

Fayette County Public Schools 2015-2016 Superintendent Entry Plan Public Engagement Activities

Highlights and Selected Key Findings

Board Presentation

May 23, 2016



Overview of Public Engagement Efforts

This school year, Fayette County Public Schools worked with independent research and communications firm K12 *Insight* to engage the entire Fayette community and learn community members' priorities for their school district. A large majority of this work was designed to inform Superintendent Emmanuel "Manny" Caulk's entry plan, "Listening, Learning, and Leading."

During the 2015-2016 school year, the following activities were completed:

- A series of community listening sessions with parents, staff, students and community members (approximately N=600; 14 listening sessions)
- The superintendent entry plan stakeholder survey with parents, staff, students and community members (N=6,150)
- An organizational health inventory of district support services employees (N=433)
- A business partners survey for current FCPS business contacts (N=485)
- A special education survey for parents of FCPS students receiving special education services (N=429)

This report contains the selected highlights from the superintendent's entry plan listening sessions and survey work.

Community Listening Sessions

Points of Pride and What FCPS Does Well

When asked to identify what they're proud of about FCPS, participants said:

- **Community Involvement:** *Including the district's diversity and the partnerships established to support for the schools, students, and families.*
- **Caring Staff:** *The presence of dedicated, quality staff members who care for students.*
- **Student Success:** *The high academic achievement of FCPS students.*
- **Variety of Courses and Extracurricular Activities:** *Including opportunities in the fine and performing arts, sports and athletics, and career and technology education; and the scope of academic programs.*
- **Rigor of Coursework:** *Including the district's gifted and talented and IB programs, opportunities to access college-level coursework, and the rigor of general curriculum.*
- **Facilities:** *The increase in the property tax to renovate schools, the clean and beautiful schools, and the well-maintained facilities equipped with updated technology.*

When asked what FCPS does well, participants said:

- **Community Engagement:** *FCPS' collaboration with people outside of the district; engagement with local businesses and organizations (e.g., Junior Achievement, Chamber of Commerce, Better Business Bureau); and communication with community members.*
- **Positive Environment:** *Making students feel secure, safe, heard, and valued.*
- **Variety of Courses and Extracurricular Activities:** *Providing students with a rich educational experience that enables them to find their niche.*

Areas for Improvement

When asked what FCPS could do better, participants said:

- **Ensuring Systematic Excellence:** *Ensuring access and opportunities are equitable across the district; hiring more diverse staff and educating existing staff to better reach and serve minority students; meeting the needs of students with additional needs.*
- **Responsive Teaching Approach:** *Better tying the curriculum to authentic learning opportunities, considering students' strengths and weaknesses to differentiate instruction, and offering interactive learning opportunities.*
- **School-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Councils:** *Improving shared decision-making at every school so the SBDM councils truly take part in the process, and ensuring equity from school to school.*
- **Guidance Counseling:** *Providing more counselors for schools, particularly to help juniors and seniors with college and career planning, and middle school students take advantage of all of the unique high school programs. In addition, participants suggested:*
 - Improving understanding of CTE courses
 - Advertising course and extracurricular offerings
 - Improving scheduling so all students who are interested can enroll
- **Skills Courses:** *Offering additional courses that teach academic skills (e.g., how to study properly) and life skills (e.g., budgeting, balancing a checkbook).*
- **Physical Activity and Socialization Time:** *Providing students with more time to exercise and develop social skills.*
- **MAP vs FAST:** *Reinstating the MAP tests.*
- **Parental Involvement:** *Ensuring parents are welcomed, treated respectfully, and have a clear point of contact who responds to them.*
- **Communication:** *Communicating in a way that is accessible, reliable, transparent, timely, and up-to-date.*

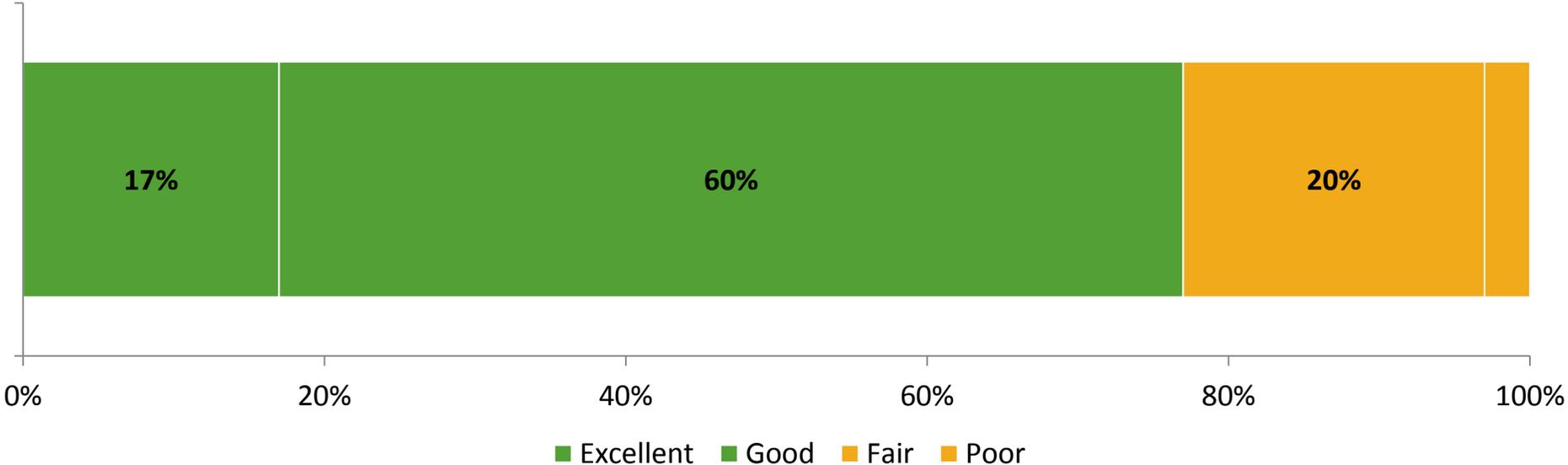
Suggested Priority Areas for Superintendent Caulk

- **Teachers:** *Ensuring the district hires and retains effective teachers.*
- **Equal/Equitable Resources:** *Giving students access to the same educational opportunities regardless of their school.*
- **Course Planning and Scheduling:** *Improving scheduling so all students who are interested can enroll*
- **Parent and Community Involvement:** *Using parents and the community as a resource that can support school efforts.*

Superintendent Entry Plan Stakeholder Survey

Overall Quality of FCPS

How would you rate the overall quality of Fayette County Public Schools? (N=5,989)



Overall Quality of FCPS (Continued)

What areas should the district address to earn a better rating in the future? (N=3,691)

Equality and Equity*: Participants said students should have access to the same educational opportunities regardless of their school. There is a perceived discrepancy in the amount and quality of resources across the district.

Teacher Quality*: Participants cited the need to hire and retain better teachers. There is a perception that some teachers are not qualified to teach their class, particularly in more advanced courses. Participants also said general educators need more support to provide quality instruction to students with special needs and English Language Learners. Participants also expressed concerns about the tenure system.

Class Size*: Participants from all school levels expressed concerns about large class sizes. They believe teachers would be more effective and students would be more successful in smaller classes with more individualized attention.

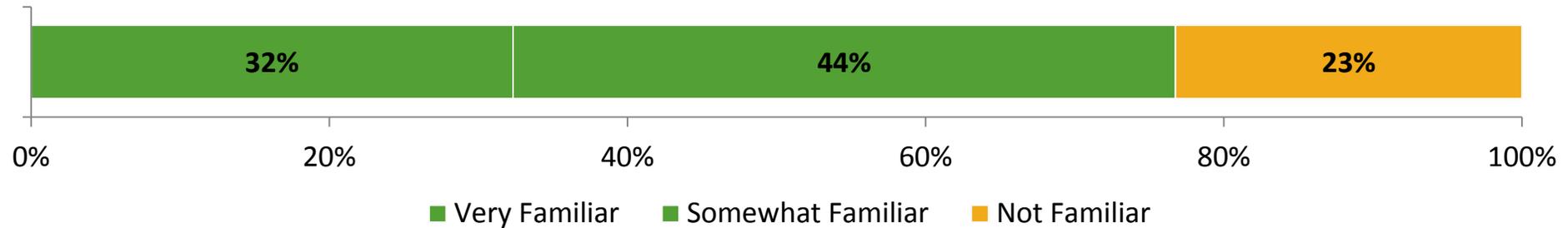
Instruction Time: Participants said there too much time is spent on standardized testing, such as the Common Core, and not enough time is spent on instruction. Additionally, there are concerns that ineffective discipline for disruptive students takes away class time from well-behaved students.

Cafeteria Food: Participants do not like the cafeteria food. They requested higher quality food and healthier options.

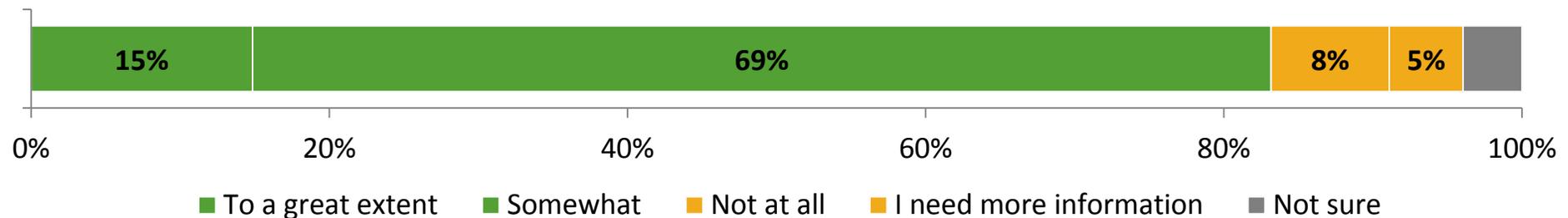
Notes: Themes are listed from most to least frequent. Items with an asterisk were identified as top priorities for Superintendent Caulk.

FCPS Mission

How familiar are you with the Fayette County Public Schools mission? (N=6,105)

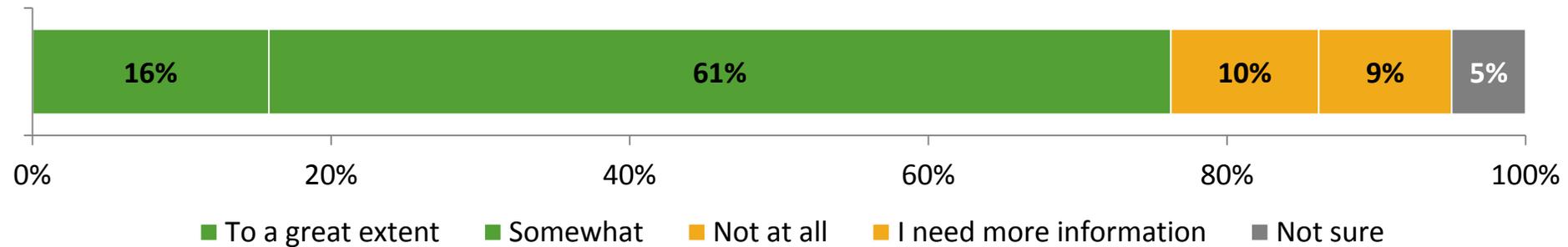


Fayette County Public Schools' mission is to create a collaborative community that ensures all students achieve at high levels and graduate prepared to excel in a global society. To what extent do you think Fayette County Public Schools is achieving its mission? (N=6,064)



FCPS Mission (Continued)

To what extent do you think Fayette County Public Schools has clear goals to measure success? (N=6,056)



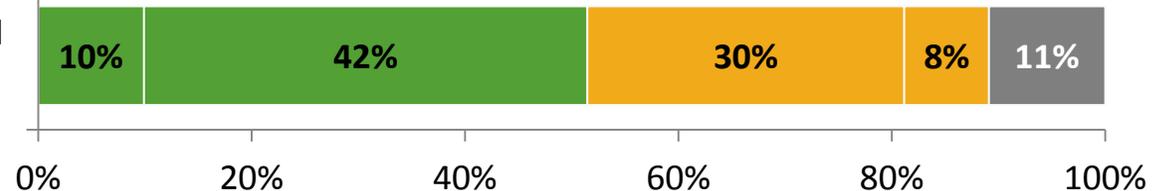
Keeping our mission statement in mind, how strongly do you disagree or agree with the following statements?

Fayette County Public Schools...

ensures all students achieve at high levels. (N=5,992)



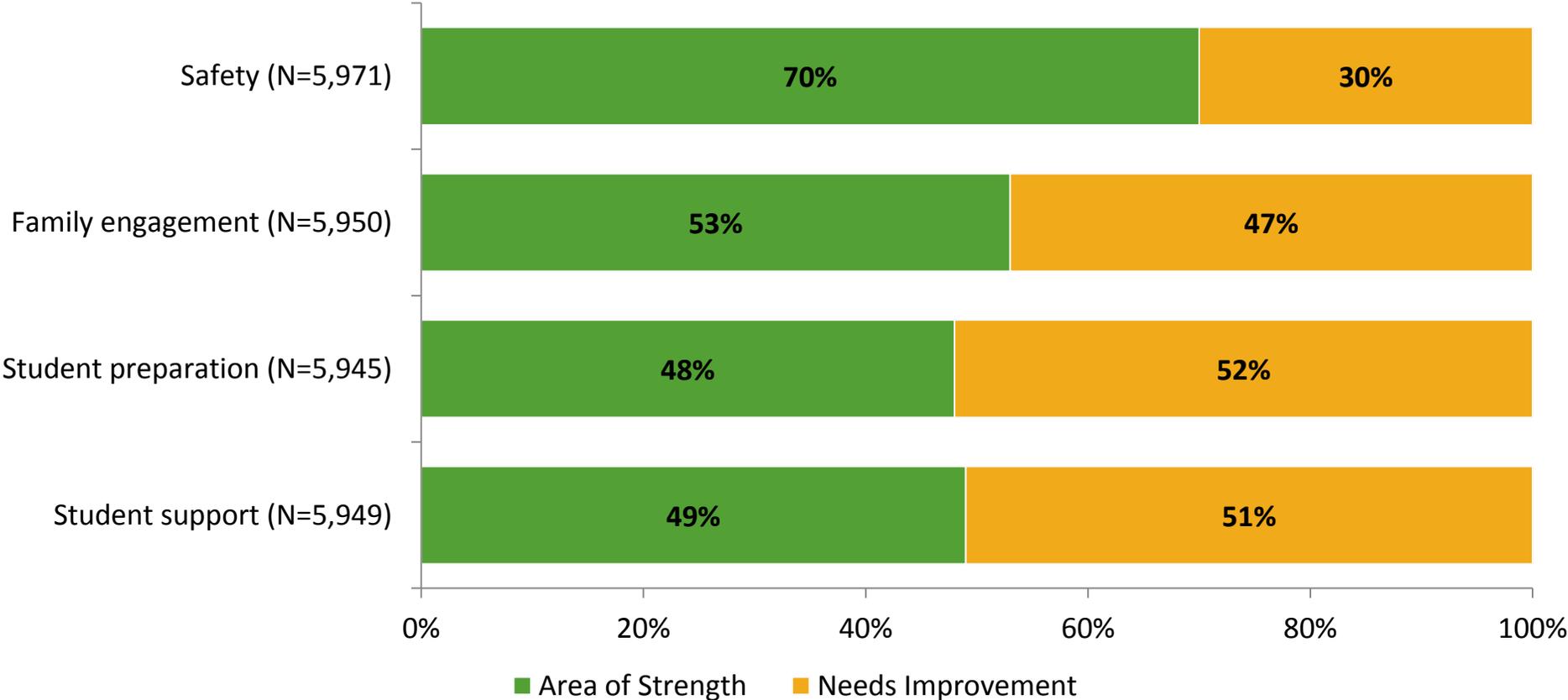
ensures all students graduate prepared to excel in a global society. (N=5,931)



■ Strongly Agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly Disagree
 ■ Unsure

School Quality

Is this an area of strength or one that needs improvement in the district?



Priority Areas

Please select your two most important priorities. Use Rank 1 for the most important priority and Rank 2 for the second most important priority.

	Relative Weighted Score	Overall Rank
Setting high standards and expectations for all students.	100	1
Building a culture of trust and collaboration between the district and schools, as well as school and home.	97	2
Ensuring equity of resources across all schools.	85	3
Meeting the needs of all stakeholders (community members, parents, staff, and students).	44	4
Giving voice and opportunities for input to all stakeholders (community members, parents, staff, and students).	35	5
Showing more fiscal responsibility and transparency.	27	6

Priority Areas (Continued)

What are the top three priority areas that Superintendent Caulk should focus on?

Teacher Quality: Participants cited the need to hire and retain better teachers. There is a perception that some teachers are not qualified to teach their classes, particularly in more advanced courses. Participants also said general educators need more support to provide quality instruction to students with special needs and English Language Learners. Participants also expressed concerns about the tenure system.

Equality and Equity: Participants said students should have access to the same educational opportunity regardless of their school. There is a perceived discrepancy in the amount and quality of resources across the district.

Class Size: Participants from all school levels expressed concerns about large class sizes. They believe teachers would be more effective and students would be more successful in smaller classes with more individualized attention.

Vision

What is your vision for the future of Fayette County Public Schools? (N=4,370)

Equal Opportunity: Participants envision a future where each school has equal access to resources and high-quality teachers. Each student, regardless of his or her race/ethnicity or socioeconomic background, would have an equal opportunity to succeed.

Accountability: Participants envision a future where *everyone* is held accountable for their actions. Most frequently cited was the need to set a high standard for students and have students strive to reach challenging goals. They would like to see families, the community, and district employees work together to ensure they are all being held accountable for helping students succeed.

Individualized Instruction: While participants noted the importance of having equal *opportunity* for all students, they also frequently mentioned the importance of having teachers adapt their instruction for students with diverse backgrounds and learning styles.

School Enjoyment: Participants would like students to be more excited to go to school. They believe students would enjoy school more and see learning as fun if they could choose more courses that reflect their goals and interests for college and their careers.

Safety: Participants envision a future where all students feel safe. They would like a learning environment where all staff members and students support one another and feel comfortable expressing themselves.

Key Insights from Superintendent Entry Plan Survey

- More than 6,000 people participated in the Superintendent Entry Plan Stakeholder Survey.
- 77% of participants rate the overall quality of FCPS as excellent or good.
- Some ways FCPS could earn a better rating included improvements in quality and equity, teacher quality, class size, and instructional time.
- 84% of survey participants think FCPS is achieving its mission somewhat or to a great extent.
- 52% agree FCPS ensures all students graduate prepared to excel in a global society.
- Almost 8 of 10 participants (79%) believe FCPS provides high-quality educational programs, and 68% think this is a strength of FCPS.
- Less than half (46%) feel FCPS meets the needs of all students, and 70% believe this needs to improve.
- Specifically, 48% feel the district needs to improve student preparation and 49% feel student support should improve.
- The top three criteria by which participants would rate FCPS schools are: strong academics, college-ready students, and high-quality employees.
- The top three recommended priorities for Superintendent Caulk are: teacher quality, equality and equity, and class-size.

Common Themes Across Listening Sessions and Survey

- **Equity:** Participants expressed concerns that access to educational opportunities and programs varied from school to school.
- **High-Quality Teachers:** Participants want the district to focus on hiring and retaining effective teachers so students receive high-quality instruction regardless of their learning needs (e.g. special education, English Language Learners).
- **Class Size:** Participants would like to see FCPS reduce class sizes so students receive more individual attention.
- **Relationship Building:** Participants would like to FCPS continue to build collaborative relationships with parents and families.



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