



CLEVELAND  
METROPOLITAN  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## Cleveland Metropolitan School District CEO Search

Stakeholder Feedback Summary  
Board Briefing - February 7, 2023



# Our Shared Purpose

Our goal is to **attract**, recruit, screen, and select the next Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District.

Our purpose is to lead a CEO search process **that is inclusive and transparent**, guided by the input of the **CMSD** community, and designed to mitigate bias every step of the way.

# CEO Search Timeline



# 3 Primary Activities for Community Input

## STAFF & COMMUNITY SURVEY

3,700+ respondents who well-represent the CMSD community

Our goal was to maximize participation of community voice in the process

## 3 COMMUNITY GATHERINGS

226 participants in all 3 regions of the city

Focus was to engage in conversations with the community

Breakout groups allowed for candid and deep discussion

## INTERVIEWS & FOCUS GROUPS

63 1:1 interviews and focus groups with 1,180+ participants; teachers, students, principals, staff, union leaders, City Council and community partners

Enabled deeper discussions by role

# Our Community Gatherings

## We asked the following guiding questions:

1. **What do you love most** about CMSD that will be important for the CEO to champion and protect?
2. What do you see as **the top 2 to 3 areas of improvement for CMSD** that the CEO will need to lead us through during the next 3 to 5 years?
3. **What skills or experiences will be most important** for our CEO to have and bring to be successful in this role?
4. **Is there anything we didn't discuss** that is important for us to know? *Or* anything you feel a potential CEO must know or understand about CMSD?
5. What actions would demonstrate that **what you shared with us today made a difference** in this process?
6. **Is there one question you would want us to ask** a potential CEO candidate?

# Stakeholder + Community Engagement



63

## MEETINGS

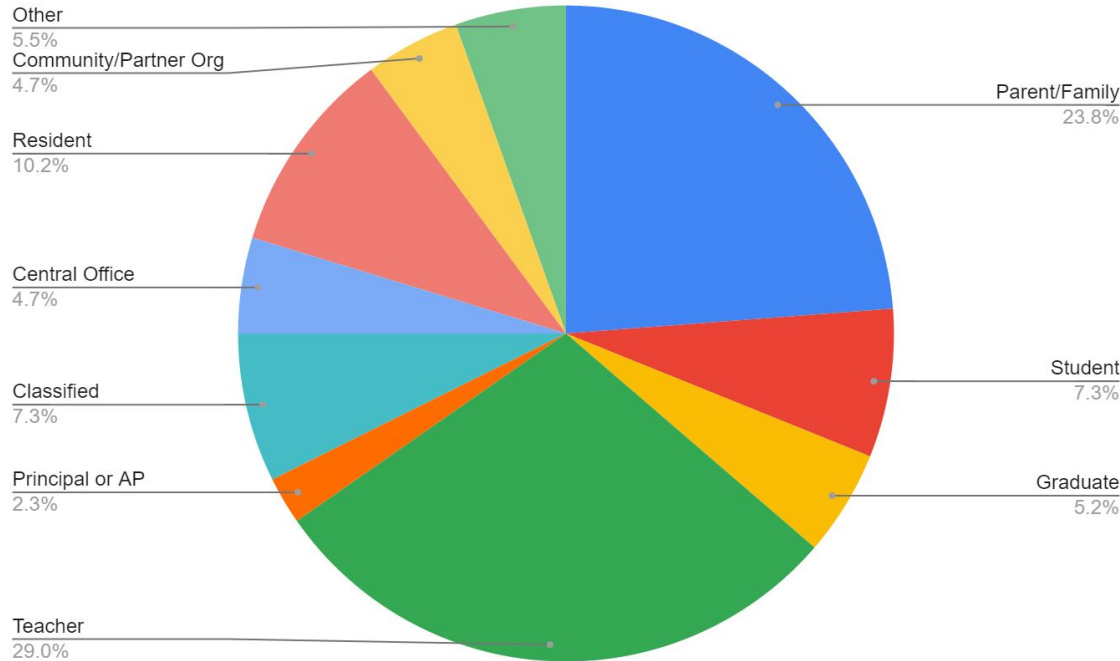
Community gatherings, focus groups, 1-on-1s, and board member interviews (including 3 live forums).

1180

## PARTICIPANTS

Parents, students, teachers, school leaders, district staff, community leaders, and program and foundation partners.

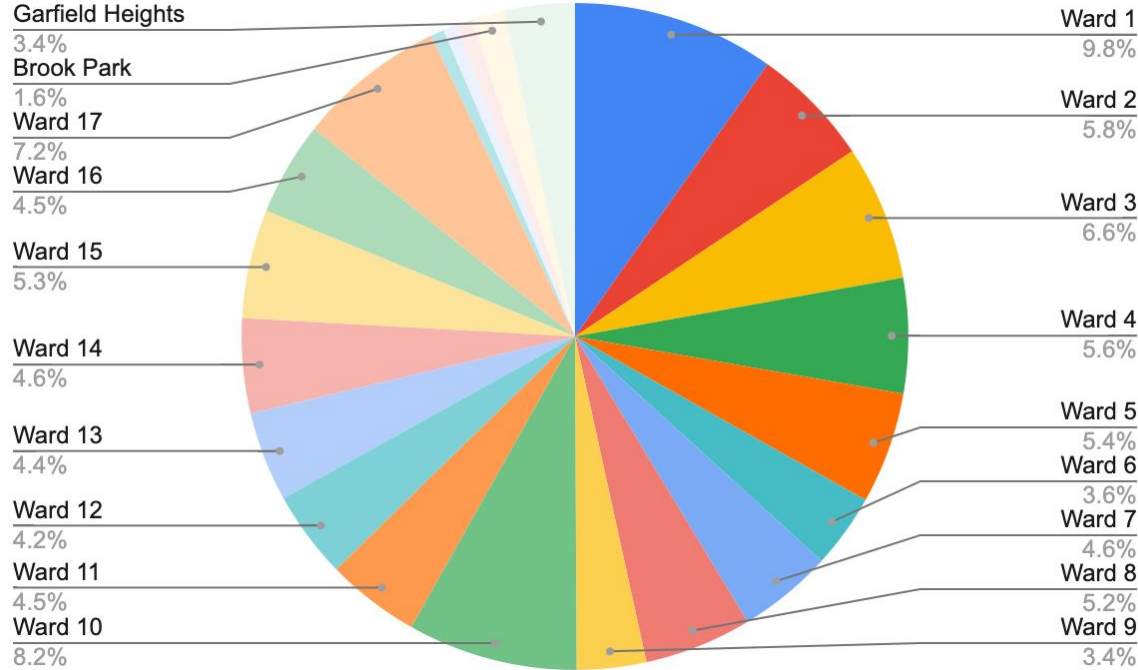
# Outstanding Community Engagement



3,700+ responses were submitted to the online survey,\* including:

- 307 students
- 998 parents
- 218 graduates
- 1,217 teachers
- 98 principals & APs
- 308 Classified
- 198 Central Office
- 426 residents
- 196 Community partners
- 229 Other

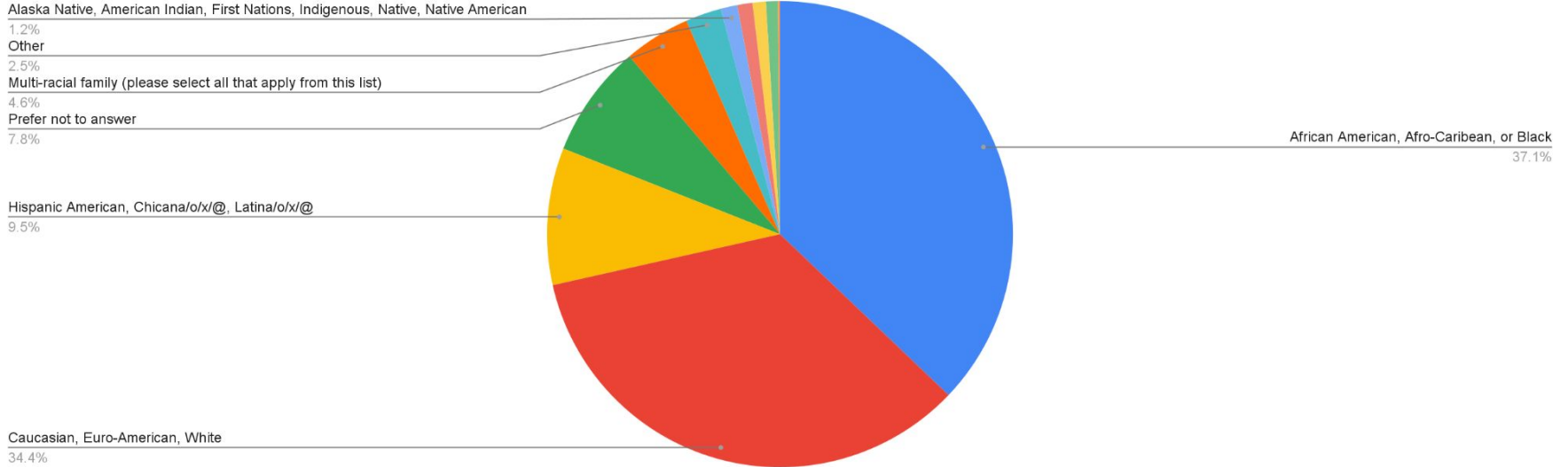
# Balanced Representation Across the Community



All 17 Cleveland wards and neighboring communities were represented amongst the survey respondents.



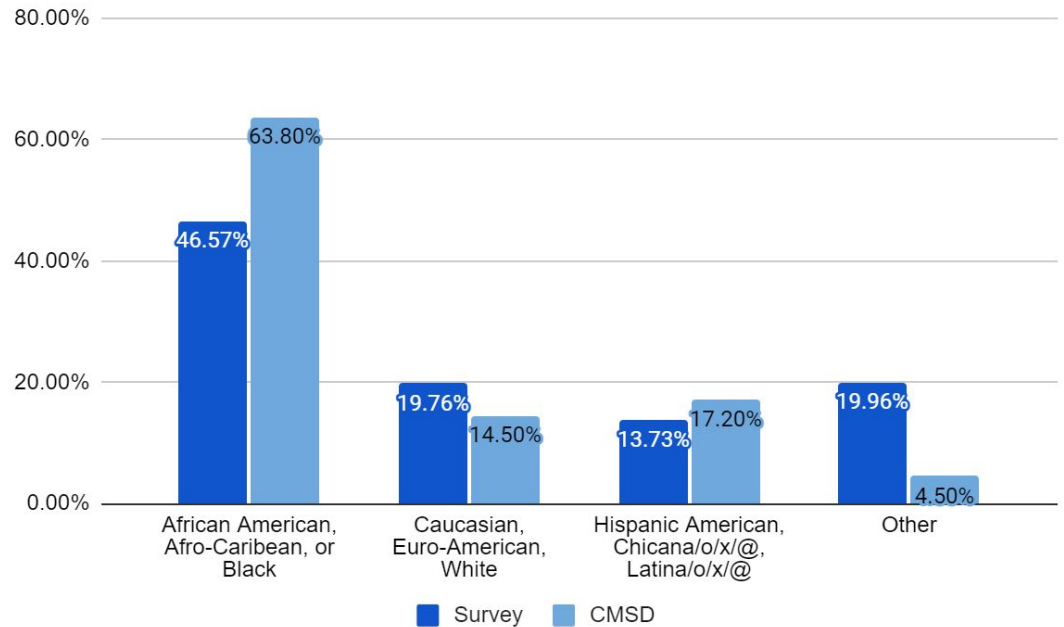
# Diverse Racial Representation



The demographics of the CMSD survey respondents were diverse, and every school had representation.

# Diverse Representation

The demographics of the CMSD survey respondents are similar to the demographics of CMSD students and families.



# Stakeholder + Community Engagement

## WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED SO FAR

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Diverse ideas. Honest, vocal, and candid points of view.

# CMSD - Programs and Experiences to Champion and Protect

From the perspective of CMSD stakeholders, the following positive trends surfaced during multiple sessions:

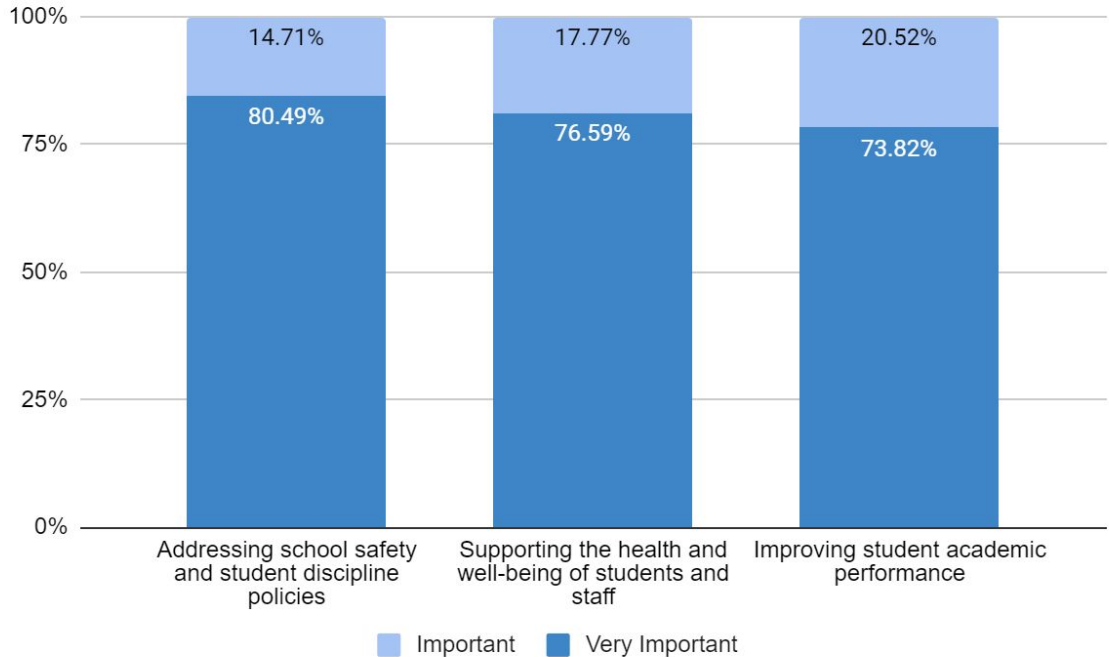
- **Championing school choice** for families and students. **“The fact that my child is able to chart their own path by selecting the school that best meets their needs and keeps them interested in school means the world to me. The new CEO must make sure this practice continues for the sake of our district.”**
- **Supporting the “Say Yes” program** for students to begin thinking early in their academic experiences about life after high school. **“The ‘Say Yes’ program allowed my student and family to access multiple services like after school programs, mental health support, tutoring assistance, and other community supports that have allowed us to feel deeply connected to the Cleveland community.”**
- **Emphasizing Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) for students** to help them reintegrate into their school communities following the pandemic and to provide holistic support for them as they navigate the complexities of their world. **“The increased focus on SEL for students in our schools is essential. Their academic experiences are important but nothing is more important than their overall mental health.”**

# CMSD - Programs and Experiences to Champion and Protect

- **Collaborating with community partners to create summer learning opportunities and wrap-around supports for families** to keep students engaged year-round and to amplify their connection to the community. **“As a CMSD teacher, students having these opportunities in the summer keeps them safe and involved, and allows me to build on their experiences in the classroom.”**
- **Enrolling our youngest students in Pre-K programs** is a step in the right direction to ensure that our students are poised for academic success from the start. **“We still have a way to go to make sure that students and families have consistent access to Pre-K programs, but we are moving in the right direction by making this an area of focus for our future.”**

# CMSD - Opportunities for Improvement

The top three priorities identified by respondents on what the next CEO needs to address.



# CMSD - Opportunities for Improvement

## Consistent areas for improvement described by multiple stakeholder groups

- **Safety and Security** – growing concerns for students and teachers at school and in the community.
- **Retention** – few incentives for teachers and staff to maintain demanding positions.
- **Access to CTE Pathways** – students need more experiences to prepare for careers.
- **Distribution of Resources** – not all schools have access to the same allocations.
- **Attendance** – significant issues with attendance and truancy across grade levels.

## Safety and security emerged as the most pressing challenge

Students, parents, staff, and other stakeholders repeatedly mentioned concerns about safety for students, both while they are on school grounds and as they make their way to and from school – especially using public transportation.

Additionally, feedback indicated a perception that the imbalanced distribution of resources allows some schools access to more intentional safety measures and other programs, and perpetuates a feeling of division between the west and east sides of the district.

# CMSD - Opportunities for Improvement

## Specific suggestions shared by community members:

- **More options and access to Career and Technical Education programs:** Parents, students, and staff mentioned consistently that students are not able to access experience in various trades and CTE strands that will prepare them for career success after high school.
- **Increased focus on academic rigor:** Stakeholders across groups reiterated the importance of access for all students to rigorous, grade-level academic content in an effort to prepare them to be competitive in the college and career market.
- **Diversity of options for “real world” life skills:** Students’ voices were very clear around wanting courses that will prepare them to be successful as young adults and members of the community: financial planning, health and wellness, time management, etc.
- **Concerns with the K-8 model:** Teachers, in particular, expressed concerns about the exclusive approach to the K-8 model and shared ideas about how to utilize district facilities to return to a leveled approach to include primary, intermediate, and middle school thresholds to set students – and staff – up for greater logistical and academic success.



# Critical Skills for the CEO

Items rated as very important or important in our survey:

92%

**Putting the best interests of students first in all decisions.**

92%

**Being a strong, clear communicator.**

91%

**Seeking and responding to feedback from students, parents, and staff.**

# Critical Skills for the next CEO

THE CMSD COMMUNITY WANTS AN **ATTENTIVE, EMPATHETIC, EXPERIENCED LEADER** THAT CARES DEEPLY ABOUT THE CLEVELAND COMMUNITY – ONE WHO HOLDS THEMSELVES AND OTHERS ACCOUNTABLE TO HIGH EXPECTATIONS.

## A leader who...

Is prepared to listen and learn from stakeholders, **and is culturally aware and politically savvy enough to galvanize the Cleveland community.**

Is fully committed to fostering relationships across lines of difference, and **to collaborate with others** in ways that are impactful and sustainable—to leverage the collective strength of Cleveland **to create meaningful outcomes for CMSD students.**

Is dedicated to sharpening the focus on **safety of students and staff**, as well as to creating conditions for more comprehensive **access to and support for their mental health and physical well-being.**



# Top 6 issues in open text response: “CMSD will be successful if we accomplish these 3 things within the next 5 years...”

33%

- Improving safety and security in schools

32%

- Improving academics, including student achievement and the curriculum

18%

- Increasing instructional staffing, including teacher recruitment and retention and class size reduction

15%

- Adding more CTE and life skills options for students

14%

- Improving communications and relationships with students with parents, and with the community

13%

- Improving mental health services and SEL

# About the Job Profile

## THE KEY RESPONSIBILITIES - THE “WHAT”

- **Ensure a purposeful education experience** with an eye toward future success for every student
- **Develop and implement a clear vision and strategy** (that amplifies and supports the Cleveland Plan)
- **Create conditions supports staff success on behalf of students**
- **Foster strong relationships** through transparent, intentional and clear and honest communication
- **Lead equitable finance and operations** with an emphasis on safety and security

## ... AND THE SKILLS NEEDED - THE “HOW”:

- **Student-centered decision making**
- **Demonstrated ability to implement and manage equitable practices**
- **Inclusive, authentic and inspirational leadership**
- **Effective relationship & coalition building and honest communication** (bringing people together to solve problems)
- **Purposeful team leadership** and effective management
- **Financial competence** - able to manage a \$700 million budget.
- **Prioritization and ability to make difficult decisions**

# Thank you!

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