

School Naming Committee Update



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School Naming Committee Members



Charles County Public Schools



Committee name recommendations



The School Naming Committee presented three name recommendations for Elementary School No. 23 to the Board of Education of Charles County on Feb. 13, 2024.

- Margaret Jamieson Thornton Elementary School.
- Ronald E. McNair Elementary School.
- White Plains Elementary School.

The Committee shared with the Board its plans to collect feedback on the recommendations.

- Live virtual public hearing.
- Survey posted at www.ccboe.com.

Public hearing feedback



The Committee held a live, virtual public hearing on the name recommendations on Feb. 28, 2024.

The hearing was streamed live at www.ccboe.com. A recording is posted online on the CCPS YouTube channel.

- 10 community members joined the virtual portion.

During the hearing committee members shared a presentation with an overview of the school naming process, name criteria outlined under Board Policy 7230 and three name recommendations.

- The committee heard feedback from four community members.

Public hearing feedback



- Two speakers spoke in support of naming the school White Plains Elementary School.
 - One speaker shared a recent experience they had as a parent of a child who attended a school in another county that went through a renaming process.
 - The other speaker commented that history has shown that naming schools after persons can be problematic when individuals of which a school is named for may be found or known to have affiliations, thoughts, actions, activities that do not promote equity and diversity.
- Two speakers spoke in support of naming the school Margaret Jamieson Thornton Elementary School.
 - One speaker shared additional information about Mrs. Thornton, her character and her “pivotal” role in the launch of kindergarten in Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) .
 - The other speaker shared information about Mrs. Thornton as a lifelong CCPS educator, community supporter, businesswoman and her belief that all children deserved an equitable and fair education.

Survey results



The Committee launched a survey on the CCPS website, www.ccboe.com, on Feb. 14.

The survey was open through March 1 and promoted on the school system website, social media platforms, and through parent and staff email communication.

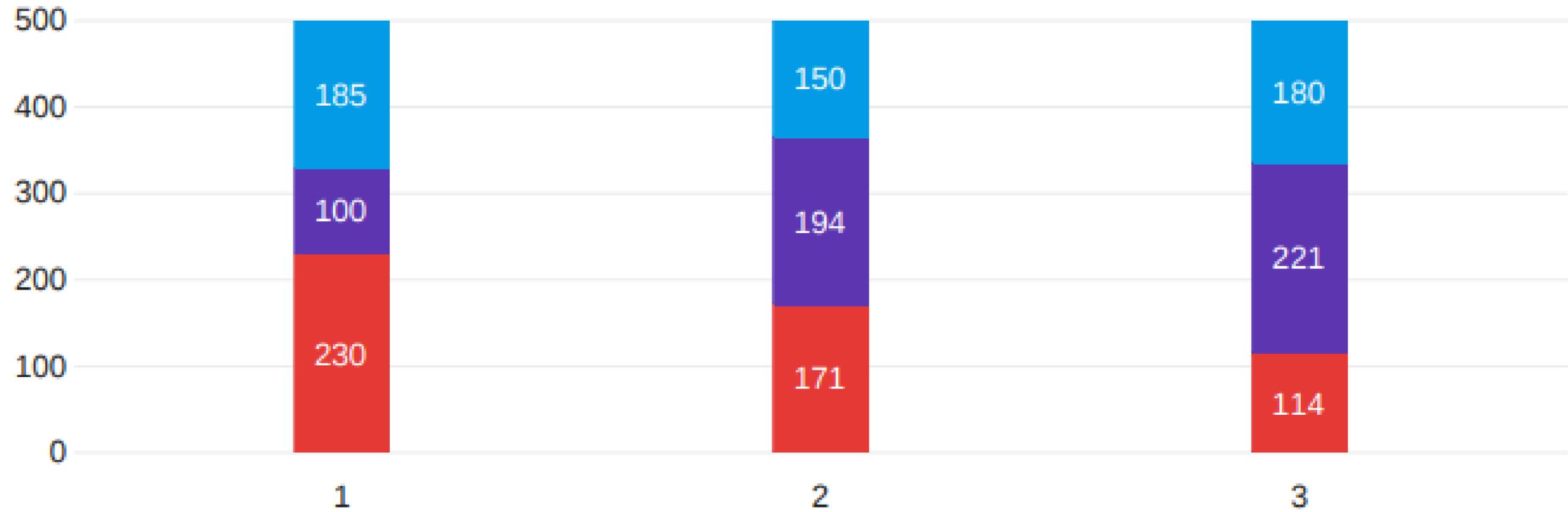
The survey introduction included a link to the committee presentation that detailed information about the three name recommendations.

The survey received a total of 795 responses.

A summary of questions and responses is outlined on the following slides.

Question One

Rank the proposed names in preference order.



- White Plains Elementary School.
- Ronald E. McNair Elementary School.
- Margaret Jamieson Thornton Elementary School.

Question Two



Do you know of any reason why one of the proposed names should not be selected?

This was an open-ended question that did not require a reply. A summary of responses is provided.

- More than 150 respondents answered no.
- Schools should not be named after people.
- Name should reflect prominent member influential in Charles County community.
- Ronald McNair does not have ties to Charles County.
- White Plains is:
 - Generic.
 - Too plain.
 - Insignificant.
 - Simple and not creative.
 - Easier for children to say.

Question Two, continued

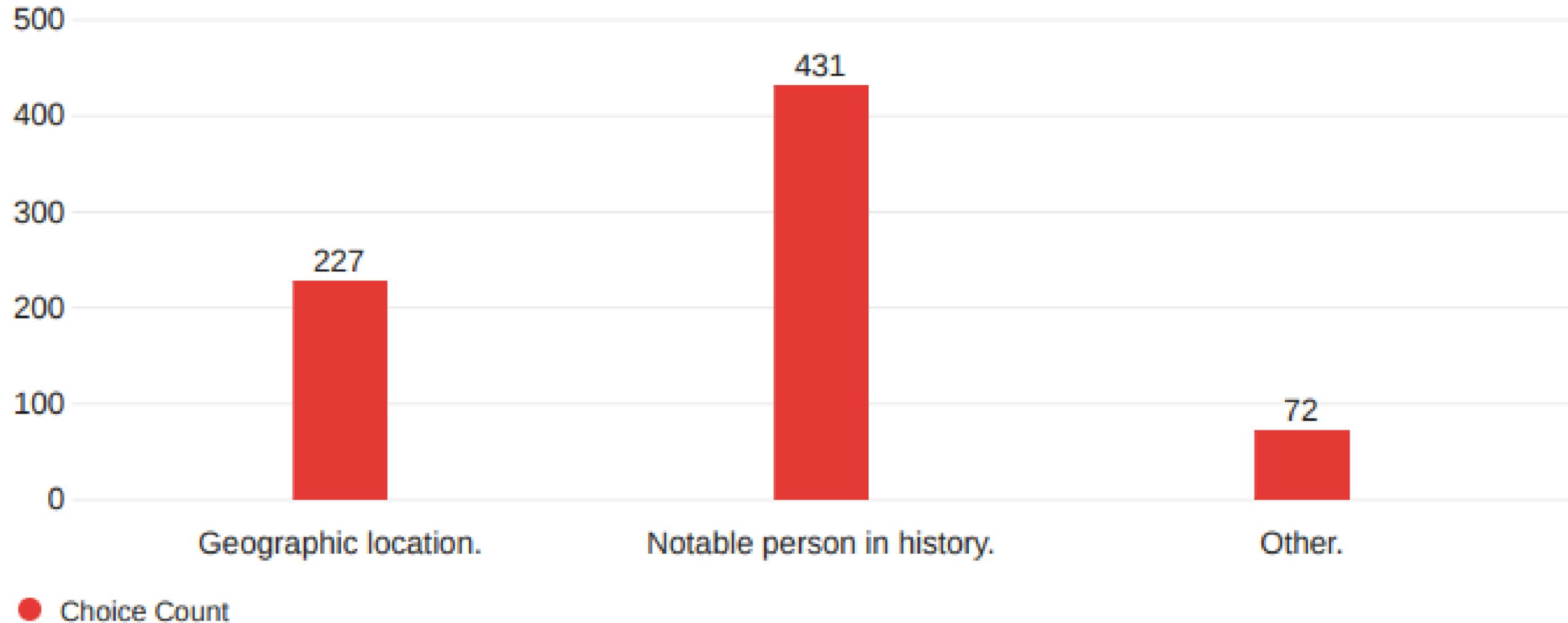


Do you know of any reason why one of the proposed names should not be selected?

- Mrs. Thornton is local to Charles County and education.
- Mrs. Thornton is a historic figure in Maryland. She was a pillar to the community.
- Select a school name based on location to avoid future conflicts.
- Name should reflect prominent member influential in Charles County community.
- Ronald McNair was an influential African American who paved the way for others.
- Ronald McNair already has a school named after him in Maryland.
- Name the school after the community it serves.
- Mrs. Thornton was instrumental in kindergarten education for Charles County.
- The inspirational story and background of Ronald McNair.
- Names are divisive.

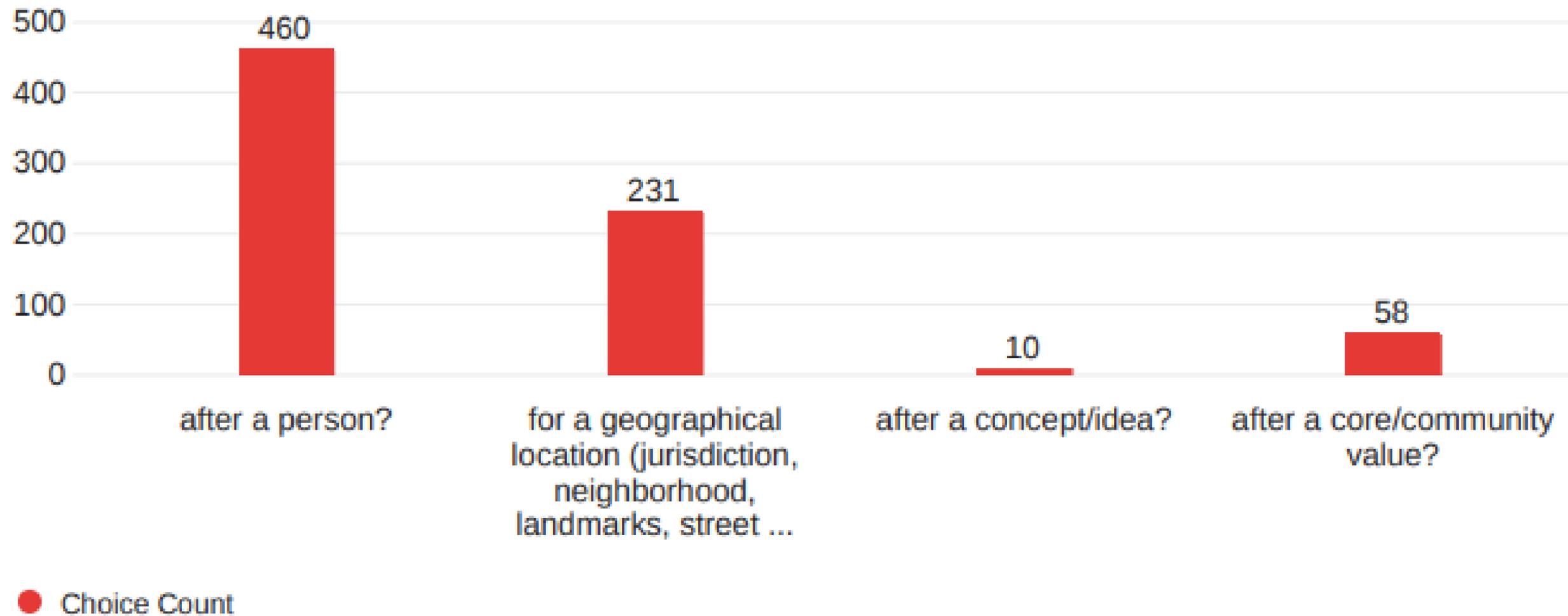
Question Three

Would you prefer the school to be named after a geographic location or a notable person in history?



Question Four

Should a school be named after a person, for a geographical location (jurisdiction, neighborhood, landmarks, street, etc.), after a concept/idea, after a core/community value? Select your top choice.



Question Five



Please share any additional thoughts the committee can share with the Board.

This was an open-ended, optional question that resulted in more than 190 responses. A summary of the responses is below.

- Would love for the school to be named after a Charles County educator.
- McNair is an icon.
- The best name for this new school would be White Plains Elementary.
- Shorten Margaret Jamieson Thornton to Margaret J. Thornton.
- Naming a school after a person from Charles County helps build pride.
- Representation is everything.
- Kids need great people to admire, and goals to strive for. Naming a school for a location does not allow a connection between the people and building.
- Mrs. Thornton was a woman of great character and integrity.

Question Five, continued



Please share any additional thoughts the committee can share with the Board.

- Stop trying so hard. Keep it simple by location.
- The most recent elementary school was named after its location due to similar concerns of naming it after a person.
- If Thornton is not chosen, stick with geographical location. McNair has no connection to this community.
- Although the individuals have a stellar biography, no one can be absolutely positive that a person was not slighted by any of their actions in the past.
- The inspiration should reflect the community.
- Recognize our community leaders who have made contributions.
- McNair is a fantastic option considering NASA and STEM investment at SCHS.
- I love when schools are named after educators from our area. Black history made in CCPS.

THINK.
INSPIRE.
GROW.

Charles County Public Schools



Questions?