

# Washburn's Cell Phone Policy: Effective or Not?



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# Our Research Question

- We feel that the current cell phone policy at Washburn isn't working for students and staff
- What can we do to make the cell phone policy at Washburn work for staff and students?

# Methods

## Student and Staff Surveys

- Distributed paper copies at lunch to students
- Emailed survey to students and staff

# Who took our survey?

## STUDENTS

		N	%
Race/Ethnicity	African/ African American	56	9%
	American Indian	4	1%
	Asian	17	3%
	Latinx	69	11%
	Mixed Race	58	9%
	Other	9	1%
	prefer not to respond	55	9%
	White	354	57%
Gender	Female	345	55%
	Male	239	38%
	Other	11	2%
	Prefer not to respond	27	4%
Grade	9th	157	25%
	10th	165	27%
	11th	163	26%
	12th	137	22%

**622**  
**Students**

**46**  
**Staff**

Role	N
Administration	1
school counselor	1
School Psychologist	1
Support Staff	10
Teacher	33
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>46</b>

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# Student Responses

# Student Survey Overview

Other students cell phones distract me in class



My cell phone distracts me in class



I agree with the current cell phone policy

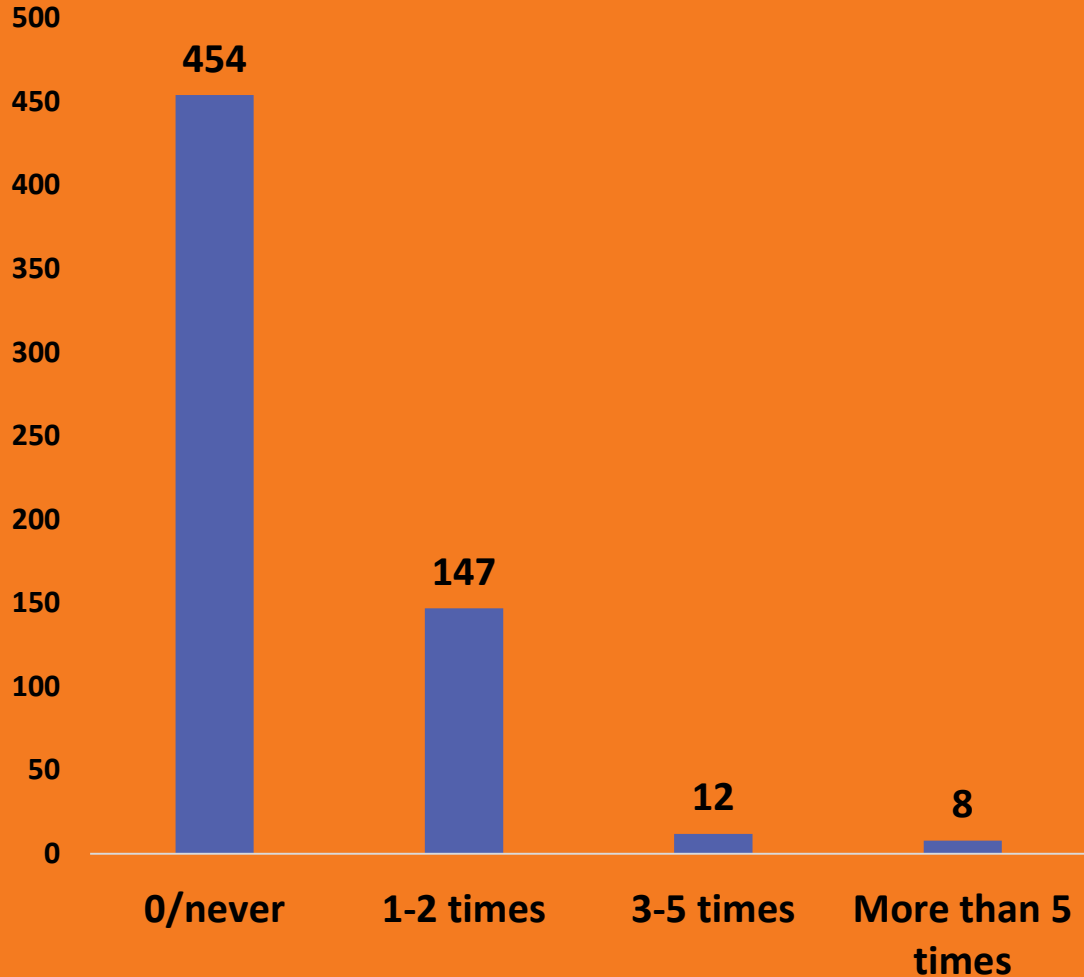


0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

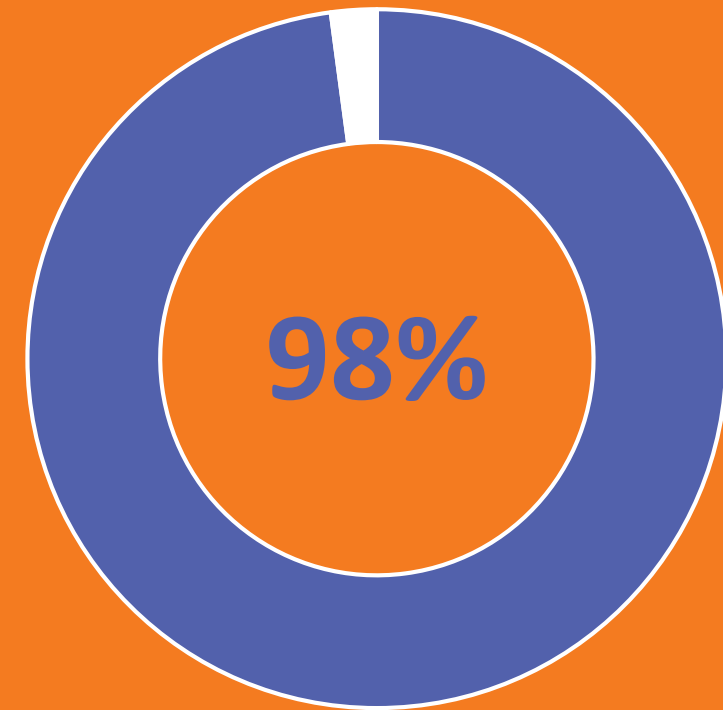
Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree I don't know about the policy

# Student Survey Overview

How many times, if ever have you had your cell phone taken away this year?



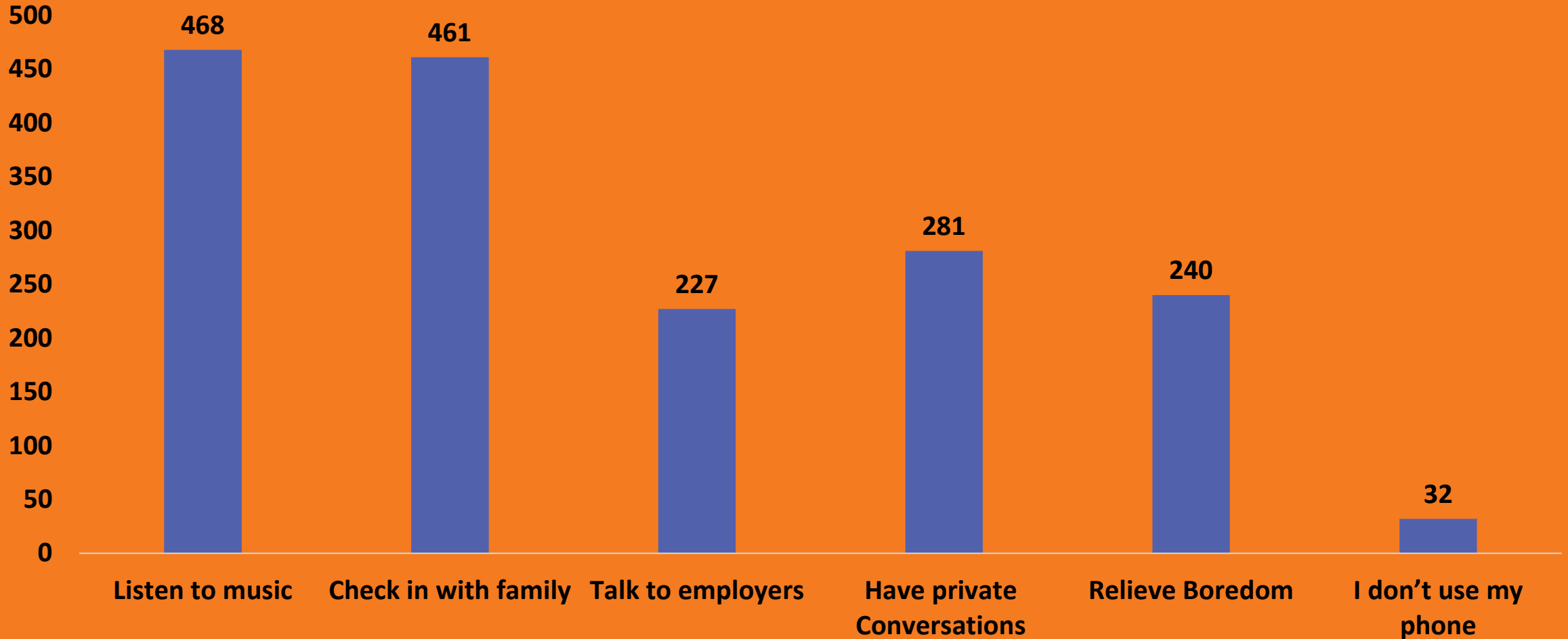
Has your parent or guardian been required to pick up your cell phone after it has been taken away?



Students responded no

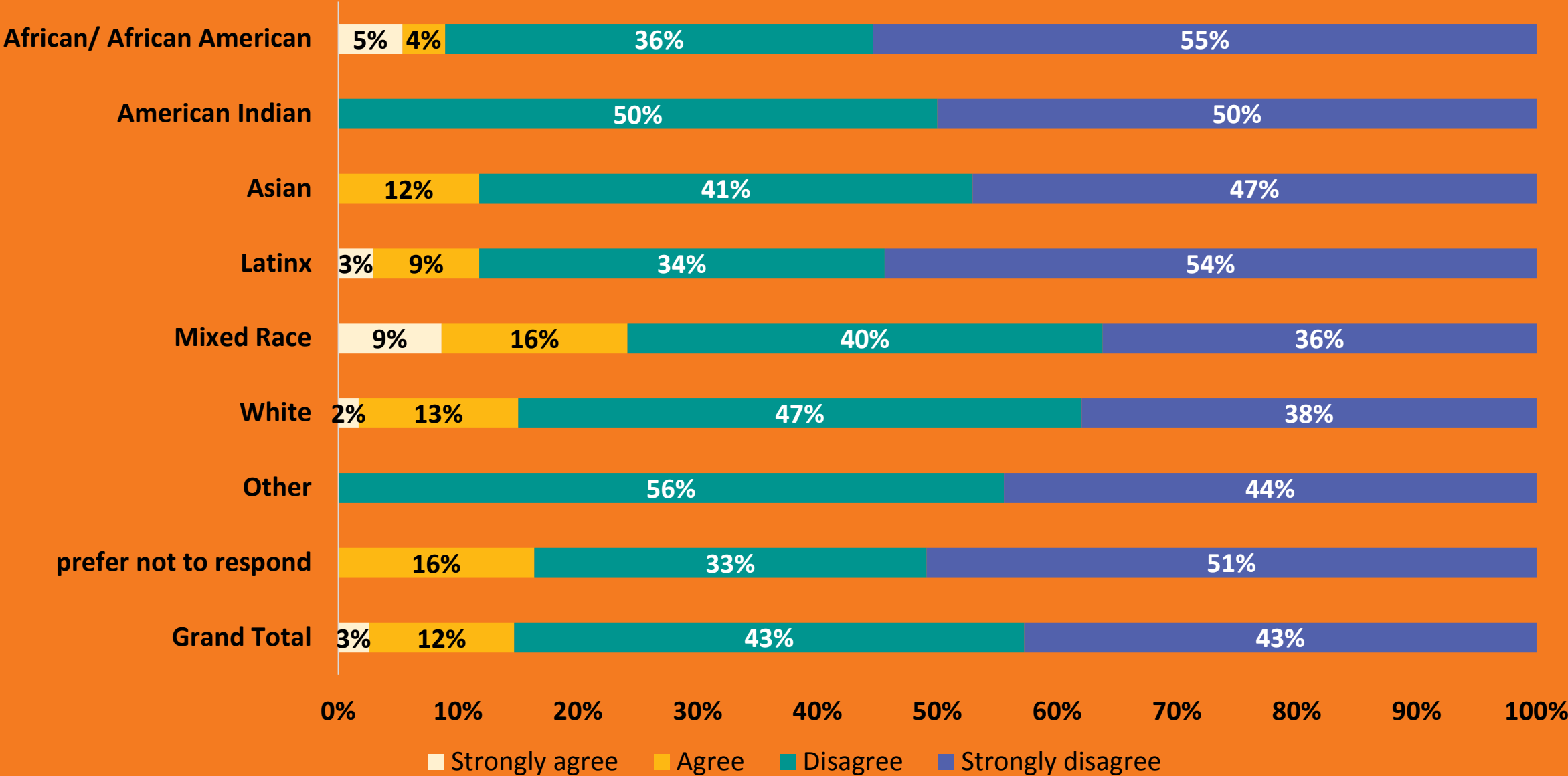
# Student Survey Overview

## Why Do You Use Your Phone During the School Day?

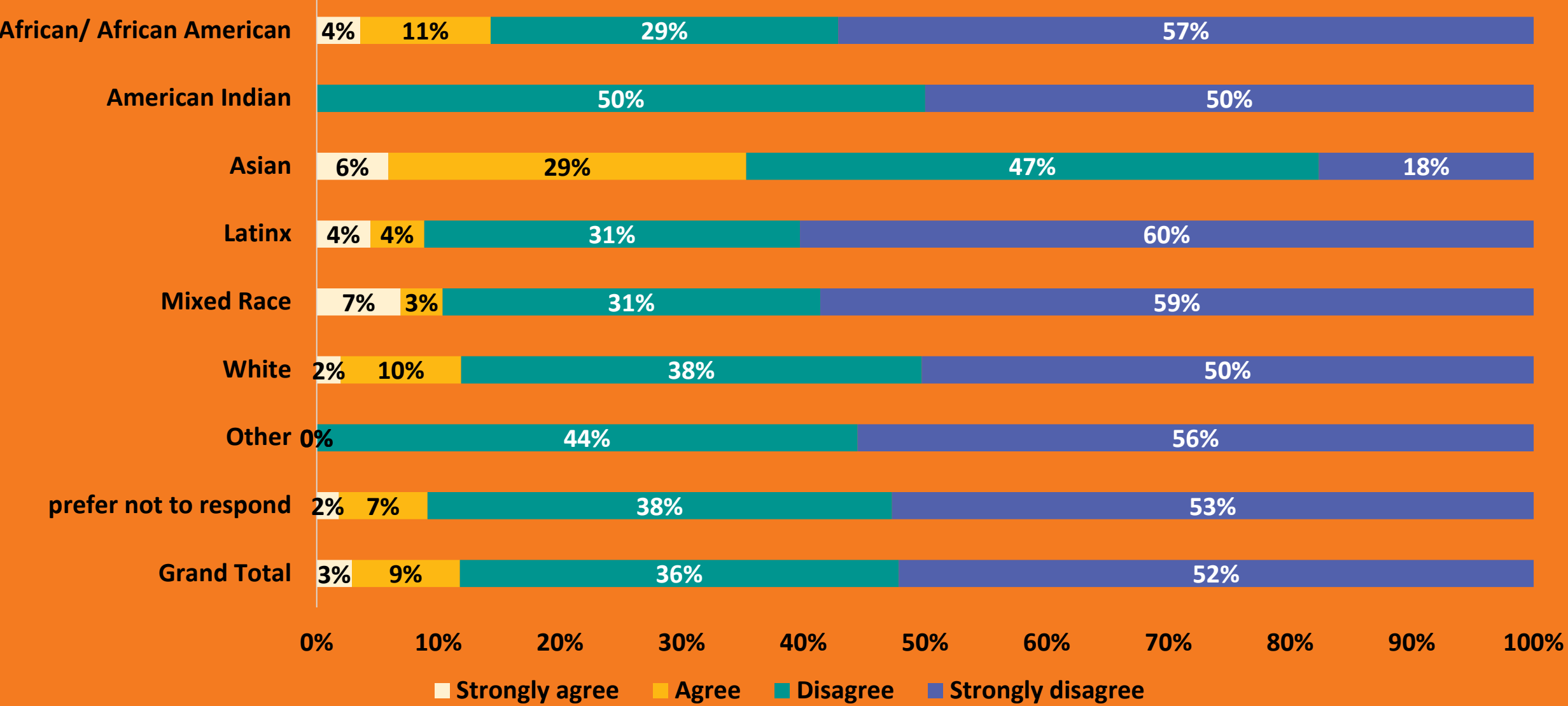




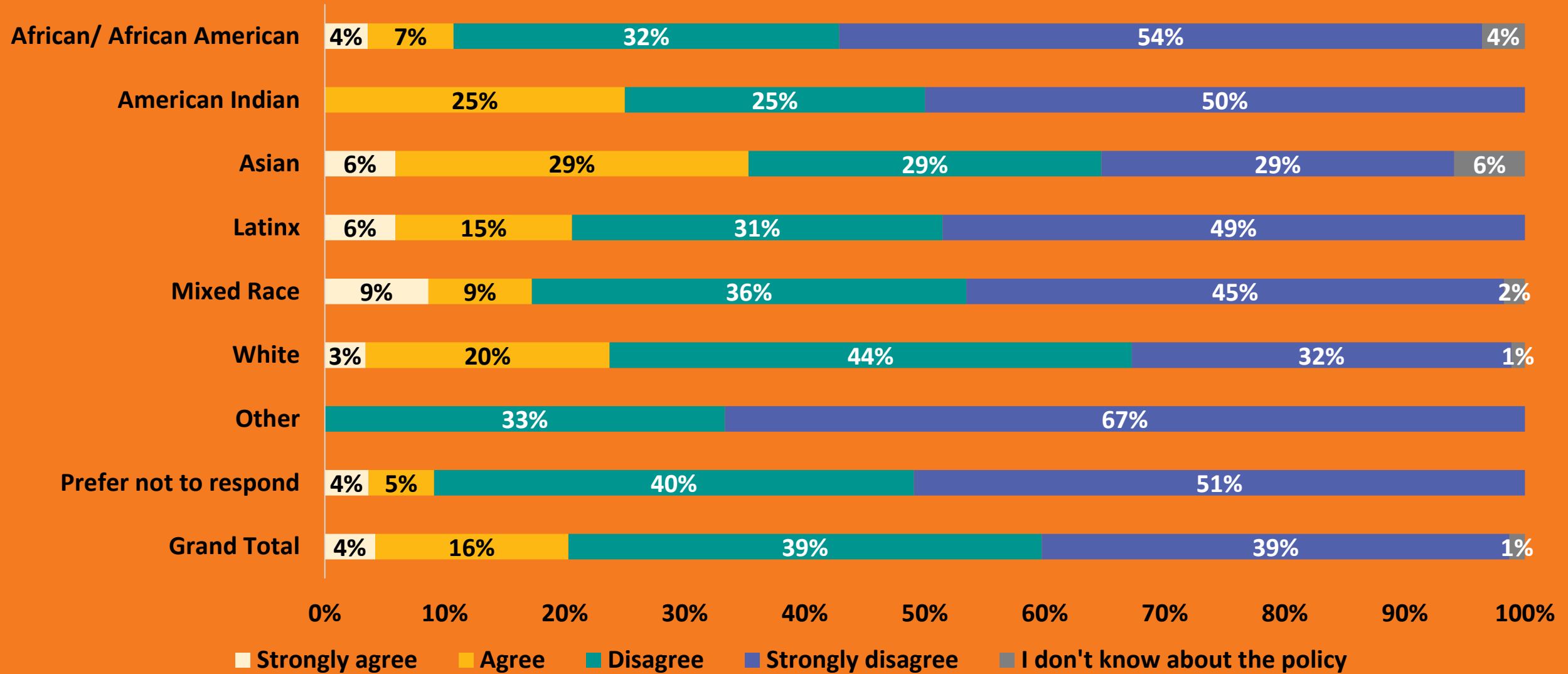
# My cell phone distracts me in class



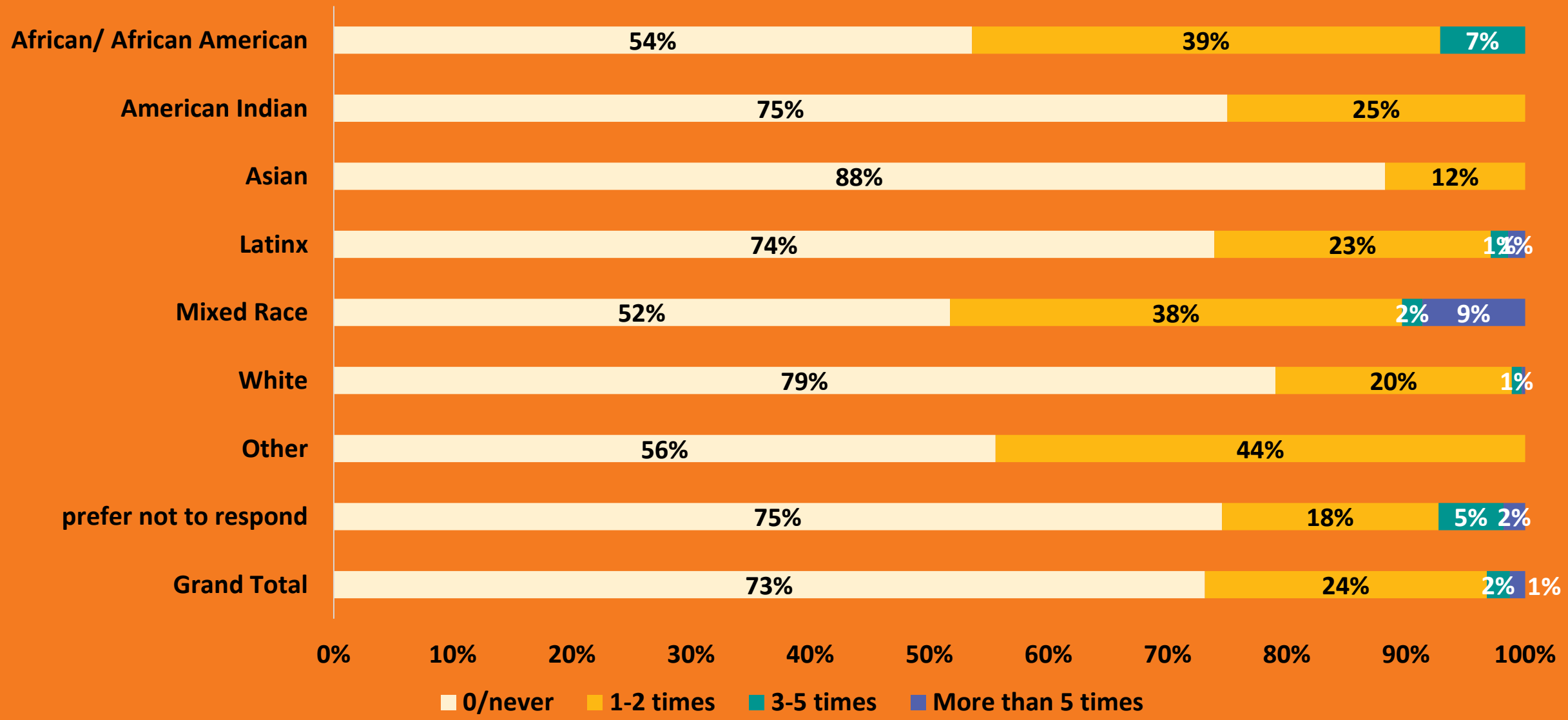
# Other students cell phones distract me in class



# I agree with the current cell phone policy



# How many times, if ever have you had your cell phone taken away this year?



# Student Recommendations

Rethink  
Bag-and-  
Tag

Allow phones  
when  
instruction  
isn't  
happening

Give  
teachers  
voice and  
choice

Know that  
phones are  
not always a  
distraction

Eliminate  
the Policy

Encourage  
phones for  
education  
oriented  
activities

Let  
students  
listen to  
music

# Student Recommendations

“Students should be able to use phones in case a family emergency happens”  
“My family doesn’t contact the office like they’ve been told to do because of how disrespectful they can be”

“Being able to listen to music while working helps me focus and helps with my anxiety”  
“Let teachers give students permission to use their phones to listen to music during work time”

## Direct quotes from students about their recommendations

“If a student is done with their assignment and the rest of class is a study hall then they should be able to use their phone”  
“We should be able to use our phones during advisory”

“Go back to teachers discretion”  
“Make it teacher preference, don’t make this determined by a blanket rule

# Student Recommendations

“ I think we should at least be allowed to use it for educational purposes such as khaooot, quizlet or to pull up information”

“I like to be able to look up pictures in art class”

“I like to be able to take pictures of the notes on the board”

“Teachers treat cell phones as if they are extreme distractions, but in all reality they are not”

“If a student is obnoxiously distracting others with their phone then take it away, don't punish other people who aren't distracting others”

## Direct quotes from students about their recommendations

“ Trust kids to handle phones themselves”

“Get rid of it. People use their phones just as much this year as last”

“Take away the phone policy. I believe that if students choose to use their phones irresponsibly it's their own fault”

“Cell phone are rarely a distraction to class, but being bag and tagged”

“Bag and tag draws teachers away from the lesson”

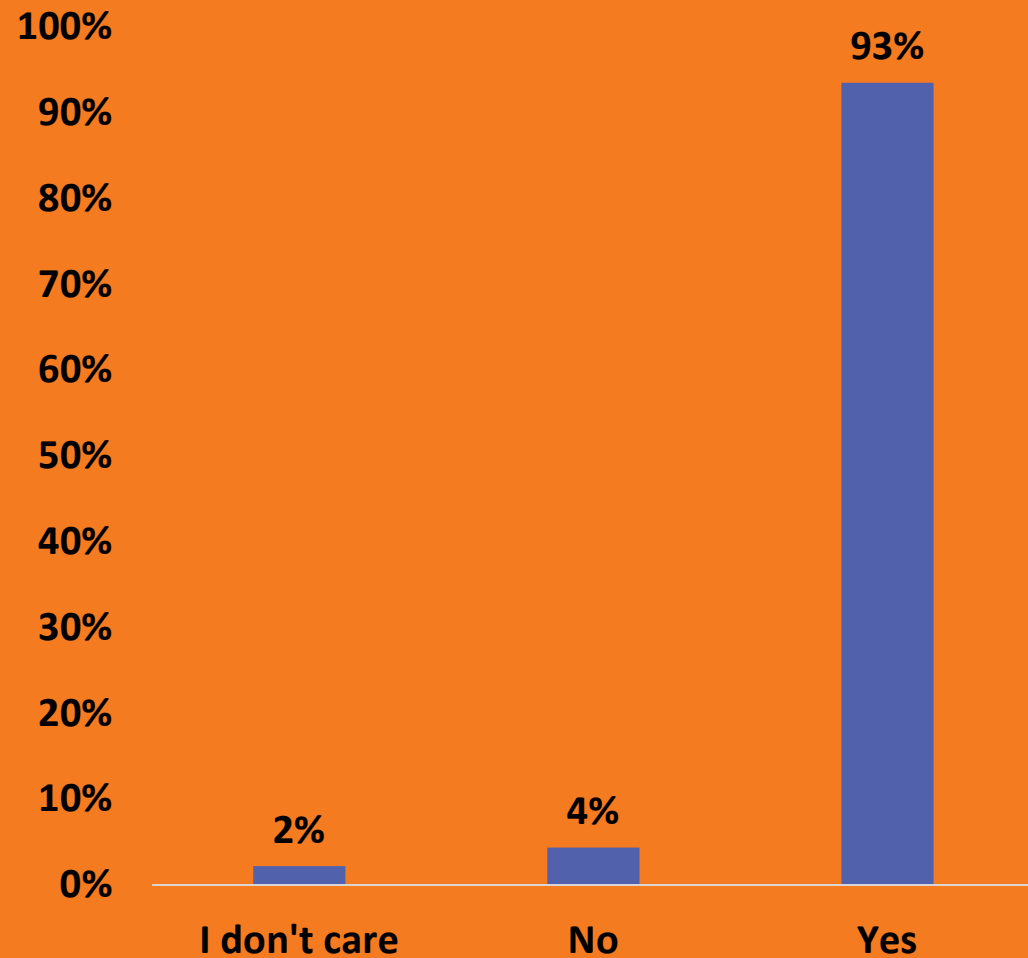
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# Staff Responses

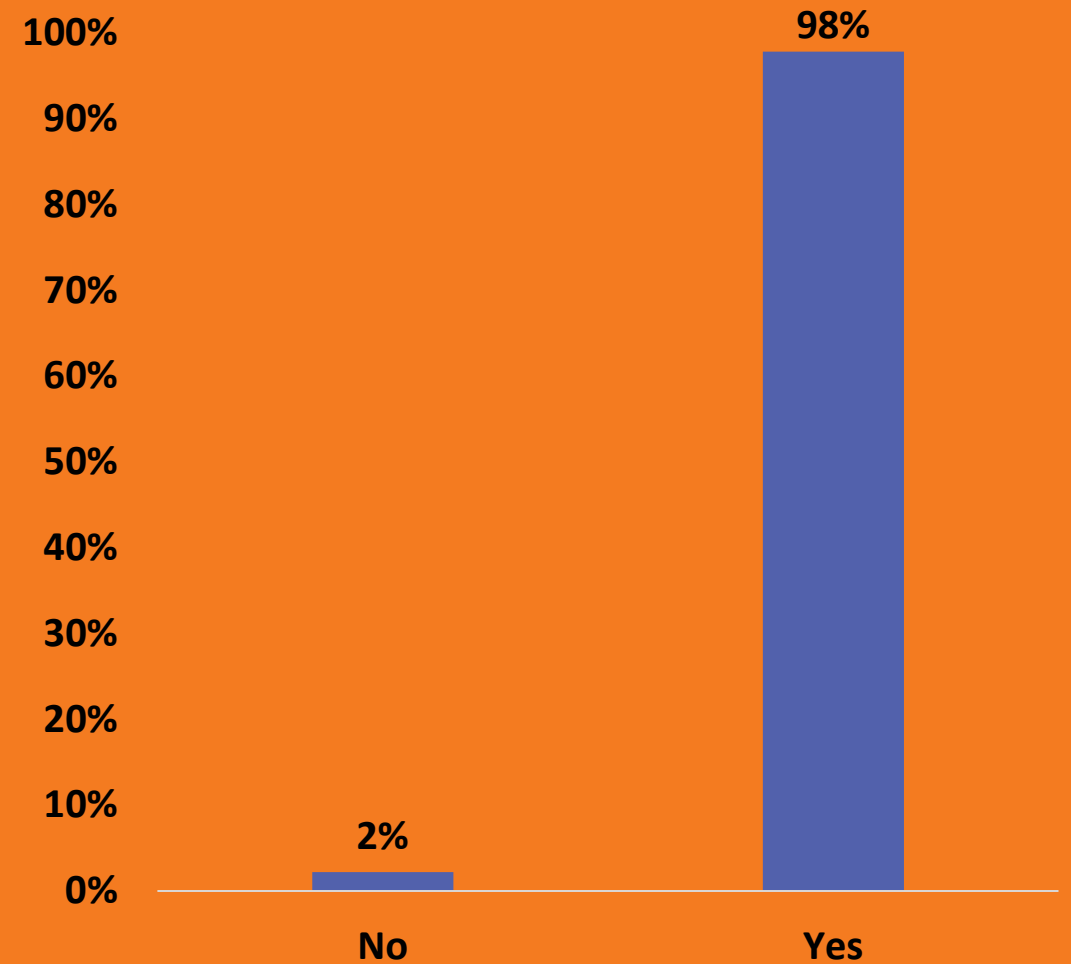


# Staff Survey Overview

Do you agree with the current cell phone policy at Washburn?



Do you enforce the cell phone policy ?



# How do staff enforce the policy?

## In the hallway

- 19 staff stated that they give verbal warnings or reminders of the policy
- 8 staff said they do not enforce this part of the policy and ignore when students are using their phones
- 7 staff said that how they respond is based on the relationship they have with the student (if they do not know the student they will ignore it)
- 3 state they call security

## In the classroom

- 19 staff said they call for a bag-and – tag without a warning
- 11 staff state they give a verbal warning before taking the phone
- 3 staff state they just ask students to put the phone away and do not bag-and -tag

# Staff Recommendations

- The majority of staff said they would not change the policy.
- 6 staff suggest that the policy should be implemented more consistently.
- 6 staff suggest that the enforcement and consequences should be more strict
- 5 staff suggest that teachers should be able to decide cell phone use in their class rooms

# Next Steps

- Present to school staff
- Share findings with student body