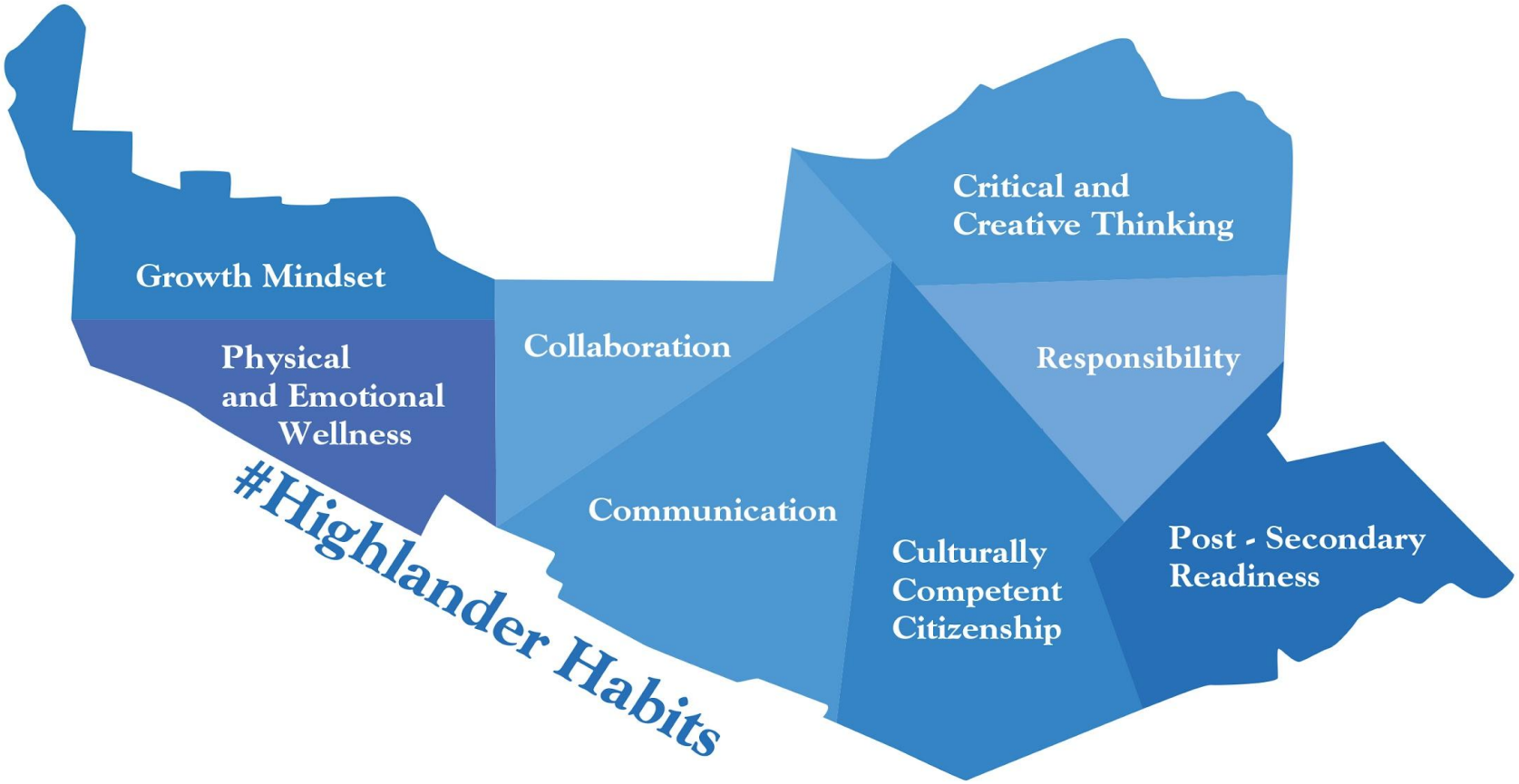
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Somerville High School
March 18, 2024

MISSION AND VISION

At Somerville High School, students **explore their passions**, **connect with their school and communities**, and **engage with the world around them through authentic and equitable learning experiences**. *Graduates are empowered to achieve their goals and contribute to a more just world.*

Somerville High School's mission is reflected in our **Highlander Habits**, which captures our vision of an SHS graduate. Over the course of their time at SHS, our goal is for all students to become proficiency in these habits, so that they can be truly prepared SHS for post-secondary readiness and success.


Growth Mindset
Physical and Emotional Wellness
Collaboration
Communication
Critical and Creative Thinking
Responsibility
Culturally Competent Citizenship
Post - Secondary Readiness
#Highlander Habits

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN GOALS

1. **Reduce unexcused school and class absences** by at least 10% over the SY23 and SY24 school years.
2. **Reduce failure rates** in required Core Academic College Prep Classes (math, English, social studies, and science) by at least 10% over the SY23 and SY24 school years.
3. **Collect data from at least 80% of students** to more accurately measure **social emotional well being and wellness**.

UPDATE ON DAILY AND CLASS ATTENDANCE

- Daily Attendance is improving, yet class avoidance persists
- Class failures are improving in some areas, and are largely correlated with absences
- New real-time data dashboards are helping us monitor progress and adjust actions
- Commitment to monitoring impact of and adapting actions/interventions/systems
- Overlap in our action steps: Improved instruction, opportunities for student choice/leadership/engagement, increasing sense of belonging and connection, and individualized supports

SHS TRENDS IN ATTENDANCE

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Chronic Absenteeism

37.9%

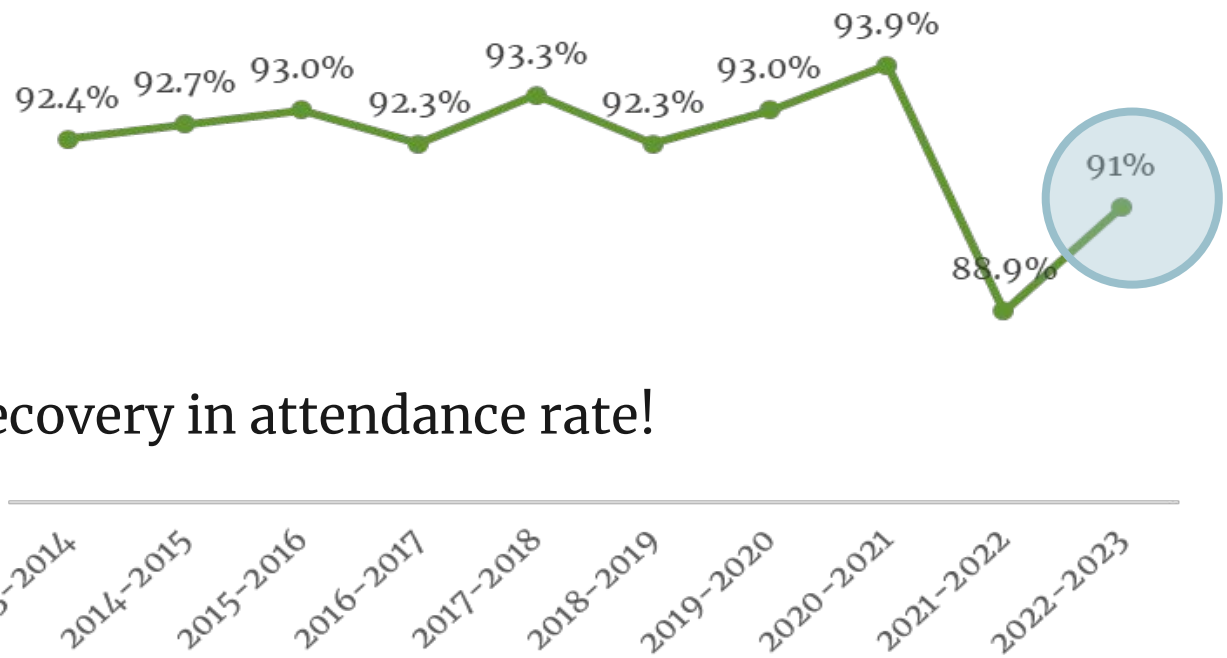
2021-2022

29.8%

2022-2023

Decrease in chronic absenteeism!

Attendance Rate



Recovery in attendance rate!

Daily Attendance has Improved

UNEXCUSED CLASS ABSENCES SY24

OVERALL Number of Classes Skipped	Number of Students	
	Quarter 1	Quarter 2
None	640	579
1-2	392	401
3-5	171	196
6-9	79	83
10+	79	106

WHY ARE STUDENTS CUTTING CLASS/NOT COMING TO SCHOOL?

- **Push Factors include:** don't like teacher, confused or already failed or fallen behind, don't have friends in class, don't see relevance of course content, time of day (lunch block and last block)
- **Pull Factors include:** hanging out with friends, staying home, supporting family/guardians, not realizing the urgency of attendance or importance of school

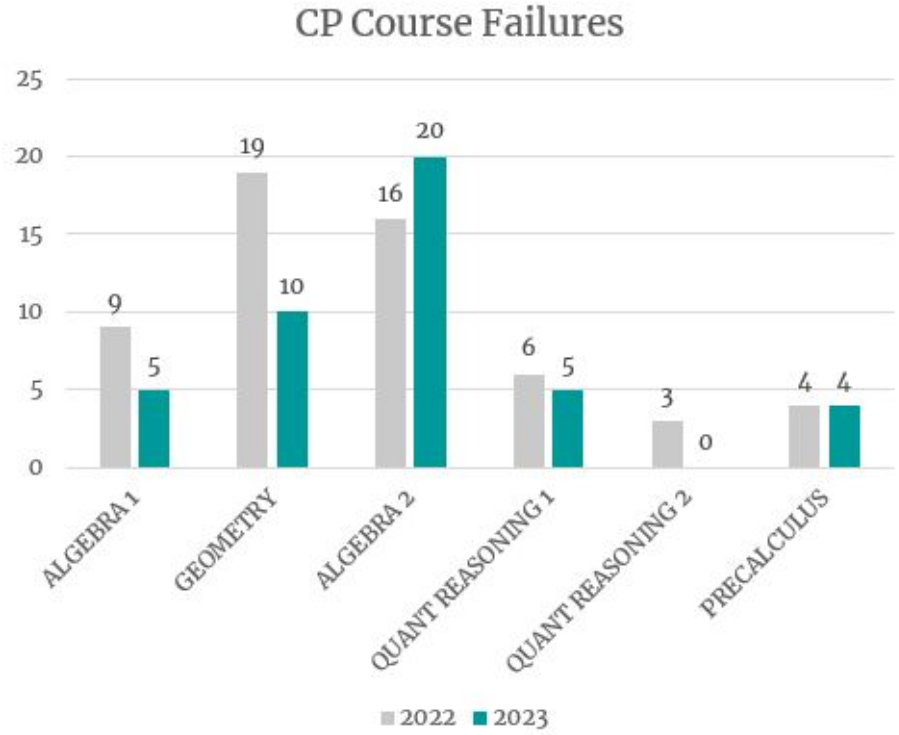
ACTION STEPS

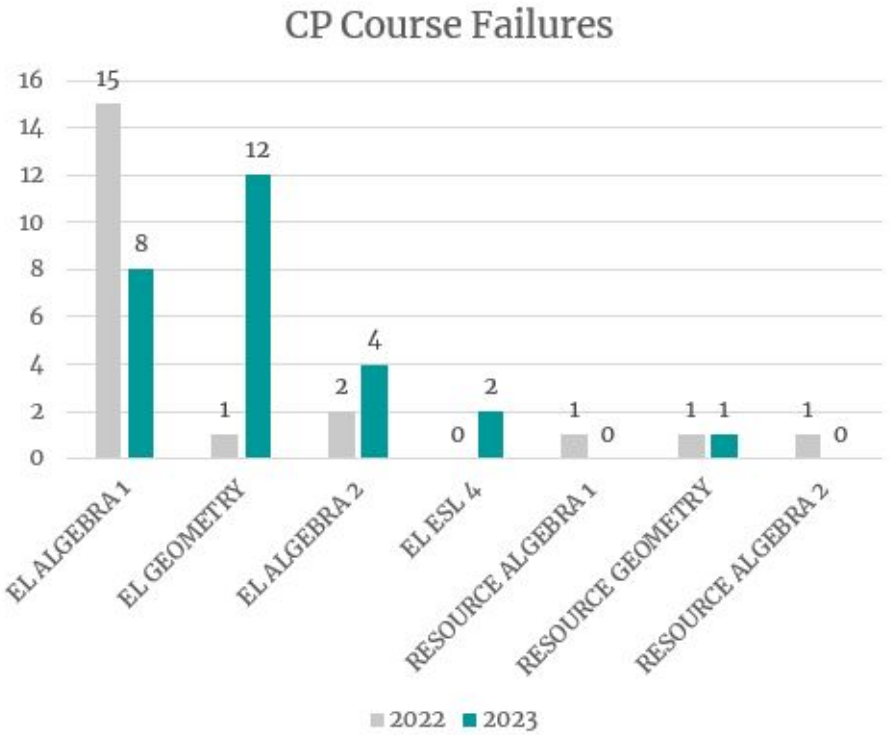
- **Improved Class Cut data monitoring (day, class, teacher, subject)**
- Improved Instruction and relationship building in class
- Use of circles during X-block and other classrooms
- Improving school culture and increase in opportunities for student voice and leadership
- Daily Calls home by Deans
- Identifying the root cause in order to individualize attendance plans/targeted supports (tutoring, mediation, case conferences)
- Social Worker interviews with 9th graders
- Strategic monitoring of school building during day
- Review of supports and consequences- what's working?
- Continue to monitor the impact of the class attendance policy including refining systems to better manage volume and prevent errors

UPDATE ON COURSE FAILURE RATES

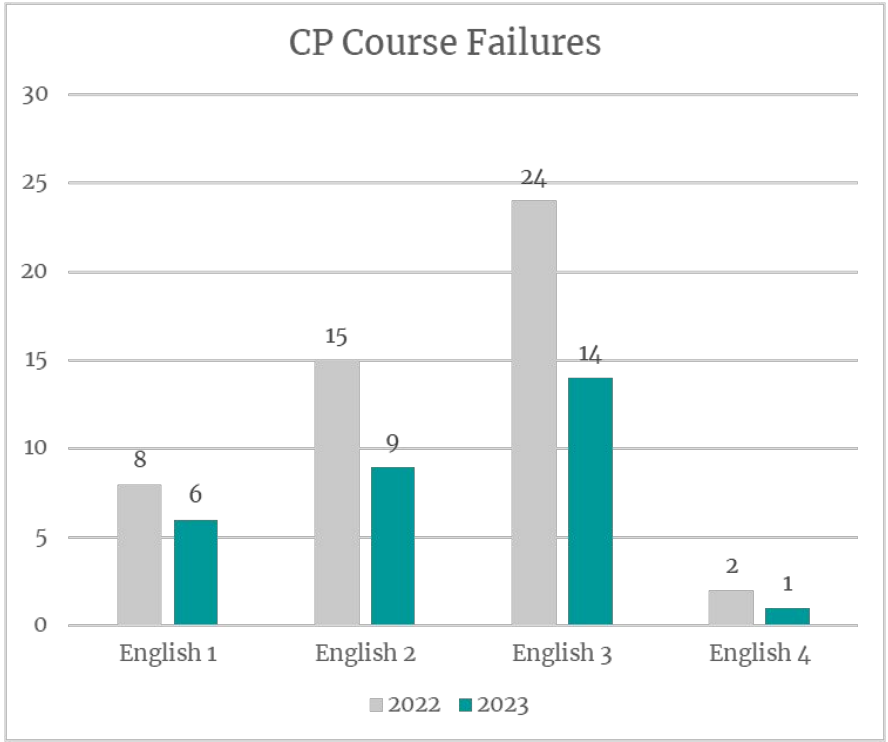
- Improved in some areas from SY22 to SY23 but course failures still persist, particularly in historically marginalized populations
- Grade 11 failure rates in English and Social Studies continue to be higher than in other grade levels; In Science rates are higher in the 9th and 10th grade required courses (Biology and Chemistry); In Math, Algebra 2 (10th and 11th graders) tends to be higher
- New data dashboard that allows Department Chairs to quickly access failure rates with list of students and attendance
- Most failures correlated with attendance concerns

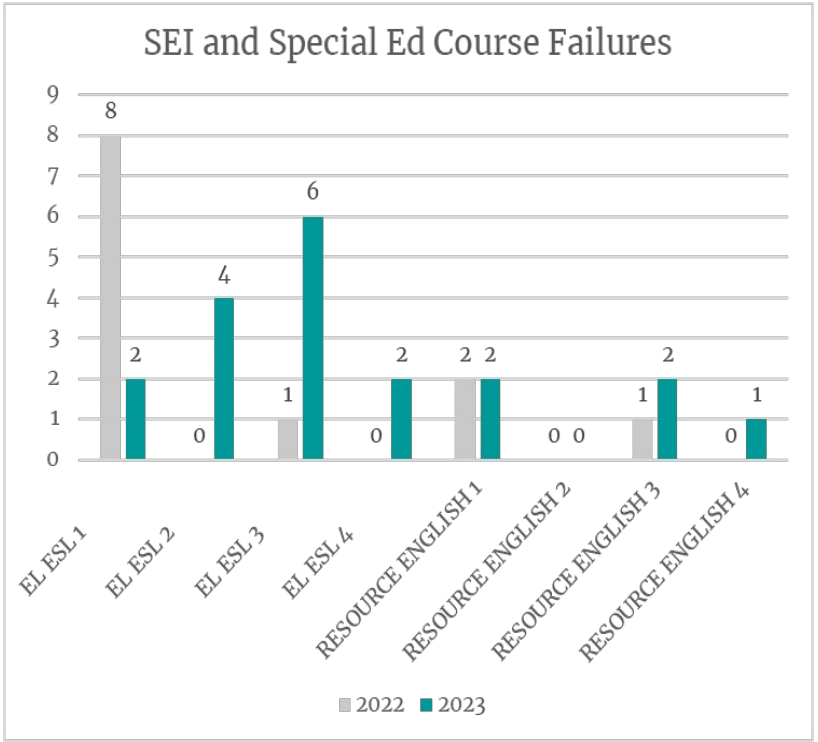
COURSE FAILURE RATE: MATH SY22 TO SY23



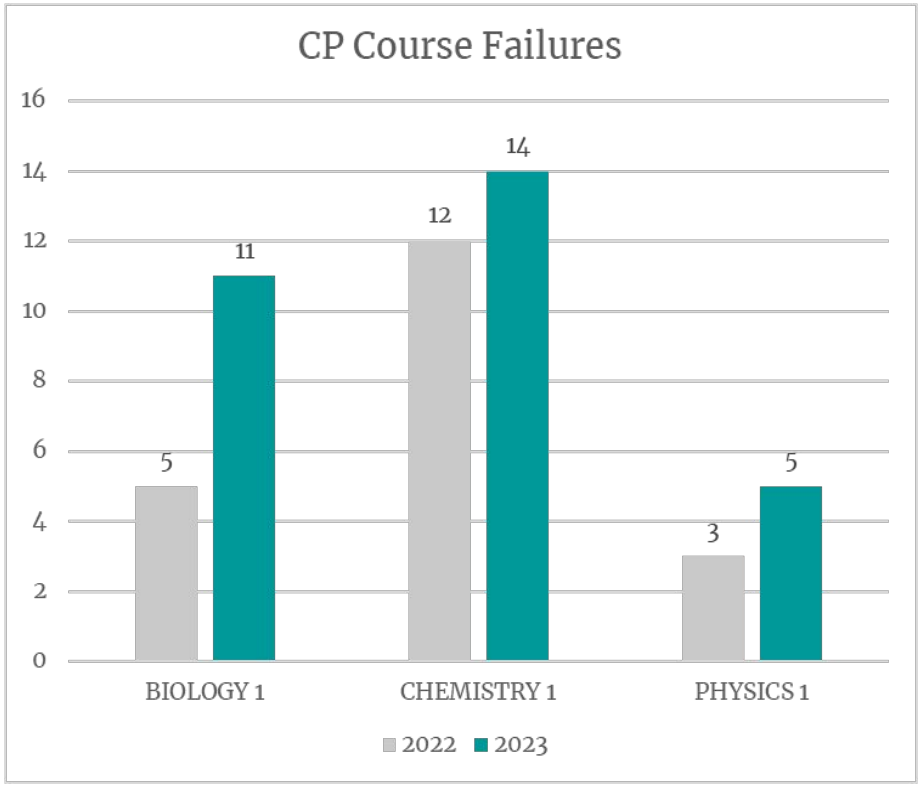


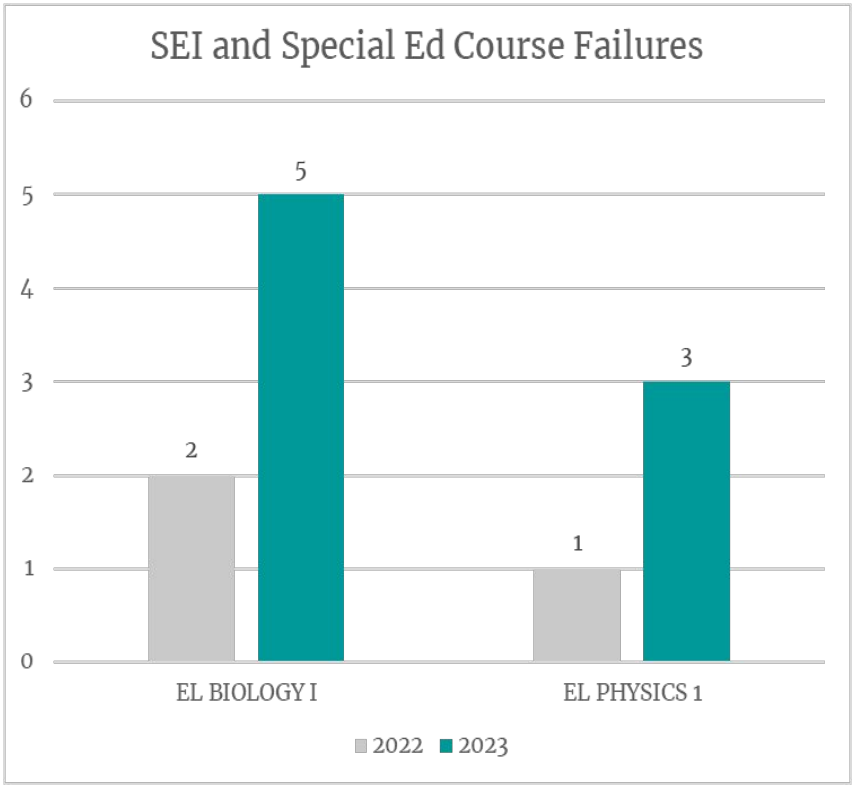
COURSE FAILURE RATE: ENGLISH SY22 TO SY23



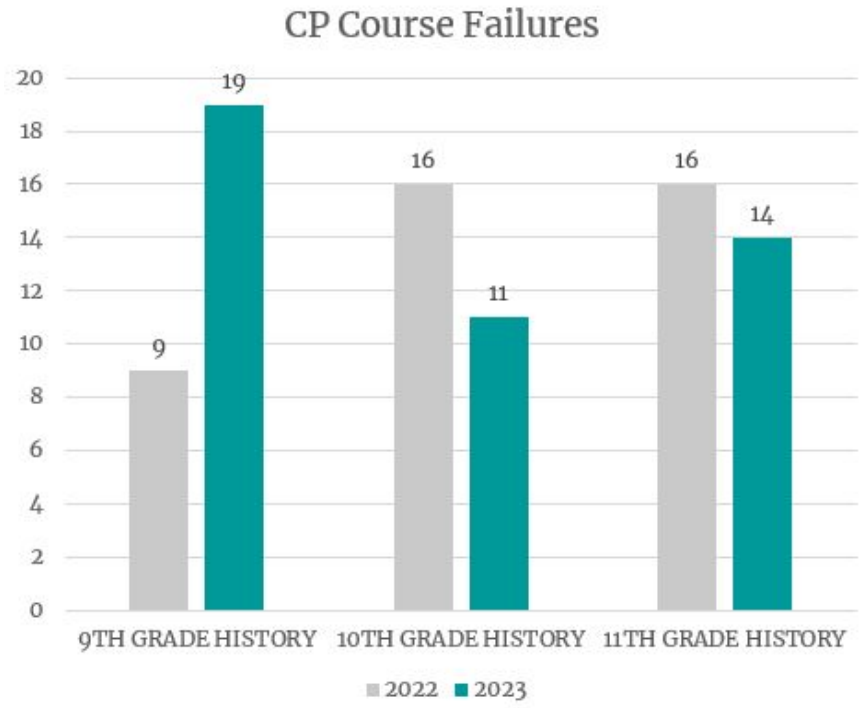


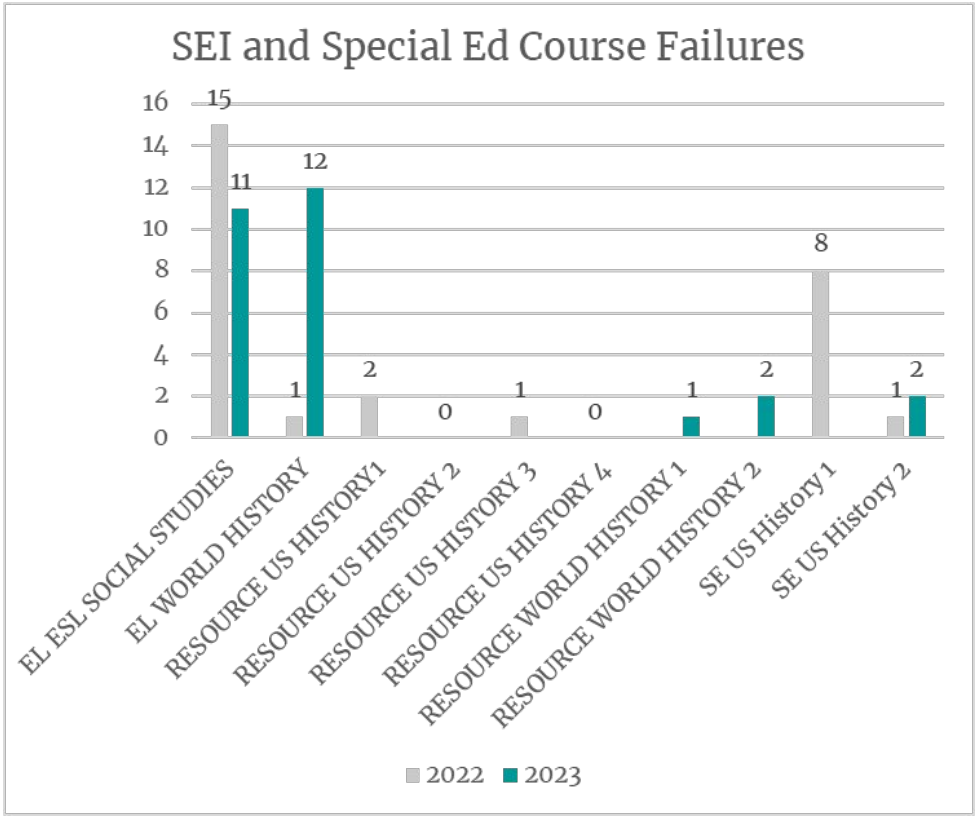
COURSE FAILURE RATE: SCIENCE SY22 TO SY23





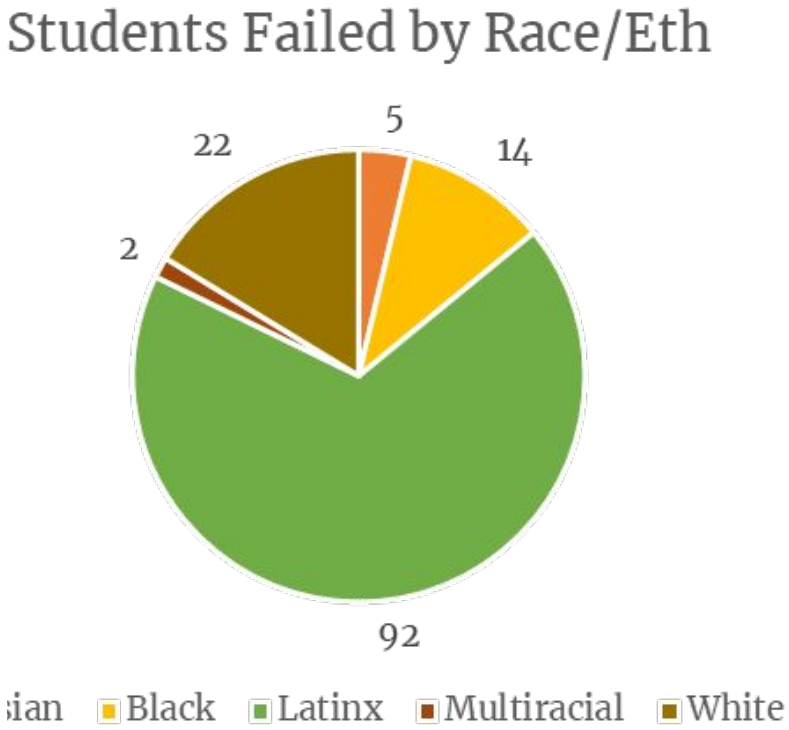
COURSE FAILURE RATE: SOCIAL STUDIES SY22 TO SY23





COURSE FAILURE RATE: SY 23 DEMOGRAPHICS

- **Latinx** students make up **68%** of students that failed at least one course in 2023.
- Students from **low-income households** made up **53%** of students that failed 1+.
- **Males** made up **61%** of students that failed at least one course in 2023.



ABSENCES AND COURSE FAILURES SY23

	# of students who failed for the year with **fewer than 25 absences**	# of students who failed with **MORE than 25 absences**
English	12	18
Math (includes electives/support classes)	22	58
Science (includes electives/support classes)	15	35
Social Studies (includes electives)	22	43

ACTION STEPS FOR COURSE FAILURES

- IMPROVED INSTRUCTION
  - Focus on Common Practices, established by our ILT and steeped in Zaretta Hammond's practices outlined in *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*
  - Math and Science Department multi-year professional development on Complex Instruction and improved access to high-level curriculum
- Quarterly monitoring/root cause analysis by teachers and department chairs
- Focus on courses with high failure rates
- Analysis of gradebooks and late work policy - increased emphasis on demonstration of proficiency and opportunities for revision
- Focus on frequent teacher-student check ins and increased communication with parents/guardians

UPDATE ON SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELL BEING

- Conditions of Learning Survey - spring of 2022 approximately 200 students responded to the conditions of learning survey - approximately 15% of our student body.
- In 2023, 744 students completed the survey, approximately 54% of the student body.
- This year, we are also using other data, such as safety assessments, referrals to counseling, mediation referrals, referrals to Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports to measure student well being.
- We plan on using this data more regularly as we plan and evaluate the effectiveness of our Social Emotional Supports.

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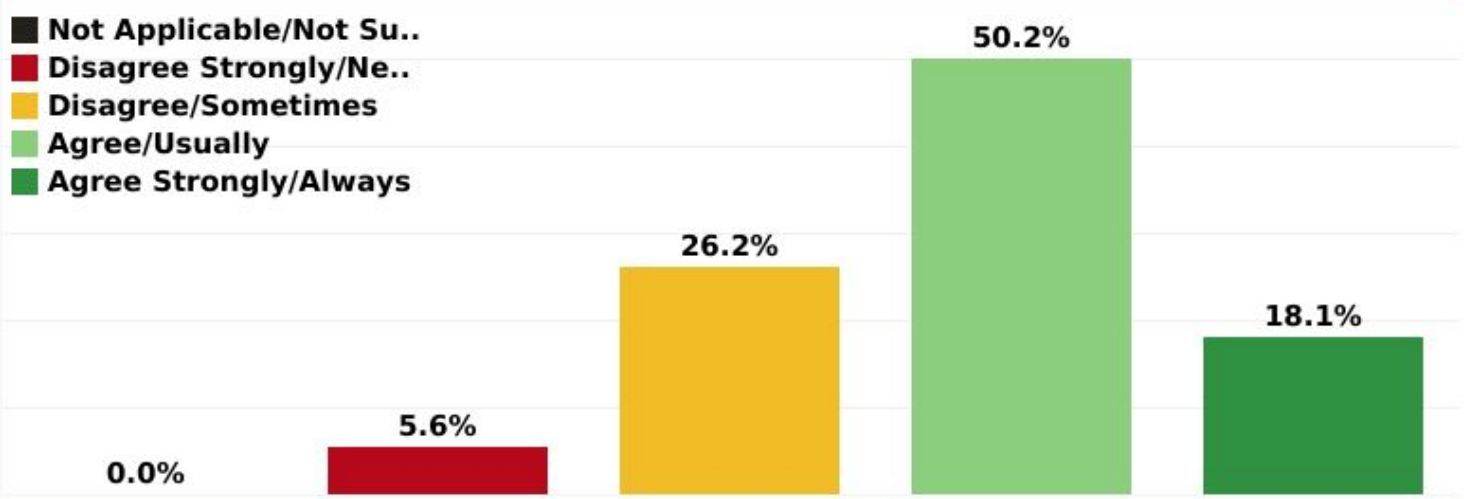
CFL: Student Responses

Start Here

Step 1: Select Year
2023

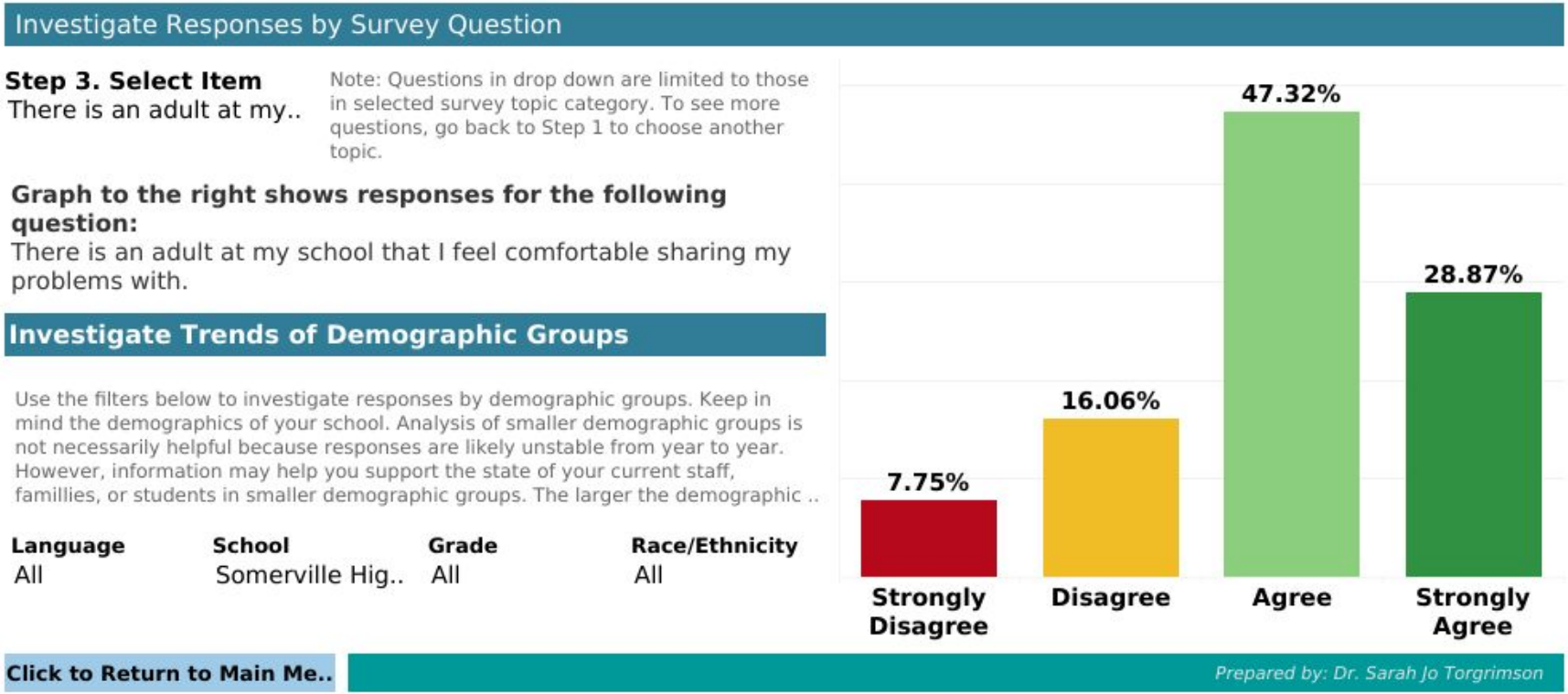
Step 2: Select Survey ..
Student Support

Graph to the right shows average overall responses for the **Student Support** topic.



Investigate Responses by Survey Question

Aggregate SHS Student Responses for SY23 for “Student Support” Questions



Percentage of students who feel they have an adult with whom they can "share problems" SY23

SOMERVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

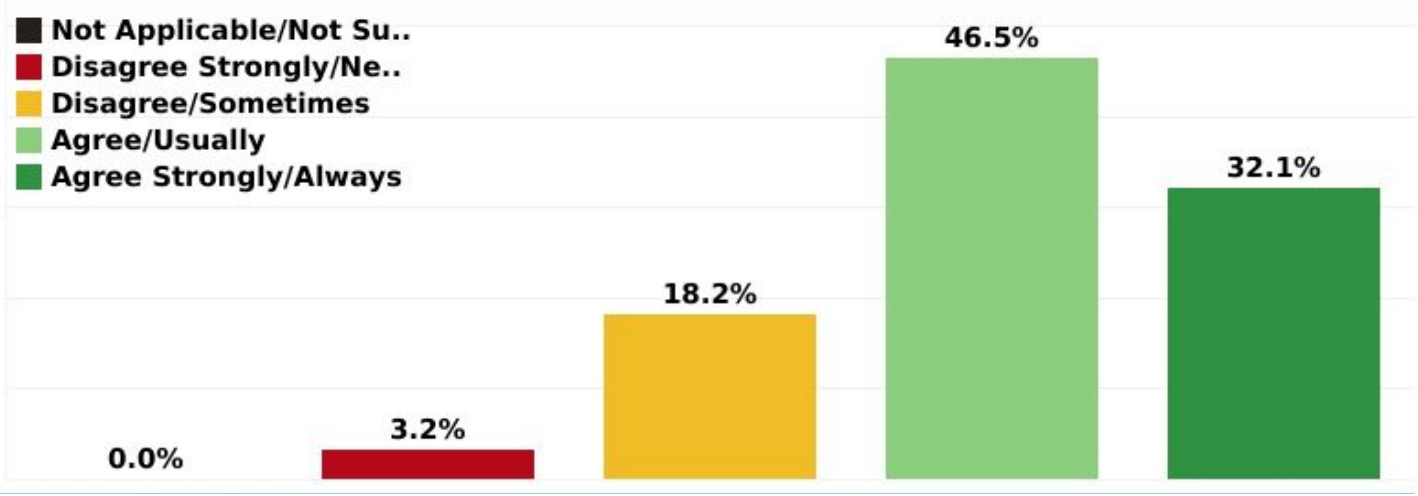
CFL: Student Responses

Start Here

Step 1: Select Year
2023

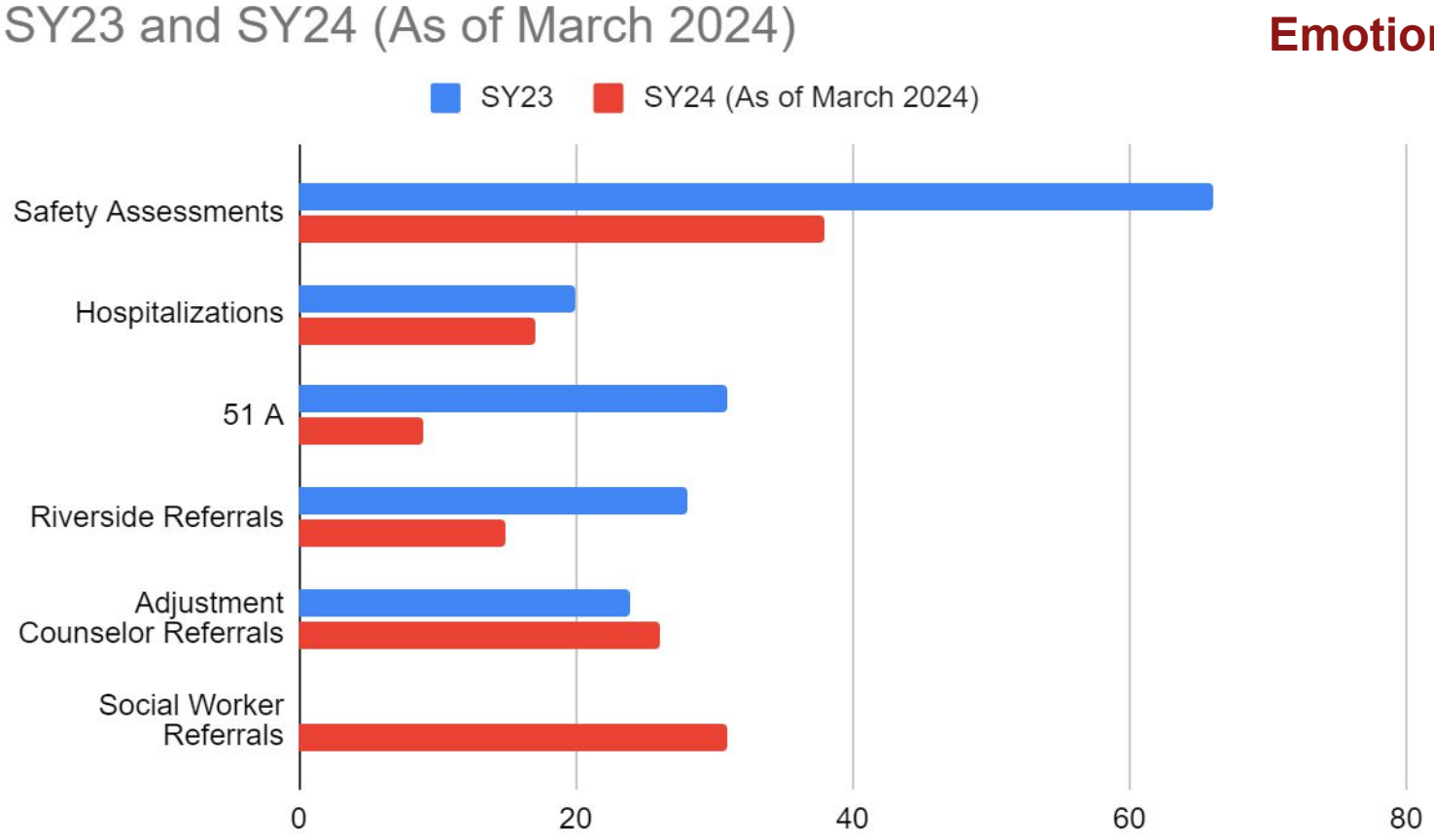
Step 2: Select Survey ..
Social Emotional Learni..

Graph to the right shows average overall responses for the **Social Emotional Learning..**



Aggregate SHS Student Responses for SY23 for "Social Emotional Learning" Questions

Measuring Social Emotional Health



MOVING FORWARD

1. **Continue to use DATA - existing and new systems - to evaluate areas of need and monitor impact of programming and support**

2. **Continue focus on Daily and Class Attendance, Course Failures, Social Emotional Well-Being**

3. **Hoping to add during the day, recent graduate tutors who can give push-in/pull out academic support and serve as mentors**

4. **Considering adjustments/adjustments to all Tiers of Support - better use of X-block - advisory/homeroom with Restorative Justice Practice, possible Tier 2 or Tier 3 programming for students who continue to skip class, improved system for monitoring and responding to class cuts**

5. **Improving school culture, move towards a “Culture of Achievement” for all**