group as a whole to choose to go to university, and much more likely than the rest of their peers to choose community college for their own post-secondary education.

Table 7. Community College Experience of Parents and Student's Plans for Next Year

One or both parents have a community college diploma (as highest level of educational attainment)	Plans for next year 1 parent have CC (n = 238)	Plans for next year 2 parents have CC (n = 87)	One or both parents have CC Diploma (n = 325)
Going to university	50.42%	39.08%	47.38%
Going to community college	22.27%	36.78%	26.46%
Take a year off to work then go back to school	12.18%	6.90%	10.77%
Work Full-time	9.66%	9.20%	9.54%
High school	2.10%	0%	1.54%
Military	0.42%	1.15%	0.62%
I don't know	2.94%	5.75%	3.69%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Similarly, students whose parents did not complete either university or college were right in line with the group average in terms of their intention to go to community college next year. However, a much smaller percentage of them intended to pursue a university education than their peers with one or two university-educated parents, or one or two college educated parents. More students in this group (n = 197 of 969) stated their intention to start working full-time directly after high school.

Table 8. Parents who did not complete university or college and student's plans for next year

Students whose parents did not complete college or university	Plans for next year
Going to university	33.5%
Going to community college	22.8%
Take a year off to work then go back to school	18.8%
Work Full-time	18.3%
High school	1.1%
Military	0.5%
I don't know	5.0%
Total	100%

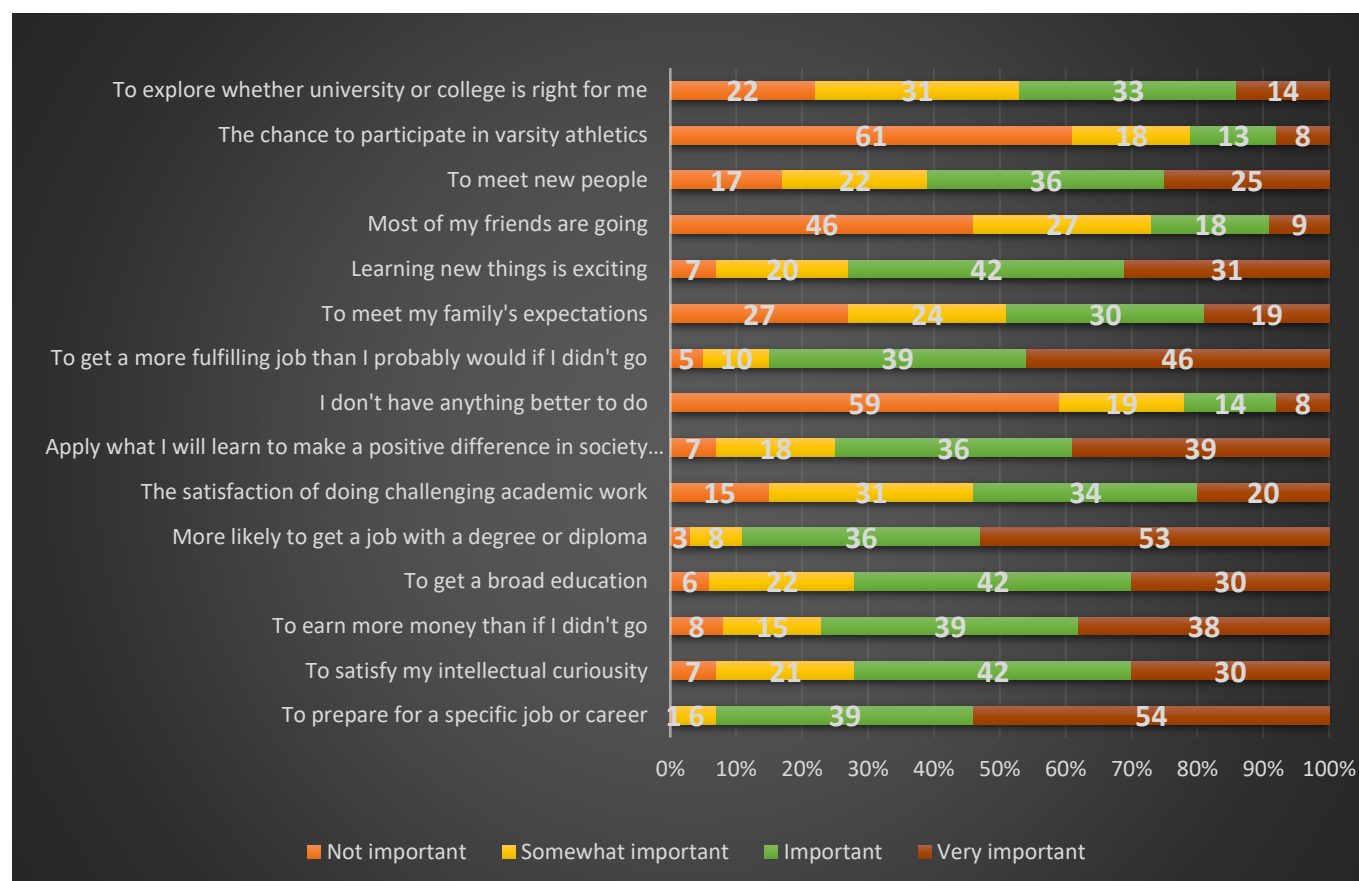
It is interesting to note that when asked, almost all students rated parental influence on their post-secondary decision-making as low (see Tables 9,11,12,14, 16 and 17 below). Nevertheless, the correlation between their parents' educational experience and their own choice of type of post-secondary education is evident in the figures above.

III. Making Decisions About the Future

Students were questioned about their decision-making process with respect to deciding what to do after graduation. The 70 percent of students who indicated that they intended to go on to university or college were asked what factors were most important to them in making this decision.

Students were asked "How important were each of the following possible reasons in your decision to go to university or college?"

Table 9. Reasons to go to university or college (rate all in level of importance to you; %)



To the question “Which one is the most important to you?” the top five responses (in order of popularity) were:

Table 10. Top Five Reasons to Go to University or College

Reason for attending university or college n = 709	% of students who said this was the most important consideration for them
To prepare for a specific job or career	32%
To earn more money than if I didn't go	11%
To get a more fulfilling job than I would if I didn't go	8%
To apply what I will learn to make a positive difference in society or my community	7%
To get a broad education	6%

The least important considerations for students seemed to be (in order of declining importance):

Table 11. Five Least Important Reasons to Go to University or College

Reason for attending university or college n = 709	% of students who said this was <i>not</i> important to them
To explore whether university or college is right for me	22%
To meet my family's expectations	27%
Most of my friends are going	46%
I don't have anything better to do	57%
The chance to participate in varsity athletics	61%

Students in the region who were born in another country and living in Canada for five years or less accorded more importance to meeting their family's expectations, and less importance to earning more money than did their classmates in their decision to pursue post-secondary education, but were otherwise in accordance with the rest of their peers. There was very little difference between male and female students on this question.

To permit some comparison between young people in the Southwest NB region and their peers elsewhere in Canada, the wording of this question was drawn from the Canadian Universities Survey Consortium tri-annual survey of 1st Year University students in Canada.⁸

The Anglophone South School District (Southwest NB) High School Class of 2019 have a lot in common with other young people across Canada in terms of the factors which are important to them in making a decision with respect to whether or not to take post-secondary education. For both groups, the three most important reasons for enrolling in post-secondary education were the same:

- To prepare for a specific job or career;
- Because they believed they would be more likely to get a job with a degree or diploma; and

⁸ Questions drawn from Prairie Research Associates for the Canadian University Survey Consortium (2016). *2016 First Year Students Survey Master Report* (retrieved at http://www.cusc-ccreu.ca/publications/CUSC_2016-First-Year-Report-EN.pdf, June 16, 2020). Note: This is a survey of first year university students only and does not include those students who elect to go to community college.

- To get a more fulfilling job than they figured they get if they didn't go.

Likewise, both groups identified the same three factors as of least importance in their decision to continue their education after high school:

- Because most of their friends are going;
- Because they didn't have anything better to do; and
- The chance to participate in varsity athletics.

Table 12. Reasons to Go to University or College: NB HS Class of 2019 vs 1st Year Canada-wide

How important were each of the following possible reasons in your decision to go to university or college? <i>(% of students rating the reason important or very important)</i>		
	SW NB High School Class of 2019	Canada 1 st Year University 2018-19 ⁹
To prepare for a specific job or career	93%	88%
I am more likely to get a job with a degree or diploma	89%	90%
To get a more fulfilling job than I probably would if I didn't go	85%	89%
To earn more money than if I didn't go	77%	72%
To apply what I will learn to make a positive difference in society or my community	75%	76%
Learning new things is exciting	73%	79%
To get a broad education	72%	76%
To satisfy my intellectual curiosity	72%	73%
To meet new people	61%	60%
The satisfaction of doing challenging academic work	54%	57%
To meet my family's expectations	49%	56%
To explore whether university or college is right for me	47%	51%
Most of my friends are going	27%	20%
I don't have anything better to do	22%	14%
The chance to participate in varsity athletics	21%	11%

The New Brunswick high school seniors and the Canada-wide sample of 1st year university students attach similar significance to social objectives such as the desire to make a positive difference in society or their community and an interest in meeting new people in deciding to pursue post-secondary education.

Nevertheless, there are some differences between these two groups of young people. Training for a specific job or career and earning more money are stronger motivators for the New Brunswick high school students as a group than they are for 1st year university students across Canada. As a group, the

⁹ Prairie Research Associates for the Canadian University Survey Consortium (June 2019). *2019 First Year Students Survey Master Report* (retrieved at https://cusc-ccreu.ca/?page_id=32&lang=en, May 25, 2020). Note: This is a survey of first year university students only and does not include those students who elect to go to community college.

Southwest NB region high school Class of 2019 are less concerned with meeting their family's expectations when making their plans than are their slightly older peers enrolled in their first year at universities across Canada (with the caveat noted above).

It is not clear whether these differences between soon to graduate New Brunswick students and recently graduated students across Canada are due to age, culture, the inclusion of community-college bound students in the UNB survey of high school students (in addition to university-bound students), or some other combination of factors.

IV. Where they are going and what they want to study

Of those students who said they intended to go to university (approximately 50 percent of the all Grade 12 students surveyed), 75.6 percent said they planned to attend a university in New Brunswick. Forty-five percent of university-bound students plan to stay and study close to home, at UNB Saint John.

Of those students who indicated that they intended to go to community college after graduating from high school, either next year or at some later point (31 percent of all students surveyed) the majority (81 percent) intend to take a program at a New Brunswick college.

Table 13. What college or university do you plan to attend next year?

<i>University-bound</i>	%	<i>College-bound</i>	%
Crandall University	1.2	New Brunswick Community College/CCNB	69.1
Mount Allison University	4.9	Another business/career college in NB	11.5
Université de Moncton	0.4	Another Canadian college outside NB	15.8
Saint Thomas University	6.4	Another college outside Canada	3.6
University of New Brunswick Fredericton	17.6	TOTAL	100
University of New Brunswick Saint John	45.1		
Another Canadian university outside NB	21.9		
Another university outside Canada	2.5		
TOTAL	100		

When asked what they intended to study at university or college, the students' responses reflect a wide range of interests and aspirations. The various programs of study they indicated they intended to pursue are listed in Appendix I.

Applying to post-secondary institutions

A surprising number of students seemed to have a put-all-the-eggs-in-one-basket philosophy when it came to applying to post-secondary institutions for programs beginning the following year. Alternatively, one could say that as a group, they were quite certain about what they wanted to do and where they wanted to do it.

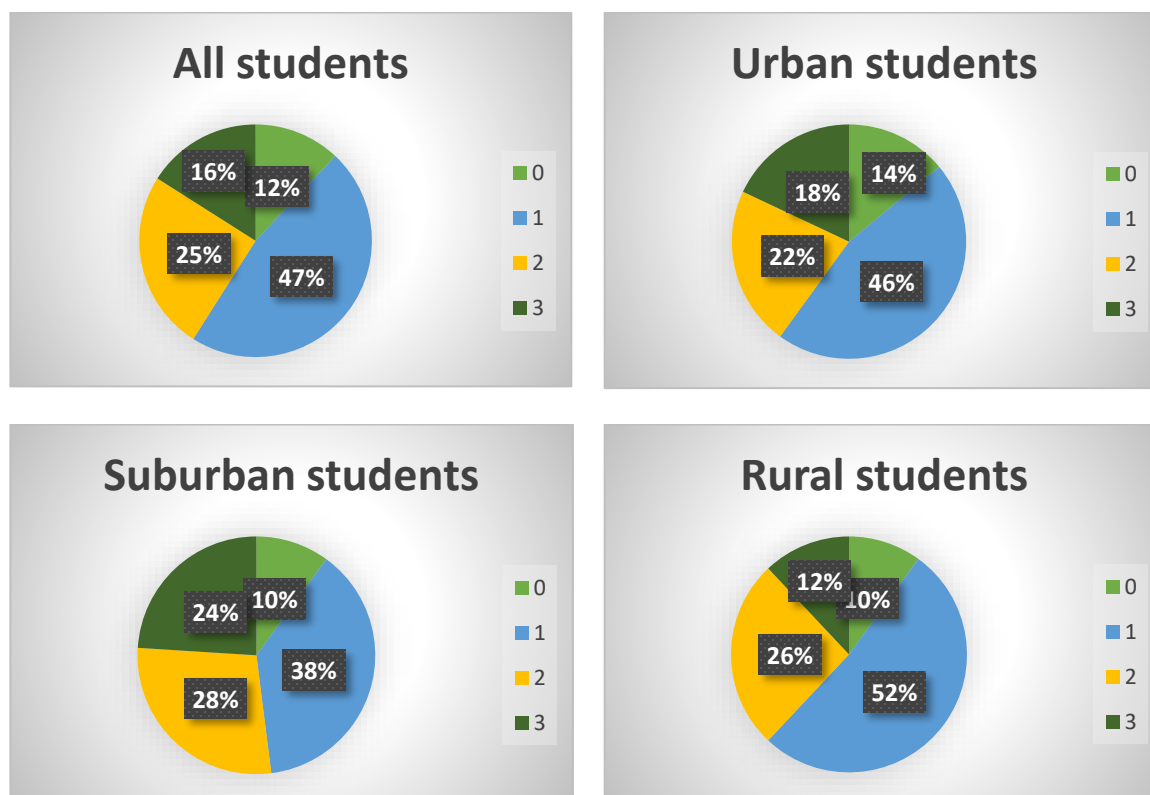
In response to the question "To how many post-secondary institutions did you apply?" 12 percent of all students (n = 837) reported that they had not applied to any.¹⁰ 47 percent of all students indicated that they had applied to only one institution.

As the chart below indicates, there was some variation among students on this point when analyzed according to school location (urban, suburban or rural) and gender. More students at suburban schools

¹⁰ Either not yet, or because they did not intend to apply.

had applied to more than one school. More female students had applied to only one school and the majority of male students had applied to two or more schools, as had the majority of students who were born in another country and resident in Canada for five years or less.^{11 12} What this question does not reveal are instances in which students might have applied to more than one program at the same university.

Figure 4. To have many post-secondary institutions did you apply?



¹¹ The number of gender independent students in the survey is small, but of the nine who answered this question, 67 percent said they had applied to one institution, 22 percent to two schools, and 11 percent (1 student) to 3 or more.

¹² Living in Canada 5 years or less: n = 48 in response to this question. Eight percent of students in this category had not applied to any post-secondary institutions at the time of the survey (May 2019); 33 percent said they had applied to one school; 17 percent to two; and 42 percent to three or more.

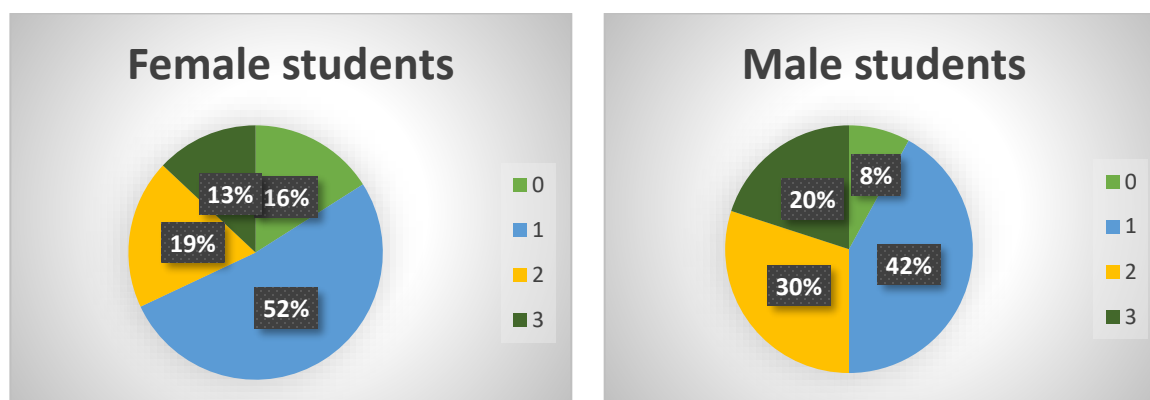
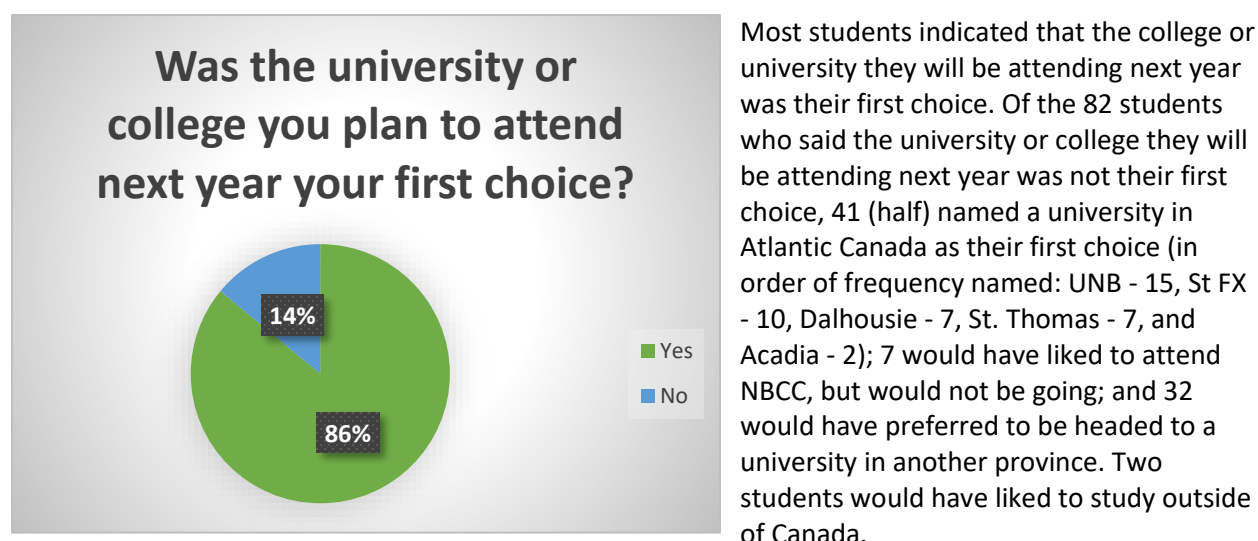


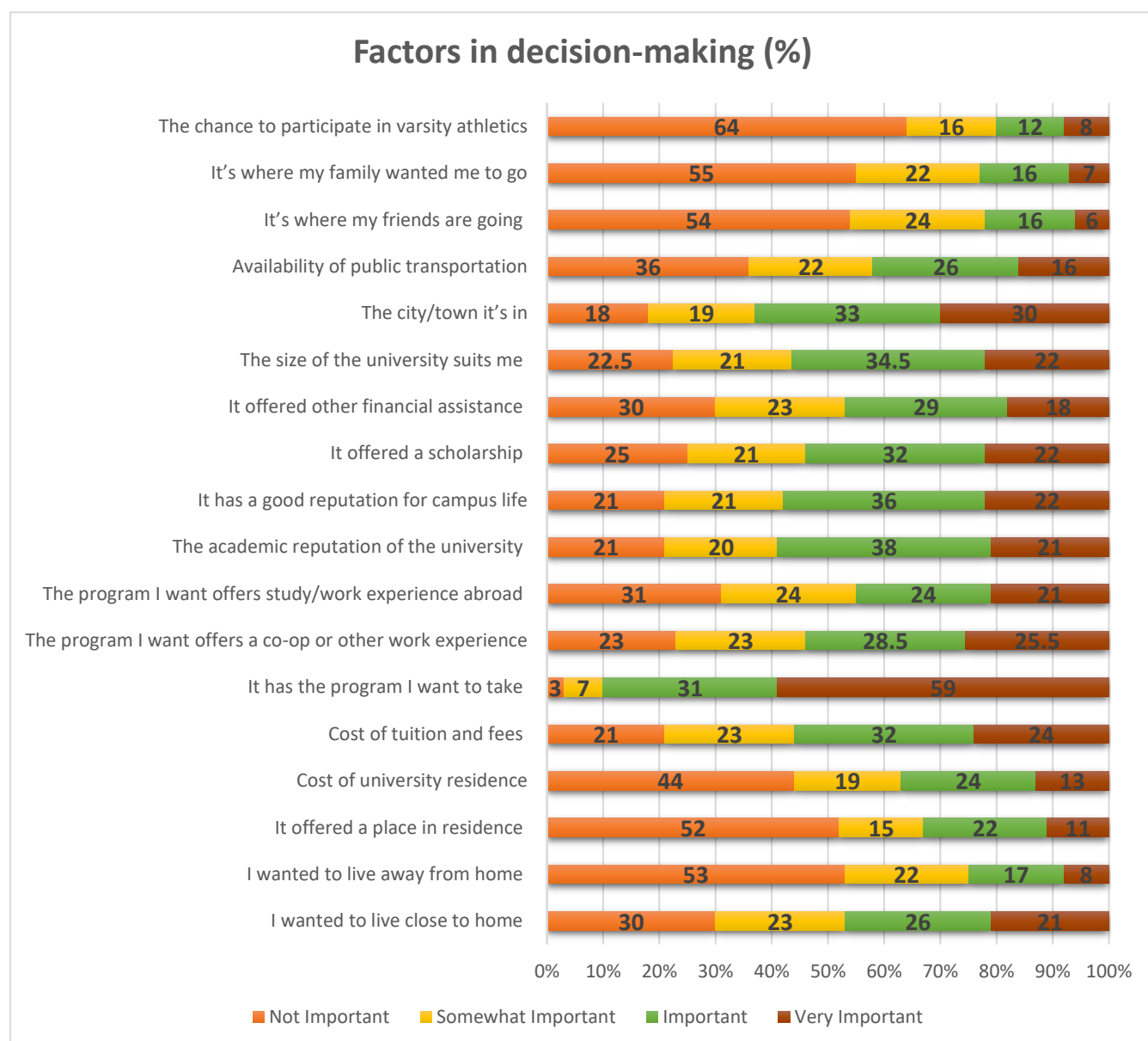
Figure 5. Will be attending their first Choice of College or University Next Year



Unprompted, a few students gave a reason why they would not be attending their first choice. Three named cost. In addition to the 82 students who indicated they would not be attending their first choice of school, a few students answered this question indicating that their plans for next year were otherwise not aligned with their preferences. For example, one student responded, *"I want to take next year off but my mom won't let me."*

In this vein, the survey asked students who intended to attend college or university next year to rate a list of factors (including parental views) in terms of the degree to which they influenced the student's choice of post-secondary institution. Again, this question was drawn from the Canadian Universities Survey Consortium tri-annual survey of 1st Year University students in Canada to permit comparisons.

Table 14. How important were each of the following in choosing your university or college?



To the question “Which one is the most important to you?” the top five responses (in order of popularity) were:

Table 15. Most Important Factors in Choosing a School

Considerations in choosing a university or college n = 711	% of students who said this was the most important consideration for them
It has the program I want to take	26%
I wanted to live close to home	21%
Cost of tuition and fees	10%
The academic reputation of the university	7%
The city/town it's in	6%

The least important considerations for students were (in order of declining importance):

Table 16. Least Important Factors in Choosing a School

Considerations in choosing a university or college n = 711	Percentage of students who said this was <i>not</i> important to them in choosing where to go to university or college
It offered a place in residence	52%
I wanted to live away from home	53%
It's where my friends are going	54%
It's where my family wanted me to go	55%
The chance to participate in varsity athletics	64%

As Table 17 below shows, the Class of 2019 from the Southwest NB region and the students enrolled in their first year at universities across Canada accorded similar importance to a range of factors in choosing where to continue their education.

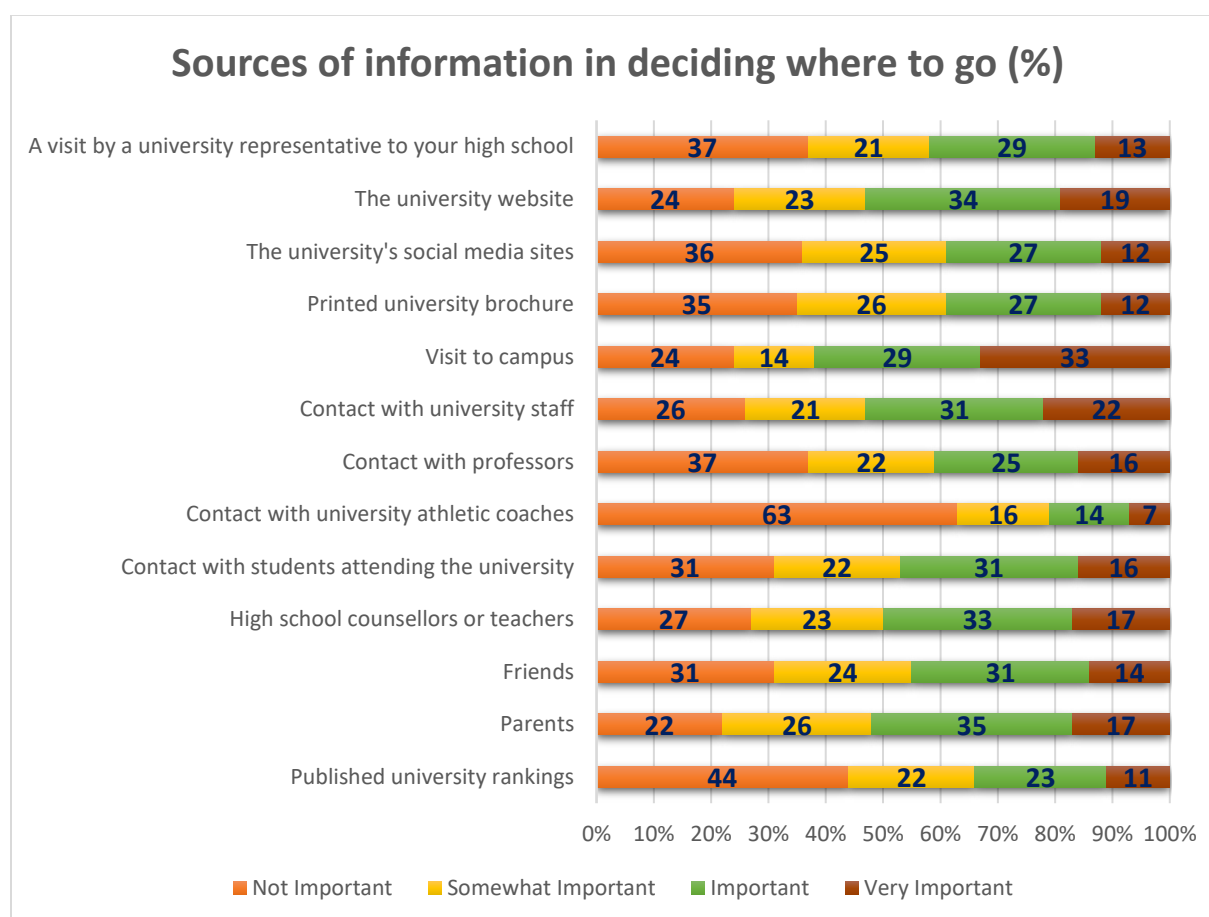
Table 17. Factors in choosing a school – SW NB HS Class of 2019 vs Canada-wide 1st Yr Uni

How important were each of the following in choosing your university or college? (% of students rating the reason important or very important)		
	SW NB High School Class of 2019	Canada 1 st Year University 2018-19
It has the program I want to take	90%	88%
The city/town it's in	63%	60%
The academic reputation of the university	59%	69%
It has a good reputation for campus life	58%	49%
The size of the university suits me	57%	52%
Cost of tuition and fees	56%	52%
The program I want offers a co-op, practicum or other work experience	54%	51%
It offered a scholarship	54%	51%
I wanted to live close to home	47%	45%
It offered other financial assistance	47%	38%

How important were each of the following in choosing your university or college? (% of students rating the reason important or very important)		
	SW NB High School Class of 2019	Canada 1 st Year University 2018-19
The program I want offers study/work experience abroad	45%	38%
Availability of public transportation	42%	50%
Cost of university residence	37%	22%
It offered a place in residence	33%	31%
I wanted to live away from home	25%	28%
It's where my family wanted me to go	23%	20%
It's where my friends are going	22%	14%
The chance to participate in varsity athletics	20%	10%

Grade 12 students in the Southwest NB region who indicated that they planned to go to university or college were asked “How important were each of the following sources of information in choosing which university or college to attend?” To allow for some comparison, this question was also drawn from the Consortium of Canadian Universities tri-annual survey of first year university students across Canada.

Table 18 Sources of Information About Post-Secondary Options



As illustrated in Table 18 above, the three most important sources of information on post-secondary education as rated by graduating high school students in the region are:

- A visit to campus (62 percent rated this as important or very important);
- contact with university staff (53.1 percent rated this as important or very important); and
- university websites (rated as important or very important by 52.9 percent of students).

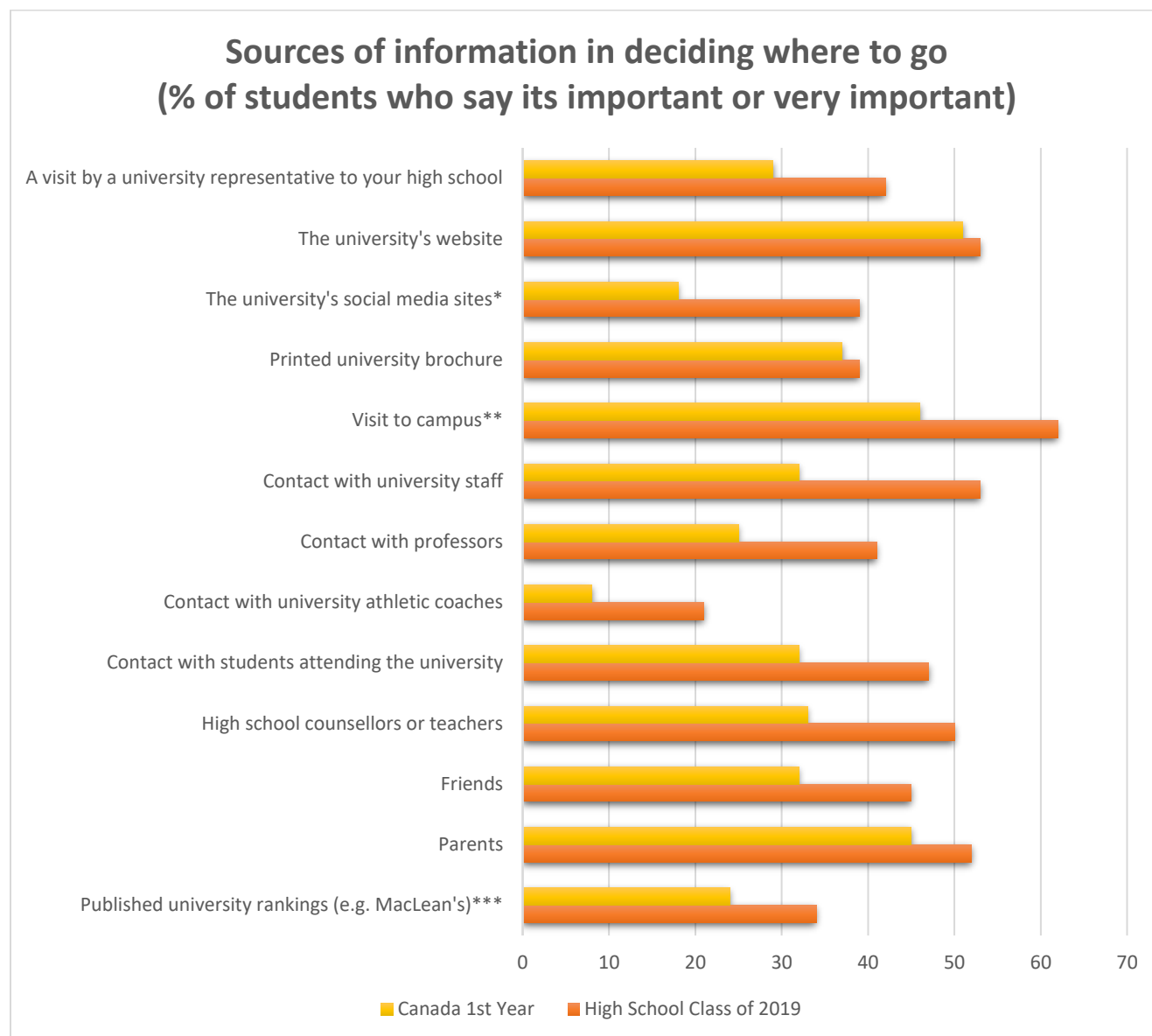
Perhaps surprisingly (or not), although high school seniors rated parental influence as low in terms of their decision to attend university or college and their choice of institution (see Tables 14 and 17 above), they cited their parents as one of their most important sources of information on their post-secondary options (rated as important or very important by 52 percent of students, as recorded in Table 18 above). Rounding out the top five sources of information were high school counsellors and teachers (50 percent of students rated them as important or very important sources of information).

We were curious about how high school students whose parents had not attended university reached the decision to enroll in university and what sources of information they drew on in deciding whether or not to seek a degree, in choosing a program, and in choosing a school. Their reasons for choosing university were very similar to those of their peers. The most important reasons for both groups were to train for a specific career, to get a good job, and because they felt they would be more likely to get a job with a degree.

Whether or not their parents had been to university, for all students, seeing a university for themselves on a campus visit was the most important source of information guiding their decision-making. Likewise, speaking with university representatives and reading university websites were the second and third most important sources of information for both students with university-educated parents and students whose parents had not attended university. However, students whose parents had not attended university indicated that they relied more heavily on each of these three sources of information than their peers, and more heavily on their guidance counsellors and teachers for information about their post-secondary education options. They relied less on their parents as a source of information, though they rated their family's views as of similar importance in deciding to go to university as their peers.

As illustrated in Table 19 below, in general, the Class of 2019 rated all the various sources of information on their post-secondary options as more important to their decision-making than did 1st year undergraduates across Canada. However, not all these responses are directly comparable as the list of options differs somewhat in each survey. Please see notes in Table 19.

Table 19. Sources of Information About Post-Secondary Options: NB HS and 1st YR Canada



*The CUSC Survey asks students to rate “The university’s Facebook page” (12% rated it as Important or Very Important) as well as “The university’s other social media” (18% rated as Important or Very Important). The UNB survey asked about university social media in general.

** The CUSC Survey asks students to rate “Visit to campus for an open house” (46% rated as Important or Very Important) as well as “Other visit to campus” (35% rated as Important or Very Important). The UNB survey asked about campus visits in general.

*** The CUSC Survey asks students to rate the importance of several published rankings: MacLean’s (24% rated as Important or Very Important); QS World University Rankings (19%); Times Education Supplement World University Rankings (18%); Academic Ranking of World Universities (17%) and the Globe and Mail rankings (14%). The UNB survey asked about published university rankings in general.¹³

¹³ Prairie Horizons for CUSC, 2019: 27.

V. Financing Post-Secondary Education

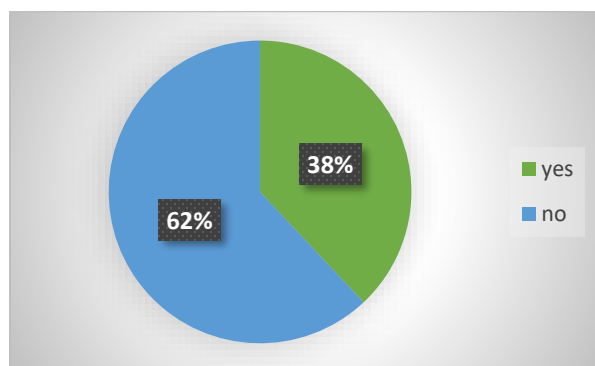
Students in the Southwest NB region Class of 2019 who said they were going to go to university or college were asked how they were going to pay for it. Almost all indicated that they would be drawing on several sources to finance their post-secondary education. Among these, income from a job, student loans, and a scholarship or bursary were the most frequently cited.

Table 20. How are you going to pay for university or college? (tick all that apply); % of students

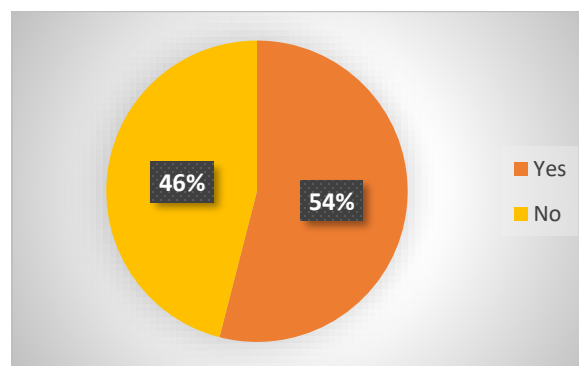
Income from a job	45%
Student loan	43%
Scholarship or bursary	42%
Personal savings	39%
Other financial support from family	37%
Registered Educational Savings Plan (RESP)	19%

Figure 6. Importance of Financial Assistance to Access to Post-Secondary Education

Would you be able to attend University or College without financial assistance?



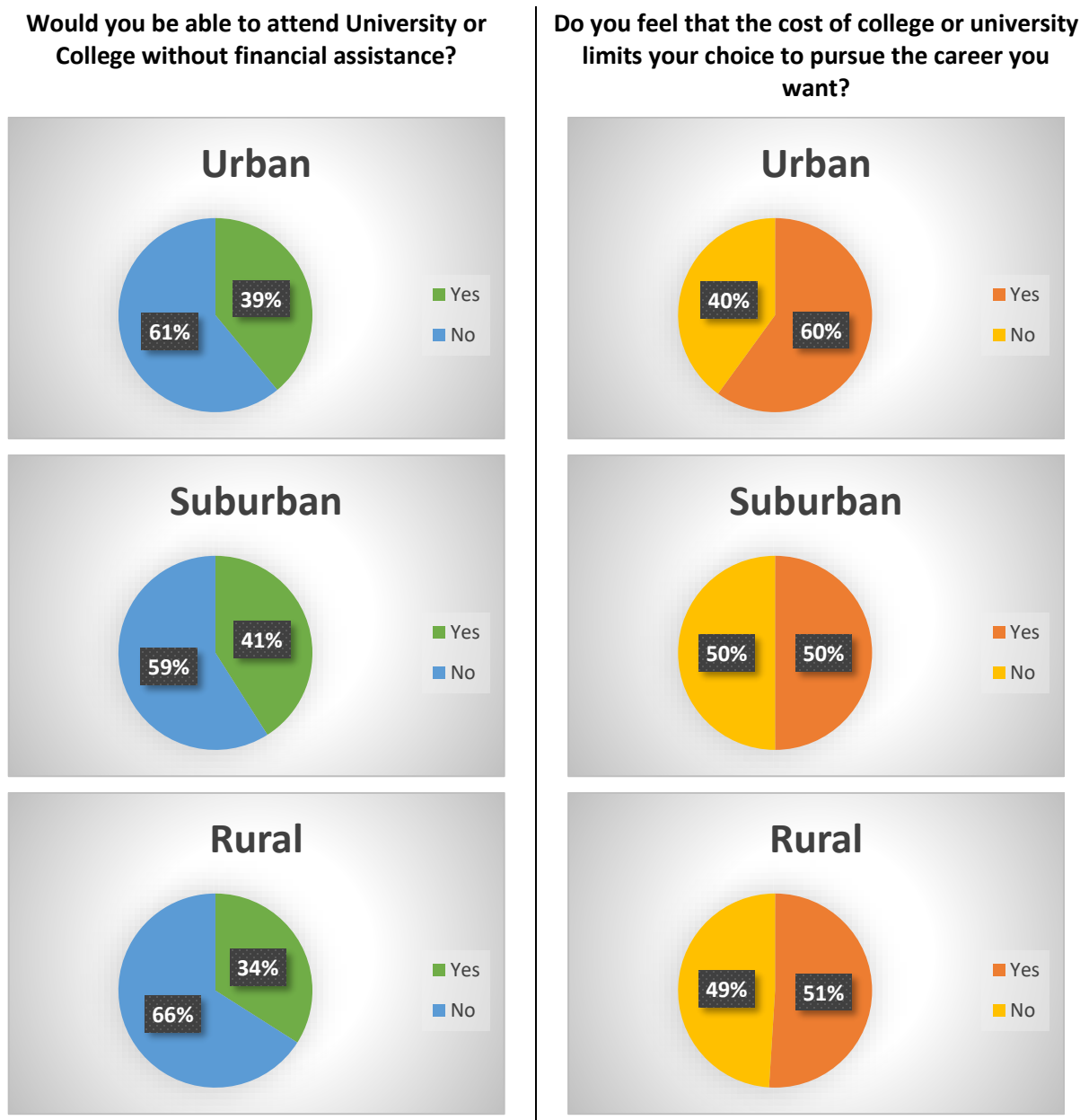
Do you feel that the cost of college or university limits your choice to pursue the career you want?



A higher percentage of students attending rural schools indicated that they would not be able to attend college or university without financial assistance. This could in part reflect the added cost of room and board for students living beyond daily commuting distance of a university or college.

A higher percentage of students attending urban schools feel that the cost of college or university limits their choice to pursue the career they want.

Figure 7. Importance of Financial Assistance: Urban – Suburban – Rural Breakdown



Conclusion

We asked members of the Class of 2019 to imagine their lives ten years from now – what would they be doing and where would they be? Their answers encompassed a wide range of occupations and travelled the globe. Many expressed a desire to help people, to contribute to their community, or work to improve the world. Most expressed a hope for what most people want: a home; fulfilling work; a family; and an interesting life. Many hoped to be living out their dreams here in New Brunswick, maybe after seeing a bit of the world, maybe having spent the previous decade building their careers and starting a family:

"I hope to be the MLA for my riding."

"I will be 28 and a pipe insulator."

"Being an entrepreneur. Hopefully in New Brunswick."

"In ten years, I see myself working a steady job that I'm passionate about and allows me to work outside."

"I see myself writing books, attempting to have them published."

"I see myself as a receptionist in a hospital scheduling appointments and checking people in."

"I see myself working at a mill and having a wife and kids."

"I see myself being the dentist in my hometown."

"I can see myself working hard in a Disney kitchen and living in Florida."

"I can see myself living in another country focusing on the environment, whether through a job or volunteer work."

"I can see myself working as a diplomat."

"I can sadly see myself here."

"In ten years, I hope to be five or six years out of university and travelling the world while working for the federal government."

"In ten years, I will be just starting out as a new lawyer."

"Hopefully, graduated from medical school and either doing a residency or having my own practice."

"Climbing the sports marketing ladder."

"Being a pilot at a major airline."

"Lobster fishing."

"Owning my own garage."

"Have my own refrigeration business."

"Physiotherapy. Maybe running my own business."

"I hope to be working and making good money to support my family. I would like to open my own daycare."

"In a management position at a nuclear facility with a family and a few kids."

"Having a good life and not worrying about bills."

"Working in a hospital with kids."

"Hopefully, a nurse in the Saint John area."

"Hopefully, teaching French somewhere between Sussex and Saint John."

"Hopefully, studying human behaviour."

"Hopefully, doing bike tours and hiking tours to promote environmental change."

"Making code, most likely having to travel fairly often as I will probably be working from home in NB for a company in the States or elsewhere."

"Hopefully, writing film scores, and if so, I will most likely be living in BC."

"I see myself already having gone to the Olympics in swimming and I'll be travelling with sports teams helping out their fitness and nutrition."

"No idea. Job might not even exist yet."

May all their dreams come true.

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Greater Saint John Community Foundation (April 2013) *Youth Vital Signs Results: The Saint John Region* (accessed at <https://thecommunityfoundationsj.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Youth-Vital-Signs-2013.pdf>, May 19, 2020).

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Appendix I – Intended Post-Secondary Program of Study

Intended Field of Study	n	Intended Field of Study	n
Aviation	3	Education	22
Bachelor of Arts (undefined)	68	Early Childhood	27
Anthropology	2	Education assistant	3
Communication	2	Border security	2
Counselor	1	Firefighting	2
Criminology	12	Police	9
Dance	2	RCMP	1
Design	5	Mathematics	6
Fashion Design	3	No clue	32
Graphic Design	6	Other	24
Interior Design	1	School	15
Economics	2	Science	73
English	6	Biochemistry	2
Film-theater	7	Biology	12
Fine arts	3	Dental	1
History	3	Engineering	46
Human Services	10	Chemical engineering	1
Journalism	3	Civil Engineering	2
Law	3	Electrical Engineering	4
Music	1	Mechanical Engineering	8
Office Administration	2	Environmental science	11
Philosophy	6	Forestry	6
Photography	4	Health Science	21
Political Science	6	Kinesiology	21
Psychology	36	Life Science	2
Religious studies	2	Nursing	27
Social science	4	LPN	14
Sociology	6	PSW	2
Tourism	6	Physics	3
Bachelor of Business	64	Veterinarian	7
Accounting	12	Sports Management	3
Commerce	6	Trades	2
Entrepreneurship	2	Carpentry	9
Marketing	4	Electrician	12
Beauty	9	Industrial Controls	12
Computer Science	27	Mechanic	19
Cybersecurity	7	Millwright/Industrial mechanic	7
Programming	2	Operator/machinist	5
Software engineer	5	Pipefitting	5
Video game design	1	Plumbing	2
Culinary	8	Power engineer	5
		Welding	17
		TOTAL	866

Appendix II - Questionnaire

2019 Survey of Grade 12 students in the Saint John region

QUESTIONS

1. What school do you attend

2. Gender:

Female ☐

Gender Independent ☐

Male ☐

3. Do you expect to graduate from high school in June 2019?

Yes ☐

No ☐

4. Please choose the grade that best reflects your overall average grade this year:

80 – 100% ☐

70 – 79% ☐

60 – 69% ☐

Below 60% ☐

5. What is the highest level of education have your parent(s)/guardian(s) have completed?

	Parent/Guardian 1
Some high school or elementary school education	<input type="checkbox"/>
A High school diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some college or technical school courses	<input type="checkbox"/>
A college or technical school diploma or certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some university courses (no degree)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Undergraduate university degree (e.g., BA, BSc, BBA, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional degree (e.g., law, medicine, MBA, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Graduate degree (e.g., Master's, PhD)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. What is the highest level of education have your parent(s)/guardian(s) have completed?

	Parent/Guardian 2
Some high school or elementary school education	<input type="checkbox"/>
A High school diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some college or technical school courses	<input type="checkbox"/>
A college or technical school diploma or certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some university courses (no degree)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Undergraduate university degree (e.g., BA, BSc, BBA, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional degree (e.g., law, medicine, MBA, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Graduate degree (e.g., Master's, PhD)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Where were you born?

Canada ☐

Another country ☐

8. If you were born in another country, how long have you lived in Canada?

0 - 3 years ☐

3 - 5 years ☐

More than 5 years ☐

CAREER PLANS

9. Which of the following best describes your career plans at this point?

I have some general ideas but I need to clarify them	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have several possible careers in mind	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have a specific career in mind	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am unsure, but I am thinking about it	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am not thinking about a career at this stage of my studies	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. At this stage in your life, what career do you think you want? What do you want to do?

11. Are the right schools and training opportunities available in New Brunswick for you to get the education and training you want after high school?

Yes ☐

No ☐

12. Do you feel you can pursue the career you want in New Brunswick?

Yes ☐

No ☐

13. If no, why not?

14. Would you like to live and work in New Brunswick after you finish your education?

Yes ☐

No ☐

15. Why or why not?

16. Do you see yourself living and working in New Brunswick 10 years from now?

Yes ☐

No ☐

17. What do you see yourself doing in ten years and where will you be?

18. What are your plans for next year?

Work full-time ☐

Attend community college ☐

Attend university ☐

Work for a year or so, then go to college or university ☐

High school ☐

I don't know ☐

Other (please specify) _____

If you don't intend to pursue post-secondary education (college or university), please go now to Question # 29.

If you intend to pursue post-secondary education, please go to Question # 17:

19. How important were each of the following possible reasons in your decision to go to university or college (rate all in level of importance to you):

	Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important
To prepare for a specific job or career	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To satisfy my intellectual curiosity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To earn more money than if I didn't go	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To get a broad education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am more likely to get a job with a degree or diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The satisfaction of doing challenging academic work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To apply what I will learn to make a positive difference in society or my community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't have anything better to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To get a more fulfilling job than I probably would if I didn't go	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To meet my family's expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning new things is exciting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Most of my friends are going	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To meet new people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The chance to participate in varsity athletics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To explore whether university or college is right for me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other reason (please specify below):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. Which one is the most important to you?

21. What college or university do you plan to attend next year? Please tick the appropriate box.

Crandall University	<input type="checkbox"/>	Another Canadian university outside NB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mount Allison University	<input type="checkbox"/>	Another university outside Canada	<input type="checkbox"/>
Université de Moncton	<input type="checkbox"/>	New Brunswick Community College/CCNB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Saint Thomas University	<input type="checkbox"/>	Another business/career college in NB	<input type="checkbox"/>
University of New Brunswick Fredericton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Another Canadian college outside NB	<input type="checkbox"/>
University of New Brunswick Saint John	<input type="checkbox"/>	Another college outside Canada	<input type="checkbox"/>

22. What are you going to study?

23. To how many post-secondary institutions did you apply?

- 0 ☐
 1 ☐
 2 ☐
 3 or more ☐

24. Was the university or college you plan to attend next year your first choice? Yes ☐ No ☐

25. If no, what was your first choice? _____

26. How important were each of the following in choosing your university or college?

	Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important
I wanted to live close to home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I wanted to live away from home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It offered a place in residence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost of university residence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost of tuition and fees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It has the program I want to take	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The program I want offers a co-op, practicum or other work experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The program I want offers study/work experience abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The academic reputation of the university	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It has a good reputation for campus life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It offered a scholarship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It offered other financial assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The size of the university suits me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The city/town it's in	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of public transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It's where my friends are going	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It's where my family wanted me to go	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The chance to participate in varsity athletics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other reason (please specify below):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

27. Which one was most important to you?

28. How important were each of the following sources of information in choosing which university or college to attend?

	Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important
A visit by a university representative to your high school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The university's web site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The university's social media sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Printed university brochure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visit to campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contact with university staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contact with professors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contact with university athletic coaches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contact with students attending the university	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
High school counsellors or teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Published university rankings (ex. MacLean's)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify below:)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

29. How are you going to pay for college or university? Please tick all that apply.

Registered Educational Savings Plan (RESP)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scholarship or bursary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other financial support from family	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal savings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student loan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Income from a job	<input type="checkbox"/>

30. Would you be able to attend University or College without financial assistance? Yes ☐ No ☐

31. Do you feel that the cost of college or university limits your choice to pursue the career you want? Yes ☐ No ☐

Thank you very much for your time and your insights. All the best with your future plans!