This snapshot of student well-being within this Building Healthy Communities (BHC) Place summarizes data reported by 11th graders related to (a) school climate, safety, and supports; (b) pupil engagement; and (c) mental health and risk behavior on the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS). These indicators are central to the goals of The California Endowment's BHC efforts and to the State's priorities that must be addressed by each California school district in its Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

National initiatives to improve schools tend to focus heavily on curriculum, testing, and personnel. But a growing consensus also recognizes that the elements that make up school climate—including peer relationships, students' sense of safety and security, and the disciplinary policies and practices they confront each day—play a crucial part in laying the groundwork for academic success.

*Data from 11th graders are presented here to highlight student needs. CHKS data have consistently shown that as youth progress through secondary school, they become less likely to feel connected to school and be academically motivated; and more likely to report truancy, involvement in substance use, and chronic sadness and hopelessness. The data for this report are from the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years administration of the CHKS in Central Santa Ana. A full report was provided to each Place showing results for all grade levels and survey items.
Poor attendance is a marker of a wider variety of other problems, including low school connectedness and learning engagement. The characteristics of students reporting poor attendance can provide insight into factors associated with chronic absenteeism. Providing students opportunities to talk about their school experiences can be helpful in building programs to improve attendance.

**ACADEMICS**

- **2016-17**: 46% reported getting B’s or better
- **2017-18**: 48% reported getting B’s or better
- **2016-17**: 75% agreed they are academically motivated
- **2017-18**: 72% agreed they are academically motivated

**PERCEIVED SAFETY**

- **2016-17**: 66% reported feeling safe or very safe at school
- **2017-18**: 53% reported feeling safe or very safe at school
- **2016-17**: 6% reported seeing a weapon on campus
- **2017-18**: 5% reported seeing a weapon on campus
- **2016-17**: 23% reported feeling very safe in their neighborhood and
- **2017-18**: 22% reported feeling very safe in their neighborhood
- **2016-17**: 26% reported having 3 or more problems in their neighborhood (based on respondents who reported any problems)
- **2017-18**: 29% reported having 3 or more problems in their neighborhood

**Gender differences for academic motivation**

- **Females**: 48% reported getting B’s or better in 2017-18
- **Males**: 46% reported getting B’s or better in 2017-18

**GRADE-LEVEL PATTERNS**

As youth progress through secondary school, they become less likely to feel connected to school and be academically motivated; and more likely to report truancy, involvement in substance use, and chronic sadness and hopelessness. Data for 11th graders are presented here because they have had the most time exposed to relationships and policies at their school compared to 9th graders.

**ATTENDANCE**

Poor attendance is a marker of a wider variety of other problems, including low school connectedness and learning engagement. The characteristics of students reporting poor attendance can provide insight into factors associated with chronic absenteeism. Providing students opportunities to talk about their school experiences can be helpful in building programs to improve attendance.

- **2016-17**: 4% reported being truant once a month or more
- **2017-18**: 5% reported being truant once a month or more
- **2016-17**: 35% reported missing three full days of school in the past 30 days
- **2017-18**: 34% reported missing three full days of school in the past 30 days
- **2016-17**: 54% reported missing school because they were sick
- **2017-18**: 48% reported missing school because they were sick
Meaningful participation among students is strongly related to engagement in school.

**HIGH EXPECTATIONS**
Students who are exposed to messages that their teachers believe in them and expect them to do well in school are more likely to report higher school connectedness and feelings of safety.

**CARING RELATIONSHIPS**
A caring relationship with an adult at school is perhaps the most powerful motivator for academic success.

**DEVELOPMENTAL SUPPORTS**
Research shows that when schools (or families or communities) provide three developmental supports measured by the CHKS—caring adult relationships, high expectations, and opportunities for meaningful participation—students are more likely to report more positive academic, social-emotional, and health outcomes, including higher school connectedness, attendance, and motivation. This scale was calculated by averaging the scales for caring adult relationships, high expectations, and opportunities for meaningful participation.

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE**
In the past 30 days:

- **Heavy drug use (frequent drug use)**
  - 2016-17: 4%
  - 2017-18: 5%

- **Binge drinking (5 or more drinks in a row)**
  - 2016-17: 3%
  - 2017-18: 3%

Substance use in the past 30 days provides insight into the percentage of students who may be regular users. Heavy drug use was calculated based on patterns of combined current drug use on three or more days (marijuana, inhalants, prescription pain medicine to get “high” [high school only], or any other illegal drug/pill to get “high”).
Students who experience chronic sadness are at higher risk of a wide range of educational, health, social, and emotional problems, including lower school attendance, performance, and connectedness.

Victims of harassment are more likely to not feel safe at, and connected to, school; to have higher truancy; and to experience lower developmental (resilience) supports at school.

School connectedness is an LCAP school climate indicator that is related to both academic and health outcomes.
COMMUNITY SUPPORTS & ENGAGEMENT

2016-17 2017-18
n/a 36% on average agreed they are connected to the community¹
n/a 69% on average agreed they have caring relationships in the community²
n/a 31% on average agreed they have opportunities for meaningful participation in the community³

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

2016-17 2017-18
n/a 6% reported being involved in 3 or more activities to bring about change in the community
n/a 51% reported being personally involved at least occasionally in creating positive change

POLICING

2016-17 2017-18
n/a 51% indicated positive perceptions of police in the community²
n/a 60% indicated positive perceptions of school police²

OTHER ITEMS

Reported being disrespected by an adult at school because of race, ethnicity, or culture

Reported their school has conflict resolution (restorative) process for hearing all sides

acknowledgments

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¹Agreement was measured by computing the average percentage of students who agree or strongly agree across all the questions that measure this domain.
²Agreement was measured by computing the average percentage of students who responded pretty much true or very true across all the questions that measure this domain.