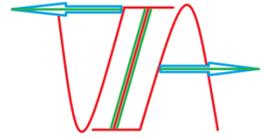


Youth Voices in Action



Youth Summit Report 2018

Created by Janelle Astorga-Ramos
Edited by Isabella Baker



About Youth Voices in Action - VIA

Our Mission Statement

Youth of different ages collectively coming together to speak up, be heard and make a change in our education system to fit the needs of everyone.

Our Vision

We work to create student-led trainings and campaigns that will help eliminate inequities in the education system and incorporate Student Voices in Decision Making at Albuquerque Public School (APS).

Our campaigns are made by youth for youth. Learn more at <http://viaabq.weebly.com>

Thank you to our partners:

Office of Equity and Engagement

Learning Alliance of New Mexico

The McCune Foundation

SouthWest Organizing Project

ENLACE

Unidos Project

Men of Color Initiative

Together for Brothers

Division for Equity and Inclusion

Washington Middle School



What is the Youth Summit?

Youth Voices in Action, or VIA, has been empowering youth since 2015. VIA was founded after the Albuquerque PARCC walkouts by Albuquerque Public School students and has since been a part of building student's leadership skills in the area of social justice and specifically Education and Youth Rights. The main goal of the VIA Student Led Youth Summit is to provide students with trainings and workshops that will develop them as leaders, public speakers and students who understand the root causes of the inequities within the education system. The youth summit also allows for a space where youth come together to speak openly about things they would like to see changed inside of their schools without being tokenized or ignored. VIA focuses on encouraging students, specifically students of color, who are not surrounded by academic or personal support, to be able to see their own potential and to develop the skills necessary to lead campaigns to make change in their schools because we believe those who are directly affected by an unjust education system have the ultimate power to create change. When youth are empowered, they can create changes that work as a domino effect for other students to also become leaders, all they need is a space to do so. That's why VIA, as students, created the student-led youth summit.

This year, 2018, was the second year VIA coordinated a student-led youth summit for all Albuquerque Public Schools. The process of selecting workshops this year was very emotional for many of our members. We understand that many students face bullying, violence and fear throughout their educational career and we wanted a space where students can learn from each other, be heard and start a healing process. 2018 was such an important yet traumatizing year for students being that in just 5 months of 2018 there was 16 school shootings. The fear of not returning home at the end of a school day was in the back of the minds of every student, parent and teacher, but according to students, there is no conversation happening inside of our schools to reassure students or teachers that they are the number one priority. We feel that this year's youth summit worked as both a place to learn and a place to heal. As VIA, we created a message to our membership and other students about our views on school safety and we hope this can bring reassurance and closure to students.

Our message:

“The members of Youth Voices In Action feel very deeply about the school shootings that have been taking place all over the country, we believe that the conversation needs to be directed in a different way than the media portrays the situation. Below is a statement we developed in solidarity with all students who fear going to school.

We as students, want to be safe. But to us, safety in schools does not look like metal detectors, zero tolerance policies, or schools looking like prisons. We don't want students to be criminalized, because youth of color are most affected by over policing in schools. Safety to us looks like prevention, intervention, and support services.

- ***Prevention- Undoing racism trainings in schools. Mediation and calming practices being taught in schools as an alternative to ISS or suspension. Outside of schools, it looks like common sense gun reforms.***
- ***Intervention- Schools that have good practices and policies for active shooter situations, including investing in things like door blockers, and fog machines that are meant to disassociate shooters, self defense and martial arts classes in schools, and especially ongoing conversations with youth.***
- ***Support- counselors and social workers in school, that know how to deal with mental health crisis', peer support and mediation programs.***

We want to see change. We want to be part of creating change. We NEED to be heard.”

Our message was so widely recognized that the Albuquerque Chapter of March for our Lives asked VIA if they can use our messaging for their campaign, and in return donated funds for our youth summit. We appreciate the new partnership we have created and we hope to continue working together in the future.

We would also like to thank all students for being brave and continuing to show up and be heard on issues that directly impact them. We realize that students of color are marginalized and discriminated against every day through the systems that are in place and we will not allow for that to further happen. We are fighting with you. We support you. We believe you.

After we discussed issues that were happening around the country and locally, VIA students selected 5 workshops that they wanted to present to their fellow students then, our core VIA members became experts in those subjects by teaming up with adult allies. The adult allies acted as mentors and educated us on the material that the students wanted to facilitate. The student facilitators then came up with the agenda and program for each workshop, as well as coordinating the agenda for the whole summit.

The workshops we presented were:

1. Teen Violence and School Safety

Facilitated by Jacob Martinez and community partner Isabella Baker

Students discussed the causes and effects of all types of school violence. As well as brought attention to resources and important reform (regulations) around school safety that VIA supports in New Mexico to make our students and schools safer. Students also discussed self-care and how to be a better friend.

2. Environmental Justice Tour

Facilitated by Valeria Salcido and community partner Emma Jones

In this workshop students went on a bus around the community to discuss how those communities have been affected by environmental injustices and how they are fighting back to save their community and how students can get involved.

3. Youth Empowerment

Facilitated by Diego Garcia and community partner Isaiah Moya

In this workshop students focused on the importance of youth empowerment and why it's important for youth voices to be heard. Students created art and were educated on how using art is a way to empower themselves.

4. What are the isms?

Facilitated by Bernadette & Janessa Lopez and community partner Javier Mateo Carrasco

In this workshop students learned about "what are the isms?". What that means is students talked about Racism, Sexism, Ableism, Classism and Ageism. They also shared their experiences and were encouraged to not be a bystander.

5. How do we create change? (Campaign Planning)

Facilitated by Zoe Hughes and mentored by Janelle Astorga-Ramos

In this workshop students discussed the best ways to create change in their schools or community. They learned about tactics and myths when it comes to creating change and strategies to developing campaigns and to become a leader in their school and community.



Each workshop had engaging activities as well as open discussions to get the students different point of views on the table. VIA students wanted this year's summit to be small and intimate because of the heavy topics that we were discussing. Before the summit, we prepared a student support team so that students had someone to talk to if they were feeling overwhelmed and/or needed someone to talk to. We made it a goal for all students to feel comfortable and safe while talking about these important issues.

Wall of Burning Issues

During the Summit we did an activity “The Wall of Burning Issues” where students write on a sticky note any issue they’re passionate about and stick it on a big piece of paper. Then, we read all the sticky notes and put them in categories of campaigns that we, as VIA can work on in the future.

The following table are the future campaigns students would like VIA to work on.

Area of Issue	Issue	Campaign
Funding	School Garden equipment and classes	Events and fundraising for awareness and educating community on the importance of school gardens
	Budget Cuts/How to keep away from hurting education and sports	Making a report for APS on how more effectively fund programs when dealing with budget cuts. What’s important to students?
	Lack of funding for new classes/ electives	Helping to discover more funding for classes and electives or finding more effective ways to spend funds
	Lack of training for school officers	Funding trainings for officers in mental health and not using excessive force while not being racially biased

Area of Issue	Issue	Campaign
Student Rights	Suicide awareness and prevention	Workshops and discussions inside schools
	Stopping discrimination, sexism, racism, genderism etc. between students & students and students & teachers	Workshops and student forums to determine what's really going on/ More teacher trainings
	Gang violence prevention	Restorative justice measures and student forums
	LGBTQ Rights and solidarity	Workshops and student forums
	Rights for undocumented Students and protecting those right	Building awareness of classes and getting more classes involved
	Poverty, Violence and drug use	Workshops and student forums
	Stop using dress code as a form to discriminate against girls and students facing poverty	Student led school wide campaigns
	Cafeteria Food	Starting school gardens to have fresh food and holding school board accountable for the food they are serving to students
	Zero Tolerance Policies	Campaigns around restorative justice and how teachers and students can work together
	In School Suspension is not an adequate way to hold students accountable	Building awareness that students shouldn't miss class if they are minutes late etc.

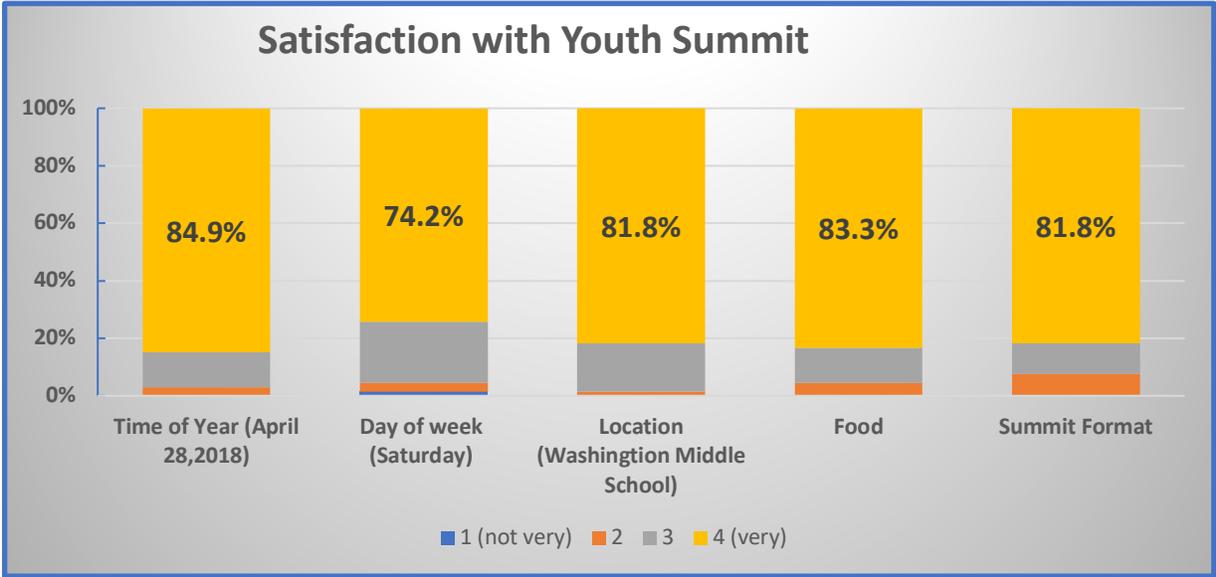
Area of Issue	Issue	Campaign
	Testing	High stakes standardized tests do not reflect every students knowledge/competency. Funding should go to better use.
Mental Health		
	Training teachers on how to react towards mental health incidents	
	Connecting Testing and Mental Health	Workshops/data collecting on how testing can disrupt mental health
Environment		
	Water Contamination inside schools	Water data and awareness
	Pollution	Student forums and awareness workshops
	Environmental Racism	Workshops and forums

Youth Summit Evaluation Findings

Question 1:

Rate your satisfaction with the following aspects of the Youth Summit:

	1	2	3	4
Time of Year (April 28,2018)	0.00%	3.03%	12.12%	84.85%
Day of week (Saturday)	1.52%	3.03%	21.21%	74.24%
Location (Washington Middle School)	0.00%	1.52%	16.67%	81.82%
Food	0.00%	4.55%	12.12%	83.33%
Summit Format	0.00%	7.58%	10.61%	81.82%



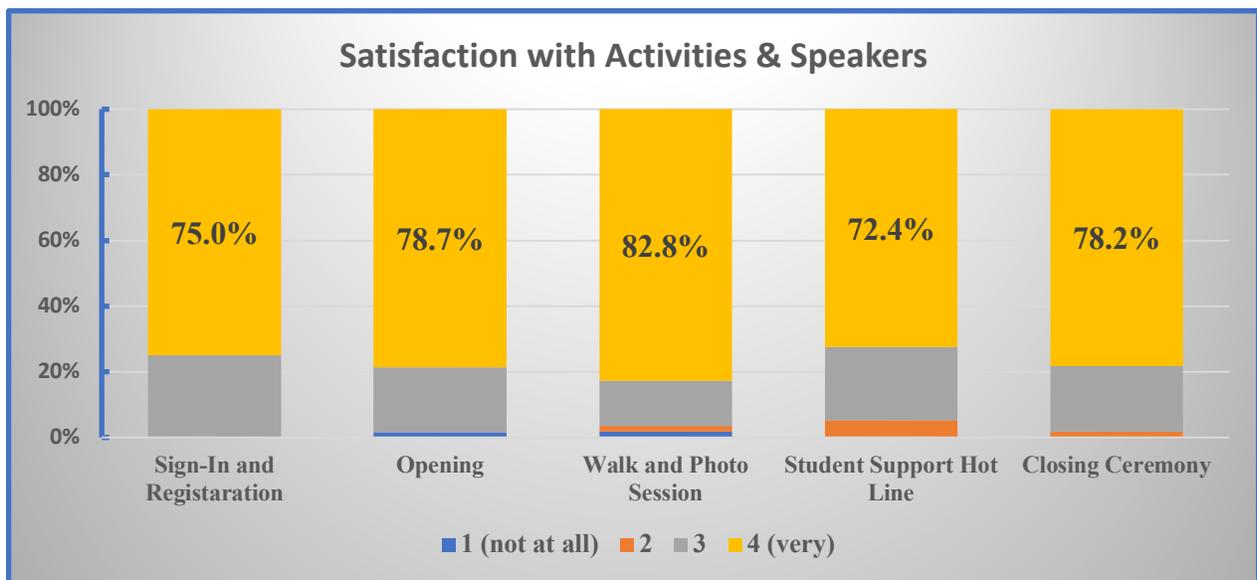
Question 2:

How satisfied were you with each of the activities and speakers?

	0*	1	2	3	4
Sign-In and Registraration	3.03%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	75.00%
Opening	7.58%	1.64%	0.00%	19.67%	78.69%
Walk and Photo Session	12.12%	1.72%	1.72%	13.79%	82.76%
Student Support Hot Line	12.12%	0.00%	5.17%	22.41%	72.41%
Closing Ceremony	16.67%	0.00%	1.82%	20.00%	78.18%

(0 "dummy") did not participate, total is of all respondents.

(1-4) scale is taken from subtraction of (0) and given in 100% of actual participants.



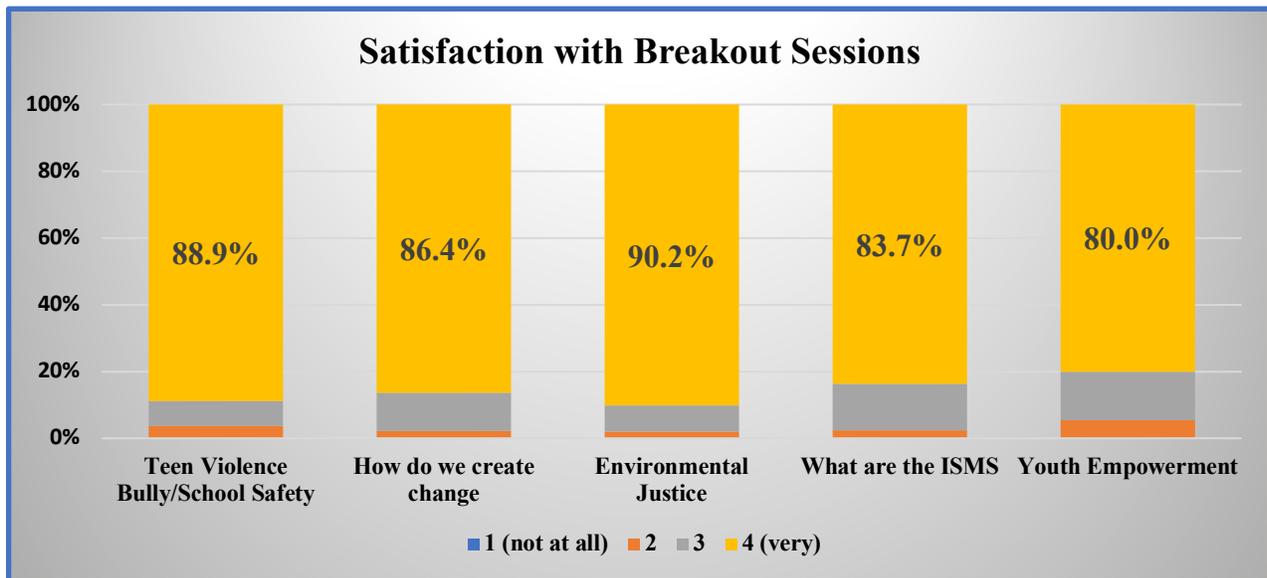
Question3:

How satisfied were you with the Breakout Sessions(s) you attended?

	0	1	2	3	4
Teen Violence Bully/School Safety	18.18%	0.00%	3.70%	7.41%	88.89%
How do we create change	33.33%	0.00%	2.27%	11.36%	86.36%
Environmental Justice	21.54%	0.00%	1.96%	7.84%	90.20%
What are the ISMS	34.85%	0.00%	2.33%	13.95%	83.72%
Youth Empowerment	16.67%	0.00%	5.45%	14.55%	80.00%

(0 "dummy") did not participate, total is of all respondents.

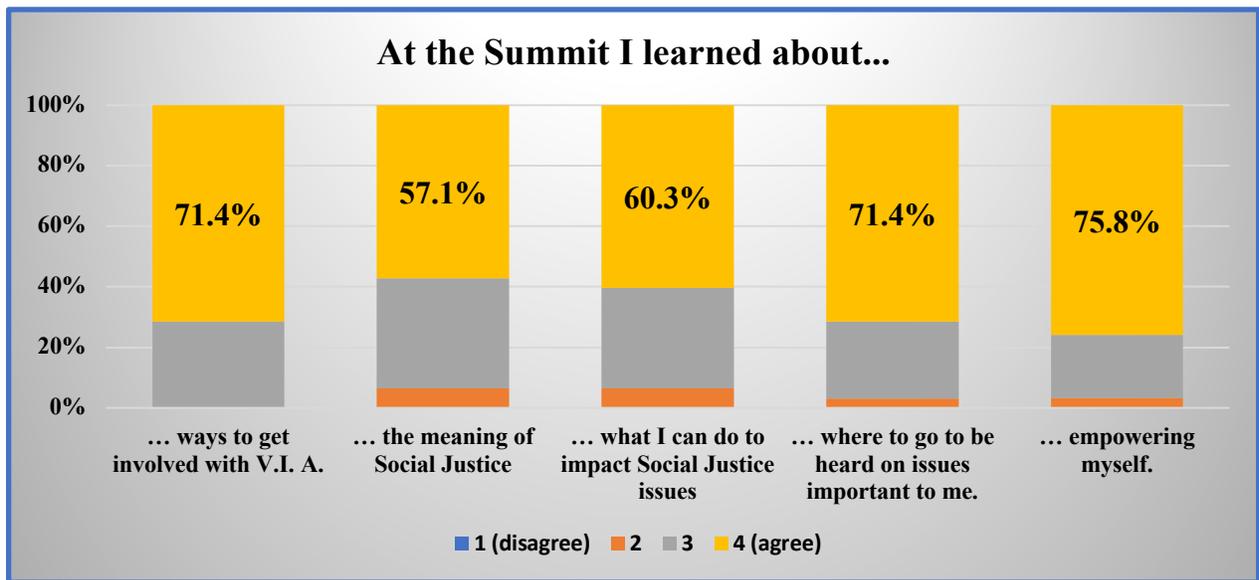
(1-4) scale is taken from subtraction of (0) and given in 100% of actual participants.



Question 4:

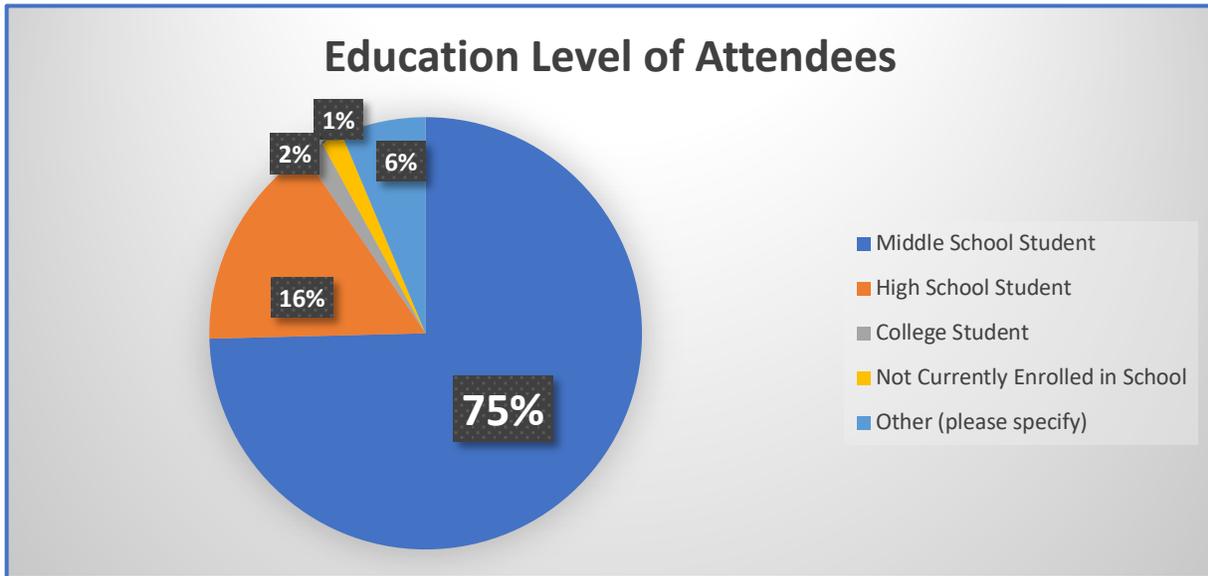
How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? At this summit, I learned about...

	1	2	3	4
... ways to get involved with V.I. A.	0.00%	0.00%	28.57%	71.43%
... the meaning of Social Justice	0.00%	6.35%	36.51%	57.14%
... what I can do to impact Social Justice issues	0.00%	6.35%	33.33%	60.32%
... where to go to be heard on issues important to me.	0.00%	3.17%	25.40%	71.43%
... empowering myself.	0.00%	3.23%	20.97%	75.81%

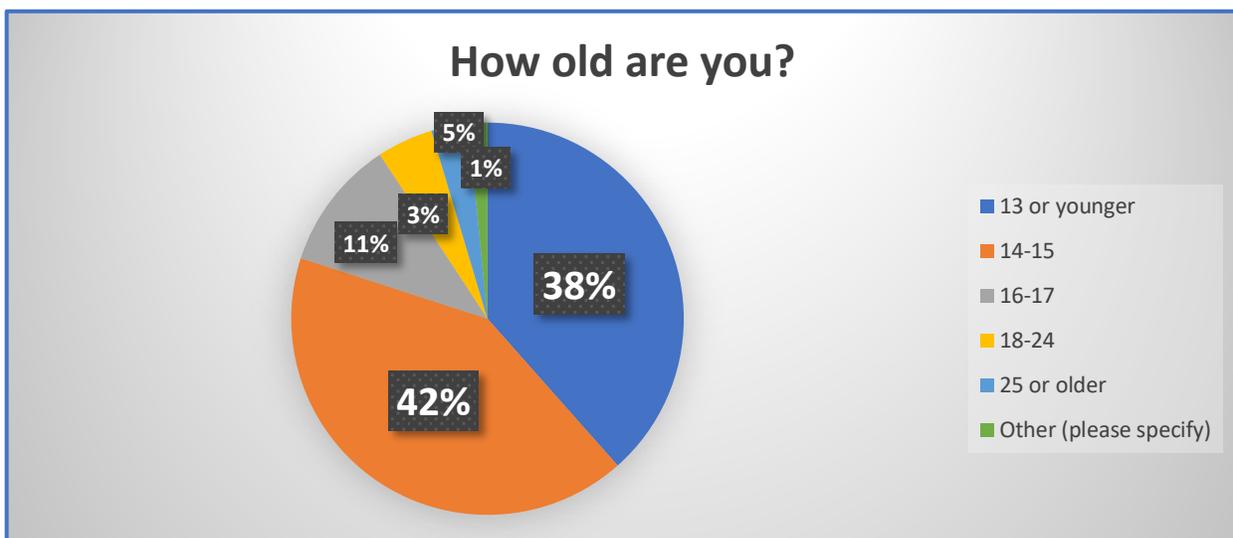


Question 5: Demographics

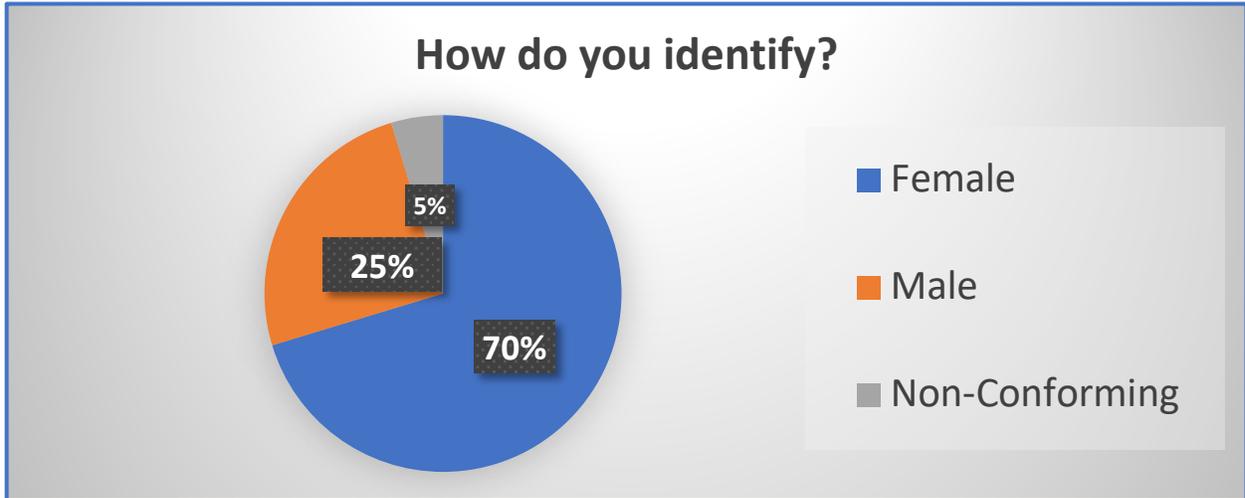
What is your current level of education?



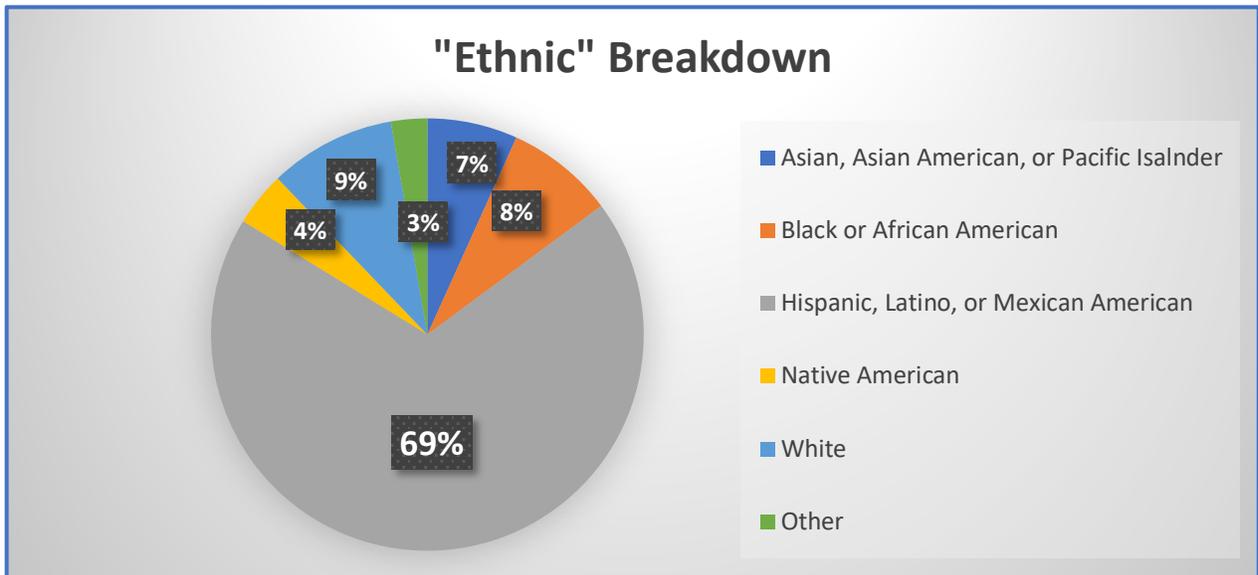
Question 6: Age Demographics



Question 7: How do you identify? (Gender)



Question 8: Ethnic Demographics – How do you identify?



2018 VIA Internships

This year, VIA partnered with the McCune foundation and had the privilege of compensating three incredible students that worked with myself and other VIA members over the course of 9 weeks to coordinate, outreach and undergo trainings that supported our Youth Summit. These three students alongside many others, put in countless hours preparing their workshop and truly becoming leaders in their schools. This goal was achieved by meeting weekly with students and training them on facilitation, public speaking, coordinating, budget analyzing and social justice areas such as organizing 101, environmental justice, the school to prison pipeline and other material. After the students went through our trainings we educated them on VIA's goal for our yearly youth summits and why it is important. Then, the students picked a topic that they would focus on for their workshop by brainstorming current events and by reading our youth summit report from last year. These three students were chosen by a random application process that took place at two schools where VIA has been running afterschool programs, which includes Washington Middle School (WMS) and George I. Sanchez Community School (GIS) as well as students from Atrisco Heritage Academy that attended meetings at GIS. Our three interns will also become lead facilitators and coordinators for our fall program at their schools, which means they will be writing agendas and facilitating trainings to other students who attend our afterschool programs as well as getting a first pick to deciding next year's youth summit theme! We hope to continue this incredible internship opportunity with the help of the McCune foundation in upcoming years, as it was such an incredible experience for each student. Below are quotes from our interns:

"Something that I learned through VIA is speaking up. I used to be very observant and now that I have been part of VIA it's like I truly changed in a good way. VIA has taught me how to be a leader, and activist, and many more things. And I really like that cause I get to create connections with new people and my community. Even in my classes I get involved more and I love that, all thanks to VIA. And I wish next year I could be in my youth coordinators spot."

– Valeria Salcido

"By participating in this experience, I increased my networks and gained experience in youth organizing. I discovered this is something I would like to continue doing in the future. I would love for other students to get involved and have the same impact that this experience had on me. I learned so much and will take these new skills with me to become a better leader in my school and community. It was also great to receive a stipend for my work, but I will continue being involved even after my internship is over."

– Diego Garcia

"It was really amazing having an opportunity like this where I can educate students on things that are affecting me too and showing them that we need to take care of ourselves as students too. It was exciting because a community organizer who has been doing this work for a very long time even quoted me in one of his posts and it really made me feel like a leader. Now that I'm going to high school I want to continue working with VIA in a bigger role and help other students like myself become leaders."

– Jacob Martinez

Appendix A – VIA Summit Debrief

VIA Summit planning committee members met May 10, 2017 to reflect on what went well during the summit and what could improve for the next summit. Findings listed below.

What did you appreciate the most about the summit?

- District leadership - School board member Patterson attended
- Use community space and location
- Student-led
- Student interest, engagement and leadership
- WMS staff – welcoming & supportive
- Positive energy and punctual time management
- Well organized
- Lots of learning
- Teachers re-engaging former students
- Youth walked away with skills and tools

What did we do REALLY well that we want to repeat next year?

- Organization
- Time management - food breaks
- Privilege walk
- Wall of burning issues
- Youth speakers
- Welcoming space
- Youth-led and youth-focused
- Set up day before
- Give space for community members/organizations to present
- Share community resources/internships with students
- Conversations in safe spaces

What are a few things we want to IMPROVE for next year?

- Promoting VIA better (t-shirts, posters, etc.)
- Outreach
- Group norms/community agreements
- Get a professional caterer
- Hold schools accountable that we are working with

Next Steps

The 2nd annual youth summit was very successful and intimate. We understand how impactful this summit is especially for students who have never been involved with organizing before. Students are directly impacted by policy changes in education and having a space where youth can come together, learn and fight back is extremely important. One thing that VIA would love to do is give a huge thank you to Washington Middle School for letting us use their space, being so welcoming and helpful and actively participating in the youth summit.

VIA will be having a meeting on Wednesday June 20th and another July 2018 to reconnect students and plan for the fall semester. We hope to continue our after school programs inside of middle schools around the city including Washington Middle School and George I Sanchez Community School. The afterschool program will meet once a week and will focus on different areas such as homework help, community campaigns, and workshops based on the needs and wants of the students involved. This is an amazing opportunity for students everywhere to develop their leadership skills, public speaking and other skills.

Also, VIA will start the planning for the Youth Summit 2019 in fall semester of 2018. We will be adding in all the feedback from the last two youth summits to make the third one an even bigger success, we will also be expanding our school outreach to get a larger crowd and welcoming back our community partners to again help with mentoring our youth facilitators.

RECAP:

- Wednesday June 27th 2018 – VIA Summer Meeting
- 2018-2019 school year, VIA will be hosting after school programs
- Youth Summit 2019 planning meeting will start fall semester 2018

Thank you to the following schools that were in attendance:

Washington Middle School

Atrisco Heritage Academy

Albuquerque High School

AIMES at UNM

George I. Sanchez Community School

John Adams Middle School

Native American Community Academy

New Futures High School

New America High School

Public Academy For Performing Arts

Tierra Adentro NM

Tech Leadership High School

Truman Middle School

University of NM

Thank you to the following APS Board Member that was in attendance:

Candelaria 'Candy' Patterson

Special Thanks to:

Angela Rodriguez – WMS Principal

Bernadette Trujillo-Ellis– WMS Teacher