

C12: When the Parent is More Ambitious Than the Student

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- Jeffrey Makris, Stuyvesant High School, NY
- Trista Ramirez, Palos Verdes High School, CA
- Tracy Stockard, Gilmour Academy, OH
- Moderator: Cailin Papszycki, Kaplan Test Prep, NY



Agenda

- Introductions
- Background Information
- Review of the Data
- Panelist Discussion
- Q&A



"I don't have my homework, Miss Flynn—my parents forgot to do it."

from The New Yorker



HOWARD MCWILLIAMS

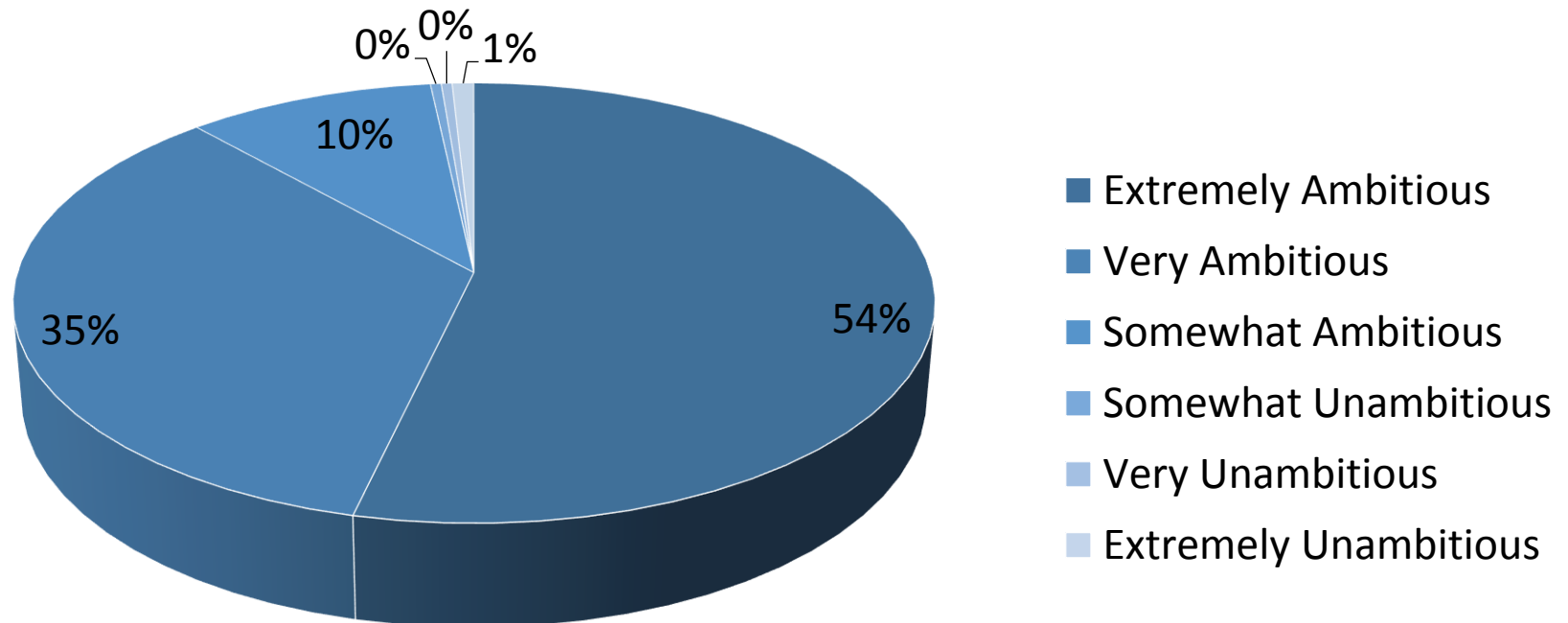
Potential Challenges

- Student Independence
- Parents: Ability to Let Go
- Counselors/Admissions: Time Management

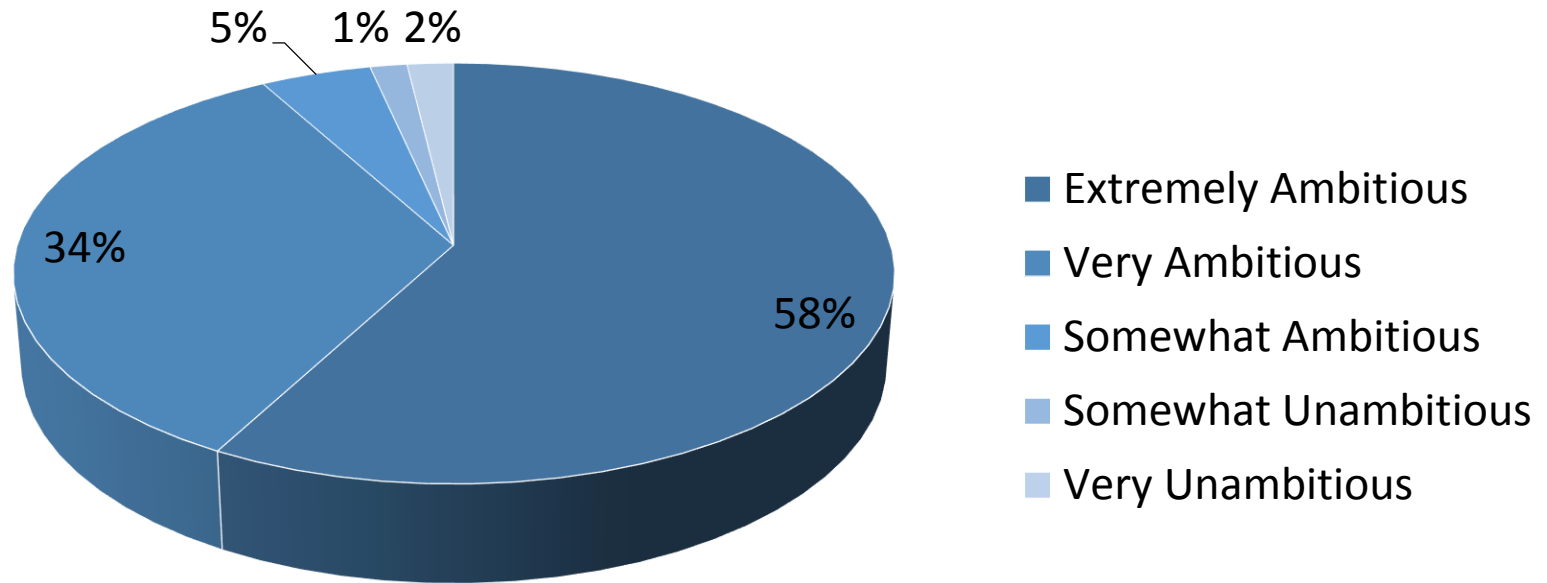
Survey Highlights

- From January through August, we surveyed approx.:
 - 500 Secondary School Counselors
 - 200 Students
 - 250 Parents
 - 400 College Admissions Officers

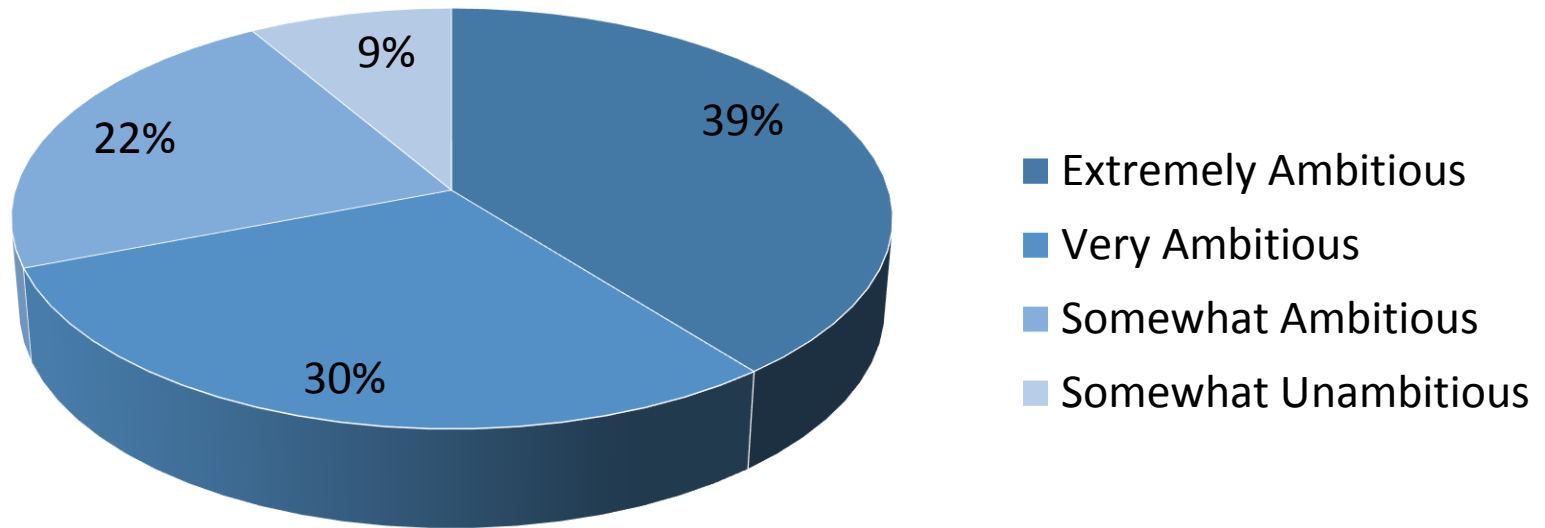
Students: What is your level of ambition for attending college?



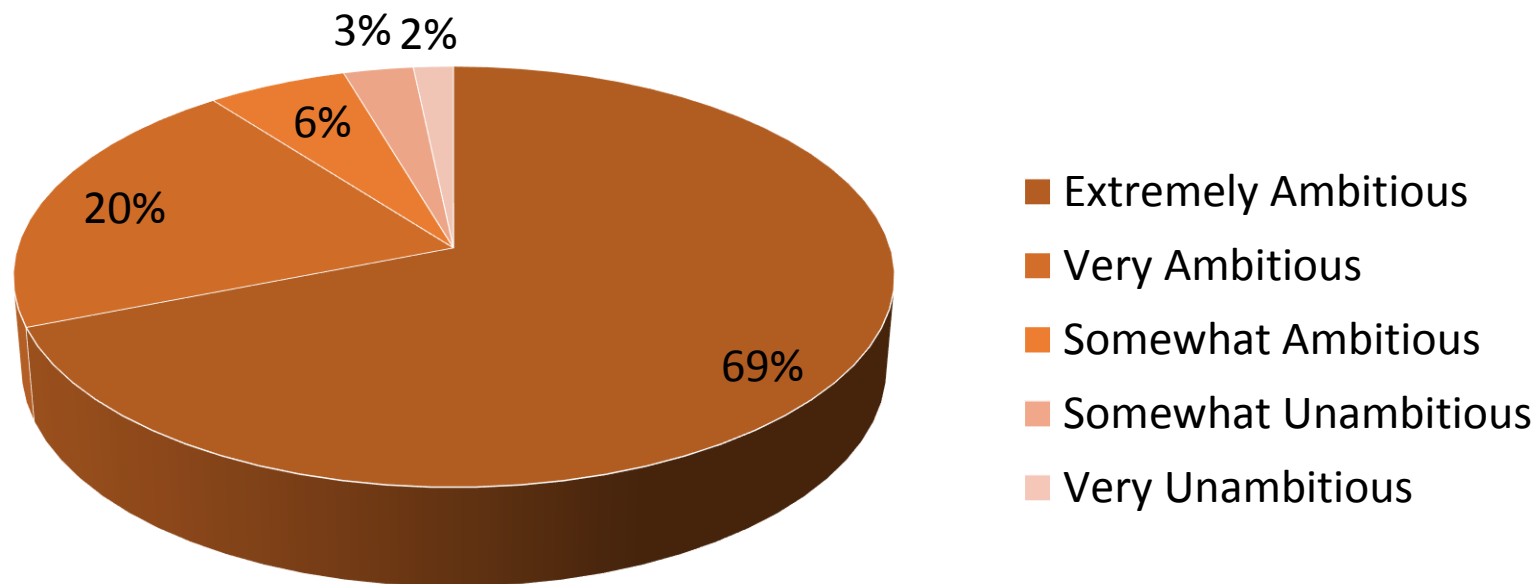
Parents: What is your child's level of ambition for attending college?



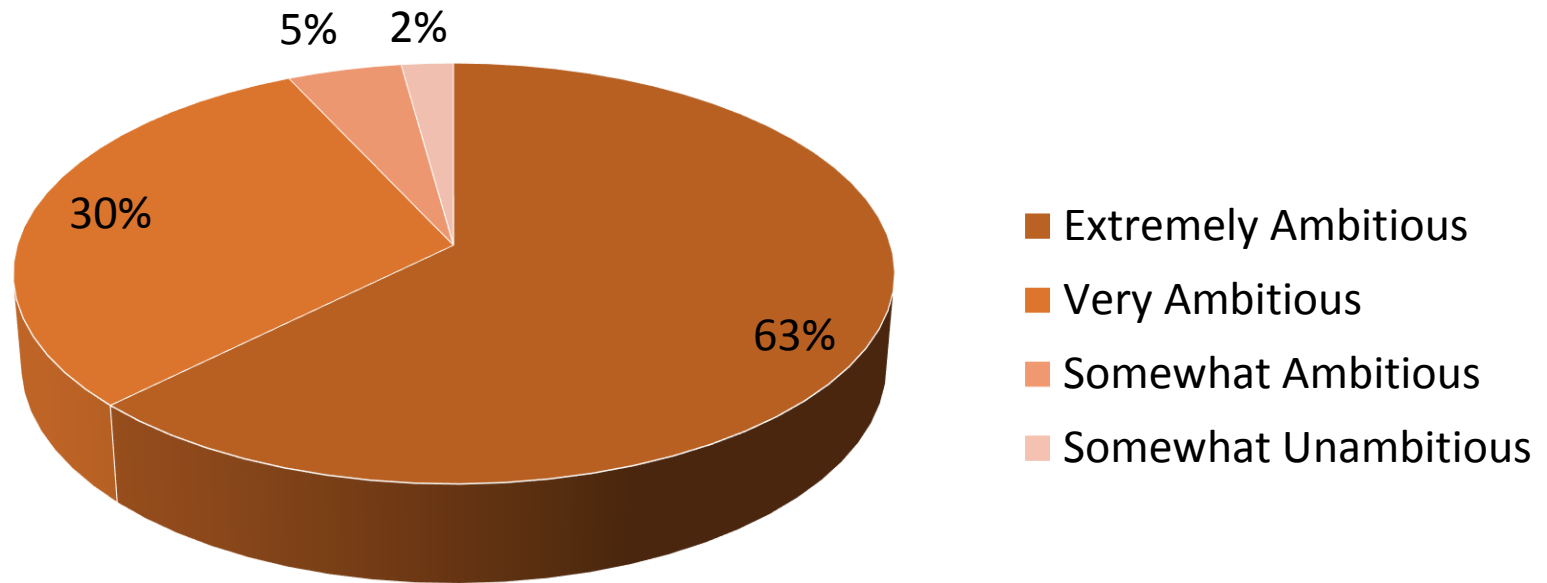
Counselors: What are your students' level of ambition for attending college?



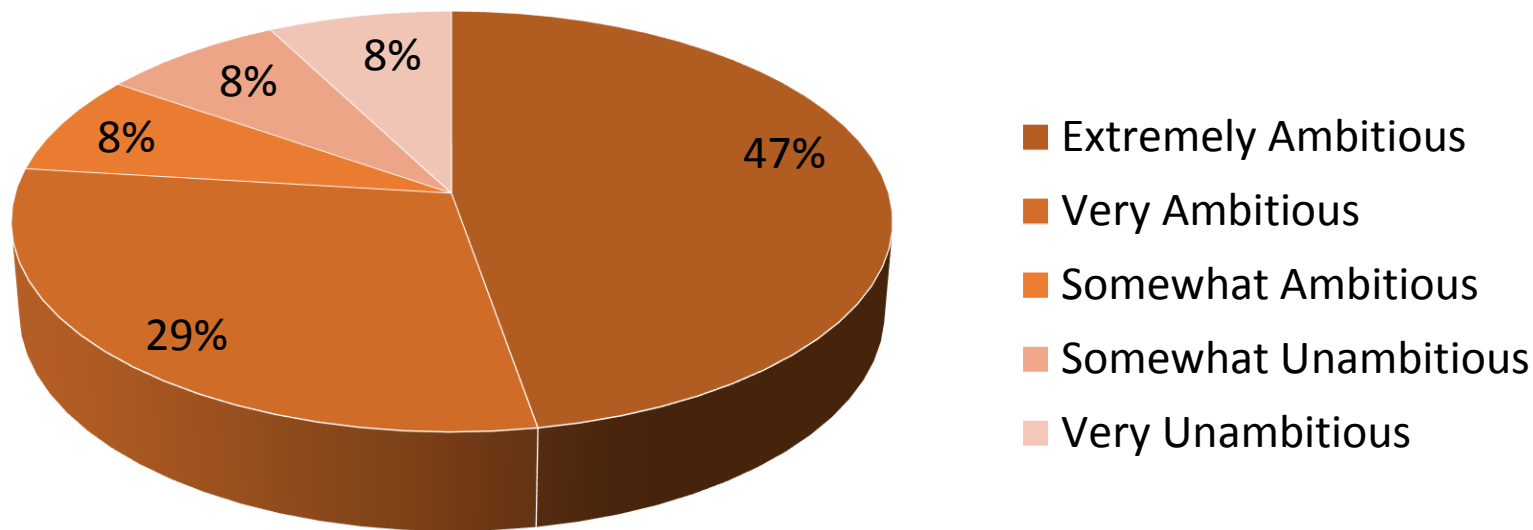
Students: What are your parents' level of ambition for you to attend college?



Parents: What is your level of ambition for your child to attend college?



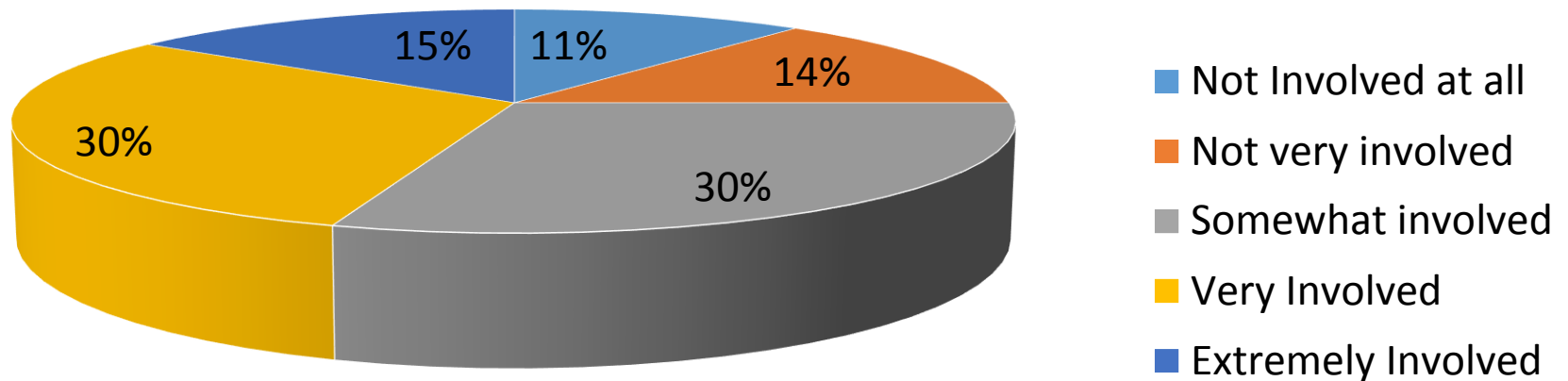
Counselors: What are your parents' level of ambition for your students to attend college?



Parents: The Ambition is Real

- **Similar to our students, the largest percentage in all 3 groups is towards Extremely Ambitious**
 - Parents and Students – almost 2/3
 - Counselors – almost half
- **Much smaller percentage for Somewhat Ambitious for counselors in this grouping**
- **Comparing Parent to Student Ambition – Extremely Ambitious**
 - Counselors – 47% vs. 39%
 - Students – 69% vs. 54%
 - Parents – 63% vs. 58%

In your current world, how involved are parents in their student's admissions process?



Counselor Perspective: What's the most extreme behavior you've seen from a parent?

"Parents (husband and wife) tried intimidation to allow their son to take the SAT when the student arrived without any identification and the parents could not produce current, valid identification."

"Giving me a letter of recommendation that they have written for their child, noting they understand how busy I am and they just wanted to save me some time. Also offered to put it on school letterhead."

"Encouraging them not to go to college because it does nothing for them."

"A parent camped out in the President's Office for a full day after his daughter was denied, trying to get the decision overturned. "

"A parent came into the office intoxicated trying to get advice on how to get her daughter into college. "

"Parent checks the grades on-line every day, provides a tutor for every class whether the kids needs a tutor or not, and then wonders why the kid does not take any initiative."

"A parent deposited to a school without the child knowing. The child found out on an accepted student's day."

"Parent signs student up for the SAT or ACT secretly. Wakes the child up at 7 am on a Saturday and says, "Get up - you're taking the SAT today." Reason: "I didn't want him to stress about it.""

"A parent that completed all the applications for their child and in addition relentlessly called the college to try to convince them to accept the student. The student was denied admission."

From The Other Side of the Desk

"A parent assumed multiple identities, called from several different numbers to avoid being screened, and tried to change the contact email from student email to family."

"Parents that email 10 people at the University just because they want to make sure that their child gets all the necessarily attention."

"When a student is denied admission, we've had parents fly across the country to ask questions with an admissions officer to ask what the child could have done differently and to appeal the decision."

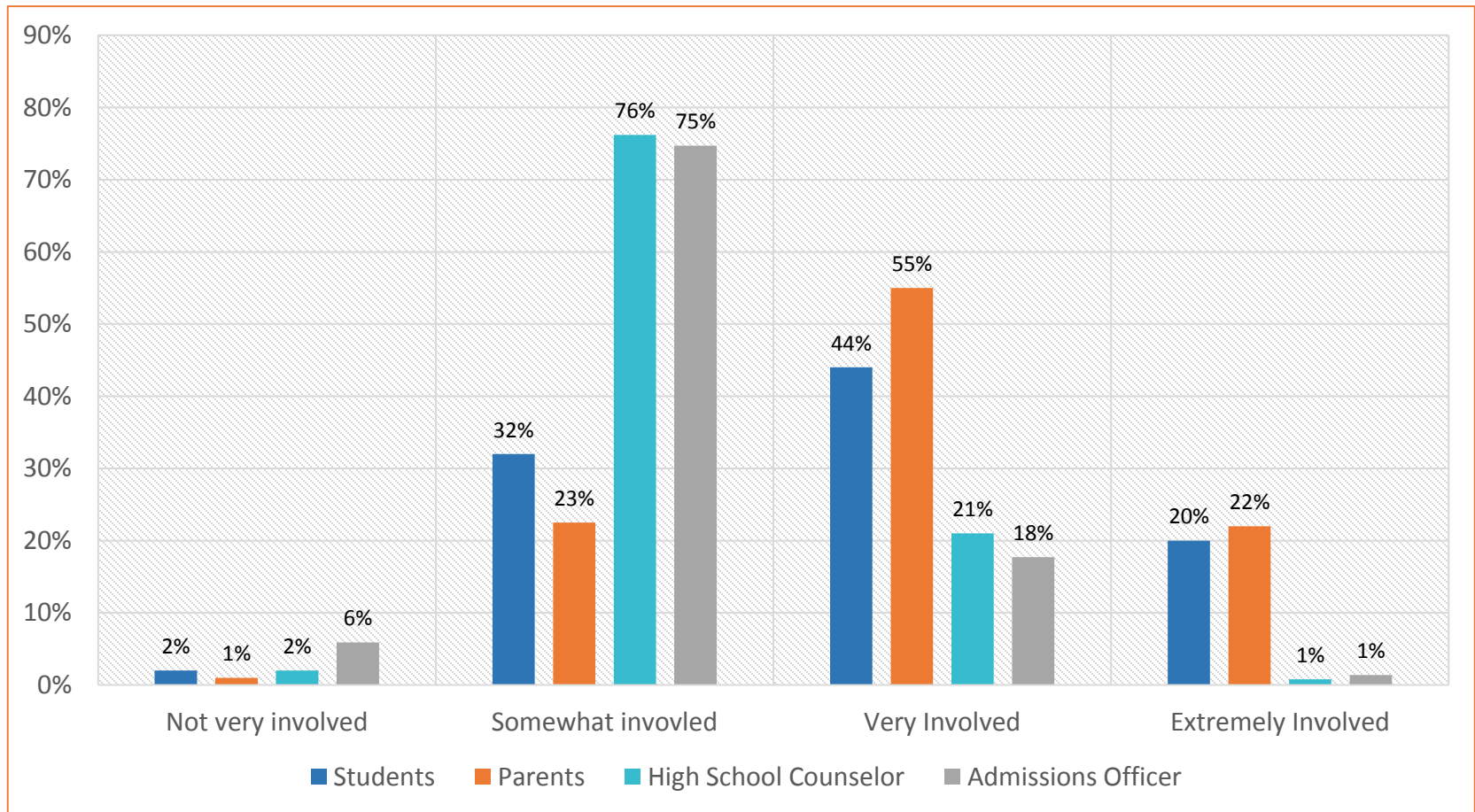
"We usually get a few letters of recommendations from parents or their best friends."

"Dad was livid that his daughter had to send her high school transcript...to prove graduation before they receive federal funding, but he wouldn't drop it. Started name dropping and making threats because he is a donor to the school."

"Once had a parent call pretending to be the student, but I had met the student before so I knew how their voice sounds. I called the student's cell phone after and reached out to the student to suggest that her mom not pretend to be her and call other schools because that's fraud."

"A dad came in and asked about his son applying for the fall and the counselor told him that the admissions cycle was closed. Didn't like the answer, so he went to a different office. Different person in different office transferred parent back over to admissions office and parent said "I have the money so just admit my student". That parent has been calling every day for a week to talk with this particular officer, but she has still never spoken to the student. Parent kept pushing to be able to apply for his own student."

How involved do you believe parents should be in the admissions process?



What advice do you give to students to take ownership?

"Maturity is more than are you a good student with great grades. To be college ready, you have to be able and willing to ask questions, find your way to your classes, fill out paperwork, meet deadlines, etc. You cannot expect your parent to do all of that for you."

"If your parent is trying to take over, stand up for your self - politely."

"To be the "driver of their car" to not let their parents make all the choices for them and for them to be responsible"

"Have an organized plan of attack and focus on time management. The choices and decisions will impact their own future so choose what fits best."

"Many of my students are the first generation college kid and don't have a good grasp of what college is all about. They are afraid, they don't have confidence, and they have no idea what to expect (even though we try to explain that). My best advice is to not let fear get in the way and move forward."

"Focus on what you want and find the right fit and everything else will fall into place."

"They must have very open and honest conversations with their parents especially about costs. Students need the most guidance when discussing limits of student debt."

"This is about you, about who you are, building your self confidence. Be proud of the work you put into the college admissions process, since it is the first opportunity to not just act like an adult, but to be an adult!"

College Office Mantra

- Students are the drivers in this process.
- This is a partnership: student, parent & college counselor.
- Students come to us with different needs.
- We help market and advocate for our students.
- The end result is all about the fit.

Gilmour's Timeline

Parents: We welcome a meeting with you and your child, but your child must first meet with his/her college counselor before we will set up a student/parent meeting.

Remember, the student is the driver...



Q&A