



Zencity + Chicago Public Schools

June 2025

A stylized graphic in the bottom right corner of the slide. It features several white outlines of buildings of varying heights and a single tree with a rounded canopy, all set against the dark blue background.

CPS CEO Search Pulse Survey Results

June 2025



400+ government organizations
use Zencity every day to
improve services, increase
satisfaction & build trust

”

Zencity allows us to understand the needs and concerns of our residents in order to make the best decisions.

Mayor Todd Gloria
San Diego, CA



Our Past Experience



Hearing from over 200M people

We collect 10s of millions of survey responses from **cities across the country** around local issues like public safety, health and education



Extensive Chicago Experience

Through our long partnership with CPD, The city of **Chicago and others**, we have been repeatedly running **representative surveys on a monthly basis in Chicago since 2019**, collecting hundreds of thousands of representative survey responses from the community.



Robust proven methodology

Zencity reaches out to residents via **proprietary multi channel recruitment online**. This methodology helps us hear from non-English speakers, younger populations, and other traditionally harder to reach groups.



Education Survey Leadership Expertise

Dr. Rachel Levenstein, who oversaw this research, has extensive experience in education surveys, including here in Chicago. She holds a Ph.D in Survey and Data Science from the University of Michigan and served as the senior survey methodologist at the UChicago Consortium, leading methods for the My Voice, My School surveys.

Executive summary

- Zencity collected a **city-wide representative survey** of ~2700 responses, representing the makeup of the CPS community in Chicago.
- The goal of this survey was to assess public perception of the **performance of CPS** and **expectations from the new CEO**.
- Overall, we found that a majority of Chicagoans were satisfied with CPS performance on a variety of metrics.
- When comparing Chicagoans who have a **connection to CPS** to those who don't, we saw **meaningful differences in in performance perception**, but strong **similarities in expectations** from the CEO.
- In terms of CEO expectations, the top issues Chicagoans expect the CEO to address include **High-quality instruction, Preparing students for careers, ensuring school safety and supporting teachers**.
- As for skills, Chicagoans prioritize Strong **communication skills, innovation** and **seeking and responding to feedback**.

Report Structure

01 Methodology and Sample

02 Student Support

03 System Operations

04 Superintendent/CEO Success Attributes

05 Appendix

Key Findings

CPS CEO Search 2025

Instructional Performance and Priorities

Internal CPS stakeholders such as employees and families of students were the most likely to report positive performance ratings on student support metrics, compared to those not connected to the CPS community. Employees give 70%+ positive marks on instruction, readiness, achievement, and inclusion, whereas respondents not connected to the CPS community hover near 50%.

In terms of priorities for the new CEO, high-quality instruction is a key stakeholder expectation: 33% name it the top priority and another 22% stress stronger academic outcomes. Career preparation follows (25% careers, 19% college), while equity themes (e.g., diverse-student support) cluster near 22%. The data suggests converting internal optimism into city-wide confidence while elevating rigor, readiness, and equity will be an important for the next Superintendent/CEO.

System Operations Priorities

As seen in student support metrics, internal CPS stakeholders such as employees and families of students were the most likely to report positive performance ratings on system operations metrics, compared to those not connected to the CPS community.

Respondents prioritized ensuring school safety; 34% cite it as a priority, although 59% positively rate current efforts, and confidence falls from 72% among staff to 48% in the wider public. Teacher support follows (30% priority) with strong employee approval of current performance (71%). Fiscal health and senior-level leadership each draw between 26% and 27% priority, yet opinions on current performance are divided—just half rate finances or executive development positively, and 41% are dissatisfied. Transparency, attendance, and community partnership cluster around 22–23%, while pipeline issues such as hiring and enrollment sit below 17%. Closing safety gaps, boosting frontline supports, and proving prudent stewardship will be early credibility tests for the next superintendent.

Methodology and Sample

CPS CEO Search Pulse Survey Results
June 2025

Zencity Sampling & Methodology

2,689 respondents were recruited online from Chicago between **May 12th and June 9th, 2025** using targeted ads on various platforms (e.g., social media, apps for Android and IOS) as well as online survey panels, using quota sampling during data collection. Using multiple methods of recruitment minimizes the impact of any one source on bias or representation.

Ensuring Representation

Zencity used a two-step process to ensure the survey accurately reflects Chicago adults with children in public schools. First, during data collection, we monitored respondent demographics—race, ethnicity, age, and gender—to match U.S. Census targets for this population. This ensured a balanced mix of participants as responses came in.

After data collection, we applied a statistical adjustment called rake weighting. This fine-tuned the results by slightly increasing or decreasing the influence of responses from groups that were under- or overrepresented. As a result, the final findings better reflect the entire community.

In addition, the survey was translated into Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, and Polish, although 97% of respondents took the survey in English.

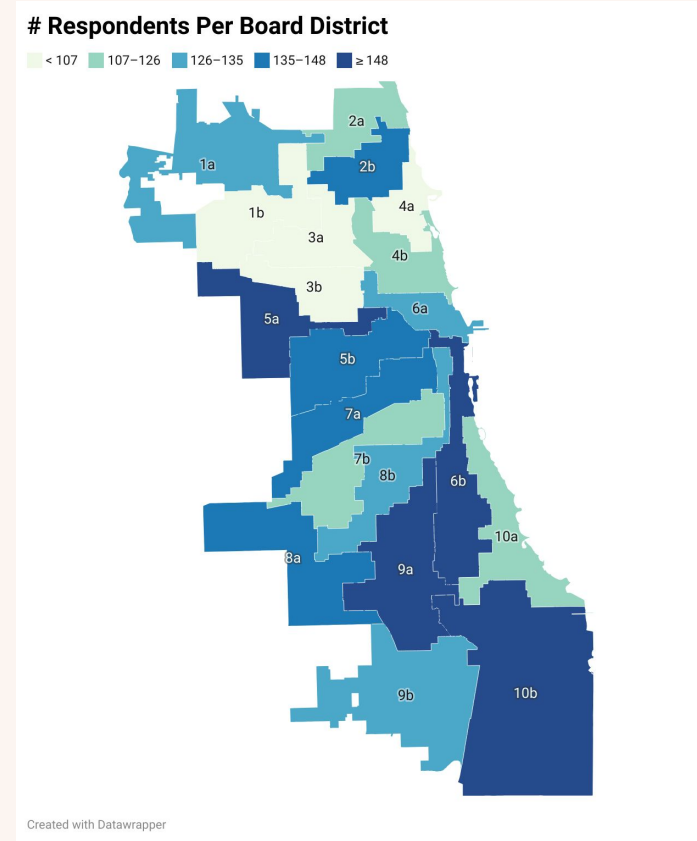
Other Data Quality Safeguards

- Zencity's digital fingerprinting service prevents duplicate submissions from the same device.
- Zencity's targeted ad campaigns avoid hinting at specific topics, ensuring diverse participation and mitigating biases.

Zencity Sample Composition: Board District

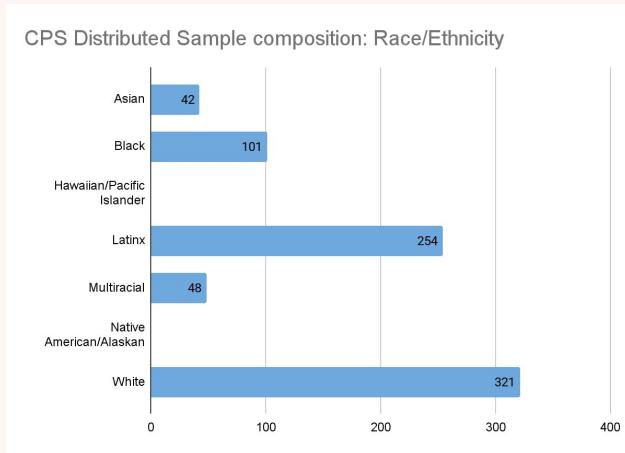
District	Weighted # Responses	District	Weighted # Responses
1a	135	6a	129
1b	105	6b	217
2a	108	7a	143
2b	148	7b	113
3a	95	8a	136
3b	99	8b	132
4a	98	9a	149
4b	122	9b	132
5a	155	10a	121
5b	144	10b	208

n=2689



CPS Outreach to the Community

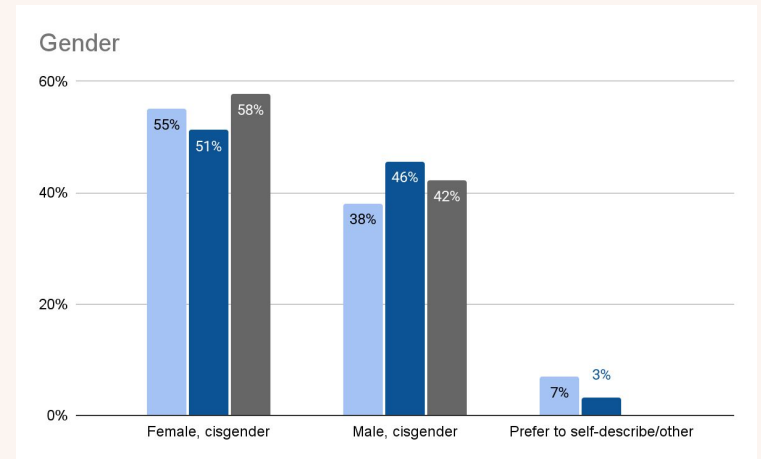
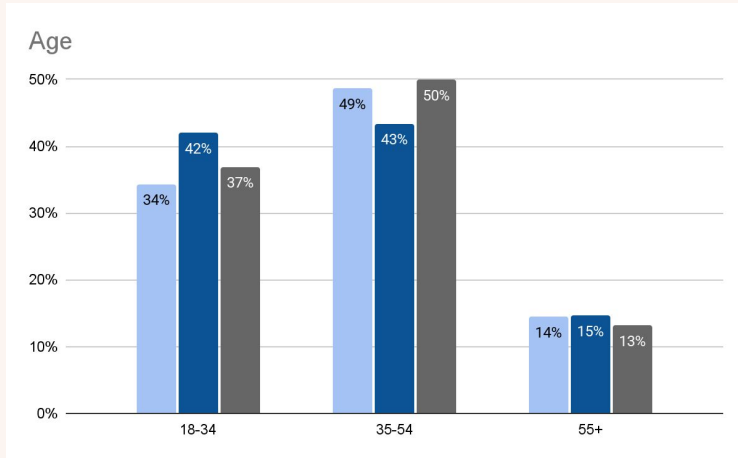
In addition to the representative sample shown in the previous slides, 881 respondents were recruited via outreach from Board members, who shared the survey link with parents and employees via email and on the BOE website. In addition, the Alma Group shared the link with focus group participants and other gatherings. Those responses are shown separately in this report and are unweighted.



Connection to CPS	# Responses from CPS (unweighted)
I am not connected to the Chicago Public Schools community	31
CPS parent caregiver or family member	486
CPS teacher	237
CPS principal or assistant principal	37
CPS PSRP or Education Support Staff	57
CPS central office employee	93
Affiliated with a Chicago community partner organization	69

Language	# Responses
English	802
Spanish	61
Chinese	16
Arabic	1
Polish	1
Total	881

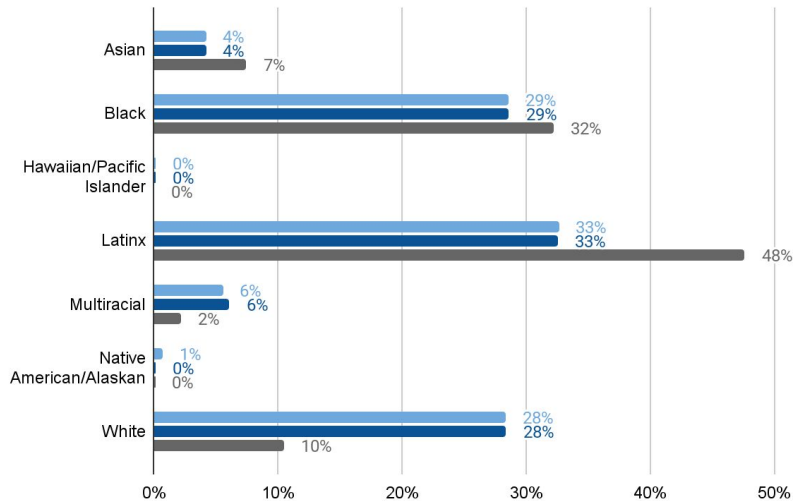
Zencity Sample Composition: Age/Gender



- **Unweighted demographics** - What we collected, without adjustments.
- **Weighted demographics** - Our sample, adjusted to be representative of the population.
- **Population demographics** - The demographics of the 18+ population with 1+ child enrolled in public school.

Zencity Sample Composition: Race/Ethnicity

Sample composition: Race/Ethnicity



- **Unweighted demographics** - What we collected, without adjustments.
- **Weighted demographics** - Our sample, adjusted to be representative of the population.
- **Population demographics** - The demographics of the 18+ population with 1+ child enrolled in public school.

Note: Weights were calculated using the demographics targets from the US Census Bureau, using the demographics of adults who live with at least one child attending public school. Race/ethnicity targets used here allow individuals to have more than one race/ethnicity, while CPS recodes race/ethnicity so that each individual is classified in exactly one group.

Zencity Sample Composition: Language and Connection to CPS

The survey was translated into Spanish, Arabic, Polish, and Chinese. Devices set in these languages will automatically show the survey in those languages.

Language	Weighted # Responses	%
English	2614	97%
Spanish	67	2.5%
Chinese	7	.3%
Arabic	1	.02%
Polish	0	0%
Total	2689	

How are you connected to the Chicago Public Schools community? [select all that apply]

Connection to CPS	Weighted # Responses	%
I am not connected to the Chicago Public Schools community	1,165	43%
CPS parent caregiver or family member	870	32%
CPS teacher	168	6%
CPS principal or assistant principal	74	3%
CPS PSRP or Education Support Staff	82	3%
CPS central office employee	77	3%

Respondents who selected "Other" when asked about CPS connection are excluded from the table above

Insights

CPS CEO Search Survey Results
June 2025

The structure of this report

We asked Chicagoans about the **performance of CPS** on various metrics:

Student support areas, such as:

- High-quality instruction for every student
- Culturally responsive instruction for every student
- Support of students from diverse backgrounds
- Creating an inclusive environment for students

System-wide operations, such as:

- Maintaining CPS's financial health
- Supporting and developing strong executive leadership for the district
- Student attendance
- Increasing student enrollment

Then, we asked them to take the same categories and select the **highest priorities for the new CEO**.

We will show **large differences in rated performance between those affiliated with CPS (e.g., parents, teachers, principals, and staff) compared to those unaffiliated with CPS**. However, **priorities did not differ** between the two groups.

We therefore focus on the full sample, breaking down the different ratings in performance by affiliation with the CPS community. Note that changes by race/ethnicity in terms of performance were minimal and are shown in the appendix.

Rank Priorities for new CEO based on:

We asked Chicagoans about the **performance of CPS** on various metrics:

Student support areas, such as:

- High-quality instruction for every student
- Culturally responsive instruction for every student
- Support of students from diverse backgrounds
- Creating an inclusive environment for students

System-wide operations, such as:

- Maintaining CPS's financial health
- Supporting and developing strong executive leadership for the district
- Student attendance
- Increasing student enrollment

While perception of performance varied a lot, priorities did not differ between respondents who were affiliated with CPS (e.g., parents, teachers, staff) and those who were not.

Key topics

Student Support

Page 14

System Operations

Page 23

CEO Success Attributes

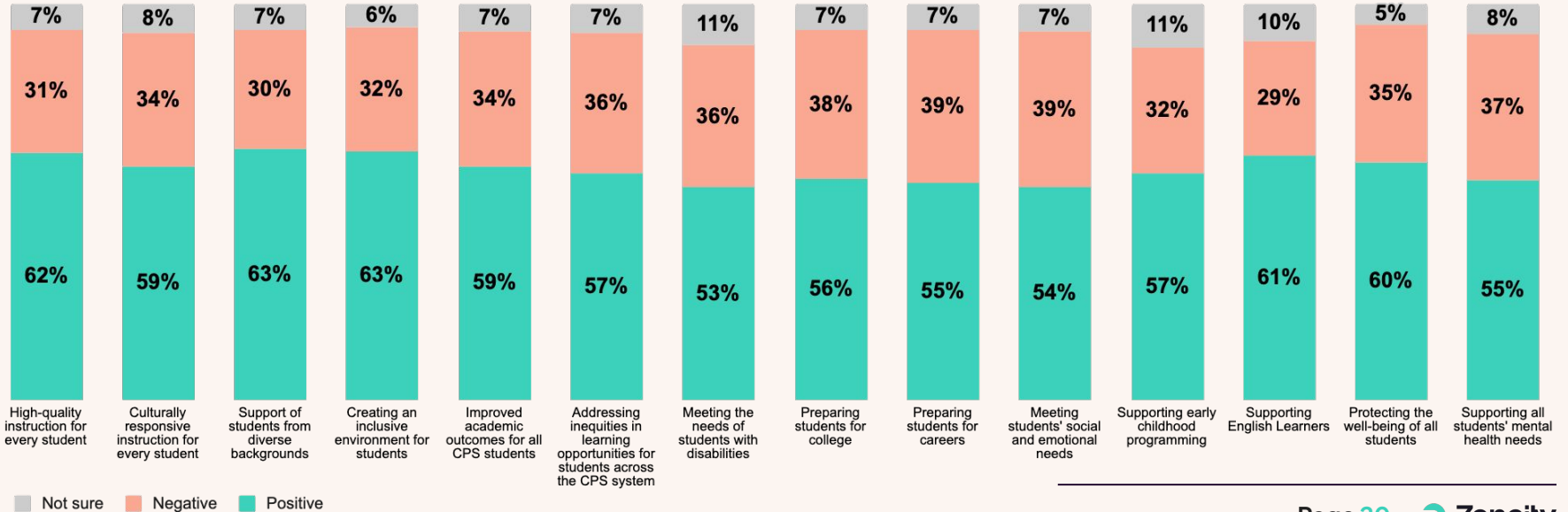
Page 32

Student Support

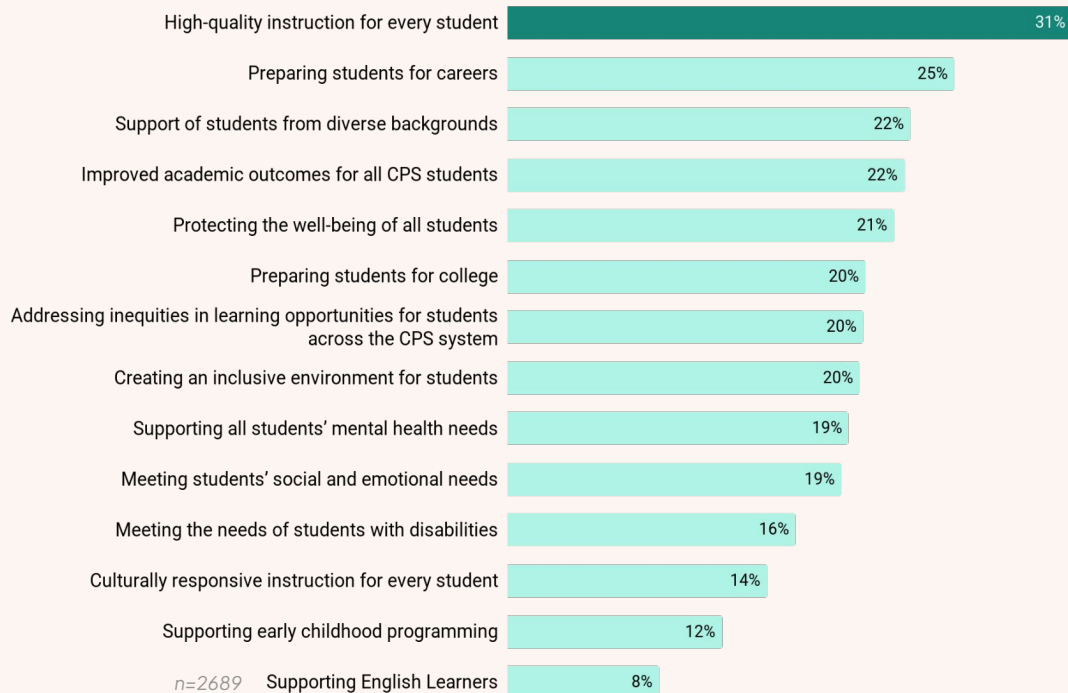
CPS CEO Search Pulse Survey Results
June 2025

CPS Performance: Student Support

The distribution of overall performance ratings for student support metrics is relatively even, ranging from 53%–63% positive.



Q37: What do you see as the top three instructional or student-centered areas that the next CEO/Superintendent should focus on improving? [select up to 3]



Respondents identified a broad range of instructional priorities, but common themes emerged.

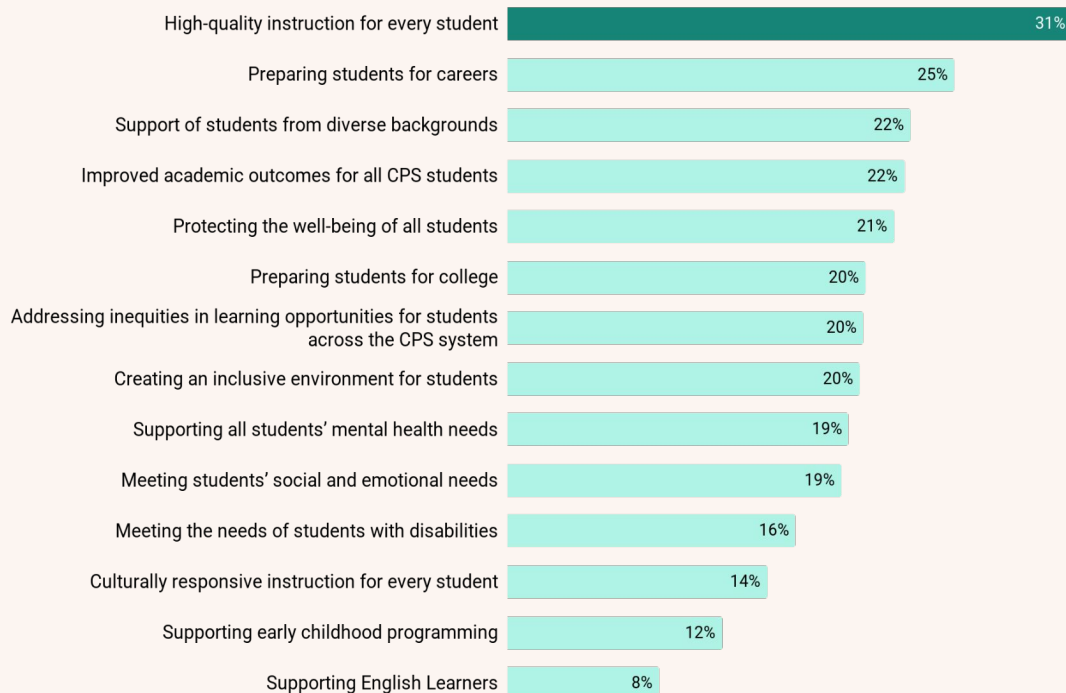
Foremost is a focus on academics: about one-third (32%) name “high-quality instruction for every student” as a top focus, and another 25% specifically call for improved academic outcomes—together signalling a push for consistently rigorous teaching and measurable results.

Second, preparation for life after graduation looms large. 22% emphasize career readiness and 19% highlight college preparation, suggesting families want CPS to balance vocational pathways with traditional higher-education tracks.

Third, equity remains a persistent theme. Roughly 1 in 5 respondents cite support for diverse backgrounds, eliminating systemic learning gaps, and safeguarding student well-being, while mental-health, inclusion, disability services, and social-emotional supports cluster just below that tier. In contrast, early childhood programming (11%) and English-learner services (9%) draw the least attention, indicating they may be viewed as niche or adequately addressed for now.

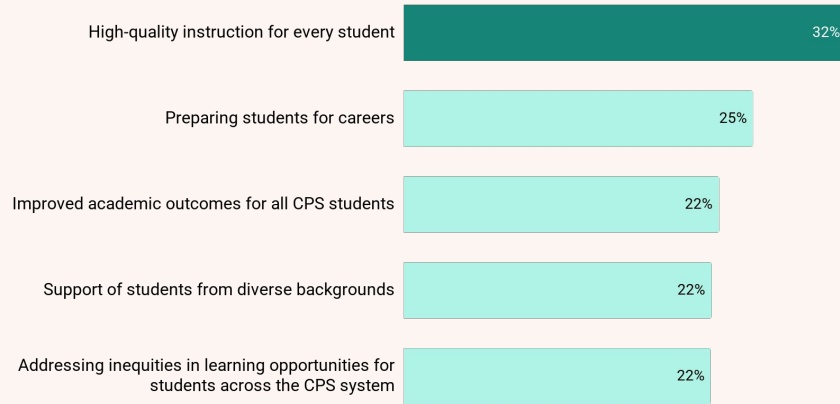
Q37: What do you see as the top three instructional or student-centered areas that the next CEO/Superintendent should focus on improving? [select up to 3]

[CPS-affiliated respondents only, n=1193]

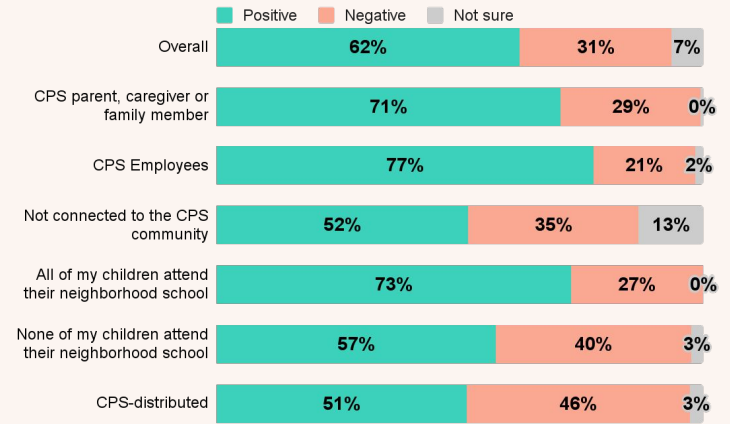


Filtering respondents who identified as having any connection to CPS (parent, teacher, or employee), we see identical results as the full sample.

CEO Priorities: High-Quality Instruction for Every Student

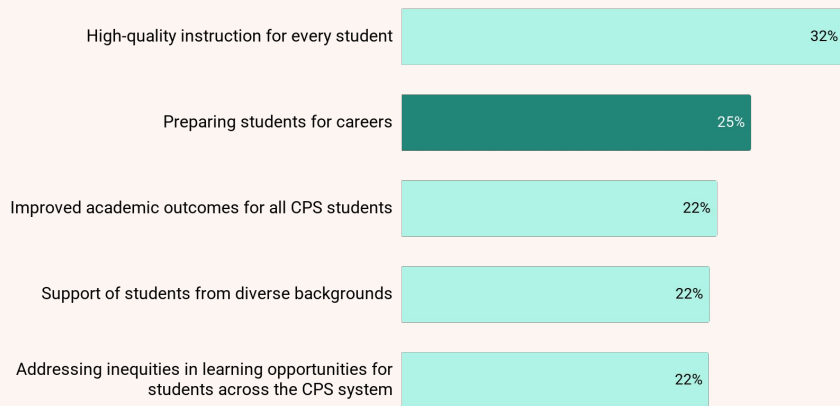


Current CPS Performance, by connection to CPS community

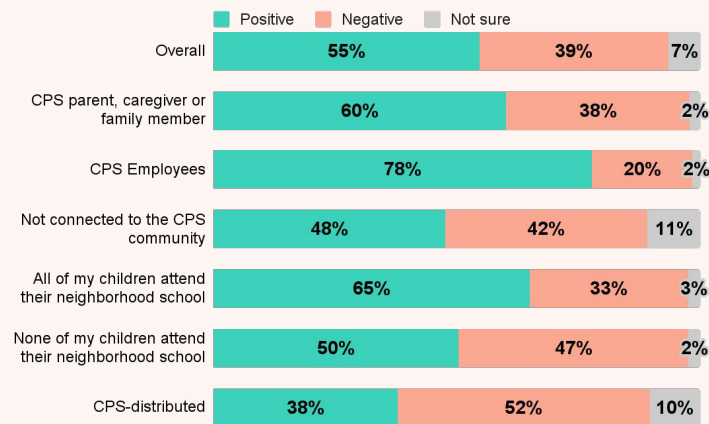


High-quality instruction for every student emerges as the top priority the next Superintendent/CEO should focus on (32%). A solid majority of respondents (62%) presently rate such instruction positively, yet sentiment is uneven across stakeholder groups. CPS employees are the most positive (77% positive, 21% negative), followed closely by parents, caregivers, and family members (71% positive, 29% negative). Those with no connection to the CPS community are considerably less likely to rate such instruction positively (52% positive, 35% negative), suggesting that first-hand exposure is more aligned with confidence, compared to the broader public. Instructional quality looms largest in stakeholders' expectations: nearly one-third (32%) name "high-quality instruction for every student" as the top improvement priority. **The results suggest that delivering consistent classroom excellence will be a visible measure for the next Superintendent/CEO, and that translating internal satisfaction into broader community confidence will be critical.**

CEO Priorities: Preparing Students for Careers

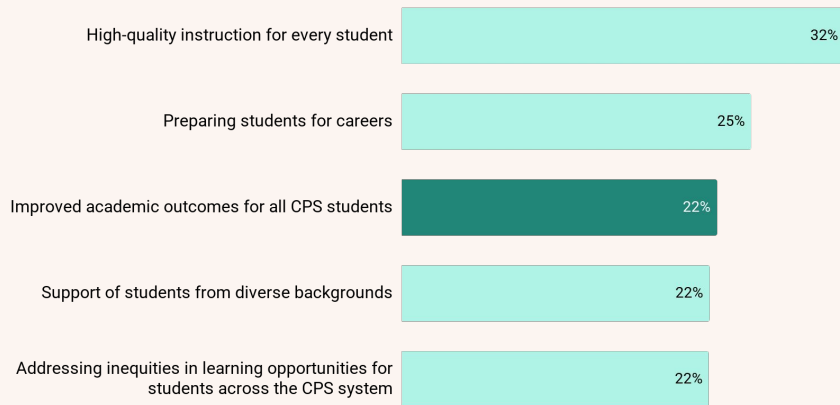


Current CPS Performance, by connection to CPS community

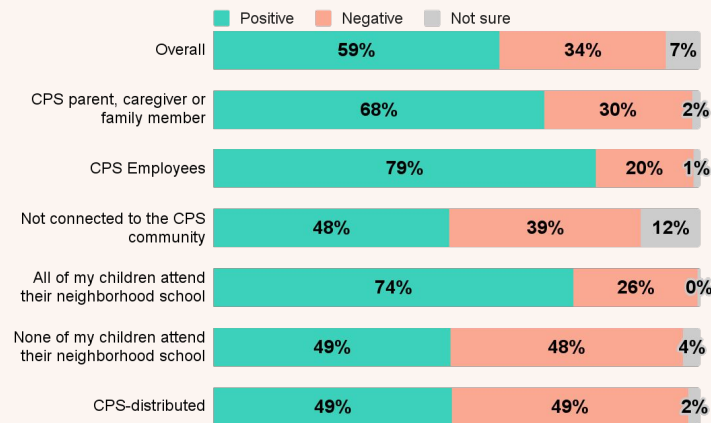


Preparing students for life after graduation is a top priority, and a slight majority of respondents rate CPS' performance positively. One in four (25%) of respondents said that "preparing students for careers" as a priority for the next Superintendent/CEO. 55% of all respondents rate CPS' student preparation positively, and 39% rate it negatively. Nearly four in five CPS employees rate such preparation positively, compared to 60% of parents, caregivers, or family members. Further, only 48% of respondents not connected to the CPS community offered positive ratings. **The shift in sentiment from CPS employees, to family, to the broader community suggests an awareness and communication gap which may negatively impact perceptions of those who are disconnected from the school system.**

CEO Priorities: Improved Academic Outcomes for All CPS Students

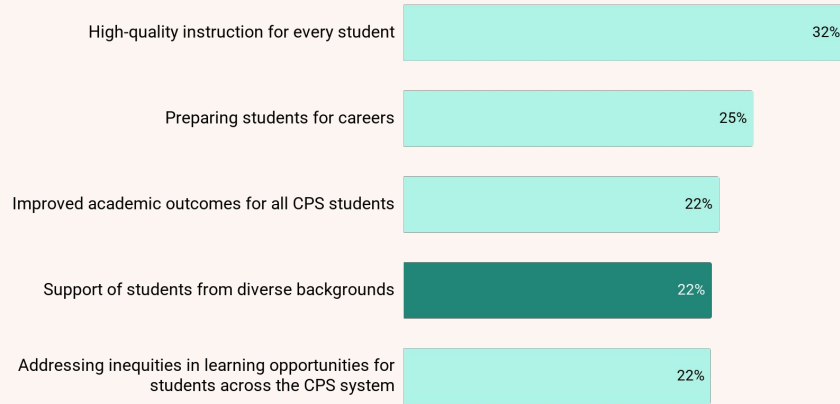


Current CPS Performance, by connection to CPS community

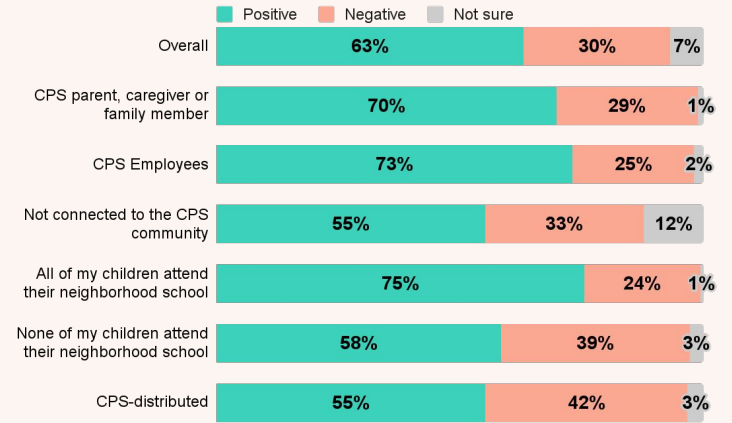


22% of respondents overall consider improved academic outcomes for all CPS students as a priority for the next Superintendent/CEO. Over half (59%) of all respondents rate such academics positively, and only 34% rate it negatively. CPS employees expressed the most positive sentiment (79%), and only a fifth (20%) rated it negatively. Those whose children all attend their neighborhood school were also more likely than average to rate such academic outcomes positively (74%). In comparison, roughly half of those not connected to the CPS community expressed positive sentiment (48%). **The gap between internal and external stakeholders suggests that closer connections to CPS align with more positive ratings, and that closing the gap may be important for the incoming leader to build district-wide confidence in academic excellence.**

CEO Priorities: Support of Students from Diverse Backgrounds

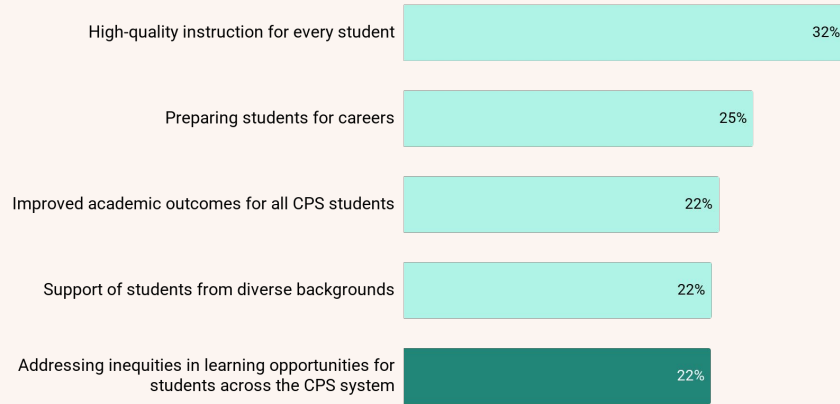


Current CPS Performance, by connection to CPS community

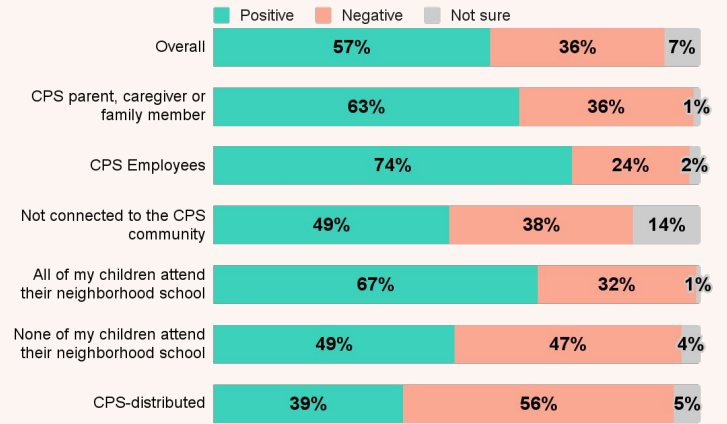


Roughly one in five (22%) respondents overall prioritize the support of students from diverse backgrounds as something the next Superintendent/CEO should focus on. Nearly two thirds (63%) of all respondents rate such support positively, and only 30% rate it negatively. Positive ratings were highest among those whose children all attend their neighborhood schools (75%), CPS employees (73%), and CPS families and caregivers (70%). Positive ratings were less common among those whose children do not attend their neighborhood school (58%) and those not connected to the CPS community (55%). **Bridging these perception gaps will be crucial for the next leader to prove that inclusive practices reach every student, regardless of program or placement.**

CEO Priorities: Addressing Inequities in Learning Opportunities for Students Across the CPS System



Current CPS Performance, by connection to CPS community



22% of respondents overall prioritize addressing inequities in learning opportunities for students across the CPS system as something the next Superintendent/CEO should focus on, but perceived performance of current CPS efforts vary across stakeholder groups. More than half (57%) of all respondents currently rate CPS' performance on this metric positively, and only about a third (36%) rate it negatively. Positive ratings are highest among CPS employees (74%) and those whose children all attend their neighborhood school (67%). In contrast, those not connected to the CPS community (49%) and those whose children do not all attend their neighborhood school (49%) are relatively less like to rate CPS' performance positively.

CEO Priorities: Top Student Support Priority by Board District

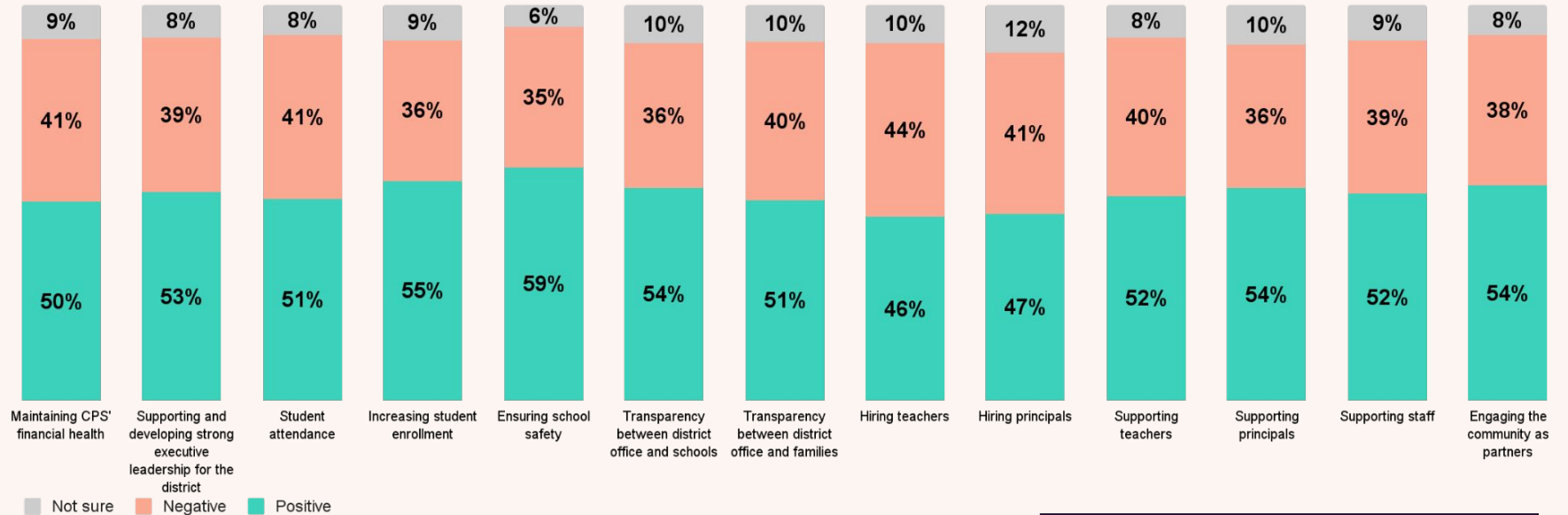
District	Top Choice	%Selected	District	Top Choice	%Selected
1a	High-quality instruction for every student	35%	6a	High-quality instruction for every student	42%
1b	Preparing students for careers	38%	6b	Improved academic outcomes for all CPS students	28%
2a	High-quality instruction for every student	36%	7a	High-quality instruction for every student	29%
2b	High-quality instruction for every student	49%	7b	Preparing students for careers	35%
3a	High-quality instruction for every student	41%	8a	High-quality instruction for every student	30%
3b	Addressing inequities in learning opportunities for students across the CPS system	33%	8b	Meeting students' social and emotional needs	29%
4a	Support of students from diverse backgrounds	36%	9a	High-quality instruction for every student	29%
4b	High-quality instruction for every student	38%	9b	Addressing inequities in learning opportunities for students across the CPS system	36%
5a	Addressing inequities in learning opportunities for students across the CPS system	30%	10a	High-quality instruction for every student	41%
5b	Preparing students for college	31%	10b	Preparing students for careers	25%

System Operations

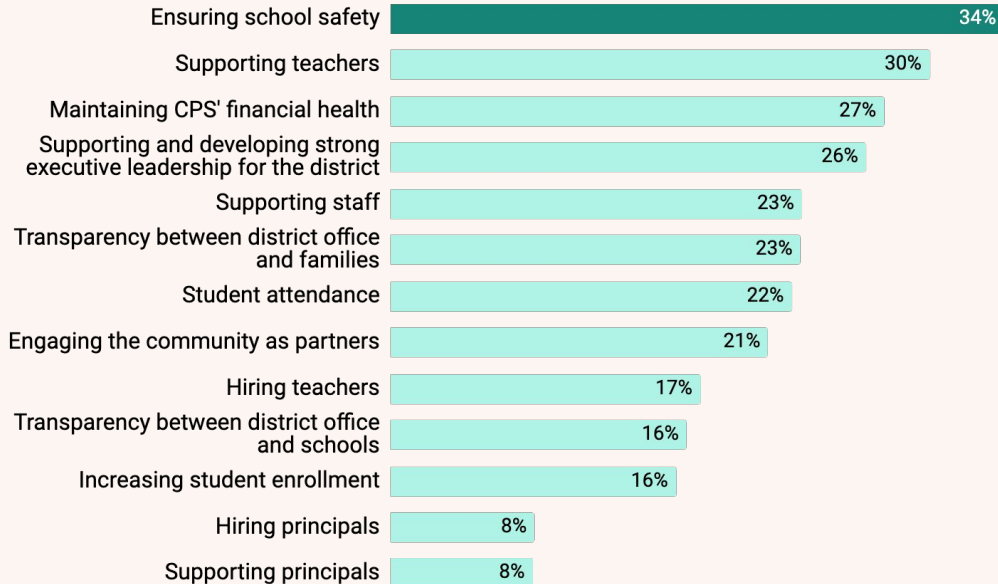
CPS CEO Search Pulse Survey Results
June 2025

CPS Performance: System Operations

The distribution of overall sample average performance ratings for system operations metrics is relatively even, ranging from 46%–59% positive.



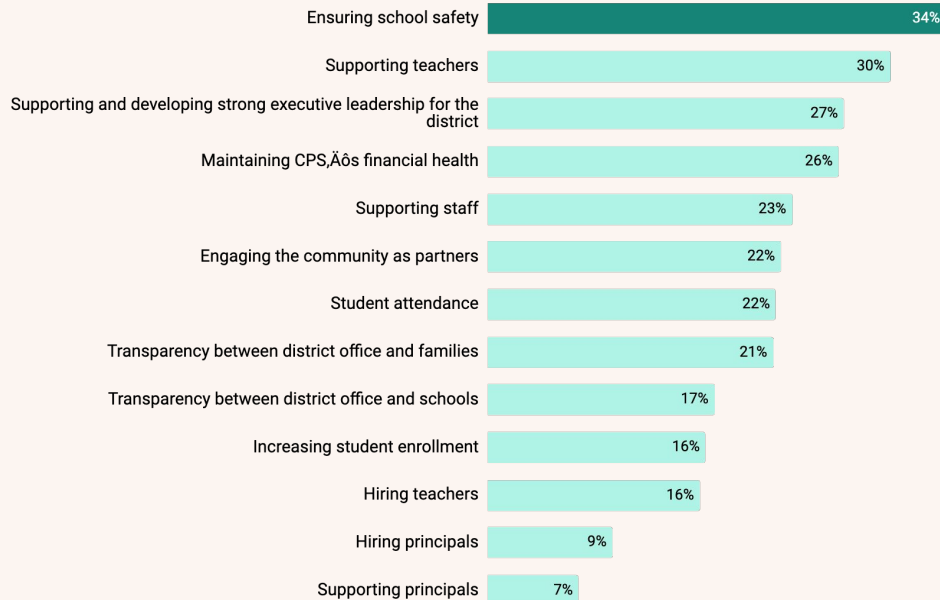
Q38: What do you see as the top three operational or system-wide areas that the next CEO/Superintendent should focus on improving? [select up to 3]



Respondents identified school safety as a priority, with 34% of respondents placing it in their top three—signalling that parents and staff view a secure learning environment as non-negotiable. Talent issues come next: 30% want stronger support for teachers, while about quarter emphasize both robust district-level leadership (26%) and sound fiscal management (27%), underscoring a desire for stable governance and resources that protect classrooms from budget shocks. A second cluster—transparency with families (23%), improving attendance (22%), broader staff supports (23%), and community partnership (21%)—points to communication and engagement gaps that stakeholders believe hinder day-to-day success.

In contrast, pipeline items such as hiring teachers (17%), boosting enrollment (16%), and especially supporting or hiring principals (8% each) register lower urgency, suggesting respondents see these as longer-term or secondary once core safety, teaching conditions, and leadership stability are secured.

Q38: What do you see as the top three operational or system-wide areas that the next CEO/Superintendent should focus on improving? [select up to 3]

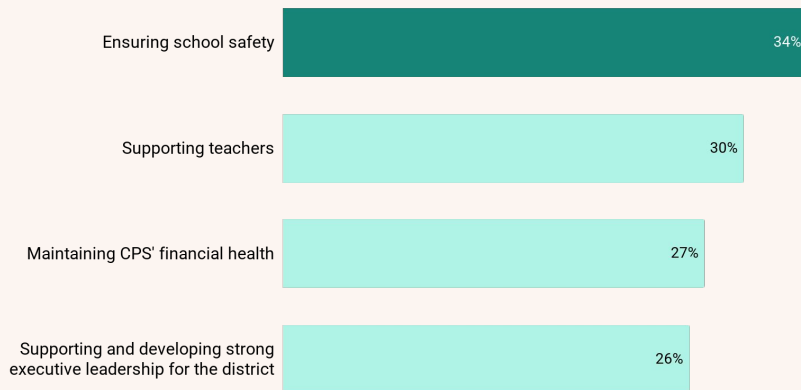


[CPS-affiliated respondents only, n=1193]

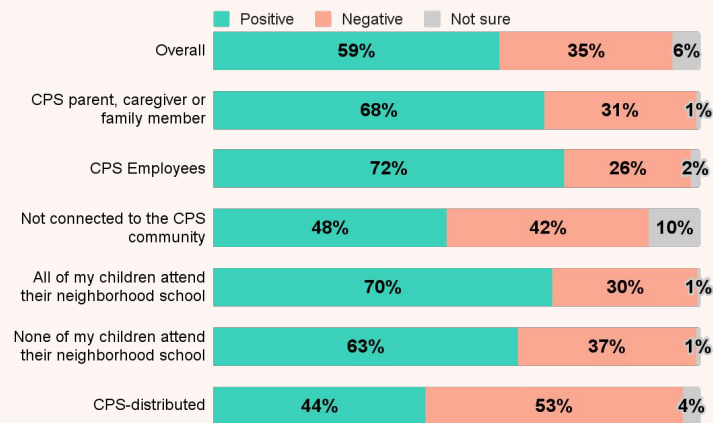
Filtering respondents who identified as having any connection to CPS (parent, teacher, or employee), we see identical results as the full sample.

[CPS-affiliated respondents only, n=1193]

CEO Priorities: Ensuring School Safety



Current CPS Performance, by connection to CPS community

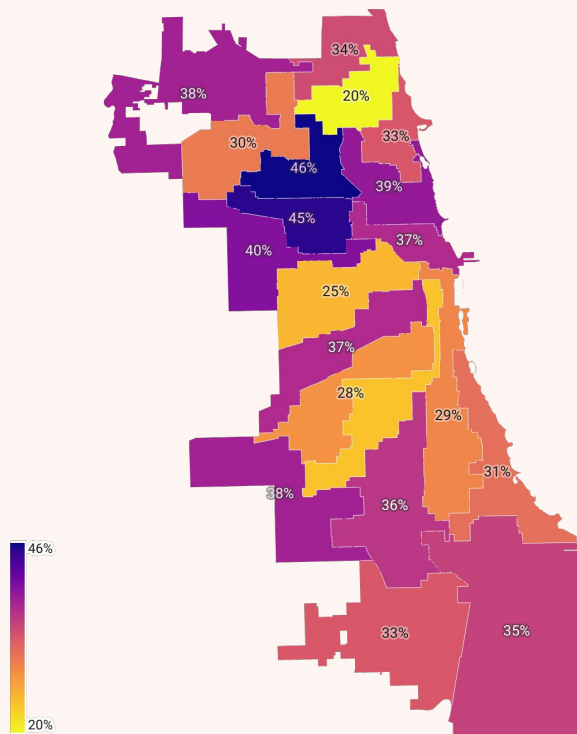


Safety eclipses all other operational concerns for CPS stakeholders. Roughly one in three respondents (34%) list “ensuring school safety” as a top priority for the next Superintendent/CEO, and 59% rate the district’s current safety efforts positively. Confidence is highest among CPS employees (72% positive) and those whose children all attend their neighborhood school (70%). Lower ratings follow a familiar trend, as the broader public is less convinced. Fewer than half (48%) of those who are not connected to the CPS community offer a favorable assessment of safety efforts. **Demonstrable, system-wide improvements in campus security will therefore be essential to win family trust and close the credibility gap beyond certain internal stakeholders.**

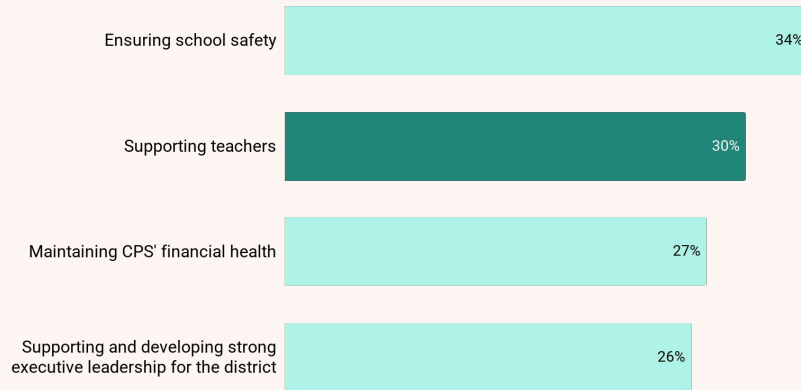
“Ensuring School Safety” Priority by District

District	%Selected	District	%Selected
1a	38%	6a	37%
1b	30%	6b	29%
2a	34%	7a	37%
2b	20%	7b	28%
3a	46%	8a	38%
3b	45%	8b	24%
4a	33%	9a	36%
4b	39%	9b	33%
5a	40%	10a	31%
5b	25%	10b	35%

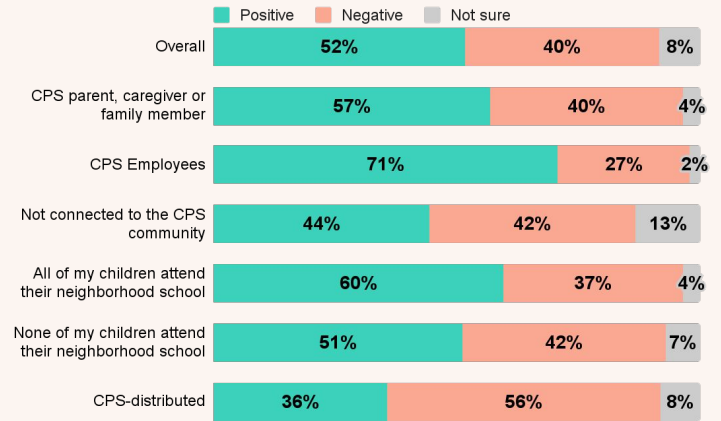
Differences in prioritization of safety ranged varied considerably. Only one in five respondents in district 2b said “ensuring school safety” is something the next CEO should focus on. In contrast, nearly half of those in districts 3a and 3b placed an emphasis on student safety (46% and 45%, respectively).



CEO Priorities: Supporting Teachers

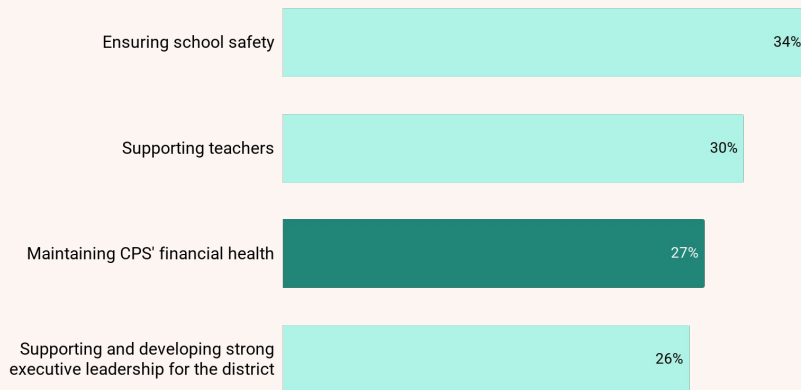


Current CPS Performance, by connection to CPS community

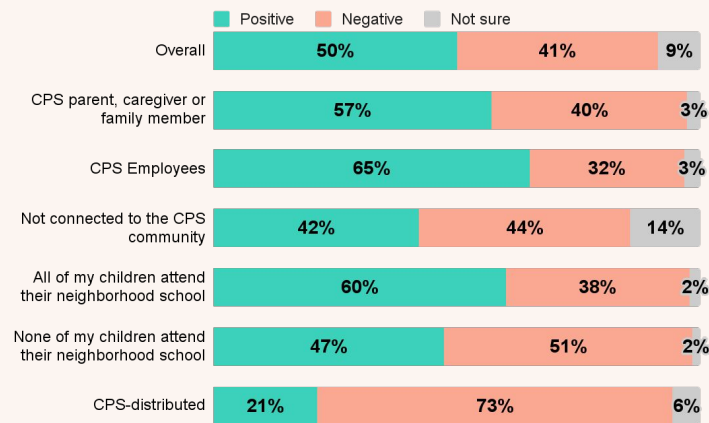


Investing in classroom talent sits near the top of stakeholders' priority list. Almost a third (30%) of respondents name teacher support as a priority for the next Superintendent/CEO, and just over half (52%) give CPS passing marks on its current efforts. Enthusiasm is strongest inside the system: 71% of employees say teacher support is handled well. Ratings are more divided across other stakeholder groups, suggesting that **expanding visible, high-impact supports beyond staff perceptions is therefore essential to build district-wide confidence.**

CEO Priorities: Maintaining CPS' Financial Health



Current CPS Performance, by connection to CPS community

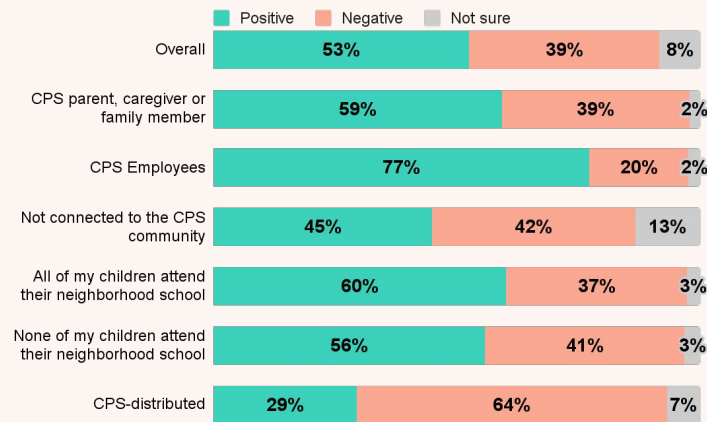


Sound fiscal stewardship underpins every CPS initiative, yet confidence is more limited compared to other metrics. Just over one quarter of respondents (27%) list “maintaining CPS’ financial health” as a top priority for the next Superintendent/CEO, and perceptions of current performance are split: half rate it positively, while 41% are dissatisfied. Employees are most positive (65% positive, 32% negative), but support falls off sharply outside district walls. Only 42% of those not connected to the CPS community offer a positive rating. **Restoring broad trust in budgeting and cost control for nearly all stakeholder groups will therefore be a critical early benchmark for the new leader.**

CEO Priorities: Supporting and Developing Strong Executive Leadership for the District



Current CPS Performance, by connection to CPS community

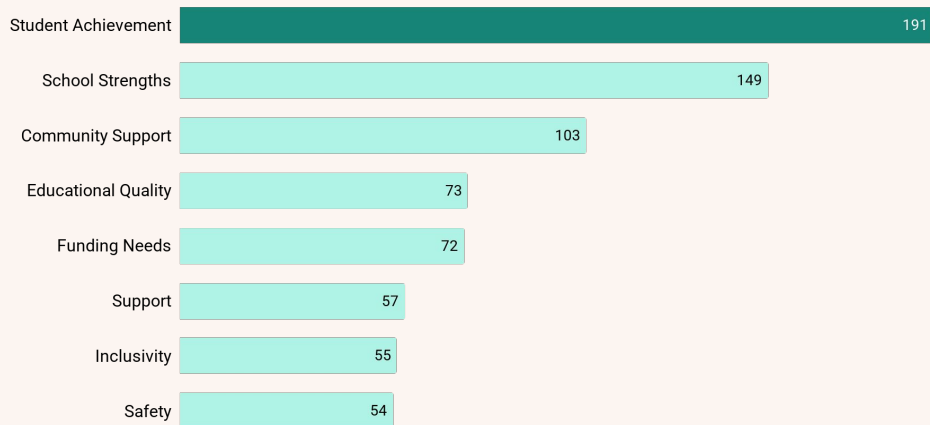


Strong, stable leadership is a foundational expectation for the next CPS Superintendent/CEO. Roughly one quarter of respondents (26%) flag the need to cultivate and support top district executives, yet opinions of current performance are mixed: roughly half (53%) rate it positively, while 39% expressed negative sentiment. CPS employees are far more likely than other groups to rate executive leadership support and development positively (77%). Perceptions of performance are lowest among those not connected to the CPS community. The results suggest that it may be important for the next Superintendent/CEO to expand the confidence among CPS employees to the broader public.

Top Operational Priority for the CEO, by Board District

District	Top Choice	%Selected	District	Top Choice	%Selected
1a	Ensuring school safety	38%	6a	Supporting teachers	51%
1b	Supporting teachers	38%	6b	Ensuring school safety	29%
2a	Ensuring school safety	34%	7a	Ensuring school safety	37%
2b	Transparency between district office and families	37%	7b	Maintaining CPS' financial health	35%
3a	Ensuring school safety	46%	8a	Ensuring school safety	38%
3b	Ensuring school safety	45%	8b	Supporting and developing strong executive leadership for the district	42%
4a	Maintaining CPS' financial health	36%	9a	Supporting and developing strong executive leadership for the district	36%
4b	Ensuring school safety	39%	9b	Ensuring school safety	33%
5a	Supporting staff	41%	10a	Ensuring school safety	31%
5b	Supporting and developing strong executive leadership for the district	31%	10b	Ensuring school safety	35%

Q33: Please share any additional comments you have about the top areas of strengths for the Chicago Public Schools.



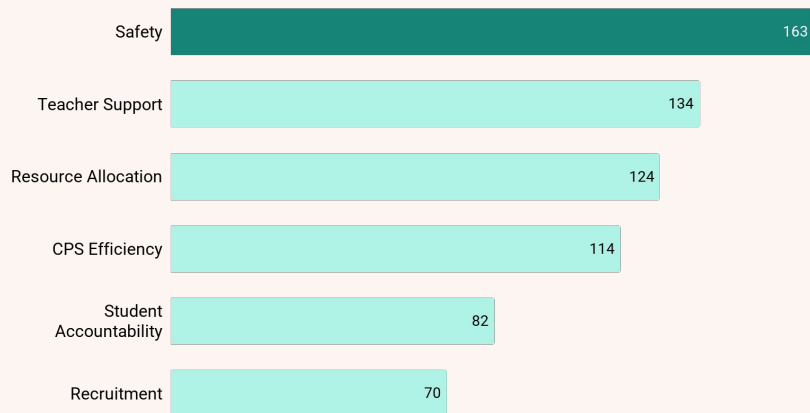
“As a whole there have been improvements district wide. Test scores have risen, attendance has improved, college level course, building a partnership with City College wonderful gains.”

n=2252

Open-ended feedback paints a picture of a district prized most for what happens inside the classroom.

A quarter of all comments (191 mentions) celebrate student achievement, and another one fifth (149 mentions) praise specific school-level strengths—from standout magnet programs to dedicated teaching teams. Community factors follow: community support (103 mentions) and broad educational quality (73 mentions) are viewed as pillars that reinforce academic success. Smaller but notable clusters applaud the district’s climate: respondents cite caring staff support (57 mentions), a growing ethos of inclusivity (55 mentions), and improvements in safety (54 mentions) as emerging assets. Finally, 72 respondents flagged funding needs—underscoring that stakeholders see financial stability as critical to sustaining these strengths. Together, the themes suggest CPS’ core value lies in strong academics supported by engaged communities, but long-term confidence will hinge on securing resources and extending inclusive, safe environments to every school.

Q34: Please share any additional comments you have about the top areas of improvement for Chicago Public Schools.



“Teacher safety needs to be addressed along with adequate support for and smaller class sizes for elementary and high school teachers.”

n=2461

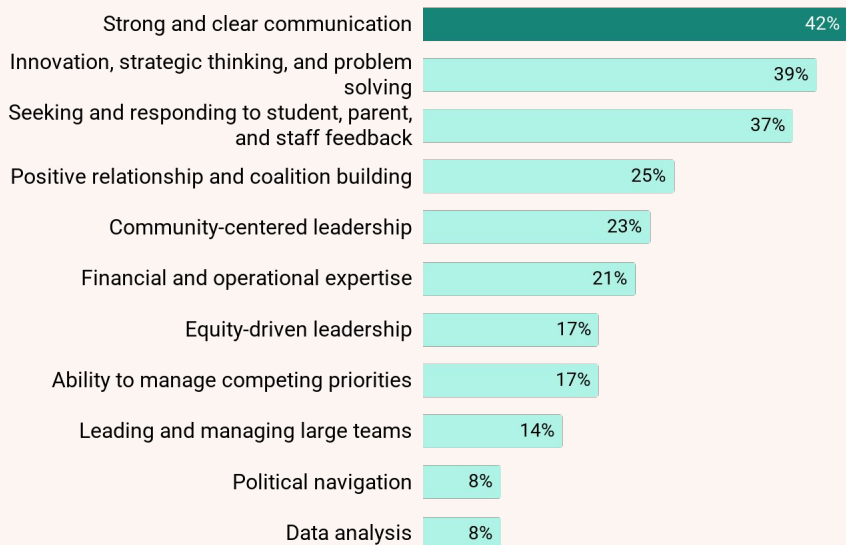
Open-ended critiques focus on six pressing deficits.

Safety dominates the conversation, accounting for roughly one quarter of all improvement mentions (163 mentions), signalling that many stakeholders remain unconvinced classrooms and campuses are secure. A second, tightly grouped tier targets teacher support (134 mentions) and resource allocation (124), followed closely by calls for greater district-level efficiency (114). Together, these themes underline worries about over-stretched staff, uneven funding, and bureaucratic drag that dilutes impact at the school level. Finally, respondents highlight student-side and pipeline issues: demands for stronger student accountability (82) suggest discipline and engagement gaps, while concerns about recruitment (70) flag the need for fresh talent and diversity in the workforce. Addressing this hierarchy—beginning with safety, then empowering teachers through smarter budgeting and leaner processes—will be central to rebuilding trust and accelerating student outcomes.

Superintendent/CEO Success Attributes

CPS CEO Search Pulse Survey Results
June 2025

Q35: Which of the following skills and attributes are most important for our Superintendent (CEO) to be successful? [select up to 3]

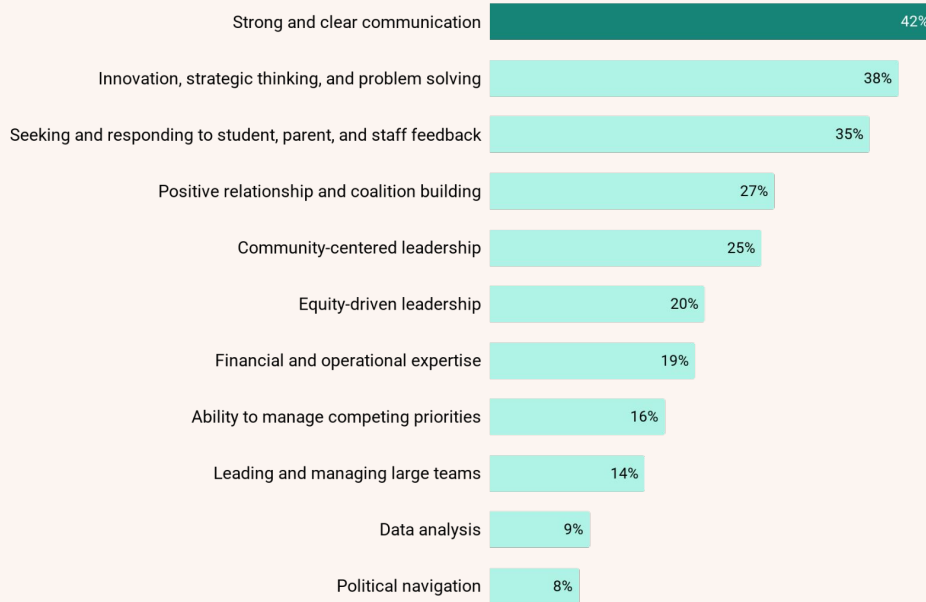


Respondents expressed a preference for a superintendent (CEO) who can both articulate a vision and translate it into inventive solutions. “Strong and clear communication” tops the list at 42%, but it is closely trailed by “innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving” (39%). A near-equal share (37%) underscore the importance of attentiveness to constituent voices—actively seeking and responding to student, parent, and staff feedback—reinforcing that open, two-way dialogue is essential.

Relational and community skills occupy a second tier: roughly one quarter emphasize coalition building (25%) and community-centered leadership (23%), indicating that bridging diverse interests will be critical, though secondary to core vision-setting. Traditional managerial competencies—financial and operational expertise (21%), juggling competing priorities (17%), equity-driven leadership (17%), and large-team management (14%)—sit further back, potentially seen as necessary but not differentiators. Technical prowess in data analysis and political navigation rank lowest (8% each), implying these competencies are expected table stakes or can be delegated, provided the superintendent excels in strategic communication, innovation, and responsiveness.

Superintendent/CEO Success Attributes

Q35: Which of the following skills and attributes are most important for our Superintendent (CEO) to be successful?
[select up to 3]



n=2688

[CPS-affiliated respondents
only, n=1193]

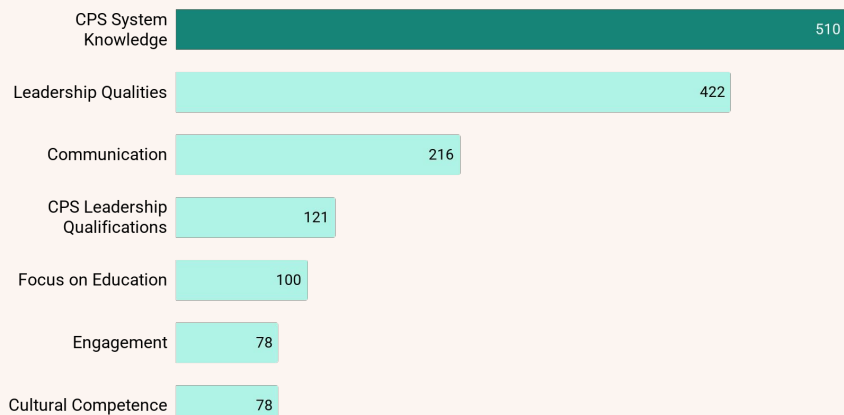
Filtering respondents who identified as having any connection to CPS (parent, teacher, or employee), we see identical results as the full sample.

[CPS-affiliated respondents only,
n=1193]

Q35: Which of the following skills and attributes are most important for our Superintendent (CEO) to be successful?

District	Top Choice	%Selected	District	Top Choice	%Selected
1a	Innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving	55%	6a	Innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving	45%
1b	Leading and managing large teams	44%	6b	Innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving	37%
2a	Positive relationship and coalition building	43%	7a	Innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving	41%
2b	Leading and managing large teams	45%	7b	Leading and managing large teams	45%
3a	Innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving	48%	8a	Leading and managing large teams	48%
3b	Innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving	50%	8b	Innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving	42%
4a	Innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving	45%	9a	Innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving	56%
4b	Innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving	39%	9b	Innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving	39%
5a	Strong and clear communication	32%	10a	Innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving	49%
5b	Innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving	38%	10b	Innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving	45%

Q36: Is there anything else you want to share about the search and selection of the next Superintendent?



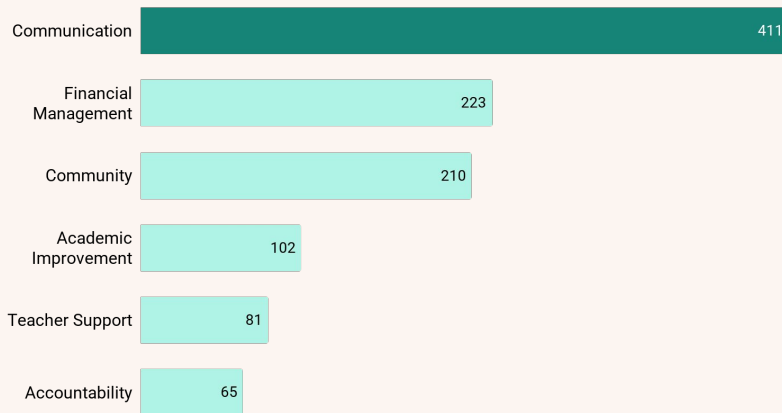
“Ability to listen to other people’s opinions, culturally sensitive because CPS is made up of a diverse population, and effective communication with all segments of the CPS system.”

n=2342

Stakeholders are clear about the profile they want in the next CPS Superintendent/CEO.

Deep, first-hand knowledge of the CPS system eclipses all other traits, cited in nearly half of the comments (510 mentions). A strong second tier stresses leadership qualities writ large—vision, decisiveness, integrity—garnering 422 mentions. Effective communication follows (216), underscoring the need for regular, transparent dialogue with families, staff, and the public. More specific “nuts-and-bolts” credentials appear next: 121 comments call for proven district-level qualifications, while 100 insist the leader keep an unwavering focus on education rather than politics. Finally, respondents highlight style and inclusivity: they want active engagement with community voices (78) and robust cultural competence (78) to serve Chicago’s diverse student body. In short, the ideal candidate pairs insider expertise with visionary leadership and open, culturally responsive communication.

Q39: Please share any additional comments you have about what the Chicago Public Schools District can do to improve.



“The most important issue in improving CPS is to listen intently to its constituents and community and to communicate clearly and effectively those goals and the plan to achieve those goals. We must be updated frequently with real progress, as we must be convinced change in a new direction- not indiscriminate change for change’s sake (akin to shooting arrows in the dark) -but positive concrete change is happening.”

Stakeholders see clearer, two-way dialogue as the linchpin of progress: 411 comments mention communication.

A strong second tier zeroes in on stewardship and partnership—better financial management (223) and deeper community involvement (210)—signalling that residents want transparent budgeting and a seat at the decision-making table. Academic factors trail but remain significant: academic improvement (102) and stronger teacher support (81) underscore the need to translate resources into classroom gains. Finally, calls for greater accountability (65) suggest frustration with follow-through on existing initiatives. Delivering a coherent communication plan that ties fiscal transparency to tangible academic and community outcomes will be essential to rebuilding trust and momentum.

Conclusions

CPS CEO Search 2025

Zencity collected a representative sample of almost 2700 adults in Chicago to provide feedback on current performance of CPS and priorities for the new CEO. This survey provides breadth of understanding of what Chicagoans are looking for in the new CEO.

Perception of Current Performance of CPS

Internal CPS stakeholders such as employees and families of students were the most likely to report positive performance ratings on student supports and system operations metrics, compared to those not connected to the CPS community.

Instructional Priorities for the New CEO

In terms of priorities for the new CEO, **high-quality instruction** is a key stakeholder expectation (aligning with the findings from the Alma Group), followed by **preparing students for careers** and items related to **equity and support of all students**.

System Operations Priorities for the New CEO

Respondents prioritized **ensuring school safety**, followed by **teacher support**, **fiscal health**, and **support/development of senior-level leadership**.

CEO Success Attributes

Respondents wanted the new CEO to have **strong communication skills** as well as **innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving**. In addition, **seeking and respondent to student, parent, and staff feedback** was seen as important. Open-ended responses indicate that **knowledge of the CPS system** and **leadership qualities** are important for the new CEO to have, aligning with the Alma Group's qualitative findings.

Conclusions: CPS Performance and CEO Priorities

1. CPS stakeholders have more positive views of performance than those not affiliated.
2. Priorities for the new CEO:

Instructional Priorities

- High-quality instruction
- Preparing students for careers
- Equity and support of all students

System Operations

- Ensuring school safety
- Teacher support
- Fiscal health

Respondents reported that the new CEO should have the following skills and attributes:

- Strong communication skills
 - Innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving
 - Seeking and responding to student, parent, and staff feedback
 - Support/development of senior leadership
 - Knowledge of the CPS system and leadership qualities
-

Conclusions:

Top Success Attributes of the CEO

Respondents reported that the new CEO should have the following skills and attributes:

- Strong communication skills
 - Innovation, strategic thinking, and problem solving
 - Seeking and responding to student, parent, and staff feedback
 - Support/development of senior leadership
 - Knowledge of the CPS system and leadership qualities
-

Appendix A

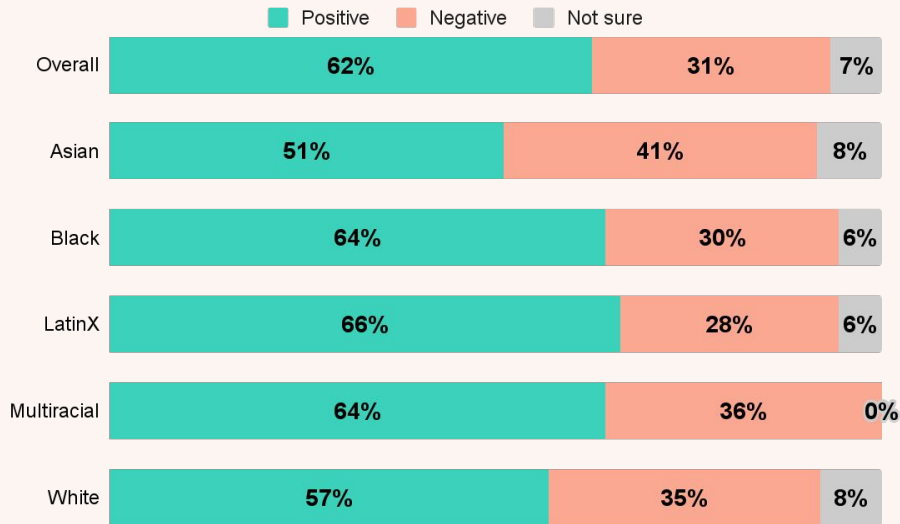
CPS Performance Ratings

by Race/Ethnicity

Zencity Sample
June 2025

CPS Performance: High-quality instruction for every student

Current CPS Performance, by Race



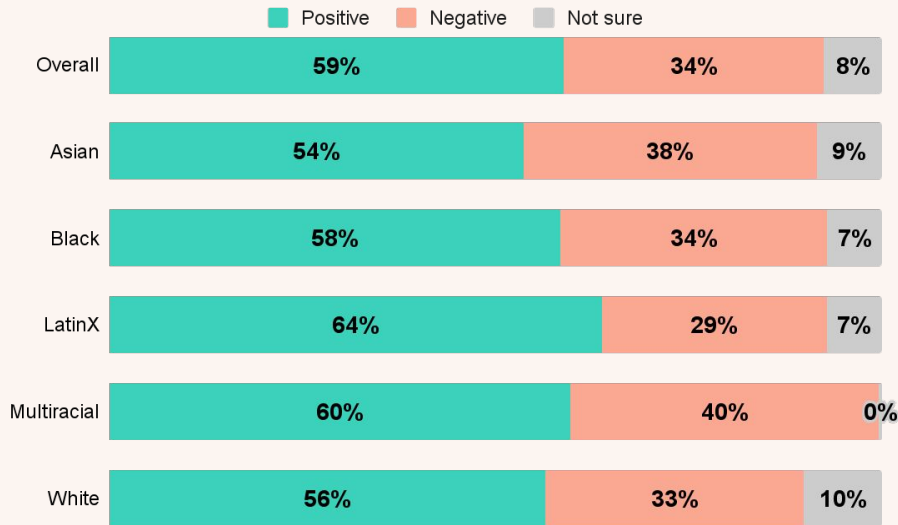
Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

Across most metrics, Asian and White Respondents generally rate CPS' performance slightly less positively than respondents of other Races.

See the following slides for more scores.

CPS Performance: Culturally responsive instruction for every student

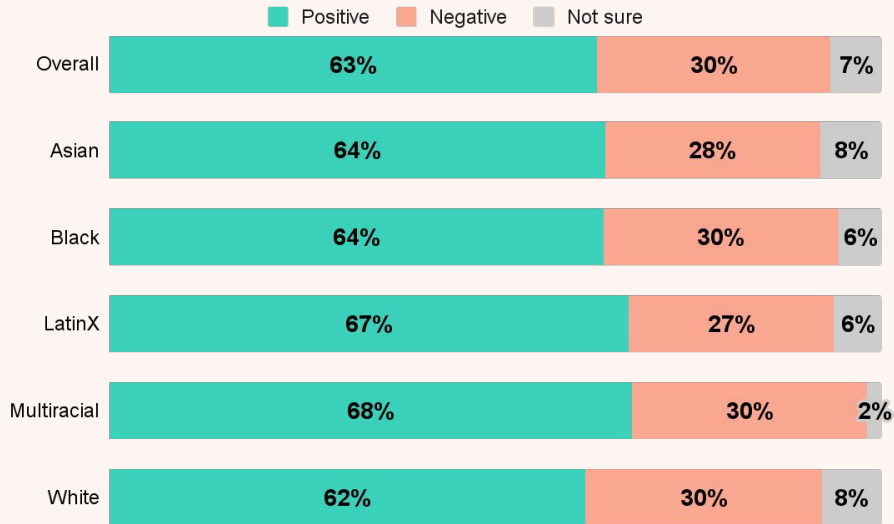
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Support of students from diverse backgrounds

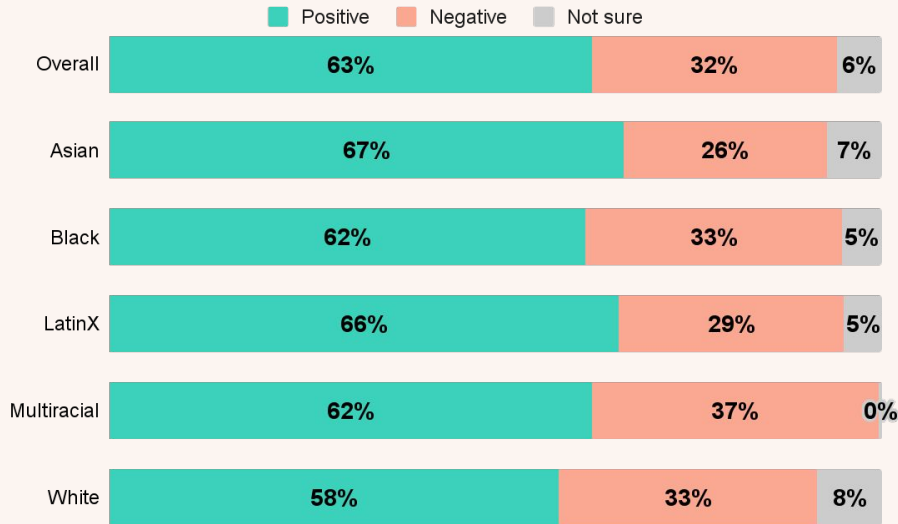
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Creating an inclusive environment for students

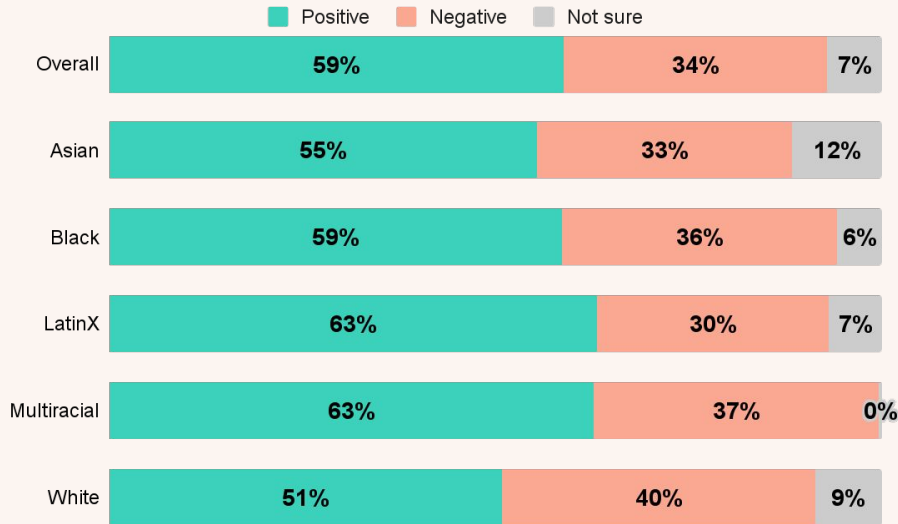
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Improved academic outcomes for all CPS students

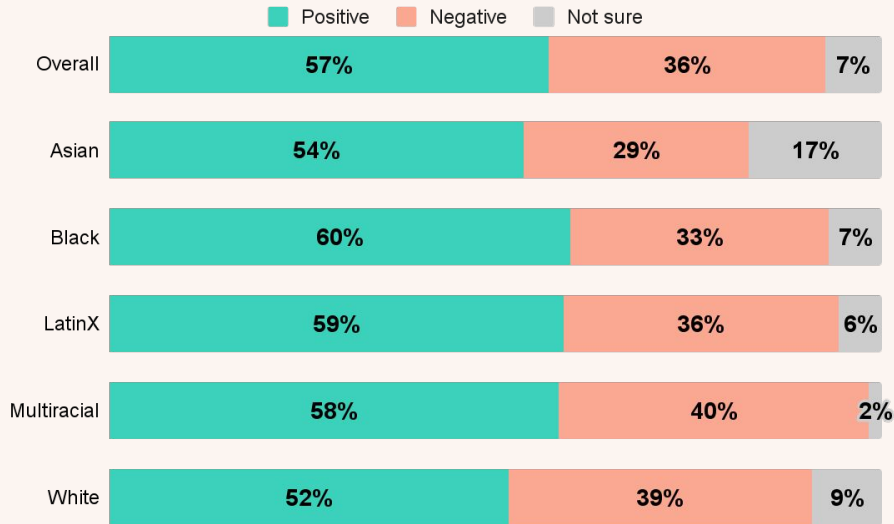
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Addressing inequities in learning opportunities for students across the CPS system

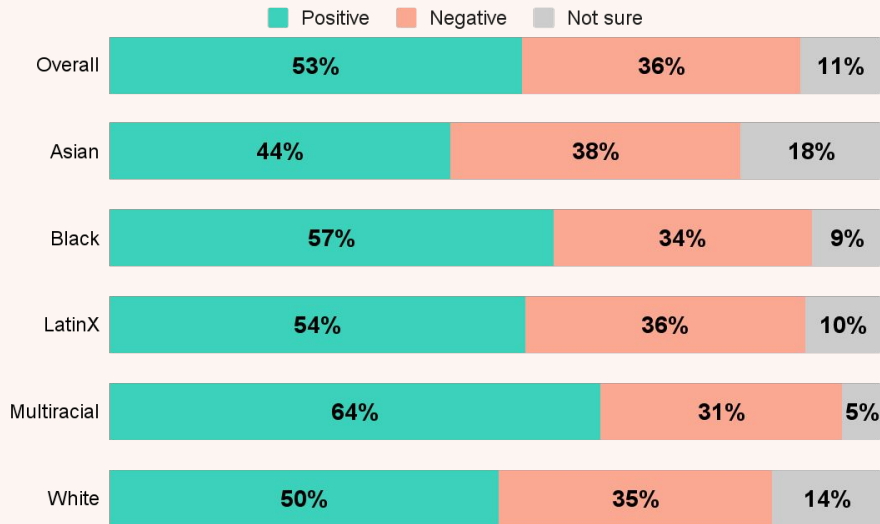
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Meeting the needs of students with disabilities

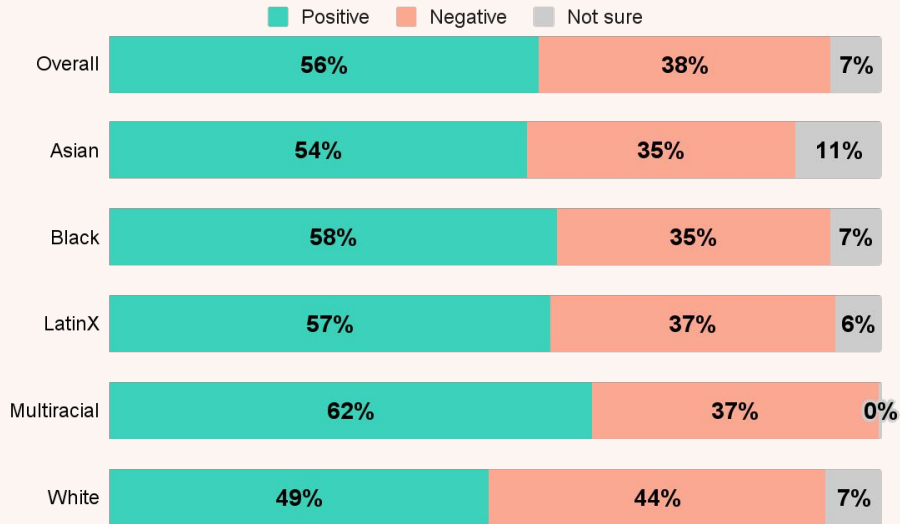
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Preparing students for college

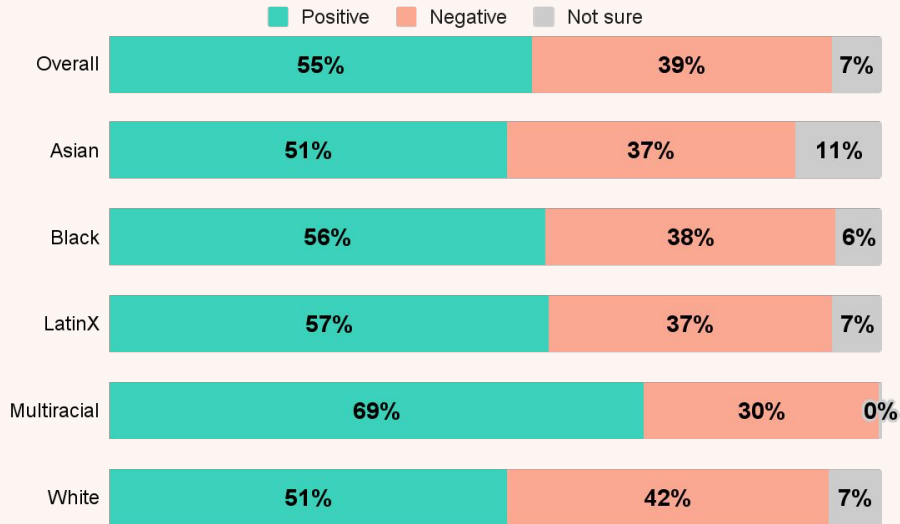
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Preparing students for careers

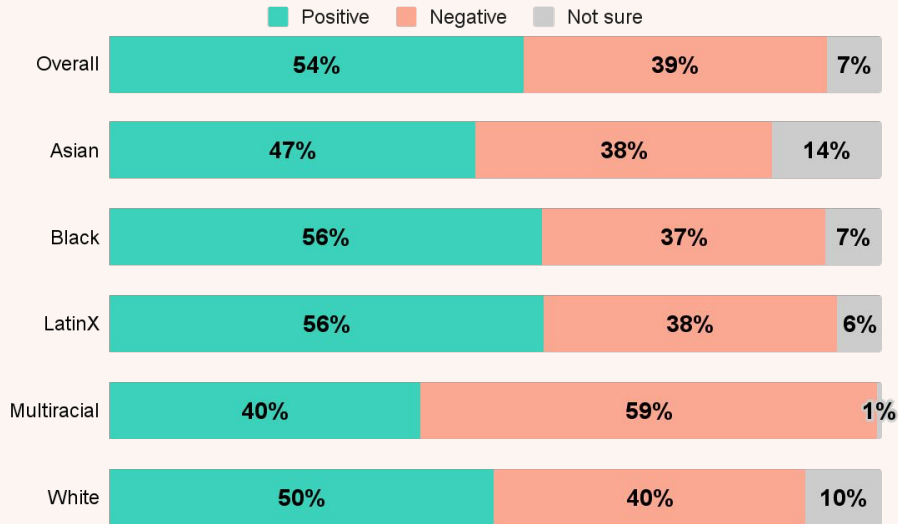
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Meeting students' social and emotional needs

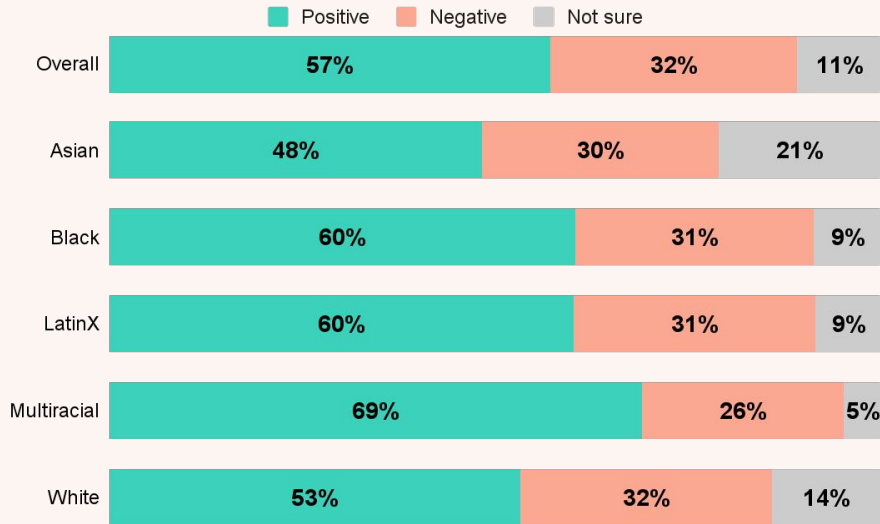
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Supporting early childhood programming

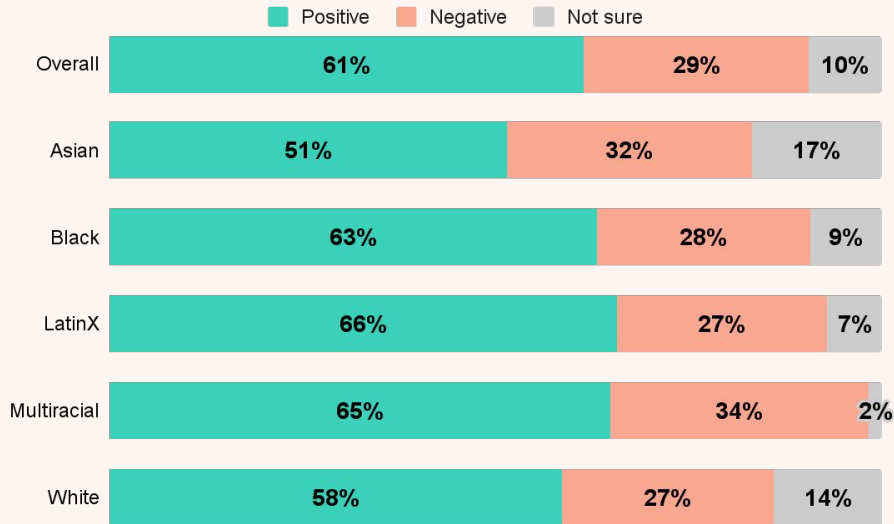
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Supporting English Learners

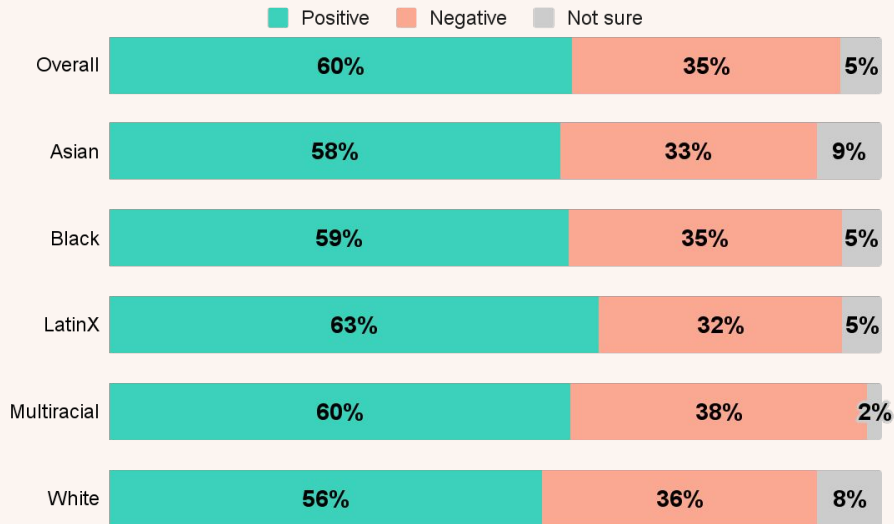
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Protecting the well-being of all students

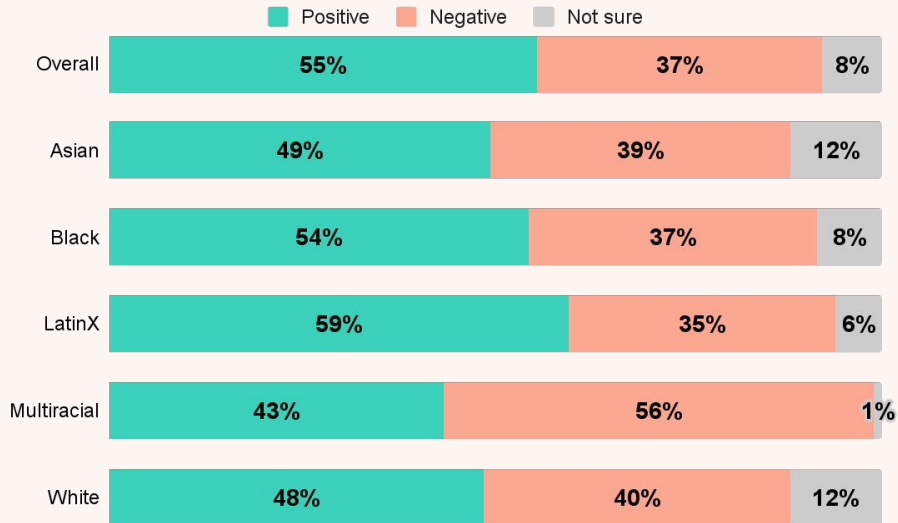
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Supporting all students' mental health needs

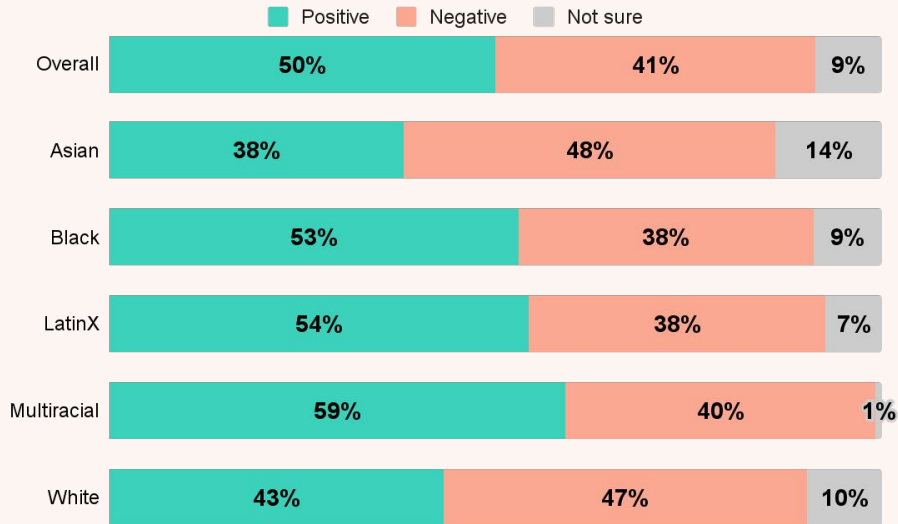
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Maintaining CPS' financial health

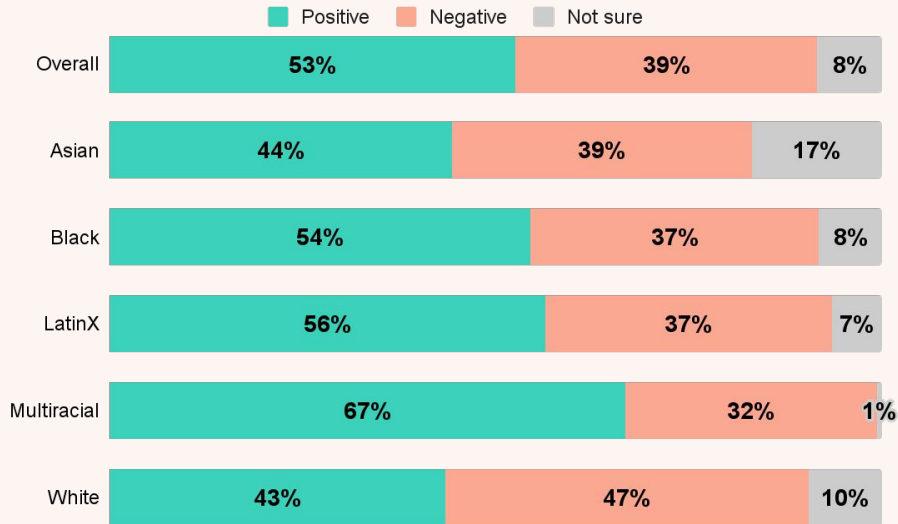
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Supporting and developing strong executive leadership for the district

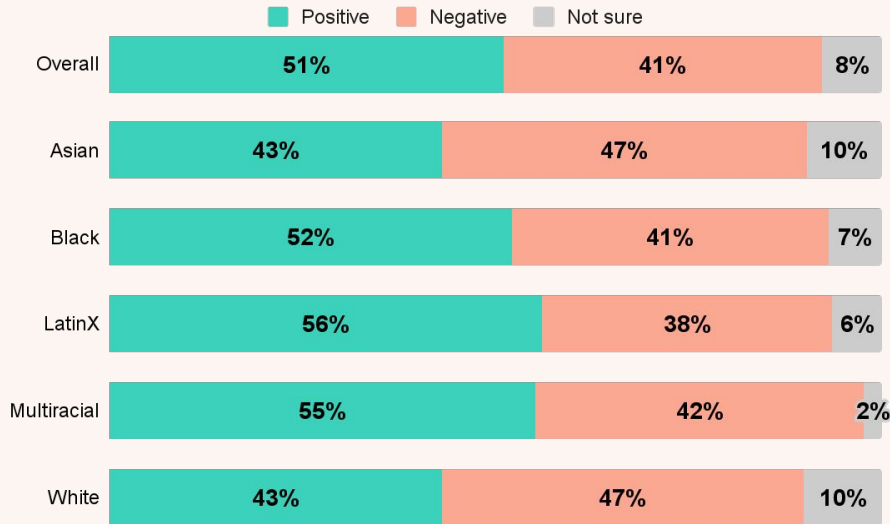
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Student Attendance

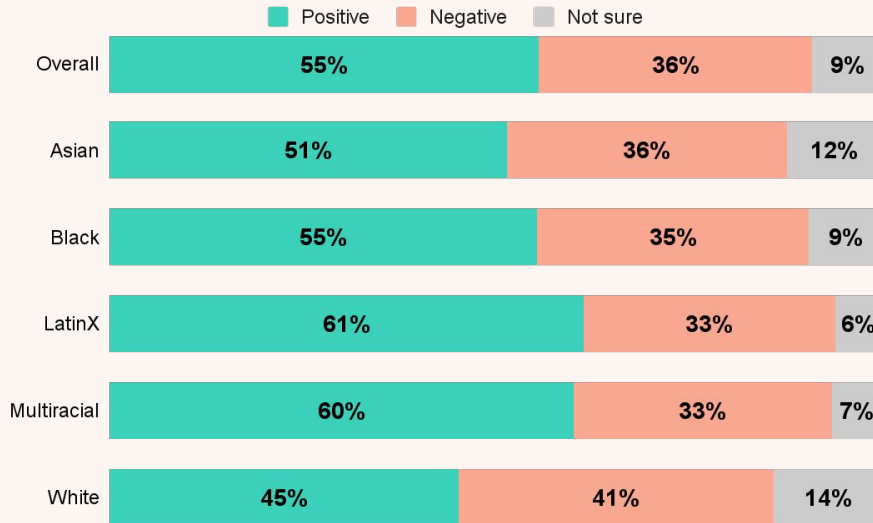
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Increasing student enrollment

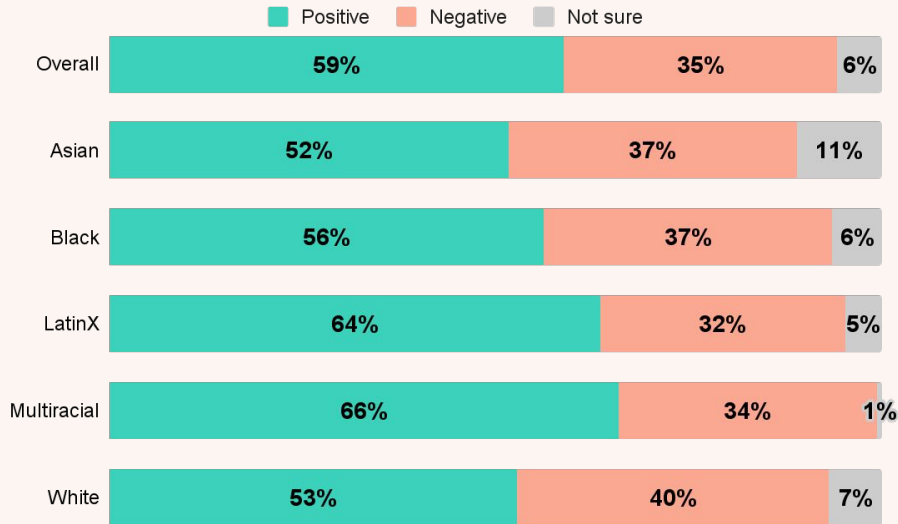
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Ensuring school safety

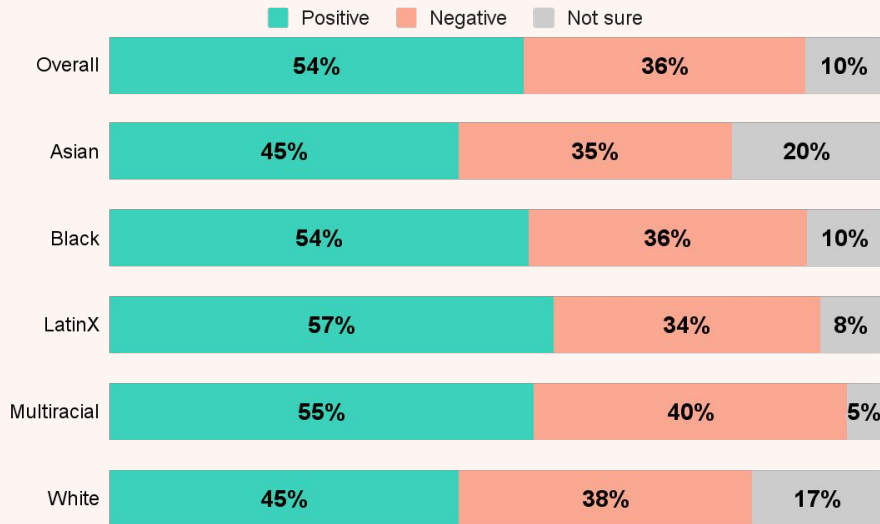
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Transparency between district office and schools

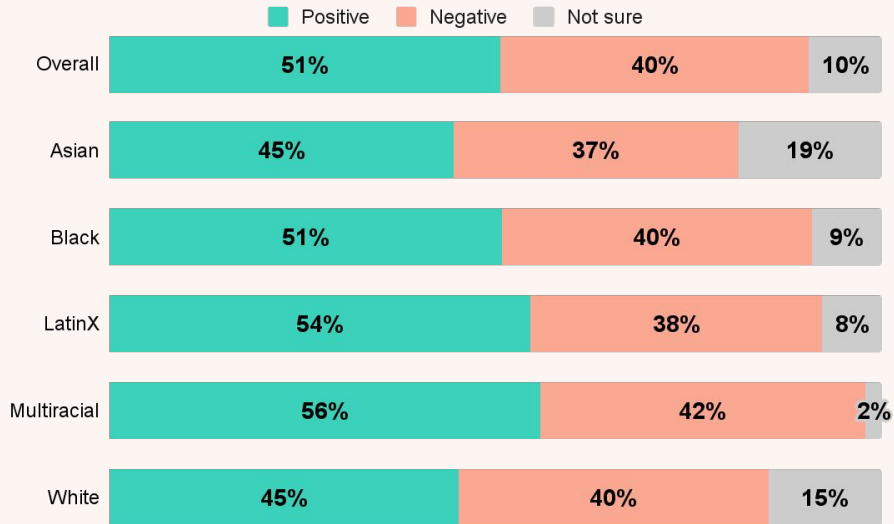
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Transparency between district office and families

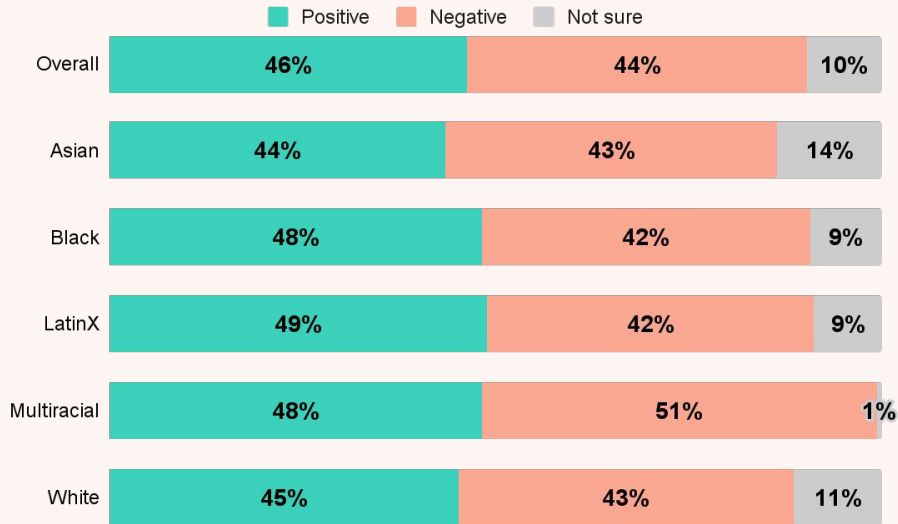
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Hiring teachers

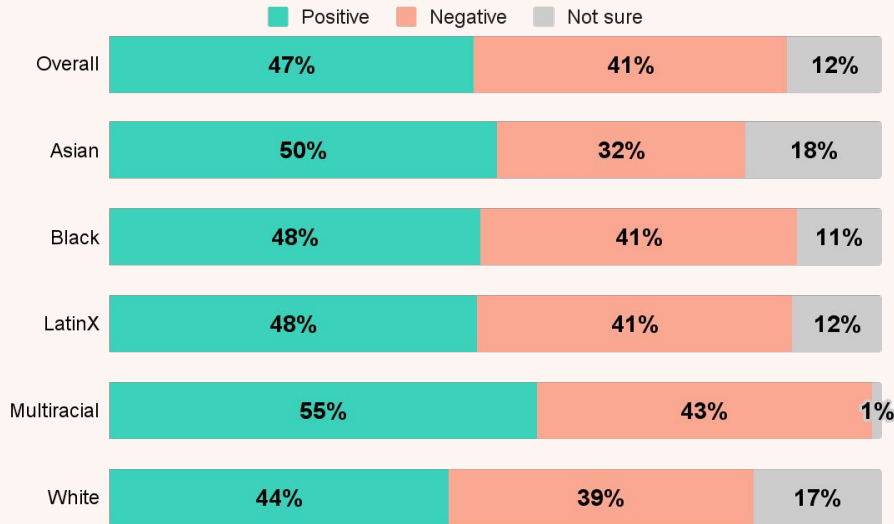
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Hiring principals

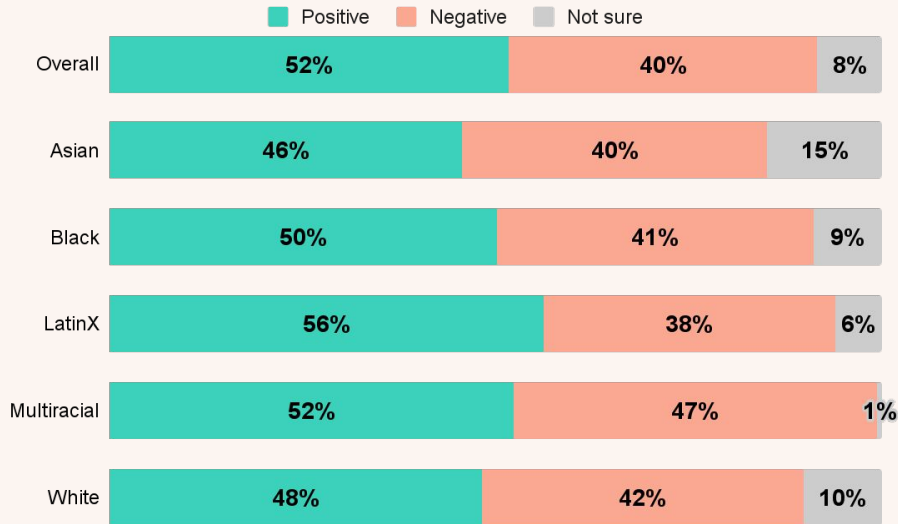
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Supporting teachers

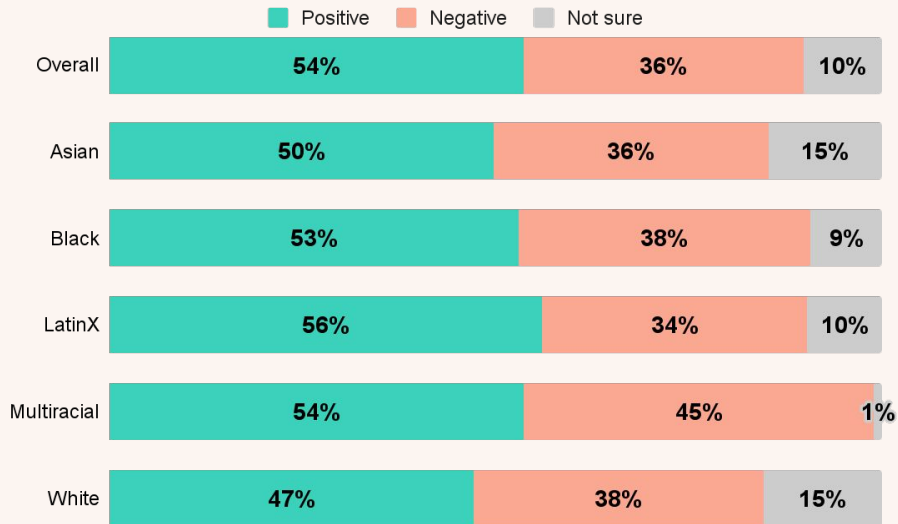
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Supporting principals

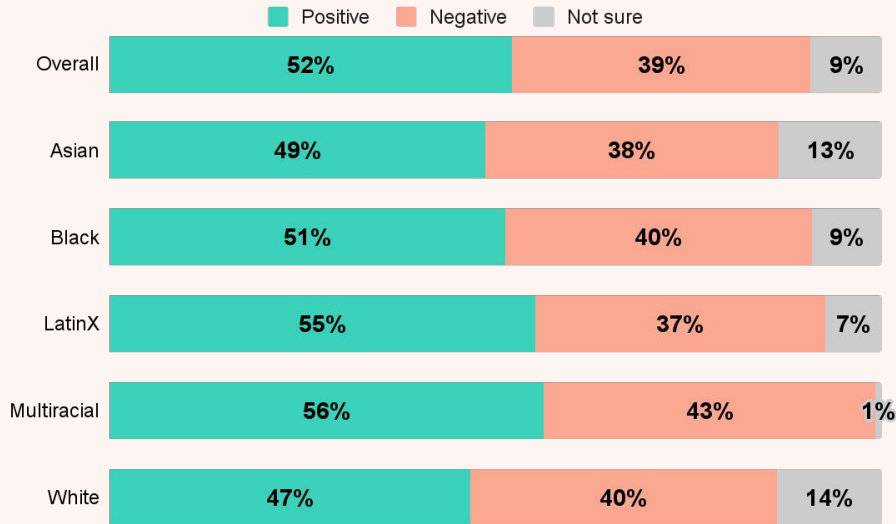
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Supporting staff

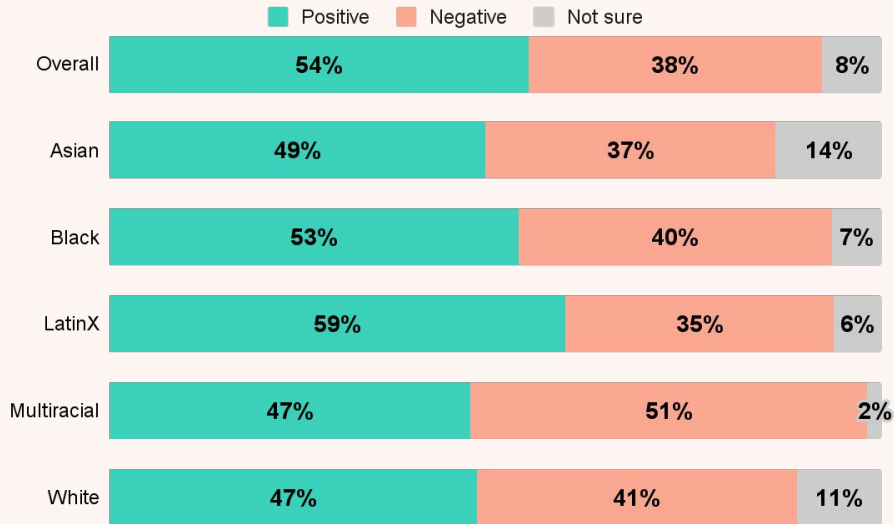
Current CPS Performance, by Race



Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

CPS Performance: Engaging the community as partners

Current CPS Performance, by Race



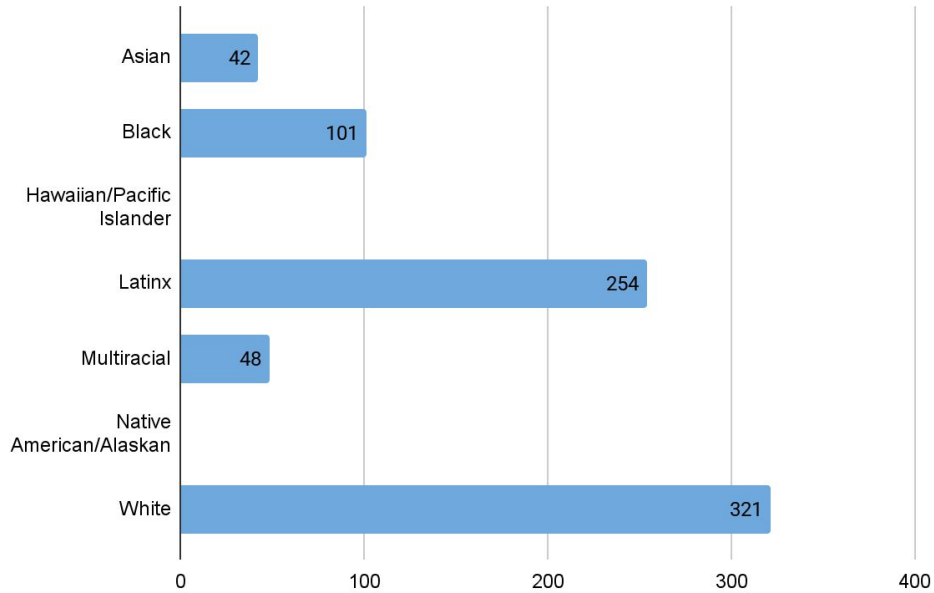
Race/Ethnicity	N
Asian	112
Black	769
Latinx	875
Multiracial	136
White	763

Appendix B. Findings from CPS-distributed data

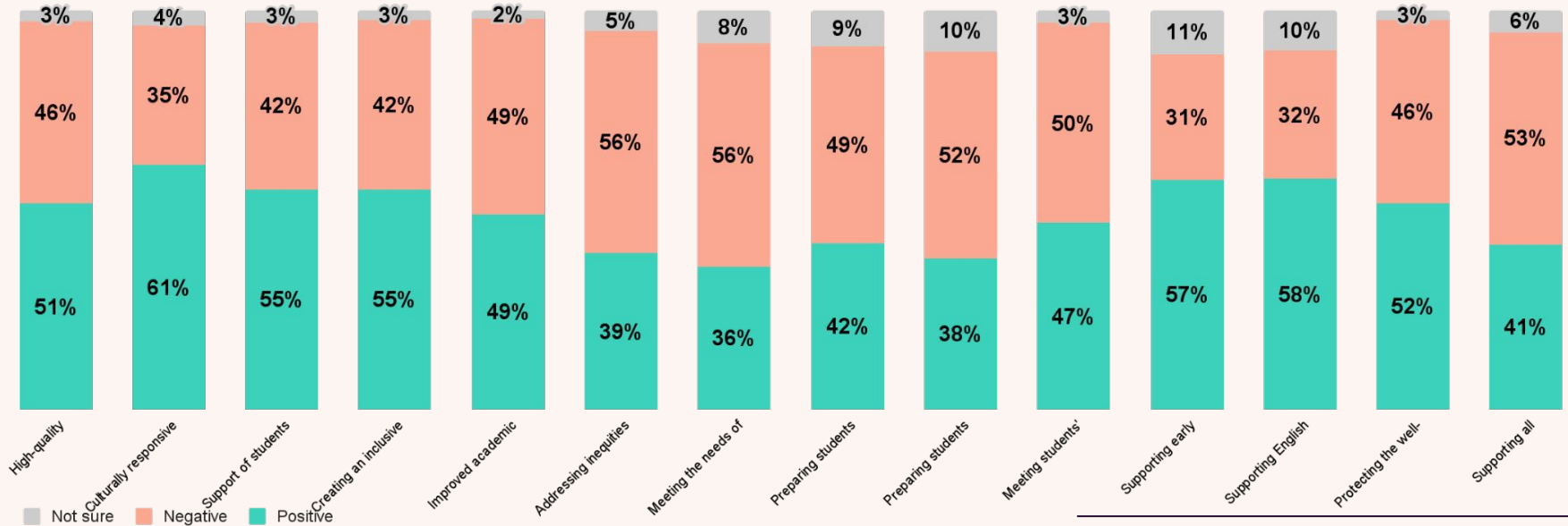
CPS CEO Search Results
June 2025

CPS Distributed Sample Composition

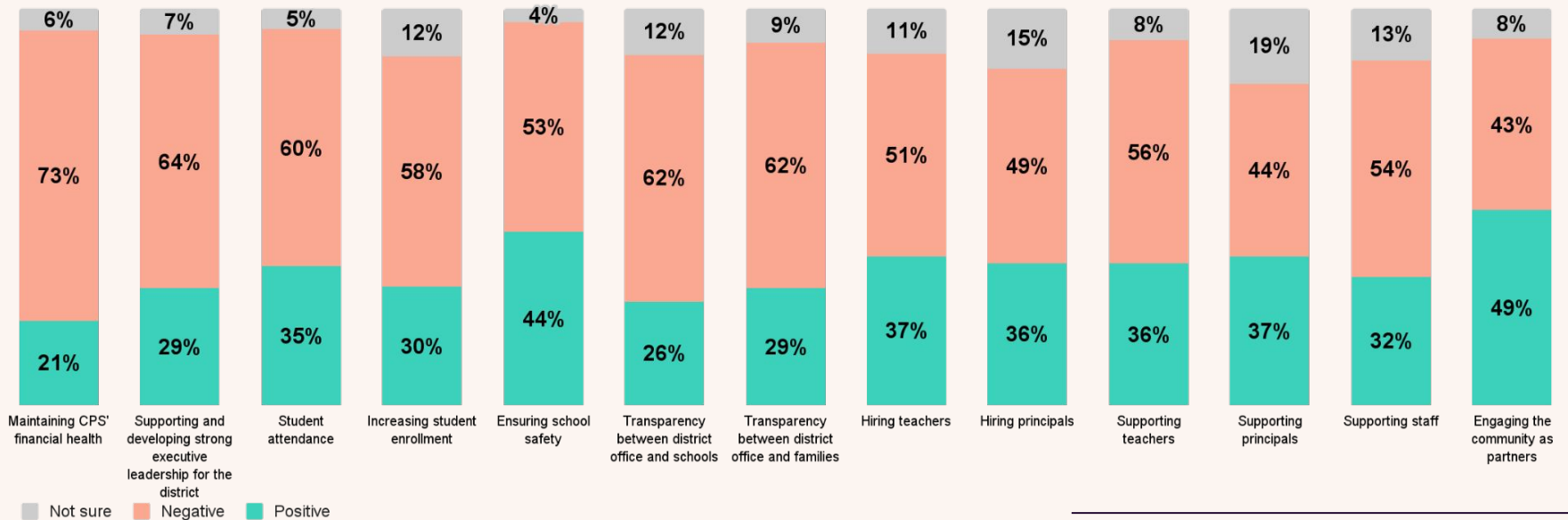
CPS Distributed Sample composition: Race/Ethnicity



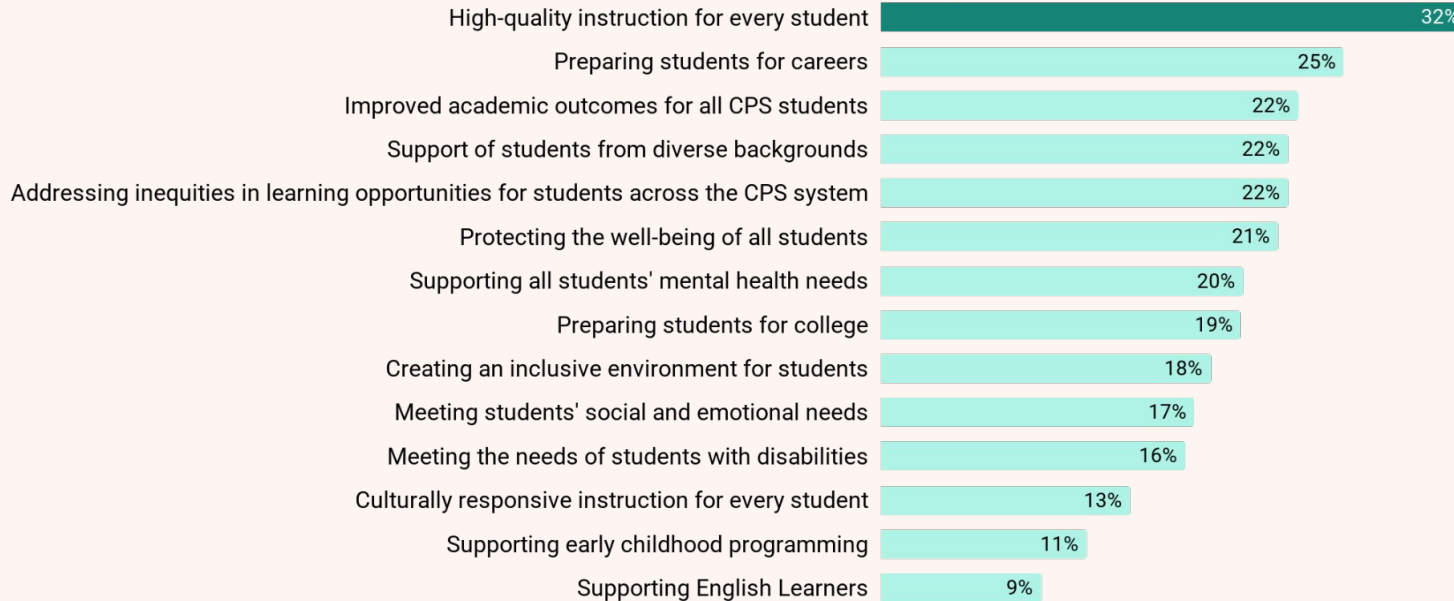
CPS Student Support Performance: CPS Distributed Data



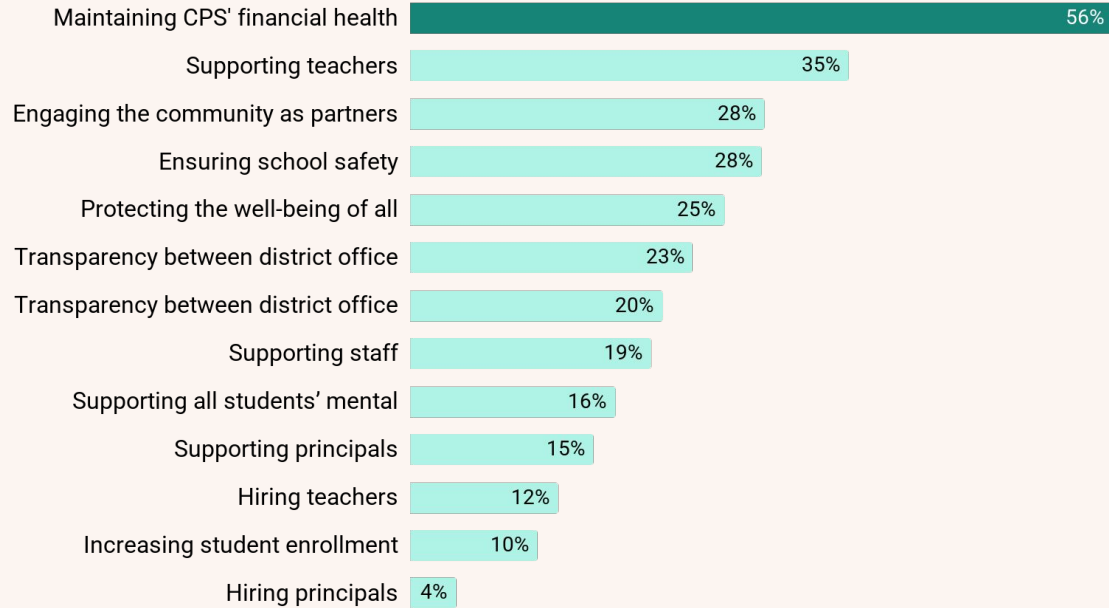
CPS System Operations Performance: CPS Distributed Data



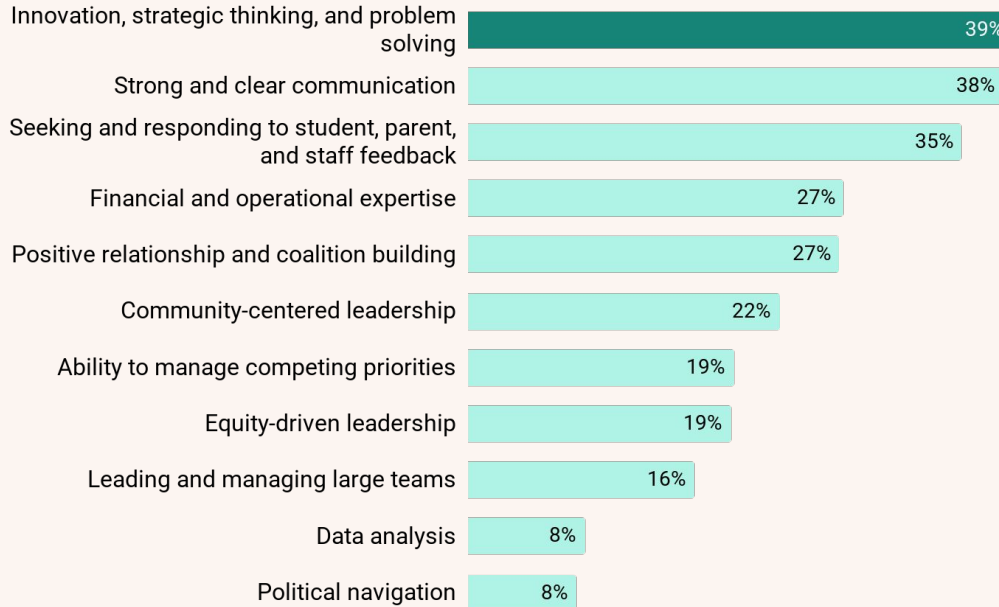
Instructional Priorities: CPS Distributed Data



Operational Priorities: CPS Distributed Data



CEO Success Attributes: CPS Distributed Data



Appendix C. Survey Questionnaire

CPS CEO Search Results
June 2025

| Questionnaire

[Link to Questionnaire](#)