



# Let's Talk About:

**our city  
our schools  
our future**

**School-Based Report**



championing student success.



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## **“I didn’t know you did that. I do that, too”: Findings from School-Based Listening Sessions and Interviews**

**MARCH 28, 2019**  
**Prepared by Reaching Higher NH**

### **Executive Summary**

Between June 20, 2018 and March 7, 2019, Manchester Proud heard from 353 individuals who are directly connected to the Manchester Public Schools as school administrators, teachers, support staff, families, and students. Manchester Proud began by speaking individually with administrators over the summer in one-on-one conversations, and then implemented a listening session model in the fall to engage with the other affinity groups.

The listening session model was designed to include up to 12 participants within one distinct affinity group; a facilitator would lead the group through four prompts over the course of an hour, allowing participants time to write down their thoughts first, and then share aloud, during which the facilitator would document comments on poster paper. Between October 30 and March 7, there were 14 teacher sessions, 12 support staff sessions, eight family sessions, and five student sessions.

The listening session protocol encouraged individuals to share openly and candidly about their individual school, as well as the district as a whole. Discussions would come up among attendees about how their individual experiences were so different – or so similar. At one school, a teacher shared that at the end of the day, she found the piles that the custodian swept up, and collected all of the pencils, as the school needs to “ration pencils.” Another teacher said, “I didn’t know you did that. I do that, too.”

Throughout this process, however, significant concerns were raised that school staff were afraid to participate in listening sessions, as they believed that other individuals in the room would not maintain confidentiality after the session ended. Manchester Proud then began to offer full-day office hours at school sites, which allowed individuals to speak with a facilitator confidentially about their experiences and perspectives in the school and district. There were nine full-day office hours,

though at one school, not a single person spoke with the facilitator over the course of six hours.

Overall, individuals who work in the schools are primarily concerned with the budget, as well as the consequences of what they perceive to be a limited budget: understaffing, materials, class sizes, and infrastructure. Throughout the sessions and interviews, participants identified wanting to see the Board of School Committee and district leadership change – in composition and/or in behavior – in order to better meet the needs of students.

Participants spoke highly of teachers and staff, those who engaged in this process – and particularly, those who opted not to engage directly in this process – shared a significant distrust of those aligned in any way with the district. There was extensive concern by individuals that if people knew what they were saying, they would lose their jobs. Stories and people were referenced, to emphasize that it had happened before.

The school-based community engagement allowed Manchester Proud to better understand the experiences of those directly impacted by the schools;

## **Overwhelmingly, students do not feel supported in Manchester Public Schools – which, in many ways, is in contrast to how the district views itself.**

Students, however, focused on the policies within their buildings – primarily that of school discipline and equity. Overwhelmingly, students do not feel supported in Manchester Public Schools – which, in many ways, is in contrast to how the district views itself.

Although throughout the interviews and sessions, partici-

pants spoke highly of teachers and staff, this meant their concern and general mistrust of all levels of leadership in the district. For families and students, this engagement highlighted the misalignment between their priorities and the priorities of the schools and district.



## Introduction

In order to better understand current perceptions and realities in the schools as experienced by those who are directly impacted on a daily basis, Manchester Proud met with individual school administrators one-on-one, offered school-based listening sessions in each of the twenty-two schools, and offered full-day, confidential office hours at schools where turnout to the initial listening sessions was low, or had no attendees.

Individual meetings with principals and school leaders over the summer allowed Manchester Proud to begin to build relationships with school officials, and share what the community engagement plan for the next six months would include: community canvassing, listening sessions, and a community survey. In those meetings, administrators were asked the same questions, in the same order, with an opportunity to elaborate after each one.

Listening sessions, similar to “focus groups,” were kept intentionally small to ensure participation by all attendees. These sessions were offered to distinct affinity groups, during which only members within



that affinity group would participate-- teachers with teachers, support staff with support staff, family members with family members, and students with students. These affinity groups were designed to allow participants to feel comfortable sharing candidly and openly; if the sessions included both families and staff, or staff and administrators, for example, they may have resulted in individuals not fully participating.

The listening session format allowed individuals to share their direct experiences regarding both the specific school and the district as a whole. In addition,

it provided participants with the contexts of other individuals in the room – whether they had shared experiences, drastically different experiences, or something in between. Throughout the process, participants would comment on the similarities or contrasts between their experiences.





In early November, due to significant concerns around participant confidentiality, Manchester Proud began to offer an alternative model to schools: full-day office hours. For office hours, a facilitator would be available at the school site for an extended period of time during the school day. This would allow staff members to speak privately with a facilitator, without fear that others in the room would report what they had said.

The one-on-ones, listening sessions, and full-day office hours encapsulate the school-based community engagement. Throughout this process, Manchester Proud was interested in learning the following:

- What are the perceptions of individual schools by different affinity groups?
- What are the perceptions of the district as a whole by different affinity groups?
- What are the perceived strengths of elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools by affinity groups?
- What are the perceived challenges and opportunities for growth of elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools by affinity groups?
- What are the perceived strengths of the Manchester School District affinity groups?
- What do affinity groups identify as traits in an aspirational future of their individual school?
- What do affinity groups identify as traits in an aspirational future of the school district?



## Process

Between June 20, 2018 and March 7, 2019, Manchester Proud met with administrators at every school; facilitated listening sessions across the district for teachers, support staff, families, and students; and hosted full-day office hours within nine school buildings.

### Principal one-on-one interviews

#### Methods

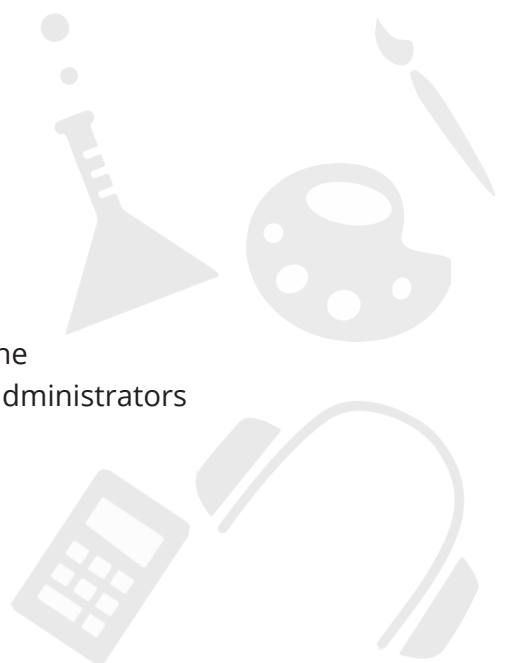
Each interview with administrators included the same set of questions, in the same order:

- What brings you to be principal at [your school]?
- Describe your students.
- Describe your staff.
- Describe your families.
- What are the strengths at [your school]?
- What are the areas of growth at [your school]?
- What do you wish people outside your building knew?
- What would you like to see from Manchester Proud?

Based on the responses, the interviewer may have asked follow-up questions, which was explained in advance of the interview. However, the questions were not shared in advance of the meeting. Manchester Proud wanted to learn from each school leader – but did not want anyone to prepare materials or answers in advance. The majority of these interviews lasted about 45 minutes to an hour, with a few going as long as an hour-and-a-half, and others as short as 25 minutes. Because the questions were open-ended, principals had the opportunity to elaborate as much as they wanted for each one.

#### Participants

Between June 25 and October 1, Manchester Proud met with a school leader at every school. The only instance in which the meeting did not take place with a principal was at Webster Elementary School. Although the meeting was scheduled with the then-principal, the newly-assigned Assistant Principal was interviewed instead. Additionally, at one school, both the Principal and the Assistant Principal were interviewed at the same time. All in all, 23 administrators participated in the principal one-on-ones.



### **School-based listening sessions**

Manchester Proud presented to 16 schools in August and two schools in September; these presentations were approximately 15 minutes each, with the purpose of introducing staff members to Manchester Proud and answering their questions, inviting them to canvass in September and October, and inviting them to participate in the school-based listening sessions in November or December. Using sign-in sheets, Manchester Proud collected educators' names and email addresses in order to contact them individually for follow-up outreach, so that they might participate in these sessions.

Manchester Proud also attended 27 school-based events, such as PTO meetings and Open Houses, across 19 schools between September 25 and November 15, 2018 to speak with families, answer questions, and invite them to participate in the upcoming listening sessions. Manchester Proud also collected families' names and email addresses, in order to contact them individually.

### **Methods**

Listening sessions are similar to "focus groups"; in that the sessions are kept intentionally small (typically no more than 12 participants) in order to hear from every individual in the room. Manchester Proud provided four open-ended prompts for individuals to answer one at a time, first by writing down their thoughts in a graphic organizer (Appendix 1), and then through an open conversation during which the facilitator wrote participants' thoughts on poster paper, and checked to ensure that what was documented on the poster matched the intent of the commenter. Information shared in the sessions was kept confidential by the facilitator, and participants were asked and expected to do the same.

When attendees arrived at their listening session, the shared community agreements/norms were already posted in the room. They included:

- Maintain confidentiality.
- Share space.
- Participate voluntarily.
- Respect participants.

Facilitators would first introduce themselves, and share a very brief overview of the session process. They would then explain the importance of each of the community agreements in detail: that confidentiality was a top priority for Manchester Proud, and that the facilitator would only share the raw notes with the few individuals who would analyze the data. No specific information would be shared from Manchester Proud with leadership (school, union, or district). Participants were also encouraged to ensure other individuals in the room had space to answer the questions, so that no one or two individuals could dominate the conversation. Additionally, the sessions were voluntary, so if at any time an attendee wanted to leave, they could do so. And finally, though people in the room might have differing experiences or perspectives, the agreement was that all individuals needed to be respected.

Each participant was given a graphic organizer upon arrival; after the facilitator introduced themselves, they provided two minutes for participants to respond to the first prompt. Often, at least one participant in a session would ask something to the effect of, "Do we have to only write positive things?" or "Do I need to agree with this statement?" for one of the prompts. The facilitator would respond that they should feel comfortable writing whatever they would like, and that there were no wrong answers. All

graphic organizers were collected at the end of the session.

After the two minutes of writing, the facilitator would open the conversation and ask volunteers to share their thoughts. The facilitator would then write down the information on the poster paper with the prompt or the number of the prompt at the top. The facilitator, as participants would share their responses, would check to ensure that what was written on the paper reflected the comment made.

The open-ended prompts were the same across all affinity groups, and were provided both on the graphic organizer and on the poster paper, with one prompt per poster:

- I feel that [my school] is doing a good job.
- I feel that Manchester Public Schools are doing a good job.
- My hope/dream for [my school] is...
- My hope/dream for Manchester Public Schools is...

On the poster paper, the specific school was written instead of [my school]. For example, a session at McLaughlin Middle School would have a first prompt of, "I feel that McLaughlin Middle School is doing a

good job."

The facilitator also made sure that the session lasted only one hour – no matter what. Even if a group only answered the first question within the hour, the session would not go over the publicized time, in order to respect participants' time. For the large majority of sessions, the groups did not complete all four prompts.

Participants: How many sessions, schools, people?

Initially, 24 school-based sessions were offered to teachers, 36 to families, and 19 to support staff. Of these, 10 teacher sessions, 20 family sessions, and eight support staff sessions were cancelled due to a lack of RSVPs 24 hours before the session. In addition, eight family sessions and three support staff sessions did not come to fruition due to zero individuals attending the session.

For the student affinity group, listening sessions were advertised for every school, but coordinating school-based student listening sessions proved impossible, due to the turn-around time of permission slips, and the logistical challenges of coordinating students during their school day. Manchester Proud was, in the end,

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able to convene five out-of-school listening sessions for students through community organizations and other advertising. 75 students, representing all four district high schools, attended these sessions.

Five additional support staff sessions were held, as well, in community locations through partner organizations, though one session had zero individuals attend.

In the end, 14 sessions for teachers were held across 10 schools (with 115 teachers participating), eight sessions for families across seven schools (with 40 family members participating), and 12 for support staff across six schools and four community convenings (with 57 support staff participating).

### **Full day office hours**

#### **Methods**

A full-day office hours model was introduced in November, as educators and staff members expressed fear of reprisal for expressing their opinions in a session with other individuals in the room. A Manchester Proud facilitator, instead, would sit in a closed room all day, and individuals could stop by and speak with the facilitator in full confidentiality. There were no specific prompts given during these full-day sessions; instead, the facilitator allowed the attendees to guide the entire conversation, taking notes throughout. Although staff members generally stopped by individually, there were cases in which multiple staff members spoke with the facilitator at once.

#### **Participants: How many sessions, schools, people?**

Nine full-day office hours sessions were offered, and eight had staff members speak with a facilitator throughout the day. 43 participants spoke

with Manchester Proud facilitators during these office hours, including teachers, students, support staff, and family members.

## **Challenges**

An initial challenge to the school-based engagement was the reliance on school administrators for purposes of introductions to their school communities. At first, this included scheduling the 15-minute presentations to the school staff. While the majority of administrators were able to accommodate this request, whether in August or September, there were a few cases in which finding a time proved impossible, due to highly limited opportunities during which the entire staff was available. By the time listening sessions began, not every school had had a Manchester Proud representative present to introduce the work directly to the staff, which made direct outreach more challenging.

For any type of session in which there is a cap on the number of people who could participate, the challenge of “cherry-picking,” as well as limited participation, exists. Manchester Proud needed to rely on school officials and representatives to open the sessions to all members of their communities. Throughout the outreach process, a few questions came to mind: Who is already engaged in the community? Are school leaders’ jobs at risk if session participants provide negative feedback? And, might concerns about that impact the scope and nature of the feedback participants offered? To that end, are school leaders willing to be vulnerable, and to invite individuals in who may be critical of the school or district? And how do staff members feel about their school leaders in the first place, and how does that contribute to their choice to participate?

While Manchester Proud had contact information for a large proportion of educators and could access information publicly available on the schools' websites, its ability to contact families, for example, was restricted. Messaging had to go through the schools or district, in formats that may or may not be successful. For the most part, families who participated in the sessions were families already engaged with the school, through organized channels such as the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) or other formal volunteering opportunities. This was overtly stated, at times, by parents. In a high school family session, one family member said, "Of course we're here. We're always here. But what about everyone else who is not able to be here?" Additionally, some schools do not have a formal PTO, which limited participation even further for these communities.

Teachers by and large did not sign up to participate in listening sessions outside of work hours, which was often attributed to the lack of a teacher contract. Manchester Proud worked with administrators to set times that would work best for their school building staff – in many cases, administrators would discourage scheduling after-school sessions, due to

the lack of a teacher contract, and the resulting likelihood that teachers would not stay after school. There were 13 teacher sessions scheduled for individual schools on November 6, 2018, a professional day for teachers – yet six were cancelled, due to zero sign-ups. By having one-hour sessions during the school day, the availability of staff was also limited, due to teaching schedules.

Overall, securing dates and times for sessions that would be well-attended across all affinity groups, proved to be

school. Adapting the process to provide full-day office hours significantly improved access to teachers and support staff, however, this solution was reached relatively far into the process.

Manchester Proud also began to hear significant concern by individuals working in the schools that what they would share in these sessions would not be kept confidential. One participant in a community-based listening session (and unaffiliated with the schools or district) shared with the facilitator

**“My wife works in one of the schools. She won’t participate in this at her school because she believes there would be people in the room planted there to share out to administration.” This sentiment was brought up confidentially numerous times throughout the process – a fear of retaliation.**

among the more complex challenges Manchester Proud encountered. Accessing each group presented unique challenges. Requiring RSVPs helped to ensure participants would attend their session – but this approach would deter individuals from dropping into the session. Additionally, some would RSVP after the session had already passed, and oftentimes, there was not another session scheduled for that particular

tor after the session, “My wife works in one of the schools. She won’t participate in this at her school because she believes there would be people in the room planted there to share out to administration.” This sentiment was brought up confidentially numerous times throughout the process – a fear of retaliation. Importantly, the concern was not limited to any one group of leadership; it included the Board of School

Committee, the superintendent and district leadership, principals and school leaders, union leaders, and fellow teachers and colleagues.

Beyond the challenges of reaching a wide array of families and educators was the issue of reaching students. Originally, sessions were scheduled at every school for up to ten students, which would include all of the previously mentioned concerns around “cherry-picking.” However, the sessions were cancelled, due to the need for a district-level parent permission slip. By the time it was received by Manchester Proud, some sessions had already passed, and others were too soon to give families enough notice. To accommodate, Manchester Proud began holding sessions in the community for students, and partnering with community organizations that work directly with students, in order to hear from students. While these six sessions took place in the community, they are still reflected in this school-based report. Even with these changes, however, the number of students who participated in sessions were far fewer than originally anticipated.

There was also skepticism and confusion about Manchester Proud itself – at times, partici-



pants would ask and/or assume that the facilitator worked for the district. This confusion then led to concern about how information shared in the session would be used, and who would have access to it.

And finally, there were the logistical and operational challenges embedded in the school-based sessions. The prompts needed to be open-

ended enough that participants could engage however they felt comfortable, but could not be leading questions or make assumptions about what individuals might say. Limiting the time to one-hour, Manchester Proud received fewer responses to later prompts (typically the third and fourth), compared to more thorough responses to the first two questions.



## Findings

### Data analysis methods

After each meeting or session, the one-on-one interviews were transcribed, full-group notes were written, and listening session graphic organizers were collected. All of this information was transferred to qualitative analysis software, which allowed text to be highlighted and coded for themes and characteristics. These themes include ones that can be seen at the school level (such as technology, English Language Learners supports, and attendance), at the district level (such as the Board of School Committee, the teachers' union, and the budget), and at the community level (such as poverty, drugs, and community services). A full list of these topics can be seen in Appendix 2.

For example, a poster from one high school family listening session included the comment, "Haven't seen much communication from teachers despite my best efforts. Not sure why – contracts? Email?" This statement could be coded under a few different categories: the affinity group, which in this case was "families," and the school type, which in this case was "high school." It would also be coded under the subject nodes (or topics), "communication (negative)" and "teacher contract (mixed/neutral)," because both of these topics were mentioned, with the speaker's feelings made relatively clear in the case of communication, and less clear in the case of the teacher contract.

Once all notes were entered and coded, the data were analyzed to find the most frequently mentioned topics for different affinity groups (administration, families, students, support staff, and teachers), school types, and geographies.



It is important to note what is meant here by "mentions." Any time a topic was documented, whether on the poster paper or a graphic organizer, it was counted as a "mention" – meaning that a topic could have multiple mentions in the same session, as well as for the same question. Even if the topic was mentioned more than once for the same question, however, the context could be different.

Throughout the findings section, this report will provide top overall mentions, regardless of whether they were positive, negative, or neutral. It will then provide the top overall positive mentions. Finally, it will provide the top overall negative mentions. By doing so, the hope is to identify the similarities and differences across affinity groups, school types, and geographic regions.

In order to provide the reader the most comprehensive list of topics discussed in listening sessions, this report also includes Appendices for each of the analyses in the Findings section, in the same order as they appear. While this report focuses on the most frequently mentioned topics – or, at times, the least frequently mentioned topics, the reader is encouraged to review the full array of topics as well.



## Overall findings

To begin with, it is helpful to look at the most frequently mentioned topics and themes across all participants and sessions, which includes the administrator interviews, all listening sessions, and all full-day sessions. The overall frequency of these topics is listed in Table 1 below (see Appendix 2 for all topics mentioned).

*Table 1: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics Overall*

Overall	Positive	Negative
Students supported (314)	Staff (145)	Budget (259)
Staff supported (287)	Students supported (90)	Staff supported (239)
Budget (283)	School culture (78)	Students supported (170)
Staff (232)	Family engagement (62)	School discipline (137)
District leadership (173)	Enrichment activities (49)	Materials (136)

As demonstrated in this table, the most frequently mentioned topic was “students supported” with 314 mentions. This category includes general statements about how kids feel in their schools, such as when one high school student said, “What I like most about my school is that the teachers are supportive (most of them) and caring of the students.” It also includes statements of how students are prioritized, such as when a support staff member said, “The admin is great at listening to interests and putting kids first.”

Following students was “staff supported,” with 287 mentions. These were general statements of how staff are, or are perceived to be, treated in their schools. One principal

discussed bringing yoga teachers and compassion fatigue training in for the staff. A staff member at a different school described how they wanted to work in a place “where teachers feel empowered to teach and be successful.”

The third most frequently mentioned topic was the budget, with 283 mentions. This topic includes both issues of funding and budget management. Again, this column includes references that are positive, neutral, and negative. But when reviewing the Negative column, we see that the budget came up 259 times with a negative connotation, out of a total 283 mentions (91.5 percent). Staff supported was mentioned negatively 239 times out of the

287 total mentions (82.3 percent of mentions). These topics, overall, had strongly negative leans, while other topics, like “students supported,” were more polarized, appearing in both the top five positive and negative topics.

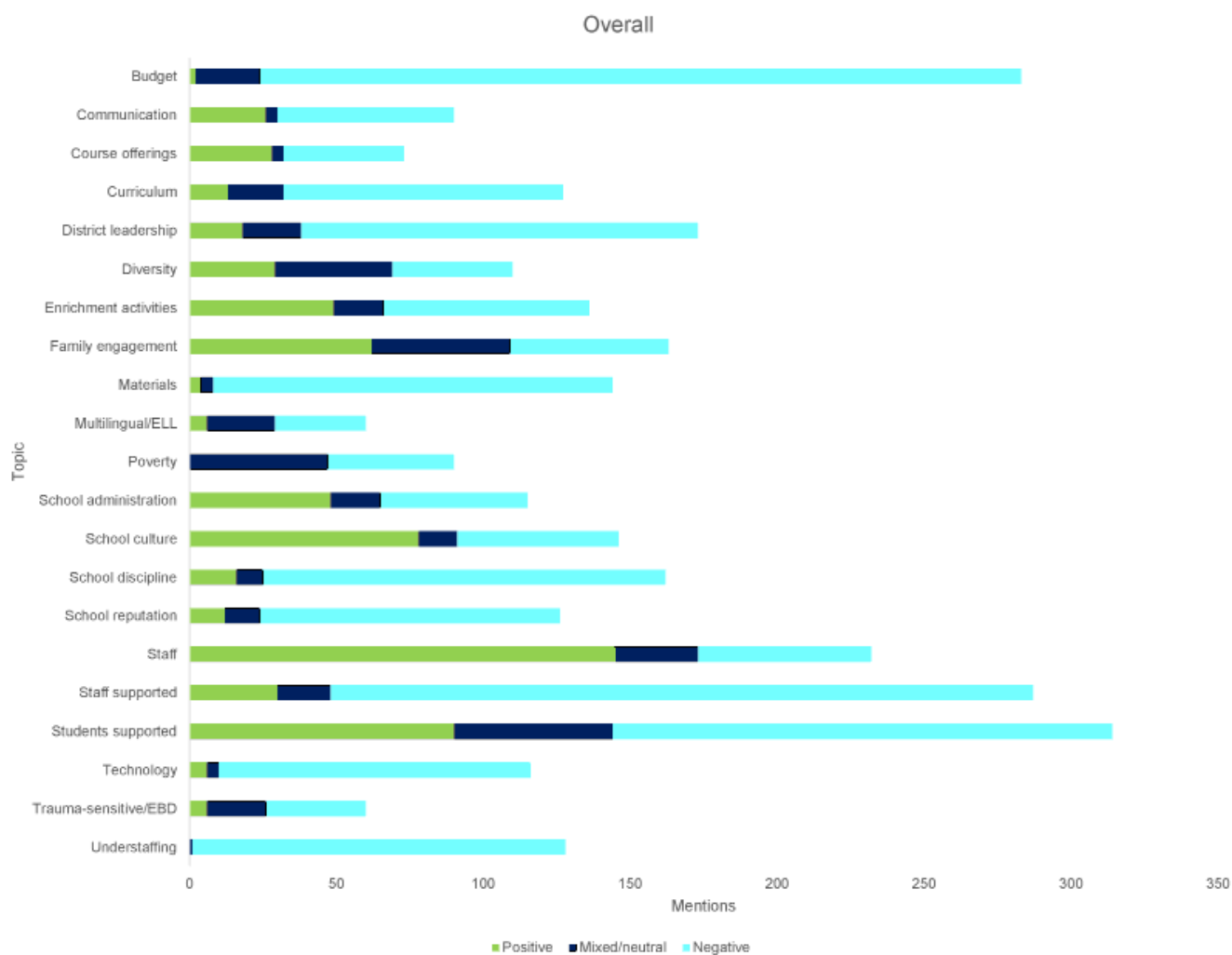
In addition, how these topics are connected with one another must also be considered. “Materials,” as seen in the Negative column with 136 mentions, can be connected to the budget. Because of the frequency of mentions, this report does not combine the topics of materials and budget, but it does highlight similarities and connections like this as they appear.



The most common topic referred to positively was the staff, with 145 mentions. For example, administrators would often refer to their staff as the most dedicated staff in the district, or in any school in which they've worked. One administrator shared: "I have very dedicated people here. They put their hearts into their jobs. They want to do well. They love the kids. They go above and beyond, for the most part."

Comparing the most mentioned Positive and Negative topics, the top five positive mentions were used 424 times, versus the 941 mentions in the top five negative mentions. Of course, those attending the listening sessions and office hours were there to share what they view is wrong, or what they would like to fix, so it is unsurprising that the Negative mentions were more than double the Positive mentions.

Figure 1: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics



A selection of the topics most mentioned by all participants can be seen in Figure 1. It is important to note that there are a few topics that were mentioned with relative frequency, yet were never mentioned positively: the teachers' contract, staff salaries, crime and drugs in students' communities in Manchester, school infrastructure, understaffing (including paraprofessionals, substitutes, and certified staff), and the teachers' union. In addition, all topics that were mentioned with relative frequency had at least one negative mention – no topics were only mentioned positively or neutrally.

### **Findings by prompt**

This next section dissects each of the listening session questions individually. To be clear, this excludes information from administrators, as well as those who participated in full-day office hours, as they did not have the prompts from the listening sessions to which to respond.

#### **Prompt 1: "I feel that [my school] is doing a good job."**

This first prompt focuses on the individual school, and what participants view as its current strengths and weaknesses. The most frequently mentioned topics related to this prompt can be seen in Table 2 below (see Appendix 3 for all topics mentioned in response to the first prompt).

*Table 2: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for Prompt 1, "I feel that [my school] is doing a good job."*

<b>Overall</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
Staff (60)	Staff (44)	Budget (31)
Students supported (59)	Students supported (33)	Staff supported (30)
Staff supported (42)	Family engagement (27)	School discipline (23)
Budget (36)	School culture (27)	Students supported (22)
Family engagement (35)	School administration (21)	Equity (19)

Overall, participants in listening sessions identified "staff" most frequently. Thematically, all five topics mentioned most frequently relate to the systems, policies, and culture within a school building. Topics that participants most frequently mentioned positively tended to be about the people: staff, staff supported, family engagement, and students supported. A few of the comments directly from participants included the following (a larger sampling of comments can be found in Appendix 4):

*"We have great staff, support from school. We work together to manage everything"*

*"Great principal and admin with great teachers. Great school community."*

*"We are beginning to have more collective attitudes"*

*"Yes. Tremendous staff support of each other for the best for our kids."*

*"We have such positive caring staff, but we don't share that with the community. They don't see it. We support the individual almost to a fault."*

*"Student education -- I will say yes [sic], yes. The teachers here are caring, organized and have high expectations."*

Yet, "staff supported" and "students supported" also appear in the negative column, along with other elements to a school building that are related to systems and structure: budget, discipline, and equity. A few comments directly from participants' graphic organizers include:

*"We should be "in the know" more, I feel sometimes like "the blind leading the blind" and not enough info. is given to us, i.e. test insights, testing, trying to find things on our own."*

*"There is a huge gap between admin and teachers-- admin wants to make thing [sic] better for kids -- teachers want more time off-- but work with kids less-- Good teachers get driven out of the district"*

*"I believe [my school] is doing a good job--at challenging, engaging and teaching our higher level students. We are not doing a good job at meeting the needs of our lower level students. The school board talks about rigor, yet we are "encouraged" to pass/promote students that are not achieving competencies. Students can take online course that are not challenging. Students don't have the options they used to have."*

Students shared the following:

*"I do not feel my school is a good [sic] job, it does an average job. There's nothing it does to create spirit, or excitement within the school. There is a fine line between the "smart" and "dumb" kids. And they do not give much [sic] opportunities."*

*"As a community, I think [my school] is doing a good job making students feel welcomed and belonged [sic] since it is such a diverse school. However, a few teachers do not have the most ideal ways of teaching."*

*"I wouldn't say that their [sic] doing a good job, because some teachers don't seem to want to help. Like sometime a lot of kids won't understand a topic and instead of re-teaching in a better way they just teach a new topic. Also most teachers don't want to stay with students."*

*"There are lots of opportunities to take chorus or band. The extracurriculars are good and you can switch if you don't like it."*

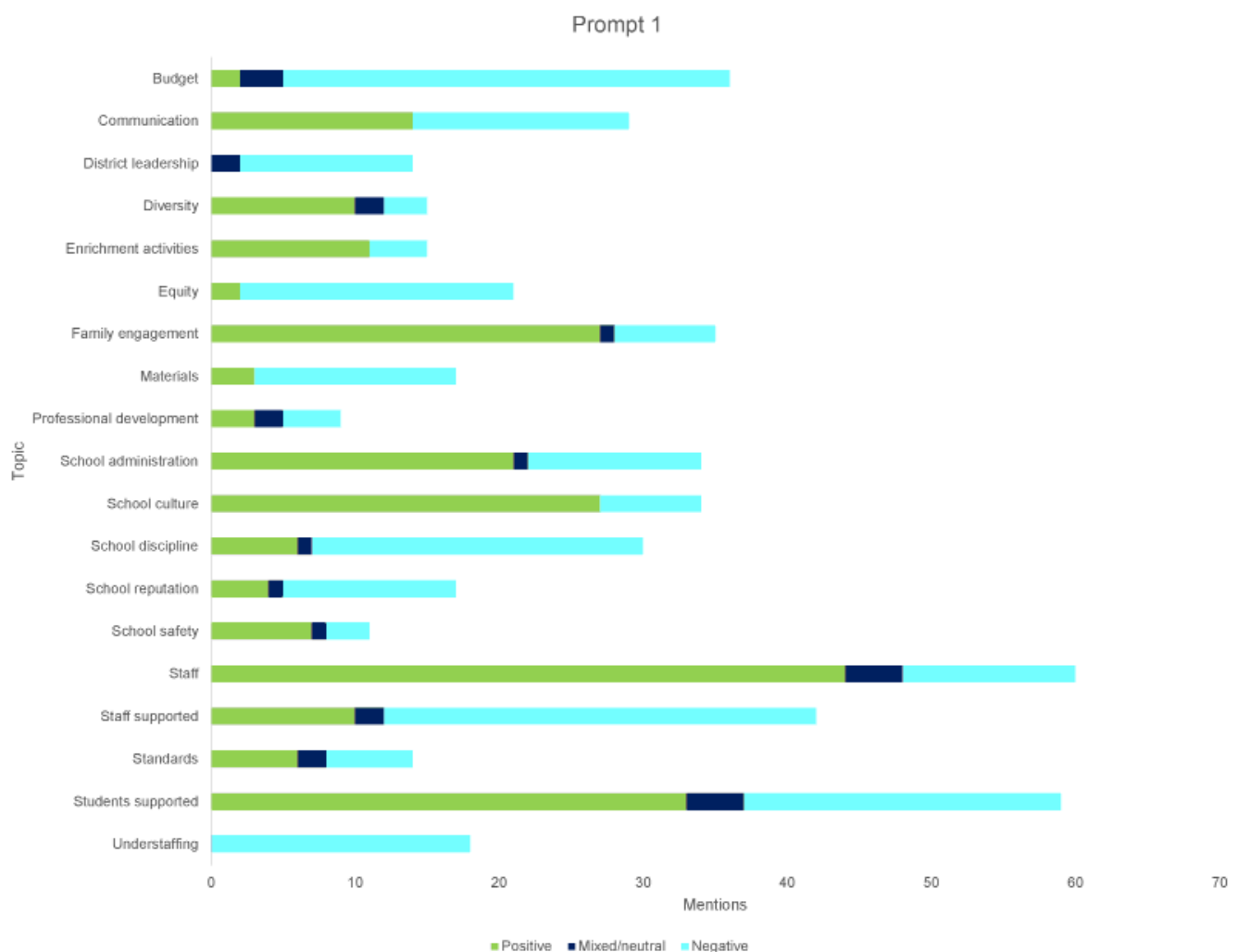
*"Sometimes, I found myself feeling unsafe at my school. Our principle [sic] himself said he was surprised nobody shot up our school yet."*

*"Some teachers are doing a good job. The school is very culturally diverse and full of motivated and experienced students. Although we are not doing a good job completely. School spirit is still lacking from students and teachers. Also a community awareness should be included too."*

Although discipline and equity may be linked, Manchester Proud does not have sufficient data to link them directly together. However, one participant alluded to this connection:

*"I feel that the high school needs a lot of work! Lack of discipline and accountability are setting our students up for failure."*

Figure 2: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for Prompt 1, "I feel that [my school] is doing a good job."



Prompt 2: "I feel that Manchester Public Schools are doing a good job."

The second prompt seeks to better understand participants' perspective of the district as a whole, as well as what they believe the district is doing well, and what the district needs to change. It is also important to note here that the majority of school-based listening sessions took place prior to January 4, 2019, when the district's superintendent announced his resignation. The most frequently mentioned topics related to this prompt can be seen in Table 3 below (see Appendix 5 for all topics mentioned in response to the second prompt). A more extensive sampling of comments from participants' graphic organizers can be found in Appendix 6.

*Table 3: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for Prompt 2, "I feel that Manchester Public Schools are doing a good job."*

Overall	Positive	Negative
District leadership (63)	Staff (11)	Staff supported (48)
Staff supported (49)	Communication (7)	Budget (45)
Budget (47)	District leadership (7)	District leadership (45)
Students supported (33)	School administration (5)	Students supported (28)
Staff (25)		BOSC (21)
		Materials (21)

District leadership is most frequently mentioned (63 mentions), and notably, the second-most frequently mentioned topic in the negative column, as well (45 mentions, 71.4 percent). Similar to the first prompt, all four of the topics in the negative column pertain to systems and structures: staff supported, district leadership, budget, and students supported.

In terms of leadership and staff, some participants shared the following:

*"Not prepared to handle changing demographics, growing special needs/broken families that remain in the city--great migration"*

*"About 2-4 years ago I felt MSD was moving in many different directions and although I believe we are not fully aligned, we are beginning to move in the same direction with a "shared" mission, vision -- now -- it's just communicating and working as a team"*

*"Lack of understanding teachers"*



*"We are doing a mediocre job. There is a lack of a "plan" for academics. The district keeps throwing new initiatives at us and then changes to a new initiative before we can assess the current one."*

*"No I do not believe that MSD is doing a good job-- we are desperate for change, leadership and a more positive image for our community and educators."*

A sampling of the comments regarding the budget, resources, and materials follows:

*"Based on SAT results, no. The whole city is low and needs an overhaul. No elementary math program. Again no standard curriculum. School leaders need to be afforded more time to have closer relationship to what is going on in classrooms. Can only do that w/apropriate supports. No decent pay for subs/paras."*

*"Lack of funding to provide adequate staff & resources -- PBL, after school program, iReady, need more principals, needs behaviorists, need restorative justice program, need psychologists to service PTSD"*

*"Lacking funds-- not enough of a tax base. Toxic people in the district which trickles down to the kids-- families moving away to get out of Manchester"*

*"Manchester is huge and is still growing with different cultures. Some changes are positive and some aren't. Too much "try this and try that." Nothing is consistent. Too much inflexibility [sic]. There is always more and more demand. Ex: if you can do this much, then you can do this. Overload"*

*"As far as materials-- no! Last year, pencils were rationed [sic]. I buy pencils."*

*"I think w/the limited amount of \$ and resources, we are doing the best we can, but no I do not believe we are doing a great job. Students lack essential skills (academic, productivity, study, etc.) by the time they get to HS."*

*"Teachers sometime struggling with being valued, especially with so many contract issues. They could be far better supported, and supporting them could help them support our students better."*

*"Manch [sic] has such a diverse student population requiring EL services, etc., yet Manch. students receive the lowest per student funding in the state"*

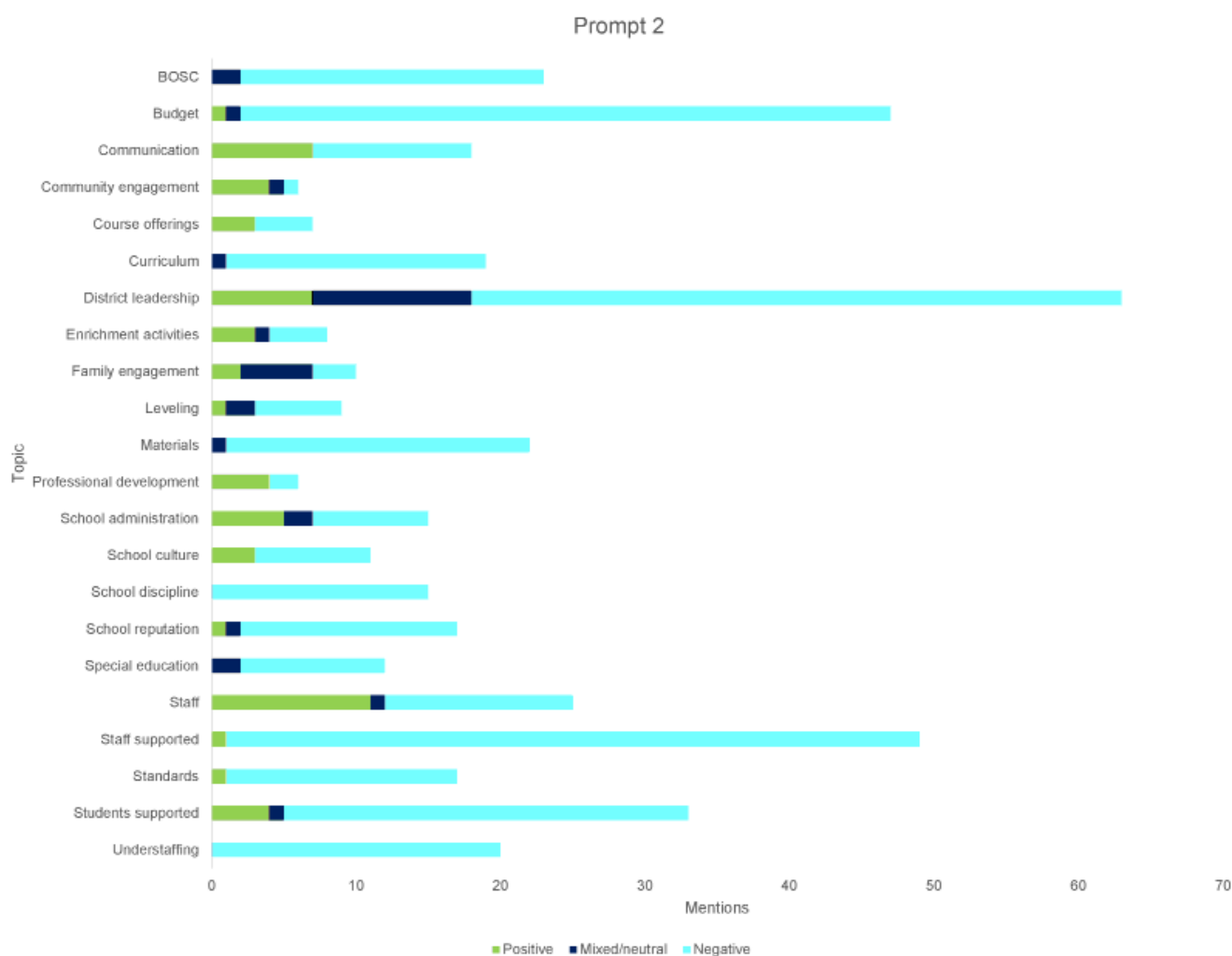
*"Lots of great things happening in individual schools. Very poorly funded."*

*"No. Students/families are often paywalled from critical services. Essential equipment is missing or in poor condition. Students used as assets in district management."*

*"I do not feel like they are not doing a good [sic]. They don't treat all the schools equally. They do not create fair schedules, and all of the students are treated differently."*

Also of note is the infrequency of positive topics mentioned – the top four topics, in total, only have 30 mentions, whereas the top four negative mentions have a total of 166 mentions. Compare this to the previous prompt, which had 152 positive mentions in the top five, and 125 negative mentions – relatively even.

Figure 3: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for Prompt 2, "I feel that Manchester Public Schools are doing a good job."



### Prompt 3: “My hope/dream for [my school] is...”

This third prompt is framed in aspirational language, in order to learn what participants want for their individual schools in the future. With that in mind, for this (and the next) prompt in particular, the expectation is for topics in the negative column to have a larger frequency of mentions (see Appendix 7 for all topics mentioned in response to the third prompt). The assumption is that these are issues that participants want to change or add, as they may not exist currently at the school.

*Table 4: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for Prompt 3, “My hope/dream for [my school] is...”*

Overall	Positive	Negative
Staff supported (36)	Communication (2)	Understaffing (35)
Understaffing (35)	Family engagement (2)	Technology (34)
Students supported (34)	Housing (1)	Staff supported (33)
Technology (34)	Literacy (1)	Students supported (33)
Class size (30)	Professional development (1)	Class size (30)
Materials (30)	Trauma-sensitive/EBD (1)	

Again, the topics of staff and student support rise to the top. Additionally, the issues of understaffing, technology, and class sizes – which were not within the top five in the previous two charts – are now identified as priorities in the individual schools.

Some participants’ responses to this prompt follow. A more extensive sampling of comments from participants’ graphic organizers for Prompt 3 can be found in Appendix 8. The first set of quotes specifies class size:

*“Smaller classroom sizes with more supports, supplies. More arts and free time to have a system that support [sic] individual learning rather than prepping for”*

*“Small class size-- 15 in K. No more than 20 in upper grades. This would reduce behavior issues.”*

*“Small class size, continued dedicated staff, adequate supplies, updated technology, bathrooms and classrooms would be cleaner”*

*“Technology, smaller class sizes, new textbooks - at least up-to-date, sports/athletics fields and facilities, more unified arts! [sic], staff -> properly staffed schools [sic]”*

This next series identifies the need for specific staff, which can also connect to class size:

*"Enough staff, resources to address my students [sic] needs, enough time to spend with my students to address their needs"*

*"Certified staff to provide more small group instruction to students"*

*"More paraprofessionals to aid struggling students in the classroom so they don't take away from all students"*

*"More paras and support for our autism program"*

Other participants focused on the social-emotional development and support needs for students:

*"To be a highly functioning role model school where students, staff, families and the community can work together for the social-emotional and academic success of each child. Welcoming, high expectations and supportive. Students are consistently pushed to reach beyond their current ability."*

*"How to support ACEs [adverse childhood experiences] and SE [social-emotional] challenges"*

*"Trauma-sensitive school"*

*"To put supports in place for specialized programming both social/emotional and academic, supports for students of trauma"*

*"Positive behavioral support to meet this new 'demographic'"*

*"To be able to handle troubled kids in real time."*

*"As a group--they are not funding on par-- EBD [Emotional Behavioural Disorder] programs, enrichment programs, 'general med'"*

*"School staff would represent the community (also languages) it serves, would be proactive about student behavior rather than reactive. Would love to see more of a focus on teaching SEL skills, using restorative justices as a discipline model. More class/racially conscious."*

Others looked to communications and their school communities:

*"More regular communication teachers/parents"*

*"...to have parent support moving us in a positive direction. To support teachers with their daily, professional, emotional needs. To build a community where everyone is proud to be 'from [participant's school],' to have continuity of administrators and have school wide communication where it flows from the bottom up, not just from the top down"*

And finally, participants shared hopes and dreams for consistent curriculum, which relates to both staff and students being supported:

*"Unified arts for all kids"*

*"Uniformity in teaching, grading and expectations, staffing would be fair and equitable"*

*"Cohesive curriculum with support materials"*

*"A program for reading and math with a scope and sequence, PreK-5, so children have books so when a program is mandated, it is funded, teachers are trained, and materials are provided."*

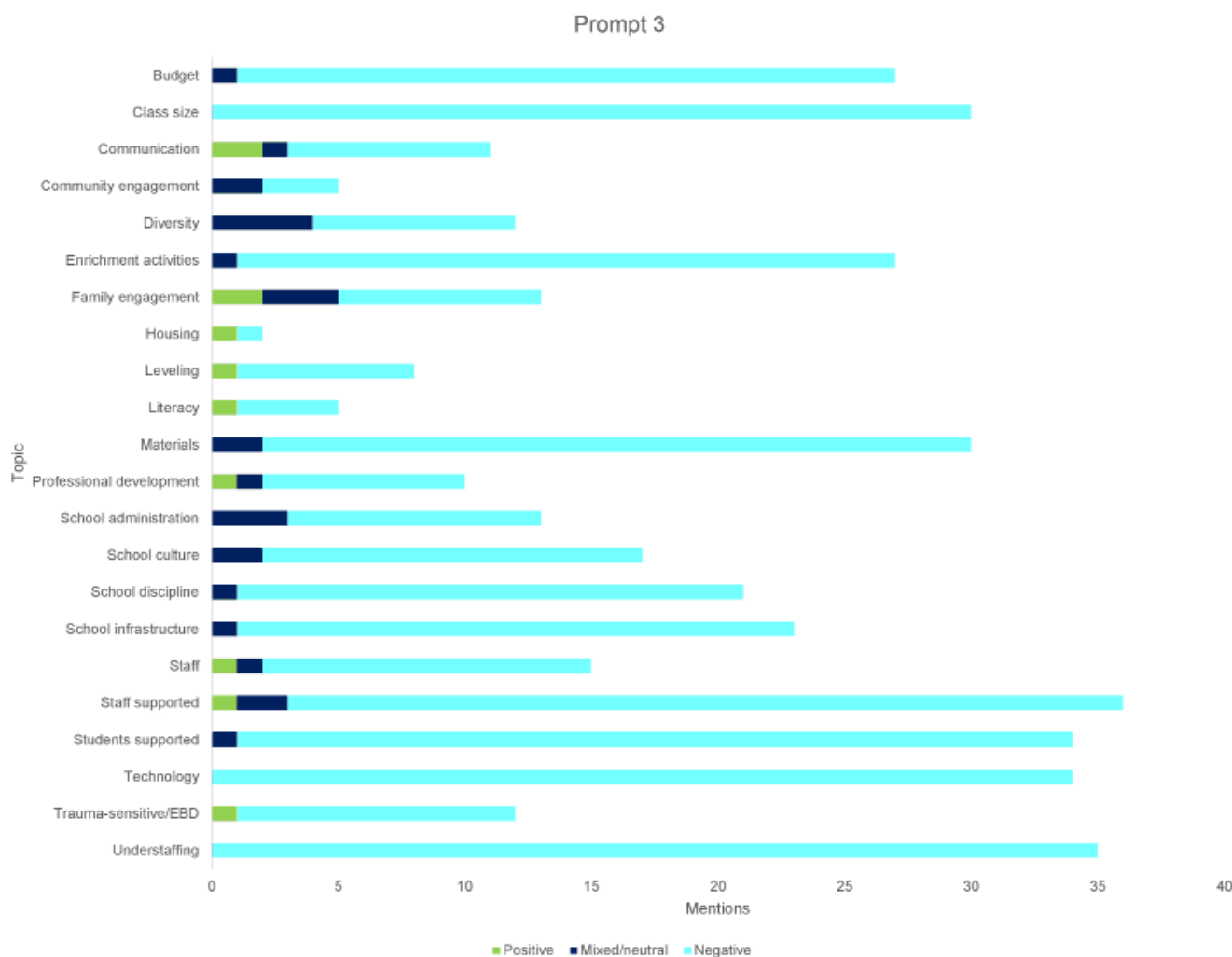
*"For our school administrators to hold teachers accountable for teaching a curriculum that is standardized across the district [sic] for that grade level."*

*"Consistent curriculum/testing expectations for more than 1-2 years at a time, to give teachers a chance to prepare and become adept at changes"*





Figure 4: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for Prompt 3, “My hope/dream for [my school] is...”



Prompt 4: "My hope/dream for Manchester Public Schools is..."

This prompt focuses on the school district as a whole, similar to the second prompt, and what individuals in the listening sessions want to change or add to the Manchester School District. Here, it is important to note that this question was answered by fewer participants, as many groups did not complete this prompt in the allotted time (see Appendix 9 for all topics mentioned in response to the fourth prompt).

*Table 5: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for Prompt 4, "My hope/dream for Manchester Public Schools is..."*

Overall	Positive	Negative
Budget (34)	BOSC (1)	Budget (34)
BOSC (29)	Course offerings (1)	BOSC (28)
Staff supported (23)	District leadership (1)	Staff supported (23)
District leadership (21)	Equity (1)	District leadership (17)
Equity (19)	Family engagement (1)	Equity (17)
	School administration (1)	
	Testing (1)	

The budget is the most frequently mentioned topic, with 34 out of 34 mentions identifying this as needing to change.

*"Teachers have contract so kids don't miss/lose out on activities/education"*

*"Pay teachers more/more \$ for supplies, resources, facilities improvements"*

*"Better appropriation of \$ based in research and teacher input"*

The Board of School Committee (BOSC) and staff supported were also mentioned with negative leans and, therefore, as needing to change. This first series of questions pertain directly to the BOSC:

*"School board with better intentions/new ideas"*

*"BOSC comes in and visits not just on walkthrough. See what goes on."*

*"Some new school board members who are committed to our school system and not just spouting rhetoric and being right (not all of them do this [sic])"*

*"A mission/vision, values for the school board; team building for board; communications norms (student success is the goal for all, NOT "I'm here to save the taxpayers \$)."*

*"School board that believes in and supports all our schools, visits schools, speaks positively about schools"*

*"Manchester is in a tough position. I feel like the teachers of Manchester schools are working hard and doing the best with what they have to work with. I have no faith in the integrity of the Board."*

Participants' hopes and dreams for staff and students being supported include the following:

*"They can keep the best and the brightest teachers and staff in the city making it a place people love working in"*

*"Stronger mentor program for new (1st three years) teachers"*

*"Four our professional development days to be full of useful, motivating workshops"*

*"Individual mentors"*

*"Services for all, respect and accountability"*

*"Everyone, superintendent, teachers, para etc. trained on the barriers these kids face, i.e. walking to school on a snowy day on unplowed sidewalks"*

*"Adequate services/training for new demographic"*

*"Consolidate resources and have programs to help ESL kids be prepared to learn content in classrooms without unnecessary struggles."*

*"More cultural competency training for teachers, more diverse staff"*

*"Complete reorganization to provide a uniform and coordinated curriculum throughout the district"*

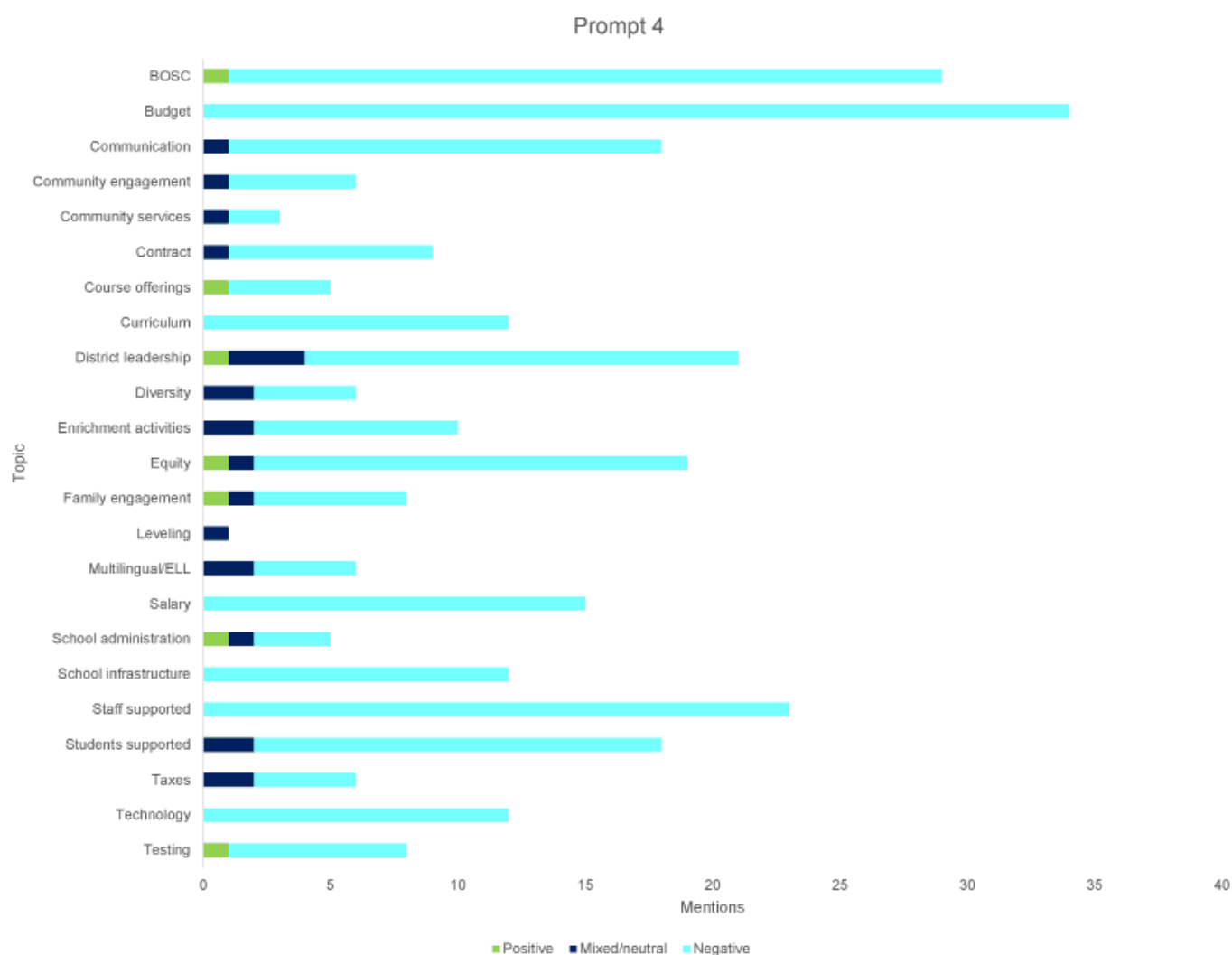
Equity is frequently mentioned as well, though relating to what or whom is not known, based on the information shared:

*“EQUAL ACCESS for all students, resources are fair”*

*“Equity across all elementary schools”*

Again, a more extensive sampling of comments from participants’ graphic organizers can be found in Appendix 10.

Figure 5: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for Prompt 4, “My hope/dream for Manchester Public Schools is...”



Overall, listening session participants identified staff and school culture as elements they feel are positive in their individual schools, and to a lesser extent, in the district as a whole. What they would like to see changed, however, includes the budget, as well as related topics like understaffing, technology, and class sizes. Additionally, participants identified particular groups of leadership that they are unhappy with: the Board of School Committee and district leadership.

### **Findings by affinity group**

This next section returns again to the entire group of participants, by examining responses within the affinity groups, whether they participated in one-on-one interviews, listening sessions, or full-day office hour conversations.

#### **Administrators**

Topics mentioned most frequently by the participating school administrators can be seen in the table below. Appendix 11 contains all topics mentioned by administrators.

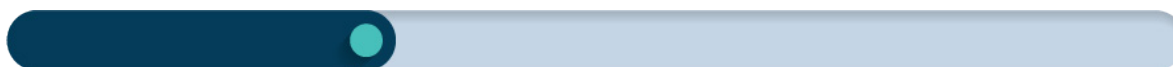
*Table 6: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for Administrators*

<b>Overall</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
Students supported (94)	Staff (47)	Budget (65)
Budget (81)	School culture (37)	School reputation (36)
Family engagement (74)	Students supported (34)	Staff supported (31)
Poverty (68)	Family engagement (28)	Materials (26)
Staff (65)	Staff supported (16)	Poverty (23)

The most frequently mentioned topic by administrators was students supported, yet only 34 of those 94 mentions were positive (36.2 percent). They also spoke favorably about their own school's culture, as well as of their staff. When they talked about family engagement, which is in the top five of positively mentioned topics, they typically referred to traditional measures of family engagement/parent involvement: the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) or Parent Teacher Group (PTG), donations to the school, and volunteering during the school day.

# 36.2%

**The most frequently mentioned topic by administrators was “students supported”, yet only 34 of those 94 mentions were positive (36.2 percent).**

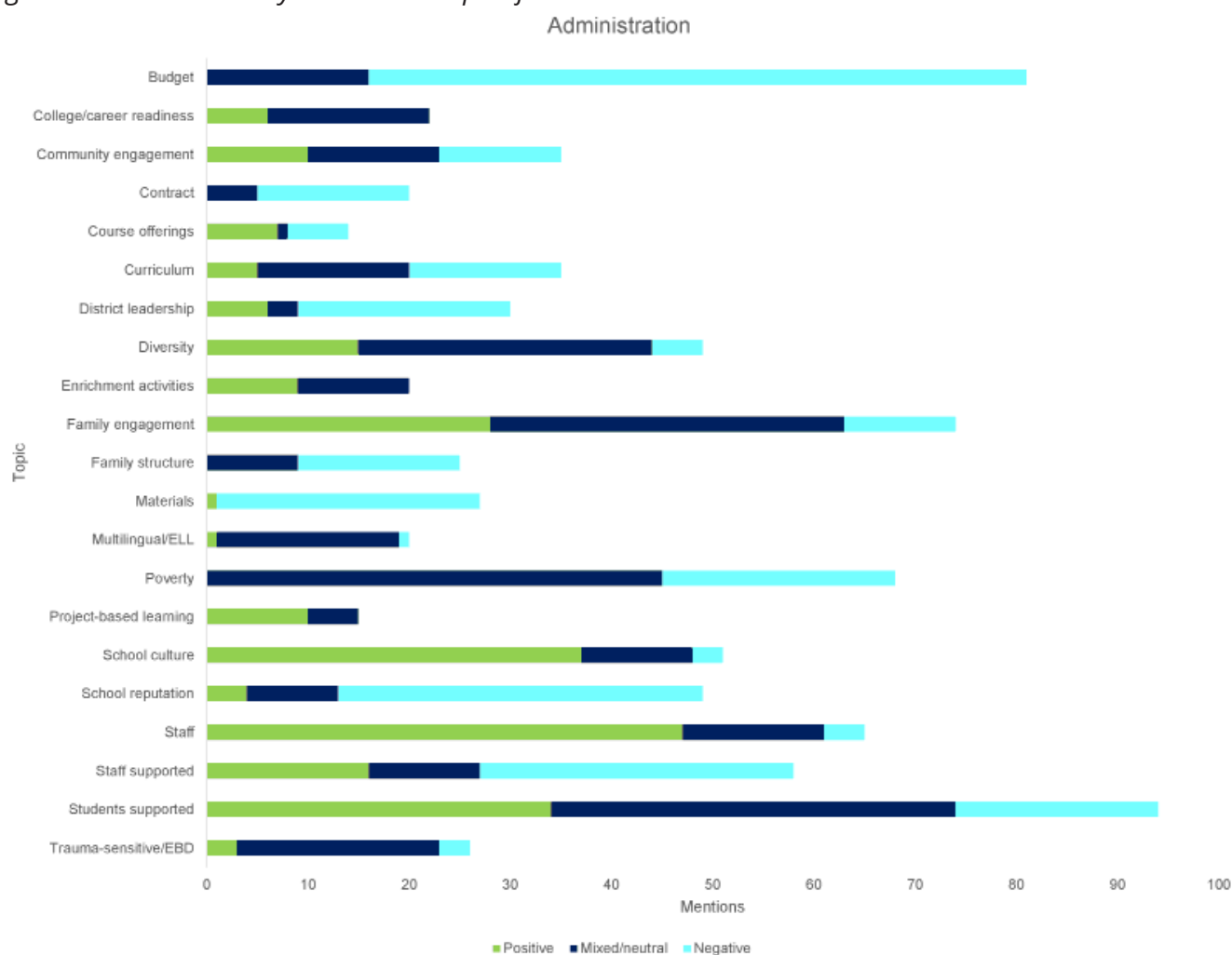




Additionally, administrators tend to see more “global” issues, such as poverty and its impact on students and families in their buildings. One principal shared about the shifting role of a Manchester principal, as well as the challenges seen on a day-to-day basis across the school:

*“My job as a principal should be to be the instructional leader. I should be caring for the students to make sure they are safe. Make sure the teachers are doing a great job in teaching. And making sure that my school is moving forward academically. But that’s not my day. It could be an hour with DCYF. It could be dealing with family issues or parent issues or crises or scrounging to get materials. I think the role of teachers and principals and educators in general is so stressed with so many other things they have to do, besides what they really want to do is teach.”*

Figure 6: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for Administrators



Teachers

Topics mentioned most frequently by participating teachers can be seen in Table 7 below. All topics mentioned by teachers can be found in Appendix 12.

*Table 7: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for Teachers*

Overall	Positive	Negative
Staff supported (170)	Staff (44)	Staff supported (153)
Budget (131)	Students supported (22)	Budget (128)
Students supported (103)	Family engagement (17)	Understaffing (75)
District leadership (78)	School culture (13)	Students supported (73)
Understaffing (75)	School administration (12)	District leadership (66)

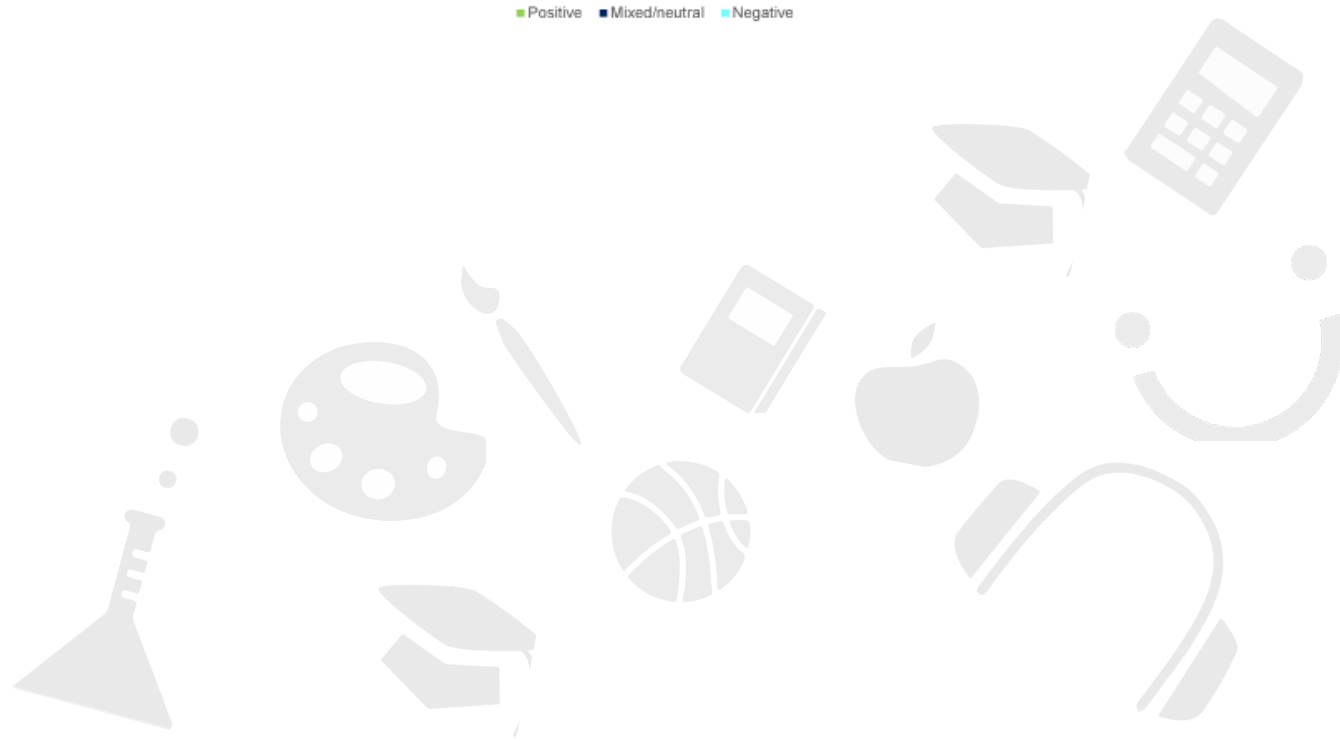
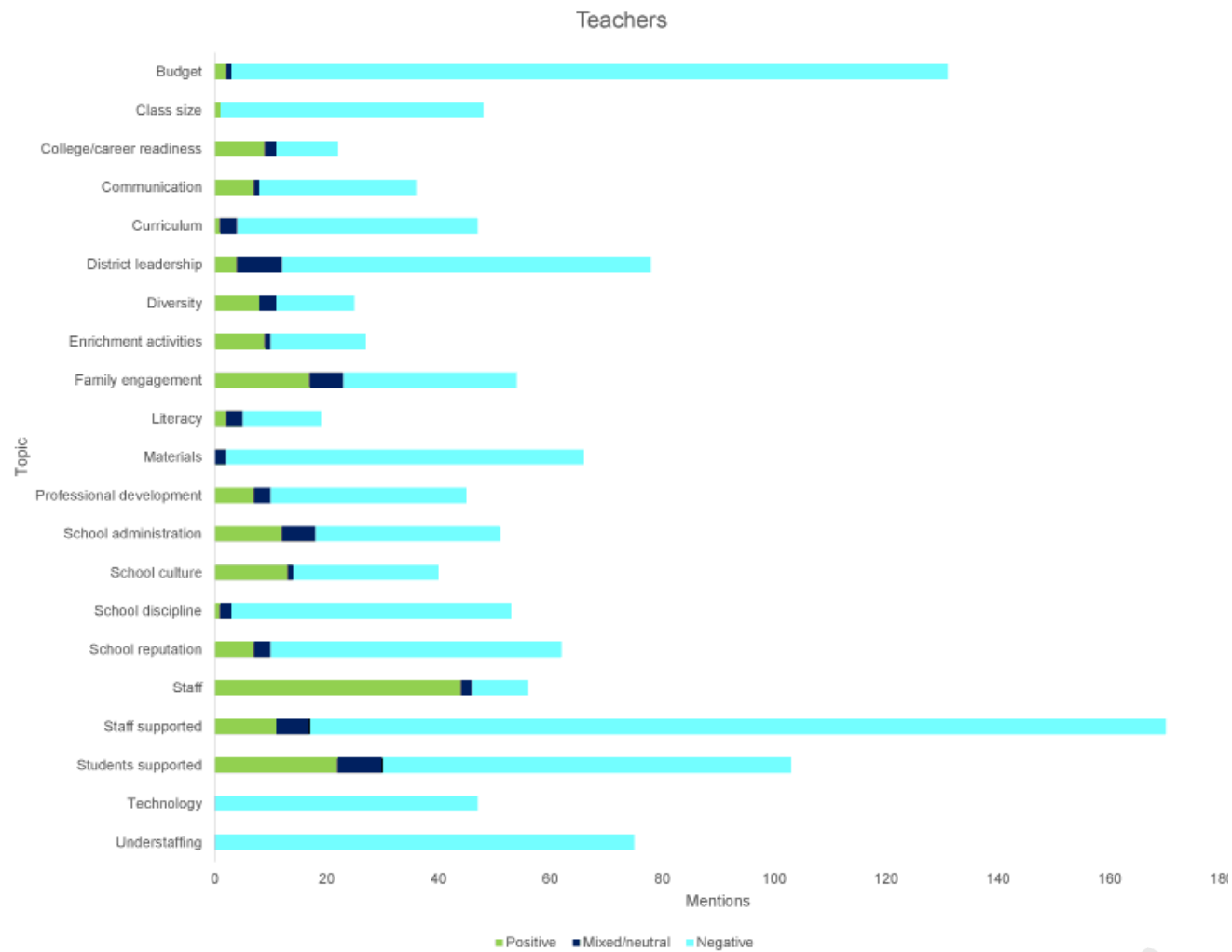
Similar to the administrator affinity group, teachers most frequently referred to the staff (including both teachers and support staff) positively. After that first positive, however, the frequency of topics in the column drops by half; the negative column, on the other hand, includes a number of mentions that is quite larger (108 positives and 495 negatives).

The teacher affinity group is most concerned about staff supported, with 153 out of 170 mentions being negative (90.0 percent). Therefore, although they see the staff as a strength, they do not feel that staff are supported in the schools and/or district. Two of the top five concerns pertain to funding and finances: the budget and understaffing.

Not reflected in this chart, but important to note, is the fact that while administrators mentioned staff positively 47 times, and it was the top positive mention, they mentioned staff negatively only 4 times (available in Appendix 11). The teachers, however, mentioned school administrators positively 12 times, but negatively 33 times (available in Appendix 12).



Figure 7: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for Teachers



### Support Staff

Topics mentioned most frequently by the participating support staff can be seen in the table below. For the purposes of this report, the term “support staff” refers to anyone who works in a school building who is not a teacher or an administrator. This includes, but is certainly not limited to, para-professionals, counselors, librarians, substitute teachers, administrative assistants, and health and wellness staff such as nurses. Appendix 13 contains all topics mentioned by support staff.

*Table 8: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for Support Staff*

Overall	Positive	Negative
Staff supported (75)	Staff (22)	Staff supported (73)
Budget (59)	School administration (16)	Budget (57)
Students supported (49)	School culture (8)	Students supported (38)
Staff (44)	Students supported (6)	School discipline (35)
School discipline (39)	Family engagement (5)	Understaffing (35)

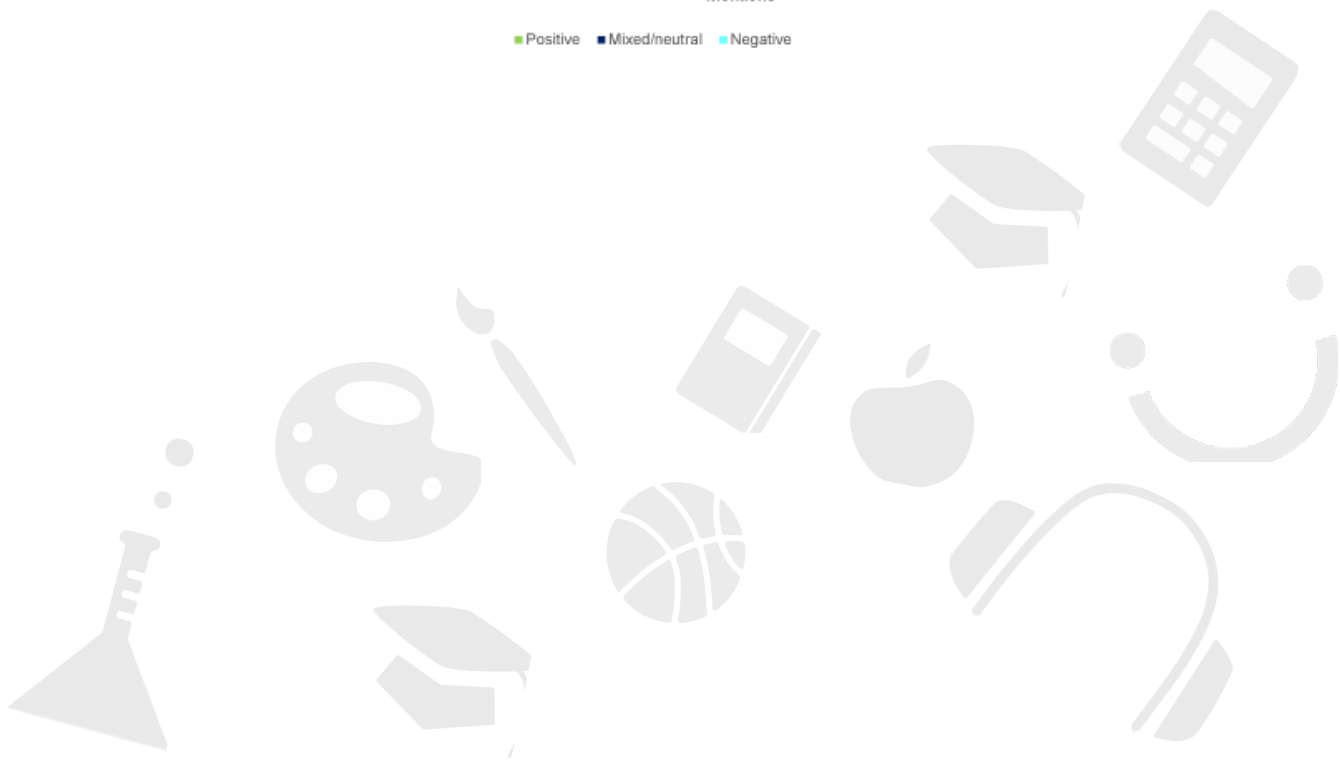
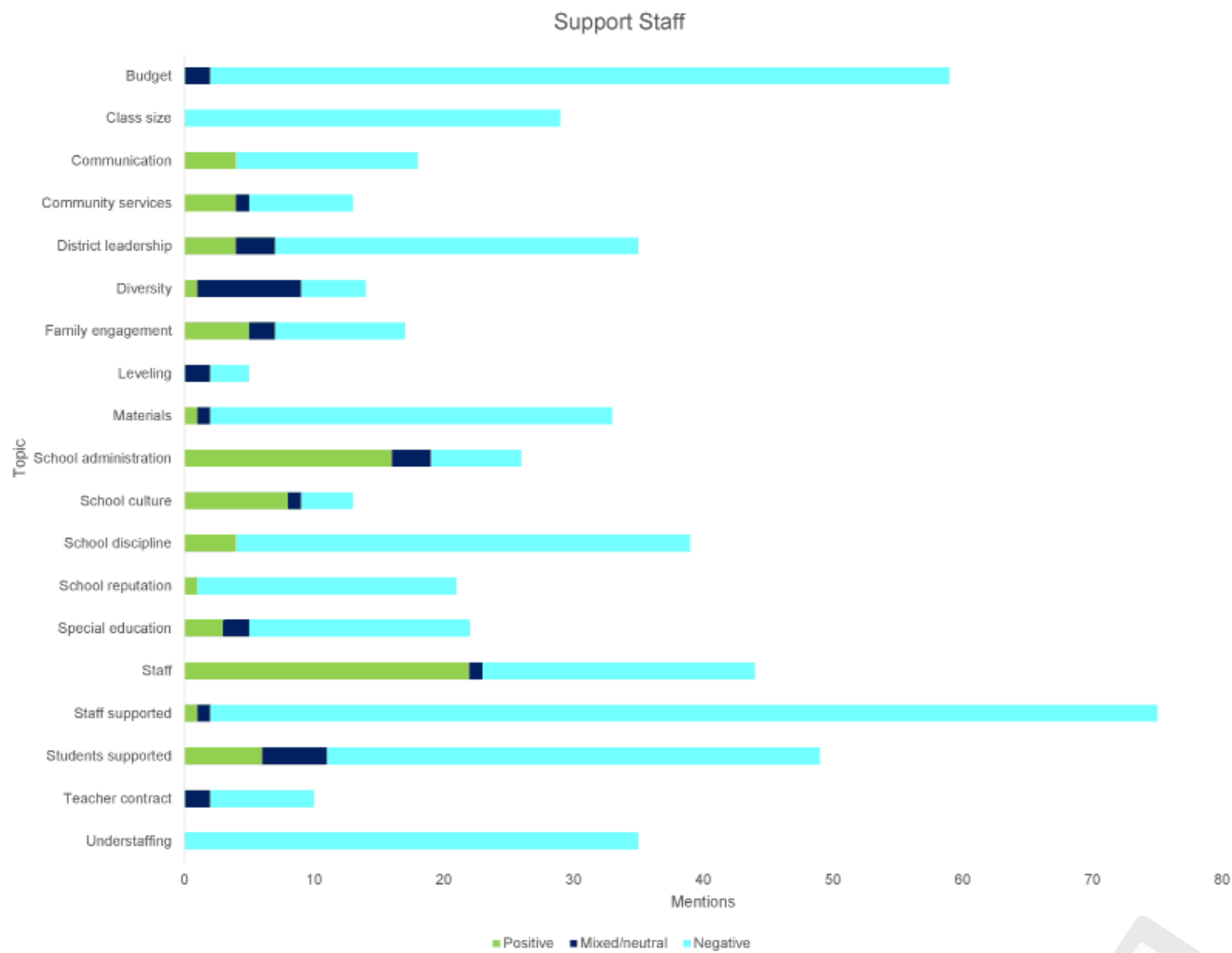
The overall topics for support staff mirror the teacher affinity group: staff supported, budget, and students supported. In terms of the most positively mentioned topics, the support staff highlighted people – staff, school administration, and family engagement (though the previous comments about the limits of family engagement still apply).

But in terms of staff supported, 73 out of the 75 mentions (97.3 percent) were negative. The most frequently mentioned topics in the negative column also tend to be about in-building policies and procedures: support of staff – which can be connected with understaffing (as well as the budget), support of students, and school discipline.

Interestingly, only teachers and support staff had “understaffing” in their top five concerns – but not administrators (although they did identify “materials”). This could be due to the impact on the staff themselves, if they have larger class sizes or are covering other classes when someone is out of the building.

Additionally, school administration was mentioned positively 16 times, resulting in it being in the top five positive mentions. Support staff only mentioned school administration negatively seven times (see Appendix 13), in contrast to the teacher affinity group which had a much higher number of negative mentions than positive for their school administration.

Figure 8: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for Support Staff



### Families

Topics mentioned most frequently by participating family members can be seen in the table below. Appendix 14 contains all topics mentioned by families.

*Table 9: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for Families*

Overall	Positive	Negative
Enrichment activities (24)	School culture (13)	Budget (17)
Communication (23)	Family engagement (11)	Enrichment activities (17)
Budget (20)	School administration (11)	BOSC (13)
Family engagement (19)	Students supported (10)	Communication (13)
District leadership (18)	Communication (9)	Understaffing (13)
	Staff (9)	

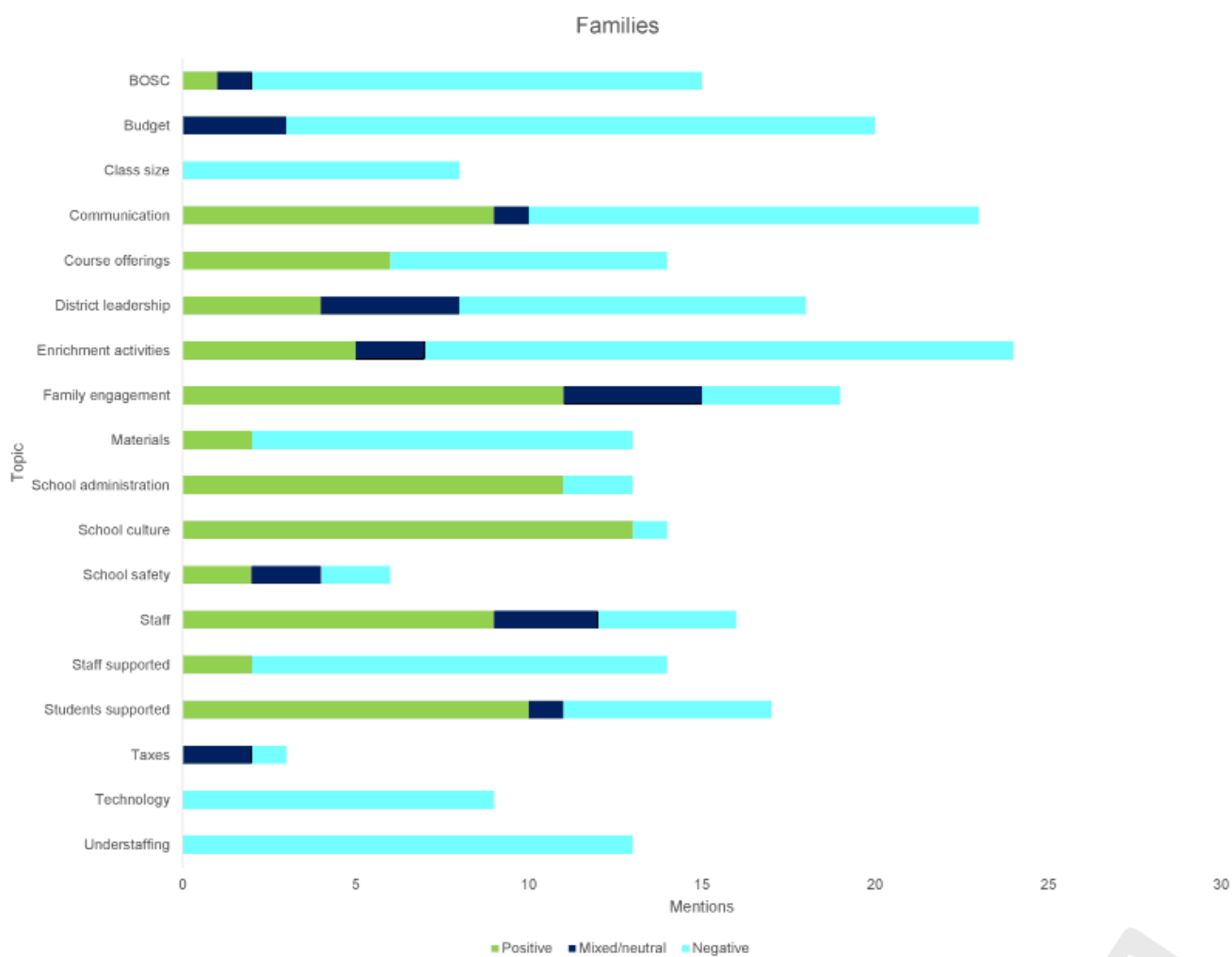
For the families affinity group, family members may have spoken about more than one school, as they may have multiple children attending schools in the district. The most frequently mentioned topics were enrichment activities, communication, and the budget. There is a discrepancy, however, between family engagement, which was mentioned mostly positively, and communications, which was mentioned mostly negatively. This indicates that families are happy with activities like the PTO/PTG, but may be dissatisfied with the communication from the school on their child's progress or from the district on safety concerns like lockdowns, for example.

As with the first three affinity groups discussed, staff were mentioned positively with enough frequency to be in the most frequent positive mentions - though less frequently than school administration. Enrichment activities are a top priority for families, and they see them currently as lacking, whether at the school or district level.

Additionally, the families affinity group is the only one to elevate the Board of School Committee to a top five topic, though still with only 13 negative mentions. None of the previously discussed affinity groups, who are all school district employees, mentioned the Board of School Committee with enough frequency to have this group in a most frequently mentioned list.

Finally, unlike the teacher and support staff affinity groups, comments from families show a relative balance between the positives and negatives overall, with an almost equal number in these most frequently mentioned topics.

Figure 9: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for Families





### Students

Topics mentioned most frequently by the participating students can be seen in the table below. Appendix 15 contains all topics mentioned by students.

*Table 10: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for Students*

Overall	Positive	Negative
Students supported (66)	Staff (30)	School discipline (50)
Staff (59)	Enrichment activities (24)	Students supported (47)
School discipline (56)	Students supported (18)	Equity (46)
Enrichment activities (53)	Course offerings (11)	Enrichment activities (27)
Equity (46)	School culture (9)	Nutrition/food (27)

Similar to all of the affinity groups already discussed, staff appear as a frequently mentioned topic for students with 59 mentions. Students supported is also mentioned frequently both positively and negatively, though only 18 mentions were positive (27.3 percent) compared to 47 mentions that were negative (71.2 percent). The teachers and support staff affinity groups show a similar trend around the topic of supporting students.

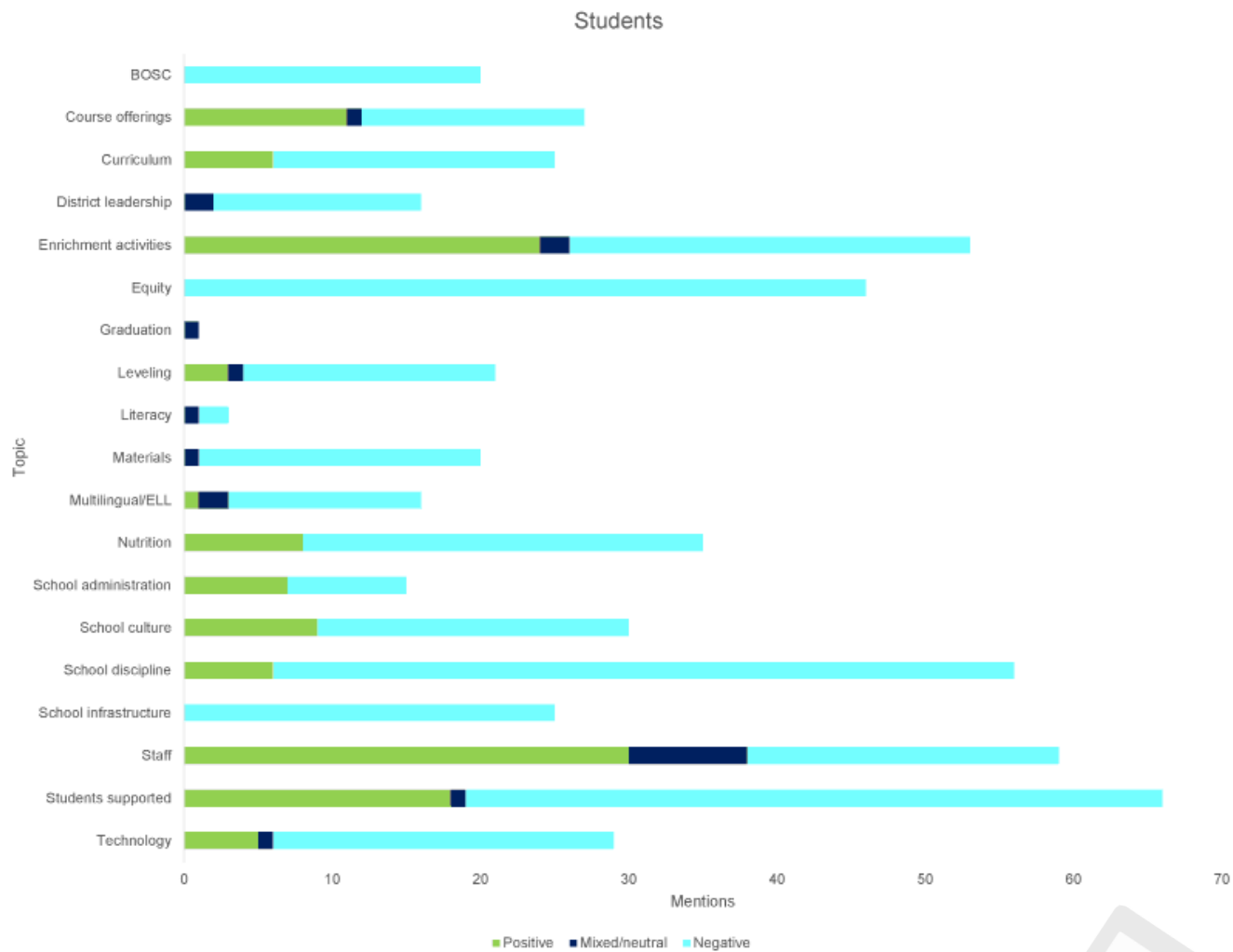
Students spoke frequently about school discipline, with 50 out of 56 mentions as negative (89.3 percent). Though school discipline and equity are both listed, there is not enough data to link them directly together.

**There are also topics that were frequently mentioned by students, but not by any other affinity group, including equity and nutrition. For equity, out of the 46 times it was mentioned by students, all 46 mentions were negative.**

In addition, for students, the topic of nutrition means the quality of breakfast and lunch provided at the schools - students mentioned nutrition negatively 27 out of 35 times (77.1 percent, as can be seen in Appendix 15).

And finally, as with the teachers and support staff, the overall mentions of negatives greatly outweigh the most frequent positive mentions.

Figure 10: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for Students



When reviewing and comparing the data across all affinity groups, some trends emerge. The first is that school culture, across all affinity groups, is mentioned positively with enough frequency to elevate to the top five lists.

The staff are regarded almost entirely positively by adults, but the students have a different experience, with far more negative than positive mentions. School culture is also similar: though this topic was in their top five, they mentioned school culture negatively 21 times (Appendix 15).

The budget is also on the minds of the adults throughout the district; equity, on the other hand, is on the minds of students, and does not appear in any of the adults' lists. Understaffing, as mentioned earlier in this section, was frequently mentioned by teachers and support staff, but with no other group at the same rate.

The schools all see family engagement as a strength, and the families, to some extent, do as well. Yet, the families also identify communication as an area for improvement, both at the school and district levels. Additionally, family engagement examples that were used through-

out interviews and listening sessions tended to mean participation in PTO/PTG and volunteerism, versus an equal partnership between school and home.

The support of students was a priority for all affinity groups, yet the students themselves – arguably the most important group to look to regarding this topic, with 47 negative mentions out of a total of 66, do not feel supported within the schools and/or district. Additionally, enrichment activities for students were mentioned frequently by families and students, and although students had this topic in their most frequently mentioned positive topics, they shared negative commentary about these types of activities 27 times (Appendix 15).

### **Findings by school type**

This next section examines the most frequently mentioned topics within the three school types -- elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools – in order to determine if there are noticeable similarities and differences across the students' ages. This section, like the previous, includes all participants.

### **Elementary schools**

*Table 11: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for Elementary Schools*

Overall	Positive	Negative
Staff supported (168)	Staff (73)	Staff supported (132)
Budget (135)	Family engagement (45)	Budget (126)
Students supported (117)	Students supported (41)	Materials (67)
Family engagement (102)	School culture (36)	Students supported (56)
Staff (91)	School administration (24)	School reputation (55)
	Staff supported (24)	Understaffing (55)

Participants connected to elementary schools identified staff supported most frequently, with 168 mentions. Of those, 132 were mentioned negatively (78.6 percent). The budget was mentioned negatively 126 times by participants, out of a total 135 (93.3 percent). Students supported, the third most frequently mentioned topic, was divided between positive (41 mentions, 35.0 percent) and negative mentions (56 mentions, 47.9 percent). Additionally, this topic is solely from the perspective of adults, whether administrators, staff, or families, as Manchester Proud did not interview

currently-enrolled Manchester Public Schools elementary students. Appendix 16 contains all topics mentioned in elementary school responses.

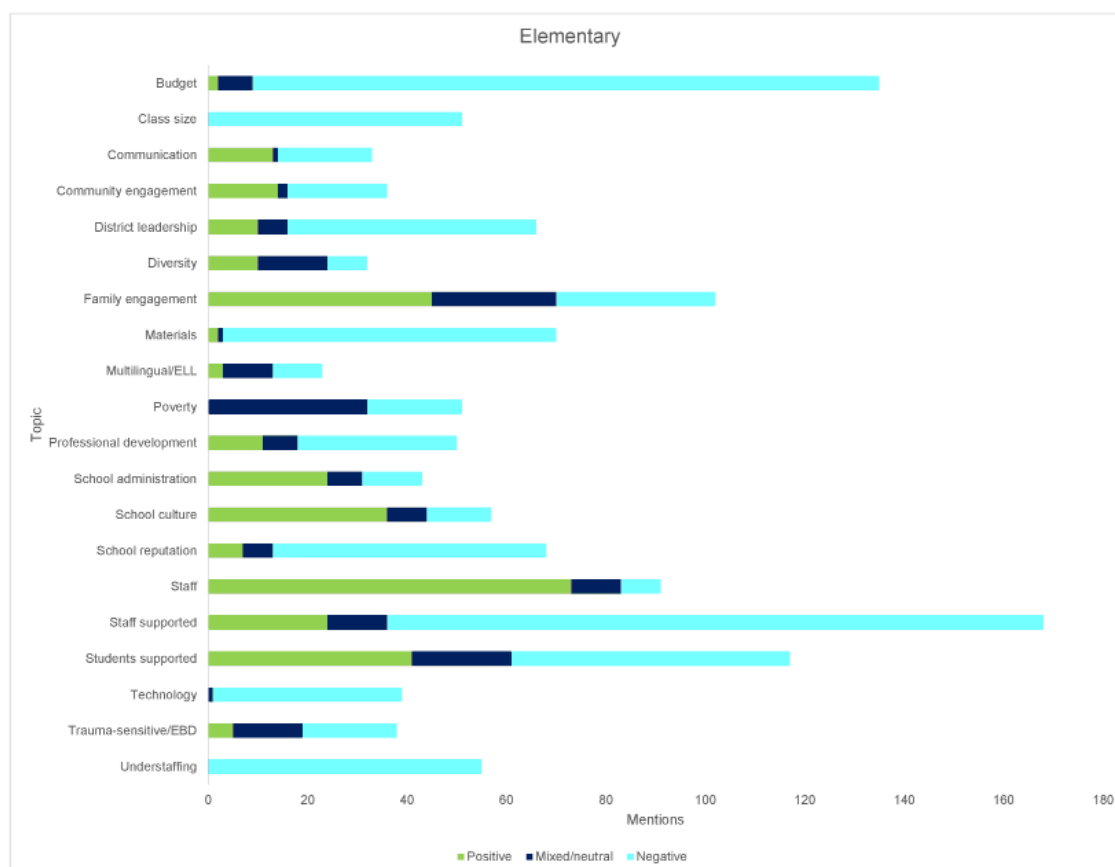
schools with 45 positive mentions, which may be due to the prevalence of PTOs/PTGs, as well as opportunities to volunteer.

**In one elementary school session, a teacher shared that, “We ration pencils here. So at the end of the day, I find the pile where the custodian swept up, and grab all the pencils there.” Another participant in the room said, “I didn’t know you did that. I do that, too.”**

Staff topped the list of positive mentions, with 73 out of 91 mentions (80.2 percent). Family engagement was also identified positively in the elementary

For the topics mentioned negatively most frequently, a trend emerges around resources – staff supported, budget, materials, and understaffing

Figure 11: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for Elementary Schools



all directly relate to the resources available. Materials and understaffing, specifically, directly relate to the budget. In one elementary school session, a teacher shared that, “We ration pencils here. So at the end of the day, I find the pile where the custodian swept up, and grab all the pencils there.” Another participant in the room said, “I didn’t know you did that. I do that, too.”

### Middle schools

*Table 12: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for Middle Schools*

Overall	Positive	Negative
Budget (64)	Staff (21)	Budget (61)
District leadership (56)	School culture (15)	District leadership (42)
Students supported (48)	Enrichment activities (12)	Staff supported (41)
Staff supported (44)	Students supported (12)	Curriculum (29)
Enrichment activities (39)	Family engagement (9)	Materials (29)

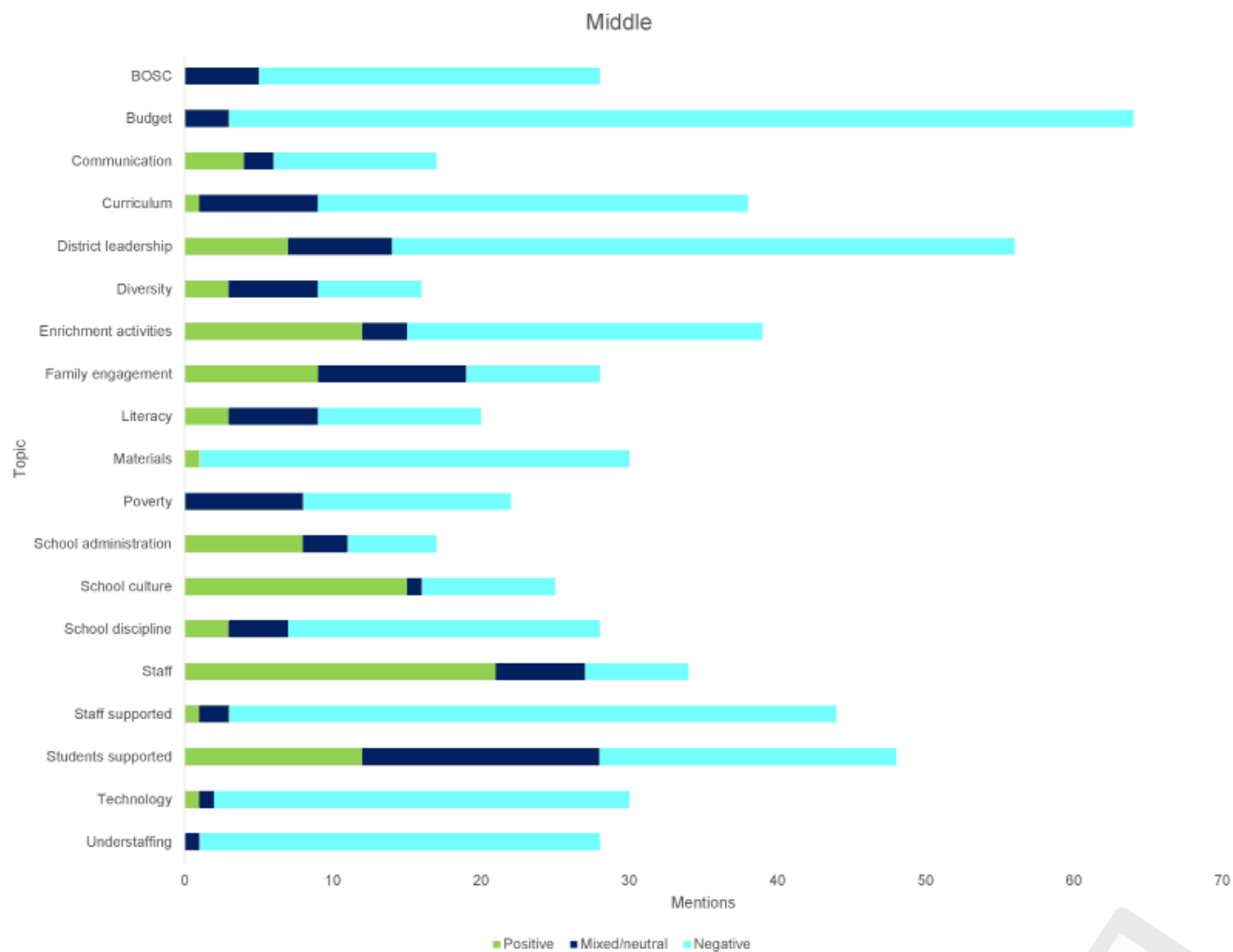
For participants connected to middle schools, the budget was mentioned most frequently with 64 mentions. Of those, 61 (95.3 percent) mentions were negative. District leadership was mentioned second-most frequently with 56 mentions, and of those, 42 times were negative (75.0 percent). Staff, however, was most frequently mentioned positively (21 mentions).

Middle school is the only school type with the topic “curriculum” in one of the most frequently mentioned lists, and it was mentioned negatively 29 times out of 38 (76.3 percent). The concept of a unified curriculum across middle schools, or even across classrooms within a school, continued to come up, as some would like to see this implemented in Manchester for students who may move during the school year. For example, one teacher remarked, “MSD [Manchester School District] gives standards, but no books and no curriculum.”

Middle school participants also identify enrichment activities, with enough frequency for the top five topics in the “positive” and “overall” categories. Middle school is when students really begin to have after-school activities more available at school, which is likely a part of why this topic was elevated for middle school participants.

Overall, the theme within the negative column seems to be at the district level: the budget (61 mentions), district leadership (42 mentions), curriculum (29 mentions), and materials (29 mentions), which can be connected to the budget, as well as the leadership in the district. Appendix 17 contains all topics mentioned in middle school responses.

Figure 12: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for Middle Schools



## High schools

Table 13: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for High Schools

Overall	Positive	Negative
Students supported (101)	Students supported (27)	Students supported (61)
Budget (70)	Staff (24)	Budget (59)
Staff (68)	School culture (22)	School discipline (56)
School discipline (62)	Course offerings (19)	Equity (51)
Diversity (54)	College/career readiness (16)	Staff supported (46)
Equity (54)		

For participants connected to high schools, students supported was mentioned most frequently (101 mentions), and of those, 27 mentions were positive (26.7 percent) and 61 were negative (60.4 percent). The high school groupings of mentions look fairly different from elementary or middle schools: school discipline and equity were part of the most frequently mentioned topics, likely because of high school students in sessions.

Interestingly, diversity is mentioned 54 times, however, it does not appear in either the positive or negative columns, indicating that most high school-affiliated people mentioned it neutrally. Equity, on the other hand, came up with a heavy negative lean (94.4 percent negative). This indicates that although people recognize

diversity in the high school setting, equity in practice is still a challenge. With that said, equity is not just an issue identified in the high schools, as it was

and school discipline and equity are viewed overwhelmingly as negatives. A family member shared a story about her son's friend: "I heard he was sus-

**Students do not feel supported, and school discipline and equity are viewed overwhelmingly as negatives. A family member shared a story about her son's friend: "I heard he was suspended for ten days. How can any student catch up if they are suspended for ten days? What if they have an IEP or a 504?"**

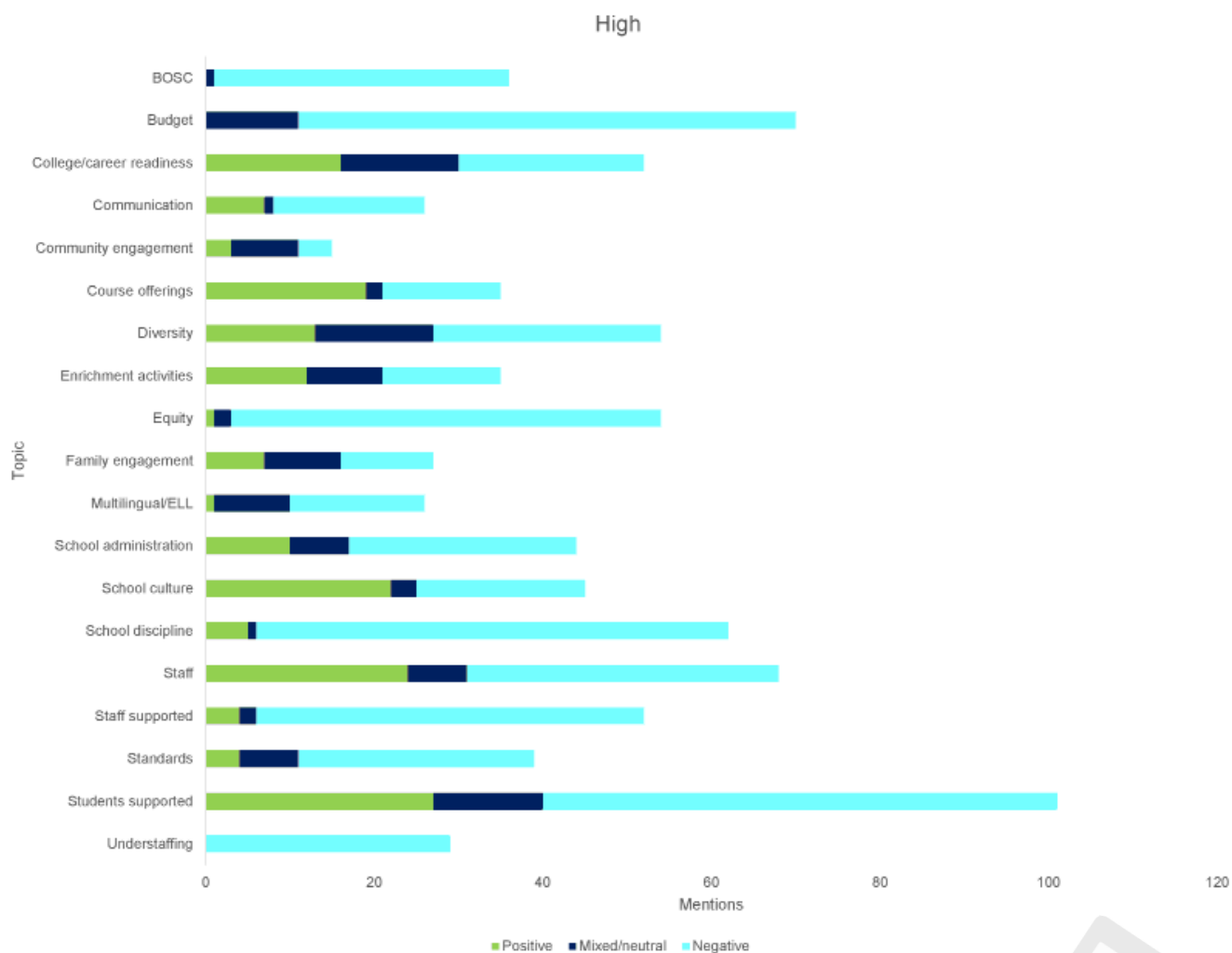
mentioned negatively 15 times in elementary schools (Appendix 16), and 15 times for middle schools (Appendix 17).

While the elementary school theme was resources, and the middle school theme was leadership, the high school's focus for change is in-school policies. Students do not feel supported,

suspended for ten days. How can any student catch up if they are suspended for ten days? What if they have an IEP or a 504?" Appendix 18 contains all topics mentioned in high school responses.



Figure 13: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for High Schools



### **Findings by geography**

This final findings section examines each of the regions of Manchester, which will include all participants across the interviews, listening sessions, and office hours. The schools categorized in each area of Manchester can be seen in the inset below.

*Inset: Manchester Schools by Geographic Area*

	North: Hillside Middle McDonough Elementary Smyth Road Elementary Webster Elementary	
West: Gossler Park Elementary Manchester High West Northwest Elementary Parker-Varney Elementary Parkside Middle	Central: Beech Street Elementary Central High Hallsville Elementary Wilson Elementary	East: Green Acres Elementary McLaughlin Middle Weston Elementary
	South: Bakersville Elementary Highland-Goffe's Falls Elementary Jewett Street Elementary Manchester School of Technology Memorial High Southside Middle	

### North Manchester

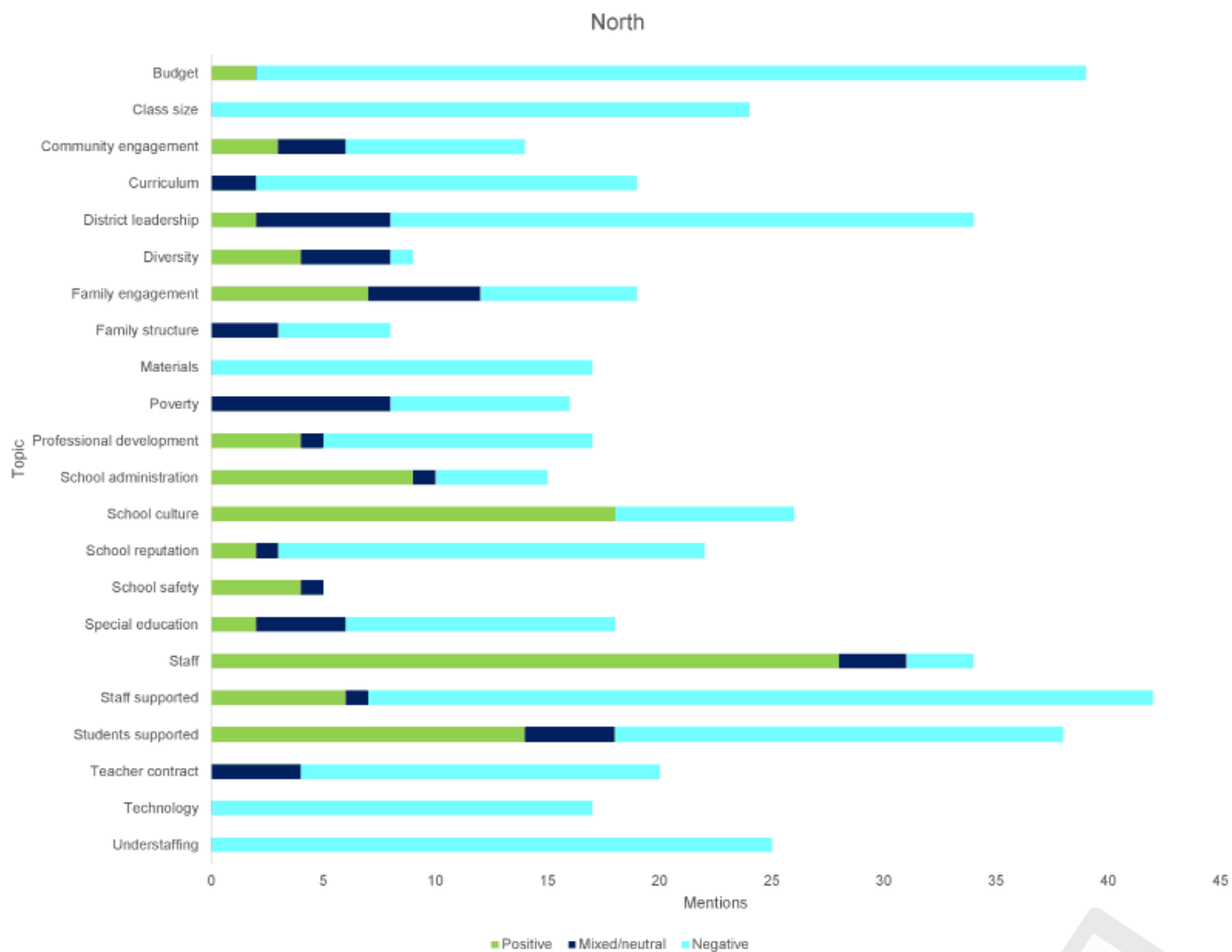
Table 14: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for North Manchester

Overall	Positive	Negative
Staff supported (42)	Staff (28)	Budget (37)
Budget (39)	School culture (18)	Staff supported (35)
Students supported (38)	Students supported (14)	District leadership (26)
District leadership (34)	School administration (9)	Understaffing (25)
Staff (34)	Family engagement (7)	Class size (24)

In North Manchester, the focus is on people: staff are viewed positively with 28 out of 34 mentions (82.4 percent). District leadership, on the other hand, is viewed negatively, with 26 negative mentions out of 34 total (76.5 percent). The principal change at Webster is a potential explanation for the focus on leadership – both as a positive at the school-level, as the principal was viewed favorably within the school community, and as a negative at the district-level, as participants perceived this process and decision as unfair and/or unclear. Appendix 19 contains all topics mentioned in North Manchester.



Figure 14: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for North Manchester



East Manchester

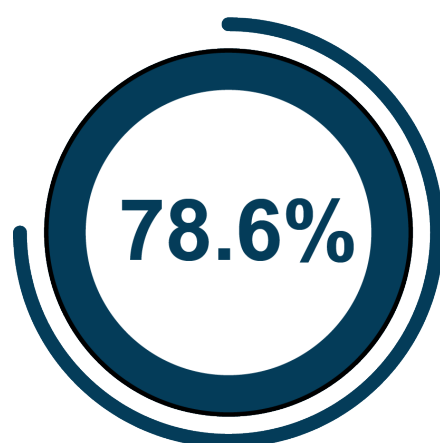
Table 15: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for East Manchester

Overall	Positive	Negative
Staff supported (68)	Staff (22)	Budget (60)
Budget (63)	Family engagement (15)	Staff supported (56)
Students supported (53)	Students supported (11)	Materials (36)
Materials (38)	Enrichment activities (8)	District leadership (28)
District leadership (34)	Staff supported (7)	Students supported (27)
		Understaffing (27)

Similar to North Manchester, in East Manchester, the staff are at the top of the most frequent positively mentioned topics with 22 mentions out of a total of 28 (78.6 percent).

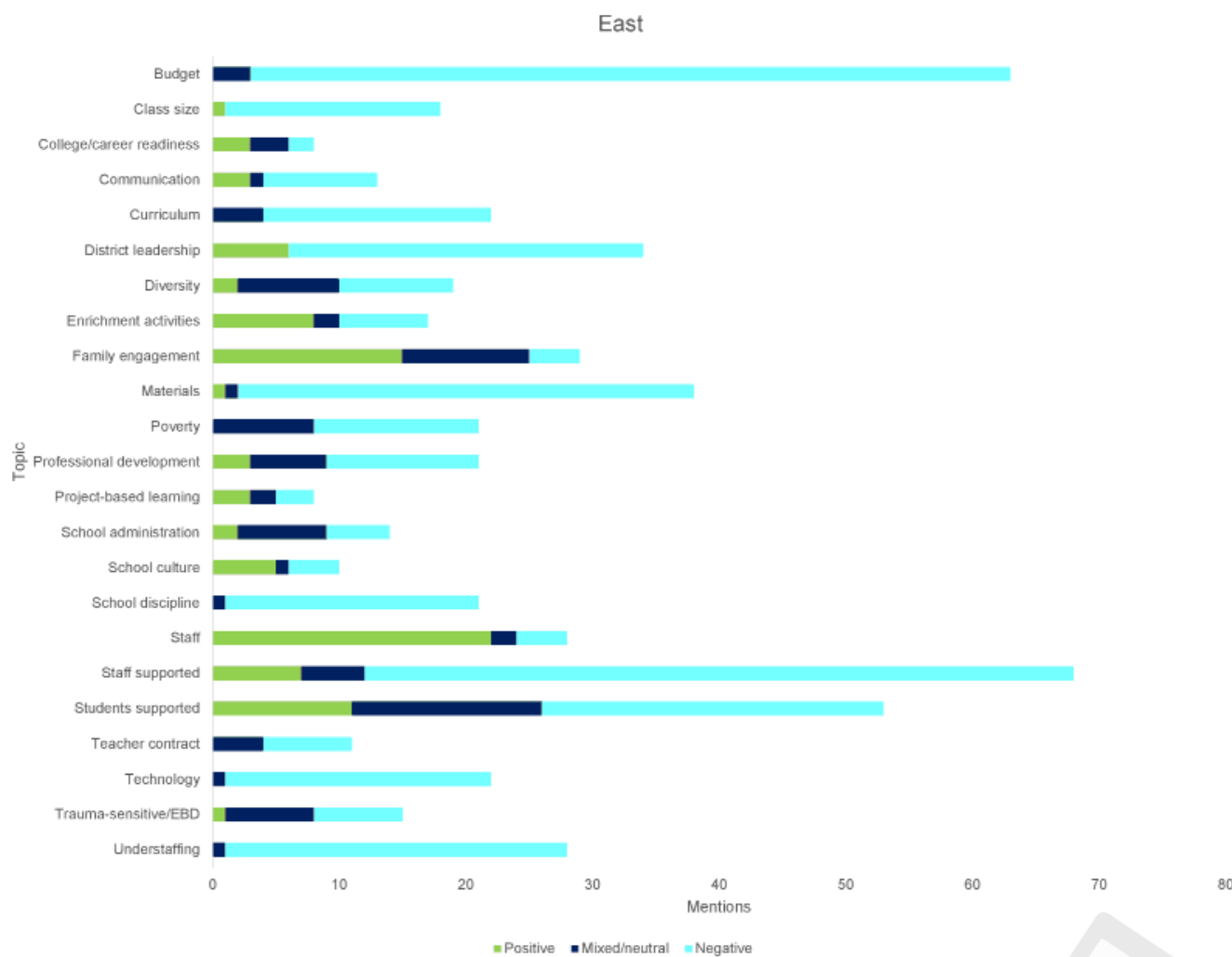
In East Manchester, the only mention of “leadership” within the most frequently mentioned chart is that of district leadership, with 28 negative mentions out of 34 mentions total (Appendix 20). The focus within East Manchester seems to be the budget, and related topics to the budget: materials and understaffing.

Interestingly, family engagement is mentioned positively 15 times (51.7 percent), and never mentioned negatively for participants connected to East Manchester schools. Appendix 20 contains all topics mentioned in East Manchester.



**Similar to North Manchester, in East Manchester, the staff are at the top of the most frequent positively mentioned topics with 22 mentions out of a total of 28 (78.6 percent).**

Figure 15: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for East Manchester



Central Manchester

Table 16: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for Central Manchester

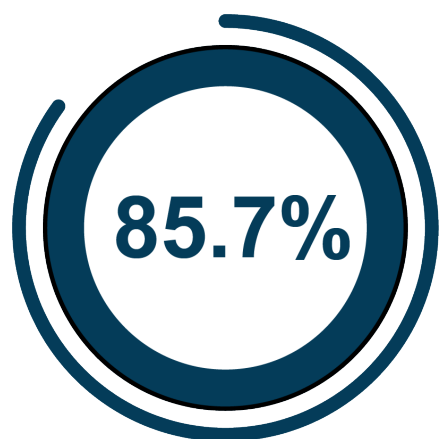
Overall	Positive	Negative
Family engagement (43)	School culture (15)	Staff supported (31)
Staff supported (38)	Diversity (12)	Budget (28)
Diversity (35)	Staff (12)	School reputation (20)
Budget (34)	Family engagement (11)	Family engagement (14)
Students supported (25)	School administration (8)	School infrastructure (13)

Central Manchester stands out in comparison with North and East Manchester – topics such as “school reputation” and “school infrastructure” are mentioned most frequently as negatives in this region. Diversity is also the second most frequently mentioned topic overall, and mentioned positively or neutrally 85.7 percent of the time. Appendix 21 contains all topics mentioned in Central Manchester.

Additionally, school culture, the topic most frequently mentioned positively, is only mentioned negatively twice (Appendix 21).

Family engagement is also more overtly nuanced in this region, with 11 positive mentions (25.6 percent) and 14 negative mentions (32.6 percent). One school leader shared the two sides of family engagement at the school:

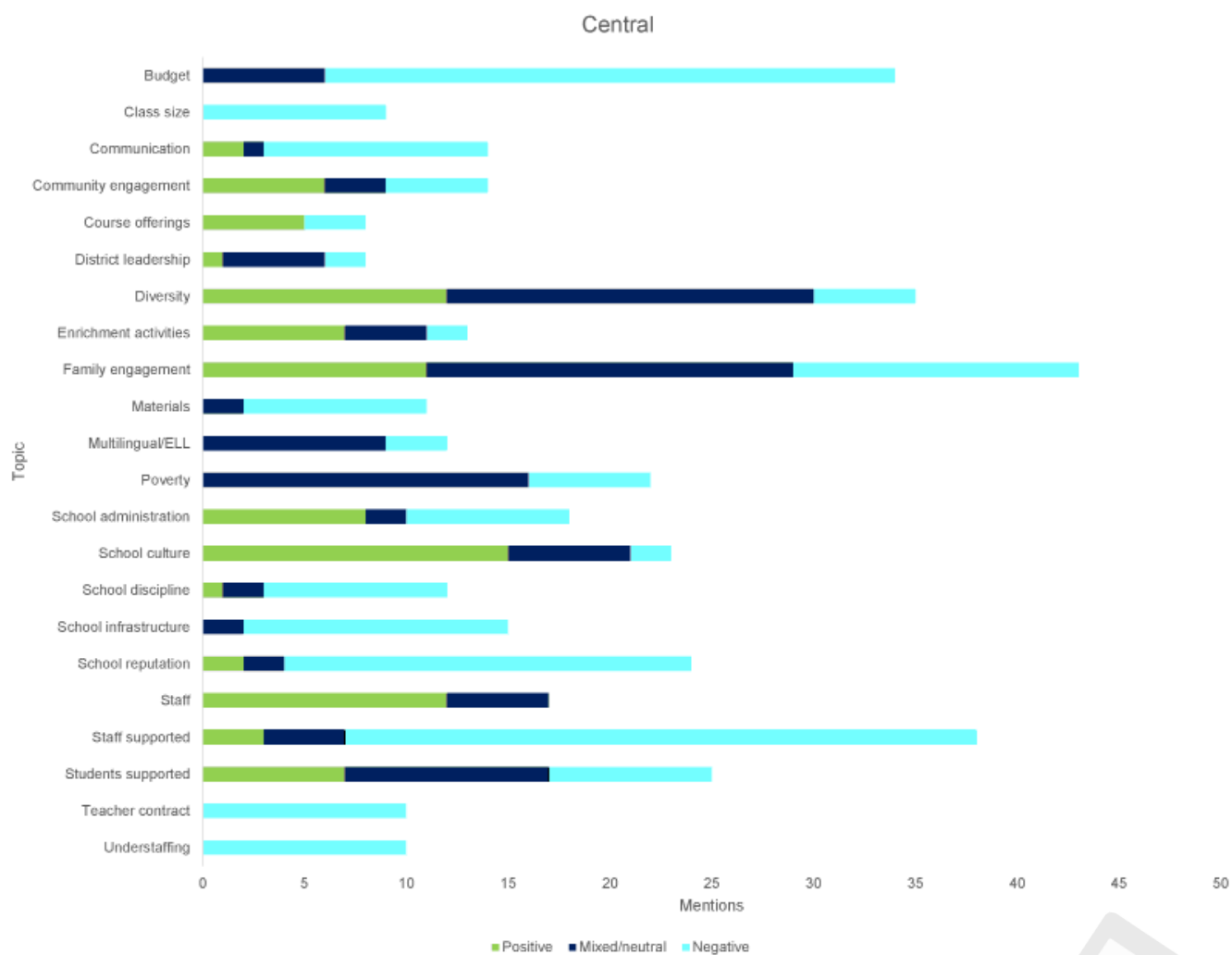
“One of the benefits of being a walking school is we see parents all the time, so we have a lot of communication with parents, but they are not necessarily involved with the school. We don’t have a PTA or anything that looks like a PTA, we don’t necessarily get volunteers, or very few of them, so that’s always something that we work with.”



**Diversity is also the second most frequently mentioned topic overall, and mentioned positively or neutrally 85.7 percent of the time.**



Figure 16: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for Central Manchester



South Manchester

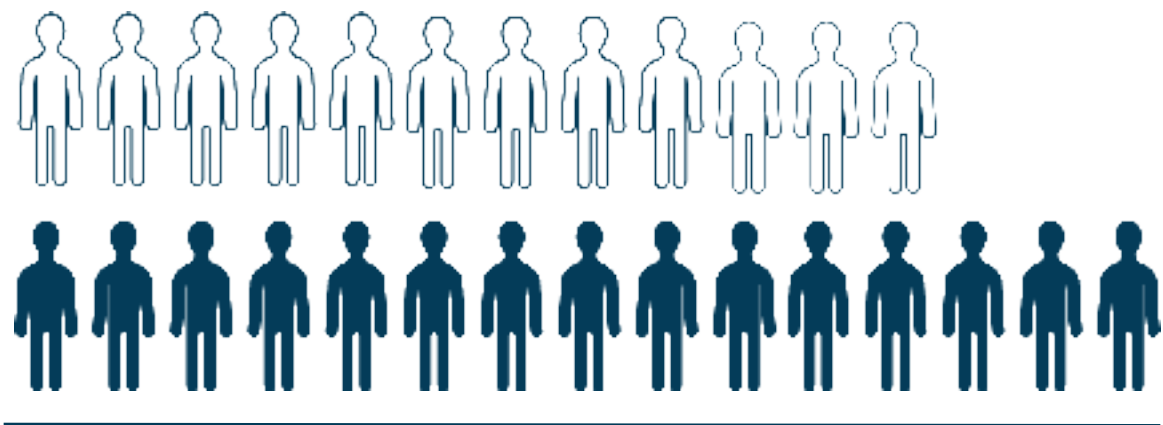
Table 17: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for South Manchester

Overall	Positive	Negative
Budget (69)	Students supported (25)	Budget (62)
Students supported (63)	Family engagement (23)	Staff supported (44)
Staff supported (53)	School culture (21)	Students supported (31)
Family engagement (41)	Staff (19)	Technology (26)
School culture (40)	Communication (15)	Understaffing (26)

South Manchester also had a standout topic that does not appear in previously mentioned regions: “communication,” with 15 positive mentions out of 27 total (55.6 percent).

Positive mentions of students being supported and family engagement ranked higher than those of staff, which is distinctly different from North and East Manchester, where staff was ranked first in positive mentions. This is, however, comparable to Central Manchester, where staff ranked fourth in positive mentions – though notably in Central Manchester, there were zero negative mentions of staff, and in South Manchester, there were 14 negative mentions (35.9 percent).

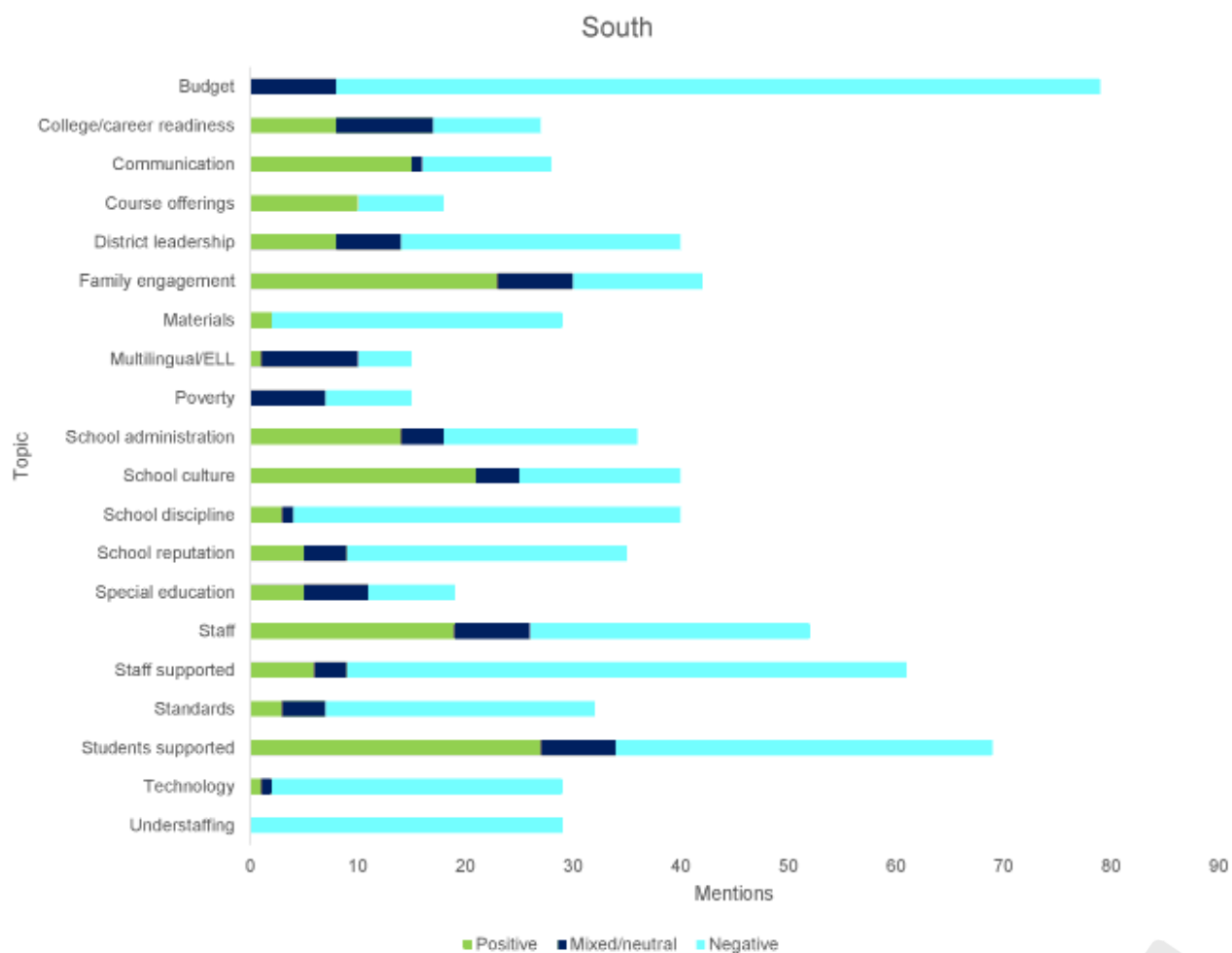
And unlike the other regions identified so far, “leadership” entities did not appear in South Manchester’s most frequently listed topics, whether overall, positively, or negatively. Appendix 22 contains all topics mentioned in South Manchester.



15/27

South Manchester also had a standout topic that does not appear in previously mentioned regions: “communication,” with 15 positive mentions out of 27 total (55.6 percent).

Figure 17: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for South Manchester



West Manchester

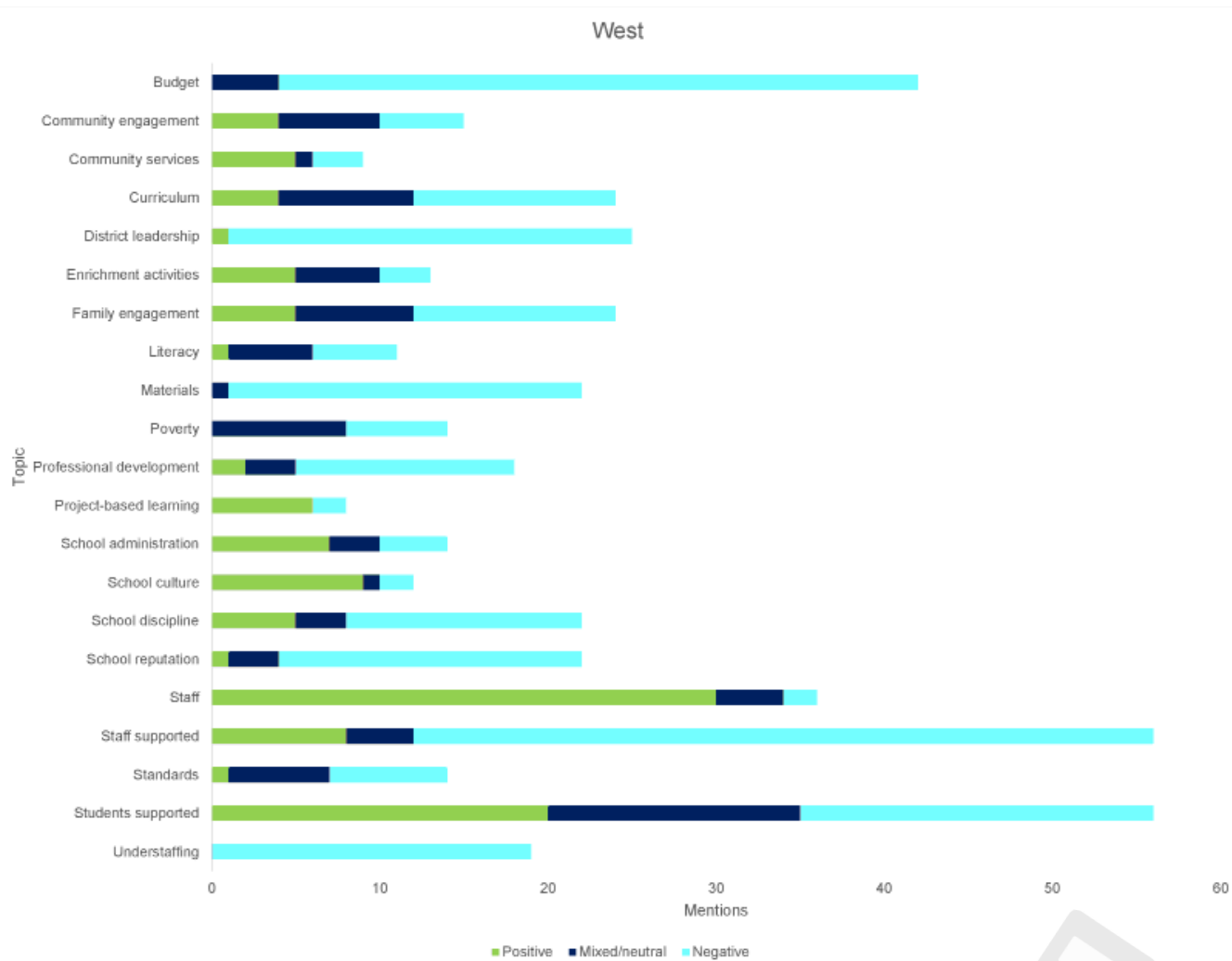
Table 18: Top Five Frequently Mentioned Topics for West Manchester

Overall	Positive	Negative
Staff supported (56)	Staff (30)	Staff supported (44)
Students supported (56)	Students supported (20)	Budget (38)
Budget (42)	School culture (9)	District leadership (24)
Staff (36)	Staff supported (8)	Materials (21)
District leadership (25)	School administration (7)	Students supported (21)

Similar to the other regions in the city, “staff” were mentioned positively most frequently (83.3 percent) in West Manchester, yet the support of staff ranked in the top of negative mentions (44 mentions out of 56 total, 78.6 percent). District leadership was also mentioned negatively 24 out of 25 times (96 percent) in West Manchester, and to a slightly lesser, but nevertheless notable, degree in North Manchester (76.5 percent) and East Manchester (82.4 percent). Appendix 23 contains all topics mentioned in West Manchester.



Figure 18: Most Commonly Mentioned Topics for West Manchester





Across all regions, staff and school culture were in the top positive mentions, and the budget was in the top negative mentions. There were some distinctions across the city: South Manchester never identified a leadership entity in their most frequently mentioned topics; Central Manchester specifically spoke to negative commentary about their school reputations and concerns around infrastructure, and North, East, and West Manchester spoke more frequently about leadership at all levels. Specifically, however, the Board of School Committee does not appear in any of these most frequently mentioned lists.

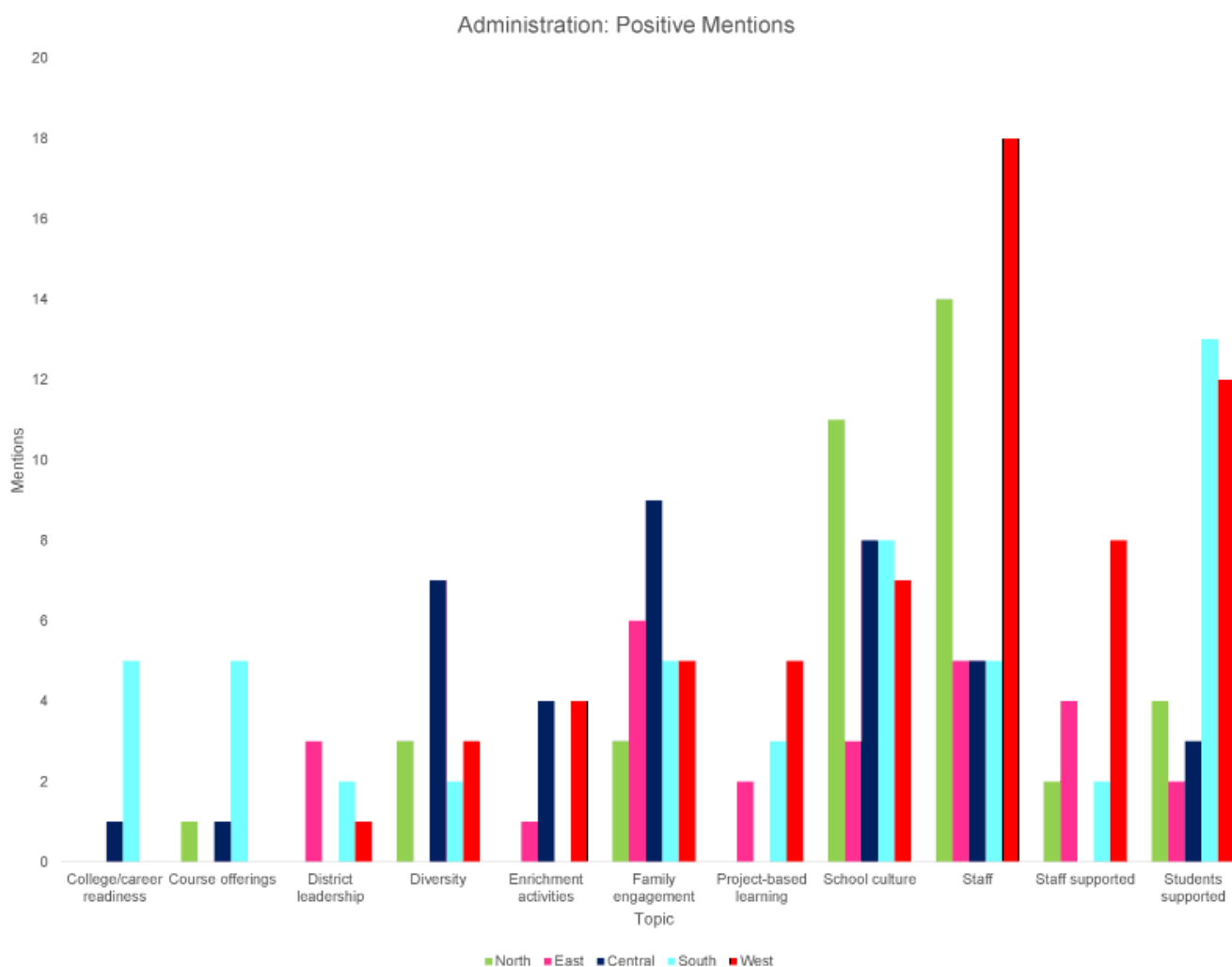
### **Findings by Affinity Group Across Geographic Region**

Finally, it is helpful to explore similarities and differences across geographic regions, within the same affinity group. That is, what topics appear to be priorities for all administrators, regardless of geography? And what topics appear in certain regions, but not others, within affinity groups?

In the bar graphs that follow, the top five positive or negative mentions for each of the affinity groups are depicted in comparison to their affinity group across the five geographic regions. If a topic is in the top five for the administration in the Central geographic region of Manchester, for example, the number of mentions by administration within the other four geographic regions are shown as well – even if that topic was not in the other regions' top five mentions.

Using the first graph as an example, administrators in all five regions positively mentioned “staff” – with administrators from the West region of Manchester mentioning staff the most. Project-based learning, on the other hand, was only mentioned positively by administrators in East, South, and West Manchester.

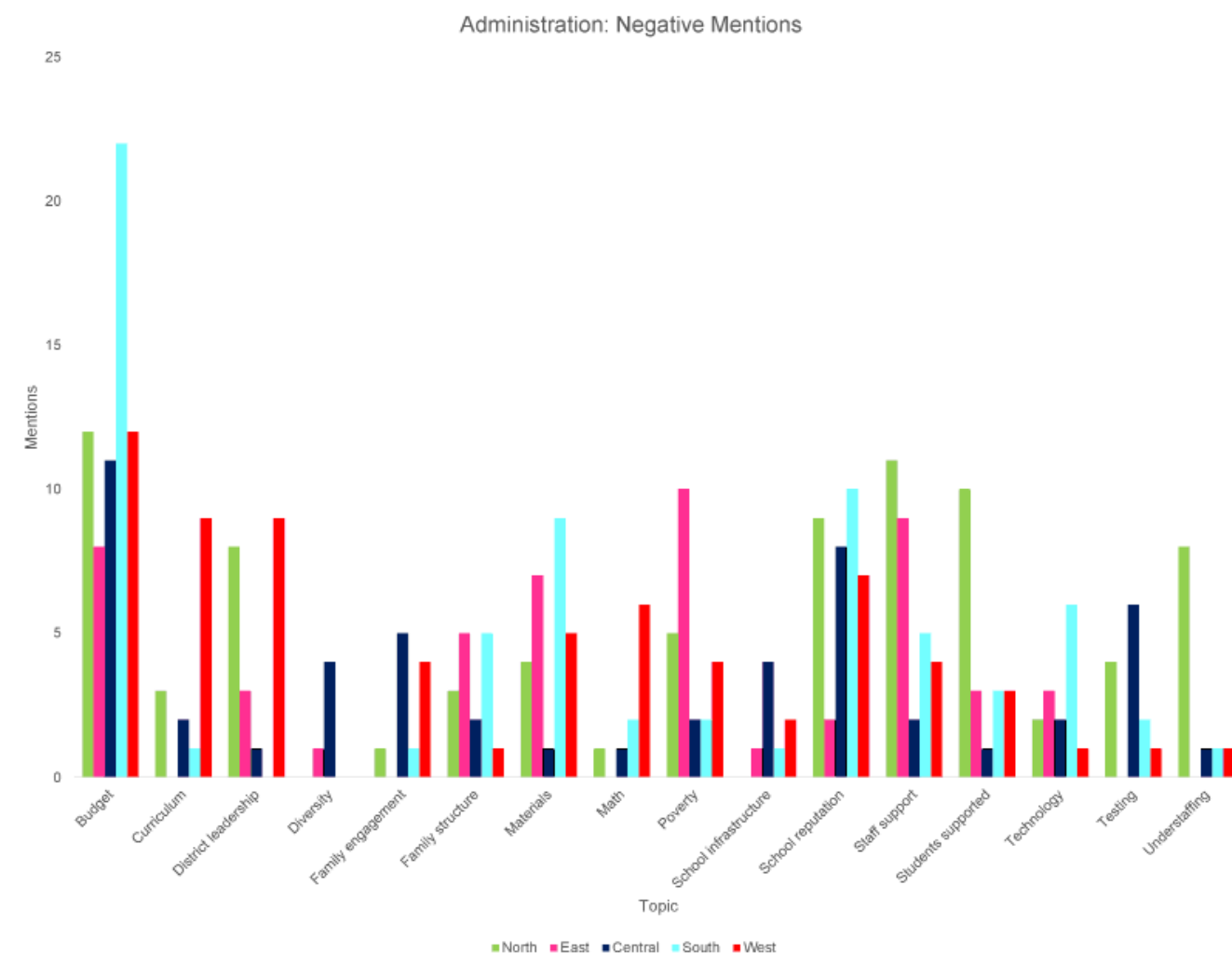
Figure 19: Administration - Positive Mentions



A few topics stand out in this first graph: administrators in every region positively mentioned students supported, staff, school culture, and family engagement. In North and West Manchester, staff are mentioned positively by administrators with quite a bit more frequency than in other regions. Diversity is mentioned positively most often in Central Manchester – whereas, it is never mentioned positively in East Manchester.

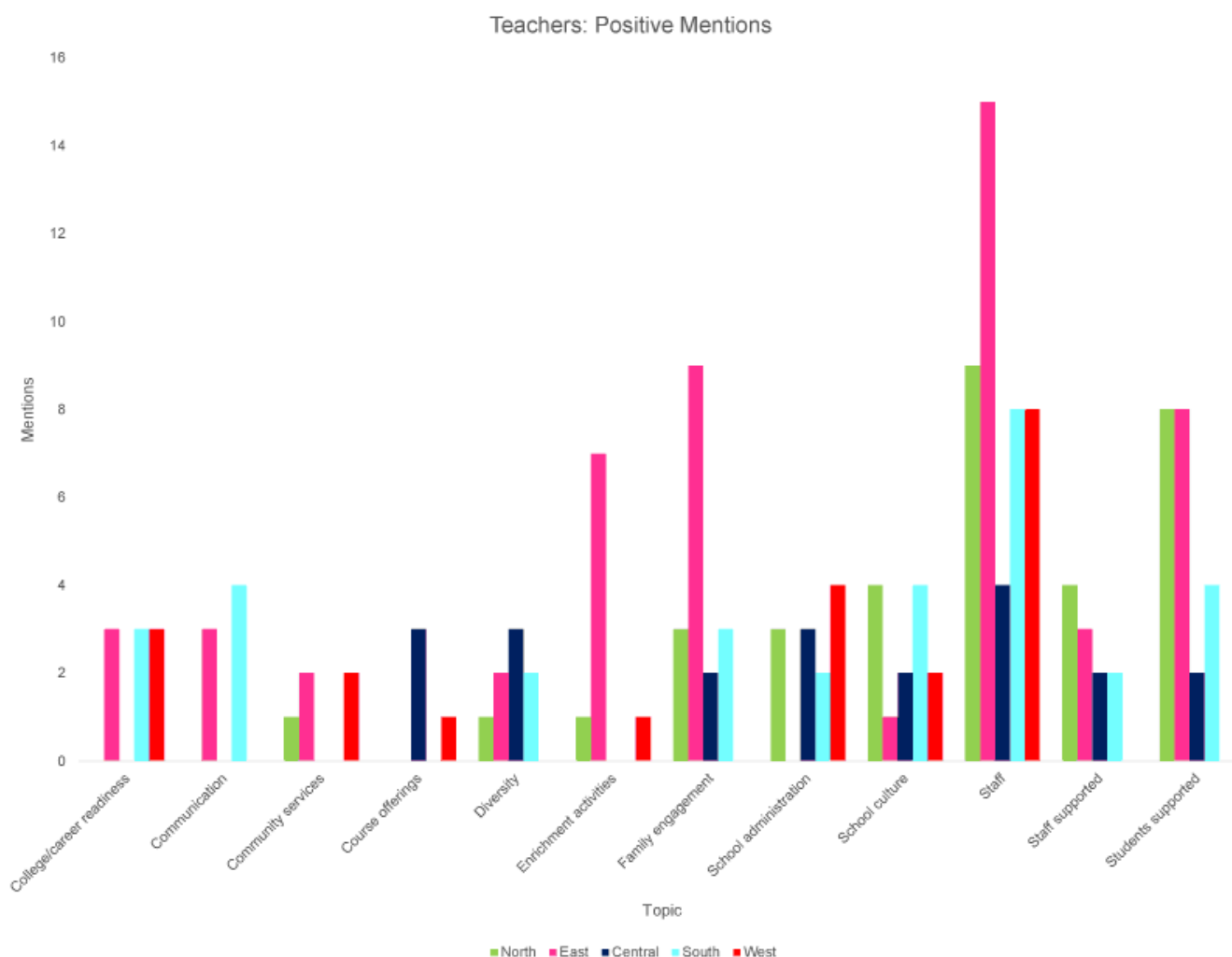


Figure 20: Administration - Negative Mentions



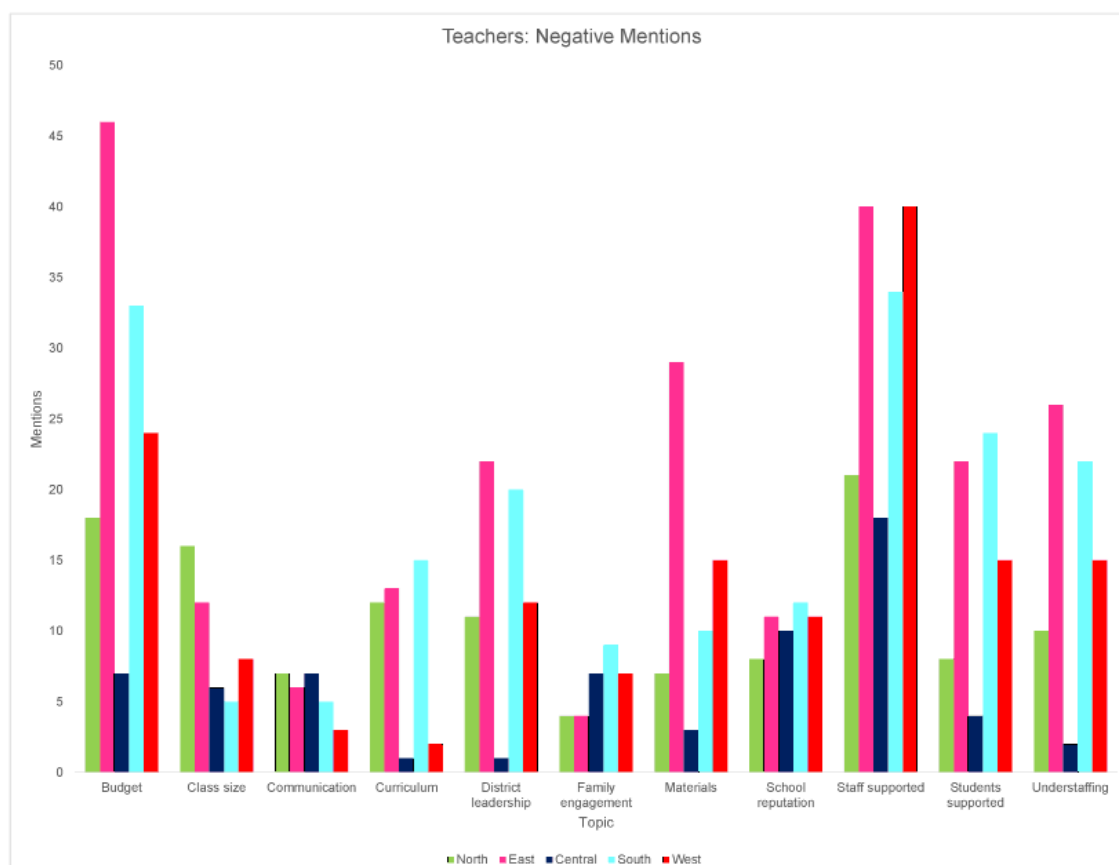
This graph shows negative mentions by administrators. It also demonstrates that many of the topics that concern administrators in any one region likely concern administrators in the other areas of Manchester. Some topics to note include understaffing – which is mentioned negatively most frequently in North Manchester, and never mentioned negatively in East Manchester by administrators.

Figure 21: Teachers - Positive Mentions



This graph shows the frequency of positive mentions by teachers in the five geographic regions. Staff is mentioned positively by teachers in all geographic regions, as is school culture. Communication is mentioned positively by teachers in East and South Manchester only, whereas course offerings are mentioned positively in Central and West Manchester only.

Figure 22: Teachers - Negative Mentions



Similar to the administrator graph, teachers in any given region elevate concerns that appear to be shared across the district. In fact, all topics that are in the most frequently mentioned negatively list are mentioned negatively at least once across all regions. Some notable standouts in this graph include understaffing, which is mentioned frequently in East and South Manchester; class size is mentioned most frequently in North Manchester by teachers; and family engagement is mentioned most frequently in South Manchester, though relatively evenly across all regions.

When analyzing the data similarly for support staff in various regions, the groups were too small to draw further conclusions. We have provided the graphs for positive and negative mentions, however, as Appendices 24 and 25, respectively.

When analyzing the family affinity group across regions, groups were, again, too small - and notably, there were no West Manchester family sessions. Although Manchester Proud had offered multiple family sessions (five, across three schools) in West Manchester, all were cancelled due to zero sign-ups. We have provided the graphs as Appendices 26 for positive mentions and 27 for negative mentions.

Because student listening sessions were not specific to any school, there are no further graphs delineating geographic region. Participants shared aloud where their school was located, but their graphic organizers and responses on posters were not sufficient to analyze by region.

## Discussion

When considering the various regions of Manchester, there were quite a few commonalities: participants are concerned about the budget, and the ramifications of limited funding. This includes, but is not limited to, materials available, infrastructure, understaffing, and class sizes. Understaffing and class sizes are, of course, related – but understaffing goes deeper. Many paraprofessional positions remain unfilled in March 2019, and have been open since the beginning of the school year. These positions would not decrease class sizes, but they would, however, support both students and staff. There are some classrooms in the district that have upwards of 25, 26, 27 students under the age of 10, without a second adult available for support. Understaffing also relates to the substitute shortage, which can affect class sizes. If a school cannot find a substitute when a teacher is absent, the students need to be with someone and, at times, they are brought into other classrooms, which then increases those class sizes. And, even if for a day, this can have a tremendous impact, both on the students and on the teacher.



And while participants identified leadership at various levels within these regions - whether school administration (viewed mostly positively), or district leadership (viewed mostly negatively), the Board of School Committee was never mentioned frequently enough (positively, negatively, or overall) within a region to be within the most frequently mentioned topics.

The three school types also had a lot of similarities, often focusing, again, on the budget and the lack of resources. The elementary schools feel that they are under-resourced, and do not have the materials and resources needed. The middle schools zoomed in on the district-level leadership, as well as the impact of decisions by leadership through the budget and curriculum – or the lack of

a unified curriculum.

But the high schools deviate slightly, and this is where one begins to see a real shift: the responses focus on how students are not supported – this topic is mentioned most frequently, as well as most frequently as a positive and as a negative. Yet, it is notably more negative overall (60.3 percent of mentions), and links to the other topics also top-of-mind: school discipline and equity. These topics are virtually nonexistent in other school types – they certainly do not rank in the most frequently mentioned topics. But when looking at the individual affinity groups, the misalignment becomes clearer.

Those who work in the buildings feel the impact of a budget that they believe does not meet their needs as professionals,

or the needs of their students. They purchase their own supplies. They cover each other's classes and manage the complex task of taking on larger classes, even as numbers of paraprofessionals decline. They want to feel supported by their administration, by their union leadership, and by their district leaders, and they want consistency of supports, resources, opportunities, and professional development across every school in the district.

But students have a different experience. They are not focused on the budget or materials, but on the day-to-day policies that affect their lives: discipline that is perceived to be too harsh and/or perhaps inequitable; enrichment activities that are offered in only certain schools; course offerings that may exist in their building – but that are not accessible to every student in the building. They also want to feel better and more equitably supported by their teachers, who they sometimes perceive to deliver both expectations and supports differently, depending on what kind of student they are, or what language(s) they speak first, what color their skin is, or what challenges they experience learning. And families echo the needs of their students, though seeing the chal-

lenges and barriers as greater than what happens in any one building.

Although Manchester Proud set out to learn about the perceptions and realities within the schools by interviewing and speaking directly to individuals related to the schools, some of the most significant findings were through the process of the community engagement activity.

Overwhelmingly, educators and support staff are afraid of losing their jobs, and do not trust that they can share openly in front of anyone else affiliated with the district and that their information will remain confidential. One participant, for example, wrote on their graphic organizer: "We're afraid we'll lose our jobs. Fear in buildings. Decisions are made and no one wants to hear from teachers." Some school communities were more receptive than others, of course, to share feedback in front of their peer groups. But overall, there was concern about every level of leadership: the Board of School Committee (the group, as well as individuals), the superintendent, the assistant superintendents, the union leadership, the principal at the school, assistant principals, the union representative at schools, teacher

**...discipline that is perceived to be too harsh and/or perhaps inequitable; enrichment activities that are offered in only certain schools; course offerings that may exist in their building – but that are not accessible to every student in the building. They also want to feel better and more equitably supported by their teachers, who they sometimes perceive to deliver both expectations and supports differently, depending on what kind of student they are, or what language(s) they speak first, what color their skin is, or what challenges they experience learning.**

leads-- every level of leadership was directly addressed as being retaliatory. This is not reflected in this report and in these findings because it was shared many times by individuals who relayed their reasons for choosing not to participate in Manchester Proud sessions, or who would only participate in absolute confidence through office hours.

Another finding learned through the process was the profound impact of the teachers not having a contract. It would be easy to point to sessions that were scheduled after school as not having participation – but, in reality, it was the sessions scheduled on Election Day (November 6, 2018), a professional development day for teachers, that were largely cancelled due to zero RSVPs. In fact, six out of the nine teacher sessions that were cancelled throughout the process were scheduled for that day – and scheduled intentionally to accommodate teachers who were following “work to rule,” that is, the policy of working from the start to the end of the contract work hours, and not beyond those hours. But, teacher participation in the listening sessions ran deeper than just “work to rule” – teachers, at times, asserted that Manchester Proud was siding with the

district, or had the ability to “get the teachers their contract.” While these assertions were inaccurate, their impact on teacher engagement was nevertheless quite significant.

And finally, the outreach process for the listening sessions strongly highlighted the issue of family engagement. Schools relied on standard methods of reaching out to families: a school newsletter (if they had one), an autodialer (if they use it), a new online system for email (which some schools stopped using shortly thereafter), email blasts (when school officials remembered or had time) – but this is not family engagement. Family engage-

**...it was clear from the sign-ups and lack thereof, that the schools do not have trusting relationships with their students’ families, or a way to encourage them to participate in a process that may shine a light on elements of the school, from the perspectives of families, that would be unfavorable to the school and/or district.**

ment is building trusting relationships between school and home – all homes, and rests on the school to do so. Very few schools had clearly built relationships with the majority of their families, and most instead, relied on their PTO/PTG, which by-and-large rep-

resents a very small sample of families in any school. Manchester Proud’s intent was to offer multiple times for families to attend, as those who may not be able to attend PTO meetings, typically at night, may be able to attend during the day – but it was clear from the sign-ups and lack thereof, that the schools do not have trusting relationships with their students’ families, or a way to encourage them to participate in a process that may shine a light on elements of the school, from the perspectives of families, that would be unfavorable to the school and/or district.

These three learnings have one strong commonality: a lack of

trusting relationships across all affinity groups in the district -- from students and families, to educators and school leaders. And perhaps the reader already knows this, but to make it more clear-- there are no groups within Manchester School District Schools, within the build-

ings or outside the buildings, that are universally trusted. And that has profound implications for morale across the district, the planning process, and the eventual implementation of the plan.

But still, there is reason for great hope: whether participants engaged directly in this process, or shared their rationale for not engaging, they expressed a significant amount of investment in what is to come for the Manchester School District - and from the Manchester Proud movement. No one - not one person - expressed a desire for the district to continue to operate and function as it is.

**Participants overwhelmingly said that even through all of the challenges, which are myriad and complex, they have stayed.**

These sessions allowed individuals to share, of course, but also to learn: they are part of a larger community within their building, their district, and their city, working to move Manchester forward.



**Manchester Proud Listening Session**  
Use this space to write down your thoughts/opinions/ideas about the statements.

1. "I feel that my school is doing a good job."	2. "I feel that Manchester Public Schools are doing a good job."
3. "My dream/wish for my school is..."	4. "My dream/wish for Manchester Public Schools is..."



## Appendix 2: Overall Responses, All Topics

	MENTIONS			
TOPIC	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	9	9
Attendance	4	10	21	35
BOSC	1	7	75	83
Budget	2	22	259	283
Class size	3	0	92	95
College & career readiness	16	18	24	58
Common Core	0	0	1	1
Communication	26	4	60	90
Community engagement	21	16	29	66
Community services	16	6	19	41
Course offerings	28	4	41	73
Crime	0	3	7	10
Curriculum	13	19	95	127
District leadership	18	20	135	173
Diversity	29	40	41	110
Drugs	0	7	34	41
Enrichment activities	49	17	70	136
Equity	3	7	93	103
Family engagement	62	47	54	163
Family structure	0	10	34	44
Graduation	2	8	10	20
Health	3	4	6	13
Housing	3	0	12	15
Leveling	9	8	26	43
Materials	4	4	136	144
Math	6	5	36	47

## Appendix 2: Overall Responses, All Topics (continued)

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Multilingual/ELL	6	23	31	60
Nutrition	11	6	39	56
Poverty	0	47	43	90
Professional development	15	14	53	82
Project-based learning	14	6	9	29
Salary	0	0	54	54
School administration	48	17	50	115
School culture	78	13	55	146
School discipline	16	9	137	162
School infrastructure	0	4	73	77
School reputation	12	12	102	126
School safety	12	5	48	65
Special education	9	15	49	73
Staff	145	28	59	232
Staff support	30	18	239	287
Standards	13	15	67	95
STEM	5	3	15	23
Student support	90	54	170	314
Taxes	3	11	20	34
Teacher contract	0	9	55	64
Technology	6	4	106	116
Testing	4	10	45	59
Transportation	5	5	24	34
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	6	20	34	60
Turnover	3	7	22	32
Understaffing	0	1	127	128
Union	0	2	3	5

## Appendix 3: Prompt 1 Responses, All Topics

### "I feel that [my school] is doing a good job."

	MENTIONS			
TOPIC	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	2	2
Attendance	3	0	1	4
BOSC	0	0	3	3
Budget	2	3	31	36
Class size	1	0	8	9
College/career readiness	6	0	4	10
Common Core	0	0	0	0
Communication	14	0	15	29
Community engagement	6	0	2	8
Community services	4	0	0	4
Contract	0	1	9	10
Course offerings	6	0	3	9
Crime	0	0	0	0
Curriculum	1	1	7	9
Discipline	6	1	23	30
District leadership	0	2	12	14
Diversity	10	2	3	15
Drugs	0	0	2	2
Enrichment activities	11	0	4	15
Equity	2	0	19	21
Family engagement	27	1	7	35
Family structure	0	1	1	2
Graduation	0	1	2	3
Health	1	0	1	2
Housing	1	0	1	2
Infrastructure	0	0	4	4
Leveling	1	0	2	3

## Appendix 3: Prompt 1 Responses, All Topics (continued)

### "I feel that [my school] is doing a good job."

	MENTIONS			
TOPIC	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Literacy	2	1	0	3
Materials	3	0	14	17
Math	1	1	2	4
Multilingual/ELL	2	1	2	5
Nutrition/food	0	0	1	1
Poverty	0	0	4	4
Professional development	3	2	4	9
Project-based learning	1	0	1	2
Reputation	4	1	12	17
Salary	0	0	4	4
School administration	21	1	12	34
School culture	27	0	7	34
School safety	7	1	3	11
Special education	2	0	6	8
Staff	44	4	12	60
Staff supported	10	2	30	42
Standards	6	2	6	14
STEM	0	0	1	1
Students supported	33	4	22	59
Taxes	0	0	0	0
Tech	0	1	6	7
Testing	1	0	2	3
Transportation	1	1	0	2
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	2	0	3	5
Turnover	0	0	3	3
Understaffing	0	0	18	18
Union	0	0	0	0

## Appendix 4: Prompt 1: Additional Comments from Graphic Organizers - "I feel that [my school] is doing a good job."

"We can see a lot of activities going on in school that gives us confidence that my kids are doing well. Best part I like is Wednesday folders they have all the required communication. My baby is learning good things like communicating with people, learning new things, etc."

"The textbook [sic] are really outdated. The teachers are racists. There is a lot of behavior and drug problems. The teachers pick favorites. The school is too cold most of the time. There's a lot of pipe problems...human waste fell through the ceiling. The lessons are boring. The teachers just keep talking and never try anything new. Teachers don't explain what you have to do for a fire drills [sic] or lockdown drills. Teacher [sic] don't try to understand their students and they yell at you. It's like hunger games every day. There are lots of fights. Some classes are too big (28-32)."

"Our leadership does not ensure that any type of curriculum is happening w/in the academic classrooms. We need more leadership"

"Agree, given the circumstances. Lack of \$, support, resources, and conditions of school. Great teachers are making the most out of a poor situation. Our students (who put the energy in) can compete and excel at college level. The staff make leaps and bounds w/students considering what they arrive w/for skills and knowledge. Unfortunately, there is a lack of strategic planning and direction so individual teachers need to identify critical needs of learners. We act in isolation."

"Whenever something bad is posted on social media, the administrators tries [sic] to help the student and has an assembly so everyone is aware it's wrong."

"Individual teachers are committed but there isn't support from the city (contract issues, not enough paras/don't pay paras enough, not enough teachers/class sizes) and community (our profession is looked up negatively as a result of bipartisan politics.)"

"Education upper level students, fostering a culture of inclusion."

"I feel that it is doing some good things but still lacking. Such as the teacher contract and the funding overall. Also, the midterm schedule is a mess"

"There is a lot of room for improvement regarding accurate data collection, goal setting, and growth monitoring."

## Appendix 4: Prompt 1: Additional Comments from Graphic Organizers - "I feel that [my school] is doing a good job."

"In some aspects we are, but I feel that there needs to be more consistency with discipline and consequences."

"I feel that my daughter loved coming to school-- she has a nice social network. There are parts of the curriculum that I wish were stronger-- and I wish that teachers were given more training opportunities/resources"

"However, I feel the elementary schools need more support and help to prepare for students to enter middle school. Ex: math skills, reading skills"

"We've been in a tough place the past few years - our students are greatly affected by outside influences. We are moving in the right direction-- school, families, community. Partnerships-- meeting the needs of students -- utilizing outside resources."

"The PTG supports enrichment activities we might not otherwise have."

"Yes, with the resources currently available. Not enough support for teachers struggling w/diff behaviours in classroom. Admin stretched too thin, support staff-- to thin, para & subs"

"No. This week, nope. Just yesterday and today. We had two fights involving firearms (kind of, it's firecrackers) and an arrest. Today, more officers showed up at our school. The facility is not the problem but the students are. My English teacher got hurt and bled in my classroom from trying to separate the situation."

"PBL received positively for the most part"

"Proud of the fact that all the teachers that I have come in contact with here really do care about the kids (every single kid). There is a portrayal in the Union Leader of Manchester teachers not caring and not being high quality teachers."

"Identifying areas of concern, access to administration, team autonomy, trust from higher ups"

"It's a positive school, doing awesome things for kids academically and through all of the great extra-curriculars. But-- there are things missing -- example: unified arts."

"...in overwhelming us"

## Appendix 5: Prompt 2 Responses, All Topics - "I feel that Manchester Public Schools are doing a good job."

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	1	1
Attendance	0	1	6	7
BOSC	0	2	21	23
Budget	1	1	45	47
Class size	0	0	8	8
College/career readiness	0	0	3	3
Common Core	0	0	1	1
Communication	7	0	11	18
Community engagement	4	1	1	6
Community services	2	1	3	6
Contract	0	1	9	10
Course offerings	3	0	4	7
Crime	0	0	1	1
Curriculum	0	1	18	19
Discipline	0	0	15	15
District leadership	7	11	45	63
Diversity	2	1	6	9
Drugs	0	0	1	1
Enrichment activities	3	1	4	8
Equity	0	1	13	14
Family engagement	2	5	3	10
Family structure	0	0	4	4
Graduation	0	1	1	2
Health	0	0	0	0
Housing	1	0	0	1
Infrastructure	0	0	1	1
Leveling	1	2	6	9

## Appendix 5: Prompt 2 Responses, All Topics - “I feel that Manchester Public Schools are doing a good job.” (continued)

	MENTIONS			
TOPIC	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Literacy	2	0	10	12
Materials	0	1	21	22
Math	0	1	8	9
Multilingual/ELL	1	0	2	3
Nutrition/food	1	0	1	2
Poverty	0	1	4	5
Professional development	4	0	2	6
Project-based learning	0	1	1	2
Reputation	1	1	15	17
Salary	0	0	12	12
School administration	5	2	8	15
School culture	3	0	8	11
School safety	1	0	9	10
Special education	0	2	10	12
Staff	11	1	13	25
Staff supported	1	0	48	49
Standards	1	0	16	17
STEM	0	0	1	1
Students supported	4	1	28	33
Taxes	0	0	5	5
Tech	0	0	8	8
Testing	0	1	6	7
Transportation	0	0	9	9
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	0	0	3	3
Turnover	0	0	2	2
Understaffing	0	0	20	20
Union	0	0	1	1



## **Appendix 6: Prompt 2: Additional Comments from Graphic Organizers - "I feel that Manchester Public Schools are doing a good job."**

"It appears the educational experience for students is uneven depending on the school and the subject."

"Coaches biased"

"We lack a unifying vision for the district. We underfund education which results in poor staffing and support for students. We do not communicate our goals to the community, i.e. why is public education important. There is a disconnect between the BOSC, the district admin. and the Aldermen."

"Biased teachers"

"I've taught at all three levels in this district. I've seen some unacceptable deficiencies. The most troubling trend is a lack of hiring. Positions remain unfilled, which at the least create [sic] a safety hazard. Elementary and Middle School class sizes are too high. We can't fundraise ourselves out of this problems. We need more support."

"Cyberbullying, some students joke about suicide"

"Somewhat. Great kids, a lot of struggles that create barriers. Also to be to be expected w/the districts' barriers (i.e. tax cap not being realistic for the needs this city has)"

"All students get in trouble when some students are bad"

"Connecting with organizations/community resources"

"District office is dysfunctional. Too many administrators. Not enough teachers. Class size to [sic] large. Over the cap set by school board and admin. No curriculum. No focus on academics"

"People who never worked in schools setting policy."

"Helping such a wide range of students with so many different needs and backgrounds"

"Access to district human resources. Superintendent is a known quality"

"No. They are stuck in traditional learning styles. They need to be moved to outside of the box thinking. Bare minimum."

## Appendix 6: Prompt 2: Additional Comments from Graphic Organizers - “I feel that Manchester Public Schools are doing a good job.” (continued)

“Consistent discipline - PBIS [Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports] = change culture/climate”

“Trying to have grade level schools be more consistent across the city”

“We are living in a world of haves and have nots -- federally funded schools receive so much more training with regard to teachers and receive an abundance of resources. The non-Title 1 schools are not provided with equitable opportunities.”

“Too many new initiatives, not enough time to see them through”

“Regroup/re-elect new school members - dysfunctional. Educators not politicians”

“They need to figure out this “teacher strike” thing because it’s affecting students negatively”

“No, the school board isn’t listening to the students. Also, the schools are SO [sic] divided its a competition between schools.”

“Teachers work hard. Considering scores, academics, and not title funds, I think it should be excellent. Professional school--most professional I’ve encountered in the city.”

“I do not feel that the students we get have the basics from elementary and jr. high. Possibly teaching to “tests” and other fads are taking teachers’ time from drilling basics in.”

“In starting to change the PR about the schools. They need to publish and self-promote more of the student success via social media”

## Appendix 7: Prompt 3 Responses, All Topics - “My hope/dream for [my school] is...”

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	0	0
Attendance	0	0	2	2
BOSC	0	0	5	5
Budget	0	1	26	27
Class size	0	0	30	30
College/career readiness	0	0	5	5
Common Core	0	0	0	0
Communication	2	1	8	11
Community engagement	0	2	3	5
Community services	0	0	7	7
Contract	0	0	5	5
Course offerings	0	0	9	9
Crime	0	0	0	0
Curriculum	0	0	14	14
Discipline	0	1	20	21
District leadership	0	1	4	5
Diversity	0	4	8	12
Drugs	0	0	0	0
Enrichment activities	0	1	26	27
Equity	0	0	19	19
Family engagement	2	3	8	13
Family structure	0	0	1	1
Graduation	0	0	1	1
Health	0	0	0	0
Housing	1	0	1	2
Infrastructure	0	1	22	23
Leveling	1	0	7	8

## Appendix 7: Prompt 3 Responses, All Topics - “My hope/dream for [my school] is...” (continued)

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Literacy	1	0	4	5
Materials	0	2	28	30
Math	0	0	4	4
Multilingual/ELL	0	0	7	7
Nutrition/food	0	0	3	3
Poverty	0	0	0	0
Professional development	1	1	8	10
Project-based learning	0	0	3	3
Reputation	0	0	9	9
Salary	0	0	5	5
School administration	0	3	10	13
School culture	0	2	15	17
School safety	0	1	5	6
Special education	0	0	9	9
Staff	1	1	13	15
Staff supported	1	2	33	36
Standards	0	0	13	13
STEM	0	0	7	7
Students supported	0	1	33	34
Taxes	0	0	1	1
Tech	0	0	34	34
Testing	0	0	4	4
Transportation	0	0	2	2
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	1	0	11	12
Turnover	0	0	2	2
Understaffing	0	0	35	35
Union	0	0	0	0

## Appendix 8: Prompt 3 Additional Comments from Graphic Organizers - “My hope/dream for [my school] is...”

“Continued funding for the school to improve and keep up with needs. Positive moral [sic] amongst staff passed on to students.”

“Keeps building individualized learning options. Offers more after school groups/activities.”

“Sense of community to continue to grow making it safe and enjoyable place for all of its students. Reconnect w/Manchester community.”

“To redistrict to be able to balance social, economic, mental health issues”

“Students ready for the real world by teaching them the basic necessities to survive in life. Anything from balancing a checkbook to knowing how to change a tire, to unclogging the toilet. The basics! Also to teach this [sic] children what doesn’t get taught at home. I.e. how to be a parent, a moral person.”

“We need a principal that listens to its staff. We are told to use the chain of command and never know where our concerns, questions, end up.”

“Competency based progression. Teachers given the time and training to bring real world problems into the classrooms through PBL”

“To add business partnerships and expand on our integrated college/high school classes as well as add a better transition process for non-college students (work studies, job shadowing for credit).”

“Educational resources, more teachers and support staff, supported by adults, not just looked down on, more community involvement in positives not just negatives. Transparency and honesty.”

“Increased support for the diversity of the students/cultural competency of teachers/increased translators to improve family communication”

“Para support”

“Time--we need uninterrupted blocks of time to work together in our departments to design high quality rigorous lessons that produce results.”

“More diversity among teachers and staff”

## Appendix 8: Prompt 3 Additional Comments from Graphic Organizers - "My hope/dream for [my school] is..." (continued)

"More instructional classes for paraprofessionals that can be done when teachers have in-service days."

"That every voice will be heard and teachers continue to be there for kids-- even the hardest ones to reach-- get parents involved"

"To embrace all learners and provide opportunities for all students to reach their potential"

"Respect from students in the building"

"More collaboration time, more prep time, more tech, admin & teacher climate change, more time for essentials (reading, math, etc., recess!!, alternative school!!)"

"More guidance counselors -- a lot of students just need someone to talk to, and often ask to have lunch with us (we use that time to run around making copies and send parent emails or call parents - do not see any classroom teachers just sitting in the Teacher Room eating for 20 minutes--ever)."

"Principal that is proud to be here, resources for classrooms, training for teachers (they have barely any prof dev) [sic]"

"Equality: services that are available in other schools is [sic] not [sic] available here."

## Appendix 9: Prompt 4 Responses, All Topics - "My hope/dream for Manchester Public Schools is..."

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	2	2
Attendance	0	0	1	1
BOSC	1	0	28	29
Budget	0	0	34	34
Class size	0	0	8	8
College/career readiness	0	0	4	4
Common Core	0	0	0	0
Communication	0	1	17	18
Community engagement	0	1	5	6
Community services	0	1	2	3
Contract	0	1	8	9
Course offerings	1	0	4	5
Crime	0	0	0	0
Curriculum	0	0	12	12
Discipline	0	0	8	8
District leadership	1	3	17	21
Diversity	0	2	4	6
Drugs	0	0	0	0
Enrichment activities	0	2	8	10
Equity	1	1	17	19
Family engagement	1	1	6	8
Family structure	0	0	1	1
Graduation	0	0	3	3
Health	0	0	0	0
Housing	0	0	0	0
Infrastructure	0	0	12	12
Leveling	0	1	0	1

## Appendix 9: Prompt 4 Responses, All Topics - “My hope/dream for Manchester Public Schools is...” **(continued)**

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Literacy	0	0	6	6
Materials	0	0	11	11
Math	0	0	3	3
Multilingual/ELL	0	2	4	6
Nutrition/food	0	0	1	1
Poverty	0	0	4	4
Professional development	0	0	8	8
Project-based learning	0	0	1	1
Reputation	0	0	10	10
Salary	0	0	15	15
School administration	1	1	3	5
School culture	0	0	3	3
School safety	0	0	7	7
Special education	0	0	2	2
Staff	0	0	5	5
Staff supported	0	0	23	23
Standards	0	0	7	7
STEM	0	0	1	1
Students supported	0	2	16	18
Taxes	0	2	4	6
Tech	0	0	12	12
Testing	1	0	7	8
Transportation	0	0	1	1
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	0	0	3	3
Turnover	0	0	1	1
Understaffing	0	0	2	2
Union	0	0	0	0



## Appendix 10: Prompt 4: Additional Comments from Graphic Organizers - "My dream/wish for MPS is..."

"For our community to feel proud of our schools, not embarrassed or bitter."

"Real top-down leadership/vision to be valued [sic] by the city and its officials"

"Define its purpose and create longevity in meeting its goals."

"New school board"

"Better advertise resources to students and families in LANGUAGES spoken there, too many families lack resources that they could get if we could take the language barrier out of the equation."

"FUNDING!!!, collaboration across SPED [special education], more OTs [occupational therapists] PTs [physical therapists], speech, respect educators as professionals"

"Not siloed -- share innovative ideas"

"ELO's are not consistent. Electives are limited-- for someone who wants to take. Across the district electives were limited"

"Truly collaborate (superintendent's office, board, school admin)"

"No overcrowded classrooms, IEPs actually being met, more support for students below grade level, resources - i.e. maps w/o Soviet Union on them, books that are updated, pencils, etc."

"Become a school district that parents want to send their kids to, because we are meeting the needs of the students."

"Wrap around education. Engage families, looks at education across the city rather than school-by-school. Fully fund and support education."

"Remove the tax cap. Invest in education and the students. Treat educators like professionals. Attract sending towns again. Become leader in innovative techniques and methods. Provide 21st century training to the staff, celebrate student achievement."

"We are able to rebuild the reputation of Manchester School District"

## Appendix 11: Administration Responses, All Topics

	MENTIONS			
TOPIC	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	2	2
Attendance	1	9	8	18
BOSC	0	5	3	8
Budget	0	16	65	81
Class size	0	0	9	9
College/career readiness	6	16	0	22
Common Core	0	0	0	0
Communication	3	2	2	7
Community engagement	10	13	12	35
Community services	6	4	4	14
Contract	0	5	15	20
Course offerings	7	1	6	14
Crime	0	3	6	9
Curriculum	5	15	15	35
Discipline	4	7	5	16
District leadership	6	3	21	30
Diversity	15	29	5	49
Drugs	0	7	13	20
Enrichment activities	9	11	0	20
Equity	0	5	7	12
Family engagement	28	35	11	74
Family structure	0	9	16	25
Graduation	2	5	1	8
Health	2	4	3	9
Housing	0	0	8	8
Infrastructure	0	3	8	11
Leveling	1	4	0	5

## Appendix 11: Administration Responses, All Topics (continued)

	MENTIONS			
TOPIC	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Literacy	1	9	5	15
Materials	1	0	26	27
Math	2	2	10	14
Multilingual/ELL	1	18	1	20
Nutrition/food	2	6	5	13
Poverty	0	45	23	68
Professional development	4	11	13	28
Project-based learning	10	5	0	15
Reputation	4	9	36	49
Salary	0	0	7	7
School administration	5	9	2	16
School culture	37	11	3	51
School safety	2	3	3	8
Special education	5	13	6	24
Staff	47	14	4	65
Staff supported	16	11	31	58
Standards	3	12	7	22
STEM	1	3	0	4
Students supported	34	40	20	94
Taxes	2	9	7	18
Tech	1	2	14	17
Testing	2	8	13	23
Transportation	3	4	3	10
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	3	20	3	26
Turnover	3	7	8	18
Understaffing	0	1	11	12
Union	0	2	2	4

## Appendix 12: Teacher Responses, All Topics

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	6	6
Attendance	0	1	7	8
BOSC	0	0	28	28
Budget	2	1	128	131
Class size	1	0	47	48
College/career readiness	9	2	11	22
Common Core	0	0	0	0
Communication	7	1	28	36
Community engagement	4	1	13	18
Community services	5	1	9	15
Contract	0	2	18	20
Course offerings	4	2	7	13
Crime	0	0	0	0
Curriculum	1	3	43	47
Discipline	1	2	50	53
District leadership	4	8	66	78
Diversity	8	3	14	25
Drugs	0	0	9	9
Enrichment activities	9	1	17	27
Equity	2	0	29	31
Family engagement	17	6	31	54
Family structure	0	1	14	15
Graduation	0	2	8	10
Health	1	0	1	2
Housing	1	0	2	3
Infrastructure	0	0	23	23
Leveling	4	1	5	10

## Appendix 12: Teacher Responses, All Topics (continued)

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Literacy	2	3	14	19
Materials	0	2	64	66
Math	2	2	23	27
Multilingual/ELL	2	1	10	13
Nutrition/food	1	0	3	4
Poverty	0	1	13	14
Professional development	7	3	35	45
Project-based learning	2	0	7	9
Reputation	7	3	52	62
Salary	0	0	28	28
School administration	12	6	33	51
School culture	13	1	26	40
School safety	6	0	10	16
Special education	1	0	26	27
Staff	44	2	10	56
Staff supported	11	6	153	170
Standards	4	1	35	40
STEM	0	0	9	9
Students supported	22	8	73	103
Taxes	1	0	7	8
Tech	0	0	47	47
Testing	2	2	12	16
Transportation	0	0	10	10
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	1	0	20	21
Turnover	0	0	9	9
Understaffing	0	0	75	75
Union	0	0	0	0

## Appendix 13: Support Staff Responses, All Topics

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	1	1
Attendance	1	0	5	6
BOSC	0	1	14	15
Budget	0	2	57	59
Class size	0	0	29	29
College/career readiness	1	0	5	6
Common Core	0	0	0	0
Communication	4	0	14	18
Community engagement	2	1	7	10
Community services	4	1	8	13
Contract	0	2	8	10
Course offerings	0	0	5	5
Crime	0	0	1	1
Curriculum	1	1	15	17
Discipline	4	0	35	39
District leadership	4	3	28	35
Diversity	1	8	5	14
Drugs	0	0	1	1
Enrichment activities	2	1	9	12
Equity	1	1	6	8
Family engagement	5	2	10	17
Family structure	0	0	5	5
Graduation	0	0	1	1
Health	0	0	0	0
Housing	1	0	3	4
Infrastructure	0	1	10	11
Leveling	0	2	3	5

## Appendix 13: Support Staff Responses, All Topics (continued)

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Literacy	2	1	12	15
Materials	1	1	31	33
Math	0	0	1	1
Multilingual/ELL	2	1	9	12
Nutrition/food	0	0	2	2
Poverty	0	1	6	7
Professional development	2	0	10	12
Project-based learning	1	1	4	6
Reputation	1	0	20	21
Salary	0	0	16	16
School administration	16	3	7	26
School culture	8	1	4	13
School safety	1	0	16	17
Special education	3	2	17	22
Staff	22	1	21	44
Staff supported	1	1	73	75
Standards	1	1	16	18
STEM	0	0	1	1
Students supported	6	5	38	49
Taxes	0	0	5	5
Tech	0	1	15	16
Testing	0	0	3	3
Transportation	0	1	3	4
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	1	0	16	17
Turnover	0	0	3	3
Understaffing	0	0	35	35
Union	0	0	0	0

## Appendix 14: Family Responses, All Topics

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	0	0
Attendance	2	0	0	2
BOSC	1	1	13	15
Budget	0	3	17	20
Class size	0	0	8	8
College/career readiness	0	0	0	0
Common Core	0	0	1	1
Communication	9	1	13	23
Community engagement	2	1	0	3
Community services	1	0	1	2
Contract	0	0	7	7
Course offerings	6	0	8	14
Crime	0	0	0	0
Curriculum	0	0	5	5
Discipline	2	0	7	9
District leadership	4	4	10	18
Diversity	2	0	0	2
Drugs	0	0	0	0
Enrichment activities	5	2	17	24
Equity	0	1	5	6
Family engagement	11	4	4	19
Family structure	0	0	2	2
Graduation	0	0	0	0
Health	0	0	0	0
Housing	1	0	0	1
Infrastructure	0	0	7	7
Leveling	1	0	1	2



## Appendix 14: Family Responses, All Topics (continued)

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Literacy	2	0	0	2
Materials	2	0	11	13
Math	0	1	1	2
Multilingual/ELL	0	1	0	1
Nutrition/food	0	0	2	2
Poverty	0	0	1	1
Professional development	2	0	0	2
Project-based learning	0	0	0	0
Reputation	0	0	3	3
Salary	0	0	3	3
School administration	11	0	2	13
School culture	13	0	1	14
School safety	2	2	2	6
Special education	0	0	4	4
Staff	9	3	4	16
Staff supported	2	0	12	14
Standards	2	1	4	7
STEM	0	0	2	2
Students supported	10	1	6	17
Taxes	0	2	1	3
Tech	0	0	9	9
Testing	0	0	2	2
Transportation	1	0	1	2
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	1	0	1	2
Turnover	0	0	1	1
Understaffing	0	0	13	13
Union	0	0	0	0

## Appendix 15: Student Responses, All Topics

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	0	0
Attendance	0	0	2	2
BOSC	0	0	20	20
Budget	0	0	15	15
Class size	2	0	7	9
College/career readiness	0	0	8	8
Common Core	0	0	0	0
Communication	3	0	5	8
Community engagement	3	0	0	3
Community services	0	0	0	0
Contract	0	0	7	7
Course offerings	11	1	15	27
Crime	0	0	0	0
Curriculum	6	0	19	25
Discipline	6	0	50	56
District leadership	0	2	14	16
Diversity	3	0	17	20
Drugs	0	0	12	12
Enrichment activities	24	2	27	53
Equity	0	0	46	46
Family engagement	1	0	5	6
Family structure	0	0	0	0
Graduation	0	1	0	1
Health	0	0	2	2
Housing	0	0	0	0
Infrastructure	0	0	25	25
Leveling	3	1	17	21

## Appendix 15: Student Responses, All Topics (continued)

	MENTIONS			
TOPIC	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Literacy	0	1	2	3
Materials	0	1	19	20
Math	2	0	2	4
Multilingual/ELL	1	2	13	16
Nutrition/food	8	0	27	35
Poverty	0	0	1	1
Professional development	0	0	1	1
Project-based learning	2	0	0	2
Reputation	0	0	1	1
Salary	0	0	3	3
School administration	7	0	8	15
School culture	9	0	21	30
School safety	2	0	17	19
Special education	0	0	2	2
Staff	30	8	21	59
Staff supported	0	0	9	9
Standards	3	0	8	11
STEM	4	0	4	8
Students supported	18	1	47	66
Taxes	0	0	1	1
Tech	5	1	23	29
Testing	0	0	15	15
Transportation	1	0	7	8
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	0	0	2	2
Turnover	0	0	2	2
Understaffing	0	0	6	6
Union	0	0	1	1

## Appendix 16: Elementary School Responses, All Topics

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	2	2
Attendance	1	1	6	8
BOSC	1	1	11	13
Budget	2	7	126	135
Class size	0	0	51	51
College/career readiness	0	2	0	2
Common Core	0	0	1	1
Communication	13	1	19	33
Community engagement	14	2	20	36
Community services	8	2	9	19
Contract	0	6	26	32
Course offerings	1	2	9	12
Crime	0	1	2	3
Curriculum	5	6	30	41
Discipline	4	4	22	30
District leadership	10	6	50	66
Diversity	10	14	8	32
Drugs	0	4	15	19
Enrichment activities	8	4	14	26
Equity	0	2	15	17
Family engagement	45	25	32	102
Family structure	0	6	19	25
Graduation	0	0	0	0
Health	2	1	2	5
Housing	2	0	9	11
Infrastructure	0	2	22	24
Leveling	4	2	4	10

## Appendix 16: Elementary School Responses, All Topics (continued)

	MENTIONS			
TOPIC	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Literacy	3	5	13	21
Materials	2	1	67	70
Math	3	2	11	16
Multilingual/ELL	3	10	10	23
Nutrition/food	3	2	7	12
Poverty	0	32	19	51
Professional development	11	7	32	50
Project-based learning	7	4	3	14
Reputation	7	6	55	68
Salary	0	0	27	27
School administration	24	7	12	43
School culture	36	8	13	57
School safety	7	4	5	16
Special education	5	6	29	40
Staff	73	10	8	91
Staff supported	24	12	132	168
Standards	4	5	20	29
STEM	1	1	6	8
Students supported	41	20	56	117
Taxes	3	7	10	20
Tech	0	1	38	39
Testing	2	2	14	18
Transportation	3	3	8	14
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	5	14	19	38
Turnover	0	7	6	13
Understaffing	0	0	55	55
Union	0	1	1	2

## Appendix 17: Middle School Responses, All Topics

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	6	6
Attendance	0	4	3	7
BOSC	0	5	23	28
Budget	0	3	61	64
Class size	2	0	10	12
College/career readiness	0	2	2	4
Common Core	0	0	0	0
Communication	4	2	11	17
Community engagement	3	5	3	11
Community services	3	2	4	9
Contract	0	2	14	16
Course offerings	3	1	10	14
Crime	0	1	2	3
Curriculum	1	8	29	38
Discipline	3	4	21	28
District leadership	7	7	42	56
Diversity	3	6	7	16
Drugs	0	2	6	8
Enrichment activities	12	3	24	39
Equity	1	2	15	18
Family engagement	9	10	9	28
Family structure	0	0	8	8
Graduation	0	1	1	2
Health	0	2	1	3
Housing	0	0	1	1
Infrastructure	0	1	12	13
Leveling	0	3	1	4

## Appendix 17: Middle School Responses, All Topics (continued)

	MENTIONS			
TOPIC	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Literacy	3	6	11	20
Materials	1	0	29	30
Math	0	1	7	8
Multilingual/ELL	2	3	1	6
Nutrition/food	3	3	7	13
Poverty	0	8	14	22
Professional development	2	5	10	17
Project-based learning	2	1	3	6
Reputation	0	4	15	19
Salary	0	0	11	11
School administration	8	3	6	17
School culture	15	1	9	25
School safety	2	1	15	18
Special education	1	4	6	11
Staff	21	6	7	34
Staff supported	1	2	41	44
Standards	3	3	7	13
STEM	0	0	4	4
Students supported	12	16	20	48
Taxes	0	1	4	5
Tech	1	1	28	30
Testing	1	5	7	13
Transportation	1	1	7	9
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	0	5	5	10
Turnover	0	0	10	10
Understaffing	0	1	27	28
Union	0	1	1	2

## Appendix 18: High School Responses, All Topics

	MENTIONS			
TOPIC	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	1	1
Attendance	3	5	10	18
BOSC	0	1	35	36
Budget	0	11	59	70
Class size	2	0	10	12
College/career readiness	16	14	22	52
Common Core	0	0	0	0
Communication	7	1	18	26
Community engagement	3	8	4	15
Community services	1	1	1	3
Contract	0	1	11	12
Course offerings	19	2	14	35
Crime	0	1	3	4
Curriculum	1	4	23	28
Discipline	5	1	56	62
District leadership	1	5	26	32
Diversity	13	14	27	54
Drugs	0	1	3	4
Enrichment activities	12	9	14	35
Equity	1	2	51	54
Family engagement	7	9	11	27
Family structure	0	4	7	11
Graduation	2	7	9	18
Health	0	1	2	3
Housing	1	0	1	2
Infrastructure	0	1	17	18
Leveling	2	0	17	19



## Appendix 18: High School Responses, All Topics (continued)

	MENTIONS			
TOPIC	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Literacy	1	1	9	11
Materials	0	2	26	28
Math	2	1	16	19
Multilingual/ELL	1	9	16	26
Nutrition/food	3	1	9	13
Poverty	0	7	7	14
Professional development	2	2	9	13
Project-based learning	3	1	1	5
Reputation	5	2	26	33
Salary	0	0	16	16
School administration	10	7	27	44
School culture	22	3	20	45
School safety	3	0	17	20
Special education	3	4	10	17
Staff	24	7	37	68
Staff supported	4	2	46	52
Standards	4	7	28	39
STEM	0	2	3	5
Students supported	27	13	61	101
Taxes	0	3	5	8
Tech	1	1	26	28
Testing	1	3	17	21
Transportation	2	0	8	10
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	1	1	3	5
Turnover	3	0	3	6
Understaffing	0	0	29	29
Union	0	0	1	1

## Appendix 19: North Manchester Responses, All Topics

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	2	2
Attendance	0	1	1	2
BOSC	0	0	13	13
Budget	2	0	37	39
Class size	0	0	24	24
College/career readiness	0	0	0	0
Common Core	0	0	0	0
Communication	0	1	10	11
Community engagement	3	3	8	14
Community services	1	1	2	4
Contract	0	4	16	20
Course offerings	1	0	7	8
Crime	0	1	0	1
Curriculum	0	2	17	19
Discipline	2	2	4	8
District leadership	2	6	26	34
Diversity	4	4	1	9
Drugs	0	1	7	8
Enrichment activities	2	1	13	16
Equity	0	1	4	5
Family engagement	7	5	7	19
Family structure	0	3	5	8
Graduation	0	0	0	0
Health	0	0	0	0
Housing	1	0	4	5
Infrastructure	0	0	4	4
Leveling	2	1	2	5

## Appendix 19: North Manchester Responses, All Topics (continued)

	MENTIONS			
TOPIC	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Literacy	0	0	0	0
Materials	0	0	17	17
Math	0	0	5	5
Multilingual/ELL	3	2	3	8
Nutrition/food	0	1	2	3
Poverty	0	8	8	16
Professional development	4	1	12	17
Project-based learning	0	0	0	0
Reputation	2	1	19	22
Salary	0	0	11	11
School administration	9	1	5	15
School culture	18	0	8	26
School safety	4	1	0	5
Special education	2	4	12	18
Staff	28	3	3	34
Staff supported	6	1	35	42
Standards	3	1	5	9
STEM	0	0	4	4
Students supported	14	4	20	38
Taxes	0	0	3	3
Tech	0	0	17	17
Testing	1	1	5	7
Transportation	1	0	1	2
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	0	2	3	5
Turnover	0	2	5	7
Understaffing	0	0	25	25
Union	0	0	1	1

## Appendix 20: East Manchester Responses, All Topics

	MENTIONS			
TOPIC	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	4	4
Attendance	0	2	5	7
BOSC	0	2	11	13
Budget	0	3	60	63
Class size	1	0	17	18
College/career readiness	3	3	2	8
Common Core	0	0	0	0
Communication	3	1	9	13
Community engagement	2	2	4	8
Community services	2	1	1	4
Contract	0	4	7	11
Course offerings	0	2	4	6
Crime	0	0	0	0
Curriculum	0	4	18	22
Discipline	0	1	20	21
District leadership	6	0	28	34
Diversity	2	8	9	19
Drugs	0	2	3	5
Enrichment activities	8	2	7	17
Equity	2	1	13	16
Family engagement	15	10	4	29
Family structure	0	1	10	11
Graduation	0	1	0	1
Health	0	1	0	1
Housing	0	0	0	0
Infrastructure	0	0	9	9
Leveling	0	2	3	5

## Appendix 20: East Manchester Responses, All Topics (continued)

	MENTIONS			
TOPIC	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Literacy	2	2	12	16
Materials	1	1	36	38
Math	1	0	6	7
Multilingual/ELL	1	1	1	3
Nutrition/food	0	1	0	1
Poverty	0	8	13	21
Professional development	3	6	12	21
Project-based learning	3	2	3	8
Reputation	2	2	16	20
Salary	0	0	9	9
School administration	2	7	5	14
School culture	5	1	4	10
School safety	0	1	7	8
Special education	0	0	9	9
Staff	22	2	4	28
Staff supported	7	5	56	68
Standards	0	2	10	12
STEM	0	0	1	1
Students supported	11	15	27	53
Taxes	2	2	4	8
Tech	0	1	21	22
Testing	1	1	5	7
Transportation	0	0	3	3
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	1	7	7	15
Turnover	0	3	4	7
Understaffing	0	1	27	28
Union	0	2	1	3

## Appendix 21: Central Manchester Responses, All Topics

	MENTIONS			
TOPIC	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	0	0
Attendance	0	2	3	5
BOSC	0	0	5	5
Budget	0	6	28	34
Class size	0	0	9	9
College/career readiness	1	2	1	4
Common Core	0	0	0	0
Communication	2	1	11	14
Community engagement	6	3	5	14
Community services	3	2	2	7
Contract	0	0	10	10
Course offerings	5	0	3	8
Crime	0	0	1	1
Curriculum	2	2	5	9
Discipline	1	2	9	12
District leadership	1	5	2	8
Diversity	12	18	5	35
Drugs	0	0	2	2
Enrichment activities	7	4	2	13
Equity	1	3	6	10
Family engagement	11	18	14	43
Family structure	0	2	3	5
Graduation	0	2	4	6
Health	1	1	2	4
Housing	0	0	2	2
Infrastructure	0	2	13	15
Leveling	1	2	1	4

## Appendix 21: Central Manchester Responses, All Topics (continued)

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Literacy	1	3	5	9
Materials	0	2	9	11
Math	1	2	5	8
Multilingual/ELL	0	9	3	12
Nutrition/food	0	2	2	4
Poverty	0	16	6	22
Professional development	3	2	4	9
Project-based learning	0	1	0	1
Reputation	2	2	20	24
Salary	0	0	4	4
School administration	8	2	8	18
School culture	15	6	2	23
School safety	3	0	2	5
Special education	2	1	4	7
Staff	12	5	0	17
Staff supported	3	4	31	38
Standards	2	2	6	10
STEM	0	0	1	1
Students supported	7	10	8	25
Taxes	1	4	5	10
Tech	0	0	5	5
Testing	0	1	7	8
Transportation	2	2	1	5
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	1	4	5	10
Turnover	2	0	4	6
Understaffing	0	0	10	10
Union	0	0	0	0

## Appendix 22: South Manchester Responses, All Topics

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	3	3
Attendance	4	2	2	8
BOSC	1	2	11	14
Budget	0	7	62	69
Class size	0	0	8	8
College/career readiness	8	9	8	25
Common Core	0	0	1	1
Communication	15	1	11	27
Community engagement	3	2	5	10
Community services	2	1	8	11
Course offerings	10	0	8	18
Crime	0	1	4	5
Curriculum	1	2	19	22
District leadership	8	4	25	37
Diversity	5	4	6	15
Drugs	0	3	5	8
Enrichment activities	2	4	12	18
Equity	0	0	16	16
Family engagement	23	7	11	41
Family structure	0	0	11	11
Graduation	2	3	3	8
Health	0	1	2	3
Housing	2	0	2	4
Leveling	1	0	1	2
Literacy	3	3	7	13
Materials	2	0	25	27
Math	0	2	11	13
Multilingual/ELL	1	9	5	15



## Appendix 22: South Manchester Responses, All Topics (continued)

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Nutrition/food	1	1	4	6
Poverty	0	6	8	14
Professional development	3	2	9	14
Project-based learning	3	3	2	8
Salary	0	0	16	16
School administration	10	3	17	30
School culture	21	4	15	40
School discipline	1	1	23	25
School infrastructure	0	2	13	15
School reputation	5	4	25	34
School safety	2	3	5	10
Special education	5	6	8	19
Staff	19	6	14	39
Staff supported	6	3	44	53
Standards	3	4	20	27
STEM	1	2	4	7
Students supported	25	7	31	63
Taxes	0	3	3	6
Teacher contract	0	0	7	7
Tech	1	1	26	28
Testing	2	3	9	14
Transportation	1	1	8	10
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	2	3	1	6
Turnover	0	0	4	4
Understaffing	0	0	26	26
Union	0	0	0	0

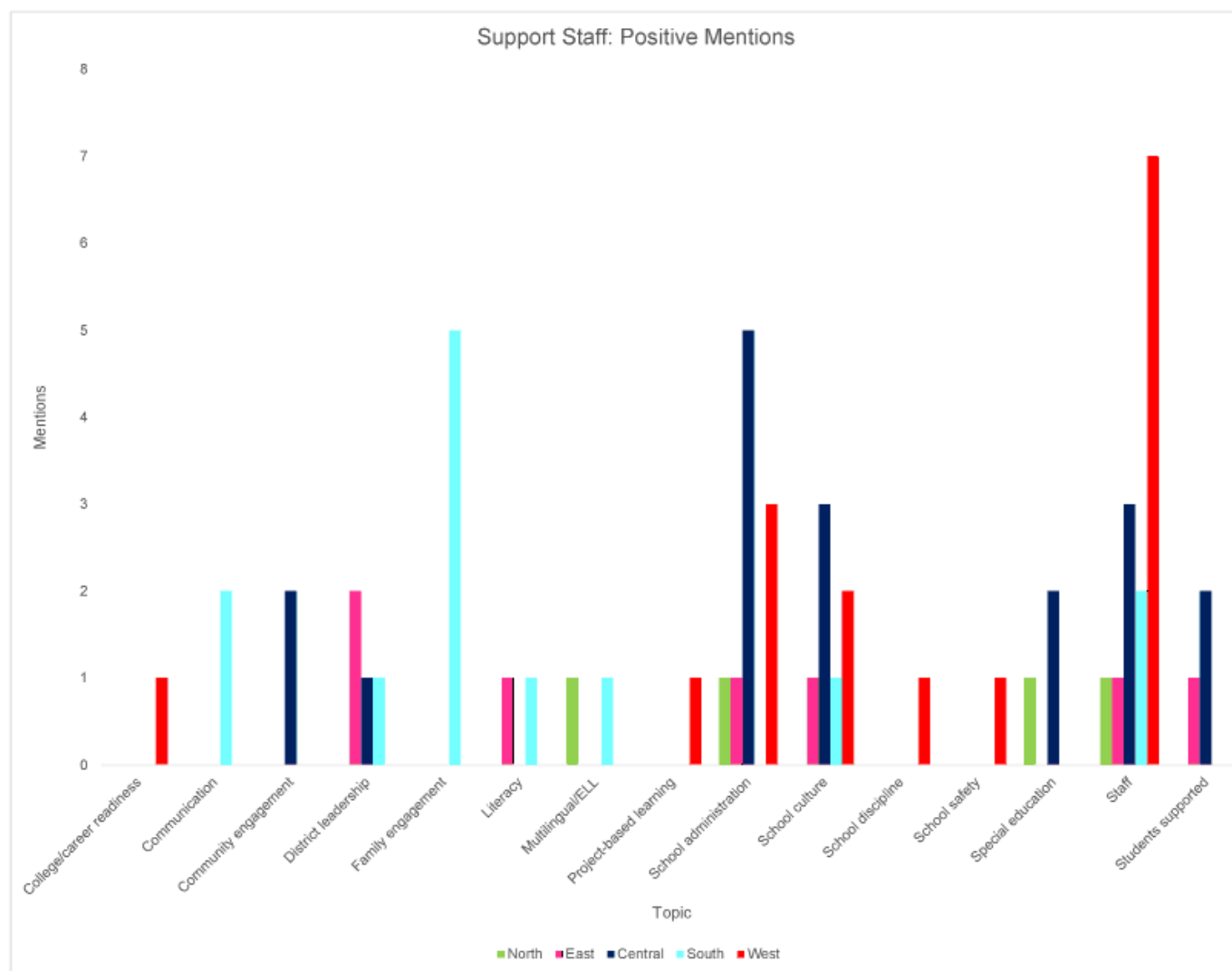
## Appendix 23: West Manchester Responses, All Topics

TOPIC	MENTIONS			
	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Aldermen	0	0	0	0
Attendance	0	3	6	9
BOSC	0	3	11	14
Budget	0	4	38	42
Class size	1	0	11	12
College/career readiness	4	4	3	11
Common Core	0	0	0	0
Communication	1	0	5	6
Community engagement	4	6	5	15
Community services	5	1	3	9
Contract	0	0	6	6
Course offerings	2	1	1	4
Crime	0	1	1	2
Curriculum	4	8	12	24
Discipline	5	3	14	22
District leadership	1	0	24	25
Diversity	3	2	1	6
Drugs	0	1	5	6
Enrichment activities	5	5	3	13
Equity	0	2	4	6
Family engagement	5	7	12	24
Family structure	0	4	5	9
Graduation	0	1	2	3
Health	2	1	1	4
Housing	0	0	3	3
Infrastructure	0	0	2	2
Leveling	2	1	1	4

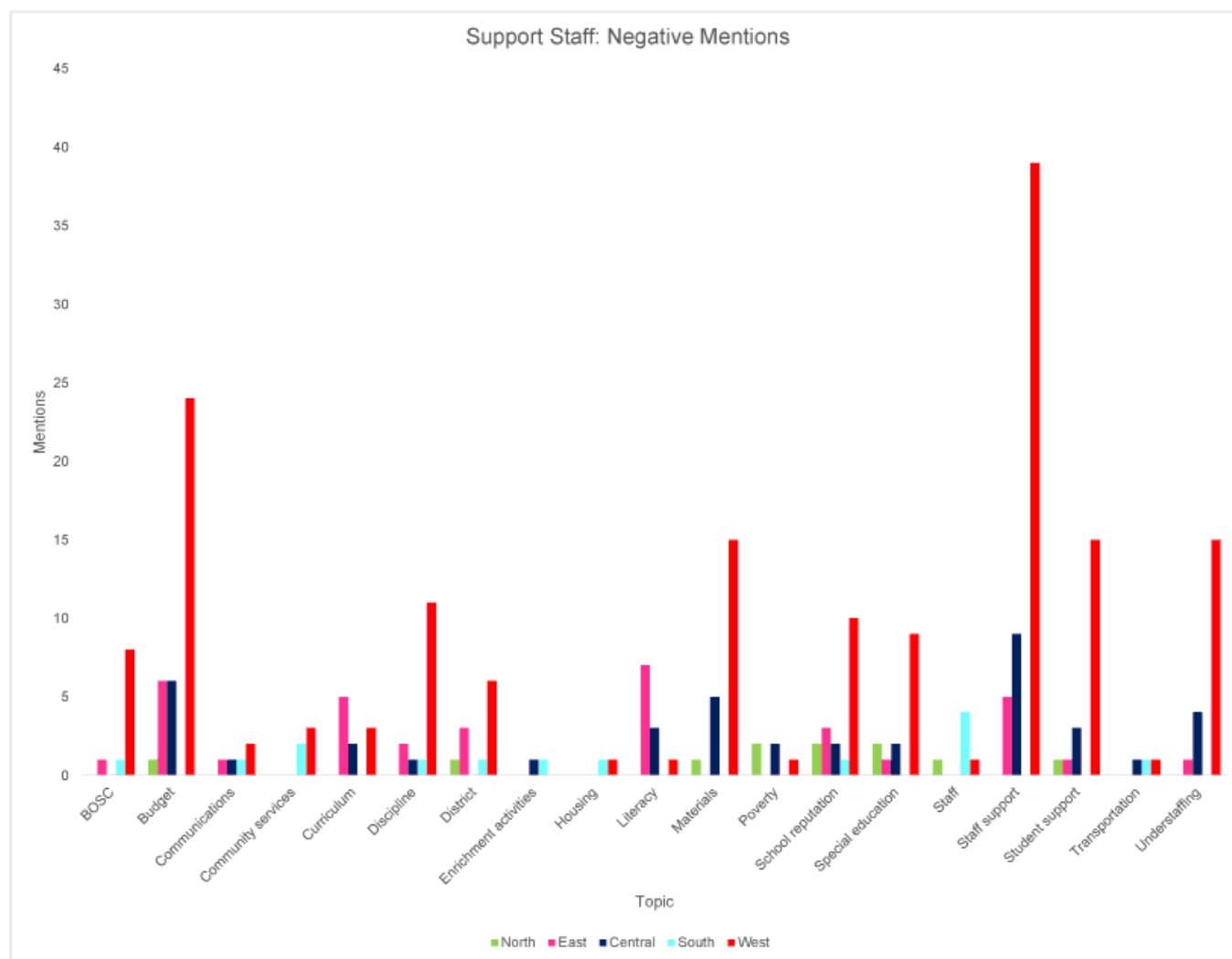
## Appendix 23: West Manchester Responses, All Topics (continued)

	MENTIONS			
TOPIC	POSITIVE	MIXED/NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	OVERALL
Literacy	1	5	5	11
Materials	0	1	21	22
Math	3	1	7	11
Multilingual/ELL	1	2	9	12
Nutrition/food	2	1	7	10
Poverty	0	8	6	14
Professional development	2	3	13	18
Project-based learning	6	0	2	8
Reputation	1	3	18	22
Salary	0	0	7	7
School administration	7	3	4	14
School culture	9	1	2	12
School safety	1	0	3	4
Special education	0	3	11	14
Staff	30	4	2	36
Staff supported	8	4	44	56
Standards	1	6	7	14
STEM	0	1	2	3
Students supported	20	15	21	56
Taxes	0	2	2	4
Tech	1	1	8	10
Testing	0	4	2	6
Transportation	0	1	4	5
Trauma-sensitive/EBD	2	4	10	16
Turnover	1	2	3	6
Understaffing	0	0	19	19
Union	0	0	0	0

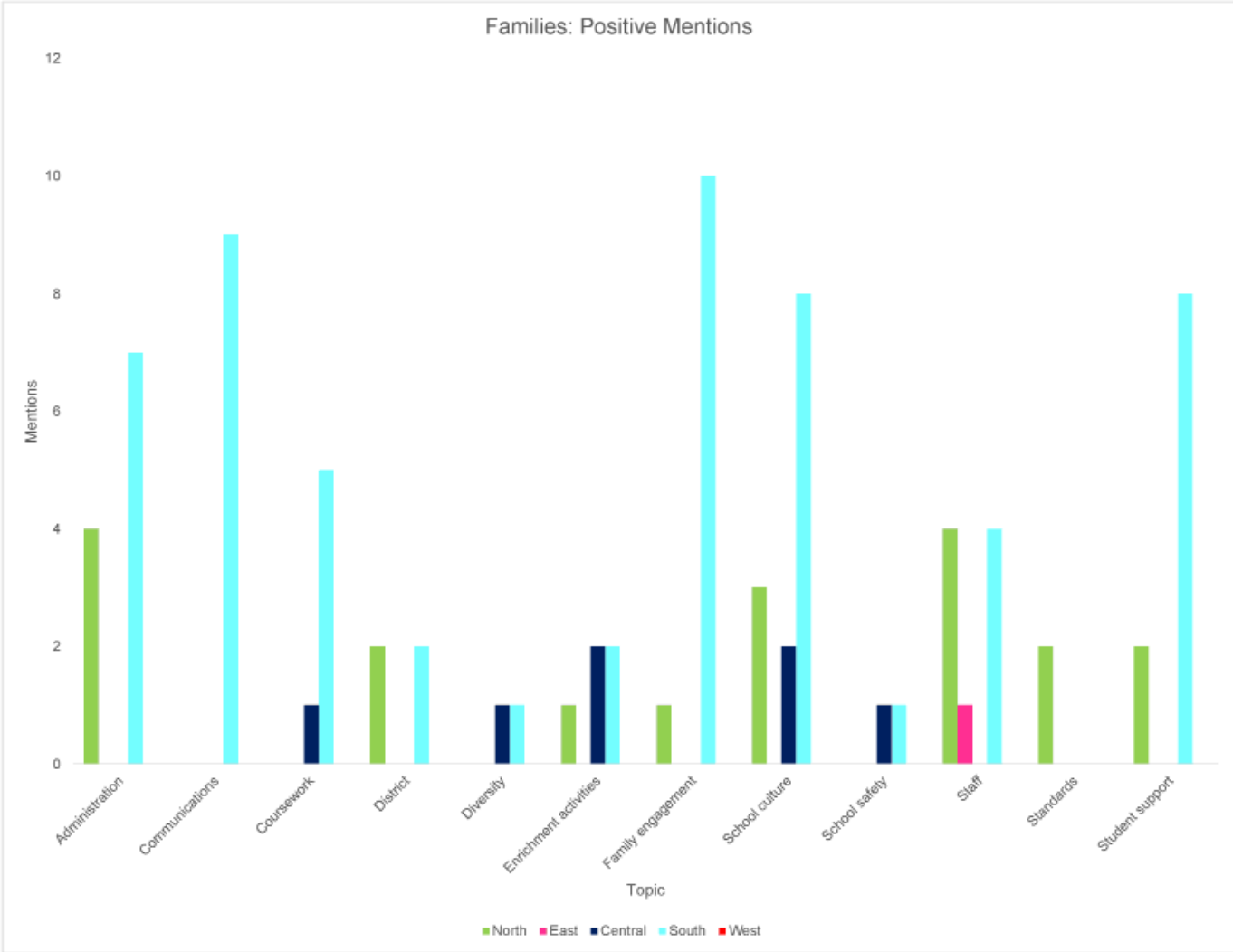
## Appendix 24: Positively Mentioned Topics for Support Staff by Geography



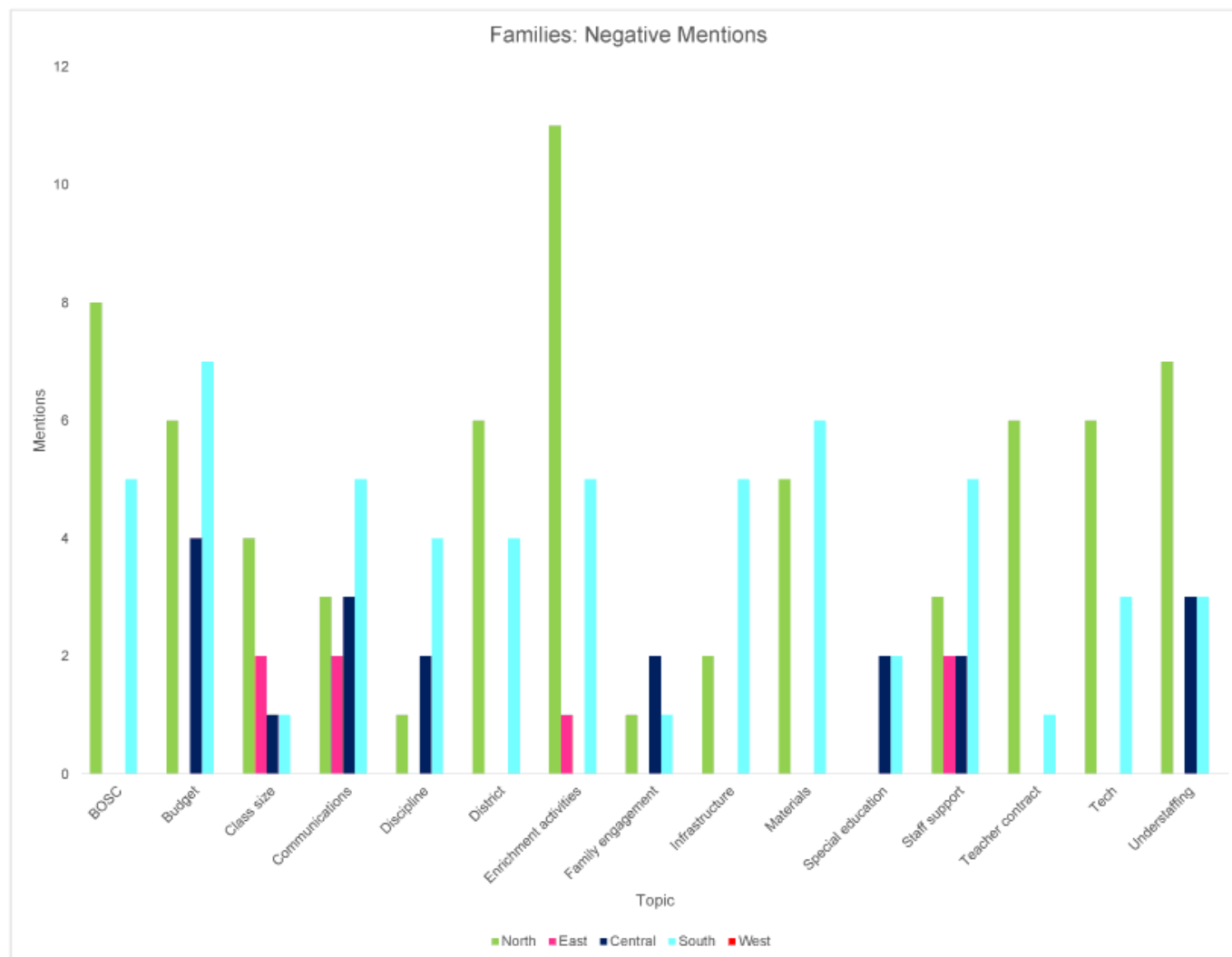
## Appendix 25: Negatively Mentioned Topics for Support Staff by Geography



# Appendix 26: Positively Mentioned Topics for Families by Geography



## Appendix 27: Negatively Mentioned Topics for Families by Geography



## Appendix 28: Reaching Higher New Hampshire

To support its efforts, Manchester Proud contracted with Reaching Higher New Hampshire (RHNH), a nonpartisan nonprofit that supports high-quality public education for all students in New Hampshire. During the reporting period, RHNH provided two services to Manchester Proud: first, it served as general project manager for Manchester Proud, with responsibility for coordinating and supporting both the Manchester Proud Champions Council and all of the community-led Work Groups; and second, RHNH led community engagement efforts to gather feedback, build public involvement with the planning process, and ultimately, create a public mandate to implement and support the new strategic plan for MSD.

Reaching Higher New Hampshire's mission is to foster support for high standards in all of our public schools, giving all New Hampshire children the opportunity to prepare for college, for immediate careers, and for the challenges and opportunities of life in the 21st Century. RHNH serves as a nonpartisan 501c3 public education policy and community engagement resource for New Hampshire students, families, educators, and elected officials.