
Ninth Grade Student Survey Report 2017

Anoka-Hennepin
School District

Prepared by the Department of
Research, Evaluation, and Testing



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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' perceptions of their educational experiences are 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 sixth 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 April 3 and May 19, 2017. 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
- educational aspirations
- demographic information

Representing each high school in the district, 2,573 students completed the survey. Students were evenly distributed across both genders, with 49% of the respondents being male and 49% being female (2% of students provided no response to this question). Also, students self-reported their ethnic background as the following:

- 1.2% American Indian
- 8.7% Asian
- 4.1% Hispanic
- 9.7% Black
- 67.0% White
- 7.9% Multi-racial
- 1.3% No response

This summary aggregates student responses for a selected number of items from the survey. Some items are disaggregated by school for further comparison.

Key Messages

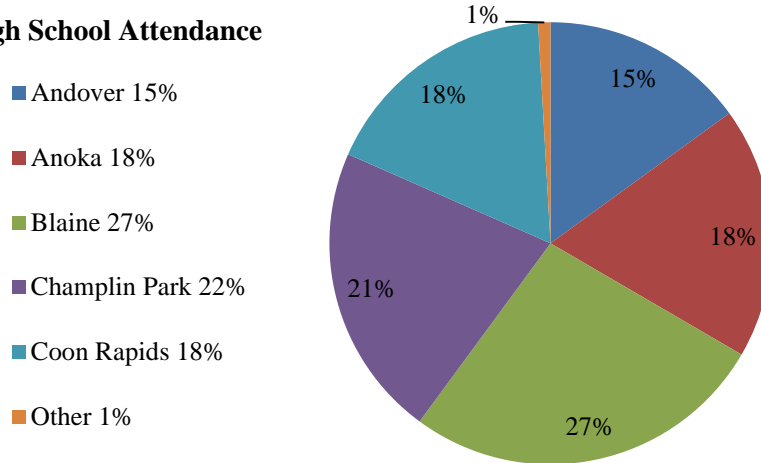
Illustrated in the graphs that follow.

- There were 2,573 ninth grade students who completed the Ninth Grade Student Survey in 2017.
- Approximately 84% of the ninth grade students reported that their highest level of educational aspiration included obtaining a 4-year degree or higher, similar to the 2016 rate of 85%. In general, students with higher educational aspirations were more confident in reaching their goals.
 - Asian, Hispanic and Multi-Racial students report feeling significantly less confident in reaching their educational goals than 9th grade students overall, whereas Black students report feeling significantly more confident in reaching their educational goals than 9th grade students overall.
- Most students learned about their school counselor through orientation, open house, an individual meeting or advisory. Twenty percent of students reported not knowing who their counselor was, up from 17% in 2016. Over half (53%) of the 9th grade students reported that they have never met with their counselor.
- Students reported being most likely to go to their school counselor for schedule changes, making sure credits are on track for graduation, registration, and college or career problems.
- Thinking about their ninth grade year, 96% of students reported feeling well adjusted to high school, and 91% of students reported feeling prepared to move from 8th grade to high school. Both of these items are consistent with last year.
- Eighty-four percent of students reported feeling safe at their school, down 5% from last year.
- Eighty-seven percent of students agree that they have the support they need from building staff to be successful in high school and feel their teachers and other adults at school respect them.
- 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 9th grade were peer pressure, school size and bullying. These items were even less of a concern at the end of the year.
 - Asian students were more concerned about peer pressure, making friends, finding classrooms, going to a new school, getting help from teachers, expectations to do well, fitting in and bullying both at the beginning and end of 9th grade when compared to all students.
 - Female students reported feeling more concerned than male students on all items except keeping up with class/homework *as they entered 9th grade*. They remained more concerned on seven of the eleven items at the end of the year.
- Students rated the overall quality of the services provided with a 2.7 (which is equivalent to a B-), down from 2.8 in 2016. Grades assigned to each of 7 items remained steady or decreased slightly since 2016.
 - Male students rated ‘relationships with teachers,’ ‘helpful feedback,’ and ‘incorporation of life skills’ significantly higher than students overall. Black students rated ‘variety of learning opportunities,’ ‘relationships with teachers,’ and ‘exposure to technology’ significantly lower, and multi-racial students rated ‘variety of learning opportunities,’ ‘exposure to technology,’ ‘course content I can relate to,’ and ‘helpful feedback’ significantly lower than students overall.

Findings

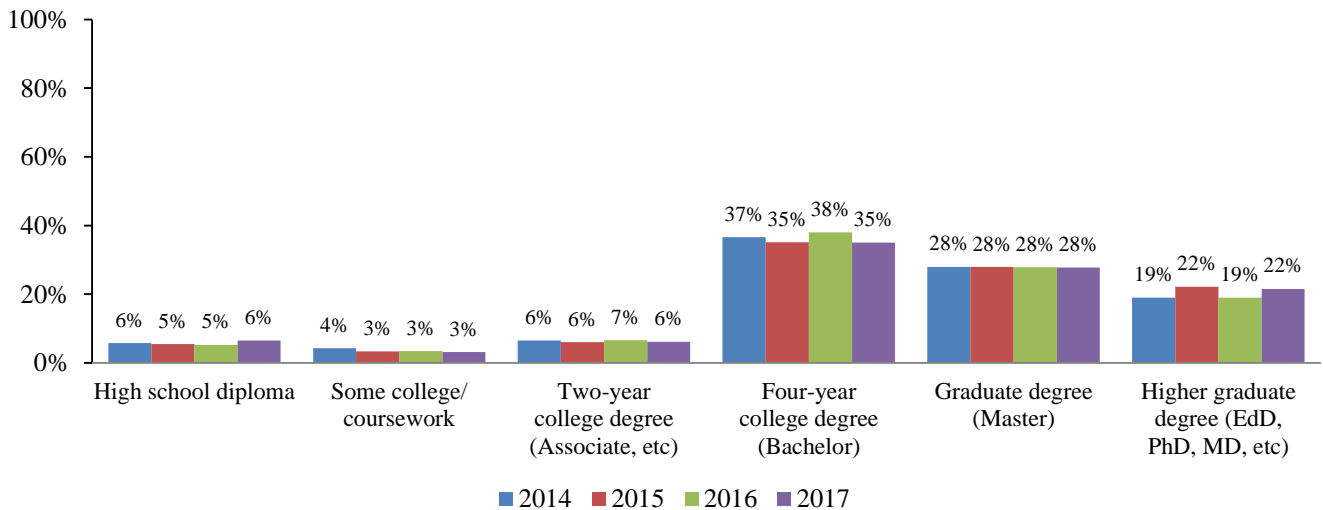
There were 2,573 ninth grade students who completed the survey in 2017. Students were representative of the five traditional high schools, as well as other programs, and representation was proportional to school size.

High School Attendance



Eighty-four percent of the ninth grade students reported that their highest level of educational aspiration includes obtaining a 4-year degree or higher, similar to the 2016 rate of 85%. Aspirations of obtaining a four-year college degree have declined 3%, back to the 2015 rate of 35%, whereas aspirations for obtaining a higher graduate degree such as a Ph.D. or M.D. have increased 3%.

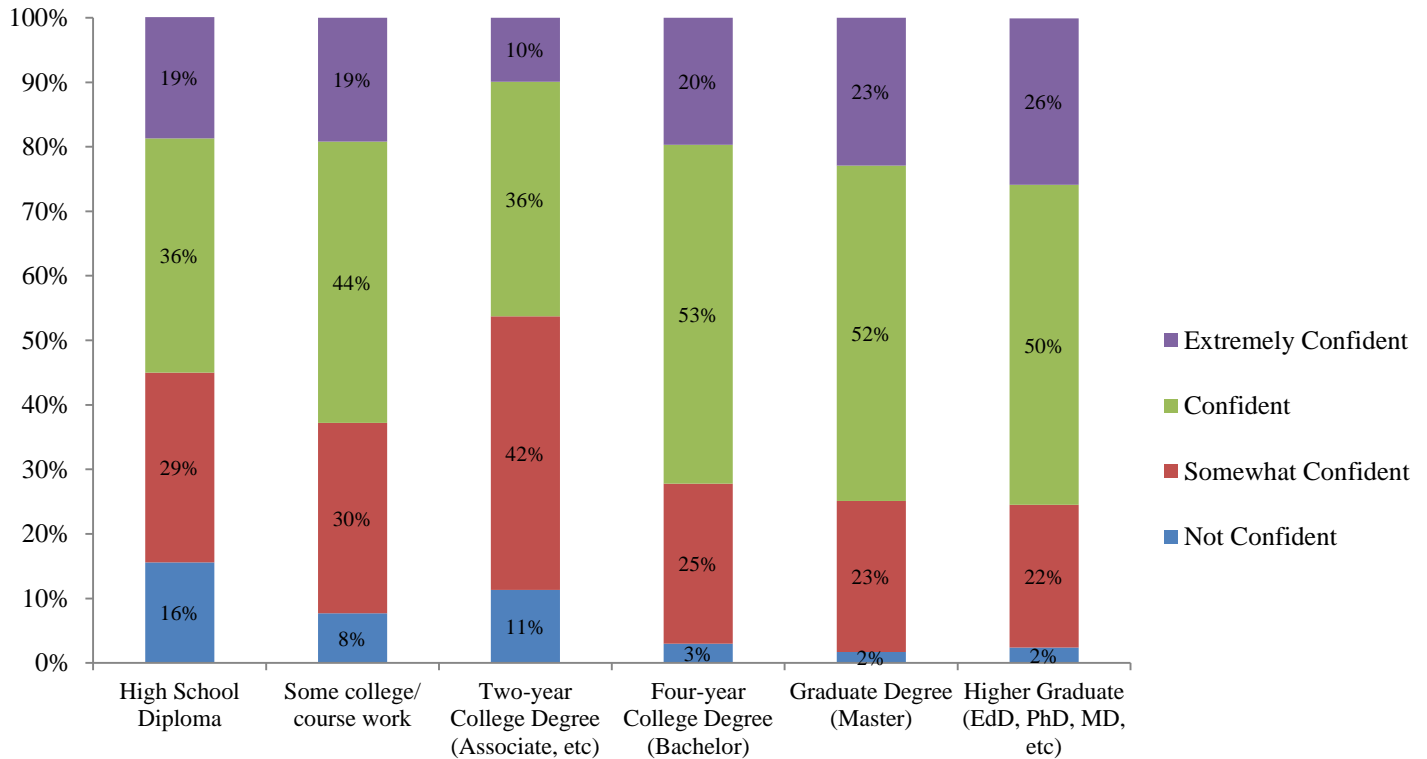
Highest Educational Goal (% of Students)



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

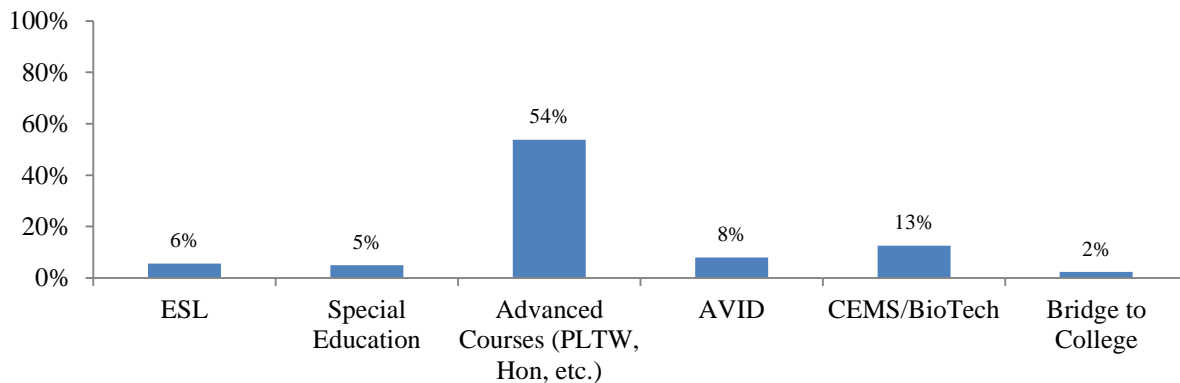
Sixteen percent of ninth grade students were not confident they would obtain their educational goal of a high school diploma, up from 11% in 2016. In general, students with lower educational aspirations were less confident in reaching their goals.

**Relationship Between Two Questions:
What is your highest educational goal and how confident do you feel that you will reach your educational goal?**



Just over half of the participants said they are taking an advanced course, remaining steady from 2016.

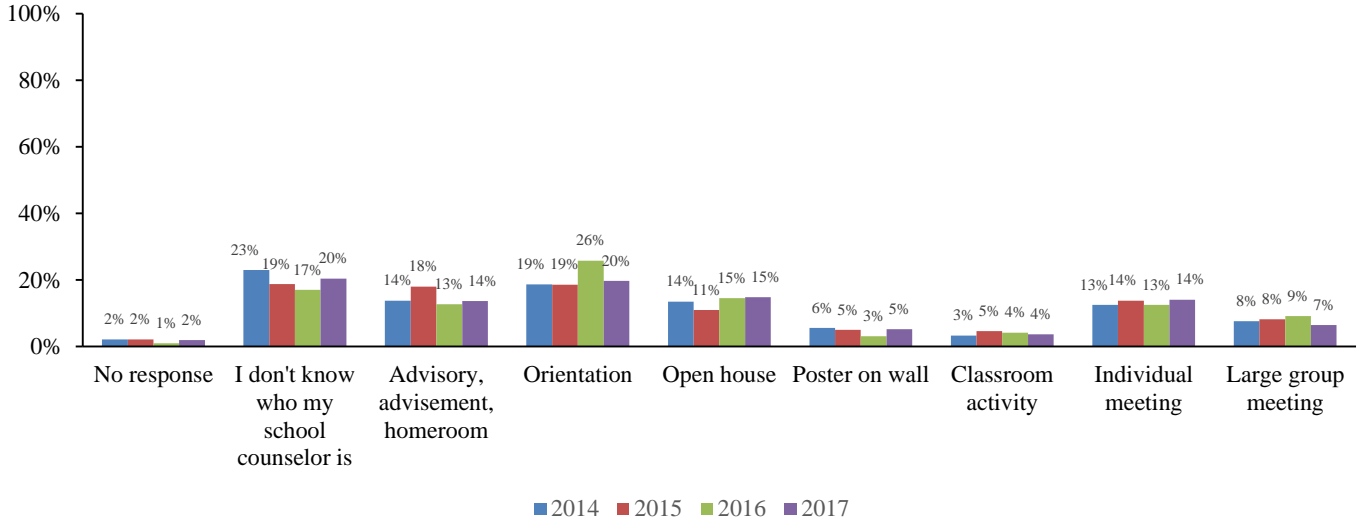
Percent of Students Participating in Special Programming



School Counselor Information

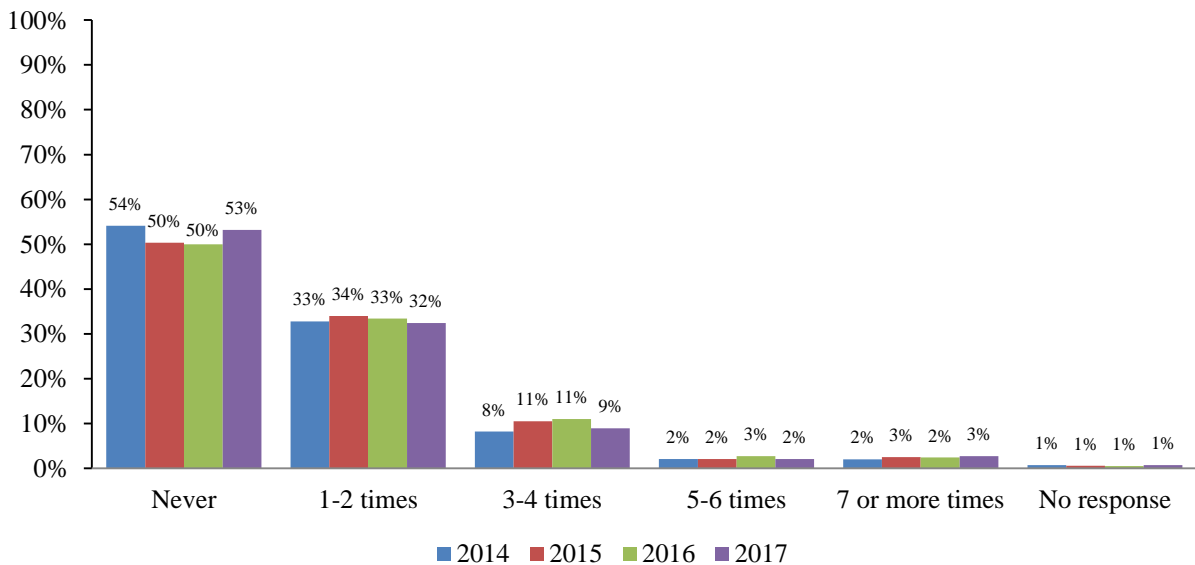
Most ninth grade students learned about their school counselor through orientation (20%), though an equal percent of students stated that they do not know who their counselor is. Students also learned about their counselors from their open house (15%), their advisory/advisement/homeroom (14%), or an individual meeting (14%). The percent of students not knowing their counselor has increased 3% since last year.

How did you learn about your school counselor?



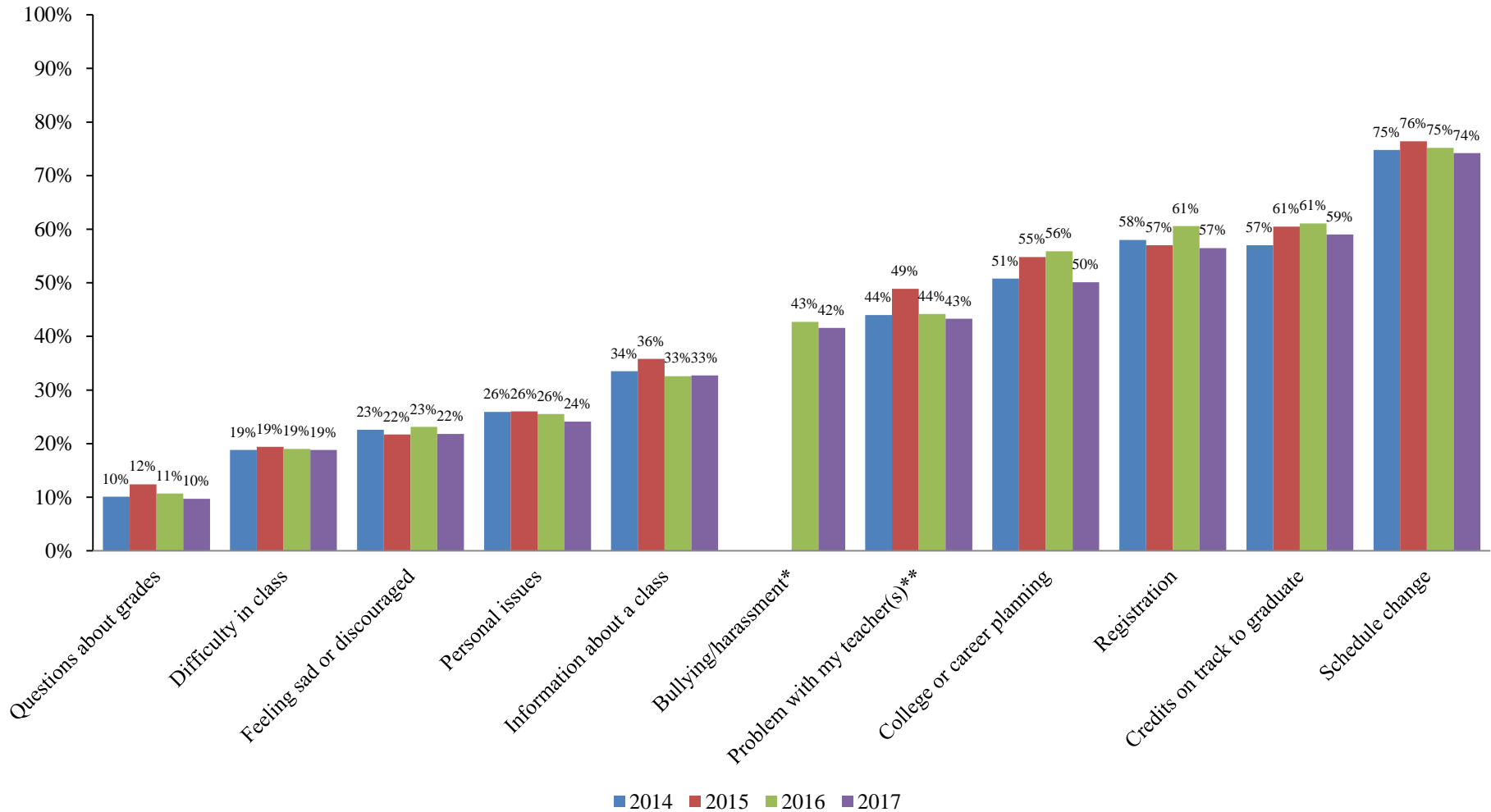
Over half (53%) of ninth grade students have never met with their school counselor one-on-one. This is up from 50% in 2016. About one-third of ninth graders met with their counselor one or two times during the school year.

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



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

Percent Of Students Reporting They Would Go To Their School Counselor For Each Concern

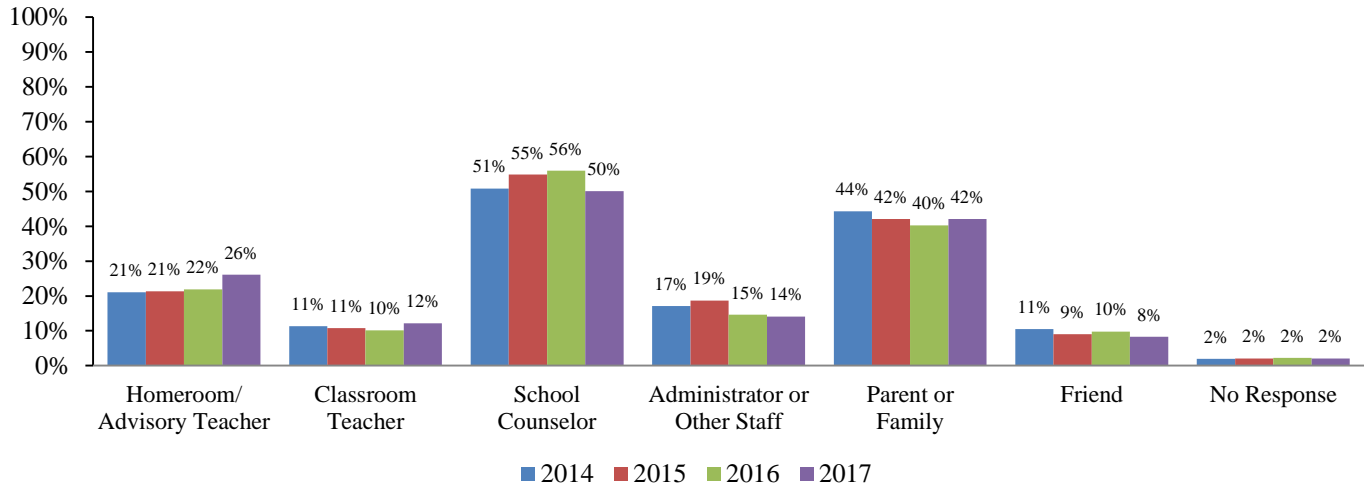


*Note: Students were allowed to choose more than one person they would go to for each concern. Other response options included an advisory teacher, a classroom teacher, an administrator, a friend, or a parent or family member. * New option in 2016. **New wording in 2016 (previously "teacher problems").*

Additional Responses to Six of the Concerns

Half of the students surveyed (50%) said that they would go to a school counselor for college or career planning, down 6% from 2016. Forty-two percent of students said they would go to a parent or family member, a small increase from 40% in 2016, while 26% said they would go to their homeroom or advisory teacher, up 4% from 2016.

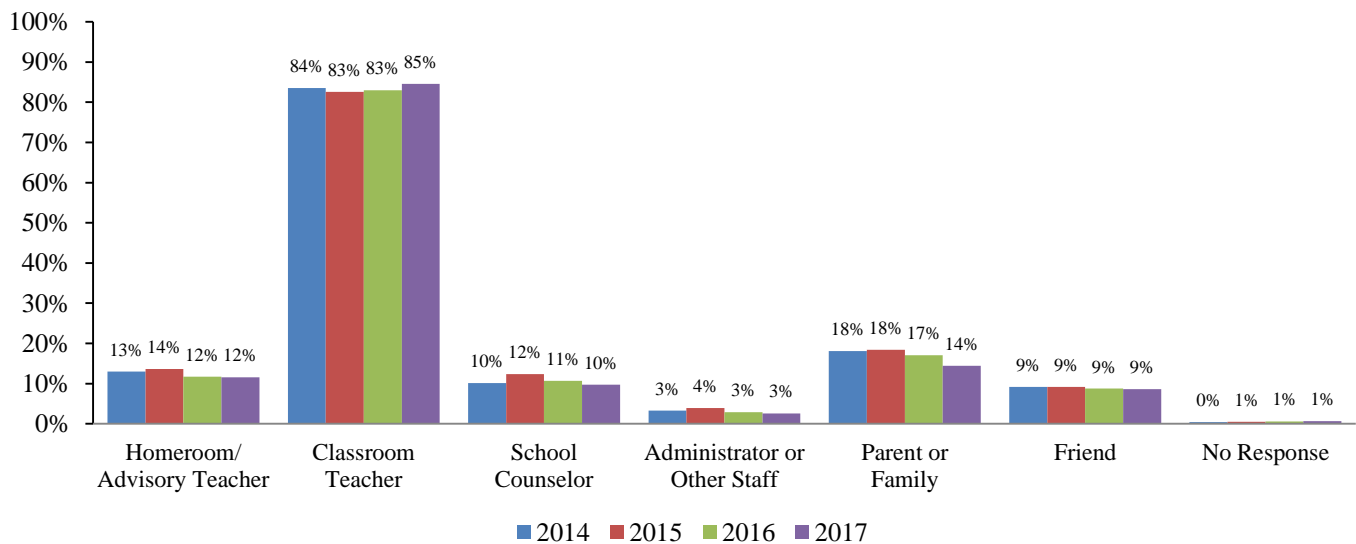
Concern: College or career planning



Note: Students were allowed to choose more than one person they would go to for each concern.

The vast majority of students (85%) said that they would go to a classroom teacher with questions about their grades. More students reported that they would go to a parent or family member (14%) than to their homeroom/advisory teacher (12%).

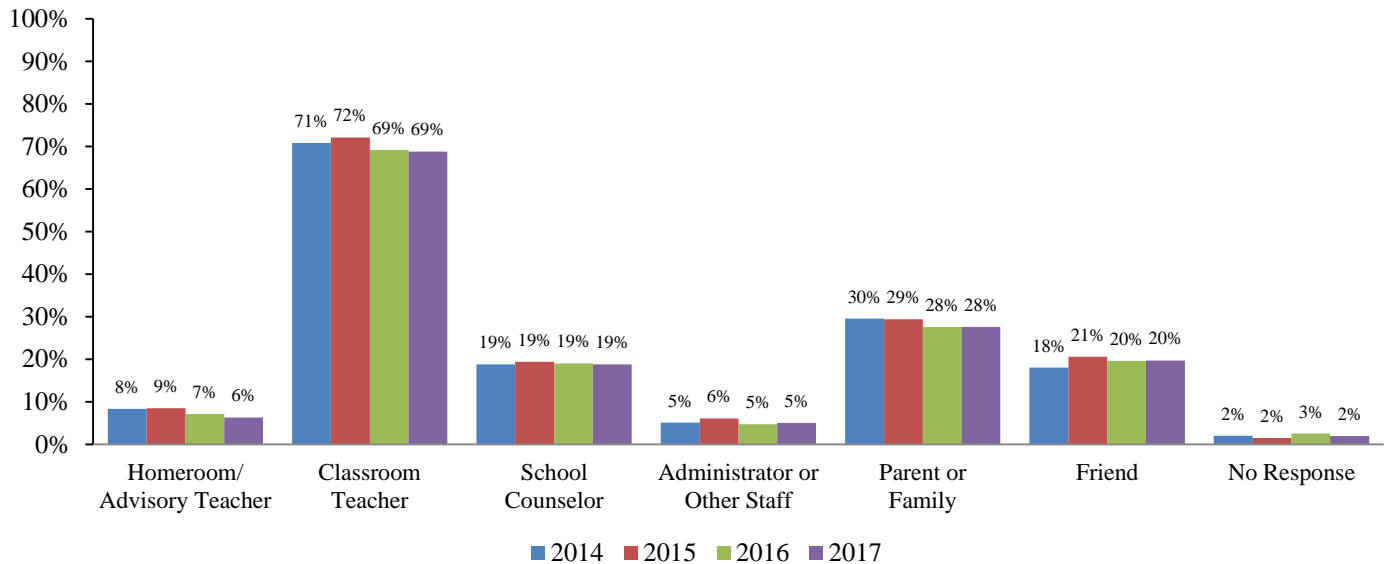
Concern: Questions about grades



Note: Students were allowed to choose more than one person they would go to for each concern.

While 69% 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 a parent or family member, a friend or their school counselor.

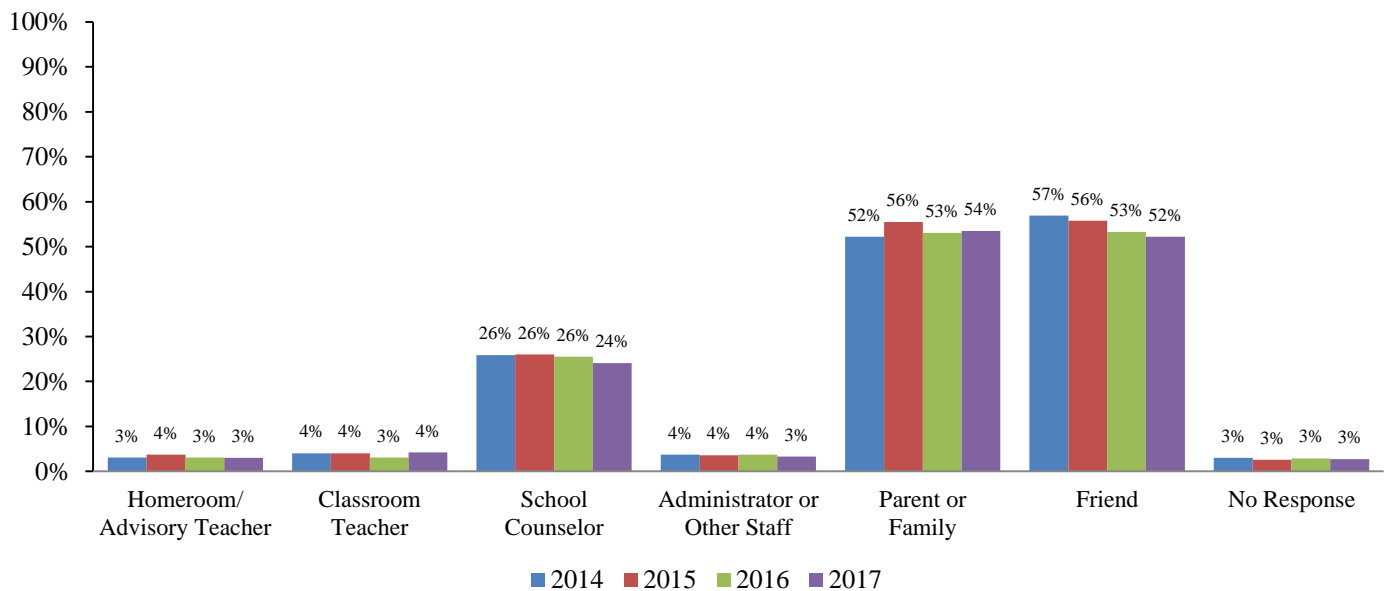
Concern: Difficulty in class



Note: Students were allowed to choose more than one person they would go to for each concern.

Fifty-four percent also said they would go to a parent or family member. Fifty-two percent of ninth grade students said they would go to a friend when they are having personal issues. The percent of students who would go to a friend with personal issues has declined steadily since 2014. About one-quarter of students would go to their school counselor with personal issues.

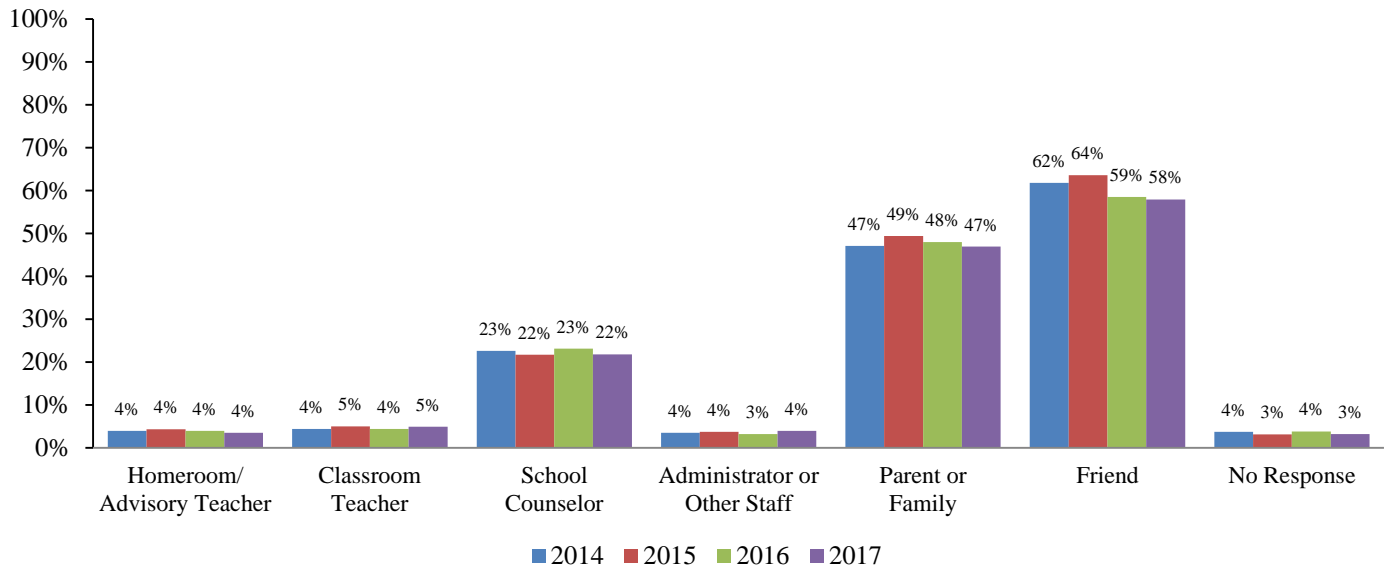
Concern: Personal issues



Note: Students were allowed to choose more than one person they would go to for each concern.

The majority of students (58%) said they would go to a friend if they were feeling sad or discouraged, although that percentage has decreased from 64% in 2015. Other common responses included going to a parent or family member or to a school counselor.

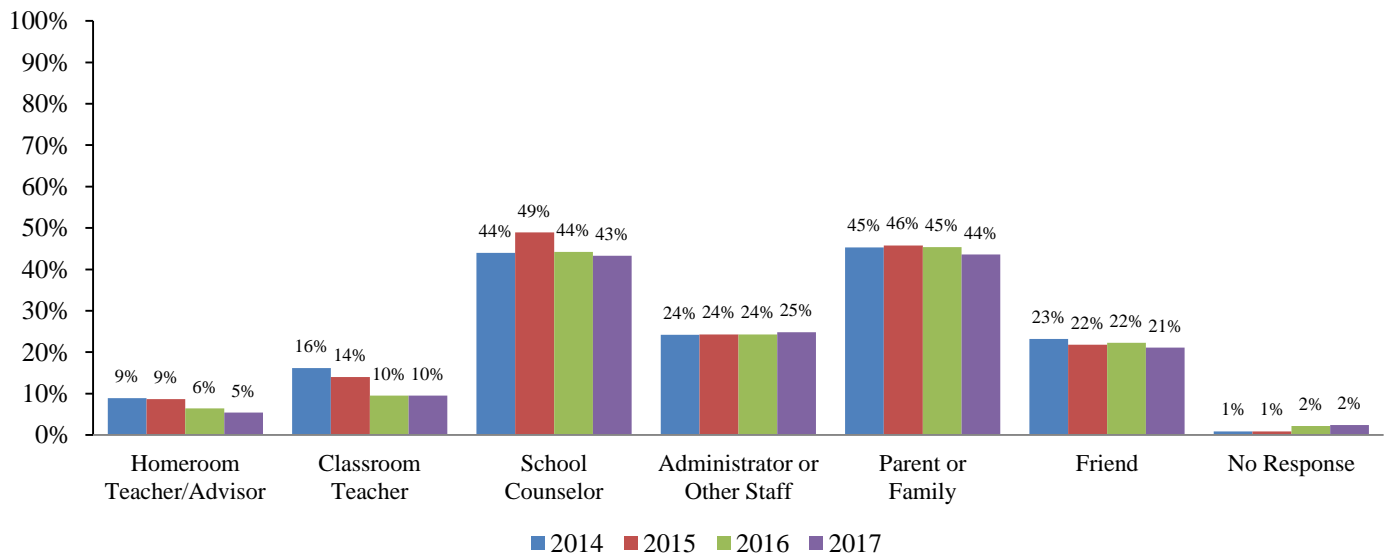
Concern: Feeling sad or discouraged



Note: Students were allowed to choose more than one person they would go to for each concern.

Many students selected more than one response in regards to who they would go to if they had a problem with a teacher. The top responses were talking with a parent or family member and with a school counselor, followed by administration or a friend.

Concern: Problems with my teacher(s)*



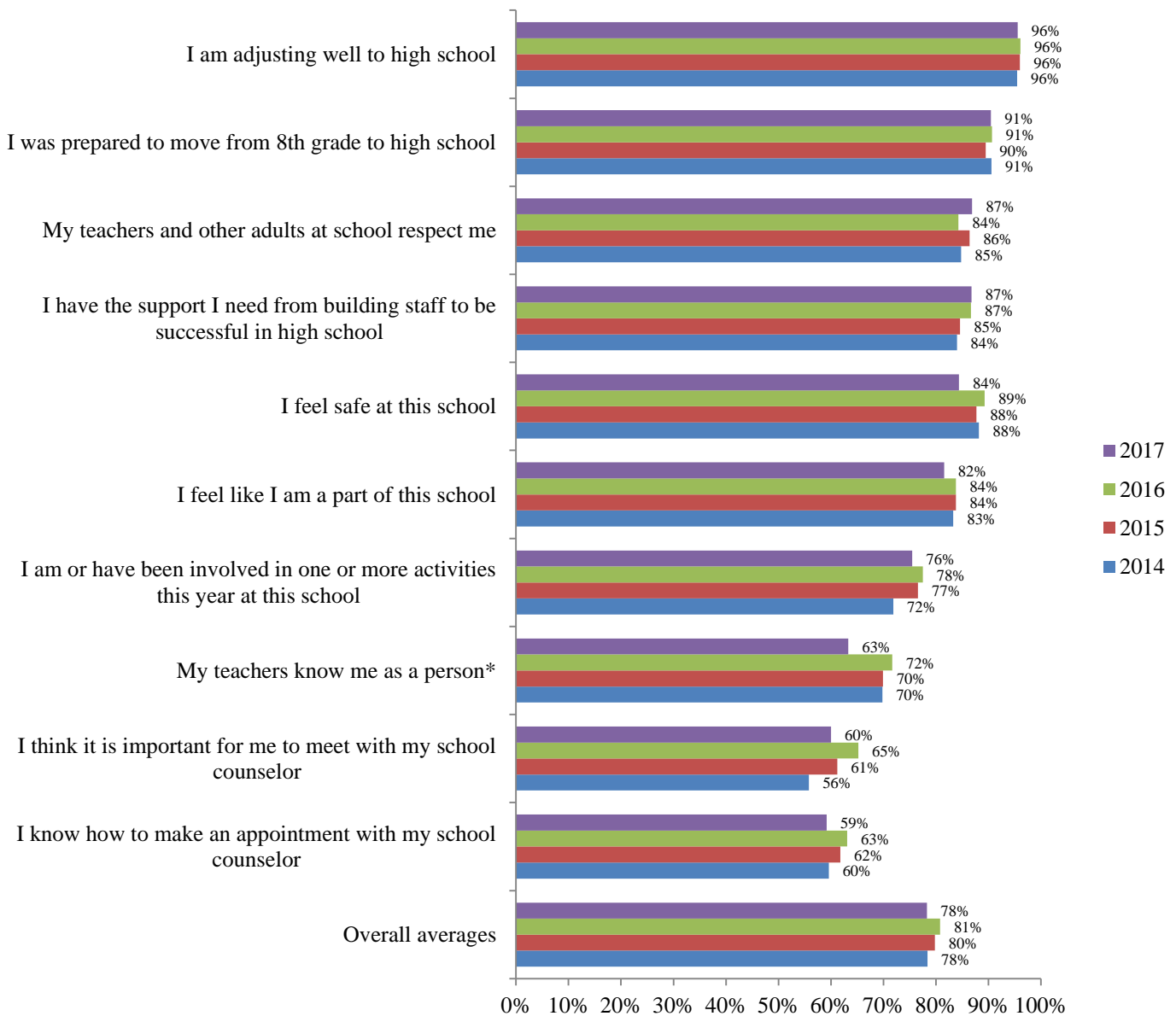
*Note: Students were allowed to choose more than one person they would go to for each concern. * New wording in 2016 (previously “teacher problems”).*

Perceptions of the 9th Grade Experience

Ninety-six percent of ninth grade students reported feeling well adjusted to high school. The item with the lowest level of agreement was, *I know how to make an appointment with my school counselor*, with 59% of students agreeing.

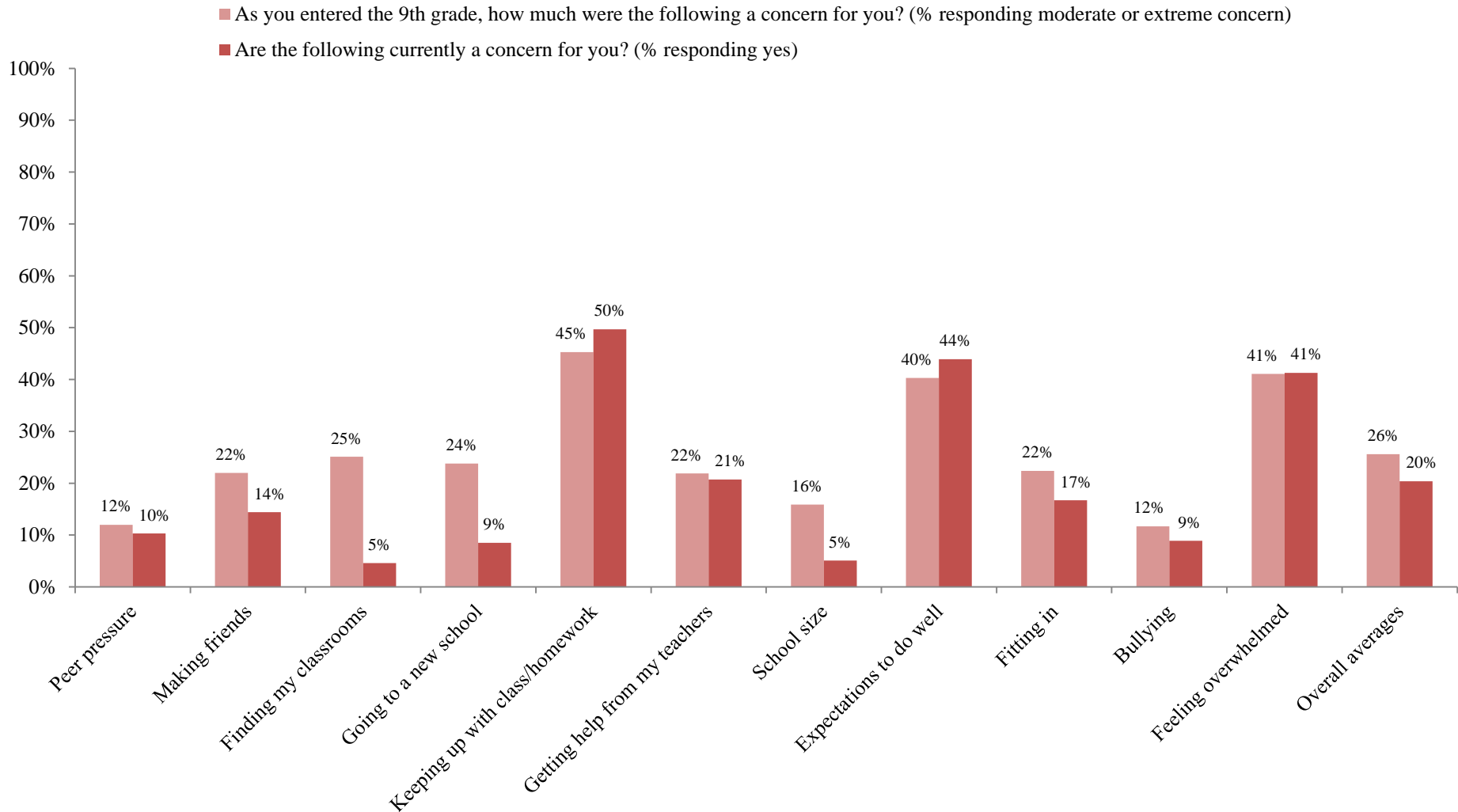
Not considering the two items related to meeting with school counselors, the item of lowest agreement was, *My teachers know me as a person* with only 63% of students reporting agreement with the statement, a decrease from 72% in 2016, which may be impacted by a wording change in the item from *my teachers are interested in me as a person*. Over 90% of students agreed or strongly agreed that they were *adjusting well to high school* and were *prepared to move from 8th grade to high school*.

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



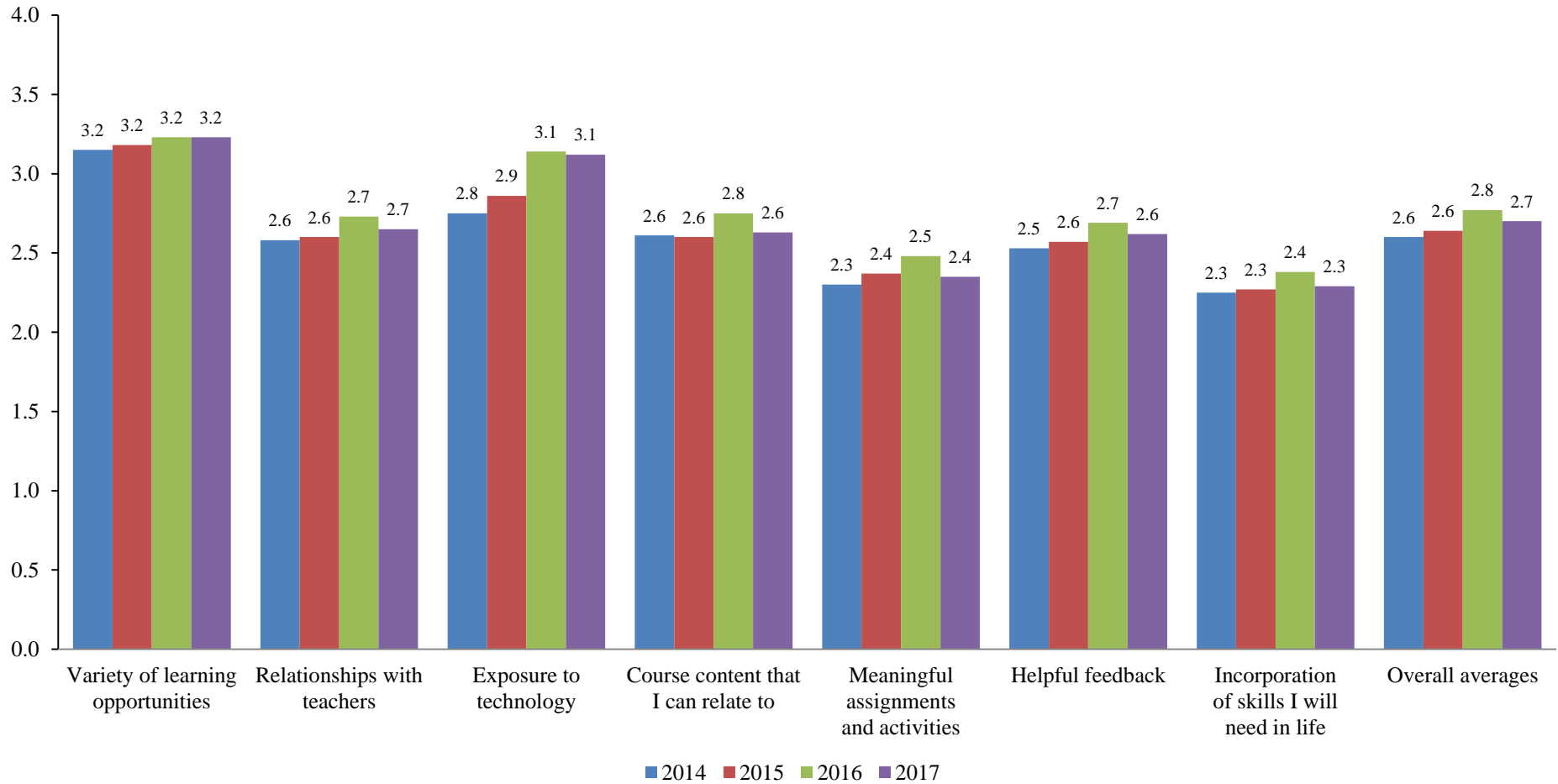
Note. The overall average was the average of the ten items. * New wording in 2017 (previously "My teachers are interested in me as a person").

Comparison of level of concern



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 finding their classrooms, going to a new school, and school size. These findings are consistent with previous years. The items with the lowest levels of concern when entering 9th grade were peer pressure and bullying. These items remained among the lowest concerns at the end of the year, as well as concerns about being in a bigger school. On average, students felt about the same levels of concern at the beginning and end of the year around getting help from their teachers and feeling overwhelmed.

Average Letter Grade Assigned to High School (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, and F=0)



Students rated the overall quality of the services provided a 2.7 (which is equivalent to a B-). Grades assigned to each item were slightly lower than the 2016 responses across the board.

In general, students rated having a ‘variety of learning opportunities’ and ‘exposure to technology’ higher than the other items. The rating of ‘incorporation of skills needed in life’ is the lowest rated item, and has been over time.

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