



DC Student & Educator Wellbeing: Fall 2021-22

REVIEW OF FALL HOLISTIC SURVEY DATA & CONVERSATION WITH
A PANEL OF LEADERS FROM BRIGHT SPOT SCHOOLS

BACKGROUND/ RESEARCH

WHY WELLBEING MATTERS
AND SURVEY DESIGN
PROCESS



Prefrontal Cortex

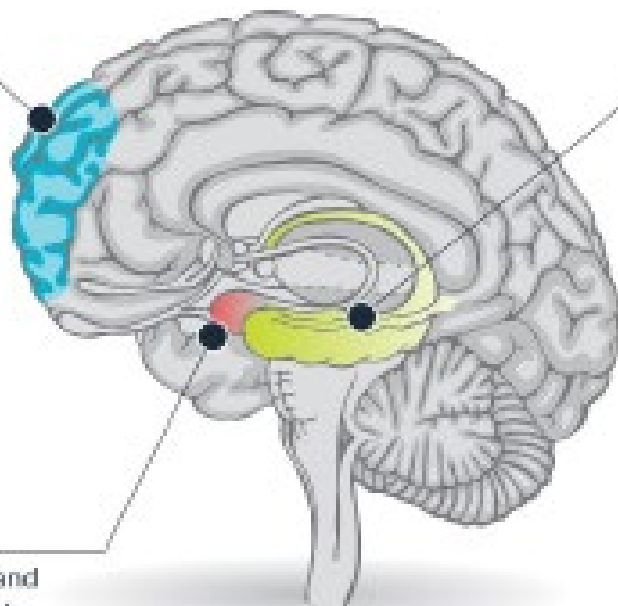
Regulates thoughts, emotions, behavior

Hippocampus

Stores learning and memory

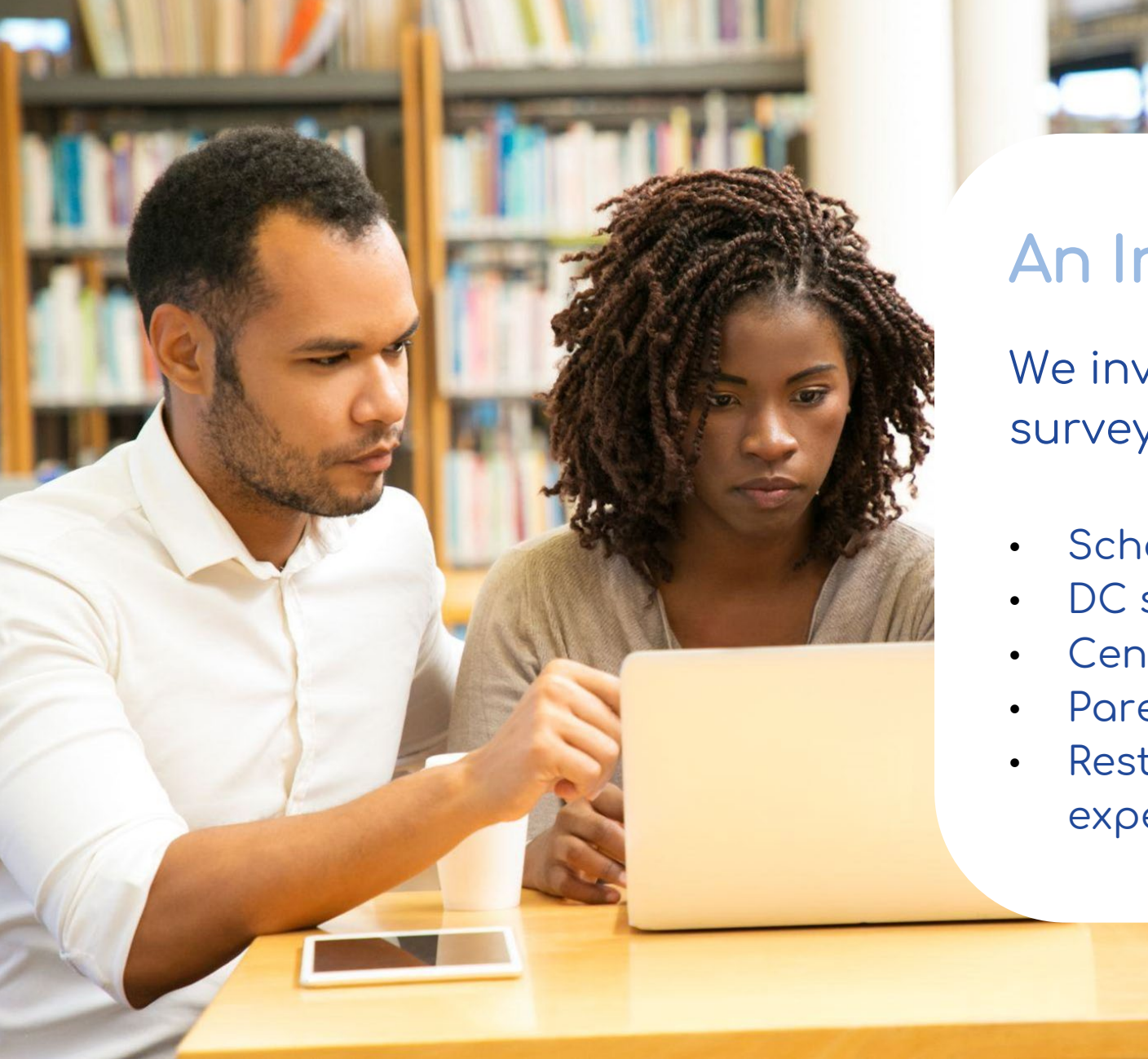
Amygdala

Reacts to stress and emotional arousal



Your body reacts to stress by producing adrenaline and cortisol. Chronic and toxic stress leads to an overproduction of these hormones which have scientifically proven impacts on important learning regions of the brain, the limbic system.

Source: Turnaround For Children



An Inclusive Design Approach

We involve the following stakeholders in the survey design process:

- School-based behavioral health specialists
- DC school leaders and teachers
- Center for Health and Health Care in Schools
- Parent leaders at advocacy organizations
- Restorative justice, student and teacher voice experts

SURVEY DESIGN PROCESS



We don't start from scratch. We asked educators what concerns them about their students and pull items from other well-known surveys such as Panorama and YouthTruth



Identify and learn from bright spots. To ensure relevancy, we repeat the engagement process every season. To ensure efficiency, we run sophisticated analyses to eliminate items with strong correlations. This allows us to cover more ground without sacrificing relevant topic areas.



Some questions are asked every season to monitor longitudinal progress. Others are asked annually or biannually. Areas of wellbeing addressed:

- Physical health
- Mental health
- Positive relationships
- Stress and resiliency
- Scholarly habits and school thoughts

Schools receive immediate access to completion and results data. Comparison data is delivered after the window closes.

FALL 2021 WELLBEING DATA

RESULTS



Fall 2021-22 Wellbeing Participation

Student participation was lower this fall because of survey fatigue concerns. The biannual Youth Risk Behaviors Survey and at least one other major grant required student surveys this fall. This was the first Educator Wellbeing survey administration.

Student Characteristics

913 response in grades 3-8
12 public charter schools

60% Black or African American
15% White
9% Hispanic or Latinx
4% Asian or Pacific Islander

19% Students experiencing food
insecurity

Educator Characteristics

145 responses in ES/MS
8 public charter schools

60% teacher of record
14% school administrator
26% specialist / paraprofessional

49% Black or African American
24% White
13% Asian or Pacific Islander
3% Hispanic or Latinx

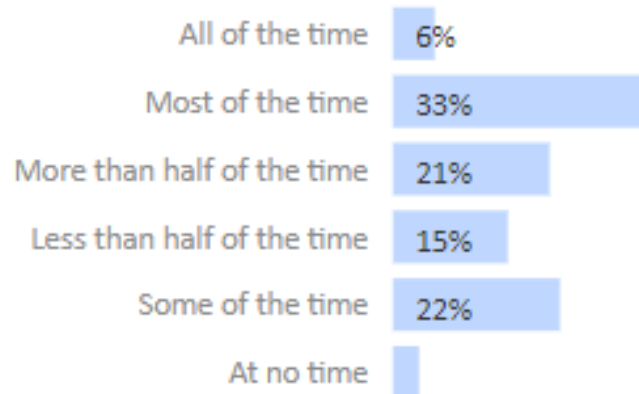
Educators are **stressed** by the challenges presented in and out of the classroom this fall. **More than** a typical pre-pandemic fall.

“The amount of time and energy that is taken out of my day (ALL day long) to spend on 3-4 students is overwhelming. I do not have the time, energy, or skillset to support all the needs presented to me by students every day.”

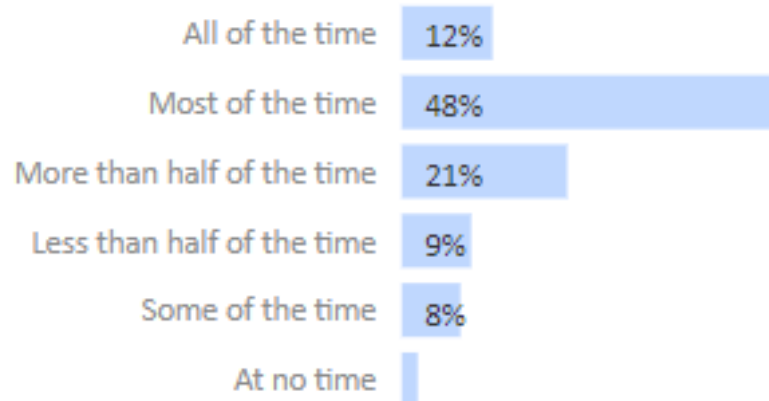
- Veteran Elementary Teacher



Over the last two weeks, I have felt cheerful and in good spirits
while at work.



Over the last two weeks, I have felt cheerful and in good spirits
while at home and in my personal life.



This fall, many educators were not feeling cheerful and in good spirits most or all the time at work. They were more likely, but not overwhelmingly so, to be in better spirits in their personal life.

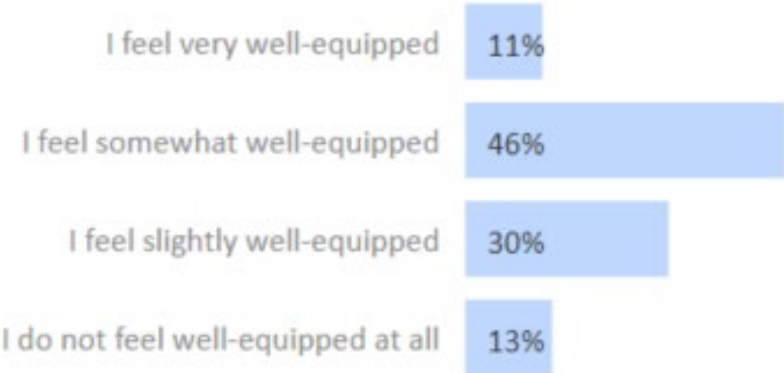
The most common sources of stress for educators at school included behavioral health, student unfinished learning, and work-life balance.

Compared to school pre-pandemic, teachers are spending significantly more time addressing student social-emotional and behavioral challenges. For most, the amount of time spent on daily lesson planning and communicating with families is also up.

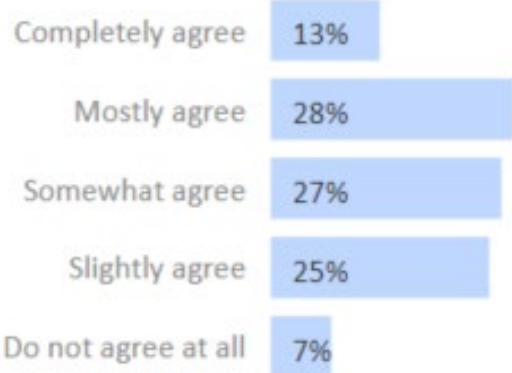
The frequency of behavioral health challenges at your school >> Comparison to pre-pandemic	
Much more than pre-pandemic	37%
Somewhat more pre-pandemic	37%
About the same as pre-pandemic	23%
Somewhat less than pre-pandemic	3%
Time I spend addressing students' social-emotional issues >> Comparison to pre-pandemic	
Much more than pre-pandemic	76%
Somewhat more pre-pandemic	9%
About the same as pre-pandemic	15%
Time I spend communicating with families >> Comparison to pre-pandemic	
Much more than pre-pandemic	35%
Somewhat more pre-pandemic	26%
About the same as pre-pandemic	29%
Somewhat less than pre-pandemic	9%
Time I spend on lesson planning daily >> Comparison to pre-pandemic	
Much more than pre-pandemic	29%
Somewhat more pre-pandemic	29%
About the same as pre-pandemic	32%
Somewhat less than pre-pandemic	6%
Much less than pre-pandemic	3%

We find that educators might need additional professional development and support to address the trauma, grief, and stress students are experiencing and to take proactive steps for their own self-care.

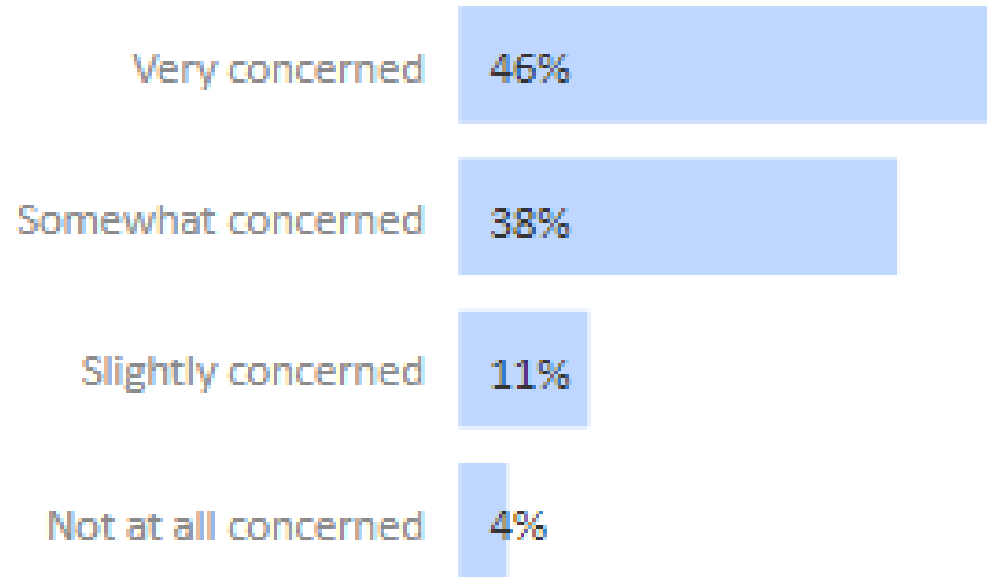
Do you feel well-equipped to support students with any trauma, grief, or stress they are experiencing?



How much do you agree with the following statement? I proactively address my own self-care needs as a teacher.



How concerned are you about colleagues' wellbeing right now?



Educators are concerned about their colleague's wellbeing right now.

Educator Wellbeing Open Responses

We asked educators what they find most rewarding and most challenging about the school year so far. Here are their top answers ordered by most mentions.

Most Rewarding

Building In-Person Relationships
w/ Students

Fast Student Growth
Seeing Colleagues
“Small Wins”

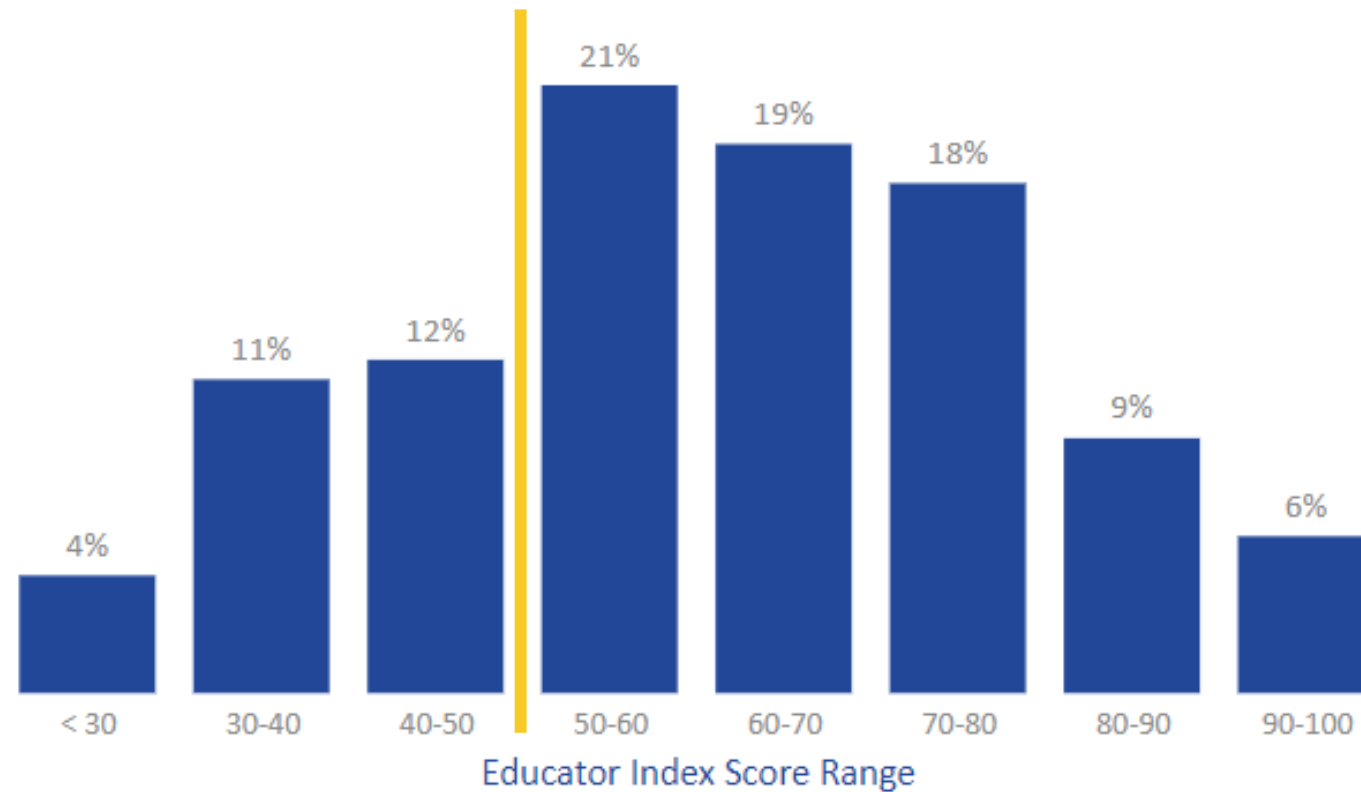
Most Challenging

Student Behavioral Health
Students Behind Academically
Staff Attendance/Substitutes

Personal Mental Health/Balance
COVID Protocol
Time Management
Admin Communication

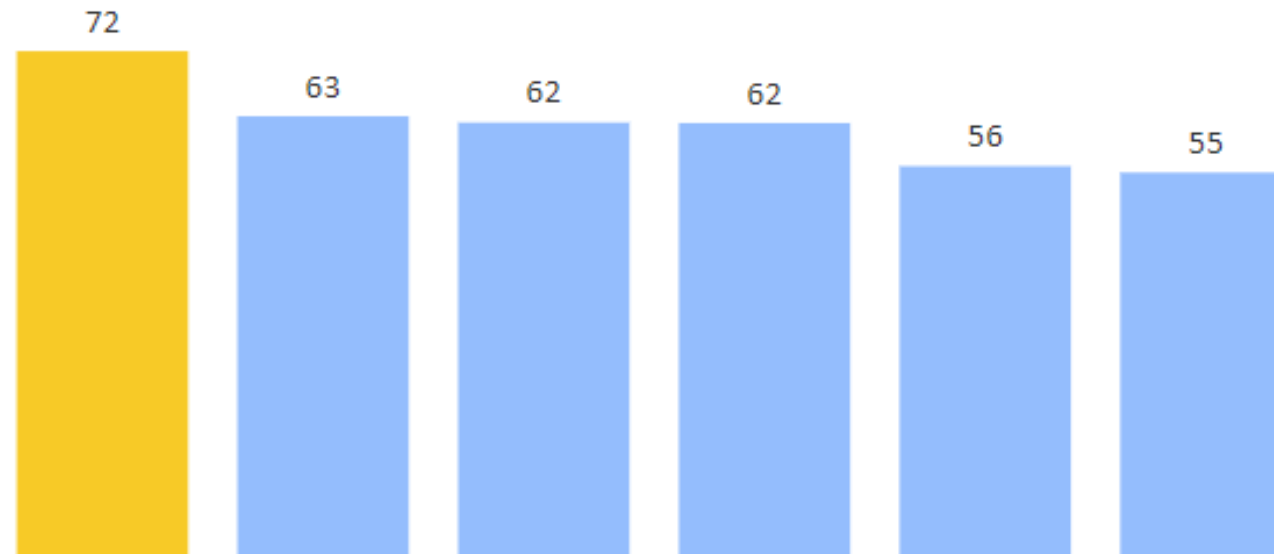
Educator Wellbeing Index Scores

We aggregate educator responses across key questions about their personal and professional wellbeing, focusing on favorable responses, into an overall index score.



Educator Wellbeing Index Scores by School

We aggregate educator responses across key questions about their personal and professional wellbeing, focusing on favorable responses, into an overall index score. The leader from the top scoring school is here today to talk about her strategies.



FALL 2021 WELLBEING DATA

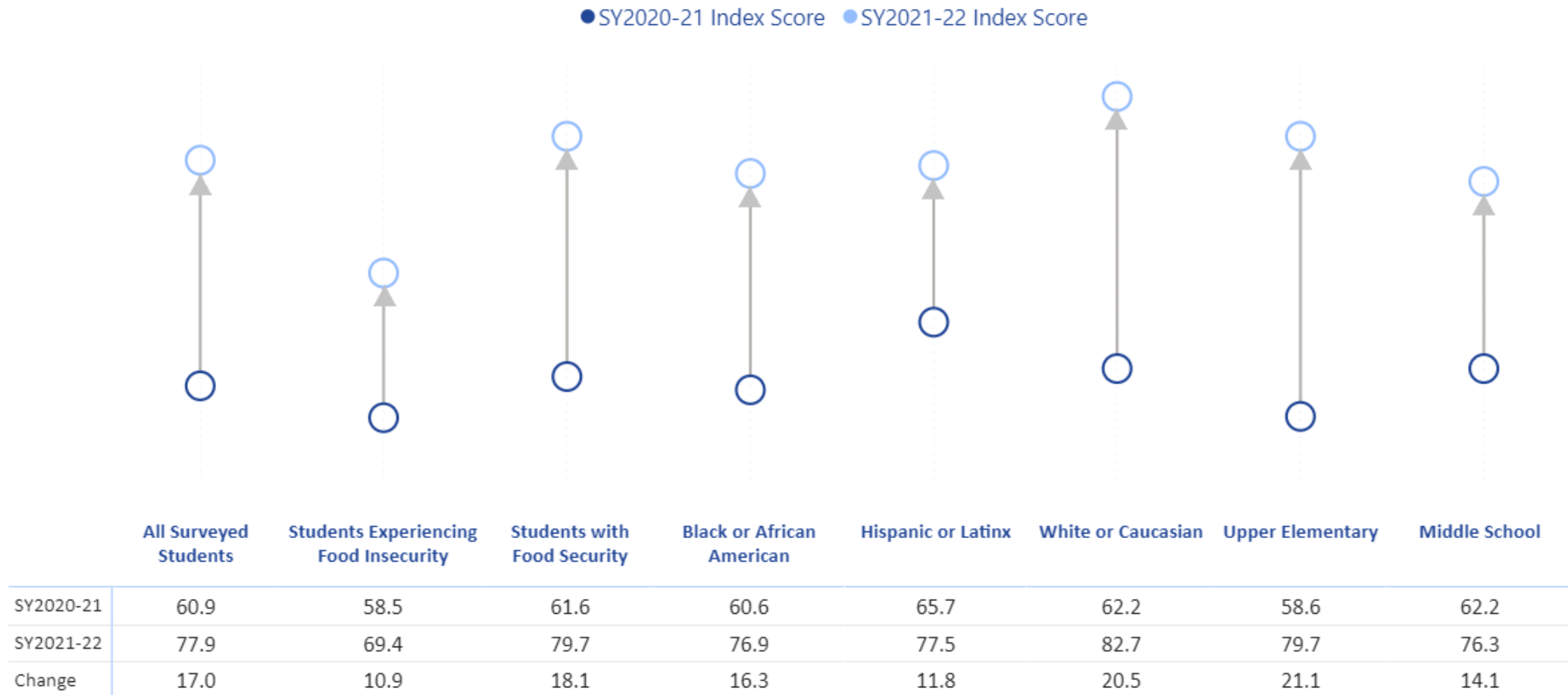
STUDENT RESULTS



Most students are feeling better about life now that they are back in-person, but some students still need additional wellbeing support.

Student Wellbeing Index Scores

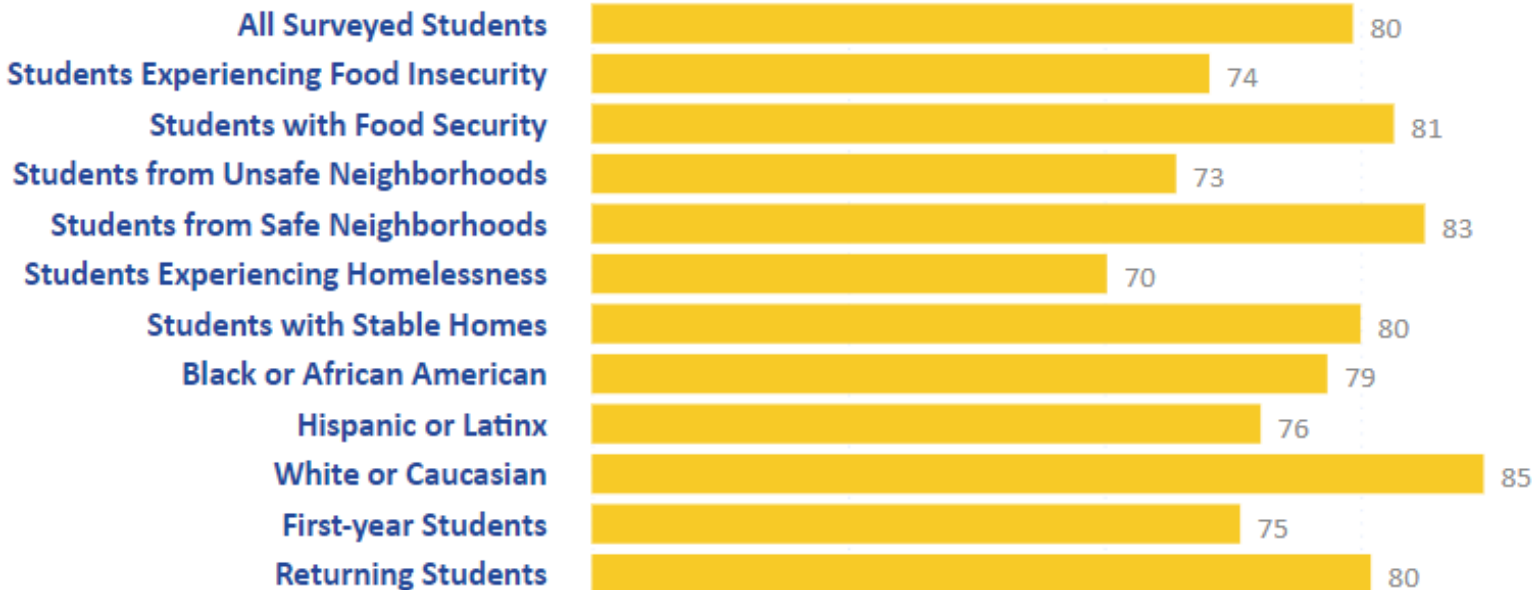
We also aggregate student responses across key questions about their wellbeing into an overall index score, which have improved since fall 2020



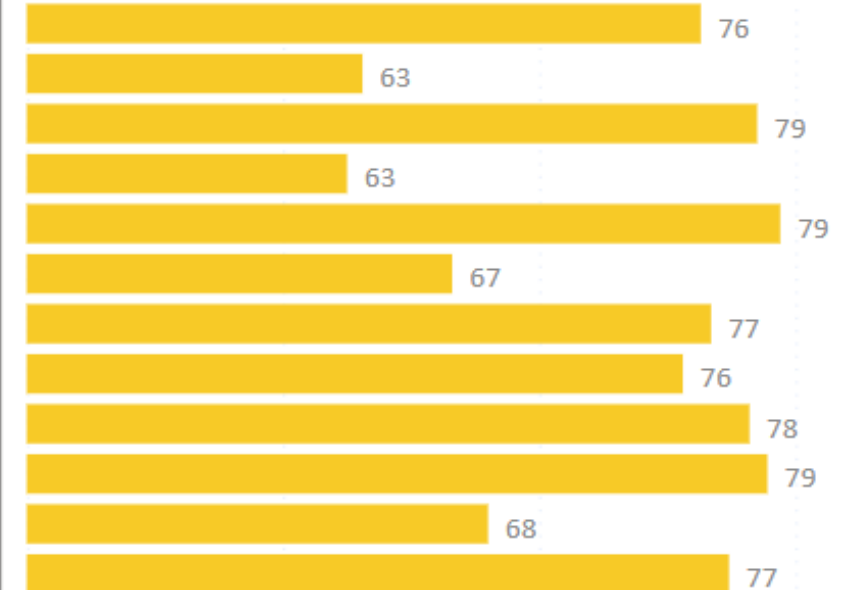
Student Wellbeing Index Scores

We find different levels of overall wellbeing for various student groups, especially in middle school. Students experiencing various risk factors and those who are new to school are struggling more often.

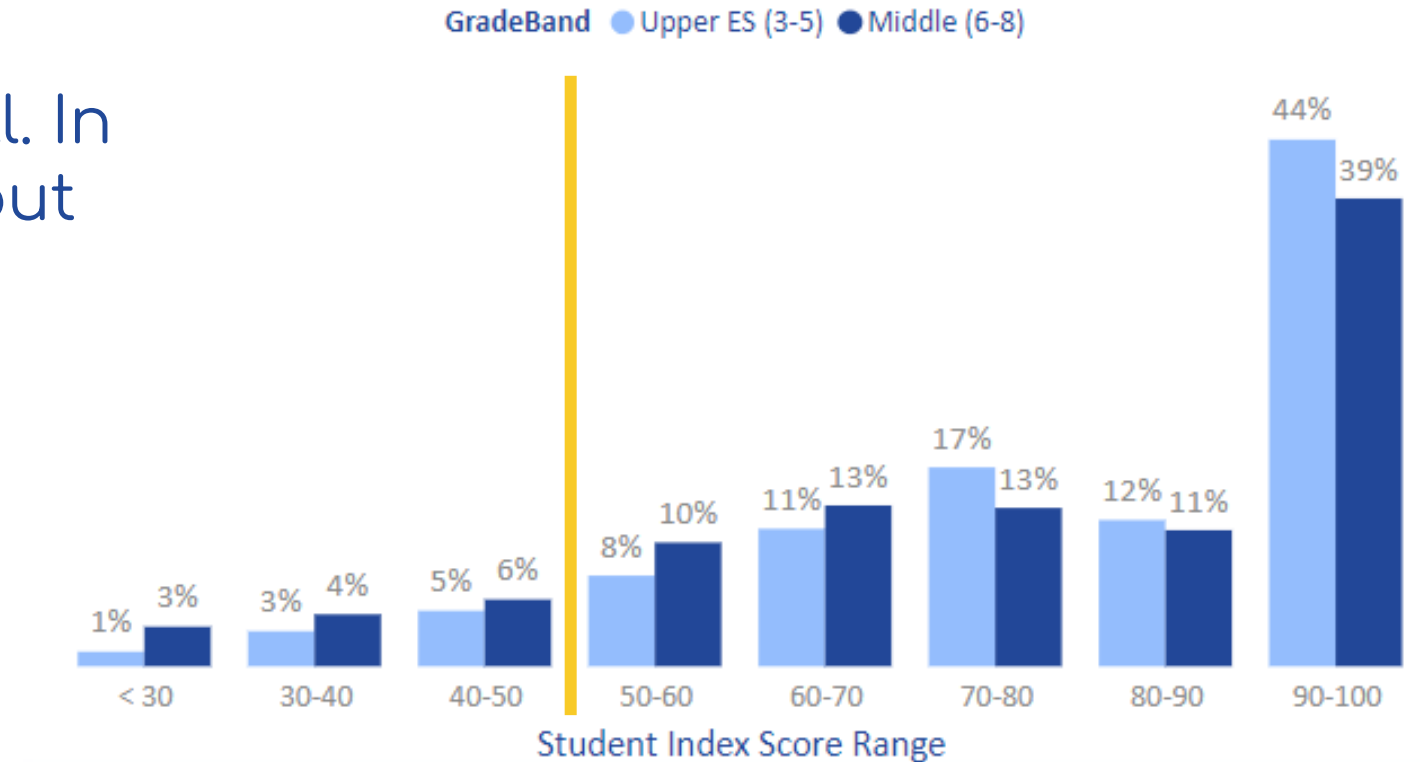
Upper ES (3-5)



Middle (6-8)



About 1 in every 10 elementary school students experienced significant wellbeing challenges as of this fall. In middle school, it was 1 out of every 8 students.

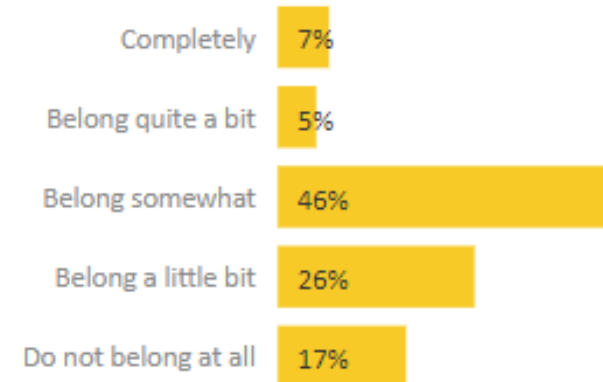


Why students with wellbeing index scores in the bottom quartile might be struggling

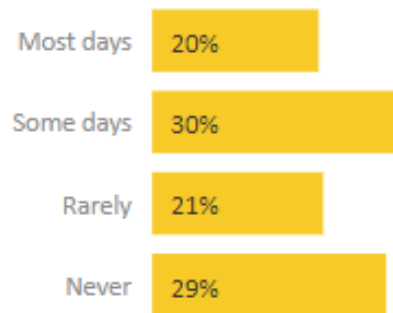
Since the beginning of the summer, have you experienced the loss of an adult or family member you care about?



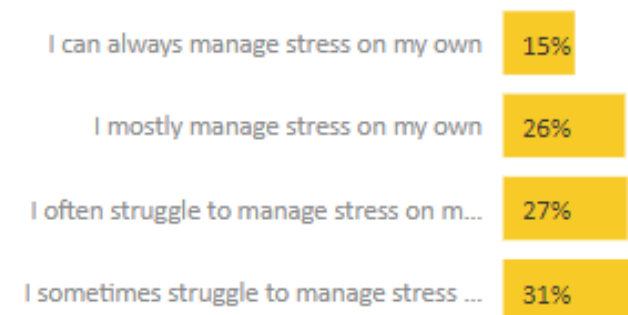
Overall, how much do you feel like you belong at your school?



Over the last couple weeks, how often did you see your friends outside of school?



How would you rate your ability to deal with stressful situations?



Student Wellbeing Open Responses

We asked students what they like the most and the least about the school year so far. Here are their top answers ordered by most mentions.

Like Most

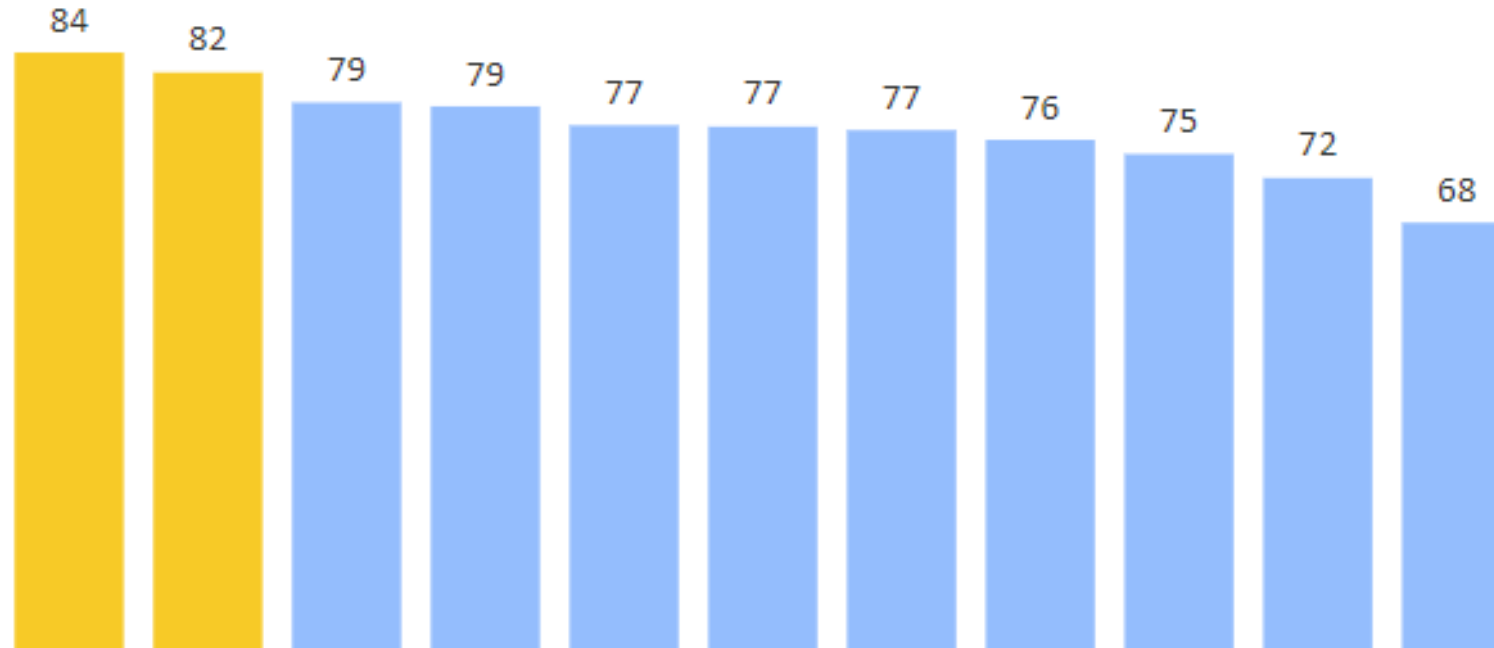
Seeing their friends
Teachers
Gym/Recess
Math or Reading
Arts/Specials
Sciences or Humanities
Extracurricular Activities

Like Least

Wearing a Mask
Bullying
Fighting
Whole Class Getting in
Trouble
Math
Lunch / Lunch Food

Student Wellbeing Index Scores

Leaders from the top two schools are here today to discuss their student wellbeing strategies.



MOVING THE NEEDLE

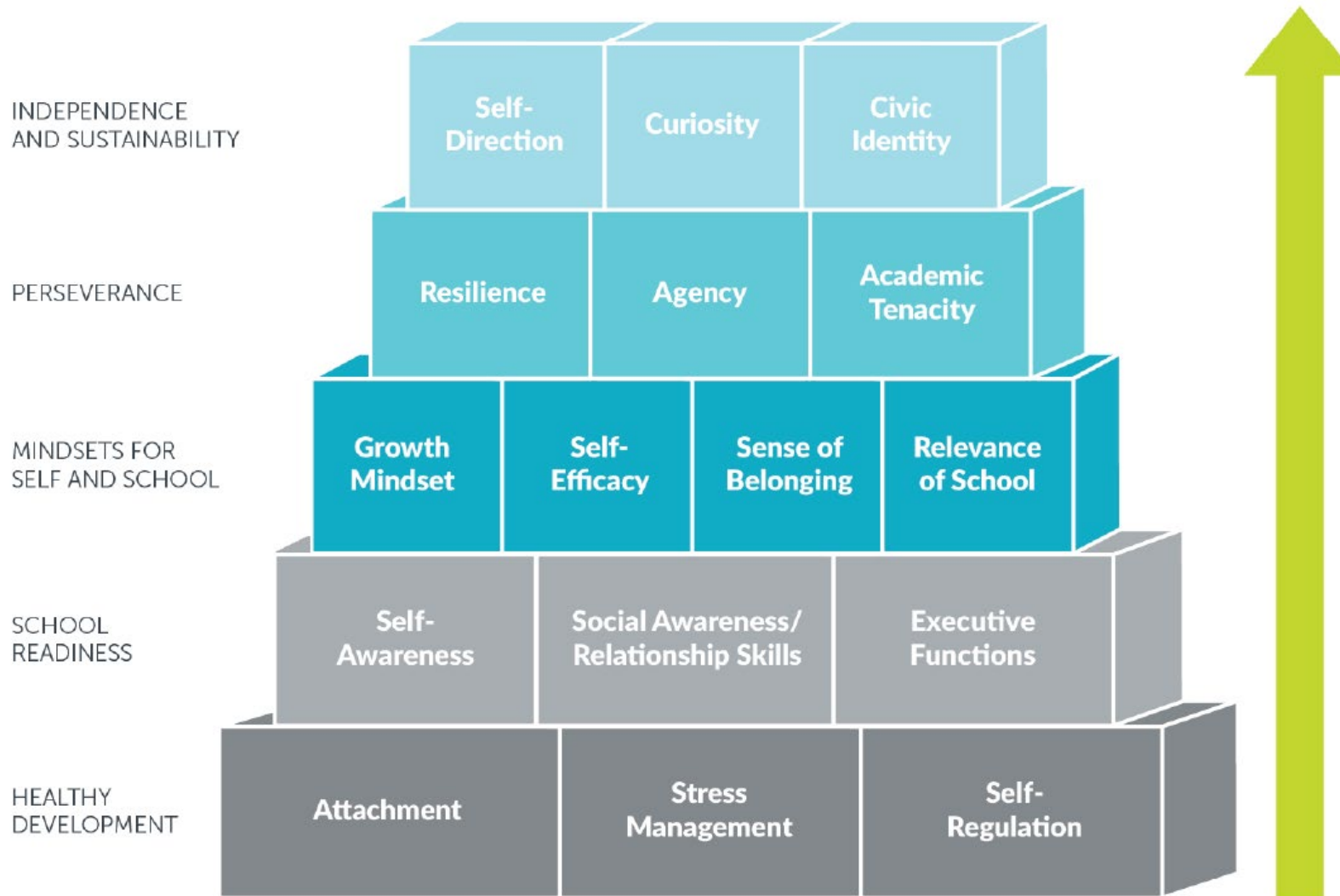
THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND AS
WE MOVE FORWARD



What Stands Out to Us as Possible Next Steps

- **Education is a “long game”** it may help to remind educators that the last two years have led to significant challenges, but for most students, we have years to resolve them. It may also be best to limit our use of terms like “crisis” which could heighten stress response mechanisms.
- **Joy, Creativity, and a Scientific Mindset** we are reminded of the kinds of things DC’s Bold Schools were doing pre-pandemic. They focused on joyful relationships and environments, allowed for creative solutions to challenges, and utilized a scientific mindset to better determine what worked and what didn’t to continuously improve faster.
- **Collaboration and Promising Practice** today we will hear great and promising strategies from our panelists and audience members. Feel free to use them and join us for future wellbeing surveys to continue sharing data in the spirit of collaborative improvement.

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LEARNING



Source:
Turnaround
For Children

Balancing the Art & Science of Education to Improve Quickly

ART OF TEACHING

- Connect with & inspire students
- Deep pedagogical knowledge
- Blend interests and curriculum
- Build family relationships
- Collaborate creatively

SCIENCE OF EDUCATION

- Deep analysis of root causes
- Collect valid & reliable data
- Review information frequently
- Utilize latest research
- Collaborate strategically



What's Next?

Join our Winter Survey. The survey window runs Feb. 14 - Mar. 11. Reach out to us and monitor OSSE and PCSB weekly comms for more info.