

The Ontario Student Survey Summary Report

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and
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Introduction

The Ontario Student Survey was created and promoted by three organizations that believe in the power of students and the importance of students in the education system. The Ontario Student Trustees' Association, Student Vote and ScholarshipsCanada.com have worked together to create and promote a survey that is entirely student driven. The original idea came from students, along with the questions included in the survey, were proposed by students across the province and the final questions were selected by students.

The overall goal and purpose of this survey was to hear and address the most important issues in the education system as identified by students.

This awareness of student concerns allows Student Trustees to develop solutions, provide consistency between boards, and ultimately better the school lives of students. Over the coming months, Student Trustees will be sharing these results with the students' in their school boards, making presentations to their board of Trustees and encouraging all education stakeholders to seriously consider how they can adapt their best practices based on the results of the survey.

The Ontario Student Survey would not have been a success without the assistance of the ScholarshipsCanada.com, who developed the application and dealt with all technical aspects as well as featuring the survey on their website and promoting it via email to thousands of Ontario students.

Student Vote was an invaluable partner in the project, promoting the survey to teachers throughout the province, coordinating outside expert advice that helped create the survey be balanced and easy to access.

The results included in the survey below will serve to encourage discussion amongst all who are passionate about education in the province of Ontario.

Abstract

The **Ontario Student Survey** was a project of the Ontario Student Trustees' Association-l' Association des élèves conseillers et conseillères de l'Ontario (OSTA-AECO), in partnership with ScholarshipsCanada.com and Student Vote. It was primarily conducted through an application on Facebook developed by ScholarshipsCanada.com. Students were also able to complete the survey by email. The survey was available in both English and French. It was launched the first week of November 2010, and ran until January 23, 2011. Students who completed the survey before December 15, 2010 were eligible to win a bursary valued at \$1,000 to be split evenly between the winning student and the winning student's school. Students who completed the survey before January 23, 2011 were eligible to win one of five bursaries valued at \$200 each.

Report Structure

The survey consisted of 10 questions. The first 9 required a "Yes" or "No" response and allowed for additional comments, and the 10th asked if the student had a suggestion for a question to be included in future student surveys.

Responses

2,656 students from Ontario responded to the survey.

These respondents represent 69 of the 72 school boards in Ontario, as well as education authorities and private schools.

There are two statistics that should be noted when reading the survey, in regards to the respondents:

- 71.20% were female
- 85.05% were in Grade 12

In this report, each student is weighted equally when calculating responses to each question.

Results

The results to each question are detailed in this report. Each question has an accompanying pie graph, which displays the split between the “Yes” and “No” responses for all respondents. Additionally, there is a bar graph displaying the results for the 15 school boards that had the greatest total number of respondents. They are the following school boards:

- Toronto District School Board (TDSB)
- York Region District School Board (YRDSB)
- Peel District School Board (PDSB)
- Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB)
- Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB)
- York Catholic District School Board (YCDSB)
- Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB)
- Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB)
- Durham District School Board (DDSB)
- Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB)
- Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB)
- Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB)
- Upper Grand District School Board (UGDSB)
- Halton District School Board (HDSB)
- Ottawa-Carleton Catholic District School Board (OCCDSB)

The student comments associated with each question were selected as samples of the variety and breadth of responses. They are not intended to represent the average student, or majority of students.

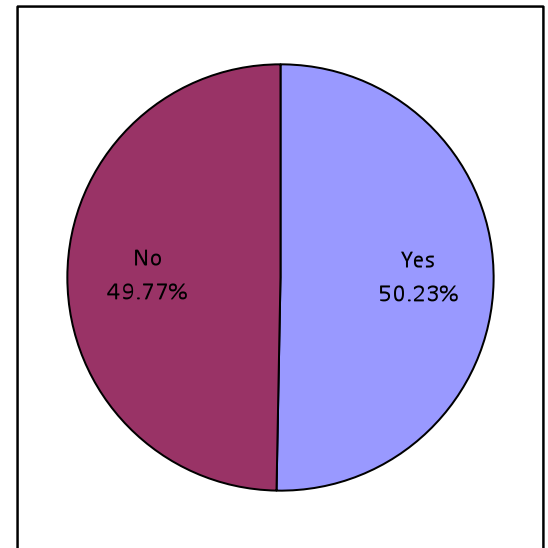
Commitment to Anonymity

We protect your personal information and adhere to all legislative requirements with respect to protecting privacy. All data was collected anonymously and shall remain so – there is no way to identify individual students who participated in this survey. The only data that is displayed about students is their respective District School Board and/or gender.

1. Do you feel you would benefit academically from a daily start time of 10am or later?

For this question, the Ontario student respondents were almost equally divided between “Yes” and “No”, with approximately 50% selecting each answer.

Both **Toronto Catholic District School Board** and **Toronto District School Board** had 58% of respondents claim that they would benefit from a late start time. On the other hand, both **Ottawa-Carleton Catholic District School Board** and **Ottawa-Carleton District School Board** reported nearly opposite results, with approximately 61% of respondents reply “No” to the above question.

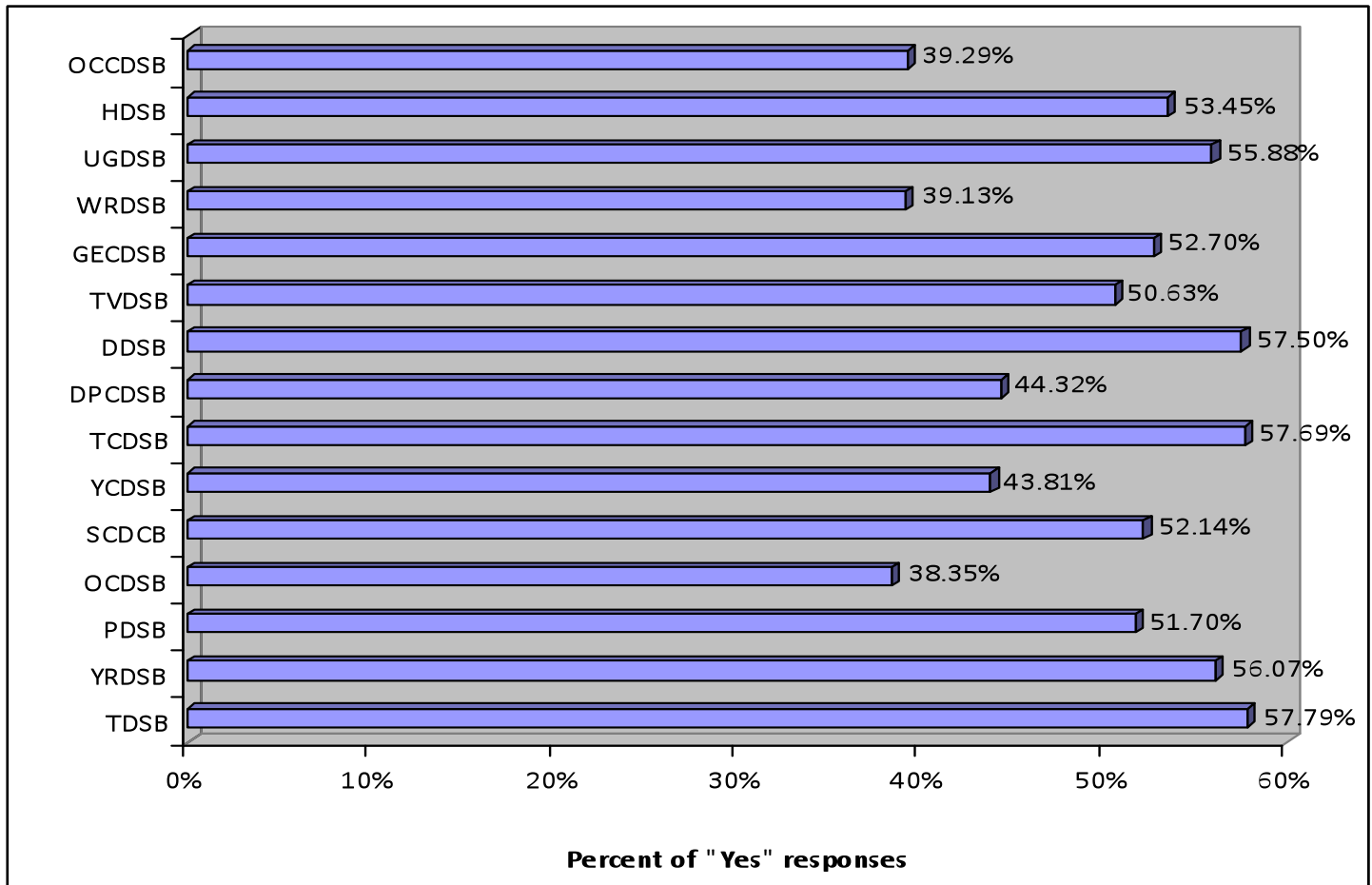


In the teenage years your bodies are going through a lot of different changes, growing, hitting puberty etc. If we were given that extra time it would allow us to be more attentive in class because our bodies are not physically tired.

Student From York Region District School Board

No, this will only make the school day longer. It is easier to go to school in the morning and get it over with, as many people have part-time jobs. If school were to start later, there would be conflicting schedules.

Student From Thames Valley District School Board



2. Should physical education be mandatory until the end of high school?

Response to this question was mixed, with 54% of respondents selecting “No” and 46% of respondents selecting “Yes”.

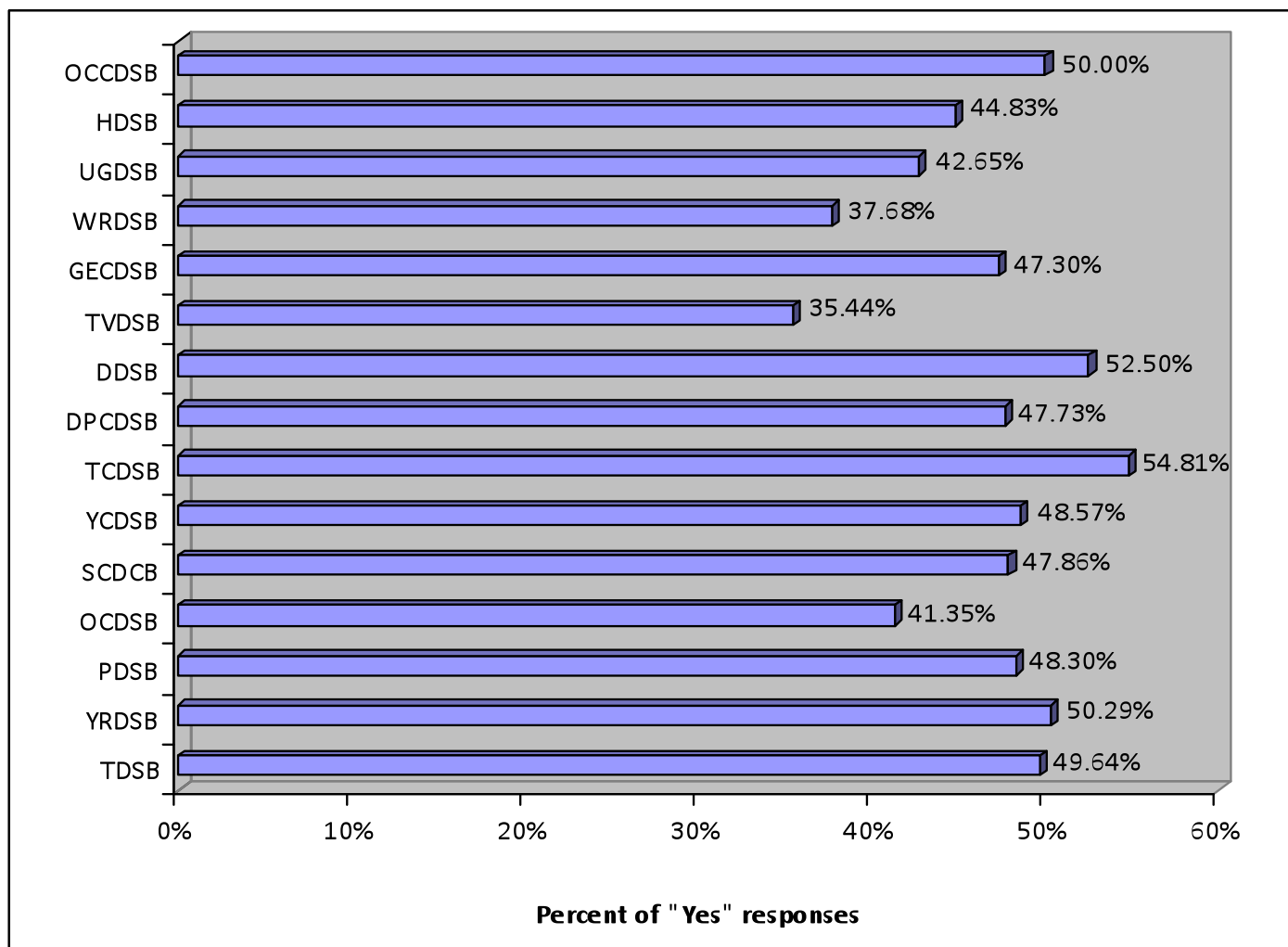
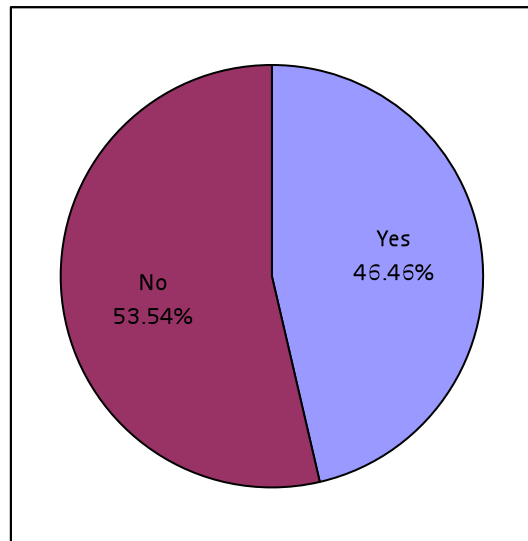
Thames Valley District School Board respondents were least in favour of mandatory physical education, with only 35% “Yes” responses. **Toronto Catholic District School Board** respondents were most in favour, recording 55% “Yes” responses.

Health is just as important as academics. Even if the students could be part of an extracurricular team instead of a full course as a mandatory allowance that would benefit health.

Student From District School Board of Niagara

Physical education is very important but we get 4 classes in a day and the people in grade 11 and 12 need that space in the schedule for the prerequisites needed for college and university. It should be mandatory in grade 9 and 10.

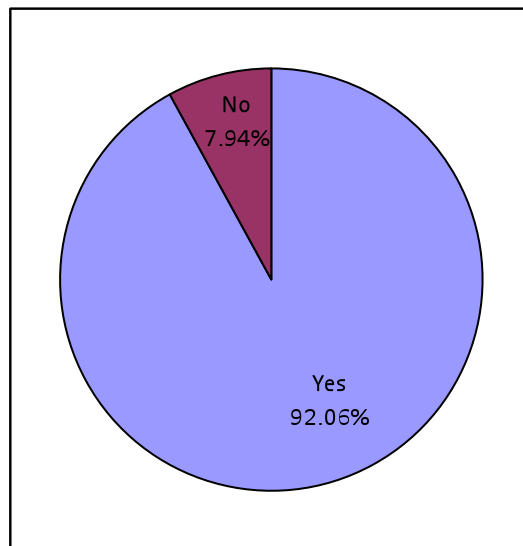
Student From Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board



3. Should students be allowed to view their marked provincial tests? (ie. EQAO/Literacy Test)

The overwhelming majority of respondents (92%) replied “Yes” to the above question, indicating that they believe students should be allowed to view their marked provincial tests.

Five boards recorded between 80%-90% “Yes” respondents, while the rest were over 90%. They ranged from **Thames Valley District School Board**, who had 86% of respondents agree that students should be able to see their graded provincial tests, to **Toronto Catholic District School Board**, where 96% of respondents replied “Yes”.

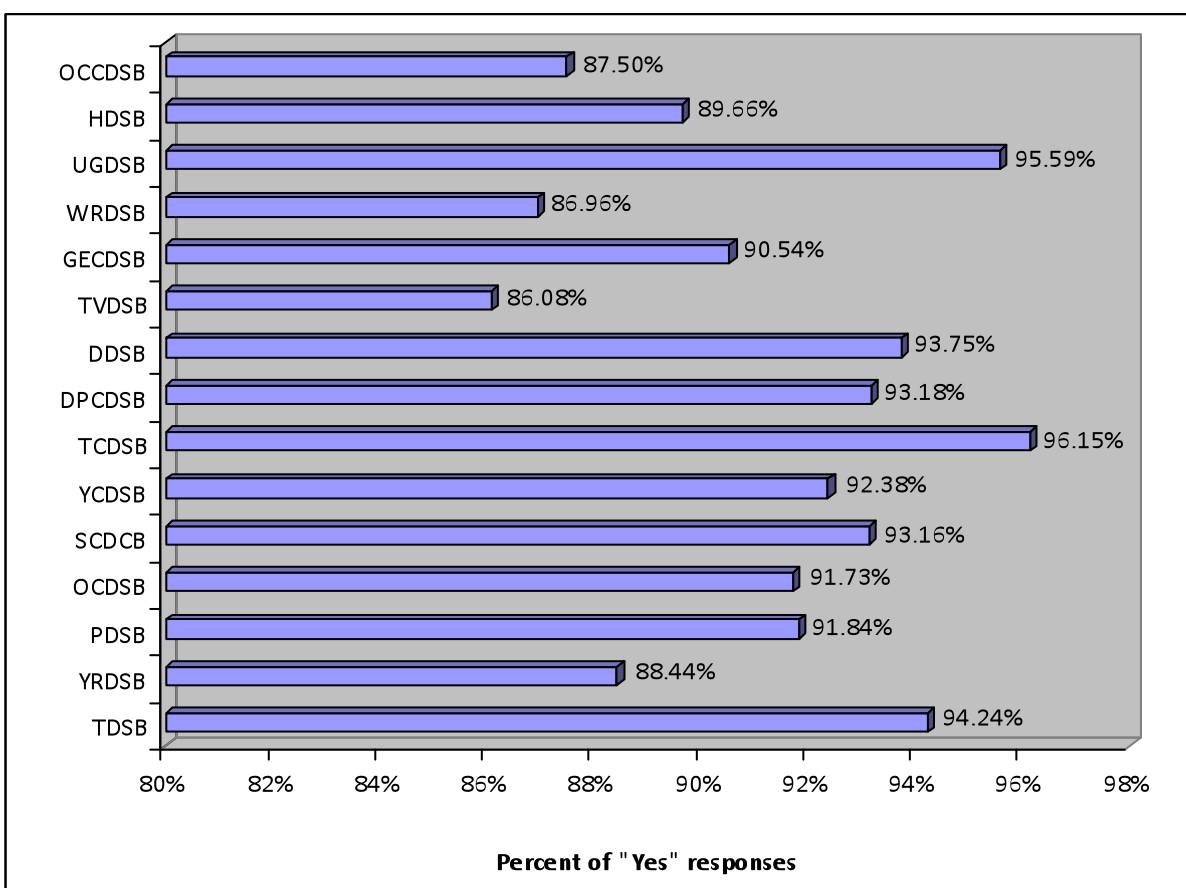


I learn a lot from seeing what I've done wrong on tests. Why make them write a test and not tell them what they did wrong?

Student From Peel District School Board

As long as I pass I'm not too interested. Maybe students who fail should be able to see where they went wrong though.

Student From Toronto District School Board



4. Do you think cell phones have a place in the classroom as an educational tool?

72% of the Ontario students surveyed on this question responded “No”, indicating that they did not believe cell phones had a place in the classroom as an educational tool.

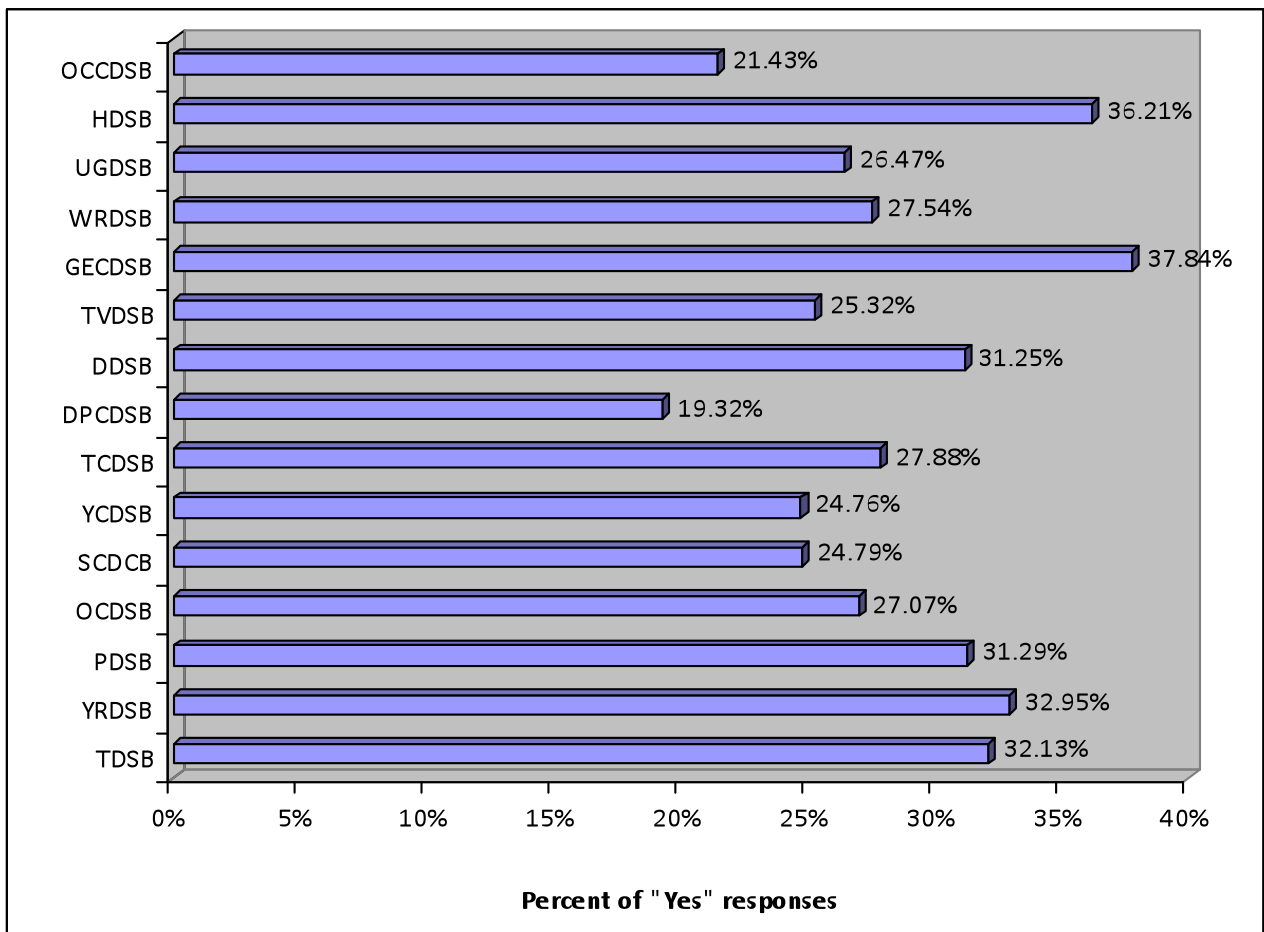
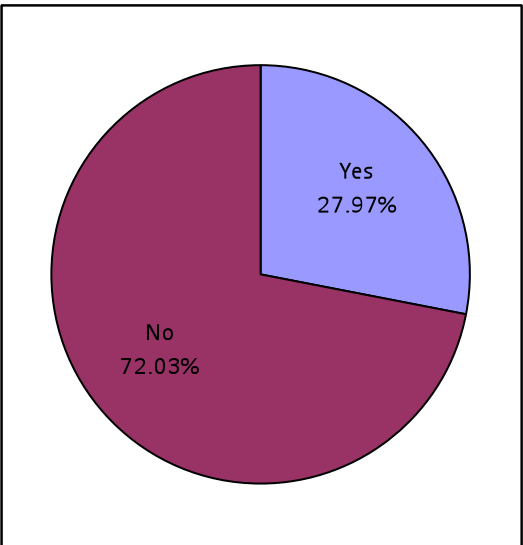
Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board respondents were least positive, as only 19% selected “Yes”. **Greater Essex County District School Board** was most in support of cell phones as educational tools, as 38% of their respondents selected “Yes”.

As an educational tool, I don't believe so. They are quite a distraction. I see people texting a lot, and it has no educational purpose. I don't think that they should be banned completely because they can still be useful but they do not aid education.

Student From Halton District School Board

Yes. Cellphones or [sic] so prominent now that they will be used anyway, so teachers should be looking for ways that students can use them constructively.

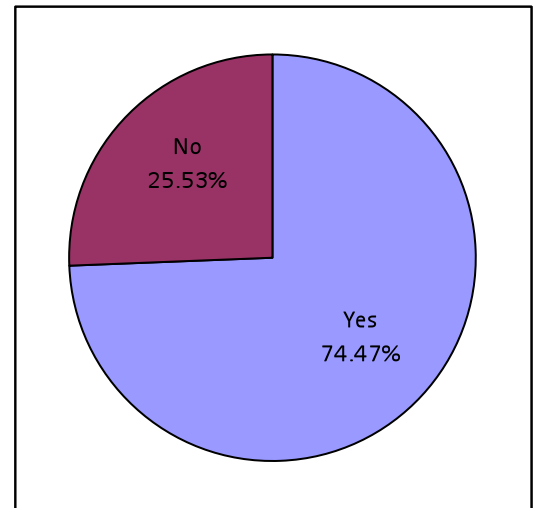
Student From Waterloo Region District School Board



5. Would you be achieving better if you chose your culminating project with your teacher?

Approximately three quarters of respondents replied “Yes” to the above question, indicating that they believed they would be achieving better if they were able to choose their culminating project with their teacher.

While all of the below school boards recorded “Yes” responses above 50%, they varied from the average across the province. **Ottawa-Carleton Catholic District School Board** respondents were most likely to reply “Yes” at 84%, and **Upper Grand District School Board** respondents were least likely to reply “Yes” at 62%.

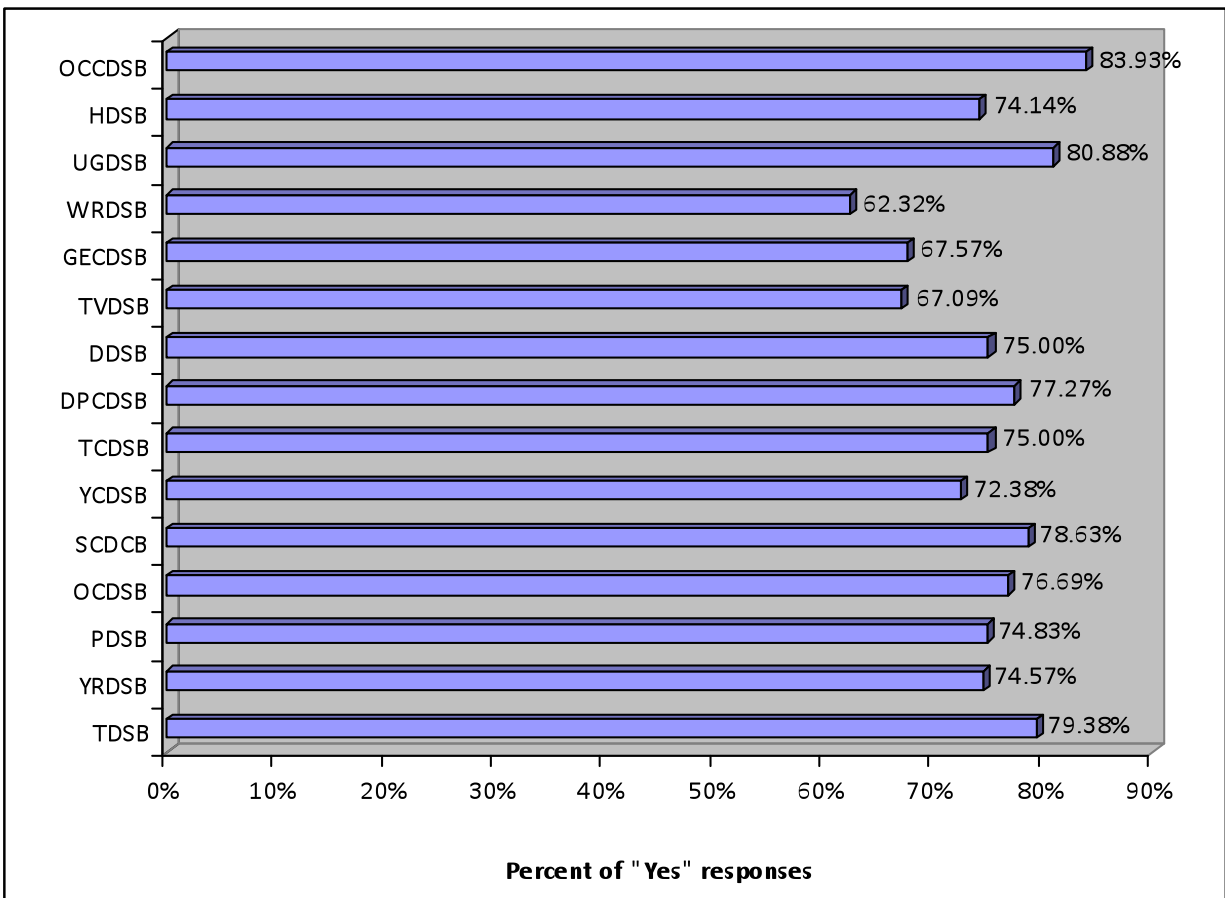


I would like to choose how I present my summative, so I can play to my personal strengths. Some standard criteria would obviously have to be met, but I don't think it should matter if I present it in a poster or a dramatic filming.

Student From Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

In university I won't be able to choose my own projects, we need to learn to adapt to projects even if we don't like them.

Student From Halton District School Board



6. Does the guidance system offer enough support to students?

The majority of students, 57% of respondents, answered “Yes”, the guidance system does offer enough support to them and their peers.

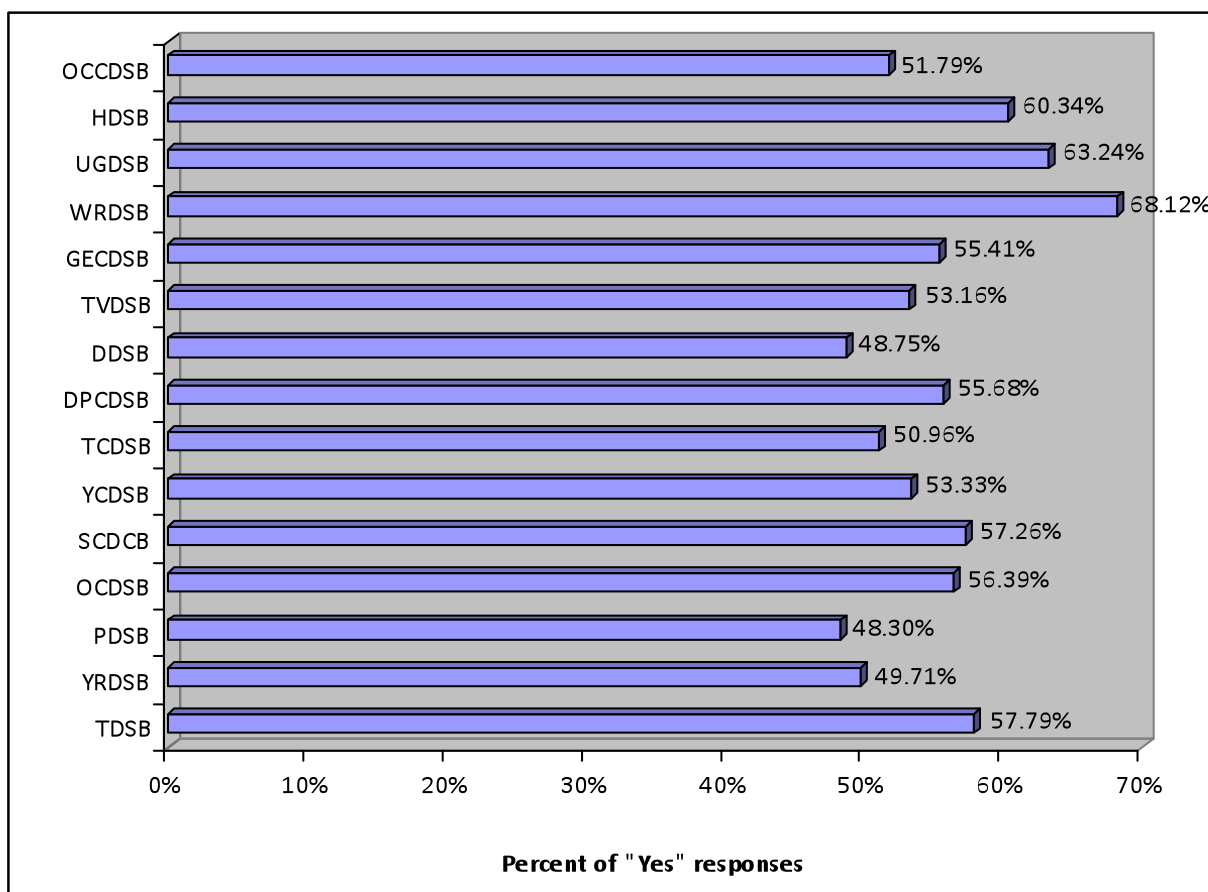
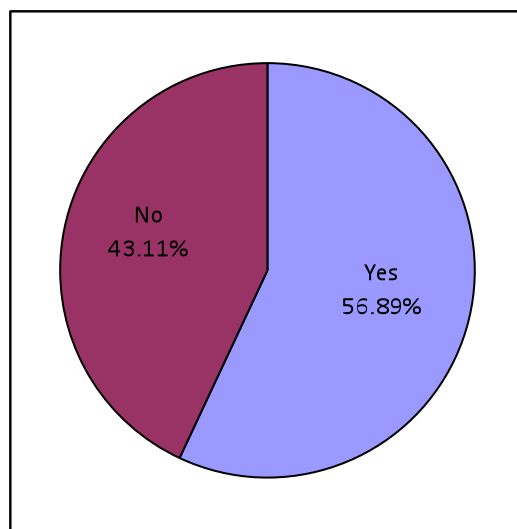
The responses of some boards placed their “Yes” responses below 50%, changing the majority sentiment of their board to “No”. **Peel District School Board** had the lowest percentage of “Yes” responses at 48%, and **Waterloo Region District School Board** respondents were most likely to believe their guidance system offered enough support, with 68% replying “Yes”.

At my school, some of the guidance counselors refuse to help or change courses. Other cases they are very helpful. I think it depends on the counselor.

Student From Peel District School Board

They don't put in enough effort to have UP-TO-DATE information. They don't know enough about the way that the career system has changed. They aren't trained to help the needs of the individual, rather to give ballpark generic answers.

Student From York Catholic District School Board

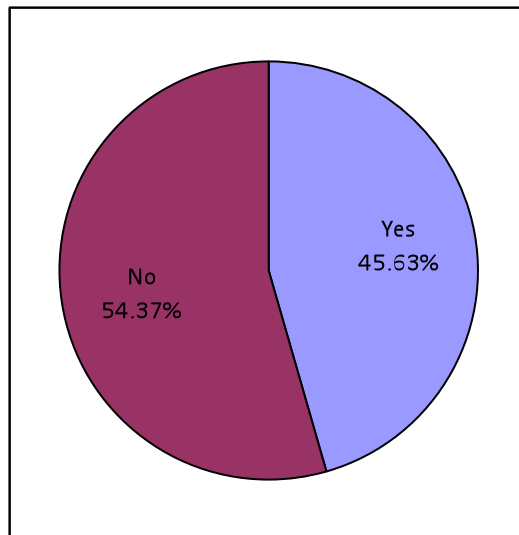


7. Have you ever been bullied in school?
Students were assured of their anonymity when responding to their question.

54% of respondents answered “No” they have never been bullied in school.

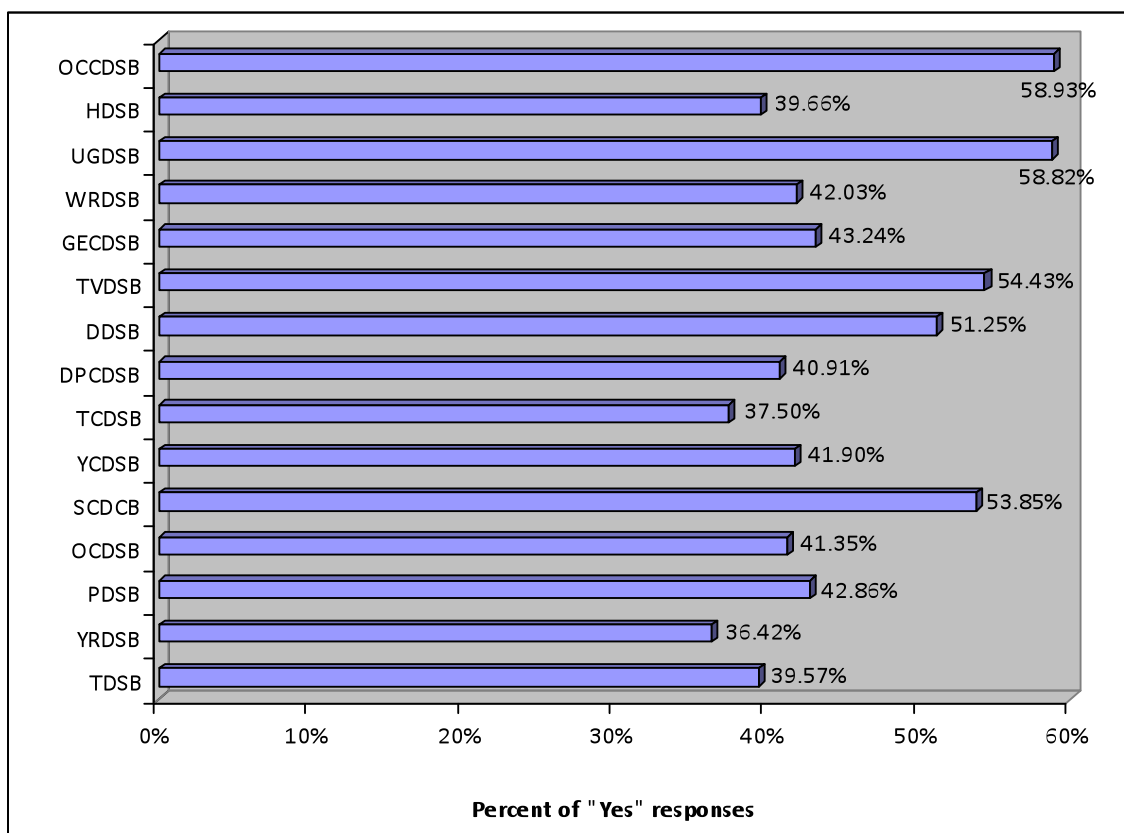
Only five of the fifteen boards examined below had greater than 50% of their respondents reply that they had experienced bullying at school.

Ottawa-Carleton Catholic District School Board respondents were most likely to report experiencing bullying, replying “Yes” 59% of the time. In contrast, **York Region District School Board** respondents reported the lowest occurrence of bullying, with only 36% replying “Yes”.



I have not been bullied however I feel that the school board does not look into situations deep enough in the case of bullying and often times the victim is punished and not the person who caused it.
 Student From Greater Essex County District School Board

I have been bullied several times at school, once in kindergarten, once in junior school and once in high school. All three time I have had some support from teachers and other students but the bullies were never dealt with or punished by the school.
 Student From Toronto District School Board



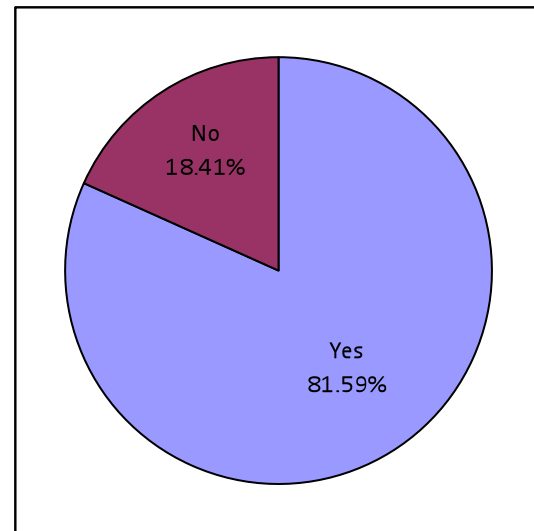
8. Should information on all sexualities be taught during sexual education classes?

In response to this question, 82% of respondents answered “Yes”, indicating that they thought information on all sexualities should be taught in school during sexual education class.

This question saw a discrepancy in responses between school boards, with **Toronto Catholic District School Board** over 90% in favour and **Waterloo Region District School Board** responding approximately 71% in favour, while the majority of school boards hovered around the same percentage as the province wide response.

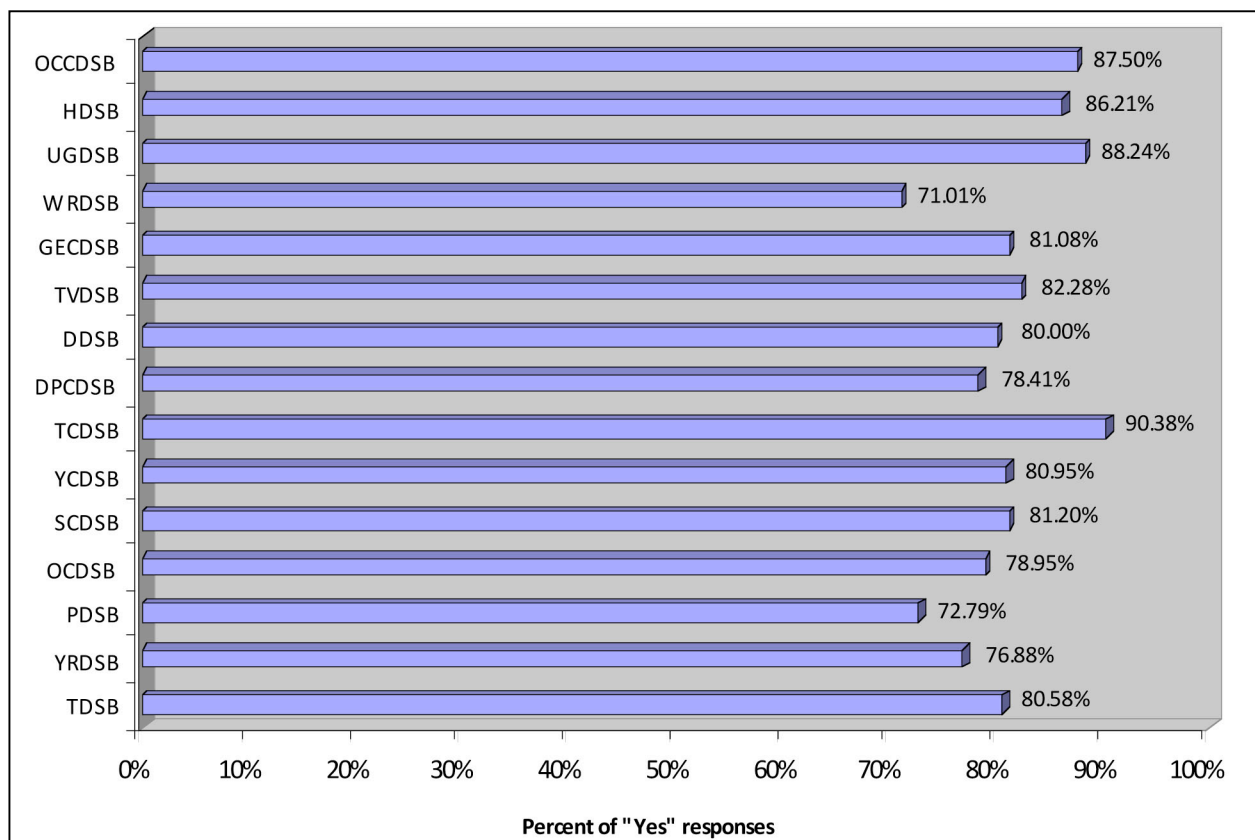
Since I attend a catholic school it would be contradictory to the teachings of our religion to teach about all sexualities.

Student From Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board



It's still important information, and the more that students are exposed to an open attitude about other sexualities, the more likely it will be that they won't bully students based on a different sexual orientation.

Student From Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

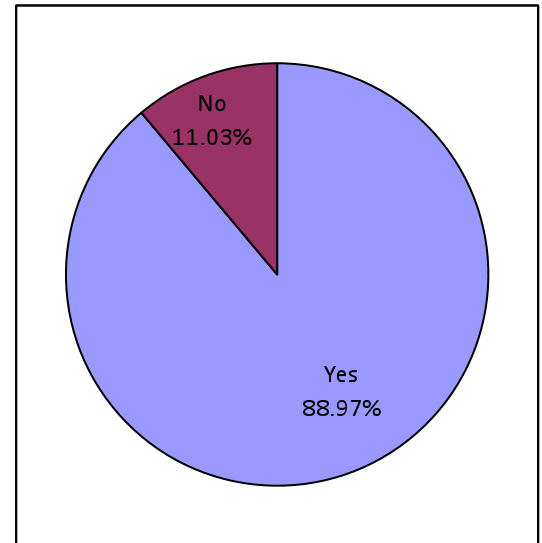


9. Should every high school and middle school (grades 7-12) have a Student Council?

A very strong majority (89%) of Ontario students responding to this survey replied “Yes”, indicating their belief that every high school and middle school should have a Student Council.

The difference in responses between school boards was minimal compared to other questions surveyed.

Three school boards had over 94% of their respondents reply “Yes” to this question. **Waterloo Region District School Board** had the lowest percent of “Yes” responses, but still reported 84% “Yes”.

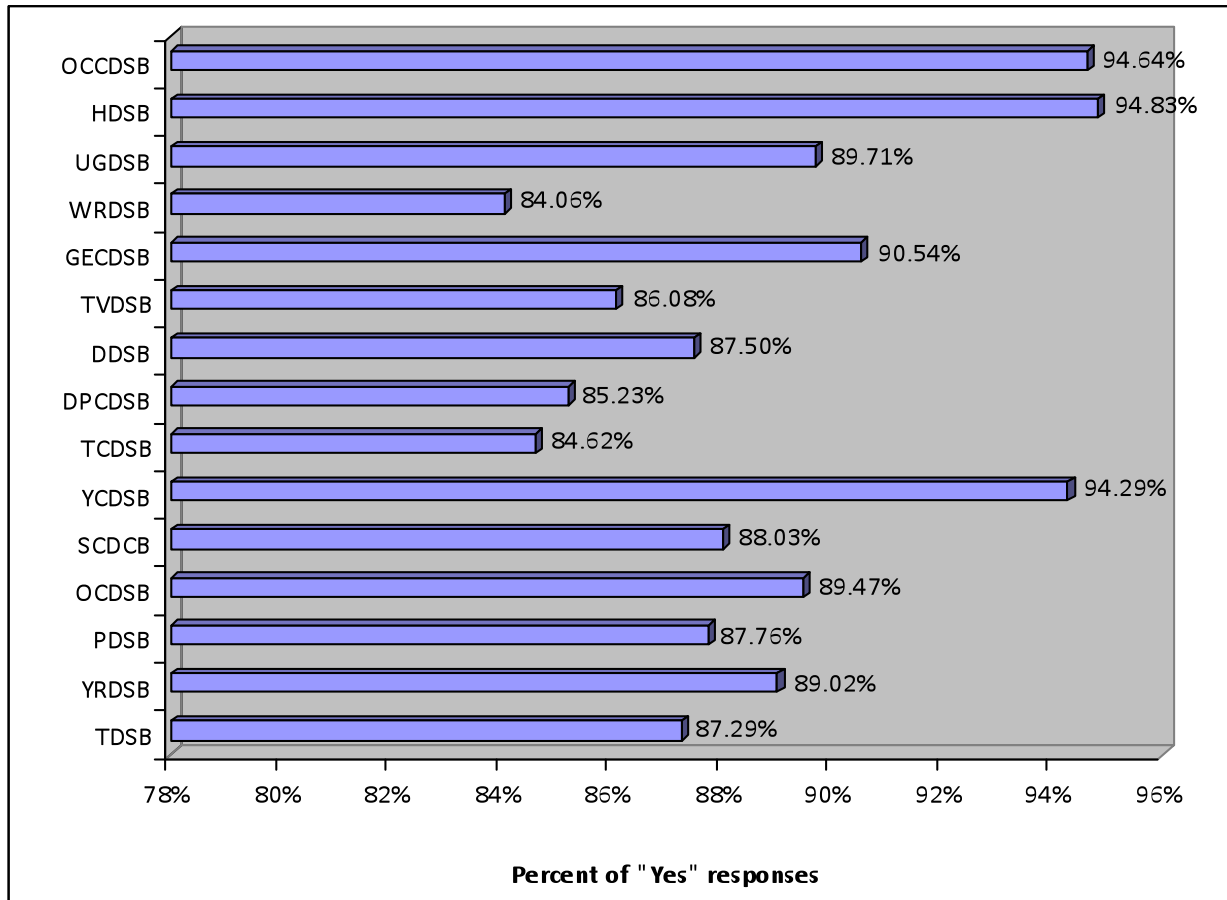


I think Student Council is obsolete. We should make decisions together as a student body rather than having the people who won the popularity contest decide for us. Votes together can replace Student Council easily. It would also help unite the students.

Student From Waterloo Region District School Board

A Student Council is a successful initiative that connects the administration and the students. It should be part of every high school as well as middle school where there are students eager to involve themselves in school politics.

Student From Algoma District School Board



Contact:

We encourage all who read these results to consider what the surveyed students have represented as the facts on the ground in their schools and their communities.

It is critical that students, despite their age, have input on the issues that affect their lives on a daily basis in schools.

You can contact your Student Trustee(s) to find out more about specific details related to your community.

For general inquiries and questions regarding province-wide results please consult the student leader for the project Zane Schwartz, at 416 768 7790 or pbcpresident@osta-aeco.org