Mikayla's Voice External Consultation Data Summary
For the PA Department of Education

2024-2025 Programming Year

Overview

During the 2024-2025 academic year, Mikayla's Voice offered their standard programming in 18 elementary/K-8 schools. Mikayla's Voice offered this programming along with a supplementary mentorship program in an additional 5 secondary (i.e., middle or high) schools, for a total of 23 participating schools. Qualtrics was used to host electronic versions of both the pre-test and post-test surveys; unique links were created for each school's pre-test and post-test survey. Paper surveys were also offered as an option at pre-test and post-test for all schools. The surveys were designed to be a brief, efficient way to gather information on students' perspectives on school climate and their experiences with their peers at baseline and post-intervention. Although the school could be identified, all students' responses were collected anonymously. Neither the pre-test survey nor the post-test survey was mandatory; students could choose to skip any items or the entire survey if they did not want to participate.

A total of 4,266 pre-test surveys and 2,184 post-test surveys were included in the final analysis. To be included in the final sample, each school had to have participated in both the pre-survey and the post-survey; any schools with 0 responses to the post-survey were dropped from analyses. In addition, Mikayla's Voice collected publicly available school-level data on each participating school to better contextualize the schools served. The sections that follow present the data separately for elementary schools participating in the standard programming and secondary schools participating in the mentorship program.

Student Survey Data, Standard Programming

Of the 18 schools that received the standard programming through Mikayla's Voice, 15 schools completed both the pre-test and post-test surveys. This resulted in student data with 4,099 surveys prior to their assemblies (pre-test) and 2,157 surveys following their assemblies (post-test). The tables below summarize data from the first question on the student survey, "How do you feel about your school?" There was a significant change in feelings about school from pre-test to post-test: $t(6234) = -9.122$, $p < .001$. The findings indicate that students felt less positively about school between the pre-test and post-test surveys. However, the mean difference was

small and generally high at both time points; Pre-Test Mean = 3.96, Post-Test Mean = 3.70 on a 5-point Likert scale, with the modal response of "Like It" at both time points.

Summary of Students' Responses to "How do you feel about your school?" by Time

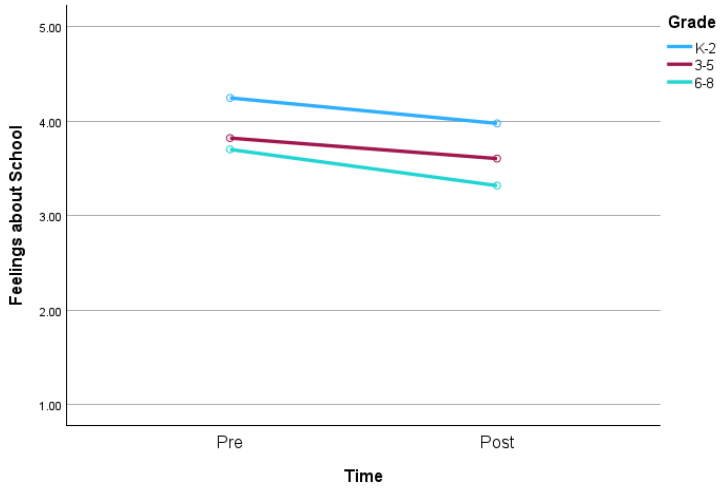
	😍	😀	😐	☹️	😢
Pre-test	35.9%	38.0%	17.2%	4.4%	4.5%
Post-test	26.2%	36.2%	23.6%	8.2%	5.5%

The data indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in reported feelings about school across the grade levels (r = -.24, p < .001), with better feelings about school reported in the lower grade levels. The stepwise decrease in liking of school brings attention to an unintended but important finding that is consistent with previous years; namely, that the elementary school grades might benefit from the Mikayla's Voice programming from a preventive standpoint, with a goal to prevent the decline in liking of school that occurs in the secondary school years, and the secondary school grades might benefit from a more intensive intervention (such as the addition of the Mikalya's Voice mentorship program).

Summary of Students' Responses to "How do you feel about your school?" by Grade Level

	😍	😀	😐	☹️	😢
Grades K-2	48.1%	30.5%	14.1%	3.6%	3.8%
Grades 3-5	25.6%	41.1%	21.6%	6.7%	5.1%
Grades 6-8	12.1%	45.8%	27.8%	8.1%	6.2%

Notably, older children were less likely to say they love school, but more likely to say they like school, than younger children. This developmental trend might suggest a need to consider moving from a 5-point scale to a 3-point scale moving forward, as liking school is still a desirable outcome and may not be practically inferior to loving school. There was not an interaction effect between intervention time point and grade, meaning that all grade levels showed a slight decline in feelings about school from pre-test to post-test (see figure below).



The tables below summarize data from the second question on the student survey, "Do you have a friend at school?" Students were less likely to indicate having a friend on the post-survey as compared to the pre-survey: $\chi^2(1) = 6.48$, $p = .011$. However at both timepoints, the vast majority of students indicated having a friend at school.

Summary of Students' Responses to "Do you have a friend at school?" by Time

	👍	👎
Pre-test	97.2%	2.8%
Post-test	96.0%	4.0%

The data indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in reported friends across the grade levels ($\chi^2(2) = 30.44$, $p < .001$), with students in the higher grade levels reporting a greater likelihood of having a friend at school.

Summary of Students' Responses to "Do you have a friend at school?" by Grade Level

	👍	👎
Grades K-2	95.4%	4.6%
Grades 3-5	97.8%	2.2%
Grades 6-8	98.4%	1.6%

Student Survey Data, Mentorship Schools

Of the 5 secondary schools that received programming including the mentorship program through Mikayla's Voice, 2 schools completed both the pre-test and post-test surveys. This resulted in student data with 167 surveys prior to their assemblies (pre-test) and 27 surveys following their assemblies (post-test). Of the 27 post-test surveys, 21 students indicated that they participated as mentors in the mentorship program. Therefore, it appears that the survey was erroneously primarily distributed to those who participated in the mentorship program, precluding comparisons across those who did and did not participate.

The table below summarizes data from the first question on the student survey, "How do you feel about your school?" There was not a significant change in feelings about school from pre-test to post-test: $t(192) = 0.97$, $p = .334$. However, the mean difference was increasing and generally high at both time points; Pre-Test Mean = 3.66, Post-Test Mean = 3.85 on a 5-point Likert scale, with the modal response of "Like It" at both time points.

Summary of Students' Responses to "How do you feel about your school?" by Time

	😍	😀	😐	☹️	😢
Pre-test	13.2%	55.7%	18.0%	10.8%	2.4%
Post-test	22.2%	55.6%	11.1%	7.4%	3.7%

The table below summarizes data from the second question on the student survey, "Do you have a friend at school?" Students equally likely to indicate having a friend on the post-survey as compared to the pre-survey: $\chi^2(1) = 0.16$, $p = .69$. Almost all students indicated having a friend on the pre-survey, and all indicated having a friend on the post-survey.

Summary of Students' Responses to "Do you have a friend at school?" by Time

	👍	👎
Pre-test	99.4%	0.6%
Post-test	100%	0%

The table below summarizes data from the question, "I would talk to a student with a disability who I don't know." Students' agreement with the statement increased from the pre-test to the post-test survey: $t(192) = 2.66$, $p < .01$.

Summary of Students' Responses to "I would talk to a student with a disability who I don't know." by Time

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Pre-test	30.5%	47.3%	12.0%	10.2%
Post-test	63.0%	29.6%	0%	7.4%

The table below summarizes data from the question, "I would invite a student who has a disability to hang out." Students' agreement with the statement increased significantly from the pre-test to the post-test survey: $t(192) = 4.16$, $p < .001$.

Summary of Students' Responses to "I would invite a student who has a disability to hang out." by Time

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Pre-test	21.0%	49.1%	20.4%	9.6%
Post-test	66.7%	25.9%	3.7%	3.7%

The table below summarizes data from the question, "I am considering a career in the human services." Students indicated stronger agreement with the statement on the post-survey as compared to the pre-survey, but the change was not statistically significant: $t(192) = 1.22$, $p = .23$.

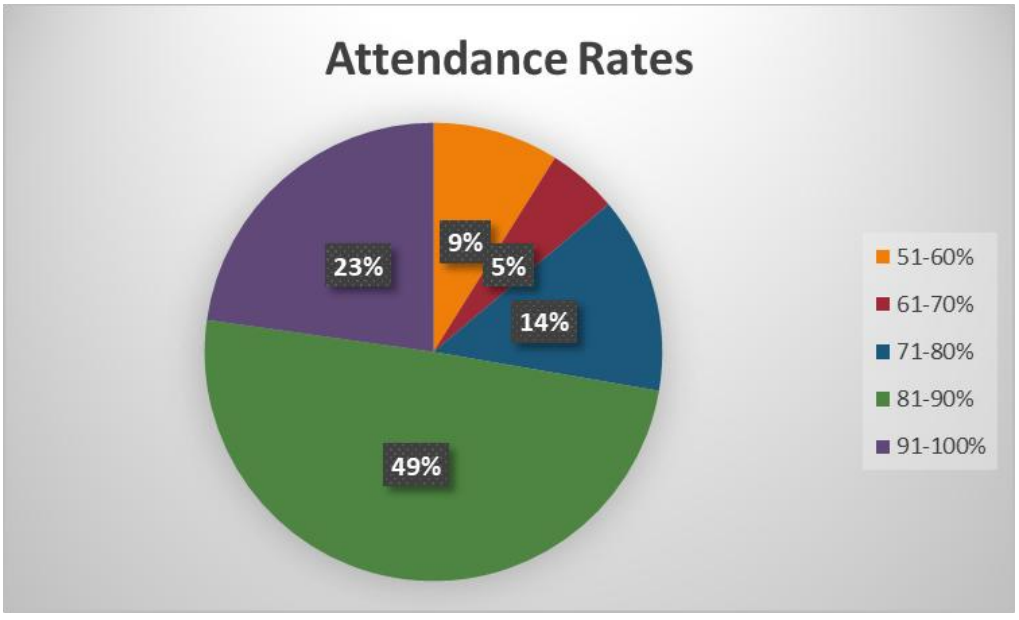
Summary of Students' Responses to "I am considering a career in the human services." by Time

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Pre-test	19.9%	28.9%	30.1%	18.1%
Post-test	29.6%	37.0%	11.1%	3.1%

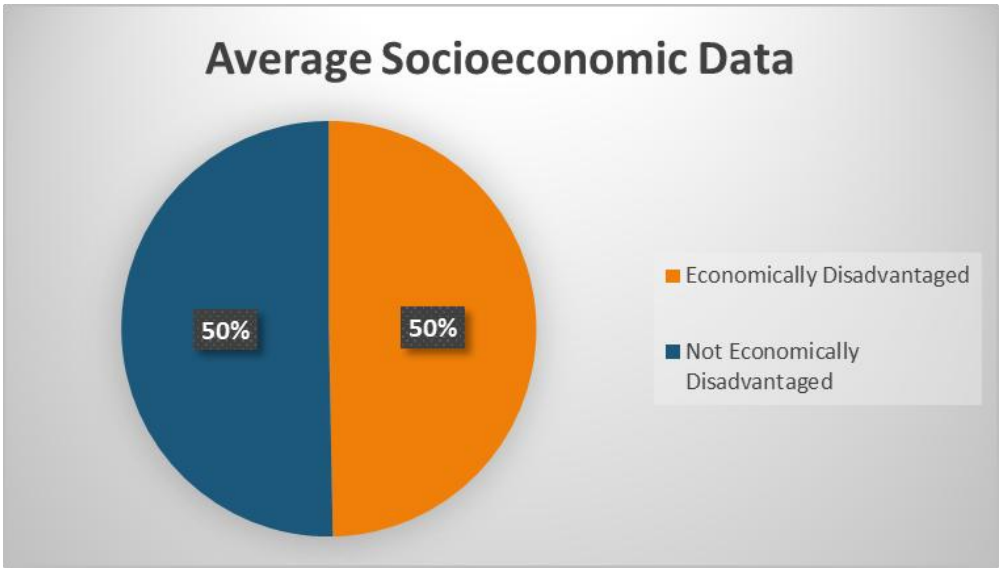
Therefore, although causation cannot be determined in these analyses, there is evidence to suggest that the Mikayla's Voice intervention at the secondary school level is linked with increased likelihood of inclusive behaviors. This is a proximal goal of the program, which suggests that survey items that are more closely related to the program's goals should be considered for future evaluations. However, it should be noted that the sample size for post-survey was small, and included mostly students who had served as mentors.

School-Level Data

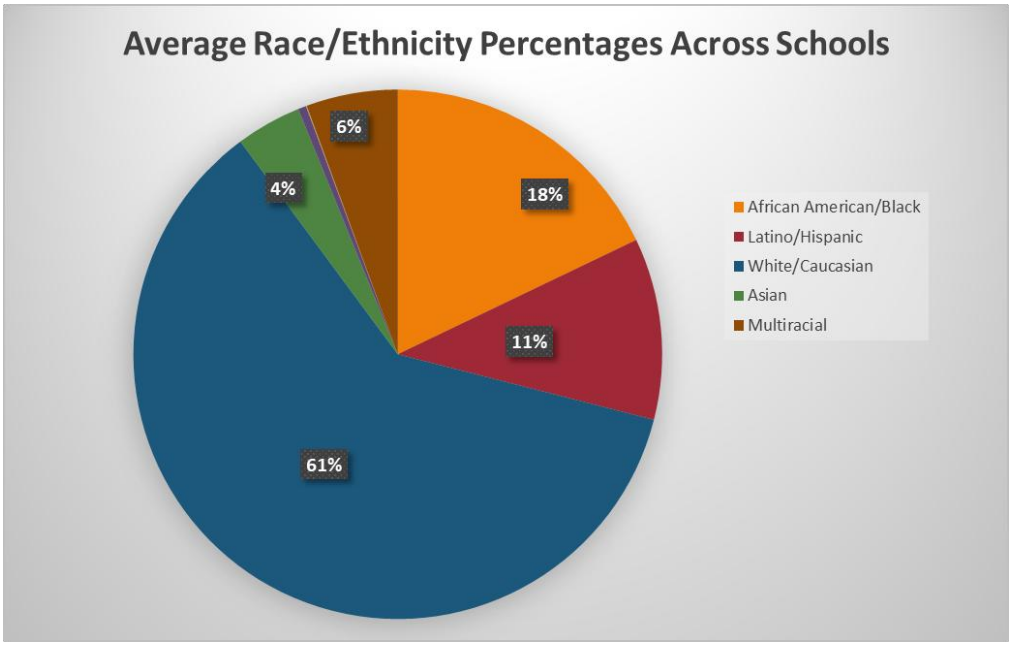
Mikayla's Voice collected school-level data from the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS) during the Spring of 2025. Demographic information and attendance data for the 2024-2025 academic year are presented here. Attendance rates for participating schools ranged from 57.8% to 94.8% (see figure below), *which may partially explain the disparate response rates to post-test surveys across schools.*



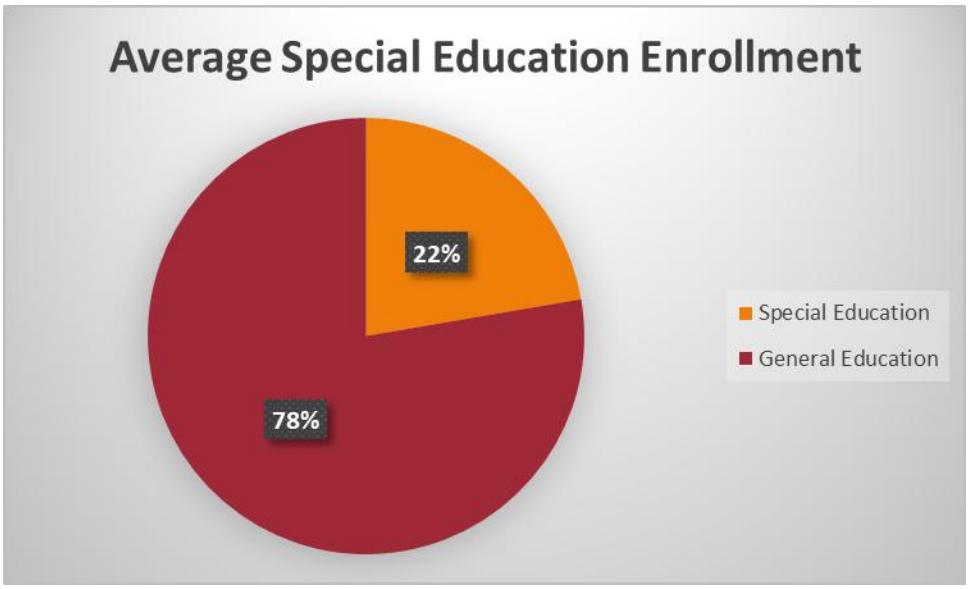
Mikayla's Voice served a diverse group of schools, with the percentage of economically disadvantaged students in each school ranging from 11% to 100%; summary information across all schools is presented in the figure below.



The percentage of White/Caucasian students per school ranged from 0% to 97%, demonstrating high levels of racial/ethnic diversity across schools; see the figure below for a summary across all schools.



The percentage of students receiving special education services ranged from 8% to 25%, see the figure below for an average summary across schools.



Testimonials

Two participating schools submitted testimonials of their experiences with the Mikayla's Voice program. Excerpts from these testimonials are included below, as these qualitative accounts are useful for contextualizing the quantitative data presented thus far.

"Mikayla's Voice has been an invaluable partner in fostering inclusivity, awareness, and advocacy for individuals of all abilities. Their programs empower students by promoting kindness, understanding, and meaningful inclusion…"

"One of the most remarkable aspects of Mikayla's Voice is their ability to connect with students on a person level."

"Through their engaging and innovative initiatives…students develop a deeper appreciation of diversity and are inspired to become proactive changemakers."

"Their unique approach – encouraging students to engaged with real-life experiences of individuals with disabilities – has not only educated but also deeply moved out school community."

"The impact of Mikayla's Voice on our school climate has been profound."

These testimonials speak to the impact of Mikayla's Voice on the school community, in particular as related to the proximal outcomes of inclusivity, belongingness, and school climate.

Summary and Recommendations

School-level data suggest that the Mikayla's Voice programming continues to reach a diverse audience of schools. Some participating schools have attendance rates as low as 58%, which may have affected survey response rates, particularly later in the academic year. Statistical evidence from participating secondary schools during the 2024-25 academic year suggests an increase in likelihood of inclusive behavior from pre-test to post-test. This is an important finding, as inclusivity is a proximal goal of the program.

Students in grades 3-5 showed a slight increase in the likelihood of having a friend from pre-test to post-test. Across grade levels, liking of school remained stable throughout the academic year. Liking of school and likelihood of having friends were both generally high at pre-survey and post-survey, suggesting a ceiling effect in the data that left little room for growth across the school year. Additionally, liking of school is a more distal goal of the program, which may make the detection of change challenging.

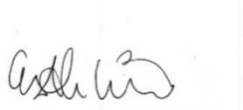
For all pre- and post-surveys, we recommend adding more items that align more closely to the proximal goals of Mikayla's Voice (e.g., belongingness and inclusion). Given that students' liking of school and likelihood of friendship is already high, change may be easier to detect with additional items. In addition, we recommend using a 3-point response scale for liking of school (i.e., like it, unsure, don't like it) as the data suggest that students (particularly older students) may avoid using the option of "love it"; however, in terms of meaningful outcomes liking school is practically as important as loving school as an outcome of the program.

It would be helpful to explore reasons why response rates were so low, particularly in the secondary schools and at post-test, in order to encourage greater participation in the surveys. A question remaining on the survey post-COVID regarding school modality (in person vs. online) should be removed next year, as all participating schools are now in person. Removing this question may encourage greater participation, as it will move the main survey questions to the beginning of the instrument.

In addition, we recommend continuing to offer a choice to schools to administer the surveys either online or on paper, as it may be the case that more schools could choose to administer the survey on paper to increase response rates. Mikayla's Voice will offer a paper version of the survey that is clear and easy to complete to all schools; school should not print the surveys on their own, as surveys printed from Qualtrics do not translate well to paper. We suggest retaining the Qualtrics platform for those schools that choose to complete the surveys electronically, as this provides an efficient and secure means of data collection; however, we would also suggest

that each school selects either paper or electronic surveys and maintains the same choice across both the pre- and post-surveys in order to increase consistency.

Report prepared by:



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