



Career Intentions and Perceptions of Grades 6-9 Students



*with a Particular Focus on the Regional
Cape Cod Blue Economy.*

September 2018

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The report authors would like to thank these organizations for their support and encouragement during the project execution. We would also like to thank the school administrators and teachers who worked with us closely to implement the survey in their schools during an already busy spring term.

This report follows the footsteps and approach taken by the Institute of Ocean Research Enterprise (IORE)/Center for Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship (COVE)'s Marine People Partnership Program. Established in 2011 as a Canadian not-for-profit corporation, IORE partners with industry, academia, and government agencies to inspire and facilitate world-class scientific research, and to apply and commercialize its results. We thank IORE for sharing with us their survey materials and documents with which to shape our project.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recognizing that the Cape Cod region's environment is its economy, the water or "Blue" Economy is the fulcrum that balances our economic and environmental health, creates a new regional identity focused on pride in our water and coastal resources, and supports a more balanced and sustainable year-around economy for its residents.

The statistics on the growth of the Cape Cod region's Blue Economy from 2003 to 2014 are encouraging:

- The number of blue establishments increased 42 percent (from 2,180 to 3,104)
- The number of employees employed by blue businesses increased approximately 100 percent (from 14,412 to 29,093)
- Annual payroll for blue businesses increased by 111 percent (from \$574M to \$1.21B)
- Even more encouraging is that all this growth showed the largest portion in later years, between 2011-2014.

To achieve the vision of the Blue Economy Project, in 2018 work commenced in areas that center around the following three themes:

1. A Vibrant Maritime and Technology Economy
2. Healthy Water = Healthy Communities
3. A Prepared and Educated Workforce

The central theme addressed in this study is the development of a prepared and educated workforce. Though a highly-educated workforce exists in certain areas of the region, we acknowledge that the overall "all-ages" educational and workforce development resources must align to the needs of the growing economy. As a living laboratory for many of the world's pressing challenges, the region is well suited to career preparation and exporting our knowledge in expanding blue economy fields.

To foster entry to and careers in the Cape Cod Blue Economy, we must first understand the career perceptions and intentions of young people.

- Do they know what the Blue Economy is?
- What do they know about available careers in Blue Economy sectors?
- Do they know what they need to do to acquire a career in the field?
- Are they interested in any of these future opportunities?
- Are they planning on staying in the region to pursue a career or do they plan to leave?

This study surveyed all children enrolled in public and private schools in the Cape Cod region on their career intentions and perceptions specifically surrounding those careers included in the following Blue Economy sectors:

1. Tourism & Recreation
2. Ship & Boat Building
3. Renewable Living Resources
4. Marine Transportation
5. Marine Construction & Facilities
6. Physical Resource Extraction
7. Marine Technology
8. Research, Education, Advocacy & Support Services

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1. INTRODUCTION

This study was commissioned by the Cape Cod Blue Economy Project as a component of the Project's Implementation Plan (2017) that examined the region's water-based economy and proposed actions to advance it.

The Cape Cod Region is defined as southern Plymouth County including Plymouth and Wareham, all of the towns on Cape Cod, and the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. Our efforts to define, characterize, engage, and identify actions for the Blue Economy in the Cape region proved very fruitful and encouraging for the future growth of this sector. Our investigations and socialization of the Blue Economy concept resulted in a better understanding of the unique nature of the region and the role that water and healthy environments play in the economy.

Through our analytical work during Implementation Plan development, we determined that while the Commonwealth derives 2.6 percent of direct employment and 1.3 percent of direct gross state product from the maritime economy, the Cape region is more connected, more dependent, and more focused on the "blue" or water economy. In fact, the "dark blue" economy, that which is directly dependent on water, is worth 6 percent of revenues and employs 4 percent of the workforce in the Cape region. More broadly, the Cape region's overall blue economy is a significant economic driver, representing 12 percent of jobs and 11 percent of gross revenues.

The statistics on the growth of the Cape Cod region's Blue Economy from 2003 to 2014 are encouraging:

- The number of blue establishments increased 42 percent (from 2,180 to 3,104)
- The number of employees employed by blue businesses increased approximately 100 percent (from 14,412 to 29,093)
- Annual payroll for blue businesses increased by 111 percent (from \$574M to \$1.21B)
- Even more encouraging is that all this growth showed the largest portion in later years, between 2011-2014.

Recognizing that the Cape Cod region's environment is its economy, the Blue Economy is the fulcrum that balances our economic and environmental health, creates a new regional identity focused on pride in our water and coastal resources, and supports a more balanced and sustainable year-round economy for its residents.

Through the realization of our vision – driven by the water that surrounds us, steeped in maritime tradition, and dedicated to innovation – the Cape Cod region will be a modern, water-based, highly diversified economy. This new focus on blue will connect people to their environment, inspire learning, and export knowledge to the world.

To achieve this vision, the Blue Economy Project is focusing work in the following three themes:

1. A Vibrant Maritime and Technology Economy
2. Healthy Water = Healthy Communities
3. A Prepared and Educated Workforce

Within Theme 3, we are laser-focused on workforce development and education of our region's youngsters, to better inform them of opportunities for solid, high-wage, year-round employment in the "blue" or water-related economy, and prepare them for such positions.

Trends show that the seasonal economy is strong in the Cape Cod region due to the highly-varied seasonality, annual migrations of people, and focus of economic development efforts on seasonal tourism. Year-round, high wage employment opportunities do not make up the basis for the current economy. Further, flight from the region post-high school diploma is a well-documented trend. The execution of this survey tool provides us with many learning points and observations for economic and workforce development efforts. Through this study, we introduced students in Grades 6-9 to the possibilities of careers and jobs right here in our region through a perceptions and intentions survey conducted electronically.

1. Opinions and Perceptions: We can discern if there is any critical inflection point (age, location, sector) that, when met, gives insights into when career plans or topics begin to form. We can get glimpses into their ideas and interests into one career or another, and whether (or when) they understand what it will take to reach a desired career outcome or qualification.
2. Choices: Understanding the awareness, plans and influencers on the career choices among youth ages 12-15 may give educators, economic development programs, guidance professionals, and parents/guardians some knowledge and direction on how to support robust life and career preparation activities. By surveying these younger children, we can consider targeting guidance, educational choices, and programs/activities to suit their interests.
3. A Sense of Place – A Culture of Blue: With our particular focus on "blue" fields found in the Cape Cod region, we can better understand the influence of living in a place that is defined by water, water activities, and opportunities. An additional benefit of the survey is to better understand how these young members of society identify with the concept of a Blue Economy. The survey tool also gives us an opportunity to introduce the Blue Economy to this segment through a brief video.

It is important to note the approach we employed here is based on a successful survey conducted by the Institute of Ocean Research Enterprise (IORE) in Nova Scotia, Canada through funding from Irving Shipbuilding, and is being conducted under the academic guidance and support of the Public Policy Center at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

Following in the footsteps of the IORE study, with a focus on children age 12-15 (grades 6-9), we mirror their overarching objectives with an additional focus on careers in the Blue Economy in the Cape Cod region:

- *“the perceptions young people have of alternative education and career pathways*
- *how and when those perceptions are formed, and who has strongest influence over them*
- *young people’s career and mobility intentions*
- *young people’s perceptions of minimum requirements for jobs and education”*

Similarly, or in some cases identically, to the IORE study, the results of the Cape Cod Blue Economy survey will provide evidence-based observations and recommendations for future career literacy programs and engagement initiatives, and may serve to help inform traditional and “blue” economy:

- Career literacy programs, coaching and curriculum links to career opportunities
- Blue economy and career awareness and exposure building programs in grades 6-12
- Discussions and decisions regarding career, technical, STEM and co-op programs in high school
- Preferred channels for connecting youth with career coaching
- Involvement of proximal role models in awareness and exposure programs
- Marketing and social messaging strategies to influence youth perceptions of career opportunities

2. METHODS

2.1 Survey Design

Using the IORE study as a guide, the Cape Cod Blue Economy Career Intentions and Perceptions survey was developed to better understand and to inform students in Grades 6-9 of the existence of, and career opportunities in, the Blue Economy. All 49 public and private schools in the Cape Cod region (southern Plymouth County including Plymouth and Wareham, all of the towns on Cape Cod, and the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket) that enrolled and educated children in Grades 6-9 were invited to participate in the study.

2.2 Methodology

The Cape Cod Blue Economy Student Survey questionnaire was developed in conjunction with the staff of the Public Policy Center (PPC) at UMass Dartmouth and based on the *Marine People Partnership Student Intentions and Perceptions Survey* conducted by the Institute of Ocean Research Enterprise (IORE). The survey was administered online using QuestionPro survey software. The survey underwent significant testing before implementation to ensure its validity and effectiveness in meeting the overall project goals. Survey questions were developed in three general areas and numbered 14 distinct questions, some with a follow-up depending on the initial answer:

- I. Background Demographics
- II. Choosing and Preparing for a Job/Career
- III. Introducing the Blue Economy

The survey was administered to students in grades 6 through 9 enrolled in both public and private schools in the geographic area of study, which includes Cape Cod, Southern Plymouth County, and the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. A total of 49 schools were included in the study with a total enrollment of 11,181 in grades 6 through 9. A letter providing an overview of the project and requesting participation was emailed to superintendents on March 1, 2018 (See Appendix A). As an incentive, a \$150 donation was offered to any school with a response rate above 60 percent.

Principals and Superintendents were emailed detailed instructions on how to disseminate the survey via a simple online link. Though no requirements were made on when or where the survey could be accessed during the survey period, we recommended that time be set aside for students to complete the survey at school, preferably in the classroom. Any device with an internet or cell connection could be used to access the on-line survey directly through the link provided.

With instructions to teachers, the survey was launched on May 1, 2018, with a follow up reminder two weeks later on May 15 and an initial survey close date of May 31, 2018. Due to the Memorial Day holiday and the concurrent Standardized Testing (MCAS) activities, the survey was extended by one week and closed on June 7, 2018. Students were forwarded the survey link by their classroom instructors, along with detailed instructions to ensure that the survey was implemented with

fidelity. No surveys were completed outside of normal school hours, implying that all surveys were completed during regular class hours under the guidance of a classroom teacher or specialist.

During the survey period, we developed individual school profiles and conducted survey reminder communications on May 15, 2018 and May 30, 2018. Response-rates-to-date were shared with school administration so that they could be informed of their school performance on the survey and conduct internal follow-up as necessary.

Data collection was monitored daily by the PPC. When the survey ended, the study co-leader at the PPC downloaded, cleaned, and prepared the data for analysis. This initial data work resulted in basic descriptive statistics (e.g. frequencies, means, crosstabs) for use in the overall analysis.

2.3 List of Questions and Question Categories

I. Background Demographics

1. What grade are you in?
2. What is your gender?
3. Where do you live?
4. What is the name of your school?

II. Choosing and Preparing for a Job/Career

5. What do you think are some of the best ways to get ideas about your future goals and job choices? You may choose more than one.
6. What job are you most interested in doing when you're older?
7. When you think about your future job, what is most important to you?
7a. Of the choices you made in the previous question about your future job, please select the ONE that is the most important to you.
8. Please answer whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:
"To get the job I want, I think that I will need to..."
9. What subjects do you think will best prepare you for your future job?
10. What do you think you will do once you finish high school? (leave, stay, unsure)

III. Introducing the Blue Economy

11. What word or phrase do you think of when you hear the term "Blue Economy"? (watch video before proceeding)
12. Have you ever thought that you might want a job or career related to the water?
12a. Why wouldn't you want a job or career related to the water? (if no)
13. How would you feel about working in one of the following occupations or careers once you finish school? (list of Blue Economy jobs/careers)

14. What do you think schools can do to better prepare students for possible careers in the Blue Economy? Please write in your response below.

3. SURVEY RESPONSE GENERAL INFORMATION

3.1 Process for Generating Interest and Participation

An email introduction was sent to Principals and Superintendents of all 50 public and private schools with children in Grades 6-9 across the Cape Cod study region. This email introduced the Cape Cod Blue Economy Project, described the characteristics of the region’s Blue Economy, shared the Implementation Plan and explained the purpose and need of this Study and its links and importance to the region. The introductory communication included a request for participation of all students in Grades 6-9 and provided a detailed project timeline for drafts, reviews, dissemination, incentives and follow-up. Over the course of a 2-month period the Study, led by the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce and the Blue Economy Project’s Community Outreach coordinator, worked with each school to understand the request, and review the draft survey. Through this process, 76% of all schools actively agreed to participate in the survey with no response for participation from the other 24%. The request to participate came from the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce, the Cape and Islands Workforce Investment Board, the Cape Cod Blue Economy Foundation and the Cape Cod Blue Economy Project Staff. The approach to participation requests, dissemination, and survey questions was advised by the IORE project lead scientist.

3.2 Demographic Data

Repeated requests through telephone calls and emails over a two-month period were made to schools to enlist participation. A \$150 incentive was offered to schools that returned a 60% response rate of those students enrolled at their school in Grades 6-9. While no schools actively declined to participate, no response was received from 10 of the 49 schools invited. As such, 39 schools actively accepted the invitation to participate.

CAPE COD REGION - SCHOOLS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE	
ACCEPTED INVITATION	
Barnstable High School	Nauset Regional High School
Barnstable Intermediate School	Nauset Regional Middle School
Bourne High School	Oak Bluffs School
Bourne Middle School	Plymouth Community Intermediate School
Cape Cod Academy	Plymouth North High School
Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School	Plymouth South High School
Cape Cod Regional Technical School	Plymouth South Middle School
Cyrus Pierce Middle School	Provincetown School
Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School	Quashnet School

Edgartown School	Saint Francis Xavier Preparatory School
Falmouth High School	Saint John Paul II High School
Martha's Vineyard Public Charter School	Saint Margaret Regional School
Martha's Vineyard Regional High School	Saint Pius School
Mashpee Middle-High School	Sandwich Middle-High School
Mattacheese Middle School	Sandwich STEM Academy
Monomoy Regional High School	Tisbury School
Monomoy Regional Middle School	Upper Cape Vocational Tech School
Morse Pond Middle School	Veritas Academy
Nantucket High School	West Tisbury
NON-PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS	
Bayberry Christian School	Rising Tide Charter Public School
Bridgeview Montessori School	Sturgis Charter Public School
Falmouth Academy	Waldorf School of Cape Cod
New Testament Christian School	Wareham High School
Oak Ridge School	Wareham Middle School

Based on common language levels in students ages 12-15, an electronic survey questionnaire was developed that was designed to be deployed in a flexible format. Principals and Superintendents were asked to review and comment on a draft survey before it was made final for dissemination.

The success of the response rate was influenced by the following constraints and dependencies:

1. Assume that school administration will allow the survey to be deployed at their school and respond in a timely fashion.
2. Assume the schools have the computer/internet access capabilities to allow each student to complete the 20-minute survey.

A total of 25 schools participated in the survey (see map below) and the total number of valid survey responses is 3,320. The response rate for the survey is 29.7% with a margin of error of +/- 1.43% at the 95% confidence level. The survey data was exported to SPSS and analyzed by PPC staff. Results were shared with Blue Economy Project staff, who were responsible for the final report write-up, with further technical assistance provided by the PPC.

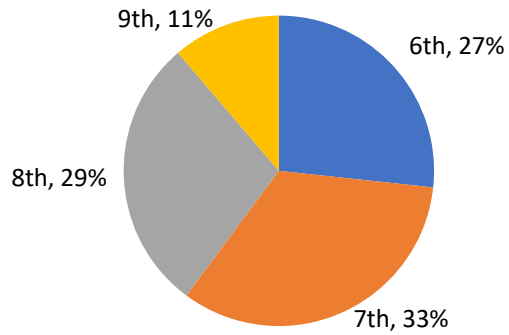
Participating Schools



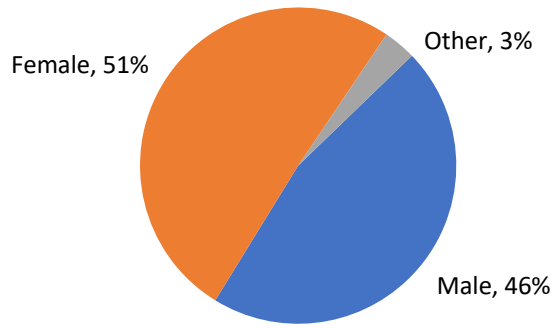
4. SURVEY RESPONSE BY QUESTION CATEGORY

4.1 Background Demographics

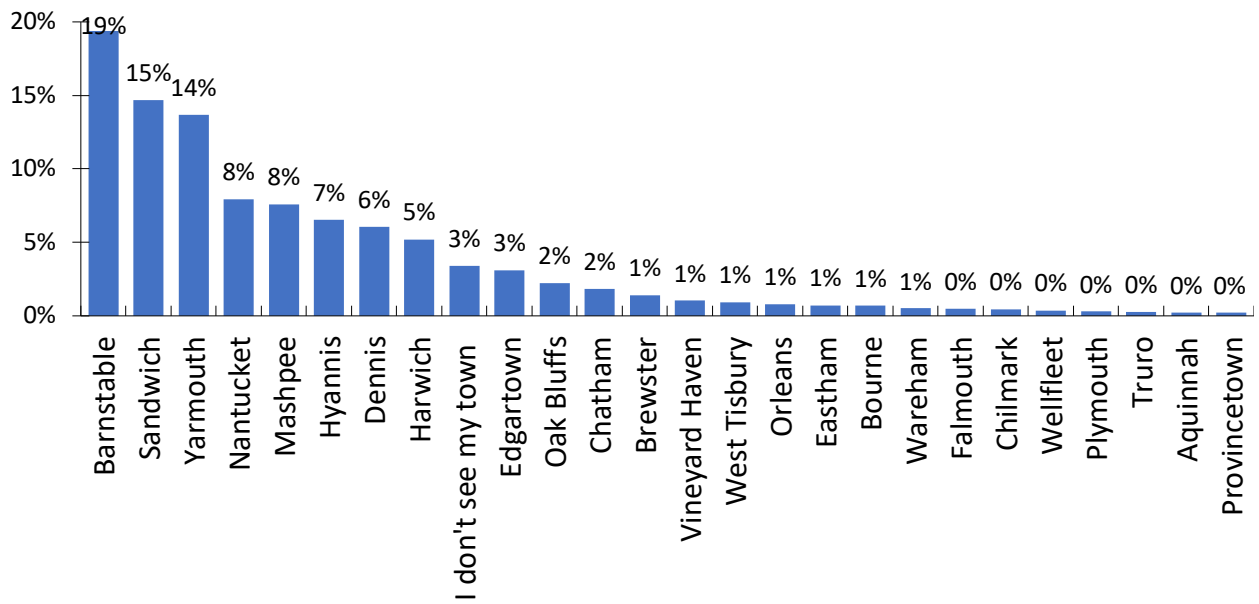
1. What grade are you in?



2. What is your gender?



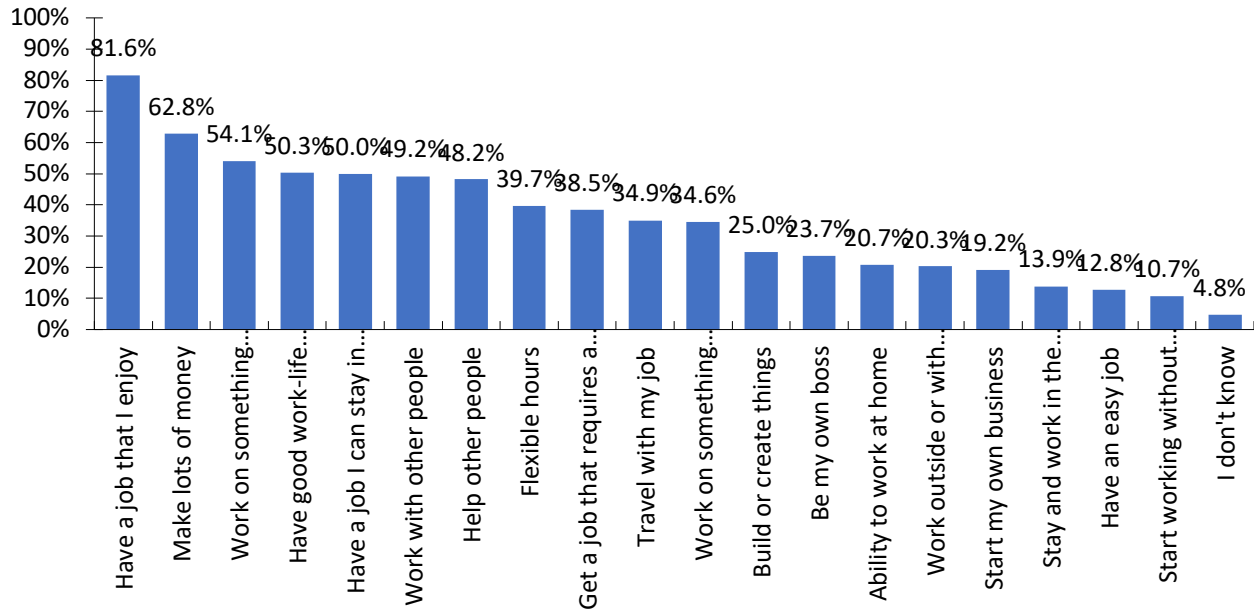
3. Where do you live?



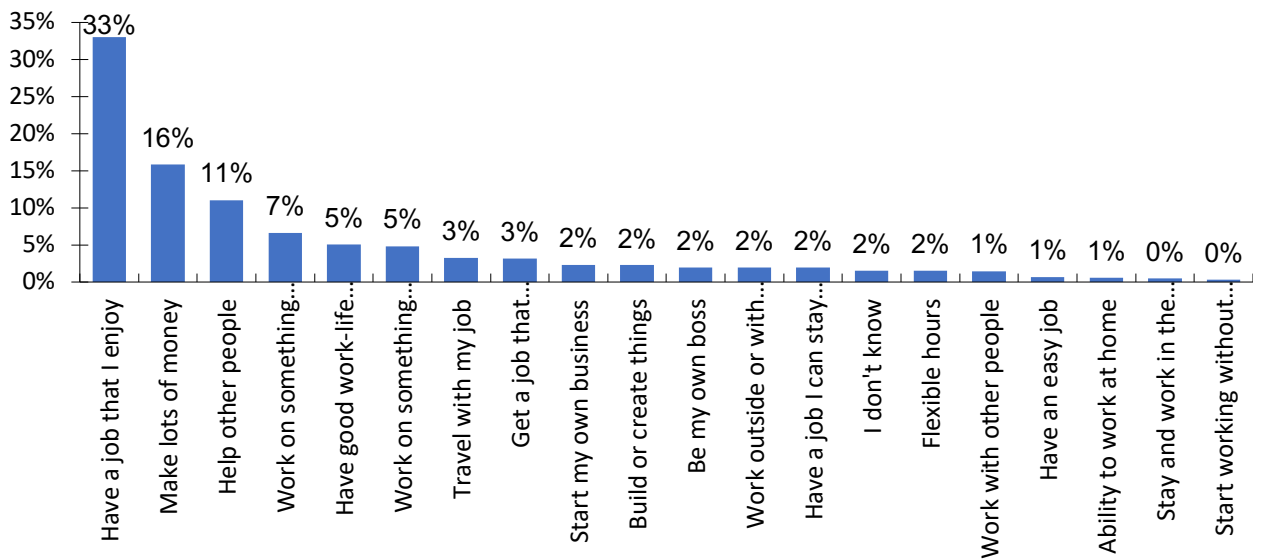
4. What is the name of your school? (and response rates)

	6th Grade		7th		8th		9th		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Veritas Academy	N/A	N/A	4	100.0%	1	100.0%	N/A	N/A	5	100.0%
Quashnet School	102	100.0%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	102	100.0%
Monomoy Regional Middle School	126	95.5%	98	74.2%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	224	84.8%
Mattacheese Middle School	208	92.4%	160	73.7%	4	100.0%	N/A	N/A	372	83.4%
Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School	70	87.5%	57	70.4%	74	91.4%	N/A	N/A	201	83.1%
Cyrus Pierce Middle School	82	71.9%	100	78.7%	87	81.3%	N/A	N/A	269	77.3%
Edgartown School	31	83.8%	25	83.3%	20	55.6%	N/A	N/A	76	73.8%
Saint Francis Xavier Preparatory School	1	2.2%	66	100.0%	47	100.0%	N/A	N/A	114	71.7%
Saint Margaret Regional School	12	100.0%	9	100.0%	6	35.3%	N/A	N/A	27	71.1%
Sandwich STEM Academy	N/A	N/A	144	61.5%	149	65.9%	N/A	N/A	293	63.7%
Barnstable Intermediate School	202	53.4%	252	70.2%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	454	61.6%
Martha's Vineyard Regional High School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	91	53.2%	91	53.2%
Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	128	55.7%	93	49.2%	221	52.7%
Barnstable High School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	329	84.1%	35	9.5%	364	47.9%
Mashpee Middle-High School	N/A	N/A	83	59.3%	50	38.5%	11	8.5%	144	36.1%
Nauset Regional High School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	82	34.7%	82	34.7%
Oak Bluffs	0	0.0%	32	66.7%	8	26.7%	N/A	N/A	40	31.5%
West Tisbury	41	97.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A	41	29.5%
Sandwich Middle-High School	0	0.0%	77	32.9%	48	21.2%	49	31.2%	174	20.7%
Martha's Vineyard Public Charter School	12	60.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	12	20.7%
Saint John Paul II High School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5	9.6%	5	9.6%
Tisbury School	1	2.7%	0	0.0%	2	4.8%	N/A	N/A	3	2.8%
Nantucket High School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	2.5%	3	2.5%
Nauset Regional Middle School	0	0.0%	2	1.1%	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A	2	0.4%
Bourne Middle School	0	0.0%	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A	1	0.2%
Bourne High School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Cape Cod Academy	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Cape Cod Regional Technical School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Falmouth High School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Monomoy Regional High School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Morse Pond Middle School	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0.0%
Plymouth Community Intermediate School	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A	0	0.0%
Plymouth North High School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Plymouth South High School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Plymouth South Middle School	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A	0	0.0%
Provincetown School	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A	0	0.0%
Upper Cape Vocational Tech School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
							*Total Participation Rate		<u>3,320</u>	<u>29.7%</u>

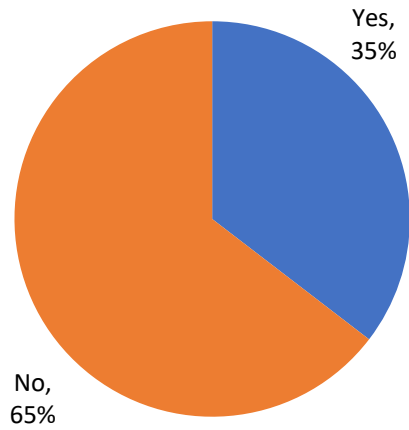
7. When you think about your future job, what is most important to you?



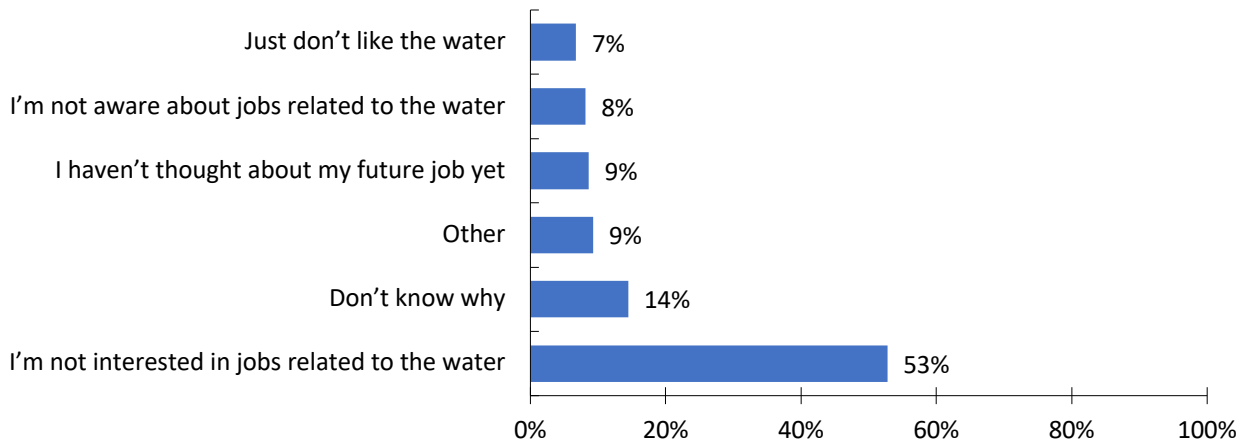
7a. Of the choices you made in the previous question about your future job, please select the ONE that is the most important to you.



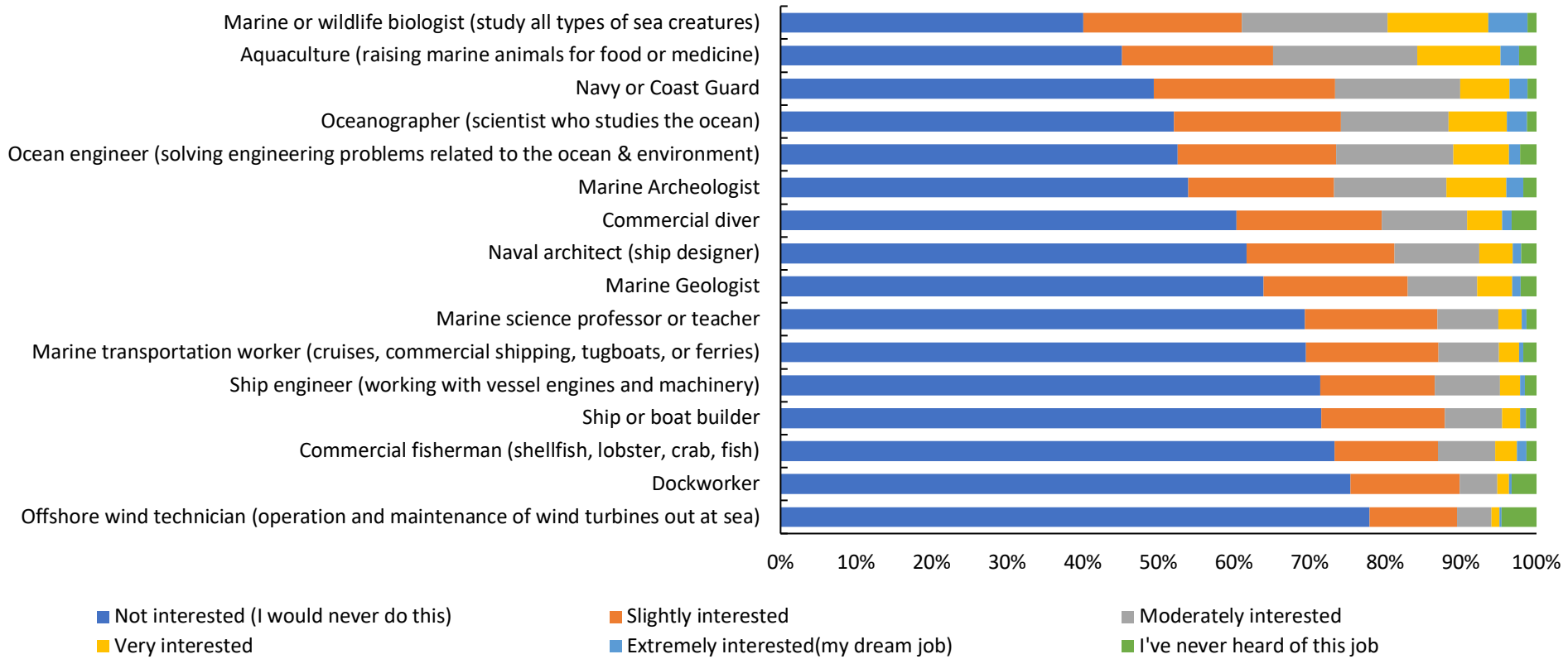
12. Have you ever thought that you might want a job or career related to the water?



12a. Why wouldn't you want a job or career related to the water? (if no)



13. How would you feel about working in one of the following occupations or careers once you finish school? (list of Blue Economy jobs/careers)



5. INSIGHT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the survey were robust and provided insight into the opinions and perceptions of Grade 6-9 students, including what influences their choices and awareness of career options, and the students' understanding of the water-based economy in the Cape Cod region.

Opinions and Perceptions

By asking about their opinions and perceptions, we can discern if there is any critical inflection point (age, location, sector) that, when met, gives insights into when career plans or topics begin to form. In the case of this survey, there is not much difference in responses between region (as defined by the area in which the school is located), although the farther one moves from west to east, the more likely students are to say they plan to leave the region after graduation. Additionally, overall, there is not much difference in results by grade, school, or gender except for the fact that the higher the grade, the more likely students are to say they plan to leave the region when they graduate (and the less likely they are to not be sure of their plans). This is a very significant result, i.e. the fact that 40.5% of eighth graders and 47.8% of ninth graders plan to leave the region when they graduate or go out of the Cape region to college. An area for follow-up would be to investigate whether, given the main influencer is sited as parents or family, socioeconomic status has any correlation to the leave or stay response. We do note that middle school grades 6-8 make up the vast majority of respondents, indicating opportunity for education and awareness on career choices and options.

Choices

Understanding the awareness of, plans for, and influencers on the career choices among youth ages 12-15 may give educators, economic development programs, guidance professionals and parents/guardians some knowledge and direction on how to support robust life and career preparation activities. By surveying these younger children, we can consider targeting guidance, educational choices and programs/activities to suit their interests. The results of this survey are clear that most students say they get ideas about future goals from parents/family members and most cite they want "a job I enjoy" in terms of their future job regardless of grade, gender, school, and region. In fact, in looking at the job characteristics most cited in the responses, 6 of the 7 top descriptors chosen were either lifestyle or socially-conscious based (with money the other). In asking what subjects they thought would prepare them best for a future job, STEM related subjects such as math and science were the highest, but engineering, biology, chemistry and technology scored well too.

A Sense of Place / A Culture of Blue

With our particular focus on "blue" fields found in the Cape Cod region, we can better understand the influence of living in a place that is defined by water, water activities, and opportunities. An additional benefit of the survey results for the Cape Cod Blue Economy Project is an understanding

of how these young members of society identify with the concept of a Blue Economy. The survey tool also gives us an opportunity to introduce the Blue Economy to this segment through a brief video. The biggest conclusion from the responses is that there are significant percentages of students who have not thought about or do not want to work in the Blue Economy, yet they also admit that they do not know much about it. This seems like an opportunity to educate. However, we note that while 53% of respondents were not interested in jobs related to the water, 47% have some interest. Given that the survey did not generate responses from any of the main fishing villages in the region (Wellfleet, Plymouth, Provincetown, Chatham, Falmouth), we are fairly certain that an in-depth blue jobs and careers awareness campaign to both students and their main influencers (family members) could increase the number of students considering blue career paths in the future. We should consider in future surveys questions that are more geared about awareness of these careers and less about if they actually want to pursue them. In looking at the open response comments to the question “What word or phrase do you think of when you hear the term Blue Economy?” a number of students described the blue economy in fairly accurate terms. We wonder if respondents who answered that they “are not interested” in a career related to the water indicated their lack of awareness, vs dis-interest.

Future Survey Recommendations

We would suggest consideration of adjustments to the survey questions to better suit the intent of the Cape Cod Blue Economy Project’s Workforce Development goal “Prepared and Educated for the Future”:

- Change questions to gear more towards culture, sense of place, awareness, linkage.
- Repeat similar study to grades 9-12 but maybe more retrospective in nature and not as impacting on their decisions.
- Distribute the survey in the fall as we believe the late spring may compete with other standardized testing requirements.
- Consider a direct teacher or department contact in whose classroom the survey will be disseminated. For instance, if we chose to disseminate the survey in math or science class, a class all students are taking, we may have had a higher response rate and more schools participating.
- Consider developing a companion survey for the younger (grades 6-7) and older (grades 8-9) with more age appropriate language.

For a full view of the data received including cross tabulations of responses, please see Appendix B.

6. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Letters to Schools



March 1, 2018

Dear School Leader,

On behalf of the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce and the Cape Cod Blue Economy Foundation, we would like to introduce you to the [Cape Cod Blue Economy Project](#). In our work, we have defined the Cape Cod region as southern Plymouth County including Plymouth and Wareham, all of the towns on Cape Cod, and the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket.

Through our analytical work over the past 18 months, we have determined that the Cape region is more connected, more dependent, and more focused on the "blue" or water economy than the state as a whole. In fact, the "dark blue" economy, that which is directly dependent on water, in the Cape region is responsible for 6% of the region's revenues and employs 4% of the workforce. More broadly, the Cape region's overall blue economy is a significant economic driver for the region, representing 12% of jobs and 11% of gross revenues.

Over the past year, under a grant from the Massachusetts Seaport Economic Council, the Project has successfully developed an Implementation Plan to support the vision:

The Blue Economy is the fulcrum that balances our economic and environmental health, creates a new regional identity focused on pride in our water and coastal resources, and supports a more balanced and sustainable year-around economy for its residents.

To achieve this vision, the Blue Economy Project will focus work in the following three themes:

1. Vibrant Maritime and Technology Economy
2. Healthy Water, Healthy Communities
3. A Prepared and Educated Workforce for the Future

Within Theme 3, we are laser focused on workforce development and education of children in the Cape Cod Region to better inform them of the opportunities for solid, high-wage, year-round employment in the "blue" or water-related economy and how to prepare themselves for such positions. Understanding the perceptions of "blue" careers among today's youth and understanding their intentions and influences will provide useful insights to inform recommendations for the design of future awareness/exposure building initiatives and career development programs to help us shift the dial on this workforce challenge.

Accordingly, we seek your help in introducing students in Grades 6-9 to the possibilities of careers and jobs right here in our region through a perceptions and intentions survey that will be conducted electronically. Surveying younger students (grades 6-9) will provide useful insights into understanding when and how their career perceptions are formed, which could signal optimal periods for targeting career counseling and awareness and exposure building programs. The survey will take less than 15 minutes to complete and does not capture any identifiable information on individual students other than basic demographics: School, Grade/Age, Gender, Town of Residence). The survey results will provide insights

into:

- the perceptions young people have of alternative education and career pathways
- how and when those perceptions are formed and who has strongest influence over them
- young people’s career and mobility intentions
- young people’s perceptions of minimum requirements for jobs and education

Additionally, the results of this survey will provide evidence based observations and recommendations for future career literacy programs and engagement initiatives. It is important to note the survey approach we suggest here are based on a successful survey conducted by the [Institute of Ocean Research Enterprise](#) in Nova Scotia, Canada through funding from Irving Shipbuilding and is being conducted under the academic guidance and support of the Public Policy Institute at the [University of Massachusetts Dartmouth](#).

On or before March 15, 2018, please send us your response to our request to deploy an electronic survey to all of your students in grades 6-9 in a manner that matches your school situation. Responses along with questions should be made to Leslie-Ann McGee, Program Manager, at 781-635-4747 or via email Leslie-Ann@capecodchamber.org

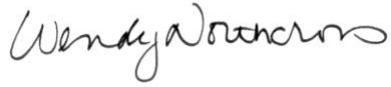
The Cape Cod Blue Economy “Student Intentions and Perceptions Survey,” with your permission, will be implemented on the following schedule:

March 1	Informational material sent to Superintendents and Principals with the request for survey participation
March 15	Deadline for approvals to participate submitted by school leadership to the Cape Cod Blue Economy Project: Leslie-Ann McGee, Project Manager, leslie-ann@capecodchamber.org
March 23	Draft survey questions and protocols sent to school leadership for review and approval. Electronic survey under construction.
March 30	Deadline for feedback from school leadership. Logistical issues of deployment finalized.
April 23	Deployment of survey begins across all schools.
May 11	Check-in on survey return rates and distribution. Encouragement for survey responses.
May 18	Deadline for survey responses.
June 8	Draft report on survey responses.
June 22	Next Steps Outlined

We highly encourage you to join with your regional school counterparts and take advantage of participating in this project. While it may take a little logistical time in school to access the electronic surveys, it will not cost you any additional money to execute. As an incentive, we will be offering a \$150 donation to any school that returns surveys of over 60% of each grade’s population.

Thank you for considering this request.

With Sincere Regards,



Wendy Northcross
CEO, Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce



John Pappalardo
Board Chair, Cape Cod Blue Economy
Foundation



Leslie-Ann McGee
Program Manager, Cape Cod Blue Economy Project



Kara Galvin
Director of Youth Services, Cape and Islands
Workforce Investment Board

Appendix B.1 – Response Data (separate file)

Appendix B.2 – Data Cross Tabulations (separate file)