

# Virginia High School Safety Study: Descriptive Report of Survey Results from Ninth Grade Students and Teachers

Revised 7-13-08

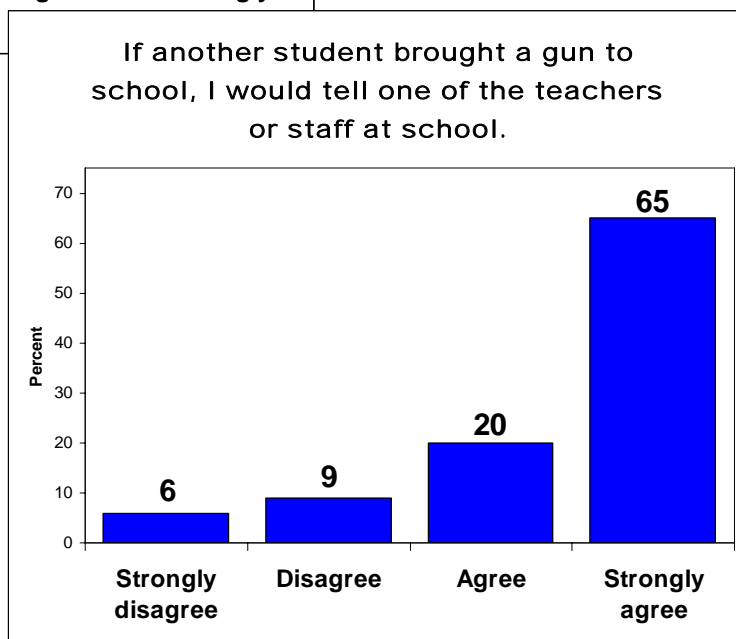
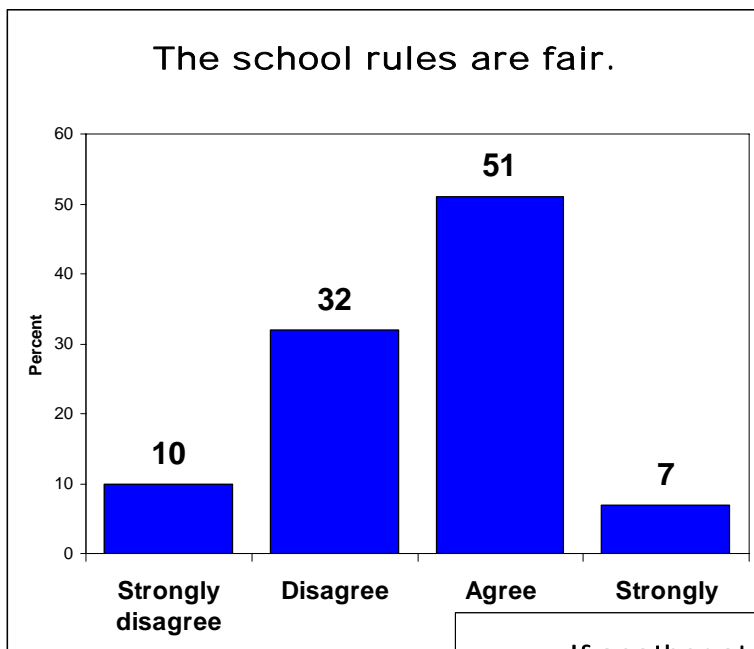


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## Executive Summary

*Chapter 1. Purpose of the Study.* The purpose of the Virginia High School Safety Study is to identify student safety, discipline, and support policies that best maintain a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning. The project is being completed by researchers at the Curry School of Education, University of Virginia, in collaboration with the Virginia Center for School Safety of the Department of Criminal Justice Services and the Virginia Department of Education. One component of this larger project was a school climate survey administered to ninth-grade students and teachers as part of Virginia's 2006-07 school safety audit program. This report provides a detailed review of survey results, item by item and scale by scale, but does not address the broader study questions that are still under investigation. This report does not review the research literature or theory regarding school climate, does not test formal hypotheses, or make recommendations for school practices. These matters will be addressed in additional reports.

*These survey results are limited to the responses of ninth-grade students and teachers, so they do not necessarily represent their whole school.* Surveys results will be integrated with additional data from the whole school in subsequent reports.

*Chapter 2. Study Methods.* Principals in each of Virginia's public high schools were asked to select approximately 25 students and 10 teachers using a series of random numbers provided by the researchers. Of 314 eligible schools, 296 schools submitted student surveys and 291 schools submitted teacher surveys. Approximately 7,400 ninth-grade students and 2,900 ninth-grade teachers completed the online survey during the spring of 2007.

The student survey consisted of standard scales designed to measure:

1. School structure (such as perceived fairness of rules, security measures, awareness of zero tolerance, daily enforcement of school rules);
2. Student support efforts (willingness to seek help from teachers, perceptions that the learning environment is supportive);
3. Student engagement (commitment to school, belief in school rules, trust in teacher authority, extracurricular involvement, perception that teachers encourage students to work hard, absence of aggressive attitudes);
4. Student victimization (various forms of victimization ranging from personal theft to being threatened, bullied, or assaulted; perceptions that there is a lot teasing and bullying at school, presence of gangs at school).

The teacher survey was similar to the student survey, but measured teacher perspectives on:

1. School structure (such as perceived fairness of rules, security measures, awareness of zero tolerance, daily enforcement of school rules);
2. Student support efforts (student willingness to seek help from teachers, teacher encouragement of help-seeking, and perceptions that administrators are supportive of teachers);
3. Student engagement (how much teachers encourage students to work hard); and

4. Teacher victimization (various forms of victimization ranging from personal theft to being threatened or assaulted; perceptions that there is a lot teasing and bullying at school, presence of gangs at school).

*Chapter 3. Student Survey Descriptive Results.* Most ninth-grade students regarded their school rules to be strictly enforced, but fair. They reported trust in their teachers and acceptance of their authority. They believed their friends do not support breaking school rules, with the exception of copying homework assignments. They disavowed aggressive attitudes. They expressed willingness to seek help from their teachers if a student brought a gun to school or talked about killing someone, but were much less willing to seek help for bullying. Only about half of the students said they like school. Most students said they found school boring, but nevertheless reported that they work hard and want to get good grades.

Students reported varying rates of victimization. About one in five students reported theft of personal property, one in four reported being threatened by a student, and one in eight reported being physically attacked.

Overall, about half of the students perceived that bullying was a problem at their school. About one in five students reported being bullied in the past 30 days, although fewer than half of those students reported telling someone that it happened. One in twelve reported being bullied at least once per week.

When asked about the general school climate, nearly three-fourths reported that students were teased about their physical appearance, about half reported teasing about sexual topics, and about one-third reported that students are often put down because of their race or ethnicity. However, about three-fourths also indicated that new students are made to feel welcome and that students from different neighborhoods get along. Over 80% agreed that “students at this school accept me for who I am.”

*Chapter 4. Teacher Survey Descriptive Results.* Most ninth-grade teachers regarded their school rules to be fair, but had mixed opinions about enforcement. Most teachers thought that students would be caught if they got in a fight or cut class, but were less confident about smoking or wandering in the hall. Only about half thought that school rules were rigorously enforced and most did not regard their dress codes as strict. Nevertheless, most teachers expressed confidence in how their administrators handle school discipline. They also agreed that administrators are supportive of teachers and treat them fairly.

The large majority of teachers reported an atmosphere in which students are free to seek help for problems such as bullying. Almost all teachers claimed that they personally encourage students to come to them for help. They consistently reported that their school fosters the social and emotional development of their students, provides instruction to prevent substance use, and has programs to resolve conflicts and provide character education. Most teachers also indicated that students are challenged to do thoughtful academic work.

Teachers reported low rates of victimization for problems such as physical attacks at school. Approximately 4% reported being physically attacked in some way, with about one quarter of

these attacks requiring medical attention. About one in five teachers reported verbal threats, two in five reported obscene remarks or gestures, and four out of five reported being spoken to in a rude or disrespectful manner by a student.

Overall, about half of the teachers regarded bullying as a problem at their school, although a large majority reported that new students are made to feel welcome and that students from different neighborhoods get along. More than half reported that students tease one another about physical appearance and sexual topics, but fewer than one-third reported that students are often put down because of their race or ethnicity.

*Chapter 5. Comparison of Student and Teacher Surveys.* There was modest agreement between ninth-grade students and teachers in their perceptions of school rules. Predictably, teachers were more likely than students to judge the rules to be fair and students were more likely than teachers to perceive the rules as strictly enforced. There was moderate agreement between students and teachers in their perception of how closely students are supervised at school, although teachers were more likely than students to think that students will be caught for various infractions.

There was high agreement between students and teachers in identifying what kinds of security measures (e.g., security cameras, security guards, and metal detectors) are in use at school. There was low agreement, however, in awareness of zero tolerance policies for infractions such as bringing a gun, BB gun, toy gun, drugs, or alcohol to school. Teachers reported slightly higher rates of zero tolerance policies than did students. The comparison of students and teachers highlights an obvious, but important feature of all surveys, which is that they represent the *perceptions* of the respondents. In future reports, student and teacher perceptions can be compared with data from other sources, such as principal reports on the school safety audit surveys.

*Chapter 6. Student Perceptions of School Climate Associated with Student Enrollment, Poverty, and Minority Status.* This chapter used student perceptions of school climate to compare schools on three demographic characteristics: (1) number of students enrolled; (2) percentage of students receiving a free or reduced price meal; and (3) percentage of minority students. These three demographic variables are only modestly intercorrelated: school size was correlated -.42 with the percentage of low income students and .35 with the percentage of minority students, and the percentage of low income students was correlated .31 with the percentage of minority students. These correlations may seem contrary to conventional expectations, but reflect the demographic composition of Virginia schools. For example Virginia has a number of small rural schools that enroll a large percentage of low-income white students. Additional analyses of the relationships among these demographic characteristics will be undertaken in a future report.

The correlations summarized below are statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ), but many are relatively small in magnitude. They indicate areas of concern in schools that are larger, have more low-income students, or a greater proportion of minority students. These correlations do not, however, indicate that these schools are unsafe or unhealthy environments or that these school characteristics caused the differences in school climate.

Although school size did not matter for most survey items, there were some differences that favored smaller schools. Ninth-grade students in larger schools perceived a less supportive school climate and were less willing to seek help from a teacher. They were also less likely to report involvement in extracurricular activities. Although there were no school size differences for most forms of victimization, students in larger schools were more likely to report theft of personal property and having a weapon pulled on them. They were also more likely to report gangs in the school and to indicate that those gangs have been involved in drug sales and violence at school. It should be noted that all the survey questions reflect student perceptions, and do not establish that gangs are present or not present in different schools.

In schools with more low-income students, ninth-grade students perceived less fairness in how rules are enforced and less support from adults in the school. Curiously, they reported less willingness to seek help from teachers, but more occasions when they did seek help or advice from a teacher. They reported less commitment to school and less trust in teachers, and described their friends as less respectful of school rules. They endorsed more aggressive attitudes and described more teasing and conflict in the school climate. They were more likely to report being bullied or physically attacked, and having personal property stolen.

In schools with higher proportions of minority (nonwhite) students, there was a student perception that teachers would be more likely to overlook a student coming late to class or making a sarcastic remark, and that students would be less likely to be caught cutting class. Students perceived teachers as less supportive, but nonetheless rated themselves as more committed to school. They described their friends as less likely to accept school rules and themselves as less trusting of teachers. They were less likely to report involvement in extracurricular activities.

Furthermore, students in schools with more minority students were less likely to express willingness to seek help for bullying. They were also less likely to seek help for a threat of violence such as a fellow student bringing a gun to school or talking about killing someone. However, students did report more occasions when they asked a teacher for help or advice about an academic matter or something that worried them.

Students from schools with higher proportions of minority students were more likely to endorse aggressive attitudes, to report teasing about clothing and physical appearance, and to indicate more conflict among students from different neighborhoods. They were more likely to report being bullied. They reported more incidents of being physically attacked and having a weapon pulled on them (although both were relatively rare events). Like students in larger schools, they were more likely to report gangs in the school and to report that those gangs have been involved in drug sales and violence at school.

#### *Chapter 7. Teacher Perceptions of School Climate Associated with Student Enrollment, Poverty, and Minority Status.*

This chapter examined how teacher perceptions of school climate varied across schools based on school enrollment, student income, and minority status. The correlations summarized below are statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ), but many are relatively small in magnitude. They indicate areas

of concern in schools that are larger, have more low income students, or a greater proportion of minority students, but do not necessarily mean that these schools are unsafe or unhealthy environments. These correlations do not demonstrate that these school characteristics caused the differences in school climate.

In larger schools, ninth-grade teachers reported more security measures, but less strict enforcement of school rules and less confidence in administrator handling of disciplinary matters. They expressed feeling less supported by the school administration. They reported more health and prevention programs, but perceived students as less willing to seek help. They were less likely to encourage students to come forward if they have information about a gun at school or a student who plans to hurt someone.

Ninth-grade teachers in larger schools were more likely to report victimization, particularly obscene remarks or gestures from a student. They perceived a less positive school climate, with more conflict among students from different neighborhoods and more students being put down because of their race or ethnicity. Like the ninth-grade students, teachers in larger schools were more likely to report gangs in the school and to report that those gangs have been involved in drug sales and violence at school.

Ninth-grade teachers in schools with higher proportions of low income students reported relatively few consistent differences from other teachers. They perceived more awareness of zero tolerance policies, and less emphasis on health and prevention programs in their schools. Teachers in schools with a higher proportion of students from low-income families experienced higher rates of victimization, particularly verbal threats, obscene remarks, serious physical attacks (although rare), and theft of personal property.

In schools with higher proportions of minority students, teachers reported less confidence that the school rules were fair and strictly enforced. They reported more security measures, but a less structured school environment, with students less likely to be caught cutting class, smoking, or getting into a fight. Teachers were more likely to overlook students coming late to class or making a sarcastic remark.

Teachers in schools with higher proportions of minority students consistently perceived less support from their administrators and described less confidence in how they handle disciplinary matters. They reported less emphasis on health and prevention programs

Furthermore, these teachers felt that students were less likely to express willingness to seek help for bullying or a threat of violence such as a student bringing a gun to school or talking about killing someone. Teachers perceived a consistently less favorable school climate, with more teasing and bullying, and gangs.

Teachers in schools with higher proportions of minority students experienced more victimization, including verbal threats, rude and obscene remarks, physical attacks, and theft of personal property.



*Chapter 8. Correlates of Student and Teacher Victimization.*

School safety is essential to maintaining an environment conducive to learning. In support of this view, the correlations of victimization rates with schoolwide SOL passing rates were examined. These are preliminary analyses using relatively simple correlational analyses that will be followed up with more complex analyses controlling for potentially confounding variables. These analyses are presented to illustrate the kinds of questions that can be investigated in subsequent phases of this project.

Schools with higher rates of teacher victimization had lower passing rates in Science, Mathematics, English, and History SOL exams, even after controlling for school size, the percentage of low income students, and the percentage of minority students in the school. Similarly, ninth-grade student victimization was correlated with lower passing rates in Mathematics and English SOL exams. It was surprising to observe these correlations since most of the students taking SOL exams were not ninth graders. It would appear the ninth grade victimization rates are sufficiently indicative of school climate trends that they are correlated with academic performance on the SOL exams. The statistical significance of the correlations were maintained even after using partial correlations to control for school size, the percentage of low income students, and the percentage of minority students in the school. These findings will be examined in more detail in future reports when additional SOL data are available.

One indication of how victimization rates could influence teaching and learning is that ninth-grade student victimization rates were correlated with lower student commitment to school and lower academic press (how much teachers press students to really think and do their best work).

It is important to identify school characteristics that increase victimization rates and in turn depress student achievement. Several findings are highlighted in this chapter:

- Victimization rates were higher in schools with gangs.
- Victimization rates were lower in schools with stricter dress codes.
- Victimization rates were lower in schools with higher teacher support of students.
- Victimization rates were lower in schools with higher administrative support of teachers.
- Victimization rates were lower in schools with higher daily structure (more likely enforcement of school rules).

It is important to note again that these findings are correlational; they do not establish a causal relationship between school climate and victimization levels. However, these findings do support the theory of authoritative school discipline that underlies this project and they indicate important directions for further study that will be examined in future reports.

*Chapter 9. Participant Reactions to the Survey.* The survey period began on April 1, 2007, about two weeks before the Virginia Tech shooting on April 16. Surveys completed before April 16 were compared to those completed after April 16. Overall, these analyses showed no large changes in survey results. The most notable changes were that after the shooting, students expressed greater willingness to seek help from teachers if a student brought a gun to school (increasing from 78% to 85%) or if a student talked about killing someone (increasing from 72% to 80%).

After the student and teacher surveys were completed, principals completed a brief online survey that invited them to write any comments they had about the study. All 87 comments are included in this report. Although many principals found that the survey process went smoothly and praised the project, others noted that it was time-consuming to select participants and they encountered technical difficulties with the online survey and video instructions. Many also questioned the timing of the survey because of the need to prepare for SOL exams.

Students and teachers also had an opportunity to write comments on their surveys. The vast majority chose to comment on school climate and safety conditions. For example, a teacher commented:

“I have taught for over 40 years, and I have never seen an administration try so hard to make both students and teachers feel appreciated. We pick students of the month on a regular basis and reward them for their academic and behavioral efforts. We sometimes get students who have never been successful at anything, and before they leave our school, they DO become successes. This makes our whole society safer.”

There were 1,593 student comments, including 58 that praised the survey (“The survey was an excellent idea for the school”) and 48 that criticized the survey (“This survey was stupid because no one is going to listen to it and change what the students want changed.”)

The most commonly expressed student concerns were complaints about school safety (179 comments), bullying (121), the fairness of school rules (112), weapons at school (68), the dress code (67), drugs (56), fighting (52), racism (47), and gangs (39).

There were many positive comments by students who felt safe and supported at school. Here are three examples:

1. “This is a great school, but all schools have flaws, all schools have bullies. Safety is not an issue here. I can go to school without worrying about my personal safety.”
2. “I feel very safe at this school and the teachers have all treated me well.”
3. “I think that our school is a very safe place to be and I wouldn’t pick any other place to be that I could be more safe.”

This Executive Summary presents a selected sample of survey results intended to give a broad overview of study findings. There are many additional results in the report that may suggest interpretations and conclusions not presented here. Readers are cautioned that the findings are descriptive and correlational, and do not necessarily indicate causal relationships. Moreover, this is a study in progress, with additional data analyses and reports to come.

## Chapter 1

### Study Purpose

The purpose of the Virginia High School Safety Study is to identify student safety, discipline, and support policies that best maintain a safe and orderly school environment conducive to learning. This report presents results from the survey of ninth-grade students and teachers that was conducted as part of this larger study.

#### Why study school safety?

National concern over school violence has stimulated widespread changes in school policies and practices, but how do we know whether these changes are effective in reducing violent and disruptive behavior? Some efforts—such as zero tolerance discipline policies—are intended to create a more structured school environment, while other efforts concentrate on building supportive relationships with students. Does zero tolerance make schools safer? Do student support efforts improve student engagement in school? More broadly, what is the right balance of structure and support to maintain a safe and orderly school environment? The Virginia High School Safety Study is designed to provide some answers to these questions.

State and national trends indicate that violence in schools is not increasing, but decreasing, and that schools continue to be one of the safest places for young people (Cornell, 2006). Nevertheless, school authorities must continuously monitor the school climate and look for ways to maintain and improve a safe school environment. Moreover, even though Virginia schools are safe, there is room for improvement. According to state crime and discipline reports, in 2004-05, there were 124,543 discipline violations in the high school grades (9-12). This included 5,204 fights, 2,156 assaults, 2,367 threats, 901 weapons incidents, and 23,883 cases of disorderly conduct, as well as other types of offenses. The more serious violations resulted in 89,058 short term suspensions, 2,491 long-term suspensions, and 2,056 expulsions. Notably, ninth grade is the peak year for high school student aggression: ninth graders received 45% of these disciplinary consequences, compared to 25% for 10<sup>th</sup> grade, 16% for 11<sup>th</sup> grade, and 13% for 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. Moreover, Virginia's expulsion rate of .169 per thousand students was among the top five in the nation (National Center for Education Statistics, 2004).

#### What are the main study questions?

The Virginia High School Safety Study is designed to investigate three main questions:

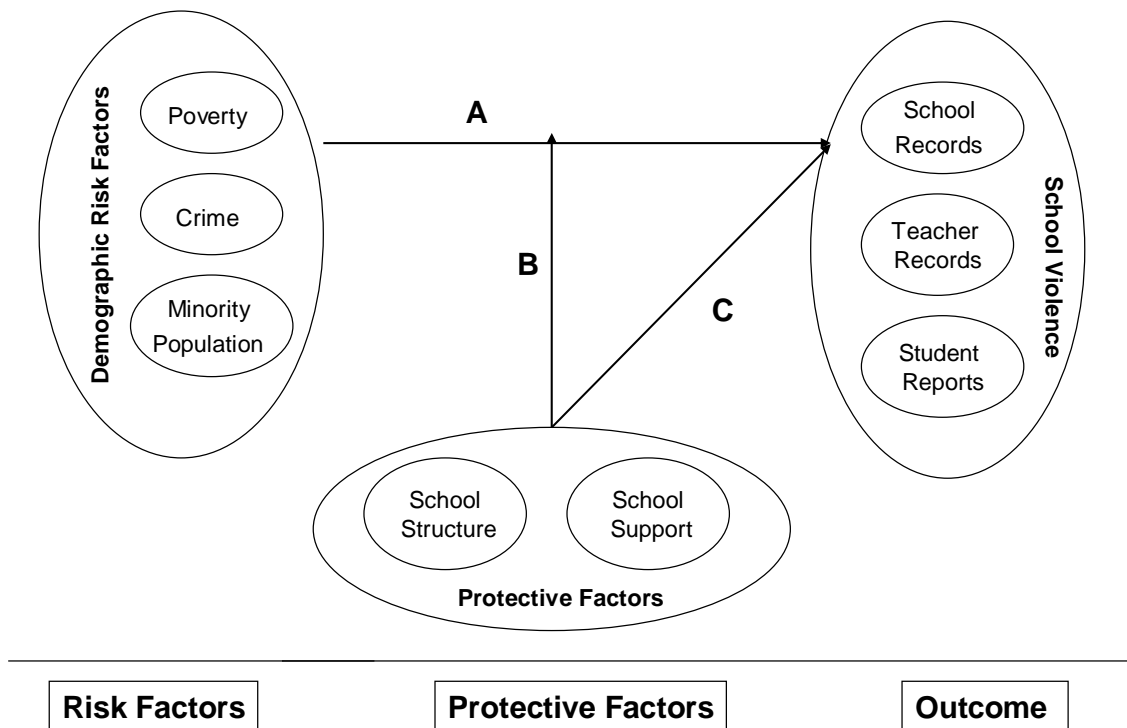
1. How much structure and support are optimal to prevent youth violence in schools?
2. How does neighborhood crime and poverty affect school crime and disorder?
3. Are there school structure and support practices that reduce disproportionate punishment of minority students?

The investigation of these questions will require the collection of data from five sources:

1. To measure school discipline violations and rates of suspension and expulsion, we are reviewing data from the annual state discipline reports;

2. To measure school structure and support, we are collecting data from the Virginia School Safety Audits for 2006-07. These audits typically involve a survey of school principals, but this year we augmented the procedure with a survey of ninth-grade students and teachers (which is the subject of this report);
3. To measure community poverty, we are mapping U.S. census data onto GIS maps for each high school district;
4. To measure community crime, we are mapping crime data onto GIS maps for each high school district, extracted from the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) that is used by Virginia law enforcement agencies;
5. To measure academic achievement, we are using SOL test results from the Virginia Department of Education.

The collection and analysis of data from these five sources is well under way, but this report is confined to presenting descriptive results from the survey of ninth-grade students and teachers that was included in the 2006-07 school safety audits. When data collection is complete, the study will test a structural equation model depicted in the figure below:



**What questions are addressed in this report?**

This report is prepared at the request of the Virginia Department of Education in order to provide a summary of results from the surveys of ninth-grade students and teachers. Therefore, it addresses the following questions regarding Virginia's ninth-grade students:

1. **Structure.** How do Virginia's ninth-grade students perceive the rules, disciplinary standards, and security practices that make up the structure of the school climate?
2. **Support.** How do ninth grade-students perceive the school's efforts to support students by encouraging students to work hard and seek help when they need it?
3. **Engagement.** How engaged in learning and school activities are Virginia's ninth-grade students?
4. **Victim experiences.** How frequently are ninth-grade students victimized by peers and how much bullying and teasing do they perceive in the school?

The survey of teachers addresses a similar set of questions:

5. **Structure.** How do Virginia's ninth-grade teachers perceive the rules, disciplinary standards, and security practices that make up the structure of the school climate?
6. **Support.** How do ninth-grade teachers perceive the school's efforts to support students by encouraging students to work hard and seek help when they need it?
7. **Victim experiences.** How frequently are ninth-grade teachers victimized by students and how much bullying and teasing do they perceive in the school?

To address the next series of questions, the individual survey results were aggregated at the school level in order provide a set of student-perceived measures of the school climate for each school and a set of teacher-perceived measures of the school climate for each school. The average score for students at the same school was used as a proxy or indicator of school climate (as perceived by ninth graders) and the average score for teachers at the same school was used as an indicator of school climate (as perceived by ninth-grade teachers).

School climate consisted of measures of school structure, student support, student engagement, and victim experiences. Some scales were completed by both students and teachers, while other scales were specific to one group. These school-level measures were used to address an additional set of questions:

8. **Student-Teacher agreement.** How much agreement is there between student and teacher perceptions of the school climate?
9. **Effect of school demographics on student perceptions.** How do student perceptions of school climate differ as a function of school enrollment, the percentage of low income students in the school, and the percentage of minority students in the school?

10. **Effect of school demographics on teacher perceptions.** How do teacher perceptions of school climate differ as a function of school enrollment, the percentage of low income students in the school, and the percentage of minority students in the school?

Finally, this report includes a series of questions examining the relationship of school safety to other dimensions of the school.

11. **Effects of victimization on academic performance.** How are high rates of victimization correlated with student achievement and engagement in learning?
12. **Effects of school characteristics on victimization.** How are school characteristics such as strict enforcement of school rules correlated with victimization??

### **Caveats**

There are two important limitations to the survey results presented in this report. First, all of the survey results are based on descriptive statistics and correlations, and therefore do not establish causal relationships. Readers are cautioned not to draw firm conclusions about the direction of causal effects based on the limited evidence provided in this study.

Second, *these survey results are limited to the responses of ninth-grade students and teachers and do not necessarily represent the whole school.* It is likely that students in higher grades would have a more mature perspective and would give somewhat different answers to many of the survey questions. However, the purpose of these analyses is to provide a common point of comparison across schools, not to provide an absolute measure of each school. Ninth grade was chosen because ninth grade is the first year of high school and ninth-grade students typically have a much higher rate of discipline problems than students in other grades. To some extent, ninth-graders might be regarded as the canary in the coal mine—a particularly vulnerable group in the high school setting that should be monitored closely. Furthermore, by gathering information from ninth-grade students, it will be useful to track the future achievement, discipline record, and graduate rate of this cohort in subsequent years. If this survey is repeated in future years, it would be desirable to obtain samples from each grade level.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Study Methods**

#### **Preparation for the Study**

In planning this study, the researchers placed a high priority on minimizing the burden on school administrators and the disruption of instructional time for students. Initially, three decisions were made in consultation with our collaborators in the Department of Education and Department of Criminal Justice Services:

- 1) The survey would be administered on-line, to minimize paperwork for school staff.
- 2) The survey would be administered to a small number of students in a single grade, to avoid schoolwide disruption of student instruction.
- 3) The survey would be designed for administration within a standard 50-minute period, to minimize student time out of class.

In order to notify schools about the survey, the following steps were undertaken:

- 1) As soon as the project was approved (October 2006), the principal investigator (Dr. Cornell) consulted with representatives from the Department of Education and Department of Criminal Justice Services to plan the survey portion of the study.
- 2) Information was provided to two professional organizations (Virginia Association of School Superintendents and Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals) and was published in their newsletters.
- 3) Detailed information was posted on the websites of the University of Virginia Youth Violence Project and the Virginia Center for School Safety of the Department of Criminal Justice Services.
- 4) Dr. Cornell sought meetings with each regional superintendent's group. Presentations were made to seven regional groups in December and January. Feedback from these presentations was used to make modifications to the study.
- 5) An additional meeting was held with State Superintendent Dr. Cannaday and a group of superintendents to review study methods and procedures for reporting results. The meeting resulted in additional modifications to study procedures.
- 6) Dr. Cannaday issued a superintendent's memo advising schools about the study.

To provide schools with instructions for the survey portion of the study, a packet of materials was prepared for each school. The packet included:

- 1) Detailed written instructions for selecting participants and administering the survey;
- 2) Paper copies of the survey and forms for carrying out the study;
- 3) Two copies of a DVD containing separate video instructions for principals, students, and teachers, as well as electronic copies of all forms.

The packet of materials was sent by U.S. postal mail to each school principal. Researchers then contacted the principals by email and telephone to verify that the packet had been received. Although no packets were returned by the U.S. postal service as undeliverable, there were 41

schools in which school authorities reported that they did not receive a packet. The correct name and address was verified and a second packet was sent. In 7 cases, a third packet was mailed. Copies of the materials were also posted on the Internet.

The timetable for the survey was developed in collaboration with the Department of Education and after consulting with a variety of school administrators. School principals were notified of the study by the Superintendents Memo 24 of January 26, 2007. Instruction packets were mailed to schools on March 4, 2007. In order to provide schools with flexibility in conducting the survey, they were asked to identify a one-week period in April when their students and teachers would complete the study. Many schools were unable to conduct the study within this timeframe, and the study period was extended for these schools. The final school to participate in the study completed its surveying in June.

After schools completed student and teacher surveys, principals were required to submit a brief online report indicating how many students and teachers were invited to participate, how many declined, and how many ultimately participated. The collection of school principal surveys was completed in August.

Throughout the data collection period, researchers provided telephone and email consultation with each school to answer questions about survey procedures and remained in contact with school authorities until the survey process was completed. Staff of the Virginia Center for School Safety also devoted extensive time to consulting with school authorities and encouraging their participation.

### **School Eligibility and Participation**

Three hundred and fourteen public high schools in the state of Virginia were eligible for participation in this study. Eligible schools had to include grades 9-12, provide the opportunity to earn a high school diploma, and serve a majority of students under the age of 18. Educational programs were not eligible if they were housed in a juvenile detention facility, if students attended for less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  the school day, or if the majority of the student population had a handicapping condition that would prevent them from being able to take the survey. Several high schools that served only grades 10-12 were not eligible for the study.

The student and teacher surveys were administered as part of the annual school safety audits required of all public schools in Virginia. Virginia code § 22.1-279.8 defines the safety audit as “a written assessment of the safety conditions in each public school to (i) identify and, if necessary, develop solutions for physical safety concerns, including building security issues and (ii) identify and evaluate any patterns of student safety concerns occurring on school property or at school-sponsored events. Solutions and responses shall include recommendations for structural adjustments, changes in school safety procedures, and revisions to the school board's standards for student conduct.”

Responsibility for the content and format of the school safety audit is assigned to the Virginia Center for School Safety. According to §22.1-279.8, “B. The Virginia Center for School Safety shall develop a list of items to be reviewed and evaluated in the school safety audits required by



this section. . . . The Virginia Center for School Safety shall prescribe a standardized report format for school safety audits, additional reporting criteria, and procedures for report submission, which may include instructions for electronic submission.”

Because all school divisions are mandated to complete the school safety audit, all schools were expected to participate in the student and teacher surveys. A number of school principals requested clarification of this requirement, and were referred to the Virginia Center for School Safety. All school authorities were assured that participation in the student and teachers surveys was not voluntary for schools and was necessary in order to fulfill the requirement for a school safety audit during the 2006-07 school year. School authorities were further advised by the Center for School Safety that the identities of nonparticipating schools could not be held in confidence because participation in the school safety audit was a matter of public record. Of the 314 eligible high schools, 296 (94%) submitted student surveys, 291 (93%) submitted teacher surveys, and 276 (88%) submitted both teacher and student surveys. The names of nonparticipating schools were made available to the Department of Education and the Virginia Center for School Safety.

The only noteworthy difference between participating and non-participating schools was that the non-participating schools tended to be smaller in enrollment, with an average 9<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment of 250 students and a range of 9 to 633 students.

**Participating Schools**

Participating schools came from all 8 geographical regions in Virginia. The table below presents a breakdown of counties in each region based on their classification by the U.S. Census Bureau as rural areas, Metropolitan Statistical Areas, or Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Areas.

<b>Region</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Metropolitan Statistical Area</b>	<b>Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area</b>
1	0 (0%)	15 (100%)	0 (0%)
2	4 (27%)	10 (73%)	0 (0%)
3	11 (64%)	3 (18%)	3 (18%)
4	5 (26%)	2 (11%)	12 (63%)
5	8 (40%)	12 (60 %)	0 0 (0%)
6	9 (60%)	6 (40%)	0 0 (0%)
7	16 (84%)	3 (16%)	0 0 (0%)
8	12 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 0 (0%)

Note: Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Areas (CMSA) include 1 million residents or more in their most densely populated center.

*Ninth-grade enrollment for participating schools.*

Enrollment	Number of schools	Percentage of sample
<25 students	1	<1%
25-99	38	12%
100-299	94	32%
300-499	83	28%
≥500	82	28%

Schools differed substantially in the percentage of minority student enrollment, as displayed in the table below.

*Percentage of minority students in whole school enrollment.*

Percent Minority Enrollment	Number of schools	Percentage of sample
<10% minority students	48	18
11-30%	79	28
31-50%	59	22
51-70%	47	17
71-90%	26	10
>90%	14	5

*Number of surveys per school.* A total of 25 student surveys and 10 teacher surveys were requested from each school, although some schools chose to have more participants. Schools with fewer than 25 ninth-grade students or 10 ninth-grade teachers were asked to submit as many surveys as possible. Participating schools submitted an average of 25 (range 1-86) student surveys and 10 (1-24) teacher surveys. The table below displays the number of student and teacher surveys submitted across schools. For example, four schools submitted 1-5 student surveys and 20 schools submitted 1-5 teacher surveys. The largest number of schools submitted 21-25 student surveys (157 schools) and 6-10 teacher surveys (177 schools).

*Number of schools submitting surveys*

Number of Surveys per School	Number of Schools	
	Student Surveys	Teacher Surveys
1-5	4	20
6-10	3	177
11-15	7	79
16-20	12	16
21-25	157	--
26-30	94	--
≥31	17	--

## Student Sample

The sample was selected from the population of students identified by their school as ninth-grade students. Ninth-grade students were not included in the study if (1) they did not read English well enough to complete the survey; (2) they had cognitive limitations (e.g., mental retardation) that prevented them from comprehending the survey; or (3) they had physical limitations that prevented them from completing the survey.

Principals were sent detailed instructions for selecting a random sample of ninth-grade students and teachers to complete the survey (see appendix for a copy of the instructions). Each school was supplied with a form containing a list of random numbers that were to be matched with an alphabetized list of ninth-grade students. For example, if the first random number on the list was 12, then the twelfth student on the alphabetized list of ninth-grade students would be selected. The list of random numbers was generated individually for each school, based on its fall 2006 ninth-grade enrollment.

Each school was asked to send the parents of identified students a standard letter explaining the purpose of the study and notifying them that their child was selected by random number to complete an anonymous online survey about school safety. Because parents could decline their child's participation (by contacting the school), principals were asked to contact 50 students in order to have at least 25 students complete the survey. At the conclusion of the survey, principals were asked to complete an online form indicating how many students were identified for the study, how many parents declined, how many students were unable to participate for other reasons, and finally, how many students completed the survey.

According to reports received from 291 principals, there were 112 parents who declined to allow their children to participate and 325 students who declined to participate. As indicated in the table below, there were 641 students who were absent from school when the survey was administered, 105 who were suspended, and 142 who had moved or transferred. There were 68 who were unable to take the survey for language reasons and 590 who were unable to take the survey for other reasons (such as a field trip, SOL exam preparation, or a handicapping condition that prevented the student from taking the survey). Overall, 1,983 alternate students had to be invited to participate in the study, with each school contacting an average of 6.8 alternate students.

### *Students who did not participate in the survey*

Reports from 291 principals	Students
Parents declined	112
Students declined	325
Students absent due to illness	641
Students absent due to suspension	105
Student had moved or transferred	142
Language barrier prevented student from taking survey	68
Other (absent due to field trip, alternative placement, homebound instruction, or SOL exam preparation/disability made student ineligible)	590

Students completed the survey anonymously, reporting only their age, grade, race, and school. Students selected the name of their school from a scroll-down list and then clicked on the school name before proceeding to the next question. After the surveying began, it was evident that some students did not correctly identify the name of their school. It is likely that some students made an error in scrolling down the list and accidentally clicked on the wrong school name. It is also possible that some students intentionally clicked on the wrong school name.

Fortunately, the IP address and the date of survey completion were automatically documented as part of the survey record. As a result, the school name reported by each student was checked against the IP address (a unique number assigned to each computer operating on the Internet) for the computer used to complete the survey. Researchers verified the school division which owned the IP address and the known dates the school was using to complete the survey. In this way, 189 surveys with the wrong school name were identified and corrected. The origin of 5 student surveys could not be determined and were dropped from the analysis.

The same verification process was used to correct 23 teacher surveys and 4 online reports completed by principals. The origin of 8 teacher surveys could not be determined. All principal reports were connected with the correct school.

*Sample characteristics.* The final sample consisted of 7,318 9<sup>th</sup> grade students who completed surveys. Of these students, 49% were girls and 51% were boys. The student sample was 63 % White/Caucasian, 23% Black/African American, 5% Latino/Hispanic, 3% Asian American, 1% American Indian, and 5% Other. This distribution does not differ substantially from the high school population described in a 2005 survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, which reported 68% Caucasian, 20% African American, 6% Hispanic, 5% Asian American, <1% American Indian, and <2% Other.

The mean age of student participants was 14.8, with a range of 12 to 17 years. See table below for the distribution of student ages.

*Age distribution for participating students*

	12	13	14	15	16	17
Number of Students	1	12	2272	4175	790	181
Percentage of Sample	<1%	<1%	31%	56%	11%	2%

**Teacher Sample**

The teacher sample was selected by a procedure similar to the student sample. Principals received a random number list to use in selecting ninth-grade teachers from their alphabetized list of teachers. For purposes of this study, a ninth-grade teacher was defined as any teacher who had at least two classes filled with predominantly ninth-grade students at the time of survey administration.

Principals identified approximately 20 teachers in order to gain a sample of 10 teachers per school. Schools with fewer than ten ninth-grade teachers were encouraged to have all available

ninth-grade teachers complete the survey. Teachers were contacted by letter and invited to participate in the study. Teachers who declined to participate were replaced by the next teacher identified on the random number list.

According to reports received from 291 principals, there were 163 teachers who declined to participate, 140 who were absent the week of administration, and another 162 who, for unknown reasons, did not complete the survey.

*Sample characteristics.* Of the 2,922 teachers who completed the survey, 64% were female and 36% were male. Eighty-three percent of the teachers were White, 12% were African-American, 2% were Latino, 1% were Asian-American, 1% were American Indian and 1% were Other. The teachers reported a wide range of teaching experience, as shown in the table below.

*Years of experience among participating teachers (2919 teachers reporting)*

	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	≥16 years
Number of teachers	1056	613	365	885
Percentage of sample	36%	21%	13%	30%

## Student Survey Measures

### *Measures of school structure*

1. *Experience of School Rules* is a 7-item scale that measures perceptions of the school rules as fair and strictly enforced. This scale has been used in the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005).
2. *Security Measures* is an index of 9 security measures (e.g., metal detectors, security cameras) that students are asked to identify as present or absent at their school. These items are taken from the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005)
3. The *Awareness of Zero Tolerance Policies* index asks students whether the school has zero tolerance (automatic expulsion or lengthy suspension) for any of 10 different infractions, ranging from bringing a gun to school to fighting at school.
4. In order to gauge out-of-class time, the *Time out of Class* questions ask students how much time they have for lunch, how many minutes they have to change classes, and how many times they change class in a typical day. These items were suggested for the survey by a school principal.
5. The *Daily Structure* scale (Cornell, 2006) consists of 6 items devised for this study to measure student perceptions of how strictly rules were enforced for common problems such as cutting class, coming late to class, smoking, fighting, and speaking sarcastically to a teacher.

*Measures of student support efforts*

6. *Help-seeking* is an 8-item scale from the School Climate Bullying Survey (Cornell & Sheras, 2003) designed to measure student willingness to seek help from school staff members for bullying and threats of violence.

7. *Help-seeking Behavior* is a 4-item scale designed for this study to measure how often students actually sought help from a teacher for academic or non-academic concerns (Eliot, 2006).

8. *Learning/Working Environment* is an 8-item scale used to measure how much students perceive that adults in their school care about all students and treat them fairly (Austin & Duerr, 2005).

*Measures of student engagement*

9. *Commitment to school* is a 9-item scale developed to measure how much a student likes school and tries hard to do well (Thornberry, Lizotte, Krohn, Farnworth, Jang, 1991).

10. The *Belief in School Rules* index consists of 16 items asking whether the student's friends support breaking various rules such as cheating on tests, getting into fights, and skipping school (Stewart, 2003). This scale indirectly measures the student's acceptance of school rules without asking the student to make an admission of guilt.

11. The *Aggressive Attitudes* scale consists of 6 items measuring the student's endorsement of beliefs and attitudes that support aggressive behavior, such as the conviction that if you fight, others will look up to you and the attitude that bullying and hitting others is enjoyable. This scale was taken from the School Climate Bullying Survey (Cornell & Sheras, 2003).

12. The *Trust in Teacher Authority* scale asks 5 questions about the student's respect for the authority of their teachers (Gregory, 2005).

13. The *School Involvement* index surveys students about their involvement in various extracurricular activities, ranging from athletic teams to school government. This list is taken from the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005).

14. The *Academic Press* scale (Midgley et al., 2000) contains 6 items measuring how much teachers press the student to study hard and do challenging work.

*Measures of student victimization.*

15. The *Victimization* index consists of 7 forms of victimization ranging from theft of personal property to being physically attacked that have been used in previous studies (Gottfredson, 1999). Because the 7 items cover such a wide range, this index was subdivided into *Major Victimization* (being physically attacked or having a weapon pulled on you) and *Minor Victimization* (damage or theft of personal property, receiving obscene remarks or being threatened by a student).

16. The *Bullying Climate* scale consists of 7 items describing the extent of teasing and bullying that takes place at school. These items are taken from the Bullying School Climate Bullying Survey (Cornell & Sheras, 2003).
17. The *Bullying Index* asks students how frequently they have been victims of various forms of bullying. These 4 items are taken from the Bullying School Climate Bullying Survey (Cornell & Sheras, 2003).
18. The *Bully Reporting* questions ask students whether they have told anyone that they were bullied in the past 30 days.
19. The *Gang* questions ask students whether there are gangs at their school, and if so, whether those gangs have been involved in violence and drug sales at school in the past six months.
20. The *Validity* questions ask students whether they are being honest and telling the truth on the survey. These questions help identify a small group of students who answer the survey randomly or who admit making inappropriate responses.

## **Teacher Survey Measures**

### *Measures of school structure*

1. *Experience of School Rules* is a 7-item scale that measures perceptions of the school rules as fair and strictly enforced. This scale has been used in the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005).
2. *Security Measures* is an index of 9 security measures (e.g., metal detectors, security cameras) that teachers are asked to identify as present or absent at their school. These items are taken from the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005)
3. The *Awareness of Zero Tolerance Policies* index asks teachers whether the school has zero tolerance (automatic expulsion or lengthy suspension) for any of 10 different infractions, ranging from bringing a gun to school to fighting at school.
4. In order to gauge out-of-class time, the *Time out of Class* questions ask teachers how much time students have for lunch, how many minutes they have to change classes, and how many times they change class in a typical day. These items were suggested for the survey by a school principal.
5. The *Daily Structure* scale (Cornell, 2006) consists of 6 items devised for this study to measure teacher perceptions of how strictly rules were enforced for common problems such as cutting class, coming late to class, smoking, fighting, and speaking sarcastically to a teacher

*Measures of student support*

6. *Help-seeking* is a 6-item scale from the School Climate Bullying Survey (Cornell & Sheras, 2003) designed to measure teacher perceptions of student willingness to seek help from school staff members for bullying and threats of violence.

7. *Learning/Working Environment* is an 8-item scale that was adapted for this study to measure how much teachers perceive that administrators in their school care about all teachers and treat them fairly (Austin & Duerr, 2005).

8. The *Encouragement of help seeking* scale is a 7-item scale developed for this study designed to measure the frequency with which teachers encourage students to seek help from school staff for a variety of problems (Eliot, 2006).

*Measures of student engagement*

9. The *Academic Press* scale (Midgley et al., 2000) contains 6 items measuring how much teachers press the student to study hard and do challenging work

*Measures of teacher victimization*

10. The *Victimization* index consists of 8 forms of victimization ranging from theft of personal property to being physically attacked that have been used in previous studies (Gottfredson, 1999). Because the 8 items cover such a wide range, this index was subdivided into *Major Victimization* (being physically attacked or having a weapon pulled on you) and *Minor Victimization* (damage or theft of personal property, receiving obscene remarks or being threatened by a student).

11. The *Bullying Climate* scale consists of 7 items describing the extent of teasing and bullying that takes place at school. These items are taken from the Bullying School Climate Bullying Survey (Cornell & Sheras, 2003).

12. The *Gang* questions ask teachers whether there are gangs at their school, and if so, whether those gangs have been involved in violence and drug sales at school in the past six months.

**Survey Procedure**

An instructional video was sent to all schools with separate instructions for teachers and students. The purpose of the video was to give all students and teachers a common understanding of the survey and to encourage their participation. The video for students contained two parts: (1) an explanation of the purpose of the study presented by Miss Virginia 2006, Adrianna Sgarlata; and (2) a short dramatization of the survey procedure presented by a group of high school drama students. The video for teachers had the same introduction by Miss Virginia, but a different dramatization by a group of high school drama students and teachers.



Principals were asked to administer the survey to groups of students seated at individual computers in a quiet room supervised by a staff member. Students were to begin by viewing the instructional video, and then use their web browser to view the survey website and complete the survey. Teachers were asked to self-administer the survey on any school computer within the same week that students took the survey. Teachers were to watch the instructional video and then complete the survey.

### **Lessons Learned to Improve Future Surveys**

- 1. Choice of sample.** Many school superintendents expressed concern about the choice of ninth-grade students for the survey. Ninth graders are not representative of the whole student body, they are less mature than the other students, and they include a disproportionate number of students who failed to advance beyond ninth grade in previous years. Unfortunately, this advice was received too late to expand the survey, but in future years it would be desirable to survey all grades. Furthermore, some superintendents were concerned that a sample of just 25 students would not be sufficient to characterize their school. Although there are statistical reasons why a sample of 25 per school is sufficient for the purposes of this study, it would be desirable to survey a larger sample of students, or survey all available students, in future surveys.
- 2. Use of DVDs to convey video instructions.** A number of schools found it difficult to use a DVD to present video instructions to students and teachers. Some school personnel were unfamiliar with the distinction between a CD and DVD, and were not prepared to make copies of the DVD video available to groups of students for viewing prior to taking the survey. Some principals thought that the DVD was defective, although we were not able to find a single defective DVD among those that were returned to us. In almost every case, we were able to resolve the problem over the telephone with the technology advisor for the school. In future studies, it might be preferable to place the video on the web for downloading and viewing. The most significant problem with this approach is that school computers might not be well-equipped to download high quality videos.
- 3. Identification of schools.** Survey participants identified their school by clicking on the name of their school from a drop-down list of schools. This proved to be prone to error, as many students, as well as some teachers and principals, clicked on the wrong school. Fortunately, the correct school identity could be determined by checking the IP address for the computer used to take the survey, but this is a time consuming process. Another approach would be to assign each school a unique code number and require participants to write in the code number for their school in order to take the survey. The code numbers would have to be sufficiently diverse (e.g., not in consecutive order) that students could not readily type in a number that happened to correspond to a different school.
- 4. Use of commercial survey company.** The commercial survey company Survey Monkey was used to administer the online survey. Although Survey Monkey has some attractive features and it is easy to construct a survey, there were a number of technical problems. Most notably, the survey went offline several times during the administration period. This was inconvenient for schools that had scheduled students to take the survey and then found that the survey was not

available. Moreover, Survey Monkey relies almost entirely on email correspondence and the inability to speak with a live consultant made it difficult to resolve problems.

5. **Special delivery of packets.** Many principals reported that they did not receive the instruction packet, although all of the addresses were confirmed as correct and no packets were returned by the U.S. Postal Service as undeliverable. In many cases, school personnel reported finding that the packet had been received, but misplaced. In some cases, two and even three packets were mailed. In future surveys, it may be desirable to send the packets by special delivery to raise awareness of their arrival and to obtain a signature to confirm their receipt.

6. **Survey administration schedule.** Many school principals complained that the survey should not be administered in April because it interfered with preparation for SOL testing. In future years, it may be preferable to administer the survey in February or March.

### Chapter 3 Student Survey Descriptive Results

#### Measures of School Structure

Experience of school rules scale

Thinking about your school over the last 6 months, would you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following...	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Agree/ Strongly Agree
Everyone knows the school rules for student conduct.	33	67
The school rules are fair.	42	58
The punishment for breaking school rules is the same no matter who you are.	39	61
The school rules are strictly enforced.	30	70
If a school rule is broken, students know what kind of punishment will follow.	32	68
We have a strict dress code at school.	48	52
If a student breaks the rules at this school, he or she will be punished.	16	84

Source: School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005)

Overall, most students agree or strongly agree that the school rules are known by everyone (67%). In addition, most students agree or strongly agree that the school rules are strictly enforced (70%) and if a student breaks the rules, he or she will be punished (84%). About half the students agree or strongly agree that the school rules are fair (58%). There were mixed opinions regarding whether students agree that there is a strict dress code at school (52%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7442	19.12	3.38				
Gender				50.83	.00	.01	
Boys	3669	18.88	3.38				
Girls	3601	19.44	3.31				
Race				7.80	.01	.00	
Black	1615	19.21	3.57				a
Hispanic	393	19.59	3.32				a
White	4599	19.16	3.22				a
Asian	226	19.23	3.12				a, b
Other	437	18.55	3.97				b
Age				.18	.67	.00	
< 15	2244	19.14	3.26				
15	4106	19.21	3.29				
>15	920	19.02	3.84				

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The seven items on the Experience of School Rules scale were summed into a scale (alpha = .72) that ranged from 7 to 28 with a mean of 19. There were no statistically significant differences among students associated with age. There were significant differences among students associated with gender and race, but the differences were so small that the effect size was .01 or less. Girls felt more positive about the school rules than boys. Students identifying as Other felt less positive about the school rules than African-American, Hispanic and White students.

Security measures index

Does your school take any of these measures to make sure students are safe?	No	Don't know	Yes
Security guards or assigned police officers?	12	12	76
Other school staff or other adults supervising the hallways?	9	10	81
Metal detectors?	77	15	8
Locked entrance or exit doors during the day?	34	30	36
A requirement that visitors sign in?	4	11	85
Locker checks?	30	39	31
A requirement that students wear badges or picture identification?	83	9	8
One or more security cameras to monitor the school?	13	20	67
A code of student conduct (written rules for students to follow)?	3	10	87

Source: School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005)

All students responded to the same standard list of security measures. Overall, most students noted that their school had security guards or police (76%), adult supervision of the hallways (81%), visitor sign-in (85%), security cameras (67%), and a written code of student conduct (98%). However, most students noted that they did not have metal detectors (76%) or a requirement that students wear badges or picture identification (83%). Reports of locked entrance or exit doors during the day and locker checks varied considerably across students. The accuracy of student reports can only be verified by obtaining security information from each high school. The school safety audits completed by principals will be used for this purpose.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7376	4.83	1.53				
Gender				.21	.65	2.96	
Boys	3624	4.85	1.58				
Girls	3583	4.83	1.46				
Race				22.34	.00	.00	
Black	1597	5.00	1.62				a
Hispanic	391	4.63	1.63				b
White	4561	4.83	1.46				b
Asian	224	4.71	1.45				a, b
Other	434	4.63	1.69				b
Age				1.41	.24	1.96	
<15	2225	4.86	1.42				
15	4074	4.84	1.50				
>15	908	4.78	1.82				

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The nine items on the Security measure index were summed and ranged from 0 to 9. Students typically reported 5 of the nine listed security measures. There was no difference in the number of observed security measures associated with gender or age. There was a statistically significant difference among students associated with race, but the difference was so small that the effect size was less than .01. African-American students reported more security measures (5) than Hispanic, White and those identifying as Other (~4).

Awareness of zero tolerance policies index

<b>Zero tolerance means that a student is automatically expelled or given a lengthy suspension for any violation of the rule. Does your school have zero tolerance for:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Bringing a gun to school?	7	5	88
Bringing a BB gun, pellet gun, or similar gun to school?	7	11	82
Bringing a toy gun or something that looks like a gun to school?	9	29	62
Bringing in edged or cutting weapons such as knives?	9	12	79
Bringing illegal drugs to school?	8	8	84
Bringing legal drugs, such as prescription drugs and over the counter medications, to school?	18	32	50
Bringing alcohol to school?	8	12	80
Belonging to a gang?	21	40	39
Fighting at school?	17	14	69
Does your school have zero tolerance for some other reason not mentioned above?	27	66	7

Source: Virginia Dept. of Criminal Justice Services, 2005

Students were asked for their perceptions of whether their school had zero tolerance for various infractions. Overall, most students reported that their school had zero tolerance for a gun (88%), a BB gun or similar gun (82%), a toy gun (62%), a cutting weapon (79%), illegal drugs (84%), and alcohol (80%). Most students also reported zero tolerance for fighting at school (69%). Reports were mixed regarding bringing legal drugs to school and belonging to a gang. The accuracy of student reports will be verified by obtaining security information from the school safety audits completed by principals.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7280	6.54	2.60				
Gender				4.80	.03	6.74	
Male	3574	6.49	2.60				
Female	3542	6.63	2.58				
Race				.31	.58	4.28	
Black	1590	6.50	2.87				
Hispanic	385	6.06	2.93				
White	4498	6.65	2.42				
Asian	220	6.46	2.46				
Other	423	6.27	2.88				
Age				7.48	.01	.00	
<15	2194	6.63	2.45				A
15	4024	6.57	2.55				A
>15	898	6.31	3.07				B

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The ten items on the Awareness of Zero Tolerance index were summed and ranged from 0 to 10. Most students were aware of zero tolerance policies in their schools for 7 of the 9 offenses listed. There were no differences in the awareness of zero tolerance associated with race. There were some statistically significant differences among students associated with gender and age. Girls were more aware of zero tolerance rules compared to boys. Students older than 15 were less aware of zero tolerance rules than students 15 or younger. However, the difference was so small that the effect size was less than .01.

## Time out of class items

**How many minutes do students have for lunch on a normal day?**

Responses to this question ranged from less than 20 minutes to 60 or more minutes. The majority of students reported 20-29 minutes for lunch.

Time for lunch	Frequency	Percent
< 20 minutes	305	4
20-29 minutes	4495	59
30-39 minutes	1952	26
40-49 minutes	582	8
50-59 minutes	122	2
60+ minutes	62	1

**How many minutes do students have when changing classes or going from one class to the next?**

Responses to this question ranged from less than 5 minutes to 15 or more minutes. The majority of students reported 6-10 minutes to change classes.

Time between classes	Frequency	Percent
1-5 minutes	3165	43
6-10 minutes	4091	55
11-15 minutes	111	1
16+ minutes	75	1

**How many times do students change classes on a normal day?**

Responses to this question ranged from 0 to 10 times. The majority of students reported changing classes 4 times on a normal day.

Number of class changes	Frequency	Percent
0	13	<1
1	25	<1
2	22	<1
3	1013	14
4	3624	49
5	498	7
6	469	6
7	1195	16
8	377	5
9	92	1
10	114	2

Daily structure scale

How likely are the following?	Not at all Likely/ Not Likely	Likely/ Very Likely
If a student was wandering in the hallways during class time, how likely would an adult stop the student?	48	52
If a student cut a class, how likely would the student be caught?	41	59
If a student smoked a cigarette at school, how likely would the student be caught?	37	63
If two students got into a fight at school, how likely would they get caught?	8	92
If a student was five minutes late for class, how likely would teachers overlook it?	56	44
If a student said something sarcastic to a teacher, how likely would the teacher overlook what the student said?	43	57

Source: Cornell, 2006

Overall, most students think it is likely or very likely for other students to be caught either smoking (63%) or getting into fights at school (92%). Over half reported that it was likely or very likely that adults would stop students from wandering in the halls during class time (52%), that students will be caught cutting class (59%), and that teachers would overlook sarcastic comments from students (57%). On the other hand, over half the students do not think that teachers would overlook a student being five minutes late to class (56%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7442	16.41	2.60				
Gender				17.29	.00	.00	
Boys	3669	16.30	2.63				
Girls	3601	16.55	2.54				
Race				9.02	.00	.00	
Black	1615	16.42	2.60				a, b
Hispanic	393	16.08	2.54				a, c
White	4599	16.52	2.57				b
Asian	226	16.14	2.39				a, b, c
Other	437	15.87	2.71				c
Age				.37	.69	1.01	
<15	2244	16.41	2.56				
15	4106	16.44	2.69				
>15	920	16.37	2.77				

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The six items of the Daily Structure scale were summed into a scale from 6 to 24 with a mean of 16. There were no statistical differences among students associated with age. Students differed significantly based on gender and race; however, the differences were small (effect size = .00). Girls were more likely than boys to report that students were did not get away with breaking school rules. Additionally, White students were more likely to report that students would get caught breaking rules than Hispanic and those identifying as Other. Students identifying as Other were also less likely to report that students would get caught than African-American students.

## Measures of Student Support

### Help seeking scale

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Somewhat Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Agree/ Strongly Agree
If another student was bullying me, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.	46	54
There are adults at this school I could turn to if I had a personal problem.	26	74
If I tell a teacher that someone is bullying me, the teacher will do something to help.	21	79
Students tell teachers when other students are being bullied.	69	31
If another student talked about killing someone, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.	21	79
If another student brought a gun to school, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.	16	84
Teachers here make it clear to students that bullying is not tolerated.	33	67
Students here try to stop bullying when they see it happening.	63	37

Source: Cornell & Sheras, 2003

Overall, most students somewhat agree or agree that there are adults at school to whom they could turn with personal problems (74%), would report another student if they talked about killing someone (79%) and would report guns at school (84%). The majority of students reported that teachers make it clear that bullying is not tolerated (67%) and will do something to stop bullying (79%). Slightly more than half the students (54%) somewhat agree or strongly agree that they would tell one of the teachers or staff at school if they were being bullied. Most students somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that students tell teachers about bullying (69%) and that students try to stop bullying after witnessing it happen (63%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7339	22.2	4.68				
Gender				97.75	.00	.01	
Boys	3714	21.67	4.83				
Girls	3625	22.75					
Race				26.53	.00	.00	
Black	1643	21.24	4.89				a
Hispanic	394	22.34	5.03				b
White	4632	22.62	4.49				b
Asian	228	22.75	4.36				b
Other	442	20.98	5.00				a
Age				3.26	.07	4.01	
<15	2255	22.21	3.89				
15	4135	22.31	3.84				
>15	949	21.73	4.13				

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The eight items on the Help Seeking scale were summed into a scale that ranged from 8 to 32 with a mean of 22. There were no statistical differences among students associated with age, although students differed slightly based on gender and race. The effect sizes were so small that the effect sizes were .01 or lower. Girls reported more positively about seeking help at school compared to boys. Hispanic, White and Asian students were more likely to agree that students seek help than Black students or those identifying as Other.



Help seeking behavior scale

<b>During the past 6 months, how many times have you...</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Once or Twice</b>	<b>About Once a week</b>	<b>Several Times a Week</b>
Gone to a teacher (or other adult at school) for academic help?	22	48	19	11
Asked a teacher (or other adult at school) for advice?	47	37	10	6
Told a teacher (or other adult at school) about something that worries you?	66	26	5	3
Told a teacher (or other adult at school) about a friend who was in trouble?	76	19	3	2

Source: Eliot, 2006

Overall, most students reported that they never told a teacher about a friend who was in trouble (76%) or about something that worried them (66%). Almost half of students reported that they never asked a teacher for advice (48%) and only went to a teacher for academic help once or twice (47%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7240	7.00	4.68				
Gender				44.54	.00	.01	
Boys	3653	6.53	2.27				
Girls	3583	6.89	2.35				
Race				14.06	.00	.01	
Black	1602	7.01	2.51				a
Hispanic	390	6.58	2.41				b
White	4585	6.58	2.18				b
Asian	226	6.49	2.21				b
Other	433	7.09	2.69				a
Age				21.22	.00	.01	
<15	2255	6.55	2.21				a
15	4135	6.69	2.27				a
>15	909	7.14	2.69				b

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The four items on the Help seeking behavior scale were summed into a scale that ranged from 4 to 16 with a mean of 7. There were statistical differences among students associated with gender, race, and age. However, the effect sizes were so small that the effect sizes were .01 or lower. Girls were more likely than boys to report help-seeking behaviors. African-American students and those identifying as Other were more likely to report seeking a teacher or another adult at school for help. Additionally, students older than 15 were more likely to report seeking help from a teacher or another adult at school.

Learning/Working environment scale

How much do you agree that adults in this school...	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree/ Strongly Agree
Really care about all students.	17	37	46
Acknowledge and pay attention to students.	14	38	48
Want all students to do their best.	8	22	70
Listen to what students have to say.	21	38	41
Believe that every student can be a success.	18	29	53
Treat all students fairly.	37	30	33
Support and treat students with respect.	19	34	47
Feel a responsibility to improve the school.	18	33	49

Source: Austin & Duerr, 2005

Overall, most students report a positive perception of the school as a learning environment. Notably, most students agree or strongly agree that adults in their school want students to do their best (70%). Slightly more than half (53%) of students agree or strongly agree that adults in their schools believe that every student can be a success. There was less agreement on the other items, but in each case, the majority agreed to some extent that the environment was positive.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7338	27.25	6.82				
Gender				3.47	.06	4.73	
Boys	3714	27.10	6.94				
Girls	3624	27.40	6.68				
Race				25.06	.00	.00	
Black	1643	25.81	7.00				a
Hispanic	394	28.31	6.79				b
White	4631	27.78	6.61				b
Asian	228	28.34	6.62				b
Other	442	25.55	7.32				a
Age				13.95	.00	.01	
<15	2255	27.30	6.75				a, b
15	4135	27.34	6.66				a
>15	948	26.74	7.59				b

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The eight items of the Learning/Working Environment scale were summed into a scale (alpha = .92) that ranged from 8 to 40 with a mean of 27. There were no statistically significant differences in perceptions of support among students associated with gender, but there were differences associated with race and age. Hispanic, White, and Asian students felt more positively about the learning and working environment in their schools than Black students and those identifying as Other. Students, age 15, reported slightly more positive perceptions of support received from adults than older students.

## Measures of Student Engagement

### Commitment to school

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Agree/ Strongly Agree
You like school a lot.	50	50
School is boring to you.	35	65
You do poorly at school.	75	15
You don't really belong at school.	87	13
Homework is a waste of time.	58	42
You try hard at school.	13	87
You usually finish your homework.	24	76
Getting good grades is very important to you.	9	91
Sometimes you do extra work to improve your grades.	27	73

Source: Thornberry, Lizotte, Krohn, Farnworth, Jang, 1991

Overall, most students disagree or strongly disagree that they do poorly at school (75%), don't really belong at school (87%), or think homework is a waste of time (58%). Most students believe they try hard at school (87%), usually finish their homework (76%), value getting good grades (91%), and sometimes do extra work to improve grades (73%). However, most students agree or strongly agree that school is boring (65%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7240	27.00	4.04				
Gender				295.14	.00	.04	
Boys	3653	25.30	4.61				
Girls	583	27.14	4.47				
Race				12.73	.00	.01	
Black	1602	26.82	4.27				a
Hispanic	390	25.83	4.78				b
White	4585	25.98	4.72				b
Asian	226	27.15	4.39				a
Other	433	26.21	4.70				a, b
Age				62.49	.00	.02	
< 15	2229	26.59	4.44				a
15	4098	26.35	4.57				a
>15	909	24.64	5.04				b

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The nine items of the Commitment to School scale were summed into a scale that ranged from 21 to 30 with a mean of 27 (alpha = .81). There were some statistically significant differences among students associated with gender and race. As evidenced by their higher mean, girls expressed more commitment to school than boys. African American and Asian students as well as students identifying as Other rated higher commitment to school than students identifying as White or Hispanic; however, the difference was so small, that the effect size was negligible. Students older than 15 reported less commitment to school than those who were 15 and younger.

Belief in school rules index

<b>This section asks you what your friends think, not what you do. In your school, is it OK with your friends to do the following:</b>	<b>Disagree/ Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Agree/ Strongly Agree</b>
Be late for school?	53	47
Cut a couple of classes?	67	33
Skip school for a whole day?	68	32
Cheat on tests?	62	38
Copy someone else's homework?	37	63
Get into physical fights?	67	33
Belong to gangs?	87	13
Steal belongings from school, a student, or a teacher?	86	14
Destroy or damage school property?	85	15
Smoke on school grounds?	84	16
Drink alcohol during the school day?	90	10
Use illegal weapons during the school day?	96	4
Bring weapons to school?	93	7
Abuse teachers physically?	97	3
Talk back to teachers?	57	43
Disobey school rules?	62	38

Source: Stewart. 2003

Overall, most students indicate that their friends support school rules. The overwhelming majority of students do not perceive their friends as okay with abusing teachers, using weapons, or consuming alcohol during the school day, etc. The rule-breaking that students reported was most acceptable to their peers was copying someone's homework (63%), coming late for school (47%), and talking back to teachers (43%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7240	45.75	6.65				
Gender				87.13	.00	.01	
Boys	3653	48.04	9.26				
Girls	3583	50.03	8.85				
Race				4.54	.00	.00	
Black	1602	48.54	9.47				a
Hispanic	390	48.51	9.12				a, b
White	4585	49.25	8.88				a, b
Asian	226	50.46	8.55				b
Other	433	48.16	10.26				a
Age				9.59	.00	.00	
<15	2229	49.45	8.84				a
15	4098	49.05	9.06				a
>15	909	47.89	9.88				b

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The sixteen items on the Belief in School Rules index were summed (some items were reverse scored) so that higher scores indicated more acceptance of school rules. Scores ranged from 40 to 55 with a mean of 46 (alpha = .94). Girls reported more acceptance of school rules among their friends than did boys. Asian students reported more acceptance of school rules among their friends than did Black or Other students; however, the difference was so small, that the effect size was negligible. Students older than 15 viewed their friends as less inclined to follow school rules than those who were 15 and younger.

Aggressive attitudes index

How much do you agree or disagree with following?	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Agree/ Strongly Agree
It feels good when I hit someone.	77	23
If you fight a lot, everyone will look up to you.	87	13
Sometimes you only have two choices: get punched or punch the other person first.	49	51
If you are afraid to fight, you won't have many friends.	82	18
Students who are bullied or teased mostly deserve it.	90	10
Bullying is sometimes fun to do.	83	17

Source: Cornell & Sheras, 2003

Overall, most students disavowed aggressive attitudes, but about half of ninth-grade students feel that sometimes they have to punch someone first or get punched, and almost a quarter admitted that it feels good to hit someone.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7240	11.23	3.61				
Gender				700.14	.00	.09	
Male	3653	12.34	3.53				
Female	3583	10.20	3.36				
Race				46.48	.00	.03	
Black	1602	12.23	3.37				a
Hispanic	390	11.59	3.64				b
White	4585	10.90	3.59				c
Asian	226	10.58	3.40				c
Other	433	11.81	4.02				a, b
Age				52.55	.00	.01	
<15	2229	10.96	3.56				a
15	4098	11.21	3.61				b
>15	909	12.38	3.55				c

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

Boys endorsed (i.e., marked agreement with) more aggressive attitudes than girls, with a noteworthy effect size of .09. Students identifying as Black, Hispanic, and Other marked higher agreement with aggressive beliefs than White and Asian students. Students older than 15 were more supportive of aggressive behavior than those who were 15 and younger.

Trust in teacher authority scale

How much do you agree or disagree with following?	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Agree/ Strongly Agree
It is sometimes 'ok' to disobey the teacher.	69	31
Students should obey teachers even if it goes against what they want to do.	41	59
Respect for teachers' authority is important for students to have.	17	83
I do what teachers ask me to do, even if I don't want to do it.	24	76
I can trust the way teachers use their power and authority.	43	57

Source: Gregory, 2005

Overall, most students disagree and strongly disagree with the statement that it is “ok” to disobey the teacher (69%). Most students agree or strongly agree that they do what teachers ask them to do, even if they don’t want to do it (76%) and that respect for teachers’ authority is important (83%). Over half of the students agree or strongly agree that students should obey teachers even if it goes against what they want (59%) and that they can trust the way teachers use their power and authority (57%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	P value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7240	14.00	2.90				
Gender				138.00	.00	.02	
Boys	3653	13.60	2.80				
Girls	3583	14.40	2.89				
Race				16.36	.00	.01	
Black	1602	13.67	2.80				a, b
Hispanic	390	13.45	2.90				a
White	4585	14.19	2.90				c
Asian	226	14.15	2.59				b, c
Other	433	13.57	3.10				a, b
Age							
<15	2229	14.12	2.83	25.68	.00	.01	a
15	4098	14.07	2.90				a
>15	909	13.36	3.00				b

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The five items on the Trust in Teacher Authority scale were summed and ranged from 5 to 20 with a mean of 14 (alpha = .75). There were some statistically significant differences in terms of perceptions of trust in teachers among students associated with gender, race and age; however, the differences were so small, that the effect size was .02 or less. As evidenced by their higher mean, girls were more trusting than boys. White students had more trust in teachers than students identifying as African American, Hispanic, or those identifying as Other. Students older than 15 were less inclined to trust their teachers than those who were 15 and younger.

School involvement index

<b>During the past 6 months, have you participated in any of the following extracurricular activities sponsored by your school such as:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Athletic teams at school?	53	47
Spirit groups, for example, Cheerleading or Pep Club?	86	14
Performing arts, for example, Band, Orchestra, or Drama?	74	26
Academic clubs, for example, Debate Team, Honor Society, Spanish Club, or Math Club?	81	19
School government?	95	5
Service clubs, for example Key Club or other service oriented groups?	84	16
During the past 6 months, have you participated in an extra-curricular activity that is not mentioned above?	78	22

Source: School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005)

The highest percentages of students were involved in athletics (47%), performing arts (26%), and academic clubs (19%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7240	1.49	1.40				
Gender				88.16	.00	.01	
Boys	3653	1.34	1.34				
Girls	3583	1.65	1.44				
Race				10.33	.00	.01	
Black	1602	1.43	1.49				a
Hispanic	390	1.10	1.26				b
White	4585	1.54	1.37				c
Asian	226	1.47	1.15				a, c
Other	433	1.52	1.46				a, c
Age				15.58	.00	.00	
<15	2229	1.56	1.35				a
15	4098	1.51	1.38				b
>15	909	1.26	1.54				c

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The seven items on the Student Involvement index were summed and ranged from 0 to 7 (alpha = .01). There were some statistically significant differences in student involvement associated with gender and race. Girls reported being more involved in their schools than boys. Hispanic students indicated the lowest level of school involvement among racial groups; however, the difference was so small, that the effect size was negligible. The older ninth-grade students were less likely to be involved in school activities than younger ninth-grade students.

Academic press scale

How true is this in your school?	Not at all/Not Very true	Somewhat True	True/Very True
When I've figured out how to do a problem, my teachers give me more challenging problems to think about.	21	43	36
My teachers press me to do thoughtful work.	16	33	51
When I'm working out a problem, my teachers tell me to keep thinking until I really understand.	19	32	49
My teachers don't let me do just easy work, but make me think.	14	30	56
My teachers make sure that the work I do really makes me think.	17	35	48
My teachers accept nothing less than my full effort.	19	30	51

Source: Academic Press (Midgley et al., 2000)

Overall, about half of the students agreed that teachers press them to do thoughtful work (51%), make them think (56%), and accept nothing less than their full effort (51%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7240	20.49	4.62				
Gender				18.35	.00	.00	
Boys	3653	20.26	4.67				
Girls	3583	20.72	4.56				
Race				6.20	.00	.00	
Black	1602	21.00	4.77				a
Hispanic	390	20.38	4.53				a, b
White	4585	20.34	4.55				b
Asian	226	20.32	4.24				a, b
Other	433	20.40	4.97				a, b
Age				1.24	.29	3.43	
<15	2229	20.56	4.57				a
15	4098	20.50	4.60				a
>15	909	20.27	4.86				a

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The six items on the Academic Press index were summed and ranged from 6 to 30 with a mean of 20 (alpha = .84). Girls reported feeling slightly more pushed toward achievement by their teachers than boys. African-American students reported greater academic press than White students; however, the difference was so small that the effect size was negligible. There were no significant differences associated with age.



## Measures of Student Victimization

Total victimization index

This year in school have any of the following happened to you personally in the school?	False	True
Damage to personal property worth more than \$10.	85	15
Theft of personal property worth more than \$10.	80	20
Was physically attacked and had to see a doctor	96	4
Was physically attacked, but not serious enough to see a doctor.	87	13
Received obscene remarks or gestures from a student.	49	51
Was threatened in remarks by a student.	72	28
Had a weapon pulled on me.	96	4

Source: Victimization (Gottfredson, 1999)

Overall, the most common forms of victimization reported by students involved being the recipient of obscene remarks or gestures (51%), being threatened (28%), or having personal property stolen (20%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7485	1.34	1.50				
Gender				110.64	.00	.02	
Boys	3621	1.52	1.31				
Girls	3541	1.15	1.62				
Race				13.03	.00	.01	
Black	1591	1.32	1.52				a
Hispanic	385	1.22	1.48				a
White	4529	1.31	1.44				a
Asian	226	1.20	1.45				a
Other	431	1.82	1.81				b
Age				19.60	.00	.01	
<15	2213	1.25	1.42				a
15	4047	1.32	1.46				a
>15	902	1.61	1.75				b

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The seven items on the Total Victimization index were summed and ranged from 0 to 7. Students typically reported one or two forms of victimization. Boys were more likely to experience victimization than girls. Students identifying as Other were more likely to experience victimization than other racial groups. Students older than 15 reported more victimization than students 15 or younger than 15.

Major victimization index

<b>This year in school have any of the following happened to you personally in the school?</b>	<b>False</b>	<b>True</b>
Was physically attacked and had to see a doctor	<b>96</b>	<b>4</b>
Was physically attacked, but not serious enough to see a doctor.	<b>87</b>	<b>13</b>
Had a weapon pulled on me.	<b>96</b>	<b>4</b>

From: Victimization (Gottfredson, 1999)

Because the Total Victimization scale covers a wide range of victim experiences, the scale was subdivided into Major and Minor Scales. Overall most students noted that they did not experience major victimization in the form of having a weapon pulled on them (96%) or being physically attacked resulting in having to see a doctor (96%). However, 13% of the students reported that they had been physically attacked, but not serious enough to see a doctor.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7485	.21	.54				
Gender				142.21	.00	.02	
Boys	3621	.28	.62				
Girls	3541	.13	.42				
Race				18.43	.00	.01	
Black	1591	.25	.60				a
Hispanic	385	.22	.54				a, b
White	4529	.17	.47				b
Asian	226	.21	.53				a, b
Other	431	.37	.75				c
Age				38.25	.00	.01	
<15	2213	.16	.46				a
15	4047	.20	.52				a
>15	902	.34	.72				b

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The three items of the Major victimization scale were summed into a scale (alpha = .53) that ranged from 0 to 3 with a mean of .21. Boys were more likely to report major victimization than girls. Students in the Other racial group reported the higher victimization levels than any other group, and African-American students reported more victimization than White students. Students older than 15 were more likely to experience major victimization than younger students.

Minor victimization index

<b>This year in school have any of the following happened to you personally in the school?</b>	<b>False</b>	<b>True</b>
Damage to personal property worth more than \$10	<b>85</b>	<b>15</b>
Theft of personal property worth more than \$10	<b>80</b>	<b>20</b>
Received obscene remarks or gestures from a student	<b>49</b>	<b>51</b>
Was threatened in remarks by a student	<b>72</b>	<b>28</b>

From Victimization (Gottfredson, 1999)

Because the Total Victimization scale covers a wide range of victim experiences, the scale was subdivided into Major and Minor Scales. The most frequent minor victimization experiences involved obscene remarks or gestures (51%) and threatening remarks (28%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7485	1.14	1.19				
Gender				61.40	.00	.01	
Boys	3621	1.24	1.24				
Girls	3541	1.02	1.11				
Race				10.79	.00	.01	
Black	1591	1.07	1.16				a
Hispanic	385	1.00	1.22				a
White	4529	1.14	1.18				a
Asian	226	.99	1.15				a
Other	431	1.45	1.29				b
Age				7.78	.00	.00	
<15	2213	1.09	1.16				a
15	4047	1.13	1.17				a
>15	902	1.27	1.30				b

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The four items of the Minor victimization index were summed into an index that ranged from 0 to 4 with a mean of 1. There were statistically significant differences among students associated with gender, race, and age, but the differences were so small that the effect size was .01 or less. Boys reported more minor victimization than girls and students in the Other racial group reported more victimization than other race groups. Older students reported experiencing more minor victimization than younger students.

Bullying climate scale

<b>Experiences of teasing and bullying at school</b>	<b>Disagree/ Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Agree/ Strongly Agree</b>
Bullying is a problem at this school.	53	47
Students here often get teased about their clothing or physical appearance.	29	71
Students here often get put down because of their race or ethnicity.	65	35
New students are made to feel welcome here by other students.	30	70
Students from different neighborhoods get along well together here.	28	72
There is a lot of teasing about sexual topics at this school.	45	55
Students at this school accept me for who I am.	19	81

Source: *School Climate Bullying Survey* (Cornell & Sheras, 2003)

Overall, most students reported a positive school climate, but some problems were identified. The most frequently reported problems were students being teased about their clothing or physical appearance (71%) and sexual topics (55%). On the positive side, most students reported that other students accept them for who they are (81%), that students from different neighborhoods get along well together (72%), and that new students are made to feel welcome (70%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7484	16.72	3.34				
Gender				12.63	.00	.00	
Boys	3620	16.52	3.25				
Girls	3541	16.85	3.42				
Race				6.43	.00	.00	
Black	1591	16.73	3.47				a
Hispanic	385	16.53	3.29				a
White	4528	16.65	3.27				a
Asian	226	16.65	3.09				a
Other	431	17.48	3.62				b
Age				.71	.49	1.97	
<15	2213	16.66	3.36				
15	4046	16.72	3.30				
>15	902	16.82	3.45				

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The seven items of the Bullying Climate scale were summed (some items were reverse scored) and ranged from 7 to 28 with a mean of 16.7. There was no statistically significant difference among students associated with age, and although there were significant differences associated with gender and race the differences were so small that the effect size was less than .01. Girls reported a less favorable school climate than boys, and students in the Other race group reported more bullying and teasing than students in other groups.

Bullying index

How often have you experienced the following?	Never	Once or twice	About once per week	Several times per week
Bullying is defined as the use of one’s strength or status to injure, threaten, or embarrass another person. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or social. It is not bullying when two students of about the same strength argue or fight. By this definition, I have been bullied in the past month.	71	21	4	4
Physical bullying involves repeatedly hitting, kicking, or shoving someone weaker on purpose. By this definition, I have been physically bullied in the past month.	88	9	2	1
Verbal bullying involves repeatedly teasing, putting down, or insulting someone on purpose. By this definition, I have been verbally bullied in the past month.	60	27	7	6
Social bullying involves getting others repeatedly to ignore or exclude someone on purpose. By this definition, I have been socially bullied in the past month.	74	19	4	3

Source: *School Climate Bullying Survey* (Cornell & Sheras, 2003)

Researchers typically used a cut-off of about once per week or more to identify bullying. By this cutoff, about 8% of students reported being a victim of bullying. It should be noted, however, that when asked about a more specific form of bullying, more students reported victim experiences (this inconsistency is commonly observed in other studies). The most frequently reported form of bullying was verbal, followed by social and then physical bullying.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All students	7484	5.54	2.32				
Gender				4.96	.03	6.94	
Boys	3620	5.60	2.45				
Girls	3541	5.48	2.17				
Race				9.84	.00	.01	
Black	1591	5.33	2.25				a
Hispanic	385	5.35	2.12				a, b
White	4528	5.59	2.29				b
Asian	226	5.42	2.20				a, b
Other	431	6.06	2.91				c
Age				1.35	.26	.00	
<15	2213	5.48	2.21				
15	4046	5.57	2.33				
>15	902	5.60	2.53				

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The four items of the Bullying index were summed into an index and ranged from 4 to 16 with a mean of 5.5. There were no statistically significant differences among students associated with age, but there were some significant differences among students associated with gender and race. Boys reported more bullying than girls. Students in the Other category reported the highest levels of bullying, and African-American students reported less bullying than White students.

Bully reporting questions

**Have you told anyone that you were bullied in the past 30 days at school?**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
I have not been bullied.	6092	81
I have been bullied, but I have not told anyone.	813	11
I have told someone.	580	8

Most students reported that they had not been bullied at school (81%), but of those students who have been bullied, the majority has not told anyone.

**I have told these persons that I was bullied in the past 30 days at school;**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No one	6344	77
A parent	606	7
A friend	844	10
A teacher or other adult at school	215	3
Someone else	264	3

Students are 2-3 times much more likely to tell a friend or a parent that they have been bullied than to tell a teacher or other adult at school.

Gang questions

**Are there any gangs at your school?**

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Don't Know	2651	47
Yes	1288	35
No	3547	18

Nearly half of students reported that they did not know whether there were gangs at their school.

**During the last six months, how often have gangs been involved in fights, attacks, or other violence at your school?**

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Don't Know	2651	43
Never	1288	33
Once or twice in the last 6 months	3547	14
Once or twice a month	464	6
Once or twice a week	180	2
Almost everyday	135	2

**Have gangs been involved in the sale of drugs at your school in the last six months?**

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Don't Know	4599	61
No	1690	23
Yes	1196	16

Validity questions

<b>How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree/ Somewhat Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree/ Somewhat Agree</b>
I am being honest on this survey.	<b>2</b>	<b>98</b>
I am telling the truth on this survey	<b>4</b>	<b>96</b>

These items were included in the survey in order to identify students who were not paying attention when they answered the survey or who were willing to admit that they were not being honest. Previous research has shown that when a substantial number of students respond inappropriately to these items, they inflate the rates of problems reported at the school. These rates are acceptably low.



## Chapter 4 Teacher Survey Descriptive Results

### Measures of School Structure

#### Experience of school rules scale

Thinking about your school over the last 6 months, would you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following...	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Agree/ Strongly Agree
Everyone knows the school rules for student conduct.	17	83
The school rules are fair.	6	94
The punishment for breaking school rules is the same no matter who you are.	48	52
The school rules are strictly enforced.	49	51
If a school rule is broken, students know what kind of punishment will follow.	38	62
We have a strict dress code at school.	56	44
If a student breaks the rules at this school, he or she will be punished.	34	66

Source: School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005)

Overall, most teachers agree or strongly agree that the school rules are fair (94%) and known by everyone (83%). There were mixed opinions regarding whether rules are strictly enforced and students know what kind of punishment will follow breaking a rule, and whether punishment is the same no matter who breaks the rule. About half of the teachers (56%) felt that their school did not have a strict dress code.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All teachers	2938	19.11	3.95				
Gender				9.30	.00	.00	
Male	1068	19.39	3.93				
Female	1846	18.93	3.95				
Race				4.45	.00	.01	
Black	354	18.71	4.16				a, b
Hispanic	52	19.17	4.22				a, b
White	2407	19.17	3.88				a
Asian	40	20.45	4.28				a
Other	61	17.59	4.38				b
Teaching Experience (years)				13.95	.00	.01	
1-5	1062	18.81	3.89				a
6-10	617	18.61	3.84				a
11-15	364	19.14	4.13				a
16 or more	871	19.78	3.93				b

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The seven items on the Experience of Rules scale were summed into a scale ( $\alpha = .86$ ) that ranged from 7 to 28 with a mean of 19. There were some statistically significant differences among teachers associated with gender, race, and teaching experience, but the differences were so small that the effect size was .01 or less. Male teachers felt more positive about school rules than female teachers. Asian teachers and White teachers felt more positive about school rules than those identifying as Other. Teachers with 16 or more years of experience had more positive perceptions of the school rules than other teachers.

**Security measures index**

Does your school take any of these measures to make sure students are safe?	No	Don't know	Yes
Security guards or assigned police officers?	7	1	92
Other school staff or other adults supervising the hallways?	4	1	95
Metal detectors?	89	4	7
Locked entrance or exit doors during the day?	30	5	65
A requirement that visitors sign in?	2	1	97
Locker checks?	26	31	43
A requirement that students wear badges or picture identification?	93	1	6
One or more security cameras to monitor the school?	17	9	74
A code of student conduct (written rules for students to follow)?	1	1	98

Source: School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005)

All teachers were presented with the same standard list of security measures. Overall, most teachers reported that their school had security guards or police (92%), adult supervision of the hallways (95%), visitor sign-in (97%), locked entrance doors (65%), security cameras (74%), and a written code of student conduct (98%). However, most teachers noted that they did not have metal detectors (89%) or a requirement for students to wear badges (93%). One-third of teachers were unaware if their schools had locker checks. Teacher perceptions could be verified by comparing their answers with the school safety audits completed by principals.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All teachers	2933	5.77	1.20				
Gender				2.18	.14	.00	
Male	1066	5.81	1.23				
Female	1843	5.74	1.19				
Race				12.72	.00	.02	
Black	352	6.18	1.47				a
Hispanic	52	5.56	1.45				b
White	2404	5.72	1.14				b
Asian	40	5.70	1.18				a, b
Other	61	5.49	1.32				b
Teaching Experience (years)				4.23	.01	.00	
1-5	1059	5.67	1.21				a
6-10	615	5.76	1.26				a, b
11-15	384	5.84	1.13				a, b
16 or more	871	5.85	1.18				b

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The “yes” responses on the Security measure index were summed and ranged from 0 to 9. Teachers typically reported 6 or 7 of the nine listed security measures. There was no difference in the number of security measures observed by male or female teachers. There were some statistically significant differences among teachers associated with race and teaching experience, but the differences were so small that the effect size was .01 or less. African American teachers on average reported one more security measures (~ 6 measures) than other racial and ethnic groups (~ 5 measures). Teachers with 16 or more years of experience observed slightly more security measures than teachers with 1 to 5 years of teaching.

**Awareness of zero tolerance policies index**

<b>Zero tolerance means that a student is automatically expelled or given a lengthy suspension for any violation of the rule. Does your school have zero tolerance for:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Bringing a gun to school?	2	6	92
Bringing a BB gun, pellet gun, or similar gun to school?	2	15	83
Bringing a toy gun or something that looks like a gun to school?	4	35	61
Bringing in edged or cutting weapons such as knives?	6	15	79
Bringing illegal drugs to school?	6	9	85
Bringing legal drugs, such as prescription drugs and over the counter medications, to school?	15	32	53
Bringing alcohol to school?	7	13	80
Belonging to a gang?	20	45	35
Fighting at school?	20	11	69
Does your school have zero tolerance for some other reason not mentioned above?	23	72	5

Source: Virginia Dept. of Criminal Justice Services, 2005

Overall, most teachers reported that their school had zero tolerance for a gun (92%), a BB gun or similar gun (83%), a toy gun (61%), a cutting weapon (79%), illegal drugs (85%), legal drugs (53%), and alcohol (80%). Most teachers also reported zero tolerance for fighting at school (69%). There was less agreement on zero tolerance policies regarding belonging to a gang. Teacher perceptions of zero tolerance could be verified with the school safety audit surveys completed by principals.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All teachers	2871	6.58	2.43				
Gender				3.18	.08	.00	
Male	1040	6.69	2.34				
Female	1810	6.52	2.48				
Race				3.74	.01	.01	
Black	352	6.99	2.39				a
Hispanic	52	6.08	2.66				a, b
White	2349	6.54	2.41				b
Asian	38	6.61	2.51				a, b
Other	59	6.15	2.82				a, b
Teaching Experience (years)				28.51	.00	.03	
1-5	1017	6.14	2.59				a
6-10	604	6.43	2.57				a, b
11-15	363	6.75	2.28				b
16 or more	866	7.14	2.07				c

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The “yes” responses on the Awareness of Zero Tolerance Policies index were summed and ranged from 0 to 10. Most teachers were aware of zero tolerance policies in their schools for 6 or 7 of the 9 offenses listed. There was no difference in the awareness of zero tolerance among male or female teachers. There were some statistically significant differences among teachers associated with race and teaching experience, but the differences were so small that the effect size was .03 or less. White teachers reported that their school had fewer zero tolerance rules compared to African American teachers. Each of the groups based on teaching experience differed significantly from at least one other group. Teachers with 16 or more years of experience reported more tolerance policies than the other groups.

**Time out of class items**

**How many minutes do students have for lunch on a normal day?**

Responses to this question ranged from less than 20 minutes to 60 or more minutes. The average response was 25 to 30 minutes, with a standard deviation of 1.28 (corresponds to approximately 5 minutes).

Time for lunch	Frequency	Percent
< 20 minutes	55	2
20-29 minutes	2245	76
30-39 minutes	441	15
40-49 minutes	158	5
50-59 minutes	32	1
60+ minutes	7	1

**How many minutes do students have when changing classes or going from one class to the next?**

Responses to this question ranged from less than 5 minutes to 15 or more minutes. The average response was 6 to 10 minutes, with a standard deviation of .49 (corresponds to approximately 2.5 minutes).

Time between classes	Frequency	Percent
1-5 minutes	669	23
6-10 minutes	2200	75
11-15 minutes	39	1
16+ minutes	30	1

**How many times do students change classes on a normal day?**

Responses to this question ranged from 1 to 10 times with a mode of 4 and a mean of 5.

Number of class changes	Frequency	Percent
1	5	<1
2	5	<1
3	792	27
4	1087	37
5	238	8
6	344	12
7	339	11
8	91	3
9	20	1
10	17	1

**Daily structure scale**

How likely are the following?	Not at all Likely/ Not Likely	Likely/ Very Likely
If a student was wandering in the hallways during class time, how likely would an adult stop the student?	39	61
If a student cut a class, how likely would the student be caught?	26	74
If a student smoked a cigarette at school, how likely would the student be caught?	41	59
If two students got into a fight at school, how likely would they get caught?	1	99
If a student was five minutes late for class, how likely would teachers overlook it?	71	29
If a student said something sarcastic to a teacher, how likely would the teacher overlook what the student said?	49	51

Source: Cornell, 2006

Overall, most teachers think it is likely or very likely that students would be caught wandering in hallways during class time (61%), cutting class (74%), or fighting at school (99%). A majority of teachers (71%) reported that it was not at all likely or not likely that they would overlook a student being five minutes late to class. There were mixed opinions regarding whether a student would be caught for smoking a cigarette or if sarcasm towards teachers would be overlooked.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All teachers	2937	17.10	2.78				
Gender				2.48	.12	.00	
Male	1067	17.20	2.71				
Female	1846	17.03	2.83				
Race				1.18	.32	.00	
Black	354	17.12	2.94				
Hispanic	52	16.90	2.69				
White	2406	17.10	2.76				
Asian	40	17.62	2.61				
Other	61	16.48	3.10				
Teaching Experience (years)				21.63	.00	.02	
1-5	1062	16.80	2.74				a
6-10	617	16.78	2.79				a
11-15	364	17.00	2.78				a
16 or more	870	17.72	2.76				b

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The six items of the Daily Structure scale were summed into a scale (alpha = .74) that ranged from 6 to 24 with a mean of 17. There were no statistical differences among teachers associated with gender or race. Teachers differed significantly based on teaching experience; however, the differences were very small (effect size = .02). Teachers with 16 or more years of teaching experience were more likely to report adherence to the daily structure at their schools than teachers with fewer years of experience.

**Perception of administration and discipline index**

	<b>Disagree/ Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Agree/ Strongly Agree</b>
I trust that my administration will handle discipline fairly.	<b>29</b>	<b>71</b>
When I refer a student to the office for a discipline problem, I feel confident that it will be handled appropriately.	<b>31</b>	<b>69</b>
Disciplinary consequences for students at this school tend to be too harsh.	<b>93</b>	<b>7</b>

Source: Austin & Duerr, 2005

Overall, most teachers agreed or strongly agreed that administration will handle discipline fairly (71%) and appropriately (69%), and that disciplinary consequences for students are not too harsh (93%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All teachers	2994	8.97	1.59				
Gender				4.39	.04	.00	
Male	1061	9.05	1.58				
Female	1850	8.92	1.59				
Race				1.60	.17	.00	
Black	353	8.86	1.58				
Hispanic	50	9.00	1.73				
White	2409	8.99	1.58				
Asian	39	9.36	1.71				
Other	60	8.68	1.61				
Teaching Experience (years)				12.67	.00	.01	
1-5	1057	8.82	1.55				a
6-10	612	8.84	1.57				a
11-15	363	8.99	1.61				a, b
16 or more	879	9.23	1.60				b

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The three items on Perception of Administration and Discipline were summed into an index that ranged from 3 to 12 with a mean of 9. There were no statistically significant differences among teachers associated with race. There were significant differences based on gender and teaching experience, but the differences were so small that the effect size was .01 or less. Male teachers were more likely to agree that administrators handle discipline violations appropriately than their female counterparts. Teachers with 16 or more years of experience had more positive perceptions of how administration handles disciplinary issues than teachers with 1 to 10 years of experience.

### Measures of Student Support

#### Help seeking scale

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Somewhat Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Agree/ Strongly Agree
Students feel free to ask for help from teachers if there is a problem with a student.	10	90
Teachers know when students are being picked on or being bullied.	28	72
Students are encouraged to report bullying and aggression.	14	86
Students know who to go to for help if they have been treated badly by another student.	14	86
Students report it when one student hits another.	40	60
Teachers take action to solve the problem when students report bullying.	8	92

Source: Cornell & Sheras, 2003

Overall, most teachers somewhat agree or strongly agree that students feel free to ask for help (90%), are encouraged to report bullying and aggression (86%), and know who to go to for help (86%). The majority of respondents reported that teachers know when students are bullied (72%), and they take action in response to student reports of bullying (92%). There were more mixed opinions regarding whether students report hitting one another. Slightly more than half of the teachers (60%) felt students report such incidents.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All teachers	2938	18.58	2.95				
Gender				0.02	.88	.00	
Male	1068	18.57	2.87				
Female	1867	18.59	3.00				
Race				4.08	.00	.01	
Black	355	18.22	3.39				a, b
Hispanic	53	18.15	3.21				a, b
White	2427	18.67	2.85				a
Asian	39	18.87	2.35				a, b
Other	61	17.56	3.71				b
Teaching Experience (years)				12.50	.00	.01	
1-5	1064	18.32	3.05				a
6-10	618	18.30	2.95				a
11-15	368	18.71	2.83				a, b
16 or more	885	19.05	2.81				b

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The six items of the Help Seeking scale were summed into a scale (alpha = .78) that ranged from 6 to 24 with a mean of 19. There were no statistically significant differences among teachers associated with gender, although teachers differed slightly based on race and teaching experience. The differences were so small that the effect sizes were .01. White teachers felt more positively about students seeking help at school compared to teachers who identified themselves as Other. Teachers with 16 or more years of experience were more positive about student help seeking than those with 1 to 10 years of teaching experience.

**Learning/Working environment scale**

How much do you agree that administrators in this school...	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree/ Strongly Agree
Really care about all teachers.	11	20	69
Acknowledge and pay attention to teachers.	12	23	65
Want all teachers to do their best.	3	10	87
Listen to what teachers have to say.	14	25	61
Believe that every teacher can be a success.	7	23	70
Treat all teachers fairly.	20	24	56
Support and treat each other with respect.	8	19	73
Feel a responsibility to improve the school.	4	15	81

Source: Austin & Duerr, 2005

Overall, most teachers feel positively about the support and encouragement they receive from administration at their schools. Most notably, the majority agreed or strongly agreed that administrators want all teachers to do their best (87%), and feel a responsibility to improve the school (81%). There was less agreement about whether or not all teachers are treated fairly.

Group	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All teachers	2938	31.32	6.92				
Gender				7.48	.01	.00	
Male	1068	31.77	6.77				
Female	1867	31.05	6.99				
Race				3.58	.01	.00	
Black	355	30.51	7.10				a
Hispanic	53	30.96	7.31				a
White	2427	31.47	6.87				a
Asian	39	32.74	5.69				a
Other	61	29.07	7.73				a
Teaching Experience (years)				4.01	.01	.00	
1-5	1064	31.29	6.81				a, b
6-10	618	30.70	6.73				a
11-15	368	30.99	7.26				a, b
16 or more	885	31.90	7.00				b

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The eight items of the Learning/Work Environment scale were summed into a scale (alpha = .95) that ranged from 8 to 40 with a mean of 31. There were some statistically significant differences among teachers associated with gender, race, and teaching experience, but the differences were so small that the effect sizes were all less than .01. Male teachers reported slightly more positive perceptions of administrative support than did female teachers. Although there was an overall significant difference among racial groups, no single comparison of teachers by racial category showed a significant difference. Teachers with 16 or more years of teaching experience had more positive perceptions of support from administrators than teachers with 6 to 10 years of experience.



**Health and prevention items**

	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree/ Strongly Agree
This school collaborates well with community organizations to help address substance abuse or other problems among youth.	12	31	57
This school provides effective confidential support and referral services for students needing help because of substance abuse, violence, or other problems.	9	29	62

Overall, most teachers agree or strongly agree that their schools provide appropriate health and prevention programs for students in need. However, almost a third of teachers felt ambivalent about whether or not their schools collaborate well with community organizations (31%), and if youth suffering from substance abuse, violence, or other problems receive effective and confidential support from their schools (29%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	P value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All teachers	2938	7.24	1.72				
Gender				.93	.33	.00	
Male	1068	7.28	1.69				
Female	1867	7.21	1.74				
Race				1.42	.23	.00	
Black	355	7.15	1.93				
Hispanic	53	6.96	1.87				
White	2427	7.26	1.68				
Asian	39	7.36	1.81				
Other	61	6.89	1.80				
Teaching Experience (years)				22.63	.00	.02	
1-5	1064	7.01	1.75				a
6-10	618	7.09	1.74				a
11-15	368	7.23	1.71				a
16 or more	885	7.62	1.62				b

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The two items of the Health and Prevention Programs were summed and ranged from 2 to 10 with a mean of 7. There were no statistically significant differences among teachers associated with gender or race. There were significant differences based on teaching experience, but the differences were so small that the effect size was .02. Teachers with 16 or more years of experience perceived more effective use of health and prevention programs than teachers with less experience.

**Health and prevention programs scale**

To what extent does this school...	Not much/ Not at all	Some/ A lot
Foster youth social and emotional development or resilience?	18	82
Provide nutritional instruction?	27	73
Provide opportunities for physical education and activity?	6	94
Provide alcohol or drug use prevention instruction?	21	79
Provide tobacco use prevention instruction?	24	76
Provide conflict resolution or behavior management instruction?	32	68
Provide character education?	37	63
Provide harassment or bullying prevention?	40	60
Provide services for students with disabilities or other special needs?	3	97

Source: Austin & Duerr, 2005

Overall, most teachers felt their schools provided health and prevention programs needed to address a range of student issues. The strongest agreement was found for programs providing services for physical education and activity (94%) and for students with disabilities or special needs (97%). Although most teachers felt that their school provided character education (63%) and bullying prevention (60%), these categories were the least often marked.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All teachers	2938	27.02	4.50				
Gender				14.65	.00	.00	
Male	1068	27.44	4.32				
Female	1867	26.78	4.58				
Race				.84	.50	.00	
Black	355	26.70	5.21				
Hispanic	53	27.34	5.02				
White	2427	27.05	4.35				
Asian	39	27.72	4.76				
Other	61	26.77	5.35				
Teaching Experience (years)				18.65	.00	.02	
1-5	1064	26.44	4.60				a
6-10	618	26.63	4.53				a, b
11-15	368	27.29	4.47				b, c
16 or more	885	27.87	4.22				c

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The nine items of the Health and Prevention Programs scale were summed into a scale (alpha = .88) that ranged from 9 to 36 with a mean of 27. There were some statistically significant differences among teachers associated with gender and teaching experience, but the differences were small, with effect sizes of .02 or less. Male teachers were more likely to report that their schools made greater health and prevention efforts for students. More experienced teachers tended to report greater provision of health and prevention programs than teachers with less experience.

**Encouragement of help seeking scale**

How much do you agree with the following statements...	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Agree/ Strongly Agree
I encourage students to come to me for academic help.	1	99
I let students know that I am available to talk outside of class.	3	97
I encourage students to turn to me with personal problems.	22	78
I encourage students to tell me if they are being bullied.	8	92
I encourage students to come forward if they have information about a gun at school.	7	93
I encourage students to come forward if they have information about a student who plans to hurt him/herself or someone else.	6	94
I believe that teachers should be mentors as well as instructors.	2	98

Overall, most teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they encourage students to seek help for a variety of reasons including academics (99%), personal problems (78%), bullying (92%), information about weapons at school (93%), and information about students intending harm to him/herself or someone else (94%). Almost all teachers reported letting their students know they are available outside of class (97%), and that they believe that teachers should be mentors as well as instructors (98%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size
All teachers	2994	33.30	3.79			
Gender				3.51	.06	.00
Boys	1061	33.24	3.88			
Girls	1850	33.35	3.73			
Race				.36	.84	.00
Black	353	33.17	4.15			
Hispanic	50	32.86	4.51			
White	2409	33.34	3.71			
Asian	39	33.51	3.89			
Other	60	33.08	3.74			
Teaching Experience (years)				.15	.93	.00
1-5	1057	33.15	3.67			
6-10	612	33.12	3.81			
11-15	363	33.33	3.96			
16 or more	879	33.62	3.80			

The seven items of the Encouragement of Help Seeking scale were summed into a scale (alpha = .85) that ranged from 12 to 40 with a mean of 33. There were no statistically significant differences among teachers associated with gender, race, or teaching experience.

### Measures of Student Engagement

#### Academic press scale

How true is this in your school?	Not very true/ Not at all true	Somewhat true	True/ Very true
When students figure out how to do a problem, teachers give them more challenging problems to think about.	5	41	54
Teachers press students to do thoughtful work.	4	27	69
When students are working out a problem, teachers tell them to keep thinking until they really understand.	6	39	55
Teachers don't let students just do easy work, but make them think.	6	34	60
Teachers make sure that the work students do really makes them think.	7	39	54
Teachers accept nothing less than students' full effort.	19	45	36

Source: Midgley et al., 2000

A majority of teachers reported that teachers in their school press students to really think when working out problems. A little over half of teachers felt this was true or very true in terms of providing students who can solve a problem even more challenging problems (54%), pressing them to do thoughtful work (69%), and making sure they don't just do easy work (60%). There were mixed opinions regarding whether teachers accept nothing less than students' full effort. Slightly less than half of the teachers (45%) felt this was somewhat true.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All teachers	2939	21.32	3.72				
Gender				0.57	.45	.00	
Male	1068	21.25	3.61				
Female	1868	21.36	3.79				
Race				3.45	.01	.00	
Black	355	21.76	4.25				a
Hispanic	53	20.70	5.17				a
White	2428	21.25	3.58				a
Asian	39	22.77	3.96				a
Other	61	20.98	4.08				a
Teaching Experience (years)				8.06	.00	.01	
1-5	1064	21.06	3.71				a
6-10	619	20.99	3.85				a
11-15	368	21.52	3.56				a, b
16 or more	885	21.77	3.68				b

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The six items of the Academic Press scale were summed into a scale (alpha = .89) that ranged from 6 to 30 with a mean of 21. There were no statistical differences among teachers associated with gender, although teachers differed slightly based on race and teaching experience. The differences were so small that the effect sizes were .01 or less. Although there was an overall significant difference among racial groups, no single comparison of teachers by racial category showed a significant difference. Teachers with 16 or more years of experience were more likely to agree that teachers pressed students to think while doing work at school than those with 1 to 10 years of teaching experience.

### Measures of Teacher Victimization

#### Total victimization index

This year in school have any of the following happened to you personally in the school?	False	True
Damage to personal property worth more than \$10.	86.3	13.7
Theft of personal property worth more than \$10.	84.6	15.4
Was physically attacked and had to see a doctor.	98.9	1.1
Was physically attacked, but not seriously enough to see a doctor.	96.9	3.1
Received obscene remarks or gestures from a student.	56.9	43.1
Was threatened in remarks by a student.	80.3	19.7
Had a weapon pulled on me.	99.6	0.4
Was spoken to in a rude or disrespectful manner by a student.	16.3	83.7

Source: Gottfredson, 1999

Overall, most teachers reported little personal victimization in school this year. About one in seven teachers reported damage (14%) or theft (15%) of personal property. A small percentage (1-3%) reported being physically attacked, although about one in five reported being threatened by a student (20%). Less than 1% of teachers reported having had a weapon pulled on them. The most frequent forms of victimization were receiving obscene remarks or gestures (43%) and being spoken to in a disrespectful manner (84%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All teachers	2994	1.80	1.35				
Gender				0.01	.94	.00	
Male	1061	1.80	1.45				
Female	1850	1.80	1.28				
Race				0.91	.46	.00	
Black	353	1.84	1.34				
Hispanic	50	1.74	1.24				
White	2409	1.79	1.34				
Asian	39	1.72	1.40				
Other	60	2.10	1.36				
Teaching Experience (years)				13.42	.00	.01	
1-5	1057	1.98	1.36				a
6-10	612	1.82	1.27				a, b
11-15	363	1.68	1.28				b, c
16 or more	879	1.61	1.36				c

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The “true” responses of the Total Victimization index were summed into an index that ranged from 0 to 8 with a mean of 2. Although there were no statistically significant differences among teachers associated with gender or race, there were significant differences based on teaching experience. The differences were so small that the effect size was .01. Teachers with 16 or more years of experience were less likely to report victimization than teachers with 1 to 10 years of experience.

**More severe victimization index**

This year in school have any of the following happened to you personally in the school?	False	True
Was physically attacked and had to see a doctor.	98.9	1.1
Was physically attacked, but not seriously enough to see a doctor.	96.9	3.1
Had a weapon pulled on me.	99.6	0.4

Source: Gottfredson, 1999

The most serious forms of victimization were pulled from the total scale and analyzed separately. Few teachers reported serious victimization.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size
All teachers	2994	0.05	0.27			
Gender				4.53	.03	.00
Male	1061	0.06	0.32			
Female	1850	0.04	0.22			
Race				1.13	.34	.00
Black	353	0.05	0.32			
Hispanic	50	0.00	0.00			
White	2409	0.04	0.25			
Asian	39	0.10	0.38			
Other	60	0.07	0.31			
Teaching Experience (years)				0.98	.40	.00
1-5	1057	0.05	0.29			
6-10	612	0.05	0.29			
11-15	363	0.03	0.18			
16 or more	879	0.04	0.23			

The three items of the More Severe Victimization index were summed into an index that ranged from 0 to 3 with a mean of 1. There were statistically significant differences among teachers associated with gender, although none associated with race or teaching experience. The differences related to gender were so small that the effect size was less than .01. Male teachers were slightly more likely to report serious victimization than their female counterparts.

**Minor victimization index**

This year in school have any of the following happened to you personally in the school?	False	True
Damage to personal property worth more than \$10.	86	14
Theft of personal property worth more than \$10.	85	15
Received obscene remarks or gestures from a student.	57	43
Was threatened in remarks by a student.	80	20
Was spoken to in a rude or disrespectful manner by a student.	16	84

Source: Gottfredson, 1999

The less serious forms of victimization were pulled from the total scale for separate analysis.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All teachers	2994	1.76	1.25				
Gender				0.13	.72	.00	
Male	1061	1.75	1.32				
Female	1850	1.76	1.21				
Race				0.92	.45	.00	
Black	353	1.78	1.24				
Hispanic	50	1.74	1.24				
White	2409	1.75	1.26				
Asian	39	1.62	1.16				
Other	60	2.03	1.19				
Teaching Experience (years)				14.06	.00	.01	
1-5	1057	1.93	1.25				a
6-10	612	1.77	1.18				a, b
11-15	363	1.65	1.25				b, c
16 or more	879	1.58	1.29				c

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The five items of the Minor Victimization index were summed into an index that ranged from 0 to 5 with a mean of 2. There were no statistically significant differences among teachers associated with gender or race. There were significant differences based on teaching experience, but the differences were so small that the effect size was .01. Overall, teachers with 16 or more years of experience reported less minor victimization than teachers with 1 to 10 years of experience.

**Bullying climate scale**

Experiences of Bullying	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Agree/ Strongly Agree
New students are made to feel welcome here by other students.	22	78
Students from different neighborhoods get along well together here.	24	76
Students at this school accept other students for who they are.	33	67
Bullying is a problem at this school.	49	51
Students here often get teased about their clothing or physical appearance.	41	59
Students here often get put down because of their race or ethnicity.	71	29
There is a lot of teasing about sexual topics at this school.	46	54

Source: Cornell & Sheras, 2003

More than two-thirds of the teachers reported that new students are made to feel welcome by other students (78%), students from different neighborhoods get along well together (76%), and students at their school accept other students for who they are (67%). There were more mixed opinions regarding whether bullying is a problem at their schools, and whether students are often teased about physical appearance or sexual topics. A majority of the teachers did not perceive that students are often teased because of their race or ethnicity (71%).

Groups	N	Mean	SD	F value	p value	Effect size	Tukey test <sup>1</sup>
All teachers	2994	16.75	3.12				
Gender				23.66	.00	.01	
Male	1061	16.39	3.02				
Female	1850	16.97	3.15				
Race				1.51	.20	.00	
Black	353	16.92	3.17				
Hispanic	50	16.98	3.59				
White	2409	16.75	3.06				
Asian	39	15.67	3.37				
Other	60	16.73	4.10				
Teaching Experience (years)				25.20	.00	.03	
1-5	1057	17.31	3.16				a
6-10	612	16.84	3.08				b
11-15	363	16.56	3.03				b, c
16 or more	879	16.10	2.98				c

<sup>1</sup>For Tukey test results, groups that do not share the same letter have statistically different scale scores.

The five items of the Bullying Climate scale were summed into a scale (alpha = .62) that ranged from 7 to 28 with a mean of 17. There were no statistical differences among teachers associated with race. However, teachers differed slightly based on gender and teaching experience. The differences were so small that the effect sizes were .03 or less. Female teachers perceived more bullying and teasing than did male teachers. Teachers with 16 or more years of experience perceived less bullying and teasing than those with 1 to 10 years of teaching experience.



**Gang items**

	No	Don't Know	Yes
Are there any gangs at your school?	18	40	42
Have gangs been involved in the sale of drugs at your school in the last 6 months?	17	72	11

	Never	Once or twice in the last 6 months	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Almost everyday	Don't know
During the last 6 months, how often have gangs been involved in fights, attacks, or other violence at your school?	27	11	5	2	<1	54

Source: School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005)

Slightly less than half of the teachers reported that there are gangs in their school (42%), and 40% are not sure if gangs exist in their school. The majority of teachers also do not know if gangs have been involved in the sale of drugs (72%) or in acts of violence (54%) at their schools in the last 6 months.

## Chapter 5

### Comparison of Student and Teacher Perceptions of School Climate

A special feature of this survey is that teachers and students were asked many of the same questions, so that it is possible to compare their perspectives. There are 32 questions comprising four scales that can be directly compared. Each table on the following pages presents a comparison of student and teacher perceptions of the school climate, based on the average scores for students and teachers within the same school. There is a total of 291 schools in these analyses.

Each table presents two types of comparisons between teachers and students. The first comparison is the Pearson correlation ( $r$ ) that measures the extent to which student and teacher scores correspond with one another, so that a school receiving a high score from its teachers will receive a high score from its students. After the  $r$  value is the  $p$  value indicating the statistical significance of the correlation.

The second comparison is a paired  $t$ -test to measure the difference between teacher and student scores. This comparison is useful to determine if teachers systematically give higher or lower scores than students. Each table presents the means and standard deviations for students and teachers, followed by the  $t$ -value, its statistical significance ( $p$ ), and effect size.

*Experience of school rules.* There is modest agreement between teachers and students in their overall perception of school rules. Agreement is greatest in perceiving whether there is a strict dress code, but lowest in whether the punishment for breaking school rules is the same no matter who you are. Teachers are more likely than students to perceive that everyone knows the school rules and that the rules are fair. Students are more likely than teachers to perceive that the rules are strictly enforced and that the dress code is strict.

*Daily structure.* There is moderate agreement between teachers and students in their perception of how closely students are supervised at school. Teachers are more likely than students to perceive that students will be caught wandering in the hallway, cutting class, or fighting. In contrast, students are more likely than teachers to perceive that students will be caught smoking. Students are less likely than their teachers to perceive that teachers will overlook a student coming late to class or saying something sarcastic to a teacher.

*Security measures.* There was high overall agreement between teachers and students in perceptions of security measures in place at school, although teachers report more security measures than do students. The highest agreement between teachers and students is on whether the school uses security cameras, employs security guards and/or police officers, and has metal detectors. However, there is little agreement between teachers and students on whether visitors must sign in to the school and whether students must wear ID badges.

*Awareness of zero tolerance policies.* There is poor agreement between teachers and students in awareness of zero tolerance policies. In other words, teachers and students do not agree on whether the school has zero tolerance for guns, BB guns, toy guns, drugs, alcohol, and other objects or actions. Teachers are slightly more likely to report a zero tolerance policy than students.

<b>Experience of School Rules Scale</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Student M (SD)</b>	<b>Teacher M(SD)</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Effect Size</b>
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>.31</b>	<b>&lt;.01</b>	<b>19.2 (1.02)</b>	<b>19.0 (2.07)</b>	<b>.95</b>	<b>.34</b>	<b>.06</b>
Thinking about your school over the last six months, would you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following...							
Everyone knows the school rules for student conduct.	.23	<.01	2.8 (.22)	3.1 (.29)	-17.66	<.01	-1.05
The school rules are fair.	.14	.02	2.6 (.25)	3.3 (.24)	-38.42	<.01	-2.27
The punishment for breaking school rules is the same no matter who you are.	.11	.07	2.7 (.26)	2.5 (.43)	6.24	<.01	.37
The school rules are strictly enforced.	.39	<.01	2.8 (.22)	2.5 (.43)	14.23	<.01	.84
If a school rule is broken, students know what kind of punishment will follow.	.15	.01	2.8 (.20)	2.7 (.36)	4.47	<.01	.26
We have a strict dress code at school.	.55	<.01	2.6 (.32)	2.3 (.41)	11.22	<.01	.66
If a student breaks the rules at this school, he or she will be punished.	.27	<.01	3.0 (.17)	2.7 (.36)	15.42	<.01	.91

<b>Daily Structure Scale</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Student M (SD)</b>	<b>Teacher M(SD)</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Effect Size</b>
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>.43</b>	<b>&lt;.01</b>	<b>16.4 (.80)</b>	<b>17.1 (1.46)</b>	<b>-8.40</b>	<b>&lt;.01</b>	<b>-.50</b>
How likely are the following?							
If a student was wandering in the hallways during class time, how likely would an adult stop the student?	.43	<.01	2.6 (.26)	2.7 (.35)	-5.94	<.01	-.35
If a student cut class, how likely would the student be caught?	.54	<.01	2.7 (.24)	2.9 (.40)	-12.54	<.01	-.74
If two students got into a fight at school, how likely would they get caught?	.18	<.01	2.8 (.31)	3.6 (.21)	-6.95	<.01	-.41
If a student smoked a cigarette at school, how likely would the student be caught?	.49	<.01	3.5 (.22)	2.7 (.39)	4.90	<.01	.29
If a student was five minutes late for class, how likely would teachers overlook it?	.31	<.01	2.6 (.23)	2.8 (.36)	-9.00	<.01	.53
If a student said something sarcastic to a teacher, how likely would the teacher overlook what the student said?	.21	<.01	2.4 (.19)	2.5 (.28)	4.92	<.01	.29

<b>School Security Measures Index</b>	<b>r</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Student M (SD)</b>	<b>Teacher M(SD)</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Effect Size</b>
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>.79</b>	<b>&lt;.01</b>	<b>4.8 (.75)</b>	<b>5.8 (.82)</b>	<b>-31.01</b>	<b>&lt;.01</b>	<b>-1.84</b>
Does your school take any of these measures to make sure students are safe?							
Security guards or assigned police officers?	.86	<.01	0.9 (.22)	.9 (.23)	-8.69	<.01	-.51
Other school staff or other adults supervising the hallways?	.17	<.01	0.9 (.10)	1.0 (.08)	-8.56	<.01	-.51
Metal detectors?	.83	<.01	0.1 (.19)	.1 (.20)	2.93	.004	.17
Locked entrance or exit doors during the day?	.67	<.01	0.5 (.25)	.7 (.30)	-14.06	<.01	-.83
A requirement that visitors sign in?	.04	.51	1.0 (.06)	1.0 (.05)	-5.15	<.01	-.31
Locker checks?	.47	<.01	0.5 (.26)	.6 (.28)	-6.75	<.01	-.40
A requirement that students wear badges or picture identification?	-.15	.80	0.1 (.16)	.6 (.15)	6.51	<.01	.39
One or more security cameras to monitor the school?	.94	<.01	0.8 (.34)	.8 (.38)	1.70	.09	.10
A code of student conduct (written rules for students to follow)?	.21	<.01	1.0 (.05)	1.0 (.04)	-8.29	<.01	-.49

<b>Awareness of Zero Tolerance Policies Index</b>	<b>r</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Student M (SD)</b>	<b>Teacher M(SD)</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Effect Size</b>
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>.19</b>	<b>&lt;.01</b>	<b>6.5 (.70)</b>	<b>6.6 (1.09)</b>	<b>-1.09</b>	<b>.28</b>	<b>-.06</b>
Zero tolerance means that a student is automatically expelled or given a lengthy suspension for any violation of the rule. Does your school have zero tolerance for:							
Bringing a BB gun, pellet gun, or similar gun to school?	-.07	.22	0.9 (.07)	1.0 (.06)	-9.05	<.01	-.54
Bringing a toy gun or something that looks like a gun to school?	.01	.88	0.9 (.09)	.9 (.12)	-7.49	<.01	-.44
Bringing in edged or cutting weapons such as knives?	.29	<.01	0.9 (.09)	.9 (.12)	-3.66	<.01	-.22
Bringing illegal drugs to school?	.11	.07	0.9 (.07)	.9 (.11)	-3.46	<.01	-.20
Bringing legal drugs, such as prescription drugs and over the counter medications, to school?	.09	.11	0.7 (.15)	.8 (.20)	-3.11	<.01	-.18
Bringing alcohol to school?	.04	.46	0.9 (.07)	.9 (.11)	-2.09	.04	.12
Belonging to a gang?	.22	<.01	0.6 (.18)	.7 (.27)	-.54	.59	-.03
Fighting at school?	.15	.01	0.8 (.10)	.8 (.17)	2.63	<.01	.16
Does your school have zero tolerance for some other reason not mentioned above?	.03	.65	.2 (.17)	.2 (.29)	.62	.53	.04

## Chapter 6

### **Student Perceptions of School Climate Differences Associated with Student Enrollment, Poverty, and Minority Status**

In this section, student surveys are aggregated so that each school has a single score representing the average of all the students for that school who completed the survey. The scores for each school were correlated with the size of the school (Fall 2006 total enrollment for grades 9-12), the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced price meals (low income), and the percentage of minority (nonwhite) students at the school.

The overall sample size consisted of 286 schools; however, for a small number of schools, there are missing data for some of the variables. Correlations are presented first for the total score for each scale or index and then for each of the items that are part of the scale or index.

The analyses presented here are simple correlations and they do not prove the existence of a causal relationship. However, the presence of a statistically significant correlation does indicate the need for further study and examination in future reports. It is also important to recognize that school size is correlated  $-.42$  with the percentage of low income students and  $.35$  with the percentage of minority students in the school, and that the percentage of low income students is correlated  $.31$  with the percentage of minority students. In future analyses, we will attempt to disentangle the complex and interacting effects of these variables on school climate.

Throughout this section we have prepared some bar charts that allow readers to appreciate what the correlations mean in practical terms. We followed three conventions in creating these charts:

1. School enrollment was classified as small, medium, and large using the cut-offs used in Virginia athletics: under 700, 700-1500, and over 1500 students.
2. For other variables that did not have convenient cut-off points, we divided schools into groups by rank ordering the schools and classifying the top third as “high,” the middle third as “medium,” and the lower third as “low.” This is an arbitrary division.
3. Finally, we transformed the scores on most scales into percentiles so that they will be easier to interpret. For example, rather than present a chart showing the average scores for each group of schools, we report the percentile rank for each group in comparison to all schools. Percentile scores do not tell us the absolute size of the gap between two points, but do indicate how many schools fall above and below those points. (Note that a large percentile gap could be associated with a relatively small difference if a large number of schools are clustered together.)

We have selectively chosen some of the statistically significant correlations to mention in the text and to depict in charts. The reader is urged to review all of the statistically significant results in order to gain a more complete understanding of the findings. Effect sizes are reported because in a large sample even small group differences can be statistically significant.

The reader is reminded that all of these results are based on the perceptions of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students and teachers, which do not necessarily represent the school as a whole.

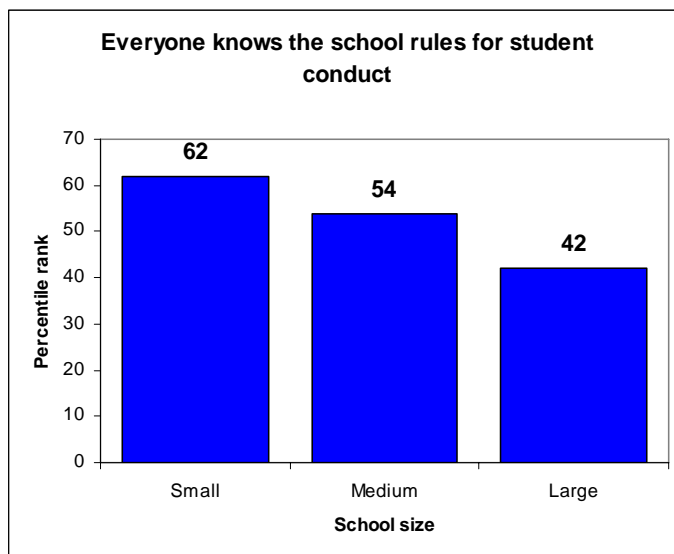
### Measures of School Structure

Experience of school rules scale

Thinking about your school over the last 6 months, would you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following...	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score for Experience of School Rules</b>	<b>-.06</b>	<b>-.04</b>	<b>-.07</b>
Everyone knows the school rules for student conduct.	<b>-.26*</b>	<b>.14*</b>	<b>-.07</b>
The school rules are fair.	<b>-.06</b>	<b>-.19*</b>	<b>-.20*</b>
The punishment for breaking school rules is the same no matter who you are.	<b>.24*</b>	<b>-.21*</b>	<b>.03</b>
The school rules are strictly enforced.	<b>-.03</b>	<b>-.09</b>	<b>-.09</b>
If a school rule is broken, students know what kind of punishment will follow.	<b>-.19*</b>	<b>.17*</b>	<b>.05</b>
We have a strict dress code at school.	<b>-.02</b>	<b>.06</b>	<b>-.01</b>
If a student breaks the rules at this school, he or she will be punished.	<b>.02</b>	<b>.00</b>	<b>.01</b>

\* p. < .05. *Source:* School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005)

Although the total score for Experience of rules was not significantly correlated with school size, percentage of low-income or minority students, there were eight statistically significant correlations with individual items. Most notably, students in larger schools were less likely to agree that everyone knows the school rules, but were more likely to agree that the punishment was the same for everyone. Students in schools with more low-income students were less likely to perceive the rules as fair and the punishment as the same for everyone. Students in schools with more minority students were less likely to agree that the rules are fair.



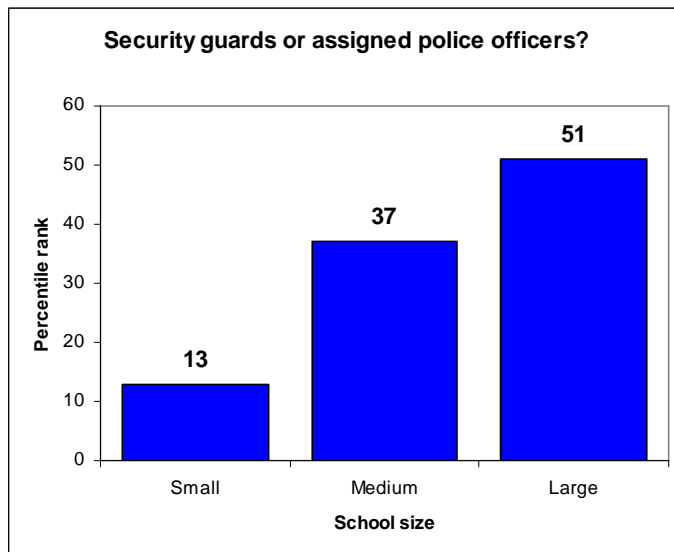
According to student reports, students from smaller schools tended to report more knowledge of school rules for student conduct. Small schools rank at about the 62<sup>nd</sup> percentile compared to the 42<sup>nd</sup> percentile for large schools.

**Security Measures index**

Does your school take any of these measures to make sure students are safe?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score for Security Measures</b>	<b>.17*</b>	<b>.09</b>	<b>.27*</b>
Security guards or assigned police officers?	<b>.41*</b>	<b>-.16*</b>	<b>.26*</b>
Other school staff or other adults supervising the hallways?	<b>.28*</b>	<b>-.17*</b>	<b>.15*</b>
Metal detectors?	<b>.05</b>	<b>.31*</b>	<b>.45*</b>
Locked entrance or exit doors during the day?	<b>.14*</b>	<b>-.03</b>	<b>.15*</b>
A requirement that visitors sign in?	<b>.16*</b>	<b>-.17*</b>	<b>.02</b>
Locker checks?	<b>-.15*</b>	<b>.14*</b>	<b>-.14*</b>
A requirement that students wear badges or picture identification?	<b>.10</b>	<b>.19*</b>	<b>.37*</b>
One or more security cameras to monitor the school?	<b>.19*</b>	<b>.00</b>	<b>.15*</b>
A code of student conduct (written rules for students to follow)?	<b>.16*</b>	<b>-.13*</b>	<b>-.03</b>

\* p. < .05. Source: School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005)

The total score for Security measures was significantly correlated with school size and the percentage of minority students. For example, students from larger schools and schools with more minority students were more likely to report security measures such as security guards, staff supervising the hallways, and locked entrances during the day. In total, there were twenty-one statistically significant correlations with individual scale items.



Students in large schools were more likely than students in small schools to report the presence of security guards or assigned police officers. Large schools rank at the 51<sup>st</sup> percentile compared to the 13<sup>th</sup> percentile for small schools. Note, however, that these are student perceptions and might not reflect the actual presence of security and police staff.

**Awareness of zero tolerance policies index**

Zero tolerance means that a student is automatically expelled or given a lengthy suspension for any violation of the rule. Does your school have zero tolerance for:	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score for Awareness of Zero Tolerance Policies</b>	<b>.04</b>	<b>-.06</b>	<b>-.03</b>
Bringing a gun to school?	.02	-.32*	-.22*
Bringing a BB gun, pellet gun, or similar gun to school?	.03	-.33*	-.22*
Bringing a toy gun or something that looks like a gun to school?	.06	-.21*	-.05
Bringing in edged or cutting weapons such as knives?	.17*	-.22*	.06
Bringing illegal drugs to school?	.02	-.27*	-.20*
Bringing legal drugs, such as prescription drugs and over the counter medications, to school?	.13*	-.08	.01
Bringing alcohol to school?	.01	-.24*	-.20*
Belonging to a gang?	.00	-.08	-.06
Fighting at school?	-.06	.01	-.06
Does your school have zero tolerance for some other reason not mentioned above?	.05	.01	.09

\* p. < .05. Source: Virginia Dept. of Criminal Justice Services, 2005

The total score for Awareness of zero tolerance policies was not significantly correlated with school size, percentage of low-income students or minority students; however, there were twelve statistically significant correlations with individual items. For example, students from schools with higher percentages of low-income and minority students were less likely to note zero tolerance for bringing guns, illegal drugs, or alcohol to school.

**Time out of class**

	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
How many minutes do students have for lunch on a normal day?	-.02	-.01	-.01
How many minutes do students have when changing classes or going from one class to the next?	.50*	-.20*	.05
How many times do students change classes on a normal day?	-.33*	.05	-.23*

\* p. < .05.

Students from larger schools reported more time between classes, while students from schools with higher percentages of lower-income students reported less time. Students from larger schools and schools with a higher minority population reported fewer class changes during the school day.

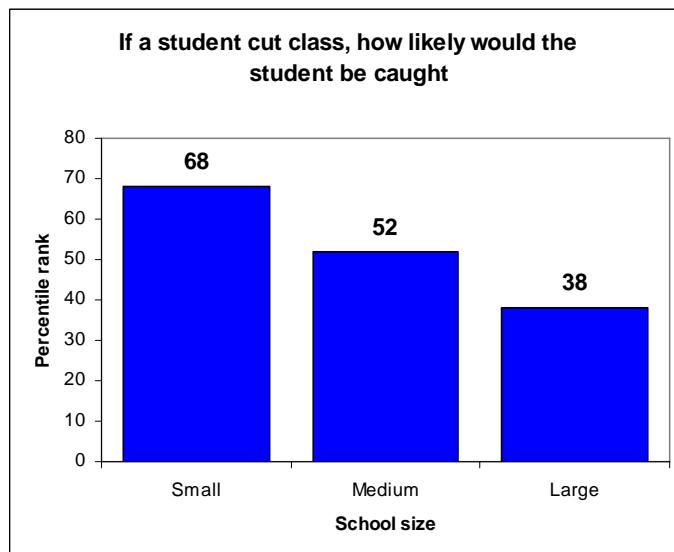


**Daily Structure scale**

How likely are the following?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score for Daily Structure</b>	<b>-.07</b>	<b>.09</b>	<b>.05</b>
If a student was wandering in the hallways during class time, how likely would an adult stop the student?	.01	.25*	.21*
If a student cut a class, how likely would the student be caught?	-.41*	.11	-.35*
If a student smoked a cigarette at school, how likely would the student be caught?	-.08	-.17*	-.19*
If two students got into a fight at school, how likely would teachers overlook it?	-.07	.18*	.07
If a student was five minutes late for class, how likely would teachers overlook it?	.19*	.00	.33*
If a student said something sarcastic to a teacher, how likely would the teacher overlook what the student said?	.18*	-.03	.19*

\* p. < .05. Source: Cornell, 2006

Although the total score for Daily Structure was not significantly correlated with school size, percentage of low-income students, or minority students, there were eleven statistically significant correlations with individual items. For example, students from larger schools report that students are less likely to be caught cutting a class, and that teachers would be more likely to overlook a sarcastic statement from a student. Students from schools with higher percentages of minority students reported that students would be more likely to get stopped wandering the hallways, but that teachers would overlook lateness to class as well as sarcastic remarks; however, they thought it was less likely for students to be caught cutting class or smoking cigarettes.



Students in small schools were more likely than students in large schools to report that students would be caught cutting class. Small schools rank at the 68<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to the 38<sup>th</sup> percentile for large schools.

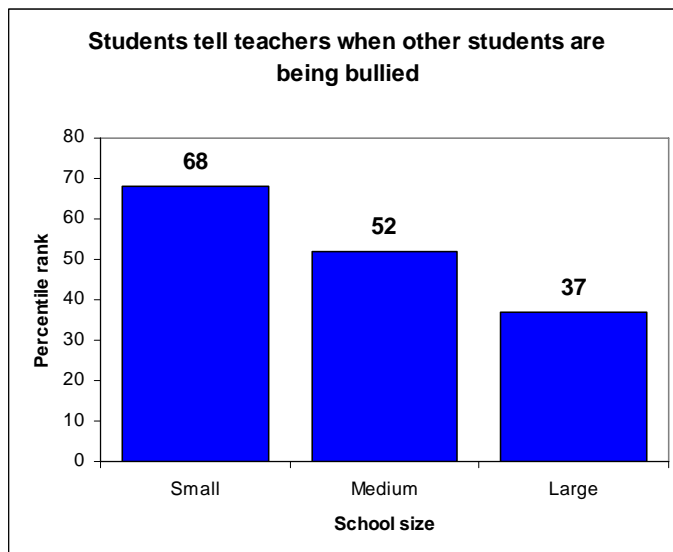
## Measures of Student Support

### Help Seeking Scale

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score for Help Seeking</b>	<b>-.17*</b>	<b>-.14*</b>	<b>-.32*</b>
If another student was bullying me, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.	<b>-.04</b>	<b>-.08</b>	<b>-.12*</b>
There are adults at this school I could turn to if I had a personal problem.	<b>-.14*</b>	<b>.01</b>	<b>-.08</b>
If I tell a teacher that someone is bullying me, the teacher will do something to help.	<b>-.01</b>	<b>-.25*</b>	<b>-.20*</b>
Students tell teachers when other students are being bullied.	<b>-.33*</b>	<b>.22*</b>	<b>-.12*</b>
If another student talked about killing someone, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.	<b>-.16*</b>	<b>-.11</b>	<b>-.30*</b>
If another student brought a gun to school, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.	<b>-.11</b>	<b>-.27*</b>	<b>-.48*</b>
Teachers here make it clear to students that bullying is not tolerated.	<b>-.06</b>	<b>-.22*</b>	<b>-.25*</b>
Students here try to stop bullying when they see it happening	<b>-.20*</b>	<b>-.06</b>	<b>-.29*</b>

\* p. < .05. Source: Cornell & Sheras, 2003

Overall, students from larger schools and schools with higher percentages of low-income and minority students reported less willingness to seek help from teachers or staff at their schools. There were fifteen statistically significant correlations for individual items.



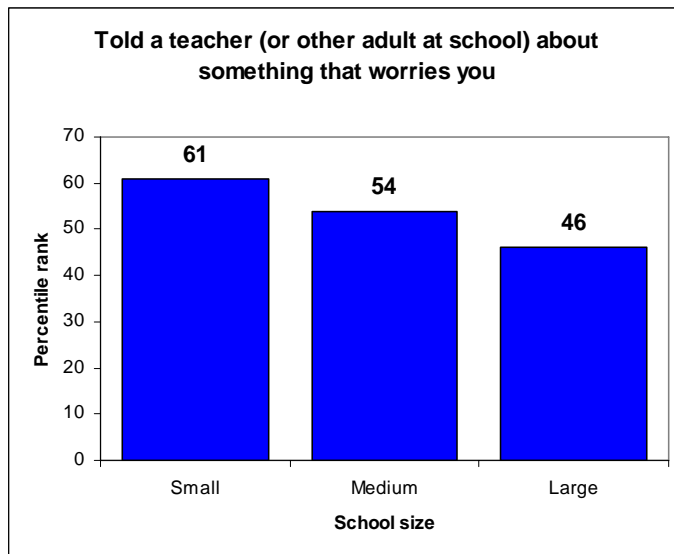
Students in small schools were more likely than students in large schools to report bullying behaviors to teachers. Small schools rank at the 68<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to the 37<sup>th</sup> percentile for large schools.

Help seeking behavior scale

During the past 6 months, how many times have you...	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total Score for Help Seeking Behavior</b>	<b>-.12*</b>	<b>.23*</b>	<b>.28*</b>
Gone to a teacher (or other adult at school) for academic help?	<b>.10</b>	<b>-.06</b>	<b>.28*</b>
Asked a teacher (or other adult at school) for advice?	<b>-.13*</b>	<b>.26*</b>	<b>.20*</b>
Told a teacher (or other adult at school) about something that worries you?	<b>-.17*</b>	<b>.29*</b>	<b>.25*</b>
Told a teacher (or other adult at school) about a friend who was in trouble?	<b>-.26*</b>	<b>.31*</b>	<b>.09</b>

\* p. < .05. Source: School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005)

Students from larger schools reported fewer efforts to seek help from a teacher than students in smaller schools. Conversely, students in schools with more low-income or minority students reported more help-seeking behavior.



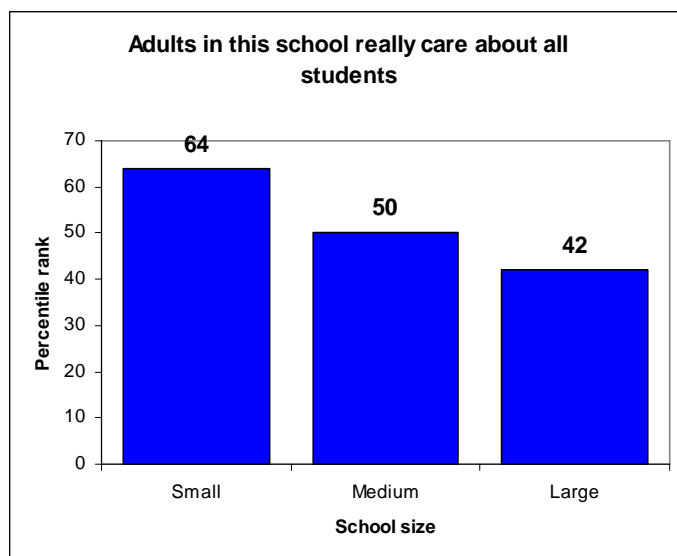
Students in small schools were more likely than students in large schools to tell a teacher or another adult about something worrying them. Small schools rank at the 61<sup>st</sup> percentile compared to the 46<sup>th</sup> percentile for large schools.

Learning/Working Environment scale

How much do you agree that adults in this school...	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score for Learning/Working Environment</b>	<b>-.17*</b>	<b>-.16*</b>	<b>-.30*</b>
Really care about all students.	-.21*	-.18*	-.37*
Acknowledge and pay attention to students.	-.14*	-.21*	-.30*
Want all students to do their best.	-.17*	-.16*	-.26*
Listen to what students have to say.	-.13*	-.18*	-.33*
Believe that every student can be a success.	-.22*	-.02	-.14*
Treat all students fairly.	-.02	-.18*	-.19*
Support and treat students with respect.	-.09	-.20*	-.31*
Feel a responsibility to improve the school.	-.20*	-.03	-.23*

\* p. < .05. Source: Austin & Duerr, 2005

In general, students from larger schools and schools with higher percentages of low-income and minority students feel less positively about the learning/working environment within their school. Most notably, students in larger schools are less likely to believe that adults feel that every student can be a success and that they really care about all students. Similarly, students in schools with a larger percentage of minority students perceived the adults in the school as less caring and interested in listening.



Students in small schools were more likely than students in large schools to perceive that adults in school really care about all students. Small schools rank at the 64<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to the 42<sup>nd</sup> percentile for large schools.

## Measures of Engagement

### Commitment to school scale

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total Score for Commitment to School</b>	<b>.08</b>	<b>-.12*</b>	<b>.19*</b>
You like school a lot	.04	-.01	.12*
School is boring to you.	.05	-.16*	-.17*
You do poorly at school.	-.04	.11	-.08
You don't really belong at school.	-.08	.14*	-.15*
Homework is a waste of time.	.00	-.09	-.26*
You try hard at school.	-.07	.01	.11
You usually finish your homework.	.04	-.35*	-.22*
Getting good grades is very important to you.	.18*	-.15*	.23*
Sometimes you do extra work to improve your grades.	.23*	-.24*	.23*

p. < .05. *Source:* Thornberry, Lizotte, Krohn, Farnworth, Jang, 1991

Overall, students from schools with higher percentages of low-income students reported less of a commitment to school. However, students from schools with a higher percentage of minority students reported more of a commitment to school.

Belief in school rules scale

This section asks you what your friends think, not what you do. In your school, is it OK with your friends to do the following:	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total Score for Belief in School Rules</b>	<b>-.02</b>	<b>-.21*</b>	<b>-.19*</b>
Be late for school?	.02	-.13*	-.21*
Cut a couple of classes?	.22*	.11	.28*
Skip school for a whole day?	-.21*	.12*	-.17*
Cheat on tests?	.03	.12*	.11
Copy someone else's homework?	.18*	-.20*	-.02
Get into physical fights?	-.09	.31*	.19*
Belong to gangs?	.05	.31*	.36*
Steal belongings from school, a student, or a teacher?	.16*	.09	.21*
Destroy or damage school property?	.05	.15*	.16*
Smoke on school grounds?	-.08	.35*	.16*
Drink alcohol during the school day?	-.07	.22*	.08
Use illegal weapons during the school day?	-.09	.32*	.17*
Bring weapons to school?	-.10	.29*	.15*
Abuse teachers physically?	-.05	.37*	.22*
Talk back to teachers?	.12*	.11	-.36*
Disobey school rules?	.10	.04	.15*

\* p. < .05. Source: Stewart. 2003

Overall, students from schools with higher percentages of low-income and minority students reported less acceptance of school rules among their friends.

Aggressive attitudes scale

How much do you agree or disagree with following?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total Score for Aggressive Attitudes</b>	<b>-.07</b>	<b>.39*</b>	<b>.34*</b>
It feels good when I hit someone.	-.09	.34*	.29*
If you fight a lot, everyone will look up to you.	.01	.37*	.40*
Sometimes you only have two choices: get punched or punch the other person first.	-.09	.43*	.35*
If you are afraid to fight, you won't have many friends.	-.06	.37*	.38*
Students who are bullied or teased mostly deserve it.	-.13*	.24*	.02
Bullying is sometimes fun to do.	.06	.00	.09

\* p. < .05. Source: Cornell & Sheras, 2003

Students from schools with higher percentages of low-income and minority students expressed higher agreement with aggressive beliefs.

Trust in teacher authority scale

How much do you agree or disagree with following?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total Score for Teacher Authority</b>	<b>-.12*</b>	<b>-.13*</b>	<b>-.18*</b>
It is sometimes 'ok' to disobey the teacher.	.10	-.01	.07
Students should obey teachers even if it goes against what they want to do.	-.20*	-.05	-.16*
Respect for teachers' authority is important for students to have.	-.01	-.08	.03
I do what teachers ask me to do, even if I don't want to do it.	.01	-.24*	-.17*
I can trust the way teachers use their power and authority.	-.14*	-.17*	-.30*

\* p. < .05. Source: Gregory, 2005

Overall, students from larger schools and from schools with higher percentages of low-income and minority students reported less trust in teacher authority.

School involvement scale

During the past 6 months, have you participated in any of the following extra-curricular activities sponsored by your school such as:	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score for School Involvement</b>	<b>-.19*</b>	<b>-.07</b>	<b>-.17*</b>
Athletic teams at school?	-.17*	-.23*	-.30*
Spirit groups, for example, Cheerleading or Pep Club?	-.28*	.07	-.19*
Performing arts, for example, Band, Orchestra, or Drama?	.04	-.18*	.02
Academic clubs, for example, Debate Team, Honor Society, Spanish Club, or Math Club?	-.25*	.10	-.15*
School government?	-.17*	.16*	.15*
Service clubs, for example Key Club or other service oriented groups?	-.11	.00	-.18*
During the past 6 months, have you participated in an extra-curricular activity that is not mentioned above?	.13*	-.04	.16*

\* p. < .05. Source: School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005)

In general, students from larger schools and schools with a larger minority population reported less involvement in school activities.

Academic press scale

How true is this in your school?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total Score for Academic Press</b>	<b>-.05</b>	<b>.06</b>	<b>.04</b>
When I've figured out how to do a problem, my teachers give me more challenging problems to think about.	.04	-.02	.03
My teachers press me to do thoughtful work.	.03	-.14*	-.02
When I'm working out a problem, my teachers tell me to keep thinking until I really understand.	-.03	-.02	-.04
My teachers don't let me do just easy work, but make me think.	-.09	.17*	.05
My teachers make sure that the work I do really makes me think.	-.05	.08	.05
My teachers accept nothing less than my full effort.	-.12*	.19*	.11

\* p. < .05. Source: Academic Press (Midgley et al., 2000)

The total score for Academic press was not significantly correlated with school demographics.



**Victimization**

Total victimization index

This year in school have any of the following happened to you personally in the school?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total index score for Total Victimization</b>	<b>.03</b>	<b>.03</b>	<b>.04</b>
Damage to personal property worth more than \$10.	.07	.02	.02
Theft of personal property worth more than \$10.	.21*	-.20*	.11
Was physically attacked and had to see a doctor	-.02	.26*	.15*
Was physically attacked, but not serious enough to see a doctor.	-.02	.05	.07
Received obscene remarks or gestures from a student.	-.09	-.01	-.12*
Was threatened in remarks by a student.	-.07	.08	.02
Had a weapon pulled on me.	.12*	.08	.14*

Source: Victimization (Gottfredson, 1999)

The overall scale score for Total victimization was not statistically correlated with school demographics. However, there were seven significant correlations for individual items. For example, students from larger schools were more likely to report theft of personal property and students from schools with higher percentages of low-income students were less likely to report theft, but more likely to report being physically attacked and having to see a doctor.

Major Victimization Scale

This year in school have any of the following happened to you personally in the school?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total scale score for Major Victimization</b>	<b>.02</b>	<b>.15*</b>	<b>.15*</b>
Was physically attacked and had to see a doctor	-.02	.26*	.15*
Was physically attacked, but not serious enough to see a doctor.	-.02	.05	.07
Had a weapon pulled on me.	.12*	.08	.14*

From Victimization (Gottfredson, 1999)

Overall, students from schools with higher percentages of low-income and minority students were more likely to report major victimization.

Minor victimization index

This year in school have any of the following happened to you personally in the school?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total index score for Minor Victimization</b>	<b>.03</b>	<b>-.03</b>	<b>-.01</b>
Damage to personal property worth more than \$10	.07	.02	.02
Theft of personal property worth more than \$10	.21*	-.20*	.11
Received obscene remarks or gestures from a student	-.09	-.01	-.16*
Was threatened in remarks by a student	-.07	.08	.02

From Victimization (Gottfredson, 1999)

Minor victimization as a whole was not significantly correlated with school demographics.

Bullying climate scale

Experiences of teasing and bullying at school	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score for Bullying Climate scale</b>	<b>.11</b>	<b>.15*</b>	<b>.07</b>
Bullying is a problem at this school.	.12*	.09	.01
Students here often get teased about their clothing or physical appearance.	.11	.20*	.27*
Students here often get put down because of their race or ethnicity.	.27*	-.03	.06
New students are made to feel welcome here by other students.	.02	-.17*	.02
Students from different neighborhoods get along well together here.	-.02	-.42*	-.35*
There is a lot of teasing about sexual topics at this school.	.08	-.17*	-.19*
Students at this school accept me for who I am.	.16*	-.05	.23*

Source: Bullying School Climate Survey (Cornell & Sheras, 2003)

Overall, students from schools with higher percentages of low-income students reported more bullying and teasing. There were eleven statistically significant correlations for individual items.

Bullying index

How often have you experienced the following?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total index score for Bullying</b>	<b>.00</b>	<b>-.15*</b>	<b>-.17*</b>
Bullying is defined as the use of one’s strength or status to injure, threaten, or embarrass another person. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or social. It is not bullying when two students of about the same strength argue or fight. By this definition, I have been bullied in the past month.	<b>-.01</b>	<b>-.12*</b>	<b>-.14*</b>
Physical bullying involves repeatedly hitting, kicking, or shoving someone weaker on purpose. By this definition, I have been physically bullied in the past month.	<b>-.06</b>	<b>.18*</b>	<b>.07</b>
Verbal bullying involves repeatedly teasing, putting down, or insulting someone on purpose. By this definition, I have been verbally bullied in the past month.	<b>-.07</b>	<b>-.13*</b>	<b>-.19*</b>
Social bullying involves getting others repeatedly to ignore or exclude someone on purpose. By this definition, I have been socially bullied in the past month.	<b>-.08</b>	<b>-.07</b>	<b>-.16*</b>

Source: Bullying (Cornell & Sheras, 2003)

Students from schools with higher percentages of low-income and minority students were less likely to report bullying.

Bullying reporting questions

<b>Have you told anyone that you were bullied in the past 30 days at school?</b>	<b>Correlations</b>		
	<b>School Size</b>	<b>% Free/Reduced Meals</b>	<b>% Nonwhite</b>
Proportion of students who said, "I have not been bullied"	<b>.09</b>	<b>.13*</b>	<b>.19*</b>
Proportion of students who said, "I have been bullied, but I have not told anyone"	<b>-.10</b>	<b>-.11</b>	<b>-.20*</b>
Proportion of students who said, "I have told someone"	<b>-.03</b>	<b>-.09</b>	<b>-.07</b>

Students from schools with higher percentages of low-income and minority students were more likely to report that they had not been bullied. However, if students from schools with larger minority populations were bullied, they were more likely not to tell anyone.

<b>I have told these persons that I was bullied in the past 30 days at school;</b>	<b>Correlations</b>		
	<b>School Size</b>	<b>% Free/Reduced Meals</b>	<b>% Nonwhite</b>
No one	<b>-.05</b>	<b>.13*</b>	<b>.02</b>
A parent	<b>.00</b>	<b>-.07</b>	<b>-.08</b>
A friend	<b>.07</b>	<b>-.19*</b>	<b>-.08</b>
A teacher or other adult at school	<b>-.06</b>	<b>.15*</b>	<b>.12*</b>
Someone else	<b>.08</b>	<b>-.06</b>	<b>.01</b>

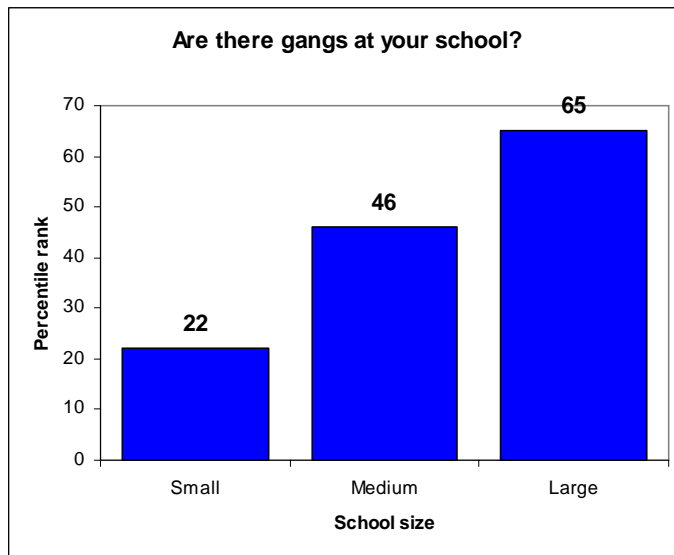
Students from schools with higher percentages of low-income students were less likely to tell anyone that they had been bullied, especially friends. If students from schools with higher low-income and minority students were bullied, they were more likely to tell a teacher or adult at school.

**Gangs**

How true is this in your school?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
Are there any gangs at your school?	<b>.60*</b>	<b>-.12*</b>	<b>.50*</b>
During the last 6 months, how often have gangs been involved in fights, attacks, or other violence at your school?	<b>.43*</b>	<b>.09</b>	<b>.48*</b>
Have gangs been involved in the sale of drugs at your school in the last 6 months?	<b>.52*</b>	<b>-.18*</b>	<b>.32*</b>

\* p. < .05. *Source:* School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005)

Students from larger schools were more likely to report the presence of gangs at schools and gang involvement in the sale of drugs at school. Students from schools with higher minority populations were also more likely to report gang involvement. However, students from schools with higher percentages of low-income students were less likely to report gang presence. It should be noted that these results reflect *perceptions* of gang presence and do not necessarily mean the actual presence or absence of gangs. Data from school safety audits and law enforcement could be used to verify these perceptions.



Students in large schools were more likely than students in small schools to report the presence of gangs in school. Large schools rank at the 65<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to the 22<sup>nd</sup> percentile for small schools.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Teacher Perceptions of School Climate Differences Associated with Student Enrollment, Poverty, and Minority Status**

In this section, teacher surveys are aggregated so that each school has a single score representing the average of all the teachers for that school who completed the survey. The scores for each school were correlated with the size of the school (Fall 2006 total enrollment for grades 9-12), the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced price meals (low income), and the percentage of minority (nonwhite) students at the school.

The overall sample size consisted of 286 schools; however, for a small number of schools, there are missing data for some of the variables. Correlations are presented first for the total score for each scale or index and then for each of the items that are part of the scale or index.

The analyses presented here are simple correlations and they do not prove the existence of a causal relationship. However, the presence of a statistically significant correlation does indicate the need for further study and examination in future reports. It is also important to recognize that school size is correlated  $-.42$  with the percentage of low income students and  $.35$  with the percentage of minority students in the school, and that the percentage of low income students is correlated  $.31$  with the percentage of minority students. In future analyses, we will attempt to disentangle the complex and interacting effects of these variables on school climate.

Throughout this section we have prepared some bar charts that allow readers to better appreciate what the correlations mean in practical terms. We followed three conventions in creating most of these charts:

1. School enrollment was classified as small, medium, and large using the cut-offs used in Virginia athletics: under 700, 700-1500, and over 1500 students.
2. For other variables that did not have convenient cut-off points, we divided schools into groups by rank ordering the schools and classifying the top third as “high,” the middle third as “medium,” and the lower third as “low.”
3. Finally, we transformed the scores on most scales into percentiles so that they will be easier to interpret. For example, rather than present a chart showing the average score for a group of schools, we report the percentile for the mean of these schools among all schools.

We have selectively chosen some of the statistically significant correlations to mention in the text and to depict in charts. The reader is urged to review all of the statistically significant results in order to gain a more complete understanding of the findings. Effect sizes are reported because in a large sample even small group differences can be statistically significant.

The reader is reminded that all of these results are based on the perceptions of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students and teachers, which do not necessarily represent the school as a whole.

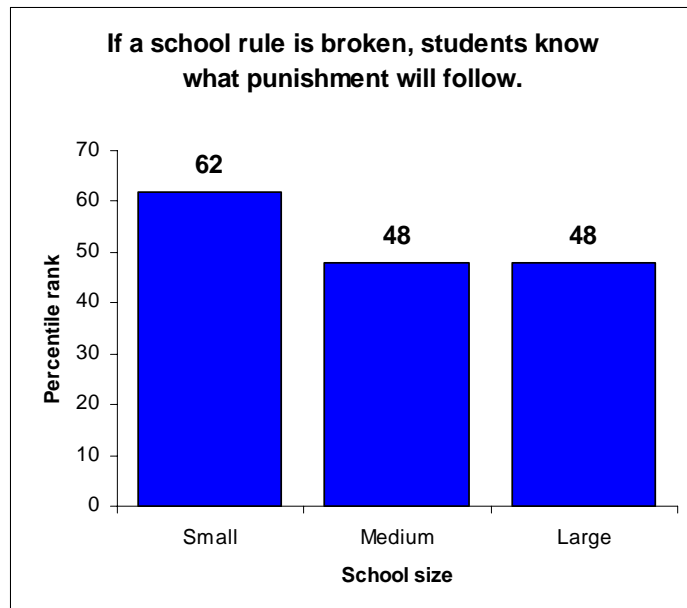
### Measures of School Structure

Thinking about your school over the last 6 months, would you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following...	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total Score for Experience of School Rules</b>	<b>-.14*</b>	<b>-.01</b>	<b>-.25*</b>
Everyone knows the school rules for student conduct.	<b>-.10</b>	<b>-.05</b>	<b>-.18*</b>
The school rules are fair.	<b>-.02</b>	<b>-.15*</b>	<b>-.17*</b>
The punishment for breaking school rules is the same no matter who you are.	<b>-.09</b>	<b>-.05</b>	<b>-.25*</b>
The school rules are strictly enforced.	<b>-.14*</b>	<b>-.02</b>	<b>-.26*</b>
If a school rule is broken, students know what kind of punishment will follow.	<b>-.20*</b>	<b>.04</b>	<b>-.24*</b>
We have a strict dress code at school.	<b>-.10</b>	<b>.07</b>	<b>-.05</b>
If a student breaks the rules at this school, he or she will be punished.	<b>-.14*</b>	<b>.03</b>	<b>-.27*</b>

\* p. < .05. Source: School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005)

Teachers in larger schools and schools with proportionately more minority students were less likely to perceive the school rules as strict, but fair, and consistently enforced than teachers from schools that were smaller or had proportionately fewer minority students.

One example is presented in the adjacent chart. Teachers in medium and larger schools were less likely than teachers in smaller schools to report that students know what punishment will follow from breaking a rule. Medium and large schools (> 700 students) rank at about the 48<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to the 62<sup>nd</sup> percentile for small schools (< 700 students).



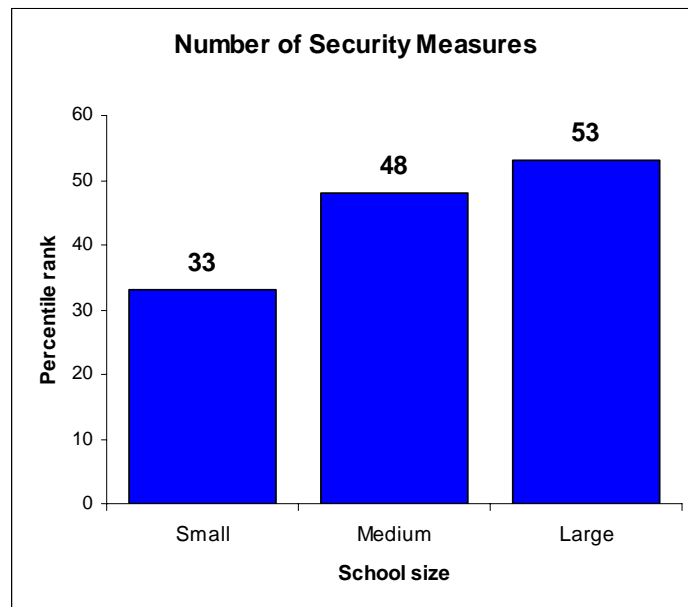
**Security measures index**

Does your school take any of these measures to make sure students are safe	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total index score of security measures</b>	<b>.18*</b>	<b>.09</b>	<b>.22*</b>
Security guards or assigned police officers?	.35*	-.16*	.14*
Other school staff or other adults supervising the hallways?	-.04	-.03	-.15*
Metal detectors?	.03	.33*	.47*
Locked entrance or exit doors during the day?	.22*	-.11	.13*
A requirement that visitors sign in?	.15*	-.23*	-.08
Locker checks?	-.01	.11	-.11
A requirement that students wear badges or picture identification?	.05	.24*	.36*
One or more security cameras to monitor the school?	.13*	.03	.12*
A code of student conduct (written rules for students to follow)?	.08	-.16*	-.10

\* p. < .05. Source: School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005)

Teachers in larger schools and schools with proportionately more minority students reported more security measures than teachers from smaller schools and teachers with proportionately fewer minority students. Notably, according to teachers, schools with proportionately more minority students were substantially more likely to use metal detectors and require student identification.

Teachers in larger schools were more likely to report higher numbers of security measures implemented in their schools than teachers in smaller schools. Large schools (> 1,500 students) rank at about the 53<sup>rd</sup> percentile compared to the 33<sup>rd</sup> percentile for small schools (< 700 students).





**Awareness of zero tolerance policies index**

Zero tolerance means that a student is automatically expelled or given a lengthy suspension for any violation of the rule. Does your school have zero tolerance for:	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score for awareness of zero tolerance policies</b>	<b>-.03</b>	<b>.12*</b>	<b>.01</b>
Bringing a gun to school?	.08	-.06	.01
Bringing a BB gun, pellet gun, or similar gun to school?	.08	.01	.05
Bringing a toy gun or something that looks like a gun to school?	.06	-.00	.04
Bringing in edged or cutting weapons such as knives?	.20*	-.14*	.09
Bringing illegal drugs to school?	-.03	-.04	-.08
Bringing legal drugs, such as prescription drugs and over the counter medications, to school?	.10	.03	-.04
Bringing alcohol to school?	-.03	.05	-.02
Belonging to a gang?	-.08	.07	-.20*
Fighting at school?	.04	-.03	-.09
Does your school have zero tolerance for some other reason not mentioned above?	.14*	-.02	.13*

\* p. < .05. Source: Virginia Dept. of Criminal Justice Services, 2005

Teachers in schools with proportionately larger numbers of low income students reported more zero tolerance policies than teachers from other schools.

**Time out of class items**

	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
How many minutes do students have for lunch on a normal day?	.10	-.10	.01
How many minutes do students have when changing classes or going from one class to the next?	.38*	-.22*	-.04
How many times do students change classes on a normal day?	-.30*	.04	-.22*

\* p. < .05.

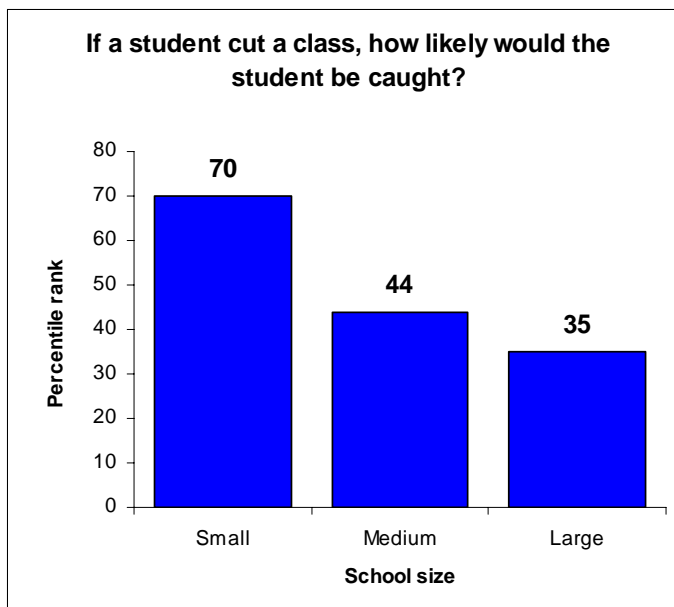
In general, teachers in larger schools report that students have more time between classes, but fewer class changes throughout the day. Schools with more low-income students permit less time to change classes, and schools with more minority students tend to have fewer class changes during a normal day.

**Daily structure scale**

How likely are the following?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score for Daily Structure</b>	<b>-.28*</b>	<b>.01</b>	<b>-.28*</b>
If a student was wandering in the hallways during class time, how likely would an adult stop the student?	<b>-.10</b>	<b>.15*</b>	<b>.03</b>
If a student cut a class, how likely would the student be caught?	<b>-.39*</b>	<b>-.02</b>	<b>-.47*</b>
If a student smoked a cigarette at school, how likely would the student be caught?	<b>-.19*</b>	<b>-.02</b>	<b>-.19*</b>
If two students got into a fight at school, how likely would they get caught?	<b>-.14*</b>	<b>.06</b>	<b>-.05</b>
If a student was five minutes late for class, how likely would teachers overlook it?	<b>.15*</b>	<b>.14*</b>	<b>.30*</b>
If a student said something sarcastic to a teacher, how likely would the teacher overlook what the student said?	<b>.18*</b>	<b>-.08</b>	<b>.14*</b>

\* p. < .05. Source: Cornell, 2006

In larger schools and schools with more minority students, teachers perceive less daily structure. Correlations with individual items show that teachers report that students in these schools are less likely to be caught cutting a class and smoking. Similarly, these teachers were more likely to report that tardiness and sarcasm directed at a teacher would be overlooked.



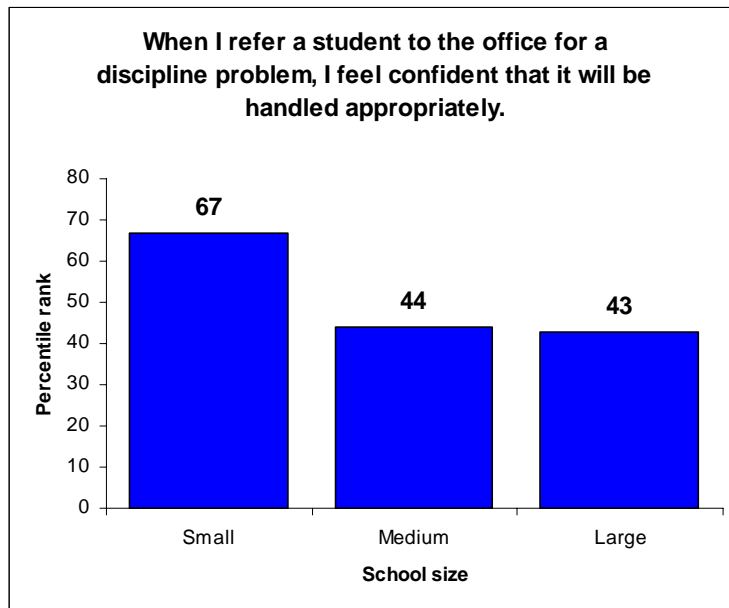
Teachers in larger schools were less likely than teachers in smaller schools to report that students would be caught for cutting class. Large schools (> 1,500 students) rank at about the 35<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to small schools (< 700 students) that rank at the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile.

**Perception of administration and discipline index**

	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total index score for perception of administration and discipline</b>	<b>-.15*</b>	<b>-.04</b>	<b>-.29*</b>
I trust that my administration will handle discipline fairly.	<b>-.14*</b>	<b>-.01</b>	<b>-.26*</b>
When I refer a student to the office for a discipline problem, I feel confident that it will be handled appropriately.	<b>-.22*</b>	<b>.01</b>	<b>-.29*</b>
Disciplinary consequences for students at this school tend to be too harsh.	<b>-.12</b>	<b>.10</b>	<b>-.04</b>

\* p. < .05. Source: Austin & Duerr, 2005

In general, teachers in larger schools and teachers in schools with more minority students had a more negative perception of how administrators handled discipline.



Teachers in small schools were more likely than those in larger schools to report that when referring a student for a discipline problem they feel confident that the problem will be handled appropriately. Small schools rank at about the 67<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to larger schools with 700 or more students that rank at about the 43<sup>rd</sup> percentile.

## Measures of Student Support

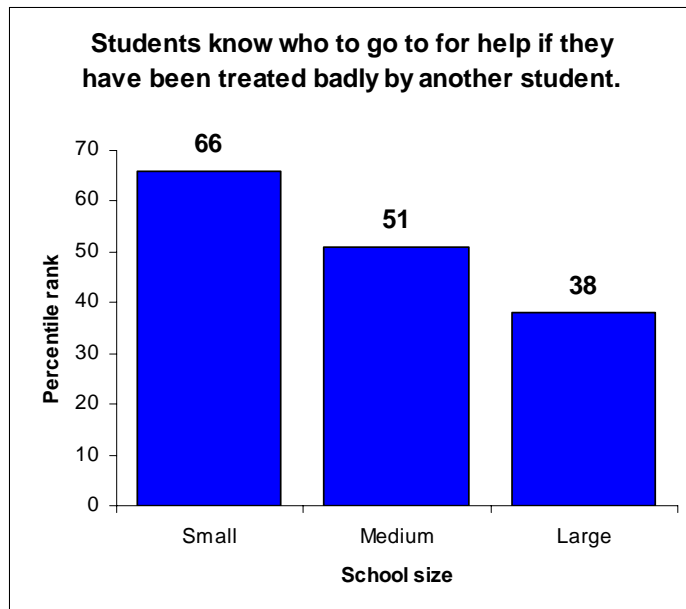
### Help seeking scale

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score for Help Seeking</b>	<b>-.26*</b>	<b>-.02</b>	<b>-.32*</b>
Students feel free to ask for help from teachers if there is a problem with a student.	<b>-.19*</b>	<b>-.04</b>	<b>-.24*</b>
Teachers know when students are being picked on or being bullied.	<b>-.19*</b>	<b>.21*</b>	<b>-.04</b>
Students are encouraged to report bullying and aggression.	<b>-.08</b>	<b>-.08</b>	<b>-.23*</b>
Students know who to go to for help if they have been treated badly by another student.	<b>-.29*</b>	<b>.07</b>	<b>-.19*</b>
Students report it when one student hits another.	<b>-.28*</b>	<b>-.07</b>	<b>-.40*</b>
Teachers take action to solve the problem when students report bullying.	<b>-.10</b>	<b>-.15*</b>	<b>-.26*</b>

\* p. < .05. Source: Cornell & Sheras, 2003

According to teacher reports, students are less likely to seek help for problems related to peer aggression in schools that are larger and in schools that have a larger percentage of minority students.

Teachers in larger schools were less likely than teachers in smaller schools to report that students know who to go to for help when treated badly by a peer. Large schools rank at about the 38<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to small schools that rank at the 66<sup>th</sup> percentile.



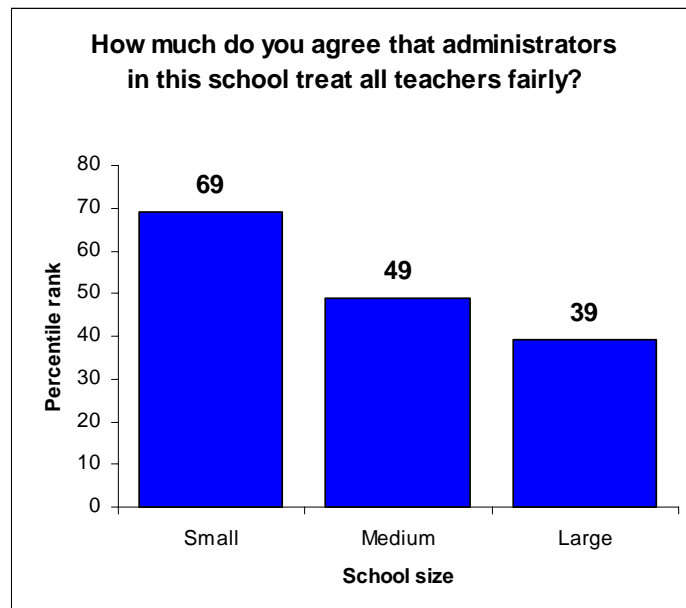
**Learning/Working environment scale**

How much do you agree that administrators in this school...	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score of Learning/Working Environment</b>	<b>-.23*</b>	<b>-.01</b>	<b>-.29*</b>
Really care about all teachers.	-.26*	.02	-.29*
Acknowledge and pay attention to teachers.	-.25*	.01	-.31*
Want all teachers to do their best.	-.11	-.06	-.22*
Listen to what teachers have to say.	-.22*	.03	-.25*
Believe that every teacher can be a success.	-.20*	-.01	-.24*
Treat all teachers fairly.	-.25*	.02	-.28*
Support and treat each other with respect.	-.18*	-.06	-.28*
Feel a responsibility to improve the school.	-.19*	-.02	-.22*

\* p. < .05. Source: Austin & Duerr, 2005

In general, teachers in larger schools and in schools with a higher percentage of minority students tend to have a more negative perception of their working environment.

Teachers in large schools were less likely to agree that administrators in their school treat all teachers fairly as compared to teachers in smaller schools. There is a 30 point difference in percentile rank between large schools (39<sup>th</sup> percentile) and small schools (69<sup>th</sup> percentile).



**Health and prevention items**

How much do you agree that this school...	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score of Health and Prevention Items</b>	<b>.09</b>	<b>-.17*</b>	<b>-.19*</b>
Collaborates well with community organizations to help address substance abuse or other problems among youth.	<b>.06</b>	<b>-.13*</b>	<b>-.17*</b>
Provides effective confidential support and referral services for students needing help because of substance abuse, violence, or other problems.	<b>.10</b>	<b>.19*</b>	<b>-.19*</b>

\* p. < .05.

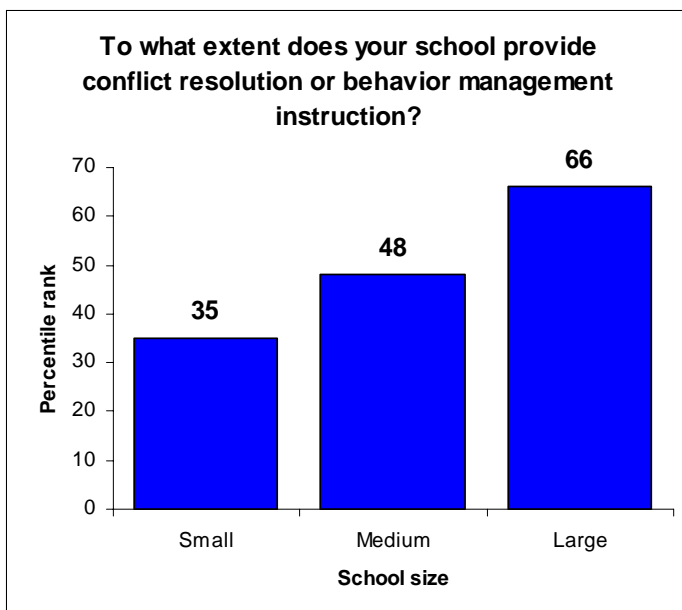
School size was not related to the teachers’ perceptions of health and prevention programming. However, teachers in schools with low-income students and schools with more minority students were less likely to have positive perceptions of how the school collaborates with community organizations and whether the school provides effective support and referral services.

**Health and prevention programs scale**

To what extent does this school...	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score of Health and Prevention Programs</b>	<b>.12*</b>	<b>-.18*</b>	<b>-.14*</b>
Foster youth social and emotional development or resilience?	.04	-.17*	-.17*
Provide nutritional instruction?	.03	.00	-.07
Provide opportunities for physical education and activity?	.07	-.17*	-.08
Provide alcohol or drug use prevention instruction?	.12*	-.19*	-.11
Provide tobacco use prevention instruction?	.10	-.14*	-.12*
Provide conflict resolution or behavior management instruction?	.31*	-.10	.18*
Provide character education?	.01	-.08	-.15*
Provide harassment or bullying prevention?	-.03	-.10	-.20*
Provide services for students with disabilities or other special needs?	.21*	-.33*	-.23*

\* p. < .05. Source: Austin & Duerr, 2005

Overall, teachers in larger schools had more positive impressions about the health and prevention programs implemented in their schools. In contrast, teachers in schools with higher percentages of low income students and higher percentages of minority students had less positive perceptions of the health and prevention programs in their schools.



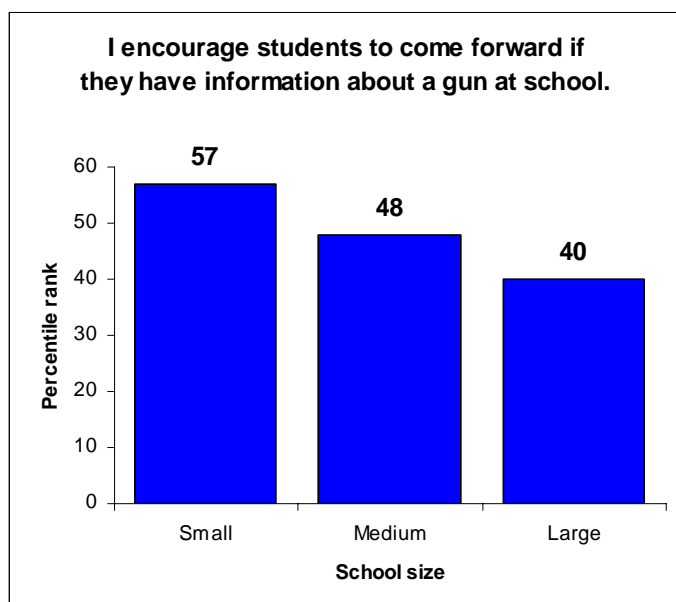
According to teacher reports, larger schools tended to provide more conflict resolution or behavior management instruction than smaller schools. Large schools rank at about the 66<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to the 35<sup>th</sup> percentile for small schools.

**Encouragement of help seeking scale**

How much do you agree with the following statements...	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score for Encouragement of Help Seeking</b>	<b>-.05</b>	<b>.08</b>	<b>-.11</b>
I encourage students to come to me for academic help.	<b>.14*</b>	<b>-.10</b>	<b>.02</b>
I let students know that I am available to talk outside of class.	<b>.17*</b>	<b>-.11</b>	<b>-.01</b>
I encourage students to turn to me with personal problems.	<b>-.02</b>	<b>.18*</b>	<b>.07</b>
I encourage students to tell me if they are being bullied.	<b>-.04</b>	<b>.07</b>	<b>-.11</b>
I encourage students to come forward if they have information about a gun at school.	<b>-.19*</b>	<b>.14*</b>	<b>-.20*</b>
I encourage students to come forward if they have information about a student who plans to hurt him/herself or someone else.	<b>-.17*</b>	<b>.12</b>	<b>-.19*</b>
I believe that teachers should be mentors as well as instructors.	<b>-.07</b>	<b>.03</b>	<b>-.13*</b>

\* p. < .05.

Although the total score for Encouragement of Help Seeking was not significantly correlated to school size, percentage of low-income students, or minority students, there were nine statistically significant correlations with individual items on this scale. Teachers from schools that were larger, or had higher percentages of minority students were less likely to encourage students to report the presence of a gun and were less encouraging of students to report knowledge of a peer with intent to harm themselves or others. In addition, teachers in schools with more minority students were less likely to believe that teachers should be mentors as well as instructors. Conversely, teachers from larger schools were more likely to encourage students to approach them for academic help and assure their students of their availability outside of class, and teachers from schools with more low-income students were more likely to encourage students to come to them with personal problems.



Teachers in large schools were less likely than teachers in small schools to report that they encourage students to come forward if they have information about a gun at school. Large schools rank at about the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to the 57<sup>th</sup> percentile for small schools



## Measures of Student Engagement

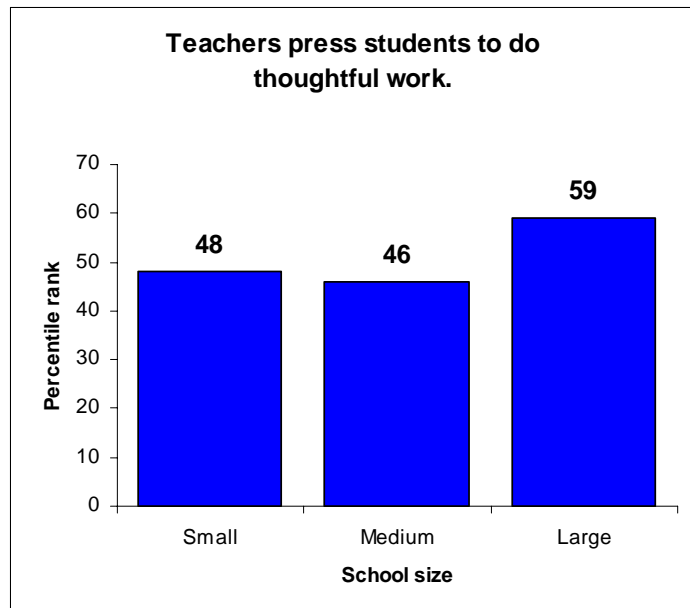
### Academic press scale

How true is this in your school?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score for Academic Press</b>	<b>.08</b>	<b>-.08</b>	<b>-.04</b>
When students figure out how to do a problem, teachers give them more challenging problems to think about.	<b>.14*</b>	<b>-.12</b>	<b>-.04</b>
Teachers press students to do thoughtful work.	<b>.14*</b>	<b>-.16*</b>	<b>-.08</b>
When students are working out a problem, teachers tell them to keep thinking until they really understand.	<b>-.01</b>	<b>-.00</b>	<b>-.01</b>
Teachers don't let students just do easy work, but make them think.	<b>.08</b>	<b>-.09</b>	<b>-.04</b>
Teachers make sure that the work students do really makes them think.	<b>.14*</b>	<b>-.07</b>	<b>.06</b>
Teachers accept nothing less than students' full effort.	<b>-.05</b>	<b>.03</b>	<b>-.08</b>

\* p. < .05. Source: Midgley et al., 2000

There were no statistically significant correlations between the overall score for Academic Press and the three school demographics. However, teachers from larger schools were more likely to report that they gave more challenging problems, pressed students to do thoughtful work, and made sure the work really makes students think. Teachers in schools with more low income students reported being less likely to press students to do thoughtful work.

Teachers in large schools were more likely than teachers in small and medium schools to report that teachers in their schools press students to do thoughtful work. Large schools rank at about the 59<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to small schools that rank at the 48<sup>th</sup> percentile and medium schools that rank at the 46<sup>th</sup> percentile.



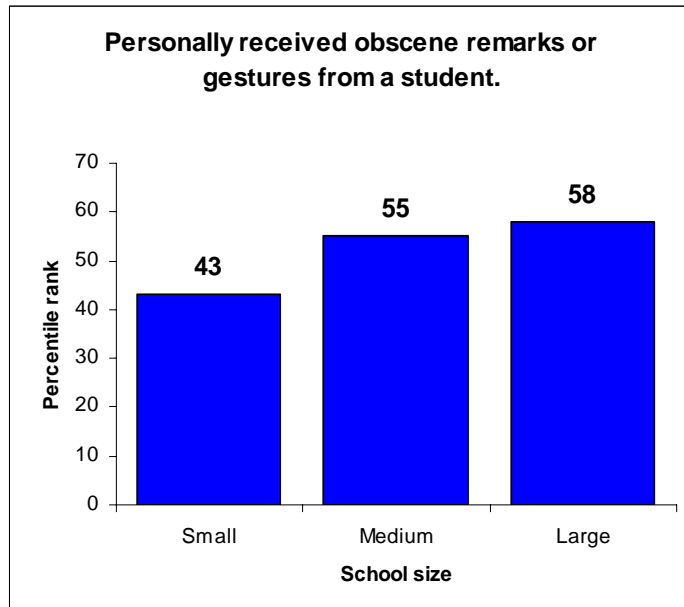
## Measures of Teacher Victimization

### Total victimization index

This year in school have any of the following happened to you personally in the school?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total index score of total victimization</b>	<b>.13*</b>	<b>.23*</b>	<b>.44*</b>
Damage to personal property worth more than \$10.	.09	.06	.17*
Theft of personal property worth more than \$10.	.03	.12*	.18*
Was physically attacked and had to see a doctor.	-.06	.18*	.11
Was physically attacked, but not seriously enough to see a doctor.	.05	.13*	.18*
Received obscene remarks or gestures from a student.	.18*	.18*	.40*
Was threatened in remarks by a student.	.09	.29*	.49*
Had a weapon pulled on me.	-.02	.04	.03
Was spoken to in a rude or disrespectful manner by a student.	.10	.12	.29*

\* p. < .05. *Source:* Gottfredson, 1999

Teachers in schools with larger enrollments, and schools with a higher percentage of low-income students, and schools with a higher percentage of minority students all reported a higher level of victimization. The strongest correlations were between the percentage of minority students and teachers being threatened and receiving obscene remarks or gestures in schools .



Teachers from larger schools indicated that they were more likely to personally receive obscene remarks or gestures from a student than teachers from smaller schools. Large schools rank at about the 58<sup>th</sup> percentile compared to the 43<sup>rd</sup> percentile for small schools.

**More severe victimization index**

This year in school have any of the following happened to you personally in the school?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total index score for more severe victimization</b>	<b>.00</b>	<b>.17*</b>	<b>.16*</b>
Was physically attacked and had to see a doctor.	<b>-.06</b>	<b>.18*</b>	<b>.11</b>
Was physically attacked, but not seriously enough to see a doctor.	<b>.05</b>	<b>.13*</b>	<b>.18*</b>
Had a weapon pulled on me.	<b>-.02</b>	<b>.04</b>	<b>.03</b>

\* p. < .05. Source: Gottfredson, 1999

Teachers in schools with a higher percentage of low-income students and schools with a higher percentage of minority students reported higher rates of more serious victimization such as physical assaults.

**Minor victimization index**

This year in school have any of the following happened to you personally in the school?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total index score of minor victimization</b>	<b>.14*</b>	<b>.22*</b>	<b>.44*</b>
Damage to personal property worth more than \$10.	<b>.09</b>	<b>.06</b>	<b>.17*</b>
Theft of personal property worth more than \$10.	<b>.03</b>	<b>.12*</b>	<b>.18*</b>
Received obscene remarks or gestures from a student.	<b>.18*</b>	<b>.18*</b>	<b>.40*</b>
Was threatened in remarks by a student.	<b>.09</b>	<b>.29*</b>	<b>.49*</b>
Was spoken to in a rude or disrespectful manner by a student.	<b>.10</b>	<b>.12</b>	<b>.29*</b>

\* p. < .05. Source: Gottfredson, 1999

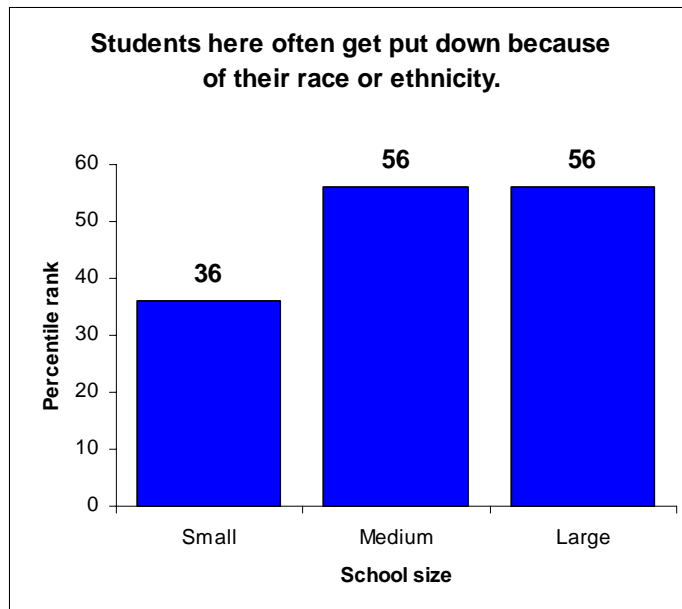
Overall, teachers in larger schools and schools with a higher percentage of low-income and schools with higher percentages of minority students reported higher rates of minor victimization. The strongest correlations were associated with the percentage of minority students in the school.

**Bullying climate scale**

Experiences of Bullying	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
<b>Total score of Bullying Climate</b>	<b>.15*</b>	<b>.10</b>	<b>.28*</b>
New students are made to feel welcome here by other students.	-.14*	-.01	-.20*
Students from different neighborhoods get along well together here.	-.25*	-.19*	-.50*
Students at this school accept other students for who they are.	-.09	-.11	-.24*
Bullying is a problem at this school.	.06	.10	.15*
Students here often get teased about their clothing or physical appearance.	.05	.12	.18*
Students here often get put down because of their race or ethnicity.	.20*	-.13*	.09
There is a lot of teasing about sexual topics at this school.	.01	.12*	.12*

\* p. < .05. Source: Cornell & Sheras, 2003

Overall, teachers in larger schools and schools with a higher percentage of minority students perceived higher rates of bullying and teasing in their schools. The strongest correlations were observed with the percentage of minority students in the school. Notably, teachers are less likely to report that students from different neighborhoods get along well together in schools that are larger, have more low income students, and have more minority students.



According to teachers, there is a higher presence of racial or ethnic teasing among students in medium and large schools than in small schools. Large and medium schools both rank at the 56<sup>th</sup> percentile whereas small schools rank at the 36<sup>th</sup> percentile.

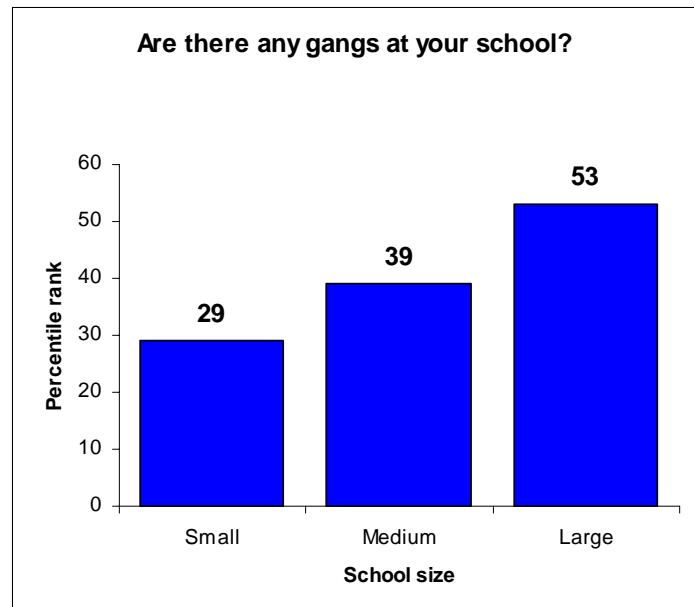
**Gang items**

How true is this in your school?	Correlations		
	School Size	% Free/Reduced Meals	% Nonwhite
Are there any gangs at your school?	<b>.58*</b>	<b>-.09</b>	<b>.60*</b>
Have gangs been involved in the sale of drugs at your school in the last 6 months?	<b>.48*</b>	<b>.04</b>	<b>.50*</b>
During the last 6 months, how often have gangs been involved in fights, attacks, or other violence at your school?	<b>.43*</b>	<b>.14*</b>	<b>.61*</b>

\* p. < .05. *Source:* School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCES, 2005)

In general, teachers in schools that are larger or have a higher percentage of minority students were more likely to report gangs at their schools. Furthermore, teachers from these schools were more likely to report that gangs at their schools were involved with drugs and violence in their schools in the past 6 months. There were seven statistically significant correlations with individual items.

Teachers in larger schools were more likely to report the presence of gangs at their schools than teachers in smaller schools. Large schools rank at about the 53<sup>rd</sup> percentile compared to the 29<sup>th</sup> percentile for small schools.



## **Chapter 8**

### **Correlates of Student and Teacher Victimization**

This chapter presents some of the school characteristics that are correlated with student and teacher victimization. The purpose of these analyses is to suggest ways in which the school climate can affect school safety and vice versa. Because the analyses are correlational and cross-sectional, they do not establish causal relationships, but do indicate important areas for further study. These results are samples from the many analyses that could be undertaken.

#### **Effects of victimization on academic performance**

These analyses show how school victimization rates appear to affect academic performance. For example, the first set of analyses shows that schools with high victimization rates have lower SOL passing rates. These correlational analyses do not prove that higher victimization will cause lower passing rates, but they suggest that victimization may be an important consideration in improving a school's SOL passing rate. The analyses presented in this section include three measures of academic performance:

1. SOL passing rates
2. Commitment to school
3. Academic press

#### **Effects of school characteristics on victimization**

This series of analyses identify school characteristic that are likely to affect victimization rates. For example, it is hypothesized that the presence of gangs would be associated with higher student and teacher victimization. Again, these correlations do not establish a causal relationship, but indicate areas that merit further investigation with longitudinal data and controls for potentially confounding and mediating variables. These analyses will be pursued in future reports. The school characteristics examined in the final sections of this chapter include:

1. Presence of gangs
2. Dress code
3. Student support efforts (Student Learning/Working Environment)
4. Teacher support efforts (Teacher Learning/Working Environment)
5. Daily structure

## Effects of victimization on academic performance

### SOL passing rates

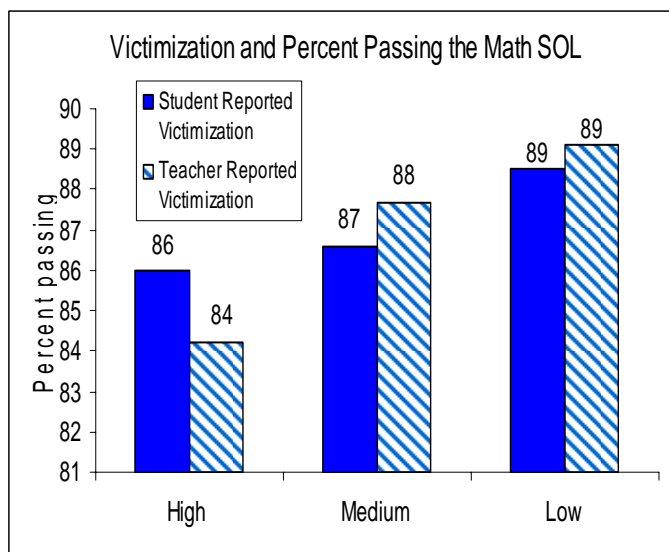
A major reason for studying school climate is its relation to student learning. Students who do not feel safe will not be able to learn up to their potential and teachers who do not feel safe will not be able to teach as effectively Bowen & Bowen, 1999; Osher, Dwyer, & Jackson, 2004.

The relation between school safety and Standards of Learning (SOL) performance will be examined in future reports. This preliminary analysis examines the link between student and teacher victimization rates and schoolwide passing rates on the SOL exams. Students and teachers were asked whether they had been victimized by events such as physical assault, threats, obscene remarks, theft, and damage to personal property. The number of victimization experiences were summed for each respondent and averaged for each school.

Teacher-reported victimization was associated with lower passing rates on the Science, Math, English, and History SOL exams ( $r$  ranging from  $-.24$  to  $-.38$ ,  $p < .05$ ). These statistically significant correlations held up after controlling for school size, the percentage of low income students, and percentage of nonwhite students in the school.

Student-reported victimization was associated with lower passing rates on the Science, Math, and English SOL exams ( $r$  ranging from  $-.12$  to  $-.16$ ,  $p < .05$ ). These relationships held up for Math and English SOL exams when controlling for school size, the percentage of low income students, and the percentage of nonwhite students in the school.

To illustrate the relationship between victimization and achievement, schools were rank ordered based on their average level of student and teacher victimization and each school was classified as high (upper third), medium (middle third) or low (lower third) As shown in the adjacent chart, schools with high victimization had lower percentages of students passing the Math SOL exam (84% - 86%) compared to those with low victimization (89%).

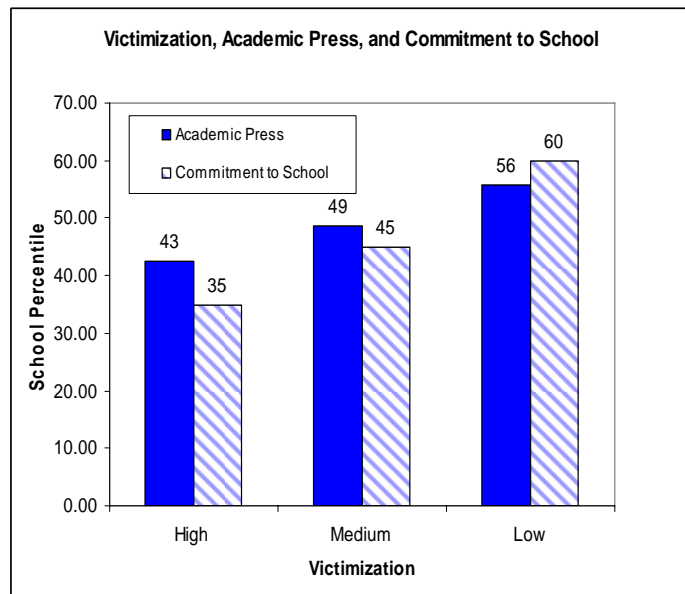


Caveats: These correlations between victimization reported by ninth grade students and school-wide SOL exam passing rates support the idea that school climate has an effect on academic achievement, but they do not prove that victimization *causes* differences in achievement. Further study is needed to elucidate the impact of school climate on achievement.

## Academic Press and Commitment to School

This preliminary analysis examines the link between school safety and two measures of an academically-oriented school climate: academic press and commitment to school. The academic press scale measures student perceptions of whether teachers push them to really think, provide them with challenging problems, make sure they don't just do easy work, and accept nothing less than students' full effort. The commitment to school scale measures how much students agree that they work hard in school, like school, do extra homework, and try hard. We found that student-reported victimization was associated with lower academic press ( $r = -.21, p < .001$ ) and lower commitment to school ( $r = -.24, p < .001$ ).

To illustrate the relationship between victimization, academic press, and commitment to school, schools were rank ordered based on their average level of student and teacher victimization and each school was classified as high (upper third), medium (middle third) or low (lower third). As shown in the adjacent chart, schools with high victimization ranked lower in academic press and commitment to school (35<sup>th</sup> – 43<sup>rd</sup> percentile) compared to those with low victimization (56<sup>th</sup> – 60<sup>th</sup> percentile).



**Caveats:** These correlations between victimization, academic press, and commitment to school support the idea that school safety has an effect on the academic climate of schools, but they do not prove that victimization *causes* differences in academic climate.



## Effects of school characteristics on victimization

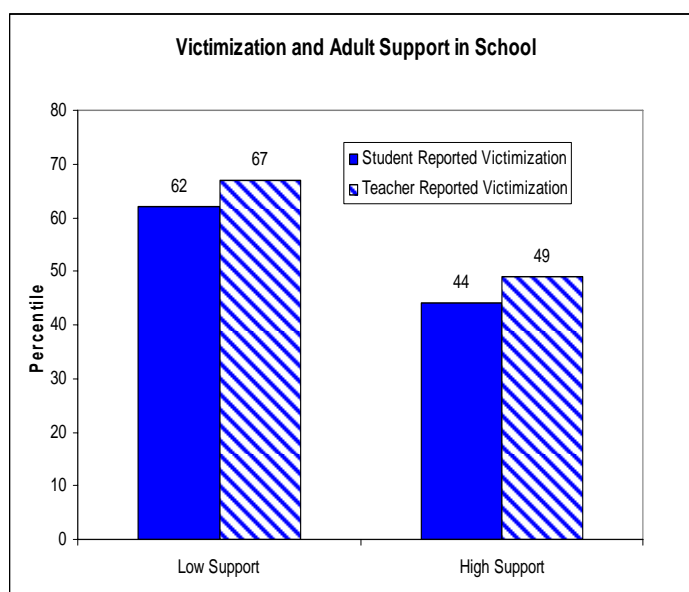
### Learning/Working Environment

Students were asked whether they believed adults in their school cared about students, were interested in listening to them, and communicated the idea that every student can be a success. Overall, this scale measured perceptions of adult support in their learning environment.

Student perceptions of support were used to classify schools. There were 152 schools classified as having “high” adult support because the average student response was above the mean of 3.4 on a scale which ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). One hundred and thirty-eight schools were classified as having “low” adult support because their average student response was 3.3 or lower. Student perceptions of adult support were correlated with both teachers reports of being victimized ( $r = -.31, p < .001$ ) and student reports of being victimized ( $r = -.39, p < .001$ ).

As shown in the adjacent chart, schools with high support tended to rank lower in victimization (44<sup>th</sup> – 49<sup>th</sup> percentile) than schools with low support, which ranked high in victimization (62<sup>nd</sup> – 67<sup>th</sup> percentile). These findings are consistent with the theory that a supportive school staff will create a safer school environment for students.

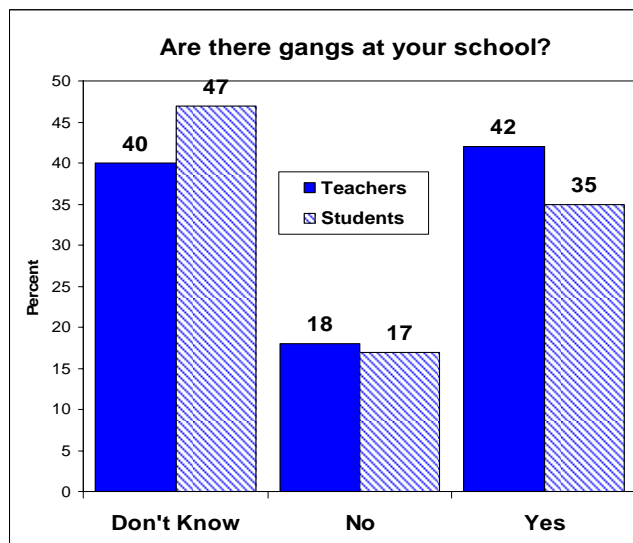
Caveats: These results do not prove that adult support *causes* differences in victimization. It is certainly possible that there are complex relationships between support and victimization. For example, students who are highly victimized may develop more negative perceptions of staff support, and high rates of victimization may erode staff support for students. Even if the relationship between support and victimization is bidirectional and interactive, there is reason to believe that an emphasis on creating a supportive environment will have a positive impact on school safety and lead to lower levels of victimization.



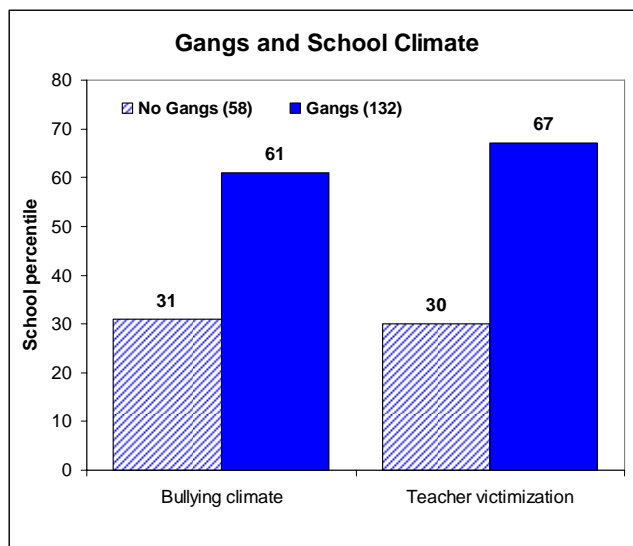
## Gangs

Students and teachers responded to the statement “Are there any gangs at your school?” Gangs were defined on the survey as “street gangs, fighting gangs, crews, or something else. Gangs may use common names, signs, symbols, or colors. For this survey we are interested in all gangs.” The correlation between overall student and teacher perceptions was quite high ( $r = .72, p < .001$ ).

Teacher perceptions were used to classify schools, excluding teachers who responded “Don’t know.” There were 58 schools in which none of the included teachers reported gangs at their school and 132 schools in which every included teacher reported gangs. In order to have clearly contrasting groups of schools with and without gangs, the 93 schools in which the teachers were not in agreement about the presence of gangs at school were excluded from these analyses.



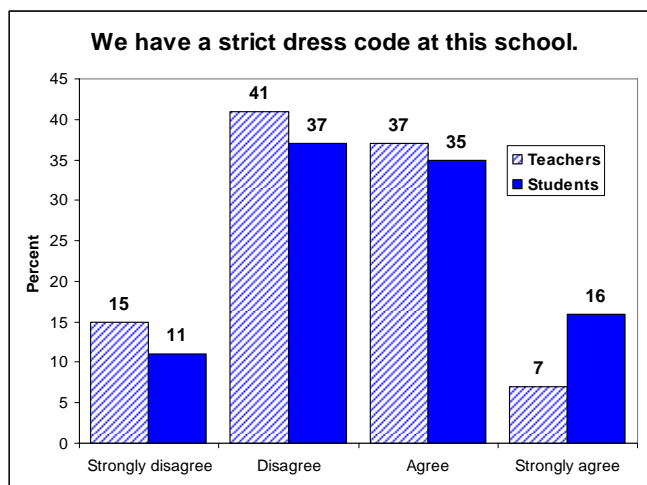
As shown in the adjacent chart, schools without gangs tended to rank lower in bullying climate (31<sup>st</sup> percentile) and teacher victimization (30<sup>th</sup> percentile), than schools with gangs, which ranked high in bullying climate (61<sup>st</sup> percentile) and teacher victimization (67<sup>th</sup> percentile). Also noteworthy, but not depicted here, student perceptions of gangs were associated with bullying climate and teacher victimization, too.



Caveats: Correlations between gangs and school climate were obtained using both teacher and student perceptions, but there was no link between gangs and student victimization. These results do not prove that gangs *cause* differences in school climate, and it is possible that the presence of gangs skews perceptions of school climate.

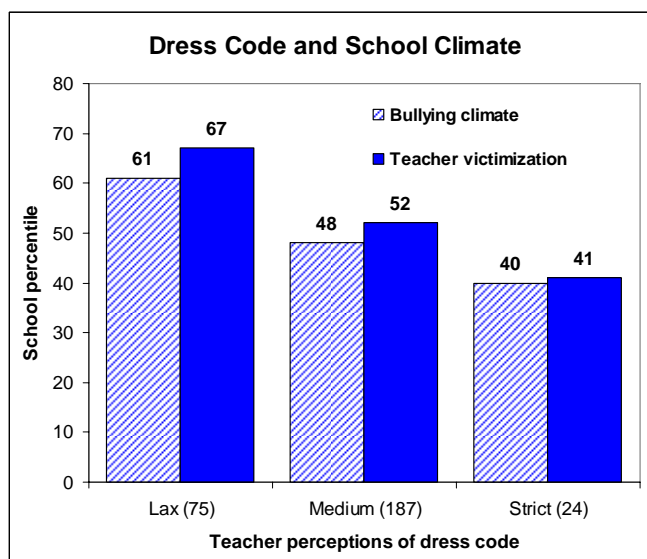
### Dress Codes

Students and teachers responded to the statement “We have a strict dress code at this school” by checking “Strongly disagree” (1 point), “Disagree” (2 points), “Agree” (3 points), or “Strongly Agree” (4 points). About half of students and teachers perceive their school’s dress code as strict. Students tended to perceive the dress code as somewhat stricter than did teachers, but the correlation between teachers and students was substantial ( $r = .55, p < .001$ ).



Teacher perceptions were used to classify schools. There were 75 schools classified as having a lax dress code because the average teacher response was 2.0 or lower, while 24 schools were classified as having a strict dress code because their average teacher response was 3.0 or higher. The majority of schools (187) fell in the middle. A stricter dress code was correlated with teacher reports of less bullying and teasing ( $r = -.20, p < .001$ ) and lower rates of teacher victimization ( $r = -.24, p < .001$ ).

As shown in the adjacent chart, schools with a lax dress code tend to rank higher in bullying climate (61<sup>st</sup> percentile) and teacher victimization (67<sup>th</sup> percentile), while schools with a strict code ranked lower in bullying climate (40<sup>th</sup> percentile) and teacher victimization (41<sup>st</sup> percentile). Relationships were found for teacher perceptions, but not student perceptions



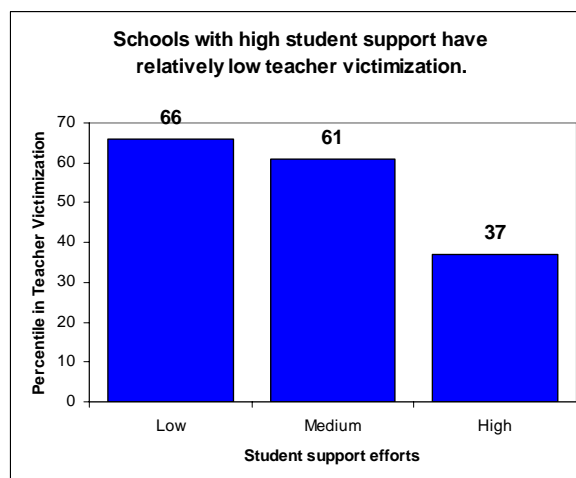
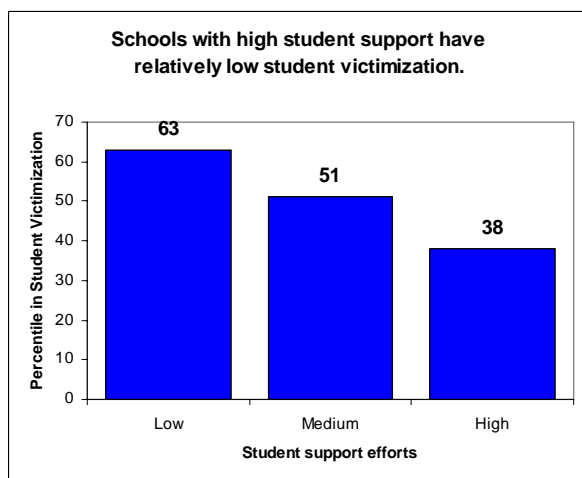
Caveats: These results do not prove that dress codes *cause* differences in school climate; it is likely that dress codes are associated with a variety of other school policies and practices. Furthermore, it is possible that teacher perceptions of school climate affected their perception of the dress code. Finally, these results are based on teacher *perceptions* of the dress code and not actual dress restrictions.

### Student Support Efforts

One measure of student support efforts is the Learning/Working Environment scale, which asks students how much the adults at school care about them, listen to them, and treat them fairly. Overall, students perceived the adults at their school as supportive.

Students were asked, “How much do you agree that adults in this school...”	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree/Strongly Agree
Really care about all students.	17	37	46
Acknowledge and pay attention to students.	14	38	48
Want all students to do their best.	8	22	70
Listen to what students have to say.	21	38	41
Believe that every student can be a success.	18	29	53
Treat all students fairly.	37	30	33
Support and treat students with respect.	19	34	47
Feel a responsibility to improve the school.	18	33	49

Schools with especially supportive environments had lower levels of both student victimization ( $r = -.38$ ) and teacher victimization ( $r = -.31$ ). To illustrate the relationship between student support and victimization, schools were divided into thirds and classified as low, medium, or high in student support. The first chart shows that the average school with high student support has student victimization levels at the 38<sup>th</sup> percentile, whereas the average school with low student support has student victimization levels at the 63<sup>rd</sup> percentile. The second chart shows similar findings for teacher victimization. The average school with high student support has teacher victimization levels at the 37<sup>th</sup> percentile, whereas the average school with low student support has teacher victimization levels at the 66<sup>th</sup> percentile.



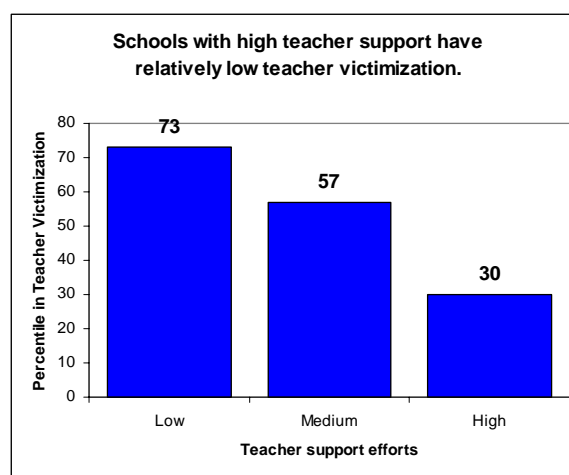
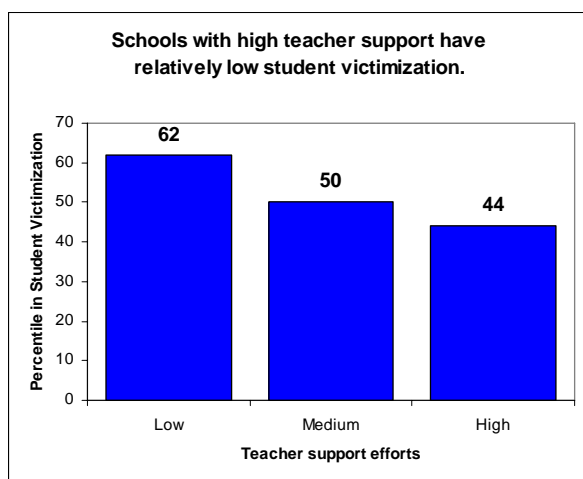
Caveats: These correlations are consistent with the view that student support efforts have a positive influence on school safety, but they do not prove that student support causes lower victimization.

### Teacher Support Efforts

Whereas students were asked how adults supported them at school, the teachers were asked a similar set of questions about administrator support of their work. Results from the Teacher Learning/Working Environment scale (table below) show that most teachers regard their administrators as supportive and fair.

Teachers were asked, “How much do you agree that administrators in this school..”	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree/ Strongly Agree
Really care about all teachers.	11	20	69
Acknowledge and pay attention to teachers.	12	23	65
Want all teachers to do their best.	3	10	87
Listen to what teachers have to say.	14	25	61
Believe that every teacher can be a success.	7	23	70
Treat all teachers fairly.	20	24	56
Support and treat each other with respect.	8	19	73
Feel a responsibility to improve the school.	4	15	81

Schools with especially supportive administrators had lower levels of both student victimization ( $r = -.18$ ) and teacher victimization ( $r = -.53$ ). To illustrate the relationship between administrative support of teachers and victimization, schools were divided into thirds and classified as low, medium, or high in teacher support. The first chart shows that the average school with high teacher support has student victimization levels at the 44<sup>th</sup> percentile, whereas the average school with low student support has student victimization levels at the 62<sup>rd</sup> percentile. The second chart shows even stronger findings for teacher victimization. The average school with high teacher support has teacher victimization levels at the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile, whereas the average school with low teacher support has teacher victimization levels at the 73<sup>rd</sup> percentile.



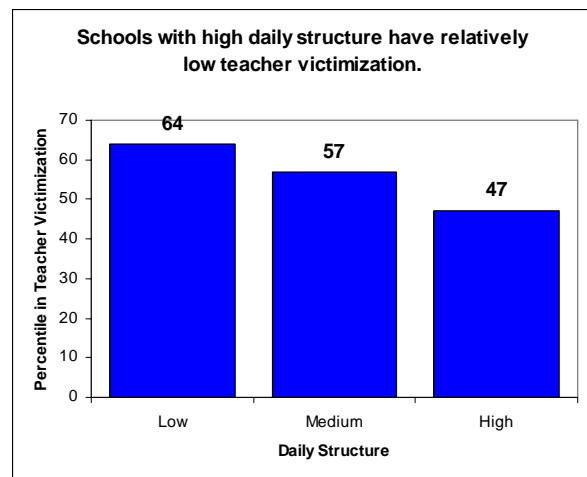
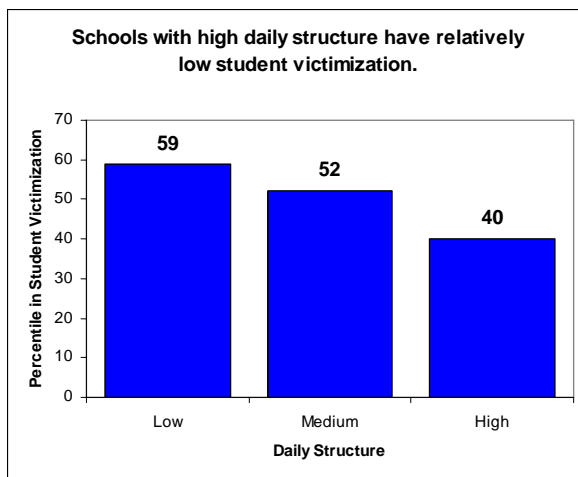
Caveats: These correlations are consistent with the view that teacher support by administrators has a positive influence on school safety, but they do not prove that teacher support causes lower victimization.

### Daily Structure

To measure the degree of structure in the daily routine at school, students were asked how likely students would be caught for various misbehaviors. As reflected in the table below, most students feel that school rules are enforced, but there is a wide range of opinion.

Students were asked, “How likely are the following?”	Not at all Likely/ Not Likely	Likely/ Very Likely
If a student was wandering in the hallways during class time, how likely would an adult stop the student?	48	52
If a student cut a class, how likely would the student be caught?	41	59
If a student smoked a cigarette at school, how likely would the student be caught?	37	63
If two students got into a fight at school, how likely would they get caught?	8	92
If a student was five minutes late for class, how likely would teachers overlook it? (reverse scored)	56	44
If a student said something sarcastic to a teacher, how likely would the teacher overlook what the student said? (reverse scored)	43	57

Schools with higher daily structure (more likely enforcement of rules) have lower levels of both student victimization ( $r = -.24$ ) and teacher victimization ( $-.22$ ). To illustrate the relationship between daily structure and victimization, schools were divided into thirds and classified as low, medium, or high in daily structure. The first chart shows that the average school with high daily structure has student victimization levels at the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile, whereas the average school with low daily structure has student victimization levels at the 59<sup>th</sup> percentile. The second chart shows similar results for teacher victimization. The average school with high daily structure has teacher victimization levels at the 47<sup>th</sup> percentile, whereas the average school with low daily structure has teacher victimization levels at the 64<sup>th</sup> percentile.



Caveats: These correlations are consistent with the view that Daily Structure has a positive influence on school safety, but they do not prove that it causes lower victimization. In addition, the measure of Daily Structure completed by teachers shows somewhat different results. Teacher-perceive daily structure is correlated with teacher victimization ( $r = -.55$ ) but not student victimization ( $-.08$ ).

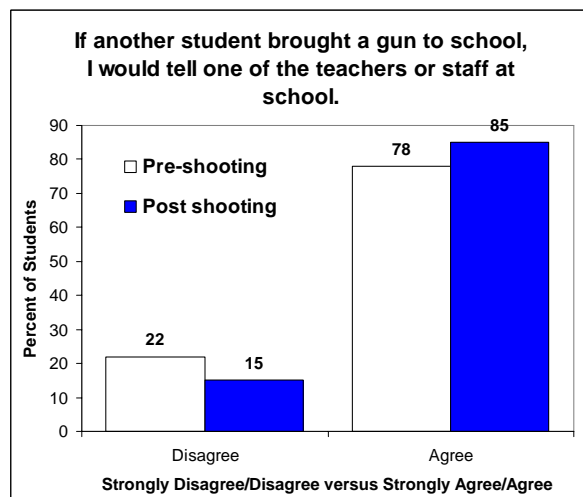
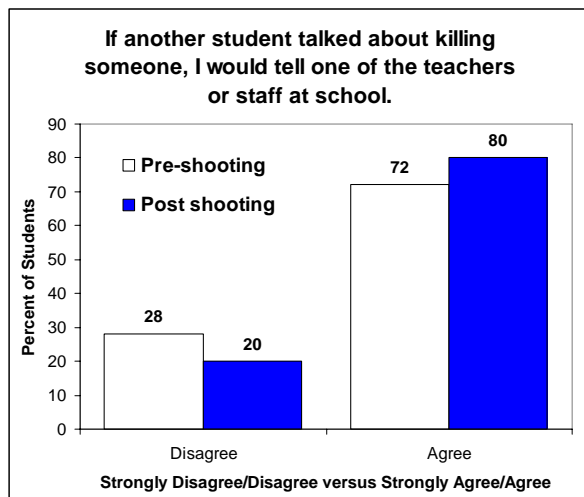
## Chapter 9 Participant Reactions to the Survey

### Reactions to the Virginia Tech Shooting

The survey period began on April 1, about two weeks before the Virginia Tech shooting on April 16. A natural question is whether this event affected survey responses. Consequently, student and teacher surveys completed before April 16 were compared to those completed after April 16 (excluding April 16).

Overall, these analyses showed several small, statistically significant, changes, but no large changes in survey results. As indicated in the table (next page), student perceptions of the school rules and daily structure declined slightly, indicating less perceived structure at school, and their perception of the school as a positive learning environment increased slightly. Curiously, their involvement in extracurricular activities was slightly lower. The most notable change, however, was that after the shooting, students expressed greater willingness to seek help from teachers if a student brought a gun to school or threatened to kill someone (see charts below). Students also reported greater willingness to seek help for bullying and perceived other students as more willing to try to stop bullying when they saw it happening.

It is perhaps equally noteworthy that many perceptions did not change. There was no change in student reports of victimization or bullying at school, and no differences in their belief in school rules, their trust in teachers, and their perception of how much their teachers attempted to challenge them academically. They did not report higher levels of security measures or greater awareness of zero tolerance policies.



*Student perceptions before and after the Virginia Tech shooting*

Student survey scale or item	Pre-Shooting N ≈ 900		Post-Shooting N ≈ 6000		t value	p	Effect size
	X	(SD)	X	(SD)			
Experience of school rules	19.4	(3.19)	19.1	(3.37)	2.03	.04	.09
Security measures	4.9	(1.53)	4.8	(1.52)	1.47	.14	--
Awareness of zero tolerance policies	6.7	(2.64)	6.6	(2.57)	.93	.36	--
Daily structure	16.6	(2.61)	16.4	(2.59)	2.00	.05	.08
Learning/working environment	26.8	(7.01)	27.4	(6.75)	2.44	.02	.09
Commitment to school	26.0	(4.74)	26.3	(4.60)	1.62	.10	--
School involvement	1.6	(1.44)	1.5	(1.39)	2.42	.02	.07
Belief in school rules	49.1	(9.42)	49.1	(9.01)	.03	.97	--
Teacher trust	14.0	(2.90)	14.0	(2.89)	.58	.56	--
Academic press	20.4	(4.69)	20.5	(4.61)	.93	.35	--
Aggressive attitudes	11.6	(3.70)	11.2	(3.59)	2.98	.56	--
Victimization (Total)	1.4	(1.53)	1.3	(1.48)	1.35	.18	--
Bullying victimization	1.4	(2.22)	1.3	(2.11)	.78	.44	--
Bullying climate (Teasing and bullying at school)	16.6	(3.52)	16.7	(3.33)	.97	.33	--
Help-seeking behavior	6.8	(2.41)	6.7	(2.29)	1.48	.14	--
Help-seeking (Willingness to seek help)	21.8	(4.88)	22.3	(4.61)	3.31	.001	.11
Items on the Help-seeking scale:							
If another student was bullying me, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.	2.4	(.96)	2.5	(.95)	2.88	.004	.11
There are adults at this school I could turn to if I had a personal problem.	2.9	(.97)	3.0	(.97)	2.93	.017	.10
If I tell a teacher that someone is bullying me, the teacher will do something to help.	3.0	(.87)	3.1	(.86)	1.52	.13	--
Students tell teachers when other students are being bullied.	2.1	(.89)	2.1	(.89)	.10	.92	--
If another student talked about killing someone, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.	3.0	(1.01)	3.3	(.93)	7.13	<.001	.32
If another student brought a gun to school, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.	3.3	(.98)	3.5	(.89)	5.22	<.001	.22
Teachers here make it clear to students that bullying is not tolerated.	2.8	(.95)	2.8	(.92)	.11	.91	--
Students here try to stop bullying when they see it happening.	2.2	(.99)	2.1	(.93)	2.35	.02	.11

Note. N varies slightly across analyses due to missing data.



## Principal comments

A total of 299 principals (including designees) completed a brief online survey after the student and teacher surveys were completed. Principals were invited to write any comments they had about the study. Below are all 87 comments that were received:

### *Positive comments*

1. "This was a very good project. The selected students were eager to participate and appeared to have taken the survey seriously."
2. "The teachers and students liked the ease of the survey and the online format."
3. "I think it is a great idea to find out what the students are thinking. It will definitely help administrators and staff to identify potential problems faster so that we may prevent situations from happening."
4. "I like the way it was set up; it did not disrupt the entire school day by pulling large numbers of students out of class; on-line survey."
5. "One advantage of the structure of this survey was the ability of the building administrator to be flexible in scheduling when the survey process would take place. With the overwhelming number of activities and testing requirements in the high school setting, flexibility of scheduling made this survey very easy to schedule for teachers, students and administrators."
6. "I thought the project was very well organized, information was presented in a format that was easily understood and extremely functional. You obviously understand the amount of daily objectives that are involved in the school day and created a project that was effective for all involved."
7. "I found the directions to be very clear. The process worked very well from the letters home and to teachers, to the completion of the survey today."
8. "Movies were very helpful."
9. "Teachers took it seriously. After they completed the survey, they sat in a group and talked about it and shared with me that they hope the results will be used."
10. "It was an excellent idea. Hopefully, we can utilize the results to improve our safety plan."
11. "Students took the survey very seriously. Please note that the survey was done the Wednesday following the VA Tech incident. Data comparisons between before and after the incident are strongly suggested."
12. "Students and teachers completed the survey per regulations. All observed completing the survey did so in a serious manner. Several students included extensive comments."
13. "Survey went over well."
14. "A relatively smooth operation. We hope the results are helpful."
15. "The survey was very easy to administer. The students did not have any problems answering the questions. The website was easy to access."
16. "After getting over the process of the selection, conducting the survey was very easy."
17. "Very well organized. I appreciate the updates. Great instructions and templates!"
18. "It was very well organized and easy to complete."
19. "The students were glad that they had a voice in a study that was done throughout the state of Virginia."
20. "People seemed very willing to do this. We don't know if they took it more seriously due to the Virginia Tech situation or not."
21. "Very involved procedures. Excellent questions."
22. "Students and teachers were positive about giving their time to complete the survey."
23. "Excellent project! Longitudinal would be nice - stay with these freshman for the next few years to see if impressions of school safety change over time - as students mature, schools improve, etc."
24. "I believe the questions covered a broad spectrum involving the daily processes in a school day. We look forward to reviewing the results. Furthermore, we hope positive changes will occur as a result."
25. "It helped students to consider other areas of safety other than building level."
26. "I thought the instructions were very clear. Administering the survey went very well."
27. "I am very interested in seeing the results of both the teachers and the students. It will be interesting to see the survey from two different points of views."
28. "Well organized survey, no changes necessary."

*Criticisms and suggestions*

29. "The timing was lousy. We start SOL testing on April 30. Spring break for us is April 7-15. This survey required students to miss class instruction at the most important time of the year for us as we complete the curriculum and work with students to prepare for the SOL tests. Suggest you do this survey well before a few weeks prior to SOL testing."
30. "The only problem was enabling students' access to the site. Technical support corrected the problem by gaining access by the technology proctor, which expedited the process once in place."
31. "Make sure your web site always works. Teachers do not have a lot of free time to do things like this survey and to have the link not working was very frustrating to them."
32. "When 5 of our students completed the survey, the thank you page did not come up. A sheet about errors came up and told them to refresh the page. We called our technical assistance dept and they said it was not a technical problem on our end. We believe their survey had been submitted."
33. "The random selection process created an administrative burden for our one data specialist. The requirement to select at random and to schedule specific students, some who should not have missed class, is problematic to learning. We lost an instructional period for our computer lab instruction."
34. "1. The DVD was difficult to use - it would be nice if this were actually a DVD. 2. We could not view the video - due to high traffic the video kept stopping and starting. 3. There were problems with internet security (getting the responses to go through our filter). The students left the survey room with the impression that even after completing the survey twice, our answers did not go through. We soon learned, however, that these surveys did go through - both times, in fact. It is strongly possible that the two teachers who experienced similar problems actually submitted their answers."
35. "The video was ridiculous. Our students and teachers are required to do so many things that they have no choice about, that to ask them to sit through that video to get to the web address was insulting. Next time, give us some directions to read to the group of students and let the teachers read the directions themselves. Don't waste their time!"
36. "The video didn't help much, especially the part with the clown. The students were fine listening to Ms. Virginia, and most would have been ok with the proctor explaining the procedure, reasons, and significance of the survey to them."
37. "The DVD/CD combo for the video was difficult to access. I had to have our technology specialist burn copies of the individual videos for usage. In the future it would be helpful to have either DVD or CD for usage."
38. "In the future I would like to have more random numbers from the beginning. I know that a process is in place for calling and getting those, but it is time consuming enough to get 25 students to show up for this. A larger pool would be helpful."
39. "The students thought the video 'silly'."
40. "The students believed that the second part of the video was very childish and cheesy. They became restless while watching it. If the survey is to be taken seriously, the instructions should be serious as well."
41. "The survey was an excellent idea; however, the introductions need to be improved. The student introduction was too elementary, and did not set the correct tone for something so serious. The teacher introduction should be shorter, and more to the point."
42. "It was extremely difficult tracking down students and teachers to complete this survey even with constant reminders via email."
43. "Typo on #24 of teacher survey. The student video was really "lame" according to the kids."
44. "It is very hard for 9th grade students to return any type of forms. It is harder for administration to check on forms being returned if we do not have direct contact with them in their homeroom. Some of the students could not be chosen at random because the student population was smaller than the random number to be used. It should also be noted that some of the students in the random selection were special needs students and they needed help to take the survey. All of the students (19) in our survey had returned permission slips signed by their parent. This number included alternate students as well."
45. "We had difficulty with the video and many were concerned after they clicked done and a message came up about time constraints."
46. "The process was too cumbersome."
47. "It would be beneficial if a student who speaks another language (i.e Spanish) would have access to a survey in his or her own language."

48. "Our technology teacher loaded the videos onto the network where it could be accessed by students and teachers. If it had been necessary to load the videos onto individual computers, the time requirements would have been oppressive. Since the students were selected randomly, they were pulled from many classes. Teaching was interrupted for at least 30 minutes in all those classes. That is not a good use of our time."
49. "Suggest the survey be completed in October. April is very near SOL time and even though the time is minimal, teachers always like students not to miss instructional time."
50. "When a principal is trying to "step back" to avoid contaminating the survey data- it is hard to know who took it and who didn't because all of my original students and teachers said they did it - then I got an email saying I was short- wasn't sure who did or didn't take it."
51. "This is a very time consuming process on the person organizing the survey in the building. April-June is a heavy testing remediation time and students should not be pulled from class to conduct a survey. Arrangements should be made for this to be done strictly on student and teacher's own time via email with coordination between state and county level officials."
52. "We did not receive the packet until late April...very little time to prepare."
53. "Please put the yellow sheets on the CD disk in word so that we can put the names on the sheet."
54. "Making it on-line, with video, made it a bit more complicated and time consuming than I would have liked just prior to the testing season."
55. "While worthwhile, the survey required an unusually large amount of planning during a busy time of year with SOL testing in computer labs and SOL preparation in classrooms!"
56. "I found this survey to be very time consuming and somewhat redundant when compared with other safety audits and surveys we complete. I also felt it was presented at the most difficult time of the school year with SOL tests/preparation, AP testing, and other end of the year activities taking place. I am not sure that this survey is of great value in it's present form compared to the disruption it causes to the instructional program."
57. "Survey should also be available in Spanish."
58. "This was a very time intensive survey which required a lot of work on the part of the administrator. It took away from my other tasks. Some of the letters given to the students to take home to the parents were not returned by the student. Random numbers should be lower for ninth grade populations under 500 to obtain a larger sample group."
59. "A variety of participants is needed to really get of fair analysis of school safety. Opportunity to all staff members."
60. "Doing this survey on-line was difficult and time-consuming."
61. "The sample design may have been better for a high school that contains 9th graders in "homes" or "pods." We do not. I was very difficult reaching the students and the criteria for the teachers, only applied to 13 teachers, total."
62. "This took a lot of time to set up and administer. It was labor intensive. I hope the results were worth all of the effort."
63. "Random selection of students caused issues - special education, alternative education, suspended, absent, out of county placement, etc."
64. "Please issue survey earlier in school year. (Around mid to late march)."
65. "April is a problematic months for testing. Online survey was more efficient than paper/pencil. Random selection is difficult; too many alternates are used"

### *Mixed and neutral comments*

66. "Great project, but many times the web site was down and/or blocked. Fortunately, we were able to complete the survey to your specifications."
67. "The school is very oriented toward academics and preparations for testing sequences may have interfered with participation."
68. "I think the project has merit. The instructions were very clear and well thought out. I would like to see results for our school in order to address student raised issues via our school improvement team. I was not pleased with the website for the survey timing my students out when they were 3/4's into the survey and they had to start over. This is SOL crunch time and to take students out of class for 45 minutes because the technology was not performing well is undesirable..."

69. "First of all, X is a college-prep high school and the teachers and students filled out the forms without difficulty because we do not have many of the problems that were listed on the form which was most interesting."
70. "We chose the date for the survey before the incidents at Virginia Tech. Because of the Virginia Tech shootings the students were very serious about the survey and the questions that it contained."
71. "There were no complaints, the students seemed to enjoy the video, and liked being heard. The only problem we had was that on a few of the surveys when selecting the submit survey the survey did not go to the thank you page. On those the students re-completed the survey. On one when the student clicked on the submit link the survey monkey home page came up. Overall it was very easy to set up and complete."
72. "The research/ survey assistants were incredibly helpful, and Dr. Cornell is always a pleasure to work with. The survey questions were quite fascinating - I am eager to see the results. The only negative comments uttered by selected students and staff were critiques about the video. The first portion with Miss Virginia was helpful, but the latter half of the film was not very well received. I was initially concerned about the timing of our survey administration given this week's tragic events at Virginia Tech, but that did not appear to be a factor during our survey administration. Not one student mentioned the incident nor did any staffers. This does not guarantee, of course, that it did not skew their responses in one direction or another, but nothing was articulated to the survey administrators, at least."
73. "We chose to begin on Tuesday, the day after the shooting at Virginia Tech. I'm sure you are aware. It will be interesting to see how the first month of April when students will probably give completely different answers than the students who answered after April 16th. Just a comment. Thank you."
74. "Students and most staff enjoyed the process. One staff member complained of spelling errors in the survey."
75. "We had no problems in conducting the survey and once students were identified and taken out to do the survey we had to use two of our alternates. Through out the entire process it was easy to follow and conduct the survey. The only problem that we had was installing the video on twenty five different computers."
76. "We had no problem conducting the survey and we had to use two of our alternates which was helpful since they were identified for us and we could pull them easily. The one area we did have problems with was installing the video for the students on 25 computers for one of our disc did not work properly"
77. "I gave teachers two days to complete the survey and had to remind four of them. All emailed be that they had completed the survey."
78. "I would be interested in the results."
79. "We experienced a power failure during the students' survey session. Three students using desktop computers had to restart the test, part-way through. Students using their laptops had no issues."
80. "This survey takes a great deal of time to execute. I hope the information you receive is worth the effort it takes to prepare the lists, notify the participants and then to give the survey."
81. "The video segment presented by Ms. VA was sufficient for instructions. The additional skits featuring Capt. Excitement and The Teachers' Lounge could have created bias for valid survey results."
82. "Will results be provided for individual school or school district or both?"
83. "We had completed this survey and received word that we had not. Please recheck you records."
84. "We made a comment about the Va Tech tragedy and how we thought the survey may be skewed."
85. "We only had 7 total teachers who met your criteria for 50% instruction of 9th grade students."
86. "The students and teachers wanted to know why they were selected."
87. "I did not administer the survey; my assistant principal did and therefore the above information is my best guess. I do know that our students and teachers did participate and that my AP indicated that the survey went well. I also believe that he responded to this survey initially as the survey administrator. Unfortunately, he is on vacation and I cannot verify information. I do know that the timing of the survey in late spring was not advantageous to getting good responses. Perhaps a survey in Oct/Nov or Mar/Apr would be better received. Thank you!"

## Teacher comments

Of the 3,014 completed teacher surveys, there were 455 comments. Most of the comments were concerned with school conditions rather than the survey. Here is a sample of positive comments and concerns:

### *Positive comments*

1. "I believe we have a very safe school but we can always be better in making sure that we are always open to change."
2. "I feel as though our school personnel do everything within their means to maintain a safe and orderly school environment."
3. "I feel fairly safe at this school. Whenever there has been a serious problem the administration has appropriately dealt with it. However on occasion some students get off lightly for doing things and others students doing the same get the book thrown at them. Just my perspective and I realize I don't always know the entire story and background. I do feel that equity should always be strived for."
4. "I feel that our school is relatively safe and that our new administration is working hard to make it even safer. I feel the problems we do have are because too many of the younger teachers simply want to be the friend of the students, instead of doing their jobs. They tend to ignore many of the rules that are in place (passes, tardies, etc.) and often overlook small incidents in the hallways that potentially lead to bigger incidents. 'Teachers make teaching hard.'"
5. "I have taught for over 40 years, and I have never seen an administration try so hard to make both students and teachers feel appreciated. We pick students of the month on a regular basis and reward them for their academic and behavioral efforts. We sometimes get students who have never been successful at anything, and before they leave our school, they DO become successes. This makes our whole society safer."
6. "Our school is very diverse, and this diverse environment is celebrated. Although I feel pretty sure that bullying must occur here at our school, I have seen little evidence of it directly. I do not feel threatened here, but I certainly hope (and encourage) that a student who did, would let me or another adult at the school know about it right away."
7. "We have an excellent safety and security staff, and several of our administrators do an excellent job, principal included. However, there are a couple of administrators that lack in several of the items in question, as well as several teachers."
8. "Excellent survey for school safety."
9. "Community involvement is paramount within our school district and helps combat some disciplinary problems mentioned in this survey. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in this important survey."
10. "This school safety survey is great. There were some questions that I feel were difficult to answer due to words like 'often' and 'a lot'. I do feel that teasing is a problem not because of this particular school, but because youth tend to do this wherever and I know that it happens to some degree here. However, other and a lot sort of shifts the answer. I would like to say also that I commend our administration for recent measures taken to ensure safety here at our campus. They attend some seminars and came back and boldly made changes with the safety of our school and students in mind. I do feel however that the presence of our resource officer is not visible enough throughout our campus. I rarely see the officer in the part of the building in which I teach and believe that the presence of the officer would be a deterrent to any potential safety or violence issues."
11. "I feel very safe at my school. The administration has taken firm stand against drug dealers and gangsters to the point of kicking out most of them at the first signs of blatant defiance. Bullying happens everywhere, but we are aware of it and fighting it."
12. "I believe that the staff and students really feel safe in the building and with each other. Although we and any community has gangs, there is not a law against being a gang member. Our resource officer helps provide information to teachers, admin., and staff as a form of awareness. Our county in general looks for outwardly signs, symbols, dress etc. That would indicate gang affiliation. Teachers look for and report such things as well. I think that the students feel strongly that the teachers look-out for their best interest and support them by any means possible. The staff members in this school will continue to make improvements--there is always room for improvement. With all of the great programs and learning opportunities, I am proud to work for this county and definitely this school!"

*Concerns*

13. "Certain Administrator(s) do(es) not assess punishment equitably among all students who break the rules. Students know which one(s) they should try to talk to when in trouble."
14. "Administration needs to stop the selling of cookies and drinks and candy during the school day to cut down on hall traffic."
15. "Real safety will not improve until we begin to take action instead of doing all these meaningless surveys! When we begin to scan everyone entering a school building, (like in a Federal building) maybe things will get better. Let us stop worrying so much about individuals rights, that we forget about their responsibility as citizens of the U.S.A."
16. "I hear from students that too much in the way of slack behavior is allowed. I hear of cheating and rowdy behavior that goes unrecognized. Sometimes the students are boasting, sometimes they are witnesses and express unfairness."
17. "Guns have been found in our school and in the school next door. In each case, students helped by telling on the student who had the gun, but at our school, the students had to be pressured to 'break the code' that prevents them from telling on each other, even though guns were involved."
18. "Support services from Special Education Services is limited for ESL students in this county. Very little is done to stop homophobic remarks."
19. "'Administrators need to be consistent in enforcing school rules. Talking to students alone does not work."
20. "Most students are respectful and well behaved. We do have a core of 100-150 students who are the constant discipline and behavior problems. This does not seem to be the right educational setting for them. If they don't want to be here and bring nothing to the educational setting, then they should be removed or given the option to obtain a GED or equivalent. They occupy too much class and administrative time."
21. "The school is in serious need of more security. I mean real security because it seems as if school security does not have any real authority or power. This needs to be done as soon as possible because with the number of students in this building and the problems with drugs and violence, I am so afraid that something will happen and someone will really get hurt and then it will be too late!"
22. "90% of all problems I have come from about 5% of my students. If those 5% had an alternative school to go to, I think we would see a dramatic drop in serious problems."
23. "A big problem is that the students who are consistently disrupting classes/the school do NOT care about getting in trouble. There is no parental support, or, if there is, there is either too little or the kids just don't care."
24. "A number of questions were difficult to answer accurately because I simply had no bases to answer. Since I couldn't choose and option of 'Don't Know'; I had to choose something. My answers must be taken with a grain of salt because of this."
25. "I do not feel safe at this school because anyone can enter the building at any times. Students are not checked for weapons upon entrance. I think the school rules are there, but not specific and therefore can not be enforced. I.E school dress code is up to the teachers to use their judgment on weather it is appropriate or not. I don't agree with this method because everyone is not the same. Some will think it is ok and some will not, therefore, a lot of things are left alone. We have female students who wear shorts up to their butt and can go the whole day without someone saying something to them. Also, punishment for a violent act in this school is not harsh enough. Students curse at teachers and would only receive after school restrictions. Student with anger management problems (i.e. students who have the tendency to explode) are in regular classrooms with other students and teachers. If this is the case, there is bound to be a problem eventually. I would love to have metal detectors and a bullet proof door to my classroom."
26. "The administration needs to be more consistent when enforcing safety rules. Also the rules need to be more explicitly written so that there is no room for potential discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, race, creed, etc."
27. "There are no consistent consequences for behavior. We need to teach social skills! We are not preparing the students to affectively deal with problems."
28. "There should be some method of evaluating how any administrator does his or her job. Teachers are evaluated by the administration but if one of them is not doing their job, the teacher has no say so except to avoid any dealing with that one person."

29. "This school needs to take a serious look at who diagnoses kids for Special Education needs. There are a lot of kids' needs that are not being met. Even when there is all the evidence in the world some keeps are not receiving the benefits they need."
30. "This school should do a better job of enforcing the dress code, particularly to encourage a more positive example for young ladies. In addition, eating in class and generally using foul language should not be overlooked. While the eating in class may not seem like a big deal, students who are allowed to bring in full course meals, crunchy chips, pizza, etc. really distract others focused on learning. (Not to mention the behavior problems presented by food throwing and damage to school classrooms.)"
31. "Too many students are wandering in the halls without supervision. They have asked to go to the bathroom, the clinic, their locker, or elsewhere. Teachers give the students the benefit of the doubt, but the same students are always in the halls during class."
32. "There's a lot more sexual harassment, and fights over relationships, than gang related activity. Lots of our students are sexually active, and over half of the girls have children or are pregnant. "Sexual harassment is one of the most important factors that make our schools unsafe. Thank you."
33. "In our school the biggest problem with school safety is the lack of concern by the faculty. There are many teachers who do not enforce the rules and many teachers who do not expect or lead their students to do the right thing. I believe too many teachers are passive about the problems in our school. These teachers seem to think they are not responsible for disciplining students outside of their classroom and unfortunately, sometimes in their classroom. I also believe that the administrators have a philosophy that teachers should police other teachers. For a school with so many discipline problems this is not practical. I would like the administrator to make teachers follow the rules, especially the ones that lead to large problems."
34. "Although I have not been assaulted during this school year, I have witnessed a student assaulting another student within my classroom and I have been assaulted on campus in a previous school year. Based upon my experiences with these two incidents, it is unfortunate that I can no longer say that neither my safety nor the safety of my current students is guaranteed."
35. "I feel that our school is very unsafe. We installed new locks on all of our doors that require a number passcode to enter, but the doors stay unlocked all the time; therefore, you don't need a pass code to enter. On several occasions, parents have entered the school and came directly to my classroom without checking in the main office."

**Student comments**

Of the 7,431 completed student surveys, there were 1,593 comments. This included 58 comments praising the survey. Two examples were:

1. “It was a good test. It asked some good questions. It talked about everything that was going on in school. I think that every school should HAVE to take this test just to find out if schools really are safe. It made me really think about everything that has been going on in school. It is a great test. Keep up the good work.”
2. “The survey was an excellent idea for the school, being that Virginia Tech was recently attacked I believe this survey will help our school and other schools learn to be more observant of there operations, activities, and more importantly, students.”

In contrast, there were 48 comments critical of the survey. Two examples were:

1. “This survey is pointless in my opinion because X high school is going to look over what each student said and then not try to fix the problem areas. That’s how this school has always been.”
2. “This survey was stupid because no one is going to listen to it and change what the students want changed. It is a HUGE waste of time!!!”

The ratings by more than 7,000 students clearly indicate an overall positive view of school climate and safety that is consistent with the positive comments. However, a number of students also raised concerns about school safety or fairness of school rules. In order to identify what kinds of concerns are most common among students, these comments were content coded according to the presence or absence of 12 topics (a single comment could receive multiple codes). The table below presents sample comments and the distribution of comments. The comments are presented in order from most frequent to least frequent. This coding did NOT include positive comments, because it was intended to identify the content of student concerns. Therefore, these comments should NOT be used to describe the overall conditions of Virginia schools.

<b>Sample comments expressing concerns</b>	<b># of Comments</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Safety</b>	179	11
“School has always been meant to be a place where we can be safe, grow, and learn. Now, it just doesn't feel like it is anymore.”		
“I think that we should have more security guards at our school and metal detectors, because just last week we had a threat at our school and people could have hid their weapons in suit cases for instruments and in bags. We just need more protection.”		
<b>Bullying</b>	121	8
“Bullying is a big problem at schools, not all the time is it bad enough to tell someone, but it happens all the time still. Bullying brings down people's confidence, and a lot of the time, bullying makes kids stop trying hard enough at school.”		
“Many kids these days don't like to tell teachers about being bullied because most kids do it on a regular basis. They don't think of it as bullying, they think of it as harmless teasing.”		
<b>Fairness</b>	112	7
“My school rules are not fair to all people and are ridicules. There are rules that no one even cares about.”		
“Rules are not the same for every one. Teachers do not treat every one the same way		



even though they say they do.”		
<b>Weapons</b>	68	4
“The people in this school need to be more aware of the students that they bring to the school. Because they don’t check the background of the child or the history and yet and still their bringing guns... drugs... and everything else..”		
“People can bring in any sort of weapon, no way of stopping them.”		
<b>Dress code</b>	67	4
“I think that the school dress code is horrible and since we are in high school, I think we should have more of a right to wear whatever we want.”		
“I think that the dress code and appropriateness is being way overdone in other words the teachers are using to much power.”		
<b>Drugs</b>	56	4
“Drugs are more of a problem than violence or bullying.”		
“Need more personal and locker searches for drugs and other contraband”		
<b>Fighting</b>	52	3
“I think that this school is not as safe as I would like it to be. There are a lot of fights that go on and the punishment is very light...”		
“I think the rules and punishments regarding fighting at school should only be enforced on the attacker because in some situations fighting is necessary a defense.”		
<b>Race</b>	47	3
“RACISM!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!, please do something to stop this behavior in school, even when teachers turn their back toward students, it begins to happen again. Please do something to stop this.”		
There is a big problem about people being teased about race!		
<b>Gangs</b>	39	2
“Earlier in the year the school had an incident where two guys got into a gang fight. The school did go through measures such as putting up metal detectors and checking backpacks.”		
“Gangs are a true issue here at X School. People get 'jumped' everyday because they are not in the right gang. Also the use of drugs on the buses is a true issue including purple haze and weed.”		
<b>Virginia Tech</b>	35	2
Sometimes, I am afraid that people who don't fit in, are considered outsiders, or do not act well in school will eventually bring a gun or hurt others for no reason. I am even more afraid of this after what happened at Virginia Tech. I think our school should do more to insure that students cannot bring weapons to school without being caught (install metal detectors).		
“Honestly, after what happened on Tech campus I almost don’t feel safe at school anymore. I know my school has done what they could to make things better but it still is a worry.”		
<b>Food</b>	26	2
“More time for lunch and to change classes.”		
“We need better food.”		
<b>Cell phones</b>	21	1
“I think students should be able to bring cell phones to school incase of an emergency.”		
“We should be able to use our ipods or other Mp3's in the hall ways it’s not like we are hurting anyone. Also we should be able to use our cell phones in the hallway like if we absolutely need to talk to someone like a parent or a friend.”		

Many students made positive comments about the safety of their school. A selection of these comments is presented below:

1. "This is a great school, but all schools have flaws, all schools have bullies. Safety is not an issue here. I can go to school without worrying about my personal safety."
2. "I feel very safe at this school and the teachers have all treated me well."
3. "I think that our school is a very safe place to be and I wouldn't pick any other place to be that I could be more safe."
4. "I think that this is a great school. There is not a lot of bullying or fights at the school. There is always room for improvement but I think for now we are fine."
5. "I think school safety is very important. Without school safety and guidelines our school would be a wreck. We need to keep up the good work!!"
6. "X is a very safe school where I think that everyone feels comfortable. The only people who bully and make trouble are the ones that have problems themselves. Bullies are not common so no one is really affected by their remarks."
7. "X is an exceptional school in the topic of security, although it would be a little more efficient if more guards were posted about the school, also, metal detectors would be a great installment to the school to track down abusers of school rules. Other than this, I always feel safe at school, and never have any feeling of insecurity."
8. "My school is a good school, there is hardly any put downs, and I have never seen a fist fight."
9. "X is a safe environment for all of us and the teachers and adults try their best to help but sometimes they don't see what all goes on."
10. "I think that our school does a very good job of keeping us safe. You don't really hear about fights and such in a conversation. We don't really have a lot of internal hostility towards one another, so there's not a lot of violence. As for gangs and drugs, I've never seen or heard or been involved in anything like that."
11. "Our school has good safety. The survey addressed everything very well."
12. "My school is very nice. People respect others of different groups and we are practically safe."
13. "X isn't a terrible school, and overall the main things on my mind when I come to school isn't safety, cause I never really feel in harm when I am here, I have never really been in or witnessed a dangerous situation, and I'm thankful for that. I just think that the schools safety is pretty good and I'm happy here at X."
14. "I think we should do more of these to make sure our school is safer!"
15. "This survey is a great way to see how each school is doing on the bullying level. I answered all honestly and hope this will help my school in the future!!!"
16. "I personally feel that our school is safe and that in the case of an emergency our school is prepared."
17. "I personally think that this school is a safe school. But then again, I don't really know what goes on because I keep out of trouble with my own friends. But I really do think this school is safe. If I was in trouble, I would want to come here. But that's just my own opinion."

18. "Very safe school I feel, even though my answers may not make it seem like it. Bullying isn't that much of a problem, but it does happen occasionally. Staff and students are very nice, understanding, and sympathetic."
19. "Unlike some schools we feel safe here, and I know I don't feel any problem in talking with one of my teachers. If I had to pick a school it would be this one."
20. "Overall, the school is a safe place for students."
21. "X is a pretty safe school. Some teachers aren't as fair as others, but all in all, it's a great school."
22. "Our school is a safe school and when I am at school I feel very safe to be here because they monitor the hallways."
23. "This is so long, but it's worth it. Here at X there really is no need for extremely strict rules. We all have respect for each other, and we are all here for one thing: to get our education and go to college."
24. "I feel that my school is pretty safe. Sometimes students get away with things that are against the rules because they don't get caught by teachers. Students will get name called, but I don't take it seriously. I just forget about it and move on. I'm here for an education not to have a party."
25. I personally think that this was a perfect time to take this essay with the events that occurred at Virginia Tech. Although I know that this survey had nothing to do with this event, I think it shows that even the small schools in the 'country' so-to-speak have just as much of a threat as does any other school. Our school is a wonderful place and although we have never had sizeable breach in our safety/security, I feel we are prepared if one should arise.

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**Student Survey for Virginia High School Safety Study  
Parent Review Copy**

(The online version of this survey is formatted for easier reading and completion)

The purpose of this survey is to improve the safety and climate of Virginia high schools. We want to understand how students feel about their school. We hope you will give us open and honest answers. This is an anonymous survey, which means that no one will know your name or your individual answers.

**Please mark the response that best describes you.**

What school do you attend? \_\_\_\_\_

How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

What grade are you in? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you? (Female, Male)

What do you consider yourself to be? (White, Black, Hispanic, American Indian, Asian, Other)

Is English spoken in your home? (Yes, No)

Are other languages spoken in your home? (No, Spanish, Other)

<b>Thinking about your school over the last 6 months, would you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following...</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Everyone knows the school rules for student conduct.				
The school rules are fair.				
The punishment for breaking school rules is the same no matter who you are.				
The school rules are strictly enforced.				
If a school rule is broken, students know what kind of punishment will follow.				
We have a strict dress code at school.				
If a student breaks the rules at this school, he or she will be punished.				

<b>Does your school take any of these measures to make sure students are safe?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Security guards or assigned police officers?			
Other school staff or other adults supervising the hallways?			
Metal detectors?			
Locked entrance or exit doors during the day?			
A requirement that visitors sign in?			
Locker checks?			
A requirement that students wear badges or picture identification?			
One or more security cameras to monitor the school?			
A code of student conduct (written rules for students to follow)?			

<b>Zero tolerance means that a student is automatically expelled or given a lengthy suspension for any violation of the rule. Does your school have zero tolerance for:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Bringing a gun to school?			
Bringing a BB gun, pellet gun, or similar gun to school?			
Bringing a toy gun or something that looks like a gun to school?			
Bringing in edged or cutting weapons such as knives?			
Bringing illegal drugs to school?			
Bringing legal drugs, such as prescription drugs and over the counter medications, to school?			
Bringing alcohol to school?			
Belonging to a gang?			
Fighting at school?			
Does your school have zero tolerance for some other reason not mentioned above?			

How many minutes do students have for lunch on a normal day? \_\_\_\_\_

How many minutes do students have when changing classes or going from one class to the next? \_\_\_\_\_

How many times do students change classes on a normal day? \_\_\_\_\_

How likely are the following?	Not at all Likely	Not Likely	Likely	Very Likely
If a student was wandering in the hallways during class time, how likely would an adult stop the student?				
If a student cut a class, how likely would the student be caught?				
If a student smoked a cigarette at school, how likely would the student be caught?				
If two students got into a fight at school, how likely would they get caught?				
If a student was five minutes late for class, how likely would teachers overlook it?				
If a student said something sarcastic to a teacher, how likely would the teacher overlook what the student said?				

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
If another student was bullying me, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.				
There are adults at this school I could turn to if I had a personal problem.				
If I tell a teacher that someone is bullying me, the teacher will do something to help.				
Students tell teachers when other students are being bullied.				
If another student talked about killing someone, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.				
If another student brought a gun to school, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.				
Teachers here make it clear to students that bullying is not tolerated.				
Students here try to stop bullying when they see it happening.				
I am being honest on this survey.				

How much do you agree that adults in this school...	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Really care about all students.					
Acknowledge and pay attention to students.					
Want all students to do their best.					
Listen to what students have to say.					
Believe that every student can be a success.					
Treat all students fairly.					
Support and treat students with respect.					
Feel a responsibility to improve the school.					

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
You like school a lot.				
School is boring to you.				
You do poorly at school.				
You don't really belong at school.				
Homework is a waste of time.				
You try hard at school.				
You usually finish your homework.				
Getting good grades is very important to you.				
Sometimes you do extra work to improve your grades.				

**If you could choose on your own between studying to get a good grade on a test or going out with your friends, would you...** (Definitely go out with friends, Probably go out with friends, Probably study, Definitely study)

<b>This section asks you what your friends think, not what you do. In your school, is it OK with your friends to do the following:</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Be late for school?				
Cut a couple of classes?				
Skip school for a whole day?				
Cheat on tests?				
Copy someone else's homework?				
Get into physical fights?				
Belong to gangs?				
Steal belongings from school, a student, or a teacher?				
Destroy or damage school property?				
Smoke on school grounds?				
Drink alcohol during the school day?				
Use illegal weapons during the school day?				
Bring weapons to school?				
Abuse teachers physically?				
Talk back to teachers?				
Disobey school rules?				

<b>How much do you agree or disagree with following?</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
It feels good when I hit someone.				
If you fight a lot, everyone will look up to you.				
Sometimes you only have two choices: get punched or punch the other person first.				
If you are afraid to fight, you won't have many friends.				
Students who are bullied or teased mostly deserve it.				
Bullying is sometimes fun to do.				
It is sometimes 'ok' to disobey the teacher.				
Students should obey teachers even if it goes against what they want to do.				
Respect for teachers' authority is important for students to have.				
I do what teachers ask me to do, even if I don't want to do it.				
I can trust the way teachers use their power and authority.				
I am telling the truth on this survey.				

<b>During the past 6 months, have you participated in any of the following extra-curricular activities sponsored by your school such as:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Athletic teams at school?		
Spirit groups, for example, Cheerleading or Pep Club?		
Performing arts, for example, Band, Orchestra, or Drama?		
Academic clubs, for example, Debate Team, Honor Society, Spanish Club, or Math Club?		
School government?		
Service clubs, for example Key Club or other service oriented groups?		
During the past 6 months, have you participated in an extra-curricular activity that is not mentioned above?		

<b>How true is this in your school?</b>	<b>Not at all true</b>	<b>Not very true</b>	<b>Somewhat true</b>	<b>True</b>	<b>Very true</b>
When I've figured out how to do a problem, my teachers give me more challenging problems to think about.					
My teachers press me to do thoughtful work.					
When I'm working out a problem, my teachers tell me to keep thinking until I really understand.					
My teachers don't let me do just easy work, but make me think.					
My teachers make sure that the work I do really makes me think.					
My teachers accept nothing less than my full effort.					



<b>During the past 6 months, how many times have you...</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Once or Twice</b>	<b>About Once a week</b>	<b>Several Times a Week</b>
Gone to a teacher (or other adult at school) for academic help?				
Asked a teacher (or other adult at school) for advice?				
Told a teacher (or other adult at school) about something that worries you?				
Told a teacher (or other adult at school) about a friend who was in trouble?				

<b>This year in school have any of the following happened to you personally in the school?</b>	<b>False</b>	<b>True</b>
Damage to personal property worth more than \$10.		
Theft of personal property worth more than \$10.		
Was physically attacked and had to see a doctor.		
Was physically attacked, but not seriously enough to see a doctor.		
Received obscene remarks or gestures from a student.		
Was threatened in remarks by a student.		
Had a weapon pulled on me.		

**Now, we'd like to know about gangs at your school.** You may know these as street gangs, fighting gangs, crews, or something else. Gangs may use common names, signs, symbols, or colors. For this survey we are interested in all gangs.

- Are there any gangs at your school? (Yes, No, Don't know)
- During the last 6 months, how often have gangs been involved in fights, attacks, or other violence at your school?
- Have gangs been involved in the sale of drugs at your school in the last 6 months? (Yes, No, Don't know)

<b>How often have you experienced the following?</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Once or twice</b>	<b>About once per week</b>	<b>Several times per week</b>
Bullying is defined as the use of one's strength or status to injure, threaten, or embarrass another person. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or social. It is not bullying when two students of about the same strength argue or fight. By this definition, I have been bullied in the past month.				
Physical bullying involves repeatedly hitting, kicking, or shoving someone weaker on purpose. By this definition, I have been physically bullied in the past month.				
Verbal bullying involves repeatedly teasing, putting down, or insulting someone on purpose. By this definition, I have been verbally bullied in the past month.				
Social bullying involves getting others repeatedly to ignore or exclude someone on purpose. By this definition, I have been socially bullied in the past month.				

<b>Experiences of bullying</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Bullying is a problem at this school.				
Students here often get teased about their clothing or physical appearance.				
Students here often get put down because of their race or ethnicity.				
New students are made to feel welcome here by other students.				
Students from different neighborhoods get along well together here.				
There is a lot of teasing about sexual topics at this school.				
Students at this school accept me for who I am.				

**Have you told anyone that you were bullied in the past 30 days at school?**  
 (I have not been bullied; I have been bullied, but I have not told anyone; I have told someone)

**I have told these persons that I was bullied in the past 30 days at school;**  
 (No one, A parent, A friend, A teacher or other adult at school, Someone else)

**Thank you for completing the survey!**

**Teacher Survey for Virginia High School Safety Study  
Participant Review Copy**

(The online version of this survey is formatted for easier reading and completion)

The purpose of this survey is to improve the safety and climate of Virginia high schools. We hope you will give us open and honest answers. This is an anonymous survey, which means that no one will know your name or your individual answers. Please note, when we ask you about "school" we mean all grades in your school, and that when we ask about "teachers" or "students" in general, we mean all teachers and students in the school.

**Please read each question carefully and click on your answers for each question.**

Are you? (Female, Male)

What do you consider yourself to be? (White, Black, Hispanic, American Indian, Asian, Other)

How many years have you been teaching? \_\_\_\_\_

A majority of my teaching is done with? \_\_\_\_\_

**This first section is about your opinion about how things work in your school.**

<b>Thinking about your school over the last 6 months, would you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following...</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Everyone knows the school rules for student conduct.				
The school rules are fair.				
The punishment for breaking school rules is the same no matter who you are.				
The school rules are strictly enforced.				
If a school rule is broken, students know what kind of punishment will follow.				
We have a strict dress code at school.				
If a student breaks the rules at this school, he or she will be punished.				

<b>Does your school take any of these measures to make sure students are safe?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Security guards or assigned police officers?			
Other school staff or other adults supervising the hallways?			
Metal detectors?			
Locked entrance or exit doors during the day?			
A requirement that visitors sign in?			
Locker checks?			
A requirement that students wear badges or picture identification?			
One or more security cameras to monitor the school?			
A code of student conduct (written rules for students to follow)?			

<b>Zero tolerance means that a student is automatically expelled or given a lengthy suspension for any violation of the rule. Does your school have zero tolerance for:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Bringing a gun to school?			
Bringing a BB gun, pellet gun, or similar gun to school?			
Bringing a toy gun or something that looks like a gun to school?			
Bringing in edged or cutting weapons such as knives?			
Bringing illegal drugs to school?			
Bringing legal drugs, such as prescription drugs and over the counter medications, to school?			
Bringing alcohol to school?			
Belonging to a gang?			
Fighting at school?			
Does your school have zero tolerance for some other reason not mentioned above?			

How many minutes do students have for lunch on a normal day? \_\_\_\_\_

How many minutes do students have when changing classes or going from one class to the next? \_\_\_\_\_

How many times do students change classes on a normal day? \_\_\_\_\_

<b>How likely are the following?</b>	<b>Not at all Likely</b>	<b>Not Likely</b>	<b>Likely</b>	<b>Very Likely</b>

If a student was wandering in the hallways during class time, how likely would an adult stop the student?				
If a student cut a class, how likely would the student be caught?				
If a student smoked a cigarette at school, how likely would the student be caught?				
If two students got into a fight at school, how likely would they get caught?				
If a student was five minutes late for class, how likely would teachers overlook it?				
If a student said something sarcastic to a teacher, how likely would the teacher overlook what the student said?				

How true is this in your school?	Not at all true	Not very true	Somewhat true	True	Very true
When students figure out how to do a problem, teachers give them more challenging problems to think about.					
Teachers press students to do thoughtful work.					
When students are working out a problem, teachers tell them to keep thinking until they really understand.					
Teachers don't let students just do easy work, but make them think.					
Teachers make sure that the work students do really makes them think.					
Teachers accept nothing less than students' full effort.					

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Students feel free to ask for help from teachers if there is a problem with a student.				
Teachers know when students are being picked on or being bullied.				
Students are encouraged to report bullying and aggression.				
Students know who to go to for help if they have been treated badly by another student.				
Students report it when one student hits another.				
Teachers take action to solve the problem when students report bullying.				

How much do you agree that administrators in this school...	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Really care about all teachers.					
Acknowledge and pay attention to teachers.					
Want all teachers to do their best.					
Listen to what teachers have to say.					
Believe that every teacher can be a success.					
Treat all teachers fairly.					
Support and treat each other with respect.					
Feel a responsibility to improve the school.					

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This school collaborates well with community organizations to help address substance abuse or other problems among youth.					
This school provides effective confidential support and referral services for students needing help because of substance abuse, violence, or other problems.					

To what extent does this school...	Not at all	Not much	Some	A lot
Foster youth social and emotional development or resilience?				
Provide nutritional instruction?				
Provide opportunities for physical education and activity?				
To what extent does this school...	Not at all	Not much	Some	A lot
Provide alcohol or drug use prevention instruction?				
Provide tobacco use prevention instruction?				
Provide conflict resolution or behavior management instruction?				

Provide character education?				
Provide harassment or bullying prevention?				
Provide services for students with disabilities or other special needs?				

**This next section is about your own interactions with students.**

How much do you agree with the following statements...	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I encourage students to come to me for academic help.				
I let students know that I am available to talk outside of class.				
I encourage students to turn to me with personal problems.				
I encourage students to tell me if they are being bullied.				
I encourage students to come forward if they have information about a gun at school.				
I encourage students to come forward if they have information about a student who plans to hurt him/herself or someone else.				
I believe that teachers should be mentors as well as instructors.				
Disciplinary consequences for students at this school tend to be too harsh.				
I trust that my administration will handle discipline fairly.				
When I refer a student to the office for a discipline problem, I feel confident that it will be handled appropriately.				

This year in school have any of the following happened to you personally in the school?	False	True
Damage to personal property worth more than \$10.		
Theft of personal property worth more than \$10.		
Was physically attacked and had to see a doctor.		
Was physically attacked, but not seriously enough to see a doctor.		
Received obscene remarks or gestures from a student.		
Was threatened in remarks by a student.		
Had a weapon pulled on me.		
Was spoken to in a rude or disrespectful manner by a student.		

**Now, we'd like to know about gangs at your school.** You may know these as street gangs, fighting gangs, crews, or something else. Gangs may use common names, signs, symbols, or colors. For this survey we are interested in all gangs.

Are there any gangs at your school? (Yes, No, Don't know)

During the last 6 months, how often have gangs been involved in fights, attacks, or other violence at your school? (Never, Once or twice in the last 6 months, Once or twice a month, Once or twice a week, Almost everyday, Don't know)

Have gangs been involved in the sale of drugs at your school in the last 6 months? (Yes, No, Don't know)

Experiences of Bullying	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Bullying is a problem at this school.				
Students here often get teased about their clothing or physical appearance.				
Students here often get put down because of their race or ethnicity.				
New students are made to feel welcome here by other students.				
Students from different neighborhoods get along well together here.				
There is a lot of teasing about sexual topics at this school.				
Students at this school accept other students for who they are.				

Thank you for completing the survey!