Bandon High School (OR)

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As rural communities face changes in local economies, populations, and workforce needs, what does the next generation of residents and workers value and want? That question was the motivation for the Rural Youth Futures project. Researchers and extension agents from several universities joined forces with local non-profits to find out what middle and high schoolers think in two forest-dependent regions: Coos County in Oregon and Piscataquis/Northern Somerset Counties in Maine. This is one in a series of fact sheets designed to present summary information to each participating school and county about the perceptions and aspirations of local youth.

**Approach**

With permission from the school principal, students in grades 9–12 at Bandon High School were given a link to an anonymous, electronic survey in January 2019. Participation was voluntary. Bandon High School had 215 students during 2018–2019, 160 of which took the survey for a participation rate of 74%. Every question was optional, so the number of responses varies by question. Fact sheets for all schools and each county are available online at: [http://ewp.uoregon.edu/RuralYouth](http://ewp.uoregon.edu/RuralYouth).

**Demographics**

Describe the family structure you live with:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Structure</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-parent, biological parents</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-parent, step family</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent, mom</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent, dad</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know or NA</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What level of education did your parents or guardians, whom you live with, complete?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did not finish high school</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finished high school</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went to school, don't know how far</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduated from college or more</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not working now, but looking for a job</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not have a job</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went to college, didn't graduate</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know or N/A</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do your parents or guardians work for pay?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Status</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, one full-time job</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, multiple jobs</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, one part-time job</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not have a job</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not working now, but looking for a job</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know or N/A</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know or N/A</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Survey Results • Summer 2020**

RURAL YOUTH FUTURES: BANDON HIGH SCHOOL

Gender that you identify as:

- Female (45%)
- Male (52%)
- Non-Binary (2%)
- Trans (1%)
- Choose not to respond (1%)

Category that best describes you:

- White/Caucasian (70%)
- Asian (2%)
- Latino/Hispanic (5%)
- Native American (8%)
- Two or more races/ethnicities (15%)

Perception of family finances:

- More than enough for food & bills (24%)
- Enough for food & bills (47%)
- Not enough for food & bills (15%)
- Don’t know/not to answer (22%)

School changes from moving in past 5 years:

- Born in Coos County:
  - Yes (86%)
  - No (13%)
  - Don’t know (1%)

- 2 or more (9%)
- 1 (18%)
- None (69%)

- Currently living in:
  - Mom, dad, or guardian: (68%)
  - Live with grandparents: (5%)
  - Live with friend’s family: (3%)
  - Couch surf or other: (5%)
  - Live with foster family: (2%)
  - Live with step family: (2%)
  - Live with single parent or guardian: (2%)
  - Live with friend’s family: (1%)
  - Live with foster family: (1%)
  - Live with grandparents: (1%)
  - Live with single parent or guardian: (1%)

- Born in Coos County:
  - Yes (86%)
  - No (13%)
  - Don’t know (1%)

- Currently living in:
  - Mom, dad, or guardian: (68%)
  - Live with grandparents: (5%)
  - Live with friend’s family: (3%)
  - Couch surf or other: (5%)
  - Live with foster family: (2%)
  - Live with step family: (2%)
  - Live with single parent or guardian: (2%)
  - Live with friend’s family: (1%)
  - Live with foster family: (1%)
  - Live with grandparents: (1%)
  - Live with single parent or guardian: (1%)

- Currently living in:
  - Mom, dad, or guardian: (68%)
  - Live with grandparents: (5%)
  - Live with friend’s family: (3%)
  - Couch surf or other: (5%)
  - Live with foster family: (2%)
  - Live with step family: (2%)
  - Live with single parent or guardian: (2%)
  - Live with friend’s family: (1%)
  - Live with foster family: (1%)
  - Live with grandparents: (1%)
  - Live with single parent or guardian: (1%)
Schools in rural communities are critical. They bring families together, support civic interaction, and foster workforce development. Schools also influence youth aspirations for future education. To learn more about these things in Coos County Schools, we asked students to tell us about their school experience and future goals, what they felt were barriers to those goals, and the extracurricular activities they participated in.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?

- **I like school:**
  - Agree (40%)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (28%)
  - Disagree (30%)
  - Don't know (2%)

- **I get bullied by others at school:**
  - Agree (10%)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (24%)
  - Disagree (63%)
  - Don't know (3%)

- **I am usually bored at school:**
  - Agree (55%)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (23%)
  - Disagree (16%)
  - Don't know (6%)

What could prevent you from going as far in school as you would like?

- **It costs too much (52%)**
- **I don’t have good enough grades (36%)**
- **I need to work after school (26%)**
- **I’m not smart enough (23%)**
- **I’d need to move away to go to school (11%)**

What is the highest level of education that you a) want, and b) expect to complete?

![Circle diagram showing education levels]

- a) Want:
  - High school: 12%
  - 2-year community college/trade school: 29%
  - 4-year college/university: 25%
  - Graduate, master’s, or law program: 11%
  - Ph.D. program or medical school: 13%

- b) Expect:
  - High school: 13%
  - 2-year community college/trade school: 33%
  - 4-year college/university: 31%
  - Graduate, master’s, or law program: 9%
  - Ph.D. program or medical school: 19%

Which of the following activities have you participated in the last year?

- **Sports team (56%)**
- **Community service or volunteering (49%)**
- **Attend community events (34%)**
- **Band or orchestra (29%)**
- **Art or dance (25%)**
- **I don’t participate in activities (22%)**

On average, how many hours per week do you spend participating in all the above activities combined?

- 0 hours: 21%
- 1-2 hours: 23%
- 3-4 hours: 8%
- 5-6 hours: 13%
- 7-9 hours: 10%
- 10 or more hours: 26%
COMMUNITY RESULTS

Increasing the number of young people and working families is a critical issue in many rural towns. Natural amenities and attachment to community can retain young people or attract in-migration. We asked students to tell us about their community to better understand what the community has to offer. We also asked them where they want to live in the future to see if there’s an interest in living in these places among young people.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your community:

- **This is a good place to grow up:**
  - Agree: 62%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 25%
  - Disagree: 10%
  - Don’t know: 3%

- **I care about my community:**
  - Agree: 69%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 22%
  - Disagree: 9%
  - Don’t know: 1%

- **I feel like I am part of my community:**
  - Agree: 48%
  - Neither agree nor disagree: 35%
  - Disagree: 15%
  - Don’t know: 2%

Where do you see your community in the future in terms of jobs and the economy?

- **Bandon High School responses**
  - MORE jobs & improving economy: 14%
  - SAME # of jobs & same economy: 40%
  - FEWER jobs & declining economy: 13%
  - Don’t know: 39%

- **All Coos County responses**
  - MORE jobs & improving economy: 21%
  - SAME # of jobs & same economy: 28%
  - FEWER jobs & declining economy: 22%
  - Don’t know: 30%

Where do you want to live and expect to live when you are 30 years old?

- **Want**
  - Same town or nearby town as now: 23%
  - Other rural area in Oregon: 10%
  - City in Oregon: 22%
  - Rural area in another state: 6%
  - City in another state: 24%
  - Another country: 15%

- **Expect**
  - Same town or nearby town as now: 30%
  - Somewhere else rural (not in a city): 13%
  - City in Oregon: 25%
  - Rural area in another state: 8%
  - City in another state: 20%
  - Another country: 5%

What would you like to see more of in your community?

**TOP 5 WISHES**

- **More indoor recreation (61%)**
- **More shops and retail stores (46%)**
- **More restaurants (44%)**
- **More outdoor recreation (43%)**
- **More medical care and hospitals (41%)**

Do you think the following are important problems facing your community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Bandon High School “yes” responses</th>
<th>All Coos County “yes” responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not enough things to do in town</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People not having enough money</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug or alcohol abuse</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough affordable or good housing</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of public transportation</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough jobs</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor school quality</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough healthcare or doctors</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homelessness</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough outdoor activities</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People moving away</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses across the county vs. School district responses vs. All Coos County responses.
Youth today are the community’s future labor force. How prepared they feel, and how willing they are to work in local industries, influences their success in the workforce. We asked students to tell us about their career plans, including what barriers they may face and what training support they need. Because the outdoors is so important to our community, we also asked them about outdoor recreation activities that they participated in.

What would be your dream job when you are 30?

For this question, students could type in any answer to the question of what their dream job would be. We wanted to get a sense of their ideal career aspirations. All responses were entered into a program that generated this word cloud, where the larger and darker an entry is, the more times it was mentioned by students. Some students didn’t name a particular job, but described in general what they hoped they’d be doing.

Would you want to work in one of the following industries in Coos County?

What sort of help would you like preparing for a job?

Which of the following outdoor recreation activites have you done in the last year? (top ten):

- Visiting the beach: 63%
- Camping: 51%
- Hiking: 45%
- Wildlife viewing: 34%
- ATV riding: 29%
- Fishing: 27%
- Golfing or frisbee/disc golf: 24%
- Clamming/crabbing: 24%
- Canoeing or kayaking: 23%
- Mountain biking: 22%

Percentage of students who agree or strongly agree with statements about their attachment to the outdoors (top two):

- they can be themselves in the outdoors here: 76%
- they feel safe in the outdoors here: 56%

The Rural Youth Futures project is funded by USDA National Institute for Food and Agriculture grant #2017-67023-26240. Project partners include: University of Maine, the University of Oregon’s Ecosystem Workforce Program, Coos Watershed Association (Oregon), the Appalachian Mountain Club (Maine), and Oregon State University. Header photo credit: Alexa Carleton, Coos Watershed Association. For more information on the project, contact Mindy Crandall, Oregon State University, mindy.crandall@oregonstate.edu.