

Fall 2018 Student Financial Wellness Survey

SFARN, June 6, 2019

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Agenda

- Methodology
- Student Financial Security
- Basic Needs Security
- Student Perceptions of Institutional Support
- Student Debt
- Conclusion



Student Financial Wellness Survey

- Survey launched on September 24, 2018
- Open for three weeks
- Fifty-eight institutions across 12 states participated:
 - 37 Community Colleges (33 Texas CCs)
 - 10 Public 4-Year Institutions (4 Texas)
 - 11 Private 4-Year Institutions (2 Texas)
- Values presented in this report are rounded, therefore the sum of response frequencies may not equal 100 percent.

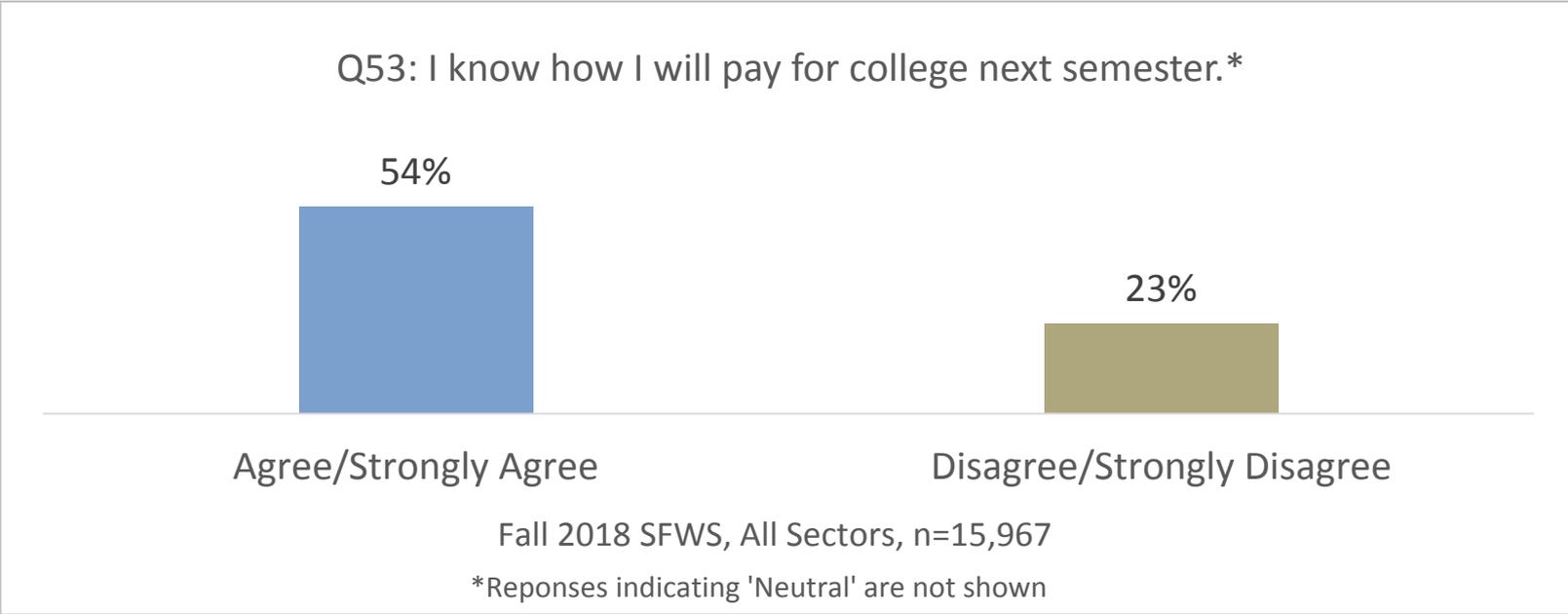
Survey Metrics Fall 2018 SFWS Undergraduate Cohort	
Survey Population	351,806 students
Responses	17,531 students
Response Rate	5.0%
Completion Rate	86%
Median Time Spent	14 minutes





Student Financial Security

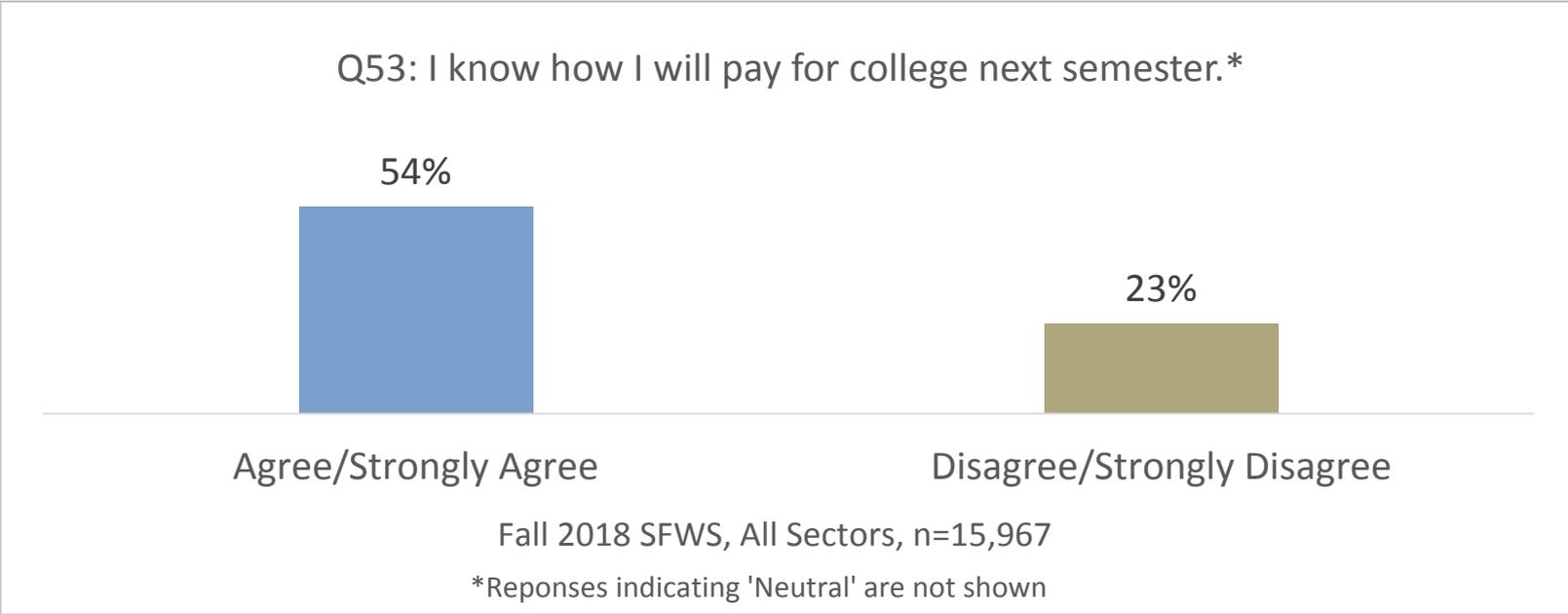
Student Financial Security



- Many students lacked a plan for paying for their next semester. Nearly a quarter of respondents (23 percent) disagreed or strongly disagreed that they knew how they would pay for college next semester.



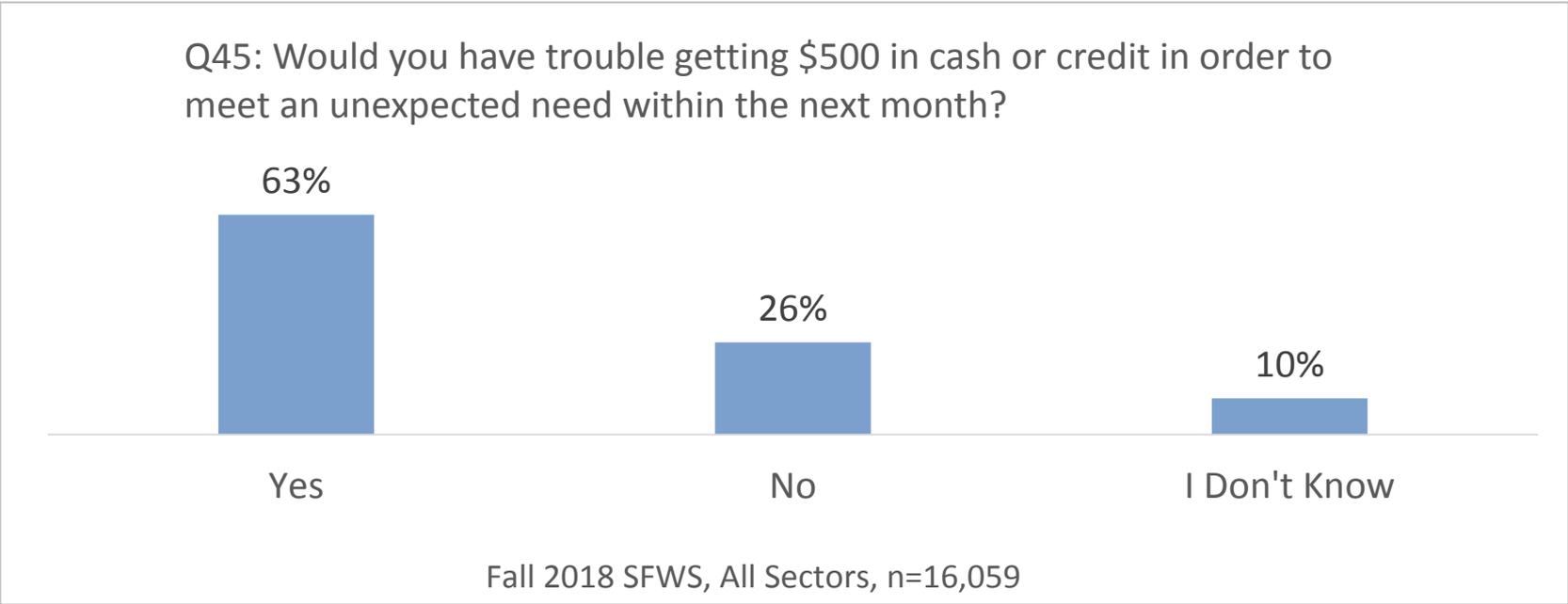
Student Financial Security



- Students that did not know how they would pay for college next semester were more likely to:
 - Be a first-generation student
 - Be female
 - Be enrolled part-time



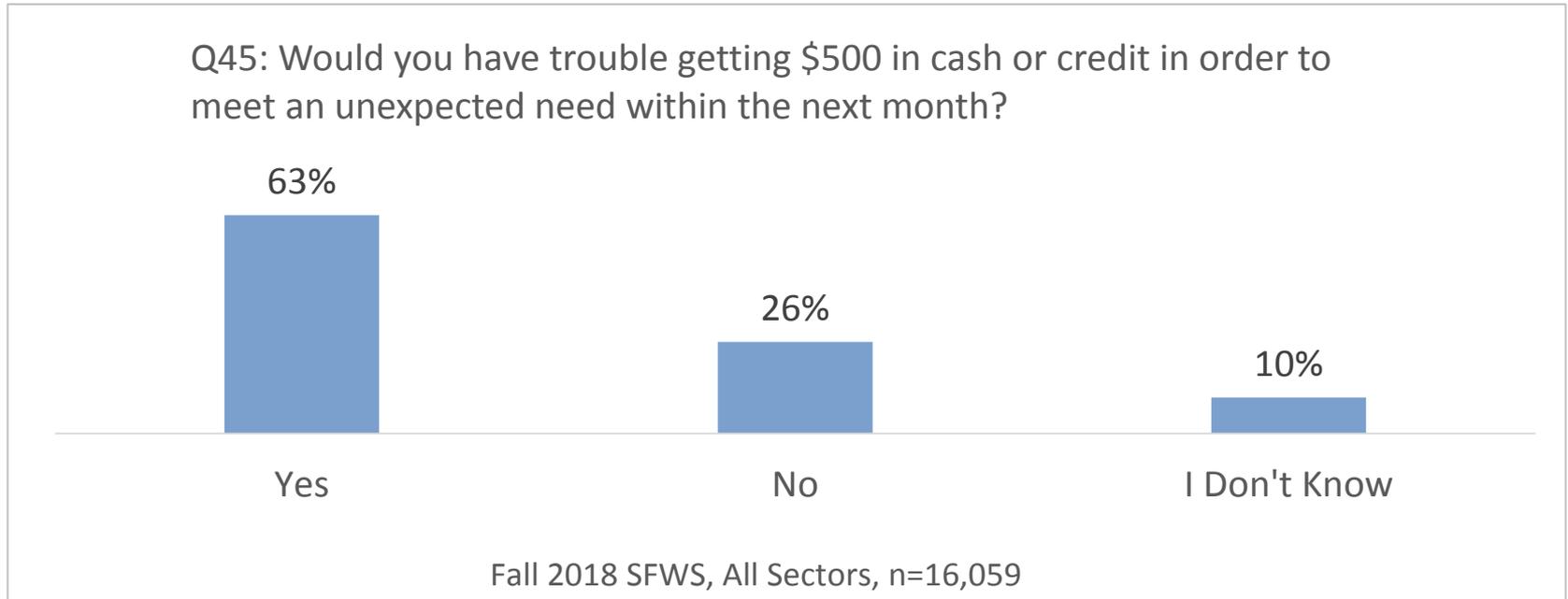
Student Financial Security



- Students' finances appear precarious, susceptible to unexpected expenses. Nearly two-thirds of respondents (63 percent) indicated they would have trouble getting \$500 in cash or credit for an emergency.



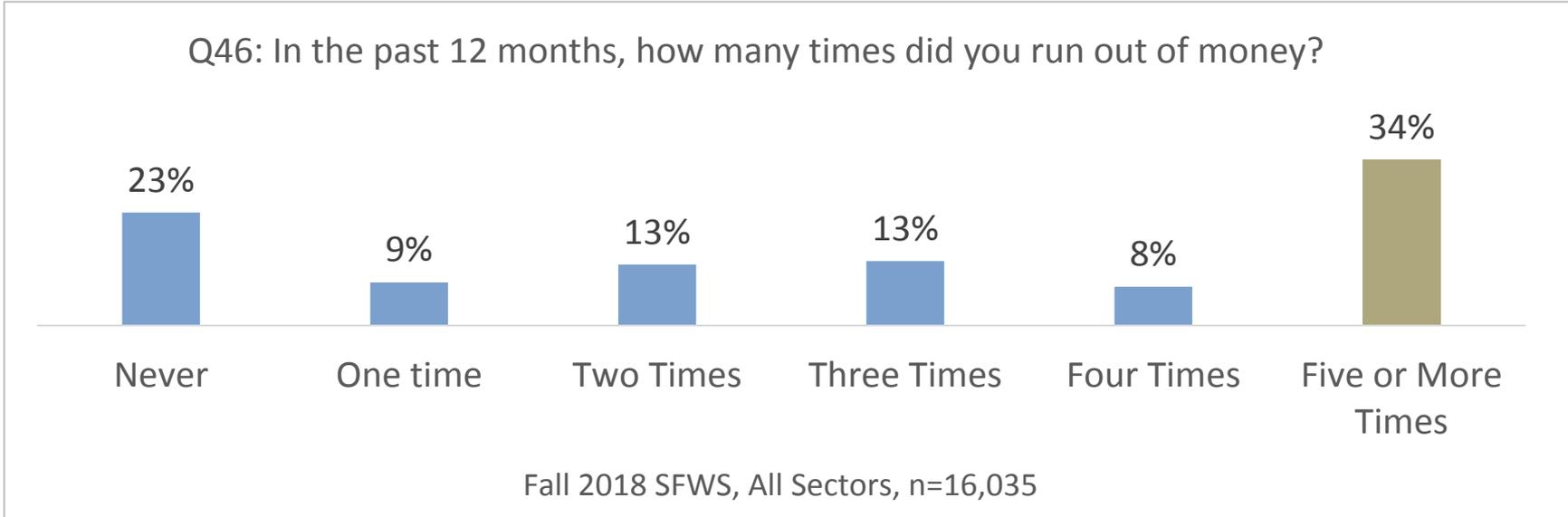
Student Financial Security



- Students that would have trouble getting \$500 in an emergency were more likely to:
 - Worry about having enough money to pay for school
 - Not know how they will pay for college next semester
 - Be a first-generation student
 - Be enrolled part-time



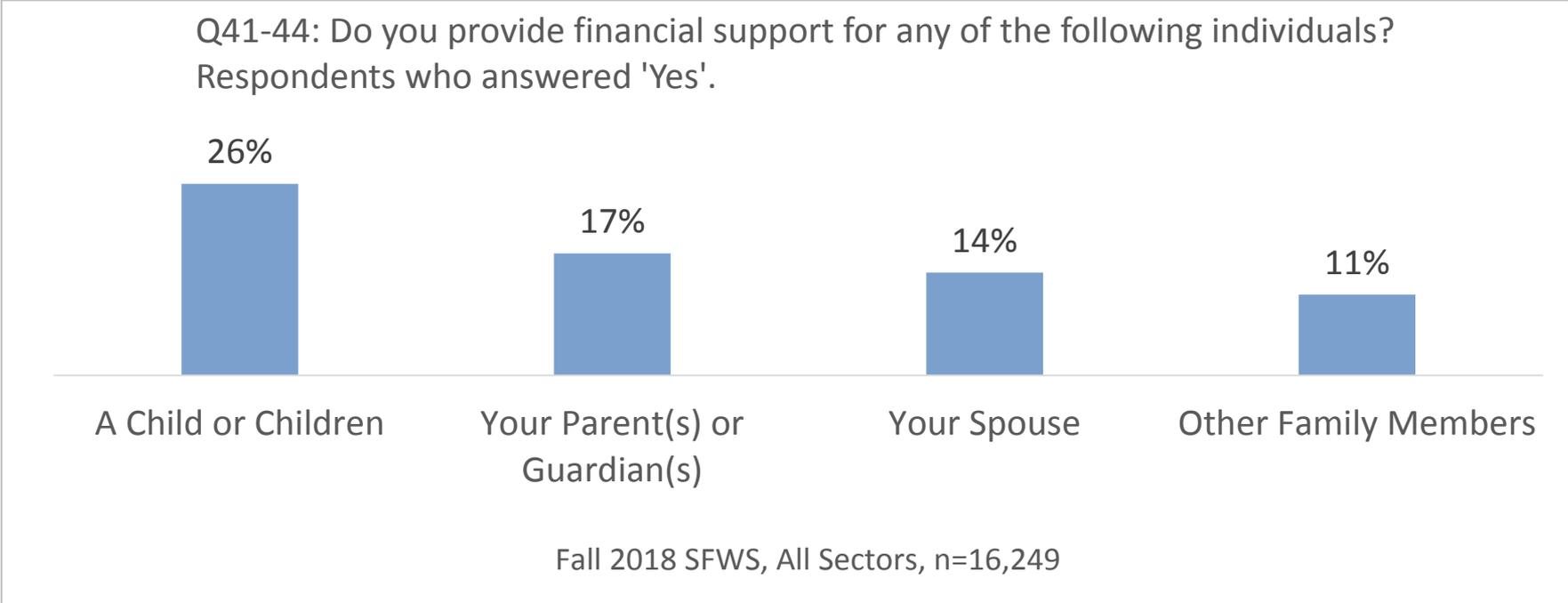
Student Financial Security



- Running out of money at some point in a year is common among college students, but nearly half face the brink an unsettling number of times.
 - More than three-quarters of respondents (77 percent) reported running out of money at least once in the past 12 months.
 - More than half of respondents (55 percent) reporting running out of money three or more times.



Student Financial Security



- More than a quarter of respondents (26 percent) support a child or children financially while in college, 17 percent provide for parents or guardians, and 11 percent support other family members financially.



Research to Practice: Student Financial Wellness

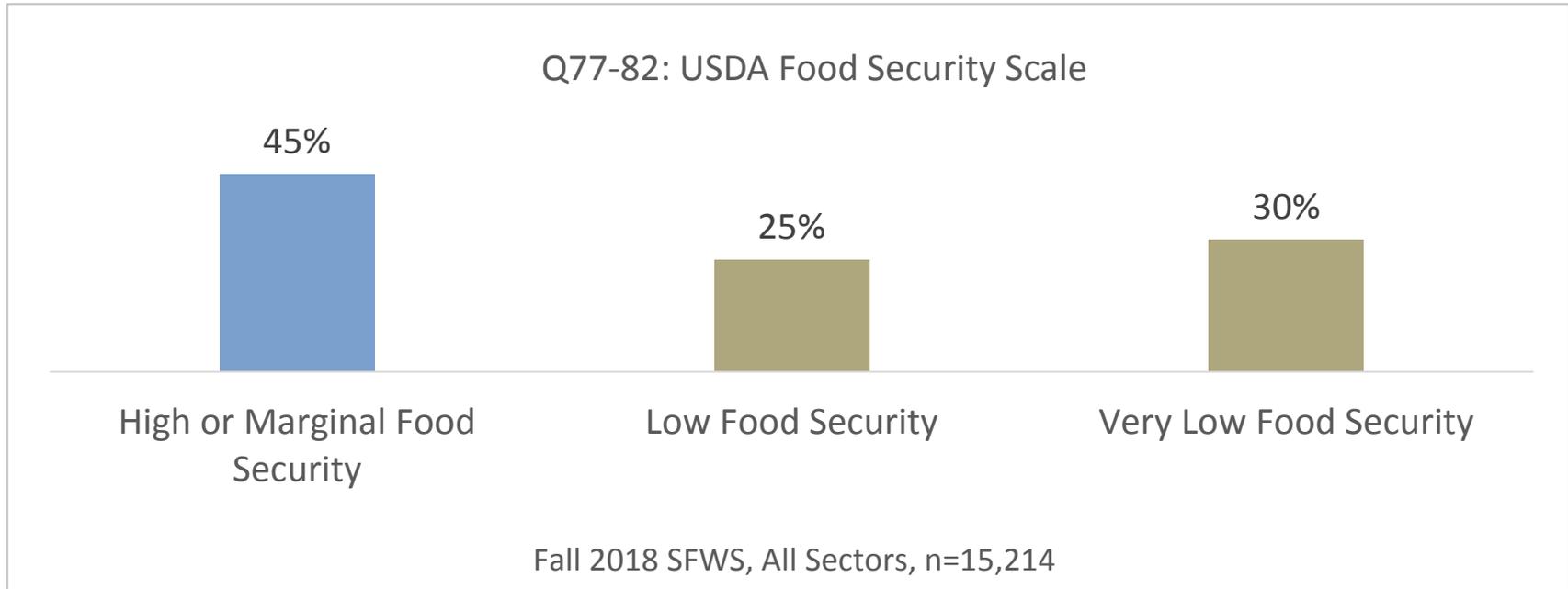
- With this information, campuses have:
 - Developed baseline metrics by which to measure the effectiveness of campus resources and interventions.
 - Implemented emergency aid programs to support students that face an unexpected financial emergency and are considering withdrawing from college.
 - Implemented staff/faculty training on the financial realities of their student body.





Basic Needs Security

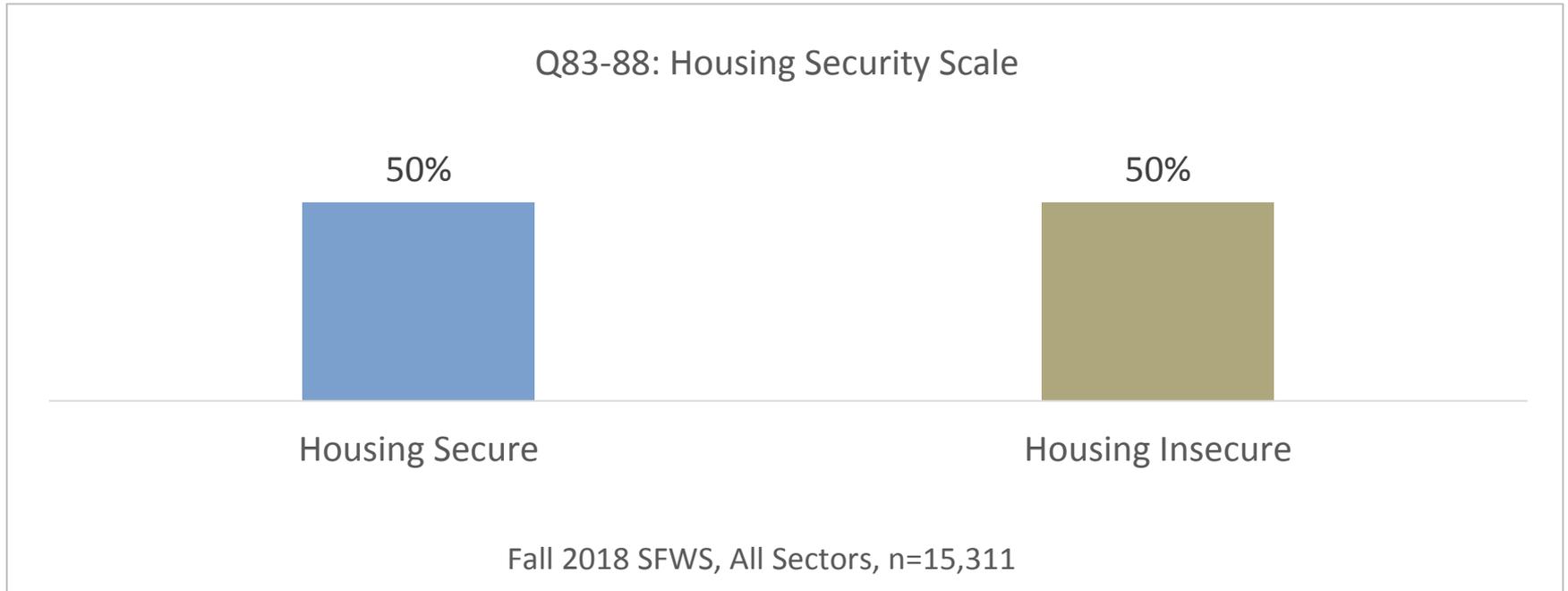
Basic Needs Security



- Low and very low food security are defined as, “reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.”
- More than half of respondents showed signs of either low food security (25 percent) or very low food security (30 percent) within 30 days prior to the survey.



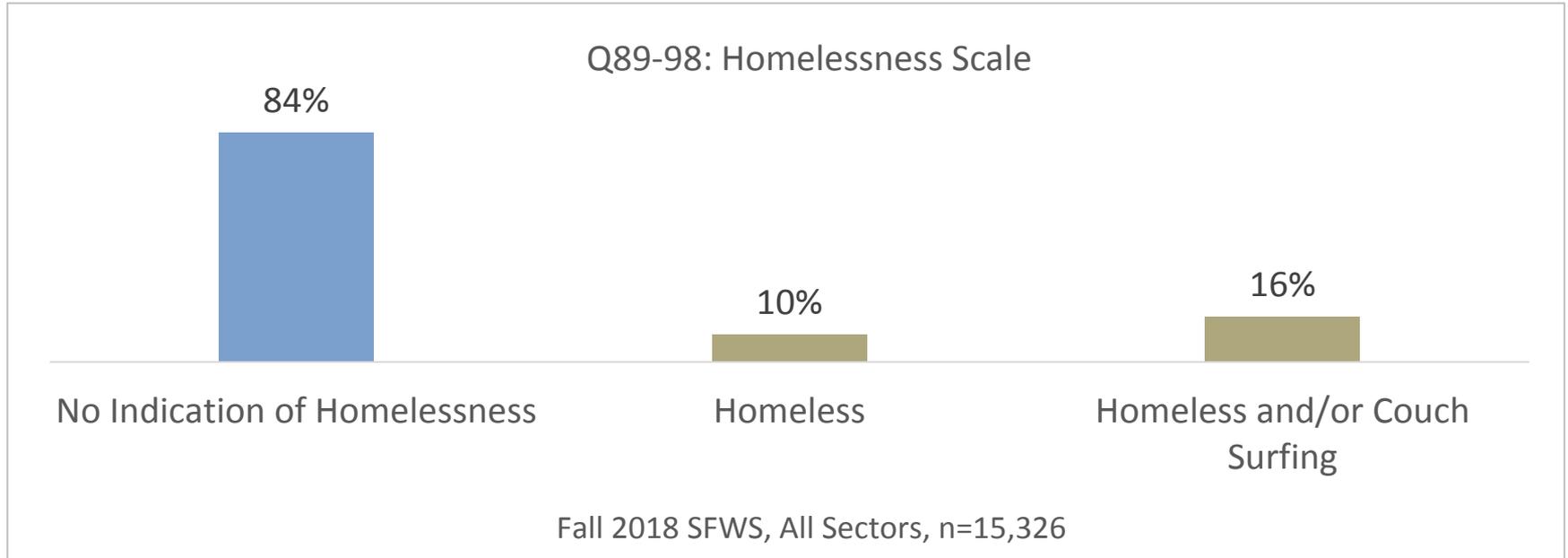
Basic Needs Security



- Housing insecurity is defined by leading researchers (The HOPE Center and others) as “broader set[s] of challenges such as the inability to pay rent or utilities or the need to move frequently.”
- Half of respondents showed signs of being housing insecure within the 12 months prior to the survey.



Basic Needs Security



- The HOPE Center and other leading researchers define a homeless person as “a person without a place to live, often residing in a shelter, an automobile, an abandoned building, or outside.”
- Ten percent of respondents indicated being homeless within the 12 months prior to the survey, and 16 percent were homeless and/or without a home temporarily staying with a relative, friend, or couch surfing.



Research to Practice: Basic Needs Security

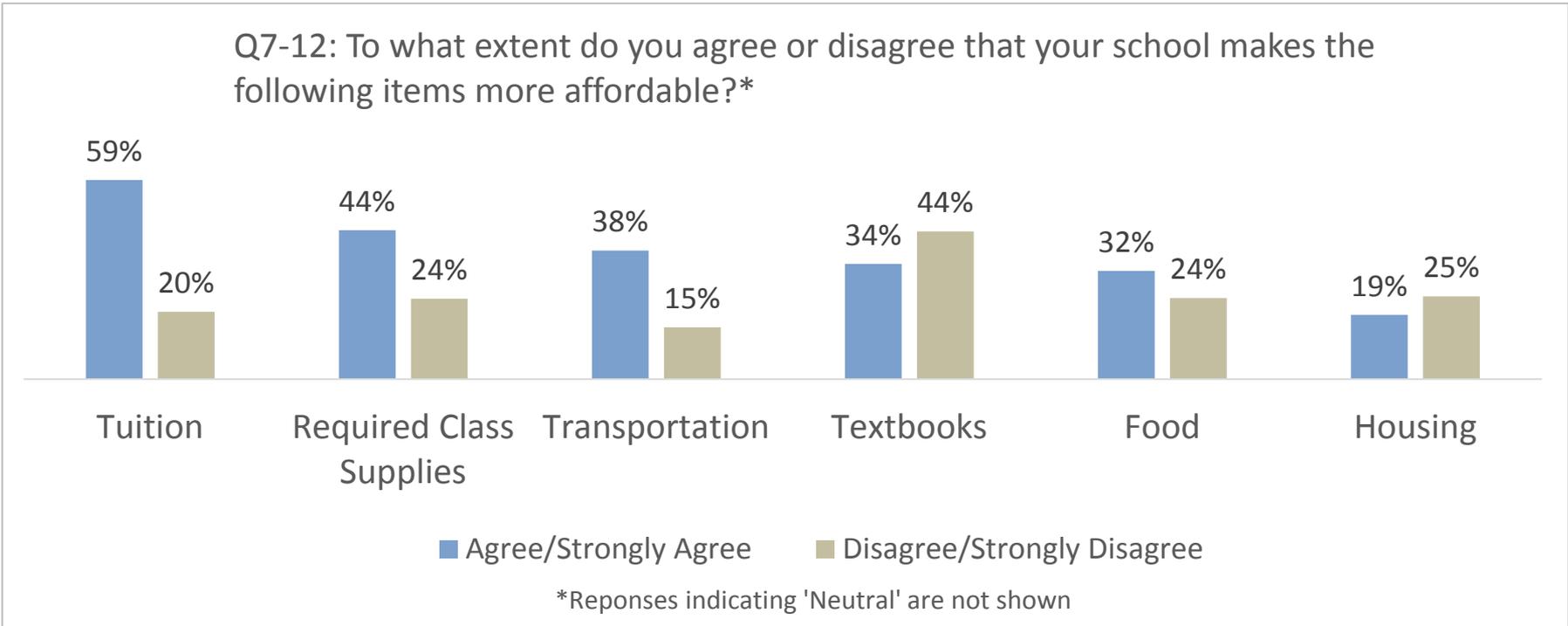
- With this information, campuses have:
 - Provided emergency support services for students such as food pantries, temporary housing, transportation vouchers/assistance, and/or emergency funding.
 - Connected students to public benefits.
 - Encouraged faculty to put campus basic needs resources in their syllabus to reach at-risk students.
 - Marketed campus resources in a high profile way and attempting to de-stigmatize resources.
 - Begun to engage in crisis support teams, which can work to holistically case manage identified students struggling with basic needs insecurity.





Student Perceptions of Institutional Support

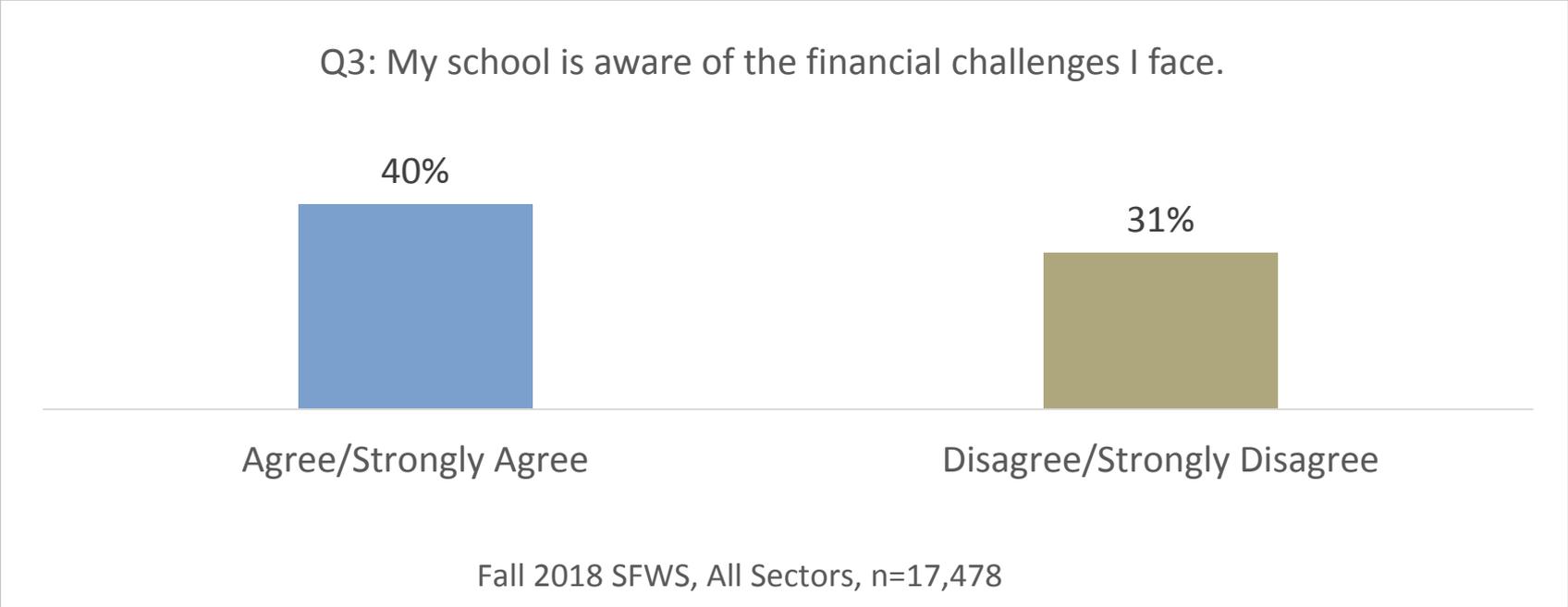
Student Perceptions of Institutional Support



- To varying degrees, many respondents reported that their school makes tuition (59 percent), required class supplies (44 percent), transportation (38 percent), and food (32 percent) more affordable.
- One common complaint of students is that many classes require textbooks that are too expensive and rarely used. More than two in five respondents (44 percent) disagreed or strongly disagreed that their school makes textbooks more affordable.



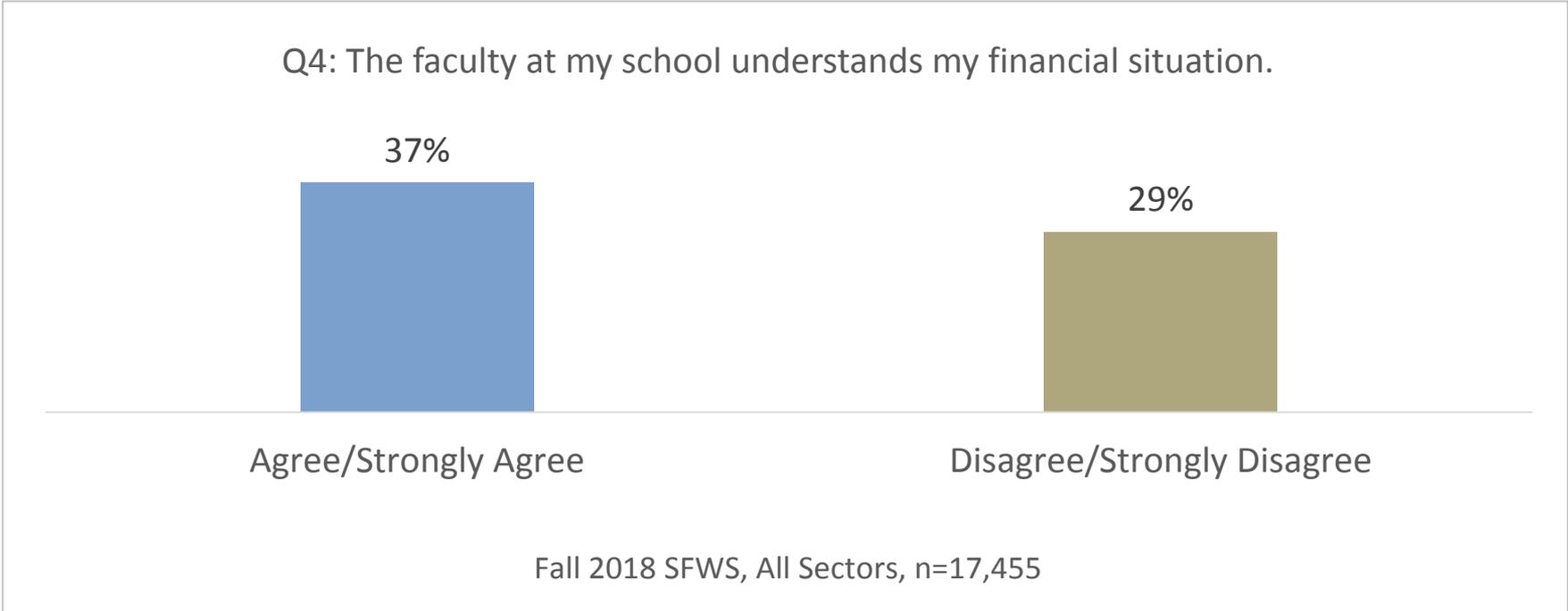
Student Perceptions of Institutional Support



- Two in five respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their school is aware of their financial challenges, but 31 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed.



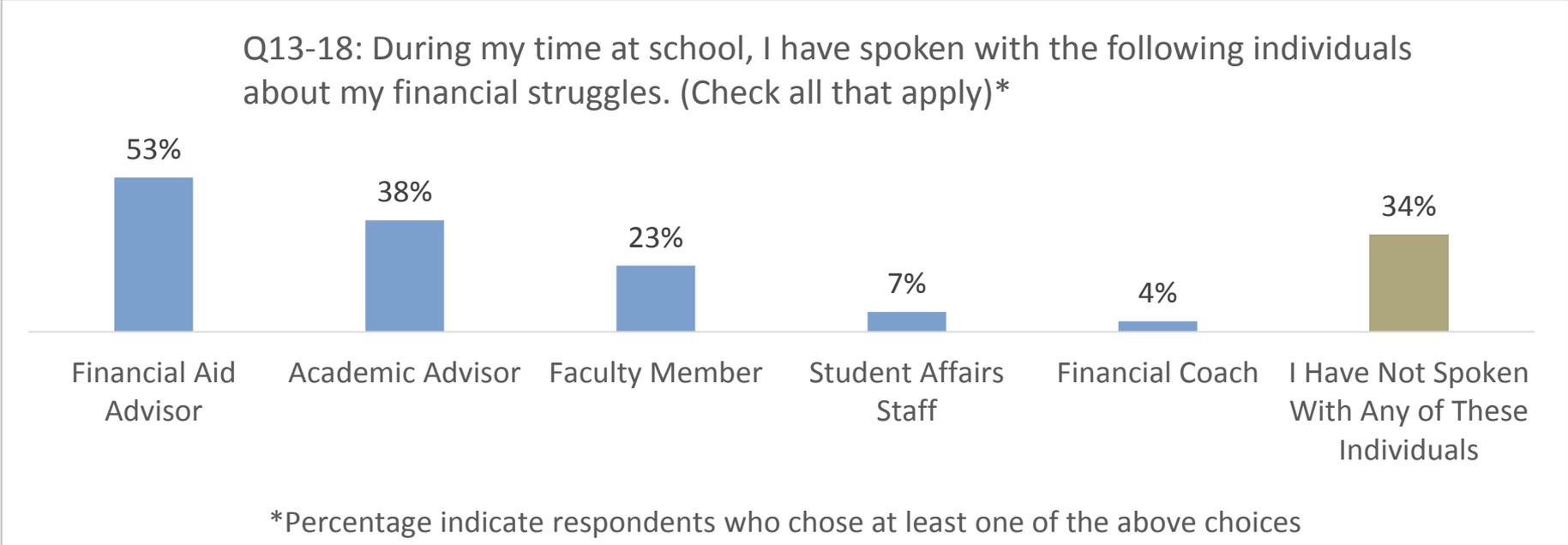
Student Perceptions of Institutional Support



- More than a third of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their school’s faculty understand their financial situation, but 29 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed.



Student Perceptions of Institutional Support



- When speaking to a school official about their financial challenges, respondents most commonly reported speaking to a financial aid advisor (53 percent), followed by academic advisors (38 percent) and faculty members (23 percent).
- More than a third of respondents (34 percent) had not spoken with any of these individuals.



Research to Practice: Student Perceptions of Institutional Support

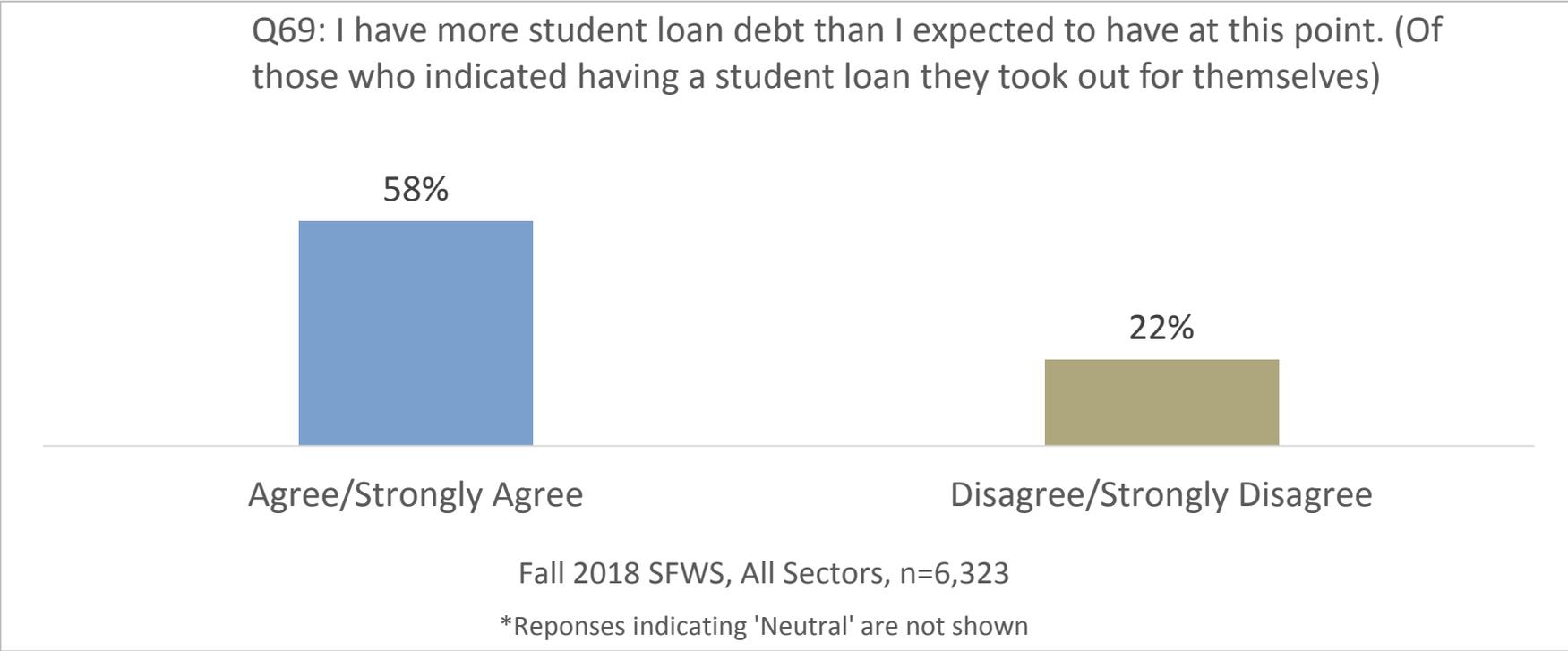
- With this information, campuses have:
 - Created communication strategies to provide realistic cost of education estimates to students and to inform students of the work being done to address their financial challenges.
 - Worked to provide intentional programs and discussions on campus related to reducing some supplemental costs of education.
 - Evaluated how they message affordability to students. While tuition freezes and even small decreases are great strides, they may come off as insensitive to students who are facing daily cash flow challenges.





Student Debt

Student Debt

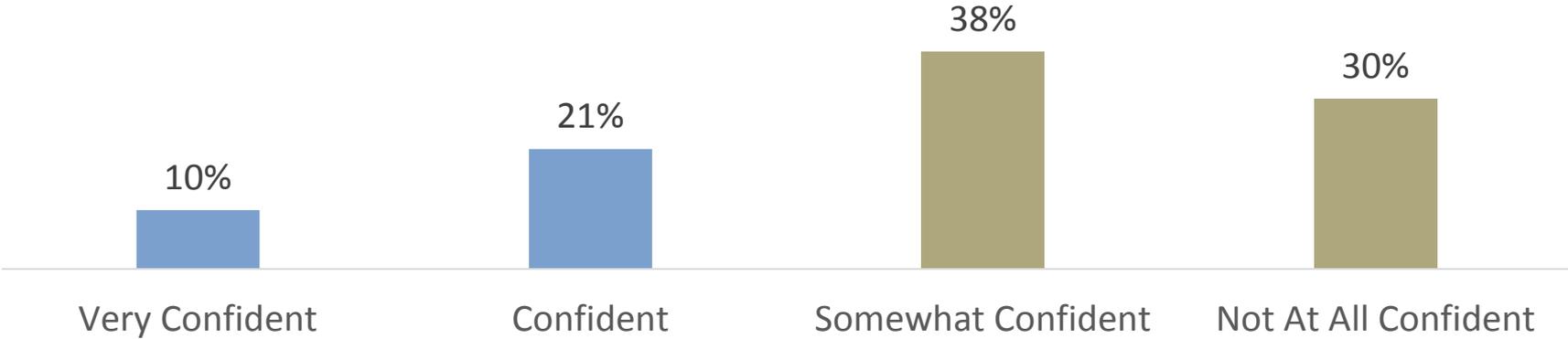


- More than half of respondents (58 percent) who borrowed agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they had more student loan debt than they expected at this point.



Student Debt

Q70: How confident are you that you will be able to pay off the debt acquired while you were a student? (Of those who indicated having a student loan they took out for themselves)



Fall 2018 SFWS, All Sectors, n=6,329

- More than two-thirds of respondents who reported having student loan debt were not at all confident (30 percent) or only somewhat confident (38 percent) that they would be able to pay off the debt acquired while they were a student.



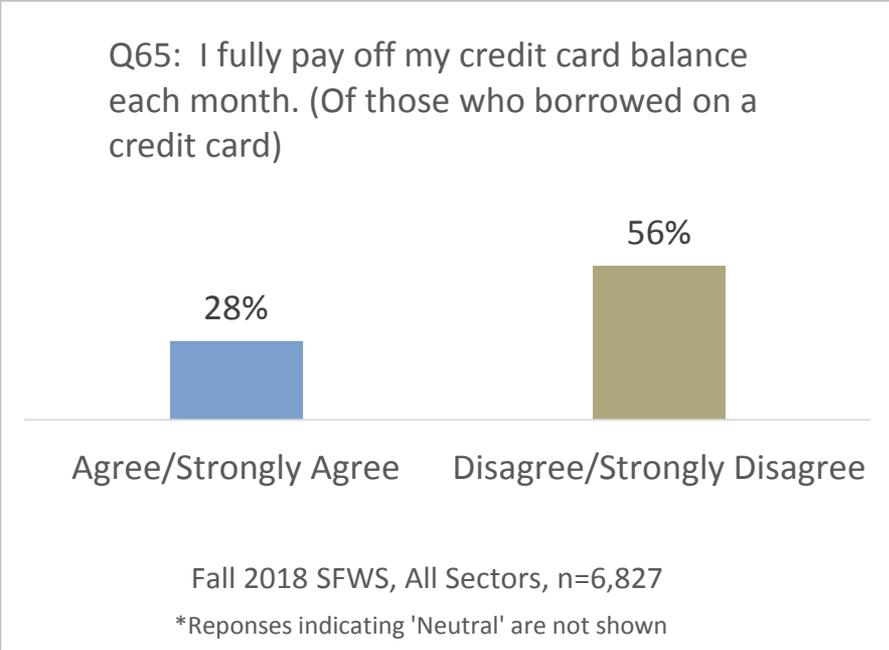
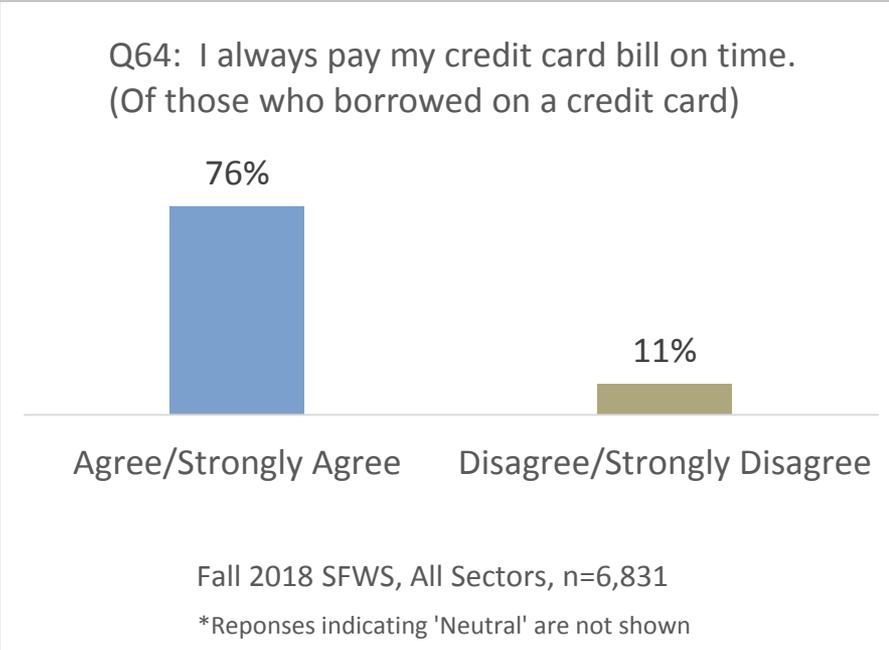
Student Debt



- Credit card debt is much more common than pay day loans and auto title loans, 43 percent of respondents reported borrowing on a credit card (for any reason, not just to pay for college) in the past 12 months.
- Eight percent reported taking out a pay day loan and five percent borrowed from an auto title loan.



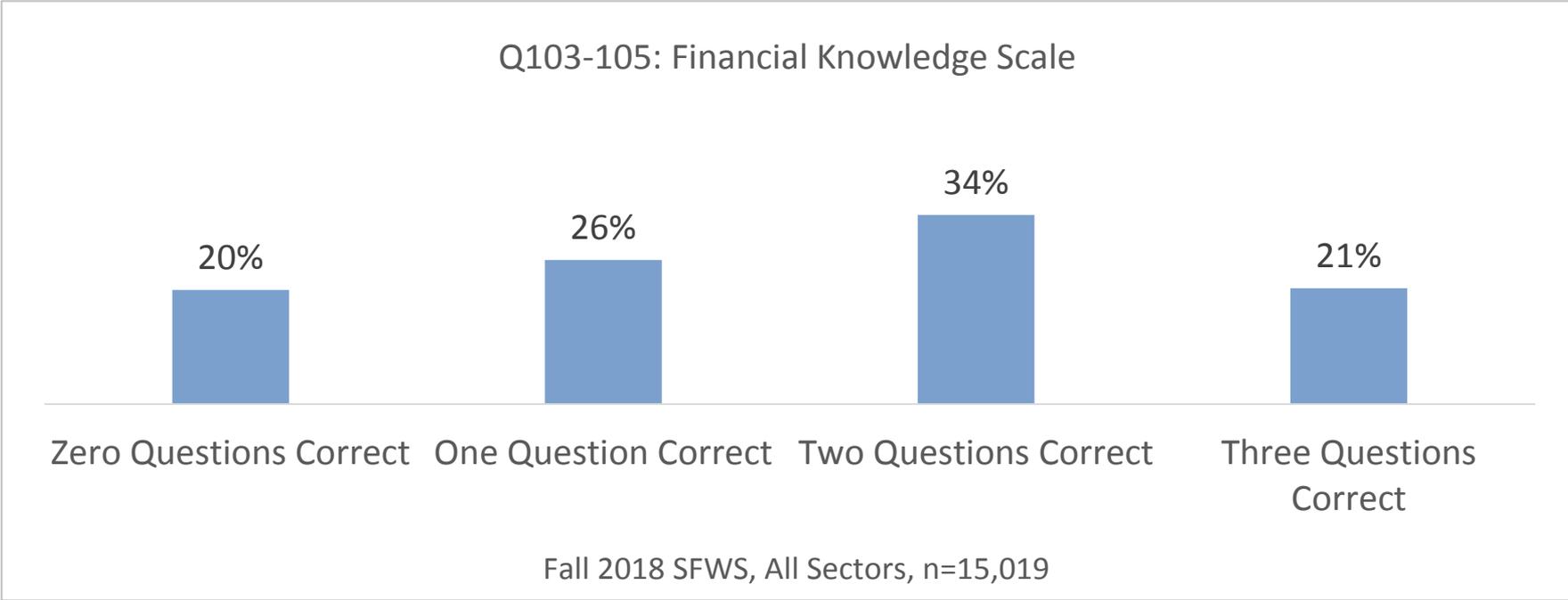
Student Debt



- Most respondents who borrowed on a credit card in the past year reported paying their bill on time.
- However, many are not paying off their full balance and are accruing interest at a high rate. Only 28 percent of respondents who borrowed a credit card in the prior year agreed or strongly agreed that they fully pay off their balance each month.



Student Debt



- Used a three-question Lusardi financial literacy scale
- Only around one in four respondents (21 percent) could answer all three financial knowledge questions correctly. However, 81 percent answered at least one correctly.



Research to Practice: Paying for College and Student Debt

- With this information, campuses have:
 - Evaluated the various student touch points that they have to provide additional support for student financial literacy and entrance counseling.
 - Informed topic areas and instructional design for student loan counseling and financial education interventions.
 - Looked at the environmental factors that support healthy financial decision making, including campus policies and procedures related to student payments, collections and debt products on or near campus.
 - Explored additional ways to get students enrolled in safe, legitimate financial services products (such as bank accounts) to avoid using services (such as check cashing services) that lead to risky financial products.



Conclusion

- Limitations of the study
- Strengths of the study
- Attainment goals at risk if issues remain unaddressed



Questions?

Please follow us on Twitter: [@TrellisResearch](#)

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