



Superintendent Search Student Survey Analysis
As Presented to the Asheville City Board of Education on September 23, 2019

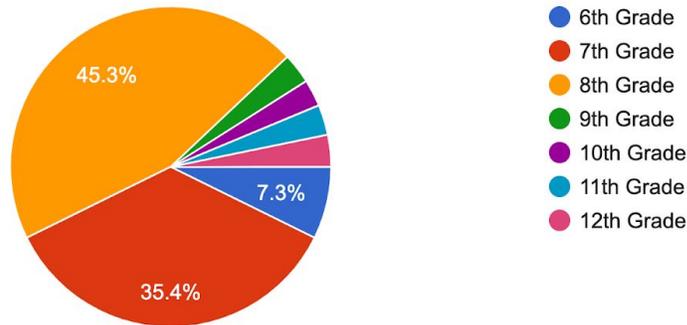
Section 1) About You

The Superintendent Search Student Survey was open from September 10th - 16th. During that time, 590 middle and high school students ensured their voices were heard.

From their results, you will see most responders were 7th and 8th Graders, respectively yielding 35.4% and 45.3% of the collected results. As for the remaining grades: 6th Grade - 7.3%, 9th Grade - 3.1%, 10th Grade - 2.7%, 11th Grade - 3.1% and 12th Grade - 3.2%.

I am in the

590 responses



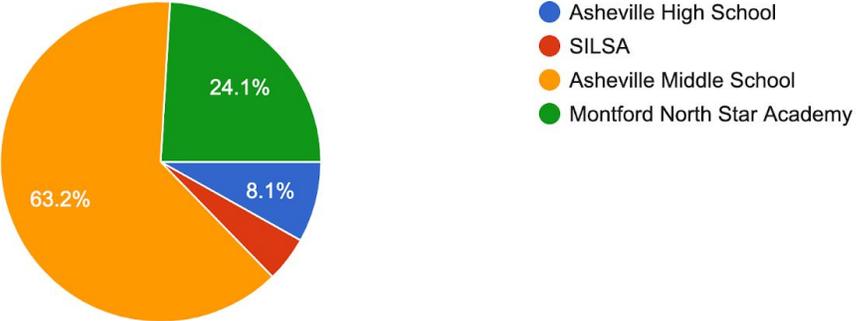
These percentages break down to:

- 6th Grade - 43 responses
- 7th Grade - 209 responses
- 8th Grade - 267 responses
- 9th Grade - 18 responses
- 10th Grade - 16 responses
- 11th Grade - 18 responses
- 12th Grade - 19 responses

Additionally, the majority of students who completed the survey attend Asheville Middle School and have been part of the district for 7 - 9 years.

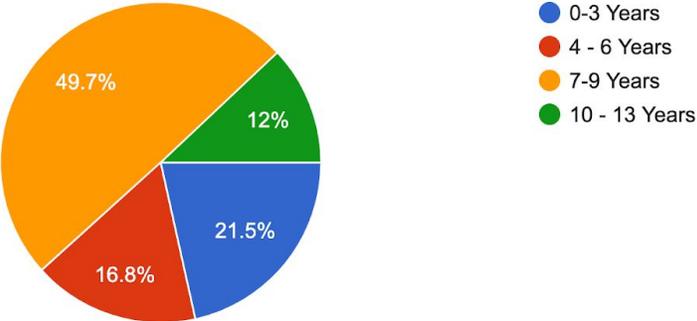
I attend

590 responses



I have been an Asheville City Schools student for

590 responses

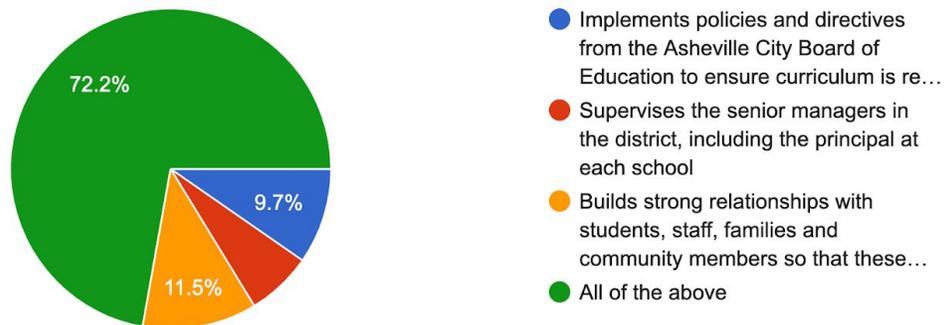


Section 2) Roles of a Superintendent

For the second section of their survey, the Asheville City Board of Education asked our students what they think make up the roles of a superintendent. Listing examples like (a) *implements policies and directives from the Asheville City Board of Education to ensure curriculum is relevant and rigorous for all students*, (b) *supervises the senior managers in the district, including the principal at each school*, (c) *builds strong relationships with students, staff, families and community members so that these stakeholders understand and support both the district's vision and mission*, as well as (d) *all of the above*, the purpose of this question was to not only give our students ideas of what a superintendent does but also allow them to start thinking about which roles they believe to be most important. 72.2% of students selected (d) *all of the above*.

Which do you think best describes a superintendent's job? Please select one.

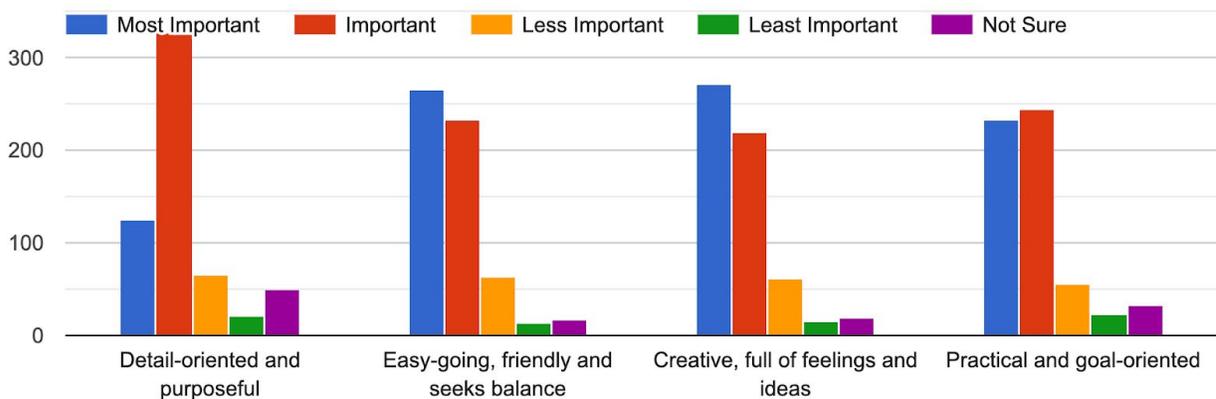
590 responses



Section 3) Superintendent Characteristics

For the third section of their survey, the Asheville City Board of Education asked our students to determine which characteristics are most important for our next leader to possess. Based on these results, our next superintendent should be creative, full of feelings and ideas.

How important is each of these characteristics to you?



Breaking this down further, results yielded:

- **(Listed 1st, Ranked 4th) Detail-oriented and purposeful**
 - Most Important - 125
 - Important - 327
 - Less Important - 66
 - Least Important - 21
 - Not Sure - 51
- **(Listed 2nd, Ranked 2nd) Easy-going, friendly and seeks balance**
 - Most Important - 265
 - Important - 232
 - Less Important - 63
 - Least Important - 13
 - Not Sure - 17

- **(Listed 3rd, Ranked 1st) Creative, full of feeling and ideas**
 - Most Important - 272
 - Important - 220
 - Less Important - 62
 - Least Important - 16
 - Not Sure - 20

- **(Listed Fourth, Ranked 3rd) Practical and goal-oriented**
 - Most Important - 233
 - Important - 244
 - Less Important - 56
 - Least Important - 24
 - Not Sure - 33

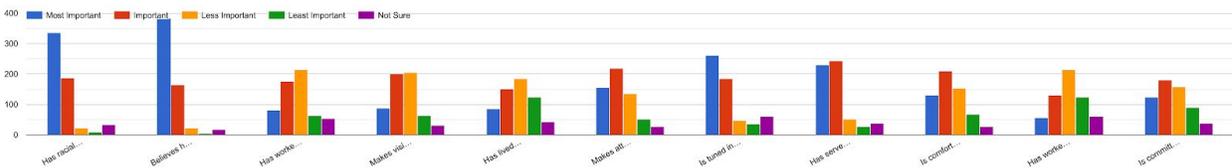
As a reminder, when our staff and community’s feedback were presented, they ranked these same characteristics. A side by side comparison yields:

	Students	Staff	Community
1st	Creative, full of feeling and ideas	Practical and goal-oriented	Practical and goal-oriented
2nd	Easy-going, friendly and seeks balance	Easy-going, friendly and seeks balance	Detail-oriented and purposeful
3rd	Practical and goal-oriented	Detail-oriented and purposeful	Easy-going, friendly and seeks balance
4th	Detail-oriented and purposeful	Creative, full of feeling and ideas	Creative, full of feeling and ideas

Section 4) Superintendent Qualifications:

During the Superintendent Qualifications portion of the Student Survey, the Asheville City Board of Education named 11 qualifications and asked participants their thoughts. Of the 11, *believes hearing from students is important* (383) ranked highest, followed by *has racial equity training* (337), *is tuned into LGBTQ+ issues* (261) and *has served children and adults experiencing poverty* (230).

How important is each of these qualifications to you?



Breaking this down further, results yielded:

- **(Listed 1st, Ranked 2nd) Has racial equity training**
 - Most Important - 337
 - Important - 187
 - Less Important - 23
 - Least Important - 9
 - Not Sure - 34

- **(Listed 2nd, Ranked 1st) Believes hearing from students is important**
 - Most Important - 383
 - Important - 164
 - Less Important - 22
 - Least Important - 4
 - Not Sure - 17

- **(Listed 3rd, Ranked 10th) Has worked as a Superintendent**
 - Most Important - 81
 - Important - 176
 - Less Important - 215
 - Least Important - 64
 - Not Sure - 54

- **(Listed 4th, Ranked 8th) Makes visiting classrooms a priority**
 - Most Important - 89
 - Important - 200
 - Less Important - 206
 - Least Important - 63
 - Not Sure - 32

- **(Listed 5th, Ranked 9th) Has lived or worked in Asheville**
 - Most Important - 86
 - Important - 152
 - Less Important - 186
 - Least Important - 124
 - Not Sure - 42

- **(Listed 6th, Ranked 5th) Makes attending student events - such as plays, band performances and athletic games - a priority**
 - Most Important - 155
 - Important - 220
 - Less Important - 135
 - Least Important - 52
 - Not Sure - 28

- **(Listed 7th, Ranked 3rd) Is tuned into LGBTQ+ issues**
 - Most Important - 261
 - Important - 184
 - Less Important - 48
 - Least Important - 36
 - Not Sure - 60

- **(Listed 8th, Ranked 4th) Has served children and adults experiencing poverty**
 - Most Important - 230
 - Important - 243
 - Less Important - 51
 - Least Important - 27
 - Not Sure - 39

- **(Listed 9th, Ranked 6th) Is comfortable using social media as a primary communications tool**
 - Most Important - 131
 - Important - 211
 - Less Important - 153
 - Least Important - 67
 - Not Sure - 28

- **(Listed 10th, Ranked 11th) Has worked as a principal**
 - Most Important - 57
 - Important - 132
 - Less Important - 215
 - Least Important - 125
 - Not Sure - 61

- **(Listed 11th, Ranked 7th) Is committed to learning Asheville's history**
 - Most Important - 124
 - Important - 181
 - Less Important - 157
 - Least Important - 90
 - Not Sure - 38

As a reminder, when our staff's feedback was presented they had 15 characteristics to rank, while the community had 13. A side by side comparison yields:

	Students	Staff	Community
1st	Believes hearing from students is important	Has worked with students in a school setting as a teacher, counselor, behavioral specialist, other	Has worked with students in a school setting as a teacher, counselor, behavioral specialist, other
2nd	Has racial equity training	Has served children and adults experiencing poverty	Has served children and adults experiencing poverty
3rd	Is tuned into LGBTQ+ issues	Has lived or worked in Asheville	Has racial equity training
4th	Has served children and adults experiencing poverty	Is committed to learning Asheville's history	Has cultural awareness training
5th	Makes attending student events - such as plays, band performances and athletic games - a priority	Has racial equity training	Is committed to learning Asheville's history
6th	Is comfortable using social media as a primary communications tool	Has worked as a principal/Has cultural awareness training (tied)	Has implemented major change
7th	Is committed to learning Asheville's history		Has lived or worked in Asheville
8th	Makes visiting classrooms a priority	Has trauma-informed practices training	Has worked in a North Carolina public school

9th	Has lived or worked in Asheville	Has worked in a North Carolina public school	Has a master's degree or doctorate
10th	Has worked as a Superintendent	Has worked as a Superintendent	Has worked as a Superintendent
11th	Has worked as a principal	Has a master's degree or doctorate	Has worked as an Assistant Superintendent
12th		Has implemented major change	Has public service experiences in social services, public health, the military
13th		Has worked as an Assistant Superintendent	Has leadership experience in the business sector
14th		Has public service experiences in social services, public health, the military	
15th		Has leadership experience in the business sector	

Section 5) In Your Own Words:

Section 5 included three open-ended questions.

The first gave students the chance to answer *What would you like our next superintendent to know, have accomplished or have as a skill set or trait?* Of the 590 survey takers, we received 492 open-ended responses to this question.

When describing our next superintendent in one or two words, common themes included:

Personable	Fair	Fun
Good Communicator	Understand Students	Creative
Open-minded	Shows Empathy	Resourceful
Humorous	Friendly	Committed
Listener	Approachable	Mediator

Desired Characteristics: Additionally, using quotes from community members, the most predominant/desired skill sets, experiences and traits included:

1) Listen to Students

- a) “They should know that they need to respect student opinions and not just do things because they think that they’re right.”
- b) “The next superintendent should listen to the students as the school and listen to what they have to say about what should change.”
- c) “I would like them to be open minded about all topics and allow students to have input on what is going on within our district.”
- d) “He should know that working with students is a good way to improve the school system.”

2) Have LGBTQ+ Knowledge to Ensure All Students Feel Safe

- a) “They need to support all communities, races, genders and sexual orientations. they need to know what’s happening and support the kids that are going through hard times.”
- b) “Make sure that students are comfortable in their environment and know they will not be judged. I would like them to attend some LGBTQ+ events.”
- c) “Equality for racially diverse and LBGTQ+ students throughout Asheville City Schools.”

3) Understand Asheville’s Diversity

- a) “I would like our next superintendent to know that Asheville is full of diverse people with lots of different experiences and views.”
- b) “We are not all the same and many need to learn in different ways.”
- c) “Get involved in the community.”

4) Know That Your Leadership Style Matters

- a) Be very kind and open-minded to new ideas. Be able to hear everyone’s voice. Seek closure, and help every student grow as an individual.”
- b) “Have empathy for the kids and teachers.”
- c) “Be friendly but not fake friendly.”
- d) “I want the next superintendent to want to fix the cracks in the school system instead of throwing some duct tape on them and pretending they don’t matter.”

5) Be Understanding

- a) “I would like the superintendent to understand what students have gone through.”
- b) “I would like he/she to know how to relate to all students and try to focus on things happening outside the school. Help us accomplish more than we think we can. Make sure you establish a good, profound relationship with students and parents.”
- c) “I would like for the superintendent to have worked in the classroom with students before and know what kids need to achieve to be successful in the classroom and at school.
- d) “I want our next superintendent to know what it is truly like to be a student in the Asheville City Schools system.”

As a reminder, when our staff and community’s feedback were presented, they yielded eight topics of discussion. A side by side comparison yields:

	Students	Staff	Community
1st	Listen to Students	Be invested in our community	Is now, or is willing to become...rooted, knowledgeable and invested in our community
2nd	Have LGBTQ+ Knowledge to Ensure All Students Feel Safe	Engage with staff and actively seek their valuable input	Tuned Into Equity
3rd	Understand Asheville’s Diversity	Motivate and Inspire Through Your Leadership Style	Effective communication and community-building skills
4th	Know Your Leadership Style Matters	Be genuine	Knowledge and skills to address the opportunity gap
5th	Be Understanding	Address Inequities	Proven Track Record/Experience
6th		Be Visible	Believer in school-based management
7th		Clarify central office roles and responsibilities	Versed in effective pedagogy
8th		Empower Schools	Leadership Style

The second open-ended question asked *How do you think the new superintendent can develop more meaningful relationships with students, parents, faculty and administrators?* Of the 590 survey takers, we received 510 open-ended responses to this question.

Responses Included:

- “By communicating with students who are aware of issues that need to be solved for the school and listening to how they can help solve them to their best knowledge.”
- “Be present at school-sponsored events; come to classrooms, and encourage parents and students to reach out.”

- “Has the ability to show that they are also human and relatable. They should show they are not always perfect, and mistakes are acceptable if we learn from them.”
- “Be more present at events, and actually make connections with community members.”
- “Come around schools and give speeches”
- “Meet families.”
- “By just starting conversations with us.”
- “Be present at school events, and try to get to know the community and the people in it. They can show their support for our schools by caring about even the little things.”
- “Try to get to know the students and their names.”
- “Engage with ALL students.”
- “We can have a fun assembly and get to know them as a class.”
- “By checking in with us and being friendly in the hallway.”
- “Attend band performances.”
- “I think hosting a fun meeting event so that she/he can get to know us and Asheville.”
- “Join the community.”
- “Communicate to students through email.”
- “Set up potlucks for each grade, and be active to the schools’ social media pages.”
- “Use social media.”
- “Visit student sporting events, and make jokes with them.”
- “Be around schools more.”
- “Give more opportunities for face to face meetings with parents and students.”
- “Talk with staff and teachers just for fun.”
- “Come to schools and eat lunch with us.”
- “Set up a fun event so we can get to know the superintendent.”
- “Be relatable.”
- “Know my name.”
- “Spend more time at schools. When you don’t spend time with the students you just become a name with no face.”
- “I think that being able to effectively delegate tasks and important decisions to administrators, teachers, parents and even students would be a great show of trust that would greatly improve the connection between the superintendent and the people they serve.”
- “I think the superintendent should spend a day as a student on our campus to see things from our perspective.”

The third and final open-ended question asked students *What issues do you think are most important for the new superintendent to address?* Of the 590 survey takers, 436 students responded.

Common themes included:

Lack of diversity in advanced / honors classes	Unstructured homerooms	Teacher Pay	Frequent Lockdowns	School Safety
Weather and the number of snow days we've had	Lunch Offerings	Student Success	Bullying	Student Relationships
Balanced curriculum for ALL students	Increase teachers' tolerances toward differing belief systems	Racial inequities	Discipline	Communication
Racial and economic biases	Discuss the achievement gap	More diverse staff	The Dress Code	For it to be okay to be different than everyone else
Mental health support	Lack of arts funding	LGBTQ rights and issues	Hearing all students' opinions	Kids dealing with anxiety, abuse, poverty, etc.