



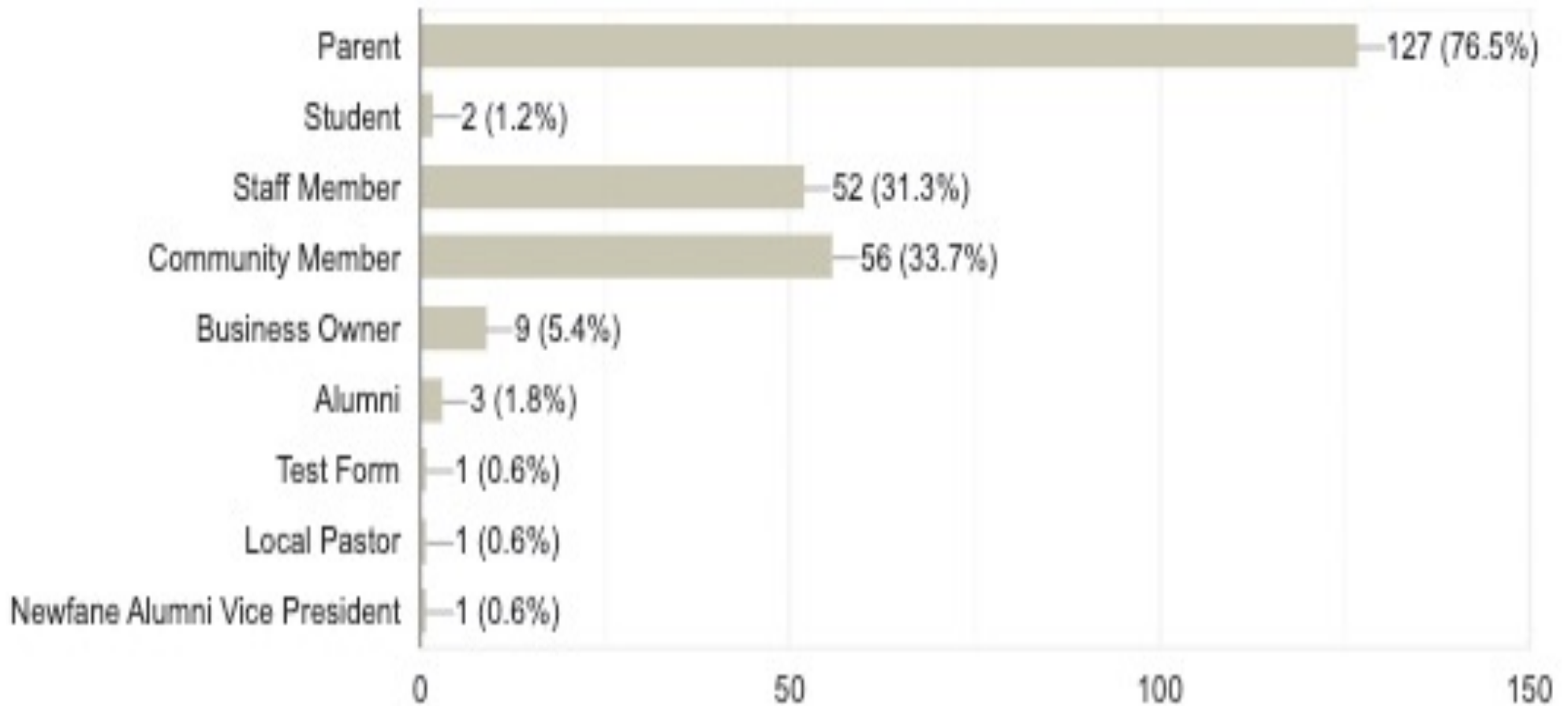
Superintendent Search- Community Survey Results Focus Group Conversation



***Anthony J. Day
Western New York Educational Service Council
February 1, 2023***

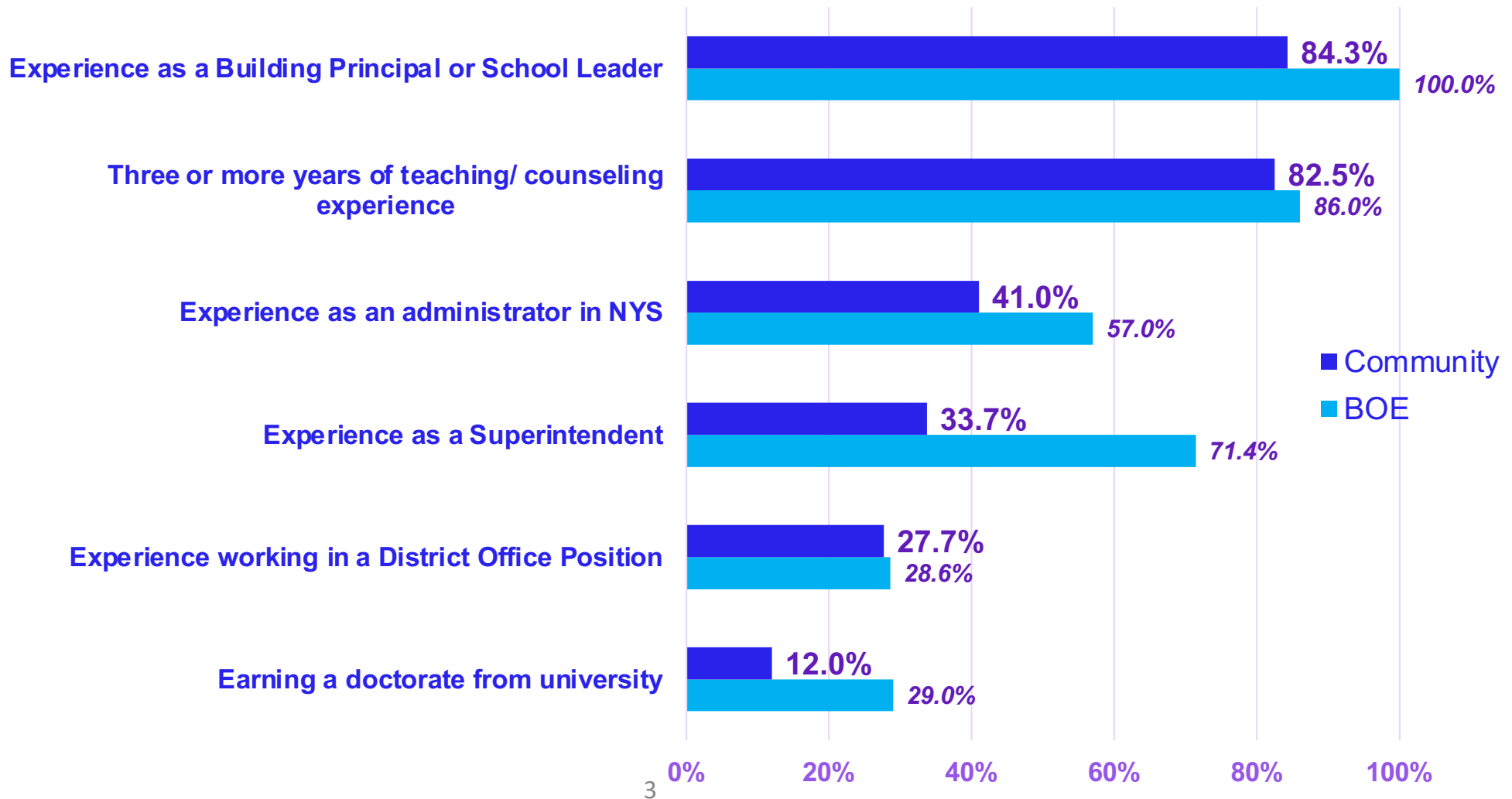
The Community Survey

Who Responded to the Survey?



The Community Survey

Which of the following PROFESSIONAL/ EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES do you believe are ESSENTIAL for the next Superintendent of the Newfane schools to possess?



The Community Survey

Which of the following PROFESSIONAL/ EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES do you believe are ESSENTIAL for the next Superintendent of the Newfane schools to possess?

Experience As A Principal

•All the participants were supportive of this idea. Most important was the advantage that experience as a Principal offers to be able to understand and support kids and teachers in classrooms.

Participant comments:

• <i>Superintendent is the next step after being a Principal</i>
• <i>Principals understand the daily ins and outs of a school. It would be best if the individual had experience at multiple levels.</i>
• <i>Principals interact with the kids- that would be important for the Superintendent.</i>
• <i>Principals are much more In tune with what kids and teachers need.</i>
• <i>Principals have a strong understanding of what kids and the staff are facing in the trenches- especially what everyone is facing since returning from the pandemic</i>

Importance of a Doctorate:

- *Doesn't matter how smart or educated they are. What can they do, what are they like is more important*

The Community Survey

Which of the following PROFESSIONAL/ EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES do you believe are ESSENTIAL for the next Superintendent of the Newfane schools to possess?

Importance of a Doctorate:

- *Doesn't matter how smart or educated they are. What can they do, what are they like is more important*

Prior Experience as a Superintendent:

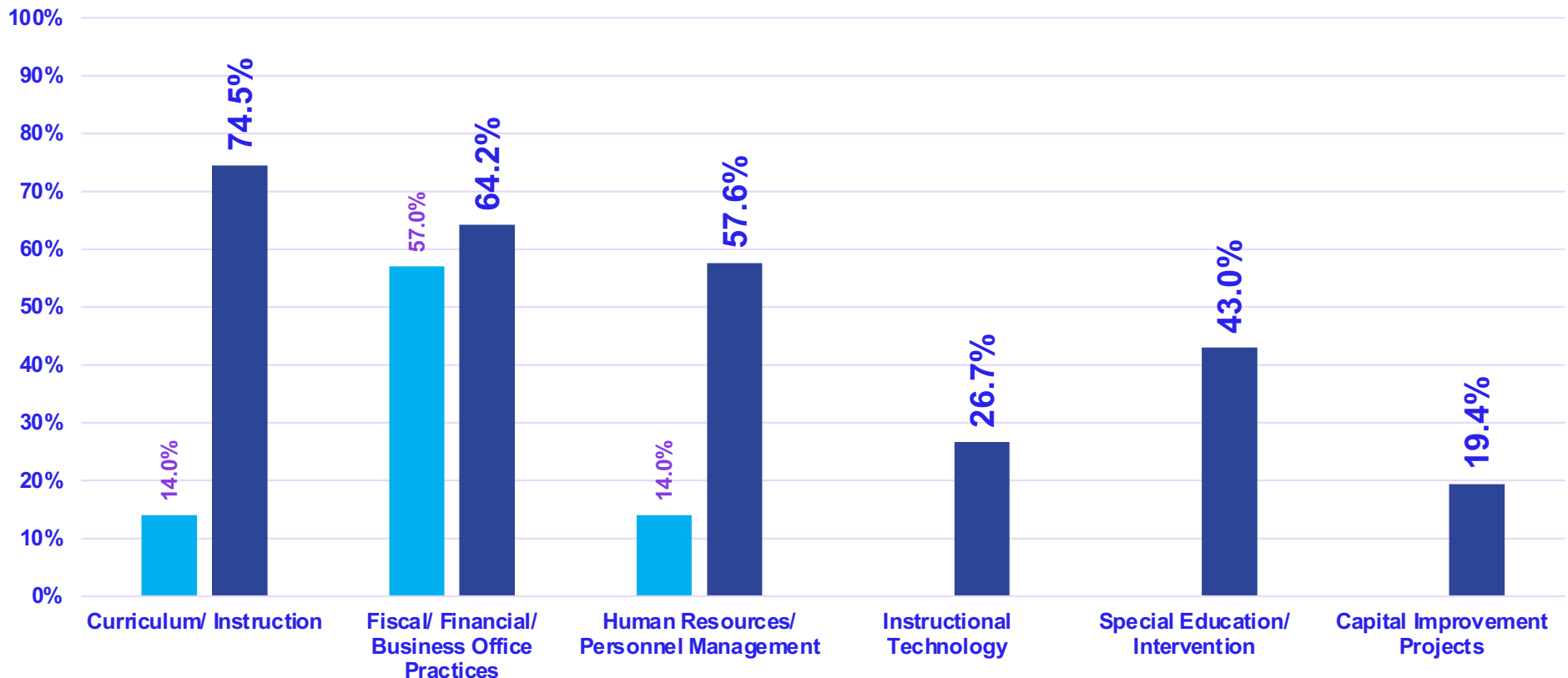
Most participants did not feel that having experience as a Superintendent was necessary; some felt it might actually work against the district as they may be more prone to leave again, or the District get a person with potential issues. Participants want someone that will commit to Newfane; willing to stay for a very long time- perhaps even the remainder of their career.

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>If already a Superintendent, they are leaving for a reason- you could be inheriting another district's problems. We don't want a revolving door.</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Don't want Newfane to be a stepping stone.</i> |
- *Don't want anyone that is going to "settle" for Newfane.*

The Community Survey

Which of the following KNOWLEDGE/ SKILL SETS will be CRITICAL/ MOST IMPORTANT for our next Superintendent of Schools to possess?

■ BOE ■ Community



The Community Survey

Which of the following **KNOWLEDGE/ SKILL SETS** will be **CRITICAL/ MOST IMPORTANT** for our next Superintendent of Schools to possess?

•Knowledge of Curriculum:

Why do you think it is so important? Participants felt that student opportunities were limited in the schools and that the Superintendent needed to be able to bring knowledge and thoughts about what could be brought to Newfane. If the new Superintendent has curricular understanding he or she can better understand and support kids and teachers. Can also understand the work in curriculum going on in the District. To lead the district, Superintendent needs to have a vision. Having curriculum knowledge helps with that.

Participant comments:

• As a smaller district, we don't have as many resources- our kids are limited due to fewer opportunities. A curricular background allows the leader to have some ideas that could be brought to Newfane
• There are other avenues out there- going through NCCC or GCCC- someone that has some ideas of what's out there.
• We are too skewed towards BOCES- too many. Kids going to BOCES because the District doesn't offer anything locally
• Need more opportunities for STEM work in our schools. Adding programming in earlier grades can rebuild interest.
• We have invested a lot in our new curriculum. We have a five year plan to implement Amplify- need someone that can understand the progression
• A passion for an idea creates/ stimulates engagement by the staff to get on board.
• How can the Superintendent help teachers if she/ he doesn't understand what good learning looks like.
• A good leader will listen to the staff for ideas and ask the right questions. Doesn't have to be great curriculum leader but does need to know how to listen to teachers/ staff
• Someone needs a vision to help us get back to where we were.
• Newfane used to be a school of excellence. Can we get back there?

The Community Survey

Which of the following **KNOWLEDGE/ SKILL SETS** will be **CRITICAL/ MOST IMPORTANT** for our next Superintendent of Schools to possess?

- **Knowledge of Business Practices and Human Resources**

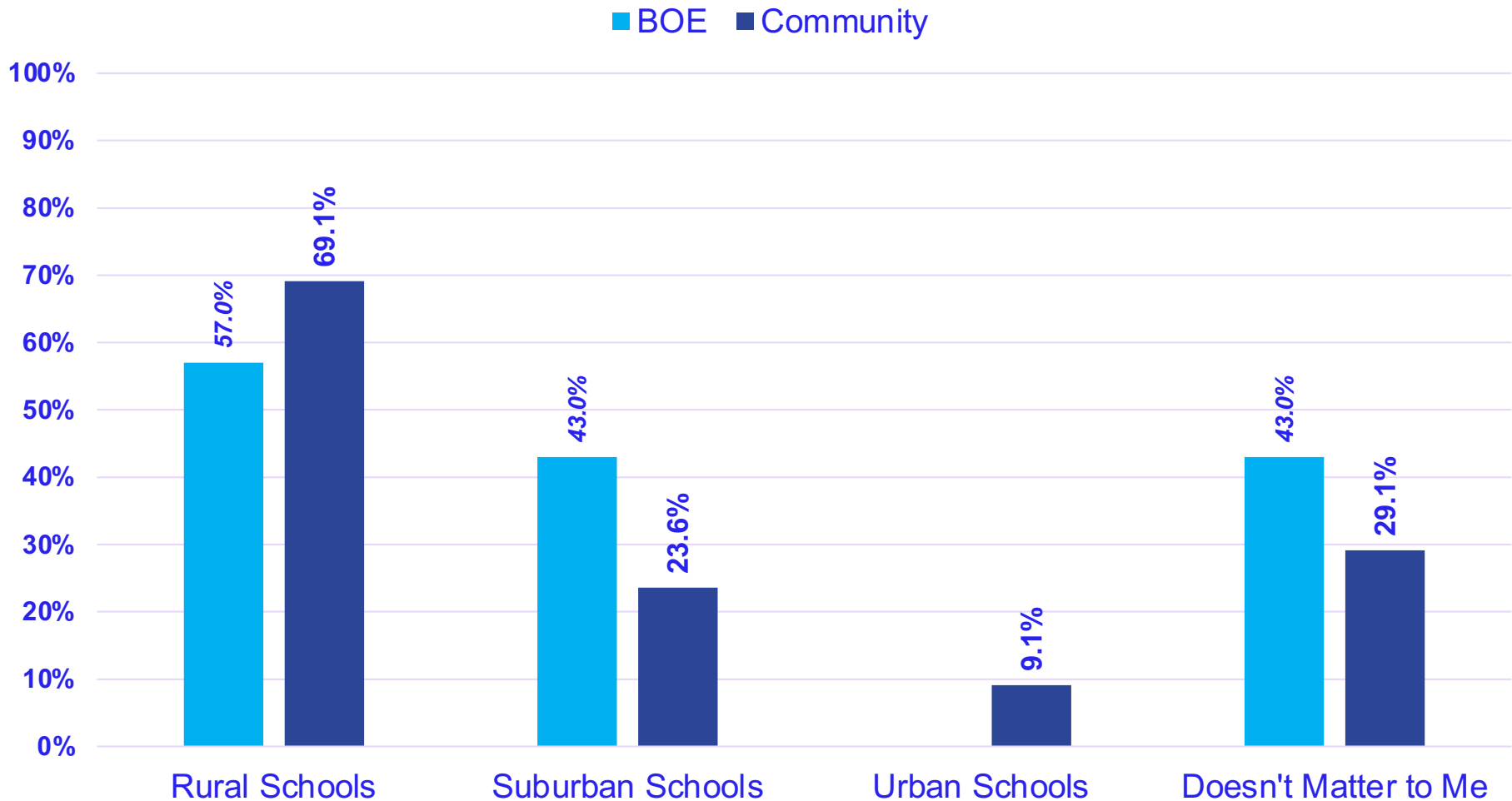
- I. Is there value in having a doctorate? No one stated that having a doctorate was important- several mentioned that it was not important. “Getting things done” was more important than this. Superintendent needs to understand business and financial part of the job out of the duty to the taxpayer. Human resource knowledge is important as getting good teachers is going to be critical. There was recognition of how all three knowledge areas- curriculum, business and human resources- are connected.

Participant comments:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Superintendent has to be knowledgeable of the laws related to human resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need to understand fiscal responsibilities- they have responsibilities to the taxpayer• You need to know what to do, who you need to hire to do it and how are you going to pay for it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Want the Superintendent to become more involved with town officials, town board, Supervisor, Town Planning Board- partner to try to attract business to build the tax base.

The Community Survey

In which of the following WORK SETTINGS/ CONTEXTS should the next Superintendent of the Newfane schools have experience?



The Community Survey

In which of the following WORK SETTINGS/ CONTEXTS should the next Superintendent of the Newfane schools have experience?

- **Rural Setting**

What do candidates need to understand about rural communities? One participant offered a thoughtful explanation of the concept focusing on the importance of relationships, integrity, hard work and community. Someone that can be honest, look people in the eye and get things done. Other participants did not offer many ideas and seemingly supported those thoughts. Several cited how well that person had done verbalizing their thoughts.

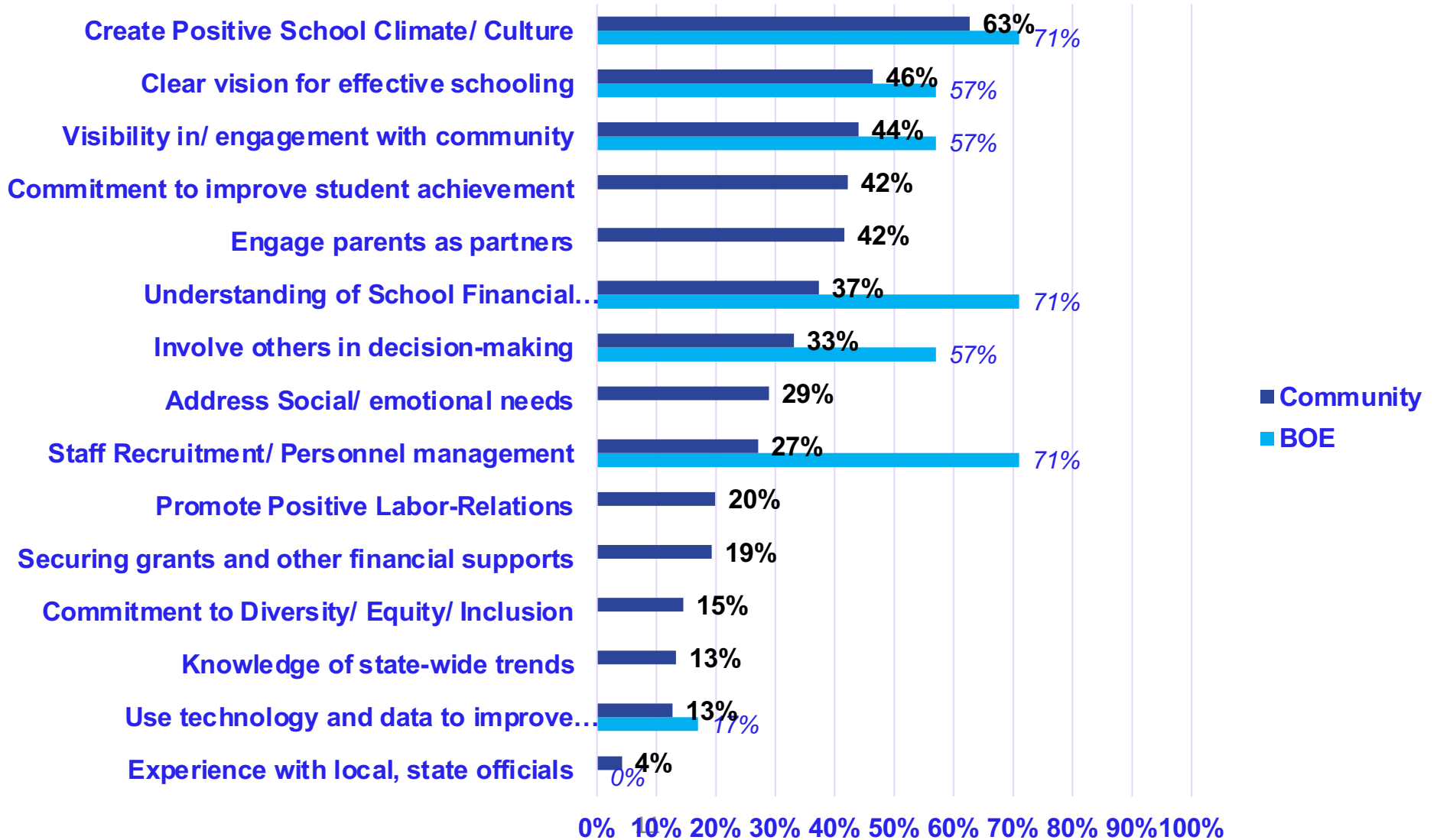
Participant comments:

- *Rural communities have a strong sense of identify. They take pride in their towns. It took four years after I moved in to gain trust. There is a set of cultural value- tight knit, blue collar, care about each other, hardwork, look people in the eye, make hard decisions, love our kids, love other kids. We tend to be more conservative, need someone to get to work and solve problems.*

The Community Survey

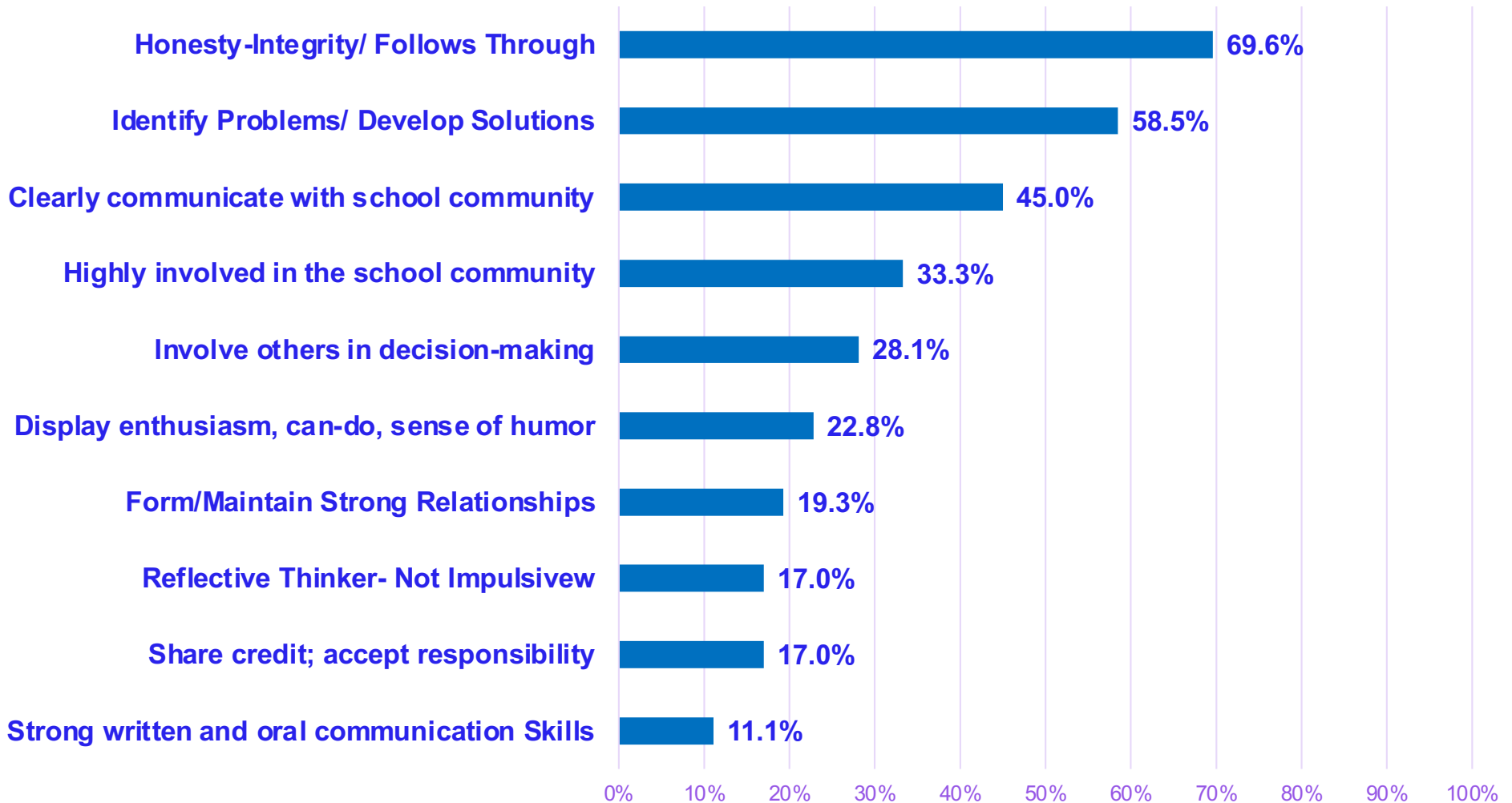
Select FOUR from the following list of PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCES that you feel are MOST IMPORTANT to the success of our next

Superintendent:



The Community Survey

Please select from the following list of PERSONAL QUALITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS that you feel are MOST IMPORTANT to the success of our next Superintendent:



The Community Survey

Please select from the following list of PERSONAL QUALITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS that you feel are MOST IMPORTANT to the success of our next Superintendent:

Personal qualities are critically important to the job.

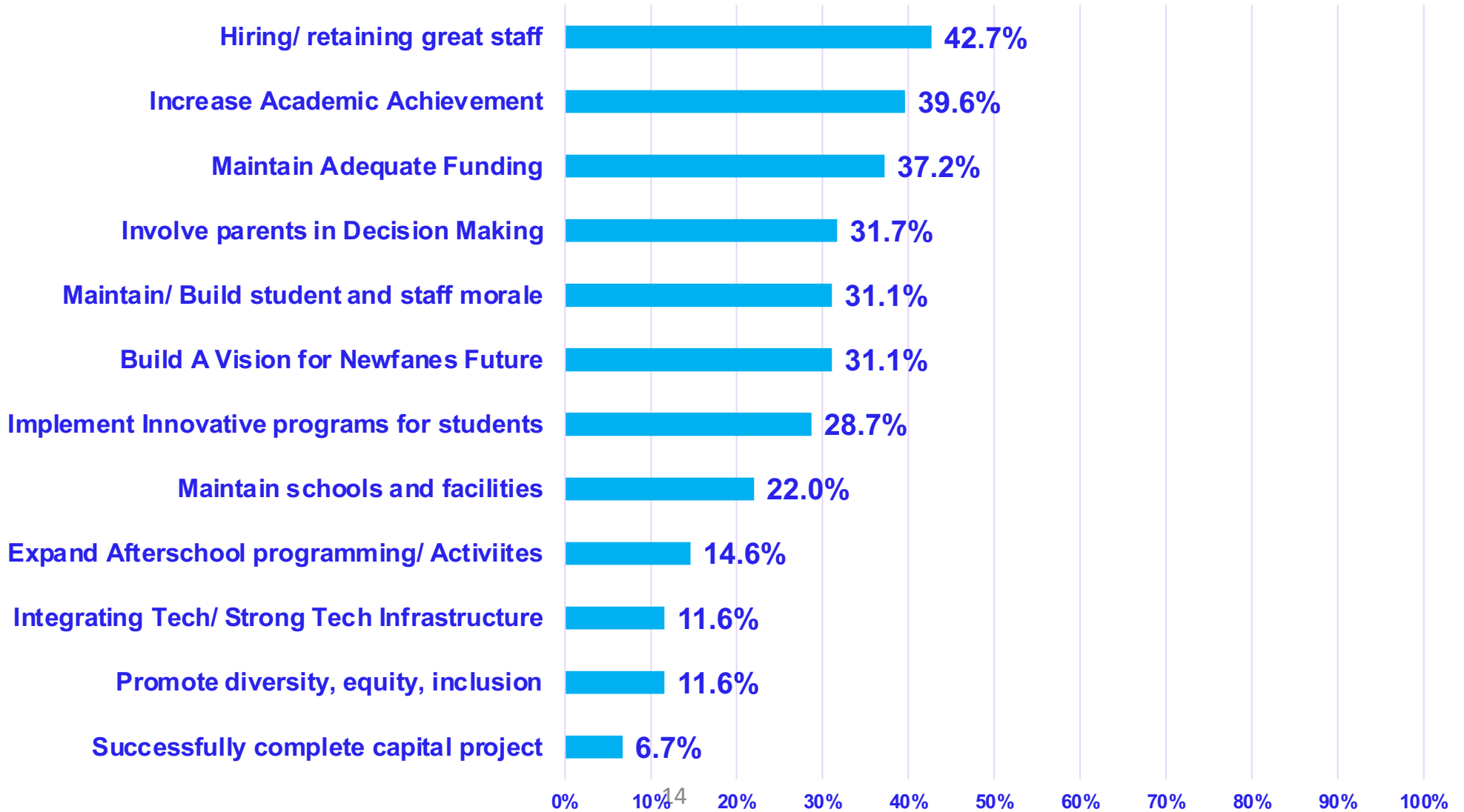
- I. This was a theme that rang true throughout the conversation. Unanimity in the belief that the power of culture and climate is the key to everything else. Critical for the Superintendent to build that and be being able to model it every day in what they do and say. Personal qualities are critical to effective leadership- especially in a small, tightly knit community. Felt both listening and speaking/ explaining were important to be Superintendent. Personal integrity and honest relationships were often stated as well as the need to listen to the community and solve problems.

Participant comments:

• Really listen to me; make me believe that I am heard. You may not make the decision I want but you will make me feel that you really listened to me.
• Listen- hear what people say. Then be honest. Don't promise what you can't or won't do.
• In tough issues like DEI- listen, engage me, show me that you hear me. Offer a response. More than thank you.
• Listen to your teachers- they are in there with the kids.
• Come in make hard decisions then follow through; don't be afraid of the consequences
• Can't brush off things that happen; have to acknowledge them and solve the problem. Can't be afraid of the parent reaction.
• Don't read off a script- talk to me; look me in the eye.
• Know your limits. If you don't know- don't make it up. Admit you don't know then go learn about it.
• Be honest- especially if you don't know.
• Need experience in problem solving. Deal with the situation and get it resolved.
• The job requires emotional intelligence- understand how people feel not just what they think.
• Who makes the decision- the Superintendent or the parents?

The Community Survey

Select up to **THREE** tasks from the list below that you feel will be the **MOST IMPORTANT CHALLENGES** facing the new Superintendent?



Concluding Thoughts....

- **Very strong congruence of BOE and Community thought.**
 - **Principal experience**
 - **Long tenure**
 - **Leadership and Personal Qualities**
- **Community had more importance attached to visioning and curricular understanding to improve opportunities and experience for students.**
- **More attuned to “career readiness” than “college and career readiness”**
- **Importance of listening as well as speaking skills.**