

# SurveyWorks

## A Guide to Rhode Island Survey Data as Displayed in InfoWorks Advanced Reports

### WHAT IS SURVEY WORKS?

Once a year, Rhode Island surveys its students, teachers and parents with an instrument called SurveyWorks. The survey asks members of school communities their opinions and perceptions regarding a broad range of school culture-and-climate issues. The goal is to provide meaningful data that can help schools them improve their social environment. The survey questions are worded to be age-appropriate for the students' level – elementary, middle and high school. Students do not participate until grade 4, when they can fill out their own surveys.

### WHY SURVEY STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND PARENTS?

Student achievement is the number one priority of every school. High-performing schools depend on several factors, not the least of which are great teachers, strong curricula, and supportive families. But research shows clearly that each school's climate and culture strongly affect student achievement. Students perform best when they are all held to high expectations and also feel welcomed, safe, and respected. Not surprisingly, their teachers do too. Similarly, parents and families are most effective when school staff treat them as valued partners. In short, climate and culture matter.

### ALL PARENTS WANT THEIR CHILDREN TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOL.

Often test scores are not parents' top priority. Parents want their child to be nurtured and cared for socially, as well as academically. But measuring subjective factors such as "feeling welcomed" is more difficult than measuring academic achievement. Anonymous surveys help. Once members of a school community understand how each other feels about their school experience, they can remove subtle, social obstacles to student learning.

### NATIONALLY, SOCIAL RESEARCH ON SCHOOL CLIMATE HAS EXPANSIVELY GROWN.

Interest in school culture and climate has become a hot issue as the public became aware of the unintended consequences of "zero-tolerance," get-tough approaches to discipline – namely: soaring suspension and expulsion rates, racial disparities among the punished, and the "classroom-to-prison pipeline." Research shows that neither poverty nor the fragmentation of families drive individual schools' poor performance as strongly as the school's culture and climate. The Advanced Reports are designed to shed light on school culture so schools can pinpoint, and address, problems.

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The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) heartily thanks all of our school districts, and particularly those charged with Survey Administration, for the time and effort they put into gathering these important data.



## Rhode Island's Educational Surveys – an Overview:

In 1998 Rhode Island was among the first states to administer surveys to students, teachers and parents in order to assess the quality of each school's culture and climate. The original "SALT" (School Accountability for Learning and Teaching) survey was long and entirely paper-and-pencil. RIDE replaced it in 2010-2011 with the shorter, SurveyWorks which is mostly taken online.

### AREAS THE CURRENT SURVEY INVESTIGATES:

InfoWorks organizes data according to five big topics, which you'll find at the "bars" on any InfoWorks page. Many issues concerning school culture can not be conveniently sorted into the five InfoWorks subjects because they cross over several topics, like "Parent-teacher Communication." Advanced Reports allow users to see the results in topic clusters.

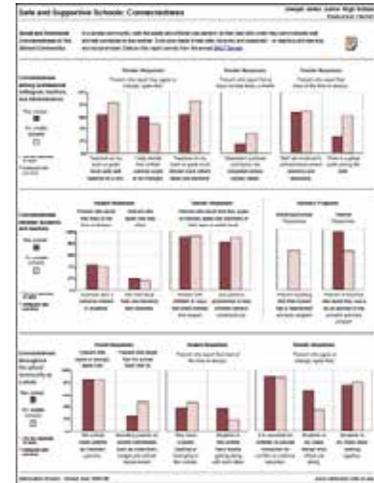
The areas surveyed include:

- Student engagement
- Parent involvement
- Teacher expectations
- Teacher practices
- Professional collaboration and climate
- Student college and career readiness
- School safety and student risk behaviors
- Bullying
- Parent-teacher communication
- School-parent communication
- Student communication with parents and school staff
- Resources and support

### ALL RESPONSES ARE ANONYMOUS.

RIDE guarantees that all responses, from all parties, are anonymous. Our administrative procedures are the same as those that guide the highest standards for research. No one can find out how any individual answered the questions.

As a rule, SurveyWorks only publishes data that have a cell size of 10 individual records or more. So, if only 9 parents answered a question, the data will show up as NA, or "not available."



*An example of an old "SALT" survey printed report*

## The Cycle Begins: Survey Administration

Surveys are administered in November and December. In the fall, if you are a parent, teacher, or administrator, you can go to [SurveyWorks Administration](#) where you'll find all you need to know about completing a survey, including the dates for the survey-administration. This site is also where teachers and parents can sign in with their access code, and fill out the survey wherever and whenever they like.

Home | About | Contact

# SurveyWorks!

Rhode Island's Education Survey Suite

Students Teachers & Administrators **Parents**

### About the Parent Survey

*Parents - we want your input!*

**The 2013-2014 Surveys are now closed.** Check back next year for information about the 2014-2015 Survey.

Please contact your child's school if you have any questions or need more information about taking the survey.

The Parent Survey asks about:

- Student engagement
- Parent involvement
- Teacher expectations
- College and career readiness
- School safety and risk behaviors
- Parent-teacher communication
- School-parent communication
- Resources and support

**Parent Survey**  
November 12th to December 20th, 2013  
• This survey is now closed.

See more at [surveyworks.ride.ri.gov](http://surveyworks.ride.ri.gov)

### ACCESS CODES ALLOW PARENTS AND TEACHERS TO TAKE THE SURVEY AT THEIR CONVENIENCE.

**Teachers** get their access codes at school, from the Survey Administrator or their Principal.

**Parents** receive access codes in the letters schools send home inviting them to participate.

The survey can only be completed with an access code, so if the letter invitation is lost, parents can get a new code anonymously by calling the number on the site's "Contact" page.

The Parent Survey can be taken online or downloaded, printed on paper, completed, and returned to your school. Schools must make computers available to their parents, as needed.

### STUDENTS TAKE THEIR SURVEYS IN SCHOOL.

Schools must make time and computers available to students during the regular school day.

Paper-pencil surveys are available upon request, to parents, teachers and students.

## The Cycle Continues: The First Set of Individual-School Survey Results

Survey results are posted in the spring. InfoWorks will automatically notify you of the availability of these results if you sign up for [InfoWorks updates](#), which are e-blasts that come out infrequently. You'll always find each school's most recent results at the very bottom of that school's page under "Other." Administrator survey results are on the bottom of the district page.

**ALL INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL AND DISTRICT DATA ARE COMPARED WITH THE STATE AVERAGE.**

Compare your school to the state average to see how it's doing in the bigger picture.

Big Topic Bars

Complete Survey Reports PDF files to download

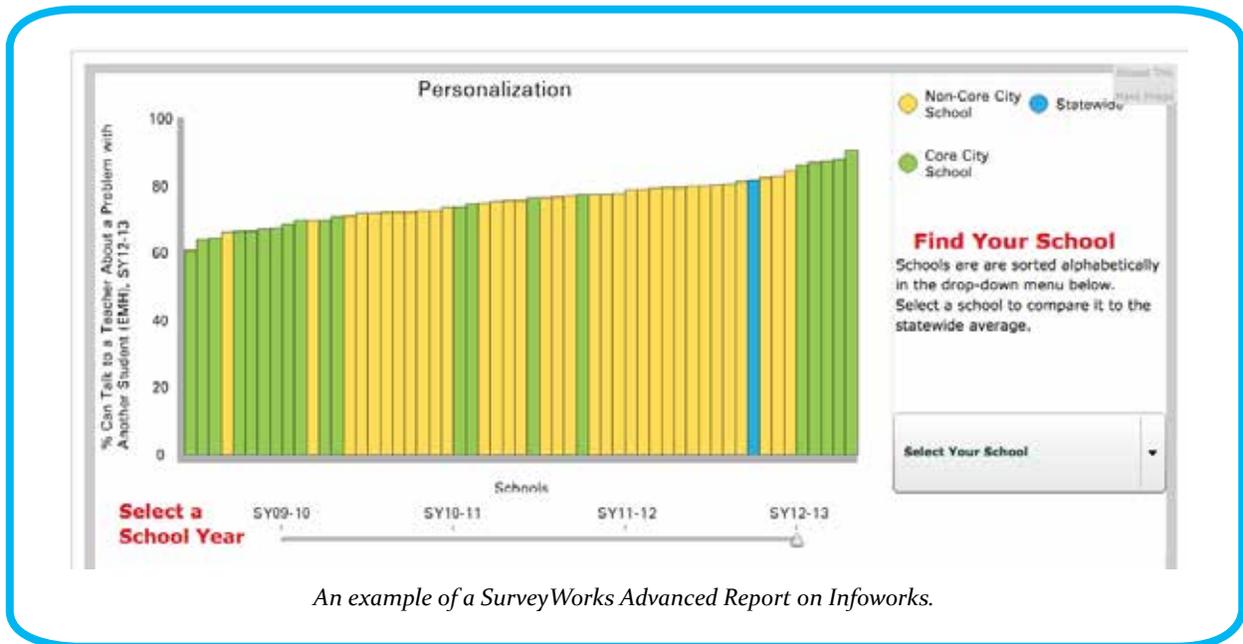
An example of a school data page on InfoWorks.ri.gov.

Parent-School Partnership	Total	This School %				Total	Statewide %			
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?										
This school views parents as important partners.	35	2.9	8.6	8.6	80.0	21457	1.8	5.9	50.2	42.1
This school and I have the same goals for my child.	35	5.7	2.9	48.6	42.9	21443	1.7	7.0	52.8	38.5

Comparing each school to the state average helps one see how each school is doing in the bigger picture.

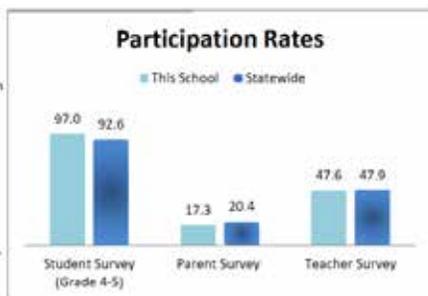
## The Survey Cycle Finishes: Advanced Reports.

Advanced Reports show large amounts of data in an at-a-glance form that makes comparisons among schools easy. If you're not used to them, Advanced Reports can seem intimidating. But click around the interactive features. The tool is powerful. And it won't be long before you get the hang of it. Keep reading to find guidance on accessing the features of the Advanced Reports, or [click here to see the tutorial video](#).



### RESULTS ARE GROUPED BY SUBJECT.

Data are clustered under topics such as Personalization, Academic Engagement or Bullying. In each report, drop-down menus give you access to the results gathered for individual questions, allowing you to see your school in the context of all other schools at the same level – elementary, middle and high.



This chart is found in the pdf version of the SurveyWorks report for each school (see page 4).

### CAUTION: NOTE PARTICIPATION RATES

Please note that if only 10% of the faculty or parents respond, the data are capturing only a small percentage of that group. So interpret the results with caution. InfoWorks can only publish the data it receives. We strongly encourage schools to reach out to every parent and teacher to ensure that every voice is heard.

Participation rates are at the top of the survey results pdf on your school's page. [An Advanced Report displays and compares them here](#).

## How to Access The Advanced Reports

Go to InfoWorks' homepage and click on the tab at the top marked "Advanced Reports."

Go to the drop-down menu of topic areas and select "SurveyWorks."

Lastly, select the survey topic of your choice by clicking the logos at the right for the interactive charts. The InfoWorks team will be adding Advanced Reports on an on-going basis, with new clusters of data, such as new survey topics and additional years of data. The InfoWorks team plans to create reports that draw from a variety of data sources, but currently the chart options in any of the Advanced Reports are only those you see when you click the "Category" you wish to explore. (Please feel free to suggest topics and questions that can be answered by the existing data by filling out the [feedback form](#). And thank you!)

Click on the Advanced Reports tab

Select Topic

Click on icons for access to interactive charts

**Advanced Reports**

Each Report has several interactive charts, often including a sortable table that shows the specific numbers that were used to calculate the visual representations. Drag your mouse across the bars to see the name of the School or District, along with the specifics represented by each datapoint. Dropdown menus allow you to change the categories on the axes of certain charts.

Select a category. Click the icons under the year columns to view available Reports.

SurveyWorks

Accountability

SurveyWorks

Uniform Chart of Accounts (UCOA)

perceptions-and-opinions data from students, parents, and teachers. The data site, which strongly affects student learning. SurveyWorks Advanced Reports have clustered survey responses around specific topics to allow you to compare schools on an at-a-glance basis.

Group	Report	2012-13
Student Responses	Academic Engagement	
Student Responses	Bullying	
Student Responses	Personnel	
Student Responses	Resources	
Student Responses	Wellness	
Participation	SurveyWorks	

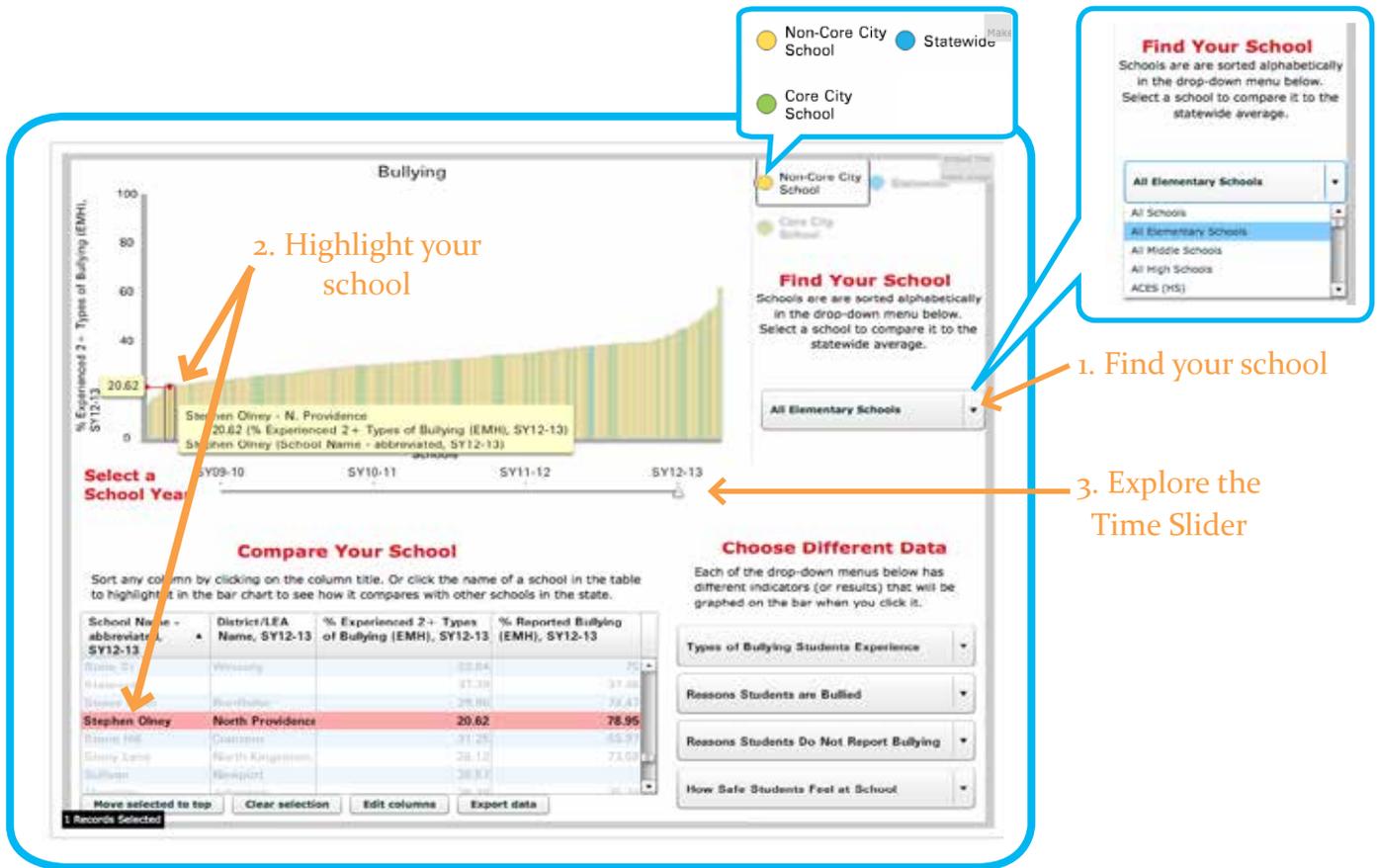
**Academic Engagement**

Find Your School

Compare Your School

School Name	District/SEA Name	% Teachers Make Learning Progress (LEP), 6/12-13	% Teachers Give Good Instruction (GMI), 6/12-13
Academy of Arts	Providence	56.02	67.36
Albany HS	Providence	64.10	51.39
Barrington HS	Barrington	62.00	71.76
Bassett Arts HS	Bassett District School	74.36	78.37
Blackstone Academy	Blackstone Academy	71	62.9
Black Stone HS	Black Stone HS	68.38	73.09
Branford HS	Branford	69.02	63.56

## Getting Started With Advanced Reports



### 1. FIND YOUR SCHOOL

Schools are grouped by level and individual schools are listed alphabetically below the groups. Often, it's best to look at a whole level and find your school among the others statewide.

### 2. HIGHLIGHT YOUR SCHOOL

To focus your exploration, find your school and click once to highlight it.

Hover your mouse and drag it slowly across the chart to see how your school compares with the others. The names of each school and the exact percent of the respondents will appear in a box that corresponds to each bar. You can also hold down your keyboard's control key to highlight several schools. Once you have one bar or several highlighted, they will remain highlighted until you click anywhere in the white space above the bars.

### 3. EXPLORE THE TIME SLIDER

Note that under the graph is a "time slider" that allows you to display the data for recent School Years (SY). Move the triangle or just click your mouse under the desired year in the time-slider bar to see how your school's response might have changed from one year to the next. Has hallway safety or the building's appearance improved over the years according to that question?

Note that the colors correspond to urban core versus non-urban schools, and there's always a statewide average. "Core cities" are Providence, Pawtucket, Central Falls and Woonsocket.

## Explore Your School’s Individual Survey Questions

**Find Survey Questions**

**Choose Different Data**

Each of the drop-down menus below has different indicators (or results) that will be graphed on the bar when you click it.

Safety and Climate

Discipline

Respect

Student Support

**Choose Different Data**

Each of the drop-down menus below has different indicators (or results) that will be graphed on the bar when you click it.

Safety and Climate

% Feel Safe in Hallways (EMH, SY12-13)

% Feel Safe Walking Outside School (EMH, SY12-13)

% Afraid to Use School Bathroom (EMH, SY12-13)

Respect

Student Support

**Personalization**

100

79.35

60

40

20

0

Avonlea HS - Providence  
79.35 (% Feel Safe in Hallways (EMH, SY12-13))

Alonzo HS (School Name - abbreviated, SY12-13)

Legend: New Core City School, Core City School

**Find Your School**

Schools are arranged alphabetically in the drop-down menu below. Select a school to compare it to the statewide average.

Select Your School

Select a School Year: SY09-10, SY10-11, SY11-12, SY12-13

**Compare Your School**

Sort any column by clicking on the column title. Or click the name of a school in the table to highlight it in the bar chart to see how it compares with other schools in the state.

School Name - abbreviated	District/SEA	% Feel Safe in Hallways (EMH, SY12-13)	% Think Discipline is Fair (EMH, SY12-13)
Davis Pines HS (Providence)		79.35	34.79
Pines HS		61.8	21.26
Socrates HS	Socrates	38.28	25.29
Socrates SHS	Socrates	64.8	29.02
South Kingsman (South Kingsman)		38.28	35.3
Dixie	The Green School	91.87	32.41
Lincoln HS	Proctor	82.22	30.67
Yale	Proctor	84	31.16

More selected to top | Clear selection | Sort columns | Export data

**Choose Different Data**

Each of the drop-down menus below has different indicators (or results) that will be graphed on the bar when you click it.

Safety and Climate

Discipline

Respect

Student Support

### FINDING SURVEY QUESTIONS

The survey questions themselves are under “Choose Different Data,” on all the charts. They’re in drop-down options that each contains a small group of related survey results. Every time you select a new indicator, the data displayed on the bar chart above will change. If you have highlighted your school in the table, you can click through these indicators, watching your school’s performance relative to all the other schools at that level.

### EXPLORING SURVEY QUESTIONS MORE GENERALLY.

Click somewhere in the white space above the bar to unhighlight an individual school, if you have done so. The chart will now show the schools in bold colors. Drag your mouse from one end to the other to see those schools with the highest and lowest percentages of respondents answering the questions.

### KEEP CONTEXT IN MIND!

Unlike performance scores, opinions-and perceptions results have no absolute values. Survey results are personal points of view that are self-reported and not objective. Obviously, a high percentage of students reporting they feel unsafe in their school’s hallways is a matter of concern. But if the students take the survey when the school has suffered a rash of online bullying or a fight broke out, the kids’ perceptions will be more negative than usual. Surveys are an opportunity for hearing a range of voices among the broader school community. The data are valuable, but require a sense of context.

# SurveyWorks

Here is where we are now.

- A vast quantity of survey information from across the state has been clustered into topics with related questions, so the data are more accessible, comparable and meaningful.
- The new reports visualize information in ways that greatly enhance the ability of novice data users to access and understand complex information.
- These at-a-glance reports of each school's climate and culture will help school communities identify weak or strained areas that could be improved – as well as celebrate evidence of strong social foundations for students.

Here is where we are going.

- Teacher and parent survey results will be added as soon as participation rates, especially among parents, become more robust and consistent.
- In time, the Advanced Reports will display survey data along with results from different sources, such as achievement results and financial information, for example, when responsible and meaningful.
- Together, with these survey results, we are working towards assurance that every child has a safe, nourishing, caring school environment.

Thank you for your continued support of Rhode Island students,

Deborah Gist, Ph.D., Rhode Island Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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**Please convey questions, comments, and suggestions via the feedback form available on the InfoWorks site — <http://infoworks.ride.ri.gov/about/contact>.**