



Student Engagement in Example High School

Results from the 2014-2015 Survey of Student Engagement

Survey & Analysis by
Advanced Education Measurement

Student engagement matters.



Research confirms what every educator and parent knows: engagement is critical to a young person's success at school. Engaged students are happier, have higher GPAs and standardized test scores, and are less likely to get in trouble or engage in problem behaviors.

One of the key ways in which schools can promote engagement is through student activities. Multiple studies have shown activities improve engagement traits such as self-confidence, self-esteem, and confidence.

In recognition of the importance of student engagement and student activities, Example High School Activities Director Greg Hroch asked Advanced Education Measurement to administer its **Survey of Student Engagement (SSE)** and analyze the results. The SSE provides reliable results on the aspects of engagement that most impact a student's future. Students take the SSE at multiple points throughout the year, so it can measure changes in attitudes over time. Thanks to its partnership with 5-Star Students, AEM is able to connect the SSE with data on student participation in activities and analyze the impact Example's activities program has on student attitudes.

This report highlights the three most important findings from Example's SSE results. Example administered the SSE first during a two-week window in late November and again in the last two weeks of February. 674 students completed the SSE at least once. 401 students completed both administrations. The Appendix includes a full demographic profile of the sample.

Result 1: Example students are en-

Example students showed relatively high levels of engagement in all areas measured. 75.2 percent agree or strongly agree that they like their school. Only 27.4 percent of students agreed or strongly agreed that "school is boring," which is a comparatively low number given the question.

Students also demonstrated positive academic attitudes. 83.4 percent agreed or strongly agreed that "I feel motivated to do well at school." 78.3 percent of students agreed or strongly agreed that "I work hard on their school work." They also believe that their hard work is fairly rewarded: 77.2 percent agreed or strongly agreed that "my grades reflect my effort."

Example students also "like most of their teachers," with 83.8 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing. They also feel a strong connection with teachers. Only 12.1 percent of students agreed or strongly agreed that "most of my teachers do not understand me." The Appendix contains full results for all ten questions.

How do they feel? Example students



Strongly agree

- **will go straight from high school to college.**
- **Their teachers understand them**



agree

- **like school and their teachers.**
- **feel good about themselves**



Neither agree nor disagree

- **School is boring.**

Result 2: Engagement differs by gender.

Students of all races and ethnicities feel equally engaged at Example, as are students from all four grades. However, engagement at Example does differ by gender.

Table 1 shows that small but statistically significant differences exist between how male and female students answered 5 of 10 SSE questions, suggesting that male and female students at Example have slightly different levels and forms of engagement. On average, male students like school and their teachers more, feel more motivated to do well, and feel better about themselves than their female counterparts. The average female student is more optimistic she will attend college than her male counterparts.

Result 3: Student activities makes a real, meaningful difference.

AEM has not collected enough SSE data to evaluate how Example's student activities participation compares to other schools, but the results we do have suggest that **Example has a very vibrant, popular activities culture**. According to data from 5-Star Students, 89.1 percent of the 674 students who completed at least one SSE administration have attended at least one student-activities event. During the 2014-2015 school year, the average student in the sample has attended 4.3 events.

Results also suggest that activities participation at Example may lead to stronger student engagement. **Event attendance was correlated at a statistically significant level with higher feelings of student engagement on four SSE questions**. As shown in Table 2, students who attended more events were more likely to *(cont.)*

Table 1: Gender Difference at Example

Percentage of students who strongly agree or agree by gender



	Males	Females
<i>I like my school.</i>	84.8	74.5
<i>I feel motivated to do well at school.</i>	87.0	77.7
<i>I like most of my teachers.</i>	89.1	80.1
<i>After high school, I will go straight to college.</i>	91.8	97.6
<i>I feel good about myself .</i>	83.3	65.2

(cont.) “agree” or “strongly agree” that they feel motivated to do well at school, their friends are a good influence, they will go straight to college, and they like Example. The correlation is particularly strong for the latter three questions.

Next steps

Only the Example community can determine whether these results should influence future decisions. However, AEM is comfortable suggesting three steps that these results presented would support.

1. Share these results as evidence of Example’s strong student engagement and activities program. The bulk of the results from the SSE suggest very good things about Example. The students who took the SSE report high levels of engagement with their school, support for their teachers, optimism about their future, and self-

esteem. In addition, all students reported participating in the student events, suggesting a vibrant student activities culture that reaches a broad spectrum of students. These conclusions should please and encourage teachers and administrators both at Example and in the larger Hroch Valley Unified community.

2. Consider expanding student activities strategically to close gender gaps in student engagement. These results suggest that Example can use its activities program to improve its already strong student engagement. Example may consider whether it wants to expand activities participation opportunities for female students that stress self-esteem and allow them to form stronger connections with their teachers. Research shows that schools nationwide struggle with female student engagement, and Example may wish to research how others have successfully boosted it. Example’s guidance counselors might ask themselves whether these results are consistent with their experiences and the school should consider special programs for male students not planning to attend college. Both AEM and 5-Star Students are available as thought partners on these topics.

3. Expand student engagement monitoring to include more students. Roughly 37 percent of Example’s 1800 student completed at least one administration of the SSE. This response rate is exceptional for a voluntary survey and has yielded powerful results robust enough to influence policy. Should Example opt to continue use of the SSE, it can strive to have even more students participate, which will provide even more useful findings.

Student Activities is Correlated with Greater Student Engagement

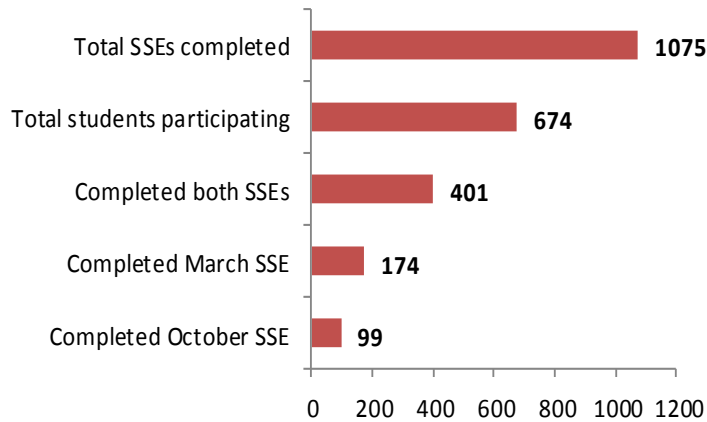
Percent “strongly agree” or “agree” with statement

	Number of Activities Attended		
	0-3	4-7	8+
I feel motivated to do well at school.	74.1	76.1	80.3
Most of my friends are a good influence on me.	72.0	76.6	82.1
After high school, I will go to college.	88.4	94.0	96.5
I like my school.	76.6	79.0	87.8

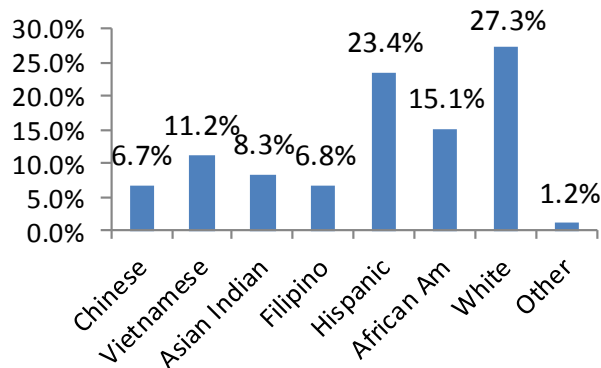
Appendix

Demographics of SSE Sample

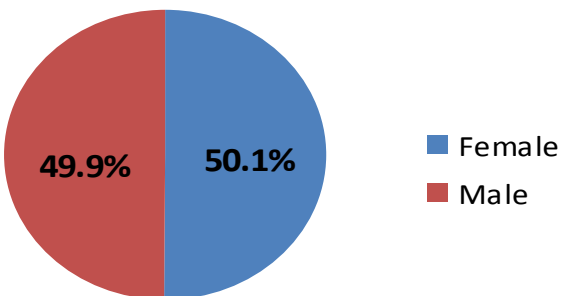
SSE Participation



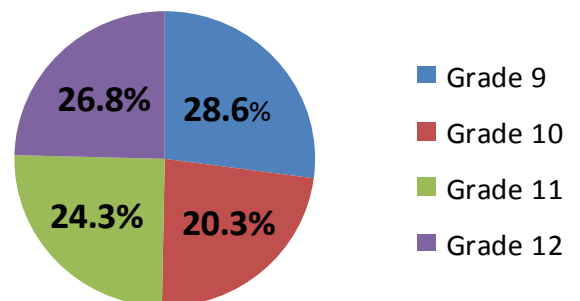
Student Participation by Groups



Gender



Grade



SSE Results

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree + Agree</i>
I like my school	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	75.2%
I feel motivated to do well at school.	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	83.4%
I work hard on my schoolwork.	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	78.3%
My grades reflect my effort.	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	77.2%
School is boring.	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	27.4%
I like most of my teachers.	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	83.8%
Most of my teachers do not understand me.	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	12.1%
Most of my friends are a good influence on me.	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	76.7%
After high school, I will go to college.	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	91.4%
I feel good about myself.	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	XX.X%	72.2%

Note: all cells will be filled in for school and district reports.

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