

Barriers to Improvement

Through the Youth Needs Assessment and follow-up conversations, students shared consistently that violence and conflict are the result of social, emotional, relational, and systemic conditions that shape how safe students feel day-to-day.

Trust, Communication, and Follow-Through

Students said they don't always trust adults and school systems to listen, respond fairly, protect their privacy, or follow through when concerns are raised. Reporting can feel risky or pointless when students believe nothing will change, and inconsistent rules or responses can deepen mistrust.

"Students do not trust adults at school so they do not tell anyone about problems or conflict."

Stress, Conflict, and Outside Pressures

Students connected conflict to stress, trauma, family and community pressures, gossip and social media, peer pressure, and feeling disrespected or provoked. Small disagreements can escalate when students lack support or tools to manage strong emotions and resolve conflict.

"Stress, students are balancing a lot of priorities - social, school, work - makes us feel like we should give up."

Safety Responses That Don't Always Build Trust

Students distinguished between having security measures in place and whether those measures actually make them feel safer. They raised concerns about inconsistent enforcement, unapproachable or disrespectful interactions, safety tools that don't always work as intended, and responses that punish behavior without addressing its underlying causes.

"If someone is already aggravated and they get yelled at for being late or having their phone, they are not going to respond well."

Belonging, School Climate, and Environment

Students said overcrowded or poorly supervised spaces, stereotypes and bias, weak relationships, and limited opportunities for positive connection can contribute to conflict. Feeling respected, supported, connected to others, and able to turn to a trusted adult are all part of what makes a school feel safe.

"Respect goes both ways. We don't feel like we get any."

"Many students don't want to come to school at all. Administrators don't treat students with respect. Not feeling treated as a human being."