



WASHINGTON LEGISLATIVE YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL 2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT





OVERVIEW

The Washington Legislative Youth Advisory Council (LYAC) serves as the official nonpartisan youth advisory body to the state legislature. Twenty-two high school student members from a wide variety of geographic, political, and socioeconomic backgrounds are given the opportunity to make tangible change at the state level by:

- Meeting with legislators to advocate for policies relevant to youth priorities;
- Testifying before the state legislature to support or oppose legislation;
- Advising government officials, policymakers, and leaders in various fields;
- Collaborating with nearly 200 community organizations to promote statewide change;
- Hosting events around the state with hundreds of youth attendees;
- Talking with media outlets such as the Associated Press, Teen Vogue, and KING-5 about student voice;
- Partnering with government agencies such as the Attorney General's Office and the Department of Health to provide their perspective; and
- Writing, lobbying for, and passing actual laws.

LYAC was originally created in 2005 through SB 5254, and in the years since its administration and funding level have changed several times. Currently, the Council is co-administered by the Office of the Lieutenant Governor and the Washington State Leadership Board. The latter organization provides a .33 FTE Program Director and other funds, while the former provides additional appropriations as necessary and officially appoints new members based on recommendations from the student members. **However, by design, LYAC is entirely student led; all activities, endorsements, projects, and goals are fully conceived and directed by the youth members of the Council.**

ACTIVITIES & PROJECTS

In spite of the COVID-19 pandemic and the virtual nature of both LYAC and the Washington State legislature, the Council was able to achieve many of its short- and long-term goals. Detailed below are its projects from this year, broken down by “Legislative Activities” and “Non-Legislative Activities.”



Legislative Activities

Throughout the 105 days of the 2021 Washington legislative session, LYAC was busy lobbying for its endorsed legislation, testifying in committee, writing (and passing) its own law, and much more. Below is a breakdown of the major statistics for the Council’s legislative work this year, as well as a list of our endorsed bills we helped pass.

106

Lobbying Meetings
(165% increase YoY)

8

Bills Passed
(167% increase YoY)

10

Testimonies
(233% increase YoY)

\$36 million

In Laws Passed
(10,247% increase YoY)

HB 1373

This year, recognizing the worsening mental health crisis among Washington youth, LYAC conceived, wrote, lobbied for, and passed HB 1373 into law. The bill expands student access to a variety of behavioral health resources, and with the prime sponsorship of Rep. Lisa Callan, it passed with large bipartisan majorities in both the House and Senate.

HB 1356 - Prohibiting the inappropriate use of Native American names, symbols, or images as public school mascots, logos, or team names.

HB 1365 - Procuring and supporting appropriate computers and devices for public school students and instructional staff.

SB 5044 - Concerning professional learning, equity, cultural competency, and dismantling institutional racism in the public school system.

HB 1140 - Concerning juvenile access to attorneys when contacted by law enforcement.

HB 1225 - Concerning school-based health centers.

HB 1302 - Concerning college in the high school programs.

SB 5299 - Allowing the use of computer science credits for the purpose of graduation requirements.



Non-Legislative Activities

Prior to, throughout, and following the legislative session, LYAC worked on several projects that were not specifically related to legislation. Some projects, such as Action Day, had been done in years prior, while others were entirely new to the Council.

2020 Washington Youth Survey

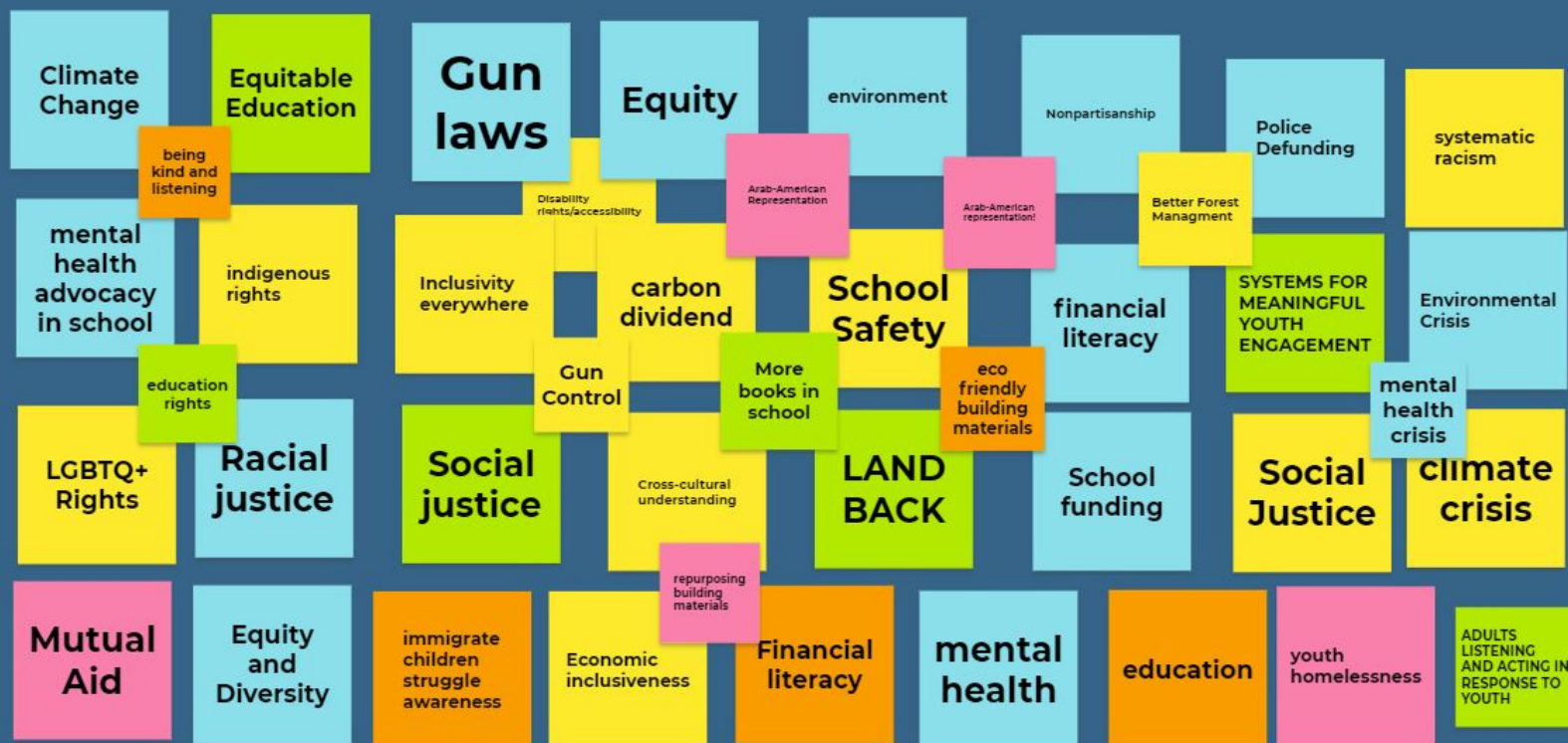
In October, LYAC launched the 2020 Washington Youth Survey. 1,401 middle and high school students around the state from 117 different cities and towns responded and offered their opinions on a wide range of questions about their communities, civic engagement, political priorities, and more. Their responses informed LYAC's advocacy throughout the year, and the answers to one question about mental health were part of the catalyst for LYAC writing HB 1373. The full list of questions and answers can be found in Appendix II.

Governor and Lieutenant Governor Candidate Interviews

Prior to the 2020 election, LYAC held interviews with gubernatorial candidates Jay Inslee and Loren Culp in partnership with the Washington PTA and Seattle CityClub, as well as interviews with candidates for lieutenant governor Marko Liias and Denny Heck. The questions in the interviews, which were recorded and can be found on any of the Council's social media platforms, focused on issues of importance to youth. These included, but were not limited to: the prototypical school model, diversity in school curriculum, mental health, food and shelter insecurity, police reform, and climate change.

Legislative Process & Youth Civic Engagement Town Hall

In January, LYAC hosted a virtual town hall with 59 youth attendees from around the country. The event featured keynote speaker Lieutenant Governor Denny Heck, as well as a panel consisting of Senator T'wina Nobles, Senate Assistant Majority Whip Claire Wilson, Senate Majority Floor Leader Marko Liias, OSPI Government Relations Executive Director Nasue Nishida, Student Voice Representative Amanda Little, and Our Climate Northwest Coordinator Emily Martin. All speakers had a chance to answer questions from both LYAC organizers and students in attendance.



Action Day 2021

Each year, towards the beginning of the legislative session, LYAC hosts Action Day. During the event, student attendees get to learn about policy and legislative strategy from workshops, hear from and speak with influential politicians and advocates, network with other youth from all backgrounds, and express their legislative priorities to policymakers. While Action Day usually takes place in Olympia, this year's virtual event was no less successful.

72 attendees from around the United States came for the full 8-hour event, and throughout the day spoke with Lieutenant Governor Denny Heck, Secretary of State Kim Wyman, Attorney General Bob Ferguson, Treasurer Mike Pelliciotti, Senator Claire Wilson, Representative Monica Stonier, Secretary of the Senate Brad Hendrickson, Education Expert Erin Jones, DCYF Youth Engagement Specialist Greg Williamson, Washington Environmental Council Field Organizer Morgan Michel, and ACLU Attorney Lisa Nowlin.

In addition, all students participated in a variety of nonpartisan trainings and discussions run by the Council designed at improving their advocacy. LYAC partner organization Teens for Tukwila also hosted an activity focused on teaching students how to build relationships with their legislators. Part of this activity required that student attendees identify one area about which they were passionate; a small sampling of the results are pictured above and below.

Public Relations Growth

As part of LYAC's goal to more accurately represent the diverse views of youth around Washington, an effort was made to increase public awareness of the Council. This was achieved through a revamp of the LYAC website and social media pages, as well as an increased number of media pieces featuring the Council's work in outlets including *The Associated Press*, *The Washington Post*, *Teen Vogue*, *Q-13 Fox*, *KIRO Seattle*, *The Seattle Times*, *KING-5*, and *KNKX*.

57,318

People Reached via
Instagram, Facebook, and
Our Website

39

Media Outlets That
Featured the Work of
LYAC Members

Community Outreach Growth

A particular focus for LYAC over the last year was growing its contact with youth around Washington, from whom policy insights and support might be gained and for whom the Council might provide support, connections, and encouragement to become further civically engaged. The Community Outreach committee successfully grew the number of youth organizations with which LYAC has connected from 58 to 180. Partnerships were also established with non-youth organizations such as the Gates Foundation, Seattle CityClub, and the Washington State School Directors Association, as well as government agencies such as the Department of Health, OSPI, and the Department of Children, Youth, and Families.



LOOKING FORWARD

LYAC is an ever-changing organization, and its exact projects and goals shift year-to-year as new students with new ideas become members.

With a record-high number of applicants for the 2021-2023 Council—44% more than last year—it will undoubtedly be the case that the activities, endorsements, and capabilities of LYAC will change and grow. However, by examining the current trajectory of LYAC it is possible to glean some insight into what the Council will look like going forward.

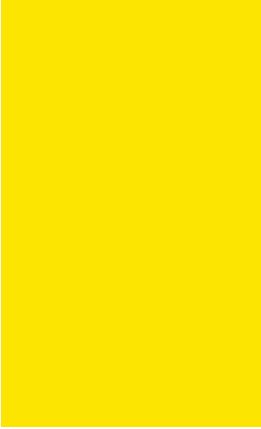
First and foremost, further engagement with youth in every community will likely be a top priority. In April, LYAC launched the "Take Action" page on its website, which allows for a young person in any Washington county to find several nonpartisan opportunities for civic engagement in their area. Expansion of Council programs that connect with overlooked youth previously unaware of LYAC or generally unsure of the power that their voice holds is likely in the near future, particularly as the pandemic subsides.

It also seems probable that the Council will look to grow its involvement in writing legislation, its work with state agencies to develop policy, and its programs oriented towards both younger students and the college transition (including through a possible student-run scholarship).

Ultimately, with new veins of funding now open, the foundations of several projects built, and the recent election of a strong leadership team with clear vision, the future of LYAC is bright.

APPENDIX I: LIST OF MEMBERS

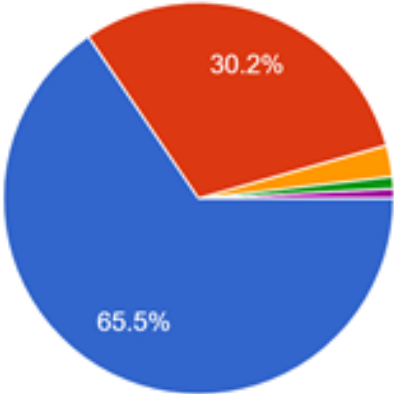
Name	City	Legislative District	Committee
Kellen Hoard	Kirkland	45	Chair
Baeza Lakew	Kent	47	Vice Chair
Ailani Baldwin	Vancouver	17	Director of Legislative Affairs
Yubi Mamiya	Shoreline	32	Director of Community Outreach
Lily Medway	Bellevue	41	Director of Public Relations
Aiyana Brumley	Bainbridge Island	23	Public Relations
Carissa Crum	Hoquiam	24	Legislative Affairs
Charlie Fisher	Ridgefield	18	Community Outreach
Connor Park	Mukilteo	21	Legislative Affairs
Isaac Yi	Mill Creek	44	Legislative Affairs
Ivy Pete	Spokane	3	Legislative Affairs
Jadon Crawford	Renton	11	Public Relations
Jaelyn Sotelo	Vancouver	18	Public Relations
Jonathan Mulenga	Auburn	47	Community Outreach
Lily Villa	Grandview	15	Community Outreach
Lucash Uniack	Seattle	36	Public Relations
Matthew Gardner	Normandy Park	33	Public Relations
Max Molgard III	Spokane	7	Community Outreach
Priyanka Mukhara	Bellevue	48	Legislative Affairs
Rohan Ganesh	Issaquah	5	Legislative Affairs
Shae Dolan	University Place	28	Community Outreach
Skye Duplessis	Seattle	32	Public Relations



APPENDIX II: 2020 WASHINGTON YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS PART 1

What is your gender?

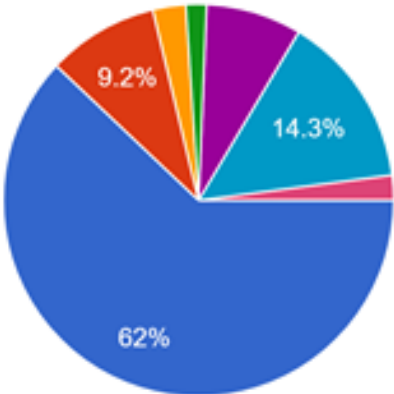
1,401 responses



- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Something else fits better for me
- Prefer not to say

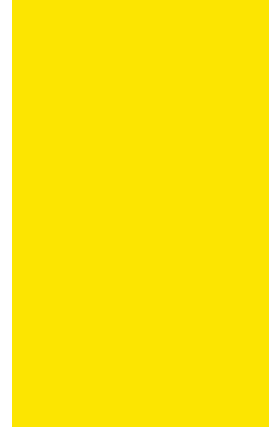
What is your ethnicity?

1,401 responses



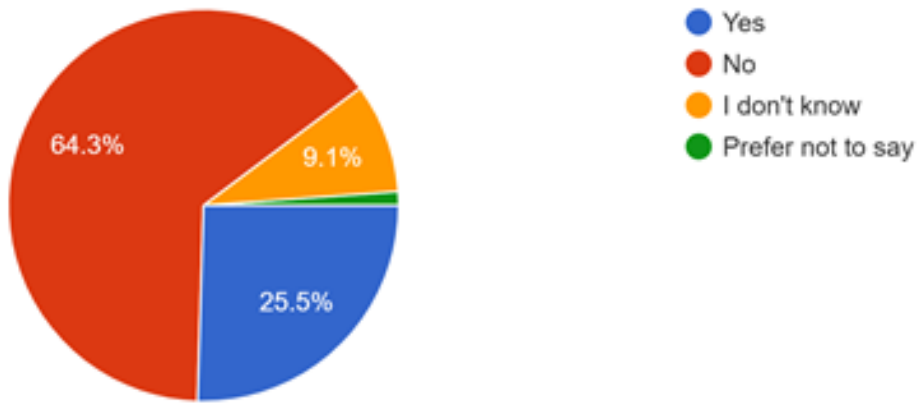
- White
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Native American
- Hispanic or Latinx
- Two or more
- Prefer not to say

APPENDIX II: 2020 WASHINGTON YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS PART 2



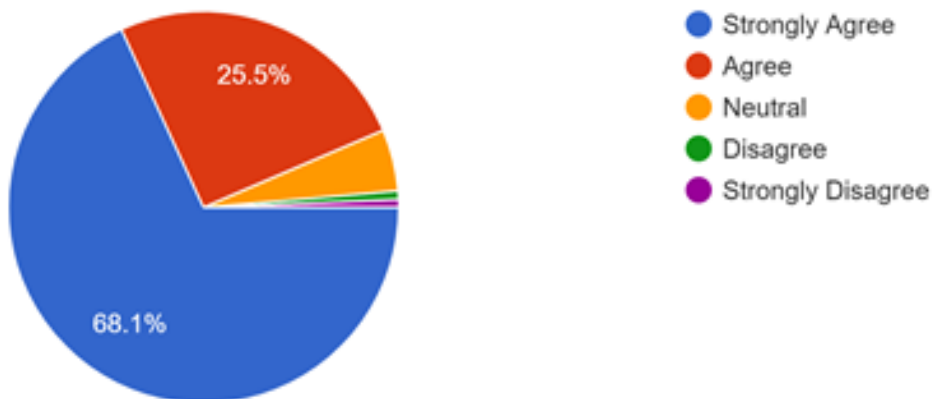
Do you receive free or reduced price lunches at school?

1,401 responses

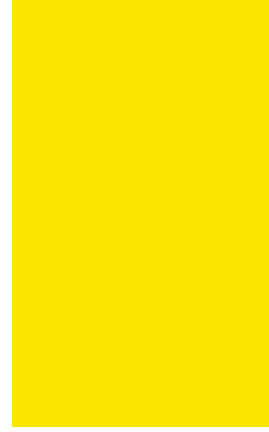


The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically changed how my education looks like this year.

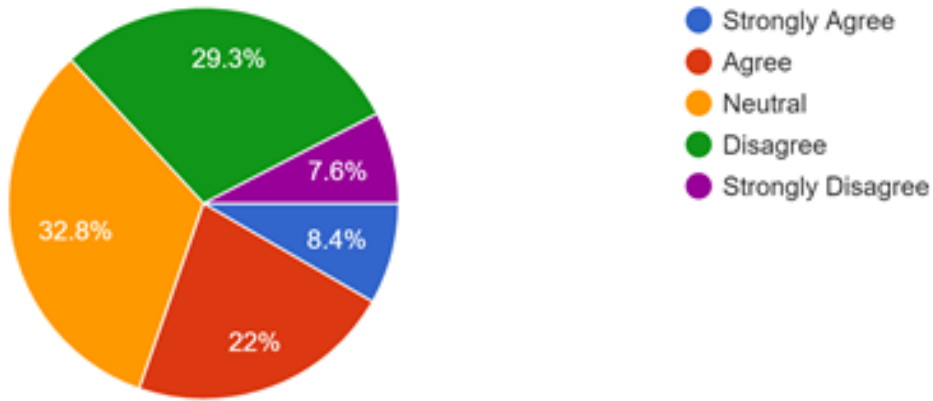
1,401 responses



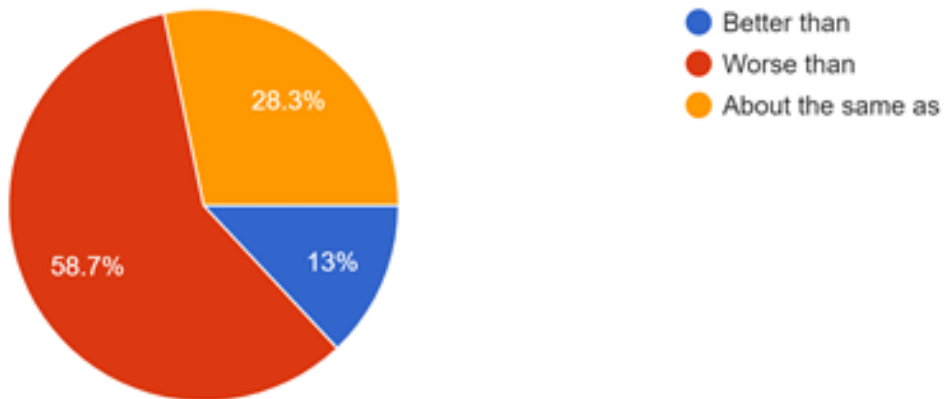
APPENDIX II: 2020 WASHINGTON YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS PART 3



The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically changed my family's financial situation.
1,401 responses



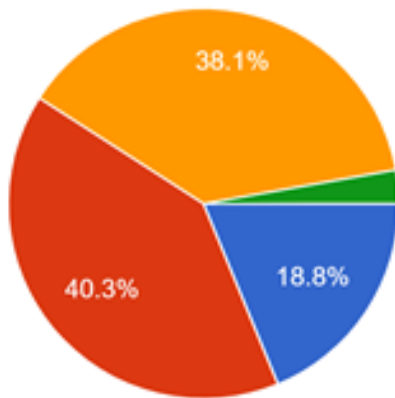
My current mental health is _____ my mental health at the beginning of 2020.
1,401 responses



APPENDIX II: 2020 WASHINGTON YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS PART 4

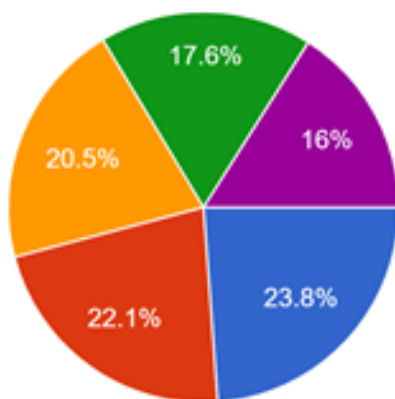


Do you believe that your school has taken the appropriate measures to address racism? This can look like changes in curriculum, administration, st...ussions, school clubs/unions, or student awareness.
1,401 responses



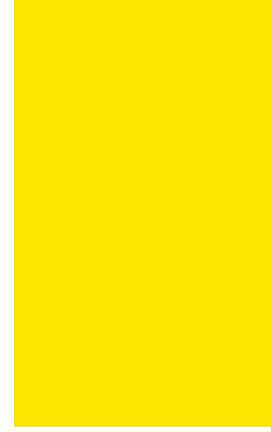
- Yes, it's perfect.
- Yes, but they could do more.
- No, it's not enough.
- No, it's too much.

I believe that individuals who are 16 years of age and older should be allowed to vote in all elections, federal, state, and local.
1,401 responses



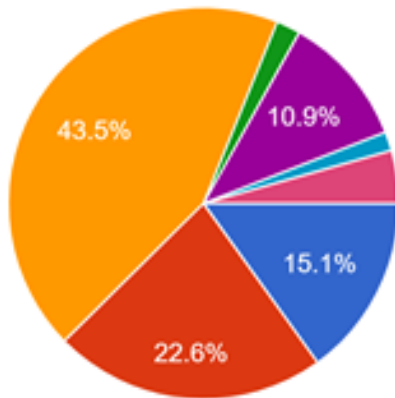
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

APPENDIX II: 2020 WASHINGTON YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS PART 5



Where is your main source of information on current events?

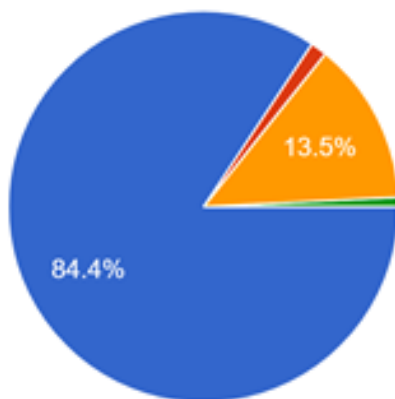
1,401 responses



- TV news channels
- News websites
- Social media
- Teachers or school administration
- Friends and family
- I don't feel like I'm receiving any information
- Other

What is the learning situation at your school right now?

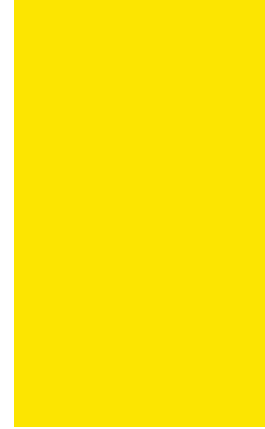
1,401 responses



- Online
- In-person
- Hybrid of online and in-person
- Homeschool/home education

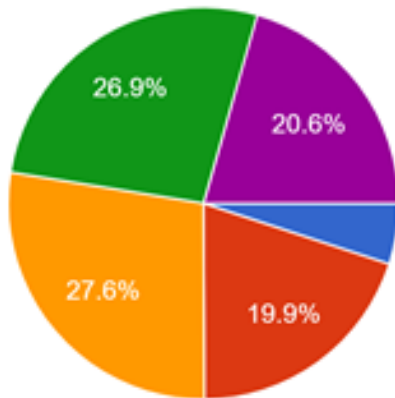
APPENDIX II: 2020 WASHINGTON YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS

PART 6



I am satisfied with my above learning situation.

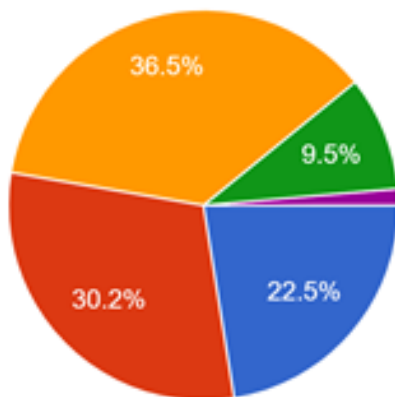
1,401 responses



- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

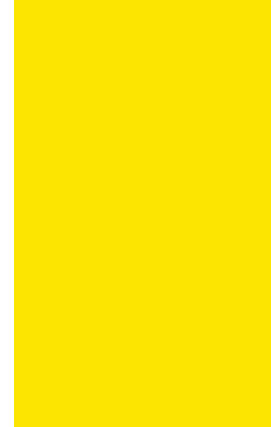
The extracurricular activities and education programs (i.e. music/art programs, career and technical education courses) at my school have drastically worsened in the past year.

1,401 responses



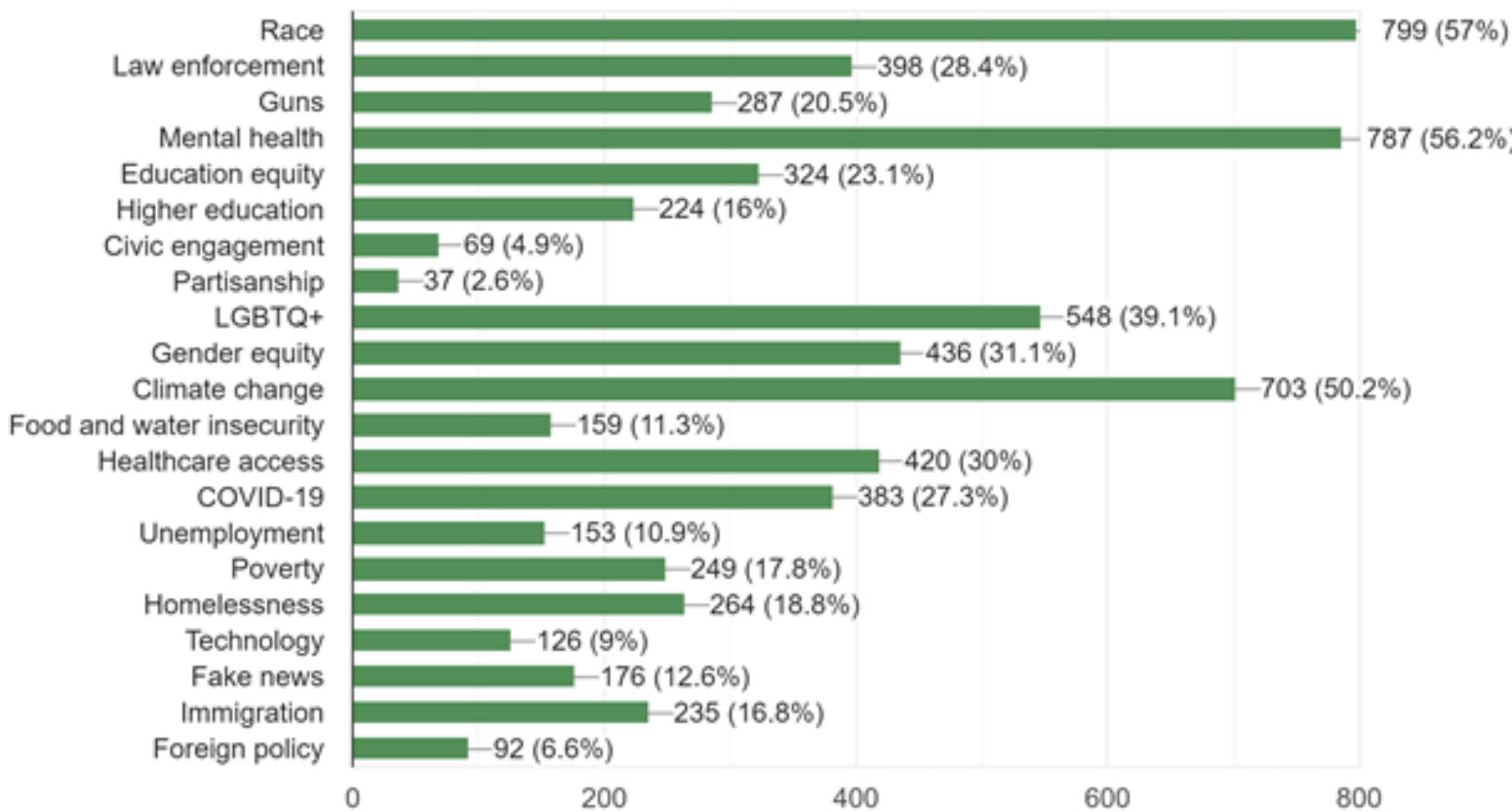
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

APPENDIX II: 2020 WASHINGTON YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS PART 7



Which five of these topics are the most important for you?

1,401 responses

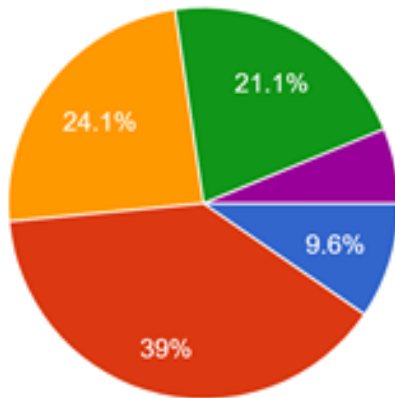


APPENDIX II: 2020 WASHINGTON YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS PART 8



I have learned about the legislative process and/or the current political atmosphere at school.

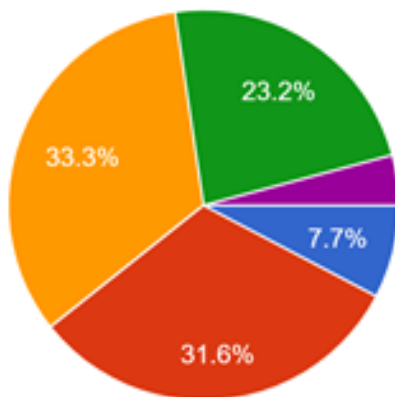
1,401 responses



- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

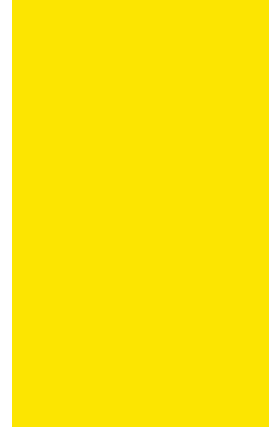
I have the resources to make a tangible change on something I care about in my community (i.e. school, city, state).

1,401 responses



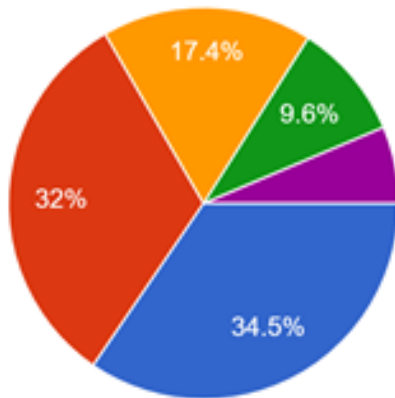
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

APPENDIX II: 2020 WASHINGTON YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS PART 9



I am interested in politics.

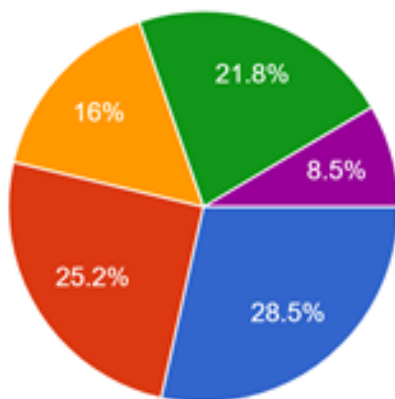
1,401 responses



- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I am confident that I know how to register to vote.

1,401 responses



- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

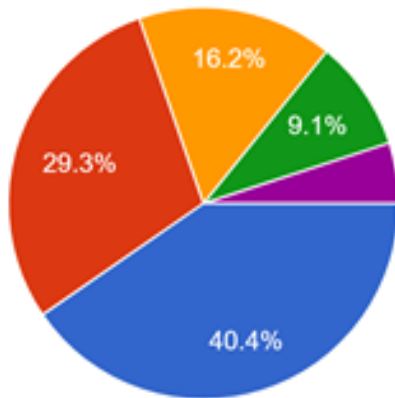
APPENDIX II: 2020 WASHINGTON YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS

PART 10



I am confident that my vote matters.

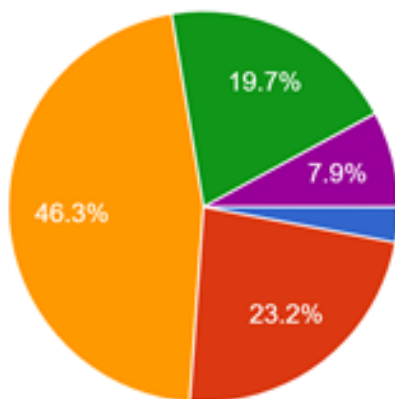
1,401 responses



- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

My experiences and perspectives are represented in government by my state legislators.

1,401 responses



- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree