



Parents, teachers, and community members expressed various opportunities, or identified opportunities for the district to improve student achievement and increase support for students, especially students who receive special education and gifted and talented services. Parents also expressed appreciation for innovative practices happening within the district, such as student-led instruction and student-led conferences. Finally, families noted there is an opportunity to make transition experiences more cohesive for students from elementary school to middle school and middle school to high school.

## STUDENT ACCESS TO PROGRAMS

*“There are [career exploration programs], but, for example, there is a program students are in, but they are students who are academically advanced, and the majority are...not Hispanic and they may have more access to services than Spanish speakers.”*  
—Spanish Session Participant

Overall, 72 people attended the listening sessions, six in the Spanish sessions and 66 in the English sessions. CEI data team staff members used a collaborative analysis approach to ensure that the process was transparent, surfaced multiple interpretations, and allowed for checks on analysis (Richards & Hemphill, 2018<sup>3</sup>). The team identified a set of codes/themes prior to analysis aligned to the core categories guiding the strategic plan development, while also allowing for inductive codes to surface throughout the process. The following represents the most salient themes gleaned from the analysis process, all quotes in the following section were collected through the listening sessions.

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## SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND MENTAL HEALTH

Participants expressed appreciation that many students' schools focus on social emotional learning, and a hope that these supports will be expanded and become more uniform across the district. Several participants emphasized the importance of continued social emotional and mental health support for students, especially considering their concerns about student disengagement and the high rates of suicide in the Grand Junction community.

*"My children are called out for behavior and leadership instead of just academic success or baseline attendance."*

—English Session Participant

## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

Many participants commented on their appreciation for family engagement and communication efforts happening district-wide, and expressed a hope that these efforts continue and are expanded to reach more families. Participants especially highlighted the importance of engaging Spanish-speaking families to ensure they are aware of the resources available to them and their students, including support for post-secondary planning.

*"I think we have a strong leadership, with a vision to improve. But we need more participation from our community, we need to strengthen our collaborative groups with the community."*

- Spanish Session Participant

## TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Finally, teacher recruitment and retention were noted as key priorities in the listening sessions. Several participants emphasized the importance of supporting teachers' mental health, to prevent teacher burnout and turnover. Other participants commented on the importance of recruiting diverse staff members so the teaching workforce in the district can be more reflective of the student population.

*"Teachers are absorbing classes, doing extra work, not fully staffed for substitutes. This is a huge challenge, we're not past the COVID experience yet. They are working beyond what they can do, [and] what they get paid for."*

- English Session Participant



## FOUR CORE BEHAVIORS

D51 focuses on the whole learner to foster growth and high achievement.

D51 believes in the strengths of our people, our schools, and our communities.

D51 values individuality, inclusivity, and belonging.

D51 commits to continuous improvement.

## VISION

Engage, equip, and empower each and every student, each and every day.

## MISSION

D51 engages our community, families, and staff to deliver individualized, collaborative, and challenging educational experiences to prepare each and every student for their brightest future.