

## Program Report 2014 for Schenectady High School

### Introduction

Michael Arterberry, the Founder and Executive Director of the Youth Voices Center, Inc., a non-profit organization that has the sole purpose of improving the lives of young people, is also the creator of the Power of Peace program. The Power of Peace program was introduced to Westchester County, NY and surrounding areas in 2005. The results of the Power of Peace program for 2014 are presented in this report. The implementation of the program took place in two cycles during the months of March and December.

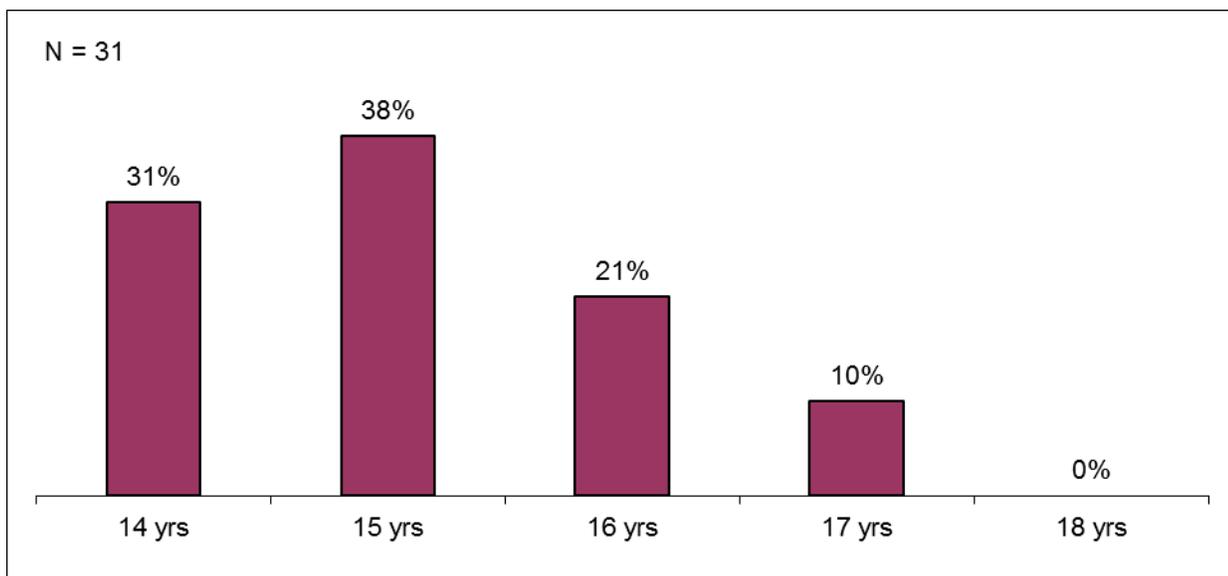
### Program Description

Power of Peace is a succession of experiential workshops, with a focus on conflict resolution and anti-violence, designed to enable young people to use their voices to express their concerns, fears and dreams within a safe environment. The workshops address the issues that youth confront daily, the components of which include: positive youth development, leadership, conflict resolution, team work and collaboration, decision making, respect for others and self, and diversity.

### Demographics

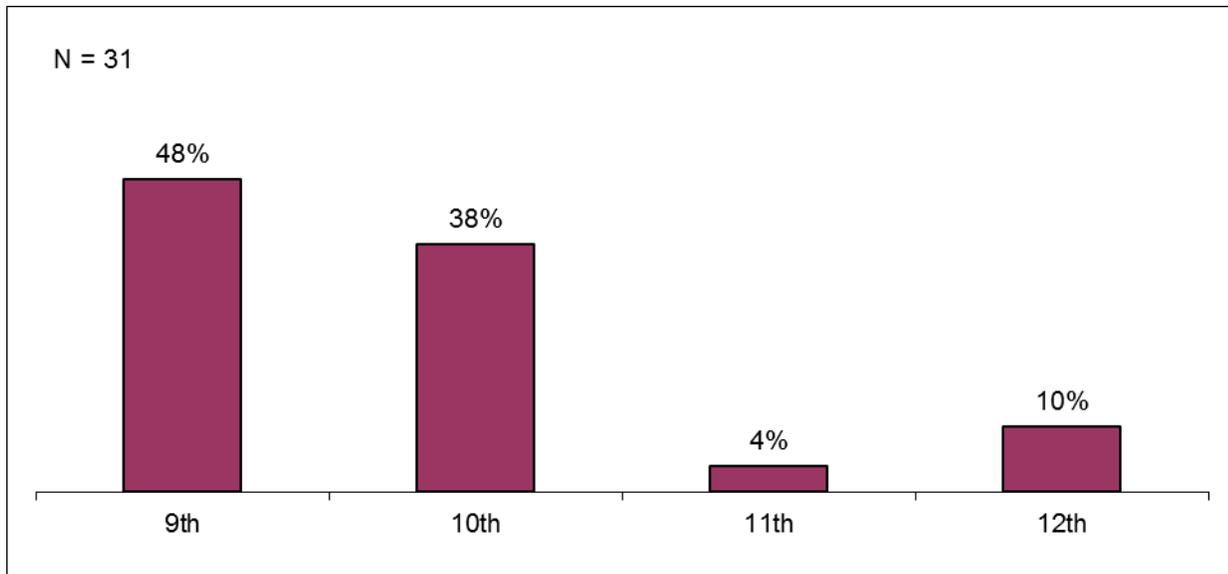
There were 31 students who participated in the 2-day Power of Peace workshops. The student group was comprised of 15 boys (48%) and 16 girls (52%) in grades 9 through 12 and ranging in age from 14 – 17. Distributions for age, grade and ethnicity are presented in the charts listed below.

### Age



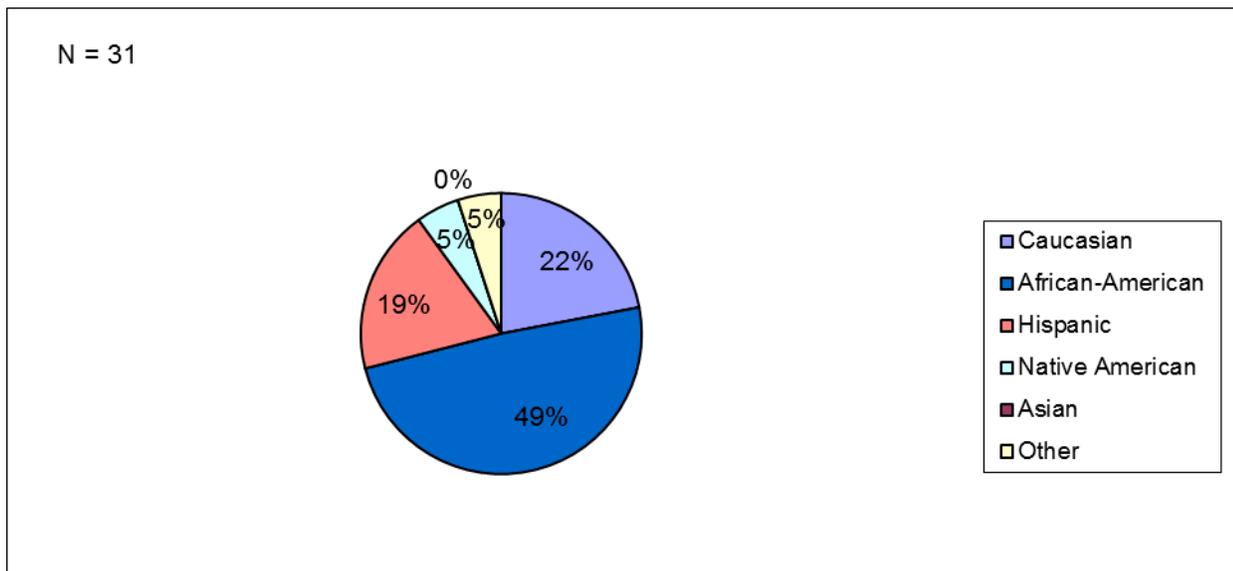
Just under one third (31%) of the participants were 14 years of age, followed by just over one third (38%) of participants 15 years of age.

## Grade



Nearly one half (48%) of participants were in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, followed by just over one third (38%) of the participants in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

## Ethnicity



Nearly half (49%) of participants identified their ethnicity as African-American, followed by Caucasian (22%) and then Hispanic (19%).

## Program Evaluation

A six statement pre-survey and a seven statement post-survey, designed by Creative Solutions Consultation Services, LLC, were administered to assess the effectiveness of the program. Students were asked to complete the pre-survey prior to the start of the first workshop and asked to complete the post-survey at the end of the second workshop. Of the 31 participants, 100% completed both the pre-survey and the post-survey.

**Quantitative:** Responses to statements were on a five point likert scale ranging from 5 = “Yes, definitely,” 4 = “Mostly,” 3 = “Sometimes,” 2 = “Not Really,” to 1 = “No, Never.”

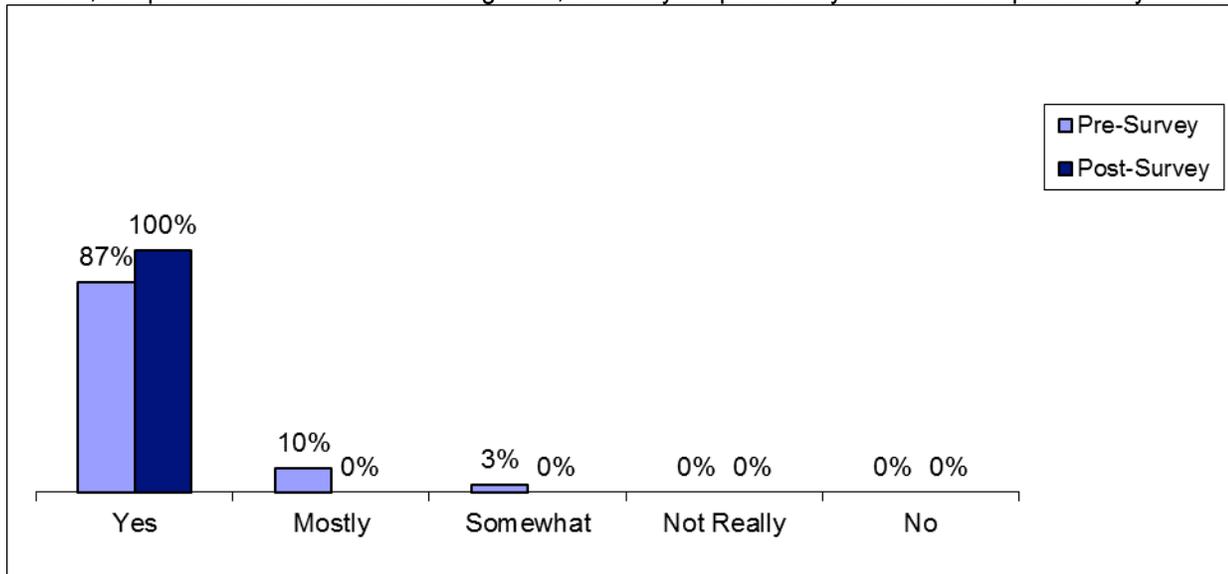
**Qualitative:** Two questions asking for feedback about the program were included on the post-survey regarding a) how participants felt about the Power of Peace experience and b) ways to improve the program in the future.

### Results

From pre-survey to post-survey, positive changes in attitudes were seen on all six items. Data were unable to be analyzed using t-tests to compare pre-survey responses with post-survey responses due to small N = 31.

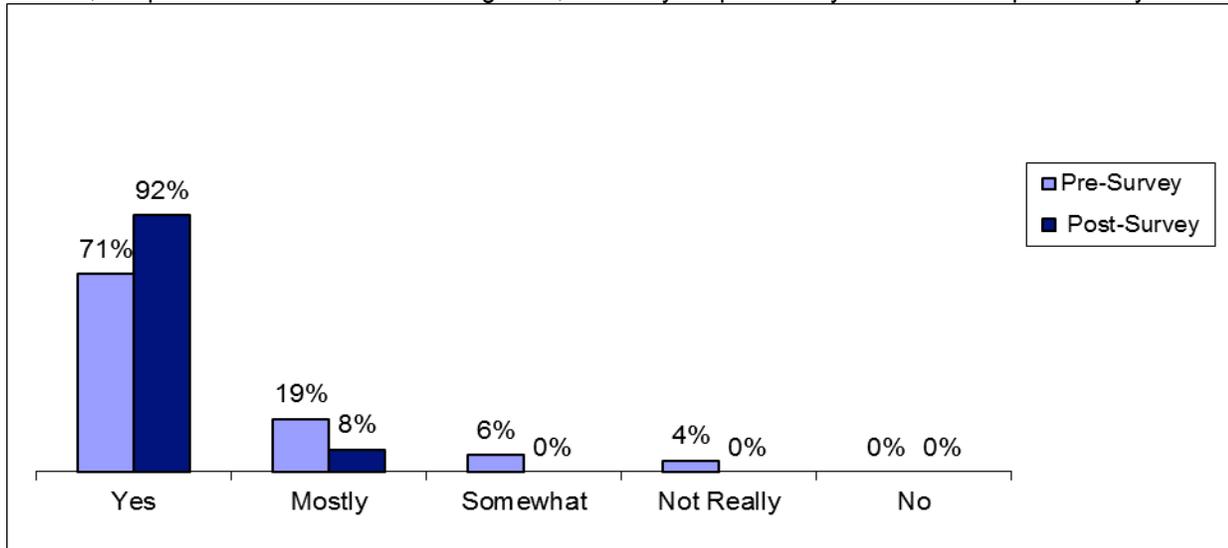
#### Item 1: I respect myself.

Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 87% and at post-survey = 100%.



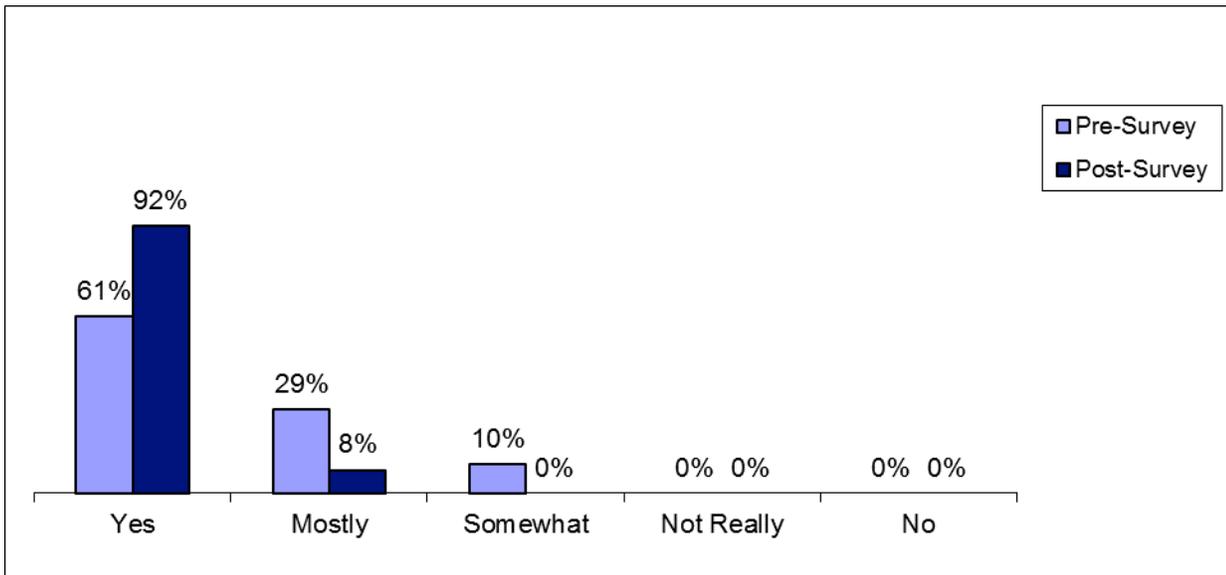
#### Item 2: I am willing to talk to a student different from me.

Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 71% and at post-survey = 89%.



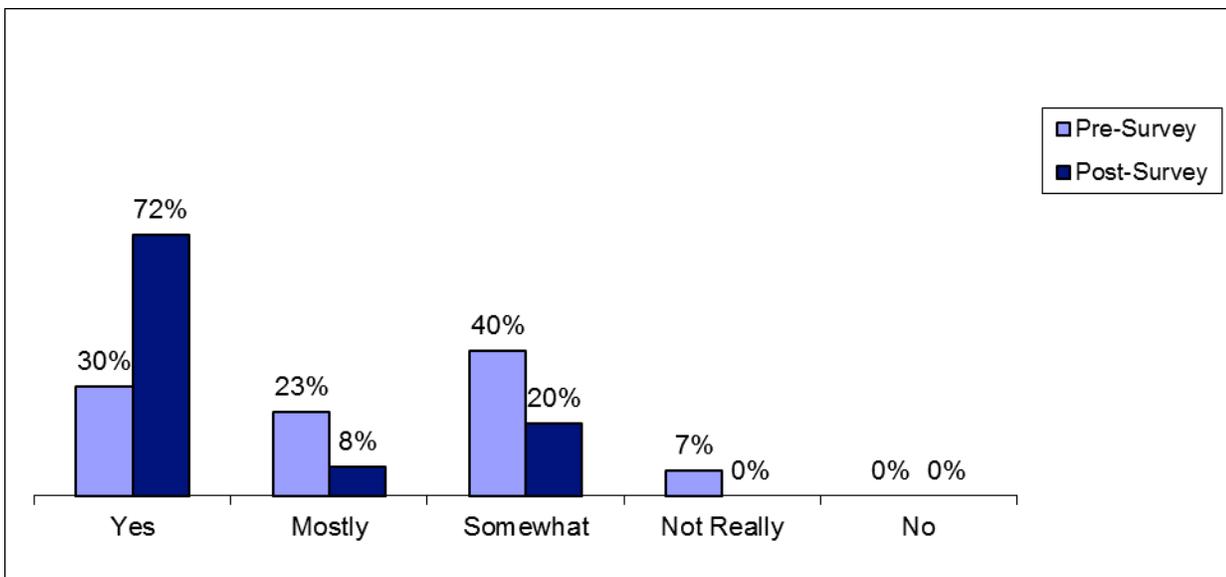
**Item 3: I respect students different from me.**

Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 61% and at post-survey = 92%.



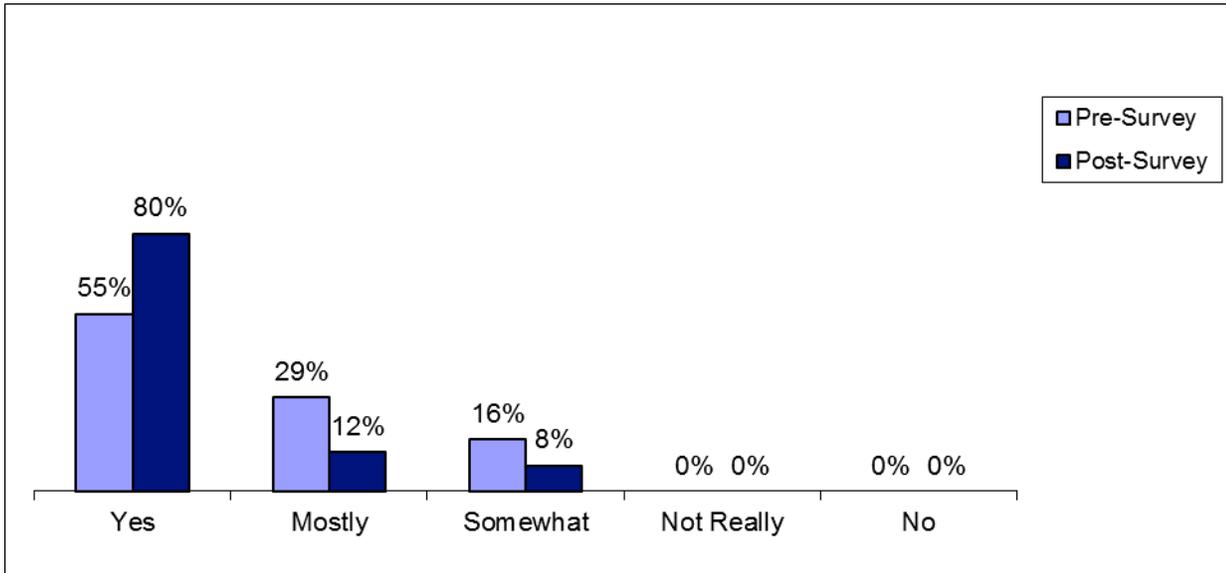
**Item 4: I believe violence will not resolve conflict.**

Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 30% and at post-survey = 72%.



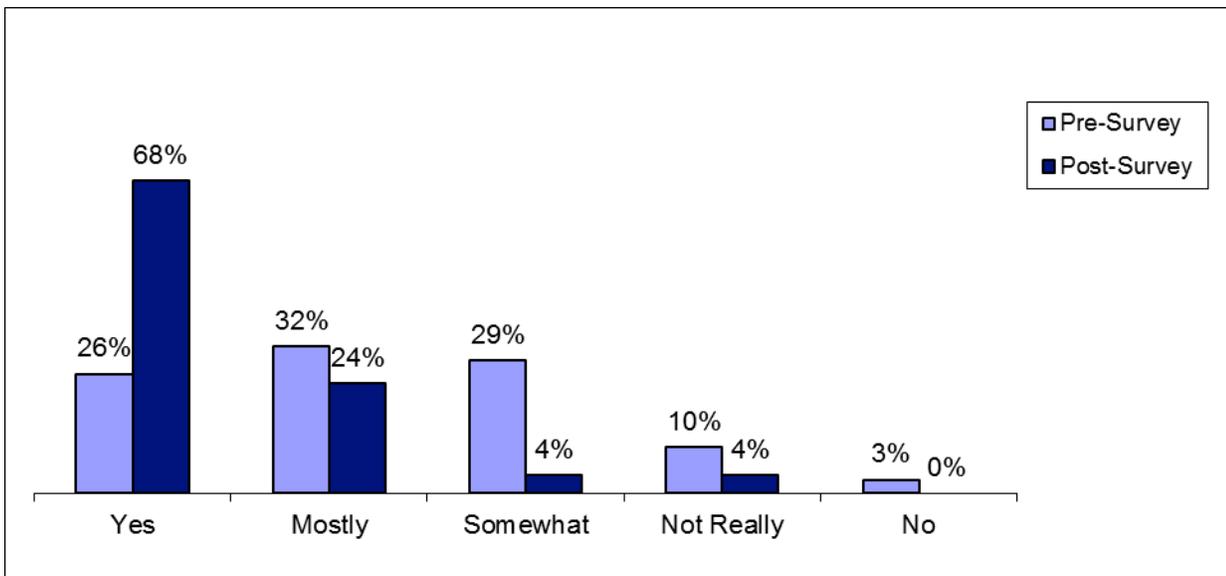
**Item 5: I am aware of alternatives to violence.**

Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 55% and at post-survey = 80%.



**Item 6: I think I know how other people see me.**

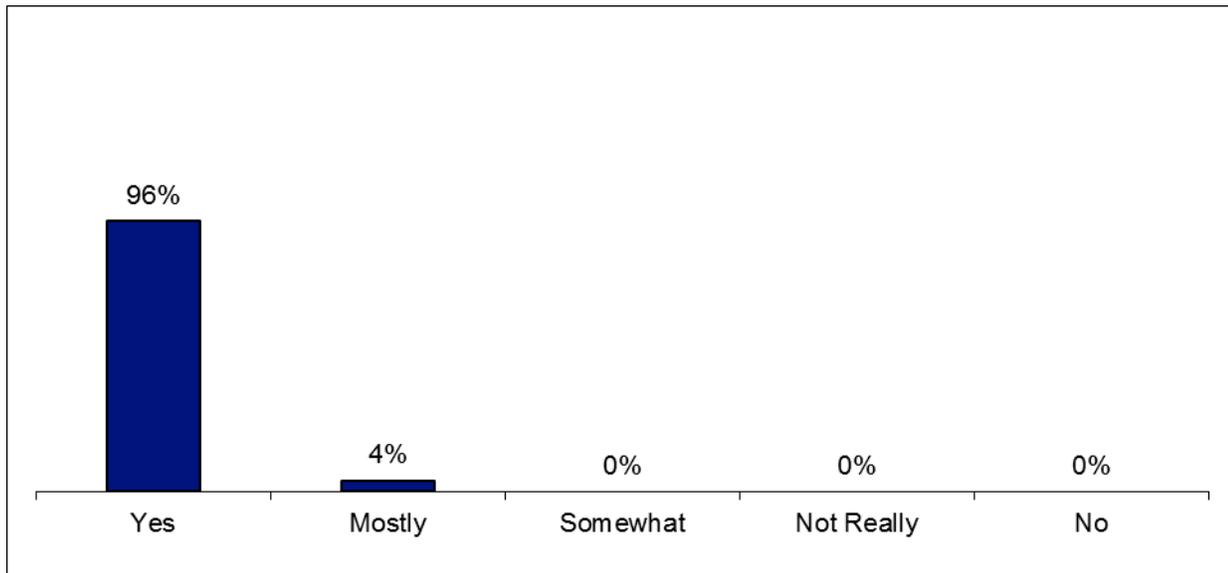
Overall, the percent of students answering “Yes, definitely” at pre-survey = 26% and at post-survey = 68%.



In addition to the six previous items listed, the three items listed below were included in the post-survey.

**Item 7: I think it's a good idea for other students in my school to attend the Power of Peace workshops.**

An overwhelming majority (96%) of the participants answered “Yes, definitely.”



**Item 8: Please tell us how you feel about Power of Peace**

Of the thirty-one students who completed the post-survey, 100% of them took the time to comment on how that felt about the Power of Peace experience. The feedback received was overwhelmingly positive. Adjectives used to describe the Power of Peace program in response to this survey item include wonderful, life-changing, helpful, awesome, fun, great and #FACTS!

Quotes from participants include:

- I love how I got broken down – I needed it.*
- Power of Peace helps you get to know yourself and other people around you.*
- This program is all about respect.*
- At first I thought this program was not for me, but these two days have been the best days of my life.*
- It helped me figure out what I believe in.*
- It exposed me to a lot of new ways of thinking. Thank you.*
- Power of Peace made me realize not to judge people because you never know what they have been through.*
- This program challenged me and made me grow and see how to learn from my mistakes.*
- It helped me to know how to set and meet goals.*
- It helped me explain and understand my own life story.*
- Now I know I am not the only person with a hard life.*
- Power of Peace helps to build community which is really needed in a big school like this.*

**Item 9: Please tell us what we could do to improve Power of Peace**

Of the thirty-one students who completed the post-survey, 100% of them took the time to comment on improving the Power of Peace experience. The majority, over 95% of the respondents indicated that they could think of nothing that would improve the Power of Peace program. Among the comments suggesting ways to improve the program the following were listed: spread the word and help more people.

## **Discussion**

The two statements indicating the highest change in attitude from pre-survey to post-survey were Item 4: I am aware of alternatives to violence (an increase of 42%) and Item 6: I think I know how other people see me (an increase of 42%). The statement indicating the least change in attitude from pre-survey to post-survey was Item 1: I respect myself. It is noteworthy that while Item 1 only indicated a 13% increase from pre-survey to post-survey, it actually went from 87% to 100%

## **Conclusion**

The results presented in this report indicate that the Power of Peace program did have a positive effect in changing student attitudes in from pre-survey to post-survey on all items.

- I respect myself.
- I am willing to talk to a student different from me.
- I respect students different from me.
- I believe violence will not resolve conflict.
- I am aware of alternatives to violence.
- I think I know how other people see me.

These results are primarily limited by the fact that this was not an empirical study. Without follow up measures, it is impossible to know the extent to which any attitudinal changes will be sustained.