

# NC Phones and Tech in Schools Study

## Wave 1 Findings

Spring 2026



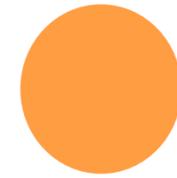
**WINSTON CENTER**  
on Technology and Brain Development

# Wave 1 At a Glance



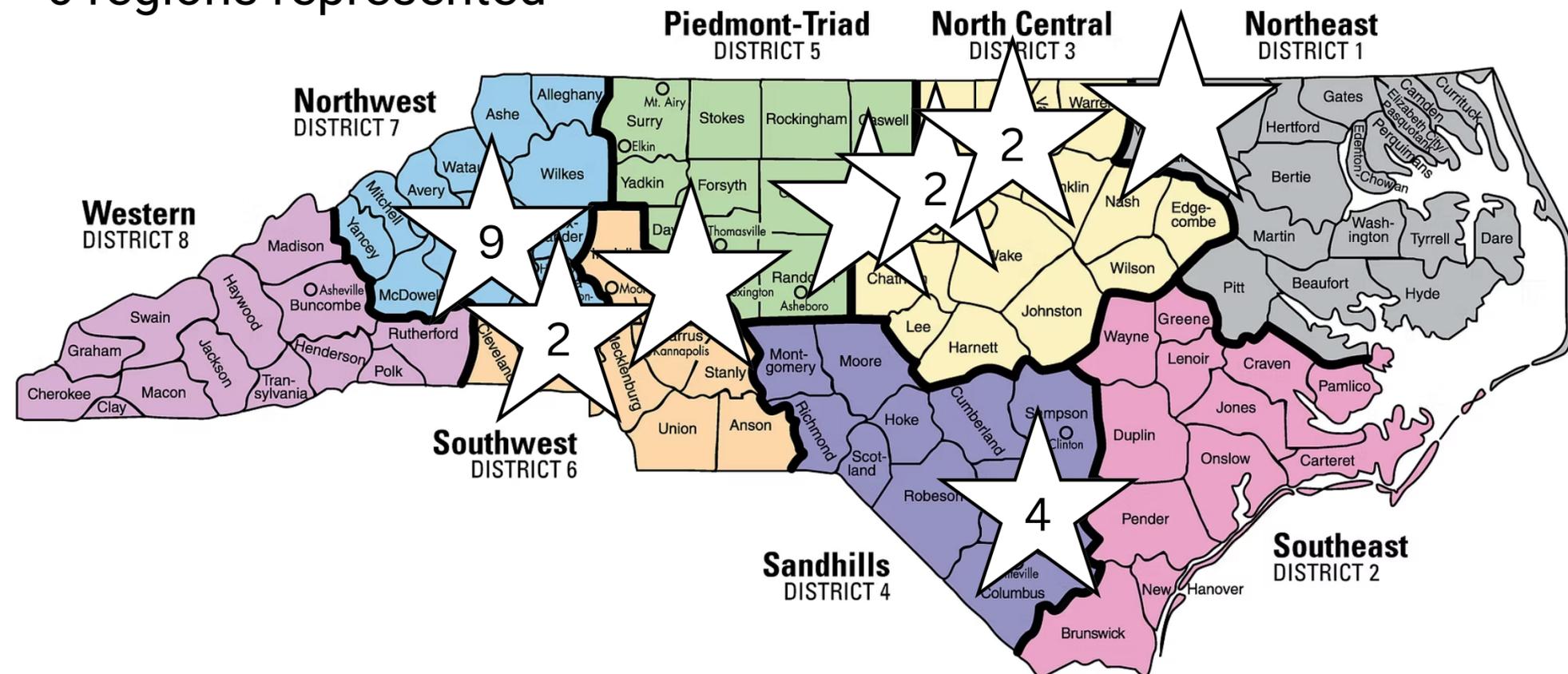
## Student Survey

- 2299 total participants
- 22 schools represented
- 6 regions represented

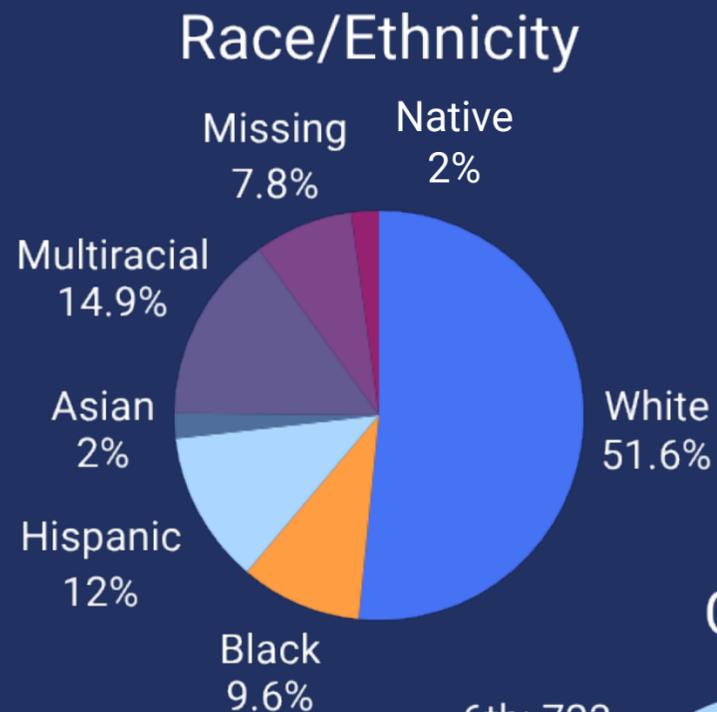


## Teacher Survey

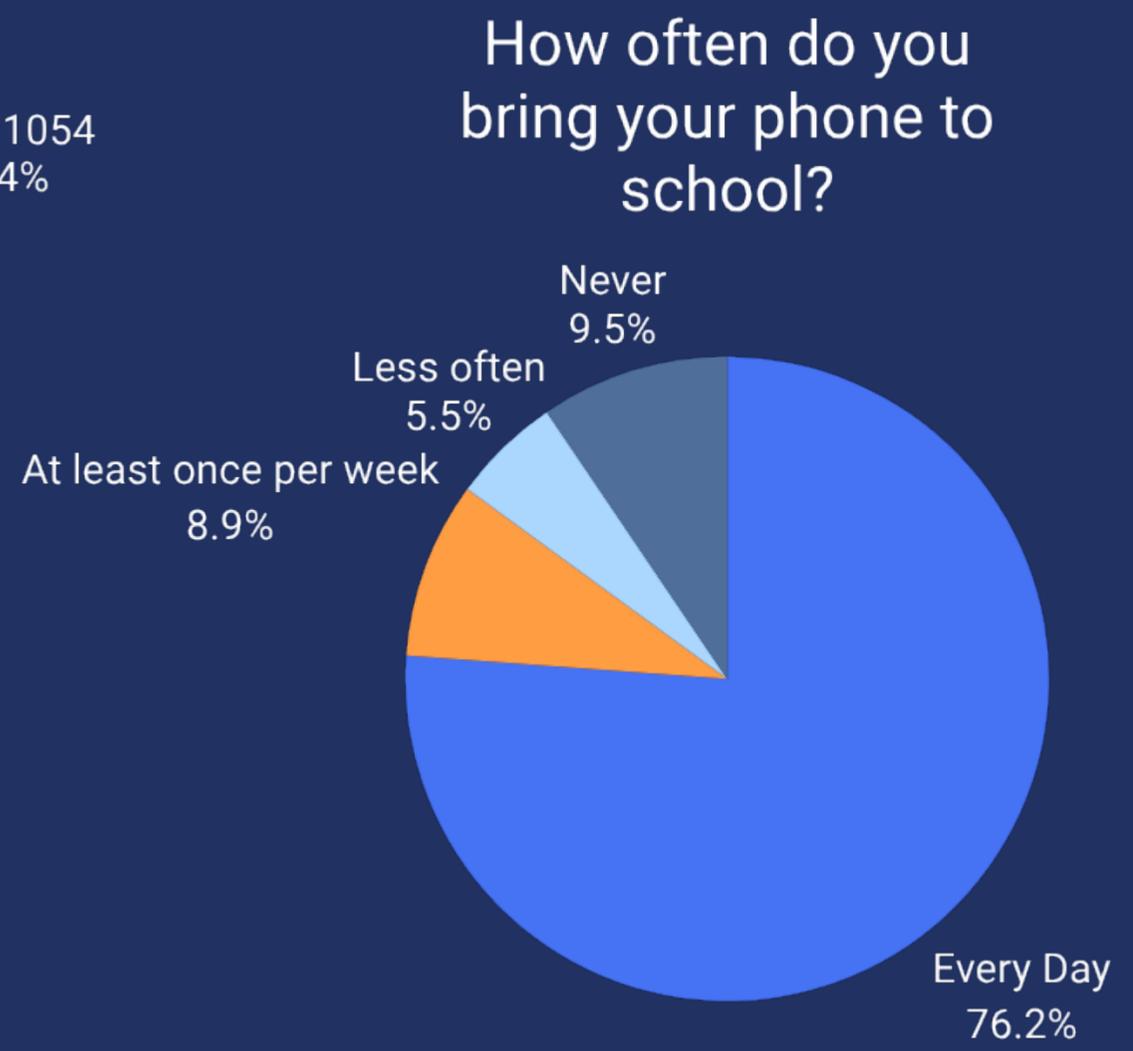
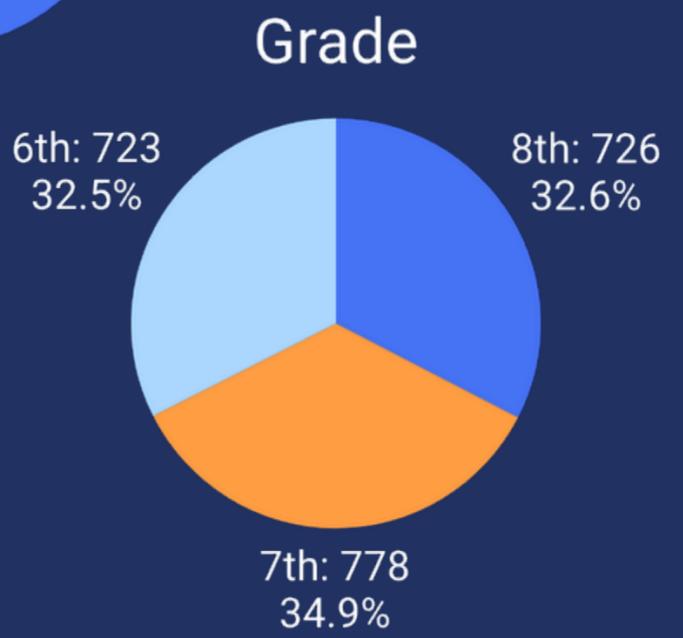
- 293 total participants
- 19 schools represented
- 6 regions represented



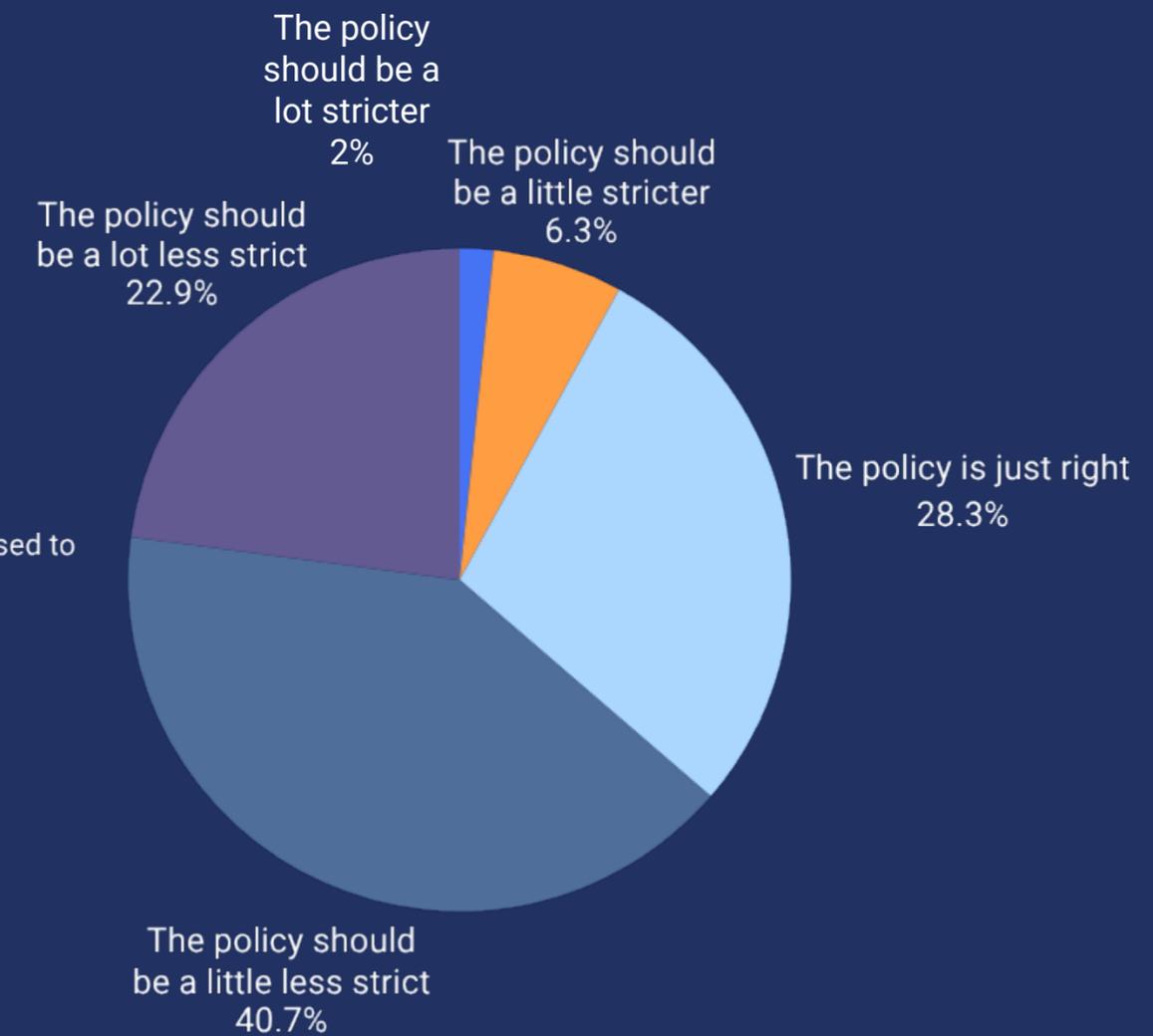
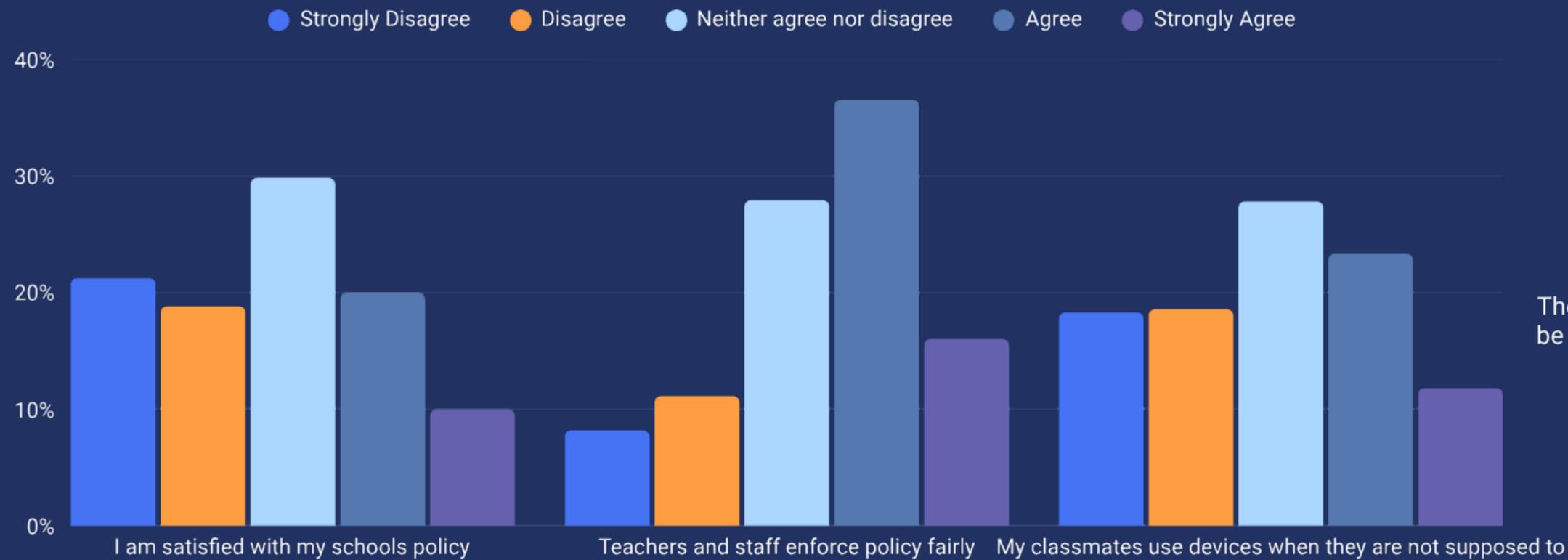
# Sample Characteristics



**81% of students (1495) say they own a smartphone. Of those 81%...**

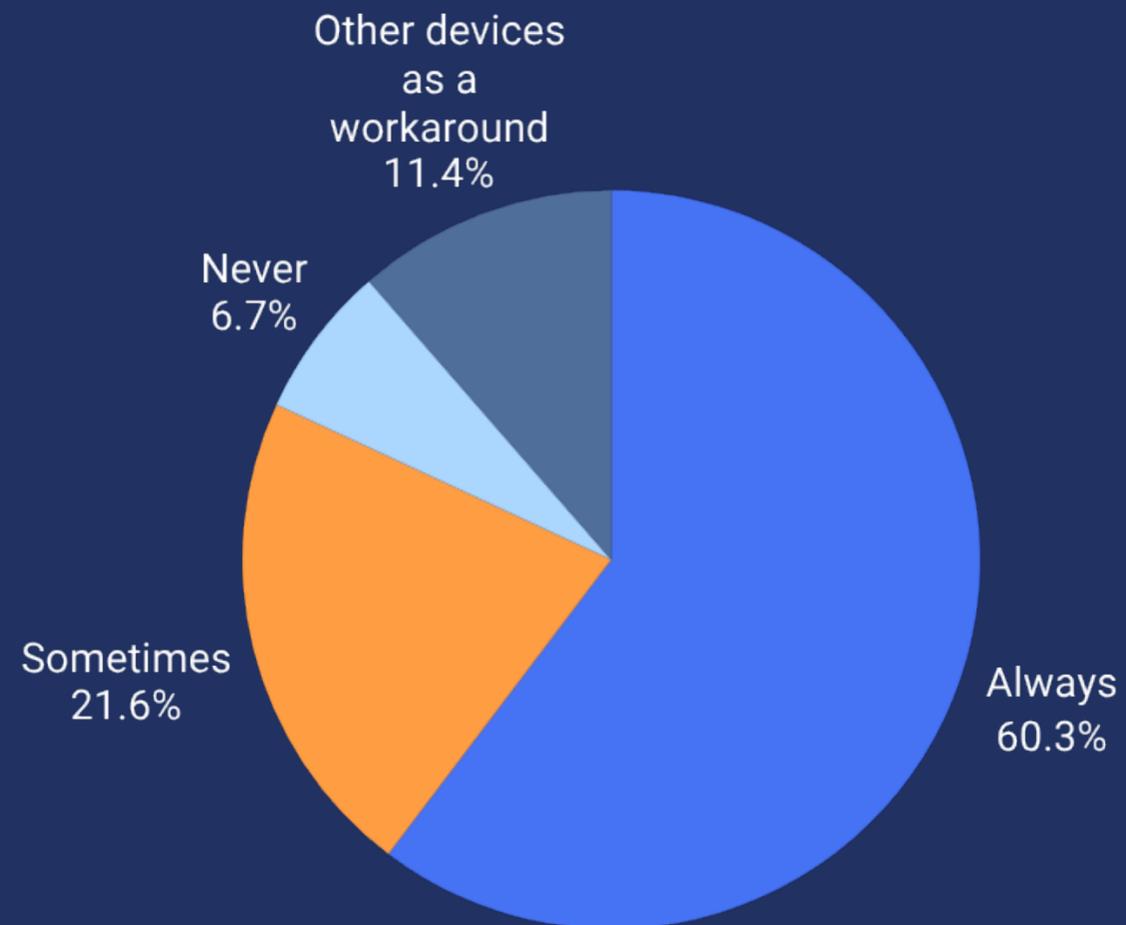


# Policy Perception

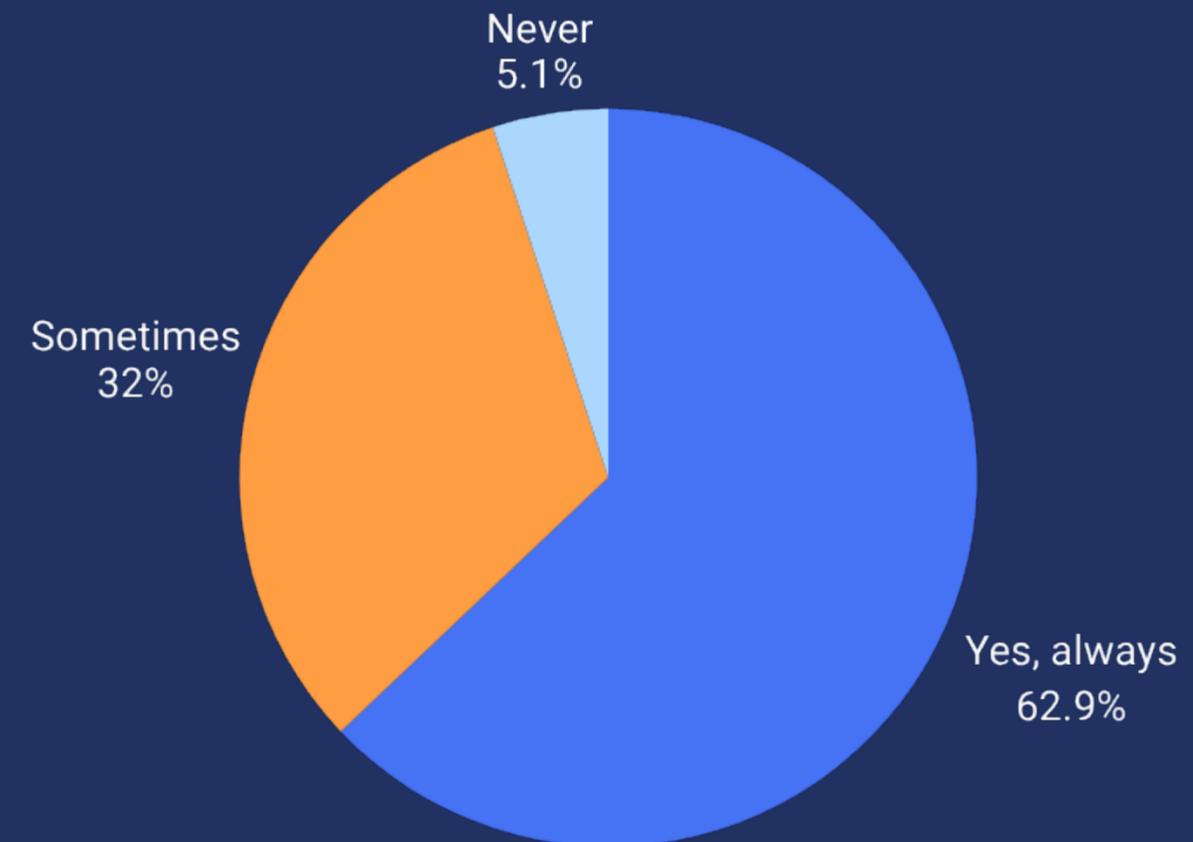


# Policy Enforcement

How often do you follow the policy?

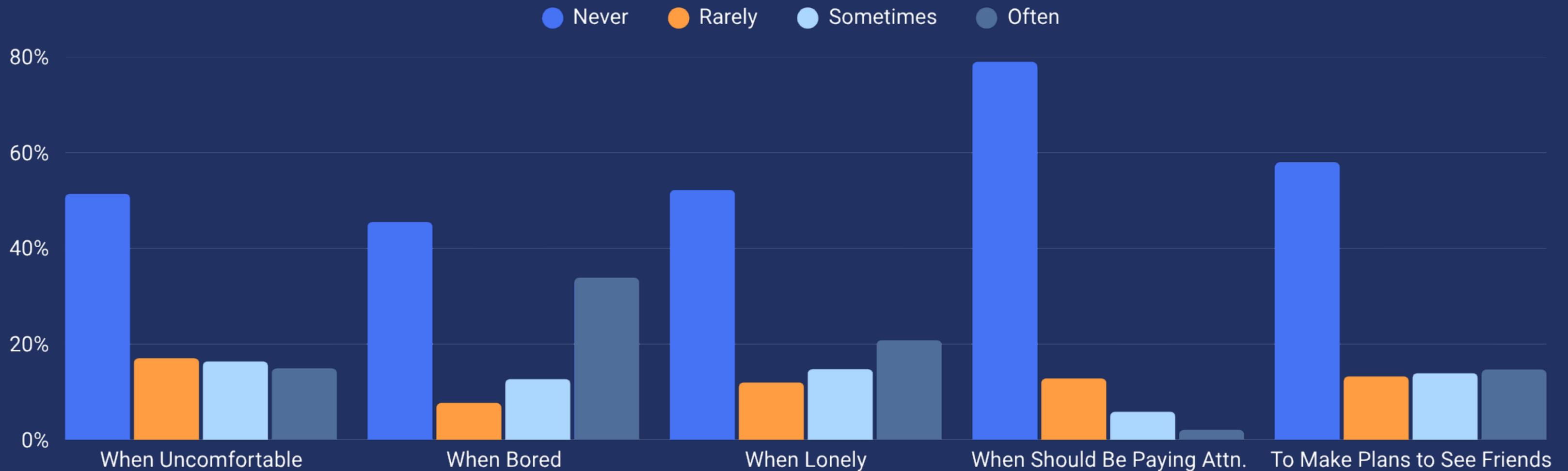


Does your school enforce the policy?



# Phone Use During Class

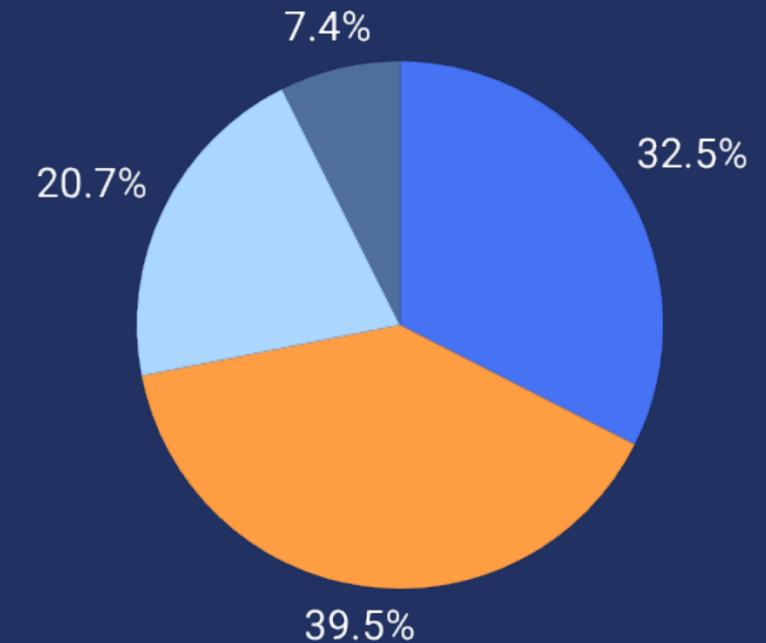
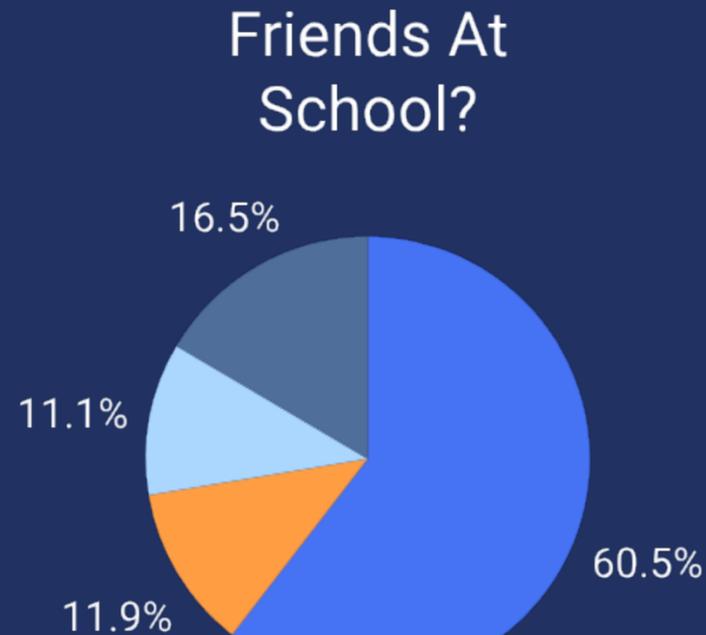
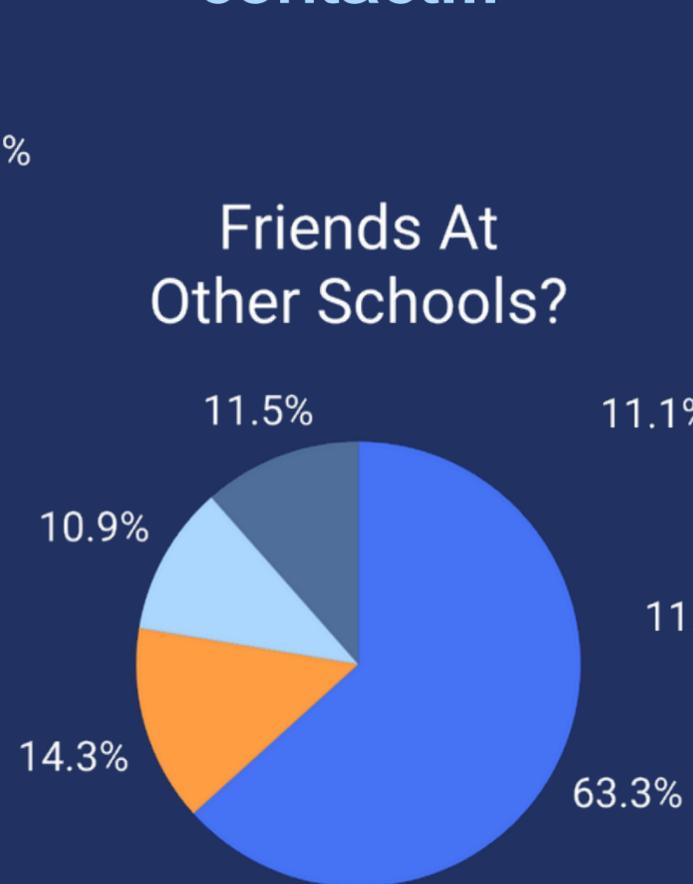
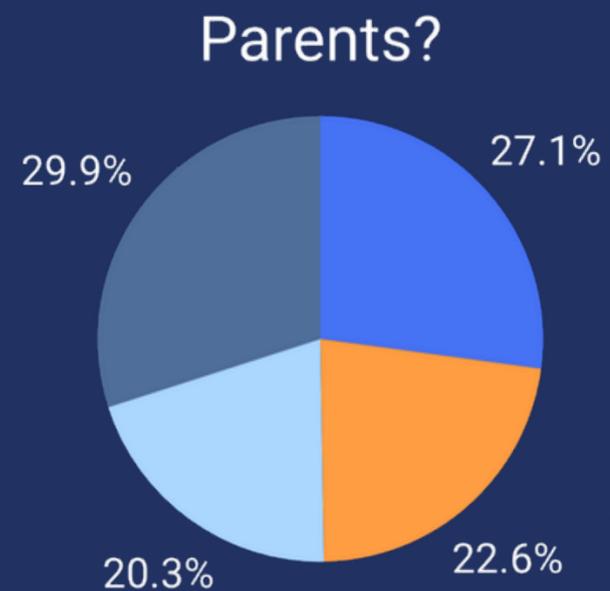
How often do you use your phone...



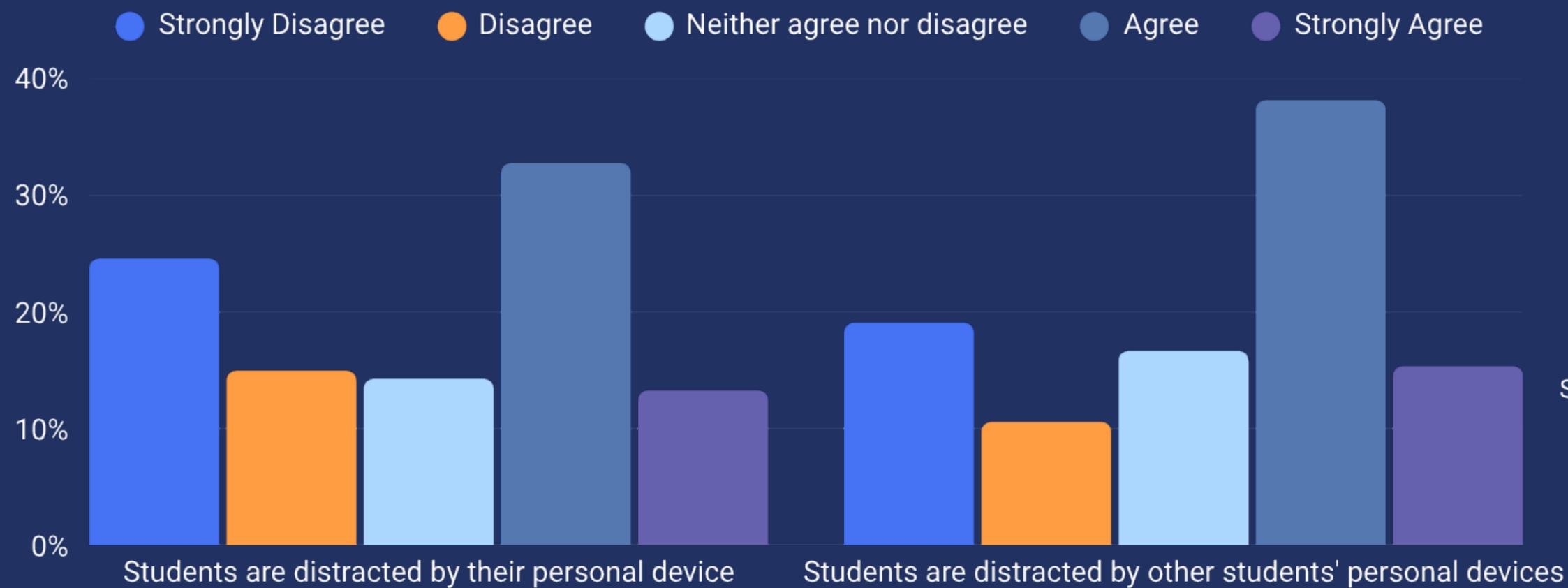
# Contact During School

In class, how often do you use your phone to contact...

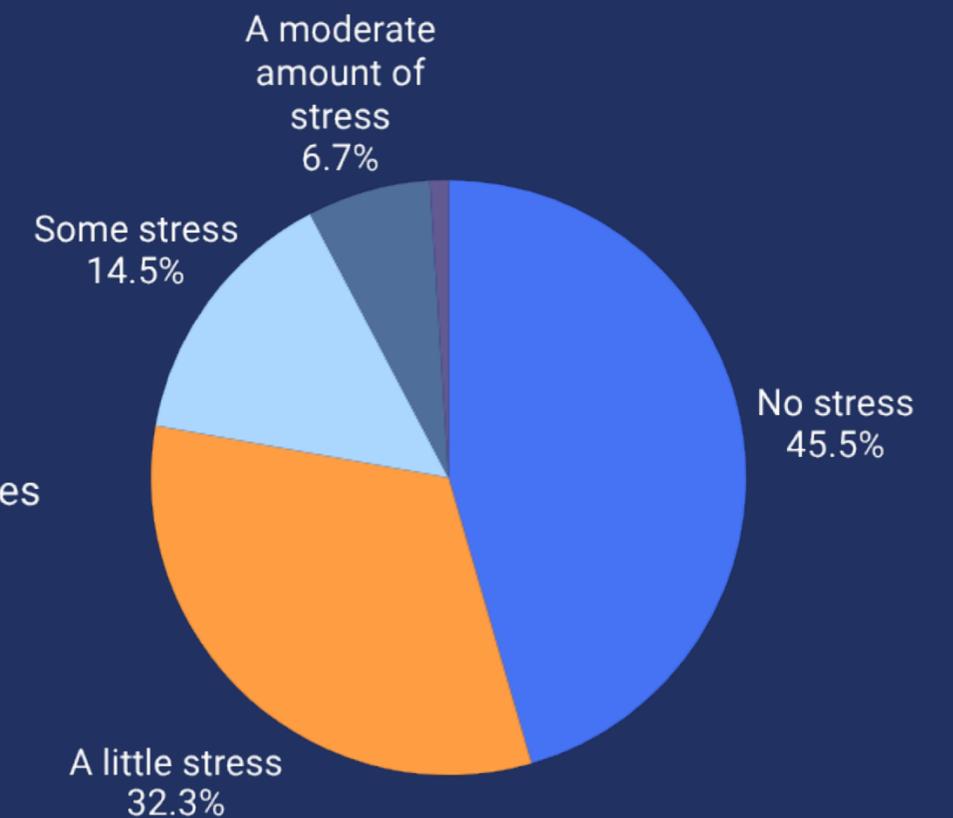
How often do your parents contact you?



# Teacher Perspective



To what degree do you experience stress from your students' personal device usage during instructional time?



# Some Emerging Trends to Examine in Future Waves

- 34% of students (759 students) report using workarounds to access content that should be blocked by school filters or firewalls
- Most students report that their school-issued device makes it easier to learn or focus
- More students report being distracted by other students' school-issued device use than other students' phone use in class

# Looking Ahead



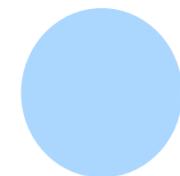
## Late Spring 2026

- Students and teachers take the survey again (Wave 2). Study team analyzes the data.
- Initial findings shared with state and local policymakers and education leaders.



## Fall 2026

- Students and teachers take the survey again (Wave 3). Study team analyzes and interprets final results.

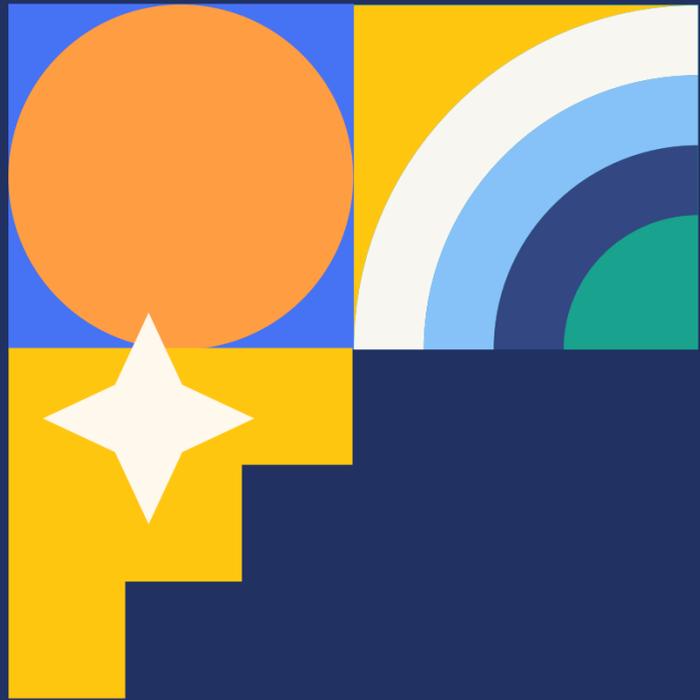


## Winter 2026/2027

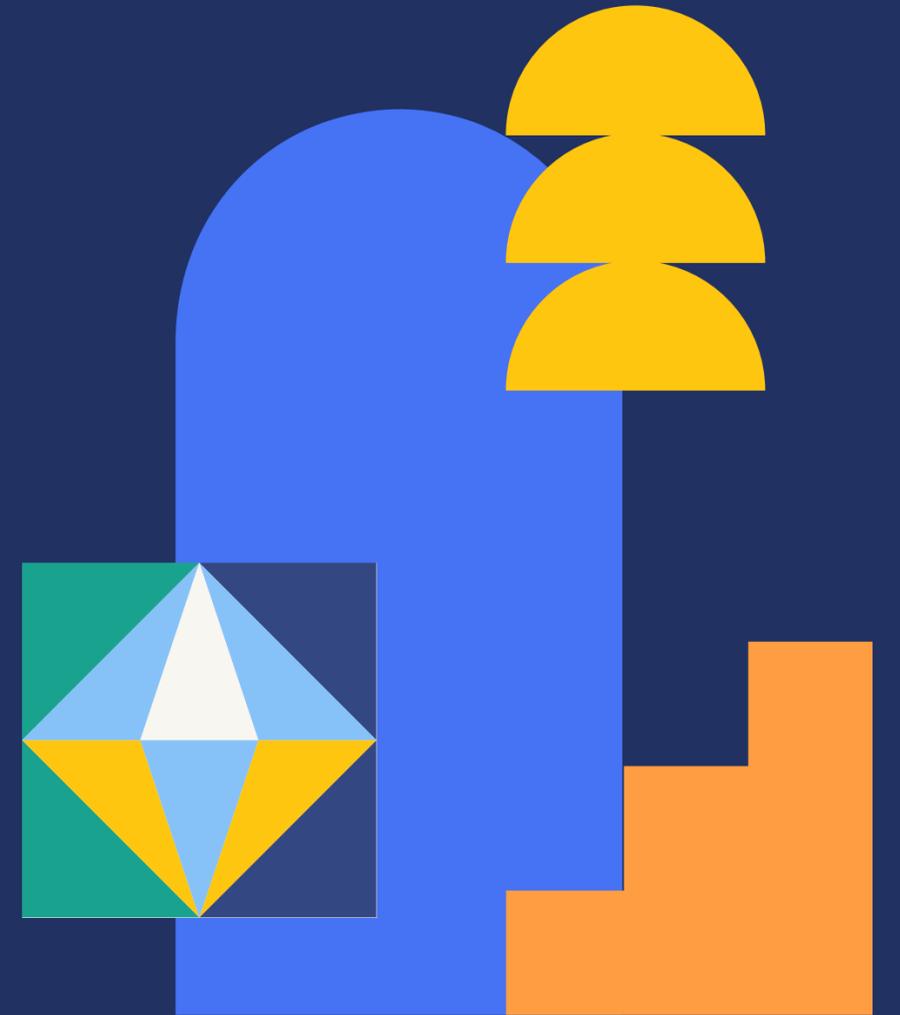
- Final report and recommendations for state and local policymakers and education leaders.

# Conclusions

- Many students are continuing to use their phones in school, and existing policies are not always enforced or followed
- Teachers are more likely to report device-related distraction, and many report stress from managing device use
- Misuse of school-issued devices is an important behavior that needs greater attention



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