
Ninth Grade Transition Survey Report 2024

Anoka-Hennepin
School District

Prepared by the Department of
Research, Evaluation and Testing



ANOKA-HENNEPIN
SCHOOLS
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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Key Findings.....	4
Demographics	5
Educational Goals	6
School Counselors	7
Support for Concerns	9
Perceptions of the Ninth Grade Experience.....	12
Comparisons by Student Group	15

Introduction

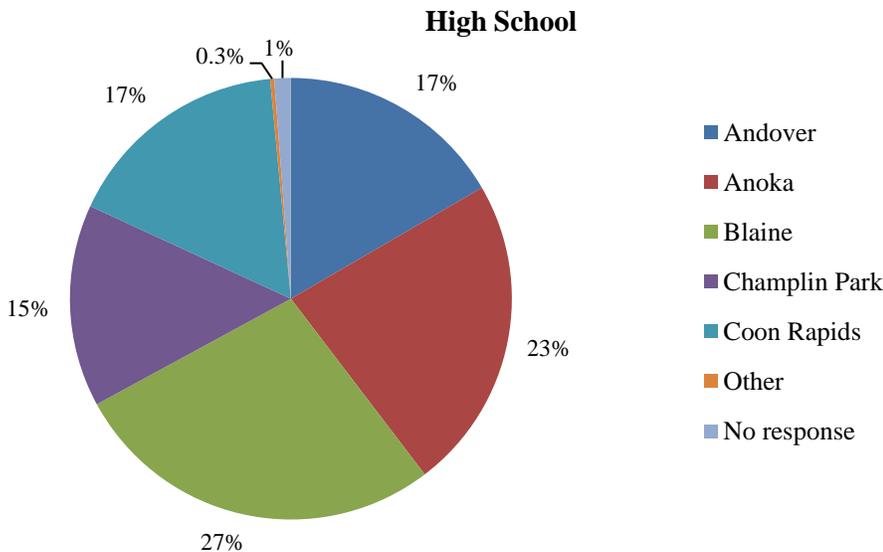
This summary highlights student responses to the Ninth Grade Transition Survey. The objective of the Ninth Grade Transition Survey is to provide an opportunity for all ninth grade students to evaluate school programming and provide feedback on their experiences entering high school. Students' perceptions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

The Ninth Grade Transition Survey has been administered since 2012 to all students finishing their ninth grade year. The online survey was administered to freshman during structured advisory classes between March 25th and May 24th, 2024. Students generally take 15-30 minutes to complete the anonymous survey. The questionnaire consists of 15 items relating to students':

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

There were 2,507 ninth grade students who completed the survey in 2024, 175 more students responding than in 2023. Historically, in years prior to 2020, teachers administered the survey during their advisory class, although in years 2020 and 2021, students were sent a link and asked to take the survey on their own time in an unstructured setting. In 2024, ninth grade students were given the opportunity to participate in the survey online during a structured time in advisory classes. In 2020 and 2021, participation rates dropped dramatically, which may have impacted the survey results during those years.

Respondents were representative of the five traditional high schools, as well as other sites and programs. Respondent representation reflected enrollment with the exception of Andover and Anoka which were slightly overrepresented and Champlin Park which was slightly underrepresented relative to their building sizes.

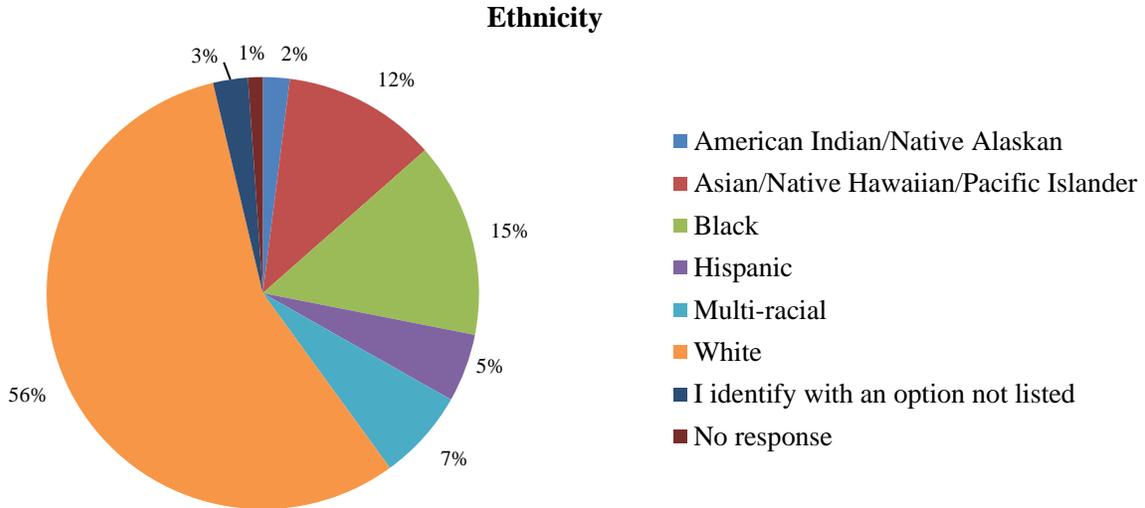


Key Findings

- The percentage of ninth grade students who reported that their highest level of educational aspiration included obtaining a 4-year degree or higher was 69%, a decrease of 16% since its highest level, reported in 2016. Students with higher educational aspirations, obtaining a 4-year degree or higher, were more confident in reaching their goals.
- Most students learned who their school counselor is through *advisory/homeroom*, a *classroom activity* or an *individual meeting*.
 - Eight percent of students reported not knowing who their counselor is, a decrease of 11% since last year. Thirty-six percent of ninth grade students reported that they have never met with their counselor individually, a decrease of 14% since last year.
 - Across all concerns, the greatest percentages of students reported that they would go to their school counselor about schedule changes, registration, and credits on track to graduate, consistent with previous years.
- Thinking about the current school year, students rated their ninth-grade experience. Ninety-six percent of students reported feeling they are adjusting well to high school. Agreement increased by at least 1% on all ten items.
 - There was a 12% increase in the percentage of students indicating that they know how to make an appointment with their counselor, bringing agreement to 82% in 2024, the highest rate in survey history.
 - There was a 10% increase in the percentage of students who agreed that meeting with their counselor is important. The 2024 rate is 75%, also the highest in survey history.
 - When thinking about their ninth-grade experiences, compared to students overall, male students reported statistically significantly greater agreement with seven of the 10 statements posed, while students who identify as female, with a gender option not listed, or preferred not to disclose their gender reported significantly lower agreement on six, nine, and seven of 10 statements, respectively. Asian students reported lower agreement with six of the 10 statements, while White students reported higher agreement with six of 10 statements. Students attending Andover High School or Blaine High School reported significantly higher agreement with four and seven of 10 statements, respectively, while students attending Coon Rapids High Schools rated nine of the 10 items significantly lower compared to all students.
- Of the 11 potential areas of concern, students indicated feeling the least concern when entering ninth grade around *bullying* and *peer pressure*. Across the year, concern about peer pressure and bullying decreased even further.
 - Thirty-two percent of students reported feeling overwhelmed as they entered ninth grade and 29% feeling overwhelmed at the end of their ninth grade year. This has been the greatest area of students' concern upon entering ninth grade since the inception of the survey.
 - The largest changes in concerns from the beginning to the end of the school year were items centered on the physical unknowns of a new school, including *finding my classrooms* which dropped by 11% and *going to a new school* which dropped by 12% by the end of ninth grade.
 - Compared to students overall, students who identified as female, with a gender option not listed, and those who preferred not to indicate their gender reported significantly greater concern when entering high school in 10, 10, and nine of the 11 areas, respectively. However, students who identified as male were significantly less concerned in all 11 areas. Students identifying as Black or White reported significantly less concern in five of 11 areas, while students identifying as Asian or Hispanic reported significantly greater concern in nine and five of 11 areas, respectively. Students attending Andover High school or Champlin Park High School reported lower concern in five and three areas, respectively, whereas students attending Coon Rapids High School reported higher concern than students overall in nine of 11 areas.
- On average, students rated the overall quality of services provided at their high schools as 3.1 (equivalent to a B). Grades assigned in 2024 to each of the seven items increased or maintained the same levels as the previous year.
 - Students who identify with a gender option not listed on the survey rated their high school lower on all seven items. Students attending Blaine High School rated their school higher in six areas, whereas students attending Coon Rapids High School rated their school lower in all seven areas, compared to students overall.

Demographics

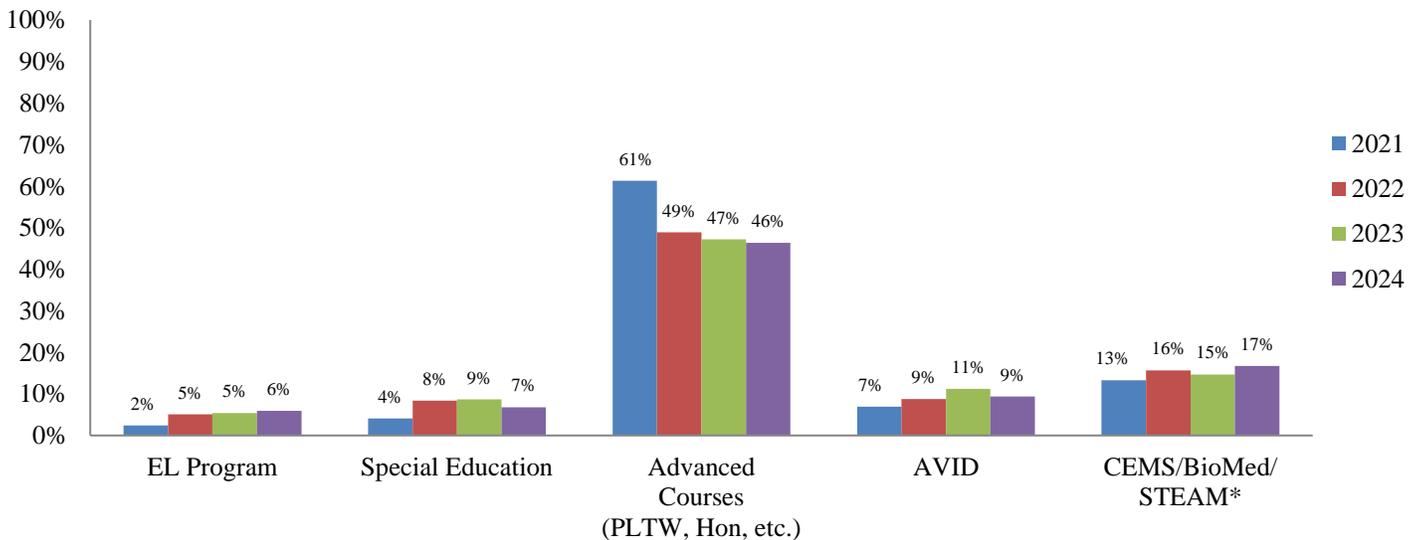
There were 2,507 ninth grade students who participated in the survey. Forty-seven percent of students indicated they were female and 48% reported they were male (3% of students preferred not to answer, 2% did not identify with the options listed, and 1% did not respond). Students’ self-reported ethnic backgrounds were similar to the district population, as follows:



Note: American Indian/Native Alaskan is referred to as American Indian and Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander is referred to as “Asian” in remainder of report.

Participation in special programming. Just under half of respondents indicated they took advanced coursework. Just under 10% of respondents reported participation in the AVID program, while 17% of those responding reported participation in either the CEMS, BioMed, or STEAM program. The percentage of respondents who reported participating in the English Language (EL) program for language acquisition services was consistent with enrollment percentages, but students reporting receiving special education services were underrepresented compared to those enrolled.

Percentage of students participating in special programming

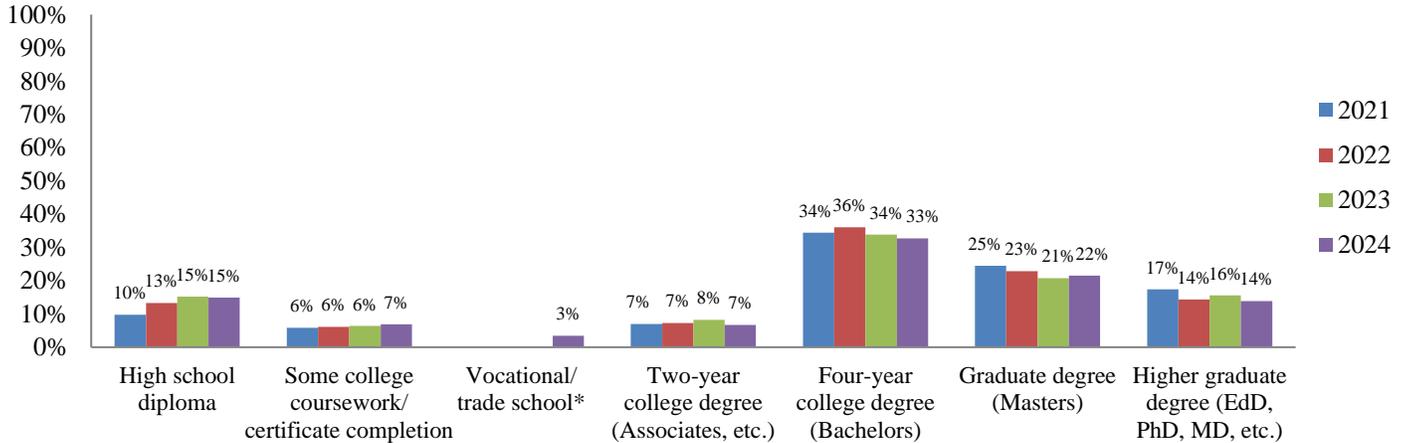


* CEMS is only offered at Blaine HS and Coon Rapids HS, BioMed is only offered at Coon Rapids HS, and STEAM is only offered at Anoka HS.

Educational Goals

Educational aspirations. Sixty-nine percent of ninth grade students reported aspirations that included obtaining a four-year college degree or higher, a decrease of 16% since the highest rate in survey history of 85%, reported in 2016. The percentage of students reporting a high school diploma as their highest educational goal remained within 1% of last year’s rate after slowly increasing over the past several years. The percentage of students indicating aspirations of obtaining a higher graduate degree has remained around 15% for the past three years.

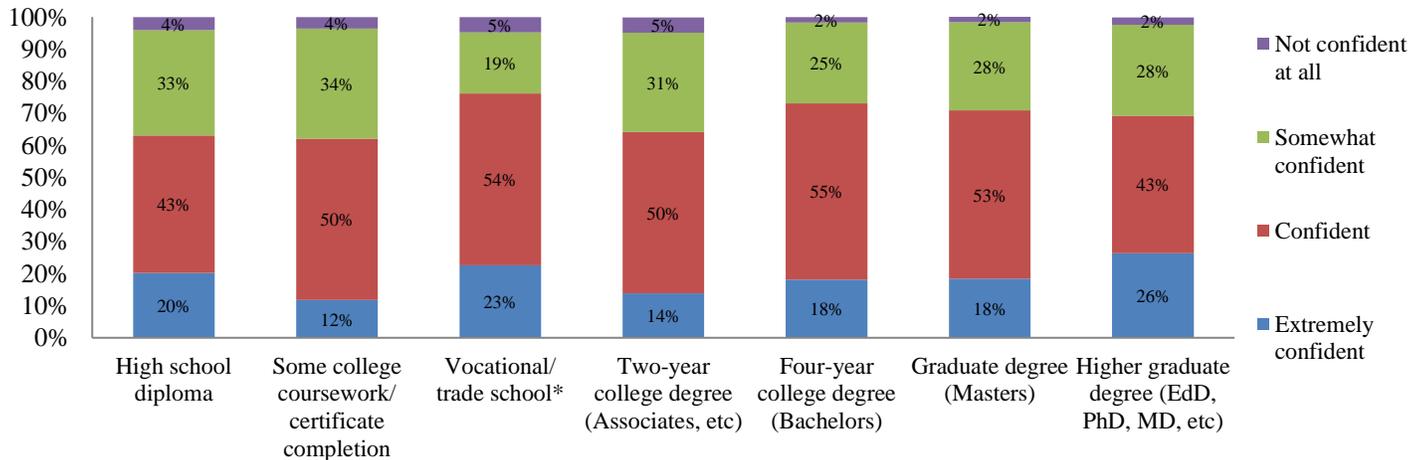
Highest educational goal (% of students)



* Vocational/trade school was added to the response options in 2024.

Confidence in reaching educational goals. Students aspiring to obtain a four-year college degree or higher reported being either extremely confident or confident in reaching their goals at a greater percentage than those students selecting other educational aspirations. Of the 367 ninth grade students who indicated a high school diploma was their highest educational goal, 4% reported not being confident and 33% reported being only somewhat confident in obtaining this goal.

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

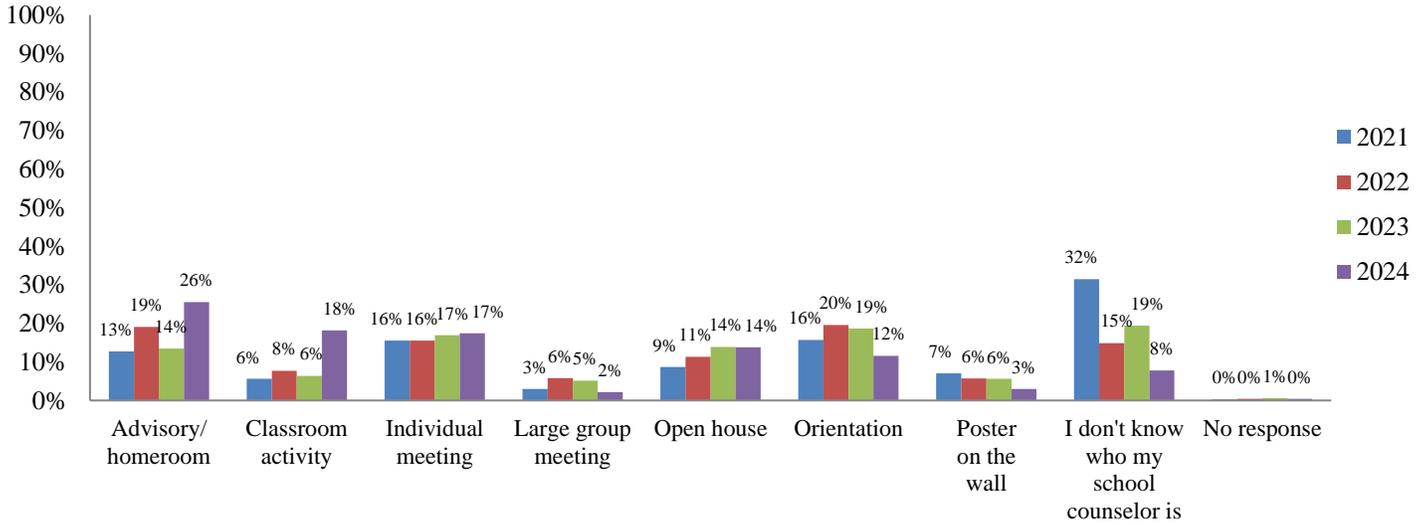


* Vocational/trade school was added to the response options in 2024.

School Counselors

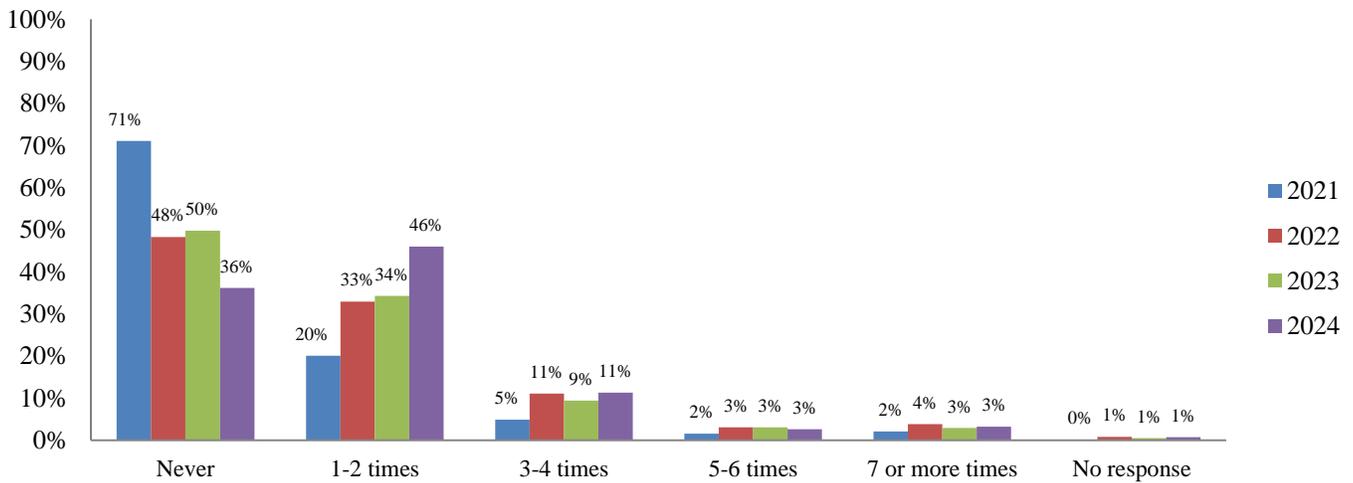
Assigned counselor. Eight percent of ninth grade students reported not knowing who their counselor was, a shift from the 19% that reported not knowing their counselor in 2023. The top ways that ninth graders learned about their counselors was through *advisory/homeroom* (26%), *classroom activity* (18%), or an *individual meeting* (17%). For those who know who their counselor is, the greatest increases from 2023 in the way students learned about their counselor was through *advisory/homeroom* and *classroom activity* (both showing a 12% increase).

How did you learn about your school counselor?



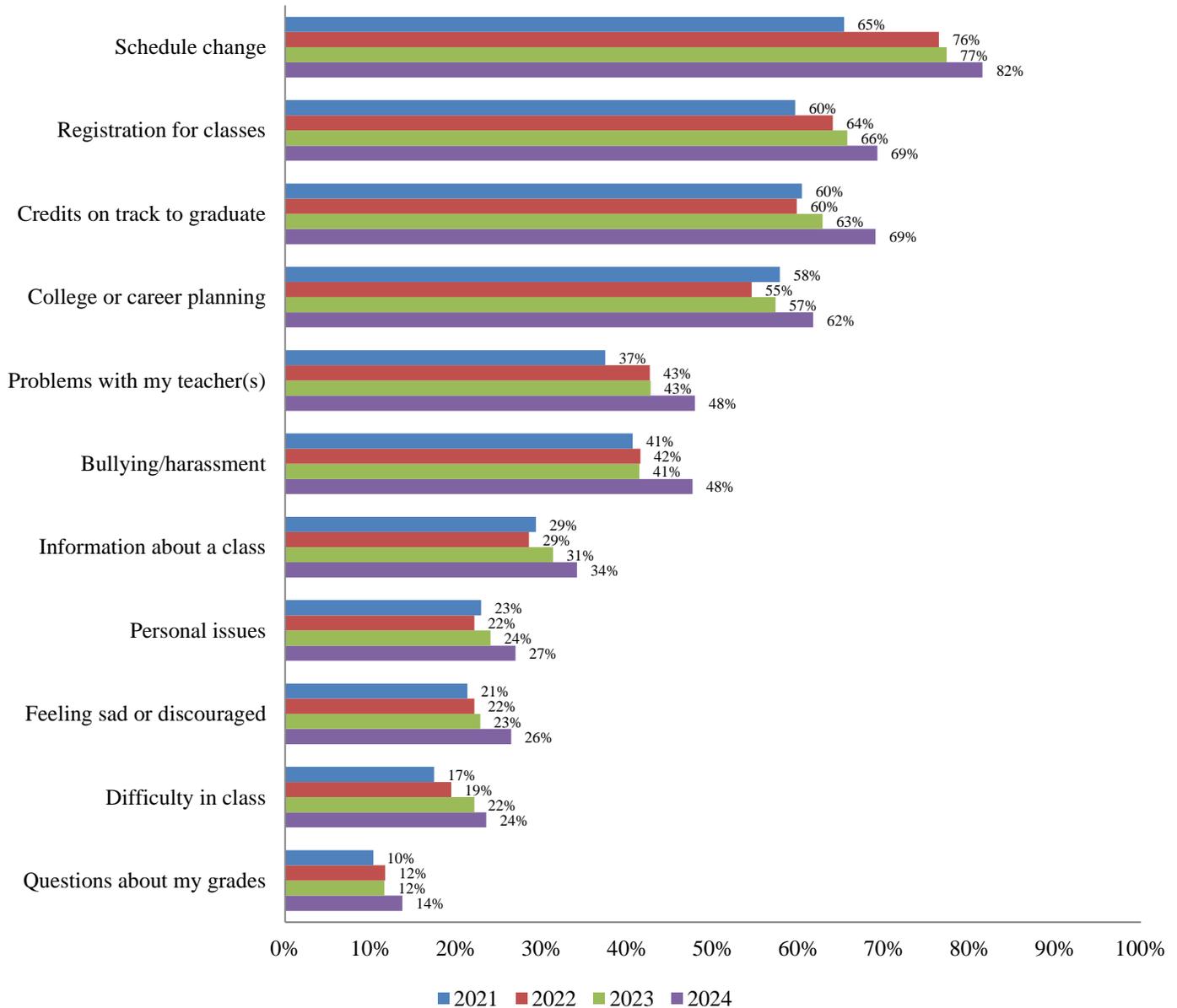
Meeting with counselor. The percentage of ninth grade students who reported having never met individually with their school counselor decreased by 14% since 2023. Three percent of respondents indicated they met individually with their counselor *7 or more times*. The percentage of students meeting with their counselor in the *1-2 times* range and the *3-4 times* range increased since last year, 12% and 2% respectively.

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



Concerns. Across all listed concerns for which ninth grade students indicated they would go to their school counselor, there was an increase from 2023 to 2024. The concerns for which students most frequently indicated they would go to their counselor included: *schedule change* (82%), *registration for classes* (69%), and *credits on track to graduate* (69%). Students were less likely to report that they would go to the school counselor for the following reasons: *questions about my grades* (14%), *difficulty in class* (24%), and *feeling sad or discouraged* (26%). The greatest changes from 2023 to 2024 in the percentage of students reporting concerns for which they would see their counselor were *bullying/harassment* (7% increase) and *credits on track to graduate* (6% increase).

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



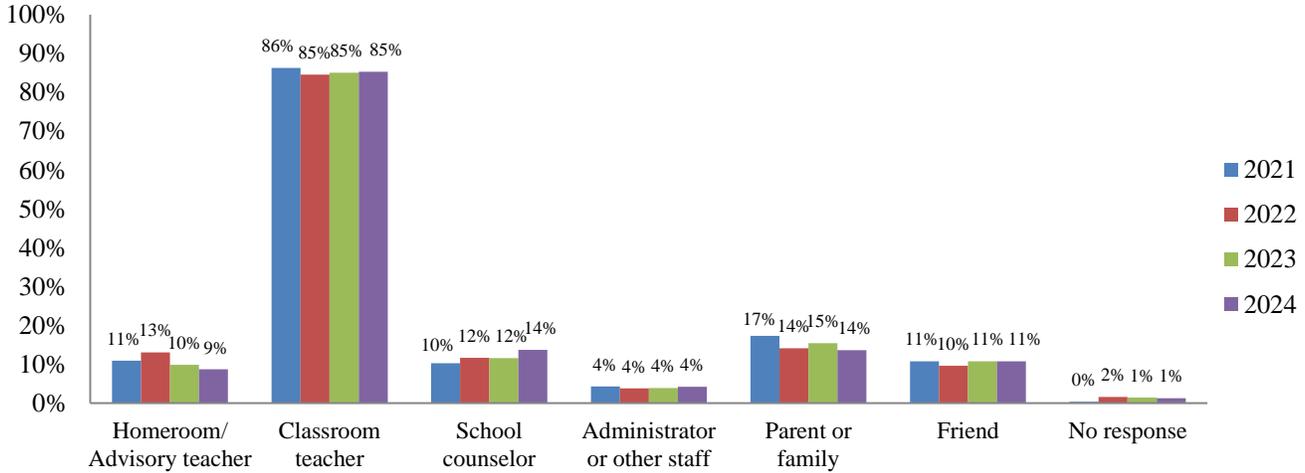
Note: For each of the concerns above, students were given several options of who they would go to, counselors being one of them. Students were allowed to select as many of the options they wanted for each concern, for example, homeroom teacher, classroom teacher, parent or family, and friend. Items in the graph are sorted from highest to lowest agreement for the current year.

Support for Concerns

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

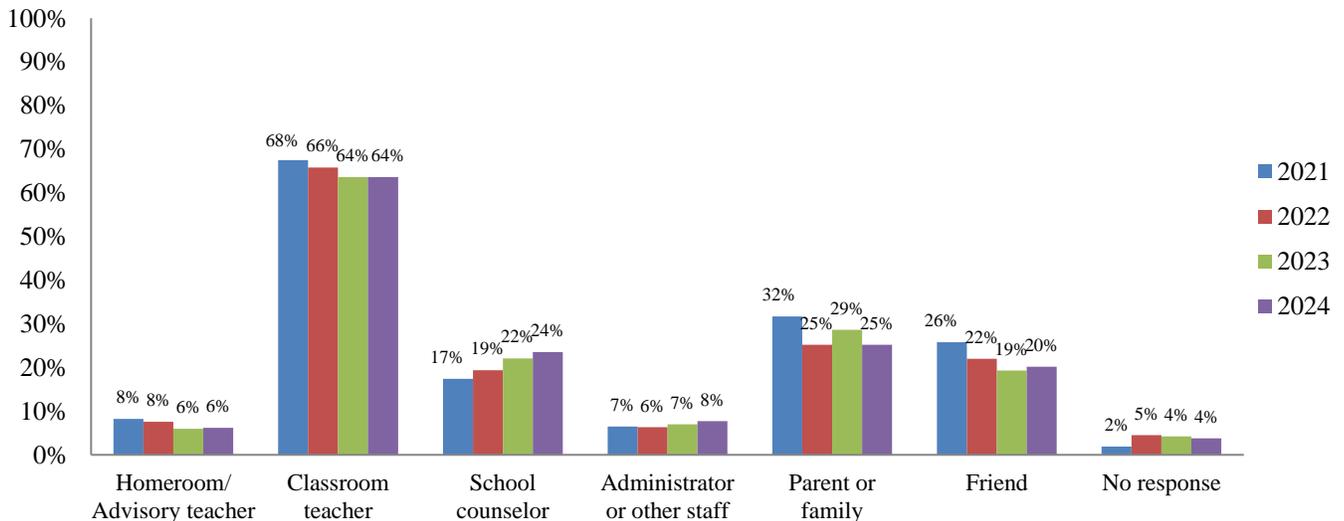
Questions about grades. Since the survey’s inception, students have most commonly reported they would go to their *classroom teacher* with questions about their grades (85% in 2024). More students reported they would go to a *parent or family member* or a *school counselor* (14%) for questions about their grades, than to a *friend* (11%), their *homeroom teacher/advisor* (9%), or a *school administrator or other staff* (4%).

Who students would go to to discuss: Questions about grades



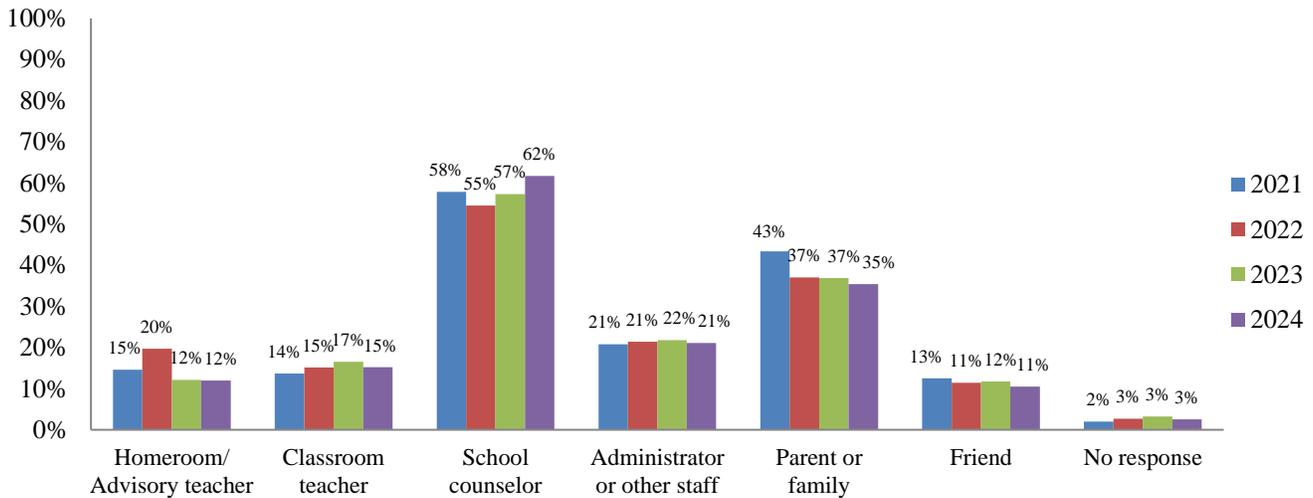
Difficulty in class. The majority of students (64%) reported they would go to a *classroom teacher* to discuss difficulty in class; this selection has steadily decreased by 7% since 2020. The percentage of students reporting that they would go to a *parent or family member* (25%) decreased by 4% since last year (29%). All other response options were chosen at the same or slightly higher (2% increase or less) rate as last year.

Who students would go to to discuss: Difficulty in class



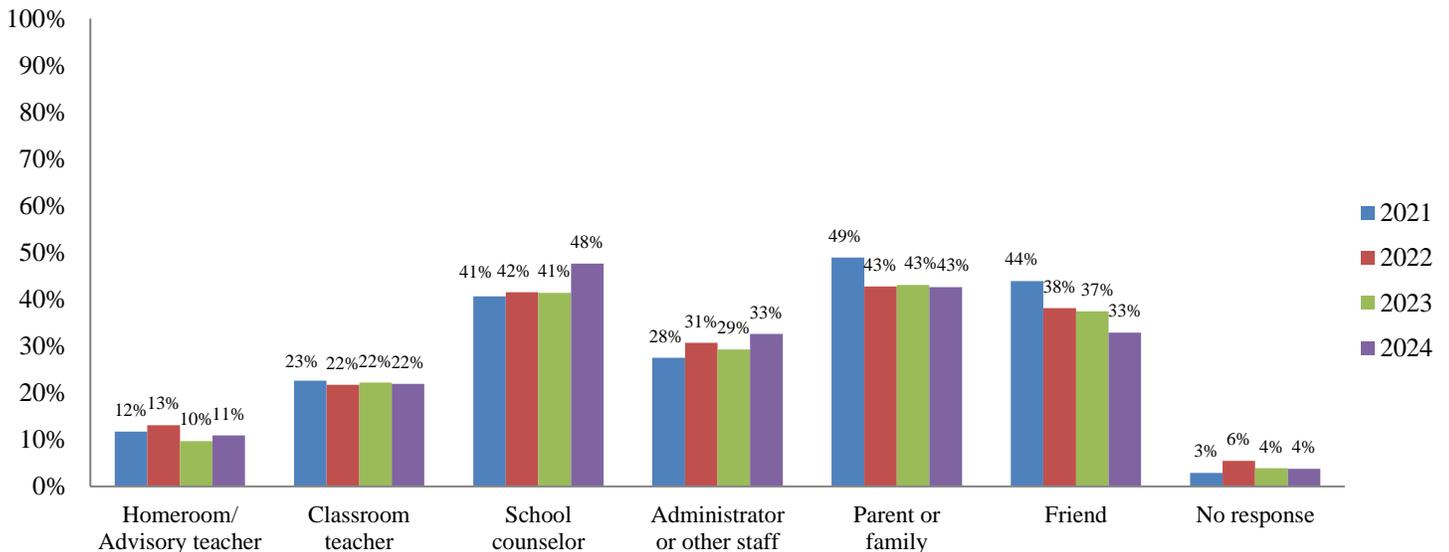
College or career planning. *School counselor* was the most commonly selected person to whom respondents would go to talk about college or career planning (62%); a 5% increase from last year. The next most common choices were a *parent or family member* (35%) and *administrator or other staff* (21%). The percentage of students responding that they would go to a *parent or family member* (35%) or a *classroom teacher* (15%) both decreased by 2% since last year. Twelve percent of students reported they would go to a *homeroom /advisory teacher* for college or career planning, consistent with 2023.

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



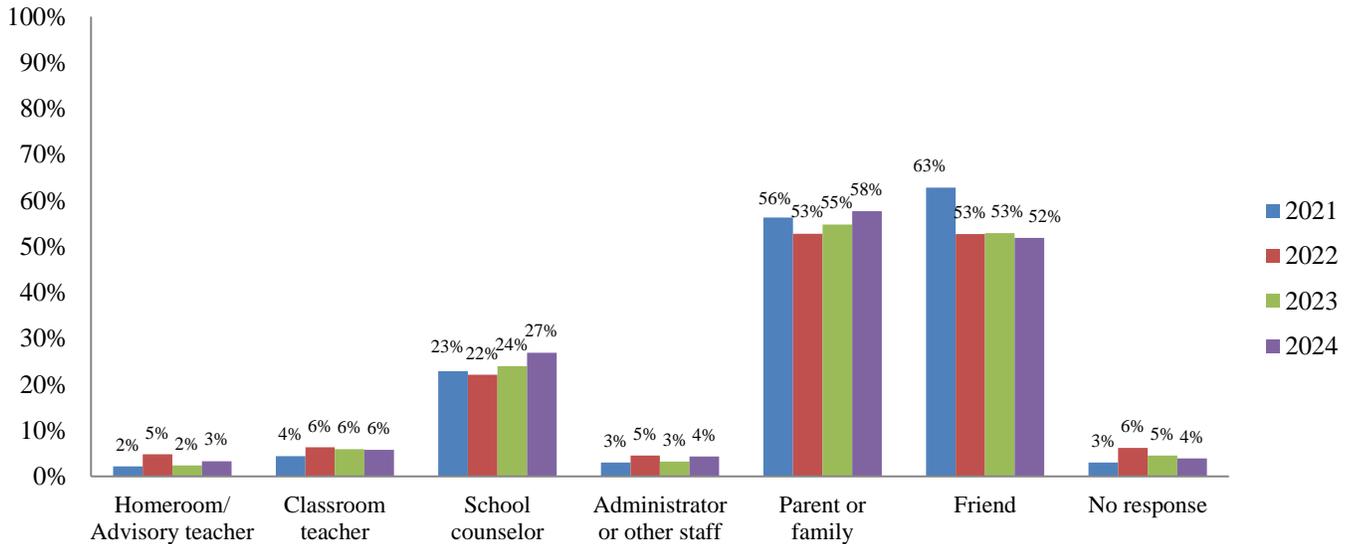
Bullying/harassment. For the first time in survey history, students reported that they would go to a *school counselor* to discuss bullying or harassment at higher rates than any other person presented as an option on the survey. Since 2023, there was a 7% increase in the percentage of students who reported they would go to a *school counselor* to discuss bullying or harassment and a 4% increase in the rate of students reporting they would go to an *administrator or other staff*. There was a 4% decrease in the rate of students who reported they would go to a friend. All other rates remained within 1% of what was reported last year.

Who students would go to to discuss: Bullying/harassment



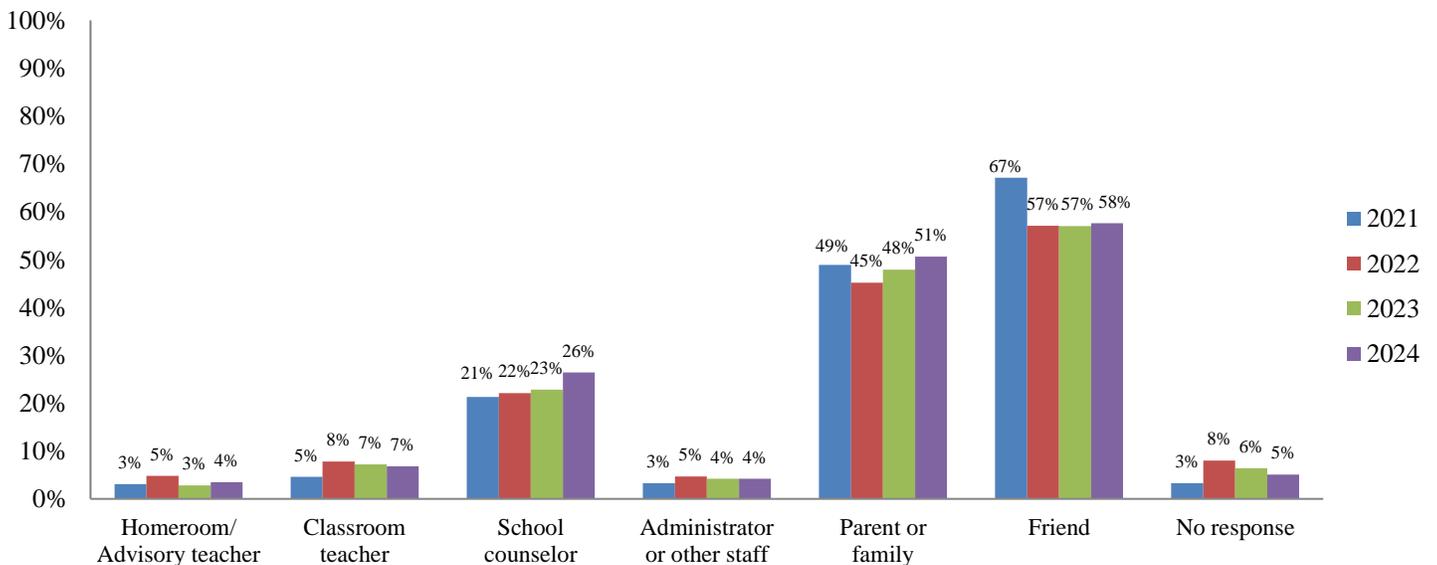
Personal issues. The highest percentage of students reported that they would go to a *parent or family member* (58%) to discuss personal issues, followed closely by a *friend* (52%). Students reporting they would go to a friend to discuss personal issues has returned to levels similar to 2019 and earlier, after increases seen across the pandemic years. The percentage of students reporting that they would go to a *parent or family member* or a *school counselor* to discuss personal issues has been steadily increasing over the past three years, both showing a 3% increase since last year. All other response options stayed within 1% of last year’s rates, with *homeroom teacher/advisor* remaining the least common choice for students.

Who students would go to to discuss: Personal issues



Feeling sad or discouraged. Fifty-eight percent of students reported they would go to a *friend* to discuss feeling sad or discouraged. Fifty-one percent of students reported they would go to a *parent or family member*, an increase of 3% since last year. Students reporting they would go to a friend to discuss feeling sad or discouraged has returned to levels similar to 2019 and earlier, after increases seen across the pandemic years. Twenty-six percent of students reported they would go to a *school counselor*, an increase of 3% over last year and 5% over the past four years. All other options remained within 1% of last year’s rates.

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

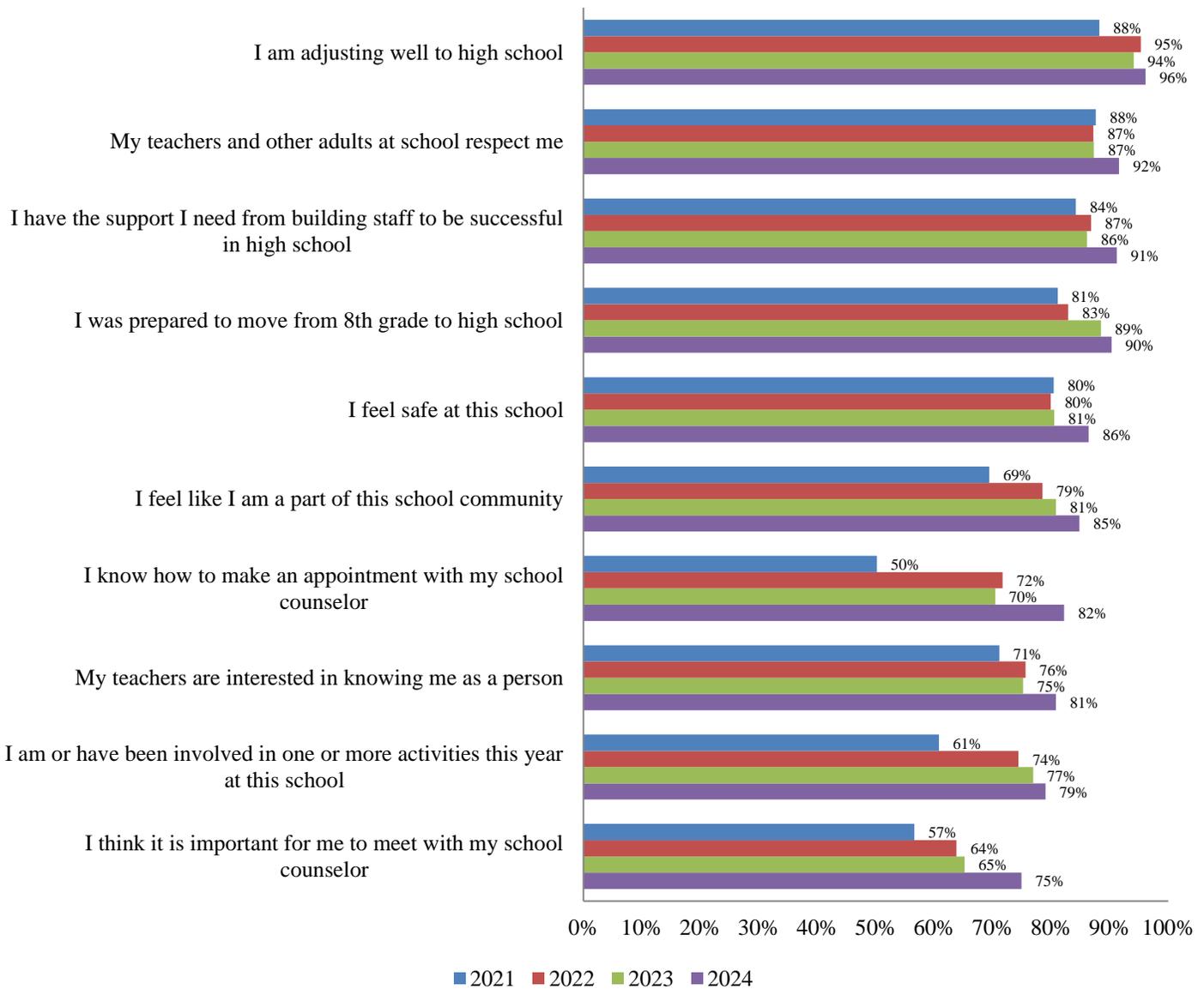


Perceptions of the Ninth Grade Experience

Ninety-six percent of students agreed with the statement *I am adjusting well to high school*. Since the inception of the survey, students' agreement with this item has been consistently high, ranging from 94% to 96%, with the exception of 2021, when agreement dipped to 88%. Since 2023, agreement with all 10 items increased by at least 1%, with three items increasing by one to two percent, five items increasing by four to six percent, and two items increasing by 10 percent or more.

The item *I know how to make an appointment with my school counselor* showed the greatest increase from a 70% agreement rate in 2023 to 82% in 2024, and the item *I think it is important to meet with my counselor* increased by 10 percentage points to 75% in 2024. Both of these items have now reached the highest agreement rate in survey history by 10 percentage points.

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

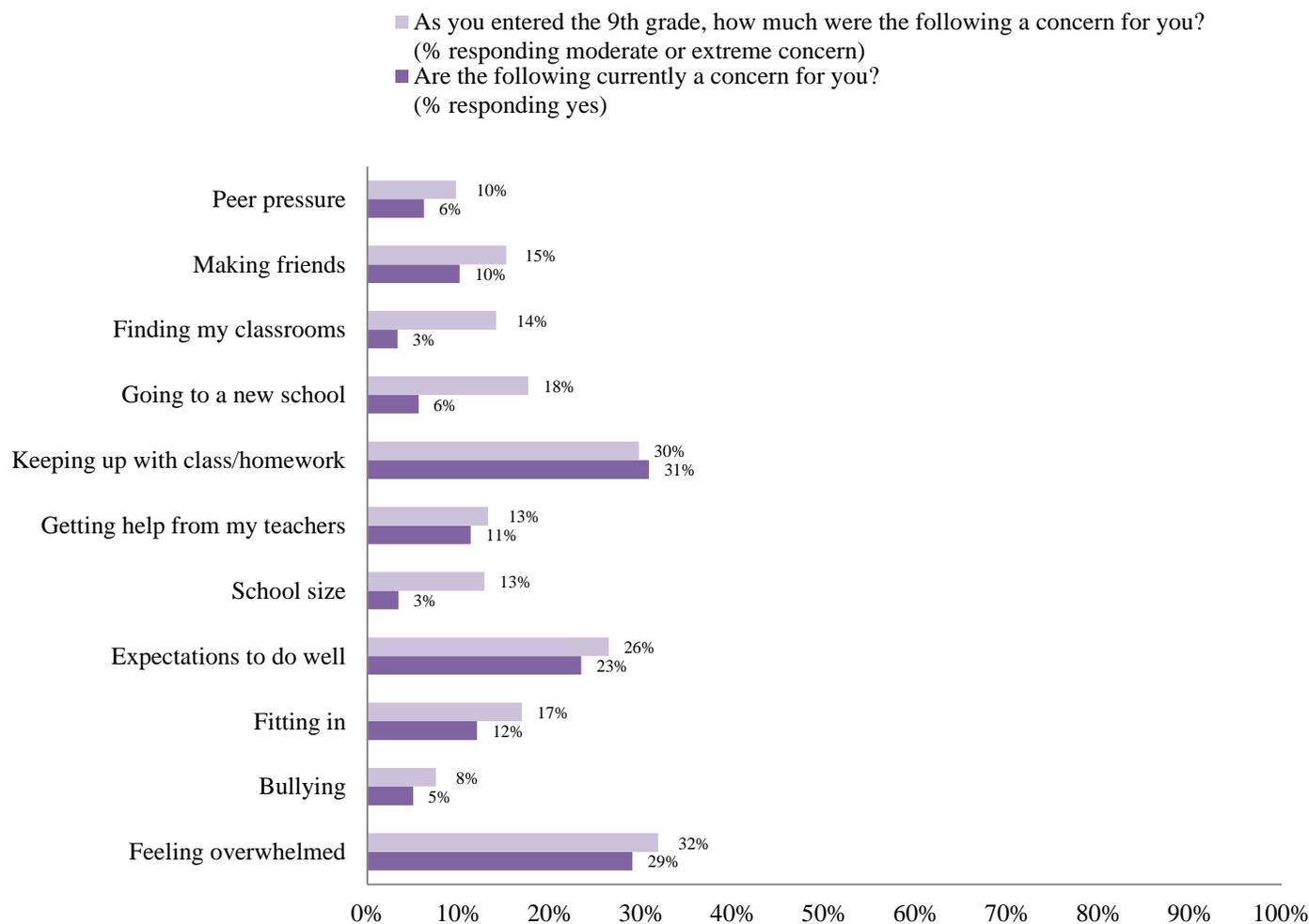


Note: Items in the graph are sorted from highest to lowest agreement for the current year. Agreement with these items in 2021 may have been particularly impacted by the 2020-21 learning model changes associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

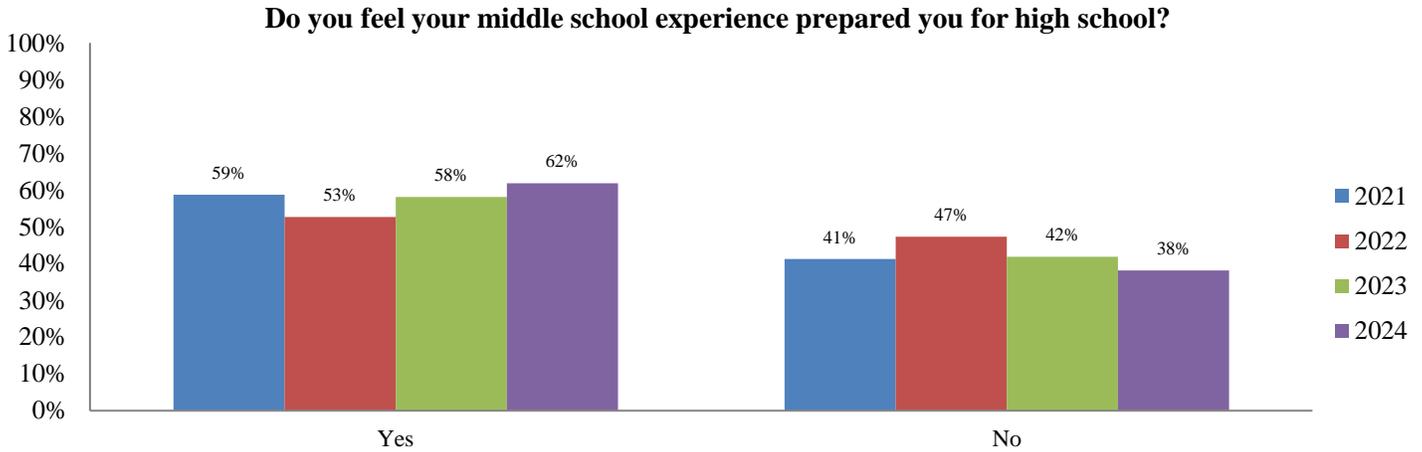
Changes to concerns entering high school. Ninth grade students were asked at the end of the year to think back to the beginning of the school year regarding whether they had certain concerns upon entering ninth grade, as well as report whether these were still concerns at the end of the year. Ninth graders expressed having less of a concern for 10 of the 11 items at the end of the year than at the beginning. Students reported being slightly more concerned at the end of the school year than when starting the school year about *keeping up with class/homework* (31% at the end of the year compared to 30% at the beginning). The items with the lowest levels of concern when entering the ninth grade were *peer pressure* (10%) and *bullying* (8%). They were least concerned at the end of the year about the following: *peer pressure* (6%), *going to a new school* (6%), *bullying* (5%), *finding my classrooms* (3%), and *school size* (3%). These were the items with the least concern at the end of the year in 2023 as well.

The largest changes in concerns from the beginning to the end of the school year were those items centered on the physical unknowns of a new school. These concerns included *school size* which dropped by 10%, *finding my classrooms* which dropped by 11%, and *going to a new school* which dropped by 12% by the end of ninth grade. The items that were most concerning to students at the beginning and end of the year were *expectations to do well*, *keeping up with class/homework*, and *feeling overwhelmed*.

Comparing level of concern from beginning to end of ninth grade

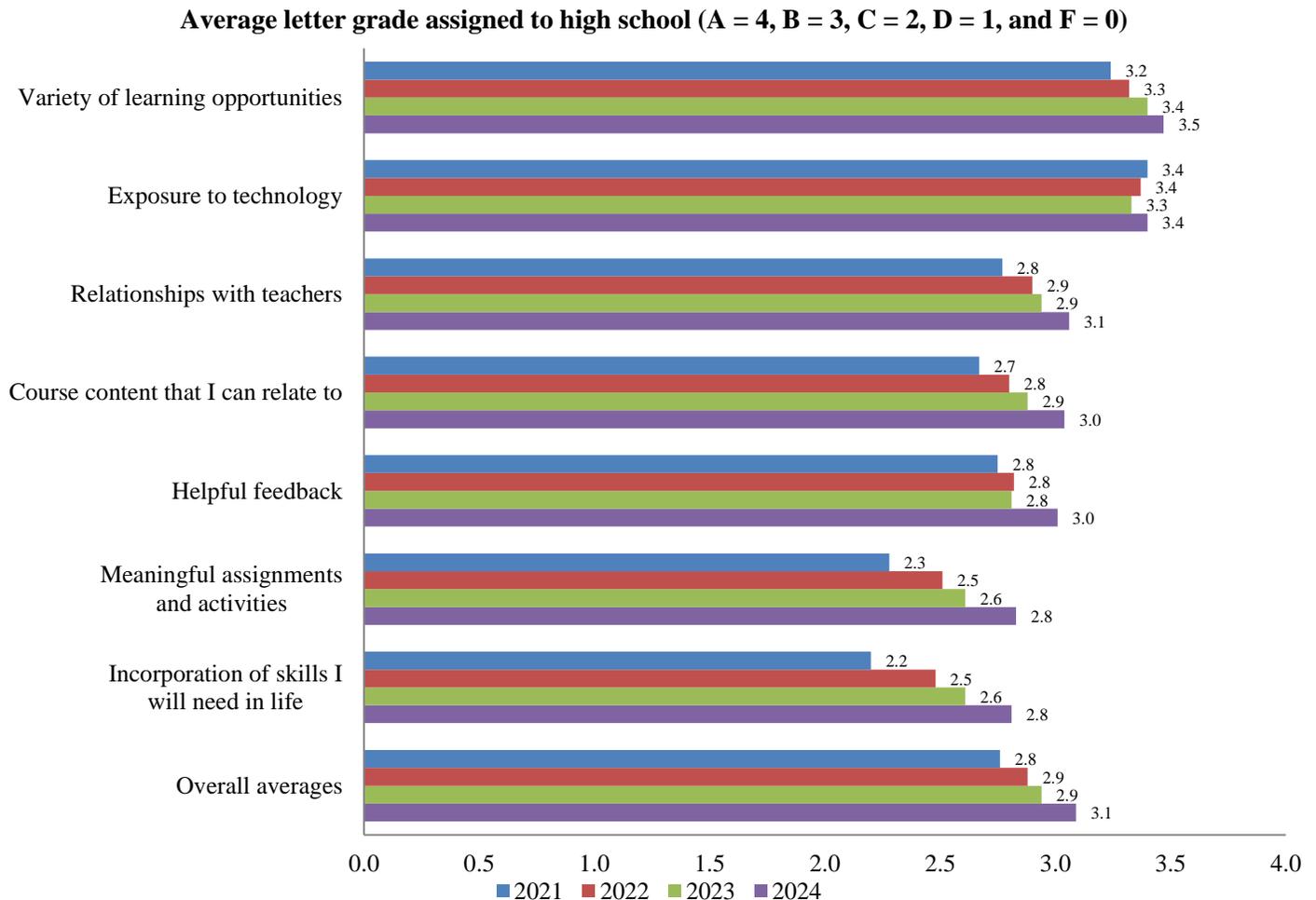


Preparation for high school. Compared to 2023, there was a 4% increase in the percentage of students who reported that they felt their middle school experience prepared them for high school. This is the highest rate in survey history.



Rating areas of high school. On average, students rated the quality of services provided at their high schools as a 3.1 (equivalent to a B). Grades assigned to each area increased from last year to this year.

In 2024, students rated *variety of learning opportunities* higher than all other items, consistent with 2023. The ratings of *incorporation of skills I will need in life* and *meaningful assignments and activities* were the lowest among items, but have increased over the past three years reaching the highest level in survey history in 2024.



Note: Items in the graph are sorted from highest to lowest rating for the current year.

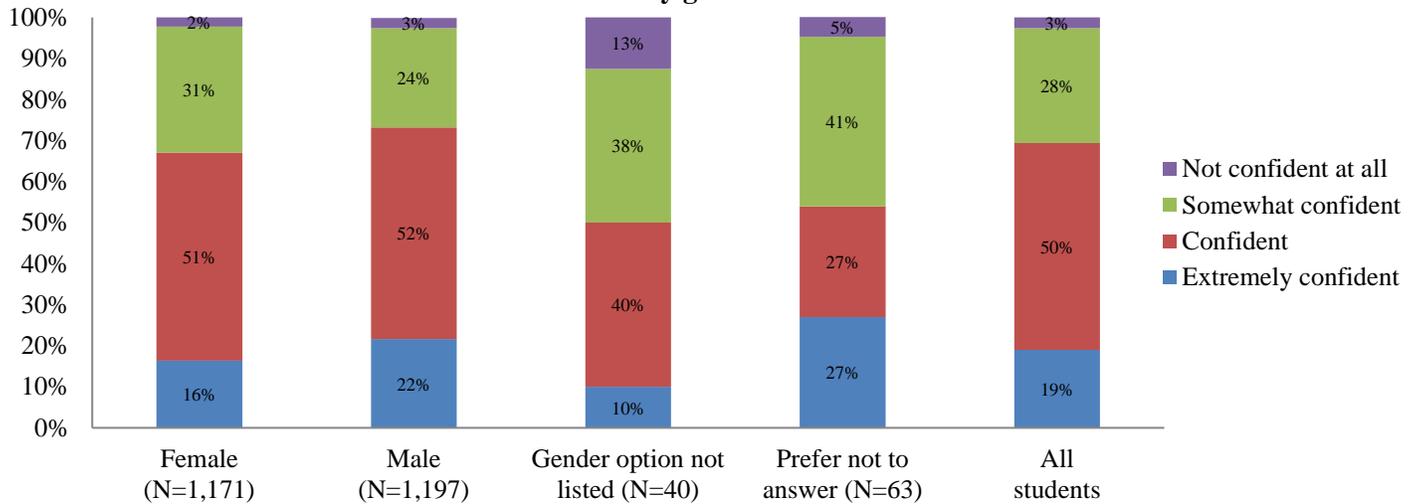
Comparisons by Student Group

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

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

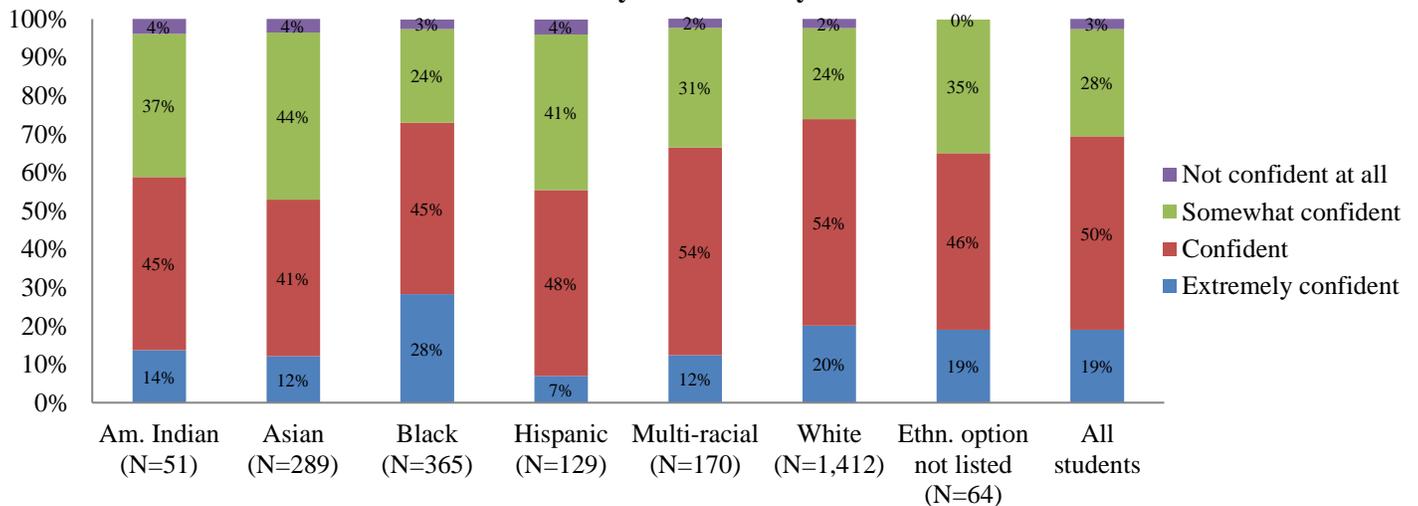
Considering gender, students who identify as female or with a gender option not listed reported feeling significantly less confident, while students who identify as male reported feeling significantly more confident than students overall.

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



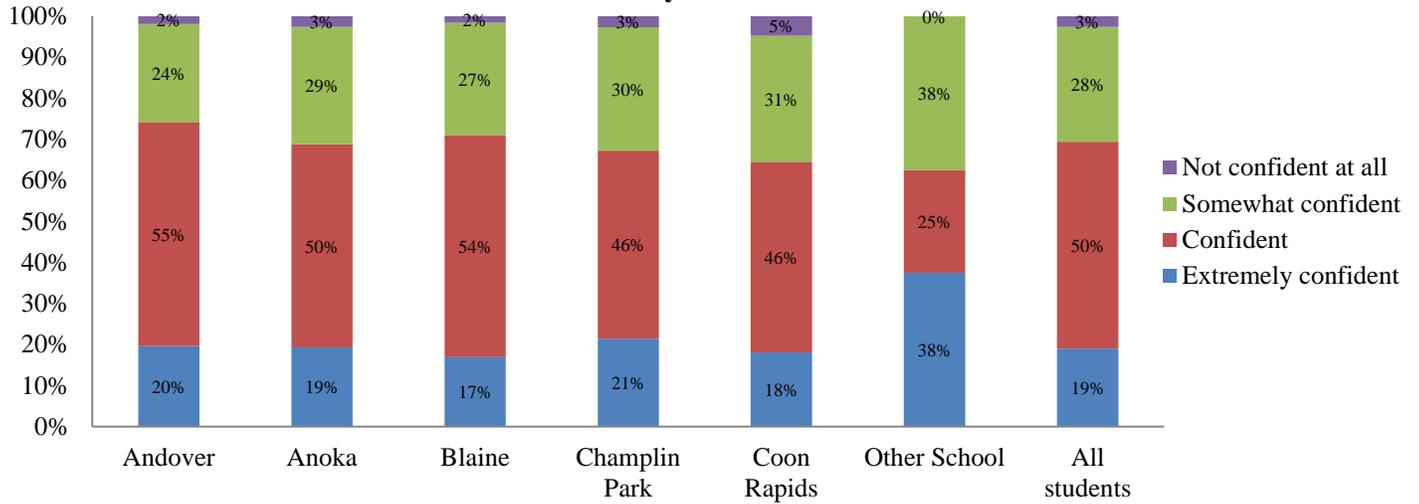
When focused on race/ethnicity, students who identify as Asian or Hispanic reported feeling significantly less confident while students who identify as Black or White reported feeling significantly more confident than students overall.

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



When focusing on school, students attending Coon Rapids High School reported statistically significantly lower confidence in achieving their educational goals than students overall.

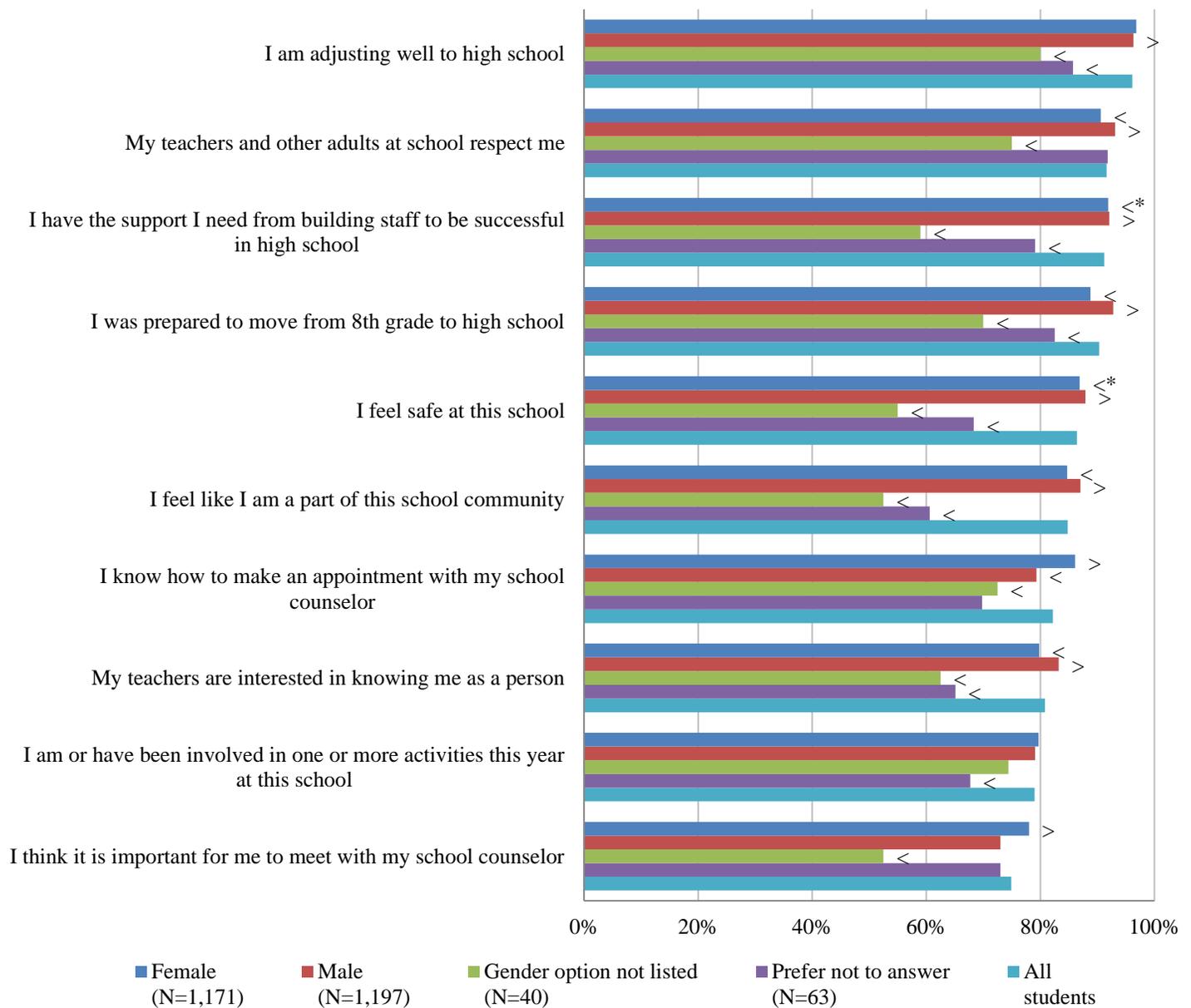
**How confident do you feel that you will achieve your ultimate educational goal?
by school**



Perceptions of ninth grade experience. When examining differences in students' perception of ninth grade, there were statistically significant differences in the areas of gender, race/ethnicity, and school. Symbols on graphs in this section indicate for which items student groups are statistically significantly different than the "all students" group. A "<" sign indicates the statement for that student group was significantly lower than students overall, and a ">" sign indicates the statement for that student group was significantly higher than students overall. Items in each graphic regarding perceptions of ninth grade experience are sorted from highest to lowest for all student agreement for the current year.

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

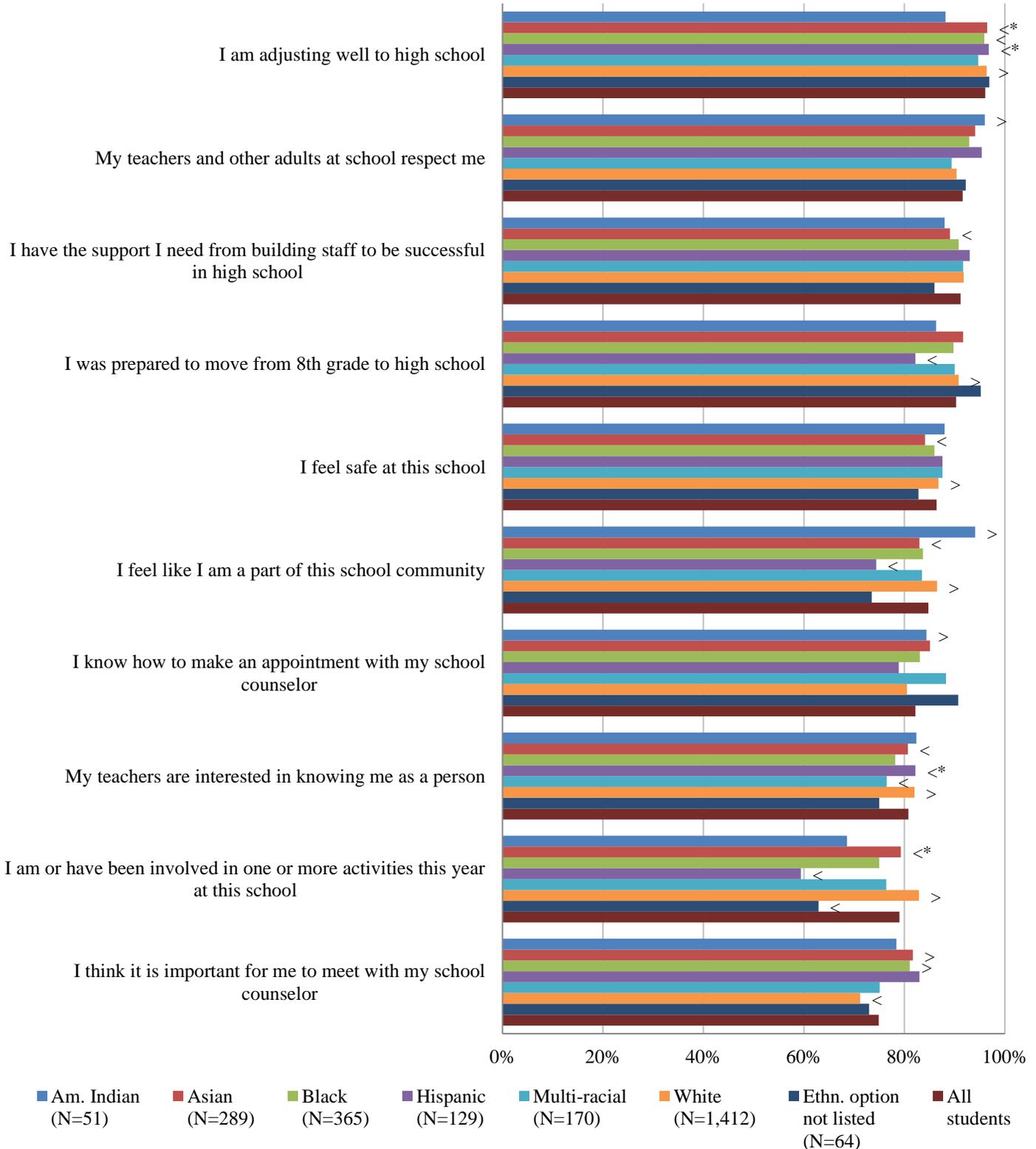
**When thinking about your ninth grade year...
(% who strongly agree or agree) by gender**



* Significance is aligned with the mean, not the percent agreement.

Regarding self-reported racial/ethnic background, students who identify as Asian and Hispanic reported significantly lower agreement (denoted with “<”) than students overall with six of 10 and five of 10 items, respectively. Students who identify as American Indian or White reported significantly higher agreement (denoted with “>”) than students overall with three of 10 and six of the 10 items, respectively.

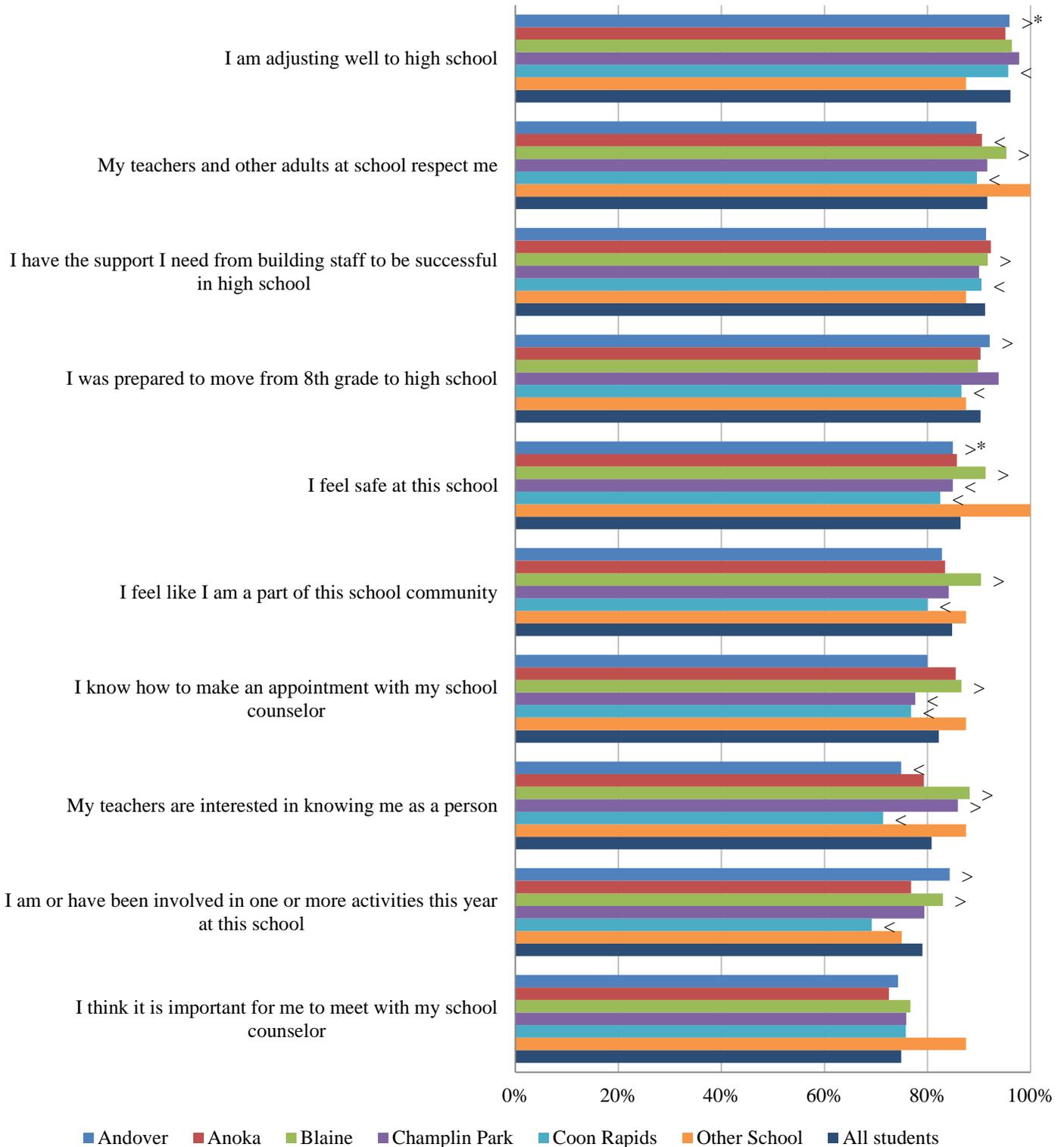
**When thinking about your ninth grade year...
(% who strongly agree or agree) by race/ethnicity**



* Significance is aligned with the mean, not the percent agreement.

When examining responses by school, students attending Coon Rapids High School reported significantly lower agreement than students overall with nine of the 10 items (denoted with “<”). Students attending Andover High School reported significantly higher agreement (denoted with “>”) than students overall with four of the 10 items, while Blaine High School students reported significantly higher agreement with seven out of 10 items.

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

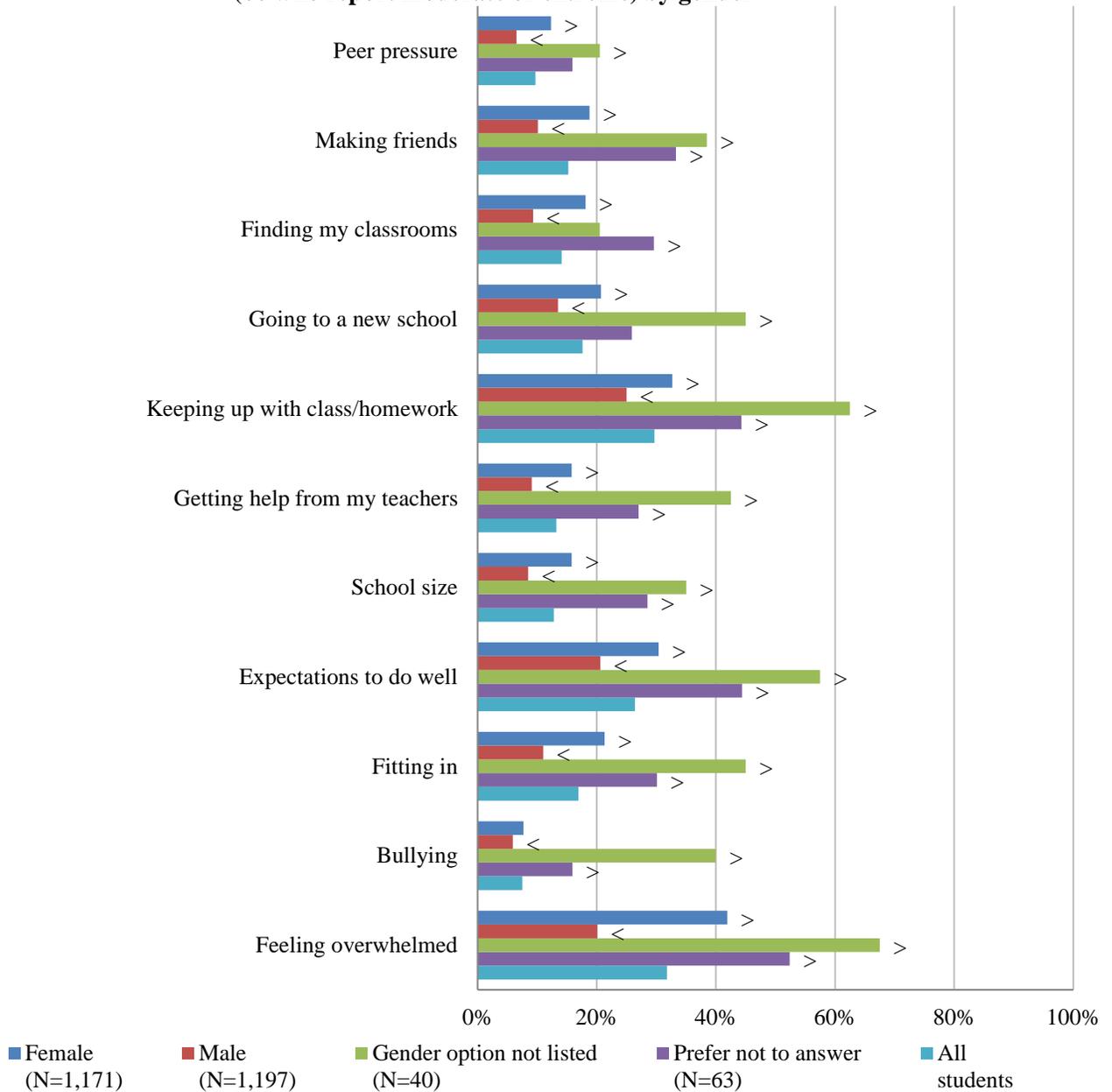


* Significance is aligned with the mean, not the percent agreement.

Concerns entering high school. When examining differences in students’ level of concern thinking back to when they entered high school, there were statistically significant differences related to gender, race/ethnicity, and school. Symbols on graphs in this section indicate which items are statistically significantly different than the “all students” group. A “<” sign indicates the area of concern for that student group was significantly lower than students overall, and a “>” sign indicates the area of concern for that student group was significantly higher than students overall.

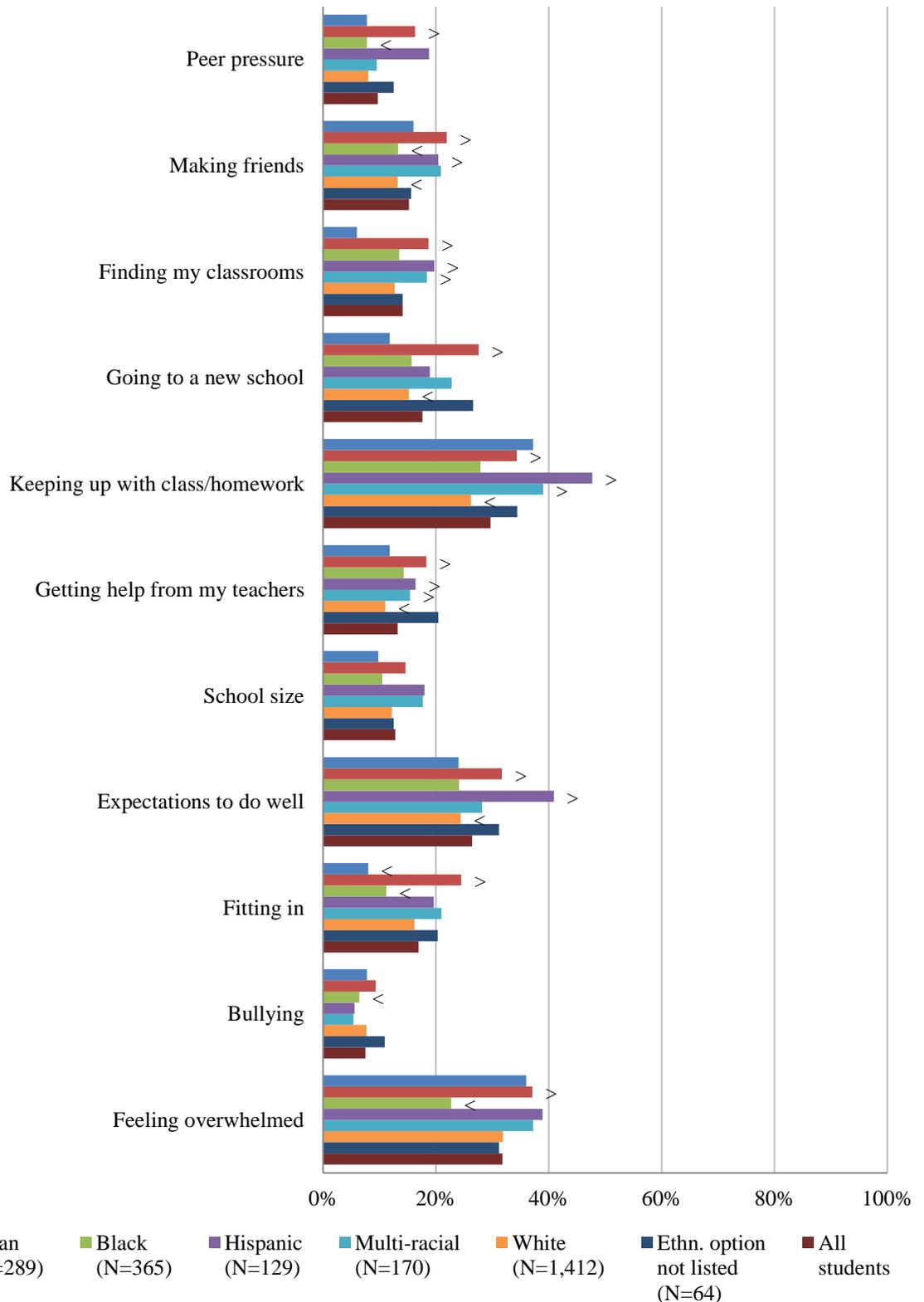
Considering gender, students who identify as female or with a gender option not listed reported significantly greater concern than students overall regarding 10 out of 11 items, and students who preferred not to indicate their gender reported significantly greater concern on nine of the 11 items. Students who identify as male reported significantly less concern than students overall for all 11 items.

**Percentage of students reporting concern when entering high school
(% who report moderate or extreme) by gender**



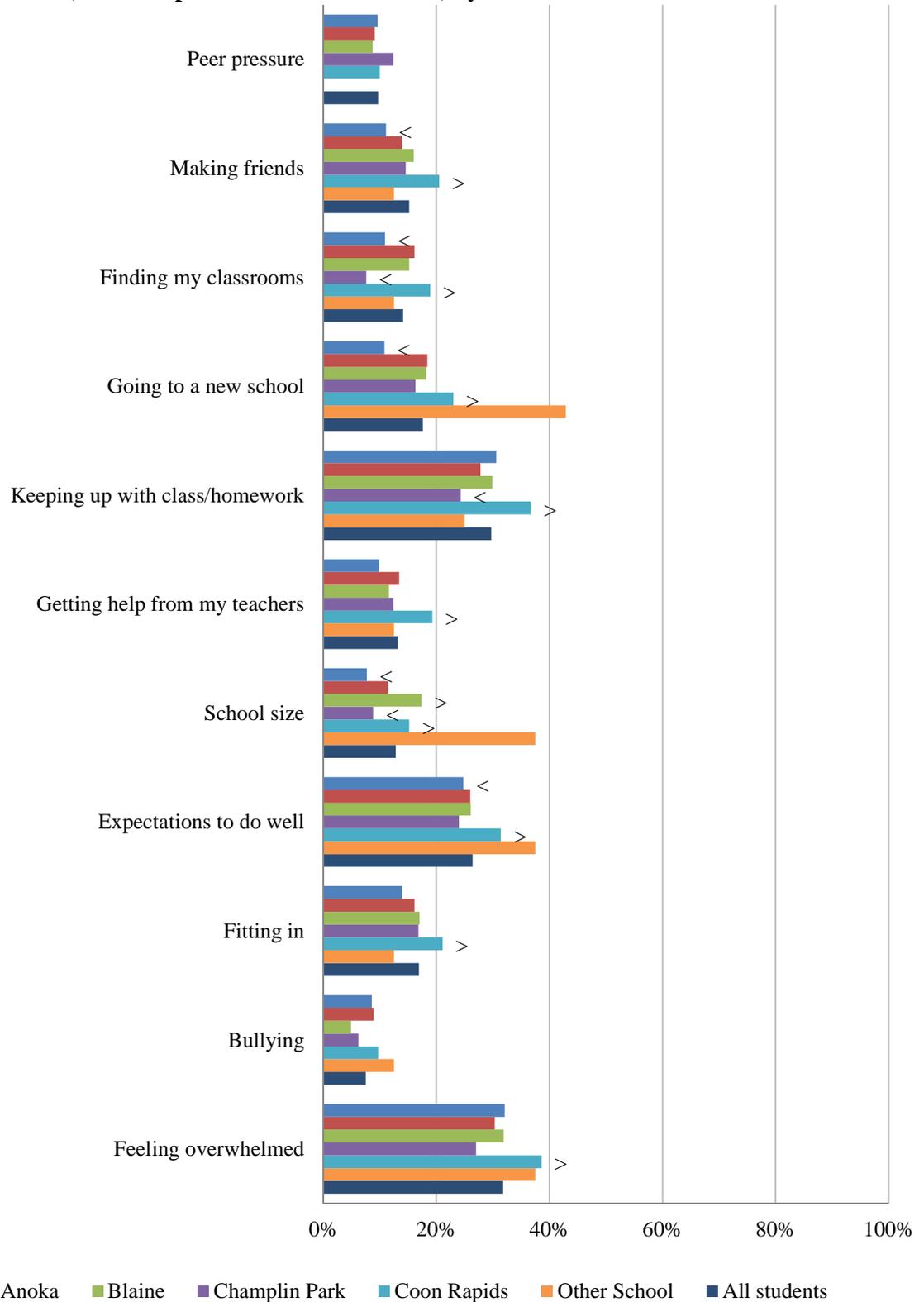
Regarding self-reported racial/ethnic background, students who identify as Asian or Hispanic reported significantly greater concern when entering high school (denoted with “>”) than students overall regarding nine of 11 and five of 11 items, respectively. Students who identify as Black or White both reported significantly less concern (denoted with “<”) than students overall on five of the 11 items.

**Percentage of students reporting concern when entering high school
(% who report moderate or extreme) by race/ethnicity**



When examining responses by school, students attending Coon Rapids High School reported significantly greater concern when entering high school (denoted with “>”) than students overall on nine of 11 items, while students attending Andover High school and Champlin Park High School reported significantly less concern (denoted with “<”) than students overall on five of the 11 items and three of 11 items, respectively.

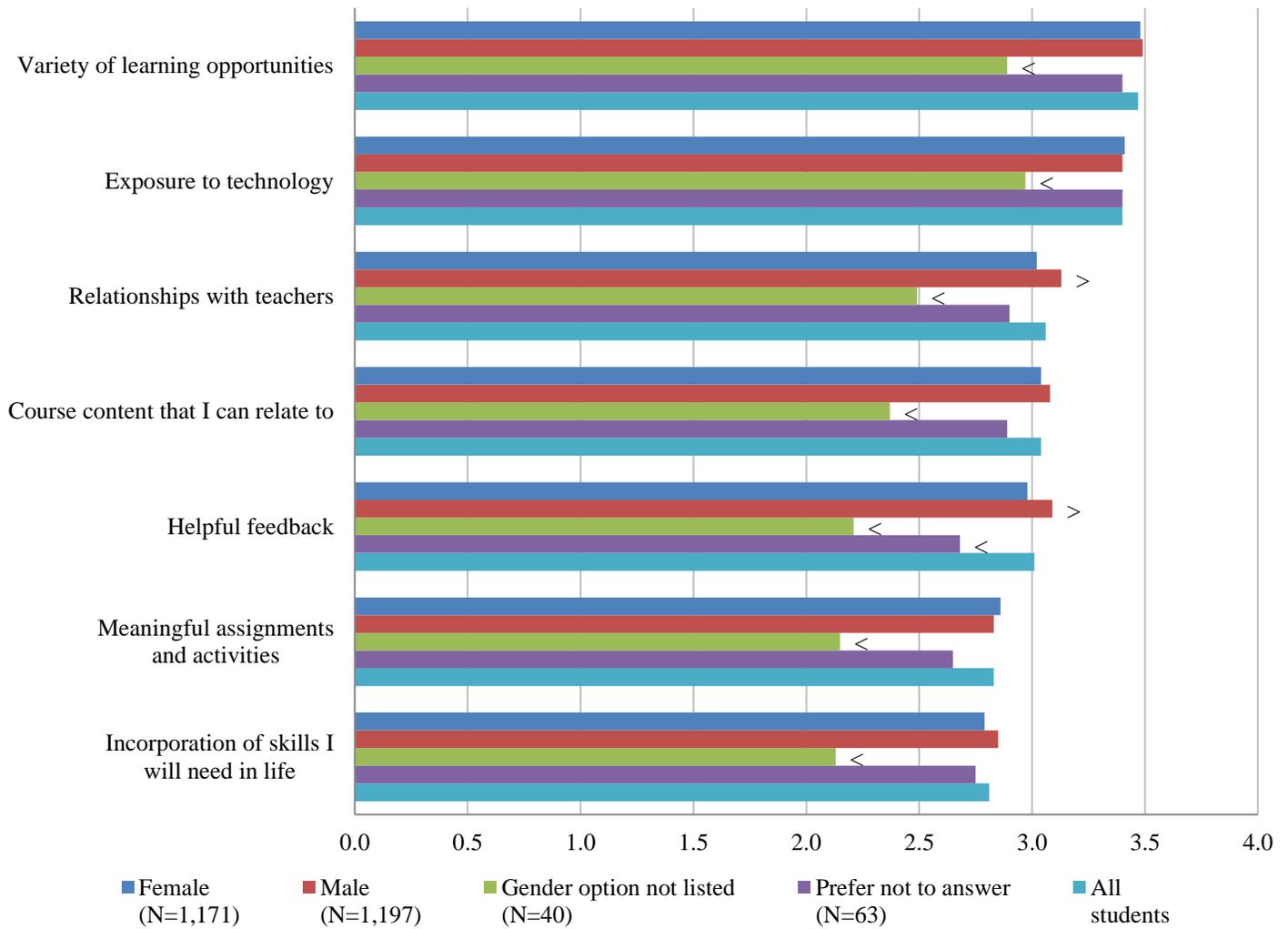
**Percentage of students reporting concern when entering high school
(% who report moderate or extreme) by school**



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

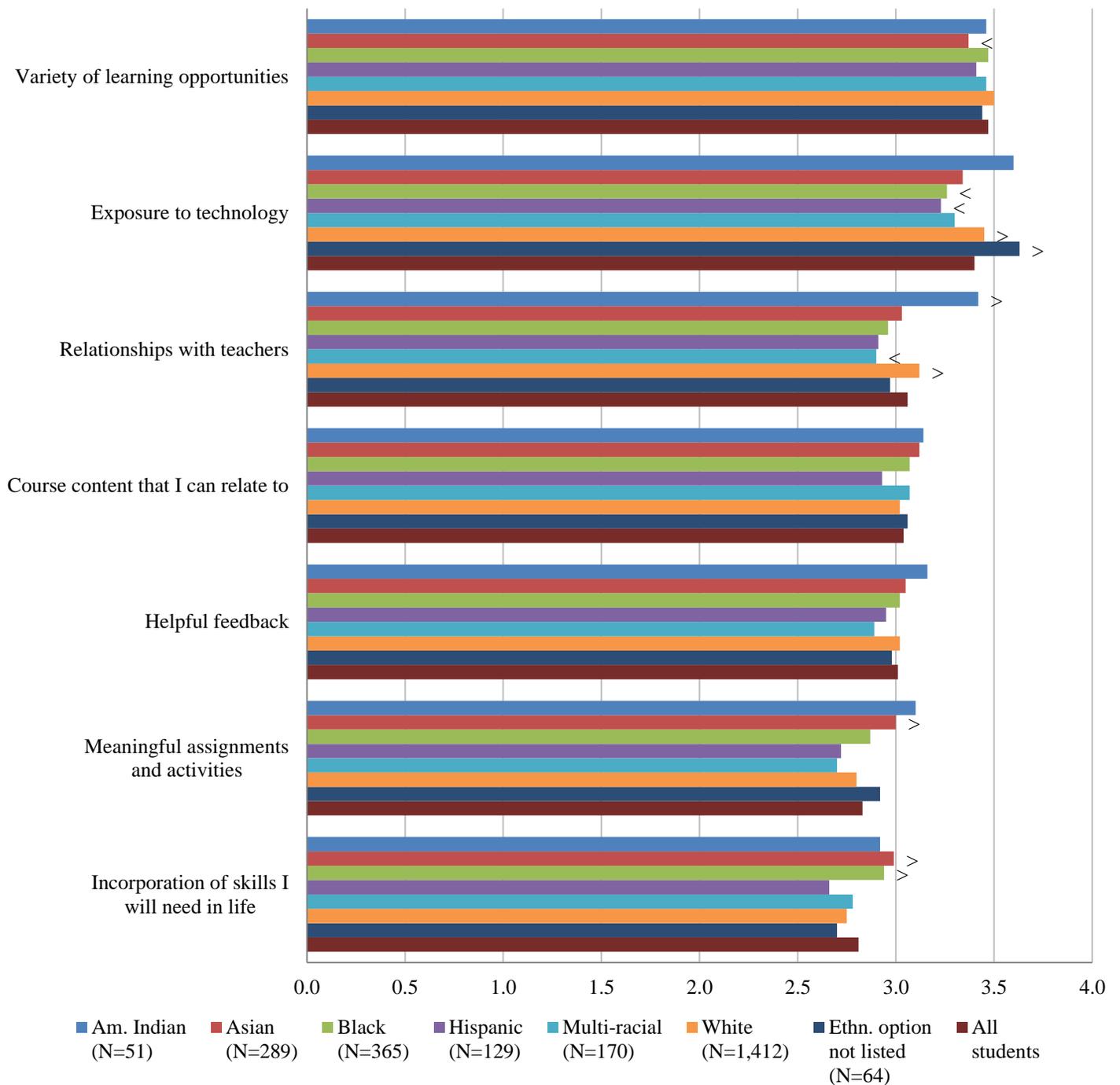
Regarding self-reported gender, students who identify with a gender option not listed reported significantly lower ratings of their school than students overall in all seven areas. Students who identify as male reported significantly higher ratings for their high school than students overall in two of the seven areas.

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



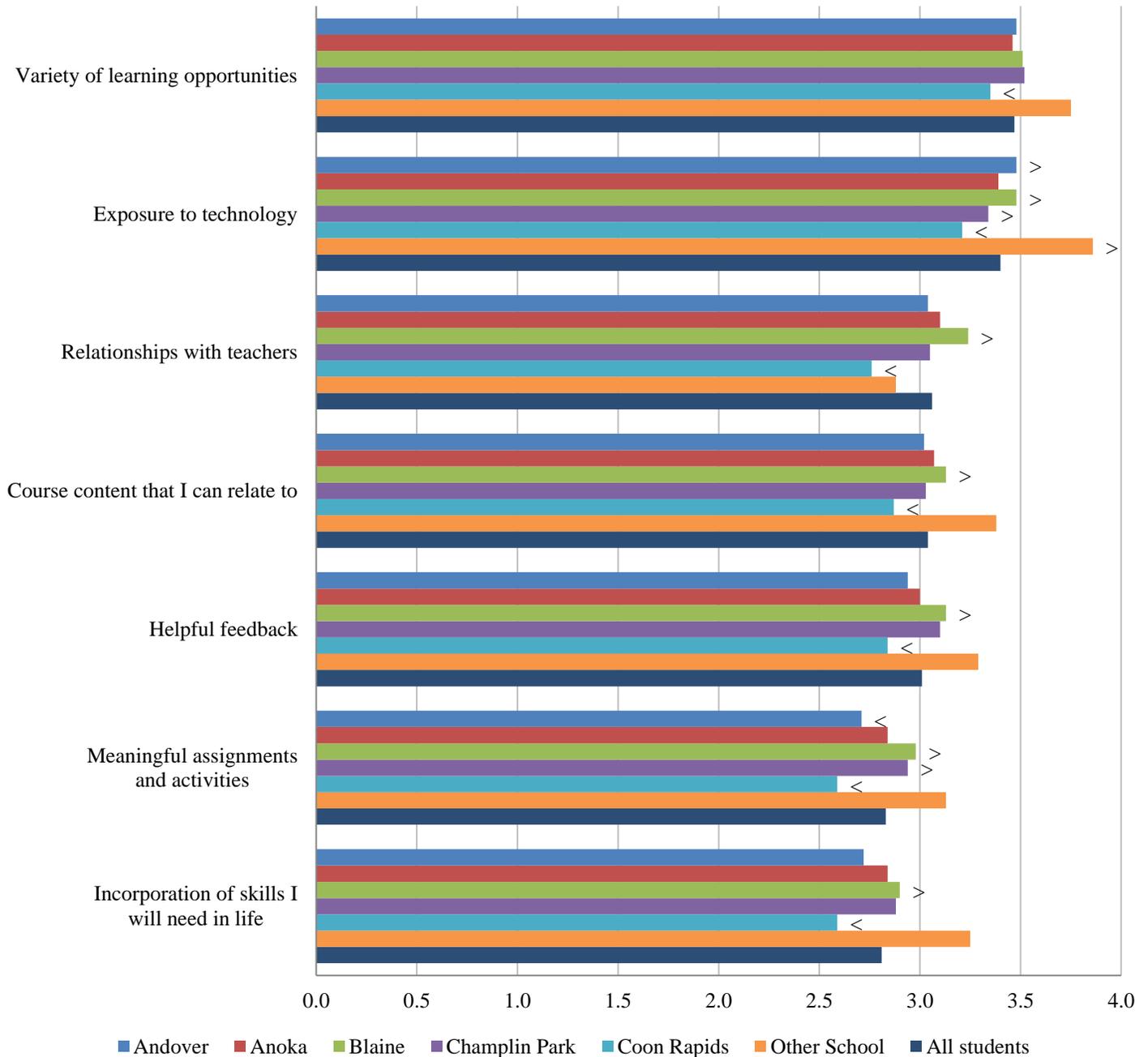
Regarding self-reported race/ethnicity, both students who identify as Asian and White reported significantly higher ratings of their school than students overall in two of seven areas.

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



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

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



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