



BY ALEXANDRIA CITY HIGH SCHOOL



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TOPIC

Improving Student Access to School Counselors at Alexandria City High School

TOPIC DESCRIPTION

Students at ACHS are affected by stress, academic pressure, and mental health struggles. Many students rely on school counselors for support with classes, college planning, and personal issues. However, students report difficulty accessing counselors and concerns about privacy and availability. This affects student well-being and academic success. This issue matters in Alexandria because students need reliable mental health support to succeed in school and daily life.

BASELINE DATA & GOAL

Over 70% of surveyed students reported feeling stressed “often” or “always,” while 52.4% said ACHS does not have enough counselors.
Goal: Improve student access to counseling support and increase student comfort in asking for help at ACHS.

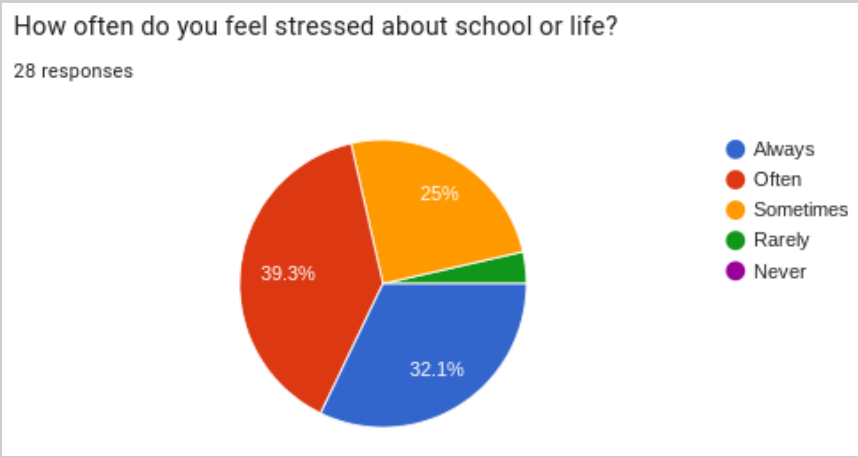
CYCP GOAL & STRATEGIC AREA

CYCP Goal: Improve youth mental health and well-being. This issue connects to the CYCP because students need better mental health support systems, easier counselor access, and stronger emotional support in schools.

WHAT IS HAPPENING RIGHT NOW?

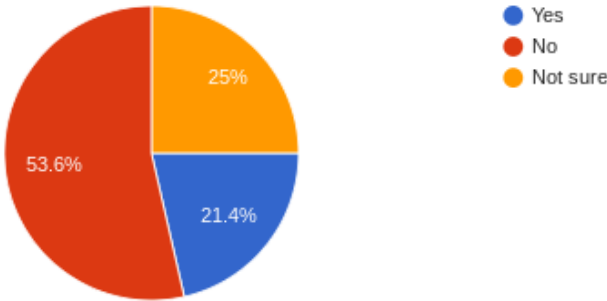
Graph 1 - Student Stress Levels

What does the data show?
Over 70% of students reported feeling stressed often or always.
Why does this matter?
High stress levels can negatively affect students’ mental health and academic performance.



Do you think our school has enough counselors?

28 responses

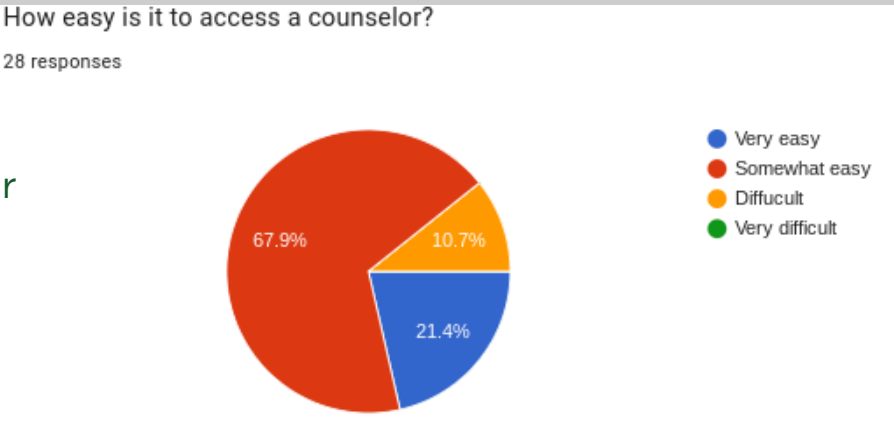


Graph 2 - Does ACHS Have Enough Counselors?

What does the data show?
52.4% of students said ACHS does not have enough counselors.
Why does this matter?
Students may not be receiving the support they need due to limited counselor availability.

Graph 3 - Ease of Accessing Counselors

What does the data show?
28.6% of students reported that accessing counselors is difficult or very difficult.
Why does this matter?
Students may avoid seeking help if support feels inaccessible or unavailable.



WHAT HAS ALREADY BEEN TRIED?

ACHS currently provides school counselors, counseling offices, and college/career support services. Students are also able to schedule appointments with counselors.

WHO CAN HELP?

These strategies help some students, but survey responses show many students still struggle with access, privacy concerns, and lack of support.



WHAT HAS BEEN DONE SO FAR?

What actions have been taken?

The school already has counselors, student support services, and appointment systems available.

How well are those actions working?

While some students find counseling helpful, many still report stress, lack of access, and concerns about confidentiality.

IS IT ACTUALLY HELPING?

Are people better off or not?

The current system helps some students, but survey data shows many students still feel unsupported. Since over 70% of students report frequent stress, the issue still needs improvement.

WHAT SHOULD CHANGE? (YOUR SOLUTION)

ACHS should improve counselor accessibility by creating easier drop-in opportunities, increasing communication about available resources, and helping students feel safer asking for support. Survey responses showed students want more privacy, better counselor relationships, and easier access without complicated appointments.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

If these changes are implemented, students will feel more supported and comfortable seeking help. Better mental health support can improve academic performance, reduce stress, and create a healthier school environment.

CITATIONS

Alexandria City Public Schools. (2026). Student support and counseling services. ACPS. <https://www.acps.k12.va.us/>
City of Alexandria. (2026).

Children & Youth Community Plan. City of Alexandria. <https://www.alexandriava.gov/ChildrenandYouth>

Student survey conducted at Alexandria City High School, 2026.

LEARN MORE

[Alexandria City Public Schools Counseling Services](#)

This resource explains counseling and student support services available in ACPS.

[Children & Youth Community Plan \(CYCP\)](#)

This resource explains Alexandria’s goals for improving youth well-being and mental health.