



YRDSB Every Student Counts Survey
Themed Research Reports

Mental Health and Well-Being

December 2021



Source: Chief Lady Bird is an Anishinaabe artist based in Toronto. Her work is also seen across the city as public murals.

We affirm that we are all treaty people and acknowledge that the York Region District School Board is located on the lands of two treaties. These treaties have been signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the First Nations of the Williams Treaties who are: the Mississaugas of Alderville, Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Scugog Island; and the Chippewas of Beausoleil, Rama, and Georgina Island who is our closest neighbour and partner in education.

To honour this agreement we will take up our responsibility to be respectful of their traditions, knowledge and inherent rights as sovereign nations.

We will respect their relationship with these lands and recognize that our connection to this land is through the continued relationship with these First Nations, and we acknowledge our shared responsibility to respect and care for the land and waters for future generations.



Title: YRDSB Every Student Counts Survey Themed Research Reports. Mental Health & Well-Being

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YRDSB Every Student Counts Survey, Themed Research Reports: Mental Health and Well-being

York Region District School Board (YRDSB) is committed to improving student achievement and well-being by working to ensure equitable, accessible, inclusive, and healthy learning environments. The Board recognizes that marginalized students face systemic barriers through policies, programs and practices that create or maintain disadvantages for these students. Ensuring equitable, accessible and inclusive learning environments, therefore, requires the intentional identification and removal of systemic barriers to student success and well-being. To this end, in 2018, YRDSB conducted the *Every Student Counts Survey* (ESCS) to:

- Identify and eliminate systemic barriers to student success;
- Create more equitable and inclusive school environments; and
- Improve student achievement and well-being.

As outlined in this report, findings from the ESCS point to disparities, or differences, in student experiences and outcomes based on socio-demographic characteristics including, but not limited to, gender identity, race, and special education needs. YRDSB recognizes that the disparities across demographics are the result of inequities within and beyond schools and school boards and **are not a reflection of deficits within students and families**. As such, it is important to review findings in this report with the understanding that:

- Biases must be examined to ensure that students, families, and communities are not further marginalized or stigmatized in reviewing and interpreting data,
- Disparities in student experiences and outcomes reflect systemic inequities; and,
- Responses to disparities in student outcomes must focus on strategies and initiatives to promote equitable institutional structures and practices.

Engaging with ESCS Data

The following questions are intended to support readers of this report in using an anti-oppression framework to review the ESCS findings:

- What do you notice about the data? What stands out for you?
- How does your social location influence how you interpret the data?
- How will you shift or maintain your focus on looking at systems and structures (e.g., school practices, school environment, Board practices) rather than attributing students' experiences and outcomes to deficits within students and families?
- What does the data suggest about the experiences of students and their families?
- What assumptions or inferences might you be making about students and their families based on the data?
- Whose voices may not be represented in the data?
- In what ways are the data similar to, or different from, other data sources (e.g., municipal, community agencies, and other school boards)?
- What additional data sources are needed to understand both complementary and divergent perspectives regarding educational experiences?

Background and Rationale¹

This report underscores YRDSB’s continued commitment to human rights, equity, anti-racism and anti-oppression, particularly in connection to providing safe, caring, welcoming, healthy and inclusive schools to improve the learning outcomes and well-being of underserved students. While a range of data is used to support students by monitoring systemic impacts on student experiences and outcomes, this report focuses on the self-reported mental health and well-being of students at YRDSB, emphasizing the 2018-2019 school year as this was the same year the ESCS was administered.

When using the term “well-being” for this report, we refer to “students’ overall development and quality of life” (OECD, 2017). We recognize that students’ quality of life depends on the interactions among number of related domains: psychological, social, cognitive, physical and spiritual/sense of self. Several factors contribute to student well-being such as, motivation, resilience, self-esteem, self-efficacy, hope and optimism. At the same time, well-being can be impeded by factors such as stress, anxiety, depression, and perceptions of self and others. These factors are often a direct result of environmental barriers permeating the lives of students today by way of systemic racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, islamophobia, ableism and many other systemic barriers.

Although students’ experiences of well-being may be unique to the individual, well-being is affected by interactions with their environment such as family, school or the broader community (OECD, 2017). Since students spend a significant amount of their time at school, this space (e.g., classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, and interactions with peers, teachers and other staff etc.) has the potential to largely influence, either positively or negatively, students’ mental health and well-being (Morley & Street, 2014). Implicit bias, for instance, plays a large role in how students are treated and perceived (Heitzeg, 2009; Jacobs, 2018), and ultimately impact students’ well-being, sense of belonging, perceptions of self and their learning.

Researchers (Seligman et al., 2009) have also found that students’ mental health and well-being influence their engagement in learning and, in turn, impact learning outcomes. In fact, a positive relationship was found between students’ mental health and well-being and their learning outcomes. Research shows that providing this caring context of a focus on mattering and belonging, improves academics, resiliency and well-being (Durlak et al, 2011). It was assumed that students who experience positive mental health and well-being were more likely to attain higher academic achievement (Berger et al, 2010; Seligman et al. 2009).

The integration of what is referred to a *culturally responsive pedagogy* (Ladson-Billings, 1994; 1995) in the context of school is a factor that more likely promotes positive emotional well-being in and out of school and is linked to academic success. *Culturally responsive pedagogy* is committed to valuing students’ out-of-school knowledge and practices (primary discourses) for school learning, however, does so in ways that guide students to develop *critical cultural consciousness* through critical dialogue (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013).

Incorporating children’s primary discourses into classroom spaces by implementing *culturally responsive pedagogy* has the potential to promote positive emotions in students within and beyond the classroom (Solsken et al ,2000). For instance, it was found that when teachers use students’ life histories as resources in the classroom, children viewed themselves as more competent in literacy at school. Other researchers (e.g., Carbone & Orellana, 2010) found that offering learners choices on topics of interest were personally relevant, thus, supported and affirmed their identities. However, engaging in critical dialogue with students about how power and privilege operates in serving certain students over others (in and out of school) is foundational to truly resisting exclusionary educational practices that, at their core, do not value and affirm

“The aim of this report is prompt critical dialogue that will contribute to positive change for students who experience such barriers at an individual level and, as a result, have historically been underserved, with the intention of better serving these students.”

¹ For details about the terms used and related literature please check the “Explanations of Terms” and the “Discussions” sections of this report.

students' individual identities, because students are wrongly expected to make themselves over in the image of those closely linked to mainstream power and privilege (Kalantzis & Cope, 2000).

Collecting identity-based data through the ESCS supports the identification of groups of students who may likely be experiencing systemic barriers such as, racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism and other forms of oppression. Methot (2019) reminds us that when school board statistics show that certain groups of students have higher rates of suspensions, dropouts, absenteeism or require special education needs services, it becomes clear that the education system is not responding to their needs. In this report, we will be able to identify, for instance, which groups of students report higher rates of feeling nervous or anxious, lonely and sad or depressed. We will also be able to identify which groups of students report lower rates of speaking with a mental health professional about their lived experiences when having high rates of emotions such as, sadness and depression. The aim of this report is to prompt critical dialogue that will contribute to positive change for students who experience such barriers at an individual level and, as a result, have historically been underserved, with the intention of better serving these students.

Moving forward: Strategies and Actions in Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) and Director's Action Plan (DAP)

[Director's Action Plan](#) goals focus on raising the learning outcomes of students who are underserved and underperforming. More specifically, Goal 1 – Foster Well-Being and Mental Health, states: “Build safe, healthy and inclusive learning and working environments where students and staff feel they matter and belong.”

The two student level key actions associated with this goal are:

- 1.1 Provide learning opportunities and resources to prioritize and support the mental health and well-being of students and staff by focusing on creating caring communities and understanding anxiety related to trauma, including racial trauma.
- 1.2 Partner with identity-specific mental health organizations to develop supports which respond to the needs of racialized students.

To support the achievement and mental health of students and to remove barriers to meaningful education for all students we will:

- Implement the [ABCs of Mental Health Lesson Series for K-12 \(Acknowledge, Bridge, Connection\)](#). The series is designed with an anti-oppressive framework, which identifies and challenges oppressive ideologies such as pathologization, universalism, and deficit thinking.
- Place the individual student at the centre of our actions.
- Ensure active family and student voice in the proactive planning to support students.
- Enhance the Family Mental Health Newsletter 2021-22 editions with emphasis on tips for families and encouraging dialogue with schools in efforts to provide accessible communications for families (e.g., encouraging participation in web events, and drop-ins for families and youth).
- Provide culturally relevant and responsive mental health care.
- Centre intersecting social identities for students in affirming practices in programming, services and supports.
- Continue to build collaborative relationships with external organizations and agencies that provide culturally, racially, and linguistically relevant mental health services.
- Enhance and extend student leadership for mental health initiatives in tandem with student leaders and other stakeholders.

YRDSB Approach to Promote Mental Health & Well-Being

The York Region District School Board’s [Mental Health and Addiction Strategy](#) program development and service delivery processes have a strong foundation in an anti-oppressive social framework. This framework acknowledges that student mental health is informed by personal assets and strengths as well as environmental and community assets and strengths. Mental health is the bedrock to learning and growing. Efforts to support student mental health at YRDSB are rooted in multidisciplinary cross-collaboration and reciprocal partnerships with families as well as culturally relevant community services. Equity and mental health are inseparably tied to one another. Student mental health thrives when students can bring their whole selves to the learning environment in a manner that is welcomed and included. There are many ways to understand and support mental health. When we focus on aspects of mental health that lie within us (internal), between us (relational), and around us (environmental/systemic), we can create the conditions for positive learning spaces where students not only feel cared for but also cared about. Our approach is tiered in its design (promotion of health, prevention of illness or difficulty, and culturally responsive interventions as needed). YRDSB’s Psychology and Social Work Services along with interdepartmental collaboration (with Inclusive School and Community Services, Indigenous Education, Healthy Schools and Caring and Safe Schools), external community partnerships with linguistically and culturally relevant services, as well as speakers with lived experience, help us to provide a multi-dimensional approach to mental health service and programs. We place an emphasis on students at the centre, while schools, families, and community wrap around. Students, families and communities help us shape the path forward through various ways of understanding mental health through knowing and doing. Oppression and racism create barriers to student mental health and impact access to services, resulting in disproportionate outcomes for those who are racialized and marginalized due to Indigeneity, religion, gender, gender expression, sexuality, class, ability, ethnicity, language spoken, etc. Oppressive ideologies such as pathologization, universalization and deficit thinking can perpetuate the disproportionate mental health outcomes for racialized and marginalized students. Our approach directly works to expose these ideologies, challenge them through reflection and affirmational and anti-oppressive practices. Hence, our approach to mental health aims to actively promote strategies, initiatives and partnerships that directly address and dismantle this disproportionality, an anti-oppressive lens on outcome measures guides us in reviewing, refining, and re-imagining our approach.

Important Note

Most of the findings of this report are based on ESCS results from the 2018-19 school year. The recent COVID-19 pandemic in the year 2020-21 school year resulted in several school shutdowns and stay-at-home orders for students and families, which may have significantly impacted students’ mental health and well-being. We will be learning more about this through student and family climate surveys administered in the 2020-21 school year.

To support students in reaching their full academic potential, and the conditions that support social and emotional development as well as address the overrepresentation of racialized and marginalized students who report feeling nervous/anxious, lonely and depressed/sad, our commitment is to more effectively:

- Continue to provide professional learning opportunities for staff to name and challenge implicit bias(es), and oppressive ideologies that may continue to impact racialized students’ lived experiences and their emotional well-being;
- Continue to provide learning opportunities for all education stakeholders about anti-racism, anti-oppression and identity affirming practices in order to intentionally disrupt racist and hateful actions impacting the lives of many marginalized students.
- Identify and close opportunity gaps among students through inclusive identity-affirming learning and well-being approaches and through monitoring students’ emotional well-being over time;
- Address the ongoing needs of the diverse student community through continued community outreach and reciprocal partnership strategies, particularly with members of marginalized communities

Anti-Oppression Note

The disparities and disproportionalities outlined in this list of key findings are the direct result of inequities within and beyond schools and school boards. It is important for us to reiterate, however, that the differences across the demographic variables included in this report are not a reflection of deficits within students and families. As such, it is important to review these findings within this report through an anti-oppressive framework. Before reading any further, we encourage readers to re-read the anti-oppressive prompts listed in the introduction of this report and ask readers to keep them front and center when engaging with ESCS data and thereafter.

Overall Mental Health and Well-Being

- Overall, students’ emotional well-being decreased considerably by grade panel.
- Students in Grades K-6 and Grades 7-8 reported higher rates of feeling happy, good about themselves, positive about the future and mattering to people at school all the time or often compared to students in Grades 9-12.
- There are noticeable differences between the percentage of students who reported having negative emotions all the time or often in Grades 7-8 and Grades 9-12 compared to students in Grades K- 6.

Students’ emotional well-being decreased considerably by grade panel. Students in Grades K-6 and Grades 7-8 reported higher rates of feeling happy (93.7% in Grades K-6 and 75.2% in Grades 7-8), good about themselves (86.5% in Grade K-6 and 56.7% in Grades 7-8), positive about the future (77.5% in Grades K-6 and 53.8% in Grades 7-8) and mattering to people at school (63.8% in Grades K-6 and 47.6% in Grades 7-8) compared to Grades 9-12 students’ feelings of happiness (64.0%), good about themselves (47.6%), positive about the future (44.9%) and mattering to people at school (41.5%). At the same time, there are noticeable differences between the percentage of students who reported having negative emotion in Grades 7-8 and Grades 9-12 compared to students in Grades K- 6.

Key Note

- The survey questions concerning mental health and well-being were grouped under two categories:
- positive emotions and (2) negative emotions.
- Participants were asked to select a single option in response for each emotional well-being question from the following scale: (a) All the Time, (b) Often, (c) Sometimes, (d) Never, (e) Not Sure.
- The survey questions regarding speaking with a mental health professional used the following scale: (a) Once (b) Two Times (c) Three or More Times (d) Not at All. Findings in this section are focusing on the perceptions combining ‘All the Time’ and ‘Often’ for the emotional well-being questions and ‘Three or More Times’ for the mental health professional question.

Emotional Well-Being and Demographics

Emotional Well-Being and Self-Identified Racial Identity

- Students who self-identified as White (single race) in Grades 9-12 (69.0%) and Grades 7-8 (79.9%) and those who were identified by their parents/guardians as Latino/Latina/Latinx (multiple race) in Grades K-6 (98.4%) reported the highest rates of feeling happy compared to all other survey respondents.
- Students who self-identified as White (single race) in Grades 9-12 (51.1%) and those whose racial category was not listed (single race) in Grades 7-8 (61.4%), as well as those who were identified by their parents/guardians as South Asian (multiple race) in Grades K-6 (85.4%) reported the highest rates of feeling positive about the future compared to all other survey respondents.
- Students who self-identified as Black (single race) in Grades 9-12 (55.3%), those who self-identified as White (single race) in Grades 7-8 (63.6%) and those who were identified by their parents/guardians as Latino/Latina/Latinx (single race) in Grades K-6 (94.5%) reported the highest rates of feeling good about themselves compared to all other survey respondents.
- Students who self-identified as White (single race) in Grades 9-12 (49.6%) and Grades 7-8 (56.0%) and those who were identified by their parents/guardians as South Asian (multiple race) in Grades K-6

B: Key Findings

(76.1%) reported the highest rates of feeling like they matter to people at school compared to all other survey respondents.

- Students who self-identified as Black (single race) in Grades 9-12 (37.6%) and Grades 7-8 (28.9%) and those who were identified by their parents/guardians as East Asian (single race) in Grades K-6 (5.7%) reported the lowest rates of feeling nervous or anxious compared to all other survey respondents.
- Students who indicated that their racial category was not listed (single race) in Grades 9-12 (21.0%), and in Grades 7-8 (15.0%), as well as those who parents/guardians indicated that their child's racial category was not listed (single race) in Grades K-6 (2.9%) reported the lowest rates of feeling lonely compared to all other survey respondents.
- Students who did not select their racial category because they were either not sure, did not understand the race question or decided not to respond in Grades 9-12 (22.2%), and those who self-identified as South Asian (single race) in Grades 7-8 (18.1%), as well as those who were identified by their parents/guardians as Latino/Latina/Latinx (single race) in Grades K-6 (0.9%) reported the lowest rates of feeling sad or depressed compared to all other survey respondents.
- Students who self-identified as Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) in Grades K-6 (91.5%) reported the second lowest rate of feeling happy compared to all other students, and those who were identified as Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) in Grades 9-12 (34.1%) reported the highest rate of feeling lonely compared to all other survey respondents.
- Students who self-identified as Latino/Latina/Latinx (multiple race) in Grades 9-12 (24.1%), and those who self-identified as Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) in Grades 7-8 (29.6%) and Grades K-6 (16.9%), reported the highest rates of talking with a mental health professional three or more times in the 12 months prior to when the survey was administered compared to all other survey respondents.

Emotional Well-Being and Self-Identified Gender Identity

- Overall, across grade panels, students who self-identified as man/boy and woman/girl notably reported the highest rates of overall positive feelings compared to their peers who also responded to this survey, with the exception of those in Grades 7-8 who self-identified as gender nonconforming who reported a slightly higher rate of feeling like they matter to people at school than students who self-identified as man/boy.
- Students who self-identified as man/boy in Grades 9-12 (69.6%) and Grades 7-8 (78.2%) followed by those who self-identified as woman/girl in Grades 9-12 (60.8%) and Grades 7-8 (74.2%) reported the highest rates of feeling happy compared to all other students in their respective grade panel. In Grades K-6, students who were identified by their parents/guardians as woman/girl (94.7%) reported the highest rates of feeling happy followed by those who were identified by their parents/guardians as man/boy (93.0%) compared to their peers who also responded to this survey.
- Students who self-identified as man/boy in Grades 9-12 (51.9%) and those who self-identified as gender nonconforming in Grades 7-8 (63.2%) reported the highest rates of feeling positive about the future compared to all other survey respondents in their respective grade panel. In Grades K-6, students who were identified by their parents/guardians as woman/girl (78.4%) reported the highest rates of feeling positive about the future, followed by those who were identified by their parents/guardians as man/boy (77.0%) compared to all their peers who responded to this survey.
- Students who self-identified as man/boy in Grades 9-12 (57.7%) and Grades 7-8 (64.4%) reported the highest rates of feeling good about themselves compared to all other students in their respective grade panel. In Grades K-6, students who were identified by their parents/guardians as woman/girl (87.1%) reported the highest rates of feeling good about themselves, followed by those survey respondents who were identified by their parents/guardians as man/boy (86.3%) compared to their peers who responded to this survey.

B: Key Findings

- Students who self-identified as man/boy in Grades 9-12 (46.8%) and Grades 7-8 (51.1%) reported the highest rates of feeling like they matter to people at school compared to all other students in their respective grade panel. Students in Grades 7-8 who self-identified as gender nonconforming, however, reported a slightly higher rate (52.6%) of feeling like they matter to people at school than did those students who self-identified as man/boy. In Grades K-6, students who were identified by their parents/guardians as woman/girl (66.0%) reported the highest rates of feeling like they matter to people at school, followed by those who were identified by their parents/guardians as man/boy (62.2%) compared to their peers who responded to this survey.
- Students who self-identified as man/boy in Grades 9-12 (35.7%), Grades 7-8 (27.2%), and those who were identified by their parents/guardians as man/boy in Grades K-6 (7.9%) reported the lowest rates of feeling nervous or anxious compared to all other survey respondents in their respective grade panel.
- Students who self-identified as man/boy in Grades 9-12 (19.6%), Grades 7-8 (14.8%) reported the lowest rates of feeling lonely compared to all other survey respondents in their respective grade panel. In Grades K-6, students who were identified by their parents/guardians as man/boy (4.2%) and woman/girl (4.2%) reported the lowest rate of feeling lonely compared to their peers who also responded to this survey.
- Students who self-identified as man/boy in Grades 9-12 (18.5%), Grades 7-8 (15.8%) reported the lowest rates of feeling sad or depressed compared to all other students in their respective grade panel. In Grades K-6, students who were identified by their parents/guardians as woman/girl (2.8%) and man/boy (2.9%) reported the lowest rate of feeling sad or depressed compared to their peers who responded to this survey.
- Students who self-identified as transgender in Grades 9-12 (44.2%), and those whose gender identity category was not listed in Grades 7-8 (30.0%) reported the highest rates of talking with a mental health professional three or more times in the 12 months prior to when the survey was administered compared to all other students in their respective grade panels.

Emotional Well-Being and self-Identified Sexual Orientation

- Students who self-identified as heterosexual reported the highest rates of overall positive feelings in Grades 9-12. Students who self-identified as heterosexual in Grades 9-12 reported the highest rate of feeling happy (67.6%), followed by feeling good about themselves (50.1%), feeling positive about the future (47.7%) and feeling like they matter to people at school (44.9%) compared to their peers who also responded to this survey.
- In Grades 7-8, students who self-identified as Two-Spirit reported the highest rate of feeling happy (79.3%), feeling positive about the future (62.1%), feeling good about themselves (60.9%), and feeling like they matter to people at school (71.7%) compared to their peers who also responded to this survey.
- Students who did not select their sexual orientation category because they were either not sure, did not understand this question or decided not to respond reported the lowest rates of feeling nervous or anxious in Grades 9-12 (41.7%) and Grade 7-8 (31.0%), as well as feeling sad or depressed (17.4%) in Grades 7-8.
- Students who self-identified as heterosexual in Grades 9-12 reported the lowest rate of feeling lonely (21.7%) and feeling sad or depressed (23.5%) compared to their peers who also responded to this survey. The same group of students in Grades 7-8 reported the lowest rate of feeling lonely (16.6%) compared to other survey respondents.
- Students who self-identified as heterosexual were least likely to talk with a mental health professional in Grades 7-8 and Grades 9-12 (15.8% and 11.7%, respectively), which is in line with the finding that this same group of students had the lowest rates of overall negative feelings.

Emotional Well-Being and Special Education Needs

- There is variance across grade panels and Special Education needs for the four positive emotion categories (happy, positive about the future, good about yourself, like you matter to people at school); students identified as deaf or hard of hearing as well as those with no exceptionality being amongst students reporting the higher overall positive emotions.
- Students who were identified with a developmental disability in Grades 9-12 and Grades K-6 reported the highest rates of feeling happy compared to their peers who also responded to this survey, with Grades K-6 respondents reporting the highest rate of feeling happy (95.5%), followed by respondents in Grades 9-12 (73.5%).
- The highest rates of feeling positive about the future were reported by students who were identified with a Language Impairment in Grades 9-12 (56.0%), those who were identified with a physical disability in Grades 7-8 (65.2%) and those who did not have an identification reported in the Student Information System but completed the ESCS survey in Grade K-6 (86.4%).
- The highest rates of feeling good about themselves were reported by students who were identified with a developmental disability in Grades 9-12 (69.6%), those who were identified with deaf or hard of hearing in Grades 7-8 (70.6%) and those who did not have an identification reported in the Student Information System but completed the ESCS survey in Grade K-6 (90.9%).
- Students who were identified with a developmental disability in Grades 9-12 reported the highest rates of feeling like they matter to people at school (58.8%), compared to their peers who also responded to this survey, while students who were identified with deaf or hard of hearing in both Grades 7-8 (58.8%) and Grades K-6 (80.4%) reported the highest rates of feeling like they matter to people at school compared to other survey respondents in each respective grade panel.
- Students who were identified with a behavioural exceptionality across grade panels reported the highest rates of feeling nervous/anxious compared to their peers who also responded to this survey, with Grades 9-12 reporting the highest rate of feeling nervous/anxious (62.7%), followed by students in Grades 7-8 (42.0%) and Grades K-6 (31.3%).
- Students who were identified with a behavioural exceptionality also reported the highest rates of feeling sad/depressed compared to peers. Likewise, across grade panels for this exceptionality, students' rates of feeling sad/depressed increased as the grade panels increased, with students in Grade 9-12 reporting the highest rate (36.6%), followed by student in Grades 7-8 (25.9%) and Grades K-6 (10.1%).
- Grades K-6 students who did not have an identification reported in the Student Information System but completed the ESCS survey, reported the highest rate of feeling lonely (13.6%), closely following survey respondents who were identified with a behavioural exceptionality (11.2%).
- Students identified with a physical disability reported the highest rate of feeling lonely in Grades 9-12 (34.6%), closely following students with a behavioural exceptionality (34.0%), and in Grades 7-8 students identified with Autism reported the highest rate of feeling lonely (28.1%) as well.
- In Grades 9-12 (46.1%) and K-6 (46.4%) students who were identified with a behavioural exceptionality were most likely to talk to a mental health professional three time or more in the 12 months prior to completing the survey. In Grades 7-8 students who were identified with a physical disability also reported high rates (47.8%) of talking to a mental health professional that school year.

Emotional Well-Being and Parent/Guardian Education

- Students in Grades 9-12 (66.1%) whose parents/guardians had accreditation from a university, and those in Grades 7-8 (77.3%) whose parents/guardians had accreditation from a college, as well as students in Grades K-6 (97.7%) whose parents/guardians completed an apprenticeship program reported the highest rates of feeling happy compared to all other survey respondents in their respective grade panels.
- Students in Grades 9-12 whose parents/guardians had accreditation from a university (47.2%) or completed an apprenticeship program (47.1%) and those in Grades 7-8 whose parents/guardians had accreditation from a university (57.0%), as well as students in Grades K-6 whose parents/guardians

B: Key Findings

completed an apprenticeship program (81.2%) reported the highest rates of feeling positive about the future compared to all other survey respondents in their respective grade panels.

- Students in Grades 9-12 (49.6%) and Grades 7-8 (58.5%) whose parents/guardians had accreditation from a university, and those in Grades K-6 whose parents/guardians either had a university degree (88.0%) or completed an apprenticeship program (88.0%) reported the highest rates of feeling good about themselves compared to all other respondents in their respective grade panels.
- Students in Grades 9-12 (44.4%) and Grades 7-8 (50.9%) whose parents/guardians had accreditation from a university, and those in Grades K-6 whose parents/guardians completed an apprenticeship program reported the highest rates of feeling like they matter to people at school (70.7%) compared to all other survey respondents in their respective grade panels.
- Students in Grades 9-12 (45.4%) whose parents/guardians completed an apprenticeship program, and those in Grades 7-8 (27.8%) whose parents/guardians did not have a formal education, as well as students in Grades K-6 (6.9%) whose parents/guardians had a high school diploma reported the lowest rates of feeling nervous or anxious compared to all other survey respondents in their respective grade panels.
- Students in Grades 9-12 who did not identify their parents/guardians' education but responded to the mental health survey questions (21.4%) and those in Grades 7-8 whose parents/guardians had accreditation from a university (17.5%) as well as those in Grades K-6 whose parents/guardians had accreditation from a college (3.8%) reported the lowest rates of feeling lonely compared to all other students in their respective grade panels.
- Students in Grades 9-12 who did not identify their parents/guardians' education but responded to the mental health survey questions (21.0%) and those in Grades 7-8 whose parents/guardians had accreditation from a university (19.8%), as well as those in Grades K-6 whose parents/guardians completed an apprenticeship program (1.5%) reported the lowest rates of feeling sad or depressed compared to all other respondents in their respective grade panels.
- Students in Grades 9-12 whose parents/guardians did not complete a formal education (16.8%) reported the highest rates of talking with a mental health professional compared to their fellow survey respondents whose parents/guardians had other forms of education.
- Across the grade panels, Grades 7-8 students whose parents/guardians had accreditations from their elementary school were most likely to speak with a mental health professional (24.2%) compared to their fellow survey respondents whose parents/guardians had other forms of education.
- Grades K-6 students whose parents/guardians completed an apprenticeship program were least likely to speak with a mental health professional (5.3%), closely following students whose parents/guardians had accreditation from a university (5.7%) and college (6.9%).

Emotional Well-Being and Learning Outcomes

- Aside from those students who did not have their Grade 6 EQAO Mathematics results reported in the Student Information System but completed the ESCS survey, students who were assessed to be at or above the provincial standard (level 3 and level 4) on the Grade 6 EQAO Mathematics assessment reported the highest rates of feeling happy (93.2% and 93.5%), feeling positive about the future (75.9% and 73.8%), feeling good about themselves (81.8% and 80.2%), as well as feeling like they matter to people at school (69.5% and 68.4%) compared to all other Grade 6 students who responded to this survey.
- Students who were assessed to be at the provincial standard level 4 on the Grade 6 EQAO Mathematics assessment reported the lowest rates of feeling nervous or anxious (10.6%) and feeling sad or depressed (3.7%) compared to their peers who also responded to this survey. The lowest rate of feeling lonely was reported by students who did not have their Grade 6 EQAO Mathematics results reported in the Student Information System but completed the ESCS survey (4.0%).
- Grade 6 students who were assessed to be below the provincial standard (level 3 and level 4) on EQAO Mathematics assessment reported the highest rates of speaking with a mental health professional compared to survey respondents, with students who were assessed at level 1 and below (13.3%) reporting the highest rate.

B: Key Findings

- Grade 9 students who were placed into an academic program of study reported the highest rates of feeling happy (71.7%), feeling positive about the future (51.8%) and feeling like they matter to people at school (47.7%) compared to all other Grade 9 survey respondents. Those students whose program of study was undefined reported the highest rates of feeling good about themselves (60.4%) compared to survey respondents in Grade 9 who also responded to this survey.
- Grade 9 students who were placed into a locally developed program of study reported the lowest rates of feeling nervous or anxious (28.7%) and feeling sad or depressed (15.8%); those whose program of study was undefined reported the lowest rates of feeling lonely (16.7%) compared to their peers in Grade 9 who also responded to this survey.
- Grade 9 students who were placed into an academic program of study (11.2%) reported the lowest rates of talking with a mental health professional compared to other peers in Grade 9 who also responded to this survey.
- Grade 10 students whose OSSLT results could not be linked in the Student Information System (No Data) reported the highest rates of feeling happy (73.8%), and feeling positive about the future (58.9%) as well as the lowest rates of feeling nervous or anxious (31.8%) and feeling sad or depressed (20.5%), yet reported the highest rate of feeling lonely (27.1%).
- Students who were assessed as unsuccessful on the OSSLT reported the highest rates of feeling good about themselves (54.7%) and feeling like they matter to people at school (45.7%) as well as the lowest rate of feeling lonely (22.2%).
- Students who were assessed as successful on the OSSLT, however, reported the highest rates of feeling both nervous or anxious (46.4%) and sad or depressed (25.8%) as well as the lowest rates of feeling happy (66.4%), positive about the future (45.1%) and good about themselves (47.3%).
- In Grade 10, aside from students whose OSSLT results were not recorded in the Student Information System (8.4%), students who were assessed as successful on the OSSLT (11.8%) reported the lowest rates of talking with a mental health professional compared to fellow survey respondents in Grade 10.
- Overall, among students who were on pace by credit accumulation in Grade 12, a higher percentage reported feeling happy (57.4%) compared to those who reported feeling good about themselves (43.2%), or who indicated feeling positive about the future (38.9%), and feeling like they matter to people at school (37.1%) compared to other Grade 12 survey respondents.
- Overall, among students who were on pace by credit accumulation in Grade 12, a lower percentage reported feeling lonely (27.1%) compared to student who reported feeling sad or depressed (29.8%), or who indicated feeling nervous or anxious (53.0%).
- In Grade 12, students who were on pace by credit accumulation (13.5%) reported the lowest rates of talking with a mental health professional compared to other peers in Grade 12 who also responded to this survey.

One limitation of this report relates to methodology and its assumptions about knowledge, which has shaped how the data was “gathered, analyzed and disseminated.” (Peterson et al., 2016, p. 22). As Peterson et al., (2016) explains, “[i]nherent within research methodologies are assumptions about knowledge creation that shape how data are gathered and analyzed and how findings are disseminated” (p. 22). Findings in this report are based solely on quantitative analyses, which only answer questions about “what”, “who”, or “how many” and therefore, cannot by themselves, answer questions about “why” or “how”. As a result, these alternative, yet crucial, perspectives or truths, are often missing in quantitative research. We also recognize that findings have been reported in a way that maintains the idea of neutrality so commonly used as a validity and reliability metric in quantitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Historically, quantitative analyses are often seen as “truths” because of the false assumption that quantitative researchers remain “neutral” when working with numbers.

Qualitative research methods, on the other hand, allow for a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of the marginalized groups that the numbers claim to represent. In fact, qualitative research does not claim to represent or generalize to particular groups of individuals or provide an objective “truth”. Rather, qualitative research claims to provide a “rendition of how life is perceived” (Bold, 2012, p. 17), often inviting participants as co-researchers to retell stories as faithfully as possible. This collaboration, coupled with reflexivity - a technique used by many qualitative researchers that questions one’s own taken for granted assumptions about lived experiences and makes transparent multiple interpretations, or “truths”, of the lives explored - offers readers a more balanced representation of lived experience(s) (Bold, 2012).

For this reason, in the next series of themed reports, the YRDSB plans to use a mixed methods study design with intersectionality analyses and frameworks in order to further understand the perceptions and experiences of marginalized groups. This approach, in addition to reflexivity, will help illuminate that education systems are not, and cannot be conceptualized as, unbiased or neutral enterprises (Parkay et al., 2012). Exploring these themed reports through a reflexive dialogue can also provide readers the room to make their own meanings “with the lived stories that they know . . . and the stories that are common in many ways to others” (Bold, 2012, p. 145). It will contextualize information about students’ experiences and their socio-cultural environment to enrich findings (Goswami & Rutherford, 2009).

Since the objective of these initial and ongoing themed reports is to promote critical dialogue that leads to positive social change for the marginalized and underserved students, offering multiple perspectives through reflexivity in the future reports is a crucial step toward this goal. For the current themed reports, however, an in-depth reflexive dialogue in the reporting structure was not feasible due to the scope of the research. Instead, prompts that guide readers towards using an anti-oppression perspective when reviewing the report can be found within the introduction section. These prompts may be used to promote critical dialogue amongst education stakeholders. In the future, a closer focus will be needed on how oppressive ideologies, that may be present in the educational environment, impact the mental health of racialized and marginalized students.

Other considerations pertain to the categories used to conceptualize social identities. The identity categories used in this report are based on the responses to questions in the ESCS and data available from YRDSB’s Student Information System. Some limitations pertaining to the use of this data are:

- Findings indicate that participants who did not provide identity information for certain categories or whose information could not be linked to the Students Information System at times reported higher rates of feeling sad/depressed, lonely or nervous/anxious or lower rates of speaking with a mental health professional when having high rates of negative emotions compared to their peers; however, we do not know the identity groups to which they belong. This means that inequities for some groups may actually be higher than reported.
- The social identity categories used in this analysis may not align with how individual students describe their identities. For instance, the sexual orientation and gender identity questions were single-selection, meaning that students could only select one gender identity category. As a result, students whose gender identity is best described by more than one category were unable to fully identify their gender identity.

The use of culturally-biased standardized tests as a metric for student achievement and diagnostic purposes is another consideration for this study as the contents of standardized assessments, which more often than not are designed to favour students of European-heritage in urban settings, cannot reflect concepts, perspectives, and values that are familiar to non-European students (Dench et al., 2011; Eriks-Brophy, 2014; Noggle, 2014,

C: Limitations and Implications for Future Research

Peltier, 2011; Peterson et al., 2016). In the future, YRDSB hopes to use more culturally relevant and responsive assessment tools (e.g., Eisazadeh et al., 2021; Peterson et al., 2021, 2018), that draw on students' *funds of knowledge* (Hedges et al., 2011; Moll et al., 1992) and, in turn, affirm their individual identities.

Lastly, although we engaged in a comprehensive community consultation in the development of this report, we hold the belief that there is always room for growth to better partner with communities, particularly in co-constructing the themed reports. In efforts to best collaborate and hear the voices of community members, we welcome any feedback on this report or any suggestions for next steps regarding the current and ongoing reporting structures. If desired, you may contact research.services@yrdsb.ca with your feedback.

Survey Development

Survey questions for the ESCS, including the questions with a mental health and well-being focus presented throughout this report, were developed by YRDSB staff members from various departments, including Inclusive School and Community Services, Research and Assessment Services, the Human Rights Commissioner's Office, Student Services, Student Mental Health and Well-Being, Caring and Safe Schools and other senior staff. The surveys were reviewed and revised in consultation with the Ministry of Education's Education Equity Secretariat, the Ontario Human Rights Commission and CCI Research Inc. to adhere to the Ontario Public Service Anti-Racism Data Standards.

To ensure age-appropriate language, two versions of the survey were created: one for Kindergarten to Grade 6 students and to be completed by families at home with their child and one for Grades 7 to 12 students to be completed by students during class time. The survey questions concerning mental health and well-being were grouped under two categories: (1) positive emotions and (2) negative emotions. Four questions were grouped under the former and three questions under the latter category with the same response scale:

ESCS Positive and Negative Well-Being Questions

Positive Emotion Questions	Negative Emotion Questions
(1) How often do you (or does your child) feel happy? (2) How often do you (or does your child) feel positive about the future? (3) How often do you (or does your child) feel good about yourself (or themselves)? (4) How often do you (or does your child) feel like you (or they) matter to people at school?	(1) How often do you (or does your child) feel sad or depressed? (2) How often do you (or does your child) feel lonely? (3) How often do you (or does your child) feel nervous or anxious?

Participants were asked to select a single option in response to these questions from the following scale:
(a) *All the Time* (b) *Often* (c) *Sometimes* (d) *Never* (e) *Not Sure*

Additionally, the survey included a single question about the frequency to which students spoke with a mental health professional that school year with the following response scale:

ESCS Mental Health Professional Question
In the last 12 months, how many times have you (or has your child) talked to a professional (for example, doctor, counsellor, social worker, psychologist) about your (or your child's) mental health?

Participants were asked to select a single option in response to this question from the following scale:
(a) *Once* (b) *Two Times* (c) *Three or More Times* (d) *Not at All*

Response Rates & Data Analysis

The ESCS survey was provided to approximately 126,806 students in total. In total, 72,974 surveys were submitted or returned, which produced an overall response rate of 57.6%. Response rates by grade are provided in Table 1:

Table 1. Response Rates by Reporting Group

Grade	Total (n)	Completed (n)	Response Rate
K-6	67,350	20,284	30.1%
7-8	18,456	17,165	93.0%
9-12	41,000	35,525	86.6%

Our analysis for the purposes of this report focused only on those students who selected *All the Time* and *Often* for each of the positive and negative emotion questions as well as *Three or More Times* for the mental health professional question outlined above. For the positive and negative emotion questions, the analysis

involved calculating percentages for each question by combining the total number of respondents within each category who selected both *All the Time* and *Often* divided by the total number of respondents for each category across the entire response scale for each grade panel. For example, as shown in Table 2 (page 25), 91.6% of Grades K- 6 students who were identified by their parents/guardians as Black (single race) felt happy *All the Time* and *Often*. This percentage was calculated by dividing the total number of Grades K- 6 students (n=293) within the Black (single race) demographic category who felt happy *All the Time* and *Often* by the overall total number of Grades K-6 students within the Black (single race) category (n=320).

Likewise, for the mental health professional question, the analysis involved calculating percentages by combining the total number of respondents within each category who selected *Three or More Times* divided by the total number of respondents for each category across the entire response scale for each grade panel. For example, as shown in Table 5 (page 28), 5.9% of Grades K-6 students who were identified by their parents/guardians as Black (single race) talked to a mental health professional *Three Times or More* that school year. This percentage was calculated by dividing the total number of Grades K-6 students (n=19) within the Black (single race) category who talked to a mental health professional *Three Time or More* by the overall total number of Grades K-6 students within the Black (single race) category (n=320).

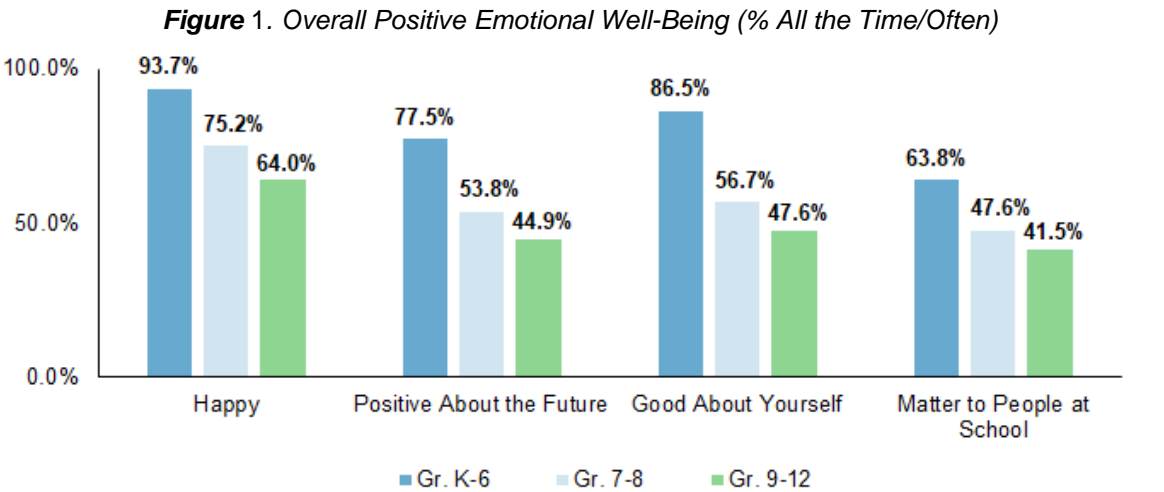
Percentages for the total survey participants for each question were reported in the last row of each table and figure. These percentages were calculated by combining the total number of respondents for *All the Time* and *Often* as well as *Three or More Times* for each respective question divided by the total number of participants who completed the survey for that grade panel – Grades K-6 (20,284), Grades 7-8 (17,165) Grades 9-12 (35,525). For example, as shown in Table 2 (page 25), 93.7% was calculated by combining the responses of Grades K-6 students who felt happy either *All the Time* and *Often* (n=18,989) and dividing that number by the total survey participants who completed the survey for that grade panel (n=20,284). Thereby, all percentages displayed in tables and figures are individually out of 100%. All percentages were reported to one decimal point. Due to the nature and scope of this report, only notable, key findings are reported.

This section reports on the overall mental health and well-being of students across three grade panels: Kindergarten to Grade 6 (Gr. K-6), Grades 7 to 8 (Gr. 7-8) and Grades 9 to 12 (Gr. 9-12). In particular, this section presents data on the overall positive and negative feelings that students reported on the 2018-19 ESCS.

Positive and Negative Emotional Well-Being across Grade Panels

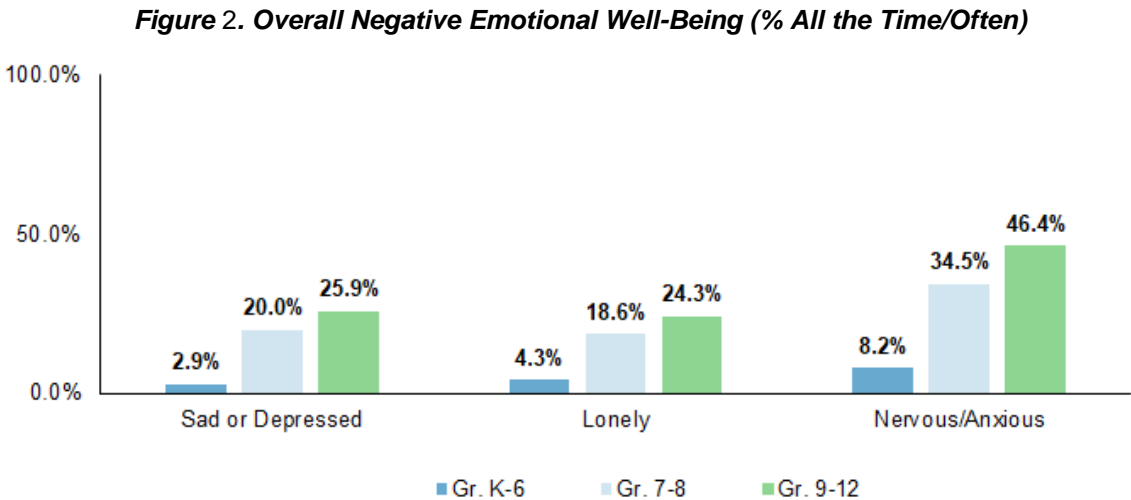
- Overall Mental Health and Well-Being
- Overall, students' emotional well-being decreased considerably by grade panel.
 - Students in Grades K-6 and Grades 7-8 reported higher rates of feeling happy, good about themselves, positive about the future and mattering to people at school all the time or often compared to students in Grades 9-12.
 - There are noticeable differences between the percentage of students who reported having negative emotions all the time or often in Grades 7-8 and Grades 9-12 compared to students in Grades K- 6.

Figure 1 shows the overall positive emotional well-being results from the survey. Students had the highest perceived rates of feeling happy across the three grade panels – Grades K-6 (93.7%), Grades 7-8 (75.2%) and Grades 9-12 (64.0%) – followed by the other positive feeling categories. However, the proportion was higher for the Grades K-6 panel compared to the other two grade panels. Additionally, the percentage of students who reported feeling positive emotions decreased as the grade panels increased. Overall, students in all grade panels had the lowest rates of feeling like they matter to people at school (63.8% in Grades K-6, 47.6% in Grades 7-8, and 41.5% in Grades 9-12).



Source: Every Student Counts Survey 2018-2019

Figure 2 shows the overall negative emotional well-being results. The percentage of students who reported feeling nervous or anxious – Grades K-6 (8.2%), Grades 7-8 (34.5%) and Grades 9-12 (46.4%) – was noticeably higher than the percentage of students who reported the other negative emotions. Additionally, the percentage of students who reported feeling negative emotions increased as the grade panels increased from Kindergarten to Grade12.



Source: Every Student Counts Survey 2018-2019

This section reports on the previously described ESCS questions and disaggregates the data by student and family demographics, such as race, Indigenous identity (First Nations, Métis, Inuit), gender identity, sexual orientation, special education needs and parent/guardian education. This section also reports on the percentages of frequency of visits students had with a mental health professional.

Student and Family Demographics

This section reports on the following student demographics: Race, Indigenous identity (First Nations, Métis, Inuit), gender identity, sexual orientation, special education needs, and parent/guardian education. The section begins with reporting on the relationship between Racial Identity and students’ emotional well-being.

Emotional Well-Being by Student Racial Identity

Overall Emotional Well-Being and Self-Identified Racial Identity

- Overall, across Grades 7-8 and 9-12, students who self-identified as White (single race) reported the highest rates of feeling happy and like they matter to people at school compared to other survey respondents in their respective grade panels.
- In Grades 9-12 students who self-identified as Black (single race) reported the highest rate of feeling good about themselves, while students who self- identified as White (single race) indicated the highest rate of feeling positive about the future.
- In grades K-6 students who were identified by their parents/guardians as South Asian (multiple race) had the highest rates of feeling positive about the future and feeling like they matter to people at school, while those identified as Latino/Latina/Latinx (multiple race) reported the highest rate of feeling happy, and those identified as Latino/Latina/Latinx (single race) had the highest rate of feeling good about themselves.
- In Grades 7-8 and 9-12, students who self-identified as South Asian (single race), and those who were identified by their parents/guardians as South Asian (multiple race) reported the highest rates of feeling nervous or anxious.
- The highest rates of feeling lonely were reported by students who self-identified as Latino/Latina/Latinx (single race) and those whose racial identity was not listed in Grades 7-8, students with Indigenous identity in Grades 9-12, and those whose parents/ guardians identified them as Middle Eastern (multiple race) in Grades K-6.
- The highest rates of feeling sad or depressed were reported by students who self-identified as South Asian (multiple race) in Grades 7-8, those who self-identified as Latino/Latina/Latinx (multiple race) in Grades 9-12, as well as those whose parents/ guardians identified them as Black (single race) in Grades K-6.

Table 2 shows the percentage of Grades K-6 students’ emotional well-being across the four positive feeling categories as well as the three negative feeling categories disaggregated by Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) and racial identity. Students who were identified by their parents/guardians as Latino/Latina/Latinx (multiple race) had the highest rate of feeling happy (98.4%) and students whose parents/guardians did not identify their child’s racial identity, because they were either not sure, did not understand the race question or decided not to respond, had the lowest rate of feeling happy (89.7%), closely following students who were identified as Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) (91.5%) and Black (single race) (91.6%).

Additionally, students whose parents/guardians did not identify their child’s racial identity because they were either not sure, did not understand the race question or decided not to respond to the race question had the lowest rates of feeling good about themselves (79.0%) or feeling positive about the future (68.8%). Students who were identified by their parents/guardians as Latino/Latina/Latinx (single race), however, had the highest rate of feeling good about themselves (94.5%) and those who were identified by their parents/guardians as South Asian (multiple race) had the highest rate of feeling positive about the future (85.5%). Students whose parents/guardians identified them as South Asian (multiple race) had the highest rate of feeling like they matter to people at school (76.1%).

Students whose parents/guardians identified them as White (single race) had the highest rate of feeling anxious or nervous (12.1%). Students who were identified by their parents/guardians as Black (single race) also had the highest rate of feeling sad or depressed (5.3%). Students whose parents/guardians identified them as Middle Eastern (mixed race) had the highest rate of feeling lonely (8.5%), followed by students whose parents/guardians identified them as Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) (6.9%) and Black (single race) (5.6%).

Table 2. Emotional Well-Being by Racial Identity, Gr. K-6 (% All the Time/Often)

Student Indigenous and Race Identity	Positive Emotions				Negative Emotions		
	Happy	Positive About the Future	Good About Themselves	Like They Matter to People at School	Nervous / Anxious	Lonely	Sad/ Depressed
Indigenous Identity							
Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit)	91.5%	75.4%	86.9%	60.0%	10.0%	6.9%	2.3%
Total Survey Participants (n)	(119)	(98)	(113)	(78)	(13)	(9)	(3)
Race Identity							
Black (SR)	91.6%	78.8%	87.2%	67.8%	10.6%	5.6%	5.3%
Black (MR)	93.4%	82.4%	87.4%	75.3%	7.7%	4.4%	1.6%
East Asian (SR)	93.2%	73.0%	83.6%	55.9%	5.7%	4.0%	2.7%
East Asian (MR)	94.5%	75.8%	87.5%	71.6%	10.4%	4.5%	2.3%
Latino/Latina/Latinx (SR)	95.4%	78.9%	94.5%	72.5%	11.9%	5.5%	0.9%
Latino/Latina/Latinx (MR)	98.4%	82.9%	91.9%	73.2%	8.9%	4.9%	1.6%
Middle Eastern (SR)	95.3%	84.6%	89.7%	63.4%	7.2%	5.3%	3.1%
Middle Eastern (MR)	96.0%	79.0%	92.0%	72.5%	11.0%	8.5%	2.5%
South Asian (SR)	94.8%	82.7%	89.9%	66.9%	7.4%	3.9%	2.4%
South Asian (MR)	93.8%	85.4%	88.5%	76.1%	12.8%	4.9%	1.8%
Southeast Asian (SR)	93.1%	76.4%	87.6%	60.9%	8.7%	4.6%	4.1%
Southeast Asian (MR)	95.3%	77.8%	88.7%	74.1%	10.8%	5.2%	1.4%
White (SR)	94.2%	81.0%	89.0%	74.9%	12.1%	4.4%	3.4%
White (MR)	95.2%	80.7%	90.4%	75.7%	11.4%	4.6%	2.3%
A Racial Category Not Listed (SR)	96.0%	77.5%	91.9%	72.8%	9.8%	2.9%	1.7%
A Racial Category Not Listed (MR)	95.9%	83.7%	86.4%	71.4%	10.2%	3.4%	2.0%
No Race Selection	89.7%	68.8%	79.0%	50.4%	6.9%	3.7%	3.1%
Total Survey Participants (n)	93.7% (18,989)	77.5% (15,707)	86.5% (17,531)	63.8% (12,927)	8.2% (1,659)	4.3% (864)	2.9% (588)

Source: Every Student Counts Survey & Student Information System 2018-2019

Note: No Race Selection collapsed the following responses to the Race identity survey question: not sure, I do not understand this question or when they did not respond. Additionally, n= represents the total number of participants who responded All the Time and Often for each feeling category.

Table 3 shows the percentage of Grades 7-8 students’ emotional well-being across the positive and negative feeling categories disaggregated by Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) and racial identity. Students who self-identified as White (single race) had the highest rate of feeling happy (79.9%) and students who self-identified as Southeast Asian (multiple race) had the lowest rate of feeling happy (69.6%). Students who self-identified as Southeast Asian (multiple race) also had the highest rate of feeling sad or depressed (29.8%), closely followed by students who self-identified as Southeast Asian (single race) (29.1%). Additionally, students who self-identified as White (single race) also had the highest rates of feeling good about themselves (63.6%), and like they matter to people at school (56.0%). Students who self-identified as East Asian (single race), however, had the lowest rates of feeling good about themselves (45.7%) and like they matter to people at school (40.1%) as well as feeling positive about the future (42.2%). Students who selected A Racial Category Not Listed Above (single race) had the highest rate of feeling positive about the future (61.4%). This group of students also had the lowest rates of feeling lonely (15.0%) and sad or depressed (16.6%). Students whose racial category was of a multiple race but not represented in the survey options alongside students who identified as Latino/Latina/Latinx (single race) had the highest rate (24.7%) of feeling lonely. Students who identified as Southeast Asian, both multiple race (24.6%) and single race (24.5%), Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) (24.5%), and Latino/Latina/Latinx (multiple race) (24.3%) also had similar rates of feeling lonely. Students who were self-identified as South Asian (single race) had the highest rate of feeling nervous or anxious (45.2%), yet students who were self-identified as Black (single race) had the lowest rate of feeling nervous or anxious (28.9%).

Table 3. Emotional Well-Being by Racial Identity, Gr. 7-8 (% All the Time/Often)

Student Self-Identified Indigenous and Race Identity	Positive Emotions				Negative Emotions		
	Happy	Positive About the Future	Good About Themselves	Like They Matter to People at School	Nervous/Anxious	Lonely	Sad/Depressed
Self-Identified Indigenous Identity							
Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit)	73.8%	56.6%	55.1%	43.8%	41.5%	24.5%	26.2%
Total Survey Participants (n)	(347)	(266)	(259)	(206)	(195)	(115)	(123)
Self-Identified Race Identity							
Black (SR)	72.0%	59.5%	62.6%	49.1%	28.9%	17.4%	22.0%
Black (MR)	73.4%	57.8%	60.1%	53.2%	37.3%	21.1%	27.3%
East Asian (SR)	71.5%	42.2%	45.7%	40.1%	35.1%	19.6%	20.6%
East Asian (MR)	70.1%	49.0%	48.8%	40.9%	39.0%	21.9%	26.4%
Latino/Latina/Latinx (SR)	70.5%	52.7%	50.0%	45.9%	36.3%	24.7%	28.8%
Latino/Latina/Latinx (MR)	72.3%	47.5%	52.0%	47.5%	44.1%	24.3%	29.4%
Middle Eastern (SR)	74.3%	59.8%	59.5%	48.6%	36.0%	20.3%	23.4%
Middle Eastern (MR)	74.5%	59.4%	58.4%	47.3%	42.6%	21.0%	22.5%
South Asian (SR)	79.4%	60.8%	61.4%	50.1%	30.4%	17.4%	18.1%
South Asian (MR)	74.7%	56.3%	58.3%	52.0%	39.3%	19.7%	22.3%
Southeast Asian (SR)	71.6%	49.0%	51.7%	45.4%	45.2%	24.5%	29.1%
Southeast Asian (MR)	69.6%	46.8%	46.8%	35.3%	40.4%	24.6%	29.8%
White (SR)	79.9%	59.9%	63.6%	56.0%	35.3%	16.0%	19.1%
White (MR)	73.8%	55.6%	55.9%	47.9%	42.7%	20.6%	23.8%
A Racial Category Not Listed (SR)	77.1%	61.4%	58.6%	48.0%	31.0%	15.0%	16.6%
A Racial Category Not Listed (MR)	72.6%	54.7%	55.3%	46.8%	37.4%	24.7%	28.4%
No Race Selection	72.2%	50.1%	57.1%	43.3%	32.2%	19.5%	18.3%
Total Survey Participants (n)	75.2% (12,886)	53.8% (9,216)	56.7% (9,711)	47.7% (8,165)	34.5% (5,907)	18.5% (3,175)	20.4% (3,488)

Source: Every Student Counts Survey & Student Information System 2018-2019

Note: No Race Selection collapsed the following responses to the Race identity survey question: not sure, I do not understand this question or when they did not respond. Additionally, n= represents the total number of participants who responded All the Time or Often for each feeling category.

Table 4 shows the percentage of Grades 9-12 students’ emotional well-being across the positive and negative feeling categories disaggregated by Indigenous identity (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) and racial identity. Students who self-identified as White (single race) had the highest rates of feeling happy (69.0%), positive about the future (51.1%) and like they matter to people at school (49.6%). Students who self-identified as Black (single race) had the highest rates of feeling good about themselves (55.3%). Self-identified Southeast Asian (multiple race) as well as East Asian (multiple race) students had the highest rates of feeling nervous (52.4%). Students who self-identified as Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) had the highest rate of feeling lonely (34.1%), closely following students who identified as Southeast Asian (multiple race) (31.7%), and Latino/Latina/Latinx (multiple race) (30.2%). Latino/Latina/Latinx (multiple race) had the highest rate of feeling sad/depressed (38.2%), closely followed by students who identified as Southeast Asian (multiple race) (36.8%) and Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) (36.0%).

Table 4. Emotional Well-Being by Racial Identity, Gr. 9-12 (% All the Time/Often)

Student Self-Identified Indigenous and Race Identity	Positive Emotions				Negative Emotions		
	Happy	Positive About the Future	Good About Themselves	Like They Matter to People at School	Nervous/ Anxious	Lonely	Sad/ Depressed
Self-Identified Indigenous Identity							
Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit)	58.0%	44.2%	46.6%	41.6%	49.5%	34.1%	36.0%
Total Survey Participants (n)	(388)	(296)	(312)	(278)	(331)	(228)	(241)
Self-Identified Race Identity							
Black (SR)	61.1%	49.3%	55.3%	42.4%	37.6%	25.4%	26.1%
Black (MR)	58.7%	45.1%	50.4%	45.1%	45.8%	29.6%	34.8%
East Asian (SR)	60.1%	36.8%	39.0%	32.8%	46.1%	25.5%	26.0%
East Asian (MR)	58.4%	37.3%	40.8%	36.5%	52.4%	28.9%	32.5%
Latino/Latina/Latinx (SR)	63.4%	49.8%	49.8%	40.2%	47.7%	29.0%	30.8%
Latino/Latina/Latinx (MR)	56.9%	43.5%	45.1%	40.0%	51.9%	30.2%	38.2%
Middle Eastern (SR)	63.8%	50.5%	51.8%	43.6%	49.0%	25.6%	27.0%
Middle Eastern (MR)	59.9%	45.0%	48.7%	42.5%	50.4%	28.7%	32.7%
South Asian (SR)	68.4%	48.1%	51.1%	44.9%	46.4%	23.0%	25.5%
South Asian (MR)	60.8%	43.1%	48.5%	41.8%	51.0%	27.3%	33.7%
Southeast Asian (SR)	60.2%	39.3%	41.4%	33.4%	46.3%	30.0%	29.6%
Southeast Asian (MR)	54.3%	33.9%	40.0%	34.0%	52.4%	31.7%	36.8%
White (SR)	69.0%	51.1%	53.4%	49.6%	47.5%	22.3%	24.4%
White (MR)	60.6%	43.7%	45.7%	42.3%	52.1%	28.8%	32.1%
A Racial Category Not Listed (SR)	65.5%	47.2%	53.9%	44.2%	44.2%	21.0%	24.5%
A Racial Category Not Listed (MR)	59.4%	43.1%	50.6%	42.7%	49.4%	28.5%	28.9%
No Race Selection	58.1%	40.3%	45.3%	35.8%	39.8%	22.2%	22.2%
Total Survey Participants (n)	64.0% (22,698)	44.9% (15,922)	47.6% (16,881)	41.5% (14,733)	46.4% (16,447)	24.3% (8,611)	25.8% (9,164)

Source: Every Student Counts Survey & Student Information System 2018-2019

Note: No Race Selection collapsed the following responses to the Race identity survey question: not sure, I do not understand this question or when they did not respond. Additionally, n= represents the total number of participants who responded All the Time or Often within each feeling category.

Table 5 shows the percentage of students who reported speaking with a mental health professional three or more time in the 12 months prior to completing the survey disaggregated by Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit), racial identity and grade panel. As shown, overall, students of various racial backgrounds reported higher rates of talking with a mental health professional in Grades 7-8 compared to the other two grade panels. Students who self-identified as Latino/Latina/Latinx (multiple race), however, reported a slightly higher rate of talking with a mental health professional in Grades 9-12 (24.1%) compared to Grades 7-8 (23.2%). Likewise, students who self-identified as South Asian (multiple race) reported a higher rate of talking with a mental health professional in Grades 9-12 (15.8%). Students who were identified as Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) in Gardes K-6 (16.9%) and Grades 7-8 (29.6%) reported the highest rates of talking with a mental health professional. In Grades 7-8, students who self-identified as Black (single race) (23.8%) reported the second highest rates of talking with a mental health professional, closely following students who self-identified as Latino/Latina/Latinx (multiple race) (23.2%). Most notably, East Asian (single race) students across all grade panels reported the lowest rate of talking with a mental health professional (4.5% in Grades K-6, 10.4% in Grades 7-8 and 6.8% in Grades 9-1).

Table 5. Talking With a Mental Health Professional by Racial Identity (% Three Times or More)

Student Indigenous and Race Identity	Gr. K-6	Gr. 7-8	Gr. 9-12
Indigenous Identity (First Nations, Métis, Inuit)			
Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit)	16.9%	29.6%	23.5%
Total Survey Participants (n)	(22)	(139)	(157)
Race Identity			
Black (SR)	5.9%	23.8%	13.7%
Black (MR)	8.8%	19.5%	18.6%
East Asian (SR)	4.5%	10.4%	6.8%
East Asian (MR)	5.7%	16.9%	12.8%
Latino/Latina/Latinx (SR)	4.6%	19.9%	13.9%
Latino/Latina/Latinx (MR)	7.3%	23.2%	24.1%
Middle Eastern (SR)	7.3%	18.5%	14.7%
Middle Eastern (MR)	7.0%	17.8%	17.5%
South Asian (SR)	7.0%	17.7%	10.2%
South Asian (MR)	6.6%	12.0%	15.8%
Southeast Asian (SR)	7.8%	14.9%	11.6%
Southeast Asian (MR)	5.2%	15.2%	13.7%
White (SR)	8.3%	20.0%	17.7%
White (MR)	6.8%	20.4%	19.3%
A Racial Category Not Listed (SR)	5.2%	19.4%	17.8%
A Racial Category Not Listed (MR)	7.5%	19.5%	21.8%
No Race Selection	7.2%	22.1%	15.0%
Total Survey Participants (n)	6.4% (1,289)	17.4% (2,977)	13.1% (4,645)

Source: Every Student Counts Survey & Student Information System 2018-2019

Note: No Race Selection collapsed the following responses to the Race identity survey question: not sure, I do not understand this question or when they did not respond. Additionally, n= represents the total number of participants who responded Three Times or More.

Emotional Well-Being by Student Gender Identity

Overall Emotional Well-Being and Gender Identity

- Overall, across grade panels, students who self-identified as Man/Boy and Woman/Girl notably reported the highest rates of overall positive feelings compared to their peers, with the exception of those in Grades 7-8 who self-identified as gender nonconforming; this group reported a slightly higher rate of feeling like they matter to people at school than students who self-identified as Man/Boy.
- Overall, students who self-identified as Man/Boy and Woman/Girl notably reported the lowest rates of overall negative feelings compared to their peers in their respective grade panels who completed the survey that school year.

Figure 3 shows the percentage of students’ emotional well-being across the positive and negative feeling categories disaggregated by gender identity and grade panel. Overall, across grades, students who self-identified as man/boy and woman/girl notably reported the highest rates of overall positive feelings and the lowest rates of overall negative feelings.

Students who self-identified as man/boy in Grades 9-12 (69.6%) and Grades 7-8 (78.2%) followed by those who self-identified as woman/girl in Grades 9-12 (60.8%) and Grades 7-8 (74.2%) reported the highest rates of feeling happy compared to all other survey respondents in their respective grade panel. Similarly, students who self-identified as Man/Boy in Grades 9-12 and Grades 7-8 reported the highest rates of feeling positive about future (51.9% in Grades 9-12, 59.6% in Grades 7-8), as well as feeling good about themselves (57.7% in Grades 9-12, 64.4% in Grades 7-8). Additionally, students who self-identified as man/boy in Grades 9-12 (46.8%) and Grades 7-8 (51.1%) reported the highest rates of feeling like they matter to people at school. Students in Grades 7-8 who self-identified as gender nonconforming, however, reported a slightly higher rate (52.6%) of feeling like they matter to people at school than did those students who self-identified as man/boy.

F: Mental Health & Well-Being by Demographics

In Grades K-6 students who were identified by their parents/guardians as woman/girl reported the highest rates of feeling happy (94.7%), feeling positive about future (78.4%), feeling good about themselves (87.1%), and feeling like they matter to people at school (66.0%).

Students who self-identified as man/boy in Grades 9-12 (35.7%), Grades 7-8 (27.2%), and those who were identified by their parents/guardians as man/boy in Grades K-6 (7.9%) reported the lowest rates of feeling nervous or anxious. Students who self-identified as man/boy in Grades 9-12 (19.6%) and in Grades 7-8 (14.8%) also reported the lowest rates of feeling lonely. Additionally, students in K-6 who were identified by their parents/guardians as man/boy (4.2%) and woman/girl (4.2%) reported the lowest rate of feeling lonely compared to their peers who also completed the survey that school year. This pattern continues in both the Grades 9-12 (18.5%) and Grades 7-8 (15.8%), where students who self-identified as man/boy reported the lowest rates of feeling sad or depressed. In Grades K-6, students who were identified by their parents/guardians as woman/girl (2.8%) and man/boy (2.9%) reported the lowest rates of feeling sad or depressed.

Figure 3. Emotional Well-Being by Gender Identity (% All the Time/Often)

Gender Identity Gr. K-12		Nervous/Anxious	Lonely	Sad/Depressed	Happy	Positive About Future	Good About Themselves	Like They Matter to People at School
Gender Fluid	Gr. K-6	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Gr. 7-8	49.2%	37.3%	42.4%	64.4%	44.1%	47.5%	40.7%
	Gr. 9-12	70.6%	52.9%	58.8%	32.4%	22.5%	26.5%	20.6%
Gender Nonconforming	Gr. K-6	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Gr. 7-8	52.6%	21.1%	42.1%	68.4%	63.2%	52.6%	52.6%
	Gr. 9-12	60.0%	44.6%	50.0%	41.1%	25.0%	25.0%	26.8%
Man/Boy	Gr. K-6	7.9%	4.2%	2.9%	93.0%	77.0%	86.3%	62.2%
	Gr. 7-8	27.2%	14.8%	15.8%	78.2%	59.6%	64.4%	51.1%
	Gr. 9-12	35.7%	19.6%	18.5%	69.9%	51.9%	57.7%	46.8%
Non-Binary	Gr. K-6	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Gr. 7-8	61.6%	41.9%	51.6%	41.9%	32.3%	25.8%	19.4%
	Gr. 9-12	74.5%	57.3%	61.5%	28.1%	27.1%	19.8%	22.9%
Questioning	Gr. K-6	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Gr. 7-8	64.6%	41.7%	54.2%	47.9%	31.3%	35.4%	29.2%
	Gr. 9-12	66.1%	47.9%	53.7%	36.4%	20.7%	16.5%	20.7%
Transgender	Gr. K-6	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Gr. 7-8	52.9%	58.8%	61.8%	29.4%	29.4%	17.6%	32.4%
	Gr. 9-12	77.9%	63.6%	67.5%	24.7%	23.4%	15.6%	18.2%
Two-Spirit	Gr. K-6	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Gr. 7-8	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Gr. 9-12	46.2%	43.6%	43.6%	44.9%	39.7%	41.0%	32.1%
Woman/Girl	Gr. K-6	8.4%	4.2%	2.8%	94.7%	78.4%	87.1%	66.0%
	Gr. 7-8	41.2%	21.2%	23.9%	74.2%	49.4%	50.4%	45.9%
	Gr. 9-12	57.0%	27.6%	32.0%	60.8%	39.7%	39.3%	38.1%
A Gender Identity Not Listed Above	Gr. K-6	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Gr. 7-8	40.0%	40.0%	43.3%	50.0%	46.7%	43.3%	30.0%
	Gr. 9-12	40.4%	39.4%	37.4%	38.4%	27.3%	34.3%	29.3%
No Gender Selection	Gr. K-6	9.5%	7.0%	5.9%	81.2%	62.3%	70.7%	40.6%
	Gr. 7-8	39.5%	27.8%	26.4%	51.7%	34.1%	37.0%	24.7%
	Gr. 9-12	40.6%	32.5%	30.4%	40.2%	28.6%	32.3%	25.2%
Total Survey Participants	Gr. K-6	8.2%	4.3%	2.9%	93.7%	77.5%	86.5%	63.8%
	Gr. 7-8	34.5%	18.6%	20.4%	75.2%	53.8%	56.7%	47.6%
	Gr. 9-12	46.4%	24.3%	25.9%	64.0%	44.9%	47.6%	41.5%

Source: Every Student Counts Survey 2018-2019

Note: No Gender Selection collapsed the following responses to the gender identity survey question: I prefer not to answer, not sure, I do not understand this question or when they did not respond. Additionally, NR in tables or graphs denotes there were less than 15 students in a particular group and therefore the resulting figure is Not Reported (NR) to preserve the privacy of the students.

Table 6 shows the percentage of students who reported speaking with a mental health professional three or more times in the 12 months prior to when the survey was administered disaggregated by gender identity and grade panel. In Grades 7-8, aside from students who indicated that their gender identity was not listed in the

survey options (30.0%), students who self-identified as gender fluid (28.8%) reported the highest rates of talking with a mental health professional that school year.

Students who self-identified as transgender in Grades 9-12 (44.2%) also reported the highest rate of talking with a mental health professional that school year. In Grades 7-8, students who self-identified as gender nonconforming (15.8%) and those who self-identified as woman/girl (16.0%) reported the lowest rates of speaking with a mental health professional. In Grades 9-12, students who did not select a gender identity from the listed options on the survey because they were either not sure, did not understand the question or decided not to respond to this question (11.2%) and who self-identified as man/boy (11.1%) reported the lowest rate of talking with a mental health professional compared to their peers who also completed the survey that school year.

Table 6. Talking With a Mental Health Professional by Gender Identity (% Three Times or More)

Gender Identity	Gr. K-6	Gr. 7-8	Gr. 9-12
Gender Fluid	NR	28.8%	40.2%
Gender Nonconforming	NR	15.8%	23.2%
Man/Boy	6.8%	18.5%	11.1%
Non-Binary	NR	22.6%	43.8%
Questioning	NR	16.7%	23.1%
Transgender	NR	26.5%	44.2%
Two-Spirit	NR	NR	17.9%
Woman/Girl	5.8%	16.0%	14.6%
A Gender Identity Not Listed Above	NR	30.0%	25.3%
No Gender Selection	7.7%	19.4%	11.2%
Total Survey Participants (n)	6.4% (1,291)	17.4% (2,990)	13.1% (4,665)

Source: Every Student Counts Survey 2018-2019

Note: No Gender Selection collapsed the following responses to the gender identity survey question: I prefer not to answer, not sure, I do not understand this question or when they did not respond. Additionally, n= represents the total number of participants who responded Three Times or More. Lastly, NR in tables or graphs denotes there were less than 15 students in a particular group and therefore the resulting figure is Not Reported (NR) to preserve the privacy of the students.

Emotional Well-Being by Student Sexual Orientation

Overall Emotional Well-Being and Sexual Orientation

- Students who self-identified as Heterosexual reported the highest rates of overall positive feelings in Grades 9-12, and the second highest rates of overall positive feelings in Grades 7-8.
- Students who self-identified as Two-Spirit reported the highest rates of overall positive feelings in Grades 7-8.
- Overall, across the two grade panels, students who self-identified as Heterosexual notably reported the lowest rates of overall negative feelings compared to their peers.

This section only presents data for Grades 7-12 students since these were the only groups of students asked to identify their sexual orientation. Figure 4 shows the percentage of students’ emotional well-being across the positive and negative feeling categories disaggregated by sexual orientation and the two grade panels. Students who self-identified as heterosexual reported the highest rates of overall positive feelings in Grades 9-12 and the second highest rates of overall positive feelings in Grades 7-8. Students who self-identified as heterosexual reported the highest rates of overall positive feelings in Grades 9-12. Students who self-identified as heterosexual in Grades 9-12 reported the highest rate of feeling happy (67.6%), followed by feeling good about themselves (50.1%), feeling positive about the future (47.7%) and feeling like they matter to people at school (44.9%) compared to their peers who also responded to this survey. In Grades 7-8, students who self-identified as two-spirit reported the highest rate of feeling happy (79.3%), feeling positive about future (62.1%), feeling good about themselves (60.9%), and feeling like they matter to people at school (71.7%) compared to their peers who also responded to this survey.

Across both grade panels (Grades 7-8 and Grades 9-12), students who self-identified as heterosexual reported the lowest rate of feeling lonely (16.6% and 21.7%). Students who did not select their sexual orientation category because they were either not sure, did not understand this question or decided not to respond

reported the lowest rates of feeling nervous or anxious in Grades 9-12 (41.7%) and feeling nervous or anxious (31.0%), as well as feeling sad or depressed (17.4%) in Grades 7-8. In Grades 9-12, students who self-identified as heterosexual reported the lowest rate of feeling sad or depressed (23.5%) compared to their peers who also responded to this survey.

Figure 4. Emotional Well-Being by Sexual Orientation (% All the Time/Often)

Sexual Orientation Gr. 7-12		Nervous/Anxious	Lonely	Sad/Depressed	Happy	Positive About Future	Good About Themselves	Like They Matter to People at School
2SLGBQ+	Gr. 7-8	49.8%	33.0%	36.8%	59.1%	42.2%	41.2%	34.7%
	Gr. 9-12	60.2%	41.0%	43.3%	47.2%	32.7%	34.4%	29.6%
Asexual	Gr. 7-8	35.2%	20.4%	22.2%	73.4%	53.6%	54.8%	43.7%
	Gr. 9-12	47.3%	24.8%	25.5%	61.0%	44.8%	47.8%	39.6%
Bisexual	Gr. 7-8	61.3%	43.7%	50.0%	48.1%	34.5%	27.0%	25.8%
	Gr. 9-12	68.7%	49.1%	52.8%	41.1%	26.5%	28.0%	24.3%
Gay	Gr. 7-8	55.0%	52.5%	52.5%	47.5%	37.5%	37.5%	32.5%
	Gr. 9-12	60.3%	50.5%	50.5%	47.1%	33.8%	33.3%	29.9%
Lesbian	Gr. 7-8	63.2%	44.7%	57.9%	42.1%	34.2%	28.9%	28.9%
	Gr. 9-12	63.6%	46.5%	52.4%	40.1%	25.1%	32.1%	21.9%
Pansexual	Gr. 7-8	71.4%	52.7%	60.4%	41.8%	23.1%	26.4%	27.5%
	Gr. 9-12	76.4%	52.8%	60.6%	33.5%	22.7%	23.0%	21.7%
Queer	Gr. 7-8	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Gr. 9-12	69.1%	38.2%	47.3%	36.4%	27.3%	29.1%	30.0%
Questioning	Gr. 7-8	62.4%	40.0%	43.0%	47.3%	26.1%	28.5%	23.0%
	Gr. 9-12	60.2%	47.5%	45.0%	39.1%	24.8%	21.7%	22.7%
Two-Spirit	Gr. 7-8	41.4%	17.2%	27.6%	79.3%	62.1%	60.9%	71.7%
	Gr. 9-12	52.4%	49.2%	41.3%	50.8%	47.5%	42.9%	39.7%
A Sexual Orientation Not Listed Above	Gr. 7-8	44.6%	25.3%	25.3%	57.8%	47.0%	49.4%	42.2%
	Gr. 9-12	53.9%	45.2%	44.8%	46.5%	30.9%	33.5%	29.1%
Heterosexual	Gr. 7-8	33.9%	16.6%	19.4%	77.8%	56.3%	58.6%	51.1%
	Gr. 9-12	45.1%	21.7%	23.5%	67.6%	47.5%	50.1%	44.9%
No Sexual Orientation Selection	Gr. 7-8	31.0%	18.5%	17.4%	74.3%	51.6%	57.3%	43.7%
	Gr. 9-12	41.7%	24.5%	24.1%	57.9%	40.7%	45.1%	32.8%
Total Survey Participants	Gr. 7-8	34.5%	18.6%	20.4%	75.2%	53.8%	56.7%	47.6%
	Gr. 9-12	46.4%	24.3%	25.9%	64.0%	44.9%	47.6%	41.5%

Source: Every Student Counts Survey 2018-2019
Note: No Sexual Orientation Selection collapsed the following responses to the sexual orientation survey question: I prefer not to answer, not sure, I do not understand this question or when they did not respond. Additionally, NR in tables or graphs denotes there were less than 15 students in a particular group and therefore the resulting figure is Not Reported (NR) to preserve the privacy of the students.

Figure 7 shows the percentage of students who reported that they spoke with a mental health professional three or more times in the 12 months prior to when the survey was administered disaggregated by sexual orientation and the two grade panels. Across grade panels (Grades 7-8 and Grades 9-12), students who were identified within the 2SLGBQ+ community (21.5% and 39.6%) or who did not select a sexual orientation (19.8% and 13.0%) reported higher rates of talking with a mental health professional compared to those students who self-identified as heterosexual (15.8% and 11.7%).

Additionally, students in Grades 9-12 who were identified within the 2SLGBQ+ community notably reported higher rates (39.6%) of talking with a mental health professional compared to students in Grades 7-8 (21.5%). Students who self-identified as heterosexual reported the lowest rate of talking with a mental health professional across the two grade panels (15.8% and 11.7%), which is in line with the finding that this same group of students had the lowest rates of overall negative feelings. Among students who were identified within the 2SLGBQ+, those who self-identified as lesbian (42.1%) in Grades 7-8 and those who self-identified as Pansexual (34.5%) in Grades 9-12 reported the highest rates of talking with a mental health professional that school year.

Table 7. Talking With a Mental Health Professional by Sexual Orientation (% Three Times or More)

Sexual Orientation	Gr. 7-8	Gr. 9-12
2SLGBQ+	21.5%	39.6%
• Asexual	19.0%	14.6%
• Bisexual	23.9%	25.6%
• Gay	17.5%	26.0%
• Lesbian	42.1%	31.6%
• Pansexual	23.1%	34.5%
• Queer	35.7%	30.0%
• Questioning	16.4%	19.6%
• Two-Spirit	27.6%	22.2%
• A Sexual Orientation Not Listed Above	24.1%	21.7%
Heterosexual	15.8%	11.7%
No Sexual Orientation Selection	19.8%	13.0%
Total Survey Participants (n)	17.4% (2,990)	13.1% (4,665)

Source: Every Student Counts Survey 2018-2019

Note: No Sexual Orientation Selection collapsed the following responses to the sexual orientation survey question: I prefer not to answer, not sure, I do not understand this question or when they did not respond. Additionally, n= represents the total number of participants who responded Three Times or More.

Emotional Well-Being by Student Special Education Need

Overall Emotional Well-Being and Special Education Needs

- Overall, students who were identified with a Developmental Disability in Grades 9-12, reported the highest rates of positive feelings, with the exception of those who were identified with a Language Impairment who had the highest rates of feeling positive about the future.
- In Grades 7-8, students who were identified with Deaf and Hard of Hearing, reported the highest rates of positive feelings, with the exception of those who were identified with a Physical Disability who had the highest rates of feeling positive about the future.
- The highest rates of feeling happy was reported by students who were identified with a Developmental Disability, and the highest rates of feeling like they matter to people at school was reported by those who identified with Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
- Students who were identified with Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Grades 9-12 and Grades 7-8 reported the lowest rates of negative feelings, with the exception of Grades 9-12 students who were identified with a Developmental Disability; this group reported the lowest rates of feeling nervous and feeling sad. Those students who were identified with a Mild Intellectual Disability reported the lowest rates of feeling nervous.
- In Grades K-6, those students who were identified with Deaf and Hard of Hearing reported the lowest rates of negative feelings, with the exception of those students who were identified with Giftedness who also reported the lowest rates of feeling lonely.

Figure 5 shows the percentage of students’ emotional well-being across the positive and negative feeling categories disaggregated by special education needs and grade panel. This section of the report focuses on students’ primary exceptionality identification by *Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)* as of the 2018-2019 school year.

There is variance across grade panels and exceptionality for the four positive emotion categories; students identified with deaf or hard of hearing as well as those with “no exceptionality” being amongst some of the exceptionalities reporting the higher overall positive emotions. Students who were identified with a developmental disability reported the highest rates of feeling happy in Grades K-6 (95.5%), followed by students in Grades 9-12 (73.5%). In Grades 7-8, students who were identified with deaf or hard of hearing reported the highest rate of feeling happy (88.2%).

The highest rates of feeling positive about future were reported by students who were identified with a language impairment in Grades 9-12 (56.0%), those who were identified with a physical disability in Grades 7-8 (65.2%) and those who completed the ESCS survey but could not be linked to the Student Information System in Grade K-6 (86.4%). The highest rates of feeling good about themselves were reported by students who were identified with a developmental disability in Grades 9-12 (69.6%), those who were identified with deaf or hard of hearing in Grades 7-8 (70.6%) and those who completed the ESCS survey but could not be linked to the Student Information System in Grade K-6 (90.9%). Students who were identified with a developmental disability in Grades 9-12 reported the highest rates of feeling like they matter to people at school (58.8%). Students who were identified with deaf or hard of hearing in both Grades 7-8 (58.8%) and Grades K-6 (80.4%) reported the highest rates of feeling like they matter to people at school compared to other survey respondents in each respective grade panel.

Additionally, survey respondents who were identified with a behavioural exceptionality across grade panels reported the highest rates of feeling nervous/anxious. Across grade panels for this exceptionality, Grades 9-12 students had the highest rate of feeling nervous/anxious (62.7%), followed by students in Grades 7-8 (42.0%) and Grades K-6 (31.3%). This group of survey respondents also had the highest rates of feeling sad/depressed. Likewise, across grade panels for this exceptionality, students' rates of feeling sad increased as the grade panels increase, with students in Grade 9-12 reporting the highest rate (36.6%), followed by student in Grades 7-8 (25.9%) and Grades K-6 (10.1%). Additionally, in Grades K-6, this group of students reported the second highest rate of feeling lonely (11.2%). Students who completed the ESCS survey but could not be linked to the Student Information System, had the highest rate of feeling lonely (13.6%) in Grade K-6. Students identified with a physical disability had the highest rate of feeling lonely in Grades 9-12 (34.6%), closely following students with a Behavioural exceptionality (34.0%). In Grade 7-8, students identified with Autism had the highest rate of feeling lonely (28.1%).

Figure 5. Emotional Well-Being by Special Education Needs (% All the Time/Often)

Special Education Needs Gr. K-12		Nervous/Anxious	Lonely	Sad/Depressed	Happy	Positive About Future	Good About Themselves	Like They Matter to People at School
Autism	Gr. K-6	22.2%	8.5%	5.1%	88.6%	53.8%	77.8%	45.3%
	Gr. 7-8	33.8%	28.1%	20.4%	64.2%	46.2%	55.0%	39.2%
	Gr. 9-12	40.0%	28.5%	25.1%	61.2%	43.4%	51.1%	37.6%
Behavioural	Gr. K-6	31.3%	11.2%	10.1%	81.0%	65.4%	72.1%	54.2%
	Gr. 7-8	42.0%	23.9%	25.9%	69.6%	47.1%	53.6%	40.3%
	Gr. 9-12	62.7%	34.0%	36.6%	53.5%	35.9%	41.1%	35.7%
Blind and Low Vision	Gr. K-6	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Gr. 7-8	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Gr. 9-12	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	Gr. K-6	2.2%	4.3%	2.2%	93.5%	80.4%	89.1%	80.4%
	Gr. 7-8	23.5%	5.9%	11.8%	88.2%	64.7%	70.6%	58.8%
	Gr. 9-12	42.1%	18.4%	11.8%	72.4%	53.9%	55.3%	48.7%
Developmental Disability	Gr. K-6	9.5%	9.5%	4.8%	95.2%	38.1%	66.7%	47.6%
	Gr. 7-8	23.3%	14.0%	11.6%	67.4%	46.5%	58.1%	48.8%
	Gr. 9-12	23.5%	19.6%	16.7%	73.5%	53.9%	69.6%	58.8%
Giftedness	Gr. K-6	9.4%	4.1%	3.7%	92.5%	69.7%	78.6%	67.3%
	Gr. 7-8	39.3%	19.4%	22.6%	70.5%	46.2%	47.8%	46.4%
	Gr. 9-12	53.5%	27.3%	30.7%	58.5%	36.9%	41.0%	39.5%
Language Impairment	Gr. K-6	13.3%	8.1%	4.8%	87.6%	68.1%	77.6%	51.9%
	Gr. 7-8	33.8%	21.8%	18.1%	79.2%	58.3%	62.5%	43.5%
	Gr. 9-12	44.7%	22.2%	24.8%	67.7%	56.0%	55.6%	44.4%
Learning Disability	Gr. K-6	18.1%	8.6%	7.0%	88.6%	67.9%	76.2%	60.0%
	Gr. 7-8	34.9%	19.8%	19.8%	71.7%	52.7%	59.5%	46.8%
	Gr. 9-12	44.3%	23.8%	24.1%	62.4%	43.8%	48.8%	40.8%
Mild Intellectual Disability	Gr. K-6	14.3%	7.1%	0.0%	89.3%	60.7%	75.0%	46.4%
	Gr. 7-8	23.3%	24.0%	17.3%	68.0%	44.0%	62.7%	44.0%
	Gr. 9-12	33.8%	21.7%	20.2%	68.4%	51.1%	58.3%	46.2%
Physical Disability	Gr. K-6	13.6%	0.0%	0.0%	90.9%	36.4%	63.6%	40.9%
	Gr. 7-8	39.1%	17.4%	21.7%	69.6%	65.2%	43.5%	56.5%
	Gr. 9-12	38.5%	34.6%	20.5%	60.3%	39.7%	47.4%	43.6%
Speech Impairment	Gr. K-6	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Gr. 7-8	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Gr. 9-12	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
No Exceptionality	Gr. K-6	7.4%	4.0%	2.7%	94.1%	78.7%	87.4%	64.3%
	Gr. 7-8	34.2%	18.0%	20.3%	76.2%	54.7%	56.8%	48.2%
	Gr. 9-12	46.3%	24.0%	25.8%	64.6%	45.5%	47.6%	41.8%
No Data	Gr. K-6	22.7%	13.6%	4.5%	86.4%	86.4%	90.9%	54.5%
	Gr. 7-8	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Gr. 9-12	37.5%	31.3%	28.1%	56.3%	37.5%	50.0%	34.4%
Total Survey Participants	Gr. K-6	8.2%	4.3%	2.9%	93.7%	77.5%	86.5%	63.8%
	Gr. 7-8	34.5%	18.6%	20.4%	75.2%	53.8%	56.7%	47.6%
	Gr. 9-12	46.4%	24.3%	25.9%	64.0%	44.9%	47.6%	41.5%

Source: Every Student Counts Survey & Student Information System 2018-2019

Note: No Data refers to survey participants who responded to the mental health survey questions, but their identity characteristics could not be linked to the Student Information System. Additionally, NR in tables or graphs denotes there were less than 15 students in a particular group and therefore the resulting figure is Not Reported (NR) to preserve the privacy of the students

*Primary exceptionality identification by [Identification, Placement and Review Committee \(IPRC\)](#)

Table 8 shows the percentage of students who reported that they spoke with a mental health professional three times or more in the 12 months prior to when the survey was administered disaggregated by exceptionality and grade panel. In Grades 9-12 (46.1%) and K–6 (46.4%) students who were identified with a behavioural exceptionality reported the highest rate talking to a mental health professional that school year. In Grades 7-8 students who were identified with a physical disability reported the highest rate (47.8%) of talking to a mental health professional that school year.

Table 8. Talking With a Mental Health Professional by Special Education Needs (% Three Times or More)

Special Education Needs Status*	Gr. K-6	Gr. 7-8	Gr. 9-12
Autism	27.2%	32.3%	27.9%
Behavioural	46.4%	42.3%	46.1%
Blind and Low Vision	NR	NR	NR
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	13.0%	14.7%	14.5%
Developmental Disability	19.0%	20.9%	21.6%
Gifted	5.1%	8.8%	10.5%
Language Impairment	11.4%	27.3%	16.2%
Learning Disability	23.2%	27.9%	21.5%
Mild Intellectual Disability	3.6%	25.3%	20.0%
Physical Disability	9.1%	47.8%	23.1%
Speech Impairment	0.0%	NR	NR
No Exceptionality	5.3%	15.7%	11.0%
No Data	18.2%	NR	28.1%
Total Survey Participants (n)	6.4% (1,291)	17.4% (2,990)	13.1% (4,661)

Source: Every Student Counts Survey & Student Information System 2018-2019

Note: No Data refers to survey participants who responded to the mental health survey questions, but their identity characteristics could not be linked to the Student Information System Additionally, n= represents the total number of participants who responded Three Times or More.

*Primary exceptionality identification by [Identification, Placement and Review Committee \(IPRC\)](#)

Emotional Well-Being by Parent/Guardian Education

Overall Emotional Well-Being by Parent/Guardian Education

- Overall, Grades 9-12 and Grades 7-8 students whose parents/guardians had accreditation from a university reported the highest rates of overall positive feelings, with the exception of those whose parents/guardians completed a college degree who reported slightly higher rates of feeling positive about future in Grades 9-12 and feeling happy in Grades 7-8
- In Grades K-6 students whose parents/guardian completed an apprenticeship program reported the highest rates of positive feelings.
- In Grades K-6 students whose parents/guardian had a high school diploma, a college degree, or completed an apprenticeship program were amongst those with the lowest rates of overall negative feelings.
- Students in Grades 9-12 and 7-8 who did not identify their parent/guardian education reported the lowest rates of negative feelings, with the exception of those whose parents/ guardians completed a university degree who had slightly lowest rates of feeling lonely.

Figure 6 shows the percentage of students’ emotional well-being across the positive and negative feeling categories disaggregated by parent/guardian education, that is, whether students’ parents/guardians had accreditation from a university, college, apprenticeship, high school, elementary school or had no formal education. There were many students that also did not respond to this question. In Grades 9-12 students with parents/guardians who had a university education reported the highest rates of overall positive feelings, with the exception of students whose parents/guardians completed an apprenticeship program, which reported the highest rate of feeling positive about future (47.2%) closely followed by those whose parents/guardians had a university education (47.1%). Similarly, in Grades 7-8 students with parents/guardians who had a university education reported the highest rates of overall positive feelings, with the exception of students whose parents/guardians had a college degree, which reported the highest rate of feeling happy (77.3%) closely followed by those whose parents/guardians had a university education (77.1%). In Grades K-6 students with parent/guardian who completed an apprenticeship program reported the highest rates of overall positive feelings. Students in Grades K-6 whose parents/guardians had a university degree and those whose parents/guardians completed an apprenticeship program reported the same rate of feeling good about themselves (88.0%). In Grades K-6 whose parents/guardians completed an apprenticeship program reported

the highest rates of feeling like they matter to people at school (70.7%) compared to all other survey respondents

In Grades 9-12 and Grades 7-8 participants who did not identify their parents/guardians' education but responded to the mental health survey questions reported the lowest rates of overall negative feelings compared to other students in this grade panel, with the exception of Grade 7-8 students whose parents/guardians completed a university degree; this groups of students reported the lowest rates of feeling lonely (17.5%) compared to all other survey respondents in this grade panel. In Grades K-6 students whose parents/guardians had a high school diploma reported the lowest rates of feeling nervous or anxious (6.9%), while those whose parents/guardians had a college degree reported the lowest rates of feeling lonely (3.8%) and those whose parents/guardians completed an apprenticeship program reported the lowest rates of feeling sad or depressed (1.5%) compared to other students in this grade panel.

Figure 6. Emotional Well-Being by Parent/Guardian Education (% All the Time/Often)

Parent/Guardian Education Gr. K-12		Nervous/Anxious	Lonely	Sad/Depressed	Happy	Positive About Future	Good About Themselves	Like They Matter to People at School
University	Gr. K-6	8.2%	4.3%	2.7%	94.4%	79.4%	88.0%	66.3%
	Gr. 7-8	34.7%	17.5%	19.8%	77.1%	57.0%	58.5%	50.9%
	Gr. 9-12	47.1%	23.8%	25.6%	66.1%	47.1%	49.6%	44.4%
College	Gr. K-6	8.0%	3.8%	2.9%	93.9%	75.7%	85.8%	61.2%
	Gr. 7-8	36.3%	18.8%	22.6%	77.3%	53.9%	57.6%	48.5%
	Gr. 9-12	49.4%	25.3%	27.2%	64.1%	44.7%	47.0%	41.5%
Apprenticeship	Gr. K-6	7.5%	4.5%	1.5%	97.7%	81.2%	88.0%	70.7%
	Gr. 7-8	45.9%	24.3%	28.4%	70.3%	51.4%	52.7%	45.9%
	Gr. 9-12	45.4%	29.6%	35.2%	57.9%	47.2%	46.3%	39.8%
High School	Gr. K-6	6.9%	4.2%	3.4%	90.5%	69.7%	79.6%	50.1%
	Gr. 7-8	37.2%	23.8%	24.2%	69.3%	47.9%	48.4%	41.8%
	Gr. 9-12	46.5%	28.0%	29.6%	60.4%	42.0%	44.5%	36.2%
Elementary School	Gr. K-6	13.5%	10.1%	13.5%	83.8%	58.8%	74.3%	53.4%
	Gr. 7-8	34.3%	26.3%	21.2%	70.3%	48.9%	52.8%	37.5%
	Gr. 9-12	47.6%	30.5%	32.7%	53.5%	37.4%	39.8%	33.4%
Did Not Complete Formal Education	Gr. K-6	12.0%	8.0%	8.0%	94.0%	72.0%	80.0%	60.0%
	Gr. 7-8	27.8%	25.6%	24.1%	66.2%	44.4%	45.1%	39.1%
	Gr. 9-12	50.8%	37.3%	38.9%	53.0%	33.0%	38.9%	34.6%
Did Not Respond	Gr. K-6	10.6%	6.8%	5.4%	79.7%	57.2%	66.9%	44.4%
	Gr. 7-8	32.2%	18.8%	19.4%	71.0%	46.9%	53.9%	40.9%
	Gr. 9-12	38.3%	21.4%	21.0%	57.9%	37.2%	41.6%	31.8%
Total Survey Participants	Gr. K-6	8.2%	4.3%	2.9%	93.7%	77.5%	86.5%	63.8%
	Gr. 7-8	34.5%	18.6%	20.4%	75.2%	53.8%	56.7%	47.6%
	Gr. 9-12	46.4%	24.3%	25.9%	64.0%	44.9%	47.6%	41.5%

Source: Every Student Counts Survey 2018-2019

Note: Did Not Respond refers to survey participants who did not identify their parent/guardian education but responded to the mental health survey questions

Table 9 shows the percentage of students that spoke with a mental health professional three times or more in the 12 months prior to when the survey was administered disaggregated by parent/guardian education. In Grades 9-12, students whose parents/guardians did not complete formal education reported the highest rates of speaking with a mental health professional (16.8%). Grades 7-8 students whose parents/guardians had accreditations from their elementary school reported the highest rates of speaking with a mental health professional (24.2%) compared to their peers whose parents/guardians had other forms of education. Grades K-6 students whose parents/guardians completed an apprenticeship program, on the other hand, reported the lowest rates of speaking with a mental health professional (5.3%), closely following students whose parents/guardians had accreditation from a university (5.7%) and college (6.9%).

Table 9. Talking with a Mental Health Professional by Parent/Guardian Education (% Three Times or More)

Highest Parent/Guardian Education	Gr. K-6	Gr. 7- 8	Gr. 9-12
University	5.7%	16.3%	12.9%
College	6.9%	18.0%	14.9%
Apprenticeship	5.3%	21.6%	15.3%
High School	9.0%	18.8%	13.4%
Elementary School	19.6%	24.2%	15.0%
Did Not Complete Formal Education	18.0%	21.8%	16.8%
Did Not Respond	10.6%	18.8%	11.2%
Total Survey Participants (n)	6.4% (1,291)	17.4% (2,990)	13.1% (4,665)

Source: Every Student Counts Survey 2018- 2019

Note: Did Not Respond refers to survey participants who did not identify their parent/guardian education but responded to the mental health survey questions. Additionally, n= represents the total number of participants who responded Three Times or More

This section reports on emotional well-being and learning outcomes by panel (elementary and secondary). For the elementary panel, learning outcomes were assessed based on the 2018-19 results from the provincial Grade 6 Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) Assessments of Mathematics. For the secondary panel, learning outcomes were assessed based on the results from the 2018-19 Program of Study in Grade 9, Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) in Grade 10, and Grades 12 credit accumulation.

Overall Emotional Well-Being and Learning Outcomes

Grade 6 EQAO Mathematics

- Students who were assessed to or above the provincial standard (level 3 and 4) had the lowest rates of the three negative emotions with the exception of feeling lonely which were reported by those students whose test results could not be linked to the Student Information system.
- Students who were assessed to be below the EQAO provincial standard had the highest rates of speaking with a mental health professional.

Grade 9 Program of Study

- Grade 9 students who were streamed into locally developed programs of study reported the lowest rates across the three negative feeling categories with the exception of lonely; those whose program of study was undefined reported the lowest rates of feeling lonely.
- Students who were streamed into an academic program of study had the lowest rates of speaking with a mental health professional during the 2018-19 school year.

Grade 10 OSSLT

- Grade 10 students whose OSSLT results could not be linked in the Student Information System (No Data) reported the highest rates of feeling happy, and feeling positive about the future as well as the lowest rates of feeling nervous or anxious and feeling sad or depressed, yet reported the highest rate of feeling lonely.
- Students who were assessed to be unsuccessful on the OSSLT, however, reported the highest rates of feeling good about themselves and feeling like they matter to people at school as well as the lowest rate of feeling lonely.
- Students who were assessed to be successful on the OSSLT, on the other hand, reported the highest rates of feeling both nervous or anxious and sad or depressed as well as the lowest rates of feeling happy, positive about the future and good about themselves.
- In Grade 10, students whose OSSLT results could not be linked to the Student Information System reported the lowest rates of talking with a mental health professional that school year, followed by students who completed the OSSLT successfully that school year.

Grade 12 Credit Accumulation

- Overall, among students who were on pace by credit accumulation in Grades 12, feelings of happiness had at the highest rate, followed by feeling good about themselves, or positive about the future or like they matters to people at school; feelings of loneliness was the lowest rate, followed by feeling sad/depressed or nervous anxious.
- Students in Grade 12 who were on pace by credit accumulation also had the lowest rates of talking with a mental health professional during the 2018-19 school year

Elementary Panel

EQAO, Grade 6 Mathematics

Figure 7 shows the percentage of Grade 6 students’ emotional well-being across the positive and negative feeling categories disaggregated by the learning outcomes in Grade 6 Mathematics EQAO. Aside from those students with no Grade 6 EQAO Mathematics results (No Data), students who were assessed to be at or above the provincial standard (level 3 and level 4) on the Grade 6 EQAO Mathematics assessment reported the highest rates of feeling happy (93.2% and 93.5%), feeling positive about future (75.9% and 73.8%), feeling good about themselves (81.8% and 80.2%) as well as feeling like they matter to people at school (69.5% and 68.4%) compared to all other Grade 6 students who responded to this survey.

Figure 7. Emotional Well-Being by EQAO, Gr. 6 Mathematics Assessment (% All the Time/Often)

EQAO Math Gr.6	Nervous/Anxious	Lonely	Sad/Depressed	Happy	Positive About Future	Good About Themselves	Like They Matter to People at School
Level 1 and Below	18.0%	9.7%	7.8%	88.3%	67.0%	75.7%	56.8%
Level 2	17.9%	6.7%	5.2%	90.8%	73.0%	80.1%	63.8%
Level 3	12.2%	4.9%	4.0%	93.2%	75.9%	81.8%	69.5%
Level 4	10.6%	5.5%	3.7%	93.5%	73.8%	80.2%	68.4%
No Data	10.7%	4.0%	0.0%	97.3%	88.0%	84.0%	65.3%
Total Survey Participants	13.0%	5.7%	4.2%	92.7%	74.4%	80.7%	67.3%
n	430	188	140	3,072	2,467	2,674	2,231

Source: Every Student Counts Survey & Student Information System 2018-2019

Note: No Data refers to survey participants who responded to the mental health survey questions, but their EQAO, Grade 6 mathematics results could not be linked to the Student Information System. Additionally, n= represents the total number of participants who responded All the Time and Often within each feeling category.

Table 10 shows the percentage of students that spoke with a mental health professional three times or more in the 12 months prior to when the survey was administered disaggregated by the learning outcomes for Grade 6 Mathematics EQAO. As shown in the table, Grade 6 students who were assessed to be at or above the provincial standard (level 3 and level 4) on EQAO Mathematics (8.1% and 5.1%) reported higher rates of speaking with a mental health professional compared to their peers. Those students who were assessed at level 1 and below (13.3%) reported the highest rate.

Table 10. Talking with a Mental Health Professional by Parent/Guardian Education (% Three Times or More)

EQAO Mathematics	Gr. 6
Level 1 and Below	13.3%
Level 2	12.1%
Level 3	8.1%
Level 4	5.1%
No Data	5.3%
Total Survey Participants (n)	8.2% (272)

Source: Every Student Counts Survey & Student Information System 2018-2019

Note: No Data refers to survey participants who responded to the mental health survey questions, but their EQAO, Grade 6 mathematics results could not be linked to the Student Information System. Additionally, n= represents the total number of participants who responded All the Time and Often within each feeling category.

Secondary Panel

Program of Study, Grade 9

Figure 10 shows the percentage of Grade 9 students’ emotional well-being across the positive and negative feeling categories disaggregated by program of study. Program of Study was determined by the majority of courses the students took in their Grade 9 year. Students whose program of study could not be determined are presented as “undefined” (i.e., students taking only non-credit courses, students entering the YRDSB after Grade 9). Grade 9 students who were placed into an academic program of study reported the highest rates of feeling happy (71.7%), positive about the future (51.8%) like they matter to people at school (47.7%) compared to all other Grade 9 students. Those whose program of study was undefined reported the highest rates of feeling good about themselves (60.4%) compared to their fellow survey respondents in Grade 9.

Grade 9 students who were placed into a locally developed program of study reported the lowest rates of feelings nervous or anxious (28.7%) and feeling sad or depressed (15.8%); those whose program of study was undefined reported the lowest rates of feeling lonely (16.7%) compared to their fellow survey respondents in Grade 9.

Figure 8. Emotional Well-Being by Gr. 9 Program of Study (% All the Time/Often)

Program of Study Gr. 9	Nervous/Anxious	Lonely	Sad/Depressed	Happy	Positive About Future	Good About Themselves	Like They Matter to People at School
Academic	42.2%	20.7%	22.7%	71.7%	51.8%	52.5%	47.7%
Applied	38.0%	22.0%	20.4%	68.1%	48.4%	54.5%	44.6%
Locally Developed	28.7%	23.8%	15.8%	69.3%	45.5%	51.5%	39.6%
Undefined	35.4%	16.7%	25.0%	70.8%	47.9%	60.4%	39.6%
No Data	41.0%	35.9%	30.8%	56.4%	35.9%	51.3%	30.8%
Total Survey Participants	41.5%	20.9%	22.4%	71.1%	51.2%	52.7%	47.1%
n	3,753	1,893	2,026	6,430	4,628	4,768	4,255

Source: Every Student Counts Survey & Student Information System 2018-2019

Note: No Data refers to survey participants who responded to the mental health survey questions, but their Grade 9 program of study could not be linked to the Student Information System. Additionally, n= represents the total number of participants who responded All the Time or Often within each feeling category.

Table 11 shows the percentage of students that spoke with a mental health professional three times or more in the 12 months prior to when the survey was administered disaggregated by students’ Grade 9 program of study. Grade 9 students who were placed into an academic program of study (11.2%) reported the lowest rates of talking with a mental health professional compared to their fellow survey respondents in Grade 9.

Table 11. Talking with a Mental Health Professional by Parent/Guardian Education (% Three Times or More)

Program of Study	Gr. 9
Academic	11.2%
Applied	21.4%
Locally Developed	23.8%
Undefined	22.9%
No Data	28.2%
Total Survey Participants (n)	12.8% (1155)

Source: Every Student Counts Survey & Student Information System 2018-2019

Note: No Data refers to survey participants who responded to the mental health survey questions, but their Grade 9 program of study could not be linked to the Student Information System. Additionally, n= represents the total number of participants who responded All the Time or Often within each feeling category.

OSSLT, Grade 10

Figure 8 shows the percentage of Grade 10 students’ emotional well-being across the positive and negative feeling categories disaggregated by the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) results. This figure shows the emotional well-being of the following groups of students: those who completed the ESCS survey but their OSSLT results could not be linked to the Student Information System (No Data), those who completed the test but were assessed as unsuccessful on the test as well as those who completed the test and were assessed as successful on the test.

Grade 10 students whose OSSLT results could not be linked in the Student Information System (No Data) reported the highest rates of feeling happy (73.8%), and feeling positive about the future (58.9%) compared to their fellow survey respondents in Grade 10. This same group of students reported the lowest rates of feeling nervous or anxious (31.8%) and feeling sad or depressed (20.5%), yet reported the highest rate of feeling lonely (27.1%). Students who were assessed as unsuccessful on the test reported the highest rates of feeling good about themselves (54.7%) and feeling like they matter to people at school (45.7%). This same group of students reported the lowest rate of feeling lonely (22.2%). Students who were assessed as successful on the test, however, reported the highest rates of feeling nervous or anxious (46.4%) and sad or depressed (25.8%) and the lowest rates of feeling happy (66.4%), positive about the future (45.1%) and good about themselves (47.3%).

Figure 99. Emotional Well-Being by OSSLT, Gr. 10 (% All the Time/Often)

OSSLT Gr. 10	Nervous/Anxious	Lonely	Sad/Depressed	Happy	Positive About Future	Good About Themselves	Like They Matter to People at School
Successful	46.4%	23.2%	25.8%	66.4%	45.1%	47.3%	43.3%
Unsuccessful	35.0%	22.2%	22.9%	65.7%	49.4%	54.7%	45.7%
No Data	31.8%	27.1%	20.5%	73.8%	58.9%	53.6%	33.8%
Total Survey Participants	42.9%	23.4%	25.2%	33.4%	46.4%	48.4%	42.9%
n	3,805	2,004	2,156	2,864	3,677	4,152	3,681

Source: Every Student Counts Survey & Student Information System 2018-2019

Note: No Data refers to survey participants who responded to the mental health survey questions, but their Grade 10 OSSLT results could not be linked to the Student Information System. Additionally, n= represents the total number of participants who responded All the Time and Often within each feeling category.

Table 12 shows the percentage of Grade 10 survey respondents who spoke with a mental health professional three times or more in the 12 months prior to when the survey was administered disaggregated by the OSSLT results. Grade 10 students whose OSSLT results could not be linked to the Student Information System reported the lowest rate of talking with a mental health professional (8.4%). Those Grade 10 students who were assessed as unsuccessful on the test reported the highest rate (18.4%) of talking with a mental health professional that school year.

Table 12. Talking with a Mental Health Professional by Parent/Guardian Education (% Three Times or More)

OSSLT	Gr. 10
Successful	11.8%
Unsuccessful	18.4%
No Data	8.4%
Total Survey Participants (n)	11.8% (1045)

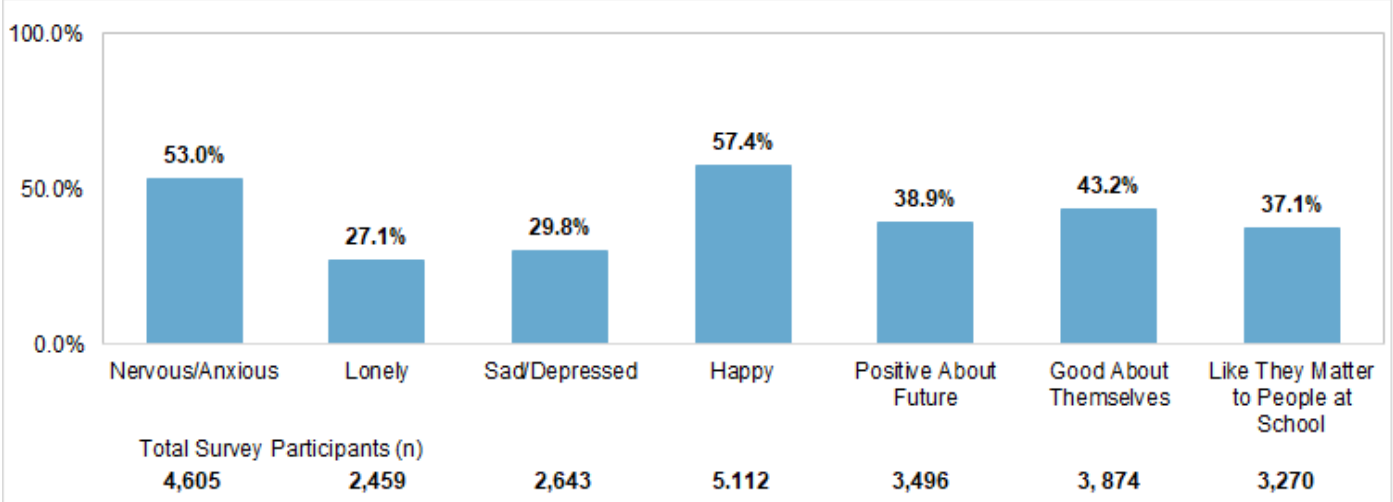
Source: Every Student Counts Survey & Student Information System 2018-2019

Note: No Data refers to survey participants who responded to the mental health survey questions, but their Grade 10 OSSLT results could not be linked to the Student Information System. Additionally, n= represents the total number of participants who responded All the Time and Often within each feeling category.

Credit Accumulation, Grade 12

Figure 9 shows the percentage of students in Grade 12 who were on pace by credit accumulation disaggregated by students' positive and negative emotional well-being. Across the four positive feeling categories, students who were on pace by credit accumulation reported the highest rate of feeling happy (57.4%) followed by feeling good about themselves (43.2%), positive about the future (38.9%) and like they matter to people at school (37.1%) compared to other Grade 12 students who also completed the survey that school year. Across the three negative feeling categories, these students reported the highest rate of feeling nervous or anxious (53.0%) followed by feeling sad or depressed (29.8%) and feeling lonely (27.1%) compared to other survey respondents in Grade 12.

Figure 10. Emotional Well-Being by Gr. 12 Credit Accumulation on Pace (% All the Time/Often)



Source: Every Student Counts Survey & Student Information System 2018-2019, Grade 12 on Pace (30 or more credits)
Note: n= represents the total number of participants who responded All the Time or Often within each feeling category

Table 13 shows the percentage of Grade 12 students that spoke with a mental health professional three times or more in the 12 months prior to when the survey was administered disaggregated by students' credit accumulations in Grade 12. Students who were on pace by credit accumulation (13.5%) reported the lowest rates of talking with a mental health professional compared to other survey respondents in Grade 12 that school year.

Table 13. Talking with a Mental Health Professional by Parent/Guardian Education (% Three Times or More)

Credit Accumulation Pace	Gr. 12
On Pace	13.5%
Not on Pace	22.1%
No Data	0.0%
Total Survey Participants (n)	14.4% (1283)

Source: Every Student Counts Survey & Student Information System 2018-2019, Grade 12 on Pace (30 or more credits)

Note: No Data refers to survey participants who responded to the mental health survey questions, but their Grade 12 Credit Accumulation results could not be linked to the Student Information System. Additionally, n= represents the total number of participants who responded All the Time or Often within each feeling category

In order to resist deficit perspectives that have wrongfully, yet historically, put blame on students and families, when interpreting the findings within this report, we must openly acknowledge that cultural, racial, sexual and other identity-based differences among students cannot and should not be viewed as causes for, or inherent qualities of, groups of people who experience overall poor mental health and well-being. Instead, we must turn the gaze to environmental barriers and systemic obstacles that obstruct students' well-being and learning at both a collective and individual. A reflective discussion on how some environmental factors may be contributing to this report's findings is an important step toward the overarching goal of providing students with equitable educational opportunities.

The findings of this report reveal that within the 2018-19 school year, students of marginalized communities who completed the ESCS survey that year (e.g., members of the BIPOC and the 2SLGBQ+ communities) often had the highest rates of feeling nervous/anxious, lonely, or sad/depressed. This finding can be directly attributable to the social inequities that adversely impact the mental health and well-being of many students who are marginalized (Bährer-Kohler & Bolea-Alamanac, 2019). Cyndy Baskin (2016), for instance, explains, the mental health struggles (e.g., depression) that some Indigenous people (e.g., First Nations, Métis and Inuit) face have directly been attributed to the lasting impacts of colonization, particularly the intergenerational trauma and "impacts of the residential school system and the imposition of Christianity on [Indigenous] people, which forcefully . . . eradicate[d] Indigenous spirituality [and, in turn, their culture]" (Baskin, 2016, p. 94). However, although reflecting on the historical colonial atrocities that continue to have an impact on the world today is important (e.g., Baskin, 2016; Methot, 2019; Peltier, 2011), recognizing that trauma and resilience are intertwined is equally as important (Methot, 2019). Without recognizing the resilience, resistance and excellence of marginalized groups in the face of social inequities that have been, and may continually be, adversely impacting their mental health and well-being at YRDSB, groups students may become "stuck" in a victim mentality, which ultimately adds to their harm.

Keeping this in mind, it is important to recognize the resilience and excellence of students at the face of systemic barriers such as, racism (e.g., Paradies et al., 2015), classism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia (e.g., DiPlacido & Fallahi, 2020), islamophobia, ableism, etc., which may have contributed to participating students' feelings of sadness/depression, loneliness and nervousness/anxiousness at YRDSB in 2018-19. DiPlacido and Fallahi (2020), recently put forward, for instance, that "disparities among sexual minorities can be explained by a lifetime of living [albeit with powerful resistance and resilience] in a social environment that is unique, stressful, and hostile, leading to harassment, prejudice, discrimination, and stigma" (DiPlacido & Fallahi, 2020, p. 2). In fact, many students belonging to the various minority groups may even choose not to disclose their identity information due to stigma associated with a specific group(s) (DiPlacido & Fallahi, 2020). Alternatively, groups of students may choose not to disclose their identity information for a number of other reasons that resist the victim mentality such as, the resistance to historic and frequent confrontation with "negative statistics and information about their well-being and . . . ability" (Zeidler, 2011, p. 141).

Kendi (2019) explains, the negative statistics that attribute behaviour traits to groups of people based on their race has historically been a form of racism. Oluo (2018) extends this further, explaining that racial disproportionalities are, in fact, evidence of racism perpetuated by systems of power, which requires steps toward positive social change for the underserved groups. Thus, race as well as other identity differences cannot and should not be investigated in isolation; an intersectional approach is suggested (Oluo, 2018). With this in mind, this report is meant to prompt critical dialogue toward positive social change for underserved groups of students by illuminating systemic barriers certain groups of students have faced and may continue facing.

Ensuring that schools promote inclusive environments such as multicultural spaces, does not mean that there will be an absence of detrimental social barriers (e.g., racism, sexism, etc.) impacting students' overall mental health and well-being or that such multicultural spaces can prevent feelings of isolation and social exclusion. Kalantzis and Cope (2000) explain that the only form of modern education that is not exclusionary is *pluralism*, which encompasses the notion "of openness, negotiation, experimentation and the interrelation of alternative frameworks and mindsets" (p. 120). *Pluralism* requires transformation from the dominant groups or institutional structures (e.g., education) in and of themselves through the development of *critical cultural consciousness* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). *Critical cultural consciousness* not only has the potential to promote critical dialogue amongst various education stakeholders, but it also has the potential to promote positive emotional well-being in all students, particularly those who identify as a minority.

YRDSB will continue to strive toward developing and implementing anti-oppressive mental health programs and services that focus on positive identity affirming approaches and community partnerships through *critical cultural consciousness*, which overtly examines concepts such as power and privilege in relation to students' positionality in the world - a key identifying tenant of *culturally responsive pedagogy* that teachers, administrators and staff are encouraged to take up in their practice (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). *Culturally responsive pedagogy* and intervention strategies have the potential to positively affirm students' individual identities and, in turn, increase students' level of engagement at schools (Jones et al., 2018).

Ableism: Ableism is described as “attitudes in society that devalue and limit the potential of persons with disabilities. People with disabilities are assumed to be less worthy of respect and consideration, less able to contribute and take part, and of less value than other people. Ableism can be conscious or unconscious and is embedded in institutions, systems or the broader culture of a society” (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2013, p. 54).

Anti-Oppression Framework: An approach that places equity and human rights at the forefront of actions by intentionally identifying, addressing and changing the values, structures, policies, attitudes and practices that result in discrimination against individuals or groups. The framework promotes an understanding of how power, privilege and oppression operate within institutions.

Anti-Racism Data Standards: Anti-Racism data standard were established by the Government of Ontario to help identify and monitor systemic racism and racial disparities within the public sector in order to create an inclusive and equitable society for all Ontarians. The standards establish consistent, effective practices for producing reliable information to support evidence-based decision-making and public accountability to help eliminate systemic racism and promote racial equity.

Asexual: Asexual refers to a person who does not experience sexual attraction.

Autism: The ministry of Education defines autism as a learning disorder that is characterized by disturbances in the rate of educational development; ability to relate to the environment, mobility, perception, speech, and language. Autism is also characterised by a lack of the representational-symbolic behaviour that precedes language (as cited in York Region District School Board, 2021a).

Behavioural: The Ministry of Education defines behavioural (or behavioural disorder) as characterized by specific behaviour problems over such period of time, and to such a marked degree, and of such a nature, as to adversely affect educational performance. This may be accompanied by one or more of the following: a) significant difficulty to build or to maintain interpersonal relationships; b) excessive fears or anxieties; c) a tendency to compulsive reaction; and d) an inability to learn that cannot be traced to intellectual, sensory, or health factors, or any combination thereof (as cited in York Region District School Board, 2021a). It also includes, but is not limited to, the following: anxiety, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and mood disorders/depression.

BIPOC: BIPOC is an acronym that refers to Black, Indigenous, and other People of Colour.

Bisexual: Bisexual refers to a person who experiences attraction to both male-identified and female-identified people.

Cisgender: “Cisgender described the identity of people whose sex assigned at birth corresponds with their gender expression and identity” (Center for Intersectional Justice, 2020, p.16)

Class: Class refers to “a group of people within society who have the same economic and social position” (dictionary.cambridge.org, 2021)

Classism: Classism is defined as those who are directly or indirectly impacted by poverty or low income.

Colonialism: “Colonialism is the historical practice of European expansion into territories already inhabited by Indigenous peoples for the purposes of acquiring new lands and resources. This expansion is rooted in the violent suppression of Indigenous peoples’ governance, legal, social and cultural structures. Colonialism attempts to force Indigenous peoples to accept and integrate into institutions that are designed to force them to conform with the structures of the colonial state. ‘Colonialism remains an ongoing process, shaping both the structure and the quality of the relationship between settlers and Indigenous peoples’” (TRC Final Report, 2016 *What We Have Learned: Principles of Truth and Reconciliation* as cited in Government of Ontario, 2021).

Critical Cultural Consciousness: “the ability to recognize and analyze systems of inequality and the commitment to take action against these systems” (El-Amin et al, 2017, p. 18). Based on the work of Paulo Freire (1970), critical consciousness is developed through: “gaining knowledge about the systems and structures that create and sustain inequity (critical analysis), developing a sense of power or capability (sense of agency), and ultimately committing to take action against oppressive conditions (critical action)” (El-Amin et al, 2017, p. 20).

I: Explanations of Terms

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy or Culturally Responsive Teaching acknowledges, responds to, and celebrates students' cultures, languages, and life experiences in all aspects of students' learning (Ladson-Billings, 1994)

DABRS: DABRS is an acronym that refers to YRDSB's Dismantling Anti-Black Racism Strategy.

Data: "Data is defined as facts, figures, and statistics objectively measured according to a standard or scale, such as frequency, volumes or occurrences. Data does not include information like reports or manuals." (Government of Ontario, 2021).

Developmental Disability: The Ministry of Education defines developmental disability as a severe learning disorder characterized by: a) an inability to profit from a special education program for students with mild intellectual disabilities because of slow intellectual development; b) an ability to profit from a special education program that is designed to accommodate slow intellectual development; and c) a limited potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment and economic self-support (as cited in York Region District School Board, 2021a).

Disability: Disability is a term that covers a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and others not (e.g., physical, mental, and learning disabilities; hearing or vision disabilities; epilepsy; environmental sensitivities). A disability may be present from birth, may be caused by an accident, or may develop over time. A disability may be temporary, sporadic or permanent.

Disaggregated Data: "Disaggregated data is broken down into component parts or smaller units of data for statistical analysis. In the context of race-based data, this means breaking down the composite (aggregate) "racialized" category into its component parts such as Black, South Asian, East/Southeast Asian, Latino, Middle Eastern, White, etc." (Government of Ontario, 2021).

Discrimination: Discrimination is the distinction between individuals not based on legitimate terms; refers to arbitrary bias for or against an individual or a group, or the unjust and inequitable treatment of an individual or group. Discrimination can be based on age, birth, socioeconomic class, colour, creed, ability, ethnicity, familial status, gender, gender identity, language, marital status, political or other opinion, race, religion or faith belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

EIAC: EIAC is an acronym that refers to the Equity and Inclusivity Advisory Committee.

EQAO: EQAO is an acronym that refers to Education Quality and Accountability Office.

Equity: Equity refers to "the systemic fair treatment of all people. It results in equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone. It contrasts with formal equality where people are treated the same without regard for ... differences" (Government of Ontario, 2021)

Ethnicity: Ethnicity refers to ethnic groups have a common identity, heritage, ancestry, or historical past, often with identifiable cultural, linguistic and / or religious characteristics.

Exceptionality: The Education Act sets out five categories of exceptionalities in the definition of an exceptional pupil including: behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical, and multiple. These broad categories are designed to address the wide range of conditions that will affect a student's learning needs. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2017, p. 63).

Exclusion: Exclusion is defined as "denying access to a place, group, privilege, etc." (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2017, p. 57).

Funds of Knowledge: Funds of knowledge in Education refers to any culturally rooted knowledge found within communities (Moll et al., 1992).

Gay: Gay refers to a person who experiences attraction to people of the same sex and / or gender. Gay can include both male-identified individuals and female-identified individuals or refer to male-identified individuals only.

Gender Fluid: Gender fluid refers to a person whose gender identity or expression changes or shifts along the gender spectrum.

Gender Identity: Gender identity is a person's internal and deeply felt sense of being a man, a woman, both, neither, or having another identity on the gender spectrum (i.e., gender fluid, gender nonconforming, non-

I: Explanations of Terms

binary, questioning, transgender, two spirit). A person's gender identity may be different from the sex assigned at birth (i.e., female or male).

Gender Expression: "Gender expression is how a person publicly expresses or presents their gender. This can include behaviour and outward appearance such as dress, hair, make-up, body language and voice. A person's chosen name and pronoun are also common ways of expressing gender. Others perceive a person's gender through these attributes." (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2014, p. 3)

Gender Nonconforming: Gender nonconforming refers to a person not being in line with the cultural associations made in a given society about a person's sex assigned at birth.

Gifted: The Ministry of Education defines gifted as an unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated (as cited in York Region District School Board, 2021a).

Harassment: Harassment is "engaging in a course of comments or actions that are known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome. It can involve words or actions that are known or should be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, demeaning or unwelcome" (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2013, p. 58).

Heterosexual: Heterosexual refers to "people whose enduring physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction is to people of the opposite sex. (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2013, p. 62).

Homophobia: Homophobia is "the irrational aversion to, fear or hatred of gay, lesbian or bisexual people and communities or of behaviors stereotyped as homosexual" (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2013, p. 59).

Identity-Based Data: "Identity-based data refers to information about various aspects of students' identities (e.g., racial / ethnic background, and sexual orientation). In the educational context, students from historically and currently marginalized communities face systemic barriers through policies, programs and practices that create or maintain disadvantages for these students. Collecting identity-based data is important for evaluating how well programs, resources and practices support students, and identify the groups of students who may be underserved in order to develop and revise programs, strategies, policies and teaching practices, as well as allocate resources and supports to improve school environments and help students succeed. The Ontario Human Rights Code permits and encourages the collection and analysis of identity data for the purposes of identifying and removing systemic barriers, preventing discrimination, and promoting equity and inclusivity" (Government of Ontario, 2021).

Ideologies: refers to "a set of beliefs or principles, especially one on which a political system, party or organization is based" (dictionary.cambridge.org, 2021)

IEAC: IEAC is an acronym that refers to the Indigenous Education Advisory Council.

Inclusive: "Inclusive processes, policies, services, program and practices are accessible to and useable by as many people as possible, regardless of race, ethnic origin, gender, age, disability, language, etc. An inclusive environment is open, safe, equitable and respectful. Everyone can enjoy a sense of trust, belonging and involvement, and everyone is encouraged to contribute and participate fully" (Government of Ontario, 2021).

Indigenous: "Indigenous people identify as being descended from the Original Peoples of what is currently known as Canada. In this context, Indigenous peoples include people who may identify as First Nations (status and non-status), Métis and/or Inuit and any related identities" (Government of Ontario, 2021).

Individual Education Plan (IEP): IEP is an acronym that refers to an Individual Education Plan. "An IEP is a written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student, based on a thorough assessment of the student's strengths and needs that affect the student's ability to learn and demonstrate learning" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2021).

Intergenerational Trauma: "Historic and contemporary trauma that has compounded over time and been passed from one generation to the next. The negative effects can impact individuals, families, communities and entire populations, resulting in a legacy of physical, psychological, and economic disparities that persist across generations. For Indigenous peoples, the historical trauma includes trauma created as a result of the imposition of assimilative policies and laws aimed at attempted cultural genocide, including the annihilation of Indigenous Nations, the imposition of the Indian Act system, and the forcible removal of Indigenous children to Indian Residential Schools. Contemporary trauma includes the disparities in access to basic human rights,

including clean water, safe housing and minimum standards of income as well as ongoing lack of access to equity in justice, health and child welfare services. Contemporary trauma also includes forced relocation away from ancestral territories and ongoing disputes about Indigenous governance, jurisdiction and decision-making related to resource and other development occurring within Indigenous territories. Other examples of intergeneration trauma include the ongoing legacies of slavery of people of African descent, as well as the impacts of racial segregation, and the long histories and contemporary forms of racial oppression and violence directed at Black and racialized individuals and communities” (Government of Ontario, 2021).

Intersectionality: “Intersectionality is the way in which people’s lives are shaped by their multiple and overlapping identities and social locations, which, together, can produce a unique and distinct experience for that individual or group, for example, creating additional barriers, opportunities, and/or power imbalances. In the context of race and Indigenous identity, this means recognizing the ways in which people’s experiences of racism or privilege, including within any one group, may vary depending on the individual’s or group’s relationship to additional overlapping or intersecting social identities, like religion, ethnic origin, gender, age, disabilities or citizenship and immigration status. An intersectional analysis enables better understanding of the impacts of any one particular systemic barrier by considering how that barrier may be interacting with other related factors” (Government of Ontario, 2021).

IPRC: IPRC is an acronym that refers to Identification, Placement, and Review Committee.

Islamophobia: “Islamophobia is racism, stereotypes, prejudice, fear, or acts of hostility directed towards individual Muslims or followers of Islam in general. In addition to individual acts of intolerance and racial profiling, Islamophobia can lead to viewing and treating Muslims as a greater security threat on an institutional, systemic, and societal level” (Government of Ontario, 2021).

Language Impairment: The Ministry of Education defines language impairment as a learning disorder characterized by an impairment in comprehension and/or use of verbal communication or the written or other symbol system of communication, which may be associated with neurological, psychological, physical or sensory factors (as cited in York Region District School Board, 2021a).

Learning Disability: The Ministry of Education defines learning disability as one of a number of neurodevelopmental disorders that persistently and significantly has an impact on the ability to learn and use academic and other skills (as cited in York Region District School Board, 2021a).

Lesbian: Lesbian refers to a female-identified person who experiences attraction to female-identifies people.

Marginalization: “Marginalization is a long-term, structural process of systemic discrimination that creates a class of disadvantaged minorities. Marginalized groups become permanently confined to the fringes of society. Their status is perpetuated through various dimensions of exclusion, particularly in the labour market, from full and meaningful participation in society” (Government of Ontario, 2021).

Mild Intellectual Disability: Mild intellectual disability refers to a learning disorder characterized by: a) an ability to profit educationally within a regular class with the aid of considerable curriculum modification and supportive service; b) an inability to profit educationally within a regular class because of slow intellectual development; and c) a potential for academic learning, independent social adjustment and economic self-support (as cited in York Region District School Board, 2021a).

Mixed Methods: Mixed methods involve the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Non-Binary: Non-binary refers to a person whose gender identity does not align with the binary concept of gender such as man or woman.

Not Reported (NR): NR denotes where in tables or graphs there were less than 15 students in a particular group and therefore the resulting figure is Not Reported (NR) to preserve the privacy of the students.

Oppression: Oppression refers to the “a situation in which people are governed in an unfair and cruel way and prevented from having opportunities and freedom” (dictionary.cambridge.org, 2021).

OSSLT: OSSLT is an acronym that refers to Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test.

Pansexual: Pansexual refer to a person who experiences attraction to people of diverse sexes and/or genders. The term pansexual reflects a desire to recognize the potential for attraction to sexes and/or genders that exist across a spectrum and to challenge the sex/gender binary.

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Paternalism: Paternalism refers to “thinking or behaviour by people in authority that results in them making decisions for other people that, although they may be to those people’s advantage, prevent them from taking responsibility for their own lives” (dictionary.cambridge.org, 2021).

Pathologization: Pathologization “refers to the process by which an experience comes to be seen and approached as something that elicits suffering. It can thus broadly be interpreted as turning something into a problem” (Liebert, 2014)

PEAC: PEAC is an acronym that refers to the Parent, Family and Community Engagement Advisory Committee.

Physical Disability: The Ministry of Education defines physical disability as a condition of such severe physical limitation or deficiency as to require special assistance in learning situations to provide the opportunity for educational achievement equivalent to that of students without exceptionalities who are of the same age or development level (as cited in York Region District School Board, 2021a).

Pluralism: “Pluralism involves a subtle but profound shift from a more superficial multiculturalism. Pluralism means that the mainstream – be that the culture of the dominant groups or institutional structure such as education – is itself transformed. Instead of representing a single cultural destination, a monolithic cultural position, it is a site of openness, negotiation, experimentation, and the interrelation of alternative frameworks and mindsets” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2000, p. 120).

Power: Power is defined as “access to privileges such as information/knowledge, connections, experience and expertise, resources and decision-making that enhance a person’s chances of getting what they need to live a comfortable, safe, productive and profitable life (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2013, p. 61).

Prejudice: Prejudice is defined as a “negative prejudgment or preconceived feelings or notions about another person or group of persons based on perceived characteristics” (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2013, p. 61).

Privilege: Privilege is defined as “unearned power, benefits, advantages, access and/or opportunities that exist for members of the dominant group(s) in society. Can also refer to the relative privilege of one group compared to another” (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2013, p. 61).

Provincial Standard: In Ontario, there are four different degrees of student achievement for any given subject/subject. “Level 3 is the ‘provincial standard’. . . Level 1 identifies achievement that falls much below the provincial standard. Level 2 identifies achievement that approaches the standard. Level 4 identifies achievement that surpasses the standard (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 143).

Program of Study: The course level in which the student took the majority of their courses in their Grade 9 year.

Queer: Queer refers to some members within LGBTQ communities, particularly youth, as a symbol of pride and affirmation of diversity. This term makes space for the expression of a variety of identities outside of rigid categories associated with sex, gender or attraction. It can be used by a community to encompass a broad spectrum of identities related to sex, gender or attraction, or by an individual to reflect the interrelatedness of these aspects of their identity.

Questioning: Questioning refers to a person who is unsure about their own sexual orientation.

Race: “Race is a term used to classify people into groups based principally on physical traits (phenotypes) such as skin colour. Racial categories are not based on science or biology but on differences that society has created (i.e., “socially constructed”), with significant consequences for people’s lives. Racial categories may vary over time and place and can overlap with ethnic, cultural or religious groupings” (Government of Ontario, 2021).

Racialized (person or group): “Racialized persons and/or groups can have racial meanings attributed to them in ways that negatively impact their social, political, and economic life. This includes but is not necessarily limited to people classified as “visible minorities” under the Canadian census and may include people impacted by antisemitism and Islamophobia” (Government of Ontario, 2021).

Racial Trauma: Racial Trauma or race-based traumatic stress is a cumulative emotional pain or stressful impacts of experiencing or witnessing discrimination, racism, and institutional racism (Carter, 2007).

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Racism: “Racism includes ideas or practices that establish, maintain or perpetuate the racial superiority or dominance of one group over another” (Government of Ontario, 2021). These ideas and practices are maintained when racial prejudice is so often backed by systems of power (Oluo, 2018)

Reflexivity: Reflexivity is a technique used in qualitative research involving the practice of questioning one’s own taken for granted assumptions. This may involve making transparent multiple perspectives or interpretations in the written report, particularly ones beneath the master narrative. It involves staying “awake” (Clandinin et al., 2010, p. 82) to what is provided and what is not, what is heard as well as the silence. It also involves the ability to disclose biases rooted from personal experiences.

Reliability and Validity: Reliability and validity are measures used to evaluate the rigour of quantitative research. These terms are reconceptualized, however, within qualitative research, challenging the notion of a single objective truth that can be “accurately,” or close to “accurately,” measured (Bold, 2012). Through a qualitative lens, the trustworthiness of research resides in readers’ ability to find their own truth through “the relevance of lives explored” (Bold, 2012), and rejects that of a single truth to be applied or replicated to multiple contexts for generalizability or “accuracy” purposes.

Religion: Religion is a religious denomination, group, sect, or other religiously defined community or system of belief and and/or spiritual faith practices (Government of Ontario, 2021).

SEAC: SEAC is an acronym that refers to the Special Education Advisory Committee.

Sexism: Sexism is defined as “discrimination based on sex” (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2013, p. 62).

Sexual Orientation: Sexual orientation is a personal characteristic that forms part of who you are. It covers the range of human sexuality and is different from gender identity.

Social Identity: Social identity refers to a person’s sense of who they are based on the social groups the person was born into and belongs to. People can identify or be identified by others on the basis of their social identity (and their intersections). This aspect of an individual’s self-conception is not based on their personal qualities (e.g., skills and abilities).

Social Location: Social Location (Positionality) refers to the recognition that where you stand in relation to others in society shapes what you can see and understand. It is how people are impacted by social relations of inequity (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, immigrant status, disability, class, age, etc.) as well as their intersections (see Vosko, 2006). Social location emphasizes that inequity is complex, and that people hold positions of dominance and subordination in different contexts (Anthias, 2012).

Stereotypes: Stereotypes is defined as “Qualities ascribed to individuals or groups that are based on misconceptions, false generalizations, and/or oversimplifications that potentially result in stigmatization. A race-based stereotype is a quality ascribed to individuals/groups related to race. Stereotypes can perpetuate racism and racial discrimination and give rise to racial inequalities.” (Government of Ontario, 2021).

Stigma: Stigma is defined as a harmful negative stereotype (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2021).

Streaming: Streaming refers to the separation of students into different course types (streams). In Ontario, students are currently streamed for Math, English, Science, Geography, History and French. The course types (streams) for these Grade 9 and 10 courses are Academic, Applied and Locally Developed (York Region District School Board, 2021b).

Students with Special Education Needs: “Students who have been formally identified by an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC), as well as students who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Students whose sole identified exceptionality is giftedness are not included” (EQAO, 2019, p.38). Special education needs is a classification of students for school to provide specialized or intensive programming and support. It is closely associated with Program of Study (Brown & Sinay, 2008; Brown & Parekh, 2010) or “streaming” and is widely considered to be strongly connected to postsecondary access.

Systemic Barriers: “Systemic barriers are policies, programs and practices that result in particular groups of students receiving inequitable access to opportunities or being excluded in a way that creates or maintains disadvantages for these marginalized groups” (Government of Ontario, 2021).

Systemic Racism: “Systemic racism consists of organizational culture, policies, directives, practices or procedures that exclude, displace or marginalize some racialized groups or create unfair barriers for them to access valuable benefits and opportunities. This is often the result of institutional biases in organizational

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culture, policies, directives, practices, and procedures that may appear neutral but have the effect of privileging some groups and disadvantaging others” (Government of Ontario, 2021).

Transgender: Transgender refers to a person whose gender identity differs from the one associated with their birth-assigned sex.

Transphobia: Transphobia is defined as “the irrational aversion to, fear or hatred of [transgendered] . . . people and communities or of behaviors stereotyped as . . . [transgender]” (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2013, p. 59).

Two-Spirit: Two-spirit refers to an Indigenous person whose gender identity, spiritual identity or sexual orientation includes masculine, feminine, or non-binary spirits.

2SLGBQ+: 2SLGBQ+ is an acronym used in this report to refer to two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer or questioning. 2SLGBTQ+ is an acronym often used as an umbrella term to encompass a much wider range of identities and experiences related to sex, gender and attraction that fall outside the dominant norms of heterosexual and cisgender. In this report, the “T” for transgender is not included when the acronym is used in reference to Sexual Orientation. Transgender is included under gender identity.

Universalism: “In the field of psychology, universalism conventionally refers to the idea that the range of human experience – from basic needs and psychological processes to core values – is intrinsic and therefore similar across humans and cultures” (Kohfeldt & Grabe, 2014).

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