Fusion Charter

California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS)

Executive Leadership Summary

2025-2026 School Year (Grades 6-12)

Executive Headline

Fusion Charter students overwhelmingly report feeling safe, supported, and connected to caring adults.

At the same time, students continue to experience challenges related to attendance, engagement, emotional well-being, optimism, and meaningful participation in school.

The data suggests that Fusion's strongest asset is its relationship-centered culture. The next phase of improvement is helping students translate those relationships into stronger engagement, resilience, attendance, and future readiness.

The Big Picture

When viewed across grades 6-12, the survey results tell a consistent story:

Students generally believe:

✓ Adults care about them

✓ Staff want them to succeed

✓ School is safe

✓ They have access to support when needed

However, many students continue to struggle with:

• Anxiety and emotional distress

• Chronic absenteeism

• School engagement

• Motivation

• Optimism about the future

• Feeling like they have a meaningful voice in school

Five Key Findings

1. Relationships Are Fusion's Greatest Strength

Across grade levels, students consistently report positive relationships with adults.

Students generally perceive:

- Caring staff
- High expectations
- Supportive relationships
- Positive school climate

Leadership Takeaway

Fusion's relationship-centered model is working.

Students know adults care about them and want them to succeed.

This remains one of the strongest protective factors in the school.

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2. Students Feel Safe

School safety emerged as one of the strongest findings.

High school students reported:

- 75% perceived school safety
- 88% low violence victimization
- 83% no harassment
- 83% no mean rumors
- 89% no fear of being beaten up
- 94% no substance use at school

Middle school students reported similar positive trends.

Leadership Takeaway

Students generally feel physically and emotionally safe at Fusion.

Safety is not a major barrier to attendance or engagement.

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3. Engagement Is Lower Than Connectedness

One of the clearest patterns in the data is the gap between:

Feeling Supported

and

Feeling Engaged

High school findings show:

- School Connectedness: 62%
- Academic Motivation: 60%
- Meaningful Participation: 21%
- Feel Part of School: 46%
- School is Really Boring: 31%

Leadership Takeaway

Students often feel connected to adults but less connected to learning.

The challenge is no longer simply relationship-building.

The challenge is increasing ownership, voice, engagement, and relevance.

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4. Attendance Remains a Significant Concern

Attendance continues to emerge as one of the most important challenges across grade spans.

High school students reported:

- 40% experienced three or more absences per month.
- Only 60% reported two or fewer absences per month.

Leadership Takeaway

Attendance should remain a schoolwide priority.

The survey suggests attendance concerns may be more closely connected to motivation, emotional well-being, anxiety, and avoidance behaviors than to school safety concerns.

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5. Mental Health Requires Continued Attention

The Mental Health Report reveals both encouraging and concerning findings.

Positive Indicators

Student Wellness Index:

- Grade 9: 101.6
- Grade 11: 100.4

Both scores are approximately at state averages.

Life Satisfaction:

- Grade 9: 56%
- Grade 11: 60%

Areas for Attention

Chronic Sadness:

- Grade 9: 23%
- Grade 11: 24%

Social/Emotional Distress:

- Grade 9: 23%
- Grade 11: 22%

Considered Suicide:

- Grade 9: 0%
- Grade 11: 14%

Optimism:

- Grade 9: 21%
- Grade 11: 45%

Leadership Takeaway

Most students are functioning within expected wellness ranges, but a significant minority continue to struggle with emotional distress, hopelessness, and anxiety.

Mental health remains a critical area for prevention and intervention efforts.

Celebrations

Celebrate These Findings

✓ Students feel safe.

✓ Students trust adults.

✓ Students perceive high levels of support.

✓ Violence and harassment indicators remain low.

✓ Substance use at school is very low.

✓ Student wellness indicators are generally consistent with state averages.

✓ Fusion's relationship-centered culture is clearly visible in the data.

Areas for Growth

Student Voice & Leadership

Meaningful Participation remains the lowest climate indicator.

Students want greater opportunities to:

- Lead
- Contribute
- Influence decisions
- Feel ownership of their school experience

Attendance

Attendance remains one of the strongest barriers to student success.

Student Engagement

Students need greater opportunities to experience:

- Relevance
- Purpose
- Voice
- Connection to future goals

Mental Health Literacy

Students would benefit from continued instruction around:

- Anxiety
- Emotional regulation
- Coping skills
- Help-seeking
- Resilience

What the Data Says About CEI and STEPS

Perhaps the most important finding is how closely the survey results align with Fusion's Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) work.

The data does not point primarily toward:

✗ Safety problems

✗ Discipline concerns

✗ Poor relationships

Instead, the data points toward:

✓ Anxiety

✓ Emotional distress

✓ School avoidance

✓ Attendance challenges

✓ Low optimism

✓ Limited engagement

These are precisely the issues targeted by Fusion's STEPS framework and CEI Problem of Practice.

Leadership Takeaway

The survey findings strongly validate the direction of Fusion's current CEI work.

The school's focus on emotional regulation, coping skills, distress tolerance, and reducing avoidance behaviors appears well aligned with identified student needs.

Recommended Priorities for 2026-2027

Continue:

✓ Community School implementation

✓ Counseling services

✓ Relationship-centered practices

✓ Foster Youth and McKinney-Vento supports

✓ Family engagement efforts

✓ STEPS implementation

Focus Additional Attention On:

➜ Student voice and leadership

➜ Attendance improvement

➜ School engagement

➜ Future readiness and optimism

➜ Mental health literacy

➜ Family education around anxiety and avoidance

Final Conclusion

The 2025-2026 California Healthy Kids Survey results present a hopeful picture of Fusion Charter.

Students overwhelmingly describe Fusion as a safe, supportive, and caring school where adults believe in them and want them to succeed.

The next phase of improvement is helping students build the confidence, skills, resilience, and engagement necessary to fully benefit from the supportive environment that already exists.

One-Sentence Summary

Fusion Charter's greatest strength is relationships; its greatest opportunity is helping students turn those relationships into stronger engagement, resilience, attendance, and long-term success.