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# RURAL YOUTH FUTURES: PENQUIS VALLEY SCHOOL

SURVEY RESULTS • SUMMER 2020

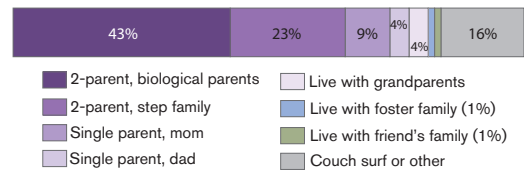
**A**s rural communities face changes in local economies, populations, and workforce needs, what does the next generation of residents and workers value and want? That question was the motivation for the Rural Youth Futures project. Researchers and extension agents from several universities joined forces with local non-profits to find out what middle and high schoolers think in two forest-dependent regions: Piscataquis/Northern Somerset County in Maine and Coos County in Oregon. 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

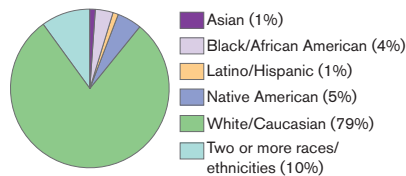
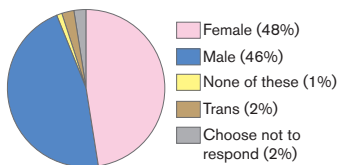
With permission from the school principal, students in grades 6–12 at Penquis Valley School were given a link to an anonymous, electronic survey in February 2019. Participation was voluntary. Penquis Valley School had 130 students in these grades during 2018-2019, 103 of which took the survey for a participation rate of 79%. 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>.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

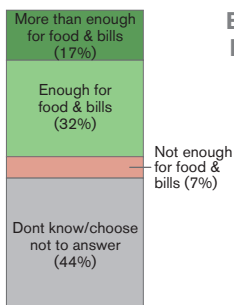
Describe the family structure you live with:



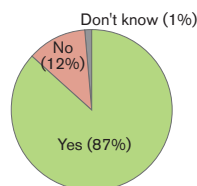
Gender that you identify as:      Category that best describes you:



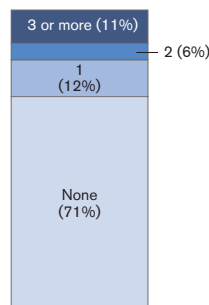
Perception of family finances:



Born in Piscataquis or N. Somerset County:



School changes from moving in past 5 years:



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

Mom, dad, or guardian:



Second mom, dad, or guardian:



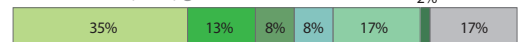
Did not finish high school      Graduated from college or more  
 Finished high school      Went to school, don't know how far  
 Went to college, didn't graduate      Don't know or N/A

Do your parents or guardians work for pay?

Mom, dad, or guardian:



Second mom, dad, guardian:

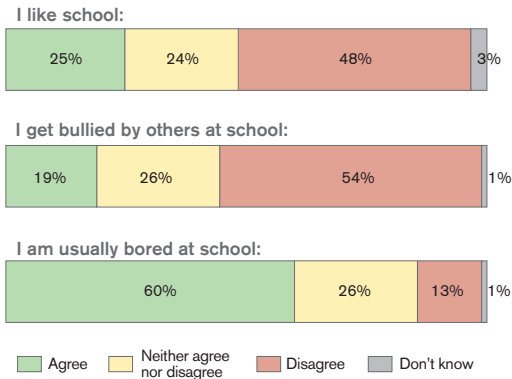


Yes, one full-time job      Not working now, but looking for a job  
 Yes, one part-time job      Does not have a job  
 Yes, multiple jobs      Retired  
 Don't know or NA

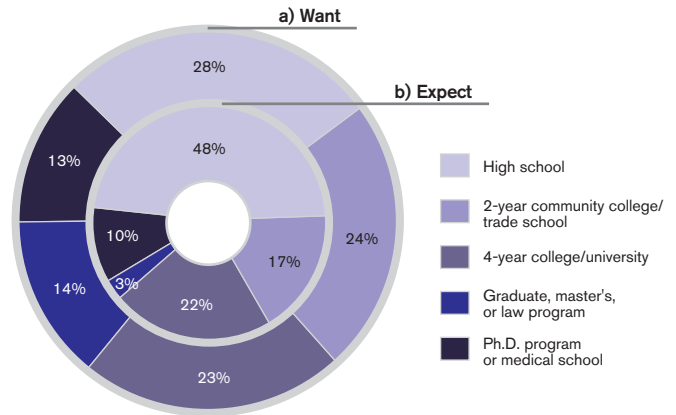
# SCHOOL RESULTS

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 Piscataquis and Northern Somerset 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?



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



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

## TOP 5 BARRIERS



It costs too much (38%)



I'm not smart enough (25%)



I need to work after school (24%)



I don't have good enough grades (17%)



I'd need to move away to go to school (8%)

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

## TOP 5 ACTIVITIES



Community service or volunteering (37%)



Sports team (29%)



Band or orchestra (24%)

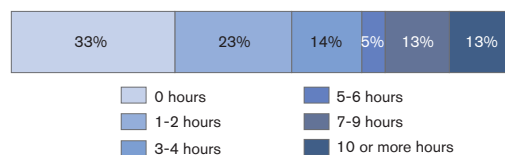


After-school or summer program (22%)



Attend community events (22%)

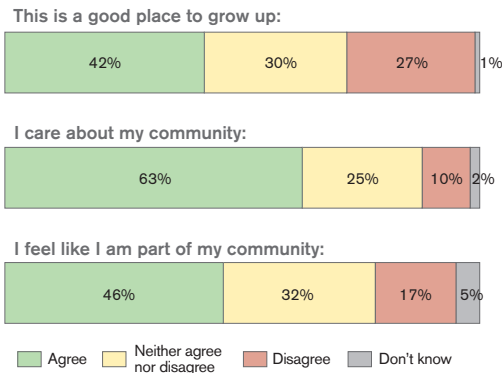
On average, how many hours per week do you spend participating in all the above activities combined?



# 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:



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

## TOP 5 WISHES



**More indoor recreation (hockey rinks, gyms) (51%)**



**More outdoor recreation (49%)**



**More shops and retail stores (48%)**

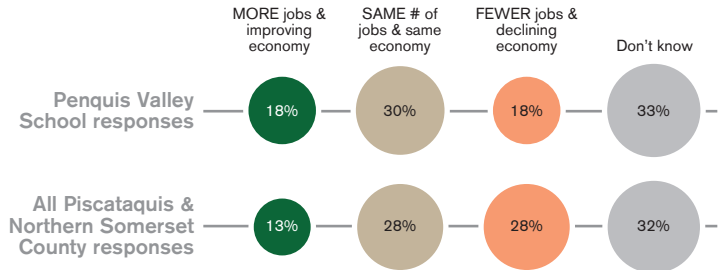


**More restaurants (48%)**

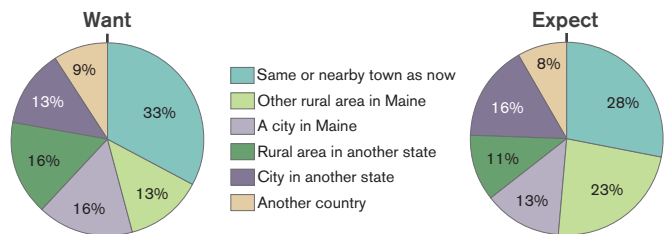


**More medical care and hospitals (41%)**

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



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



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

