

Grand County Youth Survey Summary

February 16, 2015

Introduction:

The following report summarizes the survey results from youth attending middle school and high school in Grand County, CO. The survey was conducted by the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship in partnership with Grand County Economic Development, East Grand Middle School, West Grand Middle School, Middle Park High School and West Grand High School.

Early in the spring 2015 semester, 469 6th through 12th grade students participated in the survey to measure their perceptions of their community, future education and career plans, and desire to live in the local area in the future. The survey was administered online in classroom environments with teacher supervision. Of the 469 participants, 255 attended East Grand Middle School, 112 attended West Grand Middle School, 36 attended Middle Park High School and 65 attended West Grand High School. One participant indicated that they were a home school student.

High school students constituted 24% of total respondents, with 7% being juniors and seniors. 76% of survey respondents were middle school students. Females represented 45% and males 55% of total survey participants.

Survey highlights include:

Many students plan to attend college after high school.

Overall, 67% of respondents plan to attend college or technical school, 11% plan to enter the workforce, and 8% of youth surveyed plan to enter the military after high school. 14% indicated other career plans.

Youth are interested in a spectrum of career opportunities.

Respondents indicated interest in a wide variety of career fields, with the most popular options being: Arts, Broadcasting, Film, Printing or Journalism (32.3%), Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (30.7%), Medical, Firefighter or Police Officer (29.8%), , Education or Training (24.8%), and Architecture or Construction (20.3%).

Results are positive regarding the quality of life for young people

57.4% of survey respondents rate their community as an above average to excellent place to live as a youth. Conversely, 13.3% rated their community as a below average to poor place to live as a young person.

A number of youth are interested in owning their own business.

Overall, 16% of youth surveyed have a business now and 54% are interested in owning their own business in the future.

Over half of youth surveyed would like to live in the local area in the future.

Among all respondents, 53% picture themselves living in their hometown area in the future. This is nearly identical to the combined 51% who indicated very strong likelihood to stay or return to their hometown area (26% stay and 25% return).

Among reasons given for living in their hometown area in the future, 69% indicated it is a good place to raise a family, 40% noted family ties in the community, 31% said job or business opportunity, and 29% marked quality school and health care as important factors in their desire to live in their hometown area in the future.

Conversely, among all respondents, 63% marked career opportunities elsewhere, 54% indicated make more money elsewhere and 45% noted lack of entertainment as reasons they would not live in their hometown area in the future. In addition, 39% felt the community was too small and 38% said there were too few shopping options.

Youth are seeking more entertainment and recreation options, and jobs.

Youth were asked to rank changes they would like to see that would make their community a better place to live. More entertainment and recreation options received the highest first place ranking at 38.5%, followed by more local job opportunities for youth (24.6%), more local shopping and restaurant options (23.6%). Additional opportunities to be involved in community events and projects came in fourth at 13%.

Many youth have been asked for their input, but many more would volunteer.

41% of youth surveyed indicated that adults have asked for their input on what would make their community a better place to live for teens. 81% stated they would volunteer if asked by an adult community leader to become involved in making their community better. Among specific activities proposed by the We Are Grand (WAG) youth at their fall 2013 retreat, survey respondents ranked the ideas as follows:

53% High school athletes mentoring middle school athletes

37% Career fair to learn about local job opportunities in your community

36% After-school winter fitness program that involves the entire community

28% Middle school robotics program

27% Volunteer fair to learn about opportunities to be involved in community projects and activities

24% High school rodeo team with parents and teachers as sponsors

20% Junior town council to inform adult leaders about the priorities of young people

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