

INTRODUCTION

During the 2021-2022 school year, K-12 districts across the nation continued to deal with unprecedented disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic, economic uncertainty, and a heightened focus on equity. While many had hoped the 2021-2022 school year would be an opportunity for revitalization and return to normalcy, many districts are facing new and continued challenges that have affected their strategic goals. Brookings Institute notes that at the end of 2021, schools "faced severe staff shortages, high rates of absenteeism and quarantines, and rolling school closures"¹. Both students and educators continue to struggle with mental health challenges, higher rates of violence and misbehavior, and concerns about lost instructional time.² For example, a study done by Brown University tracked changes in math and reading achievement for 5.4 million U.S. students across the first two years of the pandemic and the achievement gap increased among various student populations.³ Research has also found that students continued to deal with social-emotional health challenges from being in a virtual environment and the ongoing pandemic as they returned to in-person learning.⁴

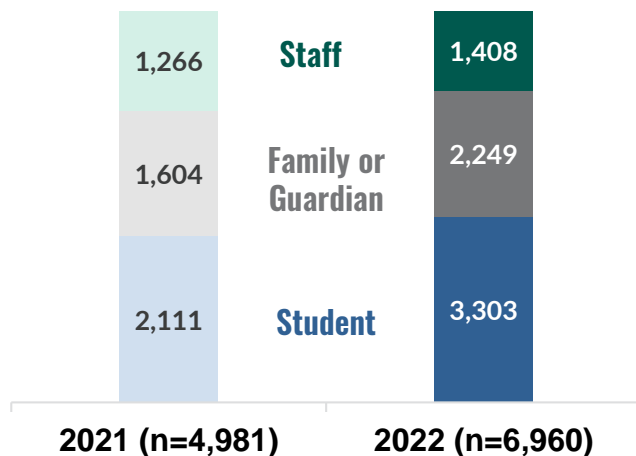
In Spring 2022, Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) administered an online survey to students in Grades 6-12, staff members, and families and guardians to gather stakeholder perceptions of school and district climate generally as well as perceptions of educational equity specifically. The survey was designed to provide ACPS with information to inform planning and identify critical areas for improvement related to the division's [ACPS 2025: Equity For All](#) strategic plan. This survey was also administered during the 2020-21 school year..

SURVEY PARTICIPATION

A total of 6,960 ACPS stakeholders participated in the Spring 2022 survey. However, the total number of respondents varies for each individual survey question. Additional details on survey participation and participant demographics can be viewed at the end of this summary report.

This report primarily discusses results from 2021-22 (2022) and offers comparisons to 2020-21 (2021) where relevant. Results are organized around six main themes: academic environment, equity, restorative practices, social-emotional supports and environment, stakeholder inclusiveness, and staff social environment.

Survey Respondents by Stakeholder Role and Year



¹Kuhfeld, M. et al. "The Pandemic Has Had Devastating Impacts on Learning. What Will It Take to Help Students Catch Up?" March 3, 2022. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2022/03/03/the-pandemic-has-had-devastating-impacts-on-learning-what-will-it-take-to-help-students-catch-up/>

²ibid.

³Kuhfeld, M., J. Soland, and K. Lewis. "Test Score Patterns Across Three COVID-19 Impacted School Years." <https://edworkingpapers.com/sites/default/files/ai22-521.pdf>

⁴ Becker, M.S. "Educators Are Key in Protecting Student Mental Health during the COVID-19 Pandemic." Brookings, February 24, 2021.

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2021/02/24/educators-are-key-in-protecting-student-mental-health-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

AREAS OF STRENGTH

- Most families, staff, and students have positive perceptions of the learning environment, teachers, and school climate overall. Survey respondents are most likely to agree that students feel welcome at school (Family: 82%, Staff: 89%, Student 68%), that teachers provide extra support when needed (Family: 80%, Staff: 93%, Student: 82%), and that students are encouraged to be active participants in learning (Family: 79%, Staff: 91%, Student: 70%). Broadly, student responses declined from 2021 to 2022 across most related questions, while family/guardian and staff responses were more likely to remain the same or increase slightly.
- Stakeholders also report positive impressions of the social-emotional environment and supports at their school. In particular, a majority report that adults at school care about all students (Family: 79%, Staff: 87%, Student: 66%). Student agreement decreased by 13 percentage points between 2021 and 2022, though family and staff agreement did not change. While students and families agree at a lower rate than staff, the majority also agree that adults at school support students, connect students with supports, and help students with problems other than schoolwork (Family: 67-76%, Staff: 76-88%, Student: 62-66%).

AREAS OF CONTINUED FOCUS

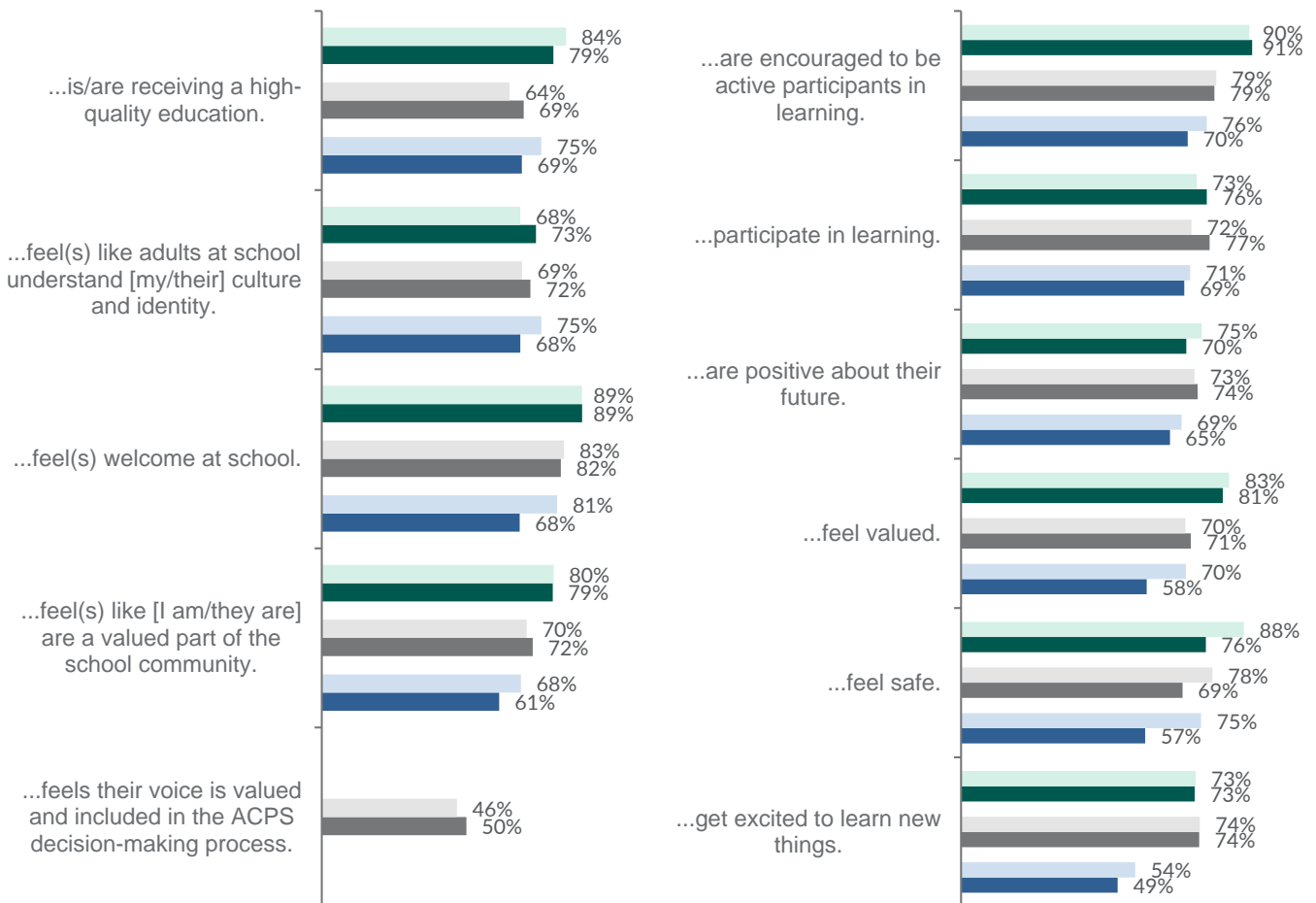
- Feeling of safety at school declined between 2021 and 2022. This trend was seen across two questions related to school safety and all three stakeholder groups. Students are less likely to agree that they feel safe at school (58%) than staff (76%) and family/guardians (73%). Agreement that they (or their child) feel safe during school declined in 2022 by 17 percentage points for students, 11 percentage points for staff, and 9 percentage points for family/guardians. Agreement that students are frequently bullied at school (Family: 36%; Staff: 23%; Students: 41%) also increased by about 11 percentage points for all stakeholder groups between 2021 and 2022.
- There are opportunities to strengthen student and staff relationships. Only a slight majority of students (52%) agree that students respect other students from different backgrounds, a 15-percentage point decline from 2021. Similarly, an increasing percentage of students (34% in 2021 to 41% in 2022) agree that students from different backgrounds are treated differently when they break the rules. Students and staff members report varying use of restorative practices in classrooms. Fewer than half (Student: 29%; Staff: 39%) report that they participate in or facilitate community circles at least once a week and 36% of students report never participating. Slightly more than half of staff (59%) agree that they are comfortable using restorative practices. These results are similar to 2021.

ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

- Most stakeholders report positive perceptions of the learning environment at their or their child's school, where students feel welcome, valued, and engaged in learning. Compared to 2021, perceptions in 2022 remain similar for most questions, varying by less than 5 percentage points in either direction. Student responses generally declined across most questions, while family/guardian and staff responses were more likely to remain the same or increase slightly. There was a more substantial and consistent decline in the percentage of all groups agreeing that students feel safe at school, though a majority continue to agree with this statement (76% staff; 69% family/guardian; 57% students).

Most Students at My/My Child's School... (% Agree + Strongly Agree)

■ 2021 Staff
 ■ 2021 Family/Guardian
 ■ 2021 Student
■ 2022 Staff
 ■ 2022 Family/Guardian
 ■ 2022 Student

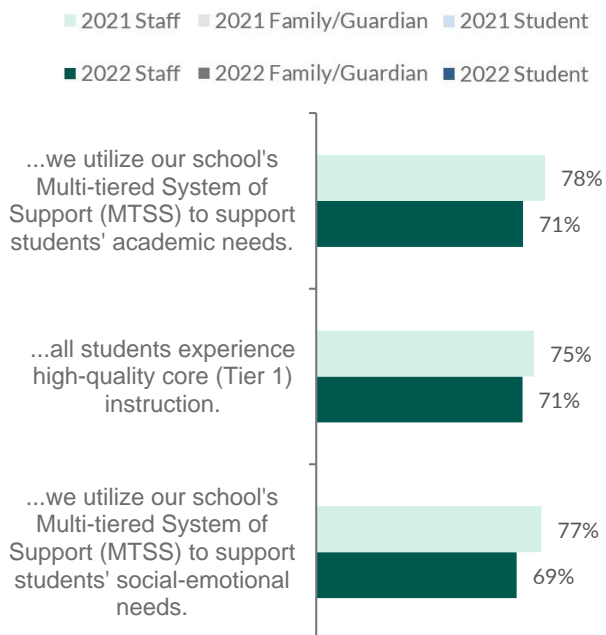


ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT (CONTINUED)

- Family/guardians continue to be less likely than staff and students to agree that their school sets high academic expectations for all students, though family/guardian perceptions improved in 2022 and a majority of all three stakeholder groups agree overall.
- About 60% across all stakeholder groups believe that their school prepares students to engage with the local and global communities. Staff agreement declined in 2022, while student and family/guardian agreement increased or remain constant.
- Most stakeholders believe that schools help to develop skills in collaboration, problem-solving, creativity, and self-advocacy. However, family/guardians are less likely to agree than students and staff members. Student agreement declined across all skill areas, family agreement increased slightly, and staff agreement remained mostly similar between 2021 and 2022.
- While the majority of staff agree with statements related to MTSS use (69-71%), agreement declined between 2021 and 2022.

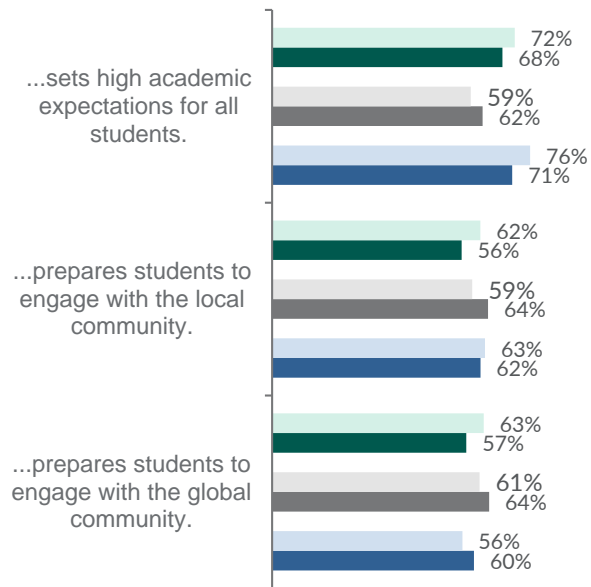
At My School...

(% Agree + Strongly Agree)



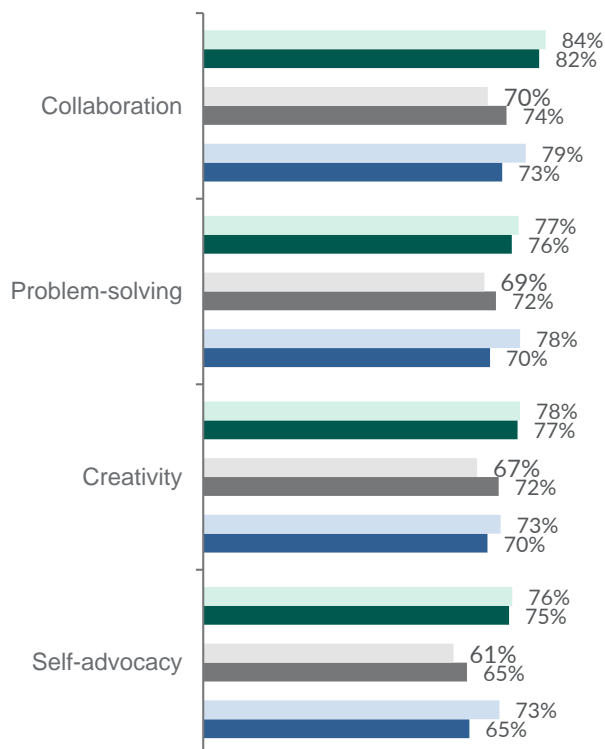
My/My Child's School...

(% Agree + Strongly Agree)



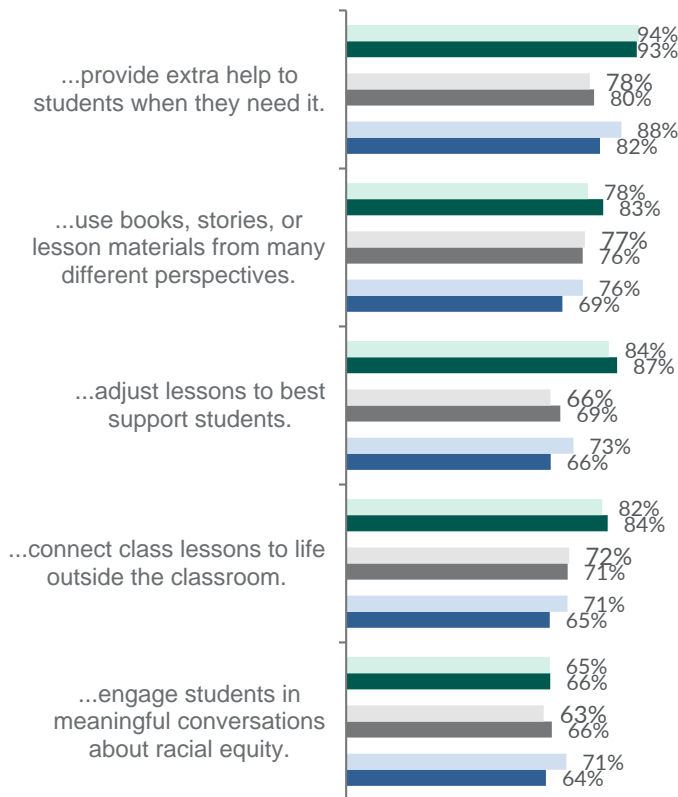
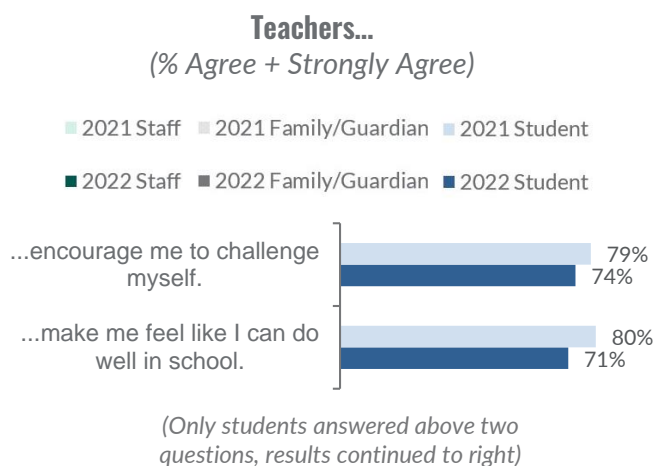
My/My Child's School Helps Students Develop...

(% Agree + Strongly Agree)



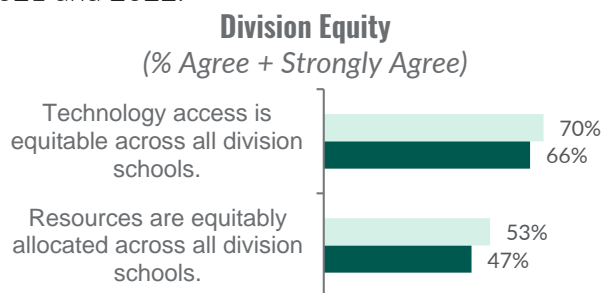
ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT (CONTINUED)

- Most stakeholders agree with statements related to teacher support and instruction and are most likely to agree that teachers provide extra support to help students when they need it. Student agreement with all statements declined in 2022 by 5 to 9 percentage points. Family/guardian and staff agreement remained more similar across 2021 and 2022.

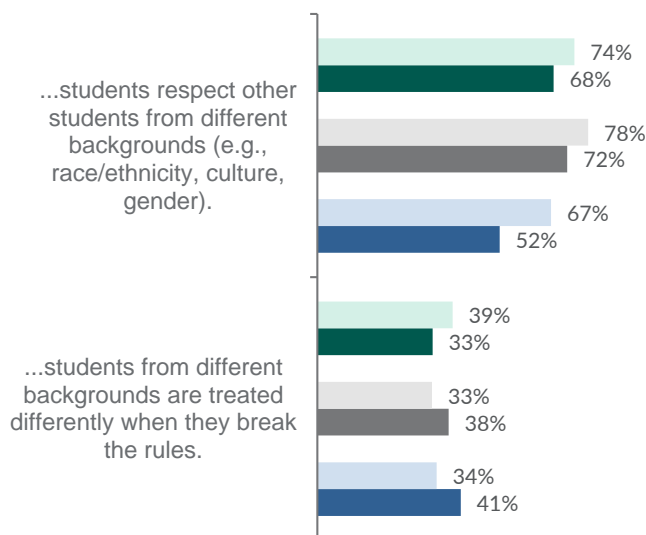


EQUITY

- Slightly less than half of staff members (47%) agree that resources are equitably allocated across schools, though 66% agree that technology access is equitable. Agreement for both statements declined in 2022.
- Most family/guardians (72%), staff (68%) and students (52%) agree that students respect other students from different backgrounds. Student agreement declined by 15 percentage points between 2021 and 2022.



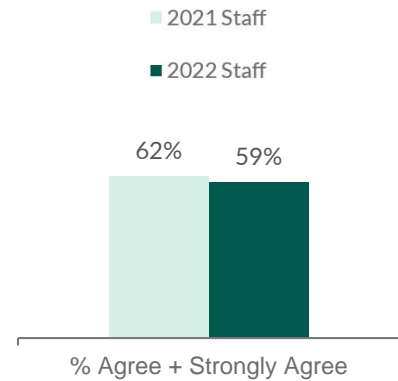
At My/My Child's School...
(% Agree + Strongly Agree)



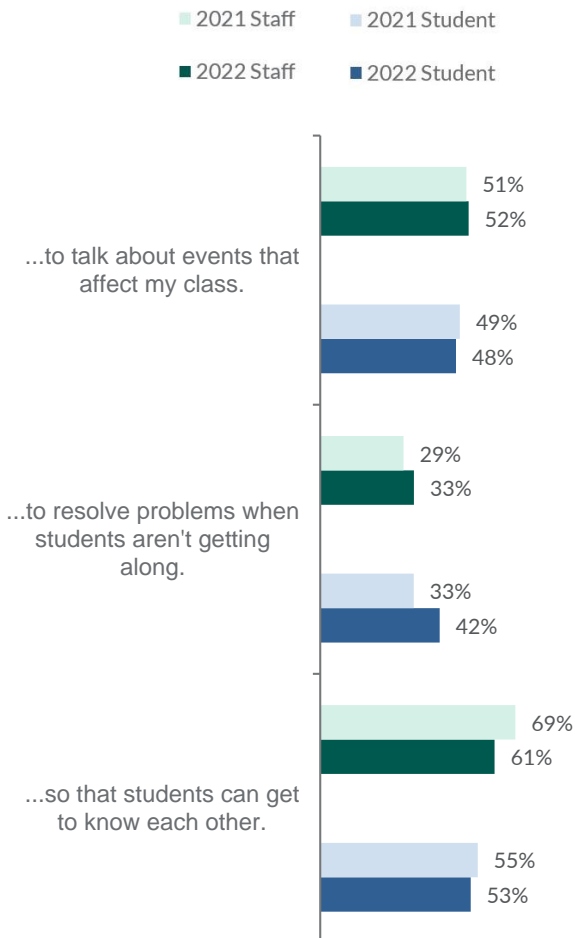
RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

- Students and staff members report varying use of restorative practices in classrooms. Fewer than half (Student: 29%; Staff: 39%) report that they participate in or facilitate community circles at least once a week and 36% of students report never participating. Slightly more than half of staff (59%) agree that they are comfortable using restorative practices. These results are similar to 2021.
- Students and staff most often use community circles to get to know each other and to talk about events. However, an increasing percentage of students (33% in 2021 to 42% in 2022) report using community circles to resolve problems when students are not getting along.

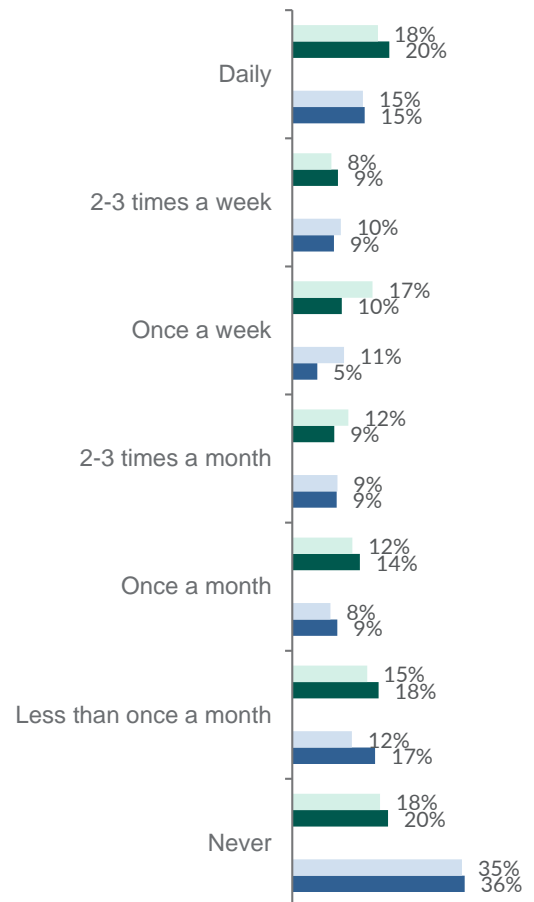
I feel comfortable using restorative practices



In my classroom, community circles are used...



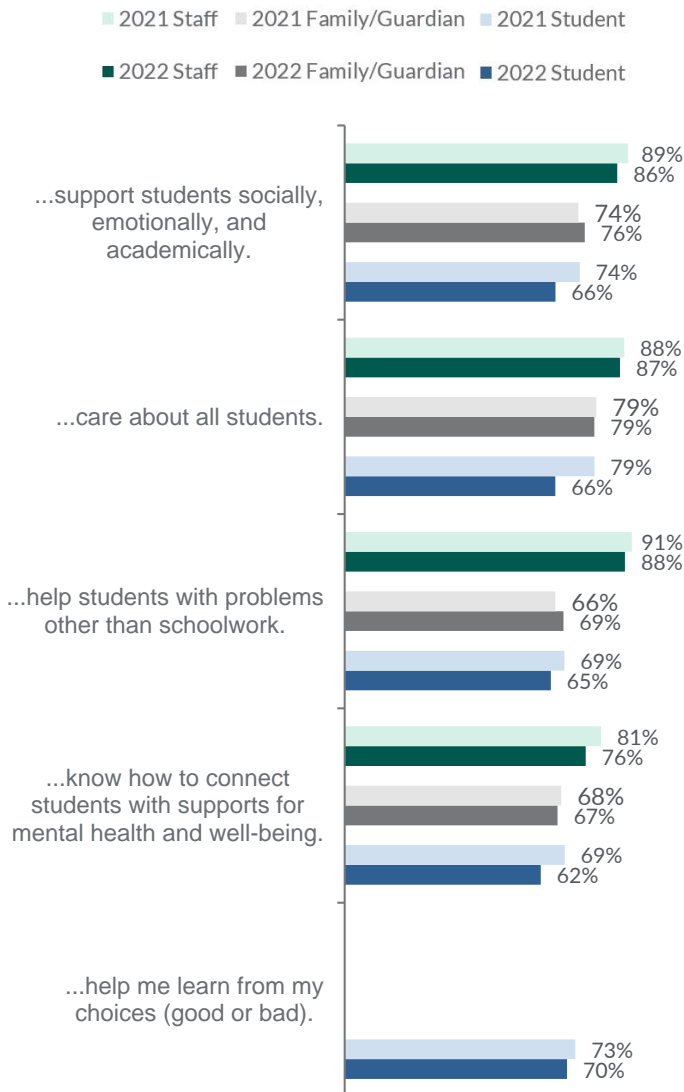
How often do you participate in/facilitate community circles in your classroom?



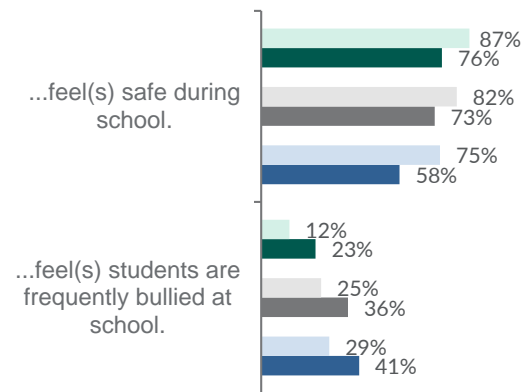
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORTS AND SCHOOL BUILDING ENVIRONMENT

- A large majority of staff agree that adults at their school care about, support, and help students with problems outside of schoolwork. Most students and family/guardians also agree, but at a lower rate. Family/guardian and staff agreement was similar in 2022 compared to 2021. Student agreement declined more substantially, especially agreement that adults at school care about all students (13 percentage point decline).
- Most stakeholders agree that schools feel safe, though students (58%) are less likely to agree than family/guardians (73%) and staff members (76%). Agreement levels declined in 2022 by 17 percentage points for students, 11 percentage points for staff, and 9 percentage points for family/guardians. An increasing percentage of all stakeholder groups agree that students are frequently bullied at school.

Adults at My/My Child's School...
(% Agree + Strongly Agree)



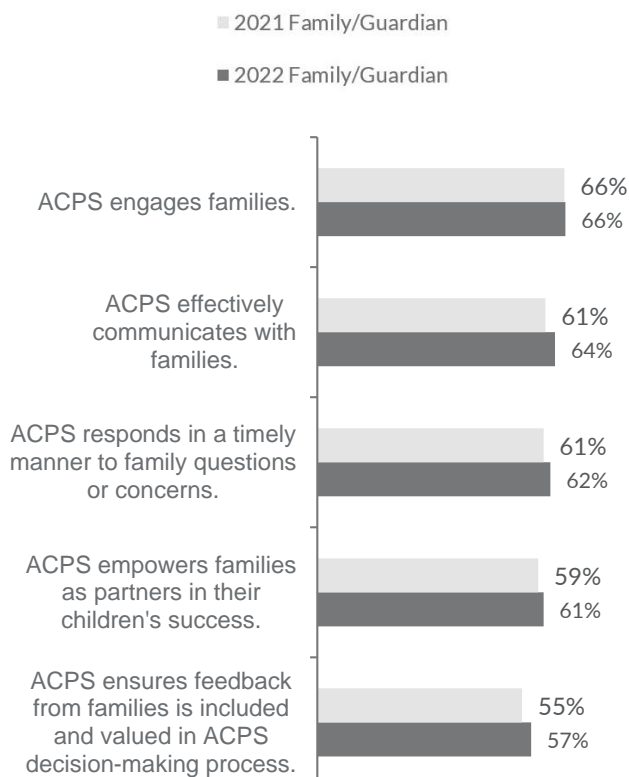
I/My Child...
(% Agree + Strongly Agree)



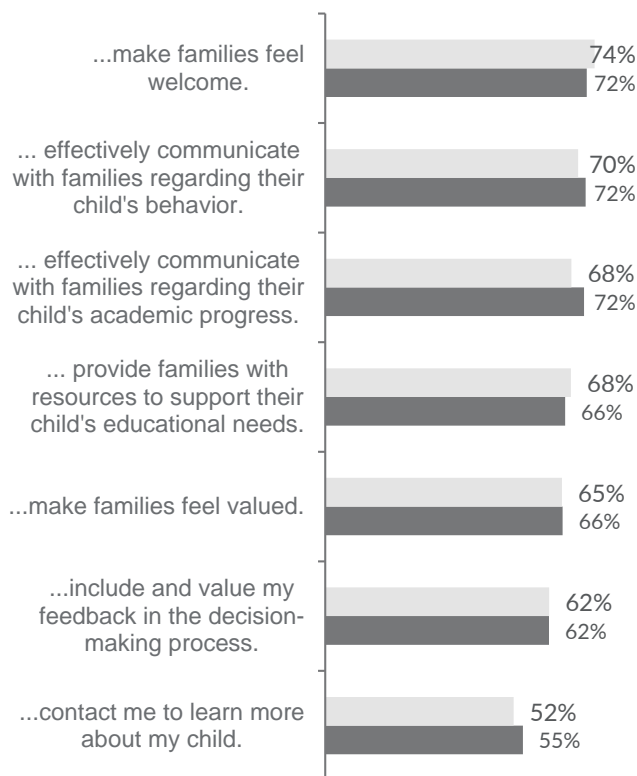
STAKEHOLDER INCLUSIVENESS

- Family/guardians have a slightly more positive perception of school-level engagement than division-level engagement, however over half of respondents agree with all statements on family engagement. Perceptions of division family engagement increased slightly or remained the same from 2021 to 2022.
- Compared to other areas, respondents are least likely to agree that school staff members contact them to learn more about their child (55%), that they are included and valued in decision-making (57% division; 62% school), and that ACPS empowers families as partners in student success (61%).

Division Family Engagement
(% Agree + Strongly Agree)



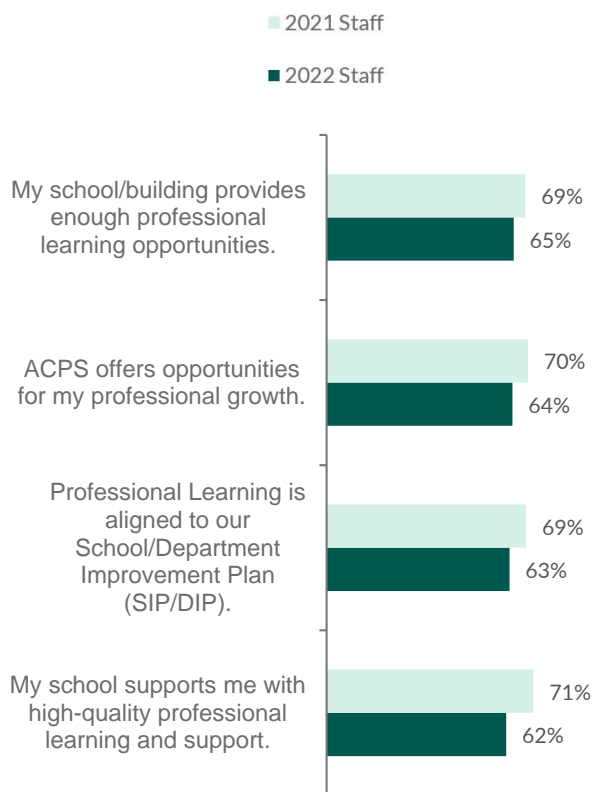
Staff Members at My Child's School...
(% Agree + Strongly Agree)



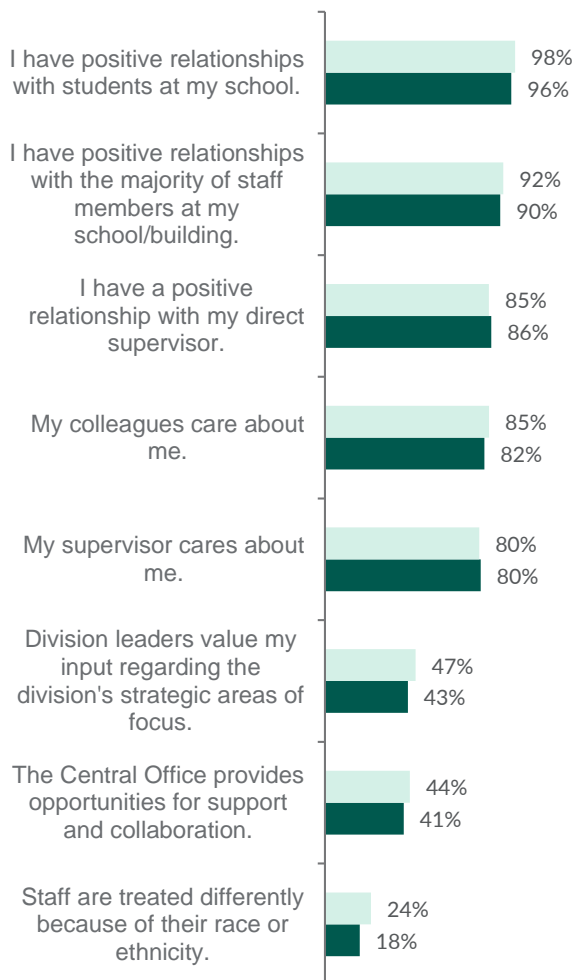
STAFF SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

- Nearly all staff members agree that they have positive relationships with both students (96%) and other staff (90%) at their school. Eighty to 86% of staff also agree that their colleagues and supervisor cares about them and that they have a positive relationship with their supervisor. There were only minimal changes in perceptions between 2021 and 2022.
- Staff report comparatively lower perceptions of their opportunities for professional learning (64-65%), value of their input on division strategic areas of focus (43%), and opportunities to for support and collaboration with the Central Office (41%). Staff agreement declined slightly in 2022 for all these questions.
- In 2022, a lower percentage of staff (18%) agree that staff are treated differently because of their race or ethnicity compared to 2021 (24%).

Staff Resources and Professional Learning (% Agree + Strongly Agree)

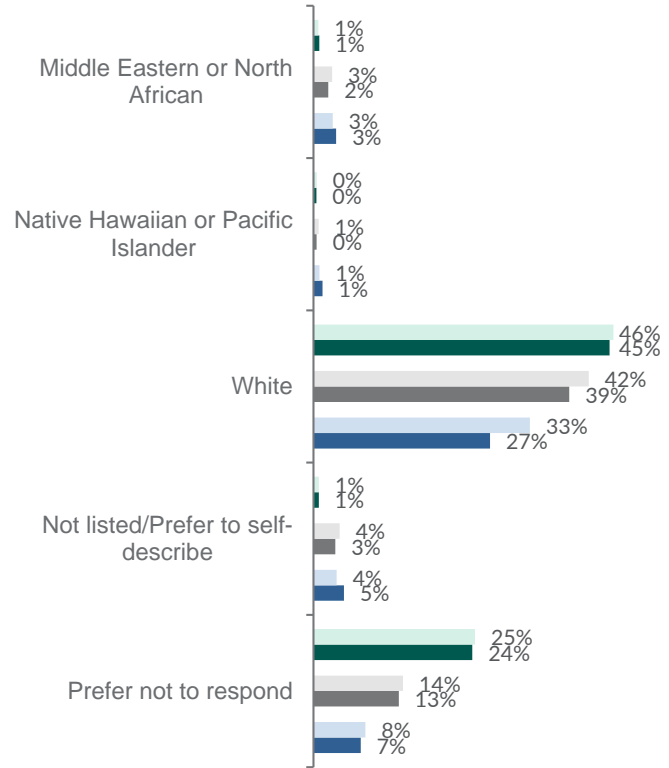
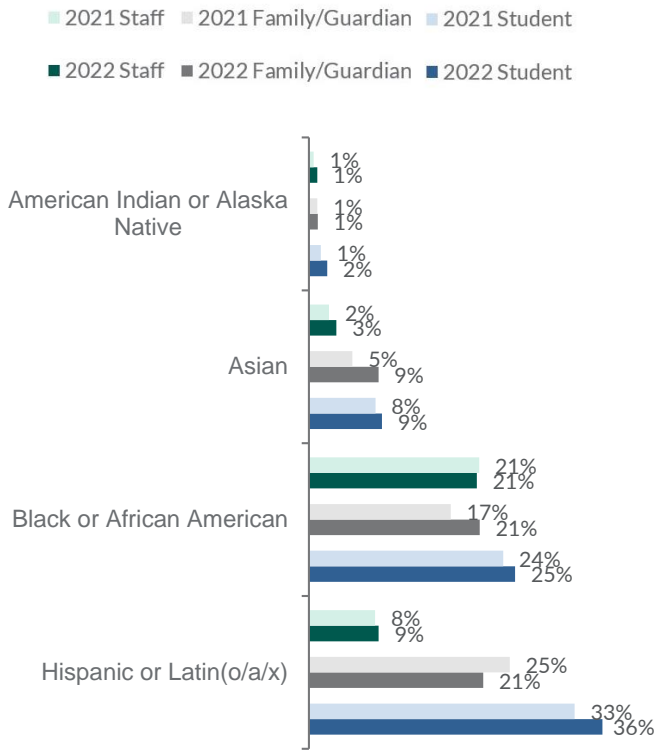


Staff Relationships (% Agree + Strongly Agree)



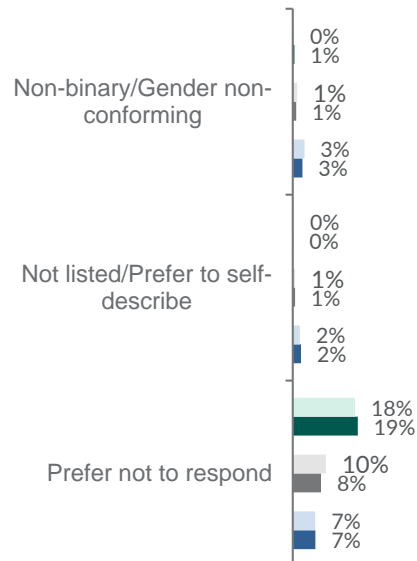
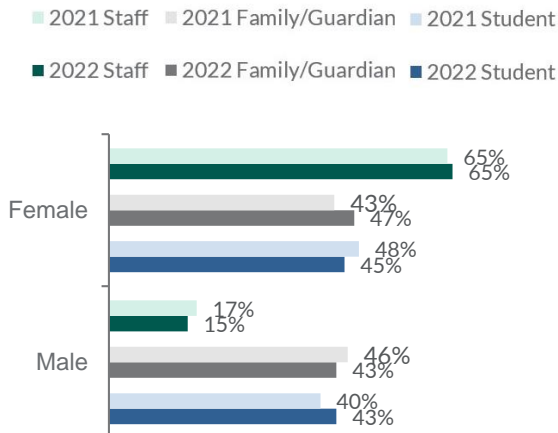
SURVEY RESPONDENTS

With which of the following categories do you/your child identify?
(Select all that apply)



Note: Student population demographics based on VDOE 2021-22 Fall Membership Dataset: Asian: 6%, Black: 26%, Hispanic: 38%, White: 27%

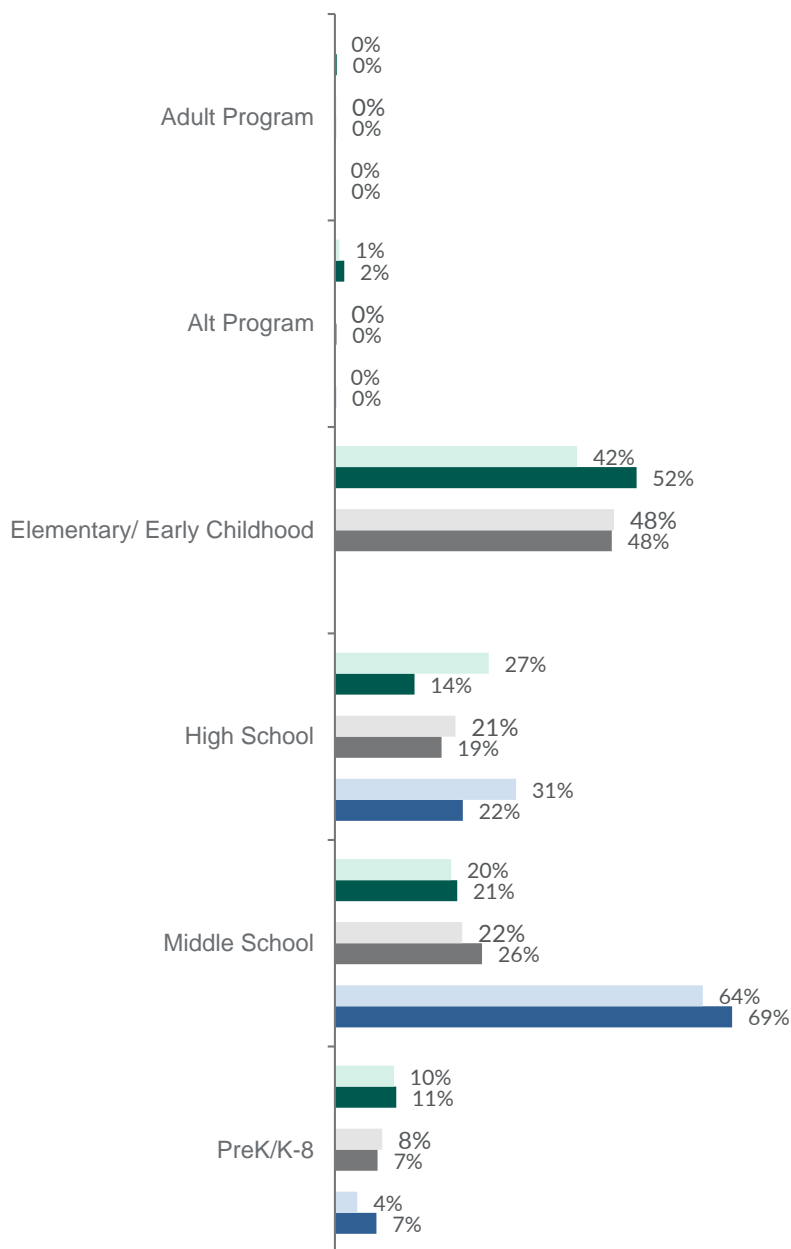
With which of the following gender identities do you/your child most identify?



SURVEY RESPONDENTS

School Grade Level

■ 2021 Staff
 ■ 2021 Family/Guardian
 ■ 2021 Student
■ 2022 Staff
 ■ 2022 Family/Guardian
 ■ 2022 Student



School or Division Staff

■ 2021 Staff
■ 2022 Staff

