

**Eugene School District
Superintendent Search
Board Work Session
March 2, 2022**



Update: The Board's Collective Work

- **Board members canceled vacations** and personal plans to spend two days together
- The event was an important opportunity to **reset and build community**
- Board members took their work seriously and stayed present as they **worked through some of their most pressing challenges**
- They made several commitments in the interest of strengthening their collective work:
 - **Be curious** and seek to understand
 - **Address concerns directly** and verify before responding
 - **No derogatory comments** with staff or in the public arena about each other, including press, social media or other forums
- This work was **an encouraging start** to continued work that should continue from here



Our Shared Purpose

Our goal is to lead a fair and open search process for the next permanent Superintendent of Eugene School District 4J.

Our purpose is to communicate clearly and to lead a transparent search process, designed to mitigate bias every step of the way, where all voices of the 4J community are valued.



Our Expected Timeline

March

1. Alma Screen & 1st Round Interview

- Conducted by Alma team
- Assess experience, key competencies, mission-alignment
- Resume review
- Phone interview
- Initial background search
- Candidate profile created

Late March

2. 2nd Round Interview

- Conducted Board members in small teams
- Assess organizational fit, core competencies
- Scenario-based questions

April

3. Semi-Finalist Round, Board Members

- Conducted by Board
- Assessment on competencies and leadership ability
- Includes performance task
- May include 2 to 3 interviews, focused on different aspects of the role
- Full background check

Late April

4. Finalist Round, Board, Staff & Community

- Final interview(s) with Board members
- Community and staff engagement
- Primary assessment on cultural fit and alignment



3 Primary Activities to Participate

COMMUNITY GATHERING

Focus was to learn about the process and engage in conversations with the community.

INTERVIEWS & FOCUS GROUPS

1:1 interviews and focus groups with teachers, students, principals, staff, union leaders and community partners

Allowed deeper discussions by role.

STAFF & COMMUNITY SURVEY

Survey was open for one month as an opportunity for broader community input.

Over 3,700 respondents.



Stakeholder and Community Engagement



38

MEETINGS

Community gatherings, focus groups, student panels, board member interviews

215

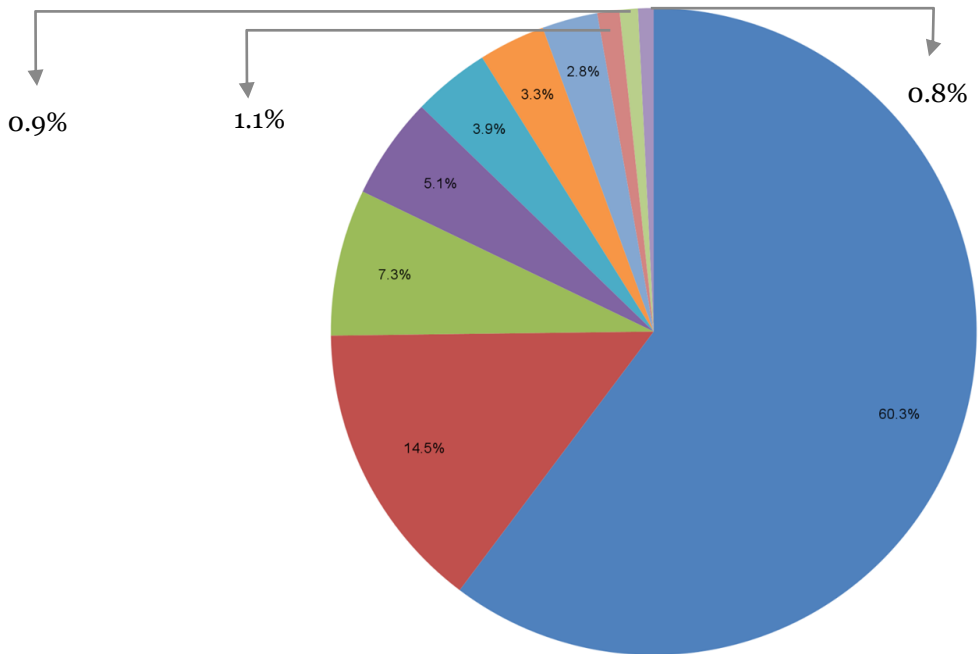
PARTICIPANTS

Families, students, teachers, school leaders, district staff, community leaders and partners, and graduates

Significant Participation in Community Survey

3,712

SURVEY RESPONSES

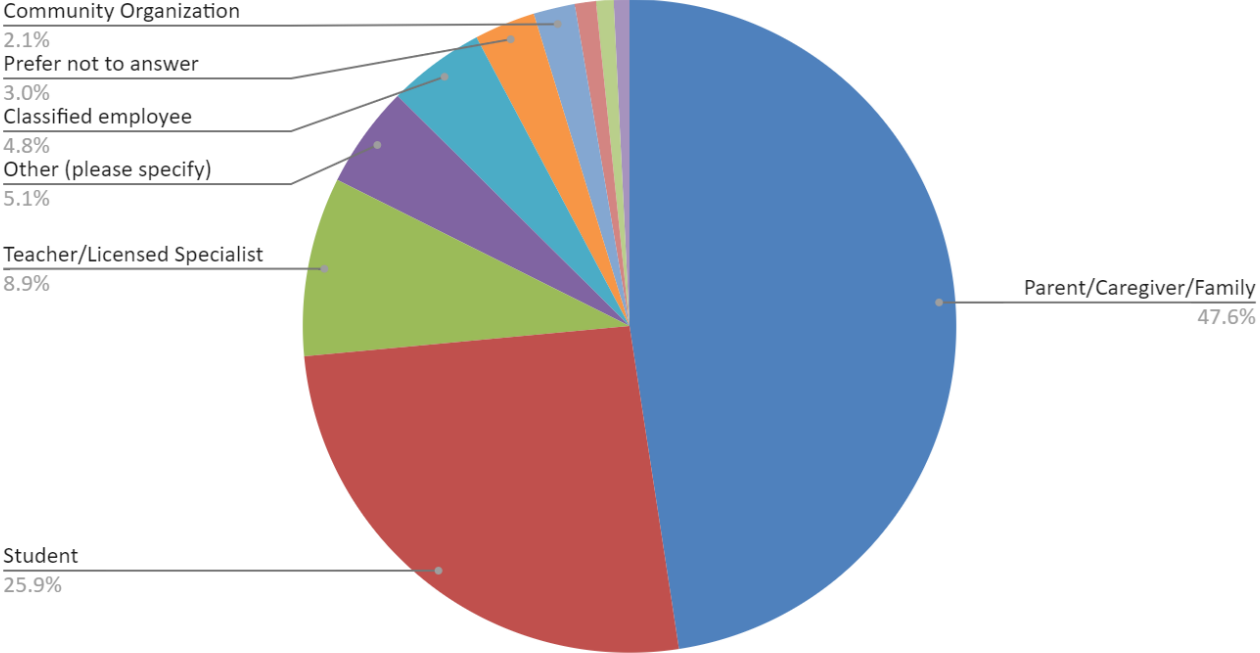


- Caucasian, Euro-American, White
- Prefer not to answer
- Hispanic American, Chicana/o/x/@, Latina/o/x/@
- Asian American or East Asian (not South Asian)
- African American, Afro-Caribbean, or Black
- Other (please specify)
- Alaska Native, American Indian, First Nations, Indigenous, Native, Native American
- Indian American or South Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Arab American or Middle Eastern



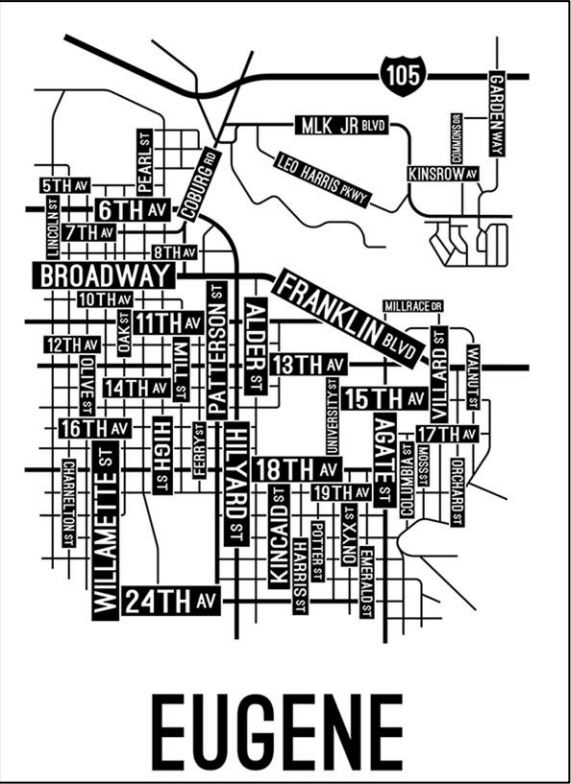
Survey has high participation from many groups

3,712
SURVEY RESPONSES



Nearly 75% of respondents were 4J students, graduates & families
About 15% were employees of 4J

Geographic Breakdown of Survey Responses



South Eugene	34.5%
North Eugene	20.7%
Sheldon Region	19.6%
Churchill Region	17.5%
Outside of 4J	7.7%



Our Community Gatherings

We asked guiding questions:

1. **What keeps you up at night** regarding your specific schools or your neighborhood? And what gives you comfort?
2. **What do you love most** about 4J that will be important for our permanent Superintendent to champion and protect?
3. What do you see as the **top 2 to 3 areas of improvement** for 4J that our permanent Superintendent will need to lead us through during the next 3 to 5 years?
4. **What skills do you think will be most important** for our Superintendent to be successful in the role?
5. **What would you like to see** from us that would demonstrate to you that what you shared with us **made a difference** in this process?
6. If there is **one question that you could ask a potential candidate** for this role, what would it be?



Stakeholder and Community Engagement

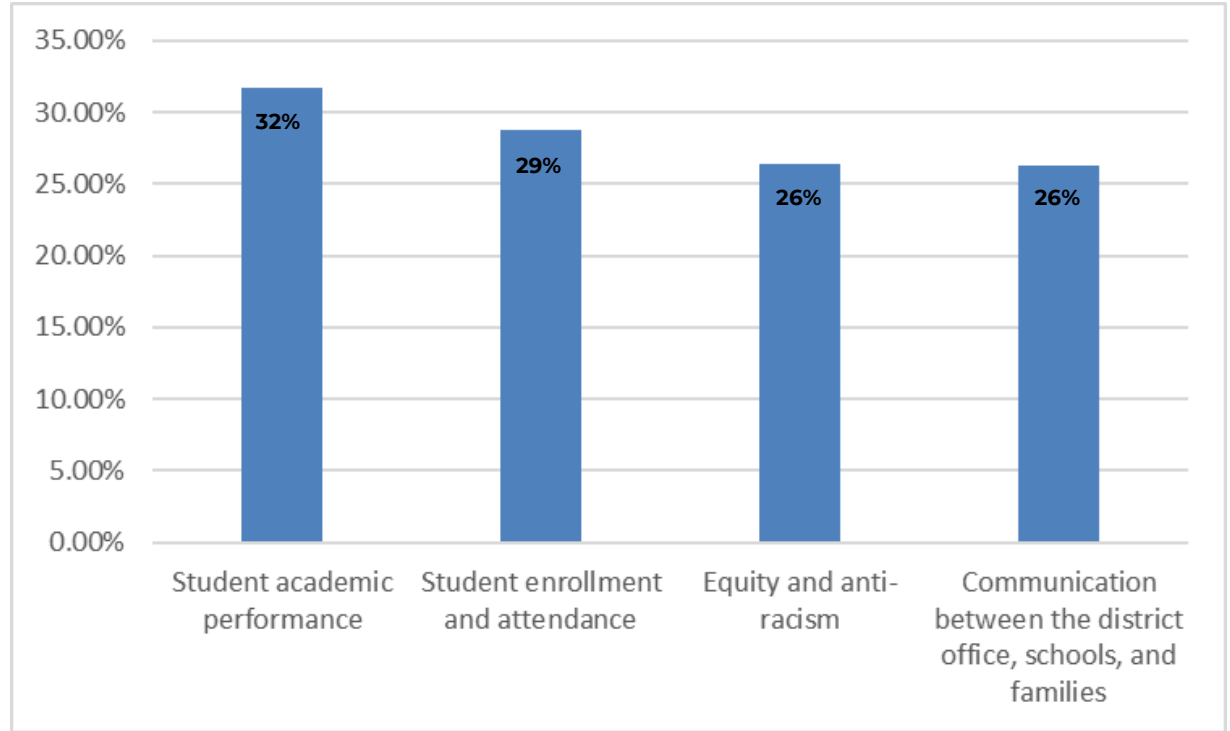
WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED SO FAR

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



4J's Strengths

The top four strengths identified by survey respondents on what 4J does well today that needs to be preserved by the Superintendent



4J's Strengths

From the perspective of parents, community members, students and staff, the following positive trends surfaced during multiple sessions.

- **Language rich opportunities.** “We have rich **language immersion programs** from K-12, we have international programs.”
- **Educators are committed** to students and are adept at meeting students where they are. “They really **care about students**. We teach kids how to read so they can read and be critical thinkers.” and “The **strength of the district is the staff**, the human capital of the district is the most important asset and resource.” and “We have some passionate educators at all levels—**every single person** in a school from the bus drivers to the nutrition services people—everyone **cares so much**.”
- Consistent recognition that district is moving in the right direction in support of **diversity, inclusion, and safety**. “The equity and inclusion directors have done great work providing wrap around services and reaching out to our latinx families.” and “We have a **strong equity focus**, debatable on how effective, want to **keep this going** and keep building.”



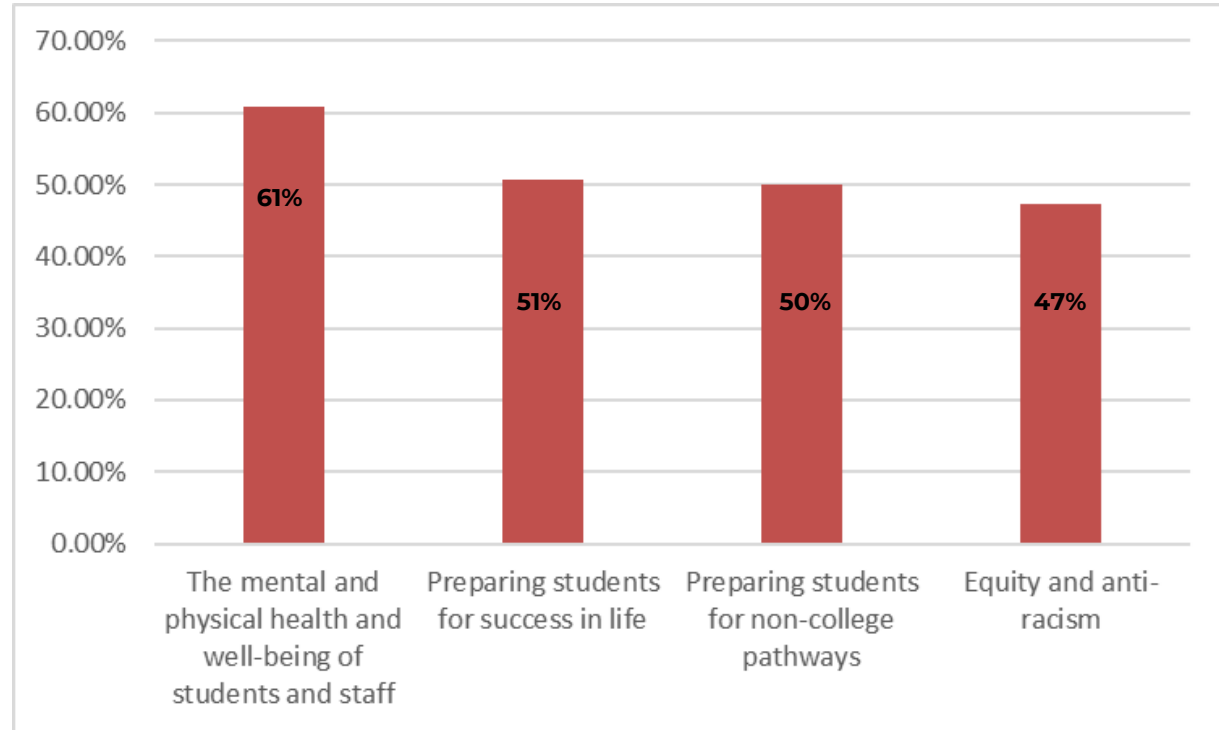
4J's Strengths

- Strong commitment within **community to support schools and families**. “The **wraparound team** - this did not exist prior to the pandemic; we have the culture navigators and social workers.” and “Community has **consistently voted for bonds** to support the district and our students.” and “The **resources to help families** during covid; the plans were put together quickly and programs and resources were deployed quickly.”
- A clear focus on **communication** emerged between the survey and community meetings. “Important to listen - someone prepared and with experience to work with different communities and work with people who speak with other languages.” and “I liked very much **the communication and the care for the parents**.” and “4J is very communicative with families; my kids teachers send weekly outlines on what is happening in class.”



4J's Opportunities for Improvement

The top four areas for improvement identified by survey respondents on what 4J needs to strengthen or improve.



4J's Opportunities for Improvement

PARENTS, STAFF AND STUDENTS SHARED KEY AREAS TO STRENGTHEN

- Comprehensive training for staff to **support neurodiversity** among students
- Building collaborative environments that **honor the voices of students, teachers, community**
- **Focus on whole student support**, including mental health and school safety
- **Implement multiple post-secondary** pathways and career opportunities
- Ensuring **access to rigorous and high-quality programming** and courses for all students
- **Teachers shared a feeling of demoralization**, with little autonomy to be change makers in their own classrooms and schools

EQUITY IS AN EMERGING STRENGTH... WITH A NEED FOR BOLD MOVES FORWARD

Community noted progress with a developing understanding of equity, **building muscle to advocate for students in the margins**. There are great resources that are not fully formed yet in need of coherence and clarity.



However, there is a desire for more explicit and proactive equity work - **addressing racism and ablism that feels at times “unchecked” in schools**, along with experiences of religious discrimination and punitive relationships with students.

What skills are most important for the superintendent?

EUGENE 4J WANTS A COURAGEOUS LEADER WITH AN UNWAVERING DRIVE TO DO WHAT'S BEST FOR STUDENTS

A leader who...

Is a qualified change agent that has **proven track record of standing their ground, taking risks, trying new things**, questioning policies that aren't working.

Leans into conflict and **seeks the best outcome for the health and wellness of students**

Holds themselves and others accountable to decisions, **acknowledges mistakes with transparency, and empathizes with communities** in the margins.



Survey Comments Reveal Additional Perspectives

When respondents were asked if there was anything else they wanted to share about the search, over 1,400 individuals responded. We reviewed all of them and these traits were mentioned by a significant number of respondents:

- A clear **“Students First”** focus
- Clear value for **equity and inclusion**
- Desire for a **leader of color**
- A leader with **no political agenda**
- **Communication** - willing to listen and collaborate/partner with others
- **Valuing teachers**, supporting hiring, retention and positive working conditions
- Focus on **support for students with diverse learning needs**
- Someone with **classroom experience**
- Focus on **safety and mental health**
- A need for **compassion and healing**
- **High ethics and integrity**
- Able to ensure **4J’s financial health**
- Improvements in **technology**
- Someone who is **committed to the Eugene 4J community**/ready to stay
- Desire for a **qualified change agent**
- Many mentioned specific **support for the current interim Superintendent**



Students specifically called out a need to address bullying in the schools, bringing fun back to the classroom, and strengthening trust and relationships between teachers and their students

Different perspectives were mentioned by a limited few

Although these were noted by a small minority of respondents (fewer than 20 out of 1,400+ comments), these perspectives are present in the community:

- Equity considered by some a “distraction”
- A number of respondents commented against face masks and COVID protocols
- Several comments were against LGBTQ+ inclusion, or acknowledgment of gender identity
- Several mentioned an “anti-right” culture
- Several mentioned concerns about the current Board
- Fewer than 10 comments did not want the current interim to be considered



Response/Reactions

- What stood out to you about what you heard?
- What was exciting to hear?
- What was difficult or concerning?



About the Job Profile

THE KEY RESPONSIBILITIES - THE “WHAT”

- Establish the vision and mission for aligned academic and non-academic programming for the district
- Promote innovation in the classroom and support a diverse systems of schools
- Lead and develop a strong workforce and build a positive work culture
- Partner with and foster a trusting collaborative relationship with the board and the community

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

- Advocate for Equity, Anti-Racism and Inclusion
- Innovative, Inspiring and Demonstrated Educational Leadership
- Authentic Relationship Builder and Courageous Communicator
- Ability to Manage Complex Organizations and Systems



Review Job Profile

- The job description can be found [here](#)
- Have we captured the strengths, opportunities, responsibilities and competencies?
 - What resonates with you?
 - What is missing?
 - What would you add based on the community feedback?



Thank you!

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