



Executive Summary Report: Student Assignment Process Survey Data Analysis for DeKalb County School District (DCSD)

Introduction

This report presents an executive summary of two recent surveys conducted with employees and the community associated with DCSD. The SAP Employee Input Survey gathered 707 responses, while the SAP Community Member Input Survey captured 2,450 responses. The survey aimed to gather insights on perceptions regarding educational equity, school choice programs, boundaries, facilities, and transportation, as well as familiarity and satisfaction with various district initiatives and policies. The data incorporates responses from both internal stakeholders (employees) and external community members.

Key Findings

Employee Survey Data Analysis

1. Equity & Policy Priorities

Statement	Strongly Agree (SA) + Agree (A)	Key Insight
Building improvements for schools	94.1% (56.1% SA + 38.0% A)	Top priority for equity
Review school choice process	71.8% (27.6% SA + 44.2% A)	Strong support for reform
Systemic Concern: 87% agree "students' outcomes vary by school," but only 25% believe schools are equitable across districts.		

2. Boundary & Transportation Preferences

Proposal	Strongly Agree (SA) + Agree (A)	Key Insight
Prioritize boundary diversity	64.2% (18.7% SA + 45.5% A)	Moderate support for integration efforts

Create neighborhood boundaries	44.5% (13.7% SA + 30.8% A)	Polarized opinions on diversity vs. proximity
Transportation Insight: 71.4% (24.3% SA + 47.1% A) support walkability-focused redesign		

3. Special Programs & Support

Program	Very Familiar	Employee Satisfaction	Key Gap
Exceptional Education Centers	39.0% (e.g., Coralwood, UHS)	42.7% dissatisfied (Q14)	High unfamiliarity paired with policy dissatisfaction
Fernbank Science Center	38.6% (employees)	32.8% "very familiar" (community)	Discrepancy in program importance vs. awareness
Actionable Insight: Employee/student transfer policy has lowest satisfaction (Q14: 42.7% dissatisfied).			

Cross-Survey Insights

Theme	Community Perspective	Employee Perspective
Equity	High school satisfaction (60%+) vs. low policy awareness	Strong consensus on inequitable outcomes (86%)
Transportation	Reliance on cars/buses (57.8% + 30.2%) → Minimal walking	Employees push walkability (71.4% support)
Choice Programs	Low familiarity (50%+ unfamiliar)	Employees see need for review (71.9% support)
Facilities	52.7% report adequate space → Employees prioritize infrastructure funding (94.2% support)	

Employee Survey Data Insights

- **Student Presence and Residency:**
 - Approximately 67% of employees have students enrolled in DCSD.

- About 76% of employees do not live within DCSD boundaries, indicating a significant portion of staff commute from outside the district.
- **Access and Opportunity:**
 - There is a perception of inequity in educational programs: only ~37% agree that programs are equitable, while over 53% disagree or strongly disagree.
 - Education quality is viewed as uneven across schools, with 85% agreeing student education quality varies by school.
 - Educator satisfaction is mixed; about 43% agree educators are happy, while 46% disagree or are uncertain.
 - Strong support (over 75%) that educators effectively support students with exceptionalities.
 - Majority favor reviewing and updating the school choice process (over 71% agree).
 - Opinions are divided on creating neighborhood boundaries regardless of diversity.
- **Boundaries and Buildings:**
 - High support (over 61%) for creating boundaries to ensure diversity.
 - Strong consensus (94%) on prioritizing building improvements based on school needs.
 - Preference for balancing boundaries to ensure smaller class sizes (over 91% agree).
 - Significant agreement on making schools fiscally responsible in light of declining enrollment (~65%).
- **Families and Community:**
 - Approximately 71% feel families belong in their school community.
 - Almost 69% believe it is important for schools to have boundaries including diverse student backgrounds.
 - Over 88% prioritize proximity of schools to student homes for family accessibility.
- **Transportation:**
 - Around 71% support redesigning boundaries to enhance walkability.
 - Mixed feelings on redesigning grade bands and changing start/end times for routing efficiency.
- **School Choice Programs:**

- Awareness and satisfaction vary by program, with Dual Language Immersion, Early Learning Center, and International Baccalaureate receiving moderate familiarity and satisfaction.
- Theme Schools and Special Interests Magnet programs also show notable recognition and approval.
- **Initiatives and Special Programs:**
 - Programs such as Fernbank Science Center, FLEX Academy, and International Student Center have relatively high familiarity and satisfaction.
 - Some programs like Fambassadors have lower familiarity but high satisfaction among those aware.
- **Exceptional Education Programs:**
 - Strong familiarity and satisfaction with programs like UHS at Laurel Heights and Margaret Harris Comprehensive School.
 - Majority recognize the importance and adequacy of special education resources.
- **Employee Student Transfers and Policy Views:**
 - Only 26% are satisfied with the employee student transfer policy; many are neutral or dissatisfied.
 - A majority see value in changing student assignment processes despite potential difficulties (70% agree).
 - Staff anticipate possible work structure changes if equity improves, with about 66% supportive.
 - Recognition of historic inequities impacting assignment changes is high (75% agree).

Community Survey Data Analysis

1. School Choice Programs

Program	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not Familiar	Key Insight
Dual Language Immersion	27.7%	17.8%	52.1%	Low awareness (52% unfamiliar)
High Achievers Magnet	32.2%	16.0%	42.0%	Polarized perceptions (32% familiar, 42% unfamiliar)
International Baccalaureate (IB)	30.7%	16.1%	36.7%	Moderate awareness (30% very familiar)
Note: All choice programs show majority "unfamiliar" responses (>50% Not Familiar across most options). Montessori (32.0%) shows highest familiarity.				

2. State Board Policy Familiarity

Policy	Not Familiar	Key Insight
HB 251 School Choice Law	40.7%	Alarming lack of awareness (40% unfamiliar)
SB 47 Cross-District Enrollment	52.4%	Most unfamiliar policy (52.4% Not Familiar)
Hardship Transfers	54.0%	Highest unfamiliarity (54% Not Familiar)
Core Issue: Majority of respondents (50-55%) lack awareness of key policies impacting school access.		

3. Transportation & Registration

Question	Key Metrics
Transport Backup Plan	57.8% drive/bus → 30.2% school bus → 10.9% walk → Minimal public transit use

Registration Satisfaction	35.4% neutral → 30.2% somewhat dissatisfied → Low "very satisfied" (2.6%)
Critical Insight: Registration process (question 21) has highest dissatisfaction, contrasting with overall school satisfaction (Q23: 31% very satisfied).	

4. Facilities & Satisfaction

Metric	Response	Key Finding
Adequate Facilities (Q13)	52.7% "Yes" → 29.5% "Neutral" → 17.7% "No"	Majority report adequate space, but minorities flag concerns
Overall School Satisfaction (Q23)	60%+ combined "satisfied" (31% Very + 39.9% Somewhat)	High satisfaction rate despite registration/choice program challenges

Community Survey Data Insights

- **School Choice Programs:**
 - Dual Language Immersion and Early Learning Center programs are well-known (27-28% familiarity).
 - High Achievers Magnet and International Baccalaureate programs are recognized by approximately 25-32% of respondents.
 - Satisfaction levels are generally positive but vary across programs.
- **Household Composition:**
 - Around 38% have one child attending DCSD; approx. 34% have two children.
- **Initiatives and Special Programs:**
 - Familiarity with special programs varies widely; notably, Fernbank Science Center (35%), DeKalb Alternative School (16%), and CTAE (13%).
 - High satisfaction reported for these initiatives by those familiar.
- **Policy Familiarity:**
 - Awareness of state board policies like Hardship Transfers, HB 251, SB 47, and SB 10 ranges mostly between 18%-29% familiarity.
- **Application Knowledge:**

- Only 42% know how to apply for programs or offerings listed, suggesting an information gap.
- **Facilities and Transportation:**
 - Over 52% feel their schools have adequate space for learning and play.
 - If transportation was unavailable, 58% would use car riders, while 30% rely on DCSD school buses.
- **Registration and Overall Satisfaction:**
 - About 35% are satisfied with the student registration process; however, 30% remain neutral.
 - Overall satisfaction with children's current schools is moderate, with 38% satisfied or very satisfied, but nearly 23% neutral and others dissatisfied.

Conclusions

- **Equity and Access:** Both employees and community members recognize inequities in program quality and access across DCSD schools, emphasizing the need for continued review and improvement in student assignment and boundary policies.
- **School Choice and Special Programs:** Programs such as Dual Language Immersion, International Baccalaureate, and various magnet and special interest schools are well-regarded, but awareness and clarity on application processes need enhancement.
- **Facilities and Infrastructure:** There is strong support for prioritizing facility improvements based on need, balancing boundaries for diversity and class size, and adapting to declining enrollment.
- **Transportation and Community Engagement:** Redesigning boundaries to promote walkability and optimize bus routes is favored, but communication and transportation options remain critical concerns.
- **Communication and Familiarity:** There is a noticeable gap in knowledge about policies, programs, and application processes, indicating a need for improved stakeholder communication strategies.

Recommendations

1. **Enhance Communication:** Create accessible, clear informational campaigns about school choice options, application procedures, and policies to increase community and staff awareness.
2. **Review and Update Boundaries:** Continue initiatives to balance school diversity, class size, and proximity while considering community feedback on neighborhood boundaries.

3. **Support Equity-Focused Programs:** Invest in programs supporting students with exceptionalities and underrepresented groups, focusing on equitable access district-wide.
4. **Improve Facilities Based on Need:** Prioritize capital improvements guided by data on facility conditions and enrollment trends.
5. **Transportation Optimization:** Consider restructuring start/end times and routes to improve efficiency and safety, while enhancing walkability options.
6. **Engage Staff and Families:** Involve employees and families in planning processes to ensure policies address their concerns and build community trust.