Newark Public Schools Strategic Planning
The Next 3 Years

Survey Results

May 2016

Background

Newark Public Schools

A survey was created as another way to gather feedback to help support our strategic planning process. The goals of which are:

- Help ensure that every Newark child has access to a high-quality, free public education
- Lead to a smoother transition back to local control
- Ensure an operationally stable and sustainable school system

Survey Goals

Newark Public Schools

Newark Public Schools created a survey aligned with the questions being asked at in-person strategic planning meetings with two primary goals:

1. To ensure that we captured specific feedback and insights from those who attended community meetings in writing

2. To provide an opportunity for those who were not able to attend meetings, but were interested in doing so, to share their input

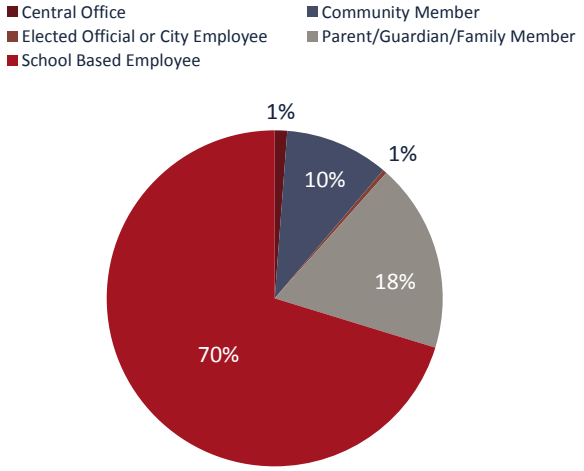
With these goals in mind, this survey provides information about the preferences of those who chose to participate in the process, but can not be used to draw conclusions about the views of the NPS population as a whole.

Methodology

Newark Public Schools

- Survey Distribution Mechanisms
  - Provided to community meeting attendees
  - Posted on district website
  - Shared on district social media, and through direct e-mail to teachers and principals

- 524 people participated in the survey
  - A majority were school-based employees
  - Parents/Guardians were the next most represented



- The survey was conducted from January-March 2016

Methodology Continued…

Newark Public Schools

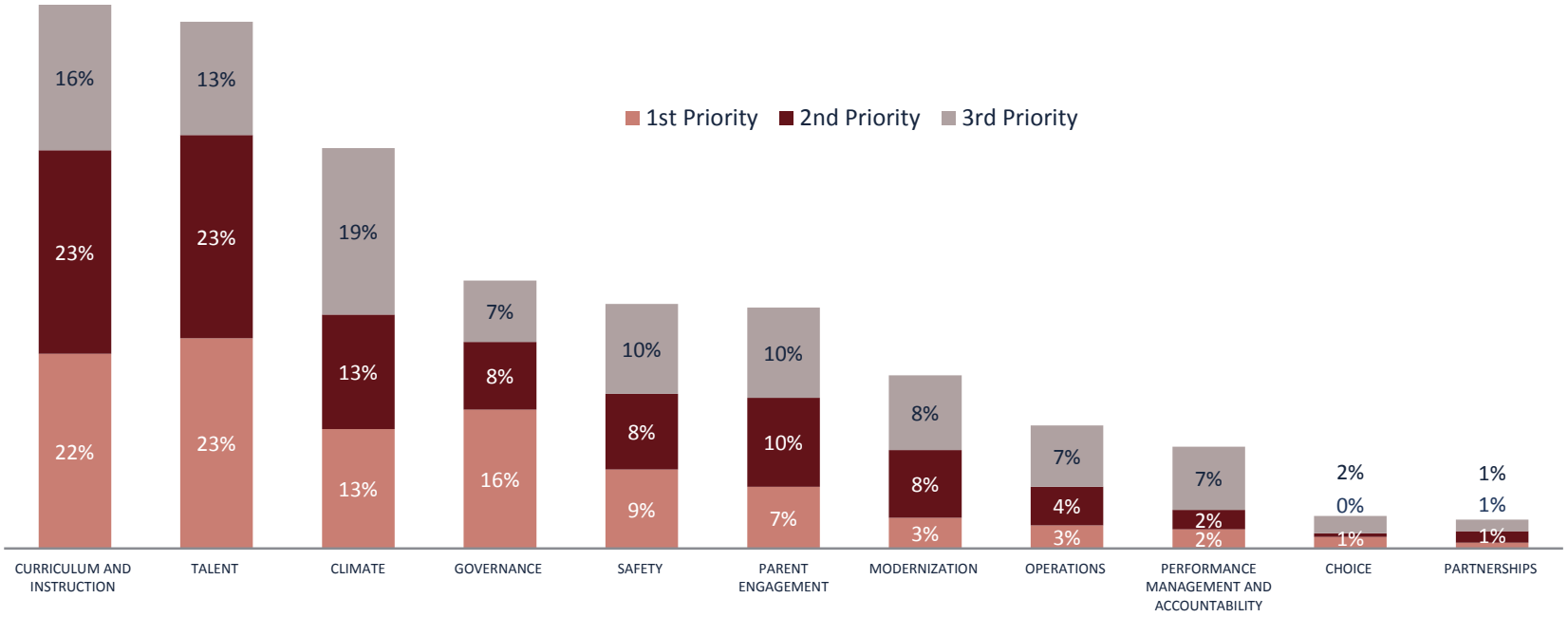
Use of Short and Long Surveys

- The district provided two versions of the survey in response to initial feedback that a shorter survey would be valued.
  - 339 people completed the long survey
  - 185 completed the short survey
- Both surveys asked participants to rank their priorities, while only the long survey included questions on each category discussed at strategic planning meetings.
- In order to compile this data, the district combined responses on questions that were the same across both surveys. All questions about individual “ideas” are drawn from the long survey.

Overall Priorities

Newark Public Schools

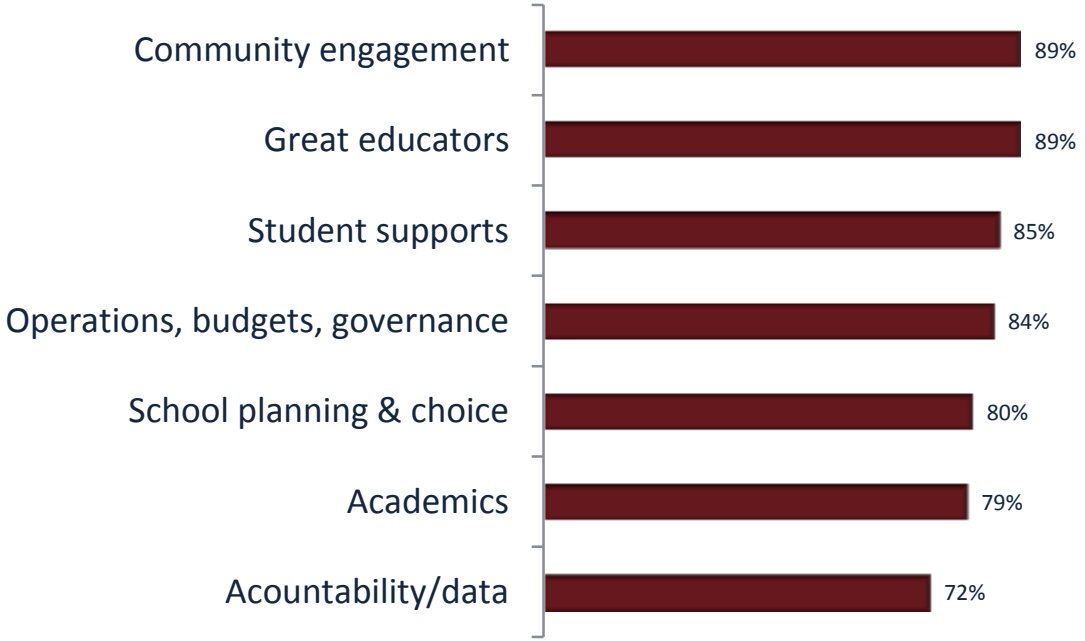
Our survey gave respondents categories and asked them to identify which of these would be their first, second, or third priorities. This chart weights those priorities, and shows which category was the top priority.



Specifics Within Each Topic

Newark Public Schools

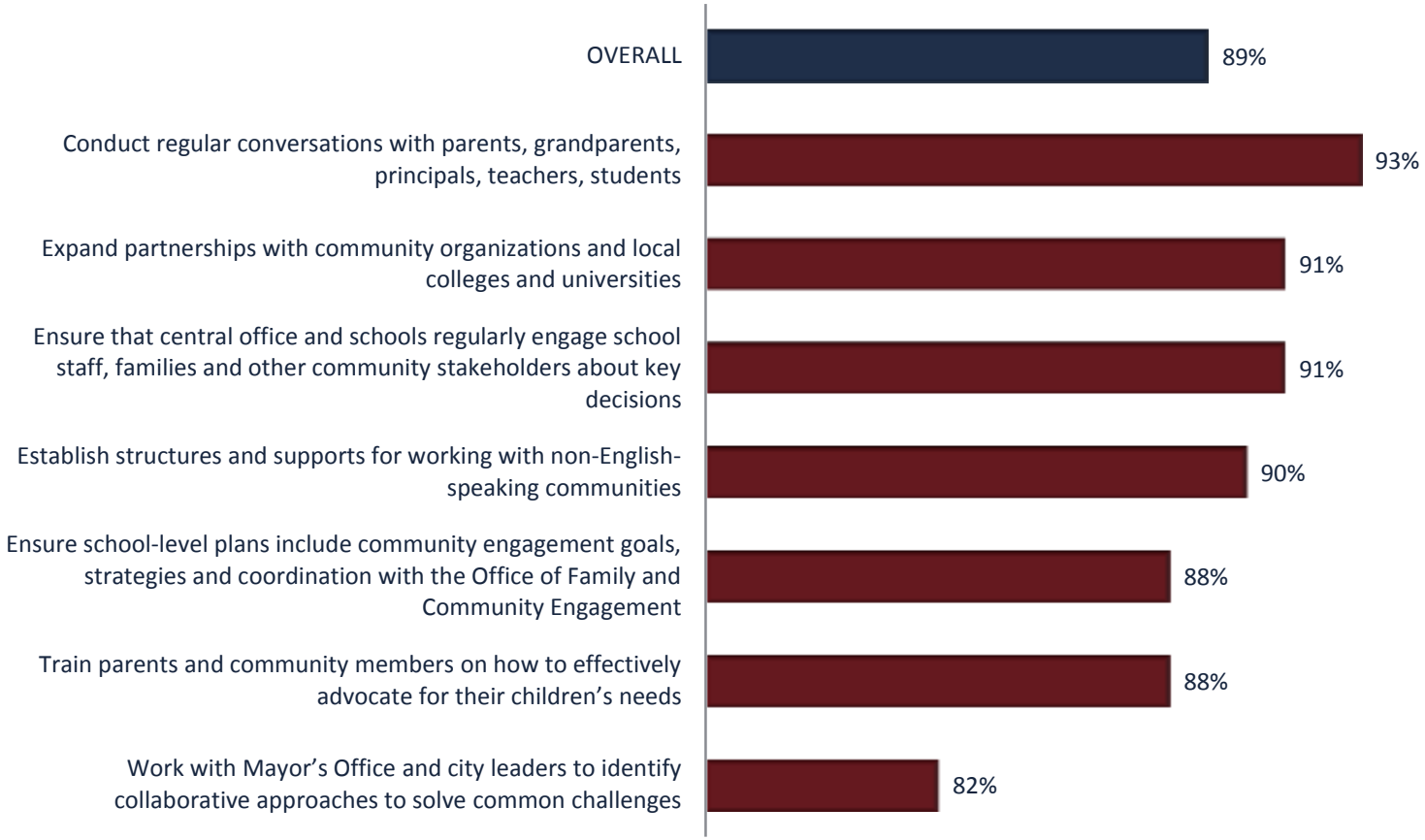
We also asked respondents to prioritize specific issues within seven topics. The chart below summarizes the average number of favorable responses — % of issues rated 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale.



Community Engagement Priorities

Newark Public Schools

% “favorable” – 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale



Community Engagement - Voices

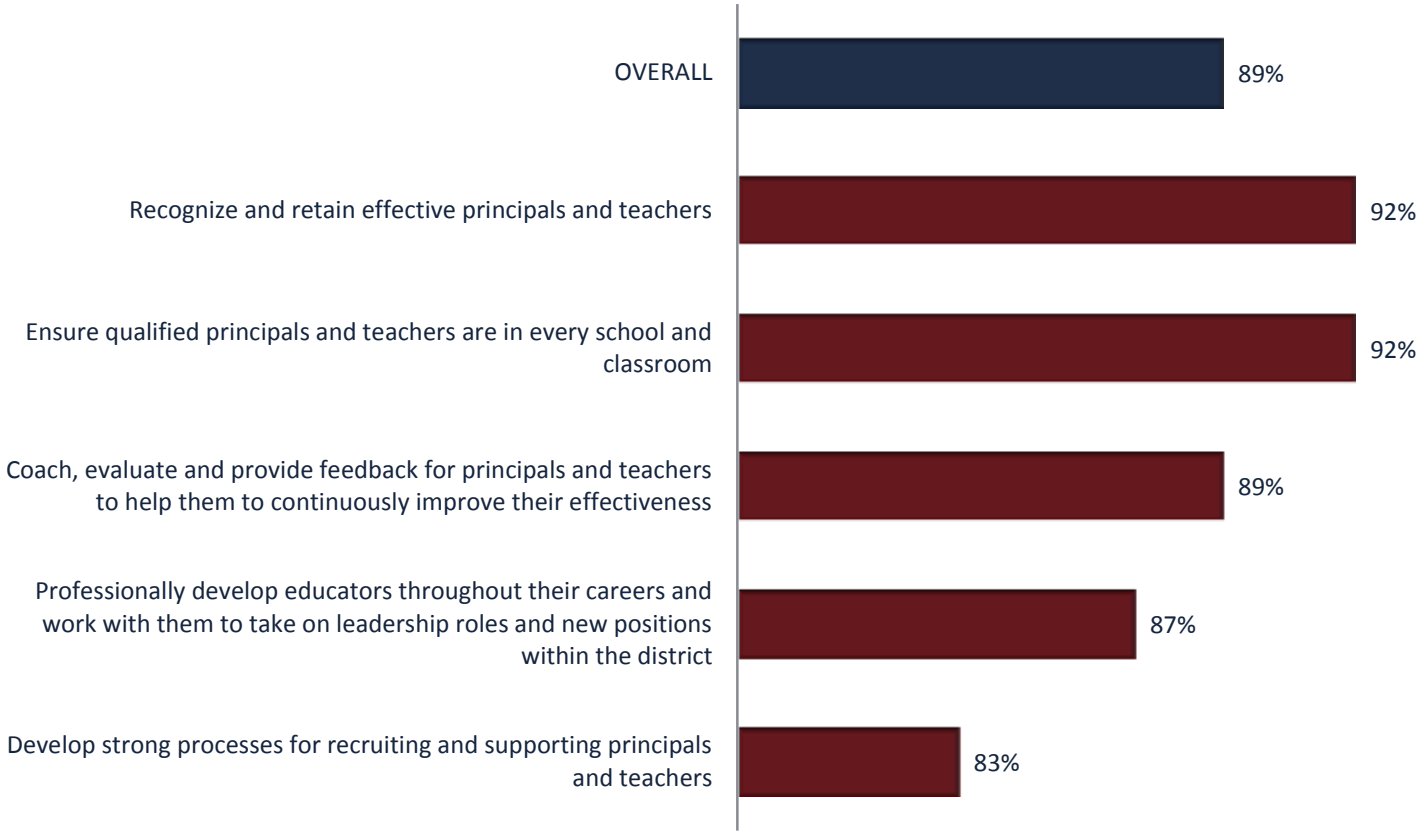
Newark Public Schools

- “Get more parents involved with students and the community.”
- “Train parents how to communicate with students and teachers, and partner together to make education successful.”
- “Community Engagement Specialists do a great job in partnering with families and communities.”
- “Community engagement is crucial. Parents should be more visible in our schools, whether it's through PTA meetings, visiting classrooms to offer support or even just walking the buildings (with escorts) to get a feel of the school climate. Parents/Guardians can make such a difference with ‘moving the needle forward’ related to the success of their child's school and individual success of students.”

Great Educator Priorities

Newark Public Schools

% “favorable” – 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale



Great Educators - Voices

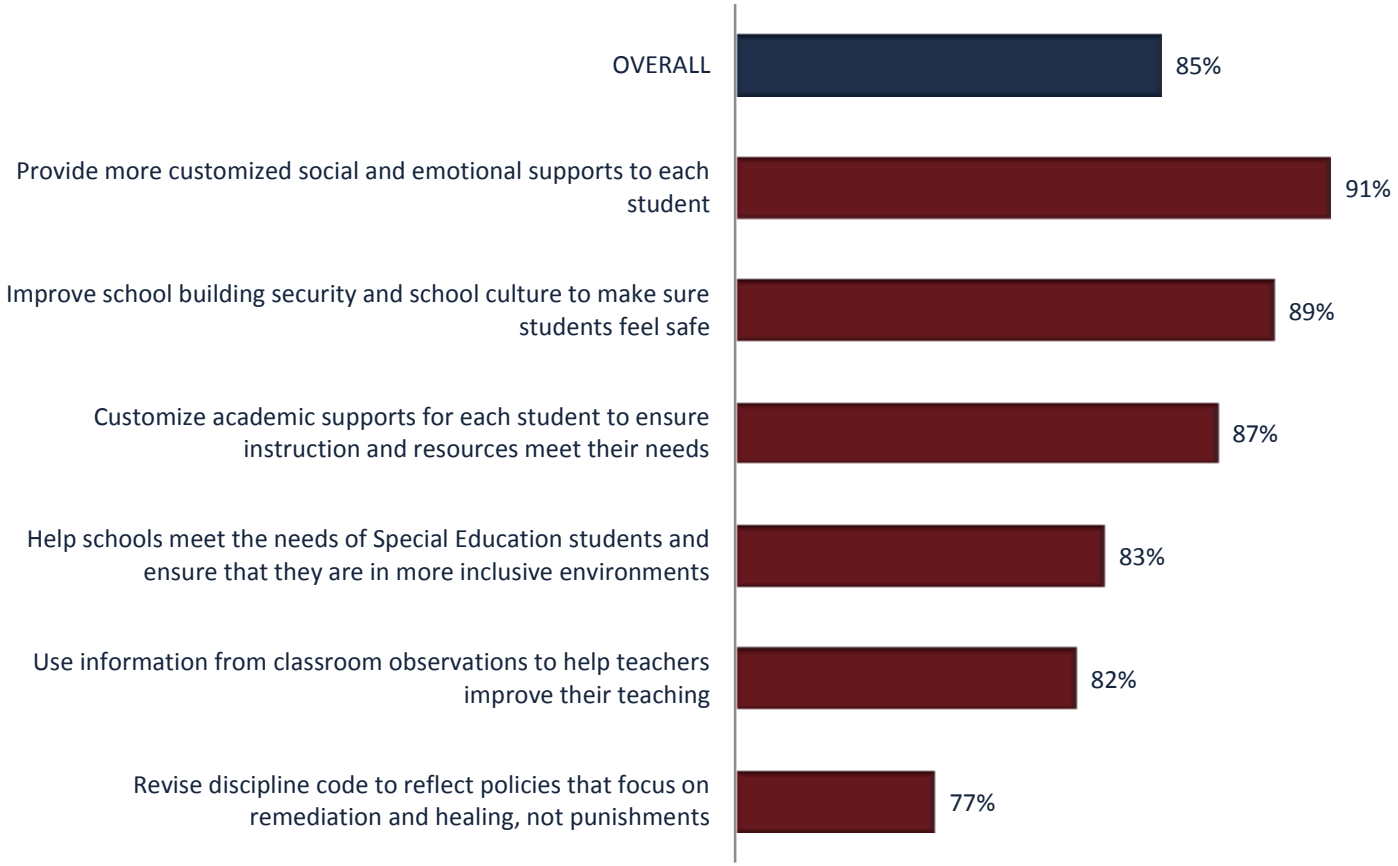
Newark Public Schools

- “If NPS allowed teachers and staff to help in making decisions such as curriculum, things would be better. We know our children. We know our schools.”
- “Great educators need to know their subject. But to work in an urban area, you also need the right kind of heart.”
- “A great teacher is the key to have successful, critical thinkers and ready for college students.”
- "Differentiated professional development is a must and should be integrated when developing PD classes.”

Student Supports Priorities

Newark Public Schools

% “favorable” – 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale



Student Supports - Voices

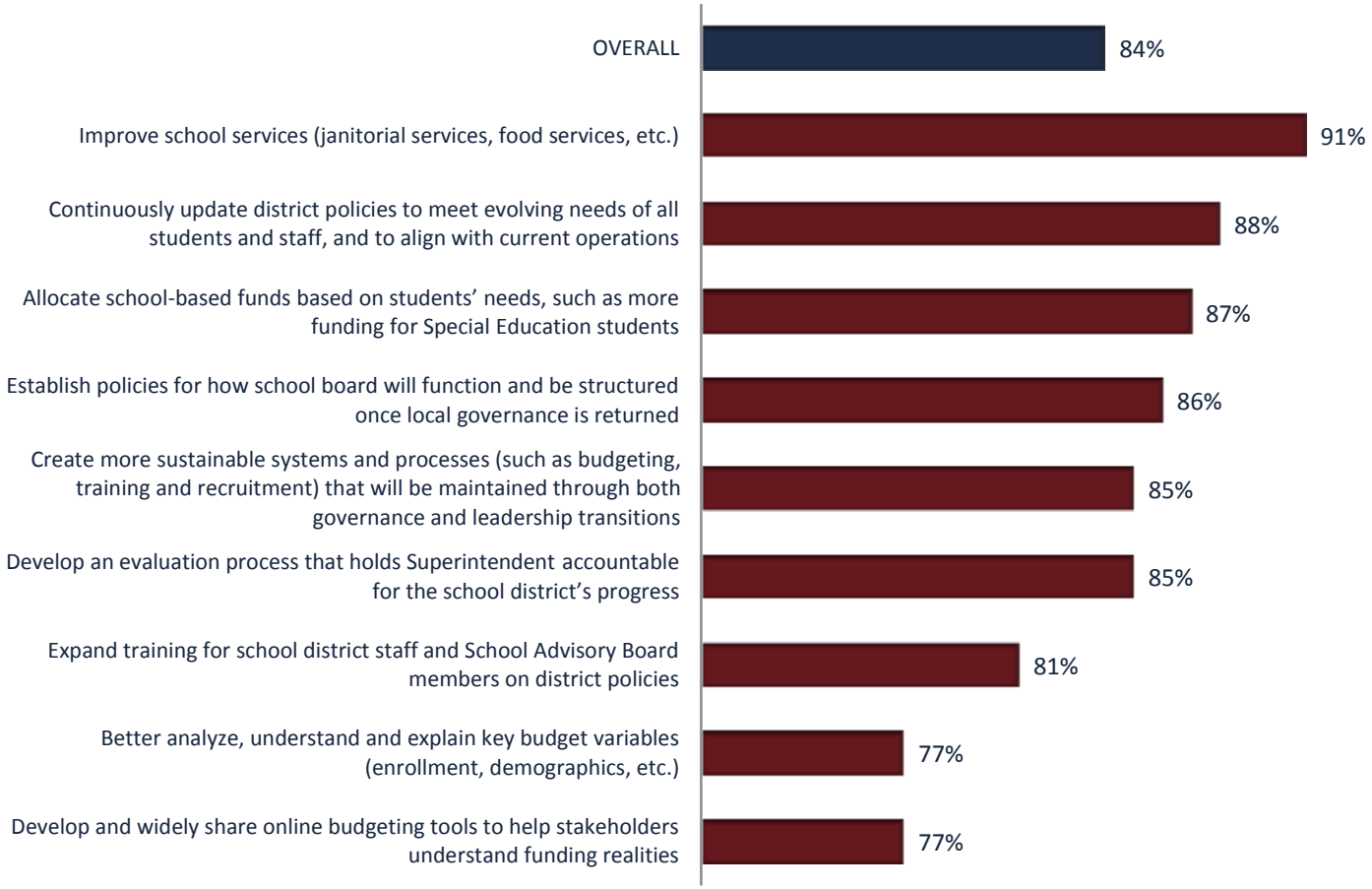
Newark Public Schools

- “Our students need more trust, affection, love.”
- “Have more after-school programs for students that need extra help. And for those students whose parents work late. Keeping them off the streets.”
- “Help schools meet the needs of Special Education students and ensure that they are in more inclusive environments requires academic, social, and emotional support.”
- “Culture within each school can be a big challenge, getting students to leave 'it' (whatever that may be for each student) at the door and enter their schools trusting that the spaces are safe on all levels (physical, social/emotional, etc.) takes work for everyone involved (students and staff).”

Operations/Budget/Governance Priorities

Newark Public Schools

% “favorable” – 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale



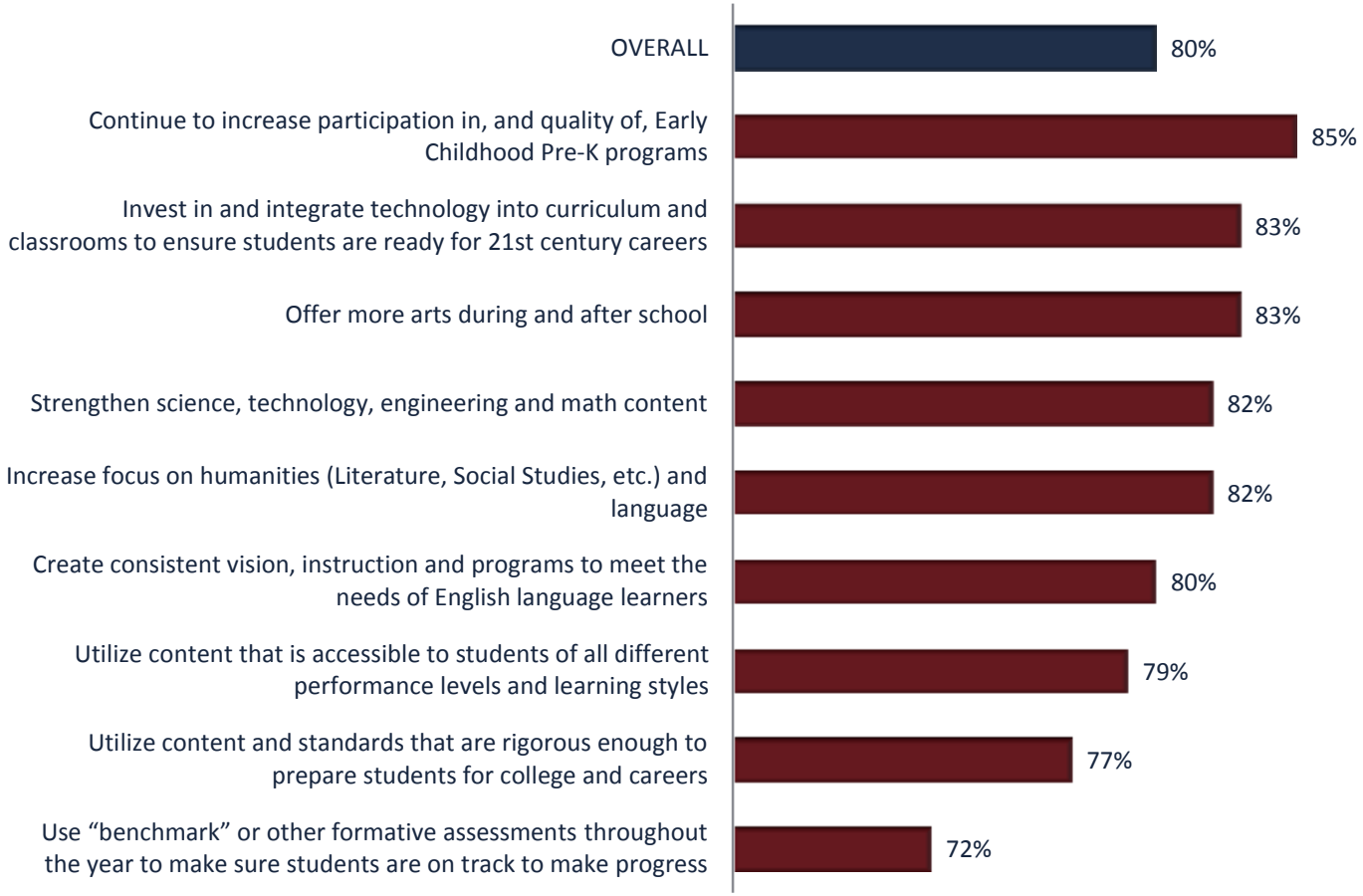
Operations/Budget/Governance - Voices

Newark Public Schools

- “Strong, committed, sustained school leadership as well as qualified, committed teachers are always key to success. But the systems and supports and resources are also critical.”
- “The biggest priority should be to return local control.”

Academics and Curriculum Priorities

Newark Public Schools



Academics and Curriculum - Voices

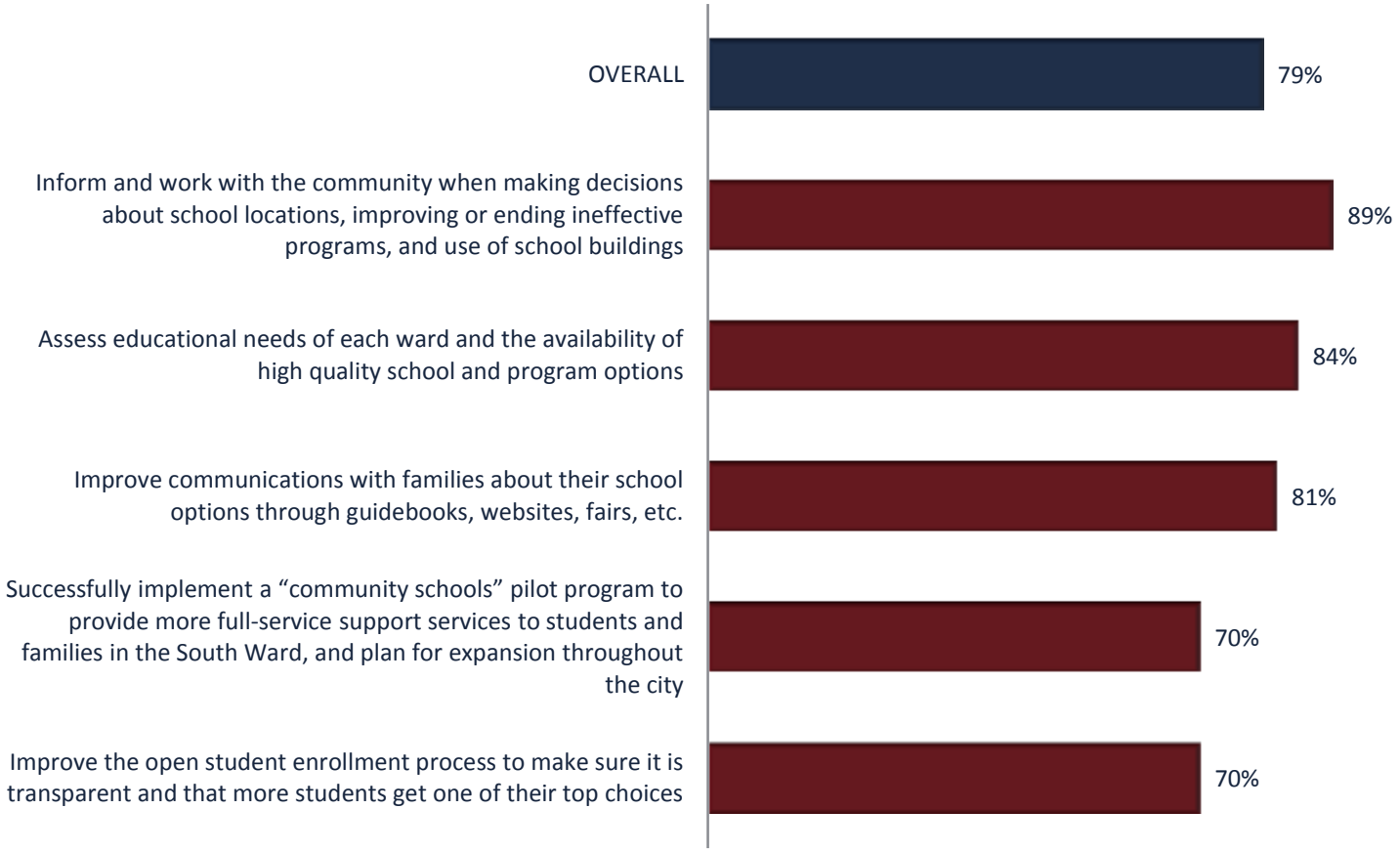
Newark Public Schools

- “The arts and vocational schools should be available to ALL students.”
- “Infuse STEM in EVERYTHING!”
- “Culturally relevant curriculum is needed. What students study should be based on the problems students currently face.”
- “I believe that all this is possible, if there is an effort to maintain consistency.”
- “Newark needs to adopt a data, research tested instructional method that all teacher utilize in classroom practice that addresses the needs of our students, yet is flexible. “

School Planning and Choice Priorities

Newark Public Schools

% “favorable” – 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale



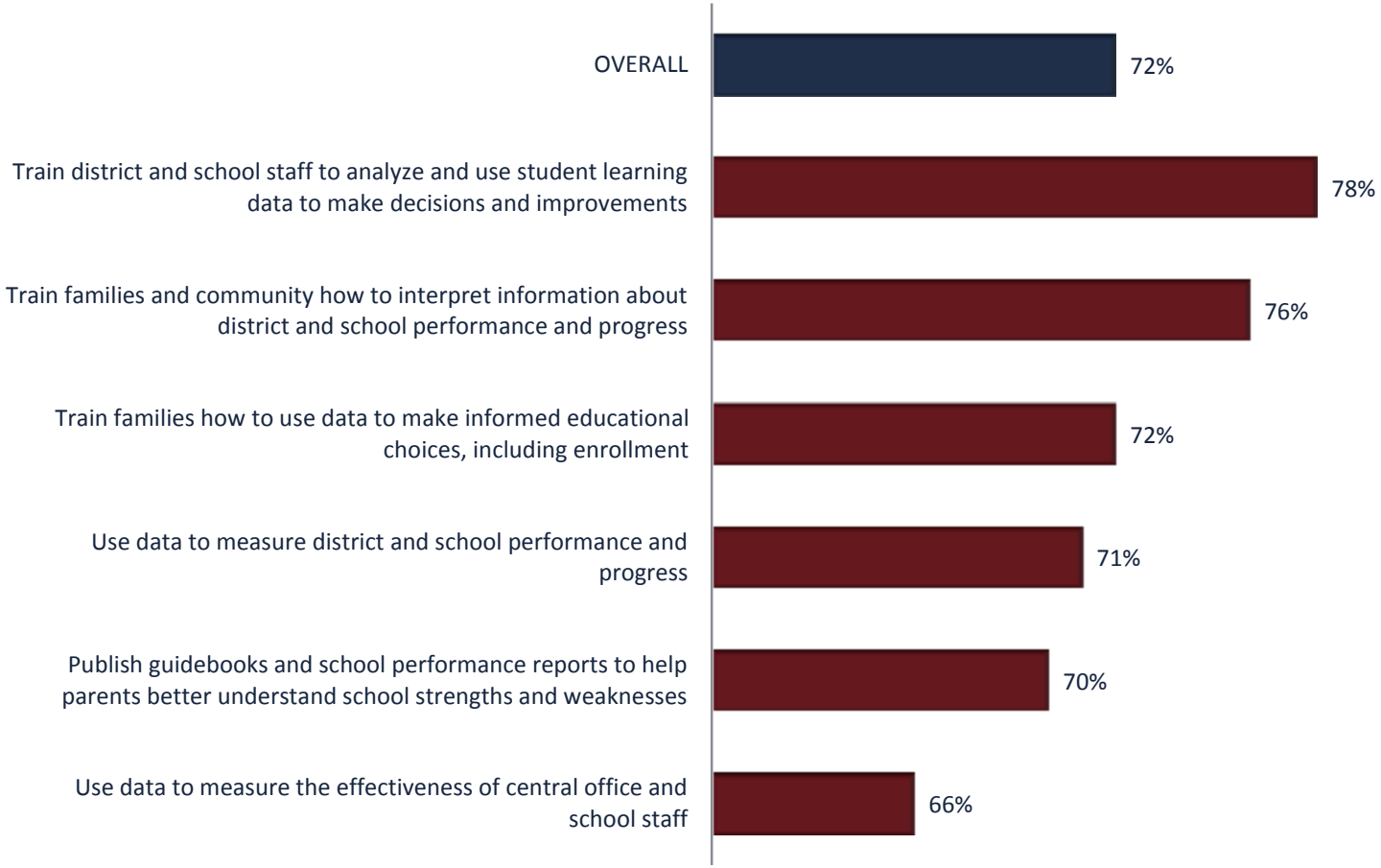
School Planning and Choice - Voices

Newark Public Schools

- “It would really be helpful if the district successfully implements a community schools pilot program to provide more full-service support services to students and families in the south ward.”
- “Teachers and parents working together to help children to success, a must!”
- “Improve open enrollment process so that parents are not sent across town to a school because other options don't exist for them. Help parents utilize the system better.”
- “Although choice is good, the priority of NPS should be to ensure neighborhood schools are quality options for families.”

Data Use Priorities

Newark Public Schools



Data Use - Voices

Newark Public Schools

- “Information needs to be accessible in all forms, including print. Be mindful that not all have Internet access.”
- “Use rating scales that truly measure the challenges and successes of the educational system. Use this data to find solutions. “
- “Measure student happiness.”
- “Parents need to be educated on the terms we use in order for them to make informed decisions.”
- “I feel that you need to tread lightly here. Using data is only one piece of the puzzle.”

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