Superintendent Search Survey

Boston Public Schools
April 26, 2022

Superintendent Search Survey

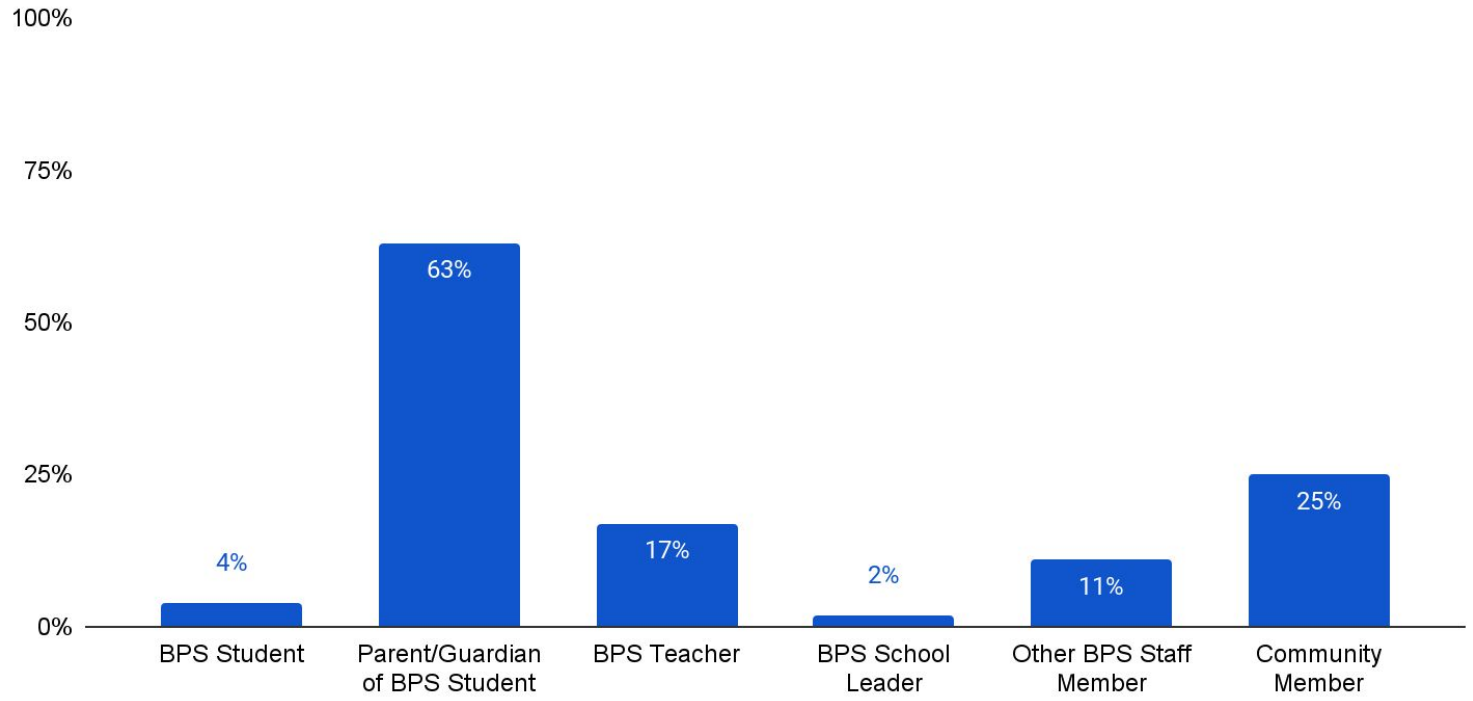
Survey available to all members of the Boston Public Schools community about desired qualities in a superintendent.

- Available in 10 Languages
- https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/supt-search
- Survey window : March 14 - April 15

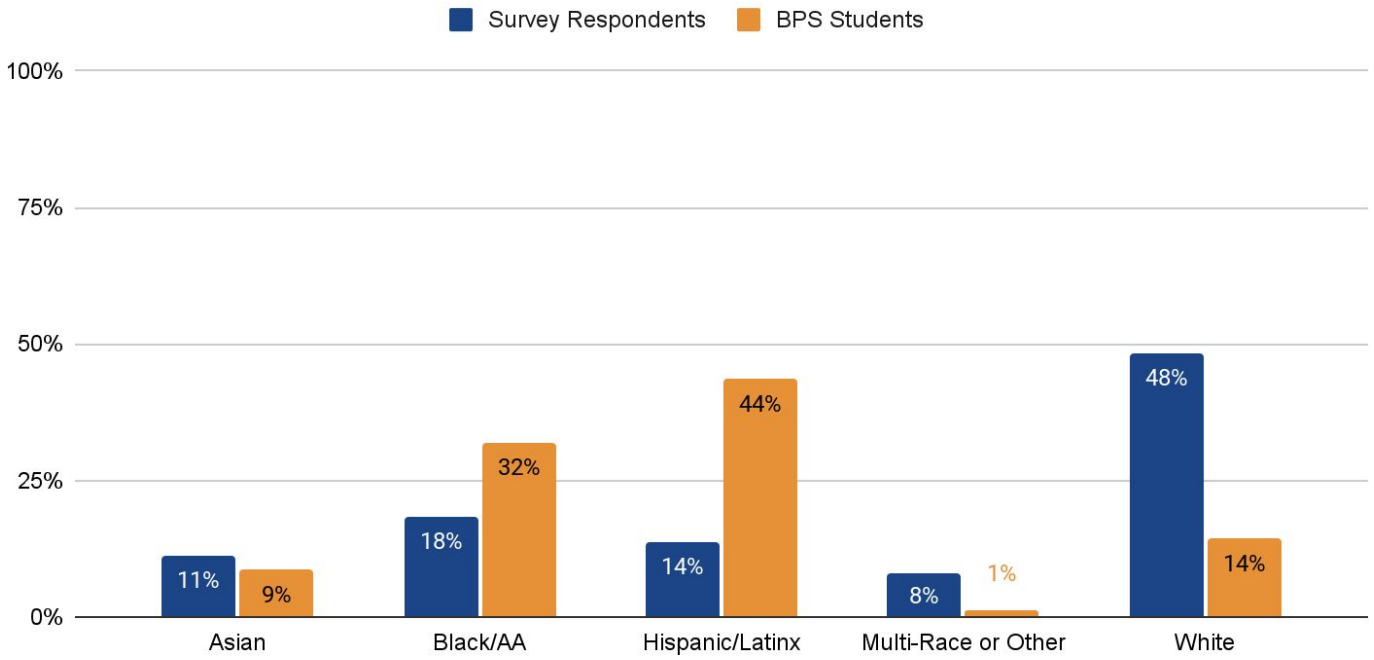
Number of Survey Responses: 507

Respondents

Question: Please select the option(s) that most accurately describe your relationship with BPS. Check all that apply.



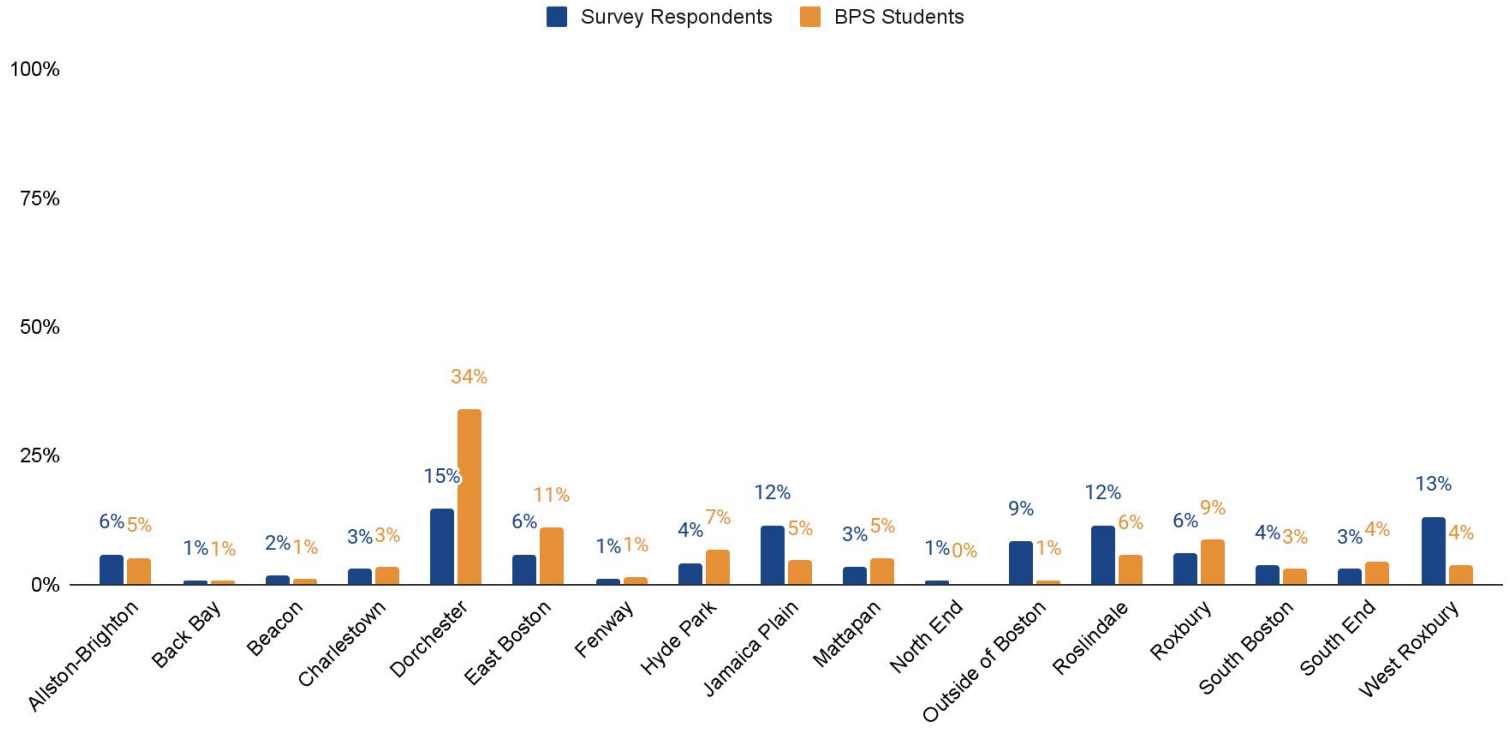
Race/Ethnicity of Survey Respondents and BPS Students



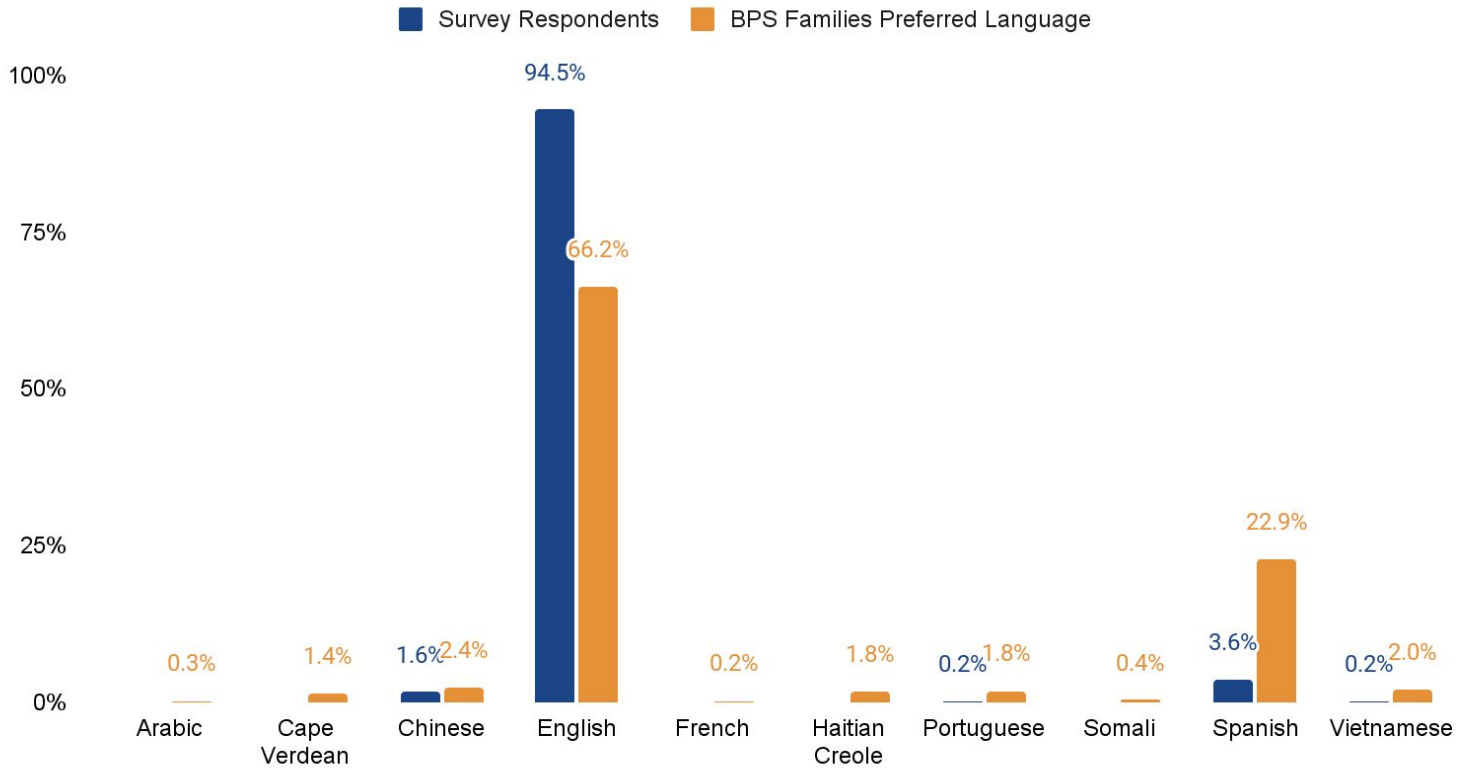
Number of Responses by Self Identified Race	
Asian	48
Black/AA	78
Hispanic/ Latinx	58
Multi-race/ Other	34
White	204

85 survey respondents declined to answer this question.

Neighborhoods of Survey Respondents and BPS Students

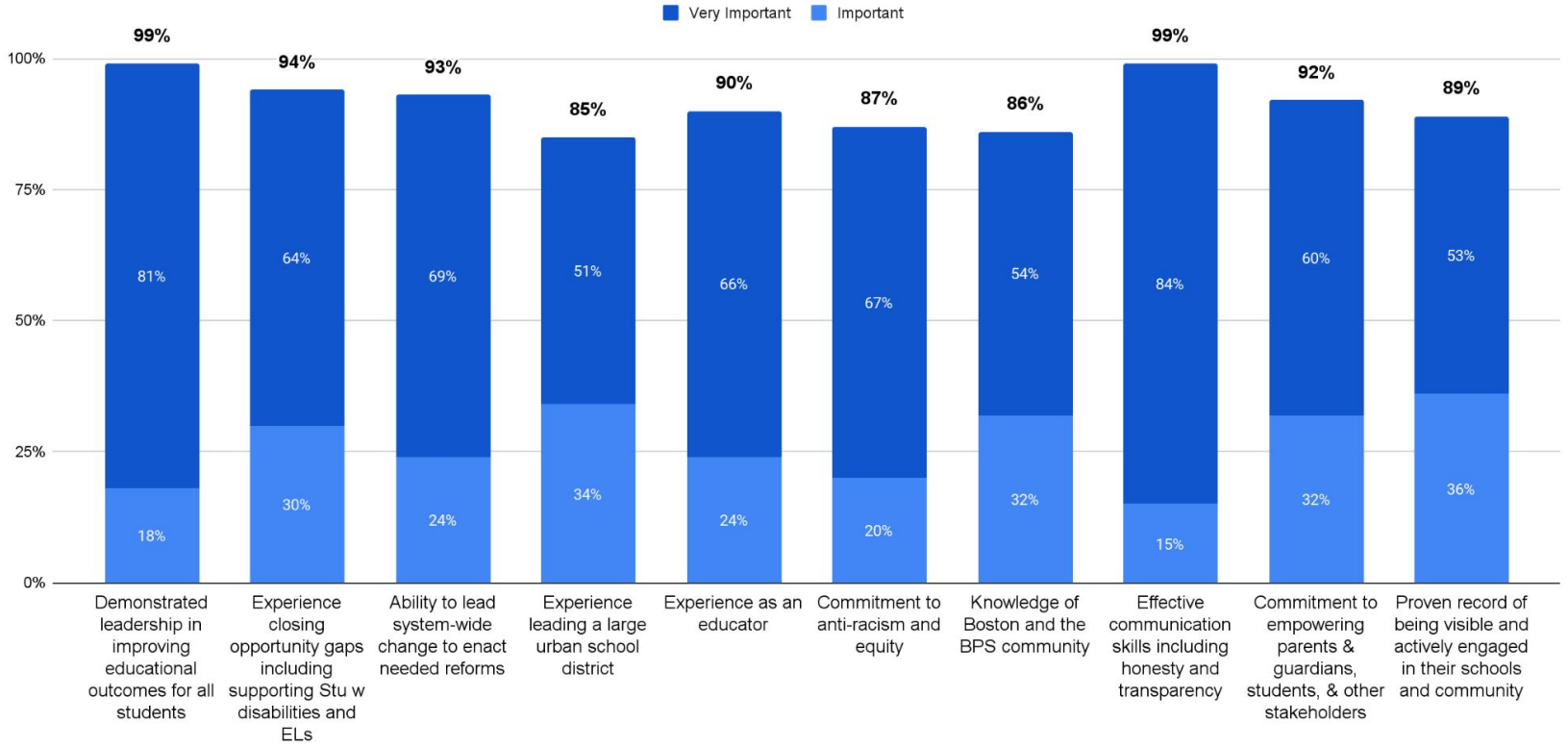


Survey Response Language

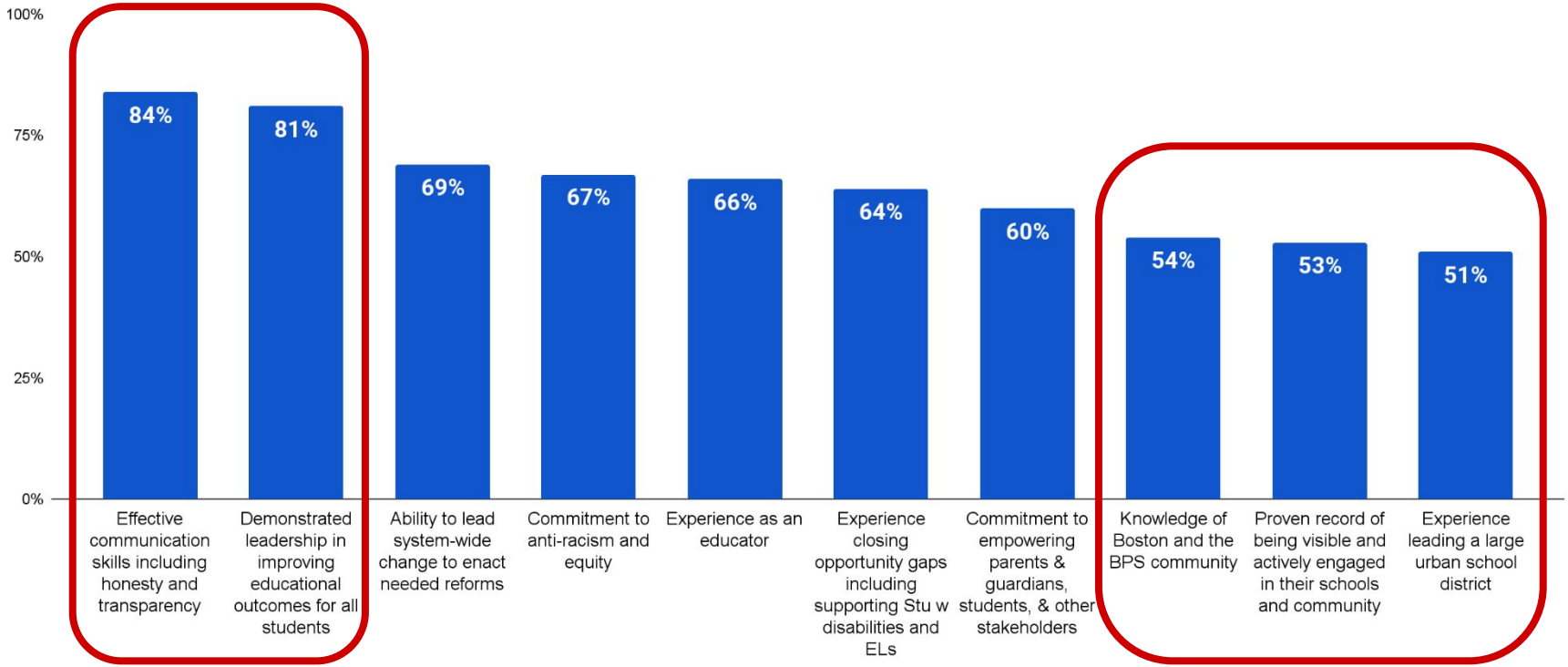


Results

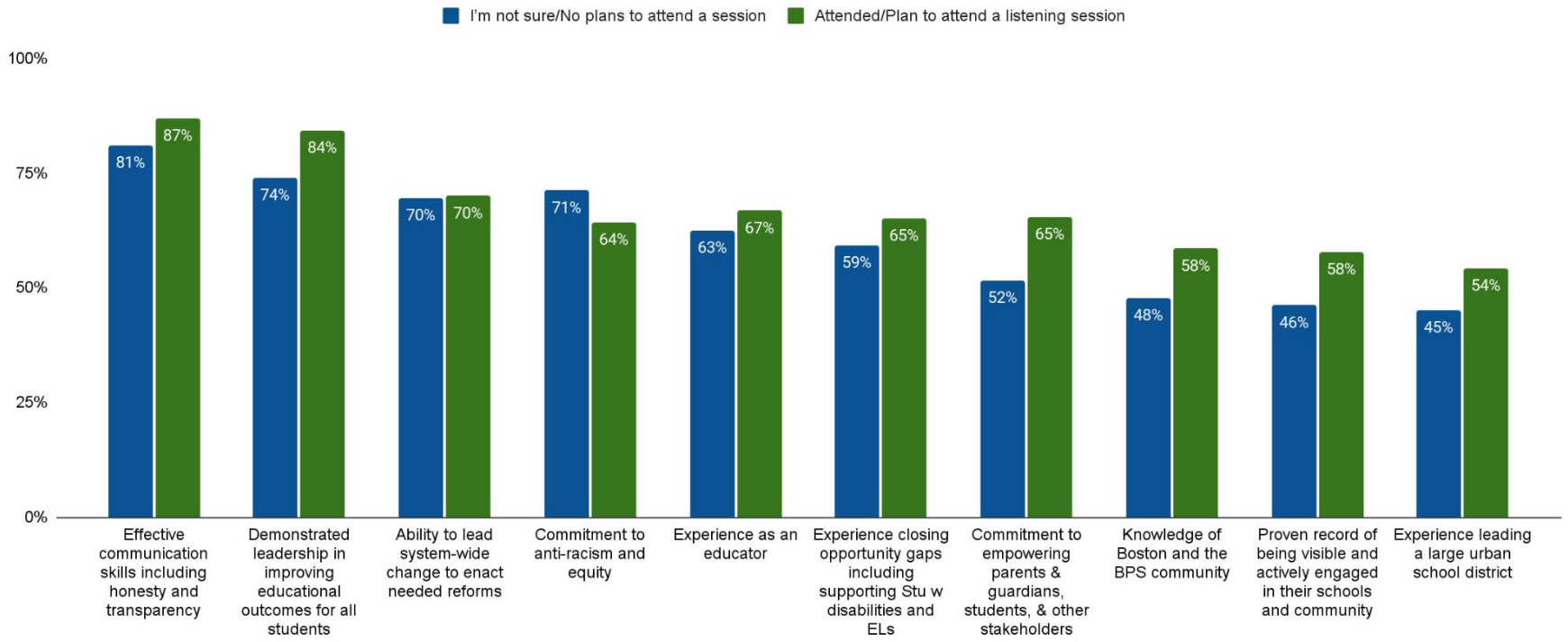
How important to you are the following qualities or characteristics in the next superintendent?



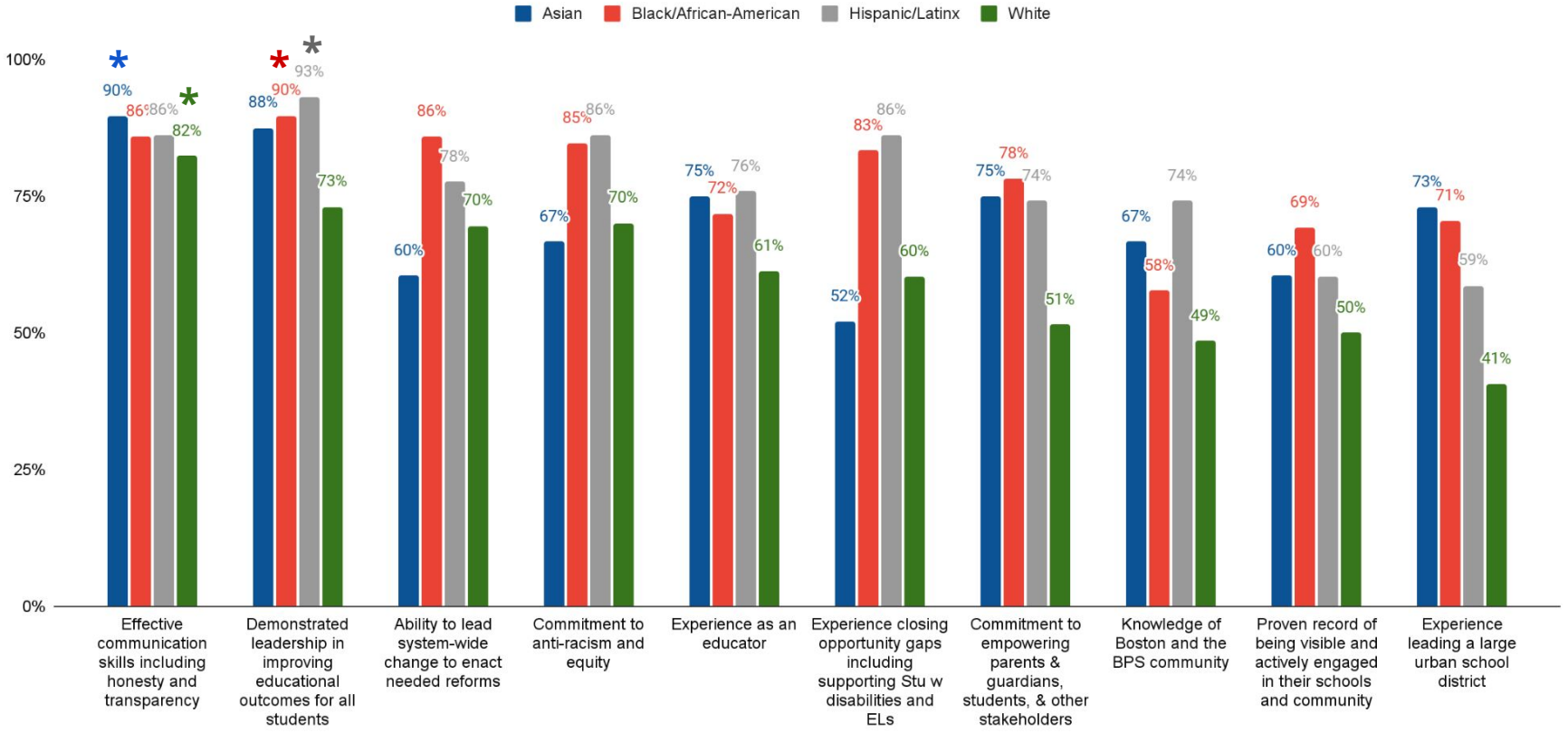
How important to you are the following qualities or characteristics in the next superintendent? - **Very Important Only**



Very important qualities or characteristics and Whether respondents attended or plan to attend a community listening session

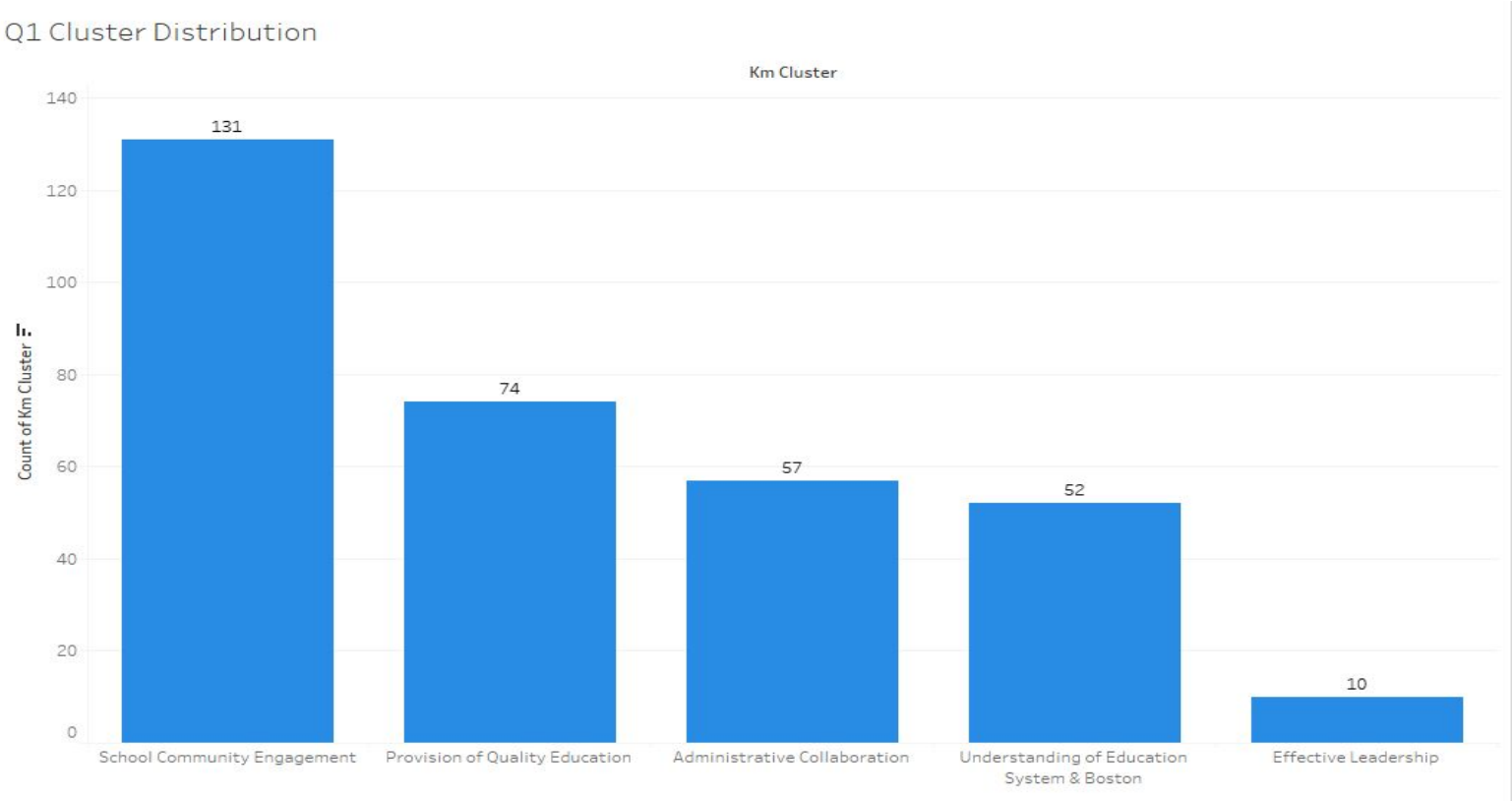


Very important qualities or characteristics and Race/Ethnicity of Respondents



Question 1 (329 responses)
“What other qualities or experiences are important to seek in the next Superintendent?”

QUESTION 1 MAJOR THEMES: *What other qualities or experiences are important in the next Supt?*



Cluster Key-Words

What other qualities or experiences are important to seek in the next Superintendent?

School Community Engagement (131 responses):
help, district, willing, support, families, commitment, community

Provision of Quality Education (74 responses):
quality, exam, education, high, children, students

Administrative Collaboration (57 responses):
team, set, stand, effectively, union, work, staff, ability

Understanding of Education System and Boston (52 responses):
system, understands, years, knows, city,boston

Effective Leadership (10 responses):
courage, necessary, deep, ability, experience, management, empathetic, outcomes, political

EXAMPLE RESPONSES IN EACH CLUSTER

School Community Engagement:
'A person who truly understands the community, has worked within the education system, a team builder, collaborator, open-minded to change. Someone who will tirelessly advocate for the students of BPS.'

Provision of Quality Education:
'Someone who can bring high quality education to BPS for the next generation of students. Someone who has a vision for BPS that answers the call for high quality education but also has a plan for how BPS can pivot when the next COVID wave hits. Someone who is proactive vs reactive.'

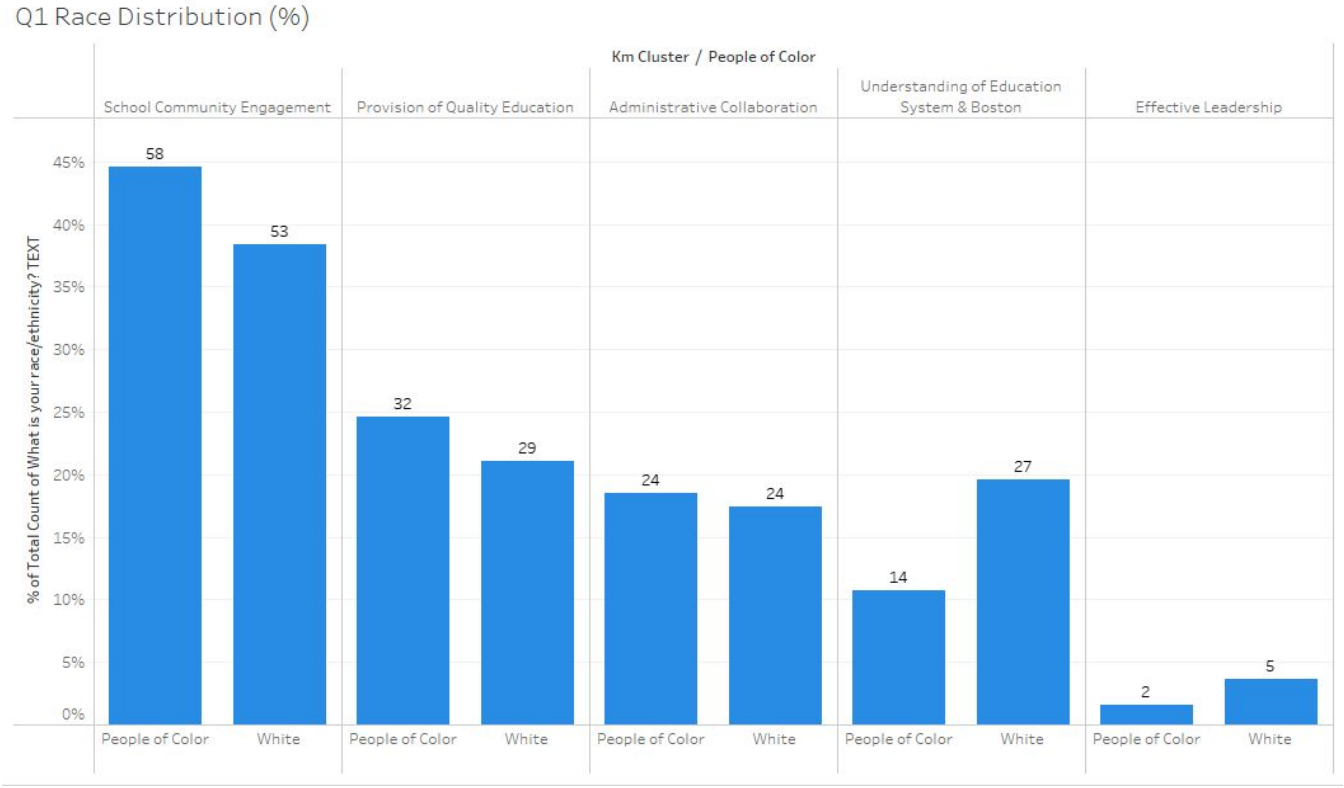
Administrative Collaboration:
'Someone who will ensure that the central office is well-organized and effectively supports leaders and teachers in the various schools.'

Understanding of Education System & Boston:
'I want to further emphasize how important I think it is for the superintendent to come from Boston and demonstrate understanding of Boston Public Schools and its local context. I think this quality is crucial to a superintendent's success in the district. Fully understanding the complexities, strengths, weaknesses, and history of our district takes years, and any superintendent who does not have that background knowledge is at an immense disadvantage.'

Effective Leadership:
'I'd love for the next Superintendent to have experience in navigating an extremely complex urban district. BPS has many areas that desperately need to be addressed but are political hot potatoes. Improving outcomes for all students will require confident leadership and a vision that is clearly communicated to all stakeholders.'

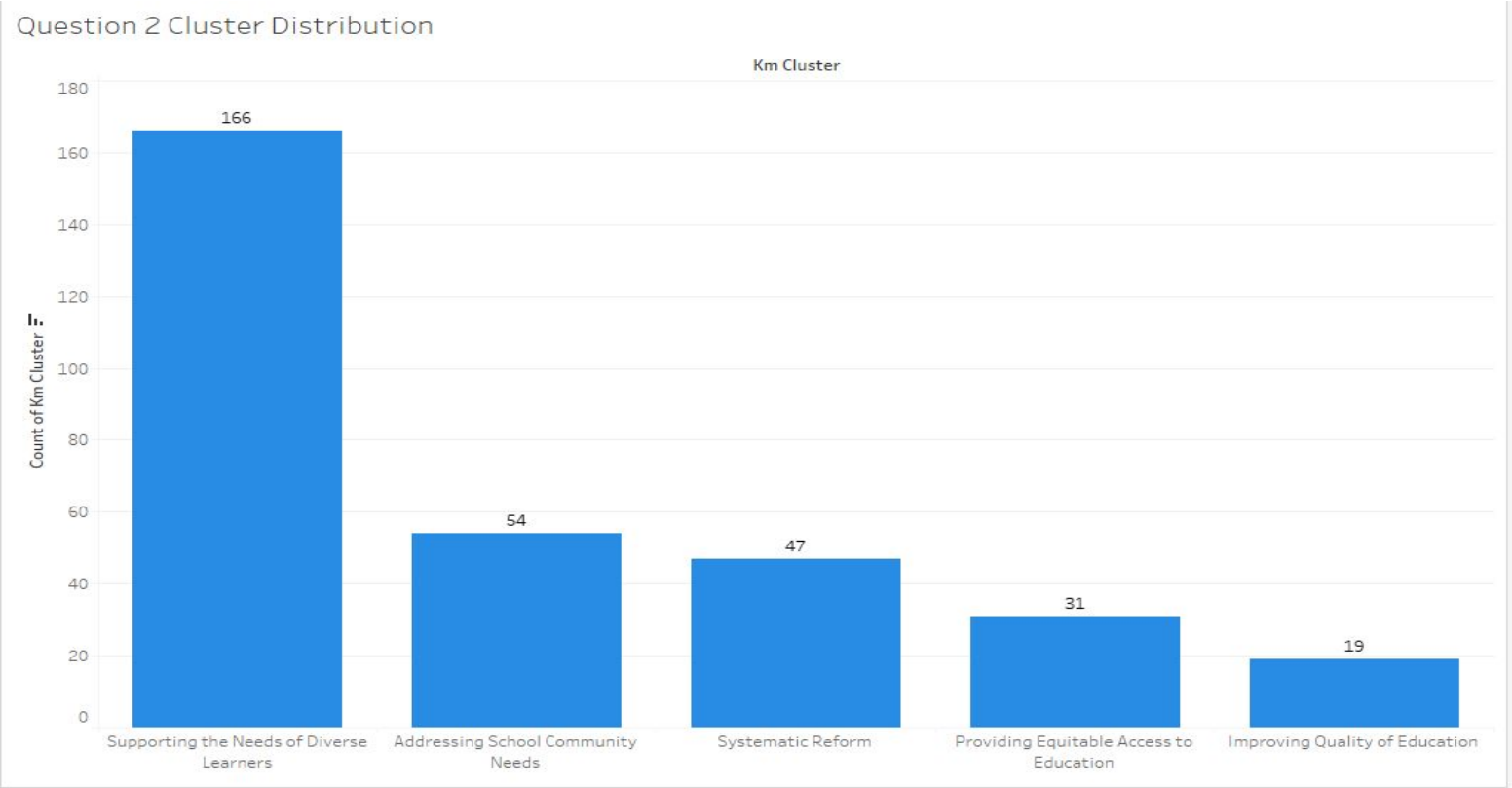
FOCUS OF RESPONDENTS OF COLOR

- Relative frequency of responses was fairly consistent between white and people of color respondents
- People of color respondents were more likely to emphasize School Community Engagement (45% vs 38%)
- White respondents were more likely to emphasize Understanding of Education System & Boston (20% vs 11%)



Question 2 (318 responses)
“What question would you most like a candidate for the job to answer?”

QUESTION 2 MAJOR THEMES: *What question would you most like a candidate for the job to answer?*



Cluster Key-Words

What question would you most like a candidate for the job to answer?

Supporting the Needs of Diverse Learners (166 responses):
job, special, learning, staff, needs, years, support, teachers

Addressing School Community Needs (54 responses):
needs, families, system, bring, community, vision, arts, address, ensure

Systematic Reform (47 responses):
district, ensure, improve, system, based, think, education, quality, high, exam

Providing Equitable Access to Education (31 responses):
vision, racial, city, resources, teachers, improve, change, families, public

Improving Quality of Education (19 responses):
education, best, public, involved, boston, provide, help, children

EXAMPLE RESPONSES IN EACH CLUSTER

Supporting the Needs of Diverse Learners:
'What plans do they have to address mental health for students with Special needs and what plan do they have to support/train teachers who teach students with special needs?'

Addressing School Community Needs:
'How would you address the racial inequity in BPS?'

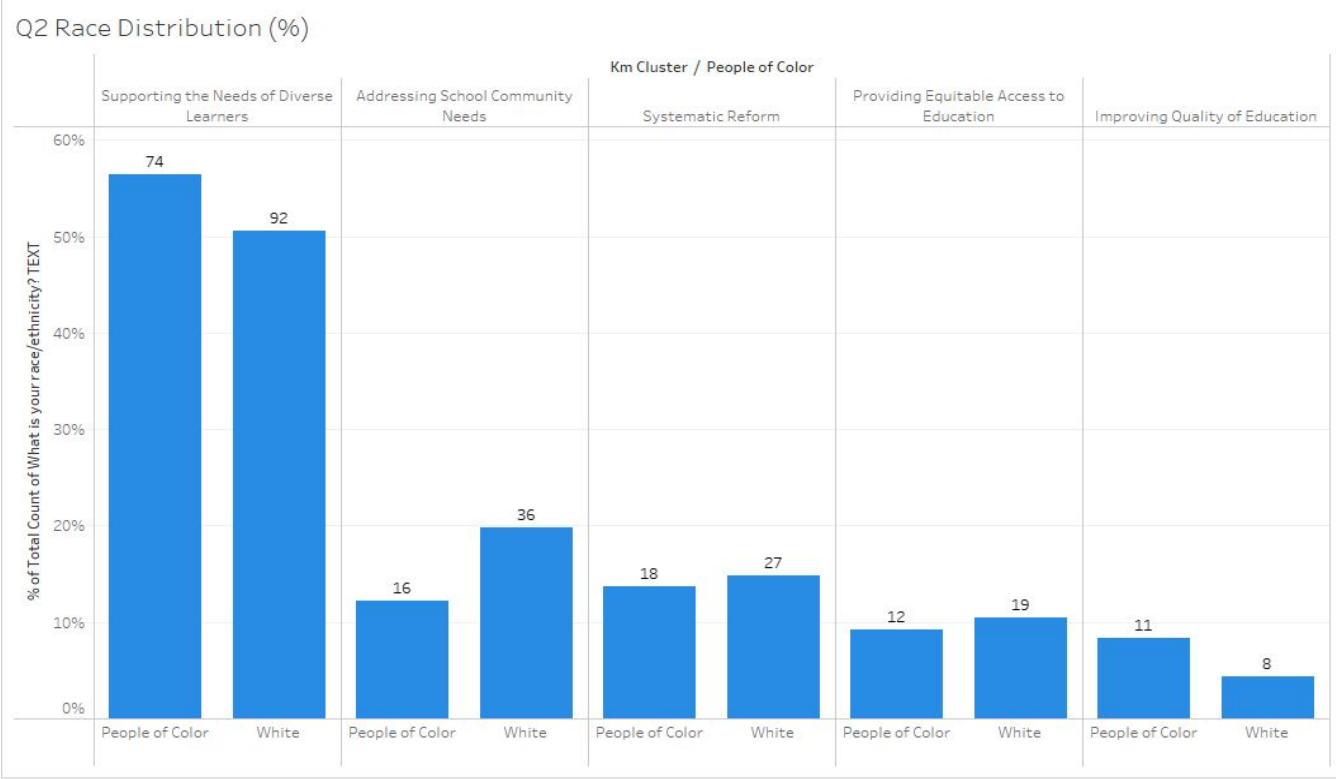
Systematic Reform:
'How will you ensure that every student in BPS has access to a high-quality high school education, whether or not they test in or choose to attend one of the exam schools?"

Providing Equitable Access to Education:
'Share your vision or proposed plan for making all schools more equitable for all students?'

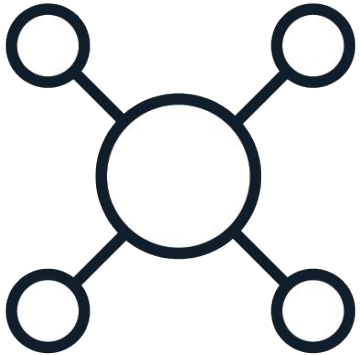
Improving Quality of Education:
'How will you determine which practices (in Central Office, in schools/classes) and policies in BPS should stay and which should be eliminated or changed for the good of our children and their futures? Specifically, what will you do to center the needs and futures of children over the interests of adults?'

FOCUS OF RESPONDENTS OF COLOR

- Relative frequency of responses was fairly consistent between white and people of color respondents
- People of color respondents were more likely to emphasize Supporting the needs of diverse learners (57% vs 51%)
- White respondents were more likely to emphasize Addressing School Community needs Needs (20% vs 12%)



Appendix

BACKGROUND ON CLUSTERING

- The natural language processing algorithm assigns each response a value based on how often a word or phrase is used in the response and the uniqueness of those words and phrases across all responses.
- These values are then used to group the responses into clusters. The Analytics Team reviewed the top keywords from each of these clusters to determine the common thematic elements and assign names to the clusters.
- This is most useful for giving a general sense of the themes that emerge from the survey, and whether the focus of responses differed between subgroups of respondents.
- A single response may not seem particularly applicable to the cluster in which it is assigned - results are more reliable as sample size increases