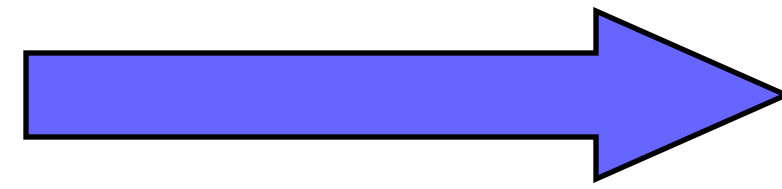# Collaboration between Libraries and Schools:
Improving High-School Student Awareness of Local Library Resources

Susan DeMarco, New Hanover County Public Library
Jacob Deininger, Cape Fear Community College
Beth Kaylor, Randall Library, UNC Wilmington
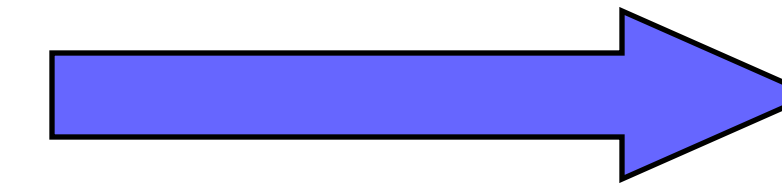Melissa Raymer, Randall Library, UNC Wilmington

The Project

- Each year librarians from New Hanover County Public Library, Cape Fear Community College Learning Resource Center and Randall Library at UNCW visit the local high schools to offer assistance to seniors working on required Graduation Projects.

- Wanted to evaluate the effectiveness of the effort so we decided survey the students.
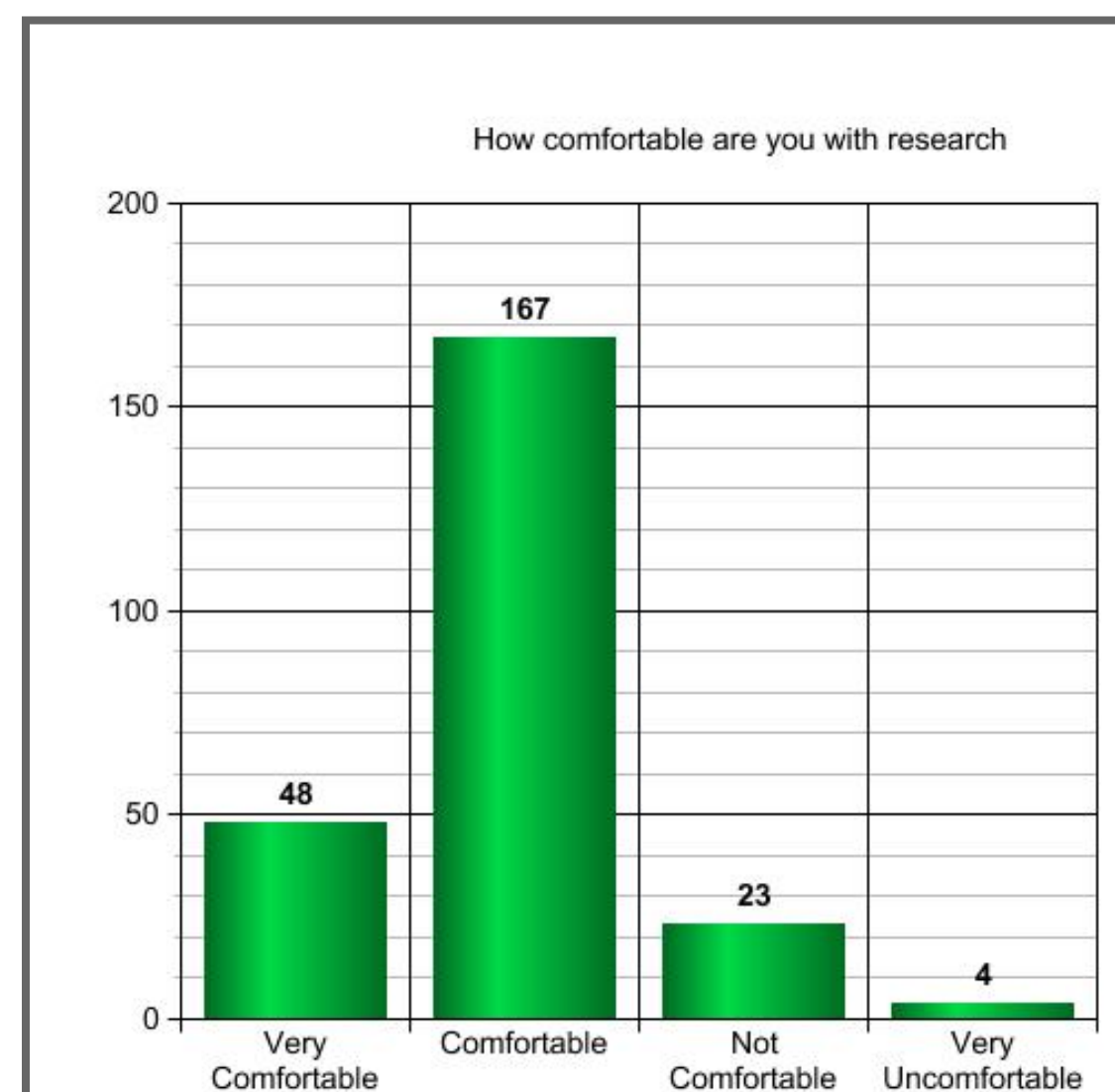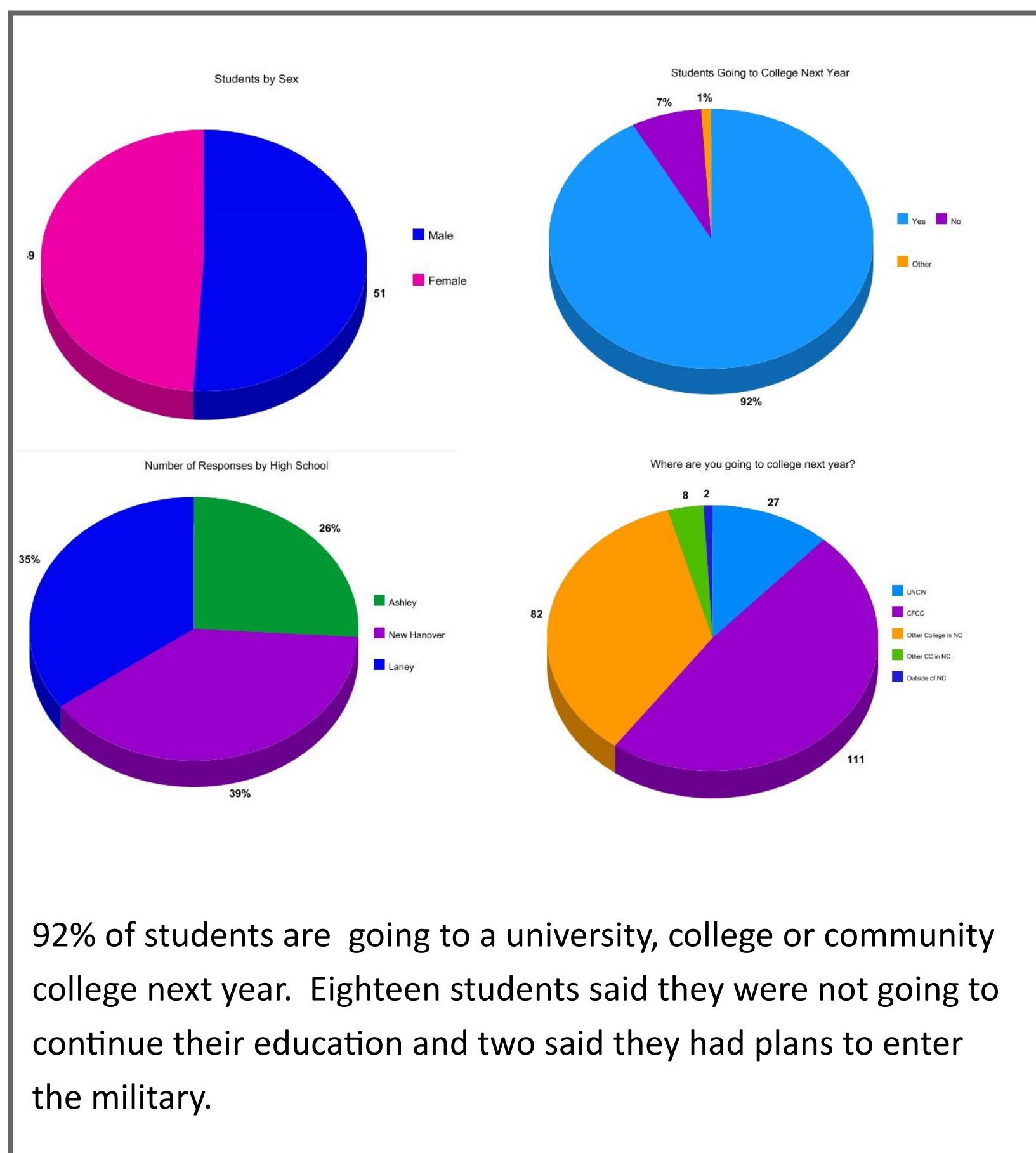
NHC Graduation Projects

- Requires the successful completion of four major components:
  1. research paper – This paper requires students to demonstrate proficiency in conducting research and completing an 8-10 page formal paper with the proper documentation.
  2. related product – A product that is selected, designed, developed, and related to the student's research topic.
  3. portfolio – The portfolio documents the student's progress in completing the components of Graduation Project.
  4. presentation – Graduation Project culminates with the student's formal oral presentation, which is made before a panel of judges composed of community members.
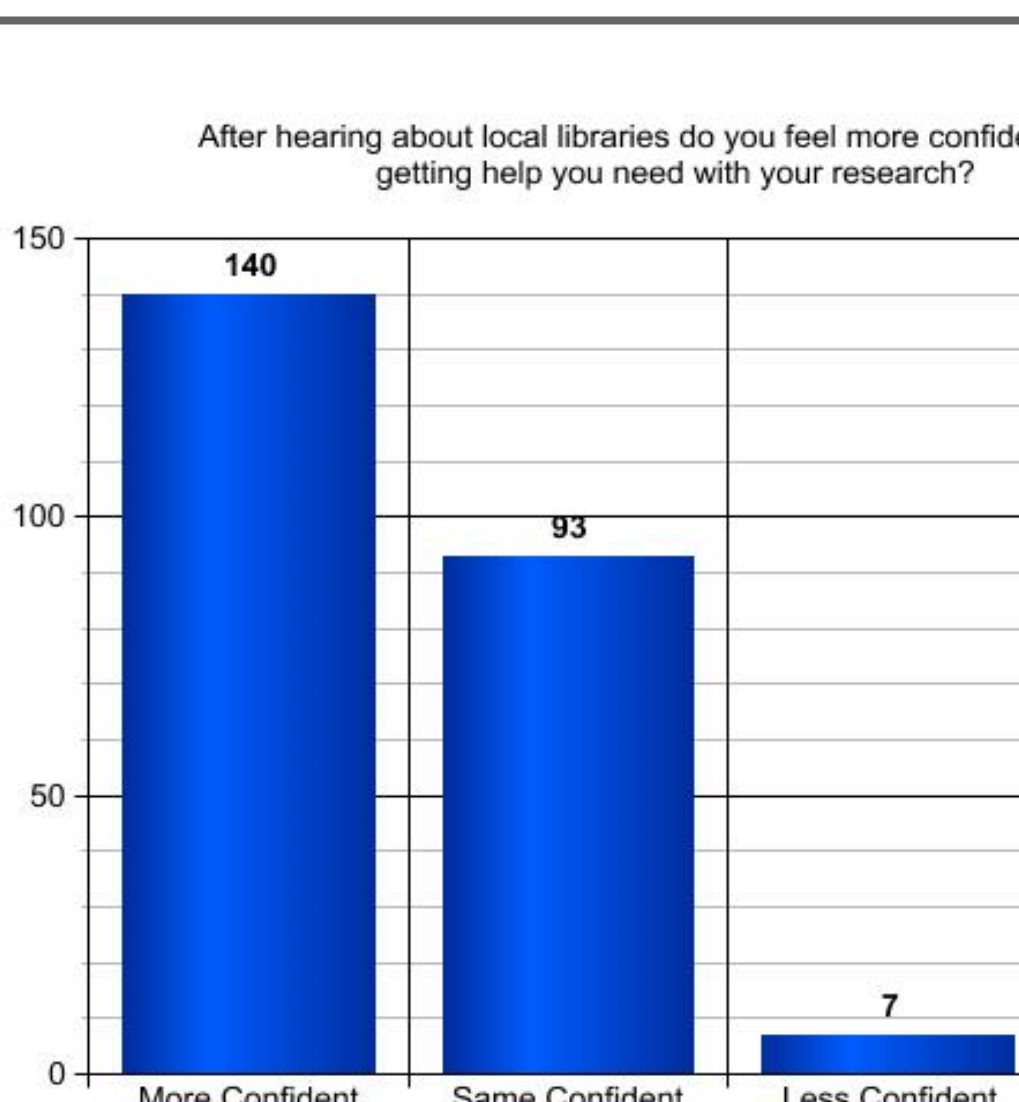
Information Sessions

- Instruction sessions vs. Information sessions
- General Orientation
  - locations
  - services
  - resources
  - cards
- Highlight differences in each library's collections
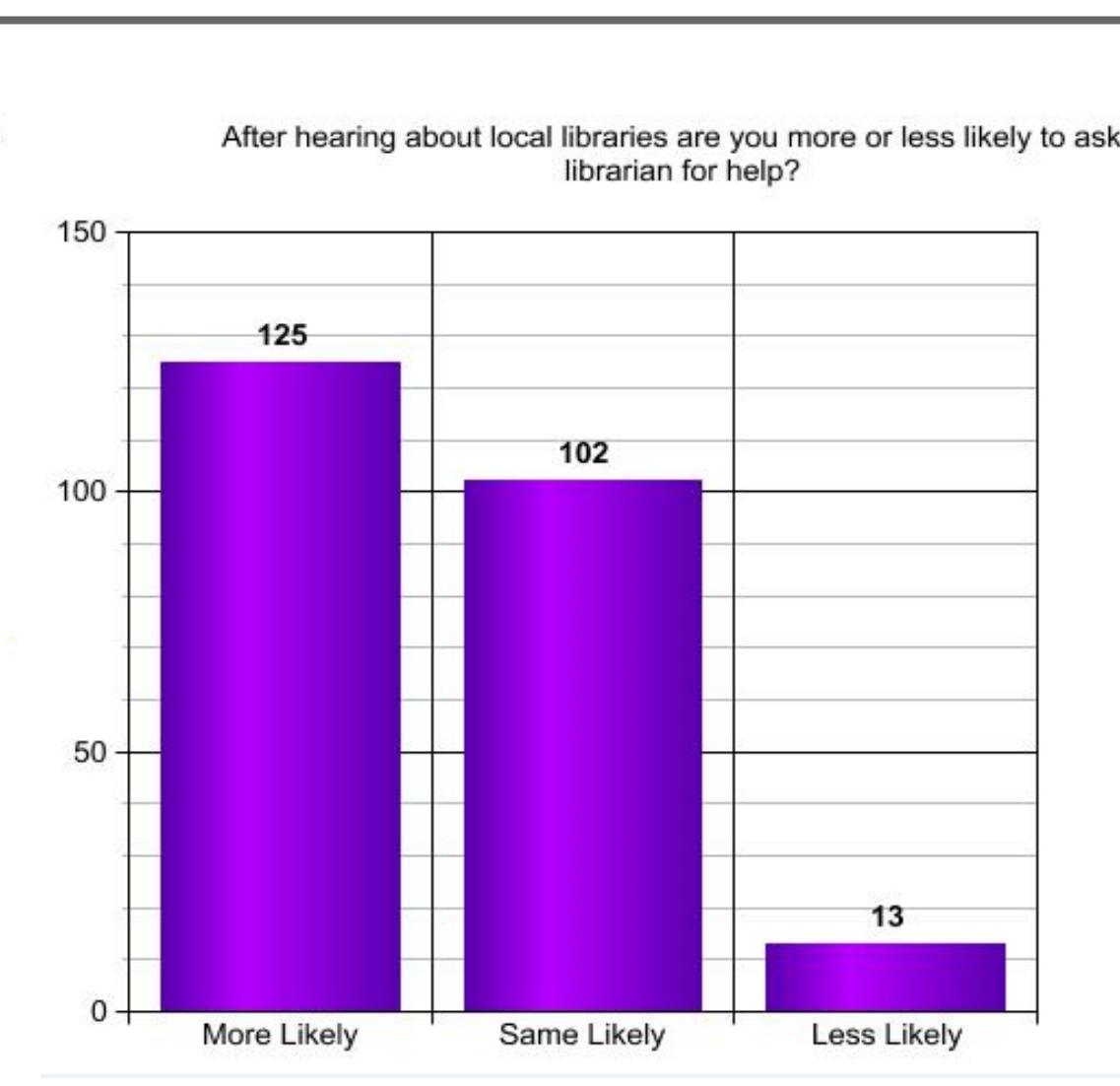- Invite students to libraries

The Data

92% of students are going to a university, college or community college next year. Eighteen students said they were not going to continue their education and two said they had plans to enter the military.
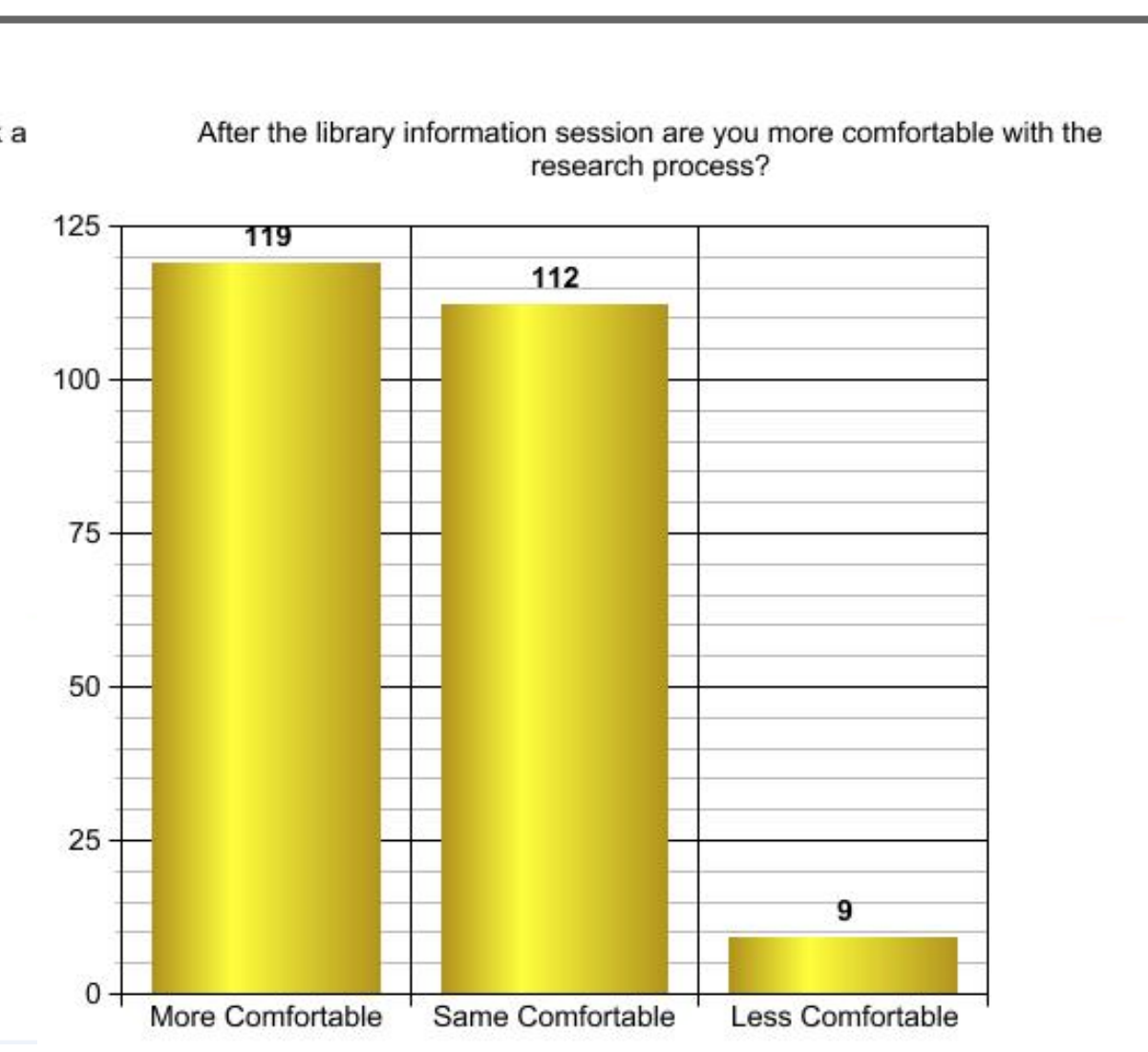

90% of the students said they were comfortable or very comfortable with research.

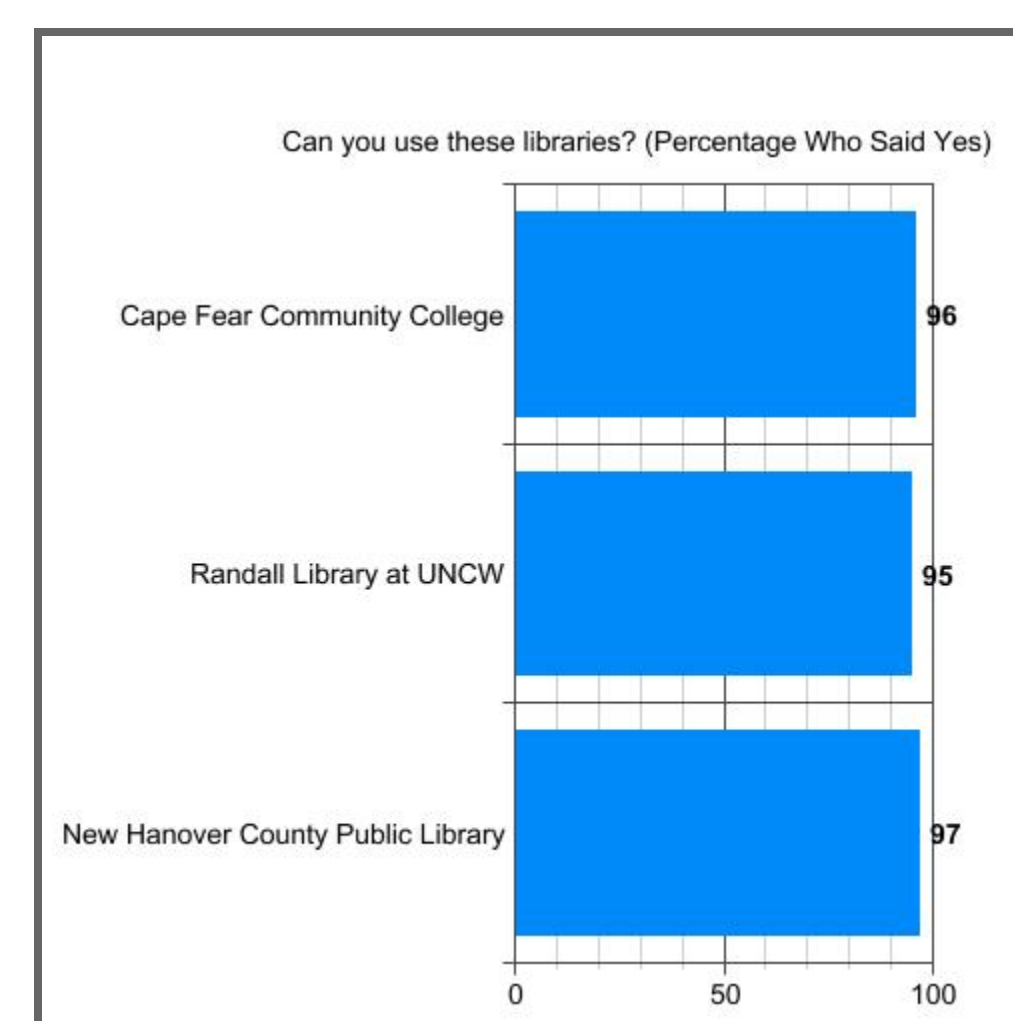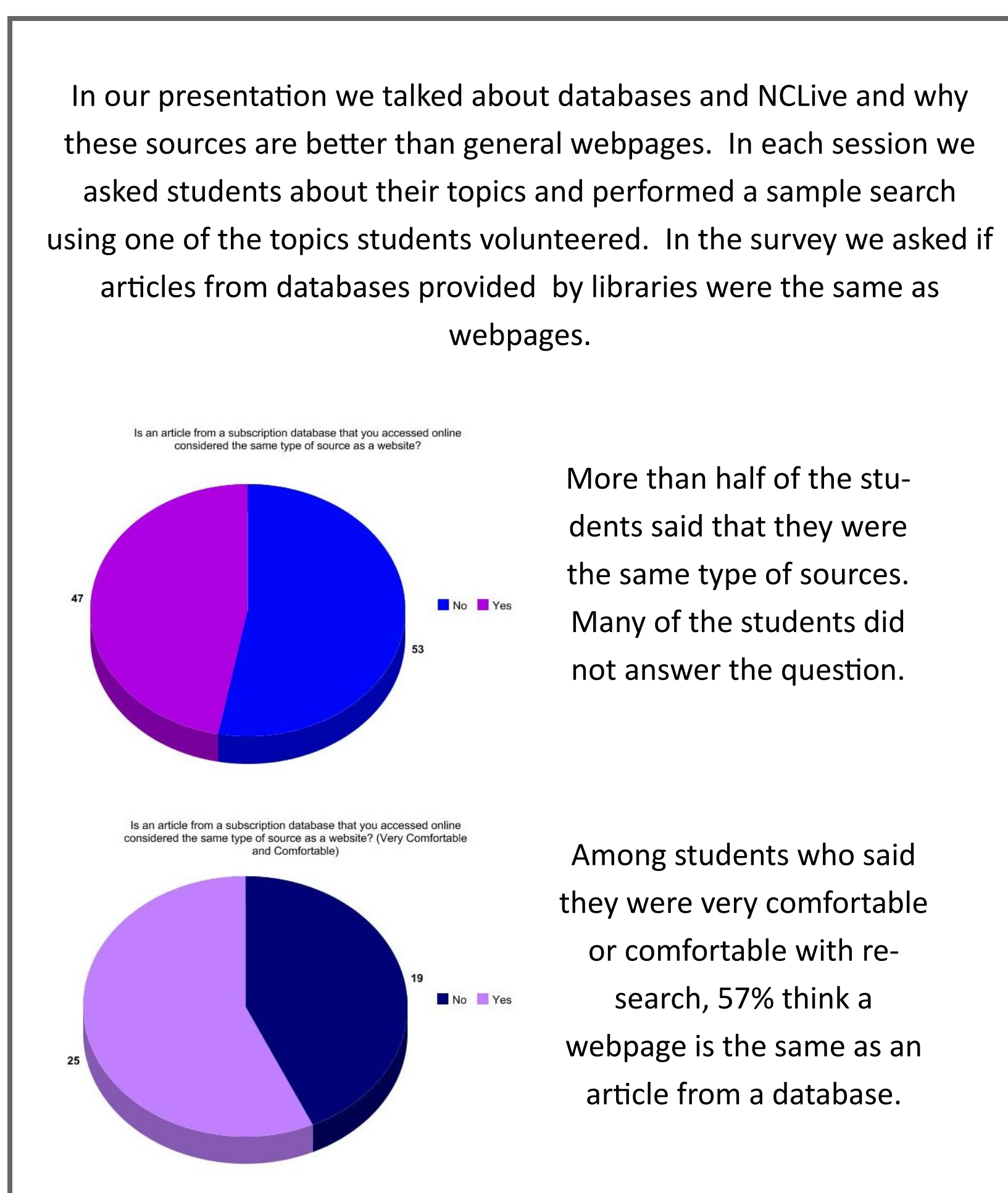50% of the students in the survey said they were more confident about getting help they needed after hearing about the resources available in local libraries.

52% percent of students stated they were more likely to ask for help. Next time we will ask a follow-up question for clarification for those who said they were less likely to ask for help.

50% of students said they were more comfortable with research after our visit.

In our presentation we talked about databases and NCLive and why these sources are better than general webpages. In each session we asked students about their topics and performed a sample search using one of the topics students volunteered. In the survey we asked if articles from databases provided by libraries were the same as webpages.

More than half of the students said that they were the same type of sources. Many of the students did not answer the question.

Among students who said they were very comfortable or comfortable with research, 57% think a webpage is the same as an article from a database.

After our presentation and invited students to contact us and come ask for help, we asked if they could use each library. The percentages of those who said yes were high but some students still said they could not use the libraries.

The Results

- The results of the surveys show that local high school students, for the most part, feel comfortable with research. 90% of responses were comfortable or very comfortable. Even with such a high percentage of students saying they are comfortable, 50% of students said that they were more comfortable after listening to our presentation.

- Students also show that our visits made them feel more confident about finding the information they need to complete their Graduation Projects. 58% reported that they were more confident.

- One of the questions we were most interested in was the question about their likelihood of asking a librarian for help. 52% of students reported that they were indeed more likely to ask for help. 42% reported that there was no change in the likelihood.

- There is room for concern that these students do not know what a database is and that they are not relying on better sources. In order to better prepare them for college, we hope to improve their understanding of the sources available to them by working with teachers and school librarians to improve our presentation.

- These responses show that our visits to the high schools are having a positive impact.

We have a Google Sites page with information about all of our libraries including services and contact information. The page also includes information about the projects and other useful resources.

https://sites.google.com/site/nhcseniorproject/

Literature Review

- Few articles written about this type of collaboration
  - few programs with collaboration among different types of libraries
  - Several programs with college or university libraries working with high school college preparedness programs
  - many libraries agree with the need to reach out but not really sure about the best way to do it
  - There are many benefits to all from working together

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