

# Learning from the Minnesota Student Survey

Every three years, students in grades 5, 8, 9, and 11 have the chance to weigh in on their experiences, opinions, and behaviors, informing public health campaigns, school safety initiatives, and more. Here we share a snapshot of key findings around in-school experience and climate. [See the full results at education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/health/mss/](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/health/mss/).

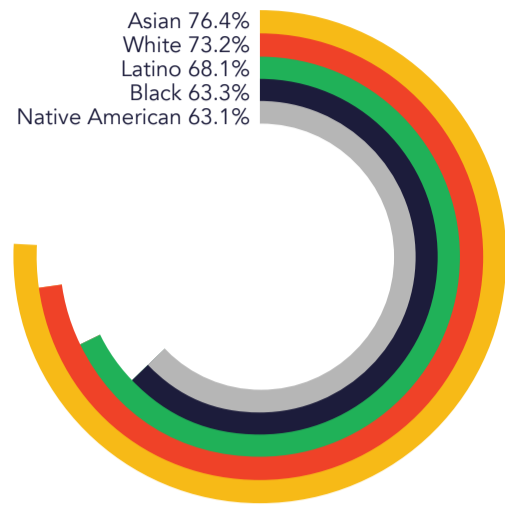
## Student-Teacher Relationships

**34%**

of students do not believe their teachers are interested in them as a person.<sup>1</sup>

**28%**

of students do not believe school rules are fair.<sup>2</sup>



### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

How can adults foster positive relationships with students?

What opportunities do students have to inform school rules?

A large body of research shows that when students, particularly low-income,<sup>3</sup> believe their teachers care about their success and have high academic expectations for them they are more motivated to meet those expectations, do better academically,<sup>4</sup> have higher self-esteem,<sup>5</sup> and more positive social-emotional adjustment than similar peers who do not.

## School Resource Officers

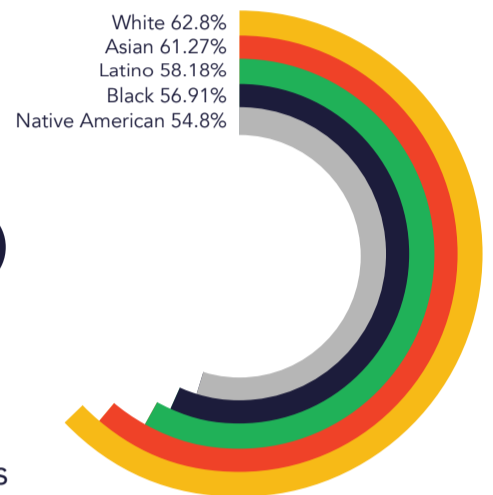
**94%**

of students believe having an officer is a good idea.

But only ...

**61%**

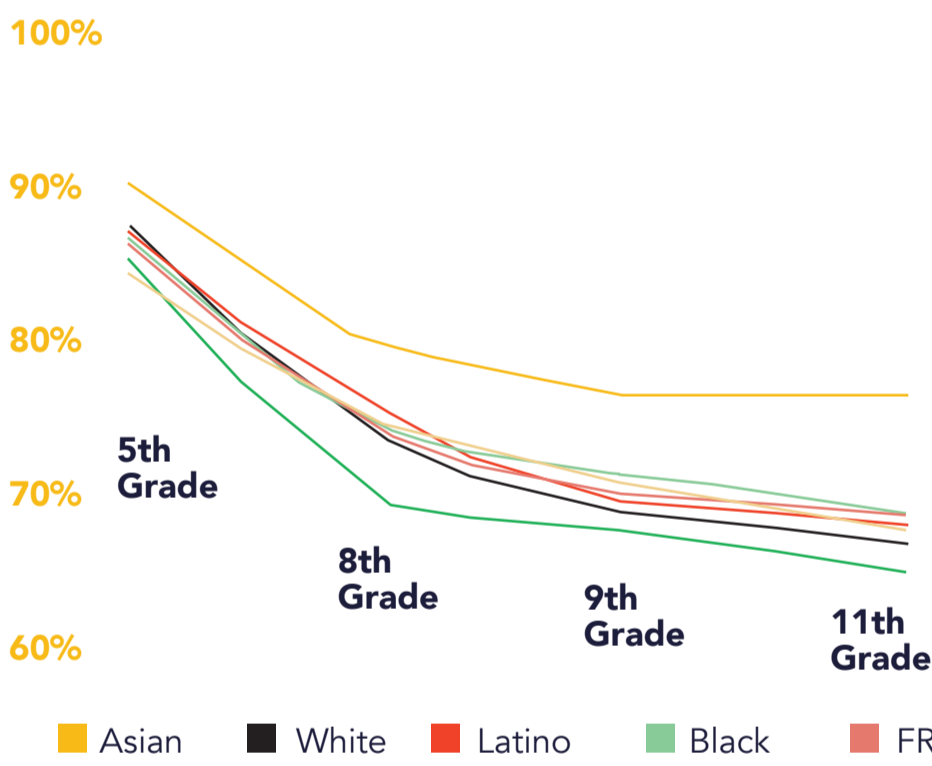
of students would reach out to one.



School-based policing is considered one of the fastest-growing areas of law enforcement.<sup>6</sup> And the debate over the role of officers in schools and the effect they have on students and school safety is ongoing. It's important to examine unintended consequences of officer presence —especially for students of color.

## Engagement

As students move into higher grades, they are less likely to "think things [they] learn in school are useful."



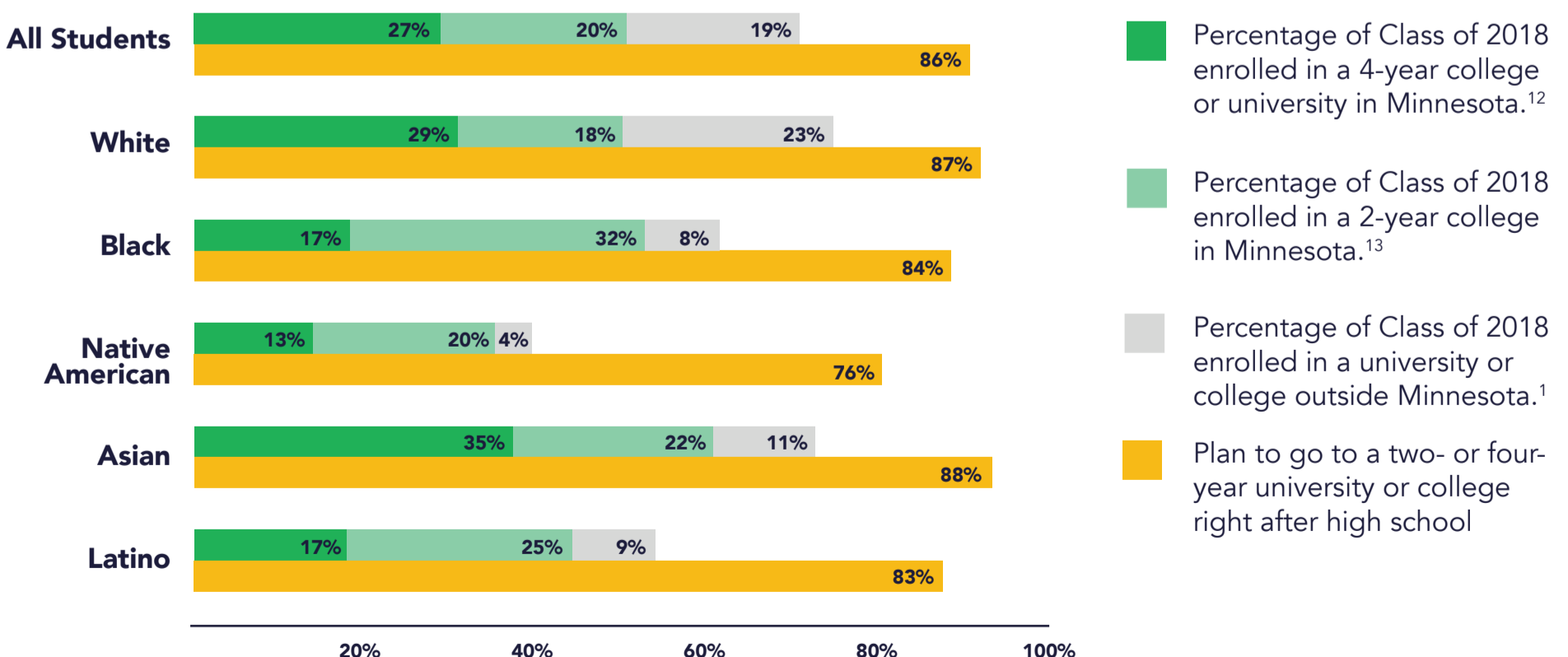
### QUESTION TO CONSIDER

What opportunities do schools have for students to engage in relevant hands-on learning?

Students who are more engaged earn higher grades,<sup>7</sup> have higher standardized test scores,<sup>8</sup> better attendance,<sup>9</sup> higher graduation rates,<sup>10</sup> and are less likely to drop out of school.<sup>11</sup> About half of high-school dropouts reported being uninterested in what they had been learning and that their schoolwork was not relevant to their lives or experiences. Whether through more personalized or rigorous and relevant course options, addressing engagement should be a top priority for schools and policymakers.

## Plans After High School

While 86% of students plan to attend a two- or four-year college or university right after high school, only 68% of students attend one.



### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

How can schools ensure students stay on track for college and career?  
How can schools ensure equitable access to rigorous coursework and dual enrollment?

In today's economy, post-secondary education is critical, but significant disparities in access and success persist. From programs to ensure freshmen are on-track, to policies that ensure access to rigorous coursework, we must set our sights beyond high school graduation and toward meaningful measures of post-secondary success.