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The State of Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging

Campus Prevention Network National Insights Report

2022 - 2023 Academic Year

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Executive Summary

Context for this Report

In an era of declining enrollment, alternative paths for career preparation, and increasing skepticism about the overall value of a degree, institutions of higher education face the urgent task of demonstrating how a college education uniquely prepares today's college students for post-graduation success. Higher education leaders are hearing from their counterparts in the corporate and non-profit and public sectors that today's graduates must be skilled in engaging effectively with others in an increasingly diverse work environment. Students also expect for their college experience to increase their skills in building community and making positive social impact. And research demonstrates when colleges and universities foster a greater sense of belonging for students, those students perform better academically, stay in school, and are more satisfied with their college experience. Investing in diversity, inclusion, and belonging generates many desired outcomes for institutions of higher education.

This report shares unique insights from college students across the nation on their experiences and perceptions when it comes to diversity, inclusion, and belonging. This report also highlights strengths and challenges for college students when it comes to building skills in self-reflection and perspective-taking, allyship, communicating effectively, and stepping in when they identify situations that undermine community values and safety.

How to Use This Report

We hope that higher education leaders and practitioners will share this report with campus stakeholders and use these insights to shape conversations on the future of diversity, inclusion and belonging efforts on campus, to inform and shape strategic diversity and inclusion plans, to benchmark institutional progress, and to inspire innovation that may usher forth a brighter future for all students.

About the Data

The data in this report were collected from 238,078 students across 200 colleges and universities. These students completed Vector Solutions' *Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging for Students* and *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Students* Pre-Course Surveys between June 1, 2022 and January 26, 2023.

Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging in Higher Education Today

Data and insights from students
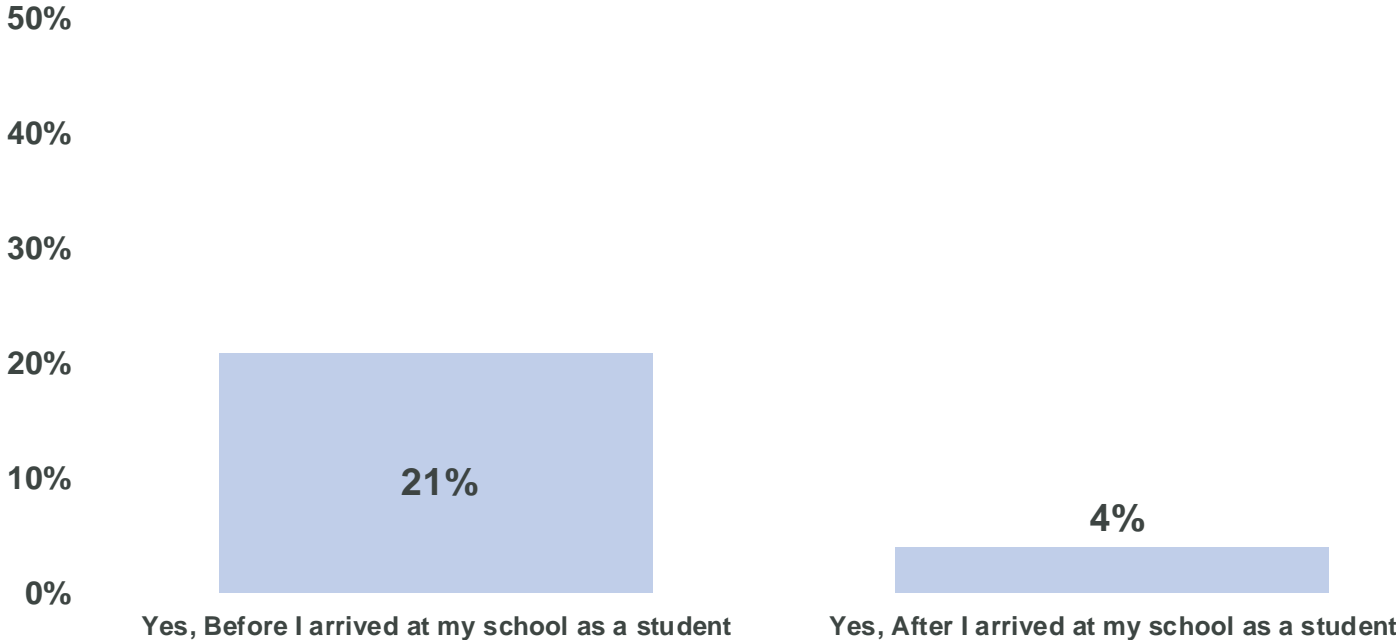
Student Experiences of Bias Vary Across Groups

When asked whether they experienced bias prior to their time on campus, over twenty percent of all students reported "yes." Among students of color, their experiences mostly aligned with all respondents -- 23% experienced bias. For LGBTQ+ students, the picture is much different with nearly 40% reporting experiences of bias prior to matriculation. Looking at post-matriculation experiences of bias, LGBTQ+ students continue to report significantly higher rates than other students (7% vs. 4%). As a note, 65% of respondents are first-year students and so this rate is likely to be higher for students with more time on campus.

Finding community is the most urgent goal for many students as they arrive on campus and is a predictor of their likelihood to persist. Twelve percent of all students report feeling like they do not fit in at their school—with students of color and LGBTQ+ reporting slightly higher rates at 13% and 14%, respectively.

Experiences of Bias

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In the past 12 months, have you been treated unfairly because of one or more aspects of your identity?

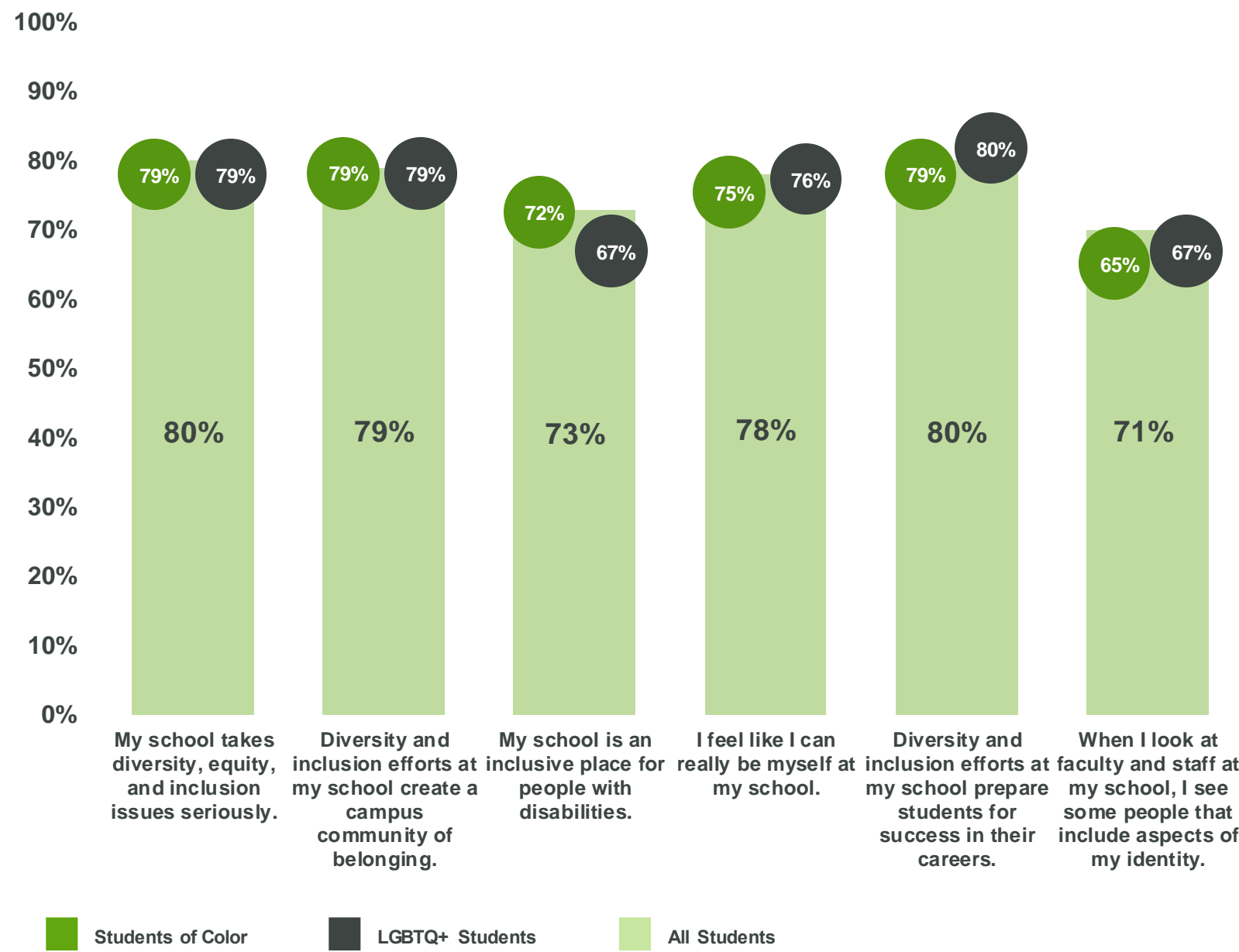|	
21%	4%
Yes, Before I arrived at my school as a student	Yes, After I arrived at my school as a student

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Students See Their Schools as Committed to Inclusion

Because students' experience of belonging on campus is closely tied to a range of positive outcomes, student perceptions of their school's commitment to these issues can serve as a bellwether for progress towards other institutional goals, such as recruitment, academic performance, student engagement, retention, and satisfaction with their experience.

Overall, students report positive feelings towards their institution's commitment to inclusion and believe these efforts will help them be successful post-graduation. LGBTQ+ students and students of color report similar perceptions as the broader student population with an important exception—these students are less likely to report that they see faculty and staff who share aspects of their identity.

Perceptions of Campus Climate

	Students of Color	LGBTQ+ Students	All Students
My school takes diversity, equity, and inclusion issues seriously.	79%	79%	80%
Diversity and inclusion efforts at my school create a campus community of belonging.	79%	79%	79%
My school is an inclusive place for people with disabilities.	72%	67%	73%
I feel like I can really be myself at my school.	75%	76%	78%
Diversity and inclusion efforts at my school prepare students for success in their careers.	79%	80%	80%
When I look at faculty and staff at my school, I see some people that include aspects of my identity.	65%	67%	71%

■ Students of Color   ■ LGBTQ+ Students   ■ All Students
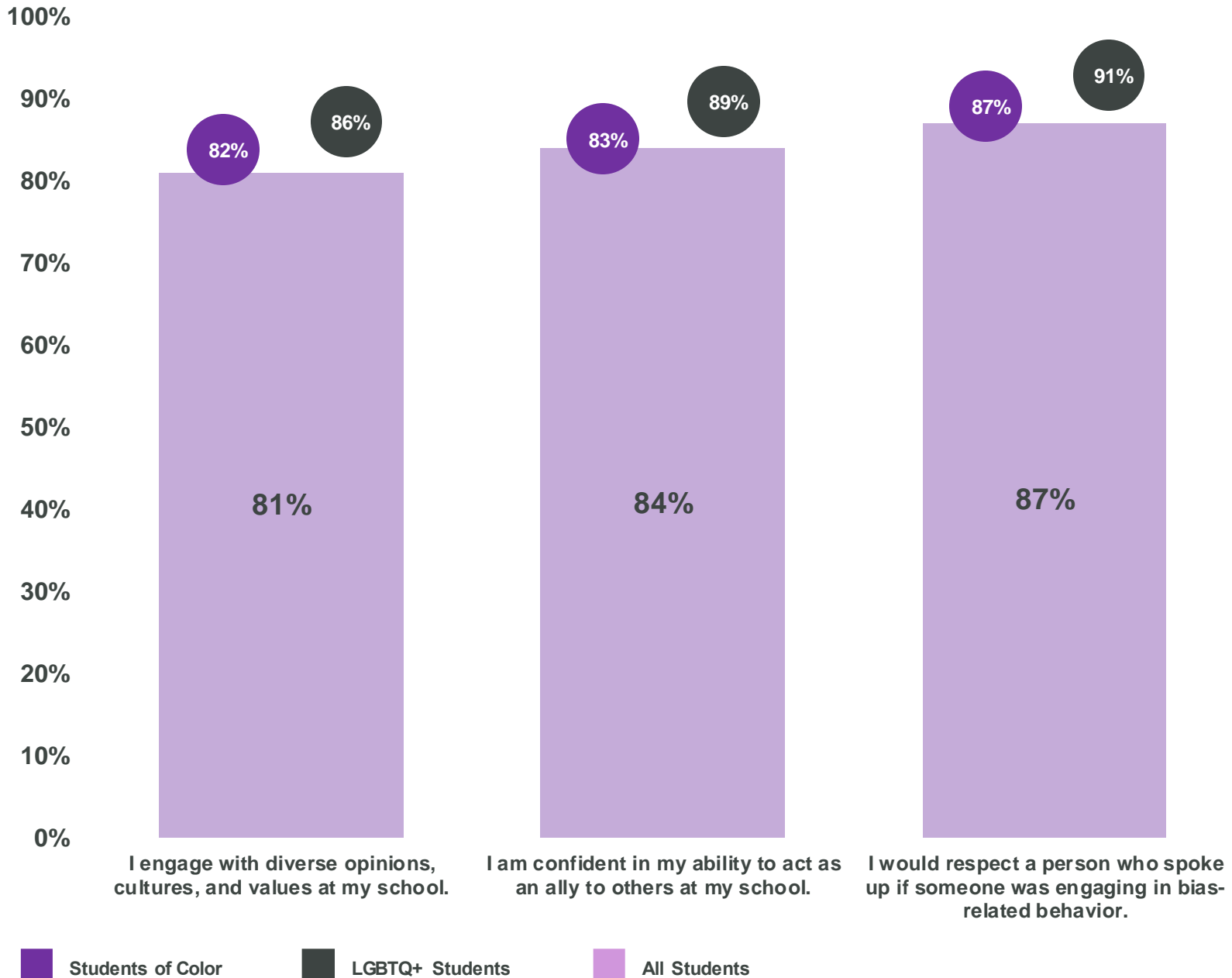
Percentage of students who chose "agree" or "strongly agree" for each item.

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Students are Engaging In and Supportive of Ally Behaviors

When it comes to acting as an ally, most students report confidence in their ability to support their peers, which is a strong predictor of their likelihood to take action when they recognize a situation of potential bias.

These data also tell the story of an emerging and positive norm on college and university campuses—when a person witnesses bias-related behavior, intervening is the right, and expected, thing to do. Students strongly indicated that they would respect someone who took action when confronted with acts of bias—with LGBTQ+ students even more likely to endorse these pro-social values.

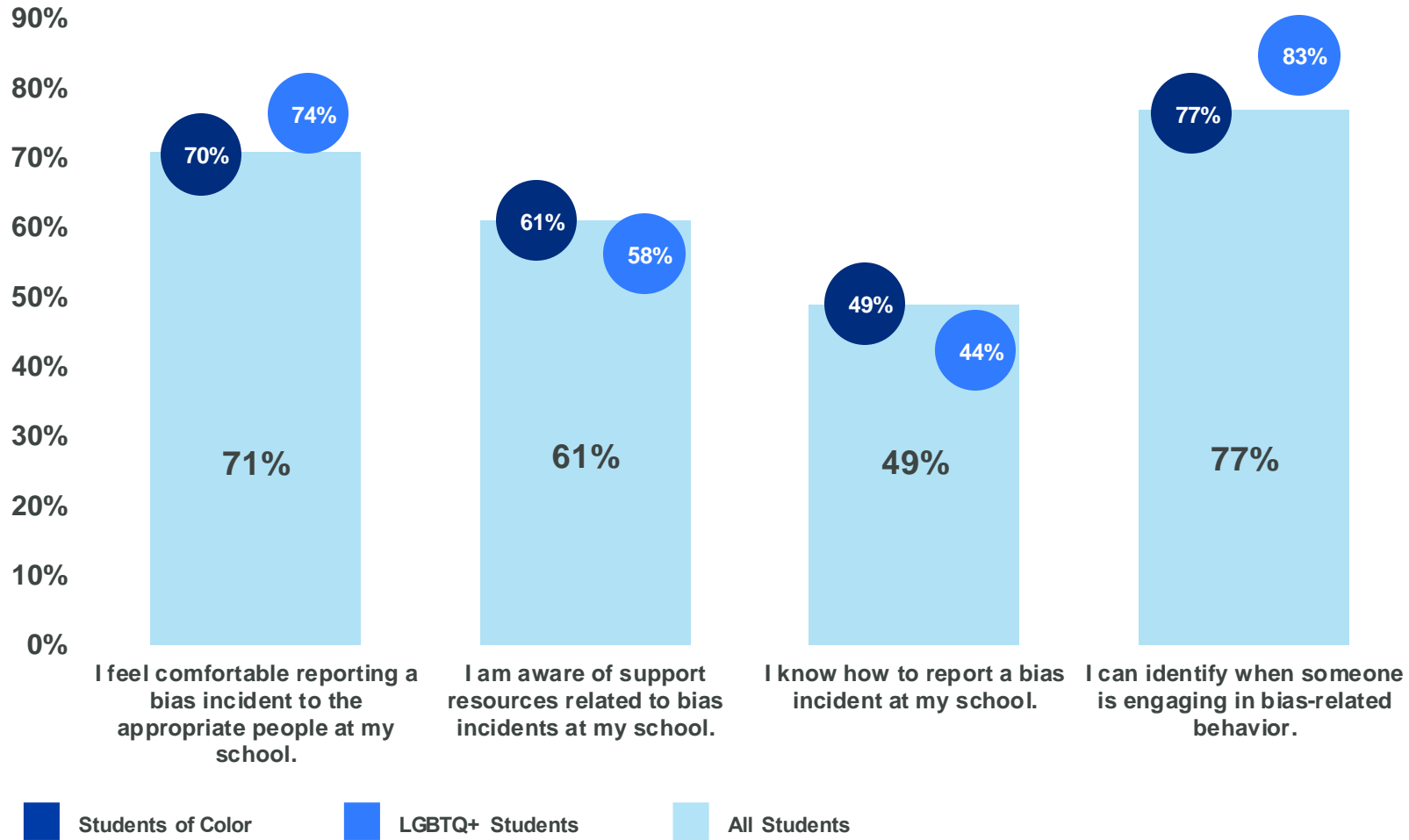|	Students of Color	LGBTQ+ Students	All Students
I engage with diverse opinions, cultures, and values at my school.	82%	86%	81%
I am confident in my ability to act as an ally to others at my school.	83%	89%	84%
I would respect a person who spoke up if someone was engaging in bias-related behavior.	87%	91%	87%

Percentage of students who chose "agree" or "strongly agree" for each item.

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Students Can Identify Bias, but Lack Awareness of Support Resources and Reporting Process

Teaching students to identify problematic behavior and leveraging their desire to support peers is an essential step in building an inclusive campus culture, but without understanding how to report, students are unlikely to do so. These data reinforce earlier findings that students have confidence in their institution—the majority are "comfortable" in reporting.

These positive trends can be bolstered by delivering the information and skills to students to both intervene to address harmful behavior and report the behavior to campus officials when appropriate.

	I feel comfortable reporting a bias incident to the appropriate people at my school.	I am aware of support resources related to bias incidents at my school.	I know how to report a bias incident at my school.	I can identify when someone is engaging in bias-related behavior.
Students of Color	70%	61%	49%	77%
LGBTQ+ Students	74%	58%	44%	83%
All Students	71%	61%	49%	77%

Students of Color   **LGBTQ+ Students**   **All Students**

Percentage of students who chose "agree" or "strongly agree" for each item.
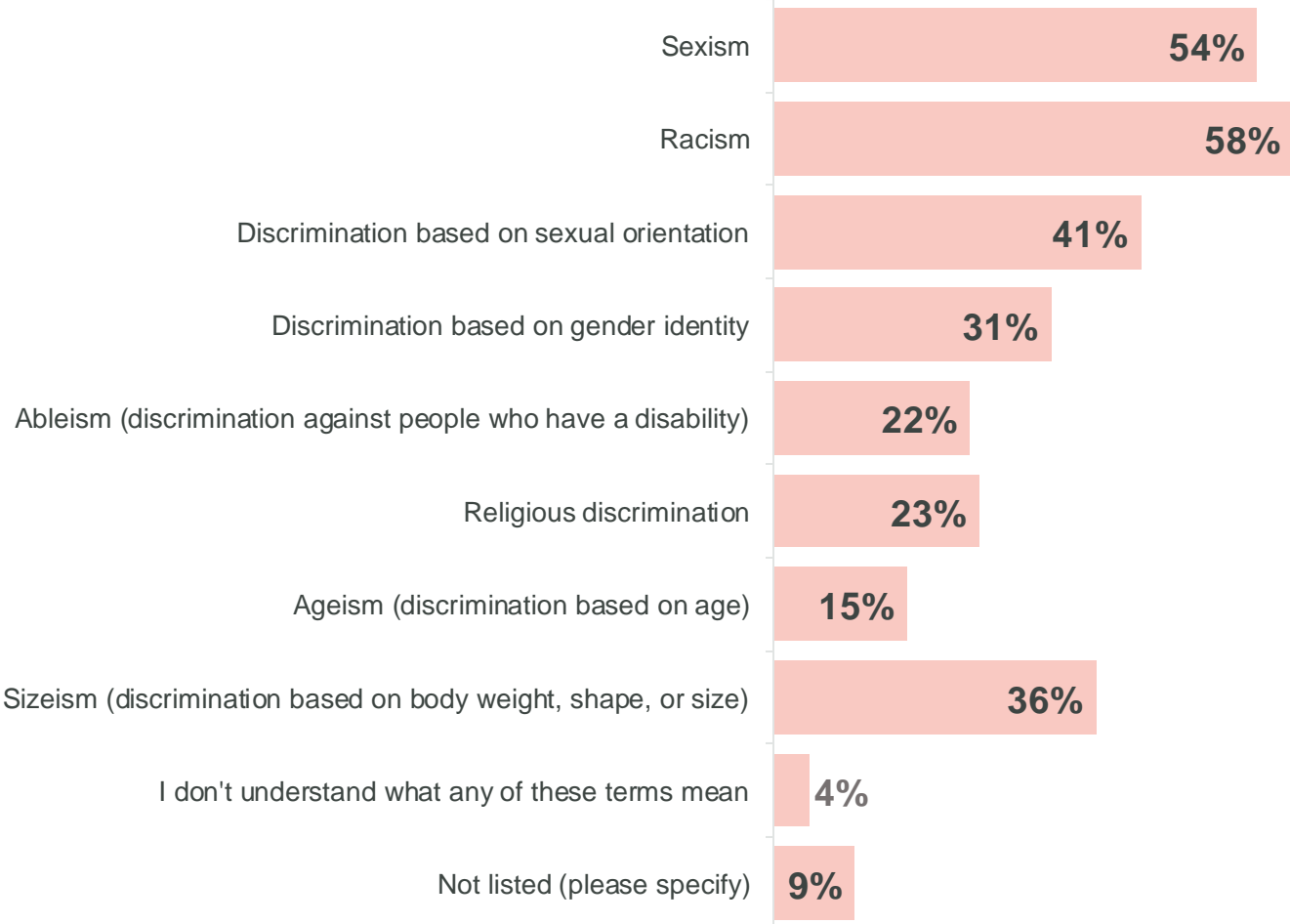
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Students Most Likely to Witness Bias Based on Sex and Race

Students' confidence in their ability to identify biases is supported by data on witnessing biases at their institution. However, students do not report witnessing biases equally. Acts of bias students are least likely to report witnessing include ageism, religious discrimination, and discrimination against persons who have a disability.

While certain rates are likely impacted by the student context, they also may also reflect emphases in efforts on campus to address biases related to sex, gender, race, and sexual orientation. When students do not recognize bias, they do not intervene. Diversity and inclusion professionals may wish to audit their education programs to determine whether less-recognized forms of bias are represented.

?

I have witnessed the following types of bias at my school:

Type of bias	Percentage
Sexism	54%
Racism	58%
Discrimination based on sexual orientation	41%
Discrimination based on gender identity	31%
Ableism (discrimination against people who have a disability)	22%
Religious discrimination	23%
Ageism (discrimination based on age)	15%
Sizeism (discrimination based on body weight, shape, or size)	36%
I don't understand what any of these terms mean	4%
Not listed (please specify)	9%

Note: Students could select more than one option.

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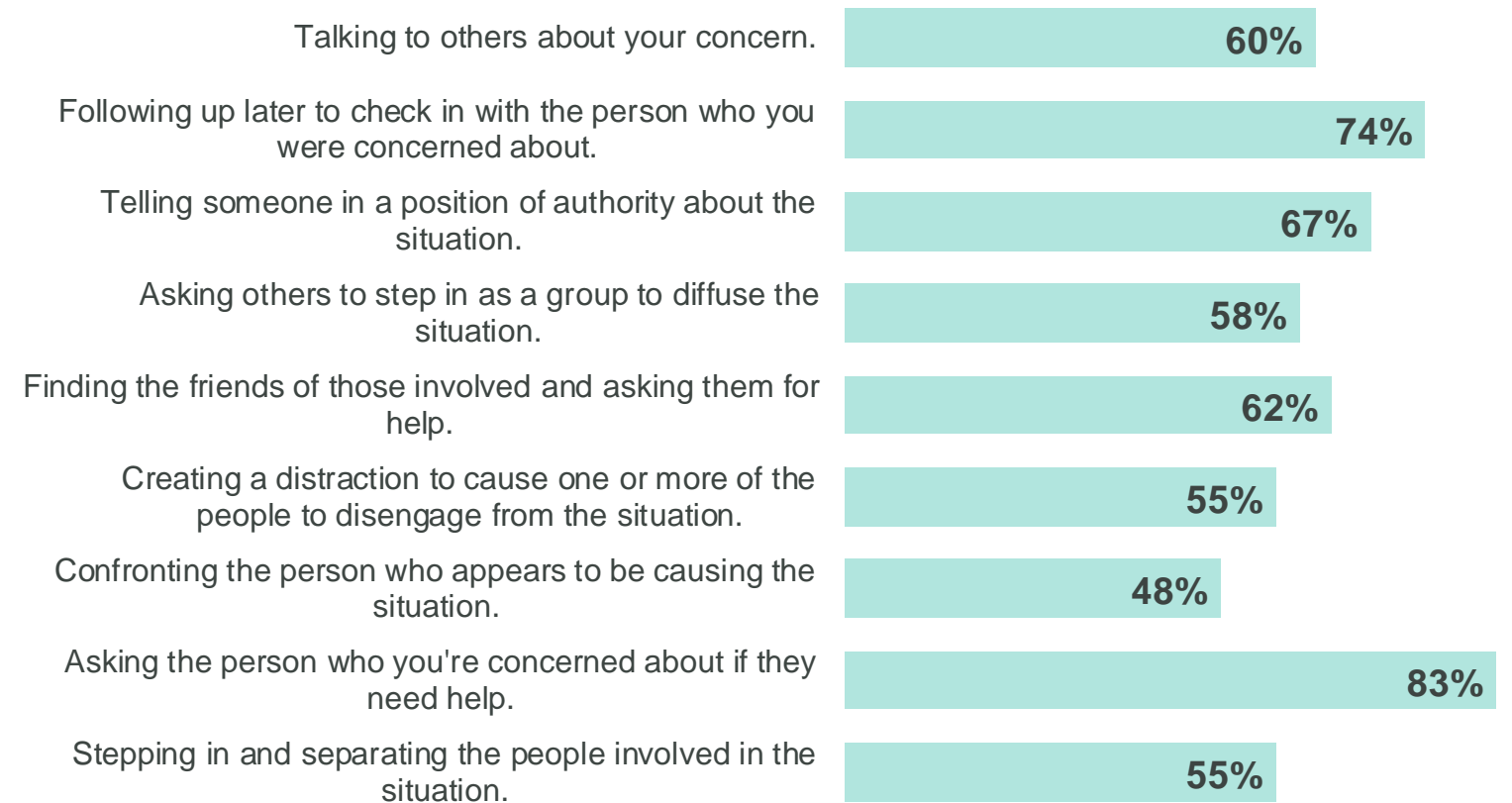# Students Use a Range of Approaches in Responding to Bias

Today's college students care significantly about their peers and their community. The top two intervention strategies students endorse involve supporting the person affected by the behavior.

Confronting the person causing the behavior is the least likely strategy students reported they would use. While all intervention is beneficial, to make real progress, colleges and universities will also need to build confidence and skills for someone to intervene with the person causing the harm, and reduce concern about social consequences.

Teaching students how to intervene with the harm-doer in ways that preserve social connection is an urgent need that will also serve students (and employers) well in their post-graduation careers.

If you observe a situation that you believe is, or could lead to, an act of bias, which of the following behaviors would you be confident engaging in? (Select all that apply.)

Behavior	Percentage
Talking to others about your concern.	60%
Following up later to check in with the person who you were concerned about.	74%
Telling someone in a position of authority about the situation.	67%
Asking others to step in as a group to diffuse the situation.	58%
Finding the friends of those involved and asking them for help.	62%
Creating a distraction to cause one or more of the people to disengage from the situation.	55%
Confronting the person who appears to be causing the situation.	48%
Asking the person who you're concerned about if they need help.	83%
Stepping in and separating the people involved in the situation.	55%

Note: Students could select more than one option.
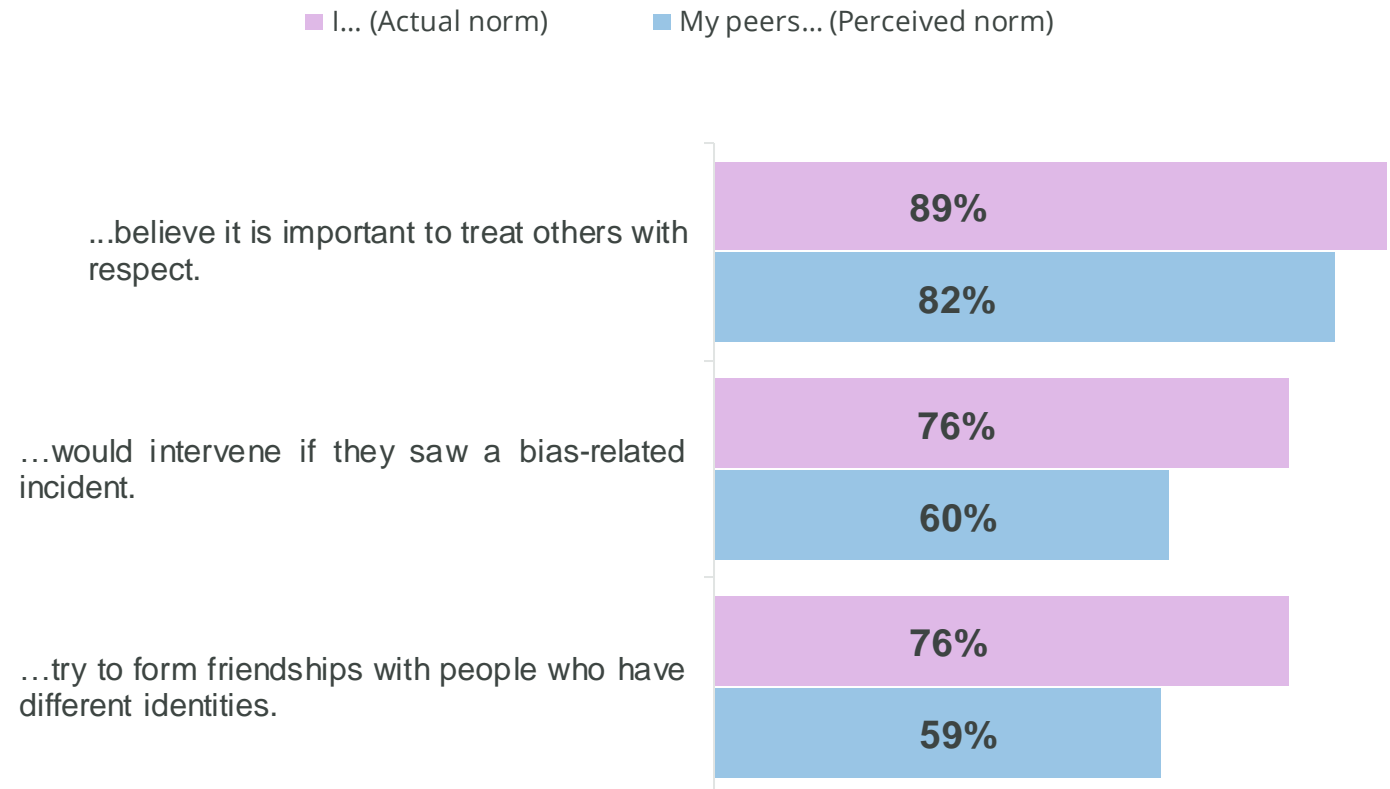
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Students Misperceive Positive Peer Norms

Creating the opportunity for students to form friendships with individuals who are different from them is commonly cited by students as a hallmark experience of their time on campus. It is also one of the skills that promotes civic engagement, and open discourse and translates effectively into the work world. Three quarters of students report they seek to form these friendships, and that they would intervene in situations where they witness incidents of bias.

However, students are less likely to believe that others would do the same. This gap between what students believe about themselves and what they perceive about peers can diminish their willingness to engage in positive, community-supportive acts.

Sharing institution-specific data on the values, beliefs, and actions of the student body is an effective way to reinforce for students that if they take action, their peers will respect and support them.
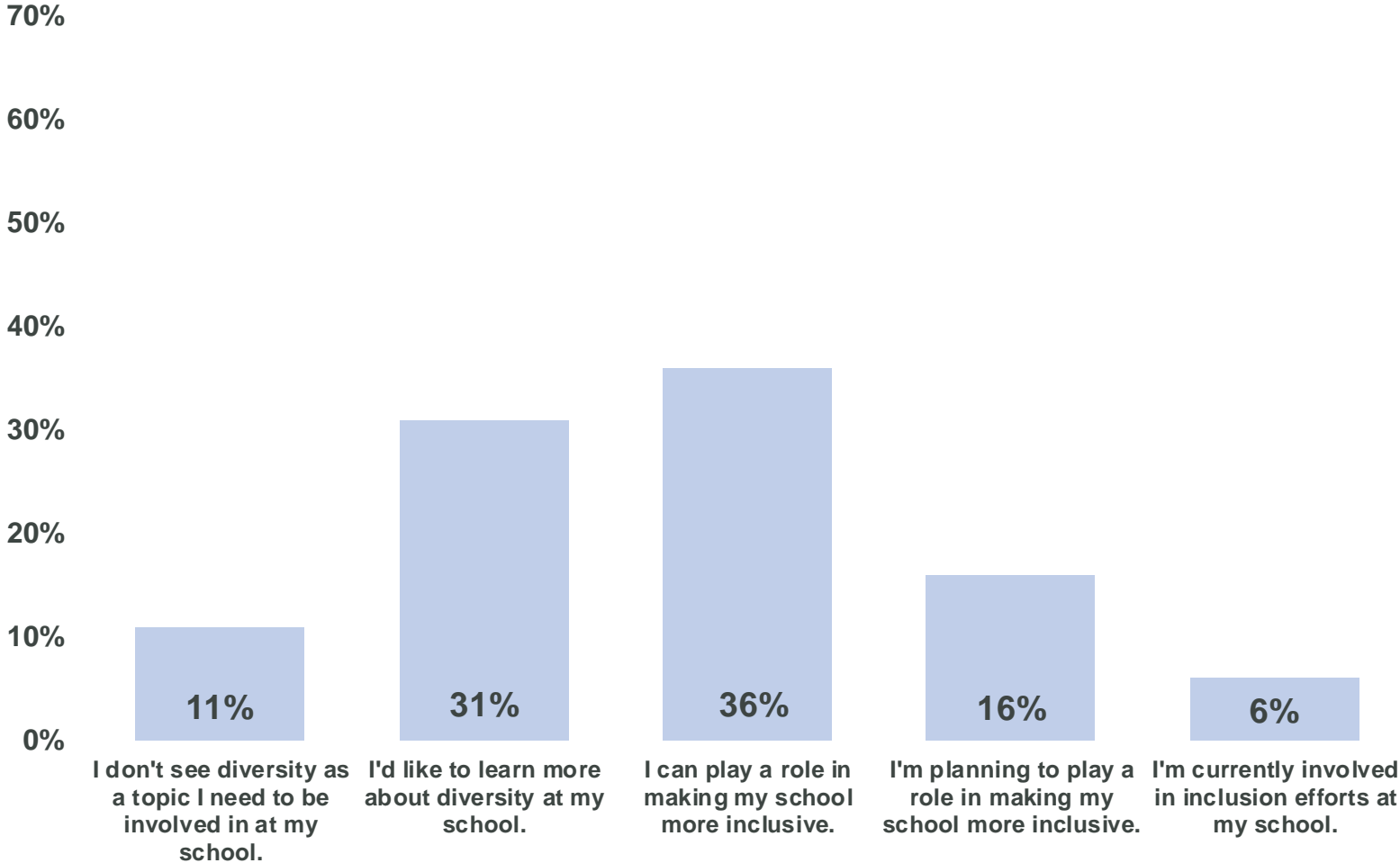
Social Norms

■ I... (Actual norm) ■ My peers... (Perceived norm)

...believe it is important to treat others with respect.
- 89%
- 82%

…would intervene if they saw a bias-related incident.
- 76%
- 60%

…try to form friendships with people who have different identities.
- 76%
- 59%

Percentage of students who chose "agree" or "strongly agree" for each item.

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Most Students Ready to Support Inclusion, Few Currently Involved

Students bring a range of perspectives on inclusion to their time on campus, and as their skills in fostering belonging develop, so too does their readiness to engage further. As institutions work to develop their comprehensive inclusion and belonging strategic plans, integrating campus-specific information about where students place themselves along a continuum of engagement can ensure that activities and interventions align with student interest, readiness, and need.

These data can also serve as a helpful benchmark on progress towards institutional inclusion goals by tracking progress towards greater engagement. It is noteworthy that the strong majority of students express interest in or commitment to inclusion, with only 11% expressing no interest in being involved in diversity efforts on campus.

Perceptions of Community Readiness

Bar chart with y-axis from 0% to 70%:
- I don't see diversity as a topic I need to be involved in at my school: 11%
- I'd like to learn more about diversity at my school: 31%
- I can play a role in making my school more inclusive: 36%
- I'm planning to play a role in making my school more inclusive: 16%
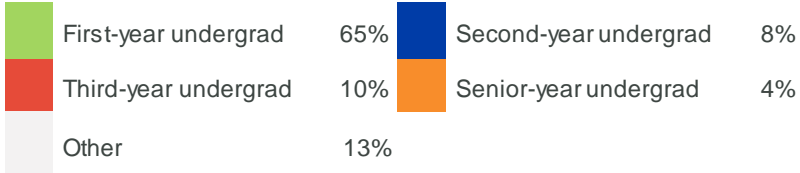- I'm currently involved in inclusion efforts at my school: 6%
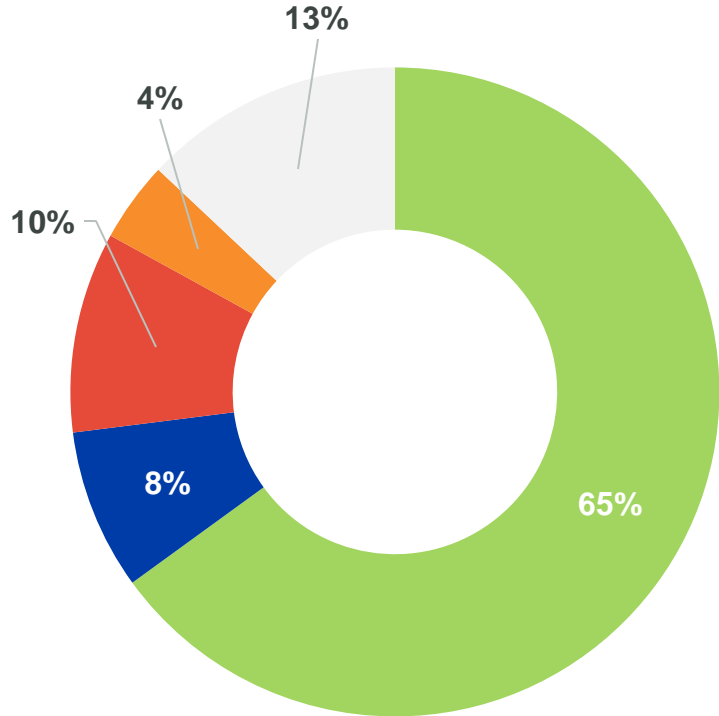
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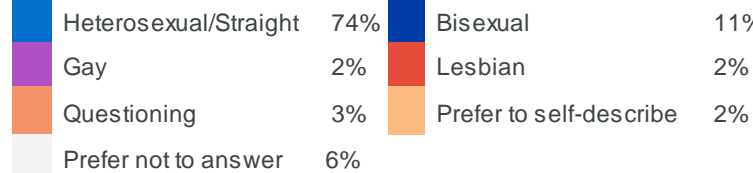Student Demographics
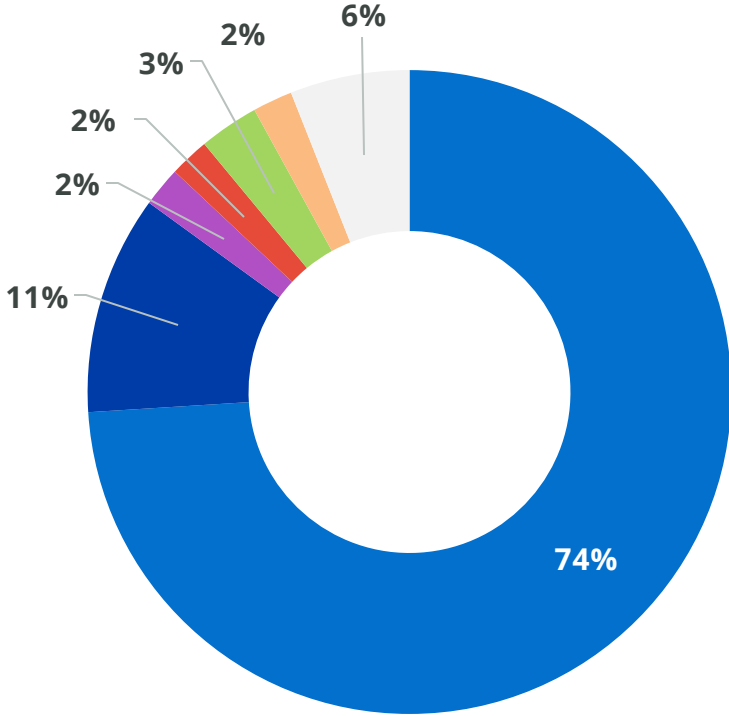
Student Demographics

The following is a summary of the demographics of students who participated in Vector Solutions Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging course from June 1, 2022 through January 26, 2023.

Demographic information is self-reported by students as part of the Pre-Course Survey. All questions are optional, and students may choose not to share demographic information.
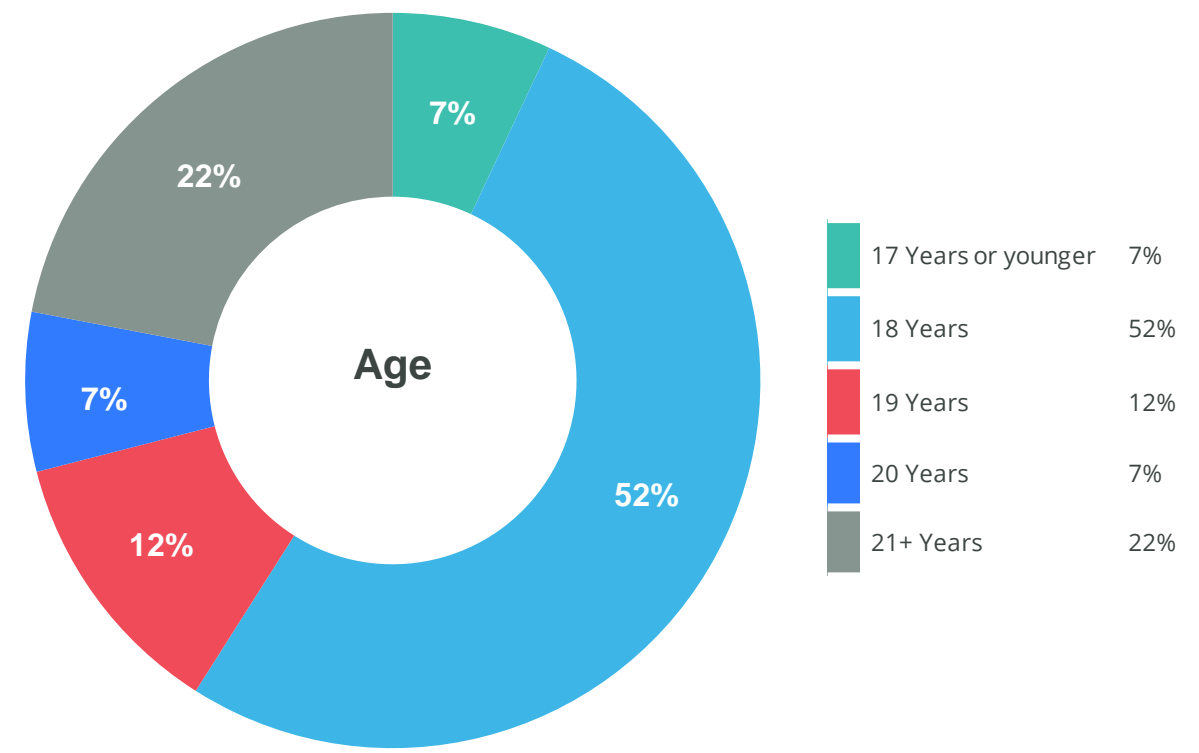
Year In School

First-year undergrad	65%	Second-year undergrad	8%
Third-year undergrad	10%	Senior-year undergrad	4%
Other	13%		

Sexual Orientation

Heterosexual/Straight	74%	Bisexual	11%
Gay	2%	Lesbian	2%
Questioning	3%	Prefer to self-describe	2%
Prefer not to answer	6%		

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Student Demographics *(Cont.)*

Race and/or Ethnicity

Bar chart — Race and/or Ethnicity:
- Black / African American: 9%
- White / Caucasian: 67%
- Hispanic / Latino: 14%
- Asian / Pacific Islander: 16%
- Native American Indian: 2%
- Other: 4%

Donut chart — Age:
- 17 Years or younger: 7%
- 18 Years: 52%
- 19 Years: 12%
- 20 Years: 7%
- 21+ Years: 22%
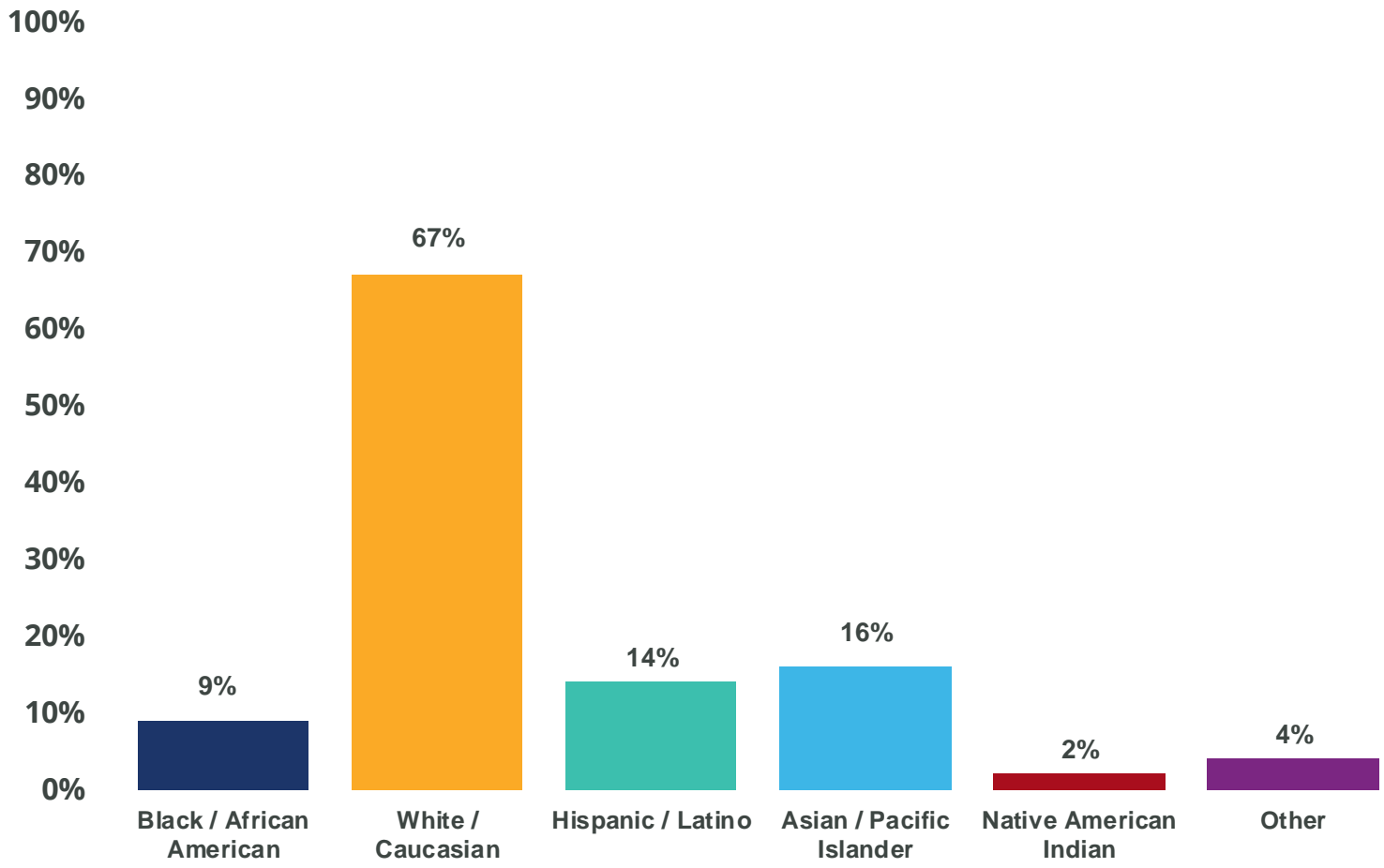
Do you identify as trans (e.g., transgender, transsexual, a person with transitioning sex or gender history, etc.)?					
Yes	2%	No	95%	Not sure	1%
Prefer not to answer	2%				

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Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging for Students

Supplemental Information

About Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging for Students

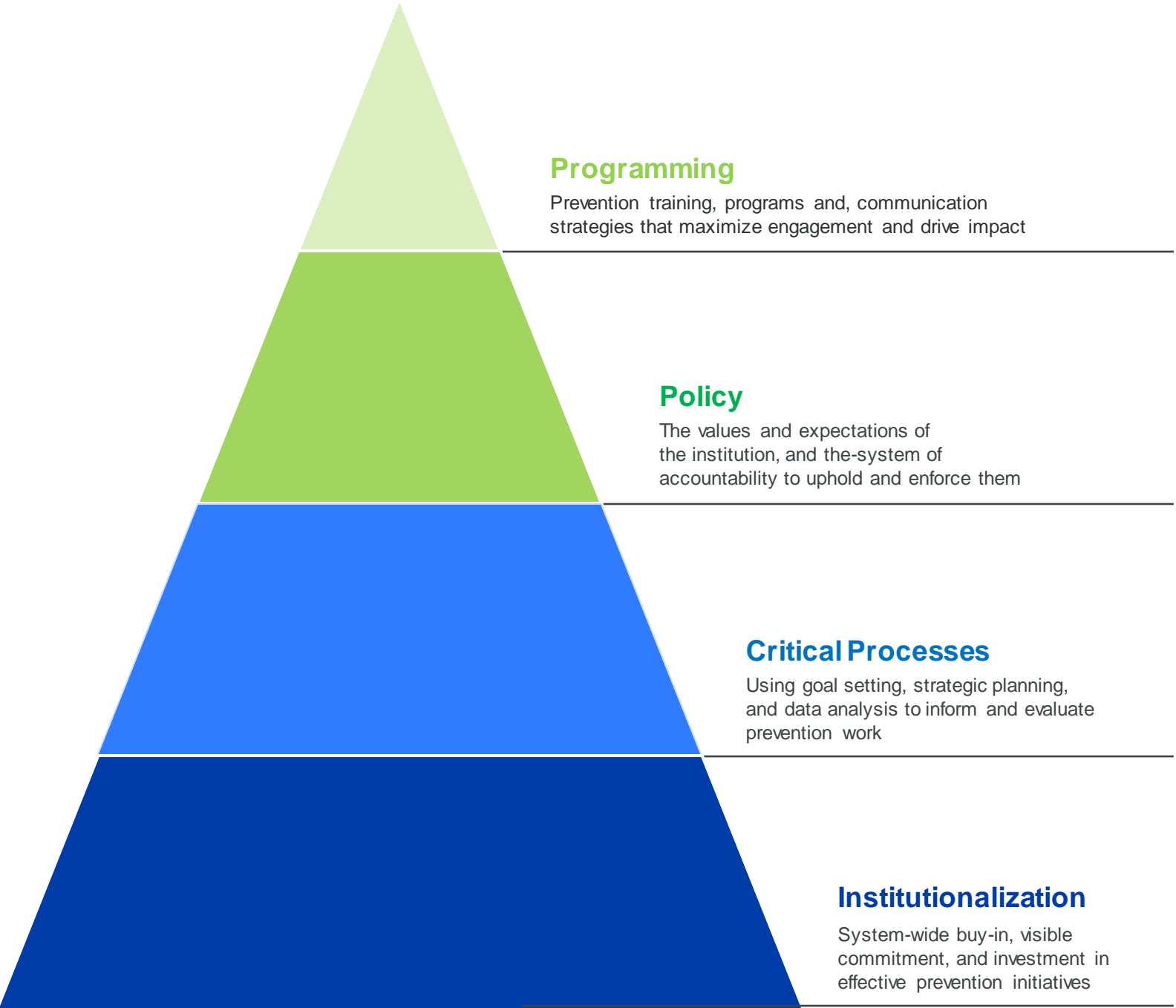| The Benefits of Working with Vector Solutions	Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging for Students
Proven Efficacy Nine independent studies have been published demonstrating the efficacy of Vector online programs. Our approach improves knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors.	**Informed by Emerging Research** on evidence-based practice (e.g., social norms approach, bystander intervention, cultural competency).
True Expertise Our team includes public health professionals, administrators from student affairs, campus prevention offices, legal experts, and more. Extend your team by partnering with ours.	**Learner-Centered Design** of content that utilizes positive framing with all topic areas that is always inclusive and relevant to contemporary audiences.
Beyond Compliance Our online programs are built by prevention and compliance experts to meet and exceed requirements from Title IX, Clery Act, and EDGAR Part 86.	**Built in Collaboration** with leading researchers and campus prevention experts including subject matter experts from our Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging Advisory Board.
Data Driven Our data and analytics provide real-time access to attitudinal and behavioral data from your unique populations, and national benchmarks to assess needs and strengths.	

The Prevention Framework

The Prevention Framework, developed by Vector Solutions' Campus Prevention Network, defines the elements of a comprehensive approach to Inclusive Excellence, and the ways in which those elements build to an effective diversity, inclusion, and belonging program.

Programming
Prevention training, programs and, communication strategies that maximize engagement and drive impact

Policy
The values and expectations of the institution, and the-system of accountability to uphold and enforce them

Critical Processes
Using goal setting, strategic planning, and data analysis to inform and evaluate prevention work

Institutionalization
System-wide buy-in, visible commitment, and investment in effective prevention initiatives

About Vector Solutions

Our Mission

We Make You Safer, Smarter, Better.

Our mission is to help higher education institutions and organizations create safer, smarter, better campus environments by improving safety, well-being and inclusion through comprehensive, evidence-based prevention strategies and solutions.

Safer. Smarter. Better.

Vector Solutions: Your Higher Education Partner

10 Million+ Annual Learners

2,000+ Higher Ed Customers

120+ Education Team Members

9 Course Efficacy Studies in Peer-Reviewed Journals

20+ Years In Higher Ed

VectorSolutions™

Elements of Best-in-Class Prevention

Comprehensive Course Catalog

45+
Student Courses

240+
Faculty and Staff Courses

High-Impact Content

9
Efficacy Studies in Peer-Reviewed Journals

Powerful Training Platform

21 Language Translations

In-course Configurations

Automations

Integration

Unparalleled Data to Inform Decision Making

Pre-, Post-, and Follow-up Surveys

Impact Reports

National & Custom Benchmarking

Climate Surveys

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