2016 NAIS-NAIS-NSCC-Winston Prep Wellness Survey for Independent Schools
About NAIS

The National Association of Independent Schools provides services to more than 1,700 schools and associations of schools in the United States and abroad, including 1,400 nonprofit, private K-12 schools in the U.S. that are self-determining in mission and program and are governed by independent boards. For more information, visit www.nais.org.

NAIS conducts research among schools nationally and then provides you with targeted, digested reports you can use to evaluate your own practices. Our research clearinghouse also identifies external research relevant to independent schools and helps you understand how to use the findings in your work.

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2016 NAIS-NSCC-Winston Prep Wellness Survey for Independent Schools

CONTENTS

Executive Summary
Background
Methodology

Key Findings

Promoting Well-Being in Schools
- Most Common Mental Health and Well-Being Issues Reported by Students
- Most Common Mental Health and Well-Being Issues Reported by Educators
- Challenges and/or Barriers to Intentionally Promoting Well-Being
- Key Resources to Promote Wellness
- Policies to Promote Well-Being
- Measurements of Student Learning
- Use of Surveys on Social Climate, Culture, General Well-Being, and Risk Behavior
- Use of Readiness Surveys
- Use of School Improvement Process Surveys
- Time Allocated to Prosocial Instruction Practices
- Amount of Time Allocated to Support Teachers
Fostering Learning about the Range of Sexual-Social-Emotional Experiences
  - Sexuality Education Guidelines
  - Sexuality Education Outside of Biology

Anxiety and Depression
  - Actions Taken by the School
  - Addressing Psychiatric Issues and Concerns

College Admissions and Counseling
  - Goals of the College Admissions Process
  - College Admissions Process as a Learning Experience
  - Use of Counseling about the Transition to College
  - Resources to Make the College Admissions Process Less Stressful
  - Importance of Admission to More Selective Colleges
  - Time Allocated in College Counseling Program

Next Steps: Learning Needs and Wants

School Demographics
  - Type of School
  - Enrollment Size
  - School Gender
  - Location
Executive Summary

In January 2016, NAIS partnered with the National School Climate Center (NSCC) and the Winston Preparatory School to conduct a new survey on well-being in the independent school community. The NAIS-NSCC-Winston Prep survey gathers information on topics related to promoting well-being in independent schools, instructional and relational efforts, college admissions and counseling, sexual-social-emotional experiences, anxiety and depression, as well as what independent schools’ leaders need to learn to better meet the wellness needs of their students.

Participating school heads indicated that their schools are making a substantial investment of time and resources in promoting student health and well-being.

Student anxiety and depression are by far the most commonly mentioned mental health and well-being issues reported both by teachers and by students. A lack of time and teacher training were reported as the top two barriers to promoting well-being in schools. Respondents identified face-to-face consultations/conversations and case studies with school examples as the primary resources that would help schools further wellness among students and staff.

Policies to promote well-being are widespread in independent schools. Seven out of 10 schools already have such policies in place, and a fifth of the schools are in the process of developing them. Participants also cited some of the types of surveys they use, with more than 60 percent using climate surveys and more than half using culture surveys. Slightly more than a fifth (22 percent) of the respondents use readiness surveys (defined as those that help leadership teams understand their strengths, their needs, and their possible weaknesses). Over a third (37 percent) use school improvement process surveys.

Most schools report substantial time allocations to various prosocial instruction practices, such as character education, social/emotional skill development, and positive psychology. Likewise, more than a third of the participants set aside time on an ongoing basis to promote social,
emotional, civic, and ethical learning in the curriculum; to support teachers using a range of pedagogic strategies that promote prosocial learning; and to help teachers manage classrooms.

A large majority of independent schools offer sexuality education that is outside the realm of biology, with most providing guidelines for mutual respect in relationships and sexual harassment prevention, as well as guidelines in other areas of sexuality education.

When dealing with anxiety and depression, most schools have taken action in the past five years, such as increased counseling, work with social workers, and greater collaboration with other mental health partners and outside agencies.

School heads assign high importance to students’ securing admission to an appropriate college, and many apply some effort to make the college admissions process less stressful and more of a learning experience for students.

Most school heads express interest in learning more about research-based information, guidelines, and tools regarding issues of wellness and well-being, and they are especially interested in further understanding and addressing anxiety and depression, support of student learning about healthy social-emotional-sexual development, and policies and rules designed to enhance wellness.

Finally, in comparison to the overall demographics of NAIS schools as of October 2015, survey respondents were less likely to be from small schools with fewer than 200 students.
Background

NAIS partnered with the National School Climate Center (NSCC) and the Winston Preparatory School to conduct a new survey on well-being in our community. The NAIS-NSCC-Winston Prep survey builds on the 2015 NAIS and ISHA Survey on Health and Well-Being in Independent Schools and is designed to “dig deeper” and learn more about what independent schools are experiencing in four major areas that have been raised as prime issues for our schools:

1. Promoting wellness: systemically, instructionally, and/or relationally
2. Making the college admissions process a time of learning and not an inherently stressful experience
3. Fostering learning about the range of sexual-social-emotional experiences in middle and high school to support healthy development and prevent toxic and illegal activities (e.g., date rape)
4. Recognizing and supporting students who are depressed or anxious

Methodology

NAIS staff collaborated with NSCC and the Winston Preparatory School on the creation of the questionnaire used in this survey. On January 6, 2016, NAIS research staff emailed 1,659 heads of schools to invite them to complete the online survey. Two additional reminders were sent on January 20 and January 28.

Out of these potential respondents, a total of 396 participants completed the survey, 30 opted out, and 42 could not be reached due to problems with their email addresses. The response rate was 25 percent. Due to rounding, percentages may not always appear to add up to 100.

This report was written by Amada Torres, vice president of studies, insights, and research at NAIS.
Key Findings

Promoting Well-Being in Schools

Most Common Mental Health and Well-Being Issues Reported by Students

As identified by almost nine out of 10 heads (88 percent), anxiety is by far the most common well-being issue reported by students. Depression was second, raised by half of all heads (49 percent). The remaining issues are at much lower levels.

What are the two most common mental health and well-being issues that students report in your school?

- Anxiety: 88%
- Depression: 49%
- Alcohol and other drug use: 16%
- Unhealthy dietary behaviors: 15%
- Inadequate physical activity: 5%
- Behaviors that contribute to unintentional injuries and violence: 4%
- Risky sexual behaviors including multiple partners or casual sex: 2%
- Tobacco use: 2%
- Other (please specify): 13%

(n=391)
An important number of participants (13 percent) also indicated other issues of concern. These included inadequate sleep or lack of sleep, general stress, stress around secondary school admissions, inability to cope, social concerns with friends, bullying, inattention, lack of focus, impulsivity, traumatic experiences related to abuse, fatigue, feeling overwhelmed with their schedules, ADHD, adjustment issues, lack of confidence, social pressures, homesickness, family pressure, social micro-aggressions, and social exclusion.
Most Common Mental Health and Well-Being Issues Reported by Educators

The reports of fellow educators are almost identical to those of students, with student anxiety continuing to be far in the lead as the most common well-being issue (85 percent), followed by depression (45 percent).

What are the two most common mental health and well-being issues that fellow educators report in your school about students?

Among other issues reported, educators listed inadequate sleep, stress, inability to cope, social concerns with friends, impulsivity, bullying or teasing, cliques or groupings, being overbooked or overprogrammed, self-esteem issues, fatigue, emotional problems, family trauma, feelings of exclusion related to social media use, technology misuse or too many electronic devices, ADD, pressure and tension, inability to focus, and family pressure.
Challenges and/or Barriers to Intentionally Promoting Well-Being

A lack of time and a lack of teacher training appear to be the key barriers to promoting well-being in schools, as indicated by 61 percent and 40 percent of participants, respectively. Eighteen percent of respondents cited “other” challenges such as financial constraints, lack of support from parents, need to balance this with other school programs, lack of faculty buy-in, student anxiety about high school admissions, and lack of clarity on goals and next steps in this area.

What are the two most important challenges and/or barriers (if any) that make it difficult to intentionally promote well-being at your school?

(n=367)
Key Resources to Promote Wellness

When asked what resources would help them further wellness among students and staff, school heads identified face-to-face consultations/conversations (52 percent) and case studies with school examples (44 percent) as the primary resources. Other options suggested by participants included training for parents and teachers, presentations by speakers, and written guidelines.

What are the top two kinds of resources that would most support your efforts to further wellness among students and staff?

![Bar chart showing the percentages of respondents for each resource.]

- Face-to-face consultations and/or conversations: 52%
- Case studies with school examples: 44%
- Written guides for curriculum: 28%
- Online learning modules or courses: 21%
- Webinars: 15%
- Written guides for school partnerships: 14%
- Videos: 11%
- Other (please specify): 11%

(n=363)
Policies to Promote Well-Being

Policies to promote well-being appear to be well-entrenched in independent schools. Seven out of 10 schools already have such policies in place (71 percent) and one in five (21 percent) are in the process of developing them.

Does your school have policies that are designed to promote well-being?

(n=370)
Measurements of Student Learning

Approximately six out of 10 independent schools measure the social, emotional, and civic aspects of student learning.

From the list below, please indicate whether or not your school measures the following aspects of student learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Do not know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social aspects</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional aspects</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic aspects</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(n=362)
Use of Surveys on Social Climate, Culture, General Well-Being, and Risk Behavior

About 60 percent of respondents conduct surveys to assess their social climate, while more than half use surveys to assess their culture. Also, more than 30 percent of the schools use surveys to assess general well-being. Very few assess risk behavior through surveys among parents and school personnel, while close to a third do so among students. Surveys on other topics also appear to be popular at independent schools.

From the list below, please indicate whether or not your school uses the following type of surveys and if they include feedback from students, school personnel, and parents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes (parents)</th>
<th>Yes (school personnel)</th>
<th>Yes (students)</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Do not know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social climate</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General well-being</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk behavior</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other surveys</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(n=350)
Use of Readiness Surveys

Only about a fifth of the independent schools (22%) use readiness surveys — surveys that help school leadership teams understand their needs and their strengths and weaknesses.

Participants who use readiness surveys provided some examples, such as head assessment surveys, Gallup StrengthsFinder assessments, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, 360-degree evaluations, DISC assessments, assessments from the Center for Creative Leadership, SWOT analyses, annual administrator surveys, and Independent School Management surveys.

Does your school use readiness surveys (surveys that support school leadership teams understanding their strengths, needs, and possible weaknesses)?

(\(n=350\))

![Pie chart showing the responses to the question about the use of readiness surveys.]

- Yes, 22%
- No, 65%
- Do not know, 13%
Use of School Improvement Process Surveys

Less than a fourth of the schools (37 percent) currently use school improvement process surveys — surveys that support school leadership teams in understanding their challenges and building successes. Some of the instruments used include 360-degree feedback, accreditation reports, Mission Skills Assessment, Panorama surveys, Assessment of Inclusivity and Multiculturalism (AIM), parent satisfaction surveys, and Independent School Management surveys.

Does your school use school improvement process surveys (surveys that support school leadership teams understanding and building of successes and challenges)?

(n=345)
Time Allocated to Prosocial Instruction Practices

Most schools report substantial time allocated to various prosocial instruction practices. Two-thirds of the schools (67 percent) allocate a great deal of time or much time to character education that focuses on ethical and moral learning. Slightly fewer (62 percent) make a large time allocation to social-emotional skill development, while half (50 percent) devote a lot of time to positive psychology.

In your school, how much time is allocated to make the following prosocial instruction practices an explicit facet of your school’s instructional efforts?

- Character education that includes a primary focus on ethical and moral learning
  - A great deal: 32%
  - Much: 35%
  - Neither too little nor too much: 22%
  - Little: 10%
  - Not much: 1%

- Social-emotional learning that focuses on skill development (e.g., learning to be more reflective and empathic; caring; cooperative; intrinsically motivated; socially responsible)
  - A great deal: 29%
  - Much: 33%
  - Neither too little nor too much: 23%
  - Little: 13%
  - Not much: 2%

- Positive psychology (pedagogic focus on positive emotions and health, including personality traits like grit, resilience, and wisdom)
  - A great deal: 21%
  - Much: 29%
  - Neither too little nor too much: 25%
  - Little: 20%
  - Not much: 5%

(n=336)
Amount of Time Allocated to Support Teachers

Most schools allocate time at least once or twice a year or more for educator professional development regarding well-being and in training teachers how to use their own experience as an example. Efforts more likely to be done on an ongoing basis include devoting time in the curriculum to promoting social, emotional, civic, and ethical learning; providing support to teachers to help them manage classrooms in ways that foster learning; and supporting teachers in using pedagogic strategies that promote prosocial learning and wellness.

How often does your school...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allocate time to support your educators’ work via professional development activities that deal in the areas of student well-being, mental health, and/or well-being</th>
<th>Set aside time in the curriculum to promoting social, emotional, civic, and ethical learning (social and emotional learning, character education, positive psychology, 21st Century learning skills) throughout school life</th>
<th>Set aside time to support teachers understanding how they can use their own experience as a “living example”</th>
<th>Set aside time to support teachers in managing classrooms in ways that foster learning rather than punishment</th>
<th>Set aside time to support teachers using a range of pedagogic strategies that promote prosocial learning and wellness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(n=347)</td>
<td>(n=343)</td>
<td>(n=328)</td>
<td>(n=324)</td>
<td>(n=325)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On a weekly basis</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a month</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On a monthly basis</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven to 11 times a year</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three to six times a year</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once or twice a year</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One-third or more of the schools make ongoing efforts to set time aside for supporting teachers’ use of prosocial curriculum (32 percent); helping their educators understand how to build friendly relationships with students (44 percent); and collaborating with parents (38 percent), mental health providers (41 percent), and both of these groups as well as educators (33 percent) to help students in psychosocial/emotional trouble. Other schools do these activities more sporadically, while 5 percent to 12 percent report not doing these activities at all.

How often does your school…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Set aside time to support teachers using prosocial curriculum in your school</th>
<th>Set aside time to support educators understanding how they can build friendly relationships with students</th>
<th>Set aside time to collaborate with parents to help students who may be in psychosocial emotional trouble</th>
<th>Set aside time to collaborate with mental health providers to further your ability to help students who may be in psychosocial emotional trouble</th>
<th>Set aside time to support conversations between educators, parents, and mental health providers to further your ability to help students who may be in psychosocial emotional trouble</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(n=324)</td>
<td>(n=322)</td>
<td>(n=320)</td>
<td>(n=319)</td>
<td>(n=320)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On a weekly basis</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a month</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On a monthly basis</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven to 11 times a year</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three to six times a year</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once or twice a year</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fostering Learning about the Range of Sexual-Social-Emotional Experiences

Sexuality Education Guidelines

Provision of sexuality education guidelines is widespread, with more than eight out of 10 schools providing guidelines for mutual respect in relationships (86 percent) and sexual harassment prevention (81 percent). Most schools also offer guidelines in other areas of sexuality education.

Does your school provide sexuality education addressing the following guidelines?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guidelines</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Do not know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines that support mutual respect in relationships</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td></td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines that prevent sexual harassment</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines that enhance students’ understanding of the complexity of sexual-social-emotional experience</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines that recognize and support students with different sexual orientations</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines that support students understanding what coercion is</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines that support teachers/adults to sensitively and constructively address the complex range of sexual-social-emotional experiences</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(n=298)
**Sexuality Education Outside of Biology**

Eight out of 10 independent schools offer sexuality education that is outside the realm of biology.

Does your school have a health and/or well-being policy that is distinct from your school’s medical care services, physical education, and/or science education policies?

(n=308)

- Yes, 80%
- Don’t know, 3%
- No, 17%
Anxiety and Depression

Actions Taken by the School

Schools report taking a number of actions to address student anxiety, depression, and other psychiatric problems. Actions most frequently mentioned are expanded or improved counseling resources, work with social workers, collaboration with parents and mental health professionals, alterations of the testing regime and curriculum, and providing friendly or more relaxing schedules and physical surroundings.

Some of the examples cited by participants are below:

We have an active counseling staff that networks with parents, teachers and students to ensure students get the support they need. Teachers also receive support from our counselors. We also have student support teams in each division to talk about students of concern and talk about comprehensive support plans. We are generous in accommodations for students with mental health concerns.

Psychologists to discuss pressure and anxiety in today's world. School calendar that creates breaks and pauses. Considering the elimination of winter exams.

Individual counseling, group counseling, individual plans for students to reduce anxiety including presets, reduction of homework, breaking down the work into smaller parts, for example. We meet regularly with an Instructional Support team to address student concerns.

This is a big issue! We speak to parents all of the time and I write about this frequently. More importantly we administer just one standardized test per year in only four grades. By policy, there is little homework through sixth grade. Any project, if it is important enough to do, it is important enough to do IN school and not at home.

We have redesigned our school and created a much more child friendly environment with bright, flexible spaces and child-friendly furniture. Learning is assessed in many
ways but not usually through tests. This is a very hands on school where children create, collaborate and learn through authentic experiences. This makes learning more engaging, the children are much happier and it reduces stress.

Created a school-wide program for Student & Community Wellness, led by a senior administrator. Created a school-wide mindfulness program. Have four counselors to handle social-emotional issues. Significant health and wellness programming. Emphasis on creating a safe and healthy climate.

Integration of positive psychology into our advisor curriculum, disciplinary system, and classrooms.
Addressing Psychiatric Issues and Concerns

At most schools, the counseling staff, psychologists, or social workers are those with the primary responsibilities for addressing possible psychiatric issues and concerns. Depending on the school and the issue at hand, there may also be involvement and consultation with the school head, division heads, teachers, parents, and outside agencies.

Below are some examples of responses to the question “When a possible psychiatric issue/concern is reported, who addresses this and how?”

- School counselor or administrator, addressed by team of counselor, advisor, division head in partnership with parents, and consulting psychologist.

- The principal along with school counselor and depending on the severity of the situation the Dept. of Human Services, the hospital and other partnering agencies.

- The Director of Counseling is alerted and, depending on the severity or immediacy, in-house treatment or referral to outside professionals begins, in appropriate consultation with parents and other mental health professionals and/or administrative staff at school.

- Guidance Counselor works with the Advisor and Grade Level Team keeping Head of School informed.

- The entire leadership team of the school will convene, decide upon a plan of action and reach out to the family to plan with them.

- Counseling Department and Dean of Student Leadership. Typically there are conversations with all parties involved. Recommendations are made to president.

- We have a medical doc and a neuro-psychologist on staff and available twice a week for faculty, student, and parent consultation.
The Community Support Services Team (CSST) meets weekly to review issues of student mental/emotional health, and includes the division heads, school counselors, and school psychologist. From these meetings, normally there will be a coordinated response led by the relevant division head and including a school counselor, the school psychologist, and — as appropriate — parents, the student’s advisor and teachers.
College Admissions and Counseling

Goals of the College Admissions Process

In terms of the college admissions process, school heads assign the greatest importance to securing admission to an appropriate college (62 percent).

When you consider the college admissions process, how do you rate the following goals in order of importance to you (where 1=most important and 3=least important)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Rank 1</th>
<th>Rank 2</th>
<th>Rank 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To secure admission at an appropriate college for the student</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make this process a meaningful learning experience in and of itself</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To secure as many appropriate choices for each student as is reasonable</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(n=269)
College Admissions Process as a Learning Experience

About one-third of the schools (31 percent) set time aside on an ongoing basis to make college admissions a learning experience. Others do this on a weekly or less frequent basis.

How often does your school set aside time to make the college admissions process a learning experience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Set aside time to make the college admissions process a learning experience</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On a weekly basis</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a month</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On a monthly basis</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven to 11 times a year</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three to six times a year</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once or twice a year</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Most schools answering "other" are K–8 and are not involved in the college admissions process.

(n=289)
Use of Counseling about the Transition to College

More than one-half of independent schools also provide at least some counseling about the transition to college (52 percent.) Less than a fourth, though, do so to a great extent (22 percent).

In addition to supporting the college admissions process, to what extent does your school provide counseling about the transition to college?

(n=286)
Resources to Make the College Admissions Process Less Stressful

About two-thirds of the schools (65 percent) provide resources for parents to lessen college admissions pressure, while over half use strategies to reduce achievement pressure (56 percent) and to help students and parents focus on non-elite schools (54 percent). Less than half use strategies to reduce competition (43 percent).

How helpful do you find the following resources in making the college admissions process less stressful for students and their parents?

(\(n=233\))
Importance of Admission to More Selective Colleges

About one-half of the school heads agree that it is important for students to gain admission to more selective colleges (48 percent) in order to improve the school’s college list.

How important is it to have your students gain admissions to more selective colleges and “improve” your college list for stakeholders?

- Very important, 42%
- Important, 27%
- Neither important nor unimportant, 12%
- Of little importance, 13%
- Not at all important, 6%

(n=270)
Time Allocated in College Counseling Program
Exploring college options occupies the greatest proportion of college counseling program time at 39 percent of the participating schools, followed by essay drafting (22 percent) and counseling for college transition (14 percent).

What percentage of time does your college counseling program spend on the following items?

| Percentage of time spent by college counseling program on the following activities |
| Exploring college options | 39% |
| Essay drafting | 22% |
| Counseling for college transition | 14% |
| Standardized test prep | 12% |
| Other activities | 21% |

(n=228)
Next Steps: Learning Needs and Wants

A large majority of the responding schools expressed interest in learning more about research-based information, guidelines, and tools regarding issues of wellness and well-being. Interest is especially strong in learning ways of understanding and addressing anxiety and depression (86 percent), support of student learning about healthy social-emotional-sexual development (81 percent), and policies and rules designed to enhance wellness (80 percent).

Please rate to what extent you are interested in learning more about research-based information, guidelines, and/or tools related to the following spheres.

(n=292)
Interest in making the college admissions process more positive is somewhat lower than in other wellness/well-being issues, but more than half of the schools are interested in learning more in this area (58 percent).

Please rate to what extent you are interested in learning more about research-based information, guidelines, and/or tools related to the following spheres. (Cont’d)

(n=292)
School Demographics

In comparison to the overall demographics of NAIS schools as of October 2015, survey respondents were less likely to be from small schools with fewer than 200 students.

Type of School

Eighty-three percent of the schools participating in the survey are day schools, while 8 percent are boarding-day, 6 percent are day-boarding, and 3 percent are boarding only.

Which of the following school type best describes your school?

(n=403)
Enrollment Size

The participating schools are diverse in terms of enrollment size. Nearly one out of four (23 percent) has 200 or fewer students. Schools with 501 to 700 students had the lowest representation (15 percent).

Approximately how many students are enrolled in your school?

![Pie chart showing enrollment size distribution](image)

(n=403)
School Gender

Almost 90 percent of the schools are coed (87 percent), while 5 percent are boys-only, and 8 percent are girls-only schools.

What gender students does your school serve?

(n=403)
Location

Geographically, the largest shares of participating schools are in the West (22 percent), New England (17 percent), and Middle Atlantic (16 percent).

Where is your school located?

(n=403)