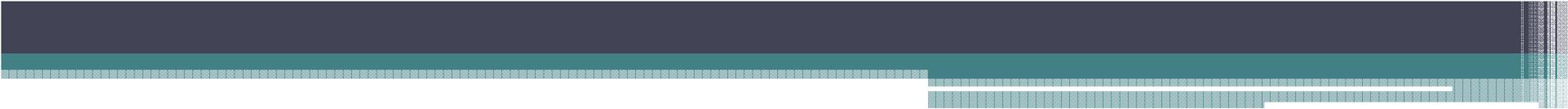


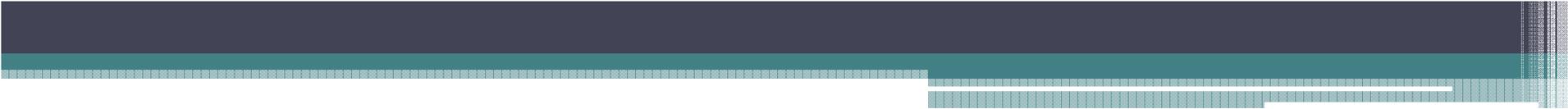
Town Hall Meeting

December 7, 2015



Agenda:

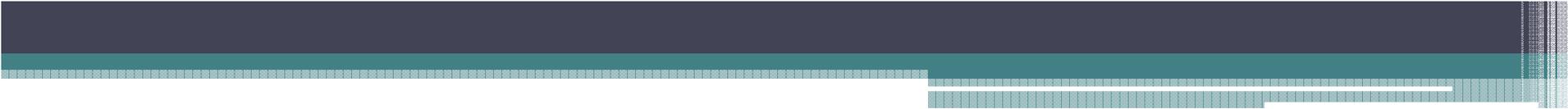
1. Overview
2. Midterms/Finals
3. A&E Math
4. Stress
5. Upcoming Programs



WW-P Mission Statement

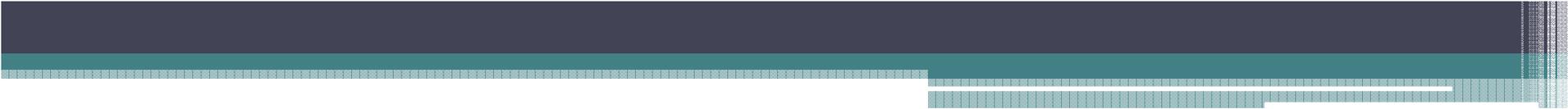
The mission of the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District, valuing our tradition of excellence, is to develop all of our students as passionate, confident, lifelong learners, who have competence and strength of character to realize their aspirations and thoughtfully contribute to a diverse and changing world.

“Whole Child, Every Child”



“Whole Child”

- In WW-P, when we state “Whole Child,” we are specifically addressing the development of the ***social, emotional, and academic development of each student.***



Whole Child Tenets

- Each student enters school **healthy** and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle.
- Each student learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally **safe** for students and adults.
- Each student is actively **engaged** in learning and is connected to the school and broader community.
- Each student has access to personalized learning and is **supported** by qualified, caring adults.
- Each student is **challenged** academically and prepared for success in college or further study and for employment and participation in a global environment.

Elimination of Midterm and Final Exams

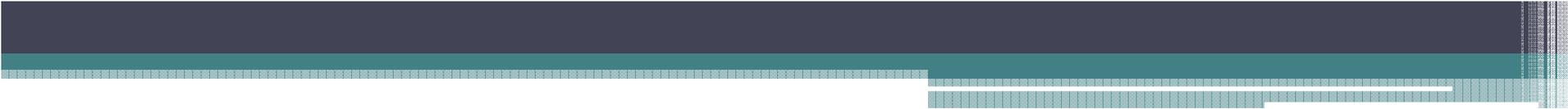
Midterm and Final Exams

How will my child be prepared for college if they do not take a midterm or final exam?

- Midterm and Final Exams were not eliminated to remove stress.
- **These were high stake assessments that derived little learning and meaning as to how to move students' progress and learning forward.**
- Common Assessments will continue to be used, often utilizing aspects of the midterm or final exams.
- The major difference is that these grades will be a component of the quarter grade versus a midterm and final exam worth 20% collectively.

Midterm and Final Exams

- Over 80 percent of WW-P students take AP classes and AP exams (over 1,100 AP tests were administered at each high school this spring). And, of the students who take AP courses, over 93 percent receive a 3 or better.
- Since AP courses are college-level work completed in high school, AP exam results are a better indicator of how students will do in college than a final exam for a high school class.



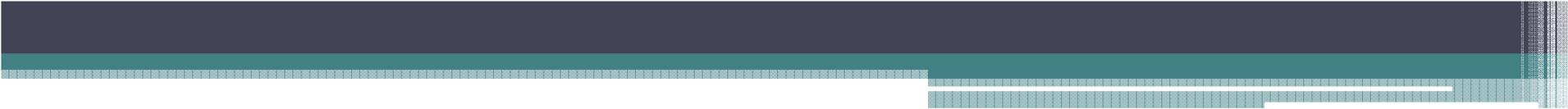
Common Assessments

- “Common assessments” are the tests and projects, that teachers give to students throughout the school year that are given district wide to all students in a particular class or grade, regardless of school building.
- Common assessments, including projects and presentations, as well as exams, can provide for more authentic learning experiences and are a stronger indicator of student achievement towards desired goals.

QUESTIONS

A&E Mathematics: Redesign of 4th and 5th Grade

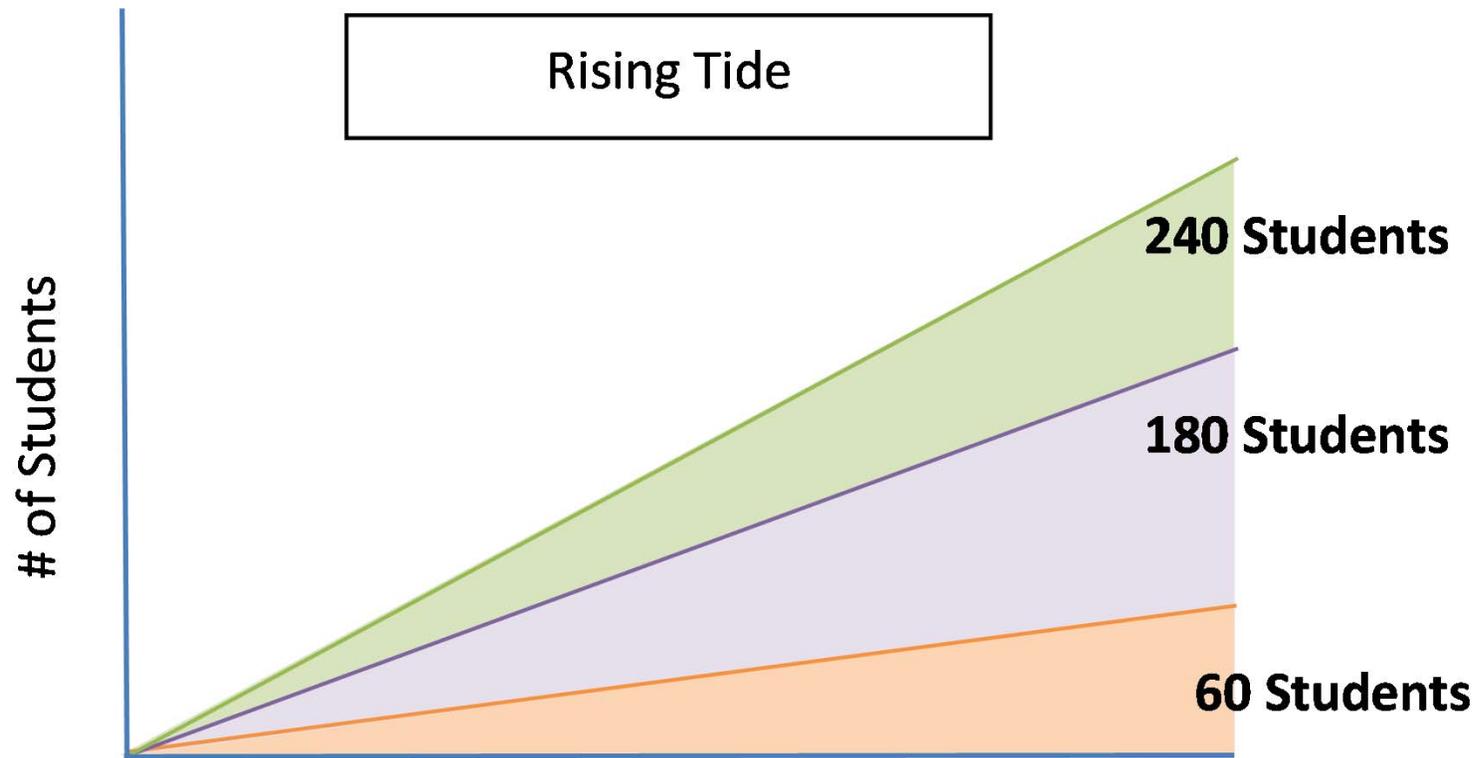




“A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats”

- Many high ability/high performing math students are currently underserved. They do not make the A&E “cut.”
- We are working to EXPAND the number of students who have access to the A&E Math program.

Rising Tide

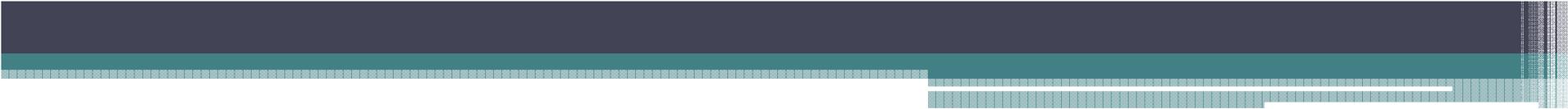


600 Tested, 800 in Grade Level



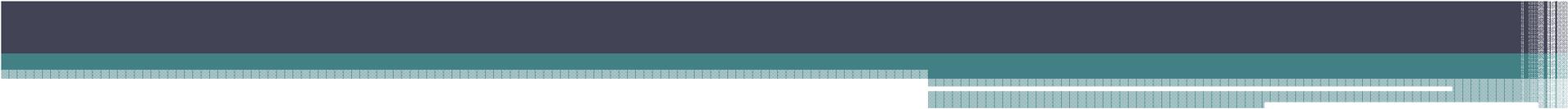
2014 NJASK in 4th and 5th Grade

- 1,541 students in 4th and 5th grade
- 1091 Advanced Proficient
- 442 with a perfect 300 (28.7%)
- 129 students in A&E



Reasons for Change

- We believe it is developmentally inappropriate to identify students in 3rd grade.
- Developmentally, elementary students are at the beginning of developing high cognitive math abilities in 3rd grade.
- The end of 5th grade is a developmentally more appropriate time to assess deep conceptual understanding in mathematics.



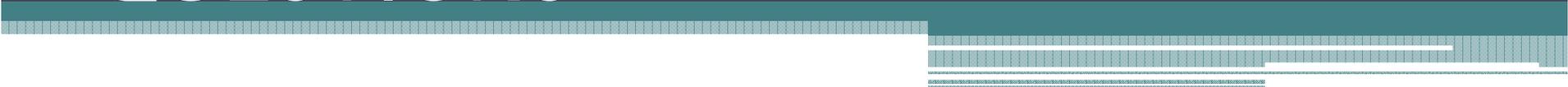
More Math for More Students...

- Provide all students with an enriched and rigorous math curriculum in the regular classroom.
- Utilize differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students.
- Introduce distinct A&E math classes in 6th grade when it is developmentally appropriate.

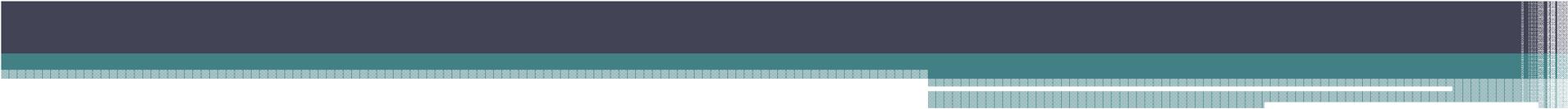
Re-design of the A&E Math Program

- Start the program in 6th grade
 - 6th grade: Pre-Algebra A&E
 - 7th grade: Algebra I A&E
 - 8th grade: Algebra II A&E
 - 9th grade: Geometry Honors & Accelerated
 - 10th Grade: Pre-Calculus Honors & Accelerated
 - 11th Grade: AP Calculus BC
 - 12th Grade: Multivariable Calculus Honors

QUESTIONS

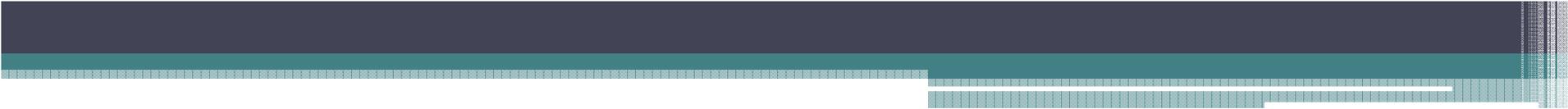


STRESS



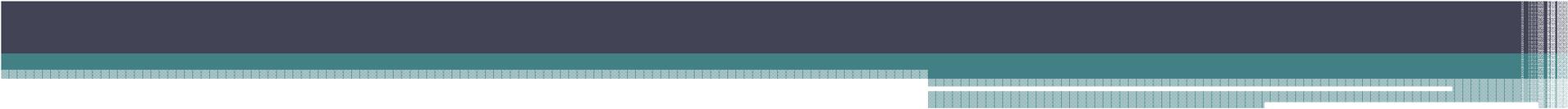
Stress

- Fact: A measure of positive stress energizes us and creates in us the energy we need to persist, to attempt new things, and to meet the challenges we face.
- Fact: An overabundance of stress, or persistent stress, or negative stress (often caused by negative events in our lives), undermines our health and safety.



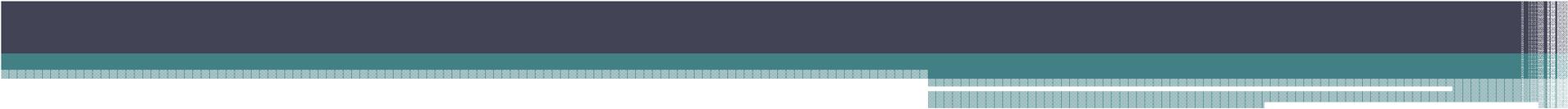
Mental Health Concerns in WWP

- During the 2014-2015 school year, we sent over **120 middle school and high school students for mental health assessments**; these include assessments for anxiety, depression and suicidal ideations. These were not drug and alcohol screenings; these screenings were additional.



When negative stress persists:

- ✓ Irritability
- ✓ Inability to Concentrate
- ✓ Anger
- ✓ Sadness/Depression
- ✓ Isolation
- ✓ Hopelessness
- ✓ Use of Drugs and Alcohol
- ✓ Non-suicidal Self-injury
- ✓ Suicidal Thinking, Attempts, Sometimes Death



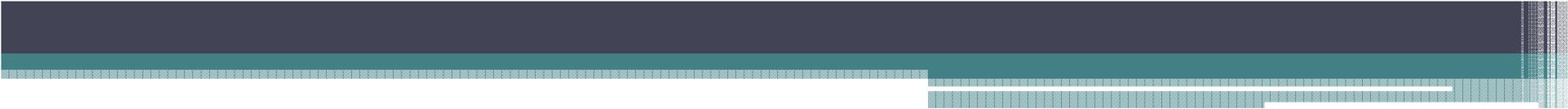
Examples of Student Voice

"What is one thing you would change about your childhood?"

"I believe you are a product of your experiences. Every place you go, every person you meet, everything you do leaves its mark, be it big or small. I like to think that I have grown up well, not in the sense that I have had a good time growing up, but that my experiences have shaped me to be a better human being. The one experience that I believe has had a negative impact on who I am today is my schooling. I wish I never went through West Windsor Plainsboro's school district."

"... Way back when, I went to a private school in Princeton called the Waldorf School. I was there for Pre K and Kindergarten, and loved every second of it. The way they structured the Kindergarten was not teaching us new words or how to read, but to let us play and create. They taught me compassion, to be kind, and to have a love for learning. They taught me how to be human.

I switched into Kindergarten at WWP since my dad had recently lost his job and my family needed to reassess finances. The stark contrast between the schools was apparent even to my six year old self. We were taught how to read, how to solve math problems, to absorb information and regurgitate it onto a page.



"What is one thing you would change about your childhood?"

I worked at the EDP program at Maurice Hawk for most of last year, and saw that I as a junior in high school faced similar fears as these elementary students. I saw their stress in understanding and completing schoolwork, in studying for tests, and for their future.

I feel that at West Windsor, I am treated as a name and a GPA. From a young age we are crafted to put grades above mental health and sleep. In West Windsor, we learn for tests, not for life. In the recent letter from the Superintendent, he talked a lot about implementing changes that promote the sculpting of a 'whole child.' I wish I went to a school where that was the case. I wish I could remove the mark of WW-P on my development as a human."

Concerning Student Comments

“Without a doubt, learning is something I'm grateful for. The amount of stress is the main issue I see. Especially with this district, people aim really high, which makes it difficult to stand out among the crowd. With this, competition is abnormally high. Stress has been there literally everywhere I go. In the hallways, there aren't discussions about someone's weekend, or about a movie, or anything of the sort. Every conversation that goes on is about the amount of stress piled on the students, and comparisons of teachers.”

Concerning Student Comments

- *“I love learning, but after this school district's experience, I think that school is a prison that we just live through in order to get on with our life.”*
- *“I've begun to hate learning, if I am to be completely honest. I feel like [school] is beating the learning out of me to the point where I dread, rather than enjoy it.”*
- ***“Coming out of 12 years in this district I have learned one thing: that a grade, a percentage, or even a point is to be valued over anything else. This includes sleep, family, and personal health.”***
- *“You guys need to fix the system as soon as possible.”*

Concerning Student Comments

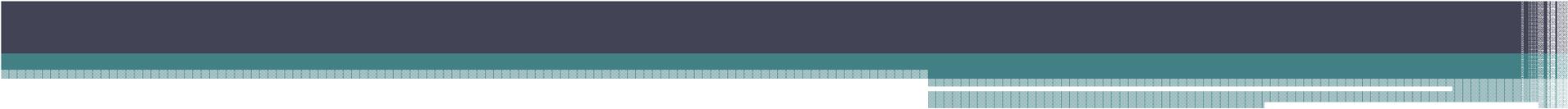
- *“I hate going to school. Clubs are perhaps the only positive school-related experience, other than friends. **For me and many other kids in my classes - perhaps an overwhelming number - school is no longer about learning but instead about grades.** Potential Bs cause me stress every single day. I absolutely do not enjoy classwork or homework, mostly due to the amount of weight everything has. No attempt is made to explain the course material or explore it in greater depth. It's all about formulas, AP strategies, and checklist-like essays.”*

We need extra credit for more than
100% bc that's what our parents want.

dress better stop 

coriating for mistakes

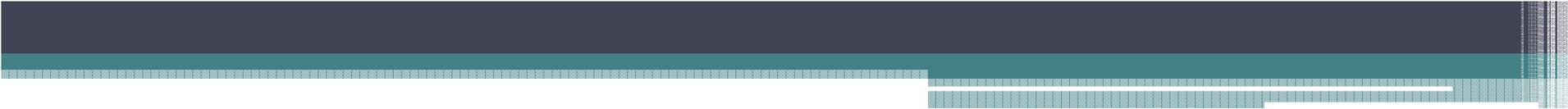
inquire The USA



Are we alone in this concern?

The Resilience Consortium





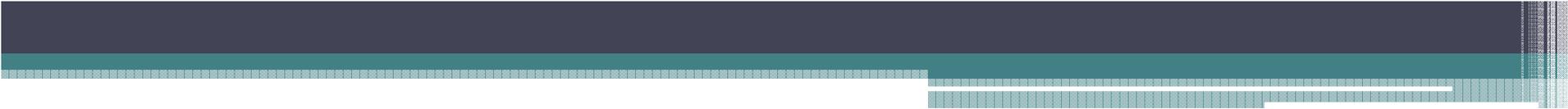
The Resilience Consortium

- [Brown University](#)
- [Columbia University](#)
- [Cornell University](#)
- [Dartmouth College](#)
- [Duke University](#)
- [Harvard University](#)
- [Princeton University](#)
- [Stanford University](#)
- [University of Chicago](#)
- [University of Pennsylvania](#)

A Closer Look at First-Year College Students

- 60% wish they had gotten more help with emotional preparation for college.
- 87% said more emphasis was placed on being ready academically than being ready emotionally.
- 57% said they felt a great deal of pressure to go to a well-known college/university.
- 52% said their high school placed greater emphasis on college prestige than college fit.
- 50% said they felt stressed most or all of the time.
- 36% did not feel they were in control of managing the day-to-day stress of college life.

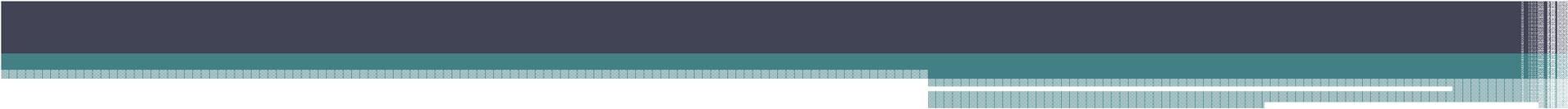
*First Year College Experience, Harris
Poll / JED Foundation, 2015*



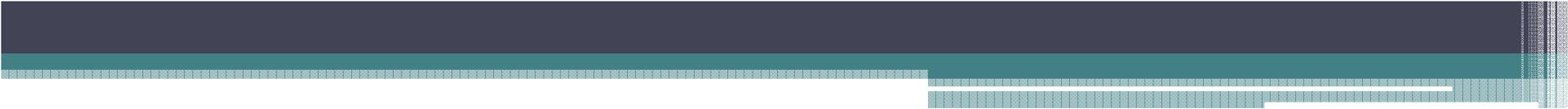
Think about this AGAIN...

Children who **know** their strengths and weaknesses and feel good about themselves seem to have an easier time handling conflicts and resisting negative pressures.

Children who **think poorly of themselves** have a hard time finding solutions to problems. Faced with new challenges, their immediate response might be “I can’t.”



Upcoming Presentations



Upcoming Presentations

- Dr. Allen Weg – School Anxiety - TBD
- Dr. Eileen Kennedy-Moore – Smart Parenting for Smart Kids - TBD
- Nicole Orro, Director of Outpatient Services with Princeton House – February 24th
- Dr. Leonard Sax – April 14th

QUESTIONS