Students Speak

A Snapshot of Youth Well-Being in the District of Columbia

By Kristen Carroll, Priyanka Patel, Ebony Lambert, and Melissa Steel King

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Executive Summary

In fall 2022 and winter 2023, **Education Forward DC** and **Venture Philanthropy Partners+Raise DC** supported a cohort of Washington, D.C., public charter schools (PCS) in administering selected domains of the Panorama Social Emotional Learning (SEL) survey to provide educators with data on well-being for students in grades 3-12. This effort complements the administration of the Panorama survey in DC Public Schools' (DCPS') traditional district schools.

The organizations partnered with Bellwether to analyze the schools' survey data and develop a report. This report is the first step in a multiyear endeavor; the partner organizations will gradually transfer financial support for the survey to participating schools so that they can administer it annually over the long term. All D.C. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are invited to join the annual report so that as many schools and district leaders as possible are equipped with actionable data and locally contextualized research on supporting students' social-emotional well-being.

This report summarizes the current state of student well-being across participating D.C. schools.

It is intended to aid educators, policymakers, and communities in interpreting the survey results, tracking progress over time, and identifying strengths and areas for growth. Coupled with the DCPS Panorama SEL survey data, this report aims to provide a more comprehensive picture of student well-being across the city.[1]

Themes Identified

The survey topics answered by each sample were aligned to **four overall themes** related to D.C. student well-being.

OVERALL THEMES

School Environment
Is school a place where students feel safe and feel like they belong?

Support and Motivation
Do students feel supported and motivated by their teachers enough to do well in school?

Quality Relationships
Do students have quality relationships at school and outside of school?

Self-Perception and Skills
Do students believe they can achieve academically and have the skills to succeed in school, career, and life?

PANORAMA SEL TOPICS[2]

School Safety
Sense of Belonging
Diversity and Inclusion
Cultural Awareness and Action

Student Engagement
Valuing School
Rigorous Expectations

Supportive Relationships
Teacher-Student Relationships

Self-Efficacy
Learning Strategies
Perseverance

Snapshot: Youth Well-Being in the District of Columbia

Panorama SEL survey findings varied across themes and grade levels. The survey pointed to bright spots related to Quality Relationships, Support and Motivation, and School Environment; specifically, a majority of students responded favorably on the Supportive Relationships, Rigorous Expectations, Valuing School, and Sense of Belonging topic areas. There were also potential areas of growth: No more than one-third of students responded favorably on the Teacher-Student Relationships, Student Engagement, and School Safety scales. Finally, approximately half of all students responded favorably across all topics related to the Self-Perception and Skills theme.

School Environment

SENSE OF BELONGING

61%
responding favorably (grades 3-5)

43%
responding favorably (grades 6-12)

SCHOOL SAFETY

24%
responding favorably (grades 4-12)

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

45%
responding favorably (grades 4-12)

CULTURAL AWARENESS AND ACTION

40%
responding favorably (grades 4-12)

Support and Motivation

RIGOROUS EXPECTATIONS

75%
responding favorably (grades 3-5)

72%
responding favorably (grades 6-12)

VALUING SCHOOL

71%
responding favorably (grades 3-5)

54%
responding favorably (grades 6-12)

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

34%
responding favorably (grades 4-12)

Quality Relationships

SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

84%
responding favorably (grades 3-5)

83%
responding favorably (grades 6-12)

TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

38%
responding favorably (grades 4-12)

Self-Perception and Skills

SELF-EFFICACY

52%
responding favorably (grades 3-5)

45%
responding favorably (grades 6-12)

PERSEVERANCE

56%
responding favorably (grades 3-5)

53%
responding favorably (grades 6-12)

LEARNING STRATEGIES

42%
responding favorably (grades 4-12)

Note: See Page 18 for details on how a "favorable response" was defined in the survey analysis.

Key Takeaways and Implications

Key Takeaways	Implications
Most students value school and believe their teachers want them to do well. Across samples, more than 50% of students reported valuing school, and more than 70% of students reported being held to rigorous expectations by their teachers.	These findings are congruent with recent research demonstrating that most students are motivated to do well in school.[3] Educators play a key role in maintaining student motivation by fostering students' beliefs in their own abilities, providing opportunities for students to engage in topics of interest, and illustrating how students can use what they learn in school in the future.[4]
Despite valuing school, students report relatively lower levels of engagement. Less than 40% of students reported feeling engaged in school and less than 50% reported using ideas from school in their daily lives.	Educators should investigate the reasons behind this mismatch between students' levels of motivation and levels of engagement. Research demonstrates that students who feel engaged in school are more likely to have better attendance, perform well academically, and continue their education.[5]
Most students have support networks that include peers and adults. The vast majority of students (more than 80%) responded favorably when asked whether they had supportive relationships in their lives.	In a study of academic resilience, researchers found that among students, peer connectedness was positively related to students feeling hopeful even when faced with academic challenges.[6] Having supportive relationships with caring adults and peers can strengthen student resilience by creating a space where students feel seen, understood, and empowered.
Students' support networks don't necessarily include their teachers. While most students report having supportive relationships, only 38% of students responded favorably when asked whether they have close relationships with their teachers.	This finding demonstrates what philosopher Nel Noddings framed as a point of consideration for teacher-student relationships: the impact of caring as a sentiment versus caring as relational practice.[7] Educators may care for and profess care to their students, but students may not always be able to perceive that care, especially if there are racial and cultural differences in how care is communicated.[8] This highlights an opportunity for educators: To solicit student perspectives on what care from teachers means to them.

Key Takeaways and Implications

Key Takeaways	Implications
Older students scored lower than younger students on multiple indicators of well-being. There were marked differences in responses by grade level across topics such as Valuing School, Sense of Belonging, Diversity and Inclusion, Cultural Awareness and Action, School Safety, Student Engagement, Teacher-Student Relationships, and Self-Efficacy.	These findings mirror trends in DCPS and in Panorama's national data for the Valuing School, Sense of Belonging, and Student Engagement scales. They are also reflected in previous research in the U.K.[9] and U.S.[10] and could reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on adolescent students. These findings highlight a critical need to attend to the well-being of older students, as positive emotions, self-perceptions, and attitudes can help students persevere through adverse experiences.[11]
There is an opportunity to ensure that more students feel safe and welcome in their in-person and/or virtual school environments. A notable proportion of students are concerned about online bullying.	Students have well-founded concerns about online bullying — recent research shows that almost 60% of teenagers experience some form of online harassment.[12] School safety in online contexts has serious implications for student well-being, as it can lead to withdrawal, depression, and anxiety.
There is an opportunity to help students grow in cultural awareness and inclusivity, and to engage students in conversations about race-related topics that may impact their learning and lives beyond school. Less than 50% of surveyed students responded favorably when asked about the diversity and inclusiveness of their school environment and the extent to which they engage in discussion of topics related to race and culture in school.	Most schools in our sample are not very racially diverse, which is one likely factor behind students' lower ratings on the Diversity and Inclusion topic. However, many of the school populations do include students from different races, ethnicities, and/or cultures, and the survey questions inquired about inclusiveness across these lines of difference. This finding warrants future investigation, as research demonstrates that school environments that lack attention to diversity and inclusion can negatively impact students' feelings of belongingness at school, which are associated with retention and graduation rates.[13] Additionally, many psychologists argue that discussing bias, racism, and cultural differences can reduce discrimination and ensure that students have context and language to understand the world around them.[14]

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What is student well-being?

Student well-being is an essential component of young people's success in school and beyond.

The term "well-being" encompasses multiple domains of students' health, including students' social and emotional wellness, relationships with peers and adults, and engagement at school.[15]

Due to its complex nature, supporting student well-being requires an approach that is comprehensive and differentiated; while all students benefit from a positive school climate and support for social and emotional development, some students may need additional, more targeted and intensive supports to address acute mental health needs.

DEFINING STUDENT WELL-BEING

For this report, participating schools administered selected domains of the Panorama SEL survey, which defines student well-being as "**the positive experiences, thoughts, and feelings that enable students to thrive**."[16]

This framing situates well-being as a multidimensional construct that is central not only to students' learning outcomes but also to their holistic growth and development across multiple aspects of their lives.

Why should schools focus on student well-being?

Schools can provide a buffer against the negative impact of stressors that students face, inside and outside of the classroom, by creating a positive school climate and intentionally supporting the development of young people's social and emotional skills.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), schools function as crucial partners in efforts to support and improve student well-being and mental health.[17] A large body of research demonstrates that when schools intentionally support young people's mental health, interpersonal relationships, and social and emotional development, students benefit academically and emotionally.[18]

The impacts include short-term benefits, like increased academic performance and decreased anxiety and depression, as well as long-term benefits like enhanced social-emotional skills and attitudes and the ability to thrive in adulthood.[19]

As a result, educators across the country have committed to fostering positive well-being in addition to tending to students' academic growth. Organizations like the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) provide resources and guidance to help schools integrate evidence-based support for SEL throughout the school day.[20]

Attention to student well-being has become even more urgent in the U.S. due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over one-third (37%) of U.S. high school students reported experiencing poor mental health during the height of the pandemic.

Across the country, education leaders and researchers have increasingly focused on conceptualizing, defining, and improving the well-being of youth and young people in the past three decades.[21] Efforts to improve student well-being are imperative now after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

National research demonstrates the negative and outsized impact of the pandemic on students' mental health. According to the CDC's Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences Survey (ABES) in 2021, **over one-third (37%) of U.S. high school students reported experiencing poor mental health** during the height of the pandemic.[22] Forty-four percent of students also reported that they persistently felt sad or hopeless in the past year.[23] Additionally, data from the National Center for Education Statistics' 2022 School Pulse Panel revealed that **over two-thirds (70%) of public schools reported an increase** in the percentage of students seeking mental health services since the start of the pandemic.[24]

National reports also provide evidence that students from systemically marginalized backgrounds were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. For example, a 2021 report from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights demonstrates that Indigenous, Black, and Latino students were more likely to experience COVID-19-related stressors (such as loss, grief, and economic hardship) than their counterparts.[25] Finally, data from the CDC's 2021 ABES indicate that Asian American, Black, and multiracial students also reported experiencing high levels of racism during the pandemic, which carries an additional mental health toll.[26]

Note: *The Youth Risk Behavior Survey is administered every two years in D.C. and across the country. It assesses the health and risk behaviors of middle and high school students.*

D.C. schools are committed to strengthening student well-being.

Education leaders and policymakers from D.C. schools (DCPS and PCS) to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) recognize the critical importance of supporting student well-being.[27]

This report complements other efforts underway to understand how D.C. youth are doing and to provide adults with the knowledge and tools to better support students across the city.

A Capital Commitment

The DCPS 2017-22 strategic plan, A Capital Commitment, includes "Educate the Whole Child" as one of DCPS' strategic priorities.[28] This priority is reflected in the DCPS' goal of ensuring that "100 percent of students feel loved, challenged, and prepared."

To measure progress toward this goal, DCPS administers the Panorama SEL survey annually.[29] Annual reports document each year's survey results, highlighting bright spots and identifying areas for further growth.

DC Wellbeing Initiative

EmpowerK12's DC Wellbeing Initiative aims to provide a holistic assessment of student and educator well-being in the city.[30] The initiative invites schools to administer twice-annual comprehensive surveys and monthly "vibe checks" co-designed by local educators and school-based mental health experts. Comprehensive results from the 2021-22 academic year are posted on EmpowerK12's website.[31]

> This report complements other efforts underway to understand how D.C. youth are doing and to provide adults with the knowledge and tools to better support students across the city.

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The Panorama SEL Survey

The Panorama SEL survey is a tool designed by Panorama Education to help educators measure students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to their own emotions, identities, and relationships with others.[32] The survey measures a variety of topics that fall under three broad categories: 1) student skills and competencies, 2) student supports and environment, 3) and student well-being.

The topics in **bold** were identified by schools that participated in the 2021 Venture Philanthropy Partners+Raise DC 9th Grade Counts Network (9GCN) student well-being pilot. These questions were selected as being the most relevant given the context and values of the participating schools, and questions that educators had about students' well-being.

The *un-bolded* survey topics were administered by a separate set of schools, who partnered with Kelvin Education, a wellness platform, to assess students using the Expanded Definition of Student Success (EDSS) survey. The EDSS survey was designed by NewSchools Venture Fund (adapting questions from several sources, including Panorama) to measure student social-emotional competencies and attributes of positive learning environments. The surveys were administered in fall 2022.

SEL Survey Topic	Definition
Perseverance	How well students persevere through setbacks to achieve important long-term goals.
Self-Efficacy	How much students believe they can succeed in achieving academic outcomes.
Supportive Relationships	How supported students feel through their relationships with family, friends, and adults at school.
Sense of Belonging	How much students feel that they are valued members of the school community.
Rigorous Expectations	How much students feel that their teachers hold them to high expectations around effort, understanding, persistence, and performance in class.
Valuing School	How much students feel that school is interesting, important, and useful.
Learning Strategies	How well students use strategies to manage their own learning processes generally.
Student Engagement	How attentive and invested students are in school.
School Safety	Perceptions of student physical and psychological safety while at school.
Teacher-Student Relationships	How strong the social connection is between teachers and students within and beyond the school.
Diversity and Inclusion	How diverse, integrated, and fair school is for students from different races, ethnicities, or cultures.
Cultural Awareness and Action	How often students learn about, discuss, and confront issues of race, ethnicity, and culture in school.

This report represents the survey responses of 5,419 students attending public charter schools in the District of Columbia.

To maintain student confidentiality, if a student demographic group includes fewer than 10 students, the group is not included in the table.

Student Demographics	Percent of Students in Full Sample	Number of Students in Full Sample
Total Students	100%	5,419
Student Gender		
Male	50.4%	2,733
Female	49.5%	2,683
Student Subgroups		
Students identified as at-risk	37%	2,006
Students with disabilities (SWD)	16.5%	895
English learners (ELs)	4.5%	245
Racial and Ethnic Demographics		
Asian	2.4%	131
Black or African American	65%	3,525
Hispanic	16.2%	877
Native American	1.8%	96
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.4%	22
Two or More Races	2.1%	118
White	14.7%	800

STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS AT-RISK:[33]

- Qualify for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Qualify for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

- Have been identified as homeless during the academic year

- Are under the care of the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA, or "foster care")

- Are high school students at least one year older than the expected age for their grade level

Notes: Fewer than 10 students did not report a gender or identified as nonbinary. For most schools, race and Hispanic ethnicity were reported separately and are not mutually exclusive; see Appendix for subgroup breakdown by sample groups A, B, and C; definition of at-risk provided by OSSE.

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Not all D.C. public-school students participated in this study. The data represent a small subset of the larger population.

According to data from OSSE, a total of 94,532 students enrolled in DCPS and PCS schools in the 2021-22 school year.[34] Our sample consisted of a small subset of the larger population of PCS students in D.C.

The perspectives of students in our sample are not necessarily representative of the student population of the city, but they do provide meaningful information about the experiences and well-being of some D.C. students. Where applicable, we provide **snapshots of DCPS' fall 2022 Panorama student well-being data**[35] to offer additional information about trends across the city.

Race/Ethnicity	Percent of all DCPS Students (N=49,389)	Percent of all PCS Students (N=45,143)	Percent of Students in our sample (N=5,419)	Number of Students in our sample (N=5,419)
Black/African American	57%	71%	65%	3,525
Hispanic/Latino	21%	17%	16%	876
White	17%	18%	15%	800
Other	5%	4%	7%	367

Notes: Even though there was a total of 94,532 students enrolled in DCPS and PCS in the 2021-22 school year, only 56,598 students were eligible to participate in the survey (i.e., enrolled in grades 3-12). However, racial demographics were not publicly available by grade for direct comparison to our sample, which only includes grades 3-12; for most schools, race and Hispanic ethnicity were reported separately and are not mutually exclusive.

The study combines data from three groups of students who took slightly different versions of the survey.

Survey versions differed based on grade level and/or the schools' preferred topic areas. **Sample A** and **Sample B** took Panorama SEL survey scales. **Sample C** took the EDSS survey, which included Panorama questions on related topics.

Factors	Sample A	Sample B	Sample C	Total Surveyed
Number of Students	1,706	2,276	1,437	**5,419 students**
Grade Levels Surveyed	3-5	6-12	4-12	**Grade levels 3-12**
Number of LEAs	7	5	4	**12 LEAs**
Survey Topics Assessed	Perseverance Self-Efficacy Supportive Relationships Sense of Belonging Rigorous Expectations Valuing School	Perseverance Self-Efficacy Supportive Relationships Sense of Belonging Rigorous Expectations Valuing School	Student Engagement Learning Strategies School Safety Teacher-Student Relationships Diversity and Inclusion Cultural Awareness and Action	**12 topics assessed**

Note: Four participating LEAs serve grades K-12 and are included in both Sample A and Sample B. One LEA from Samples A and B only administered two survey topics (Self-Efficacy and Supportive Relationships). Thus, the sample size may decrease for the other four survey topics assessed for Samples A and B. For the full list of questions answered by each sample, see Appendix.

Data highlight meaningful differences in the percentage of favorable responses across topic areas and student subgroups.

Individual Question Analysis

For most survey topics, students were asked multiple questions that were coded on a 5-point Likert scale. Responses of "4" or "5" were considered "favorable responses." For the survey topic assessing supportive relationships, students were asked "yes" or "no" questions. A "yes" response was considered a "favorable response."

Overall Topic Analysis

A scale score was calculated for each survey topic overall and by student subgroup. The percent of favorable responses for each question in the topic area were averaged to produce an overall percent that is reported as the scale score.
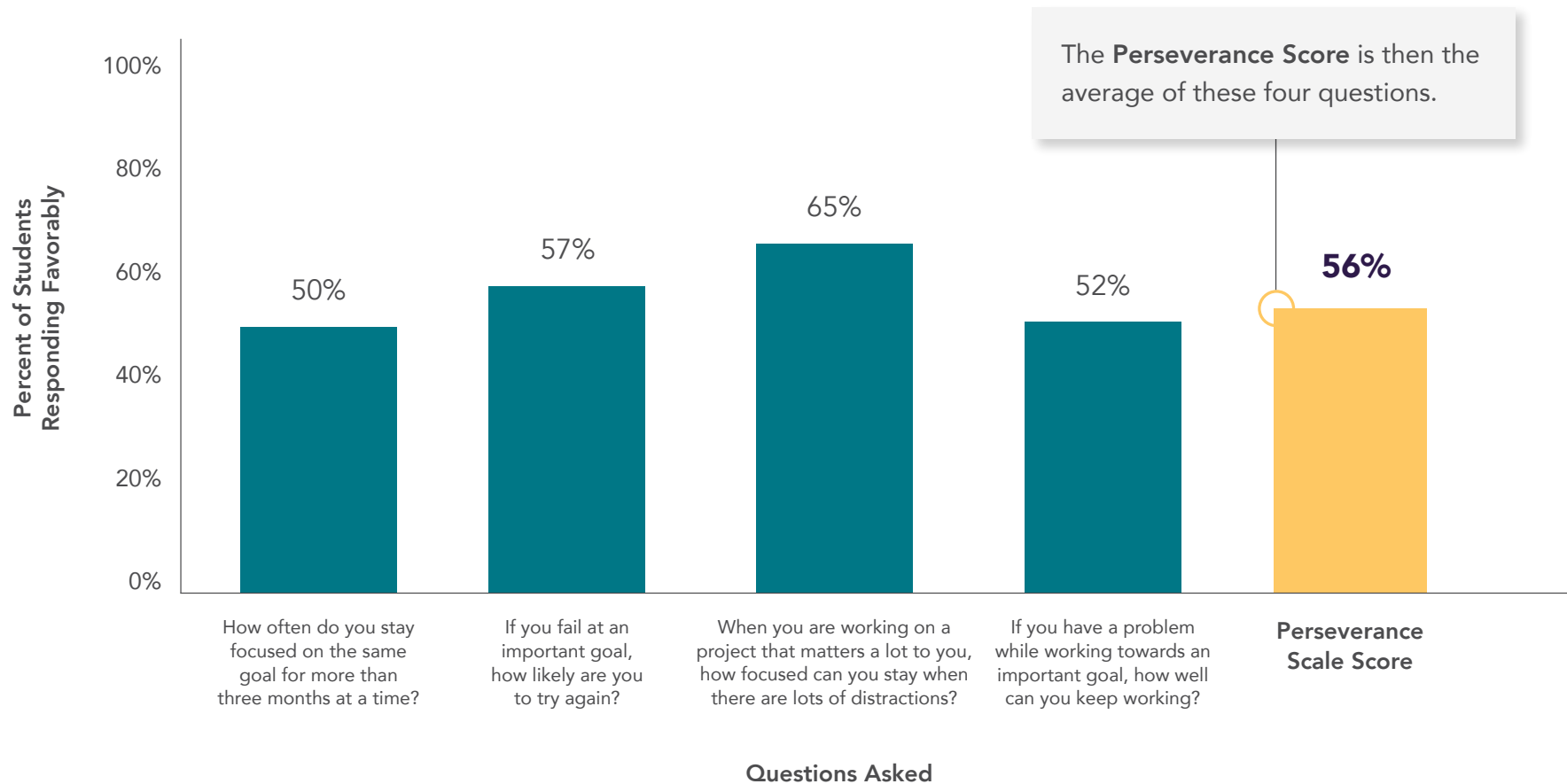
Subgroup Analysis

Results by student subgroups are presented where differences were observed across groups. However, some subgroups contained fewer than 20 students, and therefore the findings should be interpreted with caution. Rather than drawing immediate conclusions based on results from groups with very small sample sizes, it may be more useful to continue tracking these patterns over time to see if they persist in future years.

Note: For the survey topic area assessing school safety (Sample C only), questions were negatively worded (e.g., "How often are people disrespectful to others at your school?"). Responses of "almost never" or "slightly unlikely" (1 or 2) were coded as favorable.

In this example, the percent of students responding favorably to Perseverance questions 1-4 are reported.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Perseverance Scale
Mock data for illustrative purposes only

The **Perseverance Score** is then the average of these four questions.

Y-axis: **Percent of Students Responding Favorably**
- 100%
- 80%
- 60%
- 40%
- 20%
- 0%

Bar values:
- 50% — How often do you stay focused on the same goal for more than three months at a time?
- 57% — If you fail at an important goal, how likely are you to try again?
- 65% — When you are working on a project that matters a lot to you, how focused can you stay when there are lots of distractions?
- 52% — If you have a problem while working towards an important goal, how well can you keep working?
- **56%** — Perseverance Scale Score

Questions Asked

Note: This is a sample illustration and does not reflect real data recorded from the Panorama SEL survey.

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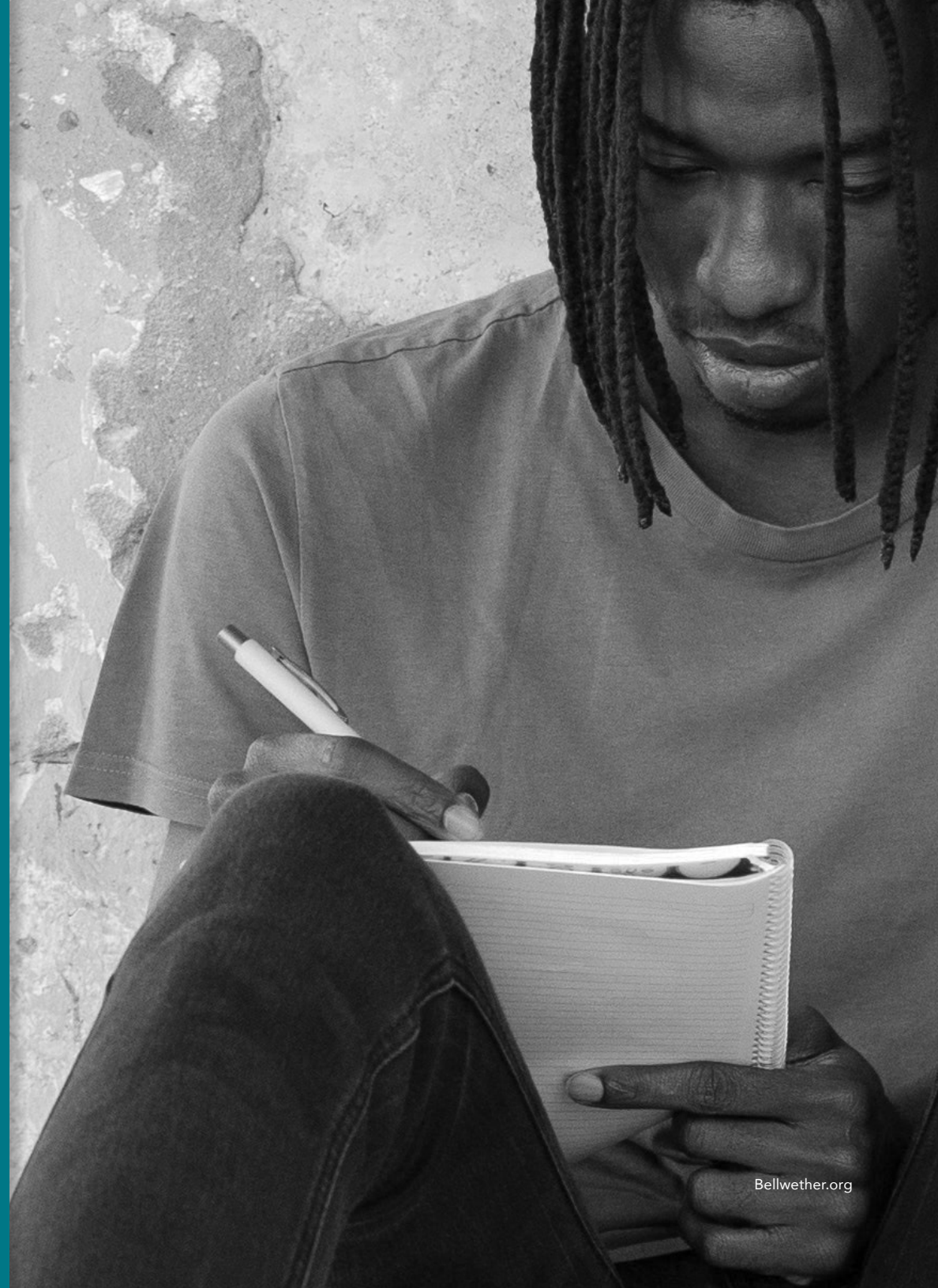
School Environment

Is school a place where students feel safe and feel like they belong?

School Safety
Perceptions of student physical and psychological safety while at school.

Sense of Belonging
How much students feel that they are valued members of the school community.

Diversity and Inclusion
How diverse, integrated, and fair school is for students from different races, ethnicities, or cultures.

Cultural Awareness and Action
How often students learn about, discuss, and confront issues of race, ethnicity, and culture in school.

School Environment

- Most students felt a sense of belonging within their school environment. However, **middle and high school students report feeling less of a sense of belonging** (43% responding favorably) compared to younger students (61% responding favorably).

- **Students' sense of belonging varied by racial groups**. Younger (grades 3-5) Native American students scored 11 percentage points below the overall score for sense of belonging in their grade band. By contrast, white students in middle and high school scored 7 percentage points higher on the sense of belonging scale compared to their peers overall.

- Students' sense of belonging is potentially influenced by their peer environment. Overall, **less than 50% of students described their school environment to be diverse and inclusive for students** from different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. Compared to their peers, fewer Black students describe their school environment as diverse and inclusive.

- While schools may have less influence over the diversity of their student population, **only 40% of students reported that they often learn about, discuss, or confront issues of race and culture in school**.

- Fewer middle and high school students responded favorably when asked about the diversity and inclusivity of their schools as well as the level of cultural awareness and action their schools have taken to confront cultural differences. **Less than 30% of students in grades 11-12 responded favorably** on the Diversity and Inclusion and Cultural Awareness and Action survey topics.

- **Fewer than one-fourth of students reported feeling physically and psychologically safe at school**. Compared to their peers, fewer white students report feeling safe at school.

Do students feel a sense of belonging in school — that they are valued members of the school community?

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Sense of Belonging Scale
Results from Sample A (grades 3-5) and Sample B (grades 6-12)
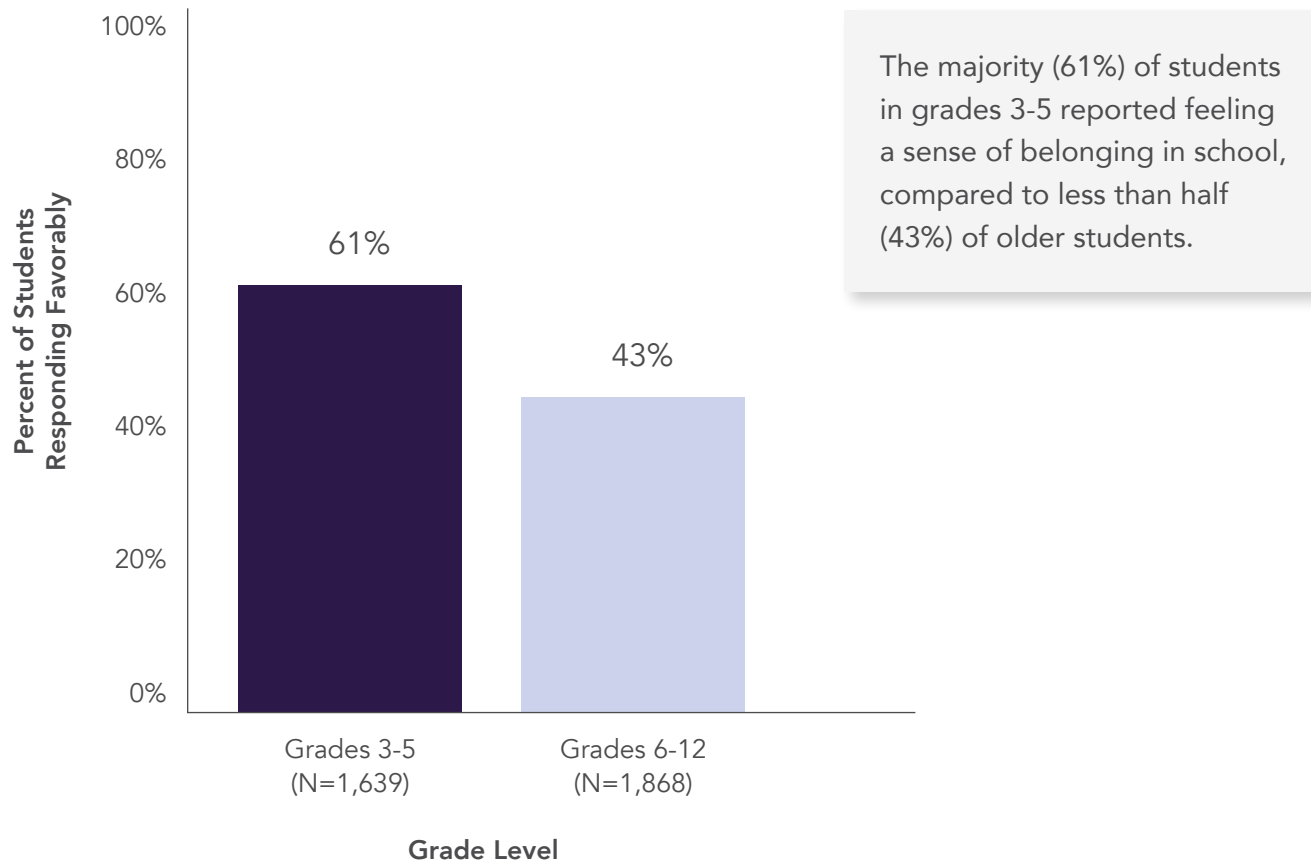
The majority (61%) of students in grades 3-5 reported feeling a sense of belonging in school, compared to less than half (43%) of older students.

When broken down by race, students reported different levels of belonging in their school community.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Sense of Belonging Scale, By Race

Results from Sample A, grades 3-5

Race	Sample Size	Average Sense of Belonging Score	Difference From Overall Average (Percentage Points)
Native American	N=19	50%	-11
White	N=305	60%	-1
Hispanic	N=162	61%	0
Black or African American	N=1,178	61%	0
Asian	N=42	62%	+1
Two or More Races	N=92	65%	+4

In grades 3-5, Native American students felt less of a sense of belonging, scoring 11 percentage points below the overall scale score.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Sense of Belonging Scale, By Race
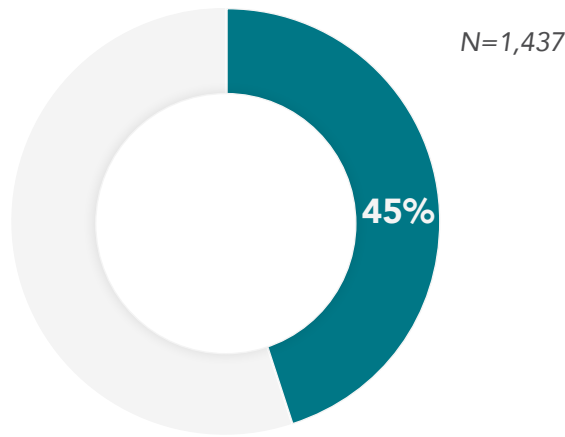
Results from Sample B, grades 6-12

Race	Sample Size	Average Sense of Belonging Score	Difference From Overall Average (Percentage Points)
Hispanic	N=43	42%	-1
Black or African American	N=1,791	43%	0
Two or More Races	N=16	45%	+2
White	N=46	50%	+7

In grades 6-12, white students felt a greater sense of belonging, scoring 7 percentage points above the overall scale score.

Note: *Some student groups are not reported due to small sample size or missing data. For most schools, race and Hispanic ethnicity were reported separately and are not mutually exclusive.*

Do students perceive their schools to be diverse and inclusive across race, ethnicity, and culture?

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Diversity and Inclusion Scale
Results from Sample C, grades 4-12

N=1,437

45%

Less than half of students (45%) described their school environment as diverse and inclusive.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Diversity and Inclusion Scale, By Race
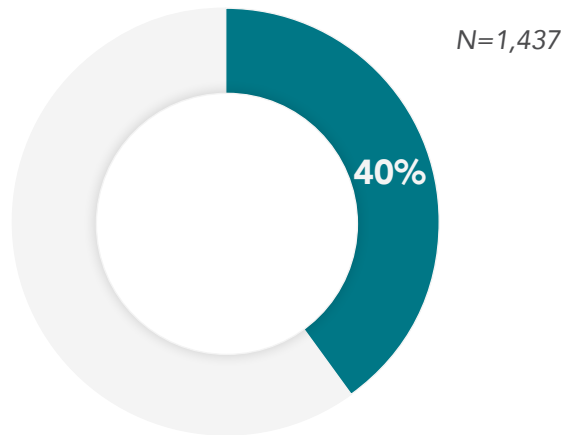*Results from Sample C, grades 4-12*

Race	Sample Size	Average Diversity and Inclusion Score	Difference From Overall Average (Percentage Points)
Black or African American	N=420	37%	-8
Hispanic	N=358	38%	-7
Native American	N=70	40%	-5
White	N=435	44%	-1
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N=17	48%	+3
Asian	N=82	57%	+12

Compared to their peers, fewer Black and Hispanic students described their school as diverse and inclusive.

Notes: Many students were in predominantly Black and Hispanic schools, which may help explain lower diversity ratings; however, the questions in this topic area also probe for perceptions of inclusion across ethnicity and culture. Some student groups are not reported due to small sample size or missing data. For most schools, race and Hispanic ethnicity were reported separately and are not mutually exclusive.

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Do students frequently learn about issues of race, ethnicity, and culture in their schools?

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Cultural Awareness and Action Scale
Results from Sample C, grades 4-12

N=1,437

40%

Forty percent of students reported that they frequently learn about issues of race, ethnicity, and culture in their schools.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Cultural Awareness and Action Scale, By Race
Results from Sample C, grades 4-12

Race	Sample Size	Average Cultural Awareness Score	Difference From Overall Average (Percentage Points)
Black or African American	N=420	32%	-8
Native American	N=70	32%	-8
Hispanic	N=358	33%	-7
White	N=435	37%	-3
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N=17	37%	-3
Asian	N=82	40%	0

A smaller percentage of Black and Native American students reported frequently learning about issues of race and culture in their schools, scoring 8 percentage points below the overall for the Cultural Awareness and Action scale.

Note: Some student groups are not reported due to small sample size or missing data. For most schools, race and Hispanic ethnicity were reported separately and are not mutually exclusive.

Older students (grades 11-12) responded less favorably across Diversity and Inclusion and Cultural Awareness and Action scales.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Diversity and Inclusion and Cultural Awareness and Action Scales, By Grade
*Results from Sample C, grades 4-12*

■ Diversity and Inclusion
■ Cultural Awareness and Action

Compared to other grade levels, less than 30% of students in grades 11-12 responded favorably on the Diversity and Inclusion and Cultural Awareness and Action scales.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably

	Grade 4 (N=39)	Grade 5 (N=30)	Grade 6 (N=301)	Grade 7 (N=273)	Grade 8 (N=306)	Grade 9 (N=212)	Grade 10 (N=134)	Grade 11 (N=77)	Grade 12 (N=65)
Diversity and Inclusion	65%	48%	61%	42%	41%	45%	42%	25%	26%
Cultural Awareness and Action	70%	52%	52%	35%	37%	40%	38%	19%	22%

Grade Level

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Do students feel physically and psychologically safe at school?

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the School Safety Scale
Results from Sample C, grades 4-12

N=1,437

24%
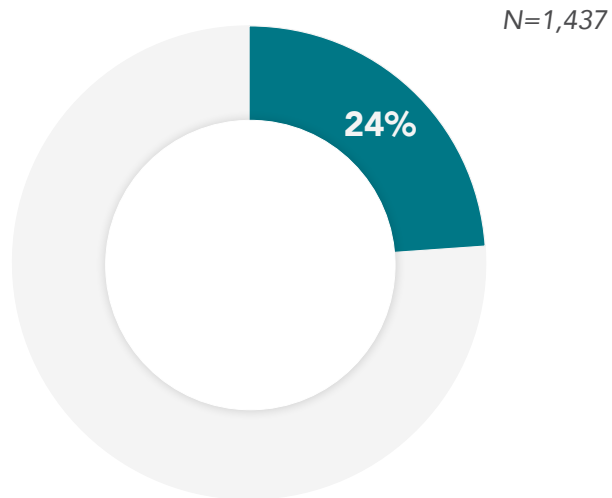
Less than one-fourth of students (24%) confidently reported feeling safe in school.

Percent of Students That Reported They Were Likely to Be Bullied Online
Results from Sample C, grades 4-12

N=1,437

33%
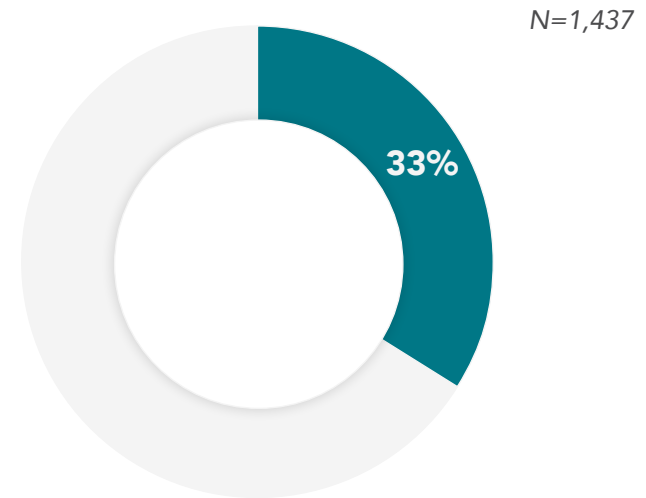
When asked about online bullying, 33% of students reported that they were likely to be bullied online by someone from their school.

School safety scores also differed across grade levels and racial groups.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the School Safety Scale, By Grade
Results from Sample C, grades 4-12

Similar to other survey topics assessing school environment, a smaller percentage of high school students reported feeling physically and psychologically safe in school.
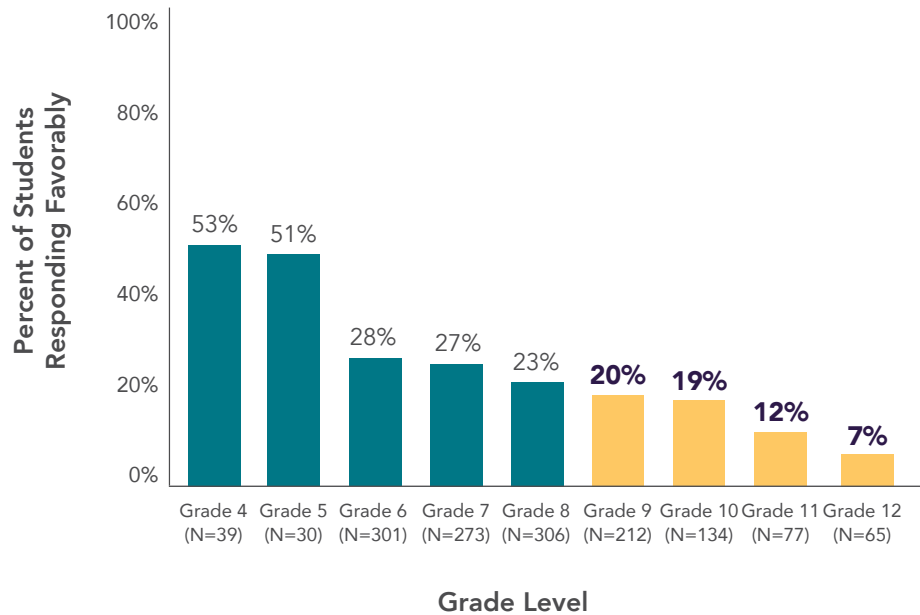
Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the School Safety Scale, By Race
Results from Sample C, grades 4-12

Race	Sample Size	Average School Safety Score	Difference From Overall Average (Percentage Points)
White	**N=435**	**15%**	**-9**
Native American	N=70	18%	-6
Asian	N=82	18%	-6
Hispanic	N=358	20%	-4
Black or African American	N=420	22%	-2
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N=17	23%	-1

Compared to their peers, a smaller percentage of white students reported feeling safe in school, scoring 9 percentage points below the overall for the School Safety scale.

Note: Some student groups are not reported due to small sample size or missing data. For most schools, race and Hispanic ethnicity were reported separately and are not mutually exclusive.

Support and Motivation

Do students feel supported and motivated by their teachers enough to do well in school?

Student Engagement
How attentive and invested students are in school.

Valuing School
How much students feel that school is interesting, important, and useful.

Rigorous Expectations
How much students feel that their teachers hold them to high expectations around effort, understanding, persistence, and performance in class.

Support and Motivation

- Across grade levels, **more than 70% of students reported being held to rigorous expectations** by their teachers.

- Although the majority of students feel they are held to rigorous expectations, **only about 34% of students reported feeling engaged in school**.

- **Student engagement scores were lowest among grade 12 students**, with only 18% responding favorably.

- While at least 50% of students across all grades responded favorably to valuing school, **a larger percentage of elementary school students (71%)** reported that they felt school was interesting, important, and useful.

- Compared to younger students, **fewer middle and high school students reported that they think school will be useful in the future (64%)** or that they often use ideas from school in their daily life (31%).

- There were differences by subgroup; **fewer students with disabilities in grades 3-5 reported valuing school** as compared to their peers without disabilities.

Students Speak: A Snapshot of Youth Well-Being in the District of Columbia

Do students feel that their teachers hold them to high expectations?

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Rigorous Expectations Scale
Results from Sample A (grades 3-5) and Sample B (grades 6-12)

Most students across grade levels (more than 70%) report being held to rigorous expectations by their teachers.
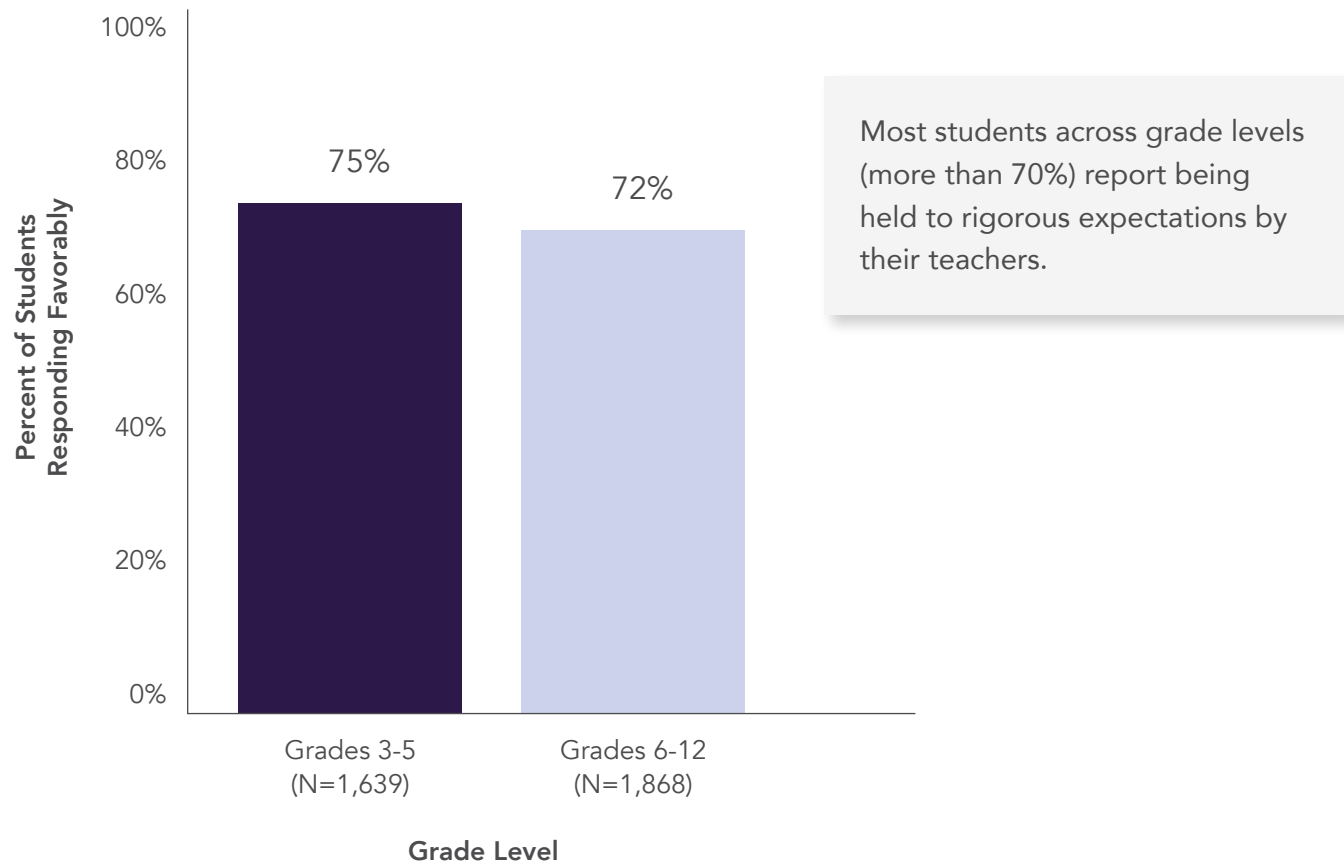
DCPS SNAPSHOT

Similar to the findings from our sample, DCPS' fall 2022 Panorama SEL survey results indicate that DCPS students report being held to high expectations.[37]

In DCPS, 80% of grade 3-5 students and 72% of grade 6-12 students responded favorably on the Rigorous Expectations scale.

Across racial groups, there were differences in the percentage of students who reported being held to rigorous expectations.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Rigorous Expectations Scale, By Race
Results from Sample A, grades 3-5

Race	Sample Size	Average Rigorous Expectations Score	Difference From Overall Average (Percentage Points)
Native American	**N=19**	**65%**	**-10**
Asian	N=42	66%	-9
White	N=305	71%	-4
Two or More Races	N=92	72%	-3
Hispanic	N=162	72%	-3
Black or African American	N=1,178	76%	+1

Fewer Native American students in grades 3-5 reported being held to rigorous expectations by their teachers, scoring 10 percentage points below the overall Rigorous Expectations scale score.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Rigorous Expectations Scale, By Race
Results from Sample B, grades 6-12

Race	Sample Size	Average Rigorous Expectations Score	Difference From Overall Average (Percentage Points)
Black or African American	N=1,791	71%	-1
White	N=46	72%	0
Hispanic	N=43	75%	+3
Two or More Races	**N=16**	**78%**	**+6**

In grades 6-12, more students who identify with two or more races reported being held to rigorous expectations by their teachers, scoring 6 percentage points above the overall Rigorous Expectations scale score.

Note: Some student groups are not reported due to small sample size or missing data. For most schools, race and Hispanic ethnicity were reported separately and are not mutually exclusive.

Bellwether.org
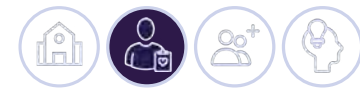
Similarly, there were differences among students identified as at-risk and those with disabilities.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Rigorous Expectations Scale, By Risk Status
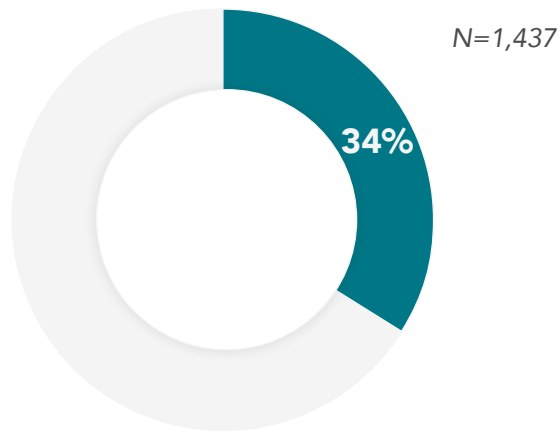*Results from Sample A (grades 3-5) and Sample B (grades 6-12)*

Legend:
- At-risk
- Not at-risk

Y-axis: Percent of Students Responding Favorably (0% to 100%)

Grades 3-5 (N=761/878): At-risk 77%, Not at-risk 73%
Grades 6-12 (N=1,245/622): At-risk 70%, Not at-risk 72%

X-axis: Grade Level
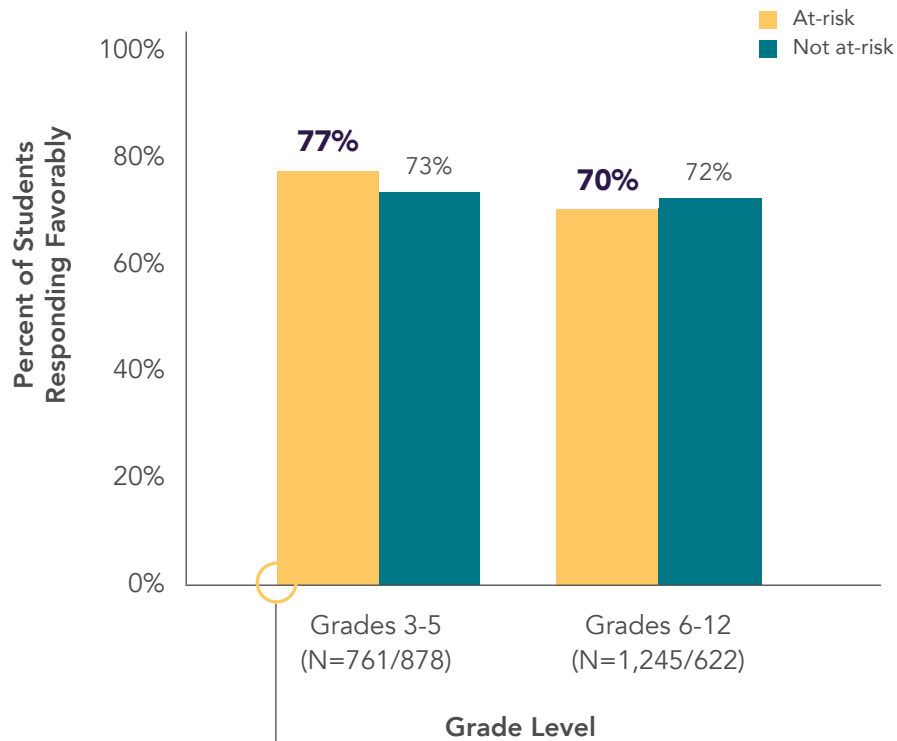
Compared to their peers, slightly more elementary students who were identified as at-risk reported being held to rigorous expectations.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Rigorous Expectations Scale, By SWD Status
Results from Sample A (grades 3-5) and Sample B (grades 6-12)

Legend:
- SWD
- Non-SWD

Y-axis: Percent of Students Responding Favorably (0% to 100%)

Grades 3-5 (N=228/1,411): SWD 68%, Non-SWD 76%
Grades 6-12 (N=416/1,451): SWD 70%, Non-SWD 72%
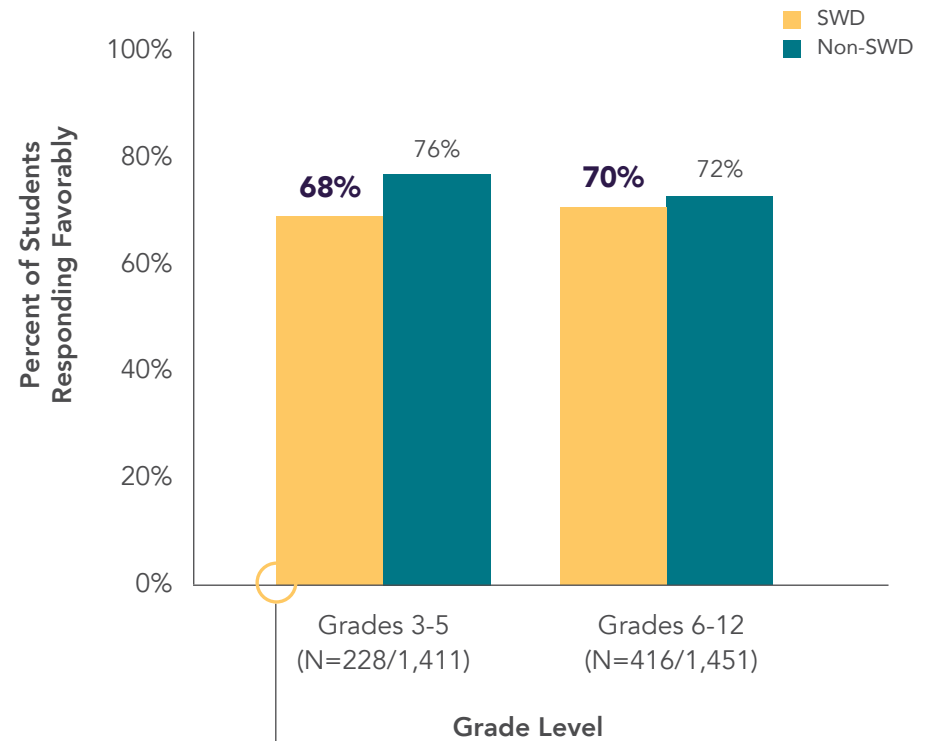
X-axis: Grade Level

Across grade levels, fewer students with disabilities reported being held to rigorous expectations compared to their peers.

Do students feel engaged at school?

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Student Engagement Scale

Results from Sample C, grades 4-12

34%

N=1,437

Only about one-third (34%) of students reported feeling engaged and attentive at school.

While a majority of students view their teachers as holding high expectations for them, students were less likely to:

Results from Sample C, grades 4-12

Be excited about going to classes.

34%

Be frequently focused on activities in class.

34%

Be eager to participate in class.

34%

Talk about ideas from their classes outside of school.

29%

Be generally interested in their classes.

38%
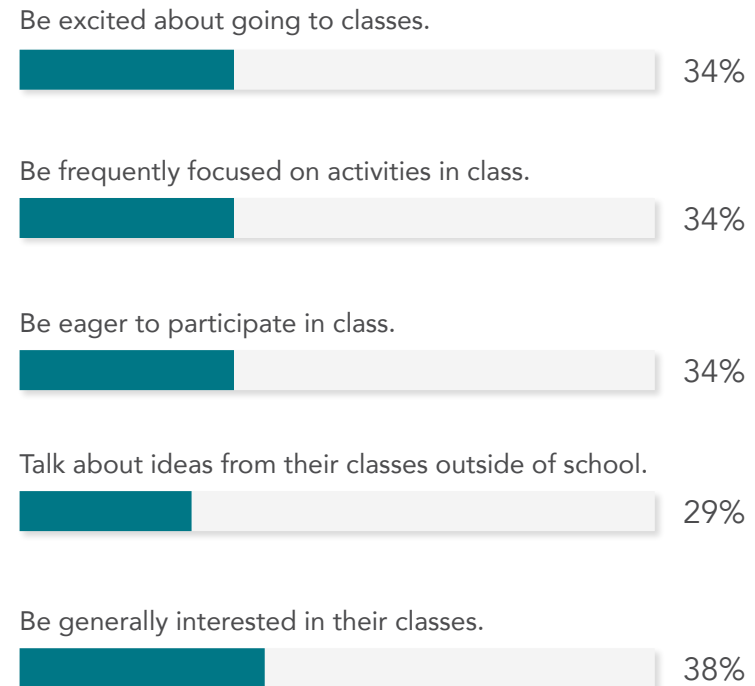
Students' engagement with and investment in school varied based on grade levels.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Student Engagement Scale, By Grade
Results from Sample C, grades 4-12

Students in grades 11-12 responded least favorably when asked how interested, attentive, and engaged they are at school.

Grade Level	Percent of Students Responding Favorably
Grade 4 (N=39)	71%
Grade 5 (N=30)	60%
Grade 6 (N=301)	46%
Grade 7 (N=273)	31%
Grade 8 (N=306)	30%
Grade 9 (N=212)	27%
Grade 10 (N=134)	30%
Grade 11 (N=77)	23%
Grade 12 (N=65)	18%
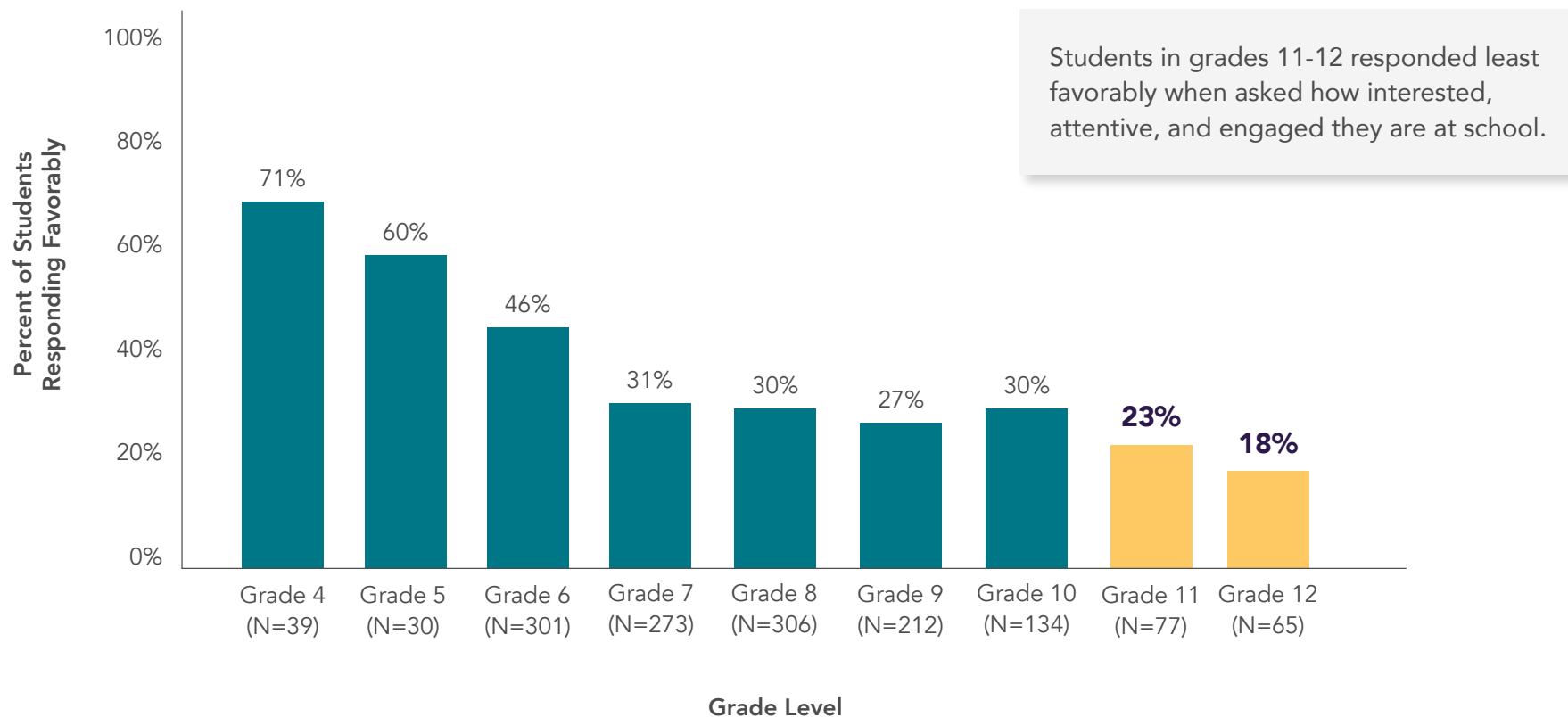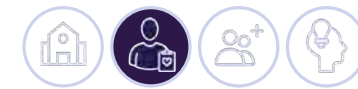
Do students value school?

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Valuing School Scale
Results from Sample A (grades 3-5) and Sample B (grades 6-12)
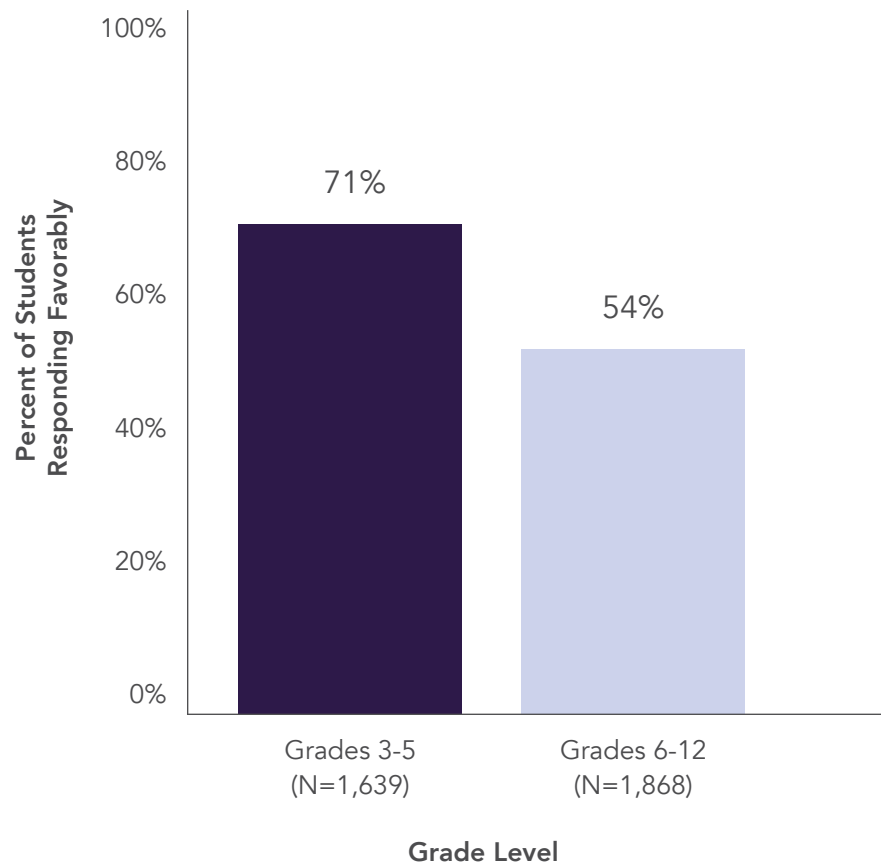
Across age groups, at least half of students responded favorably to the Valuing School scale. More elementary students reported valuing school compared to their middle and high school peers.

Although most students said they want to do well in school, fewer older students viewed what they are learning as useful now or in the future.
Results from Sample A (grades 3-5) and Sample B (grades 6-12)

- Grades 3-5 (N=1,639)
- Grades 6-12 (N=1,868)

How important is it to you to do well in school?
- 88%
- 81%

How useful do you think school will be to you in the future?
- 84%
- 64%

How often do you use ideas from school in your daily life?
- 47%
- 31%

37
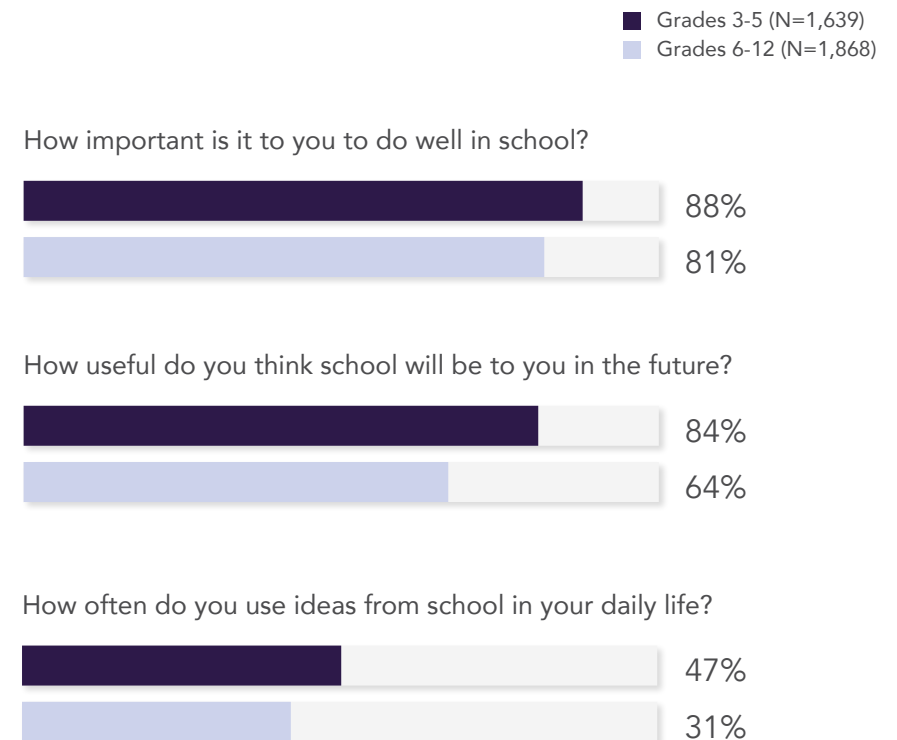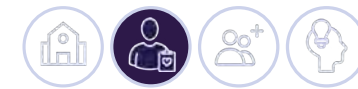
The value students see in school varied by disability status in grades 3-5 and by racial groups in grades 6-12.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Valuing School Scale, By SWD Status
Results from Sample A (grades 3-5) and Sample B (grades 6-12)
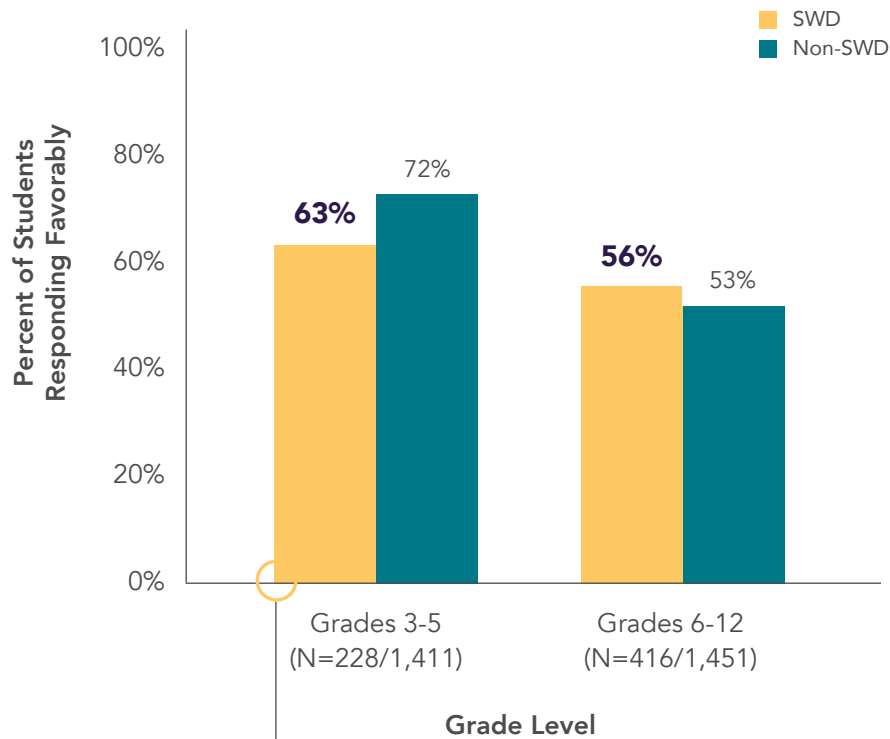
Legend:
- SWD (yellow)
- Non-SWD (teal)

Chart data:
- Grades 3-5 (N=228/1,411): SWD **63%**, Non-SWD 72%
- Grades 6-12 (N=416/1,451): SWD **56%**, Non-SWD 53%

Y-axis: Percent of Students Responding Favorably (0% to 100%)
X-axis: Grade Level

Fewer students with disabilities in grades 3-5 reported valuing school, as compared to their peers without disabilities.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Valuing School Scale, By Race
Results from Sample B, grades 6-12

Race	Sample Size	Average Valuing School Score	Difference From Overall Average (Percentage Points)
Black or African American	N=1,791	53%	-1
Two or More Races	N=16	54%	0
Hispanic	N=43	57%	+3
White	N=46	60%	+6

In grades 6-12, slightly more white students reported valuing school, scoring 6 percentage points above the overall on the Valuing School scale.

Note: Some student groups are not reported due to small sample size or missing data.

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Quality Relationships

Do students have quality relationships at school and outside of school?

PANORAMA SEL TOPICS

Supportive Relationships
How supported students feel through their relationships with friends, family, and adults at school.

Teacher-Student Relationships
How strong the social connection is between teachers and students within and beyond the school.

Quality Relationships

- When asked about supportive relationships, student responses were overwhelmingly positive. **Most students (about 83%) reported having strong, supportive relationships** with adults, friends, and/or family members.

- When asked specifically about relationships with teachers, **only 38% reported having strong relationships with teachers** at their school.

- **There were differences in students' supportive relationships scores when broken down by race**. In grades 3-5, fewer Native American and white students reported having supportive relationships. In grades 6-12, fewer students identifying with two or more races reported having supportive relationships.

- Across grades 4-12, **fewer older students reported having strong relationships with their teachers**.

- **A smaller percentage of female students reported having strong relationships with teachers** at their school compared to their male peers.

Do students have supportive relationships in their lives?

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Supportive Relationships Scale
Results from Sample A (grades 3-5) and Sample B (grades 6-12)
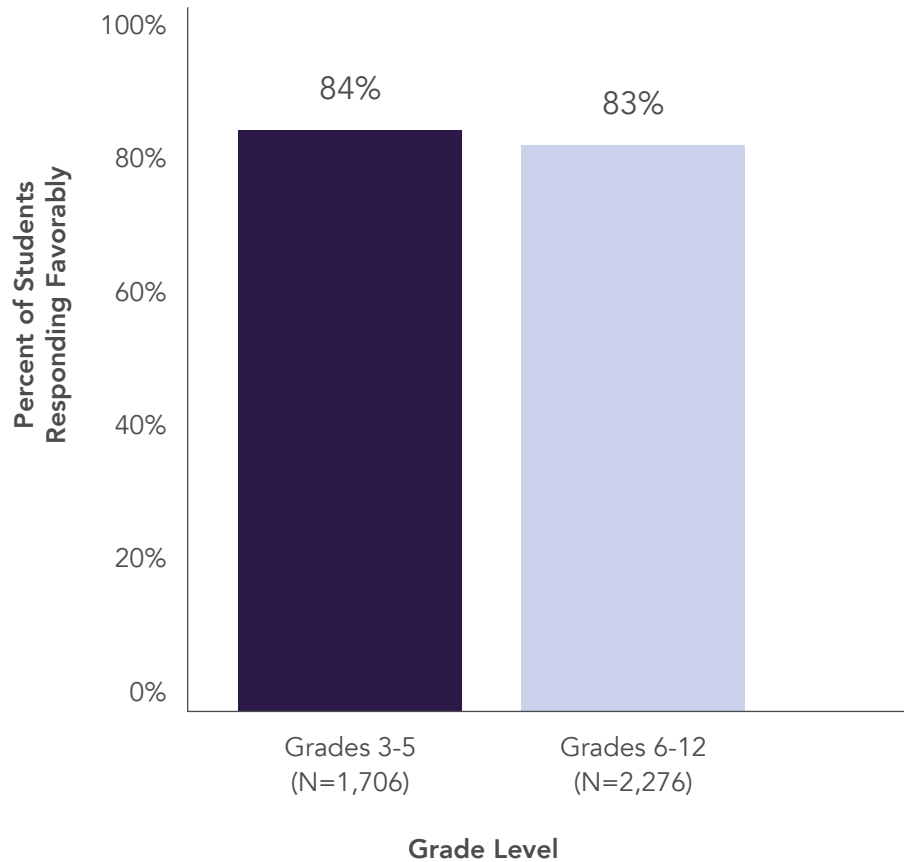
When asked generally about having supportive relationships (with friends, family, and/or adults), students overwhelmingly responded favorably.

Supportive Relationships scores remained similar across subgroups, except when broken down by race.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Supportive Relationships Scale, By Race
Results from Sample A, grades 3-5

Race	Sample Size	Average Supportive Relationships Score	Difference From Overall Average (Percentage Points)
Native American	N=19	75%	-9
White	N=312	77%	-7
Hispanic	N=195	82%	-2
Asian	N=42	83%	-1
Two or More Races	N=93	83%	-1
Black or African American	N=1,204	86%	+4

In grades 3-5, fewer Native American and white students reported having supportive relationships in and outside of school, scoring 9 and 7 percentage points lower (respectively) than the overall Supportive Relationships scale score.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Supportive Relationships Scale, By Race
Results from Sample B, grades 6-12

Race	Sample Size	Average Supportive Relationships Score	Difference From Overall Average (Percentage Points)
Two or More Races	N=24	72%	-11
Hispanic	N=323	81%	-2
Black or African American	N=1,901	83%	0
White	N=53	79%	+4

In grades 6-12, a smaller percentage of students who identify with two or more races reported having supportive relationships in and outside of school, scoring 11 percentage points below the overall Supportive Relationships scale score.

Note: Some student groups are not reported due to small sample size or missing data. For most schools, race and Hispanic ethnicity were reported separately and are not mutually exclusive.

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Do students have strong relationships with teachers?

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Teacher-Student Relationships Scale
Results from Sample C, grades 4-12

N=1,437

38%
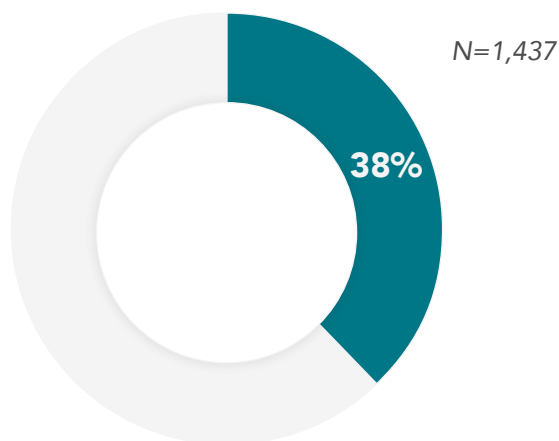
When asked about relationships with teachers, only 38% of students reported having strong relationships with teachers at their school.

Specifically, students in grades 4-12 students were less likely to report that:
Results from Sample C, grades 4-12

If [they] walked into class upset, many of [their] teachers would be concerned.

37%
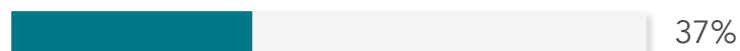
If [they] came back to visit class three years from now, many of [their] teachers would be excited to see [them].

38%
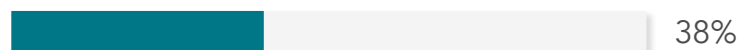
When [their] teachers ask how [they] are doing, many of them are really interested in [their] answer.

37%
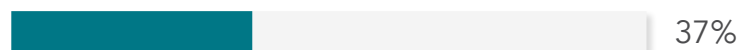
[They] would be excited to have their teachers again in the future.

38%
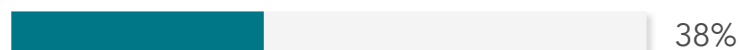
Teacher-Student Relationship scale scores were lowest among older students.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Teacher-Student Relationships Scale, By Grade
Results from Sample C, grades 4-12

> Compared to their peers, students in grades 11-12 reported having strong relationships with teachers, with only about 20% responding favorably.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably (y-axis)

- Grade 4 (N=39): 69%
- Grade 5 (N=30): 52%
- Grade 6 (N=301): 53%
- Grade 7 (N=273): 36%
- Grade 8 (N=306): 34%
- Grade 9 (N=212): 33%
- Grade 10 (N=134): 31%
- Grade 11 (N=77): 19%
- Grade 12 (N=65): 20%

Grade Level
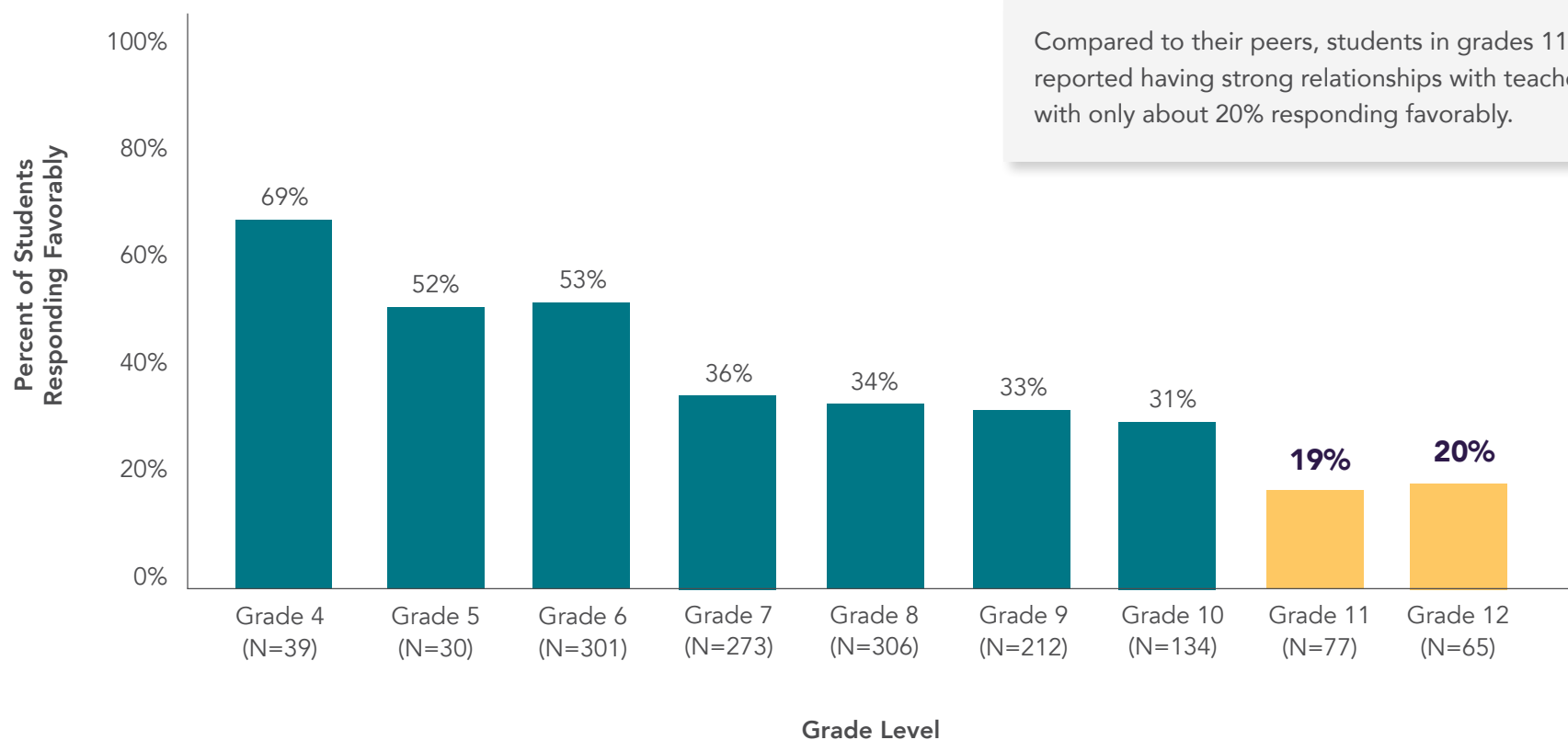
In grades 4-12, female students were less likely to report strong relationships with teachers at school.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Teacher-Student Relationships Scale, By Gender
Results from Sample C, grades 4-12
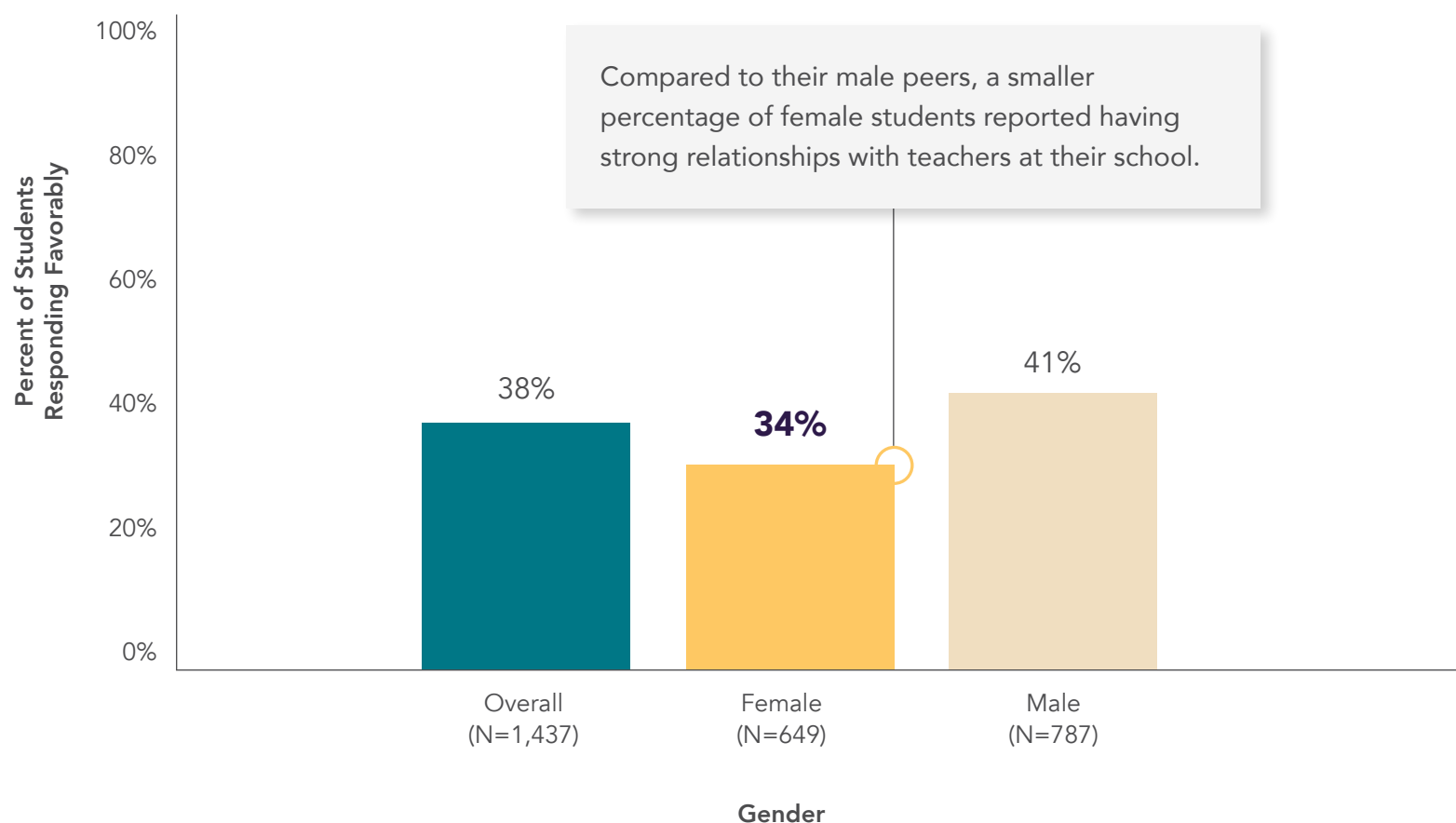
> Compared to their male peers, a smaller percentage of female students reported having strong relationships with teachers at their school.

Y-axis: Percent of Students Responding Favorably (0% – 100%)

- Overall (N=1,437): 38%
- Female (N=649): **34%**
- Male (N=787): 41%

X-axis: Gender

Self-Perception and Skills

Do students believe they can achieve academically and have the skills to succeed in school, career, and life?

Self-Efficacy
How much students believe they can succeed in achieving academic outcomes.

Learning Strategies
How well students use strategies to manage their own learning processes generally.

Perseverance
How well students are able to persevere through setbacks to achieve important long-term goals.

Self-Perception and Skills

- Across survey topics, **about half of students reported that they believe in their ability** to achieve academically, use learning strategies to manage their learning, and persevere through setbacks to achieve an important goal.

- **Slightly fewer middle and high school students responded favorably on the Self-Efficacy scale (45%)**, compared to younger elementary school students (52%).

- Across grade levels, **fewer students with disabilities responded favorably** when asked about the Self-Efficacy scale.

- Among grades 6-12, **a slightly smaller percentage of students who were identified as at-risk believe that they can succeed** in achieving academic outcomes.

- **Less than half of students (42%)** reported deliberately using learning strategies.

- Compared to their peers, **fewer EL students** reported using learning strategies.

- Across grade levels, **about 50% of students indicated that they persevere through setbacks** to achieve important goals. However, more male students report high levels of perseverance than their female peers.

- **When broken down by race, fewer Native American students in grades 3-5 and white students in grades 6-12 report high levels of perseverance**, scoring respectively 18 percentage points and 11 percentage points below the overall Perseverance scale score.

Do students believe they can succeed in achieving academic outcomes?

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Self-Efficacy Scale

Results from Sample A (grades 3-5) and Sample B (grades 6-12)
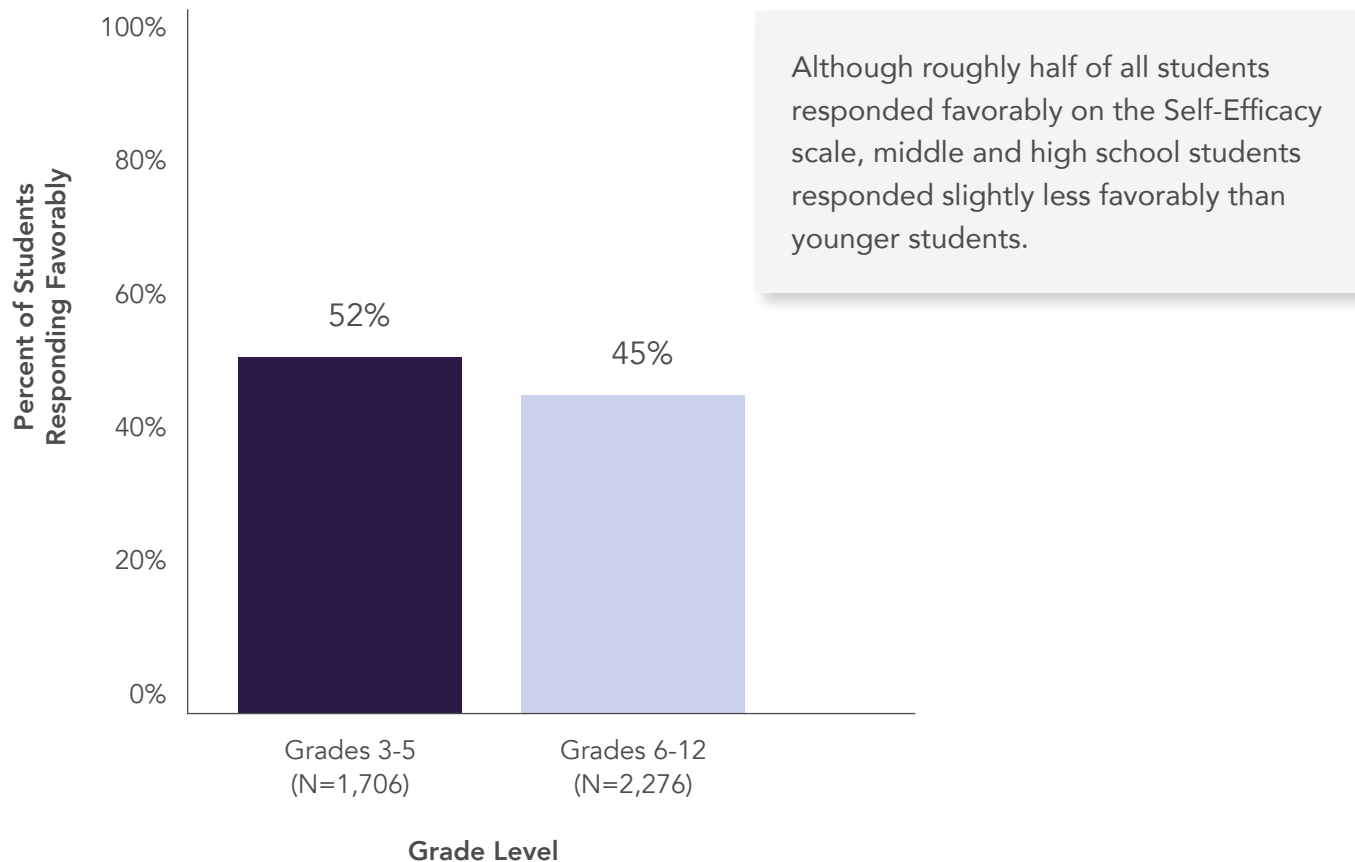
Although roughly half of all students responded favorably on the Self-Efficacy scale, middle and high school students responded slightly less favorably than younger students.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably

- Grades 3-5 (N=1,706): 52%
- Grades 6-12 (N=2,276): 45%

Grade Level

Students' beliefs that they could achieve academically differed across subgroups.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Self-Efficacy Scale, By Risk Status
Results from Sample A (grades 3-5) and Sample B (grades 6-12)

Legend: At-risk, Not at-risk

- Grades 3-5 (N=761/878): At-risk **52%**, Not at-risk 52%
- Grades 6-12 (N=1,245/622): At-risk **45%**, Not at-risk 48%

Grade Level
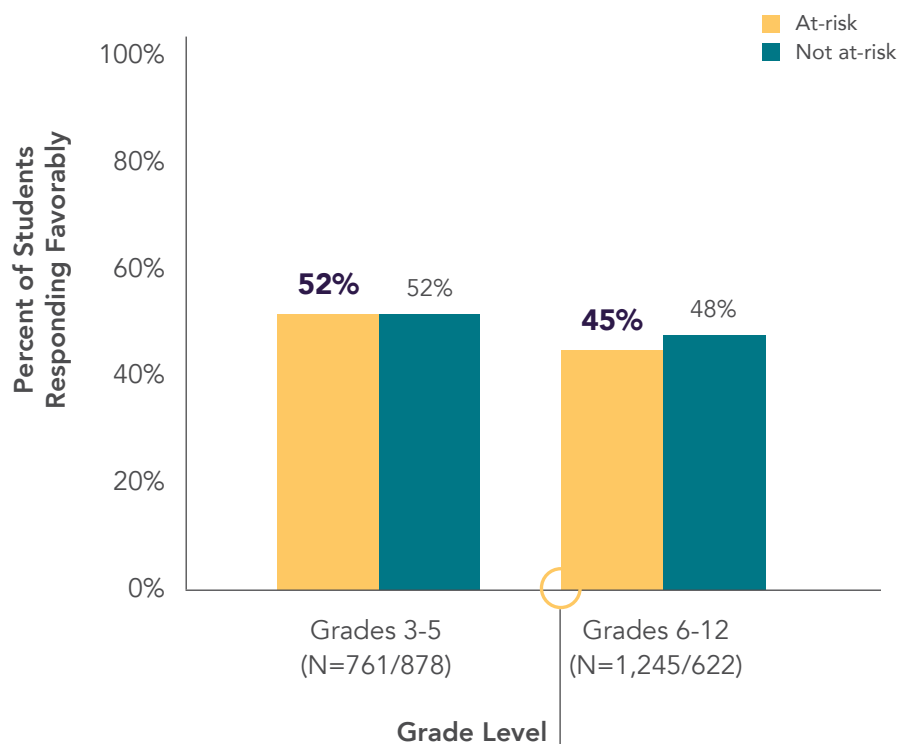
Compared to their peers, a slightly lower percentage of older students identified as at-risk responded favorably on the Self-Efficacy scale.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Self-Efficacy Scale, By SWD Status
Results from Sample A (grades 3-5) and Sample B (grades 6-12)
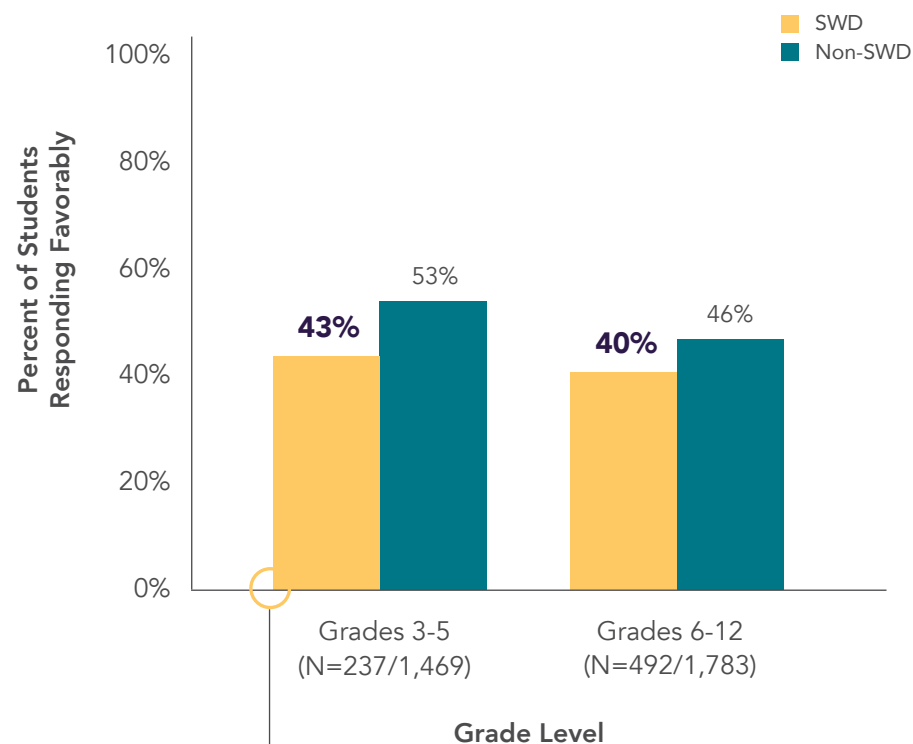
Legend: SWD, Non-SWD

- Grades 3-5 (N=237/1,469): SWD **43%**, Non-SWD 53%
- Grades 6-12 (N=492/1,783): SWD **40%**, Non-SWD 46%

Grade Level

Across grade levels, fewer students with disabilities responded favorably on the Self-Efficacy scale compared to their peers without disability.

Do students deliberately use learning strategies to manage their own learning processes?

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Learning Strategies Scale
Results from Sample C, grades 4-12

N=1,437

42%
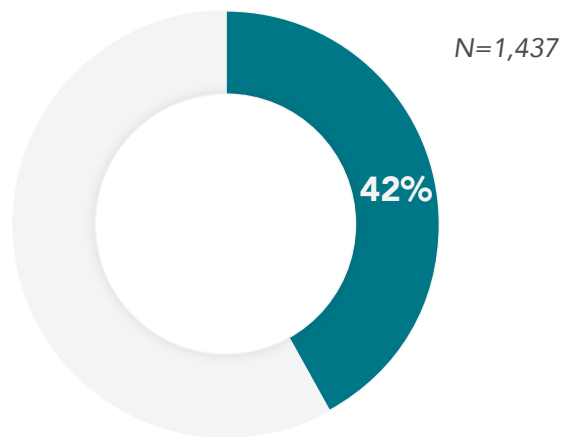
Similar to self-efficacy, less than half of students (42%) reported that they use learning strategies to manage their learning.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Learning Strategies Scale, By EL Status
Results from Sample C, grades 4-12
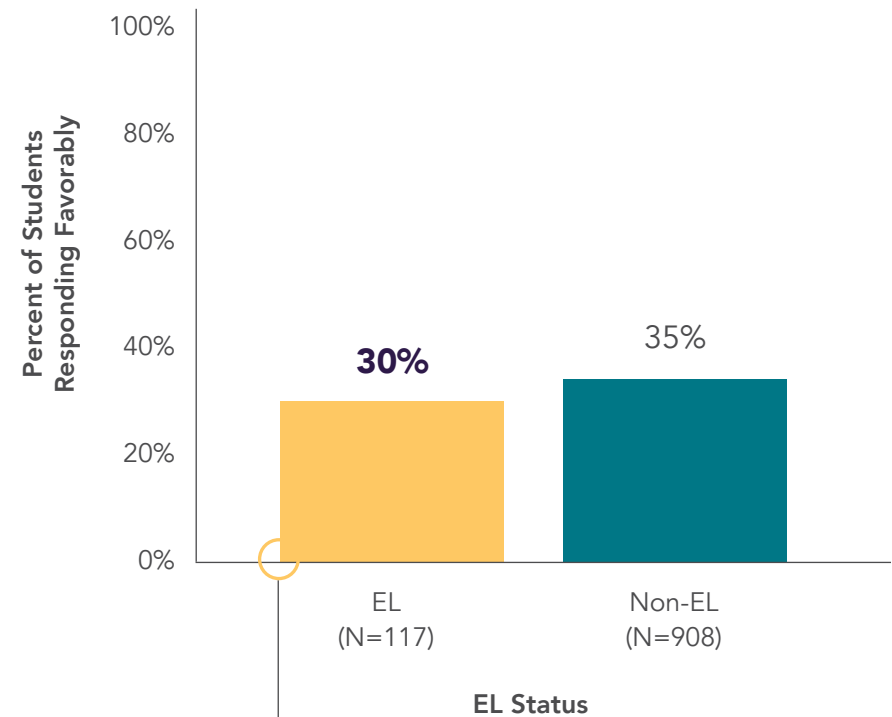
Compared to their peers, fewer EL students reported using learning strategies to manage their learning process.

Do students persevere through setbacks?

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Perseverance Scale
Results from Sample A (grades 3-5) and Sample B (grades 6-12)
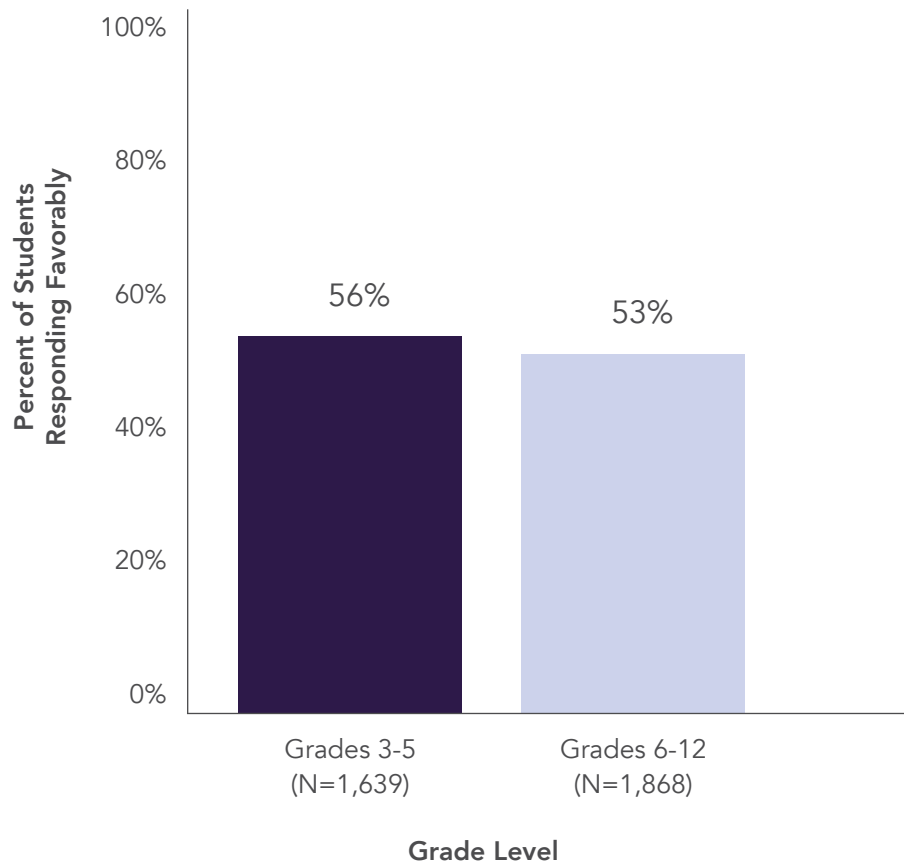
Slightly more than half of students indicated that they persevere through setbacks to achieve important goals.

Perseverance scale scores varied by gender and disability status.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Perseverance Scale, By Student Subgroup

Results from Sample B, grades 6-12

In grades 6-12, slightly fewer female students and students with disabilities reported persevering through setbacks as compared to their peers.

Student Subgroup

- Female (N=957): **50%**
- Male (N=911): 57%
- SWD (N=416): **51%**
- Non-SWD (N=1,451): 54%

0%　20%　40%　60%　80%　100%

Percent of Students Responding Favorably

Students Speak: A Snapshot of Youth Well-Being in the District of Columbia

Bellwether.org
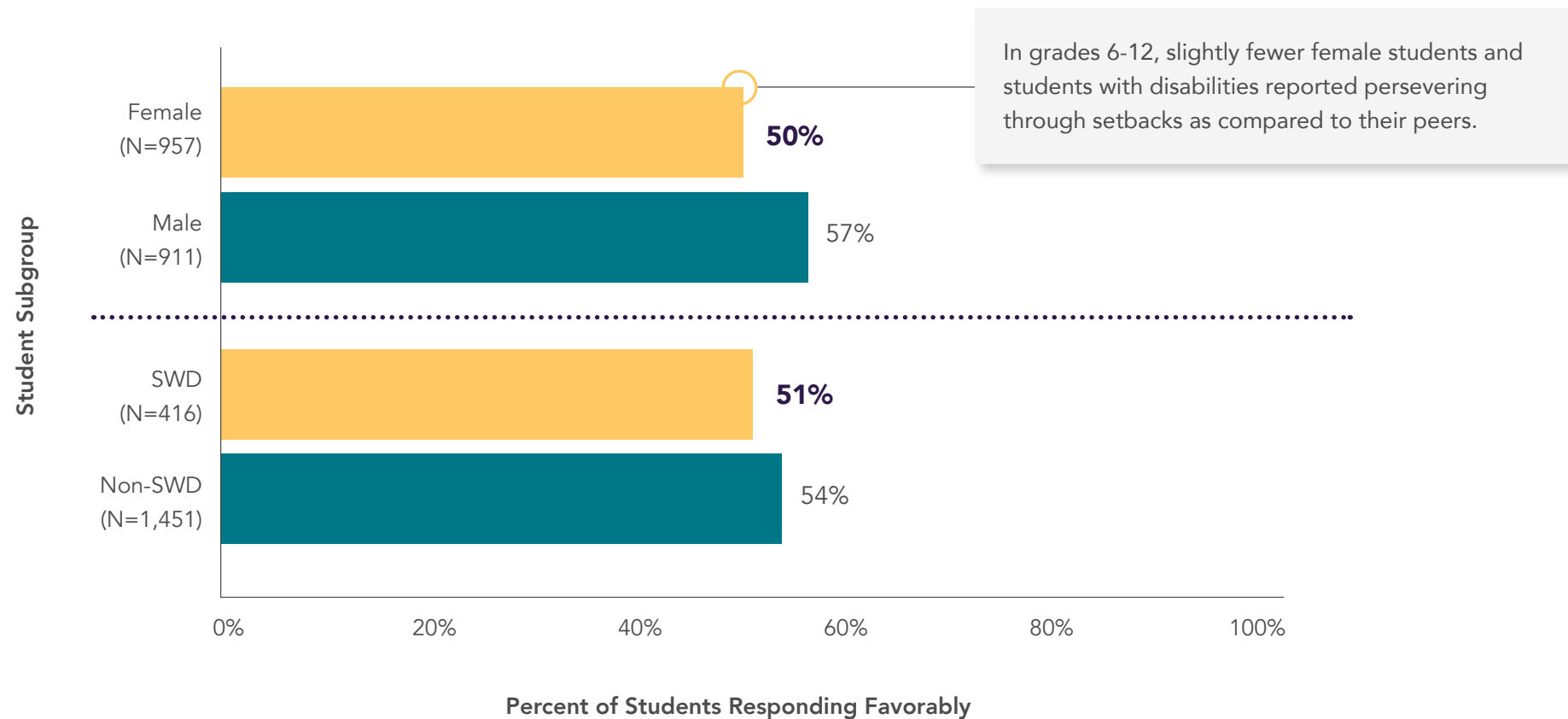
When broken down by race, students reported different levels of perseverance.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Perseverance Scale, By Race
Results from Sample A, grades 3-5

Race	Sample Size	Average Perseverance Score	Difference From Overall Average (Percentage Points)
Native American	N=19	38%	-18
Hispanic	N=162	46%	-10
White	N=305	49%	-7
Two or More Races	N=92	54%	-2
Asian	N=42	60%	+4
Black or African American	N=1,178	58%	+2

In grades 3-5, Native American students were least likely to report that they persevere during setbacks, scoring 18 percentage points below the overall Perseverance scale score.

Percent of Students Responding Favorably on the Perseverance Scale, By Race
Results from Sample B, grades 6-12

Race	Sample Size	Average Perseverance Score	Difference From Overall Average (Percentage Points)
White	N=46	42%	-11
Two or More Races	N=16	49%	-4
Hispanic	N=43	50%	-3
Black or African American	N=1,791	54%	+1

In grades 6-12, white students were least likely to report persevering during setbacks, scoring 11 percentage points below the overall Perseverance scale score.

Note: *Some student groups are not reported due to small sample size or missing data. For most schools, race and Hispanic ethnicity were reported separately and are not mutually exclusive.*

Contents

Report findings highlight potential next steps for D.C. educators.

1 Understanding students' feelings, perceptions, and experiences is crucial to improving their well-being and outcomes. Consequently, it will be important to **invest time and resources in understanding factors** that adversely impact the experiences of older students as well as the protective factors that enable younger students to have more positive experiences.

2 Less than 40% of students responded favorably to items about Student Engagement, despite reporting a desire to do well in school. To address this issue, educators and school leaders can **adopt strategies to improve student engagement that center student voice and choice**, and help students make connections to school ideas in their daily lives.

3 Female students scored lower than their peers on perceptions of belonging and support. Moving forward, it will be useful to **tailor intervention plans and programs** to address the specific cultural contexts, needs, and strengths of this student group.

4 Educators, school leaders, and systemwide leaders should consider connecting to **discuss ways to increase ethnic and cultural awareness and inclusivity in schools** and providing support and training to teachers to help students draw connections between their learning and their own experiences with race, ethnicity, and culture.

COLLECTING THE DATA

This report is the first attempt to collect data across LEAs using shared measures of student social-emotional well-being. As such, it highlights important next steps for D.C. education leaders.

Conclusion

The report's findings provide clear direction for future research efforts and amplifies future actions that school leaders, educators, and community partners can pursue in improving student well-being in D.C.

To better understand and improve student well-being, **educators will need continued access to aligned, comprehensive data on students' well-being and school experiences across D.C.** In future iterations of this work, LEAs should collaborate as much as possible to ensure they are asking students the same questions to identify citywide trends and patterns in student well-being.

Future work can also take a more nuanced look at students' perceptions of their supportive relationships. More than 80% of students who took the Panorama SEL survey reported having supportive relationships inside and outside of school, which is an important protective factor for young people. However, there were differences when broken down by race, and reports from students who took the survey through Kelvin revealed that they didn't necessarily include teachers in their list of supportive adults. Further investigation could provide more insight into what students of various ages and demographics want and need from their relationships with adults at school.

Finally, **future research could take a more nuanced look at whether and how student well-being differs based on gender and sexual orientation**, if there is a safe way to do so while maintaining student confidentiality. Data on students' sexual orientation was not available in this pilot year, but national trends indicate that this may be an important point of further research. Findings from the CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Survey demonstrate that LGBTQ+ youth and girls reported poorer mental health than their peers;[40] this same pattern of results was found for youth that identify as transgender or gender diverse.[41]

*If you or your LEA are interested in participating in this project, please reach out to Amy Dudas at **adudas@vppartners.org**.*

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The data within this report represent various student subgroups and racial demographics across three samples.

Student Demographics	Sample A		Sample B		Sample C	
Total Students	Percent of Students	Number of Students	Percent of Students	Number of Students	Percent of Students	Number of Students
	100%	1,706	100%	2,276	100%	1,437
Student Gender						
Male	49%	835	49%	1,111	55%	787
Female	51%	869	51%	1,165	45%	649
Student Subgroups						
Students identified as at-risk	45%	761	55%	1,245	—	not reported
Students with disabilities (SWD)	14%	237	22%	492	12%	166
English learners (ELs)	6%	110	< 1%	18	8%	117
Racial and Ethnic Demographics						
Asian	2%	42	< 1%	< 10	6%	82
Black or African American	71%	1,204	84%	1,901	29%	420
Hispanic	11%	195	14%	323	25%	358
Native American	1%	19	< 1%	< 10	5%	70
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	< 1%	< 10	< 1%	< 10	1%	17
Two or More Races	5%	93	1%	24	< 1%	< 10
White	18%	312	2%	53	30%	435

Notes: < 1% of students did not report a gender or identified as nonbinary; for most schools, race and Hispanic ethnicity were reported separately and are not mutually exclusive.

Questions Answered by Sample A (1 of 2)

Perseverance (5-point Likert scale)

How often do you stay focused on the same goal for more than three months at a time?

If you fail at an important goal, how likely are you to try again?

When you are working on a project that matters a lot to you, how focused can you stay when there are lots of distractions?

If you have a problem while working towards an important goal, how well can you keep working?

Self-Efficacy (5-point Likert scale)

How sure are you that you can complete all the work that is assigned in your class?

When complicated ideas are discussed in class, how sure are you that you can understand them?

How sure are you that you can learn all the topics taught in your class?

How sure are you that you can do the hardest work that is assigned in your class?

How sure are you that you will remember what you learned in your current class, next year?

Supportive Relationships (Yes/No)

Do you have a teacher or other adult from school who you can count on to help you, no matter what?

Do you have a family member or other adult outside of school who you can count on to help you, no matter what?

Do you have a friend from school who you can count on to help you, no matter what?

Sense of Belonging (5-point Likert scale)

How well do people at your school understand you as a person?

How much support do the adults at your school give you?

How much respect do students at your school show you?

Overall, how much do you feel like you belong at your school?

Rigorous Expectations (5-point Likert scale)

How often does your teacher make you explain your answers?

When you feel like giving up, how likely is it that your teacher will make you keep trying?

How much does your teacher encourage you to do your best?

How often does your teacher take time to make sure you understand the material?

Overall, how high are your teacher's expectations of you?

Valuing School (5-point Likert scale)

How interesting do you find the things you learn in school?

How often do you use ideas from school in your daily life?

How important is it to you to do well in school?

How useful do you think school will be to you in the future?

Questions Answered by Sample B

Perseverance (5-point Likert scale)

How often do you stay focused on the same goal for several months at a time?

If you fail to reach an important goal, how likely are you to try again?

When you are working on a project that matters a lot to you, how focused can you stay when there are lots of distractions?

If you have a problem while working towards an important goal, how well can you keep working?

Some people pursue some of their goals for a long time, and others change their goals frequently. Over the next several years, how likely are you to continue to pursue one of your current goals?

Self-Efficacy (5-point Likert scale)

How confident are you that you can complete all the work that is assigned in your classes?

When complicated ideas are presented in class, how confident are you that you can understand them?

How confident are you that you can learn all the material presented in your classes?

How confident are you that you can do the hardest work that is assigned in your classes?

How confident are you that you will remember what you learned in your current classes, next year?

Supportive Relationships (Yes/No)

Do you have a teacher or other adult from school who you can count on to help you, no matter what?

Do you have a family member or other adult outside of school who you can count on to help you, no matter what?

Do you have a friend from school who you can count on to help you, no matter what?

Do you have a teacher or other adult from school who you can be completely yourself around?

Do you have a family member or other adult outside of school who you can be completely yourself around?

Do you have a friend from school who you can be completely yourself around?

Questions Answered by Sample B

Sense of Belonging (5-point Likert scale)

How well do people at your school understand you as a person?

How connected do you feel to the adults at your school?

How much respect do students in your school show you?

How much do you matter to others at this school?

Overall, how much do you feel like you belong at your school?

Rigorous Expectations (5-point Likert scale)

How often do your teachers make you explain your answers?

When you feel like giving up on a difficult task, how likely is it that your teachers will make you keep trying?

How much do your teachers encourage you to do your best?

How often do your teachers take time to make sure you understand the material?

Overall, how high are your teachers' expectations of you?

Valuing School (5-point Likert scale)

How interesting do you find the things you learn in your classes?

How often do you use ideas from school in your daily life?

How important is it to you to do well in your classes?

How much do you see yourself as someone who appreciates school?

How useful do you think school will be to you in the future?

Questions Answered by Sample C (1 of 2)

Student Engagement (5-point Likert scale)

How excited are you about going to your classes?

How often do you get so focused on activities in your classes that you lose track of time?

In your classes, how eager are you to participate?

When you are not in school, how often do you talk about ideas from your classes?

Overall, how interested are you in your classes?

Learning Strategies (5-point Likert scale)

When you get stuck while learning something new, how likely are you to try a different strategy?

How confident are you that you can choose an effective strategy to get your schoolwork done well?

Before you start on a challenging project, how often do you think about the best way to approach the project?

Overall, how well do your learning strategies help you learn more effectively?

How often do you use strategies to learn more effectively?

School Safety (5-point Likert scale)

How often are people disrespectful to others at your school?

How often do students get into physical fights at your school?

How likely is it that someone from your school will bully you online?

How often do you worry about violence at your school?

If a student is bullied in school, how difficult is it for him/her to get help from an adult?

How safe do you feel when you are at school or in online school sessions?

Note: *Because School Safety questions were negatively worded, responses of "almost never" or "slightly unlikely" were coded as favorable.*

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Teacher-Student Relationships (5-point Likert scale)

If you walked into class upset, how many of your teachers would be concerned?

If you came back to visit class three years from now, how many of your teachers would be excited to see you?

When your teachers ask how you are doing, how many of them are really interested in your answer?

How many of your teachers would you be excited to have again in the future?

Diversity and Inclusion (5-point Likert scale)

How often do you spend time at school with students from different races, ethnicities, or cultures?

How often do you have classes with students from different racial, ethnic, or cultural backgrounds?

At your school, how often do students from different races, ethnicities, or cultures hang out with each other?

At your school, how common is it for students to have close friends from different racial, ethnic, or cultural backgrounds?

How fairly do students at your school treat people from different races, ethnicities, or cultures?

How fairly do adults at your school treat people from different races, ethnicities, or cultures?

Cultural Awareness and Action (5-point Likert scale)

How often do teachers encourage you to learn about people from different races, ethnicities, or cultures?

How often do you think about what someone of a different race, ethnicity, or culture experiences?

How confident are you that students at your school can have honest conversations with each other about race?

At your school, how often are you encouraged to think more deeply about race-related topics with other students at your school?

How comfortable are you sharing your thoughts about race-related topics with other students at your school?

How often do students at your school have important conversations about race, even when they might be uncomfortable?

When there are major events related to race, how often do adults at your school talk about them with students?

How well does your school help students speak out against racism?

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About This Work

To help D.C. schools address student well-being, **Education Forward DC** and **Venture Philanthropy Partners+Raise DC** supported a cohort of 12 LEAs in the nation's capital to administer selected domains of the Panorama SEL survey to students in grades 3-12. The organizations partnered with Bellwether to analyze schools' survey data. This report is intended to aid educators, policymakers, and communities in interpreting the survey results, monitoring progress over time, and identifying strengths and areas for growth in student well-being.

Education Forward DC

An organization that invests in the transformation of public schools in the District of Columbia by funding, supporting, and connecting the work of education leaders committed to ensuring students thrive.

Venture Philanthropy Partners+Raise DC

A philanthropic investment organization, Venture Philanthropy Partners+Raise DC creates connections and drives actions that improve life outcomes for youth (0-24) in Greater Washington. We approach systems change with a racial equity lens through cross-sector collaboration and direct investments, focused on early childhood education, boys and young men of color, and career and college readiness.

About the Authors

KRISTEN CARROLL

Kristen Carroll is an associate partner at Bellwether in the Policy and Evaluation practice area. She can be reached at **kristen.carroll@bellwether.org**.

PRIYANKA PATEL

Priyanka Patel is a senior analyst at Bellwether in the Policy and Evaluation practice area. She can be reached at **priyanka.patel@bellwether.org**.

EBONY LAMBERT

Ebony Lambert is an associate partner at Bellwether in the Policy and Evaluation practice area. She can be reached at **ebony.lambert@bellwether.org**.

MELISSA STEEL KING

Melissa Steel King is a partner and Evaluation leader in the Policy and Evaluation practice area at Bellwether. She can be reached at **melissa.king@bellwether.org**.

About Bellwether

Bellwether is a national nonprofit that exists to transform education to ensure systemically marginalized young people achieve outcomes that lead to fulfilling lives and flourishing communities. Founded in 2010, we work hand in hand with education leaders and organizations to accelerate their impact, inform and influence policy and program design, and share what we learn along the way. For more, visit **bellwether.org**.

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