



DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – AGENDA

Meeting Type: **Workshop**
Meeting Location: **McConnell Center, Room 306**
Meeting Date: **Monday, May 8, 2023**
Meeting Time: **6:00 PM**

- A. CALL TO ORDER**
- B. ROLL CALL**
- C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- D. CITIZENS' FORUM**
(Limited to agenda items only – To be recessed, and resumed following School Board Matters of Interest)
- E. HANOVER RESEARCH**
- F. SCHOOL BOARD MATTERS OF INTEREST**
- G. ADJOURNMENT**

Citizens, residents of the City of Dover, property owners in the City of Dover, and/or designated representatives of recognized civic organizations or businesses located in the City of Dover and/or residents of sending school districts, are invited to all public meetings and shall be given an opportunity to speak. Time shall be set aside for citizen statements, Citizen's Forum, at all public meetings, unless a vote to the contrary is taken by the School Board.

Citizens shall identify themselves by name and address for the record; address comments to the presiding officer and the Board as a body and not individual members.

Citizen's Forum will ensure citizens have the opportunity to speak to all other items on a meeting agenda and/or matters pertaining to the business of the School Board. At workshop meetings and special sessions, Citizens' Forum will be restricted to items on the meeting agenda. Statements shall be limited to five (5) minutes unless otherwise extended by the chairperson, with the approval of the School Board.

All citizens are permitted to place items on the agenda through written application to the Superintendent at least one week prior to the meeting date. Citizen items will require a formal motion and a second by seated members to bring the item to the floor for debate.



STRATEGIC PLANNING CAPSTONE SCOPE OF WORK DOVER SCHOOL DISTRICT

BACKGROUND

Dover School District (Dover) has prioritized strategic planning and needs to evaluate the district's current plan. As a first step, Dover has expressed interest in collecting stakeholder feedback to inform goal setting, by gathering perceptions of performance across various strategic planning and climate constructs. To support this effort, Dover has partnered with Hanover Research (Hanover) and conducted a series of strategic planning projects. The first project was a custom Strategic Planning Diagnostic Survey to solicit the input of district, school, and other leaders on the current priority areas of focus and perceptions of performance across various strategic planning and climate constructs. The second project was the Strategic Planning Community Engagement Survey that built on the Strategic Planning Diagnostic Survey for decision-makers. It garnered feedback from community members more broadly about their priority areas and perceptions of performance across various strategic planning and climate constructs.

Dover now seeks to synthesize the survey findings to inform the strategic plan. As such, Dover and Hanover have again partnered to create a Strategic Planning Capstone Report that will synthesize the results of the two surveys. The results will guide Dover in making decisions for potential changes to the strategic plan in its current form.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What overall themes emerge among Dover's two survey data analyses of stakeholder data?
 - What themes emerge related to students' academic and behavioral outcomes?
 - What themes emerge related to teacher quality, recruitment, retention, and attrition?
- What areas of strategic focus emerge from Dover's two survey data analyses?
- How can these findings be communicated with Dover's families and staff?

METHODOLOGY

Hanover will conduct the secondary research study by examining the findings from the two surveys completed for Dover. Hanover's research team will review and synthesize the data across these analyses for the Strategic Priorities Diagnostic and the Strategic Planning Community Engagement surveys to produce a Capstone Report that succinctly summarizes trends across the data and provides recommendations for strategic focus areas based on the data. This will include using a balance of data visualizations and written narrative to guide the interpretation of the findings.

DELIVERABLE & TIMELINE

Hanover will deliver this report in PDF format via the Hanover Digital Portal by the beginning of June.



STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

Prepared for Dover School District

April 2023

INTRODUCTION

The Dover School District is currently engaged in the process of reviewing its strategic plan, prioritizing input from the Dover Community.

To support this work, Dover School District (Dover) partnered with Hanover Research (Hanover) as an objective researcher to design, administer, and analyze surveys to gather perceptions from staff, families, community, and school and district leaders on district performance and areas to prioritize.

The following presentation was developed to communicate the findings of this work to the Dover community and Board of Education.

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WHO IS HANOVER RESEARCH?

HANOVER RESEARCH K-12 EDUCATION PRACTICE

Hanover provides access to customized research, professional services, and advisory services tailored to your organization.

- ✓ Supported over **700 different districts** and more than **20 million student journeys**

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Custom Research

- ✓ Best Practices
- ✓ Benchmarking
- ✓ Data Analysis
- ✓ Survey
- ✓ Qualitative Research

Advisory Services

- ✓ Capacity Building
- ✓ Implementation Support
- ✓ Consultations
- ✓ Workshops

Educator Learning Center

- ✓ On-Demand Professional Learning Modules
- ✓ Accountability Dashboard
- ✓ Implementation and Ongoing Support
- ✓ Discussion Boards

HANOVER RESEARCH: K-12 METHODOLOGIES



SECONDARY

- ✓ Best Practices
- ✓ Peer Benchmarking
- ✓ Discussion Guides
- ✓ Toolkits



QUALITATIVE

- ✓ In-depth Interviews
- ✓ Case Studies
- ✓ Focus Groups



SURVEYS

- ✓ Survey Design
- ✓ Survey Programming & Fielding
- ✓ Survey Analysis



DATA ANALYSIS/QUANTITATIVE

- ✓ Data Visualization
- ✓ Predictive Analytics
- ✓ Enrollment Forecasting
- ✓ Linear Regression

RESEARCH OVERVIEW

RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Research Goals

- What are key priority areas for Dover as identified by students, parents/families, staff, and school/district leaders?
- What is the perceived performance in each key priority area as identified by students, parents/families, staff, and school/district leaders?
- What potential changes would students, parents/families, staff, and school/district leaders like to see in the current district strategic plan?

Survey Administration & Sample:

- The surveys were administered online in February and March of 2023 by Hanover Research using the Qualtrics platform.
- Respondents were recruited by the district using an anonymous survey link.
- The analysis includes a total of 508 respondents following data cleaning.

Deliverables:

- 3 Survey Instruments
- 3 Executive Summary Analyses
- Board Presentation
- Infographic Analysis

SURVEY BACKGROUND

Strategic Planning
Diagnostic and
Community Engagement
Surveys to Gather
Stakeholder Perceptions



Staff



Families



Community



- ✓ Online Surveys developed and administered by Hanover Research
- ✓ Responses collected in February-March 2023
- ✓ This presentation summarizes key results from the respective surveys

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROJECTS OVERVIEW

Hanover Research completed the following four research studies on behalf of Dover School District (Dover) to gather feedback from across all schools and the community and inform district improvement planning and implementation strategies.



Strategic Planning and Climate Diagnostic for School / District Leaders

February-March 2023

Hanover surveyed Dover School and District leaders (i.e., members of the board and select staff) to examine perceptions of both district priorities and performance in strategic areas. Survey domains focused on leadership, teaching and learning, district culture, and resources and operations.



Strategic Planning Community Engagement Survey For Staff, Community Members & Families

February-March 2023

Hanover surveyed Dover parents, staff and community members to gather data on perceptions of district performance, climate and culture, ability to meet student needs, family / community engagement, staffing, and staff support and development.



Strategic Planning Infographic

January 2023

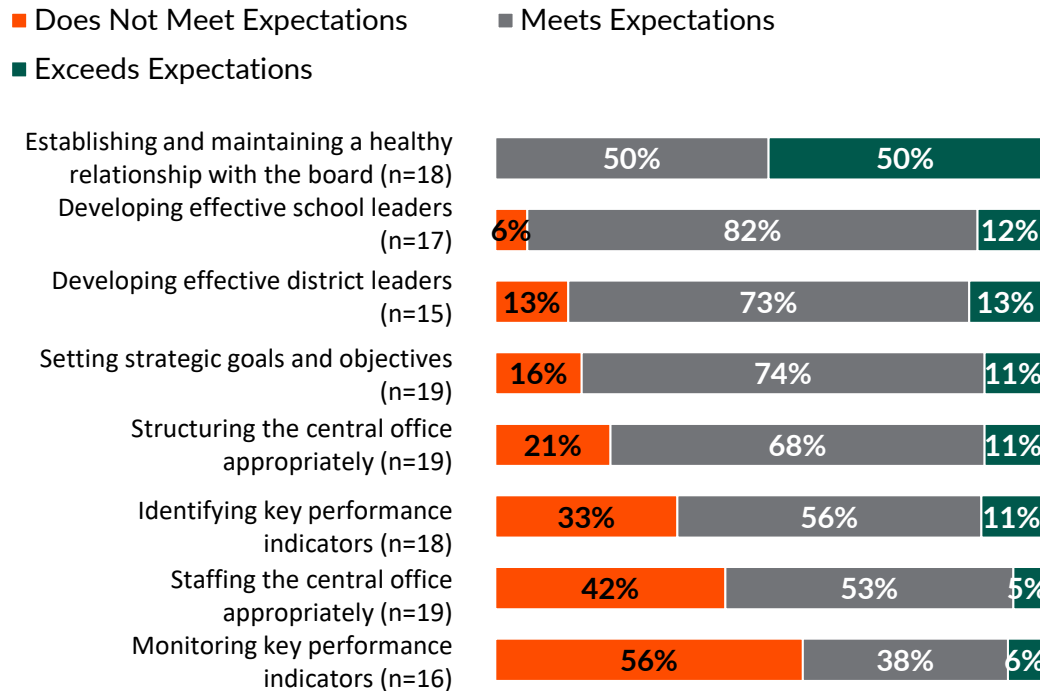
To support increased transparency and engage stakeholders in its accountability efforts, Dover partnered with Hanover to produce an infographic of findings to make these data clear and accessible.

SCHOOL AND DISTRICT LEADERS

Key Findings

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP PERFORMANCE

District Leadership: Please rate your district's current performance in the following strategic areas.



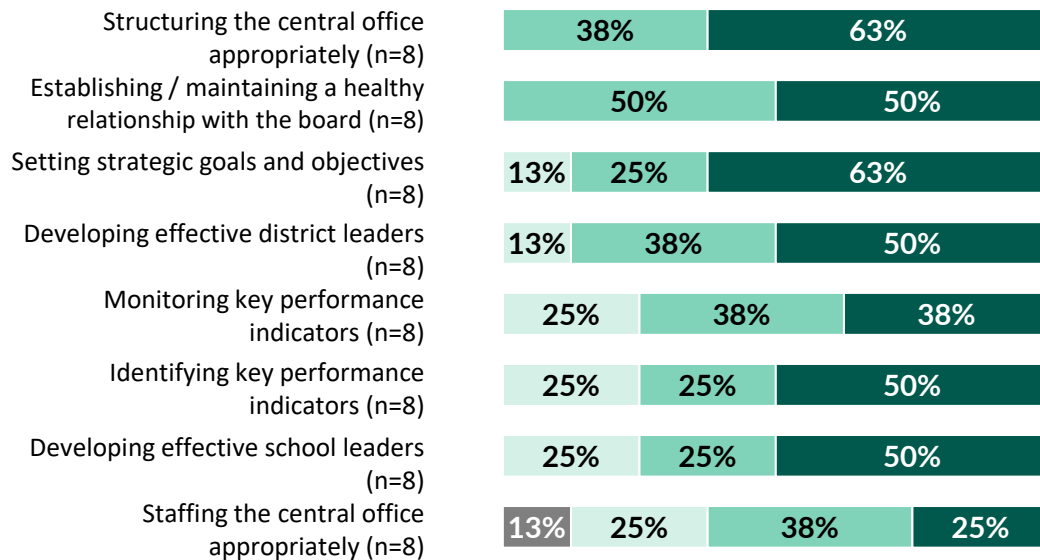
FINDINGS

Respondents indicate that the district should prioritize teaching students practical skills for the District Strategic Plan. Almost half of respondents indicate Dover should prioritize *teaching students communication skills* (49%), *problem-solving skills* (46%), and *self-management* (42%). Of these, the district fares best in *teaching students problem-solving skills* (62% good or excellent), followed by *teaching students communication skills* (58%), and then by *teaching students self-management* (47%). The factors in which Dover ranks best (i.e., *encouraging students to have a voice in the classroom* (78% good or excellent)) and lowest (i.e., *building relationships with business partners* (34%)) in terms of performance are not among the top priorities for respondents.

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP PRIORITY

District Leadership: Please indicate how much of a priority the following strategic areas are for your district.

■ Not a Priority ■ Low Priority ■ Medium Priority ■ High Priority



FINDINGS

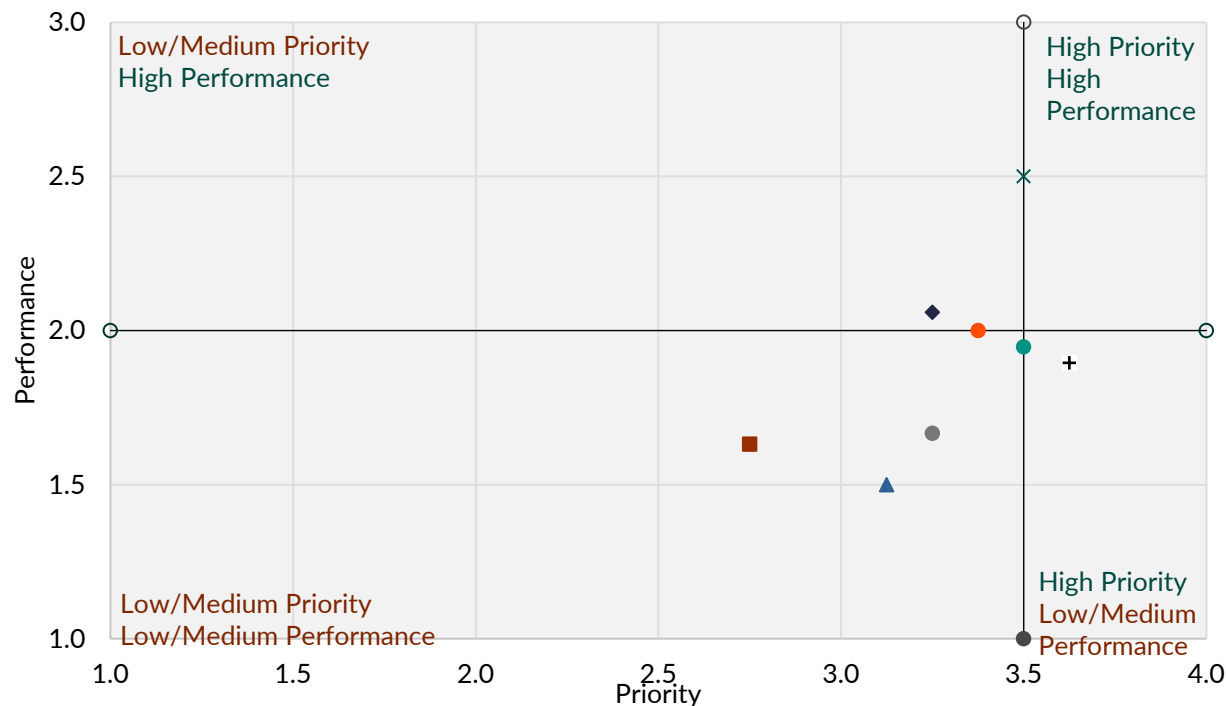
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DISTRICT LEADERSHIP

Structuring the central office appropriately is the highest priority item within District Leadership. Sixty-three percent of Dover respondents rate this area as a high priority. However, it is not meeting expectations in terms of performance, being slightly below the score threshold for meeting expectations. However, most respondents (68% or 13 out of 19 respondents) indicate it as meeting expectations.

Establishing and maintaining a healthy relationship with the board is tied for the second most high-priority area, and 100% of respondents rate it as either meeting or exceeding expectations, a win for Dover.

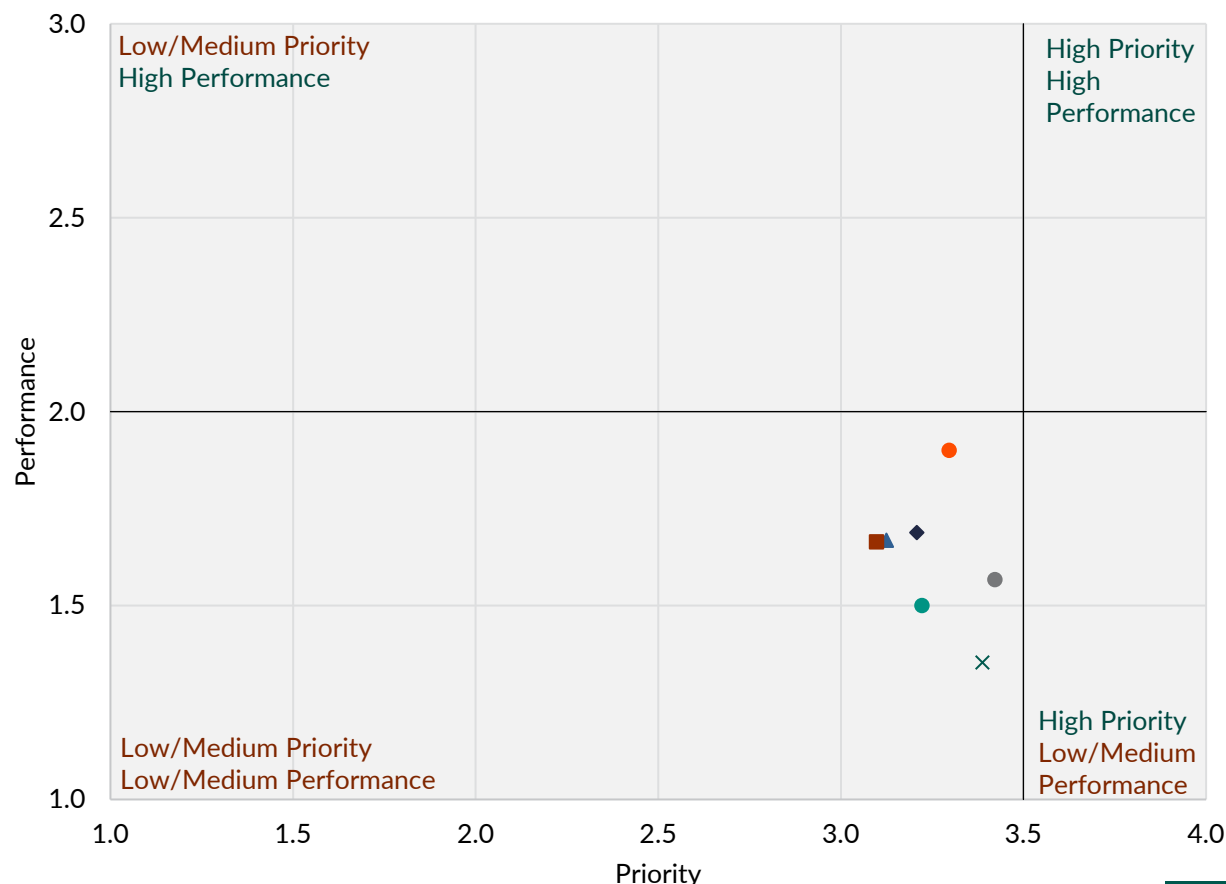
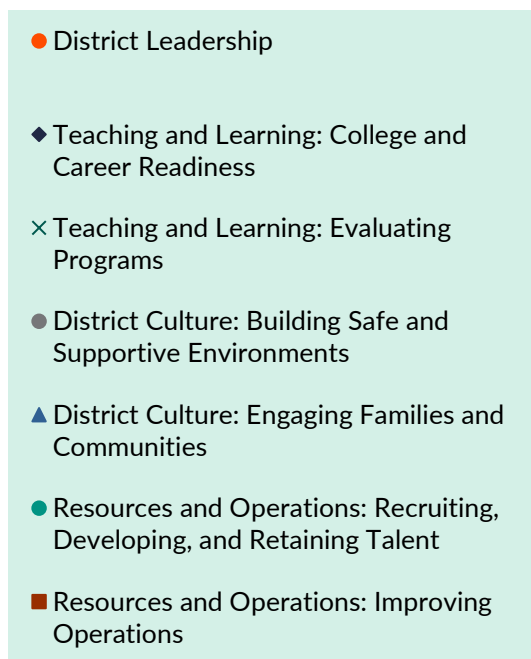
Dover leaders rank the two lowest-performing areas (Identifying key performance indicators and Monitoring key performance indicators) as the two target priorities over the next year ([see slide 20](#)).



PRIORITY AND PERFORMANCE – ALL STRATEGIC AREAS

At present, all strategic areas are clustered around the medium-to-high priority level, with no areas meeting or exceeding expectations in performance. Potentially considering underlying causes (e.g., unclear vision, misalignment between district leaders for aims and goals) for the lack of standout high-priority areas may be beneficial to Dover for future planning.

- Building Safe and Supportive Environments is the highest priority in terms of average score. However, it scores extremely close to two other strategic areas, Evaluating Programs and District Leadership.

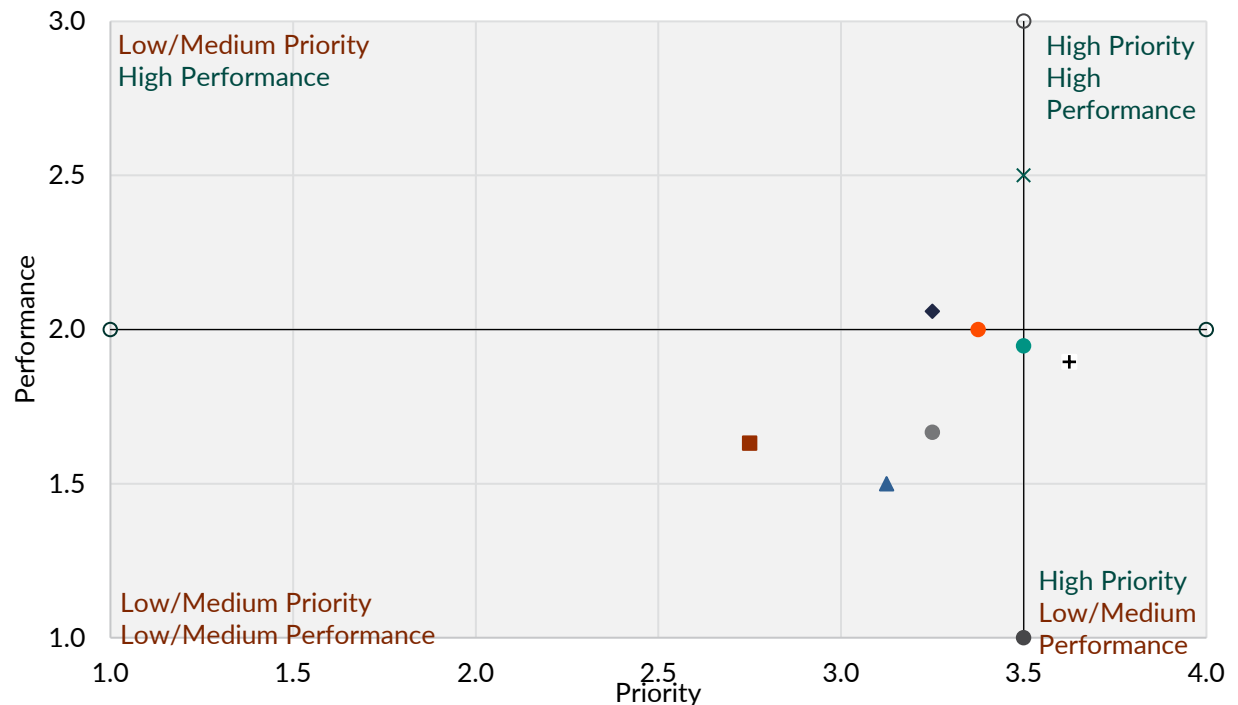


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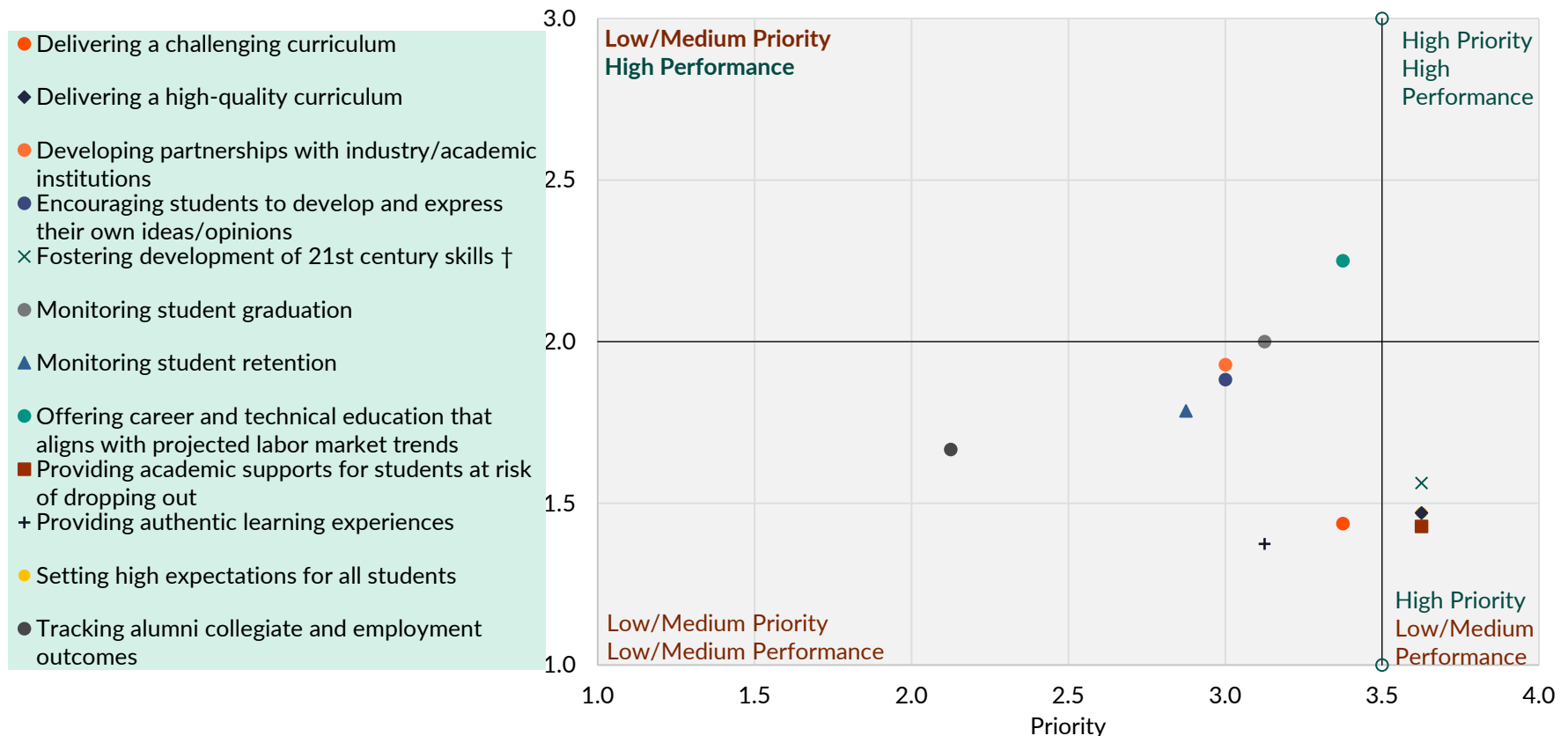
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Note: † indicates that the item description has been truncated to fit the chart.

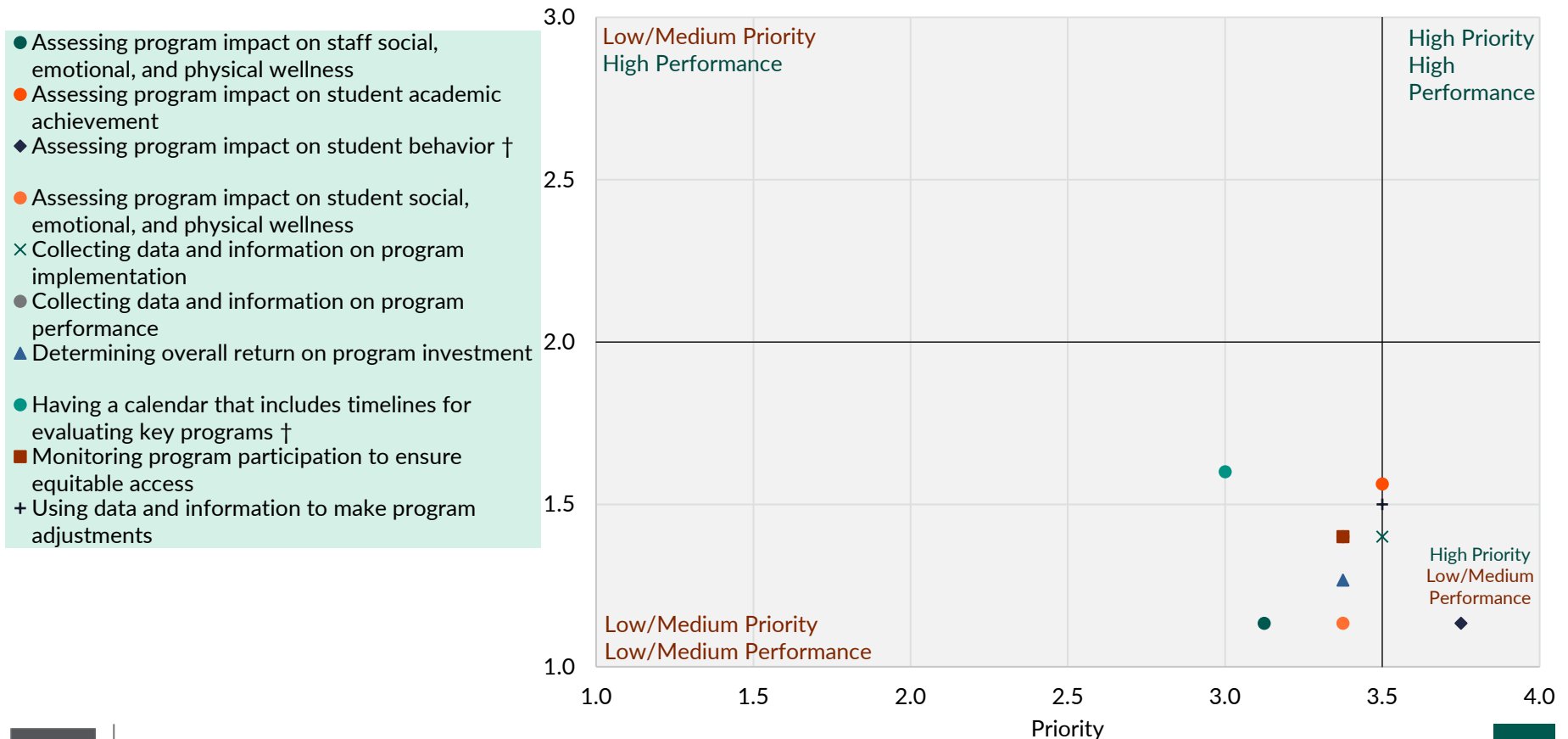
TEACHING AND LEARNING: COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

All areas by district leaders rank as high priorities do not meet performance expectations within College and Career Readiness. The three subcategories district leaders rate as high priority: Fostering development of 21st century skills, Delivering a high-quality curriculum, and Providing academic supports for students at risk of dropping out are not meeting expectations based on their aggregate scores. However, the majority of subcategories (7 out of 12) see over 50% of respondents agreeing that each area is meeting expectations ([see slide 23](#)).



TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATING PROGRAMS

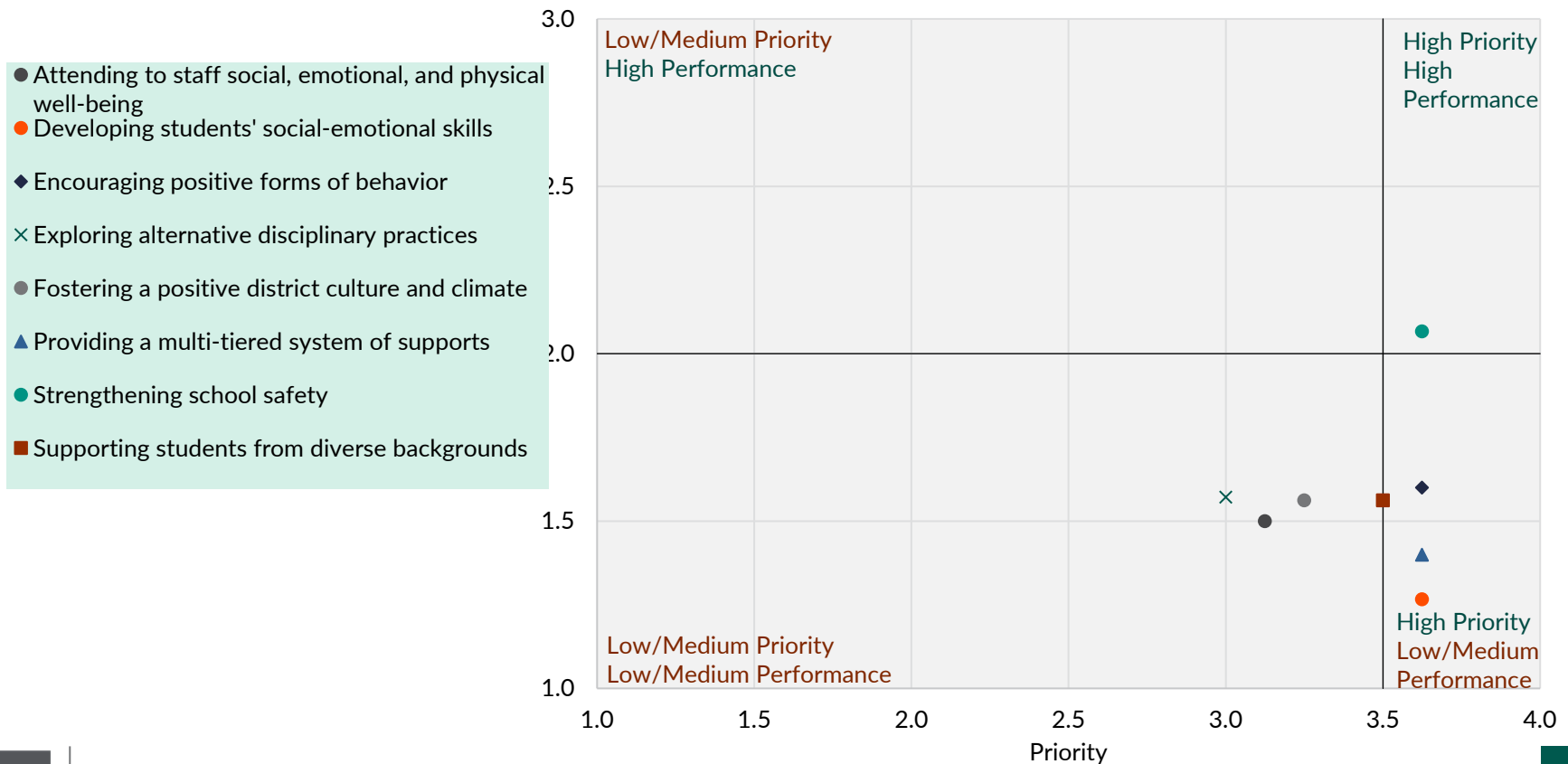
Assessing program impact on student behavior is the standout priority for evaluating programs. However, it is tied for last in terms of performance. Eighty-seven percent of respondents (thirteen out of fifteen) say it is not meeting expectations and only two rate performance as meeting expectations. Although this area is the highest priority item currently, stakeholders rank Using data and information to make program adjustments as the top priority over the next year (42%).



DISTRICT CULTURE: BUILDING SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Administrators rate half of the subcategories of building safe and supportive environments as high priority, with only one area meeting expectations. With half of the areas perceived as high priority, this may be indicative of mixed concerns within this strategic area. Strengthening school safety is the only area meeting expectations, with 67% of respondents choosing this option.

For intended priorities over the next year, stakeholders rate Developing students' social-emotional skills (56%) and providing a multi-tiered system of supports (50%) as the top two aims for the district ([see slide 32](#)).

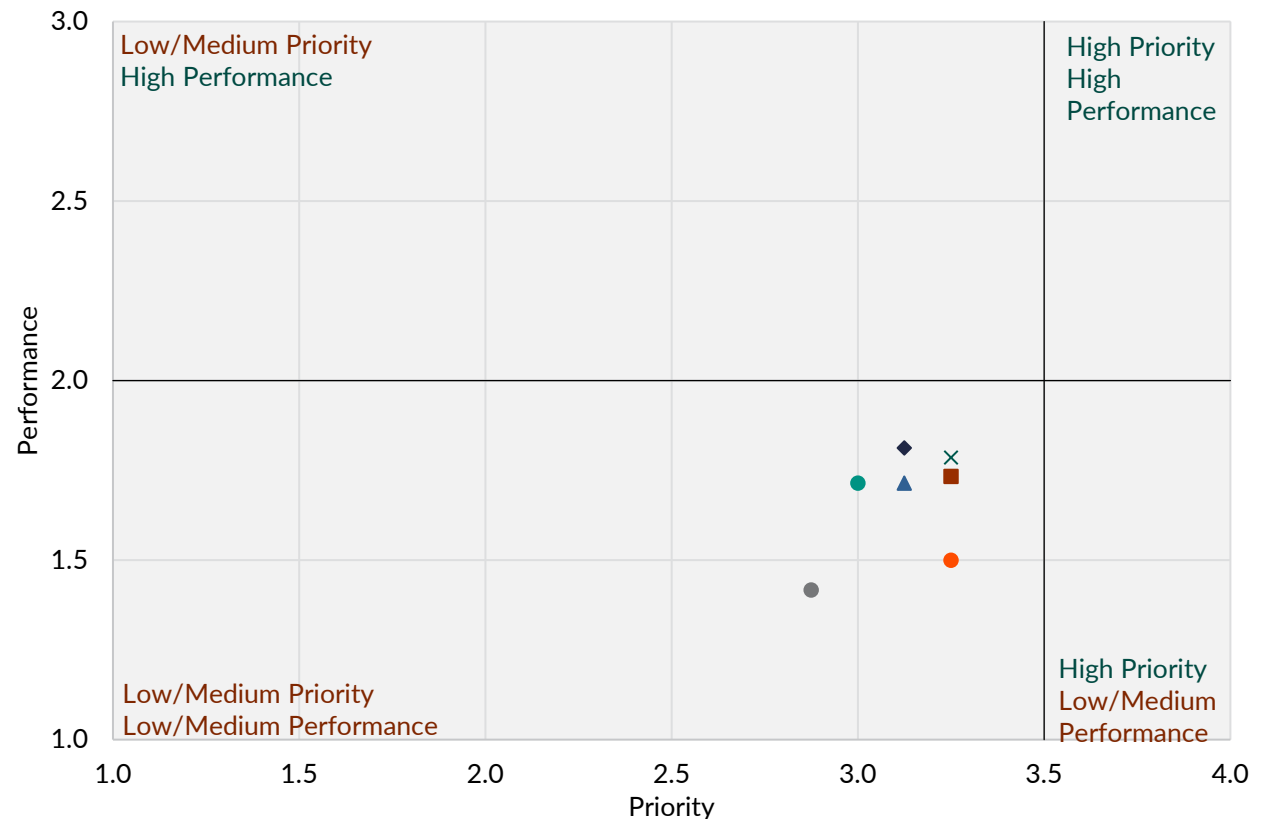


DISTRICT CULTURE: ENGAGING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Administrators indicate the subcategories of Engaging Families and Communities as having similar priority levels. The cluster of the subcategories in the medium to high priority range continues to demonstrate the trend of a potentially misaligned current district vision. Furthermore, each of these areas fails to meet expectations with regards to performance, with zero respondents rating any area as exceeding expectations ([see slide 35](#)).

No single intended priority area over the next year saw over 50% of respondents choosing it ([see slide 36](#)). This may yield a repeated theme of tightly clustered priorities within Engaging Families and Communities.

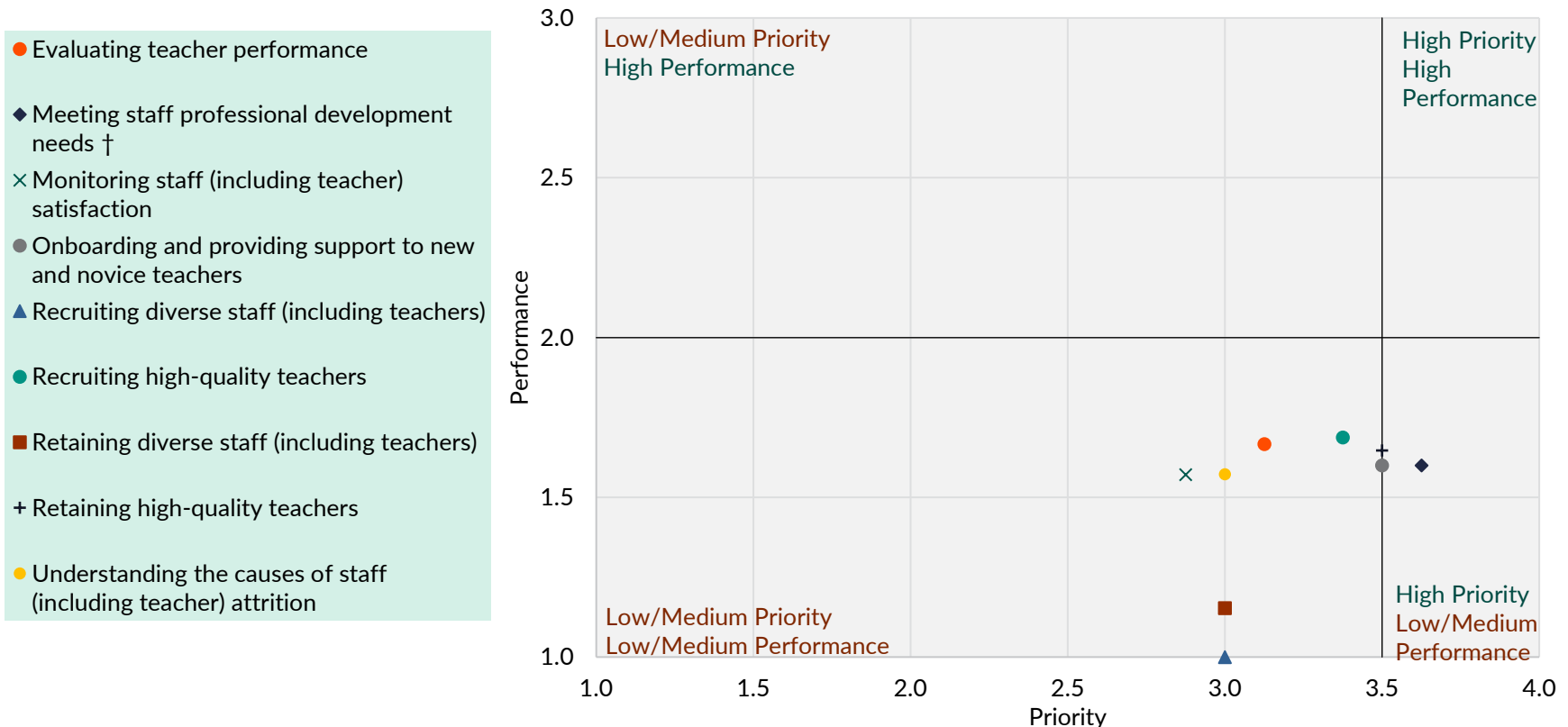
- Communicating in the languages spoken in our community
- ◆ Encouraging parents to engage with their child's school
- × Involving parents in their child's learning
- Monitoring community satisfaction with district programs and services †
- ▲ Partnering with the community to provide supports and services to students
- Partnering with the community to provide supports and services to students' families
- Using input from the community to inform key decisions †



RESOURCES AND OPERATIONS: RECRUITING, DEVELOPING, AND RETAINING TALENT

Meeting staff professional development needs is the highest priority area within Recruiting, Developing, and Retaining Talent. Forty-seven percent of respondents indicate this area fails to meet expectations, and 47% also indicate this area is meeting expectations. Out of the fifteen total respondents, one rates it as exceeding expectations.

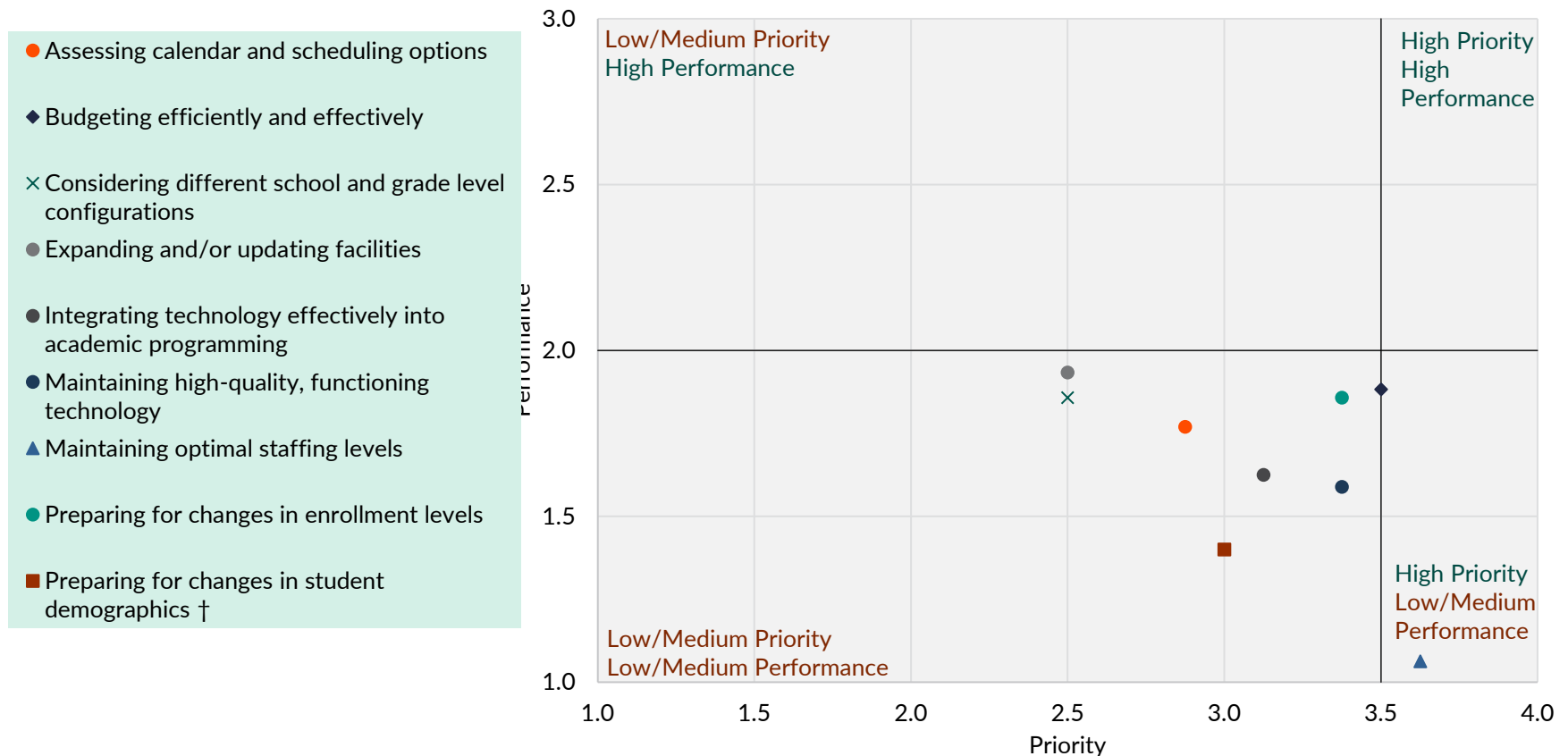
Thirteen out of thirteen respondents rate Recruiting diverse staff (including teachers) as not meeting expectations, the lowest performing category of all strategic areas. Recruiting diverse staff is tied for second place in terms of priorities over the next year ([see slide 40](#)).



RESOURCES AND OPERATIONS: IMPROVING OPERATIONS

Maintaining optimal staffing levels is the standout priority within Improving Operations, however, it is also the lowest-performing area. Fifteen out of sixteen respondents (94%) indicate that this area is not meeting expectations. Additionally, all other areas within Improving Operations fall below meeting expectations based on their average scores.

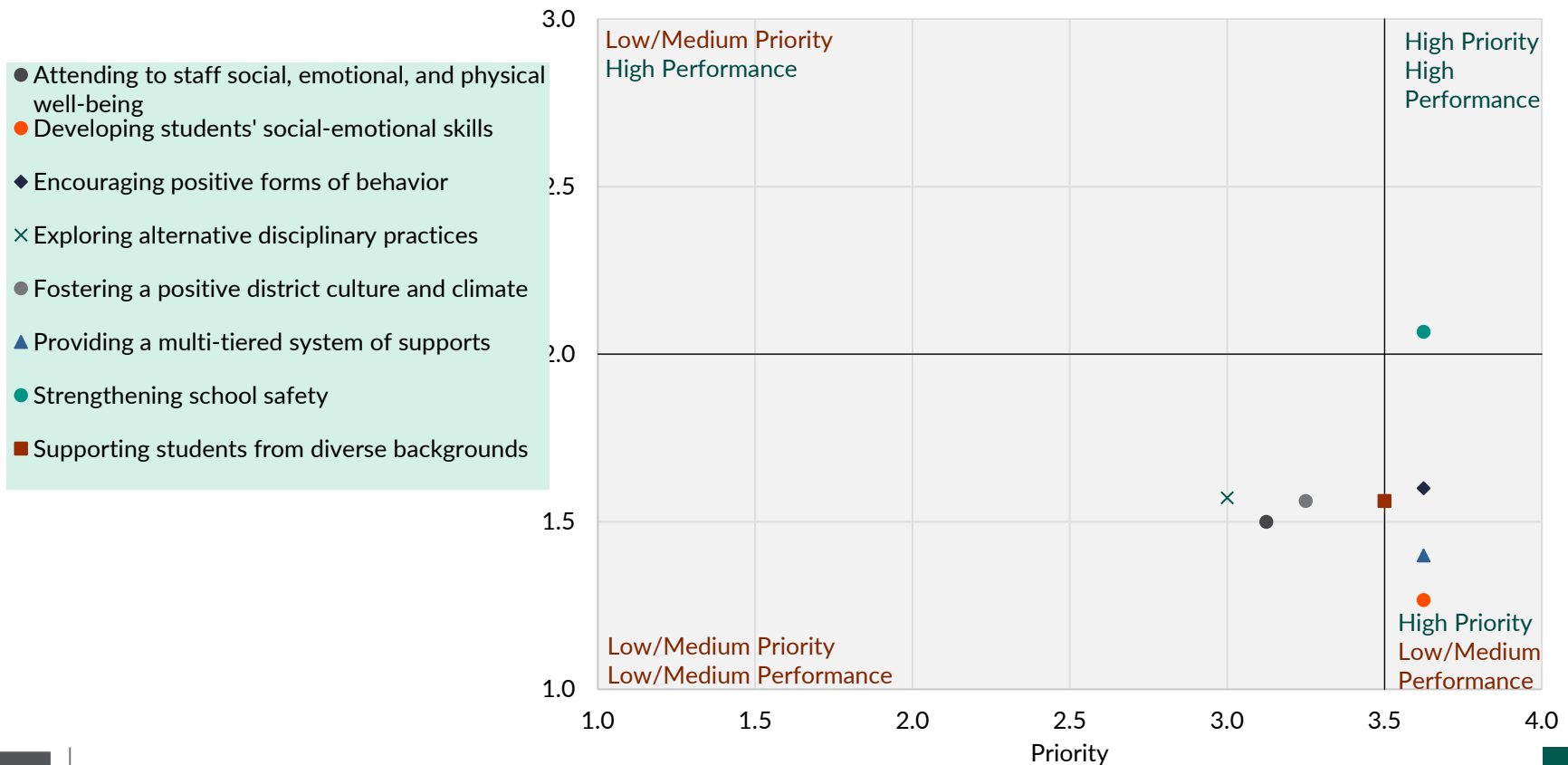
Maintaining optimal staffing levels remains the standout priority over the next year, with 72% of respondents selecting this option.



DISTRICT CULTURE: BUILDING SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Administrators rate half of the subcategories of building safe and supportive environments as high priority, with only one area meeting expectations. With half of the areas perceived as high priority, this may be indicative of mixed concerns within this strategic area. Strengthening school safety is the only area meeting expectations, with 67% of respondents choosing this option.

For intended priorities over the next year, stakeholders rate Developing students' social-emotional skills (56%) and providing a multi-tiered system of supports (50%) as the top two aims for the district ([see slide 32](#)).

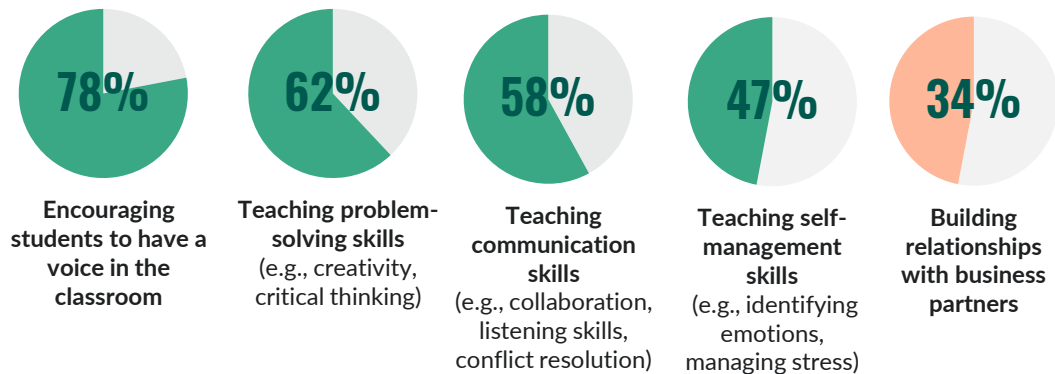


PARENTS, STAFF, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

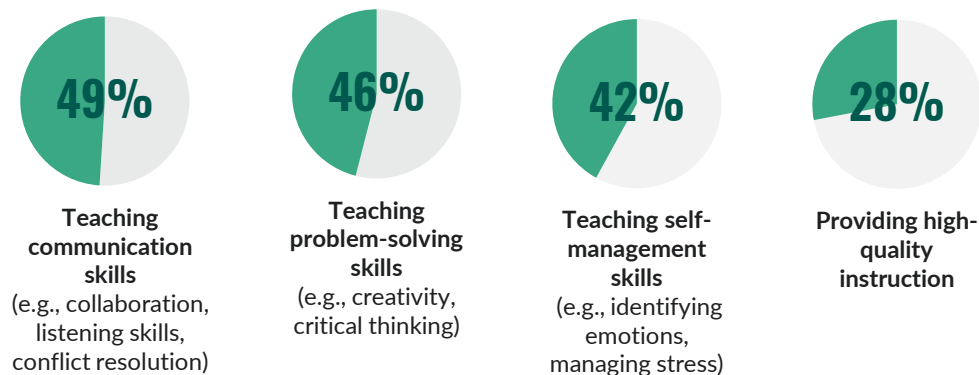
Key Findings

DISTRICT PERFORMANCE

How would you rate the performance of [your/your child's school/district schools] in each of the following areas related to student learning and outcomes?
% Good or Excellent



Which of the following areas related to student learning and outcomes should Dover prioritize for the upcoming Strategic Plan?
Please select up to three options.



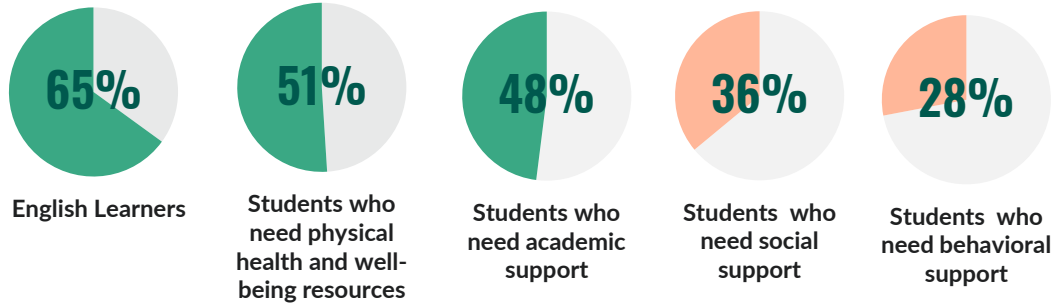
FINDINGS

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ABILITY TO MEET STUDENTS' NEEDS

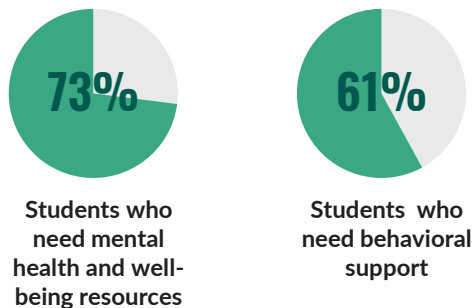
How would you rate the ability of [your school/your child's school/district schools] to meet the needs of the following students?

% Good or Excellent



Which of the following student needs and supports should Dover prioritize for the upcoming Strategic Plan? Please select up to three options.

Support for:



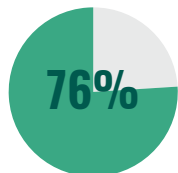
FINDINGS

Respondents' priorities for the Strategic Plan match the areas related to the ability to meet students' needs they find least sufficient. Respondents indicate that the district can best meet the needs of students who are English learners (65% good or excellent), students who need physical health and well-being resources (51%), and students who need academic support (48%). Conversely, the top priorities for respondents are aiding students who need mental health and well-being resources (73%), students who need behavioral support (61%) – the special needs group which is least well aided by the district, according to respondents (28% good or excellent) –, and students who need social support (36%).

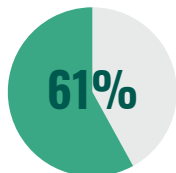
SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

How would you rate the performance of [your school/your child's school/district schools] in each of the following areas related to school climate and culture?

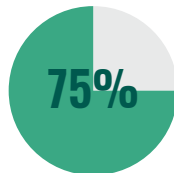
% Good or Excellent



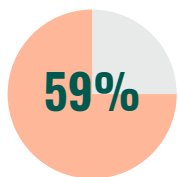
Keeping schools clean



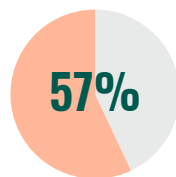
Making all students feel welcome at school



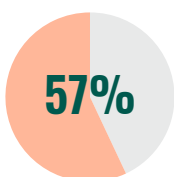
Providing a safe learning space for students



Inspiring students to enjoy learning



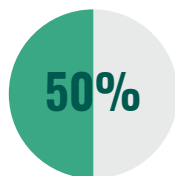
Fairly enforcing school rules



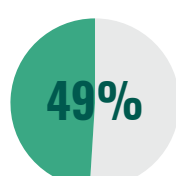
Making sure all students' backgrounds are reflected at school

Which of the following areas related to school climate and culture should Dover prioritize for the upcoming Strategic Plan?

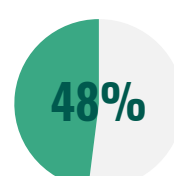
Please select up to three options.



Inspiring students to enjoy learning



Provide a safe learning space for students



School climate (e.g., Students like school)

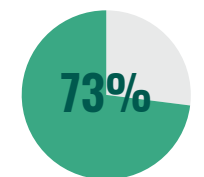
FINDINGS

There is not a clear relationship between the factors that respondents prioritize and the district's performance on those factors regarding school climate and culture. The top priorities for respondents are *inspiring students to enjoy learning* (50%), *providing a safe learning space for students* (49%), and the *school climate* (40%). Regarding district performance, however, the top performing areas are *keeping schools clean* (76% good or excellent), *making all students feel welcome at school*, and *providing a safe learning space for students* (75% for each). The lowest performing areas are *fairly enforcing school rules*, *making sure all students' backgrounds are reflected at school* (57% for each), and *inspiring students to enjoy learning* (59%).

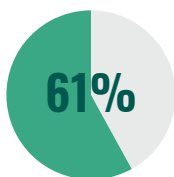
ENGAGING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

How would you rate the performance of [your school/your child's school/district schools] in each of the following areas related to engaging families and communities?

% Good or Excellent

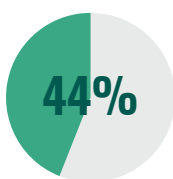


Responding to parents' questions or concerns

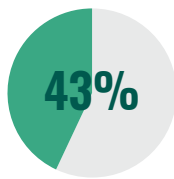


Communicating effectively with parents

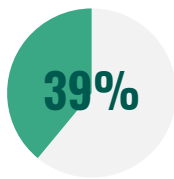
Which of the following areas related to engaging families and communities should Dover prioritize for the upcoming Strategic Plan? Please select up to three options.



Involving parents in their child's learning



Encouraging parents to engage with their child's school



Partnering with the community to provide supports and services to students

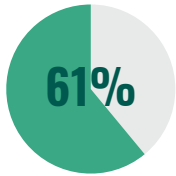
FINDINGS

Respondents want to prioritize involving parents in their child's education and school, but not in the decision-making process. When asked about engaging families and communities, respondents indicated that the main priorities for the district's Strategic Plan should be *involving parents in their child's learning* (44%), *encouraging parents to engage with their child's school* (43%), and *partnering with the community to provide supports and services to students* (39%). According to respondents, the district rates best when it comes to *responding to parents' questions or concerns* (73% good or excellent) and *communicating effectively with parents* (66%).

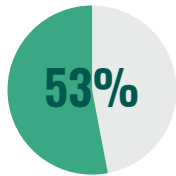
ABILITY TO MEET STUDENTS' NEEDS

How would you rate the performance of [your school/your child's school/district schools] in each of the following areas related to staffing?

% Good or Excellent



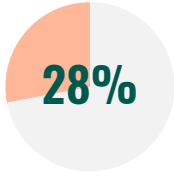
Staffing central office appropriately



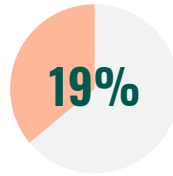
Developing effective school leaders



Recruiting high-quality teachers



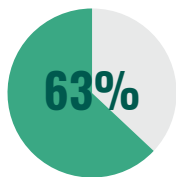
Students who need behavioral support



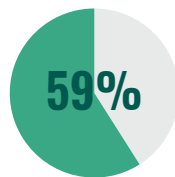
Retaining enough staff to meet school and district needs

Which of the following student needs and supports should Dover prioritize for the upcoming Strategic Plan? Please select up to three options.

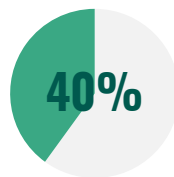
Support for:



Retaining high-quality teachers



Retaining enough staff to meet school and district needs



Recruiting high-quality teachers

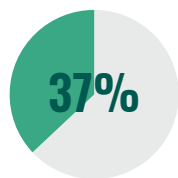
FINDINGS

When it comes to staffing, respondents prioritize retainment. Respondents indicate they prioritize *retaining high-quality teachers* (63%) and *retaining enough staff to meet school and district needs* (59%). These are followed by *recruiting high-quality teachers* (40%). These rank towards the bottom half of the table regarding district performance – only 19% of respondents rate the district as good or excellent in *retaining enough staff to meet school and district needs*. The areas in which the district fares best are *staffing the central office appropriately* (61% good or excellent), *developing effective school leaders* (53%), and *recruiting high-quality teachers* (40%).

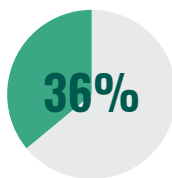
STAFF SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

How would you rate the performance of [your school/your child's school/district schools] in each of the following areas related to staff support and development?

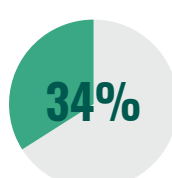
% Good or Excellent



Onboarding new and novice teachers



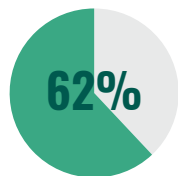
Fostering a supportive environment among staff



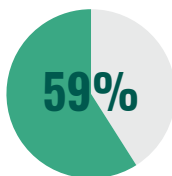
Providing ongoing support to new and novice teachers

Which of the following areas related to staff support and development should Dover prioritize for the upcoming Strategic Plan?

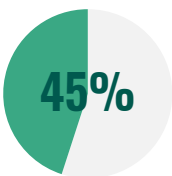
Please select up to three options.



Providing quality professional development



Fostering a supportive environment among staff



Monitoring staff satisfaction

FINDINGS

Respondents prioritize giving staff a supportive and nurturing environment with the appropriate professional development opportunities. The best-rated areas of the district's performance with regards to staff support and development are *onboarding new and novice teachers* (37% good or excellent), *fostering a supportive environment among staff* (36%), and *providing ongoing support to new and novice teachers* (34%). When it comes to the priority for the Strategic Plan, respondents point to *providing quality professional development* (62%) and *fostering a supportive environment among staff* (59%), followed by *monitoring staff satisfaction* (45%).

PRIORITIES, AIMS, AND GOALS

Priority One: Increasing Student Engagement

Our Why: Community members rate students' inspiration for learning as one of the lowest three performance areas related to climate and culture, however it is also one of the highest rated priority areas.

Priority Two: Maintaining Optimal Staffing Levels

Our Why: Leadership identify this as the highest priority subcategory area within all strategic areas. However, it sees the lowest performance score within Improving Operations, with 94% of respondents indicating it is not meeting performance expectations. Targeting this strategic area is imperative for Dover, as 72% of respondents also indicate it is the area that the district *should* continue to prioritize for next year. Similarly, community respondents indicate this is a high priority but low performance area for the district.

Priority Three: Developing Students' Wellbeing

Our Why: Fifty-six of leadership respondents indicate that developing students' social-emotional skills should continue to be a priority. However, 73% of leadership respondents indicate that it is not meeting expectations in this area. Similarly, community members rate supporting students' social and behavioral needs as high priority but low performing areas.



Thank you.

CONTACT

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