



High Achieving Schools Survey: School Climate During COVID

April 2022

School Climate During COVID

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this paper, we report on aspects of school climate most likely to be linked with resilience in adolescent mental health during the fall semester of the 2020-2021 school year. The sample consists of 4,182 middle and high school students from 10 independent and public schools across the U.S.

Findings showed three aspects of school climate that emerged as top predictors of student symptoms. **School Standards** were strongly linked with both **Depression** and **Anxiety**, overall and for most subgroups. **Teacher Alienation** was strongly linked with **Rule Breaking** and **Substance Use**, overall and for most subgroups. **Low Equity/Inclusion** also showed important links to **Depression**, **Anxiety**, and **Rule Breaking**.

Additional analyses were conducted to determine which subgroups of adolescents might be most vulnerable on symptoms. Compared to male students, notably higher vulnerability was found for gender non-binary students on all symptoms as well as on **School Standards**, **Teacher Alienation**, and **Low Equity/Inclusion**, and for female students on **Anxiety** and **Rule-Breaking** as well as on **School Standards**, **Teacher Alienation**, and **Low Equity/Inclusion**. High school students showed greater vulnerability on all symptoms and on **Low Equity/Inclusion**. Black students were significantly more likely to report **Low Equity/Inclusion**.

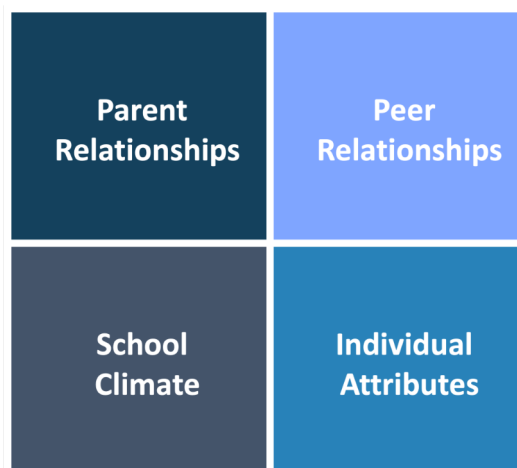
Overall, findings provide potential directions for preventive interventions as COVID-related stressors continue, with particular attention to the aspects of school climate noted above, and the subgroups of students identified as especially vulnerable.

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SCHOOL CLIMATE DURING COVID

In this report, we describe findings on school climate in relation to student mental health during COVID. This report is the fourth in a five-part series, with [Part 1](#) introducing underlying theory and methods, and presenting data on symptom rates within different student subgroups, and with each of Parts 2 - 5 focusing on a specific aspect of student life with essential implications for mental health and well-being. The aspects are **Parent Relationships** ([Part 2](#)), **Peer Relationships** ([Part 3](#)), **School Climate**, and **Individual Student Attributes**.



SCHOOL CLIMATE AND WELL-BEING

School climate refers to the quality and character of a school's environment. According to the [National School Climate Council](#) (2021), school climate encompasses the following major aspects of school life: **safety, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices**, and **organizational structures**.

In a recent peer-reviewed scientific paper published in the *International Journal of School and Educational Psychology*, Ebbert and Luthar (2021) presented findings based on 2,508 students surveyed in 2017 and showed robust links between school climate dimensions and adolescent mental health symptoms. In particular, results showed that students' perceptions of **alienation from teachers and tolerance of bullying at school were consistently found to be risk factors for symptoms**, while their perceptions of **caring adults at school and respect for diversity served as protective factors**.

The next section of this report introduces the dimensions of school climate assessed on the **2020-2021 High Achieving Schools Survey (HASS)**.

Physical and Psychological Safety

Research has shown that positive youth development depends on feelings of physical and psychological safety (Devine & Cohen, 2007).

Physical safety involves the ability of the school community to learn and work without the distraction and threat of violence, theft, weapons, and other safety concerns (National Center of Safe Supportive Learning Environments, 2021). Physical safety also includes freedom from interpersonal conflict and peer violence. Research has **shown links between bullying at school and negative student outcomes including depression, anxiety, and substance use** (e.g., Gunter & Bakken, 2010; Rivers et al., 2009)

Given the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020-2021 **HASS** included items that assessed students' feelings about **returning to school** during COVID and about **masking and safety protocols** at school. The HASS also assessed perceptions of a **climate of bullying** among students at school.

Psychological safety refers to an individual's belief that it is safe to take interpersonal risks (Edmondson, 1999; Kahn, 1990). For students, **the safety to try new things and show their true selves without the threat of embarrassment, ridicule, shame, or ostracism** is essential to their ability to engage, learn, and develop (Wanless, 2016). Elements of school climate that are important to psychological safety include perceived fairness of school rules and discipline, and respect for student diversity (Ebbert & Luthar, 2021; Gregory et al., 2016).

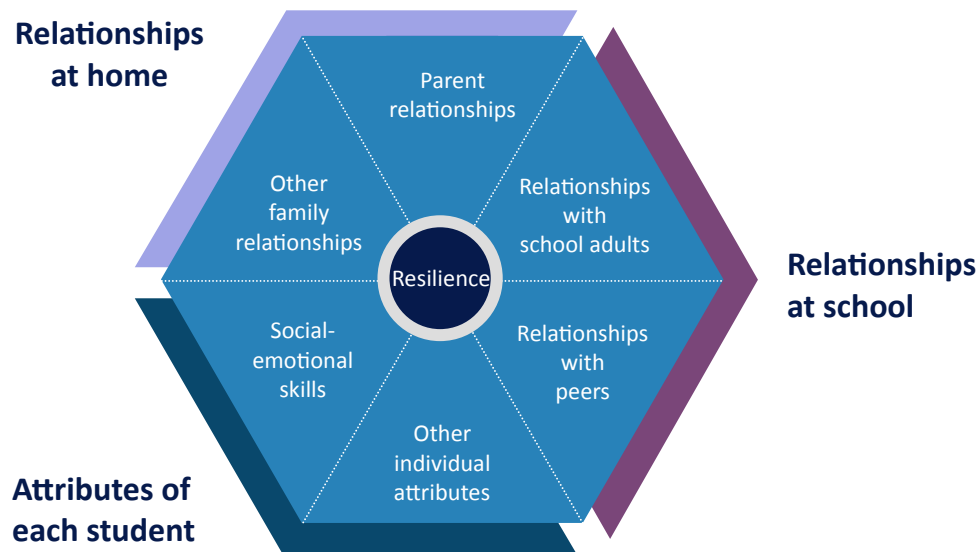
The **HASS** assessed several dimensions of psychological safety related to fairness, diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging at school:

- **ethnic discrimination,**
- **LGBTQIA+ discrimination,**
- **safety to be out as LGBTQIA+,**
- **equity and inclusion,**
- **school fairness,**
- **respect for diversity,** and
- **openness to opinions.**

"The teachers and school are trying their hardest to respect my pronouns which I really appreciate."

Interpersonal Relationships

At AC, we know that resilience rests, fundamentally, on relationships. Thus, we strive to measure, track, and improve the quality of the relationships that matter most to students. Figure 1 illustrates the components of resilience:



The **HASS** assessed aspects of **positive student relationships**, including **helpfulness**, **respect**, and **willingness to stand up against bullying**. It also assessed **cohesion and respect among adults** in the school community.

"I feel like most are nice, but there is one who is judgmental, and he gets angry whenever I get something wrong. He makes very sarcastic jokes demeaning kids in the class for things they cannot control."

"The school has a reasonable amount of home work and class work. The school also is very kind and that is probably the most important thing."

As findings from research have shown that student-teacher relationship quality is linked to students' mental health and well-being (Ebbert & Luthar, 2021; Osher et al, 2018), the **HASS** assessed student perceptions of **teacher emotional and academic support** and of the presence of **caring adults to confide in** at school.

Additionally, given research showing that **being made to feel excluded, humiliated, or embarrassed by teachers is especially harmful** to students' adjustment (Ebbert & Luthar, 2021; Darling-Hammond et al., 2019), the **HASS** included measures of **alienation from teachers** and adults at school.

School Practices and Structures

A final dimension of school climate involves practices and organizational structures that affect teaching and learning at school. Past research on students in high-achieving schools has demonstrated the **harmful effects of overly high standards and expectations for achievement and status** (e.g., Ciciolla et al., 2017; Ebbert et al., 2019). This is mirrored by research on parent-child relationships showing that students' **perceptions of parental criticism and perfectionism are linked to higher symptoms of depression** ([Authentic Connections, June 2021](#)).

The **HASS** assessed student perceptions of **teachers' standards and expectations, responsiveness to concerns, clarity of expectations**, and of the **amount and relevance of schoolwork**. It also assessed students' perceptions of their **learning efficacy**— how well they were able to learn school materials.

"Teachers expect you to prioritize their subject; that is simply a part of their job. And when, as often happens at boarding school, multiple teachers / faculty push those expectations onto you, you often feel as if you're being ripped apart."

"I think that sometimes teachers can treat the girls better than boys, sometimes my teachers will just check the boys' packets and not the girls' and just give the girls full credit without checking the homework first."

This report will present findings on student symptoms in relation to school climate. We will seek to answer two key questions: **1) Which aspects of school climate matter most for students' mental health?** and **2) Which subgroups are most at-risk?**

THE FALL 2020 HIGH ACHIEVING SCHOOLS SURVEY

During the Fall semester of the 2020-2021 school year, **AC** partnered with independent and public schools across the country to administer the **High Achieving Students Survey (HASS)** to 4,182 middle and high school students (for more details about the sample, see [Authentic Connections, June 2021](#)). The **HASS** is a comprehensive mixed-methods survey with both quantitative and open-ended questions, and is designed to be completed online by students in a single class period (approximately 30-45 minutes). At the time of assessment, participating schools were in either full in-person learning mode or in a hybrid format including both in-person and remote learning.

MEASURES

Student Symptoms

The **HASS** measured four components of student mental health and well-being: **Depression**, **Anxiety**, **Rule Breaking** (i.e., behaviors such as cheating and stealing), and **Substance Use**. For each component, five questions asked students to report how frequently they experienced the symptom in question on a 5-point scale (0 = never, 4 = very often). The items were taken from the **Well-Being Index**, a psychometrically-validated measure of adolescent mental health symptoms (Luthar et al., 2020a).

School Climate Predictors

The **HASS** assessed 21 constructs related to school climate. Table 1 presents examples of items for each construct (all were rated on a 5-point Likert scale: 1 = strongly disagree/not at all, 5 = strongly agree/very much).

Construct	Number of Items	Sample Item
Returning to School (COVID)	3	I am worried about getting sick.
Masks / Safety	2	I think it is irresponsible for people to refuse to wear masks even when instructed to do so.
Bullying Climate	3	Most students in this school like to put others down.
Ethnic Discrimination	4	I am viewed with suspicion because of my race or ethnicity.
LGBTQIA+ Discrimination	4	I am viewed with suspicion because of my LGBTQIA+ status.
LGBTQIA+ Safety	3	For LGBTQIA+ students, my school is a safe place to be "out".
Equity / Inclusion	3	Students are treated differently because of their race and/or ethnicity.
School Fairness	3	When students break rules, they are treated fairly.
Respect for Diversity	3	Teachers give students a chance to talk about topics such as racism and sexism in group discussions.
Openness to Opinions	3	Opinions from opposing political views are generally given equal airtime or respect.
Student Relationships	3	Students at this school help each other, even if they are not friends.
Community Cohesion	3	Adults in my school community (e.g., teachers, parents, and adults at school...) treat each other with respect.
Teacher Alienation	3	Teachers / adults at school have embarrassed or humiliated me.

Confiding in Adults	1	If you felt troubled about a personal or family problem, which adult(s) at school would you be most likely to confide in?
Emotional Support	3	Teachers / adults at school communicate concern and care for how I am feeling.
Academic Support	3	Teachers / adults at school offer extra academic support if I need it.
School Standards	3	I never feel like I can meet the standards of teachers / adults at school.
Learning Efficacy	1	How well are you able to learn new school materials these days?
Amount of Work	3	Teachers at my school assign too much work.
Relevance of Work	3	My teachers assign work that seems unnecessary.
Responsiveness to Concerns	2	I feel like teachers and administrators are listening (or would listen) to my concerns about school.
Clarity of Expectations	2	Given disruptions caused by the pandemic, has your school clearly communicated goals / expectations in terms of the amount of new material you are expected to learn each week?

Table 1. School Climate Constructs and Items

KEY FINDINGS

Top School Climate Predictors of Student Symptoms

We conducted multiple regression analyses to identify which of the school climate constructs examined were most strongly linked to student symptoms. Figure 2 presents the **top school climate predictor of student mental health for each symptom**, overall and within each subgroup.

	Depression	Anxiety	Rule Breaking	Substance Use
OVERALL	School Standards	School Standards	Teacher Alienation	Teacher Alienation
Male	School Standards	School Standards	Low Fairness	Low Community Cohesion
Female	School Standards	School Standards	Low Fairness	Ethnic Discrimination
Non-Binary	School Standards	School Standards	Teacher Alienation	Returning to School
White	School Standards	School Standards	Teacher Alienation	Low Learning Efficacy
Black	School Standards	School Standards	Teacher Alienation	Returning to School
Asian	School Standards	School Standards	Low Fairness	Teacher Alienation
Hispanic	School Standards	Returning to School	Teacher Alienation	Teacher Alienation
Other Ethnicities	School Standards	School Standards	Teacher Alienation	Ethnic Discrimination
Middle School	School Standards	Teacher Alienation	Student Relationships	Ethnic Discrimination
High School	School Standards	Teacher Alienation	Teacher Alienation	Low Clarity of Expectations
In-Person Learning	School Standards	School Standards	Teacher Alienation	Teacher Alienation
Hybrid Learning	School Standards	School Standards	Teacher Alienation	Low Learning Efficacy
Remote Learning	School Standards	School Standards	Teacher Alienation	Teacher Alienation
Day Student	School Standards	School Standards	Teacher Alienation	Teacher Alienation
Boarding Student	School Standards	School Standards	Teacher Alienation	Teacher Alienation
International Student	School Work Amount	Teacher Alienation	Teacher Alienation	Teacher Alienation
Domestic Student	School Standards	Teacher Alienation	Teacher Alienation	Teacher Alienation
Receives Financial Aid	Low Learning Efficacy	Low Equity/Inclusion	Teacher Alienation	Teacher Alienation
No Financial Aid	Bullying Climate	Low Equity/Inclusion	Teacher Alienation	Teacher Alienation

Figure 2. Top School Climate Predictor of Each Student Symptom ¹

As shown in Figure 2, a high level of **School Standards** was the strongest predictor of both **Depression** and **Anxiety** in the overall sample of students and for most demographic subgroups examined, indicating that students' feelings of being unable to meet the expectations of teachers and adults at school were linked to poor mental health outcomes. **Teacher Alienation** was the top predictor of both **Rule Breaking** and **Substance Use**, overall and for most subgroups, suggesting that students' feelings of being excluded, humiliated, or embarrassed by teachers and adults at school were linked to delinquent or externalizing behaviors. Although not shown in Figure 2, which presents only the single top predictor of each symptom, **Low Equity/Inclusion** consistently emerged within the top three predictors of symptoms; when the sample was split by whether or not students received financial aid, **Low Equity/Inclusion** was the strongest predictor of **Anxiety**.

Table 2 presents regression beta coefficients showing the strength of the effect of each predictor on each outcome. In psychological research, a **beta coefficient larger than ± 0.20** is generally considered "meaningful" or "noteworthy".

	School Standards	Teacher Alienation	Low Equity/Inclusion	Learning Efficacy
Depression	0.25	0.07	0.16	-0.11
Anxiety	0.18	0.13	0.18	-0.10
Rule Breaking	—	0.14	0.14	-0.11
Substance Use	—	0.10	0.04	-0.09

Table 2.
Regression Beta
Coefficients

As shown in Table 2, a large beta coefficient was observed for **School Standards** with **Depression** (0.25). Other relationships approaching the meaningful cutoff include **School Standards** with **Anxiety** (0.18); **Low Equity/Inclusion** with **Anxiety** (0.18), **Depression** (0.16), and **Rule Breaking** (0.14); and **Teacher Alienation** with **Rule Breaking** (0.14) and **Anxiety** (0.13).

The next section of this report presents clinically significant levels of the top three aspects of school climate most powerfully linked to students' mental health—**School Standards**, **Teacher Alienation**, and **Low Equity/Inclusion**—separately by gender, ethnicity/race, and grade level division.

Rates of School Climate Predictors in Student Subgroups

[Part 1](#) of this report introduced the underlying theory and methods and presented data on symptom rates within different student subgroups. To reiterate the findings on symptom rates, we found that four particular subgroups stood out. First, **gender non-binary students had higher levels of all symptoms** assessed than males and females. Second, **high school students had higher levels of all symptoms assessed** than middle school students. Third, **students in remote learning had higher levels of Anxiety and Substance Use** than students attending school in person or in hybrid format. Finally, considered by ethnicity/race, **White students were most likely to report serious rates of Substance Use**.

Rates of School Standards

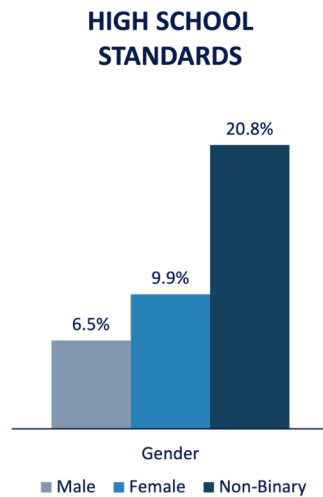


Figure 3.
School Standards by Gender Identity

Figure 3 shows the percentage of students reporting high levels of **School Standards** separately by gender identity. As shown in Figure 3, the percentage of students reporting high levels of **School Standards** was higher among gender non-binary students than among males or females; these differences were statistically significant.²

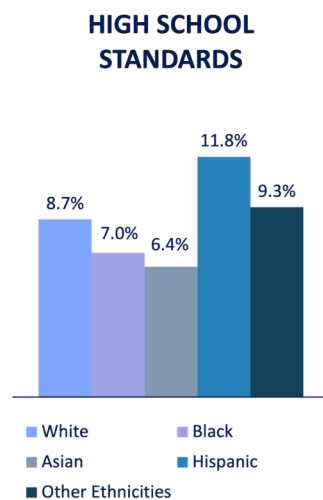


Figure 4.
School Standards by Ethnicity/Race

Figure 4 shows the percentage of students reporting high **School Standards** separately by race/ethnicity. As shown in Figure 4, rates were highest among Hispanic students and lowest among Asian students; differences were not statistically significant.³

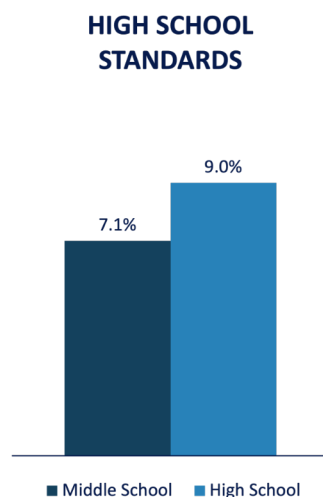


Figure 5.
School Standards by Grade Level

Figure 5 shows the percentage of students reporting high **School Standards** separately by grade level division. As shown in Figure 5, high school students were slightly more likely than middle school students to report high levels of **School Standards**; differences were not statistically significant.⁴

Rates of Teacher Alienation

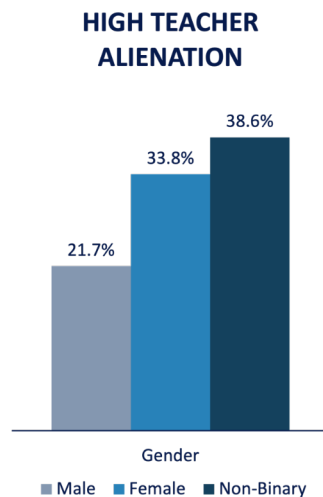


Figure 6.
Teacher Alienation by Gender Identity

Figure 6 shows the percentage of students reporting frequent **Teacher Alienation** by gender identity. As shown in Figure 6, rates of **Teacher Alienation** were significantly higher among female and gender non-binary students than among male students.⁵

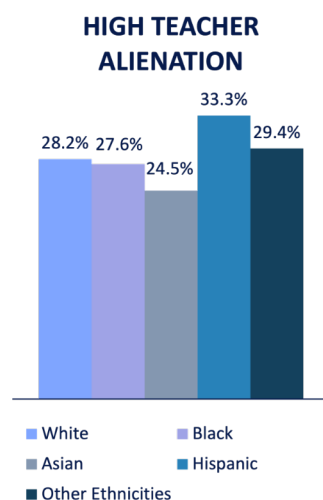


Figure 7.
Teacher Alienation by Ethnicity/Race

Figure 7 shows the percentage of students reporting frequent **Teacher Alienation** by race/ethnicity. As shown in Figure 7, rates of **Teacher Alienation** were slightly higher among Hispanic students and lower among Asian students; differences were not statistically significant.⁶

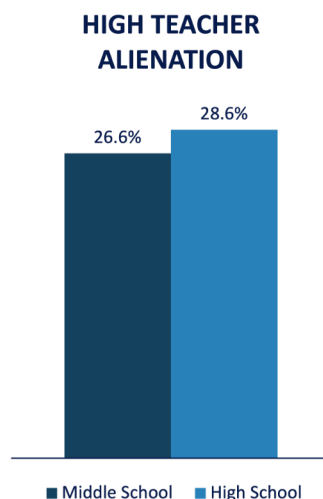


Figure 8.
Teacher Alienation by Grade Level

Figure 8 shows the percentage of students reporting frequent **Teacher Alienation** by division. As shown in Figure 8, rates of **Teacher Alienation** did not differ significantly by grade level.⁷

Rates of Low Equity/Inclusion

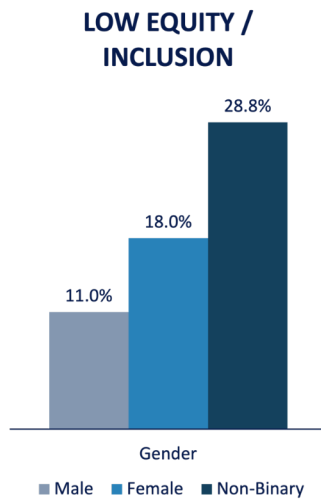


Figure 9.
Low Equity/Inclusion by Gender Identity

Figure 9 shows the percentage of students reporting **Low Equity/Inclusion** by gender identity. As shown in Figure 9, rates of **Low Equity/Inclusion** were highest among gender non-binary students and lowest among male students; differences were statistically significant.⁸

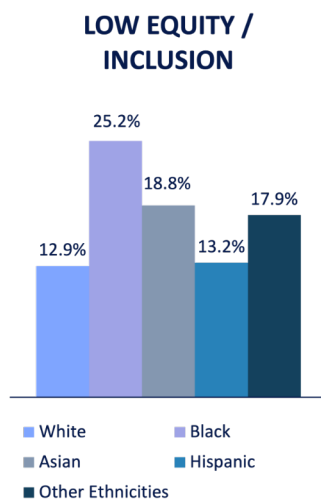


Figure 10.
Low Equity/Inclusion by Ethnicity/Race

Figure 10 shows the percentage of students reporting **Low Equity/Inclusion** by race/ethnicity. As shown in Figure 10, Black students were significantly more likely to report **Low Equity/Inclusion**.⁹

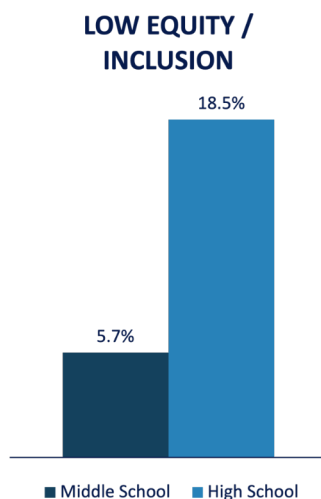


Figure 11.
Low Equity/Inclusion by Grade Level

Figure 11 shows the percentage of students reporting **Low Equity/Inclusion** by grade level division. As shown in Figure 11, high school students were significantly more likely to report **Low Equity/Inclusion**.¹⁰

QUALITATIVE RESPONSES

In addition to the quantitative, rating-scale variables discussed so far, the **HASS** also included open-ended questions designed to capture students’ feelings about issues that were top of mind for them.

Tables 3-5 show illustrative verbatim responses to open-ended questions about **what was going well at school**, **what needed improvement**, and **what was most concerning to them**.

Table 3.
Responses to “What could your teachers be doing to improve things for you?”

“I believe teachers/faculty just being reasonable would immensely improve the quality of life. The teachers every night in almost every class pass their homework limits. Further, it seems this year some of the teachers aren't actually teaching us necessary information for our courses for some reason. On numerous occasions I have been assessed on something my class was either not taught or covered extremely briefly one time as a side note of something else. In addition, teachers do not show students their grades this year; I have no clue what classes I need to focus on.”

“Be less cruel when it comes to rule enforcing. Some administrators have had very bad tone and delivery when they are enforcing the rules.”

“I feel like they could stop having favorites and just let us be ourselves sometimes when it doesn't harm literally anyone. Some teachers just cut us off, shame us for no reason, or play favorites to richer families. I hate it.”

“I think that teachers and faculty at this school think that keeping their reputation high is more important than actually listening to their students.”

Table 4.

Responses to “What is your school doing well to support you?”

“Having teachers that I am willing to talk to, having time in health class to talk about mental health and relationships.”

“I think the school mostly doesn’t interfere too much with my self expression. No one really politicizes my identity or tries to make me an example of anything. The administration itself demonstrates a degree of unconcern that’s actually really assuring.”

“They listened to us about pushing back the due date time for homework.”

“They have my back and make sure I know I can always talk to them if needed.”

“Many families and people (especially the school) care for one another. They make it their mission to be safe, accepting and diverse and I really like that. In the past, I was often bullied for my personality, my looks and even my ethnicity. But, at [school], many care and they don't just see a person for what they are BUT who they are.”

Table 5.

Responses to “These days, what are you most worried about?”

“Being lumped in with kids who aren't doing what they're supposed to in terms of COVID regulations. I sacrificed seven months of the prime of my life. I would do it again. I would like this to be understood. I'm not being an idiot, stop assuming everyone is going to make the wrong decision if given the choice. Not everyone needs to be protected from themselves. Some of us are good kids.”

“People not following the safety guidelines. I don't think that I or most of them would be at risk if we got COVID but it would make them and me go online and could put their family at risk.”

“I am very worried about doing well in my classes, as they are getting really hard and even with help from [the learning center] I don't know if I can do well enough to fulfill the standards of the school and myself as well. I am also worried that the days are getting so monotonous that one day I might burn out and get even more behind on schoolwork to the point where it could have serious consequences.”

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Our analysis of symptom rates among 4,182 students surveyed between September and December of 2020 revealed several important patterns regarding the role of school climate in student resilience during COVID. We summarize findings on the two key questions addressed, and then provide associated recommendations for schools.

Which specific aspects of school climate are most important for students' mental health?

Of the 21 aspects of school climate we examined, three emerged as top predictors of student symptoms. First, **high levels of *School Standards* were strongly linked with both *Depression* and *Anxiety***, overall and for all subgroups. Second, **high levels of *Teacher Alienation* were strongly linked with *Rule Breaking* and *Substance Use***, overall and for most subgroups. Third, ***Low Equity/Inclusion* consistently emerged as one of the top three predictors of student symptoms**; additionally, when the sample was considered by whether or not students received financial aid or tuition assistance, *Low Equity/Inclusion* emerged as the top predictor of *Anxiety*.

Statistically significant beta coefficients at or approaching the “meaningful” cutoff of ± 0.20 were observed for *School Standards* with *Depression* (0.25) and with *Anxiety* (0.18); *Low Equity/Inclusion* with *Anxiety* (0.18), *Depression* (0.16), and *Rule Breaking* (0.14); and *Teacher Alienation* with *Rule Breaking* (0.14) and *Anxiety* (0.13).

The finding that student perceptions of overly high standards and expectations among teachers and adults at school is a top predictor of mental health symptoms is mirrored by findings linking parental criticism and perfectionism to adolescent depression ([Authentic Connections, June 2021](#)). **When adolescents perceive themselves as falling short of the standards and expectations of the important adult figures in their lives, their mental health suffers.**

The finding that *Teacher Alienation* emerged as a top risk factor for *Rule Breaking* and *Substance Use*, overall and among most subgroups, illustrates the “**bad is stronger than good**” phenomenon (e.g., Luthar & Eisenberg, 2017; NASEM, 2019). Several positive aspects of relationships with teachers and school adults, such as

Emotional Support, Academic Support, Community Cohesion, and Responsiveness to Concerns were also considered as potential protective factors; however, as indicated by the size and statistical significance of regression betas, these protective factors were less important for student symptoms than *Teacher Alienation*. In other words, **the protective benefit conferred by positive aspects of teacher relationships was outweighed by the harm done by negative aspects.**

Which subgroups are most at-risk in terms of school climate?

In examining levels of school climate predictors within each student subgroup, we identified some groups of students who may be particularly at risk.


Considered by gender, non-binary students were most likely to report high levels of *School Standards, Teacher Alienation, and Low Equity/Inclusion*. As described in [Part 1](#) of this report, gender non-binary students also had higher levels of all symptoms assessed than males and females. Female students also reported higher rates of *School Standards, Teacher Alienation, and Low Equity/Inclusion* than males.

In terms of developmental level, high school students were more likely than middle school students to report *Low Equity/Inclusion*; the groups did not differ on *School Standards* or *Teacher Alienation*. By race/ethnicity, Black students were most likely to report *Low Equity/Inclusion*.

Recommendations for Schools

Taken together, the findings reported here indicate a need for schools to support students by working to promote healthy school climates and prevent negative school climates.

On this front, **the most important issue to address is school standards**; students who felt unable to measure up to the high expectations of their teachers and adults at school were more vulnerable to depression and anxiety. Here, our first recommendation is for adults at school to **make it clear that meeting high academic and extracurricular expectations should never come at the expense of health and overall well-being**. We also recommend that schools share the relevant science on the ill-effects of high achievement pressures from [parents at home](#) and [adults at school](#), and to work collaboratively to ensure that students do not feel that expectations are way too high for them to handle.



Second, we recommend that proactive steps are taken to **reduce students' feelings of alienation from teachers and adults at school. Here, it is essential for teachers, coaches, administrators and other adults at school to remain vigilant for words or actions that students may see as hurtful.** When students feel embarrassed or shamed by an educator, it negatively affects their mental health and also their ability to learn. It may be necessary to have conversations with colleagues in order to gauge how adults might come across to students, and to consider some reassignments for advisor responsibilities, so that students are paired with an adult to whom they are naturally drawn.

“Making it easier for me to inform them of my pronouns and then actually making the effort to use them. Have a gender inclusive dorm. Enforce covid rules. Educate about LGBTQ history as well as current terms. Have real sex ed. Hire accepting people. Fostering a culture where correcting people on their implicit prejudice is normal and positive.”

Our third recommendation is to **include students themselves in coming up with solutions to increase equity and inclusion at school.** Make time and space for students to openly share their insecurities and uncertainties with empathic adults and ensure that the community knows about specific adults at school who are available to help. In particular, **for students who are treated negatively because of their minority status, ensure that there is a safe space for them to share experiences.** Finally, **encourage students to speak up on behalf of others being mistreated.**

Ongoing Innovation and Support

At AC, we are committed to creating high-quality tools to help schools measure, track, and improve well-being and resilience. To that end, we constantly revise our survey measures to ensure that our surveys are measuring the most important aspects of community mental health and well-being.

Conclusion

In future efforts to enhance students' well-being, schools would do well to minimize three aspects of school climate that are related to poor mental health. Schools will have to work proactively to address overly high standards and expectations, any amount of teacher alienation, and low equity and inclusion.

NOTES

1. All regression coefficients (standardized beta weights) are statistically significant ($p < .05$).
2. Gender: $X^2(2, N = 3932) = 34.32, p < .001$.
3. Ethnicity: $X^2(4, N = 3894) = 6.12, n.s.$
4. Grade: $X^2(1, N = 3933) = 3.71, n.s.$
5. Gender: $X^2(2, N = 3932) = 75.08, p < .001$.
6. Ethnicity: $X^2(4, N = 3885) = 5.54, n.s.$
7. Grade: $X^2(1, N = 3923) = 1.64, n.s.$
8. Gender: $X^2(2, N = 4027) = 54.07, p < .001$.
9. Ethnicity: $X^2(4, N = 3985) = 42.71, p < .001$.
10. Grade: $X^2(1, N = 4027) = 104.63, p < .001$.

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