

2SLGBTQIA+ STUDENTS

Academic Achievement and Well-being

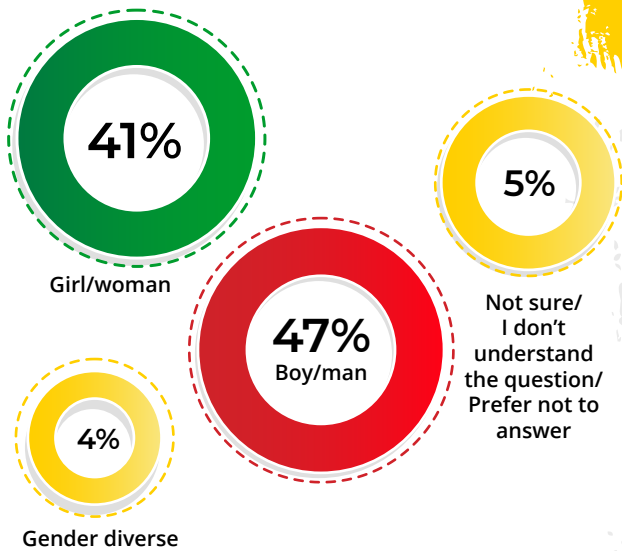


As required by the Ministry of Education and the Anti-Racism Act, the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECD SB) conducted its first Student Census in the 2023-2024 school year. The analysis of the data will help the Board understand the experiences of students who have been historically underserved by the education system and put programs in place to close any gaps in academic achievement and well-being.

Of the almost 36,000 students in the GECD SB in 2023-2024, parents/guardians completed the Student Census for **18%** of students in JK-Grade 8, while **58%** of students in Grades 9-12 completed the Student Census.

The data shows that about **20%** of all GECD SB students who completed the Census identify as 2SLGBTQIA+, i.e., as gender diverse or with a sexual orientation other than straight/heterosexual (for secondary students only).

GENDER IDENTITY

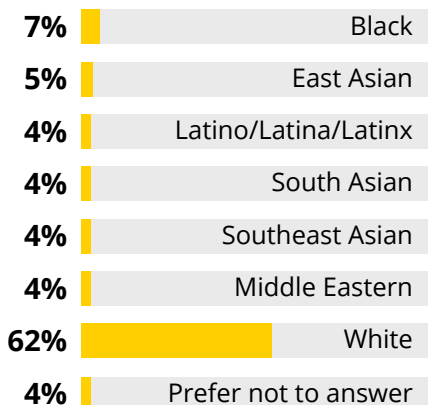


There is a good deal of diversity among students who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+.

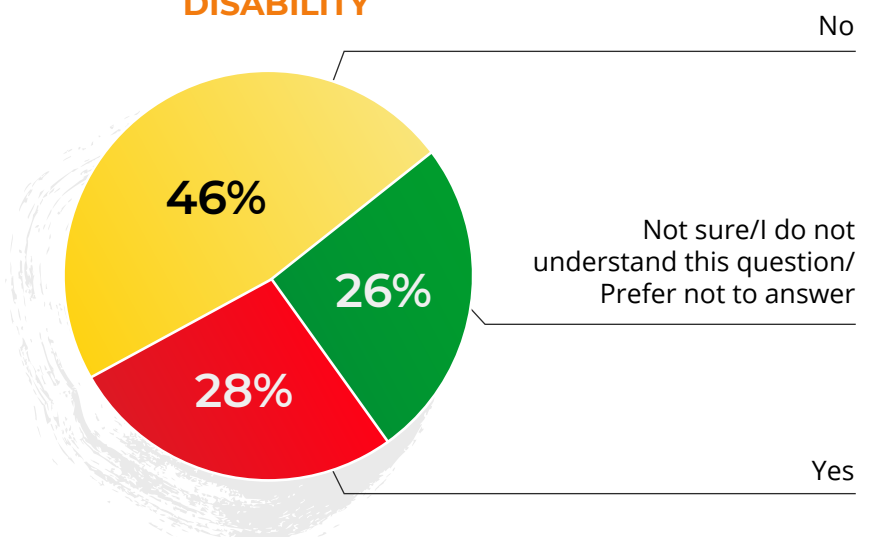
SEXUAL ORIENTATION (Grades 9-12 only)

Straight/heterosexual	72%
Asexual, bisexual, gay, lesbian, pansexual, queer, Indigiqueer, Two-Spirit, and/or questioning	18%
Not sure/ I don't understand the question/ Prefer not to answer	10%

RACE



DISABILITY

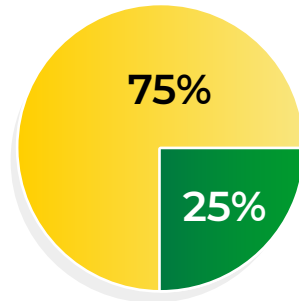


ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

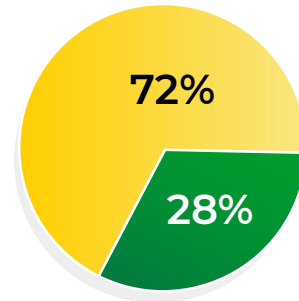
CREDIT ACCUMULATION

A student is considered to be on track to graduate within four years if they have accumulated at least 16 credits by the end of Grade 10.

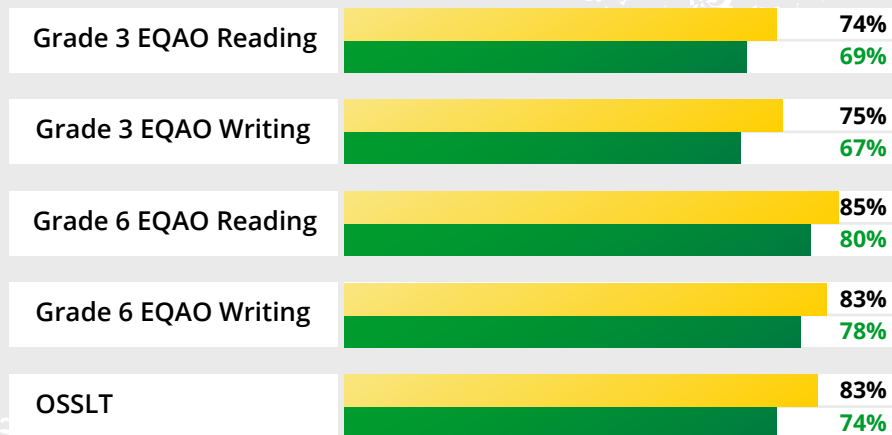
2SLGBTQIA+ Students



All Students



On Track
Not On Track



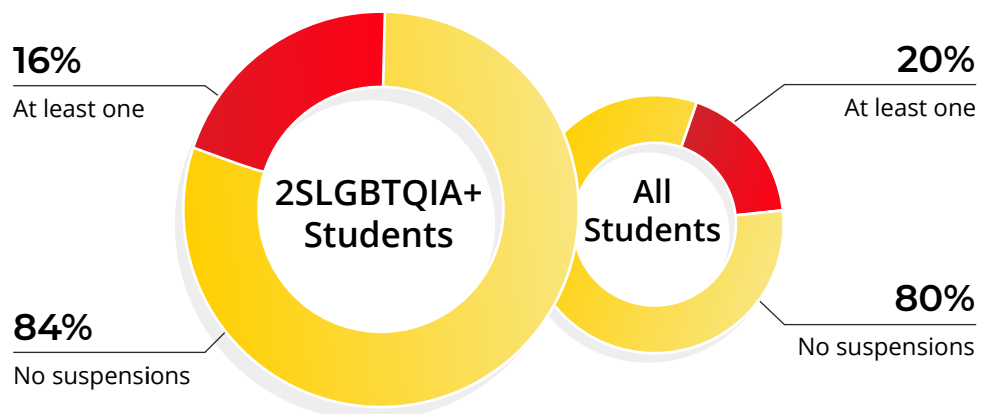
LITERACY ACHIEVEMENT

EQAO scores assess a student's reading and writing skills against provincial standards.

2SLGBTQIA+ Students
All Students

SUSPENSIONS (GRADES 4-12)

Percentage of students who have been suspended at least once between Grades 4 and 12.



ACADEMIC COURSES IN GRADE 10



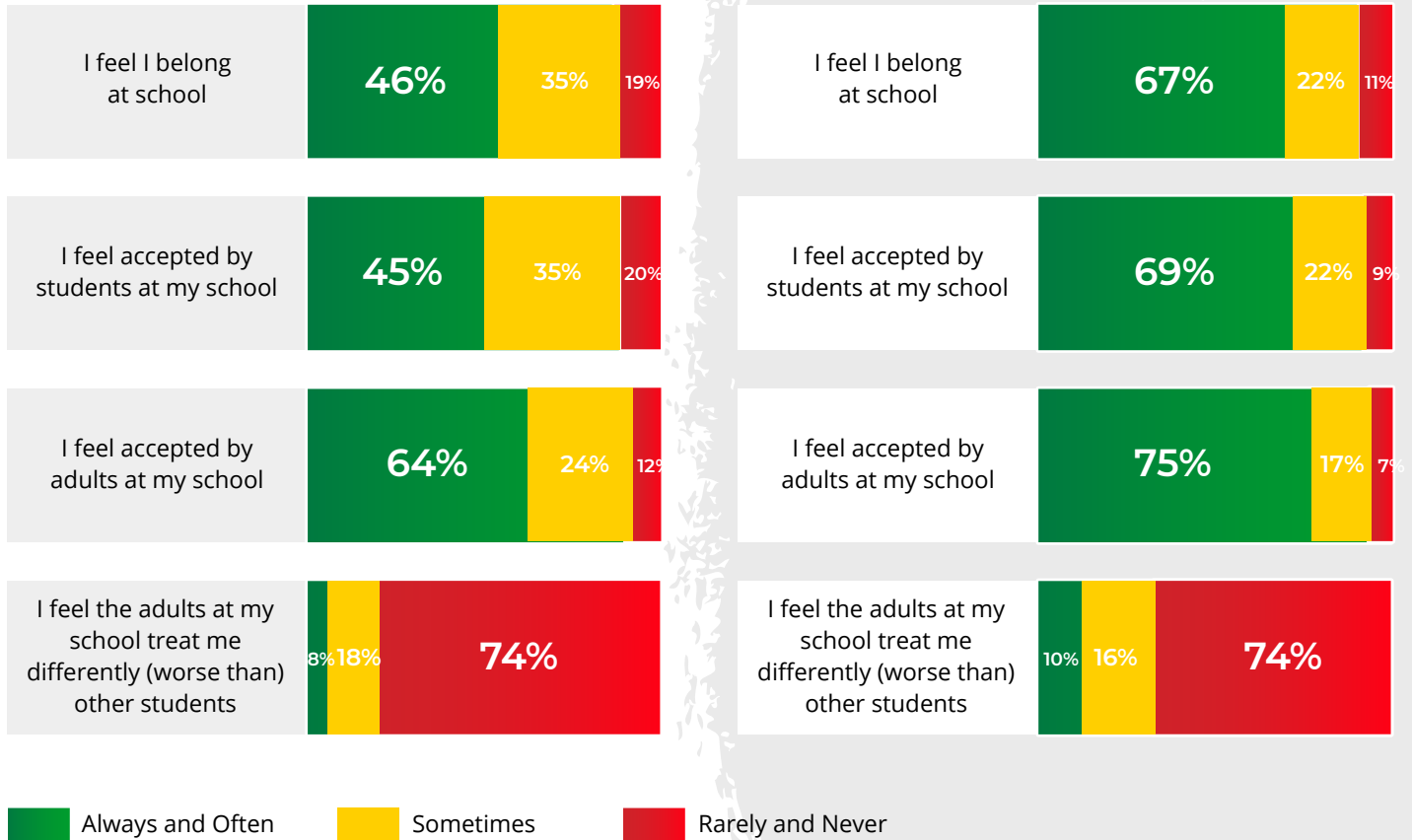
Percentage of students who have taken academic level English, Math, and Science, which allows them to go on to university.

2SLGBTQIA+ Students
All Students

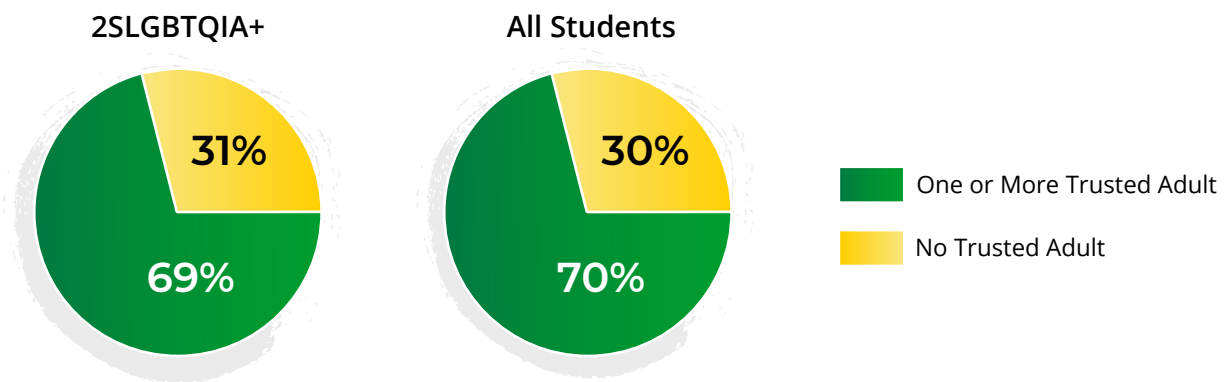
WELL-BEING

2SLGBTQIA+ STUDENTS

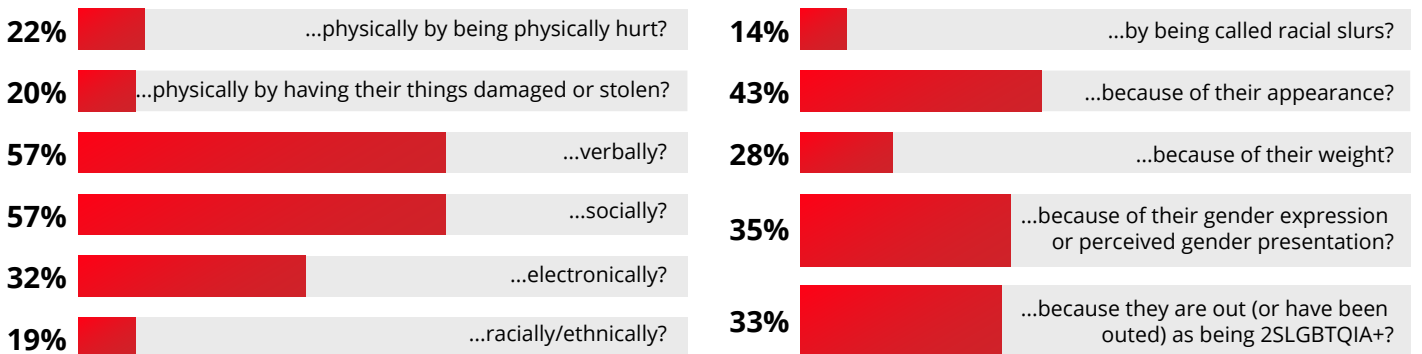
ALL STUDENTS



TRUSTED SCHOOL ADULT (GRADES 4-12)



EXPERIENCES OF BULLYING (GRADES 4-12)



2SLGBTQIA+ STUDENTS

Input From Consultations

To help understand the data, input was sought from students, parents/guardians, staff, and community members. The following summarizes the main themes from these consultations and the recommendations made.

- **Normalization of homophobia and transphobia:** 2SLGBTQIA+ students expressed that they regularly experience homophobia and transphobia at school. This includes deadnaming and misgendering from both students and teachers despite multiple corrections from the 2SLGBTQIA+ student harmed. They also shared that they experience the continued use of slurs, inappropriate jokes, and inappropriate language, all of which serves to bully and marginalize 2SLGBTQIA+ students. This impacts their mental health, well-being, and sense of safety and belonging at school.

Many 2SLGBTQIA+ students shared that it is unsafe for them to be open about their identities at school and that they do not join Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSAs) out of fear of being bullied or outed.

- **Data from the Student Census tells only part of the story:** Many consultation participants felt that the Student Census data did not reflect the full experience of 2SLGBTQIA+ students, given that there is a great deal of diversity within this group.

“ It’s genuinely hard coming to school knowing I might hear a slur.”

- **Lack of consequences for students:** Concern was expressed that there are little to no consequences for inappropriate language or behaviours directed at 2SLGBTQIA+ students. 2SLGBTQIA+ students felt there must be real consequences for students’ inappropriate behaviours which foster a toxic learning environment.

- **Lack of consequences for staff:** Concern was also expressed about a lack of consequences for staff who exhibit inappropriate behaviours or who ignore the problematic behaviour of students. Participants also discussed the negative impact on their well-being that came from the protests that occurred at their school, particularly when they didn’t feel supported by their teachers.

“ When the protests were going on, it was so hard to be at school and see the empty chairs and teachers wearing black to show that they hate me.”

- **Need for supports:** Because of the homophobia and transphobia they experience, 2SLGBTQIA+ students shared the need for in-school supports such as social workers and GSAs. There was also concern that access to these supports varies depending on which school one attends.

- **Worries about parents:** Some students expressed concerns about unsupportive parents. Their own parents may not be supportive of their 2SLGBTQIA+ identities, and they would like school to be a safe space for them. They were also concerned about the behaviours of the parents of other students, who may not hold their children accountable for their inappropriate behaviours at school or in the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Provide students with lessons and workshops regarding 2SLGBTQIA+ identity and anti-bullying.
- Advocate to the Ministry of Education to incorporate queer inclusive sexual education curricula and increase the knowledge and level of comfort of teachers who teach health and sexual education.
- Advocate for funding for ongoing and mandatory professional learning and additional resources regarding 2SLGBTQIA+ identity, mental health, and anti-bullying.
- Better equip staff to interrupt and address homophobia when it occurs.
- Ensure students experience consequences for homophobic and transphobic behaviours and that there are consequences for staff who ignore these behaviours.
- Provide 2SLGBTQIA+ students with better access to specialized in-school supports, such as social workers and GSAs, regardless of which school they attend.
- Provide 2SLGBTQIA+ students, parents/guardians, and staff a place where they can share their concerns anonymously.
- Develop policies and procedures that will foster positive and supportive learning environments for 2SLGBTQIA+ students.