

Board Retreat

Wednesday, September 22, 2021 5:00 PM

Dr. Matthew Prophet Education Center -
Windows Cafeteria / Conference Room (Floor
2)

501 N. Dixon St.
Portland, OR 97227

Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Anti-Racism
3. Board Evaluation



Portland Public Schools
Board of Education
Board Retreat
September 22, 2021



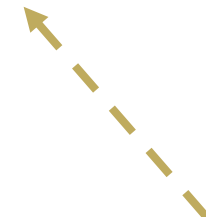
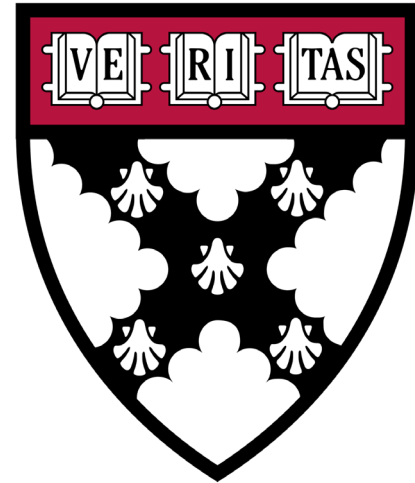
BEN KLEBAN CONSULTING



About Me



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PHILADELPHIA



Agenda

1. **Why are we here?**
2. **Introductions**
3. **Shared meeting norms**
4. **Glossary of terms**
5. **What is anti-racism?**
6. **BREAK**
7. **What it means to be an anti-racist school board / district**
8. **Board Evaluation**
9. **Closure & feedback**



Less is more.

Ludwig Mies Van Der Rohe

Why Are We Here?

Meeting Objectives:

1. Build trust and relationships among board members and district leaders
2. Increase shared understanding of anti-racism and how to become an anti-racist school district and board
3. Review findings from the board evaluation survey and identify priorities for strengthening the Board's efficacy

Why Are We Here?

Only 1 out of 18
respondents on the
board evaluation
survey agreed with
the statement:

“We regularly
evaluate the
effectiveness of our
board and board
meetings”

Introductions – Gifts & Goals

Please share the following:

1. Your full name
2. Your position with PPS and your primary role day-to-day
3. Your “gifts” – the skills, abilities and/or characteristics you bring to the table that will be valuable in achieving our collective objectives here tonight.
4. Your “goal(s)” – what’s the most important thing you want to get out of the meeting tonight?

From August 24th Board Meeting:

- Listen to understand, not to respond
- W.A.I.T. – why am I talking, why am I not talking?
- Assume good intentions but attend to impact
- Be willing to make mistakes and be forgiving of those who do
- Allow for, and appreciate, disagreement of opinions, ideas, methods – respectfully
- Personal stories stay, lessons can be shared
- Accept non-closure

Revisions:

Glossary of Terms

Terms we will use:

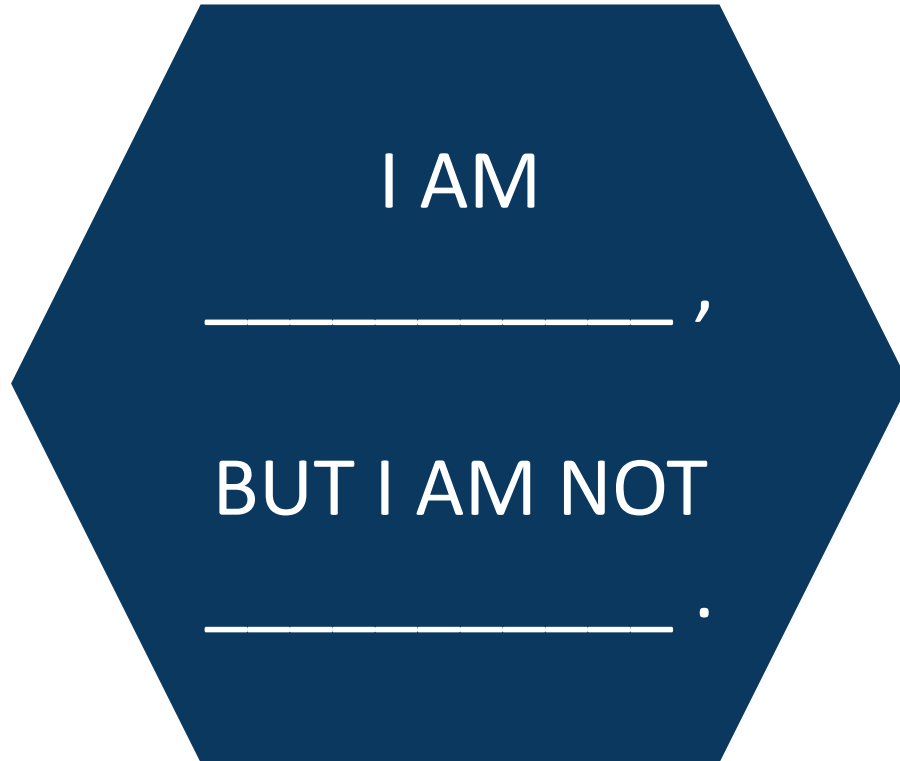
- Black (“Black”) – a person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa
- Native American (“Native”) - a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment
- LatinX – a person tracing their roots to Latin America or Spain
- “Historically underserved students of color” – Black, Native, Latinx, Pacific Islander or multi-racial identifying only within this list
- Race - groups that people are divided into based on physical traits regarded as common among people of shared ancestry
- Racism (personal) - a belief that race is a fundamental determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race.
- Racism (systemic) - “Racism is a marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produces and normalizes racial inequities” (*Ibram X. Kendi*)
- Anti-Racism – the process of actively identifying, opposing and interrupting racism

Glossary of Terms

Terms we will try to avoid:

- “Students of color” or “people of color” – these terms *may* erase racial identities and turn a plural into a singular. Bias against different racial groups often looks different. Let’s only use “people of color” or “students of color” if we truly mean to refer to all racial groups that are not white.
- “Non-white” – this term is white-centric and avoids acknowledging racial identities besides white people
- “BIPOC - Black, Indigenous, and [Other?] People of Color” – calls out two racial groups separately and then lumps together other racial groups, which unintentionally implies those groups are less important.
- “Minority” – deficit-based language. Also, when used to describe all “people of color” (i.e. “minorities”), it ignores the fact that white people are a minority of the world’s population and will become the minority of the US population within our lifetimes.
- “Subgroup” – deficit-based language. This word tends to have a connotation of inferiority or being “less than”. Let’s use “racial group” instead, when applicable.
- **Let’s try to say exactly what we mean. But this is not a “gotcha” exercise – let’s have grace for each other on this and assume best intent.**

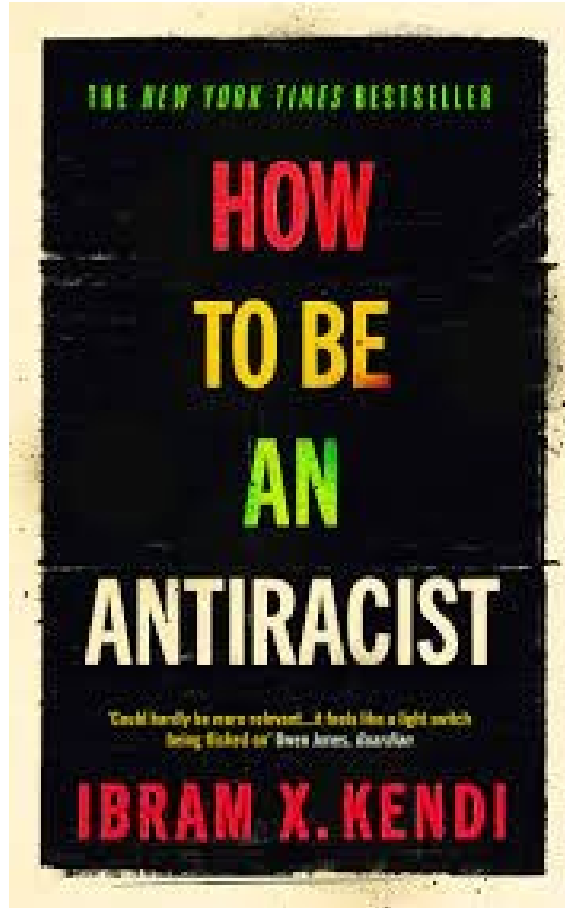
I Am, But I Am Not...



The activity engages participants in a process identifying what they consider to be the most salient dimensions of their own identity.

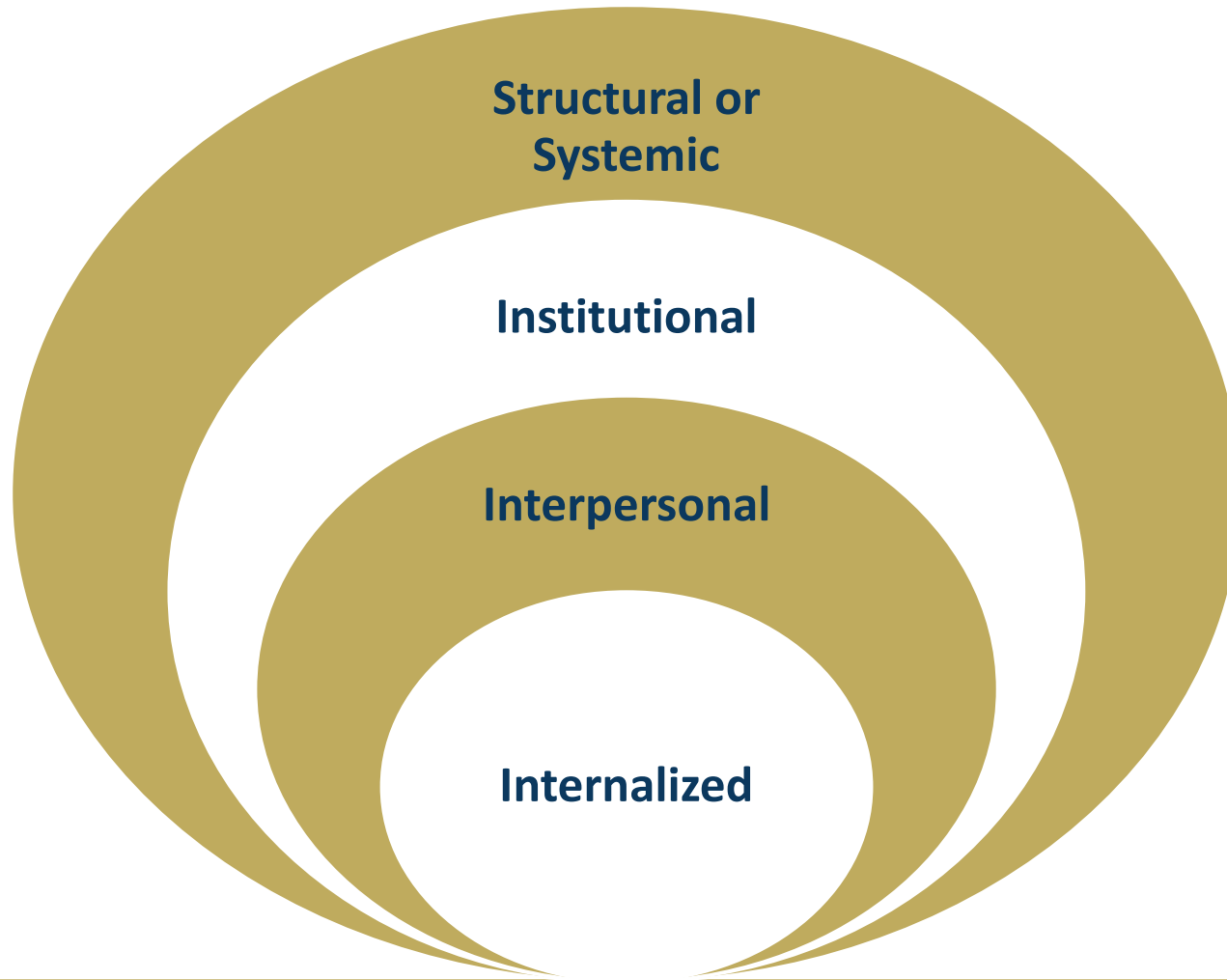
Common stereotypes can be very hurtful and make it difficult for individuals to celebrate their own identities. In this activity, we will claim some of our own identities and dispel stereotypes.

What is “Anti-Racism”?



What are the implications of what you hear in this video for your work with Portland Public Schools?

Types of Racism



Internalized Racism – private beliefs about race that reside in our minds. Ex: conscious and unconscious racial bias.

Interpersonal Racism – private beliefs about race brought into our interactions with others. Ex: public expressions of racial bias.

Institutional Racism – racial bias that occurs within institutions. Ex: history curriculum that largely ignores the experiences and achievements of Black people or Native Americans.

Structural or Systemic Racism – racial bias across institutions. Ex: compounded and cumulative effect of the Black-white wealth divide rooted in decades of cross-sector economic discrimination (mortgage access + under-resourced schools + wage levels, etc.)



Reflections on Verna's Message

Via Web:

Pollev.com/benkleban215

Answers are anonymous

Via Text:

*Text benkleban215 to
37607*

*Reply to the response you
receive*

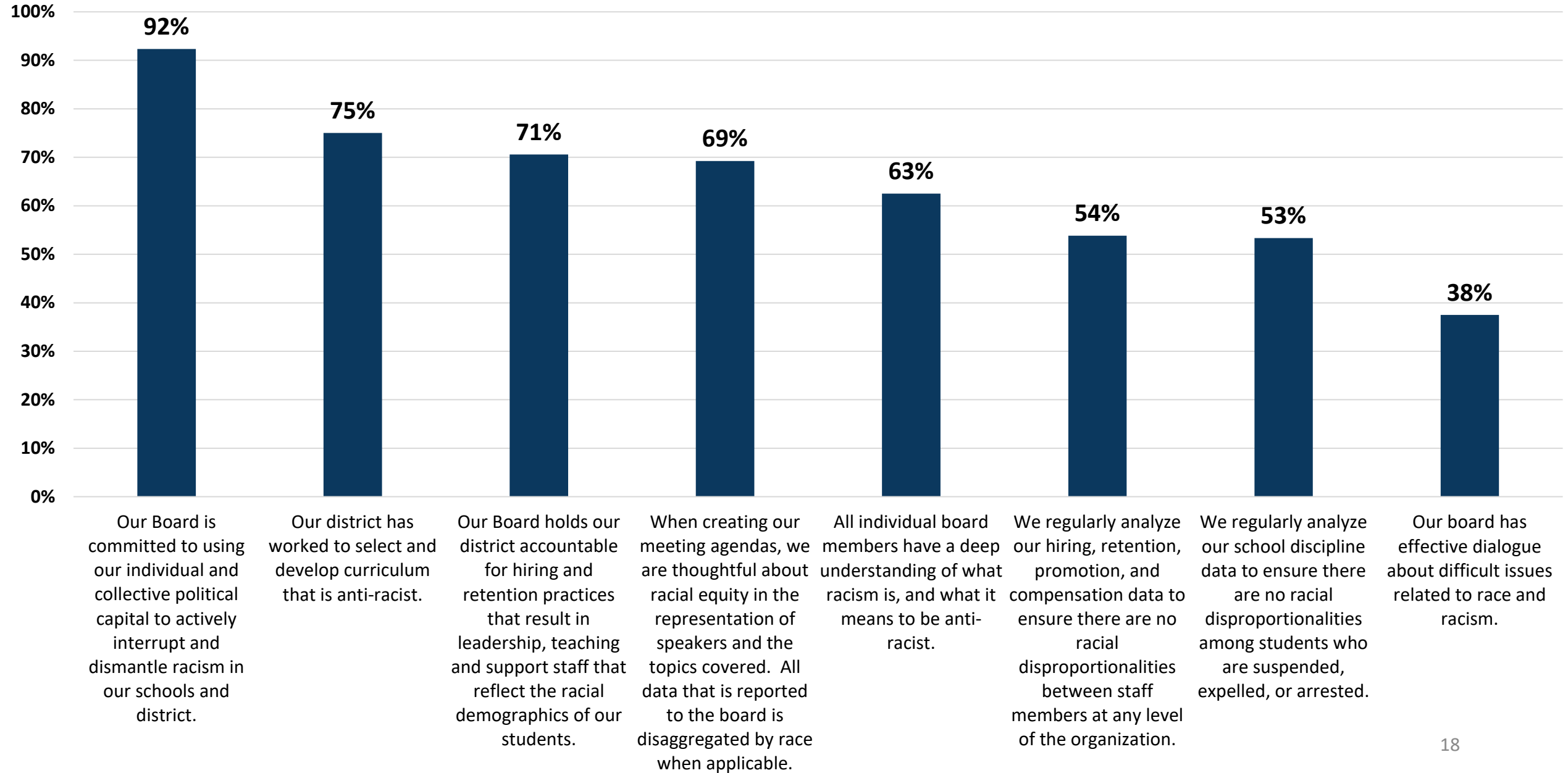
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BREAK
10 minutes

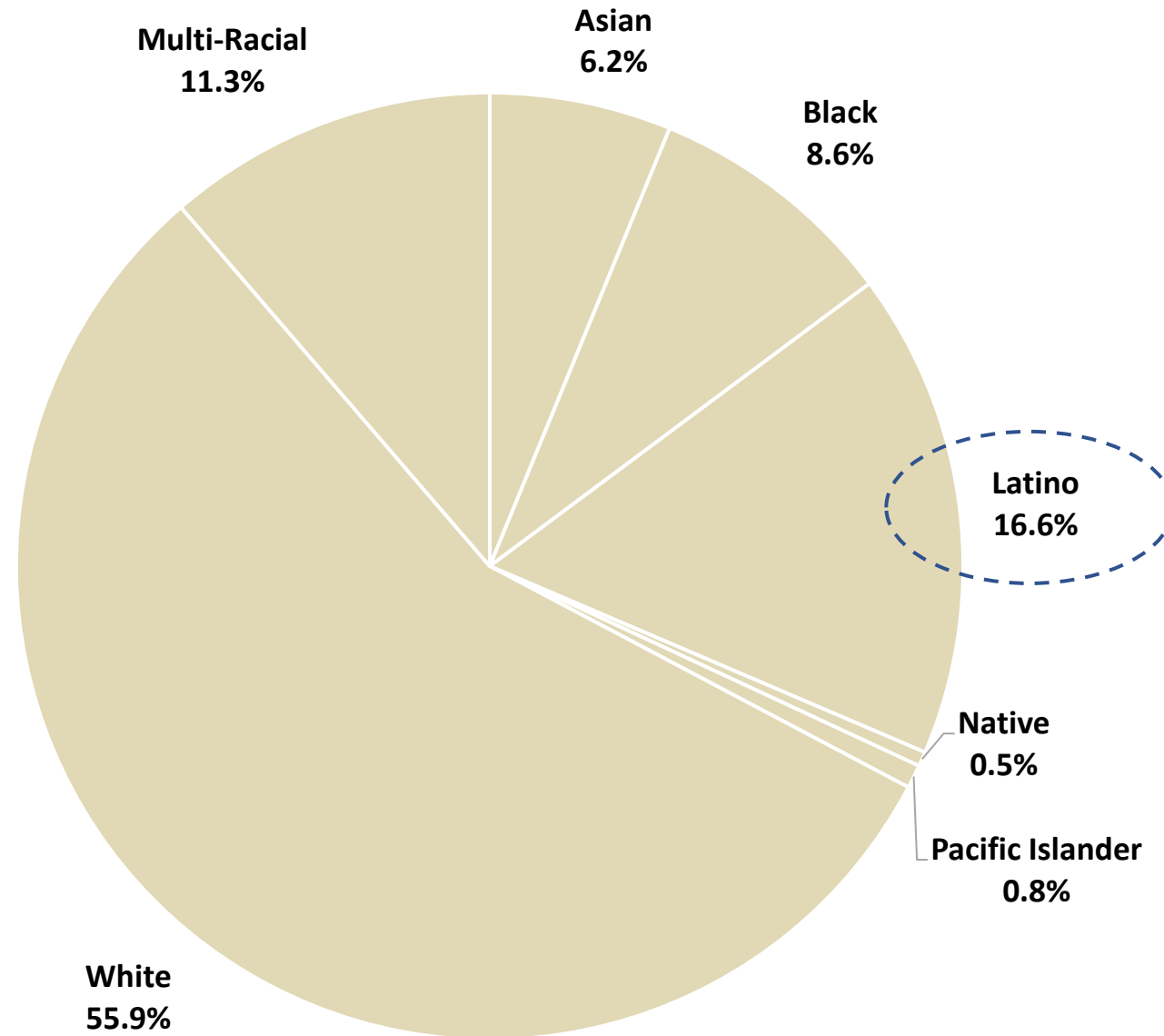
What does it
mean to be an
anti-racist school
board and
district?

Board Survey - Anti-Racism

% Agree or Strongly Agree - All Respondents



Oct 1, 2020 Enrollment Demographics



The PPS strategic plan emphasizes a focus on increasing racial equity for Black and Native American students.

Why not LatinX?

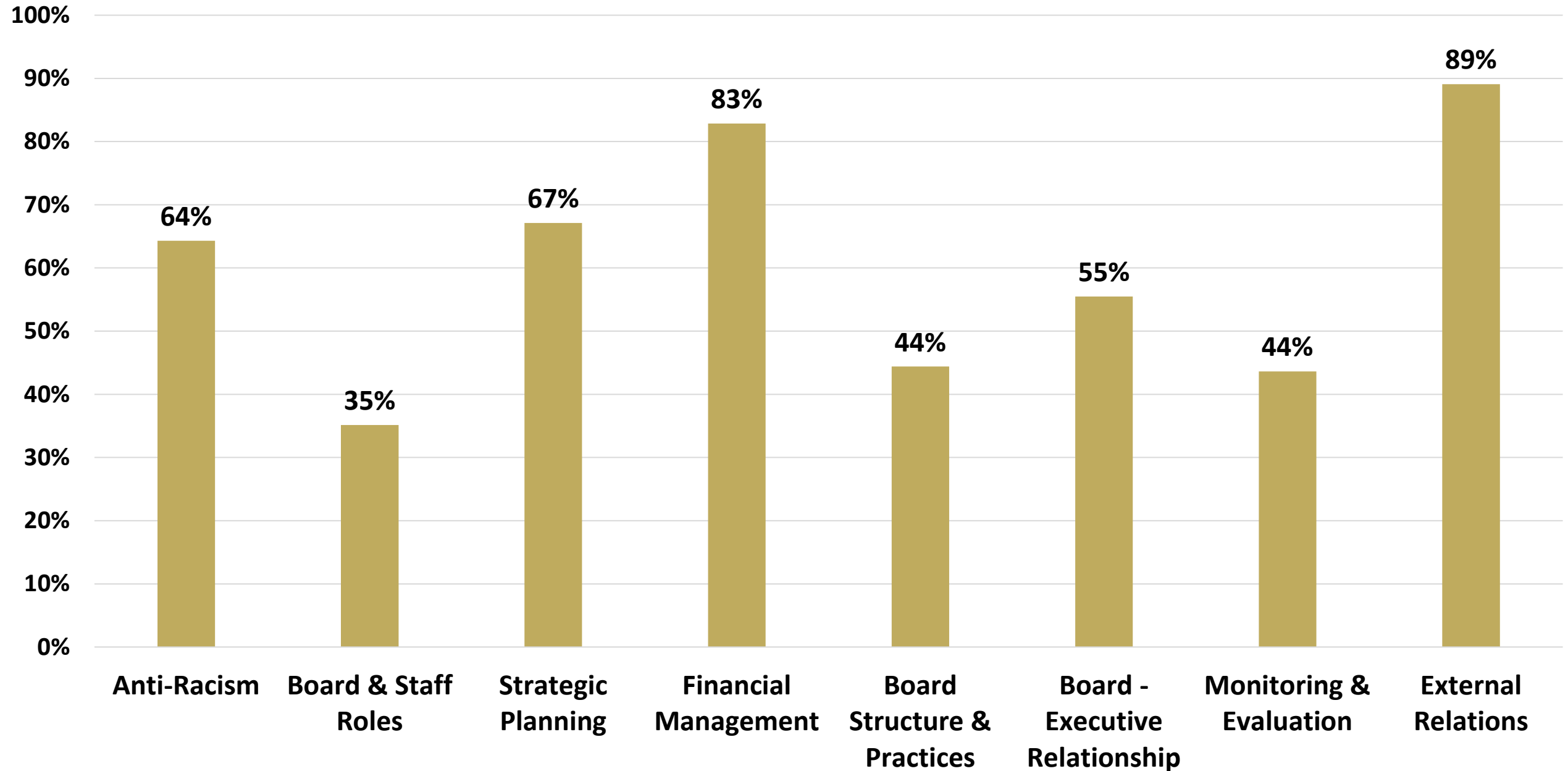
Board Evaluation Survey

Respondents:

- 6 / 7 board members
- 11 / 15 staff members
- 1 Student Representative

Board Evaluation Survey

% Agree or Strongly Agree - All Respondents



Board Evaluation Survey

Key Strengths

All individual board member visit schools and interact with students, parents and staff on a regular basis
(89% agree)

The annual report of our district's independent auditor is reviewed by the board and any necessary actions are taken in a timely way
(100% agree)

All individual board members are active and engaged with their constituents and the community
(85% agree)

The members of the board and Superintendent reach consensus on a vision and a strategic plan that communicates where the district will be headed over the next 3-5 years
(82% agree)

All individual board members actively support and attend district events
(94% agree)

The district's annual budget is fully discussed and understood by the board prior to approving it
(82% agree)

Board Evaluation Survey

High Priority Areas to Improve

**Board members seldom assume roles and responsibilities that belong to staff
(24% agree)**

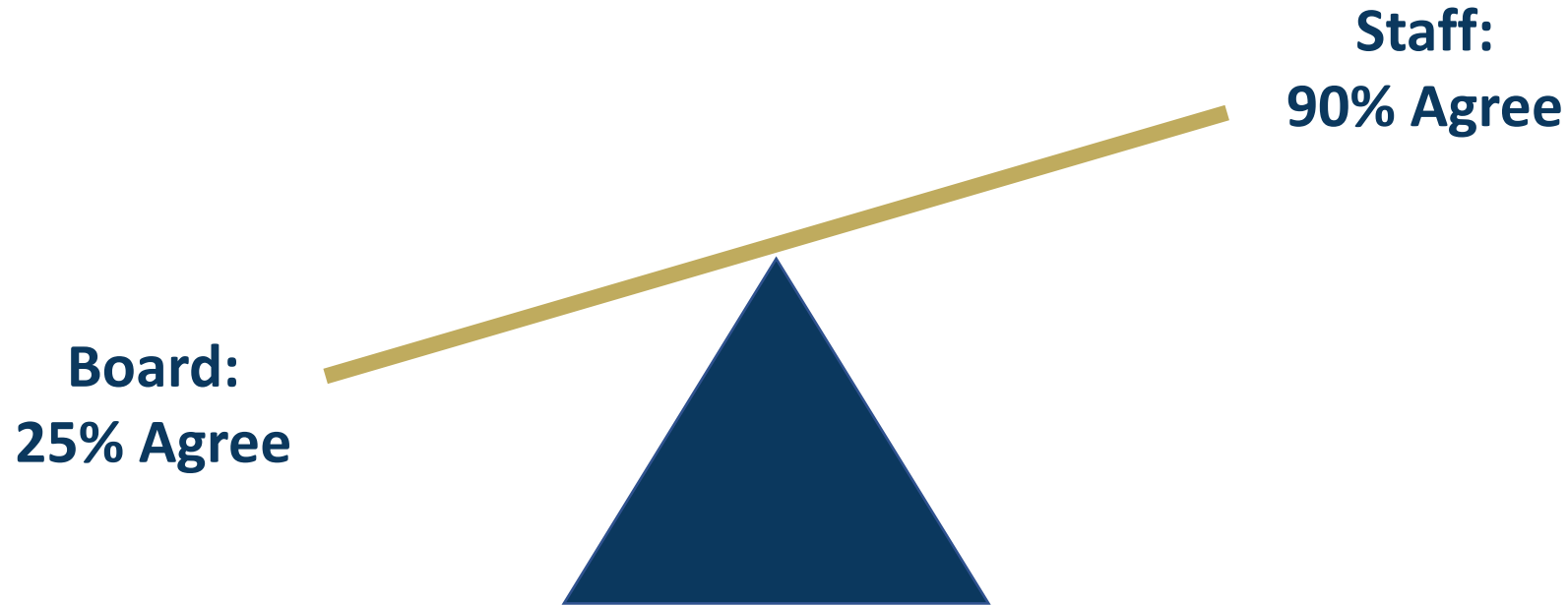
**Board members do not interact with staff directly to influence staff behavior or program management without first coordinating with and getting the agreement of the Superintendent
(6% agree)**

**All board members read and understand supporting written materials in advance and are fully prepared for meetings
(14% agree)**

**The board reviews its policies at least every two years and updates them as needed
(31% agree)**

**All board members have a working knowledge of board meeting protocol and Robert's Rules of Order
(42% agree)**

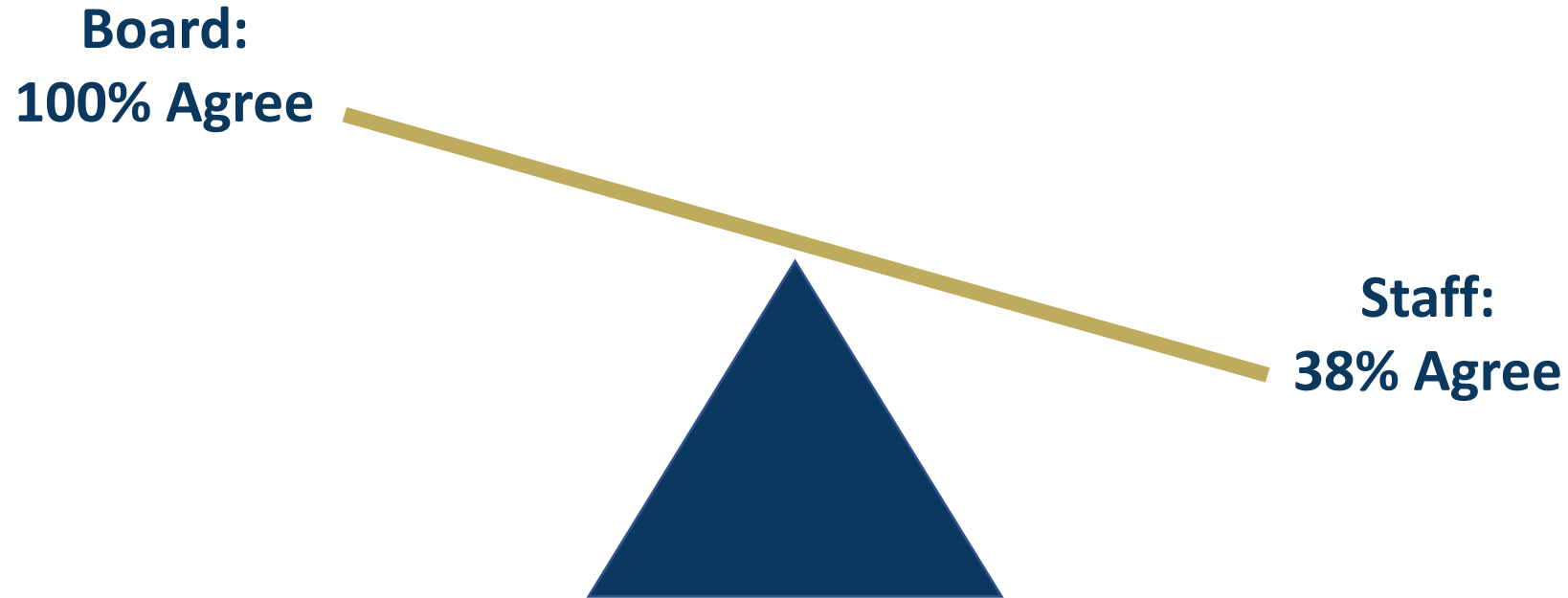
Board Evaluation Survey Disconnects Between Staff and Board



The strategic plan includes measurable performance goals for each strategic priority that can be regularly monitored by the board

Board Evaluation Survey

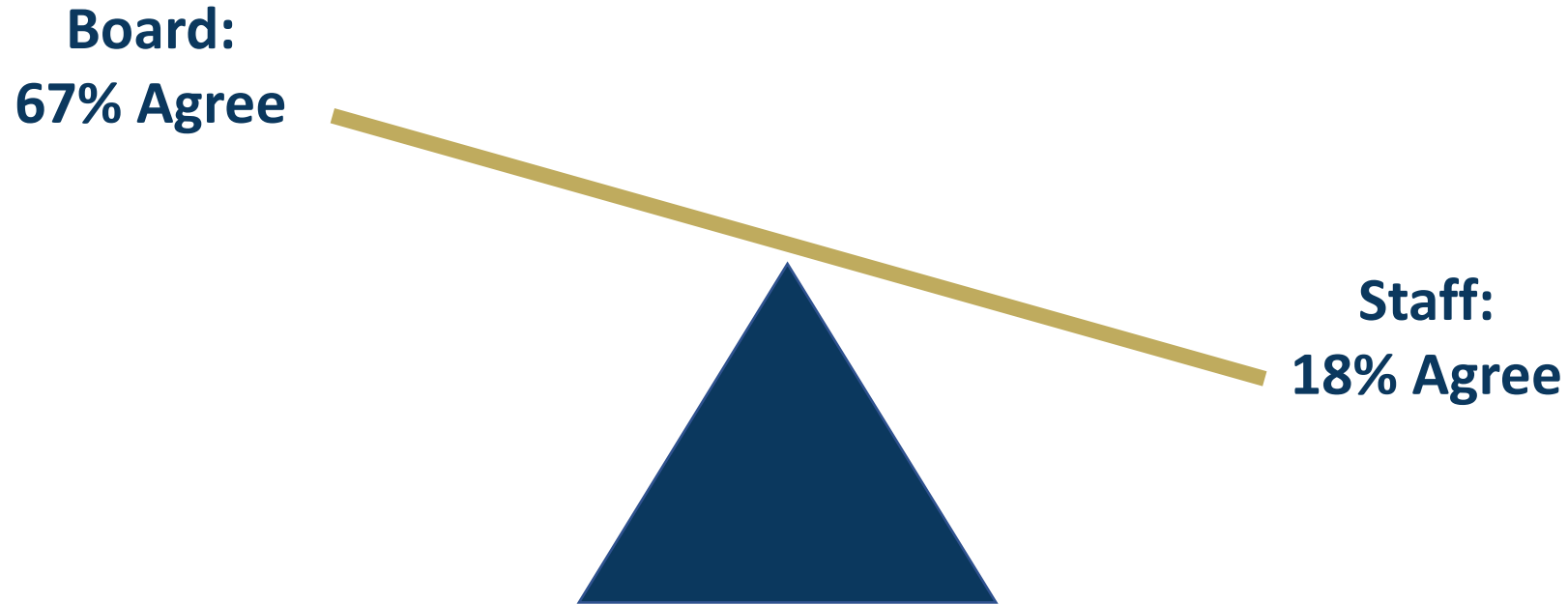
Disconnects Between Staff and Board



The board's ad hoc and standing committees streamline our work process and increase board effectiveness

Board Evaluation Survey

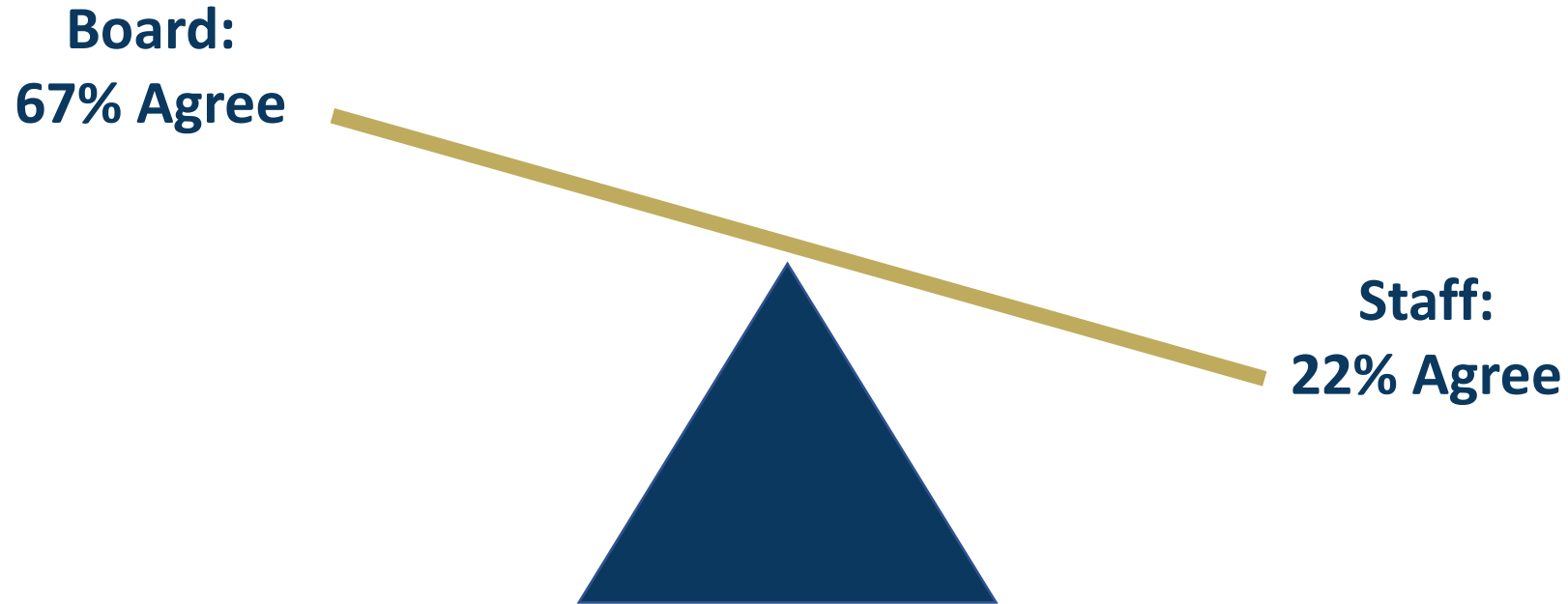
Disconnects Between Staff and Board



Board meetings are generally well-run and make good use of time

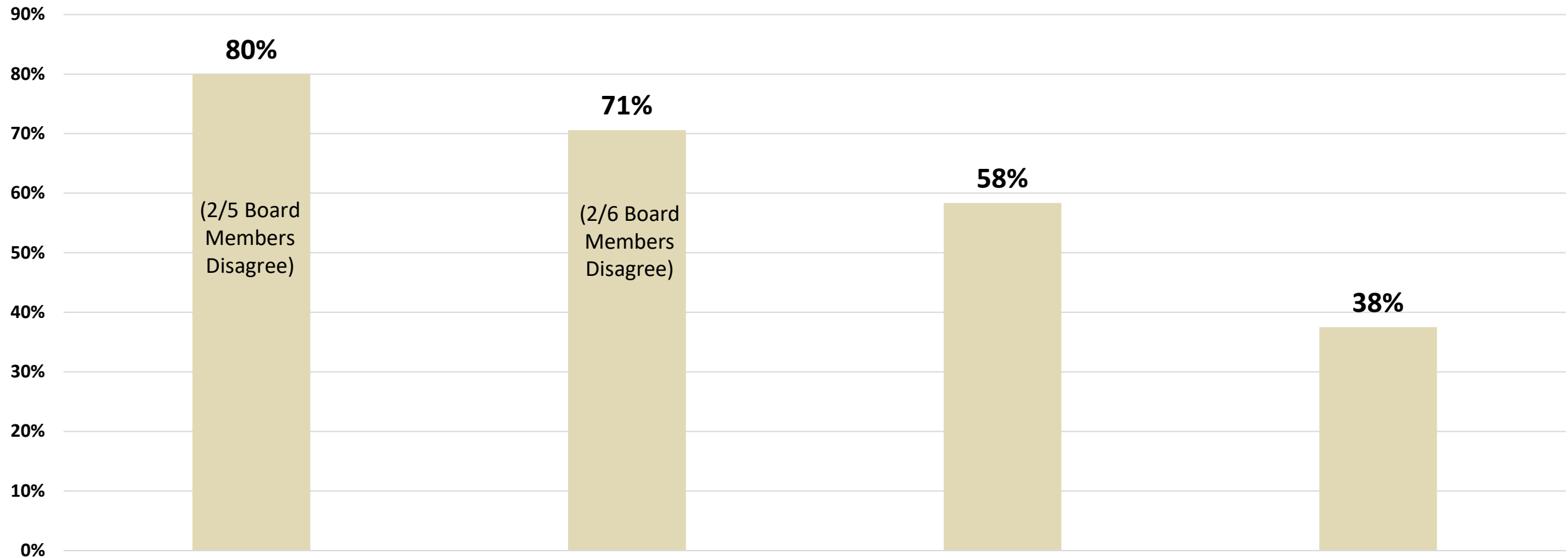
Board Evaluation Survey

Disconnects Between Staff and Board



When a problem or conflict arises between board and staff, we move quickly and effectively to resolve it

Board Evaluation Survey - Board / Executive Relationship
% Agree or Strongly Agree - All Respondents



The Superintendent keeps the board regularly informed of our district's performance against predetermined plans and quantitative goals.

The Superintendent's performance is formally evaluated annually based on clear and measurable objectives established at the beginning of the fiscal year.

The Superintendent receives ongoing feedback regarding job performance in addition to the formal evaluation.

The board ensures that the Superintendent has an ongoing professional development plan to enhance his leadership effectiveness

Board Evaluation Open Comments

“Student focused, representation on the Board, holding the Supt accountable for Black/Native success”

Key Themes – Board Members

- Invested in equity work
- 5 / 6 board members said a focus on measurable performance goals/outcomes as the top area to improve

“Set Board goals & hold the Supt accountable for improved BIPOC student performance; provide supports”

“Approving the strategic plan and continuing to have a racial equity and social justice lens”

Key Themes – Staff Members

- Appreciation for the strategic plan and prioritization of racial equity
- Staff want the board to “stay in their lane” and focus on outcomes rather than non-essential matters

“Focus on initiatives that enhance student outcomes and avoid skirmishes over issues that don't”

| | Anti-Racism | Governance | Board/Staff Disconnects | Superintendent Evaluation |
|----------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Group Members | Dani Ledezma Eilidh Lowery Herman Greene Claire Hertz | Rosanne Powell Amy Kohnstamm Julia Brim-Edwards Michelle DePass | Jonathan Garcia Kara Bradshaw Liz Large Cheryl Proctor | Guadalupe Guerrero Andrew Scott Gary Hollands |
| Task (45 min) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review and discuss board survey data for the anti-racism section Read Racial Educational Equity Policy with focus on A-F and last paragraph Brainstorm potential board / district activities that are responsive to the data and the policy. List on poster paper – “problems + solutions” | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review and discuss “high priority areas to improve” Review board-approved communication protocols – especially highlighted sections Brainstorm potential board / district activities that are responsive to the data and the issues discussed by the group. List on poster paper - “problems + solutions” | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review and discuss “disconnects between board and staff” Review board-approved communication protocols – especially highlighted sections Brainstorm potential board / district activities that are responsive to the data and the issues discussed by the group. List on poster paper - “problems + solutions” | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review and discuss board survey data for the board-executive relationship Brainstorm ideas to strengthen the superintendent evaluation process, responsive to the data and the issues discussed by the group. List on poster paper - “problems + solutions” |

Feedback

Please fill out this brief survey to share
your anonymous feedback about this
board retreat

<https://forms.gle/8sYudWidFfoHU3tY7>