Safety Model: Feedback & Recommendations

March 4, 2024

February 1, 2024 School Board Discussion

Three possible ideas to consider for CHS:

| 1) Using weapons detectors at sporting events and/or school entrances | 2) Learning more about the Youth Resource Officers that connect the Cambridge (MA) Police Department with Cambridge Public Schools | 3) Reconsidering the student cell phone policy at CHS (how to approach cell phones during lunch or between classes) |

Survey for Public Engagement

Ways of Gathering Survey Feedback (opens Monday, February 5)

- ParentSquare/website
- Social media
- Media coverage
- At public events
- During Black Knight Time at CHS
- Conversational feedback gathered through student, family interactions with school and division staff

TAKE OUR SAFETY SURVEY

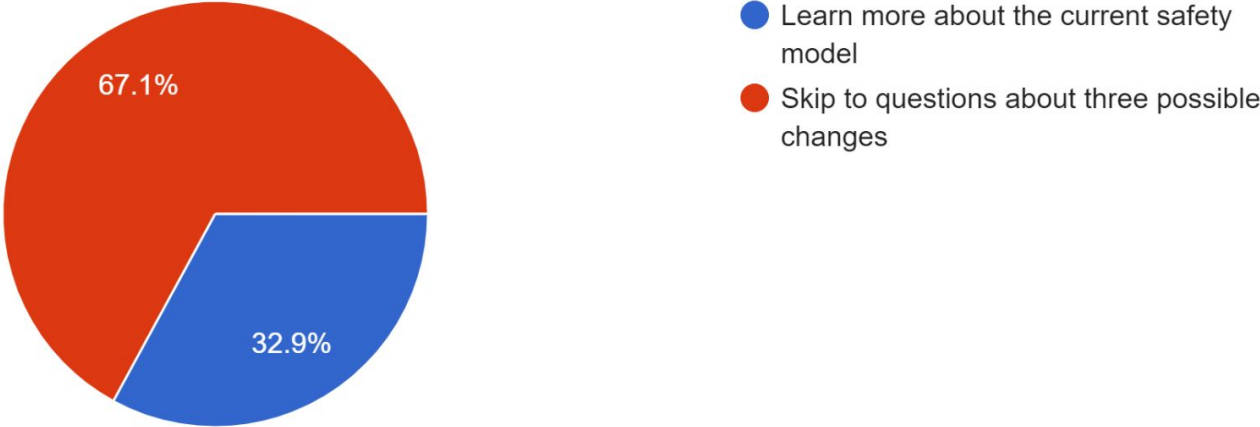**https://charlottesvilleschools.org/**

Data is as of noon March 5th.

Would you like to learn more about our current safety model, or skip to questions about the three possible changes?
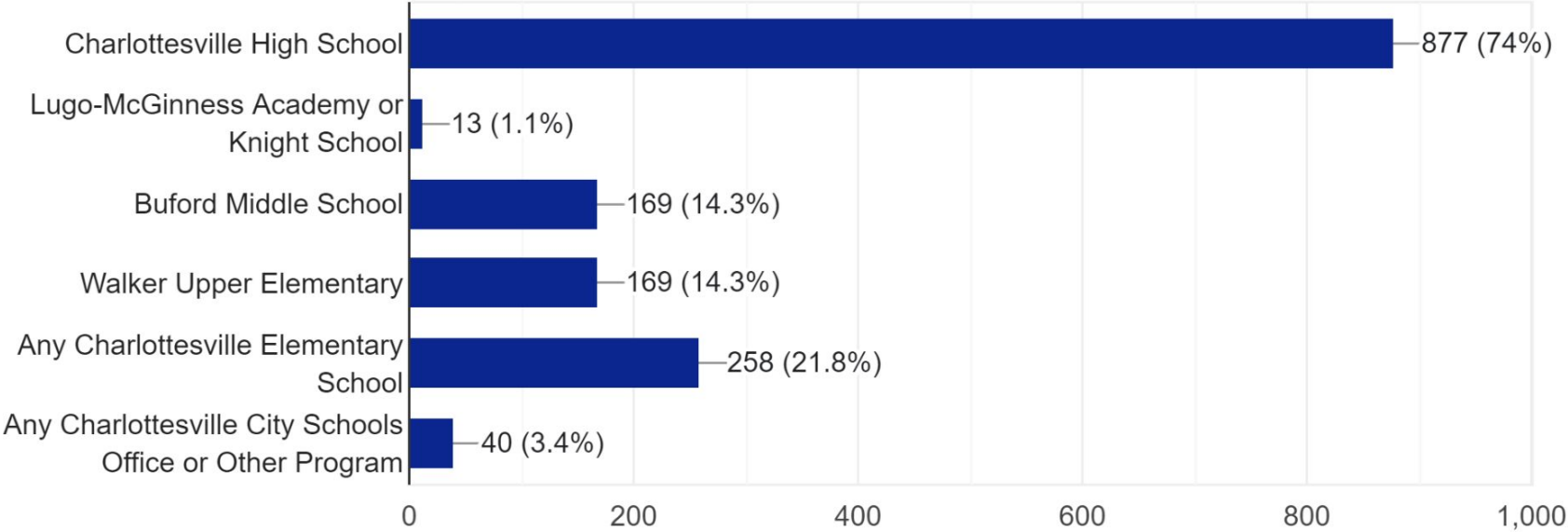
1,275 responses

- 🔵 Learn more about the current safety model
- 🔴 Skip to questions about three possible changes

67.1%

32.9%

School(s) where you or your student(s) learn or work:

1,185 responses

Your gender identity:

1,231 responses
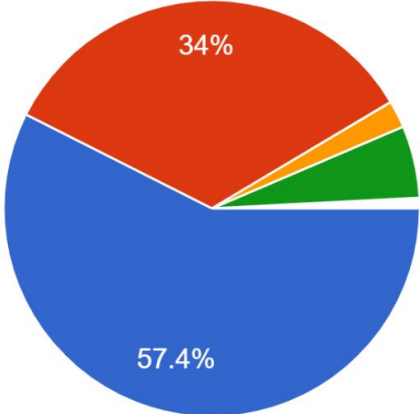
Legend:
- Female
- Male
- Nonbinary or other
- Prefer not to say

57.4%
34%

1/2

Survey Participation

Your Ethnicity and Race

1,220 responses

Category	Value
Asian / Pacific Islander	79 (6.5%)
Black or African American	127 (10.4%)
Hispanic or Latinx	81 (6.6%)
Native American or America…	11 (0.9%)
White	845 (69.3%)
Prefer not to say	149 (12.2%)
	8 (0.7%)
African	2 (0.2%)
mixed	1 (0.1%)
Mix	1 (0.1%)
European	1 (0.1%)
dinorsone	1 (0.1%)
Alien	1 (0.1%)
This is irrelevant for these q…	1 (0.1%)
"Latinx" isn't a real ethnicity.…	1 (0.1%)
Middle Eastern	1 (0.1%)
what are you going to do wit…	1 (0.1%)
super	1 (0.1%)
The blue avatar guy	1 (0.1%)
Mixed Europe Middle East	1 (0.1%)
Jewish	1 (0.1%)

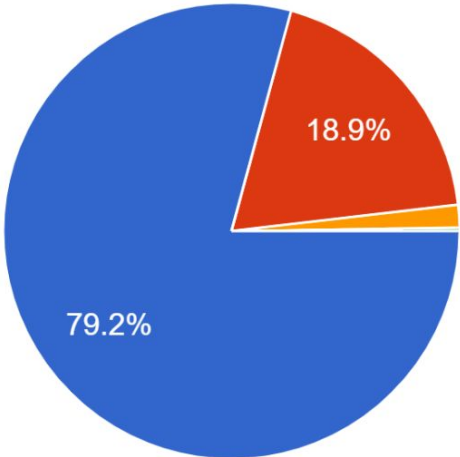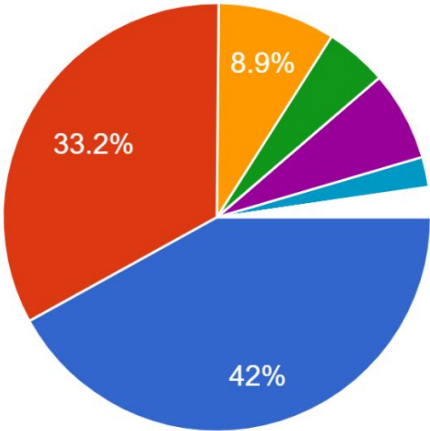## Where do you live?

1,246 responses

- In the city of Charlottesville
- In Albemarle County or another surrounding county
- Somewhere else in Virginia
- Outside Virginia
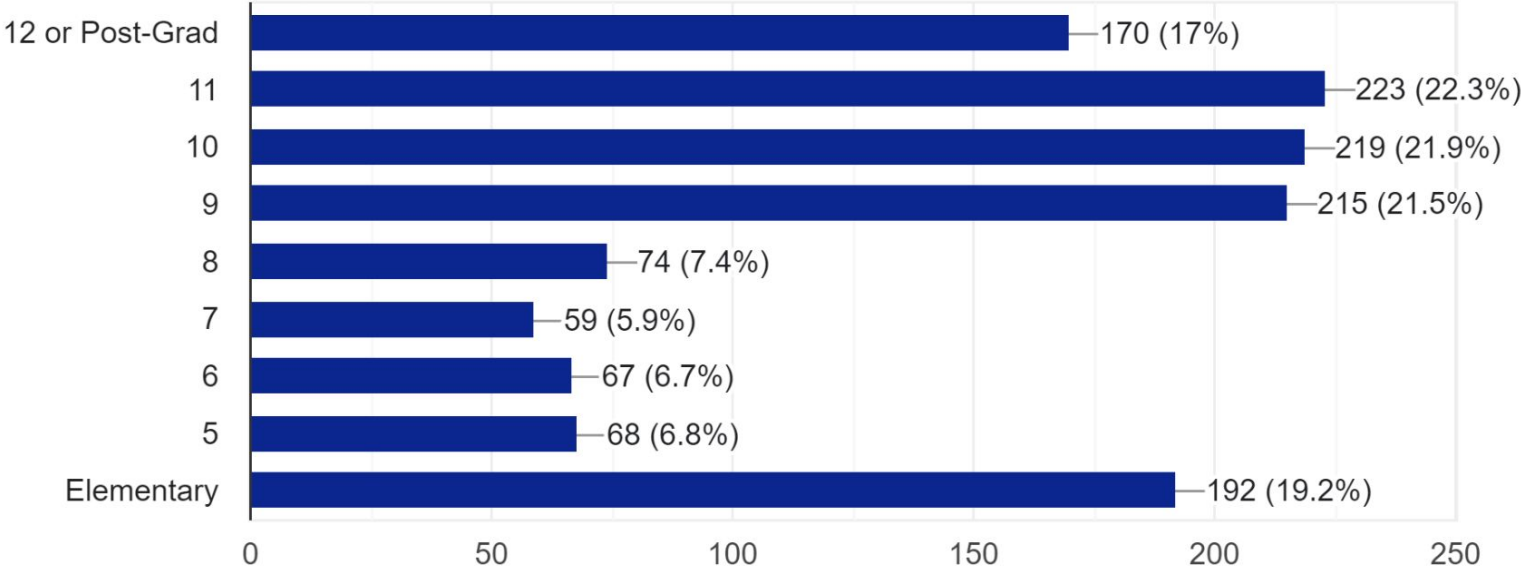
79.2%

18.9%

My primary role:

1,275 responses

- Parent/Guardian of a Cville Schools st…
- Student at Cville Schools
- Staff Member
- Staff Member AND Cville Schools Par…
- Community Member
- Former Student

1/5

Student Grade Level

1,001 responses

Survey Participation by Question

1) Using weapons detectors at sporting events and/or school entrances

2) Learning more about the Youth Resource Officers that connect the Cambridge (MA) Police Department with Cambridge Public Schools

3) Reconsidering the student cell phone policy at CHS (how to approach cell phones during lunch or between classes)

1245 Responses

1256 Responses

1257 Responses

*All respondents did not answer all questions

Do you think CHS should begin using weapons detectors:

1,245 responses
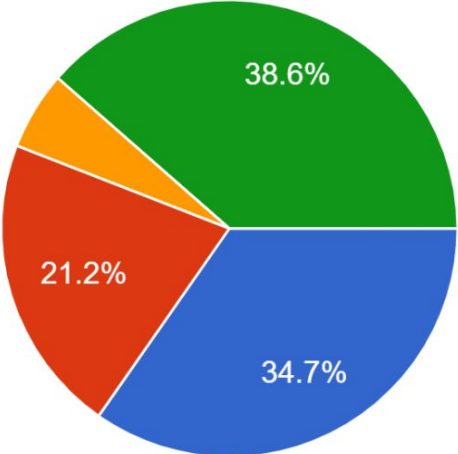
Legend:
- **Not at all** — 34.7%
- **At sporting events only** — 21.2%
- **At arrival only**
- **Both sporting events and at arrival** — 38.6%

Do you think CHS should begin using weapons detectors:

My primary role:	At arrival only	At sporting events only	Both sporting events and at arrival	Not at all	Grand Total		At arrival only	At sporting events only	Both sporting events and at arrival	Not at all
Parent/Guardian of a Cville Schools student	31	71	249	165	516		6%	14%	48%	32%
Student at Cville Schools	29	141	110	140	420		7%	34%	26%	33%
Staff Member	1	24	42	41	108		1%	22%	39%	38%
Community Member	3	9	29	44	85		4%	11%	34%	52%
Staff Member AND Cville Schools Parent	1	14	21	23	59		2%	24%	36%	39%
Former Student	2	3	14	10	29		7%	10%	48%	34%
All Other	2	2	15	9	28		7%	7%	54%	32%
Totals	69	264	480	432	1245					

Your Ethnicity and Race	At arrival only	At sporting events only	Both sporting events and at arrival	Not at all	Grand Total		At arrival only	At sporting events only	Both sporting events and at arrival	Not at all
White	35	166	254	301	756		5%	22%	34%	40%
Prefer not to say	10	21	73	32	136		7%	15%	54%	24%
Black or African American	5	25	51	19	100		5%	25%	51%	19%
Other (not specified)	5	9	26	18	58		9%	16%	45%	31%
Asian / Pacific Islander	4	11	18	18	51		8%	22%	35%	35%
Hispanic or Latinx	8	13	18	11	50		16%	26%	36%	22%
Hispanic or Latinx, White	1	4	10	6	21		5%	19%	48%	29%
Asian / Pacific Islander, White	1	2	7	8	18		6%	11%	39%	44%
Black or African American, White		8	5	5	18		0%	44%	28%	28%
All Other	0	5	18	14	37		0%	14%	49%	38%
Totals	69	264	480	432	1245					

Survey Comments - Weapons Detection
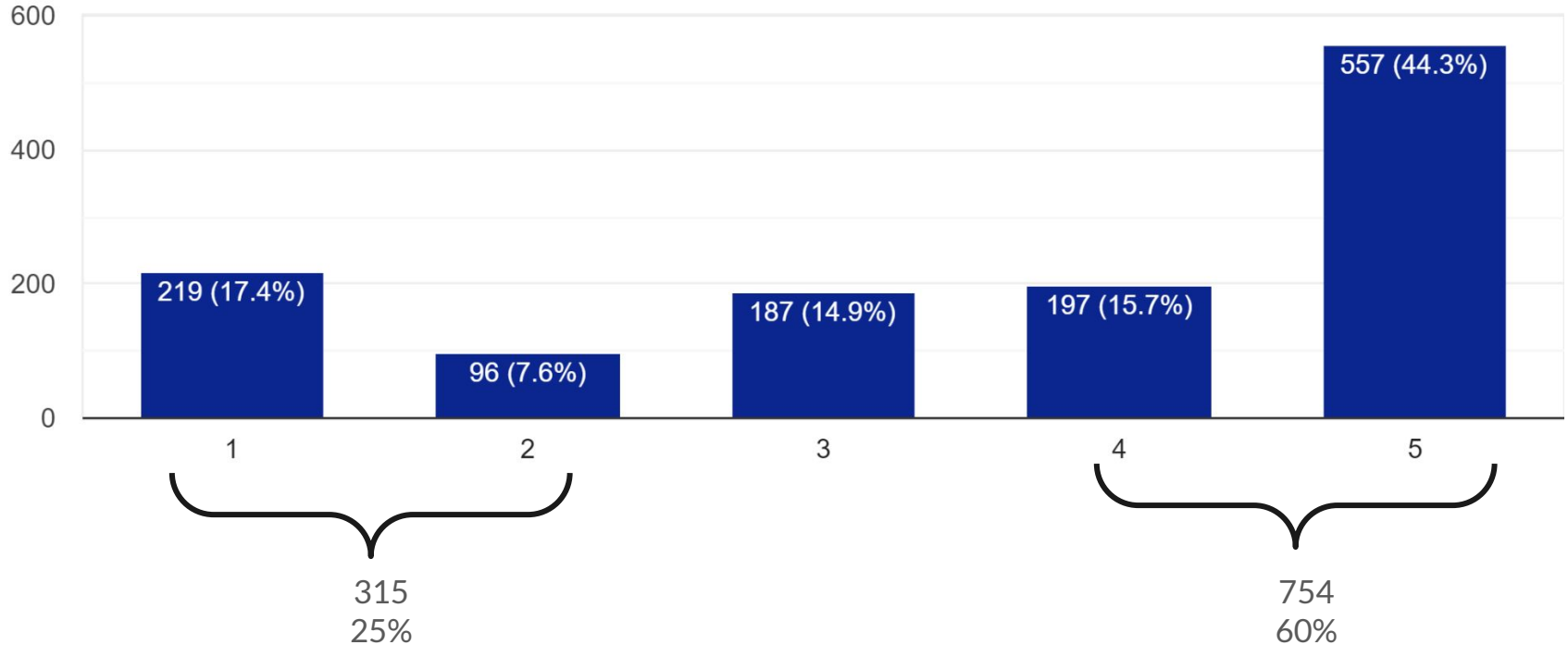
Major Themes:

- **Doubt about the Effectiveness of Metal Detectors** to address safety concerns in schools.
- **Concerns about Increased Gun Violence** in the surrounding area merits consideration of metal detectors for high school and potentially middle school levels.
- **Alternative Safety Measures** should focus on other safety measures or addressing underlying issues contributing to violence, such as improving door security and increasing mental health support.
- **Cultural and Environmental Concerns** that metal detectors may create a culture of distrust and fear, and that their implementation could lead to a prison-like atmosphere within schools.

Do we want to further explore the role of adding Youth Resources Officers to our current safety model?

1 = NO, I'm not interested in this model
5 = YES, I'd like for us to learn more about this model

My primary role:	1	2	3	4	5	Grand Total		1	2	3	4	5
Parent/Guardian of a Cville Schools student	72	28	31	73	325	529		14%	5%	6%	14%	61%
Student at Cville Schools	67	56	124	84	82	413		16%	14%	30%	20%	20%
Staff Member	19	4	15	15	59	112		17%	4%	13%	13%	53%
Community Member	38	4	3	7	32	84		45%	5%	4%	8%	38%
Staff Member AND Cville Schools Parent	7	3	4	12	34	60		12%	5%	7%	20%	57%
Former Student	11		9		9	29		38%	0%	31%	0%	31%
All Other	5	1	1	6	16	29		17%	3%	3%	21%	55%
Totals	219	96	187	197	557	1256						

Your Ethnicity and Race	1	2	3	4	5	Grand Total		1	2	3	4	5
White	129	47	106	138	345	765		17%	6%	14%	18%	45%
Prefer not to say	19	7	14	17	84	141		13%	5%	10%	12%	60%
Black or African American	20	12	24	14	29	99		20%	12%	24%	14%	29%
Other (not specified)	16	6	2	6	29	59		27%	10%	3%	10%	49%
Asian / Pacific Islander	10	7	12	6	15	50		20%	14%	24%	12%	30%
Hispanic or Latinx	11	3	15	2	18	49		22%	6%	31%	4%	37%
Hispanic or Latinx, White	5		1	3	12	21		24%	0%	5%	14%	57%
Asian / Pacific Islander, White		2	5	4	7	18		0%	11%	28%	22%	39%
Black or African American, White	1	5	4	4	4	18		6%	28%	22%	22%	22%
All Other	8	7	4	3	14	36		22%	19%	11%	8%	39%
Totals	219	96	187	197	557	1256						

Major Themes:

From Supporters:

- **Support for students involved in the legal system**, in addition to providing daily safety support.
- **Emphasize the need for special training** to effectively engage with students and build trust.
- **Mixed feelings about armed officers** - Some see value in having armed officers for daily safety and to prevent potential threats, other prefer they not carry guns or wear quasi-military uniforms to minimize intimidation.
- **Positive experiences with resource officers** in the past highlight their role beyond just preventing fights.
- **Mentorship** opportunities
- **Essential for school safety**

From Opponents:

- **Perpetuating the school-to-prison pipeline and exacerbating discipline disparities** affecting marginalized students.
- **Suggestions for alternative approaches** focusing on prevention, restorative justice, and increased mental health resources rather than relying solely on law enforcement.
- **Distrust of police presence** includes skepticism about traditional police involvement in schools due to concerns about racial profiling, negative interactions with students, and perpetuating a culture of fear.
- **Questioning the necessity and cost-effectiveness**, including concerns about the effectiveness of SROs in addressing underlying issues such as inconsistent administration and discipline policies.
- **Unnecessary or even detrimental**

Should CHS students be allowed to use their phones between classes and at lunch? (Or should the phones be "off and away all day")?

1,257 responses

1 = Allow students to use phones between classes and at lunch
5 = "Off and away all day"
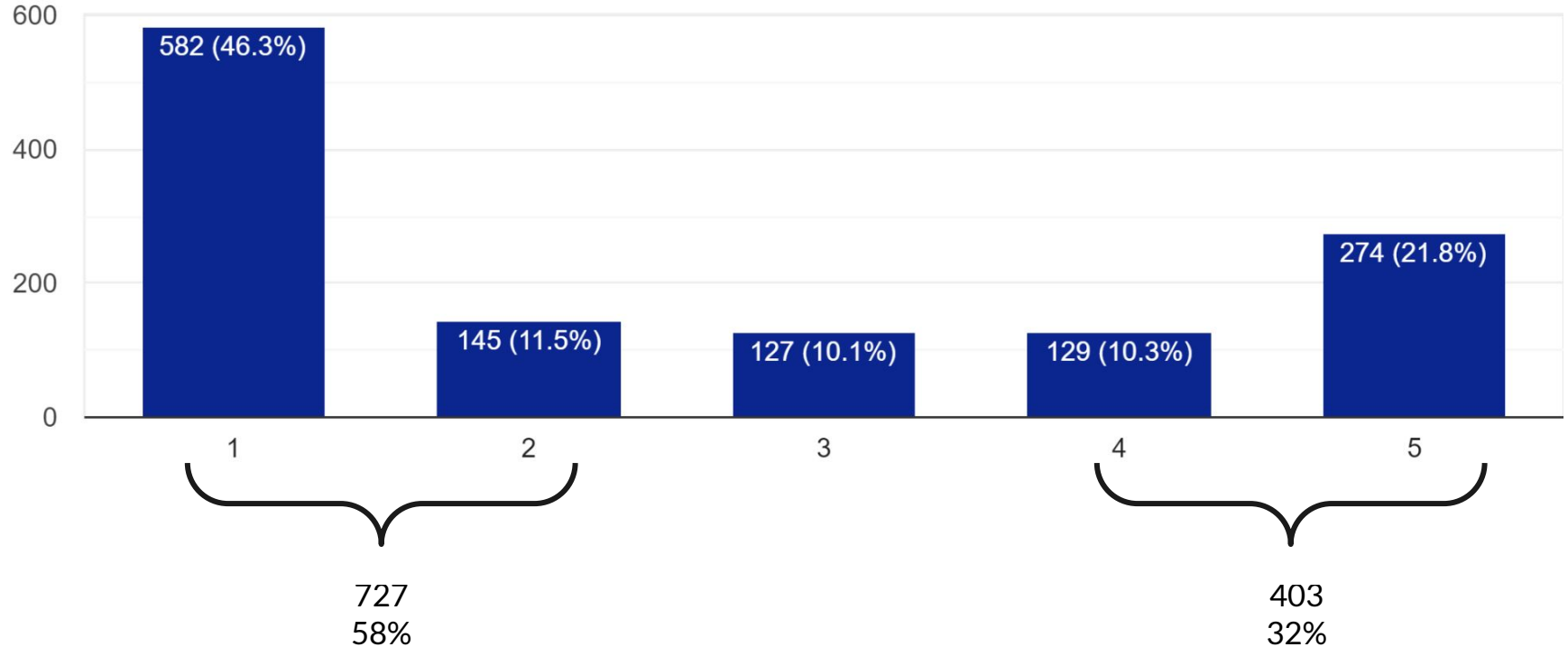
582 (46.3%)

274 (21.8%)

145 (11.5%)

127 (10.1%)

129 (10.3%)

727
58%

403
32%

Should CHS students be allowed to use their phones between classes and at lunch? (Or should the phones be "off and away all day")?

1 = Allow students to use phones between classes and at lunch
5 = "Off and away all day"

My primary role:	1	2	3	4	5	Grand Total		1	2	3	4	5
Parent/Guardian of a Cville Schools student	145	73	65	83	159	525		28%	14%	12%	16%	30%
Student at Cville Schools	329	43	18	8	23	421		78%	10%	4%	2%	5%
Staff Member	33	12	24	13	30	112		29%	11%	21%	12%	27%
Community Member	22	9	8	13	29	81		27%	11%	10%	16%	36%
Staff Member AND Cville Schools Parent	27	4	5	9	15	60		45%	7%	8%	15%	25%
Former Student	15		2	2	10	29		52%	0%	7%	7%	34%
All Other	11	4	5	1	8	29		38%	14%	17%	3%	28%
Totals	582	145	127	129	274	1257						

Your Ethnicity and Race	1	2	3	4	5	Grand Total		1	2	3	4	5
White	334	98	76	91	165	764		44%	13%	10%	12%	22%
Prefer not to say	50	15	15	15	47	142		35%	11%	11%	11%	33%
Black or African American	70	3	10	6	11	100		70%	3%	10%	6%	11%
Other (not specified)	21	6	4	5	20	56		38%	11%	7%	9%	36%
Asian / Pacific Islander	28	6	5	2	12	53		53%	11%	9%	4%	23%
Hispanic or Latinx	28	4	7	4	6	49		57%	8%	14%	8%	12%
Hispanic or Latinx, White	10	3	2	2	4	21		48%	14%	10%	10%	19%
Asian / Pacific Islander, White	12	2	3		1	18		67%	11%	17%	0%	6%
Black or African American, White	11	3		1	2	17		65%	18%	0%	6%	12%
All Other	18	5	5	3	6	37		49%	14%	14%	8%	16%
Totals	582	145	127	129	274	1257						

Survey Comments - Cell Phones

Major Themes:

- **Recognition of the challenges posed by cell phones in classrooms,** including distraction and difficulty enforcing policies.
- **Concerns about the impact of cell phone use on student relationships, mental health, and learning.**
- Suggestions for implementing **stricter policies or designated phone-free zones to mitigate distractions**.
- Suggestions for designated times or spaces for cell phone use to **balance learning and student autonomy**.
- **Concerns about enforcing cell phone policies,** especially regarding students abusing the rules and potential confrontations with teachers.
- **Recognition of the utility of cell phones for communication between students and parents**, particularly during emergencies or for managing mental health issues.
- **Concerns about distraction and cyberbullying**

While opinions on cell phone policies vary, with some favoring stricter enforcement and others proposing greater leniency during specific times, there is a widespread agreement that cell phones serve as both a potential distraction and a valuable tool for safety.

Major Themes:

1. Investment in Mental Health Resources and Support

2. Community Engagement and Decision-Making

3. Promotion of Positive School Culture

4. Addressing Negative School Culture and Bullying

5. Enforcement of Discipline Policies

6. Investment in Safety Measures

7. Community Support and Involvement

8. Focus on Teacher Retention and Quality

9. Increasing Guidance Counseling and Support Staff

10. Structured Support and Accountability

Updates/Changes Week of March 4th -

The CHS survey push on March 4th resulted in 129 additional student survey participants.
Input was received by over 420 students and now represents over 30% of the responses.
Below is a summary of how the data shifted for each of the three areas under consideration:

➢ Support for weapons detection at both arrival and sporting events decreased from 44% to 39%, the "not at all" and arrival only percentages remained basically the same; however, support for weapons detection "at sporting events only" changed from 8% to 15%.

➢ The percentage of respondents not interested in reevaluating the role of resource officers in the CCS safety model remained at ~25%. The percentage of those interested in revisiting the role of resource officers decreased from 68% to 60%, while the percentage of those undecided in the middle (the 3's) increased from 8% to 15%.

➢ The percentage of respondents who favored allowing cell phone use between classes and at lunches increased from 47% to 58%, while those favoring "off and away for the day" decreased from 41% to 32%, and the percentage of those in the middle dipped slightly from 12% to 10%.

Strategic Plan Goals

Priority 2: Provide a Culture of Safety, Wellness, and Belonging

- CCS will support social, emotional, and physical wellness.
- CCS will foster a strong sense of community.
- CCS will promote a safe and positive learning environment.

1) Using weapons detectors at sporting events and/or school entrances

2) Learning more about the Youth Resource Officers that connect the Cambridge (MA) Police Department with Cambridge Public Schools

3) Reconsidering the student cell phone policy at CHS (how to approach cell phones during lunch or between classes)

RECOMMENDATIONS - NEXT STEPS

RECOMMENDATIONS & RATIONALE

- **Proceed with purchase of Ceia Opengate detection system to be used primarily for athletic competitions** (cost of ~$40,000 for 2 gates can be funded from existing budget for safety/security equipment)
  - Consistent with police recommendations to area high schools along with the clear bag policy that has already been implemented
  - Consistent with what students & families experience at other sporting and entertainment events
  - Can be managed without significant changes or additions to event staffing
  - Responds to concerns for prevalence of weapons in the community and the fact that attendees at school events are not restricted to members of the school community
  - If there are multiple events being hosted at the CHS gym, auditorium and/or stadium on the same night, gates will be at the event with the largest anticipated attendance or split between events

RECOMMENDATIONS & RATIONALE

- **Proceed with learning more about the Youth Resource Officer model in Cambridge**
  - Current survey data is clear on this question.
  - Consistent with the local data from the 2020-2021 Superintendent's Committee on School Safety/Security Resources which indicated widespread support to proceed with a new model that would include resource officers:
    - The archived work of the Committee remains available on the CCS website (charlottesvilleschools.org/safety , *Superintendent Committee on School Safety/Security Resources tab*, committee's materials on this page, "Click Here for Minutes, Resources and More" bar at the bottom).

- **Determine the optimal model for officer involvement in CCS school safety moving forward**
  - Address inefficiencies that make it more difficult for administration to meet legal requirements while managing all other aspects of the building
  - Prioritize systems thinking above the feelings or perspectives of any particular group/individuals
  - Identify and restore essential elements of the prior SRO model that were beneficial to students and families, while also taking lessons learned from the past and present to ensure potential pitfalls are avoided
  - Removing officers from CCS schools did not remove CPD from the safety model

RECOMMENDATIONS & RATIONALE

- **Maintain the current practice of "off and away DURING CLASS"**
  - Align policy with the preponderance of actual current practices
  - Refine practices and ensure consistent enforcement
  - Promote a mutual accountability ecosystem
    - Consistent student expectations
    - Admin will continue to support teachers & students in managing the expectations
    - Student agency to regulate in-class & out-of-class expectations
    - Provide additional supports for staff who are struggling with students not responding to Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions

- **Create a standing working group of diverse students, staff, and administration to focus on school climate/culture**
  - Monitor school climate using existing data and other sources
  - Include specific initiatives around the impacts of cell phone/screen time and extend this education/outreach to middle and elementary students
  - Spear head activities to continuously improve climate/culture, helping everyone to have a sense of belonging

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

1. **Purchase the recommended detection equipment, schedule training and review policy related to searches**

2. **Work with CPD to schedule the visit to Cambridge, MA to get additional information regarding that model**

3. **Update the Cell Phone Policy and form the working group for CHS climate & culture**

Final Thoughts

- These three areas draw out varying (often polar opposite) perspectives from our stakeholders.
- Keep in mind our shared commitments to safety, community, mental health, and partnership.