

2025 VIRGINIA SCHOOL SURVEY OF CLIMATE AND WORKING CONDITIONS Executive Summary



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2025 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions – Executive Summary

The 2025 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions (the Virginia School Survey) was administered from January through March 2025 to students in grades 6–8 and to classroom instructors and staff in all Virginia public elementary and middle schools. The Virginia School Survey represents a collaboration between the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to reduce school divisions' survey administration burden, while meeting the DCJS legislative mandate to conduct a secondary school (grades 6–12) climate survey and the VDOE legislative mandate to conduct a working conditions survey of all licensed school personnel.

Local results from the Virginia School Survey are shared with participating schools and divisions to provide actionable information to division leaders and school administration, enabling a safe, healthy, and positive school and work environment for all students and staff. The findings discussed in this report focus primarily on the school climate for students, perceptions of safety, and experiences around bullying. See the VDOE website (www.doe.virginia.gov/programs-services/school-operations-support-services/school-climate-working-conditions) for additional findings on classroom instructor and staff working conditions. Most eligible schools (94.7%) participated in the 2025 survey administration, with a response rate of 74.5% participants across Virginia.

Survey Participation and Demographics

Student

- Over three-fourths of the eligible middle schools (94.7%) participated in the student portion of the survey. There were 225,934* student responses, reflecting a response rate of 84.2% among students in grades 6–8.
- The racial and ethnic demographics of student respondents were:

Race/Ethnicity Response	Count	Percentage
American Indian or Alaska Native	6,324	2.8%
Asian	11,412	5.1%
Black or African American	27,409	12.1%
Hispanic or Latino**	40,426	17.9%**
Middle Eastern and North African	4,382	1.9%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	558	0.2%
White	66,612	29.5%
Other race	30,033	13.3%
More than one race	27,975	12.4%
Total***	174,705	77.3%***

*51,229 students did not report their ethnic demographic.

**The question about Hispanic or Latino race was asked separately from the other race options, and the counts and percentages are the sum of the responses of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and other Hispanic origins.

***Hispanic or Latino is excluded.

- Just over a third, 37.5%, of student respondents identified as male, 36.7% as female, 1.3% as nonbinary, 2.5% preferred not to disclose their gender, and 22.0% did not provide an answer to the question.

Classroom Instructor

- Most eligible schools (90.6%) participated in the classroom instructor portion of the survey. There were 53,240* classroom instructor responses, a response rate of 61.7% among teachers and teacher's aides.
- The racial and ethnic demographics of classroom instructors were:

Race/Ethnicity Response	Count	Percentage
American Indian or Alaska Native	235	0.4%
Asian	1,183	2.2%
Black or African American	5,408	10.2%
Hispanic or Latino**	2,311	4.3%**
Middle Eastern and North African	275	0.5%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	37	0.1%
White	33,727	63.3%
Other race	1,565	2.9%
More than one race	1,499	2.8%
Total***	43,929	82.5%***

*9,311 classroom instructors did not report their ethnic demographic.

**The question about Hispanic or Latino race was asked separately from the other race options, and the counts and percentages are the sum of the responses of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and other Hispanic origins.

***Hispanic or Latino is excluded.

- Almost two-thirds (70.2%) of classroom instructors identified as female, 9.5% as male, 0.2% identified as nonbinary, 3.3% preferred not to disclose, and 16.7% did not provide an answer to the question.

Staff

- Most eligible schools (89.3%) participated in the staff portion of the survey. There were 22,046* staff responses. This is a response rate of 44.2% among other licensed and non-licensed individuals.
- The racial and ethnic demographics of staff respondents were:

Race/Ethnicity Response	Count	Percentage
American Indian or Alaska Native	126	0.6%
Asian	271	1.2%
Black or African American	2,412	10.9%
Hispanic or Latino**	933	4.2%**
Middle Eastern and North African	71	0.3%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	5	0.0%
White	12,037	54.6%
Other race	599	2.7%
More than one race	473	2.1%
Total***	15,994	72.5%***

*6,052 staff did not report their ethnic demographic.

**The question about Hispanic or Latino race was asked separately from the other race options, and the counts and percentages are the sum of the responses of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and other Hispanic origins.

***Hispanic or Latino is excluded.

- Sixty-one percent (61.4%) of staff respondents identified as female, 9.2% as male, 0.2% identified as nonbinary, 2.3% preferred not to disclose, and 26.9% did not provide an answer to the question.

Climate/Atmosphere

The Virginia School Survey assesses climate through several measures and asks one global question about school climate for students and working conditions for teachers and staff.

Student

- Half (50.3%) of all students participating rated the atmosphere of their school between *slightly positive* and *very positive*.
- Comparatively, among student respondents, 66.2% of male students, 61.5% of female students, 36.9% of nonbinary students, and 48.8% of those who preferred not to disclose their gender rated the atmosphere between *slightly* and *very positive*.
- Comparatively, among student respondents, 59.1% of American Indian or Alaska Native students, 74.2% of Asian students, 56.4% of Black or African American students, 61.1% of Hispanic or Latino students, 65.2% of Middle Eastern and North African students, 57.7% of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander students, 65.3% of White students, 70.4% of students who reported two or more races, and 65.5% of students who report their race as “Other” rated the atmosphere between *slightly* and *very positive*.
- Students were asked how the school’s atmosphere impacts their learning. Under half (41.6%) of respondents rate the impact on learning between *slightly* and *very positive*, 33.4% rated the atmosphere as having no impact on their learning, and 24.9% rated the impact as *very to slightly negative*.

Classroom Instructor

- Overall, 18.3% of classroom instructors stated that, over the last year, the school climate for instructors has become *slightly to much worse*, 26.4% stated that it has become *slightly to much better*, 27.3% stated that it has *stayed about the same*, and 12.4% had *no opinion*.
- Just under ten percent of instructors (8.2%) stated that the school climate for students had become *slightly to much worse*, 29.6% said the school climate for students had become *slightly to much better*, 34.3% said the school climate for students had *stayed about the same*, and 12.2% had *no opinion*.

Staff

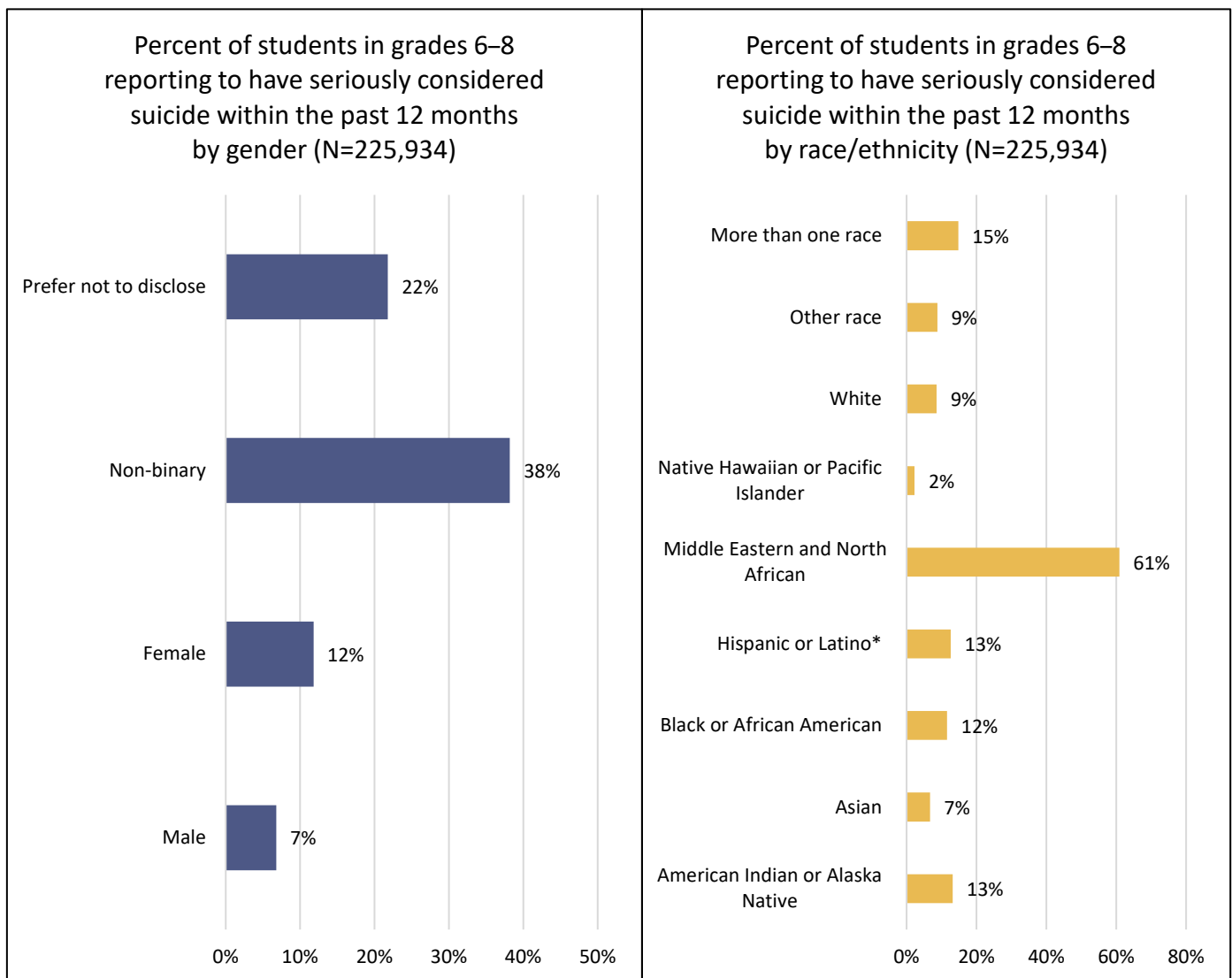
- Ten percent (10.2%) of staff stated that, over the last year, the school climate for staff has become *slightly worse to much worse*, 29.7% said that the school climate for staff had become *slightly to much better*, 22.2% stated that the school climate for staff had *stayed about the same*, and 12.8% had *no opinion*.
- Four percent of staff (4.0%) stated that the school climate for students had become *slightly to much worse*, 31.6% said that the school climate for students had become *slightly to much better*, 25.3% said that the school climate for students had *stayed about the same*, and 14.0% had *no opinion*.

Student Mental Health

- Overall, 17.4% of students reported experiencing anxiety on more than half of the days to nearly every day in the past two weeks, and 13.5% of students reported experiencing signs of depression on more than half of the days in the past two weeks.
- A third (34.8%) of students said they had an adult in their life whom they could turn to for help, and 62.1% of students statewide said they are satisfied with the level of mental health supports, services, and programs available in their school.

Eight percent (7.8%) of students reported having seriously considered suicide within the past 12 months.

- Almost forty percent (38.2%) of respondents identifying as non-binary (2,892) reported having seriously considered suicide within the past 12 months (1,106).
- Among those identifying as Middle Eastern and North African (558), 60.9% or 340 students reported having seriously considered suicide within the past 12 months.

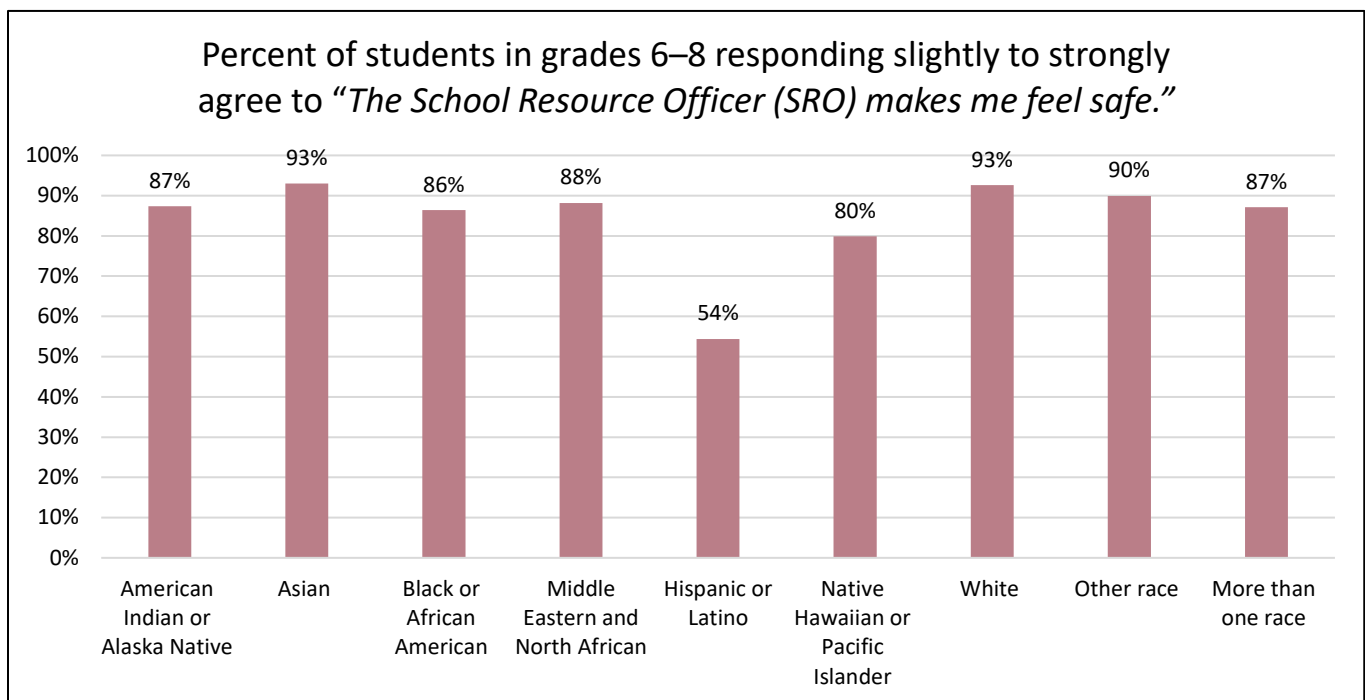


Security Personnel

Participants are asked about their perception of having a School Resource Officer and/or a School Security Officer in their building. These questions are rated on a six-point scale (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree).

Student

- Over half (59.1%) of students reported that their school had a School Resource Officer (SRO). These 133,548 students were then asked to respond to the statement, *“The School Resource Officer (SRO) makes me feel safe,”* and 90.0% responded *slightly to strongly agree*. This represents 87.4% of American Indian or Alaska Native students, 93.0% of Asian students, 86.4% of Black or African American students, 88.2% of Middle Eastern and North African students, 54.4% of Hispanic or Latino students, 79.9% of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander students, 92.6% of White students, 87.1% of students who reported two or more races, and 89.9% of students who reported their race as “Other.”
- Less than one-third (29.4%) of students who reported not having an SRO in their building (N=57,985) stated that they would feel safer if there was one, whereas 60.1% said they did not know if they would feel safer with an SRO.
- Half of the students (51.1%) reported that their school had a School Security Officer (SSO). These 115,452 students were then asked to respond to the statement *“The School Security Officer (SSO) makes me feel safe,”* and 90.2% responded *slightly to strongly agree*. This represents 87.8% of American Indian or Alaska Native students, 93.9% of Asian students, 86.7% of Black or African American students, 89.4% of Middle Eastern and North African students, 87.7% of Hispanic or Latino students, 82.0% of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander students, 93.0% of White students, 87.5% of students who reported two or more races, and 90.4% of students who reported their race as “Other.”



Classroom Instructor

- Over half of (61.6%) classroom instructors reported that their school had a School Resource Officer (SRO). These 32,799 classroom instructors were then asked to respond to the statement, *“The School Resource Officer (SRO) makes me feel safe,”* and 91.1% of instructors responded *slightly to strongly agree*. This represents 88.6% of American Indian or Alaska Native instructors, 95.9% of Asian instructors, 91.5% of Black or African American instructors, 92.0% of Hispanic or Latino instructors, 96.0% of Middle Eastern and North African instructors, 90.5% of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander instructors, 91.1% of White instructors, 88.9% of instructors who reported two or more races, and 89.9% of instructors who reported their race as “Other.”
- These same classroom instructors were asked to respond to the statement *“The School Resource Officer (SRO) makes a positive contribution to our school,”* and 88.7% of instructors responded *slightly to strongly agree*. This represents 92.9% of American Indian or Alaska Native instructors, 97.0% of Asian instructors, 92.6% of Black or African American instructors, 92.9% of Hispanic or Latino instructors, 96.0% of Middle Eastern and North African instructors, 95.2% of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander instructors, 92.2% of White instructors, 91.4% of instructors who reported two or more races, and 91.5% of instructors who reported their race as “Other.”
- Just under half (48.9%) of classroom instructors who reported not having an SRO in their building (N=12,952) stated that they would feel safer if there was an SRO, while 29.3% said they did not know if they would feel safer with an SRO.
- Forty-two percent (41.6%) of classroom instructors reported that their school had a School Security Officer (SSO). These 22,131 classroom instructors were then asked to respond to the statement, *“The School Security Officer (SSO) makes me feel safe,”* and 87.5% of instructors responded *slightly to strongly agree*. This represents 92.3% of American Indian or Alaska Native instructors, 96.2% of Asian instructors, 92.4% of Black or African American instructors, 91.5% of Hispanic or Latino instructors, 96.7% of Middle Eastern and North African instructors, 85.0% of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander instructors, 90.8% of White instructors, 89.7% of instructors who reported two or more races, and 89.9% of instructors who reported their race as “Other.”
- These same classroom instructors were asked to respond to the statement *“The School Security Officer (SSO) makes a positive contribution to our school,”* and 90.7% of instructors responded *slightly to strongly agree*. This represents 97.4% of American Indian or Alaska Native instructors, 97.1% of Asian instructors, 95.7% of Black or African American instructors, 93.6% of Hispanic or Latino instructors, 96.7% of Middle Eastern and North African instructors, 90.0% of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander instructors, 94.2% of White instructors, 94.7% of instructors who reported two or more races, and 92.4% of instructors who reported their race as “Other.”
- Thirty percent (32.9%) of classroom instructors who reported not having an SSO in their building (N=23,488) stated that they would feel safer if there was an SSO, while 45.1% said they did not know if they would feel safer with an SSO.

Staff

- Just over half (54.9%) of staff reported that their school had a School Resource Officer (SRO). These 12,100 staff members were then asked to respond to the statement *“The School Resource Officer (SRO) makes me feel safe,”* and 92.9% of staff responded *slightly to strongly agree*. This represents 93.4% of American Indian or Alaska Native staff, 95.0% of Asian staff, 93.2% of Black or African American staff, 93.6% of Hispanic or Latino staff, 90.6% of Middle Eastern and North African staff, 100% of Native

Hawaiian or Pacific Islander staff, 92.9% of White staff, 94.2% of staff who reported two or more races, and 90.2% of staff who reported their race as “Other.”

- These same staff members were asked to respond to the statement “*The School Resource Officer (SRO) makes a positive contribution to our school,*” and 93.5% of staff responded *slightly to strongly agree*. This represents 92.0% of American Indian or Alaska Native staff, 94.3% of Asian staff, 93.5% of Black or African American staff, 93.8% of Hispanic or Latino staff, 90.3% of Middle Eastern and North African staff, 80% of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander staff, 93.6% of White staff, 94.2% of staff who reported two or more races, and 91.9% of staff who reported their race as “Other.”
- Less than half (44.9%) of staff who reported not having an SRO in their building ($N=4,863$) stated that they would feel safer if there was an SRO, while 26.8% said they did not know if they would feel safer with an SRO.
- Over a third (38.9%) of staff reported that their school had a School Security Officer (SSO). Over one-fourth (25.4%) of staff who reported not having an SSO in their building ($N=8,340$) stated that they would feel safer if there was an SSO, while 19.7% said they did not know if they would feel safer with an SSO.

Bullying

Student

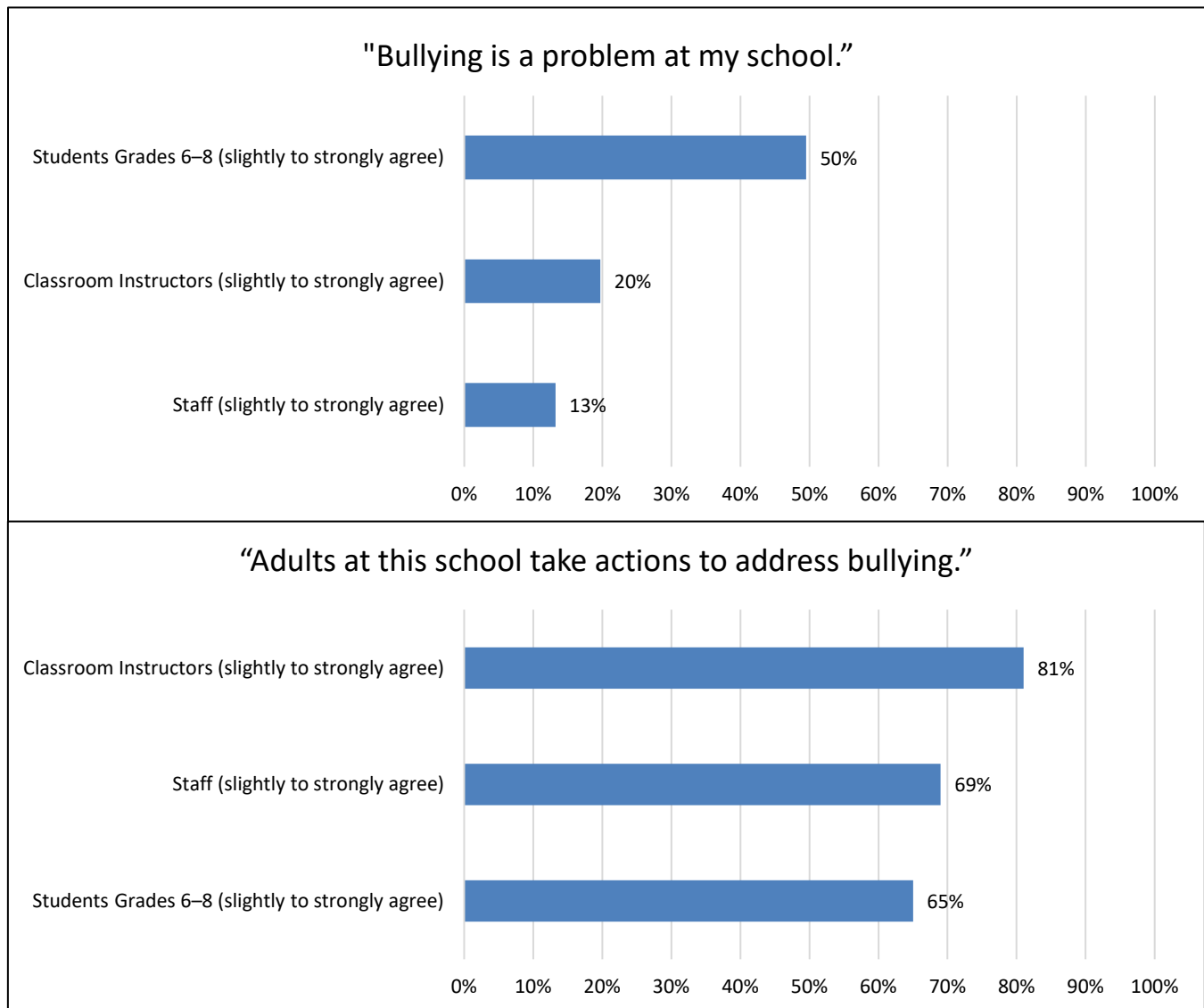
- Bullying was reported as a problem in schools by 49.5% or 111,750 students ($N=225,934$). When asked about the reasons students are bullied at school, students reported the following between *slightly* and *strongly agree* (*Participants were asked to respond to each category, therefore percentages will total more than 100%): 54.0% reported that students are bullied for their physical appearance, 37.7% reported that students are bullied for their race or ethnicity, 35.5% reported that students are bullied for their disability, 33.6% reported that students are bullied for their gender or gender identity, 32.3% reported that students are bullied for their sexual orientation, 26.0% reported that students are bullied for having too much or too little money, and 23.2% reported that students are bullied for their religious beliefs.
- Almost two-thirds of students (65.0%) report that adults take action to address bullying, and 75.1% of students report that they understand how to report bullying situations in their school.

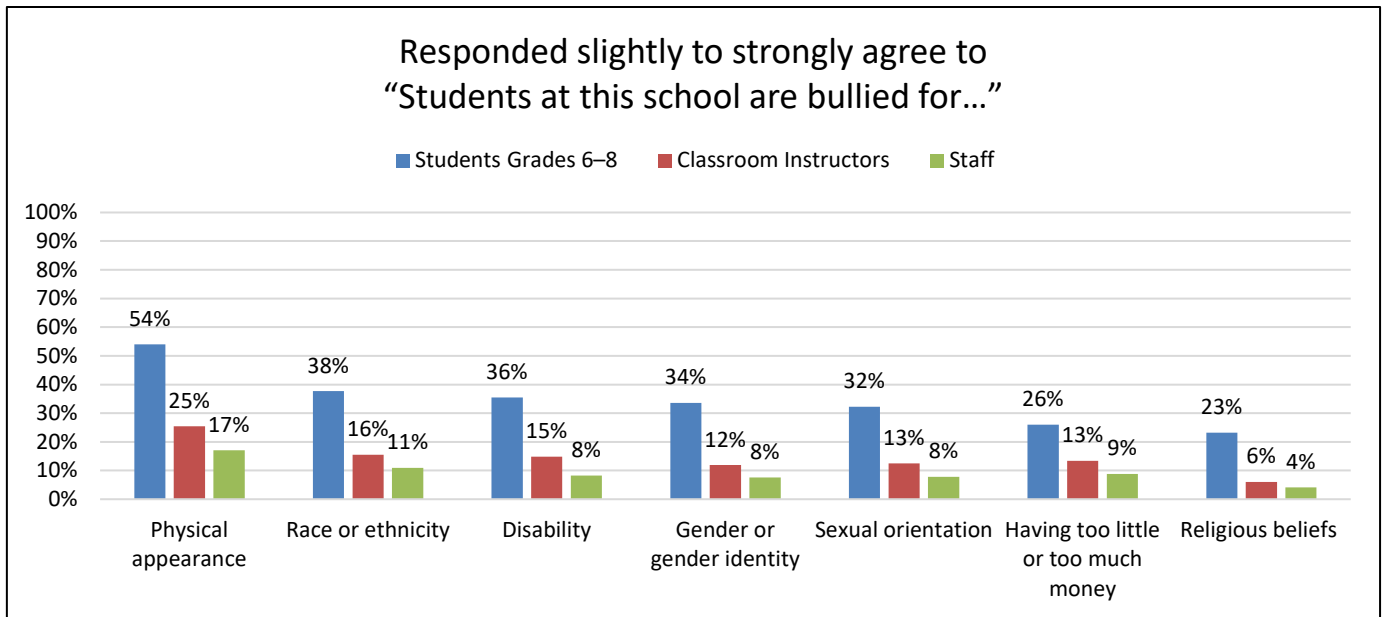
Classroom Instructor

- Bullying was seen as a problem in schools by 19.7% of classroom instructors. When asked about the reasons students are bullied at school, 25.4% reported that students are bullied for their physical appearance, 15.5% of classroom instructors reported that students are bullied for their race or ethnicity, 24.3% reported that students are bullied for their disability, 13.4% reported that students are bullied for having too much or too little money, 12.5% reported that students are bullied for their sexual orientation, 11.9%, reported that students are bullied for their gender or gender identity, and 6.0% reported that students are bullied for their religious beliefs.
- Most classroom instructors (80.9%) responded *slightly to strongly agree* that adults take action to address bullying, 64.3% report they feel equipped to handle bullying incidents, and 76.0% report that the school has a clear policy for reporting and intervening when bullying incidents occur. More than three-fourths (79.3%) of classroom instructors report feeling equipped to handle incidents of racially motivated behaviors successfully.

Staff

- Bullying was seen as a problem in schools by 13.2% of staff. When asked about the reasons students are bullied at school, 17.1% reported that students are bullied for their physical appearance, 10.9% reported that students are bullied for their race or ethnicity, 8.8% reported students are bullied for having too much or too little money, 8.2% reported they *strongly agree* that students are bullied for their disability, 7.8% reported that students are bullied for their sexual orientation, 7.6% reported that students are bullied for their gender or gender identity, and 4.1% reported that students are bullied for their religious beliefs.
- Over half of the staff (68.6%) *slightly to strongly agree* that adults take action to address bullying, and 66.8% report the school has a clear policy for reporting and intervening when bullying incidents occur.





Relationships and Safety

Student

- Only 48.4% of students reported being aware that the school uses a team approach to respond to threats of violence from students or other individuals.
- Eighty percent (80.3%) of students stated that if they heard about a threat to the school or students' safety, they would report it to someone in a position of authority.
- On average, 78.6% of students answered *slightly to strongly agree* to feeling safe in and around the school.
- Most (84.5% of) students reported they know what to do to keep themselves safe online.

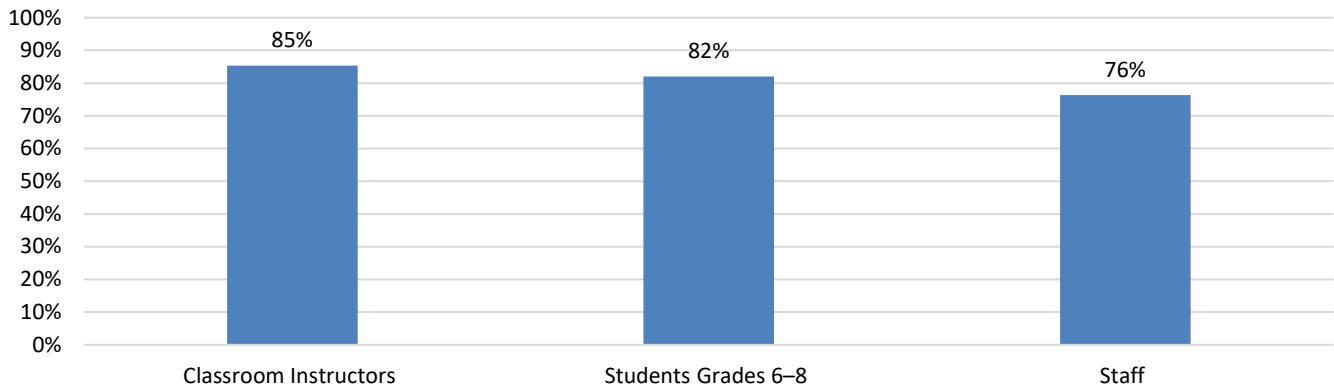
Classroom Instructor

- More than three-fourths (78.8%) of classroom instructors report being adequately informed about the threat assessment process in their building.
- Eighty-two percent (81.6%) of classroom instructors answered “Yes” when asked, “*I feel safe at this school.*”
- When asked if classroom instructors *feel confident in their ability to direct and assist students during an emergency*, 85.2% responded *slightly to strongly agree*.
- Just over eighty percent (83.2%) of classroom instructors reported feeling confident in their ability to direct students on how to be safe online.

Staff

- Over two-thirds (71.3%) of staff report being adequately informed about the threat assessment process in their building.
- Seventy-five percent (75.0%) of staff answered “Yes” when asked, “*I feel safe at this school.*”
- When asked if staff *feel confident in their ability to direct and assist students during an emergency*, 74.9% responded *slightly to strongly agree*.

Responded slightly to strongly agree to "I know what to do if there is an emergency, natural disaster (such as a tornado or a flood), or a dangerous situation (such as a violent person on campus) during the school day."



Looking Ahead

DCJS and VDOE will administer the Virginia School Survey during the 2025–2026 school year, focusing on school climate among high school students (grades 9–12) and working conditions among classroom instructors and staff in all high schools. Based on lessons learned from the 2026 administration, DCJS and VDOE will continue to improve the survey administration experience for schools and revise survey items as needed to improve the psychometric properties and actionable information derived.

Notes on Administration

Results from the Virginia School Survey are intended to assist school and division personnel in understanding how connected students feel to their school, the quality of their relationships with other students and classroom instructors, and their feelings of safety. For classroom instructors and staff, the survey provides insights into their perceptions of the learning environment, support for their professional roles, and with whom they collaborate to serve students well. The survey is not intended to be evaluative, but may be useful for understanding areas of strength, opportunity, and points of accomplishment within school buildings.

Reports summarizing state-level results by item for students, classroom instructors, and staff are available on the DCJS and VDOE websites through the following links:

- DCJS: www.dcjs.virginia.gov/virginia-center-school-and-campus-safety/programs/virginia-school-survey-climate-and-working
- VDOE: www.doe.virginia.gov/programs-services/school-operations-support-services/school-climate-working-conditions