

CALIFORNIA HEALTHY KIDS SURVEY



Palo Alto Unified Secondary 2023-2024 Main Report

This report was prepared by WestEd, a research, development, and service agency, in collaboration with Duerr Evaluation Resources, under contract from the California Department of Education School Health Office. For contract information, contact:

Hilva Chan
California Department of Education
School Health and Safety Office
Educator Excellence and Equity Division
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
hchan@cde.ca.gov

Recommended citation:

Palo Alto Unified School District. *California Healthy Kids Survey, 2023-2024: Main Report*. San Francisco: WestEd for the California Department of Education.

Contents

	Page
List of Tables	II
N. School Climate Module	1
1. Module Sample	1
2. Key Indicators of School Climate	2
3. Student Learning Environment & Academic Engagement	3
4. Fairness and Respect for Diversity	8
5. Disciplinary Environment	12
6. Student Peer Relationships	14
7. Social and Emotional Learning	15
8. School Antibullying Climate	17
9. School Physical Environment	19
10. Scheduled Lunch and Drinkable Water	21
Z. Palo Alto Unified Custom Questions	23
1. Module Sample	23
2. Custom Questions	24
Appendix I	32
Appendix II	33

List of Tables

	Page
N. School Climate Module	1
1. Module Sample	1
N1.1 Student Sample for School Climate Module	1
2. Key Indicators of School Climate	2
N2.1 School Climate Scales	2
3. Student Learning Environment & Academic Engagement	3
N3.1 Student Learning Environment Questions	3
N3.1 Student Learning Environment Questions – Continued	4
N3.1 Student Learning Environment Questions – Continued	5
N3.2 Learning Engagement Climate Questions	6
N3.2 Learning Engagement Climate Questions – Continued	7
N3.3 School Promotes Academic Success	7
4. Fairness and Respect for Diversity	8
N4.1 Fairness and Respect Scale Questions	8
N4.2 Racial/Ethnic Conflict Scale Questions	9
N4.3 Respect for Diversity Scale Questions	10
N4.4 Restorative Practices	11
5. Disciplinary Environment	12
N5.1 Clarity of Rules Scale Questions	12
N5.2 Disciplinary Harshness Scale Questions	13
6. Student Peer Relationships	14
N6.1 Student Peer Relationships Scale Questions	14
7. Social and Emotional Learning	15
N7.1 Support for Social Emotional Learning Scale Questions	15
N7.1 Support for Social Emotional Learning Scale Questions – Continued	16
8. School Antibullying Climate	17
N8.1 Antibullying Climate Scale Questions	17
N8.1 Antibullying Climate Scale Questions – Continued	18
9. School Physical Environment	19
N9.1 Quality of School Facilities Scale Questions	19
N9.2 Classroom Crowding	20
10. Scheduled Lunch and Drinkable Water	21
N10.1 Time for Lunch Scale Questions	21
N10.2 Clean and Drinkable Water	22
Z. Palo Alto Unified Custom Questions	23

1. Module Sample	23
Z1.1 Student Sample for Custom Questions	23
2. Custom Questions	24
Appendix I	32
Appendix II	33

School Climate Module

1. Module Sample

Table N1.1

Student Sample for School Climate Module

	Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11	NT ^A
<i>Student Sample Size</i>				
Target sample	788	909	891	–
Final number	618	687	498	–
Response Rate	78%	76%	56%	–

Note: ^ANT includes continuation, community day, and other alternative school types.

2. Key Indicators of School Climate

Table N2.1

School Climate Scales

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %	Table
Student learning environment [†]	74	64	67	–	N3.1
Learning engagement climate [†]	48	51	57	–	N3.2
Fairness and respect [†]	63	61	62	–	N4.1
Racial/Ethnic conflict [†]	14	18	21	–	N4.2
Respect for diversity [†]	79	70	71	–	N4.3
Clarity of rules [†]	71	53	52	–	N5.1
Disciplinary harshness [†]	22	13	14	–	N5.2
Student peer relationships [†]	69	67	70	–	N6.1
Support for social emotional learning [†]	77	63	63	–	N7.1
Antibullying climate [†]	58	51	51	–	N8.1
Quality of school facilities ^{†Φ}	57	59	61	–	N9.1
Time for lunch [†]	63	58	56	–	N10.1

Notes: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table numbers refer to tables with item-level results for the survey questions that comprise each scale.

[†]Average percent of respondents reporting “Agree” or “Strongly agree.”

^ΦIn-school only.

3. Student Learning Environment & Academic Engagement

Table N3.1

Student Learning Environment Questions

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
Student learning environment				
<i>Average reporting “Agree” or “Strongly agree”</i>	74	64	67	–
Adults at this school encourage me to work hard so I can be successful in college or at the job I choose.				
Strongly disagree	3	3	1	–
Disagree	5	5	4	–
Neither disagree nor agree	17	22	19	–
Agree	48	51	49	–
Strongly agree	28	19	27	–
My teachers work hard to help me with my schoolwork when I need it.				
Strongly disagree	2	4	1	–
Disagree	2	3	3	–
Neither disagree nor agree	13	23	22	–
Agree	51	51	50	–
Strongly agree	31	19	23	–
Teachers show how classroom lessons are helpful to students in real life.				
Strongly disagree	5	9	4	–
Disagree	11	12	13	–
Neither disagree nor agree	26	31	29	–
Agree	40	36	39	–
Strongly agree	18	12	15	–

Question HS/MS N.3-6: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... Adults at this school encourage me to work hard so I can be successful in college or at the job I choose. [In-school]... Adults from this school encourage me to work hard so I can be successful in college or at the job I choose. [Remote only]... My teachers work hard to help me with my schoolwork when I need it... Teachers show how classroom lessons are helpful to students in real life.

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table N3.1***Student Learning Environment Questions – Continued***

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
Teachers give students a chance to take part in classroom discussions or activities.				
Strongly disagree	1	3	1	–
Disagree	2	2	2	–
Neither disagree nor agree	12	19	16	–
Agree	50	54	57	–
Strongly agree	35	22	25	–
Teachers go out of their way to help students.				
Strongly disagree	2	5	2	–
Disagree	5	7	6	–
Neither disagree nor agree	24	29	30	–
Agree	43	45	43	–
Strongly agree	26	15	18	–
Teachers help students catch up when they return from an absence.				
Strongly disagree	3	5	4	–
Disagree	3	11	12	–
Neither disagree nor agree	22	30	29	–
Agree	48	42	41	–
Strongly agree	24	13	14	–
My teachers give me useful feedback on my work.				
Strongly disagree	1	4	1	–
Disagree	3	5	5	–
Neither disagree nor agree	17	25	23	–
Agree	53	51	54	–
Strongly agree	25	16	17	–

Question HS/MS N.7, 9-12: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... Teachers give students a chance to take part in classroom discussions or activities... Teachers go out of their way to help students... Teachers help students catch up when they return from an absence. [In-school]... Teachers help students catch up after being absent from online classes. [Remote only]... My teachers give me useful feedback on my work.

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table N3.1***Student Learning Environment Questions – Continued***

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
This school is a supportive and inviting place for students to learn.^Ø (<i>In-School Only</i>)				
Strongly disagree	2	4	2	–
Disagree	3	4	6	–
Neither disagree nor agree	19	25	26	–
Agree	48	51	50	–
Strongly agree	28	16	17	–

Question HS/MS N.8: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?...

This school is a supportive and inviting place for students to learn.

Notes: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

^ØItem not included in the scale.

Table N3.2
Learning Engagement Climate Questions

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
Learning engagement climate				
<i>Average reporting “Agree” or “Strongly agree”</i>	48	51	57	–
Students at this school are motivated to learn.				
Strongly disagree	4	4	2	–
Disagree	9	9	6	–
Neither disagree nor agree	41	34	26	–
Agree	35	40	44	–
Strongly agree	11	14	22	–
Students pay attention in class.				
Strongly disagree	3	3	2	–
Disagree	11	9	8	–
Neither disagree nor agree	41	43	37	–
Agree	35	36	43	–
Strongly agree	10	9	10	–
Students try their best in school.				
Strongly disagree	2	3	1	–
Disagree	7	6	5	–
Neither disagree nor agree	42	40	34	–
Agree	36	42	45	–
Strongly agree	12	10	15	–

Question HS/MS N.1, 2, 57-60: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... Students at this school are motivated to learn. [In-school]... Students from this school are motivated to learn. [Remote only]... Students pay attention in class. [In-school]... Students pay attention during class. [Remote only]... Students try their best in school. [In-school]... Students try their best on schoolwork. [Remote only]

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table N3.2***Learning Engagement Climate Questions – Continued***

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
Students turn in their homework on time.				
Strongly disagree	2	2	1	–
Disagree	5	8	11	–
Neither disagree nor agree	40	39	39	–
Agree	44	44	38	–
Strongly agree	8	7	11	–
Students usually follow the rules at school.^ø				
<i>(In-School Only)</i>				
Strongly disagree	3	3	1	–
Disagree	7	3	3	–
Neither disagree nor agree	30	30	25	–
Agree	46	54	55	–
Strongly agree	15	10	16	–

Question HS/MS N.61, 62: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... Students usually follow the rules at school... Students turn in their homework on time.

Notes: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

^øItem not included in the scale.

Table N3.3***School Promotes Academic Success***

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
This school promotes academic success for all students.				
Strongly disagree	1	2	1	–
Disagree	2	2	3	–
Neither disagree nor agree	19	24	23	–
Agree	54	54	49	–
Strongly agree	24	17	24	–

Question HS/MS N.63: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... This school promotes academic success for all students.

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

4. Fairness and Respect for Diversity

Table N4.1

Fairness and Respect Scale Questions

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
Fairness and respect				
<i>Average reporting “Agree” or “Strongly agree”</i>	63	61	62	–
Adults at this school treat all students with respect.				
Strongly disagree	2	4	2	–
Disagree	4	6	7	–
Neither disagree nor agree	20	24	23	–
Agree	45	49	47	–
Strongly agree	29	17	20	–
Students treat teachers with respect.				
Strongly disagree	2	5	1	–
Disagree	9	9	7	–
Neither disagree nor agree	33	35	32	–
Agree	39	39	44	–
Strongly agree	17	11	15	–
The school rules are fair.				
Strongly disagree	3	3	1	–
Disagree	7	3	4	–
Neither disagree nor agree	25	26	26	–
Agree	41	52	52	–
Strongly agree	23	16	17	–
All students are treated fairly when they break school rules.				
Strongly disagree	5	5	2	–
Disagree	10	5	9	–
Neither disagree nor agree	26	32	35	–
Agree	38	44	38	–
Strongly agree	21	14	15	–

Question HS/MS N.13-17: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... Adults at this school treat all students with respect. [In-school]... Adults from this school treat all students with respect. [Remote only]... Students treat teachers with respect... The school rules are fair... All students are treated fairly when they break school rules.

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table N4.2***Racial/Ethnic Conflict Scale Questions***

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
Racial/Ethnic conflict				
<i>Average reporting “Agree” or “Strongly agree”</i>	14	18	21	–
I have been disrespected by an adult at this school because of my race, ethnicity, or culture.				
Strongly disagree	54	38	31	–
Disagree	21	23	25	–
Neither disagree nor agree	12	21	23	–
Agree	8	13	14	–
Strongly agree	5	4	7	–
There is a lot of tension in this school between people of different cultures, races, or ethnicities.				
Strongly disagree	40	29	21	–
Disagree	28	28	27	–
Neither disagree nor agree	18	25	30	–
Agree	10	13	14	–
Strongly agree	5	5	7	–

Question HS/MS N.43-45: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... I have been disrespected by an adult at this school because of my race, ethnicity, or culture. [In-school]... I have been disrespected by an adult from this school because of my race, ethnicity, or culture. [Remote only]... There is a lot of tension in this school between people of different cultures, races, or ethnicities.

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table N4.3***Respect for Diversity Scale Questions***

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
Respect for diversity				
<i>Average reporting “Agree” or “Strongly agree”</i>	79	70	71	–
Students in this school respect each other’s differences.				
Strongly disagree	5	5	2	–
Disagree	6	6	6	–
Neither disagree nor agree	25	30	27	–
Agree	41	42	45	–
Strongly agree	23	18	19	–
Adults/teachers in this school respect differences in students.				
Strongly disagree	1	3	1	–
Disagree	1	2	1	–
Neither disagree nor agree	9	19	23	–
Agree	47	52	51	–
Strongly agree	41	25	25	–
Teachers show that they think it is important for students of different races and cultures at this school to get along with each other.				
Strongly disagree	1	2	2	–
Disagree	1	2	1	–
Neither disagree nor agree	13	23	25	–
Agree	49	51	50	–
Strongly agree	37	23	22	–

Question HS/MS N.46-51: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... Students in this school respect each other’s differences (for example, gender, race, culture, sexual orientation). [In-school]... Students from this school respect each other’s differences (for example, gender, race, culture, sexual orientation). [Remote only]... Adults in this school respect differences in students (for example, gender, race, culture, sexual orientation). [In-school]... Teachers from this school respect differences in students (for example, gender, race, culture, sexual orientation). [Remote only]... Teachers show that they think it is important for students of different races and cultures at this school to get along with each other. [In-school]... Teachers show that they think it is important for students of different races and cultures to get along with each other. [Remote only]

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table N4.4***Restorative Practices***

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
When there is a conflict between people, this school tries to make sure all sides are heard to help resolve the conflict.				
Strongly disagree	3	4	3	–
Disagree	7	5	5	–
Neither disagree nor agree	26	39	39	–
Agree	42	40	41	–
Strongly agree	22	11	12	–

Question HS/MS N.64: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... When there is a conflict between people, this school tries to make sure all sides are heard to help resolve the conflict (like restorative practices).

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

5. Disciplinary Environment

Table N5.1

Clarity of Rules Scale Questions

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
Clarity of rules				
<i>Average reporting “Agree” or “Strongly agree”</i>	71	53	52	–
This school clearly informs students what would happen if they break school rules.				
Strongly disagree	3	6	3	–
Disagree	6	12	13	–
Neither disagree nor agree	16	27	29	–
Agree	42	41	38	–
Strongly agree	33	14	16	–
Rules in this school are made clear to students.				
Strongly disagree	5	6	4	–
Disagree	5	11	14	–
Neither disagree nor agree	24	35	37	–
Agree	41	38	36	–
Strongly agree	25	9	10	–
This school makes it clear how students are expected to act.				
Strongly disagree	4	3	3	–
Disagree	4	7	7	–
Neither disagree nor agree	20	34	35	–
Agree	46	44	44	–
Strongly agree	27	12	12	–

Question HS/MS N.18, 23-25: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... This school clearly informs students what would happen if they break school rules... Rules in this school are made clear to students. [In-school]... School rules are made clear to students. [Remote only]... This school makes it clear how students are expected to act.

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table N5.2***Disciplinary Harshness Scale Questions***

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
Disciplinary harshness				
<i>Average reporting “Agree” or “Strongly agree”</i>	22	13	14	–
The rules in this school are too strict.				
Strongly disagree	14	11	7	–
Disagree	33	40	39	–
Neither disagree nor agree	38	37	40	–
Agree	11	8	10	–
Strongly agree	4	3	4	–
It is easy for students to get kicked out of class or get suspended.				
Strongly disagree	18	15	12	–
Disagree	32	33	37	–
Neither disagree nor agree	31	40	40	–
Agree	13	9	7	–
Strongly agree	6	3	4	–
Students get in trouble for breaking small rules.				
Strongly disagree	10	10	10	–
Disagree	24	32	30	–
Neither disagree nor agree	36	42	45	–
Agree	22	12	11	–
Strongly agree	9	3	5	–

Question HS/MS N.19-22: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... The rules in this school are too strict... It is easy for students to get kicked out of class or get suspended. [In-school]... It is easy for students to get kicked out of class (in person or remote) or get suspended. [Remote only]... Students get in trouble for breaking small rules.

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

6. Student Peer Relationships

Table N6.1

Student Peer Relationships Scale Questions

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
Student peer relationships				
<i>Average reporting “Agree” or “Strongly agree”</i>	69	67	70	–
Students enjoy doing things with each other during school activities.				
Strongly disagree	2	2	0	–
Disagree	2	2	3	–
Neither disagree nor agree	17	25	25	–
Agree	53	53	54	–
Strongly agree	27	18	18	–
Students care about each other.				
Strongly disagree	2	3	1	–
Disagree	3	3	4	–
Neither disagree nor agree	24	26	26	–
Agree	50	52	53	–
Strongly agree	22	16	16	–
Students treat each other with respect.				
Strongly disagree	3	3	1	–
Disagree	9	5	4	–
Neither disagree nor agree	32	31	28	–
Agree	37	47	52	–
Strongly agree	19	14	14	–
Students get along well with each other.				
Strongly disagree	2	3	0	–
Disagree	4	1	3	–
Neither disagree nor agree	28	27	24	–
Agree	47	55	57	–
Strongly agree	20	14	15	–

Question HS/MS N.26-29: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... Students enjoy doing things with each other during school activities... Students care about each other... Students treat each other with respect... Students get along well with each other.

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

7. Social and Emotional Learning

Table N7.1

Support for Social Emotional Learning Scale Questions

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
Support for social emotional learning				
<i>Average reporting “Agree” or “Strongly agree”</i>	77	63	63	–
This school encourages students to feel responsible for how they act.				
Strongly disagree	1	3	1	–
Disagree	4	3	5	–
Neither disagree nor agree	19	29	30	–
Agree	51	49	48	–
Strongly agree	25	15	16	–
This school encourages students to understand how others think and feel.				
Strongly disagree	2	4	1	–
Disagree	3	4	5	–
Neither disagree nor agree	19	29	30	–
Agree	48	48	48	–
Strongly agree	29	15	15	–
Students are taught that they can control their own behavior.				
Strongly disagree	1	4	1	–
Disagree	2	4	6	–
Neither disagree nor agree	20	28	29	–
Agree	55	50	50	–
Strongly agree	21	13	14	–

Question HS/MS N.30-32: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... This school encourages students to feel responsible for how they act... This school encourages students to understand how others think and feel.... Students are taught that they can control their own behavior.

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table N7.1***Support for Social Emotional Learning Scale Questions – Continued***

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
This school helps students resolve conflicts with one another.				
Strongly disagree	3	4	2	–
Disagree	5	8	9	–
Neither disagree nor agree	23	34	37	–
Agree	47	43	40	–
Strongly agree	21	12	12	–
This school encourages students to care about how others feel.				
Strongly disagree	2	4	1	–
Disagree	2	3	6	–
Neither disagree nor agree	18	29	30	–
Agree	54	51	48	–
Strongly agree	24	12	14	–
Teachers here make it clear to students that bullying is not tolerated.				
Strongly disagree	2	3	1	–
Disagree	1	3	5	–
Neither disagree nor agree	9	24	25	–
Agree	48	49	48	–
Strongly agree	40	22	21	–

Question HS/MS N.33-36: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... This school helps students resolve conflicts with one another... This school encourages students to care about how others feel... Teachers here make it clear to students that bullying is not tolerated. [In-school]... Teachers make it clear to students that bullying is not tolerated. [Remote only]

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

8. School Antibullying Climate

Table N8.1

Antibullying Climate Scale Questions

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
Antibullying climate				
<i>Average reporting “Agree” or “Strongly agree”</i>	58	51	51	–
If another student was bullying me, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.				
Strongly disagree	7	7	5	–
Disagree	9	9	13	–
Neither disagree nor agree	23	28	30	–
Agree	37	40	36	–
Strongly agree	24	16	16	–
Students tell teachers when other students are being bullied.				
Strongly disagree	5	5	4	–
Disagree	10	12	16	–
Neither disagree nor agree	35	43	40	–
Agree	33	28	28	–
Strongly agree	17	12	11	–
If I tell a teacher that someone is bullying me, the teacher will do something to help.				
Strongly disagree	2	3	1	–
Disagree	3	5	4	–
Neither disagree nor agree	15	27	29	–
Agree	51	46	49	–
Strongly agree	29	18	17	–

Question HS/MS N.37-40: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... If another student was bullying me, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school. [In-school]... If another student was bullying me, I would tell one of the teachers or school staff. [Remote only]...Students tell teachers when other students are being bullied... If I tell a teacher that someone is bullying me, the teacher will do something to help.

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table N8.1***Antibullying Climate Scale Questions – Continued***

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
Students here try to stop bullying when they see it happening.				
Strongly disagree	5	5	3	–
Disagree	13	9	10	–
Neither disagree nor agree	40	44	42	–
Agree	29	31	34	–
Strongly agree	13	11	11	–

Question HS/MS N.41, 42: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... Students here try to stop bullying when they see it happening. [In-school]... Students try to stop bullying when they see it happening. [Remote only]

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

9. School Physical Environment

Table N9.1

Quality of School Facilities Scale Questions (In-School Only)

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
Quality of school facilities				
<i>Average reporting “Agree” or “Strongly agree”</i>	57	59	61	–
My school is usually clean and tidy.				
Strongly disagree	2	3	2	–
Disagree	13	9	11	–
Neither disagree nor agree	30	29	28	–
Agree	41	48	49	–
Strongly agree	13	11	10	–
The schoolyard and buildings are clean and in good condition.				
Strongly disagree	2	2	1	–
Disagree	7	6	8	–
Neither disagree nor agree	28	31	28	–
Agree	40	47	46	–
Strongly agree	23	14	18	–
The school grounds are kept clean.				
Strongly disagree	4	3	2	–
Disagree	10	8	10	–
Neither disagree nor agree	31	33	30	–
Agree	40	45	46	–
Strongly agree	15	11	12	–

Question HS/MS A.35, N.52, 56: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?... My school is usually clean and tidy.... How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... The schoolyard and buildings are clean and in good condition... The school grounds are kept clean.

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table N9.2***Classroom Crowding (In-School Only)***

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
My classroom is so crowded it is hard to concentrate and learn.				
Strongly disagree	22	16	14	–
Disagree	45	39	39	–
Neither disagree nor agree	20	27	26	–
Agree	7	13	14	–
Strongly agree	6	5	7	–

Question HS/MS N.53: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?...

My classroom is so crowded it is hard to concentrate and learn.

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

10. Scheduled Lunch and Drinkable Water

Table N10.1

Time for Lunch Scale Questions

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
Time for lunch				
<i>Average reporting “Agree” or “Strongly agree”</i>	63	58	56	–
I eat my lunch at the right time of day.				
Strongly disagree	3	2	2	–
Disagree	5	4	5	–
Neither disagree nor agree	20	22	25	–
Agree	46	54	51	–
Strongly agree	27	17	17	–
I have plenty of time to eat my lunch.				
Strongly disagree	9	11	8	–
Disagree	13	15	20	–
Neither disagree nor agree	24	29	27	–
Agree	38	34	34	–
Strongly agree	16	10	11	–

Question HS/MS N.54, 55: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?... I eat my lunch at the right time of day... I have plenty of time to eat my lunch.

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table N10.2***Clean and Drinkable Water (In-School Only)***

	Grade 7 %	Grade 9 %	Grade 11 %	NT %
This school has clean and drinkable water.				
Strongly disagree	6	3	2	–
Disagree	8	5	4	–
Neither disagree nor agree	22	28	22	–
Agree	40	43	47	–
Strongly agree	25	20	26	–

Question HS/MS N.65: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?...

This school has clean and drinkable water.

Note: Cells are empty if there are less than 10 respondents.

Z. Palo Alto Unified Custom Questions

1. Module Sample

Table Z1.1

Student Sample for Custom Questions

	Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11	NT ^A
<i>Student Sample Size</i>				
Target sample	788	909	891	–
Final number	629	375	549	–
Response Rate	80%	41%	62%	–

Note: ^ANT includes continuation, community day, and other alternative school types.

2. Custom Questions

Table Z2.1

I help make decisions with my family.

	Grade			Total
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
Not at all true	3	4	4	4
A little true	23	20	22	22
Pretty much true	45	47	40	44
Very much true	29	28	34	30

Question HS/MS Z.1.

Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table Z2.2

My family members really help and support one another.

	Grade			Total
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
Not at all true	2	5	3	3
A little true	15	15	16	15
Pretty much true	31	42	35	35
Very much true	52	38	45	46

Question HS/MS Z.2.

Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table Z2.3

There is a feeling of togetherness in my family.

	Grade			Total
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
Not at all true	3	7	5	5
A little true	14	14	18	15
Pretty much true	30	40	34	34
Very much true	52	38	44	46

Question HS/MS Z.3.

Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table Z2.4***I have a friend my age who talks with me about my problems.***

	Grade			Total
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
Not at all true	15	13	8	12
A little true	22	16	18	19
Pretty much true	27	38	31	31
Very much true	36	33	42	38

*Question HS/MS Z.4.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.***Table Z2.5*****I have a friend my age who helps me when I'm having a hard time.***

	Grade			Total
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
Not at all true	9	11	7	9
A little true	16	14	19	17
Pretty much true	31	37	32	33
Very much true	44	37	42	42

*Question HS/MS Z.5.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.***Table Z2.6*****In my home, there is a parent or some other adult who expects me to follow the rules.***

	Grade			Total
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
Not at all true	1	2	1	1
A little true	3	3	6	4
Pretty much true	27	33	30	29
Very much true	69	63	63	66

*Question HS/MS Z.6.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.*

Table Z2.7***In my home, there is a parent or some other adult who is interested in my schoolwork.***

	Grade			Total
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
Not at all true	3	4	3	3
A little true	14	11	14	13
Pretty much true	28	33	29	29
Very much true	56	52	55	55

*Question HS/MS Z.7.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.***Table Z2.8*****In my home, there is a parent or some other adult who talks with me about my problems.***

	Grade			Total
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
Not at all true	5	6	7	6
A little true	17	17	18	17
Pretty much true	27	31	27	28
Very much true	51	46	48	49

*Question HS/MS Z.8.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.***Table Z2.9*****Do you go to bed at the same time or near the same time every night? (within 30 minutes)***

	Grade			Total
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
Always	16	15	10	14
Almost always (5-6 days each week)	56	47	41	49
Sometimes (3-4 days each week)	22	31	39	30
Almost never (1-2 days each week)	4	4	8	5
Never	1	2	2	2

*Question HS/MS Z.9.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.*

Table Z2.10***To what extent do you consider sleep difficulties to interfere with your daily functioning?***

	Grade			Total %
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
Not at all interfering	36	23	21	28
A little	39	41	35	38
Somewhat	17	24	24	21
Much	5	7	16	9
Very much interfering	3	5	4	4

*Question HS/MS Z.10.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.***Table Z2.11*****During my current semester, sleep difficulties affected my schoolwork.***

	Grade			Total %
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
Strongly disagree	38	14	14	24
Disagree	28	27	20	25
Mildly disagree	11	16	8	11
Mildly agree	16	25	30	23
Agree	4	13	20	12
Strongly agree	3	4	7	5

*Question HS/MS Z.11.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.***Table Z2.12*****During my current semester, I felt sleepy during the school day.***

	Grade			Total %
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
Strongly disagree	15	8	8	10
Disagree	15	11	8	11
Mildly disagree	14	12	9	12
Mildly agree	29	30	29	29
Agree	20	28	29	25
Strongly agree	8	11	18	12

*Question HS/MS Z.12.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.*

Table Z2.13***During my current semester, I had difficulty concentrating on things I did because I was sleepy or tired.***

	Grade			Total
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
Strongly disagree	28	14	12	19
Disagree	26	18	13	20
Mildly disagree	15	13	12	13
Mildly agree	18	32	28	25
Agree	8	16	24	15
Strongly agree	5	6	12	8

*Question HS/MS Z.13.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.***Table Z2.14*****During my current semester, I had difficulty remembering things because I was sleepy or tired.***

	Grade			Total
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
Strongly disagree	37	17	16	25
Disagree	26	25	18	23
Mildly disagree	13	16	12	13
Mildly agree	12	23	25	19
Agree	7	14	20	13
Strongly agree	4	6	8	6

*Question HS/MS Z.14.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.*

Table Z2.15

On an average school day and school night, how many hours do you play video or computer games or use a computer for something that is not school work?

	Grade			Total %
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
I do not play video or computer games or use a computer for something that is not school work	8	13	13	11
Less than 1 hour per day	21	19	15	18
1 hour per day	18	19	15	17
2 hours per day	23	24	24	24
3 hours per day	18	15	19	18
4 hours per day	5	7	8	7
5 or more hours per day	7	5	6	6

Question HS/MS Z.15.

Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table Z2.16

The books and lessons in my classes include examples of my race or ethnic background.

	Grade			Total %
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
Strongly disagree	8	10	9	9
Disagree	10	14	10	11
Neither disagree nor agree	41	40	34	38
Agree	30	26	34	30
Strongly agree	10	10	13	11

Question HS/MS Z.16.

Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table Z2.17

How safe do you feel in the neighborhood where you live?

	Grade			Total %
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
Very safe	51	47	56	52
Safe	40	43	38	40
Neither safe nor unsafe	8	8	5	7
Unsafe	1	1	1	1
Very unsafe	0	1	0	0

Question HS/MS Z.17.

Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.

Table Z2.18***Do you know where to go for help with a problem?***

	Grade			Total %
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
No, never	4	4	4	4
Yes, some of the time	17	23	27	22
Yes, most of the time	46	48	44	46
Yes, all of the time	33	26	24	28

*Question HS/MS Z.18.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.***Table Z2.19*****During the past 30 days, on how many days did you not go to school because you felt unsafe at school or on your way to or from school?***

	Grade			Total %
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
0 days	97	94	97	96
1 day	2	3	2	2
2 or 3 days	1	2	1	1
4 or more days	0	0	0	0

*Question HS/MS Z.19.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.***Table Z2.20*****During the past 12 months, did you make a plan about how you would attempt suicide?***

	Grade			Total %
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
No	95	92	94	94
Yes	5	8	6	6

*Question HS/MS Z.20.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.*

Table Z2.21***During the past 12 months, how many times did you actually attempt suicide?***

	Grade			Total %
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
0 times	98	95	97	97
1 time	2	3	1	2
2 or 3 times	0	2	2	1

*Question HS/MS Z.21.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.***Table Z2.22*****If you attempted suicide during the past 12 months, did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?***

	Grade			Total %
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
I did not attempt suicide in the past 12 months	95	90	93	93
No	5	9	6	6
Yes	0	1	0	1

*Question HS/MS Z.22.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.***Table Z2.23*****If you have been forced to engage in sexual activity, did you report it to the police or the school?***

	Grade			Total %
	7th %	9th %	11th %	
I have never been forced to engage in vaginal, oral or anal sex	95	92	93	93
Yes	1	2	1	1
No	4	6	6	5

*Question HS/MS Z.23.**Note: Columns are not displayed if there are less than 10 respondents.*

Appendix I

2023-24 CHKS Secondary Survey Response Rates

Eligible Schools	7th %	9th %	11th %	NT %
Ellen Fletcher Middle	89			
Frank S. Greene Jr. Middle	100			
Henry M. Gunn High		100	72	
Jane Lathrop Stanford Middle	94			
Packard Children's Hospital/Stanford				
Palo Alto High		73	74	

Notes: Response rates are presented by grade level. Eligible schools listed are based on CBEDS 2023-24 public school and 2022-23 enrollment data files. Directly funded charter schools have been excluded from the list.

Appendix II

CHKS Content Overview, 2023-24

This brief guide to key CHKS Core Module indicators is designed to help survey users more easily understand and interpret their findings.¹ References are provided to the tables in CHKS reports where results for the indicators discussed can be found. References are also made to other relevant CHKS reports, factsheets, and resources that can be downloaded from the CalSCHLS website (calschls.org) for further information. What Works Briefs that provide guidance on best practices related to areas assessed by the survey are available from the California Safe and Supportive Schools website (ca-safe-supportive-schools.wested.org/resources).

Special attention is directed toward indicators related to the requirements of California’s Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAP). For a summary of state-level LCAP-related baseline CHKS data, see Factsheet #15.²

MAIN CONTENT FOCUS: SCHOOL CLIMATE AND THE NEEDS OF THE WHOLE CHILD

The main purpose of the CHKS Core Module is to assess indicators of school climate, pupil engagement, and student supports, all three key priorities required of the LCAP. It provides schools with essential data to determine the degree to which they provide the conditions and supports that all youth need to succeed in learning and developmentally thrive. Forty-nine items assessing 14 school climate domains included in a *School Climate Report Card (SCRC)*.³ All districts receive a district-level SCRC and can request school-level SCRCs. The items used in the SCRC assess school connectedness, developmental supports (e.g., caring adult relationships), and safety, including bullying and victimization.

School climate, as measured by the CHKS, is strongly related to student learning and academic performance. Data for high school students show that as school climate improves—as the schools became safer, more supportive, and more engaging—academic performance increased as well.⁴

In a ground-breaking analysis, a positive school climate was a distinguishing characteristic of California secondary schools that “beat the odds” academically and consistently performed better on the state’s standardized tests than *would be predicted* based on the characteristics of their students (i.e., comparing schools with similar student demographics). The more positive the school climate, the greater the probability there was for beating the odds. School climate was more strongly associated with beating the odds than a school’s level of personnel resources.⁵

In addition, the CHKS Core Module provides data to help understand the degree to which schools address the needs of the whole child. CHKS data show that California secondary schools made greater progress in raising standardized test scores over a one-year period when they had higher percentages of students who reported: (1) being less engaged in risky behaviors such as substance use and violence; (2) being more likely to eat nutritiously and exercise; and (3) experiencing caring adult relationships and high

¹ To see how local results compare with state averages in California, download a copy of the latest Biennial State CHKS report (calschls.org/reports-data/#state-level_reports). The Biennial State data are derived from a randomly-selected, representative state sample. County-level reports are also available on the CHKS website. Biennial State CHKS and county-level data can also be examined interactively on the CalSCHLS Data Dashboard (calschls.org/reports-data/dashboard).

² Austin. (2016). Download calschls.org/docs/factsheet-15.pdf

³ See calschls.org/reports-data/#scrc

⁴ O’Malley & Hanson. (2012). Download data.calschls.org/resources/S3factsheet3_API_20120716.pdf

⁵ Voight, Austin, & Hanson. (2013). Download www.wested.org/online_pubs/hd-13-10.pdf

expectations at school.⁶ These results suggest that addressing the health and developmental needs of youth is a critical component of a comprehensive strategy for meeting accountability demands for improved academic performance.

GRADE-LEVEL PATTERNS

More than 20 years of survey administration has demonstrated that as youth progress through secondary school, they become: (1) less likely to report feeling connected to school and being academically motivated; and (2) more likely to report truancy, involvement in substance use, and chronic sadness and hopelessness. Here are some additional grade-level patterns in CHKS data:

- **Seventh graders** report the highest rates of harassment and victimization, as well as participation in a physical fight and seeing a weapon on campus.
- **Ninth graders** report the lowest rates of developmental support.
- **Nontraditional (continuation school) students** report risk behavior (e.g., binge drinking, fighting at school) prevalence rates at least twice those of 11th graders in traditional comprehensive high schools.⁷ They also exhibit lower perceived school safety, school connectedness, and developmental supports. Continuation school students are a highly vulnerable population in need of a wide range of academic, social, emotional, and behavioral supports and intervention services.⁸

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND POPULATION GROUP DIFFERENCES (Section 3)

Indicators of the demographic and background characteristics of the survey respondents help users gain a better sense of how representative the survey sample is compared to the student population overall. They also enable users to analyze how survey results vary by important groups in the school and help them to identify, and target programs for, youth most in need. School districts can use these data to meet LCAP requirements to demonstrate actions across state priorities in regard to socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, and foster youth, as well as other indicators such as race/ethnicity, homeless youth, and LGBTQ youth.

In the standard CHKS report, breakdowns for selected key indicators are provided by all the LCAP priority groups such as race/ethnicity, gender, parental education, English learner and long-term English learner status, disability status, foster youth, and unhoused youth. For selected key indicators, the CalSCHLS Data Dashboard (data.calschls.org/reports-data/dashboard) can be used to display group differences across these same groups as well as additional groups (e.g., chronic sadness, caring relationships). Districts/schools can also subscribe to the District CalSCHLS private data dashboard to disaggregate their CHKS results by these groups for each school (email calschls@wested.org).

Racial-Ethnic Group Identification

Respondents self-report their identification with six racial/ethnic groups. In one study of CHKS data, both academic performance and school well-being—the degree to which students feel safe at, supported by, and connected to the school—varied consistently and persistently across schools by racial/ethnic groupings.⁹ They were highest in schools with large proportions of white and Asian students, as well as

⁶ Hanson & Austin. (2003). Download data.calschls.org/resources/FACTSHEET-3.pdf

⁷ In interpreting the results for 11th graders, note that many youth who are most disengaged and involved in high risk behaviors may have already dropped out of school or did not participate in the survey because of truancy or absenteeism.

⁸ Austin, Dixon, & Bailey. (2007). Download data.calschls.org/resources/FACTSHEET-7.pdf

⁹ Austin, Hanson, Bono, & Zheng. (2008). Download data.calschls.org/resources/factsheet_8.pdf

in middle- and high-income schools. Controlling for socioeconomic status and other school demographic characteristics reduced these racial/ethnic group differences, but the disparities still remained. This suggests that school climate factors related to student well-being may also play a role in racial/ethnic group differences in achievement. One strategy to close the gap may be to enhance learning supports that foster caring adult relationships, high expectations, meaningful participation, safety, and connectedness in schools serving large proportions of low-income African American and Hispanic students.

In the majority of cases, with notable exceptions for Asians, *the racial/ethnic gaps in performance, engagement, perceived support, and safety are greater within-schools than between-schools*.¹⁰ White students feel more safe, engaged, and supported than their African American, Hispanic, and Asian peers *within the same school*.¹¹ Inequities in these factors can possibly contribute to the achievement differences. Further, these findings suggest that practices designed to ensure equitable access to academic resources, opportunities, learning supports, and promotion of common experiences may be effective in ameliorating the gap.

Youth in Foster Care

Compared to youth who live with their parents, youth in foster care settings report much higher rates of substance abuse, poor school attendance and grades, more violence-related behaviors, more harassment, and higher depression risk.^{12 13} They were also more likely to be low in caring adult relationships and total developmental support.

Unhoused Youth

Homeless youth are substantially more likely than other youth to engage in substance use, have lower attendance at school and struggle with academic performance, feel less safe at school and experience greater levels of harassment and bullying, and exhibit higher levels of chronic sadness.¹⁴ Like youth in foster care, unhoused youth were also more likely to be low in caring adult relationships at school.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning or queer (LGBTQ) youth are at elevated risk for bullying and violence victimization, mental health problems, drug and alcohol use, and exhibiting poor performance in school.^{15 16} For example, analysis of the Biennial State CHKS data indicate that LGBTQ youth¹⁷ are:

- about 30 percentage points more likely than non-LGBTQ youth to experience harassment and bullying at school;
- 30-to-40 percentage points more likely to exhibit chronic sadness;
- 2-to-3 times more likely to smoke cigarettes, binge drink, and to have been drunk or high at school; and

¹⁰ Hanson, Austin, & Li. (2012). Download data.calschls.org/resources/FACTSHEET-13_20120405.pdf

¹¹ See calschls.org/my-surveys/

¹² Austin, Jones, & Annon. (2007). Download data.calschls.org/resources/FACTSHEET-6.pdf

¹³ See calschls.org/my-surveys/

¹⁴ See calschls.org/my-surveys/

¹⁵ Hanson, T., Zhang, G., Cerna, R., Stern, A., & Austin, G. (2019) Understanding the experiences of LGBTQ youth in California. San Francisco, CA: WestEd. [Download wested.org/resources/lgbtq-students-in-california/](https://download.wested.org/resources/lgbtq-students-in-california/)

¹⁶ Russell, S. T., & Fish, J. N. (2016). Mental health in lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 12, 465-487. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-021815-093153>

¹⁷ See calschls.org/my-surveys/

- receive substantially fewer social supports from teachers and peers at school than their counterparts who do not identify as LGBTQ.

Because of such disparities, it is important to examine disparities across LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ youth to identify needs and support the development of practices that promote the healthy development and safety of all youth.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE, SUPPORTS, AND ENGAGEMENT (Section 6)

A major focus of the CHKS is providing data to gauge the level of pupil engagement, an LCAP state priority on which districts are required to show improvement. Enhancing student engagement has been identified as the key to addressing problems of low achievement, high levels of student misbehavior, alienation, and high dropout rates.¹⁸ CHKS and other surveys consistently show that as youth progress through the school system, indicators of engagement decline.

It is important to look at engagement from three perspectives: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive. The CHKS provides data on all three types. As discussed below, the Academic Motivation scale, school boredom, and self-reported grades provide insight into cognitive engagement; the School Connectedness scale and school value item into emotional engagement; and attendance data into behavioral engagement. Another behavioral engagement indicator on the survey is substance use at school. Research shows that student engagement is malleable and that all three types of engagement are influenced by the level to which students perceive the school as having a positive environment.

The CHKS Developmental Supports scales provide insight into whether students experience three protective factors in their school (caring relationships, high expectations, and opportunities for meaningful participation). These protective factors characterize a positive school climate and are linked to school connectedness and positive academic, behavioral, and health outcomes. Other school climate factors assessed are the level of parent involvement and the quality of the school physical environment, both also LCAP priorities. The likelihood that students will be motivated and engaged is increased to the extent that their teachers, family, and friends effectively support their purposeful involvement in learning and in school.

Self-Reported Grades

The CHKS asks students to indicate what grades they received in school in the past 12 months. Although self-reports are not as accurate as actual report card data, they provide a general sense of the school performance of the survey respondents from their self-perception.

Academic Motivation

A four-item scale gauges student academic motivation by asking how strongly they agree that they try hard to do well on schoolwork, try hard because they are interested in the work, work hard to understand new things at school, and always try to do better. On the 2019-21 State CHKS, the percentage of students agreeing with the questions on this scale ranged from 64 percent in 11th grade to 71 percent in 7th.¹⁹

In order to achieve rigorous academic goals, students need not only a challenging and engaging curriculum, but they need to be emotionally connected to their learning. Student perceptions of the school environment and their degree of school connectedness influence their achievement motivation. But students may be behaviorally and/or emotionally invested in a given activity without actually exerting the

¹⁸ Wang, M-T, & Eccles, J. (2013). School context, achievement motivation, and academic engagement: A longitudinal study of school engagement using a multidimensional perspective. *Learning and Instruction*, 28, 12-23. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2013.04.002>

¹⁹ Download data.calschls.org/resources/Biennial_State_1921.pdf

necessary mental effort to understand and master the knowledge, craft, or skill that the activity promotes. This scale provides insight into the overall level of that mental effort.

In addition, the supplementary School Climate Module includes Student Learning Environment and Learning Engagement Climate scales and a series of questions about supports for learning and academic rigor.

School Boredom – School Value

Boredom is commonly experienced among secondary students, but its meaning and effects vary from student to student. Student boredom can be associated with specific subjects and academic tasks or it can be a pervasive response to school activities. Frequent boredom is associated with poor academic and mental health outcomes. Two CHKS questions ask about students’ school boredom (school is really boring) and how much they value their schooling experience (school is worthless and a waste of time). Combined, these two survey questions are used to identify School Boredom Mindset Profiles.^{20,21}

			School is really boring									
			Low Boredom				Mid Boredom			High Boredom		
			0 Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10 Agree
School is worthless, a waste of time	High Value	0 Disagree	Optimal 1 Low Boredom-High Value Students did not think school was boring and valued school highly				4 Mid Boredom-High Value Students valued school highly with mid-level school boredom			7 High Boredom-High Value Students indicated school was very boring, yet they valued it highly		
		1										
		2										
		3										
	Mid Value	4	2 Low Boredom-Mid Value				5 Mid Boredom-Mid Value Students with mid-level school boredom and school value			8 High Boredom-Mid Value Students indicated school was very boring, and valued it at a mid level		
		5										
		6										
	Low Value	7	3 Low Boredom-Low Value				6 Mid Boredom-Low Value			Suboptimal 9 High Boredom-Low Value Students indicated school was very boring, and valued it at a very low level		
		8										
		9										
		10 Agree										

Students with high school boredom and low school-value, a suboptimal profile, report substantially poorer well-being than students with low boredom combined with elevated school-value, an optimal profile.

²⁰ Furlong, M. J., Smith, D. C., Springer, T., & Dowdy, E. (2021). Bored with school! Bored with life? Well-being characteristics associated with a school boredom mindset. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 5(1), 42–64.
<https://www.covitalityucsb.info/ewExternalFiles/10.%20Furlong%20et%20al%20Boredom-JPSP.pdf>

²¹ See D. Michael Furlong’s RISE 360 School Boredom Resource to learn more about school boredom and how these two items are combined to identify School Boredom Mindset Profiles
https://rise.articulate.com/share/evs7SLqtz3xvWkgVnQjW6YNu1vFyRm6_#/

Moreover, students with high school boredom and high school-value may be experiencing episodic or task-specific boredom, which requires different types of support than students who exhibit the suboptimal pattern. The percentage of students falling in each of these profile groups is presented in the CHKS report so that school personnel can monitor the boredom experiences of students to best address their academic and social-emotional needs.

Absenteeism

Before good teachers with quality curriculums and engaging activities can improve academic performance, the students have to show up. The CHKS provides data to identify what proportion of respondents are at risk of chronic absenteeism (missed 3 or more days during the past 30 days) and what were the reasons for absences.

Poor attendance is a marker of a wider variety of other problems, including low school connectedness and learning engagement. Both the US Department of Education and the California Office of the Attorney General have launched initiatives designed to raise awareness about and combat chronic absenteeism, generally defined as missing 10 percent of school days. According to a report by Attendance Works, the nation's large and persistent achievement gaps are rooted in a largely hidden crisis of chronic absenteeism, especially among low-income and minority children.²²

Biennial State CHKS data indicate that the most common reasons for being absent in secondary school, after illness, are generally not getting enough sleep and anxiety or stress, followed by being behind in schoolwork, and being bored or uninterested in school, another good indicator of disengagement.²³

Developmental Supports

Research shows that when schools (or families or communities) provide three developmental supports—**caring adult relationships, high expectations, and opportunities for meaningful participation**—students are more likely to report more positive academic, social-emotional, and health outcomes, including higher grades, school connectedness, attendance, and perceived safety. CHKS measures these supports using multi-item scales. Results overall suggest that the great majority of students do not receive sufficient levels of support and that the supports received are lower in high school than in middle school, even though student need for them is arguably higher.^{24 25 26 27 28 29}

School Connectedness

School connectedness is one of the indicators of school climate that a California school district must address in its LCAP. Research shows that school connectedness is associated with multiple positive academic, social-emotional, and health outcomes.³⁰ It also shows that youth who feel safe at school, experience caring adults, and have opportunities for engagement and other developmental supports are more likely to feel connected to the school. The CHKS five-item School Connectedness scale is an important differentiator between low-performing and high-performing high schools and has value as an

²² Attendance Works & Everyone Graduates Center. (2017, September). *Portraits of Change: Aligning School and Community Resources to Reduce Chronic Absence*. Download www.attendanceworks.org/portraits-of-change/

²³ Austin, Hanson, Bala, & Zheng. (2023). Download data.calschls.org/resources/18th_Biennial_State_1921.pdf

²⁴ Hanson & Austin. (2002). Download data.calschls.org/resources/factsheet.pdf

²⁵ Hanson & Austin. (2002). Download data.calschls.org/resources/FACTSHEET-3.pdf

²⁶ Hanson. (2011). Download data.calschls.org/resources/S3factsheet1_caring_20120223.pdf

²⁷ Hanson. (2012). Download data.calschls.org/resources/S3factsheet2_participation_20120224.pdf

²⁸ O'Malley & Amarillas. (2011). Download data.calschls.org/resources/S3_WhatWorksBrief1_CaringRelationships_final.pdf

²⁹ O'Malley & Amarillas. (2011). Download data.calschls.org/resources/S3_WhatWorksBrief2_MeaningfulPart_final.pdf

³⁰ National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine. (2004). *Engaging schools: Fostering high school students' motivation to learn*. Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press.

indicator of school quality. The online Query CalSCHLS system (calschls.org/reports-data/query-calschls/) enables examination of how key survey indicators vary by school connectedness.

School connectedness declines markedly after elementary school. A substantial minority of middle and high school students are not connected to their schools. On the 2017-19 State CHKS, the average percentage of students agreeing to these scale questions declined from 62 percent in 7th grade to 53 percent in 11th, a decline similar to that found for the Academic Motivation scale.³¹ This may be related at least in part to their lower levels of developmental support. Prior analyses have indicated that the lowest rates of both connectedness and test scores are in low-income schools.^{32 33}

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement, including promoting parental participation in school programs, is one of the LCAP state priorities. A three-item scale assesses student perceptions (level of agreement) of three components of parent involvement: teachers communicating with parents about what students are expected to learn in class, parents feeling welcome to participate at this school, and school staff taking parent concerns seriously. The same questions also are asked on the staff and parent surveys so that perceptions can be compared across all three stakeholder groups. A large and growing body of evidence has linked school success to the manner and degree to which a school communicates with parents, engages them both in school activities and education, and fosters a school climate that parents perceive as warm, inviting, and helpful.³⁴

Facilities and Physical Environment

As an indicator of student perceptions of the school's physical environment, the CHKS includes a question asking students how much they agree the school "is usually clean and tidy." Additional questions are included in the supplementary School Climate Module. An analysis of 2018/20 data from the questions on both modules found that a plurality of students report that their school facilities are in good condition, but a non-trivial minority of students were dissatisfied with the condition of their school facilities.³⁵ Between 20 percent and 25 percent of students disagree or strongly disagree on the quality of the physical environment items. Almost one-third of schools serving 11th graders were categorized as having low quality physical environments based on student reports on the clean and tidy item. Student perceptions of the quality of their school's physical environment were strongly related to student achievement.

SCHOOL VIOLENCE, VICTIMIZATION, AND SAFETY (Section 8)

The CHKS asks students a wide range of questions to ascertain the scope and nature of physical and verbal violence and victimization that occurs on campus, as well as vandalism, and the overall level of school safety.³⁶ Physical violence and weapons on campus have long been a major public concern. Equally disruptive are the uncounted acts of bullying, teasing, and other nonviolent misbehavior among youth, such as substance use and sales on campus.³⁷ These behaviors adversely affect not only students' ability

³¹ Austin, Hanson, Zhang, & Zheng. (2020). Download data.calschls.org/resources/Biennial_State_1719.pdf. School Connectedness was not assessed on the 2019-21 State CHKS because the majority of students did not attend school in-person in 2020-21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

³² Austin, Hanson, & Voight. (2013). Download data.calschls.org/resources/S3factsheet5_connectedness_20130827.pdf

³³ O'Malley & Amarillas. (2011). Download data.calschls.org/resources/S3_WhatWorksBrief4_Connectedness_final.pdf

³⁴ Wilder, S. (2014). Effects of parental involvement on academic achievement. A meta-synthesis. *Educational Review*, 66:3, 377-397.

³⁵ Hanson & Zheng. (2021). Download calschls.org/docs/facilities_030221.pdf

³⁶ The CHKS also includes two violence-related questions that are not school based: the frequency students experienced cyberbullying and whether they are gang members.

³⁷ Juvonen, J., & Graham, S. (2001). *Peer harassment in school: The plight of the vulnerable and victimized*. New York: Guilford Press.

to learn and willingness to attend school, but also the overall school environment, the ability of teachers to teach, and the willingness of adults to enter the teaching profession.^{38 39 40}

Perceived Safety

Perceived safety is another indicator that districts/schools are required to monitor as part of their LCAP school climate priority. School safety is more than the antithesis of violence. Perceived school safety is psychological as well as physical. Feelings of insecurity can have multiple sources, not all of which correctly reflect the level of danger and violence on a school campus, such as verbal bullying. Both physical and psychological safety are essential for high quality teaching and learning. It is a key factor in students feeling connected to school. Another indicator important for attendance is the percentage of students who report missing school because they didn't feel safe (Table A6.3).

If students report low levels of perceived school safety, further examination of all the indicators related to bullying and victimization is warranted. Consider conducting follow-up student voice and feedback sessions such as focus groups or Student Listening Circles and integrating questions on why students do not feel safe.⁴¹

Harassment and Victimization

Most of the safety-related questions on the survey assess victimization. Because a relatively small number of students can victimize a large number of their peers, victimization questions provide important insight into the overall school climate. Nonviolent harassment in any form—threats, intimidation, rumors, and ostracism—can instill a sense of vulnerability, isolation, frustration, and fear among its victims, leading to engagement in health risk behaviors or avoidance behaviors such as missing school and social isolation. This type of misbehavior, vastly more common than any other, ruins the school day for many students.

The CHKS asks about the frequency with which students experienced any bullying/harassment related to six bias-related categories (gender, race/ethnicity, disability, sexual identity, religion, immigrant status), as well as for any other reason (Table A8.2). About three-in-ten secondary students report experiencing some harassment in the past year on the 2017-19 State CHKS, with the percentages declining between 7th and 11th grades.⁴² Analyses show that victims of harassment are more likely to not feel safe at, and connected to, school; to have higher truancy; and to experience lower developmental (resilience) supports at school.^{43 44} They report higher rates of fighting and weapons possession at school, as well as risk of depression. Students who report bias-related harassment, particularly for disability and sexual orientation, have poorer well-being than students who were only harassed for other reasons.

Different forms of verbal harassment at school are assessed by asking students about: mean rumors or lies; sexual-related jokes, comments, or gestures; being made fun of because of looks or speech; and, more generally, being made fun of, insulted or called names. Physical victimization is assessed by questions about having been pushed/shoved, threatened with harm or injury (without or without weapon), and being afraid of being beaten up. Students are also asked whether they have ever been in a physical fight as a measure of general violence.

³⁸ Barton, P. E. (2001). *Facing the hard facts in education reform*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

³⁹ O'Malley & Amarillas. (2011). Download data.calschls.org/resources/S3_WhatWorksBrief5_ViolencePerpetration_final.pdf

⁴⁰ O'Malley & Amarillas. (2011). Download data.calschls.org/resources/S3_WhatWorksBrief6_ViolenceVictimization_final.pdf

⁴¹ O'Malley & Amarillas. (2011). Download data.calschls.org/resources/S3_WhatWorksBrief3_Safety_final.pdf

⁴² Austin, Hanson, Zhang, & Zheng. (2020). Download data.calschls.org/resources/Biennial_State_1719.pdf. Harassment at school was not assessed on the 2019-21 State CHKS due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

⁴³ Heck, Russell, O'Shaughnessy, Laub, Calhoun, & Austin. (2005). Download data.calschls.org/resources/FACTSHEET-4.pdf

⁴⁴ Austin, Nakamoto, & Bailey. (2010). Download data.calschls.org/resources/FACTSHEET-10.pdf

The supplementary School Climate Module includes Bullying Prevention and Respect for Diversity scales to provide insight into what the school is doing to reduce the problem.

Vandalism and Weapons

Two other safety-related areas assessed by the survey are school vandalism and weapons possession. Students are asked whether they damaged school property or had their property damaged at school and whether they carried a knife or other weapon to school or observed someone else doing these things.⁴⁵ Overall, weapons possession is not common. Statewide, only about two percent of secondary students report carrying a gun and 4-5 percent report carrying another weapon.⁴⁶ About 14 percent of 7th and 9th graders report seeing someone carrying a weapon compared to 11 percent of 11th graders.

SUBSTANCE USE (Sections 9 and 10)

An important barrier to learning, positive youth development, and health, substance use is assessed by the CHKS Core.

Alcohol and Other Drug Use (Section 9)

The misuse of alcohol and other drugs (AOD) continues to be among the most important issues confronting the nation. For schools, the problem is particularly relevant. Years of research have shown that adolescent substance use is closely connected to academic performance and contributes to raising the level of truancy and absenteeism, special education, disciplinary problems, disengagement and dropout rates, teacher turnover, and property damage.

Reflecting this, on the California School Staff Survey, 39 percent of high school staff statewide reported that alcohol and drug use are a moderate to severe problem at their school.⁴⁷

Alcohol and Other Drug Use at School (Section 9)

AOD use at school is especially troubling. This is behavior that threatens not only the user's learning ability but also the school's efforts to educate all youth. It also is an indirect indicator of school disengagement. An analysis of CHKS data found that substance use and intoxication at school, being offered drugs at school, and lifetime intoxication were significantly related to changes in California achievement test scores one year later.⁴⁸ Schools with proportionately large numbers of students who reported these behaviors exhibited smaller gains in test scores than other schools.^{49 50}

Cigarette Smoking (Section 10)

Students who report smoking cigarettes are significantly more likely than those who do not to engage in alcohol and other drug use, be involved in violence and gang membership, and experience school-related problems and disengagement. To a lesser extent, students who smoke are also more likely to be victims of violence and harassment, feel unsafe at school, and experience incapacitating sadness and loneliness. These results suggest that efforts to reduce student smoking may be more successful if embedded in approaches that address a broad range of risk behaviors and problems.^{51 52}

⁴⁵ Students who participated in school exclusively via remote learning were not asked these questions in 2020-21.

⁴⁶ Austin, Hanson, Polik, & Zheng. (2018). Download data.calschls.org/resources/Biennial_State_1517.pdf

⁴⁷ Statewide CSSS. (2018). Download calschls.org/docs/statewide_1517_csss.pdf

⁴⁸ Hanson, T. L., Austin, G. A., & Lee-Bayha, J. (2004). *Ensuring that No Child is Left Behind: How are Student Health Risks & Resilience Related to the Academic Progress of Schools*. San Francisco: WestEd.

⁴⁹ Hanson & Austin. (2003). Download data.calschls.org/resources/FACTSHEET-3.pdf

⁵⁰ O'Malley & Amarillas. (2011). Download data.calschls.org/resources/S3_WhatWorksBrief8_AOD_final.pdf

⁵¹ Hanson & Zheng. (2006). Download data.calschls.org/resources/factsheet2update.pdf

⁵² Austin, McCarthy, Slade, & Bailey. (2007). Download data.calschls.org/resources/FACTSHEET-5.pdf

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH (Section 7)

Student mental health can have a big impact on their health and well-being. The CHKS Core provides four measures for assessing mental health among students: (1) whether they experience chronic, incapacitating sadness or hopelessness; (2) whether they ever contemplated suicide; (3) social and emotional distress; and (4) life satisfaction. Students who experience chronic sadness, compared to their peers who do not, are at elevated risk of a wide range of educational, health, social, and emotional problems, including lower school attendance, performance, and connectedness.⁵³ They also report lower levels of the developmental supports in their schools and communities that have been shown to mitigate these problems. Similar findings are found among youth who have contemplated suicide.⁵⁴

CHKS data also show that students who report bias-related harassment, particularly for disability and sexual orientation, have poorer overall mental health than students who are harassed for other reasons or not harassed. Students who report any harassment are about twice as likely to experience chronic sadness/hopelessness than their non-harassed peers.^{55 56}

See also the percentage of students who report missing school because they “felt very sad, hopeless, anxious, stressed, or angry.” In addition, the supplementary School Climate Module includes a Social and Emotional Supports scale that provides insight from students on what the school does to help promote mental health and foster social-emotional competencies.

⁵³ Austin, Nakamoto, & Bailey. (2010). Download data.calschls.org/resources/FACTSHEET-11.pdf

⁵⁴ Austin, Cragle, Delong-Cotty. (2012). Download data.calschls.org/resources/FACTSHEET-12.pdf

⁵⁵ Heck, Russell, O’Shaughnessy, Laub, Calhoun, & Austin. (2005). Download data.calschls.org/resources/FACTSHEET-4.pdf

⁵⁶ Austin, Nakamoto, & Bailey. (2010). Download data.calschls.org/resources/FACTSHEET-10.pdf