

Stakeholder Input Report for

***Greene County
Schools***

submitted by



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EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT & DEVELOPMENT

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**Greene County Schools
Stakeholder Groups
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY REPORT
April 29-30, 2025**

Executive Summary

On April 29-30, 2025, consultants Dr. Debra White and Dr. Ralph Ferrie conducted meetings with district and community stakeholders representing 15 different groups associated with the Greene County Schools and Greene County communities. Those stakeholder groups included Cabinet Members; District Leadership Team Members; Central Office Staff/Transportation Members; Student Leaders; Elementary, Middle, and High School Staff Members; Career Coaches; Elementary, Middle, and High School Principals; Elementary, Middle, and high School Assistant Principals.

Six Community Meetings were held throughout the county that included participation from Local Clergy; Elected government Officials; Parents; Grandparents; and various county interest/support organizations. Dr. Debra White also conducted virtual meetings with all five School Board Members. The consultants received personal input from 190 individuals in the district, virtual, and community groups.

Additionally, a survey with the same questions was available to stakeholders to complete online through K12 Insight. There were 78 respondents to the survey and the summary was compiled by K12 Insight.

All of the input regarding the selection of a new superintendent for Greene County Schools is outlined in the executive summary, including consistent themes and ideas. They represent input that was consistent to all or most of the groups and could be considered to have broad support. The groups are categorized to report what each group shared with the consultants. As emphasized during the meetings comments made by individuals or small groups will not contain reference to specific individuals or positions who shared their comments during each session. The complete list of feedback by group is recorded within this document.

The Greene County Board of Education should be commended for its willingness to conduct these stakeholder input meetings and the online survey to ascertain what the school community believes to be important regarding the selection of the new superintendent and the future of the district.

The following is a summary of the major themes expressed by the participants at these sessions. Following the summary of overall themes is a compilation of the input received from these groups and individuals in response to the four questions asked of each group and participants:

Overall Themes

Question #1: What makes your community a good place to live?

There was a great deal of consistent comments made about how Greene County is an excellent place to live. Geographically, it is in a beautiful region of Georgia and is close to Atlanta and the International Airport. The County has a small community feel. Residents know each other and are always willing to provide assistance when needed. There is also a great deal of community support for the schools including Atlas, Boys and Girls Club, and Victory Train. The faith-based community is also incredibly supportive of the schools. In addition, there is a true feeling of community, and the consensus was that the community is a safe place to live. The wealth that supports the property tax base is an advantage to support the resources needed for the school district. The lake area is beautiful and offers a wide variety of outdoor activities and the County Recreation Center is an excellent resource for students and residents.

Question #2. What makes this a good school district for students and staff?

The size of the school district is a positive characteristic of the district that the staff and students value. The staff are extremely supportive of each other and there were consistent comments regarding how the staff cares for their students and are always supportive when needed. Often, elementary staff members attend high school events to support their former students. In general, class sizes are appropriate, and the resources needed to support the curriculum are provided as needed. The high school has the ability to offer a wide range of academic and co-curricular offerings. The career coaching program is exceptional and is one that could be duplicated throughout the state. In addition, there are many partnerships with community-based organizations. The students have many opportunities to earn scholarship funding, and the high school works diligently to offer both CTEA opportunities and programs for students such as dual enrollment and Advanced Placement classes.

The consensus also is that the buildings are close-knit communities that care for the well-being of the staff. Generally, the staff pay scale is competitive for this region of Georgia. There is also a supportive professional development program throughout the district.

Question #3. What are the issues that a new superintendent needs to know about as he or she comes into the district?

- a. Although the property tax base is high and it is indicative that the County is wealthy, the district has been designated as a Title I district as a result of the average income of the families of the students attending the Greene County Schools. As a result, there is a great deal of economic diversity in the County.
- b. The presence of the charter school (LOA) has caused a consistent expression of frustration as those interviewed feel that there is a significant division among residents that is a result of the demographic disparity between students who attend the charter school and students attending the three other schools in the district.

- c. There is much skepticism, frustration and concern surrounding the lottery system for entrance into the charter school to include its transparency and clarity regarding how students are chosen to attend LOA.
- d. Communication processes throughout the district were also voiced as a considerable concern. It was also emphasized by many that the public perception of the district needs to be addressed by consistently communicating all the positive achievements of the students attending the district as well as emphasizing the success of Greene County High School graduates.

Question #4. What skills, qualities, and characteristics will the new superintendent need in order to be successful?

- a. Everyone is looking for an individual who will be committed long-term to the district and will potentially live in the county. Visibility in all areas of the county is desired. The respondents would like the superintendent to attend as many school district and community events possible.
- b. A consistent theme is that the school community is desiring a superintendent that is an educator who has had classroom teaching experience, building leadership experience, and is knowledgeable about current effective educational trends and practices.
- c. The adjectives expressed throughout the meetings to describe the next superintendent include:
 - Excellent communicator and listener
 - Empathetic
 - Honest
 - High level of integrity
 - Keeps the students at the forefront of all decisions made
 - Consistency in implementing district policies and procedures
 - Strong leader who also values the expertise of the leadership team and building level administration
 - Compassionate leader
 - Servant leader

- Transparent leader who leads by example
- d. Other consistent themes include the concern related to consistent implementation of procedures to improve student discipline and student attendance, the work toward holding parents/guardians accountable regarding student discipline, attendance and academic support and working toward improving parental involve in the school in order establish a supportive, collaborative environment.

Stakeholder Responses

Reported as received from each Stakeholder Group

Board of Education Members

Question #1: What makes your community a good place to live?

Responses:

- Very strong sense of community
- Community of giving people
- High level of engagement across the communities
- Significant number of non-profit organizations that support the schools
- It's a very welcoming town – small town where everybody knows everybody
- Everyone is helpful
- Very safe place to live
- Many things for families to enjoy: the recreation department, restaurants, parks, churches of all denominations, and community events
- The lake has activities including walking trails
- Very generous community
- Great place for outdoors people-good hunting and fishing
- Small town atmosphere

- Centrally located in Georgia with I-20 access to Augusta or Atlanta and short distance to Macon
- Home of Lake Oconee and a vacation destination that is growing
- The tax base is growing, and Greene County offers a low millage rate
- Great place for businesses to start
- Our diversity makes us unique
- Very giving community – supportive of the school system
- The infrastructure is good for future development

Question #2: What makes this a good school district for students and staff?

Responses:

- Strong support network for all students
- Abundant resources to address all kinds of needs
- The location draws teachers from other counties
- Boys and Girls Club, ATLAS, Neighbors helping neighbors, 100 Women Who Care, Victory Train, Thilman Education foundation
- College and Career Academy prepares students for future endeavors
- Some staff members have longevity of 20-25 years in Greene County
- Board members listen to staff members about needs
- Support for paraprofessionals getting certified
- Support for teachers getting certifications and degrees
- The college and Career Academy
- Career Coach for every Freshman Student
- Teachers who love children
- Very philanthropic community
- The entire community, including the large retirement community supports the school system
- Changes in workplace style have brought many successful people to the area due to their ability to work remotely
- Great place for work/life balance
- Staff are open to suggestions
- Very supportive staff

Question #3: What are the issues that a new superintendent needs to know about as he or she comes into the district?

Responses:

- Attracting top quality staff because of the high cost of housing
- The political climate
- Tax base of parents and wealthy retirees
- Massive shift in the community among parents who want to be heard and understood
- Rumors about trying to change the grading system
- Different educational ideas – we are a public school system
- Understanding that one board member does not make all decisions
- The current superintendent was the Sheriff with no educational experience
- Board members are not the educational gurus
- North and South of the interstate perceptions
- Recent Lawsuit over funding still fresh in the minds of people
- Changing the mindsets that some may have about hiring practices
- Creating an understanding that education is the gateway to the future, and developing buy in that the education of Greene County children is the top priority in all decision making
- The planning for new facilities to accommodate the projected growth expected in the school system
- Negative perceptions of Greene County Schools over the past 25 years
- Understanding how to rebrand the school district will be a key to success and a way to gain support county-wide
- Understanding how the successes of LOA and the College Career Academy working together could go a long way into overall success of the county
- Many staff commute from neighboring counties because of housing shortage
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Question #4: What skills, qualities, and characteristics will the new superintendent need in order to be successful?

Responses:

- Good communicator

- Trustworthy
- Works in partnership with the board, communities, and non-profits
- Be on board with change
- Have integrity
- Someone who understands and supports public education
- Strong enough to say “I don’t know if that’s a good idea”
- Advocate for Greene County students, staff, and parents
- Positive attitude about Greene County students and families
- Would want to live in Greene County and be invested and committed to the community
- Compassion and trust
- Relationship Leader
- Realize that everybody has value
- Good listener
- An educator familiar with a background establishing competency-based education
- Have experience working with a school population that is diverse – ethnically and economically
- Have a background in facilities planning
- Shared belief that the safety of Greene County students and staff is paramount
- Confidence in knowing that the Greene County School Board will give him/her the support needed to be successful
- Flexibility
- Visible at events
- Approachable
- Strong willed
- Able to work with different mindsets and expectations

Executive Cabinet Members

Question #1: What makes your community a good place to live?

Responses:

- Very supportive and involved community
- In the middle of Augusta and Atlanta
- Growing area - lake communities
- Small school system
- Intimacy in the school district - can get resources when needed
- Financial resources are available to the district
- Development in the area and the county supports students and families

Question #2: What makes this a good school district for students and staff?

Responses:

- Great deal of classroom offerings and CTEA offerings
- Teachers and staff work hard to meet the students' needs and interests
- Club offerings to meet student needs - personalize programs for students
- Opportunities to participate in academic competitions
- Thriving STEM initiatives
- District responsive to family needs of staff
- Supportive staff development to include stipends for attendance and participation
- Teacher compensation for covering classes to teachers who are absent
- Pay is competitive
- Teachers are provided with the resources needed to meet their curriculum

Question #3: What are the issues that a new superintendent needs to know about as he or she comes into the district?

Responses:

- Separation between public school and charter school
- 40 percent of staff commutes into the district
- Housing costs are very high
- Perception that LOA is a college prep school and the public school is a vocational school
- Perception has to be changed

- Disproportion in areas of special education, speech services for white students, black emotional disorder students, discipline of black special education students
- Dealing with heavy handed board members and chain of command issues

Question #4: What skills, qualities, and characteristics will the new superintendent need in order to be successful?

Responses:

- Excellent communication
- Proactive communication
- Collaborative
- Financial knowledge
- Strong leader
- Ability to work with all residents of the county including wealthy and involved citizens who have strong opinions
- Ability to work with a diverse community and an economically diverse community
- Someone who can develop a common goal
- Perception that central office doesn't know what they are doing - the superintendent must value and appreciate the leadership team

Leadership Team Members

Question #1: What makes your community a good place to live?

Responses:

- Family oriented
- Close knit community
- Close to everything, next to nothing
- Starting to get modern amenities
- Getting good bandwidth - internet capability from federal government in next 2 years

- It has a rich county history - recent development - restaurants and modern amenities
- Small enough for good community relationship
- Good community support of the school district

Question #2: What makes this a good school district for students and staff?

Responses:

- Community partners - ATLAS, Boys and Girls, Foundations, Family/Scholarships. Etc.
- Official partnerships that are strategically partnered with the district
- Career Coaches - billionaires who support students - active volunteers
- Reading Buddies
- Staff who commute to work - feel closeness to students and families -
- Ability to collaborate with each other
- Many opportunities - STEM Program, access to technologies - funding for support personnel
- Small town feel allows administrators, teachers, and staff to really know students and their needs
- Enormous amounts of pathways and personalized educational plans
- Is resource rich
- Local supplements
- Close knit community
- Pre-K - 5 will be in the same building for the first time in 26 years or more

Question #3: What are the issues that a new superintendent needs to know about as he or she comes into the district?

Responses:

- The lake gets things first- good internet access for streaming
- ·Divide in the community - LOA is seen as a school for the lake community

- Board Chair is the CEO who started LOA - half of the system is in a charter, other half in the county
- New supt. Needs to focus on the fact his job does not have anything to do with the LOA
- The LOA segregated the county, the new Supt needs to understand the segregation - its more than in 1969
- Perception of deficit thinking - “we can do at LOA”, “we cannot do in the county”
- How to convince the community and staff to get rid of the negative narrative/perception about the LOA and county schools
- How do we build school collaboration - LOA and County
- Public perception of board protecting LOA - understanding true good things happening in the county school
- There is a private school, charter school, and county school - right now the private school may close
- Perception of middle school fights - (not true)
- Perception of county schools being poverty stricken and not effective for students
- New Supt. needs to understand the dynamics of the LOA and county schools
- Perception is LOA is a high academic school and the county is vocational which casts a shadow on Greene County that it limits college bound students
- Perception that we are 2 school districts, not a school system - but a system of schools
- Lack of affordable housing in Greene County which is why staff commute in

Question #4: What skills, qualities, and characteristics will the new superintendent need in order to be successful?

Responses:

- Transparency
- Great communicator
- Ability to see the complexity of the school system and politics of all that’s going on, while building trust

- The ability to build trust and be open to listening to all people
- Ability to build relationships both ways
- Open door policy - comfort letting people come to them
- Must figure out a strong relationship with the board chair
- Understand that the board chair is not the superintendent
- LOA and county schools have separate calendars
- LOA does not provide bus transportation - it's seen as a way of keeping the schools segregated
- Focus solely on the county schools instead of the LOA
- Say what you mean and mean what you say - model - lead by example

Central Office Staff & Transportation

Question #1: What makes your community a good place to live?

Responses:

- The people and the lake
- Small town however - close enough to Atlanta
- Medical care is available
- Growth with future development
- Excellent deer hunting and a great deal of wildlife
- People care about each other

Question #2: What makes this a good school district for students and staff?

Responses:

- New state of the art elementary school - prek-5
- A caring staff
- Small tight knit community - everyone knows each other
- Many programs available for students, Title I and federal programs
- Staff are always available for students

- AP classes, dual enrollment
- CTEA, pathways, foundation
- College and career academy, example is welding program
- ROTC program
- District invests in its staff
- Support system for new teachers, professional development is excellent
- The district cares about its employees - provides support when needed
- Value staff's input
- Administration is accommodating when staff need support when they are having personal or family issues
- Teachers take great care of their students in need

Question #3: What are the issues that a new superintendent needs to know about as he or she comes into the district?

Responses:

- Two financially extreme populations
- Staff can't afford to live in the county
- Be a good steward of the taxpayer's money
- Develop better procedures and protocols
- Follow up on the procedures and protocols
- Bridge the gap between LOA and the Greene County schools
- Demonstrate that he or she is invested in the community and district
- Move from a system of schools to a school system

Question #4: What skills, qualities, and characteristics will the new superintendent need in order to be successful?

Responses:

- Someone who will listen to both sides of the story before making a decision
- An excellent decision making
- Lead by example
- Personable with all staff
- Make all staff, regardless of their position, feel important
- Integrity

- Knowledge of educational leadership
- Humility
- Visionary
- Address the achievement gap issue
- Current on educational trends and developments
- Understand change theory
- Keep what works in the district
- Understand that computers should be used as a tool

Community/Parents (Lakeside Church)

Question#1: What makes your community a good place to live?

Responses:

- Rural area but have everything needed,
- Outdoors activities - lake area
- LOA gives students smaller class settings
- Small town living away from the hustle and bustle of city living
- Lots of diversity filled with compassion
- Loss of funds/money to spend on schools -
- Lots of resources
- People move here from all over - retired executives bring more medial resources and other resources
- Everybody knows your name; you don't get lost in the number
- The community was awesome before the lake community developed - it was already a wholesome, good, and wonderful community

Question #2: What makes this a good school district for students and staff?

Responses:

- Resources for scholarships and post-secondary opportunities
- Career Coaching Program - Fillan Foundation
- Produces well-rounded students
- Career Academy - provides a focus on student employment and developing skills (welding jobs - 60,000-90,000-dollar salaries - first jobs)

- ATLAS Programs, and Victory Train (early childhood option), and Boys and Girls

Question #3: What are the issues that a new superintendent needs to know about as he or she comes into the district?

Responses:

- Lack of accountability with the public - 2 Greene County systems - lake/Greene county and the county
- Disproportionate achievement scores for student performance among black students
- Knowledge of education - experience in education
- Bridge the gap/connect to 2 systems
- Must be able to motivate parents and students to excel, engage, and achieve
- Look at who is hired and fired and the reasons behind it
- Must be able to see behind the numbers - understand the students behind the numbers
- Getting people to connect with each other
- More accountability from home
- Must have a sense of urgency!

Question #4: What skills, qualities, and characteristics will the new superintendent need in order to be successful?

Responses:

- Must fit in with the whole community
- Must know how to resolve problems.
- Must learn about the people in Greene County
- Experience in the educational field
- Willing to listen - with heart for children
- Willing to roll up sleeves and be dynamic and flexible
- Must help get rid of the division
- Transparency
- Looking for longevity in working in Greene County

- Don't look for someone who is overly connected to people in Greene County
- Recognizing subordinates
- Problem-solving
- Good communicator
- Good listener
- Lead by example

Student Leaders

Question #1: What makes your community a good place to live?

Responses:

- Community culture - a great vibe - a good place to live
- Family is here and family help each other and support each other
- Close community - get to know people one on one
- Community activities

Question #2: What makes this a good school district for students and staff?

Responses:

- The school community helps each other out - there is always someone to help students
- Scholarship opportunities

Question #3: What are the issues that a new superintendent needs to know about as he or she comes into the district?

Responses:

- Getting used to the new district
- Pep rallies
- Keep the school activities
- Keep the sports programs and offerings for students
- Keep the equipment for athletics

Question #4: What skills, qualities, and characteristics will the new superintendent need in order to be successful?

Responses:

- Known better by students
- Someone who is understanding
- Has multiple interest to support all students
- Support all students
- Communication
- Listener
- Willing to meet regularly with the students

AWCMS and GCHS Staff

Question #1: What makes your community a good place to live?

Responses:

- Parks
- Recreational activities
- Downtown restaurants and shopping

Question #2: What makes this a good school district for students and staff?

Responses:

- Career Academy
- Career Coaching Program - The State is looking at the Greene County model for Career Coaching
- Curriculum Resources - Technology Resources
- In Good financial shape
- Band, musical program, elementary program, middle, and high schools, digital design program, visual arts program, audio visual technology and 16 pathways
- Dual enrollment program partnered with Athens Tech
- ATLAS

Question #3: What are the issues that a new superintendent needs to know about as he or she comes into the district?

Responses:

- Student attendance and some staff
- Divided community - south/wealth and north/economically challenge
- Feels like 2 different school systems
- Managing LOA and Greene County Schools
- Scheduling of sports and events can be challenging between the 2 systems
- Very small size of the high school brings scheduling challenges
- Not enough substitutes to cover teacher absences, teachers get paid when they have to cover
- Lack of communication between the board office and high school
- Central office has a lack of building level experience - brings good ideas but does not know how to implement
- Community members like to go straight to the top - new superintendent needs to understand they are the face of the community and understand how to handle the politics of the system
- Political influence is deeply embedded here
- Economic growth is all around the lake, people are attracted to the area because of the lake, retirees are moving in, not a lot of young families
- Growing retired community increases the tax base, but per pupil dollars are low because of low enrolled school
- High performing students are pulled over to LOA
- Equity
- The lottery at the LOA is not transparent - students are invited based upon student performance - pulls away from the county high school
- Attitudes of students and families toward school
- Struggle with apathy and low parent involvement at high school level
- Sometimes parents are more concerned with grades instead of learning.

Question #4: What skills, qualities, and characteristics will the new superintendent need in order to be successful?

Responses:

- Must have building level experience
- Visible - get to know teachers - visit classrooms
- Invested in the community - maybe live in the community
- Attend community events, festivals
- Approachable
- Present
- Flexible
- Passionate
- Open minded
- Visionary
- Fair and firm
- Understanding of rural systems and rural Georgia
- Business minded
- Add to the strengths already here and add to it
- Have had some type of experience in all levels - elementary, middle, and high if possible

GCAA Career Coaches

Question #1: What makes your community a good place to live?

Responses:

- Unique - people are willing to give up their time and talent
- People willing to volunteer
- Habitat for Humanity
- Atlas -Christian organization
- Boys and Girls Club
- Many faith-based communities
- Victory Train
- Small community - sense of community
- Kids are really nice at the high school - friendly
- Growth in the community - increase in housing
- The lake, golf beauty of the area
- People live in the county from all over the country

Question #2: What makes this a good school district for students and staff?

Responses:

- Small school district
- Diversity
- Setting high standards
- Planning and budget management to improve facilities
- Support for special needs students
- Students have multiple opportunities to experience in schools
- High school staff are very supportive of career coaching program

Question #3: What are the issues that a new superintendent needs to know about as he or she comes into the district?

Responses:

- Attendance is a big issue
- Chromebooks - not working well as they come to class unprepared, Chromebooks are not charged, etc.
- Top students not demonstrating success in first year of four-year college
- Not passing military tests
- No synergy between Greene County High School and LOA
- Bridge building is essential
- Goal should be to bring the community together
- Division between the public school and the charter school
- School board members should represent the entire school district, not from where they are elected
- Push to emphasize the importance of the career academy opportunities
- Lack of transportation for students to get to work

Question #4: What skills, qualities, and characteristics will the new superintendent need in order to be successful?

Responses:

- Lack of ego

- Free of prejudice
- Focus on the students
- Consistency in decision making process
- Honesty
- Fair and open-minded
- Experience in education - building level experience
- Supportive of staff
- Visible
- Someone who visits the schools regularly
- Make all major decisions based on gathering as much information from individuals in the organizations
- Don't require the light to shine on them
- Empowering people underneath the leader
- Know where the children come from
- Emphasis on safety
- Someone who is dedicated to the district long term
- Problem solver

Community/Parents (Greene County High School)

Question #1: What makes your community a good place to live?

Responses:

- Location
- The people - they are caring
- Everybody knows each other - really close-knit school system and community
- A safe community

Question #2: What makes this a good school district for students and staff?

Responses:

- Career academy
- Have graduated 2 Bill Gates Scholars

- Graduates have gone into some of the major colleges and universities and been successful
- Graduates return to present scholarships to current students - shows lots of pride
- Graduate played in the NFL - currently a coach with the 49ers, he supports athletes here
- Gifted services are great
- Organizations partner with the school to support students - ATLAS, Boys and girls Club
- People who move into the community feel very welcomed throughout their transition to Greene

Question #3: What are the issues that a new superintendent needs to know about as he or she comes into the district?

Responses:

- Parent involvement is lacking
- Politics
- Accountability
- Clash between LOA and Greene County - the perception has to change
- LOA was a marketing tool for selling lake property - children of families from Reynolds were given slots at LOA while Greene County school students were not given slots
- Parent who sent his child to LOA said at the time he did not have faith in the superintendent and school system, he now sees things turning around, may consider changing his child to Greene county
- It is a title I school
- Special Needs population is increasing - having the resources to ensure Special Needs students get what they need
- Affordable housing for staff
- Many children of staff members do not attend Greene County Schools they attend LOA
- The division is more between adults not the students

Question #4: What skills, qualities, and characteristics will the new superintendent need in order to be successful?

Responses:

- Be a part of the community
- Be an educator
- Feeling that this is truly a transparent process
- Bridge divides - bring people together
- Honest
- Open minded
- Inclusive
- Trustworthy
- Have the best interest for all students

Building Level Leadership

Question #1: What makes your community a great place to live?

Responses:

- Excellent retirement area of the state
- Small school system - get to develop relationships with community members
- Proximity to August, Athens and Atlanta
- Community is supportive when the school district is in need
- A close-knit community
- Authentic relationships
- People that care in the district
- Growing community

- Small town, people know one another

- Many staff members and administrators grew up in the county
- New business moving in
- Tourism
- Fantastic students
- Significant amount of land - Lake property

- The town is attempting to revise to a boutique town

Question #2: What makes this a good school district for students and staff?

Responses:

- Excellent educators who want to be in the county
- Parents are supportive
- Good students
- There is a great deal of parent involvement - need to change the mindset of what parent involvement looks like
- Practices and procedures are in place to educate students
- Teachers have small case loads
- Family oriented environment toward staff
- For a small system - many offerings, extra-curricular, academic
- Career coaches, mentoring program
- Scholarship offerings
- Support throughout the district
- Teachers support students and an example is the elementary teachers will attend events at the high school to support their former students
- Each child has an excellent support system throughout the district
- Excellent curriculum in place
- Achievement data is trending upward

Question #3: What are the issues that a new superintendent needs to know about as he or she comes into the district?

Responses:

- The challenge of closing the achievement gap and changing the culture following Covid
- Property cost is high - cost of housing is high
- Many teachers and staff commute from outside the county
- The charter school presents a significant challenge
- Lack of resources to deal with student trauma
- Inconsistency of implementing practices and procedures

- Limited amount of community support however those that do support the schools are drained
- Wealthy community, however the students qualify for free and reduced lunch
- Wealth is property base; poverty is income based - Title I district
- Lack of trust
- Set up processes and procedures
- Needs to tell the story about the great things happening throughout the district - tell the public and the teachers
- Know the dynamics of the county - understand the charter school in the county
- Challenges that go along with a small town
- Develop and communicate expectations around policies and procedures
- Review and clarify organizational structure

Question #4: What skills, qualities, and characteristics will the new superintendent need in order to be successful?

Responses:

- Open minded
- Get to know the people in the district
- Relationship builder
- Open and honest conversations
- Don't micromanage
- Trust the principals to do their job
- Be able to tell central office administrators function in a supportive role - not decision makers at the building level
- Understand data, politics
- Building level experience
- Experience facilities
- Transparent
- Servant leader
- Present - county wide leader

- Meet with teachers in large setting
- Educational background - school leadership experience
- Recognizes the impact of athletics in middle and high school on school culture
- Good listener
- Understand a clear organizational chart

Community/Parents (Greene County Recreation Department)

Question #1: What makes your community a great place to live?

Responses:

- Amazing rec center
- Rec center is a melting pot for the community - all people love coming here
- Rec center is helping to bridge the community divide between the schools
- It is a laid-back, down-home community - small town is a selling point for new people

Question #2: What makes this a good school district for students and staff:

Responses:

- LOA has had a positive effect of getting people to move into Greene County
- Tremendous amount of resources

Question #3: What are the issues that a new superintendent needs to know about as he or she comes into the district?

Responses:

- Need to make all the schools as effective as LOA
- Need more affordable housing - that will attract more people to Greene County
- Bring people together
- A parent had her children in elementary school last year - felt her child was bullied, and it was not addressed
- Safety and behavior in the schools (talk about drugs, alcohol,)

- Long waiting list for LOA - 300 on the list, students get moved up and down the waiting list -
- Turnover of teachers
- Affordable Housing not being built for younger families
- Some parents are homeschooling their children while on the waiting list - these families meet at the Rec Center weekly for social engagement

Question #4: What skills, qualities, and characteristics will the new superintendent need in order to be successful?

Responses:

- Be involved in the community, engaged in events
- Firmness - put policies in place and consistently enforce the policies
- Get into the community and listen to the needs of all people
- Be open minded

Community/Parents (New Springfield Missionary Baptist Church)

Question #1: What makes your community a great place to live?

Responses:

- All that's good about Atlanta is moving toward Greene County
- Interesting area for expansion of manufacturing
- There are qualified people within the district
- Greene County is growing
- Strong tax base - there is enough money to run the school system
- The community cares for each other

Question #2: What makes this a good school district for students and staff?

Responses:

- Atlas
- Boys and Girls Club
- Church support of the schools

- Bill Gates scholars
- Students attending exceptional colleges and universities - for example Stanford
- Students earn college scholarships
- Teacher pay is highest in this region of Georgia

Question #3: What are the issues that a new superintendent needs to know about as he or she comes into the district?

Responses:

- Must know the history of the county
- People on one side of I20 feel like they are the little ones
- It is important that students are taught to be on the right side of the law and ensure that they are eligible to vote
- Staff turnover
- Understanding that the district is challenging with world-wide issues and competition

Question #4: What skills, qualities, and characteristics will the new superintendent need in order to be successful?

Responses:

- Superintendent must have excellent knowledge regarding educational practice
- Must be someone who cares for all children
- Someone who is willing to stay in the county long term - a long-term commitment is important
- Someone must know Greene County and know the school system
- Should be knowledgeable about the county and the county school system has good people
- Someone willing to live in Greene County
- Someone who has the students as their first priority
- Leadership program
- Graduates are successful - teachers, nurses, attorneys, NFL players, etc.

- Someone who must communicate all the positive aspects and achievements of the students in the county
- Someone who understands the importance of serving the students
- Excellent listener
- Educator
- Supportive and caring
- Innovative, creative, compassionate visionary
- Open minded

GCES Staff

Question #1: What makes your community a great place to live?

Responses:

- Growing - future development
- Family oriented

Question #2: What makes this a good school district for students and staff?

Responses:

- Salary is more than in most surrounding districts
- Pay into social security and teacher retirement systems
- True investments in all schools - not school to school competition
- Teachers truly care and take care of the students
- Small enough to really get to know the students and families
- People who grew up here return to work in the school system

Question #3: What are the issues that a new superintendent needs to know about as he or she comes into the district?

Responses:

- Communication with staff and the community
- The current superintendent makes more than 300,000 while staff barely can afford to eat, yet has not educational experience
- Understanding the difference between being present and having a presence

- Current Supt. said he does not come to the elementary school because he does not like little kids
- Behavior
- Mental Health
- Parent involvement - do not have a PTA
- Resources - put more people in the schools to help with behavior
- Mental Health Resources
- Racial Divide
- LOA school population is racially different
- Find ways to overcome the reputation that has been created between LOA and the county school
- Needs an understanding of the creation of LOA
- Focus on what the Greene County Schools need to do be GREAT and stop focusing on LOA issues
- Children with Language Deficits
- Acceptance from the community if new superintendent is now from Greene County

Question #4: What skills, qualities, and characteristics will the new superintendent need in order to be successful?

Responses:

- Should have experience as an educator - building level and/or district level
- Need to live in the community and have a vested interest in the community
- Creative
- Empowering
- Empathetic
- Visionary
- Visible
- Fairness
- Integrity
- Approachable
- Transparent
- Fiscally responsible
- Willing to make tough choices

- Respectful
- Over communicative
- Present
- Trustworthy
- Honesty
- Responsive
- Accountability and high expectations for parents
- Advocates for children

Greene County School District - Superintendent Search

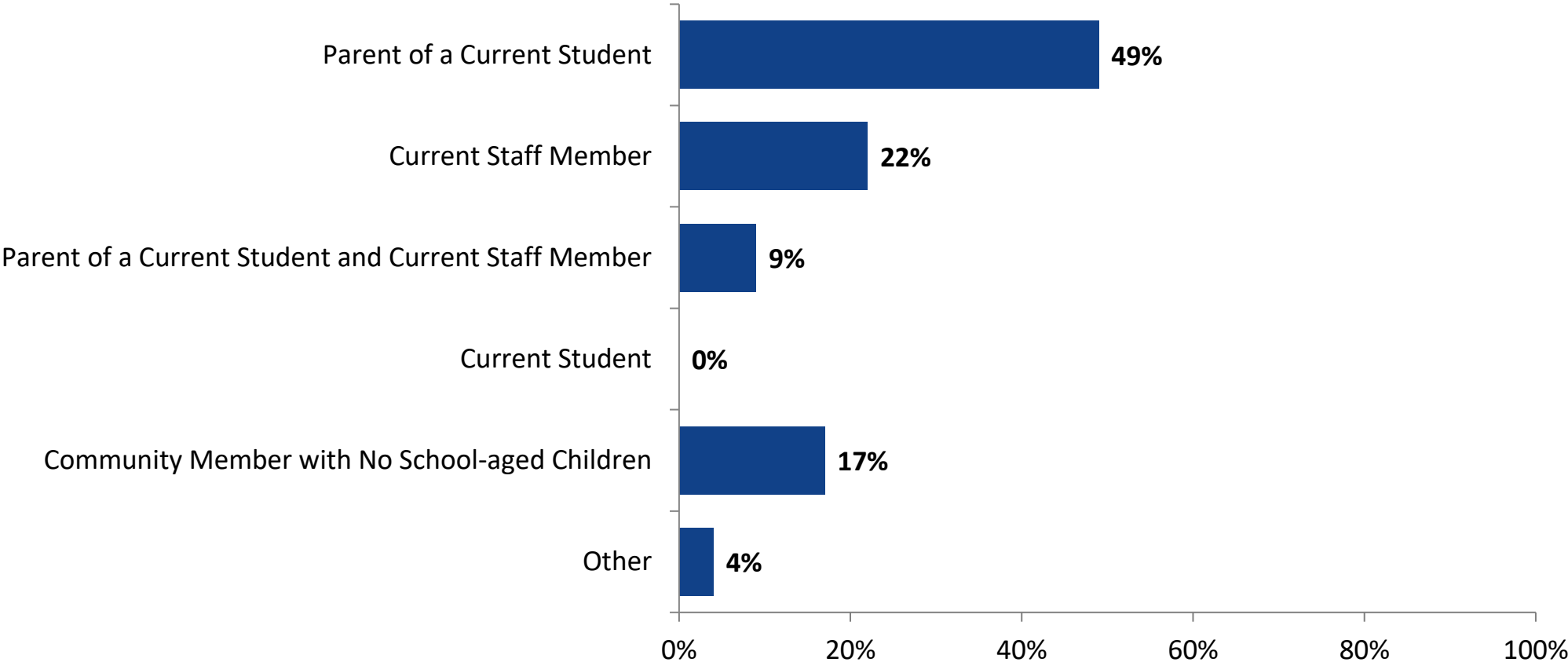
Results and Analysis

McPherson & Jacobson
2025



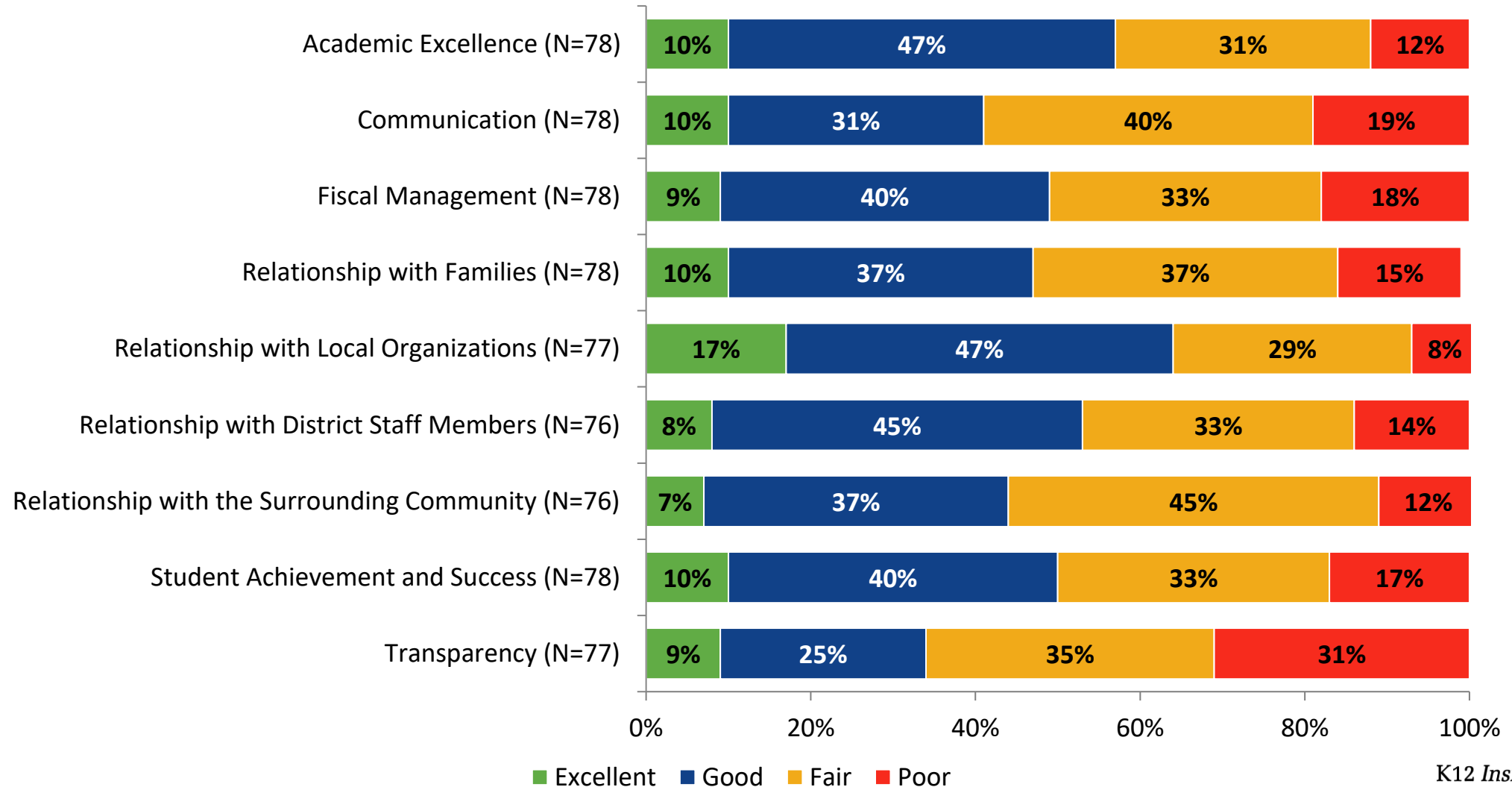
Relationship to the District

Which of the following best describes your relationship to the district? (N=78)



Perceptions of the District

Please rate the quality of the following aspects of the district.



Great Things About the Community and District

Please tell us great things about your community and school district that potential candidates for superintendent should know. (N=61)

Greene County is described as a small, close-knit, and diverse community with a strong sense of family, history, and faith.

The school district benefits from a generous tax base, excellent resources, dedicated and caring educators, and strong community and parental support.

Residents highlight the area's safety, scenic surroundings, recreational opportunities, and proximity to major cities.

The schools are noted for recent achievement gains, talented students, and programs like gifted education and career coaching.

Many see Greene County as a community full of potential, committed to improving student outcomes and supporting all children.

Current Issues

What are the issues a new superintendent should know about when coming to this position? (N=62)

Stakeholders voiced concerns about deep and persistent divisions within Greene County Schools, most notably the stark disparities between Lake Oconee Academy (LOA) and the traditional public schools—often described as segregation along racial, socioeconomic, and opportunity lines. LOA is perceived to serve wealthier, predominantly white families, while the district schools serve more economically disadvantaged and minority students, with unequal access to resources, academic opportunities, and extracurricular activities. This divide fuels resentment, low morale, and a fractured community identity.

Micromanagement and political interference by the chair are also seen as significant challenges that undermine leadership effectiveness and staff trust.

Concerns were raised about a lack of accountability for staff misconduct, inconsistent discipline, bullying, parent disengagement, and inequitable hiring practices driven by favoritism.

The next superintendent must be prepared to address systemic inequities, foster community trust, enforce high standards of professionalism, and build a school system that truly serves and unites all students and

Significant Challenges

What do you believe will be the most significant challenges the next superintendent will have to confront? (N=61)

Stakeholders identified several challenges the next superintendent of Greene County Schools will need to navigate.

A top concern is the deep division between Lake Oconee Academy (LOA) and the Greene County public schools—seen in inequitable resources, student outcomes, and community perceptions—which has fueled longstanding tensions and mistrust. Participants emphasized the need to unify the district and ensure fairness across all schools.

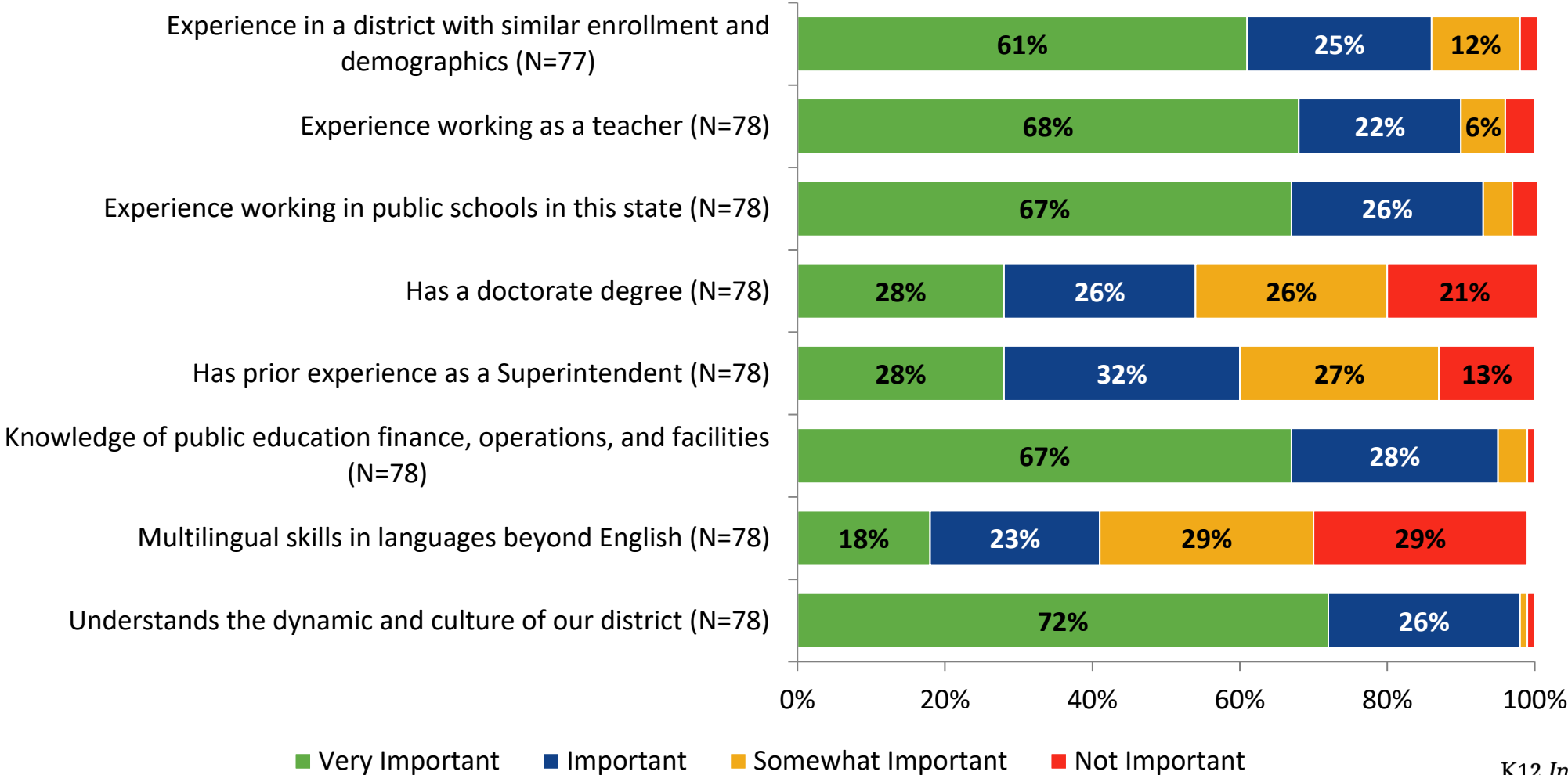
Other challenges include micromanagement and overreach from board members, which undermines leadership and staff morale.

The new superintendent will also need to address staff accountability, remove ineffective personnel, build trust across diverse community groups, and promote equity in budgeting and resource distribution.

Additional concerns include limited parent involvement, teacher retention, the negative influence of community politics, and ensuring consistent discipline and high expectations for all students.

Areas of Expertise

Listed below are specific areas of expertise that different superintendent candidates may possess. From your perspective, how much importance should the Board of Education place on each area?



Qualities, Skills, Characteristics

What qualities, skills, and characteristics do you feel the next superintendent needs to have in order to be successful? (N=62)

Community members expressed a clear desire for the next superintendent of Greene County Schools to be a strong, ethical, and student-centered leader with deep experience in education—particularly in rural, Title I, and low-income settings.

The ideal candidate should be a visible and approachable presence in schools, known for strong communication, transparency, and the ability to build trusting relationships with staff, students, families, and the broader community.

Key qualities include integrity, accountability, empathy, courage, and a commitment to equity.

Stakeholders emphasized the importance of someone who lives in the community, understands its unique culture and challenges, and is ready to lead with vision—not politics or favoritism.

Experience as a teacher and school-level administrator, a firm but fair approach to discipline and expectations, and the ability to unify diverse groups and drive systemic, lasting improvements were frequently mentioned.

Some also expressed a desire for a faith-driven leader with a genuine passion for children and a commitment to doing what is right for all students, regardless of background.



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