



# AURORA

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT

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*Aurora Public Schools*  
*March 7, 2023*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) in February and March 2023 for the new superintendent of the Aurora Public Schools. The data contained herein was obtained from input the HYA consultants received when they met with individuals and groups in either individual interviews or focus group settings and from the results of the online survey completed by stakeholders. The surveys, interviews, and focus group meetings were structured to gather input to assist the Board in determining the primary characteristics desired in the new superintendent. Additionally, the stakeholder interviews and focus groups collected information regarding the strengths of the district and some of the challenges that the district is currently facing and those that may impact the district in the coming years. We were able to identify consistent themes across the focus groups that were in-line with the results of the survey. This information will serve as a basis for hiring the next superintendent, the strengths of Aurora Public Schools that can be built upon and the challenges that the board and new leadership will need to address.

### PROCESS

The structure of the individual meetings, forums, and focus groups was open, allowing for participants to build upon each other's comments. Some sessions were also held over Zoom to allow greater flexibility for participants to both meet their scheduling needs and address any health concerns. Additionally, an online survey was available to all stakeholders for 19 days starting in February and provided an additional avenue for community members to participate in the process of determining the next superintendent's qualifications and characteristics. Further, HYA consultants did receive written feedback and comments outside of the forums and surveys that were also considered in this process. All those involved in providing input in the selection of the next superintendent of APS were asked to respond to the following questions:

1. What are the strengths of the Aurora Public Schools?
2. What are the challenges currently facing Aurora Public Schools and the community, and in the next 3 to 5 years?
3. What characteristics or traits are you looking for in your new superintendent?

### PARTICIPATION

HYA held numerous interviews - consultants met with seven (7) individuals and hosted 26 in-person and virtual focus groups across the school community. Included within the profile

interviews were the following: teachers, support staff, administrators, community members, parents of children attending school, students, and each individual school board member.

Stakeholders were invited to complete the HYA Online Survey, with a link provided on the District's Website from February 13 through March 3, 2023. The survey data was disaggregated by six groups: parent/guardians, community members, students, classified APS employees, Licensed APS employees, and administrative APS employees. The Aurora Public Schools Survey was completed by 1,884 stakeholders.

The total number of individuals interviewed or participating within a focus group was 500. Adding the 1,884 community members, parents, students, and staff who completed the online survey, the total of participants providing input into this report totaled 2,384.

The numbers of participants by the stakeholder groups in the two methods of data gathering are listed in the following chart. Not all focus groups were a group that was disaggregated for the online survey.

Group	Number of participants in personal interviews or focus groups	Number who answered the online survey	Percentage by group who answered the survey
Board	7	NA	NA
Parents / guardians	257	1036	54.9%
Community members		96	5.1%
Students	108	29	1.5%
Classified APS employees	80	126	6.7%
Licensed APS employees		495	26.3%
Administrative APS employees	48	102	5.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>1,884</b>	<b>100%</b>

The survey for Aurora Public Schools was also distributed in the district's top eleven languages to help ensure all members of the community were provided the opportunity to contribute.

The community survey report and a draft of the desired characteristics are provided under separate cover and are meant to be stand-alone complementary pieces to the Leadership Profile Report.

It should be emphasized that the data is not a scientific sampling, nor should it necessarily be viewed as representing the majority opinion of the respective groups to which they are attributed. Items are included if, in the consultants' judgment, they warranted the Board's attention.

## STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES AND CHARACTERISTICS

### COMMON THEMES ACROSS GROUPS

#### STRENGTHS OF THE DISTRICT

**Diversity of the student population and the community** – When asked about the strengths of the district, common across all groups interviewed was a strongly held belief that the diversity of students and community are an asset. The benefits of living and learning within a school community of more than 160 languages, cultures, ethnicities, and races provides a rich worldly basis for students. Additionally, it was noted and appreciated that the Board of Education reflects the diversity of the district

**Supportive community** – The community has consistently supported the needs of the district as evidenced by the continued passage of bond and budget override elections. This significant demonstration of support makes a difference for all students across the district. APS also has the unique distinction of containing Buckley Air Force Base within its boundaries and serving as the primary district to serve students from the base. This relationship is perceived as rich and strong with additional opportunities available for collaboration in the future.

**Dedicated and passionate staff** – School staff and teachers are committed to the students of APS. They care about their students' social, emotional, and academic success and place significant time and effort into meeting their needs.

**Future preparation opportunities for students** – APS offers numerous opportunities for students to be prepared for their future. Bolstered through Blueprint APS, opportunities include college preparatory classes such as Advanced Placement, International Bachelorette, and

honors classes, college credit from the Community College of Aurora, career and technical opportunities, Pickens Technical College, and Pathways at Vista Peak. The need for additional programming will increase exponentially in the future to prepare students successfully and appears to be considered in Blueprint APS.

## CHALLENGES AND ISSUES FACING THE DISTRICT

**Effectively meeting the needs of the diverse student population** – Although the diversity in APS is a clear asset, the district struggles to meet the needs of all students. There was a clear identification that the staff does not represent the demographics (race, ethnicity, language) of the students and lacks the necessary cultural competency to be effective. Additionally, the district has struggled to hire and retain teachers and leaders of color.

Similarly, there exists a strong negative perception (stereotype/stigma) regarding students who attend or come from different buildings and communities across the district. This is believed by many, including students interviewed from all regions of the district, to create low expectations and related academic opportunities.

**Impact of trauma, poverty, and language barriers** – Many groups described an increasing need of students and families across Aurora Public Schools. It was identified that students require more mental health support, attendance has become an increasing issue, and achievement has suffered. New immigrants with familial language barriers experience additional barriers and trauma.

**Physical and psychological safety** – Students, staff and parents identified an increasing degree of violence in the schools. Since returning to in-person learning from COVID, groups identified an increasing trend of behavioral issues and concerns about drugs in school. Students and staff felt traumatized by the increasing trend and concerned for their safety when at school. At the same time as discussing increasing safety concerns, students shared that some of the discipline measures feel disrespectful and belittling resulting in a lack of trust with school staff.

**Leadership** – Both staff and leadership spoke of a lack of trust across the organization, but in many instances were not able to identify a clear cause. Regardless, the impact is real and permeates the culture of the district. Trust appears to have been eroded with communication struggles, competing visions and siloed department functioning creating an atmosphere of competition instead of collaboration.

**Board Governance** – Community and staff identified the Board of Education as struggling with their role in the district. Comments included that the Board does not appear to understand their role and the governance model, can be ineffective in their communication, unfocused, and have appeared divisive and not aligned on priorities resulting in the appearance to work against each other and district leadership.

## **DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEXT SUPERINTENDENT**

The groups and individuals collectively stated that they would like a superintendent who is a strong advocate for public schools, students, staff, and community members in APS. Although the lists of desirable characteristics from the groups were long, there were similarities that are noteworthy. It is without a doubt that students, staff and the community believe it is critical that the next superintendent of Aurora Public Schools should be **a proven leader in diversity, equity, and inclusion for all students.**

Those interviewed voiced that they desire a leader who exhibits a passion for students and their future, and someone who will set high expectations and provide support for all students and staff. He/she must be a highly visible leader, interacting with the school community in authentic ways and who is willing to invest the time and energy necessary to develop relationships with all stakeholders. The leader must be open to new ideas but respectful of the work and history of APS. The district is looking for a stable, steady leader committed to the community for the long term and will help to build trust and bring the district together under a clear vision for the future.

He/she will act with integrity, honesty, and humility in all aspects of the position, striving to bring people together repairing strained relationships and supporting the board in effective district governance leadership, ultimately for the good of all students. The top characteristics are identified below with the complete list found under the data summary section.

### **Demonstrated strength and skills in diversity, equity, and inclusion**

- Proven record of successfully addressing the needs of a diverse population of students.
- Demonstrated ability to create a culture of trust and inclusion.
- Demonstrated knowledge of strategies for raising achievement for all students.
- Singularly focused on what is best for students.
- Stakeholders suggested the district should hire a diverse candidate, preferably a person of color.
- Address barriers created for non-English speaking students and families.

**Demonstrated ability to provide effective leadership to a large school district**

- Someone who can provide a clear, shared, and inspiring vision and then effectively manage its implementation across the organization.
- An individual with a proven record of providing dynamic leadership in a large organization.
- Focus on fact-based, politics-free decision making for the good of all students and staff.
- Someone who can manage the Board and is able to create an effective leadership team.
- Demonstrated experience in raising student achievement for all students.
- A leader who acts with humility and kindness, is gentle, empathetic, transparent, and honest.
- Someone who can bring the district together, with a demonstrated ability to build trust.

**Demonstrated strength and skills in providing physically and psychologically safe schools**

- Be authentically present in schools. Hear and respect student, staff, and community voices.
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience with successful mental health strategies for students and staff.
- An individual committed to taking the time to gain an understanding of the trauma and struggles of students before making decisions on their behalf.
- Can effectively and collaboratively develop a plan to address the increase in violence and drugs in the schools.

**Someone with a background and belief in public schools**

- An individual who is a strong public-school advocate and is passionate about students and their job.
- Someone with a deep understanding and commitment to Aurora Public Schools and its community for the long term.
- The candidate should have a background in education.

HYA Search Consultants will seek a superintendent who can work with the School District and Board of Education to provide the leadership and governance needed for the benefit of all students. This transition in leadership provides an exciting opportunity for the Aurora Public Schools. The hiring of a new superintendent is critical for future success, and it is the most important work the Board of Education will do. It is an exciting time as the Board of Education now selects the next superintendent for the current needs and ensures a strong future.

HYA intends to meet the challenge of finding an individual who possesses the addressed skills and character traits required to meet the needs of Aurora. The consultants would like to thank

all the participants who engaged in interviews, attended focus groups and/or completed the online survey. The consultants are especially grateful to Executive Assistants, Claudia Paz-Blossick and Michelle Ibarra, and Chief Communications Officer, Patti Moon for arranging the meetings, facilitating the communicating between our team, the APS school community, and coordinating the many contacts needed to facilitate the completion of this report. Their dedication and skill are appreciated.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mike Richie, Ed.D. – HYA Vice President

Micah Ali – HYA Associate

Scott Siegfried, Ph.D. - HYA Associate



## DATA SUMMARY

The individual and group interviews of stakeholders generated the following responses. Comments have been summarized, and careful attention has been made to accurately convey the information. They are listed with no attempt to prioritize and multiple statements of the same concept have been combined. Topics in the stakeholder interviews and the survey results appear to be congruent. The variety of data collection methods as well as the presentation of disaggregated data across stakeholder groups produced similar results with very little variance on issues.

### SCHOOL DISTRICT STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

The school district “stakeholders” who participated in the focus groups represent a cross section of the community: parents, community leaders, patrons, and employees of the district. They represented various roles within the community and within the school district. Many of those who participated have lived in the community for generations and are deeply invested in the school community. Others are newer to the district and are excited about the opportunity the district presents.

Top Strengths Identified by Stakeholders	Top Challenges Identified by Stakeholders
Diversity of the district	Meeting the needs of a diverse population
Supportive community	Impact of trauma, poverty and language
Dedicated and passionate staff	Physical and psychological safety
Future preparation opportunities for students	Leadership
	Board Governance

## STRENGTHS OF THE DISTRICT

- Diversity is a strength – there has been a good start to address issues
- Strong mental health professionals
- Increased teacher pay attracts and retains better talent
- District is responsive
- Future focused
- Supportive in work with Buckley
- Blueprint APS provides a good basis
- Board reflects the diversity of the district
- Supportive community – pass bond and budget elections to support our kids
- Good start on equity work, but have a long way to go
- Trust schools and principals. Don't always agree with them, but believe they are working hard
- Social and emotional programming
- Graduation rate has increased over the last few years
- Communication is better from the district - texts, emails, apps, robocalls
- Strong community support
- Singular focus on students
- Staff is committed to APS
- Shown a pattern of improvement – strategic actions (Blueprint, Governance, etc.)
- Teachers and support staff look out for each other
- Dedicated and passionate staff

## CHALLENGES AND ISSUES FACING THE DISTRICT

- District is non-responsive
- Need additional mental health support for staff and students
- Lack of cultural competence in the staff
  - Lack of diversity in the staff
  - Need more diversity in staff and leadership
  - Struggle to hire and then retain teachers of color
  - Changing demographic – need to prepare for the future
  - The curriculum selected does not necessarily match the cultural diversity of our students.
  - Not sure we are serving our diverse population well - culturally not norms of culture - do a good job with language
- The “how” of big changes have been difficult
- Closing schools has been tough on kids and community

- There is a sense of loss and then a feeling of not belonging at a new site
- Growth in some areas while closing schools is causing mistrust
- Process used to close schools was unfair to staff and community
- Don't feel listened to or respected
- People are moving from APS to get their kids in a better school
- Mental health struggles – lots of trauma in kids and staff
- Concerned about safety and drugs at schools
- Parent-teacher conferences aren't scheduled so that everyone can access the teachers.  
This leaves some parents out of the loop on how their students are achieving
- It is difficult for low income families who work many jobs to be involved
- Students of different races are treated differently by staff
- Immigrant and refugee families need more support to be successful
- Report cards are confusing for parents
- Would like better trusting relationships between parents and staff to help their kids
- Kids aren't motivated and therefore have bad attendance
- Police in schools causes concern
- Too many competing visions – don't know the priority – feels like chaos
- Funding in Colorado and Aurora is a challenge
- Not enough focus on social emotional needs of students. Needs to become part of the district culture
- Need to put resources in older buildings as well
- New students and language issues
- Getting away from educating students - putting lipstick on the pig - look pretty - but need to educate
- Special education is closing programs - can't say anything or get hand slapped
- Literacy curriculum is bad - MS students not required to read a novel
- Teachers are drowning
  - Less and less resources to do the job
- Impact of trauma and poverty is significant
  - Student mental health, attendance, achievement are suffering
- Kids don't have a voice – the system continues to fail them
- Stigma and stereotypes (rumors) influence perception of schools
- Need to expand opportunities for students – have a good start but need more
- Standards are dropping
- We are teaching to the test.
- Need smaller class sizes - need to see growth
- Students need better skills
- District leadership lacks training / experience to be effective leaders.

- District leadership is not present in schools in authentic ways
- Poor communication from the district
- Lack of trust and connection as you move “up the ladder” from the schools to leadership to the board
- Perception of a rift between staff and administration
  - Not all agree with this or understand the root of the issue
- There has been data misinterpretation and is creating a divide in district closing schools on west side (older side of district) and east ie is getting new schools - not being handle well - lack of communication and transparency - lots of distress
- Buildings are given time to make things look good for walkthroughs. Buildings are told which charts to put up
- District departments are too siloed. Departments don’t work together and its getting worse. Feels more like competing interests
- The foundation (of the district) is falling apart
- The board of education poses a significant challenge
  - The process regarding the prior superintendent was handled poorly
  - Past superintendent has run the district like a business - never talks about data only finances
  - District is toxic (lying - water things down) can’t tell the truth or give accurate information to principals when it comes to data. At the district level the district is run by fear.
  - Lacks discipline and focus – too political
  - Ineffective communication
  - Perception is that hiring a search firm to facilitate finding a new superintendent is to save face
  - The board is completely unprepared for their meetings
  - Board voted on Blueprint - they did not have accurate data
  - The board doesn’t appear to understand their role or the governance model
  - The board doesn’t actually listen – it's just for show
  - “The board works against each other and against the last superintendent”
  - “The board is divisive - they need to hire the right superintendent for the students, not for them”
  - The board doesn’t appear to know what they are doing
  - Lack of transparency and trust

## DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEXT SUPERINTENDENT

- Someone who can manage the board
- Demonstrated experience in raising student achievement
- Someone who can provide a clear and shared vision (clarify current vision) and then effectively manage its implementation
- Visionary, Inspirational, Transparent, Innovative, Open-minded, Flexible, Honest
- Student focused
- Demonstrated skill and knowledge in inclusion, equity and diversity
- Honest. Own mistakes when they happen
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience with mental health strategies for students and staff
- Understanding of education and how kids learn
- Open to understanding and working with military families
- Diverse candidate - person of color
- Not afraid to make hard decisions
- Fact based decision making. Work to keep politics out
- Fair and equitable approach to stakeholders
- Hear and respect the community voice
- Demonstrated leadership skills
- Get to the solution for our kids and make a difference
- Search for the root of the problem
- Act with humility - be humble
- Treat all employees and parents with respect
- Strong, proven leader
- Able to create an effective team
- Attention to detail
- Demonstrated skill and knowledge of equity and inclusion
- Someone who can bring the district together
- Someone with a background in education
- Proven leadership ability at the senior level of a large organization
- Strong public school advocate – passionate a public schools
- Demonstrated ability to build trust
- Know and respect all roles of staff in APS – treat the CFO with the same respect as a bus driver
- Someone with a proven record of providing dynamic leadership in a large organization
- Committed to APS and its community for the long term
- Listen to staff and respect their thoughts and experiences
- Capitalize on strengths of the community – currently a missed opportunity

- Take the time to gain an understanding of the trauma and struggles of students before making decisions
- Be accountable and able to make difficult decisions
- Fact based; data driven decision making
- Effective crisis manager
- Listen more than you talk
- A leader not a manager
- Someone from the outside because of the toxic environment
- Proven track record
- Sees the whole student and teacher

## STUDENT COMMENTS

The students who participated in the focus groups represent a cross section of the student body. Student focus groups were held at seven different high schools.

Top Strengths Identified by Students	Top Challenges Identified by Students
Diversity of the district	Meeting the needs of a diverse population
Dedicated and passionate staff	Safety - violence and drugs
Future preparation opportunities for students	Stigma / stereotypes associated with certain schools impacts opportunities
	Lack of relevant curriculum

## STRENGTHS OF THE DISTRICT

- Good teachers who care about students
- Diversity of students and the community is a strength
- Positive sense of community and belonging
- Feel safe - SRO's and community monitors help
- Supportive administrators
- Good career and college center
- Students have access to different opportunities – College prep, Vocational, etc
  - Pathways and CTE programming are great
- Good resources for mental health
- Strong extracurricular programs
- Strong future planning support - ICAP

## CHALLENGES AND ISSUES FACING THE DISTRICT

- Need more diversity in staff and principals– to match student population
  - Need to retain teachers of color once they are hired
  - Lack of cultural competence in the staff
- Need more support in future planning – college, career planning
- Advisory is an afterthought – the financial literacy work isn't effective
- Students are overwhelmed
- Drugs are a concern
- Need a stronger focus on the arts
- Need more empathetic and inspirational school leadership
- Some teachers don't care about us and it shows in their behavior
- Increasing violence in schools – students don't feel safe
  - Student behavior is worse since COVID
  - Some of the discipline measures feel disrespectful and belittling
- Administration can appear disconnected from students
- Lack of relevant curriculum – causes students to not be motivated
  - Attendance is a problem when students aren't motivated
  - Need more on how to “survive” in the real world – Finance, etc
  - Need to revamp history curriculum – not relevant or accurate and not all backgrounds are represented
- Students are not included in decision making. They don't feel their voice matters
- Need better food options
- Removal of late start Mondays
- Teachers are overwhelmed
  - School is understaffed
  - Too much staff turnover
- High schools need to start later
- Don't understand the need for the block schedule
- Too much focus on tests and not enough on our wellbeing
- COVID caused issues that haven't been addressed
- More transition support between middle and high schools
- There is a stigma / you are stereotyped based on what school you come from and it impacts the opportunities you have in high school
  - Low expectations keep some kids out of advanced classes
  - Kids in honors and advanced classes get preference and best teachers
  - If you're not placed in an advanced class initially its nearly impossible to get into one later -If you are not on the college track you get left behind

## DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEXT SUPERINTENDENT

- Listens to all voices including students
- Open minded
- Model active involvement
- Someone who actually wants to be around students and schools
- Honest and logical
- Responsive to families and community
- Strong values and beliefs
- Thoughtful decision maker
- Someone who can show how to focus on our mental health and not just test scores
- Good problem solver – solution based
- Interact with students – be present in schools
- Passionate about their job and will focus on students
- Demonstrated strength in equity, inclusion and diversity
- Kind and gentle, empathetic
- Diverse candidate
- Someone who has a background in education
- Effective communicator
- Solution based – can get to the root of the problem
- Inspirational
- Someone who lives in Aurora – understands the community
- Someone who is here to stay – committed to APS and students
- Passionate about students – will support success for all students
- Someone who will ensure all students have equal opportunities and break the stigma / stereotyping associated with certain schools
- Be purposeful about hearing and respecting all voices

## BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS

HYA associates also interviewed each board member to gather their input on the state of the district, challenges, and what they are seeking in their next superintendent candidate.

## STRENGTHS OF THE DISTRICT

- Investment in mental health professionals;
- Wraparound services are superb;
- Family supports are sublime; and
- Creating a sense of belonging, agency, which supports the diverse spectrum of students and their individual needs.
- Board drove teacher pay increases, which came to fruition;



- Supported families and students during COVID; and
- Excellent instructional technology department/division.

## CHALLENGES AND ISSUES FACING THE DISTRICT

- Students graduate without sustainable life skills;
- Schism between administration and teachers, which negatively impacts student achievement;
- Central office processes are ineffectual, historically mundane; principals and teachers are not franchised within decision-making;
- Customer services null;
- Districts lacks marketing strategy, customer service efforts to compete with “school choice” recruitment initiatives; and
- Sustainable student retention efforts must be developed.
- Staff does not reflect the diversity of student population;
- Staff is not always emphatic to social emotional needs of students; and
- Diversity is a mantra, with no accentuality for those, who violate the rights of others

## DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEXT SUPERINTENDENT

- Compassionate;
- Respectful;
- Community oriented;
- Subjugates to the vision of governing board;
- Intellectually astute, who is willing to listen and adjust strategies; and
- Exhibits a high level of emotional intelligence; and
- Not a mere delegator, but someone who owns challenges and shares the spoils of victory.
- Leader must have an educational background;
- An emphatic leader, who can inspire and cultivate the talent within subordinates;
- A leader with a proven track record of documented achievement, successes; and
- Leader who does not require on the job training.



# AURORA

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Aurora Public Schools Survey  
for Superintendent Search

**HYA** | HAZARD  
YOUNG  
ATTEA  
ASSOCIATES

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## METHODOLOGY

The survey results contained in this document are based on HYA's research related to superintendent leadership standards. The survey addresses both district performance and desired characteristics of the superintendent in relation to the following areas:

- **Vision and Values (VV)** - The leader's ability to provide a clear and compelling vision for the future, align district programs to the broader vision of the district, and uphold high expectations for all stakeholders
- **Teaching and Learning (TL)** - The leader's ability to guide educational programs, make data-driven decisions, and implement effective instructional change
- **Community Engagement (CE)** - The leader's ability to be the voice of the district, engage with the community, and involve stakeholders in realizing the district's vision
- **Management (M)** - The leader's ability to guide operations, manage resources, recruit and retain highly effective personnel, and create an equitable accountability system for all employees

Through the understanding of stakeholder's views regarding the state of the district and the desired profile of the next superintendent, this report will help the district prioritize the desired characteristics of the superintendent in a way that will advance the priorities of the community.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Aurora Public Schools Survey for Superintendent Search was completed by 1884 stakeholders. With over half the respondents, the largest stakeholder group surveyed were parents of students attending school. Parents of students attending school represented 55.0 percent of all respondents. Over a quarter of respondents were certified/licensed staff. They made up the second most populous stakeholder group at 26.3 percent of all respondents. The third largest participant group were classified staff at seven percent of all respondents.

Regarding the State of the District, the following statements were perceived to be district strengths:

- Technology is integrated into the classroom (TL).
- Facilities are well maintained. (M)
- District technology infrastructure is sufficient to support use of technology in the classroom. (M)
- The District engages with diverse racial, cultural and socio-economic groups. (CE)
- The District employs effective teachers, administrators and support staff in its schools. (M)

The top-rated leadership profile characteristics constituents desire in a new superintendent are:

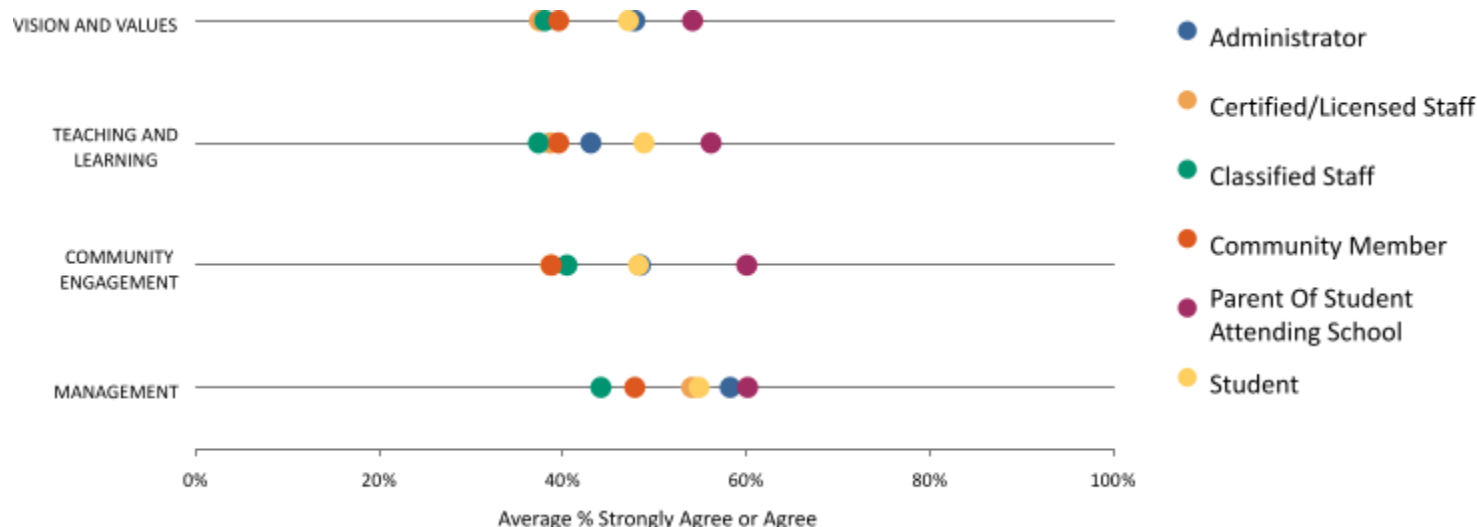
- Foster a positive, professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators (CE)
- Understand and be sensitive to the needs of a diverse student population (TL)
- Recruit, employ, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools (M)
- Demonstrate a deep understanding of educational research and emerging best practices and implement strategies (VV)
- Establish a culture of high expectations for all students and personnel (VV)

## ANALYSIS

### State of the District Summary

Respondents rated statements related to the state of the district on a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Each statement corresponds to one of the following constructs: Vision & Values, Teaching & Learning, Community Engagement, and Management. Overall results are presented below; results for individual items are reported in the appendix.

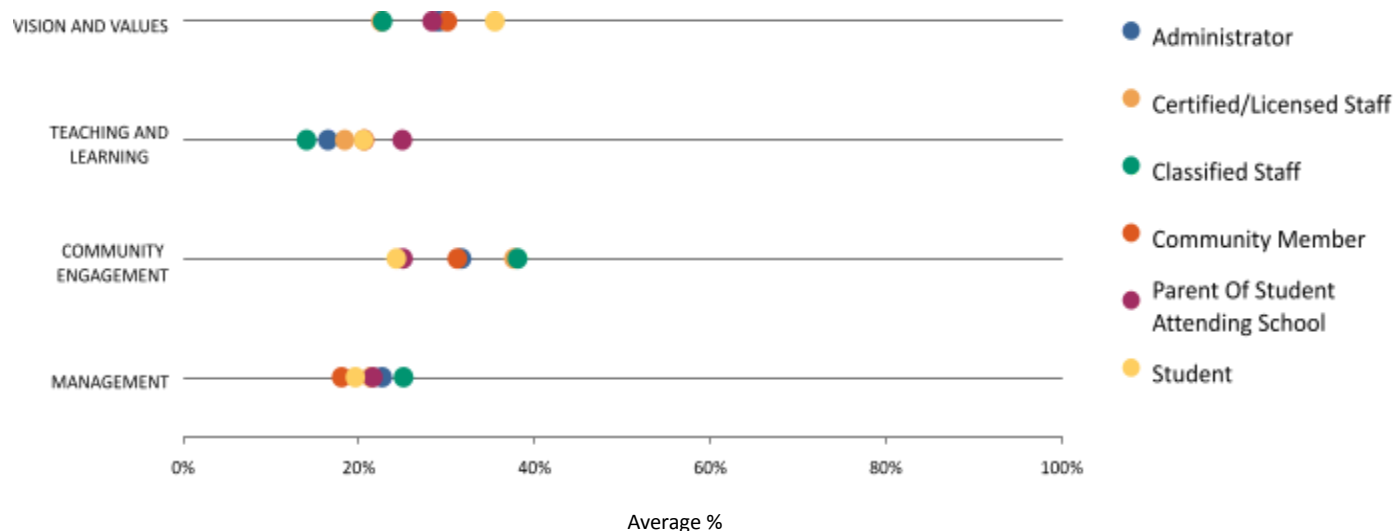
#### State of the District Results by Constituent Group



### Leadership Profile Summary

Respondents were asked to select leadership statements that are most important in selecting a new superintendent. Each statement corresponds to one of the following constructs: Vision & Values, Teaching & Learning, Community Engagement, and Management. Overall results are presented below; results for individual items are reported on the next page.









































































#### Leadership Profile Results by Constituent Group



## LEADERSHIP PROFILE DETAILS

Respondents were asked to select 4 statements they deem most important in selecting a new superintendent. Results by constituent group are presented below. Each constituent group's top 4 most frequently selected statements are depicted by blue cells (reading the chart vertically); consensus is illustrated as multiple constituent groups selected the same statements (reading the chart horizontally).

 Top 4

	All (1884)	Administrator (102)	Certified/ Licensed Staff (495)	Classified Staff (126)	Community Member (96)	Parent Of Student Attending School (1036)	Student (29)
Foster a positive, professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators	48%						
Understand and be sensitive to the needs of a diverse student population	45%						
Recruit, employ, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools	41%						
Demonstrate a deep understanding of educational research and emerging best practices and implement strategies	40%						
Establish a culture of high expectations for all students and personnel	37%						
Be visible throughout the District and actively engaged in community life	32%						
Provide transparent communication	31%						
Effectively plan and manage the long-term financial health of the District	23%						
Provide a clear, compelling vision for the future	22%						
Integrate personalized educational opportunities into the instructional program	20%						
Provide guidance for district-wide curriculum and instruction	16%						
Be an effective manager of the District's day-to-day operations	15%						

## APPENDIX I: STATE OF THE DISTRICT ITEM ANALYSIS

Percentages of parents, students, administrators, teachers, community members, and other constituents selecting 5 (Strongly Agree) or 4 (Agree) for each item are presented below.

	All (1884)	Administrator (102)	Certified/ Licensed Staff (495)	Classified Staff (126)	Community Member (96)	Parent Of Student Attending School (1036)	Student (29)
<b>OVERALL</b>							
Please rate the overall quality of education in the District.	37%	25%	23%	30%	29%	47%	31%
<b>VISION AND VALUES</b>							
The District provides a clear, compelling shared vision for the future.	52%	54%	43%	44%	45%	57%	48%
The District is heading in the right direction.	42%	40%	26%	31%	34%	53%	38%
The District has high performance standards for all students.	45%	38%	39%	33%	27%	50%	52%
The District makes decisions based on information from data and research.	44%	40%	33%	37%	40%	51%	48%
The District is working to close achievement and opportunity gaps.	49%	65%	42%	38%	44%	53%	48%
<b>TEACHING AND LEARNING</b>							
The District provides a well-rounded educational experience for all students.	41%	33%	22%	31%	33%	53%	45%
Teachers personalize instructional strategies to address individual learning needs.	53%	34%	57%	37%	42%	57%	48%
District schools are safe.	38%	49%	30%	29%	29%	44%	28%
The social and emotional needs of students are being addressed.	43%	43%	29%	31%	35%	51%	41%
Students are on track to be ready for the next grade and ultimately college and career ready.	34%	16%	12%	21%	29%	48%	52%
Technology is integrated into the classroom.	75%	78%	77%	67%	54%	77%	79%
<b>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</b>							
The District engages the community as a partner to improve the school system.	49%	48%	33%	37%	39%	60%	41%
There is transparent communication from the District.	42%	35%	24%	31%	26%	54%	38%
The District engages with diverse racial, cultural and socio-economic groups.	58%	62%	56%	50%	46%	61%	66%
<b>MANAGEMENT</b>							
Facilities are well maintained.	64%	75%	56%	50%	53%	69%	55%
The District is fiscally responsible.	41%	43%	28%	28%	47%	47%	41%
The District employs effective teachers, administrators and support staff in its schools.	58%	61%	60%	43%	44%	59%	62%
Employees are held accountable to high standards.	53%	43%	62%	39%	39%	53%	38%
District technology infrastructure is sufficient to support use of technology in the classroom.	59%	67%	57%	52%	42%	61%	76%

## APPENDIX II: LEADERSHIP PROFILE ITEM ANALYSIS

Respondents were asked to select 4 statements they deem most important in selecting a new superintendent. Results are presented below by constituent group.

	All (1884)	Administrator (102)	Certified/ Licensed Staff (495)	Classified Staff (126)	Community Member (96)	Parent Of Student Attending School (1036)	Student (29)
Foster a positive, professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators	48%	61%	71%	58%	39%	36%	38%
Understand and be sensitive to the needs of a diverse student population	45%	40%	46%	35%	47%	46%	45%
Recruit, employ, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools	41%	38%	44%	36%	34%	42%	38%
Demonstrate a deep understanding of educational research and emerging best practices and implement strategies	40%	42%	42%	26%	36%	40%	52%
Establish a culture of high expectations for all students and personnel	37%	36%	30%	35%	42%	40%	41%
Be visible throughout the District and actively engaged in community life	32%	27%	36%	40%	41%	29%	31%
Provide transparent communication	31%	32%	37%	42%	34%	27%	21%
Effectively plan and manage the long-term financial health of the District	23%	37%	26%	31%	17%	20%	21%
Provide a clear, compelling vision for the future	22%	32%	15%	22%	31%	24%	38%
Integrate personalized educational opportunities into the instructional program	20%	10%	12%	7%	17%	26%	24%
Provide guidance for district-wide curriculum and instruction	16%	13%	12%	10%	11%	19%	7%
Be an effective manager of the District's day-to-day operations	15%	11%	11%	25%	15%	17%	14%



### APPENDIX III: - BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DISTRICT

Aurora Public Schools believe that learning opportunities should be as varied and diverse as the world our students live in. Every day, we work with our community to break down barriers so that students can engage to their fullest potential and shape their own paths forward. When we advocate alongside students and their families, the future belongs to everyone.

The APS Board of Education is a group of citizens elected by the voters to provide leadership and establish policies for the school district. The seven-member Board is elected at large. Members serve four-year terms and receive no monetary compensation. The Board follows a student outcomes focused governance model.

Under this model, the APS Board adopted its set of [results and limitations](#) in September, 2022. Results reflect what the community wants its students to know and be able to do while limitations reflect the community's values for how the school system will behave as it seeks to accomplish the results. While the school board exists to represent the vision and values of the community, the job of the superintendent is to implement the vision and values of the community as described to them by the board via the results and limitations.

**APS 2026: Faces of the Future** is the district's strategic plan, which builds on the success of APS 2020 (the district's previous strategic plan). Its vision is that ***every student shapes a successful future***. The APS Board of Education and Leadership Team gathered feedback from students, staff, families, community and business members to develop APS 2026.

There are **63 schools in APS serving more than 38,000 students**: four (4) child development centers, 25 elementary schools, seven (7) P-8 / K-8 schools, six (6) middle schools, one (1) grades 6-12 academy, six (6) high schools, one (1) vocational/technical college, one (1) gifted and talented K-8 school, 11 charter schools and one (1) home school support program.

#### Student and District demographics are as follows:

Native American	0.7%
Asian	4.9%
Black	17.9%
Hispanic	56.7%
White	13.4%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	1.0%
Two or More Races	5.1%

- APS students come from more than 130 countries and speak more than 160 languages.
- 42.0% of APS students are second language learners, with 77.8% of them Spanish-speakers.
- 74.2% of APS students receive free or reduced lunch.
- 13.4% of APS students attend special education programs.
- 4.9% of APS students are identified as gifted and talented.

General fund budget for 2022-23 is \$473 million. 77 cents of every dollar from the APS operating budget goes directly to support the instructional program.



In alignment with the district's strategic plan, Blueprint APS was developed to address specific needs in the school community.

APS as well as districts across the Denver metro area are experiencing sharp enrollment declines. Enrollment declines negatively impact school district budgets. In order to address its significant enrollment shift, APS proactively began planning for the future with *Blueprint APS*.

*Blueprint APS* is about providing our children with the necessary resources, schools and learning opportunities to meet the challenges of the future. This long-term plan focuses on strengthening Aurora's educational programs and ensuring the community has the right buildings and resources to serve students into the future. *Blueprint APS* has been shaped with community voice and input starting in 2018. The APS Board of Education directed implementation of the plan starting in 2019. (You can view this information in the [Blueprint APS archives](#))

### **Community Voice, Community Need, Community Choice**

Aurora community members voiced strong support for more choice when it comes to their children's education. In addition, it is critically important for students to have more real world experiences at school that make learning exciting and engaging. *Blueprint APS* provides new choice options through a regional system, offering both magnet schools and boundary schools. In addition, APS will focus on creating more P-8 schools that serve students from preschool through 8th grade. Thanks to *Blueprint APS*, students will be able to choose to attend a specialized magnet school or a boundary school. A magnet school has a specific academic focus or program that engages students to learn in new ways and develop unique skill sets. A boundary school offers more traditional education programs, sports and activities, serving all students within their boundaries.

*Blueprint APS* also focuses on improving the district’s educational facilities through building, remodeling, and repurposing schools and buildings to meet the needs of our students and community. Addressing the future needs of our facilities will allow APS to direct more funding to choice options and strengthen educational programs for students.

*Blueprint APS* is not a new strategic plan. Rather, it is a plan focused on our facilities and educational systems that will support the ongoing and existing implementation of our current strategic plan, [APS 2026](#), and future strategic plans.

APS is currently in **Phase 3** of *Blueprint APS*, which is the *Implementation Phase*. **Phase 3** includes the development of our [Regions and Specializations](#), the creation of [Magnet Schools](#) and the [Repurposing of schools and sites](#). Please review the latest materials on this site that detail the priorities, framework and process for **Phase 3** (*You can view information on the previous two phases in the [Blueprint APS archives](#)*).

For more information visit the district website at [aurorak12.org](http://aurorak12.org).