



All Elementary Schools:  
Second Step Student Survey Report,  
Fall 2020-Spring 2021



This report was prepared by Jerry Schultz, Ph.D. and Jennifer Lawlor, PhD of the University of Kansas Center for Community Health and Development on behalf of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

Suggested reference: All Elementary School: Second Step Student Survey Report, Fall 2020-Spring 2021 (2021). Center for Community health and Development, University of Kansas. Lawrence, KS 66045

Copyright 2021 Kansas Department of Health and Environment

# All Schools Second Step Student Survey Report, Fall 2020-Spring 2021

## Contents

- Executive Summary ..... 5
- Purpose of Second Step Student Survey Report..... 7
  - Key concepts measured by this survey:..... 7
- Evaluation Questions ..... 7
- Background ..... 7
- Description of the Participants ..... 8
- Overall Results .....10
  - 1. Overall trust in adults and peers at school .....10
  - 2. Overall respect among adults and peers in the school .....11
  - 3. Student opinion whether bullying is a problem at school.....12
  - 4. Student participation in bullying behavior .....13
  - 5. Student bystander endorsement of bullying .....14
  - 6. Student Defender Behavior .....15
  - 7. Student experience as a victim of bullying .....16
  - 8. Student opinion of whether bullying is wrong or okay .....17
  - 9. Student opinion of bystander intervention against bullying.....18
  - 10. Student perception of trust and caring among peers.....19
  - 11. Student perception that peers would intervene and help a victim of bullying .....20
  - 12. Student perception that adults in school would intervene and help a victim of bullying

Appendix.....22

Evaluation Approach .....22

## Executive Summary

Students in schools experience bullying. Bullying can have negative effects on students who experience it. They can feel socially isolated, perform poorly in school, develop symptoms of anxiety or depression or other problems. There are consequences for the perpetrator as well. Bullying shares risk factors with other forms of violence, including sexual violence. Engaging in bullying can lead to sexual harassment and violence as youth grow older. To prevent bullying, prevention programs help students understand what bullying behaviors are, promote communication and engagement with adults, promote prosocial activities, and model supportive behaviors. The Second Step program builds on a social-emotional learning foundation to teach students to recognize, report, and refuse bullying.

Table 1 that follows includes a summary of results for each of the key measures related to bullying in schools. They include: 1) summary measures (e.g., level of the behavior, perception of specific behaviors); 2) changes in student responses in Fall 2019 and Fall 2020; 3) differences between grades; and 4) differences between boys and girls). Differences in time, by grade and gender were tested for statistical significance, and areas that were significant are reported and results described in more depth in each section of the report. In addition, the results for change over time from Fall 2019 to Fall 2020 (there were no Spring 2020 results) are included for comparison. Table 1 provides a profile of bullying and related behaviors and attitudes that can be used to gauge progress and improvement.

Table 1: Summary of Results

Measure	Fall 2019 to Fall 2020	Fall 2020 to Spring 2021	Grades	Gender and Race
1. Overall trust in adults and peers at school was high	Trust increased	Trust decreased	3 <sup>rd</sup> saw less trust than 5 <sup>th</sup> graders at Fall 20, more at Spring 21	No difference
2. Overall respect among adults and peers in the school was high	Respect increased	Respect decreased	3 <sup>rd</sup> reported less respect at Fall 20 than 5 <sup>th</sup> graders and more respect at Spring 21	Girls reported lower respect than boys
3. Bullying at school was a small problem	Students perceived bullying as less of a problem over time	Students perceived bullying as more of a problem over time	3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> graders perceived bullying as a problem more than 5 <sup>th</sup> graders. 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> graders perceived saw it as less and 5 <sup>th</sup>	No difference

			graders as more of problem over time	
4. Students never participated in bullying behavior	No F19 results	Bullying increased	No difference	Girls and those who did not identify gender bullied less than boys
5. A. Student bystander engagement in bullying was low	Bystander bullying decreased	No change	No difference	Girls endorsed bullying less than boys
6. Bystanders defended victims sometimes	Student defending decreased	Student defending increased	3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> graders were more likely to defend victims than 5 <sup>th</sup> graders	Girls were no different than boys.
				Students of color defended less than white students at F20 and more at SP21
7. Student report they occasionally experience bullying	Decrease in victim experiences	Increase in victim experiences	No difference	Girls were victims less than boys
				Student of color were victimized less than white students at F20 and more at SP21
8. Students held the opinion that bullying is really wrong	No change	Students' opinion that bullying was wrong decreased	No difference	Girls perceived bullying as more wrong than boys
9. Students thought it was very okay for a bystander to intervene against bullying	No change	No change	No difference	No difference
10. Student perceived trust and caring among peers was sometimes true	Perceptions of trust and caring increased	Perceptions of trust and caring decreased	No difference	No difference
11. Student sometimes perceived that peers would intervene and help a victim	Perceptions that peers would intervene increased	No change	No difference	No difference
12. Student perceived that adults in school would intervene and help a victim most of the time	No change	No change	No differences	Students who did not identify gender thought adults would intervene less than others

## Purpose of Second Step Student Survey Report:

This report provides the results of an analysis of changes in students' responses to key measures related to bullying in schools. The Second Step student survey assesses key student behaviors, perceptions and attitudes and other factors related to bullying in schools, such as trust, bullying behavior, and bystander behavior. The 12 concepts that the survey measures are:

### Key concepts measured by this survey:

1. Overall trust in adults and peers at school
2. Overall respect among adults and peers at school
3. Student opinion of whether bullying is a problem at school
4. Student participation in bullying behavior
5. Student bystander endorsement of Bullying
6. Student defender behavior
7. Student experience as a victim of bullying
8. Student opinion of whether bullying is wrong or okay
9. Student opinion of bystander intervention against bullying
10. Student perception of trust and respect in their relationships with peers
11. Student perception that peers would intervene and help a victim of bullying
12. Student perception that adults in school would intervene and help a victim of bullying

The analysis looked for changes or differences in a student's response from Fall 2019 and Fall 2020, whether there were differences between each grade level (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grades), and if there were differences between boys and girls. Differences in responses by race/ethnicity were also analyzed.

## Evaluation Questions

The questions used to evaluate the Second Step program in this report are:

1. Do students participating in the Second Step program improve their behaviors, perceptions and attitudes related to bullying?
2. How do boys and girls perceive and engage in bullying behaviors?
3. How do students in the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades respond differently after participating in the program?

## Background

The office of Sexual Violence Prevention at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment funded the implementation of the Second Step program in seven schools in Kansas. Second Step was implemented starting in Fall of 2019 in seven elementary schools – Royal Valley, Freeman, Oatville, Rex,

Prairie, Nelson and Ruth Clark elementary schools. Second Step is a social-emotional learning (SEL) program that helps transform schools into supportive, successful learning environments that encourages students to thrive. The Second Step classroom curriculum is implemented in classrooms in grades 3, 4 and 5. The bullying prevention program promotes the social-emotional growth and safety of students at the schools. Only significant findings are discussed.

## Description of the Participants

Students from the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades participated in the Second Step program. At all the schools combined, 1,030 students completed the surveys. The demographic breakdown of the respondents is presented in Table 2. The number of respondents was evenly distributed across grade level and gender. The highest percent of students were age 9-10 year-olds, followed by 8- and 11-year-olds. Students were well distributed across grades. Most of the respondents were White (58.5%) and 12.7% were Latino.

Table 2: Demographics of Participants

Age	
7	.1
8	18.4
9	33.2
10	37.3
11	10.8
12	.2
Grade Level	
3	29.6
4	36.5
5	33.9
Gender	
Boys	47.4
Girls	48.2
I do not want to answer	4.38
Race/Ethnicity*	
American Indian or Alaskan Native	11
African American/Black	5.7
Asian	4
Hispanic/Latino	12.7
White	58.5
Pacific Islander	1.2
I do not want to answer	29.4



\*Total percent exceeds 100% as multiple choices were allowed.

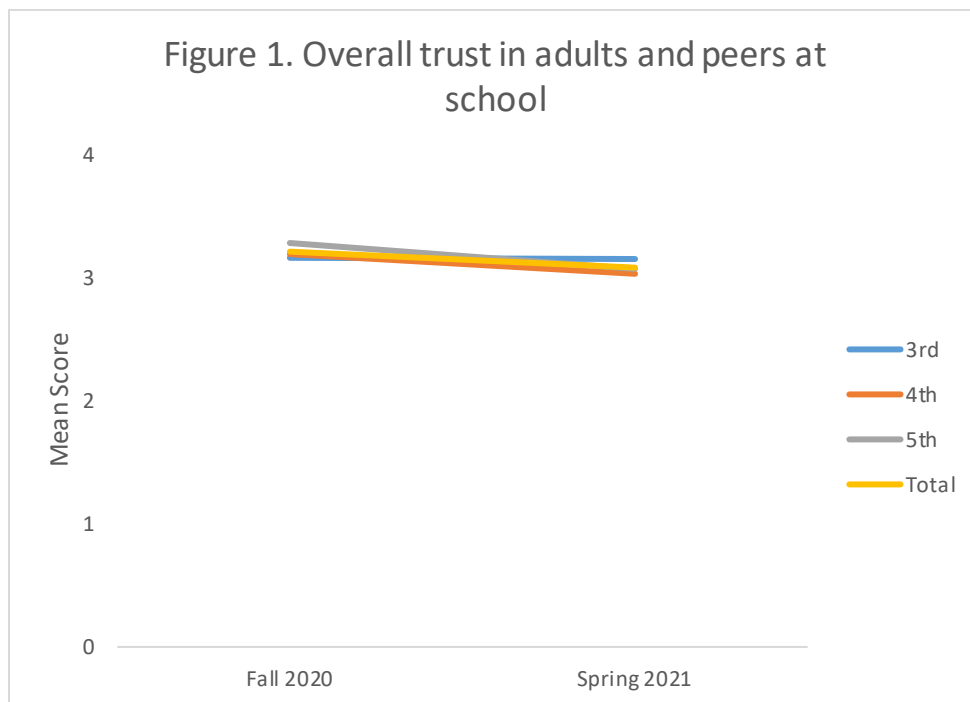
## Overall Results

### 1. Overall trust in adults and peers at school

Trust in adults and peers at school was measured using responses to four trust statements. The responses could range from *really disagree* to *really agree*. The four statements were:

Students in my school can be trusted.
Students in my school generally get along with each other.
Teachers and staff in my school can be trusted.
Teachers and staff in my school usually get along with students.

Students generally *agree* with these statements. The responses were scored and ranged from 0 to 4 and had a mean of 3.1 for Spring 2021. The higher the score the more students agreed with the statements indicating higher perceived trust in the school. The results over time and by grade are shown for Fall 2020 to Spring 2021 in Figure 1. Overall, trust decreased significantly from Fall 2020 to Spring 2021. There was no significant difference across grades. Third graders perceive significantly less trust than 5<sup>th</sup> graders at Fall 2020 and more at Spring 2021. There were no significant differences in scores between boy and girls and by race/ethnicity.

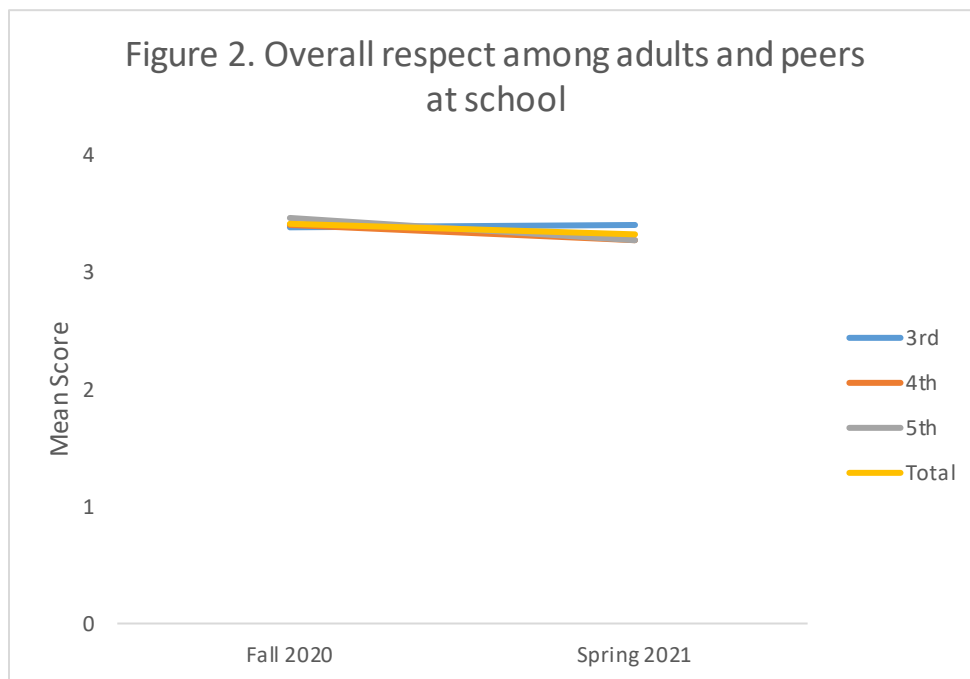


## 2. Overall respect among adults and peers in the school

Respect among adults and peers at school was measured using responses to eight respect statements. The responses could range from *really disagree* to *really agree*. The eight statements were:

My teachers respect me.
My teachers are fair.
Teachers in my school are nice people.
When students break rules at my school, they are treated fairly.
Teachers and staff ask students about their ideas at my school.
My school is a good place to be.
I feel like I belong at my school.
There is an adult at school who I trust.

Students generally *agree* with these statements. The responses to these statements were scored and range from 0 to 4, with a mean of 3.3 at Spring 2021. The higher the score the more students agreed with the respect statements. The results over time and by grade are shown in Figure 2. Overall, respect decreased significantly from Fall 2020 to Spring 2021. There were no significant differences across grades, but 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders perceived less respect than 5<sup>th</sup> graders at Fall 2020 and more at Spring 2021. Girls perceived significantly more respects than boys. There were no differences in scores by race/ethnicity.

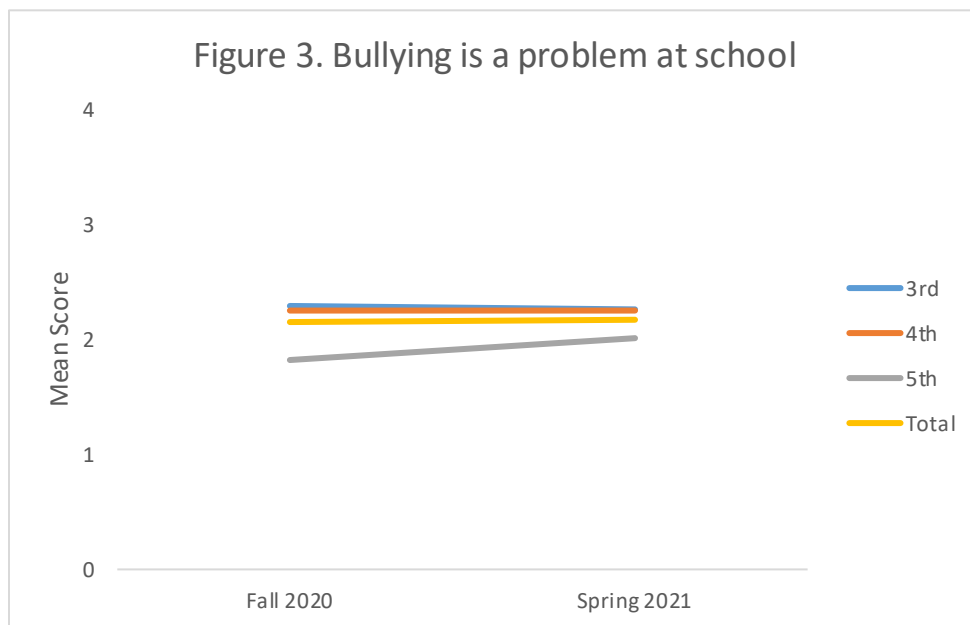


### 3. Student opinion whether bullying is a problem at school

Bullying is a problem at school was measured by nine bullying statements. The responses could range from *no problem at all* to *really big problem*. The nine statements were:

Students picking fights with other students.
Students pushing, shoving, or tripping smaller or weaker students.
Students hurting or threatening to hurt teachers or adults at school.
Students teasing, spreading rumors and lies, or saying mean things to other students.
Students saying mean things about teachers or staff.
Students telling lies or making fun of other students using the Internet or cell phone (email, instant messaging, text messaging, social media or websites).
Students starting rumors that a kid had a crush on another kid.
Students saying things about a girl's body that she didn't like.
Students saying things about a boy's body that he didn't like.

The students generally responded that these statements were a *small problem*. School bullying is a problem responses were scored and range from 0 to 4, with a mean of 2.2 at Spring 2021. The higher the score the more students thought bullying was a problem in school. The results over time and by grade are shown in Figure 3. Bullying as a problem increased significantly from Fall 2020 to Spring 2021. Third and 4<sup>th</sup> graders saw bullying as a problem significantly more than 5<sup>th</sup> graders. There were no differences between boys and girls and by race/ethnicity.

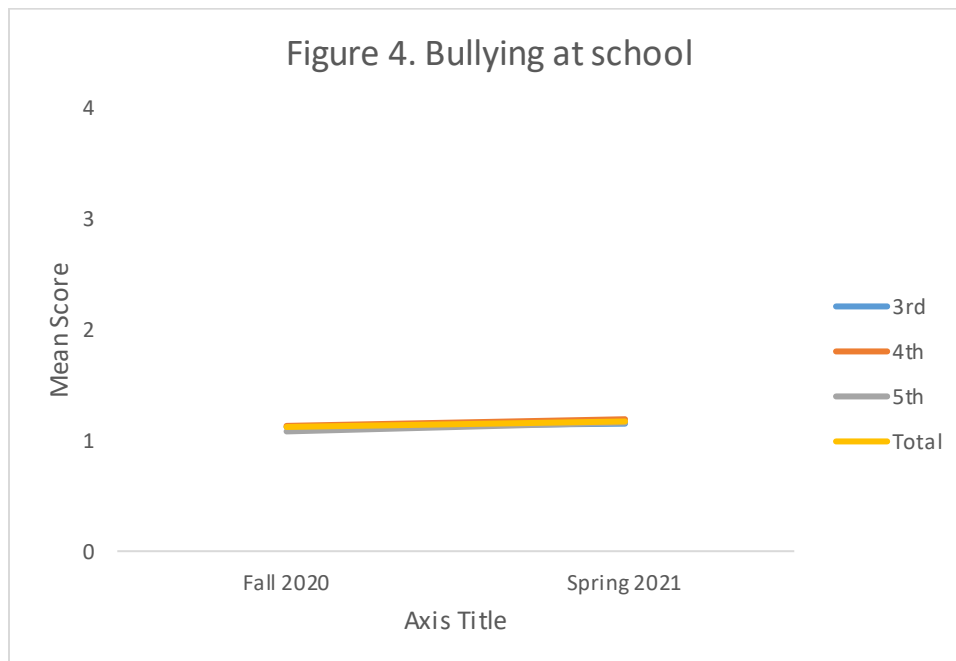


#### 4. Student participation in bullying behavior

Student participation in bullying behavior was measured by seven bullying behavior statements. The responses could range from *never* to *a lot*. The seven statements were:

I pushed, shoved, tripped, or picked a fight with a student who I knew was weaker than me.
I teased or said mean things to other students.
I spread rumors about some students.
I told lies or made fun of some students using the Internet or cell phone (for example: email, instant messaging, text messaging, social media or websites).
I started a rumor that a kid had a crush on another kid.
I said things about a girl's body that she didn't like.
I said things about a boy's body that he didn't like.

The students generally responded that they *never* engage in these behaviors. Bullying in school responses were scored and range from 0 to 4, with a mean of 1.2 at Spring 2021. The higher the score the more students engaged in bullying. The results by grade are shown in Figure 4. Bullying increased significantly from Fall 2020 to Spring 2021. There were no significant differences by grade. Girls and those who did not identify gender bullied significantly less than boys. There were no differences by race/ethnicity.



## 5. Student bystander endorsement of bullying

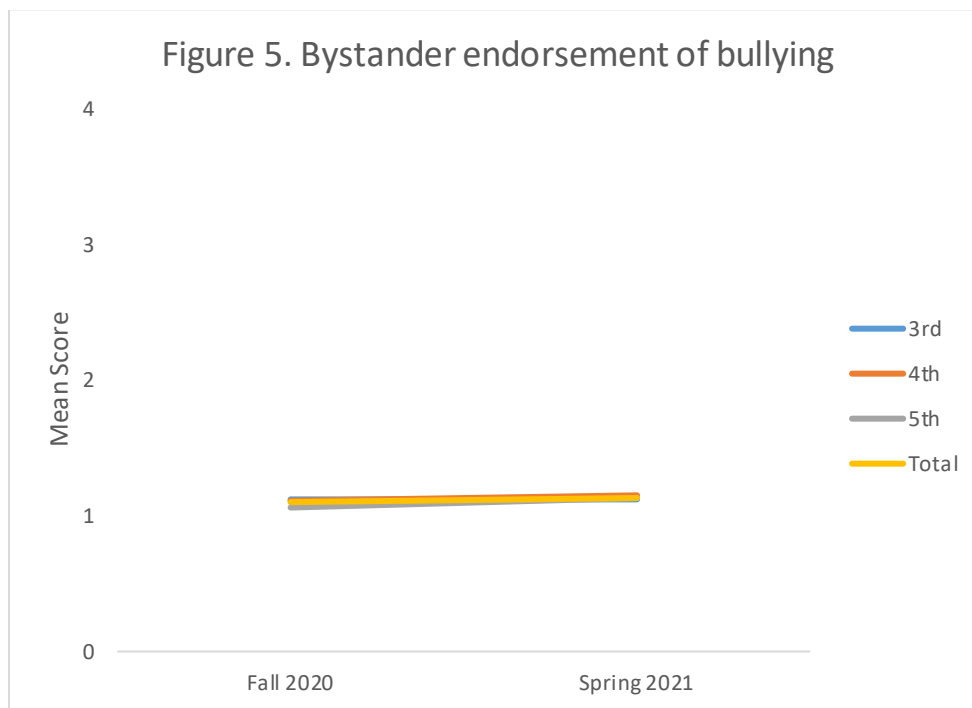
Student bystanders could endorse bullying or defend the victim. Student bystander endorsement of bullying behavior was measured by three bystander behavior statements. The responses could range from *never* to *a lot*. The three statements were:

I joined in when students were teasing or being mean to other students.

I joined in when students told lies about other students.

I encouraged somebody else to push, shove or trip weaker students.

The students generally responded that they *never* engage in student bystander endorsement of bullying. Student bystander endorsement of bullying was scored and range from 0 to 4, with a mean of 1.1 at Spring 2021. The higher the score the more students endorsed or engaged in bullying as a bystander. The results over time and by grade are shown in Figure 5. Students engaging in bullying as bystanders did not change significantly from Fall 2020 to Spring 2021. There were no significant differences by grade. Girls endorsed bullying as a bystander significantly less than boys. There were no differences by race/ethnicity.



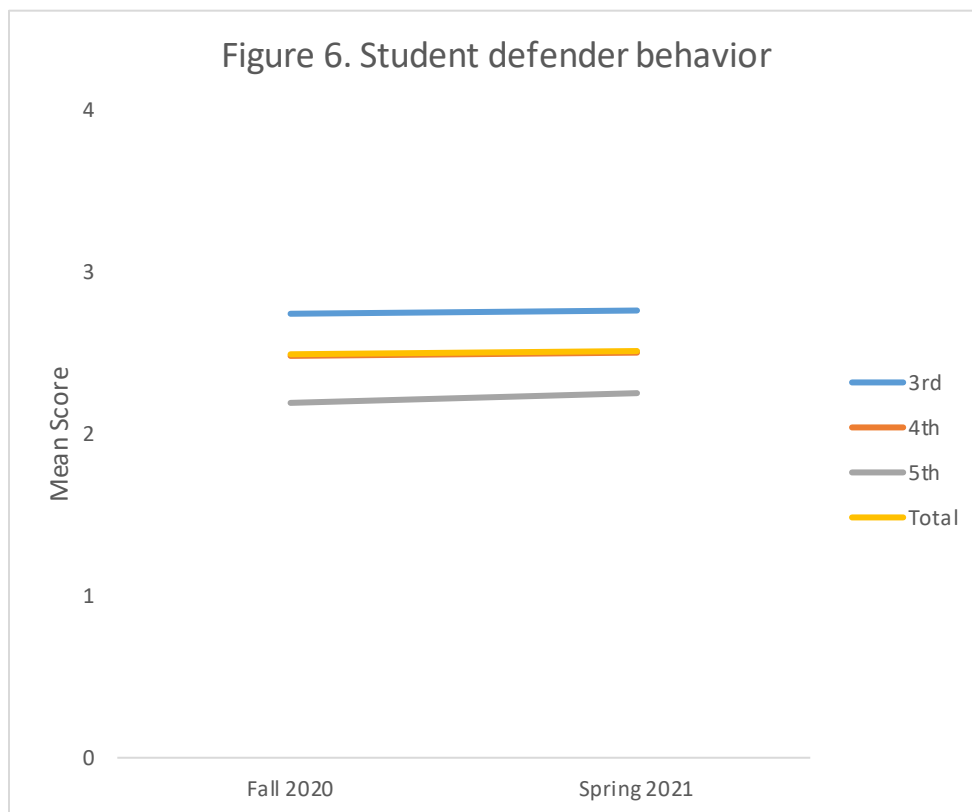
## 6. Student Defender Behavior

Student defender behavior was measured by another set of two bystander behavior statements. The responses could range from *never* to *a lot*. The two statements were:

I tried to stick up for students who always get pushed or shoved around.

I asked an adult to help someone whom was getting teased, pushed, or shoved around by other students.

The students generally responded that they had engaged in these behaviors *several times*. The student defender measure ranges from 0 to 4, with a mean of just under 2.5 at Spring 2021. The higher the score the more students engaged in defender behavior. The results over time and by grade are shown in Figure 6. Students defended behavior increased significantly from Fall 2020 to Spring 2021. Third and 4<sup>th</sup> graders defended significantly more than 5<sup>th</sup> graders. There were no significant differences in scores between boys and girls. Students of color defended significantly less than white students.

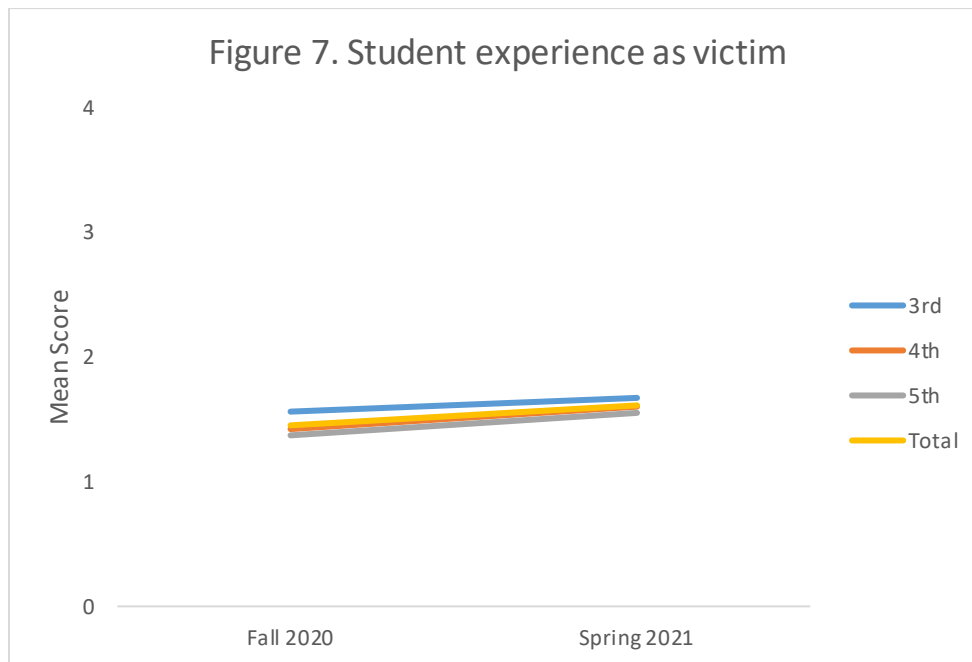


## 7. Student experience as a victim of bullying

Being a victim of bullying was measured by four victimization statements. The responses could range from *never* to *a lot*. The four statements were:

Another student or group of students pushed, shoved, tripped, or picked a fight with me.
Another student or group of students teased me or said mean things to me.
Another student or group of students spread rumors about me.
A student or group of students told lies or made fun of me using the Internet or cell phone (for example: email, instant messaging, text messaging, social media or websites).

Students generally responded that they had *never* experienced to experienced victimization *once or twice*. The victim of bullying measure ranges from 0 to 4, with a mean of 1.6 at Spring 2021. The higher the score the more students experienced being a victim of bullying. The results over time and by grade are shown in Figure 7. Overall, being a victim increased from Fall 2020 to Spring 2021. There were no significant differences by grade. Girls were victims significantly less than boys. Students of colors were victims significantly less than white students at Fall 2020 and more at Spring 2021.



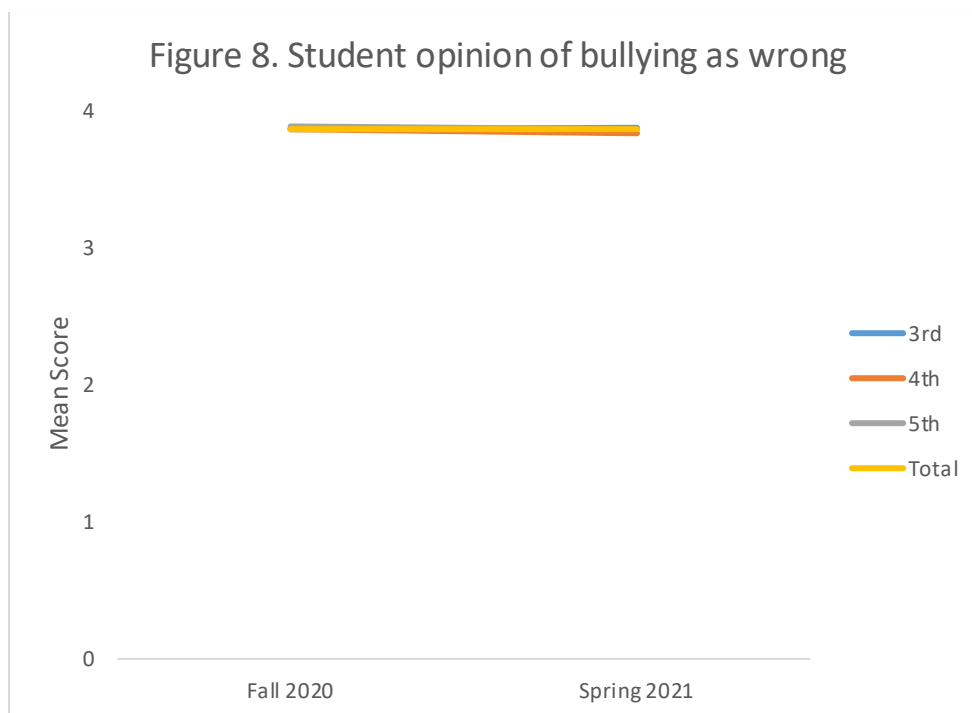


## 8. Student opinion of whether bullying is wrong or okay

Student opinion of bullying was measured with seven bullying statements. The responses could range from *really wrong* to *very okay*. The seven statements were:

Students tease weaker students in front of others.
Students spread rumors or lies about other students behind their back.
Students telling lies or making fun of less popular students using the Internet or cell phone (for example: email, instant messaging, text messaging, social media or websites).
Students push, shove, or pick fights with weaker students.
Students encourage others to fight weaker students and cheer them on.
Students encourage others to be mean and spread lies about less popular students.
Students ignore it when someone weaker is being pushed around.

Students generally responded that they thought bullying was *really wrong*. The bullying is wrong or okay measure ranges from 0 to 4, with a mean of 3.9 at Spring 2021. The higher the score the more students thought bullying was wrong. The results over time and by grade are shown in Figure 8. Overall, student opinion of that bullying was wrong decreased significantly from Fall 2020 to Spring 2021. There were no significant differences by grade. Girls thought bullying was significantly more wrong more than boys. There were no differences by race/ethnicity.

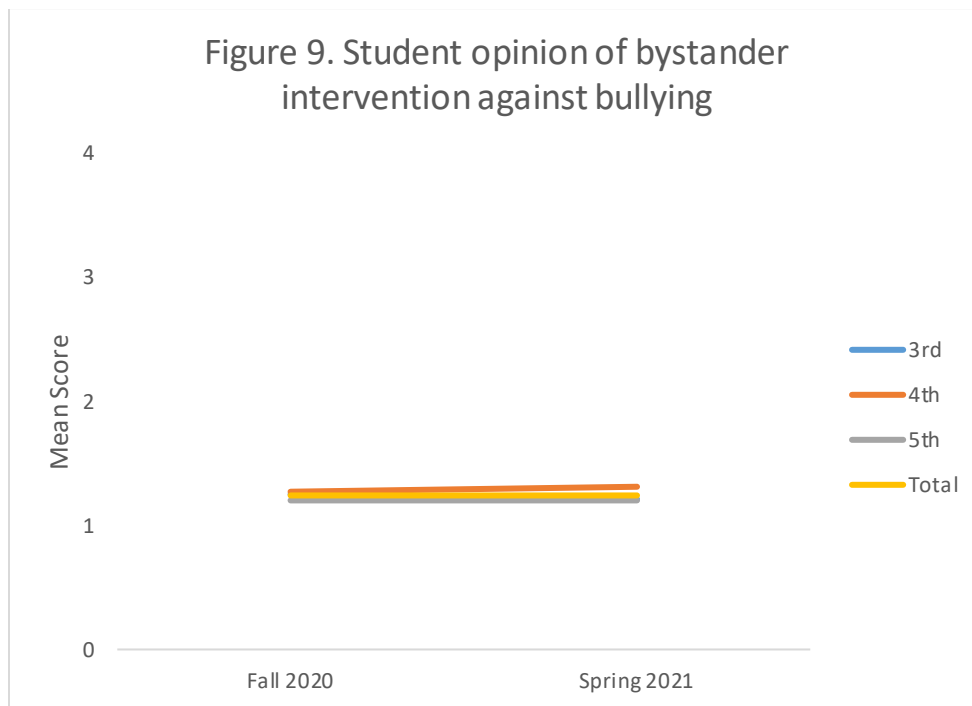


## 9. Student opinion of bystander intervention against bullying

Student opinion of bystander intervention was measured with three intervention statements. The responses could range from *really wrong* to *very okay*. The three statements were:

Students stick up for others who are being shoved around by strong students.
Students go to the teacher or an adult for help when someone is getting beaten up.
Students go to the teacher or an adult for help when others are spreading rumors or lies about someone.

Students generally responded that they thought bystander intervening against bullying was very okay. The bystander intervening against bullying ranges from 0 to 4, with a mean of 1.2. The higher the score the more students thought intervening as a bystander was wrong. The results over time and by grade are shown in Figure 9. Overall, there were no significant changes from Fall 2020 to Spring 2021. There were no significant differences across grades. There were no significant differences in scores between boy and girls or by race/ethnicity.

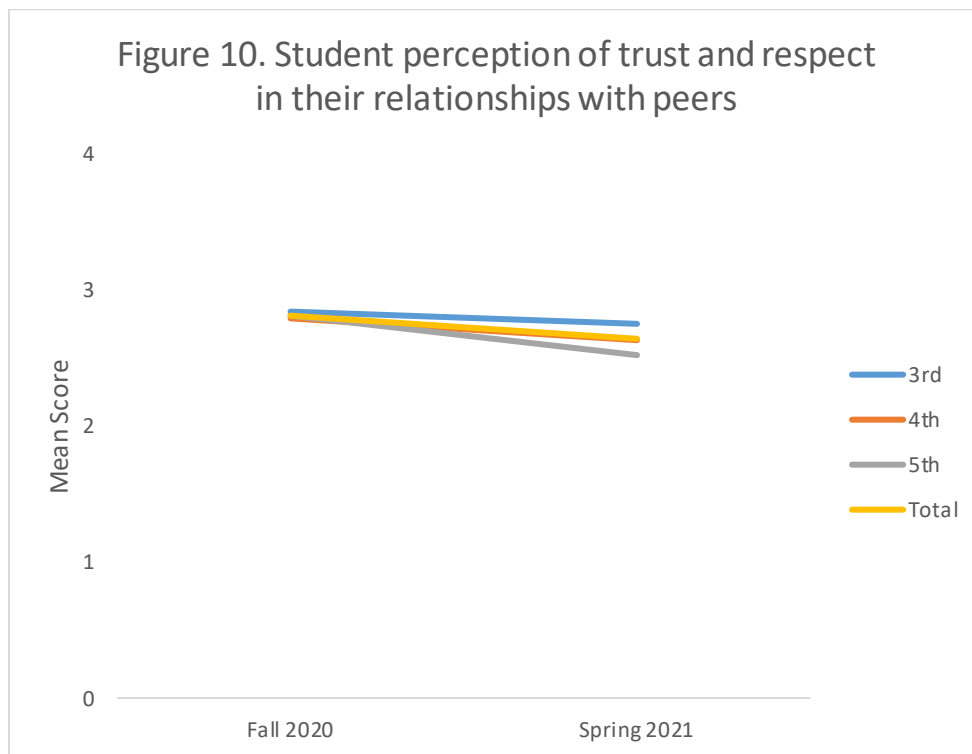


## 10. Student perception of trust and caring among peers

Student perception of trust and caring among peers was measured using responses to four trust and caring statements. The responses could range from *no, not at all true* to *yes, completely true*. The four statements were:

Students my age...
Really care about what happens to me.
Are there for me whenever I need help.
Can be trusted a lot.
Care about my feelings.

The students thought these statements are *sometimes true*. The responses were scored and range from 0 to 4 and had a mean of 2.6. The higher the score the more students perceived trust and respect among peers. The results over time and by grade are shown in Figure 10. Overall, perception of trust and respect decreased from Fall 2020 to Spring 2021. There were no significant differences across grades. There were no significant differences in scores between boy and girls or by race/ethnicity.

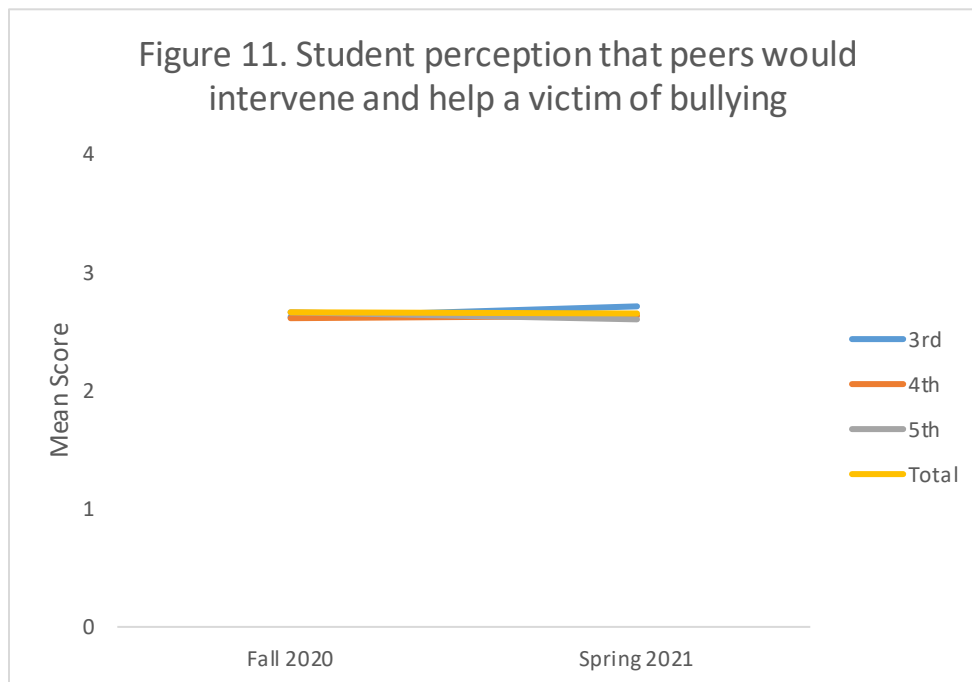


## 11. Student perception that peers would intervene and help a victim of bullying

Student perception that peers intervene was measured using responses to four intervention statements. The responses could range from *never* to *always*. The four statements were:

Students would help out if...
A student is making fun of or teasing another student who is obviously weaker.
A student is spreading rumors or lies about another student behind their back.
A student in my school is telling lies or making fun of another student who gets picked on a lot using the Internet or cell phone (for example: email, instant messaging, text messaging, social media or websites).
A student or group of students is pushing, shoving, or trying to pick a fight with a weaker student.

The students responded that these statements were true *most of the time*. The responses were scored and range from 0 to 4 and had a mean of 2.7. The higher the score the more students thought peers would intervene in bullying situations. The results over time and by grade are shown in Figure 11. Overall, the perception that peers would intervene did not change from Fall 2020 to Spring 2021. There were no significant differences across grades. There were no significant differences in scores between boy and girls or by race/ethnicity.

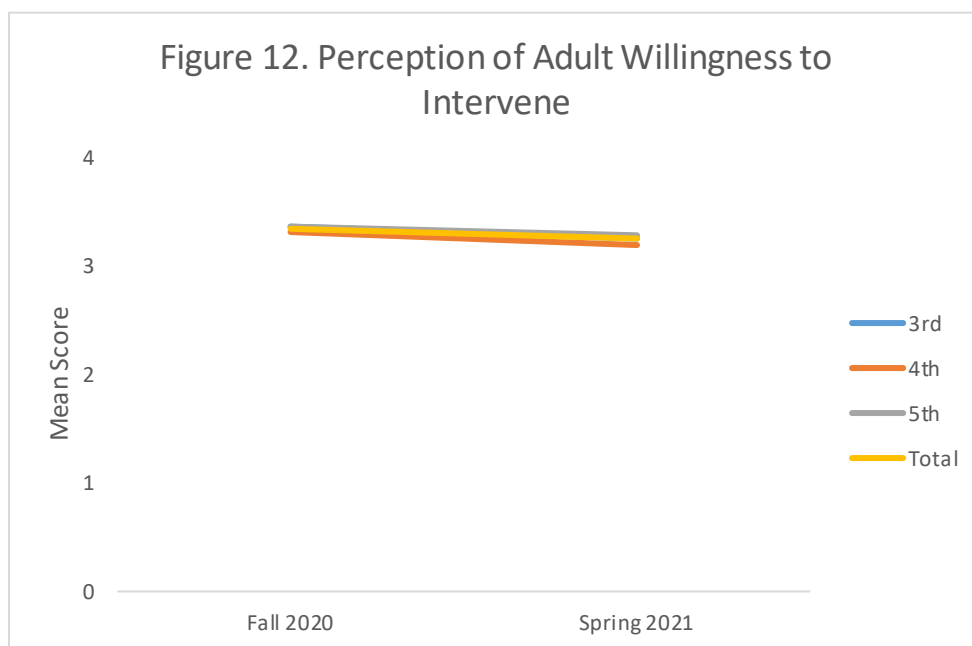


## 12. Student perception that adults in school would intervene and help a victim of bullying

Student perception that adults will intervene was measured using responses to four intervention statements. The responses could range from *never* to *always*. The four statements were:

Teachers or staff would stop it, if...
A student is making fun of or teasing another student who is obviously weaker.
A student is spreading rumors or lies about another student behind their back.
A student in my school is telling lies or making fun of another student who gets picked on a lot using the Internet or cell phone (for example: email, instant messaging, text messaging, social media or websites).
A student or group of students is pushing, shoving, or trying to pick a fight with a weaker student.

The students thought these statements were true *most of the time*. The responses were scored and range from 0 to 4 and had a mean of 3.3. The higher the score the more students thought adults would intervene in bullying situations. The results over time and by grade are shown in Figure 12. Overall, the perception that adults would intervene did not change from Fall 2020 to Spring 2021. There were no significant differences across grades. There were no significant differences in scores between boy and girls or by race/ethnicity.



## Appendix

### Evaluation Approach

Freeman, Nelson, Oatville, Prairie, Rex, Royal Valley, and Ruth Clark Elementary schools took part in the Second Step Program during Fall of 2019 to Spring 2021. Responses from 1,030 students were used in this evaluation.

Blank surveys were removed before data analysis. All analyses were conducted with Stata Meolgit, which allowed us to model the nested structure that exists in the data (students nested within grades, as well as allowing non-normal distributions of outcomes). Each model contained predictors representing the fixed effects of time (pre or post), gender and grade, as well as the time by grade and time by gender interaction.