LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT
MARCH 2025

JCPS™

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This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) during the months of January and February 2025 for the new superintendent of Jefferson County Public Schools. The data contained herein were obtained from input the HYA consultants received when they met with individuals and groups in either individual interviews or focus group settings and from the results of the online survey developed by the JCPS Advisory Committee and completed by stakeholders. The surveys, interviews, and focus group meetings were structured to gather input to assist the Board in determining the primary characteristics desired in the new superintendent. Additionally, the stakeholder interviews and focus groups collected information regarding the strengths of the District and some of the challenges that it will be facing in the coming years. It should be emphasized that the data are not a scientific sampling. Characteristics were included in the profile if there were similar comments from multiple constituent groups.

HYA and the Board intend to meet the challenge of finding an individual who possesses most of the skills and character traits required to meet the needs of the district. The search team will focus its recruitment on candidates that possess the leadership qualities congruent with the profile and needed to raise academic standards and student performance, while meeting the unique needs of each of its schools and communities.
The search team would like to thank all the participants who attended focus groups meetings or completed the online survey.

PROFILE DEVELOPMENT

HYA Associates collected data from multiple sources to develop the Leadership Profile and arrive at a set of desired characteristics for recruitment and selection of the next Superintendent of Jefferson County Public Schools.

The desired characteristics for the next Superintendent is based on the community feedback and survey results. These characteristics align with the community's desire for a **transformational leader** who can build trust, drive equity, and improve student outcomes across all JCPS schools.

1. Visionary and Proven Leader for Academic Improvement

- Bold, innovative, and future-focused with a track record of improving student outcomes.
- Experienced in urban education with knowledge of JCPS's unique challenges.
- Capable of navigating political pressures while advocating for public education.

2. Equity-Focused, Student-Centered Leader

- Create a culture focused on students social, emotional well-being
- Demonstrates a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Prioritizes equitable resource allocation and supports underserved communities.
- Addresses achievement gaps and ensures all students, especially Black, multilingual, special education, and low-income students, have access to high-quality education.

3. Community Connector and Transparent Communicator

- Builds authentic relationships with families, students, staff, and community partners.
- Actively engages the JCPS community in decision-making.
- Demonstrates transparency in financial and operational matters.

4. Supporter of Educators and Staff

- Elevates teacher voices and prioritizes staff morale, pay equity, and professional development.
- Addresses staffing shortages and toxic workplace cultures.
- Builds leadership pipelines and empowers school leaders.

5. Operational, Financial, and Strategic Excellence

- Implements data-driven decisions to improve student achievement.
- Manages budget deficits, infrastructure and facility upgrades, and transportation challenges.
- Balances consistency across the district with school-based decision-making.

The structure of the focus groups was open, allowing for participants to build upon each other's comments. Session participants were told that their voice would remain confidential to allow for authentic and honest commentary.

Focus groups provide an opportunity for the Board of Education to gain insight from stakeholders regarding the strengths of the districts, challenges that need to be addressed, and desired leadership attributes. This information provides more granular detail to the stakeholder survey. Hazard, Young, Attea Associates facilitated the focus groups. Probes were used to further conversation and discussion on the key questions of interest.

PROBES/GUIDING QUESTIONS:
When HYA & Associates recruit, the organization looks for someone who desires an extended tenure in the district, so it is important that your new superintendent has the skills necessary to address both current, as well as future issues.

- What do you, as a stakeholder/constituent, value regarding the schools? What strengths of the District do you desire to retain and build upon?
  - JCPS has undertaken major structural changes to their work under Dr. Pollio's leadership, including the creation of the Academies of Louisville high schools, the creation of Explore middle schools, major changes to the student assignment plan,

and the adoption of a common curriculum for math and reading across the district. Which of these changes do you think have been the most important for JCPS to make? Which do you consider to be vital for the next Superintendent to continue and strengthen?

○ More than 200 local employers are now actively involved with at least one of the career pathways at an Academies of Louisville high school. How important do you think it is for employers to be connected to high school teachers and students in this way? Has the effort improved the preparation level of JCPS graduates from those schools?

- What are the issues this District currently faces, and, as importantly, will be facing in the next three to five years?

- What are the personal and professional characteristics you and your community expect a superintendent to possess?

Additional probes were included for the business community:

- Have you personally, or your company, been involved with one or more JCPS high schools? If so, what has your experience been? How important do you think it is that the next Superintendent keeps the momentum going for the Academies of Louisville effort, and expands ways that local employers can contribute to the success of JCPS students?

- If you hire local talent, what percent are workforce ready? What skills gaps have you noticed that could be addressed through middle and high school curriculum?

- How do you think the Superintendent of JCPS should interact with the business community? What other ways outside the Academies of Louisville would you want to engage with the JCPS administration?

- What skill sets are needed in a superintendent to more effectively work with Frankfort?

SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUPS

The purpose of summarizing focus group notes is to synthesize key insights, themes, and perspectives gathered during the sessions into a clear, concise, and actionable format. This helps decision-makers, stakeholders, and leadership teams understand the collective voice of participants as the following summaries highlight recurring topics, concerns, and values expressed across different constituent groups.

Probe: What do you, as a stakeholder/constituent, value regarding the schools?

The summary of stakeholders' voices regarding what they value has been organized by theme. These themes are core values, educational quality, leadership and operations, and community engagement.

Core Values

- **Equity and Diversity:** The community places a strong emphasis on equitable education for all students, with a particular focus on Black students and those from underserved communities.
- **School Choice and Program Options:** Community members express support for school choice, magnet programs, and career pathway programs such as the

Academies of Louisville and Explore Middle School.
- **Community and Business Partnerships:** The community values partnerships with local businesses that provide real-world learning experiences for students.
- **Innovation and Forward Thinking:** The community desires innovative educational models and leadership that prioritize student needs and future readiness.

Educational Quality

- **Academic Excellence:** The community is focused on improving student proficiency in core subjects and life skills.
- **Safe and Inclusive Environment:** Community members want schools to foster positive, safe, and supportive cultures.
- **Support for Educators:** The community values teachers and support staff and calls for better wages and professional development opportunities.

Leadership and Operations

- **Transparency and Financial Accountability:** The community is concerned about financial mismanagement and desires a superintendent who prioritizes fiscal responsibility.
- **Strong, Experienced Leadership:** The community prefers leaders with urban school experience and a student-first approach.
- **Equity-Focused Leadership:** The community maintains a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) despite external pressures.

Community Engagement

- **Authentic Transparency and Communication:** The community desires open communication between district leadership and the community.
- **Parent and Community Involvement:** The community recognizes that schools are community hubs that support families beyond academics.

Probe: What strengths of the District do you desire to retain and build upon?

The summary of stakeholders' voices regarding what they want to retain and build upon has been organized by theme. These themes are equity and diversity, academic programs and innovation, student supports, leadership and community partnerships, operational improvements, and community engagement.

Equity & Diversity

- Dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), especially for underserved

populations and students of color.
- Tiered equity funding to better support students based on need.
- Continued support for LGBTQ+ students, particularly transgender students, even with external challenges.

Academic Programs & Innovation

- The Academies of Louisville program, which substantially improved post-secondary readiness.
- Magnet schools and diverse program options that meet student interests and career pathways.
- Focus on literacy, numeracy, and life skills as foundations for lifelong learning.
- Use of High-Quality Instructional Resources (HQIRs) and research-based teaching practices.
- Expanded career and technical education (CTE) opportunities.

Student Supports

- Onsite health and mental health services.
- Family Resource and Youth Services Centers (FRYSCs) that support student well-being.
- Restorative justice practices to improve school culture and discipline.
- Increased student mentoring programs and after-school support.

Leadership & Community Partnerships

- Collaborative school board members and bold leadership advocating for equity.
- Strong partnerships with higher education institutions and businesses.
- Recognition of dedicated teachers and staff as JCPS's greatest asset, with calls for ongoing support and professional development.

Operational Improvements

- Continued implementation of JCPS's building plan to modernize schools.
- Streamlined systems to reduce administrative burdens and allow school leaders to focus on student success.
- Improved transportation services to ensure equitable access to programs.

Community Engagement

- Valuing student, staff, and community voices in decision-making.
- Commitment to welcoming all students and providing a place for everyone.

The summary of stakeholders' voices regarding what issues the District currently faces and will face in the next three to five years has been organized by theme. These themes are staffing, equity and diversity, student achievement and behavior, infrastructure and budget, transportation and access, political and community perceptions, and innovation.

Staffing

- Recruiting, retaining, and training qualified teachers
- Low pay for classified staff (bus drivers, bookkeepers, instructional assistants)
- Toxic workplace cultures and lack of leadership development

Equity & Diversity

- Maintaining commitment to equity despite political and social pressures
- Supporting the rising multilingual learner (ML) population
- Addressing inequitable distribution of resources and program access
- Eliminating racial and socio-economic disparities in school quality

Student Achievement & Behavior

- Closing achievement gaps, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Reducing chronic absenteeism and addressing student behavioral issues
- Improving mental health and trauma-informed supports

Infrastructure & Budget

- Modernizing aging facilities and ensuring equitable building improvements
- Addressing budget deficits and implementing strategic financial planning
- Improving inefficient administrative processes and reducing central office bloat

Transportation & Access

- Resolving ongoing bus driver shortages
- Ensuring equitable access to magnet programs and academies
- Addressing community concerns around busing policies

Political & Community Perceptions

- Managing hostility from the state legislature and external political attacks
- Rebuilding public trust in JCPS
- Reversing the trend of enrollment decline, especially among white and

middle-class families

Innovation

- Implementing innovative learning models and student-centered customization
- Balancing district-wide consistency with school-based decision-making

<blockquote>Probe: What are the personal and professional characteristics you and your community expect a superintendent to possess?</blockquote>

The summary of stakeholders' voices regarding personal and professional characteristics desired have been organized by theme. These themes are personal qualities, professional qualities, and additional considerations.

Personal Qualities

- **Compassion and Empathy:** Shows care for students, staff, and families, especially those from marginalized communities.
- **Integrity and Honesty:** Transparent, trustworthy, and student-centered in decision-making.
- **Cultural Inclusion:** Values and embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- **Approachable and Visible:** Engages with the community and maintains a consistent presence in schools and neighborhoods.
- **Resilient and Courageous:** Willing to make difficult decisions while maintaining a collaborative and respectful approach.

Professional Qualities

- **Proven Leadership:** Bold, visionary, and experienced leader with a successful history of improving student outcomes.
- **Effective Communication:** Skilled in listening, articulating a vision, and engaging with diverse stakeholders.
- **Collaborative Team Builder:** Able to build, motivate, and empower leadership teams with complementary skills.
- **Equity-Focused Decision-Making:** Prioritizes resources and supports for underserved schools and communities.
- **Educational Experience:** Background as a teacher and administrator, with deep understanding of curriculum, classroom needs, and public education systems.
- **Community Connector:** Builds partnerships with parents, civic leaders, and local businesses to support student success beyond academics.
- **Data-Driven and Strategic:** Uses data to guide decisions and measure progress toward equitable outcomes.

Additional Considerations

- Preference for a leader with local ties or internal candidates who understand the district's unique challenges.
- Commitment to elevating teacher voices and addressing workload, pay equity, and school climate concerns.
- Willingness to challenge the status quo and advocate for public education amid political pressures.

> Additional Probes: Focus group participants were given the opportunity to give comment to additional considerations.

Leadership Qualities

- The ideal leader will be a connector and bridge builder, actively engaging with the community and collaborating with external organizations.
- The leader should be visionary and goal-oriented, building upon the district's existing progress.
- The leader should be people-centered, prioritizing relationships, staff morale, and recognizing achievements.
- The leader should be able to navigate crises, drive systemic change, and promote equity across all schools.

Operational Challenges

- JCPS needs to address large class sizes, inequitable staffing allocations, and outdated facilities.
- Transportation needs improvement, paperwork should be reduced, and central office processes need to be streamlined.
- The district needs to focus on elementary education equity and classified staff compensation.
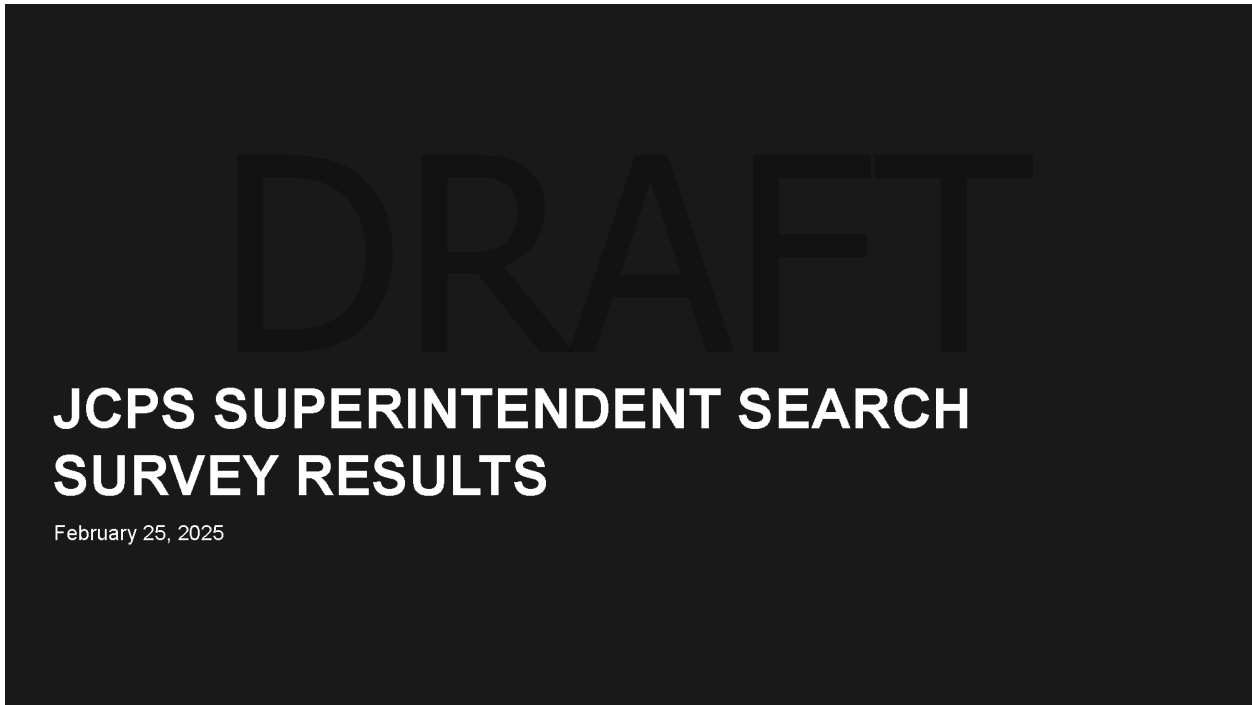
Community Engagement

- Transparency is critical to rebuilding trust within the community.
- The district should offer more opportunities for staff and community members to participate in the search process.
- Parents, students, and classified staff should be involved in decision-making.

Final Thoughts

- JCPS needs a transformational leader who balances operational expertise with a deep community connection.
- There is a strong call to prioritize internal candidates who have already demonstrated leadership and crisis management skills.
- The superintendent must fight for the district's needs and maintain a visible presence in the community.

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SURVEY RESULTS

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The Advisory Committee submitted a report of findings from the survey they developed. Those findings are included in this section.

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JCPS SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH SURVEY RESULTS

February 25, 2025

4568 Total Responses

- 4339 English
- 216 Spanish
- 7 Arabic
- 3 Nepali
- 2 Kinyarwanda
- 1 Swahili

Survey Window: January 24, 2025 – February 14, 2025

Q2: Which JCPS school district do you live in:

Answered: 4427

District	Percentage
District 1 – Gail Logan-Strange	3.5%
District 2 – Tricia Lister	6.7%
District 3 – James Craig	10.1%
District 4 – Trevin Bass	4.3%
District 5 – Linda Duncan	4.2%
District 6 – Corrie Shull	4.9%
District 7 – Taylor Everett	5.4%
I don't know	54.6%
Do not live in Jefferson County	6.3%
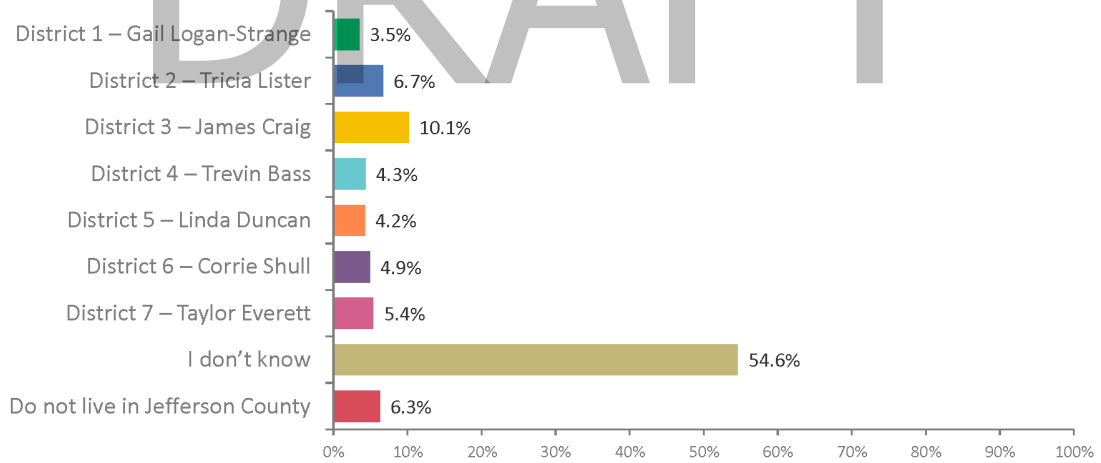
Q3: What role group best describes you (select all that apply)

Answered: 4050

Role	Percentage
JCPS student	6.3%
JCPS parent	49.7%
JCPS employee	44.8%
Community member	19.6%
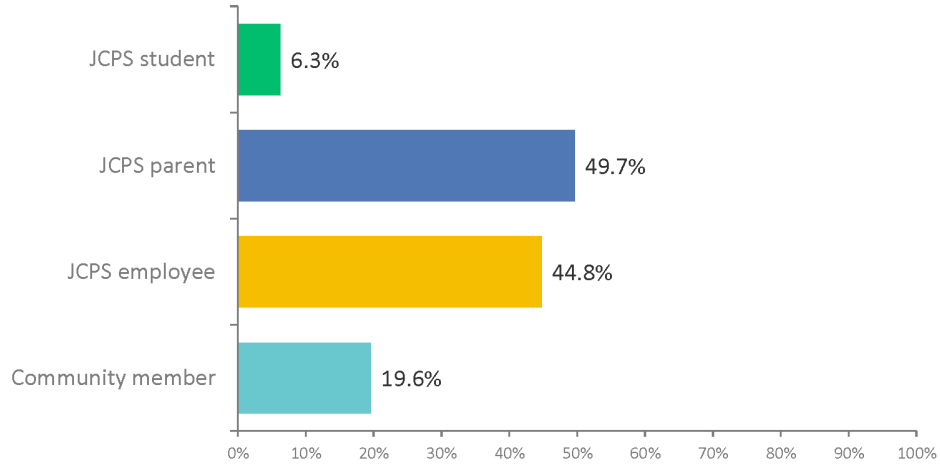
Q4: To which ethnic group do you most identify?

Answered: 4480

Ethnic group	Percentage
Asian / Pacific Islander	2.8%
Black or African American	21.0%
Hispanic or Latino	6.9%
Middle Eastern or North African	0.4%
Native American	0.4%
White	61.3%
Other	3.6%
Two or more races	3.8%

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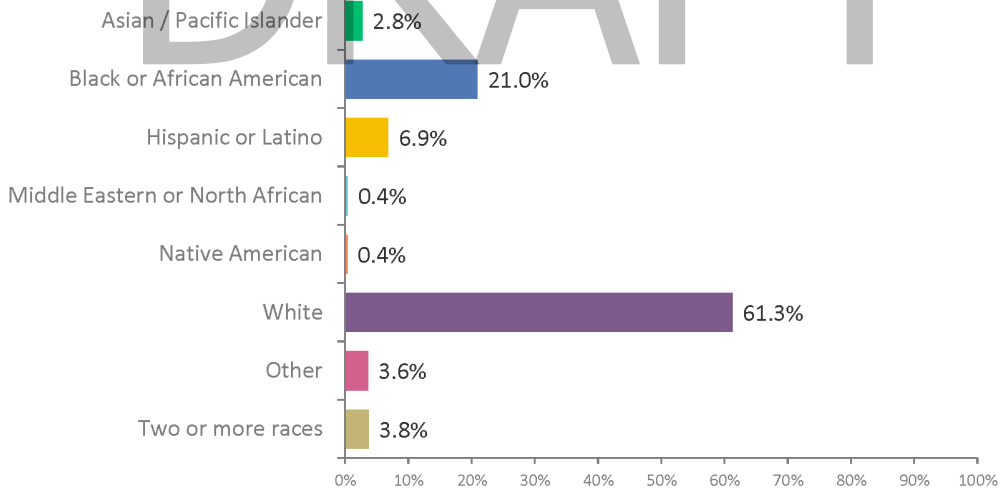
Q5: How important is the candidate's ability to promote the academic achievement of all students across the district?

Answered: 4529

Average: 9.2

0.9% 0.1% 0.3% 0.4% 0.8% 4.6% 3.4% 10.1% 10.3% 69.2%

■ 1 Low Priority ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 Medium Priority ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10 High Priority
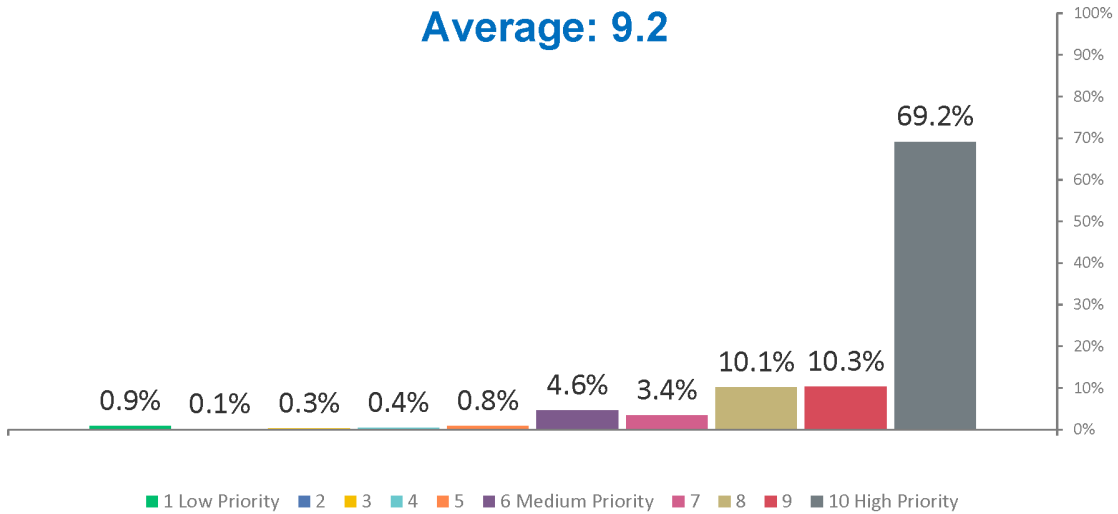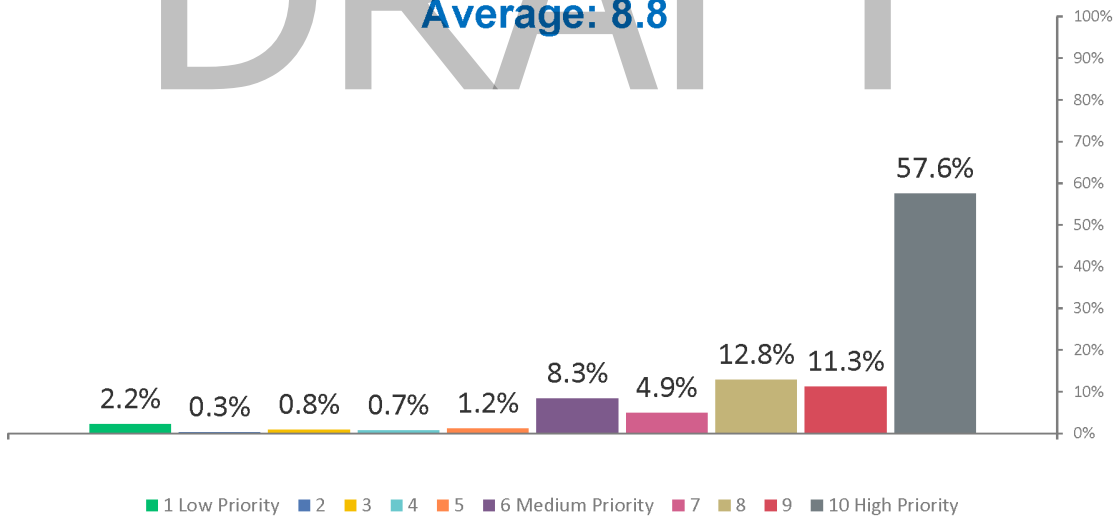
Q6: How important is the candidate's ability to promote the social-emotional well-being of all students across the district?

Answered: 4526

Average: 8.8

2.2% 0.3% 0.8% 0.7% 1.2% 8.3% 4.9% 12.8% 11.3% 57.6%

■ 1 Low Priority ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 Medium Priority ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10 High Priority

Q7: How important is the candidate's ability to improve results in lower-performing schools?

Answered: 4530

Average: 8.8

- 1.0% 1 Low Priority
- 0.2% 2
- 0.5% 3
- 0.9% 4
- 1.5% 5
- 8.9% 6 Medium Priority
- 6.5% 7
- 14.4% 8
- 10.3% 9
- 55.8% 10 High Priority
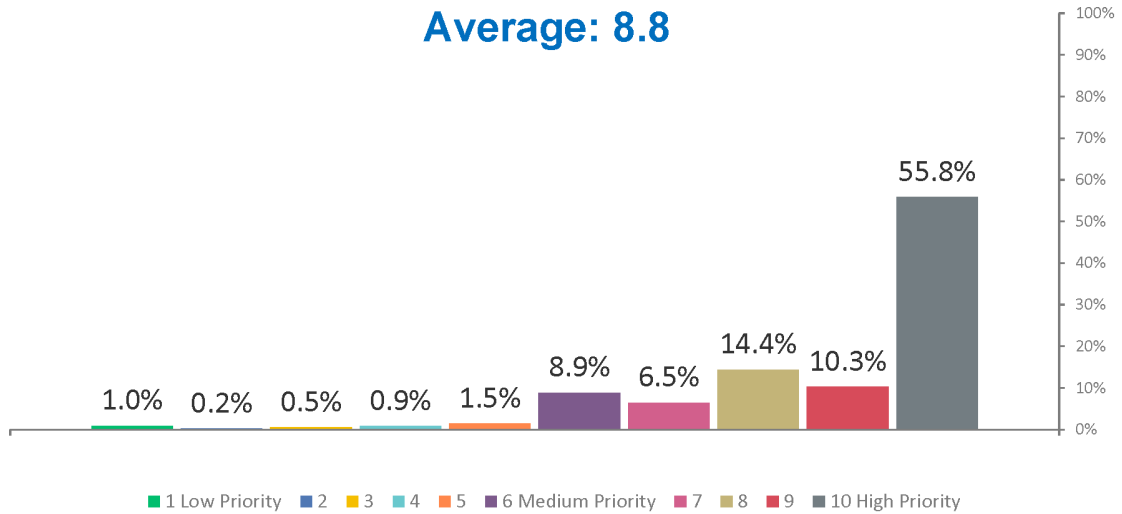
Q8: How important is the candidate's ability to lead a team?

Answered: 4529

Average: 9.3

- 0.5% 1 Low Priority
- 0.1% 2
- 0.2% 3
- 0.3% 4
- 0.6% 5
- 4.1% 6 Medium Priority
- 3.6% 7
- 10.1% 8
- 12.3% 9
- 68.1% 10 High Priority
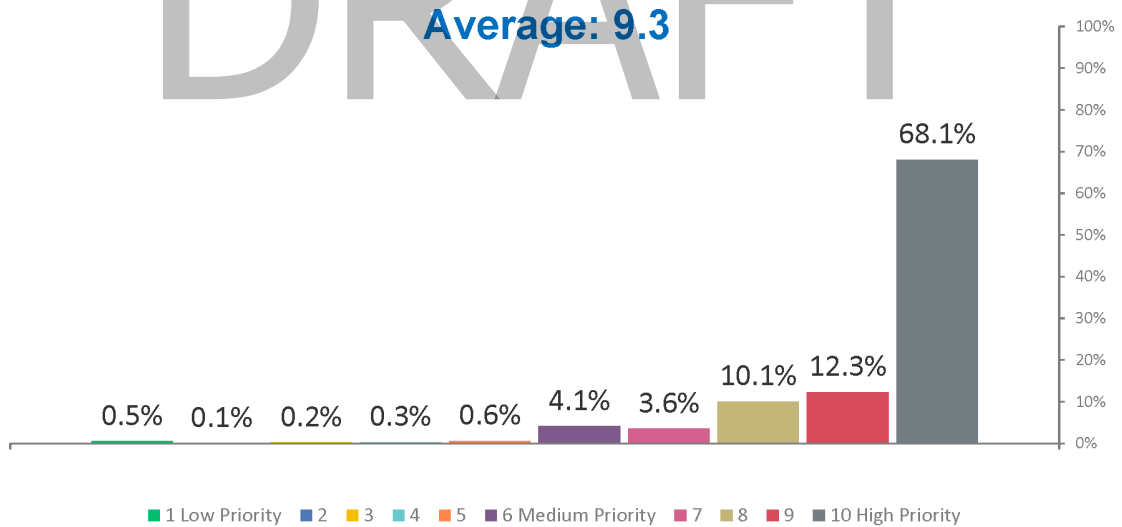
Q9: How important is the candidate's ability to implement policies to achieve staff diversity?

Answered: 4523

Average: 7.5

Legend: ■ 1 Low Priority ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 Medium Priority ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10 High Priority

Values: 10.2%, 1.0%, 2.0%, 1.9%, 2.9%, 15.1%, 5.9%, 12.5%, 8.8%, 39.7%
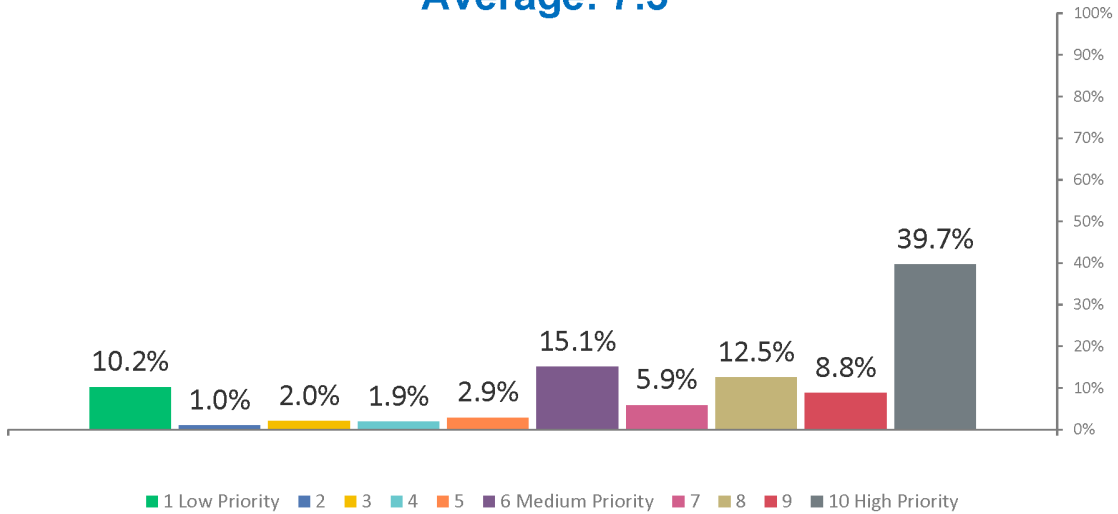
Q10: How important is the candidate's ability to recruit and retain staff?

Answered: 4524

Average: 8.9

Legend: ■ 1 Low Priority ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 Medium Priority ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10 High Priority

Values: 0.7%, 0.2%, 0.3%, 0.5%, 1.0%, 6.9%, 5.2%, 15.2%, 13.8%, 56.2%

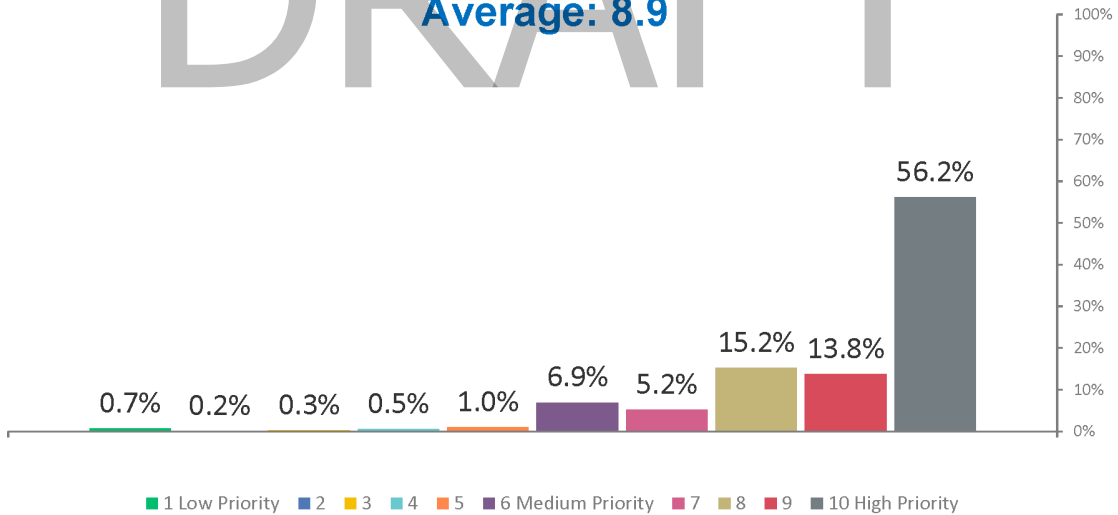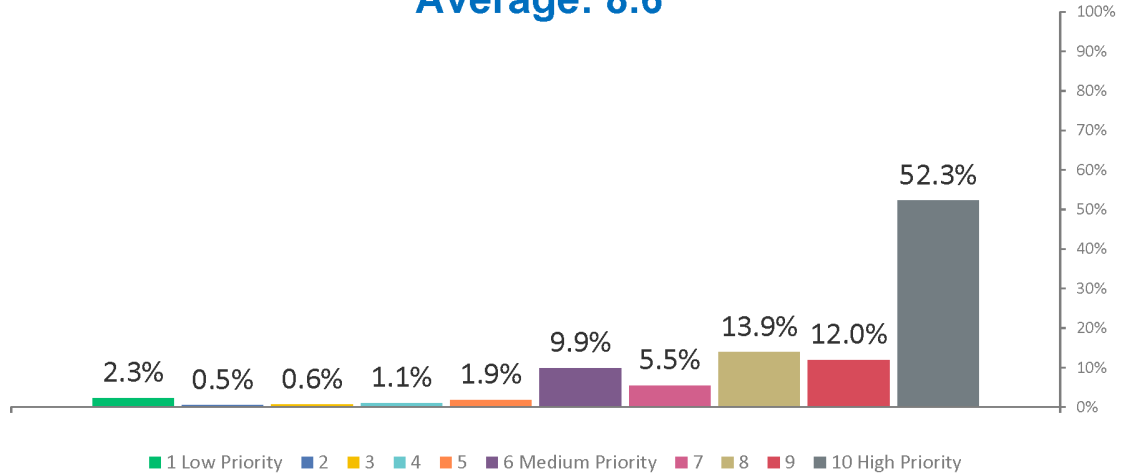**Q11: How important is the candidate's ability to implement policies to meet the needs of students in the Choice Zone, multilingual learners, and students with special needs?**

Answered: 4515

Average: 8.6

2.3% 0.5% 0.6% 1.1% 1.9% 9.9% 5.5% 13.9% 12.0% 52.3%

■ 1 Low Priority ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 Medium Priority ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10 High Priority
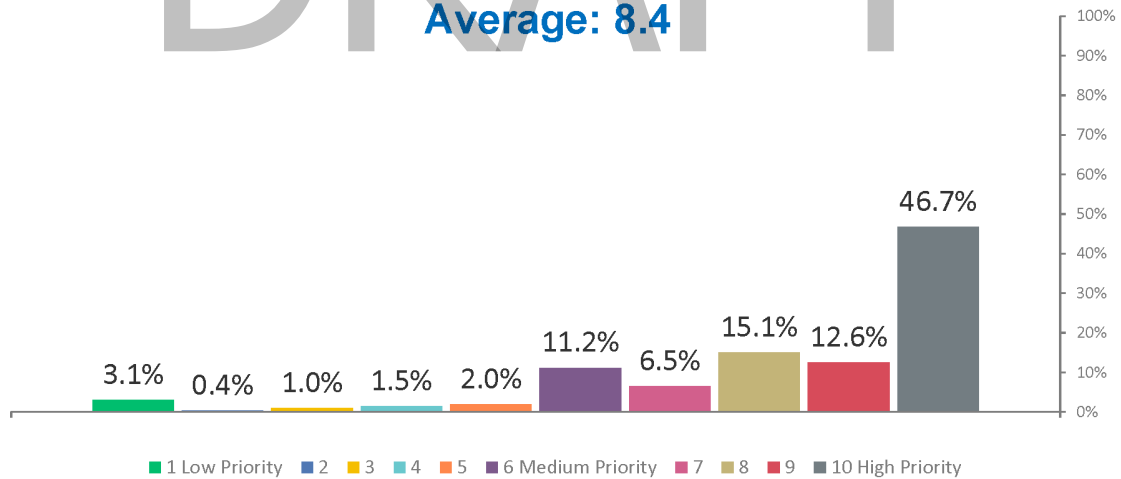
Q12: How important is the candidate's ability to close the opportunity, achievement, and resources gap?

Answered: 4510

Average: 8.4

3.1% 0.4% 1.0% 1.5% 2.0% 11.2% 6.5% 15.1% 12.6% 46.7%

■ 1 Low Priority ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 Medium Priority ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10 High Priority

Q13: How important is the candidate's ability to champion services to address the mental health concerns of students and staff?

Answered: 4519

Average: 8.5

Legend: 1 Low Priority ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 Medium Priority ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10 High Priority

Values: 2.1% | 0.4% | 1.0% | 1.4% | 2.1% | 10.0% | 6.1% | 15.4% | 12.5% | 49.1%
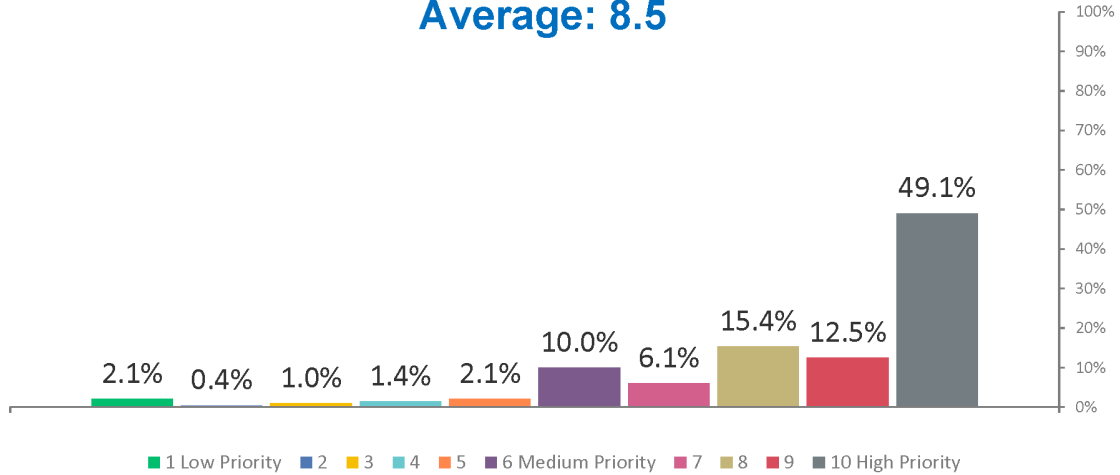
Q14: How important is it that the candidate has experience focusing on student behavior in the classroom?

Answered: 4528

Average: 9.0

Legend: 1 Low Priority ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 Medium Priority ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10 High Priority

Values: 0.7% | 0.2% | 0.5% | 0.6% | 1.4% | 7.4% | 4.7% | 11.8% | 11.4% | 61.4%

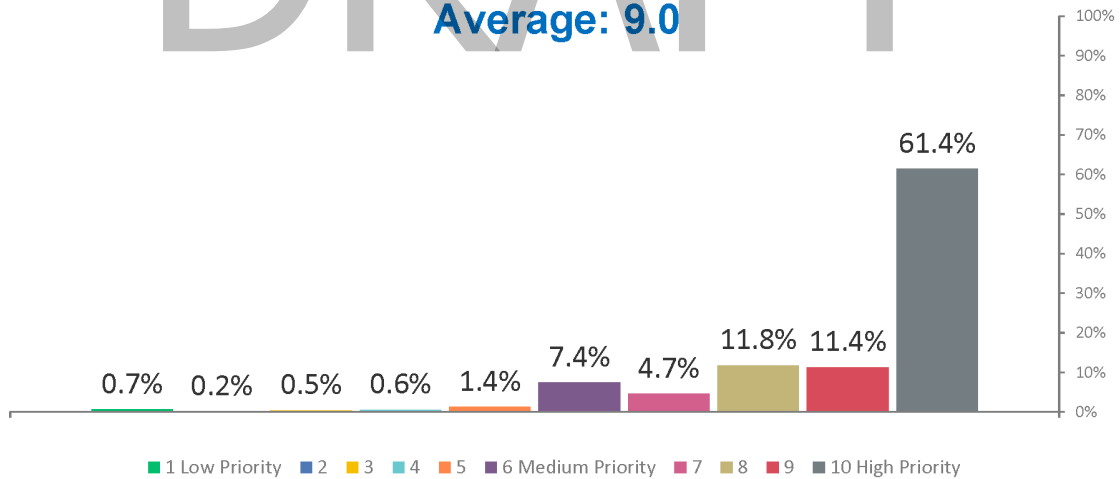**Q15: How important is the candidate's ability to enhance relationships outside JCPS, for instance, with elected state and local leadership, business partners, and community groups?**

Answered: 4510

Average: 7.6

Legend: ■ 1 Low Priority ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 Medium Priority ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10 High Priority

Values: 3.9% 0.8% 1.6% 2.0% 4.0% 19.7% 9.6% 18.3% 10.7% 29.6%
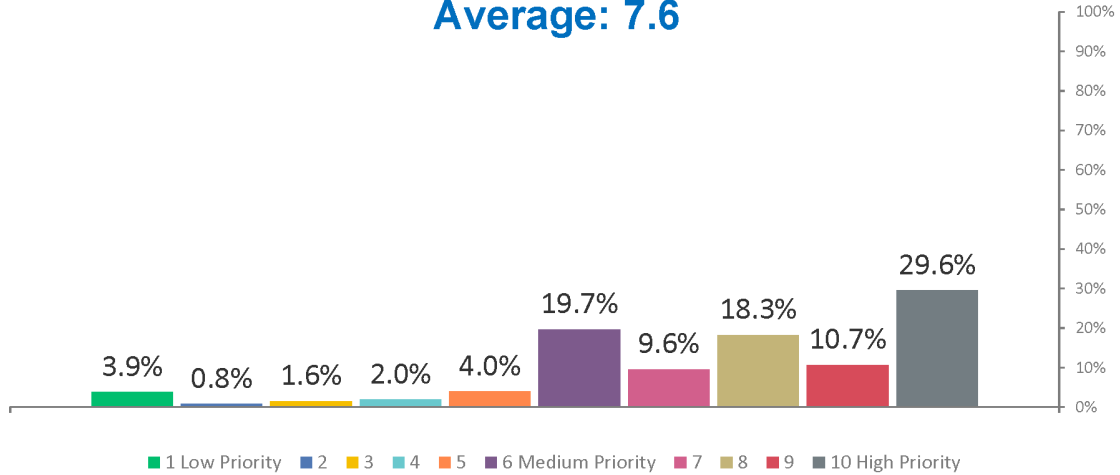
Q16: How important is the candidate's ability to build and implement a plan to improve JCPS facilities?

Answered: 4530

Average: 8.5

Legend: ■ 1 Low Priority ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 Medium Priority ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10 High Priority

Values: 1.0% 0.2% 0.7% 1.0% 1.8% 11.9% 8.8% 18.0% 13.1% 43.6%

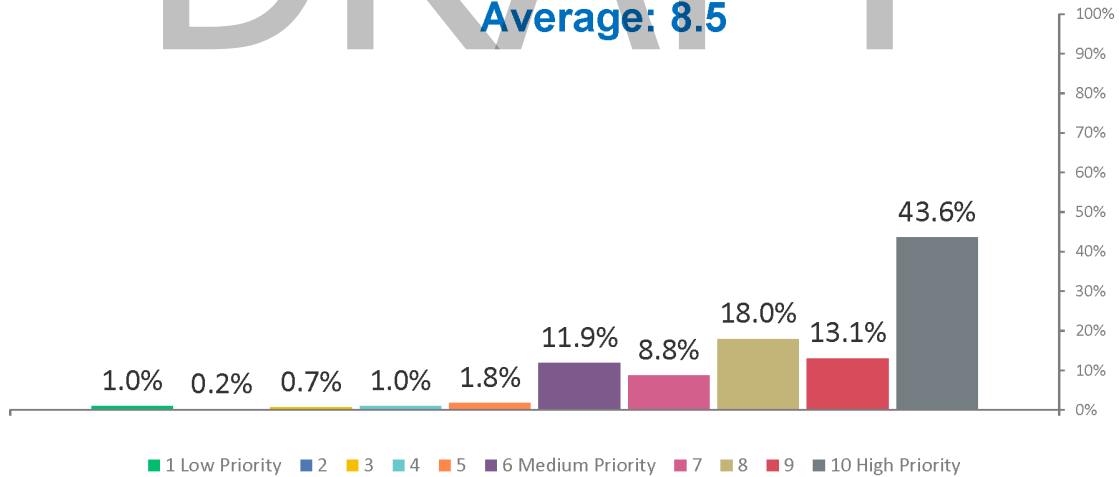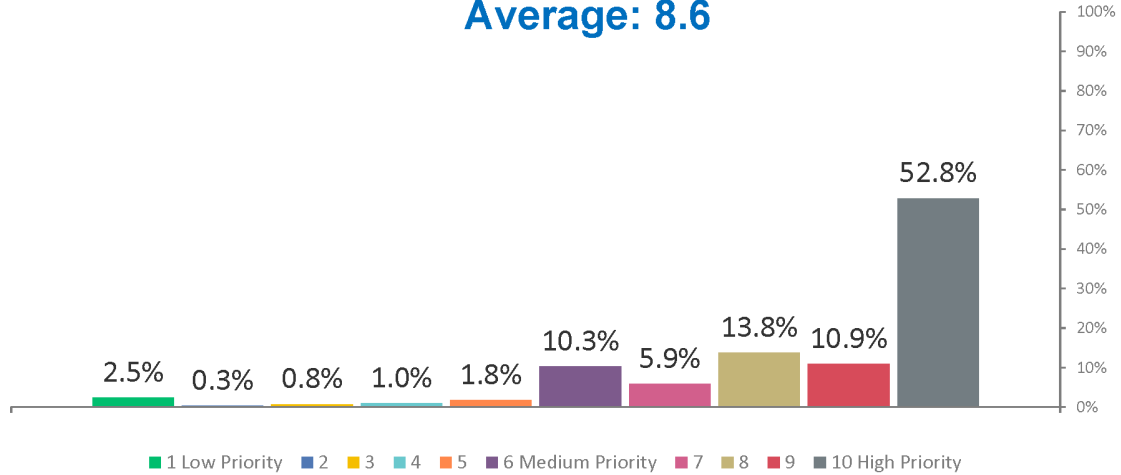## Q17: How important is the candidate's ability to build and implement a plan to improve JCPS transportation?

Answered: 4523

Average: 8.6

Legend: ■ 1 Low Priority ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 Medium Priority ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10 High Priority

Values shown: 2.5%, 0.3%, 0.8%, 1.0%, 1.8%, 10.3%, 5.9%, 13.8%, 10.9%, 52.8%

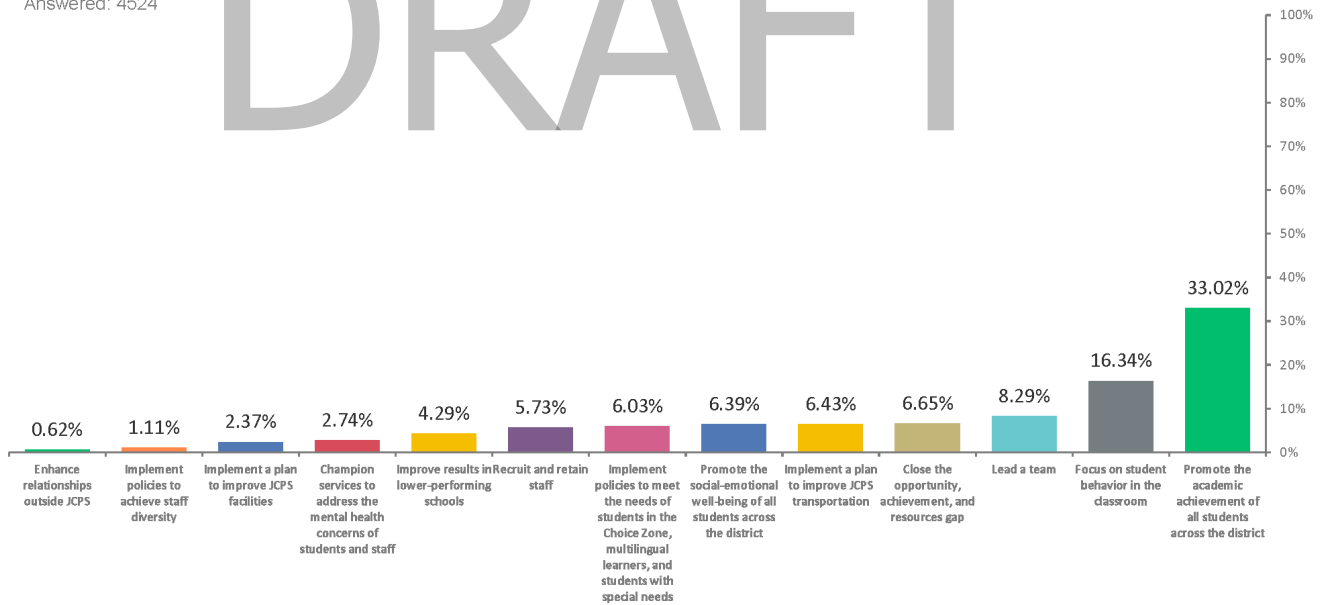## Q18: Of these, which do you believe is the single most important qualification for the ideal Superintendent? (select one)

Answered: 4524

Category	Percent
Enhance relationships outside JCPS	0.62%
Implement policies to achieve staff diversity	1.11%
Implement a plan to improve JCPS facilities	2.37%
Champion services to address the mental health concerns of students and staff	2.74%
Improve results in lower-performing schools	4.29%
Recruit and retain staff	5.73%
Implement policies to meet the needs of students in the Choice Zone, multilingual learners, and students with special needs	6.03%
Promote the social-emotional well-being of all students across the district	6.39%
Implement a plan to improve JCPS transportation	6.43%
Close the opportunity, achievement, and resources gap	6.65%
Lead a team	8.29%
Focus on student behavior in the classroom	16.34%
Promote the academic achievement of all students across the district	33.02%

Open Response Items

Q19: What characteristics, or traits, are most important in the next JCPS Superintendent?

Q20: What are the most significant challenges a new JCPS Superintendent will face?

Q21: What are the biggest opportunities for the new JCPS Superintendent?

Q22: If you were selecting the new Superintendent, what one question would you ask?
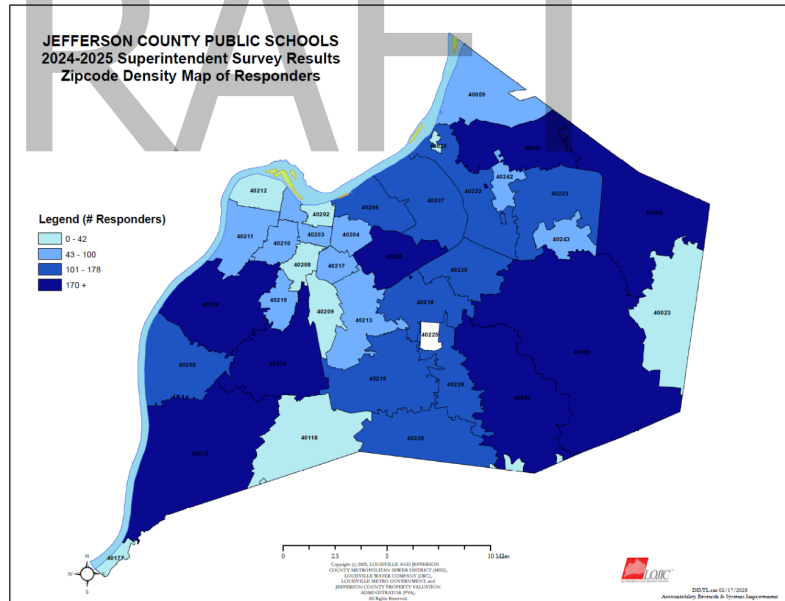
Q23: Any additional comments?

Q24: If you know someone that would be a good candidate for this position, please share their name and contact information.

Q1: Please enter the ZIP code for where you live:

Answered: 4479

- 91% in county
- 7% out of county
- 3% didn't respond

JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2024-2025 Superintendent Survey Results
Zipcode Density Map of Responders

Legend (# Responders)
0 - 42
43 - 100
101 - 178
170 +

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