Trends in Mental Health & Social-Emotional Learning Programming update

Mrs. Stephanie Smith, Director of School Counseling
Dr. Russell Lazovick, Ridge High School Principal
Mr. Mike Pepitone, Mt Prospect Assistant principal
Mrs. Krissy Uhler, Cedar hill Assistant Principal
Mrs. Pam lawrence, Liberty Corner Assistant Principal
Mr. Tom Thorp, Oak Street Assistant Principal

Bernards Township School District
April 26, 2021

THE DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL COUNSELING

Overview

- Trends in mental health Data review 2019-20
  - Data collected by the district counseling departments
  - District mandated reporting Data:
    - Home Instruction
    - Suicide Intervention Reports
    - violence Prevention Reports
    - Department of Child Protection & Permanency Reports
  - Trends from "Professionals' Soundbites"

- Sel programming update 2020-2021

Trends in Mental Health
Data Review School Year 2019-2020

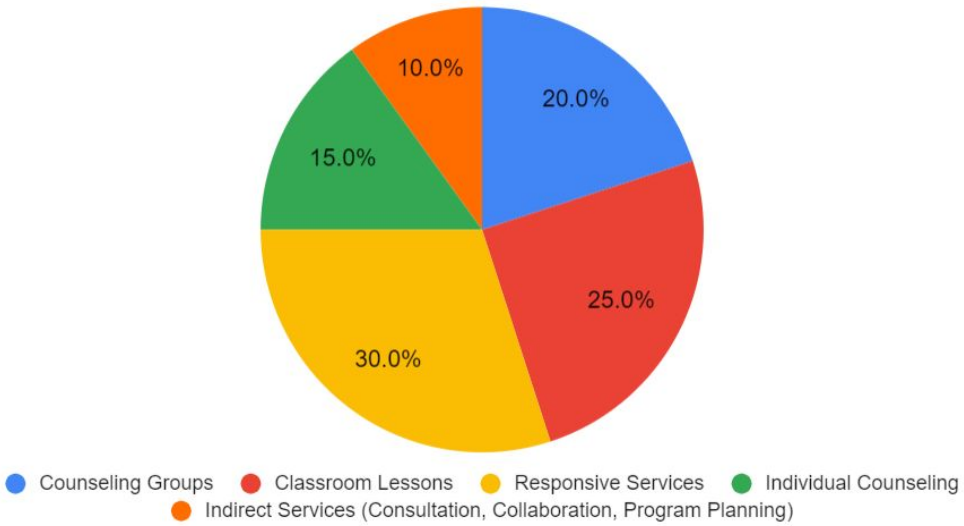
THE DEPARTMENT OF
SCHOOL COUNSELING

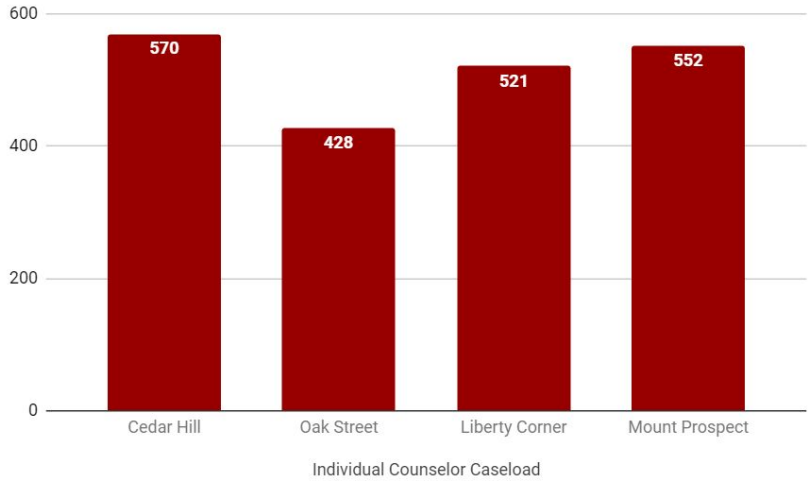
Elementary Schools

Cedar Hill, Liberty Corner, Mount Prospect, Oak Street

THE DEPARTMENT OF
SCHOOL COUNSELING

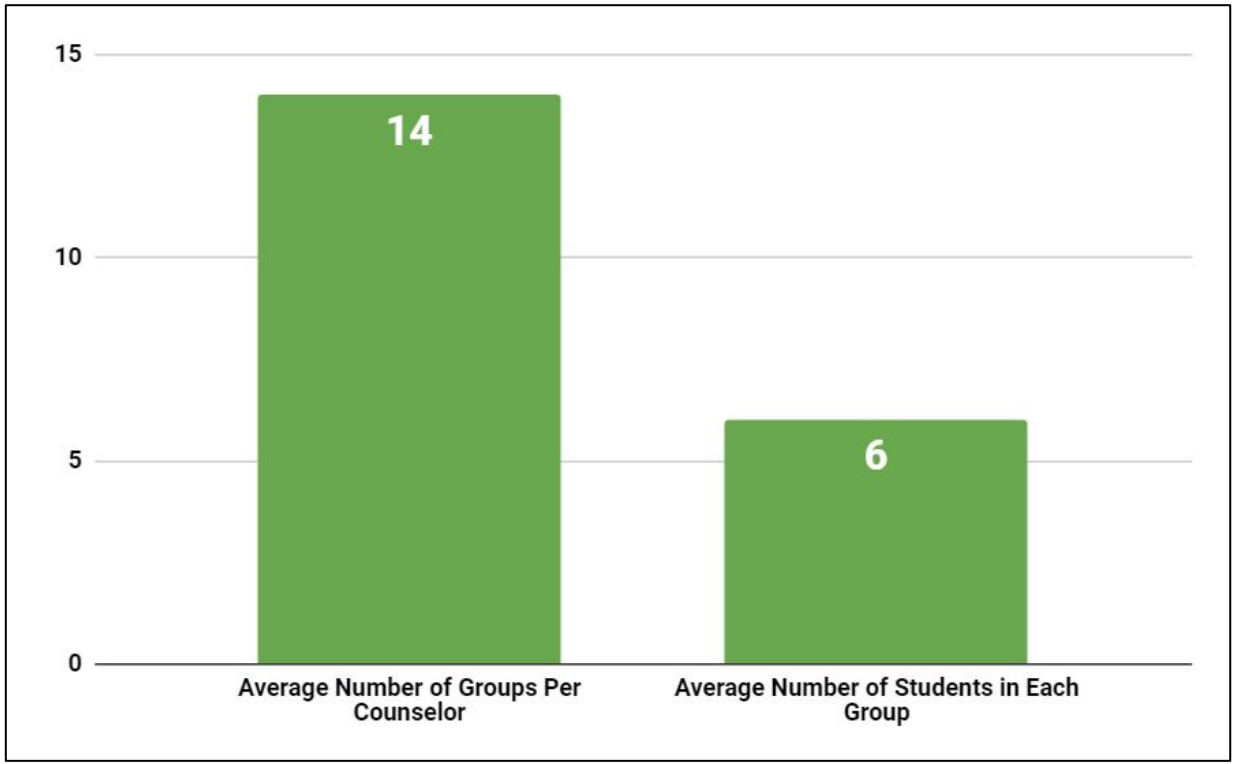
Elementary Counseling Program





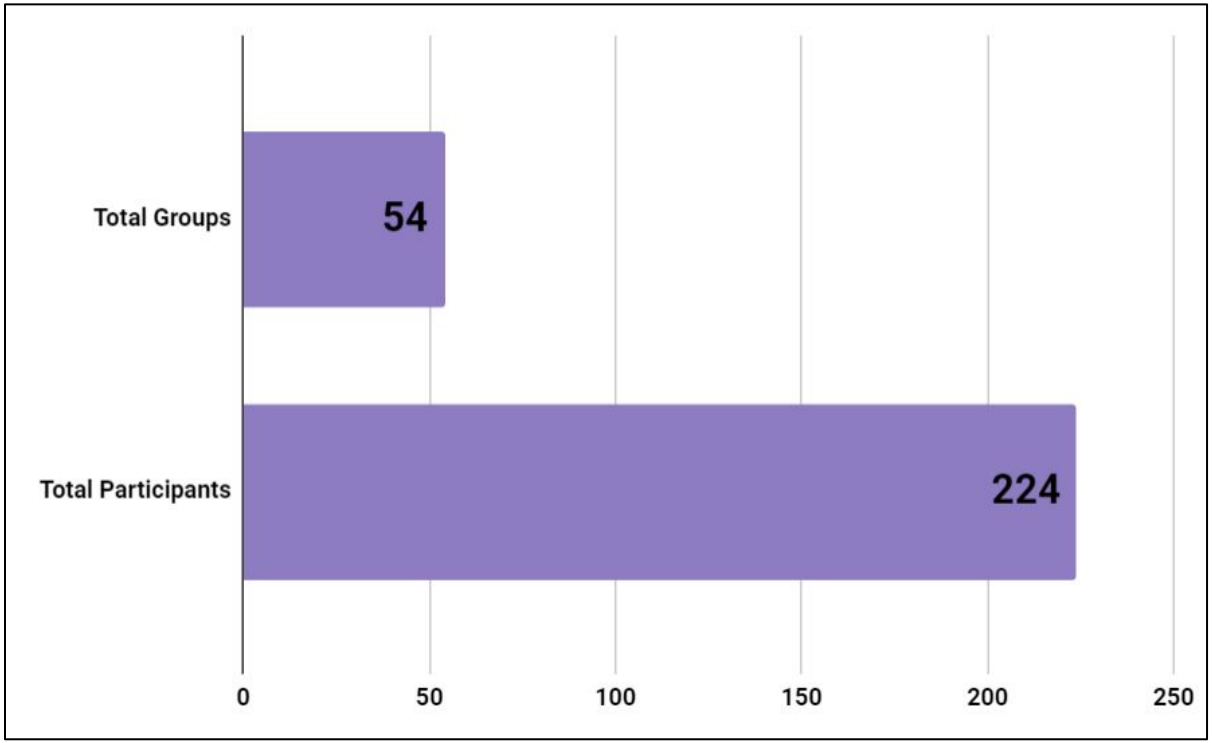
Elementary Counseling Program

Small Group Counseling Averages Per Counselor



Elementary Counseling Program

Total Small Group Counseling Rates by District

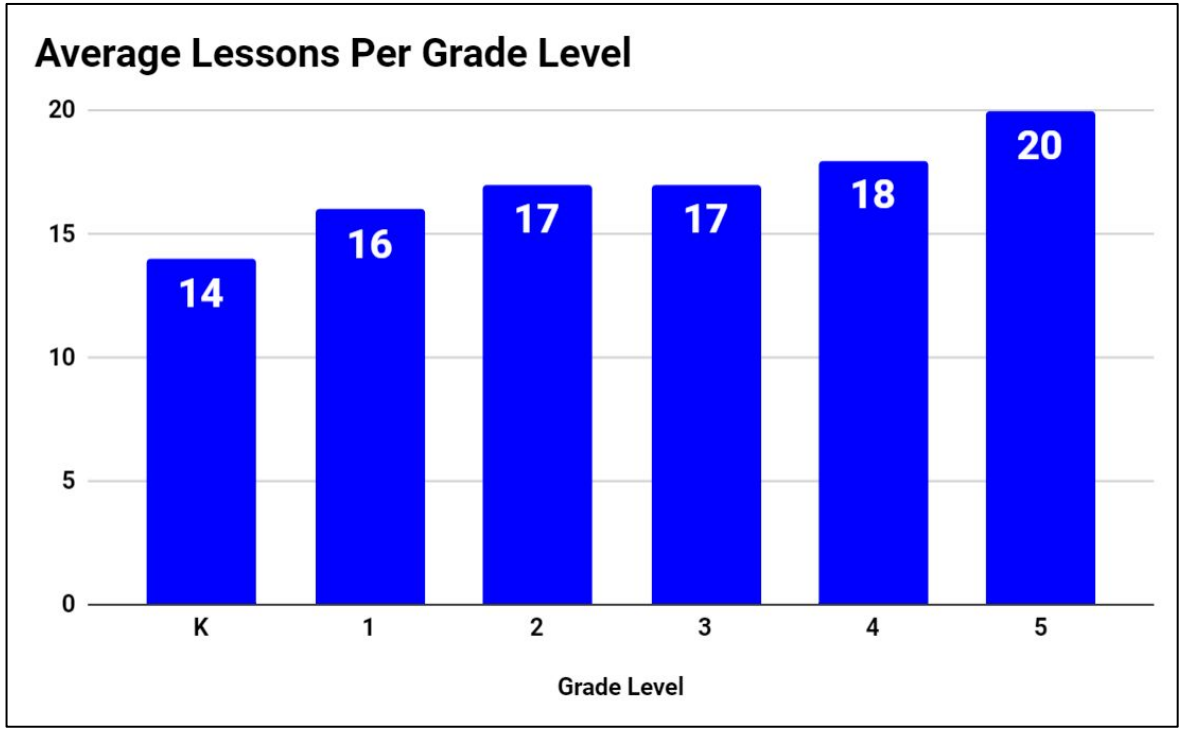


224 Students in total across district participating in Counseling Groups

*Data does not include ad hoc or lunch bunch groups that may arise as needs present

Elementary Counseling Program

Average Counselor Classroom Lessons via Counseling Curriculum Delivery

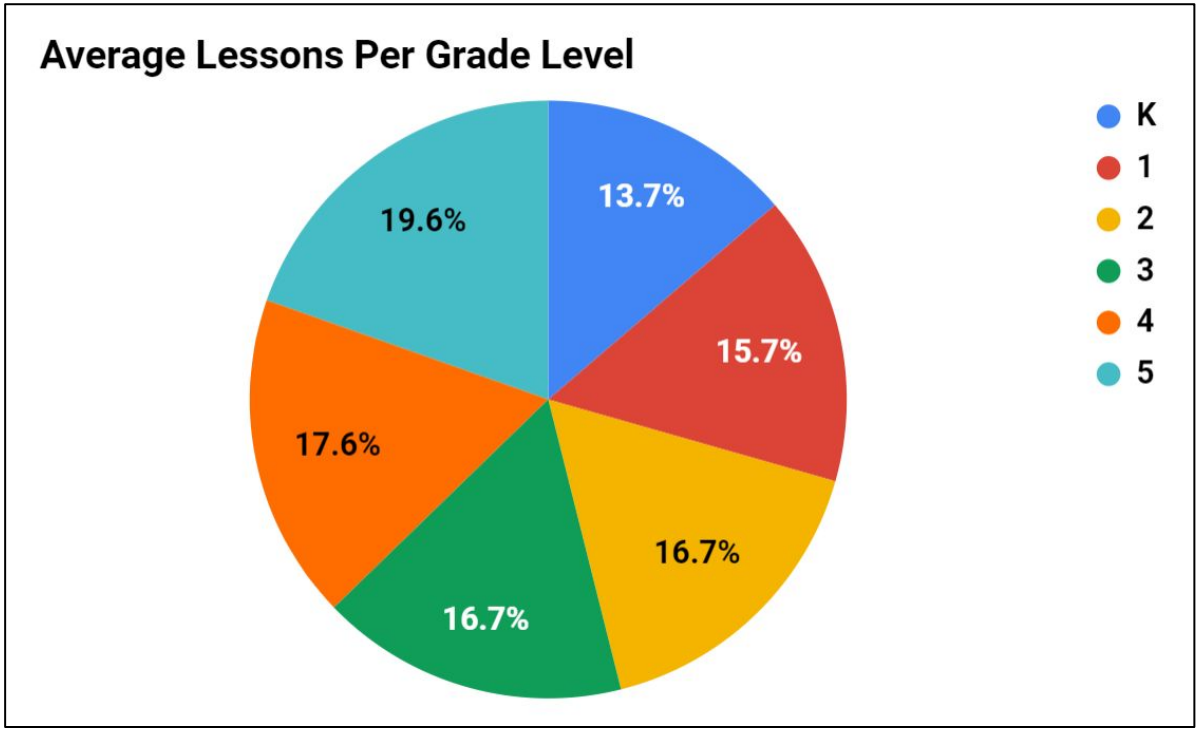


102 Average Lessons to students across K-5 per school counselor
*Increase in over 30 average lessons per counselor with new curriculum

413 total counseling lessons delivered across 4 elementary schools

Elementary Counseling Program

Average Counselor Classroom Lessons per grade level via Counseling Curriculum Delivery (Graph Percentage)



William Annin Middle School

THE DEPARTMENT OF
SCHOOL COUNSELING

WAMS Counseling Program

Data Considerations

Large group meetings	Small Group Meetings	Professional Approach	Looping Model
• Large group meetings such as Grade level assemblies not in data set, including examples below • Presentations to grade levels (example, VOTECH visit for course selection or bystander program) • Transition activities	• Health Classroom Lessons mental health and/or SEL • Classroom lessons for academic support/strategies • Social-emotional small counseling groups throughout the year for student support	• Professional approach to data collection can vary even within uniform collection system • Many categories can be counted twice if the counseling meeting met one or more (ie., meeting with a student for both academic challenges and peer issues)	• The department was restricted at the start of 2019-20 to represent a looping model with a school counselor and school counselor/SAC in each grade level, and a 6-8 grade SAC

<u>2019-20 Class Sizes</u>

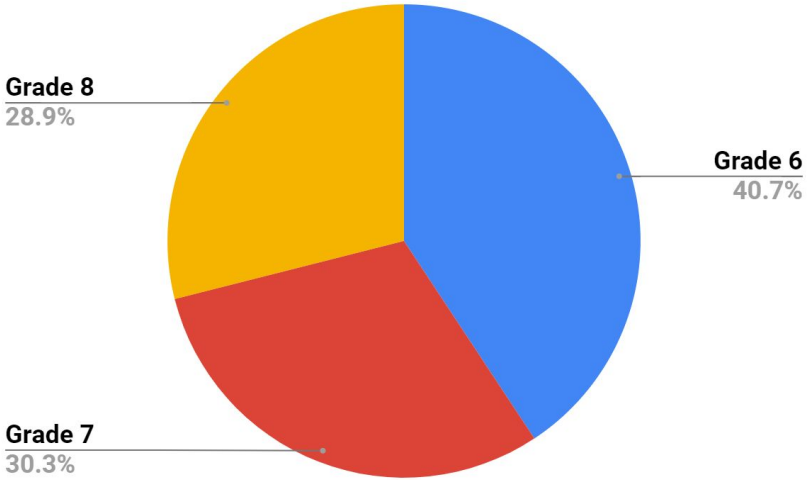
- 8th - 452
- 7th - 439
- 6th - 397
- Total: 1,288

WAMS Counseling Program

Totals

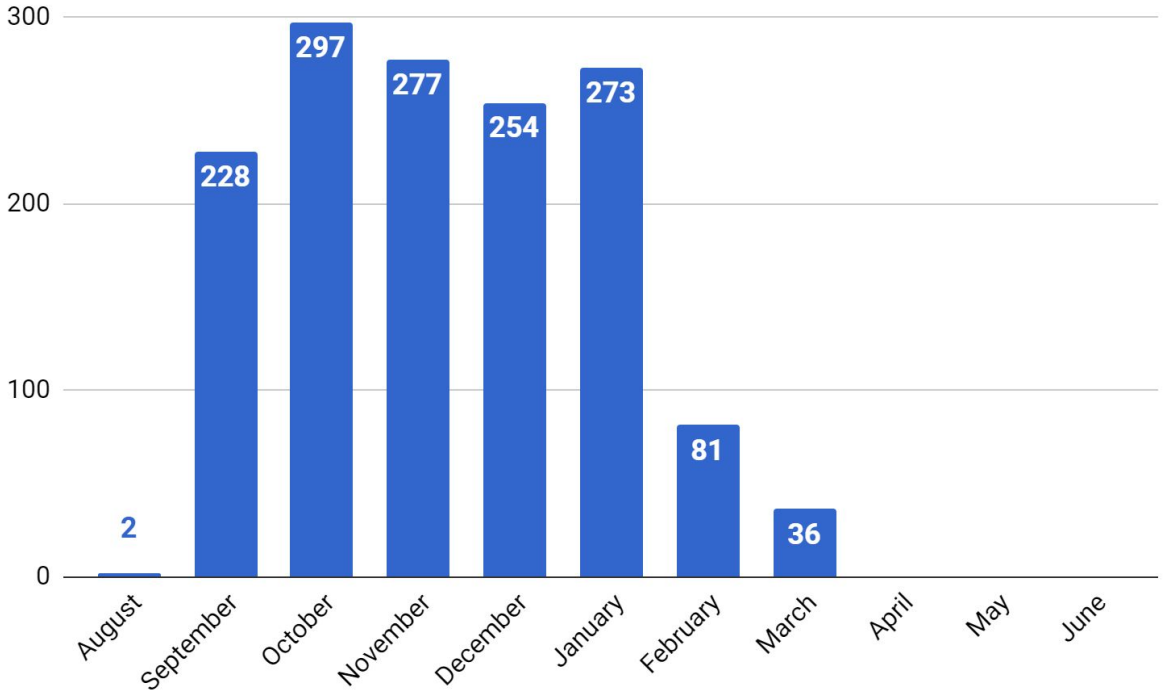
Individual Students Seen	664
Number of Visits to Counseling Office	1449

Percentage of Students Seen by Grade



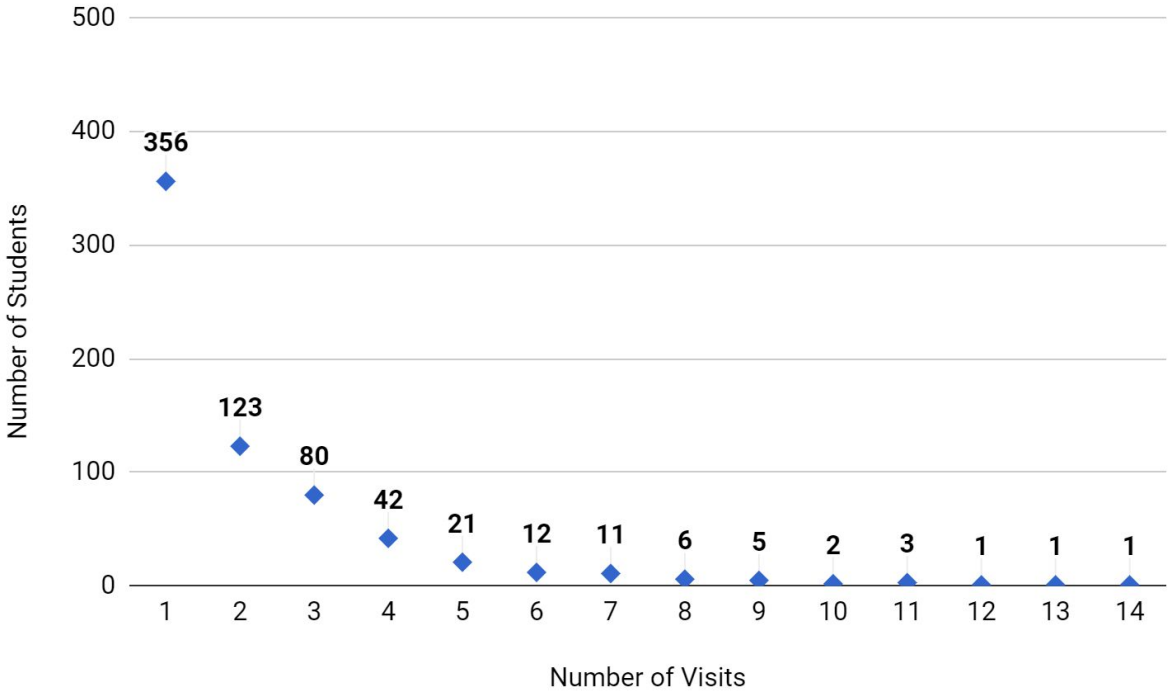
WAMS Counseling Program

Number of Visits by Month



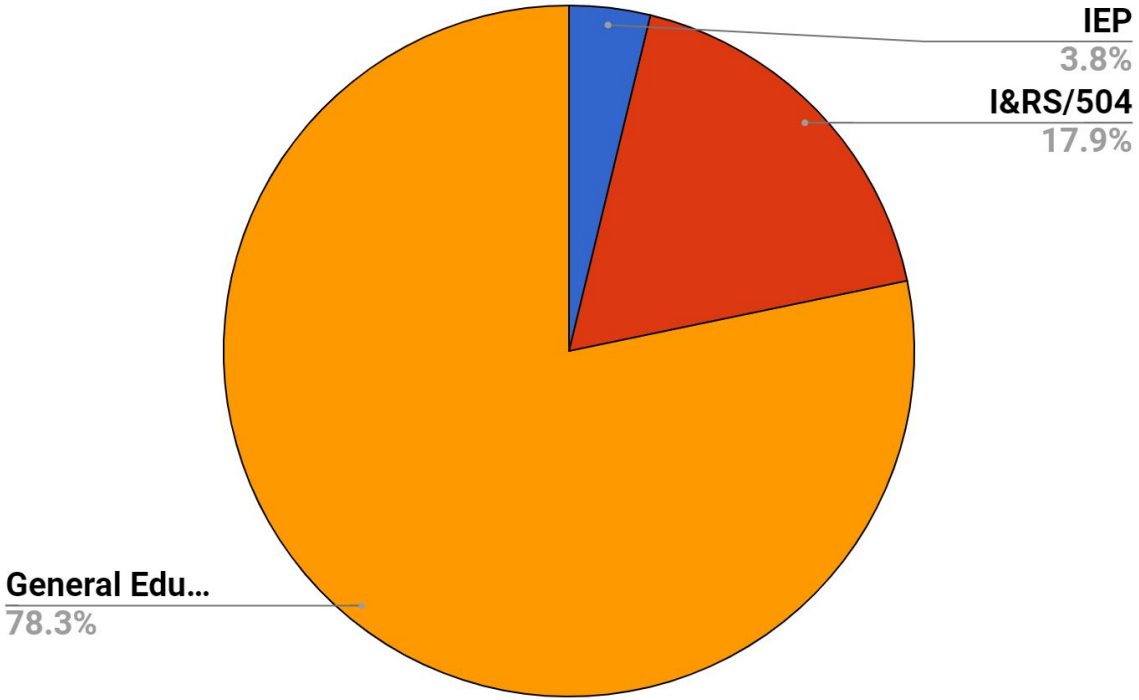
WAMS Counseling Program

Number of Visits to the Counselor per Student



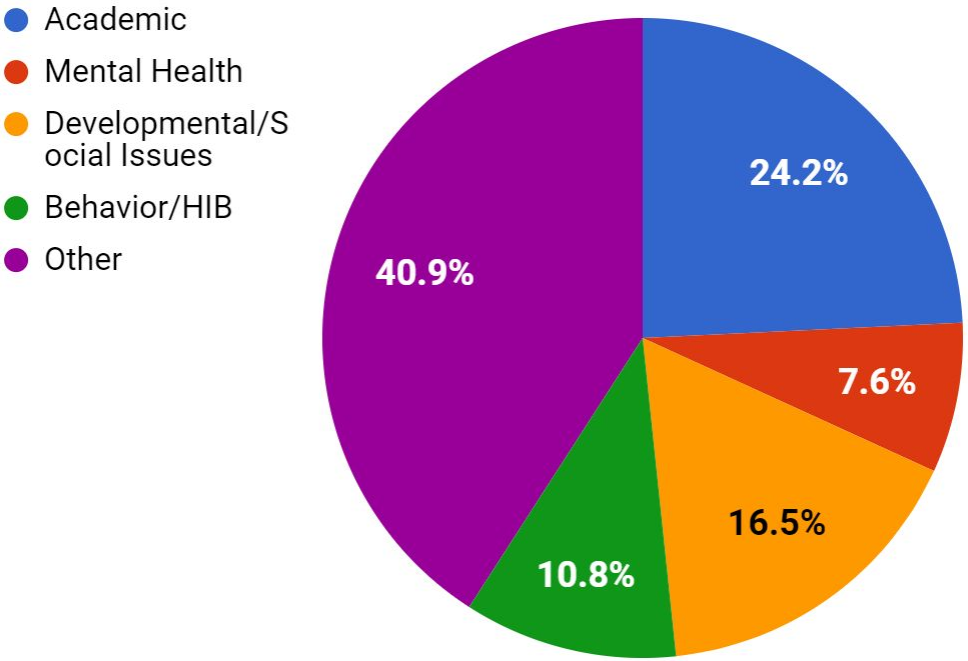
WAMS Counseling Program

Type of Program



William Annin Counseling Program

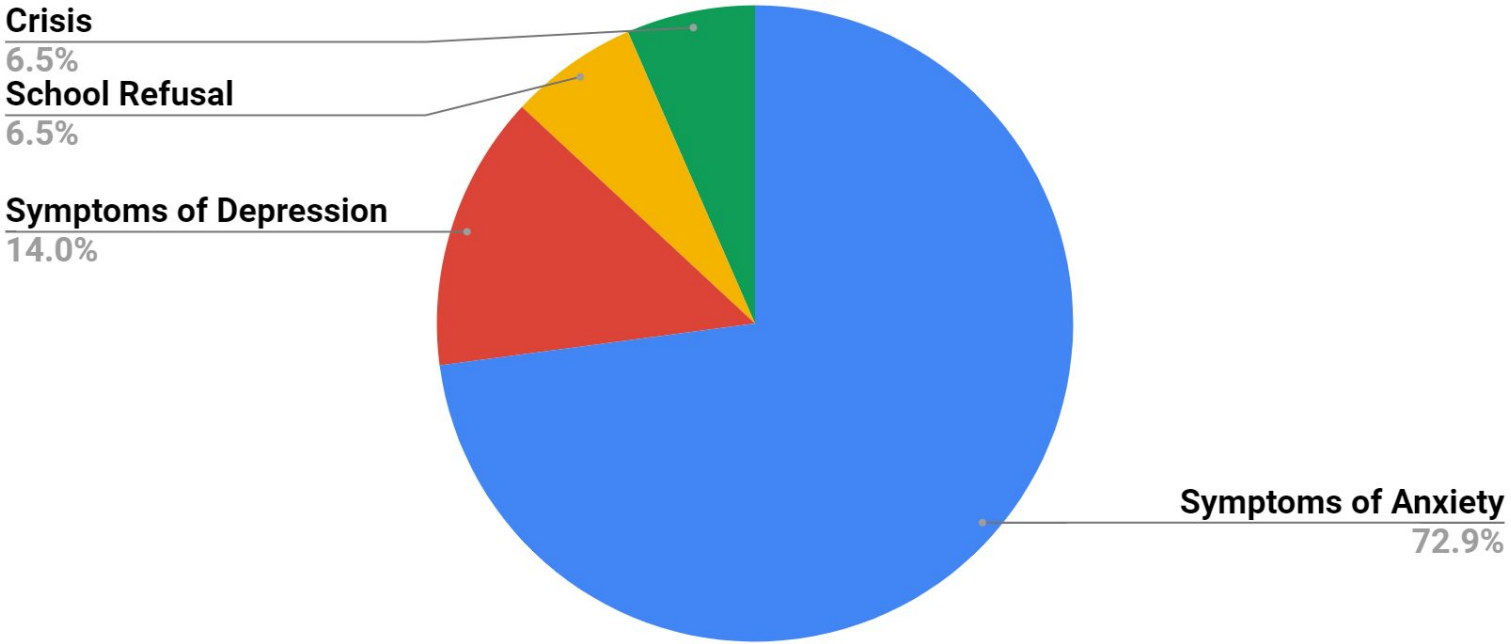
Direct Services*



*Some visits were for multiple reasons

William Annin Counseling Program

Visits for Mental Health Issues (7.6%)



*Some students were seen for multiple Mental Health Reasons.

WAMS Student Assistance Program

Total referrals

	Mental Health	Substance Abuse	Combined*	Other Developmental	School Refusal	HIB Related
2018-19	46	0	0	155	12	5
2019-20	23	1	0	160	6	13

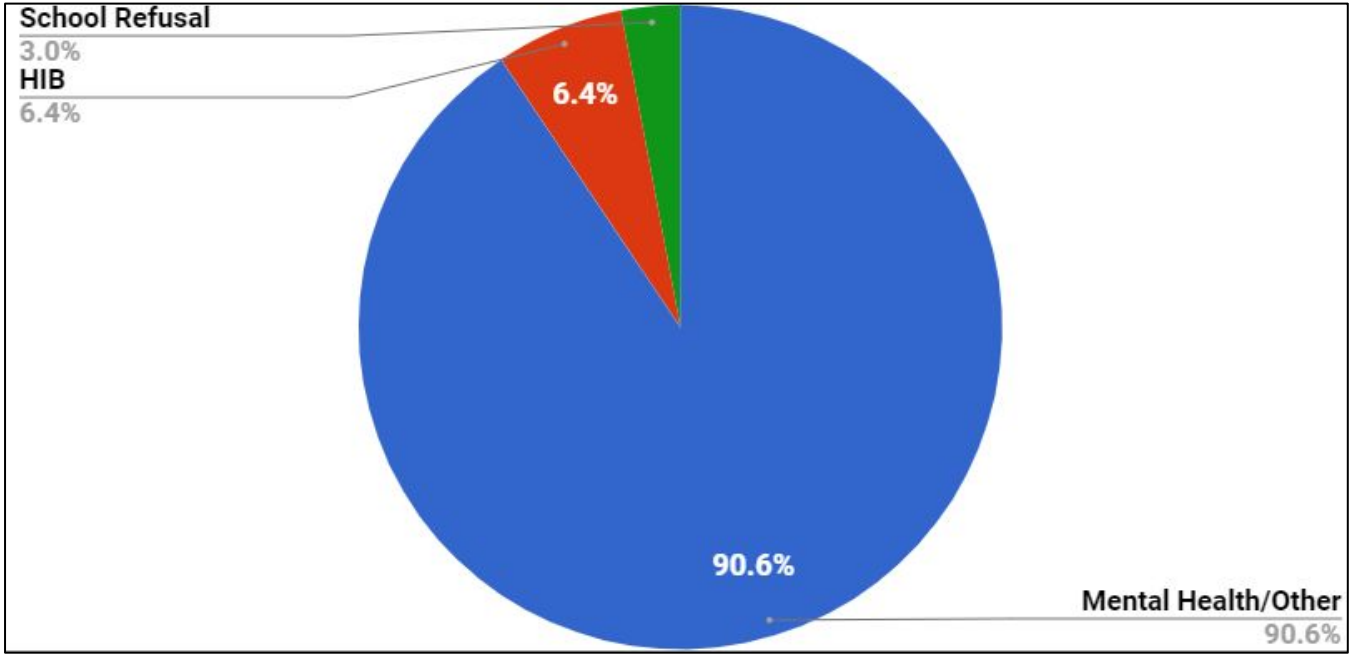
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Student Assistance Referrals	200+	168	199	200+	218	202

*Other Includes Groups, Friend/Family Concerns, social skills, behavior, teacher referrals, etc

*Combined: Mental Health & Substance Abuse Issues

Wams Student Assistance Program

Reasons for visits



*Other Includes Groups, Friend/Family Concerns, social skills, behavior, teacher referrals, etc

*This includes students who visited SAC multiple times

WAMS Student Assistance Program

Screenings & placements

	Mental Health			Drug & Alcohol Treatment	
	Emergency Psychiatric Screenings	Psychiatric IOP*	Psychiatric Hospitalization⊙	D&A/IOP+	Residential Treatment+
2019-20	9	0	0	0	0
2018-19	20	5	3	0	0
2017-18	23	6	6	0	1
2016-17	23	1	1	0	0
2015-16	24	6	3	0	1

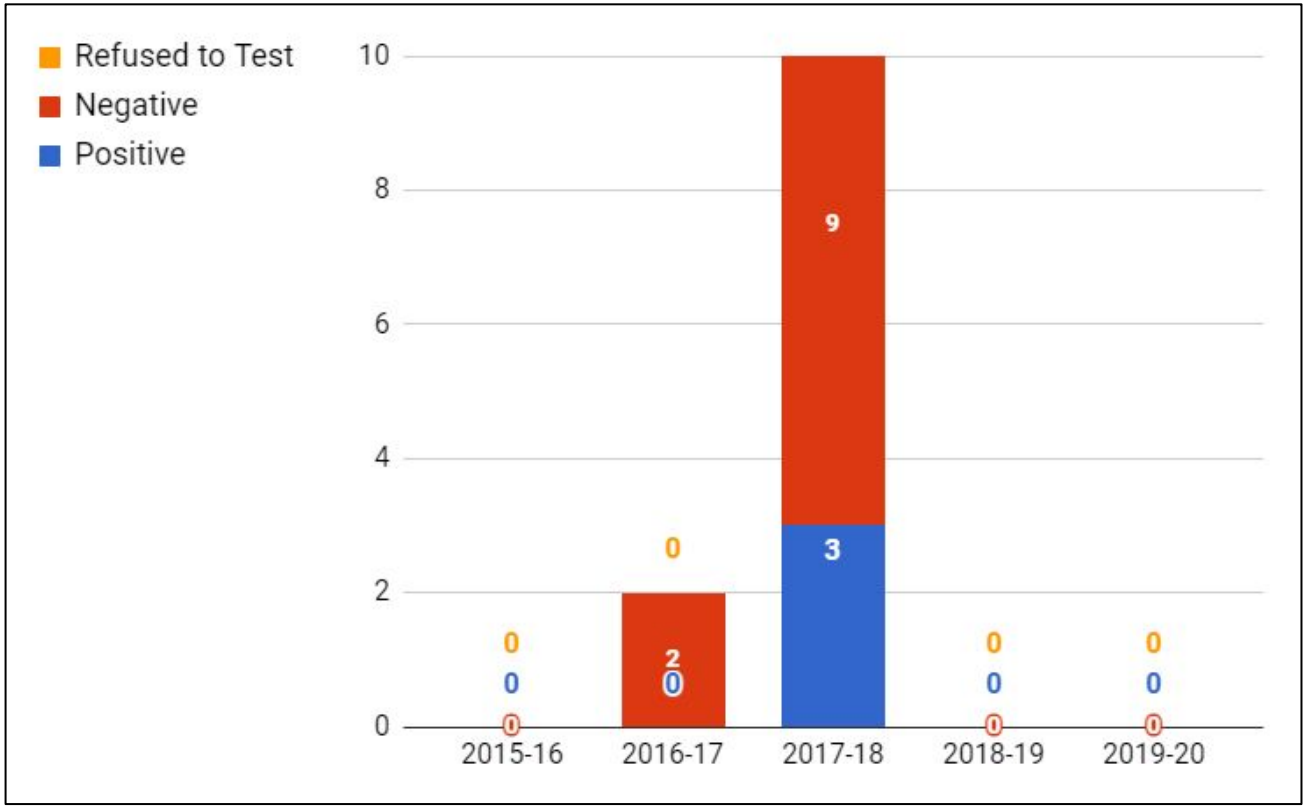
*Intensive Outpatient Program

⊙Some students were placed without school consultation

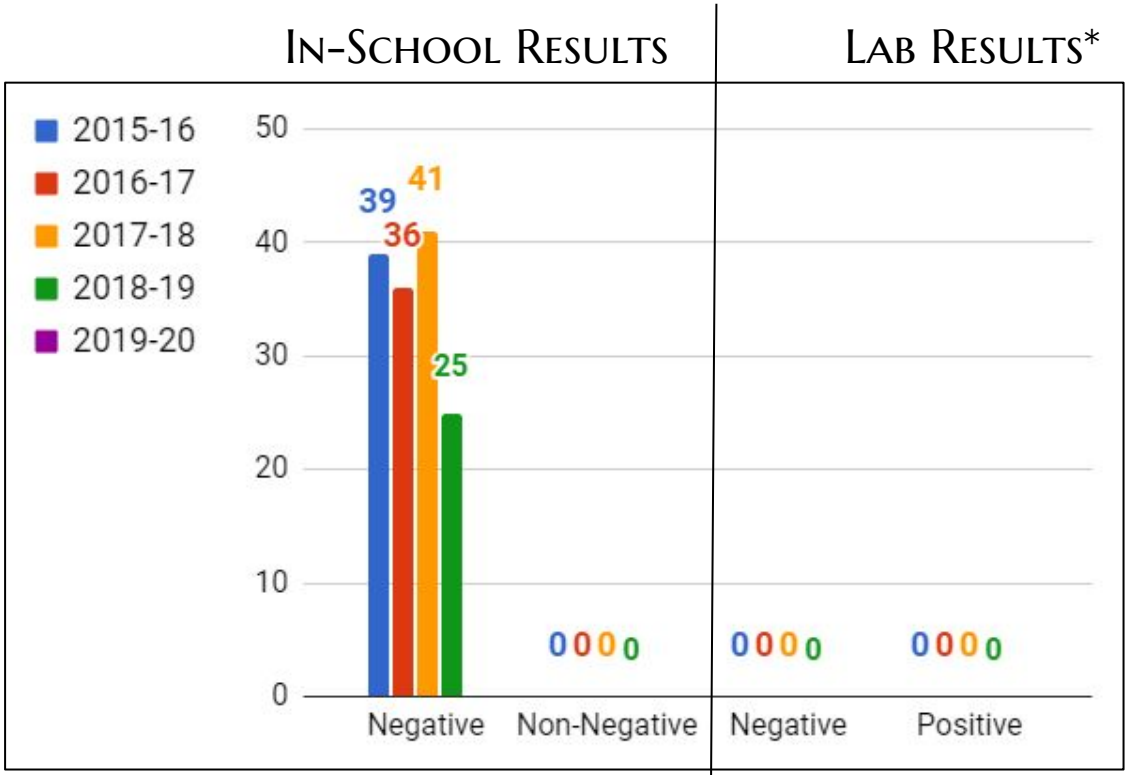
+Not always as a result of being sent out

WAMS Student Assistance Program

Students Sent for Drug Testing



WAMS Voluntary Random Drug Testing



*In-school non-negative results are sent to the lab for further testing/physician review.

Ridge High School

THE DEPARTMENT OF
SCHOOL COUNSELING

Ridge Counseling Program

Data Considerations

Large Group Meetings	Small Group Meetings	Professional approach
• Large group meetings such as Grade level assemblies not in data set, including examples below • Senior Mechanics • Junior Navigating the College Process • Program of studies presentation	• Health Classroom Lessons with SACs for suicide prevention, substance use/abuse	• Professional approach to data collection can vary even within uniform collection system • Many categories can be counted twice if the counseling meeting met one or more (ie., meeting with a student for both academic challenges and peer issues)

2019-20 Class Sizes

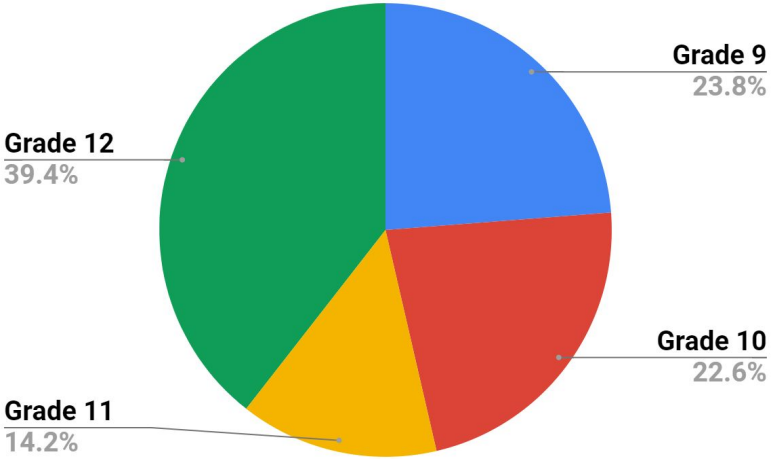
- 12th - 470
- 11th - 463
- 10th - 450
- 9th - 424
- Total: 1,807

Ridge Counseling Program

Totals

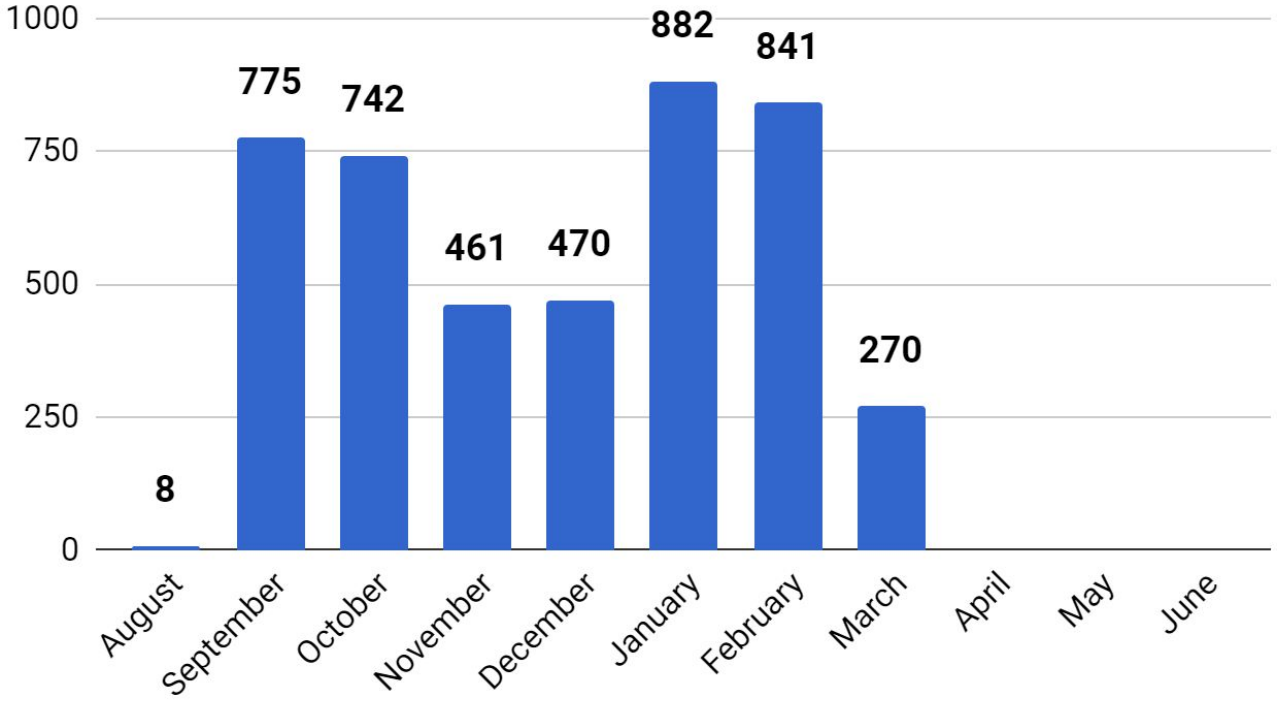
Individual Students Seen	1,453
Number of Visits to Counseling Office	4,452

Percentage of Students Seen by Grade



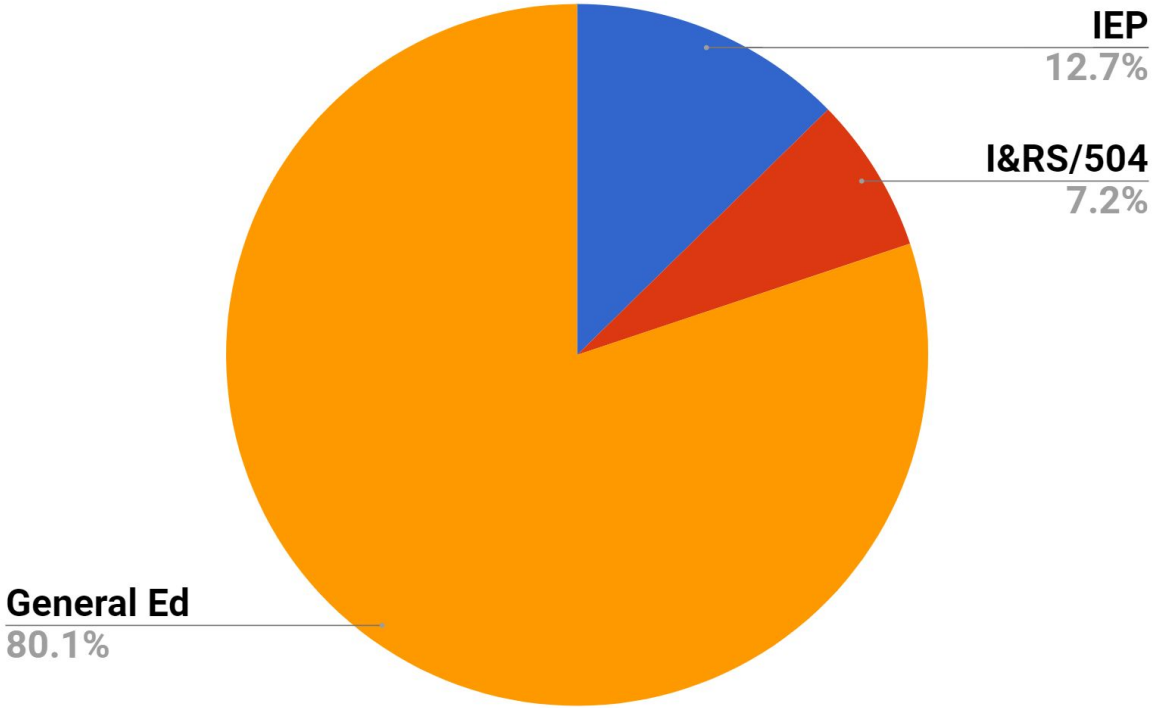
Ridge Counseling Program

Number of Visits by Month



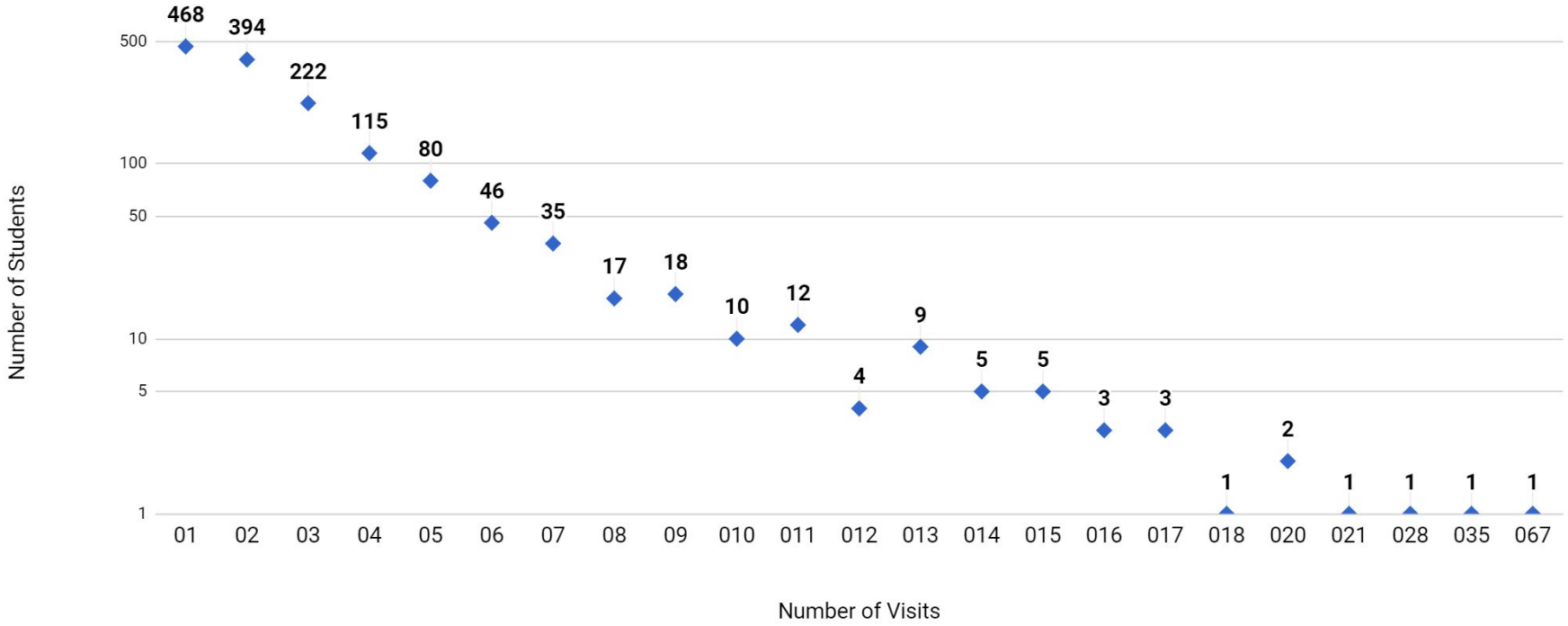
Ridge Counseling Program

Type of Program



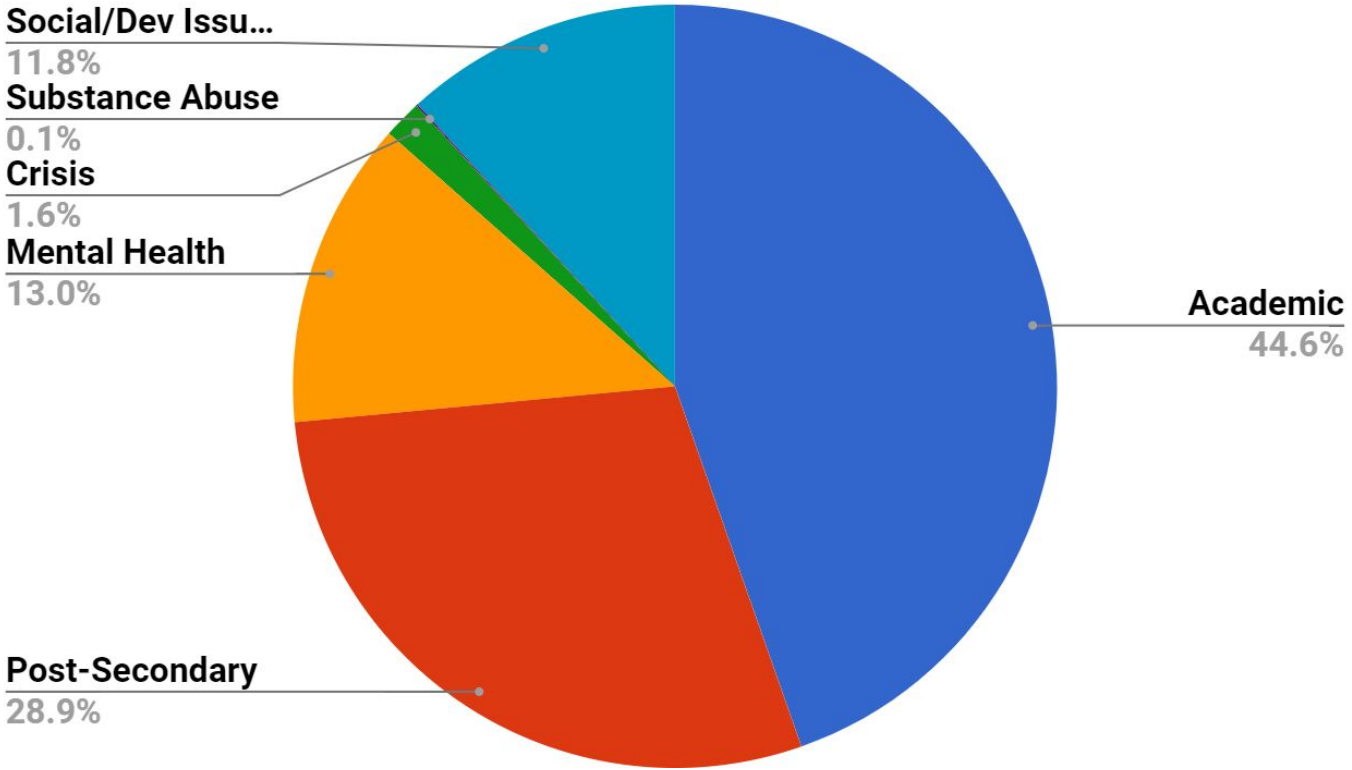
Ridge Counseling Program

Number of Visits to the Counselor per Student



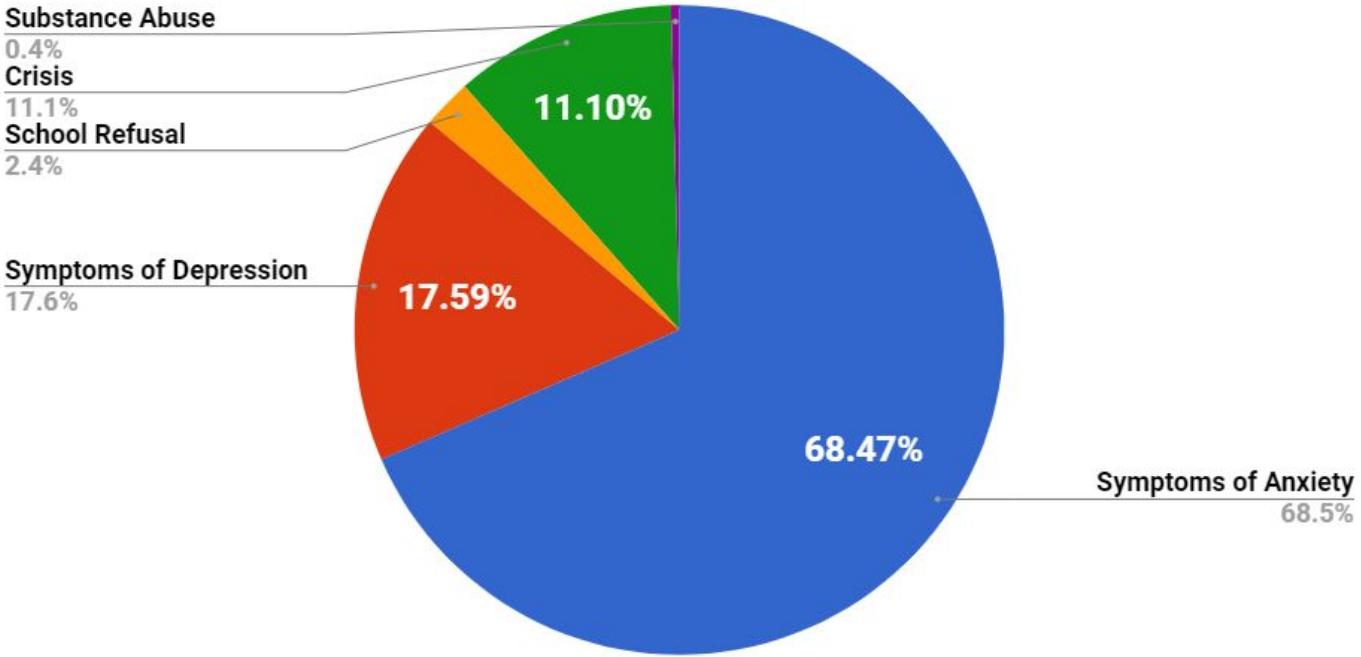
Ridge Counseling Program

Direct Services



Ridge Counseling Program

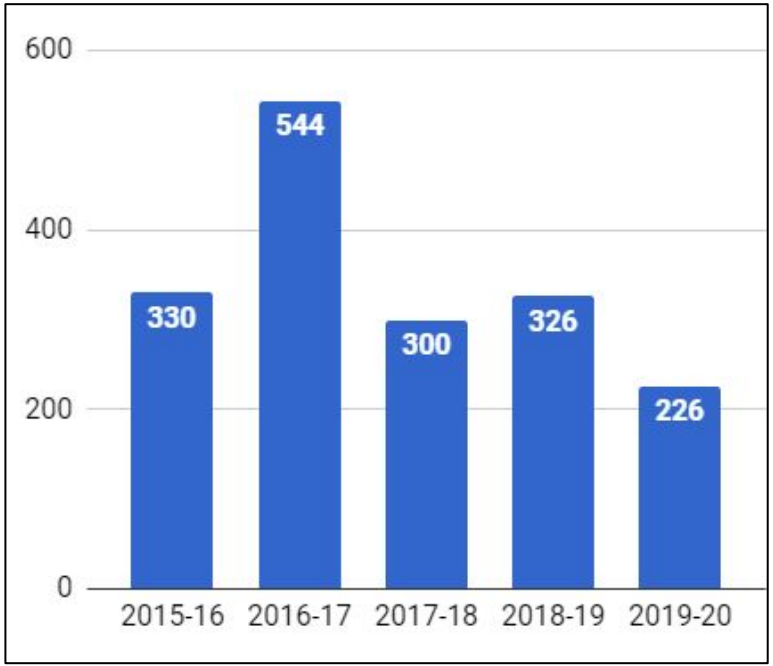
Visits for Mental Health Issues (13%)



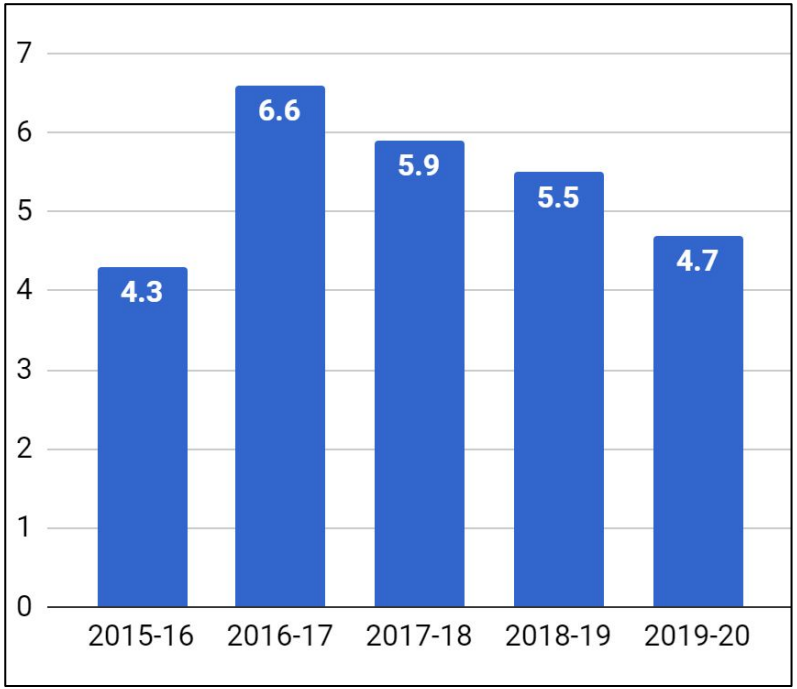
*Some students were seen for multiple Mental Health Reasons.

Ridge Student Assistance Program

Total Number of Students Seen



Average Number of Visits Per Student



Ridge Student Assistance Program

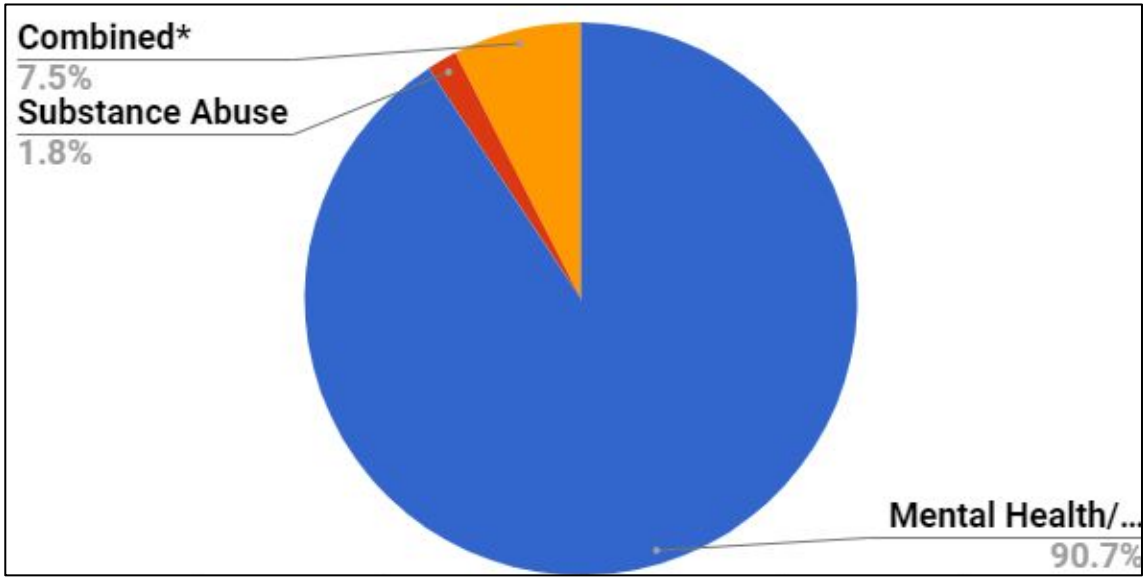
Reasons for Visits

	Mental Health	Substance Abuse	Combined Substance Abuse & Mental Health	Other
2019-20	149	4	17	56
2018-19	216	28	28	82
2017-18	204	16	11	43
2016-17	281	5	7	134
2015-16	100	22	1	128
2014-15	87	19	3	98

*Mental Health & Substance Abuse Issues

Ridge Student Assistance Program

Reasons for Visits



*Mental Health & Substance Abuse Issues
Mental health category includes
symptoms of anxiety or depression

Ridge Student Assistance Program

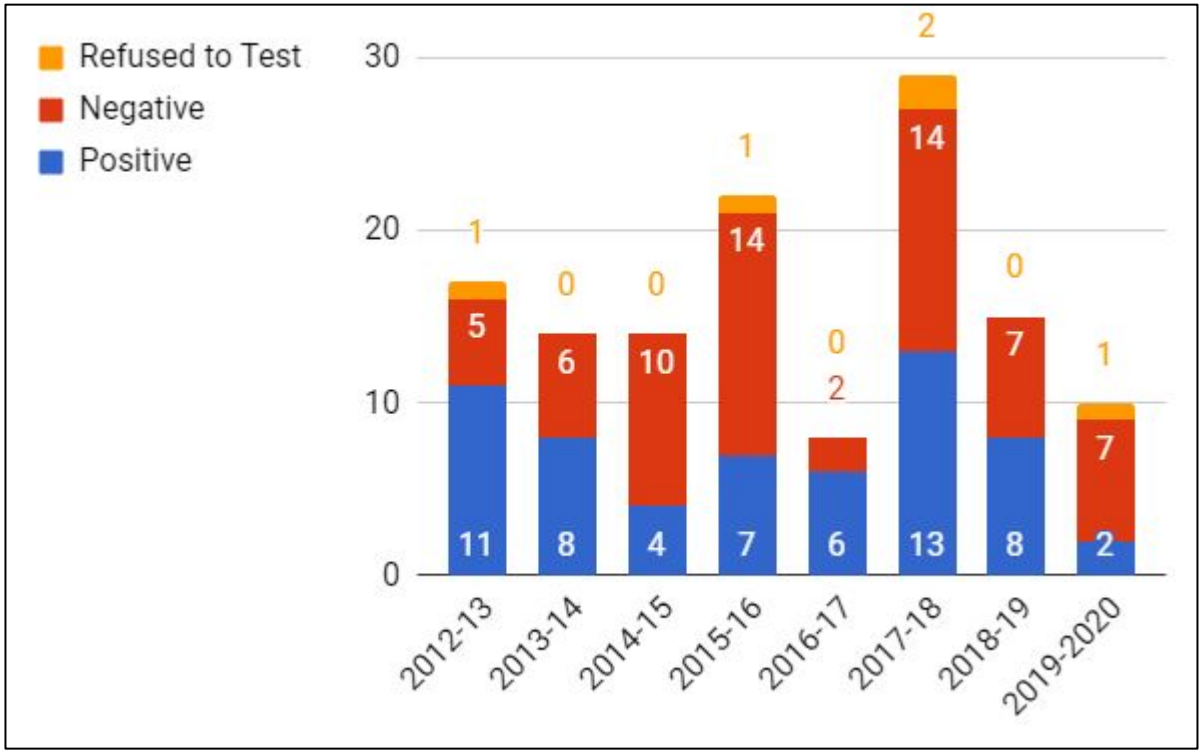
Screenings & Placements

	Mental Health			Drug & Alcohol Treatment	
	Emergency Psychiatric Screenings	Psychiatric IOP*	Psychiatric Hospitalization⊙	D&A/IOP+	Residential Treatment+
2019-20	18	14	8	2	0
2018-19	17	24	6	4	2
2017-18	21	16	16	7	4
2016-17	24	16	4	1	0
2015-16	9	4	7	5	0
2014-15	12	10	6	4	0

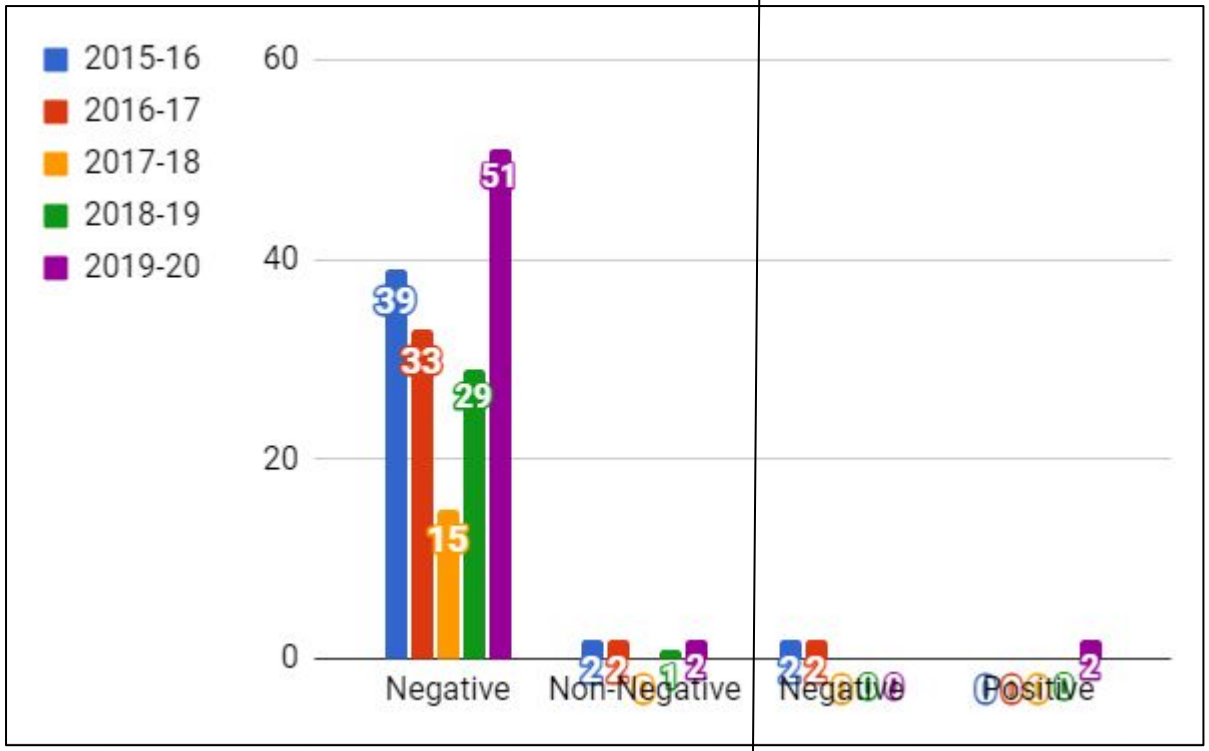
*Intensive Outpatient Program
⊙Some students were placed without school consultation
+Not always as a result of being sent out

Ridge Student Assistance Program

Students Sent for Drug Testing



Ridge Voluntary Random Drug Testing



*In-school non-negative results are sent to the lab for further testing/physician review

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District Reporting:

Home Instruction
Suicide Intervention Reports
Violence Prevention Reports
Child Abuse/DCP&P Referrals

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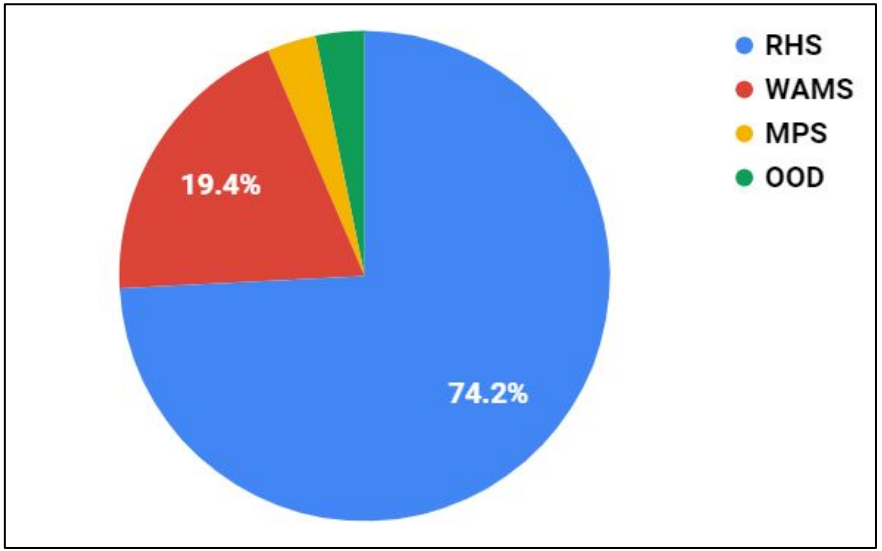
Home Instruction
K-12 District Totals

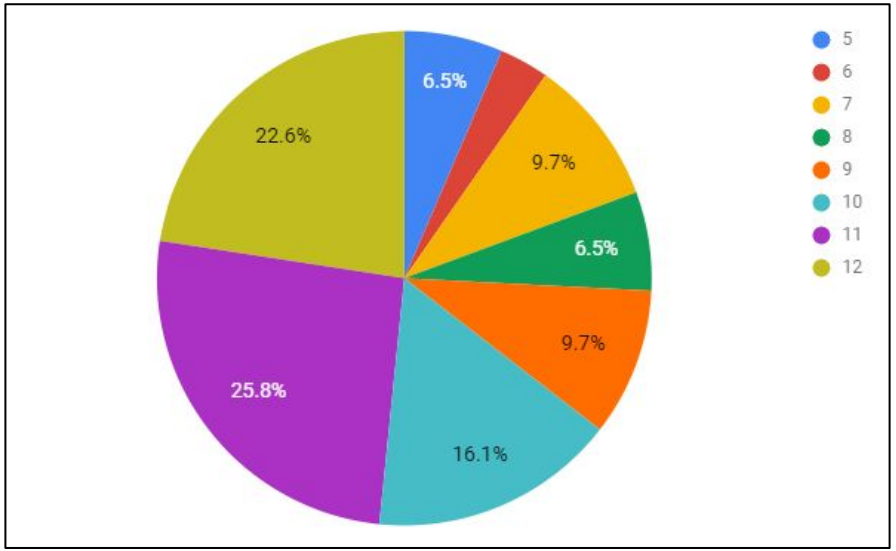
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Number of Individual Students on Home Instruction	49	45	69	48	24
Number of Rounds of HI A round of HI reflects approved start/end dates. Extensions are separate rounds.	103	68	126	65	33

Home Instruction

by school & grade



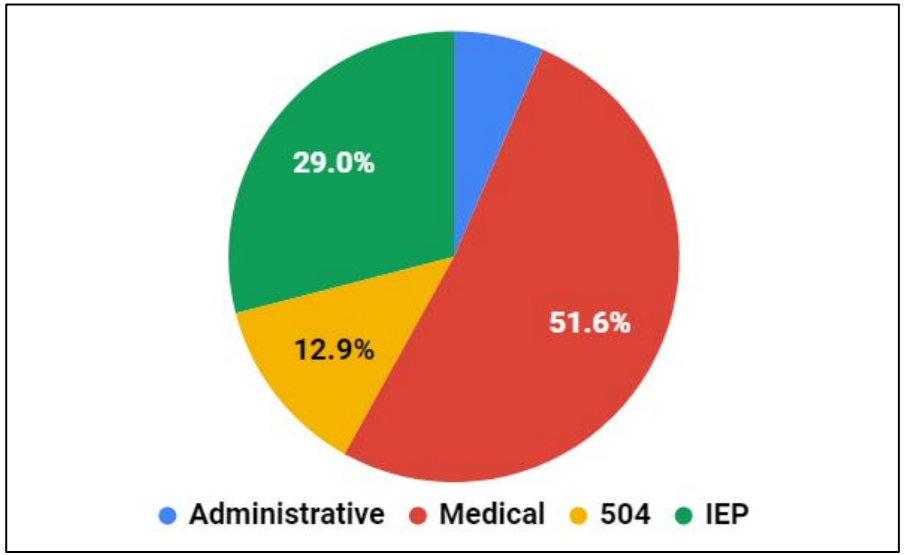
By School



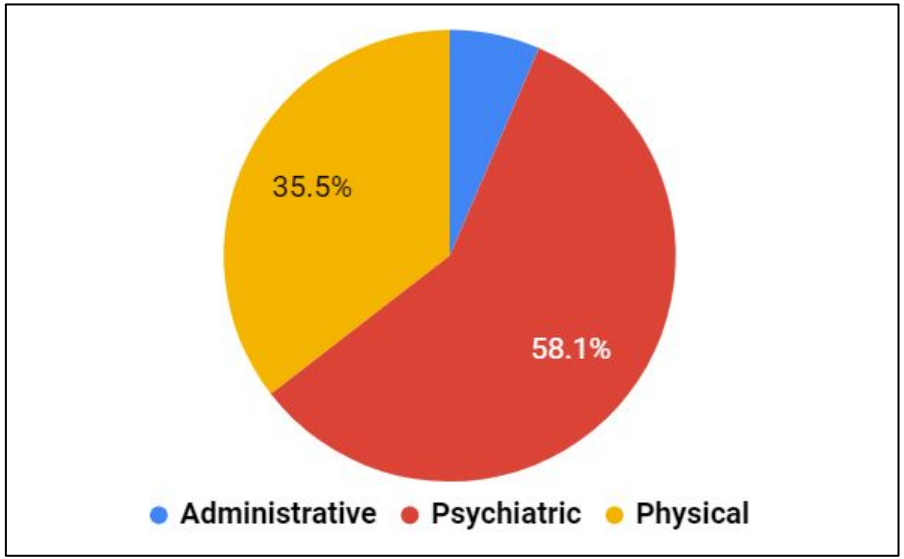
By Grade

Home Instruction

By Approval Type & Reason



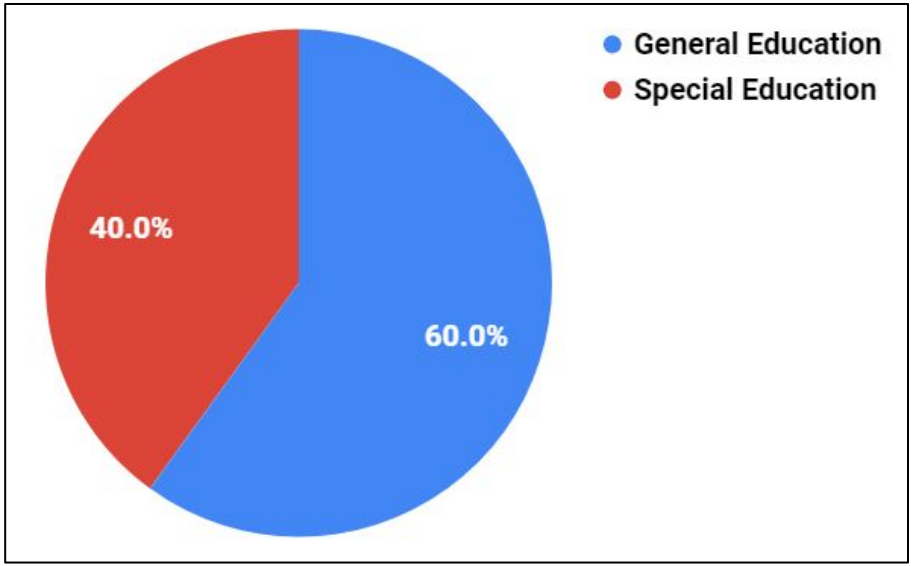
Approval Type



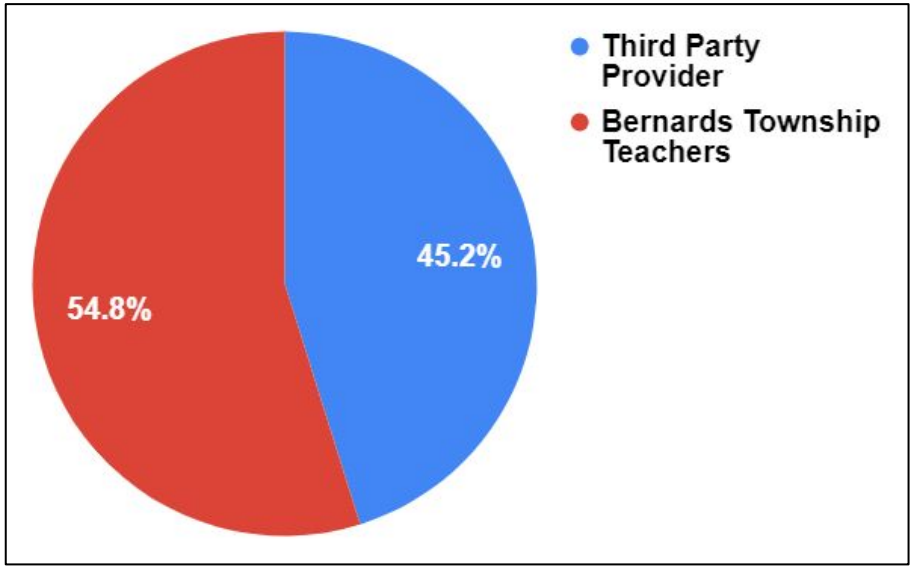
Reason

Home Instruction

Educational Program & Tutoring Services

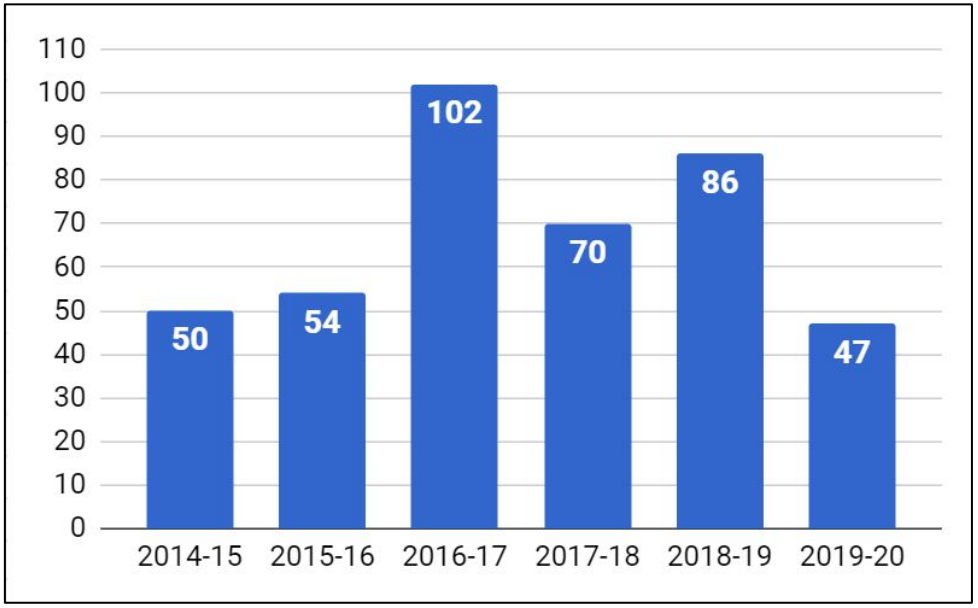


Educational Program



Tutoring Service Providers

District Totals of
Suicide, Violence, and Child Abuse Reports



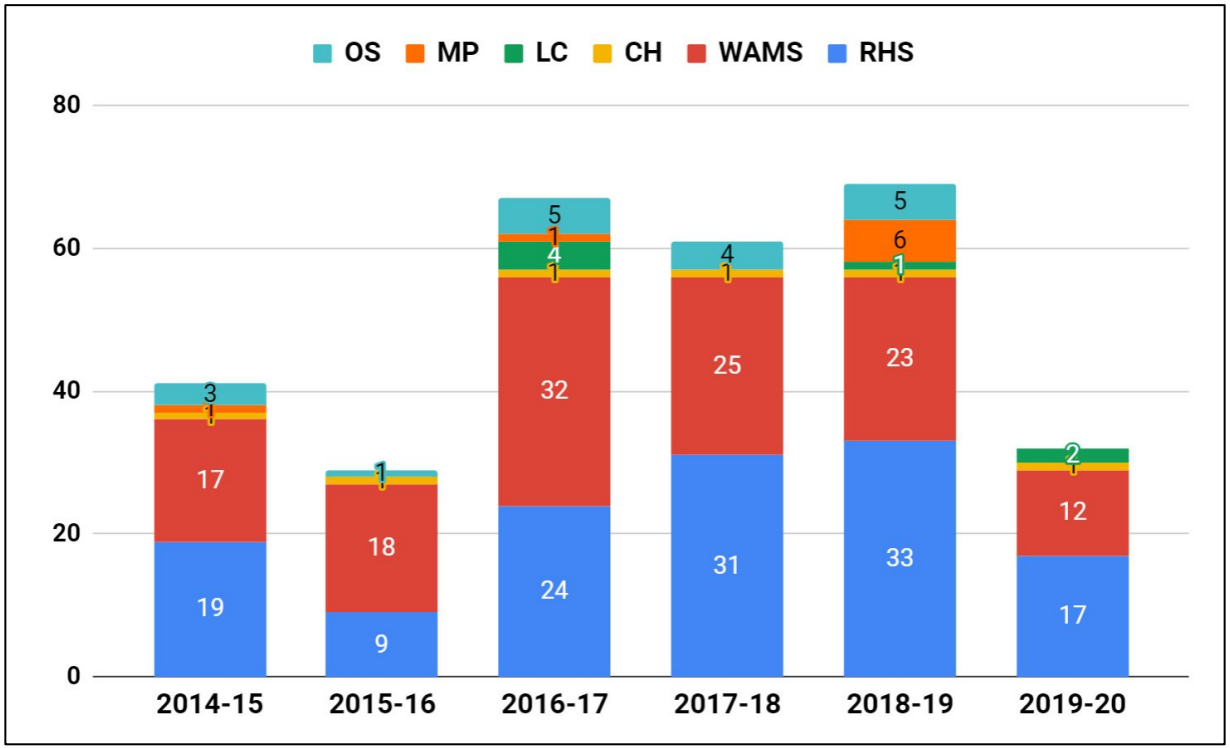
47 Total: Suicide Intervention Reports, Violence Prevention Reports, and Department of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P) Reports

Suicide Intervention Reports:

Totals by school

	RHS	WAMS	CH	LC	MP	OS
2019-20	18	12	1	2	0	0
2018-19	33	23	1	1	6	5
2017-18	31	25	1	0	0	4
2016-17	24	32	1	4	1	5
2015-16	9	18	1	0	0	1
2014-15	19	17	1	0	1	3

Suicide Intervention Reports:
Totals by Year

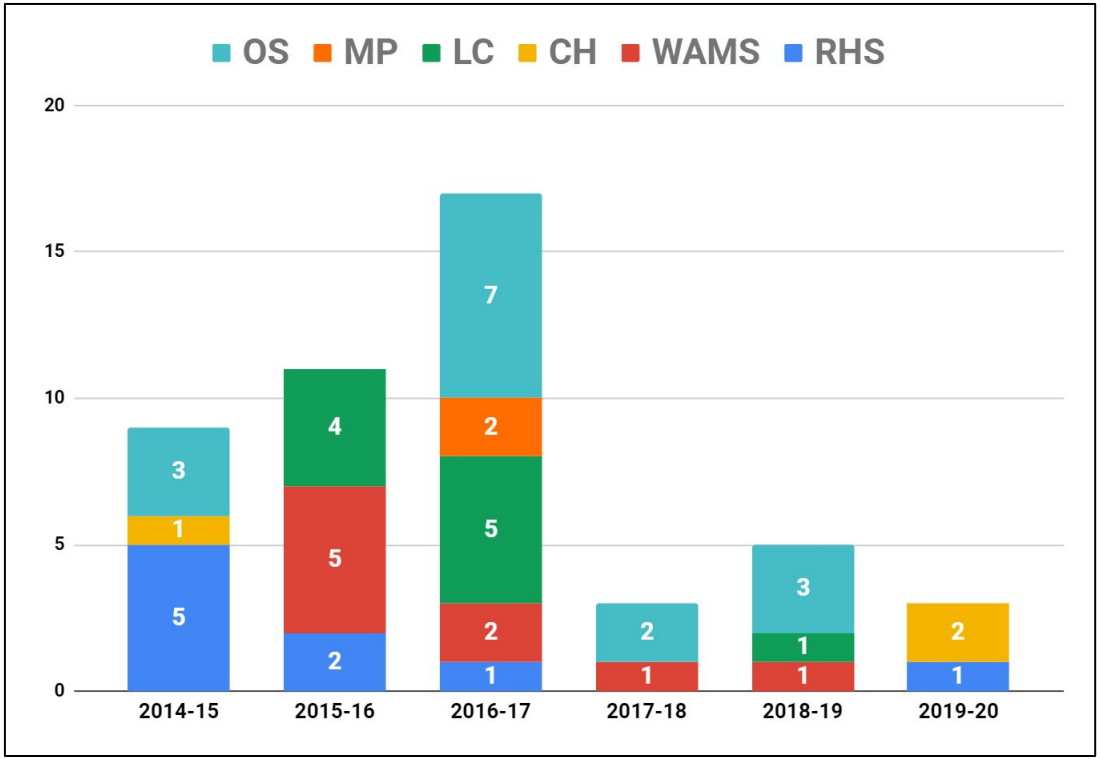


Violence Prevention Reports:
Total by School

	RHS	WAMS	CH	LC	MP	OS
2019-20	1	0	2	0	0	0
2018-19	0	1	0	1	0	3
2017-18	0	1	0	0	0	2
2016-17	1	2	0	5	2	7
2015-16	2	5	0	4	0	0
2014-15	5	0	1	0	0	3

Violence Prevention Reports:

Totals by Year



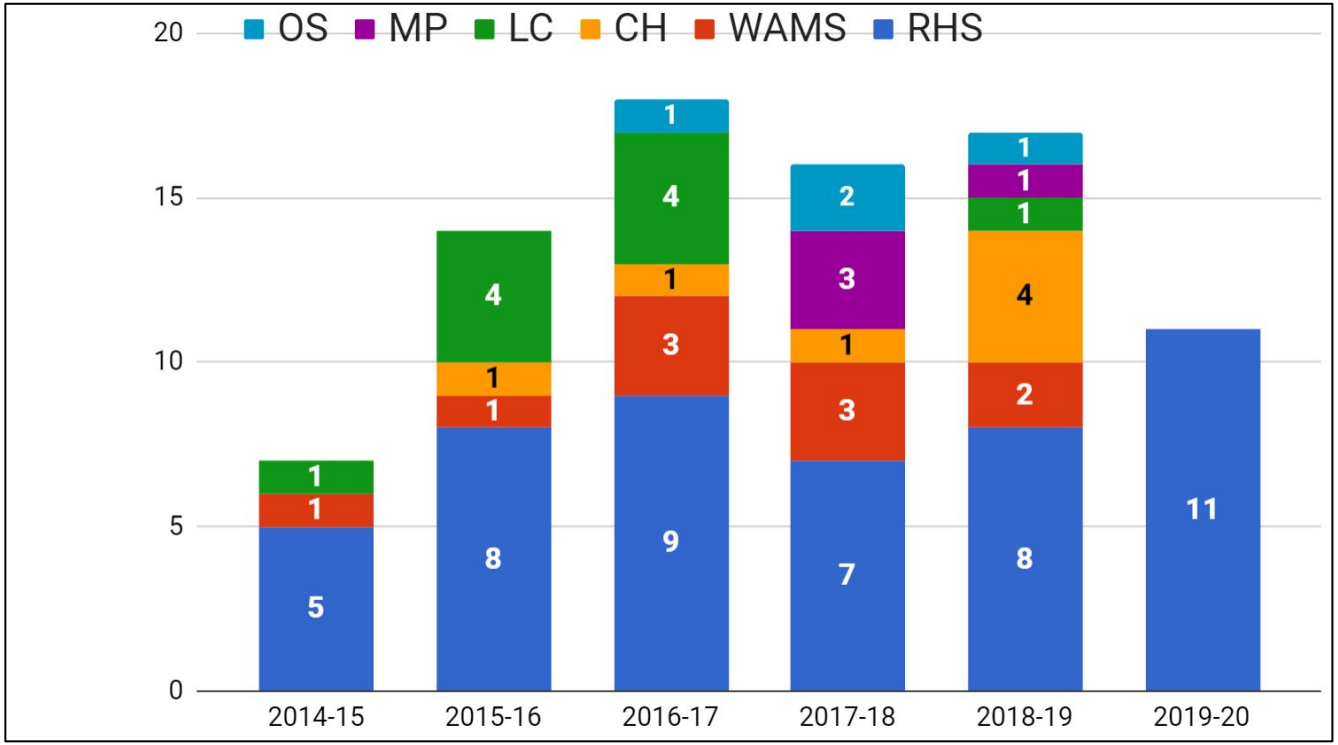
DCP&P Referrals

Totals by school

	RHS	WAMS	CH	LC	MP	OS
2019-20	11	0	0	0	0	0
2018-19	8	2	4	1	1	1
2017-18	7	3	1	0	3	2
2016-17	9	3	1	4	0	1
2015-16	8	1	1	4	0	0
2014-15	5	1	0	1	0	0

DCP&P Referrals

Totals by Year



Professionals' Soundbites

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Anecdotes

Trends in mental health, also including April - June 2020

Elementary

- Students and parents were very willing to reach out to talk about different concerns
- Lack of connections to peers, isolation due to pandemic restrictions
- Difficulty managing school work, lack of interest in school, trouble coping with stress, anxiety,
- Increase in ability to show empathy and understanding for others
- Stress associated with acclimation to virtual learning, while some virtual students enjoying it
- Adaptability and resilience, learning to use technology in new and productive ways
- Using creativity to stay connected with others (drive by Birthday celebrations)
- Parents' increased awareness about their child's mental health needs

Middle School

- Increased loneliness, but Loyal friends who maintained connection
- More social media use, and also Students proactively reaching out when they needed to talk
- More conversations about increased Family closeness
- Students were very resilient learned how to quickly use virtual platforms to learn.

Anecdotes

Trends in mental health, also including April - June 2020

Middle School Continued

- Zoom fatigue, disconnect, disengagement
- students struggling with time management, organization and homework completion
- students were able to make friends, found creative ways to forge new friendships.

High School

- Feelings of disconnection socially from peers, Lack of engagement/response
- Accessing virtual mental health support or self-care activities became more accessible
- Students seemed open to learning new skills or ways to destress.
- Students continue to be more comfortable reaching out when they are struggling.
- Struggles with self-image in virtual setting
- Some students feeling successful in virtual platform and honing coping skills, resiliency
- Difficulty coping with/handling stress
- Better recognition of warning signs in themselves and peers
- Students bringing their friends down to the Counseling Office or reporting concerns about their friends

Social-Emotional Learning Programming Update

School Year 2020-21

THE DEPARTMENT OF
SCHOOL COUNSELING

Oak Street Elementary

Building community

- Wall of Love, messages of gratitude OSS Playground Fence
- "eagles soar, no matter the distance" student & staff shirts unite all learners
- Families listened to favorite stories in their homes Virtual Family reading night
- "Souper" bowl collection for Somerset county food bank
- The Seeing eye assembly & donation of supplies
- Diversity virtual assembly
- Sweetheart and holiday Arty parties
- Chalk the walk Welcoming staff

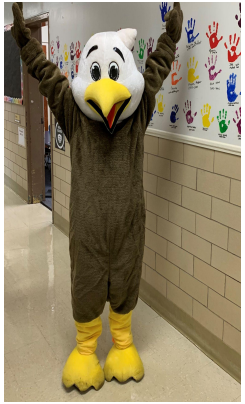
We've got character

- Learn to lead character education program with 9 habits
- Student videos teaching about our monthly habit
- Student Council leaders grade 5
- Morning announcements with staff & student announcers
- the Week of respect

Oak Street Elementary

Social-emotional learning (SEL)

- SEL counseling curriculum & instruction based on CASEL
- small groups for socialization/skill building via zoom
- culture & climate committee
- The great kindness challenge
- Spirit Day Wednesdays, Fitness Fridays to promote self-care for staff
- Morning music to incorporate the arts
- Birthday recognition for all students and NJ SEL Day



Technology Time

- Videos: tour of the school, meet our staff, welcome back to school
- Extra Special SEL Zoom was a fun feature this year
- Jamboard & Padlet have allowed classes to collaborate on thoughts & build group skills while working on school projects safely
- Flipgrid gave our students the chance to display their music talents, featured pledge leaders
- OSS Science Expo ~a full length video filled with many brilliant thoughts & theories

Liberty Corner Elementary

Character Education Goals

- Trimester 1: Making Up For Lost Time: Self-Regulation & Connections
- Trimester 2: Being our Best Selves Takes Work
- Trimester 3: Developing our Leadership Skills
- Empathy-Building and K-5 CASEL SEL Lessons Taught by School Counselor

School-Wide Programs to Achieve Character Education Goals

Led By Peace Patrol, Student Council, and Kids For Character (KFC)

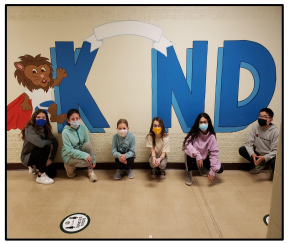
- Mystery Readers
- Virtual Zoom SEL Assemblies
- Teacher Appreciation
- Morning Announcements
- LCS Day turns LCS Week!

Additional Programs to Provide Support

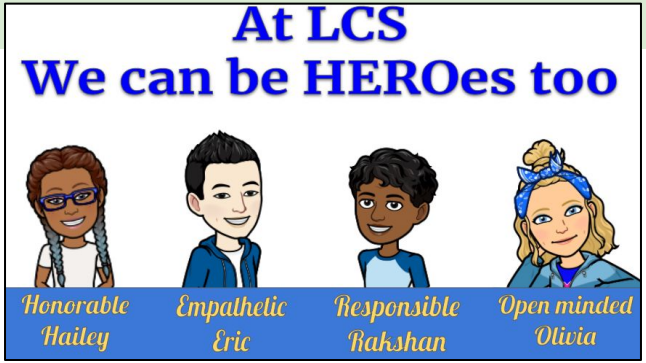
- Keeping Up with K.C.
- Big Sibling Program
- Video Of School Sent to Families

At LCS, we can be HEROes too.

Be the "I" in Kind Mural

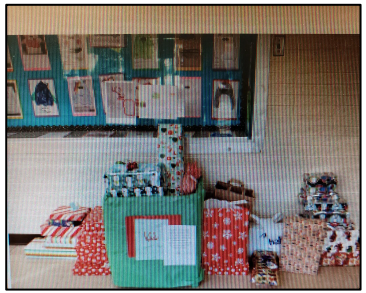


Liberty Corner Elementary



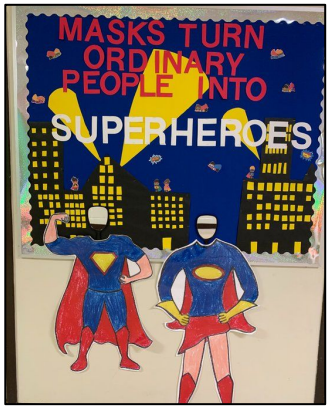
Honorable
Empathetic
Responsible
Open-Minded

Toy Drive



Food Drive

Bulletin Boards

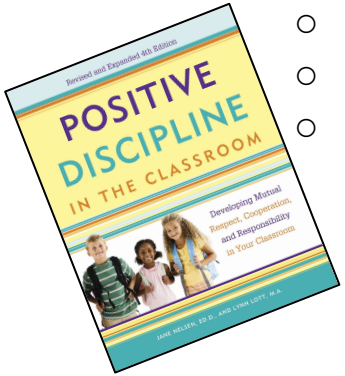


Teacher Appreciation

Mount Prospect Elementary

Focus on Positive Discipline

- promote common language
- Implementation of daily morning meetings
- Reinforcement through p.e. afternoon specials



Character Education Initiatives

- Panther P.R.I.D.E. Traits
  - Monthly Virtual Assemblies
- K-5 SEL Lessons rooted in CASEL Competencies
- Motivational Bulletin Boards
- D.U.D.E./A.C.E. Awards
- Fall Food Drive

Mount Prospect Elementary

Opportunities to Connect

- Lunch Bunch across K-5
- MPS Connect Virtual Lunch Bunch
- Fitness Friday for staff self-care
- Valentine Cards To Community Members

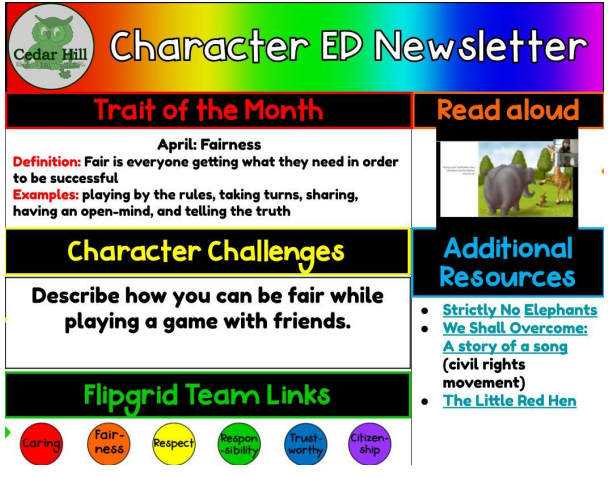
School Wide initiatives

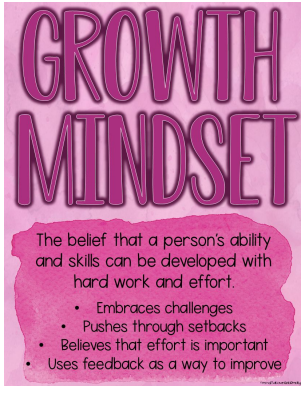
- The Great Kindness Challenge
- Read Across America
- 100th Day of School
- International Day

Cedar Hill Elementary

Monthly Character Education:

- Virtual Green and Gold Assembly on Zoom
- Character Education Newsletter
- Flipgrid Character Challenge of the Month
- Virtual Character Crusader Read Aloud
- Hoot Student Recognition





- SEL/Character Education Videos:
  - Self-Care video, Kindness Video, What I Love About CHS
- Kindness Week, Cedar Hill Salute
- Virtual Counseling Lunch Bunch on Zoom
- Counseling Curriculum Based On CASEL
- Class lessons on positive thinking

Cedar Hill Elementary

Student Leadership Programs

- Character Crusaders
- Student Council

Community Outreach

- Food Drive/Pies for the Principals
- Valentines and Fundraiser For Local Veterans
- 5th Grade Read-A-Thon

William Annin Middle School

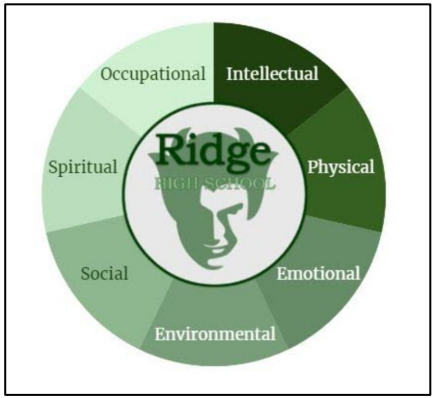
- Annual Evaluation of Character Education Program
  - Involvement of full staff in overhaul of morning meeting curriculum
    - Team work (6)
    - Self awareness (7)
    - Community needs and outreach (8)
    - Twice monthly morning meetings
- Service Learning Opportunities Center on WAMS Counseling site
- Mental Health curriculum lessons expanded: Substance use/abuse, sexual harassment, suicide prevention
- Class lessons on Reacting when a friend is in crisis/ Suicide prevention, Acknowledge, care, tell an adult protocol (all grades)
- Class lessons on coping/resilience skills related to pandemic (All Grades)
  - exit slip screening after each lesson asking if they needed to meet with a counselor about themselves or concern for others, multiple students were identified through this
- Class lessons on empathy (7th grade)
- Interest/career planning to 8th graders
- Counselors held office hours for students during tutorial times
- Counseling groups zoom meetings held for students for afternoon social connection
- Mentoring program with 8th graders and ABA classrooms

William Annin Middle School

- Group and individual counseling
  - *Stress Busters*
  - *Social Skills*
  - *Grief & Loss*
  - *Culture & Climate Student Groups*
  - *New to district*
- New 8th grade transition to Ridge High School mini series
- 7th and 8th grade Peer leaders - transition cedar hill
- Character Education Program recognized by Character.Org "Promising Practices - Day of Giving and Holocaust Day" & Digital Literacy Night
- Book Talks for staff & Parents
- Virtual Professional Development Opportunities for staff - Acceptance
- Morning Meetings including mindfulness, sel, Character Ed
- Repertoire of letters written each week by Counseling staff to parents about SEL and Middle Schoolers Needs
- Initiated the Looping model for school counselors

Ridge High School

- District and Building Social and Emotional Development Goals
- Freshman Orientation Summer 2020 collaboration with peer leaders
- Activities to Support Bullying Prevention
- Violence Prevention and Awareness Week
  - Virtual 5k for domestic violence with Fundraising
- Mikee Fowlin - Motivational Speaker -all grades
- Character Education, Wellness, & SEL
  - Programming infused within advisory sessions
    - Development of committee: fall 2021
    - Branding of the program: spring 2021
- Virtual Grade Level Meetings
- Building Community: Ridge Spirit Days
- Peer Mentoring
- Unified Team Events
- Rotating Drop Schedule Planning



Ridge High School

- Mental Health Awareness Week with SACs Virtual Mental Health Fair
  - Launching May 2021, filled with student and staff videos about what coping skills work for them and destigmatizing mental health
- SACs "Wellness Wednesdays"
  - Every Wednesday, 3 sessions per day, virtual guided meditation
- SAC Classroom Visits for Progressive Muscle Relaxation Demonstrations
  - Elective and Health/PE classes have SAC visit for a 30 minute lesson on the "progressive muscle relaxation" technique and debrief on how Currently you're feeling
- Student Assistance Counselor led activities within classes in collaboration with the RHS Project Adventure Peer Leaders
- SACs push-in to Health Classes for mental health & suicide prevention
- SAC Counseling groups with community & School partners (Cancer Support, ELL Support)
- Effective School Solutions therapeutic services for students; parent programming
- MAP Program (Motivating Adolescent Performance) student support for 9-12 graders

District-Wide

- Collaborative efforts of school support teams for students with special services:
  - Office of Special services, IEPs/504s
  - School Psychologists, social workers, Case managers, Child Study team Members
- Collaborative efforts for English Language Learners to coordinate student care:
  - ELL Support staff across the district
- Effective School Solutions (ESS)
  - ESS Clinicians parent programming series for all district families in addition to high school therapeutic supports for students & family therapy services
- School Nursing Staff Supports, including students on Home Instruction
  - Coordination of care with therapists, doctors, treatment plans
- Youth Mental Health First Aid Training expansion
  - Staff colleges and trainings offered to staff district-wide
- American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Model Alignment
- Suicide prevention K-12 program document to streamline efforts
- Substance use & abuse prevention K-12 program for streamlined efforts
- District Resource Card & Ridge Student Awareness

District-Wide

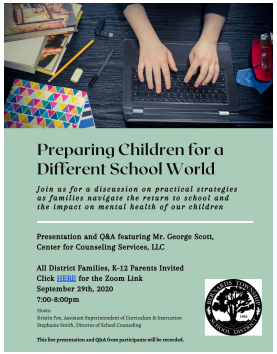
SEL In-Service Days Professional Development

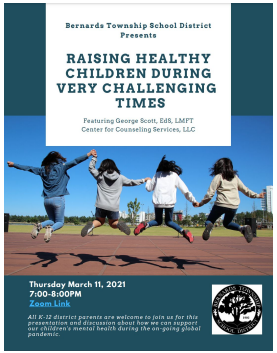
- SEL In-Service Days Professional Developments
  - September: K-12 Staff Resilience Activity
  - December: Motivational Interviewing Techniques through Counseling
  - January: Supporting Students in the LGBTQ Community
  - April: Trauma Informed Practices & Crisis Response Training
- Teaching Staff infusing wellness practices into their curriculum, implementing SEL strategies into their everyday work (mindfulness, feelings check ins)
- Teachers formalizing goals in Professional Development Plans across teaching disciplines: Research, develop and implement pedagogical practices related to the social and emotional development of students.
- Social Emotional Competencies in Classroom practices
- Health Curriculum Writing Summer 2020
- Community Partnership via parent academy series
- Board of Education Wellness Committee

District-Wide Support for Covid-19

Specific and Additional Supports in Direct Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

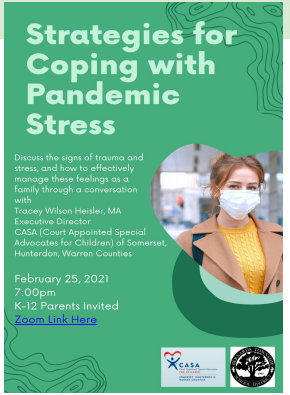
- Administered a K-12 district-wide counseling needs assessment at all levels each quarter
- Elementary SEL Google Sites resources: Coping, Building Courage, Dealing with Feelings, Growth Mindset, Self-Esteem, Social Skills, Dealing with Social-Distancing
- Counseling Corner Sites: Cedar Hill, Liberty Corner, Oak Street, Mount Prospect
- Virtual Office Hours regularly for kids to stop in or for social support
- Middle School SEL Google Sites resources: Stress management, Coping Skills, Grounding Exercises, Breathing Techniques, Mandalas, Calming Jars, Kindness Games
- Advisory period for staff to work with groups on interpersonal concepts
- High School SEL Google Site: Anxiety, Coping with Disappointment, Grief, Loneliness
- Launched the creation of the SAC Program Google Site
- Launched the Distance Learning Site for Counseling and Virtual Relaxation Room
- Effective School Solutions (ESS) Parent Information Series on destigmatizing mental health, the language of behaviors, school avoidance, managing stress
- Communicate resources & support to students, and community in google sites
- 3 Parent Academy Presentations: Preparing Children for a Different School World, Raising healthy children during times of stress, Strategies for Coping with Pandemic Stress





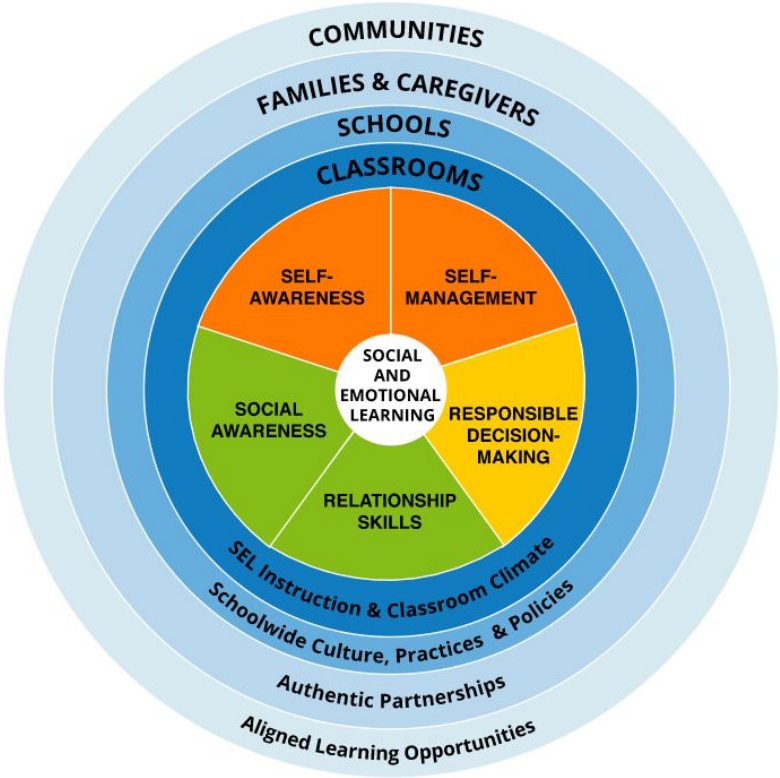
District-Wide Support for Covid-19

Specific and Additional Supports in Direct Response to COVID-19 Pandemic



- Staff Colleges:
  - Students and Trauma in a COVID-19 World,
  - "Reflection with Gratitude" and guided meditations
  - Creating & Maintaining Work/Life Balance in an Unbalanced World
  - Incorporating Self Care in your Daily Routine
  - Mindfulness in Times of Crisis
  - SEL in the Physical and Virtual Classroom
  - Zones of Regulation: A Curriculum for Self Regulation and Social Thinking
- SEL task force to Create a virtual connection, resource center of strategies, communications
- all staff Wellness Activity Choice Board & online module "*Mining the Cave of Self*" to foster resilience
- Launched the District "Wellness Hub" Staff Site, created for all staff to access resources for:
  - strategies to support feeling connected, self-compassion, healing-centered strategies
  - Care for the Caregivers; Educator Resilience & Self-Care Assessments
  - Classroom strategies addressing: Gratitude, Signature Practices of SEL, CASEL Brain Games, and SEL "Look Fors" During Blended Learning
  - Trauma-Informed Classrooms & Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)
  - Grief Sensitivity: Educator-specific resources on grief sensitivity in the classroom

In Summary: CASEL Framework

- all of the school programs vary based on School cultures, priorities and Developmental needs of students

- However, all efforts are united under the casel framework to meet 5 major Competencies for student's social and emotional growth
  - Self Management
  - Self Awareness
  - Responsible Decision Making
  - Relationship Skills
  - Social Awareness