



Remote Learning Student Survey

Summary of District Results for Students in Grades 3-12 on the May 2021 Remote Learning Survey

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Abstract:

The shift to remote learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic made it more important than ever to check in regularly with students to see how instruction was going so that efforts could be improved over the course of the year. To this end, the district administered anonymous student surveys this year in the fall (October 2020) and again in the spring (May 2021) to all students in grades 3-12. These surveys were administered entirely online, either during synchronous learning time or asynchronously. Translations for the spring student survey were available in Amharic, Chinese, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Students at every school responded to the survey. However, the overall response rate on the spring 2021 survey (56%) was lower than for the fall 2020 survey (64%), and lower than the last (pre-pandemic) annual school climate survey conducted in spring 2019 (74%).

From the survey findings, it is clear that many students experienced challenges with remote learning this year. Overall, a majority of students reported a positive experience, however elementary students (grades 3-5) were significantly more positive than middle school or high school students. Based on a composite average across several survey questions, only 52 percent of middle schoolers and 34 percent of high schoolers expressed positive perceptions of their remote learning experiences this year.

Overall, 78 percent of surveyed students prefer to return to full-time in-person learning in the future, and only 5 percent want to learn fully remotely after the pandemic is over. While most students report that they prefer in-person instruction to remote or hybrid learning, many want more from their in-person learning experience. In particular, students want in person learning environments to be safe, and to center peer and teacher relationships with multiple ways of engaging. Students generally want to continue using technology for instructional purposes in the future, particularly for accessing assignments, reviewing lessons, class communications, and collaboration on projects with peers.

Spring 2021 Student Survey

Seattle Public Schools

Research & Evaluation Department

June 2021



I. Survey Overview

The shift to remote learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has made it more important than ever to check in regularly with students to see how instruction is going so that efforts can be improved over the course of the year.

To this end, the district administered an anonymous student survey this spring (May 5-19, 2021) to all students in grades 3-12. This is in addition to the fall survey of remote learning, administered in October 2020.

View more detailed results and findings by school here:

<http://pan-ed.com/seattlesurveys>



Survey Administration

Modality. This year, for the first time, surveys were administered entirely online, either during synchronous learning time or asynchronously.

Language. For the first time, translations for the student survey were available in Amharic, Chinese, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Response Rates. Students at every school responded to the survey. However, our overall response rate (56%) was lower than for the fall pulse survey (64%), and lower than for the 2019 Spring Student Survey (74%).

Coming at the end of an unprecedented year, we want to thank all our school leaders, survey coordinators, educators and Seattle Public Schools students!



The overall response rate was 56%. We saw substantially more responses in elementary schools (72%) than in high schools (38%).

The survey was anonymous, and response rates for student subgroups are calculated by comparing students self reported information with aggregate district administrative records.

Students were able to “check all that apply” for racial identification, and the response values here count students with each race or ethnicity they selected.

Survey Response Rates

Student Group	Number Enrolled	Number Responded	Response Rate	Percent of Enrolled**	Percent of Responders
All Students	40,027	22,576	56%	N/A	N/A
African American Male Students	3,059	935	31%	8%	4%
Students of Color FFEJ*	14,439	6,380	44%	36%	28%
Special Education Served Students	6,311	2,349	37%	16%	10%
In-Person/hybrid	22,967	14,235	62%	57%	63%
Remote Only	17,060	8,222	48%	43%	36%
3rd-5th Grade	12,565	8,984	72%	31%	40%
6th-8th Grade	11,943	7,277	61%	30%	32%
9th-12th Grade	15,519	5,963	38%	39%	26%
Black/African American	9,123	2,870	31%	23%	13%
Asian	8,939	4,119	46%	22%	18%
Hispanic	5,347	2,021	38%	13%	9%
Native American	1,674	580	35%	4%	3%
Pacific Islander	530	541	102%	1%	2%
White	25,700	13,030	51%	64%	58%

* Students of color furthest from educational justice

** Subgroup response rates reflect student self-report and students are counted with all race groups they identify with. Results will vary from OSPI and other district measures that are based on federal race categories.

Spring 2021 Student Survey Topics

1.

How has the pandemic affected students?

Questions on access to food and housing; relationships with family, friends, and community, school and learning, etc.

2.

How do students experience remote and in-person/hybrid learning?

Questions on engagement, peer relationships, overall learning, etc.

3.

How do students perceive their schools' culture and climate?

Questions on culturally relevant and affirming instruction, student voice, deep learning, identity safety

4.

How do students envision their future schooling experience?

Questions on how to use technology, preferred modalities for next year

How to Read this Report

- Click through for district-level findings from highlighted areas of the survey
- Certain areas in this report provide disaggregated findings by students' identified demographics, including grade level, race/ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual orientation (for students in grades 6-12 only).
- For more detailed results, including responses for each survey question, school-specific results and additional disaggregation of data, visit the Panorama Portal at <http://pan-ed.com/seattlesurveys>



II. Engagement and Feelings of Academic Success This Year

A majority of students have reported successes with remote learning this year.

While most students reported wanting in-person instruction, many want more from their in-person learning experience when it comes to peer and teacher relationships, as well as how technology is used.

Students were asked how they feel when learning remotely and learning in-person.

Across all topics – except safety – students were significantly more likely to report 'often or always' when in-person.

These patterns hold across different student demographic groups and grade levels.

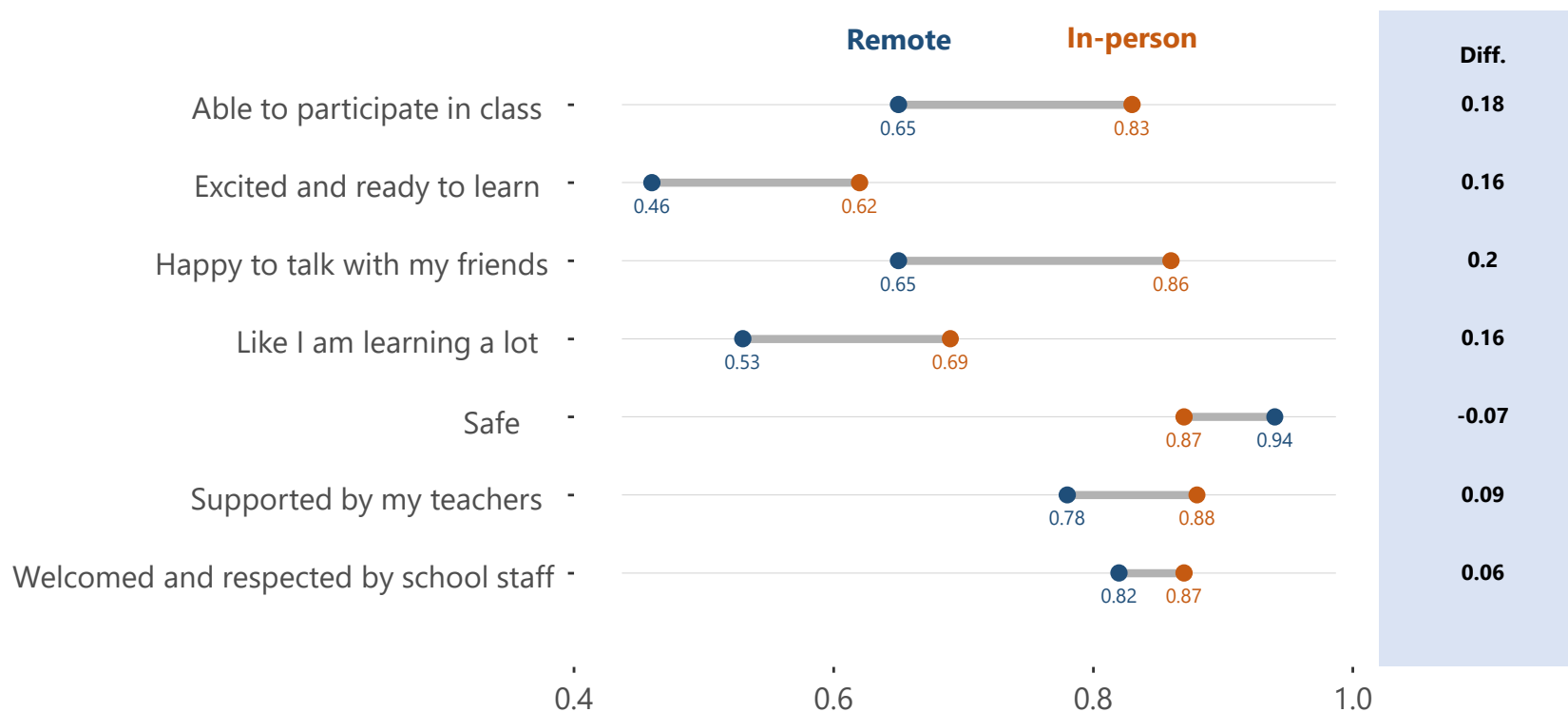
Perceptions of Remote and In-Person Learning

Survey Questions:

"When learning remotely I feel:"

"When learning in-person I feel:"

Percent reporting 'often' or 'always'



In this figure the bars represent students who were learning remotely and learning in-person this spring. The colors represent the students' desired learning mode in the future. 38% of students indicated that they were currently learning remotely, and 62% that they were learning in-person.

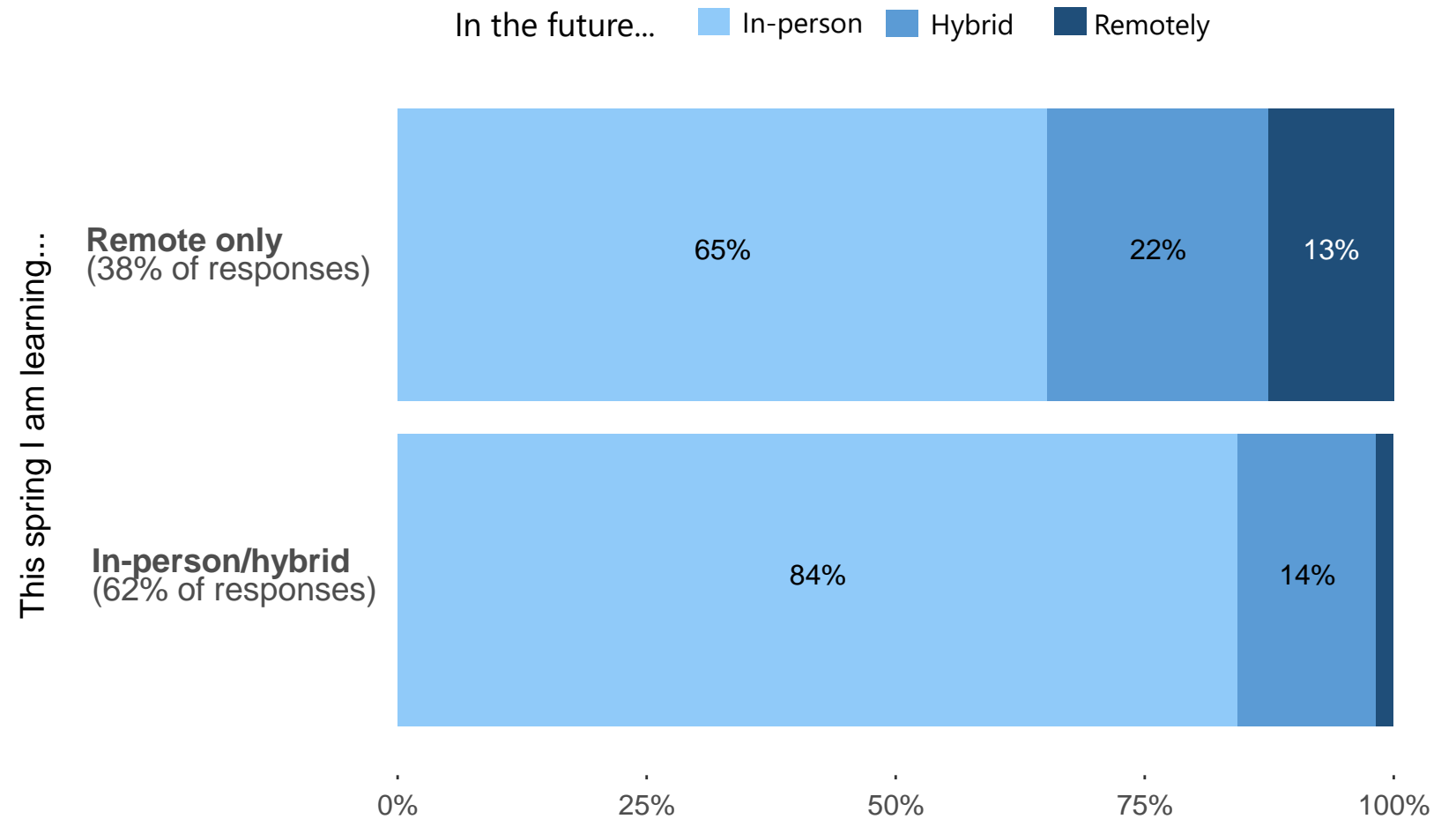
78% of all surveyed students want to return to in-person learning full. Only 5% of all surveyed students want to learn fully remotely after the pandemic is over.

17% of students indicated interest in a hybrid option – included as a response option – as this survey was implemented before SPS announced a full in-person reopening for Fall of 2021.

Students' Desired Learning Modes

Survey Questions:

- *This spring, I am learning.. (In-person/hybrid or Remote only)*
- *In the future, when the COVID-19 pandemic is over, I would like to learn: ("In-person", "Hybrid (mix of in-person and remote instruction)" or "Remotely")*



What would make you feel better about learning in-person?

“More chances to talk with classmates. Right now the vast majority of our [in-person] time is just for work, however in one of my classes we talk a lot with the teacher and other students about non-academic things and it really makes in-person better.”

High schooler currently learning in-person/hybrid



I wish that we had a better principal and leadership at the school, especially when it comes to dealing with problems of sexism, racism and homophobia.”

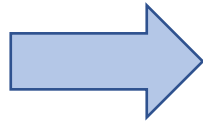
High schooler, learning remotely

I wish we filled our in-person time with more collaborative work or lectures. Having long work periods with minimal oversight from teachers does not always feel very engaging.”

High schooler, learning In-person/hybrid

“Remote Learning Experience Index”

Composite average of responses to five (5) affective questions about remote learning during the last year



**How has Covid affected:
(positively or very positively)**

- 1. My academic learning*
- 2. My overall school experience*

**When I am learning remotely,
I feel: (often or always)**

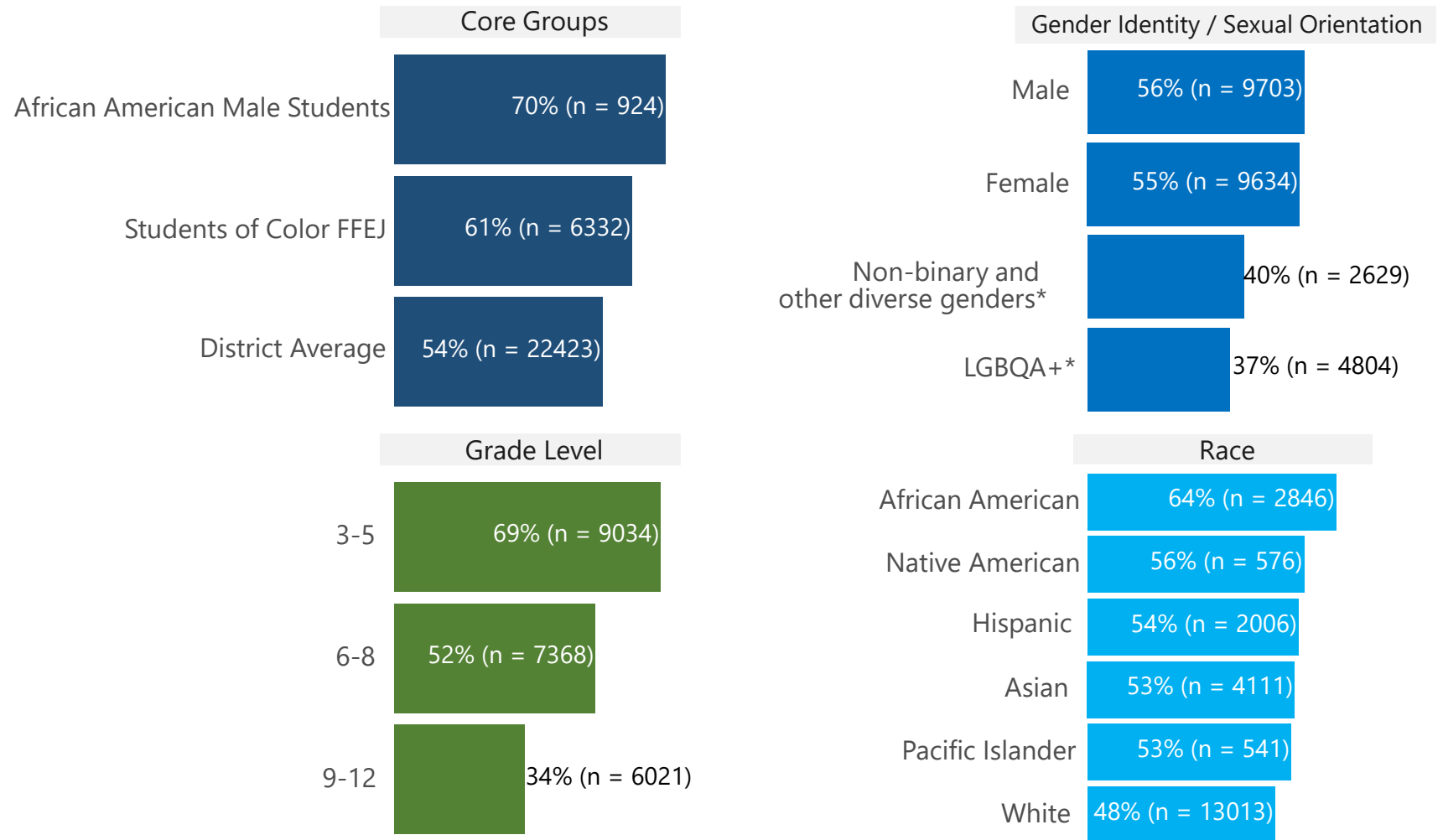
- 3. Excited and ready to learn*
- 4. Able to participate in class*
- 5. Like I am learning a lot*

Most students report overall positive experience and engagement with remote learning.

African-American male students reported the most success with remote learning, however the response rate was low (only 25%) for these students.

High school students reported less success than elementary or middle school students.

“Remote Learning Experience Index”



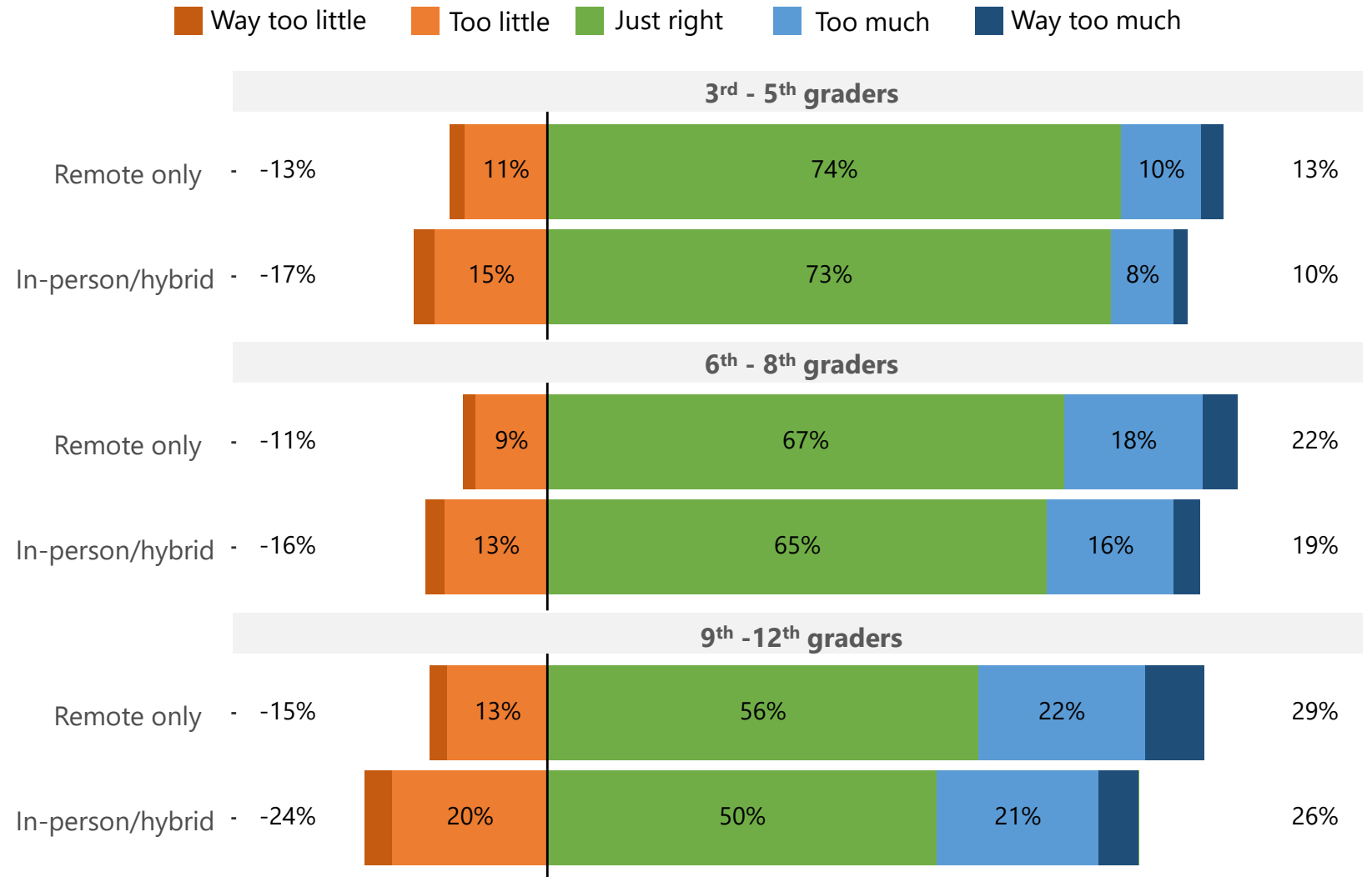
Note. See slide 27 for more information about SPS’s new survey practices around student gender identity and sexual orientation

Students who finished the school year with remote-only instruction were less likely to say that they received too little synchronous instruction - and more likely to say they received too much - than students who finished the school year with some in-person instruction. Across all grade levels and learning modes, a majority of students thought they were receiving a 'just right' amount of synchronous instruction time.

Synchronous Instruction Time

Survey Question:

"This spring, the amount of live/synchronous instruction I am receiving (either on Teams or in-person) is..."



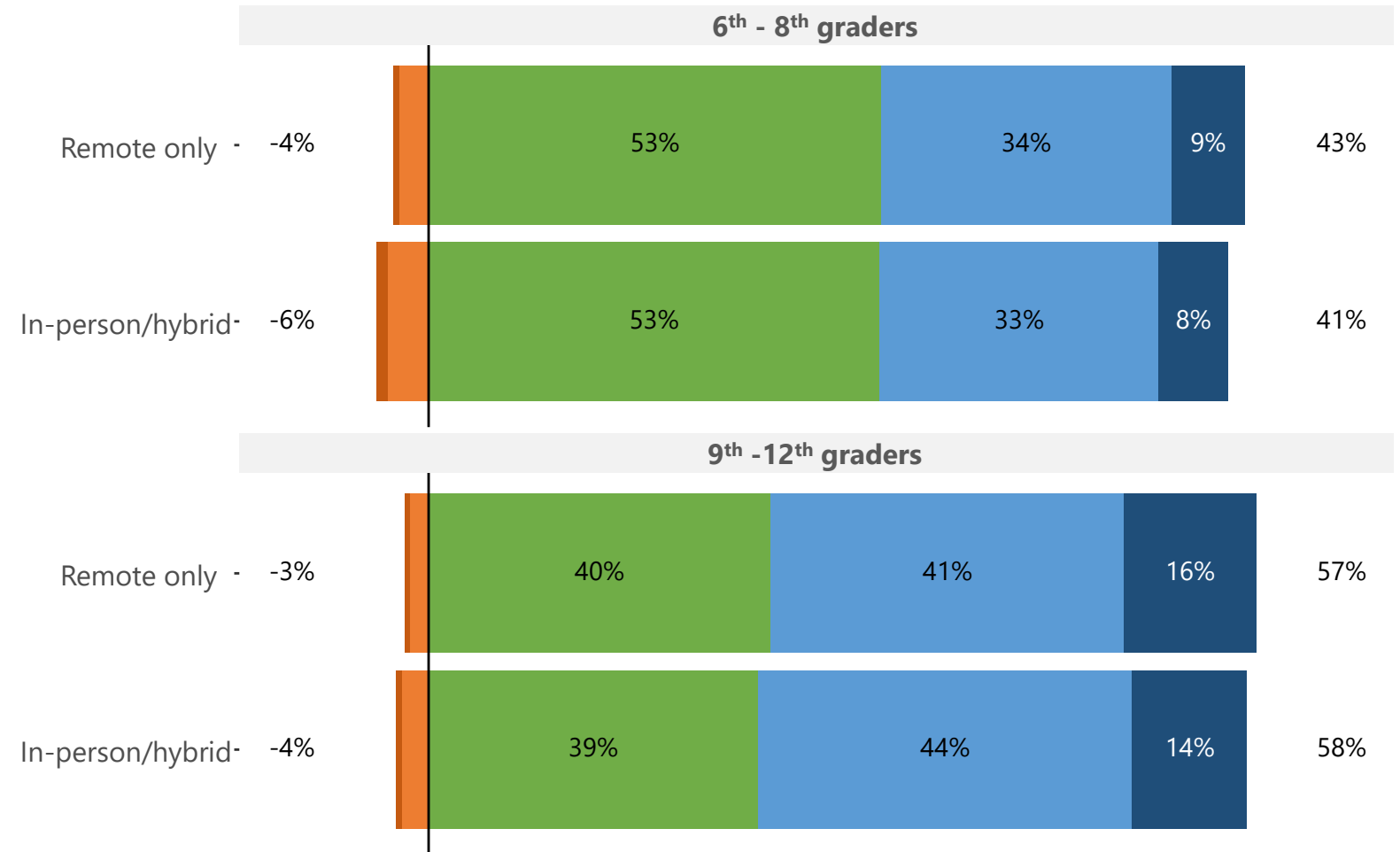
Students in middle and high school were also asked about the amount of work they need to complete. There were only minor differences between those who finished the school year with remote only instruction and in-person instruction. A majority of high school students thought they had too much work to complete.

Students' Perceived Workload

Survey Question:

"This spring, the total amount of schoolwork I need to complete each week is"

■ Way too little
 ■ Too little
 ■ Just right
 ■ Too much
 ■ Way too much



III. Resource and Technology Access

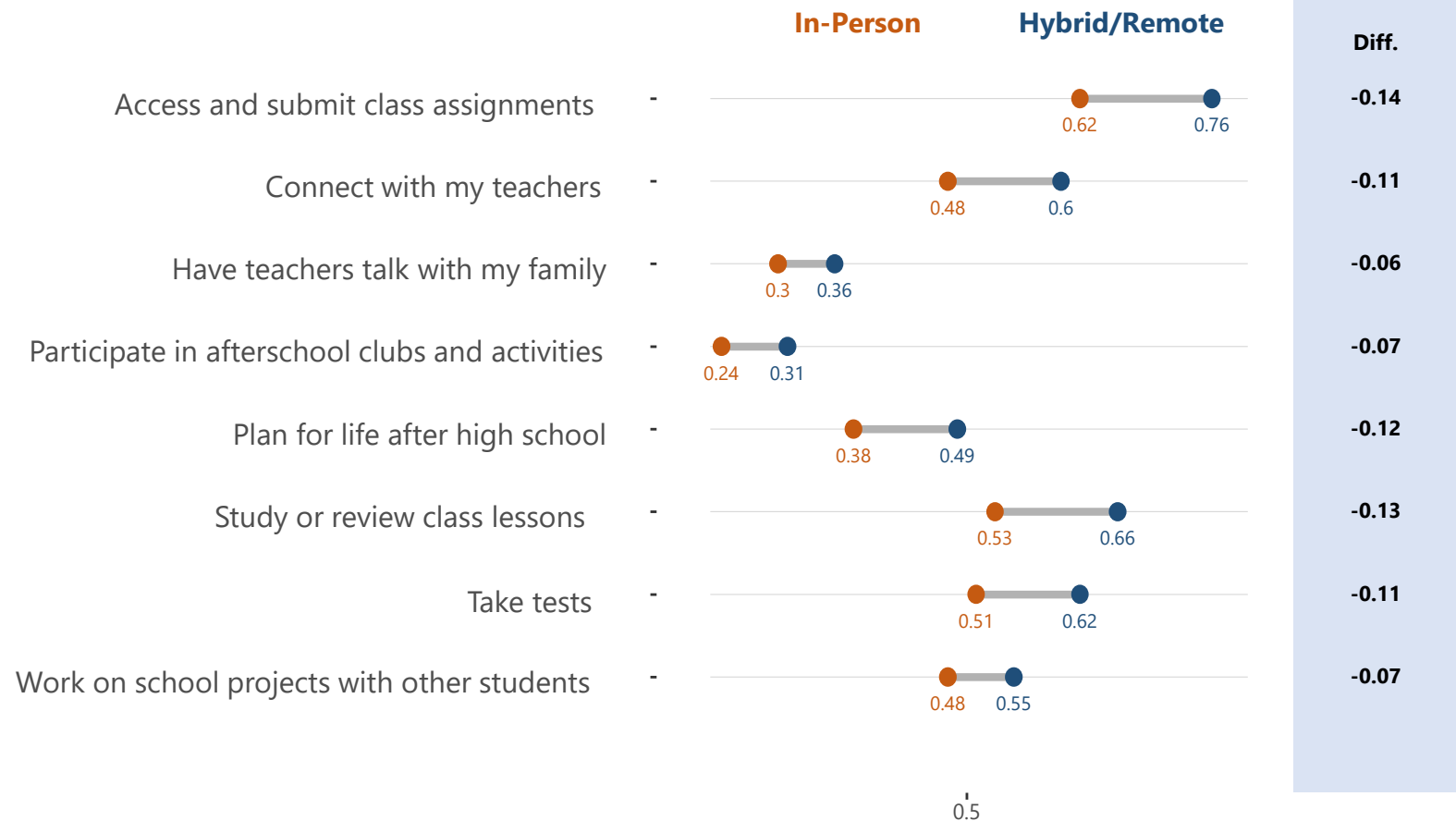
- Students generally want to continue using technology for a variety of academic/instructional purposes.
- This is true both for students currently learning in-person *and* those learning remotely.
- Main areas where they'd like to use technology: assignments, tests, and reviewing lessons.

Technology Use to Facilitate School Activities

Survey Question:

"In the future, how often would you like to use school technology to do the following?"

Figure compares percent selecting "Often" or "Always" for students whose desired future learning mode is in-person or hybrid/remote (see slide 9)



Comparing students who prefer to learn 100% in-person vs. those who are interested in fully remote or hybrid models, we see similar patterns in the use of technology, with those in favor of remote learning being 6 to 14 percentage points more likely to support each area.

Students are most in favor of technology use for accessing and submitting homework assignments.

How would you like to learn in the future? And share any ideas for new ways of learning.

Select responses referencing technology-use

" I would like to have a mix of both experiences, perhaps we could have in-person instruction, but if somehow a student didn't attend class, or needs to refresh on a lesson, they could log in to their site where lessons are posted. That certainly would help me when I have a question about what a teacher said, or how they explained it, and school is over, I could read the overview and understand. Thank you for asking for feedback."

4th grade White girl



" In-person is a great hands-on way of learning! I really miss it and I think that is the best way to learn. However, submitting homework on Seesaw is an amazing way to submit my answers [...I] think homework online is the way to go."

4th grade Multiracial girl

" I want to do hybrid and in person but without the restrictions [...and] when we come back home we can asynchronous work."

5th grade African American boy

" I think that we should learn in person, but with our computers for most of the work so we are able to easily get in touch with our teachers outside of school!"

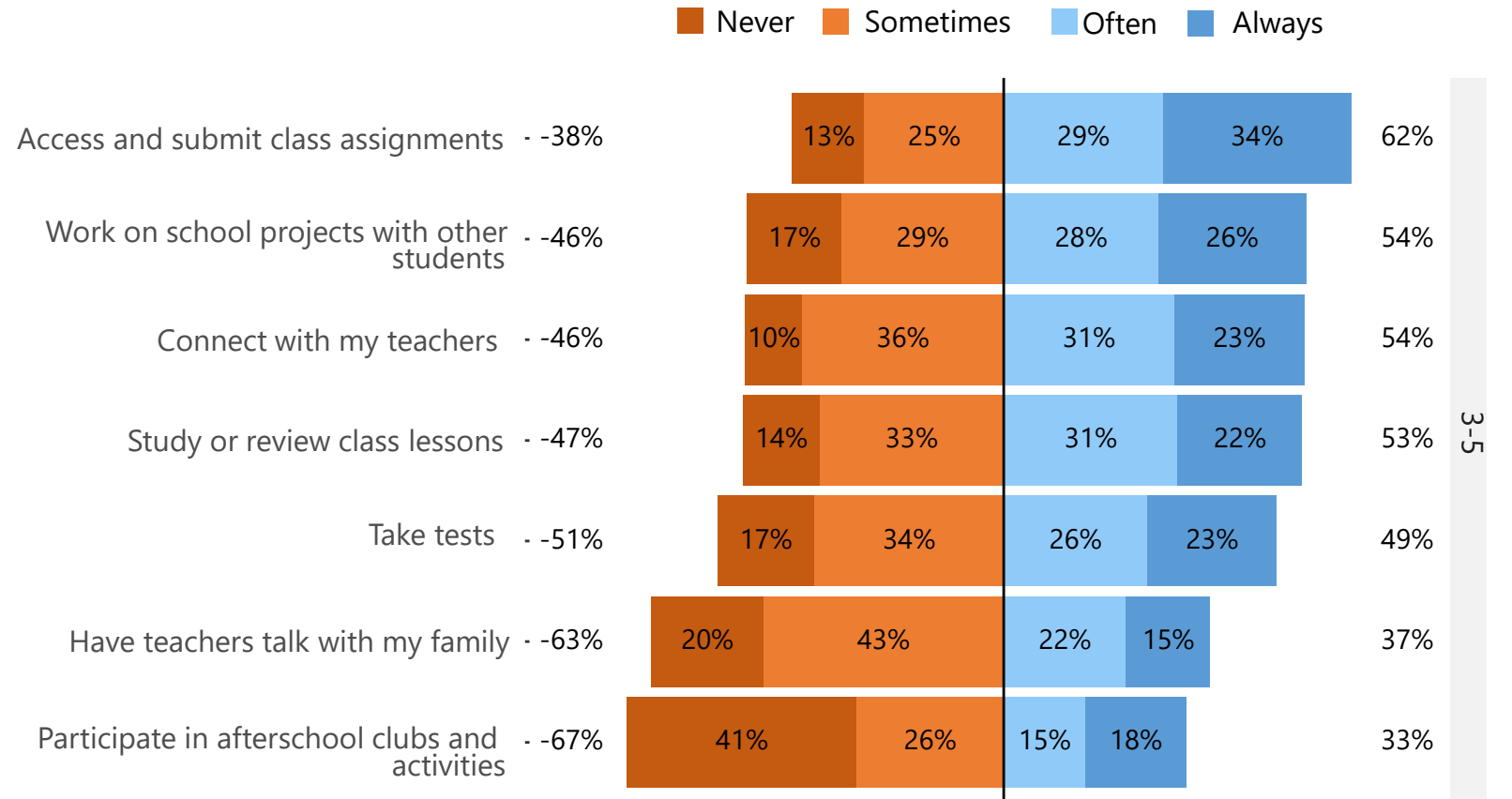
7th grade, South or East Asian girl

Elementary, Middle, and High School students had very similar views on the use of technology.

Elementary Students and Technology Use

Survey Question:

"In the future, how often would you like to use school technology to do the following?"

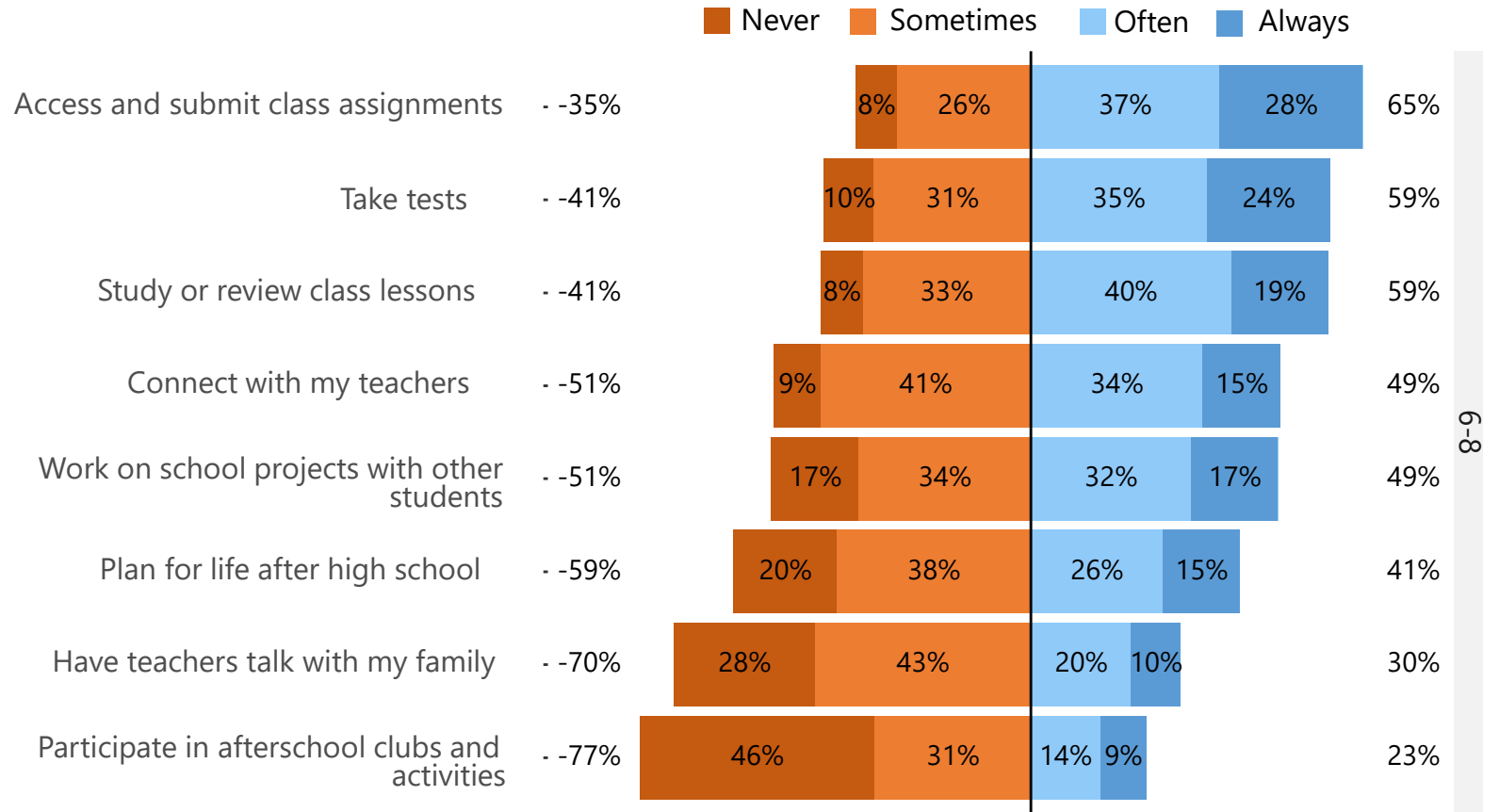


Elementary, Middle, and High School students had very similar views on the use of technology.

Middle School Students and Technology Use

Survey Question:

"In the future, how often would you like to use school technology to do the following?"

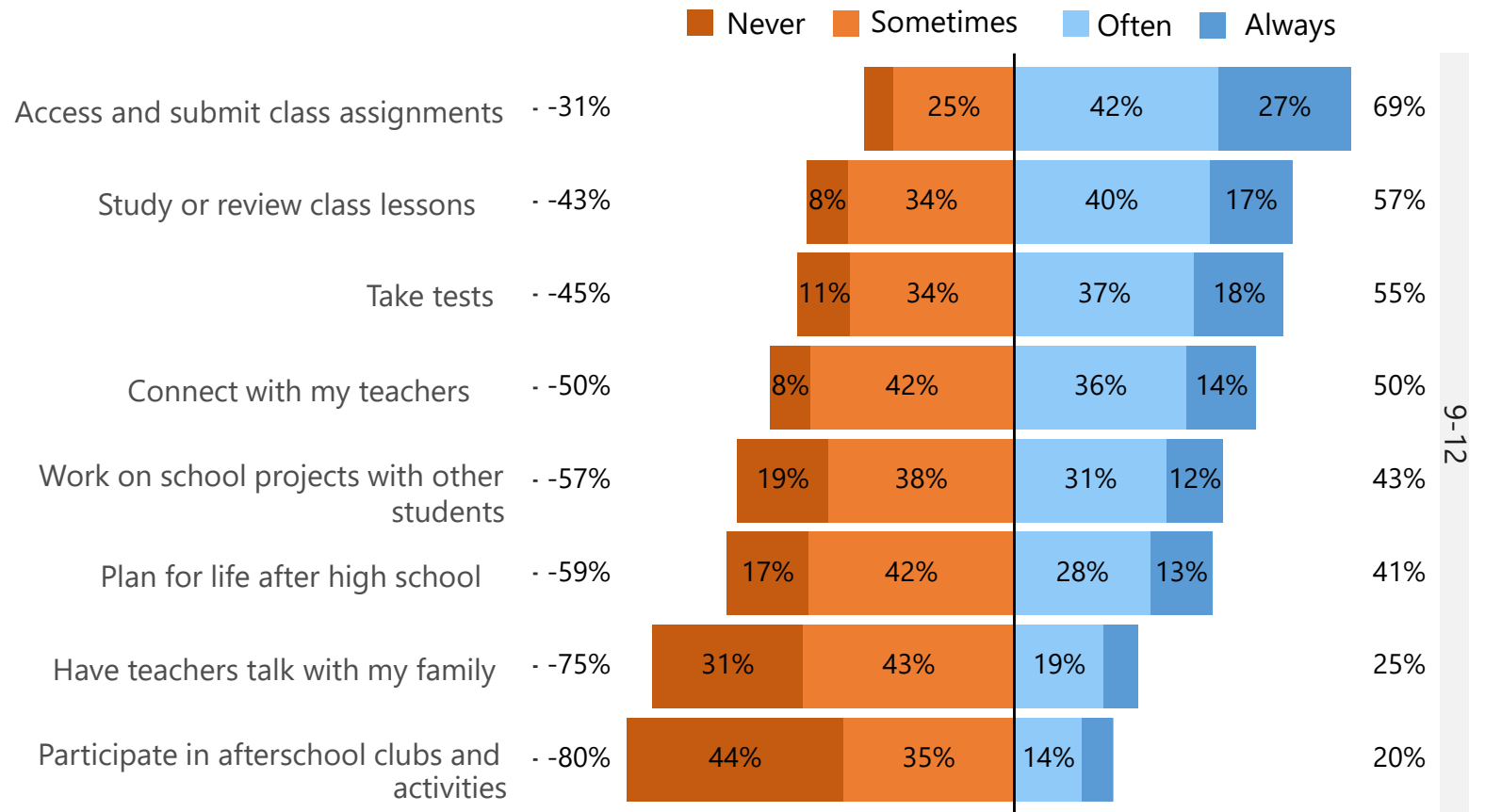


Elementary, Middle, and High School students had very similar views on the use of technology.

High School Students and Technology Use

Survey Question:

"In the future, how often would you like to use school technology to do the following?"



IV. Belonging and Cultural Affirmation

Students' relationships with their educators, peers and buildings are complex. Overwhelmingly, students want learning environments that center relationships with multiple ways of engaging.

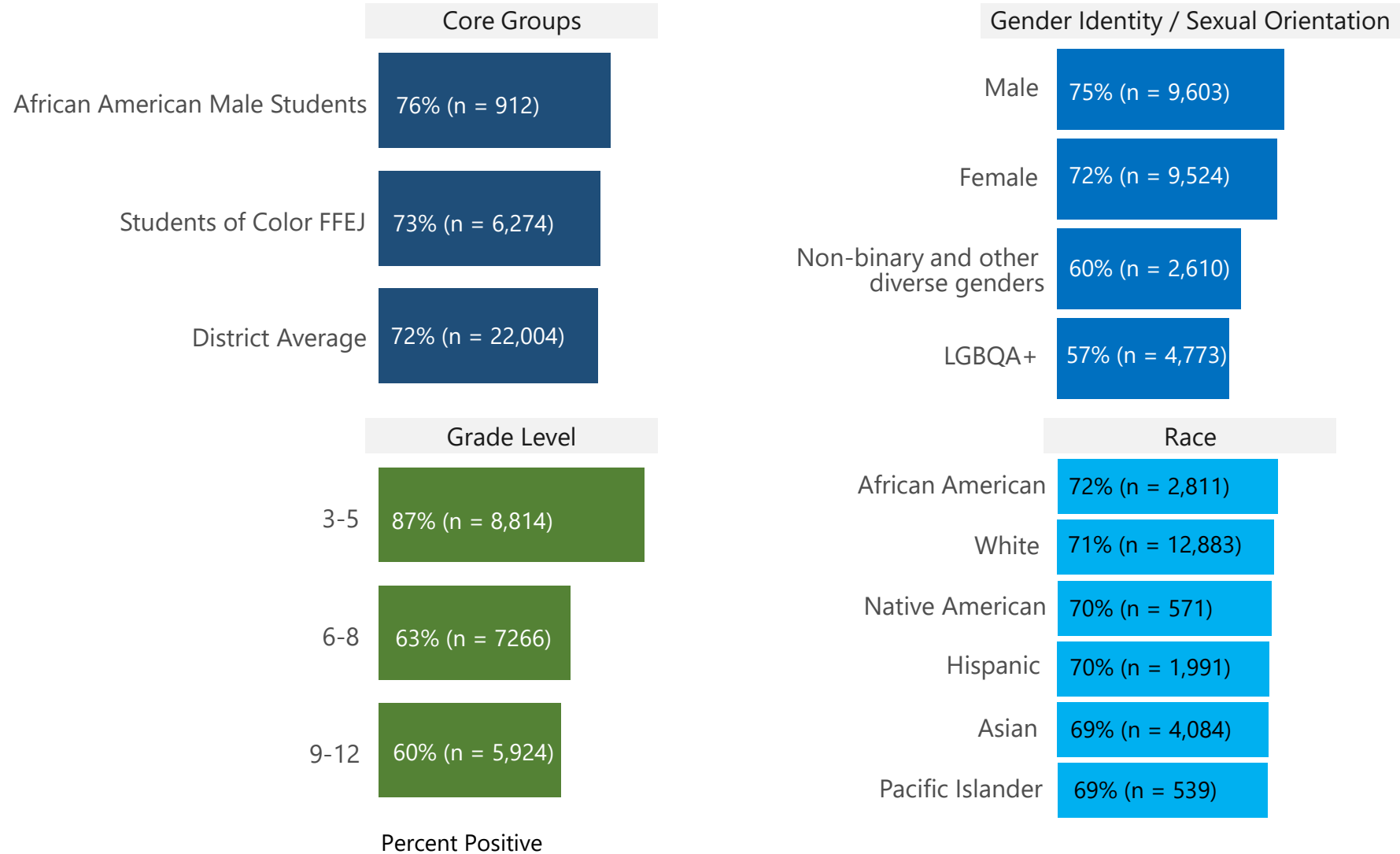
A highlight from remote learning instruction were students of color reported teachers' connecting lessons with their interests and culture.

African American boys and teens had the most positive responses overall.

We asked five questions about school culture and climate. This chart shows the average percent positive agreement across:

- We learn about people from diverse races and cultures in my classes
- Adults at school are interested in students' ideas to improve the school
- My teacher helps me connect what we learn to my interests and culture
- My teacher helps me to think deeply and creatively
- I feel like people accept me for who I am as a person at school

Positive School Culture and Climate



What would make remote learning better?

Sample of responses referencing peer and teacher interaction and safety

“ Maybe if we had more power in Teams, because when my dad has it, he can make meetings. This would help because I feel like I can only connect with a friend if they are close to where I live or if our parents know each other well. If we had more power in Teams, we would probably feel much better.”

Pacific Islander, non-binary 5th grader

“ Nothing. I feel safe because I’m in my house, so yeah.

Latinx, 4th grade girl



I would feel better if we had more time to interact and collaborate with teachers and students rather than feeling disconnected.

White, 12th grade boy

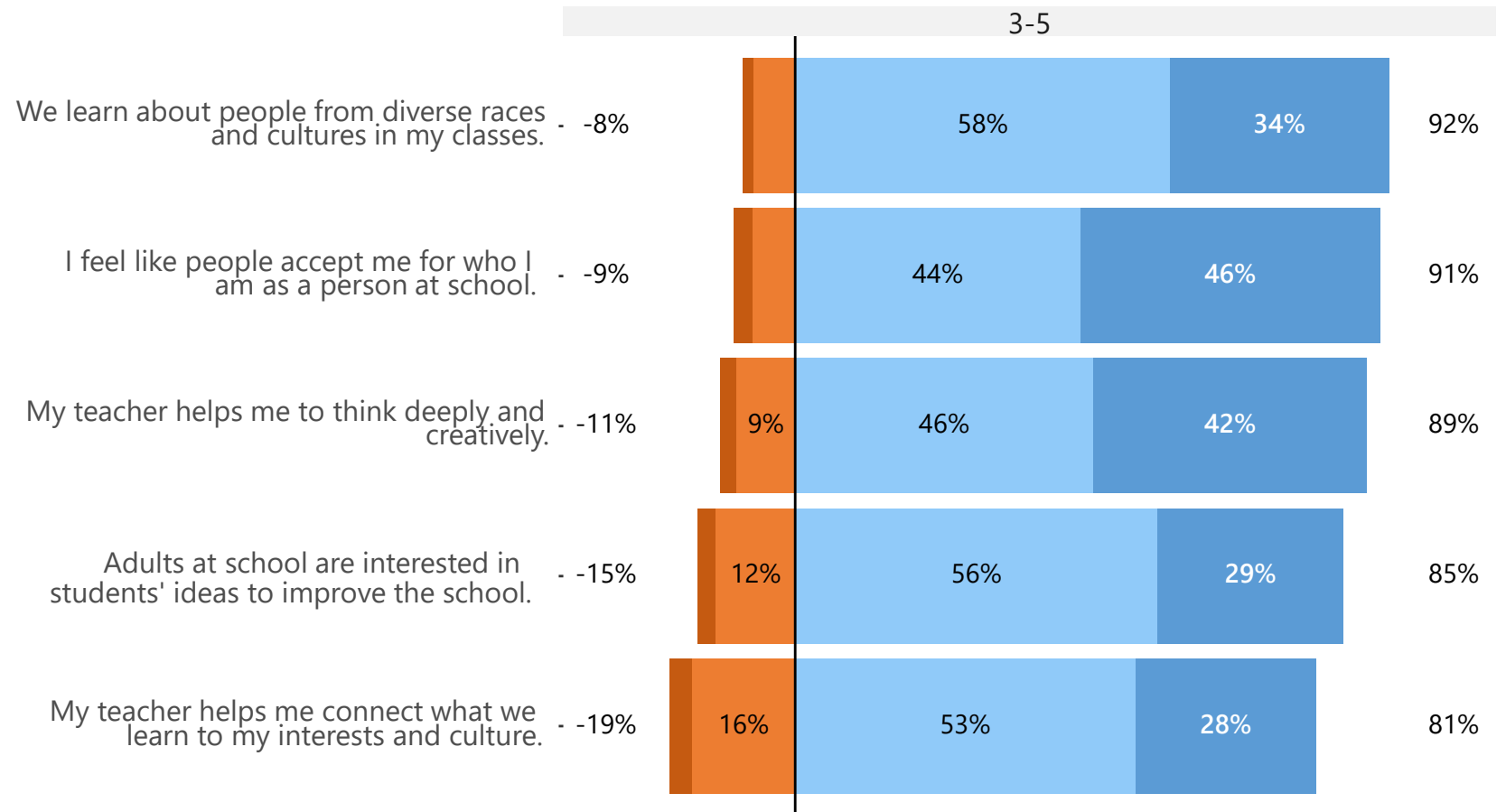
I think if teachers adapted more to the online environment. What I mean is that the teachers often had the same expectations as for when we were in person but I feel as if these expectations were not realistic.

9th grade, cisgender student

School Culture and Climate, Elementary

The survey questions are shown along the vertical axis, elementary students were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with each statement.

Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree

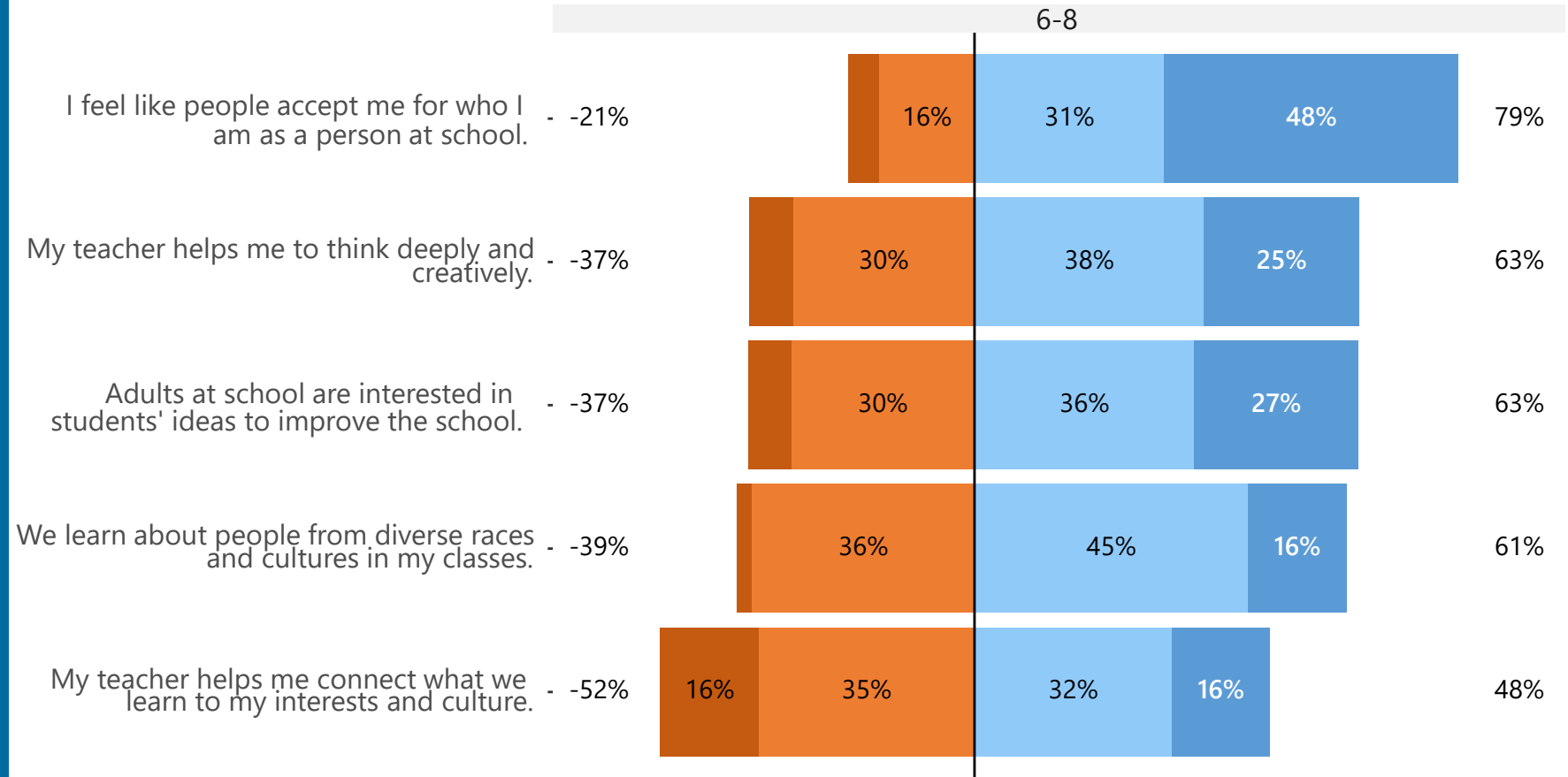


Elementary students had an overall strongly positive view of school culture. Only 3% of students “strongly disagreed” with any of the statements. Almost half (46%) of elementary students ‘strongly agreed’ that ‘people accept me for who I am as a person at school.’

School Culture and Climate, Middle School

The survey questions are shown along the vertical axis. Middle and high school students were asked how many classes the statements were true for.

■ True for none of my classes
 ■ True for only a few of my classes
 ■ True for most of my classes
 ■ True for all of my classes

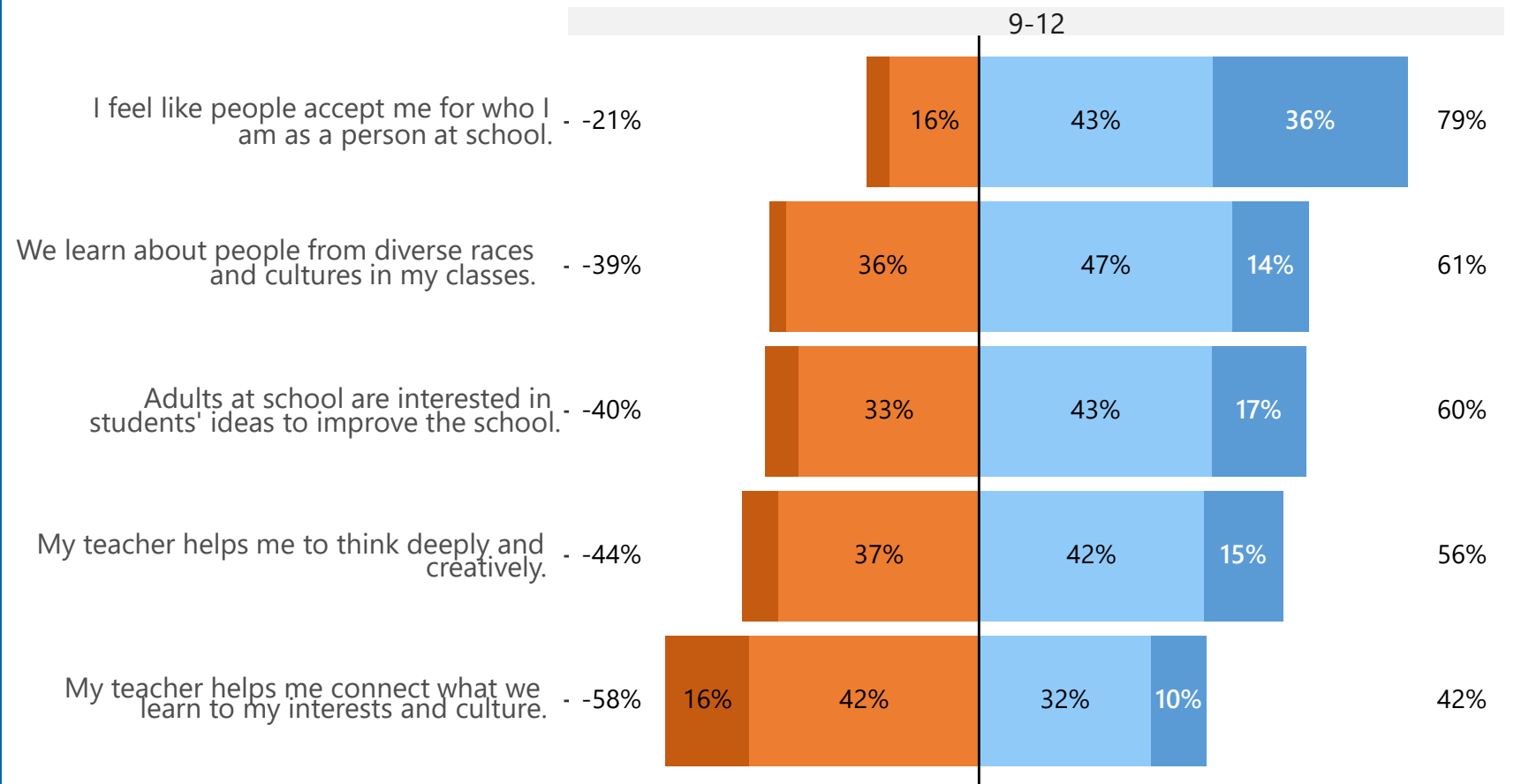


Middle school students were generally less positive than elementary, but it was still the case that 79% felt that in all or most of their classes 'people accept me for who I am as a person at school.' A majority of middle school students (52%) felt that only a few or none of their classes helped connect 'what we learn to my interests and culture.'

School Culture and Climate, High School

The survey questions are shown along the vertical axis. Middle and high school students were asked how many classes the statements were true for.

■ True for none of my classes
 ■ True for only a few of my classes
 ■ True for most of my classes
 ■ True for all of my classes



The responses from high school students were similar to middle school students. While the majority (79%) still felt positively about acceptance, fewer felt this was true for all of their classes (36%). Even more students (58%) felt that their classes were not connecting to their interests and culture.

V. LGBTQ+ Students in SPS

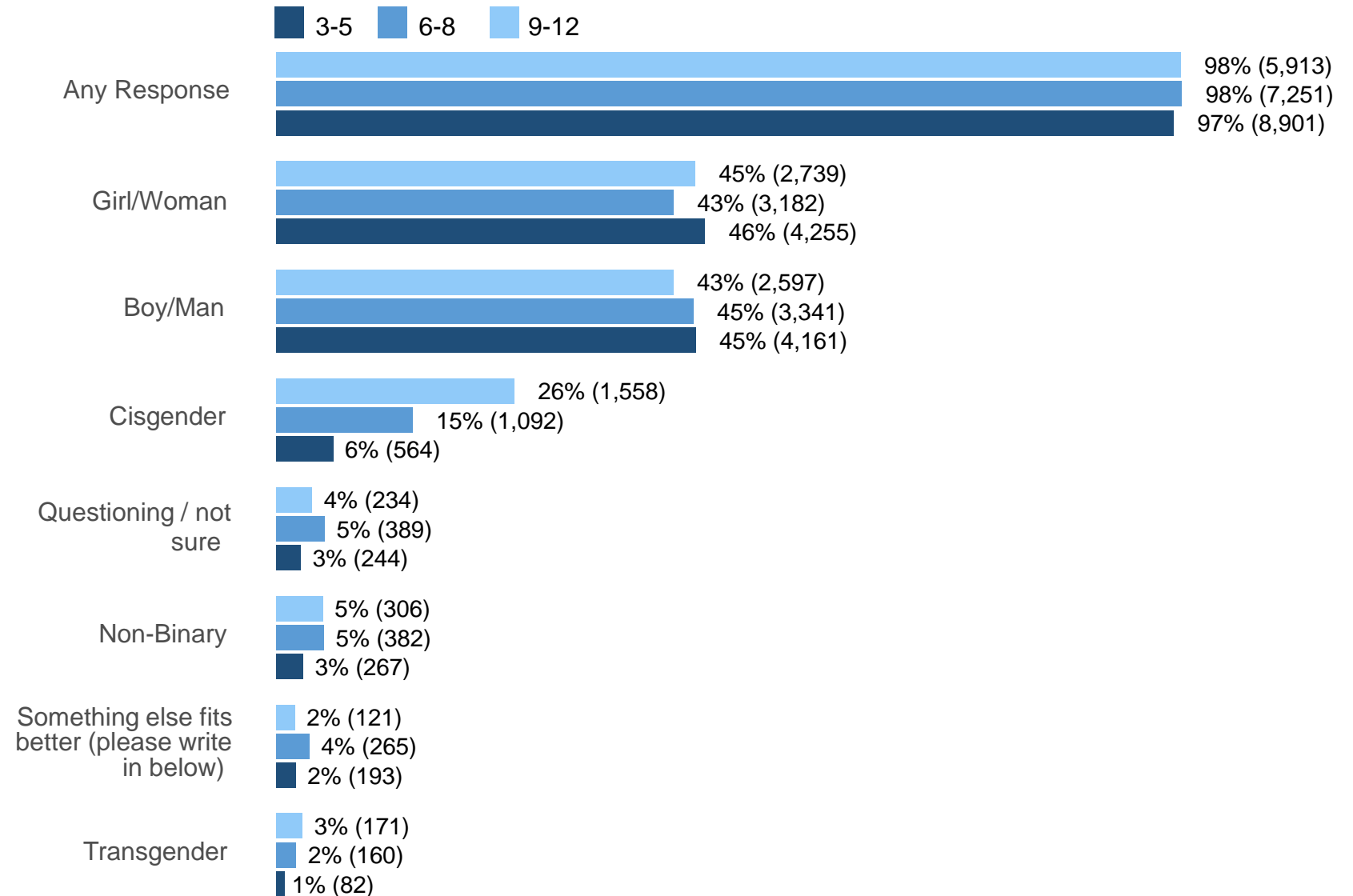
To better represent all students, and in response to student need, SPS used newly developed gender identity questions (for grades 3-12) and sexual orientation questions (for grades 6-12 only) on district-developed surveys.

Seattle Schools has included both gender identity questions and sexual orientation questions in surveys over the past 10 years. These newly modified questions were developed with student, staff, and family input, and reflect the shift in language seen in similar questions being used in districts across the country.

Approximately 90% of surveyed students identified as either a Girl/Woman or Boy/Man. The term cisgender was not widely selected, with only 6% of elementary students and 26% of high school students also choosing that option. 12% of students identified as non-binary or other diverse genders. Students could select multiple identities; some identified both with Girl/Woman or Boy/Man and another option.

Student gender identities

"Which of the following best describes your gender identity? (Check all that apply. If any of the choices are confusing, please see the definitions below.)"



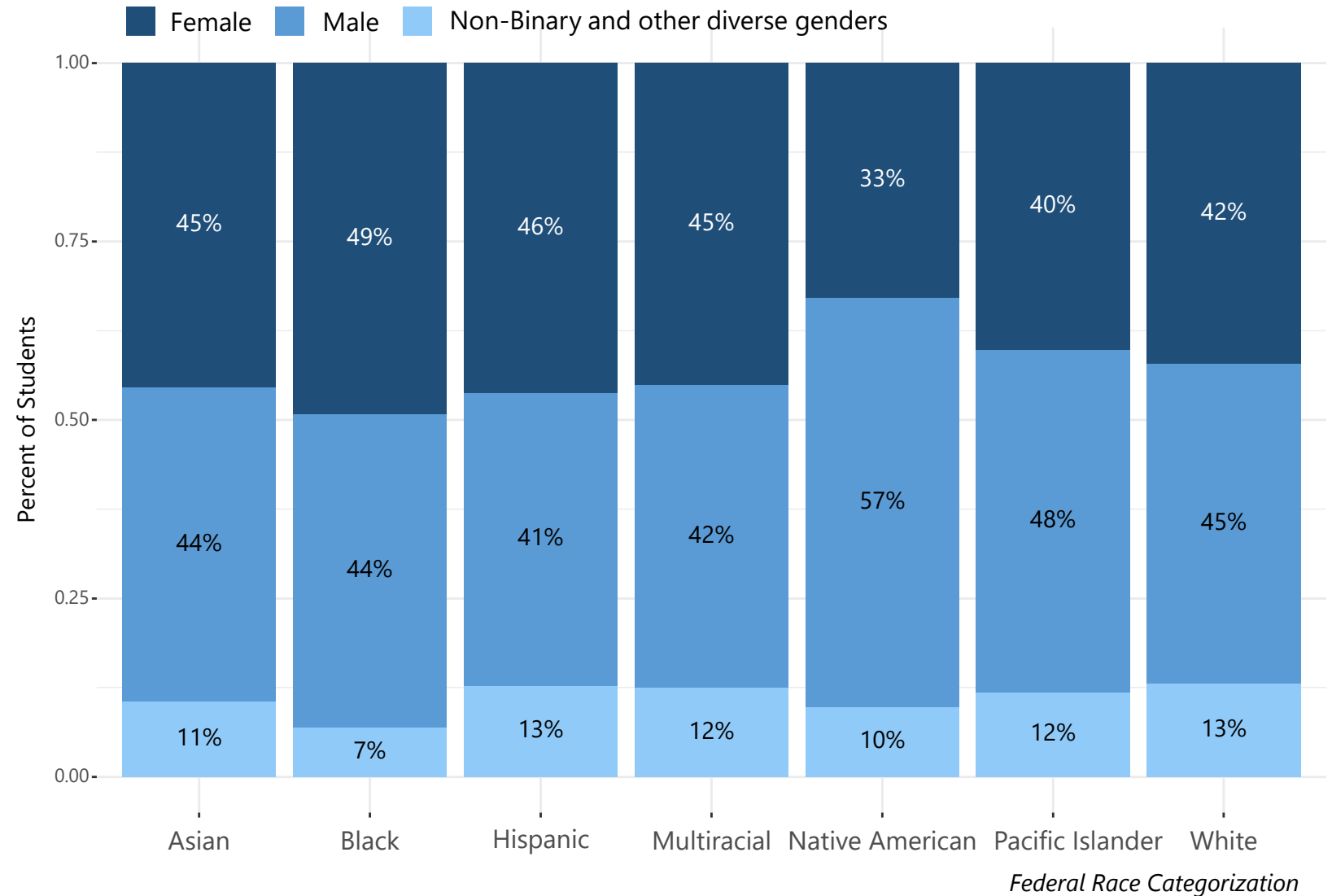
Students of all racial identities identified with Non-Binary and other diverse genders.

Non-Binary and other diverse genders includes students who selected any of the following options on the survey:

- Non-Binary
- Transgender
- Questioning/not sure
- Something else fits better

Race by Gender Identity

"Which of the following best describes your gender identity? (Check all that apply. If any of the choices are confusing, please see the definitions below.)"

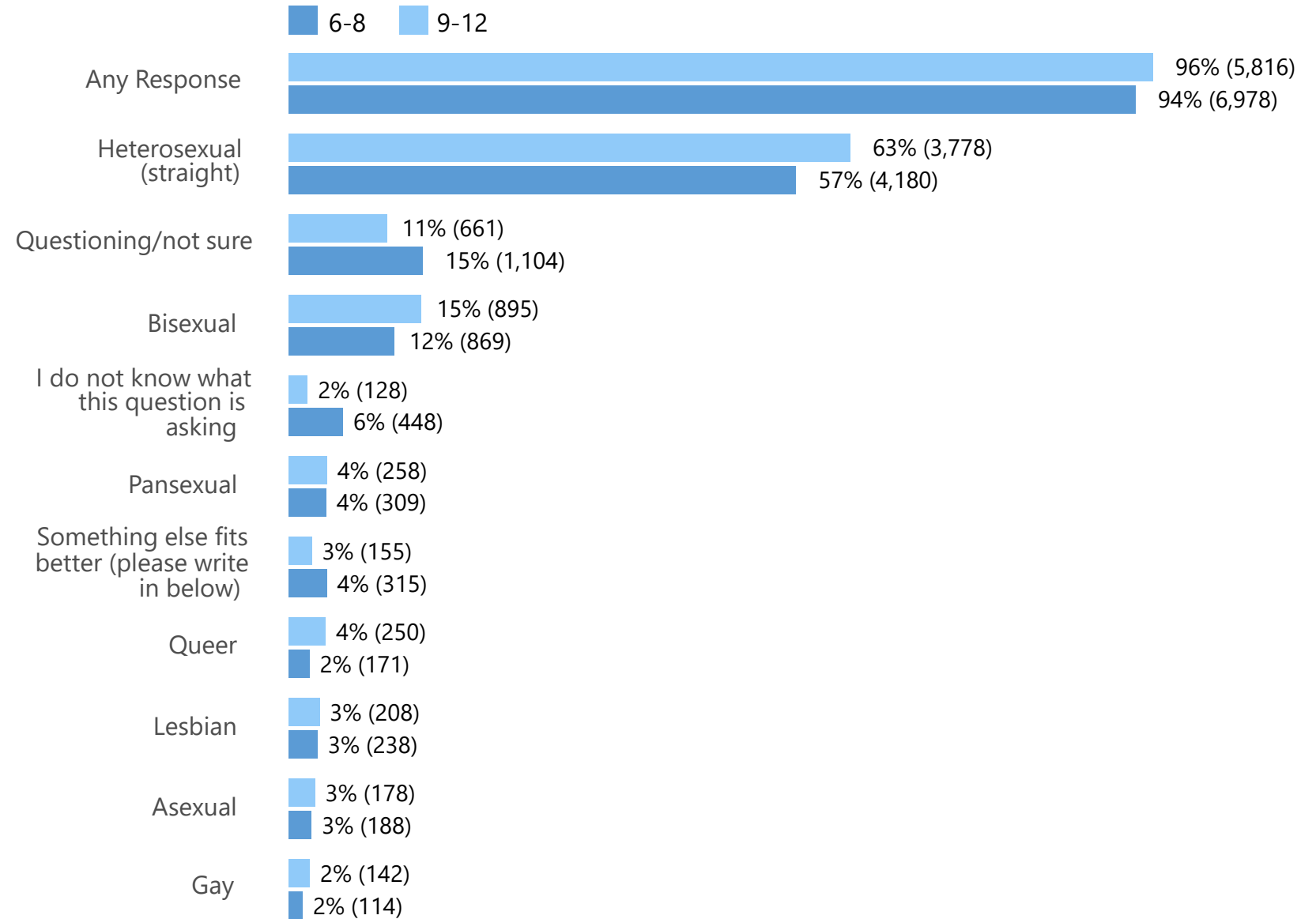


Secondary students in Seattle Public Schools report a broad array of sexual orientations that best describe themselves.

While a majority of students (63% high school, 57% middle school) identify their sexual orientation as heterosexual, many others identify as 'Questioning', 'Bisexual', or with several other orientations. This question was only asked of students in middle and high school.

Student Sexual Orientation

"Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation? (Check all that apply)"



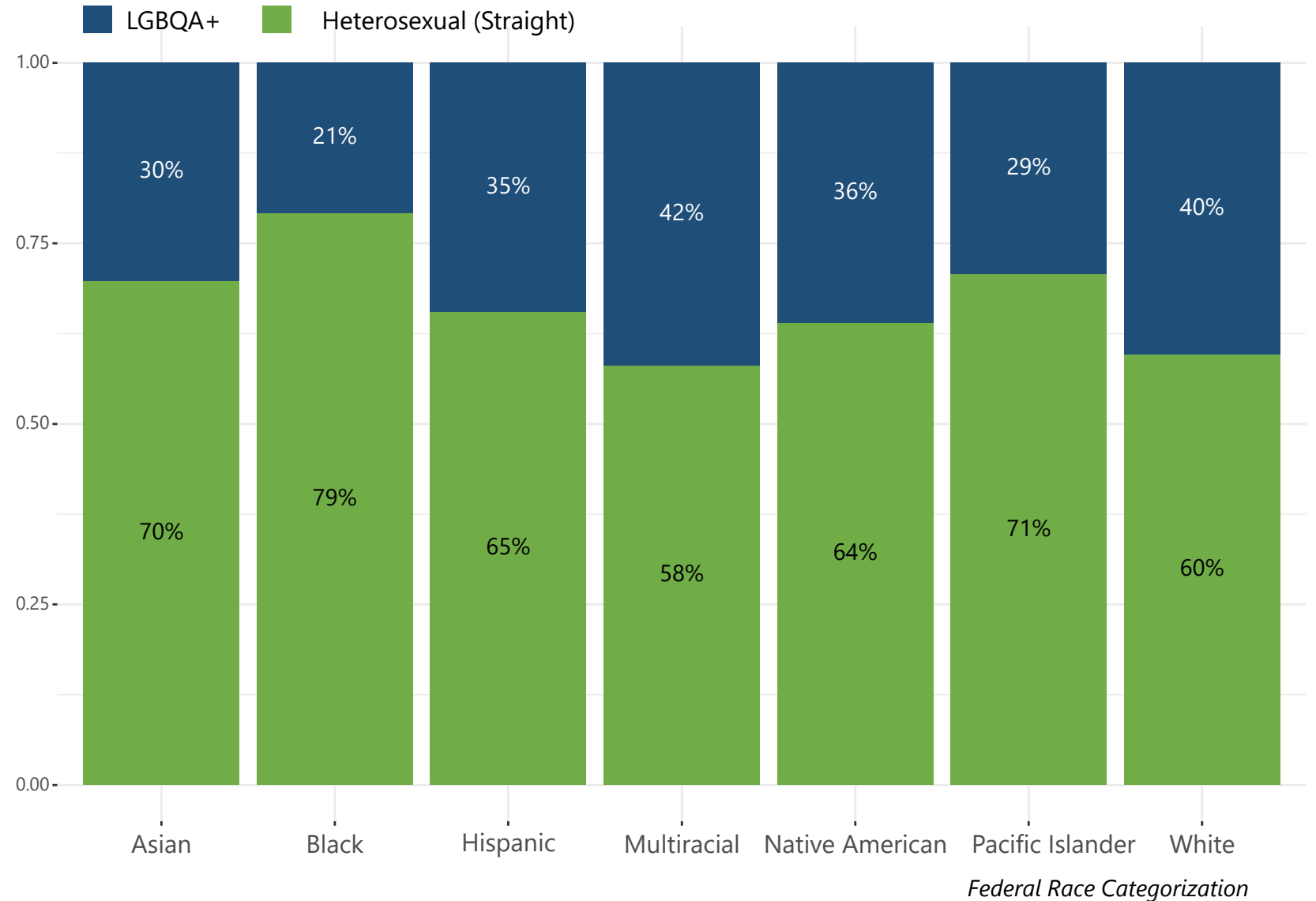
Across racial identifications, we see that many students identify as LGBTQA+.

LGBQA+: we include here all students who selected any of the following options on the survey:

- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Gay
- Lesbian
- Pansexual
- Queer
- Questioning/Not Sure
- Something else fits better

Sexual Orientation and Race

"Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation? (Check all that apply)"



VI. Findings Summary

- **Remote Learning:** A majority of students reported successes with remote learning this year. With the exception of “safety,” students report feeling more positively about learning in-person than they do learning remotely. African-American male students reported the most success with remote learning, however we have a relatively low (25%) response rate for these students. Although students generally thought they were receiving an appropriate amount of synchronous instruction time, a majority of high school students thought they had too much work to complete.
- **Returning to In-Person Learning:** Students generally want to continue using technology for a variety of academic/instructional purposes, particularly for assignments, tests, and reviewing lessons. Students also want learning environments that center peer and teacher relationships with multiple ways of engaging.
- **Student Demographics:** Findings from newly developed gender identity questions (for grades 3-12) and sexual orientation questions (grades 6-12 only) show that students of all racial identities identified with non-binary and other diverse gender response options, as well as sexual orientation response options.
- **Response Rates:** Students at every school responded to the survey. However, the overall response rate was low (56%) compared to previous district surveys.

VII. Next Steps

Surveys are necessary to understand the breadth of student experiences, but insufficient to fully examine student reasoning and nuances behind these findings. The following next steps aim to support fall planning and advance SPS's overall efforts to listen to (and lead with) student voices.

Next Steps, June-August 2021

1. Qualitative analysis of open-ended survey responses
2. Full remote learning report that will include other qualitative sources of student experience data and research
3. Analysis to learn from surveyed LGBTQ+ students (in consultation with workgroup that includes SPS students, staff, and families)
4. Meetings and further inquiry with district staff, educators, students and families.

Thank you!



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