

UPPER PERKIOMEN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Education Center, 2229 E. Buck Road, Pennsburg PA 18073

Educational Programs and Services Committee

January 19, 2023

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Director of Technology-James Roth

Approval of November 17, 2022 Educational Programs and Services Minutes.

The PAYS (Pennsylvania Youth Survey) survey was administered in the fall of the 2021-2022 school year. This is a biennial survey for students in 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th grades. PAYS asks questions about students' perspectives of their school environment, as well as attitudes, knowledge and behaviors concerning alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, violence, depression, and other problem behaviors. The purpose is to gather local data and information needed to select appropriate intervention and intervention programs to address these issues in schools and communities. Below are the areas surveyed and a summary of results.

The comparison of data for "Depressed about Life" between the 18-19 and 21-22 school years showed an increase in the number of students in grades 6, 8 and 10 feeling depressed about life, with a significant increase for 8th and 10th graders. The comparison of data for "Depressed about Self" between the 18-19 and 21-22 school years showed a significant increase of 8th and 10th grade students reporting they feel depressed about themselves.

The data for "Thoughts of Self Failure" showed that 20% of students reported a feeling of self-failure. Secondary students reported an increase of the feeling in grades 6, 8 and 10. The percentages across all grades is lower than the state averages. The data for "Self-Harm" showed that there is an almost 6% increase in 6th and 12th grade students reporting self-harm behaviors. All of the surveyed students reported an increase in self-harm; however, the rates at each grade level are lower than state averages.

The data for "On average, sleeping less than 7 hours a night on school nights" showed that 57% of seniors reported sleeping less than 7 hours/night and the majority of middle school students reported sleeping 7 or more hours/evening. The data for "Felt tired or sleepy during the day "every day" or "several times" during the past two weeks" showed that middle school students in grades 6 and 8 reported feeling tired every day (or several days). UPSD responses are at or greater than state reporting levels.

The data for "Worry about Food" showed that since 2017, there has been less concern reported with food security. UPSD saw a 5% decrease at the secondary level. The report showed that 10.3% of 6th graders reported a concern, which is greater than the state average among that grade. The data for "Skipped Meal" showed that 2.9% of students reported having to skip meals due to lack of food within the home. All grades reported the need to skip meals at rates lower than state averages.

The data for "Changed homes once or twice in the last year" showed that 6th and 8th graders reported at least one housing transition during the 2021-2022 school year. 6th grade went from 10.9% to 14.25% and 8th grade went from 12.4% to 13%. The data for "Changed homes three or more times in the last year" saw that 1.3% of secondary students reported 3 or more housing transitions in the 2021-2022 school year. 8th graders reported experiencing the greatest level of housing instability at 2.3%.

The data for "Lived in shelter/motel/car due to loss of housing/lack of money" saw that 3% of secondary students reported living in a shelter, car, or motel during the 2021-2022 school year. The data for "Lived away from home because kicked out, ran away

or abandoned” showed that 11.4% of seniors in the 2021-2022 school year reported themselves as having run away or being kicked out of their homes. There was a 6% increase of Seniors who reported housing instability.

The data for “So sad stopped doing usual activities” showed that all students surveyed saw a decrease in participation in activities due to sadness. Almost a third of 10th and 12th graders reported feeling so sad they stopped engaging in activities. The data for “Seriously considered suicide” showed that 17.5% of 8th graders reported they had considered suicide, which is higher than any other grade level. 13.1% of secondary students reported considering suicide, which is the highest level since 2017.

The data for “Planned Suicide” showed that there is an increase in all grades in planning suicide, a 3% increase overall. 8th graders reported having planned suicide increased by 5% from 2019 to 2021. The data for “Attempted Suicide” showed that each grade level reported an increase of students who attempted suicide. 10th graders reported the most significant increase in attempted suicide reports.

The data for “Offered Drugs at School” showed there was a significant decrease in middle and high school students reporting being offered drugs at school. 10-12% of high school students reported being offered drugs at school and all grades reported less access to drugs than state averages. The data for “Brought Weapon to School” showed that .4% of students surveyed reported bringing a weapon to school, which is less than the state average of .8%. 2.3% of Seniors reported bringing a weapon to school.

The data for “Threatened at School” showed that in all grades, except 10th, students reported a decrease in being threatened at school. 13% of secondary students reported being threatened, which is a decrease from 16.7% in 2019. All grades have survey reporting averages lower than the state. The data for “Attacked at School” showed that 5.6% of secondary students reported being attacked at school. Middle school students reported being attacked at higher rates than high school peers with 6th being 7.5% and 8th being 6.7%.

The data for “Threatened with Weapon at School” showed that all surveyed grades had a reduction in report of being threatened with a weapon at school-1.5% overall. 12th graders reported these threats at the highest level of 3%. The data for “Attacked with Weapon at School” showed that less than 1% of students reported being attacked with a weapon at school. 1.5% of 12th graders reported being attacked at school with a weapon, which is greater than the 1.3% average for this age group.

The data for “Participated in Activities: Organized community activities (such as scouting, 4-H, service clubs, YMCA, etc.)” showed that there was a reduction of participation in community activities for all grades surveyed. 6th and 8th graders reported over a 10% decline in participation; however, participation levels across all grades are greater than state averages. The data for “Participated in Activities: Family supported activities or hobbies (such as dance, gymnastics, hiking, biking, skating etc.) showed that almost 47% of students reported participation in family supported activities. There has been a continued decline in participation since the 2017 administration of PAYS.

The data for “Participated in Activities: School sponsored activities (such as sports, music, clubs, after-school programs, etc.)” showed that all students surveyed reported less participation in school sponsored activities with decreases ranging from 7-17%. UPSD participation rates were less for all grades than state averages. Data for “Participated in Activities: Faith-based activities (such as choir, youth group, mission, church leagues, etc.)” showed that participation rates in faith-based activities decreased at all grade levels. Overall participation at 20.2% is slightly higher than the state average, which is 18.1%.

The data for “Participated in Activities: Volunteer” showed that there was a reduction in volunteerism since 2019. 6th grade: 5.3%, 8th grade: 4.9%, 10th grade: 1.3% and 12th grade: 6.3%. Volunteerism for each grade is less than same-aged peers across the state. The data for “Participated in Activities: job, employment)” showed that 10th graders being employed has increased since 2021, with employment of 12th graders remaining the same. Overall employment rates of students are less than the state.

The data for “Commitment and Involvement in School: Enjoyed being in school during past year” showed that all students who were surveyed reported less engagement at school than their peers across the state. 6th graders reported the most significant decline in school enjoyment, with a 7.7% decrease. Only 32.3% of students reported an enjoyment of being at school. The data for “Commitment and Involvement in School: There are lots of chances for students in my school to talk one-on-one with a teacher” showed that 76.4% of students reported ample chances to speak with their teachers one on one. This is an increase of 8.3%. 8th graders report the highest rates at 83.3%, which is greater than the state average.

The data for “Commitment and Involvement in School: Feel assigned schoolwork is meaningful and important” showed that less than 25% of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders felt it was important. There has been a 20% reduction in students reporting that schoolwork was meaningful since 2017 and the percentage of UPSD students reporting is less than the state average. The data for “Commitment and involvement in School: Feel school is going to be important for their later life” showed that only 36.6% of students reported it was important. There was a 20.8% decrease of students reporting a sense of value since the 2017 administration. Less than 25% of 10th and 31% of 12th graders felt there was a value of school later in their life.

The data for “Commitment and Involvement in School: I have lots of chances to be part of class discussions or activities” showed that 88.1% of students reported the opportunity to engage in class discussions, which is greater than the state average of 86.5%. 8th graders reported the most opportunity at 92.3% with seniors reporting the least at 79.78%. The data for “Commitment and Involvement in School: My teachers praise me when I work hard in school” showed that only 43.9% of students reported being praised for their hard work. 6th graders reported an increase (6%), while 8th, 10th and 12th graders reported slight decreases in teacher praise. The results were all lower than state averages.

The data for “Commitment and Involvement in School: I feel safe at my school” showed that 80% of students reported feeling safe at school, which is slightly lower than the state average of 82%. Since the 2019 administration, the responses from 8th, 10th and 12th graders showed an increase in the feeling of safety.

PA Climate Survey 2021-2022: The school climate refers to the quality and character of school life. It is based upon people’s experiences of school and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures. The Climate Improvement Process involves Readiness (schools assess and reflect on the school’s capacity, commitment and competence in carrying out comprehensive school climate improvement); Assessment and Analysis (schools administer school climate survey to staff, students, parents, and other stakeholder groups; as well as conduct audits of programs and data sources); Action Planning (schools develop a short term action plan to improve readiness, engage the school community with climate data and address immediate needs. Later a long- term action plan is developed); Implementation (action plans are implemented for a period of time and data is collected); Reflection (the leadership team and school community reflect on the school’s progress and the leader team’s effectiveness).

There are 3 domains in the survey: Student Support (measures how much students feel listened to, cared about, and helped by teachers/adults); Social/Emotional Learning (the peer social and emotional learning scale measures students’ perception of their peers’ social and problem-solving skills) and School Safe and Respectful Climate (this scales measures how physically and emotionally safe students feel). The scale used is Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree and Strongly Agree. Once the survey is completed, the data is reviewed to reveal any patterns and relationships.

Notable district trends:	Elementary % Agreement	Middle % Agreement	High % Agreement
-My teachers care about me	93	79.1	68
-I am bored in school/classes	52.5	69.1	71.1
-Students in my school are bullied	42.9	40.9	52.1
-I am good at solving conflict (elem)	69.9	47	36.9
-Students in my school try to work out disagreements with others by talking to them (secondary)			
-Get into arguments when they disagree with people		61.1	69.5
-I think before I act (elem)	75.3	36	31.3
-Stop and think before doing anything when angry (secondary)			

UPSD has 3 tiers of student supports for mental/behavioral health concerns (academic, substance abuse, mental health, behavior/discipline, attendance). Tier 1 Supports provide additional strategies for the classroom teacher to attempt as a first step, or in addition to an additional tier of service. Tier II Supports require a referral to be completed. The services are provided by the school counselor or the Lakeside Counselor and should be short term (4, 6, 8 weeks). Students with 504 Plans and drug and alcohol violations can also receive Tier II. Tier III Supports are provided by the Student Assistance Counselor and also require a referral. These services are likely long term and could last all year. Students receiving Tier III are also receiving Tiers I and II. UPSD currently has 8 School Counselors, 4 Student Assistance Counselors (3 district and 1 Creative Health), 5 Lakeside Counselors, 1 Prevention Counselor from The Lincoln Center, 2 SAP Liaisons from Creative Health, up to 2 Counselors from

Malvern, 4 School Psychologists, and 1 Behavior Specialist. We are waiting for approval of a grant to hire a Social Worker/Home School Visitor. We also have support in special education from Licensed Behavior Specialist Consultants (LBSCs).

Within the district, programs have been implemented to enhance support for students. Currently at the elementary level there is PBIS, Responsive Classroom, the Second Step Curriculum, Calm Cat (Tier II), MH Tiered Services Model, Positive Behavior Recognition System for staff and students and a Student Assistance Program (SAP). The middle school has Restorative Practices, Second Step, SMARTS, MH Tiered Services, Positive Behavior Recognition System for students and staff, Student Assistance Program and addition of security guards and Perk Period (interest based). The high school has the same programs as the middle school with the addition of Link Crew and an SRO. Moving forward, we are looking to implement an SEL Universal screener, advanced tiers of PBIS at elementary, extracurricular activities at the elementary level, and a WEB program at the middle school.

There are upcoming Parent Engagement Sessions scheduled. QBS De-escalation will be held in January and Transition will be held in March.

The next committee meeting will be held on February 16, 2023.