NC Healthy Schools DPI Updates

June 5, 2025

North Carolina Department of PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

NORTH CAROLINA Healthy Schools

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Vision

NC students, staff, and families are healthy, safe, supported, engaged, and prepared for future success.

Mission

Provide support to schools and community stakeholders so they can promote the health, well-being, and success of NC.

How We Do It

We use the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) framework, and related best practices, to guide our partnerships, priorities, products, and recommendations.

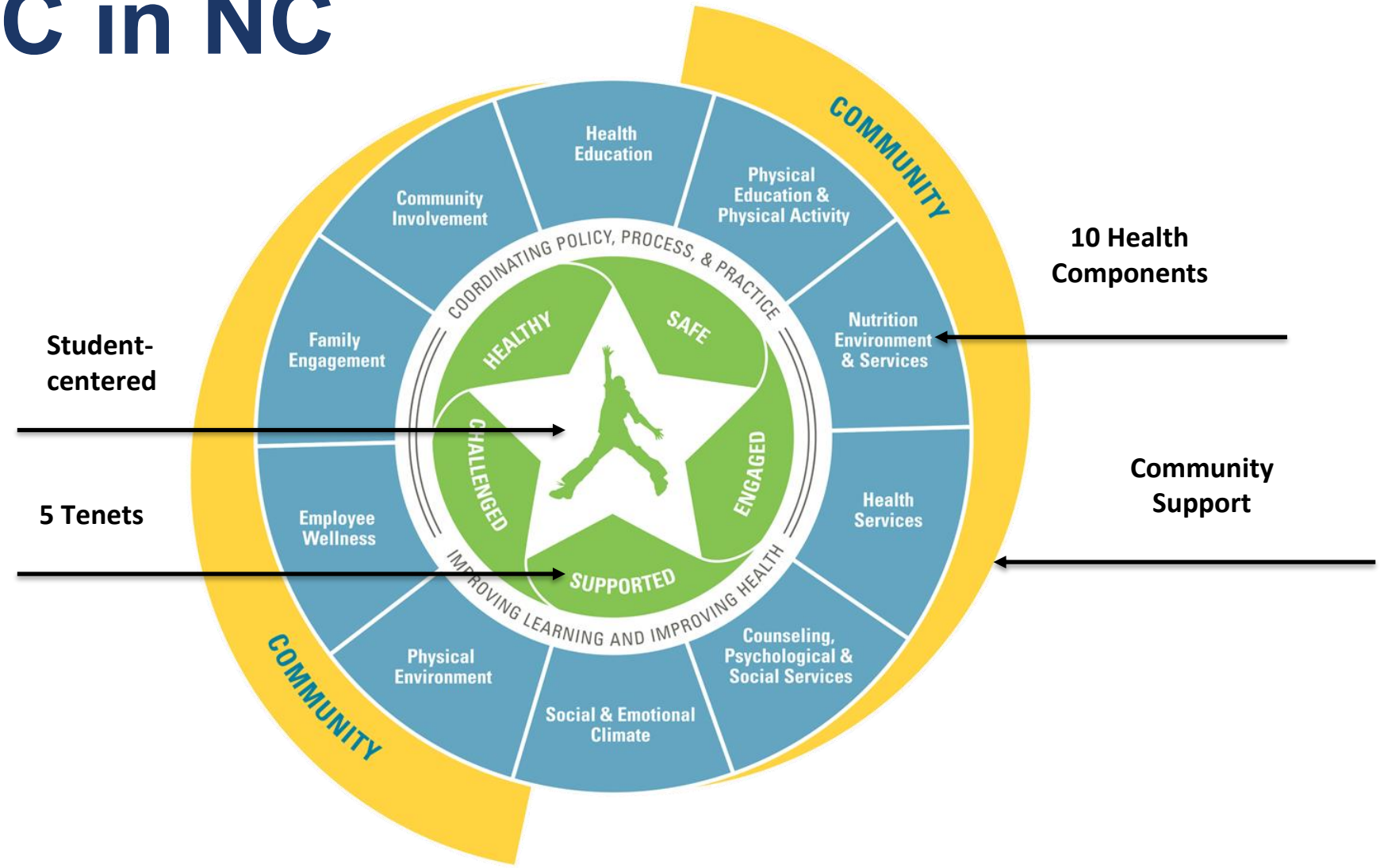
NORTH CAROLINA
Healthy Schools

www.nchealthyschools.org

How Many of You…?

- Have heard of NC Healthy Schools?
- Are in a SBHC?
- Know/use the framework WSCC?
- Use the NC YRBS data?
- Actively Participate on your SHAC?
- Have a question you hope we address today?

WSCC in NC


COMMUNITY
Health Education
Physical Education & Physical Activity
Nutrition Environment & Services
Health Services
Counseling, Psychological & Social Services
Social & Emotional Climate
Physical Environment
Employee Wellness
Family Engagement
Community Involvement
COORDINATING POLICY, PROCESS, & PRACTICE
HEALTHY
SAFE
ENGAGED
SUPPORTED
CHALLENGED
IMPROVING LEARNING AND IMPROVING HEALTH
COMMUNITY
Student-centered
5 Tenets
10 Health Components
Community Support

WHOLE SCHOOL, WHOLE COMMUNITY, WHOLE CHILD
Healthy Children Learn Better
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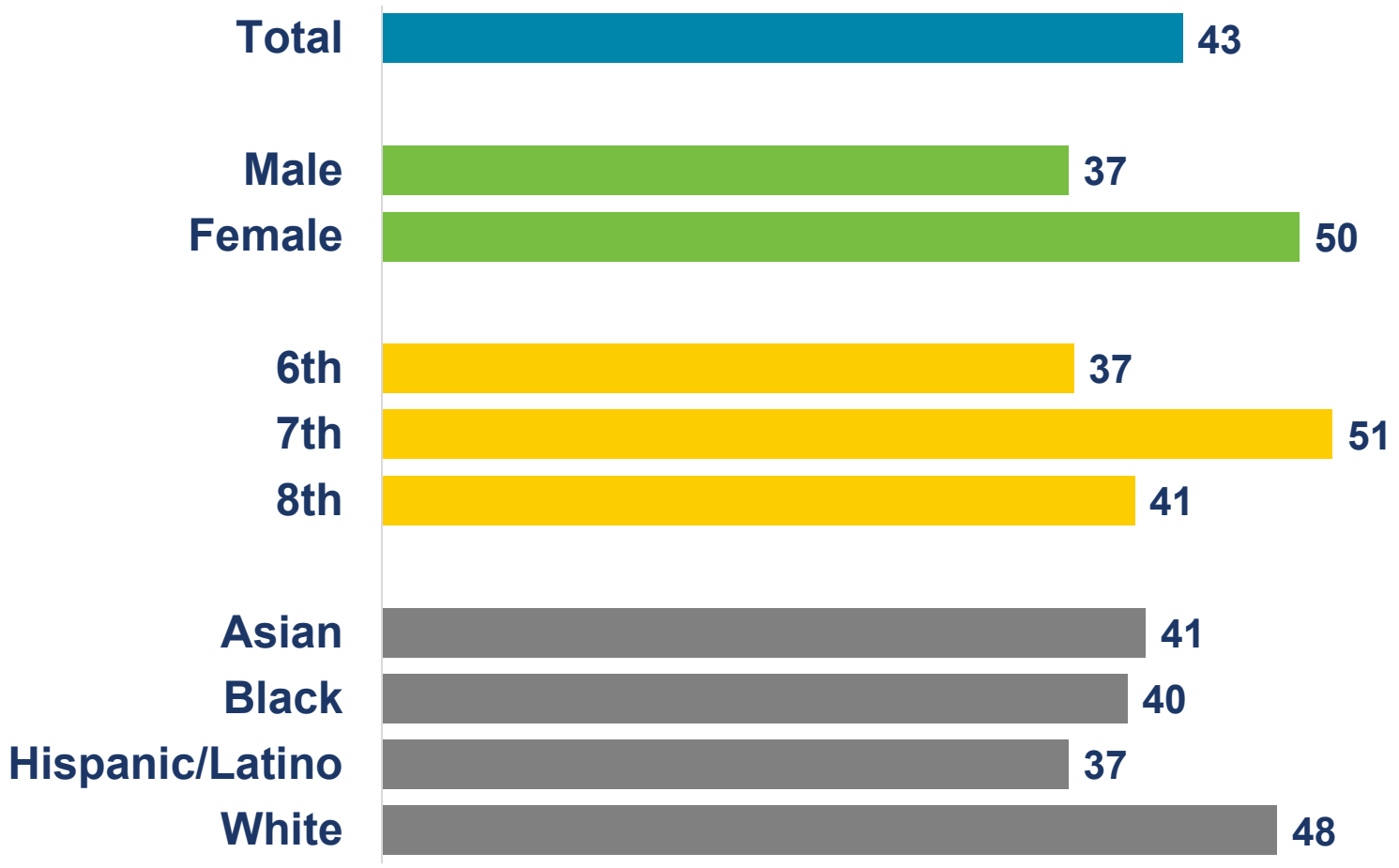
COMMUNITY
Healthy Children Learn Better

YRBS Data

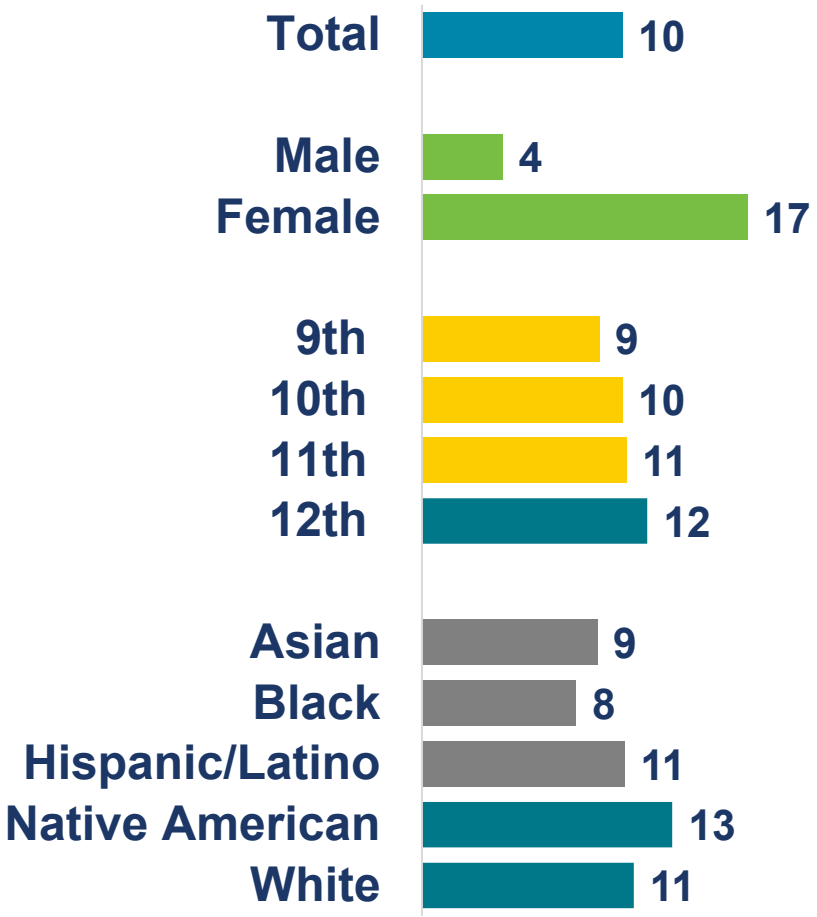
Percentage of Middle School Students Who Were Ever Bullied on School Property, by Sex,* Grade,* and Race/Ethnicity,* 2023



*F > M; 7th > 6th, 7th > 8th; W > B, W > H (Based on t-test analysis, $p < 0.05$.)
All Hispanic students are included in the Hispanic category. All other races are non-Hispanic.
This graph contains weighted results.

North Carolina - YRBS, 2023 – QN13

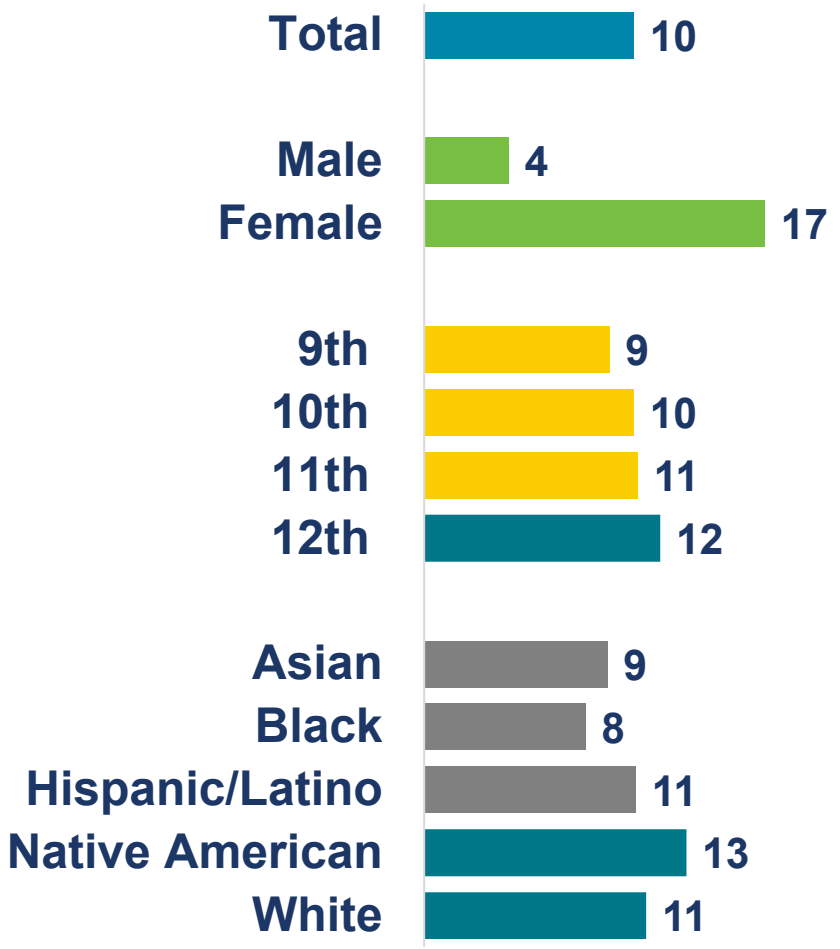
Percentage of High School Students Who Experienced Sexual Violence,* by Sex,† Grade,† and Race/Ethnicity, 2023



*Being forced by anyone to do sexual things (counting such things as kissing, touching or being physically forced to have sexual intercourse) that they did not want to one or more times during the 12 months before the survey.
†F > M; N > B, W > B (Based on t-test analysis, $p < 0.05$.)
All Hispanic students are included in the Hispanic category. All other races are non-Hispanic.
This graph contains weighted results.

North Carolina - YRBS, 2023 – QN20

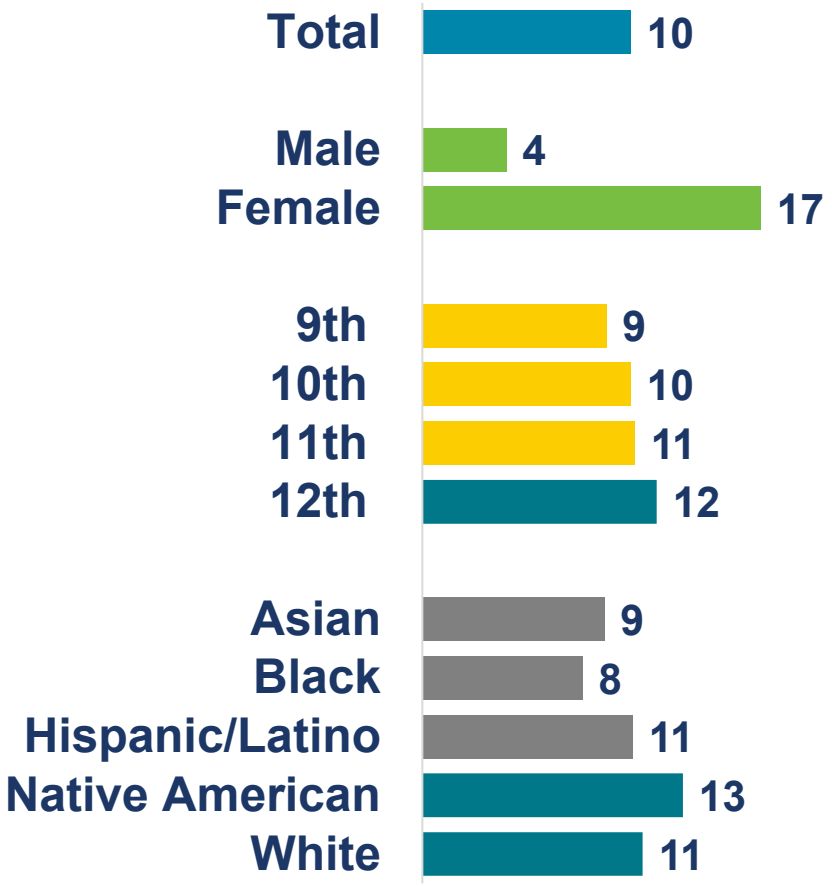
Percentage of High School Students Who Consider Themselves to Have a Disability, by Sex,† Grade,† and Race/Ethnicity, 2023



†F > M; 11th > 9th, 11th > 10th, W > B, W > H (Based on t-test analysis, $p < 0.05$.)
All Hispanic students are included in the Hispanic category. All other races are non-Hispanic.
This graph contains weighted results.

North Carolina - YRBS, 2023 – QN100

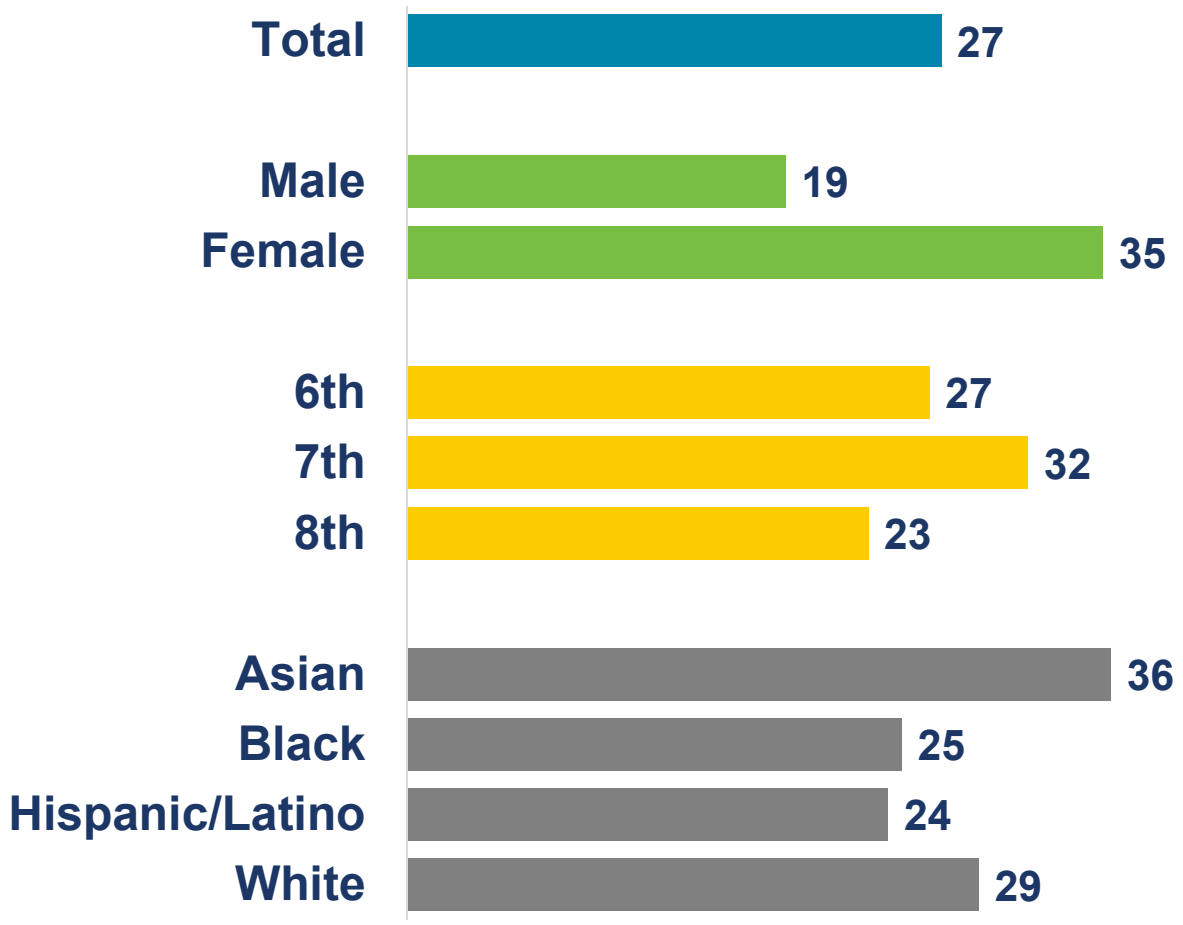
Percentage of High School Students Who Are Limited in Any Way in Any Activities Because of a Disability or Health Problem, by Sex,* Grade, and Race/Ethnicity,* 2023



†F > M; 11th > 9th, 11th > 10th, W > B, W > H (Based on t-test analysis, $p < 0.05$.)
All Hispanic students are included in the Hispanic category. All other races are non-Hispanic.
This graph contains weighted results.

North Carolina - YRBS, 2023 – QN101

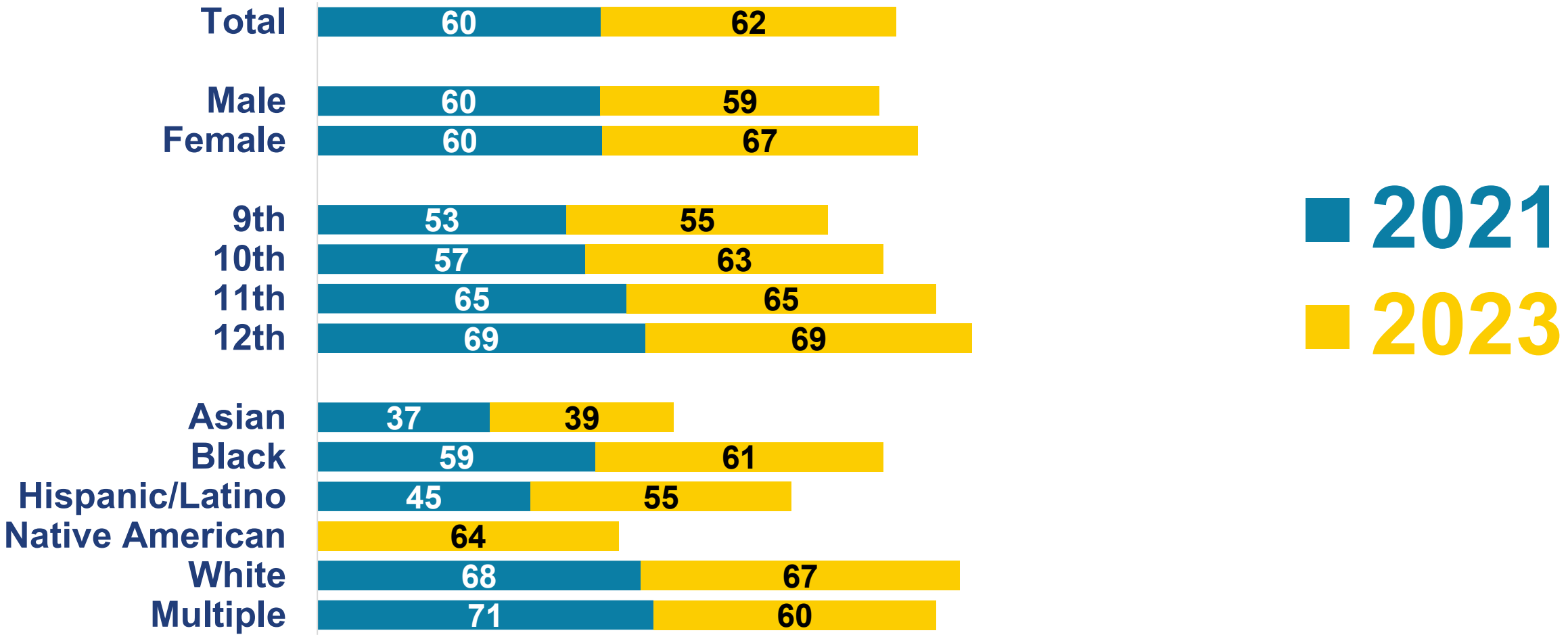
Percentage of Middle School Students Who Were Ever Electronically Bullied,* by Sex,† Grade,† and Race/Ethnicity, 2023



*Counting being bullied through texting, Instagram, Facebook, or other social media
†F > M; 7th > 8th (Based on t-test analysis, $p < 0.05$.)
All Hispanic students are included in the Hispanic category. All other races are non-Hispanic.
This graph contains weighted results.

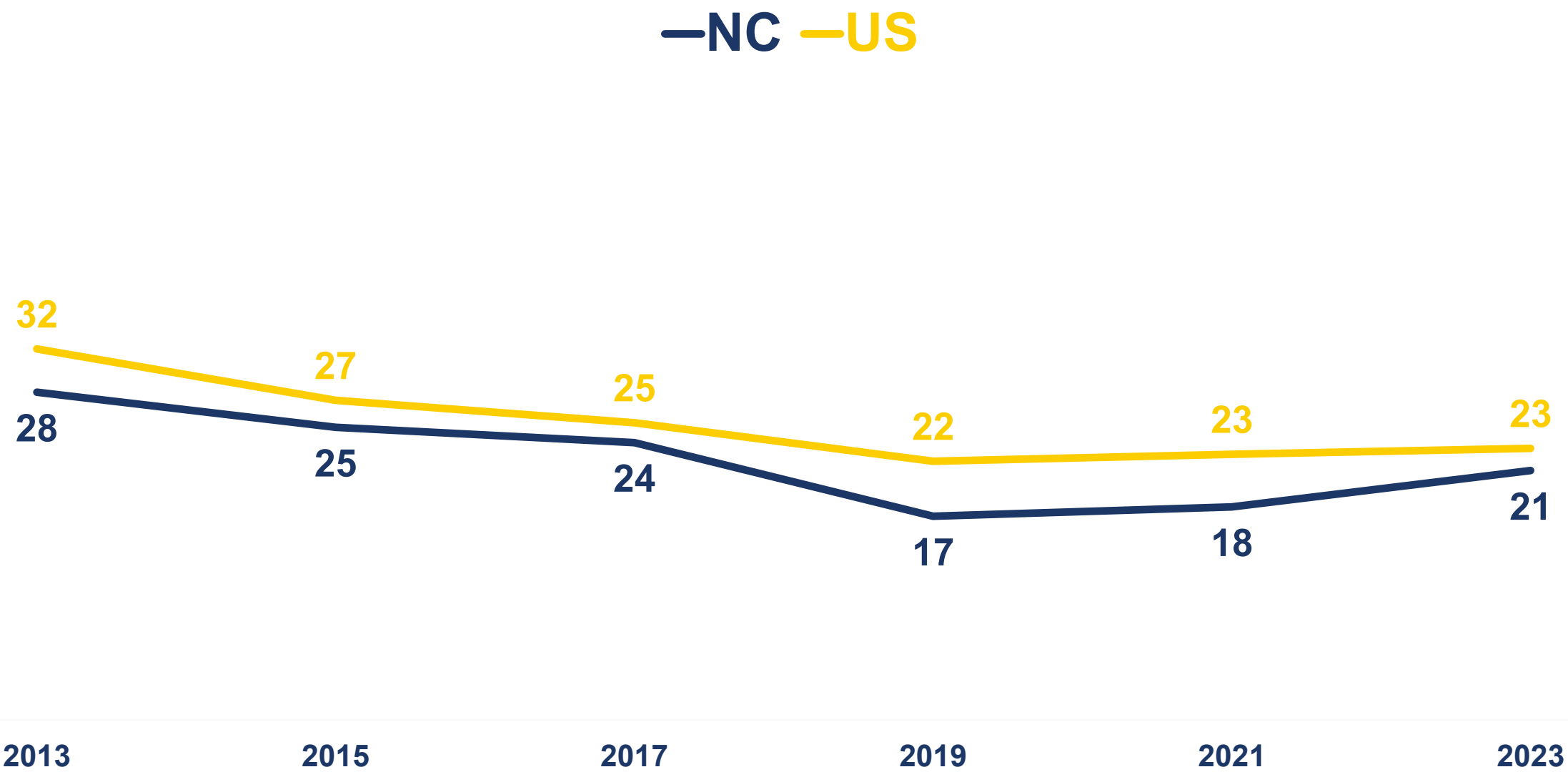
North Carolina - YRBS, 2023 – QN14

Percentage of NC High School Students Who Reported There Is at Least One Teacher or Other Adult in Their School That They Can Talk to If They Have a Problem, by Sex, Grade,* and Race/Ethnicity,*

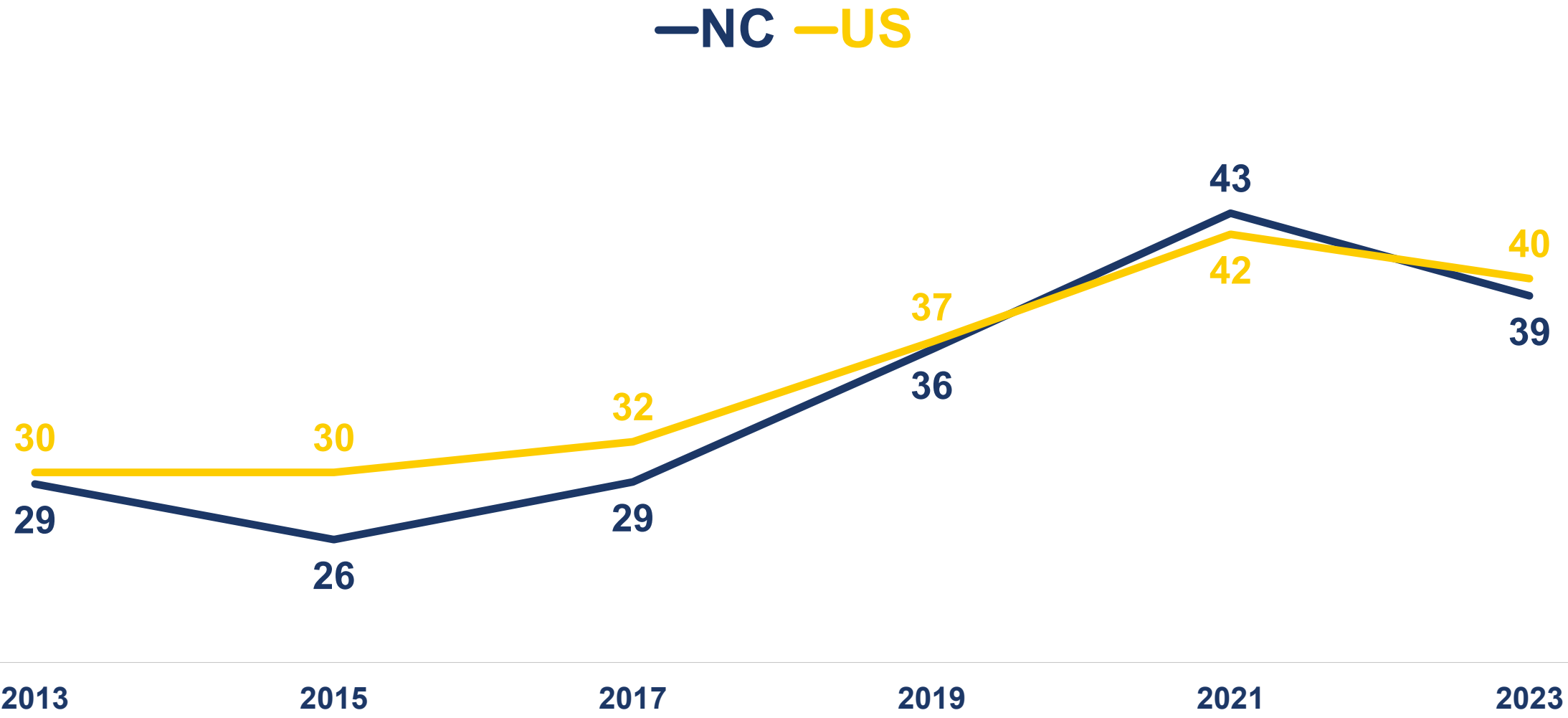


*All Hispanic students are included in the Hispanic category. All other races are non-Hispanic.

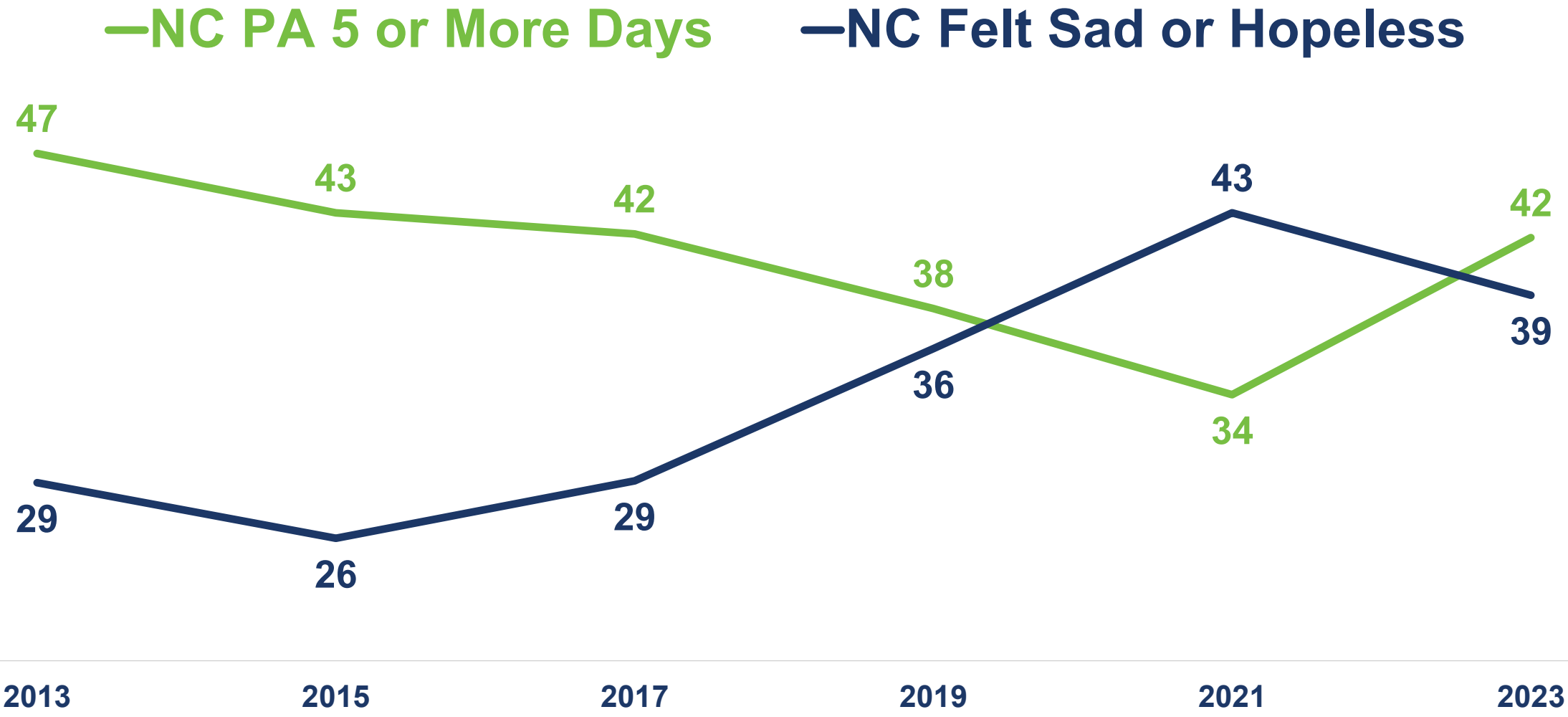
Percentage of High School Students Who Got 8 or More Hours of Sleep on an Average School Night, 2013-2023, NC vs US



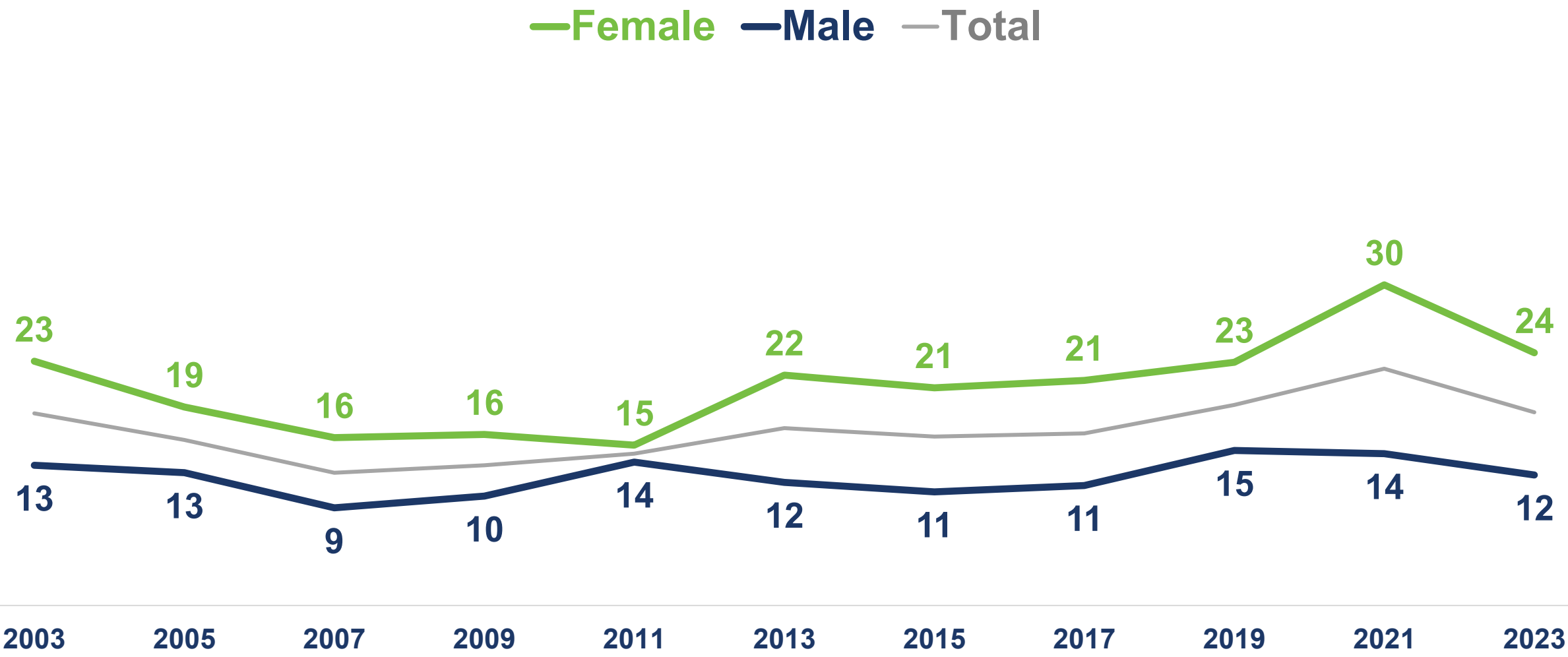
Percentage of High School Students Who Felt Sad or Hopeless, 2013-2023, NC vs US



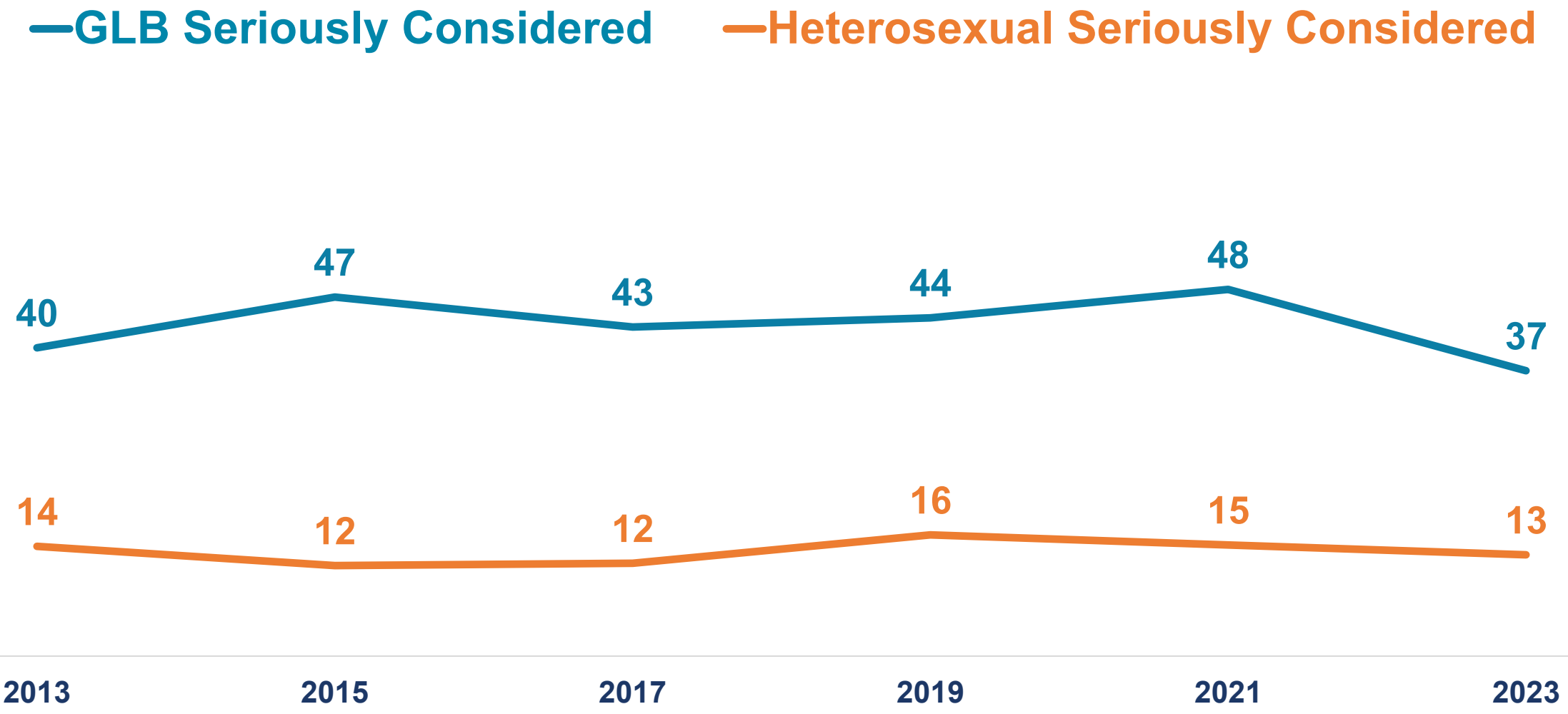
Percentage of NC High School Students Who Were Physically Active at Least 60 Minutes Per Day on 5 or More Days of the Past 7 Days vs. Felt Sad or Hopeless, 2013-2023



Percentage of NC High School Students Who Seriously Considered Suicide in Past 12 Months, 2003-2023



Percentage of NC High School Students Who Seriously Considered Suicide in the Past 12 Months, Gay, Lesbian, or Bisexual Students vs Heterosexual, 2013-2023



Section Updates

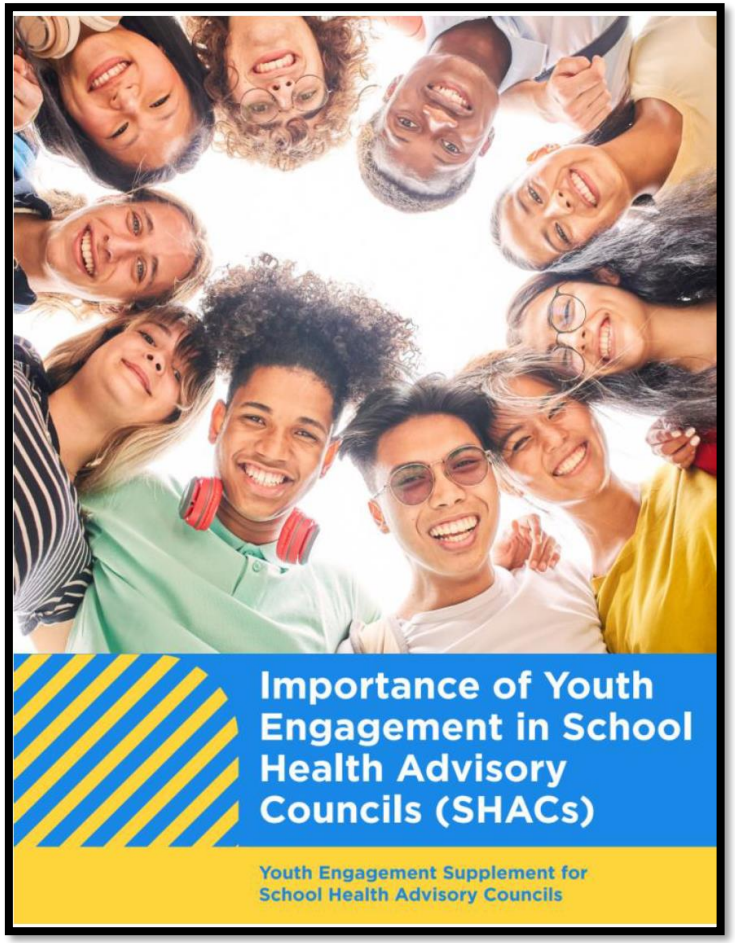
Updates

- 2025 YRBS data collection underway
- School Mental Health Policy
  - Updated Healthy Active Children policy - 60 mins activity /week for HS - to help with mental health, as well
  - SISP reports
- NC SUN Meals
  - DPI – NC SUN Meals
  - DHHS - Sun Bucks is back for 2025- $120 per eligible child for summer groceries

SUN BUCKS North Carolina

Updates

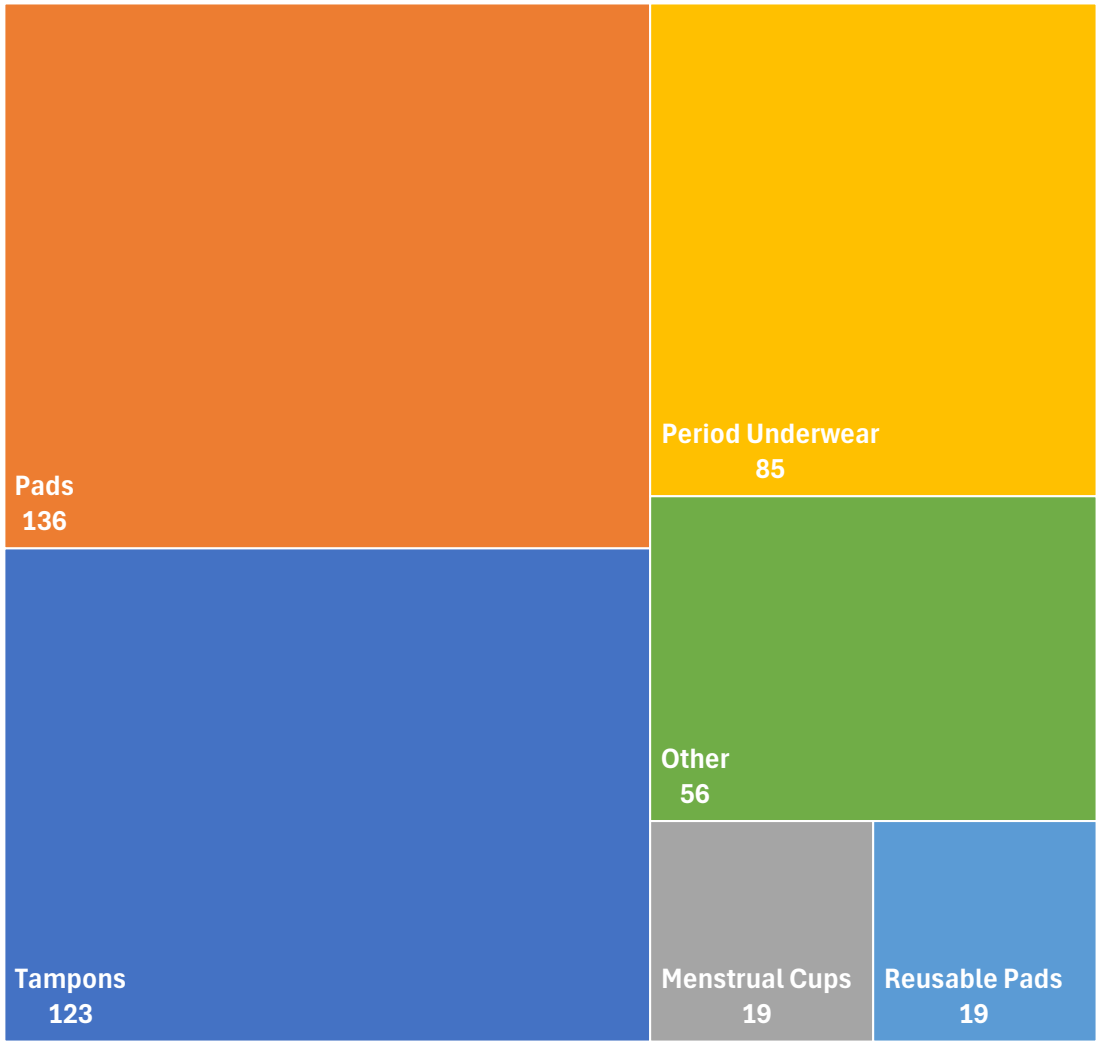
- SHAC Learning Collaborative - last Monday of each month at 3pm (unless holiday and not in June or July)
- Updating SHAC Manual
- Potential SHAC Workshop in Fall
- Youth Engagement Community of Practice for 2025 – 2026 year
- Healthful Living and Student Success Standards - Updated standards and some cross-over
  - Professional Development: NCDPI Healthful Living Hub



Impacting Period Poverty

- Feminine Hygiene Products Grant Program
  - Established in 2021 to address period poverty and help students stay in school during their menstrual cycle
  - Total Program Amount: $500,000 (increase from previous years)
  - Up to $5,000 awarded to each PSU, first-come, first-served (those not awarded in the previous year prioritized)

Number of PSUs Purchasing Each Product Type



Impact on Student Health and Well-Being

- Benefits everyone in schools, educators, and students
- Increase academic growth and decrease absences
- Opportunity to increase education/awareness of puberty and hygiene
- Contributes to positive mental health outcomes by reducing stigma and anxiety

Next Steps

- Apply for FY26 funding
  - Application is launched in August/September (depending on timing of funding availability)
  - Sign up for DPI listservs to be sure you are receiving the first announcements
  - Apply as soon as you see the application (short, ~10 questions)
  - If you apply and are not awarded there are other organizations that can provide low-cost supplies, less than retailers
    - NC Diaper Bank's Period Power program can help you get supplies at little to no cost

PERIOD @ Toledo, Ohio

Reimbursement for Medicaid-Eligible Students

Expanding School-Based Medicaid

- Most states use Medicaid funds for services provided to Medicaid-enrolled children with IEPs
- States can also use Medicaid funds for services to any Medicaid-enrolled child
- Only 16 states are doing this!

States that have Expanded Access to Medicaid for School-Based Services	
Arizona	Louisiana
California	Massachusetts
Colorado	Michigan
Connecticut*	Nevada
Georgia*	New Mexico
Illinois	North Carolina
Indiana*	Oregon
Kentucky	Virginia

*partially expanded access

Expansion of School-Based Medicaid

NCDHHS
NC Medicaid
Division of Health Benefits

North Carolina expands school-based Medicaid

Joined HSPF Collaborative

NGA award provides support for school-based Medicaid survey

NC receives grant for technical assistance and training

DHHS provides support for DPI Medicaid specialist

School-Based Services

- What:
  - Medically necessary services provided to students as written in IEP, 504, IHP, BIP can be reimbursed to the LEA
  - Includes therapies, treatments, evaluations
- Who (Students):
  - Medicaid-eligible students, ages 3-20, who are enrolled in a NC public school
  - Must have plan of care written in one of the four plans listed above, deemed medically necessary by licensed medical practitioner

School-Based Services

- Who (Staff):
  - Psychological and Counseling Services:
    - DPI-licensed school psychologists
    - Psychologists or LPAs licensed by NC Psych Board
    - LCSW, LCMH Counselors
  - Nursing services: RNs, LPNs under supervision
  - Related Services: Licensed OTs, PTs, SLPs, Audiologists

NCMEDICAID FOR MORE PEOPLE

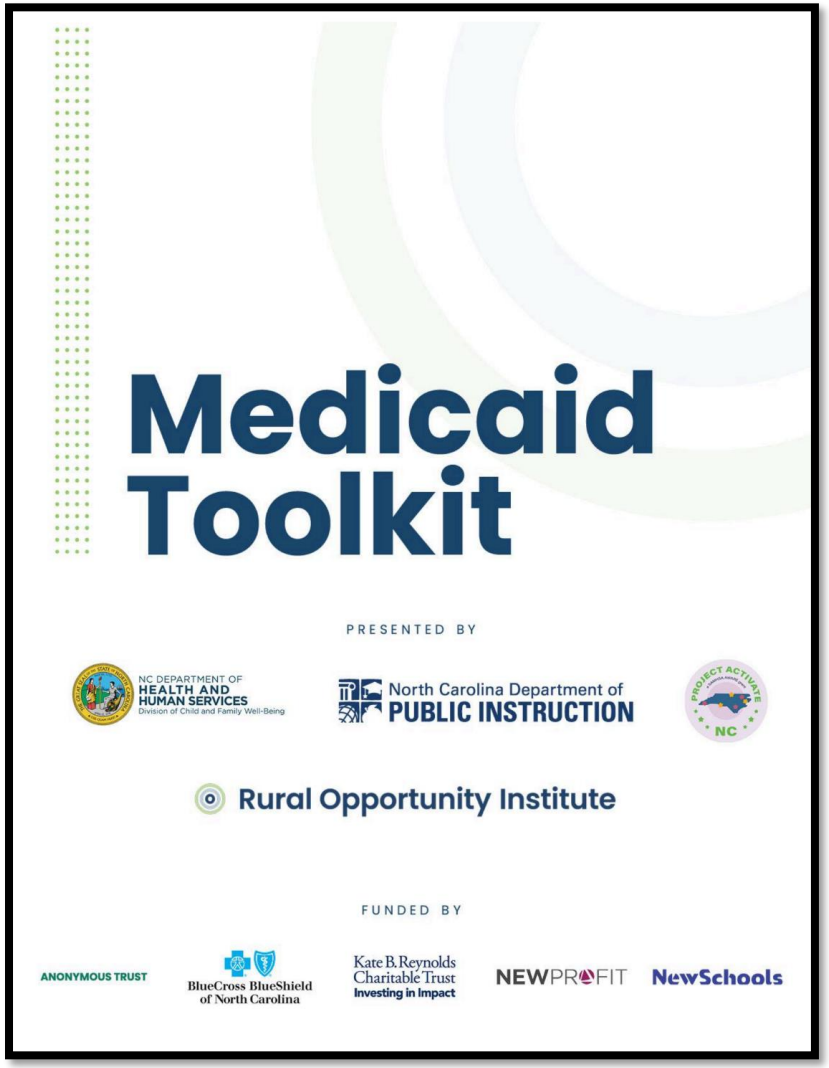
Potential Changes to SBS Medicaid

- DHHS has received a $2.5 million grant to expand and support SBS
- Changes to our State Plan Amendment (SPA) will be made, due June 2026
- State-level TA position is part of grant proposal
  - Position will be posted soon
- Work on policy to ensure increased reimbursements for MH services will be reinvested in school-based mental health services and programming

"Honestly, the entire process. I haven't received any explicit training/shown how to input billing information for assessments aside form being sent a Word doc that has the codes for billing."

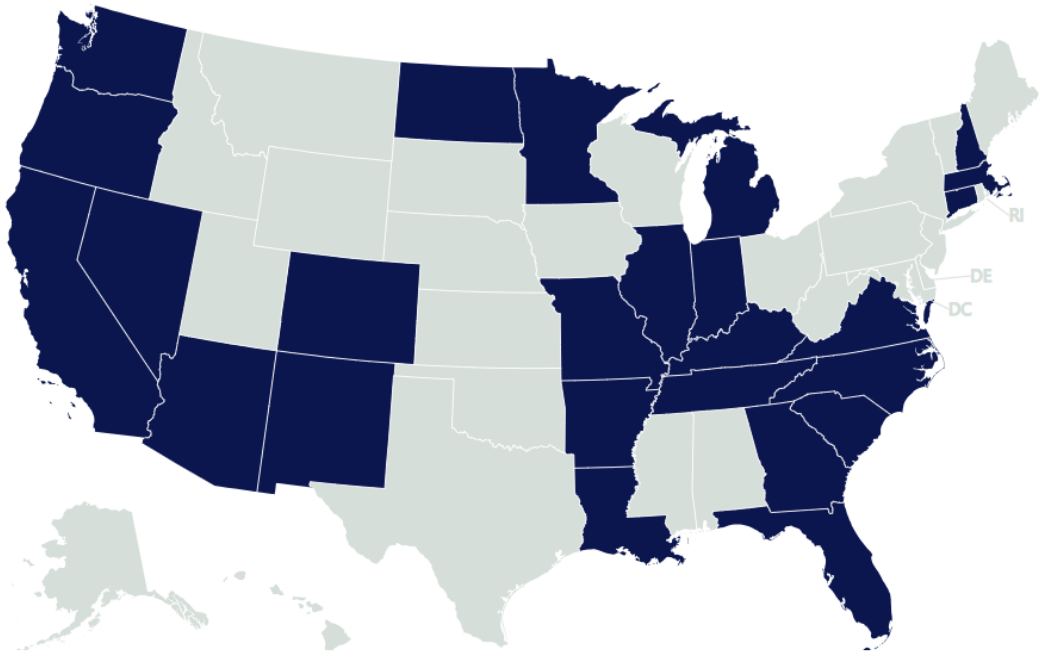
Medicaid Information

- 10C Policy – Updated 2023
- OEC Medicaid Page
- NC School-Based Medicaid Report
- NC School-Based Medicaid Billing Toolkit
- Healthy Students, Promising Futures
  - Helping states and schools expand access to Medicaid-funded school health services
  - Monthly meetings are open to all stakeholders (contact Susanne Schmal)



NC Healthy Students, Promising Futures

States That Expanded Medicaid Coverage In Schools | States In the Process Of Expanding Medicaid Coverage In Schools | States Not Yet Taking Action



School Medicaid Expansion Status

This map indicates the states that have taken the necessary steps to expand their school Medicaid program and the measures they took to do so.

Click on each state to view its status.

How Medicaid Cuts Will Harm Students & Schools

Results of a Nationwide Survey of School District Leaders

March 2025

HEALTHY SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN · ASBO International · AASA · CASE · NAME

Medicaid Learning Collaborative

- The goal of the MLC is to build capacity related to Medicaid reimbursement for School Based Services including Behavioral Health Services.
- Please review the Recruitment Flyer which links to an interest form for the 25-26 cohort.
- For additional information, please contact La'Shanda Person, Innovation Program Manager, with Rural Opportunity Institute at la'shanda@ruralopportunity.org
- Upcoming Meetings:
  - Meeting for Cohort 2 in Nash County May 2
  - Meeting for Cohort 2 in Jackson County April 29

Interested in expanding **Medicaid-funded mental health services** for your school or district?

Rural Opportunity Institute (ROI), a North Carolina-based nonprofit, has partnered with the state's Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to help your school district hire full-time mental health professionals to support students and staff. Get access to technical assistance **valued at over $100k+, all at no cost to your school district.**

Join fellow N.C. changemakers in K-12 education!

Members of this cohort receive direct support with launching Medicaid-funded mental health services, including:

- **Increase Financial Resources:** Access new funding streams to hire more mental health professionals.
- **Expert Guidance:** Join a learning community with monthly sessions led by national experts.
- **Tailored Approach:** Receive weekly follow-ups from our team to ensure the program fits your school's needs.

Requirements to participate:

- Public or charter school located in North Carolina
- Designated point person who can spend approx. 140 hours over the next year on this project, as well as other key contacts (see application and partnership agreement linked below)
- Demonstrated support from district leadership
- (Preferred) Have a National Provider Identifier (NPI) number
- (Preferred) Have billed Medicaid for something (not necessarily mental health-related) in the past year
- (Preferred) Have completed a cost report in the past year

SCAN ME

To show interest:
Fill out the form linked here, also available via the QR code to the left.
Contact La'Shanda Person, Program Manager
La'Shanda@RuralOpportunity.Org

"ROI's support has been invaluable. Our suspension rates dropped by 28% and students are receiving the mental health support they need."
QUARRY WILLIAMS, COORDINATOR FOR ALTERNATIVE LEARNING, EDGECOMBE COUNTY (N.C.) PUBLIC SCHOOLS

For more information, check out the following resources:

- ROI's Medicaid in Schools Toolkit
- Impact report on the pilot
- Full partnership agreement

PRESENTED BY
NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
North Carolina Department of PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Rural Opportunity Institute

LEAD SUPPORTER
CAMBER FOUNDATION

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTERS
ANONYMOUS TRUST
BlueCross BlueS of North Carol
Kate B Reyno Charitable Tr Investing in Imp
NEWPROFIT
NewSchools

SISP Recruitment

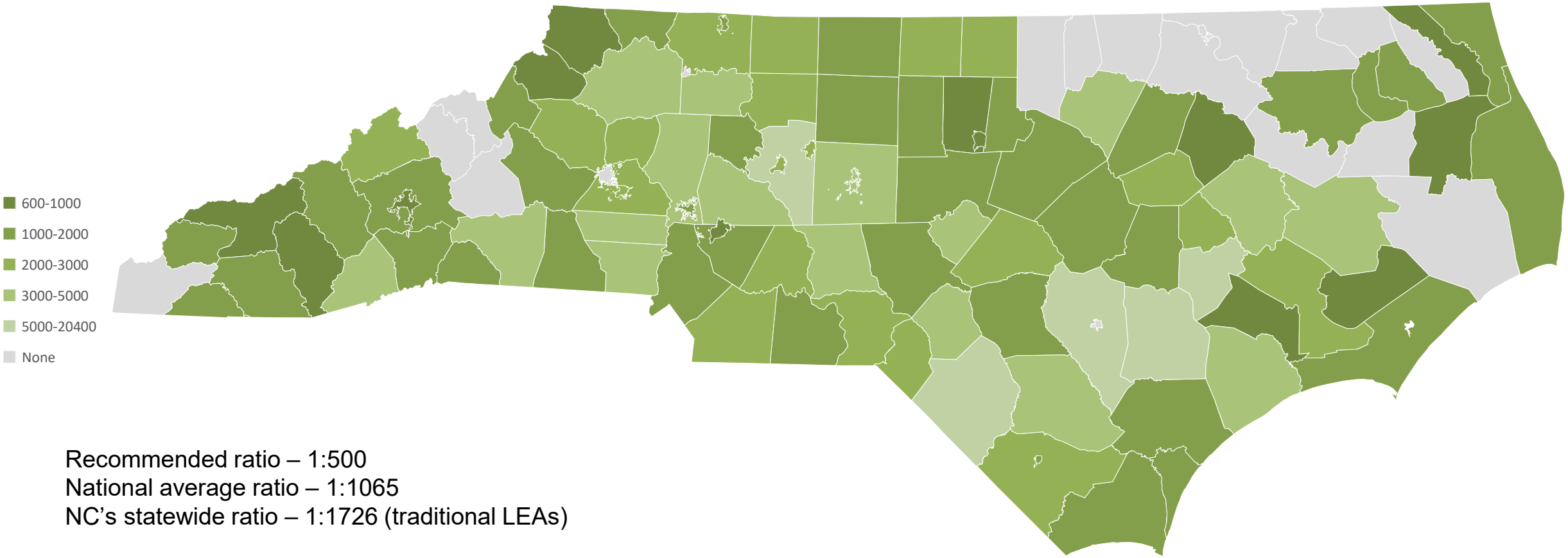
Access to Care in NC

- 1 in 5 children shows symptoms of mental health illness
  - 80 percent do not receive the needed services for treatment
- 40% of children in NC live in poor or low-income households
- 5% of children in NC without health insurance
- 53.6 % of children in NC have a medical home
- SISP Ratios:
  - School Counselors
  - School Nurses
  - School Psychologists
  - School Social Workers

Specialized Instructional Support Personnel Ratios

School Counselors	2023	1:346	Recommended	1:250	72%
	2024	1:355			
School Nurses	2023	1:809	Recommended	1 per school	65%
	2024	1:854			
School Social Workers	2023	1:969	Recommended	1:250	25%
	2024	1:995			
School Psychologists	2023	1:1,855	Recommended	1:500	26%
	2024	1:1,928			

School Psychologist Ratios



Recommended ratio – 1:500
National average ratio – 1:1065
NC's statewide ratio – 1:1726 (traditional LEAs)

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Prioritize School Psychology Recruitment FTE

- 2021 Appropriations Act: Department of Public Instruction shall reclassify at least the following positions within the Department: **One full-time equivalent position to serve as a full-time recruitment and retention coordinator** to increase the number of school psychologists in public school units with a demonstrated need that is difficult to meet.

https://www.ncleg.gov/enactedlegislation/sessionlaws/pdf/2021-2022/sl2021-180.pdf

Megan Cardin
State School Psychology Consultant

SBMH and MHSP Grants

- Project FAST, Project ADS
- Supports increase of trained school counselors and school social workers in participating LEAs
- Funds for graduate training for school counselors and social workers, retention bonuses, etc.
- In 14 districts

PSU #	PSU Name	Allotment Total
130	Cabarrus	$490,000
290	Davidson	$280,000
620	Montgomery	$198,000
760	Randolph	$290,000
830	Scotland	$100,000
840	Stanly	$210,000
340	Winston-Salem Forsyth	$650,000
		$2,218,000

PSU #	PSU Name	Allotment Total
10	Alamance- Burlington	$95,000
180	Catawba	80,000
600	Charlotte-Mecklenburg	172,000
430	Harnett	88,000
710	Pender	62,000
740	Pitt	86,000
830	Scotland	65,000
960	Wayne	91,000
		$739,000

NORTH CAROLINA Healthy Schools

Whole Child NC Advisory Committee

Policy ADVS-009

Whole Child

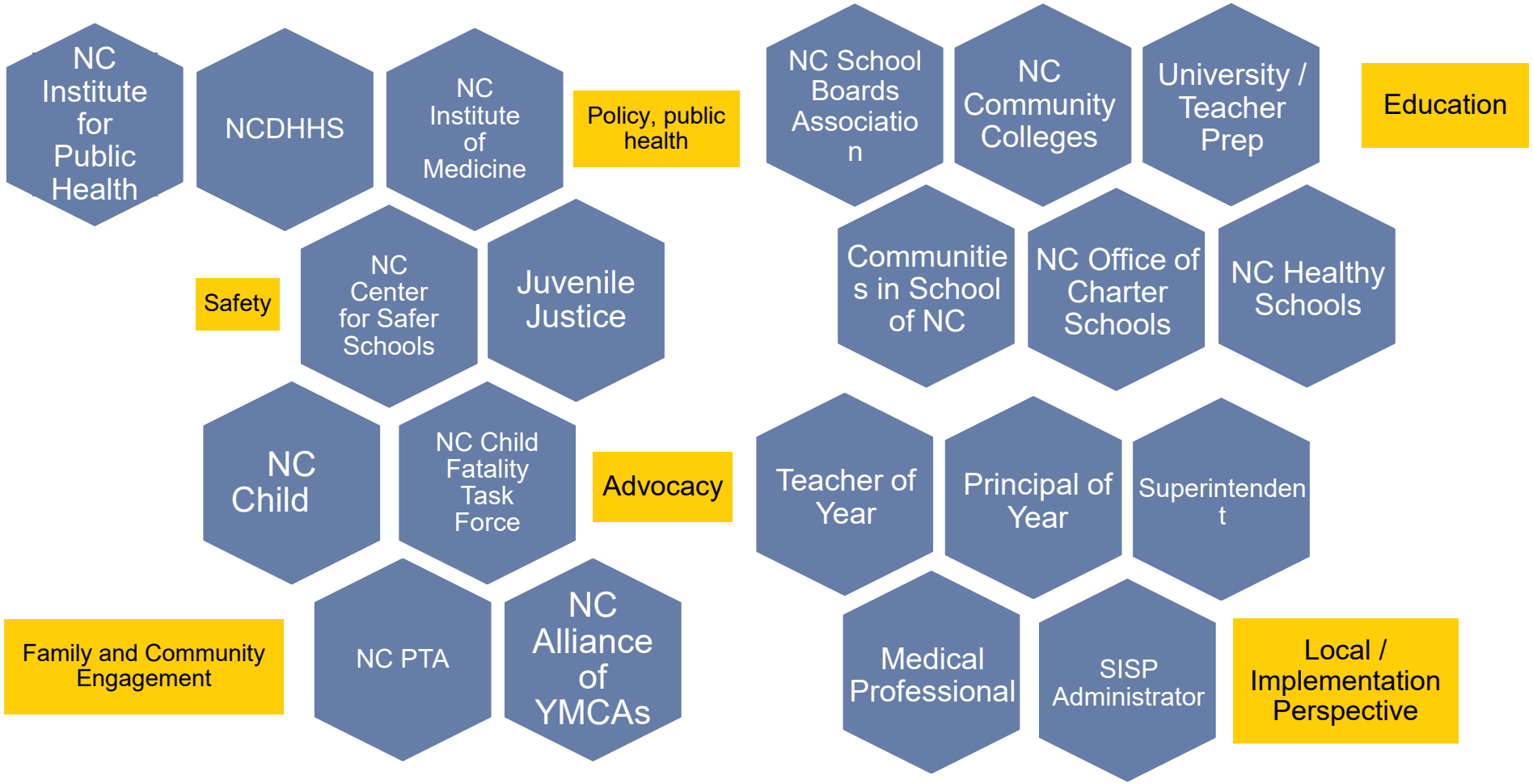
10-Year Anniversary

Established 9/3/2015 as an advisory committee to the State Board of Education.

Identifies and reviews the challenges of at-risk school-aged population such as poverty, safety, health and other non-academic barriers.

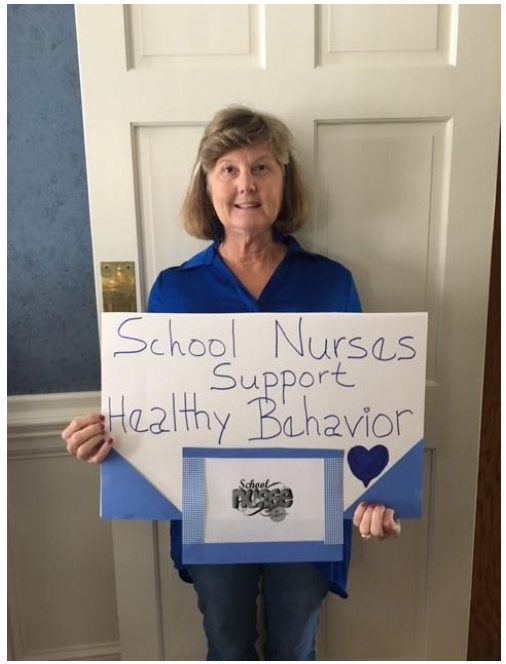
Makes recommendations to the State Board of Education, other state agencies and education stakeholder groups as to how best to facilitate access for all public-school children to receive the opportunity for a sound basic education.

WCNC Advisory Committee



2023 – 2024 Endorsement
Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP)

- Continue to advocate for funding support for additional SISP (while continuing to address the pipeline issues).



Whole Child NC 2025 Recommendations

1. Continue to advocate for funding support for additional SISP (while continuing to address the pipeline issues).
2. Support fully funding a State School Psychology position (FTE) at DPI to help with School Psychology Recruitment for the state.
3. Support Masters' level pay for School Social Workers.
4. Support collaboration with DHHS to expand opportunities for School-Based Health Centers in non-served school districts.

Table Talk

At your tables:

1. Identify a facilitator, note-taker, and reporter.
2. What are 3 – 5 key things you would want the WCNC Committee to know about SBHCs.
3. What are challenges for SBHCs?
   a. What, if any, points of confusion are there for billing?
4. What are some of your recent successes?
5. What else would you want WCNC to know about your Center or how other SBHCs operate, their infrastructure, etc.?

Landscape

Context of Federal Funding

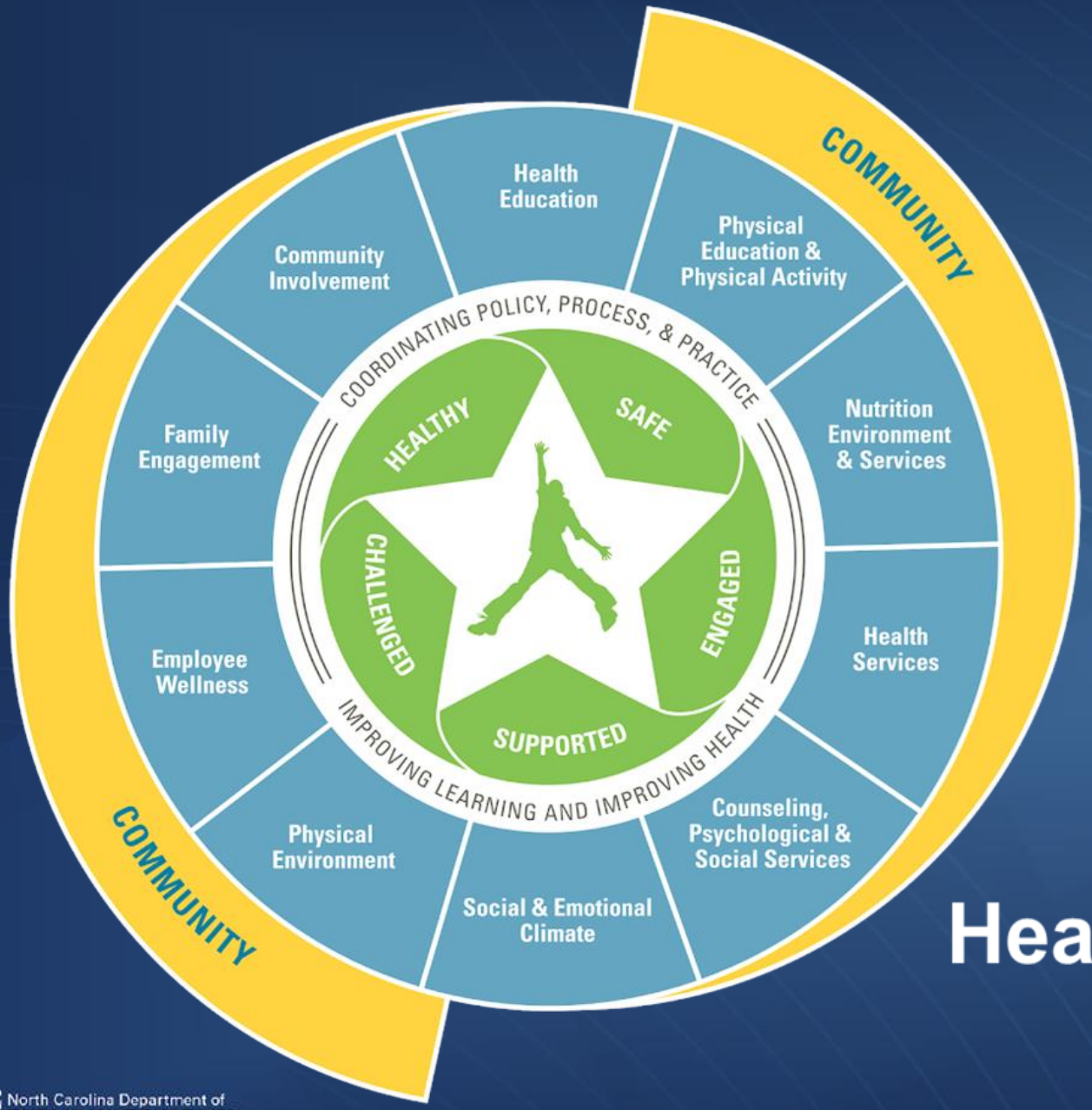
- NC Healthy Schools Team (11 members)
  - 1 fully funded state position
  - 2 partially funded state positions
  - 8 federally funded positions with discretionary grants
- $20 million in competitive, federal grants
- Approximately 95% goes out to support districts

Bills in NCGA: School Health Related

- S642 SAVE Students Act
- H578 Jason Flatt Act of NC
- H772 Student Lifeline Act
- H774 School Breakfast for all
- H766 Expand Access to Teen Mental Health First Aid
- H796 Student Mental Health Line Awareness Act

- H464/S360 – Healthy Students – A Nurse in Every School
- H523 – School Social Workers/Master's Pay
- H588 and S259 – School Psychologist Omnibus
- S238 – Edgecombe and Pitt County Nurses
- S435 – Restore Master's Pay for Teachers and ISP
- S630 – School MH Support Act

Questions?



Whole School
Whole Community
Whole Child

Healthy Children Learn Better

North Carolina Department of PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

NORTH CAROLINA Healthy Schools

Ellen Essick
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