

Executive Summary

Analysis of College in the Schools (CIS) Surveys

Program Impact Survey

Out of 335 principals, teachers, and guidance counselors who received the survey, 136 completed and returned it (41% response rate). Respondents were asked about the impact of CIS on schools, teachers, departments, and students. Ratings of the impact were strongly positive on schools, teachers, and students but somewhat lower on departments. Teacher respondents generally rated the CIS program higher than principals or guidance counselors. In response to open-ended questions about the impact of CIS, several positive themes emerged including an increased sense of teacher professionalism, better opportunities for students, and providing academic challenges. A minority of comments were negative and centered on the demands CIS courses made on teachers and departments (e.g. CIS course enrollment limits means other classes have more students).

The survey also asked respondents whether “. . . charging students for their participation in CIS is a reasonable policy?” assuming the availability of scholarships. Fifty-eight percent of respondents agreed that it was reasonable while 26% felt it was not and 15% responded “don’t know.” There was more support among principals (77%) and teachers (71%) for this than guidance counselors (54%). Only among principals was there a significant relationship between charging tuition and ratings of program impact – principals who supported charging tuition rated the program less positively than those who opposed tuition. Respondents who opposed tuition felt it was unfair to charge tuition for CIS, but not for PSEO courses. Respondents who supported tuition cited budgetary pressures.

Follow-Up Student Survey

Four hundred seventy-six students responded to the follow-up survey. Slightly over half took one CIS course and the rest took up to five courses. The most popular courses were English Literature and English Composition. Almost all respondents went on to a two or four-year college or university, or technical school and approximately two-thirds have plans to apply to graduate school. Eleven percent of respondents graduated early from college and the majority of them attributed doing so to recognition of CIS course credit by their college.

Respondents overwhelmingly gave a positive assessment to how their CIS experience prepared them for college and the quality of that experience overall. Ninety-eight percent said they would recommend to a high school student that they participate in CIS. Specific benefits gained from CIS centered around study habits, meeting academic challenges, and communication skills. Those students taking more than one CIS course including English Composition gave higher overall ratings of their CIS experience. Seventy-three percent of the respondents volunteered additional comments at the end of the survey. The majority of these comments were positive of their CIS experience and cited educational benefits, the opportunity to preview college, and enjoyment of the course for its own sake.