



LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT

Camden City
School District
June 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) in June 2025 for the successor State Superintendent of the Camden City School District. The data contained herein were obtained from input the HYA consultants received when they met with individuals, focus groups or in community wide meetings and from the results of the online survey completed by stakeholders. The surveys, interviews, and focus groups and open meetings were structured to gather input to assist the Commissioner and Advisory Board in determining the primary characteristics desired in the new superintendent. Additionally, the stakeholder interviews, focus groups and open meetings were utilized to collect information regarding the strengths of the District and some of the challenges that it will be facing in the coming years.

Participation

The numbers of participants, by stakeholder group, in the two methods of data gathering are listed below:

Group	Personal interviews or focus groups	Online Survey
Advisory Board	8	
Building level administrators	20	24
Central office administrators	4	
Faculty	20	112
Bargaining Unit Leaders	7	
Teaching and Learning	13	
Business & Non-profits	4	
Operations & Facilities	13	
Community	90+/-	37
Support Staff (non-certificated)	19	35
Support Staff (certificated)	24	
Parents	2	164

Students	20 +/-	15
Faith-based leaders	1	
Total	245	387

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 are not a scientific sampling, nor should they 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 attention.

STRENGTHS OF THE DISTRICT

Among the most frequent strengths perceived and discussed by focus group participants, in individual interviews, and as reflected in the survey, is the rich diverse cultural history, the close knit, multigenerational community, the resiliency of the community, dedicated staff, and the students.

CCSD community stakeholders who participated in the focus groups pride themselves in the rich history and diverse population of their residents. The school district reflects this diversity in its student enrollment which provides opportunities for students to explore other cultures, backgrounds, and value systems. Also, as indicated on the survey, the district engages with diverse racial, cultural and socio-economic groups. Focus groups attendees also stated that the engaged community enables a family-like atmosphere to exist within its neighborhoods. These neighborhoods provide an inclusive and tight-knit environment which some alum reported as their reason for remaining in Camden.

Focus groups also emphasized that Camden's neighborhood schools are its beacon. Camden residents are highly involved in the schools and schools' activities. CCSD boasts of an array of programs. Early childhood, Rise Academy, Star Academy, performing arts, and student choice of high school electives were

considered points of pride. Group attendees also mention their pride in the new Camden City High School and the expected new opening of Eastside High School.

Student voice, student talents, community partnerships, and the community's resilience were also considered strengths within the district. Students, staff, and community members indicated that they work passionately to support each other and incorporate a whole child approach to education. Per survey results, teachers personalize instructional strategies to address individual learning needs. Additionally, per the survey results, CCSD has successfully integrated technology into the learning environment and their schools are perceived as safe havens for students and families.

Despite the challenges presented in the following section, the Camden City School District has significant foundational pillars on which to continually improve. These include a diverse cultural history, robust arts/arts/music/theater and CTE programs, dedicated staff, passionate stakeholder engagement, and an overall desire to propel Camden City School District toward local control.

CHALLENGES AND ISSUES FACING THE DISTRICT

Concern among students, staff, Advisory Board members and community members is the desire for local control of the school system. Understanding that much work is needed to reach this goal, there is an ongoing and ever present frustration that without a clear vision and strategic plan, this goal may be unrealized. CCSD is one school system within a three tiered portfolio of schools in the City of Camden. Competing with Renaissance and charter schools, while under New Jersey DOE control, has been a bane of CCSD's community's challenge and frustration.

Notwithstanding the competition, CCSD also remains a school district in transition. At community forums, attendees expressed concern regarding the fiscal challenges the district faces and that this should be one of the highest priorities for CCSD. Budget challenges are complicated by the need for staffing to be commensurate with the actual enrollment and the student body served. Several stakeholders indicated that addressing potential cronyism and nepotism would be a critical step to assist the school district in moving toward the right direction.

Due to these challenges, a lack of trust is pervasive throughout the district and community. The ability to reestablish trust and unity amongst and between

Camden's individual and unique neighborhoods will be a priority for the incoming state superintendent. Camden's tight knit communities are highly engaged and passionate about their schools.


Inconsistencies across the district require a deep knowledge of and demonstrated results with special education, equitable access, attendance, mental health, safety & security and compliance requirements. Ensuring that transparent communication and accountability occur in all areas and departments of the system while instilling a spirit of collaboration and cooperation that builds trust is not only needed but is a priority of stakeholders. Accelerating academic achievement and building on recent growth measures will be paramount.

Promoting Camden schools amongst the portfolio of school systems will also be front and center for many residents. As indicated by stakeholders, celebrating CCSD successes within the neighborhoods, the community at large, and throughout the state is needed to recharge the schools' supporters, address naysayers, and to compete for student enrollment.

The successor state superintendent will need a clear vision for equity and inclusion, educational excellence for all students, talent recruitment and financial stewardship. CCSD boasts a rich and robust history, therefore, the successor state superintendent will need to honor the work of the past, while creating an innovative, forward-thinking platform aimed at propelling CCSD forward. There is a collective desire for a financially astute, interpersonal, and innovative educational leader who can build relationships and galvanize stakeholders towards making sure all learners succeed.

HYA, the New Jersey Commissioner of Education and the Advisory Board intend to meet the challenge of finding an individual who possesses most of the skills and character traits required to meet the needs of the district. The search team will seek a new superintendent who can work with the Camden City Advisory Board and Commissioner of Education to provide the leadership needed to continue to raise academic standards and student performance, while meeting the unique needs of each of its schools and communities.

The search team would like to thank all the participants who attended focus groups meetings or completed the online survey and the CCSD staff members who



assisted with our meetings, particularly Tonya Beaman and Sheena Yera who organized and promoted the focus groups.