

# **THE ROAD TO HEALTH: A FINAL REPORT ON SCHOOL SAFETY**

## **Table of Contents**

### **VOLUME 1**

<b>CHAPTER 1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>page 1</b>
1.01	The Panel’s Terms of Reference.....	page 4
1.02	The Panel’s Work and Methodology.....	page 5
1.03	Overview of the Report.....	page 7
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>	<b>HISTORICAL OVERVIEW.....</b>	<b>page 11</b>
2.01	Bill 21 and PPM 119.....	page 11
2.02	The Royal Commission on Learning.....	page 12
2.03	The Anti-Racism, Equity, and Access Department Dismantled.....	page 13
2.04	Amalgamation.....	page 14
2.05	Teachers and Trustees Under Siege.....	page 16
2.06	Funding Cuts to the Board.....	page 19
2.07	The Equity Foundation Statement.....	page 22
2.08	Zero Tolerance in Ontario – the <i>Safe Schools Act</i> Amendments.....	page 24
2.09	Safe and Compassionate Schools Task Force Report.....	page 27
2.10	Safe and Compassionate Schools Work Group.....	page 27
2.11	Ontario Human Rights Commission Settlement with the TDSB and the Province.....	page 28
2.12	Conclusion.....	page 32

<b>CHAPTER 3</b>	<b>A CURRENT HEALTH CHECK.....</b>	<b>page 33</b>
<b>3.01</b>	<b>The Shooting Death of Jordan Manners.....</b>	<b>page 33</b>
<b>3.02</b>	<b>A Health Check of C.W. Jefferys C.I.....</b>	<b>page 36</b>
	<i>A. Survey of Student Perspectives at C.W. Jefferys C.I.....</i>	<i>page 37</i>
3.02.01	<i>Introduction.....</i>	<i>page 37</i>
3.02.02	<i>Methodology.....</i>	<i>page 38</i>
3.02.03	<i>Sample Description.....</i>	<i>page 39</i>
3.02.04	<i>Perception of Neighbourhood Crime.....</i>	<i>page 40</i>
3.02.05	<i>Racial Differences in Student Backgrounds.....</i>	<i>page 40</i>
3.02.06	<i>Student Perceptions of Problems at School.....</i>	<i>page 44</i>
3.02.07	<i>Student Feelings About School Safety.....</i>	<i>page 57</i>
3.02.08	<i>Student Victimization.....</i>	<i>page 68</i>
3.02.09	<i>Most Serious Victimization Experience.....</i>	<i>page 83</i>
3.02.10	<i>Witnessing Crime.....</i>	<i>page 91</i>
3.02.11	<i>Improving School Safety.....</i>	<i>page 93</i>
3.02.12	<i>Perceptions of Racism and Social Injustice.....</i>	<i>page 99</i>
3.02.13	<i>Student Comments.....</i>	<i>page 104</i>
3.02.14	<i>Conclusions.....</i>	<i>page 105</i>
	<i>B. Survey of Teacher and Staff Perspectives at C.W. Jefferys.....</i>	<i>page 107</i>
3.02.15	<i>Problems at School.....</i>	<i>page 111</i>
3.02.16	<i>Staff Perceptions of Safety.....</i>	<i>page 123</i>
3.02.17	<i>Staff Victimization.....</i>	<i>page 135</i>
3.02.18	<i>Witnessing Crime and Student Misbehaviour.....</i>	<i>page 139</i>
3.02.19	<i>Staff Perceptions of School Safety Strategies.....</i>	<i>page 146</i>
3.02.20	<i>Staff Perceptions of Appropriate Punishments.....</i>	<i>page 155</i>
3.02.21	<i>Job Satisfaction.....</i>	<i>page 162</i>
3.02.22	<i>Discussion.....</i>	<i>page 165</i>

## **VOLUME 2**

<b>3.03</b>	<b>A Health Check at Westview Centennial Secondary School.....</b>	<b>page 166</b>
3.03.01	<i>Background on Westview.....</i>	<i>page 167</i>
3.03.02	<i>Supports for Westview Students.....</i>	<i>page 168</i>
3.03.03	<i>Weapons in the School.....</i>	<i>page 175</i>
3.03.04	<i>Sexual Violence.....</i>	<i>page 177</i>
3.03.05	<i>Gangs.....</i>	<i>page 178</i>
3.03.06	<i>Suspensions and Discipline.....</i>	<i>page 180</i>
3.03.07	<i>Building Security.....</i>	<i>page 183</i>
3.03.08	<i>Conclusion.....</i>	<i>page 185</i>
3.03.09	<i>Surveys of Westview School Community.....</i>	<i>page 186</i>
	<b>A. Survey of Students from Westview Secondary School.....</b>	<b>page 186</b>
	<b>B. Survey of Staff and Teachers at Westview.....</b>	<b>page 302</b>
<b>3.04</b>	<b>Safety Issues are City-Wide.....</b>	<b>page 348</b>

## **VOLUME 3**

<b>3.05</b>	<b>Gender and School Safety.....</b>	<b>page 371</b>
3.05.01	<i>Introduction.....</i>	<i>page 371</i>
3.05.02	<i>The Prevalence of Gender-Based Violence in Schools.....</i>	<i>page 374</i>
3.05.03	<i>Responding to Incidents of Gender-Based Violence in Schools.....</i>	<i>page 382</i>
3.05.04	<i>Preventing Gendered-Based Violence in Schools.....</i>	<i>page 397</i>
3.05.05	<i>Conclusion.....</i>	<i>page 411</i>

<b>3.06</b>	<b>School Safety Issues Across the Board.....</b>	<b>page 412</b>
3.06.01	<i>Barriers to Reporting.....</i>	page 413
3.06.02	<i>Tracking Safety.....</i>	page 428
3.06.03	<i>Renewal: Creating a Positive Bond Between Students and Teachers.....</i>	page 433
3.06.04	<i>Lack of Youth Activities.....</i>	page 459
3.06.05	<i>Funding Formula.....</i>	page 463
3.06.06	<i>Trustee Governance.....</i>	page 472
3.06.07	<i>Disciplinary Measures in Schools.....</i>	page 477
3.06.08	<i>Detection and Deterrence.....</i>	page 505
3.06.09	<i>Support Services for Student Success.....</i>	page 517
<b>3.07</b>	<b>Aboriginal Education in the Toronto District School Board.....</b>	<b>page 523</b>
3.07.01	<i>The “Achievement” Gap.....</i>	page 523
3.07.02	<i>Aboriginal Education at the TDSB.....</i>	page 525
3.07.03	<i>First Nations School of Toronto.....</i>	page 528
3.07.04	<i>Disciplinary Measures and Aboriginal Justice at the First Nations School.....</i>	page 531
3.07.05	<i>Oversight of Aboriginal Education in the TDSB.....</i>	page 536
3.07.06	<i>Conclusion.....</i>	page 538
<b>3.08</b>	<b>A Return to Equity.....</b>	<b>page 539</b>
3.08.01	<i>Equity Explained.....</i>	page 539
3.08.02	<i>The Relationship Between Safety and Equity.....</i>	page 540
3.08.03	<i>The Equity Foundation Statement.....</i>	page 540
3.08.04	<i>Implementation Failures.....</i>	page 541
3.08.05	<i>Discipline without Equity – The Safe Schools Act.....</i>	page 543
3.08.06	<i>Reuniting Safety with Equity – The Well-Being and Equity Departmen.....</i>	page 544

<b>3.09</b>	<b>Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth.....</b>	<b>page 547</b>
<b>3.10</b>	<b>The Need for a Coordinating Body.....</b>	<b>page 550</b>
<b>3.11</b>	<b>Vision of Hope.....</b>	<b>page 553</b>
3.11.01	<i>Brookview Middle School.....</i>	<i>page 553</i>
3.11.02	<i>Breaking the Cycle.....</i>	<i>page 557</i>
3.11.03	<i>Support Program for Expelled Student- Randolph Site.....</i>	<i>page 558</i>
3.11.04	<i>“Promoting Economic Action and Community Health” (PEACH).....</i>	<i>page 560</i>
3.11.05	<i>Community Contributions.....</i>	<i>page 561</i>
<b>CHAPTER 4</b>	<b>BLUEPRINT FOR CHANGE.....</b>	<b>page 563</b>
<b>4.01</b>	<b>Barriers to Report Implementation.....</b>	<b>page 564</b>
4.01.01	<i>Funding Limitations.....</i>	<i>page 564</i>
4.01.02	<i>Institutional Silos.....</i>	<i>page 565</i>
4.01.03	<i>Institutional Inertia.....</i>	<i>page 565</i>
4.01.04	<i>Resistance from Powerful Interest Groups.....</i>	<i>page 565</i>
4.01.05	<i>Resistance to Research.....</i>	<i>page 566</i>
4.01.06	<i>Inadequate Leadership.....</i>	<i>page 567</i>
4.01.07	<i>Leadership Turnover.....</i>	<i>page 567</i>
4.01.08	<i>Lack of Follow-up – Limited Monitoring and Evaluation.....</i>	<i>page 568</i>
4.01.09	<i>Public Apathy.....</i>	<i>page 568</i>
<b>4.02</b>	<b>Strategies to Promote Change.....</b>	<b>page 569</b>
4.02.01	<i>Legitimization and Advocacy.....</i>	<i>page 570</i>
4.02.02	<i>Constituency Building.....</i>	<i>page 570</i>
4.02.03	<i>Resource Accumulation.....</i>	<i>page 570</i>
4.02.04	<i>Ensuring Inter-Agency Cooperation.....</i>	<i>page 571</i>
4.02.05	<i>Monitoring Impact.....</i>	<i>page 571</i>
4.02.06	<i>Reward Effective Leadership.....</i>	<i>page 572</i>
4.02.07	<i>Create a Culture of Caring.....</i>	<i>page 572</i>

## **VOLUME 4**

**CHAPTER 5      CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....page 573**

**CHAPTER 6      RECOMMENDATIONS.....page 576**

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORKS ON SCHOOL SAFETY**

**APPENDIX “A”** – Terms of Reference for the School Community Safety Advisory Panel  
(June 5, 2007)

**APPENDIX “B”** – Particularization of Terms of Reference (July 6, 2007)

**APPENDIX “C”** – Individuals and Organizations Consulted

**APPENDIX “D”** – Table of Violent Incidents

**APPENDIX “E”** – Report of Zanana Akande dated December 3, 2007

**APPENDIX “F”** – Ontario Human Rights Commission Settlement with the TDSB

**APPENDIX “G”** – Well-Being and Equity Department Chart

**APPENDIX “H”** – An Interim Report on School Safety (August 28, 2007)

**APPENDIX “I”** – Safe Compassionate Schools Task Force Report

**APPENDIX “J”** – Recommendations of the Safe and Compassionate Schools Task Force  
Implementation Work Group

**APPENDIX “K”** – Sample Survey Administered to C.W. Jefferys Students

**APPENDIX “L”** – Sample Survey Administered to C.W. Jefferys Staff

**APPENDIX “M”** – Sample Survey Administered to Westview Students

**APPENDIX “N”** – Sample Survey Administered to Westview Staff

**APPENDIX “O”** – Ontario Human Rights Commission Settlement with the Ministry of Education

**APPENDIX “P”** - Short Biography of Dr. Scot Wortley

### **3.03: A Health Check at Westview Centennial Secondary School**

When this Panel was established following the tragic death of Jordan Manners, the Panel's terms of reference specifically tasked the Panel with reviewing student supervision, student discipline and building security at C.W. Jefferys, but also asked the Panel with respect to improving practices in TDSB schools more generally.

As the Panel conducted its work, it found that the safety of schools within the North-West 2 (NW2) family-of-schools is inextricably linked. For example, as a school which is a net receiver of safe school transfers from its sister schools, issues of safety and security at C.W. Jefferys cannot be divorced from those of its sister schools. For this reason, the Panel felt it was essential that the conditions at sending schools in the NW2 area be closely evaluated.

During our consultations concerning C.W. Jefferys, Westview Centennial Secondary School ("Westview") was raised as a concern from all quarters: youth, parents, community agencies, residents of the Jane-Finch area, Trustee Stephanie Payne and Superintendent Verna Lister. Parents expressed the gravest concerns. They see Westview Centennial Secondary School as a haven for fighting, gambling and intimidation. This theme was repeated often and emphatically during any focus group sessions that involved parents from the Jane-Finch communities.

Community voices such as Roger Rowe (community resident/lawyer and founding Chair of PEACH) observes, "There is a sense of frustration and a lack of response to concerns." "Police are seen as the first resort when they should be the last resort." In a community agency consultation with seven representatives of organizations from outside the Jane-Finch communities, when they were asked for feedback concerning their understanding of the health of Westview, the themes referred to above were corroborated. There was no dissenting voice.

Ms. Verna Lister, Superintendent for Northwest 2, indicated that Westview was identified to her by the outgoing Superintendent (2003-2004) as the school with the greatest challenges, based in part on the changes in administrators due to various unavoidable circumstances such as health issues. There was acknowledgment as to the existence of problems with the level of high-risk youth in the school. Ms. Lister described C.W. Jefferys as being in a different category, consistent with others' views we have heard that Jefferys is the "school of choice" in the North West 2 family-of-schools.

Based on the above, the Panel was of the view that it was not only essential that a full review of safety concerns at Westview be undertaken, but that it was equally essential that it be undertaken by a body independent from the Toronto District School Board. In the Panel's Interim Report, the Panel recommended, among other things, the following with respect to an additional school review:

The Panel has experienced a startling unanimity across a broad cross-section of interests that, while C.W. Jefferys is viewed as a school of choice, there are serious safety concerns regarding other schools in the NW2 family-of-schools. The Panel is of the view that these schools warrant a more intensive review than was earlier contemplated.

The TDSB agreed with this request, and as a result, the Panel has conducted extensive survey work and consultations with respect to Westview Centennial Secondary School (“Westview”). This Chapter reports on the Panel’s findings.

### ***3.03.01: Background on Westview***

With approximately 1,200 students, Westview is one of the larger schools in the TDSB. 52 percent of its students have a primary language other than English. Nine percent of its study body has lived in Canada for two years or less. Westview students are required to wear a school uniform.

Westview falls within a neighbourhood identified by the City of Toronto as “Glenfield-Jane Heights” and is part of the TDSB’s “North West 2” (NW2) family-of-schools. A recent United Way report on poverty in Toronto found that Glenfield-Jane Heights is one of 23 “very high” poverty neighbourhoods, with a 50.1 percent poverty rate.<sup>1</sup> The population density is amongst the highest in Toronto due to the prevalence of high-rise apartment buildings. The community has been hard hit by a decade of declining median income in Toronto.<sup>2</sup> The area is also home to a large proportion of newcomers to Canada and is characterized by significant racial, ethnic, religious and cultural diversity.

The schools in NW2 are in the top quartile of the “Learning Opportunities Index” (“LOI”), a ranking based on factors such as median income, housing, level of education and immigration in particular areas of the City. The index ranks each school from the most needy to the least needy. The higher the ranking, the more needy a school is considered to be. Westview ranks first on the LOI.

In the fall of 2007, the Panel conducted surveys of Westview students and staff resulting in an extremely rich amount of data. The results of the surveys are reported in detail below. We begin, however, with some of the insights into the school’s history and current level of safety as gathered from consultations with students, teachers, staff, administrators, parents, community agencies, police and community members. These consultations highlighted that there are a number of indicators that Westview is in poor health: extraordinarily high suspensions and expulsions, significant levels of sexual violence in the school and a staggering number of guns in the school that was not designed with safety in mind.

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<sup>1</sup> United Way, “Poverty by Postal Code: The Geography of Neighbourhood Poverty (1981-2001)” (April 2004) at p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



### 3.03.02: Supports for Westview Students

The community around the intersections of Jane and Finch has been the object of a high level of stigmatization for many years. Youth from the area are routinely depicted as violent and dangerous gang members. Such depictions are harmful on both the self-esteem of residents, as well as their futures. Many Westview students feel that they are unfairly portrayed, in that problems that they experience are typical at other high schools as well. The following comment from a female grade twelve student was typical of the concern expressed by many students:

*I think sometimes the students can be a little bit out of control. Every other week you see a glass broken. And I know a lot of little kids that got robbed. Because generally I am friends with a lot of grade nines, and tens and grade elevens too as well as the seniors and stuff. They have some bullying issues too. I know some grade nines, because I mentored them, they told me how they would get picked on by older, bigger guys. So that could be somewhat of an improvement. .... I think it happens to anyone. It happens all over, not just in this school alone. It's just somehow we're more in the media.*

Many Westview teachers were very concerned that the Panel's investigations would simply add to the stigma that the school is experiencing. Principal Palermo and Vice-Principal Jones spoke of the difficulty they experience trying to change perceptions about the students at Westview:

**Randy Palermo:** *In a traditional sense, and you're looking way back, to a time when Westview offered more tech programs... For some people there is still, they still remember those days of Westview not being the academic school. Of Westview being the tech school. That of course has changed over the years. We're now a competent school offering courses in the tech area but also in all academic areas and all high end, if you will, academic programs.*

*I think a big piece of the reputation that you speak to is also having to do with our closeness to the Jane-Finch locale and that we are a microcosm of our society and the community. And the stigma around Jane-Finch, in terms of what that means to many people, is something that sometimes is directly related to the high schools in that area.*

**Howard Jones:** *We're the core school in the Jane and Finch community... No matter what you do, we get no [positive] publicity ... It's like people wait to see a negative response. When you look at the [positive programs in the school]. When you look at the kids graduating. We don't get the kind of positive things [out], even though we constantly try to get the positive things out. And the perception in the community is that the school*

*tends to be the fall guy because their kids aren't succeeding ... It's hard to say how you change that. We've tried to. We fight with it.*

**Julian Falconer:** *What kinds of strategies, if at all, do you employ to deal with the stigma issue?*

**Howard Jones:** *We have a whole series of things, like getting involved in community things. Getting our kids out, getting out our drumming club, wrapping gifts at Christmas. Getting our kids out doing positive things in the community. Getting our seniors in for our cooking program. Getting them in for our hairdressing program ... We talk about being proactive and showing people in our community the kinds of things that our kids are doing .... We make partnerships with a variety of groups ... We see comments in the papers about things from people who have never been in this building. We say, where is this coming from? .... We do things that invite the community in, but it's very hard to change the stigma. I have been here for six years and I bang my head.*

The Panel does not wish to add to the stigma already experienced in the “Jane-Finch” community. Westview students have demonstrated great academic talent in some areas and compete academically in national competitions. For example, thirteen Westview students ranked in the top ten percent in the University of Waterloo’s national Sir Isaac Newton competition in physics.

However, it is a reality that many Westview students show significant signs that they are struggling academically. In the 2006-2007 literacy test, only 54 percent first-time eligible Westview students were successful, in contrast to a success level of 81 percent in the TDSB more generally. In terms of the mathematics assessment, 25 percent of TDSB students generally were at or above the provincial average, as compared to only 18 percent of Westview students.

In recognition of the high academic and other needs that many Westview students face, the school has implemented a number of unique programs designed to assist its students. For example, the school has partnered with Humber River Regional Hospital, as well as local colleges and universities to offer a “Health Science Program” for students considering careers in the health sciences field. The program includes co-operative education placements and special lectures by guest speakers.

The “Positive Peer Culture” (PPC) social science course teaches grade nine students life skills, problem-solving, peer mentoring and mediation. Senior PPC students mediate student disputes. Special Literacy Support services offer assistance to students preparing for the mandatory grade ten literacy test. Every student participates in Westview’s “Drop Everything and Read” (DEAR) program, reading for twenty minutes every Wednesday. After school and during the summer, the school offers free literacy classes, in partnership with York University. Homework help is offered every Monday to Thursday, between 3:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Each Friday, the school announces winners of its “Student Success Awards”, which recognize non-academic achievements such as human kindness, honesty and commitment. Students with good attendance records are also acknowledged and rewarded.

Administrators at Westview recognize that many of the students at Westview are coming to school from difficult home and neighbourhood situations and that many need assistance in order to fully participate in the life of the school in a positive way. Principal Randy Palermo provided the Panel with a comprehensive list of the programming that is in place to assist students:

<b>Student Support Initiative</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Activities include</b>	<b>Target Group</b>
<b>Attendance Committee</b>	To develop strategies to improve student attendance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create positive incentive initiatives</li> <li>▪ Review and adjust procedures to promote greater attendance</li> </ul>	All students
<b>Breakfast and Lunch Program (in partnership with the Toronto Foundation for Student Success)</b>	To ensure meals, at no cost, are available for students in need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Volunteer teachers and students purchase food and prepare meals.</li> </ul>	All students in need
<b>Co-curricular Program (community partners as coaches)</b>	To provide opportunities for personal growth through a wide variety of co-curricular activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Many active intramural and interschool sports / teams, clubs and groups (see examples of ESP and SIA below)</li> </ul>	All students
<b>Drug Awareness Training (in partnership with Conflict Mediation Services of Downsview)</b>	To provide a leadership development opportunity and a mechanism for giving back to community to a group of students. To counsel/mentor young students about the hazards of drug involvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training in a after school program through the support of Conflict Mediation Services</li> <li>▪ Delivery of anti-drug message to young students at feeder schools</li> </ul>	All interested students
<b>Enhanced Student Services Team (variety of community agency links)</b>	To help students deal with personal and academic issues in a way that maximizes their chance for success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide academic and personal counselling on a wide variety of issues.</li> <li>▪ Liaise with school social workers, youth workers, settlement worker and outside agencies.</li> </ul>	All students
<b>Enriched Mathematics and Physics Classes</b>	To equip students with knowledge and skills that will enable them to excel in post-secondary Engineering and Science courses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ After school tutoring and mentoring sessions run by a volunteer teacher</li> <li>▪ Writing of the Waterloo Sir Issac Newton Physics Contest</li> </ul>	All interested students enrolled in mathematics and physics courses
<b>Empowered Student Partnerships (ESP) Group (in partnership with Toronto Police Services)</b>	To empower students, through links with community agencies and the police to develop strategies to address issues of safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Regular meetings to allow for the planning of information sessions and activities that address issues of safety concerning teens.</li> <li>▪ Leading Family-of-Schools initiative “Students for Peace” anti-violence campaign in 2007/2008</li> </ul>	All interested students

<b>Student Support Initiative</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Activities include</b>	<b>Target Group</b>
<b>EQAO Mathematics Preparation Classes</b>	To provide an opportunity outside of the classroom for students to continue the development of mathematics skills prior to the grade nine EQAO mathematics assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Westview teachers run after school classes with support from the Continuing Education Department</li> </ul>	All interested grade 9 students
<b>Grade Nine Leadership Days</b>	To engage grade nine students and introduce them to leadership possibilities at Westview through an interactive day at Forest Valley Outdoor Education Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students from the Leadership Class work with adults to lead grade nine students in team building exercises and group problem-solving activities.</li> </ul>	Half of grade 9 class in 2007
<b>Homework Help and Mentorship Program (in partnership with the Caring Village organization)</b>	To provide academic support and a positive environment which will help students complete assigned work and improve their academic achievement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher volunteers work with small groups of students</li> <li>Monday – Thursday 3:15- 4:30 pm</li> <li>Promoting Excellence Mentorship Program continues until 5:30 pm</li> <li>Refreshments included</li> </ul>	Primarily Grade 9 and 10 students but all are welcome
<b>Homework Help (Mathematics Specific)</b>	To provide academic support specific to mathematics after class hours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After school classroom open four days a weeks</li> <li>Support with homework completion enhances numeracy initiatives embedded in classwork.</li> </ul>	All students
<b>Leadership Experience (in partnership with Toronto Police Services)</b>	To take a group of students, identified as having strong leadership potential, to an off-site leadership development camp. To foster the engagement of these students in leadership initiatives back at school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three day experience at Kinark Outdoor Education Centre</li> <li>Planning of initiative to continue at school.</li> <li>Staff mentorship for student leaders throughout the year.</li> </ul>	All interested students (about 50 each year)
<b>Literacy Committee</b>	To develop strategies that promote literacy skills and greater academic success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating resources to teach the skills of the OSSLT</li> <li>Professional development</li> <li>OSSLT Practice Test</li> <li>Boys' and Girls' Reading Clubs</li> </ul>	OSSLT candidates and any interested students
<b>Multicultural Services (in partnership with a variety of community agencies)</b>	To support recently arrived immigrant students in their adjustment to Canada and our school system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a comprehensive ESL program with academic supports</li> <li>LEAP program</li> <li>Special OLT tutorials</li> <li>Designated counsellor</li> <li>Culturally Specific Parent Information Sessions</li> </ul>	Immigrant students who have arrived within the last 4 years
<b>Peer Mediation (in partnership with Conflict Mediation Services of Downsview)</b>	To empower youth with a vehicle for the successful resolution of conflicts with minimal adult intervention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part of Positive Peer Culture courses (major focus of grade 12 course)</li> <li>Enhanced training through community partnership</li> </ul>	All interested students
<b>Positive Peer Culture</b>	To help students learn to deal with personal problems and conflict in a responsible and positive way. To develop and direct the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mandatory class for all Gr. 9 students</li> <li>Optional classes in Gr. 11 and 12</li> <li>Community projects such as organizing food drives, acting as</li> </ul>	All students

Student Support Initiative	Purpose	Activities include	Target Group
	concern, energy and skill of youth in the community and guide this force towards positive change.	reading partners with students at Firgrove, volunteering in homework clubs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Peer Mediation training and utilization</li> </ul>	
<b>Promoting Excellence – Summer Program (in partnership with the Caring Village organization)</b>	To work with at-risk youth in transition from elementary to secondary school through the delivery of a Learning Skills credit and a mentorship program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recruitment of students from feeder schools</li> <li>▪ Counselling students and parents</li> <li>▪ Delivery of credit program at York University in the summer</li> </ul>	Youth in transition who are academically at-risk
<b>Promoting Excellence – Learning Skills Course (in partnership with the Caring Village organization)</b>	To work with complex needs youth involved in the summer Promoting Excellence program to deliver the second half of a Learning Skills credit and continue to mentor students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recruitment of students from summer program who are attending Westview C.S.S.</li> <li>▪ Hiring staff and monitoring the delivery of the credit program</li> </ul>	Youth in transition who are academically at-risk
<b>“Realize” Mentorship Program (in partnership with alumni)</b>	To assist a group of young women who have faced significant challenges in life to build confidence and succeed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Former students and community partners mentor the students</li> <li>▪ Mentees become mentors for younger students</li> <li>▪ Bursaries available</li> </ul>	All female students (application in form of short essay)
<b>School Safety Monitors</b>	To help maintain a safe school environment for all students and staff. To provide guidance to students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Monitoring the halls</li> <li>▪ Responding to calls for assistance in emergencies</li> <li>▪ Following up on/investigating incidents</li> <li>▪ Developing a rapport with students through counseling and interaction</li> </ul>	All students
<b>Settlement Education Partners in Toronto (S.E.P.T.) (community agencies link)</b>	To help newcomers students and their families in their adaptation to a new country.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interview and assess settlement needs</li> <li>▪ Information and referral to government and community resources and services</li> <li>▪ Orientation and supportive counseling</li> <li>▪ Consultation with staff on settlement issues</li> <li>▪ Group sessions and workshops</li> </ul>	Newcomers
<b>“Shoot With This” Mentorship Program (partnership with private industry and Seneca College)</b>	To engage a group of complex needs youth in a mentorship program based on media production.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussion of issues / challenges facing youth through the creation of video documentaries and stories</li> <li>▪ Meet once a week 3:30 – 6 pm</li> <li>▪ Created and supported by Social Workers</li> </ul>	All interested students
<b>Social Workers in School</b>	To assist students and families who are struggling with a variety of issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Counselling</li> <li>▪ Acting as liaison/making referrals to outside support agencies and services</li> <li>▪ Work in the school 1 to 2 days a week</li> <li>▪ Consulting with/advising staff</li> </ul>	Any student referred by staff or self-referred

Student Support Initiative	Purpose	Activities include	Target Group
<b>Special Education</b>	To provide support for identified Special Education students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A comprehensive Special Education program with academic supports</li> <li>▪ IPRC annual reviews</li> <li>▪ Annual Individual Education plans for all students</li> <li>▪ Designated Special Education Staff</li> </ul>	IPRC Students identified as having learning, behavioural or mild intellectual disabilities
<b>Stay Connected (community partner agencies invited in regularly)</b>	To enable students who have become disengaged to re-integrate into the system To provide a different learning structure for students who are at-risk of leaving school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Credit accumulation through shorter modules</li> <li>▪ Case management</li> <li>▪ Counselling</li> <li>▪ Certification</li> </ul>	16-18 year old students who are behind peers in credit accumulation. Students who have been out of school.
<b>STEPS to University Program (in partnership with the University of Toronto)</b>	To provide a window into the university experience and a chance for students to get an advanced credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students are taught by both a local teacher and by a professor from the University of Toronto</li> <li>▪ Students receive two high school credit as well as a university credit in Sociology</li> </ul>	Grade 11 and 12 students selected through application process
<b>Students in Action (S.I.A.) (links with community agencies and YRR Hospital)</b>	To promote student leadership and volunteer opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ organizing school events</li> <li>▪ visits to food banks</li> <li>▪ assisting in shelters</li> <li>▪ fundraising for disaster relief, medical emergencies</li> </ul>	Students Gr.9 - 12
<b>Students Success Committee</b>	To provide support to students who are personally or academically at-risk and to the teachers who teach them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Monitoring/Guiding for students at risk</li> <li>▪ Mentorship program (volunteer teachers mentor students at risk)</li> <li>▪ Workshops/information sessions for parents of students at risk</li> <li>▪ Professional development for staff</li> <li>▪ Credit Recovery program</li> </ul>	Students identified by staff or family or self-identified as being at-risk academically or personally
<b>Student Recognition Committee</b>	To create positive role models by recognizing student achievement and improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student of the Week prizes</li> <li>▪ Journey to Success Luncheon</li> <li>▪ Awards assemblies</li> <li>▪ Public showcase/display of achievers</li> </ul>	High achievers, students who have improved, students who need motivation
<b>Suspended and Studying S.A.S. (offered in affiliation with P.E.A.C.H. community agency)</b>	To provide students on suspension with the opportunity and support to continue their studies so they don't fall behind.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A teacher and CYW oversee and assist students with course work provided by Westview teachers while student serves a short suspension.</li> <li>▪ Students on longer suspension (20 d) serviced through Safe School A2S program</li> <li>▪ Some students on a longer stay, programmed for by teacher at P.E.A.C.H.</li> </ul>	Students on suspension or students attempting to restart their formal education
<b>Transition Committee</b>	To inform our feeder schools' staff, students and families about the opportunities and positive things at Westview. To help academically at-risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gr. 9 for a Day and individualized tours</li> <li>▪ Westview Bulletin Board at feeder schools</li> <li>▪ Cross-Panel visits/activities with a curriculum focus</li> </ul>	Grade 7, 8 and 9 students

Student Support Initiative	Purpose	Activities include	Target Group
	Gr. 8 students succeed in Gr. 9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hand-timetabling for all Gr. 9 students</li> <li>▪ Special programming for students requiring extra support</li> </ul>	
<b>York-Westview Partnership (in partnership with York University and Seneca College)</b>	To provide opportunities and support for academic achievement for Westview students with a view to having more students go to university/college. To provide opportunities for York student to gain experience and make contributions to the community.	Over-all program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>ACE</b> – provides our students with the opportunity to experience post secondary education and encourage those who might not otherwise consider/apply for university</li> <li>▪ <b>OLT preparation/literacy classes:</b> develop the reading and writing skills of students to help them pass the OSSLT. Starts in August and continues on Saturday mornings.</li> <li>▪ <b>Mentoring/tutoring project (Roots of Empathy)</b> - York University students volunteer in classrooms to help and mentor students one day a week</li> <li>▪ <b>Mentoring Young Women – Schulich Students:</b> Group and individual meetings to provide support</li> <li>▪ <b>Steps to the Arts:</b> Enriched arts opportunities for students</li> <li>▪ <b>Student Teacher Candidate Program</b> Provide extra support for Westview students while helping teacher candidates develop their craft</li> </ul>	All students

The leadership and dedication of the administrative team and teachers has clearly begun to make a difference at a school that has had a reputation as being one of the roughest and most disorderly schools in the TDSB. One of the most frequent observations from the consultations was the incredible improvement that has been made at the school over the past several years.

Ken Glasgow has been a School-Based Safety Monitor in the school for five years. As someone who spends the majority of his time interacting with students in hallways and responding to issues of concern within the school, he is ideally placed to describe the changes in the school during that time period. He described a virtual sea-change in the environment in the school under the leadership of Palermo and his team:

***Ken Glasgow:** I think after being here 5 years, I kind of have a broader view of the school. When I first came to Westview, on any given day, at any given time of the day there would be 300 or 400 kids running around the hall. There seemed to be a problem with discipline and people being*

*able to get kids to either go to class or stay in class. And that sort of went on just primarily because we had a change in admin, the old principal died, there was an unstable environment – they had an interim principal, that kind of thing and there was no steady sort of figure head in the building.*

*...Now we have kids in – mostly kids in uniforms. The halls are relatively empty. That discipline issue – I mean we'll always have discipline issues. In fact everyone had a discipline problem – basically, we'd get attitude from every student that we talked to – now that is seldom, if not completely gone.*

*...When I think about ... when I first started, when there were teachers who were unable to or afraid to walk down certain halls. PCP in the halls and nobody would be able to speak to them for fear of being you know, abused one way or another. Now we don't even have those. You know before you'd have kids selling drugs in the halls, openly and blatantly. There would be no fear or consequences.*

The Panel acknowledges that the situation at Westview has improved considerably. There are many positive programs in place to assist students and some degree of calm has returned to the school. Nonetheless, it is clear that there are significant problems that remain.

### **3.03.03: Weapons in the School**

The survey work done with students at Westview has revealed a very troubling picture of weapons in the school. 23 percent of students reported that they know someone who brought a gun to school in the past two years, 5.5 percent had been threatened with a gun at school and 2.8 percent claimed that someone has tried to shoot them at school in the past two years.

Several students who were interviewed described their experiences with weapons in the school. One female grade nine student commented, “You have to know who your friends are ... people know who has a gun.” One male student who has spent two years at the school stated:

*When I was here in grade nine I saw a weapon. I saw a knife once. One of my friends was in a fight and I had to stop her because she was going to stab this person. So, I witnessed a knife that time. I do believe there are other weapons. One time again in grade nine I saw this guy with a butterfly in the hallway and he cut himself....I do believe there are kids who really have firearms in the school.... Maybe not everyday, but maybe once in awhile.*



According to the survey results, although only five percent of staff respondents from Westview reported that they have seen a student with a gun in the past two years, 13 percent of Westview staff believe that students bring weapons to school on a weekly basis.

Neither Principal Randy Palermo nor Vice-Principal Sam Miceli have seen a gun in the school and Vice-Principal Howard Jones has only seen a replica. Nonetheless, as the following quote demonstrates, Principal Palermo acknowledged the difficulty posed by the fact that some youth in the neighbourhood feel the need to arm themselves for defensive purposes.

***Randy Palermo:*** *When we look at weapons, I think that's a huge issue that I can't control. They feel a need – let's say a fear factor of coming to and from school in their community. And you know, I don't know if that reflects the safety that they have within this building. You know what I mean? It obviously does, but I mean, the fact that they feel that way to and from school is when they are getting into a lot of their problems and then that's reflecting within this building when they get here.*

Given the known presence of guns in the surrounding community, it is – sadly – not surprising that there are guns in the school. However, the extent of the presence of firearms in the school would not have been known to the Panel had it not been for the anonymous student surveys. TDSB “Weekly Incident Reports” are one of the ways in which the presence of guns in schools is monitored by the Safe Schools Department.<sup>3</sup> Yet, the presence of firearms at Westview cannot be reliably tracked using this method, particularly because they are not mandatory. The forms are not routinely completed and there are no Weekly Incident Reports involving firearms from Westview from two year's worth of forms reviewed by the Panel. Vice-Principal Miceli explained that he is not directly familiar with weekly incident reports and that: “I don't know what they are, really.” Clearly this lack of comprehensive tracking makes it difficult for the TDSB to monitor trends such as firearms in schools.

The presence of firearms can also not be reliably tracked using police reports. Staff Sergeant Federico provided the Panel with a summary of all of the weapons-related incidents at Westview that involved the Toronto Police Service over the past 24 months. The following is the sum total of police involvement at Westview with respect to weapons – one gun incident and seven incidents involving other types of weapons:

1. Police investigated a report that a suspect had pulled a firearm from his hoodie to show others.
2. A suspect was arrested following an investigation into an allegation that a knife was brandished and held against another person's neck.

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<sup>3</sup> Consultation with Donna Quan, TDSB Systems Superintendent with oversight of Safe Schools, Alternative Programs, Information Management, MISA (Managing Information Student Achievement), ONSIS (Ontario School Information System) (September 19, 2007).

3. A suspect was arrested following an investigation that an assailant had swung a knife at another person.
4. A suspect was arrested following an investigation into allegations that the assailant had produced a knife during a dispute in the school and threatened to kill the complainant.
5. Police investigated an allegation that two males took scissors from a complainant and then swung them at the victim in an attempt to assault.
6. A suspect was arrested following an investigation into an allegation that the assailant had demanded money from the victim while brandishing a knife.
7. Police received a report that an assailant removed a pair of scissors from a teacher's desk and charged towards the victim. The teacher intervened and seized the scissors from the assailant.
8. A suspect was arrested following an investigation into an allegation that the victim was robbed by the assailant while he was on his way to school. When police attended at the school to execute the arrest, the assailant was discovered to be carrying a knife on his person while in class.

The only way, at present, to track the presence of firearms at Westview, is through anonymous student surveys. Weekly incident reports and police reports are clearly unreliable as they relate to firearms in schools.

Thus the number of firearms in the school is something that is below the radar of the TDSB and police. The Panel rejects the notion that Westview is unique in this regard, or that its students are somehow better at hiding weapons than other students. Barriers to detection, including a fear of “snitching” on other students, would be identical at other schools. The same logistical limitations on the ability of police and principals to find these weapons exist elsewhere. In fact, one might expect that firearms would be more likely to be detected at Westview. There are 73 cameras in place in Westview and as firearms are known to be in the community surrounding the school, one would expect the staff at Westview to be on a higher alert for their presence. The ways in which TDSB schools, such as Westview, can improve their ability to detect and deter the presence of weapons are discussed later in this report.

#### ***3.03.04: Sexual Violence***

The survey results detailed below reveal gender-based violence such as sexual assault and sexual harassment are prevalent at Westview. 29.3 percent of female Westview students reported that they had been the victim of unwanted sexual contact at their school over the past two years. Seven percent of female respondents reported that they had been the victim of a major sexual assault at their school over the past two years.<sup>4</sup> 21 percent of Westview student respondents reported that they knew of at least one student who had been sexually assaulted at school over the past two years. Seven percent reported that

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<sup>4</sup> Major sexual assaults were identified as cases in which a student answered yes to the following question: “In the past two years, have you been sexually assaulted at school. Has someone ever forced you to have sex at school against your will?”

they knew three or more students who had been sexually assaulted at the school over the past two years. One out of every three female students indicated that they had been the victim of sexual harassment at their school over the past two years.<sup>5</sup>

Ken Glasgow, a School Based Safety Monitor, confirmed that he is aware of reports of sexual activity taking place in hallways in exchange for money. He indicated that during his time at the school there has always been “some level of that”, though it occurs less so now.

Vice-Principal Miceli acknowledged that violence of a sexual nature occurs at the school. He described one incident in which a female student was confined in a stairwell and forced into various stages of undress as other male students took photographs. This came to the attention of school authorities when the pictures were developed as part of a photography class. The brazenness of this attack suggests that there is a sense amongst some students that they can engage in sexual violence against female students with impunity.

Despite the high level of sexual violence at Westview, there are no Crisis Reports or Weekly Incident Reports to reflect such activities occurring.

Staff Sergeant Federico provided the Panel with a summary of all of the incidents of sexual assault at Westview that involved the Toronto Police Service over the past 24 months, closely mirroring the time period over which students were asked to report in the surveys. Only one sexual assault involving the school was investigated during that time period. Even this incident was not the subject of a Crisis Report or a Weekly Incident Report.

Although there is a high level of violence against young female students occurring within the school, none of the initiatives and programs described in Principal Palermo’s chart specifically address the serious issue of gender-based violence and sexual assault. There is clearly a serious need for such interventions at Westview in order to improve safety for female students. Issues related to gender-based violence are comprehensively addressed later in this report.

### **3.03.05: Gangs**

As was discussed in the Interim Report, the colours red and blue, while associated with two gangs that are present in Toronto, are also associated with particular neighbourhoods around Westview. Many students wear a colour as a signifier of their home community, rather than as a signifier of membership in a gang. It is common for students wearing neighbourhood colours to be mistaken for gang members and for students from these different communities to socialize within the school without any difficulty. These friendly inter-changes are not always possible outside of the school. Principal Palermo

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<sup>5</sup> Sexual harassment was defined in the survey questions as someone “making unwanted sexual comments that upset the student or made them feel uncomfortable.”

and Vice-Principal Jones described these neighbourhood dynamics in the following exchange:

**Randy Palermo:** *Kids come wearing colours. They know they are not allowed to wear colours in school. ...If they live in the red community, and they wear blue they will be accosted. So you know they don't belong to the gang. But they need to wear that colour because that's their community and they don't want to be hassled on their way to and from school...*

**Howard Jones:** *And the other thing that happens with us is that, we look at the different communities and different cultures in this building and the very fact that they interact on curricular teams at lunch time activities – they are involved in a variety of things together ...On a daily basis that they get involved together in a game at lunch time and with only a teacher and a safety monitor there and, we almost never have – like maybe two in the course of let's see, its been eight years since I've been here – a conflict in there and in each of those cases it would be because somebody bumped somebody in the corridor. It wasn't a gang-related colours thing.*

*And its an amazing thing to watch this at the end of the day as they separate and leave from different doors – going out to the different areas dressed and they start putting their different colours on as they go out. It's a really interesting perception.*

...

**Randy Palermo:** *But I agree with Howard, there is still – for many, not for all – when they arrive in their community they feel a need to show a particular colour. A large number of students would never think of wearing a colour, even though they live in those communities and what's the difference for those?*

Although gang presence may sometimes be over-estimated as a result of the conflation with “colours”, it is clear from the survey results that there is a gang presence in Westview. 11.8 percent of the sample (93 students) claim that they “used to be involved in a gang.” 4.8 percent of the sample (39 students) claim that they are a current gang member.

Vice-Principal Miceli described how some parts of the school are associated with “red” or “blue.” The entrance known as the “Oakdale” entrance (adjacent to the library on the west side of the school) is predominantly a “red” area, characterized by “the same students congregating in the same spot, displaying various clothing of red on it.” Further down the hall “towards the main entrance, still in the Oakdale area – closer to what I call our PPC office – you see other kids wearing blue. Sometimes under their uniforms, sometimes in lieu of their uniforms.” He elaborated further that some students have “marked” areas:

*The kids who wear red in front of the library doors in the Oakdale area – wow, though I have never seen them physically, first hand tagging the area – you’d find as you walk through the building – red tagging, or just in pen – Blood. One occasion, we were able to analyze videotape and came up with ... one of our students very clearly with a marker writing on the very floor where kids stand – Blood.*

He noted that other areas of the school had been marked with the word “Crips.”

Given the documented relationship between criminal gang activity and the possession of weapons,<sup>6</sup> the presence of gang members within the school is a significant concern. In a 2000 survey in Toronto high schools, almost seventy percent of those who identified as “criminal” gang members reported that they had carried a knife or gun with them during the past year.<sup>7</sup> Membership in a criminal gang also dramatically increases the risk of victimization. Gang membership puts one at an increased risk of being assaulted with a weapon and, particularly for female members, a higher risk of sexual assault.<sup>8</sup>

### ***3.03.06: Suspensions and Discipline***

The Panel is of the view that safe school transfers, suspension rates and expulsion rates can be a useful indicator of the health of a school. It is with concern, then, that the Panel noted that Westview Centennial S.S. has amongst the highest suspension and safe school transfer rates in the TDSB.

“Safe School Transfers” are discussed more fully elsewhere in the report. Briefly, safe school transfers involve the transfers of students who: 1) are subject to interim release conditions that prohibit them from returning to their school; 2) are returning from a limited or full expulsion; or 3) are subject to Denial of Access notices pursuant to section 306 of the *Education Act* or a principal exclusion pursuant to section 265(m) of the *Education Act*.

During the 2006-2007 academic school year, Westview was considered a “net sending school”. Westview sent out 22 safe school transfers and received 13 safe school transfers. Most such transfers involved students with conditions imposed upon them by either the

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<sup>6</sup> P.M. Kingery, M.B. Coggeshall and A.A. Alford (1999), “Weapon carrying by youth: Risk factors and prevention,” *Education and Urban Society* v. 31(3) 309.

<sup>7</sup> S. Wortley and J. Tanner (2004), “Criminal Organizations or Social Groups? An Exploration of the Myths and Realities of Youth Gangs in Toronto” (unpublished manuscript).

<sup>8</sup> S. Wortley and J. Tanner (2004), “Criminal Organizations or Social Groups? An Exploration of the Myths and Realities of Youth Gangs in Toronto” (unpublished manuscript) “Criminal” gangs were classified as those in which members indicated that they had either sold drugs, stolen property or fought against other gangs as part of their regular gang activities. When the definition was expanded to include “social” gang membership, in which members did not engage in regular criminal activity, the percentage of high school students who were classified as gang members rose to six percent. However, the differences in offending between “social” gang members and non-gang members were rarely statistically significant. Many youth who identify themselves as “gang members” are not overly involved in deviant or criminal activities.

courts or police. In the current school year, Westview has sent out nine safe school transfers and has received five safe school transfers. Westview consistently sends out the most safe school transfers in the NW2 family of schools and is generally in the top ten every year in system wide data.

Suspensions at Westview occur at extremely high levels. In the 2004-2005 school year, Westview had 292 suspensions, representing 13.69 percent of its student population. In 2005-2006, Westview handed out 518 suspensions to 264 of its 1277 students (20.68 percent). In the 2006-2007 school year, 450 students were suspended, representing approximately 20.82 percent of the student population.

A fulsome analysis of how Westview suspensions compare to other schools in the TDSB is provided later in this report. Suffice it to say at this point, that the increasing trend in suspensions stands in stark contrast to the rapid decrease in overall suspensions in the TDSB during the same period of time. Westview's suspension rate has consistently been amongst the highest in the TDSB.

As high as these suspensions are, there may actually be more suspensions taking place than have been formally reported. The Panel has been advised by a community student advocacy organization and a community legal worker that some students have been sent home from Westview, sometimes for days, without any formal suspension or expulsion. The Panel was further advised that these students were not provided any form of supports during the period they were at home nor were parents formally advised that their child had been disciplined in this manner.

Principal Palermo and Vice-Principal Jones advised they knew nothing of this practice of informal suspensions. However, Vice-Principal Miceli advised differently:

**Julian Falconer:** You use informal suspensions from time to time, where you send kids home on the basis that parents accept that they should take the day off? Is that right?

**Sam Miceli:** No, I don't. Never .... Our admin have on occasion sent kids home; 1) for their own safety until a matter is cleared up; and 2) for the rest of the school day, **which is not a formal suspension**. It might be a tentative one, because that administrator deems it is the right course of action given what's transpired. [emphasis added]

**Julian Falconer:** Why not a formal suspension?

**Sam Miceli:** I don't know. You would have to ask them. I like to make it very clear for parents. Either they are suspended or they are not.

The Panel is concerned by this practice and recommendations have been made later in this report to end informal suspensions.

Westview teachers consulted are generally supportive of the high number of suspensions, with some teachers commenting that the administration is not suspending students enough. During a consultation with Principal Palermo, the Panel was advised that the increased number of suspensions at the school could be a sign that the school is getting healthier:

*I think suspension data can also be taken ... that is high can also be taken as a positive in regards to the health of the school. I'll explain what I mean. If we are using a progressive discipline model... some students who are not attending or not doing what they need to do, may receive the suspension for neglect of duty or habitual neglect of duty and that may be a simple one day suspension that is another tool to say, "Hey, we need to make a change here". It will involve connections with the parents and if at all possible a chance for the parent to come back in and meet with the Vice Principal or teacher and have a discussion around what is happening with this child. And I think, if we are using progressive discipline models in getting to those kinds of suspensions more often, which I believe we are, it shows that we're addressing students in need. ... So it's not necessarily a negative indicator.*

Vice-Principal Miceli was also supportive of the idea that suspensions of 21 percent, while unfortunate, are a good thing for the school:

*It's high. It's horrible. But at the same time it is what it is. It's good...I wish there were no suspensions, I wish there were no safe school transfers, but that is not going to happen...I received feedback from staff and from students and from support staff to say "since you guys have been here, (meaning the current admin team) things are a lot better. Students feel safer, we feel that things are more orderly"... "Students and staff need to be reminded of what you expect of us and that there are benefits and consequences when we don't meet those expectations."*

...

*I think it signals very clearly that the school community will not tolerate certain behaviours....I speak in my short time, 2.5 years, being greater incidences of lack of safety, of gang activity, of skipping, of intruders [when] we had a lower suspension rate. I think you can make the correlation that as things got safer its because we held kids more accountable. That there is a progressive discipline that will be communicated very effectively to you, and to you through your teachers, that if you do a) and b) you will be rewarded. But If you do c) or d) we are going to talk to you and we're going to keep paying attention to you... We'll get you the help, we'll get you the homework help. But if you continue the gang colours, the bullying, the fighting, the harassing females, whatever it might be, your parents might hear about it. Eventually might get suspended and it might be more than a day...*

*Unless there is a change outside the school walls, do not anticipate too much of a change within it. I can hardly blame our kids when, because they are sleep deprived, because they are malnourished, because they have not received their school uniform... I can neither blame them nor their parents because we know full well the obstacles they are up against. Will that 21 percent change given that? Not much.*

The Panel does not share Principal Palermo's view that suspending 21 percent of the student population is a positive indicator with respect to the health of a school. While such an argument could perhaps be made if the rate was that high in one year but was reduced in the next, that is not the case here. It is precisely because suspensions cannot address some of the root causes of student misbehaviour, such as poverty, hunger and violence outside of the school, that suspensions are so ineffective. As is discussed later in this report, the Board's current approach to suspensions – which often accomplishes little more than causing already struggling students to fall even further behind – is not working.

### **3.03.07: Building Security**

The Panel has serious concerns about the design and physical plant at Westview. The school is a large and sprawling maze with numerous little hallways and enclosures. A former Westview teacher explained that stairwells have historically been an issue with students hanging around in stairwells, moving to different floors from time to time to avoid hall monitors. There are several places where the final steps of the stairwell create an alcove where students sometimes congregate.

Several students commented on problems with the school's physical plant. For example, one male student stated: "This school is not clean. The school needs to be rebuilt. There are places caretakers cannot clean."

A fall 2007 School Safety Audit identified the following concerns, among others:

- All perimeter doors need signs that direct visitors to report to the main office;
- Graffiti;
- Several exterior doors that were supposed to be locked were found unlocked;
- Exterior lighting is not operating properly. At the time of the audit only 3 lights were working;
- Caretaking receiving door is left insecure all day and evening until permits have ended. During the auditors' visit to the school, the door was propped open and no Board staff were present;
- The location of the main office is not clearly indicated when you walk through the doors;
- There are blind spots in the hallways at T intersections and alcoves;



- Stairwell near room #319 was tied shut and was being used for storage;
- More cameras are needed. The Principal has requested an additional 26 cameras;
- There is a perception that students congregating around the red lockers near the library may be associated with street gang activity. The audit recommended that the red lockers be painted a non-gang affiliated colour.

Maureen McAuley, Architectural Coordinator with the TDSB, conducted a site visit on December 10, 2007 at Westview and reported back to the Panel. Her observations about the school's layout and physical plant included the following suggested areas for improvement:

- New schools are being designed with a greater number and larger sizes of windows. With the narrow windows, Westview Centennial SS appears more 'military' than 'friendly' in the overall massing of the building;
- The main entrance for the neighbourhood students is in the 'rear' of the school, away from the main entrance and office area and is not clearly visible from the street;
- The Main Administration Office is located on the second floor. Ideally, the Main Office should be located adjacent to the main entrance to the school, on the main floor level, where the administration personnel is aware of the comings and goings at the school;
- The main parking area is located in the rear of the school, towards the playing field. There is a vehicular driveway that leads to and from the area; however, there is no strong link to the front entrance to the school. There is no turn around or drop off zone to draw attention to the main entrance;
- One of the second floor corridor exit stairwells lead the students down the stairs to the main floor, exterior exit as well as to the Library. This rear entrance/exit door from the Library was designed as a requirement of the exiting needs of the Library. However, this circulation has caused the school to create an "out of bounds" area for the students and unless there is an emergency, they are discouraged from using the second floor stairwell;
- There is another stairwell that leads to the third floor Science wing. The stairwell opens up to the corridor and an open Science Lab and has become an undesirable 'gathering area for students'. The school had to create another "out of bounds" area for the students. Securing the Science Lab with closures might increase the security of this Science classroom;
- The entrance to the Pool and Change Rooms, at the end of a corridor, must be kept secure as it presents itself as a 'hang out' area for students. The students have to be escorted to this area by a staff member.

The layout at Westview was clearly not designed to be welcoming, nor was it designed with student safety in mind. Given the numerous issues with the building's design, it is

not surprising that there is difficulty maintaining a safe environment for students at Westview.

### ***3.03.08: Conclusion***

A number of other themes that emerged from Westview are addressed throughout the report, including difficulties in the relationship between teachers and students as well as student access to after-school activities. The Panel has been left with the view that the situation with which the administrators at Westview are faced is utterly impossible. There are simply too many students with complex needs in a building that is not designed with safety in mind. The impression of high tensions and serious safety issues at the school are only strengthened by the survey results, which are described in detail in the following section. The needs of the students and surrounding community are so great, and the resources available to meet those needs are so inadequate, that at best, administrators can “keep the lid” on an explosive situation. It is understandable to the Panel that Principal Palermo and his team would be seen as making significant strides simply by virtue of their ability to keep the situation under control.

Ultimately, however, “keeping a lid on it” is simply not enough for the students of Westview. One young woman stated that “you need to have backbone” to go to Westview. No student should need to “have backbone” to attend school. The students and community around Westview are entitled to better than they have received, despite the best and well-meant efforts of the school’s staff.

One is tempted, given these findings, to recommend closing the school and replacing it with smaller, more safely designed facilities. The Panel does not feel comfortable, based on the limited work we have been able to do in the school, in making this recommendation. However, the situation cannot continue as it is and more follow up is necessary. For these reasons, the Panel recommends elsewhere in this report that the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth – a provincial office that has the power to ensure the voices of Westview students are heard at the highest levels of power in the province – conduct a systemic review of the school and make recommendations for change.

### 3.03.09 Surveys of Westview School Community

#### A. SURVEY OF STUDENTS FROM WESTVIEW SECONDARY SCHOOL:

***Abstract:** By late November 2007 the Panel had collected 870 completed questionnaires from students at Westview Centennial Secondary School. This sample represents 71.9% of the students who were attending the school during this time period. As was the case with the Jefferys students survey, the Panel survey of Westview students provides mixed, often contradictory results. For example, while most students claim that Westview has serious problems with gangs, violence, drug dealing and weapons, the majority of respondents also feel quite safe at their school. Furthermore, while at the same time acknowledging problems with criminality and poor student behaviour, many Westview students believe that their school has been unfairly labelled as dangerous or unsafe.*

*Most Westview students feel that teachers and students get along at their school and that teachers genuinely care for their students. If anything, the data suggest that the relationship between students and faculty at Westview is somewhat more positive than student-teacher relationships at Jefferys. Nonetheless, the results also indicate that a large proportion of the Westview students who participated in the survey think that there are serious problems at their school with student disorder in the hallways, students who talk back and disrespect their teachers, unfair grading, unfair punishment and discrimination by teachers against students.*

*The results of the survey also indicate that, like their counterparts at Jefferys, a significant proportion of Westview students have been the victim of threats, physical assaults, theft, sexual assaults, gun threats and other types of crime – both inside and outside of school. Many Westview students also report that they are aware of guns and knives within the school environment and know students who have brought guns or knives to school. Although many students admit that they themselves have brought a knife to school, relatively few report that they have ever carried a gun. Further analysis indicates that much of the exposure to weapons at Westview is concentrated among former and current gang members.*

*Similar to the situation at C.W. Jefferys, the survey also found that the vast majority of Westview students will not talk to the police or school officials about crimes they have witnessed or their own victimization experiences. Reasons for not reporting include fear of the offenders, fear of the police, distrust of the police, fear of upsetting parents and the desire to avoid being labelled a “snitch”.*

*Westview students, as with Jefferys students, support a wide range of school safety initiatives. They are particularly supportive of increased*

*extra-curricular programming, increased counselling for troubled youth, the increased use of security cameras and increasing the presence of security staff (hall monitors) within the school environment. They are somewhat less supportive of initiatives like installing metal detectors, allowing the police to search student lockers and creating one way in and out of the school.*

*Finally, as with their counterparts from Jefferys, the survey of Westview students also found strong evidence that racism is a major concern – particularly for black students. Indeed, the majority of black students perceived racial bias with respect to grading and disciplinary practices and felt that teachers treated some students better than others. Many black students also perceive racism outside of the school environment.*

## **Introduction**

As discussed above, one of the main objectives of the School Community Safety Advisory Panel was to document the attitudes, opinions and experiences of the students at C.W. Jefferys Collegiate. However, during the Panel's initial consultations with teachers, parents, students and community members, it became clear that issues of school safety were not isolated at Jefferys. Indeed, many community members felt that, despite the shooting death of Jordan Manners, C.W. Jefferys Collegiate was actually the safest high school in the North-West quadrant. Thus, after a series of discussions with the Toronto District School Board, the Panel was given permission to survey students and staff at one other high school within the Jane-Finch corridor. The administration at Westview Secondary School subsequently agreed to participate in the Panel's investigation.

The purpose of the Westview student survey was twofold. First of all, the Panel wanted to determine whether the school safety issues uncovered by the C.W. Jefferys student survey were similar to or different from the issues experienced by students at other neighbourhood high schools. Secondly, the Panel wanted the opportunity to ask students more detailed questions about their exposure to guns at school and about their experiences with sexual assault.

At this time, it is important to note that, in the Fall of 2007, the Safety Panel also attempted to conduct a second student survey at C.W. Jefferys Collegiate. The proposed objective of the second Jefferys student survey was to ask the same, but more detailed questions about guns and sexual assault that had been developed for the Westview survey. (see discussion below) (Appendix "M" is the students' survey) By asking these more detailed questions, the Panel felt that it would have been able to "drill down" on the statistics produced by the first survey of Jefferys students (see above). A second C.W. Jefferys survey would also have given the Panel the opportunity to examine how C.W. Jefferys students were feeling at the start of new school year – several months after the tragic shooting at their school and after a new school administration had been appointed. Unfortunately, the Panel encountered several obstacles when it attempted to conduct a

second survey at Jefferys – including an uncooperative new Principal who did want the second survey to take place.

## **Methodology**

The Panel research team entered Westview Secondary to administer the student survey on October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Before classes began, the research team first conducted an information session with teachers and administrators. During this meeting, the research team explained the purpose of the survey, explained why Westview had been selected to participate in the Panel's investigation and provided information on how the data would be analyzed and reported. The teachers were also given explicit instructions on how they were to administer the questionnaire to their students, in class, during the second period (the period immediately before lunch). During the briefing meeting, the research team also explained that the staff at Westview would soon receive its own questionnaire to fill out. At the end of the session, staff members were given the opportunity to ask questions. It was during this discussion that several teachers indicated that they were apprehensive about the survey, that they felt Westview had been unfairly targeted for investigation and that they felt the survey would further exploit or stigmatize the adolescents who lived within the Jane-Finch community. The research team attempted to address these concerns by stressing the confidential nature of the questionnaire, the fact that students would be given the opportunity to discuss the positive things about their school and the possibility that the data collected from the survey could ultimately be used to make their school a safer place to work and learn.

As mentioned above, the questionnaire was administered to students – in class – during the second period. The survey was administered much like a test or exam. The students had approximately 70 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Each member of the research team was given responsibility for three or four different classes. These research assistants first helped to introduce the survey to the Westview students. They then circulated among their assigned classes and answered student questions as well as ensured that proper survey administration procedures were being followed by the teachers.

Both teachers and members of the research team supervised the administration of the survey. After a brief introduction that outlined the purpose of the study and the nature of the questions, students were given a copy of the questionnaire and a blank envelope. They were instructed not to put their names or other identifying information on either the questionnaire or the envelope. Before they began to answer the questionnaire, the students were informed that the survey was completely anonymous and that members of the research team would never be able to identify which student filled out which questionnaire. They were also told that they did not have to answer any questions that they did not wish to answer and that they could end their participation in the study, at any time, without consequences.

The students were then given an opportunity to ask any questions they had about the survey and told that if they had any questions while they were completing the survey that they should raise their hand and consult their teacher or a member of the research team.

Finally, the students were instructed to put their completed questionnaire into the envelope, seal the envelope and turn the questionnaire into a member of the research team. This procedure was designed to increase student confidence that nobody at the school (teachers, administrative staff or other students) would ever get the opportunity to read their answers and that nobody from the research team would examine their questionnaire until after they had left the school. It was felt that this procedure would ensure the students' privacy and subsequently increase the probability that they would answer the questions honestly. After collecting completed questionnaires, all surveys were handed over to Professor Wortley from the University of Toronto for data entry and data cleaning.

### **Sample Size**

The administration informed the Panel that there were 1,209 students enrolled at Westview at the time of survey administration. The research team collected 1,003 sealed envelopes (containing the questionnaire) from students on October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007. However, during the data entry stage, it was determined that 133 of these 1,003 questionnaires (13.3%) were unusable. These unusable questionnaires were either not completed at all, only partially completed or had not been filled out properly (i.e., the student had answered, "I don't know" to every question). After eliminating the unusable questionnaires, we were left with a final sample of 870 respondents. Thus, our survey was completed by approximately three-quarters of the students (71.9%) who were attending Westview in the Fall of 2007. We feel that this is a very acceptable response rate. Indeed, public opinion surveys, conducted by prestigious polling companies, rarely achieve response rates of higher than 70%.

Nonetheless, we must address the question of why we were not able to collect questionnaires from even more Westview students. First of all, it is possible that some students were absent from school on the day that the survey was administered. Others, we know, did not participate in the study because they were just learning English and could not easily follow the questionnaire. We must also consider the possibility that some students may have made their own decisions not to participate in the study. They may, for example, have felt uncomfortable with the nature of the questions or were perhaps doubtful that the questionnaire was truly anonymous. Unfortunately, the research team did notice that some students were persuaded by their teachers not to participate. For example, one teacher gave his class a choice – fill out the questionnaire or play dodge ball. Not surprisingly, most students in this class opted for dodge ball. Another teacher apparently stood in front of her class and told her students that she did not agree with the Panel's investigation and that the results of the study could further hurt or stigmatize the students from Westview. According to our research assistant, as a result of this statement, several students in this class decided not to fill out the questionnaire. Fortunately, the vast majority of the teachers at Westview fully cooperated with the research team. For the most part, students completed the questionnaire, during class-time, in a quiet and orderly fashion. Thus, with few exceptions, we are grateful to the teachers at Westview for their assistance with this study.

### *Sample Description*

Table One provides a basic demographic profile of our sample of Westview students. Males and females are equally represented (51% male, 49% female). All Grades are well represented. Approximately 24% of the respondents are in Grade 9, 22% are in Grade 10, 21% are in Grade 11 and 33% are in Grade 12. Forty percent of the sample (41%) were born outside of Canada and 39% have a first language other than English. All age groups are well-represented. However, we are a little concerned at the high number of students (33%) who identified themselves as 14 years of age or younger, especially since some of these students also indicated that they were in Grade 11 or Grade 12. We suspect that some students were uncomfortable giving their exact age because they felt that it could be used to identify them at a later date. This suspicion was confirmed by the comments made by some students after completing the questionnaire. These students stated that while they could understand the need for questions about school safety, they were unsure why we needed to ask about their age or other personal information.

Consistent with the school's profile, the student sample from Westview is very diverse with respect to both race and religion. Over a third of the survey respondents (37%) self-identified as black or African Canadian, 20% as Asian, 23% as South Asian, and 15% come from "other" racial minority backgrounds (including a large number of multi-racial individuals) and 3% self-identified as West Asian. Only twenty-five students (3%) self-identified as White. Similarly, 16% of the sample identified themselves as Muslim, 15% as Hindu, 15% as Buddhist and 34% as Christian. One out of ten respondents claimed that they did not have a religion.

The data (see Table 1) also indicates that a large proportion of Jefferys' students come from a disadvantaged social background. For example, a third of the sample (33%) currently lives with only one parent (usually their mother). Only 56% reside with both parents. Furthermore, one out of every four students in the sample (28%) indicated that they currently reside in a public housing project. Similarly, 25% of the Westview student respondents consider themselves to be poor or very poor. Nonetheless, it should be noted that, despite their relatively disadvantaged status, 70% of the students in the sample plan to graduate high school and attend either university (53%) or community college (17%).

In summary, we feel that the characteristics of our Westview student respondents are consistent with the characteristics of the larger student population at Westview. This conclusion is bolstered by a comparison of our sample with the sample of Westview students produced by the 2006 Toronto District School Board Census (see Yau and O'Reilly 2007). For example, in the School Board Census, 39% of Westview students self-identified as black, compared to 37% of our respondents. Similarly, according to the Census results, 29% of Westview students are South Asian and 20% are Asian.<sup>9</sup> By comparison, 23% of our sample of Westview students are South Asian<sup>10</sup> and 20% self-identified as Asian. Both the Census and our survey results indicate that relatively few

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<sup>9</sup> The Asian category includes those of East Asian (Chinese, Korean, etc.) and South-East Asian (Vietnamese, Cambodian, etc.) backgrounds.

<sup>10</sup> The South Asian category includes South Asians and those with a Indo-Caribbean background (mainly from Guyana).

white students attend this school (3% according to the Census and 3% according to our survey).

### **Perceptions of Neighbourhood Crime**

We asked our student respondents from Westview about the level of crime in their neighbourhood or community. (see Table 1) The results suggest that Westview students live in more crime-prone communities than the students at Jefferys. For example, 39% of Westview students feel that they live in a neighbourhood with a lot of crime, compared to only 20% of Jefferys students. Gang activity appears to be a particular source of concern. Almost half of Westview students (45%) indicate that gangs are a big or very big problem in their neighbourhood, compared to only 31% of Jefferys students. Similarly, only 7% of Westview students report that gangs are not a problem at all in their neighbourhood, compared to 17% of Jefferys students. Westview students are also much more likely than Jefferys students to report that they often hear gunshots in their neighbourhood. For example, 43% of Westview students report that they hear gunshots at least once per month, compared to only 18% of Jefferys students. Similarly, 16% of Westview students report that they hear gunshots in their neighbourhood at least once per week, compared to only 6% of Jefferys students.

Nonetheless, although Westview students are more likely to report that they live in high crime communities, self-reported gang involvement is remarkably similar at both schools. For example, 21% of Westview students admit that they have been the member of a gang at some point in their life, compared to 19% of Jefferys students. Furthermore, Westview students (10%) are only slightly more likely than Jefferys students (7%) to admit that they are currently the member of a gang. However, almost half of Westview students (48%) report that they are friends with at least one gang member, compared to 41% of Jefferys students. Westview students (21%) are also more likely than Jefferys students (14%) to report that they know many gang members.

### **Racial Differences in Student Backgrounds**

As discussed above, Westview is a very diverse high school consisting of students from a variety of different racial and ethnic backgrounds. Further analysis reveals significant differences in the demographic and neighbourhood characteristics of students from different racial backgrounds (see Table 2). For example, South Asian (53%) and West Asian students (81%) are much more likely to report that they were born outside of Canada than students from other racial backgrounds. Similarly, South Asian, Asian and West Asian students are more likely to report English-as-a-Second-Language than Black students.

Other results strongly suggest that, in general, the Black students at Westview come from more socially disadvantaged backgrounds than students from other racial minority groups. For example, only 40% of Black respondents claim that they live with both parents, compared to 85% of West Asian students, 77% of South Asian students and 60% of Asian students. Similarly, 45% of Black students report that they live in a housing project, compared to 15% of South Asians, 15% of Asians and 21% of West Asians. Finally, Black students, White students and Asian students are somewhat more likely to



report both current and former gang involvement than students from other racial groups. Compared to students from other racial groups, Black students, Asian students and White students are also more likely to report that they have friends who are current gang members.

**TABLE 1:**  
**Respondent and Neighbourhood Characteristics (Westview Student Survey)**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percent of Students</b>
<b><i>Gender</i></b>		
Male	438	50.6
Female	427	49.4
<b><i>Age</i></b>		
14 years of age or younger	282	32.6
15 years of age	156	18.0
16 years of age	163	18.8
17 years of age	170	19.6
18 years of age	72	8.3
19 years of age or older	23	2.7
<b><i>Racial Background</i></b>		
Black	314	36.9
South Asian	192	22.6
Asian	167	19.6
West Asian	27	3.2
White	25	2.9
Other	125	14.7
<b><i>Current Grade</i></b>		
Grade 9	208	24.0
Grade 10	192	22.1
Grade 11	178	20.5
Grade 12	290	33.4
<b><i>Place of Birth</i></b>		
Canada	500	58.5
Outside of Canada	355	41.5
<b><i>First Language</i></b>		
English	526	61.4
Other Language	331	38.6
<b><i>Family Situation</i></b>		
Lives with both parents	486	56.4
Lives with mom only	260	30.2
Lives with dad only	28	3.2
Other living situation	88	10.2
<b><i>Type of Community</i></b>		
Very poor or poor	216	25.2
Average or middle-class	465	47.2
Above average or wealthy	50	5.8
Don't know	187	21.8
<b><i>Educational Goals</i></b>		
Drop out before graduation	6	0.7
Graduate high school	178	20.6
Community college	148	17.1
University	459	53.2
Other	22	2.5
Don't know yet	50	5.8

Sample Size=870

**TABLE 1 (continued):**  
**Respondent and Neighbourhood Characteristics (Westview Student Survey)**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percent of Students</b>
<b><i>Religion</i></b>		
No religion	91	10.5
Muslim	139	16.0
Hindu	133	15.3
Bhuddist	130	14.9
Christian	292	33.6
Other/not specified	85	9.8
<b><i>Type of Residence</i></b>		
Lives in a housing project	238	28.3
Other rented or owned residence	289	34.4
Don't know	313	37.3
<b><i>Level of Crime in Community</i></b>		
No crime	39	4.5
A little crime	127	14.8
An average amount of crime	273	31.8
A lot of crime	333	38.8
Don't know	86	10.0
<b><i>Gang Presence in Community</i></b>		
A very big problem	214	24.8
A big problem	172	20.0
A problem	231	26.8
A small problem	113	13.1
Not a problem at all	61	7.1
Don't know	71	8.2
<b><i>How Frequently Students Hear Gun Shots in Their Community</i></b>		
Never	130	15.1
Almost Never	149	17.3
A few times a year	99	11.5
At least once a month	230	26.7
At least once a week	138	16.0
Don't know	116	13.5
<b><i>Gang Involvement</i></b>		
Never in a Gang	687	79.0
Used to be in a gang	93	10.7
Currently in a gang	39	4.5
Refused to answer	51	5.9
<b><i>Contact with Gang Members</i></b>		
Does not know any gang members	301	34.6
Knows 1 or 2 gang members	128	14.7
Knows several gang members	108	12.4
Knows many gang members	183	21.0
Not sure if knows gang members	102	11.7
Refused to answer	48	5.5

Sample Size=870

**TABLE 2:**  
**Racial Differences in Respondents' Personal and**  
**Community Characteristics (Westview Student Survey)**

Characteristic	Black	South Asian	Asian	West Asian	White	Other
% Born Outside of Canada	45.1	52.9	17.0	80.8	36.0	40.0
% with English as 1 <sup>st</sup> language	82.4	61.4	27.4	11.1	20.8	70.8
% who live with both parents	40.2	77.5	59.3	85.2	52.0	56.0
% who live with their mother only	43.1	14.1	28.1	11.1	20.0	31.2
% who live in a poor community	31.6	17.8	26.5	11.1	36.0	20.3
% who live in a housing project	45.4	15.3	14.7	20.8	20.0	26.3
% who plan to go to university	50.0	67.7	52.1	69.2	28.0	43.9
% who feel that there is a lot of crime in their community	43.9	35.1	31.1	52.0	48.0	38.0
% who have ever been the member of a gang	19.1	12.0	17.9	14.3	24.0	12.0
% who claim that they are currently the member of a gang	6.5	2.2	4.9	0.0	4.0	5.1
% who claim that they know at least one or two gang members	63.4	38.8	66.9	42.9	88.0	63.2
<b>Sample Size</b>	314	192	167	27	25	125

## STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF PROBLEMS AT SCHOOL

The survey began by exploring the respondents' general perceptions of specific problems or issues that *may* or *may not* exist at Westview Centennial Secondary. We first provided the students with a list of issues that sometimes take place within Canadian high schools. We then asked them to indicate whether they thought these issues were a problem at C.W. Jefferys or not. Response options ranged from "A very serious problem" to "Not a problem at all." The specific problems identified in the survey were informed by our initial consultations with student and teacher stakeholders at C.W. Jefferys (discussed in a previous section of this report). However, other items were extracted from previous student surveys conducted in Canada and the United States. The results (see Table 3 and Figure 1) indicate that:

- Seven out of ten (69%) respondents report that students who steal things from other students represent a serious (36%) or very serious problem (33%) at Westview.
- Two thirds of all students (67%) believe that bullying is a serious (27%) or very serious problem (40%) at Westview.
- Two thirds of Westview students (63%) also believe that fighting between students is a serious (32%) or very serious (31%) problem at their school.

- Six out of every ten Westview students (59%) report that gangs are a serious (34%) or very serious problem (25%) at their school. We also asked the respondents if they could identify the names of the gangs that were at their school. The vast majority of respondents simply replied: “The Bloods and the Crips.”
- Six out of every ten Westview students (58%) also believe that students who bring weapons to school are a serious (16%) or very serious problem (42%) at their school.
- Westview students are also concerned with gossip. Over half of the respondents (54%) report that students who gossip or spread rumours about other students are a serious (28%) or very serious problem (27%) at their school. An additional 29% report that gossip is a small problem.
- Over half of Westview students also report that both drug use (54%) and drug trafficking (52%) are serious or very serious problems at their school. By contrast, very few students (less than 10% of the sample) report that drug use and drug dealing are not problems at all at Westview.
- Over half of the students (51%) concede that students who talk back to teachers are a serious or very serious problem at Westview. An additional 36% think that students who talk back are a small problem.
- Almost half of Westview students (48%) report that teachers who don’t listen to students are a serious or very serious problem at their school. An additional 25% of students think that teachers who don’t listen are a small problem.
- Almost half of Westview students (45%) feel that racial discrimination by teachers against students is a serious or very serious problem at their school. An additional 15% think that teacher racism is a small problem. Less than one-fourth of the student respondents (23%) believe that discrimination is not a problem at all.
- Four out of every ten students (41%) report that teachers who don’t care about students are a serious or very serious problem at Westview. Only 23% think uncaring teachers are not a problem at all at their school.
- Four out of every ten Westview students (40%) think that the unfair punishment of students is a serious or very serious problem at their school. Less than 20% of respondents (18%) perceive that unfair punishment is not a problem at all.’
- Finally, only a third of Westview students (34%) believe that unfair grading is a serious or very serious problem at their school. However, an additional 36% believe that unfair grading is a small problem. Only 21% of the sample feel that unfair grading is not a problem at all.

Further analysis reveals that Westview students are somewhat more likely than Jefferys students to perceive various crime problems at their school. For example, 59% of Westview students report that gangs are a serious or very serious problem at their school, compared to only 46% of Jefferys students. Similarly, 63% of Westview students feel that fighting is a serious or very serious problem at their school, compared to 55% of Jefferys students. Compared to Jefferys students, Westview students are also slightly more likely to perceive that bullying (67% vs. 60%) and drug trafficking (52% vs. 47%) are serious problems at their school. Nonetheless, Westview and Jefferys students are just as likely to perceive that theft, drug use and weapons are serious problems at their school.

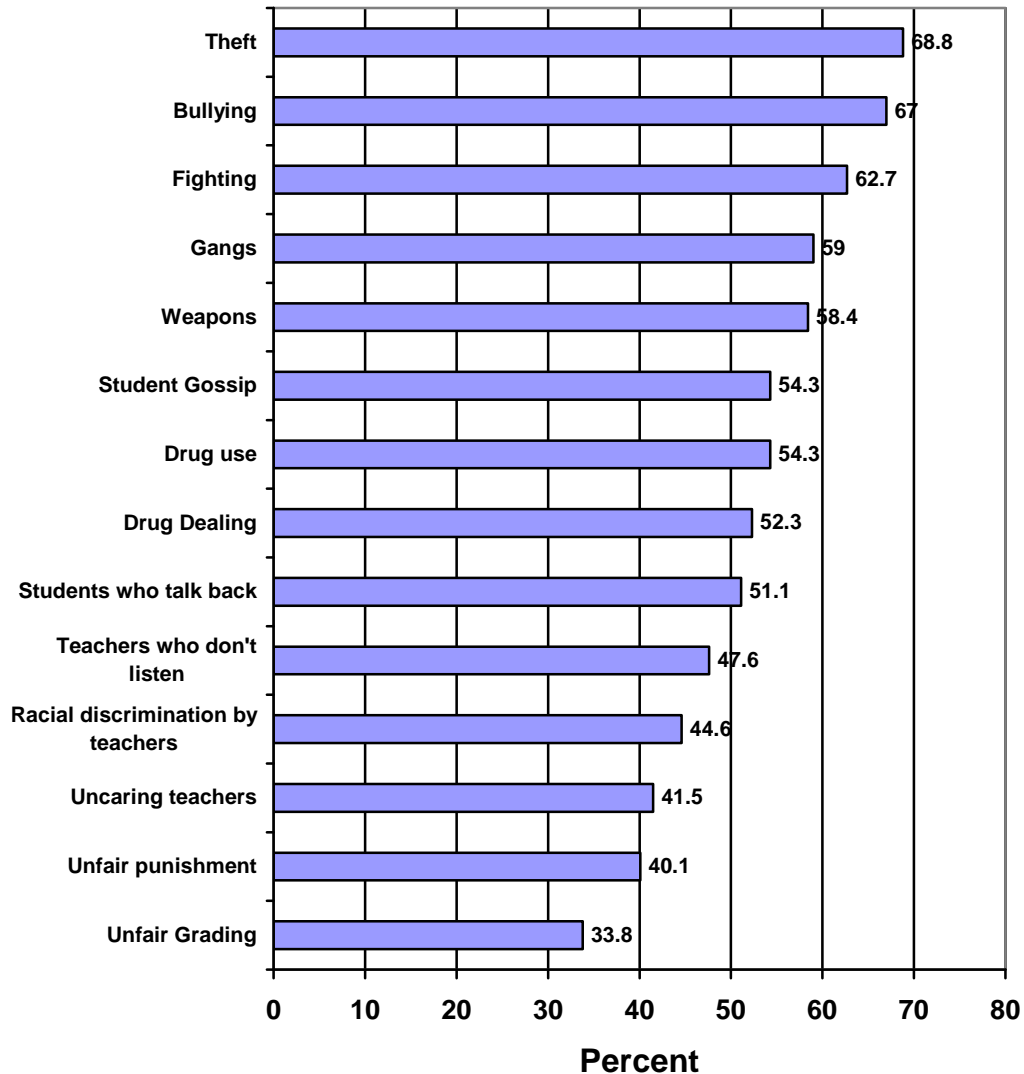
Finally, although the findings suggest that Westview students are somewhat more likely to perceive that certain criminal behaviours are problems at their school, Jefferys students are more likely to report problems with teachers who don't listen to students (57% vs. 48%), unfair grading (44% vs. 34%) and uncaring teachers (49% vs. 41%). All other differences between Jefferys and Westview students do not reach statistical significance.

**TABLE 3:**  
**Percent of Westview Students Who Feel that Various Issues are a Problem at Their School**

<b>TYPE OF PROBLEM</b>	<b>A Very Serious Problem</b>	<b>A Serious Problem</b>	<b>A Small Problem</b>	<b>Not a Problem At All</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
Students who bring weapons to school.	42.4	16.0	17.0	9.7	14.9
Students who steal things from other students.	36.0	32.8	19.4	5.3	6.6
Students who pick-on or bully other students.	40.2	26.8	20.5	5.1	7.5
Racial discrimination by teachers against students.	28.6	16.0	15.2	22.8	17.3
Teachers who don't listen to what students have to say.	25.8	21.8	25.3	17.1	10.0
Students who try to sell drugs to other students.	32.8	19.5	20.1	9.9	17.6
Fighting between students.	32.1	30.6	27.3	3.8	6.1
Teachers who do not care about students.	22.8	18.7	24.4	22.6	11.5
Students who talk back to teachers.	21.2	30.3	36.4	7.7	4.4
Students who gossip or spread rumours about others.	26.8	27.6	29.9	7.5	8.2
Students who use illegal drugs at school.	27.4	26.9	26.4	7.5	11.8
Teachers who punish students for no good reason.	20.4	19.3	28.5	18.4	13.4
Teachers who mark too hard.	15.2	18.6	36.1	20.6	9.6
Youth Gangs.	25.0	34.0	26.0	5.3	9.2

Sample Size=870

**FIGURE 1: Percent of Westview Students Who Feel that Specific Issues are a "Very Serious" or "Serious" Problem at Their School**



The 2<sup>nd</sup> strategy that we used to identify potential problems at Westview Secondary was to present our student respondents with a series of statements about their school and ask them whether they agreed or disagreed with each of these statements. Response options ranged from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” Responses to these questions are presented in Table 4 and Figure 2. The results indicate that:

- Over three-quarters of Westview students (76%) agree that many students at their school do not respect their teachers.

- Similarly, seven out of every ten Westview students (72%) agree that some students at their school won't obey their teachers.
- Seventy-one percent of the Westview students who participated in the survey also agree that students at their school often hang out in the halls and make noise when classes are on.
- Almost seventy percent of Westview students (68%) agree that outsiders (people who are not students) often come to their school to hang out. However, only 34% report that outsiders often come to their school to "cause trouble" and only 17% report that outsiders often come to their school to sell drugs. Thus, although many Westview students feel that drug dealing is a serious problem at their school (see discussion above), relatively few respondents believe that outsiders cause this problem.
- Over half of the Westview students (54%) agree that some teachers at their school do not know how to talk to their students. However, almost one-third of the sample (29%) disagree with this statement.
- It should be stressed that the findings are not all negative. Indeed, two-thirds of Westview students (66%) agree or strongly agree that the teachers at Westview care about what happens to their students. By contrast, only 18% of the sample disagreed with this statement.
- Similarly, 62% of the Westview students who participated in the survey agree or strongly agree that most of the teachers and students at their school get along. Nonetheless, one out of every five students (22%) disagrees with this statement.
- Only 19% of Westview students agree that, in general, the teachers at their school do not respect their students. By contrast, over two-thirds of the respondents disagree with this statement.
- Finally, half of the sample agrees that teachers at their school treat everyone fairly. However, it should be noted that over one third of the student respondents from Westview (38%) disagree with this statement.

In general, the respondents from Westview and Jefferys responded to this line of questioning in a very similar fashion. However, Jefferys students (40%) were somewhat more likely than Westview students (34%) to feel that outsiders often come to their school to cause trouble. The data also suggest that the quality of teacher-student relationships may be slightly higher at Westview than Jefferys. For example, a third of Jefferys students (31%) agree that many teachers at their school do not respect their students, compared to only 19% of Westview students. Similarly, half of the Westview respondents (50%) believe that teachers at their school treat everyone fairly, compared to

43% of Jefferys students. Finally, 62% of Westview students agree that students and teachers get along at their school, compared to 56% of Jefferys students. All other differences in how students from the two schools responded to these questions were less than 5 percentage points.

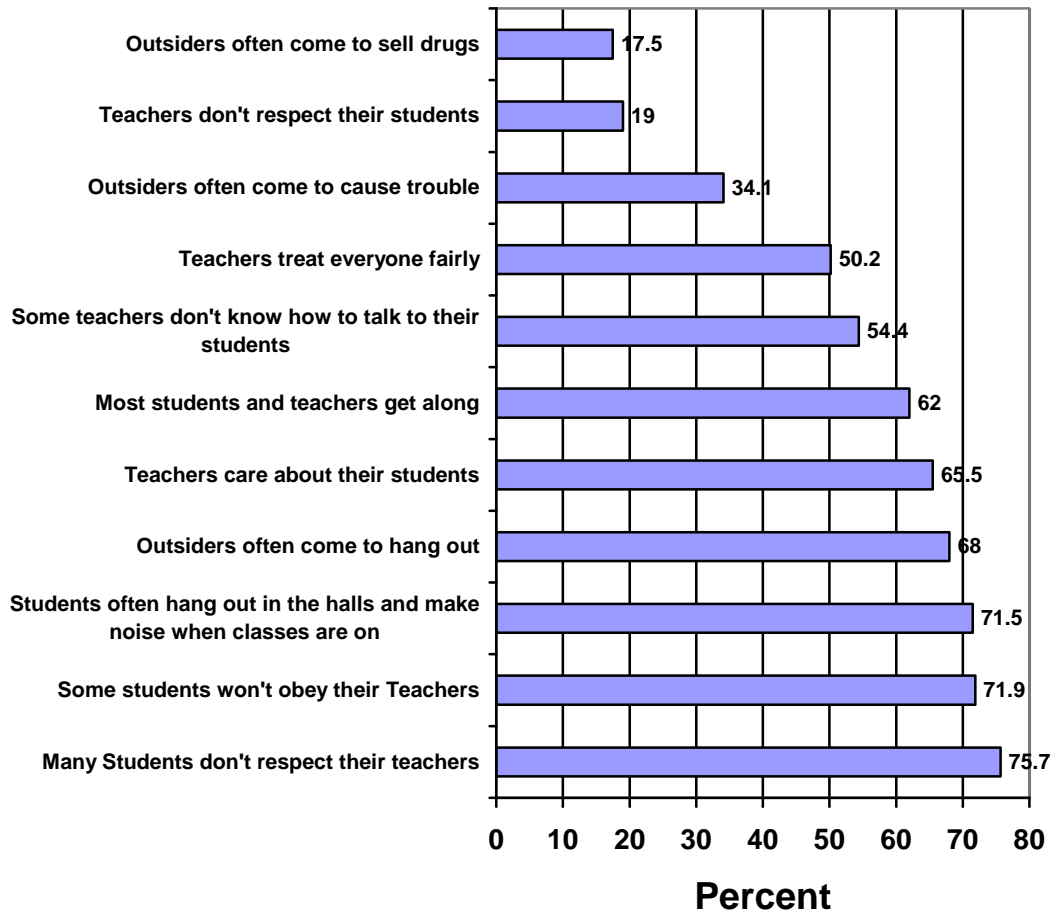
**TABLE 4:**  
**Percent of Westview Students Who Agree or Disagree with Various Statements About Their School**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
There are many students at my school who do not respect their teachers.	35.0	40.7	10.2	4.4	9.7
Students often hang out in the halls and make noise when classes are one.	21.0	50.5	17.2	4.6	6.7
People from outside my school often come to visit their friends and hang out.	21.8	46.2	11.7	3.6	16.7
Some students at my school just won't do what the teachers tell them to do.	21.9	50.0	10.8	3.1	14.2
Some teachers at my school do not know how to talk to their students.	15.8	38.6	21.9	6.9	16.6
The teachers at my school care about what happens to the students.	25.4	40.1	11.4	6.7	16.3
Most of the students and teachers at my school get along.	17.2	44.8	16.7	5.6	15.8
People from outside my school often come to the school to cause trouble.	8.4	25.7	32.2	10.7	23.0
Teachers at my school treat everyone fairly.	15.3	34.9	28.1	9.7	12.1
People from outside my school often come to sell drugs at my school.	5.0	12.5	23.4	15.4	43.7
In general, the teachers at my school don't respect the students.	5.3	13.7	48.0	18.9	14.1

Sample Size=870



**FIGURE 2:**  
**Percent of Westview Students Who "Agree" or**  
**"Strongly Agree" with Various Statements About Their**  
**School**



The third strategy that we used to identify potential problems at Westview Centennial Secondary School was to ask our student respondents how frequently they thought certain behaviours or activities occurred at their school. Response options ranged from “Almost every day” to “Never or almost never.” As with Jefferys, the results strongly suggest that hallway disorder and students who talk back to teachers are the most commonly occurring problems at Westview (see Table 5 and Figure 3).

- Seven out of every ten Westview students (69%) report that “students make noise in the hallways during class time” at least once per week at their school. In fact, half of Westview respondents (49%) report that students make noise in the halls almost every day.

- Almost two-thirds of student respondents from Westview (62%) report that students talk back to teachers at their school at least once per week. In fact, over a third of the sample (37%) claim that students talk back to teachers almost every day.
- Over a third of the students surveyed (38%) indicate that bullying takes place at their school at least once per week. One out of ten Westview students (11%) claims that bullying takes place at their school almost every day.
- Three out of every ten respondents (30%) report that fights take place at Westview at least once per week. An additional 30% indicate that fights take place at their school at least once per month. One out of ten Westview students claims that fights occur every day.
- Over a quarter of all Westview students (28%) claim that drug dealing takes place at their school at least once per week. In fact, one out of every five students (20%) claims that drug dealing takes place at Westview almost every day. It is interesting to note, however, that over half the sample (52%) apparently do not know how often drug trafficking takes place at their school. Thus, although many students feel that drug dealing is a problem, the majority are unaware of how frequently it takes place.
- Approximately one-fourth of all Westview students (28%) feel that teachers treat students unfairly at least once per week. An additional 13% claim that students are treated unfairly by teachers at least once per month. However, a significant proportion of students do not think that unfair treatment is common. Indeed, one out of five Westview students (21%) believe that unfair treatment of students by teachers never or almost never occurs at their school. An additional 30% are unsure how frequently unfair treatment occurs.
- Consistent with the results pertaining to teacher treatment, one fourth of the respondents from Westview (27%) feel that students are unfairly punished at least once per week. On the other hand, 19% of students feel that unfair punishment almost never occurs at their school. Interestingly, over a third of respondents do not know how frequently unfair punishment occurs.
- Finally, one out of every five Westview students (20%) reports that students bring weapons to school at least once per week. In fact, one out of every eight respondents (13%) feels that students bring weapons to school almost every day. Nonetheless, over half of the respondents who participated in the survey (55%) claim that they do not know how often students carry weapons to school. This finding suggests that most students are not directly exposed to weapons at school on a regular basis.

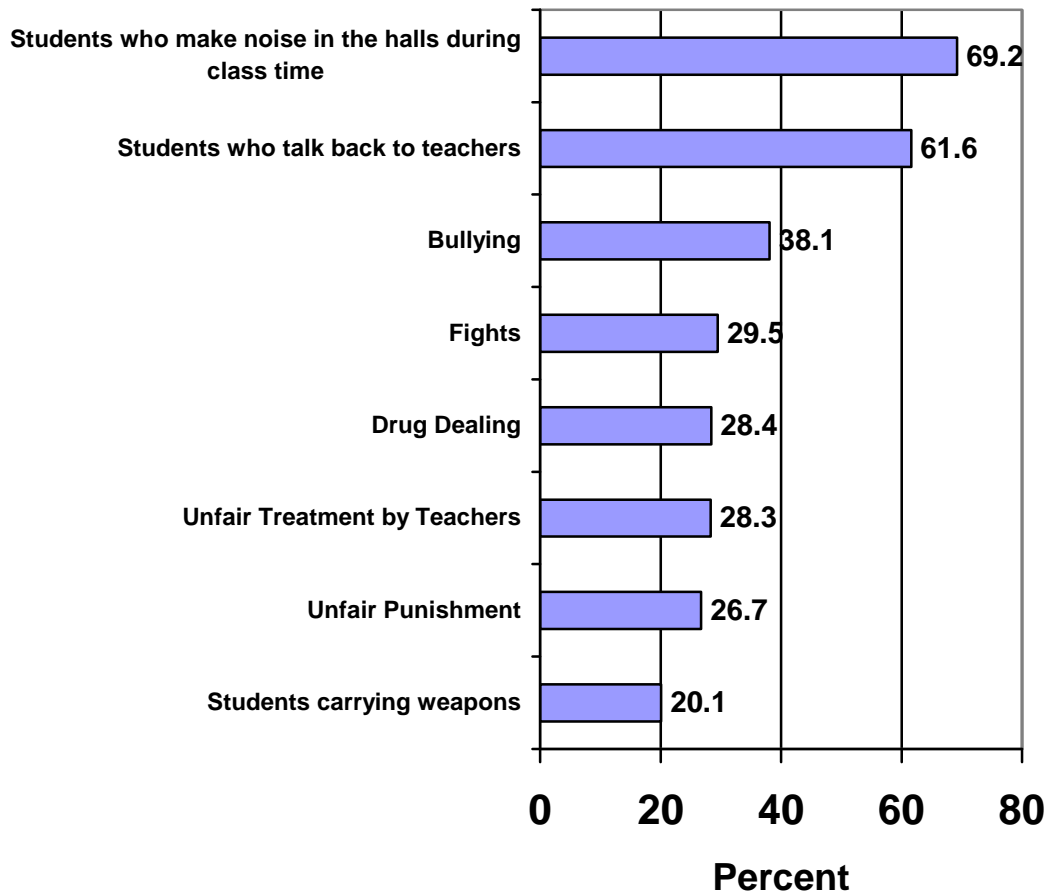
Once again, further analysis reveals that certain crimes may be slightly more prevalent at Westview than at C.W. Jefferys. For example, 30% of Westview students claim that fights take place at their school at least once per week, compared to only 17% of Jefferys students. Similarly, 38% of Westview students report that bullying occurs at their school at least once per week, compared to 30% of Jefferys students. Finally, 20% of Westview students report that drug dealing takes place at their school at least once per week, compared to 15% of Jefferys students. However, compared to Westview students, Jefferys students are somewhat more likely to perceive that unfair teacher treatment occurs weekly at their school (36% vs. 28%). All other differences between Westview and Jefferys students are minimal. For example, identical proportions of Westview and Jefferys students (62% for both schools) perceive that students talk back to teachers once per week or more.

**TABLE 5:**  
**Westview Students' Perceptions About How Frequently**  
**Specific Activities Take Place at Their School**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>Almost Every Day</b>	<b>At Least Once per Week</b>	<b>At Least Once per Month</b>	<b>A Few Times a Year</b>	<b>Never Or Almost Never</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
How often do students hang out in the halls and make noise while classes are on?	48.8	20.4	7.2	3.1	8.4	12.2
How often do students talk back or act rudely to teachers?	36.6	25.0	9.1	5.8	5.3	18.2
How often do teachers treat students unfairly?	10.8	17.5	12.8	7.6	21.5	29.9
How often do students get picked on or bullied?	23.1	15.0	12.0	10.1	10.6	29.1
How often are students punished unfairly?	10.8	15.9	11.0	8.6	18.7	35.2
How often do students sell drugs?	20.2	8.2	4.5	3.7	11.3	52.1
How often do students bring weapons to school?	13.0	7.1	5.9	4.8	14.4	54.7
How often do students get into fights?	9.5	20.0	29.6	21.2	6.0	13.6

Sample Size=870

**FIGURE 3: Percent of Westview Students Who Feel That Certain Activities Take Place at Their School Once per Week or More**



### *Other Problems*

We concluded this section of the student questionnaire by asking our respondents: “Are there any other problems at your school that you have not told us about? If there are other problems -- please tell us about them.” A text box was then provided for the students to write in their answers. The data retrieved from this question are quite rich and capture the students’ experiences with violence and other problems at school. A number of different themes emerged by allowing the students to describe their situation in their own words. To begin with, a large number of students complained that both fighting and bullying are major problems at their school. The following comments are typical:<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Please note that student comments have been edited for spelling. However, for the most part, sentence structure and grammar have remained untouched.

The Reader is advised that the next several pages contain direct comments from students completing the Westview Centennial Secondary School survey. Student remarks have not been edited for profane, racist, sexist or culturally-negative content; the remarks appear as stated by the youth.

*A lot of kids get pick on and bully. Need more clubs so some bad kids can get involved and stop bullying.*

*In school there are a lot of fights. I had a similar incident. I was just fooling around reminding this guy how he lied to everyone about his racial background. I didn't touch him at all but he got mad and wanted to fight so he pushed me. Then I got really mad. Even my best friend encouraged me to fight.*

*Stop all these nonsense like bullying, fights, and students giving a hard time in school.*

*Basically, I think bullying is a big issue, especially during lunch at the back of the school.*

*Bullying, bad behaviour, students talking crap, hitting you with weapons.*

*Gang fights, bullying, drugs, weed.*

*Getting rushed or picked on at the back of the school (fights/stealing).*

*Grade nines are being bullied.*

*I want to go to university but I don't think I will make it because there are too many people who want to fight me. I live in the same area with them.*

*In September, on one day there were about 3 fights on that one day. Police attended the school and students were arrested. Within that week 2 stretchers came into the school for 2 students. One student was injured another fainted.*

*Kids smoking on school property, ganging up on students, it needs to stop!*

*My name is (name withheld). I may ask you to help me as I have been bullied and it is as it is.*

*People fights one guy with a gang and beat him till he bleeds and the student punches other in the face for no reason.*

*People who skip, people who cheat & people who threaten you.*

*Students are bullied. Teachers do nothing. Need help at school and on streets.*

*Students bully and they steal and get into fights.*

*Students encourage violence. Many students have not respect for others.*

*Students stealing from other students and beating them up for no reason.*

*There are black students and Asian students that hang out by the 2 doors beside the parking lot that bully students.*

*When there is a fight no one calls anyone so they beat up each other till blood comes.*

Some Westview respondents highlighted the fact that bullying was often done to extort money or other goods from students. Other students claimed that robbery was a major problem at their school. The following quotes highlight this issue:

*A lot of students bully other kids. They robbed them, steal things from them and they need to get punished.*

*People bully us and take our money sometimes, and you're only safe from bad people if: 1) you know one, or 2) you are a bad person.*

*People from outside school can rob kids or harass them outside school property during lunch or after school.*

*People like to know other people's business and bully other people for money.*

*People pick on other people to get money or to start a fight.*

*Some students get beaten by black guys if they refuse to give their stuff to them.*

*The school authority never gave proper attention to a student who is robbed and beaten up by gangs and school students. Not even police.*

*At the plaza across the street, people always try to take money from us. They try to take our money.*

*Extortion - people taking away your money. Threats.*

*Getting robbed for money and for personal items.*

*People always asking and threatening you for money.*

*People always asking for quarters or dollars – they threaten to beat you up if you don't give them money.*

*People from outside school can rob kids or harass them outside school property during lunch or after school.*

*People trying to steal money from people. If they don't give they beat them up.*

*Robbing the students by other students.*

*These guys with big pants and shirts ask us for money (bullying).*

A number of students expressed the opinion that youth gangs were the source of a

great deal of the violence and intimidation at Westview.

*There are problems with gang fights, bullying, drugs, weed.*

*Gangs run the place now. Teachers are tough and try to rule the regular students cause they are too afraid of the gang guys.*

*Got to be in a click or a gang to be popular or your just gonna get fucked up.*

*My school caters to the needs of students but walking through the hall I get the feeling of uneasiness. There are too many groups and gang individuals who want to hurt people.*

*There's always students in gangs at the stairway. I don't know what there doing, maybe they skip classes. Some students in gangs smoke outside like where we buy lunch or right next to the school.*

*At our school there is a Bloods hallway and Crips hallway. There's always students there watching out there hallway. I know there is cameras but it seems that it doesn't help.*

*There are gangs.*

*There is a lot of gang violence around. People just hate each other.*

*Too many gangs in the school.*

*Too many reds walking around ripping a hood as they look at it. And since there are so many people who adopt the Blood and Crip culture it leads to a lot of acts of violence. Perhaps finding a way to stop the community gang thing where if you live in a certain area you belong to a stupid gang. Stoppin the ignorance could change it all but that 's a very hard task.*

*School shouldn't be housed like a locked up territory with one gang on this side and another gang around the corner. We the students must feel safe, not afraid, such as not bringing you iPod or phones to school cause they will get ripped off! Those are our things not their own because they can't afford there own.*

Drug use and drug dealing were other problems commonly identified by our student respondents from Westview. The following quotes are typical:

*A lot of people in my school smoke cigarettes and weed. That really bothers me because I can tell by the way they smell.*

*All the drugs should be banned!*

*At times, the area by the shops will smell of what I assume is weed.*

*During classes, students hang out and play games with money across the street and are always smoking drugs.*

*Grade nines smoking weed in the morning and after school.*

*I just got to say there are good people and bad people in this world and people are changing for the better. Bullys don't pick on people as much anymore. Everyone is getting better but, there are still people out there alot of us has friends that do drugs but it normal now. They get high to take away the misery and it ain't our fault. We have problems and don't now how to handle them.*

*I see students smoking weed because of that everyone saying Westview is a bad school.*

*In school some students smoke and sell drugs to other students.*

*People selling drugs behind the school. Underage teenagers smoking near the swimming pool area.*

*People smoking on school property and teachers do nothing even if they see them.*

*Some students do drugs in the back of the school.*

*Students smoking weed around the school property.*

*Taking drugs around the school.*

*Teachers and principals punish students for stupidity but yet they don't see how they do drugs around the school and sell drugs. But yet they suspend them for skipping schools or swearing. Bullshit!*

*Some student smoke weed or just come to school and not being in class.*

*There's a group of people always hanging at the back door outside of school. They don't seem to get to class and most of the times they're smoking weed.*

*Too much weed smokers. The weed gives them the mentality to drop out and to cause chaos to our school. Stop the weed from being passed through and kick out all the students that hang out across the street.*

*Too much drugs are being sold across the street. Students from other schools should be banned from entering Westview.*

A few students also highlighted both sexual assault and sexual harassment as problems at Westview:

*There is a problem with rape.*

*I got raped.*

*A lot of the boys grab or touch the girls when they don't want to be touched and where they don't want to be touched.*

*Girls are being forced into corners from young teen boys.*



*I don't know if this is really a problem, but when the boys stand up in the hallways, trying to "get" with the girl or staring them down.*

*People put condoms on my lock.*

*Girls that are being harassed in the hallways by people.*

*Stalking is a big problem in this school.*

While some students complained about sexual assault or harassment, others reported that consensual sexual acts between students were becoming a problem at Westview. The following comments illustrate this point of view:

*Students having sex in the school is disgusting.*

*People are having sex in the halls, in the stairs and in the empty classes.*

*Some students have sex in the classrooms when their empty.*

*Students have sex in the hallways or in the staircases.*

While some students mention particular problems with crime or violence, others highlighted general school safety as an issue. Many of these students felt that safety measures (including security cameras) had to be improved or that school discipline had to be increased. The following comments are typical:

*We need better surveillance.*

*Cameras are a problem here. Do they even work?*

*A lot of people in my school and my community also in my neighbourhood are always killing snitchers. So please try your best to help the people who aren't safe like me.*

*Cameras are a problem. They don't work.*

*I feel too scared at school too scared to bring valuables to school.*

*Outside the school is not safe for students who walk home from school.*

*Somebody should review the surveillance cameras because things happen.*

*The most important problem at my school is that there is no safety at all. Almost everyday there are people selling drugs, stealing, fights and there is no one there to see what's going on except for us students. Also the school is too lenient allowing students to come back which are kicked out. I think the school should be more strict toward these problem students instead of worrying about the small things that happen like uniforms and etc.*

*The problem that I see at Westview is that there are no cameras where most of this "bad/illegal" stuff occurs. The back of the school near the parking lot is usually where it all goes down. There are like two cameras*

*only pointing at the door, pretty useless if you ask me. There are also people shooting paintballs. One time I came out of the doors and all I seen was pink dots all over about 50 cars!*

*Proper security surveillance should be installed to make students feel and know they are truly SAFE!*

*Too much violence and very dangerous.*

*We don't have enough protection at least two officers are needed at the beginning of school and at lunch and after school.*

While some students highlighted specific problems with school safety – including violence, robbery, drugs and inappropriate sexual activity - others focused on the general attitudes of Westview students towards the educational system. Many respondents suggested, for example, that there are problems with skipping classes and with the students talking back to or disrespecting teachers. The following quotes are typical.

*I have a problem when the students talk back to the teachers.*

*People at my school skip classes.*

*People who skip.*

*Some students don't give any importance to their education.*

*Students get angry when they get in trouble by school staff and does vandalism on doors and garbage cans.*

*Students not taking school serious. Skipping classes, not completing work, not studying.*

*Students skipping consistently.*

*Students who are just not pushed hard enough to accomplish goals.*

*Talking back to teachers have to stop.*

*The amount of kids skipping class.*

*The only question I would ask is why are kids skipping class and not doing their work?*

*Also, skipping classes is an issue for a number of students. It seems like they won't get anywhere perhaps because they simply do not care about their education and/or because they are lazy.*

*The students do not care much about the school. Only a few students really care about the reputation of the school.*

*Very disrespectful students, not only to the teachers.*

*We have students that are just there for hanging out instead of doing the work. Tell principal to do something. School is not a hanging out area. Principal should do something with those kids that are just here for fun.*

*Well the biggest problem is that the Principal really don't know what to do about those rude students.*

It should be stressed, however, that not all students focussed on the behaviour or actions of fellow students. In fact, many students felt that the behaviour of teachers and administrators was a serious problem at Westview. The following comments illustrate this point of view:

*Administrators plot ways to get students into trouble with the law by making false accusations or exaggerating situations.*

*An incident had happen to me on the first month of class. My teacher told me to do a project about myself. So I did my best on that project. Especially since it was my first project. She had said that I have not done the project it was my brother who did it for me. I did not like that she told me to write a 750 word essay to prove that I did the project and I did. It's the second month now almost 3rd month of school and my teacher did not finish marking my project. I am fed up with her.*

*Guidance counsellors are rude and are here to help but it seems like they choose not to*

*Guidance lies and tell me I cannot take the classes I want.*

*I don't like one teacher. He yells a lot at us. I am scared of him.*

*If a teacher does something to you that's hurtful you get suspended for trying to tell the teacher to stop and when you try to tell the Principal or the Vice-Principal that it wasn't your fault they never agree with you. The students are always the ones to get blamed for no matter what. They think we are the cause for all problems and that the teacher had nothing to do with it. Teachers just teach, get students suspended without even thinking to whose fault it is and in the end they get the money for doing such a poorly job.*

*Kids are suspended for nothing and other students are treated better than others.*

*The (name of administrator withheld) does not give a fuck about us. Believe me when I tell you this*

*My teacher called some of my classmates annoying. She also gives us unfair marks.*

*Our hall monitors treat certain people unfairly. Also (name of administrator withheld) treats people unfairly. If he sees you in the office he will target you for a long time.*

*Teachers giving too much homework. Teachers not willing to help students after school. Not enough extra activities.*

*Some teachers swear at their students.*

*Please help us. I think that teachers and police take advantage of their power and instead of doing their job they harass us.*

*Some teachers don't seem to believe your reasons for some certain things. Instead they just take it as an excuse from you like your playing a game.*

*Sometimes a teacher would be mad and would bang the tables and some would hit them in the head. I think teachers are not allowed to touch students.*

*Sometimes teacher compare students. Those students who are being compared badly start to feel bad and start to feel angers towards their teacher.*

*Teachers not accepting work if late and not giving make-up assignments.*

*Teachers not dedicated time to exercise proper teaching.*

*Teachers at Westview are some time fair but more time unfair.*

*Teachers give too much work. After school we need to take a bath, eat, we have barely any time to do a lot of homework plus we have four classes to do homework for.*

*Teachers punish people for little shit but are too scared of the real things in the school and they do what they want.*

*Teachers sometimes don't understand students and punish them for an idiotic reason.*

*Teachers swear at students all the time.*

*Teachers don't help out the students with their school work.*

*Some of the teachers who can't teach or speak English properly.*

*Tell the teachers to care more about their students and not about themselves.*

*A problem that I have is the fact that some students get suspended from school for skipping class. I find that very pointless.*

*Some of the teachers are very mean but not all of them. Some of them don't even answer your questions is she/he doesn't like you.*

*The zero tolerance policy is a big problem in my school, because that means that the staff are too lazy to deal with the students. Like they don't want to help them become better student, citizens in this country. The staff at my school (name of administrator withheld) don't want to help students, only kick them out of school. Like what is kick "not -so-good" students out of school gonna do. Really? Think about this problem. Zero tolerance just goes to show how lazy, uncaring, unfit for this job this (name of administrator withheld) is!*

*Some teachers won't let you participate in class because he/she don't like you. There is not respect between teachers and students. Teachers say bad words to students, we lost respect toward that teacher.*

*The office staff is not very supportive of students who need to ask a question or may need help.*

*Unnecessary suspensions for small problems.*

*You ask a specific teacher to help you if understand and they act so rude. "Huh? What? I been explaining so long." And you try to seek help but you can't cause your scared. You might get yelled at and then you end up failing.*

*I feel that there are better ways of dealing with students who come from tough areas and are prone to being or being near trouble. I find that strictly giving them the textbook disciplinary actions would be less efficient than getting to know each student individually and understand where they're coming from and their personal situation.*

*I personally don't acknowledge that students should be getting suspended from school. All it does is make them more lazier and drop out of high school, or hang out with their "homies" to cause more trouble.*

*I strongly believe that the teachers/adults here are fully aware of all of these on-going issues and have not taken any action into solving them. Also our hall monitors and superiors here are so laid back that they don't really enforce students to attend class.*

*I think the new rules in are school are making the students uncomfortable to the point that these events can only get worst.*

A number of students specified that they thought racism (including racism by staff towards students) was a major problem at Westview. The following quotes serve to highlight this perspective:

*Teachers are racist.*

*There is racism in this school and sometimes teachers do not respect you because of your religion.*

*Too much racism from teachers towards students. (Name of administrator withheld) only picks on certain students with suspension everyday.*

*There is segregation in this school. People discriminating on race.*

*I am not trying to be racist. Yes the school is trying to keep our rep but if you look at the Jane/Finch area majority are black and when crime occurs its 90% black people who committ it.*

*I guess you could say there is a lot of racism especially against white*

*people. I am not white myself, but I still hear things that would seriously hurt my feelings if I was white.*

*Problem with letting us express about our religion with freedom.*

*Racism.*

*There is racism.*

*Some do not respect our religious rules or customs.*

*Some students only hang around with their race.*

*The problem is that, whatever anybody says this same crap about there is no racial discrimination in Canada they are wrong because there is lots of it. Because I been in and out of these groups and I know for a fact that racial discrimination exists and a lot. I think they need to separate races in Canada. Especially blacks and whites.*

A number of students also complained that they felt the school was under-funded. They reported that they felt the school needed more money for extra-curricular activities and for better learning resources. Others felt the school needed more money to improve the overall appearance and cleanliness of the facility. The following comments are typical.

*We need faster Internet connections.*

*We need more resources.*

*We need more supplies and equipment.*

*I'm not getting the help I need to further my education. They should open more classes to prepare students for university and college.*

*I believe that not having a day-care is a problem for teen mothers because of this most of our teen mothers drop out of school.*

*We need a proper washroom.*

*Need a nicer environment. Better supply, more funding, bathrooms and class not clean.*

*Not enough money to run school right.*

*Not enough extra activities.*

*School needs to be more clean. Class and bathrooms need a renovation. School needs more funding.*

*Schools' not providing the available access and assistance to the students to develop their education. The School Board and government should pay attention and encourage students to achieve. This city is turning into shit. In 10 years what are you going to do? Build more jails? You should make jobs and opportunities.*

*The fact that we don't have a suggestion box in school or youth groups at school where students can talk about their problems.*

*The school is poor and we don't have a lot of stuff that's brand new.*

*The TDSB does not give enough money to our school so they can provide our students with proper books, clean school environment and school equipment, etc. Money is an issue. Also, cafeteria food prices are too expensive, especially for students who cannot afford it.*

*There are not enough sports teams.*

*There are money problems such as the lunchtime period and maybe a lack of an upgrade to the school.*

*They should place better computers in the library because most of them are slow. Students shouldn't have to pay to print their work. So they should just make it free.*

*We need more sports programs. Hockey! Hockey!*

*Well, I personally think that teachers should be more involved into the entire student body and not only the teachers, but the parents. Students don't hurt other students, because it's fun, well sometimes. But the main issue is that some students just need to be talked at and for parents to get their child into more activities/programs.*

*Westview used to have a day-care in the school for the young mothers that go here, but they shut it down and now young moms like me, sometimes get fed up, and can't even come to school, because we need day-care, or have it but it's too far and it's really hard.*

*Yes, the school is always dirty and unsafe with wires hang out of the ceiling. Water dripping from the ceiling. Textbooks are old and vandalized with graffiti.*

*Cafe food should be cheaper -boilers are broken -nicer environment -more funding.*

*The toilets here can't flush. Nasty washrooms. Always litter in the classrooms.*

*Lack of cleanness.*

*No cleanliness.*

*Its not that CLEAN!*

*More cleanliness, need lower cafeteria prices.*

*Lower cafeteria food prices and more cleanliness.*

*The school that are in the Jane and Finch community really need programs for the kids*

We must also stress that a relatively large number of students did not think Westview had any problems at all. These respondents simply replied that their school did not have any problems. Others, however, maintained that although Westview was a good school, it had been given a bad reputation by outsiders, including the media.

*I actually don't think there are many problems at our school. If you feel that Westview has problems just because we live in Jane and Finch, I'm sorry but you came to the wrong place. I believe Westview has a great education program, and the teachers do care about the students.*

*Not that I know of. I just wish Westview had way more creativity like a couple of years ago when we had a drawing of important people on the walls and more activities at school. That would be nice and also our bad rep that we have. We are not a bad school.*

*There's not much problem in our school. I don't know why people have such a negative image towards our school. It's the Press, they should look at the positive rather than printing all the bad things. I love this school, no matter what happens or what goes on.*

*My comment has nothing to do with problems at my school. In fact it is the opposite. Everyone wants to know about the negative. What about the positive things that come out of Westview? We have one of Canada's top track and field athletes here. We have a club called S.I.A that does nothing but positive things. We participate hard in classes and other activities. Talk about that.*

Finally, there were a few students who stressed that the problems at Westview stemmed from the problems in the outside community. These students stressed that until these outside problems had been dealt with, the problems at Westview would persist. The following comments are typical.

*I really don't know what to say about the school because I just came. But what I heard about this school well is that it really needs to change. But it has more to do with Jane and Finch than the school. True I say Jane and Finch is the best! But it's the people that are doing bad things that are giving it a bad name. Get the guns and gangs off the streets!! What would you do if your people were living here? I bet you would do something then. We the people need to have change!!*

*We're the poorest fucking school in one of the poorest communities in Toronto. What do you think? Isn't that a big enough problem?*

*From what I've seen kids new to the school try to act bad and often do things they never done before to fit in or to make themselves look "bad." Sometimes they do it cuz they want to be noticed or feel some respect. Yet at home they probably think they don't get it or mostly cuz they never have*



*the time to sit down and talk to a parent because they are always busy working and they are barely home. Some of my friends have been raised on their own because parents are too busy working so they never really knew from good or bad. They even had to steal or sell drugs to get some money for their food or clothes, shoes or something they really wanted. So they look for it in the wrong place yet that they don't have someone to talk to them and teach them.*

## **STUDENT FEELINGS ABOUT SCHOOL SAFETY**

The survey next turned to an examination of student feelings of safety at Westview and in the wider community. We focussed on four separate issues: 1) How safe do students at Westview feel when they are at school? 2) How safe do students feel when they engage in various public activities outside of the school environment? 3) Do students feel safer at school or out in the community?; and 4) How worried are students about specific types of criminal activity at school and in their community?

We began our investigations into feelings of school safety by asking the students the following question: “How safe do you feel when you are at your school?” Response options ranged from “very unsafe” to “very safe.”

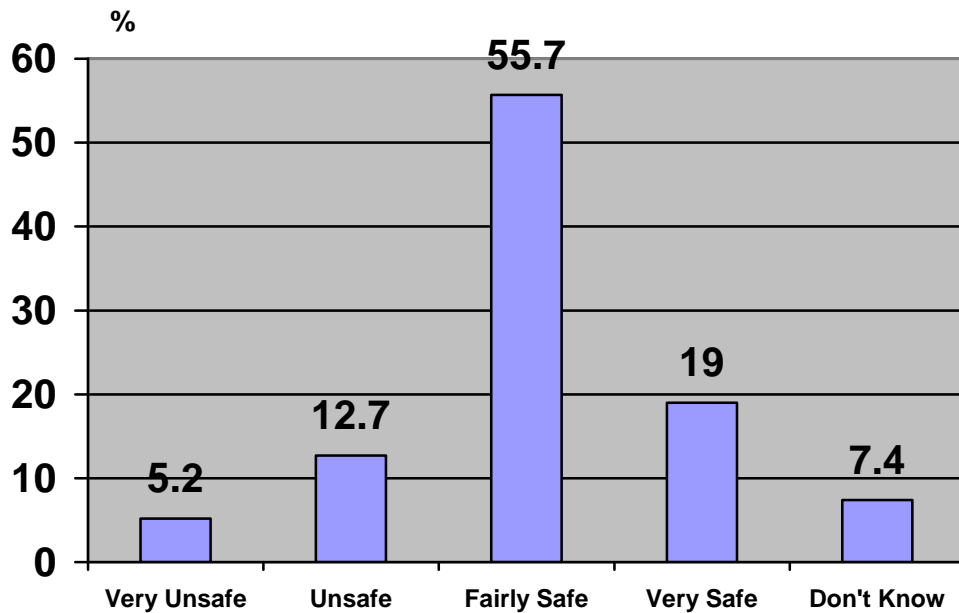
Although many respondents acknowledged that Westview has serious problems with gangs, weapons, bullying, fights and drug dealing, the results (see Figure 4) suggest that the most Westview students feel relatively safe when they are at school. Indeed, one out of every five students (19%) feel very safe at school and an additional 56% feel fairly safe. By contrast, only 18% of the respondents feel either unsafe (13%) or very unsafe (5%). Further analysis suggests that the students at C.W. Jefferys may feel somewhat safer at their school than the students at Westview, especially before the Jordan Manners shooting. For example, before the shooting, 38% of Jefferys students claimed that they felt very safe at their school. By contrast, in October 2007, only 19% of Westview students felt very safe at their school.

We next asked the respondents whether they thought Westview Secondary was, in general, a safe school (see Figure 5). The results indicate that the majority of Westview students (58%) feel that their school is a fairly safe place. An additional 15% think Westview is very safe. By contrast, only 18% of the Westview respondents feel that their school is unsafe (13%) or very unsafe (5%). Once again, further analysis suggests that Jefferys students are somewhat more likely to feel that their school is safe than Westview students. For example, 29% of Jefferys students feel that their school is very safe, compared to only 15% of Westview students.

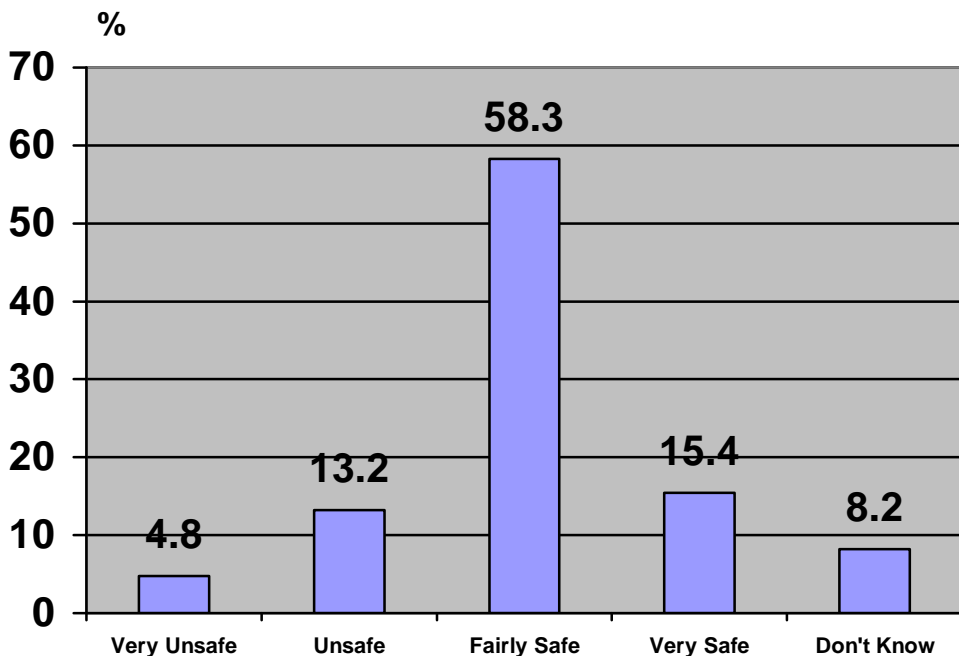
We next asked the respondents whether, in their opinion, Westview was more or less violent than other high schools in Toronto (see Figure 6). The results suggest that the students are divided on this issue. While one third of the respondents (32%) feel that Westview is just as violent as other schools, 27% think it is less violent and 21% feel it is actually more violent. An additional 20% of the sample do not know if Westview is

more or less violent than other schools. However, further analysis once again reveals that Jefferys students have a slightly higher opinion of their school's relative safety than Westview students. For example, 50% of Jefferys students feel that their school has less violence than other schools, compared to only 27% of Westview students. By contrast, 21% of Westview students feel that their school is more violent than other schools, compared to only 13% of Jefferys students.

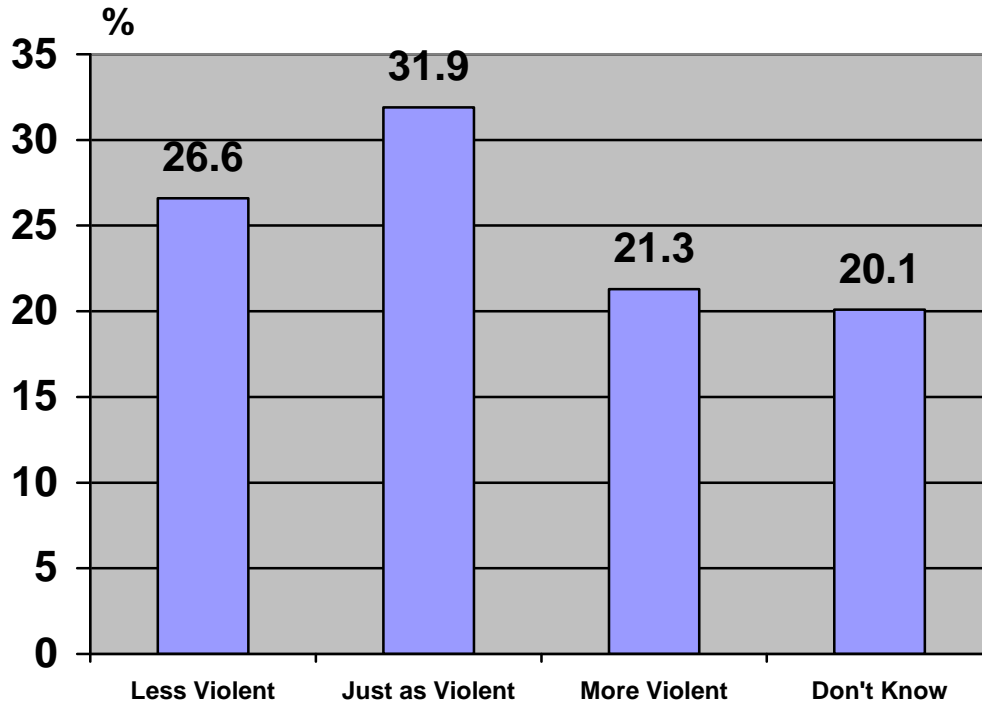
**FIGURE 4: Percent of Westview Students Who Feel Safe or Unsafe at their School**



**FIGURE 5: Percent of Students Who Feel that Westview is a Safe or an Unsafe School**



**FIGURE 6:**  
**Percent of Students Who Feel that Westview is More or**  
**Less Violent than Other Toronto High Schools**



After consulting our student respondents about their feelings of safety at school, we asked them how safe they feel when they engage in a variety of different activities outside of the school environment. The results suggest that students are most likely to feel unsafe when they engage in certain activities at night (see Table 6 and Figure 7). They are least likely to feel unsafe when they use the TTC during the day, go to a shopping mall or go to the movies with friends.

- Six out of every ten Westview students (59%) indicate that they would feel unsafe or very unsafe walking around their own neighbourhood at night. This is consistent with the fact that many respondents reported that they currently live in high crime areas.
- Over half of all respondents (52%) indicate that they would feel unsafe or very unsafe going to a bar or nightclub at night.
- Half of all respondents (48%) also indicate that they would feel unsafe or very unsafe using the TTC at night.
- A third of all Westview students (33%) indicate that they would feel unsafe or very unsafe visiting a friend at another school. This may be an indication

that some youth are territorial about their school and may engage in intimidation or violence against outsiders.

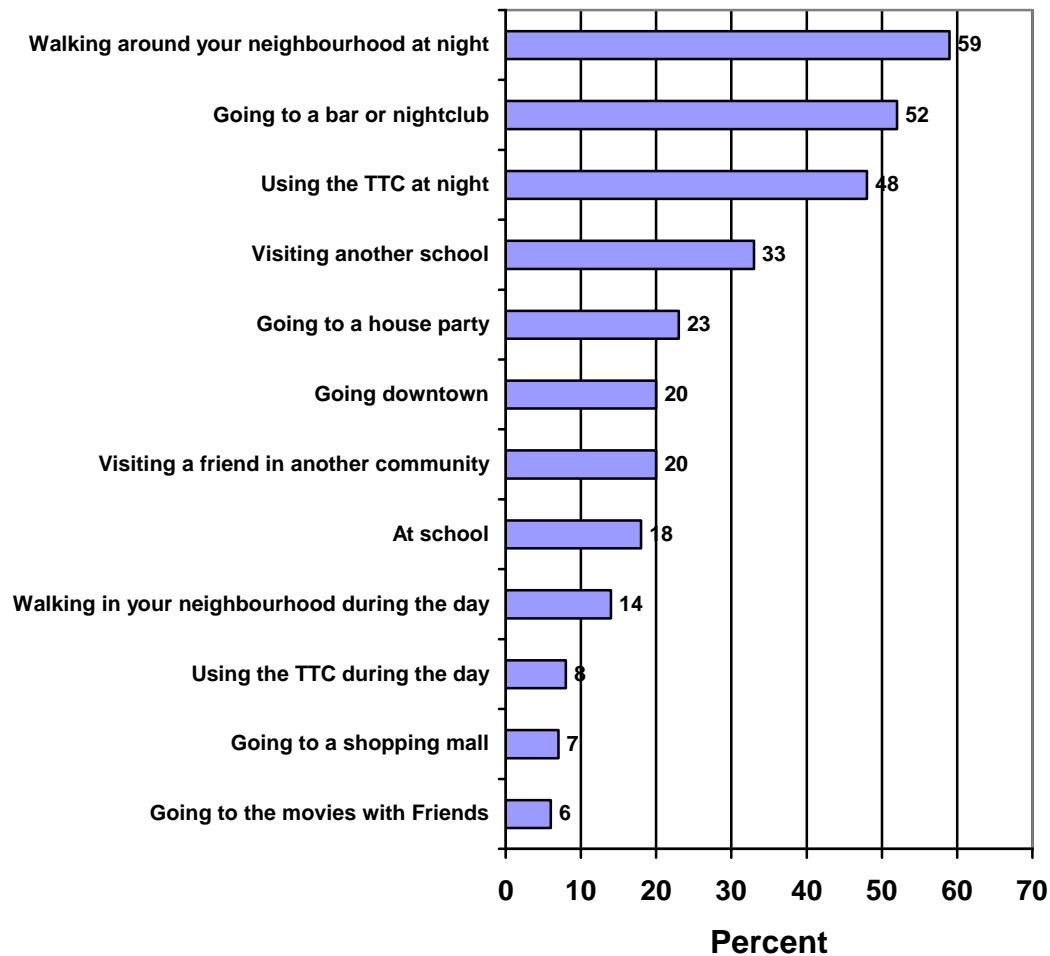
- One out of every four Westview students (23%) indicates that they would feel unsafe or very unsafe going to a party at someone's home.
- One out of every five Westview students (20%) indicates that they would feel unsafe or very unsafe going downtown.
- Similarly, one out of every five Westview students (20%) indicates that they would feel unsafe or very unsafe visiting a friend who lives in another neighbourhood.
- While the majority Westview students (59%) would feel unsafe walking in their own neighbourhood at night, very few (14%) would feel unsafe walking in their own neighbourhood during the day.
- Less than 10% of Westview students would feel unsafe using the TTC during the day (8%), going to a shopping mall (7%) or going to the movies with friends (6%).

Further analysis indicates that Westview students tend to feel safer at school than when they engage in a number of other social activities. For example, only 18% of Westview students indicated that they felt unsafe at school. By contrast, 59% would feel unsafe walking in their own neighbourhood at night, 52% would feel unsafe going to a bar or nightclub, 48% would feel unsafe using the TTC at night and 33% would feel unsafe visiting another school. Nonetheless, it is somewhat disconcerting to note that a higher proportion of Westview students feels unsafe at school than feels unsafe walking around their own neighbourhood during the day, using the TTC during the day, visiting a shopping mall and going to the movies with friends.

**TABLE 6:**  
**Percent of Westview Students Who Feel Safe or Unsafe**  
**in Specific Social Contexts**

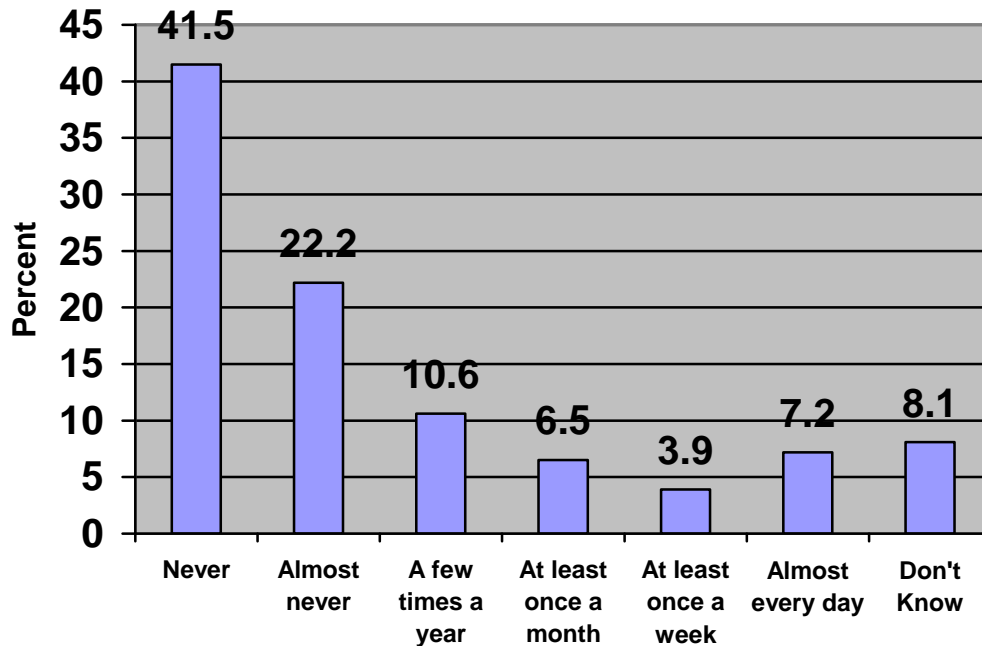
<b>Social Context</b>	<b>Very Unsafe</b>	<b>Unsafe</b>	<b>Fairly Safe</b>	<b>Very Safe</b>	<b>Don't Know/ Depends</b>
Went to a nightclub or bar	26.5	25.2	13.8	4.6	30.0
Walked around your own neighbourhood at night	31.4	27.2	21.8	8.0	11.7
Took a bus or subway at night	20.4	27.5	28.6	10.7	12.8
Went to hang out at another school	11.2	21.5	29.7	7.9	29.6
Went to a party at someone's home	6.6	16.5	40.6	14.6	21.8
Went downtown to shop or hang out	4.8	15.1	46.0	20.0	14.1
Went to visit a friend in another area of town	4.5	15.5	41.8	19.8	18.4
Went to a shopping mall	1.7	5.4	54.2	32.9	5.7
Took a bus or subway during the day	2.2	5.4	49.4	34.5	8.4
Went to the movies with friends	1.4	5.1	51.3	34.4	7.8
Walked around your own neighbourhood during the day	2.9	11.3	49.0	25.9	10.9

**FIGURE 7:**  
**Percent of Westview Students Who Feel "Unsafe" or**  
**"Very Unsafe" in Different Social Contexts**



We also asked our student respondents from Westview how often they felt afraid or unsafe travelling to and from school (see Figure 8). The results suggest that two-thirds of Westview students (64%) either never (42%) or almost never (22%) feel afraid coming or going to school. However, 28% feel afraid a few times a year or more often and one out of every ten students (11%) reports that they feel afraid coming to school at least once per week.

**FIGURE 8: Frequency of Feeling Afraid or Unsafe  
When Travelling to and From School  
(Westview Student Sample)**



We concluded our inquiry into feelings of safety by asking the Westview students how often they worry about becoming the victim of different types of crime (see Table 7 and Figure 9). The results suggest that students are most worried about street gangs, both inside and outside of school, followed by personal theft, robbery and being shot by a stranger.

- Almost two-thirds of all Westview students (61%) at least sometimes worry about the gangs in their community. Over half of all respondents (55%) also sometimes worry about gangs in their school or the gangs that reside in areas outside of their own community (54%).
- Half of all respondents (50%) at least sometimes worry about having something stolen from them at school. By contrast, only 42% sometimes worry about having something stolen outside of school.
- Almost half of Westview students (44%) at least sometimes worry about being robbed at school. A similar proportion (43%) worry about being robbed by someone outside of school.
- Four out of every ten Westview students (43%) indicates that they at least sometimes worry about being shot by a stranger. By contrast, only 24% sometimes worry about being shot by someone they know.

- Four out of ten students at Westview (39%) at least sometimes worry about being attacked or beat up at school. A similar proportion (38%) sometimes worry about being assaulted outside of school.
- In general, Westview students are more likely to worry about being sexually assaulted outside of school than sexually assaulted in school. For example, 29% of the sample at least sometimes worries about being sexually assaulted outside of school. By contrast, only 19% sometimes worry about being sexually assaulted when they are at school.

Further analysis suggests that Westview students are somewhat more worried about the gangs than their counterparts at C.W. Jefferys. For example, 55% of Westview students at least sometimes worry about the gangs at their school, compared to only 45% of Jefferys students. Westview students are also more likely to report that they sometimes worry about the gangs in their own community (61%) than Jefferys students (49%). Interestingly, few other differences in fear of crime exist between the two schools. In other words, students from Jefferys and Westview are equally likely to worry about all other types of criminal victimization.

**TABLE 7:**  
**Percent of Westview Students Who Report being Worried or Not Worried About Specific Types of Criminal Activity**

Do you ever worry about..	Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	All the Time
Street gangs at your school	23.4	21.4	37.0	11.1	7.1
Street gangs from your community	20.2	18.6	32.6	15.9	12.7
Street gangs outside of your community	21.6	24.5	30.7	14.2	9.0
Being attacked or beat up at school	35.5	25.4	23.4	9.4	6.2
Being attacked or beat up outside of school	33.3	28.8	23.9	8.9	5.1
Being robbed by someone at school	35.5	20.3	25.3	11.5	7.3
Being robbed by someone outside of school	34.0	23.3	27.2	10.1	5.3
Having something stolen from you at school	29.7	20.5	32.0	11.6	6.2
Having something stolen from you outside of school	33.1	24.9	27.0	9.9	5.1
Being shot by someone you know	58.5	17.1	13.1	5.7	5.6
Being shot by a stranger	38.1	19.2	23.7	10.1	8.9
Being sexually assaulted at school	65.5	15.1	9.9	5.6	3.8
Being sexually assaulted outside of school	57.1	14.4	15.2	8.4	4.9

Sample Size=870



**FIGURE 9:**  
**Percent of Westview Students Who are at Least**  
**"Sometimes" Worried about Specific Criminal Activities**



## STUDENT VICTIMIZATION

In the next section of the survey, we asked our student respondents from Westview whether or not they had experienced eight different types of criminal victimization. Consistent with the Panel's mandate, we asked the students about only those victimization experiences that had taken place over the past *two years*. We further asked the respondents to distinguish between incidents of victimization that occurred at school, or on school property and victimization experiences that occurred outside of school. It should be noted that just because a student indicates that they were victimized at school in the past two years does not necessarily mean that the victimization occurred at Westview. For example, a Grade 9 student who claims that they were assaulted in the past two years might be referring to an incident that occurred in Grade 8 when they were attending another school.

The eight types of victimization we examined include: 1) *Minor Theft* (defined as the theft of money or items worth less than \$50.00); 2) *Major Theft* (defined as the theft of money or items worth more than \$50.00); 3) *Vandalism* (defined as the deliberate damage of property, clothes or personal items); 4) *Physical Threats* (defined as threats of physical harm that did not involve a weapon); 5) *Physical Assaults* (defined as incidents of being punched, kicked or slapped); 6) *Robbery* (defined as having money or personal items taken from you by force or the threat of force); 7) *Weapons Assaults* (defined as being attacked by someone with a weapon like a knife or a bat); and 8) *Verbal Abuse* (defined as being verbally teased or insulted). Respondents could answer that they had never experienced a specific type of victimization in the past two years, that they were only victimized once, that they were victimized between three and five times or that they were victimized on more than five occasions. The questions that were asked are consistent with items that have been used in other North American victimization surveys.<sup>12</sup> The results (see Table 8 and Figure 10) indicate that:

- Verbal abuse is the most common form of victimization among Westview students. Half of the respondents (50%), for example, indicate that they have been insulted or teased at school at least once over the past two years. One third of Westview students (32%) report that they have been verbally abused at school on more than one occasion. The results also indicate that students are more likely to be verbally abused at school (50%) than outside of school (36%).
- Physical threats are the next most common form of victimization at Westview. Four out of every ten Westview students (40%) report that they have been threatened with physical harm, at school, over the past two years. Almost a quarter of the respondents (22%) report that they have been threatened on multiple occasions. Once again, in the past two years,

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<sup>12</sup> These eight questions were also asked of the students at Jefferys. However, for the Westview survey, new, more detailed questions were developed to deal with the issues of guns, knives and sexual assault. The results from these questions are discussed below.

Westview students were more likely to be threatened at school (40%) than outside of school (31%).

- Minor theft (theft under \$50) is the next most common form of victimization at Westview. Almost forty percent of the students (38%) report that they have been the victim of minor theft at school in the past two years. Eight percent have been the victim of minor theft at school on multiple occasions. Once again, Westview students were more likely to experience minor theft at school (38%) than outside of school (23%).
- Physical assault is the fourth most common type of victimization at Westview. Over a third of Westview students (37%) report that they were physically assaulted at their school on at least one occasion over the past two years. One out of every five Westview students (21%) indicates that they were physically assaulted at school on two or more occasions. The data also indicate that Westview students are much more likely to be physically assaulted at school (37%) than outside of school (27%).
- Almost a third of Westview students (29%) report that someone deliberately damaged their property or possessions, at school, in the past two years. Twelve percent of students report that they have been the victim of vandalism, at school, on more than one occasion. Once again, the data indicate that students are somewhat more likely to become a vandalism victim at school (29%) than outside of school (24%).
- One out of every four Westview students (23%) indicates that they have been the victim of a robbery or extortion attempt, at school, in the past two years. Twelve percent, in fact, indicate that they have been robbed at school on multiple occasions. Westview students are only slightly more likely to report being robbed at school or on school property (23%) than outside of school.
- One out of every four Westview students (23%) also indicated that they had been the victim of a major theft (over \$50), at school, in the past two years. One out of every ten respondents (9%) indicates that they have been the victim of major theft, at school, on more than one occasion. The data further indicate that the rate of major theft was slightly higher at school (23%) than outside of school (19%).
- Finally, one out of every ten Westview students (10%) reports that they were assaulted by someone with a weapon, at school, in the past two years. One out of every twenty students (5%) reports that they have been assaulted with a weapon, at school, on more than one occasion. Unlike the other seven types of victimization discussed in this section, students were just as likely to be assaulted with a weapon outside of school (11%) than inside of school (10%).

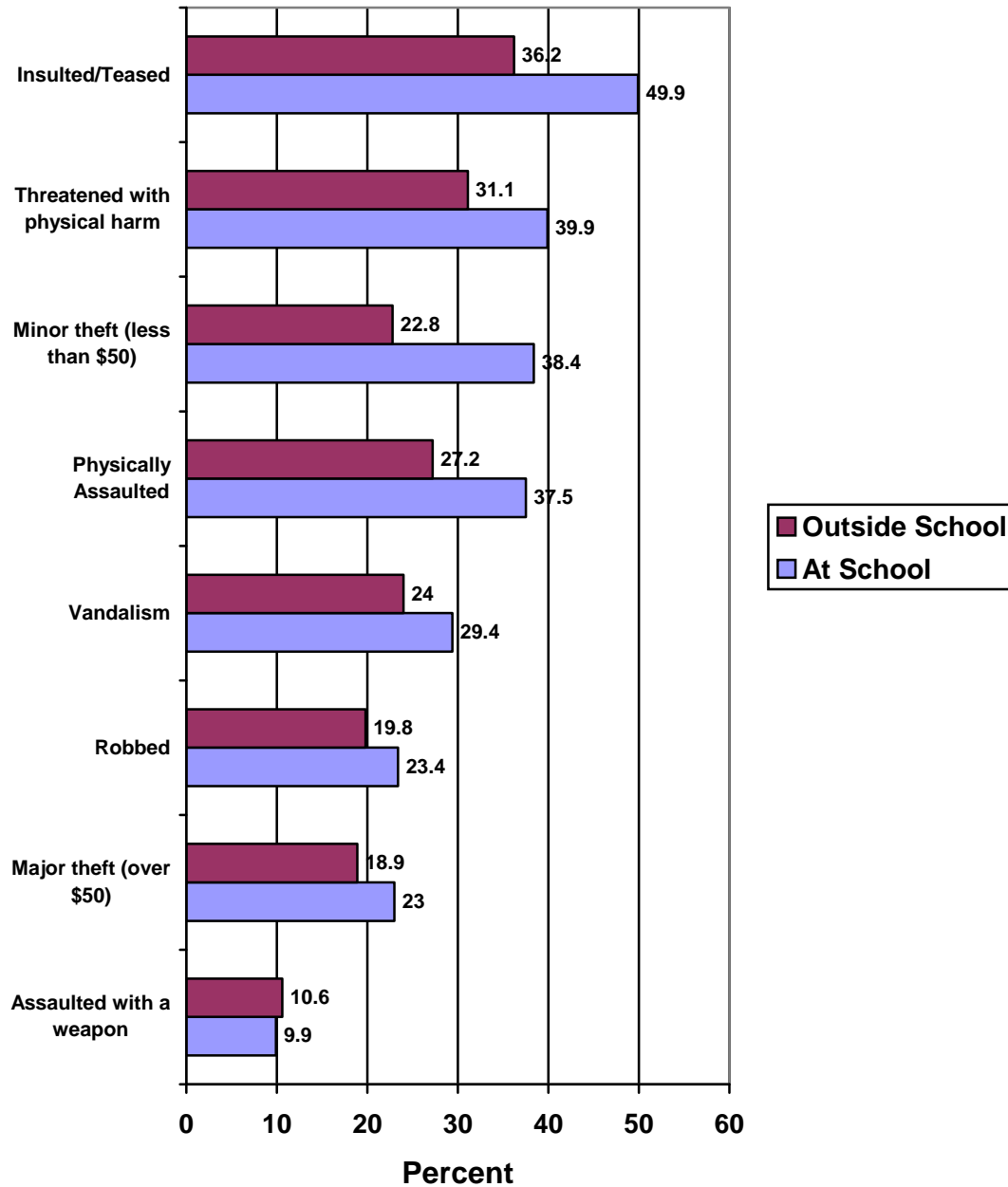
Overall, the victimization levels documented by the Westview students survey are remarkably similar to the victimization levels documented by the survey of students at C.W. Jefferys. Indeed, at school, Westview students are just as likely as Jefferys students to be physically assaulted (37% vs 37%), threatened with physical harm (40% vs. 39%), robbed (23% vs. 22%) or assaulted with a weapon (10% vs. 11%). However, compared to Westview students, Jefferys students do report somewhat higher levels of minor theft (45% vs. 38%), vandalism (35% vs. 29%) and major theft (32% vs. 23%). On the other hand, the data do suggest that Westview students are more likely to be teased and insulted at school (50%) than their counterparts from Jefferys (42%). Importantly, for both Westview and Jefferys students, victimization levels are higher at school or on school property than outside of school.

**TABLE 8:**  
**Percent of Westview Students Who Have Experienced Different Types**  
**of Victimization in the Past Two Years, Inside and Outside of School**

TYPE OF VICTIMIZATION	Never	Once	Between 2 and 5 times	More than 5 Times
Minor theft: at school	61.7	20.3	13.3	4.8
Minor theft: outside of school	77.1	14.9	4.3	3.6
Major theft: at school	77.0	13.8	5.9	3.3
Major theft: outside of school	81.1	10.7	5.5	2.7
Vandalism: at school	70.6	17.4	8.8	3.2
Vandalism: outside of school	76.0	14.9	6.6	2.5
Threatened: at school	60.1	18.2	13.8	7.9
Threatened: outside of school	68.9	14.5	9.0	7.6
Assaulted: at school	62.4	16.9	12.7	7.9
Assaulted: outside of school	72.9	11.0	9.1	7.1
Robbery: at school	76.6	11.3	8.1	4.0
Robbery: outside of school	80.2	10.8	5.7	3.3
Assaulted with a weapon: at school	90.0	5.9	2.4	1.6
Assaulted with a weapon: outside of school	89.4	5.1	3.4	2.1
Teased/Insulted: at school	50.1	17.8	15.9	16.2
Teased/Insulted: outside of school	63.8	14.1	11.0	11.1

Sample Size=870

**FIGURE 10: Percent of Westview Students Who Experienced Various Types of Criminal Victimization Over the Past Two Years, by Location**



## Gender and Victimization

Additional analysis indicates that important gender differences exist with respect to student victimization (see Table 9). For example, both within and outside of the school environment, male Westview students are significantly more likely than female students to report being the victim of various crimes including minor and major theft, physical threats, vandalism, physical assaults, robbery and assaults involving a weapon. However, within the school environment, female Westview students are significantly more likely to report verbal abuse (53%) than their male counterparts (46%). These basic gender differences were also identified by the student survey at C.W. Jefferys with one notable exception. At Westview, it appears that male students are significantly more likely to experience minor theft, major theft and vandalism than female students. However, at Jefferys, female students were just as likely as their male counterparts to experience these types of property crime. However, as with Westview, male students at Jefferys were much more likely than females to experience threats, physical assaults, robbery and assaults with a weapon. Nonetheless, female students are much more vulnerable than male students to both sexual harassment and sexual assault. Our findings related to sexual victimization among Westview students are discussed below.

**TABLE 9:**  
**Percent of Westview Students Who Have Experienced Different Types of Criminal Victimization in the Past Two Years, by Gender**

TYPE OF VICTIMIZATION	MALE	FEMALE	Statistical Significance
Minor theft: at school	41.8	34.0	*
Minor theft: outside of school	25.6	19.2	*
Major theft: at school	25.3	19.9	*
Major theft: outside of school	21.5	15.5	*
Vandalism: at school	34.5	23.0	**
Vandalism: outside of school	27.4	19.2	**
Threatened: at school	43.6	34.7	**
Threatened: outside of school	34.9	25.8	**
Assaulted: at school	46.3	27.4	**
Assaulted: outside of school	33.6	19.2	**
Robbery: at school	32.4	13.6	**
Robbery: outside of school	27.6	10.8	**
Assaulted with a weapon: at school	13.9	5.6	**
Assaulted with a weapon: outside school	15.1	5.4	**
Teased/Insulted: at school	45.9	53.2	*
Teased/Insulted: outside of school	34.0	36.5	NS
Sample Size	438	427	

NS gender difference is not statistically significant

\* gender difference is statistically significant at  $p < .05$

\*\* gender difference is statistically significant at  $p < .01$

### The Victimization Number in Context

Although some may find the student victimization levels at Westview to be disturbing, it is important to note that, in our opinion, they are in fact quite consistent with the results of other youth victimization surveys conducted in North America. Unfortunately, few of these surveys have actually been conducted in Canada. One exception is the *2000 Toronto Youth Crime and Victimization Survey* (see Tanner and Wortley 2002; Wortley and Tanner 2006). This survey (discussed above), was conducted in 2000 and involved a random sample of 3,393 high school students from 30 different high schools in the Toronto region (10 from the Catholic School Board and 20 from the Public School Board). During this study, a detailed questionnaire was administered to student respondents during class time. As with the survey conducted at Westview, one of the primary objectives of this project was to document experiences of victimization. However, some of the questions asked in 2000 were quite different than the questions posed during the Westview survey. For example, while the Westview survey focussed on victimization in the past two years, the 2000 survey focussed on lifetime victimization rates and victimization experiences that had taken place in the past twelve months. Nonetheless, we feel that, despite the seven year gap and somewhat different lines of questioning, the existence of the 2000 data provides at least some opportunity to compare the experiences of Westview students to the experiences of students from other high schools in the Toronto area. It should be noted that Westview was not one of the schools included in the 2000 survey.

In general, we feel that many of the results of the 2000 survey are completely consistent with the results of the October 2007 survey conducted at Westview. For example, in 2007, 38% of the student respondents from Westview reported that they had been the victim of minor theft in the past two years. By contrast, in 2000, 38% of Toronto high school students also claimed that they had been a victim of minor theft *in the past twelve months* and 72% claimed that they had been a victim of minor theft at sometime in their life. Similarly, in 2007, 40% of the student respondents from Westview claimed that they had received physical threats in the past two years. By contrast, in 2000, 39% of Toronto High School students claimed that they had received physical threats *in the past twelve months* and 67% claimed that they had received physical threats at some time in their life. In 2007, 37% of Westview students claimed that they had been physically assaulted at school in the past twenty-four months. In 2000, 39% of Toronto high school students (from 30 different schools) reported that they had been physically assaulted in the past year and 70% indicated that they had been assaulted at some time in their life. Additional analysis reveals that, in 2007, 10% of the Westview students who took part in the Panel study claimed that they had been assaulted by someone with a weapon in the past two years. By contrast, in 2000, 8% of Toronto high school students indicated that they had been the victim of a weapons-related assault in the past twelve months and 16% had been assaulted with a weapon at some time in their life.

In summary, the victimization findings produced in 2000, using a large sample of high school students from 30 different schools, largely mirror the victimization results produced in 2007, using a small sample of students from Westview Centennial. The

comparison of data from the 2007 survey with the results of the 2000 survey only serves to increase our confidence in the current findings. Furthermore, this comparison serves to highlight the possibility that Westview is not more dangerous or violent than other high schools in the Toronto area. This does not mean that crime and victimization are not serious problems at Westview. However, the comparison of the two surveys, conducted seven years apart, underscores the possibility that problems with crime and victimization are not isolated within Westview or even within other schools in the Jane-Finch community. Crime and victimization may be a problem faced by students at schools throughout the Toronto region.

### **The TDSB Census of High School Students**

As discussed ABOVE, in 2006, the Toronto District School Board conducted a “Census” of all high school within its schools. (see Yau and O’Reilly 2007) As part of this census, 430 students at Westview were asked questions about their victimization experiences at school. Unfortunately, the Census questions were very different than the questions asked on the Panel survey. For example, while the Panel survey asked about 8 different types of victimization, (see Table 8) the Census only asked about five types of victimization (physical threats, physical bullying by an individual, physical bullying by a group, theft or destruction of personal property and insults or name calling). Furthermore, while we examined victimization experiences over the past two years, the Census asked about victimization at school without specifying a time period. Similarly, while the Census asked about “physical bullying” by an individual and “physical bullying” by a group, we asked more specifically about physical assaults (being punched or kicked) without asking students to distinguish between assaults by individuals and assaults by a group. We are also somewhat concerned with how students interpreted terms like “physical bullying.” What exactly is “physical bullying”? Is it verbal abuse? Physical threats? Being pushed or shoved? Or is it an actual physical assault? In our opinion, it is difficult to determine the exact meaning of the phrase “physical bullying” from the current wording of the Census questions. We should also note that previous research suggests that many students, especially male students, are unlikely to report that they have ever been “bullied.” The term “bullied” implies weakness and the passive acceptance of physical intimidation or violence. By contrast, many students who refuse to admit bullying will admit that they have been punched, kicked, assaulted, jumped or involved in a physical fight. In other words, questions about “bullying” may lead to an under-estimation of the true extent of violence within the school setting.

Finally, the response categories also differ dramatically between the two surveys. While we asked our respondents to indicate exactly how often they had experienced a particular type of victimization (i.e., never, once, twice, three times, etc.), the Census provided quite vague response categories (never, rarely, sometimes, often or always). Although it is not difficult to interpret the meaning of “never,” it is somewhat difficult, in our opinion, to determine exactly what a student means when they state that they are “rarely” or “sometimes” victimized at school. Does this mean once a year, once a month, once per week? Does “rarely” mean the same thing for all students? In summary, both the Community-School Safety Panel and the TDSB conducted two separate surveys of Westview students over the 2006-2007 period. However, the actual questions used in the



two surveys are quite different, making accurate comparisons between datasets extremely difficult, if not impossible. Nonetheless, some crude comparisons are attempted in the following paragraphs.

In November 2007, the TDSB released preliminary findings from its 2006 School Census (Yau and O'Reilly 2007). However, the manner in which the victimization data were reported, in our opinion, masks the true level of victimization in Toronto high schools. The problem is that, in its report, the School Board analysts collapsed the "never" answer category with the "rarely" answer category and only presented data on students who were "sometimes," "often," or "always" victimized. For example, according to the report, 16% of all high school students in Toronto were either "sometimes" threatened (10%) or "often/always" threatened (6%) at their school (see Yau and O'Reilly 2007: 21). However, the report does not give us any information on the percent of students who are "rarely" victimized at school. This, in our opinion, gives the impression that threats are less common than they actually are. In other words, if we include those who are "rarely" threatened, the overall percentage of students receiving a physical threat at school will increase significantly. Our analysis of the Jefferys Census data supports this hypothesis.

In response to a special request, the Toronto School Board agreed to provide us with the full, un-collapsed frequencies for all Census questions related to school safety issues. They provided us with this data for both C.W. Jefferys Collegiate and Westview Centennial Secondary School. In our opinion, despite important methodological differences, the Census data we received is quite consistent with the results of the Panel survey. Understandably, consistencies are most apparent for those questions that are the most similar. For example, we asked our Westview respondents: "How many times has someone at your school threatened to hurt you?" Sixty percent of our respondents indicated that they had "never" been threatened at school and 40% reported that they had been threatened on at least one occasion. The 2006 Census, on the other hand, asked Westview students, "In your school have you ever experienced threats to hurt you?" Sixty-five percent of the Census respondents from Westview indicated that they had "never" been threatened at school and 35% reported that they had been threatened on at least one occasion. In other words, the Panel survey found that 40% of Westview students had been threatened, while the Census results suggest that 35% have been threatened. These figures are very close, thus increasing confidence in the overall findings and the integrity of the data. Other remarkably similar results from the two surveys include the following:

- The Panel survey found that 50% of Westview students had been teased or insulted at school over the past two years. This finding is consistent with the 2006 Census results that suggest that 57% of Westview students have been the victim of insults or name calling at school.
- The Panel survey found that 43% of Westview students had been the victim of either minor theft, major theft or vandalism at school in the past two years. By contrast, the Census found that 39% of Westview students had been the victim of "theft or destruction of property" at their school. Thus,

although the questions are quite different, the two studies produced estimates of property crime victimization that are within 5 percentage points of each other.

- Finally, according to the Panel survey, 37% of Westview students had been physically assaulted (defined as being punched or kicked) in the past two years. By contrast, the 2006 Census results indicate that 29% of the students at Westview were bullied by an individual at school and an additional 21% have been bullied by a group. As discussed above, these results are very difficult to compare because “bullying” may mean something very different to students than a physical assault or fight. Indeed, many young people who are involved in fights would never admit to being bullied. Thus, we strongly feel that the line of questioning used by the Census likely under-estimated the true extent of violence within Toronto high schools.

In summary, although the Panel Survey of Westview students employed a much more detailed line of questioning with respect to victimization experiences, the overall results of the Panel Survey, in our opinion, are quite consistent with the results of the 2006 School Census.

### **MOST SERIOUS VICTIMIZATION EXPERIENCE**

In order to examine student victimization experiences more closely, we asked our Westview student respondents to describe their worst victimization experience. All students were asked the following question:

Please think about the worst thing that has ever happened to you that might be considered a crime or an act of violence. We are talking about such things as being threatened, punched, kicked or attacked by someone with a weapon. We are also talking about having things stolen from you or being sexually assaulted. What is the worst thing that ever happened to you that might be considered a crime? Please write you answer in the box below.

A total of 305 respondents (35.1% of the sample) provided us with the details of their “worst victimization” experience. (see Table 10 and Table 11) We carefully examined the qualitative descriptions of these incidents and identified seven basic types of victimization. Examples of how the students described these different types of victimization are provided below.

#### **Robbery/Extortion-- not involving a gun**

*Two tall black guys came to me with a knife and they took my iPod.*

*A group of guys tried robbing me by force when walking after school. They searched everything I had in my bags and pockets and they stole stuff*

*from me. They always start by asking for a dollar or twenty-five cents then it escalates to harassment and even assault.*

*I was attacked and robbed.*

*Being held up by a group of kids that wanted to steal from me and they beat me up while I was with my girl.*

*Being held down by two black male teens and scaring me and taking my stuff.*

*Being robbed at my building by a black guy.*

*Got robbed for my money and got beat up for it.*

*I've been bullied for money and was punched in the face after giving it to them.*

*I got bullied into giving my lunch money.*

*I was bike riding with my friends but I stopped and two guys came out of the bushes with a knife and stole my bike.*

*I was jumped by three thugs for my jacket and shoes. One guy had a knife.*

*I was held in a choke hold and got my iPod robbed.*

*I was robbed and beat.*

*I was robbed a York Gate Mall by 5 to 7 black males.*

*I was rushed and robbed by these gang mon dem.*

*I was walking home late one night from work when three black guys came up to me and pulled out a knife. They told me to give them my purse and I did and they just ran away.*

*I was walking to the mall and a bunch of black kids cover their faces with red and black bandanas and say gimme all your money and empty out your pocket.*

*My bicycle got stole from four black guys and I got punched by them.*

*Three guys came to me and went through my pocket and robbed me of a few dollars.*

*Someone threatened to beat the crap out of me if I did not give them some dollars. I gave them my money.*

*Someone took money from me by force.*

*My phone was taken from me at the Jane and Finch Mall. People stood around like idiots not doing anything while I was getting punched up trying to get my phone back from these three black girls.*

*Walking home from school and I was confronted by three people. They take money from me.*

*When I go from school to home people always ask you for money or other things. If you don't give it to them they hit you.*

*When I used to go to the gym in the morning there was this guy who would take a knife out at me and always take my money.*

*Being extorted in front everyone and in front the ice-cream truck and no one said anything.*

*This guy with big pants and he has long hair tried to put his hands in my pocket and told me to give him a toonie. I had to give him my money because he threatened me. I was so scared. It was at Westview.*

*Three black guys tried to rob me and my friends and they were hitting, punching and kicking us.*

*Pointed by knife and asked to give money or they will stab me.*

*I got threatened to empty out my pockets and hand over my money and when I didn't I was attacked and ended up needing 5 stitches.*

*Someone came up to me and asked me for everything I had. I tried running but he followed me. I then grabbed a stone and hit him in his head for self- defence and ran away to the mall. I then reported it to the police but nothing was done or said. They said because it's called Jane and Finch.*

### **Physical Assault**

*A group of girls wanted to fight me and they did, but I was already fighting with one of them so they like rushed me and then they ganged on me.*

*A group of guys surrounded me on school property. Two of them from this school and the rest from elsewhere. One of the guys punched me in the centre of my forehead.*

*Attacked by someone with a weapon.*

*Attacked.*

*Beat up for no reason.*

*Being teased, punched, kicked.*

*Fight with one person. I beat him. Then he brought his friends and they all jumped me.*

*Fight last year with a girl which ended up us both getting suspensions because she didn't like me. But later found out it was someone else that set us up.*

*Fight with knife.*

*Getting beat up.*

*Getting into a fight with a girl and being kicked in my stomach.*

*Getting rushed by 9 guys with Extendos when there is only 3 of us.*

*Got into a fight on the street.*

*I'd been attacked by a large group of people unprovoked, due to where I'd went to school and the friends I'd had.*

*I got beat up at a place where I take extra credit.*

*I got into a fight and they pulled out a weapon and I took it from them and threw it and continued fighting.*

*I got into a fight trying to get my money back and ended up losing. I got punched a couple of times and got a black eye. Happened twice, except the first time I won.*

*I was badly beaten by a classmate.*

*I have been beaten with an Extendo and an iron thing for your hands.*

*I was attacked on the way to a friend's place.*

*I was playing football and I took someone down. He got mad and rushed me after school. I got hit and fell down in an awkward position and broke my arm.*

*I was punched in my face from behind - cheap shot.*

*Jumped by another gang.*

*Jumped by another gang at the mall. They knocked my tooth out. I got stabbed in the shoulder and spit on.*

*Me and my best friend got into a fight. Me and my friend fell to the ground but everyone started to kick me on the floor.*

*Me and my friend got into a fight at school.*

*I was stabbed and beat up near the hospital across the street.*

*People tried to hurt me just because I wore a certain colour (red). People mistaken me for someone else and tried to attack me just because I 'm being myself. Someone else might think I'm cocky or think I'm all that so they try and jump me.*

*During the past time in my neighbourhood things such as crime or an act of violence often occur between me and someone. The first time this ever happened to me was at church when I was being threatened by a guy that assaulted me and I self-defended myself and in which later he came after me with his gang chasing me after church.*

*Please stop the Asians and blacks that chill in the parking lot doors. I was beaten up there.*

*Some policeman fight me for nothing because I help some people.*

*I was punched and kicked.*

*Some stupid student was throwing things on me in front of teacher. I asked him so many times not to do that. I even told the teacher. But nothing happened so I punched the student and we started fighting. But the teacher didn't care.*

### **Theft**

*A good friend of my brother stole \$300 from me. She went into my room and took it. My mother opened the front for her.*

*I let my friend borrow my iPod because I was participating in the gym and so she decided to give it back to me so I told her to put it in my bag. When gym ended I couldn't find the iPod and I searched a few people but didn't end up finding it.*

*Money stolen from my locker.*

*My bike worth \$500 was stolen. No place to actually to put a bike like a bike rack. Many kids use bikes and have to lock them off school property instead of having bike racks right near the school walls, so no one could ever be brave to take their time and cut off a lock and steal a bike.*

*My MP3 player was stolen from out of my bag.*

*My iPod was stolen.*

*My wallet was stolen. It happened while I was in gym class.*

*One day I was walking home with my friends and someone came up to me asking for the time on my iPod. He said he couldn't see it, so I passed it to him and he stole it.*

*Twice someone stole my wallet with my money in it. Once it happened at my house and the second time at my school.*

*Someone stole an iPod from me.*

*Someone stole my iPod.*

*My iPod was stolen from me.*

*Breaking into my house and stole possessions.*

### ***Sexual Assault***

*A family friend fingered me during my mother's birthday party and no-one knows except for me and him.*

*A guy grabbed me into a corner and tried to put his hands down my pants.*

*Being sexually assaulted by my friend at my aunt's house and my older brother walked in and he was drunk and didn't do anything and my little brother had to see me try to fight him but I felt like I couldn't scream on the outside though it seemed like I was on the inside.*

*By far the worst think that has happened to me was when I was small I used to get molested by a family member.*

*I've been sexually assaulted by a family member that's in my step family.*

*I 've almost been sexually assaulted.*

*I almost got raped.*

*I was sexually assaulted by a guy in his 20's. I was crying when I got home.*

*I was raped.*

*I was sexually assaulted as a kid.*

*I was sexually attacked by 2 guys at school in the stairs.*

*In Grade 9 and 10 I would walk the halls and gangsters would be calling and trying to talk to me I would just avoid and walk the other way. They would then surround me and start to sexually assault me.*

*Last year one of my friends took a hug too far. It turned into sexual assault.*

*My step-dad was touching me up in my private parts. My granduncle also tried to molest me.*

*Was raped.*

*Set up by a friend and was gang raped by 3 mans.*

*Sex assault.*

*Sexually assaulted.*

*Sexually abused.*

***Physical Threats:***

*A person threatened to beat me up.*

*Being teased and threatened in school caused a mental break down which made me drop out.*

*Being threatened or verbally attacked on the TTC or in malls.*



*Couple of years ago a girl started saying I said something about her and sent another girl to threaten me and scare me off.*

*I had a girl come up to me and falsely accuse me of doing something I didn't do. Then she threatened me. This happened more than once with the same girl.*

*I was teased and threatened and bullied.*

*Me and my friends were regularly teased by black girls and a black guy in the cafeteria at lunch time. They started bullying and swearing at us and threatening for no reason and also asked us to stop talking in our own language.*

*Only once this girl came up to me and wanted to hit me with a bat in Jane and Finch cause I had red on.*

*I have been threatened of being beaten up because the girl said I hate Goths and she yelled at me to go and die.*

*My second week into the school I was walking to soccer practice after school and these three guys in all red jumped this one guy and his girlfriend after school. All five people come to Westview. The three guys in red were throwing punches and kicks at the poor guy and I was just watching. So one of the guys came right up into my face and started threatening me and asking me for money. But my boys came in and handled the problem.*

*Some people bully me and threaten me.*

*Some people came up to my door and threatened to rush me because of something.*

*Someone has threatened me.*

### **Gun Assaults -- including gunpoint robbery:**

*Two guys came out from nowhere and started questioning me. They didn't know me and by force took my iPod. I couldn't say nothing because they had a gun and I would get beat up or shot.*

*A shooting at my elementary school park and I made eye contact with the shooter. But I knew the person who got shot and tried to help but I was too little to understand what was going on until the shooter came into our school and shot up the place.*

*Almost got shot and friend got shot.*

*Drive by shooting.*

*Getting stabbed and getting hit with a gun.*

*I've been shot at more than 20 times.*

*I've only been threatened once by a person with a gun. That has been the worst so far.*

*I got a gun pointed to my head.*

*I was at Yorkdale and 2 guys brought me outside and showed me a gun. They wanted money so I had to give them.*

*I was coming home with one of my oldest sister one night from work during summer. It was around 1:00 am when a group of guys with their face covered started running toward us. They grabbed my sister and I so they pointed a gun at me and told her that if she didn't let go they were gonna shoot. So she let go and they took everything we had and left.*

*I was playing baseball with my friends and a group of individuals approached and tried to take the bat. My group refused and they pulled a gun and the cops drove by and they ran.*

*Was robbed at gunpoint.*

*Was robbed by two guys with a gun.*

*Shot at.*

*Shot by someone.*

*Someone pulled up a gun on me and almost shot me on the head. That happened to me twice and I am in Canada 1 year and half.*

*Someone put a gun to my head.*

*Someone shot a bullet through my window.*

*Someone showed me a gun in class and told me not to tell anyone.*

*This other gang I had a beef with chased me with a gun but I got away.*

*Threatening to shoot and kill me.*

*Walking home from school to be held up at gunpoint and robbed of \$2.25 (so much money I know). They punched me in the stomach and kicked in my head and back. As they left saying racial slurs.*

*I was at a party and there was a shoot-out. Someone pointed a gun to my head. I felt I was going to die*

*At gunpoint I got beat down and robbed of my phone.*

*Was jumped by some Cripz and they pointed a gun at my head and robbed me then they kicked me and knocked 2 teeth out.*

*When I saw a girl getting beat up behind Driftwood Community Centre by 3 guys when I went running and screaming two of them pointed a gun at me and the third one was brutally kicking the girl in the stomach and face and when they finished they all left and the girl was left with broken nose and chin. I took her to the hospital.*

### ***Sexual Harassment***

*A person was calling my phone threatening me on a regular basis and sexually harassing me and finally when I had enough I called the police and they made it seem like it was my fault.*

*I have been sexually harassed by 2 black guys when I was walking home after school and when I went across the street to buy stuff. It made me to never go anywhere alone anymore.*

*Older men are always chomping at me and asking me for dates.*

*Some men have pulled my hand and tried to talk to me when I refused to talk to them or ignore them when they try to ask me out.*

*Some guys verbally abused me in a sex way.*

*Verbal sexual assault.*

As illustrated in Table 10, 565 respondents (65% of the sample) did not provide details about their worst victimization experience. These respondents have either never been victimized or did not want to share the details of their worst victimization experience with the research team. On the other hand, 305 Westview students (35% of the sample) did provide details about their worst victimization experience (see Table 11).

In 52 cases (17% of all reported victimization incidents) the respondent indicated that they were victimized but did not want to disclose the details of the crime (see Table 11). One respondent, for example, simply stated that she was “Too embarrassed to say.” Another respondent wrote, “It is too emotional to write about.” However, we were able

to identify 74 cases of physical assault (24% of all reported victimization incidents), 66 cases of robbery or extortion (22% of all incidents), 29 gun-related crimes (9% of all incidents), 28 cases of sexual assault (9% of all incidents), 27 cases involving physical threats (9% of all incidents), 22 cases of theft (7% of all incidents) and seven cases of sexual harassment (2 of all victimization incidents). Further analysis of the data reveals that:

- Seventy-six percent of the victimization incidents described by the Westview respondents occurred in the past two years: 57% within the past year and 19% within the past two years. Only 11% of the incidents occurred more than 3 years ago (see Figure 11).
- A large proportion of the “most serious” victimization incidents described by the Westview respondents took place at school (36%) or in the area around the school (22%). An additional 16% took place in the respondent’s own neighbourhood. Ten percent of these incidents either took place at the respondent’s own home (7%) or at someone else’s home (3%). The remainder (15%) took place in other public areas including parks, shopping malls, parties and city streets outside of the respondent’s own community (see Figure 12).
- Further analysis reveals that most of the victimization incidents described by the Westview students took place at school or in the area around the school (see Figure 13). For example, 82% of the thefts described by the respondents took place at school (55%) or in the area around the school (27%). Similarly, 82% of robberies took place at school (63%) or in the area around the school (18%). Eighty-one percent of physical assaults also took place at school (63%) or in the area around the school (18%). Three out of every four threats took place at school (48%) or in the area around the school (26%). Similarly, seven out of every ten gun-related crimes (72%) also took place at school (48%) or in the area around the school (24%). However, 28% of gun crimes took place outside of the school environment. Finally, according to the data, sexual assault and harassment are likely to occur at school. Indeed, 71% of sexual harassment cases reported by the Westview students took place at school. In addition, 50% of the reported sexual assaults either took place at school (25%) or in the area around the school (25%). However, 50% of the reported sexual assaults did take place off of school property.
- According to our Westview respondents, one out of every three victimization incidents (34%) involved an offender who was a student at their school. An additional 25% of offenders were acquaintances (defined as someone the respondent had seen but did not know well) and 9% of all offenders were friends with the victim. We cannot determine whether these friends or acquaintances were also students at Westview. Finally, 23% of

the offenders were strangers. By contrast, only 4% were parents or other relatives (see Figure 14).

- Only 17% of Westview respondents reported their “worst victimization” experience to the police. In other words, 83% of the Westview victims decided not to report these criminal incidents to the authorities. The rate of reporting, however, varies somewhat by type of victimization. For example, not a single victim of sexual harassment reported the incident to the police. By contrast, 8% of threats were reported to the police, as were 14% of sexual assaults, 15% of gun crimes, 16% of robberies, 21% of physical assaults and 24% of all thefts (see Figure 15). Clearly, regardless of victimization type, the vast majority of Westview students do not report their victimization experiences to the police.
- All Westview respondents who indicated that they did not report their victimization to the police were asked why they did not report this crime (see Figure 16). On average, respondents gave 4.6 different reasons for not reporting their victimization experience to the police. The most common reasons include: 1) The belief that the police can’t provide protection from offenders (56%); 2) The person feels that they can take care of themselves (71%); 3) The victim does not want to upset their parents (55%); 4) The victim fears that, because of the victimization, parents will prevent them from going out in the future (48%); 5) It is a waste of time to report the crime. The police can’t or won’t do anything about it (58%); 6) The victim is afraid of the offenders and fears reprisals if they report (48%); 7) The victim does not want to be a “snitch” (54%); 8) The victim does not like or trust the police (47%); 9) The victim believes that the police would not take the crime seriously (38%); 10) The matter or incident was too trivial (47%); 11) The victim wants to get their own revenge (38%); 12) The victim does not want to get in trouble with the police (30%); and 13) The victim does not want the offender or offenders to get into trouble (33%).

Clearly, the reasons youth don’t report their victimization experiences to the police are complex. It seems that young people view the decision to report as a rational calculation and thus, weigh the benefits of reporting against the possible consequences. Unfortunately, the vast majority of youth think that reporting their victimization experiences to the police will only make their life more difficult. This “no snitching” phenomena makes it increasingly difficult for school officials and the police to identify and assist young victims of criminal activity. This “code of silence” might also help offenders get away with their crimes and ultimately increase the level of criminal behaviour in the community.

One major concern is that the unwillingness to report victimization experiences to the police may be getting worse. For example, in their 2000 survey of Toronto high school students, Tanner and Wortley (2002) asked the same questions about “worst victimization” experiences that were asked in the current survey. However, Tanner and

Wortley found that, in 2000, 50% of all victimization incidents were reported to the police or another adult authority figure. By contrast, in 2007, less than 20% of Westview and Jefferys students reported their victimization experiences to the police. There are two possible explanation for this gap: 1) Youth are less likely to report their victimization experiences to the police in 2007 than they were in 2000; or 2) Students from the Jane-Finch neighbourhood are less likely to report their victimization experiences to the police than youth from other areas of Toronto.

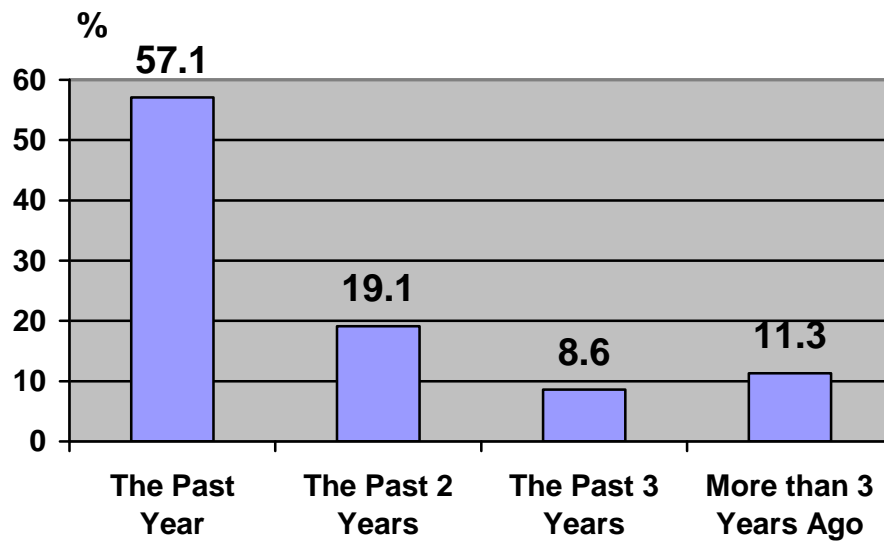
**TABLE 10:**  
**Number and Percent of Westview Students Reporting a “Most Serious” Criminal Victimization, by Type of Crime**

<b>MOST SERIOUS VICTIMIZATION</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
No victimization reported	565	64.9
Victim of a physical assault	74	8.5
Victim of robbery/extortion	66	7.6
Details not specified	52	6.0
Victim of a gun crime	29	3.3
Victim of a sexual assault	28	3.2
Victim of threats	27	3.1
Victim of theft	22	2.5
Victim of sexual harassment	7	0.8
<u>SAMPLE SIZE</u>	870	100.0

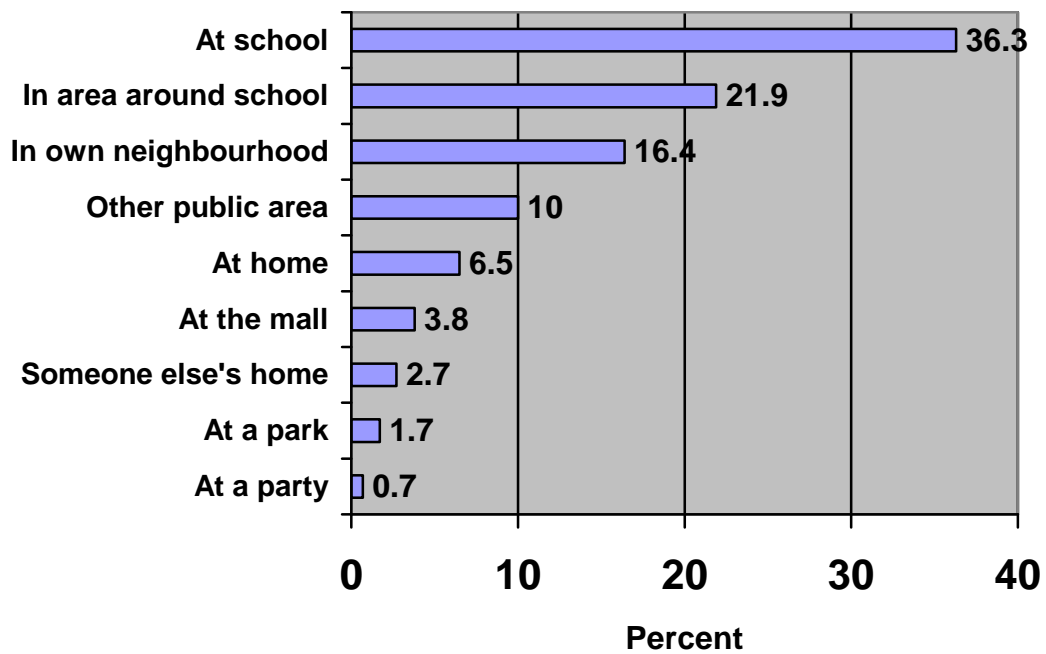
**TABLE 11:**  
**Number and Percent of All “Worst” Criminal Victimization Cases Reported by Westview Students at Jefferys, by Type of Crime**

<b>MOST SERIOUS VICTIMIZATION</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
Victim of a physical assault	74	24.3
Victim of robbery/extortion	66	21.6
Details not specified	52	17.0
Victim of a gun crime	29	9.5
Victim of a sexual assault	28	9.2
Victim of threats	27	8.9
Victim of theft	22	7.2
Victim of sexual harassment	7	2.3
<u>SAMPLE SIZE</u>	305	100.0

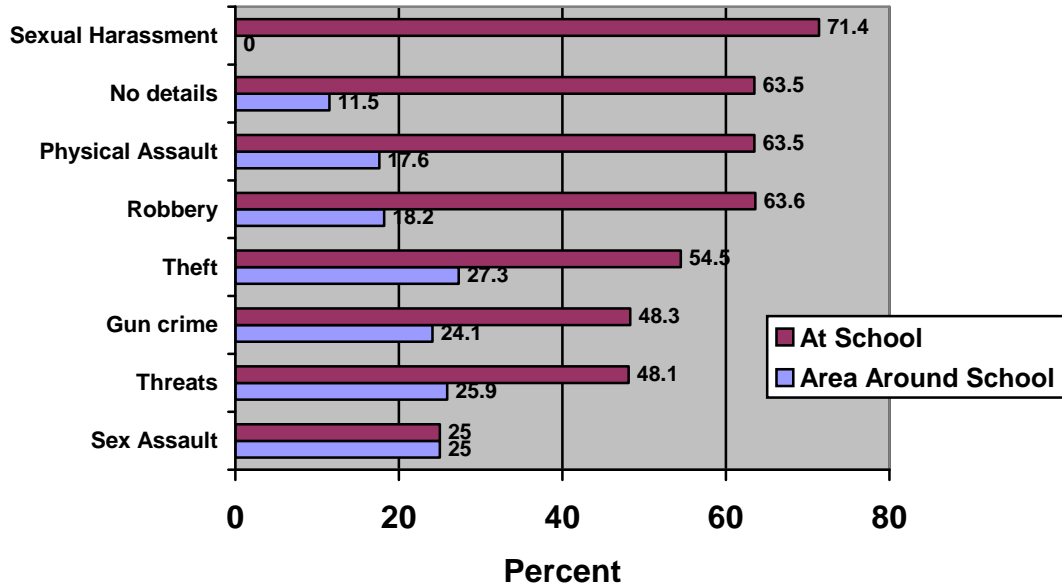
**FIGURE 11: Timing of Most Serious Victimization (Westview Student Sample)**



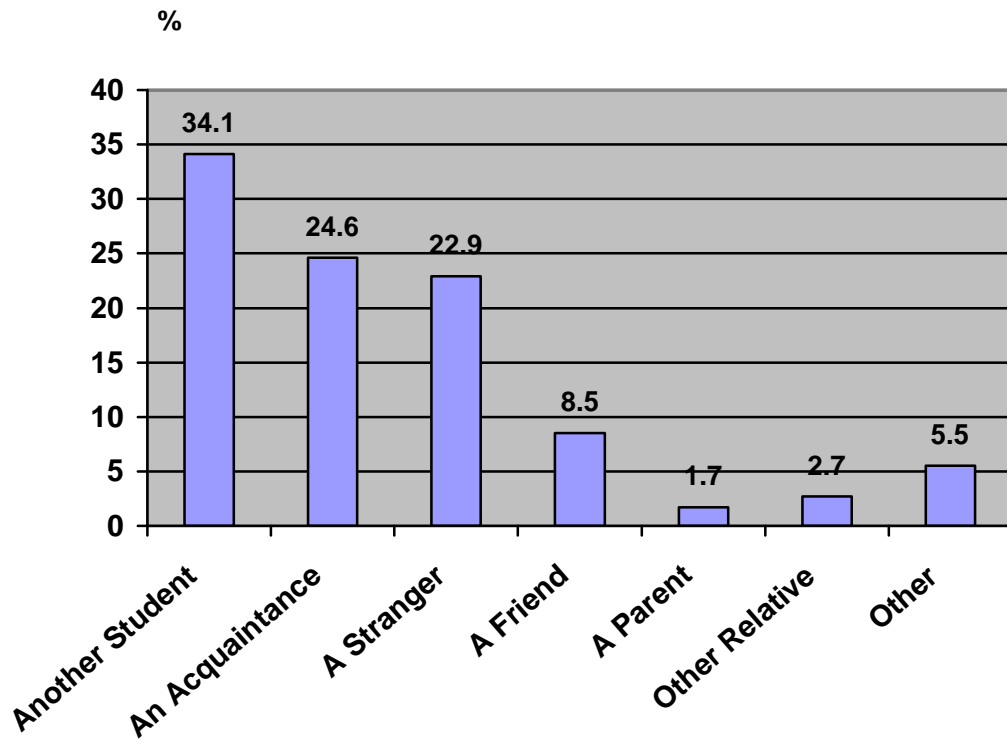
**FIGURE 12: Location of Most Serious Victimization (Westview Student Sample)**



**FIGURE 13: Percent of "Most Serious" Victimizations that Took Place at School or in the Area Around School, by Crime Type (Westview Student Sample)**

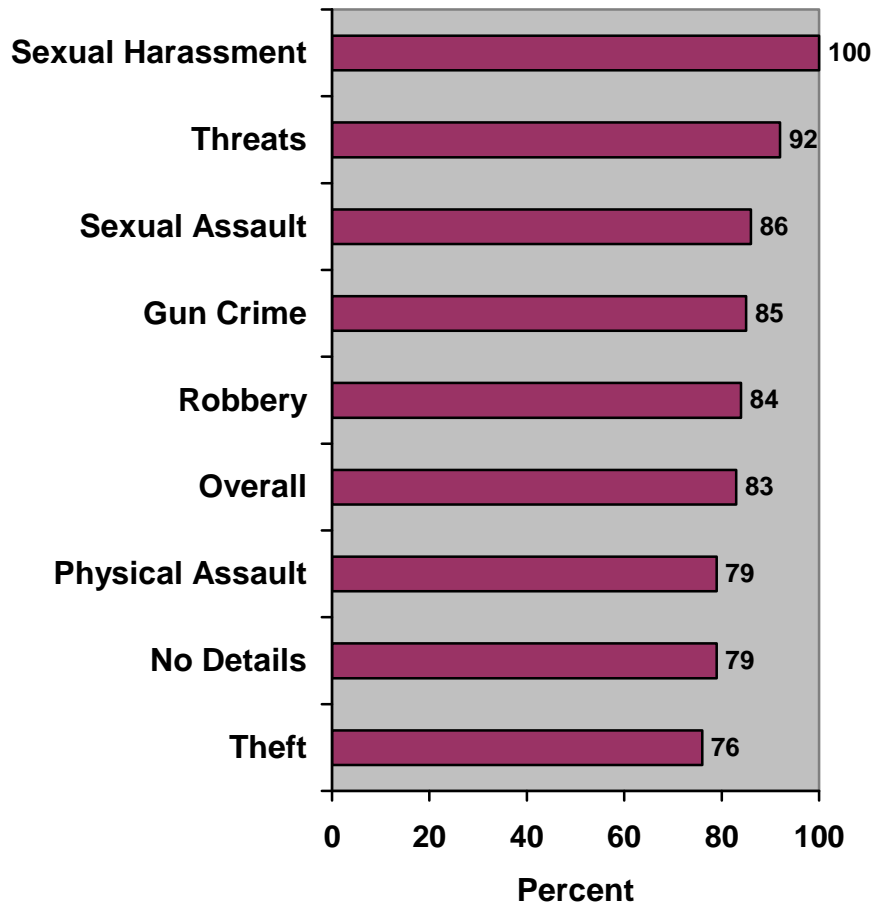


**FIGURE 14: Relationship of the Offender to the Victim (Westview Student Sample)**

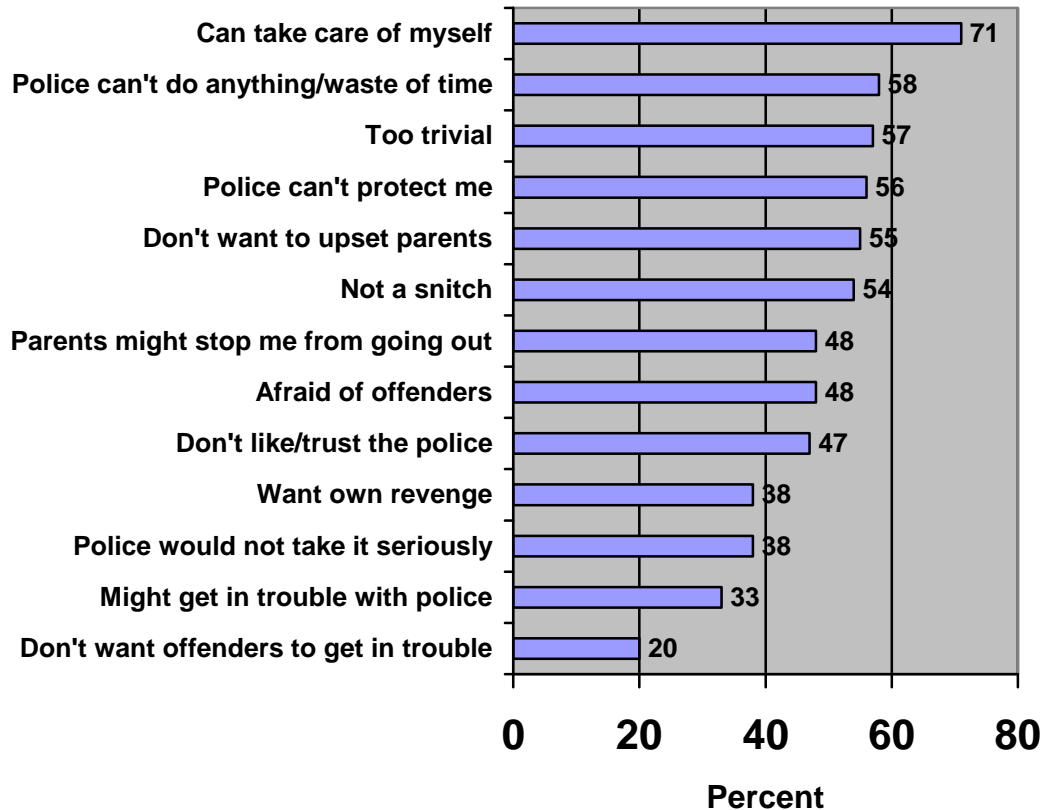




**FIGURE 15:**  
**Percent of Westview Students Who Did Not Report**  
**Their "Most Serious" Victimization Experience to the**  
**Police,**  
**by Type of Victimization**



**FIGURE 16:**  
**Reasons Westview Students *Do Not* Report Their**  
**Personal Victimization Experiences to the Police**



### **STUDENT EXPOSURE TO WEAPONS**

As stated above, the Panel was interested in gathering more detailed information about student exposure to guns and knives in school. Thus, for the Westview student survey, we developed a series of weapons-related questions that were much more thorough than those asked in the June 2007 survey of students at C.W. Jefferys. As discussed above, we also attempted to re-enter Jefferys a second time to administer these new weapons questions to Jefferys students. Unfortunately, our efforts were unsuccessful. Nonetheless, we were able to successfully administer these questions to the students at Westview.

### *Exposure to Guns*

We began by providing the Westview students with the following introduction:

We are interested in knowing what you know about guns and other weapons – both inside of school and outside of school. Please remember that your answers are completely private and confidential. Nobody will know how you respond to each of these questions. Please try to be as honest as possible:

We then asked the respondents the following question: “Over the past two years, do you know of anyone who brought a gun to your school or had a gun on school property?” The results (see Figure 17) suggest that almost one quarter of Westview students (23.3%) know at least one person who brought a gun to school over the past two years. The data also suggest that it is not just one person who has brought a gun to Westview. One out of every ten Westview students (11.1%) knows two or more people who brought a gun to school in the past two years. In fact, one out of every sixteen students (16.4%) knows four or more people who brought a gun to school over the past two years. Interestingly, an additional 15.8% are “not sure” if they know someone who has carried a gun to school.

We next asked our respondents: “Have you ever seen a gun at school or on school property?” We also asked the respondents if they had ever seen a gun outside of school. The results suggest that 22.5% of Westview students have seen a gun at their school over the past two years. (see Figure 18) In fact, one out of every ten Westview students (9.6%) has seen a gun on at least two occasions and 6.5% have seen a gun at school three times or more often. However, the data also reveal that Westview students are much more likely to be exposed to guns outside of school than inside of school. Indeed, almost half of all Westview students (46.5%) have seen a gun outside of school in the past two years. One in four Westview students (26.1%) has seen a gun outside of school on three or more occasions in the past two years.

Further analysis indicates that students who see guns rarely report them to the police or to school officials. For example, although 193 different students stated that they saw a gun at Westview over the past two years, only 15 of these 193 students (7.7%) stated that they reported a gun (that they saw at school) to the police or to a school official. Similarly, although 363 different Westview students claimed that they saw a gun outside of school over the past two years, only 34 of these 363 students (9.3%) indicated that they reported a gun to the police.

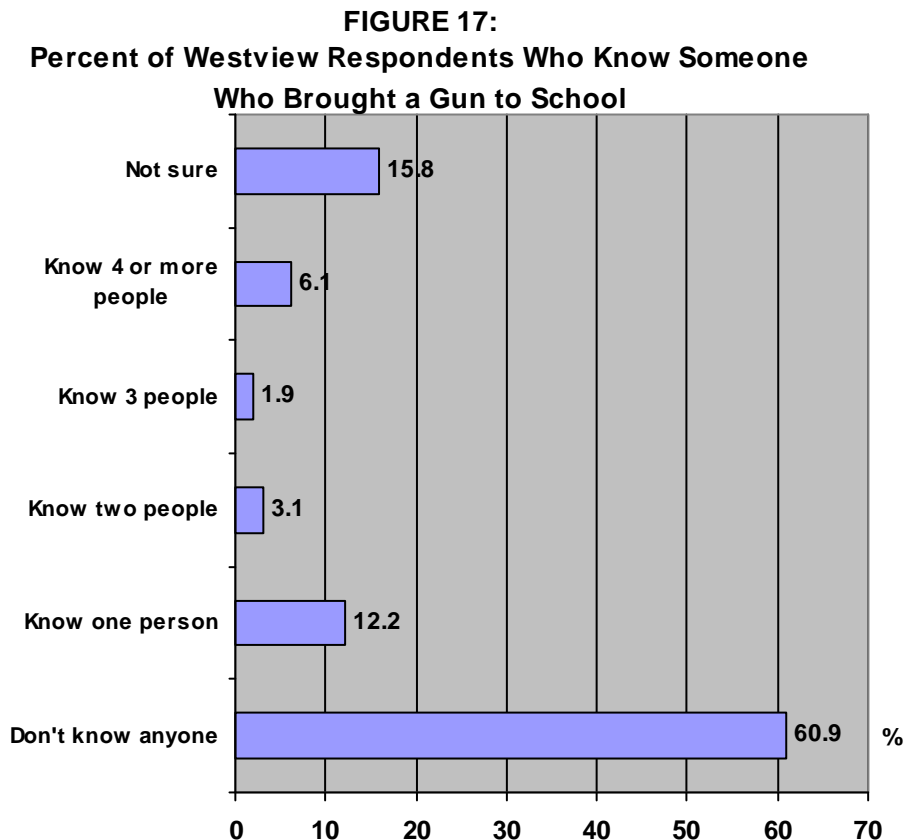
We also asked our Westview student respondents if they have been threatened by a someone with a gun over the past two years. (see Figure 19) The results suggest that students are more likely to be threatened with a gun outside of school than inside of school. One out of every ten students (9%), for example, claims that they have been threatened by someone with a gun outside of school in the past two years. By contrast,

5.6% of Westview students have been threatened with a gun while they were in school or on school property.

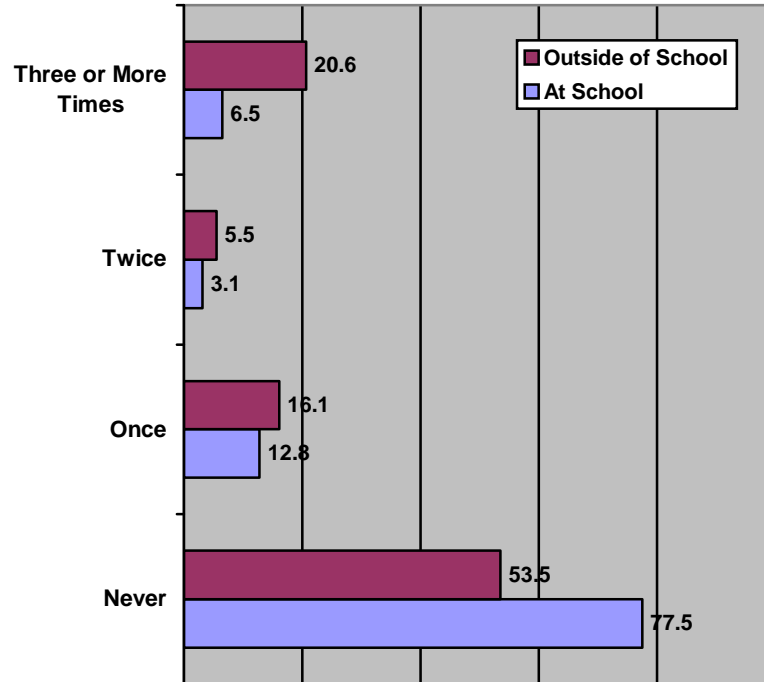
We also asked the Westview student respondents if they had ever had a gun pointed at them over the past two years. (see Figure 19) One out of every nineteen students (5.3%) reports that they have had a gun pointed at them outside of school. Slightly fewer (3.9%) have had a gun pointed at them while they were at school.

We also asked the respondents if someone had ever tried to shoot them outside of school or while they were at school or on school property (see Figure 19). The results suggest that 4.9% of Westview students have been “shot at” (or had someone try to shoot them) outside of school and 2.8% have been shot at (or had someone try to shoot them) while they were at school or on school property.

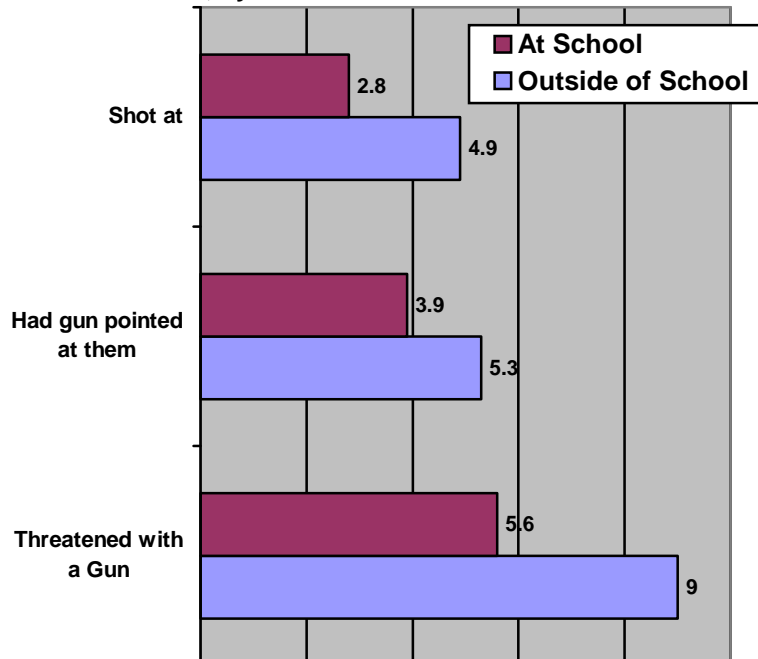
Finally, we asked the Westview respondents if they themselves had ever carried a gun to school (see Figure 20). A total of 20 Westview students (2.3% of the sample) indicated that they have carried a gun to school at least once in the past two years. Six students (0.7% of the sample) claim that they have carried a gun to school on many occasions. The data also indicate that students are much more likely to carry guns outside of school than in school. Indeed, 52 students (6.0% of the sample) report that they have carried a gun when they were outside of school (compared to only 20 students who have carried a gun in school). Furthermore, 17 Westview students (2.0% of the sample) claim that they have carried a gun on many occasions outside of school (compared to only 5 students who have carried a gun to school on many occasions).



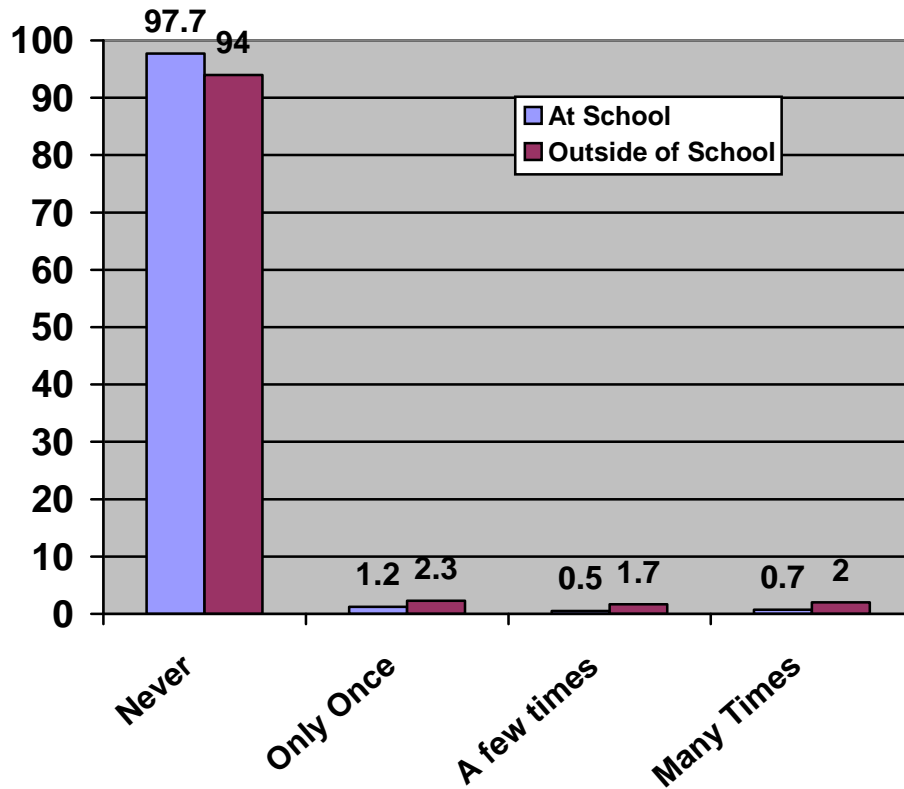
**FIGURE 18:**  
**Percent of Westview Student Respondents Who Have**  
**Seen a Gun at School and Outside of School**



**FIGURE 19:**  
**Percent of Westview Student Respondents Who Have**  
**Been Threatened with a Gun, Had a Gun Pointed at Them**  
**or Been Shot at, by Location of Gun-Related Incident**



**FIGURE 20: Percent of Westview Student Respondents Who Have Carried a Gun With Them to School and Outside of School**



### Exposure to Knives

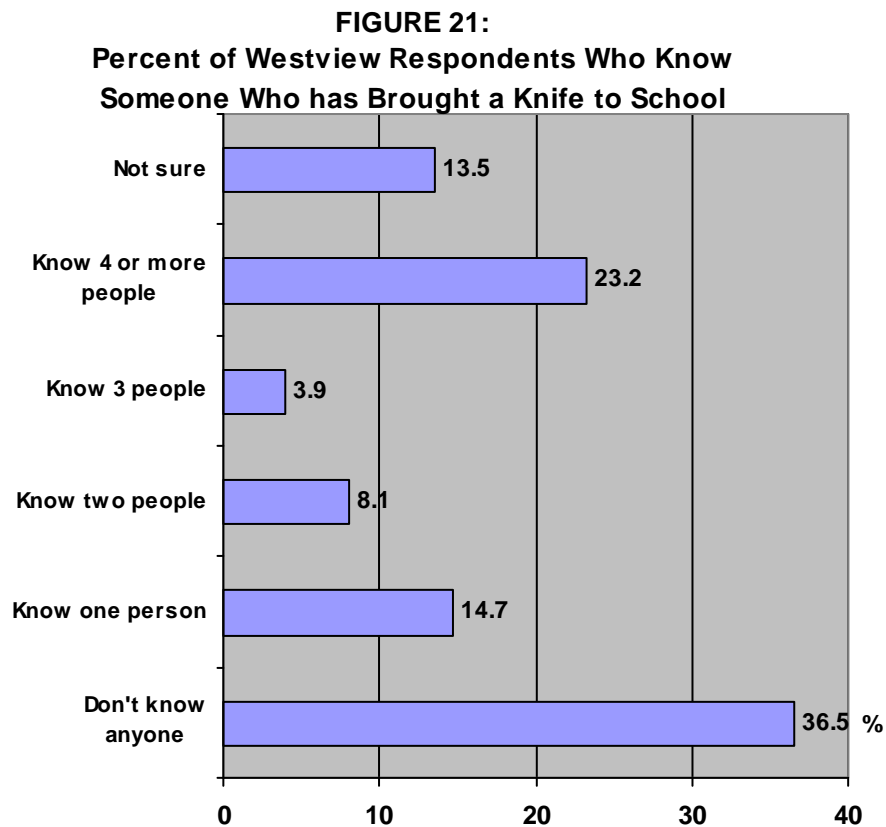
The data indicate that Westview students are much more likely to be exposed to knives than guns both inside and outside of school. (see Figure 21) For example, while only 23.3% of respondents know someone who has brought a gun to school, half of all Westview students (49.9%) know at least one person who has brought a knife to school. Similarly, while only 6.1% of Westview students know four or more people who have brought a gun to school, 23.2% know four or more people who have brought a knife to school.

Over half of Westview students (51.9%) report that they have seen someone with a knife at their school over the past two years. (see Figure 22) By contrast, only 22.5% of respondents have seen someone with a gun. Similarly, over one quarter of Westview students (27.4%) report that they have seen someone with a knife at their school on three or more occasions. By contrast, only 6.5% have seen someone with a gun at school on three or more occasions.

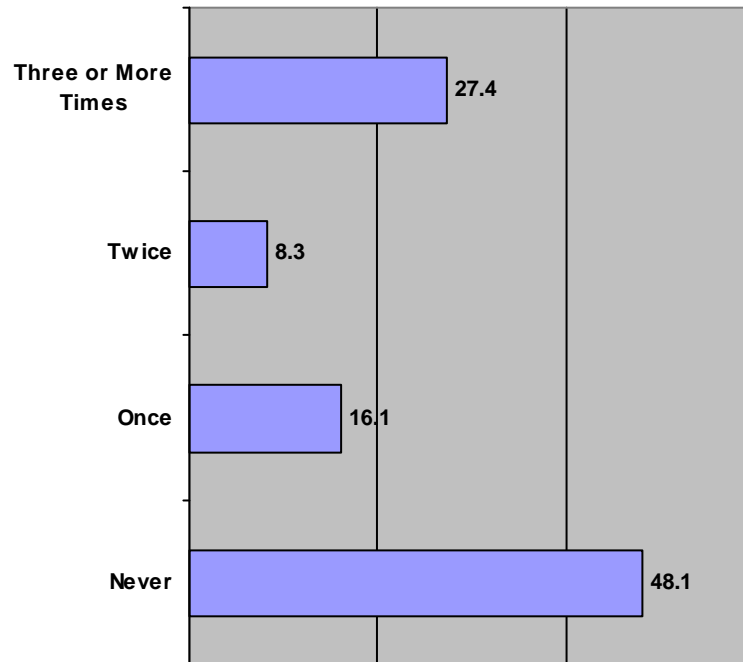
Further analysis indicates that students who see knives at school rarely report them to the police or to school officials. For example, although 442 different students stated that they saw someone with a knife at Westview over the past two years, only 19 of these 442 individuals (4.2%) stated that they reported a knife (that they saw at school) to the police or to a school official.

We also asked Westview students if they had ever been threatened or attacked by someone with a knife over the past two years. The results suggest that students are somewhat more likely to be exposed to knife-related violence outside of school than inside school. (see Figure 23) For example, 10.6% of Westview students report that they were threatened by someone with a knife outside of school over the past two years. By contrast, 8.5% claim that they were threatened with a knife in school or on school property. Similarly, the results also indicate that Westview respondents are twice as likely to be stabbed or cut with a knife outside of school (4.4%) than inside of school (2.3%).

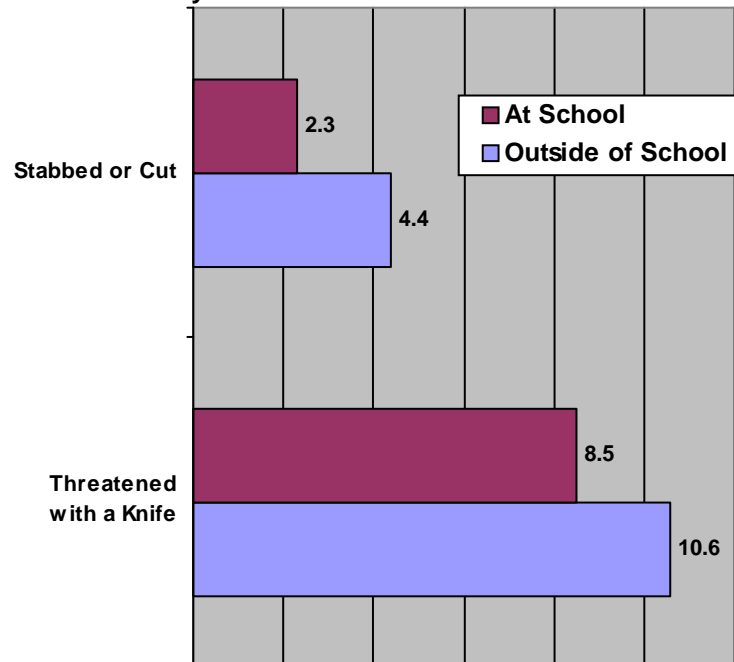
Finally, we asked students whether they themselves had ever carried a knife to school or outside of school. (see Figure 24) The data indicate that Westview students are much more likely to carry knives than guns. For example, 141 respondents (16.4% of the sample) claim that they have carried a knife to school. By contrast, only 20 respondents (2.3% of the sample) have carried a gun to school. Similarly, 51 students (5.9% of the sample) have carried a knife to school on many occasions. By contrast, only 6 students (0.7% of the sample) report that they have carried a gun to school on many occasions. The results also indicate that Westview students are only slightly more likely to carry a knife outside of school than to school. For example, 21% of Westview students claim that they have carried a knife outside of school and 16.4% have carried a knife to school.



**FIGURE 22:**  
**Percent of Westview Student Respondents Who Have  
Seen a Knife at School**

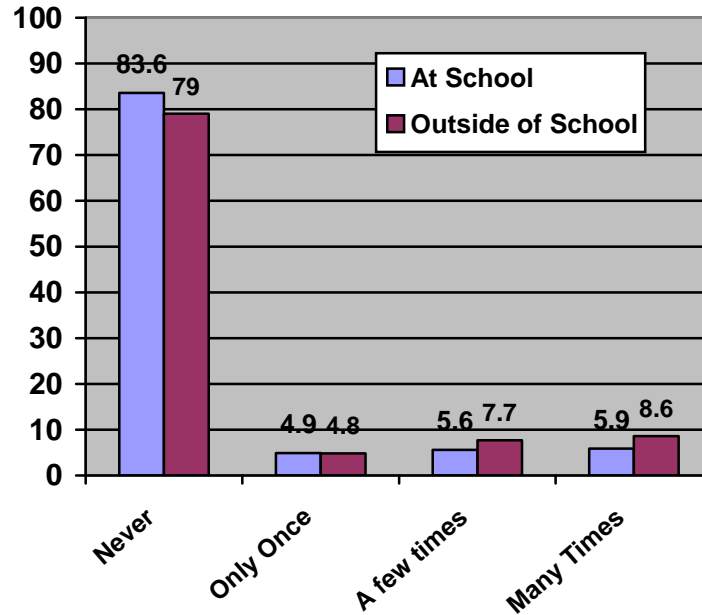


**FIGURE 23:**  
**Percent of Westview Student Respondents Who Have  
Been Threatened or Stabbed/Cut with a Knife,  
by Location of the Incident**





**FIGURE 24: Percent of Westview Student Respondents Who Have Carried a Knife With Them to School and Outside of School**



### *The Gangs-Weapons Relationship*

As discussed above, many Westview students believe that gangs are a serious problem at their school. Furthermore, the criminological literature indicates that the use of weapons is much higher among gang members than among youth who are not gang-involved. (see Chettleburgh 2007; Wortley and Tanner 2007; Esbensen et al. 2004; Decker and Van Winkle 2004) Thus, we were interested in exploring whether Westview students who were, or had been, the member of a gang were more exposed to guns and knives than students who had never been the member of a gang.

To begin with, our results suggest that most Westview students (79%) have never been involved with a gang. However, 93 students (10.7% of the sample) indicated that they used to be the member of a gang and an additional 39 students indicated that they are a current gang member. Further analysis indicates that exposure to guns and knives is highly concentrated among this population of students. (see Table 12) For example, 16.7% of non-gang students know someone who has brought a gun to school, compared to 48.4% of former gang members and 66.7% of current gang members. Similarly, 17.3% of non-gang students have seen a gun at school, compared to 42.9% of former gang members and 69.2% of current gang members. Gang-involved students are also much more likely to experience gun-related violence. For example, only 2.2% of non-gang youth have been threatened by someone with a gun at school, compared to 20.9% of former gang members and 30.8% of current gang members. Finally, less than one

percent of non-gang youth have actually carried a gun to school, compared to 8.7% of former gang members and 23.1% of current gang members.

Exposure to knives at Westview is also much higher among gang-involved students (see Table 12). For example, 38% of non-gang students at Westview know someone who has brought a knife to school, compared to 68.8% of former gang members and 79.5% of current gang members. Similarly, only 4.8% of non-gang youth indicate that they have been threatened with a knife at school over the past two years, compared to 23.9% of former gang members and 33.3% of current gang members. Finally, only 9.4% of non-gang youth admit that they have carried a knife to school in the past two years, compared to 53.8% of former gang members and 53.6% of current gang members. Clearly, reducing gangs might be a good strategy for reducing or eliminating serious weapons within the school environment.

**TABLE 12:**  
**Percent of Westview Student Respondents Who have Been Exposed to Weapons,**  
**By Type of Weapon and Level of Gang Involvement.**

Type of Involvement With Weapons	Never a Gang Member	Former Gang Member	Current Gang Member
Know someone who brought a gun to school	16.7	48.4	66.7
Have seen a gun at school	17.3	42.9	69.2
Have seen a gun outside of school	36.6	81.1	78.4
Have been threatened with a gun at school	2.2	20.9	30.8
Have been threatened with a gun outside of school	5.6	25.0	30.8
Had a gun pointed at them at school	1.5	14.1	23.1
Had a gun pointed at them outside of school	2.5	20.7	23.1
Have been shot at while at school	2.2	3.3	10.3
Have been shot at outside of school	1.9	16.3	25.6
Have carried a gun to school	0.3	8.7	23.1
Have carried a gun outside of school	3.1	16.3	33.3
Know someone who brought a knife to school	38.0	68.8	79.5
Saw a knife at school	45.7	83.5	84.6
Was threatened by a knife at school	4.8	23.9	33.3
Was threatened by a knife outside of school	6.9	28.9	35.9
Was stabbed or cut with a knife at school	1.2	7.8	7.9
Was stabbed or cut with a knife outside of school	2.2	11.8	25.6
Carried a knife to school	9.4	53.8	53.6
Carried a knife outside of school	13.9	58.2	59.0
<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>39</b>

### *The Weapons Numbers in Context*

The percent of Westview students who have been exposed to guns and knives may appear shockingly high to some readers. However, our review of the academic literature suggests that the statistics produced by the Panel survey are quite consistent with other Canadian research. Although research on youth weapons use in Canada is extremely limited, the studies that have been conducted strongly suggest that exposure to knives and

guns is not restricted to Toronto or more specifically to high schools in the Jane-Finch community. The following results help to illustrate this point:

- A 1999 national survey of Canadian youth (aged 12-15) found that 3% of boys had carried a gun in public and 10% had carried a knife (Fitzgerald 2003). This study did not investigate the percentage of students who had carried weapons to school.
- A 2000 survey of over 3,300 Toronto high school students (from 30 different schools) asked respondents if they had ever carried a hidden weapon – like a knife or gun – in public (Tanner and Wortley 2002). The results indicate that 24% of Toronto high school students had carried a hidden weapon at some time in their life and 15% had carried a weapon in the past year. Unfortunately, this study did not distinguish between guns and other weapons, nor did it ask questions about carrying weapons to school.
- The biannual survey of Ontario high school students -- conducted by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) -- found that 10% of student respondents had carried a weapon on a “regular” basis (Paglia and Adlaf 2003). This study, however, did not distinguish between guns, knives and other weapons.
- In 2005, for the first time, the CAMH survey of Ontario high school students asked a question about gun carrying. The results suggest that 2.2% of Ontario high school students had carried a gun with them in the past two years (CAMH 2006). By contrast, the Panel survey found that 2.3% of Westview students had carried a gun to school and 6% had carried a gun outside of school.
- A 1997 survey of Alberta high school students also asked about gun and knife possession (Paetsch and Bertrand 1999). This study found that 28% of students had carried a weapon to school, 15.9% had carried a knife and 2.6% had carried a handgun. These numbers are very similar to the results of the Westview survey (discussed above).

Perhaps the most extensive research on weapons use among Canadian youth was conducted by Professor Patricia Erickson (University of Toronto) and Jennifer Butters (CAMH). In 2003, these researchers conducted interviews with a random sample of 456 students from eight Toronto high schools and a random sample of 448 students from eight Montreal high schools. High schools were selected to include students from middle and upper class neighbourhoods as well as students from disadvantaged communities (see Erickson and Butters 2006). It is important to note that students from Westview Secondary and C.W. Jefferys Collegiate did not participate in this study. The results of this study indicate that:

- 28% of Toronto high school students and 23.6% of Montreal students know someone who carries a weapon to school.
- 21.5% of Toronto high school students know someone that has carried a gun to school. This figure is almost identical to the percentage of Westview students (23.3%) who reported that they know someone who has brought a gun to school. Interestingly, only 7.2% of Montreal students report that they know someone who has carried a gun to school.
- 7.1% of Toronto high school students and 4.7% of Montreal students indicated that someone has threatened or tried to hurt them with a gun. These results are strikingly similar to the results of the Panel survey. If you recall, 5.6% of Westview students indicated that they had been threatened with a gun at school and 9% had been threatened with a gun outside of school.
- 40.0% of Toronto high school students and 41.2% of Montreal students indicated that they had carried a weapon outside of school.
- 15.1% of Toronto high school students and 18.7% of Montreal students indicated that they had carried a weapon to school.
- Erickson and Butters (2006) also found that 4.2% of Toronto high school students and 2.8% of Montreal students had carried a gun in public. However, less than one percent of Toronto high school students (0.8%) and only 2.2% of Montreal students reported that they had carried a gun to school. Thus, a comparison of results suggests that Westview students may be somewhat more likely to carry weapons to school (2.3%) than students from other Toronto high schools (0.8%). Some might consider this result predictable considering Westview Secondary is located within one of the most economically disadvantaged and crime-prone communities in Canada.

In summary, according to the results of other Canadian studies of youthful populations, exposure to guns, knives and other weapons is not restricted to Westview or other high schools within the “Jane-Finch” community.

### **Reasons for Not Reporting Weapons**

As discussed above, students who have actually seen guns or knives at school rarely report them to the police or to school officials. We further pursued this line of investigation by asking all Westview students -- even those who had never seen a weapon at school -- the following hypothetical question: “If you knew about a student in your school with a gun (or a knife) would you report it to a teacher, a school official or to the police?” The results indicate that only 25% of Westview students would report a student with a gun. By contrast, 24% stated that they would never report a student with a gun and an additional 51% stated that it would “depend on the situation.” The results with

respect to knives at school are similar. Only 21% of Westview students indicated that they would report a student with a knife, 28% said that they would never report a student with a knife and 51% stated that it would “depend on the situation.” Those students who indicated that they would not or might not report weapons at school were subsequently asked the following question: “Why would you not report a gun (or a knife) to your teachers or to the police? Why would you not talk to these people about a student with a gun (or a knife)?” The results suggest that Westview students would not report weapons for several different reasons: 1) They are frightened that the person carrying the weapon (or their associates) might seek revenge; 2) They subscribe to a “code of silence” and do not want to be labelled a snitch or a rat; 3) The person with the weapon might be a friend or a family member; 4) They do not trust the police; 5) They feel that it is okay or justifiable to carry a weapon (i.e., weapons are sometimes carried for protection); 6) They would talk to the student themselves about the weapon; and 7) They think that students carrying weapons to school are “none of their business.” Of course, it is quite possible that students who state that it is “not their business” are simply afraid of the possible consequences of reporting. Westview student comments that reflect the various reasons for not reporting weapons at school are provided below.

### *Fear of Victimization*

*Snitches get stitches.*

*A man could get hurt. Feel me?*

*I'm afraid of being the next victim*

*They ain't doing nothing to me. I'll get shanked.*

*Because I don't want to get shot with the gun.*

*Because I'm scared that the person's friends or family would try to shoot me and try to hurt my family.*

*Because I am not a rat. I don't want to get shot.*

*Because I don't want to live my life in fear of that person coming after me.*

*Because I don't want to get my ass killed.*

*Because I would be accused of being a snitch and might get hurt.*

*Because I would not want to get involved with the situation. I also wouldn't want to have a confrontation with the person if they found out I was the one that reported it.*

*Because if I did the person who showed me the gun will know that I told because the person would only tell 1 or 2 people so therefore when they get in trouble they will sent someone else after me. I love my life too much*

*to snitch.*

*Because if I do report the person will find out who snitched and would beat me up.*

*Because if I report they will shoot me. I would die.*

*Because if I told the teacher the person with the gun might come after me and I would feel scared.*

*Because if the person found out I told that they had the gun my life could be in danger and I don't want that to happen as I have a child at home to care for.*

*Because if the person with the gun knew I reported them they would try to hurt me.*

*Because if the person knew it was me the person would of shot me or rush me.*

*Because if they find out they'll call me a snitch or shoot me.*

*Because in this neighbourhood, if you tell on someone and they get arrested then you are as good as dead.*

*Because it could put other people in danger depending on the situation. If I snitch then someone gets hurt or it could put me in danger.*

*Because my family or I might be the next victim.*

*Because reporting it may cause more trouble and you can never take the chance that your name will get called up!*

*Because the next day I will be shot dead.*

*Because the person might come back at me with the rest of their friends and do something to me.*

*Because the person might find out it was you who told and come after you!*

*Because the person who had the gun may find out and harm me and my family.*

*Because the student might shoot me.*

*Because they might come after me because let me tell you when a man has a gun he has enough balls to pull it out he must have a lot of back up and believe me if I tell on him I won't look so pretty after that day.*

*Because they will find out and kill me. I am scared.*

*Because what if the teacher told someone then the information rotates. Don't you think the perpetrator would eventually find out! Then I would have to run to save my life!!*

*Because what if they find out that I reported, then they will be after me.*

*Because when you report a person in the possession of a gun you are taking a very big risk. Imagine the person find out that you told police about him/her! The person will come after you with his/her gang and next thing you know you'd be drenched in blood with a bullet in your head.*

*Cause maybe when you talk about it then that same person may come back and shoot the person who had told on them so that why maybe I would not report.*

*Cause they might want to shoot me if I snitched.*

*Don't want to get into trouble or involved in gangs that have guns. If the report is confidential I might think about talking to the teacher or to the police.*

*Duh, cause they have a gun? They would kill you if you snitch.*

*I'd rather not because in the future me or more importantly my family would be in danger.*

*I do not want to get involved. What if he finds out I told on him and he tries to shoot me?*

*I don't report because I'm afraid the guy will know who tells the Principal then they will hurt me.*

*I don't wanna get shot.*

*I don't want to get killed.*

*I probably wouldn't because if the person found out he/she would come after me.*

*I said maybe because I would be scared that the person with the gun*



*would attack me because they know I was the only one that would know.*

*I will be scared so I might keep it to myself.*

*I would get beat up. Don't want to snitch.*

*I would not report because if the person found out that I reported they will shoot me or hurt me.*

*I would not report it if they threatened me or saw me see it. Because I don't want them to come looking for me or my family.*

*I would not say anything because I don't want to be a snitch and I don't want anyone having revenge for the person that snitched on them.*

*I wouldn't tell anyone because they could find me and then probably do something to me.*

*If I do say something it will involve me in the situations and knowing he has a gun I wouldn't want to get involved.*

*If I do, there is a chance that the person will hunt me down.*

*If someone found out you snitched, you can get beat up or shot, so it depends on what is happening.*

*If that person was caught with the gun and they know you told someone about them that person may come after you.*

*If you tell on someone you would just get hurt by the person in possession of the weapon. I intend on not bothering with the situation so myself or others will not get hurt.*

*It's a situation that could cause you being assaulted or badly hurt.*

*They might come after me because I snitched.*

*No, I wouldn't report this incident to the police or any teacher in my school because I would be scared of this getting out to the public and the victim getting to know that I was the cause for his being arrested and jailed. He might attack me later.*

*Not my business and you would be putting your life in danger if the person finds out. The police do not protect you. You can't be protected all the times!*

*Only because the person with the gun always finds out who told on them and then your life is done right there.*

*People may kill you or others if you report them.*

*Peoples be coming after you for snitching. If it was somebody I don't know and they were gonna use it on someone I do know that then I would tell someone*

*Reporting the gun to my teacher or the police will be putting my life in danger.*

*Snitches beware. Snitching gets you killed and to be honest I like my life...but if I thought the situation would get out of hand then I would report it.*

*The only reason why anyone in general wouldn't tell is because they value their own life.*

*The person with the gun might find out and come after me.*

*They might come back after you and sometimes no one will help you out and everybody will just watch you die.*

*They might kill me.*

*They might seek revenge on me.*

*They shoot you if you piss them off.*

### **Code of Silence (Not a Snitch)**

*It is the law of street life. A person may not rat, report on any means of addressing gang activity to authority figures or the person must face the consequences.*

*I wouldn't report it because I don't like to get into something like that. I know that it's best if I do report it but I don't know. It's a small world. Word gets out one way or another. I wouldn't report it because its the code--don't snitch*

*Because I ain't no snitch*

*I would not talk to any of those people about a gun because it's none of my business. I'm also not no informer.*

*Because snitching on a friend may cause more problems.*

*Because I am not a rat!*

*Because I don't trust police and I don't snitch.*

*I wouldn't report it because I'm not a snitch.*

*I would not report it because I would not want to be a snitch*

*If I feel someone's life is in danger, maybe. But I wouldn't wanna snitch for no reason.*

*No one wants to be a snitch.*

*No snitching!!*

*Stop snitching!!!*

*I would not want to snitch.*

*I don't like to snitch.*

*Maybe people call you a snitch.*

*I don't like ratz.*

*Cuz I ain't no snitch!*

*I'm not a rat.*

*I'm not a snitch*

*I don't snitch*

*I ain't a snitch.*

*Because I don't want to be a snitch.*

*Because as they are my acquaintances to them I'll be seen as a snitch or rat and the consequences could hurt me.*

*Because I wouldn't want to get that person in trouble and I'm scared to tell on that person. I don't want people calling me a snitch.*

*G-code.*

*Because the number one rule is no snitching! And because you should stay out of mix up and mind your own business if your smart.*

### **Distrust of Police/School Authorities**

*It causes complications. The school isn't really confidential when it comes to those kinds of situations. I have also had a situation handled in the office which caused my first school fight. Students and myself have found out things shared in the office or we put the pieces together looking at people going in or out of the office. The point is if the person wanted to find out it was you they will, and they can, and they did in the past.*

*Over reaction and teachers as well as those higher up are not tactful enough to deal with these situations. As well as the fact even though they say no one will know when you reports it students always find out.*

*Because although it's unsafe some police needs your witness whether they did really had a gun during the time so I like to keep myself private and confidential. I would only report if it was a threat to my close friend.*

*Because I don't trust police and I don't snitch.*

*Because I would rather be anonymous and by telling a teacher/police everyone would know.*

*Because once you tell a teacher/principal they would announce bringing a gun to school on the P.A. and others would obviously find out who told or "snitched."*

*Because the teachers wouldn't take it seriously.*

*Depends on which teacher and how they will take it. I have been at Westview for about 1 1/2 months and there are some teachers that do not respect our privacy.*

*I would not because teachers are informers.*

*Not my business and you would be putting your life in danger if the person finds out. The police do not protect you. You can't be protected all the time!*

*Teachers sometimes don't take things serious. It feels like they're only here to benefit them, money seems like what they're up to. They don't want to put up with such nonsense.*

*I hate the police.*

*The police don't care about me.*

*The police won't do anything.*

*The police would not care to protect me.*

**To Protect Friends or Family**

*Because if it's someone close to me like a good friend or family I would not snitch/rat on them.*

*Because it could be one of my friends or relatives.*

*Because it might belong to your friend.*

*Because snitching on a friend may cause more problems.*

*Because they is my niggaz.*

*Depending on the situation. I feel there are, not specifically valid, but there might be reasoning but if not I would warn them to get rid of it. But I would not report it. I don't want to get a friend in that type of trouble.*

*He was my friend.*

*I would not do so because that person can be my close friend, and even if I did I would get into more trouble. I would also talk to my friend about how it's negative.*

*I wouldn't report it because it could be a very close friend of mine. Also, I would be a snitch!! And everyone would make or threaten to kill me for ratting out on that person or friend.*

*If it was a friend, no. If I got caught snitching something would happen.*

*If the student is my friend I wouldn't really mind if he had it. I would just tell him/her not to do anything with it.*

*It depends if it was my friend with it.*

*The person who had the gun could be your friend and a person that you know.*

*The student may be a friend. I would likely want to talk sense into that person before addressing the authority.*

*I would not do so because that person can be my close friend and even if I did I would get into more trouble. I would also talk to my friend about how it's negative.*

*If it was someone I knew, I would try to talk them out of not having it. If the person continued, I would make sure that they don't have it on school property. But if all fails, I still wouldn't report it because I don't want to have the reputations of a snitch.*

*If it was a friend, no. If I got caught snitching something would happen.*

*If the student is my friend I wouldn't really mind if he had it. I would just tell him/her not to do anything with it.*

### **Would Talk to Student Themselves**

*Main reason, I wouldn't want to snitch and then the person I snitched on found out that I told on them. If it was a friend of mine, I'd personally talk them out of it myself.*

*If I knew the person I would talk to them about why and if I did not I would not want to get into the business because I would probably be their next victim.*

*It's not my problem. I will try and stop them but if that don't work then who don't hear must feel the consequences.*

*If I didn't get involved, it would not have concerned me. If it was someone close to me I would convince them to put away the gun and would have never told the police. It is a waste of time.*

*I would talk to the student about it myself.*

*I would talk to the student to ask why did they bring a gun to school and ask if the student have any problem.*

*I would try to talk to that person and get them to get rid of their gun on there own but if that doesn't work I'd report it.*

*I wouldn't because I have a different way that I can let the person forget about the gun.*

### **Not My Business**

*Cause it isn't my business, if it is not mine and not happening to me or my friend it is not my business and if I felt guilty maybe I would report it (and maybe the teacher would call my name that I said it and everyone would*

*hate me.*

*Because I don't feel like reporting and it's none of my business so it shouldn't be the teacher's either.*

*Because if it's not towards me its none of my business.*

*Because it's none of my business.*

*Because it's not my problem.*

*Because it ain't my business.*

*Because it has nothing to do with me so I don't really care.*

*Because it isn't my problem and even if they have one on school property I know they are not going to use it.*

*Because it's none of my business.*

*Because its not my problem or my business.*

*Doesn't really involve me.*

*I choose not to say anything at all, its not my business.*

*I don't get into other people's business.*

*I don't wanna put my nose in something.*

*I would not say nothing because its not my problem.*

*If I think that no one will get hurt at least none of my friends then it's none of my business. Unless I knew the person is going to shoot someone.*

*If somebody had a gun without any intentions of using it I don't think it would be necessary for me to report it. If somebody else feels threatened, then they have every right to say something.*

*It's none of my business.*

*It's not my concern.*

*It doesn't concern me so I don't give a Ross-clot.*

*No snitching, not my problem.*

*None of my business, unless it is my business. There are police officers for a reason.*

*Unless it would be pointed at me or a close friend. It's not my business.*

*Well I would not report it because I am not involved with the situation.*

*Well in society most people don't stick their nose in situation they don't belong in.*

**Weapon is for Protection (Weapon is Justified)**

*I would not talk to anyone about the gun because it's not my business and the student probably needs the gun for protection.*

*I wouldn't talk to these people about a gun in my school because I wouldn't want to get myself in mix up and also I don't think they brought it to use it. Because a lot of people have guns and knives just to show for protection.*

*Because he didn't fire it. Some people carry guns or knives for their own safety.*

*Because I believe the student with the gun wouldn't shoot anybody and the just have it for protection.*

*Because it depends if the person needs the gun for self-defense or to protect something. But if he/she were to kill an innocent person I would definitely tell the official.*

*Because maybe it's a fake gun or it's just for intimidation or protection.*

*Because the guns I've seen by friends were not threats but for protection use only. Plus they're not a threat to me so it wouldn't really matter.*

*Because the student might have it on them for protection.*

*Depending on the situation! Sometimes they bring it to show off where if it was that the students brought it for a purpose to shoot someone then it would be different.*

*I once had this guy in my class. He used to bring guns to school. I never thought it was a big thing. He did it for protection.*

*If someone got hurt then I would report it, but if they just have it and not doing anything with it there's no point.*



*If the person has it protect himself from other groups with guns I wouldn't report it.*

*If the student is not harming anyone there is no reason to tell.*

*If they're not using it or don't plan to use it then they're fine.*

*If they are planning to hurt someone I would report. Would not report it if it is just for show.*

*It would depend as long as they don't plan to use the gun on anyone or anything then there is no threat.*

*School is dangerous. You need something to feel safe.*

*The person probably has the gun to protect themselves.*

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT AT WESTVIEW**

In the next section of the questionnaire, we asked Westview students about their experiences with sexual harassment and sexual assault both at school and outside of school. Sexual harassment was measured by responses to the following question: "At your school has someone ever said unwanted sexual things to you that upset you or made you feel uncomfortable?" The results (see Figure 25) suggest that 32% of female students have been sexually harassed at school in the past two years. By contrast, only 8% of male students reported sexual harassment at school over the same time period.

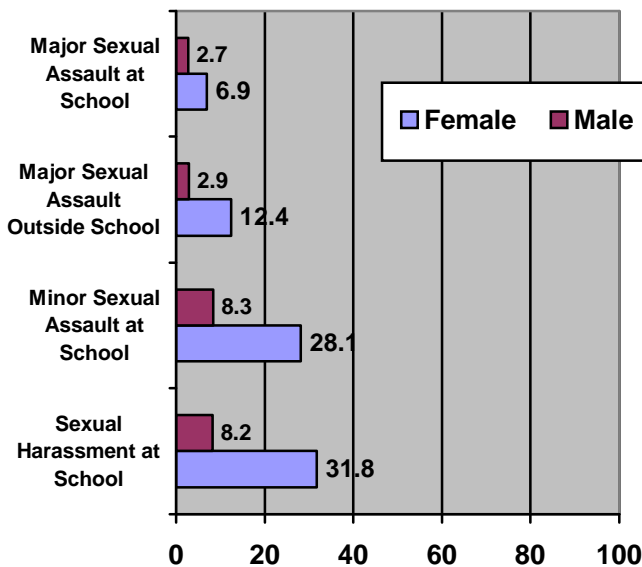
Minor sexual assault was measured by responses to the following question: "At your school has someone ever touched or grabbed you in a sexual way when you did not want to be touched?" The results indicate that 28% of female students at Westview have been the victim of minor sexual assault over the past two years, compared to 8% of male students. (see Figure 25)

Finally, major sexual assault was measured by responses to the following question: "At your school has someone ever sexually assaulted you? Has someone ever forced you to have sex at school against your will?" We also asked the students if they had ever been the victim of sexual assault outside of school. The results suggest that female students are more likely to become the victim of a major sexual assault outside of school than in school. (see Figure 25) For example, 12.4% of female students reported that they had been sexually assaulted outside of school in the past two years. By contrast, 6.9% of female students at Westview indicate that they had been the victim of a major sexual assault at school in the past two years. As with the results related to sexual harassment and minor sexual assault, female students are also much more likely to report major sexual assault than male students (both inside and outside of school).

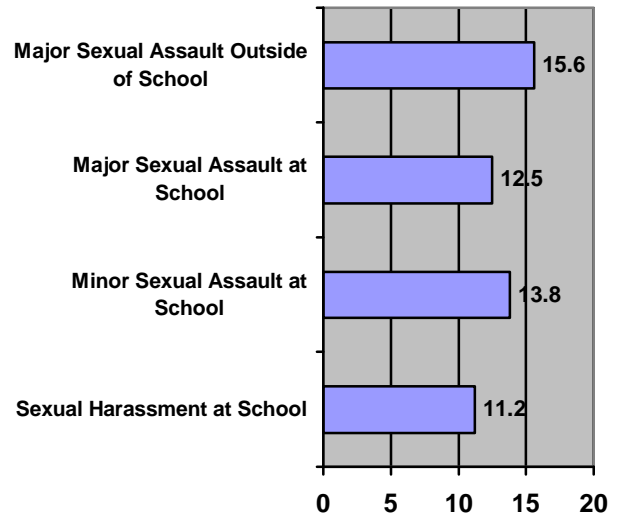
As with other forms of student victimization, further analysis reveals that very few victims of sexual assault actually report their victimization to school authorities or the police (see Figure 26). For example, the data indicate that there were 152 victims of minor sexual assault at Westview over the past two years. However, only 21 of these victims (13.8%) actually reported this harassment to school officials or the police. Similarly, the data suggest that 40 respondents were the victim of major sexual assault at Westview in the past two years. However, only 5 of these respondents (12.5%) reported their victimization to school officials or the police.

In addition to asking students about their own experiences with sexual harassment and sexual assault, we also asked whether they knew of any other Westview students who had been sexually assaulted in the past two years. (see Figure 27) The results suggest that 32% of Westview respondents know at least one student who was sexually assaulted at school in the past two years. Similarly, 37% know at least one student who was sexually assaulted outside of school. Further analysis reveals that one out of every ten students knows two or more students who were sexually assaulted at school in the past two years. By contrast, 13% know two or more students who were sexually assaulted outside of school.

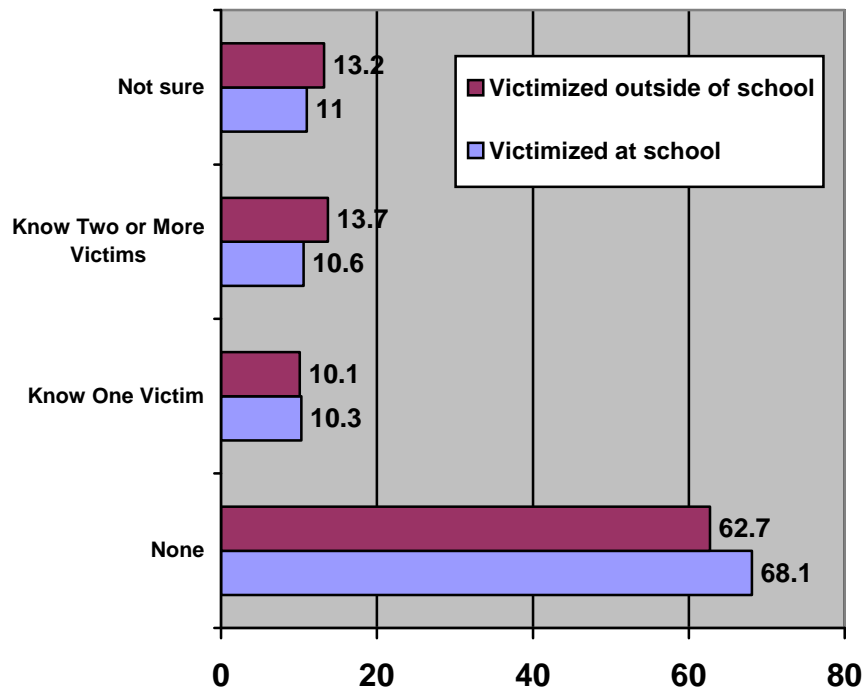
**FIGURE 25:**  
Percent of Westview Student Respondents Who Have Been the Victim of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault



**FIGURE 26:**  
Percent of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Victims from Westview Who Reported their Victimization to the Police, Parents or School Officials



**FIGURE 27: Percent of Westview Students Who Know Someone Who Was Sexually Assaulted at School or Outside of School**



A specific mandate of the Panel was to study the sexual victimization of racial minority females. (see Table 13) The results suggest that mixed race (37%), White (36%) and Black females (35%) at Westview are more likely to report sexual harassment at school than females from other racial backgrounds. However, the statistics for White females should be interpreted with caution. There are only 11 white females in our Westview student sample and this small number makes broader generalizations difficult. South Asian females are the next most likely to report sexual harassment at school followed by Asians (24%) and West Asians (15%).

White females are also most likely to report minor sexual assaults at school (36%), followed by Black females (30%), South Asian females (29%), mixed race females (28%), Asian females (26%) and West Asian females (15%). White females are also most likely to report a major sexual assault at school (18%), followed by mixed race females (12%), West Asian females (8%), Black females (7%), Asian females (5%) and South Asian females (3%). The results also suggest that, regardless of racial background, female students from Westview are more likely to be sexually assaulted outside of school than inside school.

**TABLE 13:**  
**Percent of Female Student Respondents from Westview Who Have Experienced Various Types of Sexual Harassment and Assault, by Racial Background**

<b>Type of Sexual Victimization</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>South Asian</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>West Asian</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Mixed Race</b>
Sexual harassment at school	35.1	30.1	24.1	15.4	36.4	37.3
Minor sexual assault at school	29.7	28.6	26.5	15.4	36.4	27.7
Major sexual assault at school	7.4	3.3	4.8	7.7	18.2	12.1
Major sexual assault outside of school	14.8	5.6	10.8	0.0	36.3	16.4
Know someone who was sexually assaulted at school	24.3	32.3	9.6	15.4	45.5	26.5
Know someone who was sexually assaulted outside of school	26.3	32.3	26.5	7.7	36.4	32.4
<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>67</b>

We also examined whether the religious background of female students from Westview is associated with self-reported sexual victimization. (see Table 14) Much of this focus was sparked by alleged sexual assaults against Muslim females at C.W. Jefferys. The results indicate that Christian females (39%) and females with “no religion” (36%) are more likely to report sexual harassment at school than female students from other religious backgrounds. Hindu females are the next most likely to report sexual harassment (34%), followed by Muslim (23%) and Buddhist females (23%). The data also indicate that Christian females (33%), Hindu females (30%) and those with no religious background (31%) are more likely to experience minor sexual assaults at school than students from other religious backgrounds. Only 19% of Muslim females indicated that they had been the victim of a minor sexual assault at school in the past two years. Finally, the data also indicate that Christian females, along with females with no religious background, are more likely to report major sexual assaults – both inside and outside of school – than students from other religious backgrounds. For example, 11% of Christian females report that they were the victim of a major sexual assault at school in the past two years, followed by 9% of females with no religious background, 5% of Buddhist females, 5% of Muslim females and only 3% of Hindu females. It should also be noted that, regardless of religious background, female students from Westview were more likely to be sexually assaulted outside of school than in school.

In summary, according to the survey findings, there is little evidence to suggest that Muslim women at Westview are more vulnerable to sexual harassment or sexual assault than females from other religious backgrounds. However, it is possible that this finding

may reflect a greater reluctance among Muslim females to report or discuss experiences with sexual victimization.

**TABLE 14:**

**Percent of Female Student Respondents from Westview Who Have Experienced Various Types of Sexual Harassment and Assault, by Religious Background**

<b>Type of Sexual Victimization</b>	<b>No Religion</b>	<b>Muslim</b>	<b>Hindu</b>	<b>Buddhist</b>	<b>Christian</b>	<b>Other</b>
Sexual harassment at school	36.1	22.7	33.8	22.6	38.5	24.1
Minor sexual assault at school	31.4	19.4	30.0	24.2	32.7	20.7
Major sexual assault at school	8.6	4.8	2.8	4.8	11.3	0.0
Major sexual assault outside of school	14.3	7.8	7.0	8.1	19.6	3.6
Know someone who was sexually assaulted at school	18.9	28.8	31.0	9.7	25.9	17.2
Know someone who was sexually assaulted outside of school	27.0	25.8	35.2	29.0	24.7	34.5
<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>29</b>

## **WITNESSING CRIME**

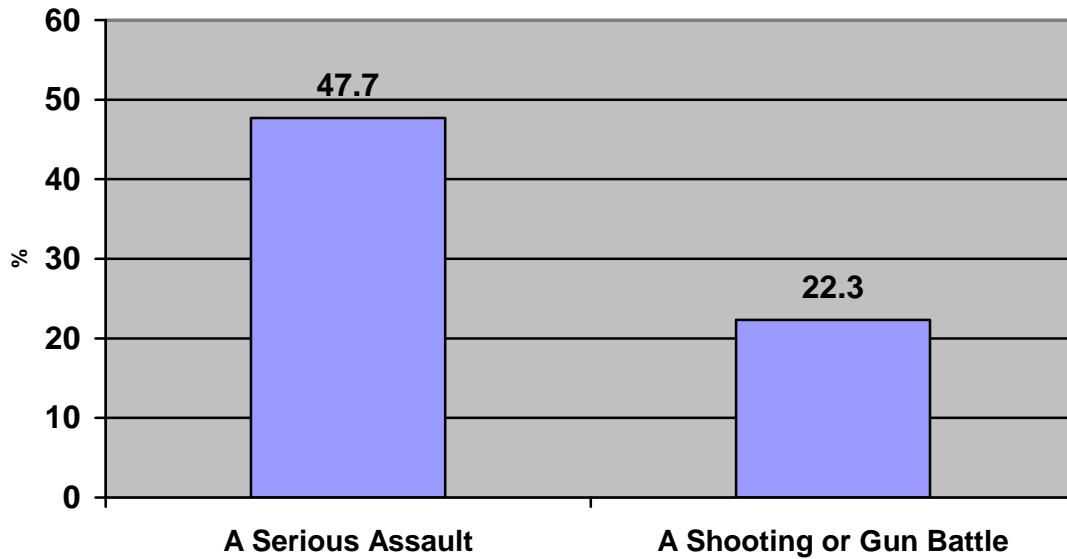
We also asked our student respondents from Westview if they had ever *witnessed*: 1) A shooting or gun battle; or 2) A serious physical assault or beating. We also asked respondents when they last witnessed each type of crime and whether they reported the last incident they witnessed to the police. The results indicate that a large proportion of students at Westview have witnessed serious criminal incidents. (see Figure 28)

- Half of all Westview students (48%) indicate that they have witnessed a serious attack or beating in their life. Forty-six percent of these respondents witnessed a serious assault in the past year and an additional 22% had witnessed a serious assault within the past two years.
- A fourth of all Westview students (22%) indicate that they have witnessed a shooting or gun battle at some time in their life. Over half of these respondents (57%) reported that they witnessed a shooting within the past two years. An additional 26% witnessed a shooting in the past two years.

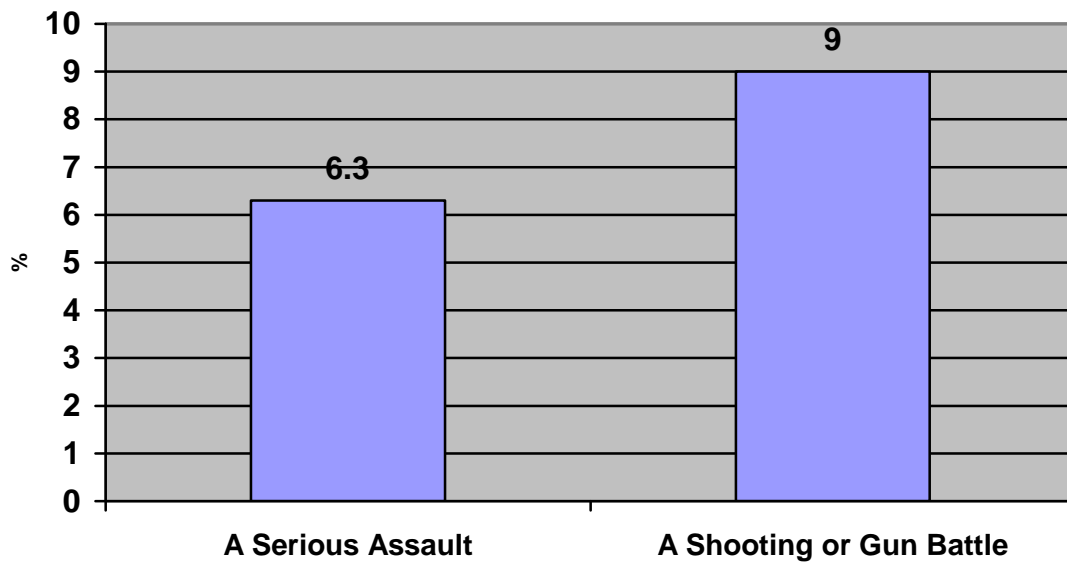
- Most witnesses did not report the crimes they had witnessed to the police (see Figure 29). For example, only 6% of Westview students who had witnessed a serious physical assault reported the incident to the police. Similarly, only 9% of those who had witnessed a gun battle or shooting reported the incident to the police. These figures serve to illustrate just how difficult it is for the police to both identify and solve specific criminal events and how reluctant students from Westview are to talk to the authorities.
- Those respondents who did not report the crimes they had witnessed to the police were asked why they decided not to report these incidents. (see Table 15) As with their own personal victimization experiences, respondents often gave multiple reasons for not reporting the crimes they had witnessed to the police (an average of 5.2 reasons per respondent).
- For each type of crime, the majority of witnesses simply stated that they felt the incident was “none of their business.” For example, 55% of those who had witnessed a shooting said it was none of their business, as did 57% of those who had witnessed a serious assault. Other common reasons for not reporting crimes include fear of the offenders, a belief that the police can’t protect witnesses and both fear and distrust of the police.
- Many respondents (approximately 50% for each type of crime) also indicated that they did not want to get a reputation as a “snitch.”
- About 30% of witnesses stated they did not report criminal incidents because there were other witnesses and they were not needed.
- Regardless of crime type, more than 25% of witnesses did not report to the police because they did not want to appear in criminal court.
- Less common reasons for not reporting to the police include a fear of getting into trouble with the police, a fear of getting into trouble with parents, a general fear of the police and a desire to protect the offenders.

In summary, these findings further illustrate that, because young people are often reluctant to report the crimes that they witness or experience, a great deal of youth crime in Toronto goes undetected by both the police and other adult authority figures. This fact underscores the need for anonymous surveys (like the present study) that can shed light on the many criminal events that go unreported to the police and examine the reasons people decide not to report serious criminal incidents to the legal authorities. It is only by understanding why people don’t report that we can begin to design strategies that will encourage people to come forward with details about the crimes they have witnessed.

**FIGURE 28:**  
**Percent of Westview Students Who Have Witnessed**  
**Shootings or Serious Assaults in their Lifetime**



**FIGURE 29:**  
**Percent of Student Witnesses from Westview that**  
**Reported the Crime to the Police, by Crime Type**



**TABLE 15:**  
**Student Reasons for Not Reporting the Crimes that they Witnessed to the Police**  
**(Westview Students Sample)**

Reason for Not Reporting Crime to the Police	TYPE OF CRIME WITNESSED BY THE STUDENT	
	Gun Battle or Shooting (%)	Serious Physical Assault (%)
None of my business	54.8	57.0
Don't want to be a snitch	51.0	48.4
Police can't protect me	42.6	38.1
Don't trust the police	38.8	31.7
Don't want to appear in court	37.4	24.8
Afraid of offenders	32.0	28.5
Many other witnesses (was not needed)	27.9	31.4
Hurt reputation	22.1	15.6
Might get in trouble with family	20.7	16.0
It would not help	20.2	18.3
Might get in trouble with police	17.8	13.6
Afraid of the police	15.6	13.8
Offender was caught	13.4	12.5
To protect the offenders	10.7	9.8
Police witnessed the crime	10.7	4.1
<b>SAMPLE SIZE</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>381</b>

## IMPROVING SCHOOL SAFETY

In the next section, we asked the students from Westview to express their own opinions with respect to how to improve school safety and discipline. We first presented the respondents with nine specific strategies that have sometimes been proposed by policy-makers. The students were then asked whether they thought each strategy was a very good idea, a good idea or a bad idea with respect to improving safety at their school. (see Table 16 and Figure 30) The results reveal that:



- The vast majority of Westview students (77%) think that it would be a good or very good idea to provide more counselling or help for students who keep getting into trouble.
- Three out of every four Westview students (76%) also think that increasing funding for after-school programs and extra-curricular activities is a good or very good idea with respect to reducing school safety.
- Two-thirds of Westview students (67%) think it would be a good idea to install more security cameras in the halls and in the classrooms.
- Two-thirds of the Westview sample (65%) also believe that it would be a good or very good idea to increase the number of security monitors at the school.
- Almost half of all Westview students (46%) think that it would be a good or very good idea to install metal detectors at the school.
- Forty-four percent of Westview students also think that it would be a good idea or very good idea to make students carry or wear security passes (with the student's name and photo) while at school.
- Support for other safety measures is more limited. For example, only a third of Westview students (34%) feel that it would be a good or very good idea to give the police permission to search student lockers whenever they want.
- Similarly, less than a third of Westview respondents (31%) think that it is a good or very good idea to create one way in and out of the school.

For the most part, Westview students and Jefferys students are strikingly similar in their support for various security measures. For example, an equal proportion of students from both schools support increased counselling for troubled students (77% of Westview students vs. 72% of Jefferys students), increased after school activities (76% vs. 75%), more security cameras (67% vs. 69%), increased security staff (65% vs. 64%); the installation of metal detectors (46% vs. 44%) and increased police powers to search student lockers (35% at both schools). However, 59% of Jefferys students support identification badges for students, compared to only 44% of Westview students. Similarly, 45% of Jefferys students support having only one way in and out of the school, compared to only 31% of Westview students.

### **Perceptions of School Disciplinary Practices**

Finally, in order to examine student attitudes towards school disciplinary practices, we asked the respondents how they thought students at Westview should be punished for engaging in different types of disciplinary infractions. (see Table 17 and Figures 31 and 32) The results suggest that:

- The majority of Westview students (73%) think that students should not be punished at all for wearing hats in school. However, 18% felt that a detention was warranted and 8% thought the school should call the parents of students who violate this rule.
- Forty-three percent of Westview students also think that there should be no punishment for talking back to teachers. On the other hand, 33% of respondents think that those who talk back should be given a detention, 21% percent think the school should call their parents and 20% think that these students should have to see a counsellor. Only 14% think that students who talk back to teachers should be suspended from school and only 3% think they should be expelled from school.
- More than a third of Westview students (37%) feel that students should not be punished at all for teasing or insulting other students. On the other hand, 38% think such students should be given a detention, 20% think that the school should call their parents and an additional 20% think that these students should talk to a counsellor. Nineteen percent of the Westview students we surveyed think that students who tease or insult other students should be suspended, but only 5% think these students should be expelled from school.
- In general, the Westview respondents are much harsher with respect to more serious disciplinary violations. For example, 61% of Westview students think that students should be suspended for fighting at school, 12% think they should be expelled and 14% think that the school should call the police.
- Similarly, 57% of the respondents think that students should be suspended for stealing from other students. An additional 18% think they should be expelled and 24% think the school should call the police.
- Forty-one percent of Westview students think that students who sell drugs at school should be suspended and an additional 40% think that these students should be expelled. Over a third of Westview students (36%) also think that the school should call the police on student drug dealers.
- Finally, 34% of the Westview respondents think that students should be suspended for bringing a weapon to school. Almost half (48%) think that such students should be expelled and 42% think the school should call the police.

It is quite obvious that the majority of Westview student respondents think that the school should only call the police for very serious violations of the code of conduct. Only one out of every seven respondents (14%), for example, thinks that the school should call the police to deal with students who are fighting. Similarly, less than a quarter of

respondents (24%) think the police should be called for theft and only 36% think the police should be called for drug dealing. Finally, less than half of all students (42%) think that the school should call the police to deal with students who bring weapons to school. It is interesting to note that even when it comes to dealing with serious criminal activity like drug dealing, assault, theft and carrying weapons to school, the majority of students *do not* think the school should call the police. Clearly, similar to their counterparts at C.W. Jefferys, most Westview students think that the answer for dealing with badly behaved students – even those involved in serious criminal activity – lies outside of the criminal justice system.

In summary, the results of the survey suggest that the Westview students are somewhat divided with respect to their ideas about how to improve school safety and deal with students who break the rules. Although some students seem to favour a tough approach to school safety issues (more student suspensions and expulsions, greater use of the police, the installation of metal detectors, mandatory security passes, etc.), other students are opposed to such strategies. However, most of the students at the school seem in favour of particular measures including the installation of security cameras, more security monitors, increased funding for after-school programs and increased counselling for students with chronic behaviour problems.

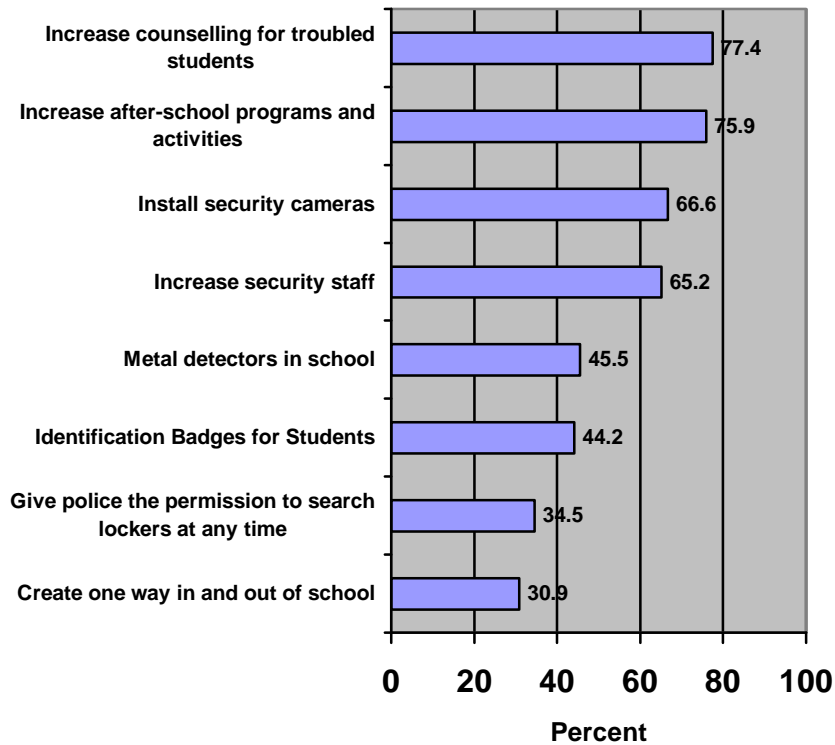
**TABLE 16:**

**Percent of Westview Students who think Specific Strategies are a “Good” or a “Bad” Idea With Respect to Increasing School Safety**

School Safety Strategy	A Very Good Idea	A Good Idea	A Bad Idea	A Very Bad Idea	Don't Know
Provide more after-school programs and activities.	45.0	30.9	3.3	1.0	19.9
Provide more counselling for students who keep getting into trouble.	42.5	34.9	2.7	1.0	19.0
Put more security cameras in school halls and classrooms.	35.9	30.7	7.5	5.1	20.8
Increase the number of security people in schools.	33.7	31.5	9.5	4.4	20.8
Metal detectors in school.	25.1	20.4	16.9	16.0	21.7
Identification Badges for all students.	19.3	24.9	17.0	15.7	23.1
Give police the permission to check student lockers at all times.	18.3	16.2	20.1	25.4	20.1
Creating one way to enter and exit the school	13.8	17.1	23.9	21.4	23.8

Sample Size = 843

**FIGURE 30: Percent of Westview Students Who Think that Specific Policies are a "Very Good" or "Good" Strategy for Increasing School Safety**

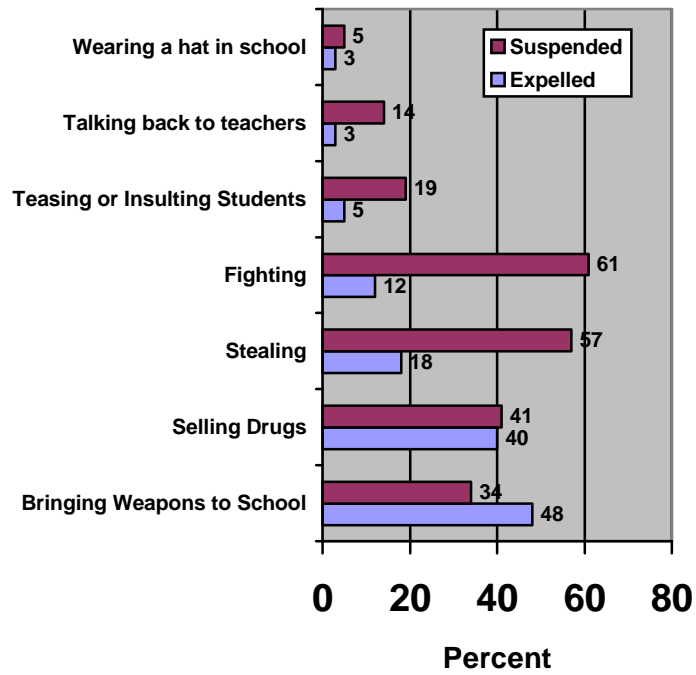


**TABLE 17:  
Percent of Westview Students Who Support Specific Types of Punishment,  
By Type of Disciplinary Infraction**

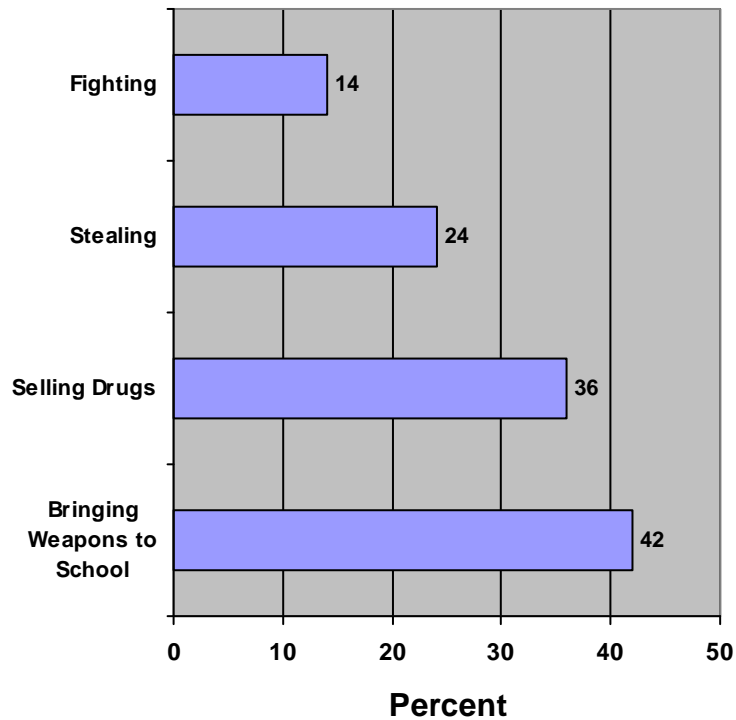
Recommended Punishment	Talking Back To Teachers	Wearing a hat in School	Selling Drugs	Bringing Weapons To School	Stealing	Fighting	Teasing or Insulting other students
No punishment	42.7	72.7	10.4	9.4	9.9	13.6	37.3
Detention	33.4	17.8	8.3	7.0	15.7	20.9	38.2
Call parents	20.5	7.9	21.2	21.7	28.3	26.1	19.7
Counselling	19.7	5.1	14.8	13.9	12.9	19.1	20.1
Suspension	13.6	4.6	40.6	33.8	56.8	61.3	19.2
Other type of punishment	6.7	7.8	3.6	4.2	3.8	3.4	2.8
Expulsion	3.3	2.6	40.4	47.6	18.4	12.1	5.2
Call police	0.0	0.0	35.6	41.8	24.0	13.6	2.5

Sample Size = 870

**FIGURE 31: Percent of Westview Students Who Think that Students Should be Suspended or Expelled for Specific Disciplinary Infractions**



**FIGURE 32: Percent of Westview Students Who Think that the Police Should be Called to the School for Specific Disciplinary Infractions**



## PERCEPTIONS OF RACISM AND SOCIAL INJUSTICE

During our initial consultations at Westview, a number of students, parents and school officials claimed that racism and race relations were problems at Westview Centennial Secondary School and other schools within the Greater Toronto Area. In order to examine these issues, we asked our student respondents from Westview whether they thought people from their own racial group were treated fairly at school and in the wider community. An examination of the data suggests that a significant proportion of students believe that members of their racial group are subject to discrimination with respect to both expulsion and grading practices. Furthermore, almost half of all respondents (44%) believe that the school is more likely to call the police to deal with racial minority students than white students. It is important to note, however, that perceptions of racism are not confined to the school environment. Indeed, a large proportion of students also identify racism with respect to policing and outside employment opportunities. (see Table 18)

Other findings suggest that the majority of Westview students (60%) believe that rich kids have a better chance to succeed in Canada than poor kids. (see Table 18) A similar proportion of Westview students (61%) don't believe that everyone in Canada has an equal chance of getting a good education. Nonetheless, despite such perceptions of social injustice, the majority of Westview respondents (75%) believe that they will eventually get a good job.

Finally, Westview students are divided on the issue of teacher treatment. For example, while a third of respondents (36%) think that teachers treat all students the same, half (49%) feel that teachers treat some students better than others. Similarly, while 63% of the Westview students think that the teachers at their school work hard to help students succeed, 18% disagree with this statement and 19% are unsure if teachers work hard to help students or not.

Additional analysis reveals that perceptions of racial bias and social injustice at Westview are much more prevalent among black students than students from other racial backgrounds. (see Table 19) For example, over half of black students (53%) believe that students from their racial group are more likely to be unfairly expelled from school than students from other racial backgrounds. By contrast, this view is shared by only 30% of West Asian students, 24% of South Asian students, 20% of Asian students and 14% of white students. Similarly, almost half of the black respondents from Westview (48%) believe that discrimination makes it difficult for students from their racial group to get good grades at school, compared to 40% of West Asians, 25% of South Asians, 21% of Asians and 9% of white students. Finally, 55% of black respondents believe that the school is more likely to call the police on racial minority students than white students. By contrast, this opinion is shared by only 38% of Asian students, 38% of South Asian students and 26% of West Asian students. Interestingly, a quarter of the white students (24%) also agree that the school is more likely to call the police on racial minority students than white students.

The results also suggest that, compared to students from other racial backgrounds, black students are more likely to perceive police discrimination, employment discrimination, social class bias and teacher favouritism. (see Table 19) For example, 72% of the black respondents believe that students from their racial group are more likely to be unfairly stopped and questioned by the police than students from other racial groups. By contrast, the view that the police are biased against your own racial group is held by only 27% of Asians, 25% of West Asians, 24% of South Asians and only 5% of White students. Almost two-thirds of Black students (64%) also believe that discrimination makes it difficult for people from their racial group to get a good job, compared to 42% of West Asians, 37% of South Asians, 25% of Asians and only 14% of Whites. Finally, only 28% of Black students believe that teachers treat everyone the same, compared to 53% of South Asians, 50% of West Asians and 41% of Asian students. Interestingly, White students are even less likely (23%) than Black students (28%) to think that teachers treat everyone the same.

The results of the Panel survey suggest that a very high percentage of Black students at Westview perceive that they face racial discrimination both inside and outside of school. Similar results were found in the Panel survey of Jefferys students. It should be stressed that these results are remarkably similar to the a 1994 study of Toronto high school students conducted by the Commission on Systemic Racism in the Ontario Criminal Justice System. (see Wortley and Ruck 2003) Apparently, perceptions of racial bias and discrimination have not diminished among Black students over the past decade and a half. As discussed above, in light of these disturbing findings, we must ask ourselves a series of difficult but extremely important questions. How did these perceptions of racial discrimination develop? To what extent do these perceptions of racism reflect the actual lived experience of black students at Westview and other schools in Toronto? What impact do racism and the perception of racism have on the quality of life for Black students at Toronto high schools? Do racialized feelings of marginalization and alienation impact educational ambitions, academic performance and student behaviour? Do racism – and the perception of racism – make it more difficult for some students to succeed in school than others? How can we eliminate racism and injustice within schools and increase the level of confidence that Black students have in the educational system? How can we reduce perceptions of racial injustice and marginalization? It could be argued that, until these difficult questions are fully answered, the school environment *will not* be *safe* for many students of colour. Indeed, dealing with issues of racism, in our opinion, should be central to any broader discussion of school safety issues.

**TABLE 18:**  
**Percent of Westview Students Who Agree or Disagree with Various**  
**Statements About Racial Discrimination and Social Injustice**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
Students from my racial group are more likely to be unfairly expelled from school than students from other racial groups	12.8	20.2	22.5	17.8	26.6
Teachers treat all students the same.	10.9	25.5	34.2	14.3	15.2
Discrimination makes it difficult for students from my racial background to get good grades in school.	9.6	22.9	29.4	15.0	23.1
Students from my racial group are more likely to get unfairly stopped and questioned by the police than students from other racial groups.	25.6	20.3	18.6	12.1	23.4
Discrimination makes it difficult for people from my racial group to get a good job.	18.9	24.5	20.7	11.8	24.1
Everyone in Canada has an equal chance of getting a good education.	31.6	29.0	15.0	10.1	14.3
I will eventually get a good job.	51.6	24.1	4.2	3.1	17.1
Rich kids have a better chance in Canada than poor kids.	39.3	20.4	12.3	10.8	17.3
The school is more likely to call the police on racial minority students than white students.	24.0	20.2	16.0	8.9	30.9
Teachers at my school work hard to help students become successful.	27.5	35.7	11.6	6.7	18.5



**TABLE 19:**  
**Percent of Westview Students Who “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” with Various Statements About Racial Discrimination and Social Injustice, By Racial Group**

Statement	Black	Asian	South Asian	West Asian	Other Minority	White	
Students from my racial group are more likely to be unfairly expelled from school than students from other racial groups	53.1	19.6	23.6	30.0	23.8	13.6	**
Teachers treat all students the same.	27.8	41.1	53.2	50.0	35.9	22.7	**
Discrimination makes it difficult for students from my racial background to get good grades in school.	48.4	20.9	25.5	40.0	25.7	9.5	**
Students from my racial group are more likely to get unfairly stopped and questioned by the police than students from other racial groups.	71.8	27.0	24.5	25.0	43.0	4.8	**
Discrimination makes it difficult for people from my racial group to get a good job.	63.8	24.7	36.7	42.1	37.7	14.3	**
Everyone in Canada has an equal chance of getting a good education.	46.2	70.4	78.9	52.6	63.2	61.9	**
I will eventually get a good education and a good job.	71.4	78.4	82.6	77.8	75.6	76.2	NS
Rich kids have a better chance in Canada than poor kids.	64.0	52.8	63.0	36.8	59.7	57.1	NS
The school is more likely to call the police on racial minority students than white students.	54.7	38.0	38.2	26.3	41.7	23.8	**
Teachers at my school work hard to help students become successful.	54.4	69.9	71.8	68.4	65.9	52.4	*

NS      Racial differences are not statistically significant

\*        Racial differences are statistically significant at  $p < .01$

\*\*       Racial differences are statistically significant at  $p < .001$

## STUDENT COMMENTS

At the conclusion of the questionnaire, Westview students were thanked for their participation in the survey and asked if they had any other comments that they would like to make. Many students took the opportunity to make additional comments. Several themes emerged. First of all, a number of students wanted to stress that Westview is a good school and a safe school that has undeservedly been given a bad reputation. Although some acknowledged problems with student behaviour, school safety issues or a lack of resources, these students wanted to stress that they were happy at their school and that they felt it was a good place. Many blamed the media for stigmatizing Westview and the whole Jane-Finch Community. The following quotes are typical:

*Although violence exists in our school I believe that it's not to the point where police has to be informed. The students here are smart, they will respect those who respect them and these are the words from these students. I respect the authority in our school, the hall monitors. The teachers do such a great job of getting order around. I have no complaints but only respect for the effort of you guys and the school. Thanks a bunch!*

*Westview promotes positivity. The teachers' main focus is to help students be the best they can. Why don't you come up with a survey that questions Westview students' involvement in the community. How many talented students go on to university or college? Why don't you focus on that? You focus on the negative so kids feel like they are expected to mess up so why bother?*

*Ever since I've been going to Westview there hasn't been any serious crimes like gun violence or fatal accidents. I'm not saying Westview should be considered the safest school because violence can happen anywhere. Adults are failing the young generation of today leading them to pick up bad habits from others. I feel safe at Westview for the time being. I don't know if anything serious will happen in the future for me to change my mind.*

*I think my school is good. Do need some help for those people who make the school's reputation bad.*

*I think my school is great, despite the fights and stuff. It's a really good school and I love it. Been here for 3 years now in grade 11, moving on to grade 12 next year. I'm so excited. But we need more Hall monitors in our school or more police to watch out for fights and everything.*

*I think that the Jane and Finch community is not a bad community like police say it is. Police and media just want things to talk about. Westview has a bad reputation, but it's a very good school. There are schools in*

*York Region that are worse. All you have to do is mind your own business.*

*I think that Westview is a good school and everything, but I think you guys could make it safer.*

*I think Westview is a good school, but some children need to be good and stop the skipping. They need to come to school every day so that they can learn.*

*In my opinion, Westview is better than a majority of schools in the GTA. But yet every time the news comes on and you read the paper all you see is Westview being portrayed to a bad light and the worst part about it is none of it is true. The media just loves to report on negative aspects of the community and at the same time not being accurate about it.*

*It's a great school. Only seen as negative because it's in Jane and Finch.*

*It's a great school since I've been here the only thing I've experienced are fights.*

*It's nice here.*

*The media should stop giving bad names to my school.*

*My school, in general, is safe. It is only the people who gets themselves involved with these things are the ones who get hurt.*

*My school is a safe place, but because of the community we're in we are often targets in the media for negative attention. The media needs to stop setting up my school and community for failure.*

*My school is a very good school and gives me education that I need.*

*My school is a very safe and good place to learn and get educated at. The school needs to increase the cleanliness in hallways and washrooms though. It should also increase the resources and have better resources. Otherwise, it is a very safe place to learn at.*

*My school is the best school in the GTA.*

*My school is the best, the community should know that. We're not lesser than any other school. We have a lot of achievers in the school too. Our teachers always want what's best for their students. We will succeed so don't trash the name for our school. If you do don't do that I thank you.*

*School is school and yeah I'm use to it. Don't see much wrong with my school. Just a lot of fights.*

*Our school isn't bad and shouldn't be publicized for nothing. Other schools have more crimes.*

*Overall I think my school is okay.*

*Overall, Westview is a pretty safe place. Maybe we need more hall monitors on every floor.*

*People always say negative things about Westview. But I like this school. I think it's safe and I only fought someone a couple of times.*

*My school's great. Teachers are great. We need it to be more clean though. We need more money.*

*Since Westview is in Jane and Finch people don't recognize what we do. They think we are not a good school but judge a book by the cover. I don't know any other school that has homework help and other volunteering activities.*

*Stop judging the Jane and Finch area. It's not as bad as you make it out to be. Westview is a very good school. Teachers are most helpful.*

*Students should feel safe when they go to this school. More hall monitors are needed, maybe even metal detectors. But honestly, it's the media that portrays bad news. I would say Jane and Finch is a good community if you have lived here all your life, but you don't. People shouldn't be influenced that easily.*

*The media should stop stigmatising my school because it stops people from attending my school. They talk a whole bunch of foolishness. I love Westview and it teaches you things in here that you won't learn anywhere else.*

*The only thing I have to say is that recently in the newspaper there was an article stating that all kids from Jane and Finch do not understand how to write the English language. Why must they put us down? All they talk about is the negative things. What about the good things that come out from this community? Why is that not RECOGNIZED?!!*

*There are teachers here that care about students' success. Our school is full of intelligent students that will be successful. Some students are not aware of their potential and so turn to gangs. Our school needs more*

*supplies, new textbooks, and better surveillance systems. We also need a community centre so students have something to do after school.*

*There is a lot of good here at Westview and a lot of talented students. I feel it's safe and it just needs more programs to help students achieve their goals and have a solid foundation which would reduce crime in the community.*

*This school rocks!*

*Well, I am in my fourth year at high school meaning graduating time. Westview is a safe school. I guess students just don't know how to treat the school and respect it but to be honest I will miss high school especially Westview.*

*Westview's a good school. I personally love it. If only all this gang violence and shootings can stop.*

*Westview Centennial S.S is a great school but some students are just fucked up in the head! Sorry about the bad use of language but honestly some students are just crazy.*

*Westview CSS is a very good school with great caring teachers but to make this school better we need the TDSB to provide our school with money so we can buy better school supplies, have a cleaner school and most of all high-tech security cameras so we know that we are safe and it must be working! Also, better after-school programs to keep our youth safer.*

*Westview is a good school and so are other schools but the media should stop looking down at Westview.*

*Westview is a good school. I think you guys should get off our dicks and let us deal with our problems. P.S. stop calling Jordan Manners name. He was my close friend and I think you guys are using him as an excuse to react this way.*

*Westview is a good school. For a school in a poor community it's a great place.*

*Westview is a very fun and safe school. Fuck all ya'll haters.*

*Westview is a very good school. And the media needs to realise that.*

*Westview is a very under-rated school. It gets bad publicity because of "Jane and Finch" or because the news. I been here since Grade 9 and I'm*

*now in Grade 12 and it has gotten safer by the years. To me there is no threat and I have no problems with the school. I think students are more easy to get along with than other schools.*

*Westview is actually a very good school. There are a lot of bad seeds, but the thing is you need to go through adversities in life in order to enjoy the fruit of your labour. So if 'they' choose to join a gang then it is up to them, but me I know what I want to become with my life.*

*Westview is great just as it is. Safe but providing a safer environment across the streets where we buy lunch will be a good idea.*

*Westview is great. Rumours are rumours. This school should never be mentioned in the news concerning deaths or crime.*

*Westview isn't a bad school at all. I feel safe and secure at the school with the hall monitors and the camera I believe it's safe.*

The fact that many students feel intense pride in their school and their community was evident in student comments that indicate that many do not want the “Jane-Finch” neighbourhood to be renamed:

*Don't change Jane & Finch to University Heights!!*

*Don't change Jane and Finch to University Heights.*

*Don't change the name of Jane and Finch to University Heights.*

*Don't change the name of Jane and Finch to University Heights.*

*Don't change the name "Jane and Finch" to "University Heights."*

*Don't change the street name Jane n Finch to something else.*

*Don't change Jane & Finch to University Heights!!*

Other students took the opportunity to stress that Westview required more resources and programming. Some called for special programs to help deal with youth violence and gang activity, while others asked for more general programming that would benefit all students. The following comments are typical:

*I think this school should have after school programs about the negative aspects of being in a so-called gang. People (young high school students who are still immature) need older men and women to talk to them about their own experiences living in the "street life". There should be former gang members/drug dealers to work with youths to make their lives more positive. Youths would respect and even listen to older people who went*

*through the same struggle or know our lifestyle.*

*Certain people should encourage students to make good choices, by doing good things. Encourage them not to drugs/ alcohol, steal etc. And help them believe they're important and that God loves them, even the unloveable.*

*Cut that bullshit of zero tolerance from our school rules at Westview! We need to sit down and help these students carefully. Zero tolerance is in Westview because our principal is lazy as hell. He does not want to help our black kids in achieving the best they can.*

*I think teachers need to help students after school with school work. And get more school after programs so students can get out of trouble.*

*Just help the students that needs to get help please and this shooting needs to stop!!*

*We need more security officers, better school equipment, better hall monitors, lectures on guns and weapon related violence.*

*The students need help and they need direction. It's hard for them to know what they want from life if all they see is gangbanging and selling drugs. There weren't many doctors or lawyers in Jane and Finch.*

*Add hockey to our school! Please!!!*

*After school programs should be what the students want to participate in. Teachers should treat everyone fairly.*

*Enforce student participation in extra curricular activities.*

*Make more after school programmes.*

*We need more opportunities and participation in things.*

*More class help for better success.*

*More clubs and make them all year around.*

*More dress days, more activities, more special trips.*

*More extracurricular programs, more school spirit is needed.*

*More jobs in the community and after school program, sports and lots of fun.*

*More programs for students, more counselling for troubled students, less biased administrators.*

*More programs to help kid stay out of trouble. More things at school, outside of school fun places to go to (so we are off the streets). Please make more places to go to, fun things to do.*

*This is a good idea already. Just more leadership programs and groups would help students be leaders!*

*We need more leadership opportunities and teachers need to be strict. If teachers don't do something it will continue to happen.*

*The school itself (the building) is in a state of squalor. They should make all schools have equal facilities and equal programs. My school also needs more safety monitors.*

*Will get some activities for the student so they would like to do so they don't have to be on the street hustling.*

*New equipment for the classrooms.*

*We need better teachers and better school equipments.*

*A lot more activities.*

*Fix our school.*

*Fix the whole school up cause some of the ceiling are peeling. There are old hallways and dirty washrooms. We need more supplies and free things.*

*I think this school should get funded more.*

*More better and faster computers, free printing for students, cheaper prices in the cafeteria.*

*More understanding teachers; smaller classroom sizes.*

*New equipment for speciality classes such as the cooking class, band, art and photography. We need better lab equipment to make it more fun and enthusiastic to come to school with better computers and equipment student will want to be in school more then they would not want to shoot each other.*



*New equipment in the gym.*

*Give my school more money for gym equipment and arts equipment.*

*Our school needs better funding, also some teachers are not cut out to be teachers because they can't handle students.*

*Our school needs to have more in our budgets and have more supplies towards our education.*

*Teachers need to be more be nice to students and talk to them and try to help them with any problem they have.*

*We need many programs but students fail to take advantage of it. Renovate and make the school look more appealing.*

Some students felt that Westview needs more or better security measures and tougher punishment for students (including more expulsions) who do not abide by the rules. The following comments illustrate this point of view:

*Ban all gang members from entering the school or being in the area around school. Try to have the students be part of the decisions made at our school.*

*We need more cameras, more security.*

*Get a lot of hall monitors outside and inside the school and expel bad students.*

*I think students should have an identification card used to get into school.*

*I think we are lucky to our teachers in this school but there must be metal detector in all the school doors and the Principal should not look at the students the easy way. What I mean is that they can't just tell them to not do it again. There should be a punishment right away.*

*Increased security.*

*More cameras and talk to the flippin police. They do shit to protect the streets. Do whatever you need or think you need to do to make this school safer. This school really needs help!*

*More cops and safety more security.*

*More hall mans and more cameras.*

*More hall monitors and more cops across the street.*

*More hall monitors; more cops in the school.*

*More security please.*

*We need more security.*

*More security and more cameras.*

*More security in schools and in the real world. We need very high security in dangerous Jane and Finch neighbourhoods at night and morning.*

*Every part of halls should be monitored.*

*Police should come to school once in a while or have one or two in the hallways.*

*Put cameras in every hallway and inside the class and outside the school.*

*Schools should have safety passes for security. Visitors should not come at lunch and during school time.*

*Security officers, better school equipment, better hall monitors, lectures on gun and weapon related violence.*

*The police wouldn't help. We need more hall monitors.*

*The school needs more cameras at the back of the school. More hall monitors and more cop security around school.*

*They should have more security at school.*

*They should provide more security.*

*We should have more cameras and no uniforms.*

*I think my school shouldn't accept any bad people from other schools who got kicked out.*

*If a student creates a problem the teachers must be serious before it rises.*

*It's not hard to tell who is at school to learn and who is at school to mess around so obviously just get rid of the ones who don't want to learn because they are the ones who will mostly cause trouble.*

*Like I have been saying, we need to be more stricker and safer rules. Bullying happens in my school and isn't stopped. Gang members should be jailed. If you let a little problem escalate then your going to have what happened to Jordan Manners. People smoke pot, crack, weed, drink alcohol at this school. Need to get tougher on those guys.*

*Students who does nothing in school but hang out in the hallway should be kicked out or forced to be in class because they're just wasting their time in school.*

*Zero tolerance on things like weapons, drugs, robbery and our school needs better teachers that actually care.*

While some students wanted a higher police and security presence at the school, others provided negative comments about law enforcement:

*The law is the worst. Nobody helps victim students. Not even cops and school authorities.*

*Please do not send security to our school. They don't do anything good.*

*The police are frauds.*

*Tell the police to stop harassing people and leave us alone. And take their threats and shove them up their ass!! Those pussys!!*

*The police need to back off. They are invading people's privacy. Get out of our lives because you only make things worse than it already is.*

*The police should stop harrassing the youths and start to get to know them better.*

*I would never trust the cops cause they shot my brother. The cops should not have that much rights cause they make things worse.*

*The thing you people said in this booklet about the police is a very bad idea. It won't change a thing (but you can try). The police and the government tried and you failed on us, you forgot about us.*

*The police wouldn't help. We need more hall monitors.*

*Cops like harass you like no tomorrow around here.*

Many student commented about the survey itself. While a few students had positive observations, many wondered about the point of the survey. These students often challenged the Panel, and the government, to do something to help their community. The following comments are typical:

*Now that you did this survey are you going to take any action?*

*I just hope that all this information will stop the crimes in my community and in my school.*

*I used to run with a gang but I stopped when I almost got shot. Life is fucked up. Help us!!*

*How come you guys gave this survey to only our school only after Jordy got shot. This his old school. It's all the government fault Jordy got shot. They don't give a fuck bout our community.*

*These surveys are a good way to get the students' feelings on the school. It does not waste their time because about 90% of students would probably not waste their time reporting all these problems after school to the police. I hope there will be another survey so I can get to express my feelings without wasting time after school.*

*This is a good way to improve our school safety. I'm glad that I did that, so that people would stop stereotyping Westview as a bad school.*

*This questionnaire is pointless. You guys already have all the answers. This is not a game. Instead of spending money on surveys, give the money to the community so we have more things to do and more help.*

*I say that everyone instead of ignoring others with problems, they should reach out and help.*

*I think the government should focus more about the middle and primary then high school and talk with parents more than two times a year.*

*I think the school should help give students jobs.*

*Make it safe!!*

*Students want to feel safe not scared to go in an environment like school that is supposed to be like home.*

*You can change our behaviour in school, but it won't change once we exit the doors. The community needs help.*

Finally, one student eloquently reminded the research team of the very issue that had led to the formation of the School Safety Panel – the violence that has damaged or even claimed the lives of so many young people in the Toronto area:

*R.I.P Jordan Manners. R.I.P. Emphraim Brown. R.I.P. Benn Allen. Just stop the violence for us please or reduce it. We can't afford to lose anyone again. R.I.P Monique Mcknight. R.I.P. Alisha Ashley. R.I.P. Keegan Allen.*

## CONCLUSIONS

As was the case with the Jefferys survey, the Panel survey of Westview students provides mixed, often contradictory results. For example, while most students claim that Westview has serious problems with gangs, violence, drug dealing and weapons, the majority of respondents also feel quite safe at their school. Furthermore, while at the same time acknowledging problems with criminality and poor student behaviour, many Westview students believe that their school has been unfairly labelled as dangerous or unsafe.

Most Westview students feel that teachers and students get along at their school and that teachers genuinely care for their students. If anything, the data suggest that the relationship between students and faculty at Westview is somewhat more positive than student-teacher relationships at Jefferys. Nonetheless, the results also indicate that a large proportion of the Westview students who participated in the survey think that there are serious problems at their school with student disorder in the hallways, students who talk back and disrespect their teachers, unfair grading, unfair punishment and discrimination by teachers against students.

The results of the survey also indicate that, like Jefferys, a significant proportion of Westview students has been the victim of threats, physical assaults, theft, sexual assaults, gun threats and other types of crime – both inside and outside of school. Many Westview students also report that they are aware of guns and knives within the school environment and know students who have brought guns or knives to school. Although many students admit that they themselves have brought a knife to school, relatively few report that they have ever carried a gun. Further analysis indicates that much of the exposure to weapons at Westview is concentrated among former and current gang members.

The survey also found that the vast majority of Westview students will not talk to the police or school officials about crimes they have witnessed or even their own victimization experiences. Reasons for not reporting include fear of the offenders, fear of the police and a belief that the police can't provide protection from retaliation. It is also clear that part of the problem may be rooted in an emerging youth culture that enforces a "code of silence" and calls for youth to "stop snitching."

Finally, as with the Jefferys survey, the survey of Westview students also found strong evidence that racism is a major concern at this school – particularly for Black students.

Indeed, the majority of Black students perceived racial bias with respect to grading and disciplinary practices and felt that teachers treated some students better than others. We will return to these issues in later sections of the Report.

The Panel acknowledges that there are distinct methodological strengths and weaknesses with using surveys to document youth attitudes and experiences. That is why we have tried to supplement our survey results with other forms of data collection (official records, one-on-one consultations, etc.). One concern with the present survey is whether the students who completed the questionnaire have the same attitudes and experiences as the students who did not complete the survey. In other words, can the results of the survey be generalized to the entire Westview student population. As discussed above, some academics have argued that surveys of high school populations often underestimate the true level of crime and violence in the school environment. They argue, for example, that the worst behaved students within a school are often the same students who refuse to participate in studies or skip classes when questionnaires are being administered. This may have been a problem with this survey – it is impossible to determine. With this in mind, the statistics on crime, violence and safety at Westview may be conservative.

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## **B. SURVEY OF STAFF AND TEACHERS AT WESTVIEW**

***Abstract:** By December 17th, 2007 the Panel had collected 39 completed questionnaires from staff at Westview. This sample represents 35% of the staff employed at the school during that time period.*

*As with the Westview student survey, the Westview staff survey produced both positive findings as well as results that are cause for serious concern. Fortunately, most of the teachers and staff members who completed the Westview survey appear to be dedicated professionals. Despite some challenges, the vast majority are happy with their jobs, report that they enjoy working with the students at Westview, and claim that, in general, teachers and students at Westview get along. Unlike their counterparts at Jefferys, at the time of the survey, the majority of Westview staff respondents were very satisfied with the current school administration.*

*Nevertheless, the staff respondents at Westview did indicate that changes are necessary. Several respondents felt that discipline was too lenient or inconsistently applied at the school and that this situation had caused deterioration in school safety and student behaviour. Indeed, a large proportion of faculty had witnessed criminal activity at Westview over the*

*previous two years – including fights between students, physical threats, students with weapons, theft and drug trafficking. The majority of respondents also indicated that they had been subject to deliberate student misbehaviour – including challenges to authority, insults, teasing and accusations of unfairness with respect to both student punishment and grading. Finally, the majority of the staff who participated in the survey are fearful of the neighbourhood around Westview (especially at night) and claim that their school has serious problems with hallway disorder, students who disobey authority, bullying, theft, youth gangs, violence between students, and drug use and drug trafficking.*

*With these findings in mind, it is not surprising to note that the majority of staff support policies that are “tough” on student misbehaviour. A high proportion of staff respondents, for example, would like to suspend or expel more students at Westview, call the police more frequently to deal with unruly students, give police the power to search student lockers, increase the number of security cameras in the halls and increase the number of fulltime security staff. Most would also support having a single entrance in and out of the school. However, it is also important to note that the majority of staff are also very supportive of “softer” initiatives that would attack the root causes of student misbehaviour. These initiatives include the provision of better counselling and treatment for troubled youth, more after school programs and programs that would increase the involvement of parents in school activities.*

*For the most part, the results of the Westview staff survey are remarkably similar to the results of the staff survey at C.W. Jefferys. However, unlike the staff members at Jefferys, the teachers and support staff at Westview appear to be significantly more satisfied with the current administration at their school. Compared to their counterparts at Jefferys, the Westview staff are also less likely to believe that school safety and student behaviour have deteriorated over the past two years. Thus, one might conclude that the results of the Westview staff survey are somewhat more positive or optimistic than the results of the Jefferys staff survey. However, such conclusions may be somewhat premature. One concern with the Westview survey is the low response rate. Many teachers, staff and administrators at Westview simply refused to participate in the survey. This makes it somewhat difficult to generalize the results of this survey to the views and experiences of the entire staff at this school.*

In addition to surveying the students at Westview, the panel conducted a survey of all support staff and teachers at the school. As with the students' survey, the questionnaire was designed to elicit information about the teachers' own perceptions of, and experiences with issues of school safety over the past two years. (Appendix “N” is the teachers' survey) The questionnaire was distributed to teachers and staff in early November 2007. After completing the questionnaire, staff respondents were instructed to



seal their questionnaire and either mail it directly to the Panel offices or leave it at the school's main office for pick-up by a member of the Panel research team. As with the students, staff respondents were asked not to put their names on the questionnaire. This guaranteed their anonymity. Staff respondents were also told that they did not have to fill out the survey if they did not want to and that they did not have to answer any questions they felt uncomfortable answering. They were informed that their participation in the survey was completely voluntary and that there were no consequences for refusing to take part.

### *Sample Characteristics*

By early December 10, 2007 we had received 38 completed staff surveys. (see Table 1) An additional questionnaire was submitted on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Thirty-two respondents (82% of the sample) identified themselves as teachers -- including one principal/vice-principal. Four respondents (10% of the sample) identified themselves as support staff and three respondents (8%) did not identify their position at the school. According to information provided by the administration, in November 2007 there were 110 staff members at Westview -- 93 teachers (including the Principal and three Vice-Principals) and 17 support staff. Thus, 39 of the 110 staff members at Westview participated in the survey, producing a rather low response rate of 35%. Indeed, the Panel received anecdotal information that a large number of the staff at Westview decided to boycott the survey because they felt that Westview had been unfairly targeted by the Panel and that research results could lead to further stereotyping and exploitation of students from the "Jane-Finch" community. Several staff members indicated that, in order to ensure fairness, student and staff surveys about school safety issues should be conducted at all high schools in the Toronto area, not just Westview. Such surveys, they felt, would provide evidence that violence and school safety issues are not isolated within the "Jane-Finch" region.

Six out of ten respondents (61%) are male and 39% are female. Less than 10% of the respondents are under thirty years of age, 16% are between 30 and 39 years, 21% are between 40 and 49 years and half are over 50 years of age. The majority of staff members are of White racial background (45%); however, this figure may be higher because an additional 26% of the respondents did not identify their racial background. It is clear that the racial background of Westview staff (at least those that responded to the survey) does not match the racial diversity of the student body. Indeed, while at least 45% of the staff respondents are White, only 3% of the student respondents (discussed above) are White. Similarly, while only 5% of the staff respondents are Black, 37% of the student respondents identified themselves as Black.

Most of the staff who participated in the study (87%) indicated that they had worked at Westview for more than 2 years. About one quarter (26%) had worked at the school for ten years or more and 10% report having worked at Westview for 20 years or more. Finally, while many of the student respondents indicated that they currently live in a poor or very poor community (see previous section), the majority of staff respondents reside in middle-class (66%) or wealthy neighbourhoods (29%). Furthermore, while many

students report that they live in neighbourhoods with a lot of crime, the majority of staff respondents (50%) reside in neighbourhoods with either no crime or only a little crime, and 40% claim that their neighbourhood has an average amount of crime.

Additional analysis (see Table 2) indicates that only a small proportion of our staff respondents live in the area around the school. Indeed, only 2 respondents (5.4%) live within five kilometres of the school. By contrast, about one fifth live between 10 and 20 kilometres away from Westview and 51% live more than 20 kilometres away. The staff members clearly view the neighbourhood around Westview as more dangerous than their own neighbourhood. Indeed, 86% of the respondents feel that their neighbourhood has less crime (25%) or a lot less crime (61%) than the community around the school. Eight out of ten respondents (81%) also feel that their own neighbourhood is wealthier (51%) or much wealthier (30%) than the area around Westview. While almost a quarter (24%) of staff respondents report living in a neighbourhood more ethnically diverse than Westview, the majority (58%) indicate that they reside in communities that are less ethnically diverse than the community around Westview. Finally, the vast majority of Westview staff members indicate that they *would not* want to live in the neighbourhood around the school. Only 2 respondents (5%) indicated that they would live in the area around the school.

As with the results from the Jefferys' staff survey, these findings raise important issues. Clearly, as with Jefferys', most of the staff at Westview come from a wealthier, less ethnically diverse neighbourhood than the area around the school. Similarly, most staff feel that they reside in a community with a much lower crime rate. Most importantly, the majority of respondents would not want to live in the Jane-Finch area. To what extent do these staff perceptions of the Westview neighbourhood impact the ways in which they interact with both parents and students at the school? To what extent are teachers and staff at Westview viewed as "outsiders" by students and parents? Can teachers effectively engage students when they come from such dramatically different worlds? These are questions that deserve serious consideration.

**TABLE 1:**  
**Sample Characteristics (Westview Staff Survey)**

Characteristics	Number of Staff	Percent
<b><i>Gender</i></b>		
Male	22	61.1
Female	14	38.9
<b><i>Age</i></b>		
Under 20 years	1	2.6
20-29 years	2	5.3
30-39 years	6	15.8
40-49 years	8	21.1
50-59 years	18	47.4
60 years or older	1	2.6
Not stated	2	5.3
<b><i>Racial Background</i></b>		
White	17	44.7
South Asian	5	13.2
Black	2	5.3
Mixed Race	2	5.3
Asian	1	2.6
Other	1	2.6
Not Stated	10	26.3
<b><i>Current Position</i></b>		
Principal / Vice Principal	1	2.6
Teacher	31	79.5
Support Staff	4	10.2
Not Stated	3	7.7
<b><i>Time at Westview</i></b>		
Less than 2 years	5	13.2
Between 2 and 5 years	7	18.4
Between 5 and 10 years	16	42.1
Between 10 and 15 years	4	10.5
Between 15 and 20 years	2	5.3
More than 20 years	4	10.5
<b><i>Community of Residence</i></b>		
Very poor or poor	2	5.3
Average or middle-class	25	65.8
Above average or wealthy	11	28.9
<b><i>Crime in Own Neighbourhood</i></b>		
No crime	5	13.2
A little crime	14	36.8
An average amount of crime	15	39.5
A lot of crime	3	7.9
Don't know	1	2.6

Sample Size=39

**TABLE 2:**  
**Staff Perceptions of the Westview (Jane-Finch) Neighbourhood**

Characteristics	Number of Staff	Percent
<i><b>Distance of Own Residence from Westview</b></i>		
Less than 5 kilometres	2	5.4
Between 5 and 10 kilometres	9	24.3
Between 10 and 20 kilometres	7	18.9
Between 20 and 30 kilometres	9	24.3
Over 30 kilometres	10	27.0
<i><b>Level of Crime in Own Neighbourhood</b></i>		
Much more crime than Westview neighbourhood	1	2.8
Same amount of crime as Westview neighbourhood	4	11.1
Less crime than Westview neighbourhood	9	25.0
A lot less crime than Westview neighbourhood	22	61.1
<i><b>Social Class of Own Neighbourhood</b></i>		
Same social class as the Westview neighbourhood	7	18.9
Wealthier than the Westview neighbourhood	19	51.4
Much wealthier than Westview neighbourhood	11	29.7
<i><b>Ethnic Diversity of Own Neighbourhood</b></i>		
Less diverse than the Westview neighbourhood	22	57.9
Just as diverse as the Westview neighbourhood	7	18.4
More diverse than the Westview neighbourhood	9	23.7
<i><b>Would Staff Member Live in Westview's Neighbourhood</b></i>		
No – would not live in Westview neighbourhood	26	70.3
Maybe – might live in Westview neighbourhood	9	24.3
Yes – would live in Westview neighbourhood	2	5.4

Sample Size=39

## PROBLEMS AT SCHOOL

We began our exploration of school safety issues at Westview by asking staff respondents whether they thought specific behaviours were a problem at their school or not. (see Table 3 and Figure 1) The results suggest that:

- Over 60% of Westview staff feel that there is a very serious (24%) or serious problem (38%) with youth gangs at their school. Similarly 59% of Westview students feel that gangs are a serious or very serious problem.
- Almost 60% of Westview staff perceive that bullying is a serious or very serious problem at Westview (compared to 67% of students).

- About 60% of Westview staff members feel that there is a serious or very serious problem with students who talk back to teachers (compared to 51% of students).
- Over half (55%) of staff members feel that fighting is a serious or very serious problem at Westview (compared to 63% of students).
- Almost half (49%) of staff members believe that student theft is a serious or very serious problem at Westview. By contrast, 69% of Westview students reported that theft is a very serious or serious problem at their school. Perhaps Westview students are more impacted by theft than their teachers.
- Forty-six percent of staff respondents feel that student drug use is a very serious or serious problem at Westview (compared to 54% of students).
- About four out of ten staff members (39%) believe that student drug trafficking is a serious or very serious problem at Westview (compared to 52% of students).
- Almost one third of staff respondents (32%) feels that students who gossip is a serious or very serious problem at Westview (compared to 54% of students).
- One quarter (26%) of the staff respondents believes that students who bring weapons to school is a serious or very serious problem at Westview. By contrast, 60% of Westview students feel that weapons are a serious or very serious problem. This disparity might reflect the fact that students are more aware of the weapons that enter the school than teachers or support staff.
- Almost one out of five staff members (18%) believes that “racial or ethnic tensions between students” is a serious or very serious problem at Westview. This question was not asked of the students.
- Only 11% of staff members feel that “teachers who don’t care about students” is a serious or very serious problem at Westview. By comparison, 42% of Westview students felt that uncaring teachers was a serious or very serious problem.
- Only 8% of staff feel that “unfair punishment of students” is a serious or very serious problem at Westview (compared to 40% of students).
- Only 5% of staff feel that “unfair grading” is a serious or very serious problem at Westview -- compared to one third (34%) of students.

- Only 5% of the staff respondents feel that “teachers who don’t listen to students” is a serious or very serious problem at Westview -- compared to almost half (48%) of the student respondents.
- Only one staff respondent (2.7% of the sample) believes that “racial discrimination by teachers against students” is a serious or very serious problem at Westview. However, an additional 19% believe that it is a “small problem”. By contrast, half of the students surveyed at Westview (45%) feels that teacher racism is a serious or very serious problem at their school. An additional 15% of students feel teacher racism is a small problem.

In summary, the data indicate that the majority of staff at Westview feel that there are serious problems with youth gangs, bullying, students talking back to teachers and student fights. Almost half of all staff members also perceive serious problems with student theft, student drug use and student drug trafficking. Some are also concerned with student gossip, students who carry weapons and racial tensions between students. By contrast, very few staff respondents see problems with uncaring teachers, the unfair punishment of students, unfair grading of students, teachers who don’t listen or racial discrimination by teachers against students.

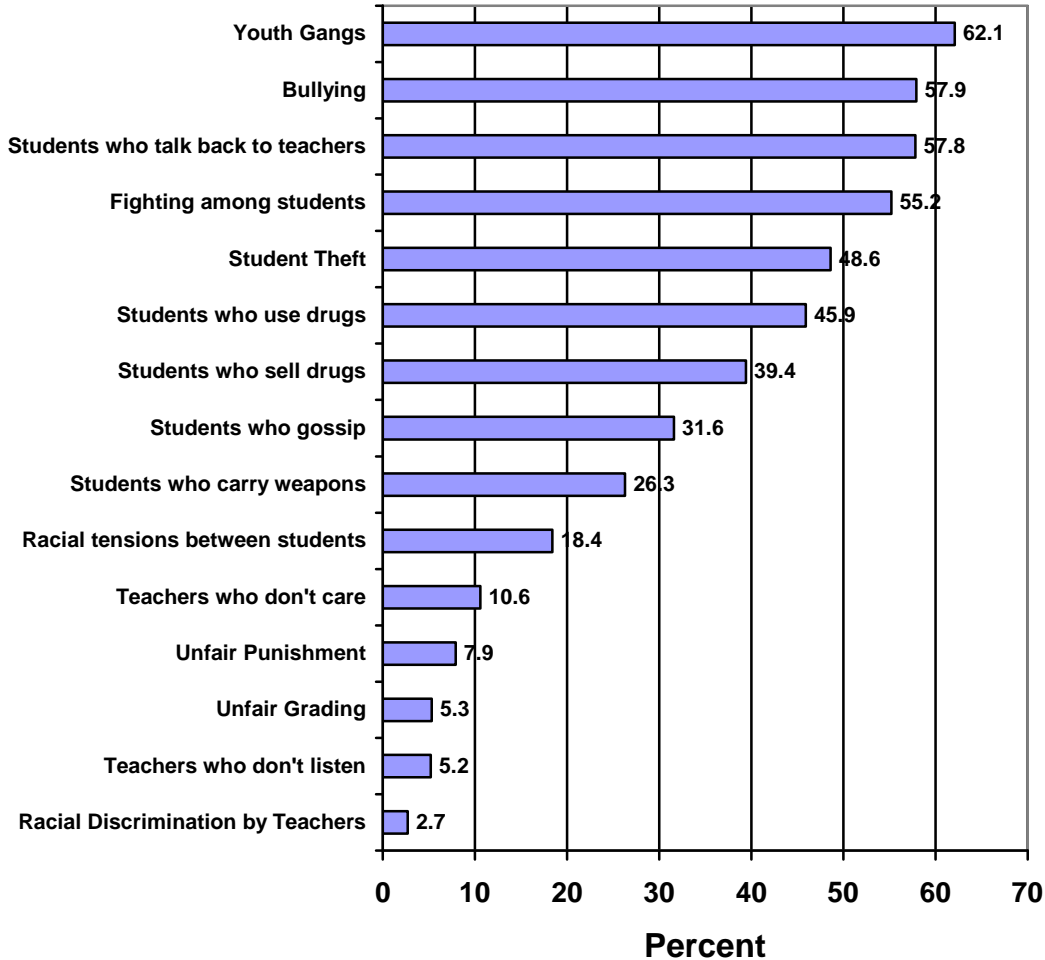
The data also indicate that teachers often have very different views about school problems than students. For example, staff members are significantly more likely than students to perceive serious problems with students who talk back to teachers. By contrast, students are significantly more likely to observe serious problems with teacher racism, student gossip, teachers who don’t listen to students, teachers who don’t care about students, unfair punishment and unfair grading. It is also interesting to note that students are somewhat more likely than teachers to view, theft, drug dealing and weapons as serious problems at their school. Is it possible that these issues are falling below the teachers’ radar at Westview? Are students more exposed to and thus, more aware of the crime and violence that takes place at Westview than their teachers? Nonetheless, teachers and students hold fundamentally similar views about the seriousness of youth gangs, student drug use, bullying and fighting.

**TABLE 3:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who Feel that Various Issues are**  
**a Problem at Their School**

<b>TYPE OF PROBLEM</b>	<b>A Very Serious Problem</b>	<b>A Serious Problem</b>	<b>A Small Problem</b>	<b>Not a Problem At All</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
Students who talk back to teachers.	28.9	28.9	39.5	2.6	0.0
Students who pick on or bully other students.	15.8	42.1	28.9	2.6	10.5
Students who steal things from other students.	13.5	35.1	37.8	0.0	13.5
Fighting between students.	18.4	36.8	44.7	0.0	0.0
Youth gangs.	24.3	37.8	35.1	0.0	2.7
Students who bring weapons to school.	10.5	15.8	36.8	2.6	34.2
Students who sell drugs.	10.5	28.9	26.3	0.0	34.2
Students who gossip and spread rumours about others.	21.1	10.5	39.5	7.9	21.1
Students who use drugs.	18.9	27.0	37.8	0.0	16.2
Teachers who don't listen to students.	2.6	2.6	34.2	39.5	21.1
Teachers who don't care about students	5.3	5.3	31.6	52.6	5.3
Racial discrimination by teachers against students.	2.7	0.0	18.9	48.6	29.7
Teachers who unfairly punish students.	5.3	2.6	15.8	50.0	26.3
Teachers who mark too hard.	0.0	5.3	21.1	47.4	26.3
Racial/ethnic tensions between students	2.6	15.8	42.1	18.4	21.1

Sample Size=39

**FIGURE 1:**  
**Percent of Staff at Westview Who Feel that Specific Issues**  
**are a "Very Serious" or "Serious" Problem at Their School**



We also asked the staff whether they agreed or disagreed with various statements about potential problems at their school. (see Table 4) The findings with respect to this set of questions reveal that:

- Six out of ten staff respondents (58%) agree that many students at Westview refuse to obey their teachers. Interestingly, 72% of student respondents also agreed with this statement.
- Six out of ten staff members (60%) agree that there are too many students at Westview who do not respect their teachers. This view was shared by 76% of students.



- About 30% of staff members agree that the behaviour of students at Westview has gotten worse over the past two years. Students were not asked this question.
- The vast majority of staff (87%) agree that, in general, teachers at Westview treat all students fairly. By contrast, only 50% of Westview students agreed with this statement.
- Eight out of ten staff respondents (79%) agree that most of the teachers and students at Westview get along well. This view was shared by only 62% of students.
- Over half of the staff respondents (51%), however, did admit that some teachers at Westview do not know how to talk to students. This view was shared by a similar proportion of students (54%).
- Over half of the staff respondents (52%) also agree that there are some teachers at Westview who do not respect their students.
- Half of all staff members (50%) agree that the media coverage of Jordan Manners' death unfairly damaged the reputation of the students in the Jane-Finch community. Four out of ten of them (37%) agreed that such media coverage had also damaged the reputation of the teachers who work in the Jane-Finch neighbourhood.
- Almost thirty percent (29%) of the staff members agree that they sometimes worry about their own safety when they come to work at Westview.
- Despite safety concerns and concerns about student behaviour, nine out of every ten staff respondents (89%) agree that they enjoy working at Westview.

In summary, a high proportion of both students and staff at Westview agrees that there are problems with students who do not obey or respect their teachers. However, only 30% of the staff members report that student behaviour has gotten worse over the past two years. Staff and students also seem to be in agreement that there are some teachers at Westview who just don't know how to talk to their students. However, compared to the staff respondents, students are less likely to agree that teachers always treat students fairly and are less likely to agree that teachers and students always get along. Finally, despite acknowledging serious safety concerns and problems with student behaviour, the vast majority of staff at Westview, as with the staff at C.W. Jefferys, agree that they enjoy working at the school.

**TABLE 4:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who Agree or Disagree with Various**  
**Statements About Their School**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
In general, I enjoy working at Westview.	52.6	36.8	5.3	0.0	5.3
In general, teachers at this school treat all students fairly.	42.1	44.7	5.3	5.3	2.6
Most of the students and teachers at Westview get along well.	34.2	44.7	13.2	5.3	2.6
There are too many students at this school who don't respect their teachers.	26.3	34.2	31.6	7.9	0.0
Many students at this school refuse to obey their teachers.	23.7	34.2	31.6	7.9	2.6
Media coverage of Jordan Manners' death has unfairly damaged the reputation of students from the Jane-Finch community.	21.1	28.9	31.6	13.2	5.3
Media coverage of Jordan Manners' death has unfairly damaged the reputation of teachers who work at schools in the Jane-Finch community.	18.4	18.4	39.5	5.3	18.4
Some teachers don't know how to talk to students.	13.5	37.8	24.3	5.4	18.9
The behaviour of students at this school has gotten worse over the past 2 years.	10.8	18.9	43.2	21.6	5.4
I am sometimes worried about my safety when I come to work at this school.	10.5	18.4	42.1	28.9	0.0
There are some teachers at Westview who do not respect their students.	7.9	44.7	26.3	2.6	18.4

Sample Size=39

### ***Frequency of Problem Behaviours***

We also asked the staff at Westview about how often specific problem activities occurred at their school.(see Table 5 and Figure 2) The results indicate that:

- Almost all Westview staff (90%) claim that “students making noise in the halls during class time” occurs at least once per week at their school. Indeed, 71% believe that such disruption occurs almost every day. Interestingly, 69% of Westview students also agree that students making noise during class is a problem that occurs at their school once per week or more.
- 71% of Westview staff report that students talk back to teachers at least once per week at their school. Fifty percent report that students talk back almost every day. About 61% of students also think students talk back once per week or more often.
- Almost half (47%) of the staff respondents report that bullying takes place at Westview at least once per week. A quarter (24%) think bullying occurs almost every day. Similarly almost forty percent (38%) of Westview students report that bullying takes place once per week or more and 23% think it occurs almost every day.
- Over 40% of staff respondents report that fights between students occur at least once per week at Westview. In fact, 13% of staff report that fights take place almost every day. Thirty percent of students also think that fights take place at least once per week and 10% think fights occur almost every day.
- Over a third of staff respondents (34%) think that student drug trafficking takes place at least once per week at Westview. Only 16% report that drug trafficking occurs almost every day. Similarly 28% of students think drug dealing occurs at least once per week and 20% think it occurs almost every day. A high proportion of both staff (60%) and students (52%) claim that they do not know how often drug dealing takes place at their school.
- 13% of staff respondents report that students bring weapons to school at least once per week. Eight percent of staff members believe that students bring weapons to school almost every day. Whereas, 20% of students think that students bring weapons to school once per week and 13% think they bring weapons to school almost every day. A high proportion of teachers (68%) and students (54%) do not know how often students bring weapons to school.
- Only 8% of Westview staff think that students are treated unfairly by teachers once per week or more often, of which 5% think they are treated unfairly almost every day. By contrast, 28% of student respondents think

that teachers treat students unfairly at least once per week and 11% think teachers treat students unfairly almost every day.

- Finally, staff respondents rarely think students are subject to unfair punishment. Indeed, only 8% think unfair punishment of students occurs once per week or more often and 5% think unfair punishment occurs almost every day. By contrast, 28% of students think that teachers unfairly punish students at least once per week and 11% report that students are unfairly punished almost every day.

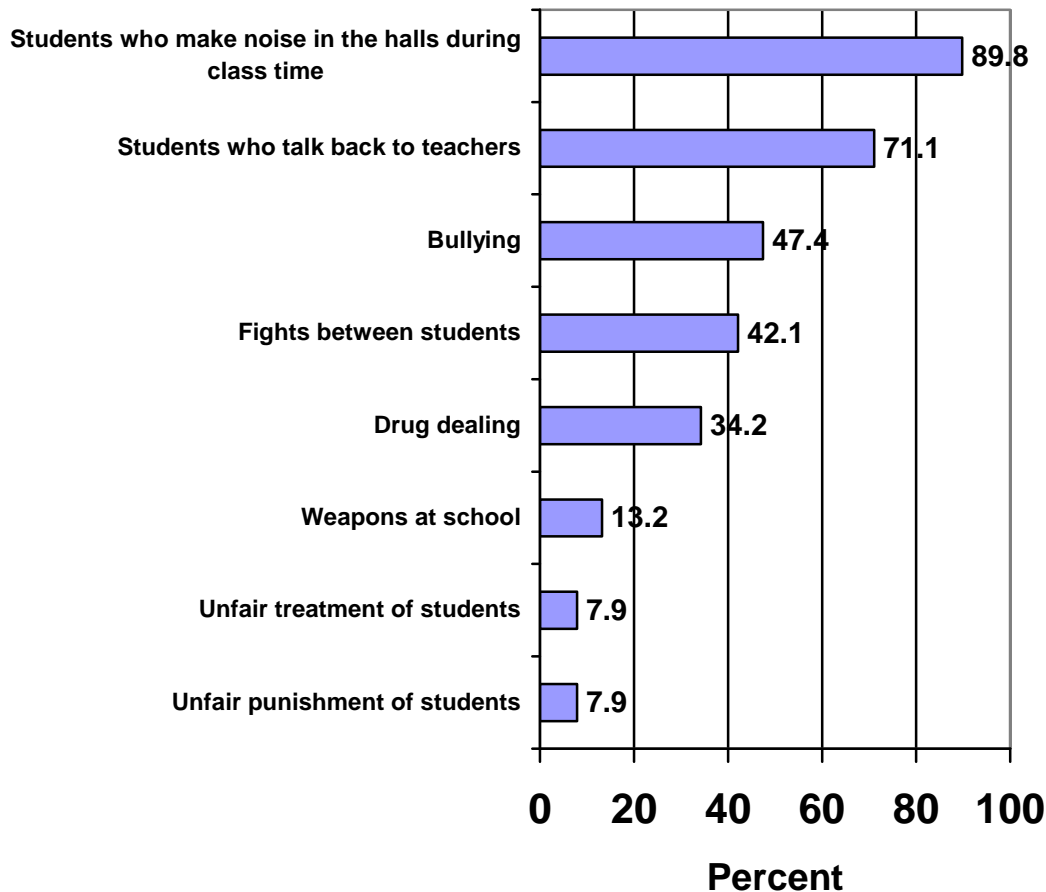
In summary, the majority of staff respondents report that noise in the hallways during class, students talking back to teachers and bullying occurs at least once per week at Westview. In addition, forty percent of all the staff members report that fights occur at least once per week and a third report that drug dealing occurs with the same frequency. The staff at Westview are more likely than students to believe that hallway noise, talking back to teachers, bullying, fights and drug dealing occurs at least once per week. On the other hand, students are more likely to believe that both unfair punishment and unfair treatment of students occurs on a frequent basis, and are more likely to perceive a greater frequency of weapons in the school, compared to Westview staff members.

**TABLE 5:**  
**Staff Perceptions About How Frequently Specific Activities Take Place at Their School**

ACTIVITY	Almost Every Day	At Least Once per Week	At Least Once per Month	A Few Times a Year	Never Or Almost Never	Don't Know
How often do students hang out in the halls and make noise while classes are on?	71.1	18.4	0.0	0.0	7.9	2.6
How often do students talk back or act rudely to teachers?	50.0	21.1	5.3	10.5	5.3	7.9
How often do students get picked on or bullied?	23.7	23.7	10.5	10.5	0.0	31.6
How often do students sell drugs?	15.8	18.4	2.6	0.0	2.6	60.5
How often do students bring weapons to school?	7.9	5.3	2.6	5.3	10.5	68.4
How often do students get into fights?	13.2	28.9	26.3	15.8	0.0	15.8
How often are students unfairly punished?	5.3	2.6	0.0	2.6	50.0	39.5
How often do teachers treat students unfairly?	5.3	2.6	5.3	2.6	34.2	50.0

Sample Size=39

**FIGURE 2:**  
**Percent of Staff Who Feel That Certain Activities Take**  
**Place at Their School Once per Week or More**



#### *Other Problems at Westview*

We also asked the staff respondents if there were any other problems at Westview that the questionnaire had not yet identified. Some respondents identified specific issues including: student lateness and absences, unruly students in the halls, no consequences for bad behaviour at home and the abject poverty of the local community. Other staff respondents expressed concerns about the relationship between the teachers and the school administration. Some felt that there was a lack of consequences for poor student behaviour or that school rules were inconsistently enforced by the Principal and Vice-principals. Others cited a general breakdown in communication between the teachers and parents on the one hand, and between teachers and students on the other. Examples of the comments made by the staff respondents include the following:

*A lot of times, if you call home because of a student's behaviour there are no consequences at home because: 1) You can't reach parents; 2) Parents*

*cannot handle the kids themselves; or 3) The parent believes that their child doesn't do any of those things without just cause -- so you must have disrespected their child.*

*Administrators are always downplaying certain situations between students and support staff.*

*Although we have several hall monitors, there is very little hall supervision -- and when there is an emergency (students acting up) it takes at least 10-15 minutes to get him/her out of class. Consequently there is a lot of tense environment as well as time taken away from the students who are serious and want to learn.*

*Attendance, punctuality, cell phones, no consequences for poor student behaviour. The administration makes excuses for bad student behaviour. It seems nothing is ever done.*

*Everyone has problems sticking to established rules regarding everyday school discipline.*

*I am attaching a letter of recommendation. We have a disproportionate amount of Grade 9 students who have been "transferred" into our school. They are not ready to read Grade 9 textbooks in most subject matters. There are students over 18 years of age who re-register and then do not attend class. They roam the halls and lure other weak students out of class.*

*I have answered questions in section B based on my own direct personal knowledge and experience, not rumour or hearsay. What you need to know is that every teacher who works here is very clear that we aren't just educating these children. We're helping to raise them. This creates a special bond between students and teachers here. The relationship may not always go smoothly, but the friction is almost always out of concern or disappointment.*

*I have many students that are late for 1st period and after lunch. I have many students that are absent from class for long periods of time.*

*There is a lack of consistency with the administration and hall monitors to enforce uniforms, electronics (toys/phones), wandering into classrooms, food in classrooms, skipping, etc.*

*Not enough accountability to students and parents. There is a strong sense of teachers always wanting students to be suspended or punished. Some teachers work hard to get students to permanently leave school—to push them out. Some hall monitors are a problem for students.*

*Principals are not serious enough with fights and punishments, late students, attendance, etc.*

*There are problems with regular attendance and punctuality. Many students are not prepared for their classes.*

*Some kids roam about in the hallways. They disturb other classes in session. They block the door and sometimes enter in the class where there is a supply teacher. Some kids come emotionally disturbed from their home. Fix the home atmosphere and the school atmosphere will improve.*

*Students do not identify themselves when challenged. Students ignore teachers in hallways. They say "I'm not in your class" or "Just go about your business".*

*Students who are not engaged in learning who turn to "hall walking."*

*Students arriving at school hungry or without a proper winter jacket. Students not bringing or buying lunch so they continue to be hungry at school. Students lack mentors to guide them through school. Students feel trapped in their surroundings. School does not meet the diverse needs of all students -- particularly those who have left school for a period of time and are now returning.*

*The majority of students have behavioural problems. They are rude, uncooperative, disruptive and they swear at the teachers (they use the F-word). If the teacher sends those students to office the administration does not react properly or communicate to parents properly. Some administrators just blame the teachers and say that he or she doesn't have classroom management skills. It's our responsibilities as elders and teachers to correct students' behaviours and help them for their better future. A teacher is not an enemy of the student (mostly not). So the administration and parents must support the teachers in this case.*

*This is a good school. I have worked in a number of high schools and nowhere have I found a more committed, hard-working and caring staff, administration and support staff. I mean this in all sincerity. The great majority of the kid's also are super. There is a tiny minority, however, whose behaviour, rudeness and outright defiance of any rules (including those of basic respect towards peers and authority) keeps others from learning, waste an enormous amount of time and energy on the part of the teachers and administration and makes Westview, at times, a less than sage learning environment. Something more radical is needed to keep these students from ruining it for everyone else. There should be alternative programs for them, maybe a school dedicated to dealing with*

*the more egregious troublemakers so that the business of leaning can carry on in a more effective way. Our students deserve no less. Westview is on a slippery slope; if rudeness, disrespect, defiance of rules and expectations are not checked, then things will continue to slide inexorably towards mayhem. We, staff and administration, are doing a good job in dealing with such problems, but we need more resources and more serious consequences for those (relatively few) who are serial troublemakers.*

## **STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY**

We next asked the staff respondents from Westview a variety of questions about their perceptions of safety both inside and outside of school. We began by asking how safe staff members felt at school before the shooting of Jordan Manners. (see Table 6) One fifth (21%) reported that they felt very safe before the shooting and an additional 63% felt fairly safe. Before the shooting only 16% of staff members felt either unsafe or very unsafe.

Compared to the staff at Jefferys (where the shooting actually took place), feelings of safety only declined slightly in the immediate aftermath of the Manners incident. Indeed, the proportion of staff members feeling either very safe or fairly safe only dropped from 84% to 79% during this time period. By contrast, the percentage of staff feeling unsafe or very unsafe jumped from 16% to 21%. Furthermore, as with the situation at Jefferys, the slight increase in fear among staff at Westview was only temporary. Indeed, staff respondents appear to feel safer now (at the time of the survey) than they did before the shooting. For example, before the shooting (May 2007), 21% of staff respondents felt very safe at Westview. This figure had risen to 24% by November 2007. Perhaps some staff noticed differences in school safety procedures or disciplinary actions in the wake of the shooting and these changes subsequently made them feel safer at school.

We also asked the staff respondents: “In general, would you say that Westview Centennial is a very safe school, a fairly safe school, or do you think that the school is an unsafe place for teachers and students?”. (see Figure 3) The findings suggest that the vast majority of staff members (87%) feel that, in general, Westview is either a very safe (24%) or a fairly safe school (63%). Only 13% of staff respondents feel that Westview is either unsafe (10.5%) or very unsafe (2.6%). Interestingly, further analysis suggests that teachers are actually more likely to view Westview as a safe school, than students. For example, almost a quarter (24%) of Westview staff feel that their school is very safe, compared to only 15% of Westview students.

Finally, we also asked staff members: “Do you think that Westview has less violence than other high schools in Toronto, more violence than other schools or do you think it is about the same as other schools?” Only 16% of staff respondents feel that Westview is less violent than other schools. By contrast, 40% believe that Westview is more violent than other schools and 37% think it is just as violent. Interestingly, although staff members are more likely than students to think that Westview is “very safe,” a higher



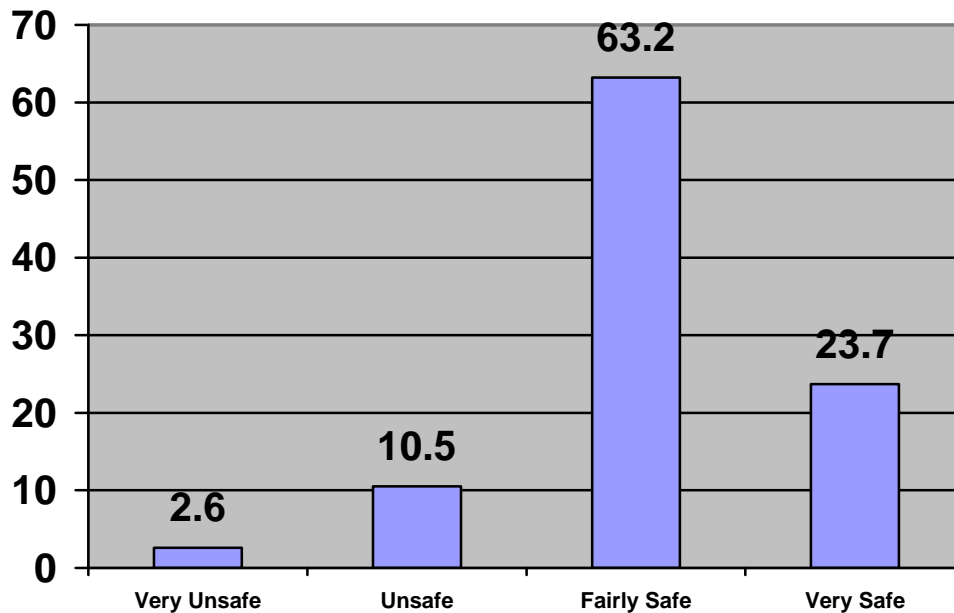
proportion of students think that Westview is safe relative to other high schools. For example, 27% of Westview students think their school is less violent than other schools, compared to only 16% of Westview staff. On the other hand, only 21% of students think Westview is more violent than other schools, compared to 40% of staff respondents.

**TABLE 6:**  
**Percent of Staff Who Felt Safe or Unsafe at Westview Before and After the Shooting Death of Jordan Manners**

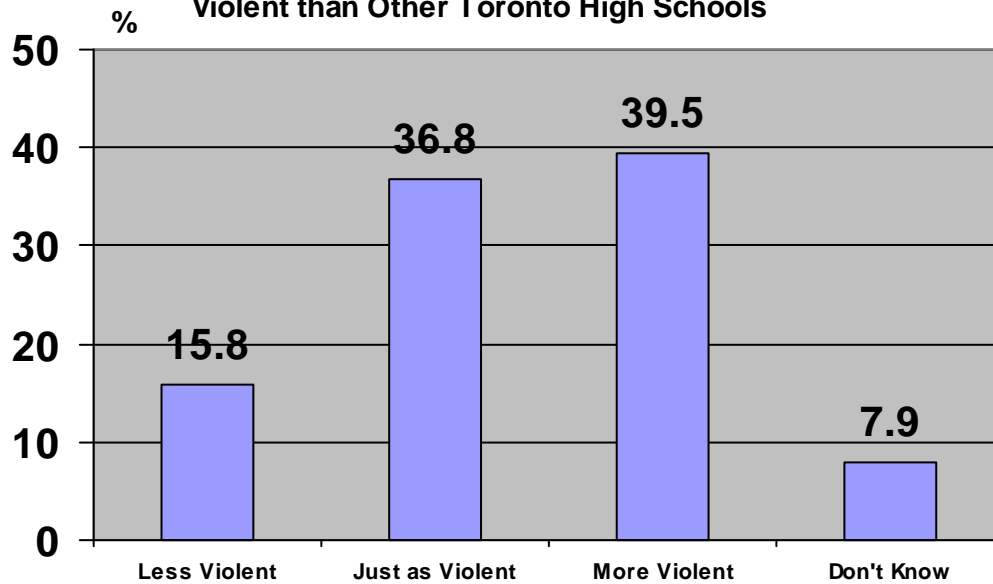
<b>TIME PERIOD</b>	<b>Very Safe</b>	<b>Fairly Safe</b>	<b>Unsafe</b>	<b>Very Unsafe</b>
How safe did you feel at your school before the shooting?	21.1	63.2	10.5	5.3
How safe did you feel at your school immediately following the shooting?	23.7	55.3	18.4	2.6
How safe do you feel at your school today?	23.7	60.5	13.2	2.6

Sample Size=39

**FIGURE 3:**  
**Percent of Staff Who Feel that Westview is a Safe or an Unsafe School**



**FIGURE 4:**  
**Percent of Staff Who Feel that Westview is More or Less**  
**Violent than Other Toronto High Schools**



### *Feelings of Safety by Social Context*

After consulting with staff about their feelings of safety at school, we asked them how safe they feel (or would feel) when they engage in a variety of different activities outside of the school environment. (see Table 7 and Figure 5) The results confirm that many Westview staff, as with their counterparts at C.W. Jefferys, fear the neighbourhood around the school. Indeed, almost sixty percent of staff respondents indicated that they would feel unsafe or very unsafe walking around the Westview neighbourhood at night. It was somewhat surprising to note that three times as many staff respondents (59%) reported that they would feel unsafe walking in the Westview neighbourhood at night than felt unsafe immediately following the shooting death of Jordan Manners (21%).

The next most feared activity for Westview staff members appears to be walking around the Westview neighbourhood during the day. One out of four staff respondents (24%) indicated that they would feel unsafe or very unsafe walking around the Westview neighbourhood during the day, 23% would feel unsafe going to a bar or nightclub at night, 19% would feel unsafe riding a bus or subway at night and 13% would feel unsafe going downtown. It is interesting to note that staff members are apparently more afraid of walking around the Westview neighbourhood during the day (24% feel unsafe) than they are of walking around their own neighbourhood at night (only 16% feel unsafe).

It is a recognized finding in the criminological research literature that fear of crime is greater among older people than younger people. Thus, it is surprising to note that Westview students report somewhat higher levels of fear than their staff counterparts. Although students tend to feel somewhat safer at school than staff members (see

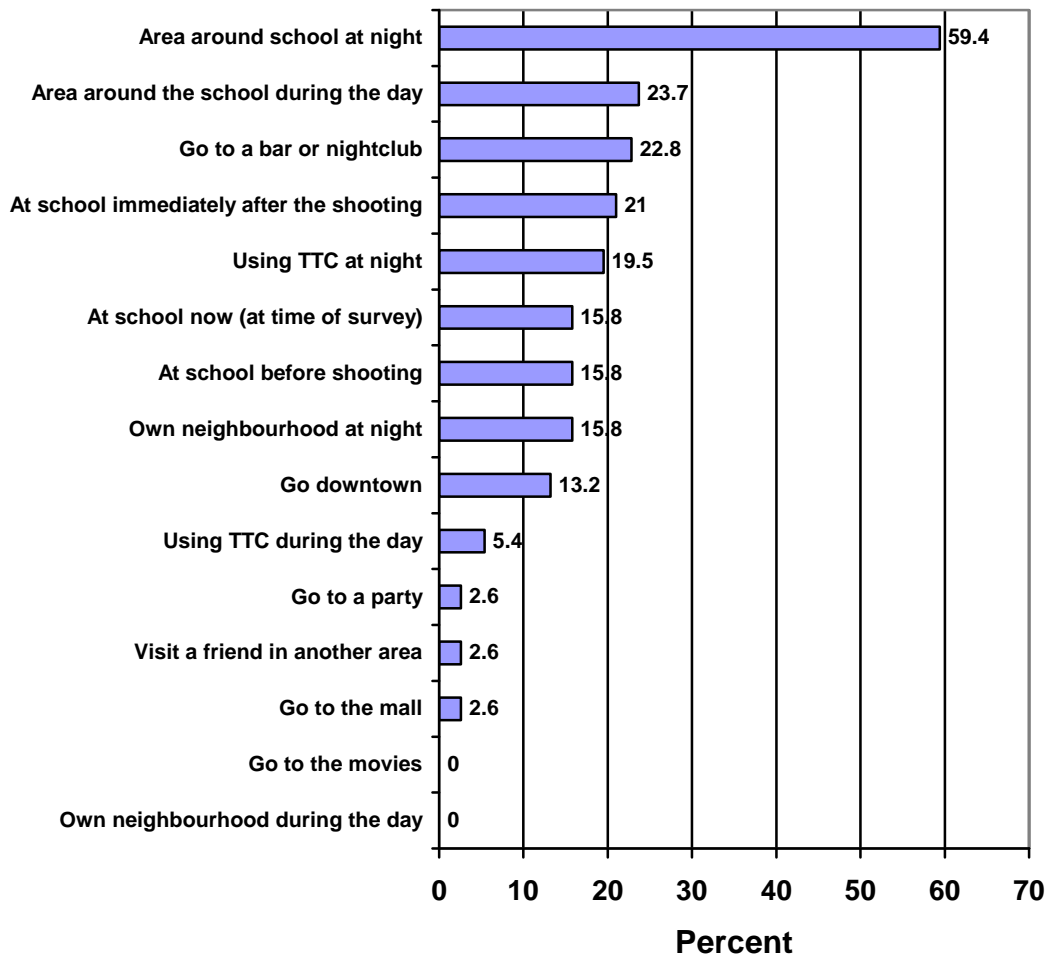
discussion in the previous section), staff members feel safer in all other social contexts. For example, 59% of students report that they would feel unsafe walking around their own neighbourhood at night, compared to only 16% of staff members. Similarly, 14% of students report that they would feel unsafe walking around their own neighbourhood during the day. By contrast, not a single staff member (0%) reported that they would feel unsafe walking around their neighbourhood during the day. These findings suggest that the community around Westview, where most Westview students live, may indeed be more dangerous than the types of neighbourhoods in which staff members reside. However, compared to staff members, students are also more likely to feel unsafe when they go to bars or nightclubs (52% vs. 23%), use the TTC at night (48% vs. 20%), go to a party (23% vs. 3%), visit a friend in another area (20% vs. 3%), go downtown (20% vs. 13%), use the TTC during the day (8% vs. 5%), go to a mall (7% vs. 3%) or go to the movies with friends (7% vs. 0%). These results may be a reflection of the fact that, over the past few years, students are more likely to have experienced various forms of criminal victimization – in a variety of contexts – than the staff members. (see discussion in the following sections)

**TABLE 7:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who Feel Safe or Unsafe**  
**in Specific Social Contexts**

<b>Social Context</b>	<b>Very Unsafe</b>	<b>Unsafe</b>	<b>Fairly Safe</b>	<b>Very Safe</b>	<b>Don't Know/ Depends</b>
Walking around the Westview neighbourhood after dark.	29.7	29.7	18.9	2.7	18.9
Going to a nightclub or bar.	5.7	17.1	40.0	17.1	20.0
Walking around the Westview neighbourhood during the day.	5.3	18.4	39.5	34.2	2.6
Went downtown	0.0	13.2	55.3	26.3	5.3
Taking the bus or subway at night.	2.8	16.7	55.6	11.1	13.9
Walked in your own neighbourhood at night.	2.6	13.2	44.7	28.9	10.5
Taking a bus or subway during the day.	2.7	2.7	43.2	43.2	8.1
Went to a shopping mall.	0.0	2.6	50.0	47.4	0.0
Went to visit a friend in another part of town.	0.0	2.6	47.4	42.1	7.9
Went to the movies with friends.	0.0	0.0	42.1	50.0	7.9
Went to a party at someone's friend.	0.0	2.6	36.8	50.0	10.5
Walked in your own neighbourhood during the day.	0.0	0.0	28.9	71.1	0.0

Sample Size=39

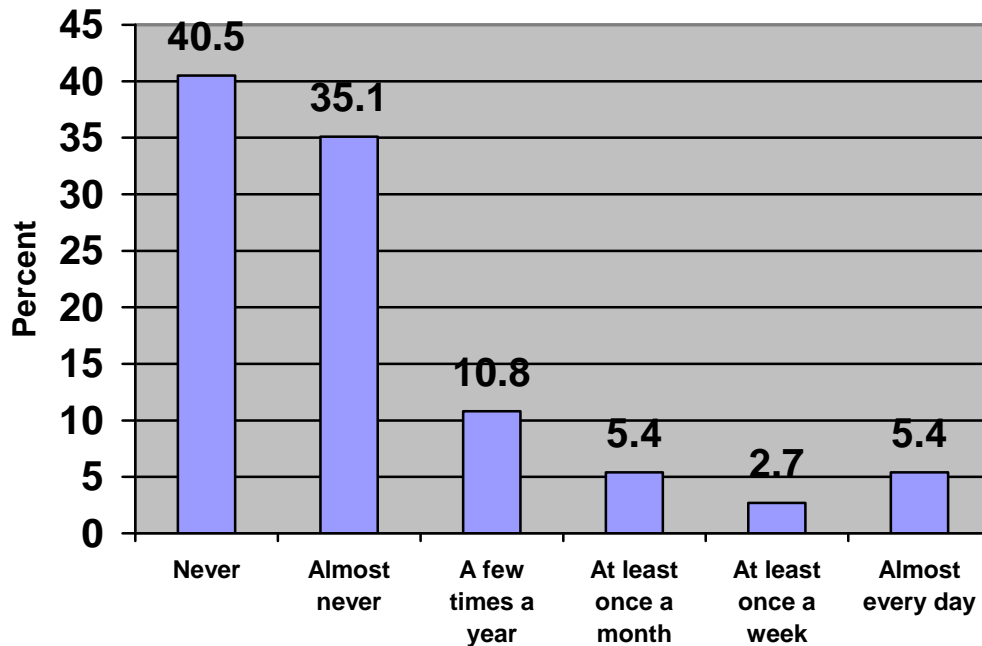
**FIGURE 5:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who Feel "Unsafe" or "Very Unsafe" in Different Social Contexts**



#### **Perceived Safety Travelling To and From School**

We also asked the staff respondents how frequently they felt afraid or unsafe when travelling to and from school. (see Figure 6) Forty percent of staff members indicate that they never feel unsafe travelling to and from school. An additional 35% indicate that they almost never feel unsafe. However, 14% of staff members feel unsafe at least once a month and 5% feel unsafe almost every day. Further analysis reveals that staff members are slightly less likely to feel unsafe travelling to and from school, than students. For example, 25% of staff members feel unsafe travelling to and from school at least a few times per year, compared to 29% of students. Similarly, only 5% of staff members feel unsafe almost every day, compared to 7% of Westview students.

**FIGURE 6:**  
**Frequency that Westview Staff Feel Afraid or Unsafe**  
**When Travelling To and From School**



#### **Fear of Criminal Victimization**

Finally, we asked the staff respondents from Westview if they ever worried about specific criminal activities or behaviours at school or outside of school. (see Table 8 and Figure 7) The results indicate that:

- Two-thirds of staff respondents (66%) at least sometimes worry about the gangs in the neighbourhood around the school. Over a quarter (27%) “often” or “always” worry about these gangs.
- Six out of ten staff members (61%) at least sometimes worry about the gangs at Westview. Almost a third (30%) “often” or “always” worry about the gangs at their school.
- Forty-five percent of staff members at least sometimes worry about having something stolen from them at school, of which 16% “often” or “always” worry about becoming the victim of such a crime.
- More than a third of all staff members (42%) at least sometimes worry about having something stolen outside of school

- More than a third of staff members (39%) at least sometimes worry about being robbed by someone outside of school. Over a quarter (29%) at least sometimes worry about being robbed by a student at school.
- More than a third of staff members (37%) at least sometimes worry about being shot at or attacked with a weapon at school. The same proportion of staff respondents at least sometimes worry about such attacks outside of school.
- About one-third of the staff members at Westview (32%) at least sometimes worry about being physically assaulted by a student at school. The same proportion of staff respondents sometimes worry about physical assaults outside of school.
- In general, although staff members are not often worried about sexual assaults, they are more worried about the possibility of being sexually assaulted outside of school than in school. For example, 8% of staff respondents at least sometimes worry about being sexually assaulted outside of school, while only 5% sometimes worry about being sexually assaulted at school.

In general, the survey results suggest that staff members are somewhat less worried about specific types of criminal victimization than students. For example, 45% of staff members are at least sometimes worried about theft at school, compared to 50% of students. Similarly, 29% of staff members are at least sometimes worried about being robbed at Westview, compared to 42% of students. Furthermore, 32% of staff respondents report being at least sometimes worried about being assaulted at school, compared to 39% of students. Westview students are also four times more likely to worry about being sexually assaulted at school (19%) than staff members (5%). Students and staff, however, are equally worried about physical assaults and robbery outside of school. Interestingly, Westview staff respondents are somewhat more likely to be worried about gangs at school (61%) than Westview students (55%). In addition, a higher proportion of Westview staff members (37%) than students (24%) sometimes worry about being shot or attacked with a weapon at school. However, compared to the staff respondents, Westview students are much more likely to express worry about the gangs that live in their own neighbourhood (61% vs 32%). This is further evidence that the students at Westview may indeed live in more dangerous communities than teachers and staff.

### ***Other “Unsafe” Places***

We next asked the staff respondents: “Are there any school activities or places around the school that you avoid because you are afraid for your safety?” Many respondents reported that they avoid certain areas of the school – including certain stairwells and the area around the cafeteria – where they felt they might encounter large groups of students hanging out. It is clear that some teachers find such situations intimidating and do not

want to be forced into a situation where they might have to enforce the rules of the school. A number of staff also indicated that they do not like being around the school after dark. This is consistent with other results (presented above) that suggest that a high proportion of staff members feel unsafe in the Westview neighbourhood after dark. Specific teacher comments about unsafe places around the school include the following:

*I avoid areas where there are crowds of students.*

*I avoid the back parking lot and certain back corridors in the evening. I don't like events where parents have to meet the teacher's night.*

*The fitness room after 4:30 pm.*

*I avoid the following: 1) the hallway by the cafeteria; 2) behind the curtains on the stage; 3) the foyer in front of the school; 4) the cafeteria; 5) school dances; 6) the parking lot after dark; 7) any area on the first floor facing Oakdale Rd; and 8) School assemblies.*

*I try not to venture out of the office alone.*

*I often travel by myself, sometimes I feel uncertain because I am not sure what weapons if any, students might have on them or in their lockers.*

*If I have to attend a function at night (i.e. parents night, a concert or just working late) I will ask someone to wait for me and walk with me to the parking lot. I will sometimes ask the custodian to walk me to the parking lot door and wait till I'm in the car. Reason for it is that it is night and dark and it is a bad area.*

*Nothing in particular -- If there are a lot of students hanging around, loud noisy, I would avoid it and just call the hall monitor.*

*Oakdale doors, first floor, some stairwells.*

*The first floor, by the Oakdale doors, by the library.*

*Stairwells throughout the school, hallways leading to parking lot, the parking lot.*

*Stairwells, Oakdale doors, shop 8/9 doors, bathrooms (except staff bathrooms), areas around the cafeteria or shops.*

It should be stressed, however, that a few Westview teachers did not have any fear at all of the school or the area around the school. As one respondent wrote: "I have taught at Westview for 20 years. I have never been afraid for my safety."

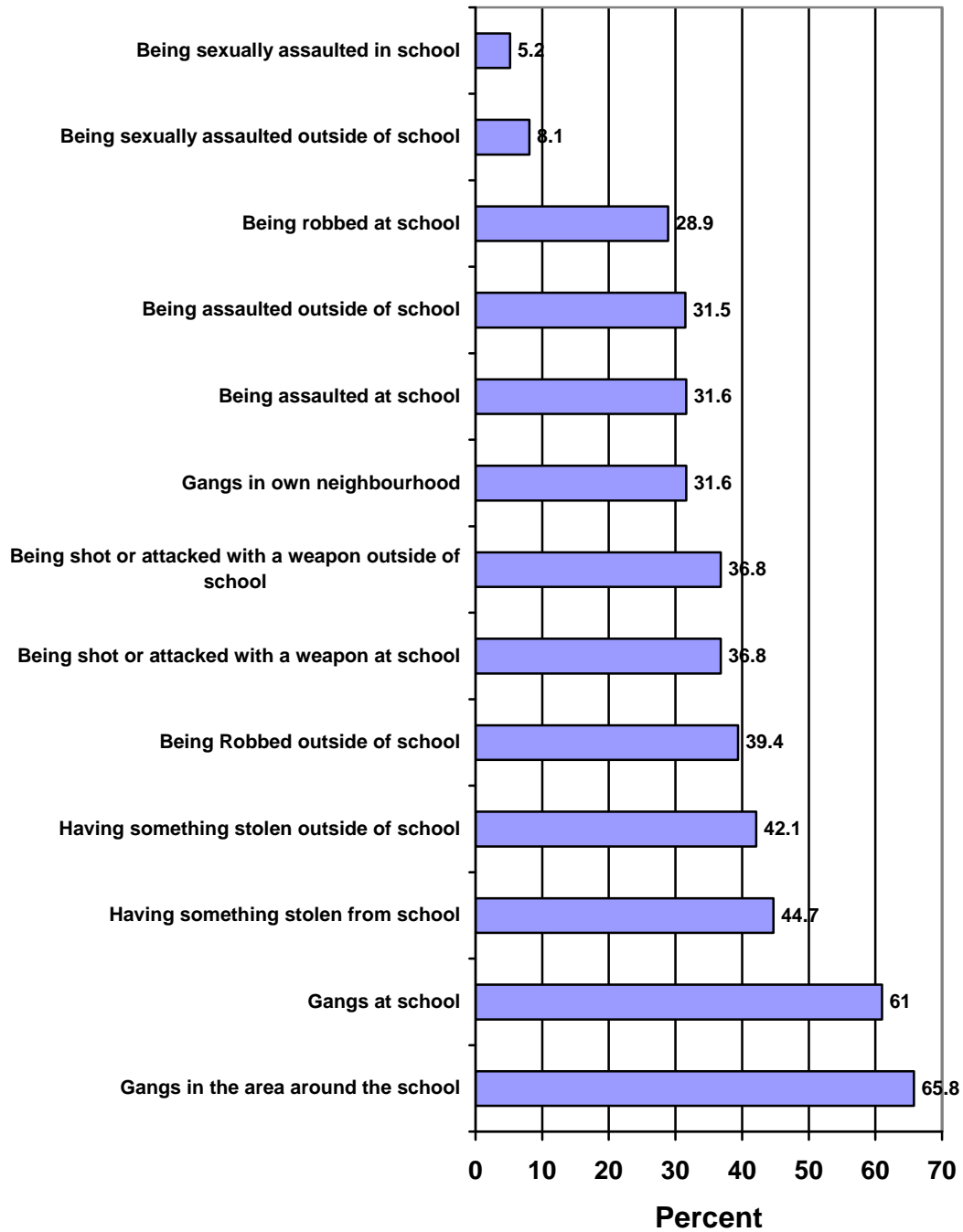
**TABLE 8:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who Report being Worried or Not Worried**  
**About Specific Types of Criminal Activity**

<b>Do you ever Worry about...</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Almost Never</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>All the Time</b>
Street gangs in your school	28.9	10.5	31.6	23.7	5.7
Street gangs in the community around the school	21.1	13.2	39.5	15.8	10.5
Street gangs in your own neighbourhood	55.3	13.2	39.5	15.8	10.5
Being attacked or beat up by a student	50.0	18.4	23.7	7.9	0.0
Being attacked or beat up by someone outside the school	36.8	31.6	28.9	2.6	0.0
Being robbed by a student	44.7	26.3	26.3	0.0	2.6
Being robbed by someone from outside the school	34.2	26.3	34.2	2.6	2.6
Having something stolen from you at school	31.6	23.7	28.9	10.5	5.3
Having something stolen from you outside of school	23.7	34.2	36.8	0.0	5.3
Being shot at or attacked with a weapon at school	47.4	15.8	31.6	2.6	2.6
Being shot at or attacked with a weapon outside of school	39.5	23.7	28.9	5.3	2.6
Being sexually assaulted or molested at school	78.9	15.8	2.6	0.0	2.6
Being sexually assaulted or molested outside of school	67.6	24.3	8.1	0.0	0.0

Sample Size=39



**FIGURE 7:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who are at Least**  
**"Sometimes" Worried about Specific Criminal Activities**



## STAFF VICTIMIZATION

In the next section of the questionnaire, we asked our staff respondents whether or not they had been the victim of various crimes at school in the past two years and if they had been subject to poor student behaviour. (see Table 9 and Figure 8) The results indicate that:

- Over eighty percent of the staff (84%) at Westview report that a student talked back to them at least once over the past two years. Over half (53%) report that students talked back to them on five or more occasions.
- Over half of Westview staff respondents (55%) report that they have been physically threatened by a student over the past two years. Over ten percent (13%) have been threatened on two or more occasions.
- Over half of the staff members (54%) from Westview report that they have been accused of unfairly punishing a student over the past two years. Sixteen percent indicate that they have been accused of unfair punishment on at least five occasions.
- Half of all staff members (50%) indicate that they have been teased or insulted by a student in the past two years. Over a quarter (27%) have been teased or insulted by a student on two or more occasions.
- Almost half of the staff members (47%) indicate that they have been accused of unfair grading over the past two years. Seventeen percent have been accused of unfair grading on five or more occasions.
- One third of Westview staff members (34%) have been the victim of minor theft (under \$50) at school over the past two years. Sixteen percent have been the victim of minor theft on two or more occasions.
- Almost a third (29%) of the Westview staff respondents have been the victim of vandalism at school over the past two years. Five percent have been the victim of vandalism – at school – on multiple occasions.
- Staff respondents were also asked the following question: “How many times has a student at your school sexually harassed you or made inappropriate sexual comments?” Only 13% of staff members indicate that they have been sexually harassed by a student in the past two years. One out of twenty (5%) have been sexually harassed by a student on multiple occasions.
- Only 10.5% of staff members have been the victim of major theft (over \$50) at school over the past two years. Five percent have been the victim of major theft on two or more occasions.

- Three staff respondents from Westview (8%) indicate that they have been physically assaulted by a student in the past two years. One respondent (3%) reports being physically assaulted on five or more occasions.
- Two of the staff respondents (5%) indicate that they have been threatened by a student with a weapon over the past two years.
- Two Westview staff members (5% of all staff respondents) indicate that they have been physically assaulted by a student with a weapon over the past two years. One respondent indicated that they have been physically assaulted with a weapon on more than one occasion.

Further analysis suggests that Westview staff members are much more likely to be victimized at school than outside of school. (see Figure 8) For example, while 55% of staff respondents were threatened with physical assault at school, only 8% were threatened outside of school. Similarly, 50% of staff members were insulted or teased at school. By contrast, only 27% were insulted or teased outside of school. This general relationship holds for all types of victimization -- with the exception of major theft. Staff respondents were slightly more likely to report being the victim of major theft outside of school (14%) than in school (10%).

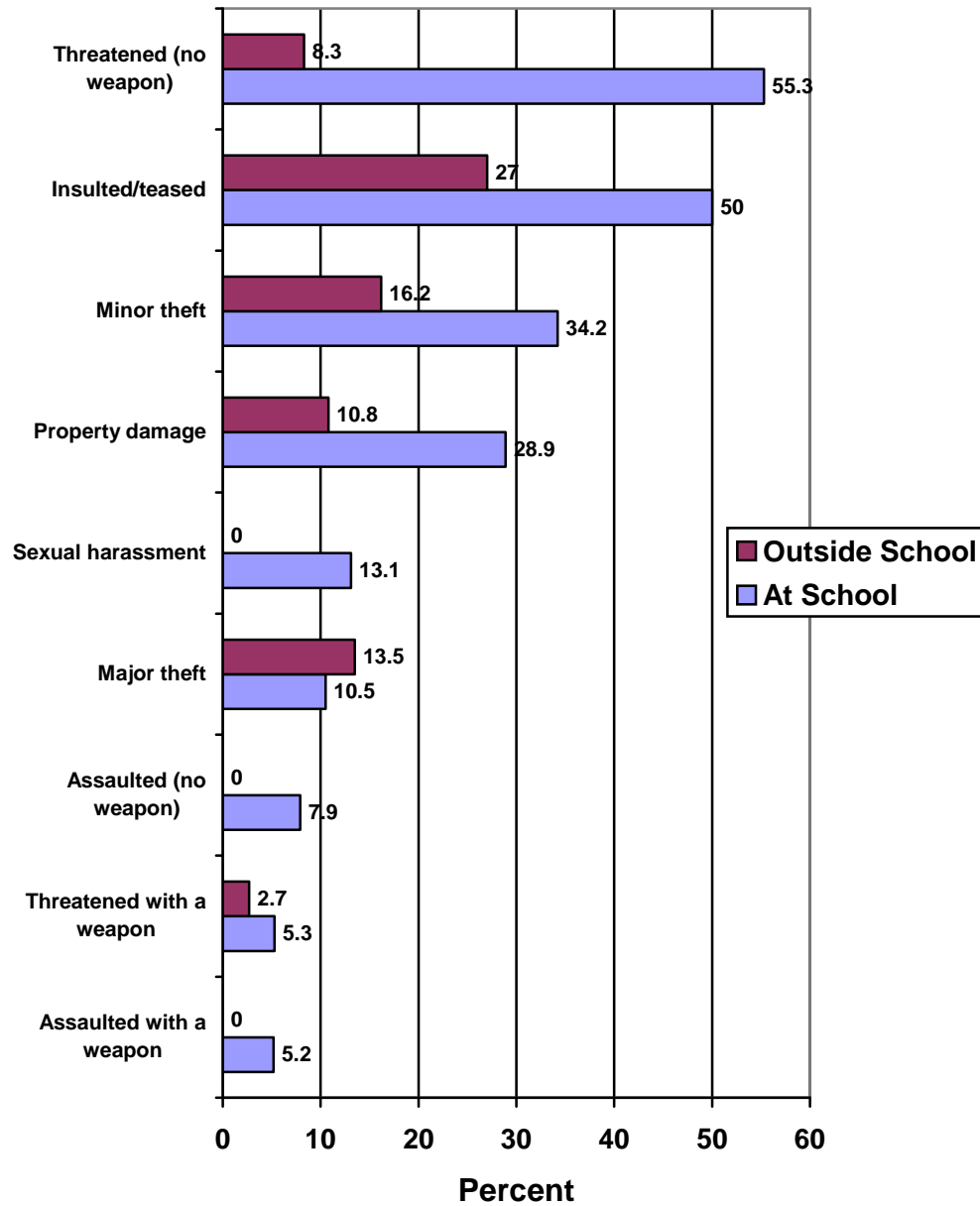
In general, the findings also suggest that staff members are much less likely to be victimized at school than students. For example, 38% of Westview students were physically assaulted at school over the past two years, compared to only 8% of staff members. Similarly, 23% of students were the victim of a major theft at school in the past two years, compared to only 10% of staff members. However, staff members (55%) were more likely to report being physically threatened at school -- without a weapon -- than students (40%). Furthermore, student and staff respondents are equally likely to report minor theft, property damage and being teased or insulted at school.

**TABLE 9:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who Have Experienced Different Types**  
**of Victimization in the Past Two Years, by School and Non-School Locations**

<b>TYPE OF VICTIMIZATION</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Once</b>	<b>Between 2 and 5 times</b>	<b>More than 5 Times</b>
Minor theft: at school	65.8	18.4	15.8	0.0
Minor theft: outside of school	83.8	8.1	8.1	0.0
Major theft: at school	89.5	5.3	2.6	2.6
Major theft: outside of school	86.5	10.8	2.7	0.0
Vandalism: at school	71.1	23.7	2.6	2.6
Vandalism: outside of school	89.2	5.4	5.4	0.0
Threatened: at school	44.7	42.1	5.3	7.9
Threatened: outside of school	91.7	8.3	0.0	0.0
Weapons threats: at school	94.7	5.3	0.0	0.0
Weapons threats: outside of school	97.3	2.7	0.0	0.0
Assaulted: at school	92.1	5.3	2.6	0.0
Assaulted: outside of school	100	0.0	0.0	0.0
Weapon assault: at school	94.7	2.6	2.6	0.0
Weapon assault: outside of school	100	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sexually harassed by a student at school	86.8	7.9	2.6	2.6
Sexually assaulted outside of school	100	0.0	0.0	0.0
Teased/Insulted by a student at school	50.0	23.7	15.8	10.5
Teased/Insulted: outside of school	73.0	16.2	10.8	0.0
Had a student talk back to you	15.8	7.9	23.7	52.6
Accused of unfair punishment by a student	45.9	13.5	24.3	16.2
Accused of unfair grading by a student	52.8	11.1	19.4	16.7
Attempted shooting	100	0.0	0.0	0.0
Robbery	100	0.0	0.0	0.0

Sample Size=39

**FIGURE 8:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who Experienced Various**  
**Types of Victimization Over the Past Two Years,**  
**by Location**



## WITNESSING CRIME AND STUDENT MISBEHAVIOUR

We also asked the staff members from Westview if they had ever witnessed specific types of student misbehaviour – including criminal activity – at their school over the past two years. (see Table 10 and Figure 9) The results indicate that:

- Almost all Westview staff members (97%) have witnessed a fight between students in the past two years. Indeed, 86% of staff members have witnessed a fight between students on more than one occasion and over a third (35%) have witnessed five or more fights at school over the past two years.
- Nine out of every ten staff members (92%) has also witnessed a student swearing at or insulting a teacher in the past two years. Over forty percent of staff members (42%) have witnessed such behaviour on five or more occasions in the past two years.
- Nine out of every ten staff members (92%) has also witnessed a student talking back to a teacher in the past two years. Indeed, almost two-thirds of staff members (65%) have witnessed a student talking back to a teacher on five or more occasions.
- Three out of four staff members (74%) have witnessed drunk or intoxicated students at school over the past two years. Almost a third (32%) have witnessed drunk or intoxicated students on five or more occasions.
- Seven out of ten staff members (71%) have witnessed a student threaten another student at school in the past two years. One quarter (26%) of staff respondents have witnessed a student threaten another student on five or more occasions.
- Six out of ten Westview staff members (58%) indicate that they have seen a student with a weapon – like a knife or a bat – at school over the past two years. Almost twenty percent (19%) have seen a student with a knife or bat on more than one occasion.
- Almost sixty percent (57%) of the staff members indicate that they have witnessed a student threaten a teacher in the past two years. Over a third (35%) have seen a student threaten a teacher on two or more occasions and 16% have witnessed such behaviour at least five times over the past two years.
- Forty-five percent of staff members report that they have witnessed a student engaging in theft at school over the past two years. Almost a third have witnessed a student engaging in theft on two or more occasions.

- Four out of ten of the staff respondents (38%) indicate that they have witnessed a student sexually harass another student over the past two years. Eleven percent have witnessed a student sexually harass another student on five or more occasions.
- One out of every four Westview staff members (26%) reports that they have witnessed students engaged in drug trafficking at school over the past two years.
- Only eight percent of staff members at Westview have witnessed a student sexually harass a teacher at school over the past two years.
- Finally, two of the 39 staff respondents from Westview (5%) indicate that they have seen a student with a gun at school in the past two years. One staff respondent reported that they had seen a student with a gun on two different occasions. The other indicated that they had seen a student with a gun on four occasions.

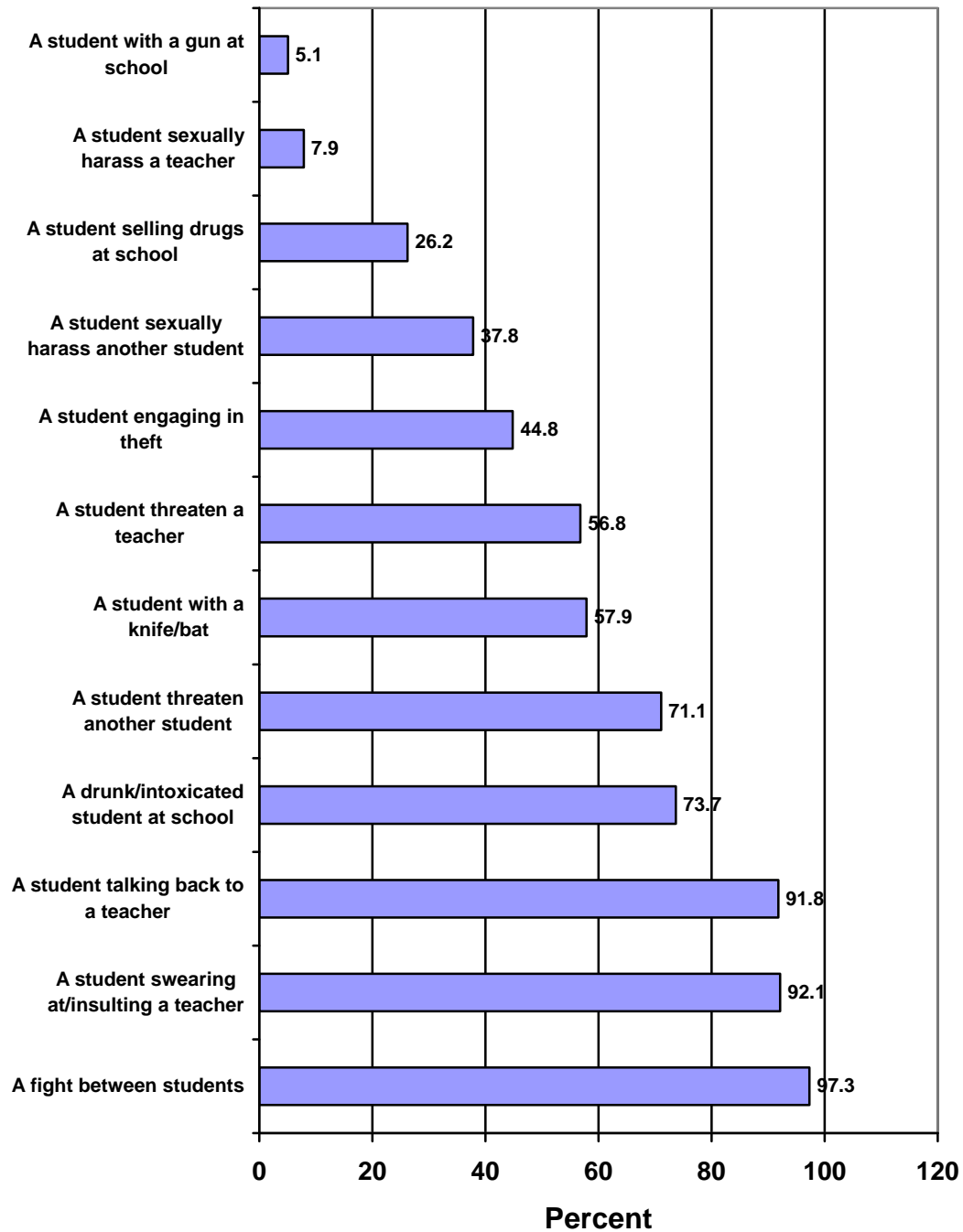
**TABLE 10:**

**Percent of Westview Staff Who Have Witnessed Different Types of Incidents in the Past Two Years, by School and Non-School Locations**

<b>TYPE OF INCIDENTS WITNESSED</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Once</b>	<b>Twice</b>	<b>Three Times</b>	<b>Four Times</b>	<b>Five Times or More</b>
A student talking back to a teacher	8.1	8.1	5.4	5.4	8.1	64.8
A student swearing at or insulting a teacher	7.9	10.5	15.8	15.8	7.9	42.1
A fight between students	2.7	10.8	27.0	13.5	10.8	35.1
Students who were drunk or intoxicated at school	26.3	5.3	18.4	2.6	15.8	31.6
A student threaten another student	28.9	15.8	18.4	5.3	5.3	26.4
A student threaten a teacher	43.2	21.6	13.5	2.7	2.7	16.2
A student sexually harass another student	62.2	10.8	10.8	2.7	2.7	10.8
A student engaging in theft	55.3	13.2	15.8	2.6	2.6	10.6
A student selling drugs	73.7	2.6	10.5	2.6	2.6	7.9
A student with a knife or bat	42.1	39.5	5.3	2.6	2.6	7.9
A student sexually harass a teacher	92.1	7.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
A student carrying a gun at school	97.4	0.0	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0

Sample Size=39

**FIGURE 9:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who Witnessed Various**  
**Incidents at School Over the Past Two Years**

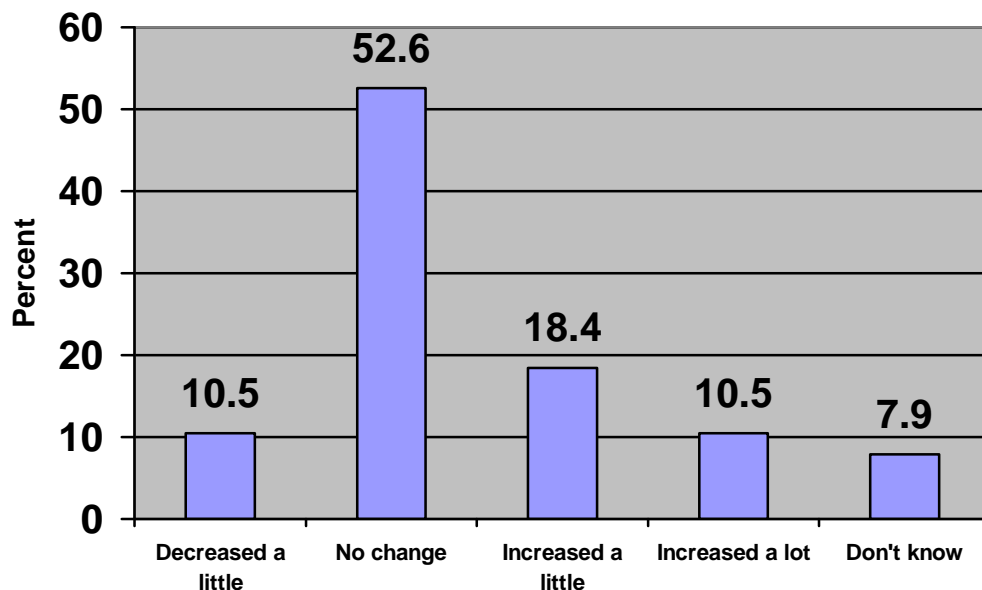




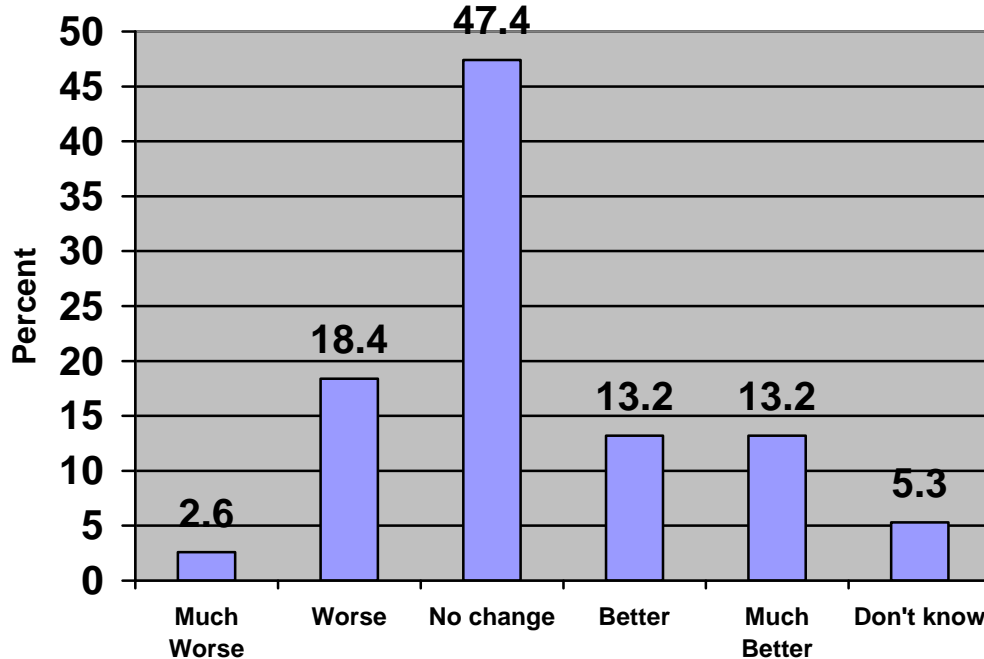
We also asked staff members whether they felt school safety at Westview had increased, decreased or remained about the same over the past two years. (see Figure 10) The results indicate that half of the staff respondents from Westview (53%) feel that school safety has not changed at all over the past two years. However, those who do perceive change tend to feel that things have changed for the better. One out of every three staff members (29%) believes that school safety at Westview has improved over the past two years. One out of every ten staff members (10%) feels that school safety at Westview has increased a great deal. It is important to note that, at least from a staff perspective, school safety appears to be more stable at Westview than at C.W. Jefferys. If you recall, 60% of the staff respondents from Jefferys felt that school safety had *decreased* at their school over the past two years. By contrast, only 10% of Westview staff respondents feel that school safety has deteriorated at their school over the same period of time.

We also asked the staff respondents whether they thought student behaviour at Westview had improved or gotten worse over the past two years. (see Figure 11) Almost half of the staff members from Westview (47%) perceived no change in student behaviour. However, one out of every four (26%) felt that student behaviour had improved. Nonetheless, 21% of Westview staff members still felt that student behaviour at their school had gotten worse over the past two years. As with general school safety, Westview staff members tend to be more positive about changes in student behaviour than the staff at C.W. Jefferys. For example, 61% of the staff at Jefferys felt that student behaviour at their school had gotten worse over the past two years, compared to only 21% of Westview staff. Similarly, 26% of Westview staff feel that student behaviour had improved, compared to only 8% of the staff respondents from Jefferys.

**FIGURE 10:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who Feel that School Safety**  
**has Increased or Decreased over the Past Two Years**



**FIGURE 11: Percent of Westview Staff Who Feel that Student Behaviour has Improved or Gotten Worse over the Past Two ears**



Staff respondents who felt that school safety and/or student behaviour had gotten worse at Westview in the past few years were asked to explain why they thought things had deteriorated. Staff often blamed growing problems with school safety and student behaviour on one or more of the following four themes: 1) A growing lack of respect among students for teachers; 2) Few or inconsistent consequences for student misbehaviour; and 3) Parents and a school administration that do not support teachers when they try to discipline students. The following comments are typical:

*Administration is too lax and too inconsistent in its dealings with students. Hall monitors have not been supported and hence are not as vigilant and consistent in their dealings with students as they used to be.*

*Grade 9 students seem angrier than before. The number of under-qualified students being transferred to grade 9 has increased.*

*Hard to say. The only thing that has to improve is there must be full cooperation from parents and the administration to keep students safe and learning in school. Parents' positive involvement will improve the behaviour of students.*

*I don't feel safety in the school has changed a great deal over the last 2 years. It goes up and down depending on the time of year. However, it eats up a lot of the administration's time which means they have less time to focus on other issues like curriculum, student assessment, etc.*

*I think school safety has gotten worse because of the following: 1) there are more acts of violence; 2) there is more vandalism; and 3) the students' mood has become more depressive. They seem angry because they don't feel protected. I feel this has made them act out more. They seem to talk back to teachers more; engage in more violent behaviour to show their strength and talk tough amongst their peers because they are afraid.*

*School safety has been the same over the last 2 years. There are still too many students in the halls and getting into trouble.*

*There is very little done to make students accountable for their actions and consequently students often defy authority and do whatever they want to do.*

*Too many students in the halls during class without passes.*

*I think student behaviour has worsened over the past two years. Male students at Westview do not know when to draw the line with the support staff – especially with respect to sex.*

*Nothing has been improved -- students with no parent or no supervision by parents or guardians will not help anything in the school. Media also has to focus on the bad things that students are learning from TV or other sources of ugly and inappropriate information that spoils the kids.*

*Student behaviour has been the same. There has always been a large number of disenfranchised students at this school who are unpredictable in their behaviour.*

*Students are more inclined to be confrontational (verbally) -- though they are a bit less physically confrontational with adults.*

*Teachers are tired, overworked, not properly supported, intimidated and some don't care enough. As a result, students run some classes, not the teachers. The administration has not done a good job of laying down consistent expectations and following through on them. We've also let some good teachers go.*

*There are really no consequences for the students' actions and sometimes students are praised for their rude behaviour. Students must be made to understand that there are consequences for rude and unruly behaviour.*

*There continue to be problems with too many students out of classes in the halls, etc. This seems to be episodic. It is worse at some points in the year and during some times of the day.*

## **STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL SAFETY STRATEGIES**

All staff respondents were asked to provide their opinions about fourteen different strategies that might improve school safety at Westview. (see Table 11 and Figure 12) The results indicate that:

- There is complete support for programs that would increase parental involvement in the educational system. Indeed, all 39 staff respondents from Westview (100%) indicated that increasing parental involvement would be a good or very good idea.
- Over ninety percent of staff respondents (92%) feel that it would be a good or very good idea to increase the number of after school programs at Westview.
- Nine out of ten Westview staff respondents (89%) think it would be a good or very good idea to increase the number of security cameras in the halls.
- Over eighty percent of staff respondents (82%) feel that it would be a good or very good idea to increase counselling programs for troubled students.
- Eight out of ten staff respondents (80%) from Westview think it would be a good or very good idea to hire trained security guards to patrol the school.
- Three quarters of all staff respondents (76%) also feel that it would be a good idea to increase the number of hall monitors at Westview.
- Seven out of ten staff respondents (71%) believe that it would be a good or very good idea to introduce photo identification badges for all students. Such badges would be worn by all students when they are at school or on school property.
- Two-thirds of staff respondents (66%) believe that increasing police patrols at Westview is a good or very good idea.
- An additional 61% of Westview staff believe that it would be a good idea to allow the police to search student lockers for drugs, guns and other contraband.
- Six out of ten staff members (61%) think it would be a good or very good idea to allow school officials to search student lockers.

- Interestingly, while support for security cameras in the halls is widespread, there is less enthusiasm for security cameras in the classroom. Just over half of staff respondents (56%) from Westview think it would be a good idea to install security cameras in the classrooms. By contrast, 90% think it would be a good idea to install more cameras in the halls.
- Over half of all staff respondents (55%) feel that it would be a good or very good idea to create one entrance/exit to the school.
- However, less than one-third of staff members (29%) think that hiring more racial minority teachers will increase safety at Westview.
- Finally, less than one quarter of staff members (24%), think it would be a good or very good idea to install metal detectors at Westview.

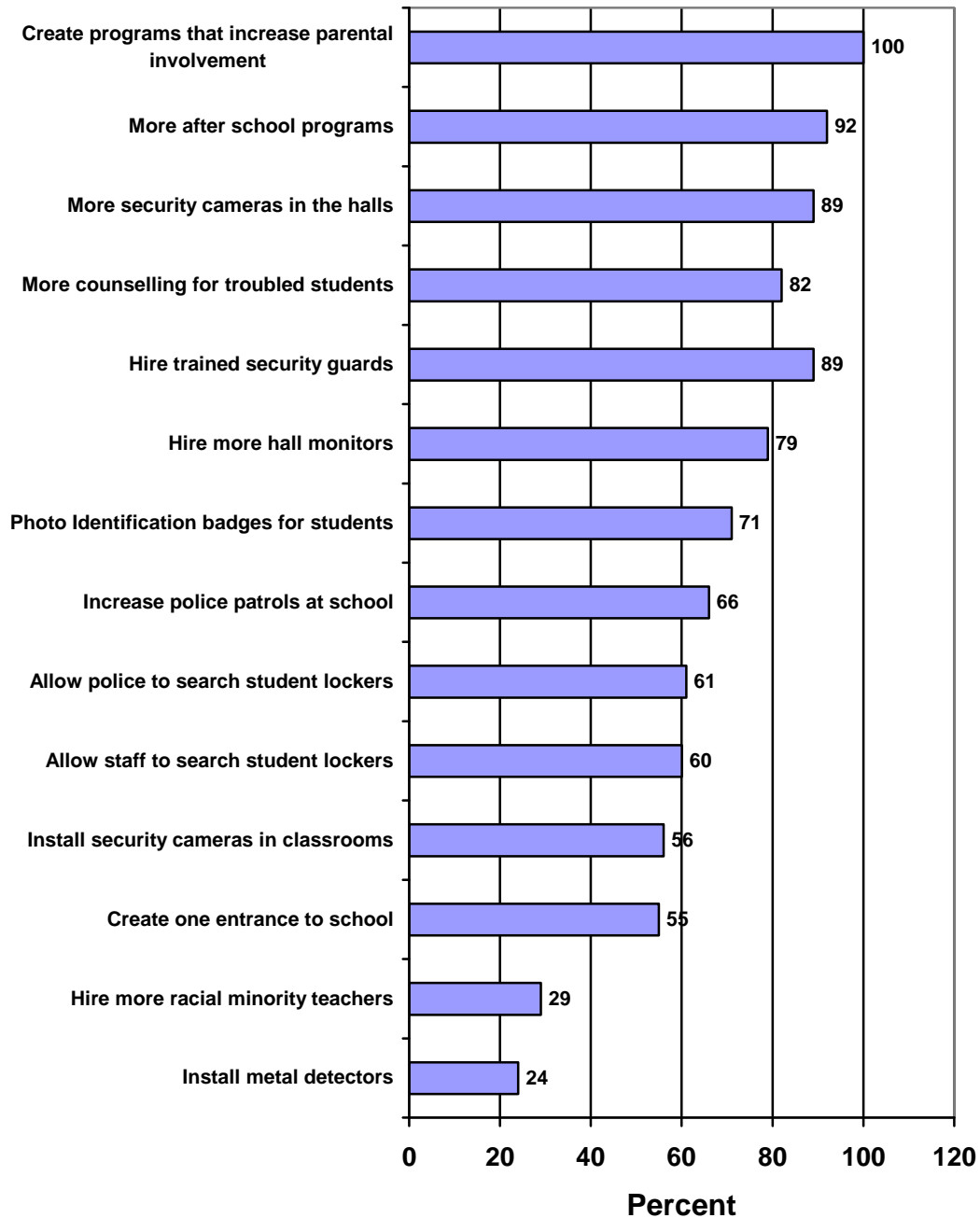
In summary, the staff respondents from Westview support a wide variety of strategies designed to increase school safety. However, support is limited for metal detectors and for the hiring of more racial minority staff. It is important to note that the students at Westview appear to be more supportive of metal detectors (45% think they are a good idea) than teachers (23% think they are a good idea). Teachers, however, appear to be more supportive of all other strategies. For example, 71% of staff members think it would be a good idea for students to have identification badges, compared to only 44% of students. Similarly, 61% percent of teachers think that the police should be given the power to search student lockers, compared to only 35% of students. Furthermore, 55% of staff respondents feel that establishing one entrance in and out of school is a good idea. By contrast, only 31% of students support the idea of a one-way entrance and exit.

**TABLE 11:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who Think Specific Strategies are a “Good”**  
**or a “Bad” Idea With Respect to Increasing School Safety**

School Safety Strategy	A Very Good Idea	A Good Idea	A Bad Idea	A Very Bad Idea	Would Make No Difference	Don't Know
Installing security cameras in the halls	56.8	32.4	2.7	0.0	5.4	2.7
Installing security cameras in classrooms	26.5	29.4	11.8	5.9	11.8	14.7
Increasing the number of hall monitors	44.7	31.6	0.0	2.6	15.8	5.3
Increasing the number of trained security guards	47.1	32.4	0.0	5.9	2.9	11.8
Installing metal detectors	15.8	7.9	23.7	18.4	13.2	21.1
Give school officials the power to search lockers	34.2	26.3	13.2	7.9	5.3	13.2
Give police the power to search lockers	36.1	25.0	11.1	0.0	5.6	13.9
Photo identification cards for all students	44.7	26.3	5.3	5.3	15.8	2.6
Establish one entrance to the school (lock all other doors)	39.5	15.8	18.4	7.9	15.8	2.6
Increase the number of police patrols in the school	21.1	44.7	21.1	0.0	5.3	7.9
Provide more counselling for troubled students	63.2	18.4	2.6	0.0	13.2	2.6
Provide more after school programs	68.4	23.7	0.0	5.3	2.6	0.0
Develop programs to make parents more involved in their children's education	73.0	27.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hire more racial minority teachers	13.2	15.8	5.3	7.9	42.1	15.8

Sample Size = 39

**FIGURE 12:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who Feel that Specific**  
**School**  
**Safety Strategies are a "Very Good" or "Good" Idea**



We also asked the staff members from Westview whether they agreed or disagreed with various safety-related statements about their school. (see Table 12 and Figure 13) The results indicate that:

- Nine out of ten staff members (89%) agree that parents need to take more responsibility for the behaviour of their children at school.
- Eight out of ten staff members (78%) agree that noise in the halls during class time makes it difficult to teach.
- Two-thirds of the staff respondents from Westview (66%) agree that students at Westview know they can get away with bad behaviour.
- Half of the staff (51%) at Westview agree that, when it comes to the punishment of students, they are supported by the administration. However, 44% *disagree* with the statement: “The administration at this school always supports teachers who try to punish badly behaved students.”
- Exactly half of the staff respondents (50%) agree that, in general, student discipline at Westview is too lenient.
- Almost half the staff respondents (46%) from Westview agree that the administration needs to expel more students. Similarly, 41% agree that the administration at Westview needs to suspend more students.
- Over one third of the staff respondents (36%) agree that Westview students often talk back to teachers during class.
- Over one third of staff respondents (34%) agree that the police need to be called to Westview more frequently.
- Over one third of staff respondents (34%) report that they are sometimes afraid of being accused of racism by students.
- Finally, one out of every four staff respondents (25%) agrees that they fear some of the students at Westview.

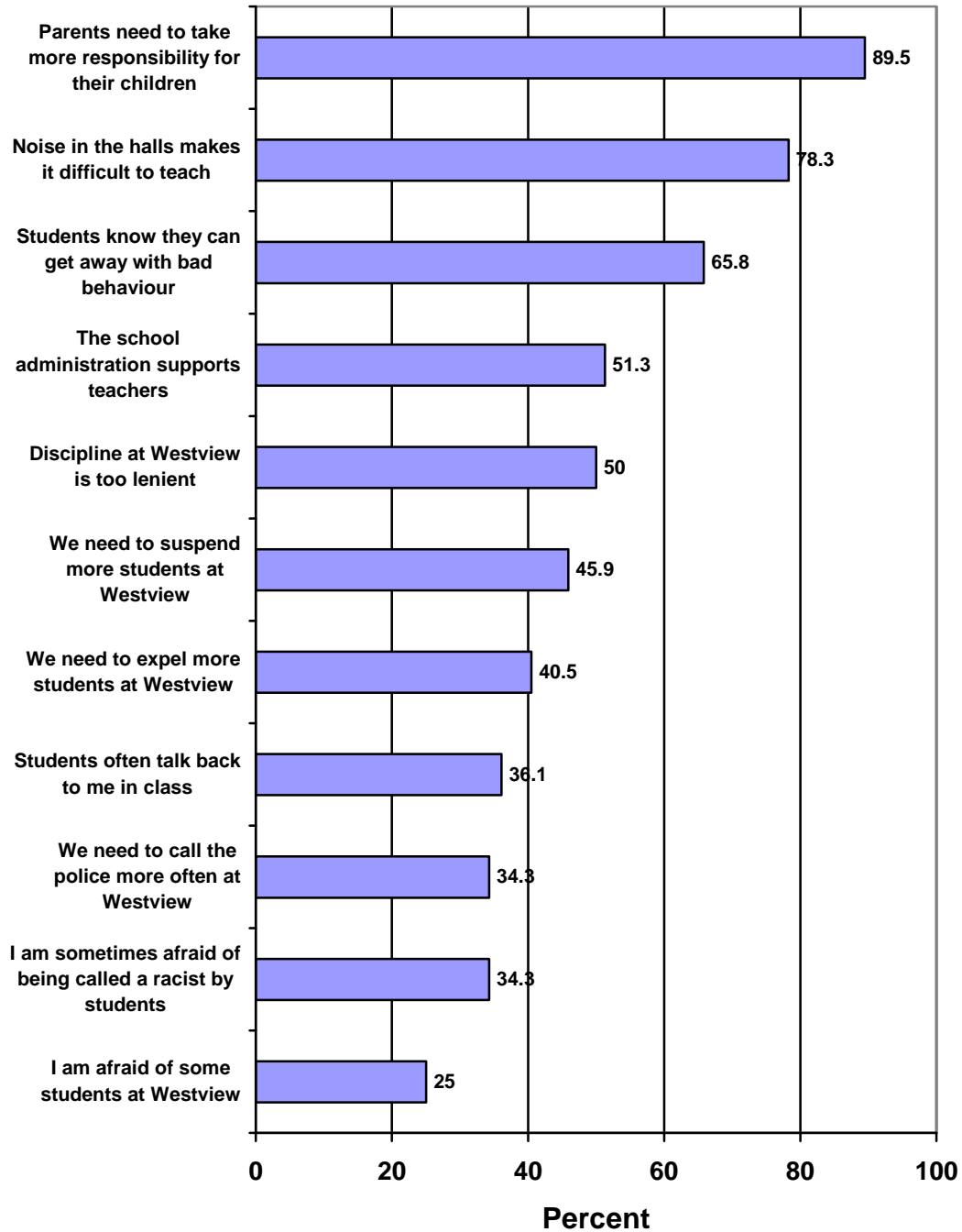


**TABLE 12:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who Agree or Disagree with Various**  
**Statements About Their School**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
Parents need to take more responsibility for how their children behave at school	68.4	21.1	2.6	2.6	5.3
Students at this school know they can get away with bad behaviour	23.7	42.1	31.6	2.6	0.0
Discipline at Westview has become too lenient over the past few years	18.4	31.6	26.3	13.2	10.5
Noise from students in the halls often makes it difficult for me to teach	37.8	40.5	21.6	0.0	0.0
To increase order at Westview we need to call the police more often to deal with unruly students	13.2	21.1	44.7	7.9	13.2
To increase order at Westview we need to expel more students	18.9	21.6	43.2	13.5	2.7
To increase order at Westview we need to suspend more students	13.5	32.4	32.4	18.9	2.7
Students often talk back to me in class	13.9	22.2	33.3	27.8	2.8
I am afraid of some of the students who go to this school	11.1	13.9	47.2	22.2	5.6
I am sometimes afraid of being called a racist by the students at this school	13.2	21.1	28.9	34.2	2.6
The administration at this school supports the teachers who try to punish badly behaved students	16.2	35.1	29.7	13.5	5.4

Sample Size=38

**FIGURE 13:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who "Strongly Agree" or**  
**"Agree" with Specific Statements about School Safety**



We also asked the staff respondents from Westview if they had any further ideas about how to make their school safer for both students and staff. The staff had many, sometimes contradictory, suggestions. For example, while some felt it was important to remove students with behavioural issues from the school, others were clearly against such an idea and thought that students were sometimes treated too harshly. However, most of the staff members who participated in the survey did feel that more cooperation was needed between teachers, parents and the administration. Many respondents also identified a need for more consistency with respect to student discipline and that the school required more resources to develop meaningful programs for students. The following comments reflect some of the ideas the Westview staff had with respect to increasing school safety:

*1) We need more VPs and Principals in the Hallways; 2) Students who have severe emotional, mental, behavioural and social problems and have no parental support should be placed in a more appropriate school; 3) Parents need to have some skills and consequences training; 4) More funding for after school programs; 5) Need attendance counsellors to help keep track of students with clear consequences; 6) Maximum consequences for crime on school property; 7) Teachers need to be supported by the administration; and 8) Teachers, parents, VPs, guidance counsellors should focus on 5 students per year and track their progress from grade 9 to grade 10.*

*Close some back hallways. Close the Oakdale doors. There should be no "cross the street" traffic except during lunchtime. Students often cut class and spend their time at nearby eateries.*

*There needs to be consistent consequences for students who do not follow rules.*

*Guest speakers to talk about drugs, gangs/violence and career opportunities. Speakers who can provide hope and inspiration for kids.*

*Identify at-risk students from a much earlier age (i.e., Grade Three). Develop a mentorship program in the school. Program could call on old students, community leaders, etc. Could be alike a big-brother or big-sister program. It could involve sports and the arts. Kids need some measure to make them less vulnerable to negative influences. The more mentorship and the more school-based activities, the safer and more successful the students.*

*If the rules are made, they must be strongly enforced. Otherwise, don't make rules. Because being lax about rules is part of the problem. Administrators have to take the lead.*

*Many of our students come from families that struggle financially and emotionally. We have students from other countries who have witnessed torture or have been the victim of torture. Only 25% of my students share a*

*daily meal with family members on any kind of consistent basis. What would really make our school safer would be to have a society which provided more resources to parents so they didn't have to work 2 or more jobs and exist in a constant state of stress. In the school system, the main resources that we need are time, personnel and the flexibility to use these in ways that will benefit our students -- particularly those in crisis. At present, the Safe School Act, the funding formula and staffing agreements do not allow this. If we had the resources, the following supports would be helpful: more guidance counsellors, smaller class sizes to allow for more individual attention, staffing for initiatives like a study hall, a "time out" room, in-school suspension program, more in-school access to social workers and/or community outreach workers, E.A's for ESL classes, a highly structured, smaller supportive program for the very few students who cannot cope in a conventional setting.*

*More alternative programs, more attendance support (i.e., attendance counsellors). More alternative programs, attendance contracts, wider variety of extra curricular programs, better communication between middle and secondary schools, more mentors, wider variety of school exit strategies.*

*We need a greater presence of teachers and administrators in the halls -- before/after/at lunchtime. We need parent volunteers.*

*Parents should get more involved in their kids education. They should be more accessible: Parents, teachers and the administration should work more as a team with students. There should be more of a consistent approach towards every aspect of a student's life. We need to involve the whole community -- parents, teachers, administrators, support staff, the police, etc.*

*Stricter enforcement of the school uniform by staff.*

*We need more student-run clubs and programs.*

*Student council members can be of great help to make the school a safer place. Students know one another better and the school should hold meetings with council members to update safety issues. O.S.R. must be looked into to figure out the mental health of every student. Students who're disruptive and naughty must be given proper counselling.*

*Students who are constantly in trouble should not be allowed to return to the school. Students who have been caught selling drugs or carrying a weapon with the intent of hurting someone should be sent to an alternative school. Chances are given too many times. A three-strikes-and-you're-out policy should be implemented so that it gives students who are always*

*causing the problem the message that they're done and not welcome anymore.*

*Train Hall Monitors to be more sensitive to students needs. Remove staff who harass students and provoke them into acting out. Make it mandatory for parents to go to the police station with their child if he or she gets into trouble. Hold students accountable for their actions.*

*Use the cameras to identify those in the halls who are causing problems. Have real consequences once identified.*

*Westview needs more resources and all teachers should be on the same page when it comes to discipline. There is a great deal of discrepancy in how teachers deal with unruly students.*

*Know that this is a public school and that there are many cultures and religions. I think I can safely say that a daily reading from various places -- from the Bible, the Koran or other spiritual sources -- would be good for everyone to hear on a daily basis. We need more words of kindness, good deeds and empathy.*

*Whatever the punishment strategy that you select for the school must be followed by all teachers and the administration. Students must not have too much lenience in bad behaviours and bad learning. They must know that there is a punishment from parents and the school staff. Too much lenience by some people is spoiling their lives. Students' responsibilities are learning in the school but not neglecting their behaviour. Seventy percent of the responsibility should be with the parents and 30% with the teachers. It is the other way now.*

## **STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF APPROPRIATE PUNISHMENTS**

We next asked our staff respondents from Westview what they thought were the appropriate punishments for seven different types of student misbehaviour: 1) Talking back to teachers; 2) Wearing a hat in school; 3) Selling drugs at school; 4) Bringing weapons to school; 5) Stealing; 6) Fighting at school; and 7) Teasing or insulting other students. (see Table 13 and Figures 14 and 15) The results indicate that:

- Westview teachers almost always believe that some kind of punishment is warranted – even for minor behavioural infractions like wearing a hat in school. By contrast, 73% of Westview students think that there should be no punishment for wearing a hat in school, 43% think there should be no punishment for talking back to teachers and 37% think there should be no punishment for teasing or insulting other students.

- Half of all Westview staff members (51%) think that parents should be called when a student talks back to a teacher. An additional 50% think the student should receive counselling, and 42% think the student should be given a detention.<sup>13</sup> By contrast, only 21% of students think parents should be called for this type of misbehaviour, only 20% agree that counselling is necessary and only 33% think that a detention is warranted. Furthermore, one-third of staff members (33%) think that students should be suspended for talking back to a teacher, compared to only 14% of students.
- Over half of the staff members surveyed (53%) think that Westview students should be given a detention for wearing a hat in school, compared to only 18% of students. Similarly, 40% think that parents should be called for hat wearing, compared to only 8% of students. Over a third of staff respondents (37%) suggest another form of punishment – which generally consists of confiscating the hat.
- Almost three-quarters of Westview staff respondents (73%) feel that parents should be called when a student insults or teases another student, two-thirds (67%) think that counselling is needed, 47% think a detention is warranted and 39% think that the offending student should be suspended. By contrast, only 20% of Westview students think that parents should be called for this type of indiscretion and only 19% think a suspension is justified. However, students are just as likely to recommend a detention for such verbal abuse (40%).
- Westview staff are much harsher than Westview students when it comes to punishing criminal behaviour. For example, 63% of staff members feel that the police should be called when a student is caught selling drugs, compared to only 36% of students. Similarly, 62% of staff members feel that the students should be expelled for drug trafficking, compared to only 40% of students.
- Seven out of ten Westview staff members (68%) feel that the police should be called when dealing with students who have brought weapons to school. An additional 57% feel that the student should be expelled. By contrast, only 42% of students think the police should be called for such behaviour and only 48% believe the student should be expelled.
- Almost two-thirds of the staff respondents (65%) from Westview believe that the school should call the police to deal with students who have been caught stealing at school. An additional 47% think such students should be suspended and 25% think they should be expelled. By contrast, only 24% of students think the police should be called for stealing and 57% recommend

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<sup>13</sup> It should be noted that respondents could recommend more than one type of punishment.

suspension. However, students (18%) are also less likely to recommend expulsion for student thieves.

- Finally, 50% of Westview staff members believe that the school should call the police to deal with students who have been involved in fights. An additional 62% think such students should be suspended and 20% recommend expulsion. By contrast, only 4% of students think the police should be called to deal with fights at school. However, students are equally as likely (61%) to think students who fight should be suspended.

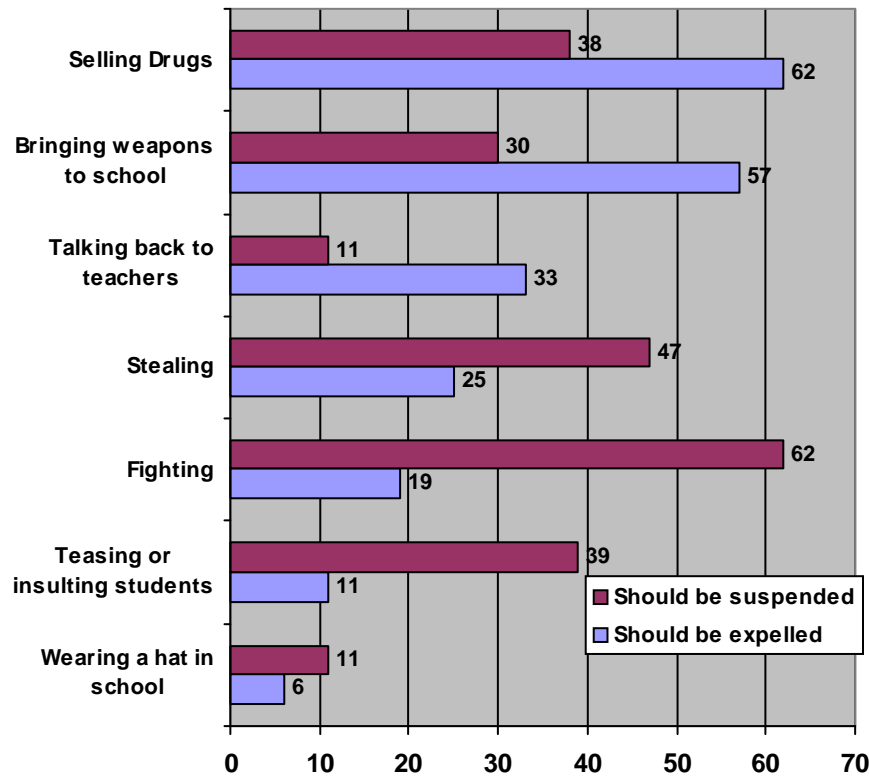
In summary, most faculty members recommend calling the police to deal with criminal activity at school – including drug trafficking, weapons use and stealing. Half of all staff members also believe that the police should be called to deal with fights between students. Not surprisingly, staff members from Westview, in general, support far harsher punishments for student misbehaviour than Westview students.

**TABLE 13:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who Support Specific Types of Punishment,**  
**By Type of Disciplinary Infraction**

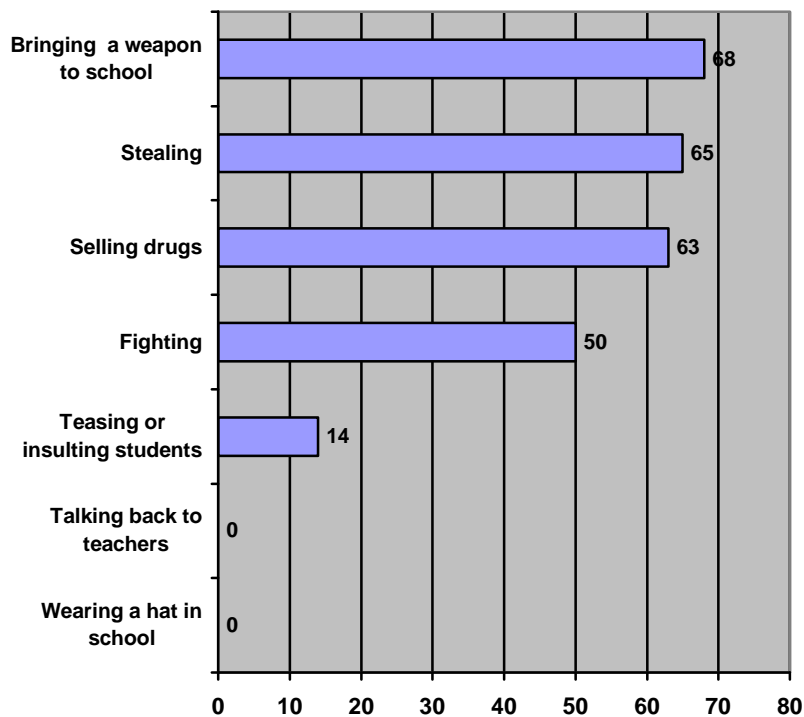
<b>Recommended Punishment</b>	<b>Talking Back To Teachers</b>	<b>Wearing a hat in School</b>	<b>Selling Drugs</b>	<b>Bringing Weapons To School</b>	<b>Stealing</b>	<b>Fighting</b>	<b>Teasing or Insulting other students</b>
<b>No punishment</b>	5.6	11.4	5.4	5.4	5.6	8.3	5.6
<b>Detention</b>	41.7	52.9	5.4	10.8	16.7	22.2	47.2
<b>Call parents</b>	51.4	40.0	43.2	54.1	52.8	58.3	73.0
<b>Counselling</b>	50.0	37.1	32.4	35.1	36.1	36.1	66.7
<b>Other type of punishment</b>	14.3	37.1	10.8	8.1	13.9	17.1	11.4
<b>Suspension</b>	33.3	11.1	37.8	29.7	47.2	62.2	38.9
<b>Expulsion</b>	11.1	5.7	62.2	56.8	25.0	19.4	11.1
<b>Call police</b>	0.0	0.0	63.2	68.4	64.9	50.0	13.9

Sample Size = 39

**Figure 14: Percent of Westview Staff Who think that Students Should be Suspended or Expelled for Specific Disciplinary Infractions**



**Figure 15: Percent of Westview Staff Who think that the Police Should be Called to the School to Deal with Specific Disciplinary Infractions**





Staff respondents were then asked if they agreed or disagreed with a number of additional statements about Westview. (see Table 14) The results indicate that:

- Almost all staff (95%) either agree (47%) or strongly agree (47%) that they enjoy working at Westview.
- Almost all staff members (87%) either agree (55%) or strongly agree (32%) that most students at Westview are well behaved.
- Eight out of ten staff members (79%) agree that incidents like the shooting death of Jordan Manners could happen at any school.
- Almost three-quarters of all staff members (73%) agree that, in general, Westview is a safe school.
- Almost two-thirds of staff members (65%) agree that most of the problems at Westview are caused by the poverty in the surrounding area. However, 24% of the staff members disagree with this statement.
- Almost sixty percent of staff respondents (59%) agree that safety issues at Westview have been exaggerated. However, 32% disagree with this statement.
- Over forty percent of the staff respondents (42%) agree that they are worried that future shootings will take place at Westview. Thirty-two percent are not concerned about shootings.
- One in three staff members (32%) agree that many of the current students at Westview will eventually acquire a criminal record. Almost seventy percent disagree with this statement.
- Only 22% of staff respondents agreed that Westview needs more racial minority teachers. Over half of the sample (57%) disagreed with this statement.
- Most staff members believe that the school system can assist poor children. For example, 76% of the staff respondents disagree with the statement: “The school system cannot help the poor people who live in this neighbourhood”.
- Only 16% of staff respondents agree that many students from Westview will have a tough time finding a good job. Seventy-two percent disagree.
- Finally, a mere 11% of the staff respondents agree that the majority of students at Westview will eventually go to university. Almost eighty percent disagree with this statement.

**TABLE 14:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who Agree or Disagree with Various**  
**Statements About Their School**

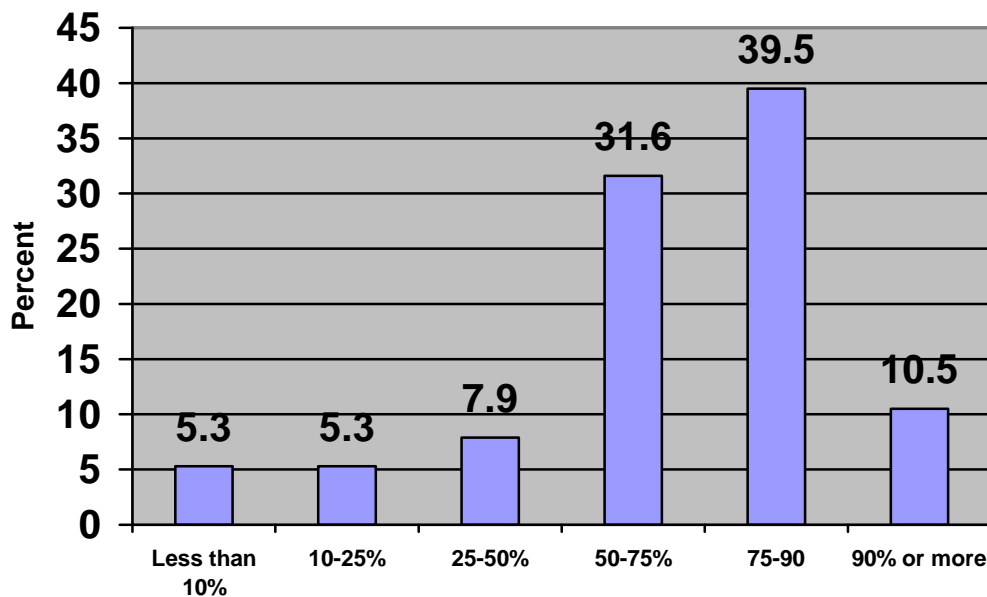
Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
I enjoy working with the students at Westview	47.4	47.4	2.6	0.0	0.0
Most of the students at Westview are well behaved	31.6	55.3	10.5	2.6	0.0
Incidents like the shooting of Jordan Manners could happen at any school	34.2	44.7	13.2	7.9	0.0
In general, Westview is a safe school	21.6	51.4	16.2	10.8	0.0
Most of the problems at this school are caused by the poverty in the community	37.8	27.0	18.9	5.4	10.8
I am worried that more shootings will take place at this school	8.6	34.3	22.9	8.6	25.7
The safety problems at Westview have been exaggerated	21.6	37.8	27.0	5.4	8.1
The school system cannot help the poor people who live in this neighbourhood	8.1	10.8	35.1	40.5	5.4
Westview needs more racial minority teachers	10.8	10.8	40.5	16.2	21.6
Many of the students at this school will eventually have a criminal record	10.5	21.1	34.2	23.7	10.5
Many of the students at this school will have a tough time finding a good job	6.3	9.4	50.0	21.9	12.5
Most of the students at this school will go to university	2.6	7.9	55.3	23.7	10.5

Sample Size=39

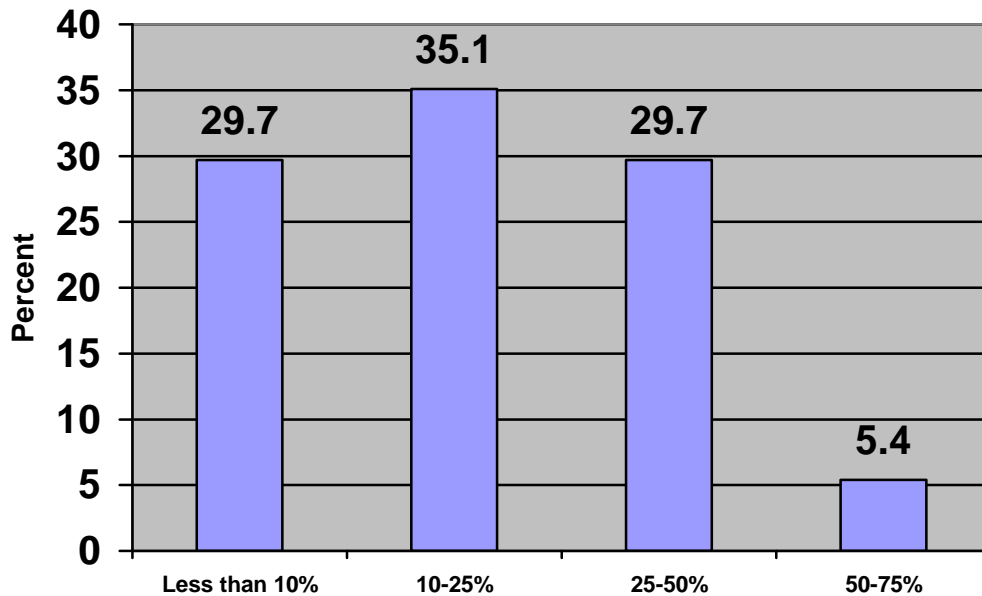
The fact that Westview staff members feel that the majority of students at Westview are well behaved is reinforced by the results presented in Figure 16. Indeed, half of all staff respondents report that more than 75% of all Westview students are well behaved. An additional 32% of staff members believe that between 50 and 75 percent of the students at Westview are well-behaved. By contrast, only 20% of respondents believe that less than half of the students at Westview are well behaved.

Although faculty report that most students at Westview are well behaved, they are not as optimistic about these students' chances at a university education. (see Figure 17) Indeed, only 5% of the faculty think that over 50% of current Westview students will graduate from university. By contrast, 65% of the staff members who participated in the survey think that less than 25% of current Westview students will earn a university degree. These figures are in stark contrast to student expectations. If you recall, 53% of the student respondents from Westview believed that they would go to university and an additional 17% felt they would graduate high school and go to a community college.

**FIGURE 16:**  
**Staff Estimates of the Proportion of Current Westview**  
**Students Who are Well Behaved**



**FIGURE 17:**  
**Staff Estimates of the Proportion of Current Westview**  
**Students Who Will Graduate from University**

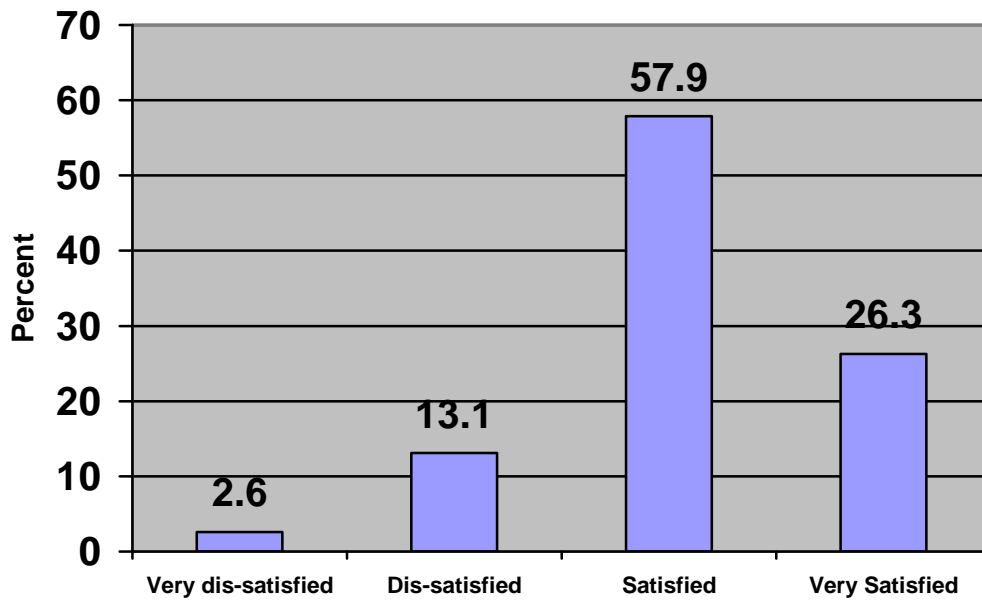


## **JOB SATISFACTION**

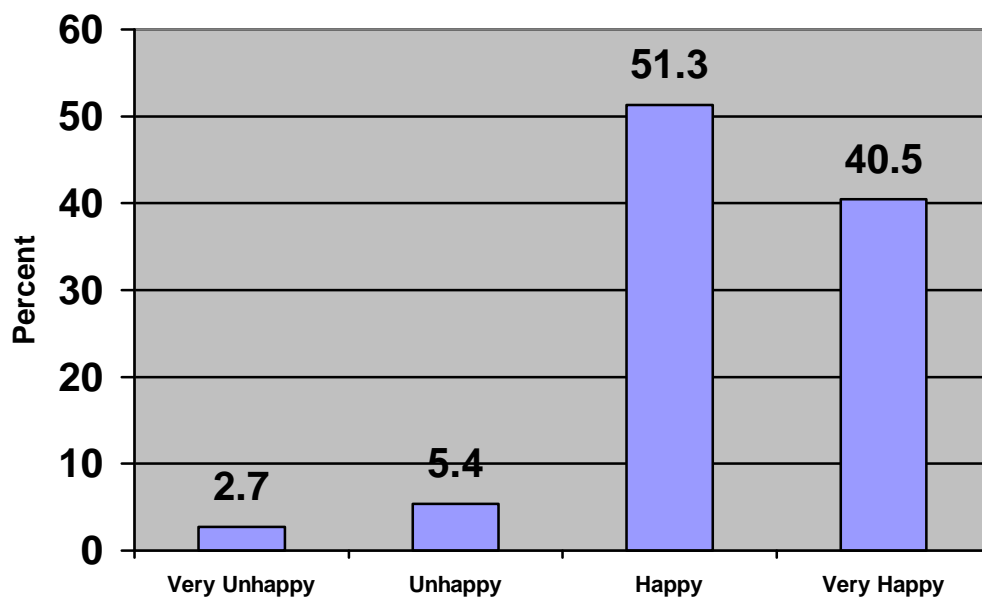
The questionnaire also asked two questions related to job satisfaction: 1) How satisfied are you with the current administration at Westview? And 2) How happy are you with your job at Westview? The results suggest that, at the time of the survey (November 2007), the vast majority of Westview staff members (84%) were satisfied with the current school administration. Indeed, more than a quarter of staff respondents (26%) indicated that they were very satisfied with the administration. (see Figure 18) Additional analysis reveals that, at the time they were surveyed, the staff at Westview were much happier with their school's administration than their staff counterparts at C.W. Jefferys. Indeed, in June 2007, 76% of the staff respondents from Jefferys indicated that they were dissatisfied with the current school administration. By contrast, only 16% of the staff respondents from Westview indicated that they were dissatisfied with the administrators at their school.

In addition to being generally satisfied with their school's administration, almost all staff respondents from Westview were either happy (51%) or very happy (41%) with their job at the school. Only 8% of staff members indicated that they were either unhappy or very unhappy. (see Figure 19) Interestingly, the staff respondents were somewhat more likely to report that they were "very happy" with their job (41%) than the staff respondents from C.W. Jefferys (20%).

**FIGURE 18:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who are Satisfied with the**  
**Current School Administration (at time of survey)**



**FIGURE 19:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who are**  
**Happy with Their Current Job**

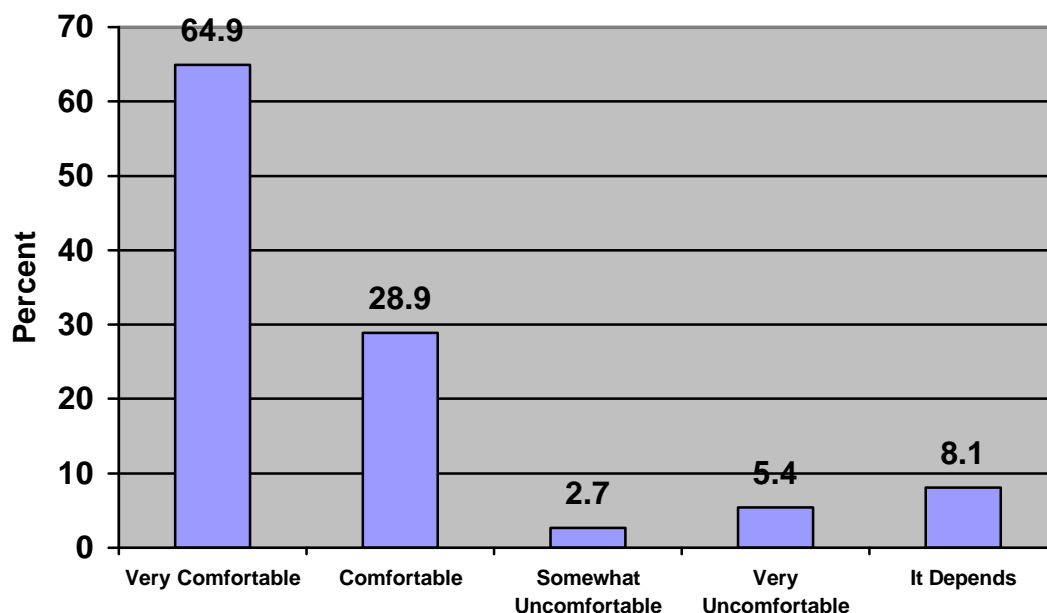


## REPORTING SCHOOL SAFETY ISSUES

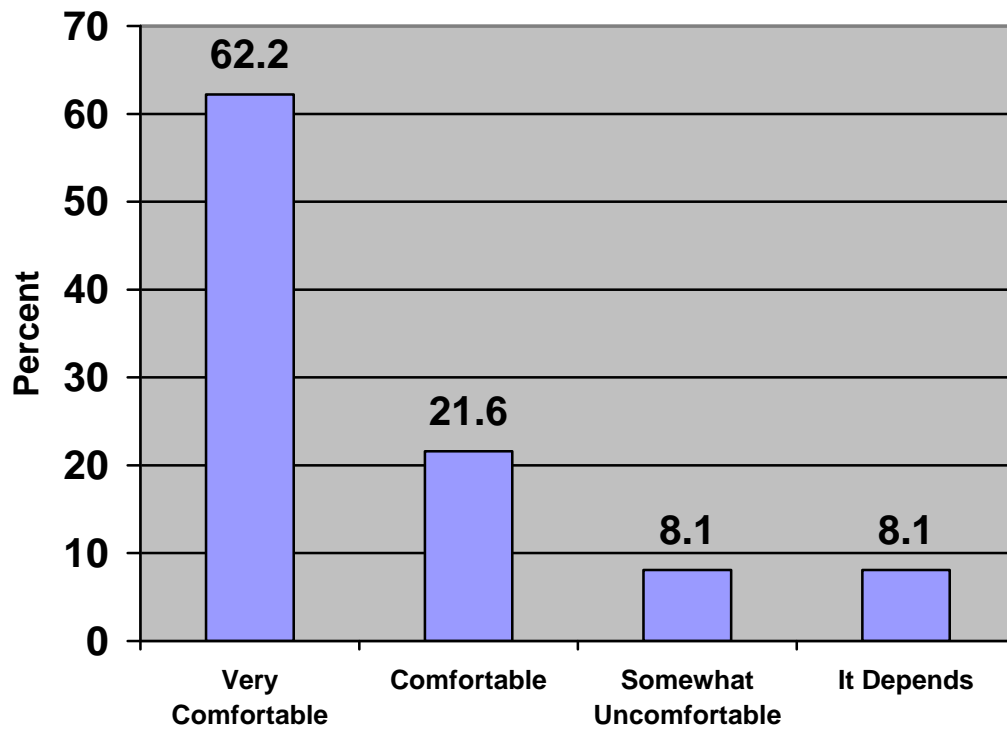
The staff respondents from Westview were also asked a series of questions about how comfortable or uncomfortable they would feel expressing concerns about school safety to school administrators or School Board officials. In general, the results further reveal the general good will most Westview teachers have towards the current school administration. For example, almost all staff respondents (94%) indicated that they would feel comfortable (29%) or very comfortable (65%) reporting concerns about a potentially violent student to the administrators at their school. (see Figure 20) By contrast, only 8% would be uncomfortable expressing such concerns. Similarly, the majority of staff respondents from Westview (84%) report that they would feel comfortable or very comfortable expressing concerns about school safety to the administrators at Westview. In fact, 84% of staff members would be comfortable or very comfortable making such a complaint. By contrast, only 8% report that expressing such a concern would be uncomfortable. (see Figure 21)

In general, Westview staff members are not overly worried about the consequences of making a complaint. (see Table 15) Indeed, the majority of staff respondents from Westview disagree that complaining to school administrators or school board officials could hurt their career or reputation. However, some staff did express reservations. For example, 17% felt that complaining to school administrators about safety issues could hurt their career and 13% felt that complaining could hurt their reputation. Furthermore, one out every four respondents (24%) felt that complaining to School Board officials about a Principal or Vice-Principal could damage their career.

**FIGURE 20: Percent of Westview Staff Who Would Feel Comfortable or Uncomfortable Reporting a Violent Student to Administrators**



**FIGURE 21: Percent of Westview Staff Who Would Feel Comfortable or Uncomfortable Expressing Concerns About School Safety to Administrators**



**TABLE 15:  
Percent of Westview Staff Who Agree or Disagree with Various Statements About School Administrators**

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
Complaining to school administrators about unsafe conditions at school could hurt or damage my teaching career.	5.6	11.1	2.8	55.6	25.0
Complaining to school administrators about unsafe conditions at school could hurt or damage my reputation.	5.4	8.1	5.4	59.5	21.6
Complaining to School Board officials about a Principal or Vice-Principal could damage my career.	13.2	10.5	7.9	26.3	42.1

Sample Size=39

We then asked our Westview staff respondents: “If you thought the administration at your school was not doing a good job at keeping students and teachers safe would you complain to the Principal or Vice-Principal? Why or why not?. The comments suggest that teachers are split on whether they would voice their concerns or not. The following are comments from staff respondents at Westview who indicated that they would not complain to the Principal or Vice Principal:

*From past experience I would not make a report to the Principal. I would be inclined to make a report to the Board. But at this point in my life I would not worry about my career.*

*I was involved in an incident and I strongly felt that the administration down played the whole situation. I do not think I would go to the administration again unless absolutely necessary.*

*I would not complain because the administrators would give you rougher classes in the next semester. They also might prevent promotion or label you a complainer.*

*I would not feel comfortable complaining to the administration. There is one administrator who deals somewhat leniently with students and I feel it may or could be labelled a racist.*

*It would depend a great deal on the administrative team. In the past when I've had concerns about an administrator and complained I felt I'd really stuck my neck out and worried about the consequences. There must be a mechanism in place to allow staff to address concerns up the chain command.*

*No. I'd complain to the Union. But first I'd try to see what other teachers felt. I'm not a complainer much so I'd probably just do my job and grin and bear it because if word ever got back to the administration about your complaint your life at work would become hell. Then again, safety is a basic issue and cannot be ignored. Our Union rep should take it up.*

*No, because everyone thinks here that complaining is a negative characteristic of a teacher. Suggestions that are given by teachers are taken in a negative way. They put the complaint in the teacher's file. They don't think or take it as a good thing.*

*No. I have tried (to report) and absolutely nothing was done. I looked like the bad guy who was getting the student in trouble and the administration was looking like a "friend" and prime supporter of the student.*

*They (the administration) are rarely to never available for the teachers. They are too tied up with student behaviour problems.*



On the other hand, many staff members indicated that they would complain to the Principal or Vice-Principal if they felt that the administration was not doing a good job keeping students and teachers safe. The following comments are typical:

*Yes, I feel it is the right action to take.*

*Yes, they (the administration) are quite receptive.*

*Yes I would. It has been my experience that the admin team for the most part will listen objectively to my concerns and will make an effort to act.*

*Yes. School safety is one of their primary responsibilities.*

*Yes. I have enough confidence in the current admin team to look into all concerns. My past concerns have been dealt with.*

*Yes – the current admin has an open door policy.*

*I would complain because I believe something would be done about it.*

*Yes, because I feel that the current admin team are sincerely interested in making sure that the school is functioning as well as it could and they would be receptive to anything anyone on the staff has to say. Of course, there has never been a need to complain about this matter.*

*To raise concerns is not synonymous with complaining. I would feel perfectly comfortable raising concerns I had about school safety with any member of our administration. It would be necessary for me to acknowledge my own responsibility in the matter and to offer constructive suggestions in order to be responsible and professional.*

*I would complain, but setting policy is not enough. The administration needs to be able to enforce policy through its teachers. This is where there is no consistency!*

*I would attend School Safety Committee meetings and in group work out a proposal for the Principals to consider.*

We also asked the Westview staff members: “If you thought the administration was not doing a good job at keeping students safe would you complain to School Board officials?” Most indicated that they would not report their concerns to School Board officials. Some felt that it would be better to deal with such issues at the school level, others felt that complaining could hurt their career and others felt that the Board is ineffective and it would do no good to report. The following comments illustrate these themes:

*No- it's better resolved here. Our administrators are very approachable.*

*No – I tried that with a previous Principal and was not supported by the Superintendent.*

*No. I really don't want to fan the wrong flames. The current Superintendent is too much the "vigilante".*

*No, because I have seen some cases when a teacher complained. Nothing has happened but she/or he was forced to quit their job. It's a self-killing thing when you complain. Even when a teacher complains about students' behaviour the administration just thinks the teacher is incapable.*

*No. I fear that the administration would not support me in future endeavours concerning my students.*

*No. Again I would work with the School Safety Committee and with the Administration.*

*When I made complaints in the past to School Board officials nothing was done and I feared the consequences.*

*Nothing was done when we previously complained about a Principal. Superintendent took reports but did absolutely nothing.*

*Probably not. I have little experience of any kind of effective or responsible leadership at the Board level. In my experience they do more harm than good and have frequently demonstrated a total lack of understanding or empathy for the challenges that face our students here or us who serve them. The creation of this Panel investigation into only two schools, citing an artificial deadline and costs which they did not have the foresight to secure, speaks volumes about their attitude towards this community. They are willing to contribute to the stereotyping of this community, our school and our students in order create the impression that they are "dealing" with the problems when all they want is to solve their public relations nightmare at Jeffreys.*

*The board does not care. We are not able to take needed time off, paid poorly and are never able to get through to needed support staff at the TDSB. We don't have time to call or wait around for them. They wouldn't listen anyways even if you were sitting right in front of them.*

The remaining respondents indicated that they would make a complaint to the Board if they felt that the administration at their school was not doing a good job at keeping students safe. Most of these respondents felt that school safety was too important an

issue and that it was their duty or responsibility to report. The following comments are typical:

*Yes -- safety is too important an issue to ignore. Our Union rep should take it up.*

*Yes I would report it -- because I would not work in a place that is not safe. There is always room for improvement.*

*Yes, I would report. I am a professional and I expect that everyone who is working in education be held accountable. If we are afraid to speak up in such matters, not only are we cowards but not worthy of the profession we are in. We may as well give it up and become plumbers.*

*Yes, safety in school trumps feeling or jobs.*

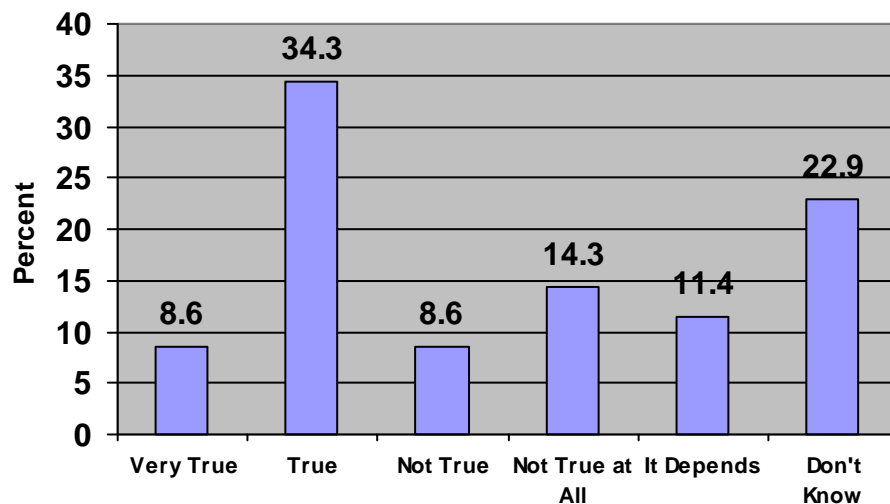
*Yes, safety is paramount.*

*Yes. So as to create a record for the future.*

*If the administrator does nothing about my concern and something happened, then I would talk to the School Board officials.*

Finally, we asked the staff at Westview if they thought other teachers were afraid to complain about safety conditions at school. Interestingly, although the majority of the staff respondents indicated that they themselves would be comfortable making a complaint about school safety, a large proportion felt that other teachers are afraid of making such complaints. (see Figure 22) Indeed, only 26% of the staff respondents we surveyed felt that it was totally untrue that some teachers are afraid of complaining about school safety conditions.

**FIGURE 22:**  
**Percent of Westview Staff Who Feel it is True or Untrue**  
**that Some Teachers are Afraid to Complain**  
**about School Safety Conditions**



Staff respondents were then given the opportunity to explain why they thought some teachers might be afraid to complain about unsafe school conditions. Most of the staff members believe that some teachers are afraid to complain or talk to administrators out of fear of reprisals. The following are typical comments:

*Fear of retaliation- I took time off and upon return have had one or more on-calls a week. If I am "punished" for taking needed time off, what would happen if I challenged their competency?*

*They don't want to "get involved." They don't want to be identified or called to account in a formal setting.*

*Because of the racial undertones.*

*In the past (4-5 years ago) complaining to the admin team would only cause you grief. The current admin team, however, will listen and is open to hearing concerns and complaints.*

*It could backfire on them. The admin team could investigate their teaching practices and tell them that they are the ones causing the problems. This actually happened 4 years ago to two teachers I know.*

*Because they may be perceived as unfit teachers.*

*Politics -- reprisals.*

*They are concerned about their careers and future support.*

*They fear being "targeted" by the administration and labelled a "trouble maker."*

*They may be afraid of being categorized as whiners. Perhaps they have had bad experiences with other administrators. Perhaps they come from countries where raising such objections could indeed have ruined one's career, or worse.*

*Very often it doesn't make any difference. Whether you do (report) or you don't.*

*Because nothing is going to happen, just all these procedures become formalities. Think about how you could make parents 100% responsible of their kids behaviours and learning. Teachers have the right to correct students' behaviours. Students must learn respect. Education is for all. Education should not be divided by race, colour, community. Equal rights, equal punishments.*

*I can't imagine why anyone would be afraid to consult with our admin on this issue. In my experience they are very candid about their thoughts and feeling in staff meetings. They may be reluctant to talk to School Board officials because they think it would be an exercise in futility.*

*I'm not sure they are afraid. I think they feel frustrated at the situation and do not feel that talking to them will have any results. Some of those teachers might have a bias already and don't feel safe to begin with. It's about the approach. I haven't been here long, but Westview has the wrong image. It's a great school. The neighbourhood is rough, but many students make it worth while. These teachers shouldn't be afraid of speaking to the administrators, but using the word complain already has a negative implication to it. I can talk to the administrator and don't feel "afraid".*

*They feel it is pointless or they are safe in their "cocoons" nearing retirement and on "autopilot".*

*Do not want to be ridiculed or singled out--late stage in career and prefer to leave quietly--do not really recognize the problems (i.e., bullying in halls, etc.).*

*The teacher is over-reactive, sensitive or is unaware of how to deal with the "fear"(call police tell admin/colleague).*

*Not secure in their profession, new school, don't know procedures.*

### **Final Comments**

At the end of the survey, staff respondents from Westview were given one final opportunity to make comments about the questionnaire, the Panel's investigation or about their school. Many took the opportunity to do so. A few respondents wanted to stress that Westview is a good school. That it is not very different from other high schools in Toronto and that it has been unfairly stigmatized. The following comments are typical:

*Westview has in the past been given a poor image by a large group especially the media. We now live and die by that image. I feel that the environment is always unfairly portrayed. As a result we all need to look at Westview as it sits today, so that we can have a place teachers can teach, kids can learn and we can all do a better job of preparing them for all that lies ahead.*

*Some of these questions are based on speculation. A lot of the questions are about violence, but I feel that it can apply to any school. Things being stolen can happen anywhere, not just Westview. My experiences at other schools are no different. I've never felt that my things will be stolen or one of the students will do something to me personally.*

*In good faith, I've taken the time to complete this survey. I hope the Board uses this information to help improve the perception the public has of our school and acknowledges the hard work and dedication that the staff here in the building make. It is a pleasure to work in this diverse and interesting community and I hope this information is used to make improvements.*

*Let's balance the "dark-side" by stories of Westview's successes!*

*You should be doing a board wide study, North Albion, West Humber, Emery, George Harvey, etc., etc.*

*In my opinion this survey should be done across the Board and not only at Westview. This survey was conducted just because of what took place at Jeffreys. This way it just perpetuates the stigma already attached to Westview. I do hope the Board takes notice of all the comments made in these surveys. Westview needs the same resources that are in place in schools such as Albert Campbell, Newton Brook, A.Y Jackson, Earl Haig, etc.*

One respondent wanted to state that, in their opinion, increasing the number of racial minority teachers at Westview is needed to increase school safety and improve student behaviour:

*Most students are not respected or valued at Westview. The staff at Westview are not culturally trained to deal with the student population at Westview. This lack of sensitivity and knowledge contribute to the high dropout rate and failure rate at Westview. The TDSB should make a strong effort to hire more racially diverse staff at Westview including office staff, teachers, administrators and especially guidance counsellors. Teachers need to have high expectations of students.*

Several respondents stressed that the Westview community requires more staff training, more programs and more resources to help students. Others called for even broader institutional and social change:

*Students should be trained to act as peer mediators. Hall monitors be better trained and given refresher courses on how to cope with unpredictable situations. Find ways to keep the students busy at school and after school. Parents must try to bring up their kids in a safe and warm atmosphere. Parents must be role models so that kids feel happy and emotionally set to do work at school.*

*We need to change the education system completely. Too much leniency to students leads to negative learning and bad behaviours. With no harsh punishment, how can we make these young kids reach their potential and become responsible citizens of this nation. If you are not in a hurry to change it we are going to see many dangerous incidents among this generation. Don't just think that you have done your job by this survey.*

*Expelled or limited expelled students should have to complete a mandatory program (as should those with lengthy suspensions 5+ days).*

*My perception is that admin, teachers, school staff are doing their best to cope with the challenges in this area. But with the admin and the School Board their ideology is flawed. There has to be a system in place that first*

*deals with the parents in making their children a priority in terms of the parental skills that need to be learned. There needs to be a selection process for the students that are enrolled in the school. There needs to be a system of consequences for lates and absences and for the severe criminal behaviour that takes place in the school. Finally, there need to be support from all areas for the teachers that has to be demonstrated and viewed by the students and parents.*

*Let's deal with the root causes and not the symptoms. Social issues are at the root of the problems (food/shelter/safety/education).*

Finally, one respondent simply stated that the focus of the questionnaire – school safety – was not the primary focus of the teachers and students at Westview. This respondent stated that the school requires assistance with the general day-to-day struggles of helping children from a diverse, yet highly disadvantaged community. This respondent also issued a subtle challenge. He hoped that, after all the time and expense of the Panel's investigation, some positive change results:

*Your focus appears to exclusively be on "crime and punishment" possibly because you are lawyers or because you believe or have been instructed that this is your mandate. You understand that this (school safety) is not our mandate and at this school not even a major concern. These young people have been entrusted to our care. They come to us from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. We accept them as they come to us and our daily struggle is to help them acquire the knowledge, understanding, concepts and skills they will need in order to overcome the many challenges they face. This is our mandate. The only one that interests us. I hope some good will result from all this.*

## **DISCUSSION**

As with the Westview student survey, the Westview staff survey produced both positive findings as well as results that are cause for serious concern. Fortunately, most of the teachers and staff members who completed the Westview survey appear to be dedicated professionals. Despite some challenges, the vast majority are happy with their jobs, report that they enjoy working with the students at Westview, and claim that, in general, teachers and students at Westview get along. In fact, at the time of the survey, the majority of respondents were very satisfied with the school administration.

Nevertheless, the staff respondents at Westview did indicate that changes are necessary for the improvement of school safety and student behaviour. Several respondents felt that discipline was too lenient or inconsistently applied at the school and that this situation had caused deterioration in school safety and student behaviour. Indeed, a large proportion of faculty had witnessed criminal activity at Westview over the previous two years – including fights between students, physical threats, students with weapons, theft and drug trafficking. The majority of respondents also indicated that they had been subjected to deliberate student misbehaviour – including challenges to authority, insults,

teasing and accusations of unfairness with respect to both student punishment and grading. Finally, the majority of the staff who participated in the survey are fearful of the neighbourhood around Westview (especially at night) and claim that their school has serious problems with hallway disorder, students who disobey authority, bullying, theft, youth gangs, violence between students, drug use and drug trafficking.

With these findings in mind, it is not surprising to note that the majority of staff support policies that are “tough” on student misbehaviour. A high proportion of staff respondents, for example, would like to suspend or expel more students at Westview, call the police more frequently to deal with unruly students, give police the power to search student lockers, increase the number of security cameras in the halls and increase the number of full-time security staff. Most would also support having a single entrance in and out of the school. However, it is also important to note that the majority of staff are also very supportive of “softer” initiatives that would attack the root causes of student misbehaviour. These initiatives include the provision of better counselling and treatment for troubled youth, more after school programs and programs that would increase the involvement of parents in school activities.

Finally, it should be stressed that the problems or concerns identified by the staff and student respondents are not limited to Westview Centennial, rather the respondents suggest that it is quite likely that similar issues exist at many other high schools in the Toronto area.

For the most part, the results of the Westview staff survey are remarkably similar to the results of the staff survey at C.W. Jefferys. However, unlike the staff members at Jefferys, the teachers and support staff at Westview appear to be significantly more satisfied with the current administration at their school. Compared to their counterparts at Jefferys, the Westview staff are also less likely to believe that school safety and student behaviour have deteriorated over the past two years. Thus, one might conclude that the results of the Westview staff survey are somewhat more positive or optimistic than the results of the Jefferys staff survey. However, such conclusions may be somewhat premature. One concern with the Westview survey is the low response rate. Many teachers, staff and administrators at Westview simply refused to participate in the survey. This makes it somewhat difficult to generalize the results of this survey to the views and experiences of the entire staff at this school. Do those who did not answer the questionnaire have more negative or more positive perceptions of Westview? Do those who did not participate in the survey have similar experiences with criminal victimization? These are questions that we simply cannot answer at this time.

Finally, the results of both the Westview student survey and the Westview staff survey still suggest that Westview suffers from problems with crime, violence and disorder within the school environment. The fact that many staff respondents feel that things have gotten better over the past two years should thus, provide little comfort. Indeed, Westview may have been a “very unsafe” school that has improved somewhat over the past few years. Jefferys, on the other hand, may have been a relatively “safe” school that has gotten less safe over the same time period. The inability to explore this issue more



thoroughly underscores the great need for periodic surveys and safety audits that will enable school board officials to track changes in school safety over time.

### 3.04 Safety Issues are City Wide

The gun and violent incident data collected in the C.W. Jefferys and Westview surveys are alarming. The issue of guns, however, should not be viewed as a “Jane-Finch” or NW2 issue. To the contrary, the possession of firearms at schools or on school property is a growing trend across the City of Toronto in general and the TDSB is not immune. In a consultation with Systems Superintendent Donna Quan, the Panel was presented with the following chart detailing the gun, weapon, and sexual assault incidents across the TDSB from February, 2006 to June, 2006 (this data was collected from weekly incident reports collected by the Safe and Caring Schools Department):

<b>Serious Incident</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Gun Incidents</b>	4	11	4	5	11	25
<b>Weapons incidents</b>	12	24	15	15	14	80
<b>Sexual Assault</b>	3	10	6	3	6	26

Based on the Panel’s inquiries, we understand that the above five month tally represents the only compiled and collated firearms information that the Department has compiled from its weekly incident reports. (see Volume 3, section 3.06.02, “Tracking Safety” regarding current gaps in tracking safety)

In addition to this data, the Toronto Police Service provided the Panel with a list of occurrences for three defined classes of incidents at Westview and C.W. Jefferys that resulted in police involvement in the last 24 months. Specifically, the Panel requested police occurrences with respect to weapons generally, guns in particular and sexual assaults. Based on this request, the Panel was provided with the following data (December 2005 to November 2007)

Westview:

1. 1 Gun incident
2. 8 assaults with a weapon (either knife or scissors)
3. 1 sexual assault

C.W. Jefferys

1. 2 gun incidents (one reported and never found; and one witnessed)
3. 1 concealed weapons incidents (knife)
4. 2 sexual assaults
5. 1 dangerous weapon incident (pepper spray)

The Panel was advised by the TDSB as to three different methods of collecting violent incidents: (1) weekly incident reports; (2) crisis reports; and (3) violent incident reports. (see Volume 3, section 3.06.02, “Tracking Safety” regarding a full description of reporting systems as well as the current gaps in tracking safety).

In order to get a more complete picture of the serious incidents and firearm related incidents that have occurred across the TDSB, the School Safety Panel staff spent days wading their way through unintegrated reports to compile and collate the serious incident data for the last 24 months. A Table of Violent Incidents was prepared that reflects incidences across the City of Toronto (predominantly outside the Jane-Finch area). A thirty page chart prepared by the Panel entitled “Table of Violent Incidents” is attached as Appendix “D” to this Report. The table identifies 177 incidents of violence that have been reported in schools across the city (see Appendix “D” to this Report, chart entitled “Table of Violent Incidents”). A summary of this chart is set out below.

The incidents included in the Table of Violent Incidents were chosen from a larger pool of incidents in order to classify according to gun incidents (firearms, replicas, pellet guns or reports of guns), weapons incidents (knives or tasers), robberies and sexual assaults. The table was compiled from a collation of data obtained from TDSB Weekly Incident Reports covering the period of January 13, 2006 to and including November 30, 2007 and a review of the Board Crisis Reports covering the period of September 26, 2006 to and including December 6, 2007. The non-mandatory nature of the reporting requirements, as well as the inconsistent reporting among quadrants, supports the view that these numbers significantly understate the prevalence of violent crime amongst youth in schools. The table allows for a comparison between those incidents reported in Northwest 2 (five) in contrast to those incidents reported in all other quadrants in the City (172). Clearly Northwest 2 suffers from under reporting. Equally clear, however, is the fact that violence in general, gun incidents and sexual assaults in particular, is a City-wide phenomenon. A summary table is provided below (see thirty-page chart, Appendix “D”:

Category	On School Property	Off School Property	NW2
Gun Incidents – actual/replicas/pellet/reported	54	26	3
Weapons Incidents – knives and tasers only - Could be in possession/threatening	30	5	0
Robberies	10	5	0
Sexual Assaults	31	16	2

The summary table demonstrates that there a significant number of gun incidents across the TDSB and outside of the NW2 area. In total, there were 80 total gun related incidents on or off school property reported in the either the Weekly Incident Reports or the Crisis Reports. Of the 80 incidents, only two occurred in the NW2 family of schools. The data detailed above (as expanded upon in the Table of Violent Incidents) demonstrates a similar trend for all serious violent incidents. While it is clear that the NW2 family of schools underreports serious incidents, it is also equally clear that these types of incidents are occurring across the TDSB in significant numbers.

The panel received data that the Board produces yearly for the Trustees that encapsulates the provincially mandated “Violent Incident” forms. The title of these reports is unfortunate as they do not represent a comprehensive reporting of incidences of violence in the school system. According to Systems Superintendent Quan (head of Safe Schools) these reports, as currently filled out, capture only a fraction of incidences of violence (the failures of this reporting system are explained in Volume 3, section 3.06.02, “Tracking Safety”). Nevertheless, the Panel obtained numbers from these violent incident reports.

In the 2005-06 school year, there were 11 incidents across the TDSB that involved the use of a weapons, including a firearm (no breakdown according to firearms has been provided). In the same year, 52 violent incident reports were prepared for incidents where a weapon was used to cause or to threaten bodily harm (no breakdown according to firearms). From September, 2007 to December 20, 2007, 34 violent incident reports were prepared for possessing a weapon, including a firearm (no breakdown according to firearms). In addition, 29 violent incident reports were completed for incidents involving the use of a weapon to cause or threaten bodily harm to another person (no breakdown according to firearms).

Given the realities of under reporting, neither the Board nor the police have any reliable means for accurately measuring the extent of youth victimization or the number of weapons in schools. Initiatives aimed at curbing violence and weapons in schools can only succeed if there is a community acknowledgement that the problem exists and is growing City-wide. These problems are not restricted to one or two troubled regions of the City. This is not simply about “Jane-Finch”. Field Superintendent Jill Worthy of Southwest 4 has recognized this reality:

*We know there are guns in the schools. The real question to be resolved is the availability and the flexibility of resources for superintendents to independently deal with this issue. For example, there is no ability on the part of superintendents to bring in itinerant staff such as school based safety monitors. What is currently in place in respect of our allocation of resources is a formulaic approach which does not include the flexibility needed for superintendents to address these problems.<sup>14</sup>*

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<sup>14</sup> Consultation dated December 11, 2007





# THE "JANE - FINCH" LANDSCAPE



HOUSING

# THE "JANE - FINCH" LANDSCAPE



## PROGRAMS



# THE "JANE - FINCH" LANDSCAPE



## SERVICES

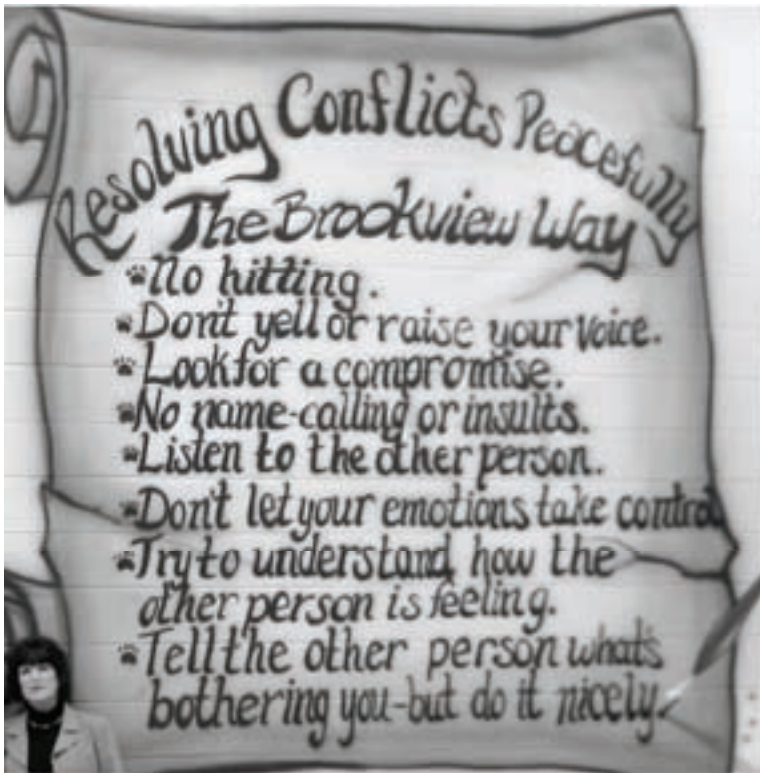


# THE "JANE - FINCH" LANDSCAPE



## SERVICES

# Brookview Middle School





# Brookview Middle School



Karl Subban - Principal



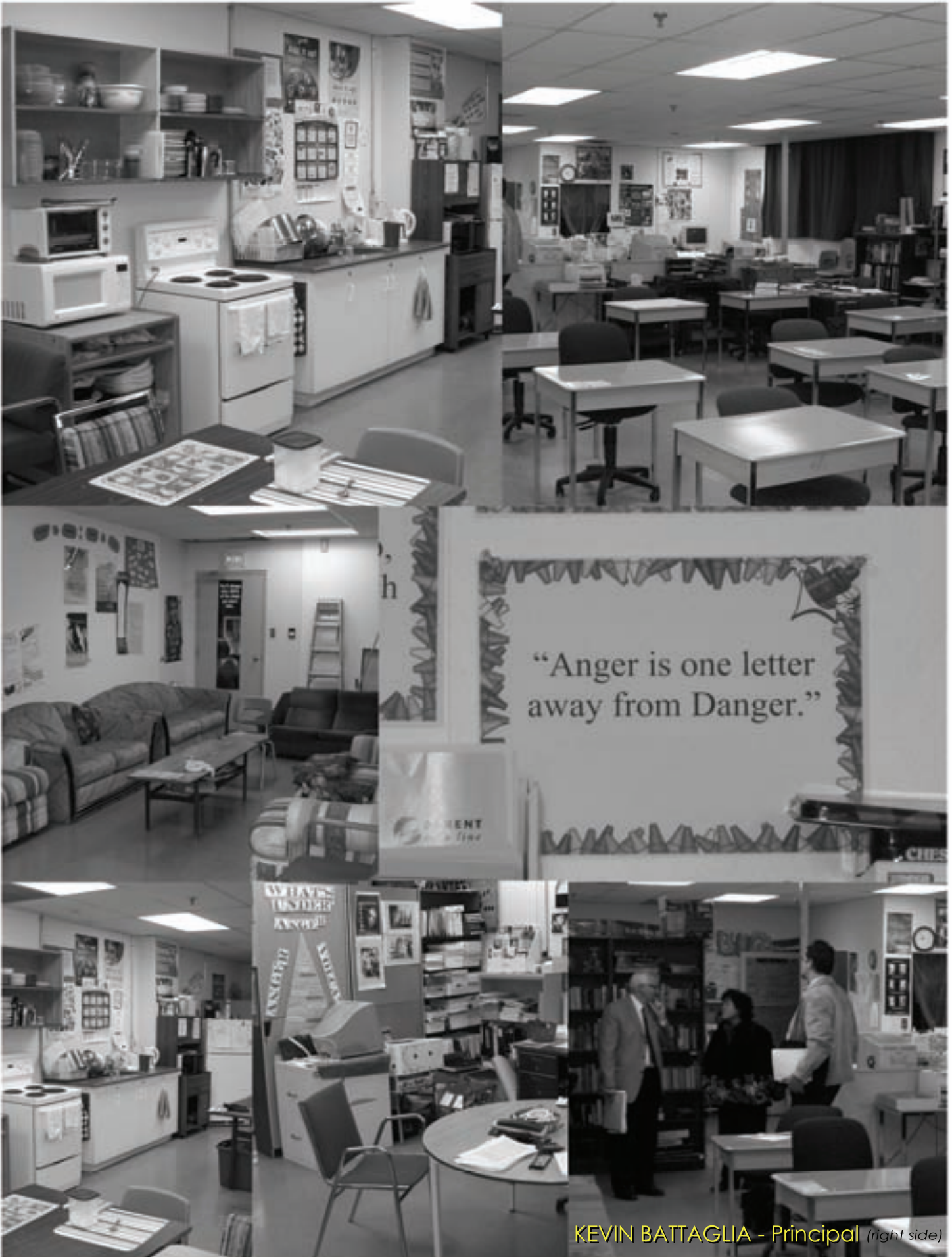
# C.W. Jefferys Collegiate Institute



Trustee STEPHNIE PAYNE  
Panel Chair JULIAN FALCONER



# S.P.E.S. - Special Program for Expelled Students Randolph



KEVIN BATTAGLIA - Principal (right side)



# Westview Centennial Secondary School



**BREAKING THE LOGJAM** - A Blueprint for Progress on School Safety: A Symposium  
co-sponsored by the School Community Safety Advisory Panel and the Ontario  
Human Rights Commission (November 21, 2007)



**BARBARA HALL** - Chief Commissioner: OHRC (Ontario Humans Rights Commission) and  
**JULIAN FALCONER**: LL.B (School Community Safety Advisory Panel Chair).