

District Mental Health Report—2025–2026

District: California District

Date Prepared: 21 Jan 2026

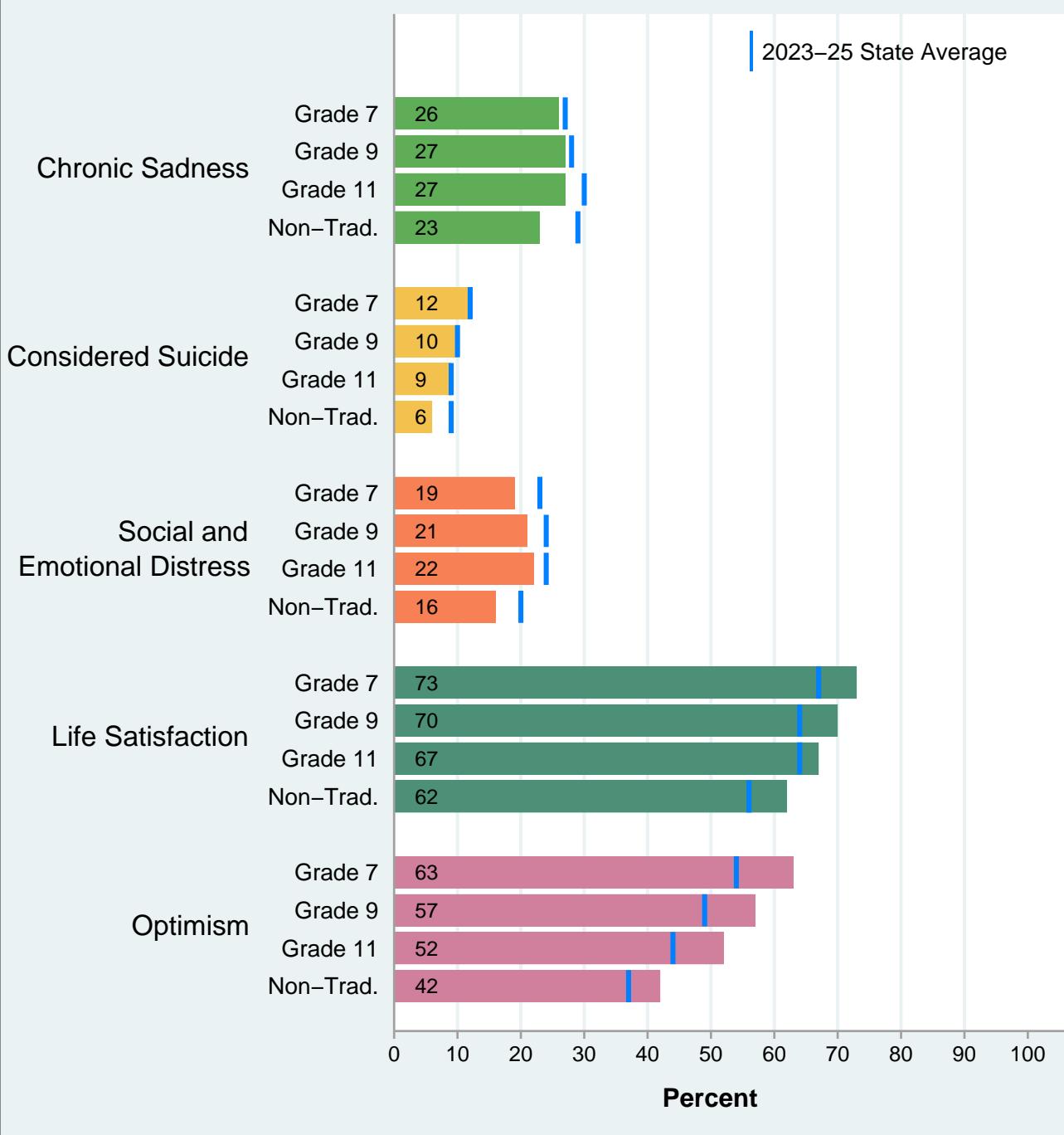
No. of Schools/Eligible: 11/11 (Grade 7), 7/7 (Grade 9), 7/7 (Grade 11), 2/3 (Non-Trad.)

Number of Responses: 3,164 (Grade 7), 3,238 (Grade 9), 2,797 (Grade 11), 381 (Non-Trad.)

Response Rate: 87% (Grade 7), 79% (Grade 9), 74% (Grade 11), 69% (Non-Trad.)

Mental Health Indicators (2026)

Based on responses from students to the California Healthy Kids Survey



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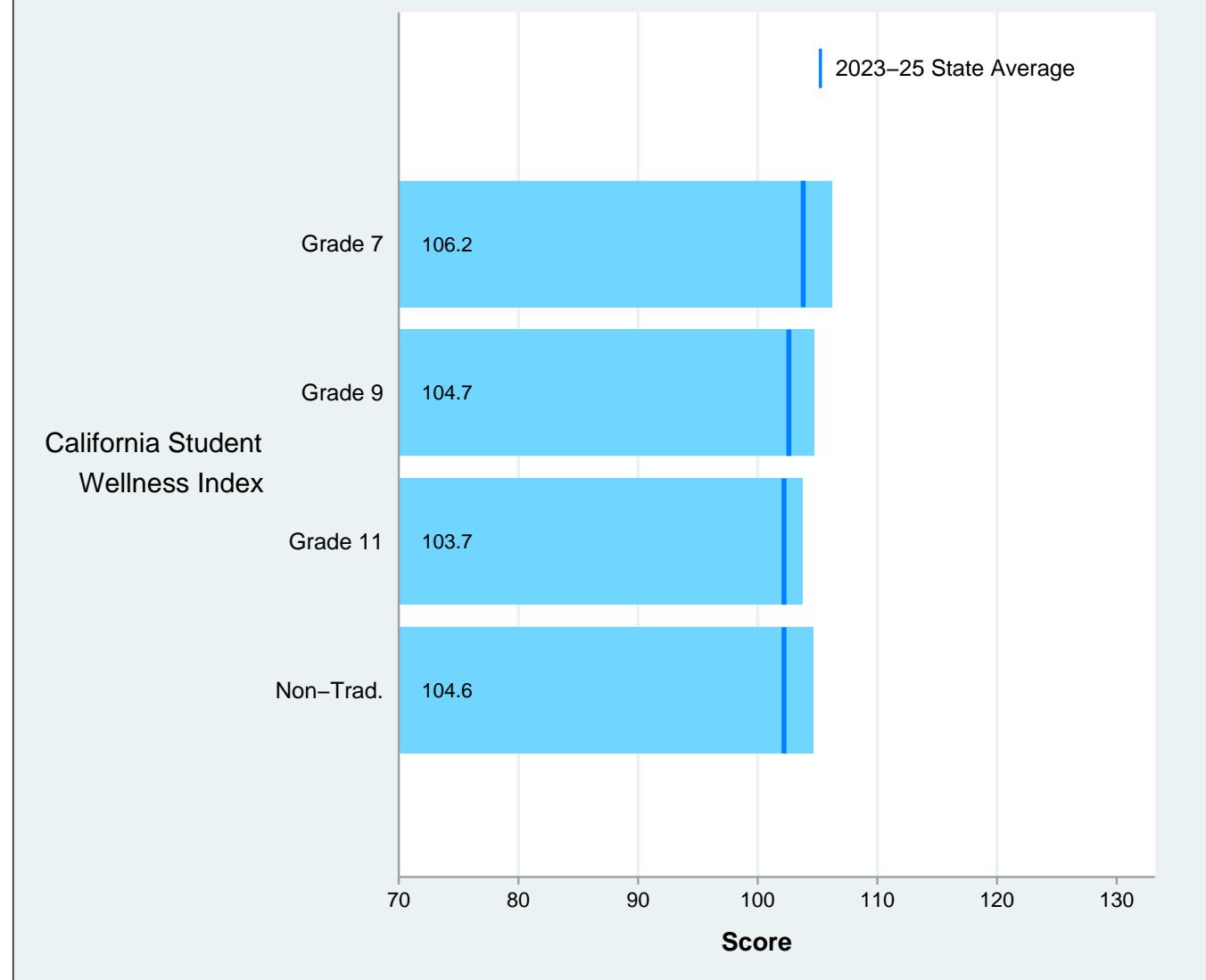
No. of Schools/Eligible: 11/11 (Grade 7), 7/7 (Grade 9), 7/7 (Grade 11), 2/3 (Non-Trad.)

Number of Responses: 3,164 (Grade 7), 3,238 (Grade 9), 2,797 (Grade 11), 381 (Non-Trad.)

Response Rate: 87% (Grade 7), 79% (Grade 9), 74% (Grade 11), 69% (Non-Trad.)

California Student Wellness Index (2026)

Based on responses from students to the California Healthy Kids Survey



District Mental Health Report (Grade 7)—2025–2026

District: California District

Date Prepared: 21 Jan 2026

No. of Schools/Eligible: 12/12 (2022), 11/11 (2023), 11/11 (2024), 11/11 (2025), 11/11 (2026)

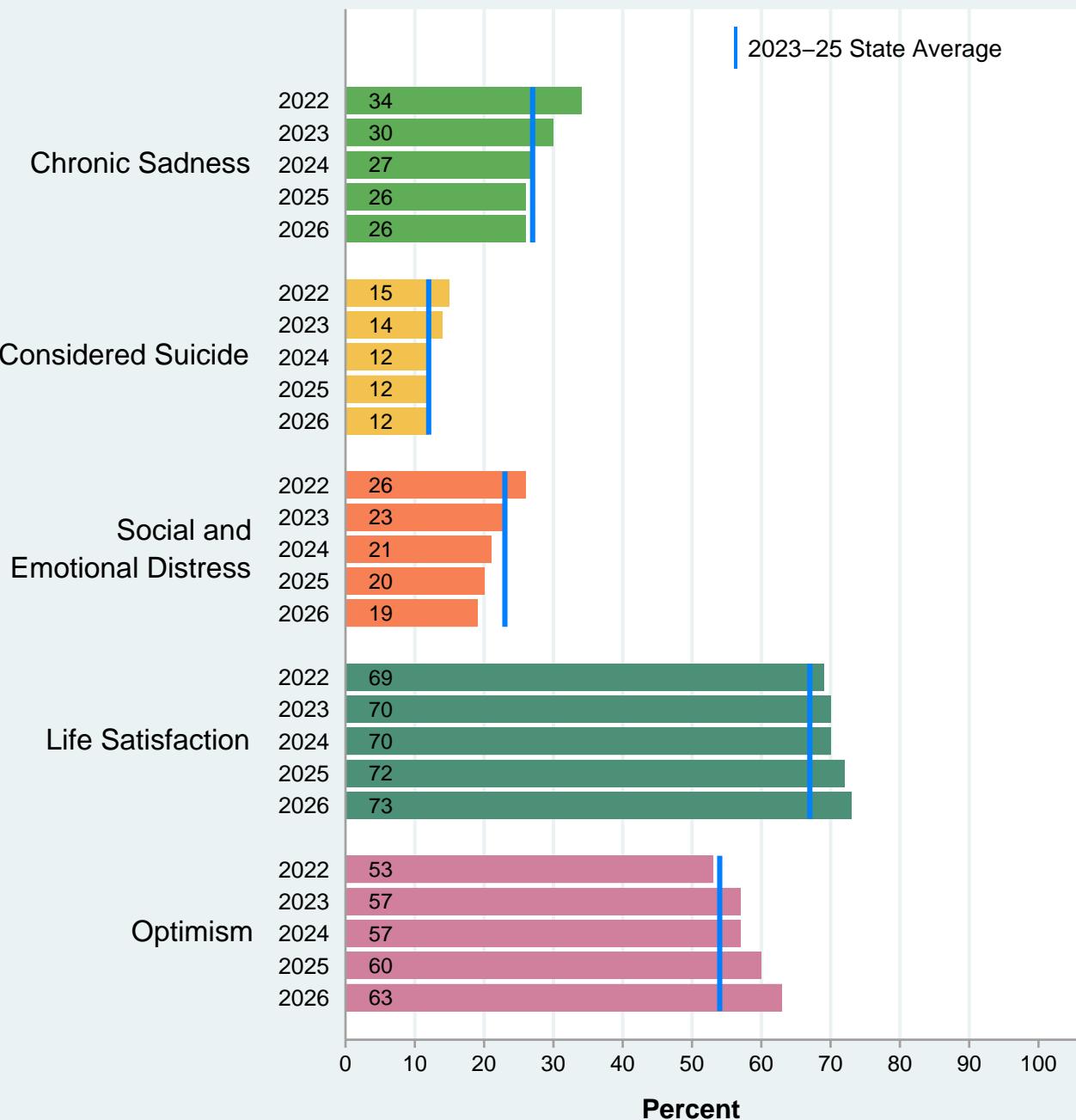
Number of Responses: 3,187 (2022), 3,215 (2023), 3,353 (2024), 3,225 (2025), 3,164 (2026)

Response Rate: 85% (2022), 85% (2023), 85% (2024), 87% (2025), 87% (2026)

Grade 7

Mental Health Indicators

Based on responses from students to the California Healthy Kids Survey



District Mental Health Report (Grade 7)—2025–2026

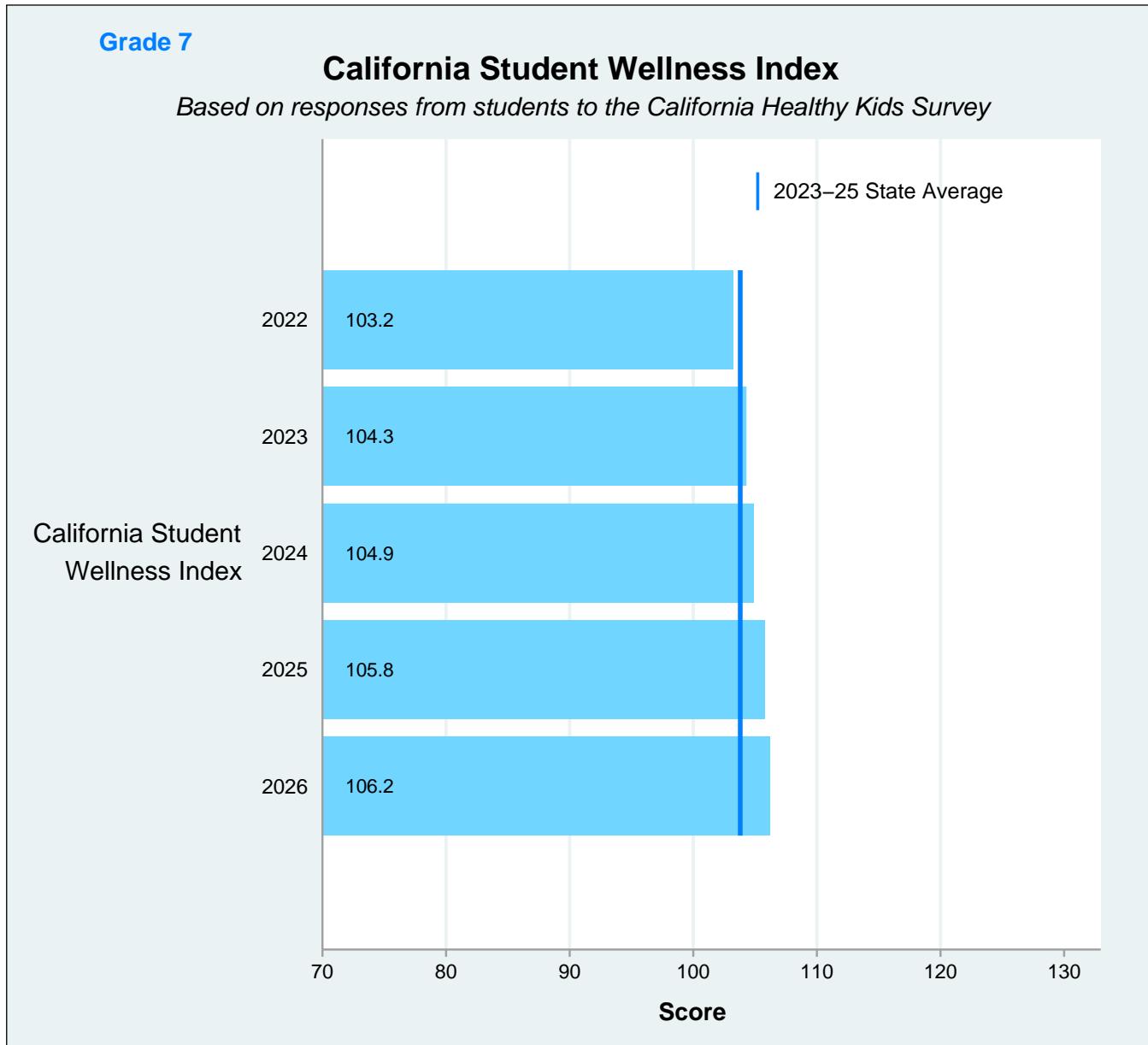
District: California District

Date Prepared: 21 Jan 2026

No. of Schools/Eligible: 12/12 (2022), 11/11 (2023), 11/11 (2024), 11/11 (2025), 11/11 (2026)

Number of Responses: 3,187 (2022), 3,215 (2023), 3,353 (2024), 3,225 (2025), 3,164 (2026)

Response Rate: 85% (2022), 85% (2023), 85% (2024), 87% (2025), 87% (2026)



District Mental Health Report (Grade 9)—2025–2026

District: California District

Date Prepared: 21 Jan 2026

No. of Schools/Eligible: 7/7 (2022), 7/7 (2023), 7/7 (2024), 7/7 (2025), 7/7 (2026)

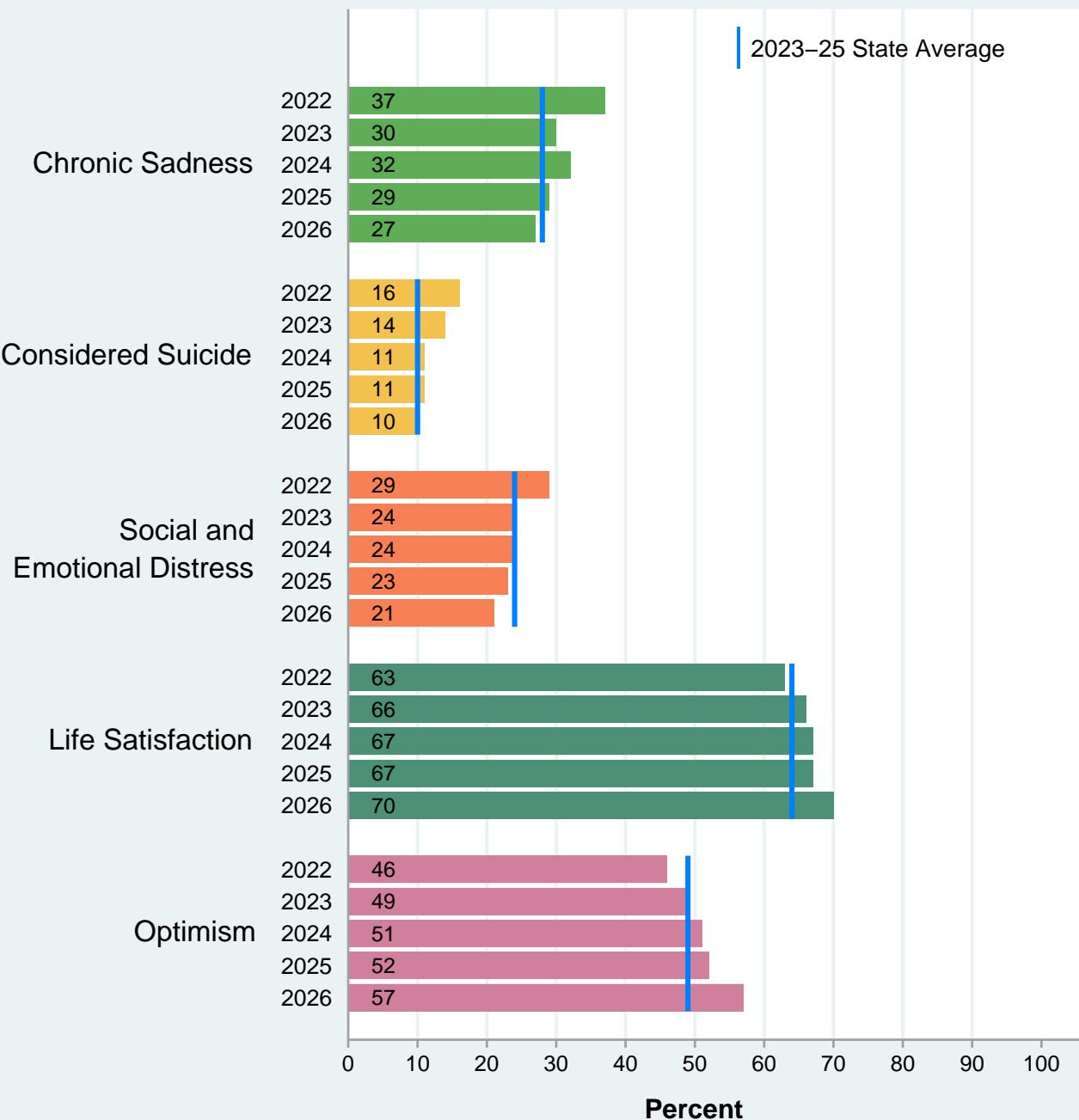
Number of Responses: 3,387 (2022), 3,453 (2023), 3,095 (2024), 3,202 (2025), 3,238 (2026)

Response Rate: 83% (2022), 82% (2023), 79% (2024), 80% (2025), 79% (2026)

Grade 9

Mental Health Indicators

Based on responses from students to the California Healthy Kids Survey



District Mental Health Report (Grade 9)—2025–2026

District: California District

Date Prepared: 21 Jan 2026

No. of Schools/Eligible: 7/7 (2022), 7/7 (2023), 7/7 (2024), 7/7 (2025), 7/7 (2026)

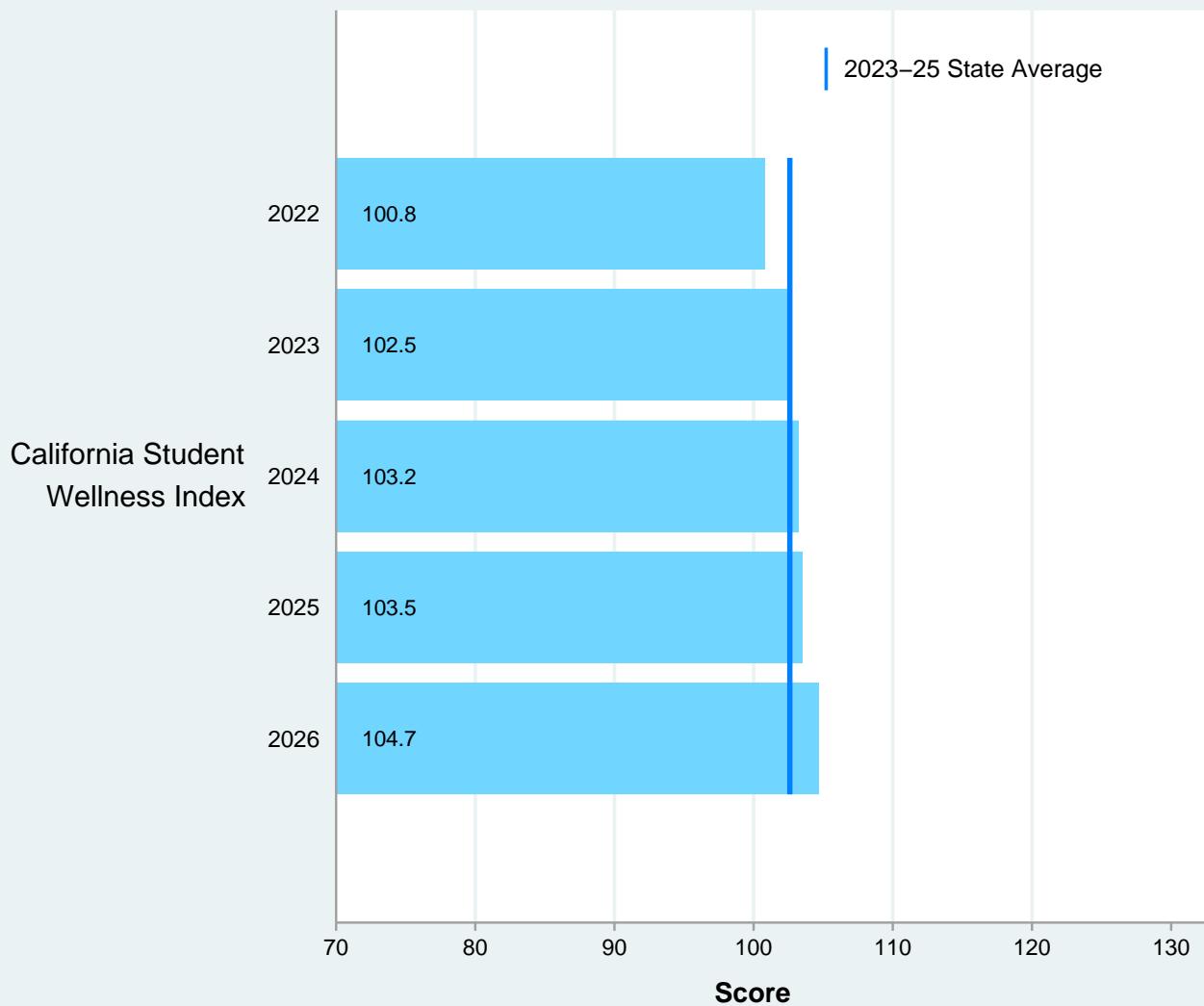
Number of Responses: 3,387 (2022), 3,453 (2023), 3,095 (2024), 3,202 (2025), 3,238 (2026)

Response Rate: 83% (2022), 82% (2023), 79% (2024), 80% (2025), 79% (2026)

Grade 9

California Student Wellness Index

Based on responses from students to the California Healthy Kids Survey



District Mental Health Report (Grade 11)—2025–2026

District: California District

Date Prepared: 21 Jan 2026

No. of Schools/Eligible: 7/8 (2022), 7/8 (2023), 7/7 (2024), 7/7 (2025), 7/7 (2026)

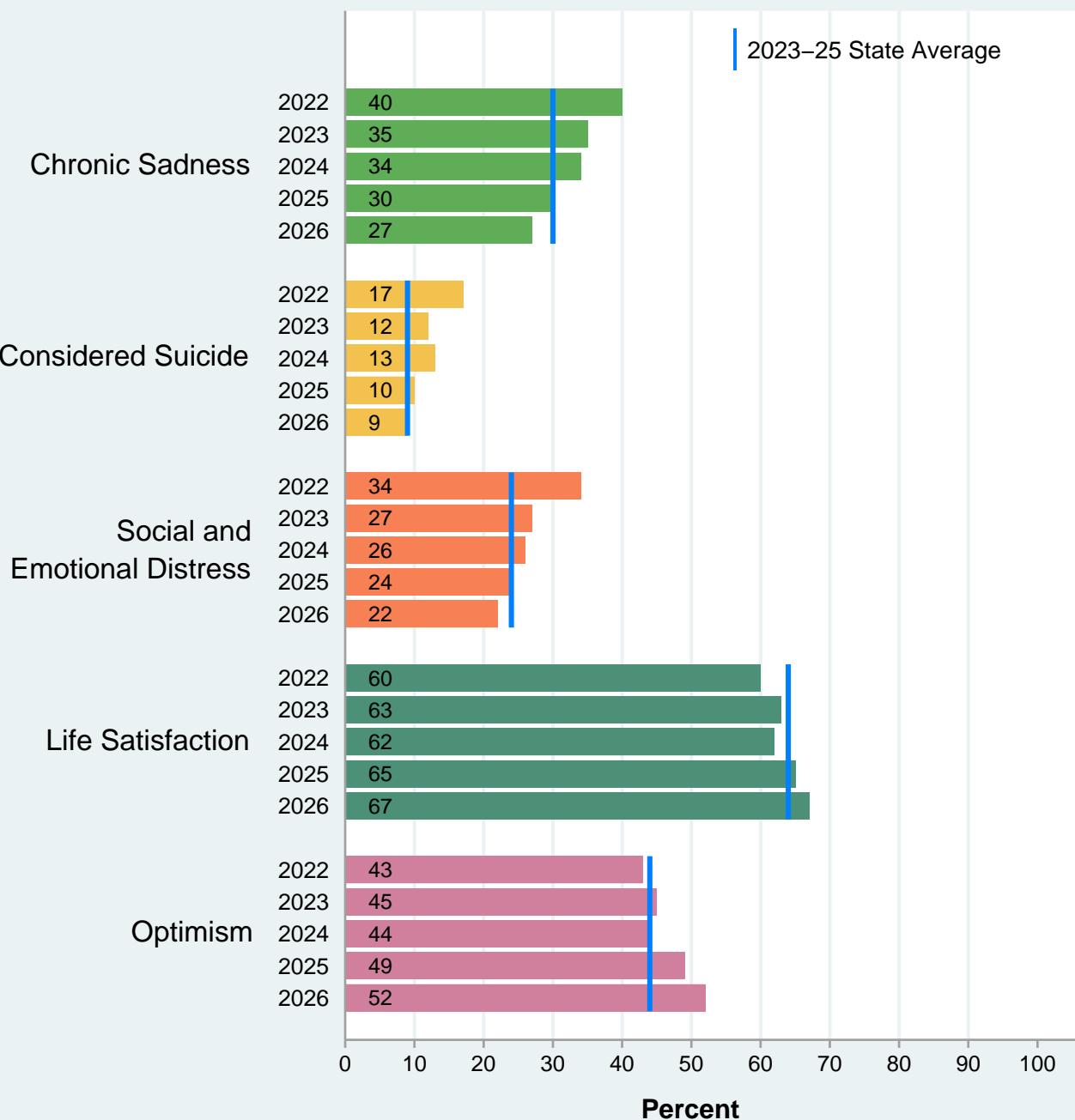
Number of Responses: 3,046 (2022), 2,716 (2023), 2,867 (2024), 2,759 (2025), 2,797 (2026)

Response Rate: 78% (2022), 70% (2023), 72% (2024), 71% (2025), 74% (2026)

Grade 11

Mental Health Indicators

Based on responses from students to the California Healthy Kids Survey



District Mental Health Report (Grade 11)—2025–2026

District: California District

Date Prepared: 21 Jan 2026

No. of Schools/Eligible: 7/8 (2022), 7/8 (2023), 7/7 (2024), 7/7 (2025), 7/7 (2026)

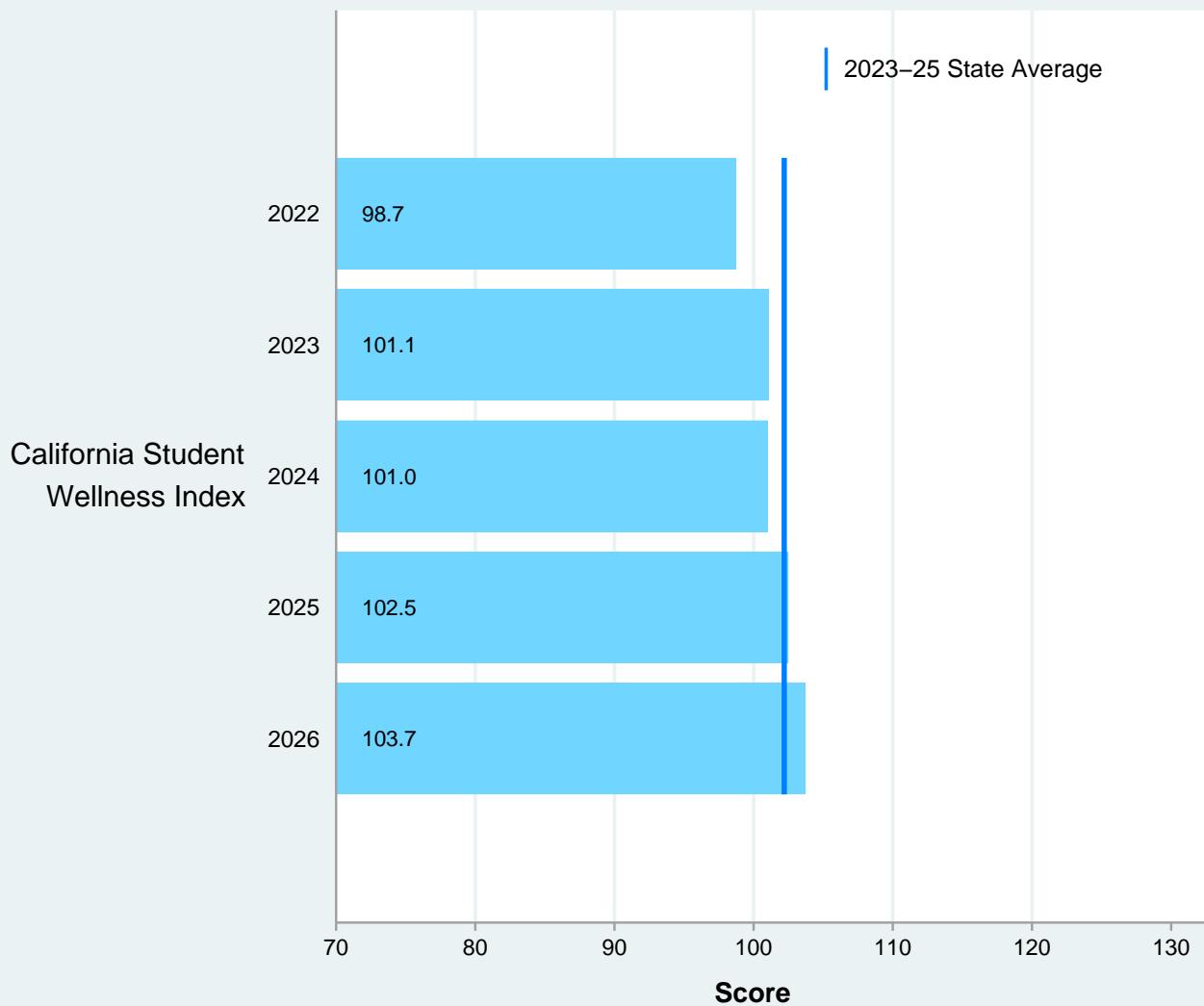
Number of Responses: 3,046 (2022), 2,716 (2023), 2,867 (2024), 2,759 (2025), 2,797 (2026)

Response Rate: 78% (2022), 70% (2023), 72% (2024), 71% (2025), 74% (2026)

Grade 11

California Student Wellness Index

Based on responses from students to the California Healthy Kids Survey



District Mental Health Report (Non-Trad.)—2025–2026

District: California District

Date Prepared: 21 Jan 2026

No. of Schools/Eligible: 2/3 (2022), 2/3 (2023), 2/3 (2024), 2/3 (2025), 2/3 (2026)

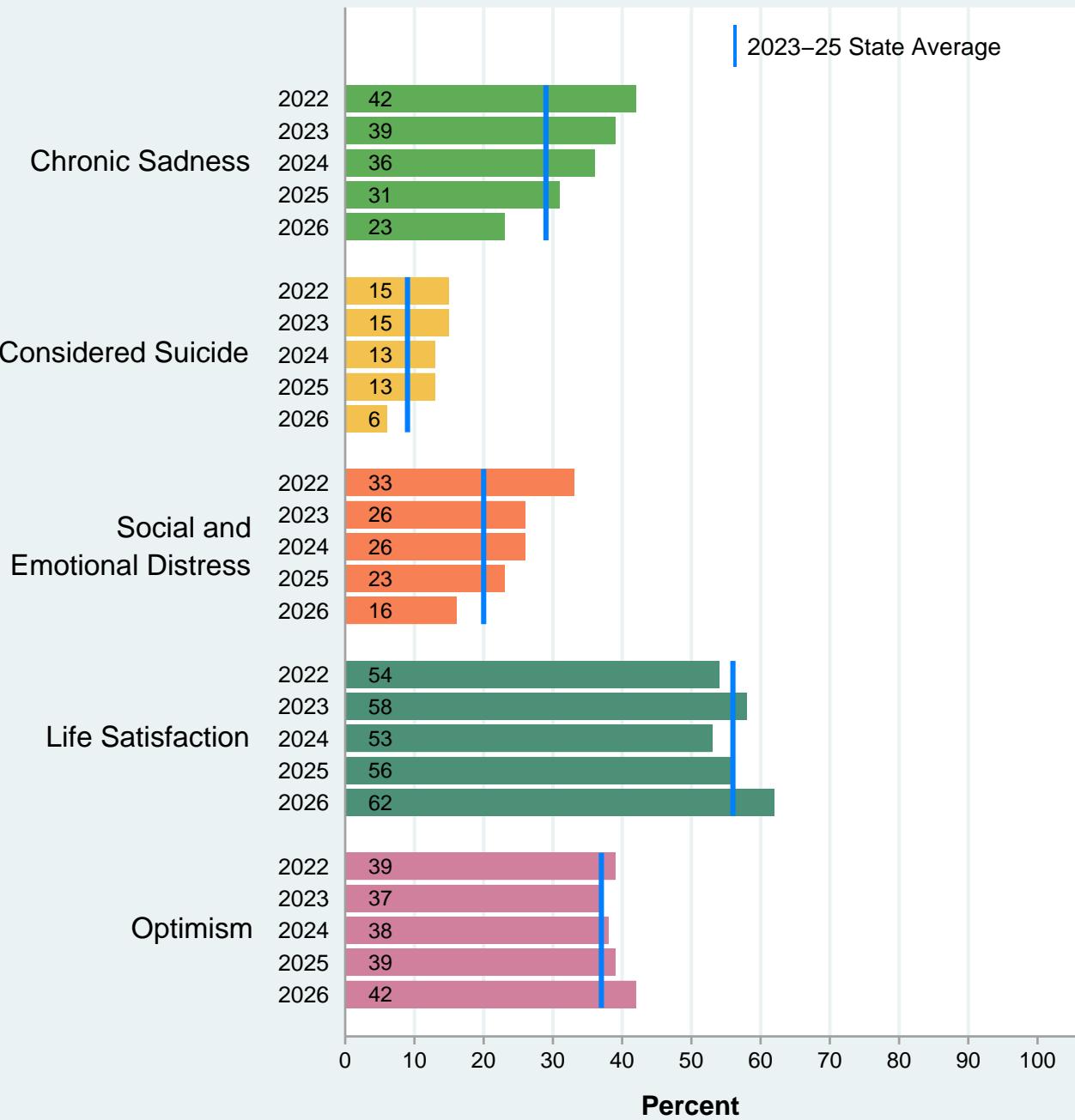
Number of Responses: 414 (2022), 489 (2023), 433 (2024), 435 (2025), 381 (2026)

Response Rate: 51% (2022), 52% (2023), 67% (2024), 79% (2025), 69% (2026)

Non-Traditional

Mental Health Indicators

Based on responses from students to the California Healthy Kids Survey



District Mental Health Report (Non-Trad.)—2025–2026

District: California District

Date Prepared: 21 Jan 2026

No. of Schools/Eligible: 2/3 (2022), 2/3 (2023), 2/3 (2024), 2/3 (2025), 2/3 (2026)

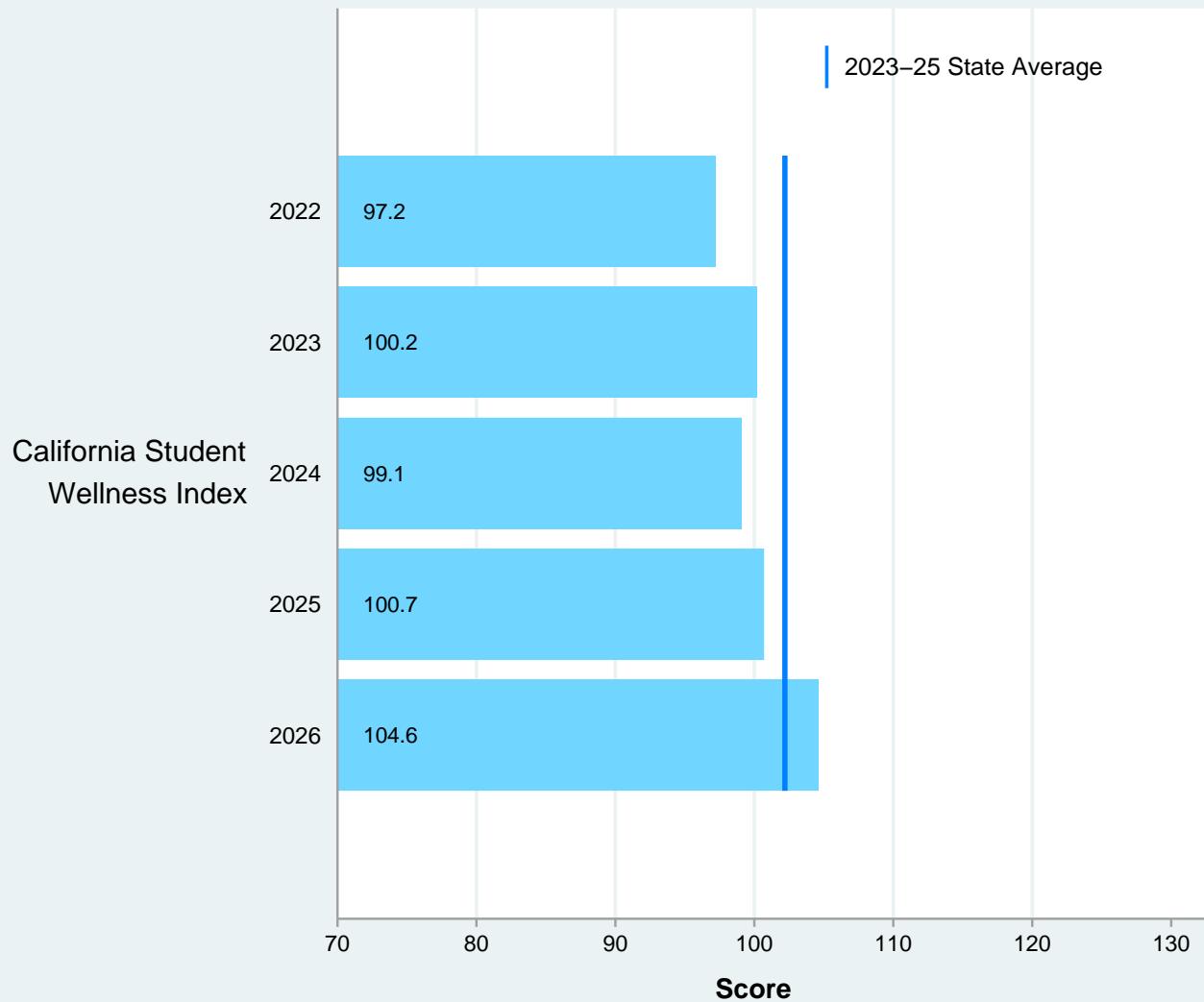
Number of Responses: 414 (2022), 489 (2023), 433 (2024), 435 (2025), 381 (2026)

Response Rate: 51% (2022), 52% (2023), 67% (2024), 79% (2025), 69% (2026)

Non-Traditional

California Student Wellness Index

Based on responses from students to the California Healthy Kids Survey



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Date Prepared: 21 Jan 2026

Mental Health Indicator Trends by Grade

	2022 (%)	2023 (%)	2024 (%)	2025 (%)	2026 (%)
Chronic sadness					
Grade 7	34	30	27	26	26
Grade 9	37	30	32	29	27
Grade 11	40	35	34	30	27
Non-traditional	42	39	36	31	23
Considered suicide					
Grade 7	15	14	12	12	12
Grade 9	16	14	11	11	10
Grade 11	17	12	13	10	9
Non-traditional	15	15	13	13	6
Social and emotional distress					
Grade 7	26	23	21	20	19
Grade 9	29	24	24	23	21
Grade 11	34	27	26	24	22
Non-traditional	33	26	26	23	16
Life satisfaction					
Grade 7	69	70	70	72	73
Grade 9	63	66	67	67	70
Grade 11	60	63	62	65	67
Non-traditional	54	58	53	56	62
Optimism					
Grade 7	53	57	57	60	63
Grade 9	46	49	51	52	57
Grade 11	43	45	44	49	52
Non-traditional	39	37	38	39	42

Note: An em dash (—) is displayed if there are no data or insufficient responses.

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California Student Wellness Index Trends by Grade

California Student Wellness Index	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Grade 7	103.2	104.3	104.9	105.8	106.2
Grade 9	100.8	102.5	103.2	103.5	104.7
Grade 11	98.7	101.1	101.0	102.5	103.7
Non-traditional	97.2	100.2	99.1	100.7	104.6

Note: An em dash (—) is displayed if there are no data or insufficient responses.

How are the Mental Health Measures Calculated?

“Chronic Sadness” is measured by the percentage of students who report feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more that they stopped doing some usual activities during the past 12 months. “Considered Suicide” – a measure of suicide ideation – is assessed by the percentage of students who report that they seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year.

The three indicators, “Social and Emotional Distress,” “Life Satisfaction,” and “Optimism,” are based on multiple items. The scores are calculated by averaging the percentage of students who report the top-two response categories on the survey items that comprise each scale. “Social and Emotional Distress” and “Optimism” are computed by averaging the percentage of respondents who report “Pretty much true” or “Very much true” on the survey items that comprise the scale. “Life Satisfaction” is calculated by averaging the percentage of respondents who report “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied” on the survey items that comprise the scale. Students’ satisfaction with their life experiences is a widely used wellness indicator. High life satisfaction is related to other positive resilience experiences (e.g., high level of school belonging) and fewer mental health challenges.

A value of 60 on the “Life Satisfaction” indicator, for example, means that on average, students report “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied” on three of the five “Life Satisfaction” survey items.

To construct the “California Student Wellness Index,” the 10 items that comprise both the social emotional distress and life satisfaction scales were each recoded such that the lowest possible score on each item was zero. These scores were then added together, resulting in a total raw score that could vary between 0 and 40. To calculate the scale score for the Student Wellness Index, the raw score was divided by the maximum possible score (40). Additionally, for clearer comparisons across groups and for interpreting future trends across time, a standardized version of the Student Wellness Index was constructed based on statewide data from the 2021–23 Biennial State CHKS. The standardized score (presented in the table) is scaled to have a mean score of 100 and a standard deviation of 15.

All of the survey items that comprise the scales/measures are listed below.

(1) Chronic Sadness (1 item)

- o During the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more that you stopped doing some usual activities?

(2) Considered suicide (1 item)

- o During the past 12 months, did you ever seriously consider attempting suicide?

(3) Social and Emotional Distress¹ (5 items)

Over the past 30 days, how true do you feel these statements are about you?

- o I had a hard time relaxing.
- o I felt sad and down.
- o I was easily irritated.
- o It was hard for me to cope and I thought I would panic.
- o It was hard for me to get excited about anything.

¹ Dowdy, E., Furlong, M. J., Nylund-Gibson, K., Moore, S., & Moffa, K. (2018). Initial validation of the Social Emotional Distress Scale to support complete mental health screening. *Assessment for Effective Intervention*, 43, 241–248.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1534508417749871>

(4) Life Satisfaction² (5 items)

I would describe my satisfaction with...

- my family life as...
- my friendships as...
- my school experience as...
- myself as...
- where I live as...

(5) Optimism³ (3 items)

- Each day I look forward to having a lot of fun.
- I usually expect to have a good day.
- Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad things.

(6) California Student Wellness Index⁴ (10 items)

Over the past 30 days, how true do you feel these statements are about you?

- I had a hard time relaxing.
- I felt sad and down.
- I was easily irritated.
- It was hard for me to cope and I thought I would panic.
- It was hard for me to get excited about anything.

I would describe my satisfaction with...

- my family life as...
- my friendships as...
- my school experience as...
- myself as...
- where I live as...

Results are based on responses from students in grades 7, 9, or 11, or respondents attending non-traditional (Non-Trad.) schools on the California Healthy Kids Survey. Non-traditional schools include Adult Education Centers, Continuation High Schools, County Community, District Community Day Schools, Juvenile Court Schools, Opportunity Schools, and Special Education Schools.

Results are not included if less than 50% of students or less than 15 respondents per grade provided data at the school or district.

Further information about the methodology used to construct the mental health indicators can be obtained by contacting Cindy Zheng at czheng@wested.org.

2 Huebner, E. S., Suldo, S. M., Valois, R. F., & Drane, J. W. (2006). The brief multidimensional students' life satisfaction scale: Sex, race, and grade effects for applications with middle school students. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 1, 211. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11482-006-9016-9>

3 Furlong, M. J., You, S., Renshaw, T. L., Smith, D. C., & O'Malley, M. D. (2014). Preliminary development and validation of the Social and Emotional Health Survey for secondary students. *Social Indicators Research*, 117, 1011–1032. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11205-013-0373-0>

4 Furlong, M. J., O'Malley, M., Chan, M., Dowdy, E., Goodwin, J. W., Ortiz, A., Nylund-Gibson, K., & Hanson, T. (2024). The California Student Wellness Index: Development, Validation, and Multi-Tier Applications. *Contemporary School Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40688-024-00519-2>

State Averages

State averages are based on responses from students in grades 7, 9, or 11, or respondents attending continuation high schools who provided data on the Biennial State California Healthy Kids Survey during the 2023–2024 and 2024–2025 school years.

2023–25 State Averages of Mental Health Measures

Indicator	Grade 7 (%)	Grade 9 (%)	Grade 11 (%)	Non-Trad. (%)
Chronic sadness	27	28	30	29
Considered suicide	12	10	9	9
Social and emotional distress	23	24	24	20
Life satisfaction	67	64	64	56
Optimism	54	49	44	37
California Student Wellness Index	Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11	Non-Trad.
	103.8	102.6	102.2	102.2