

## *Make Your Voice Heard*

Fall 2007

### Elementary School Level Survey Summary

During the 2007-2008 school year, nearly 28,000 students from 106 Jefferson County elementary schools participated in an anonymous student survey conducted by the district. This district-wide survey has been administered biennially since 1997-98. District students in grades 2 through 6 were asked to respond to 34 questions on a 3-point scale for primary grades ranging from “agree” to “disagree” or a 5-point scale for intermediate grades ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” This report provides a summary of the results from this survey with comparisons to results from prior student surveys where applicable.

#### **Demographics**

All schools in Jefferson County were invited to participate in the *Make Your Voice Heard* survey. Based on the total number of survey respondents, 91% of the entire Jeffco Schools student population in grades 2 through 6 participated in the survey. In order to collect demographic information, respondents were asked to indicate their gender, ethnicity, and grade level on the survey form.

- **Gender:** For those respondents who indicated their gender, the survey results mirrored the district elementary school population of 51% male and 49% female.
- **Ethnicity:** Elementary school students were asked to indicate their ethnicity from the following categories: American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic, and White (respondents could select more than one category if appropriate and those responses were coded as multiple ethnicities [“multi”] for this analysis). Seventy one percent of survey respondents identified themselves as White, 16% as Hispanic, 5% with multiple ethnicities, 4% as Asian, 2% as American Indian, and 2% as Black. Comparing survey results to district ethnic population data is difficult because the district does not collect data by the “multi” category.

All of the other ethnic categories reported in the survey appear reasonable in the context of district ethnic population counts except the American Indian category. Survey respondents who identified themselves as “American Indian” actually outnumber the district population for that ethnic group; therefore, slightly more than 27% (and perhaps as many as 35%<sup>1</sup>) of respondents who selected American Indian as their ethnic category incorrectly selected the American Indian category for the survey (most likely a result of students who self-identified as “American” and incorrectly selected the “American Indian” category). Because a significant number of responses on this survey are incorrectly attributed to the American Indian ethnic group, survey data disaggregated by the American Indian group is

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<sup>1</sup> Estimate is based on likely projected response rate for ethnic group at the elementary school level.

unstable at the district level.

- **Grade level:** All grade levels from 2 through 6 are included in this analysis, with approximately the same distribution as the district population.

### **Data Analyses of Survey Results**

The results for the 2007-2008 Make Your Voice Heard elementary school level survey are summarized in this report by the percent of student agreement with each survey item. These percentages are then compared across survey administration years, and between current gender, ethnicity, and grade level demographics. While gender comparisons are straightforward (between males and females), comparisons for ethnicity are limited to White/non-White students. For grade level comparisons, second and third grade student responses are combined as a primary grade level category and compared with fourth through sixth grade student responses.

To determine if the differences across survey administrations and between demographic groupings are meaningful, an effect size index is calculated and utilized for this report. This index provides a measure of practical significance (do the differences matter?) rather than statistical significance (are the differences the result of something other than luck?). Because measures of statistical significance are highly influenced by the number of people responding to the survey and the district surveys nearly 28,000 elementary school students, small differences between percentage points will exhibit statistical significance but may not necessarily be meaningful.

An effect size index, on the other hand, is not influenced by sample size and is simply a statistical transformation of the differences between two measures. The resulting value, noted by the symbol *h*, is generally classified into one of three levels to represent the meaningfulness of the difference. The thresholds for the three levels are:

- small difference: effect size index = .2 to below .5
- medium difference: effect size index = .5 to below .8
- large difference: effect size index = .8 and above

### **Organization of the Report**

This report is arranged by grouping specific items into categories of interest. The categories are curriculum and learning, teacher behavior and expectations, parent expectations and/or support, and school environment/safety. Responses of student agreement within these categories are then compared against responses from previous survey administrations.

Responses are also grouped and summarized by student demographics. Key differences in student agreement are compared for groups within each demographic category.

## Curriculum/Learning

In the area of curriculum and learning, a majority of elementary school respondents agree that they are advancing learning in a variety of content areas. Presented in the table below are the percentages of students who agree/strongly agree with each of the reported questions. Also provided is the percentage point difference from the previous administration of the survey, the effect size index of the difference, and the percentage of students who are neutral in their response to the item. Note that none of the differences have a small, medium or large effect size which indicates that these elementary district level survey results have not changed in any meaningful way from the previous survey.

I am	Percent who Agree/Strongly Agree	Percentage Point difference in Agreement from 2005-06	Effect Size of Difference	Percent Who Are Neutral
...learning to become a better reader.	88.9%	-0.2%	0.01	9.1%
...learning more about doing math.	87.3%	-0.6%	0.02	9.6%
...learning to become a better writer.	86.8%	-0.5%	0.01	10.7%
...learning more about P. E.	86.8%	0.3%	0.01	8.8%
...learning more about art.	84.8%	1.1%	0.03	10.1%
...learning more about doing science.	82.3%	0.9%	0.02	13.4%
...learning more about history and social studies.	81.8%	-0.8%	0.02	13.1%
...learning more about how to study.	81.2%	-1.2%	0.03	13.0%
...learning how to use computers and the internet.	79.4%	1.1%	0.03	12.7%
...learning more about music.	78.2%	-0.7%	0.02	13.2%
...learning how to find information in the library to help me learn.	72.1%	-1.8%	0.04	18.5%
Taking tests helps me learn.	79.2%	-1.2%	0.03	12.6%
My teacher uses computers to help me learn.	72.1%	2.2%	0.05	17.3%

- The largest changes in agreement from the 2005-2006 survey administration are in attitudes about teachers using computers to help students learn, student learning in art and in the use of computers and the internet. The percentage agreement for teachers' use of computers increased by 2 percentage points and the items about learning more in art and computer usage increased by 1.1 percentage points.
- The largest decrease in agreement was in response to the question "I am learning how to find information in the library to help me learn." For this question, 72% of the respondents agree/strongly agree, a decrease of 1.8 percentage points. Student agreement regarding their learning about history and social studies had the next largest decrease at -.8 percent. In fact, this was the second consecutive decrease in agreement to this question (-0.3 decrease in 2005-2006).

- There was a slight decrease in the percentage of students who express agreement with the statements “I am learning more about how to study” and “Taking tests helps me learn”. However, both questions had increased by more than 3 percentage points from the 2003-2004 to 2005-2006 survey administrations.

## Teachers

Of the five survey items that sought student opinions on teacher behavior and expectations, only one, “The teachers at my school like and care about me” display an increase in agreement (1.2%) from the 2005-2006 results. Over the last three administrations of the survey, the percentage agreement with this statement has increased from 89% to 92%.

All other items either maintain their percentage of student agreement or show slight increases or decreases. This year, a new survey item was added stating that “Each day, my teacher makes sure that I understand what we are learning and why we need to learn it.” Most respondents agree with this statement (89%) while 8 percent are neutral. The results for the teacher related data are presented in the table below. For this category, the differences in responses for this survey administration and the previous one are not meaningful as evidenced by effect size indices less than the minimal threshold of .2.

	<b>Percent who Agree/Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Percentage Point change in Agreement from 2005-06</b>	<b>Effect Size of Difference</b>	<b>Percent Who Are Neutral</b>
My teachers expect me to behave at school.	98.0%	-0.2%	0.01	1.7%
My school has teachers who help students.	95.7%	-0.2%	0.01	3.4%
The teachers at my school believe I can learn.	95.7%	-0.1%	0.00	3.5%
My teachers expect me to graduate from high school.	92.6%	-0.3%	0.01	6.2%
The teachers at my school like and care about me.	91.8%	1.2%	0.04	6.4%
The teachers at my school respect all students.	90.6%	0.0%	0.00	6.3%
Each day, my teacher makes sure that I understand what we are learning and why we need to learn it.	88.8%	-----	-----	8.0%

## Parents

Nearly all respondents indicate that their parents have high expectations of them. The results for the current respondents differ slightly from the 2005-2006 respondents:

	Percent who Agree/Strongly Agree	Percentage Point change in Agreement from 2005-06	Effect Size of Difference	Percent Who Are Neutral
My parents				
... Expect me to behave at school.	98.4%	-0.1%	<b>0.01</b>	1.3%
... Expect me to learn.	98.1%	-0.2%	<b>0.02</b>	1.6%
... Expect me to read at home.	93.4%	-0.6%	<b>0.03</b>	4.8%
... Help me learn.	91.2%	-1.5%	<b>0.05</b>	6.5%

## School Environment/Safety

Most respondents agree that they are learning to establish a respectful environment. The largest change was for the statement, “I am learning to solve conflicts with people.” The percentage of students who agree with this statement decreased by 1.5 percentage points; while this change is the largest, the magnitude of this change is minimal ( $h < .2$  as are all percentage point differences within this category). The results for the questions related to the establishment of a respectful environment are listed in the table below.

	Percent who Agree/Strongly Agree	Percentage Point change in Agreement from 2005-06	Effect Size of Difference	Percent Who Are Neutral
I am learning				
... to respect people who are different from me.	90.1%	-0.2%	<b>0.01</b>	7.6%
... to solve problems.	81.3%	-0.6%	<b>0.011</b>	14.1%
... to cooperate with all people.	81.1%	-0.6%	<b>0.02</b>	13.9%
... to solve conflicts with people.	74.4%	-1.5%	<b>0.03</b>	17.9%

Additionally, students were surveyed for their agreement on statements related to other measures of school environment and safety. The statement that elicited the lowest agreement from students was, “Students in my school respect each other”. Only 6 of 10 students positively agree/strongly agree with this statement; although 25% of the students are neutral in responding to this statement, the percentage of students who disagree/strongly disagree (14%) is the largest for all items of the elementary grade level survey. The results for the remaining environment/safety items are reported in the table below sorted by highest agree/strongly agree percentage. Note again that none of the percentage point differences are considered meaningful.

Elementary school level frequency distributions with trend data from previous *Make Your Voice Heard* survey results are provided as Appendix A of this report.

	Percent who Agree/Strongly Agree	Percentage Point change in Agreement from 2005-06	Effect Size of Difference	Percent Who Are Neutral
There is someone other than my teacher that I can go to for help in my school.	88.7%	-0.2%	<b>0.01</b>	6.8%
The adults at my school stop students they see bullying.	88.4%	0.2%	<b>0.01</b>	7.6%
I feel safe in my school.	86.2%	-0.5%	<b>0.02</b>	9.1%
My school is clean.	76.4%	-0.4%	<b>0.01</b>	15.9%
The students at my school tell an adult if they see bullying.	74.1%	0.2%	<b>0.00</b>	16.1%
Students in my school respect each other.	60.3%	-0.9%	<b>0.02</b>	25.4%

### Gender, Ethnicity, and Grade Level Comparisons

Appendices B through D provide gender, ethnic, and grade level frequency distributions for district-wide elementary level survey results.

- **Gender:** As in previous survey administrations, a higher percentage of female students tend to agree/strongly agree with the survey items than males. Overall, females agree/strongly agree more than males on 29 of 34 items (see Appendix B). While this is mostly consistent with results from the previous survey administration, the magnitude of these differences is not substantive ( $h < .2$  for all gender differences).
  - The percentage of females who agree/strongly agree that they are learning more in reading, writing, music, art, computer and internet usage, and how to find information in the library is generally between 2 and 6 percentage points higher than males. The only areas of learning where males have higher percentages of agreement than females are in P.E. and math (1.3 and .9 percentage points higher).
  - A higher percentage of females agree/strongly agree than males in regard to establishing a respectful environment at their school. In learning to solve conflicts and cooperating with all people, the percentage of females who agree/strongly agree is 5 and 3 percentage points higher, respectively, than males. The percentage of females who agree/strongly agree that they are learning to respect people who are different (91%) and learning to solve problems (82%) exceed the percentage of agreement for males by 2 percentage points (89% and 81%, respectively).
  - The only other statements in which the percentage of females who agree/strongly agree exceeds male agreement by more than 2 percentage points is in response to feeling safe in school (3 percentage points higher)

and whether there is someone other than a teacher that students can turn to for help (2.3 percentage points higher)

- **Ethnicity:** Minority students (i.e., students who did not identify as White) tend to have less agreement than their White peers across most of the survey questions (see Appendix C). Note that district-wide ethnic distribution analyses exclude 7% of total survey respondents who did not select an ethnicity category on the survey form.
  - For curriculum and learning categories, agreement by minority respondents (i.e., aggregated responses for all ethnic sub-groups except White) that they are learning in the areas of, science, and math and that they are learning to become better readers and writers tends to be 1 to 2 percentage points lower than White respondents. For the curriculum areas of music, physical education, computer usage and finding information in the library, minority respondents report more agreement than Whites, with differences ranging from 1 to 2 percentage points. Additionally, minority respondents agree more than White respondents that taking tests help them learn (3 percentage points higher).
  - Minority respondents show less agreement than their White counterparts that students in their school respect each other and that students in their schools report bullying to an adult (3.8 and 3.4 percentage points less, respectively). While these two areas represent the largest differences in agreement across all survey items, the magnitude of the differences was not found to be substantively significant.
  - More minority students feel that their teachers made sure they understood what they were learning on a daily basis (90.5 percent to 88.1 percent for White students). This is the only teacher-related item in which minority students are more positive than White students.

None of the above differences in minority and White student responses were determined to be meaningful in terms of effect sizes.

- **Grade level:** Because the survey form for second and third grade students differs slightly from the form used for fourth through sixth graders, it makes intuitive sense to group the grade levels based on survey form. In doing so, analysis of the survey results by grade level groupings reveal substantive differences in a few of the responses between the primary (second and third grade) and intermediate (fourth through sixth) grade levels. Overall, younger students tend to agree more with the survey items (see Appendix D).
  - In the area of curriculum and learning, the largest difference between primary and intermediate grade students is in agreement with the statement “Taking tests help me learn;” for this statement, 85% of second and third grade students agree as opposed 75% agreement for the older

grades. The next largest difference was in agreement with the statement “I am learning more about history and social studies” with younger students responding less positively (77%) than older students (86%). The effect size indices for these comparisons suggests a somewhat meaningful difference ( $h = .25$  and  $h = .23$ , respectively). Learning about art, music, physical education, finding information in a library and how to study reflect more agreement for younger students (between 2 and 7 percentage points higher) while learning more about math and science, becoming a better writer and the teacher’s use of computers as part of the learning process were higher in agreement for the older students (between 2 and 7 percentage points higher). For the aforementioned differences in agreement, however, effect size indices indicate that none were found to be meaningful.

- Younger students agree more that students in their school tell adults if they see bullying (84% to 68%) and that the adults at their school stop students they see bullying (93% to 85%). Both of these differences are considered meaningful with effect size indices of .38 and .25.
- Second and third grade students agree more that teachers at their school respect all students and like and care about them (94% to 89% and 94% to 90%, respectively) while these differences are the largest for teacher related survey items, the effect size indices are below the minimal threshold to be considered meaningful.

While student agreement generally decreases from the lowest grade level to the highest, from third grade to fourth grade the percent of agreement mostly *increases*. This is likely due to the fact that the survey form used for third grade students differs in the “extreme” response for positive agreement (Agree) than with the “extreme” response used in the fourth grade survey form (Strongly Agree). In responding to survey questions, there is tendency for participants to avoid selecting the extreme response; instead, participants will select the next, less extreme response option. For third graders, this option is “Neutral” and for fourth graders the option is “Agree”. Because the response option “Agree” for fourth graders is combined with the “Strongly Agree” responses, selecting the less extreme option has no impact on the reported results.

On the other hand, selecting the less extreme option for third grade students has a direct impact on the percentage of students who agree with any particular survey item. This is borne out by the lower agreement for third grade students compared to fourth grade students and is further illustrated by the fact that third grade students have a higher percentage of neutral responses for 33 of the 34 survey items. In fact, third grade students are more neutral in their responses than second and fifth grade students; even sixth grade student responses are less neutral, albeit for fewer items.

Overall, what this suggests is that third grade students are more discerning than second grade students when responding to survey items. Rather than

wholeheartedly endorsing agreement with an item they are apt to describe their opinion as neutral because that is the only option available. For future survey administrations, third grade students would be better served by a survey form allowing more options for responding (i.e., the 5-point scale used for the intermediate grade levels).

## *Make Your Voice Heard*

Fall 2007

### Middle School Level Survey Summary

During the 2007-2008 school year, approximately 12,000 middle level students from 33 Jefferson County schools participated in an anonymous student survey conducted by the district. Students were asked to respond to 50 questions on a 5-point scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” This summary of results from the middle level *Make Your Voice Heard* survey provides comparisons to previous student survey results where applicable (the survey has been administered biennially since 1997-98).

#### Demographics

All middle schools in Jefferson County were invited to participate in the *Make Your Voice Heard* survey. Based on the total number of survey respondents, approximately 87% of the entire Jeffco Schools population in seventh and eighth grades participated in the survey.<sup>2</sup> In order to collect demographic information, respondents were asked to indicate their gender, ethnicity, and grade level on the survey form.

- **Gender:** For those respondents who indicated their gender, survey results split evenly with half female and half male. In contrast, the district middle school population is slightly more male (51% male).
- **Ethnicity:** Middle school students were asked to indicate their ethnicity from the following categories: American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic, and White (respondents could select more than one category if appropriate and those responses were coded as multiple ethnicities [“multi”] for this analysis). About 7 in 10 (71%) survey respondents identified themselves as White, 15% as Hispanic, 7% with multiple ethnicities, 4% as Asian, 2% as American Indian, and 2% as Black. Comparing survey results to district ethnic population data is difficult because the district does not collect data by the “multi” category.
- **Grade level:** The total number of students reporting in grade levels 7 and 8 is consistent with the distribution of the district middle school student population.

#### Data Analyses of Survey Results

The results for the 2007-2008 *Make Your Voice Heard* middle school level survey are summarized in this report by students’ mean responses on the 5- point strongly agree/strongly disagree scale. As is conventional in most surveys utilizing a five-point scale, a higher mean score indicates stronger agreement or a positive response to a survey statement. The exceptions are for two items on the survey that are negatively worded. The statements, “Students can easily get alcohol at school” and “Students can easily get

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<sup>2</sup> Sixth grade students were included for three Jeffco middle schools that enroll 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.

drugs at school” are intended to elicit responses on the lower end of the five-point scale. For these items, mean scores closer to one indicate positive attitudes.

Mean responses are compared across survey administration years, and between current gender, ethnicity, and grade level demographics. While gender comparisons are straightforward (between males and females), comparisons for ethnicity are limited to White/non-White students. Because the number of sixth grade students surveyed is low, grade level comparisons will only be made between seventh and eighth grade students.

To determine if the differences across survey administrations and between demographic groupings are meaningful, an effect size index is calculated and utilized for this report. This index provides a measure of practical significance (do the differences matter?) rather than statistical significance (are the differences the result of something other than luck?). Because measures of statistical significance are highly influenced by the number of people responding to the survey and the district surveys over 12,000 middle school students, small differences between percentage points will exhibit statistical significance but may not necessarily be meaningful.

An effect size index, on the other hand, is not influenced by sample size and is simply a statistical transformation of the differences between two measures. The resulting value, noted by the symbol  $d$ , is generally classified into one of three levels to represent the meaningfulness of the difference. The thresholds for the three levels are:

- small difference: effect size index = .2 to below .5
- medium difference: effect size index = .5 to below .8
- large difference: effect size index = .8 and above

### **Organization of the Report**

Principal components analysis was used to classify most of the survey items into categories. This statistical procedure groups items together into unique categories and the resulting categories are named based on the overall context of its items. In cases where an item did not sort cleanly into a category, the item was added to an existing category based on the item context and the category theme. The process resulted in the identification of nine categorical themes:

- Curriculum - Core
- Curriculum -Electives and Learning
- Teacher Behaviors/Support
- School Climate
- Parent/Student Expectations
- Safety and Respect
- Parent Support
- Counselor Support
- Drugs and Alcohol

The results from the survey are reported separately for each of the categories and comparisons are made between current response means and response means from the previous survey administration.

In addition to the above categories, response means are compared separately for the demographic groupings of gender, ethnicity, and grade level.

### Curriculum - Core Courses

Reading, writing, math, science, and social study items were classified together as one category. These core curriculum areas all show increases in their mean responses compared to the previous survey administration.

- The largest increase in student agreement is in the area of science where the mean response increased from 4.25 to 4.29.
- The next highest increase is in the mean response to understanding history and/ or geography (increase of 0.03). This is the second consecutive increase for this item across the past two survey administrations.

The mean responses for all items in this category are reported in the table below. None of the increases are considered meaningful in terms of effects size.

	2007 Mean	2005 Mean	Mean Difference	Effect Size of Difference
I'm learning science by doing labs and activities.	4.29	4.25	0.04	0.05
I'm growing in my knowledge and use of math.	4.15	4.14	0.01	0.01
I'm learning to understand history and/or geography.	4.10	4.07	0.03	0.03
I'm learning to become a better writer.	4.06	4.05	0.01	0.01
I'm learning to become a better reader.	3.78	3.76	0.02	0.03

### Curriculum - Electives and Learning

Statistical analyses determined that nine items were related and formed a category of electives and student learning. Included in this category are items about CSAP testing, art, music, and physical education, teacher's technology use as part of the learning process, and use of the library to find information.

- Mean responses for the two CSAP-related items indicate that most students expect to do their best on the tests and believe their teachers expect the same (4.47 and 4.44, respectively).
- The largest increases are for items about the use of computers/technology. Mean

student agreement about learning to use technology and teachers' use of technology to help students learn show increases of more than .10 scale points.

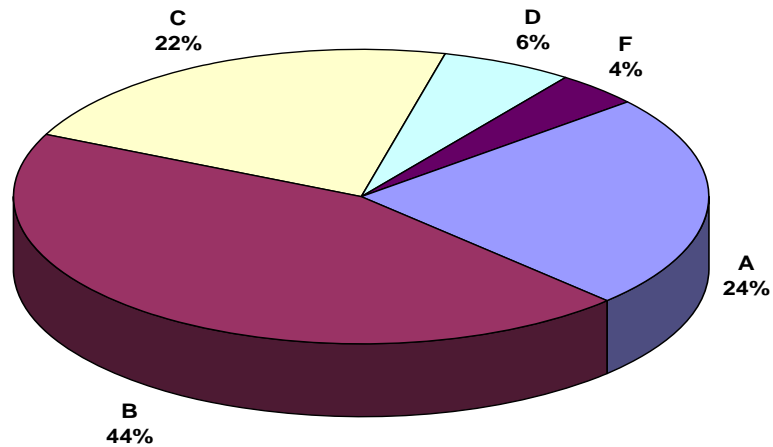
- While the mean response for learning to solve conflicts with people is the lowest value for this category, agreement for this item has increased twice over the last three survey administrations.

None of the differences reported are statistically meaningful and all mean response for the items in the electives and learning category are presented in the table below.

	<b>2007 Mean</b>	<b>2005 Mean</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Effect Size of Difference</b>
I make an effort to do my best on standardized tests like CSAP.	4.47	4.45	0.02	0.03
The teachers expect me to do my best on standardized tests like CSAP.	4.44	4.46	-0.01	-0.02
I'm learning to explore my interests in at least one elective area like music, art, P.E. or world language.	4.26	4.24	0.01	0.02
I'm learning to work effectively with others in groups.	3.90	3.85	0.05	0.06
I'm learning the skills I need to plan and set my personal goals for learning.	3.76	3.73	0.03	0.03
My teachers use technology to help me learn.	3.68	3.56	0.11	0.12
I'm learning how to use technology and the internet.	3.58	3.48	0.10	0.09
I'm learning how to find and use information in the library to help in my learning.	3.52	3.56	-0.04	-0.04
I'm learning to peacefully and productively solve conflicts with people.	3.47	3.37	0.09	0.09

Students were also asked to rate their school using the letter grades A through F. Most students (68%) gave their school a rating of “A” or “B”. This is the second consecutive increase for the “A/B” rating; the current percentage is 4 percentage points higher compared to the previous survey. This increase resulted in the decrease for the percentage of students rating their schools with a “C” or “D” (2 and 1 percentage point decreases, respectively). The overall responses are presented in the graph below.

How would you rate your school?



### Teacher Behavior and Support

Seven items were classified into a teacher related category. The content of these items ranged from teacher respect to teaching strategies. One item is newly added to the survey; students were asked their agreement on whether teachers made sure, on a daily basis, that they understood what they were learning and why.

- The highest mean response for this category was for the statement “The staff at my school respects people from all cultures and races.” Most students agreed with this statement (mean = 4.26) which increased slightly from the previous survey administration.
- On average, more students agree that they feel protected from harassment, intimidation, and discrimination. The mean response for this item increased by .06 points, the largest increase for this category.
- The largest decrease in mean response was for student agreement about homework assignments (-.10 mean decrease). There were also slight decreases in student agreement about teachers making learning interesting (3.51 to 3.46) and the availability of teachers to help students learn (4.08 to 4.05)

All response means for the teacher behavior and support category are presented in the table below. Note that all effect size indices are less than .20, indicating that all differences in means are not practically significant.

	<b>2007 Mean</b>	<b>2005 Mean</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Effect Size of Difference</b>
The staff at my school respects people from all cultures and races.	4.26	4.22	0.04	0.04
My teachers are available to help me learn during class and at other times.	4.05	4.08	-0.03	-0.04
My teachers listen to me.	3.81	3.80	0.01	0.01
Each day, my teachers make sure that I understand what we are learning and why we need to learn it.	3.74			
I feel protected from harassment, intimidation and discrimination in my school.	3.52	3.46	0.06	0.05
My teachers make learning interesting.	3.46	3.51	-0.05	-0.05
Homework assignments help me to practice what is being taught in my classes.	3.45	3.55	-0.10	-0.09

### Parent and Students Expectations

The six items classified under parent and student expectations have some of the highest mean response rates for all survey items. Almost all students agree that it is important to graduate from high school and that their parents expect them to do so with mean scores of 4.75 and 4.74. Although the means have slightly decreased from the previous survey, they still represent more than 95% student agreement.

- Students also believe that their parents expect them to do well in school and to cooperate with teachers (4.70 and 4.57 mean scores, respectively).

The mean responses for all items are reported in the table below.

	<b>2007 Mean</b>	<b>2005 Mean</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Effect Size of Difference</b>
My parents/guardians expect me to graduate from high school.	4.75	4.76	-0.01	-0.02
It's important for me to graduate from high school.	4.74	4.75	-0.01	-0.01
My parents/guardians expect me to do well in school.	4.70	4.72	-0.01	-0.02
My parents/guardians expect me to cooperate with teachers and follow school rules.	4.57	4.57	-0.01	-0.01
I make an effort to learn.	4.37	4.37	-0.01	-0.01
I'm primarily responsible for my learning.	4.28	4.29	-0.01	-0.01

### School Climate

There are 13 items classified as representing school climate. Topics such as school cleanliness, staff expectations/behaviors, student opportunities, and academic preparation fall within this category and receive mostly positive responses from students.

- The items related to student beliefs about school staff expectations of achievement, behavior, and fairness have the highest positive responses in the school climate category with mean scores of 4 or higher.
- Agreement among students that the school staff is helping them to become responsible citizens or that the opportunities to participate in clubs and activities

are adequate have the lowest mean scores among the thirteen items in the school climate category (mean = 3.75 and 3.71, respectively). Even so, mean scores for these items show improvement over the previous survey responses.

- For this survey administration, students report greater agreement that their school building is well maintained. Compared to the last survey, the mean response for this question improved by .15 scale points.

All mean scores for the school climate items are listed in the table below.

	2007 Mean	2005 Mean	Mean Difference	Effect Size of Difference
My teachers expect me to graduate from high school.	4.40	4.39	0.01	0.01
My school has clear rules for behavior.	4.20	4.17	0.03	0.03
School staff has high expectations for me to learn.	4.15	4.12	0.03	0.04
Staff members do not tolerate bullies and students who threaten others in my school.	4.12	4.13	0.00	0.00
I have at least one adult in this school I can go to when I need help.	4.12	4.13	-0.01	-0.01
My school building is well maintained and in good repair.	4.02	3.87	0.15	0.14
The staff at my school challenges me to do my best.	4.01	4.00	0.02	0.02
I'm treated respectfully by the staff at this school.	3.94	3.89	0.05	0.05
I'm treated fairly by administrators.	3.91	3.86	0.05	0.05
I feel safe in my school.	3.83	3.80	0.03	0.03
I will need to know most of the things my school is teaching when I get out into the real world.	3.82	3.80	0.02	0.02
School staff is helping me become a responsible citizen in my community.	3.75	3.68	0.07	0.07
I'm satisfied with the opportunities I have to participate in clubs and activities outside of class.	3.71	3.69	0.02	0.02

### Safety and Respect

Of the four items classified in the safety and respect category, the largest mean response was for the statement “I’m respectful of people from other cultures and people who are different from me.” This item slightly decreased from the previous survey administration although the other items in this category improved somewhat over the same time period. Note in the following table that the effect size indices for all mean differences are less than .20 indicating the changes observed are not statistically meaningful.

	<b>2007 Mean</b>	<b>2005 Mean</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Effect Size of Difference</b>
I'm respectful of people from other cultures and people who are different from me.	4.59	4.60	-0.01	-0.02
I would inform an adult in my school about drugs or alcohol at school or school related activities.	3.94	3.91	0.03	0.03
I would inform an adult in my school about bullies and students who threaten others.	3.68	3.66	0.01	0.01
If I heard about a threat to student safety at my school, I would feel comfortable reporting it to an adult in my school.	3.62	3.57	0.05	0.04

### **Counselor Support, Parent Support, and Drugs and Alcohol**

Two items each are classified into three separate categories. Because the number of items for each is minimal, they are reported here together.

- While the mean responses for the drug and alcohol items have the highest decreases among the six items, these actually represent a positive change in student response. Essentially, fewer students, on average, agree that drugs and alcohol are easily obtained at their school.

Below are response means and effect size indices for the six items.

	<b>2007 Mean</b>	<b>2005 Mean</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Effect Size of Difference</b>
<b>Counselor Support</b>				
I can meet individually with a counselor when necessary.	3.98	3.99	-0.01	-0.01
I get useful help from my school counselor when I need it.	3.73	3.74	0.00	0.00
<b>Parent Support</b>				
My parents/guardians ask me about school and what I'm learning.	4.00	4.05	-0.05	-0.05
My parents/guardians help me with homework.	3.89	3.91	-0.02	-0.02
<b>Drugs and Alcohol</b>				
Students can easily get alcohol at school.	2.10	2.18	-0.08	-0.07
Students can easily get drugs at school.	2.33	2.43	-0.10	-0.08

Middle school level mean response scores and frequency distributions with trend data from the 2005-2006-2004 *Make Your Voice Heard* survey are provided as Appendix F to this report.

### **Gender, Ethnicity, and Grade Level Comparisons**

Appendices G through I provide gender, ethnic, and grade level frequency distributions and mean response scores for district-wide middle school level survey results.

- **Gender:** Similar to other levels, overall cross-tabulation analyses by gender indicate that females respond more positively (with greater agreement) than males

in general (see Appendix G). This trend holds across survey years. Note that district-wide gender analyses exclude 4% of total survey respondents who did not select male or female on the survey form.

- Of the 50 survey items seeking student agreement, females have higher mean response scores than males in 43 of the items.
- For curriculum and learning items, males report higher agreement than females in learning more about math (4.17 to 4.15), history/geography (4.13 to 4.07) and in the use of computers and the internet (3.61 to 3.56)
- The largest gender difference is in agreement about homework assignments. On average, females agree more that homework helps them practice what is taught in class (3.58 to 3.34). The effect size index for this difference ( $d = .29$ ) indicates that it is a meaningful difference.
- Other areas in which female have substantively higher mean scores than males is in agreement on learning to be a better writer (4.12 to 4.00,  $d = .21$ ) and being respectful of people from other cultures (4.68 to 4.50,  $d = .26$ )
- **Ethnicity:** Overall, cross-tabulation analyses by ethnicity reflect less positive responses (less agreement) from minority respondents compared to White respondents, especially for American Indian, Black, and multiple ethnicity (“multi”) groups (see Appendix H).
  - While all ethnic minority students have similar agreement with White students about becoming better readers, Black and American Indian students have substantively lower mean response scores than White students in agreeing that they are learning more in math and writing ( $d > .2$ ). For learning more about history/geography, Black students have substantively lower mean response scores than Whites while American Indian students had substantively lower mean scores in responding to learning more about science. The mean responses for all ethnic groups are presented below for these content areas.

	Am. Ind.	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi	White
I'm learning to become a better writer.	3.90*	4.05	3.89*	4.02	3.95	4.09
I'm growing in my knowledge and use of math.	3.94*	4.24	3.88*	4.04	4.09	4.20
I'm learning science by doing labs and activities.	4.11*	4.30	4.17	4.22	4.27	4.33
I'm learning to understand history and/or geography.	3.98	4.14	3.91*	4.01	4.15	4.13

\* Difference in mean scores with White students considered small, statistically meaningful ( $d > .2$ )

- Respondent perceptions about teachers and staff differ by ethnicity as well. Black, Hispanic, American Indian, and multi-ethnic students had

lower mean scores than White students in response to the statement “My teachers are available to help me learn during class and at other times.” The differences for the Blacks, American Indian, and multi-ethnic students were statistically meaningful, with effect size indices exceeding .2.

- The mean response scores for all the minority students, including multi-ethnic students, were substantively different than Whites for the statement, “The staff at my school respects people from all cultures and races.” All the effect size indices for the groups exceeded .2, indicating a small but meaningful difference. The mean scores for all ethnic groups are presented below only for teacher/staff items in which more than one ethnic minority group had scores that were substantively lower than White students.

	Am. Ind.	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi	White
My teachers are available to help me learn during class and at other times	3.76*	4.14	3.70*	4.03	3.95	4.08
My teachers listen to me	3.63*	3.87	3.46*	3.74	3.61*	3.86
The staff at my school respects people from all cultures and races	3.96*	4.09*	3.88*	4.03*	4.07*	4.35
I'm treated respectfully by the staff at this school	3.74*	4.00	3.71*	3.90	3.85	3.96

\* Difference in mean scores with White students considered small, statistically meaningful ( $d > .2$ )

- Minority respondents other than Asians are less in agreement than White students for some issues related to school safety. American Indian, Black, and multi-ethnic students report feeling less safe in schools than White students. The mean differences for these students compared to Whites are small and not considered statistically meaningful.
- Compared to White students, American Indian, Black, Hispanic, and multi-ethnic students have lower mean scores for the statements “I would inform an adult in my school about drugs or alcohol at school or school related activities” and “I would inform an adult in my school about bullies and students who threaten others.” These mean scores are considered statistically different than White students ( $d > .2$ )
- **Grade Level:** Due to the low counts of students for grade 6, this summary will only compare grades 7 and 8. Consistent with trend data, eighth grade students tend to respond less positively (with less agreement) than seventh grade students (see Appendix I). Note that district-wide grade level distribution analyses exclude 8% of total survey respondents who did not select a grade level on the survey form.
  - The largest difference in mean response scores between seventh and eighth grade students is in response to the statements “I would inform an

adult in my school about drugs or alcohol at school or school related activities” and “I would inform an adult in my school about bullies and students who threaten others.” These differences are small but statistically meaningful ( $d = .39$  and  $.30$ , respectively)

- Overall, seventh graders had higher mean response scores than eighth graders in 47 of the 50 survey items. Of these items, 20 were substantively higher for seventh graders. ( $d > .2$ )

## *Make Your Voice Heard*

Fall 2007

### High School Level Survey Summary

During the 2007-2008 school year, nearly 21,000 students from 26 Jefferson County high schools participated in an anonymous student survey conducted by the district. Students were asked to respond to 49 questions on a 5-point scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” This summary of results from the high school level *Make Your Voice Heard* survey provides comparisons to previous student survey results where applicable (the survey has been administered biennially since 1997-98).

#### **Demographics**

All high schools in Jefferson County were invited to participate in the *Make Your Voice Heard* survey. Based on the total number of survey respondents, approximately 72% of the entire Jeffco Schools population in grades 9 through 12 participated in the survey. In order to collect demographic information, respondents were asked to indicate their gender, ethnicity, and grade level on the survey form.

- **Gender:** For those respondents who indicated their gender, survey results are similar to the district’s population (females were slightly over-represented on the survey): 50.6% female and 49.4% male.
- **Ethnicity:** High school students were asked to identify their ethnicity/race by selecting from the following categories: American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic, and White (note that respondents who selected more than one category are coded as multiple ethnicities [“multi”] for this analysis). Because district population data for student ethnicity do not include this “multi” category, exact comparisons between survey and district demographic data are not possible.

The distribution for most ethnic categories reported in the survey appears reasonable in the context of district ethnic population counts except two groups. First, Hispanic counts are somewhat low with approximately 56% of the Hispanic high school student population responding to the survey; the “multi” category may account for some of the Hispanic population. Second, the response rate for American Indian students was at 96% while other ethnic response rates (other than Hispanic) are between 60 and 80 percent. In previous years, the response rate for American Indian students has exceeded 100% and was likely due to students incorrectly selecting the American Indian category. As a result, survey data disaggregated by the American Indian group is somewhat unstable at the district level.

**Grade level:** Of those students who responded to the survey, 15% did not identify a grade level. The response rate also progressively declines as the grade level increases (e.g., about 70% of the total district student population in grade 9

responded, while nearly 63% of the total district student population in grade 12 responded).

### **Data Analyses of Survey Results**

As with the middle school survey, the results for the 2007-2008 *Make Your Voice Heard* high school level survey are summarized in this report by students' mean responses on the 5- point strongly agree/strongly disagree scale, with a higher mean indicating positive agreement. Again, like the middle school survey, the statements, "Students can easily get alcohol on campus" and "Students can easily get drugs on campus" are intended to elicit responses on the lower end of the five-point scale. Additionally, the statements, "Some groups of students in my school are treated with favoritism by some of the staff" and "I have seen or personally experienced disrespect in my school because of culture or race" are phrased in such a way as to generate lower response scores. For these items, mean scores closer to one indicate more positive attitudes.

Mean responses are compared across survey administration years, and between current gender, ethnicity, and grade level demographics. While gender comparisons are straightforward (between males and females), comparisons for ethnicity are limited to White/non-White students.

To determine if the differences across survey administrations and between demographic groupings are meaningful, an effect size index is calculated and utilized for this report. This index provides a measure of practical significance (do the differences matter?) rather than statistical significance (are the differences the result of something other than luck?). Because measures of statistical significance are highly influenced by the number of people responding to the survey and the district surveys nearly 21,000 students, small differences between percentage points will exhibit statistical significance but may not necessarily be meaningful.

An effect size index, on the other hand, is not influenced by sample size and is simply a statistical transformation of the differences between two measures. The resulting value, noted by the symbol  $d$ , is generally classified into one of three levels to represent the meaningfulness of the difference. The thresholds for the three levels are:

- small difference: effect size index = .2 to below .5
- medium difference: effect size index = .5 to below .8
- large difference: effect size index = .8 and above

## **Organization of the Report**

Principal components analysis was used to classify most of the survey items into categories. This statistical procedure groups items together into unique categories and the resulting categories are named based on the overall context of the items. In cases where an item did not sort cleanly into a category, the item was added to an existing category based on the item context and the category theme. The process resulted in the identification of eight categorical themes:

- Curriculum
- Learning
- Teachers
- Expectations
- Respectful Climate/Environment
- Safety
- Counselors
- Opportunities

The results from the survey are reported separately for each of the categories and comparisons are made between current response means and response means from the previous survey administration.

In addition to the above categories, response means are compared separately for the demographic groupings of gender, ethnicity, and grade level.

## **Curriculum**

Survey items related to the content areas of English language arts, math, science, social studies and electives are all classified into one category.

- The largest increase in student agreement is in the area of English language arts where the mean response increased from 3.99 in 2005-2006 to 4.11 this school year. Student agreement with this statement has increased for two consecutive survey administrations (3.90 to 3.99 from 2003-2004 to 2005-2006).
- The next highest increase is in the mean response to getting a quality education in history and social studies and in math (increase of 0.05). Student agreement for receiving a quality education in these content areas has also increased over the last three survey administrations. In fact, all content areas classified in this category have increased slightly, but consistently, since the 2003-2004 survey administration.

The mean responses for all items in this category are reported in the table below. The effect size indices presented below reveal that none of the changes since the last survey are meaningful.

	<b>2007 Mean</b>	<b>2005 Mean</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Effect Size of Difference</b>
I'm getting a quality education in at least one elective area like art, P.E., music, drama, computer technology or business at my school.	4.21	4.20	0.01	0.00
I'm getting a quality education in history and social studies at my school.	4.13	4.08	0.05	0.06
I'm getting a quality education in English language arts at my school.	4.11	3.99	0.12	0.14
I'm getting a quality education in science at my school.	4.00	3.97	0.03	0.04
I'm getting a quality education in math at my school.	3.96	3.91	0.05	0.05
I'm getting a quality education in world languages at my school.	3.66	3.63	0.03	0.03

## Learning

Five survey items were categorized as learning components.

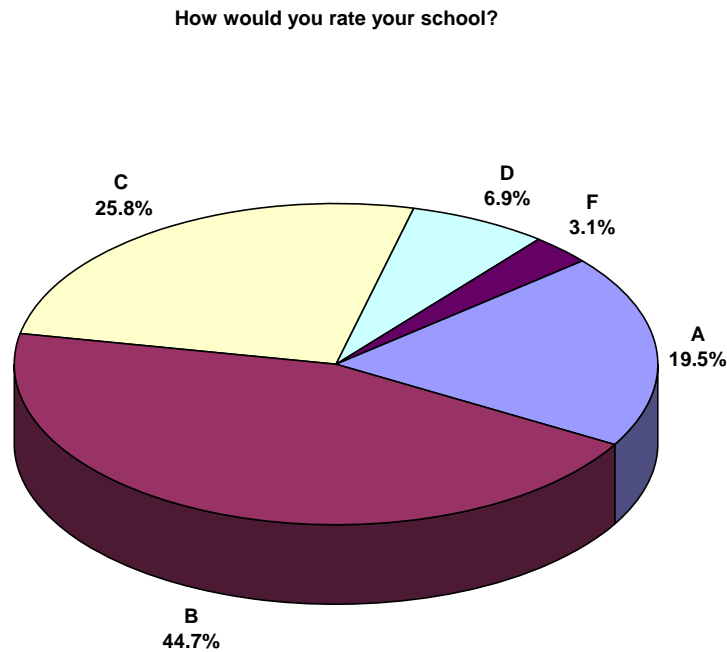
- The largest mean response increase for the items in this category is for the statement “My teachers use technology to help me learn.” From the previous survey, student agreement for this item increased from 3.49 to 3.74. The effect size index for this change was .27, signifying a somewhat meaningful change.
- The mean response for a related statement, “I'm learning how to use technology and the internet”, also increased from the previous survey (3.35 to 3.49). This statement, along with the previous one, was a newly added question for the 2005-2006 survey.
- Two other statements about setting personal goals and satisfaction with career planning have consistently increased since the 2003-2004 survey.

None of the differences reported are statistically meaningful. All mean responses for the items in the learning category are presented in the table below.

	<b>2007 Mean</b>	<b>2005 Mean</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Effect Size of Difference</b>
My teachers use technology to help me learn.	3.74	3.49	0.25	0.27
I'm learning the skills I need to plan and set my personal goals for learning.	3.63	3.56	0.08	0.08
I'm learning how to use technology and the internet.	3.49	3.35	0.14	0.13
I'm satisfied with the career preparation and work experience opportunities offered through my school.	3.45	3.36	0.09	0.08
I'm learning how to find and use information in the library to help in my learning.	3.35	3.30	0.04	0.04

Students were also asked to rate their school using the letter grades A through F. Most students (64%) gave their school a rating of “A” or “B.” This is an increase of more than 6 percentage points compared to the 2005-2006 survey. In fact, since 2003-2004, the percentage of students rating the high school with either an “A” or “B” has increased by more than 8 percentage points. The overall responses for 2007-2008 are presented in the

following graph.



### **Teacher Behavior and Support**

Five items were classified into a teacher related category. The items sought opinions for topics such as whether students believed their school had enough skilled teachers, if the teachers were available to them on a regular basis, or if what was taught would prepare students for the real world.

- Most students agree their schools had enough skilled and effective teachers and that their teachers were available to help them (mean score = 3.93 and 3.91, respectively).
- A new item was added to this year's survey form. Students were asked their level of agreement with the statement, "Each day, my teachers make sure that I understand what we are learning and the purpose for learning." The mean response for this item was 3.51, indicating that student opinions, on average, fall between neutral and agreement.

The response means for the five teacher category items are presented in the following table. For this category, all item effect size indices are less than .2, meaning all differences in means are not practically significant.

	<b>2007 Mean</b>	<b>2005 Mean</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Effect Size of Difference</b>
My school has enough skilled and effective teachers to support a high quality education.	3.93	3.82	0.11	0.12
My teachers are available to help me learn during class and at other times.	3.91	3.90	0.01	0.01
Each day, my teachers make sure that I understand what we are learning and the purpose for learning.	3.51			
Homework assignments help me to practice what is being taught in my classes.	3.47	3.47	0.01	0.01
I will need to know most of the things my school is teaching when I get out into the real world.	3.25	3.19	0.05	0.05

## Expectations

Overall students express agreement with the eight items identified for the expectations category. This category contains items which state the expectations of teachers, parents, and the students themselves along academic and behavioral issues.

- Students mostly agree that it was important for them to graduate from high school (mean = 4.67) and that their teachers expect them to graduate from high school (mean = 4.34).
- Almost all of the item mean responses increased slightly from the previous survey. However, none were found to be practically significant.

The mean responses for all items are reported in the table below.

	<b>2007 Mean</b>	<b>2005 Mean</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Effect Size of Difference</b>
It's important for me to graduate from high school.	4.67	4.67	0.00	-0.01
My teachers expect me to graduate from high school.	4.34	4.28	0.06	0.07
My parent/guardians expect me to cooperate with teachers and follow school rules.	4.34	4.32	0.03	0.04
My parents/guardians support my learning and other school activities.	4.32	4.30	0.03	0.03
The teachers expect me to do my best on standardized tests like CSAP and ACT.	4.22	4.17	0.05	0.06
I make an effort to learn.	4.21	4.17	0.04	0.05
I make an effort to do my best on standardized tests like CSAP and ACT.	4.18	4.14	0.04	0.04
I'm primarily responsible for my own learning.	4.16	4.14	0.03	0.03

## Respectful Climate

There are 10 items classified to represent a respectful school climate. The items mostly covered issues of fairness and respect at a school; including fairness and respect from teachers/staff towards students, student attitudes towards each other, and other factors

that contribute to an overall stable school environment.

- Students mostly agree that they are respectful of people from other cultures or people who are different from them (mean = 4.44). The mean response for this item has increased slightly from the past survey.
- Student agreement about having a school that is well-maintained and in good repair increased the most from the past survey (.17 increase). Also, student opinions about being treated fairly by administrators, feeling protected from harassment, feeling respected by all staff, and becoming a responsible citizen in their community have increased by more than .10 mean score points.
- While student perceptions about favoritism have decreased somewhat since the last survey administration, the mean score of 3.65 suggests that students, on average, agree more that this occurs rather than state a neutral opinion.
- The statement, “I have seen or personally experienced disrespect in my school because of culture or race” was the lowest scored item in this category. Because this statement was phrased to elicit a lower score, the item’s ranking can be interpreted as somewhat positive. In fact, this item has slightly decreased in the past year.

All mean scores for the respectful school climate items are listed in the table below. While these items generated some of the largest mean differences across categories, none of the differences were found to be practically significant.

	<b>2007 Mean</b>	<b>2005 Mean</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Effect Size of Difference</b>
I am respectful of people from other cultures and people who are different from me.	4.44	4.43	0.01	0.01
The staff at my school respects people from all cultures and races.	3.96	3.88	0.07	0.07
This is an accepting, tolerant school where I feel welcome.	3.75	3.67	0.08	0.08
My school building is well maintained and in good repair.	3.71	3.54	0.17	0.15
Some groups of students in my school are treated with favoritism by some of the staff.	3.65	3.71	-0.07	-0.06
I'm treated fairly by administrators.	3.58	3.45	0.13	0.12
I feel protected from harassment, intimidation, and discrimination in my school.	3.52	3.42	0.11	0.10
School staff is helping me become a responsible citizen in my community.	3.52	3.42	0.11	0.11
I'm listened to and respected by all staff in my school.	3.49	3.37	0.12	0.11
Most students in my school obey school rules.	3.27	3.17	0.10	0.10
I have seen or personally experienced disrespect in my school because of culture or race.	3.14	3.16	-0.02	-0.02

## Safety

There were eight items that were grouped into a safety category. Items in this category sought opinions on how student would respond to incidents at their school as well as their perceptions about the overall environment of safety at their school.

- Students agree more this year than in the previous survey that they would feel comfortable reporting a threat to an adult if they heard about a threat at their school (.14 increase).
- Student opinion changed an equal amount in response to the statement “Students can easily get alcohol on campus.” While the mean response to this item actually *decreased* by .14 scale points, this is a positive change because the item is worded to elicit a lower response score. A decrease in mean score (3.24 to 3.14) for the statement “Students can easily get drugs on campus” is also considered positive.
- Overall, items in this category trend toward a positive change when compared to the previous survey. However, none of the changes are deemed to be meaningful with all effect size indices less than the .2 threshold.

The results for the Safety category are reported in the tables below.

	2007 Mean	2005 Mean	Mean Difference	Effect Size of Difference
I have at least one adult in my school I can go to when I need help.	4.04	3.97	0.07	0.07
Staff members do not tolerate bullies and students who threaten others in my school.	3.85	3.78	0.08	0.08
I feel safe in my school.	3.84	3.80	0.04	0.04
If I heard about a threat to student safety at my school, I would feel comfortable reporting it to an adult at my school.	3.73	3.59	0.14	0.13
I would inform an adult in my school about bullies and students who threaten others.	3.45	3.35	0.09	0.09
I would inform an adult in my school about drugs or alcohol at school or school related activities.	3.15	3.04	0.10	0.09
Students can easily get drugs on campus.	3.14	3.24	-0.09	-0.08
Students can easily get alcohol on campus.	2.80	2.93	-0.14	-0.12

## Counselor Support and Student Opportunities

Five items were grouped into two separate components and are reported together for this last section.

- The mean response scores for statements about counselor availability and help have increased consecutively over the past three survey administrations. Student agreement about the resources available to solve problems has also increased consistently over the same time period.
- Likewise, the mean response scores for student opportunities to participate in

sports and clubs has improved for every survey administration since the 2003-2004 school year.

The mean scores and effect size indices for all of the items are reported in the table below. Note that none of the changes are considered meaningful in effect size.

	2007 Mean	2005 Mean	Mean Difference	Effect Size of Difference
<b>Counselors</b>				
I can meet individually with a counselor when necessary.	3.93	3.87	0.06	0.06
I get useful help from my school counselor when I need it.	3.65	3.61	0.04	0.04
My school has resources to help students solve problems they have with staff members or other students.	3.50	3.41	0.08	0.08
<b>Opportunities</b>				
I'm satisfied with the opportunities I have to play sports.	3.81	3.70	0.11	0.10
I'm satisfied with the opportunities I have to participate in clubs and activities outside of class.	3.78	3.70	0.08	0.08

High school level mean response scores and frequency distributions with trend data from the 2005-2006-2004 *Make Your Voice Heard* survey are provided as Appendix K to this report.

### Gender, Ethnicity, and Grade Level Comparisons

Appendices L through N provide gender, ethnic, and grade level frequency distributions and mean response scores for district-wide high school level survey results.

- **Gender:** Similar to other levels, overall mean comparison analyses by gender indicate that females respond more positively (with greater agreement) than males in general (see Appendix L). This trend holds across survey years. Note that district-wide gender analyses exclude 5% of total survey respondents who did not select male or female on the survey form.
  - Overall, the percent of female student agreement is higher than males on 42 of 49 survey items.
  - For most of the curriculum and learning items, female students, on average, agree more that they are getting a quality education at their school and they are satisfied with the career preparations that their school has to offer. The largest gap in agreement between female and males in this area is in the perception of receiving a quality education in world languages (mean response females = 3.73, males = 3.58).
  - The only subjects in which the mean response score for males is higher than females are math, electives, and technology use. None of the differences in the area of curriculum and learning are found to be

practically significant.

- Similar to attitudes at the middle school level, the largest differences between males and females are in the attitudes toward homework and being respectful to others. Females agree more than males that they are respectful to people from other cultures or people who are different than them (4.61 to 4.29). Females tend to agree more than males that homework assignments help them practice what is being taught in class (3.61 to 3.34). The effect size indices for these differences ( $d = .42$  and  $.24$ , respectively) indicate that they are meaningful differences.
- **Ethnicity:** Overall, mean comparison analyses by ethnicity reflect lower mean responses (less agreement) from minority respondents compared to White respondents, especially for American Indian and Black students (see Appendix M). Note that district-wide ethnic distribution analyses exclude 6% of total survey respondents who did not select an ethnicity category on the survey form.
  - All minority respondent groups have lower mean scores than White respondents for most curriculum areas. In some areas, the difference in mean scores between White students and specific ethnic groups is practically significant with effect size indices exceeding  $.2$ ; American Indian and Black students, on average, have less agreement than White students that they are receiving a quality education in math ( $d > .2$ ) while Asian students have lower agreement in their perceptions of their school's educational quality for electives ( $d > .2$ ).

The following table lists the mean scores for all ethnic groups (including the multi-ethnic category) in areas for which White students have higher mean scores. Practically significant differences are marked as noted.

	Am. Ind.	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi	White
I'm getting a quality education in English language arts at my school.	3.99	4.07	3.99	4.07	4.08	4.14
I'm getting a quality education in math at my school.	3.78*	3.98	3.68*	3.91	3.88	3.99
I'm getting a quality education in science at my school.	3.90	4.00	3.83*	3.94	3.90	4.04
I'm getting a quality education in history and social studies at my school.	4.04	4.04	4.05	4.08	4.07	4.16
I'm getting a quality education in at least one elective area like art, P.E., music, drama, computer technology or business at my school.	4.06	4.05*	4.11	4.14	4.18	4.25
My teachers use technology to help me learn.	3.56*	3.67	3.65	3.67	3.63	3.78

\* Difference in mean scores with White students considered small, practically significant ( $d > .2$ )

- In receiving a quality education in world languages and in the use of technology, Hispanic students had higher mean scores than all other ethnic

groups, including Whites. The difference between Hispanic and White respondents for the curriculum areas is not practically significant.

- American Indian students agree less than all other students that teachers are available to help them learn (mean = 3.71). The difference between American Indian students and White students is practically significant ( $d = .3$ )
- While White students agree, on average, that the staff at their school respects people from other cultures and races (mean = 4.02), responses from all other ethnic groups report less agreement. For this survey item, the effect size index for all minority groups exceeded the practically significant threshold of .2, indicating that the differences between each group and White students are meaningful.
- American Indian, Black, and multi-ethnic students agree less than White and other minority students that their school is tolerant and they feel welcome. The differences between these groups and White students are practically significant.

The table below lists specific items related to tolerance and respect in which the differences in mean scores between White students and one or more ethnic groups are practically significant. Note that American Indian and Black students, while agreeing overall, have meaningful differences from Whites in their self-perception of respect towards people from other cultures.

	<b>Am. Ind.</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Multi</b>	<b>White</b>
I am respectful of people from other cultures and people who are different from me.	4.27*	4.39	4.15*	4.43	4.38	4.47
The staff at my school respects people from all cultures and races.	3.78*	3.80*	3.80*	3.78*	3.82*	4.02
I'm listened to and respected by all staff in my school.	3.29*	3.45	3.42	3.50	3.35	3.51
I'm treated fairly by administrators.	3.34*	3.52	3.50	3.56	3.47	3.60
This is an accepting, tolerant school where I feel welcome.	3.48*	3.66	3.54*	3.66	3.52*	3.81

\* *Difference in mean scores with White students considered small, practically significant ( $d > .2$ )*

- **Grade Level:** For the current survey results, mean score analyses shows that students in grades 10 and 11 tend to have lower mean response scores (with less agreement) than students in grades 9 and 12 (see Appendix N). Of the 49 survey items, ninth grade students have the highest mean response scores for 25 items; students in grade 12 have the highest mean score response for 16 items, while students in grades 10 and 11 have the highest mean scores for only 8 items combined (3 for grade 10, 5 for grade 11). District-wide grade level distribution analyses exclude 15% of total survey respondents who did not select a grade level on the survey form. Statistical significance tests were not generated for grade level analysis.
  - As in the previous survey administration, there is declining agreement for the higher grade levels about the quality of education for world languages (3.87 in grade 9; 3.49 in grade 12) and math (4.11 in grade 9; 3.83 in grade 12).
  - There is also declining agreement from grade 9 to 12 in student opinion about the resources available to solve problems with staff and other students. Mean responses from grades 9 to 12 decline progressively for this item (3.65 to 3.44).
  - Agreement that teachers expect students to do well on standardized tests also declines steadily from grades 9 to grade 12. There is likely an accountability effect here, in that the CSAP and Colorado ACT tests are administered only in grades 9 and 10 and grade 11, respectively. Because the results of these tests have a direct impact on measures of school quality, the emphasis on doing well is stronger at these grade levels.
  - Ninth and tenth grade students also appear to have less established relationships with adults at their school. Grade 11 and 12 students seem to agree more that they are comfortable interacting with adult staff or that adult staff are helpful.

	<b>Grade 9</b>	<b>Grade 10</b>	<b>Grade 11</b>	<b>Grade 12</b>
I have at least one adult in my school I can go to when I need help.	3.94	4.02	4.10	4.15
I would inform an adult in my school about bullies and students who threaten others.	3.44	3.42	3.46	3.48
I can meet individually with a counselor when necessary.	3.90	3.88	3.93	4.03
I get useful help from my school counselor when I need it.	3.58	3.55	3.67	3.84