

THE SEARCH FOR A SUPERINTENDENT
2021

Final Report to the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education

PREPARED BY

COLLABORATE

Mozaic
media + communications



TABLE OF CONTENTS

03

Executive Summary

05

Summary Findings /Results

09

Asset Packet and Media Kit

10

Focus Groups

11

Facilitated Listening Sessions

12

Street Teams

13

Appendix A: English/Spanish Versions of
Survey + Crosstab Information + Responses to
Open-Ended Questions

Appendix B: Focus Group Summaries and
Notes by Organization

Appendix C: Facilitated Listening Session
Summaries and Notes by District

Appendix D: Street Teams

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education (LAUSD Board) engaged Collaborate to develop an outreach plan to engage all District stakeholders for the purpose of collecting a wide range of information that could be used to inform the Board as it begins the search process for the next superintendent of LAUSD.

Given the significance of this position—especially during one of the most challenging years for public education in the nation—it was paramount to everyone that this outreach touched and captured the viewpoints of all stakeholders in the process, especially those who are often not included. In fact, during the outreach process, many stakeholders made a point to mention their appreciation at being included in this comprehensive outreach.

At the outset, Collaborate conducted in-depth interviews with all seven LAUSD Board members and their staff, as well as representatives from district unions, including those for teachers, administrators, maintenance workers and police. These interviews enabled our team to:

- 1) gather important content, context, and insights that we used in the creation of the primary information-gathering tool in our outreach activities: a stakeholder-driven survey mainly conducted online; and
- 2) work with Board Members to identify preferred groups for outreach and existing frameworks for communication.

After the initial outreach phase, Collaborate created a survey to obtain stakeholder input. We created a media kit that we distributed to stakeholder groups including Board Member Offices, Council Offices, Neighborhood Councils, NGOs and Non-Profit Organizations, and educational affinity groups to distribute the survey. Using street teams, we also visited 129 schools with a high SENI rating to gather feedback for the survey on-site during student pickup and dropoff. In addition to the survey, Collaborate hosted 14 facilitations. Each Board Member hosted two facilitations; in addition, we held a number of facilitations and focus groups with key stakeholders.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over this eight-week outreach effort, our engagement efforts resulted in the 28,569 total members of the LAUSD stakeholder community providing input via the survey (complete and partially complete survey responses). Furthermore, the survey was available in the eight most widely spoken languages in LAUSD, including English, Spanish, Russian, Korean, Armenian, Tagalog, Mandarin, and Arabic. All focus groups and facilitated listening sessions were also simultaneously translated into Spanish, some were in Spanish with translation to English, and one session was translated into Korean.

An overarching theme of our engagement is that LAUSD stakeholders want to see a superintendent plugged into the particular needs, culture and inner workings of the district and region at large. In addition, many stakeholders feel they are not listened to; that they hear updates about their local school and the District from the news or through forwarded emails, instead of from the Superintendent or the Board. We believe our extensive experience doing large-scale, culturally competent communication helped stakeholders feel comfortable sharing insights and being honest about their particular experiences in the district.

What follows below is a summary of the survey, as well as stakeholder presentations, focus groups, facilitated listening sessions, and street teams.

Collaborate would like to express its thanks to all LAUSD Board Members for engaging our team to create a transparent process of participation for LAUSD stakeholders in the selection of the District's next superintendent. Without the high level of engagement and guidance from the Board, including each Board Member's leadership in the facilitated listening sessions, this outreach campaign would not have been successful. It was truly a total team effort.



SUMMARY FINDINGS / RESULTS

The summary below presents a snapshot of the key questions asked in the survey relative to respondents' school experience and outlook, the goals laid out by the Board of Education, and responses to specific questions about qualities the next superintendent of LAUSD should have.



QUESTION 1

28,569
RESPONSES

Parents/
Guardians/
Caregivers
46.91%

Teachers/
Educators
18.93%

Classified
Employees
14.35%

Students
10.77%

Represented the
highest frequency of
survey takers

QUESTION 5

14,282
RESPONSES

Of those responding
to whether they or
their student is
enrolled in a Magnet
or Dual Language
Program

Magnet
Program
34.30%
(4,899)

Dual
Language
9.03%
(1,289)

Another
Special
Program
7.50%
(1,071)

None of
These
51.47%
(7,351)

QUESTION 6

11,153
RESPONSES

For those responding to
what board district they
work in, the breakdown
is as follows:

15.78% ● Central:
16.87% ● East:
14.80% ● Northeast:
15.23% ● Northwest:
14.24% ● South:
14.30% ● West:
8.78% ● Central Office:

QUESTION 7

24,380
RESPONSES

Respondents rated the
quality of education
at their local LAUSD
school

Excellent
22.6%

Good
44.72%

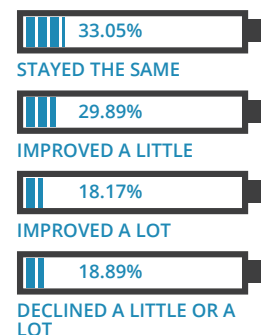
Below
Average
5.71%

Poor
2.33%

QUESTION 8

24,380
RESPONSES

How the quality of your
local LAUSD school
changed over the last
five years



SUMMARY FINDINGS / RESULTS

QUESTION 9

 21,144
RESPONSES

According to respondents, the top three strategies and investments to increase college and career readiness are:

- ☐ Improve the quality of instruction so that all students can master grade level standards
- ☐ Provide support for families to help boost student readiness for college and career
- ☐ Start college awareness in earlier grade levels

QUESTION 10

 21,144
RESPONSES

The top three strategies and investments to improve literacy in the early grades are:

- ☐ Reduce class sizes in high-needs elementary schools and lower ratios in preschool programs
- ☐ Increase teacher aide and other paraprofessional supports in elementary classrooms
- ☐ Bring in reading specialist teachers to high-needs elementary schools

QUESTION 11

 21,144
RESPONSES

The highest-rated strategies and investments to improve numeracy for 3rd through 8th grade students are:

- ☐ Create innovative programs that make math exciting, engaging and relevant
- ☐ Reduce class sizes in math classes in high-needs elementary and middle schools
- ☐ Provide professional learning opportunities so all teachers can effectively teach math

QUESTION 12

 21,144
RESPONSES

The most popular strategies and investments respondents would like to see to support students' social/emotional skills are:

- ☐ Support teachers in integrating socio-emotional learning in classroom instruction
- ☐ Establish partnerships with community providers to promote socio-emotional learning and wellbeing at schools
- ☐ Purchase curriculum and materials to teach socio-emotional skills



SUMMARY FINDINGS / RESULTS

QUESTION 13

 20,135
RESPONSES

90.37%

of respondents believe it is either very important or critical the next Superintendent has experience working in public schools as a teacher and/or administrator

QUESTION 14

 20,135
RESPONSES

88.63%

of respondents believe it is very important or critical the next Superintendent has experience in managing a very large organization in transition

QUESTION 15

 20,135
RESPONSES

66.20%

of respondents feel it is very important or critical the next Superintendent comes from a historically underrepresented community or closely reflects the population of students that the District serves

QUESTION 16

 20,135
RESPONSES

89.9%

of respondents believe it is very important or critical the next Superintendent has experience working in and with large, diverse communities

QUESTION 17

 20,135
RESPONSES

82.68%

of respondents said it was very important or critical the next Superintendent has a track record of prioritizing equity for historically underserved students, families, and communities

QUESTION 18

 20,135
RESPONSES

76%

of respondents believe it is very important or critical the next Superintendent uses data and metrics to help make policy decisions

SUMMARY FINDINGS / RESULTS

QUESTION 19

 20,135
RESPONSES

64.73%

of respondents feel it is very important or critical the next Superintendent has a prior relationship with LAUSD public schools, while 20.11% felt it was less important and 12.23% believe it does not matter

QUESTION 20

 20,135
RESPONSES

79.29%

of respondents believe it is very important or critical the next Superintendent commits to serving for at least four years, while 11.46% viewed this as less important

QUESTION 21

 20,135
RESPONSES

The five most important traits for the next superintendent are:

- ☐ Listens to community
- ☐ Teaching and/or administrative experience
- ☐ Problem solver
- ☐ Promotes transparency
- ☐ Effective communicator

QUESTION 22

 20,135
RESPONSES

The five least important traits for the next superintendent are:

- ☐ Process oriented
- ☐ Diplomatic
- ☐ Independent thinker
- ☐ Visionary
- ☐ Crisis manager

The English and Spanish versions of the final survey questions, cross tabs based on respondents' connection to LAUSD and a separate file with all individual responses, along with responses to open-ended Questions 23-25, are available in Appendix A.



ASSET PACKET AND MEDIA KIT

To aid Board Members and their staff in the promotion of the survey and facilitate listening sessions, our team compiled a comprehensive document with several resources, including:

- Central Calendar;
- Survey Link, texting code, and QR Code;
- Creative Elements;
- Community Toolkits in English and Spanish;
- Facilitated Listening Session Run of Show and Talking Points in English and Spanish;
- Facilitated Listening Session Presentation in English and Spanish;
- Facilitated Listening Session Pre-Recorded Video Presentation by English and Spanish Facilitators;
- Suggested Outreach Scripts to Promote Facilitated Listening Sessions; and
- Instructions on How Survey Can be Mailed



FOCUS GROUPS

To further enhance our engagement efforts, our team conducted focus groups with AALA, CAC, PAC, DELAC, SEIU, CSEA, the Teamsters, UTLA, the Superintendent's Advisory Council, and a community based organization focus group. Participants in the focus groups expressed a number of concerns, opinions, and thoughts on the next superintendent and related issues, including:

- Preferring a superintendent who supports adult education—LAUSD is a leader in this, and it should not be an afterthought;
- Preferring a superintendent who understands the importance of prioritizing special education;
- Familiarity with the disparities within the LAUSD community, understanding of the barriers and systemic inequalities some LAUSD children face;
- Teaching and/or administrative experience;
- Actively engages the community, cares about it, sees it as not just customers;
- A superintendent with with considerable awareness of LAUSD and its systems; and
- Not someone charter friendly.

Focus group summaries can be found in Appendix B.



FACILITATED LISTENING SESSIONS

As previously laid out in our outreach plan, Collaborate successfully scheduled and coordinated 14 virtual facilitated listening sessions, with two per Board District. During these sessions, our team provided participants with the purpose of these facilitations, an overview of the process and the survey, and a number of resources they could access to both offer additional feedback, during and after a given session—and where they could take the survey itself. The facilitations included were held in English, Spanish, and Korean.

The facilitated listening sessions proved to be a valuable trove of anecdotal information. Some of the notable comments made during these sessions about the next superintendent and other issues included:

- An individual that will fight for more funding for LAUSD;
- Someone who is a “bridge-builder” and support all schools to increase performance;
- Experience as an educator and/or administrator, especially during the pandemic;
- Concerns regarding virtual learning and ensuring special education students receive adequate resources;
- Preparing students to be a part of the future workforce; and
- Importance of equity and representation.

Summaries of each of these sessions can be found in Appendix C, where they are organized by Board District.

STREET TEAMS

Method Campaigns, our street team partner, led with surgical precision the on-the-ground outreach efforts at school sites. Partnering newer tactics such as using tablets for easy data entry, with years of LAUSD experience that allowed street team members to pivot through COVID obstacles and build a team that could speak Spanish, Korean, Armenian and several other languages to better understand the concerns of the average family. In total, our street teams visited 129 school sites and exceeded expectations collecting at least 960 fully completed surveys, averaging over seven surveys per school site.

For a list of the 129 school sites visited by our street teams and pictures taken during the Street Team Activations, see Appendix D.



Appendix A: English/Spanish Versions of Survey + Responses to Open-Ended Questions

1. [Final Survey Questions \(English\)](#)
2. [Final Survey Questions \(Spanish\)](#)
3. [Student Responses](#)
4. [Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Responses](#)
5. [Teacher/Educator Responses](#)
6. [School Administrator Responses](#)
7. [Classified Employee Responses](#)
8. [Local District or Central Employee Responses](#)
9. [Community Member Responses](#)
10. [All Individuals Responses](#) (Full Spreadsheet File for Cross-Tab Purposes)
11. [Question 23: Open-Ended Responses](#) (10,043 responses)
12. [Question 24: Open-Ended Responses](#) (9,946 responses)
13. [Question 25: Open-Ended Responses](#) (7,540 responses)

Appendix B: Focus Group Summaries and Notes by Organization

1. [Complete Focus Group Summaries](#)

Appendix C: Facilitated Listening Session Summaries and Notes by District

1. [Complete Facilitated Listening Session Summaries](#)

Appendix D: Street Teams

1. [List of Street Team Activated Schools](#)
2. [Street Team Activation Pictures](#)