



Franklin School District

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT AND SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

March 23, 2022

In preparation for the search for a new Superintendent of Franklin School District, the School Board requested that School Exec Connect consultants conduct a community engagement process that would document reflections and insights from District students, staff, and community stakeholders. Representative focus groups and an online survey allowed any stakeholder in the District to contribute on a voluntary basis.

Participation in the community engagement process was excellent. Information from the focus groups, open forums, and survey was used to create a New Superintendent Profile that will guide the recruitment, screening, interviews, and selection of a new Superintendent.

Focus groups participants included the School Board, District administrators, teachers and staff from across the District, parents, students, and community members. Seventy-six (76) stakeholders took part in one of eight (8) focus groups/open forums. All participants were asked to express their views regarding the strengths of the District, challenges facing the District, first-year priorities for the new Superintendent, and the specific characteristics, skills, and attributes to be sought in the next Superintendent.

The District also sought input from stakeholders via an online survey, open from March 1-14, 2022. Four hundred, fifty-nine (459) people answered questions about perceived educational and managerial strengths and challenges the new Superintendent will face. Respondents also identified priorities for the new Superintendent to address and characteristics they associate with a successful Superintendent in Franklin School District. A summary of the survey results can be found after the focus group report.

Due to the sampling methodology, this report should not be construed as scientifically accurate. The opinions set forth in the report may not reflect the opinion of all staff, students, and residents, but do reflect the opinions of those who participated. Judgments regarding what is included in this report are those of the consultants, based upon the frequency of statements received throughout the data gathering process.

The consultants used the information gathered in this report to develop the **New Superintendent Profile**, found on the final page of this document.

This report may be used in several ways. The profile will be helpful to the consultants as they screen and interview candidates. The Board of Education will gain an understanding of the community's view of the District and the superintendency, and can use the profile to prepare questions for the Board interviews with the candidates. The consultants also recommend the report be given to the newly appointed Superintendent for a better understanding of the issues and opportunities facing Franklin School District. The District may also choose to post the report on the Superintendent Search portion of the website to be viewed by stakeholders.

SCHOOL EXEC CONNECT

Focus Group Response Overview

Focus Groups/Open Forums were held with all constituencies including Board members, parents, administrators, teachers, students, support staff and community leaders. Seventy-six (76) participants in eight (8) focus groups/open forums provided insights into the strengths and challenges facing the District, the priorities the new Superintendent should establish, and the qualities and skills the next Superintendent should possess. Below is a summary of the responses to each of the four questions asked in each Focus group.

The first question asked participants to identify the major strengths of Franklin School District, and the community that supports the district.

- Almost every respondent noted their pride in the strong teaching and support staff who have created a close-knit community of learners in the schools. As one parent indicated, “There is a nice feeling of family at all of my child’s schools.” Many parents and teachers indicated that they specifically chose to live in this district because of its reputation for excellence. There is a climate of growth and improvement district-wide.
- Franklin is well-resourced and there are high marks for a wide assortment of extra-curricular and athletic activities for all students.
- The buildings and grounds are well-maintained, clean and safe for students and staff.
- Teachers, administrators, and parents praised the engaged and committed parent community who place a high value on education.
- Students feel supported by teachers, expressing confidence in teachers’ willingness to provide feedback, demonstrate kindness, and listen to multiple points of view. They want a superintendent who is kind, honest, loyal, and positive and who will get to know them personally.

The second prompt for the Focus Groups asked participants to identify the biggest challenges facing the District next year and beyond.

- A high-achieving school district will inevitably experience pressure to raise/maintain test scores, but many participants noted that they want to see Franklin School District continue to focus on both academic rigor and social and emotional health of students, a balance that can be challenging to maintain.
- A strong desire to diversify the teaching and administrative staff was expressed in almost every focus group, along with the hope that diversity, equity, and inclusion are priorities of the new Superintendent.
- Continuing to attract and retain the most qualified and talented individuals in every work group in a time of growing shortages will be a challenge. Keeping teaching/staff compensation competitive with competing districts is a must.
- The expectation for close collaboration with teachers, administrators, and the Board place demands on a Superintendent's time that may be greater than in some districts. Franklin also expects the new Superintendent to be highly engaged, visible, and active in the schools and community.
- Continue to consider the impacts of the pandemic on students, staff, families, and community and implement academic or emotional supports where needed.

The third question asked participants to identify those skills, personal qualities, and experiences that are important for the next Superintendent to possess.

- The new Superintendent needs to be someone who can build, and in some cases, re-build relationships and trust within the Franklin community. The person needs to be able to include all stakeholders in moving towards completion of the existing District Coherence Plan.
- The new Superintendent should be a proven leader with specific accomplishments, as well as being hard-working, proactive, transparent, visionary, and strategic. Experience in the classroom and leadership at the building level are important to many constituents.
- Understand how to motivate and manage high-performing teams, and use the talents of each individual. Clearly identify and focus on a common vision for the future.
- Demonstrate openness, accessibility, thoughtfulness, likability, and responsiveness. The new Superintendent should display humor, compassion, warmth, and approachability while also showing humility and a willingness to listen.
- Understanding finance, business operations, and board governance is important for the new Superintendent.
- Communication is a key to success; the new Superintendent should be able to inform and inspire others through eloquent speaking, skillful writing, and the effective use of multimedia.
- Understands the needs of all students, including students with IEPs, 504 plans, ELL designations, and talented or gifted identification.
- The Superintendent should be the face of the District while sharing the spotlight, recognizing the work of others and providing opportunities for growth among all staff.
- The new leader should have the ability to balance confidence and humility, to act decisively, but to listen carefully and work collaboratively in reaching those decisions.
- Engage with community partners and prioritize visibility in Franklin and in the schools.

- Remain calm under pressure and demonstrate respect for multiple viewpoints. Carefully review information and collaborate with others before decision-making, then support that decision publicly.
- Participants in the focus groups want the new Superintendent to possess a deep understanding of existing programs and practices while also inspiring the entire community with a vision for the future of the District. A community passionate about education and willing to support its schools, Franklin is a destination district; the strong hope is that the new Superintendent will become deeply rooted in the community and stay in that position for many years.

The next prompt for the Focus Groups asked participants to identify the priorities facing the District next year and beyond.

- Asked to identify priorities for the next Superintendent, Focus Group participants' responses expressed a desire for balance in providing a rigorous academic program while maintaining the emphasis on the whole child, including social-emotional health and safety.
- The new Superintendent must recognize that attraction and retention of staff is critically important. Many staff members and teachers feel undervalued and underappreciated.
- Be prepared to collaborate, to listen, and to respond to all constituencies, modeling civility and openness. Take time to understand the Franklin before making significant changes.
- Continue to focus on hiring and retaining the best teachers and administrators, prioritizing professional development and a growth mindset. Seek to hire a more diverse teaching and leadership staff.
- Build trust and establish strong relationships from the very first day.
- The need for financial planning was frequently mentioned as a priority, including an assessment of facilities, enrollment trends, and budgeting.
- Respect the strong foundation of success, assess what works and what can be improved, and plan for incremental change rather than wholesale replacement of existing programs and practices.
- Build strong teams and establish effective working relationships with administrators and teachers, providing support for building principals and seeking their input on a regular basis.
- Help all parents to become engaged in a positive way with their children's schools, setting meeting times/places that are accessible to all; treat all schools equitably and get to know staff and students in each building.
- The new Superintendent should be a visionary leader who will develop a clear, ambitious strategy for the future that enjoys support among the staff and community.



Franklin School District Survey Results

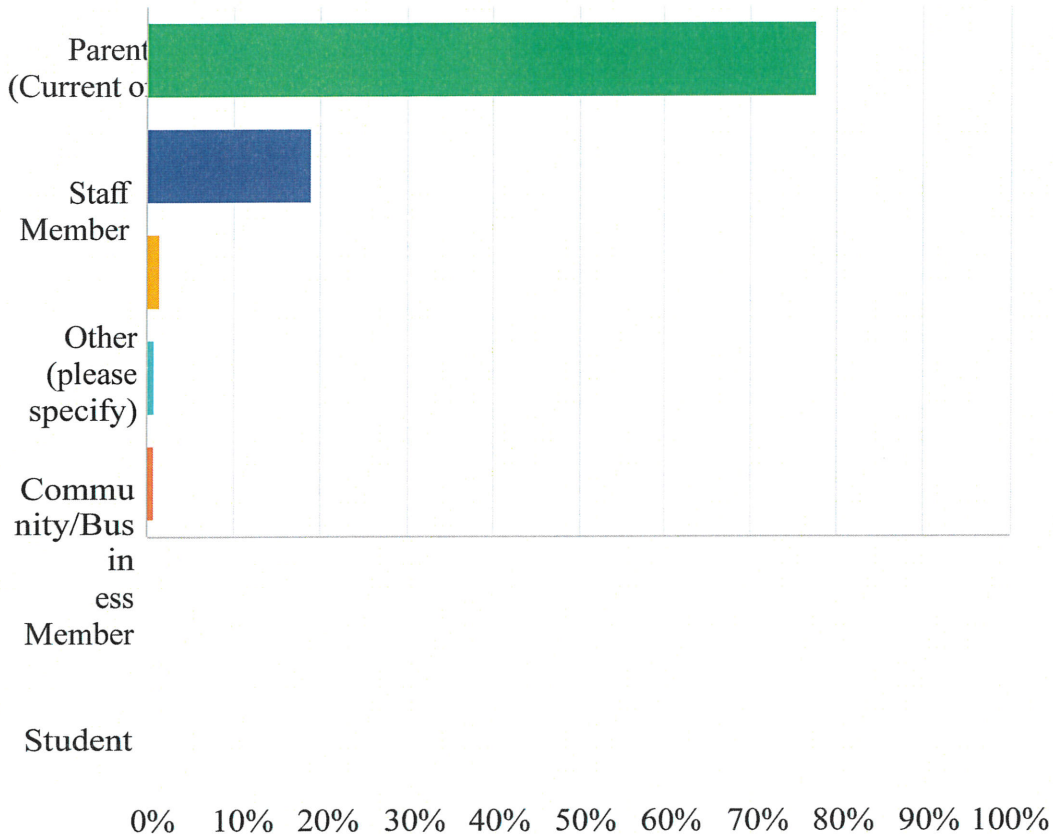
The Franklin community completed the survey in significant numbers, with 459 individuals responding to twenty-one questions. Over 75% of respondents are parents, and almost 90 teachers/staff filled out the survey.

The charts that follow show the responses to each question, beginning with a breakdown of respondents, then listing the top answers for each prompt. Each question offers a variety of forced-choice responses.

Q1 Please indicate the one group that BEST represents you.

Answered: 457

Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Parent (Current or Within Past Four Years)	77.68%	355
Staff Member	19.04%	87
Other (please specify)	1.53%	7
Community/Business Member	0.88%	4
Student	0.88%	4
TOTAL		457

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Community, parent and staff member	3/14/2022 10:39 PM
2	Parent	3/10/2022 4:04 PM
3	Staff, parent, and community member	3/9/2022 7:33 PM
4	Interested citizen	3/8/2022 9:55 PM
5	Parent from previous years & staff member	3/3/2022 8:48 PM
6	Teacher/parent	3/3/2022 8:35 PM
7	Staff Member AND current parent	3/2/2022 1:44 PM

Q2 What are the TOP EDUCATIONAL STRENGTHS of the School District? Select up to five answers.

Answered: 459

Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Quality of Teaching Staff	65.80%	302
Challenging, Quality Curriculum	48.58%	223
Use of Technology for Learning	45.53%	209
Prepares Students for College and/or Career Readiness	38.34%	176
Positive, Nurturing School Learning Environment	33.33%	153
Opportunities for Students Outside of the Classroom	24.84%	114
Student Growth as Measured by Academic Achievement Data	23.53%	108
Quality of Leadership	17.21%	79
Emphasis on Educating the Whole Child	16.99%	78
Tailoring Instruction to Individual Student Needs	16.34%	75
Instructional Methods That Engage Students	16.12%	74
Parent Commitment that Fosters Student Learning	13.94%	64
Preparing Students to be Productive Citizens in a Democratic Society	8.28%	38
Vision for the Direction of the School District	8.28%	38
District's Understanding and Support of Diversity	8.06%	37
Educating Students for a Global Future	7.63%	35
Commitment to Principles of Social Justice	2.83%	13
Total Respondents: 459		

Q3 What EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS are most needed in theSchool District? Please select up to five answers.

Answered: 459

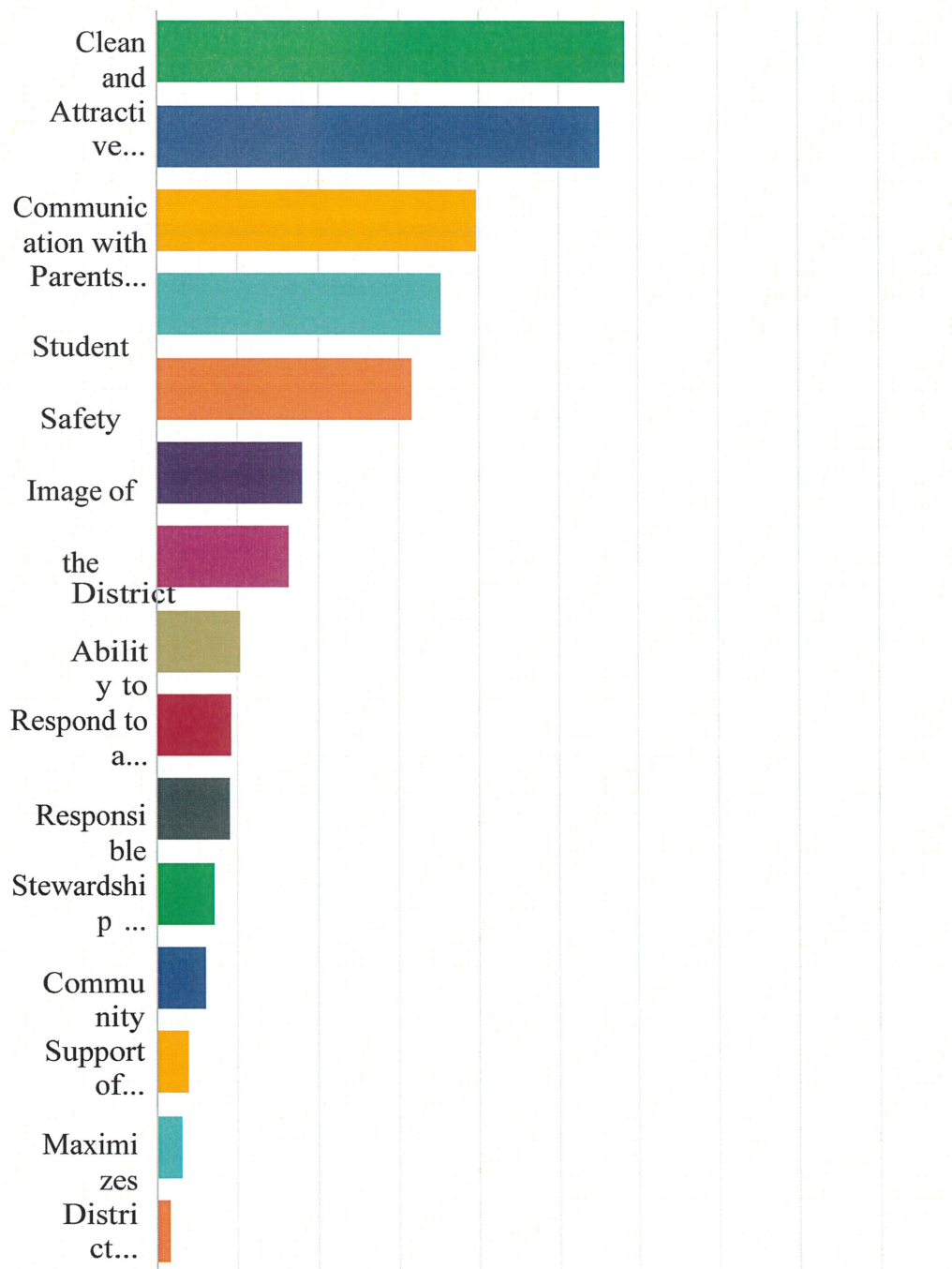
Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Quality of Leadership	34.20%	157
Tailoring Instruction to Individual Student Needs	31.15%	143
Instructional Methods That Engage Students	30.28%	139
District's Understanding and Support of Diversity	25.71%	118
Preparing Students to be Productive Citizens in a Democratic Society	24.84%	114
Educating Students for a Global Future	23.75%	109
Positive, Nurturing School Learning Environment	22.88%	105
Commitment to Principles of Social Justice	22.66%	104
Emphasis on Educating the Whole Child	22.22%	102
Vision for the Direction of the School District	21.35%	98
Challenging, Quality Curriculum	21.13%	97
Opportunities for Students Outside the Classroom	21.13%	97
Prepares Students for College and/or Career Readiness	21.13%	97
Quality of Teaching Staff	19.39%	89
Parent Commitment that Fosters Student Learning	11.33%	52
Student Growth as Measured by Achievement Data	10.24%	47
Use of Technology for Learning	10.24%	47
Total Respondents: 459		

Q4 What are the top STRENGTHS of the School District in the area of ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT? Select up to four answers.

Answered: 459

Skipped: 0



Staff Morale

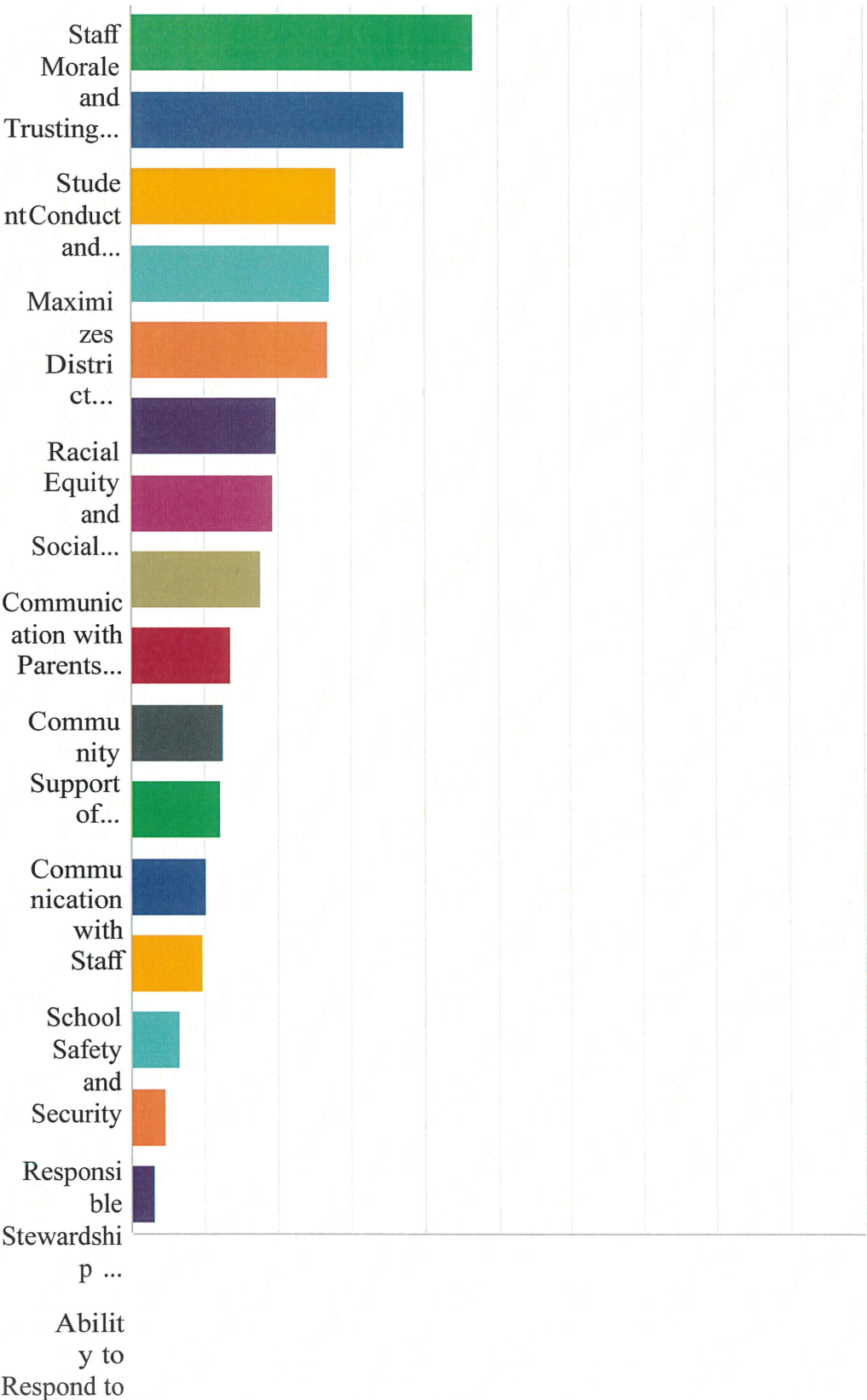
Board of Education th...

Student Conduct

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Clean and Attractive Schools	58.39%	268
Communication with Parents and Community	55.12%	253
Student Safety	39.87%	183
Image of the District	35.29%	162
Ability to Respond to a Crisis, such as a Pandemic or Financial Situations	31.81%	146
Responsible Stewardship of Financial Resources	18.08%	83
Community Support of Education	16.34%	75
Maximizes District Resources	10.46%	48
Staff Morale	9.37%	43
Board of Education that Focuses on Governance and Policy Making	9.15%	42
Student Conduct and Discipline	7.19%	33
Educational Mandates from the Legislature	6.10%	28
Racial Equity and Social Justice	4.14%	19
Relationships with Other Units of Government	3.27%	15
Restorative Practices	1.74%	8
Total Respondents: 459		

Q5 What IMPROVEMENTS are most needed for the School District in the areas of ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT that the new superintendent should prioritize? Select up to four answers.

Answered: 459 Skipped: 0

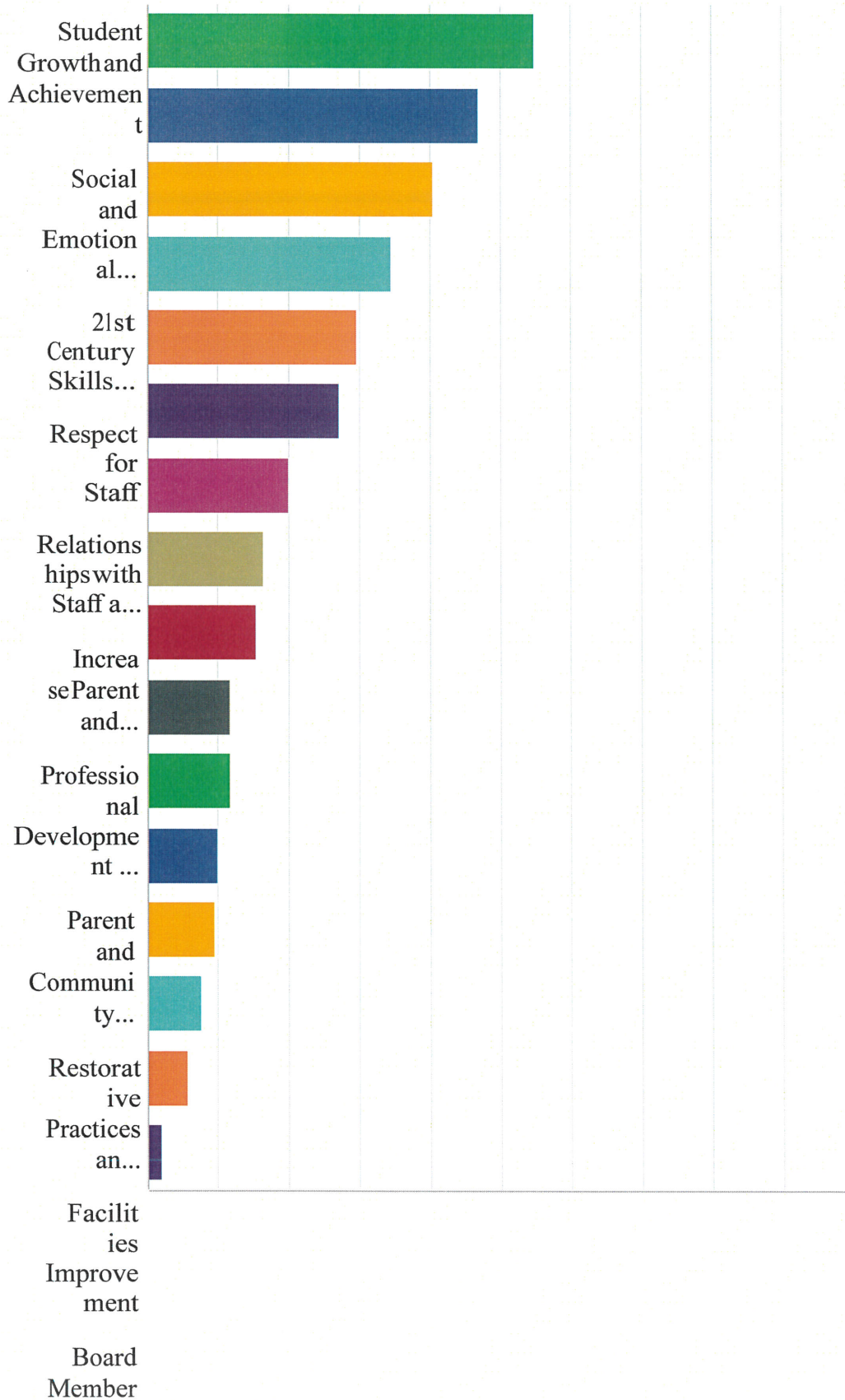


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Staff Morale and Trusting Relationships	46.62%	214
Student Conduct and Discipline	37.25%	171
Maximizes District Resources	28.10%	129
Racial Equity and Social Justice	27.02%	124
Communication with Parents and Community	26.80%	123
Community Support of Education	19.83%	91
Communication with Staff	19.39%	89
School Safety and Security	17.65%	81
Responsible Stewardship of Financial Resources	13.73%	63
Ability to Respond to a Crisis, such as a Pandemic or Financial Situations	12.64%	58
Board of Education that Focuses on Governance and Policy Making	12.20%	56
Image of the District	10.24%	47
Restorative Practices	9.80%	45
Clean and Attractive Schools	6.54%	30
Relationships with Other Units of Government	4.79%	22
Educational Mandates from the Legislature	3.27%	15
Total Respondents: 459		

Q6 Which of the following DISTRICT PRIORITIES should the new superintendent focus upon? Please select up to four answers.

Answered: 459

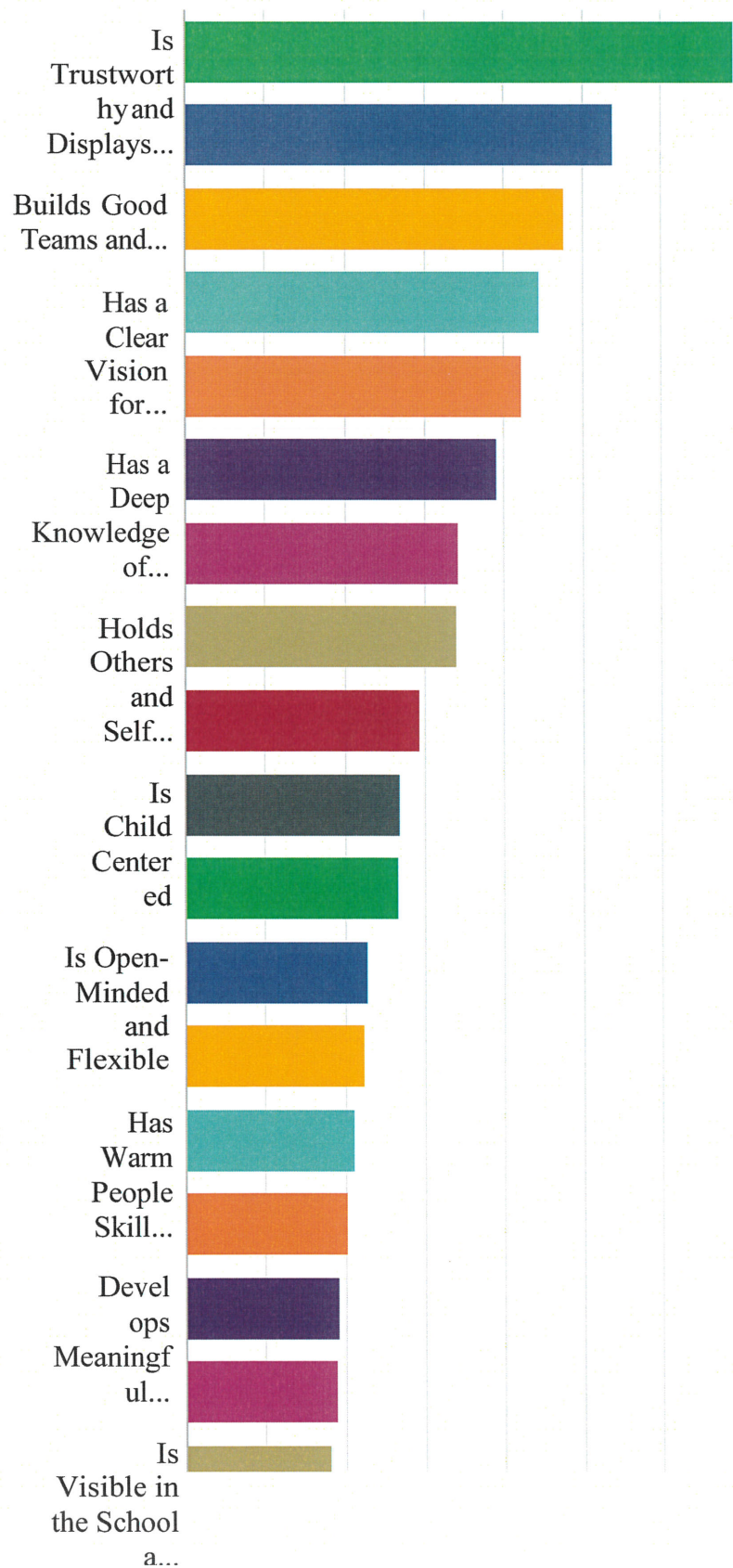
Skipped: 0

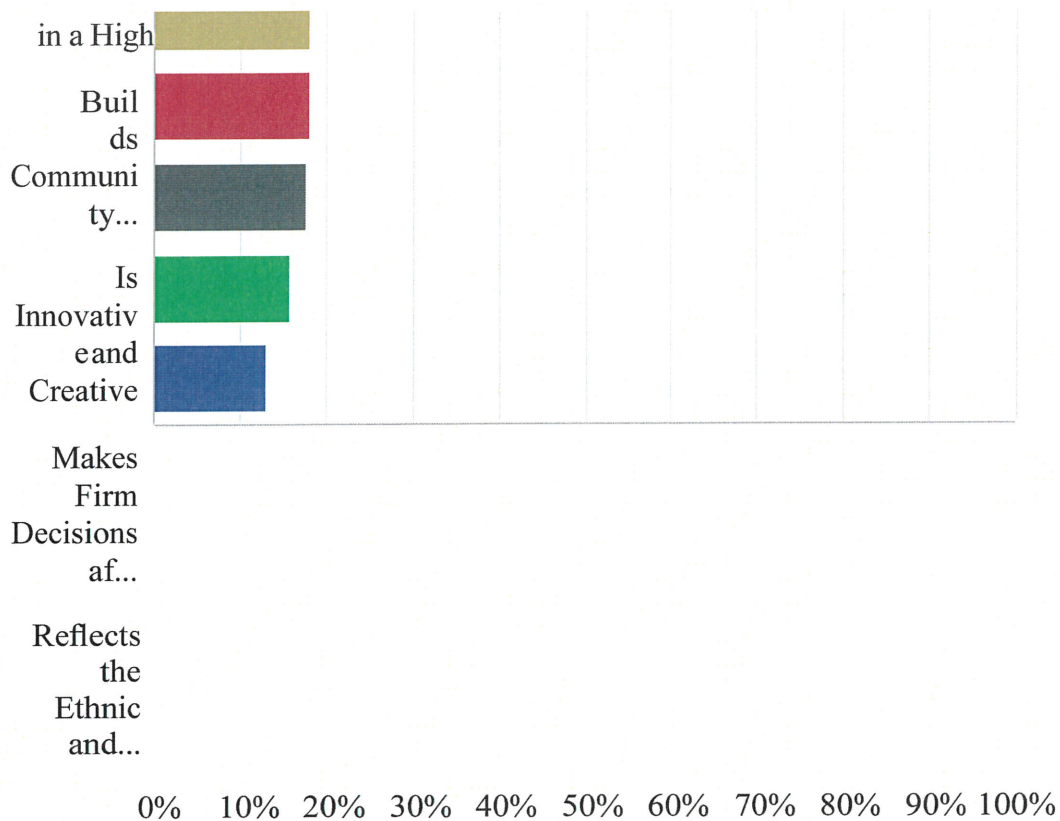


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Student Growth and Achievement	54.90%	252
Social and Emotional Health of Students	46.84%	215
21st Century Skills (Communication, Collaboration, Creativity, Innovation, Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Media and Technology Literacy)	40.52%	186
Respect for Staff	34.64%	159
Relationships with Staff and Community Members	29.63%	136
Increase Parent and Community Involvement in the Schools	27.02%	124
Professional Development for Staff	20.04%	92
Parent and Community Communication	16.34%	75
Restorative Practices and Social Justice	15.25%	70
Facilities Improvement	11.76%	54
Board Member Growth and Development	11.76%	54
Instructional Technology	10.02%	46
Understanding of Health and Safety Metrics	9.59%	44
Financial Issues	7.63%	35
Image of the District	5.66%	26
School Related Legislative Issues	1.96%	9
Total Respondents: 459		

Q7 Please choose the TOP SEVEN characteristics/skills that you believe are most important for a person to be successful as the new superintendent of our School District.

Answered: 459 Skipped: 0





ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Is Trustworthy and Displays Courage and Integrity	69.06%	317
Builds Good Teams and Brings Out the Best in Others	54.03%	248
Has a Clear Vision for Leading our Schools and School District	47.71%	219
Has a Deep Knowledge of Curriculum and the Teaching and Learning Process	44.66%	205
Holds Others and Self Accountable	42.48%	195
Is Child Centered	39.22%	180
Is Open-Minded and Flexible	34.42%	158
Has Warm People Skills; is Approachable and Easy to Talk to	34.20%	157
Develops Meaningful Community Support and Partnerships	29.41%	135
Is Visible in the School and the Community	26.80%	123
Is Collaborative and Appreciates Diversity of Opinions in the Decision-Making Process	26.58%	122
Has the Ability to Recruit Teachers and Administrators with Diverse Backgrounds	22.88%	105
Has Excellent Communication Skills; Speaks and Writes Well	22.44%	103
Understands Finance and the Business Side of Running a District	21.13%	97
Is Sensitive to and Appreciates the Needs of Special Needs Learners	20.26%	93
Uses Data for Decision-Making	19.17%	88
Works Well with the Board to Set Direction for the District	18.95%	87
Is Confident in a High Expectation Environment	18.08%	83

Builds Community Support for the Schools and District	18.08%	83
Is Innovative and Creative	17.65%	81
Makes Firm Decisions after Appropriate Review	15.69%	72
Reflects the Ethnic and Racial Diversity of the District	13.07%	60

Is there anything else you would like the School Exec Connect consultants to know that could be helpful in the search for a new Superintendent for Franklin School District?

175 survey respondents left comments in this section, with most of the comments being closely aligned to statements made in focus groups or interviews. The comments fell into several categories.

- Around one hundred of the comments included suggestions about qualities or priorities they would like to see in the next Superintendent. Over one hundred people expressed the importance of continuing to focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion and over one hundred people made statements that simply expressed their overall satisfaction with the District. Suggestions for desired qualities in the next Superintendent included visionary, trustworthy, visible, friendly, and open. A number of people advised the new Superintendent to take the time to learn about the District and become immersed in its culture and climate.
- Approximately fifty comments were primarily negative, including comments about masking mandates, curricula choices and, and concerns that a focus on diversity and equity are taking time from academic studies or imposing a political perspective.
- Conflicting opinions were reflected in widely varying comments about test scores/social emotional health as well as the District's approach to the topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion.