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# Ninth Grade Student Survey Report 2015

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Anoka-Hennepin  
School District

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Prepared by the Department of  
Research, Evaluation, and Testing

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# Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Key Messages .....	4
Findings.....	5

## Introduction

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

This year is the fourth year in which the Ninth Grade Student Survey was administered to all students finishing their ninth grade year. Teachers administered the survey during their advisory class between March 18 and May 22, 2015. Students generally take 15-30 minutes to complete the anonymous survey. The questionnaire consists of 12 main items relating to students':

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

Representing each high school in the district, 2,544 students completed the survey. Students were evenly distributed across both genders. Also, students self-reported their ethnic background as the following:

- 1.6% American Indian
- 8.6% Asian
- 3.8% Hispanic
- 8.3% Black
- 68.7% White
- 7.1% Multi-racial
- 1.9% No response

This summary aggregates student responses for a selected number of items from the survey.

## Key Messages

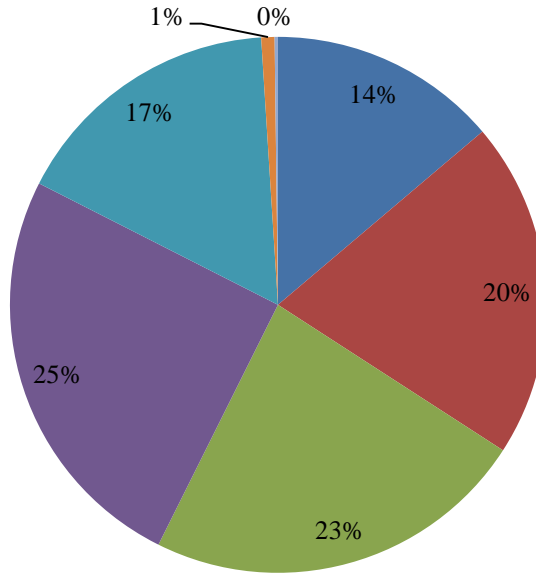
Illustrated in the graphs that follow.

- There were 2,544 ninth grade students who completed the Ninth Grade Student Survey in 2015.
- Approximately 85% of the ninth grade students reported that their highest level of educational aspiration included obtaining a 4-year degree or higher. This is up 6% from 2013. In general, students with higher educational aspirations were more confident in reaching their goals.
  - Asian students report feeling significantly less confident in reaching their educational goals than 9<sup>th</sup> grade students overall, whereas Black students report feeling significantly more confident in reaching their educational goals than 9<sup>th</sup> grade students overall.
- Most students learned about their school counselor through orientation, advisory/advisement/homeroom, or an individual meeting. There were 19% of students who reported not knowing who their counselor was, down from 23% in 2013-14.
- Thinking about their ninth grade year, 96% of students reported feeling well adjusted to high school, 90% of students reported feeling prepared to move from 8<sup>th</sup> grade to high school, and 88% of students report feeling safe at their school. Consistent with last year's data, these were the items with the highest level of agreement.
  - While 85% of students agree that they have the support they need from building staff to be successful in high school, only 70% of students agree that teachers are interested in them as a person.
- Ninth grade students were more concerned at the end of the year than upon entering the ninth grade in regards to keeping up with class/homework and expectations to do well.
  - The items with the lowest levels of concern when entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade were peer pressure and bullying. These items remained among the lowest concerns at the end of the year as well. This was consistent across ethnic groups.
  - Female students reported feeling significantly more concerned than male students on all eleven items *as they entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade*. Female students become slightly less concerned than male students at the end of 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the areas of finding their classrooms, going to a new school, and school size.
- Students rated the overall quality of the services provided with a 2.6 (which is equivalent to a C+). This has remained relatively constant over the four years of administration.
  - When assigning a letter grade to each of the seven areas assessed, female students rated four the areas significantly lower than male students including relationships with teachers, course content they can relate to, helpful feedback, and incorporation of life skills.

## Findings

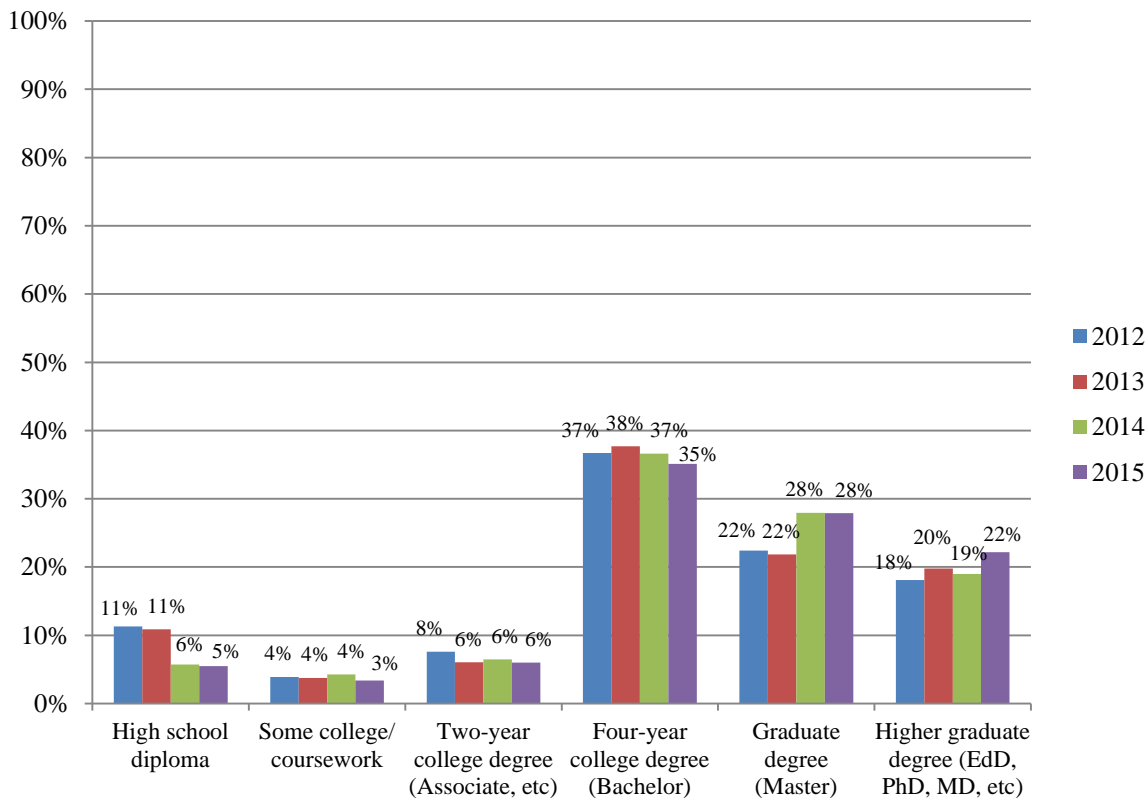
### High School Enrollment of Respondents

- Andover 14%
- Anoka 20%
- Blaine 23%
- Champlin Park 25%
- Coon Rapids 17%
- Other 1%
- No Response 0.2%



There were 2,544 ninth grade students who completed the survey in 2015.

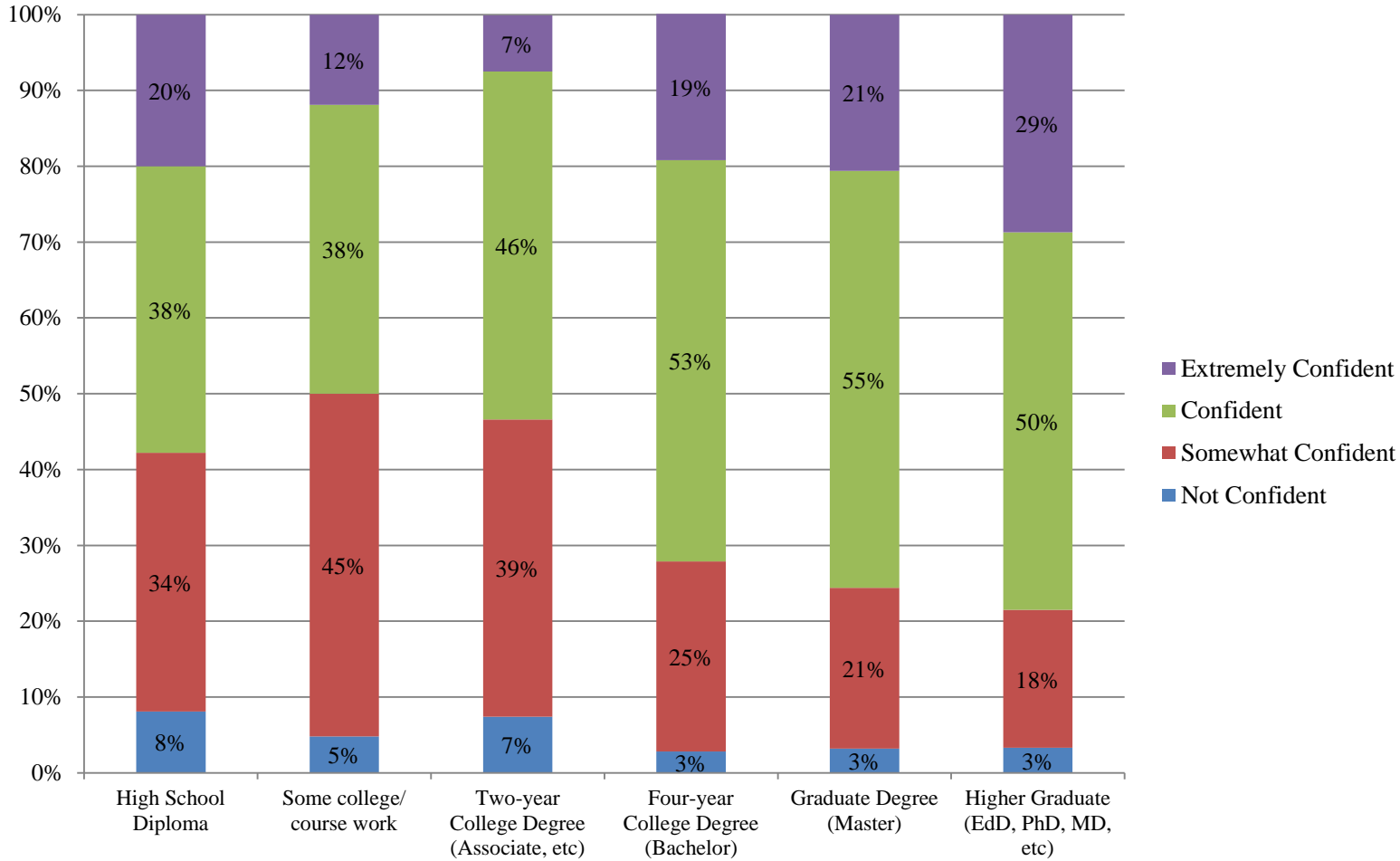
### Highest Educational Goal (% of Students)



85% of the ninth grade students reported that their highest level of educational aspiration includes obtaining a 4-year degree or higher. This is up from 79% in 2013.

Aspirations of obtaining a graduate degree or higher have increased over the last three years whereas aspirations of four-year college and lower have decreased.

**Relationship between two questions:  
At this point in your life, what is the highest level of education you plan to achieve (choose only one)? and How confident do you feel that you will achieve your ultimate educational goal (choose only one)?**

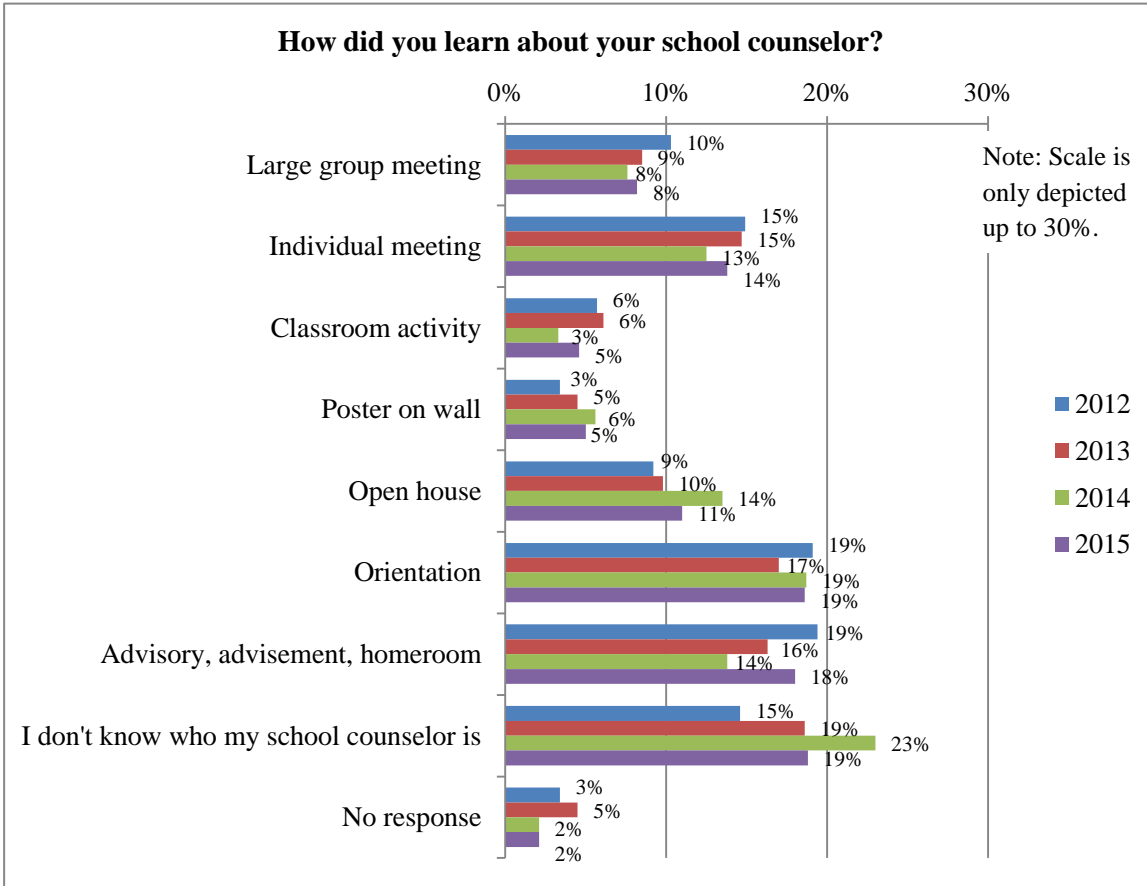


In general, students pursuing a four-year college degree, a graduate degree, or a higher graduate degree reported being either extremely or very confident in reaching their goal at a greater rate than those students selecting other aspirations.

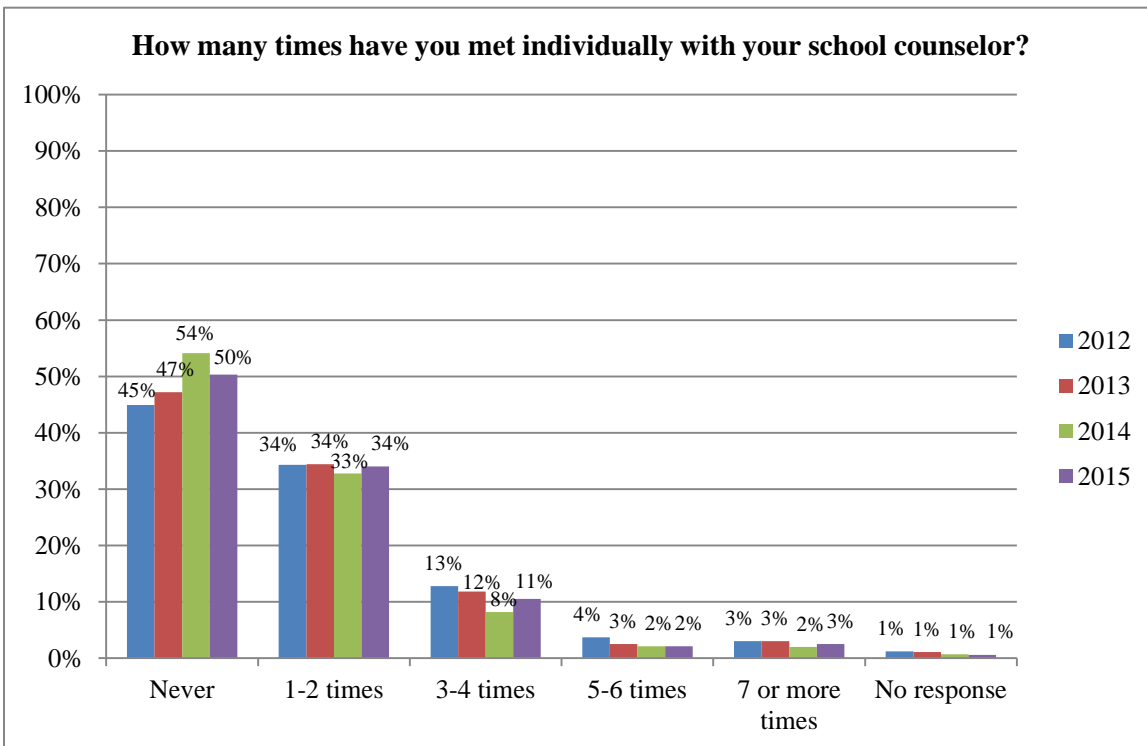
8% of ninth grade students were not confident they would obtain their educational goal of a high school diploma, down from 13% in 2013.

In general, students with lower educational aspirations were less confident in reaching their goals.

## School Counselor Information

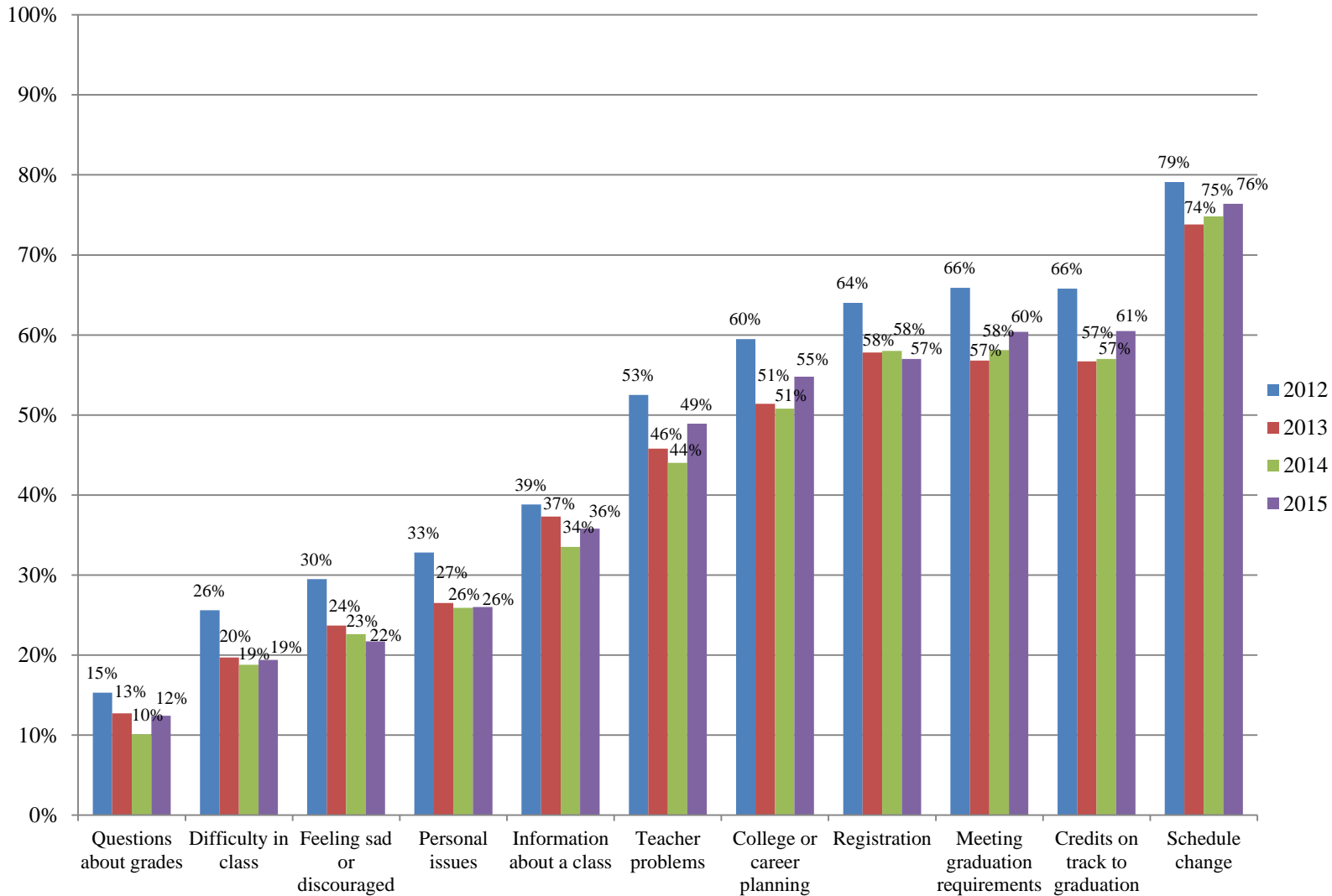


Most ninth grade students learned about their school counselor through orientation (19%), their advisory/ advisement/ homeroom (18%), or an individual meeting (14%). The percent of students not knowing their counselor decreased significantly from last year to this year.



Approximately half (50%) of ninth grade students have never met with their school counselor one-on-one. This is down from 54% in 2014.

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



*Note. Students were allowed to choose more than one person they would go to for each concern. Other response options included a homeroom teacher, a classroom teacher, an administrator, a friend, or a parent or family member.*

In general, more students reported they would go to their counselor for various reasons than in 2014.

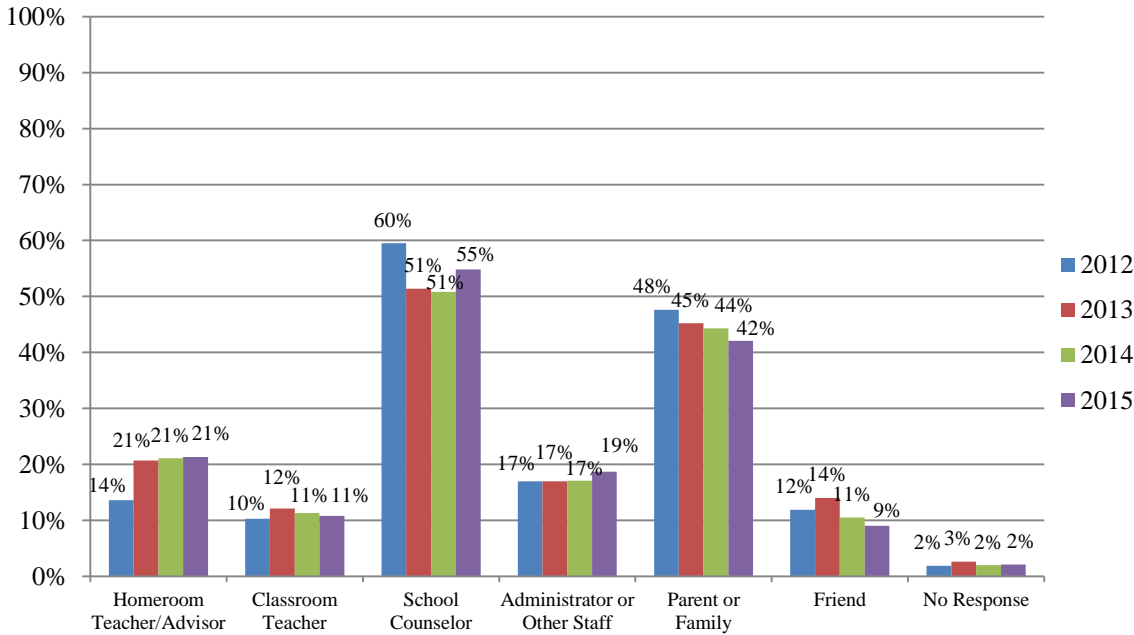
The concerns for which ninth grade students reported that they would go to their school counselor the most include schedule changes, credits on track to graduate, and meeting graduation requirements.

The least amount of students reported going to the school counselor for questions about grades, difficulty in class, and feeling sad or discouraged.



## Additional Responses to Four of the Concerns

### Concern: College or career planning

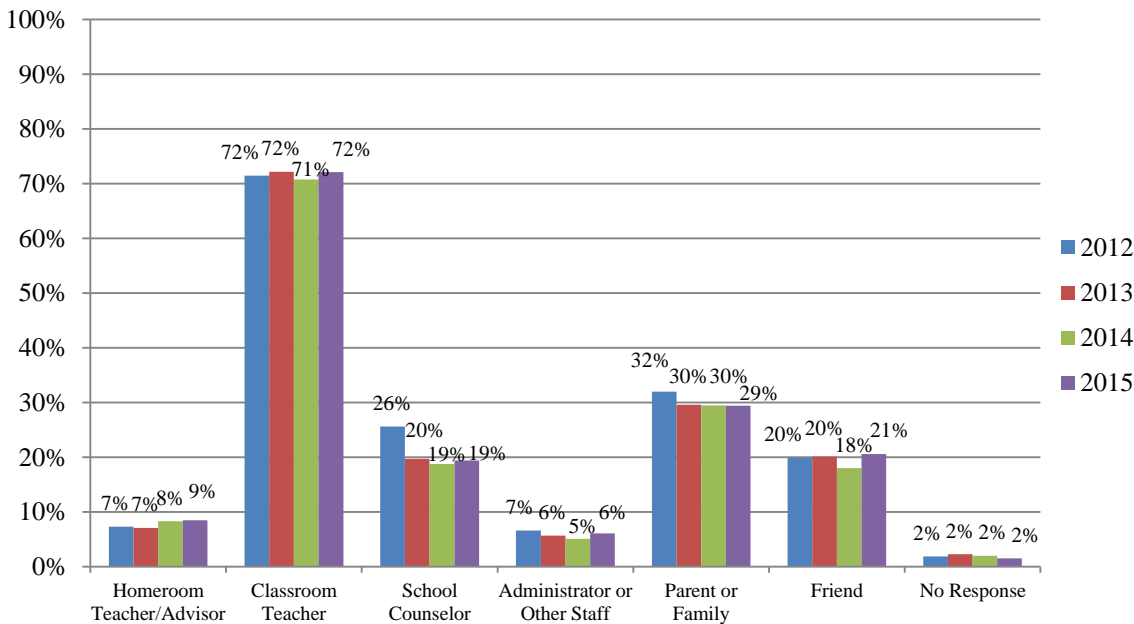


*Note. Students were allowed to choose more than one response for this item.*

55% of ninth grade students reported that they would go to their school counselor for college or career planning.

A large number of students (42%) also said they would go to a parent or family member.

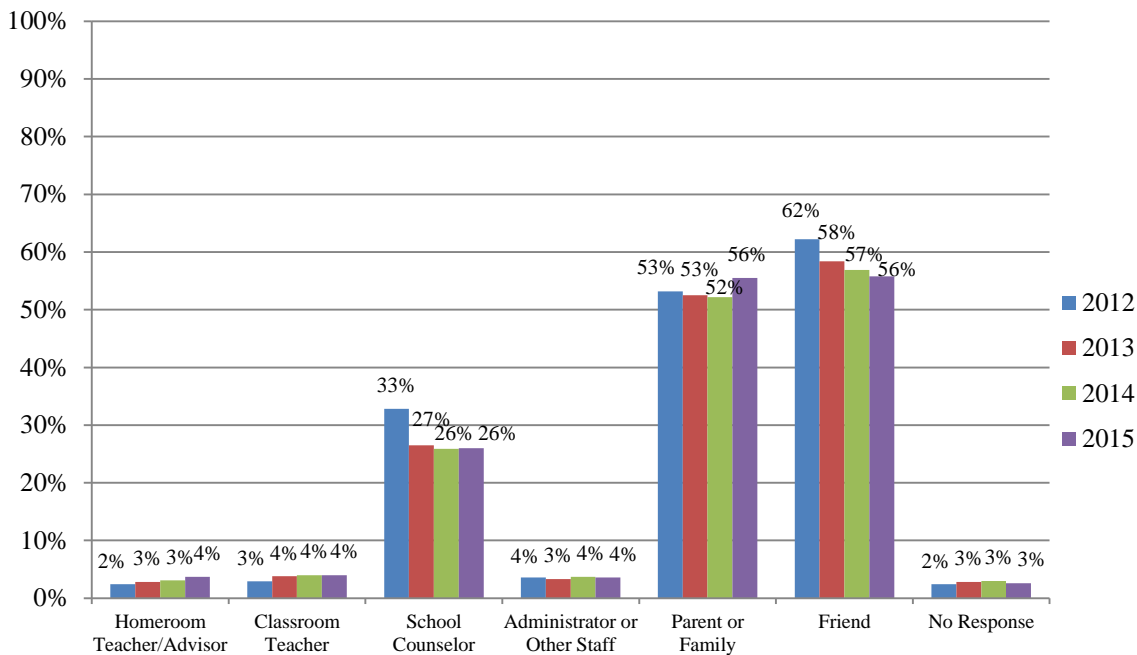
### Concern: Difficulty in class



*Note. Students were allowed to choose more than one response for this item.*

While 72% of ninth grade students said they would go to a classroom teacher for difficulty in class, a moderate number also reported going to people such as their school counselor, a parent/family member, or a friend.

### Concern: Personal issues

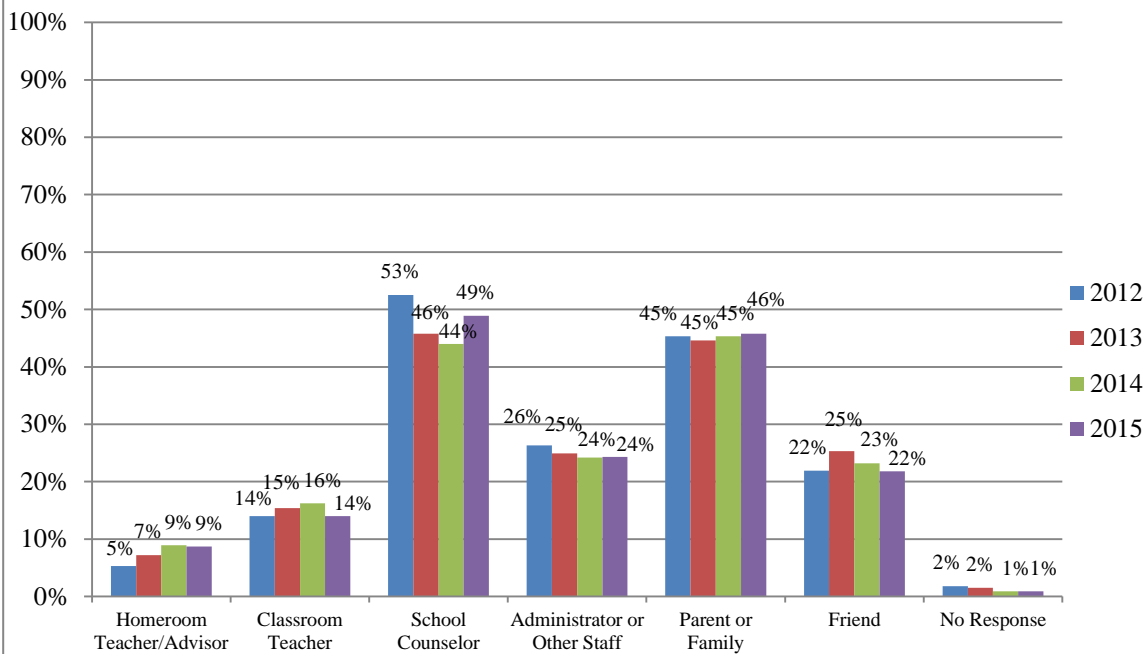


Note. Students were allowed to choose more than one response for this item.

56% of ninth grade students reported going to a friend or parent/family member when they are having personal issues.

The percent of students who report going to a friend with personal issues is declining over time.

### Teacher problems

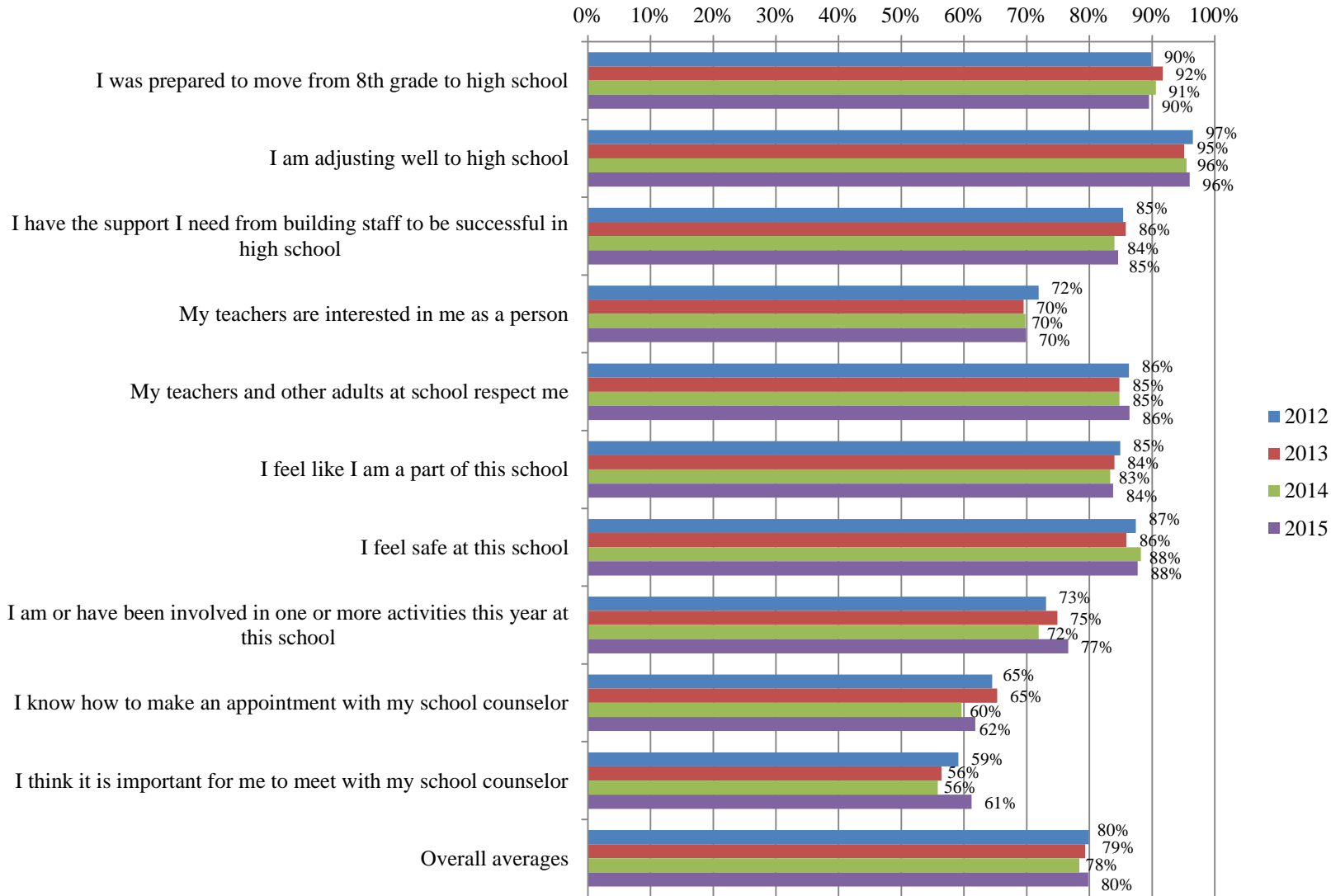


Note. Students were allowed to choose more than one response for this item.

The majority of students selected more than one response in regards to who they would go to with a problem with a teacher.

The top responses were talking with the school counselor or a parent/family member, followed by administration or a friend.

**When thinking about your 9th grade year...  
(% who strongly agree or agree)**



Note. The overall average was the average of the other ten items.

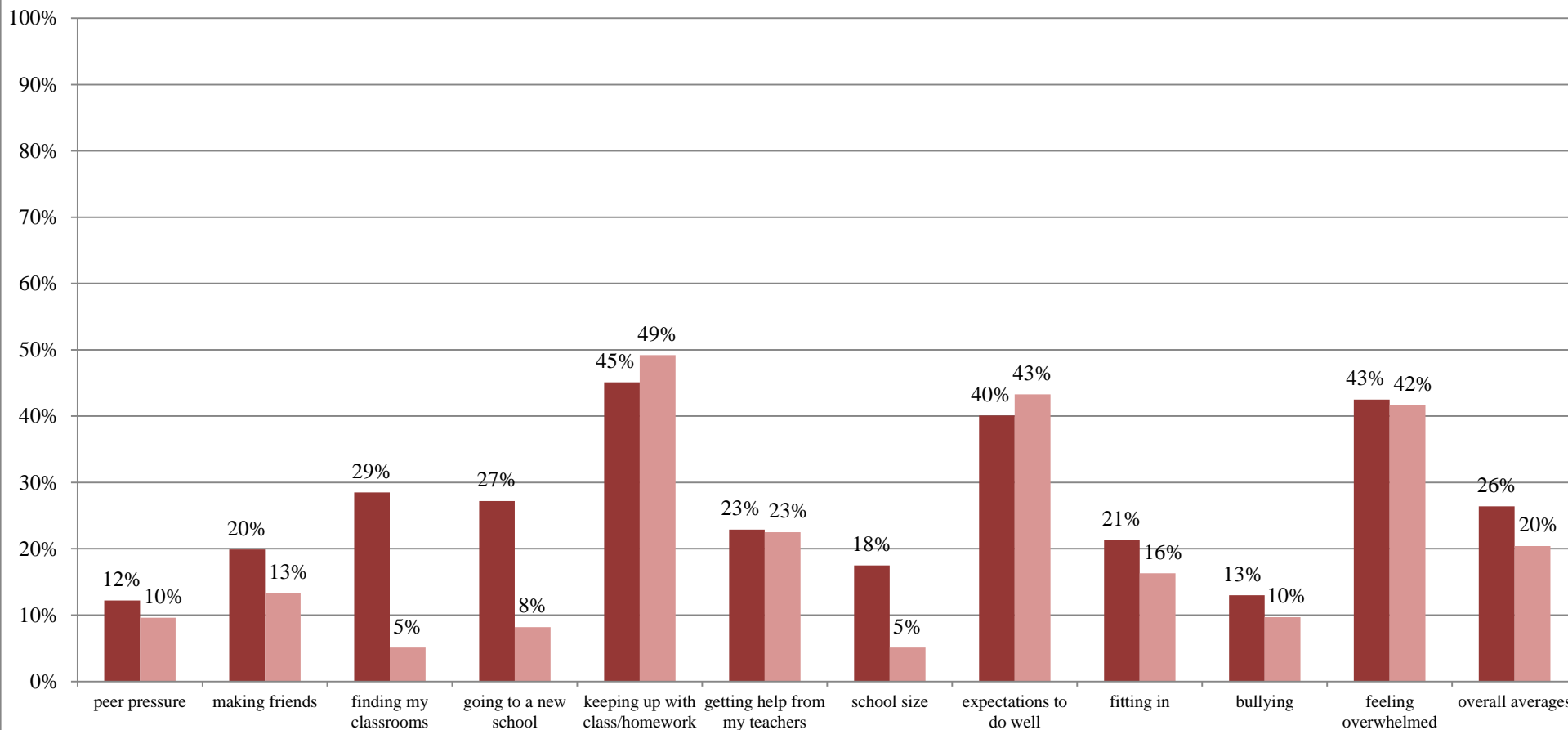
96% of ninth grade students reported feeling well adjusted to high school.

The item with the lowest level of agreement was, *I think it is important for me to meet with my school counselor*, with 61% of students agreeing, however this was a 5% increase over last year.

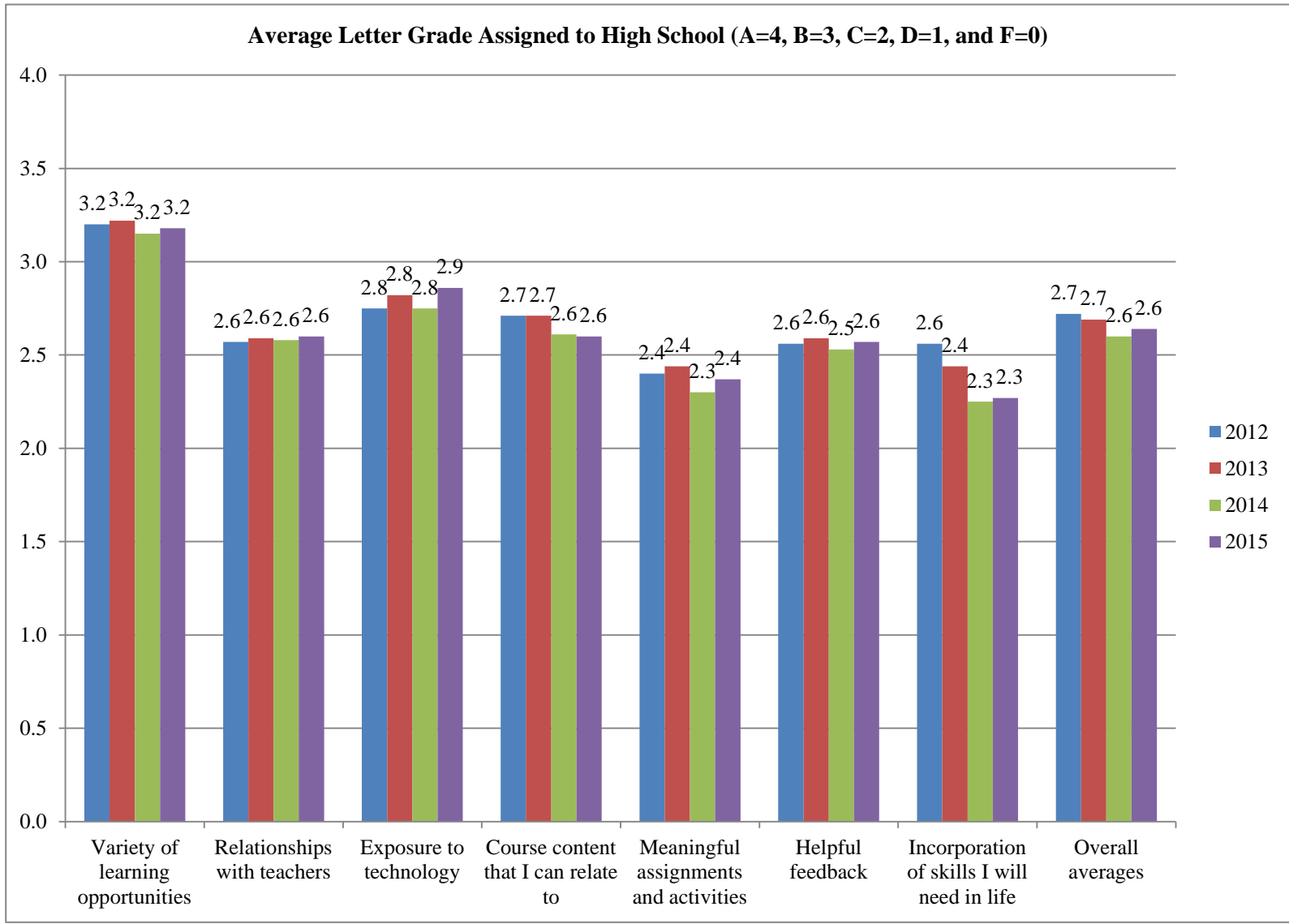
Not considering the two items related to meeting with school counselors, the item of lowest agreement was, *My teachers are interested in me as a person* with only 70% of students reporting agreement with the statement.

### Comparison of level of concern

- As you entered the 9th grade, how much were the following a concern for you? (% responding moderate or extreme concern)
- Are the following currently a concern for you? (% responding yes)



Ninth grade students were more concerned at the end of the year than upon entering the ninth grade in regards to keeping up with class/homework and expectations to do well. The largest decline in concern was in finding their classrooms. These findings are consistent with previous years. The items with the lowest levels of concern when entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade were peer pressure and bullying. These items remained among the lowest concerns at the end of the year, as well, alongside concerns about being in a new, bigger school.



Students rated the overall quality of the services provided a 2.6 (which is equivalent to a C+). Grades assigned to each item were similar to responses in 2014, but slightly higher across the board.

In general, students rated having a variety of learning opportunities significantly higher than the other items.

The rating of incorporation of life skills has decreased overtime and is now the lowest rated item.