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DECEMBER 2013

# Chehalis School District

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District-Wide Synthesis Report

The BERC Group, Inc.



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Chehalis School District employs 162 teachers serving approximately 2,900 students. The district has three elementary schools, which are divided by grade band: Cascade Elementary School (K-1), R.E. Bennett Elementary School (2-3), and Olympic Elementary (4-5). These feed into Chehalis Middle School and then to W.F. West High School. In addition, the district has the Green Hill Academic School, which provides educational services to the Green Hill School, a juvenile detention facility. On average, the district's teachers have 14.2 years of experience and 78.4% have a Master's degree. The executive summary summarizes district findings around the key areas identified in the RFP, as well information on the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) program.

### Leadership

Focus group respondents from multiple stakeholder groups spoke positively about the district administration, with many respondents identifying the new superintendent as a positive change. Speaking of the new superintendent, a union representative shared, "He was hired in July and he came to every classroom in Chehalis to introduce himself." Teachers noted more effective communication from the district office and increased opportunities to participate in distributed leadership via committees. The leadership's willingness to take calculated risks also emerged as a strength. A school board member said, "We tend to pilot a lot of things. We get a little head start. We are not afraid." The Chehalis School District piloted the Teacher/Principal Evaluation Project (TPEP), and is piloting the SmarterBalanced assessment this year.

Building administration also emerged as a strength during focus group interviews. "I think we have some exceptional leadership at each school," one school board member remarked. Teachers tended to speak positively of their principals, noting strengths such as approachability, open communication, and supportiveness. "I feel like this is a building where you are not only respected, but your opinion matters and your work is appreciated," one staff member said, echoing a sentiment that emerged in a number of focus groups. Stakeholders in a number of buildings remarked on the "trust" their principals showed in them as professionals, remarking on their building administration's willingness to support risk-taking and on the degree of autonomy granted to them in the classrooms. However, this autonomy also means limited accountability of curriculum and instruction.

A focus for school leaders is the implementation of the new evaluation framework within CSD. As a pilot district, Chehalis is participating in TPEP for the second year, using an evaluation rubric based around the Five Dimensions of Teaching and Learning (5D) from the University of Washington's Center for Educational Leadership (CEL). Half of the teachers in the district are being evaluated using the 5D rubric. These staff members were chosen on a volunteer basis. Next year, all teachers in the district will be evaluated using the new evaluation system. According to union representatives, teachers who are currently being evaluated using the old rubric will partner with teachers who have piloted the new 5D rubric.



Focus group interviews with union and district representatives indicated some aspects of the TPEP rollout presented a challenge. A district official acknowledged, “The teacher evaluation is far ahead of the principal evaluation.” In addition, there has been some confusion as to how to apply the new rubric to special education teachers who are not classroom-based. When asked about the new evaluation system, union representatives said they were working “to layer in the teacher voice, the collaborative climate, and the support needed for growth, mentorship, and make it a growth model as opposed to a punitive model.” One union representative said:

It is a big change in a lot of ways, but most of us think it is the way to go. People don’t like the old evaluation model. The new evaluation means we have to keep more records, show students growth, and that a detailed conversation that has to take place.

“It gives [teachers] vocabulary and language for what they were doing,” a union official said of the new evaluation system. Both union representatives and district officials described the relationship between the union and the district as collaborative.

### **Budget and Resources**

Generally, staff members agreed funds were allocated across the district in alignment with school improvement goals. Survey results indicate the majority (72.7%) of Chehalis staff members agree their school allocates resources in alignment with school improvement goals. However, when asked to identify barriers in the district, one union representative named time and money as challenges, but added, “If [the district] had more of either, they would provide it.” Some stakeholders raised concerns about the number of resources that get funneled into the STEM program, creating a sense of “haves and have nots.” However, other stakeholders pointed out that a significant portion of STEM funding comes from private donors, such as the Chehalis Foundation. Staff members also spoke with pride about the STEM program. As one teacher put it, “We are really excited about STEM and our advanced and average students have some incredible opportunities. We want to make sure that all kids have opportunities like this.” In terms of time, limited opportunities for teachers to meet and collaborate in grade-level or department teams was a frequently-mentioned concern. “The biggest barrier is the lack of collaboration time,” one teacher said.

Aging facilities and technology also emerged as barriers during focus group interviews. Teachers mentioned an aging infrastructure in terms of some school buildings. “Some facilities are so old,” one teacher said. District officials also acknowledged this problem. One official explained, “With state funding, our adoption cycle got suspended, and our facilities plan got stopped.” In terms of technology, stakeholders spoke of wanting to find more effective ways to use the available resources. To address this question, the district has hired a technology consultant, Phil Crocker, to conduct an in-depth assessment of the district’s use of technology resources and to help formulate a plan to move forward.

## Curriculum and Instruction

**Curriculum.** At the elementary level, teachers are using the recently adopted district reading (Houghton Mifflin *Journeys*) and math (*Math Connects*) curricula. Staff members indicated the reading curriculum was aligned with Common Core State Standards (CCSS), but that the math curriculum still needed work. Aside from the core subjects, some elementary teachers raised concerns about “inadequate” social studies and science curricula. The schools have recently purchased science kits, but teachers indicated they have yet to determine how well the new materials align with the standards. Another staff member mentioned social studies curriculum would be replaced soon.

Middle school teachers also indicated their new language arts curriculum is aligned to the CCSS, while curricula for other subjects, such as social studies, are still aligned to the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs). Teachers working with curricula that is not adapted to CCSS report having "a big work load" as they need to supplement material to guarantee it is standards-based. According to some focus group members, the math curricula at the middle school "is not even sort of aligned" to CCSS, but the math department educators work together to supplement materials to ensure students are engaging in rigorous work.

At the high school, staff members acknowledged the transition to the CCSS was still in the early stages, and that some departments were ahead of others. Some of the departments are at the point of aligning their lessons and assessments with the CCSS, but this work appears to be in the very early stages and limited to a few departments. At Green Hill, CCSS-alignment was similarly in the early stages.

**Instruction.** Focus group interviews indicated that training around the CEL 5D instructional framework (as opposed to the CEL5D evaluation rubric) was inconsistent. While CEL 5D introduced a new shared vocabulary in terms of instruction to the district, many staff members were still gaining a common awareness of research-based instructional strategies and had yet to make the transition to common practice. As one staff member described, “The TPEP lends itself to common understanding [of effective practices]. We are getting there. Those discussions about good teaching practices will occur.” Another stakeholder spoke of the need for sustained effort and attention to “changing how teachers teach.”

The BERC Group conducted classroom observations in 150 classes district-wide. Overall, researchers observed instruction that was aligned with Powerful Teaching and Learning in 37% of Chehalis classrooms, 11 points lower than the STAR Average, and there were variations across school levels (See Figures 1 and 2). According to classroom observation results, strengths for Chehalis School District are in the areas of students actively reading, writing, and/or communicating in class (*Skills*) and the classrooms being supportive learning environments for the students (*Relationships*). Three areas for improvement include students demonstrating conceptual knowledge (*Knowledge*), students demonstrating thinking through reflection and metacognition (*Thinking*), and students extending their learning into relevant contexts (*Application*). For complete results, please refer to the full *Chehalis School District: STAR Classroom Observation Report*. The STAR Data is also available in Appendix D.

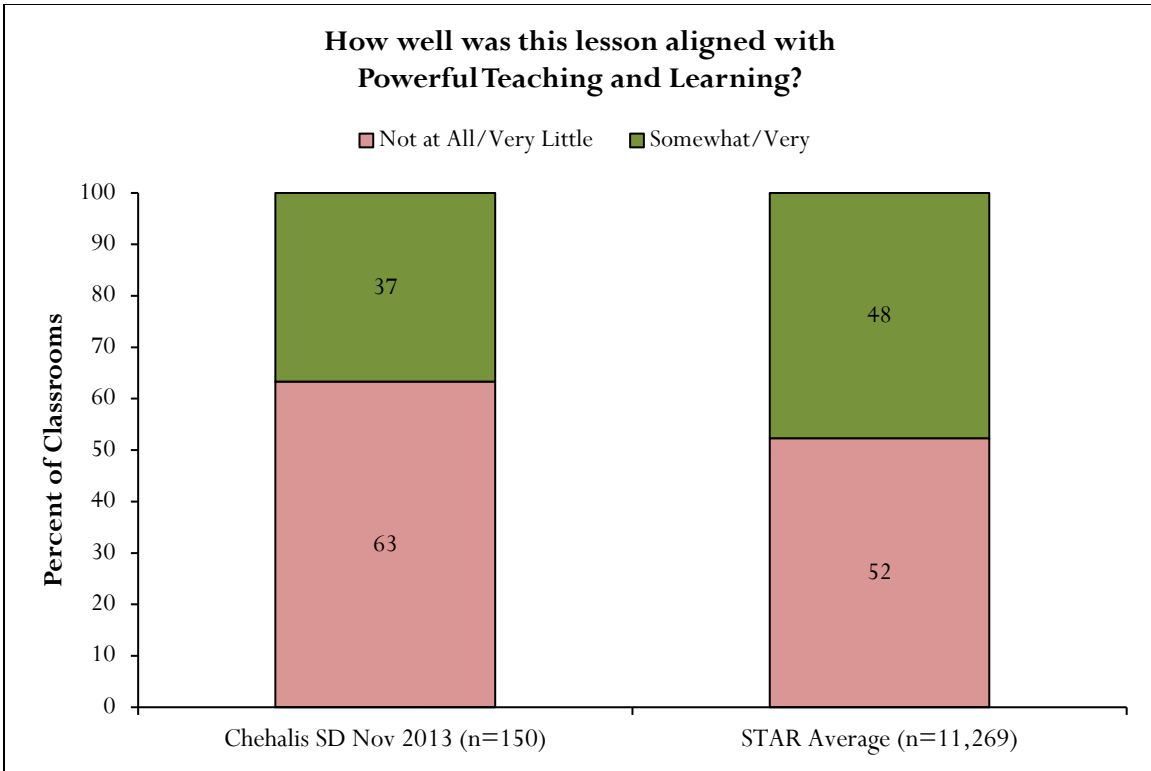


Figure 1. Chehalis STAR data - Overall

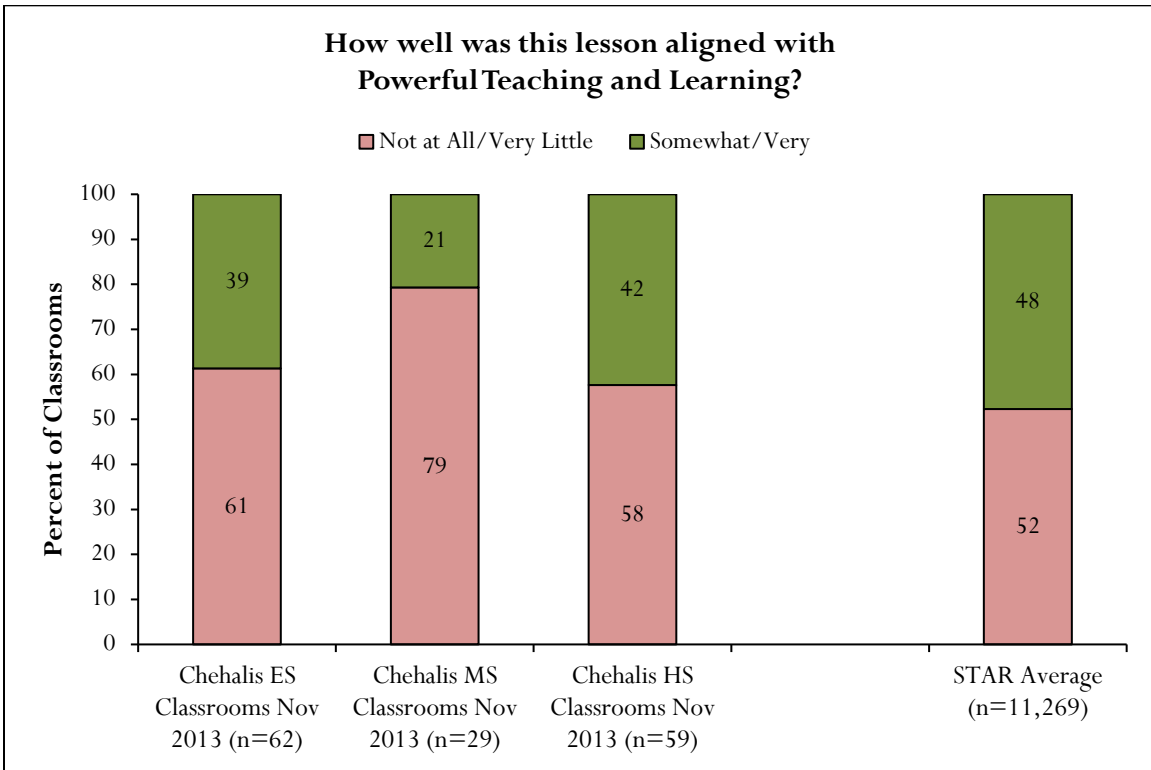


Figure 2. Chehalis STAR data - Overall, by level



## **Professional Development**

Across the district, staff members reported engaging in a number of professional development (PD) offerings, including trainings on the new language arts and math curricula, CCSS, and CEL 5D. One principal explained, “If somebody has a desire to go to something, we have some contractual money we have to spend on professional development and that has to be spent by the committee. Their constraints are really tight about what they can fund.” At each school, a staff development team coordinates staff developmental goals and facilitates the appropriate use of staff development funds to support the goals. Staff members indicated teachers attend individual trainings with the expectation that they will share their learning with the rest of the staff. However, there does not appear to be a systemic method of ensuring this sharing takes place.

PD activities appear to be largely chosen by these staff development teams, with input from the district in regard to ongoing initiatives such as TPEP or CCSS. According to one principal, “The staff development committee meets and looks at the things we want to build on, then we decide whether or not we should utilize in-house expertise.”

Several classified employees indicated they would like more professional development. In addition, multiple focus group respondents indicated needing more training in the CCSS. Green Hill teachers were also particularly concerned about the lack of regularly scheduled professional development concerning assault response, de-escalation, or self-defense.

## **School Environment**

When asked to identify strengths in the district, answers tended to center around dedicated staff members and supportive school environments. Several people mentioned that teachers, once hired, tended to stay in Chehalis long-term. Many staff members said the culture of their school was supportive and respectful of their work. This is clearly a strength throughout the district.

Similarly, researchers found evidence of positive relationships between adults and students in the schools. District-wide, 93% of lessons observed scored a 3 or 4 on Indicator 13, indicating those teachers had assured their classroom is a positive, inspirational, safe, and challenging academic environment. Staff members reported many different strategies for establishing and maintaining relationships with their students, including looping with advisories, talking to them in the hallways, asking them about their day, and generally showing interest in their lives. “The culture of our district is about relationships,” one district official said. “Because of this, there are layers of support for our students.”

## **Assessment and Accountability**

Survey and focus group data indicated that, although staff members are conducting appropriate assessments, they are not necessarily using the data from those assessments to regularly plan instruction. One staff member explained, “I think data can be helpful, but we don't know how to use it, and we are not up-to-date on the technology we need to use to access it.” All staff members



in the Chehalis School District have access to Homeroom, a data collection site where teachers can compare and analyze student data over time; however, the extent to which staff members utilize this system is unclear to researchers. One staff member said they'd had "zero training" on Homeroom so far.

Researchers could not find any evidence that data was being analyzed by subgroup indicator (e.g., race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, etc.) in order to intentionally develop strategies aimed at closing the achievement gap.

### **College Career (Readiness/Success)**

Stakeholders from multiple focus groups shared that one of the district's primary foci is on college and career readiness. The district's strategic plan for 2008 to 2013 included providing opportunities for ninth through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students to develop a pre-graduation plan, providing opportunities for career information, career counseling, and school-to-work opportunities for students of all grade levels. Stakeholders spoke of wanting to raise standards and expectations. For example, district officials envisioned a future where Chehalis graduates regularly competed with graduates of private schools on the east coast for spots in Ivy League colleges.

However, stakeholders from multiple groups acknowledged work still needed to be done to improve college and career readiness in the district. When asked what the district was doing to support college and career readiness, one district official spoke frankly, saying, "I think we are doing a terrible job. It hasn't been a focus." A school board member shared, "I believe the district is solid for the college bound, and for many career bound students in specific areas. Offerings are numerous; however, there are gaps."

One gap that emerged from focus group interviews was a shortage of offerings for career-bound students. Multiple focus group respondents spoke of wanting to improve offerings for career-bound students. A school board member said, "I would like to see more vocational kinds of things. Between Centralia [Community College] and Chehalis, they have a strong construction program over there and we have so much STEM stuff over here." That board member mentioned the possibility of expanding on the district's working relationship with Chehalis to expand possibilities for career-bound students.

Stakeholders also raised concerns that the culture of college awareness in the district could be more robust. A representative from the Chehalis Foundation shared, "They (staff members) don't talk about Husky Promise or Cougar Commitment. We don't hear them talking about college or the opportunities." During school visits, researchers noted few visible indicators of college-aware school environments. Few classrooms had college pennants or teacher diplomas on the walls, for instance, and researchers did not see much in the way of college posters, scholarship information, etc. in the general areas of the school. However, union officials spoke of improvements in this area. One teacher said, "All of us say, 'when you get to college' at least once a day . . . even from early grades, college is being seen as attainable."

Increasing the culture of college awareness could also mean increasing awareness of scholarship opportunities, such as the College Bound program. According to the Washington Student Achievement Council, only 28 Chehalis graduates were in Cohort I of the College Bound program, a surprisingly small number, for a district the size of Chehalis. Some staff members explained that the push to sign up comes in the eighth grade, whereas many schools across the state have students apply in seventh grade. By moving applications a year earlier, Chehalis Middle School would have an extra year to follow up with students who turn in incomplete applications and to contact parents of children who are eligible for the program, but did not apply. This would help to ensure that more Chehalis students begin high school knowing their college will be paid for. These students could then be guided to take high school courses that ensure they graduate college-ready.

Multiple focus group members spoke of a need to revamp academic counseling services. Focus group interviews indicate comprehensive guidance is not in place at Chehalis. “They have a reactive program,” a stakeholder said, adding that comprehensive guidance should be in place to make a systemic change. A district official explained, “The counselors don’t have time to explain the opportunities to the students, especially if they are doing well with classes and have good SAT [scores].” District officials also noted that some parents were unhappy that the counseling center is only open during school hours, making it difficult for working parents to gain information on things such as college eligibility requirements or financial aid.

An increased focus on academic counseling could also lead to more students enrolling in classes that lead to college eligibility. As described in the High School Outcomes section of this report, an analysis of course-taking patterns at W.F. West High School indicated the majority of high school graduates in the district are not eligible for four-year college admittance by Washington State HEC Board standards. Students who failed to meet college admissions requirements were most likely to lack requisite credits in English, math, and/or foreign language. As a result, a number of students who graduate from the Chehalis School District will have to complete these requirements on their own, either at a community college or in remedial college courses, before they are able to begin working on their bachelor’s degrees. A stronger focus on academic counseling could help parents and students to better understand college eligibility requirements and choose high school courses accordingly.

In addition, the district may want to revamp high school graduation requirements to ensure that more students graduate college-ready. A review of current graduation requirements at W.F. West High School shows that students are only required to complete 3.0 credits of English, rather than the 4.0 credits required for college eligibility. Although the 3.0 required credits in mathematics line up with college eligibility requirements, W.F. West students are not required to complete a minimum level of mathematics, while college eligibility requires at least 1.0 credit of intermediate algebra/trigonometry or higher. Additionally, students are not required to complete foreign language credits, although two credits of a foreign language are required for admission to a four-year college. The gap between high school graduation requirements and college eligibility requirements, combined with the lack of a comprehensive guidance system, could mean students are graduating from high school without realizing they lack vital courses for college eligibility.



It is notable that students taking courses in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) program were almost three times more likely to graduate from high school meeting college entrance requirements than their peers outside of the program. As part of the push towards college and career readiness, multiple stakeholders mentioned the STEM program at the high school as a bright spot in the district. The STEM program offers a number of advanced course offerings, and through generous donations from the Chehalis Foundation, students have access to cutting-edge technology. However, prerequisite requirements mean that many W.F. West students do not have access to these advanced course offerings and opportunities. For example, only students who take algebra in middle school can take biology as a freshman, which opens the door for them to progress all the way to molecular genetics. Focus group interviews indicated that, prior to this year, in order to take eighth grade algebra, students needed to be placed in advanced math, which depended on a recommendation from a fifth-grade teacher and (due to limited seats in the course) on parent advocacy. “We have barriers to letting kids take eighth-grade algebra,” one district official said. Erasing those barriers would allow more students to take advantage of the high school’s STEM program. So would differentiating the STEM coursework, and perhaps eliminating gateway classes when possible, to allow more students to enroll. This may also help to increase College and Career Readiness across the system.

## **STEM**

This program was funded, in part, through the Chehalis Foundation, a nonprofit organization which lists “to pursue academic excellence in the Chehalis schools” as part of its mission statement.

Researchers noted a number of strengths in the STEM program at W.F. West High School. One of the most notable is the strong and lasting partnerships the district has built with external partners, who provide financial support, as well as expertise that enhance teaching and learning opportunities. Funding from the Chehalis Foundation, along with other donors, allows the high school to offer advanced coursework that one stakeholder said would otherwise be “impossible to fund.” Another staff member stated, “Programs like robotics are extra-curricular and require money and outside expertise to be successful.” The school partners with engineers, community college faculty and other community mentors to provide additional perspectives and expertise to the student in the robotics program. Researchers also found the leadership of the STEM program to be a strength, noting that that district and building administrators embrace a distributed leadership approach and foster respectful and trusting relationships with staff members, and demonstrate a willingness to take calculated risks to implement new programs and improve teaching and learning throughout the school.

Along with these strengths, researchers noted opportunities for the STEM program and philosophy to become more pervasive in the culture of W.F. West, and the district as a whole. Although the high school offers a number of advanced classes, the presence of gatekeeper courses means only some students have access to STEM coursework, depending on their prior knowledge and experience. Differentiating the coursework could allow students with diverse histories of academic success to explore the STEM disciplines. Researchers also noted limited evidence of learning experiences that challenged students to develop higher-order thinking skills through processes such as inquiry, problem solving, and creative thinking. Furthermore, although programs such as

Homeroom and easyCBM provide access to a wide variety of student data, teachers need training in data systems, as well as regular collaboration time, in order to truly use the results of these data to drive instruction. The STEM research also recommends that school personnel develop multiple measures of student success (e.g. formative, benchmark, summative, and performance-based assessments). Family involvement in the STEM program is another area of growth. Although the efforts of the school and community groups to engage all middle level students in STEM activities through enhanced mathematics instruction, free STEM summer camps, and access to free robotics kits are commendable, researchers found little evidence of family-focused supports, wraparound services, and outreach that engage family members in programs and services. Additionally, while the stakeholder component of the STEM program is very strong, researchers indicated this area could be strengthened by the addition of internship opportunities with local businesses and industry and the regular involvement of appropriate stakeholders in the design of improvement strategies and initiatives within the school district.

Additionally, researchers noted that effective STEM programs purposefully integrate STEM across all content areas and organize time for teachers to collaborate to design interdisciplinary lessons. Though some teachers at W.F. West work plan the content and pacing of lessons together, there is limited evidence of a school-wide plan that encourages the integration of STEM education across the entire school. One teacher explained, “The idea behind the whole school getting involved (with STEM) has never been broached.” Focus group interviews also revealed frustration about “the haves and the have nots” when it comes to funding for STEM disciplines as compared to other programs in the school. “There is so much money being funneled into the STEM program, while other departments have outdated materials and do not have the same opportunities to receive training,” one staff member explained. To build on strengths and address the weaker sections of the program, researchers recommended that leaders establish and communicate a clear vision and direction of the STEM program throughout the school and to all stakeholders; ensure effective instruction is at the heart of the professional development agenda; and provide time for teachers to regularly analyze student level data for instructional planning.



# District Wide Synthesis Report

## Chehalis School District

### INTRODUCTION

The BERC Group conducted a district review for the Chehalis School District (CSD). As part of this review, we conducted School and Classroom Practices Studies in all six schools within the district, and we aggregated the results into this report. The purpose of this report is to provide information to the Chehalis School District regarding any areas emerging in school studies that may need system-wide focus and support. This report is intended to be formative in nature to assist in the ongoing implementation of improvement goals and action plans at the district level. Evaluators obtained information during site visits on November 12 (Green Hill Academic School, Cascade Elementary School, and R.E. Bennett Elementary School), November 13 (W.F. West High School) and November 14 (Olympic Elementary School and Cascade Middle School) of 2013. Researchers developed the suggested system-wide areas of focus and support by investigating each School and Classroom Practices Study. The report includes a methodology section, high school outcomes findings, and an overview the schools' alignment to OSPI's *Student and School Success Principles*. The report concludes with a summary and recommendations.

### METHODOLOGY

Researchers collected and analyzed data using a multiple measures, mixed methodology approach. The collection of both quantitative and qualitative data adds scope and breadth to the study in addition to providing the ability to triangulate findings. A description of the data sources is provided below.

#### Data Sources

Researchers used the following data sources for the School and Classroom Practices Study to triangulate the findings. These data sources are integrated throughout the report.

#### *Interviews and focus groups*

A total of 317 people, including district and building administrators, certificated and non-certificated staff members, counselors, parents, students, school board members, community members, and consultants participated in interviews and focus groups.

#### *Classroom observations*

Researchers conducted 150 classroom observations to determine the extent to which teaching practices aligned with Powerful Teaching and Learning™ (reform-like teaching). We used the STAR Classroom Observation Protocol® to collect data around instruction in five areas: *Skills, Knowledge, Thinking, Application, and Relationships*.



### *Staff, student, and parent surveys*

School staff, students, and parents completed surveys aligned with the Student and School Success Principles. Researchers obtained 173 staff surveys, 952 student surveys (Grades 6 and above), and 303 parent surveys.

## **HIGH SCHOOL OUTCOMES DATA**

This section of the report summarizes analyses of high school course taking patterns, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment and persistence data. These data only reflect the results of W.F. West High School. Green Hill Academic School is not included.

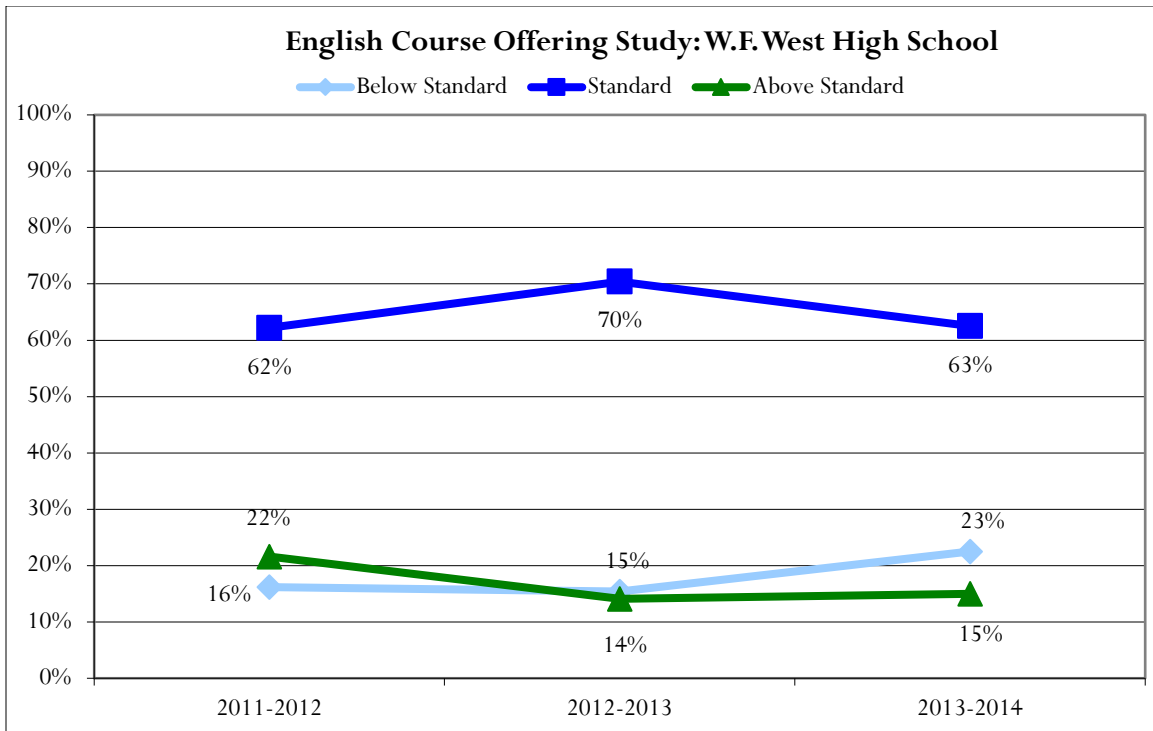
*Course Offering Patterns.* Researchers gathered and analyzed master schedules, course catalogs, and section summary sheets from W.F. West to determine changes in course offerings from the 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014 school years. Researchers tallied courses in English and math and placed them into three levels of rigor:

- Below Standard: courses designated as remedial or below grade level
- Standard: courses identified as at grade level
- Above Standard: courses designated as honors courses, courses taken beyond college entrance requirements, or Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate.

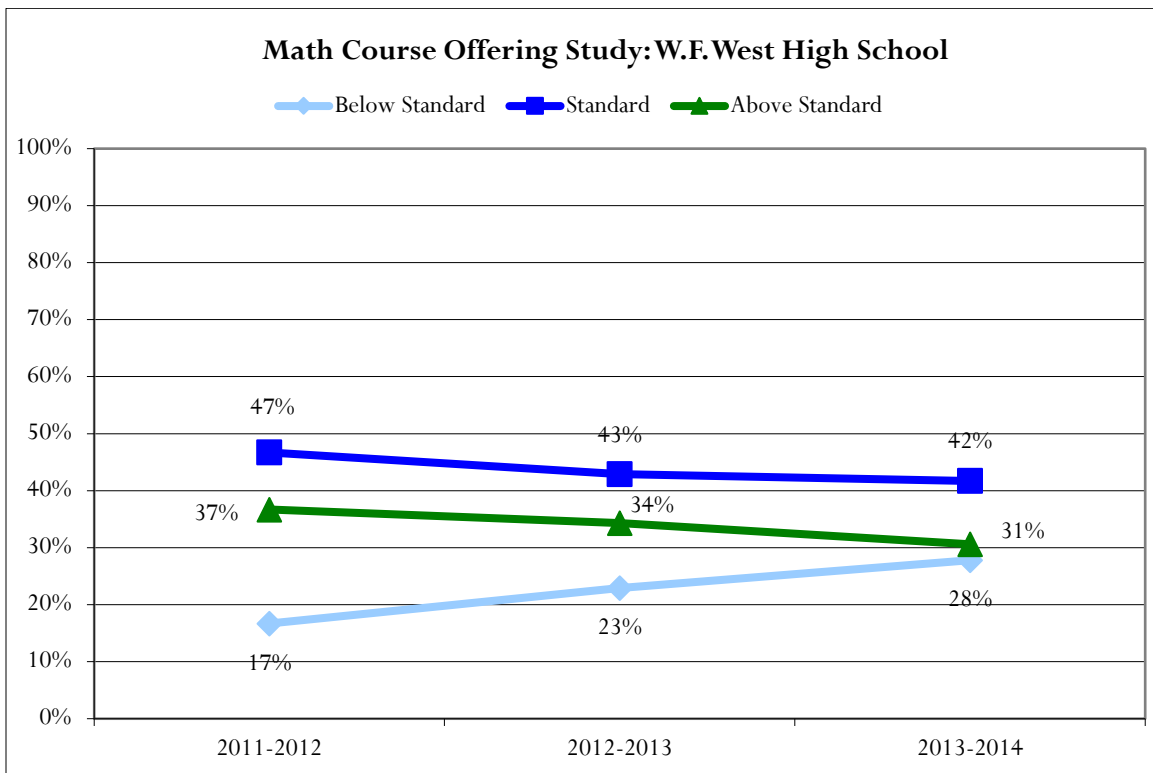
The review excluded courses from special education, English Language Learners, English as a Second Language, LAP, Running Start, and independent study courses.

English and math course offering patterns from 2011-2012 through 2013-2014 are shown in Figures 1 and 2. In English, W.F. West High School offers primarily Standard courses but also offers some Above Standard courses and some Below Standard courses. In the 2013-2014 school year, about one-quarter of the English classes offered were considered Below Standard. In math, the majority of courses are also at the Standard level; however, about 31% of the 2013-2014 math courses are Above Standard, and about 28% are Below Standard. The percentage of Below Standard math courses offered at W.F. West increased over the last three years.





**Figure 1. English Course Offering**



**Figure 2. Math Course Offering**

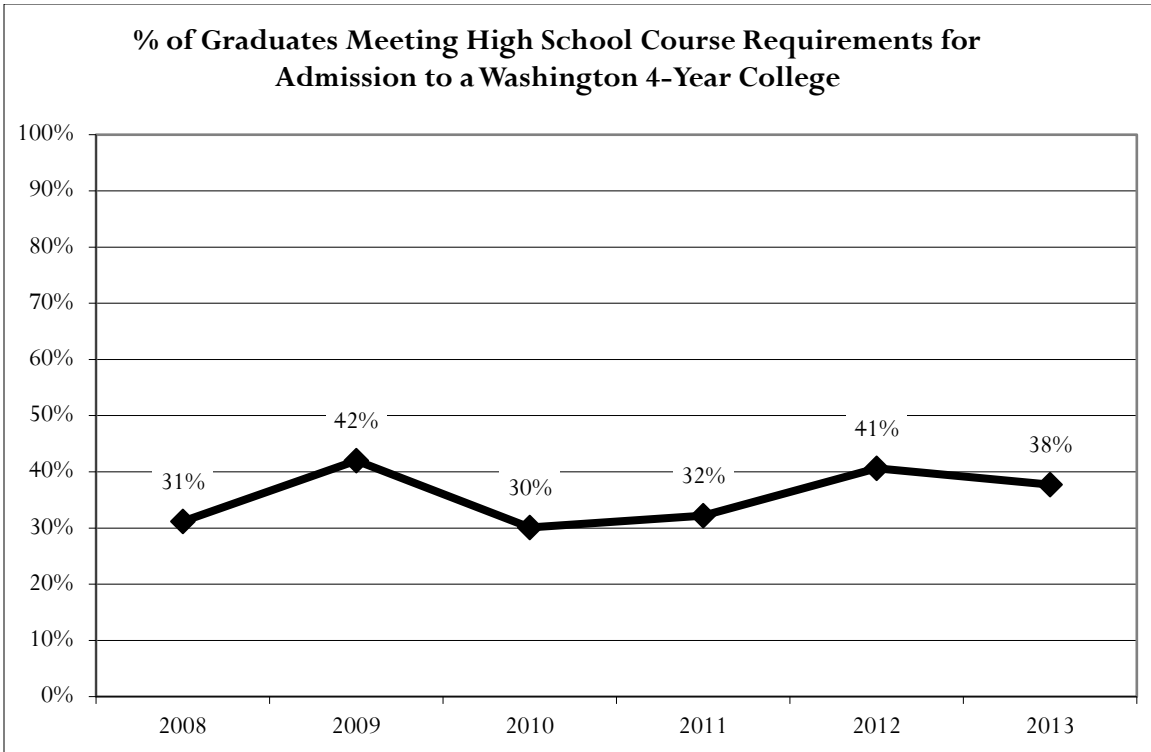


***Course Taking Patterns and College Eligibility.*** Researchers collected transcripts for all graduating students in the 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 school years from W.F. West High School. A trained team of researchers, college admissions specialists, and school counselors analyzed a sample of transcripts each year to determine if the courses taken met the Washington State four-year college and university admission standards. Although there was some variation among colleges, the general requirements include:

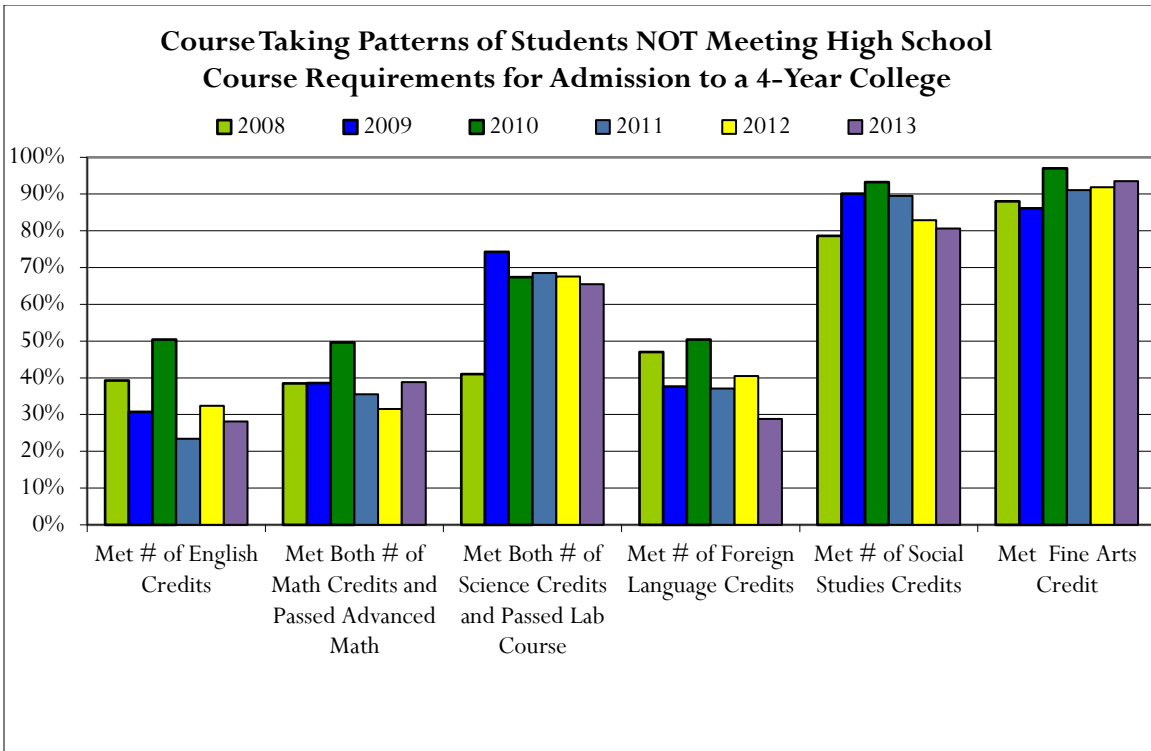
- 4 years of English, which must include three years of literature
- 3 years of mathematics, which must include an introduction to trigonometry
- 3 years of social studies
- 2 years of science, which must include at least one year of laboratory science (two years of laboratory science was required in 2010)
- 2 years of foreign language
- 1 year of fine arts (required by some colleges)

Of the 2013 high school graduates, 38% took the requisite courses for admission to a Washington 4-year college, meaning that the majority of students graduating from W.F. West High School are not eligible for four-year college admittance by Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) standards (see Figure 3). The percentage of students meeting college eligibility requirements has increased overall since 2008. Overall results indicate that while the graduation requirements meet the state's minimum requirements for a high school diploma, requirements do not align with the colleges' admission requirements.

Students who failed to meet the requisite college preparation courses were most likely to lack the English, math, and/or foreign language requisite credits (see Figure 4). There has been some fluctuation year-to-year in the percentage of students meeting these requirements, but the general pattern has remained consistent for the last six graduating classes. A review of graduation requirements shows that W.F. West High School students are not required to complete foreign language credits. Additionally, students are only required to complete 3.0 credits of English. Finally, while students are required to take 3.0 math credits, there is no minimum level, and many students take math classes at a standard less than that required for college admittance. Overall, these results show there is a gap between the diploma requirements and the requisite college preparation.



**Figure 3. Percent of Graduates Meeting High School Course Requirements for Admissions to a Washington 4-year College**

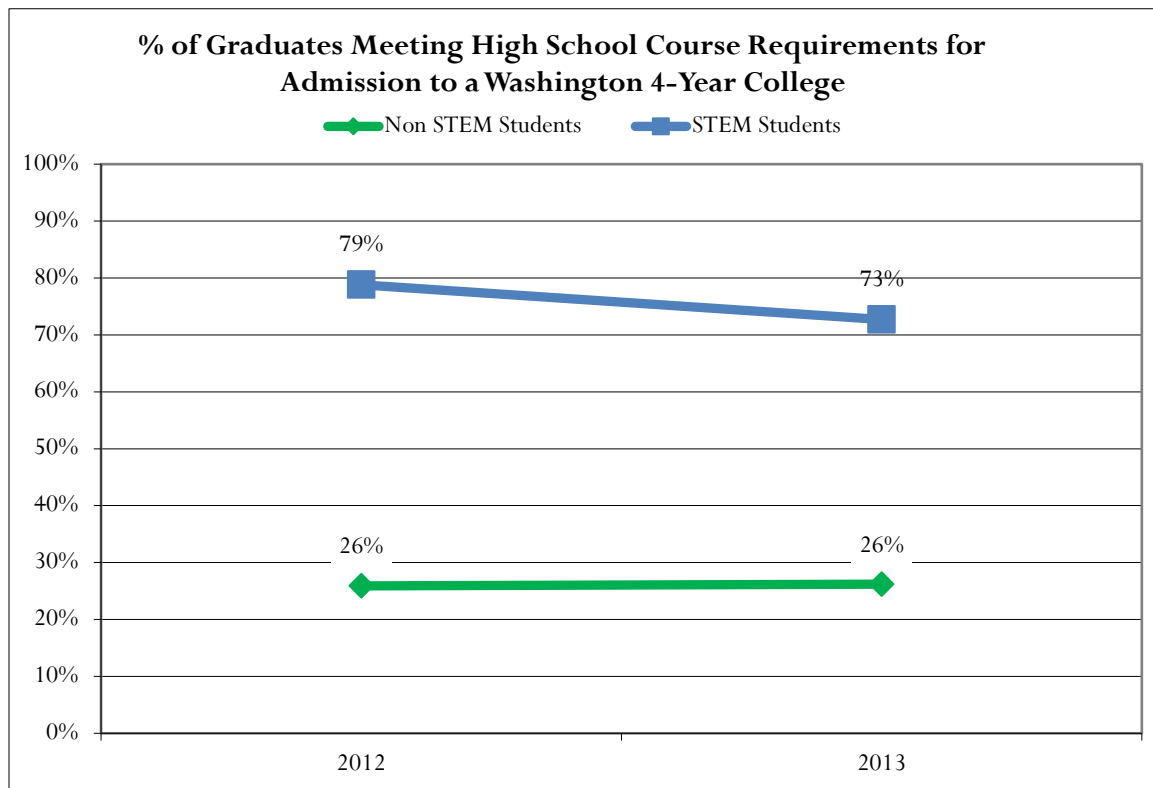


**Figure 4. Course Taking Patterns of Students NOT Meeting High School Course Requirements**

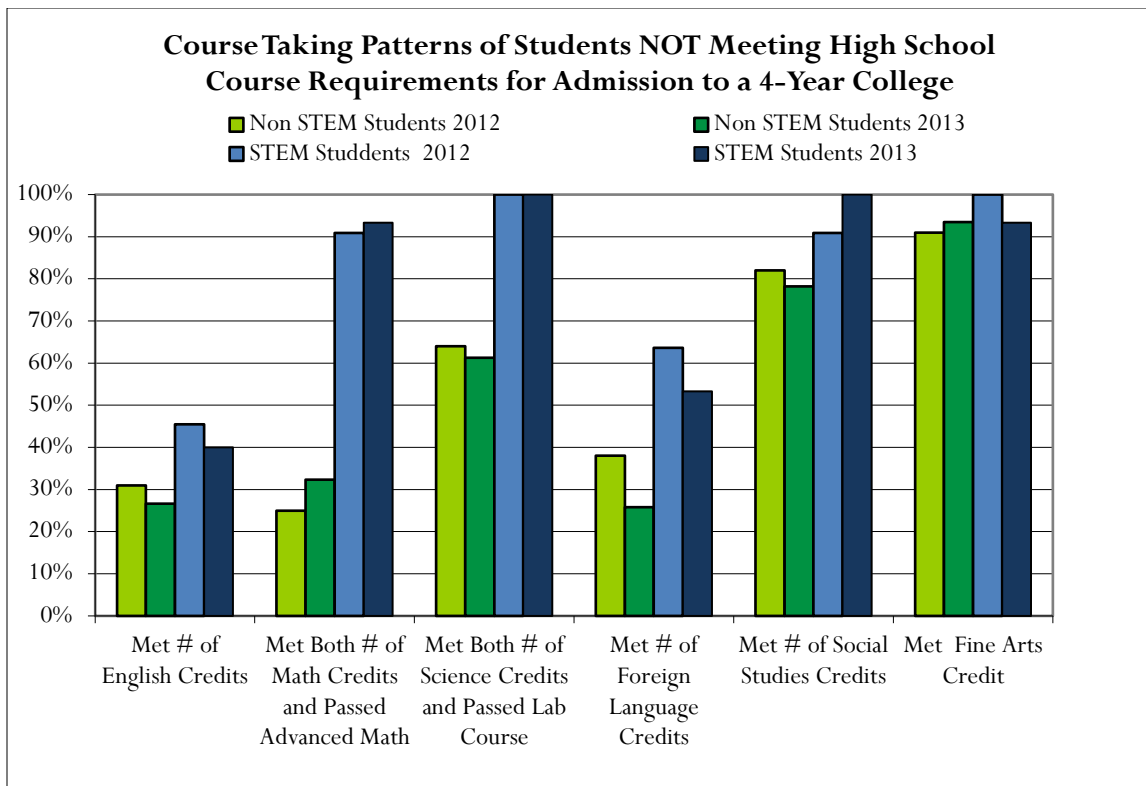


Of the 2012 high school graduates who took one or more STEM classes during their senior year, 79% took the requisite courses for admission to a Washington 4-year college, while only 26% of non-STEM students met the admission requirements. This trend was very similar in 2013 with 73% of STEM students meeting the Washington 4-year college admission requirements and only 26% of non-STEM students met the same admission criteria. This means that graduating seniors taking one or more STEM classes during their senior year are much more likely to have taken the classes required to enroll in a 4-year college in Washington State than their peers who did not take a STEM class during their senior year (see Figure 5).

Students who failed to meet the requisite college preparation courses, whether they were STEM students or non-STEM students, were most likely to lack English and/or foreign language requisite credits. Non-STEM students also failed to meet math admission requisites at a high rate (see Figure 6). A review of graduation requirements shows that W.F. West High School students are not required to complete foreign language credits.



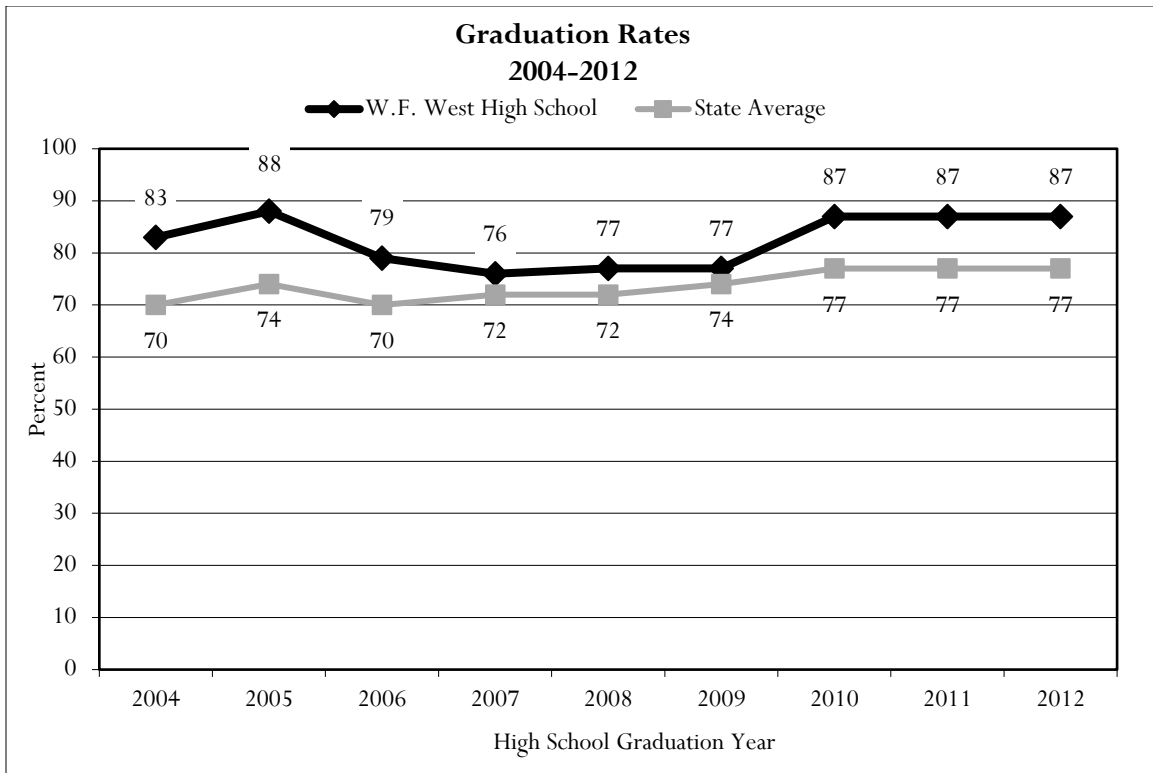
**Figure 5. Percent of Graduates Meeting High School Course Requirements for Admissions to a Washington 4-year College – STEM and Non-STEM Students**



**Figure 6. Course Taking Patterns of Students NOT Meeting High School Course Requirements – STEM and Non-STEM Students**

Collectively, these results show that fewer than half the students graduating from WF West High School meeting the minimum course taking requirements necessary for admission for a 4-year college. However, a greater percentage of students who take a least one STEM course meet the minimum 4-year course taking requirements. Students who failed to meet the requisite college preparation courses were most likely to lack the English, math, and/or foreign language requisite credits. However, STEM students took math at higher rates compared to Non-STEM students. Overall, these results show there is a gap between the diploma requirements and the requisite college preparation.

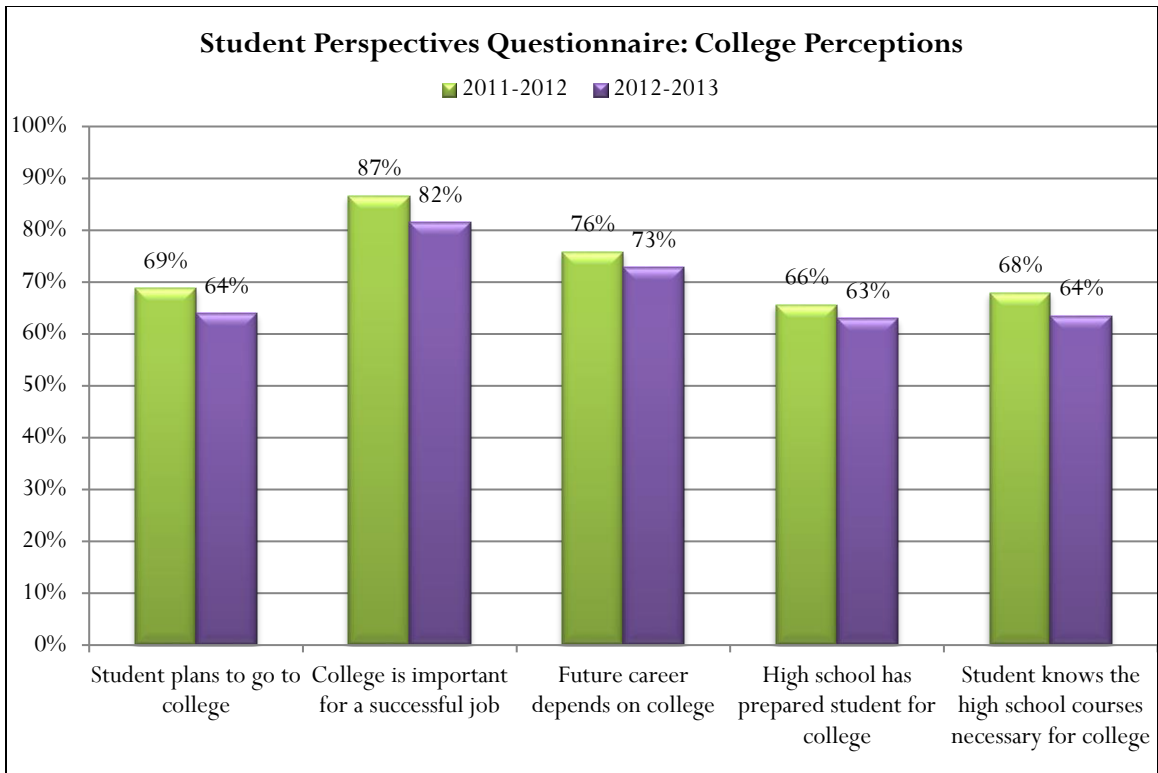
**Graduation Rates.** The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) for Washington State calculates an “estimated cohort graduation rate” for a given graduation class based on the P-210 form submitted annually by the districts. This calculated rate is based on only those students who begin in the fall of a given year with an expected graduation date of four years later and accounts for transfers and other factors. For example, students enrolled in the fall of 1998 would have an expected “on-time” graduation date of 2002. The methodology is appropriate for AYP of NCLB. Baseline estimated cohort graduation rates for 2004 through 2012 are shown in Figure 7. Graduation rates have fluctuated each year. Graduation rates for W.F. West High School reached as high as 88% in 2005. The rates then dipped by about 10 percentage-points and remained there over the next four years. The rates then increased by about 10 percentage-points up to 87% for 2010 through 2012. Rates for W.F. West are consistently higher than the state average.



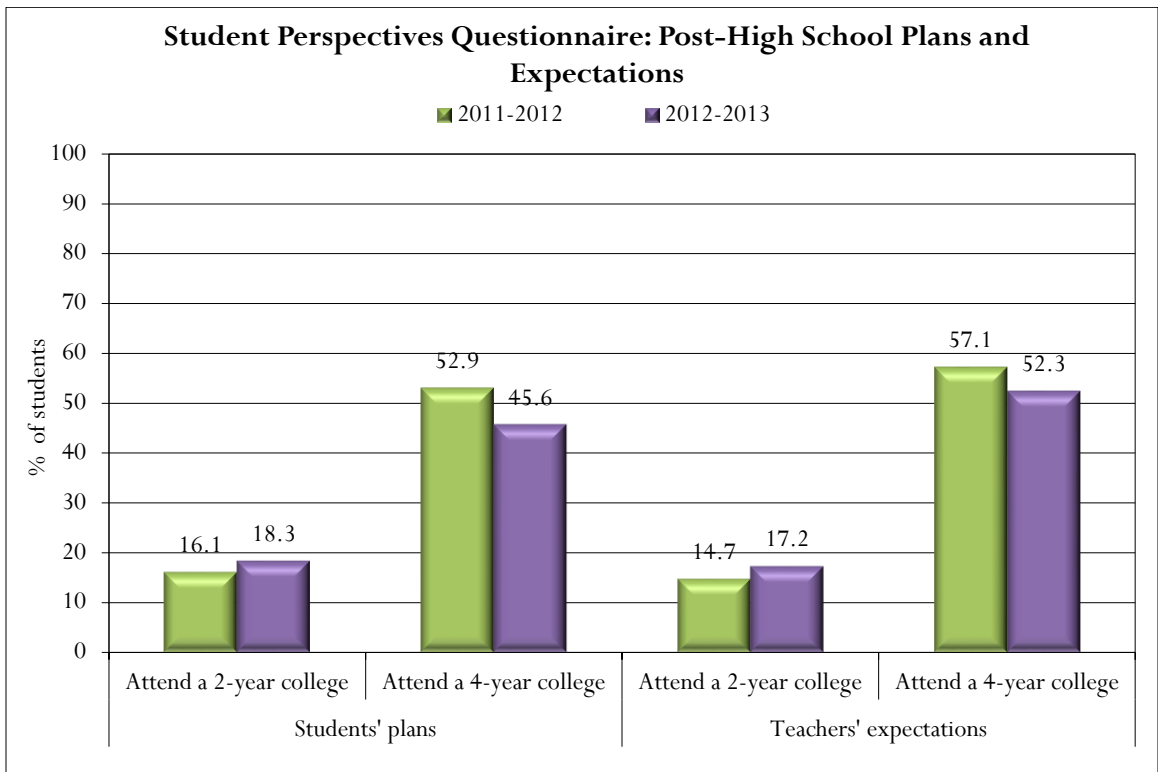
**Figure 3. Graduation Rates 2004 – 2012**

\*Note: The adjusted 4-year cohort graduation rate is used for 2011 and for 2012.

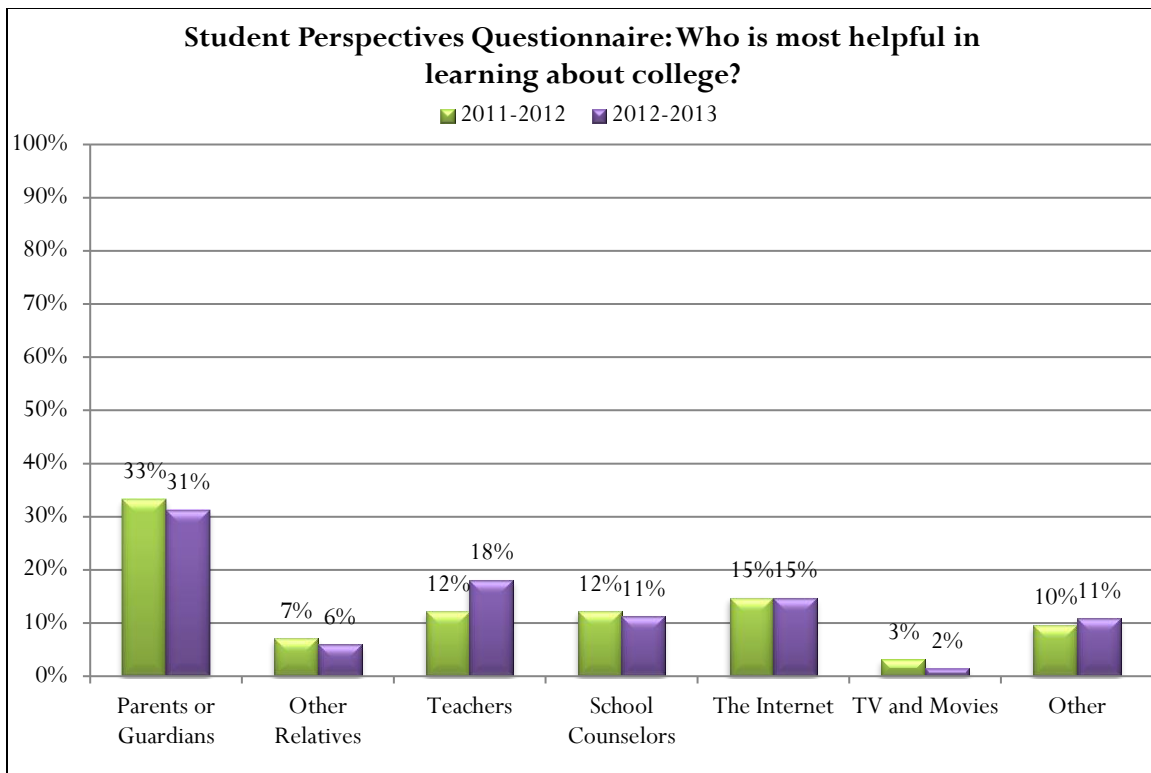
**College Awareness and College Perceptions.** As part of the statewide program evaluation of Navigation 101, researchers from The BERC Group conducted a survey in 2012 and in 2013 of students at W.F. West High School. These surveys include many questions that are relevant to the perceptions of students around college and career readiness. Figures 8, 9, and 10 display the results of the student survey. Student survey results show that the majority of students believe a college degree is important for obtaining a successful job and that their future career depends on going to college; fewer believe that high school has prepared them to succeed in college or that they know the high school courses necessary for college. Students expectations for college attendance mirror what they believe their teachers believe of them. Survey results show the majority of students plan to attend college after graduating from high school and most learn about college from parents and/or guardians. The percentage of students who report they receive information from teachers or counselors is considerably low, particularly for schools that implement the Navigation 101 program.



**Figure 4. College Perceptions**



**Figure 5. Post-High School Plans and Expectations**



**Figure 6. Learning about College**

**College Enrollment, Persistence, and Graduation Rates.** The National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) was established in 1993 by colleges and universities to serve as a national repository for comprehensive enrollment, degree, and certificate records. Since its beginnings, it has grown to contain more than 65 million student records from over 2,800 colleges and universities in the United States. As of 2012, these institutions enrolled approximately 93% of the nation’s college students.

Researchers obtained college enrollment and persistence data from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) for W.F. West High School. These researchers collected information from Chehalis for the graduating classes of 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012. Researchers submitted lists of the names, birth dates, and year of graduation, among other data, to NSC to be matched with the college reported enrollments from 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012. Researchers compiled and analyzed these yearly enrollment records to determine college enrollment persistence and college graduation rates for all W.F. West High School graduates from these years.

“College direct” students are defined as high school graduates who attended college any time in the academic year immediately following their high school graduation. The college direct rates for the high school graduates from W.F. West High School for 2004 through 2012 are presented in Figure 11. The percentage of college direct students from W.F. West has decreased from 2004 to 2012 overall, however, about a 4 percentage-point increase occurred from 2011 to 2012. The disaggregated rates for STEM and Non-STEM students show that STEM students went to college the first year after high school at a much higher rate than Non-STEM students (see Figure 12).



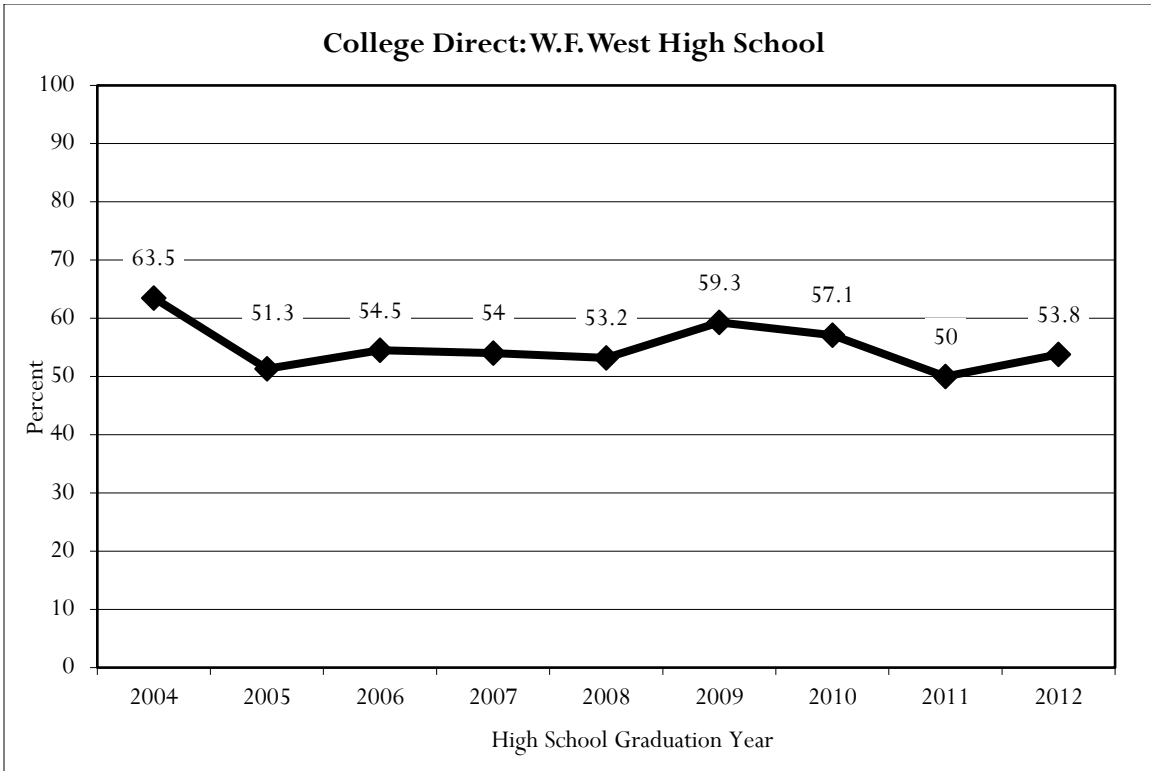


Figure 7. Percent “College Direct” – 2004-2012

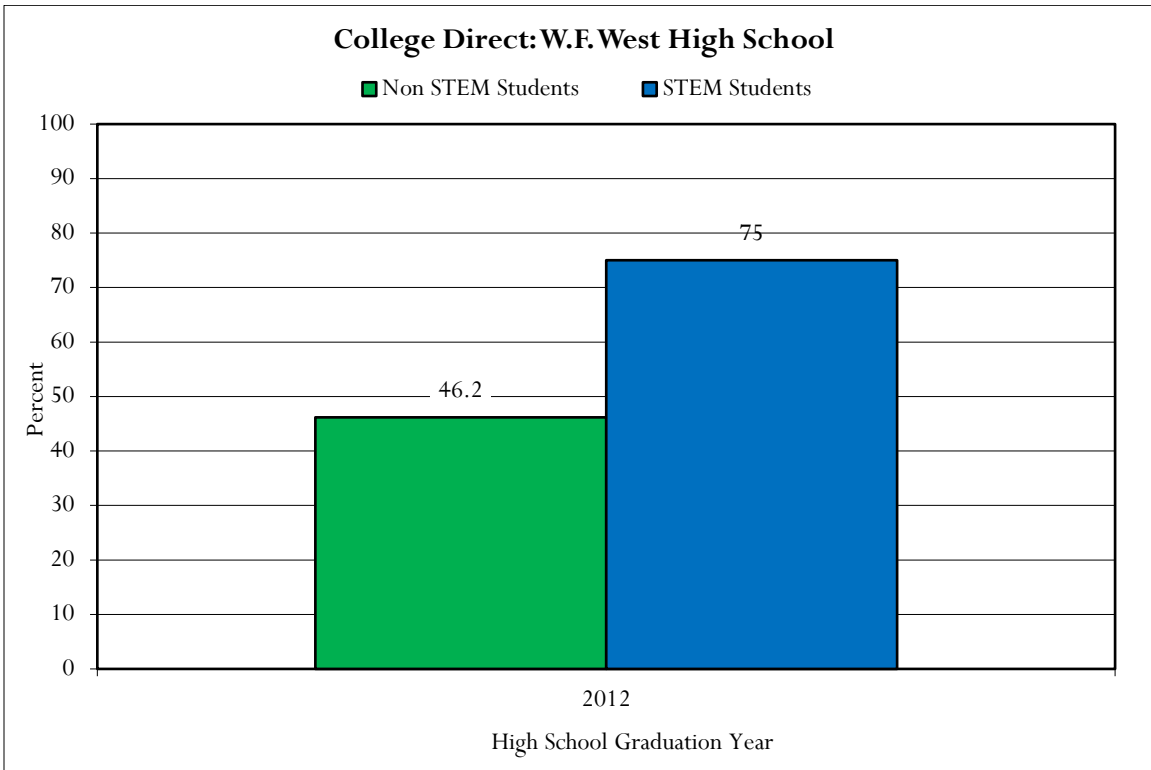


Figure 12. Percent “College Direct” for STEM and Non-STEM Students – 2012



The 2004 through 2011 college direct rates disaggregated by ethnicity, gender, and free and/or reduced-price meals (FRL) for W.F. West High School are presented in Figure 13, 14, and 15, respectively. The college direct rates for white students are substantially higher than for Hispanic students for each year where data for both groups is available (Data are not reported for categories with less than 10 students). For most of the years, a gap exists in college direct rates by gender, with a higher percentage of female students attending college compared to males students. For the one year where data with FRL data, students not qualifying attended college at higher rates than those qualifying.

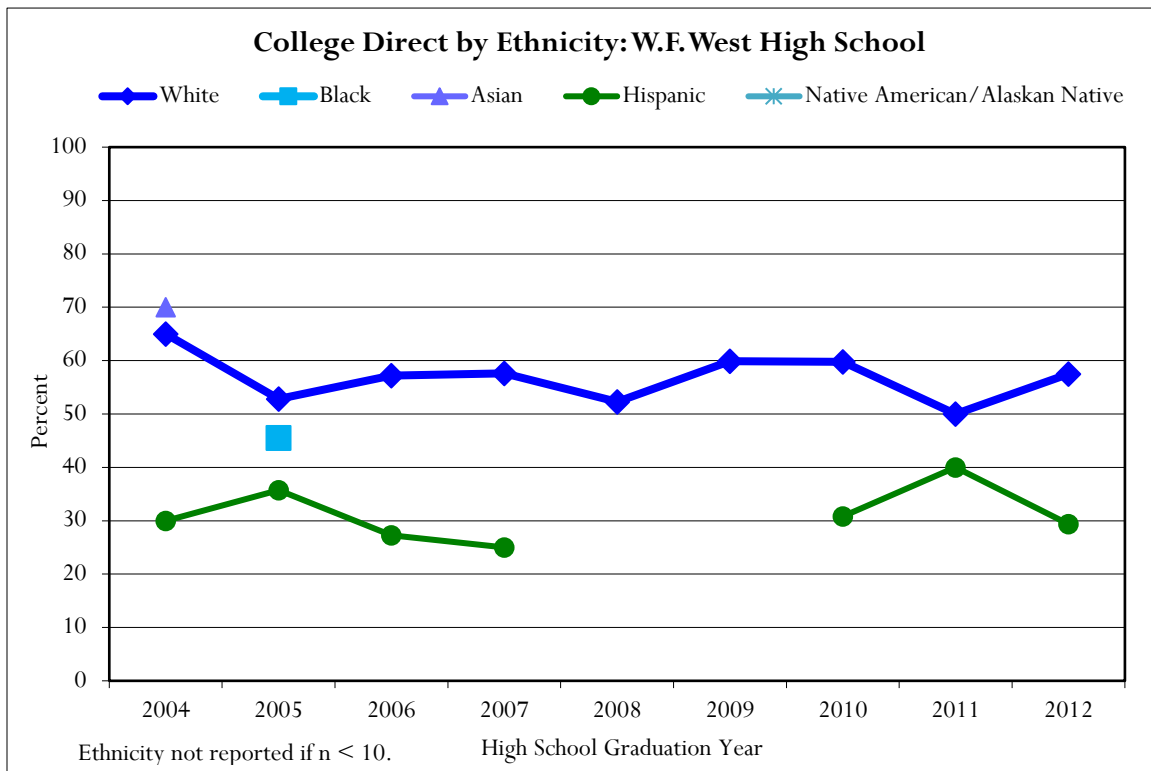


Figure 8. Percent “College Direct” by Ethnicity – 2004-2012

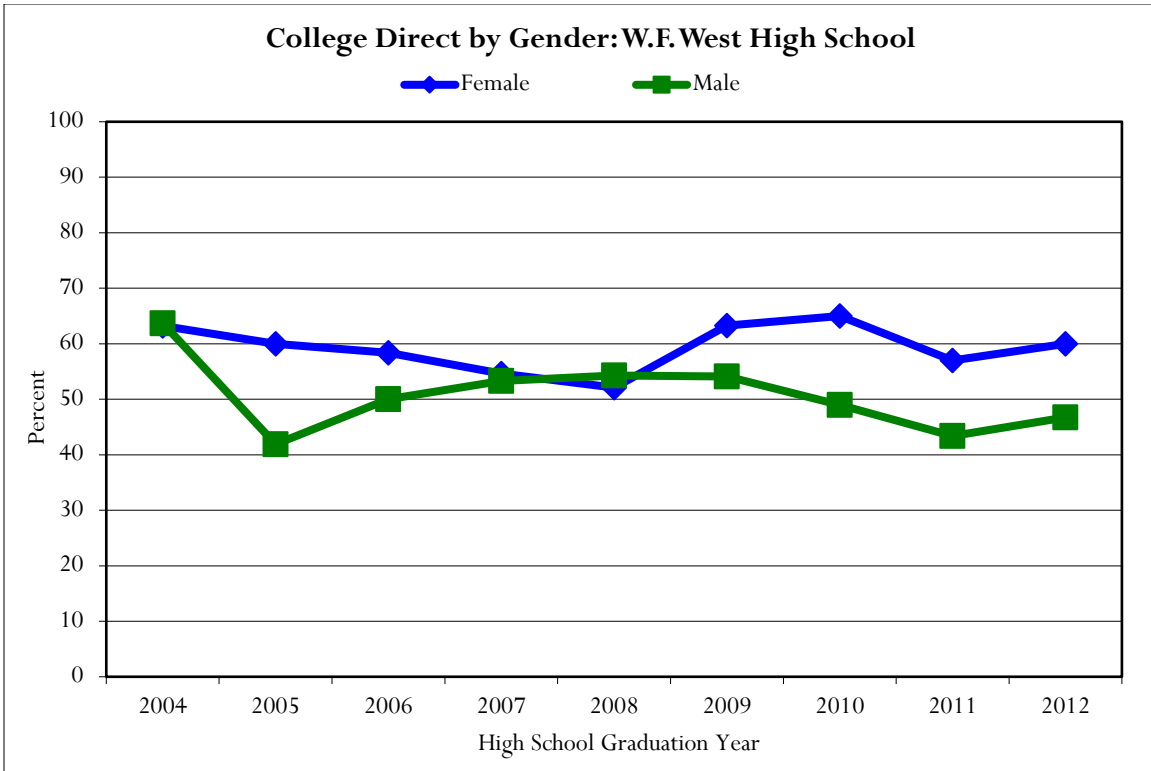


Figure 9. Percent “College Direct” by Gender – 2004-2012

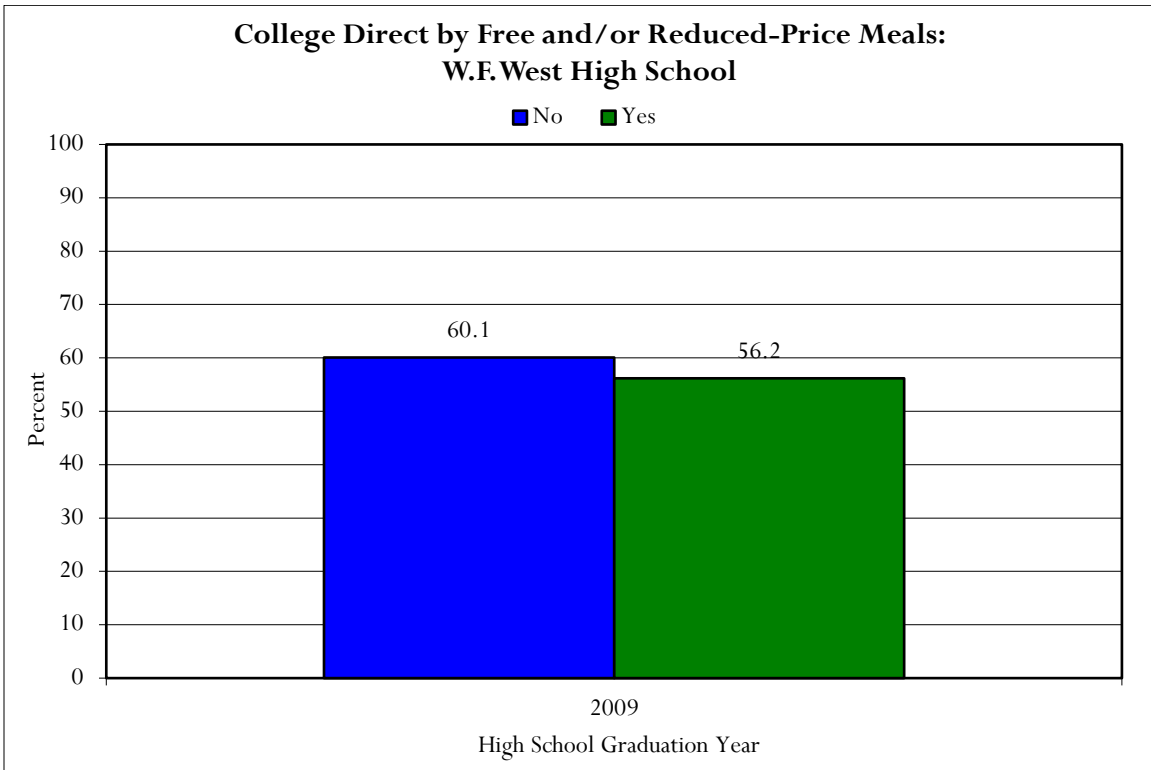
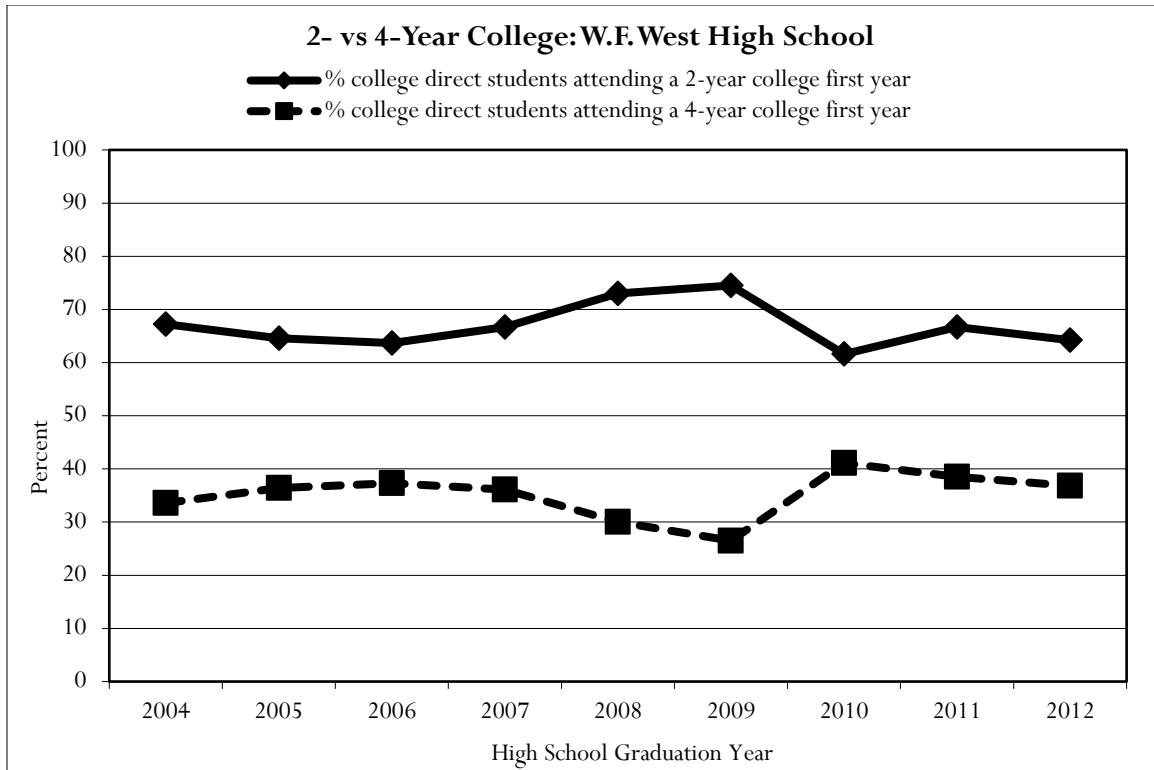


Figure 10. Percent “College Direct” by FRL – 2009



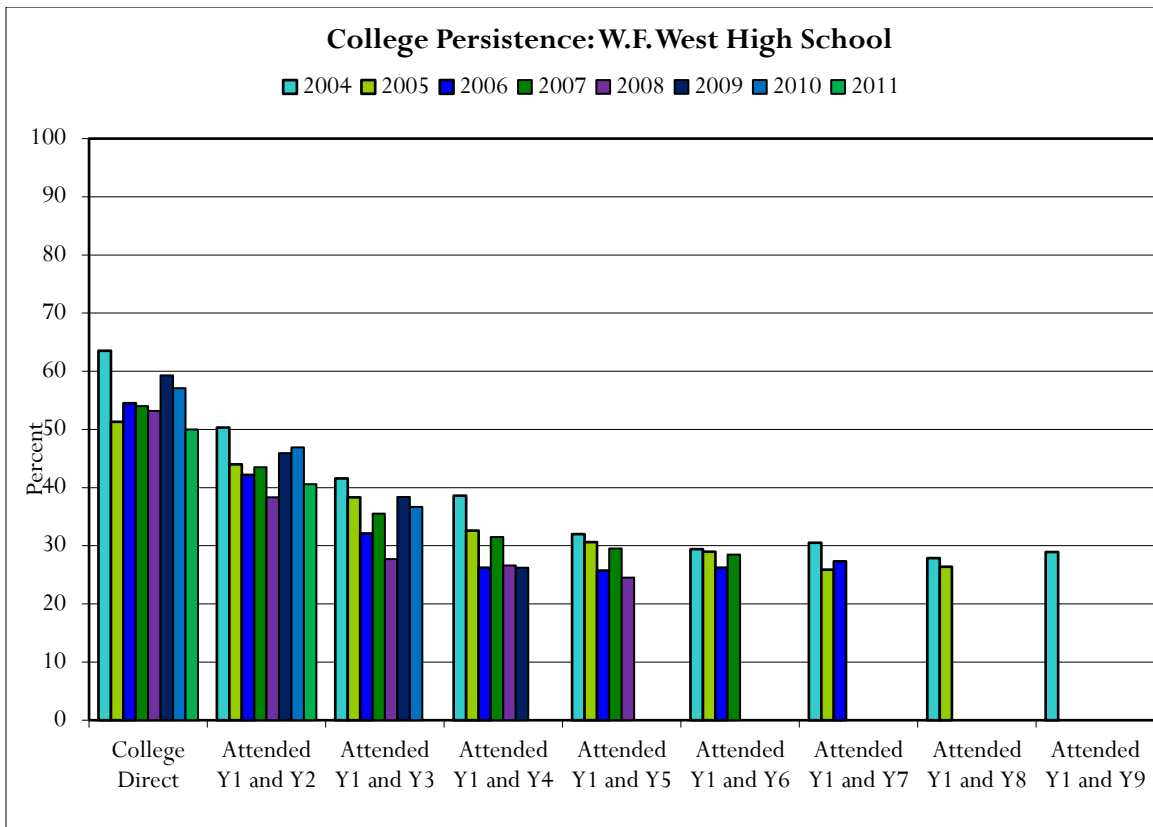
Figure 15 shows the percentages of graduates attending two- and four-year colleges the first year after graduating high school.<sup>1</sup> These data indicate a greater percentage of graduates from W.F. West High School attend a two-year versus four-year colleges in all years. Disaggregated data for the STEM students shows the reverse pattern, with a far greater percentage of students who take STEM courses in high school enrolling in 4-year colleges compared to non-STEM students.



**Figure 11. Percentage of “College Direct” Graduates Attending 2- vs. 4-year Colleges after Graduating High School – 2004-2012**

<sup>1</sup> The percentages may total more than 100% due to dual enrollments of some students.

The college persistence rate of college direct students from W.F. West High School is presented in Figure 16. We defined “persisting in college” for college direct students as being enrolled anytime in a given year following high school graduation or having received a four-year college degree. Figure 9 illustrates the percent of 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011 high school graduates that were college direct and persisting into subsequent years of college.<sup>2</sup> For example, for 2004 high school graduates, approximately 64% were enrolled in college during the 2004-2005 academic year, the first year after graduation. In the second year after graduation, approximately 50% of the high school graduates were still enrolled in college. In the fifth year after graduation, about 32% of the high school graduates had attended college the first year after graduating high school and were still enrolled in college or had received their degree. By the ninth year after graduation, about 29% of the 2004 high school graduates had attended college the first year after graduating high school and were still enrolled in college or had received their degree. In general, the pattern for all graduates is a dip in college enrollment the first year after graduating from high school.



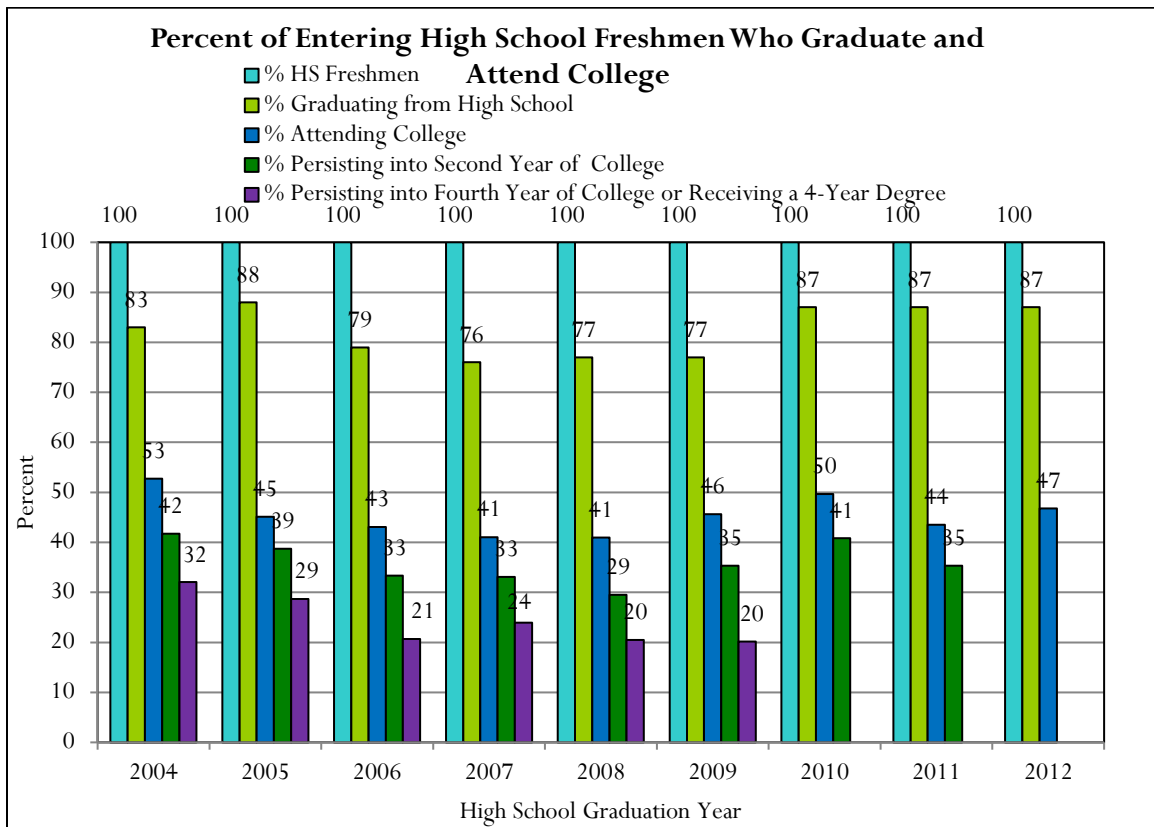
**Figure 12. Percentage of “College Direct” Students Persisting in College**

Note. “College Direct”=% of students enrolled first year after graduating high school.  
 “Attended Y1 and Y2”=% of students attending college first year and have graduated from a four-year college or are still attending college second year after graduating high school.

<sup>2</sup> Our definition of “Persistence” also includes students who had graduated from a four-year college.



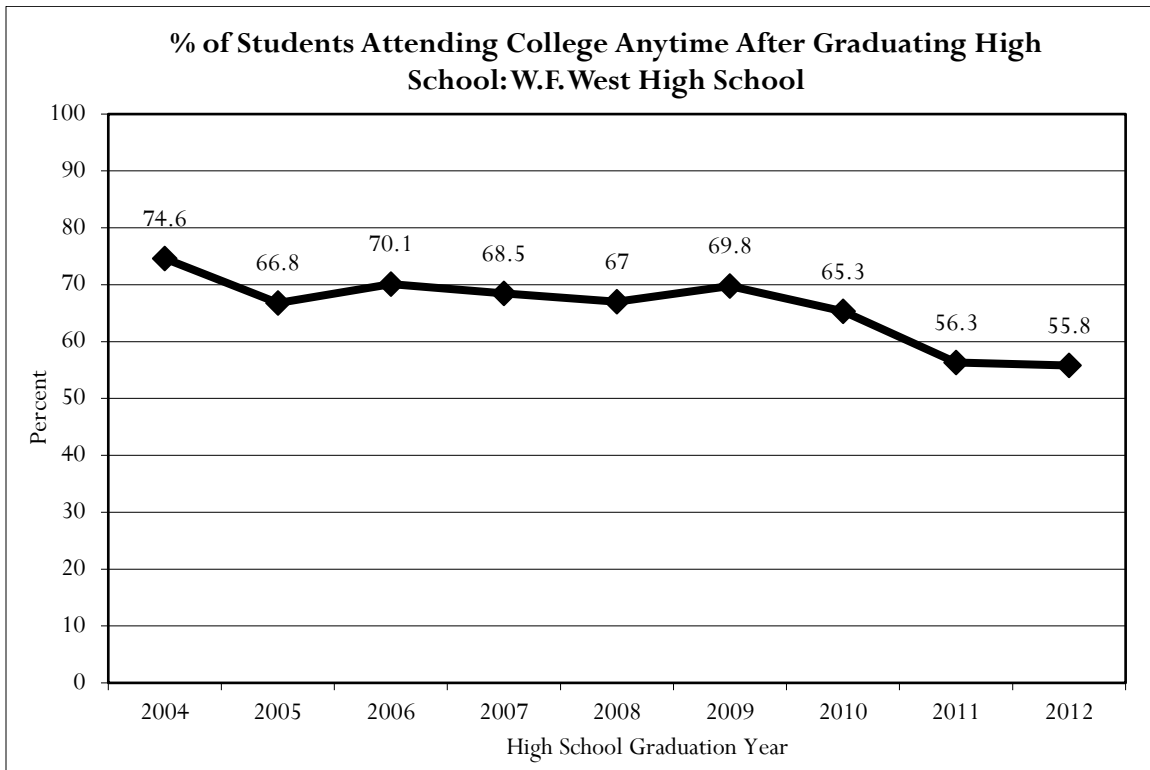
Figure 17 shows a theoretical model that depicts the percentage of the students who enter W.F. West High School as freshmen in high school, graduate from high school, and enroll and persist into the second and fourth years of college. For example, out of the entering freshmen for the class of 2004, approximately 83% graduated from high school, 53% attended college the first year after graduating from high school, 42% persisted into a second year of college or received a four-year degree, and 32% persisted into a fourth year of college or received a four-year degree.



**Figure 13. Percent of Students Who Attend College and Persist into Year 4**

\*Note: The adjusted 4-year cohort graduation rate is used for 2011 and 2012, while the other years use the Estimated On-Time Graduation Rate.

The percentage of students attending college any time after graduating from high school is depicted in Figure 19. For example, within the 2004 graduating class, approximately 75% attended college any time after graduating from high school. This is an 11 percentage-point increase from the college direct rates shown in Figure 4.



**Figure 14. Percent of Students Who Attend College Anytime After Graduating from High School**

Table 1 shows the two- and four-year college graduation rates. This details the percent of students from the class of 2004 through 2010 who received a college degree.

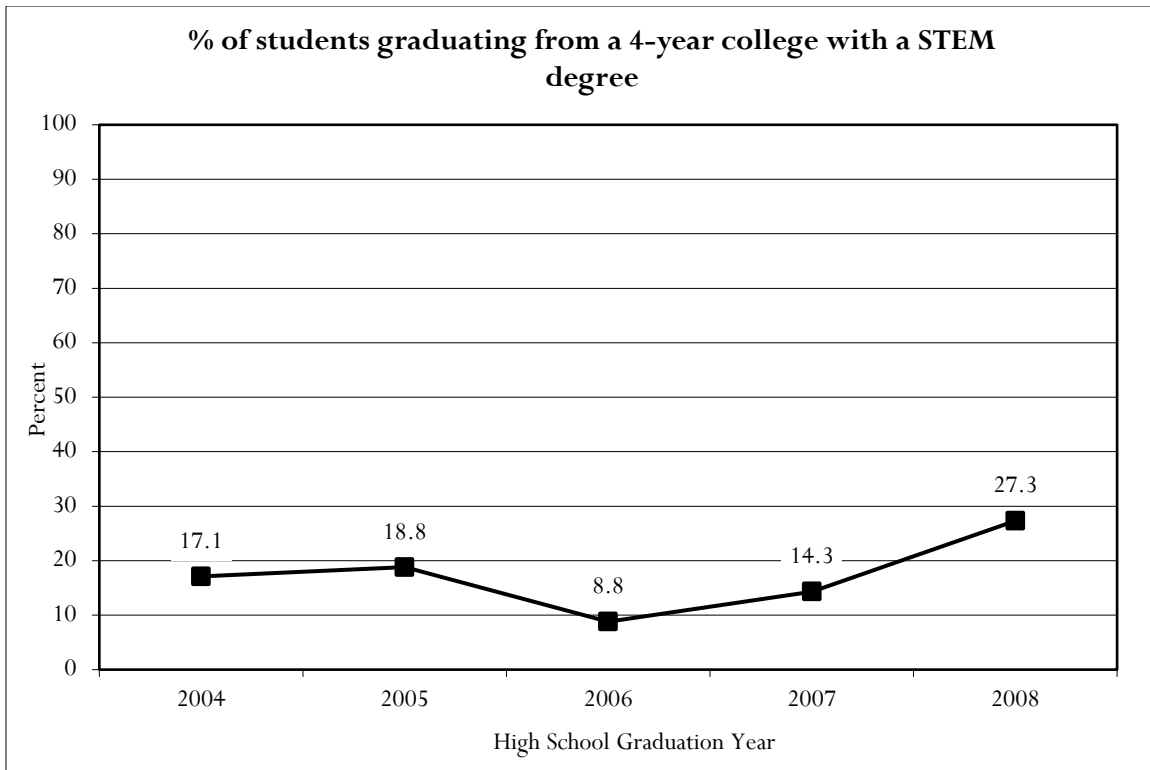
**Table 1. Percent of Students Receiving and Two or Four-Year Degree**

Graduating Class	% Receiving a Two – Year Degree	% Receiving a Four – Year Degree
2004	29.4%	24.9%
2005	16.1%	23.3%
2006	26.2%	19.8%
2007	21.0%	19.5%
2008	15.4%	9.6%
2009	20.3%	
2010	12.2%	

Researchers also analyzed college degree attainment for W.F. West High School graduates from 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008 receiving four-year college degrees. More specifically,



researchers coded the degree names and/or CIP (Classification of Instructional Programs) codes into STEM degree or not STEM degree. Figure 19 shows the percentages of four-year college graduates from W.F. West receiving a STEM degree.<sup>3</sup> These data indicate an increasing percentage of graduates receiving STEM-related degrees from 2006 to 2008. This data should be interpreted cautiously due to the small sample size for each graduating year.



**Figure 19. Percentage of Students Graduating from a 4-year College with a STEM Degree – 2004-2008**

<sup>3</sup> Data only includes students that graduated from a four-year college who have a degree name and/or degree CIP Code. Researchers used the CIP Codes listed by <http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/stem-list.pdf> to determine if CIP Code qualified as STEM-related. Researchers were not able to include two-year colleges because often they do not use CIP Codes and degree names are general.



## SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM PRACTICE

This section of the report summarizes findings from interviews, focus groups, surveys, and classroom observation study.

### Rubric Results

Researchers organized the rubric results around the Student and School Success Principles. These include principles described in federal guidance for ESEA Flexibility Requests and an additional principle that specifically addresses culturally competent practices. Together, these principles provide a roadmap to improve school performance. They also align with and expand upon OSPI's Nine Characteristics of High-Performing Schools (Shannon & Bylsma, 2007). Principles include:

1. Provide strong leadership;
2. Ensure teachers are effective and able to improve instruction;
3. Increase learning time;
4. Strengthen the school's instructional program;
5. Use data to inform instruction;
6. Establish a safe and supportive school environment;
7. Engage families and community; and
8. Build and sustain equitable and culturally competent systems and practices for all students.

Principles are numbered to support school teams in their dialogues and in writing their school improvement plans. However, *there is no hierarchy among the principles*, that is, each must be fully and effectively implemented in order to improve schools.

Researchers used data collected through the School and Classroom Practices Study, which is described in the Methodology section to reach consensus on scores for 16 Indicators organized around the Student and School Success Principles. Researchers scored each Indicator using a rubric with a continuum of four levels that describe the degree to which a school is effectively implementing the Indicator. The four levels are:

- 4 – Leads to continuous improvement and institutionalization
- 3 – Leads to effective implementation
- 2 – Initial, beginning, developing
- 1 – Minimal, absent, or ineffective

Indicators with a score of a 3 or above represent strengths in the school, and Indicators with a score of 2 or below warrant attention. The ultimate goal is to reach a 4, which leads to continuous improvement and institutionalization. Table 2 shows the mean results from the School and Classroom Practices Study, and Figure 20 shows the number of schools receiving each rubric score by indicator.



**Table 2.**  
**Indicator Scores for the Turnaround Principles**

Indicators	Avg. Rubric Score 2013
<b><i>Provide Strong Leadership</i></b>	
Clear and Shared Focus – Student Learning	2.7
Attributes of Effective School Leadership	2.7
Distributed Leadership	2.7
<b><i>Ensure Teachers are Effective and Able to Improve Instruction</i></b>	
Capacity Building	2.5
Focused Professional Development	2.2
<b><i>Increase Learning Time</i></b>	
Extended Learning Time for Adults and Students	2
<b><i>Strengthen the School's Instructional Program</i></b>	
Standards-Aligned Curriculum	2.5
High Quality Instruction	2
<b><i>Use Data to Inform Instruction and for Continuous Improvement</i></b>	
Standards Aligned Assessment System	2.7
Supporting Students in Need	2.7
<b><i>Establish a Safe and Supportive School Environment</i></b>	
Safe and Orderly Environment	2.8
Building Relationships	3.0
<b><i>Engage Family and Community</i></b>	
Family Communication	2.8
Family & Community Engagement	3.0
<b><i>Build and Sustain Equitable and Culturally Competent Systems and Policies for All Students</i></b>	
Culturally Competent System	2.2
High Expectations	2.7

### School and Classroom Practices Rubric Summary

- 4. Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization (meets criteria in column 3 plus)
- 3. Leads to Effective Implementation
- 2. Initial, Beginning, Developing
- 1. Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective



Figure 20. School and Classroom Practices Study-Synthesis Findings



## Survey Results

Chehalis School District staff members, students, and parents also completed a survey designed to measure whether they see evidence of the *Student and School Success Principles* in the school. The survey includes items organized around each of the *Principles*. Individual survey items were scored on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral/undecided, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree). Researchers consider a “4” or “5” response on an individual survey item a positive response. Likewise, an overall factor score of 4.0 and above is a positive response.

A summary of the survey findings appears in Figure 21. Overall results fell into the moderately high to high range. The Chehalis staff members scored the *Establish Safe and Supportive Learning Environment* (4.33) factor the highest and *Build and Sustain a Culturally Competent System* (3.73) and *Use Data to Inform Instruction* (3.74) factors the lowest. Similarly, parents rated the *Establish a Safe and Supportive Learning Environment* (4.05) factor the highest and *Use Data to Inform Instruction* (3.82) and *Provide Strong Leadership* (3.83) factors the lowest. Students’ responses showed very little variation, with all scores in the moderately high range. Individual item results are available in Appendices A through C.

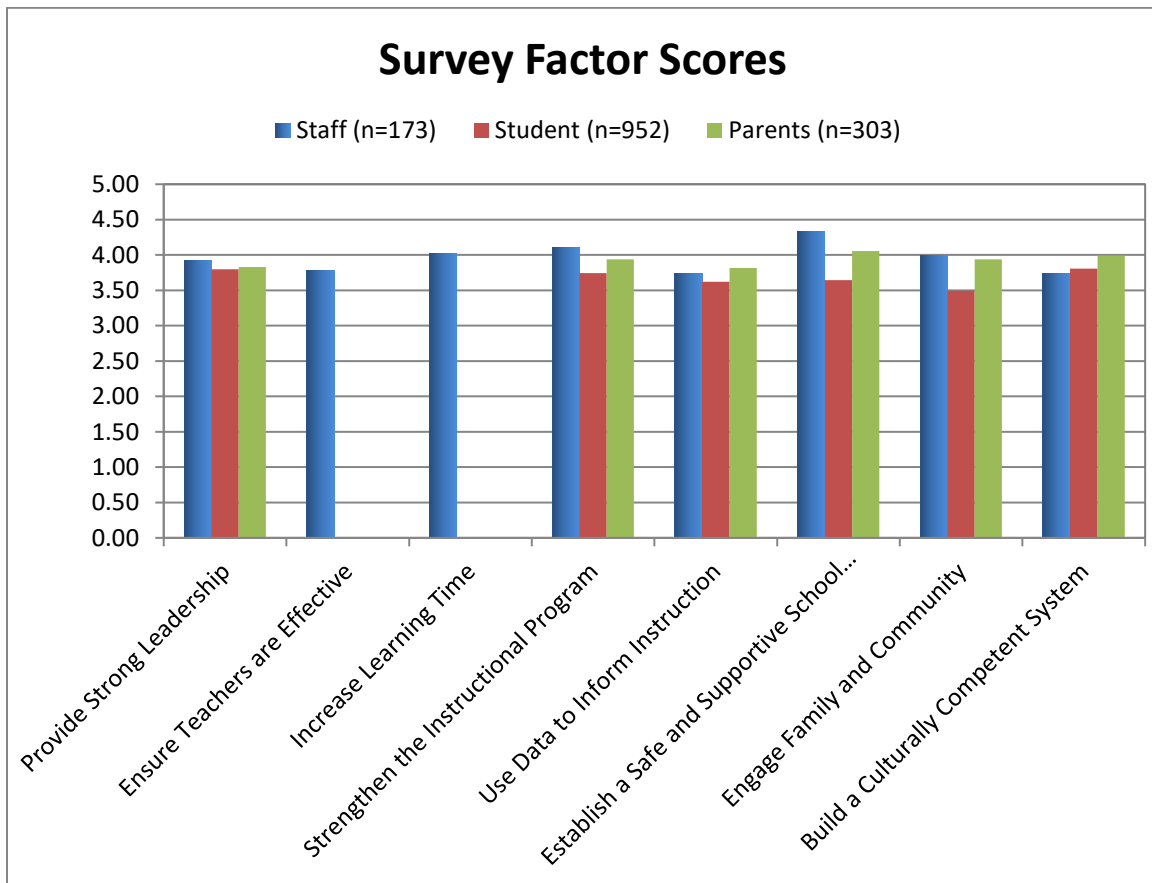


Figure 15. Survey Factor Scores

## Provide Strong Leadership

Student and School Success Principle	Rubric Score 2013
Provide Strong Leadership	
Clear and Shared Focus – Student Learning	2.7
Attributes of Effective School Leadership	2.7
Distributed Leadership	2.7

### *Clear and Shared Focus – Student Learning*

When asked to describe their school’s mission and vision, many staff members had difficulty identifying the official mission statement printed on their websites and other materials. This indicates staff members tend to view these statements as formalities rather than living documents that guide decision-making. Instead, staff members were more likely to summarize what they saw of the gist of their mission statements. Responses ranged from “college and career readiness” to “the mission is to get kids ready for life,” to “our main focus is to improve test scores, if you get right down to it.” In one school, though teachers struggled to remember their “official” mission statement, several were able to repeat a catchphrase amongst the staff – “Know what your kids know.” At one school, a staff member remarked on the lack of school-wide clarity around a shared mission:

For some, the mission is “come to school, don’t drop out.” [For] some [the mission] is “pass the MSP.” Other [staff] have a higher bar, [saying,] “be a good citizen.” It would go a long way if we were on the same page, if we understood it as our role to produce good citizens. It would go a long way to create continuity in the school.

Despite the wide range of responses, 91.6% of staff survey respondents district-wide agree or strongly agree their school’s mission or goals focus on improving student learning, and 88.1% agree or strongly agree their school’s mission statement focuses on raising the bar for all students and closing the achievement gap. These numbers indicate that most staff members in the district have a sense that a shared vision is guiding work at their school, although they may not be able to articulate it.

Staff members showed more similarities in their responses when asked to name initiatives in their building. At the elementary level, staff members described the adoption of new curriculum, while at the secondary level, staff members mentioned STEM. At all levels, staff members spoke of TPEP and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Several staff members across multiple buildings spoke of feeling overwhelmed or anxious about the number of new initiatives and the amount of work that came with them. “Everyone’s trying, but it’s so much,” one staff member said. One administrator explained their efforts, saying:

The catch is, we are trying to work on how to make all of these things tie together, to marry them together. We want to keep teachers motivated and not give them ‘just one more thing to do.’ It’s hard, it’s a push to make it all practical. We are taking it all in district wide. . . trying to figure out what to move towards, how to introduce teachers [to new concepts] and considering how they might be feeling through it all.



A smaller majority of survey respondents (72.7%) agree or strongly agree their school allocates resources in alignment with school improvement goals, which was consistent with focus group findings. Although some staff members said resources were allocated appropriately “in most cases,” others raised concerns. Some staff members worried that resource allocation favored the highest-performing students – those most likely to take STEM courses in high school. One staff member explained, “We are really excited about STEM and our advanced and average students have some incredible opportunities. We want to make sure that all kids have opportunities like this.” Other staff members reported being dissatisfied with the allocation of technology resources in their building. The issue of technology is explored further in the Budget and Resources section of this report.

### *Attributes of Effective School Leadership*

For the most part, staff members spoke positively about their principals. At multiple buildings, staff members emphasized that their principals “trusted them as professionals” and didn’t “micromanage.” As one staff member stated, “We have a lot of control in our own classroom . . . [building administrators] trust me to do what is inside of my standards.” At these schools, staff members were more likely to say their principals supported risk taking and thinking outside the box. One administrator commented further about supporting staff members to take risks:

I am intentional about it, but when somebody does something, I tend to support it and let him or her run with it. I push for that and then I do not make [a statement of] this is what we are going to do. I let them share it rather than jumping on something, then it appears top-down. [I want to] get the buy in.

Although several staff members appreciated the autonomy and support, others indicated this approach does not give teachers the instructional leadership they need. At one school, a staff member reported, “[The principal] is not an instructional leader; he just doesn't have the time. He trusts us.” A staff member at another school said:

[Administrators] don't mess with us as far as how we teach or how we do it. I think they are so hands-off that it can become a hindrance. They have no clue what happens in our room. I rarely see either one of them in our room, if so, it's only for fifteen minutes or so and that doesn't give them a good idea of what is really going on.

Survey results indicated 69.4% of staff members agreed or strongly agreed school leaders ensure instructional and organizational systems are regularly monitored and modified to support student performance, while 64.3% agreed or strongly agreed the principal systematically engages faculty and staff in discussions about current research on teaching and learning.

In general, staff members at the elementary schools tended to report more frequent informal classroom observations or walk-throughs than their colleagues at the secondary level did. At the secondary level, teachers and administrators were more likely to speak of the struggle of making it into classrooms regularly. At Green Hill, the principal shared the difficulties of conducting impromptu classroom observations when an administrative presence tends to distract that unique

population of students. “It is so disruptive for me to walk into a classroom. Usually, it's in and out. It's not that I don't want to see what [the teachers] are doing. For that knowledge, the class is disrupted for the whole period.”

According to survey results, 74.9% of staff members agree or strongly agree administrators recruit a diverse and highly-qualified staff. However, during focus group interviews, some staff members raised concerns in this area. One focus group respondent said:

[The] diversity of staff does not match the diversity of the student body. We have one minority teacher with over 50% minority student population. [We have] tried to talk to the district, we have to have some kind of a minority representation. [There is] only one or two [minority teachers] in each building.

Focus group interviews indicated that celebrating success was more prominent at some schools than others. At one school, an interviewee said, “Successes are celebrated as a whole group. We talk about the progress we've made at staff meetings. We also have ongoing conversations where we point out what kids have achieved and how can we improve.” At other schools, celebrations were not as built into the culture. Staff members at some schools felt the need for more recognition, either individually or for the entire staff. One staff member said, “Birthdays are recognized, and [the principal] does share good things that people are doing, but that information is only shared to a few people.”

Focus group respondents from multiple stakeholder groups spoke positively about the district administration, with many respondents identifying the new superintendent as a positive change. Speaking of the new superintendent, a union representative shared, “He was hired in July and he came to every classroom in Chehalis to introduce himself.” Teachers noted more effective communication from the district office and increased opportunities to participate in distributed leadership via committees.

### ***Distributed Leadership***

Focus group interviews indicated that staff input into decision-making varied from school to school. At some schools, teachers described their school's decision making process as “collaborative.” As a staff member at one such school shared:

It's a real team environment; we make decisions collaboratively. We have a lot of discussion time to talk about discipline and how to offer family support. We have a set time every other Tuesday to discuss students of concern, but also `when you have a minute' time. If we have an issue, we find a way to get together on that day to solve the issue. It's a team effort all day, every day.

However, at other schools, staff members perceived a more top-down decision making style. As a staff member at one of these schools explained:



We have team leaders but they don't ask me any questions. Decisions are made in the office by one person usually. My team leader hasn't talked to me once. Major decisions were made without any input from us at all.

A staff member at another school said, "As classroom teachers, we feel like a lot of decisions about our kids are made without our input. It's top down. It would be nice to have more input." At this school, specialists and classified staff members described a lack of opportunities to participate in the decision-making process. At another school, focus group respondents indicated that classified staff members typically do not attend the staff meetings where decisions tend to be made because they occur outside of their contract hours.

Focus group respondents indicated that, though most of the schools have leadership teams, big decisions tend to get brought to the whole staff. "The deeper the issue, the more input we get," said one teacher, a sentiment that was echoed across buildings. When asked about how the leadership team functions, a staff member at another school explained:

No decisions are strictly made by the [leadership] team, instead, they bring information back to the grade level teams, and then a decision is made. There have only been one or two meetings so far, but we believe this will work better than other methods in the past

According to survey results, 52.2% of staff members agree or strongly agree that a clear and collaborative decision-making process is used to select individuals for leadership roles within their buildings – the lowest number for any survey question in this section. One administrator commented:

We do not have a huge staff; we are intentional that we are all part of the team instead of a select few that run the meetings. We are all part of this team. Within that, there are leaders. No one is on a pedestal and that is what I have heard teachers like.

When asked how leaders are assigned, one staff member stated, "We all have an opportunity to be on the leadership team." Another at the same school said, "We've talked about having a rotation so anyone who wants to be part of the team can be.

Researchers found limited evidence of parent or student input into the decision-making process at the schools. One staff member told researchers about big changes in student empowerment happening at the high school over the last several years, and how students are really driving some decisions, whereas "before it was an adult telling them what to do." W.F. Wood students did report that they can provide feedback and are asked about certain things, but told researchers that they typically "have to seek out administrators rather than the other way around," and that it doesn't really "go out to the whole student body." No schools appeared to give parents significant opportunities for input into decision-making.



## Ensure Teachers are Effective and Able to Improve Instruction

Student and School Success Principle	Rubric Score 2013
Ensure Teachers are Effective and Able to Improve Instruction	
Capacity Building	2.5
Focused Professional Development	2.2

### *Capacity Building*

This is the second year Chehalis is participating in the Teacher/Principal Evaluation Project (TPEP), using an evaluation rubric based around the Five Dimensions of Teaching and Learning (5D) from the University of Washington's Center for Educational Leadership (CEL). Half of the teachers in the district are being evaluated using the 5D rubric. These staff members were chosen on a volunteer basis. Next year, all teachers in the district will be evaluated by new evaluation system. According to union representatives, teachers who are currently being evaluated using the old rubric will partner with teachers who have piloted the new 5D rubric.

Focus group interviews with union and district representatives indicated some aspects of the TPEP rollout presented a challenge. A district official acknowledged, "The teacher evaluation is far ahead of the principal evaluation." In addition, there has been some confusion as to how to apply the new rubric to special education teachers who are not classroom-based. When asked about the new evaluation system, union representatives said they were working "to layer in in the teacher voice, the collaborative climate, and the support needed for growth, mentorship, and make it a growth model as opposed to a punitive model." One union representative said:

It is a big change in a lot of ways, but most of us think it is the way to go. People don't like the old evaluation model, the new evaluation means we have to keep more records, show students growth, and that a detailed conversation that has to take place.

"It gives [teachers] vocabulary and language for what they were doing," a union official said of the new evaluation system. Both union representatives and district officials described the relationship between the union and the district as collaborative.

At Green Hill, the principal described meeting with CEL staff members to identify ways to apply the rubric to their unique needs. The principal explained:

One of the really fantastic things about working about the people at the University of Washington is that they said there are parts [of the framework] that won't work where you work. There are things about where we are that will make us be 3's and 4's in some [other] areas. The structure of this place is such that you can't be a 2.

Some focus group respondents mentioned walk-throughs as one method administrators use to hold teachers accountable to high standards. As mentioned in the *Attributes of Effective Leadership* section, non-evaluative walkthroughs appear to occur more frequently at the elementary level than the secondary level. Although staff members acknowledged that administrators are "being pulled in so



many different directions," some expressed a desire for more frequent classroom observations. "I think it would build continuity if they were in classrooms and observing," explained one educator. "They would see some inconsistencies across classrooms. It would help as far as discipline was concerned, as far as our instructional practices; it would go a long way." Even for administrators who regularly conduct walk-throughs, it appears the process for leaving feedback is informal. The principal at one school said:

I do not have an established walk-through system with paper feedback. Mostly, it's visiting and getting to know the kids. The teachers are very open to having us in the classroom; they want us in the classroom all the time. I feel that I'm in and out a lot. It helps us when we are working with kids, and parents, can say 'I've seen this and this and this.' As far as feedback, it's usually a questioning sort of way. I may ask, "What is going on?"

Survey data show 69.1% of staff members agree or strongly agree administrators regularly visit classrooms to observe instruction, 78.4% agree or strongly agree administrators hold staff accountable for improving student learning, 82.7% agree or strongly agree administrators expect high-quality work from adults who work at their school, and 77% agree or strongly agree they have an evaluation process that helps staff improve their process. Despite the strong survey scores, focus group respondents had mixed answers when asked how their principals hold staff members accountable for meeting high standards.

At one school, some staff members listed chronic tardiness, holding "unprofessional standards" and "inappropriate dress" as examples of staff members not being held to high standards. Other staff members felt they were held accountable. As described in the *Attributes of Effective Leadership* section, several focus group respondents indicated their principals trusted them to maintain professional standards. One focus group participant discussed how increased communication around expectations, paired with opportunities for praise and criticism could help to raise the level of accountability in the building:

I would like to see more accountability. We need a plan in place. Not just a punishing [plan], but an improvement, one that finds the positive in the things. Everything needs positive affirmation and constructive criticism. I don't think there is either [positive or negative]. People want to hear how they are doing, good and bad – they want the feedback.

A few focus group respondents mentioned data as a form of accountability. One staff member reported, "We put a lot of emphasis on test scores. [Administrators] get data out to the departments. So for example, we found that reading went down and talked about our plan on how to increase those scores." However, reports on data usage in this manner were mixed even in the same school. For example, a staff member at one school said, "I feel like [the principal] holds us accountable very well; She looks at our assessment scores, evaluations, parent feedback..." However, at the same school, another staff member said, "I'm not sure what happens when scores don't progress."

### *Focused Professional Development*

Across the district, staff members reported engaging in a number of professional development (PD) offerings, including trainings on the new language arts and math curricula, CCSS, and CEL 5D. One principal explained, "If somebody has a desire to go to something, we have some contractual money we have to spend on professional development and that has to be spent by the committee. Their constraints are really tight about what they can fund." One teacher said, "I've had good success in the past... My experience has been if I can justify it, I can go. There are some problems with communicating to people what funds are available and how to go." However, another teacher at the same school said, "There's not that much money budgeted for [PD]. If you can do one or two for the whole year, you're doing pretty well." Of the staff members surveyed, 66.9% agreed the school has a long-term plan that provides ongoing and focused PD to support the school's mission and goals, 61.5% agreed PD opportunities offered by their school and district are directly relevant to staff needs, and 57.9% agreed PD activities are sustained by ongoing follow-up and support.

At each school, a staff development team coordinates staff developmental goals and facilitates the appropriate use of staff development funds to support the goals. As one staff member explained, "Staff members can make a request to go to a training, and the leadership team evaluates the request. They can turn down our request if it doesn't meet the goals and criteria for the school." Staff members indicated teachers attend individual trainings with the expectation that they will share their learning with the rest of the staff. However, there does not appear to be a systemic method of ensuring this sharing takes place. At one school, staff members suggested this opportunity is rarely made available or "not the same as going through the experience yourself." One teacher explained:

I went to a conference last year and I learned really cool stuff. I wanted to share [findings] with staff, but I was never given the chance. It would help us all to learn, and would be a good way to recognize us as teachers if we were able to share what we learn.

PD activities appear to be largely chosen by these staff development teams, with input from the district in regard to ongoing initiatives such as TPEP or CCSS. According to one principal, "The staff development committee meets and looks at the things we want to build on, then we decide whether or not we should utilize in-house expertise." A staff member said, "The professional development is somewhat unstructured, but that's not necessarily a bad thing. It's flexible and the money is invested in the whole staff instead of just one person." Administrators appeared to use an informal system to measure the effectiveness of PD. The administrator explained:

We talk to staff members about where they are. We have benchmarks, and teams talk to each other. I look at results of classrooms and the school over all. We don't have a data board that shows that, but as far as data, we are getting more versed in it.

Several classified employees indicated they would like more professional development. "Training is not extended to us very often. I think we should be able to go to the trainings on Journeys. We are teaching it, but we haven't been trained," one classified staff member shared. At another school,



staff members reported that classified staff members were “welcome” to attend trainings, but that they were unpaid.

Several focus group respondents indicated needing more training in the CCSS, especially. At one school, most focus group participants reported that CCSS training did not occur frequently enough to have a good grasp of the standards and is not job-embedded or supplemented with adequate follow-up support. One person shared, "Our collective awareness of Common Core is very low. We had a couple half days of training last year, and that's all that we've done as a group. I've done a lot on my own, but I'm the exception, not the rule." Green Hill teachers were particularly concerned about the lack of regularly scheduled professional development concerning assault response, de-escalation, or self-defense.

## Increase Learning Time

Student and School Success Principle	Rubric Score 2013
Increase Learning Time	
Extended Learning Time for Adults and Students	2

### *Extended Learning Time for Adults and Students*

**Adults.** This was one of the lowest sections on the rubric, with every school scoring a 2. Limited extended learning time for adults was the largest factor behind the relatively low scores. According to focus group interviews, the district provides two half-day trainings a year, in addition to seven early release days for teacher collaboration. Aside from these times, there are few opportunities district-wide for teachers to meet as grade-level or department teams. Several teachers expressed frustration about their limited opportunities for collaboration, which one teacher referred to as "the biggest barrier." Survey data indicate 77.8% of staff members agree they engage in collaborative professional learning activities focused on improving teaching and learning. Only 42.2% of staff members agree teachers collaboratively review student work.

Though many focus group respondents indicated they made an effort to collaborate with peers, these meetings tended to take place before or after school, or during lunch breaks or shared planning periods. Aside from the seven early release days a year, there is no regular collaboration time built into the district schedule to facilitate meeting as professional learning communities. Even at schools where department or grade-level meetings occur frequently, they appear to be semi-voluntary. As one staff member described, "We don't have time to meet and collaborate. We meet on our lunch once a week, and it's semi-voluntary. You get clock hours. That's the only opportunity we have on a regular basis." A teacher at another school corroborated this account, saying, "A lot of our communication is in the teacher's lounge."

This limited extended learning time for adults is, in part, responsible for relatively low scores in the *Focused Professional Development* and *High Quality Instruction* sections of this report, as well. Without regular opportunities to collaboratively plan lessons using intentional strategies, to reflect on their instruction, or to process and apply material learned in trainings, teachers are left struggling to undertake this work on their own. As one focus group respondent explained, "We don't have focused time to talk education." At another school, a staff member shared, "One of my biggest frustrations is the lack of collaboration. There are no teeth in what we are expected to do, there is no accountability." Others wondered whether their department was even interested in collaboration. One person said, "Within our building my department does not get together at all. My assumption is that people don't want to." However, another person in the same building shared, "We would do it if we had more time. We really need time to work on the overall curriculum for the middle or at-risk population. We also need to work on pacing." One person shared:



I feel like we are all islands unto ourselves. I can monitor and adjust what I do, but we do not communicate as a department. We don't talk about student learning ever, and we don't talk about teaching. We just don't.

When opportunities for teacher collaboration do arrive, they do not appear to regularly include classified staff at any school. At one school, the educational assistants felt the need for more collaboration saying, "There is not a whole lot of time for us to talk to teachers prior to going into their classrooms. Teachers wish they had more time to talk to us."

Researchers found no evidence of regular opportunities for peer observation or learning walks in any of the schools. One person voiced their interest in the chance to observe their peers, saying, "I'd like to do it. It would be fun to see what others are doing. We teach in isolation, and it would be great to learn from each other's teaching styles." At other schools, staff members explained that their principals were open to teachers observing each other, but that people typically did not take advantage of that opportunity. Survey results indicated only 49.6% of staff members agreed teachers invite their colleagues into their classrooms to observe instruction.

**Students.** The schedules at most schools appear to accommodate extended learning time for students who need extra help in the core subjects. Survey results show 82% of staff members agree their school maximizes time for student learning. At the elementary level, tiered skill-based reading groups had recently been implemented, though this had occurred too recently for researchers to gauge the effect the extra time was having. At one school, an administrator explained they were planning a similar program for math. There is currently no before or after school tutoring available at the elementary level, although one staff member indicated this was available in the community, at the YMCA. In addition, Cascade Elementary moved from a half-day to a full-day kindergarten.

The middle and high school are using a combination of CORE Flex time to support students in danger of failing their classes. Students with failing grades are identified to participate in the CORE program where they work with core teachers to receive extra support for 20 minutes a day (30 at the high school), four days a week. CORE students are required to attend the program for a month and can be dismissed for the following month if they raise their grade to a C or higher. Students who maintain grades at the C level or above are eligible for the Flex program and can engage in activities such as movies, time in the gym, board games, or study time. When asked how well this model is working, staff member responses varied. "CORE is one of the coolest things we are doing," shared one building representative, "We encourage kids to go to CORE if they need a quiet place to just sit and think. It's not punishment, but a time to get work done, to study, and to get some support." Another staff member countered, saying:

I love the idea that we are helping students that need extra help, but I have a problem wasting education time for students who are high achievers with games and movies. It's a total waste of educational time. Instead of watching movie, what about if they learn something academically. Maybe not treat it so academically, but have them accidentally learn something? As a staff, I think we're smart enough to come up with something where the students can learn something interesting rather than watch movies and [listen to] music.

Opportunities for enrichment appeared limited at the elementary level. One staff member explained, "We used to have a full time gifted program teacher, but with all the funding issues that job was eliminated." Another staff member added, "There are outside sources, but none in the school. That would be an excellent thing to reinstate." At the middle school, students can choose electives from art and music classes. At the high school, the STEM program offers a wide range of elective options, such as robotics or molecular genetics. W.F. West students also have access to a diverse set of clubs. Some of the enrichment opportunities mentioned by staff included pottery, Forensic Team, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), and Knowledge Bowl. "For our size, we are lucky to have the things we offer," said one teacher. The vocational programs at Green Hill include auto mechanics, cabling, computer technology, welding, and music production. Additionally, students who excel in their studies can take college courses through Evergreen State College. One staff member said, "We are also proud of the fact that we provide students with employable skills, beyond just the regular school curriculum...We want to help our students have the skills necessary to get jobs when they leave our facility."



## Strengthen the School’s Instructional Program

Student and School Success Principle	Rubric Score 2013
Strengthen the School’s Instructional Program	
Standards-Aligned Curriculum	2.5
High Quality Instruction	2.0

### *Standards-Aligned Curriculum*

At the elementary level, teachers are using the recently adopted district reading (Houghton Mifflin *Journeys*) and math (*Math Connects*) curricula. Staff members indicated the reading curriculum was aligned with CCSS, but that the math curriculum still needed work. As one elementary teacher explained:

The reading curriculum is completely aligned. Math is pretty close, but we use a math supplement that hits places where the curriculum is lacking. I don't know if it's perfect, but we are getting there. It is in all of our minds to get things up to Common Core standards.

Aside from the core subjects, some elementary teachers raised concerns about “inadequate” social studies and science curricula. The schools have recently purchased science kits, but teachers indicate they have yet to determine how well the new materials align with the standards. As for social studies, one staff member noted, “The books we do have available are probably 30 years old.” Another staff member mentioned social studies curriculum would be replaced soon. Other staff members were concerned about the lack of opportunities for elementary students to participate in art. As one described:

Research says art is significant, and I feel as if the powers that be have made it impossible for students to do it. It breaks my heart. We were even told we couldn't do water color painting because it doesn't fit with Common Core.

Familiarizing themselves with the new curriculum has taken up a lot of the staff's time, thus staff members seem to rely heavily on the alignment and mapping already built into the curriculum. At one elementary school, a teacher explained, "We haven't sat down as a group for any type of mapping because it's mapped out in the curriculum. You can spend so much time mapping, but I would rather teach."

Middle school teachers also indicated their new language arts curriculum is aligned to the CCSS, while curricula for other subjects, such as social studies, are still aligned to the EALRs. Teachers working with curricula that is not adapted to CCSS report having "a big work load" as they need to supplement material to guarantee it is standards-based. According to some focus group members, the math curricula at the middle school "is not even sort of aligned" to CCSS, but the math department educators work together to supplement materials to ensure students are engaging in rigorous work. Math teachers work with a coach to create standards based, "hands on lesson plans that get the kids involved." One staff member explained, "First the test was MSP (Measurement of Student Progress), now it's changing to Smarter Balance. [District personnel] want to wait until the dust settles [before adopting new math curricula]." According to staff members at the middle



school, the science curriculum is stronger, with teachers having access to a CCSS-based Scope and Sequence document that aids in alignment.

At the high school, staff members acknowledged the transition to the CCSS was still in the early stages, and that some departments were ahead of others. One school leader reported:

We are in the early steps of rolling out Common Core. Most of our work thus far has been in the math department. Our English department has done some work with them as well. So far we have had a couple of trainings.

Some of the departments are at the point of aligning their lessons and assessments with the CCSS, but this work appears to be in the very early stages and limited to a few departments. For example, the science department talked about spending time on the Next Generation Science Standards and developing the curriculum in biology to align with the standards. According to one science teacher, "We plan everything together and do common assessments." A math teacher talked about the algebra teachers working together to align their curriculum and pacing, but reported "beyond that it is inconsistent."

At Green Hill, CCSS-alignment was similarly in the early stages. Focus group respondents noted two difficulties with the ongoing CCSS-alignment. First, the school uses a variety of different curricula to support the needs of its students. These differ widely in terms of quality. In focus groups, some teachers reported that they were currently teaching with outdated materials, whereas others reported that they have received the latest curriculum. Second, some teachers reported that they lack the time and resources to learn the CCSS. One teacher said, "They should print out the Common Core Standards and compare it [to the curriculum] so that we can tell where it's weak."

Of the staff members surveyed, the vast majority (90.3%) agreed their school's curriculum was aligned to the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs), although this does not indicate alignment to CCSS. A slightly smaller majority (88%) agreed teachers had a good understanding of standards in the areas in which they teach. The relative newness of the CCSS may account for this lower number.

Survey data reveal most (84.7%) of staff members agreed curriculum was aligned horizontally (within grade levels) at their schools, while a smaller percentage (72.7%) agreed curriculum was aligned vertically (across grade levels). These numbers are fairly consistent with focus group findings. At one school, a staff member said, "Horizontally, we do a great job as a team, making time for it. But as far as vertical alignment, there's not much collaboration." Even in the elementary buildings, where there are only two grades, staff members reported limited opportunities to meet across grade levels for vertical alignment. These opportunities appeared even more limited between buildings. A Cascade Elementary teacher, for instance, commented, "In the district I feel very supported, but I would like to have conversations with other grade levels. We are just pre K-1 [it is] hard to get a picture for what students are doing in other building and what are the expectations." Similarly, a high school teacher reported, "There is not a lot of dialogue between us and the middle school. For example, they teach life science in eighth grade and then we teach it



again in high school. We are sort of butting heads on the sequence." Some teachers expressed hope that the new curricula adoptions would improve vertical articulation in the district.

Staff reactions were mixed when asked whether instructional materials gave students a chance to analyze, synthesize, or evaluate information, although 86% of survey respondents agreed instructional strategies emphasize higher-level thinking and problem-solving skills. Furthermore, 79% of parents agree school work challenges their students to solve problems. Some staff member said the *Journeys* curriculum allowed students to use "thinking maps," "graphic organizers," and "work in groups." Some elementary teachers said the new curricula challenges students at a higher level than the old curricula did. Teachers also mentioned liking the differentiated instructional strategies the *Journeys* curriculum provides for English language learners. However, other staff members voiced concerns that students are "missing opportunities to make connections before opening the book" and are not participating in "discovery learning." When asked whether they perform these tasks in most of their classrooms, W.F. West students reported, "We do a lot of evaluation, but a lot of us are doing that in our advanced classes. It seems like a daily routine in those classes." District-wide classroom observation data indicate researchers found evidence of students constructing knowledge and/or manipulating information and ideas to build on prior learning, to discover new meaning, and to develop conceptual understanding, not just recall, in only 37% of the classrooms observed. Similarly, researchers found evidence of students demonstrating verbally or in writing that they were intentionally reflecting on their learning (including evaluating their own work or others') in only 28% of classrooms.

When asked how the administration monitors the fidelity of implementation of curriculum and instruction, focus group responses indicated there is little monitoring done by school leaders, as described in the *Attributes of Effective Leaders* section of this report. One staff member said:

I don't think the administration monitors the fidelity of our curriculum at all. There's no real follow up. They don't attend department meetings or check-in with us. I would love to have them take a look at my curriculum and give me some feedback.

### ***High Quality Instruction***

This was one of the lowest-scoring areas on the rubric, with all schools scoring a 2. As a whole, survey results in this section tended to be higher than focus group and classroom observation data indicated. For example, 81% of staff survey respondents agreed their building's staff shared a common understanding of what constitutes effective instruction. Focus group interviews, on the other hand, indicated that training around the CEL 5D instructional framework (as opposed to the CEL5D evaluation rubric) was inconsistent. While CEL 5D introduced a new shared vocabulary in terms of instruction to the district, many staff members were still gaining a common awareness of research-based instructional strategies and had yet to make the transition to common practice. As one staff member described, "The TPEP lends itself to common understanding [of effective practices]. We are getting there. Those discussions about good teaching practices will occur."

Similarly, 79.5% of staff members surveyed agreed teachers differentiate instruction to accommodate diverse learners, various learning styles, and multiple intelligences. However, researchers only found clear evidence of differentiation in 45% of classrooms observed. While

describing the types of differentiated instruction methods teachers use to accommodate diverse learning needs, some staff members mentioned implementing small groups, peer editing, and text-to-world connections as ways to diversify lessons. However, focus group interviews did not reveal evidence of systemic, intentional, data-based differentiation in most classrooms. Students at one school reported that, in some classes, "if you do not speak up then you just don't get the help you need." One parent of an elementary student shared, "It seems like more differentiated instruction is needed. There isn't a lot of room for achieving students to grow. My [child] isn't being challenged. It's like the mindset is 'Since he's meeting grade level expectations, why worry about him.'"

Many staff members were unable to clearly articulate how the CEL 5D framework guides instruction. One staff member shared, "We have adopted 5D, but we have not had a lot of training. We really do not have a common way we plan our lessons, and I do not think there is any agreement on lesson planning." A building administrator from a different school confirmed that PD on the instructional framework had gotten lost in the midst of other initiatives, saying, "If it calms down, we can do full staff training on the framework. It was our intention to roll it out gradually, not have a Blitzkrieg." One staff member posited that more frequent observations by administrators and by teachers might lead to more common practices:

I don't think there is a general idea that we all share of what a highly effective teacher is and that we all try to model in our school. It goes back to admin not being in our rooms, [not] holding us accountable to that and us not being in each other's rooms. I think if we could all see how we teach, it would give us all a greater understanding of what an effective teacher looks like. We have teachers who give the book, a worksheet, and expect no talking. Others are hands-on; others don't use the book at all. We have teachers who are new, others who are towards retirement. It's a wide range. It would be great if we could blend together to share with each other, to discuss new ideas and time-tested ideas.

Classroom observations using the STAR Classroom Observation Protocol yielded the following scores on the five Essential Components (3s and 4s combined): *Skills* (51%), *Knowledge* (39%), *Thinking* (24%), *Application* (25%), and *Relationships* (79%). *Thinking* and *Application* both scored in the low range, while *Knowledge* scored in the low-to-moderate range, *Skills* scored in the moderate range, and *Relationships* scored in the high range. These data indicate *Skills* and *Relationships* are relative strengths in the Chehalis School District.



## Use Data to Inform Instruction and for Continuous Improvement

Student and School Success Principle	Rubric Score 2013
Use Data to Inform Instruction and for Continuous Improvement	
Standards Aligned Assessment System	2.7
Supporting Students in Need	2.7

### *Standards Aligned Assessment System*

Staff members reported using a number of common assessments, including Renaissance Learning’s STAR reading and mathematics assessments, easyCBM reading fluency and comprehension, curriculum-based unit exams and benchmark tests, Accelerated Reader, Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI), the Washington English Language Proficiency Assessment (WELPA), Classroom Based Assessments (CBA), and the Measurement of Student Progress (MSP)/High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE). One building representative discussed how using such assessments helped department staff members to create goals for their contribution to the School Improvement Plan, saying:

We look at everything. We use the MSP a lot, look at what strands students are doing worse in. We looked at [data] as a team when we went over goals for each department to see where we were failing, where we needed the most help, and what to focus on a little more.

According to survey results, the majority (86.5%) of staff members agree teachers use assessment methods that are ongoing and aligned with core content, but a smaller majority (77.4%) agree school staff use assessment data to plan instructional activities. These numbers indicate that, while teachers are conducting appropriate assessments, they are not necessarily using these data to regularly plan instruction, which is consistent with focus group interviews. One staff member explained, "I think data can be helpful, but we don't know how to use it, and we are not up-to-date on the technology we need to use to access it." All staff members in the Chehalis School District have access to Homeroom, a data collection site where teachers can compare and analyze student data over time; however, the extent to which staff members utilize this system is unclear to researchers. One staff member said they’d had “zero training” on Homeroom so far.

Researchers could not find any evidence that data was being analyzed by subgroup indicator (e.g., race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, etc.) in order to intentionally develop strategies aimed at closing the achievement gap. Only 37.1% of survey respondents agree school level data is disaggregated by subgroup indicator. Administration at one building commented on the extent to which student academic data are disaggregated, saying, "We identify by special education and ELL students, not [by] gender or discipline. We highlight certain kids but don't make a whole other category."

Less than half (48.3%) of survey respondents agreed staff members receive training on using and interpreting student data. This low percentage is consistent with focus group interviews.

For example, although staff members at one elementary school said they used easyCBM “all the time,” there was limited evidence of any training in it. One staff member explained, “I couldn’t even talk about it with parents at conferences, because I didn’t know what it meant. I am not trained on it.” At the secondary level, the regular use of student data to inform and revise instruction, curriculum, and programs seems to vary from department to department. Some department staff members collaborate with a coach and receive a substitute during certain times of the year so they can work together to review student data. Other instructors report they “use data a lot” to identify areas students struggle with and to modify instruction. While discussing how staff members use data, one interviewee reported, “Data isn’t a huge thing here. It could be a time issue. There just isn’t enough time to look at it and delve into it.”

### ***Supporting Students in Need***

Of the staff members surveyed, 70.8% agree the school staff regularly use data to target the needs of diverse student populations, 80% agree structures are in place to support all students to acquire skills and succeed in advanced courses, and 77.6% agree school staff work with students to identify their learning goals. Focus group interviews indicated all schools had some structures in place to personalize the educational setting and allow students to be personally monitored, although the effectiveness of these structures seems to vary from building to building.

At the elementary level, decisions about participation of children in prevention levels are data-driven, involving multiple assessments for diagnosis, and involve a broad base of stakeholders through the Child Access Team (CAT). According to staff members, the CAT includes the special education (SPED) teacher, counselor, occupational therapist, psychologist, and other building staff. “Teachers come with data and information and discuss if a student needs help with social skills, a behavior plan, special education testing, or daily check-ins. We have so many kids under our wing now, and they’re in good place,” explained one staff member. Staff members shared that new curriculum and assessments have made it easier to identify students who need help. “This year has been really effective with *Journeys* and easyCBM. We are able to identify students who are high risk,” shared one educator. While students are receiving remedial services, they are progress monitored with easyCBM on a monthly timeline. Classroom teachers and reading instructors collaborate to make decisions about transitioning students between intervention levels.

As described in the *Extended Learning Time for Students and Adults* section of this report, multi-tiered reading support is now in place at the elementary level. Staff members explained they will also start using a pull-out model in math this year to give extra assistance to targeted students. As one building administrator described it, the reading program is a “partial RTI traditional model, specifically through the use of referrals to the CAT teams then special education is served by grouping kids and they get the intensive reading program with additional pull-out time.” At one school, a staff member reported that all students used to participate in a multi-tiered reading program, but now it is used “mainly for Title kids.” Staff members receive Reading Mastery training from the special education teacher and the reading and math specialists. One staff member explained:

We used to have a wonderful intervention system but that is no more. Now the reading intervention is part of the *Journeys* curriculum. It has Tier 2 and Tier 3 built into it. This is



done with varying levels of fidelity – teachers are coming up with creative ways to use Tier 2 and 3 materials.

The *Journeys* curriculum also includes differentiated material for ELLs. Many staff members referenced it when asked how they accommodated diverse learning needs in their classrooms. Staff members explained that ELL students receive specific services at the elementary level, although staff members didn't elaborate on them.

Special Education students are served in the resource room as well as in general education classes. In focus groups staff members explained, "All SPED students get Common Core in their general education classes, then they get double dipped. They come to us and either get Tier 2 or 3, or direct instruction." When asked about the effects of mainstreaming SPED students, one staff member replied:

I think the change to mainstreaming is the best. I think it's really good for the IEP kids, when we go into the classroom and are working with everyone. It's not like there is a stigma on kids anymore. Now kids want to get into our groups.

At one school, interventionists use a push-in or pull-out method to work with students on a small group or individual basis. One staff member explained that the librarian and the PE teacher are "doing *Journeys* with [those students]." This year, teachers are also relying more heavily on paraeducators and interventionists, focus group respondents reported. One principal confirmed, "EAs (Educational Assistants) have been used in ways they've never been used before. They are doing the assessments, hopefully with fidelity."

At the middle school, a "group of qualified professionals," including the school counselors, psychologist, and special education teachers, meet on a weekly basis to discuss students of concern and to action plan around potential interventions and strategies. While describing this model of support, one staff member shared, "It's not RTI (Response To Intervention) *per se* now, but we help teachers who need ideas in the same way. We need a common language. We have things in place, but are not talking about them in RTI terms." Another staff member agreed with this sentiment, adding, "We don't have a common language . . . we don't talk about 'Level One, Level Two, Level Three.' Maybe it's something to talk to admin about."

As described in the *Extended Learning Time for Students and Adults* section, both the middle school and the high school are using CORE Flex Time to personalize the educational setting for students in need. According to focus group members, counselors work to ensure students are in the proper CORE Flex period depending on their need. Focus group respondents indicate they try not to have more than 25 students assigned to a particular teacher. The CORE Flex assignments for students are adjusted monthly based on recent grades. Most teachers reported CORE Flex to be a positive intervention for students, although they admitted that it does take some extra work for teachers. On Fridays, the school has assemblies, time for student clubs, and/or Navigation 101 (advisory) depending on the schedule for the month.

In addition to the CORE Flex program, W.F. West High School has some additional elements of a multi-tiered intervention framework. Staff members screen freshman students and place them in the appropriate English course based on multiple data points. According to staff members, the decision to place a student in an extension class is data driven and involves various stakeholders. Staff members reported that progress monitoring tools are used regularly in the extension courses. The school also has a Response to Intervention team that meets periodically and was responsible for getting CORE Flex started last year. Other interventions to help students included the Special Education department, the counseling center, and ways for students to get credit recovery through an online program. Issues in this area mentioned by interviewees included having "a lot of needy kids in Special Education this year and not having enough time and personnel to serve all of them or to work with teachers on adaptations," and not having a career counselor.

Green Hill has a variety of services ELLs and Students with Disabilities (SWD). An ELL instructor assesses students' language abilities at intake and decides on their language arts placement. ELL students may be placed in a mainstream language arts course or in an ELL course. Other teachers reported that they have Spanish-language materials for ELL students. One teacher explained:

I have Spanish language for the kids that don't speak English. I do have coursework set up for kids in Spanish language. One of the things that I know from experience, conversational language is different than technical language. I give them the option whether they want English or Spanish language.

Staff members also reported that Green Hill has recently experienced an influx of Students with Disabilities (SWD). One staff member estimated that school has gone from a student population with "15-20%" of students with IEPs to a level of "30-40%." Additionally, the staff member estimated that 65% of students have a mental health diagnosis "some as benign as ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) or as serious as schizophrenia." The school has a mental health facility on campus, a psychologist, and a counselor. Many of the school's courses are computer-based and can be easily adapted to students with a wide variety of educational backgrounds. In focus groups, Green Hill staff and administrators said that collaboration is the key to providing the right mix of services for these students. However, despite weekly meetings with the mental health team, staff members admitted that the school is still struggling to accommodate the needs of SWD. One staff member pointed to the inconsistency of coordination between classroom teachers and counseling staff, the lack of adequate materials for students in the school's mental health units, and the infrequency of specialized training for teachers. "Students often do not receive an IEP appropriate to the Green Hill setting," one staff member said.

## Establish a Safe and Supportive School Environment

Student and School Success Principle	Rubric Score 2013
Establish a Safe and Supportive School Environment	
Safe and Orderly Environment	2.8
Building Relationships	3.0

### *Safe and Orderly Environment*

Several staff members mentioned concerns an aging infrastructure in terms of some school buildings. "Some facilities are so old," one teacher said. At R.E. Bennett Elementary School, one staff member said, "The air quality is bad. Once I get into the building, I seem to have a sinus problem." At Chehalis Middle School, teachers reported that a leaky roof creates "slick" floors and water stains on the ceiling. Middle school staff members also pointed out the carpet in the building is need of repair. "The carpet is 25 years old," explained one staff member, "It is causing health issues. The dust in the carpet bothers people with allergies and there is mold from the leaking. My carpet is held together with duct tape; it's a problem." At Cascade Elementary School, a staff member spoke of inadequate wheelchair accessibility, saying, "Typically, if a handicapped student needs to get from one side of the building to the other, they have to go outside. Additionally if it is raining, there are no sheltered walkways for the handicapped children to use, therefore they get wet." At multiple buildings, focus group members complained of fluctuating temperatures. "It's always either too hot or too cold," one parent said. District officials acknowledged the problem of an aging infrastructure. One official explained, "With state funding, our adoption cycle got suspended, and our facilities plan got stopped." Despite these concerns, 93.4% of staff survey respondents agreed their school environment is conducive to learning. The student responses were lower, however, with 66% of students agreeing their school was clean and orderly.

Survey results indicate the majority of staff members do not see student behavior as a concern. Most (88.3%) staff members agree their school has clear rules for student behavior, and 70% agree the rules are consistently enforced by all staff. Of the parents surveyed, 81% agree their child's teacher enforces classroom and school rules. However, student responses, again, are noticeably lower, with 59% of students agreeing discipline is handled fairly in their school. Similarly, 66% of students agreed they feel safe while at school, compared to the 93% of staff members who agree their school is a safe place to work. The parent responses were in the middle, with 88% of parents agreeing the school is a safe place for their child. Only 25% of students agreed students at their school respect each other, though 70% agree they know where to get help if they are being bullied.

Researchers did not find evidence of a district-wide behavioral management system. Instead, student behavior seemed to be handled on a school-by-school basis. In some cases, rules also differed from classroom to classroom, although there seemed to be some school-wide rules and policies that all teachers adhered to. "It really depends on the teacher," said one high school student. "Some give you detention if you have anything other than water. Others, you can eat lunch in [their classrooms]." At an elementary school, a staff member stated, "I use my own discipline. Unless a severe behavior issue occurs, we are given the freedom to do that." However, another staff member pointed out the "different discipline procedures in each classroom" caused difficulties in implementing the multi-tiered reading program last year.



Other schools have more uniform discipline systems. At two schools, researchers noted procedures that seemed to be based on Positive Behavioral Intervention Systems (PBIS), although neither school had formally adopted PBIS. At the middle school, focus group respondents noted they intentionally did not refer to their new discipline system as PBIS. One interviewee shared:

There is a focus on discipline this year, making it school wide . . . Teachers may see it [PBIS] as another initiative and are asking to wait until next year [to implement]. We have some big things to work in the right direction toward. I'm excited to get teachers bought into positive behavior expectations. It's the philosophy and ideas of how we are approaching behavior and working with students.

Unlike practices in previous years, middle school teachers are asked to call parents if they write a referral for a student this year. Staff members seem to have mixed thoughts about this practice. Some argued that it made teachers more likely to solve discipline problems themselves, while others countered that calling home for every discipline infraction took too much time. In addition, middle school staff members also raised concerns about inconsistent follow-through at the administrative level. One staff member said:

[Administrators] don't follow what is in the agenda based on how many referrals, but based on the kid, how well they like the kid, and their [student's] circumstances at home. Someone might be expelled or suspended while another one may not. It's confusing for the kids and for us.

At the middle school, staff members also raised concerns about student behavioral issues before and after school and during lunch. Due to the district bussing schedule, the middle school students are the first to be dropped off in the morning and the last to be picked up. "Our students have a lot of unstructured time, and middle school students need structure the most," stated one focus group participant. When asked how the situation could be remedied, staff members suggested "more administrator presence" and the use of more paraeducators to help supervise, especially during lunch duty.

At Green Hill, staff members also raised some concerns about safety. Teachers said that, because of privacy concerns, they do not receive detailed information about their students' criminal histories or mental health concerns. "We [teachers] are left with maximum-security level intensive mental health residents with no background information, no notification concerning potential triggers, and we are in no way trained to respond to potential outbursts," one teacher said.

Staff also said that the school lacks an adequate system for communicating quickly in the event of an emergency. For example, during a classroom observation, a teacher pointed out that his telephone landline was connected by an exposed cord extending from the front of the room to a jack near the back of the room. In the event of an emergency, he worried that a student might unplug the phone, leaving him unable to call other staff members for help. Other teachers expressed similar concerns about emergency procedures.



### ***Building Relationships***

When asked to identify strengths in the district, answers tended to center around dedicated staff members and supportive school environments. Several people mentioned that teachers, once hired, tended to stay in Chehalis long-term. Many staff members said the culture of their school was supportive and respectful of their work. "The climate is great! The staff is so happy and positive," shared one staff member. At another school, a staff member said, "There is a higher level of cross-generational respect. At other schools, I really felt invisible. I really feel included here. I very rarely have a teacher who doesn't greet me in a very open and respectful way." The vast majority (91%) of staff members surveyed agreed the school staff treats each other with respect. Of the students surveyed, 82% agreed teachers and other adults in their school show respect for each other.

Similarly, researchers found evidence of positive relationships between adults and students in the schools. District-wide, 93% of lessons observed scored a 3 or 4 on Indicator 13, indicating those teachers had assured their classroom is a positive, inspirational, and safe environment. At Green Hill Academic School, a staff member explained how adults build a respectful school culture:

We shake their hands and tell them good morning. Treat them like the most important person they are seeing today... We don't know what happened before they got here. We know walking through the gates is a traumatic experience. Imagine how discomfoting it is to walk in and know you will be here for a year.

"The culture of our district is about relationships," one district official said. "Because of this, there are layers of support for our students." Staff members at another school reported many different strategies for establishing and maintaining relationships with their students, including talking to them in the hallways, asking them about their day, and generally showing interest in their lives. One interviewee discussed the benefit of staying with [looping] their advisory groups for two years, saying, "It helps to build rapport with those kids." One parent shared her perspective, "My experience has been amazing. My [child] came to [R.E. Bennett] with an IEP, and now she's on grade level. [The teacher] has been really positive and believing in her. It helped build her confidence to do the work."

Staff and family surveys showed higher results in this area than student surveys did. The vast majority (95.4%) of staff members agreed school staff show they care about all students. Parent surveys were slightly lower, but still strong. The majority (80%) agreed there was an adult at school their child trusts and can go to for help with a problem, and 73% agreed the school staff values their child's opinions. Of the students surveyed, 65% agreed the adults in their school showed respect for them, 68% agreed they trust their teachers, and 58% agreed the adults in their building cared about all students, not just a few.

## Engage Family and Community

Student and School Success Principle	Rubric Score 2013
Engage Family and Community	
Family Communication	2.8
Family and Community Engagement	3.0

### *Family Communication*

Family Communication was one of the highest-scoring sections in this report, with most schools scoring a 3. According to the district's strategic plan, increasing the level of parent and community involvement within the school district was a focus from 2008 to 2013. Of the strategies listed to achieve this goal, two particularly speak to communication: reporting community participation in school and staff participation in the community, and utilizing a number of communication methods, such as district and school publications, newspapers, radio and technology to inform staff, volunteers and community members of service opportunities.

Staff members across the district reported communicating with families in a variety of ways, such as Skyward, newsletters, all calls, conferences, an open house, and emails. At one school, staff members mentioned "Friday Folders" that go home with the students every Friday. In the Friday Folder, students have updates on progress, work they have done the entire week, and often homework. Parents are required to sign the Friday Folder, and then it is returned to school on Mondays, providing another means of communication between families and teachers. An interviewee at another school discussed their effort to contact parents with positive messages, saying, "I try to focus on the lows and the highs. I make a call or send a note home. I try to slip in a positive thing, even if I'm calling about something not going well." Of the parents surveyed, 85% agreed school staff communicates in a way that is convenient for them, 77% agreed the school makes it easy for them to attend meetings, and 82% agreed their child's teachers respond promptly when they have a question or concern.

When asked what they still need to work as a school, one building representative shared: Communicating with families and continuing to open this place up to families is something we need to change. It goes from warm and fuzzy in elementary school, and then they get a 'stay out of middle school' idea. We need to work on more inclusiveness with parents.

One focus group participant shared that translation is "available on a limited basis," although another participant mentioned that a goal, at one school, was to get all documents translated. Staff members said that some documents are available in Spanish, while others, like the school newsletter, are not. A focus group respondent acknowledged:

It's probably frustrating for some families. At the start of the year, Spanish families get the handbook, but can't read it because it's not translated. It would be lovely to have a translator on staff (at district level). A lot of times the kids can communicate with the parents, but not in detail.



Parents at another school reported that the "newsletter is translated into Spanish" and documents are "translated if you request it." This indicates translation availability may differ from school to school. Staff members at a few schools reported difficulty in finding the resources to communicate with families who spoke languages other than English and Spanish. "We have a Korean mom that we are trying to find an interpreter. We go through the state to find interpreters," said a staff member at one school. Of the students surveyed, 40% agreed interpreters are available if they or their family needs them.

At Green Hill, the one school that scored a 2, staff members reported having limited contact with students' parents. There, only 14% of staff members surveyed agreed that teachers had frequent contact with their students' families. Similarly, only 14% agreed that school provides information to families about to help students succeed in school. In an interview, both the principal and the facility superintendent said that living unit counselors provide parent-like support for their students.

### ***Family and Community Engagement***

Family and Community Engagement was another of the highest-scoring sections in this report, with all schools scoring a 3. As part of the plan to increase the level of parent and community involvement, the district listed "continue to provide opportunities for families to join students in the learning environment," as a strategy from 2008 to 2013.

The principal at one school explained that the community is "involved whenever we have asked. They listen." Focus group respondents across the district mentioned numerous partnerships between schools and community organizations. A district homeless liaison talks to students who may be in transition between homes. Food drives at the school supply food to the local food bank, as well as a clothing drive. Around the holidays, the local police station has a program, Shop with a Cop, that takes students shopping for families who cannot afford gifts or food. One school opens its facilities to Young Life and local basketball for meetings or games. The new field going in behind Olympic Elementary School will act as baseball fields for the community as well as the school. One school maintains a parent team library for parents to check out relevant literature.

At the elementary level, schools offer a number of ways for parents to get involved. Focus group members mentioned a number of activities that occur at schools for family members, from summer barbecues and game nights, to curriculum nights and open houses, to the Daddy Daughter Dance or the Mother Son Date Night. Additionally, the YMCA provides students with after school program activities. All of the elementary schools utilize volunteers who work with students in small groups, help teachers in classrooms, or chaperone field trips.

At the middle school, eighth grade students participate in an outreach program to the local food bank. This opportunity allows students to receive service-learning hours, and, according to one interviewee, "gives the students a chance to give back to the community in an enjoyable way." Students also participate in community service events such as a canned food drive and a Pennies for Patients drive to raise money for leukemia and lymphoma patients. As a way to promote post-secondary awareness, the school counselors work with community members to provide a career fair for students every other year. Reportedly, this event "brings in tons of community members."

Donors, including funds from the Chehalis Foundation help to provide experiences such as a STEM summer learning program and other related opportunities for students from the middle school. Partnerships with Big Brothers/Big Sisters and Sound Care Kids offer students mentorship opportunities and grief support. Although parents reportedly volunteer for socials and school functions, there is no active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) in place at the middle school.

At the high school, many interviewees mentioned the generous support provided to the school and district by the Chehalis Foundation. Talking about support from the Foundation, one person commented, "The Chehalis Foundation has been huge for a certain segment of the population." Others talked about other community support, "We love our high school," claimed one parent. "The community is amazing. We often have alumni that raise money." Students and parents at W.F. West also mentioned booster clubs for athletics and music programs. The school also has partnerships with businesses in the community that provide resources and some that provide students with college scholarships. One person shared, "We have a partnership with Fred Hutch. We have grads in the UW program and at WSU, and they are helping us build connections."

Although some parents are involved in volunteering at the school, parents participating in the focus group reported that a few parents do a lot and there are many who are not involved. The parents also claimed, "The middle school and high school are not very parent friendly for volunteering. They don't ask for a lot of volunteers, and in some ways it feels like they do not want you here." A building representative from the middle school voiced a similar concern:

Communicating with families and continuing to open this place up to families is something we need to change. It goes from warm and fuzzy in elementary school and then they get a 'stay out of middle school' idea. We need to work on more inclusiveness with parents.

According to survey results, 60.4% of staff members agree community organizations and/or family volunteers work regularly in classrooms and at the school, while 83.1% agree the school works with community organizations to support its students. Of the family members surveyed, 74% agree the school offers many opportunities for family members to volunteer or help in the school, 64% agree the school works with community organizations to support their child, 57% agree community volunteers work regularly at their child's school, and 53% agree the school helps connect their family with community resources.



**Build and Sustain Equitable and Culturally Competent Systems and Policies for All Students**

<b>Student and School Success Principle</b>	<b>Rubric Score 2013</b>
Build and Sustain Equitable and Culturally Competent Systems and Policies for All Students	
Culturally Competent System	2.2
High Expectations	2.7

***Culturally Competent System***

School report card data from OSPI indicate the majority of students (74%) of Chehalis students are white, with Hispanics/Latinos-as making up the next largest demographic at 15.6%. Only 3.4% of students district-wide qualify as Transitional Bilingual. However, 49.5% of students district-wide qualify for free and reduced-price meals. Focus group respondents at one school also mentioned the community has "a high rate of incarceration and substance abuse." In addition, Green Hill has a more ethnically diverse population compared to the other schools.

To address barriers of poverty in the community, staff members at one school referred to a full time mental health counselor from Cascade Mental Health who connects families to resources and works with them "help their children achieve academic and social success," as stated in the SIP. A staff member commented, "We have a good connection with all Cascade Mental Health employees. They are important for this community." Staff members also mentioned the Shop with a Cop program and the PTA sponsored Helping Hands "closet" that houses clothes for students in need. Community businesses also donate food, backpack, clothing, and school supplies.

Some focus group respondents indicated cultural competency training has not been a priority, as staff and administration did not see the population as particularly diverse and there was "no need" seen for training. While some focus groups members did not seem to feel the need for more training in this area, others expressed the need for increased awareness around working with students who come from poverty and diverse backgrounds. An interviewee at one school said, "The staff needs training in adverse childhood experiences. We deal with a lot of children in poverty, drug related, homeless, et cetera. There's not a whole lot of training about that." A teacher at another school remarked staff members should have training around the growing Hispanic population, saying, "We need to know more about Hispanic culture and understand it better. Most of the time students come from Mexico, and it's hard [for them] to get integrated into the new school culture." Students at the high school reported that they do have a variety of clubs aimed at including different student populations, and the Associated Student Body does have Hispanic representatives.

Green Hill, the one school that scored a 3 in this area, offers a variety of culturally-themed clubs for students of various ethnic and religious backgrounds, including clubs for African American, Native American, and Hispanic students. However, staff members and students admitted there are sometimes problems both within and between ethnic groups on campus. For example, staff members said that several White supremacist students have tried to start their own cultural group

at Green Hill. The students interviewed said they try to avoid fighting with other students, regardless of ethnic background. One student explained:

If you just respect people here, they will respect you back. If you don't say anything stupid, they won't do anything stupid to you. Treat people the way you want to be treated. There's a lot going on. You just do you. You worry about yourself.

Only 36.3% of staff members agreed the school staff receives training on how to work with students from diverse cultural backgrounds. One teacher stated, "[Professional development on cultural competency] isn't something that is really addressed by the district." However, 90.7% agreed school staff respect the cultural heritage of all students. Of the family members surveyed, 74% agree the school's programs reflect and respect the diversity of their family. One elementary staff member commented, "I have noticed the reading curriculum has cultural stuff, [like] integrated color words in Spanish." A slightly smaller majority of parents (69%) agree school staff teach their child respect for different cultures, and 66% agree their child sees his/her culture and family respectfully portrayed in school learning materials, signs, and displays.

### ***High Expectations***

Stakeholders from multiple focus groups shared that one of the district's primary foci is on college and career readiness. "As the standards changed, the mission statement tried to keep up," one teacher said. District officials spoke of wanting to push students towards Ivy League colleges. As part of the push towards college and career readiness, multiple stakeholders mentioned the STEM program at the high school. This program was funded, in part, through the Chehalis Foundation, a nonprofit organization which lists "to pursue academic excellence in the Chehalis schools" as part of its mission statement.

However, stakeholders from multiple groups acknowledged work still needed to be done to improve college and career readiness in the district. When asked what the district was doing to support college and career readiness, one district official spoke frankly, saying, "I think we are doing a terrible job. It hasn't been a focus." A school board member shared, "I believe the district is solid for the college bound, and for many career bound students in specific areas. Offerings are numerous; however, there are gaps." Multiple focus group respondents spoke of wanting to improve offerings for career-bound students, perhaps in partnership with Centralia Community College. In addition, stakeholders spoke of wanting to create a more visible culture of college awareness. A representative from the Chehalis Foundation shared, "They (staff members) don't talk about Husky Promise or Cougar Commitment. We don't hear them talking about college or the opportunities."

Union officials, on the other hand, spoke of improvements in this area. One teacher said, "All of us say, 'when you get to college' at least once a day . . . even from early grades, college is being seen as attainable." In addition, multiple focus group members spoke of a need to revamp academic counseling services, citing a lack of time for counselors as a barrier. A district official explained, "The counselors don't have time to explain the opportunities to the students, especially if they are doing well with classes and have good SAT [scores]."



Focus group interviews suggested staff members across the district are still coming to a general consensus on what rigorous teaching and learning looks like. At one school, some interviewees identified their classes to be "very rigorous" or "very challenging" while others suggested the level of rigor "depends on the classroom," and that "some teachers work harder than others" to create a challenging academic environment. At another school, some focus group respondents questioned whether their students could achieve to a high standard. For example, one teacher said:

Common Core is appropriate for kids with good home lives, but not for the kids we have here. The children aren't ready to meet those levels. This group of kids in particular is so far behind, and they've never been exposed to this type of learning before. When you give the comprehension fill in the bubble test, they don't do very well.

At another school, staff members felt rigor and expectations had increased, especially for special education students. One staff member explained:

For years, we felt we had to hold back in what we could teach them, and we always wanted the expectations to be higher. Now with the teachers we have, they have higher expectations. Before, we were told, 'Do not alter direct instruction because kids won't pass the test anyway.'

A number of staff members mentioned the variety of advanced courses offered by the high school as an example of high expectations. "We have wider variety of advanced courses than most schools I've been at," stated one person. Several staff members cited the Navigation 101 program as one example of having high expectations for students and providing them with extra support to develop goals and plan for their future.

Survey results indicate 71% of students agree their teacher believes all students can do well, 79% agree their teacher encourages them to do their best, 78% agree their teacher expects all students to work hard, and 63% agree their school teaches study skills, goal setting, time management, and other ways to succeed in school. Family surveys indicate 80% of parents agree school staff expect all students to meet high standards, 78% agree their child receives detailed feedback about the quality of the work s/he does, 73% agree their child is learning what s/he needs to be successful later in life, and 82% agree teachers challenge their child to work hard and be successful.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of strengths set the Chehalis School District apart from other districts in the state. Due to its incredibly robust partnerships with community organizations, such as the Chehalis Foundation, the district is able to offer a wide variety of advanced coursework through the STEM program at W.F. West. Stakeholders from a wide variety of groups praised both district and building leadership, citing open communication, trust, and support for calculated risk-taking as key strengths. Caring and supportive school and classroom environments also emerged as a key strength for the district. It is notable that teachers, once hired, tend to remain in the district. Staff members spoke of feeling supported by each other and of having open lines of communication.

However, though staff members referred to the culture of Chehalis as collaborative, teachers in Chehalis have few opportunities to collaborate with each other. This means that much of the work around statewide initiatives, such as TPEP and Common Core, is being done in isolation, and that teachers have few opportunities to collaboratively plan or reflect on lessons, review student work, or analyze data. Additionally, although the adoption of the 5D framework has begun to give teachers a common vocabulary with which to talk about instruction, researchers noted Chehalis teachers are still gaining a common awareness of powerful teaching and learning, and have yet to put these ideas into common practice. Finally, teachers indicated they had little to no training in working with students of diverse backgrounds, including socioeconomic status. That is troubling when combined with factors that limit opportunities for students to enroll in advanced coursework.

Moving forward, the district has an incredible opportunity to build on its strengths and address these weaknesses. Its small size and strong community partnerships give the Chehalis School District a flexibility that larger districts lack. As the district plans for its future, we recommend it consider the following recommendations:

***Build College Awareness Through the System.*** In order to develop a district culture that promotes college and career readiness, we recommend the formation of a College and Career Readiness Committee with stakeholders from each building, district administration, and the community. The purpose of this committee should be to develop a vision of what college and career readiness means in Chehalis, to study the available data on college and career readiness, and to decide which types of data the district should try to influence and track long-term. Some things that the committee may want to focus on include developing strategies at each school that align with the College and Career Readiness vision, building the capacity of teachers to provide college and career readiness information (e.g., through Navigation 101) throughout the system, aligning course taking policies

***Develop a College and Career Dashboard.*** Although you may want to commission your own Cohort Study to determine indicators of drop out for your students, Cohort Studies in Spokane and Seattle can provide some guidance on the type of data you should be tracking both to identify students at risk of dropping out and to ensure students are on a path toward College and Career Readiness.



In many ways, the data used for an Early Warning System is similar to data you would use to ensure that students are on track for graduation and are College and Career Ready. In developing a district College and Career Readiness Dashboard, you may consider including some of the following indicators, which are separated into five general themes or topics below. To ensure a College and Career Readiness Dashboard is comprehensive you will want to consider collecting ongoing data in each of these areas. Some district and school level indicators are available online, but many will need to be collected at the district and school level. The following is not an exhaustive list of all College and Career Readiness indicators but represents data that is often accessible to districts within their existing data systems and is prevalent in College and Career Readiness Systems in many districts and states throughout the country. Providing comparison data for indicators can help you set benchmarks. The following links are websites where you can get access to data for Washington State and the nation on different indicators.

### **Student Growth and Proficiency:**

- **Grades** – In the Spokane Cohort Study, the researcher found that failing grades were an important predictor of dropping out. Students are at greater risk if 1) they failed any core course in middle school or high and 2) if they received a failing grade in any core course in consecutive semesters/quarters.
- **GPA** – In the Seattle Cohort Study, the researcher found that a cumulative GPA of below 1.5 at any grade was predictive of not graduating from high school.
- **Test Scores:** <http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/summary.aspx?year=2012-13>  
According to the results of the Spokane Cohort Study, students scoring in the lowest third (on math and reading) of the district distribution of raw scores on the state assessment were less likely to graduate. Additionally, test scores were a more powerful predictor in elementary and middle school.
- **Course-Taking** – An important indicator of College and Career Readiness is the percentage of students who graduate from high school with the necessary courses to be admitted to a four-year college. (The BERCC Group regularly performs transcript analysis to help districts and schools track this information.)

### **Student Engagement/Behaviors:**

- **Unexcused Absences** - Less than half of students with 4+ unexcused absences graduate (Spokane Cohort Study)
- **Disciplinary Actions** - Out of school suspension or an expulsion is strongly predictive of dropping out of school and is even worse results for students with 2+ serious disciplinary events (Spokane Cohort Study)
- **Non-Cognitive Factors** - Increasingly, evidence on non-cognitive factors are being shown to play a role in student success. Measuring factors such as a student's 1) academic behaviors, 2) academic perseverance, 3) academic mindsets, 4) learning strategies, and 5) social skills could also be incorporated into a vision of a student being College and Career Ready (*Teaching Adolescents to Become Learners*).

### College Planning:

- Staff, student, and parent survey data (for an example see the questions gathered for Navigation 101 at W.F. West High School)
- % of eligible students enrolled in College Bound Scholarship program
- % of students submitting one or more college application
- % of students going on a college visit
- % of students completing the FAFSA
- % of students admitted to one or more college
- % of students receiving a scholarship
- % of students participating in college placement exams
- Average score of students taking college placement exams
- % of students meeting college readiness benchmark on college placement exams
  - Advanced Placement:  
<http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/ap/rtn/9th-annual/9th-annual-ap-report-double-page.pdf>
  - PSAT and SAT:  
PSAT (10<sup>th</sup> grade) -  
[http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/research/WA\\_13\\_05\\_03\\_01.pdf](http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/research/WA_13_05_03_01.pdf)  
PSAT (11<sup>th</sup> grade) -  
[http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/research/WA\\_13\\_05\\_02\\_01.pdf](http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/research/WA_13_05_02_01.pdf)  
SAT -  
[http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/research/2013/WA\\_13\\_03\\_03\\_01.pdf](http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/research/2013/WA_13_03_03_01.pdf)
  - ACT: <http://www.act.org/newsroom/data/2013/states/pdf/Washington.pdf>

### Career Planning:

- Staff, student, and parent survey data
- % of students taking in career assessment
- % of students completing an internship/job shadow/service learning
- % of students participating in career fair
- % of students taking career interest inventory
- # of community speakers
- Connections with tech schools
- # of alumni mentors

### Alumni Performance (much of this data can be accessed either at [www.collegetracking.com](http://www.collegetracking.com) or <http://erdcdata.wa.gov/>):

- % of graduates enrolling in college



- % of students enrolling in remedial coursework
- % of graduates persisting in college
- % of students completing college degree
- % of students gainfully employed – alumni survey

***Develop strong instructional habits.*** We recommend the district provide professional development support to help teachers develop their instructional habits. Each school should develop an instructional leadership time that will participate in the professional development and will provide support to the staff to ensure that teachers move beyond the awareness of research-based instructional strategies and instead develop the habit of using them. Through this support, teachers will have opportunities to collaborate with colleagues both in and out of their subject areas and/or grade bands. It can be powerful to pair teachers across disciplines, and have them plan lessons pedagogically. When their focus is on instruction they will be using in the classroom, not the content itself, even teachers from widely different subject areas can collaborate on making their lessons stronger. Afterwards, they can re-group with these colleagues to reflect on the lessons they planned and discuss ways to improve their use of the strategy next time. Intentional peer support and the opportunity to reflect on their teaching will help teachers to develop stronger instructional habits.

The initial focus should be on developing instructional habits that promote critical thinking, student collaboration, and real-world application. Based on an analysis of STAR classroom observation data, we recommend you begin with a focus on strategies and techniques that will build proficiency in Criterion 2, with a secondary focus on Criterion 1. To build proficiency around Criterion 2, we recommend teachers use a variety of questioning strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and/or communication skills. One way to do this is to probe beyond a correct or incorrect answer, and ask students to explain *how* they reached their conclusions. By articulating their thinking, students will reflect on their learning and develop conceptual understanding, not just recall. Having students demonstrate verbally or in writing that they are intentionally reflecting on their learning is another way to build critical thinking in the classroom and to promote proficiency around Criterion 2. Students can reflect on their learning in a number of ways. Some teachers use journal entries or exit slips for this purpose. It can also be powerful to have students use rubrics to score their own work or a peer's, justifying why they gave the scores they did. A third way to build proficiency around Criterion 2 encourages students opportunities to collaborate in pairs or small groups. These opportunities don't need to be elaborate. Even a series of brief think-pair-shares sprinkled into a lesson can give students the opportunity to learn from each other. Teachers can hold students accountable for this collaboration in a number of ways, by keeping discussion time brief, for example, or by randomly calling on students to debrief with the class as a whole. An intentional focus on critical thinking and student collaboration will help teachers develop proficiency in Criterion 2.

To raise scores in Criterion 1, we recommend teachers focus on developing real-world connections to the material being covered in class. When going over learning objectives with the class, teachers can explain *why* students are being asked to develop a concept or skill. Even more powerfully, they can ask students to explain this to each other. In addition, they can relate lesson material to other subject areas, personal experiences, and contexts. They can also have students demonstrate a

meaningful personal connection by extending learning activities in the classroom and/or beyond the classroom. Intentional usage of technology opens up a number of avenues for this, such as students participating in web quests, collaborating with peers in other schools, or developing blog entries or podcasts. We recommend teachers collaborate to brainstorm ideas for extending learning activities. An intentional focus on developing real-world applications in the classroom, especially combined with increased opportunities for student collaboration, will build teacher proficiency around Criterion 1.

***Strengthen the STEM program through intentional fine-tuning.*** The vitality of the STEM program is one of the district's strengths; however, it can be improved through developing stronger articulation, increasing community partnerships, and eliminating barriers to access. We recommend STEM teachers have regular opportunities for interdisciplinary planning to improve the articulation of the STEM program. Through better articulation, the district can help to ensure that the available math offerings support the science offerings, for example. This will also help STEM teachers to develop stronger instructional habits, and perhaps create projects that touch on multiple disciplines. This will help students to see cross-disciplinary application of the material they are learning. We also recommend the district partner with community businesses to seek opportunities for STEM internships. The district may consider assigning someone at the district level to serve as a liaison to develop internships and partnerships. Finally, we recommend the district explore ways to decrease barriers to the STEM program to allow a wider range of students to take advantage of the opportunities it offers. It may consider offering support classes or tutoring for students who need extra assistance to succeed in higher-level math or science classes, for example, or pushing enrollment in gatekeeper classes. Work in this area can be done in conjunction with the College and Career Readiness Committee, once it is developed.

***Increase opportunities for teacher collaboration.*** We recommend the district develop a schedule that allows for dedicated teacher collaboration time in professional learning communities (PLCs). A number of districts across the state have adopted a one-hour early release or late start once a week; others have built in collaboration time through creative scheduling. Although it can be difficult to set up initially, the impact on student learning can be incredible. Weekly collaboration will ensure stronger horizontal and vertical articulation of curriculum by allowing teachers to develop common assessments and plan lessons together. It will also allow teachers to divide the heavier workload being required of them through statewide initiatives, helping to mitigate the effects of burnout. Administrators can hold teachers accountable during this collaboration time by sitting in on meetings and/or by requiring PLCs to turn in minutes. If the district decides to adopt this schedule, it's important to keep it dedicated to collaboration – it should be seen as a time for teachers to apply their learning, cooperatively plan lessons, and share student work, not as an opportunity for formal professional development or whole-staff meetings.

***Implement a comprehensive guidance system using advisory as a delivery method.*** Stakeholders raised concerns about the academic counseling available for students and their parents, noting limited time and a “reactive” system as barriers. Additionally, staff members at the high school noted frustration with the Navigation 101 program, remarking the limited meetings do not give them enough time to get to know students, and that their role as advisors is sometimes limited to “just passing out papers.” To address both of these concerns, we recommend the high school



clarify the purposes for Navigation 101 advisory classes, with the intent of turning advisory into the vehicle for getting that college and career readiness information to students without overburdening counselors. Several schools, statewide, that have implemented Navigation 101 most successfully have designated a point person (often a counselor), as well as a team to help select and prep advisory lessons in advance. This limits the amount of work any individual teacher needs to do for the program and helps to ensure fidelity to the program. If the district decides to move forward with this, we recommend it also plan mandatory professional development for all Navigation 101 advisors to ensure they share a common understanding of advisory's purpose as well as a common understanding of current college entrance requirements. We also recommend the high school host lunch or evening events to help guide students through the college application process or to explore career options. This will make the counseling system a more viable resource for working parents.

## APPENDIX A: STAFF SURVEY

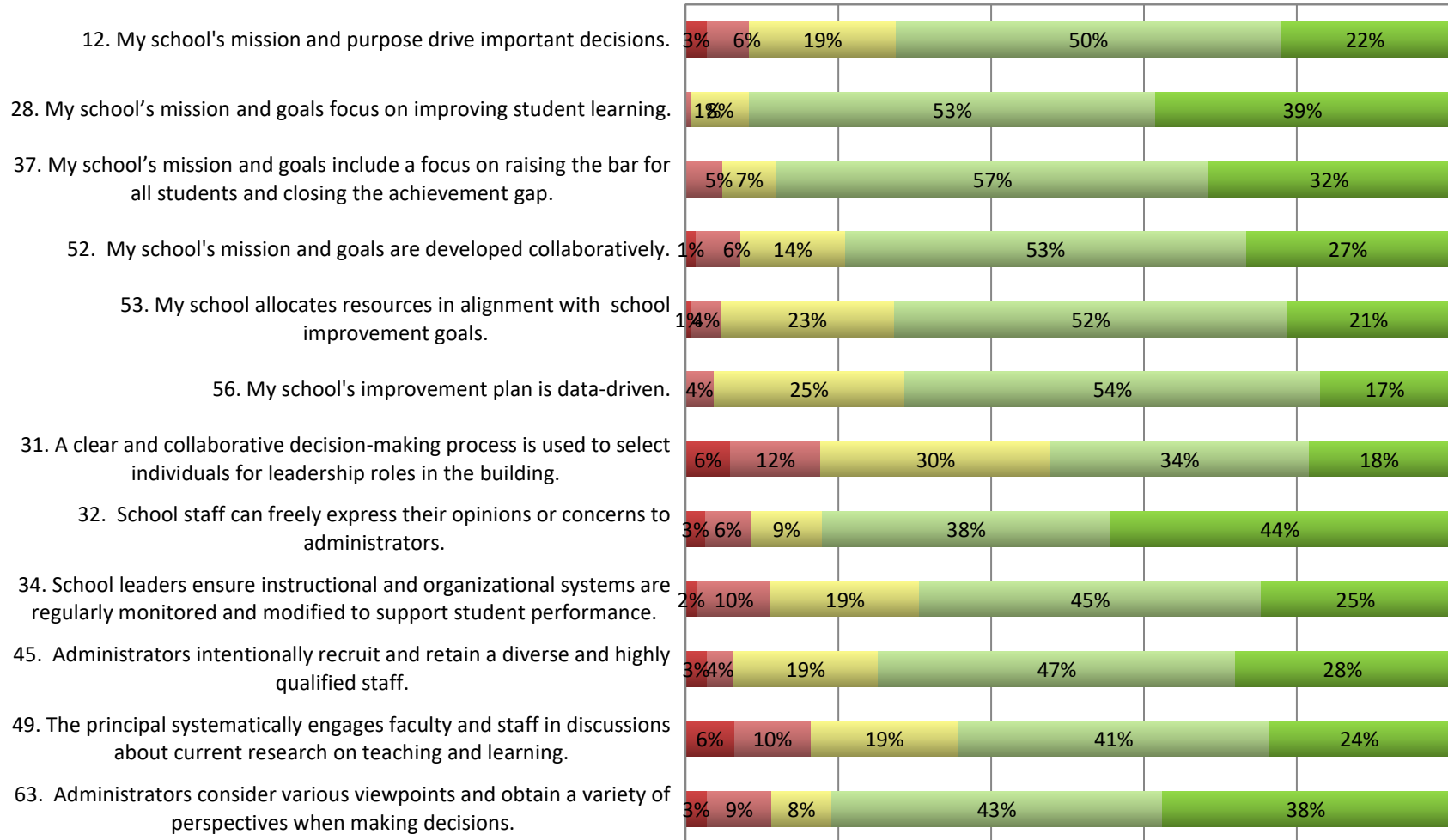
### *Participant Demographics: Staff*

<i>Gender</i>	
<i>Male</i>	26.3% (n=45)
<i>Female</i>	73.7% (n=126)
<i>Race</i>	
<i>American Indian or Alaskan Native</i>	2.9% (n=5)
<i>White</i>	87.4% (n=152)
<i>Hispanic</i>	1.7% (n=3)
<i>Declined to identify</i>	8% (n=14)
<i>Staff Role</i>	
<i>Certificated Staff</i>	69.9% (n=121)
<i>Classified Staff</i>	25.4% (n=44)
<i>Administrator</i>	4.6% (n=8)
<i>Years Teaching at this School</i>	
<i>1st year</i>	9% (n=14)
<i>2nd or 3rd year</i>	18.1% (n=28)
<i>4th or 5th year</i>	8.4% (n=13)
<i>6th-9th year</i>	21.9% (n=34)
<i>10th year or more</i>	42.6% (n=66)
<i>Total years Teaching</i>	
<i>1st year</i>	6.5% (n=10)
<i>2nd or 3rd year</i>	7.7% (n=12)
<i>4th or 5th year</i>	3.9% (n=6)
<i>6th-9th year</i>	16.8% (n=26)
<i>10th year or more</i>	65.2% (n=101)
<i>National Board Certified</i>	
<i>Yes</i>	13.6% (n=22)
<i>No</i>	86.4% (n=140)



## Provide Strong Leadership - Staff

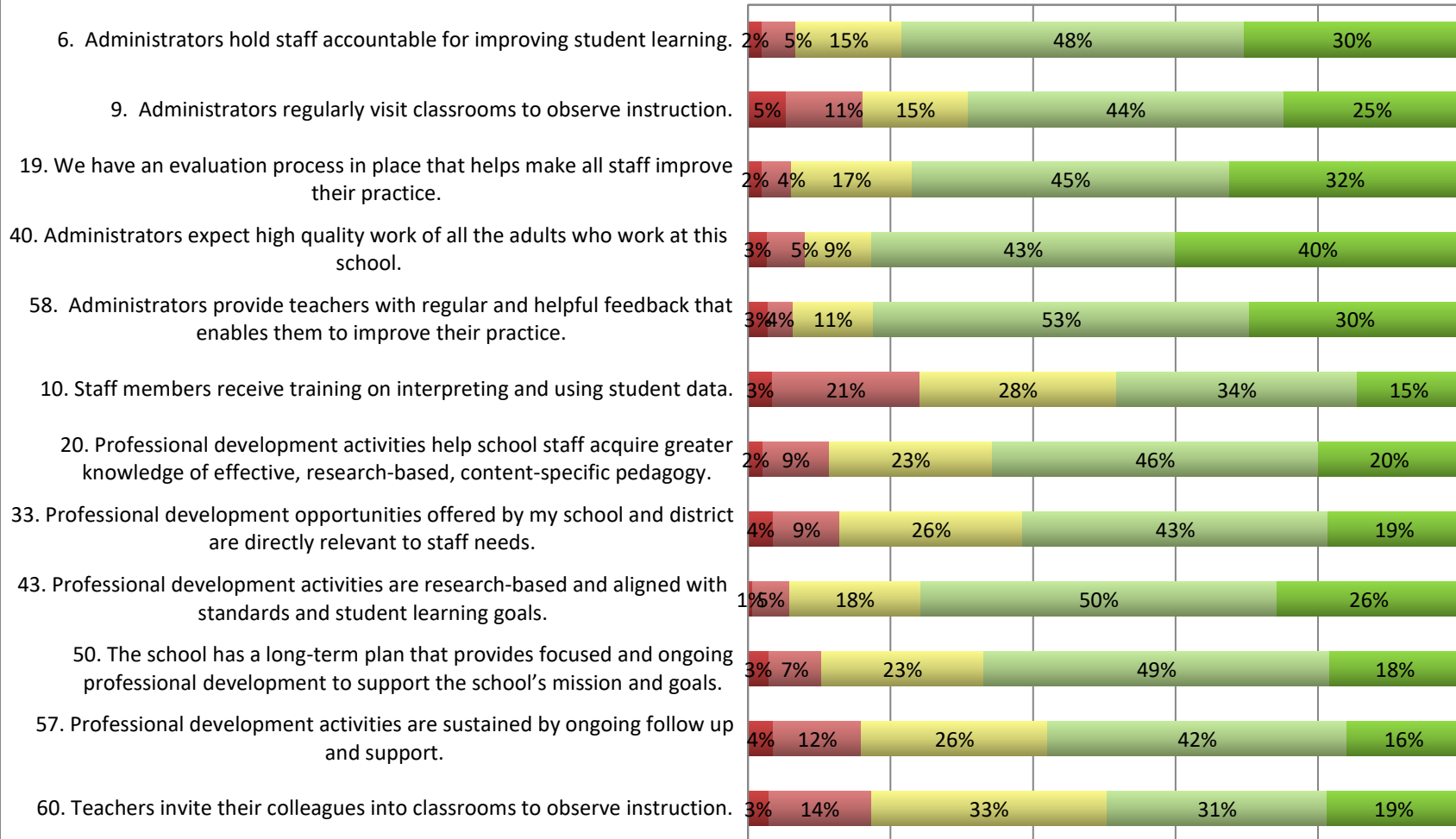
■ Strongly Disagree   
 ■ Disagree   
 ■ Neutral   
 ■ Agree   
 ■ Strongly Agree





## Ensure Teachers are Effective and able to Improve Instruction - Staff

■ Strongly Disagree 
 ■ Disagree 
 ■ Neutral 
 ■ Agree 
 ■ Strongly Agree

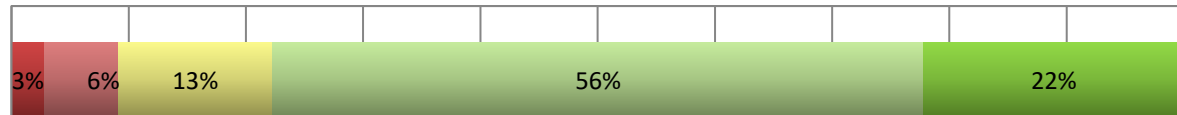




### Increase Learning Time- Staff

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

22. Staff members engage in collaborative professional learning opportunities focused on improving teaching and learning.



47. Staff members collaboratively review student work.

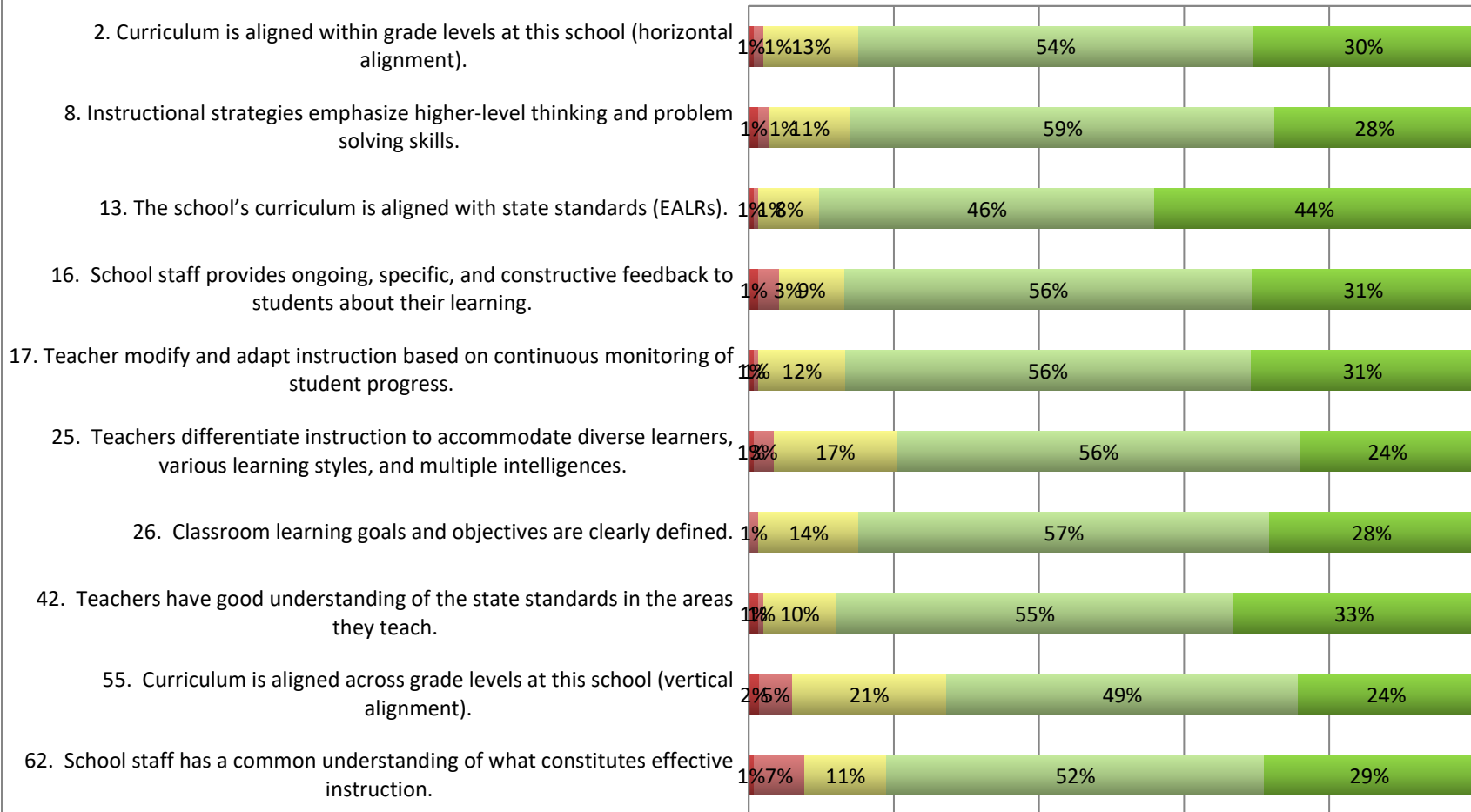


18. Our school maximizes instructional time for student learning.



## Strengthen the School's Instructional Program- Staff

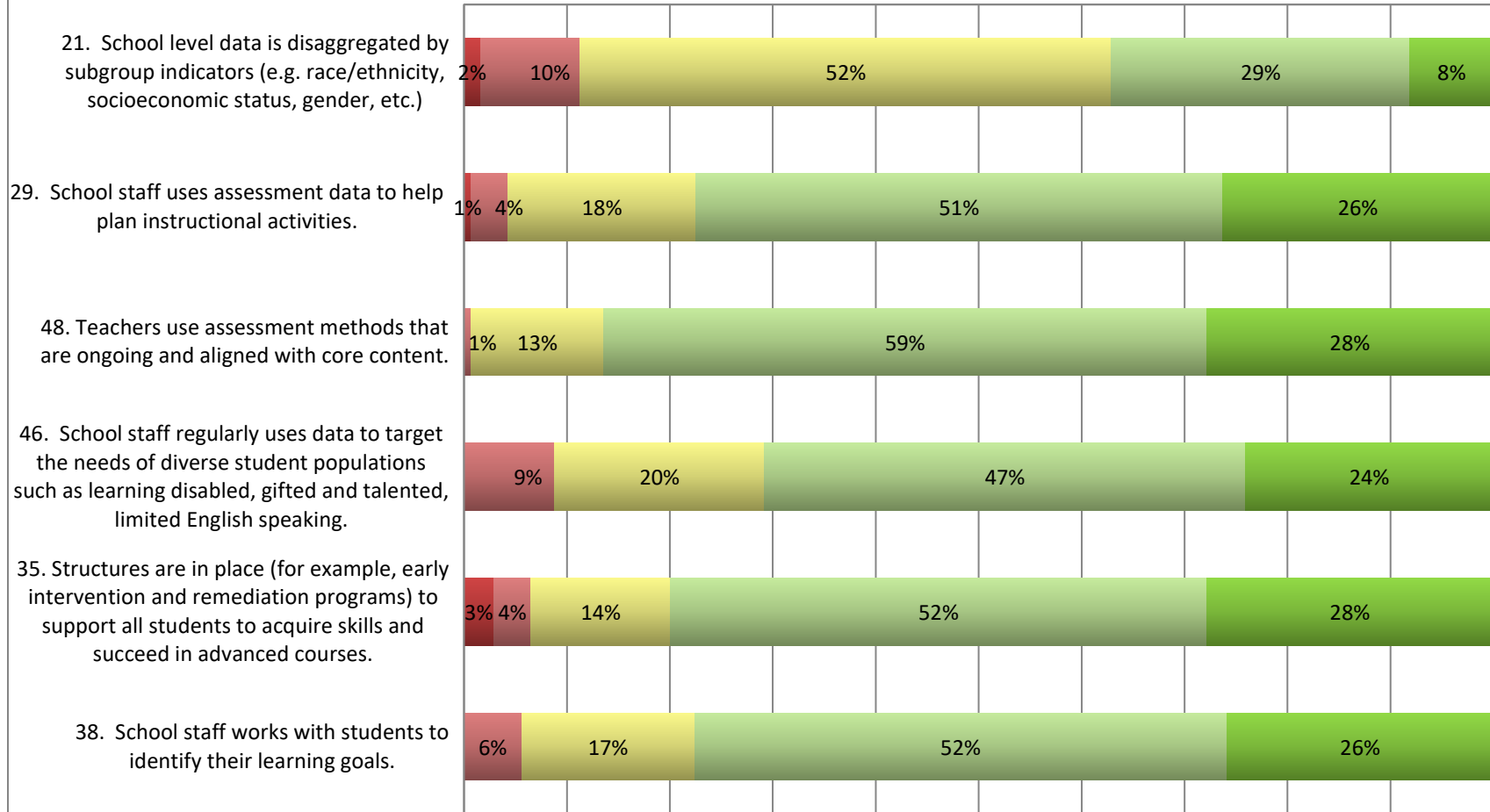
■ Strongly Disagree   
 ■ Disagree   
 ■ Neutral   
 ■ Agree   
 ■ Strongly Agree



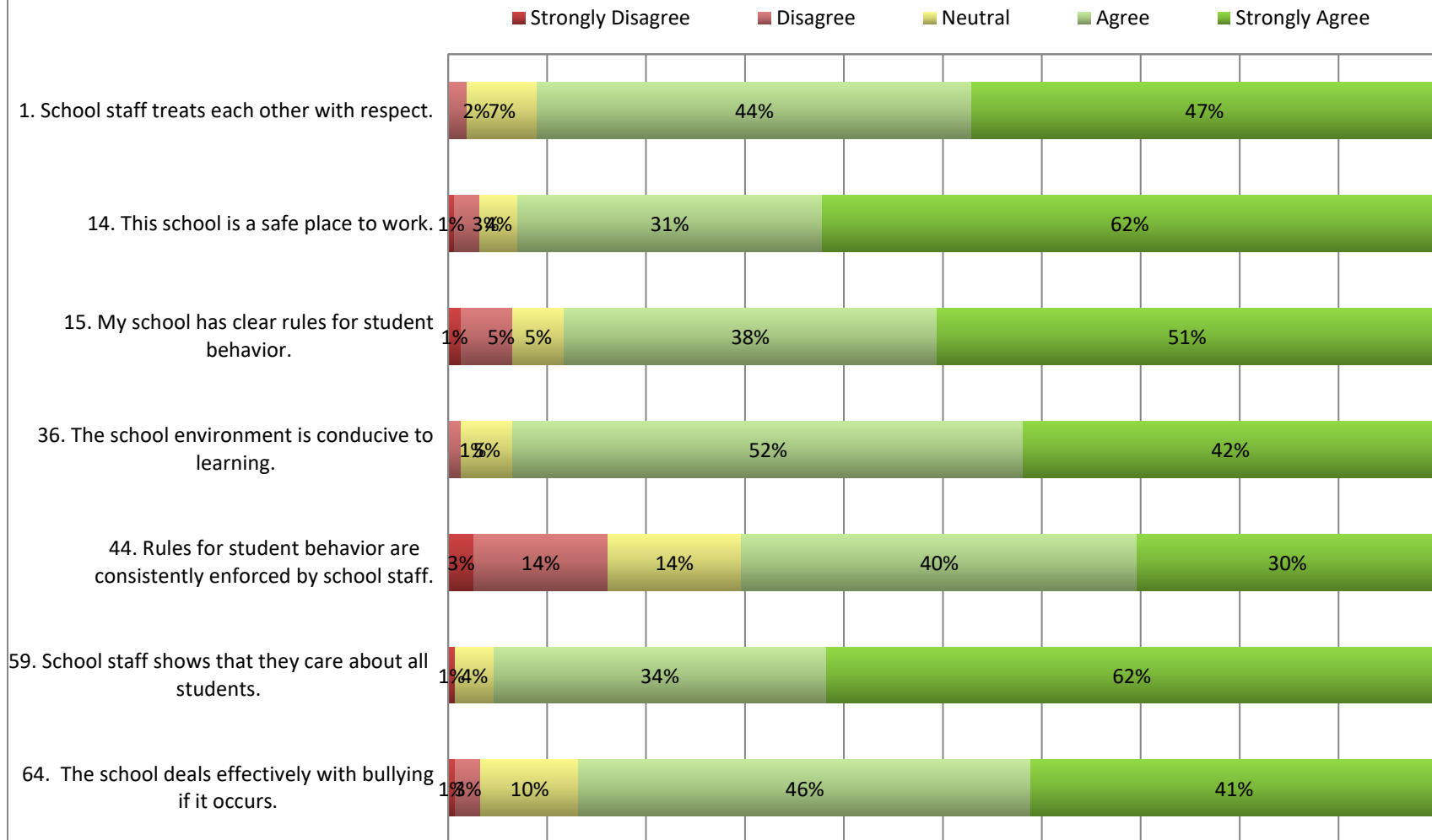


## Use Data to Inform Instruction and Continuous Improvement - Staff

■ Strongly Disagree   
 ■ Disagree   
 ■ Neutral   
 ■ Agree   
 ■ Strongly Agree



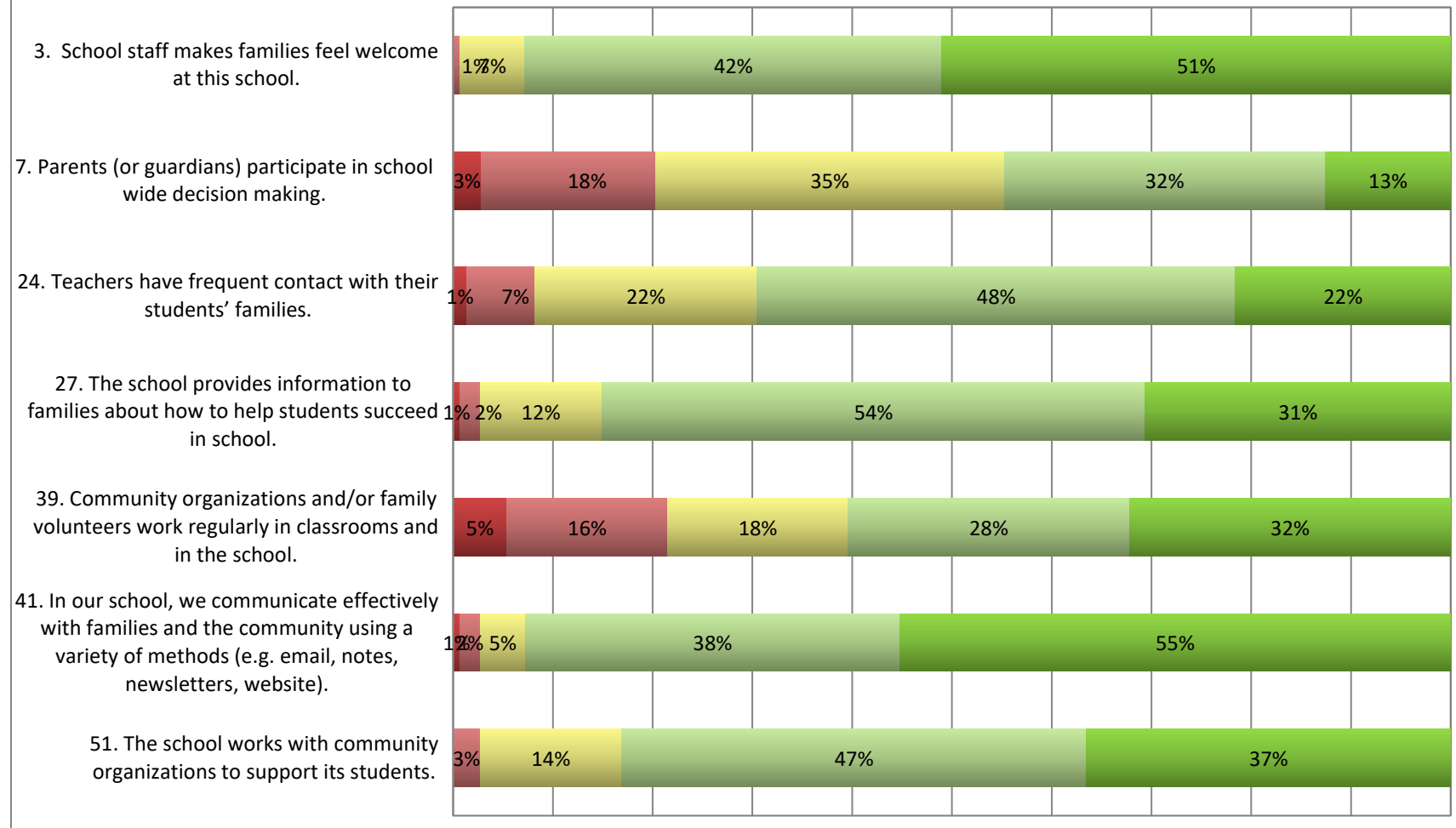
## Establish a Safe and Supportive School Environment- Staff





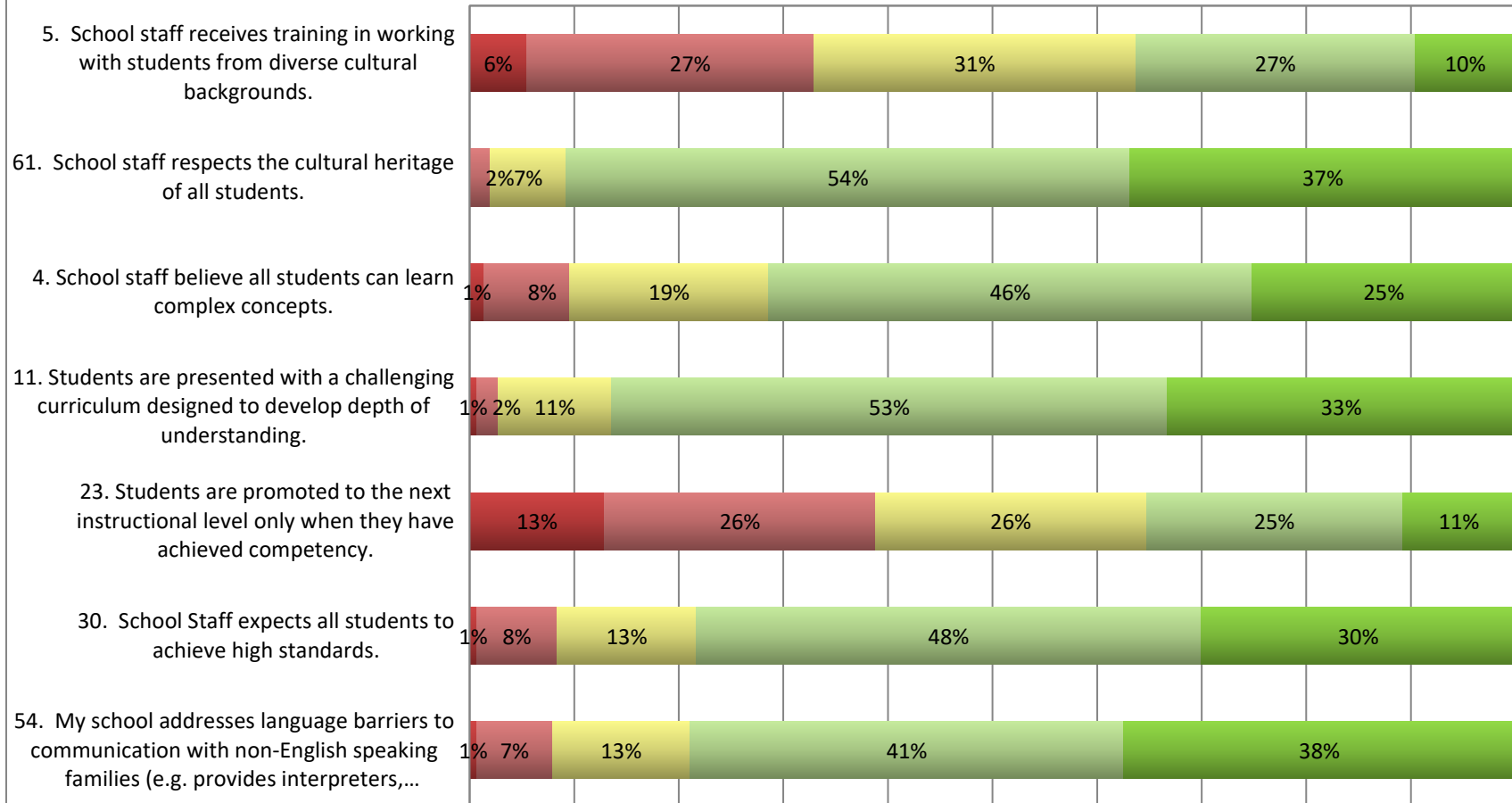
## Engage Family and Community - Staff

■ Strongly Disagree   
 ■ Disagree   
 ■ Neutral   
 ■ Agree   
 ■ Strongly Agree



## Build and Sustain Equitable and Culturally Competent Systems and Policies for All Students- Staff

■ Strongly Disagree   
 ■ Disagree   
 ■ Neutral   
 ■ Agree   
 ■ Strongly Agree





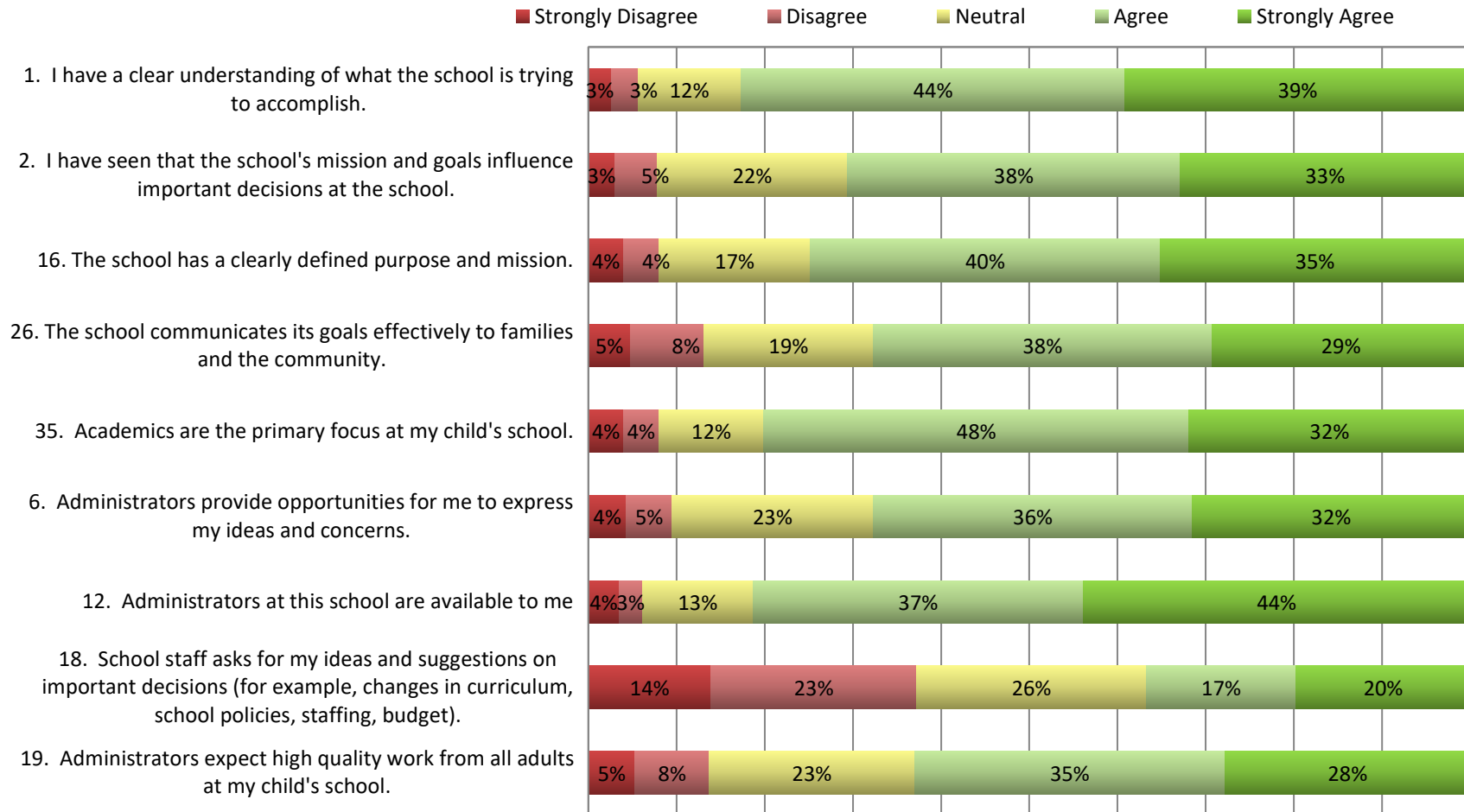
## APPENDIX B: FAMILY SURVEY RESULTS

### *Participant Demographics: Parents*

<i>Race</i>	
<i>American Indian/ Alaska Native</i>	3.3% (n=10)
<i>Asian</i>	3% (n=9)
<i>Black/African American</i>	1.3% (n=4)
<i>White</i>	83.8% (n=254)
<i>Hispanic/Latino/a</i>	3.6% (n=11)
<i>Pacific Islander</i>	0.3% (n=1)
<i>Decline to Identify</i>	4.6% (n=14)
<i>Relationship to Student</i>	
<i>Mother</i>	81.1% (n=241)
<i>Father</i>	12.1% (n=36)
<i>Grandparent</i>	
<i>Foster/adoptive parent or Guardian</i>	0.7% (n=2)
<i>Mentor</i>	
<i>Sibling</i>	2.4% (n=7)
<i>Legal guardian or Designee</i>	0.7% (n=2)
<i>Extended family member</i>	
<i>Other caregiver</i>	0.7% (n=2)
<i>Free or Reduced Lunch?</i>	
<i>Yes</i>	33.4% (n=99)
<i>No</i>	66.6% (n=197)
<i>English is the Primary Language</i>	
<i>Yes</i>	95.3% (n=283)
<i>No</i>	4.6% (n=14)



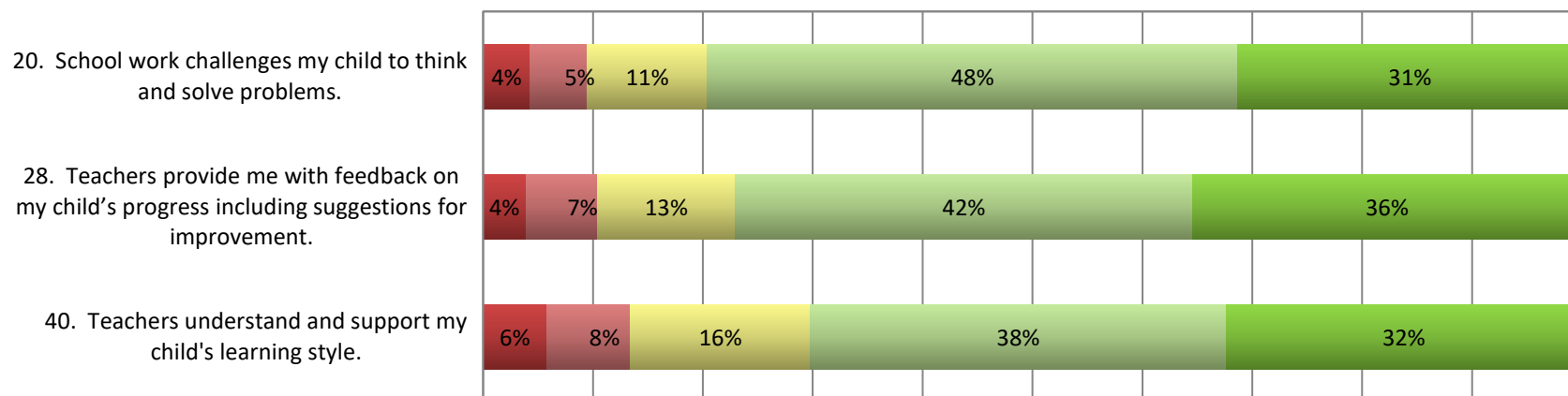
## Provide Strong Leadership - Family





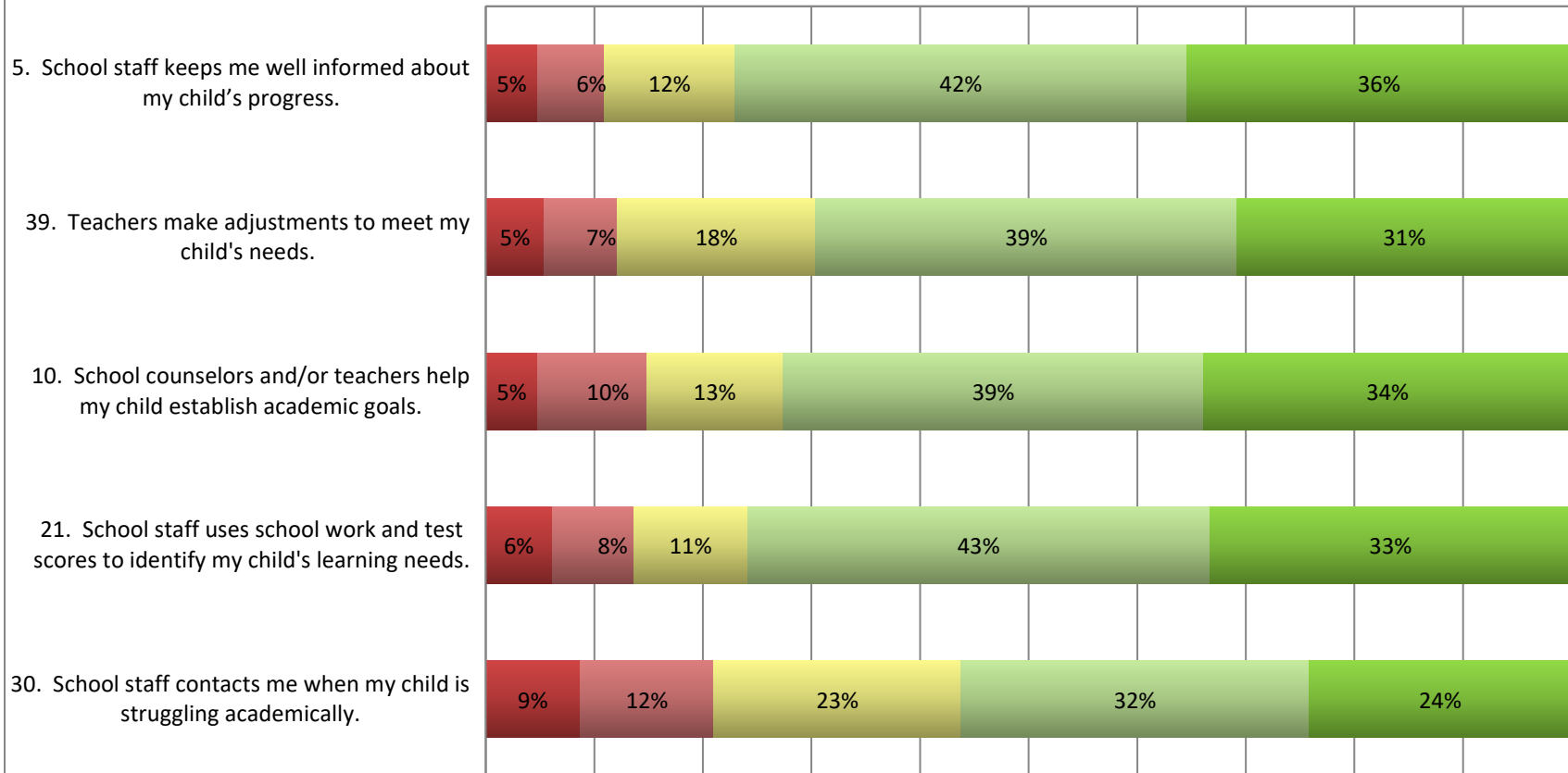
## Strengthen the School's Instructional Program - Family

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree



## Use Data to Inform Instruction and For Continuous Improvement - Family

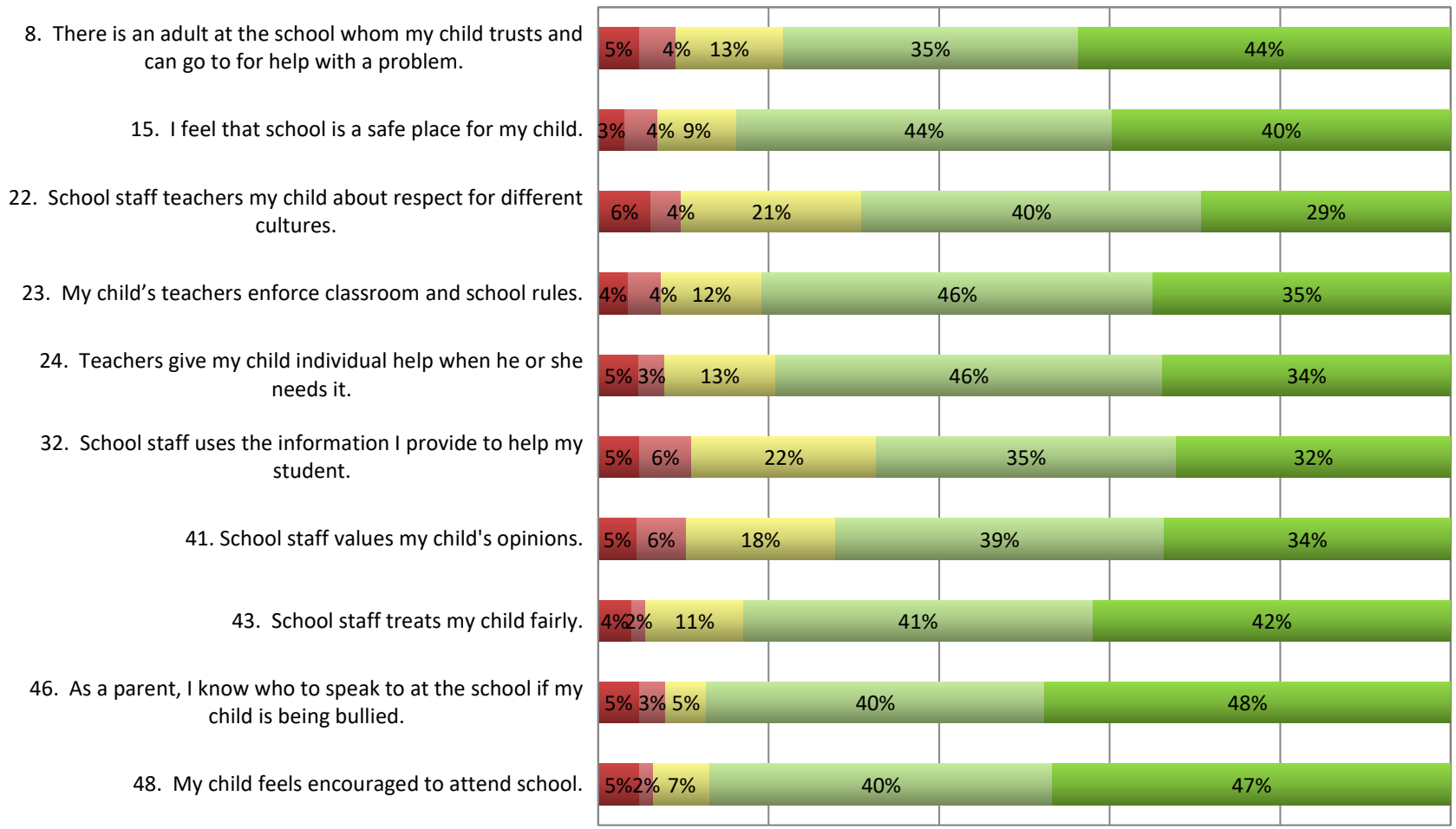
■ Strongly Disagree   
 ■ Disagree   
 ■ Neutral   
 ■ Agree   
 ■ Strongly Agree





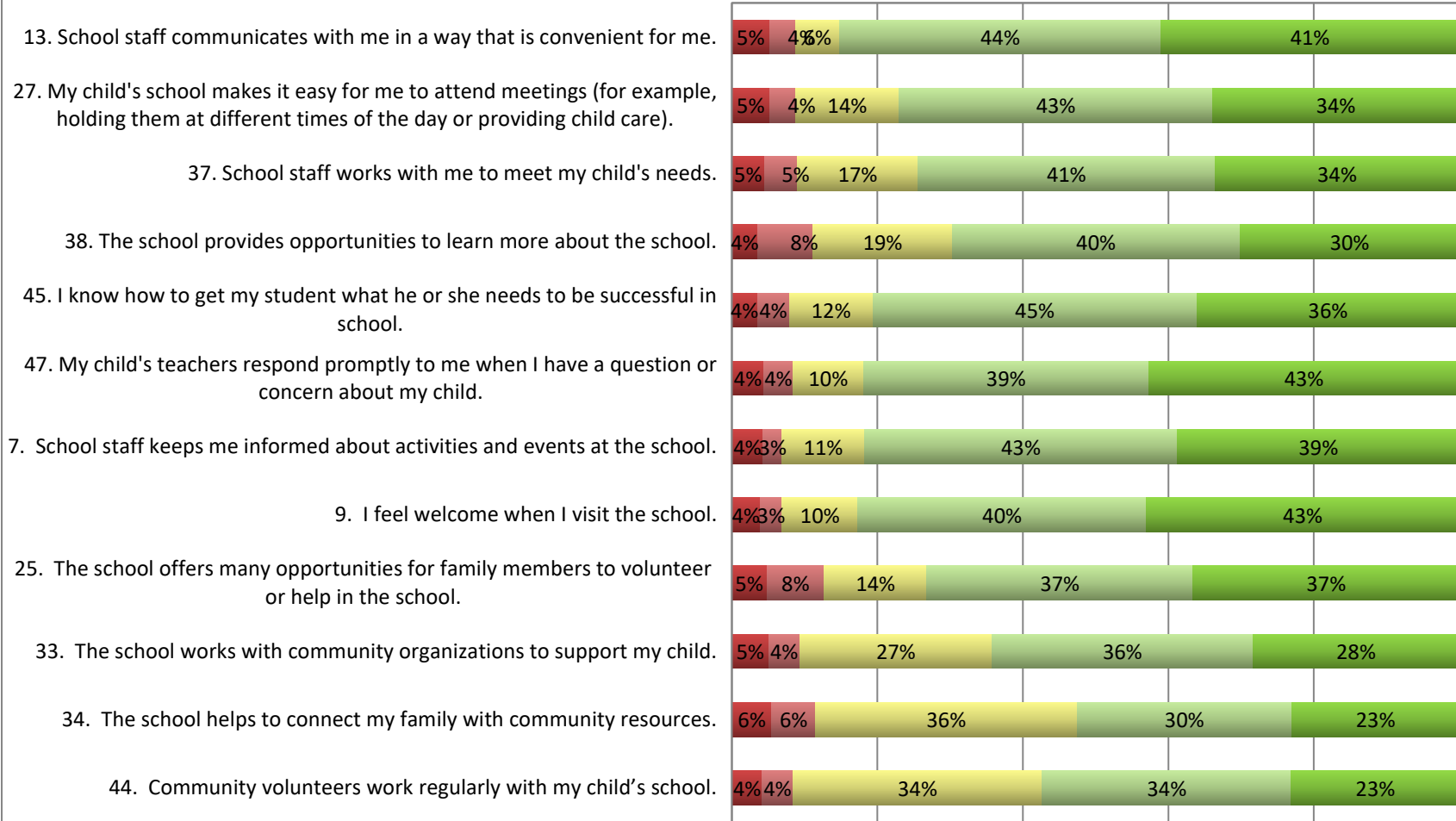
## Establish a Safe and Supportive School Environment - Family

■ Strongly Disagree   
 ■ Disagree   
 ■ Neutral   
 ■ Agree   
 ■ Strongly Agree



## Engage Family and Community - Family

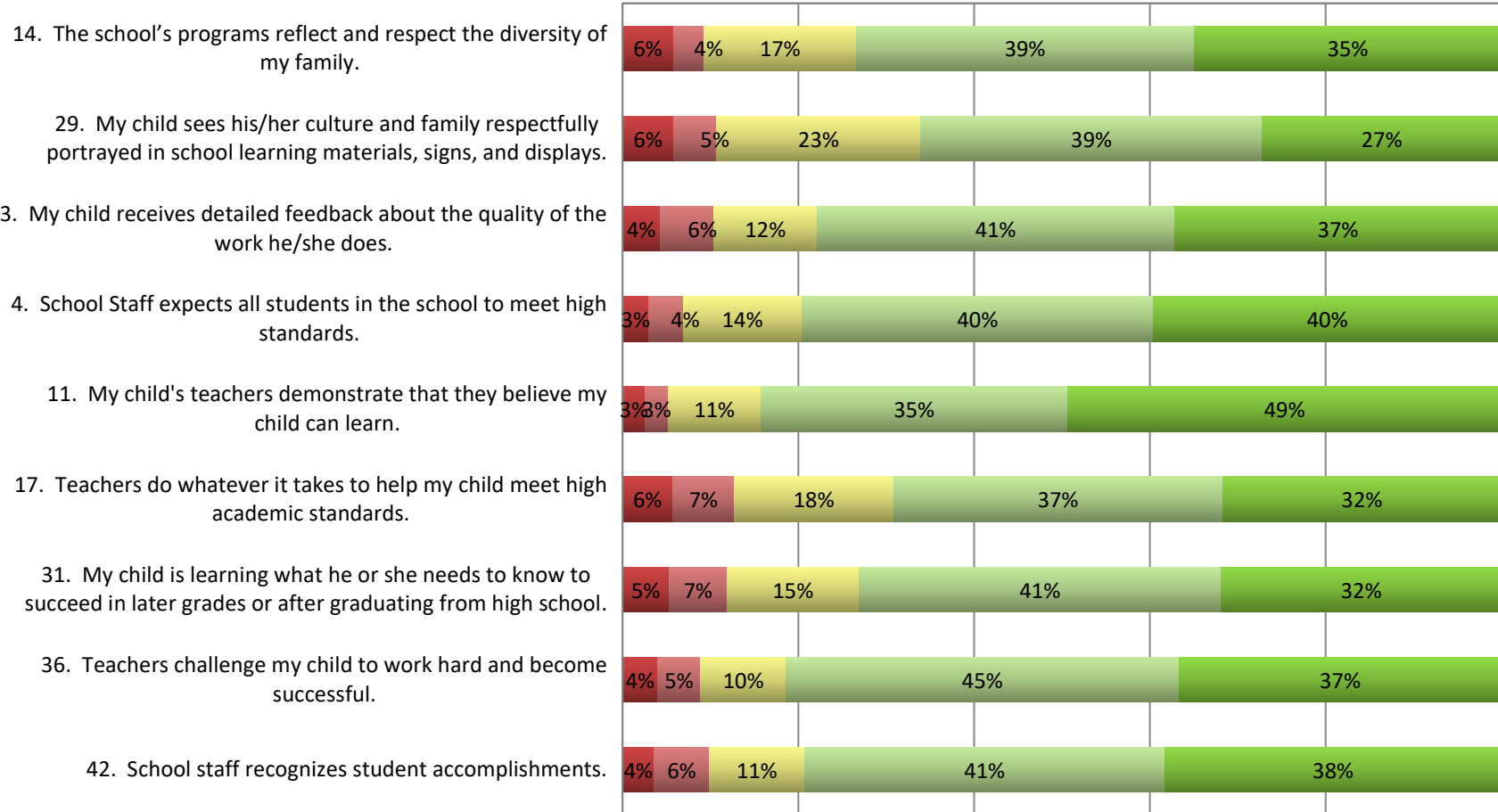
■ Strongly Disagree    
 ■ Disagree    
 ■ Neutral    
 ■ Agree    
 ■ Strongly Agree





## Build and Sustain Equitable and Culturally Competent Systems and Policies for All Students - Family

■ Strongly Disagree   
 ■ Disagree   
 ■ Neutral   
 ■ Agree   
 ■ Strongly Agree



## APPENDIX C: STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

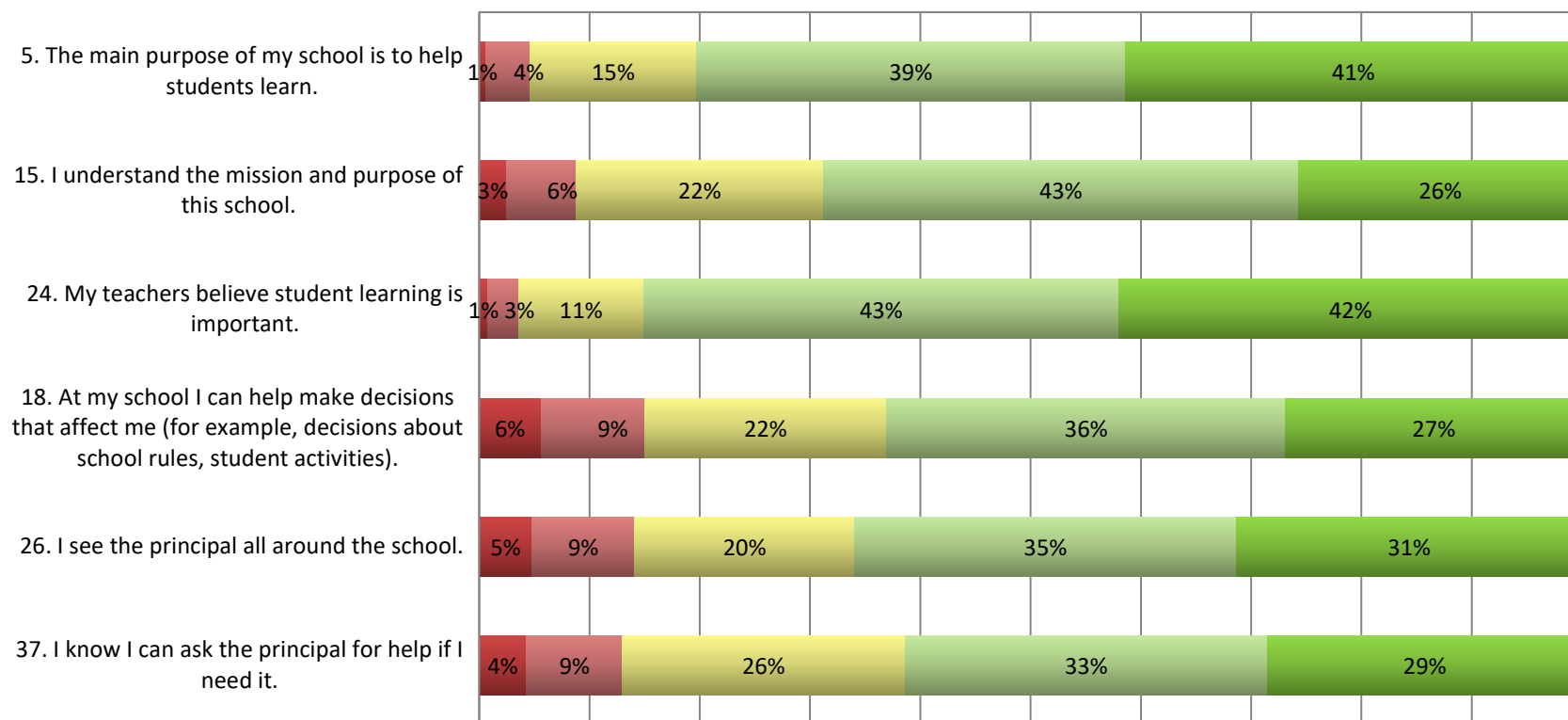
### Participant Demographics: Student

<i>Gender</i>	
<i>Male</i>	49.4% (n=439)
<i>Female</i>	50.6% (n=449)
<i>Race</i>	
<i>American Indian/Alaska Native</i>	4.3% (n=41)
<i>Black/African American</i>	1.2% (n=11)
<i>Asian</i>	1.9% (n=18)
<i>White</i>	70.5% (n=671)
<i>Pacific Islander</i>	1.3% (n=12)
<i>Hispanic</i>	8% (n=76)
<i>Decline to Identify</i>	12.9% (n=123)



## Provide Strong Leadership- Student

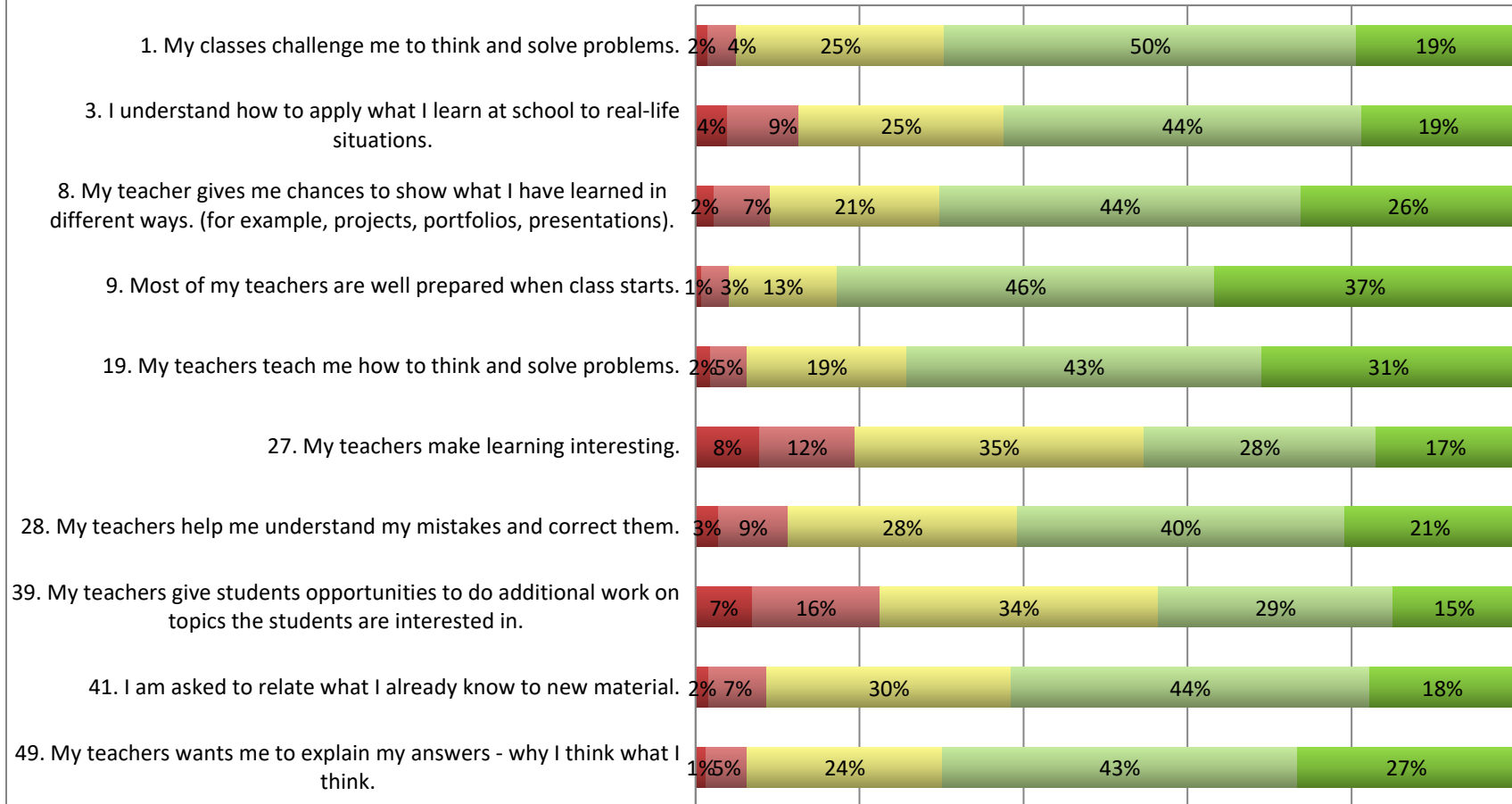
■ Strongly Disagree   
 ■ Disagree   
 ■ Neutral   
 ■ Agree   
 ■ Strongly Agree





## Strengthen the School's Instructional Program - Student

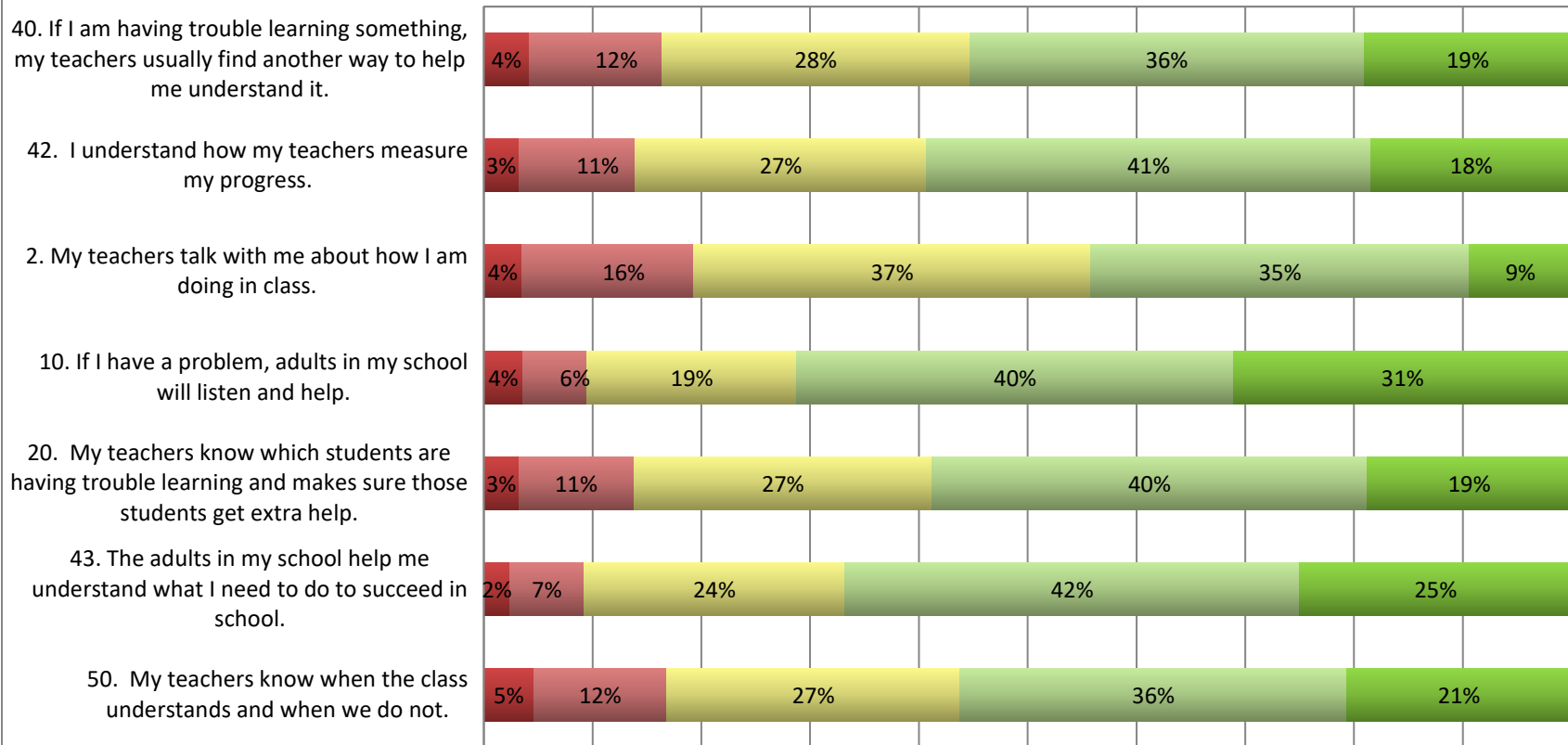
■ Strongly Disagree   
 ■ Disagree   
 ■ Neutral   
 ■ Agree   
 ■ Strongly Agree





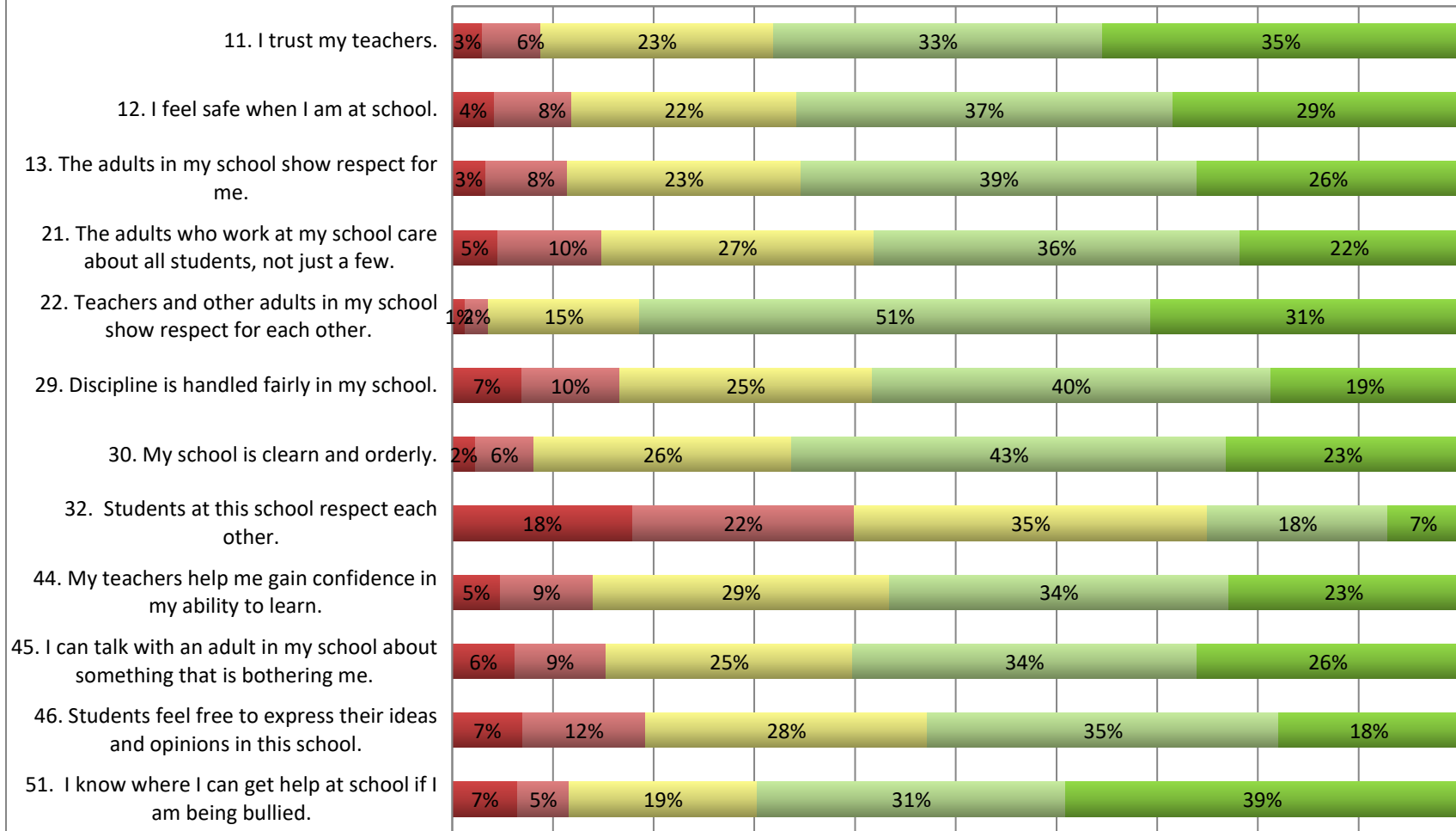
## Use Data to Inform Instruction and for Continuous Improvement- Student

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree



## Establish a Safe and Supportive School Environment - Student

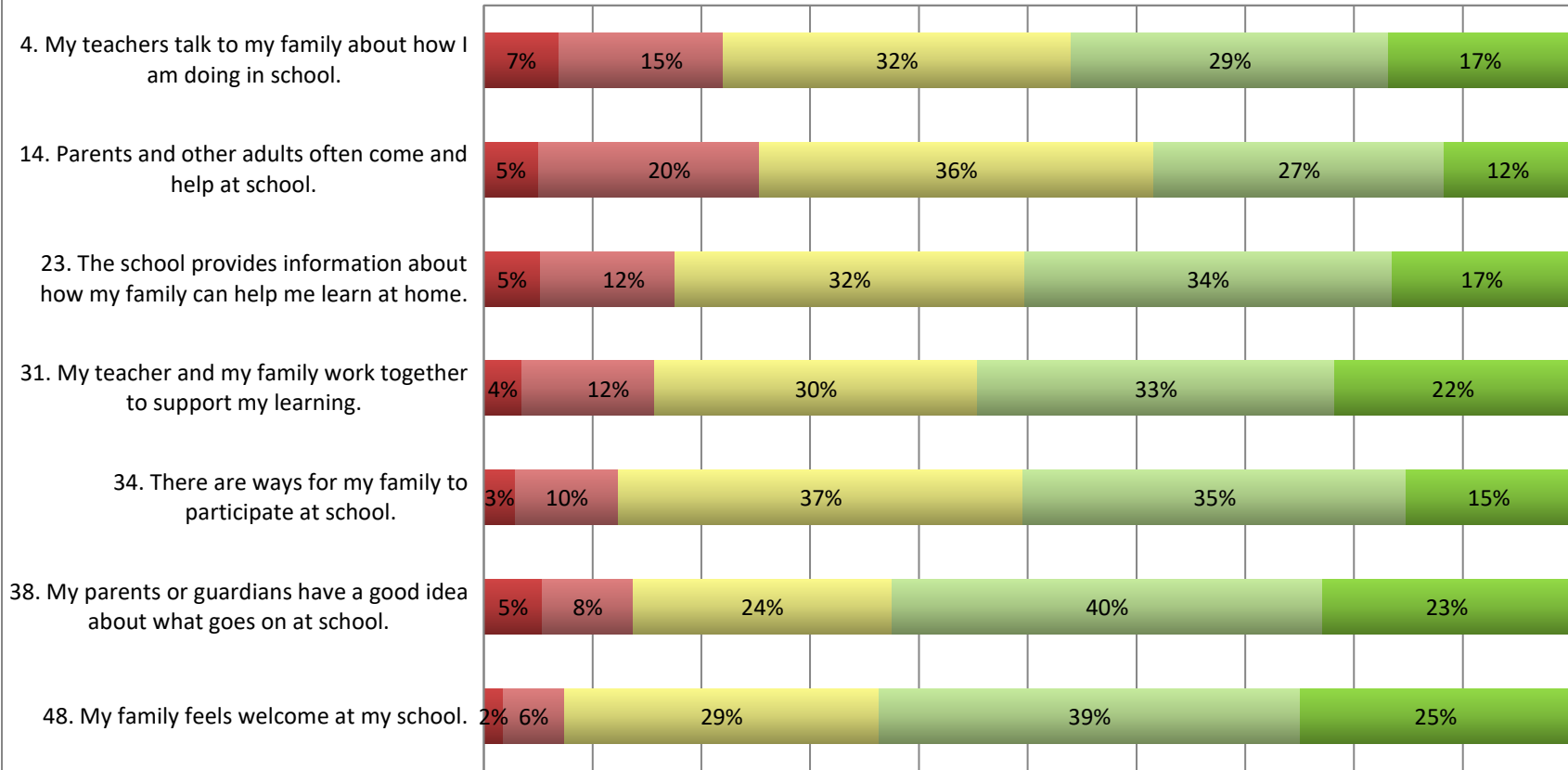
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree





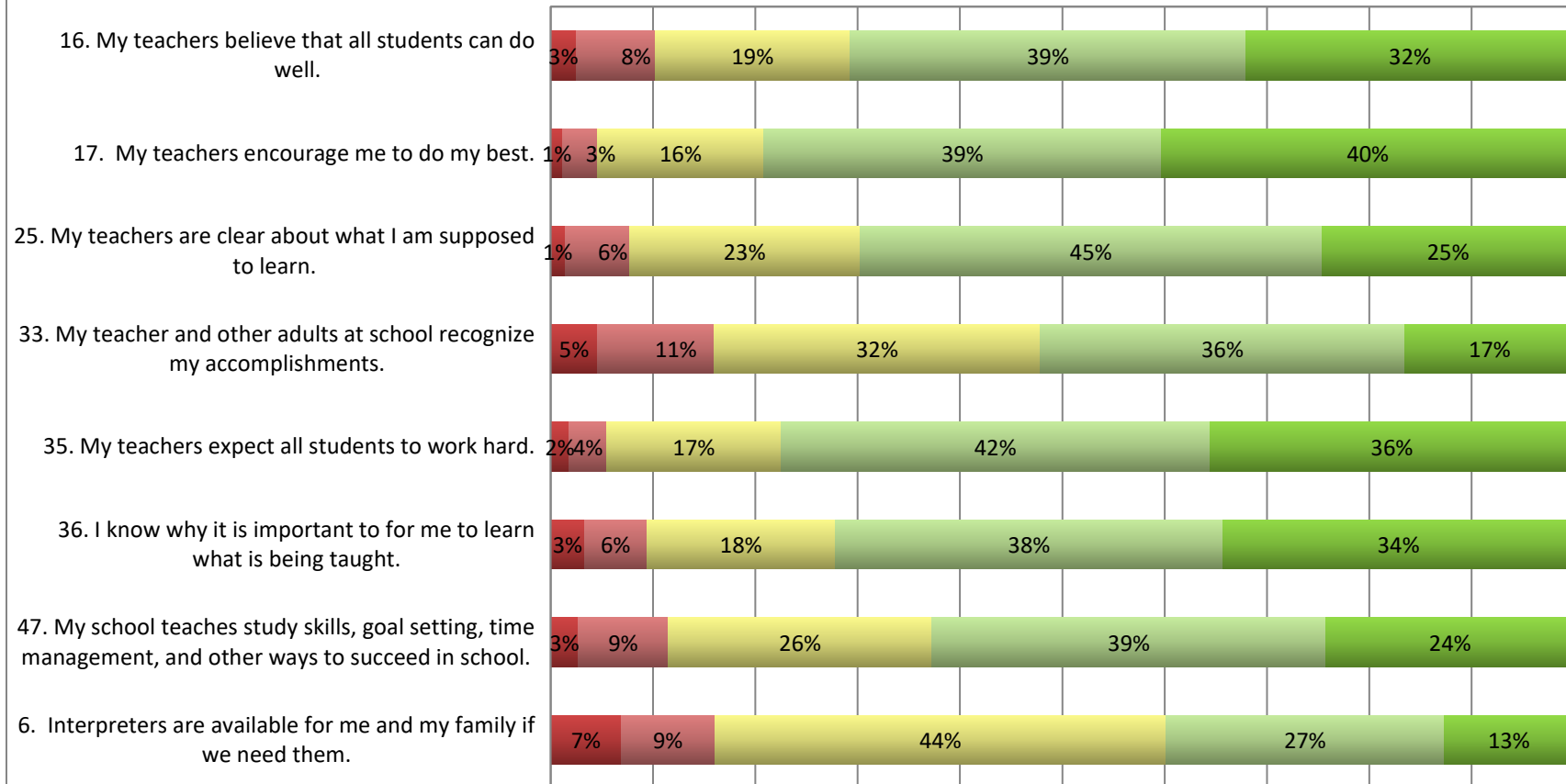
## Engage Family and Community - Student

■ Strongly Disagree   
 ■ Disagree   
 ■ Neutral   
 ■ Agree   
 ■ Strongly Agree



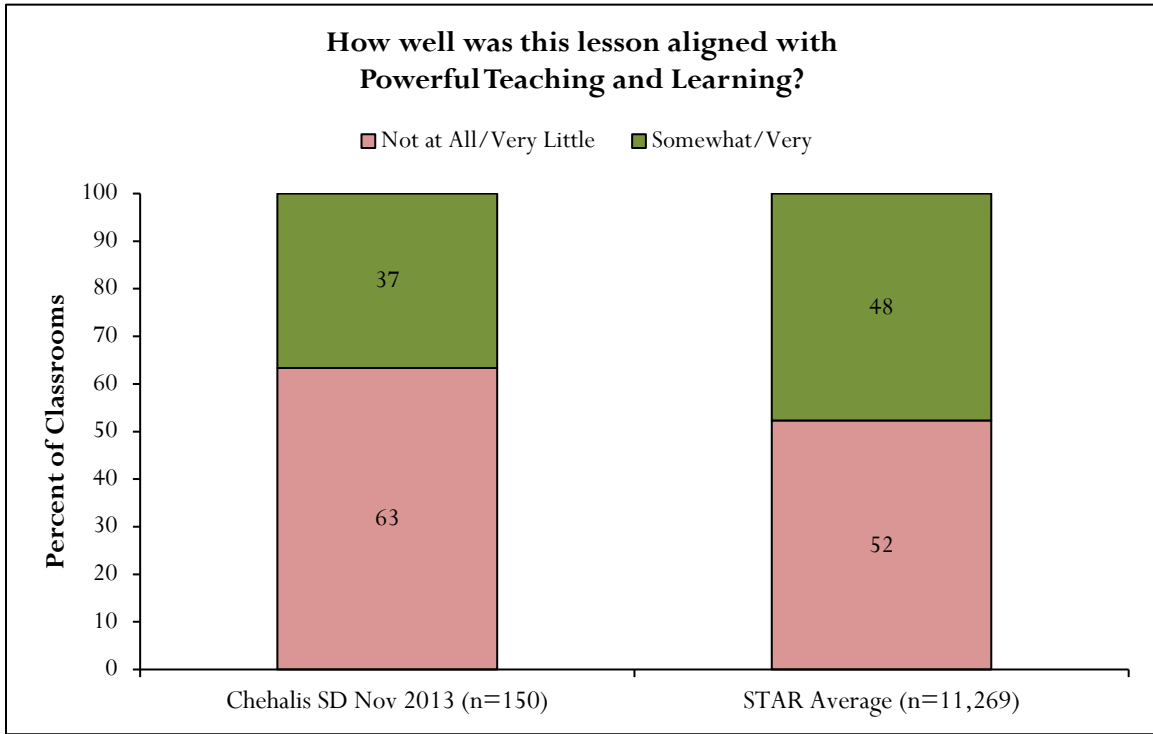
## Build and Sustain Equitable and Culturally Competent Systems and Policies for All Students - Student

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

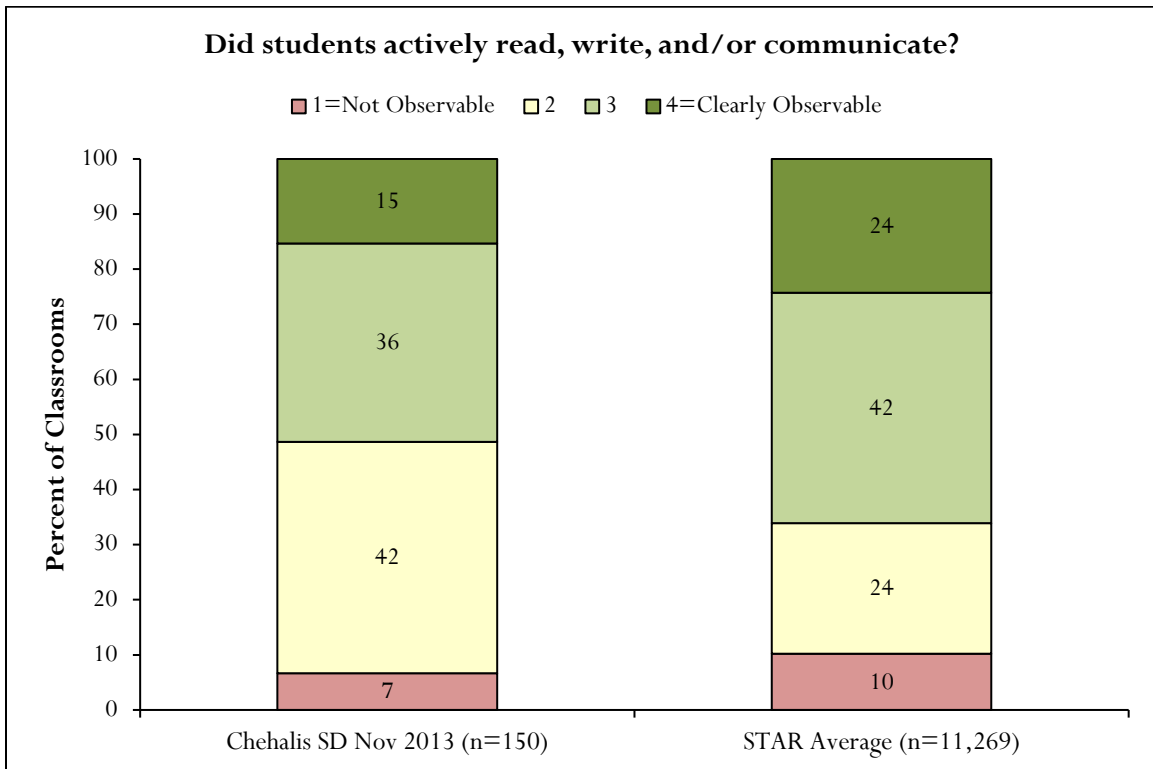


## APPENDIX D: STAR DATA

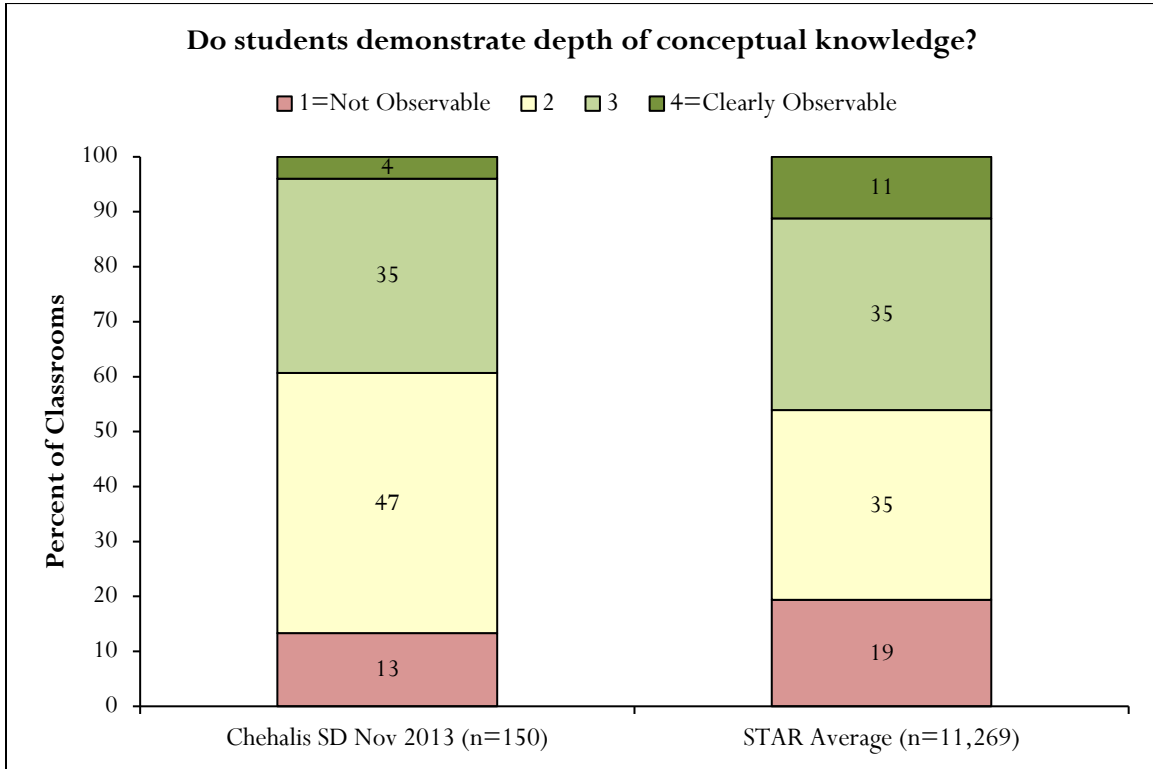
### OVERALL RESULTS



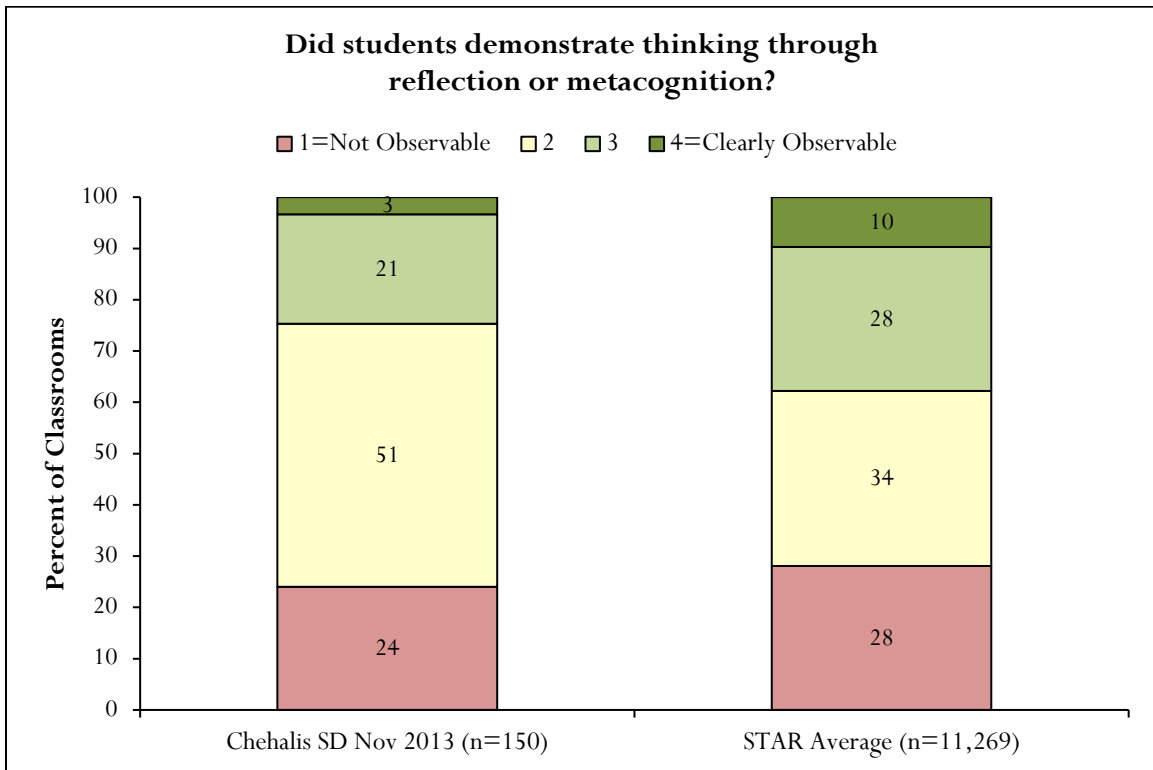
### SKILLS: ESSENTIAL COMPONENT RESULTS



**KNOWLEDGE: ESSENTIAL COMPONENT RESULTS**

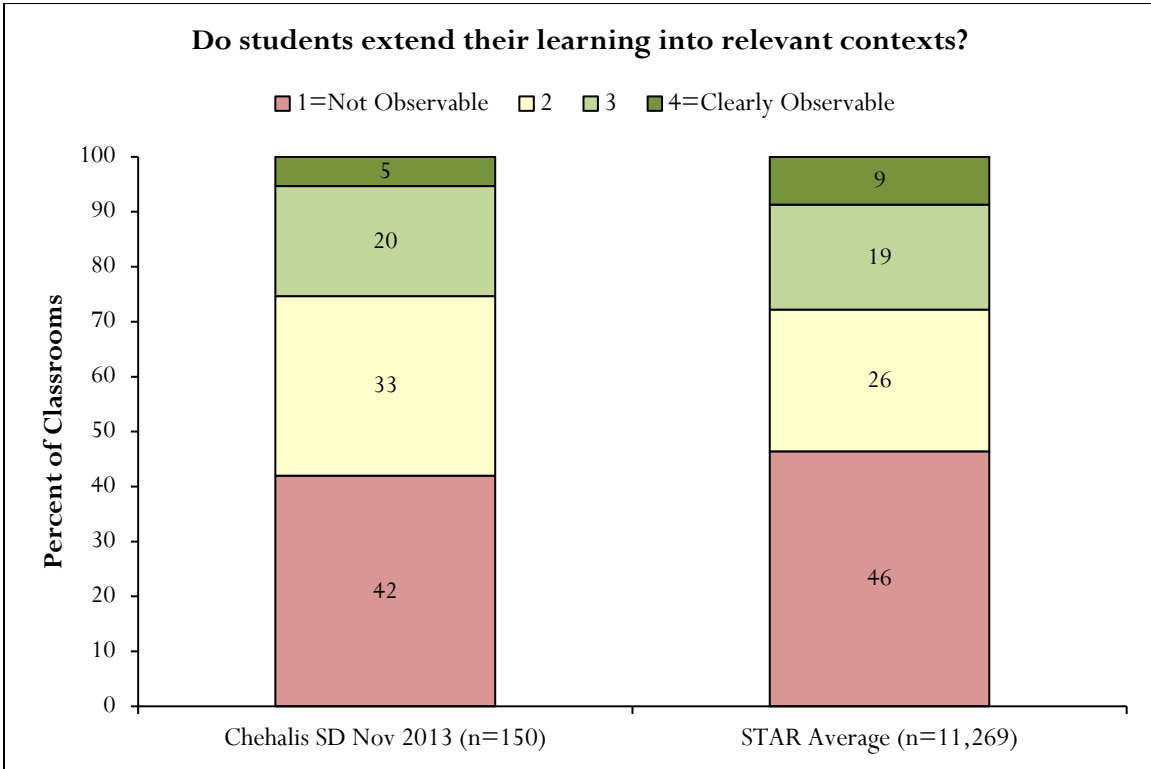


**THINKING: ESSENTIAL COMPONENT RESULTS**

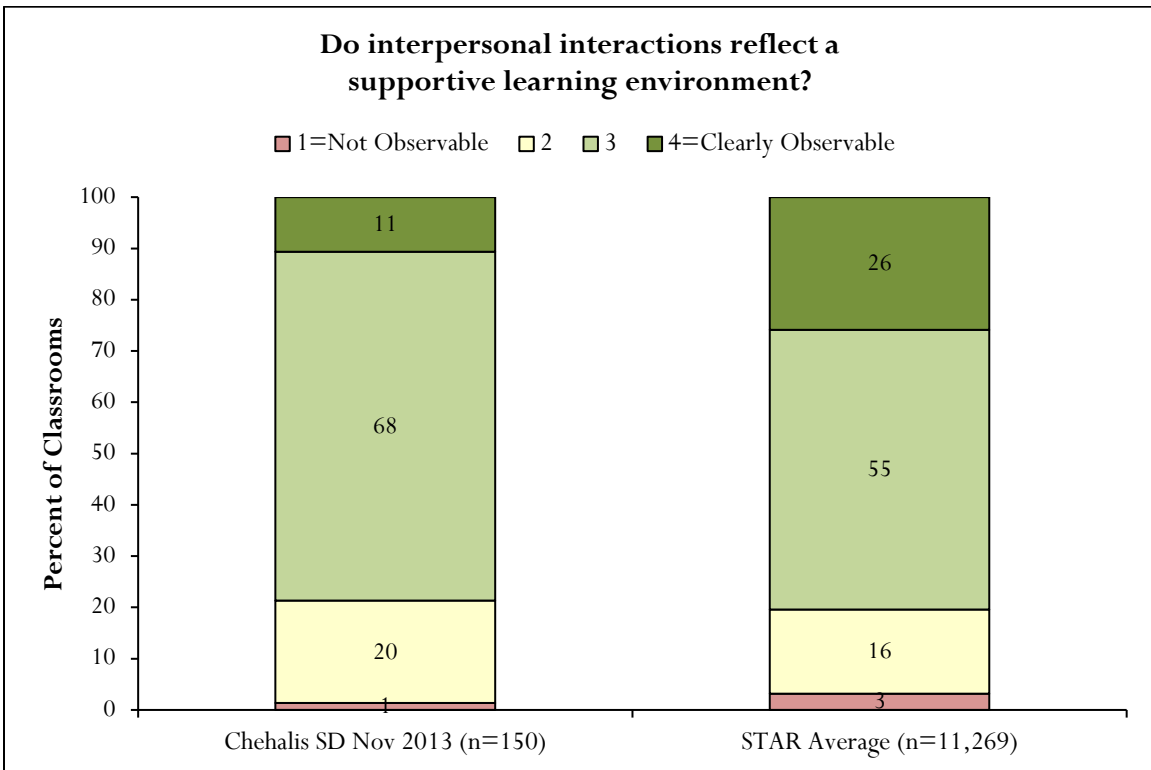




### APPLICATION: ESSENTIAL COMPONENT RESULTS

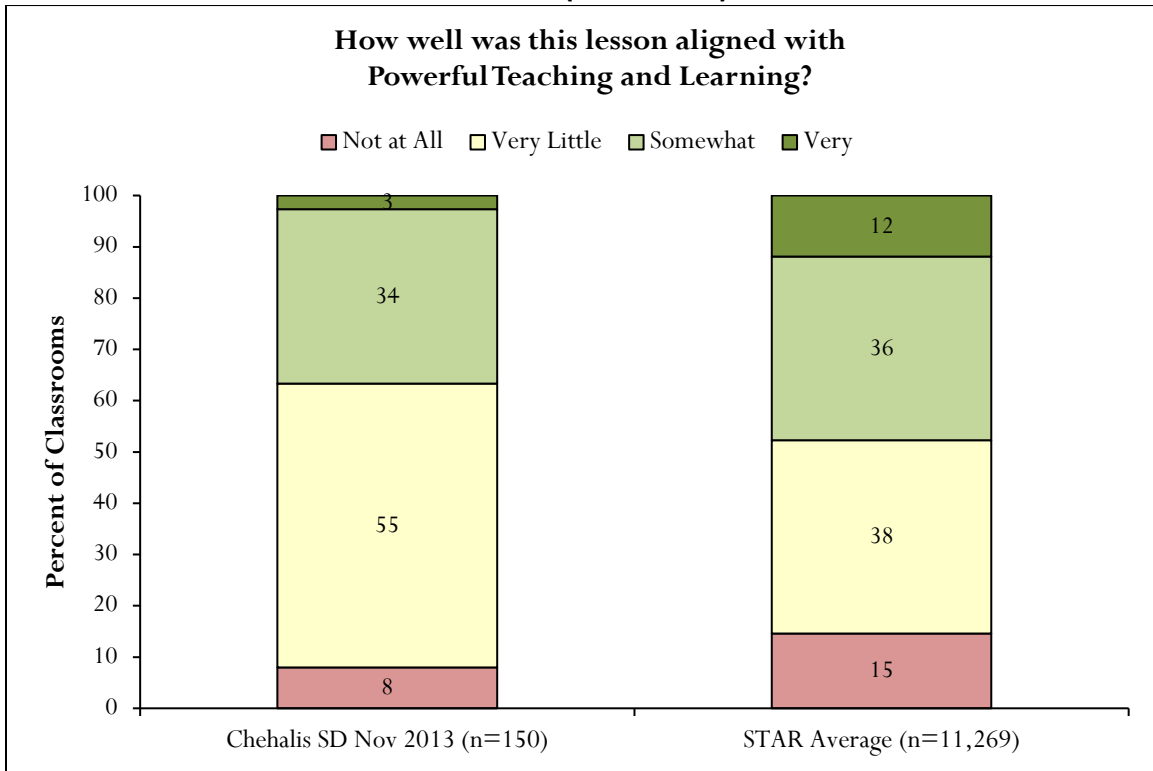


### RELATIONSHIPS: ESSENTIAL COMPONENT RESULTS





**OVERALL (SCALES 1-4)**



### Disaggregated STAR Indicator Results

<i>Skills Indicators</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
1. Teacher provides an opportunity for students to develop and/or demonstrate skills through elaborate reading, writing, speaking, modeling, diagramming, displaying, solving and/or demonstrating.	7%	31%	41%	21%
			62%	
2. Students' skills are used to demonstrate conceptual understanding, not just recall.	21%	36%	32%	11%
			43%	
3. Students demonstrate appropriate methods and/or use appropriate tools within the subject area to acquire and/or represent information.	11%	35%	36%	18%
			54%	
<i>Knowledge Indicators</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
4. Teacher assures the focus of the lesson is clear to all students and that activities/tasks are aligned with the lesson objective/purpose.	19%	40%	31%	9%
			41%	
5. Students construct knowledge and/or manipulate information and ideas to build on prior learning, to discover new meaning, and to develop conceptual understanding, not just recall.	21%	41%	34%	3%
			37%	
6. Students engage in significant communication, which could include speaking/writing, that builds and/or demonstrates conceptual knowledge and understanding.	25%	44%	27%	5%
			31%	
<i>Thinking Indicators</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
7. Teacher uses a variety of questioning strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and/or communication skills.	28%	43%	24%	5%
			29%	
8. Students develop and/or demonstrate effective thinking processes either verbally or in writing.	35%	44%	19%	2%
			21%	
9. Students demonstrate verbally or in writing that they are intentionally reflecting on their own learning.	35%	37%	25%	3%
			28%	
<i>Application Indicators</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
10. Teacher relates lesson content to other subject areas, personal experiences and contexts.	42%	27%	25%	5%
			31%	
11. Students demonstrate a meaningful personal connection by extending learning activities in the classroom and/or beyond the classroom.	51%	29%	15%	6%
			21%	
12. Students produce a product and/or performance for an audience beyond the class.	86%	4%	5%	5%
			10%	
<i>Relationships Indicators</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
13. Teacher assures the classroom is a positive, inspirational, safe, and challenging academic environment.	0%	7%	71%	23%
			93%	
14. Students work collaboratively to share knowledge, complete projects, and/or critique their work.	43%	33%	17%	8%
			25%	
15. Students experience instructional approaches that are adapted to meet the needs of diverse learners (differentiated learning).	31%	25%	33%	12%
			45%	

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