



Education E-Newsletter



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Understanding Your Graduates: Does Your District Successfully Prepare Graduates for the Future?

By Michelle Sears, Director of Client Relations



As the end of the school year approaches, you might want to ask yourself: Has our district done a good job preparing our graduates for the future? Did we offer our students enough guidance from our school counselors? How do our graduates feel about the classes we offered? With the amount of time and dedication that goes into planning and implementing programs to prepare students for the future, it could be helpful to know if those programs are really successful.

Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. has worked with school districts conducting surveys of recent graduates to measure how they value and use their education and indicate areas where they feel unprepared. We design our graduate surveys to meet the specific information needs of each district to offer objective evaluations on how effective programs have been in accomplishing each district's goals.

Graduate surveys can provide the following information to your district:

- Understand how graduates value their education after graduation
- Evaluate how the classes and the curriculum prepared students for college and how it impacted their success at college
- Measure how graduates feel about the classes they took and the value of those classes to the student
- Find out what the graduate has done since graduation; schooling, job, etc.
- Gather information regarding graduates' evaluation of the value of the guidance process and the role of counselors in their educational process

Graduate surveys can be conducted by mail or telephone depending on the availability of home telephone numbers and last known addresses from graduates.

Featured Article

[On the Clock: Rethinking the Way Schools Use Time](#)

Increasing numbers of school and district leaders are turning to one of the most fundamental features of the public education system: the amount of time students spend in school.

By Elena Silva

Useful Links

[National Environmental Education Week](#)

The largest organized environmental education event in the United States.

[Education Reform Network](#)

Topics include classroom instruction, classroom management, and data-driven reform.

[National Staff Development Council](#)

A national nonprofit organization that provides research and resources on professional development and student improvement.

[Tapped In](#)

An online-community service designed specifically for teachers.

[More on Us](#)

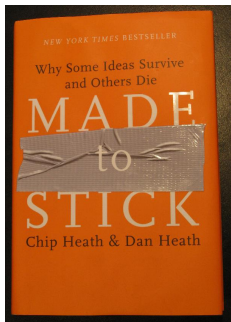
Once the information is obtained, we analyze the information and provide a direction for your district's planning purposes. When conducted every year, your district can evaluate progress annually and compare how graduates' opinions of their education change over the years. Surveys can also be used as a benchmark to offer objective evaluations to help accomplish your district goals.

For more information on what services we can provide for your school district, please visit our website: www.perspec.com, or e-mail msears@perspec.com.

Look at this Book:

Made to Stick - Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die Chip Heath and Dan Heath, Random House Inc. 2007.

By Gary Goscenski, Director of Consulting Services



Nearly every business, nonprofit organization, or even school could benefit from some "sticky ideas." Made to Stick explores the question of why some ideas thrive and others die. Sticky ideas represent those that are understandable, memorable, effective, and able to change opinions or behaviors. Chip and Dan Heath explore how companies and organizations can use sticky ideas to persuade people to buy their products, teach people a new skill, or promote a political candidate as examples. While many schools do not have a sticky idea--the potential benefits to a sticky idea can be great.

The six principles that make up a sticky idea: simplicity, unexpectedness, concreteness, credibility, emotion, and stories are outlined individually in the book's chapters. The chapters explain each principle with examples and discussions about how each one is essential to composing a sticky idea. While all the chapters are interesting, Chapter 1: Simple, is the most relevant to helping schools. The Heath brothers challenge readers to "find the core" of an idea and strip it down to its most critical essence.

The educational experience offered by schools involves different programs such as academics, athletics, or extra-curricular activities; delivered to a diverse audience such as students, parents, staff or the community. These factors, among others, can make it difficult for a school to articulate a sticky idea. The discussion about the sayings, "if you say three things, you don't say anything," and "the more you reduce the amount of information in an idea, the stickier it will be," is probably worth the price of the book. The importance of the "simple" principle is reinforced, not only because it is the first of the six principles, but because it is explained in the most detail.

The authors claim that using the principles is easy and that possessing a special expertise is not required to apply the principles. To that end, there is not a chapter in the book to tell you what sticky ideas to use for your school. They rather hint that sticky ideas are found, and not manufactured. There is little direction for finding sticky ideas, other than to ask people such as your staff, students, parents, and the community for stories about their experiences with your school. There are some stories of how sticky ideas were found, such as the Jared stories used by Subway, but you are left to your own devices to find your own sticky ideas.

Made to Stick is worth the read because it will make you think about your school's sticky idea, or lack thereof. To find a sticky idea can pose a challenge, but you will know a sticky idea when you see it after reading the principles outlined in this book.

Did You Know?

• Even before kindergarten, the average cognitive scores of children from the highest socioeconomic group are 60 percent above those of children from the lowest socioeconomic group

• Fewer than one-third of 4th graders read at the "proficient" level or higher on national tests



• Fewer than 8 in 10 White teenagers graduate from high school on time with a regular diploma

• That figure drops to 52 percent for Black students and 56 percent for Hispanic students who graduate on time with a regular diploma

Source: Olson, Lynn. "Improving Children's Chances." Education Week. Vol. 26, Issue 17, pages 10-14.

Tech Lesson of the Week:

Education CD-ROM



A resource developed for Educational Institutions. The CD-ROM includes all the information about Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc.: who we are, and what we do. Request a copy of our Education CD-ROM by emailing info@perspec.com or call (800) 724-9994.



Cinco de Mayo WebQuest
Includes a Fiesta! Offer
students a lesson on another
culture.

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Featured Blog

[The Letter From: On Teacher
Accountability](#)



The school improvement
industry was built on the
principle of accountability for
student learning.

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"An education isn't how
much you have committed
to memory, or even how
much you know. It's being
able to differentiate
between what you know
and what you don't. "

-Anatole France

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