

LVJUSD Superintendent Search Community Engagement Report

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Executive Summary

In the search for the next superintendent, the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District (LVJUSD) Board of Education engaged in multiple forms of community engagement in partnership with the Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE) to identify the major priorities and leadership qualities important to the LVJUSD community. This report summarizes the major themes that arose from feedback shared by 808¹ LVJUSD community members. Data was collected through a community input session, online survey and focus groups. This executive summary presents the most prominent themes that showed up across the three forms of community engagement.

Important Priorities to LVJUSD Community Members

- **Rebuilding trust with staff and community:** Repairing the trust broken between staff/community members and district leadership due to past fiscal decisions, a lack of transparency and leadership turnover.
- **Balancing the district's budget:** Achieving financial stability while mitigating the impact of budget cuts on school sites, students and staff members.
- **Honoring local knowledge and traditions:** Respecting Livermore's history and leveraging the people, cultures and economies that make LVJUSD unique.
- **Improving outcomes for all students:** Providing the support and resources to ensure that all LVJUSD students and schools are successful.

Desired Superintendent Skills and Characteristics

- **Bridge Builder:** Someone who can create alliances with diverse groups to make difficult decisions. Emotional intelligence is a prerequisite to this skill.
- **Someone with integrity:** Someone who is committed to serving the students and families of LVJUSD first and will follow through on their promises.
- **Experienced:** An experienced leader. Classroom experience, leadership experience, and fiscal management experience were most commonly named.
- **Committed to LVJUSD:** A leader who takes the time to learn the history of LVJUSD and serve the community long term.

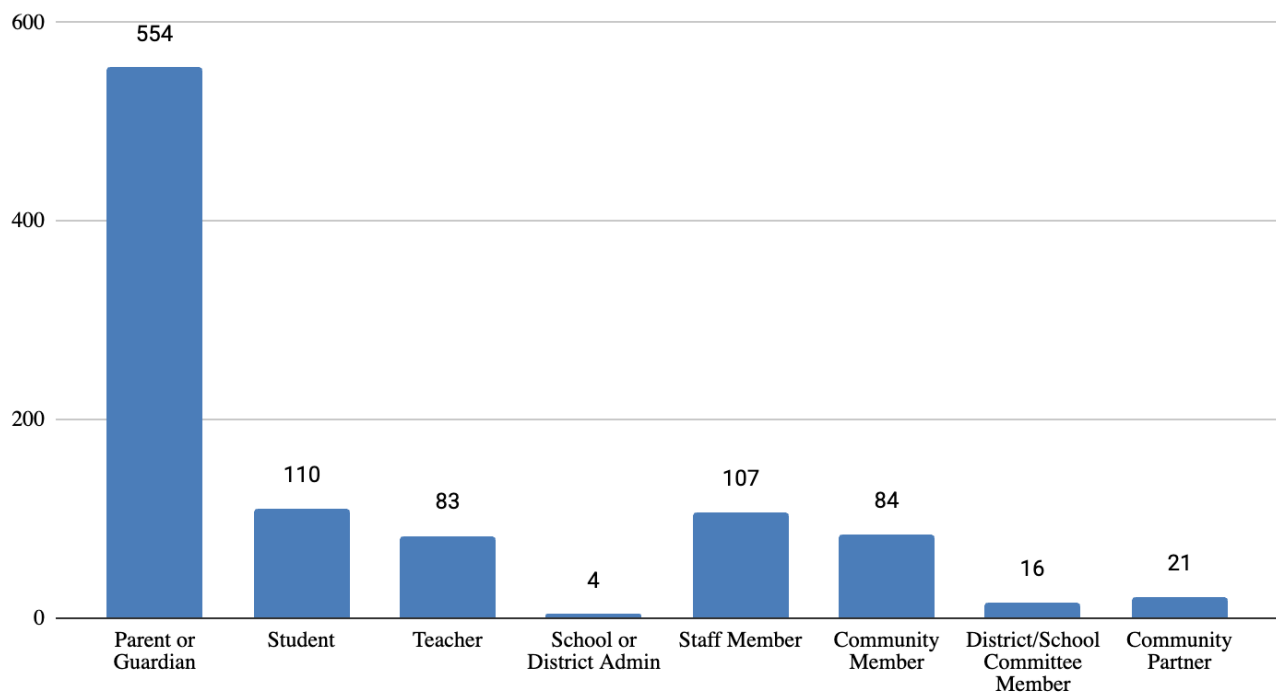
¹ This estimate was calculated by adding the number of respondents from the survey (788) and community input session (~20). This number does not include the total number of participants from the focus groups.

Survey

Summary

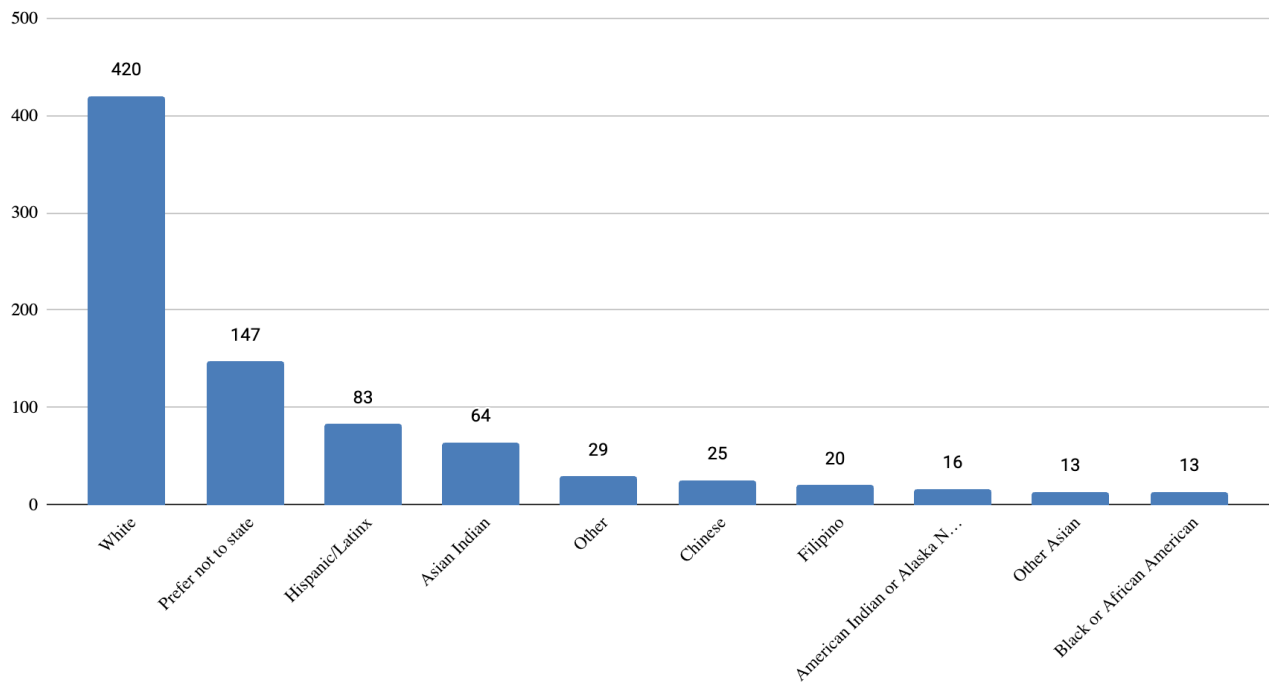
A total of 788 Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District (LVJUSD) community members completed an online Superintendent Search survey between April 30 and May 7, 2026. The survey was available in Spanish and English and consisted of eleven questions. The survey questions asked respondents to give feedback on the LVJUSD board's four priorities for the superintendent search process and to share their ideal characteristics for a superintendent candidate. Respondents also commented on LVJUSD's current strengths and challenges as a district. The following sections provide a descriptive analysis of the survey results along with the demographic profile of the respondents.

Figure 1: Respondent Relationship to LVJUSD



Note: Respondents could choose more than one answer choice.

Figure 2: Respondent Race/Ethnicity

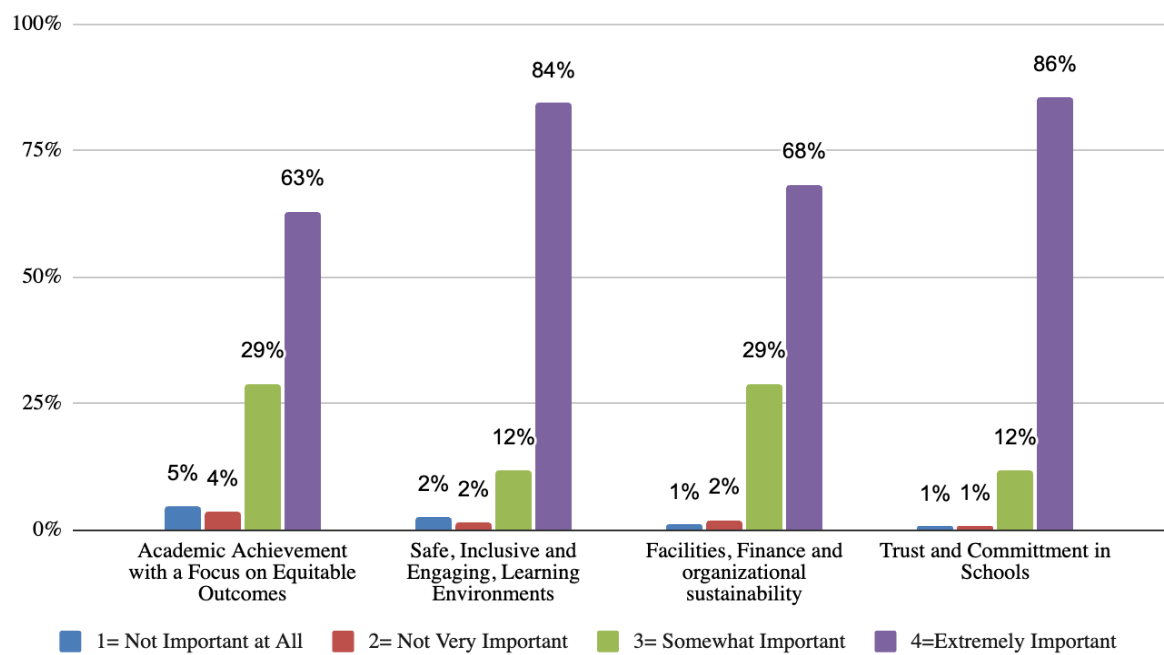


Notes:

1. 13 respondents skipped this question.
2. Respondents could choose more than one answer choice.

Feedback on Board Priorities

Figure 3: Please rate the importance of the following priorities



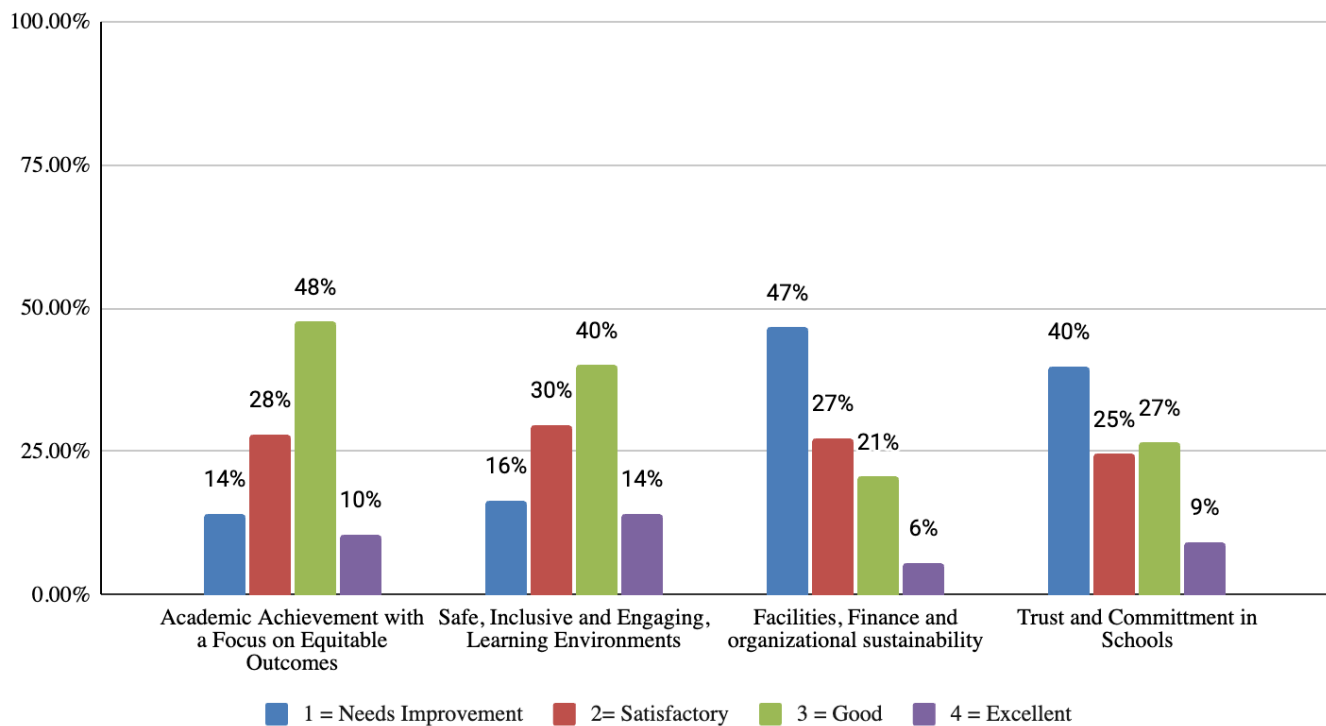
Note: 259-269 respondents skipped this question.²

Respondents were asked to rate the Board’s four priority areas by importance, from 1=Not important at all to 4=Extremely important. Respondents showed strong alignment with the four board priorities with over 90% of respondents rating all four priority areas as either 3=Somewhat important or 4=Extremely important.

Priority #2: Safe, Inclusive and Engaging Learning Environments and Priority #4: Trust and Commitment in Schools were rated as the most important priorities for respondents with 84% and 86% of respondents rating the priorities as extremely important. This pattern was true across sub-groups as well, with Parent/Guardians, Teachers, Staff members, and Community members rating “Safe, Inclusive and Engaging Environments” (Priority #2) and “Trust and Commitment in Schools” (Priority #4) as the most important of the four priorities. Of particular note is 94% of community members rating Priority #2 as extremely important and 96% of staff members rating Priority #4 as extremely important.

² Respondents were asked to rate four priorities in one question. They were not required to rate every priority in order to move on to the next question, resulting in a range of skipped responses. This is true for the rest of the survey questions.

Figure 4: Please rate how well LVJUSD is currently performing in each priority area



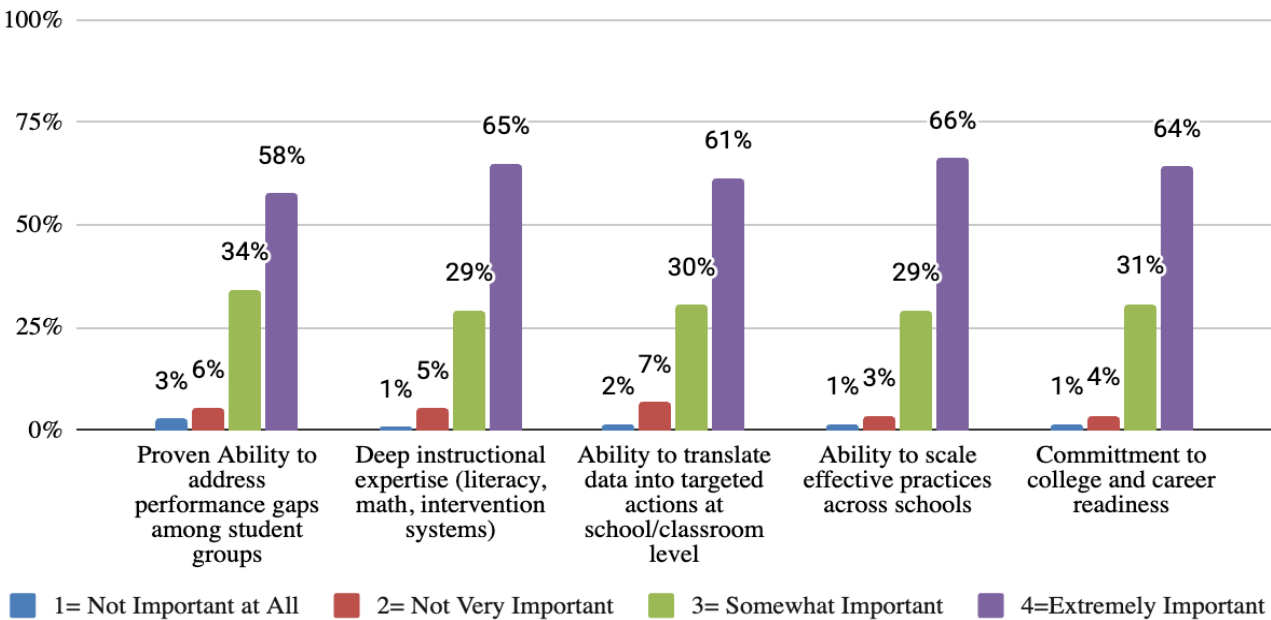
Note: 263-271 respondents skipped this question.

Respondents were then asked to rate how well LVJUSD is currently performing in each priority area from 1=Needs Improvement to 4=Excellent. Overall, respondents rated Priority #1: Academic achievement with a focus on equitable outcomes and Priority #2: Safe, inclusive and engaging learning environments more positively, with 58% of respondents rating Priority #1 as good or excellent and 54% of respondents rating Priority #2 as good or excellent. This pattern was true across sub-groups as well.

Priority #3: Facilities, Finance and Organizational sustainability and Priority #4: Trust and Commitment in schools had the highest ratings of 1=Needs improvement of the four priorities. This pattern was also reflected in an analysis of sub-group responses. Teachers and staff members rated Priorities #3 and #4 at higher levels of needs improvement compared to respondents on average with 52% of teachers and 55% of staff members rating Priority #3 as needs improvement and 57% of teachers and 55% of staff members rating Priority #4 as needs improvement.

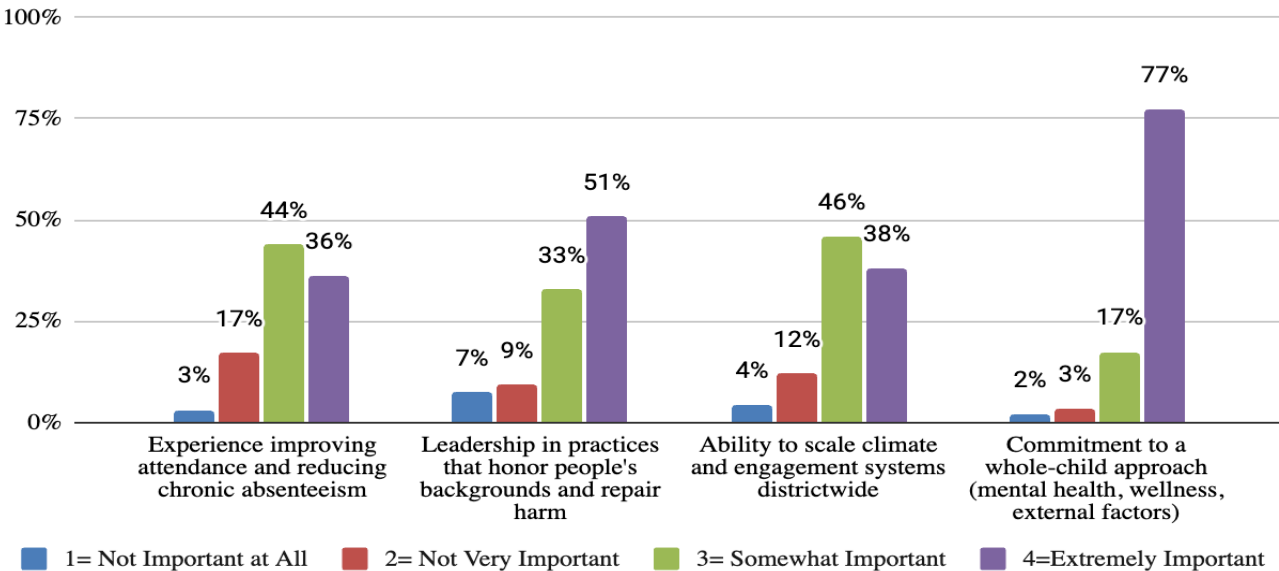
Desired Superintendent Skills

Figure 5: Please rate the importance of the following skills related to Priority #1: Academic Achievement and Equity for the next superintendent.



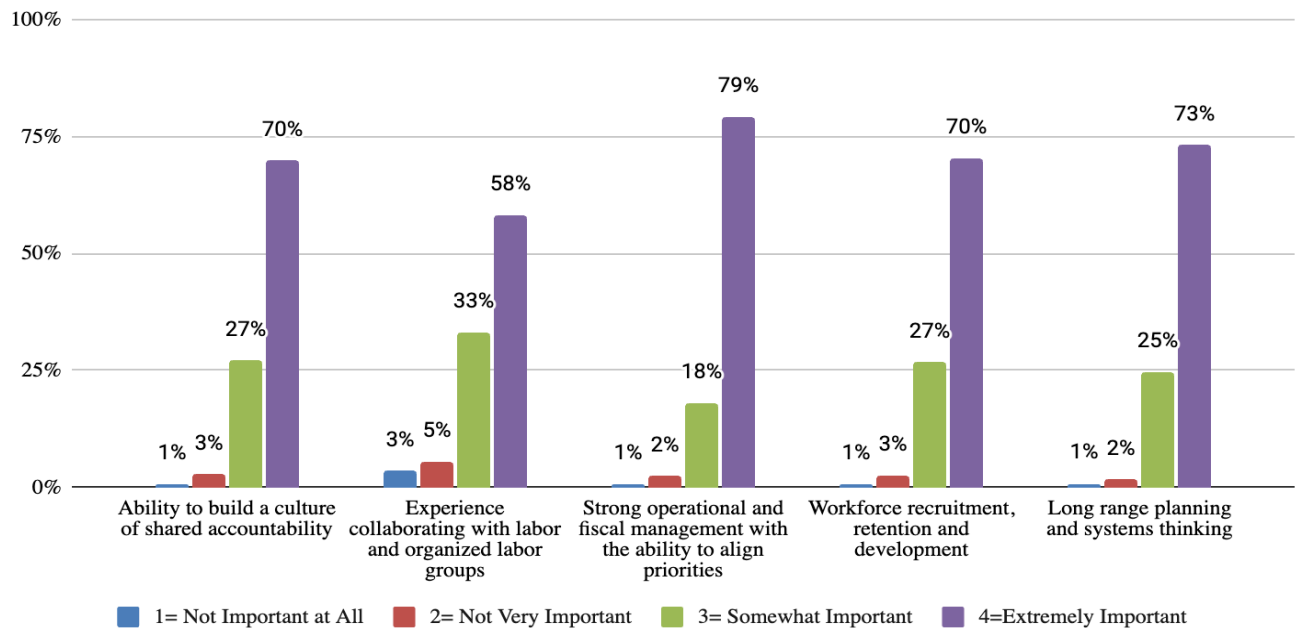
Note: 264-268 respondents skipped this question.

Figure 6: Please rate the importance of the following skills related to Priority #2: Safe, Inclusive and Engaging Environments for the next superintendent.



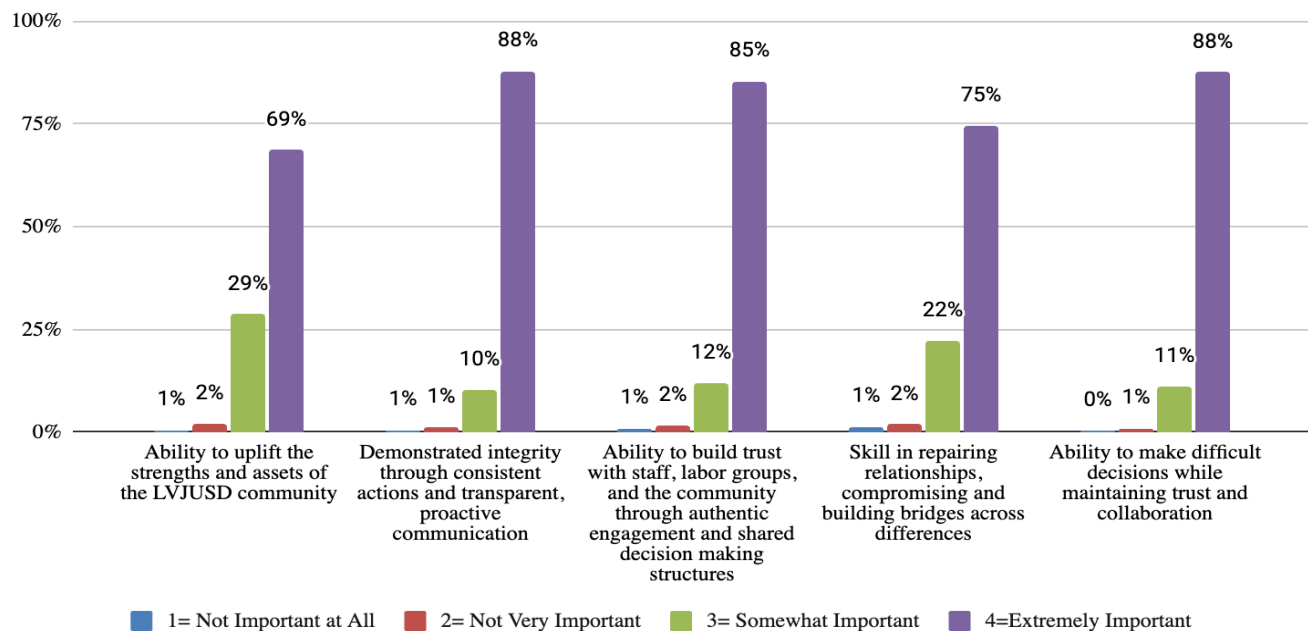
Note: 267-274 respondents skipped this question.

Figure 7: Please rate the importance of the following skills related to Priority #3: Facilities, Finance and Organizational Sustainability for the next superintendent.



Note: 269-272 respondents skipped this question.

Figure 8: Please rate the importance of the following skills related to Priority #4: Trust, Communication and Relationships for the next superintendent.



Note: 269-270 respondents skipped this question.

To better understand the types of skills respondents prioritized in the next superintendent, the survey asked respondents to rate skills related to the four priority areas by level of importance, from 1=Not important at all to 4=Extremely important. Overall, the majority of respondents (80% and above) rated all skills related to the four priority areas as 3=somewhat important or 4=extremely important.

The most highly rated skills were related to Priority #3: Facilities, Finance and Organizational Sustainability and Priority #4: Trust, Communication and Relationships. The following skills were the three highest rated overall by respondents.

- 88% of respondents rated **“Demonstrated integrity through consistent actions and transparent, proactive communication”** (Priority #4) as extremely important.
- 85% of respondents rated **“Ability to build trust with staff, labor groups and the community through authentic engagement and shared decision making structures”** (Priority #4) as extremely important.
- 79% of respondents rated **“Strong operational and fiscal management with the ability to align priorities”** (Priority #3) as extremely important.

Skills related to Priority #2: Safe, Inclusive and Engaging Environments were rated at lower levels of importance compared to the other three priorities with the exception of “Commitment to a whole-child approach.” However, there were notable discrepancies when disaggregating the data by race/ethnicity. 60% of respondents that identified as Hispanic/Latinx rated “Experience improving attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism” (Priority #3) as extremely important compared to 29% of respondents that identified as White and 26% of respondents overall. A similar pattern emerged related to the skill “Leadership in practices that honor people’s backgrounds and repair harm” (Priority #3) with 65% of Hispanic/Latinx respondents rating this skill as extremely important compared to 48% of White respondents and 51% of respondents overall.

Open-ended Responses

The survey asked respondents three optional open-ended questions:

- What are the **greatest strengths** of LVJUSD that should be sustained and built upon?
- What are the **most important challenges** facing LVJUSD now and over the next 3-5 years?
- Is there **anything else** you would like the Board of Education to consider in selecting the next superintendent?

Of the 788 total respondents, around 42% of respondents submitted a response for the open-ended questions. The following sections summarize the major themes from the three open-ended questions.

Greatest Strengths of LVJUSD

The LVJUSD Community

The most commonly named strength by respondents was the LVJUSD community: the people that make up the community, the unique attributes of Livermore as a place, and the strong sense of pride community members have in LVJUSD. Many responses named the presence of high-quality school site staff, community partners and parents as a major strength. In addition, respondents repeatedly expressed their appreciation for the diversity of the Livermore community, both culturally and economically. Overall, respondents conveyed a strong sense of pride in Livermore as a place and as a community.

“One of the greatest strengths of LVJUSD is its people. Across all parts of the district—parents, community partners, teachers, clerical staff, maintenance, and purchasing—there is a strong sense of shared commitment to students. Even during challenging times, these groups have come together to collaborate, problem-solve, and support one another in service of student success.”

“LVJUSD has a long history of growing and retaining its own staff, particularly teachers. With many being former LVJUSD students now employees. People stay because they love working in the community that they grew up in and love.”

“We have such a diverse community and school sites. We also have great organizations and businesses in Livermore that could be complementary to our school sites.

“The greatest strength in the district has and will always be the teachers, paraprofessionals and support staff.”

“We have much better diversity than other districts, with a mix of lab and agriculture backgrounds.”

“Small community feel, maintain the values and integrity of Livermore and its history.”

“Teachers, parents and students display a sense of pride in their schools and the district.”

LVJUSD Programs

Another commonly named strength by respondents was the diversity of programming offered at LVJUSD that reflects the needs of a diverse community. In particular, programs related to the arts, special education, and academic/career pathways (Green Engineering Academy, Future Farmers of America, STEM, International Baccalaureate, Dual Immersion) were specified.

"We are a community of blue-collar and college-bound people who need academics that prepare them for real-world employment, whether that be higher academics or shop class experiences."

"Unique specialized programs not available at other local schools. Dual Immersion K-8, Expanded Spanish classes for Dual Immersion students at GHS, International Baccalaureate Program especially in the HS level-both Diploma Program and availability for any Jr or Sr at GHS to take IB classes, Green Engineering at LHS."

"LVJUSD schools offer diverse learning experiences (bilingual education, agricultural, IB, STEAM, etc.), which reflect the diversity of the community. This should be sustained and built upon."

"Music Program, GEA, and IB options, immersion programs."

"Livermore high still maintains trade school options. That should be expanded especially given this AI climate."

"Our experience with special education has been very positive and should be maintained."

"Livermore focused on high academic rigor. LHS has an amazing VAPA program that should be kept in tact. Unique programs like FFA and the Green Engineering program set our students apart from other school districts..."

Most important challenges facing LVJUSD

Rebuilding Trust with Staff and Community

The strongest theme that arose from this question involved repairing the trust broken with staff and community members. Many respondents named that past fiscal decisions, a lack of transparency, and leadership turnover have broken their trust in district leadership and their belief that the district is prioritizing students and families.

“Trust from parents that the district is trying to keep kids safe, that the district is trying to actually teach high achievers and motivate them to learn at their level instead of staying with the grade level peers, trust that the district cares at all what the parents and students think.”

“The district desperately needs to rebuild trust across a wide range of stakeholders. This year's budget process - especially when all options were brought into consideration and families were afraid of losing valuable programs/ schools - created chaos and discord that still need to be repaired. The community needs to be shown - through actions, not just words - that they can trust district leadership.”

“Fiscal responsibility, particularly repairing the damage of the departed administration. Both in actual numbers but also in trust in the stewardship of the funds.”

“Regaining the trust and confidence of the community after the previous fiscal irresponsibility at the administrative level with dismissive attitudes towards the educators and students needs.”

“Restore trust in the district! Leadership must take the time to fully understand each program and stop threatening cuts based on a lack of knowledge. These actions are having detrimental effects on both students and staff.”

“Lack of trust. People not appreciating the history of the district.”

“Repairing trust with staff and the community is going to take time.”

“Underlying all of these challenges is the need to sustain strong community trust and engagement through transparent decision-making.”

A Balanced Budget and the Impact of Budget Cuts

A second challenge that respondents named involved finding a way to balance the district's budget while mitigating the impact of budget cuts on school sites, students and staff. Some respondents called for the need to identify new and creative sources of funding.

"Financials are going to be the most important thing going forward. We have to figure out how to have a more robust budget and be able to attract and retain some of the highest quality teachers out of the three districts when in our area. We need to be creative in our funding."

"Financial stability and focus/priority to allocate budget on actual student/school development instead of administration."

"Coming up with a budget that is sustainable and is student/teacher driven."

"Financial responsibility with extreme effort to keep the district financially sound."

"One of the most important challenges I see is funding. I'd like to see a Superintendent who is able to identify new revenue sources (like grants) and keep cuts as far away from students as possible."

"The impact of declining enrollment on the budget-the need for budget stability with a basis in criteria based decisions. The need for creative thinking to support and grow programs."

"Fiscal/Budget Challenges. Need to face reality that classroom sizes will need to go up and staffing levels will need to be more aligned up and down the organization to lower enrollment."

"It is imperative that even with declining enrollment and uncertain funding, we develop both monetary and non monetary to attract and retain good teachers, paraprofessionals, and really all staff to build strength in bench and ensure continuity in quality within the schools and district."

"Balancing the budget without disenfranchising marginalized students."

Adjusting Learning in the Age of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Another prominent theme involved preparing students for the “rapidly changing” world of Artificial Intelligence and technology. Many respondents expressed concern about the lack of conversation around responsibly incorporating technology into classrooms. In addition, many responses called for the need to re-think standards such as college and career readiness in light of changing workforce demands.

“Bringing kids into the 21st century by expanding educational technology beyond chrome books.”

“Technology- it’s running the classroom. Students are on it way too much. They don’t know how to pay attention to teachers actually teaching. Should be a minimum of how long they are in chromebooks!”

“Artificial intelligence is rapidly changing how students learn and how knowledge is accessed. Attempting to ban or ignore it is not a sustainable strategy. We need a superintendent who is comfortable leading this transition—developing policies, training, and curriculum that incorporate AI responsibly and effectively.”

“The most important challenges LVJUSD will face include responding to a potentially increasingly authoritative federal government, as well as technological automation, digital/gaming addiction among students, and questions about the value of AI in preparing students for college and/or careers.”

“AI as an educational tool and not a substitute for learning/critical thinking.”

“A slightly more quantifiable challenge would be the use and overuse of technology in ways that harm rather than enrich learning. There is nothing more discouraging than walking into a classroom and seeing a sea of zombies glued to a computer screen, not retaining information.”

“The challenge of incorporating AI and managing cell phones that encourages learning, health and growth.”

“Preparing our youth for an AI-powered workplace. Need to rethink career planning and critical thinking/communication skills being taught.”

Mixed Concerns Around Equity

Equity came up as a noticeable theme, though respondents were split on how they articulated their concerns. Some respondents called for a more equitable distribution of resources especially in light of budget cuts that would disproportionately impact specific student groups.

"Addressing ongoing staffing shortages, supporting staff retention, meeting the increasing academic and social-emotional needs of students, closing achievement and opportunity gaps to ensure equity for all learners."

"Staying equitable while budgets falter and individual schools fund more on their own."

"Key challenges include closing achievement gaps and ensuring equitable outcomes for all students, improving attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism, and supporting student engagement."

"Inconsistent funding support / maint. upgrades/academic opportunities across similar schools in each grade. Inefficient use of resources with TK-8 AND elementary/middle schools. An LVJUSD education in one neighborhood is not equivalent to the opportunities in all neighborhoods."

Other respondents pushed back against an equity focus and called for equal supports for all students.

"Elect someone who is more competent in making decisions like I was writing about. Equity is a waste of time. Spend more time on getting all of these kids to the finish line- to graduate."

"Overrating on "equities" can limit the ability to obtain success for others. It's important to strive for equitable results, just don't go too far like the current administration where families feel their students are being punished to make up for others."

"A "focus on equitable outcomes"?? This is a horrible idea that will only result in dragging down the best students to the lowest common denominator."

"The questions on the first page talk about "Academic Achievement with a Focus on Equitable Outcomes". We should focus on academic achievement and tracking kids regardless of whether outcomes are equitable across groups. I want a superintendent that just focuses on improving student excellence regardless of which students are achieving it."

Anything else you would like the Board of Education to consider

Proper vetting process for the superintendent search

Many respondents asked the Board to conduct a thorough evaluation of superintendent candidates before making a decision. Specific requests involved gathering information on candidates' reputations from their former school districts and community members and conducting a thorough background check.

Emphasis on personal characteristics such as integrity

Respondents repeatedly emphasized their desire for a superintendent with integrity and character. Many named personal characteristics such as “ethically moral,” “respectful” and “sincere.” Responses reflected a wish for someone who would be committed to supporting students and families.

Someone committed to the LVJUSD community

A third theme that arose from this question involved finding a candidate who is committed to understanding and serving the Livermore community long term. The majority of respondents felt it was important for the Board to hire a candidate from Livermore who understands the unique needs of the community. A couple of responses disagreed and felt an outside candidate would reduce political infighting. All responses however agreed that it was extremely important for the next superintendent to listen and seek to understand Livermore as a community before enacting any changes.

Survey Limitations

- Rates of respondents skipping questions were high. Around 31% of respondents skipped most questions.
- Difficult to make inferences from the survey in Spanish due to the low number of respondents and respondents that skipped questions. 6 respondents answered questions for the Spanish survey.
- The ability of respondents to check multiple sub-group categories for Race/Ethnicity and Relationship to district may impact sub-group analysis for certain groups. Particularly for:
 - #of respondents who chose Parent/Guardian and community member: 53
 - # of respondents who chose Parent/Guardian and staff member: 45

Community Input Session

Summary

18-20 LVJUSD community members attended a community input session hosted by the Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE) and the LVJUSD Board of Education on May 5, 2026. In the one-hour session, community members were asked to give feedback on the LVJUSD Board's four priority areas and share their thoughts on the desired skills of the next superintendent. The session ended with an open-ended discussion. The following represents a breakdown of the relationship to LVJUSD community members recorded on the sign-in sheet.

- Parents/Grandparents: 7*
- Trustees: 2
- Community members: 2*
- Community Partners: 6
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Pedrozzi Young Scholars Manager
 - Livermore Valley Education Foundation (LVEF)
 - Quest Science Center
 - Tri Valley Air Quality Climate Alliance (TVAQCA)
 - Community Partner
- Staff member: 1
- Other: 1 (Superintendent Tri-Valley RP)

*1 participant signed in as community member and grandparent.

Themes

The following is a summary of the major themes that surfaced related to the types of skills and characteristics community members desired in the next superintendent as well as the major challenges and strengths of the district. Many of the themes listed are similar to the themes from the online survey.

Superintendent Skills and Characteristics

A Bridge Builder: Someone who can bring diverse groups together and create a cohesive team, as well as organizational structure and culture.

- EQ skills were named as a prerequisite for being able to build trust with diverse groups.
 - Common EQ skills named were: conflict management/mediation skills, empathy, listening skills, communication skills
- The ability to make difficult decisions while maintaining the buy-in of various interest groups.

“Without the ability to build team and trust, none of these priorities will happen.”

“Trust has been lost between labor and leadership. We need someone who can rebuild trust.”

“We must build team and trust across the district– from 1) board and superintendent to 2) superintendent and admin and labor.”

An experienced leader.

- Types of expertise named: financial expertise, administrative/managerial/leadership expertise, experience in public education

“We need a seasoned leader. This is not a place for a learning curve because it will be a new board. They will need to manage up and help really well intentioned people be a strong team.”

“We can’t have someone green. Cannot be someone whose first time is a superintendent. I’m a district staff, I don’t want to have to live through that.”

A leader who takes the time to get to know the history and community of LVJUSD

“People have such a different perception of Livermore than what we actually are.”

“Meet the community where we are– not immediately try to put your stamp on the district.”

A leader who prioritizes inclusivity, diversity and equity.

"We have a lot of vulnerable kids in our district..I'm concerned at how all of this impacts our kids... with the political winds that are blowing across the country, we need someone who has strong pro-student values of inclusivity and tolerance and who will not waver, not bend with those political winds especially with the new board coming, we don't know what the politics of the new board will be."

District Strengths and Challenges

District Strengths

- Trust and partnership between school sites and community members/families

District Challenges

- A continued emphasis on inclusivity, equity and diversity.
- Low morale and trust

"This is literally a dumpster fire.. As employees it sucks. The foundation is broken."

"We cannot go through another chewing out of another leader at the top. It will not be possible for the fabric of this district."

"Our superintendent coming in is going to have a massive challenge with morale."

Feedback on Board Priorities

Community members shared their feedback on the strengths and areas of growth related to the LVJUSD board's four priority areas through a gallery walk activity. The following notes summarize the major themes for each priority area.

Priority #1: Academic Achievement with a focus on equitable outcomes

- *Strengths:*
 - Specific LVJUSD programs: Parent ed workshops, Green Engineering PLTW
- *Areas of Growth*
 - Equitable supports for all schools and students
 - Reading and math proficiency

Priority #2: Ensure safe, inclusive and engaging learning environments

- *Strengths:*
 - SEL programming
 - Emphasis on inclusivity and diversity
- *Areas of Growth*
 - Mixed feedback on continuing a focus on inclusivity and diversity
 - Safety/bullying concerns

Priority #3: Strengthen facilities, finance and organizational sustainability

- *Strengths:*
 - School site-community partnership
- *Areas of Growth*
 - Financial stability
 - Ability to make difficult financial decisions and plan rather than “putting out fires”

Priority #4: Elevate trust, commitment, and communication to our schools

- *Strengths:*
 - Trust between school sites and families/communities
- *Areas of Growth*
 - Continued emphasis on inclusivity and diversity
 - Relationship/trust between different groups (labor, board, superintendent, district staff, school site staff)

Focus Groups

Summary

Members of the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District (LVJUSD) board and Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE) met with nine interest groups to better understand the types of skills and characteristics they looked for in the next superintendent. Two labor groups, the Livermore Education Association (LEA) and the California School Employees Association (CSEA), conducted surveys to gather input from their members before the meetings. Below is a list of the interest groups the LVJUSD board and ACOE staff met with:

- Livermore Education Association (LEA)
 - 149 survey respondents
- California School Employees Association (CSEA)
 - ~472 survey respondents
- Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
- Livermore Management Association (LMA)
- Classified Management and Confidential (CM/C)
- District Leadership
 - Cabinet
 - Executive Assistant
 - Acting Superintendent

In the focus group sessions, LVJUSD Board members and ACOE staff asked the different interest groups for their feedback on the types of skills and actions they sought in the next superintendent. The following themes have been summarized from the focus group sessions. Many of the themes were previously named in the survey or community input session.

Themes

Superintendent Skills and Characteristics

An experienced leader: Someone who has deep classroom experience (at least 10 years) as well as leadership and financial management experience.

- “A large majority of respondents (74%) believe a Superintendent cannot effectively lead if they “rushed into administration.” (LEA survey report)
- “Prioritize fiscal knowledge and responsibility.” (CSEA)
- Someone with 10 years classroom experience. (LEA)

Someone with integrity: A genuine person who will communicate transparently and follow through on their commitments.

- Someone who has the communication skills to be able to make hard decisions and articulate their no. (District Leadership)
- Someone with trust, integrity and a willingness to give voice for all groups. (LMA)
- “The most dominant sentiment is a plea for Integrity. Many respondents explicitly mentioned a need to move away from "sneaky" or "divisive" tactics. There is a high demand for a leader who is straightforward, admits mistakes, and operates without a "bluffing" mentality, particularly during negotiations.” (LEA)

An authentic collaborator: Someone who will meaningfully engage with community partners and has the skills to bring diverse groups together.

- “Be able to build trust and instill a culture of teamwork, unity, and collaboration.” (CSEA)
- Someone that builds relationships across groups with a focus on students. (LEA)

Committed to LVJUSD: Someone who will take the time to learn and leverage local knowledge before taking action.

Superintendent Actions

Meaningfully collaborate with labor groups and staff: Emphasis on “authentic” collaboration vs “superficial” collaboration. Someone who involves all interest groups in the decision-making process and incorporates their feedback.

- “Proven history of positive relations with labor groups...Value collaborative relationships with labor groups” (CSEA)
- “A significant portion of the staff feels “fed up” with perceived superficial collaboration. The community is looking for a Superintendent who involves bargaining units and stakeholders *before* decisions are finalized” (LEA)

Build trust with staff and community members first: Prioritize repairing relationships with staff and community.

- “You cannot do priority 1-3 without doing priority 4 first” (District Leadership)

Learn about the LVJUSD community: Take the time to learn about the unique assets of LVJUSD before taking any new actions.

- Someone who recognizes the assets that we have and is willing to understand and leverage them before enacting widespread change. (District Leadership)
- Someone who asks questions before making large scale systems change. (CM/C)

- We have experienced change-fatigue. Assess and if change is necessary go slow, be purposeful, don't do too much, and communicate. (District Leadership)
- Someone who can oversee and leverage local knowledge. Someone who can listen before taking action. (CSEA)

Recommendations for the LVJUSD Board

- Include labor leaders/school-site staff on the interview panel
- Ask specific interview questions:
 - What will they do in their first 100 days?
 - What have they learned about the Livermore community specifically?
- Develop a contract that emphasizes transparency and accountability