
Ninth Grade Transition Survey Report 2022

Anoka-Hennepin
School District

Prepared by the Department of
Research, Evaluation and Testing



ANOKA-HENNEPIN
SCHOOLS
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Introduction

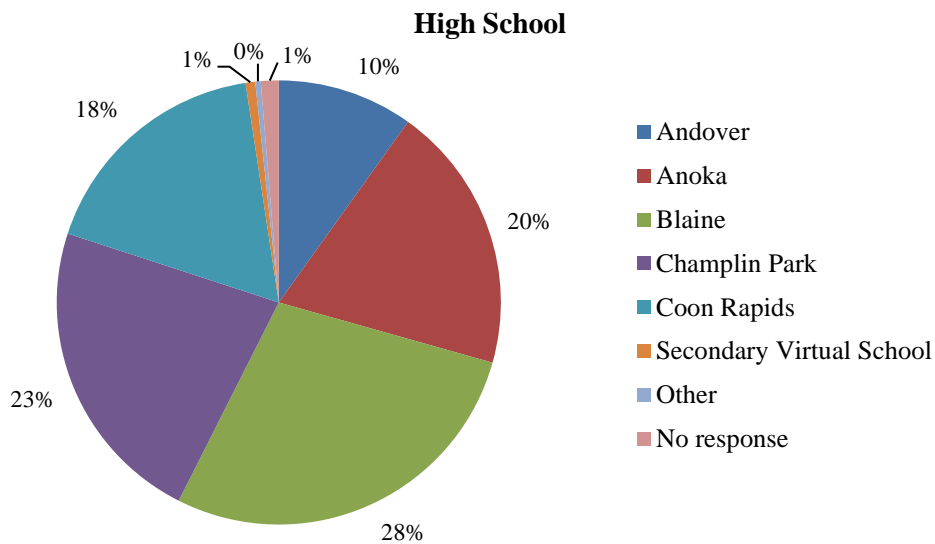
This summary highlights student responses to the Ninth Grade Transition Survey. The objective of the Ninth Grade Transition Survey is to provide an opportunity for all ninth-grade students to evaluate school programming and provide feedback on their experiences entering high school. Student’s perceptions of their educational experiences are useful for systems improvement. Summaries are shared with the Superintendent, Associate Superintendents, K-12 Curriculum and Instruction personnel, building-level administration and staff, and other district constituents.

The Ninth Grade Transition Survey has been administered since 2012 to all students finishing their ninth-grade year. The survey was administered online again this year for freshmen to complete between March 28th and May 27th, 2022. Students generally take 15-30 minutes to complete the anonymous survey. The questionnaire consists of 15 items relating to students’:

- knowledge and use of school counselors;
- concerns as ninth graders;
- evaluation of their high school experiences;
- educational aspirations; and
- demographic information.

There were 1,804 ninth grade students who completed the survey in 2022. Historically, in years prior to 2020, teachers administered the survey during their advisory class, although in years 2020 and 2021, students were sent a link and asked to take the survey on their own time in an unstructured setting. In 2022, ninth grade students were given the opportunity to participate in the survey online during a structured time in advisory classes. Changes in results or number of respondents in 2020 and 2021 may have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and how the survey was administered.

Respondents were representative of the five traditional high schools, the district’s virtual school, as well as other sites and programs. Respondent representation was generally reflective of enrollment with the exception of Andover and Champlin Park High Schools, which were slightly underrepresented relative to their building size.

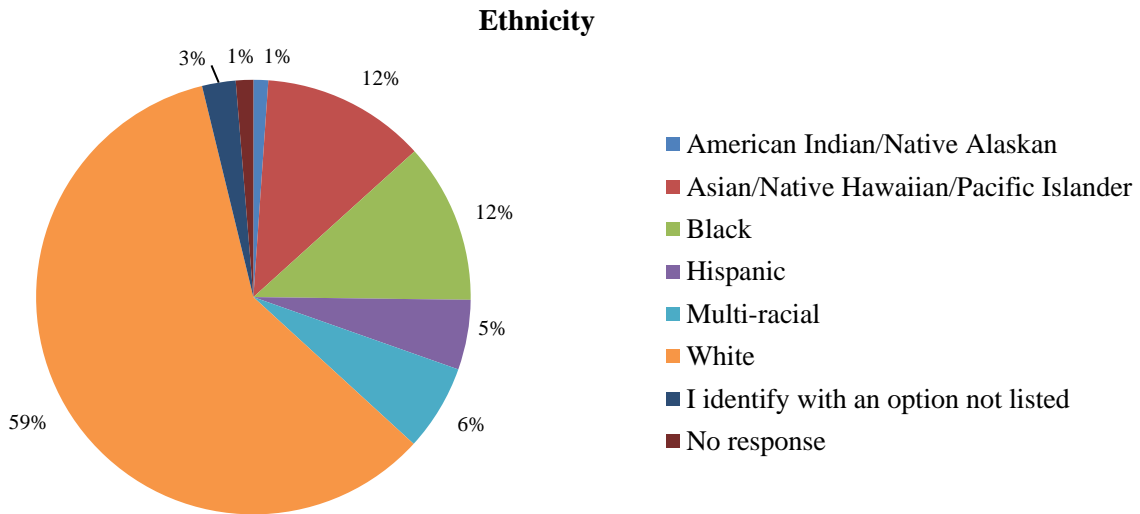


Key Findings

- The percentage of ninth grade students who reported that their highest level of educational aspiration included obtaining a 4-year degree or higher was 73%, a decrease of 3% since 2021. Students with higher educational aspirations, obtaining a 4-year degree or higher, were more confident they will reach their goals.
- Most students learned about who their school counselor is through *orientation*, *advisory*, or an *individual meeting*.
 - Fifteen percent of students reported not knowing who their counselor is, a decrease of 17% from 2021 when this percentage was at an all time high. Forty-eight percent of ninth grade students reported that they have never met with their counselor individually, a 23% decrease from last year.
 - Across all concerns, the greatest percentages of students reported going to their school counselor for concerns about *schedule change*, *registration*, and *credits on track to graduate*, which is consistent with previous years.
- Thinking about the current school year, students rated their ninth-grade experience. Ninety-five percent of students reported feeling they are adjusting well to high school, an increase of 7% from the item's low in 2021. Other notable findings of students' ninth grade perceptions are indicated below.
 - Seventy-two percent of students reported knowing how to make an appointment with their school counselor, a 22% increase since last year when it was at an all-time low.
 - Seventy-four percent of students reported that they were in one or more school activities this year, an increase of 13% from 2021.
 - The percentage of students who reported feeling like they are a part of the school community (79%) increased 10% from the previous year to the highest rate of agreement since the survey's inception.
 - When thinking about their ninth grade experiences, male students reported significantly greater agreement with six of the ten statements than students overall, while students who identify with a gender option not listed or preferred not to respond to the gender question reported significantly less agreement than students overall on seven and nine out of ten statements, respectively.
- Ninth grade students were more concerned about *keeping up with class/homework* and *expectations to do well* at the end of the year than when entering the ninth grade. This is consistent with prior years' findings.
 - The items with the lowest levels of concern when entering ninth grade were *bullying* and *peer pressure*. These items were even less of a concern and among the lowest concerns at the end of the year.
 - The largest changes in concerns from the beginning to the end of the school year were those items centered on the physical unknowns of a new school. These concerns include *school size* which dropped by 10%, *finding my classrooms* which dropped by 16%, and *going to a new school* which dropped by 16% at the end of ninth grade.
 - Forty-five percent of students reported feeling overwhelmed as they entered ninth grade and 43% still feeling overwhelmed at the end of their ninth-grade year. Feeling overwhelmed has been the greatest concern since the inception of the survey.
 - Students who identified as female reported significantly greater concern when entering high school in ten of the eleven areas than students overall. Students who identified as male reported significantly less concern than students overall in all eleven areas, while students identifying as Asian reported significantly greater concern in all eleven areas.
- On average, students rated the overall quality of services provided at their high schools as 2.9 (equivalent to a B-). Grades assigned in 2022 to each of the seven items related to the quality of services provided increased or stayed about the same as the previous year.
 - Students who identify with a gender option not listed on the survey, as well as those who preferred not to answer the gender question, rated their schools significantly lower than students overall on four and five of the seven areas rated, respectively.
 - Students who identify with a racial/ethnic group not listed on the survey rated their schools significantly lower than students overall in six of the seven areas rated, while student who identify as American Indian rated their schools significantly higher in five of the seven areas.

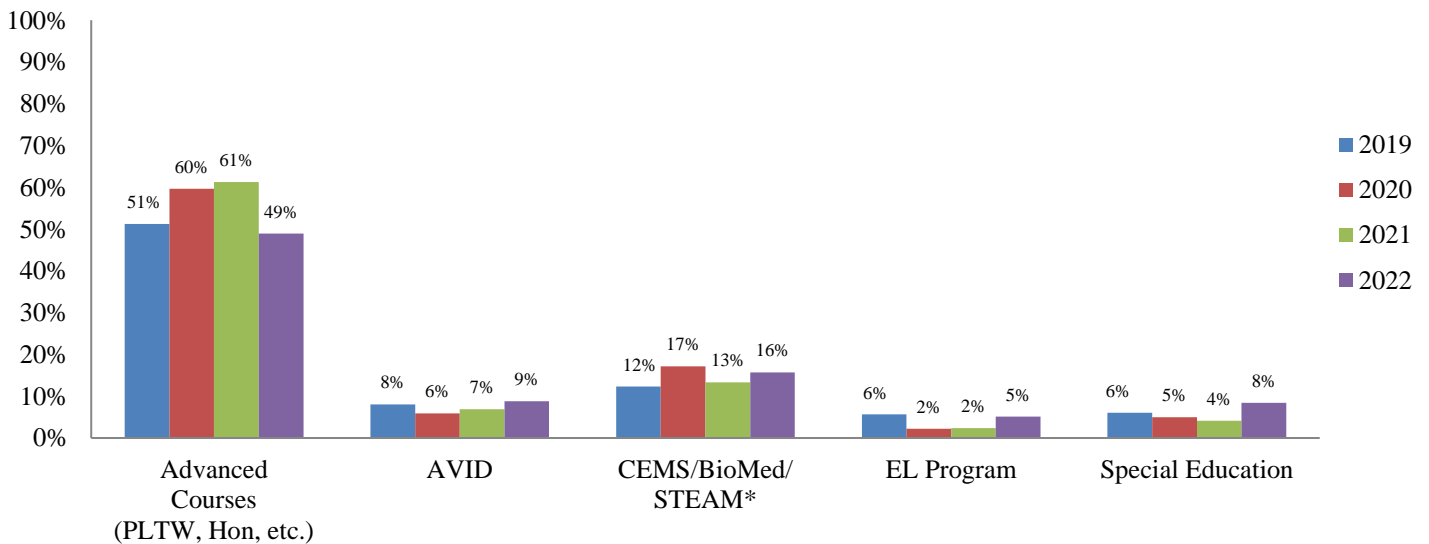
Demographics

There were 1,804 ninth grade students who participated in the survey. Students reported being 46% female and 45% male (6% of students preferred not to answer and 4% did not identify with any of the options listed). Students self-reported their ethnic background as follows:



Participation in special programming. Approximately half of respondents indicated they took advanced coursework. Just under 10% of respondents reported participation in the AVID program, while 16% of the participants reported participation in either CEMS, BioMed or STEAM. The percentage of respondents who reported participating in the EL program aligned with district participation, while districtwide students receiving special education services were slightly underrepresented compared to those enrolled.

Percentage of students participating in special programming

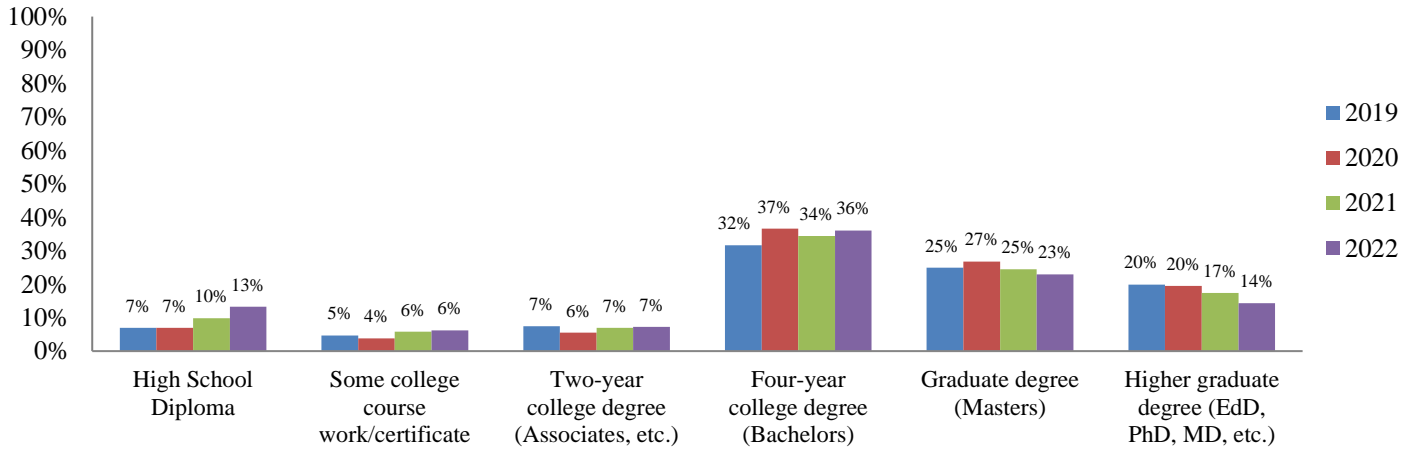


* CEMS is only offered at Blaine HS and Coon Rapids HS, BioMed is only offered at Coon Rapids HS, and STEAM is only offered at Anoka HS.

Educational Goals

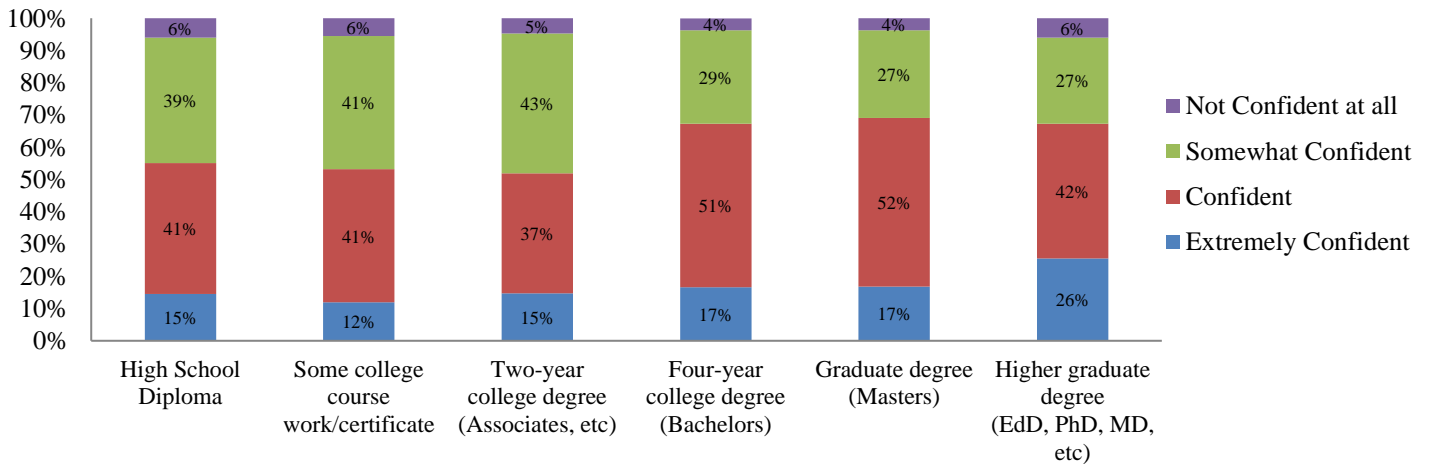
Educational aspirations. Seventy-three percent of ninth grade students reported aspirations that included obtaining a four-year college degree or higher, a decrease of 11% since the high in 2020. The percentage of students reporting a high school diploma as their highest educational goal has been steadily increasing over the last six years. The opposite was found for aspirations to obtaining a higher graduate degree which has steadily declined over the last five years.

Highest educational goal (% of students)



Confidence in reaching educational goals. Students pursuing a four-year college degree or higher reported being either extremely confident or confident in reaching their goals at a greater percentage than those students selecting other educational aspirations. Of the 234 ninth grade students who indicated a high school diploma was their highest educational goal, 6% reported not being confident and 39% reported being only somewhat confident in obtaining this goal.

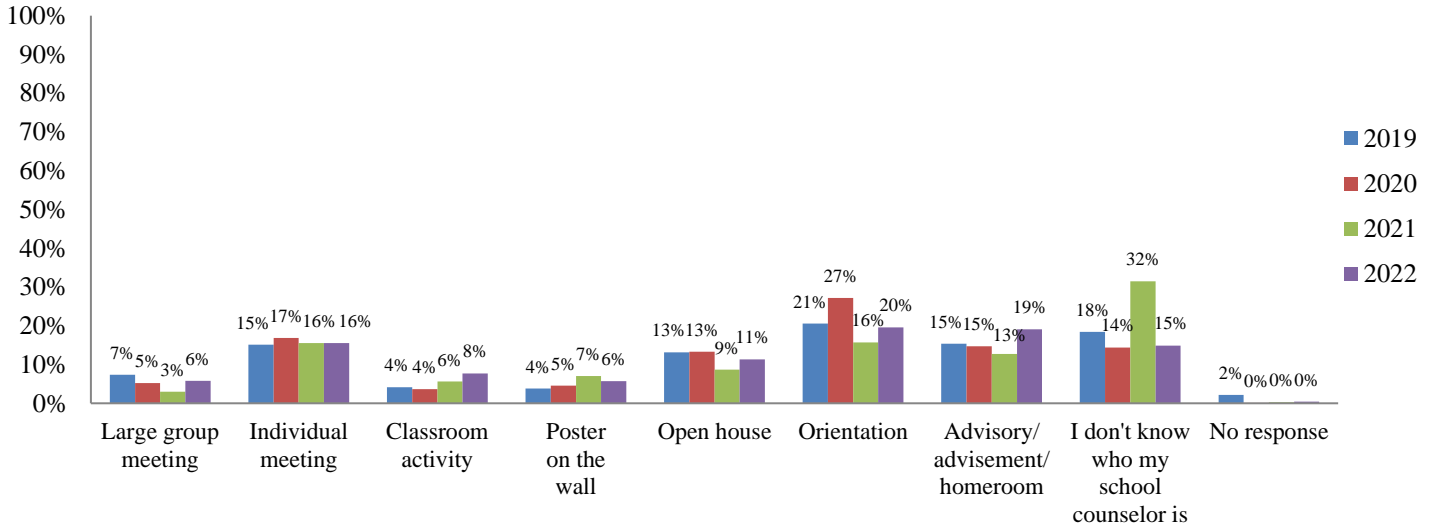
**Relationship between two questions:
'What is your highest educational goal?' and 'How confident do you feel that you will reach your educational goal?'**



School Counselors

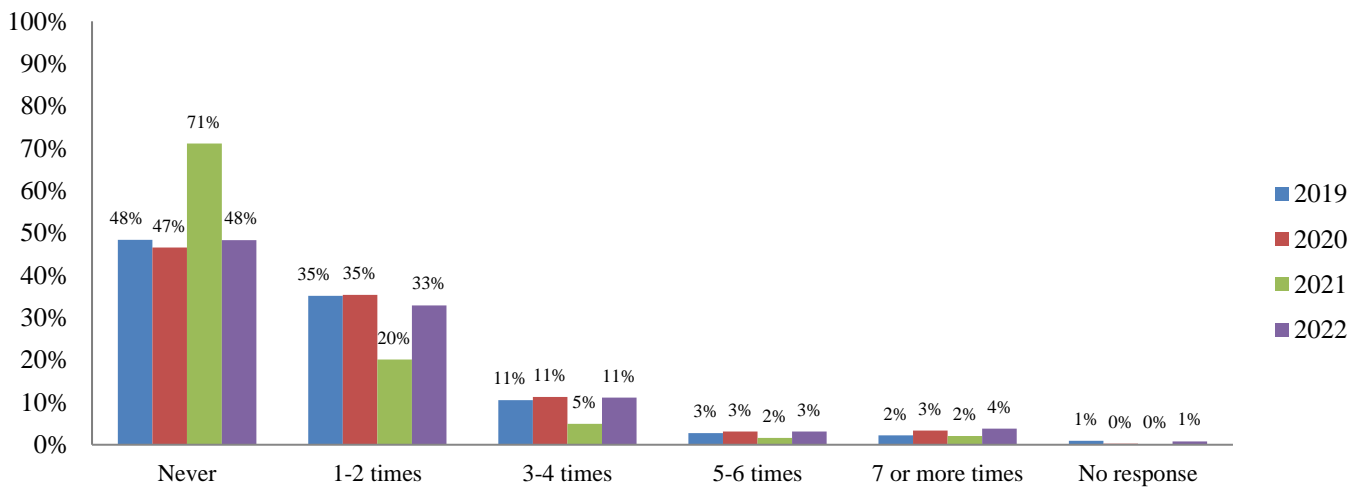
Assigned counselor. Fifteen percent of ninth grade students reported not knowing who their counselor was, a return to rates more similar to years prior to 2021 when there was a spike in students reporting not knowing their counselor. Ninth graders who knew their counselor learned about him or her through *orientation* (20%), *advisory*, *advisement*, or *homeroom* (19%), or an *individual meeting* (16%). The greatest increase from 2021 was in the percentage of students who reported learning who their counselor was through *advisory*, an increase of 6%.

How did you learn about your school counselor?



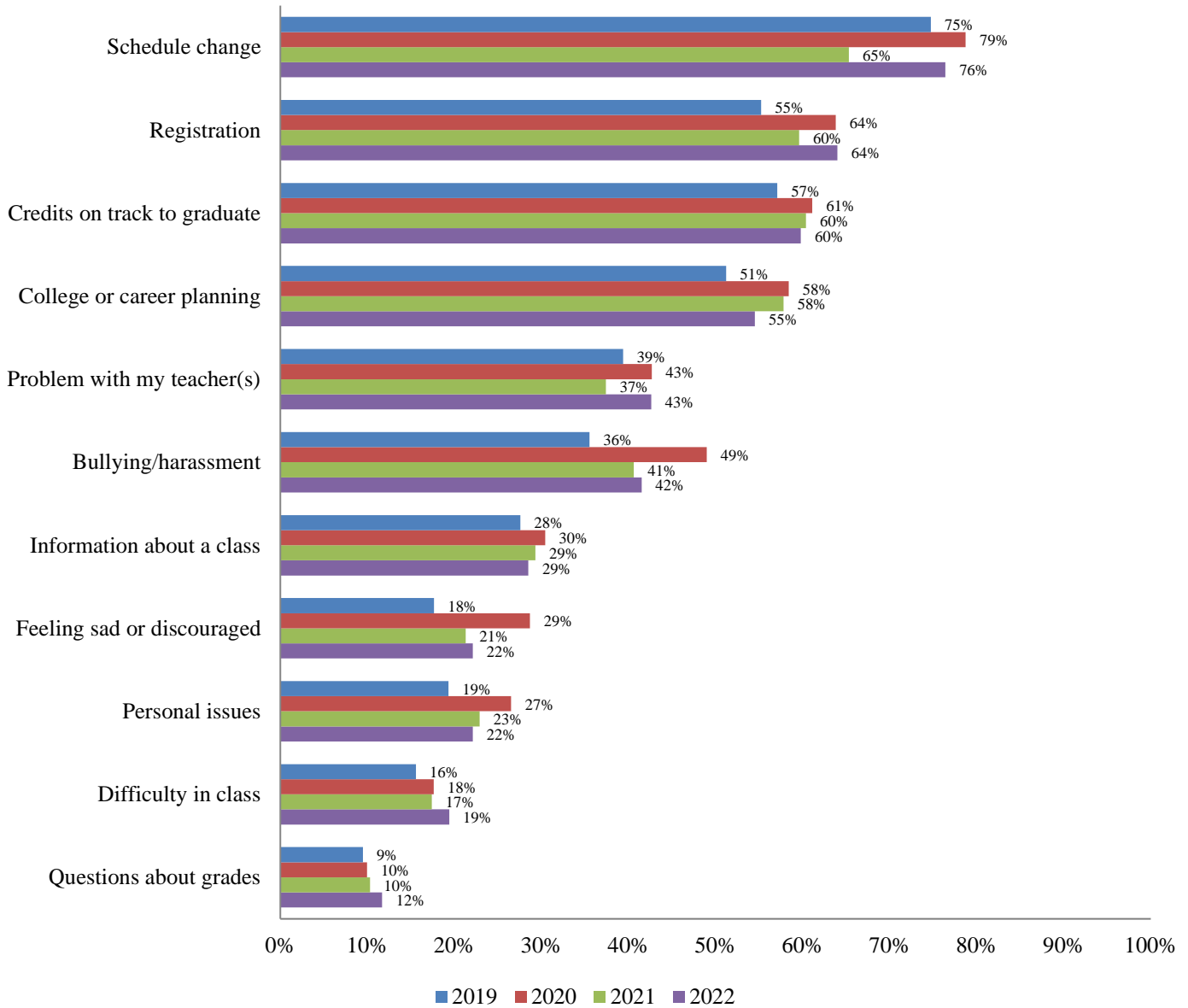
Meeting with counselor. The percentage of ninth grade students who reported having never met individually with their school counselor, showed a decrease of 23% from 2021, putting it back to a rate similar to years prior to 2021. Four percent of respondents indicated they met individually with their counselor 7 or more times which is the highest in the survey's history.

How many times have you met individually with your school counselor?



Concerns. The concerns for which ninth grade students indicated they would go to their school counselor most frequently included: *schedule change* (76%), *registration* (64%), and *credits on track to graduate* (60%). Students were less likely to report that they would go to the school counselor for the following: *questions about grades* (12%), *difficulty in class* (19%), and *feeling sad or discouraged* (22%). The percentage of students who reported they would see their counselor because of schedule change increased 11% since last year, back to rates similar to years prior to 2021.

Percentage of students reporting they would go to their school counselor for each concern



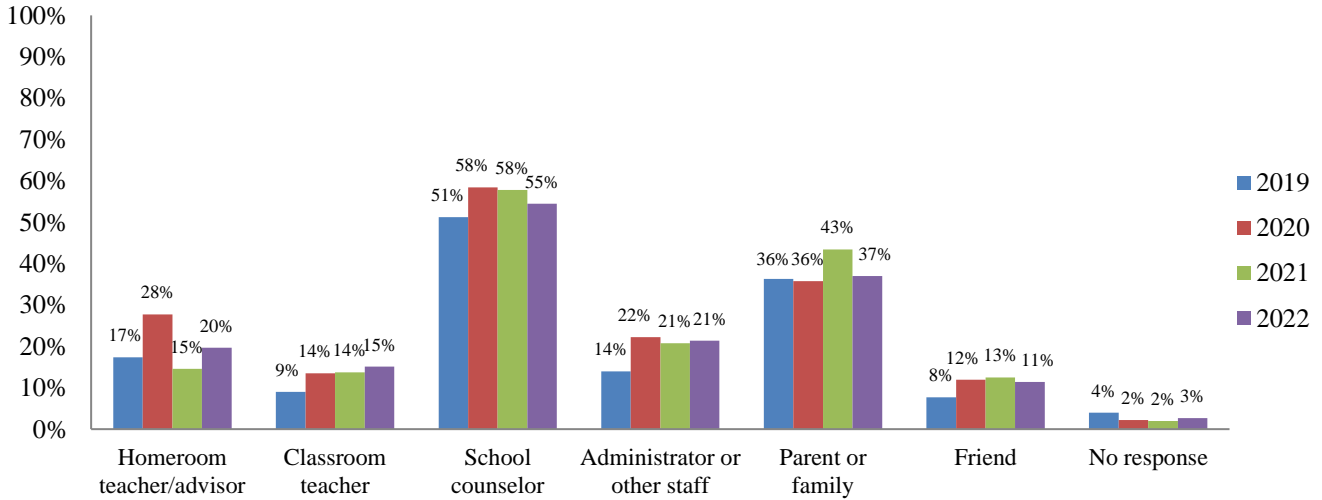
Note: For each of the concerns above, students were given several options of who they would go to, counselors being one of them. Students were allowed to select as many of the options they wanted for each concern.

Support for Concerns

The following graphs highlight who students report they would go to for support with concerns around successful course completion, future planning, and their social and/or emotional needs. In this section, students could choose more than one person that they would go to for each of the concerns.

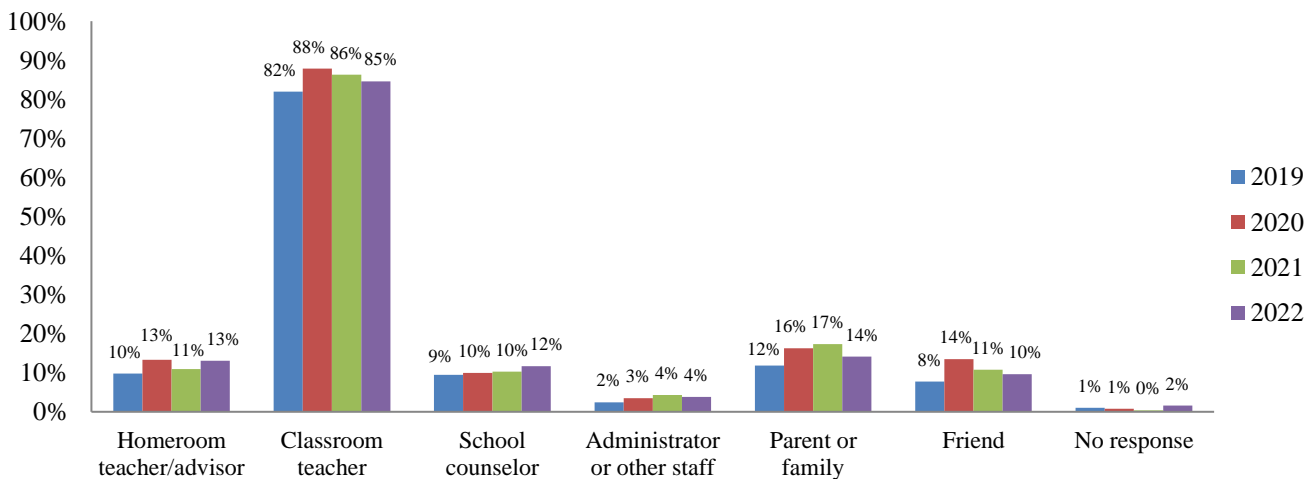
College and career planning. School counselor was the highest rated person to who respondents would go to talk about college or career planning (55%); this was consistent with previous years. The next most common choice was a parent or family member (37%). Twenty percent of students reported they would go to a homeroom teacher/advisor for college or career planning, a 5% increase from 2021.

Who students would go to to discuss: College or career planning



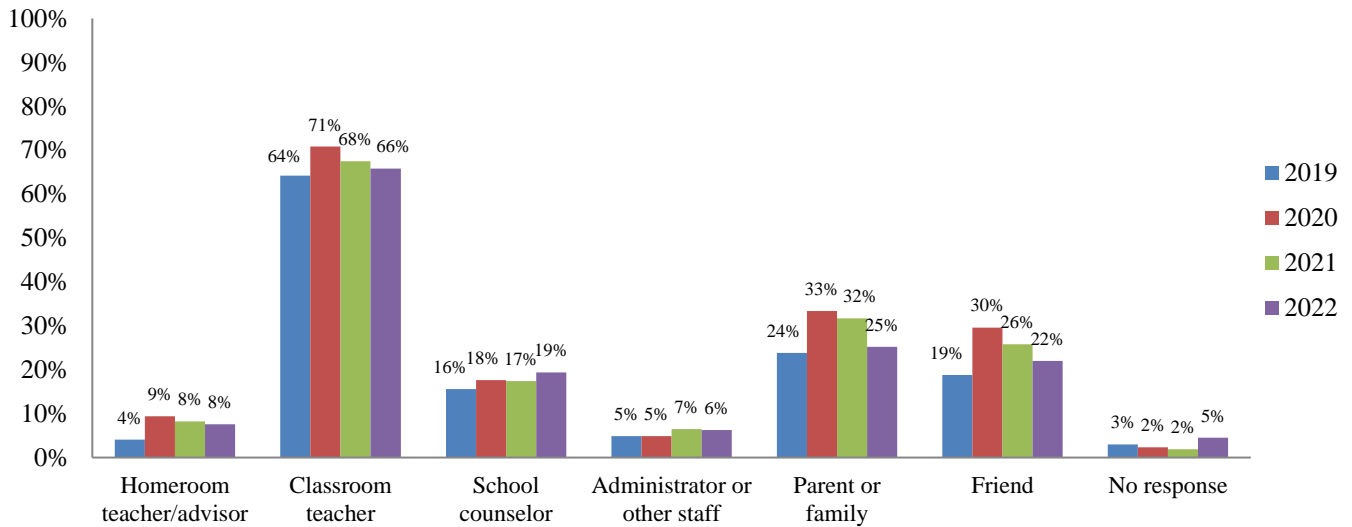
Questions about grades. Since the survey’s inception, students have most commonly reported they would go to their classroom teacher with questions about their grades (85% in 2022). More students reported they would go to a parent or family member for questions about their grades (14%), than to their homeroom teacher/advisor (13%), a school counselor (12%), a friend (10%), or a school administrator or other staff (4%).

Who students would go to to discuss: Questions about grades



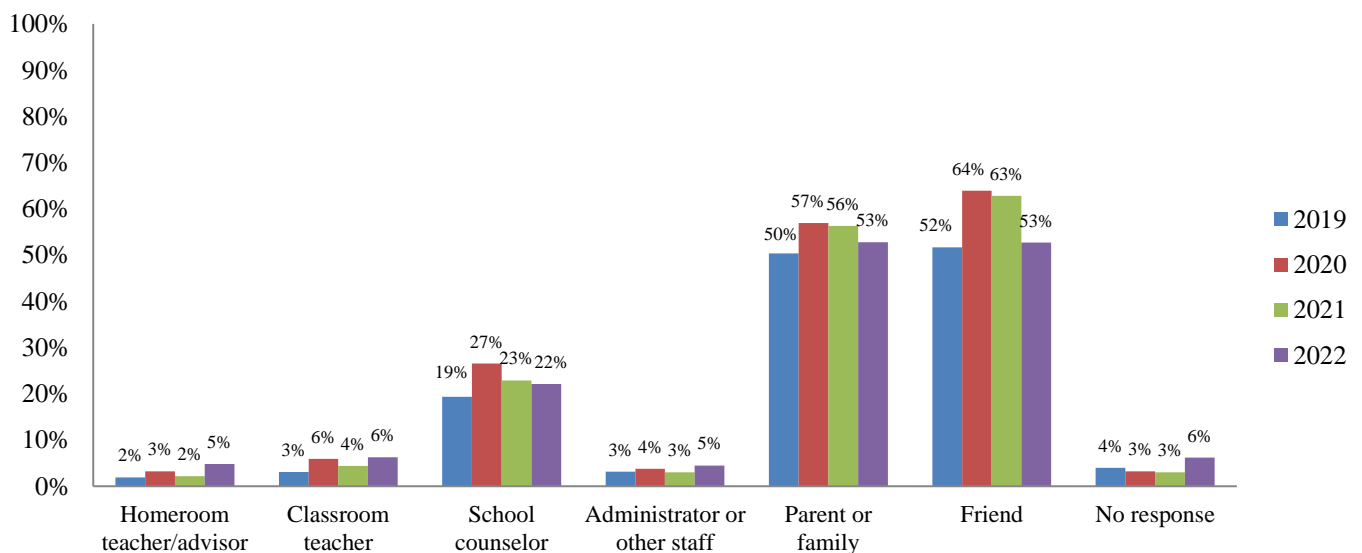
Difficulty in class. The majority of students (66%) reported they would go to a classroom teacher to discuss difficulty in class; this was a 2% decrease from 2021. A moderate percentage of students reported they would go to a parent or family member (25%), a friend (22%), and/or a school counselor (19%) to discuss difficulty in class.

Who students would go to to discuss: Difficulty in class



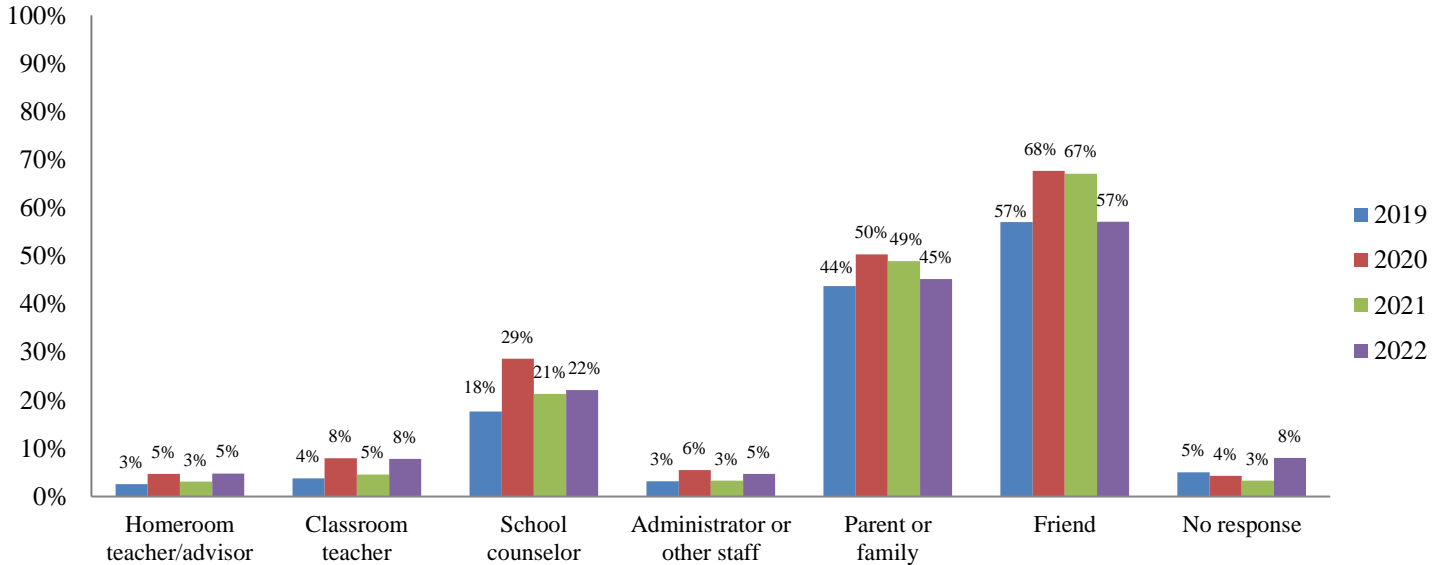
Personal issues. The same percentage of students reported they would go to a friend or a parent or family member to discuss personal issues (53% each). Twenty-two percent of students reported they would discuss personal issues with a school counselor. This is more than a classroom teacher (6%), an administrator or other staff (5%) or a homeroom teacher/advisor (5%).

Who students would go to to discuss: Personal issues



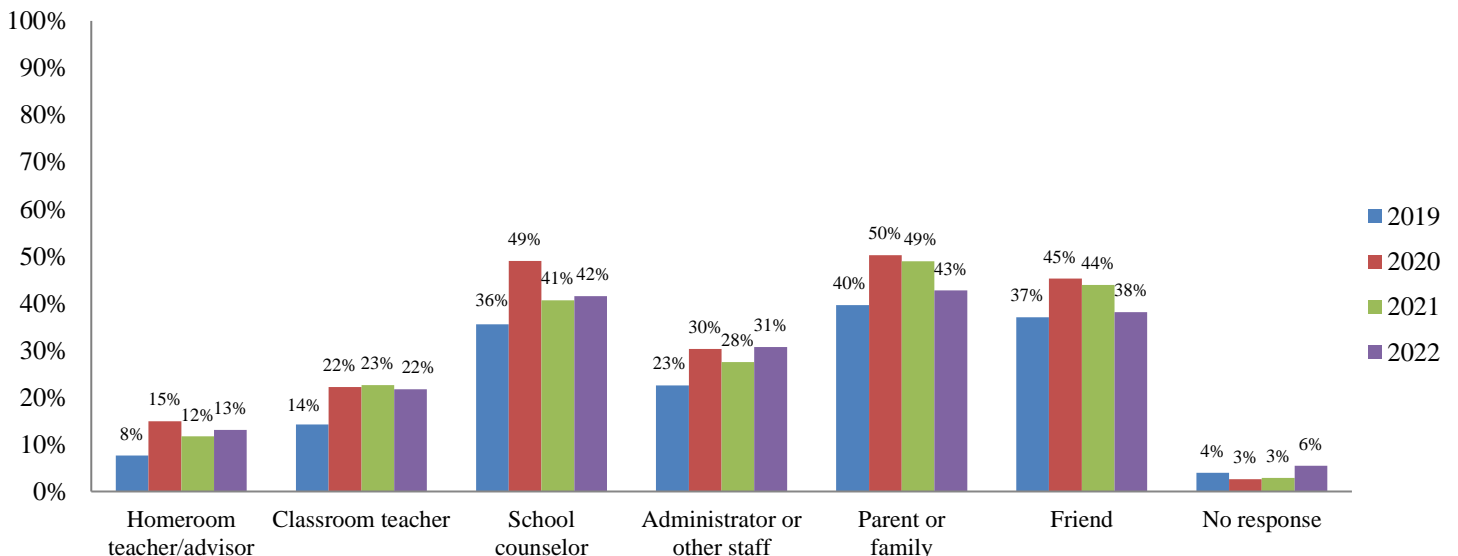
Feeling sad or discouraged. Fifty-seven percent of students reported they would go to a friend to discuss feeling sad or discouraged. Forty-five percent of students reported they would go to a parent or family member. These two response options have returned to levels similar to 2019 and earlier. Twenty-two percent of students reported they would go to a school counselor, an increase of 1% from 2021. The percentage of students who did not choose anyone they would go to for these feelings increased from 3% in 2021 to 8% in 2022.

Who students would go to to discuss: Feeling sad or discouraged



Bullying and/or harassment. The highest percentages of students reported they would go to a parent or family member (43%) or school counselor (42%) regarding bullying or harassment concerns. Thirty-eight percent of students reported they would go to a friend to discuss being bullied and/or harassed. The percentage of students who reported they would go to an administrator or other staff to discuss bullying and/or harassment is the highest it has been since the item was added in 2016 at 31%.

Who students would go to to discuss: Bullying/harassment



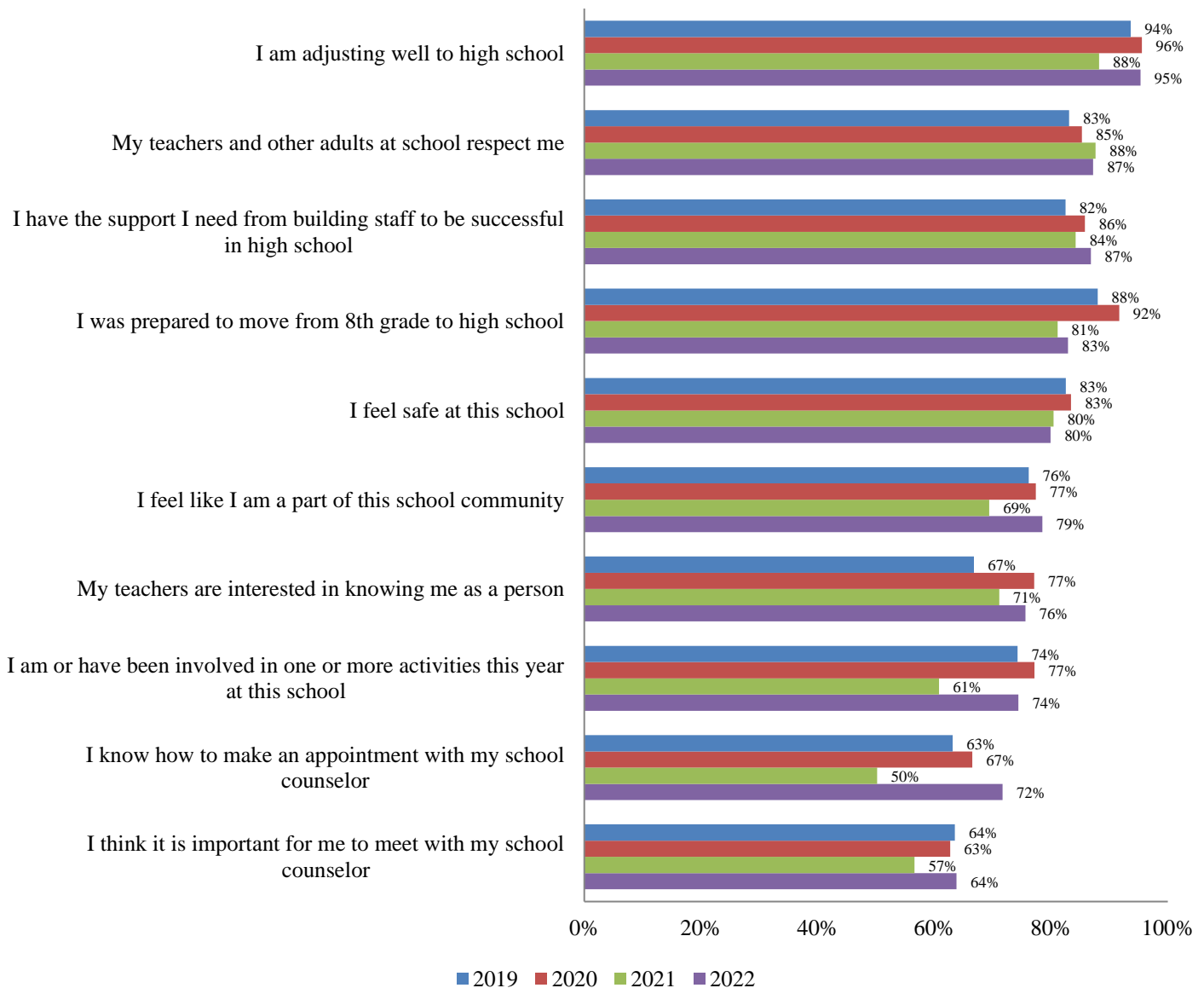
Perceptions of the Ninth Grade Experience

Ninety-five percent of students agreed with the statement *I am adjusting well to high school*, a rate similar to years prior to 2021, though only 83% agreed that they felt prepared to move from 8th grade to high school.

Seventy-two percent of ninth grade students reported knowing how to make an appointment with their school counselor, which is the highest agreement rate for the item since the survey's inception.

I feel like I am a part of this school community increased 10% from 2021 to 79%, the highest it has been since 2018. *I have the support I need from building staff to be successful in high school* also increased from last year (from 84% in 2021 to 87% in 2022), the highest agreement with this item since 2017.

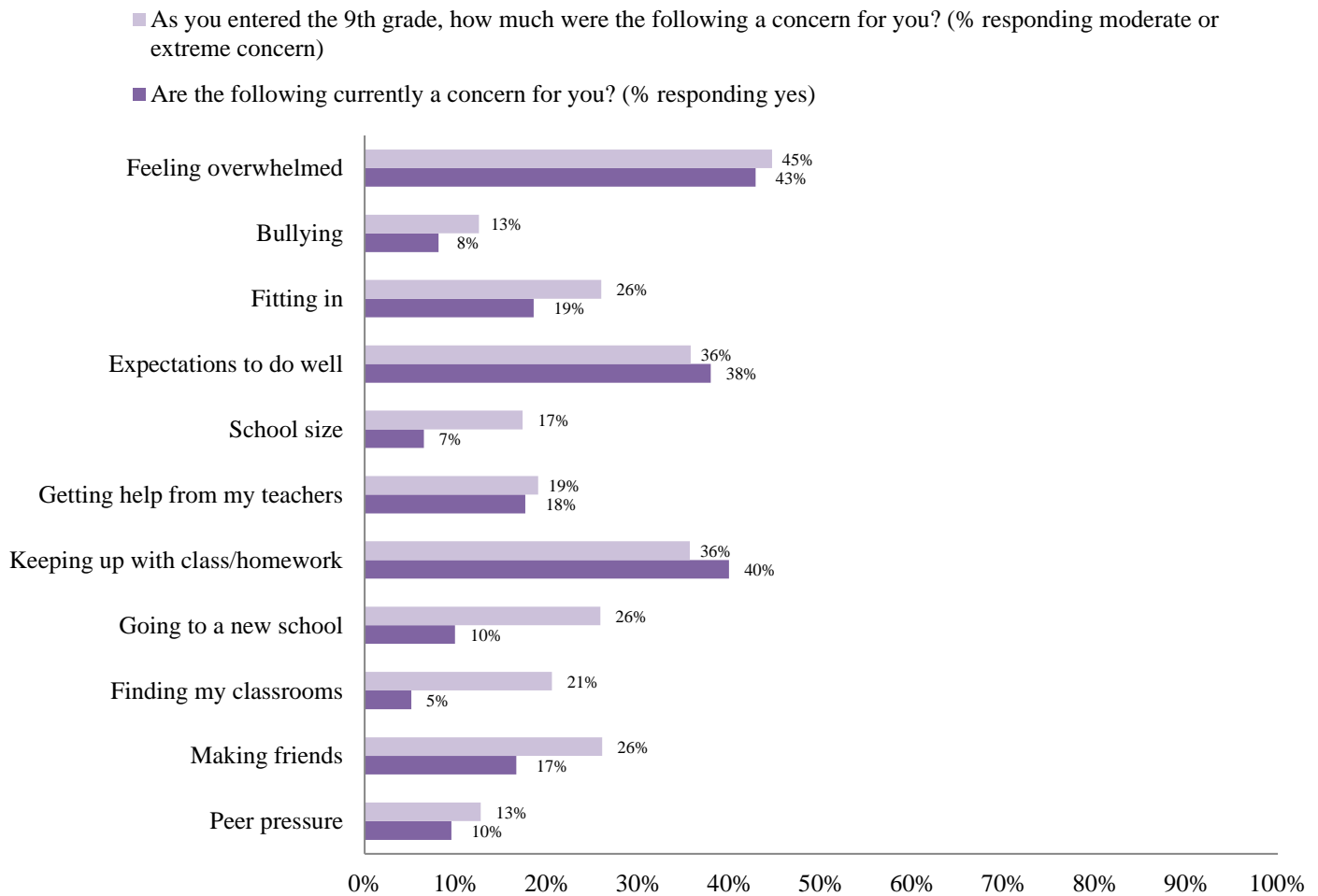
When thinking about your ninth grade year... (% who strongly agree or agree)



Note: Items in the graph are sorted from highest to lowest agreement for the current year. Agreement with these items in 2021 may have been particularly impacted by the 2020-21 learning model changes associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Changes to concerns entering high school. Ninth grade students were asked at the end of the year to think back to the beginning of the school year regarding whether they had certain concerns upon entering ninth grade, as well as report whether these were still concerns at the end of the year. Ninth graders expressed having less of a concern for nine of the eleven items at the end of the year than at the beginning. They were least concerned at the end of the year about the following: *peer pressure* (10%), *going to a new school* (10%), *bullying* (8%), *school size* (7%), and *finding my classrooms* (5%). Students reported being more concerned at the end of the school year than when starting the school year about: *keeping up with class/homework* (40%) and *expectations to do well* (38%). The items with the lowest levels of concern when entering the ninth grade were *peer pressure* and *bullying* (13% each). The largest changes in concerns from the beginning to the end of the school year were those items centered on the physical unknowns of a new school. These concerns included *school size* which dropped by 10%, *finding my classrooms* which dropped by 16%, and *going to a new school* which dropped by 16% by the end of ninth grade.

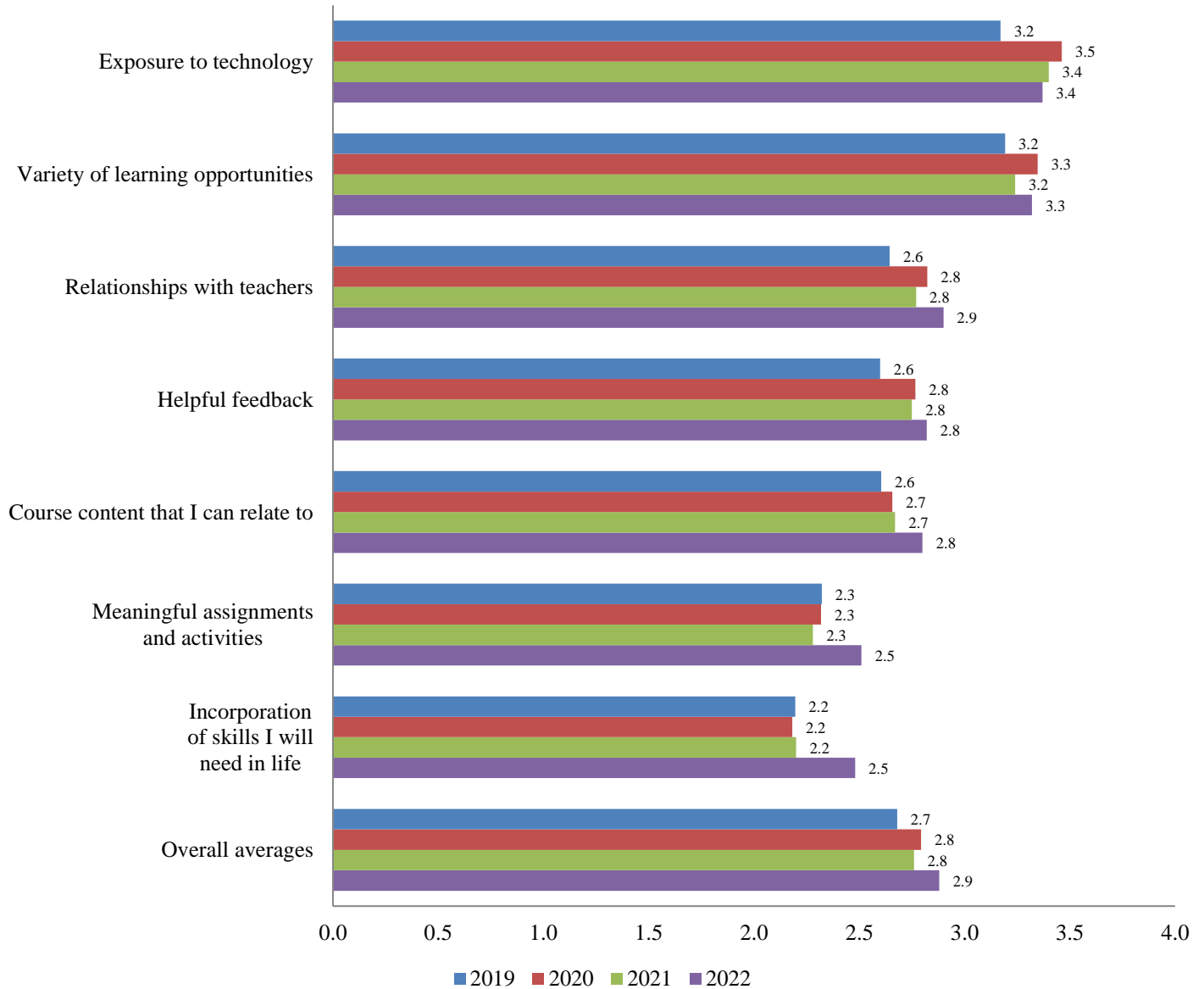
Comparing level of concern from beginning to end of year



Rating areas of high school. On average, students rated the quality of services provided at their high schools as a 2.9 (equivalent to a B-). Grades assigned to each item increased or stayed about the same from last year to this year.

Consistent with prior years, students rated *exposure to technology* and *variety of learning opportunities* higher than other items. The rating of *incorporation of skills I will need in life* was the lowest among items, with *meaningful assignments and activities* only slightly higher.

Average letter grade assigned to high school (A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, D = 1, and F = 0)



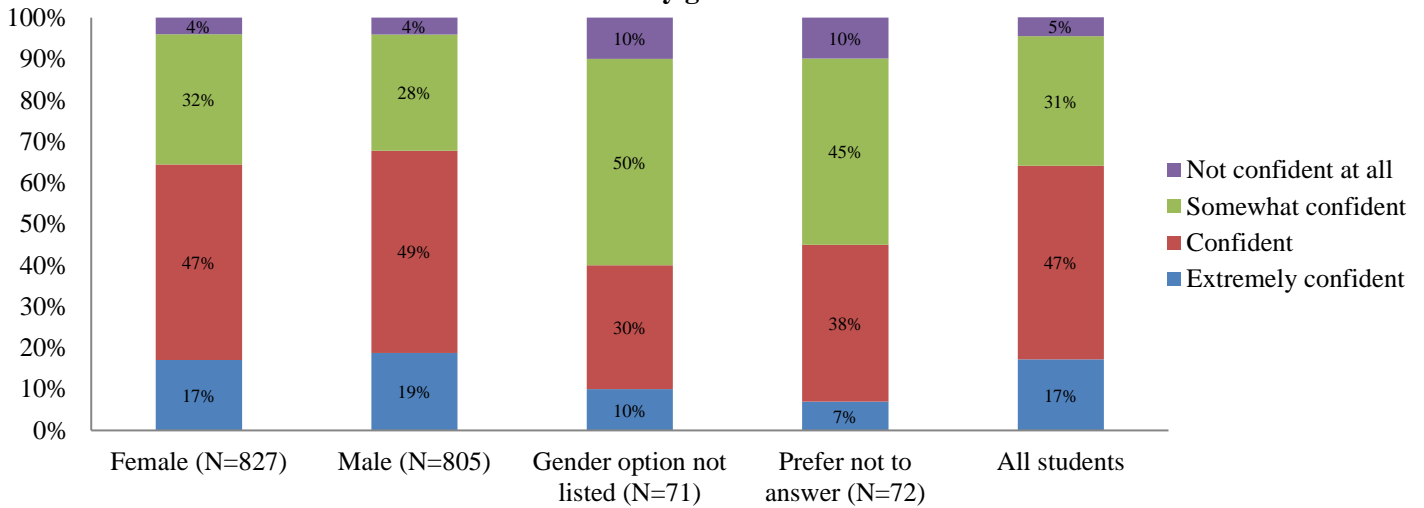
Comparisons by Student Group

In this section, results in which student group differences were statistically significant are highlighted. When statistically significant patterns were observed in the data, results are presented by self-reported factors in the order that follows: (1) gender, (2) race/ethnicity, and (3) school. When no statistically significant differences among student groups exist, or when significant differences are not consistent across several items in a section, no graphical representation of the results is presented. In all cases, the student group of focus is compared to the overall data of all respondents. Be mindful of student group size as it pertains to data volatility when drawing conclusions.

Confidence in reaching educational goals. When examining differences in ninth grade students’ confidence in reaching their educational goals, there were statistically significant differences related to gender, race/ethnicity, and school.

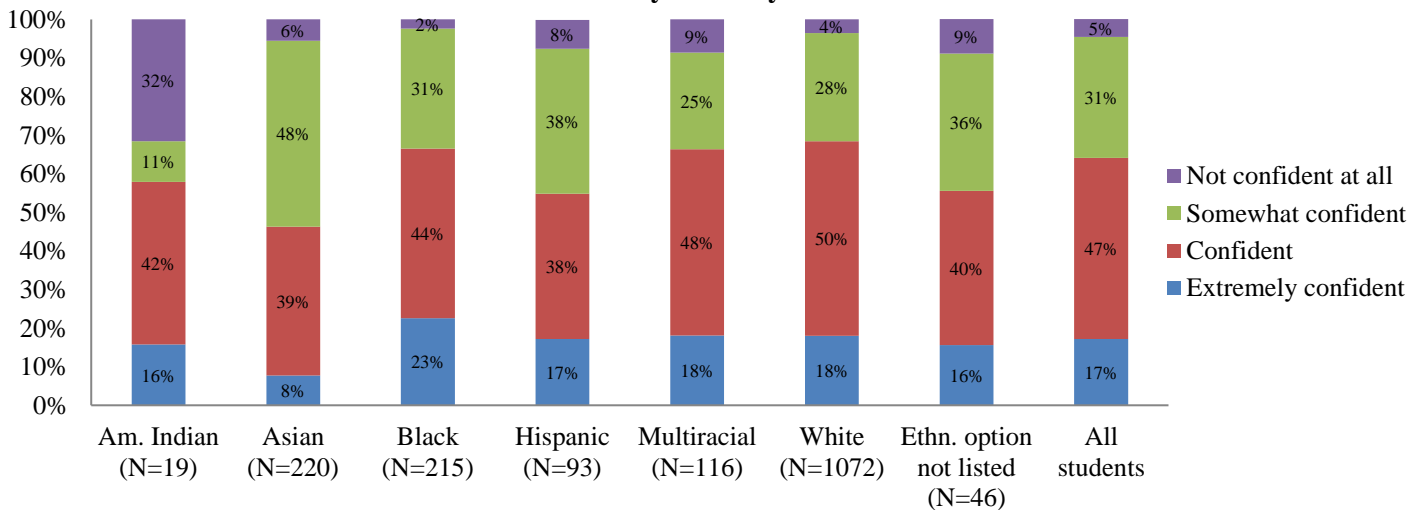
When focusing on gender, students who identify with a gender option not listed and those who preferred not to answer reported feeling less confident, while students who identify as male reported feeling more confident than students overall.

**How confident do you feel that you will achieve your ultimate educational goal?
by gender**



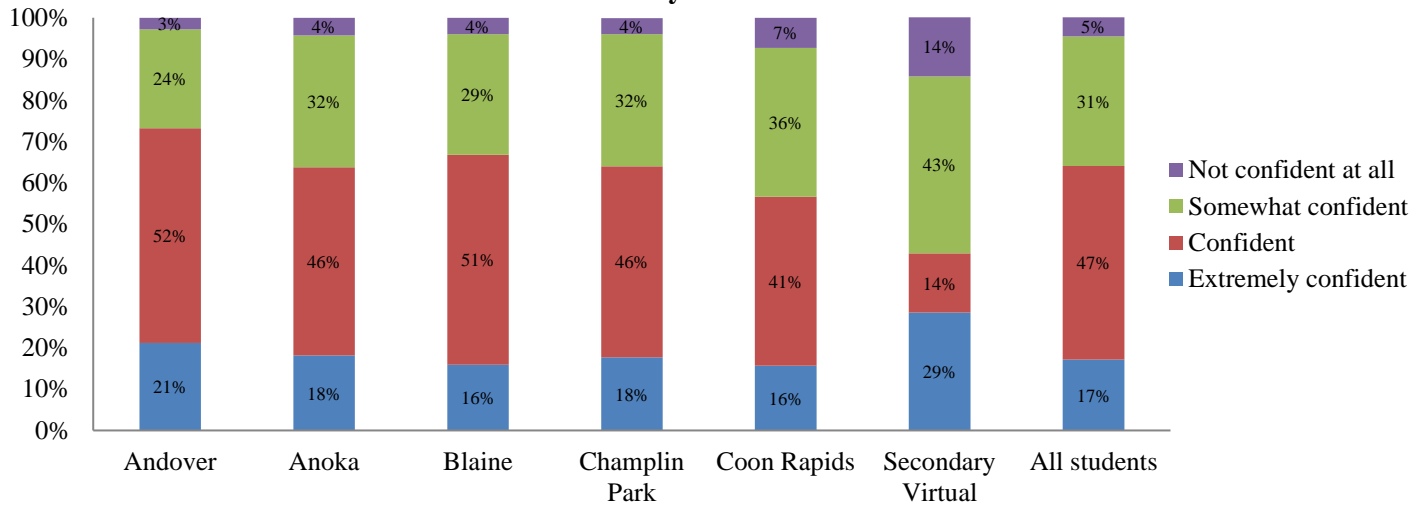
Considering race/ethnicity, students who identify as Asian reported feeling less confident in achieving their educational goals, while students who identify as White reported feeling more confident than students overall.

**How confident do you feel that you will achieve your ultimate educational goal?
by ethnicity**



When focusing on school, students at Andover High School reported significantly higher confidence in achieving their educational goals than students overall, and students at Coon Rapids High School reported lower confidence than students overall.

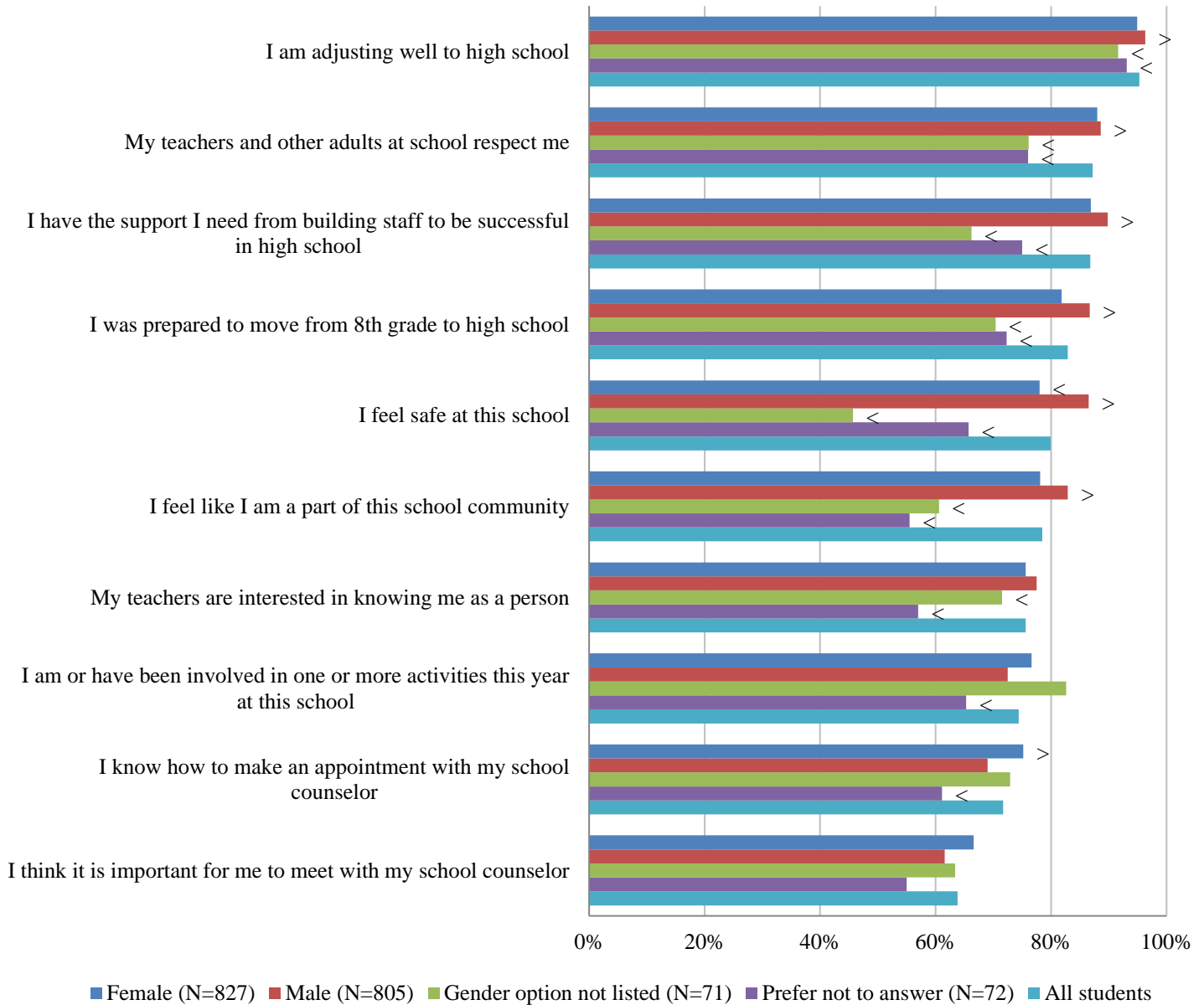
**How confident do you feel that you will achieve your ultimate educational goal?
by school**



Perceptions of ninth grade experience. When examining differences in students’ perception of ninth grade, there were statistically significant differences in the areas of gender, race/ethnicity, and school. Symbols on graphs in this section indicate which items are statistically significantly different than the “all students” group. A “<” indicates the area for that student group was significantly lower than students overall, and a “>” indicates the area for that student group was significantly higher than students overall.

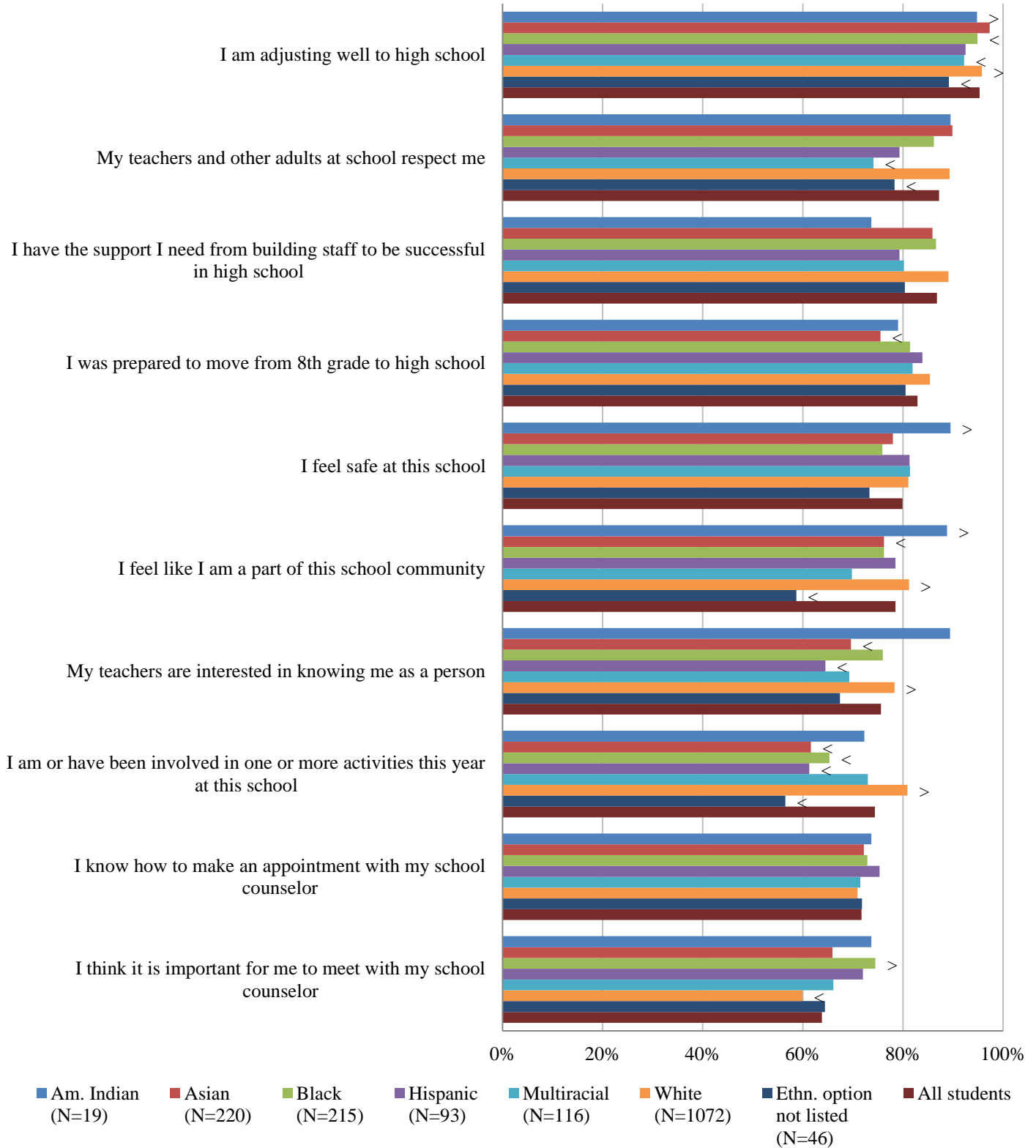
Regarding self-reported gender, students who identify with a gender option not listed or those who preferred not to answer reported significantly lower agreement than students overall on 7 of 10 and 9 of 10 items, respectively. Students who identify as male reported significantly higher agreement than students overall on 6 of the 10 items.

**When thinking about your ninth grade year...
(% who strongly agree or agree) by gender**



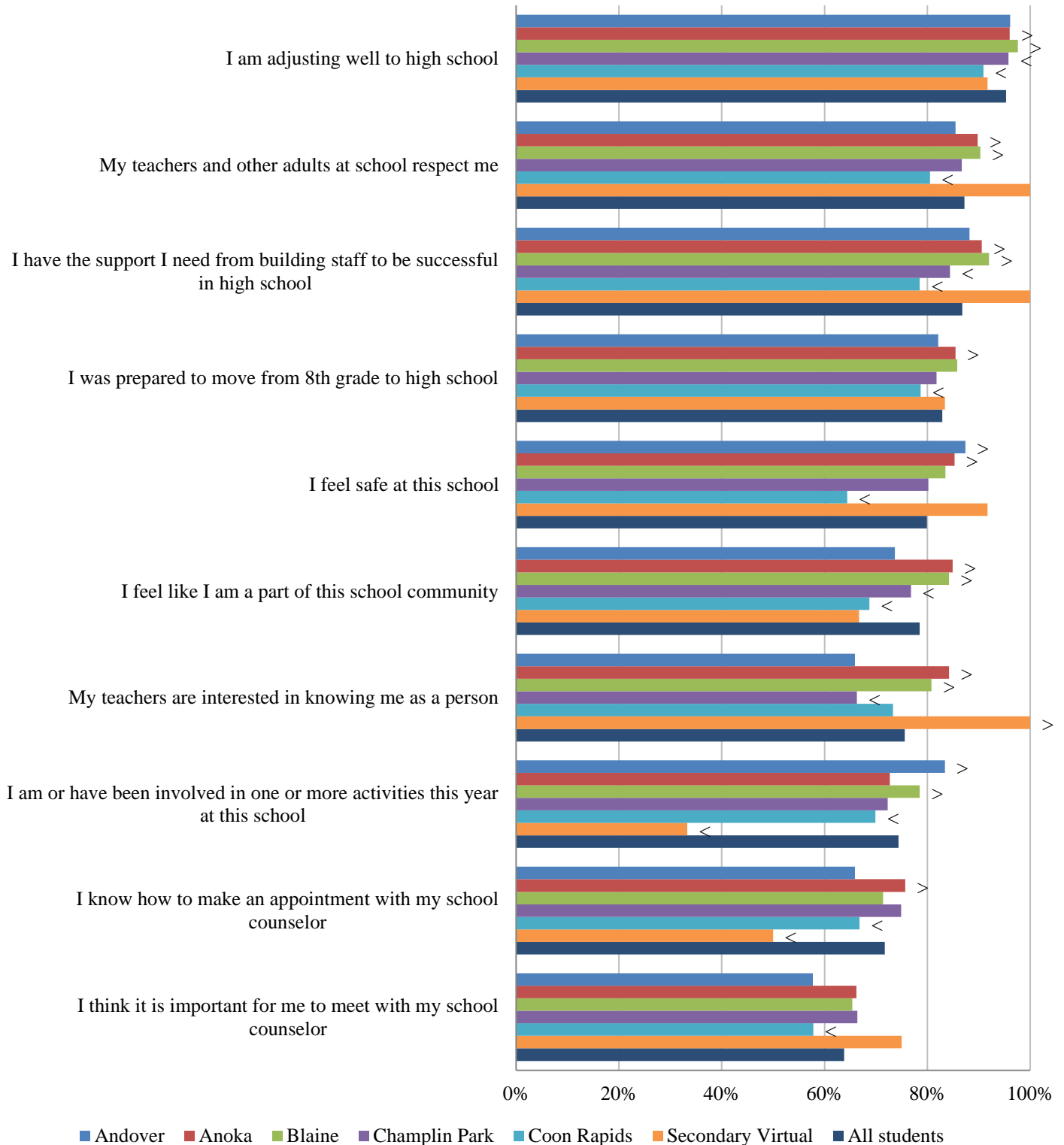
Regarding self-reported racial/ethnic background, both students who identify as Asian and those who identify with an option not listed reported significantly lower agreement (denoted with “<”) than students overall on 4 of the 10 items. Students who identify as White reported significantly higher agreement (denoted with “>”) than students overall on 4 of the 10 items.

**When thinking about your ninth grade year...
(% who strongly agree or agree) by ethnicity**



When examining responses by school, students attending Coon Rapids High School reported significantly lower agreement with 9 out of 10 of the items (denoted with “<”) than students overall. Students attending Anoka High School or Blaine High School reported significantly higher agreement (denoted with “>”) than students overall on 8 of the 10 and 6 of the 10 items, respectively.

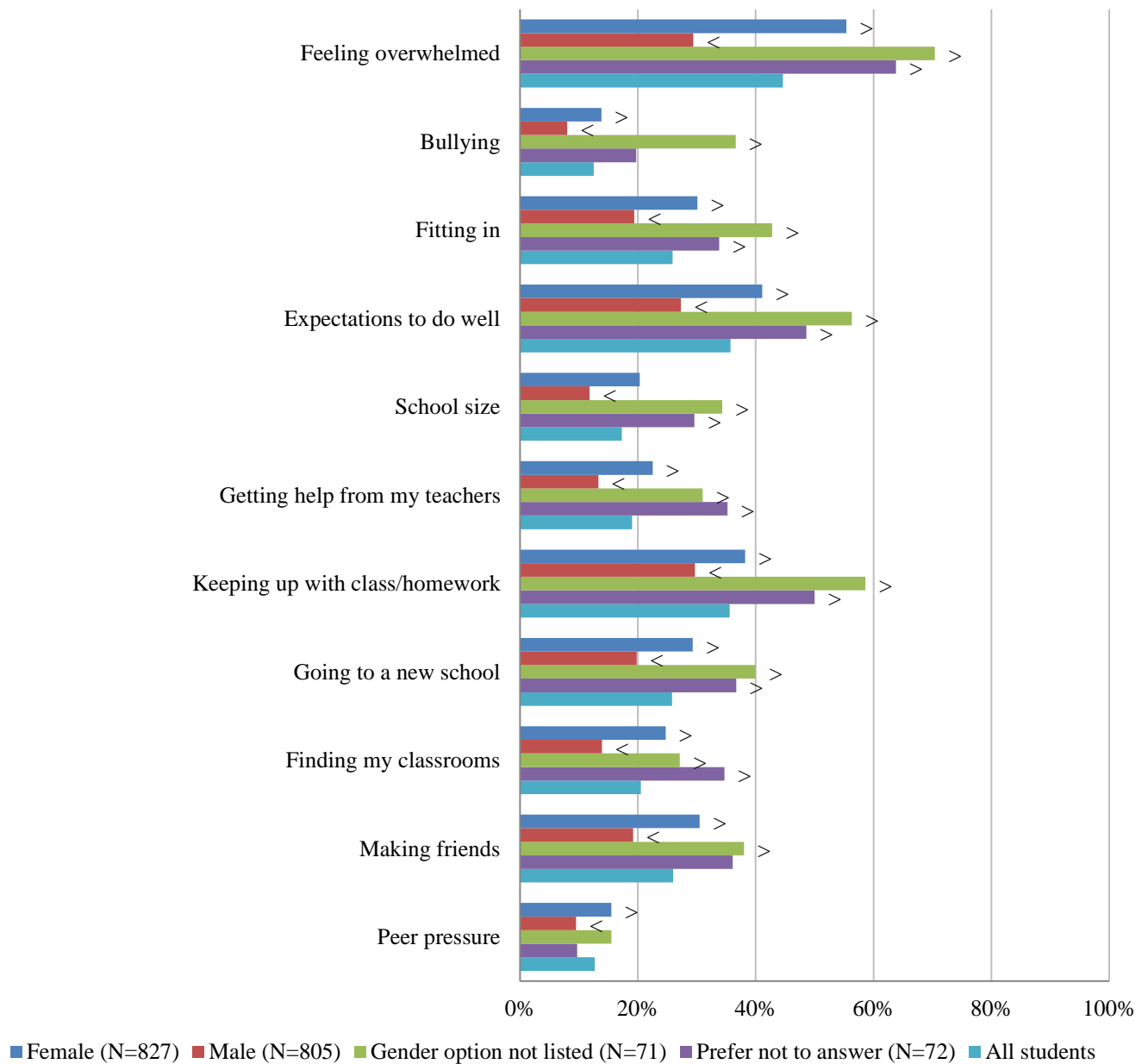
**When thinking about your ninth grade year...
(% who strongly agree or agree) by school**



Concerns entering high school. When examining differences in students’ level of concern entering high school, there were statistically significant differences related to gender and race/ethnicity. Students’ levels of concern were fairly consistent across schools with no one schools’ students reporting significantly more or less concerned than students overall on more than three of the items rated. Symbols on graphs in this section indicate which items are statistically significantly different than the “all students” group. A “<” indicates the area for that student group was significantly lower than students overall, and a “>” indicates the area for that student group was significantly higher than students overall.

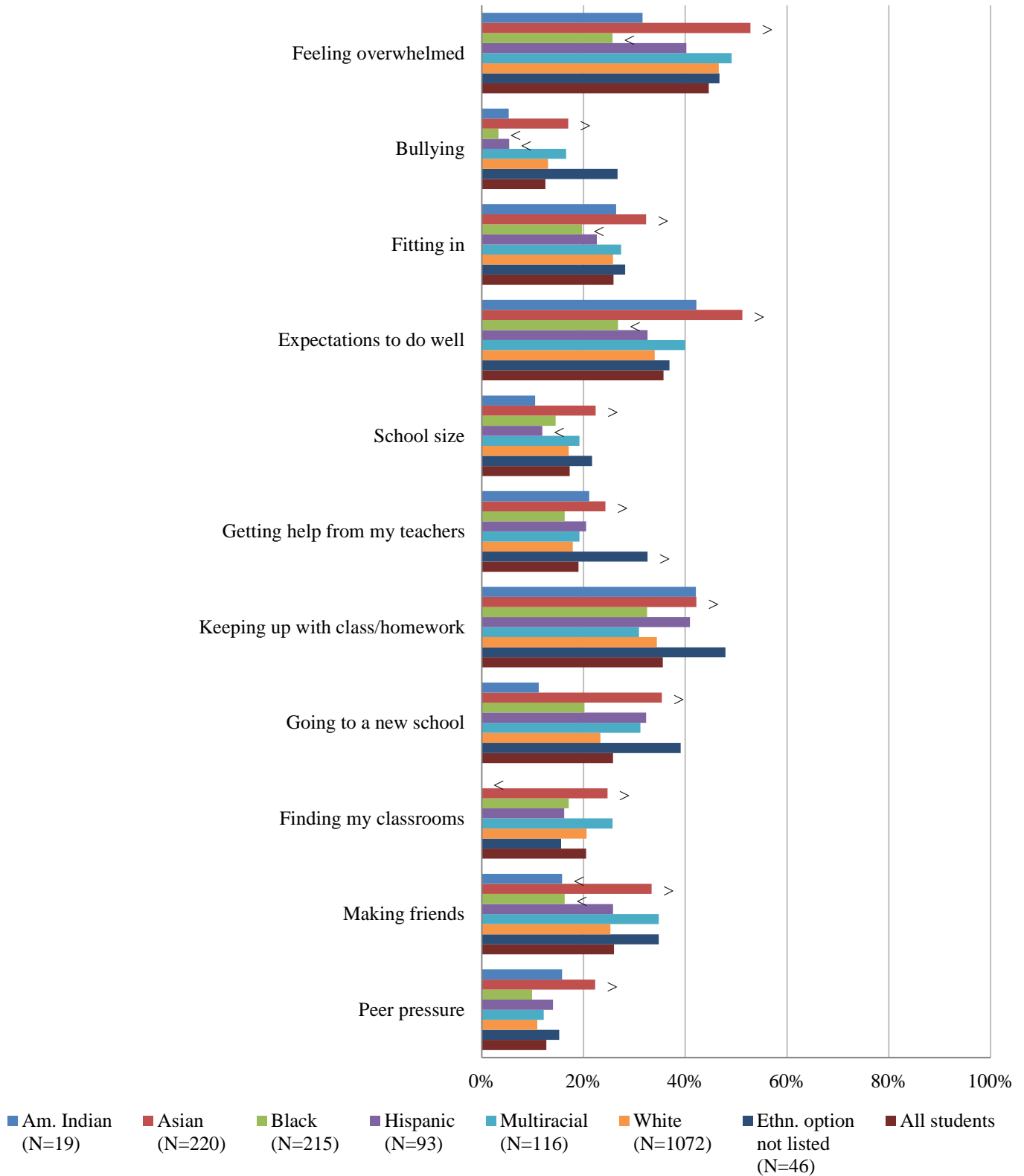
Considering gender, students who identify as female or with a gender option not listed, along with those who preferred not to answer reported significantly greater concern than students overall on 10 of 11, 10 of 11, and 8 of 11 items, respectively. Students who identify as male reported significantly less concern than students overall on 11 of the 11 items.

Percentage of students reporting concern (% who report moderate or extreme) by gender



Regarding self-reported racial/ethnic background, students who identify as Asian reported significantly greater concern (denoted with “>”) than students overall on 11 out of 11 items, while students who identify as Black reported significantly less concern (denoted with “<”) than students overall on 5 of the 11 items.

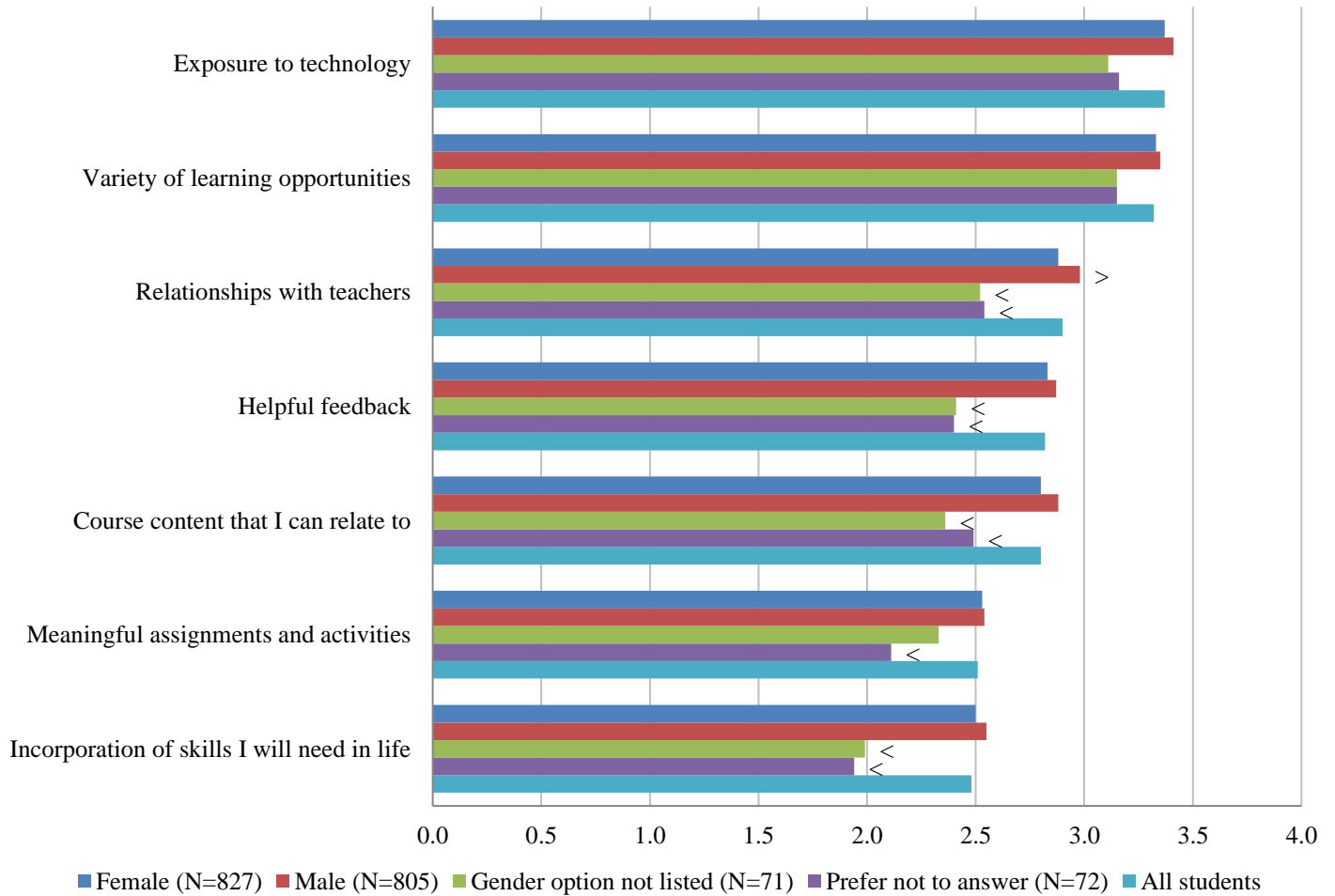
Percentage of students reporting concern (% who report moderate or extreme) by ethnicity



Rating areas of high school. When examining differences in students’ ratings of their high schools across multiple areas, there were statistically significant differences related to gender, race/ethnicity, and school. Symbols on graphs in this section indicate which items are statistically significantly different than the “all students” group. A “<” indicates the area for that student group was significantly lower than students overall, and a “>” indicates the area for that student group was significantly higher than students overall.

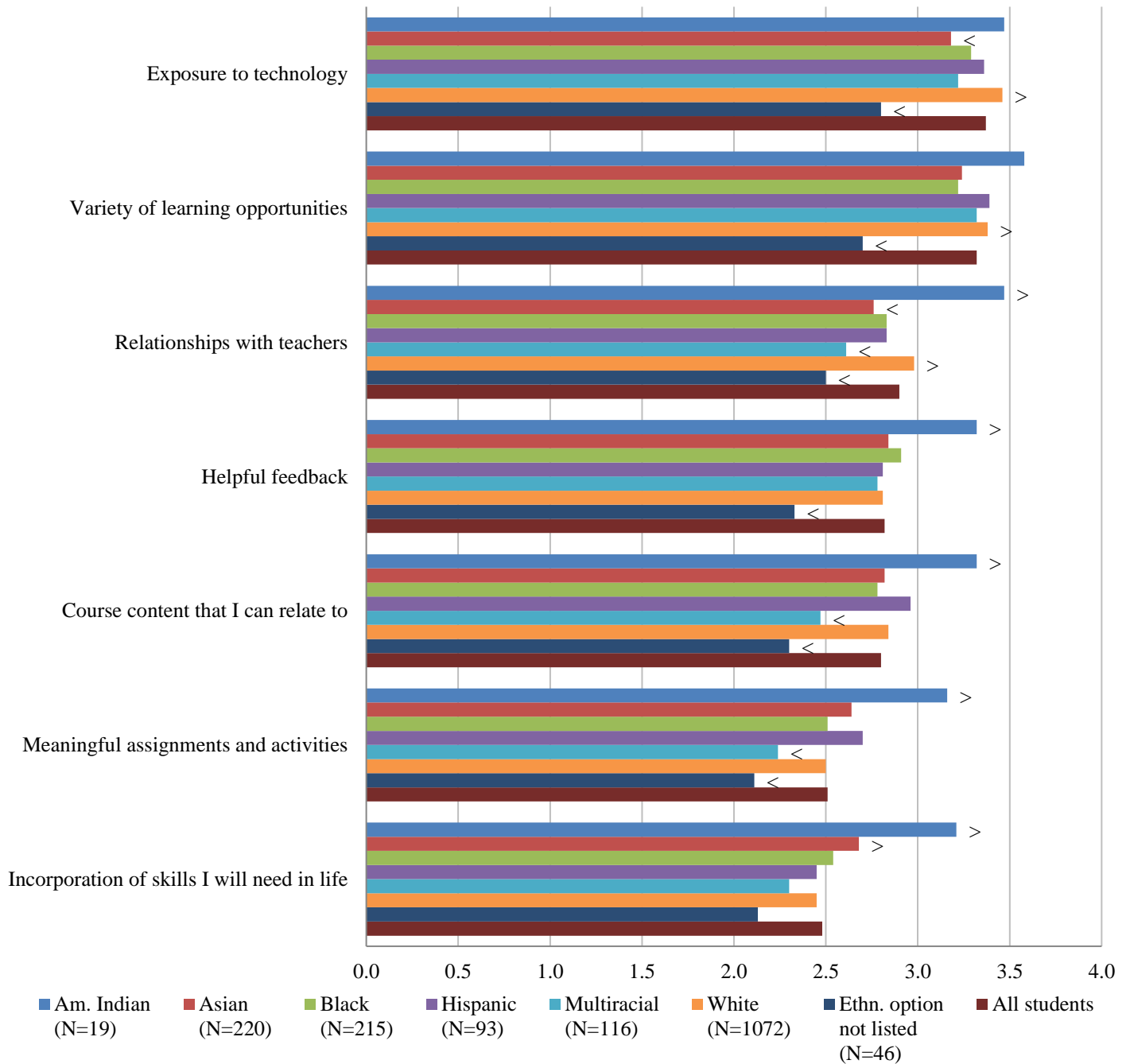
Regarding self-reported gender, students who identify with a gender option not listed or those who preferred not to answer reported significantly lower ratings of their school than students overall on 4 of 7 and 5 of 7 items, respectively.

Average letter grade assigned to high school (A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, D = 1, and F = 0) by gender



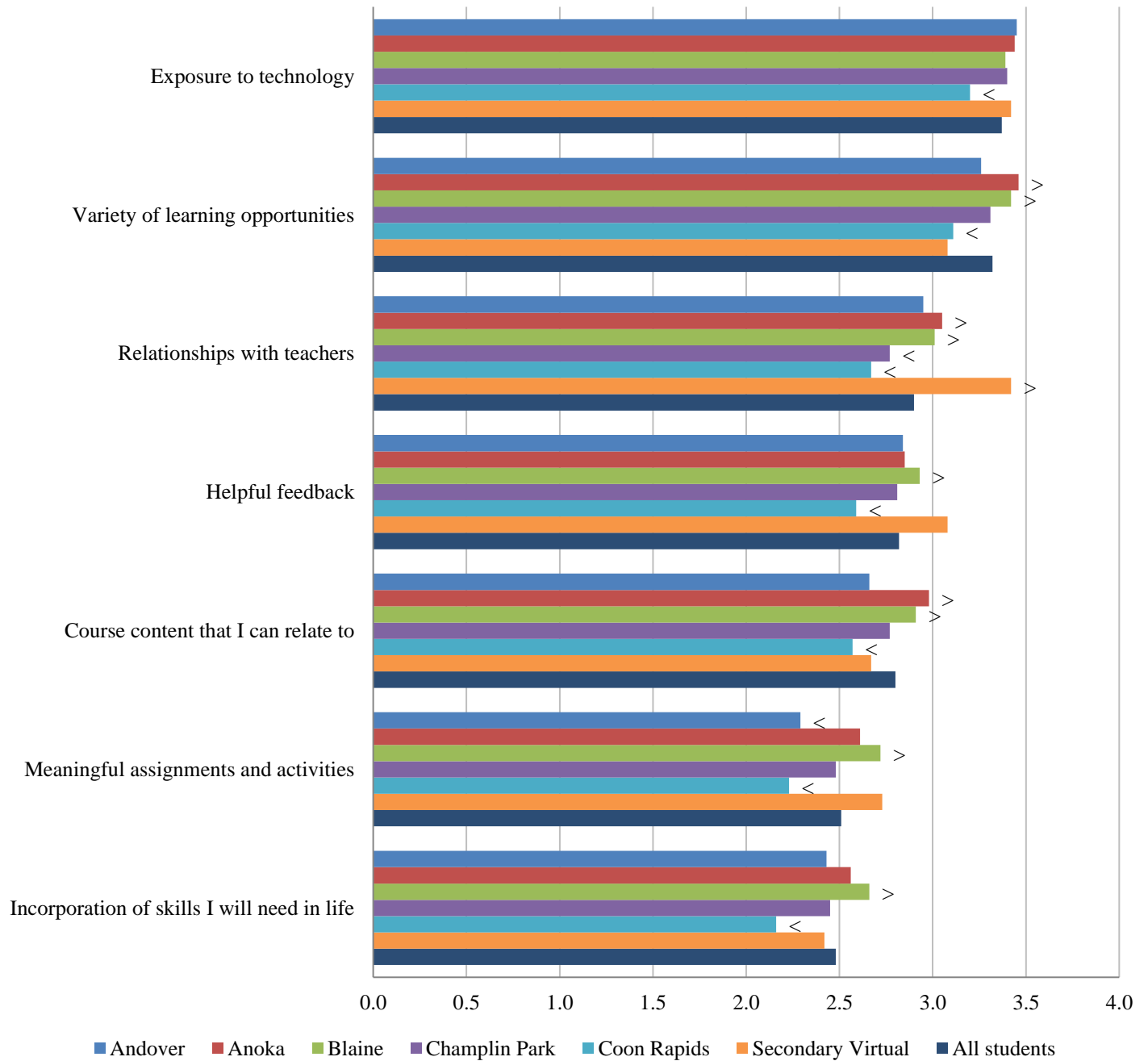
When examining responses by racial/ethnic background, students who identify with an ethnicity option not listed rated their school significantly lower (denoted with “<”) than students overall on 6 out of 7 items, while students who identify as American Indian rated their school significantly higher (denoted with “>”) than students overall on 5 of the 7 items.

Average letter grade assigned to high school (A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, D = 1, and F = 0) by ethnicity



When examining responses by school, students who attending Coon Rapids High School rated their school significantly lower in all seven areas (denoted with “<”) than students overall. Students who reported attending Blaine High School rated their school significantly higher (denoted with “>”) than students overall on 6 of the 7.

Average letter grade assigned to high school (A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, D = 1, and F = 0) by school



This report was generated by the Research, Evaluation and Testing department of the Anoka-Hennepin School District. For further information, please visit the RET website, www.ahschools.us/ret, or call (763) 506-1000 and request the RET department.