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HI! WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE



Ana Moya
Professional Development Specialist
Illinois Student Assistance
Commission
Ana.Moya@illinois.gov




Jennifer Garrison
Superintendent
Vandalia Community School
District
jgarrison@vandals203.org



Shawn Bergman
Director of Research,
K/C Distinguished Professor
Vela Institute & App State
Shawn.Bergman@VelaInstitute.org

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MEET ISAC AND ILLINOIS GEAR UP




ISAC's mission is providing Illinois students with information and assistance to help make education beyond high school accessible and affordable.

College Access & Outreach	Helping students make informed choices at the outset that will improve the high school to college transition and set them up for success both in and after college.
Capacity Building	Helping partners and communities increase their ability to support students' postsecondary and career success, including training and professional development on the college going and financial aid process.
GEAR UP	Helping student sustainability via direct services using a cohort model and supporting schools in building a college-going culture, including implementing a Postsecondary and Career Expectations (PaCE) Framework.
Financial Support	Helping families pay for college through state grants and scholarships.

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MEET VANDALIA SCHOOL DISTRICT



Vandalia is a rural school district in south central Illinois with 1403 students. The district consists of 3 buildings (PreK-3, 4-8, and 9-12) and a vocational center.

Student Profile	<p style="text-align: center;">About 60% of our students qualify for free or reduced lunch.</p> <p>Three schools (elementary, middle, and high school) with total enrollment of about 1,400</p>
Building Capacity	<p style="text-align: center;">The grant-program supports re-allocation of resources and new state funds allocated through our Evidenced-Based Funding (EBF) system in IL.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vandalia is a Tier-1 district meaning one of the poorest in the state.</p>
Professional Development	<p style="text-align: center;">Vandalia is engaged with Evidence-Based Problem-Solving through work with Vela, GEAR UP, and ISAC to support systems change.</p>

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MEET THE VELA INSTITUTE



Vela is dedicated to increasing access to evaluation, analytics, and data tracking to education partners to improve student and community outcomes

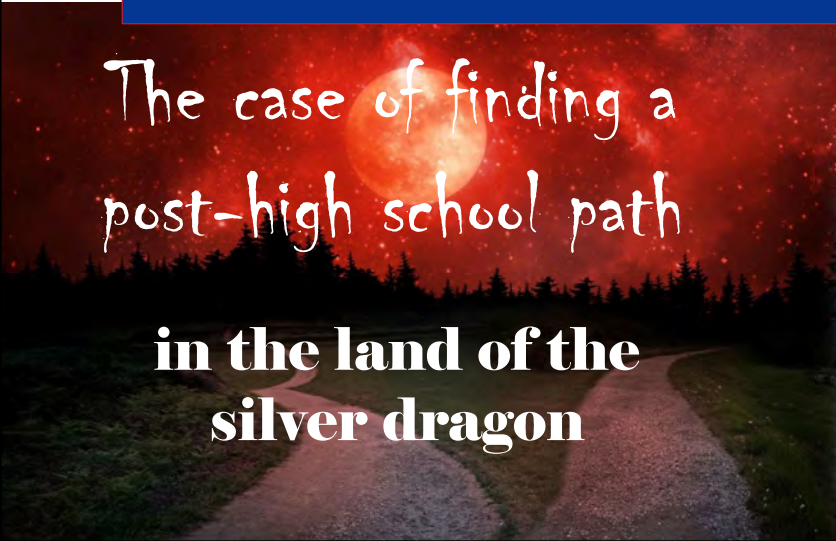
External Evaluation	Support organizations efforts to understand and demonstrate impact
Analytics	Make analytics accessible and relevant
Professional Development	Increase organizations capacity to improve evidenced-based performance

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WE GOT A STORY TO TELL AND A MYSTERY TO SOLVE






WORK, SCHOOL, OR BOTH?



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BENEFITS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS








SCHOOL

Credential Earned	Median Weekly Earnings	2023 National Unemployment Rate	Employment with Health Insurance	Retirement Plan through Employment
HS diploma	\$899	3.9%	75.5%	26.6%
Some college	\$992	3.3%	82.3%	33.1%
Associate's degree	\$1,058	2.7%	86.7%	38.8%
Bachelor's degree	\$1,493	2.2%	91.2%	45.7%

Trostel, P. A. (2015). It's not just the money the benefits of college education to individuals and to society. *Lumin Foundation*. Retrieved from: <https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/resources/its-not-just-the-money.pdf>; Carnevale, A. P., Rose, S. J., & Cheah, B. (2011). The College Payoff: Education, Occupations, Lifetime Earnings. *Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce*. Retrieved from <https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/the-college-payoff/>; Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2020). Earnings and Unemployment Rates by Educational Attainment. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/emp/chart-unemployment-earnings-education.htm>.

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- LEARNING OBJECTIVES**
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- 01

Understand postsecondary enrollment trends and patterns from 2017-2023.
 - 02

Explore students' perceptions of postsecondary education.
 - 03

Consider high school graduates exploring non-traditional postsecondary pathways.

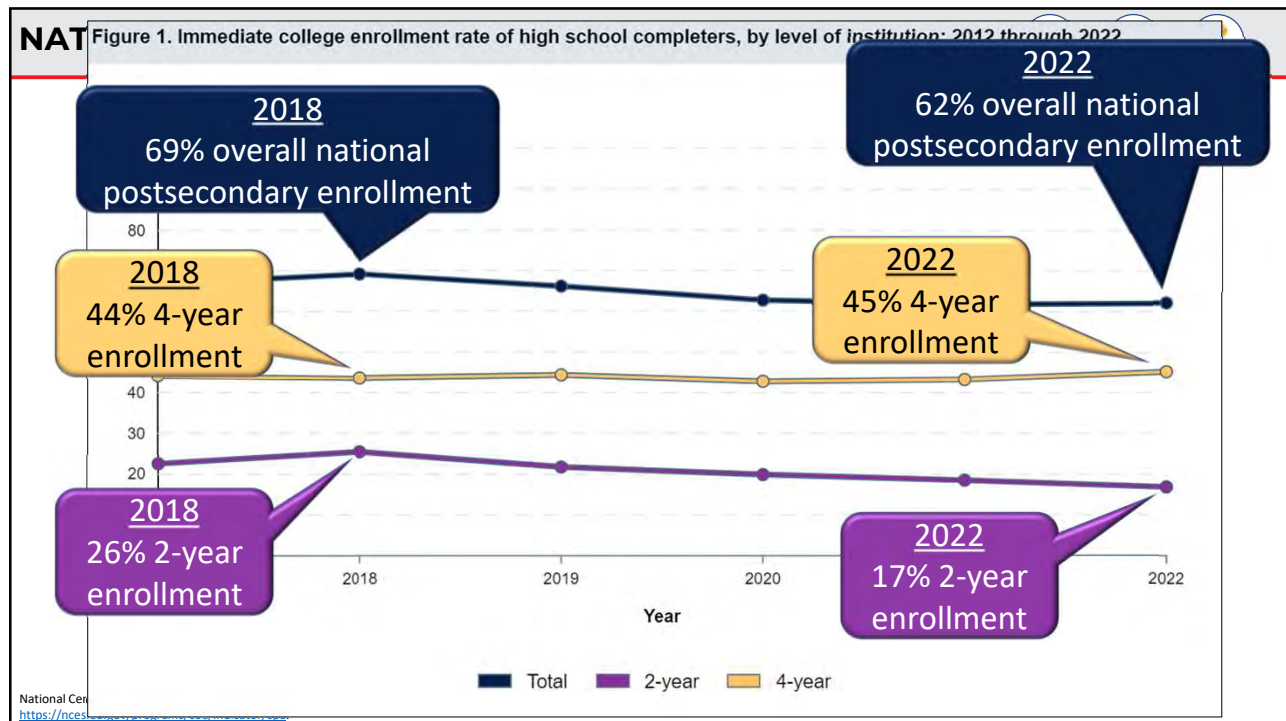
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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

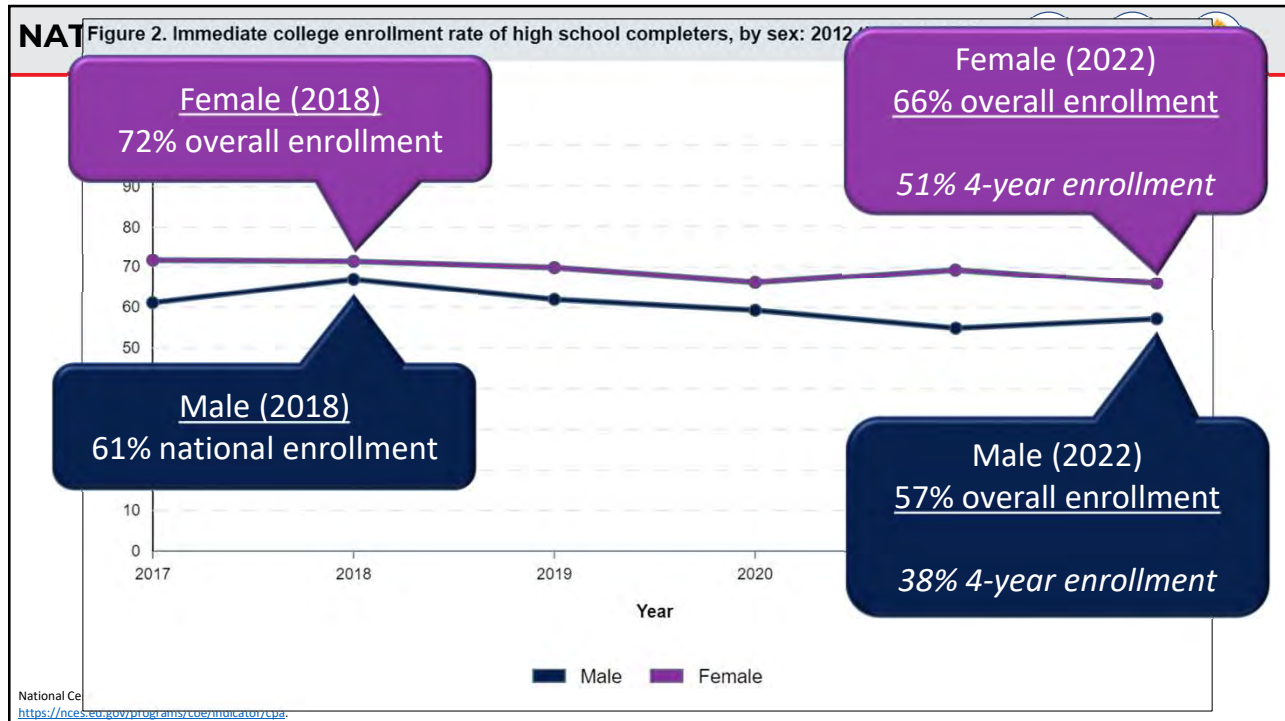


- 01** Understand postsecondary enrollment trends and patterns from 2017-2023.
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THE LAND OF THE SILVER DRAGON: VANDALIA

GEAR UP VANDALIA

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EVIDENCE-BASED PROBLEM-SOLVING (EBPS) FRAMEWORK

What is Evidence-Based Problem-Solving?

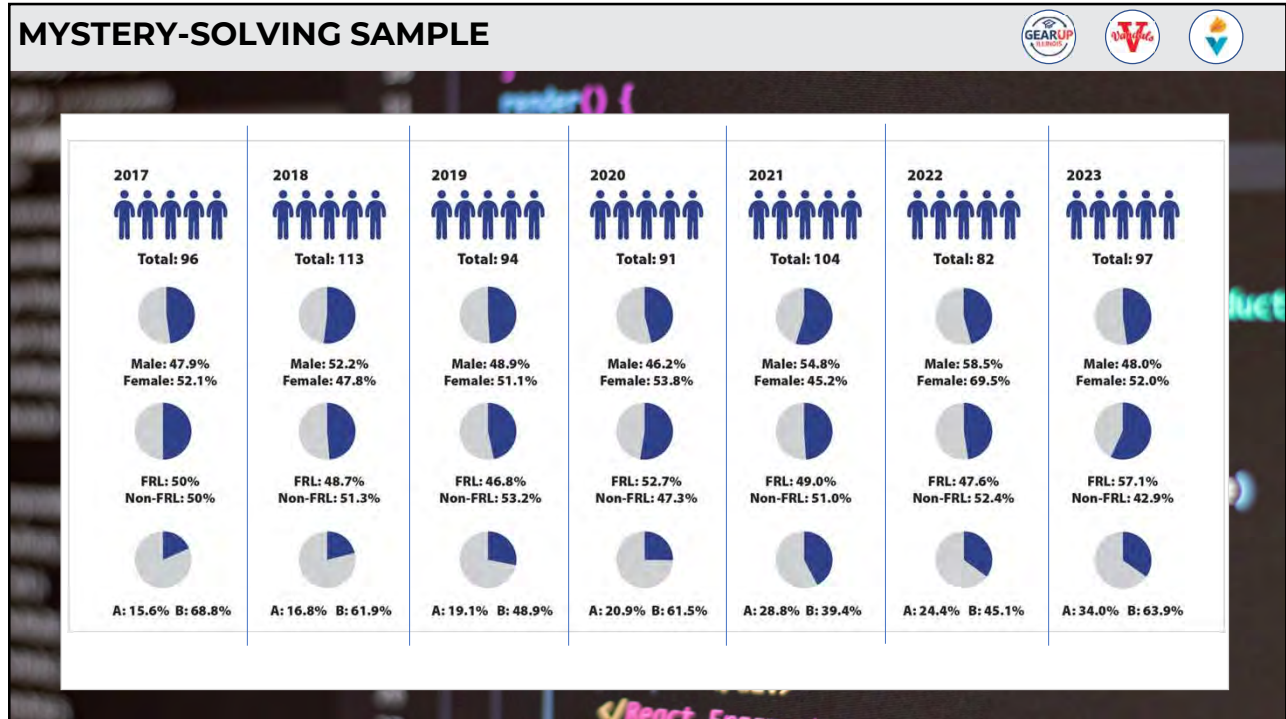
At the core of the EBPS Professional Development framework are three simple mindsets.

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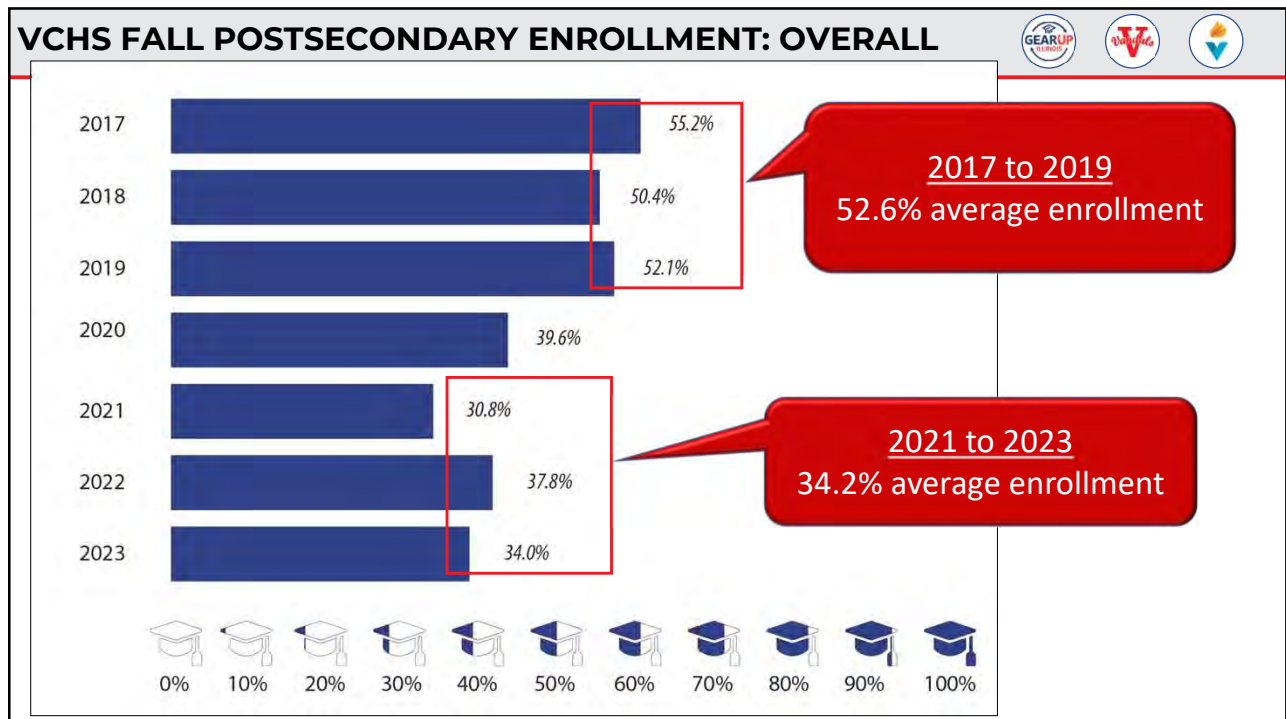
MYSTERY-SOLVING METHODOLOGY

- ISAC submitted VCHS 2017 to 2023 graduating class rosters to the National Student Clearinghouse.
- Results were matched to detailed student roster information provided by VCHS (*Shout out to CJ for providing the data!*)
- Vela created interactive dashboards of descriptive results.

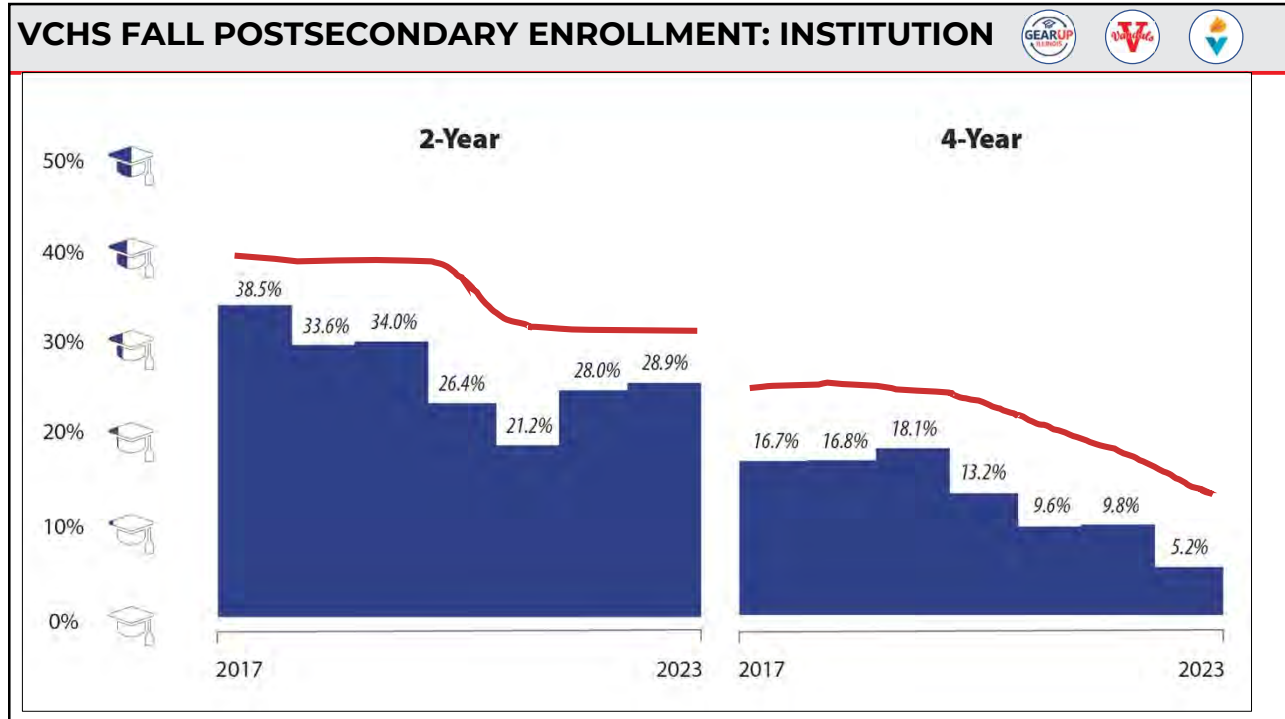
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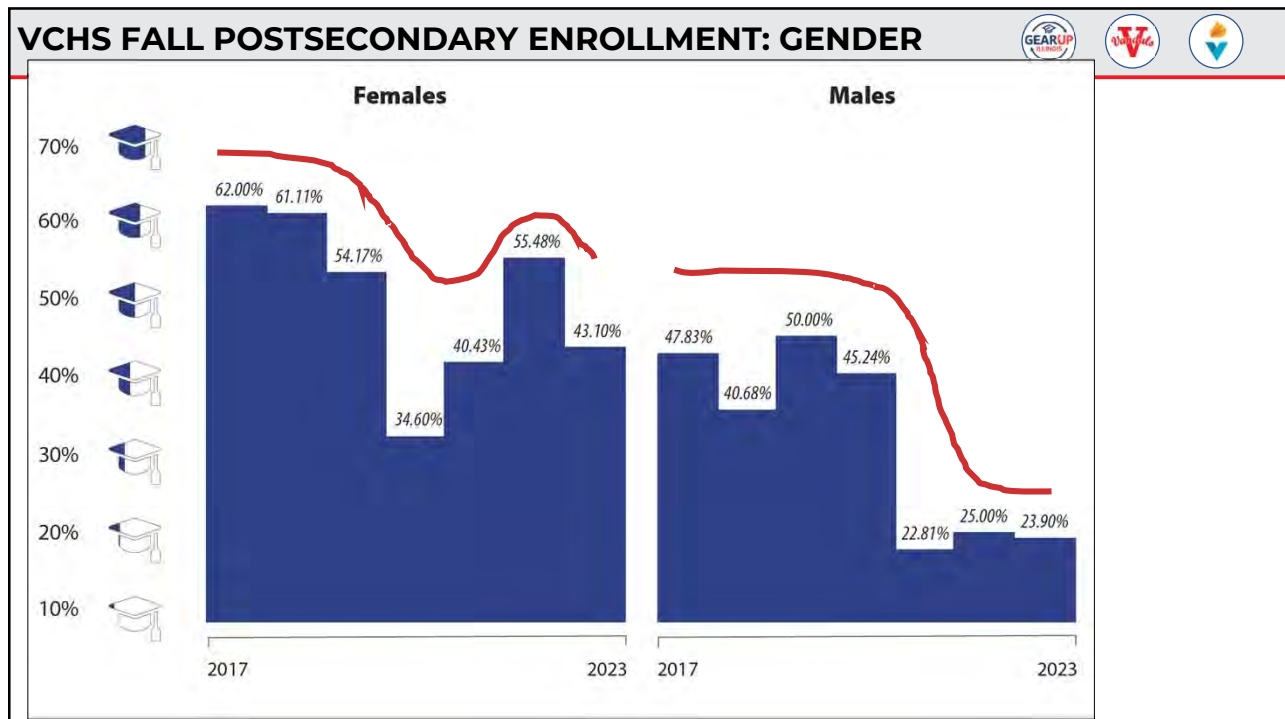
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OUR MYSTERY SO FAR (CLIFF NOTES)...



- Overall enrollment 2019 to 2022 (relative changes)
 - VCHS: down -27.4% (Nation - 6.4%)
- 4-year enrollment (relative changes)
 - VCHS: down -45.9% (Nation +1.7%)
- 2-year enrollment (relative changes)
 - VCHS: down -17.6% (Nation -22.5%)
- Male enrollment (relative changes)
 - VCHS: down -48.2% (Nation -7.7%)
- Female enrollment (relative changes)
 - VCHS: down -48.2% (Nation -21.6%)



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LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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WHAT TO DO AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?



WORK

SCHOOL



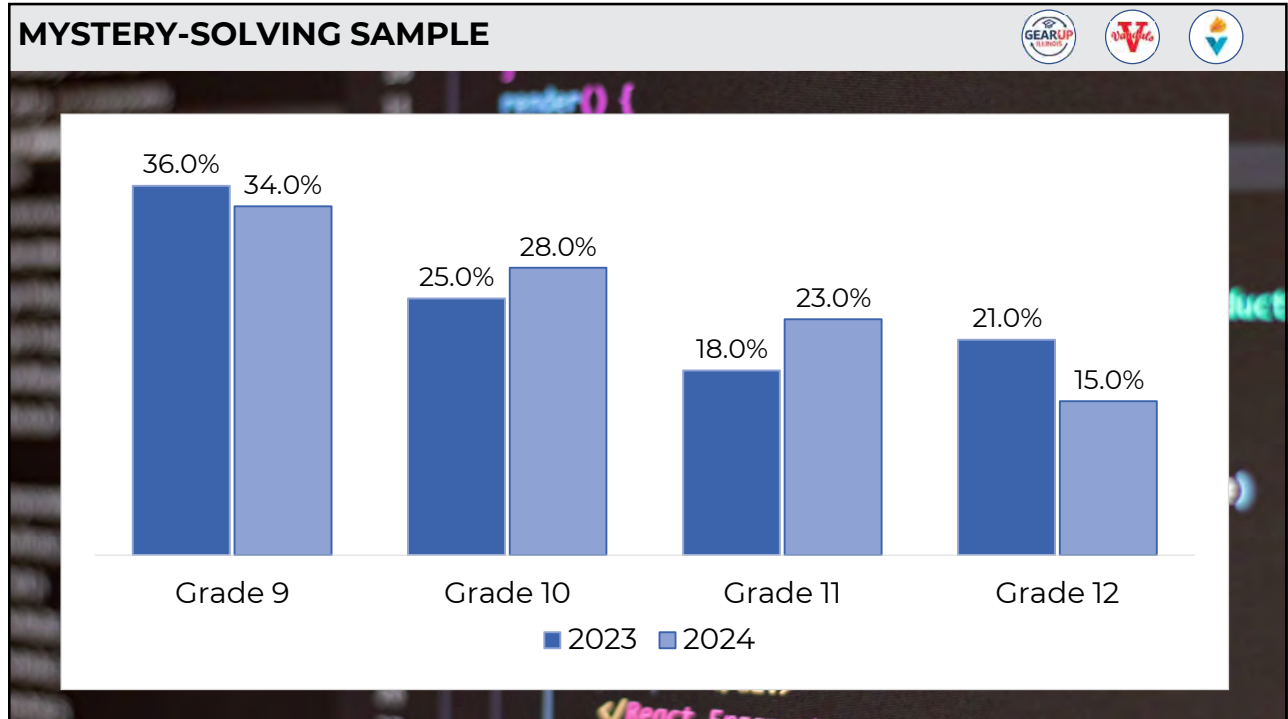
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MYSTERY-SOLVING METHODOLOGY

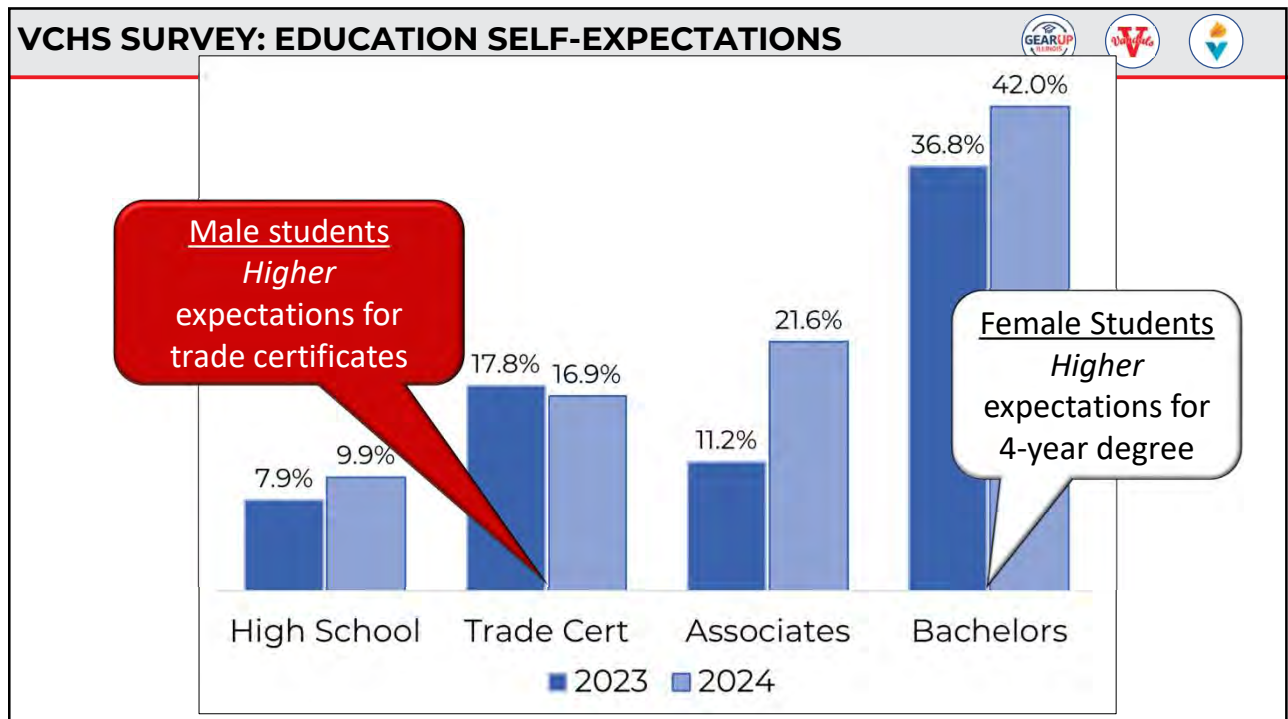


- Conducted surveys of VCHS students in Spring 2023 and 2024
 - Spring 2023: 304 students completed the survey
 - Spring 2024: 331 students completed the survey
- Survey was co-created with VCHS principals and Vandalia District Superintendent (*shout out to Dr. Garrison!*)
- Vela matched survey responses to detailed student roster using district email address (*shout out to CJ for that idea!*)

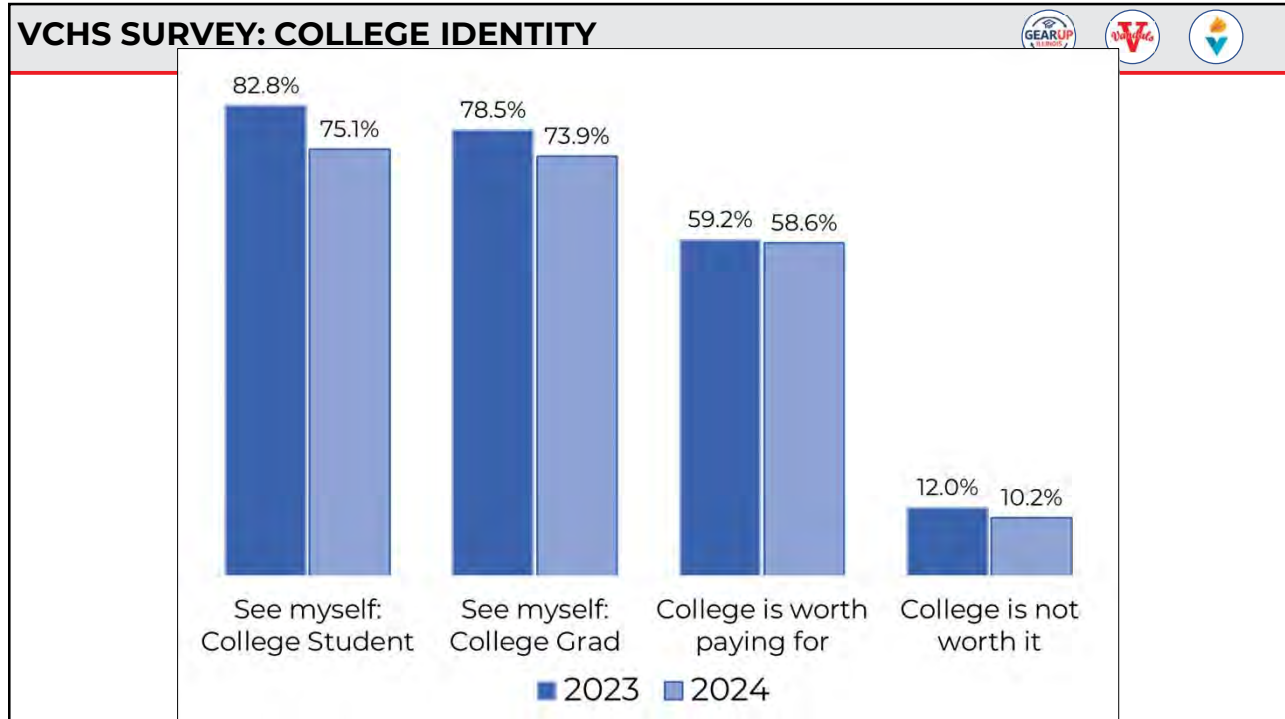
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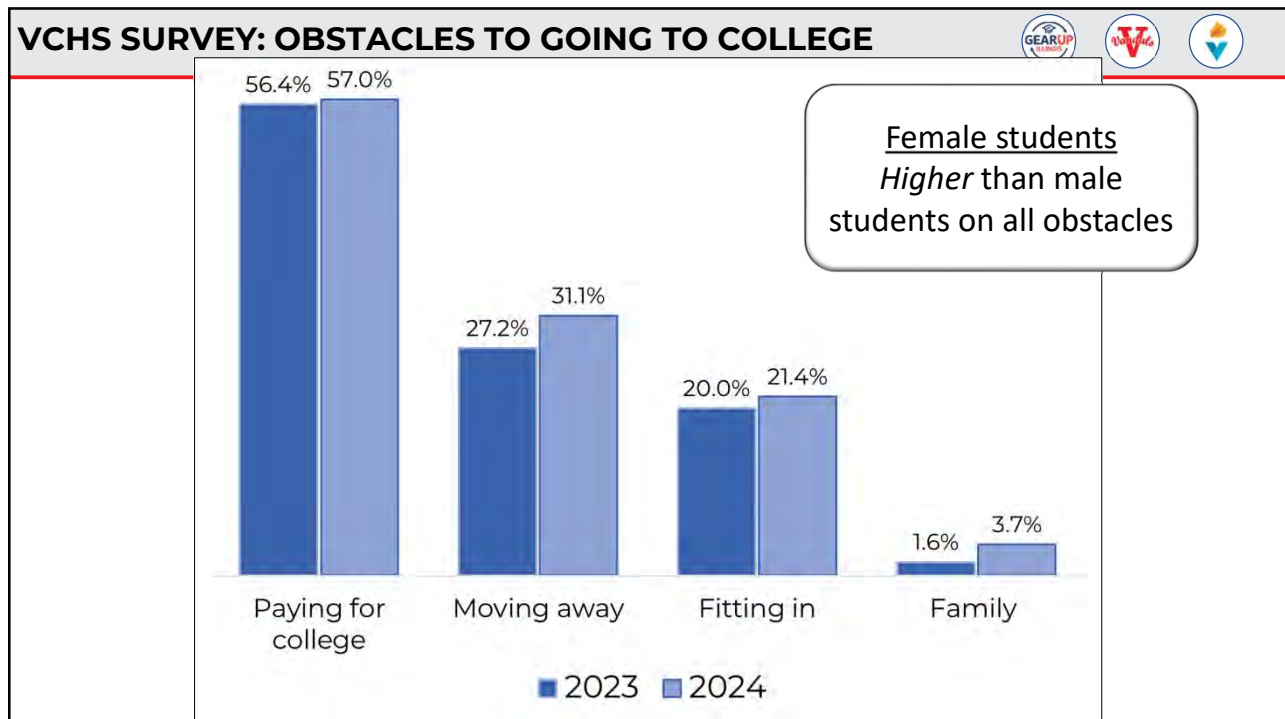
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OUR MYSTERY SO FAR (CLIFF NOTES)...



- VCHS students have college expectations
 - 17% Trade school
 - 22% Associates degree
 - 42% Bachelor's degree
- VCHS students see the value in college
 - ~ 60% agree it is a worthy investment
 - > 70% see themselves as a college grad
- Main obstacle (57%) paying for college
 - Family and teachers are supportive



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MYSTERY-SOLVING METHODOLOGY



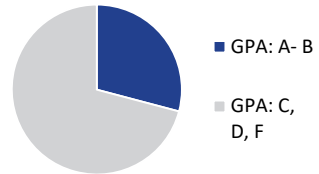
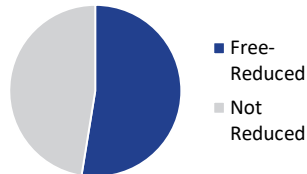
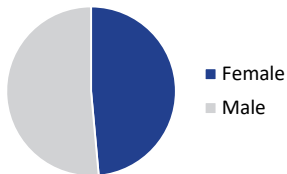
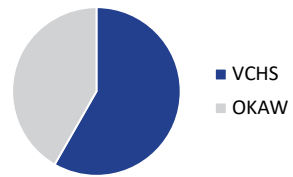
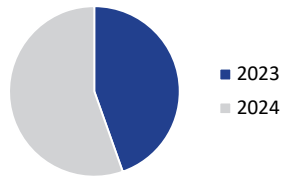
- In the spring of 2024 VCHS staff called all the VCHS 2022 and 2023 graduates to find out what they were currently doing.
- Recorded if they were:
 - In the Military;
 - Going to school and where they were going;
 - Working and where they were working;
 - If they were not working or not going to school.

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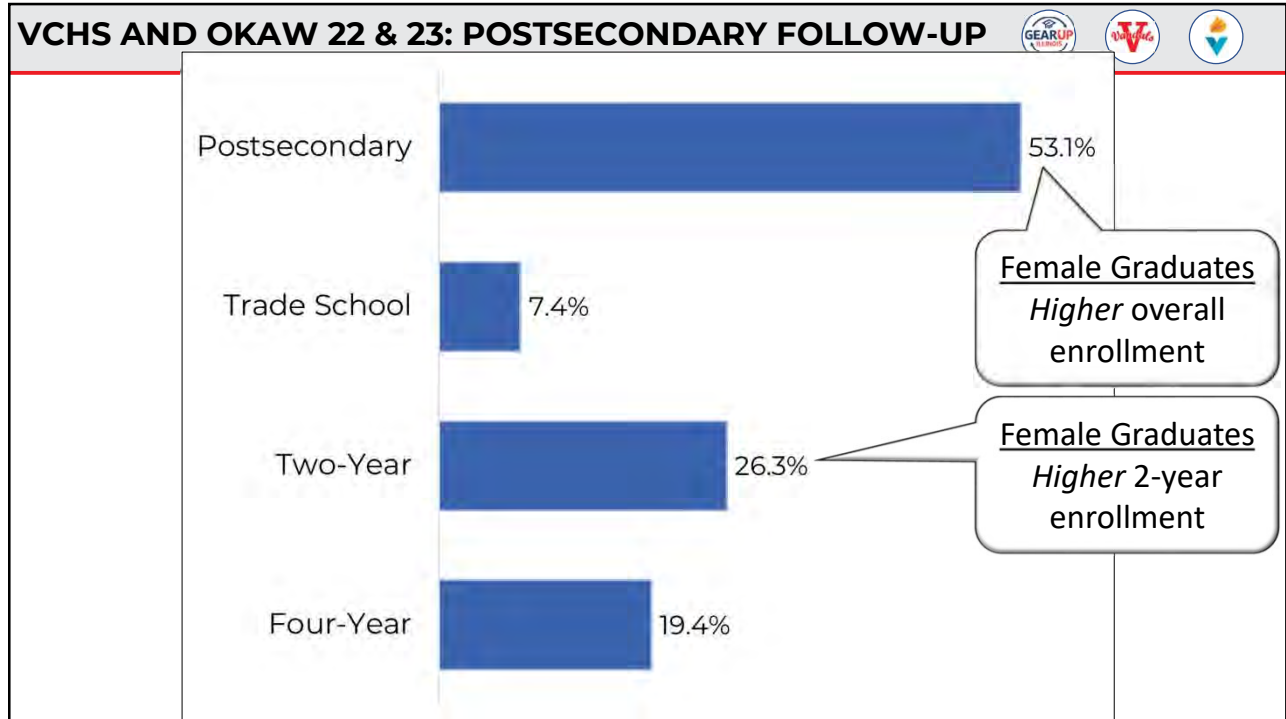
MYSTERY-SOLVING SAMPLE



**175 VCHS
Graduates**



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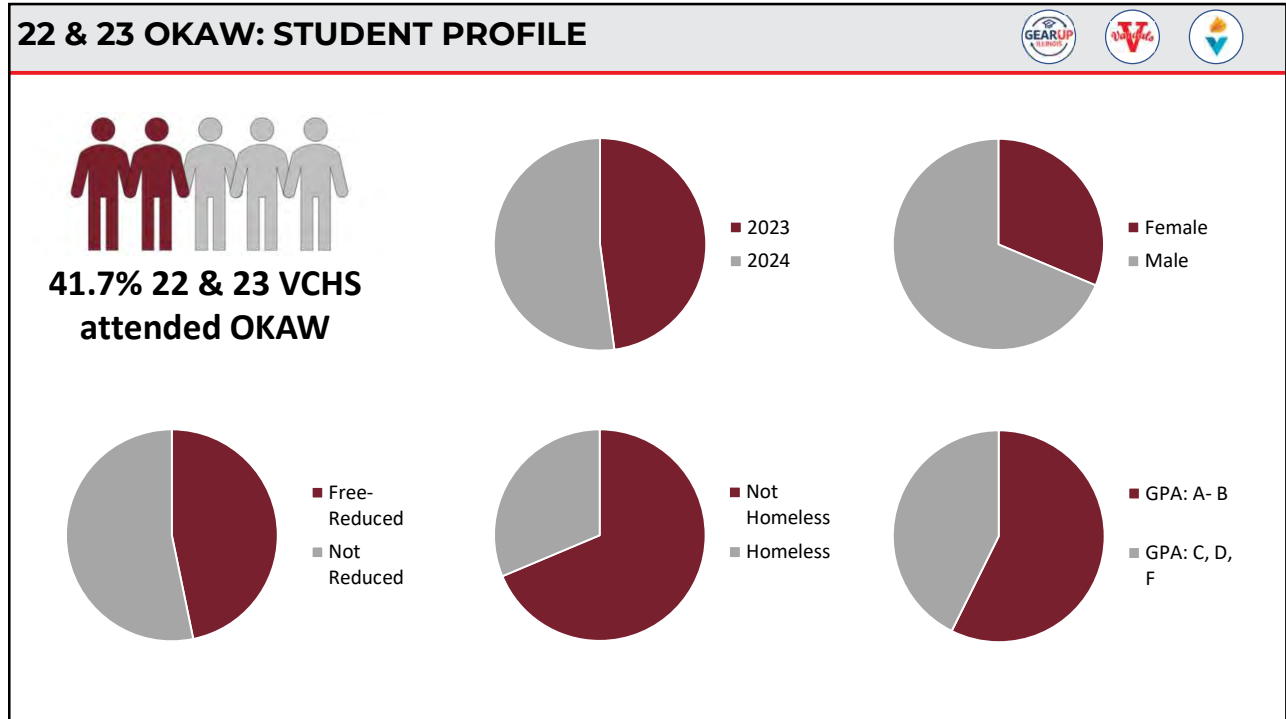
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INTRODUCING A NEW ELEMENT

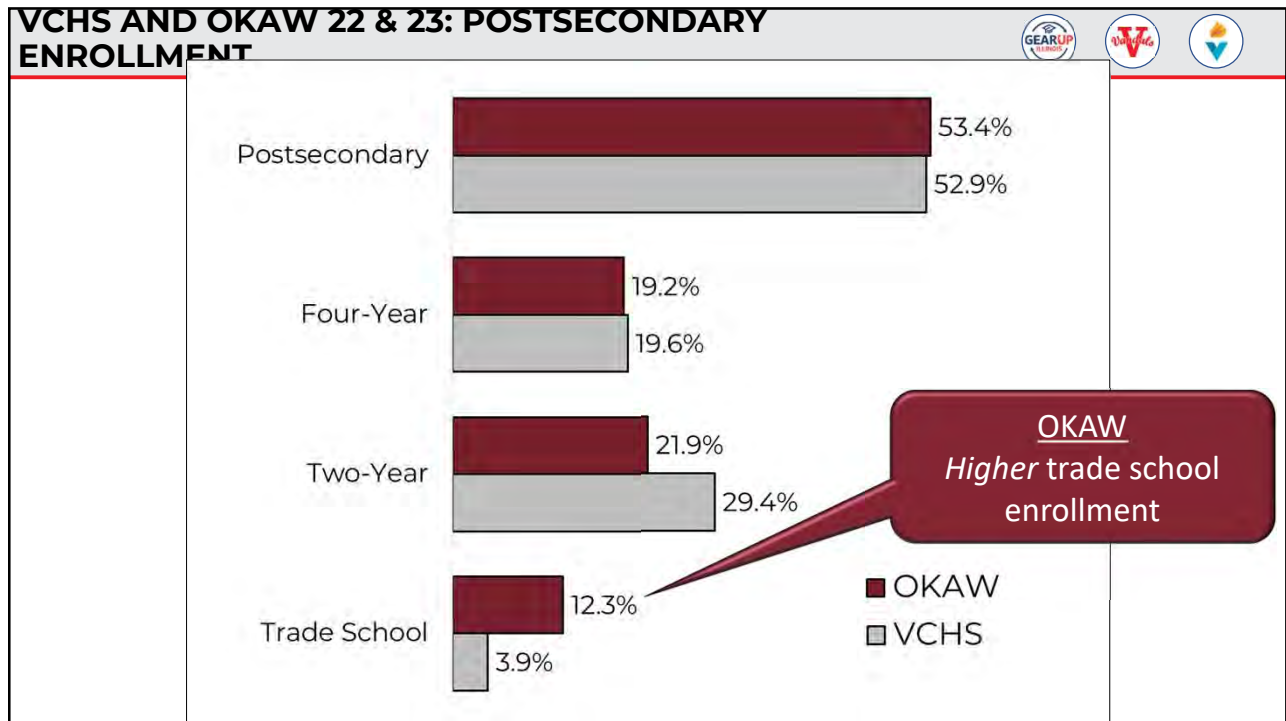
OKAW
Area Vocational Center

Collage of vocational activities: automotive repair, culinary arts, construction, and IT.

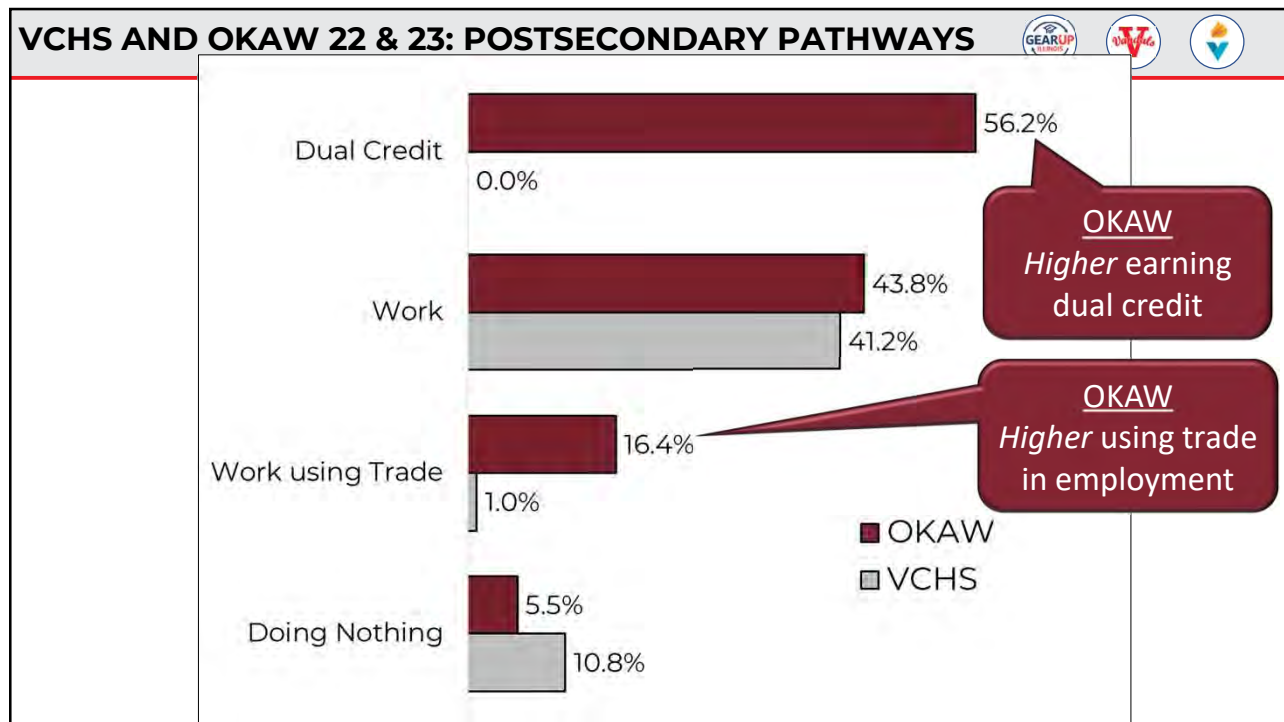
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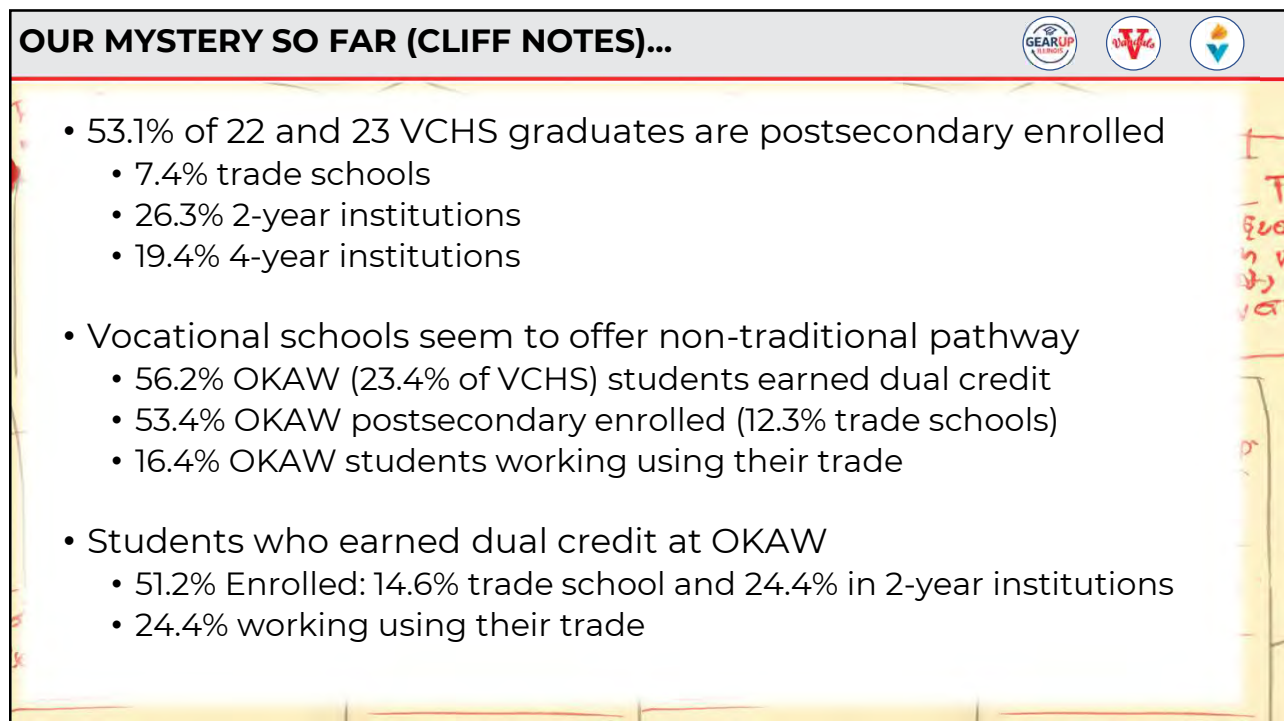
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RESOURCES TO HELP YOU TELL YOUR STORY



Problem-Solving in Uncertainty
A Professional Development Guide for Building Capacity in Education

