

# Disrupting

for Excellence



## Strategic Plan

Board Work Session #2

March 6, 2024

# Welcome!

Dr. Devon Q. Horton  
Superintendent of Schools



# Session Objectives

- Refine the core beliefs, vision, and mission for the DeKalb County School District
- Review stakeholder survey data

# Agenda

- Core Beliefs for DeKalb County School District
- Vision for DeKalb County School District
- Mission for DeKalb County School District
- Stakeholder Survey Data

# What are the elements?

<b>Core Beliefs</b>	General and fundamental assumptions/overarching truths about the world.
<b>Core Values</b>	Set of principles that drive all behaviors and decision-making for the district.
<b>Vision</b>	Describes what the district hopes to achieve or be in the future.
<b>Mission</b>	Articulates what is unique about who the district is, what the district does, and who the district serves.

# Core Beliefs and Core Values

# Core Beliefs

- General and fundamental assumptions about the world. They are deep-seated convictions you hold about yourself, others, and the nature of reality. They aren't about specific situations, but about overarching truths and they often go unquestioned.

# Core Values

- Specific and actionable guides for behavior and decision-making. They are principles that guide your actions, translating into concrete behaviors. Shared values create a sense of belonging and guide collaborative action.



Imagine **core values** as the walls and furniture. They're what you see and interact with on a daily basis, reflecting the foundation in a tangible way.

Imagine **core beliefs** as the foundation of a house. It's an unseen, underlying structure that determines the overall shape and strength of the building.



# DeKalb County Public Schools Core Beliefs

We believe

- In making sure every decision supports quality teaching and learning
- In ensuring we meet every student's academic, social, and emotional needs
- In embracing the cultural diversity of our community as a strength
- In holding everyone accountable for educational excellence

# Steering Committee Feedback

- Make them more succinct.
- Remove “we believe”.
- We should consider adding a belief about holding everyone accountable.
- Accountability should be at the top of our list.
- What does “embracing the cultural diversity” really mean and look like?
- We should include something about equitable access and having adequate resources and technology for schools.

# Steering Committee Ideas

- All students deserve a quality education.
- All students can learn.
- All students are capable of greatness.
- Students will thrive in a culturally diverse community.
- Equity and access are essential to student success.

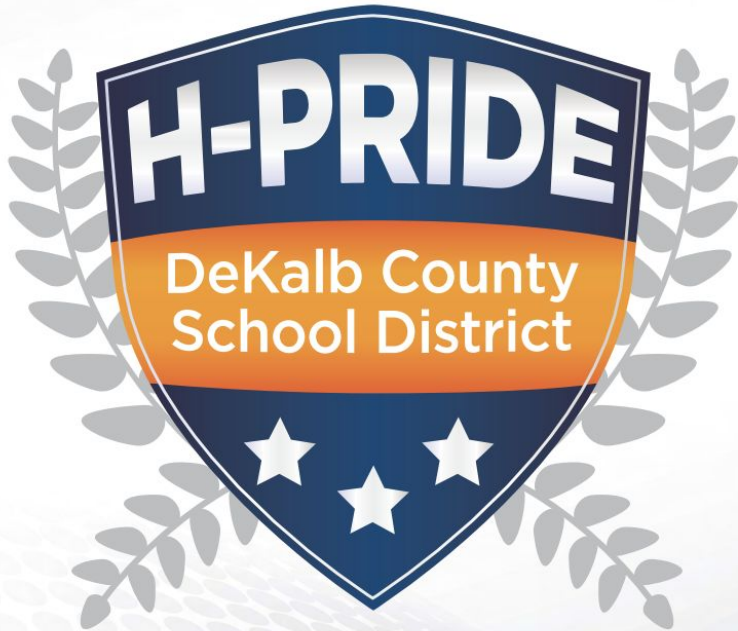
# Discussion

Based on your thoughts from the previous session and the feedback from the Steering Committee, are there any changes that you'd like to make to the core beliefs?

# DeKalb County School District

## Six Core Values:

- H** **Humanization**- Before we can address the critical work that has to be accomplished collectively in the DeKalb County School District, we must connect as human beings first. Recognizing value and worth and not viewing others solely as resources and a means to an end.
- P** **Professionalism**- should be exhibited in all phases of our professional and personal life. Our dress code, the manner in which we communicate, accountability, and punctuality are some traits that represent professionalism.
- R** **Respect**- A professional work environment is built on mutual respect. We treat each other with courtesy, we value diversity, and appreciate different perspectives.
- I** **Integrity**- is closely related to professionalism but it involves honesty, truthfulness, and ethical conduct. Taking responsibility for their actions and maintaining confidentiality when required.
- D** **Dignity**- Fair treatment of individuals. Not discriminating against individuals because of race, gender, age, or sexual orientation. Open and honest communication regardless of the position or title is imperative.
- E** **Empathy**- Understand and share the feelings, perspectives, and experiences of others. It involves recognizing and acknowledging the emotions and concerns of others, as well as responding in a compassionate and supportive manner.



# Vision

# Vision

Describes what the district hopes to achieve or be in the future.

# Sample Vision Statements

“Making the best possible ice cream, in the nicest possible way.”

-Ben & Jerry’s

“To organize the world’s information and make it universally accessible and useful.”

-Google

“To make people happy.”

-Disney

“To develop leaders who will one day make a global difference.”

-Harvard

“We will help people live longer, healthier, happier lives.”

-CVS

“To reduce human trauma and economic costs associated with automobile accidents.”

-Progressive



# Key Ingredients of a Vision

## 1 – The output

When you define what you do as an outcome, you start to transform your product or service into a benefit. Vision statements that talk about benefits are far more inspiring than those that talk about the service or product itself.

## 2 – The twist

Your vision statement needs a unique selling point. This is a key ingredient in helping you bring focus and inspiration to your vision.

## 3 – The quantification

With no possible end in sight (or a totally unrealistic one), the initial inspiration derived from a great vision can turn to frustration. Give yourself a goal to assess progress against but it doesn't have to be numeric.

## 4 – The human connection

Include something that makes people conjure a specific mental image when they read your vision statement.

# Sample Vision with Key Ingredients

1 – The output

2 – The twist

3 – The quantification

4 – The human connection

Producing and selling **locally sourced cakes and pies** that are so delicious and satisfying that **every customer who leaves our store** does so **with a smile**.

# Current DCSD Vision

To inspire our community of learners to achieve  
educational excellence

# Board Feedback

- Public education has changed. We want our vision to incorporate something about preparing students for college, career, and life. We want them to be ready to participate in society and democracy.
- We want students to have the skills that will allow them to do whatever they want to do in their futures.
- We want them to be happy, healthy, and have positive relationships with others.

# Steering Committee Feedback

- Should be aspirational.
- Revise inspire to a more concrete and actionable word like “prepare” or “equip”.
- Words to consider: grow, thrive, succeed, whole, happy, healthy, community-minded, opportunities, options, equipped, accountability, academics, diverse
- Include the human connection by using “healthy”, “productive”, or “holistic”

# Steering Committee Ideas

- Inspiring, empowering, and engaging students through learning.
- Igniting students to go forward, do something, and be somebody.
- Delivering excellence without excuses.
- Preparing students for college, career, and life as an engaged member of the community.
- Graduating students who are prepared for lifelong success.
- Preparing students for lifelong learning beyond the classroom.
- Inspiring students to grow, thrive, succeed, and achieve their dreams.

# Discussion

Based on your thoughts from the previous session and the feedback from the Steering Committee, are there any changes that you'd like to make to the vision?

# Mission



# Mission

Articulates what is unique about who the district is, what the district does, and who it serves.

# Mission Brainstorm

Describes what is  
unique about  
**who we are**

Describes what is  
unique about  
**who we serve**

Describes what is  
unique about  
**what we do**

# Current DCSD Mission

To ensure student success, leading to higher education, work, and lifelong learning.

# Board Feedback

We'd like to build from the current mission, but make it broader than just higher education, work, and lifelong learning. Add in something more holistic to say we are giving them the skills they need to thrive in life, be happy and fulfilled, and participate in society.

# Steering Committee Ideas

- DeKalb County School District embraces, educates, and empowers every student to thrive in college, career and life. We are DeKalb! We disrupt for excellence!
- As an increasingly diverse school district, DCSD equips every scholar with the academic, social, and emotional skill set to become holistic critical thinkers and lifelong learners.
- DCSD provides students with an excellent education that prepares every student thrive in life and reach their full potential.

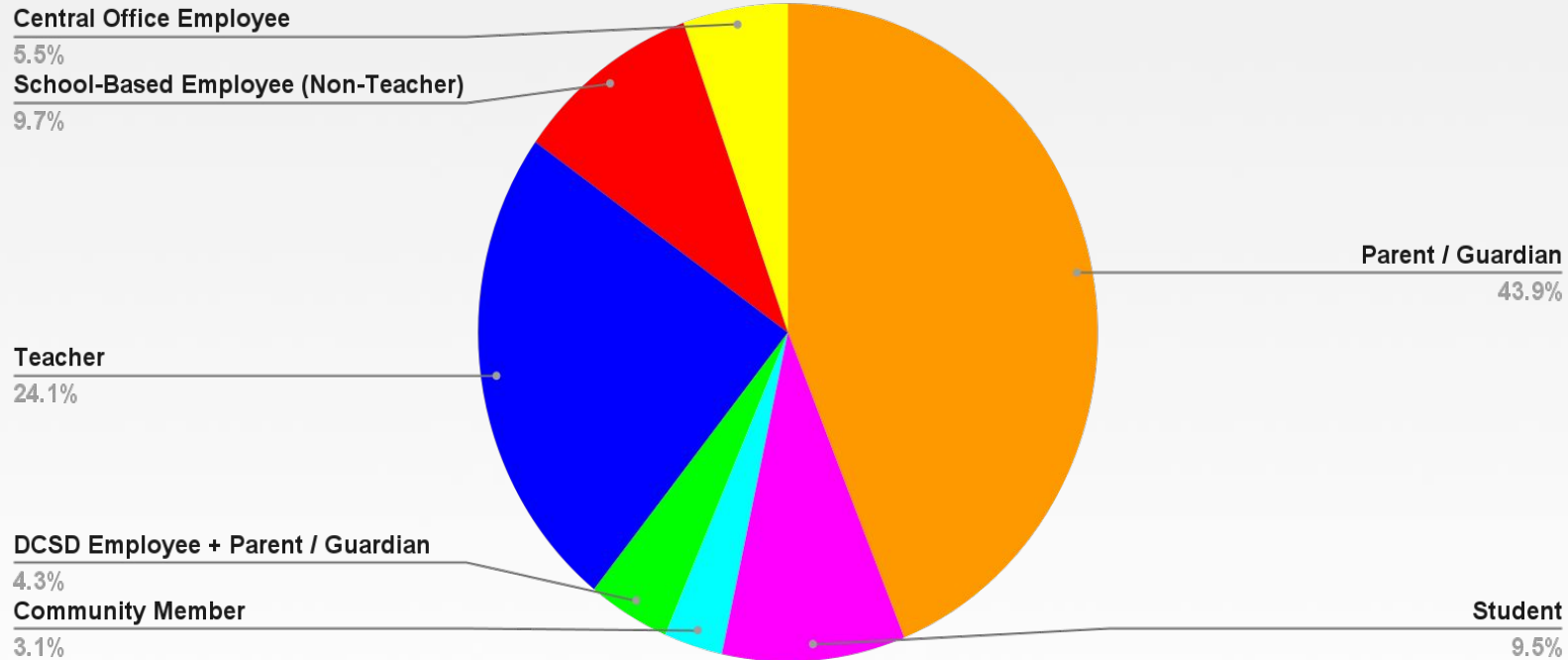
# Discussion

Based on your thoughts from the previous session and the feedback from the Steering Committee, are there any changes that you'd like to make to the mission?

# Strategic Plan Survey Results

# Survey Responses

## Survey Responses



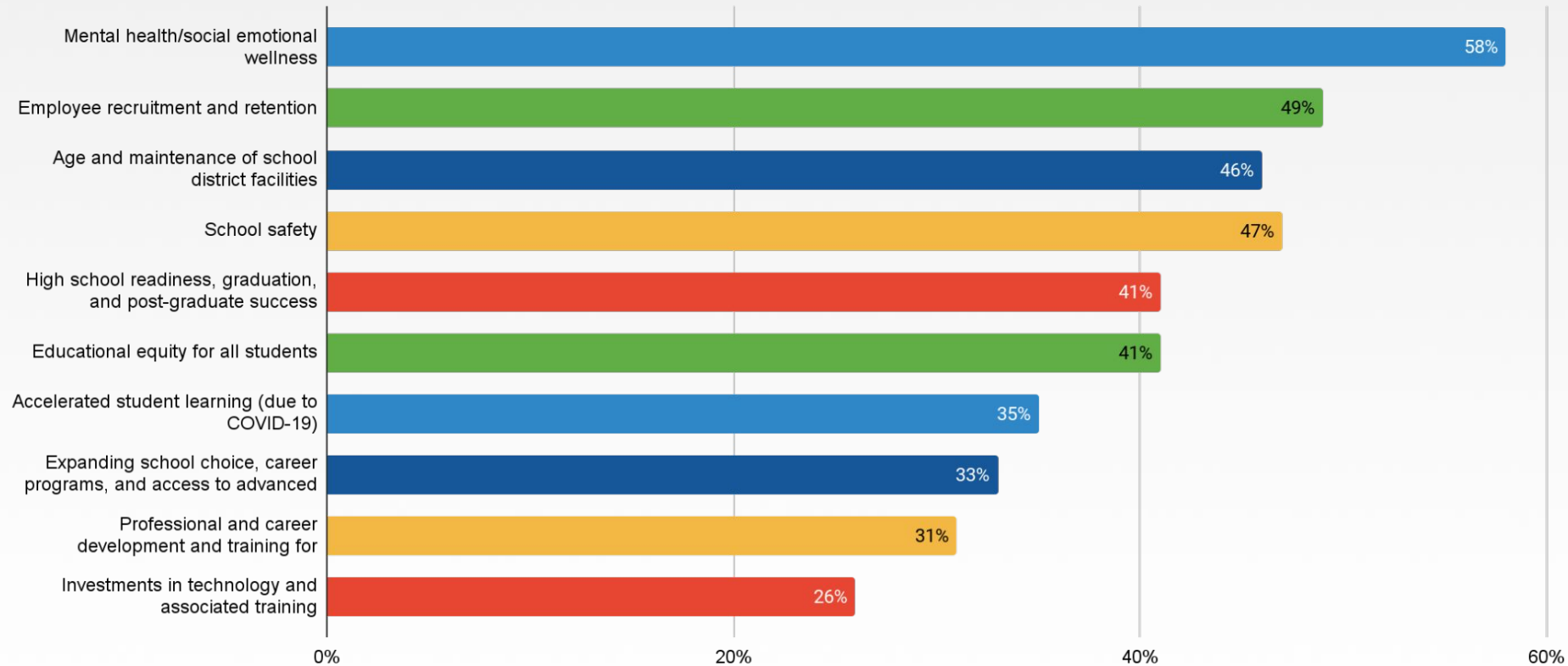
Group	Number of Respondents
Parent/Guardian	3685
Student	802
Community Member	257
DCSD Employee + Parent	359
Teacher	2022
School-Based Employee (Non-Teacher)	814
District Level Employee	460
Total	8399



# What should DeKalb County prioritize in the next 3-5 years as part of their next Strategic Plan?

All Respondents Top 10 Priorities

## Top 10 Priorities



## Top 5

1. Mental health / social emotional wellness
2. Employee Recruitment and Retention
3. Age and Maintenance of school district facilities
4. School Safety
5. High School readiness, graduation, and post-graduate success

# Top 10 Priorities by Group- Parent/Guardian

Priority	Count	Percentage
Mental health/social emotional wellness	2,122	58%
School safety	1,900	52%
High school readiness, graduation, and post-graduate success	1,740	47%
Age and maintenance of school district facilities	1,637	44%
Educational equity for all students	1,519	41%
Expanding school choice, career programs, and access to advanced coursework (honors-level, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement)	1,460	40%
Employee recruitment and retention	1,438	39%
Accelerating student learning (due to COVID-19)	1,383	38%
Professional and career development and training for teachers and staff	1,176	32%
Investments in technology and associated training	1,085	29%

## Top 5

1. Mental health / social emotional wellness
2. School Safety
3. High School readiness, graduation, and post-graduate success
4. Age and Maintenance of school district facilities
5. Educational equity for all students

# Top 10 Priorities by Group- Employee

Priority	Count	Percentage
Mental health/social emotional wellness	563	69%
Employee recruitment and retention	513	63%
School safety	416	51%
Age and maintenance of school district facilities	383	47%
Educational equity for all students	359	44%
Accelerating student learning (due to COVID-19)	299	37%
Professional and career development and training for teachers and staff	280	34%
High school readiness, graduation, and post-graduate success	269	33%
Early Childhood Education	194	24%
3rd Grade Reading	160	20%

## Top 5

1. Mental health / social emotional wellness
2. Employee recruitment and retention
3. School Safety
4. Age and Maintenance of school district facilities
5. Educational equity for all students

# Top 10 Priorities by Group- Employee and Parent/Guardian

Priority	Count	Percentage
Mental health/social emotional wellness	228	64%
Employee recruitment and retention	222	62%
Educational equity for all students	165	46%
School safety	161	45%
Age and maintenance of school district facilities	152	42%
High school readiness, graduation, and post-graduate success	146	41%
Professional and career development and training for teachers and staff	120	33%
Expanding school choice, career programs, and access to advanced coursework (honors-level, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement)	104	29%
Accelerating student learning (due to COVID-19)	102	28%
Early Childhood Education	88	25%

## Top 5

1. Mental health / social emotional wellness
2. Employee recruitment and retention
3. Educational equity for all students
4. School Safety
5. Age and Maintenance of school district facilities
6. High School readiness, graduation, and post-graduate success

# Top 10 Priorities by Group- Student

Priority	Count	Percentage
School safety	505	63%
Mental health/social emotional wellness	493	61%
Expanding school choice, career programs, and access to advanced coursework (honors-level, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement)	479	60%
High school readiness, graduation, and post-graduate success	451	56%
Educational equity for all students	327	41%
Accelerating student learning (due to COVID-19)	252	31%
Age and maintenance of school district facilities	246	31%
Investments in technology and associated training	232	29%
Professional and career development and training for teachers and staff	193	24%
Early Childhood Education	174	22%

## Top 5

1. School Safety
  2. Mental health / social emotional wellness
  3. Expanding school choice, career programs, and access to advanced coursework
  4. High School readiness, graduation, and post-graduate success
1. Educational equity for all students

# Top 10 Priorities by Group- Community Member

Priority	Count	Percentage
Mental health/social emotional wellness	162	63%
Educational equity for all students	133	52%
Age and maintenance of school district facilities	103	40%
Expanding school choice, career programs, and access to advanced coursework (honors-level, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement)	103	40%
High school readiness, graduation, and post-graduate success	97	38%
Employee recruitment and retention	89	35%
School safety	86	33%
Investments in technology and associated training	83	32%
Professional and career development and training for teachers and staff	71	28%
Accelerating student learning (due to COVID-19)	66	26%

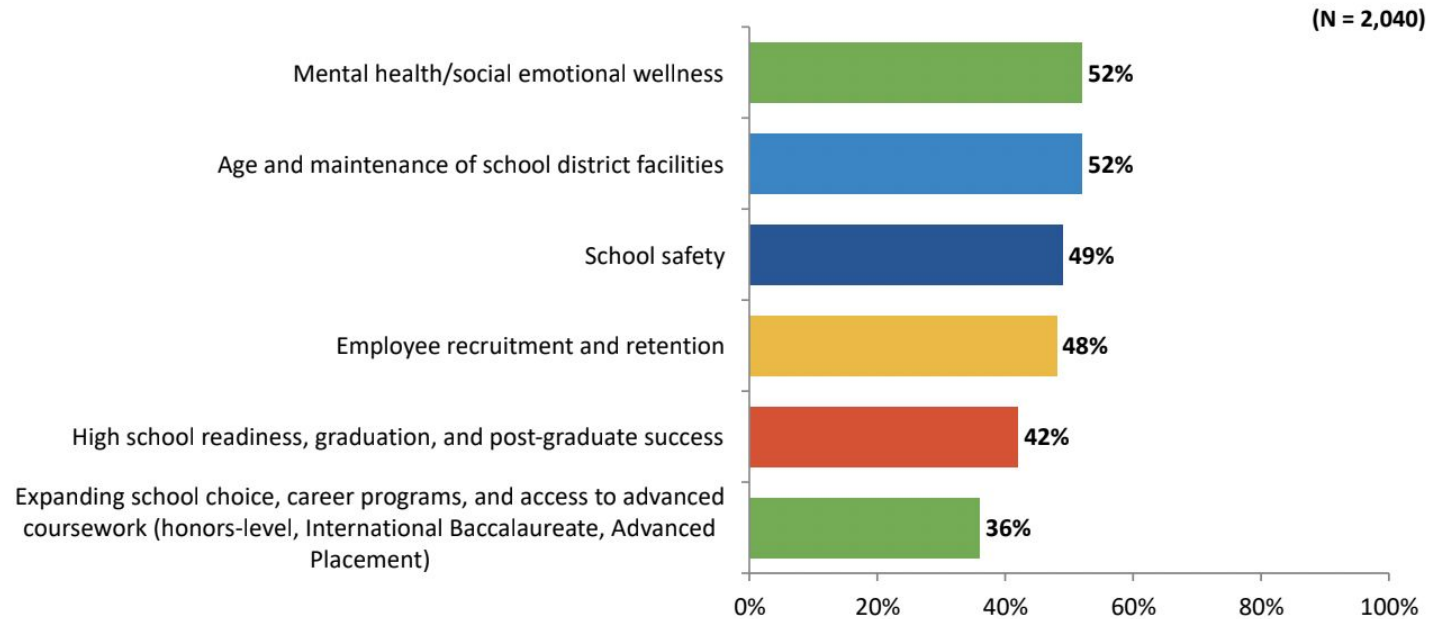
## Top 5

1. Mental health / social emotional wellness
2. Educational equity for all students
3. Age and Maintenance of school district facilities
4. Expanding school choice, career programs, and access to advanced coursework
5. High School readiness, graduation, and post-graduate success

# Top Priorities - Board Region 1

What should DeKalb County prioritize in the next 3-5 years as part of their next Strategic Plan?

Select five priorities from the list of sixteen.



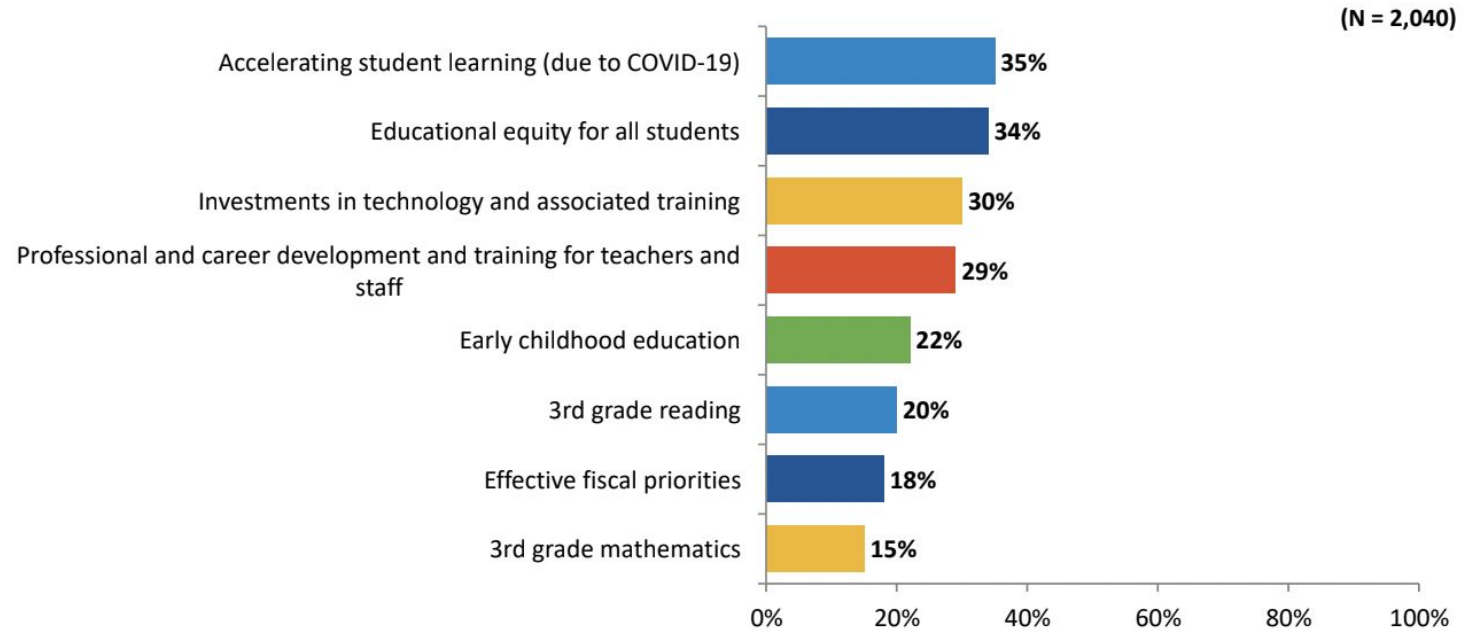
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# Top Priorities - Board Region 1

What should DeKalb County prioritize in the next 3-5 years as part of their next Strategic Plan?

## Select five priorities from the list of sixteen. (Continued)

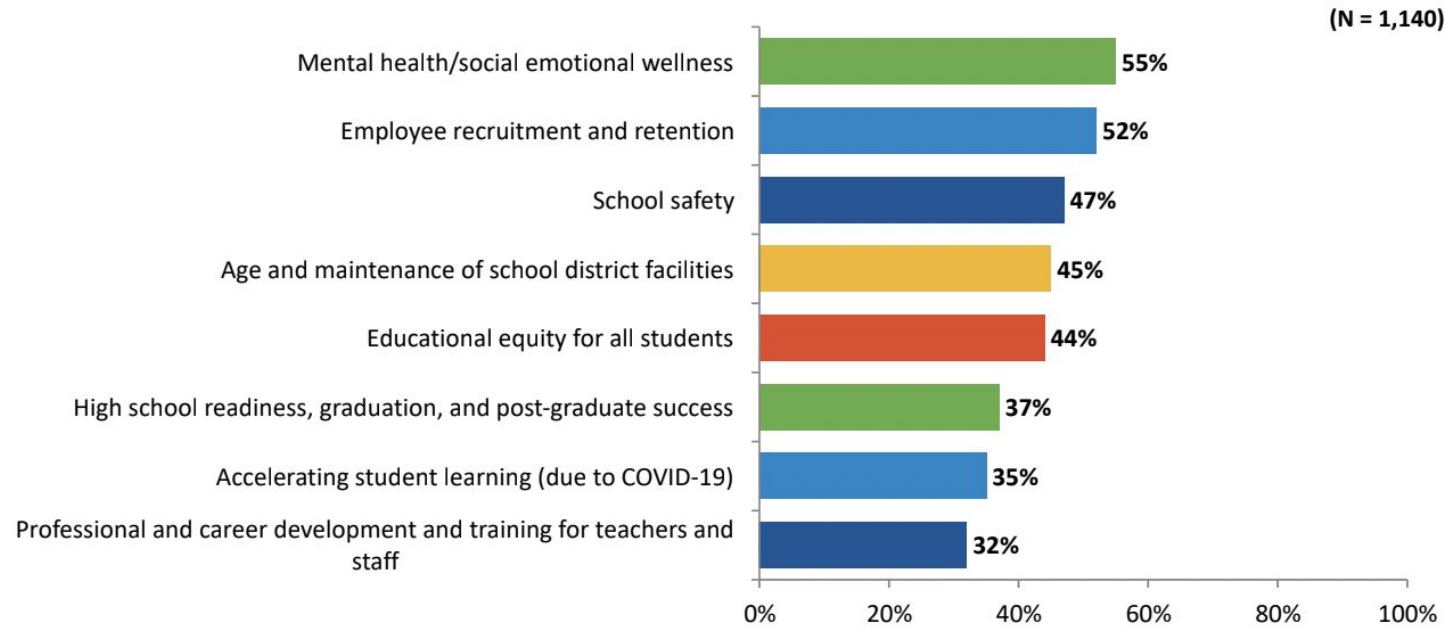




# Top Priorities - Board Region 2

What should DeKalb County prioritize in the next 3-5 years as part of their next Strategic Plan?

Select five priorities from the list of sixteen.



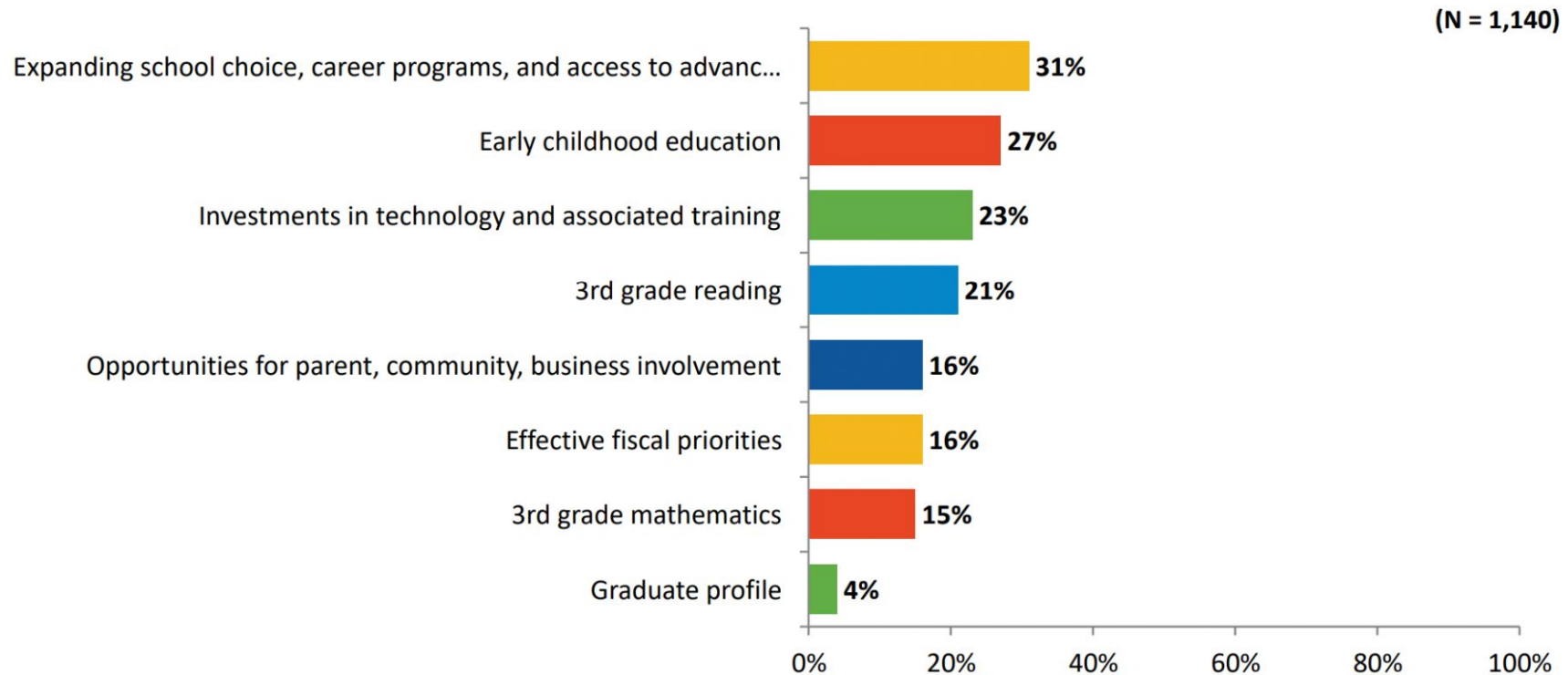
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# Top Priorities - Board Region 2

What should DeKalb County prioritize in the next 3-5 years as part of their next Strategic Plan?

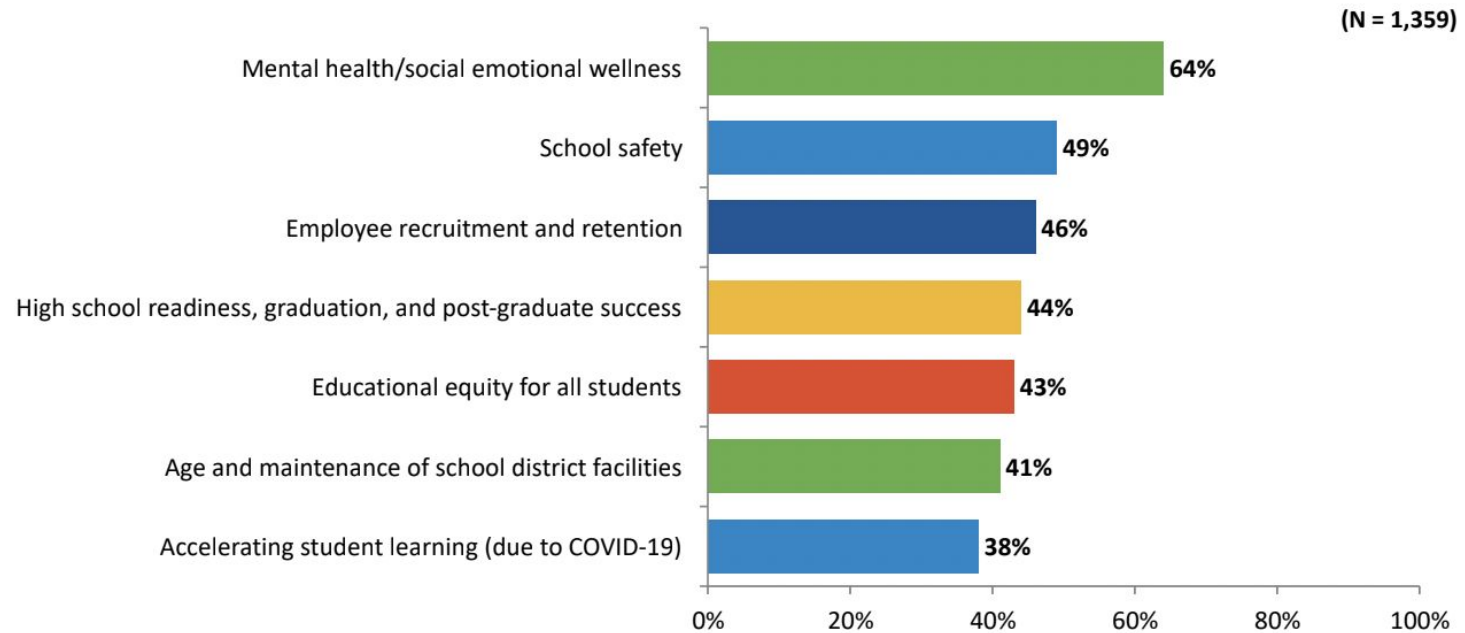
Select five priorities from the list of sixteen. (Continued)



# Top Priorities - Board Region 3

What should DeKalb County prioritize in the next 3-5 years as part of their next Strategic Plan?

Select five priorities from the list of sixteen.



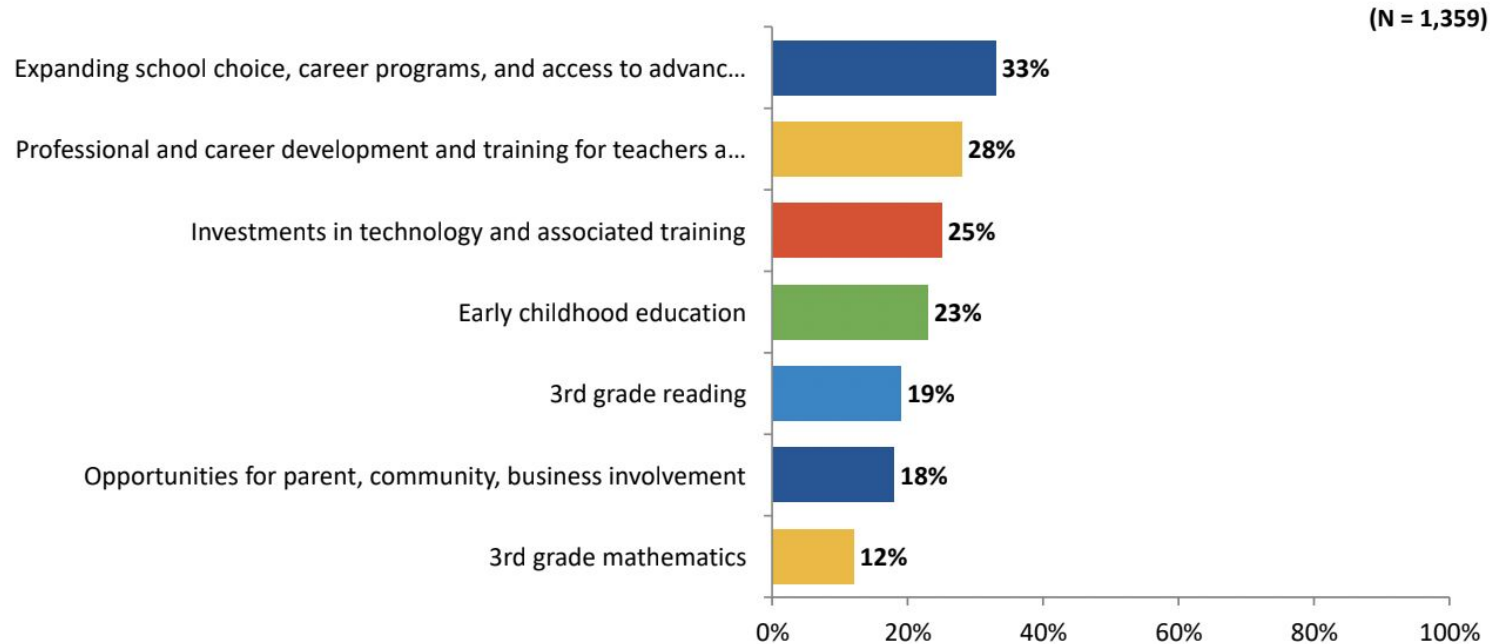
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# Top Priorities - Board Region 3

What should DeKalb County prioritize in the next 3-5 years as part of their next Strategic Plan?

## Select five priorities from the list of sixteen. (Continued)



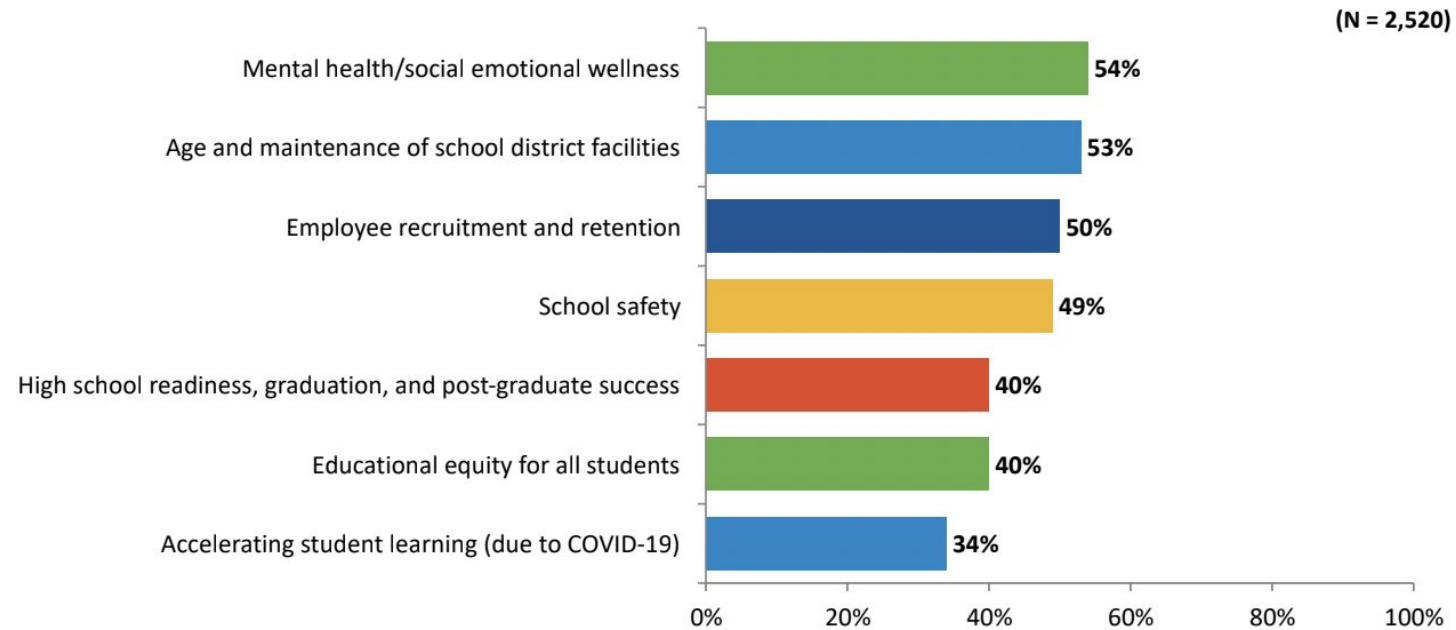
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# Top Priorities - Board Region 4

What should DeKalb County prioritize in the next 3-5 years as part of their next Strategic Plan?

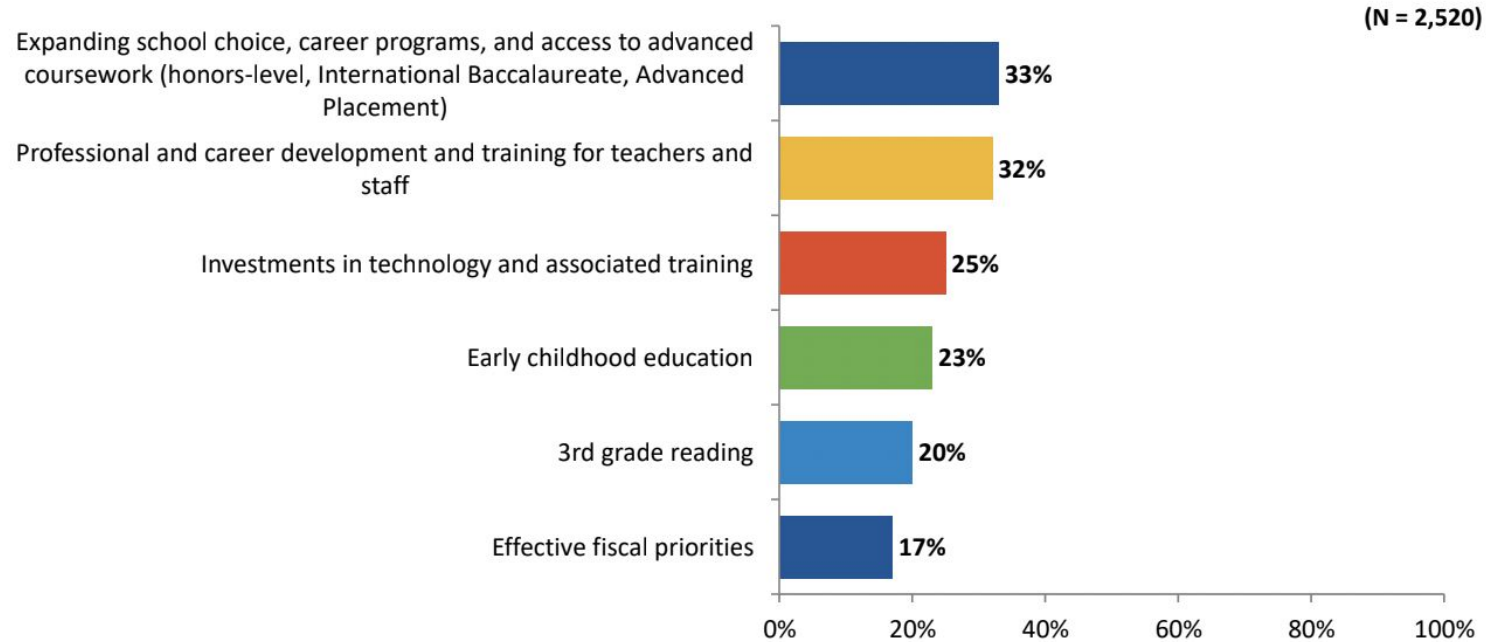
Select five priorities from the list of sixteen.



# Top Priorities - Board Region 4

What should DeKalb County prioritize in the next 3-5 years as part of their next Strategic Plan?

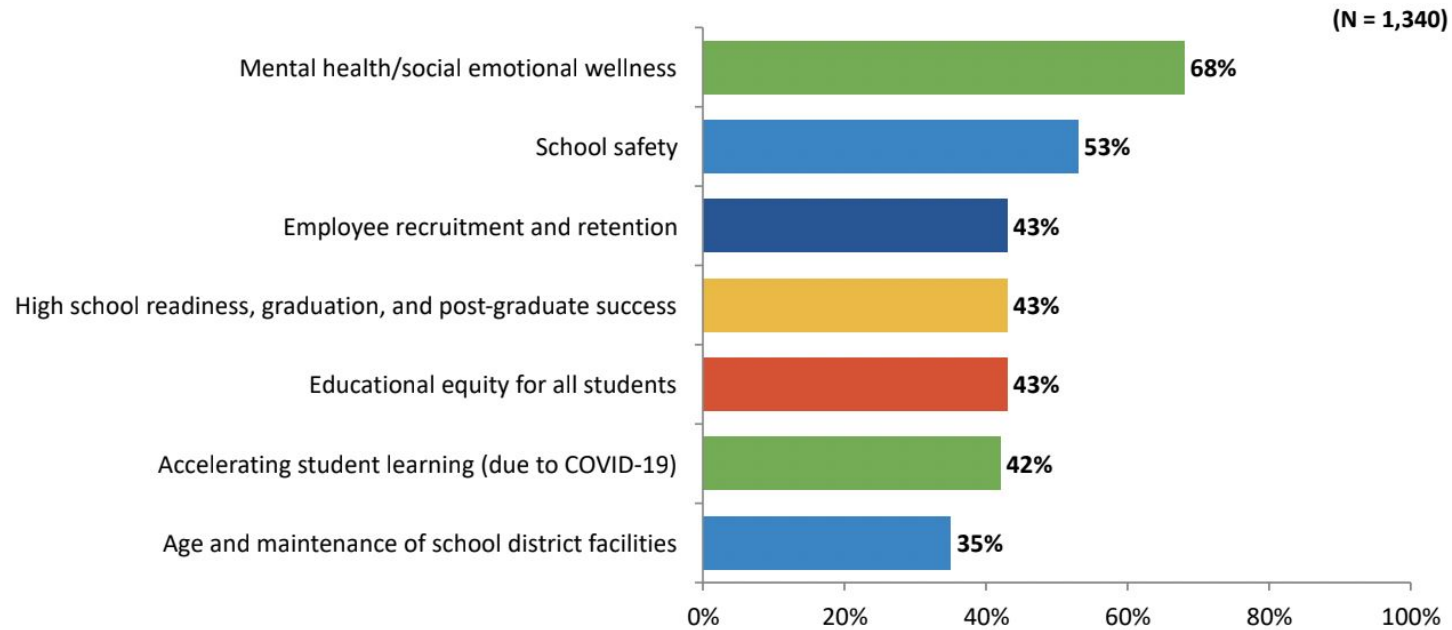
## Select five priorities from the list of sixteen. (Continued)



# Top Priorities - Board Region 5

What should DeKalb County prioritize in the next 3-5 years as part of their next Strategic Plan?

Select five priorities from the list of sixteen.



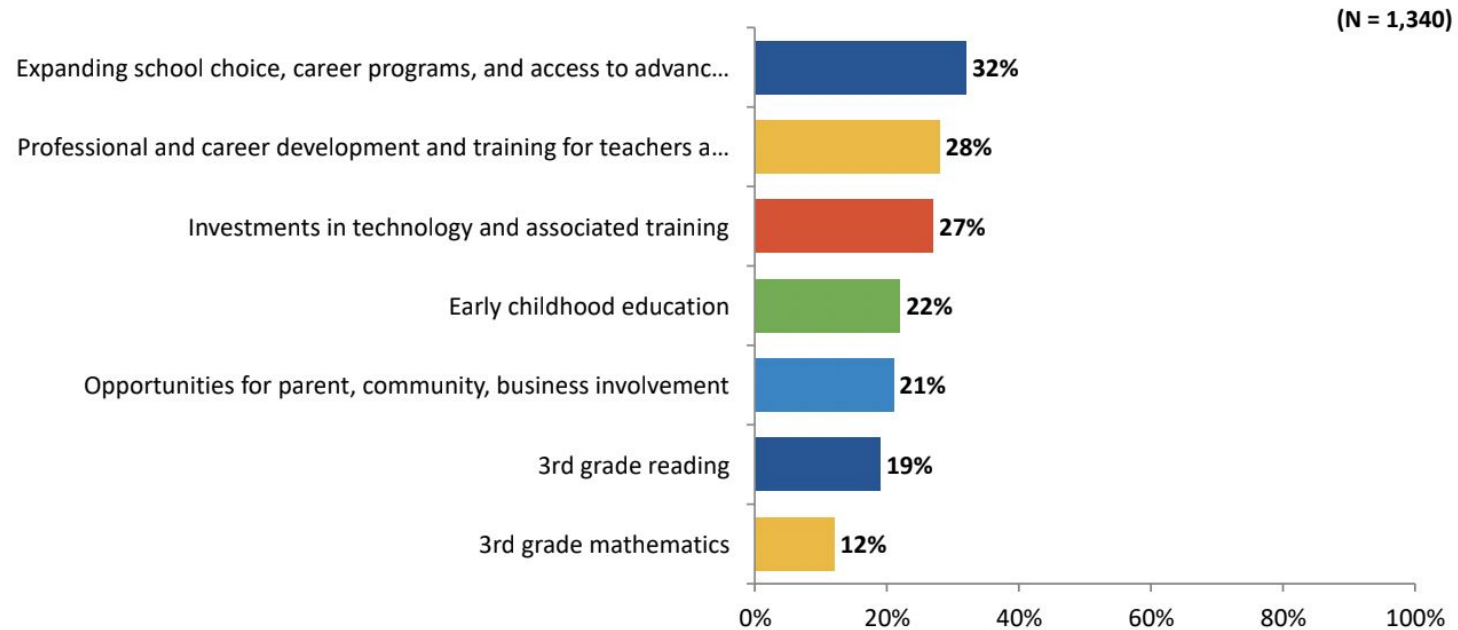
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# Top Priorities - Board Region 5

What should DeKalb County prioritize in the next 3-5 years as part of their next Strategic Plan?

## Select five priorities from the list of sixteen. (Continued)

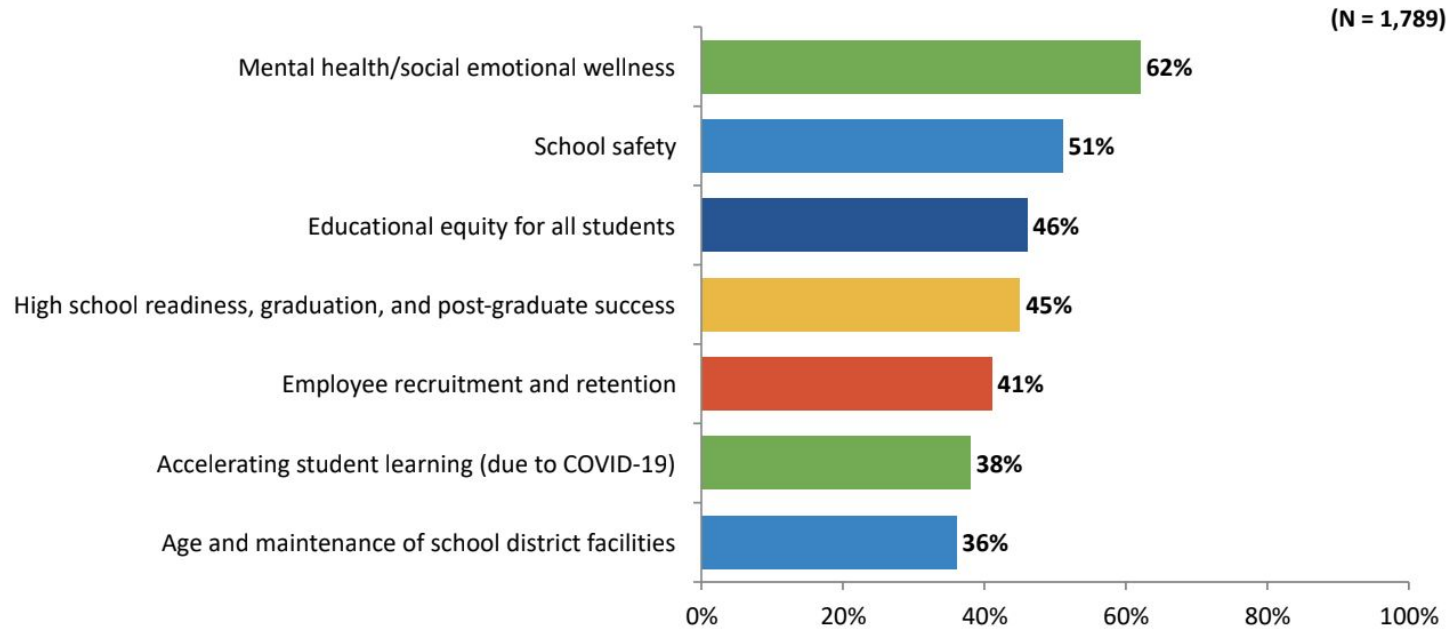




# Top Priorities - Board Region 6

What should DeKalb County prioritize in the next 3-5 years as part of their next Strategic Plan?

Select five priorities from the list of sixteen.



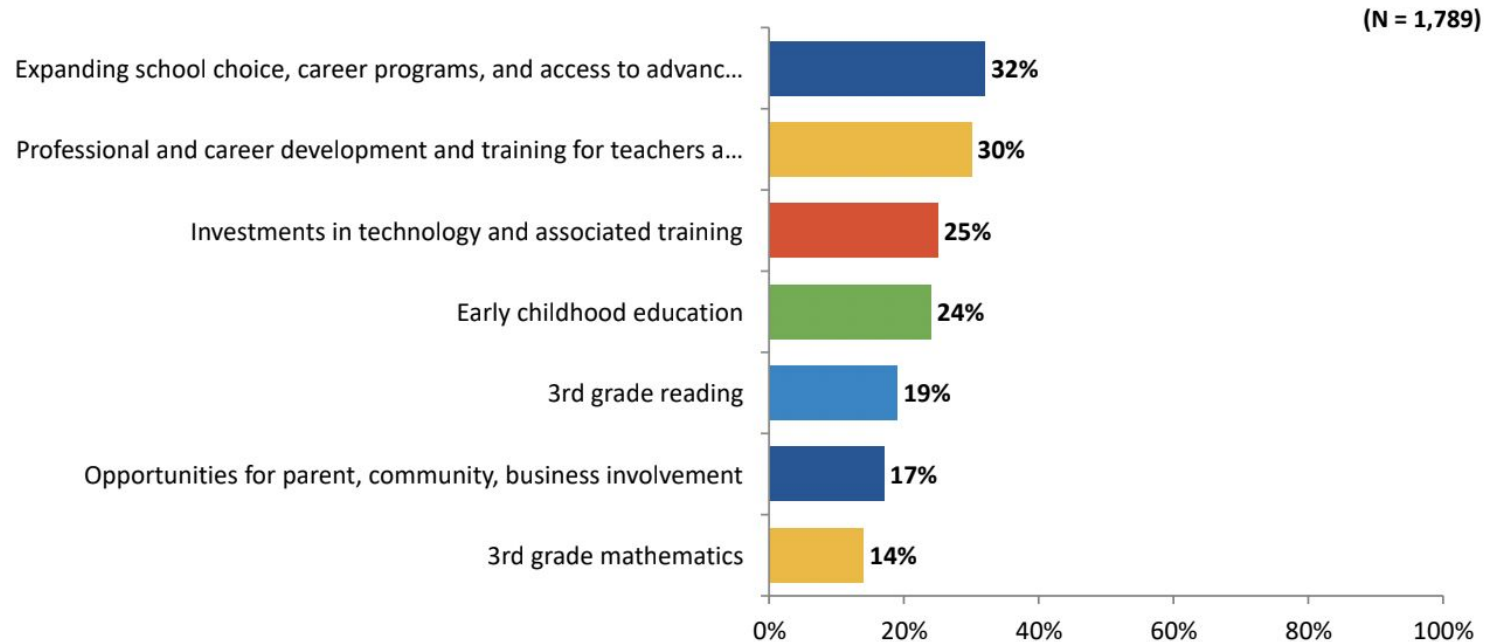
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# Top Priorities - Board Region 6

What should DeKalb County prioritize in the next 3-5 years as part of their next Strategic Plan?

## Select five priorities from the list of sixteen. (Continued)



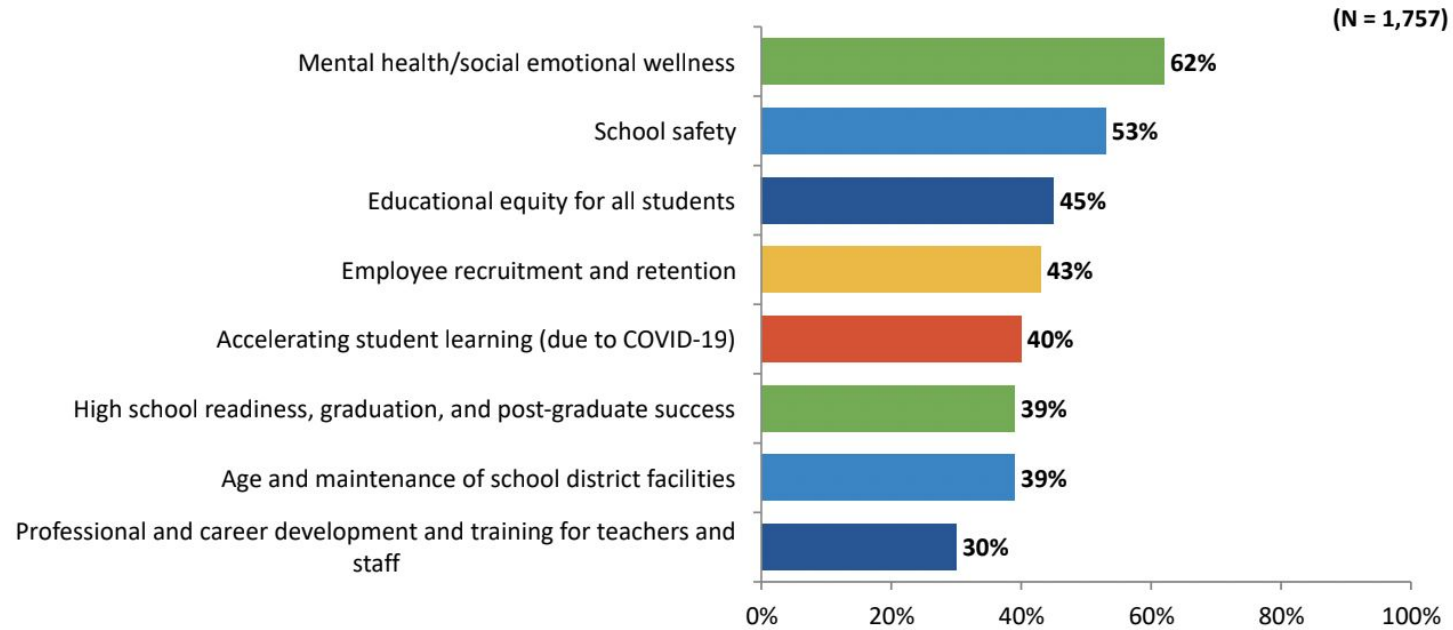
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# Top Priorities - Board Region 7

What should DeKalb County prioritize in the next 3-5 years as part of their next Strategic Plan?

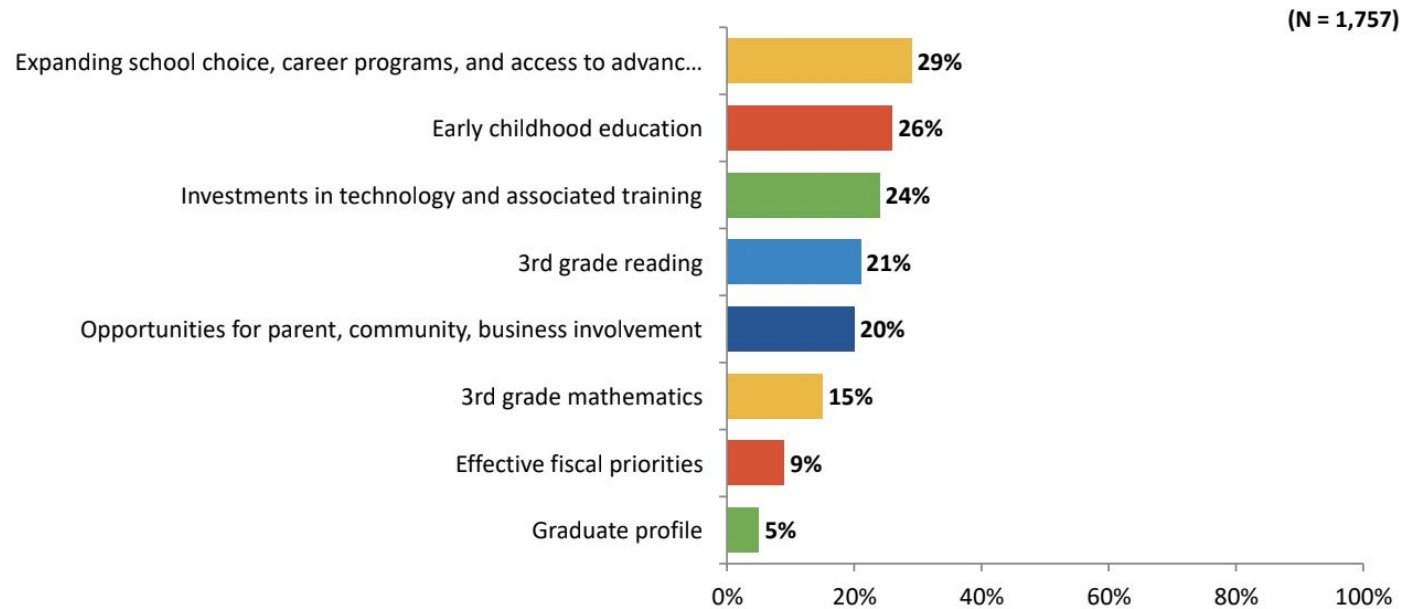
Select five priorities from the list of sixteen.



# Top Priorities - Board Region 7

What should DeKalb County prioritize in the next 3-5 years as part of their next Strategic Plan?

## Select five priorities from the list of sixteen. (Continued)



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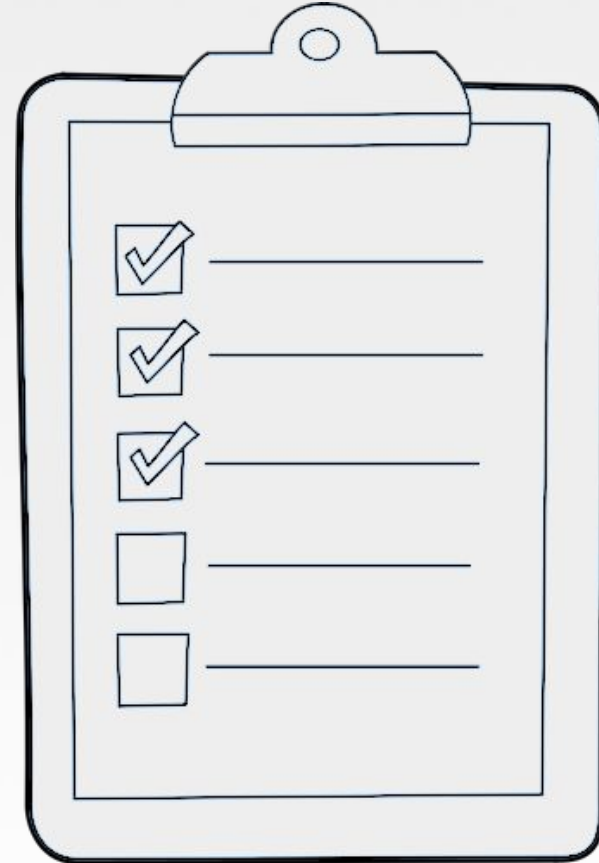
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Q&A

# Next Steps

## Steering Committee Meeting #4

- March 21, 2024
- Focus
  - Data Review - Part II
  - Goal Areas & Performance Objectives



# Meeting Feedback



I appreciate...



I wonder...

