

Community Voting Initiative

UPLIFTING COMMUNITY
VOICES TO BUILD HEALTHY,
HEALING MICHIGAN SCHOOLS

Michigan
Education
Justice
Coalition



Uplifting Community Voices

2021 Michigan Education Justice Coalition Community Voting Initiative

COMMUNITY VOTING

INITIATIVE



Introduction

Between April 19, 2021 and June 30, 2021, the Michigan Education Justice Coalition (MEJC) and its coalition partners conducted an online **survey to hundreds of parents, caregivers, educators, students, and other education stakeholders across Michigan asking them to rank their priorities for how the \$6 billion in COVID relief funding for education should be used.** The survey asked respondents to rank fifteen different priorities with one of the following scores: “Do Not Fund” - 0, “Unimportant” - 1, “Moderately Unimportant” - 2, “Moderately Important” - 3, “Important” - 4, and “Very Important” - 5.

Michigan families have clear priorities about what they want from school funding. There is broad consensus statewide among Michigan residents that **mental health, wrap-around support services for families, health, technology, transportation, facilities, language justice resources, special education, inclusive curriculums, career readiness, after school programs, early childhood development and trauma responsive programs** are all priorities for funding, while **standardized testing and policing are not.**

Though Michigan is receiving \$6 billion in COVID relief for education, we must treat this as a starting point for future investment, not a panacea. We are in debt because of past policies, this money will not solve that long term problem. **Funding for Michigan’s public schools has fallen more sharply than any other state over the past 25 years.** Total revenue for Michigan schools has declined by 30 percent since 2002 when adjusted for inflation.

Students across Michigan are struggling and they are not getting the support, in terms of teachers, counselors, and support staff, that they need. Michigan must invest in equitable education for all students, and while the COVID relief funds are a good place to start, they cannot do all that needs to be done. **Michigan needs to spend more on education as part of its annual budget,** adding at least \$3.7 billion a year to adequately fund our schools, and **adopt a weighted funding formula that disperses funds based on need.** The public school system must create systems to **bring in student voices as well as those from the community,** and allow them to have a meaningful impact.

Results and Recommendations:

2021 Michigan Education Justice Coalition Community Voting Initiative

Statewide Score Averages:

How important is funding mental health services to you?	4.39
How important is funding special education to you?	4.36
How important is funding early childhood education to you?	4.24
How important is funding family support services to you?	4.23
How important is funding overcoming the technology gap to you?	4.21
How important is funding an inclusive curriculum to you?	4.19
How important is funding career readiness to you?	4.12
How important is funding facilities and infrastructure to you?	4.09
How important is funding after school programs to you?	4.04
How important is funding trauma-responsive schools to you?	4.04
How important is funding school health services to you?	3.93
How important is funding equitable transportation to you?	3.89
How important is funding language resources to you?	3.74
How important is funding more police in schools to you?	1.85
How important is funding more standardized testing to you?	1.74

Number of Responses: 1136

Responses received from:

240 school districts in MI

Final Recommendations

The Michigan Education Justice Coalition recommends the following policy action items:

- I. Fully and equitably fund our public schools**
- II. Prioritize and invest in mental health**
- III. Eliminate high-stakes, standardized testing**
- IV. Create structures for student voice and leadership**
- V. Create budgets that reflect our values**

Michigan schools and legislators should prioritize these goals if we want to give all students in this state access to high-quality, humanizing, and equitable public schools.

Statewide, what do Michigan residents want to see funded in schools?

Score Averages:

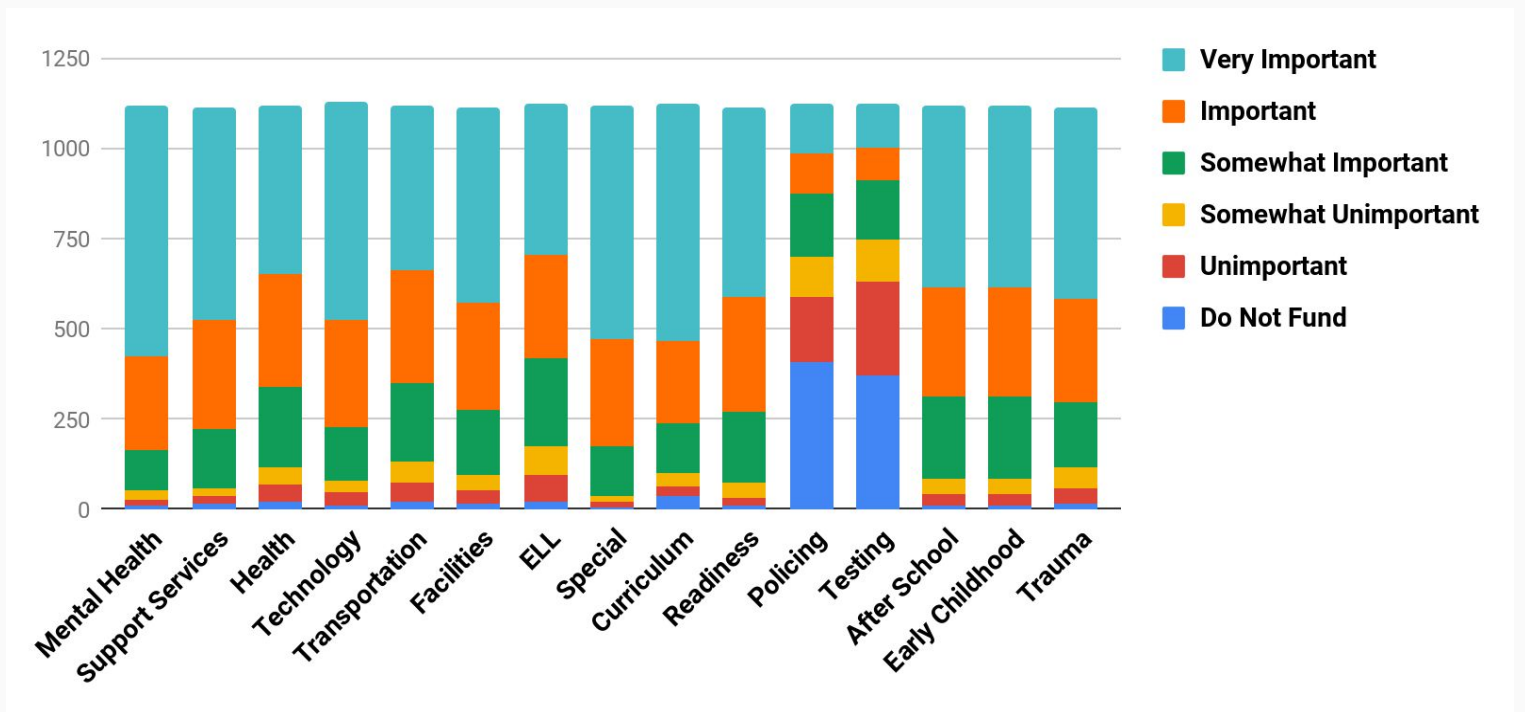
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How important is funding more police in schools to you?	1.85
How important is funding more standardized testing to you?	1.74

Number of Responses:

1136

Responses received from:

240 school districts across Michigan



RESULTS: Detroit

Score Averages:

1	Facilities and infrastructure	4.58
2	Mental health services	4.55
3	Special education	4.55
4	Overcoming the technology gap	4.55
5	Family support services	4.51
6	Early childhood education	4.50
7	Inclusive curriculum	4.48
8	Career readiness	4.42
9	After school programs	4.38
10	Trauma-responsive schools	4.32
11	Equitable transportation	4.31
12	School health services	4.25
13	Language resources	4.03
14	Police	1.67
15	Standardized testing	1.66

Summary:

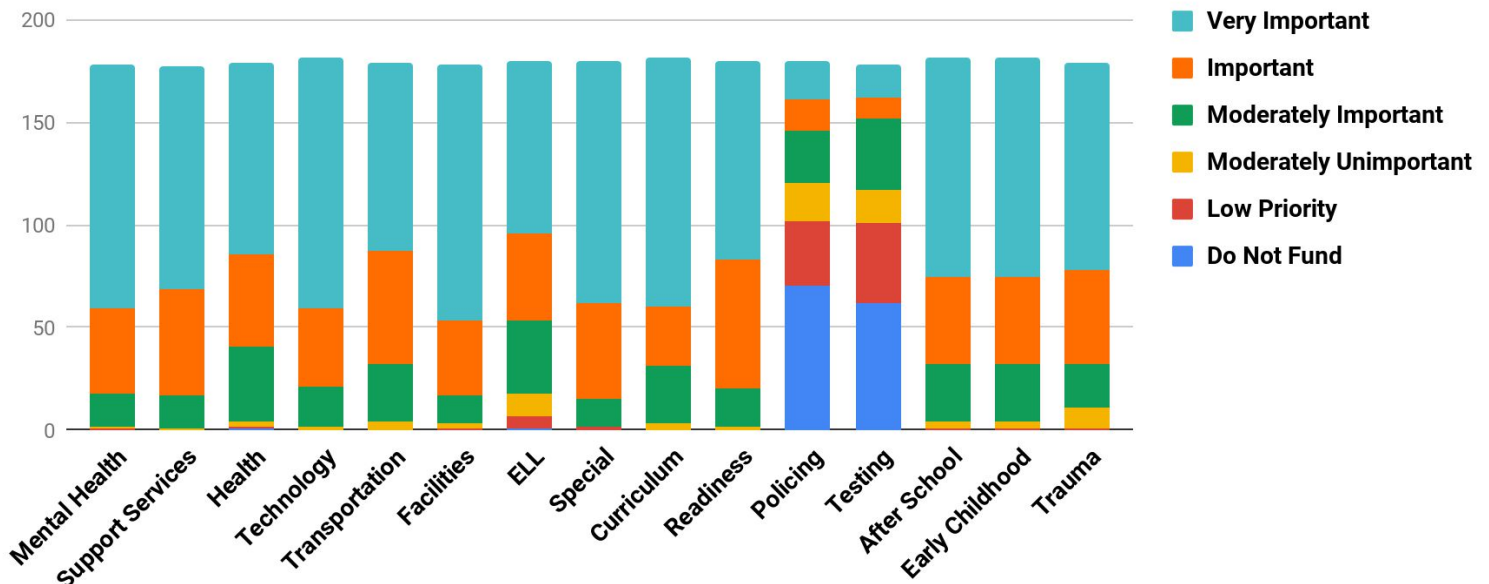
Detroit results largely mirror the statewide results with a few exceptions:

- **All areas except policing and testing ranked as higher priorities overall.**
- **Policing and testing ranked even lower**

Number of Responses: 182

Responses received from:

Detroit Public Schools Community District, Detroit Leadership Academy, Detroit Community Schools, Regent Park Scholars Charter Academy, Cesar Chavez Academy



RESULTS: Kalamazoo

Score Averages:

1	Mental health services	4.68
2	Special education	4.50
3	Trauma-responsive schools	4.39
4	Inclusive curriculum	4.11
5	Language resources	4.07
6	Early childhood education	4.07
7	Family support services	3.96
8	Career readiness	3.75
9	Facilities and infrastructure	3.71
10	After school programs	3.71
11	Overcoming the technology gap	3.68
12	Equitable transportation	3.63
13	School health services	3.54
14	More police in schools	0.96
15	Standardized testing	0.75

Summary:

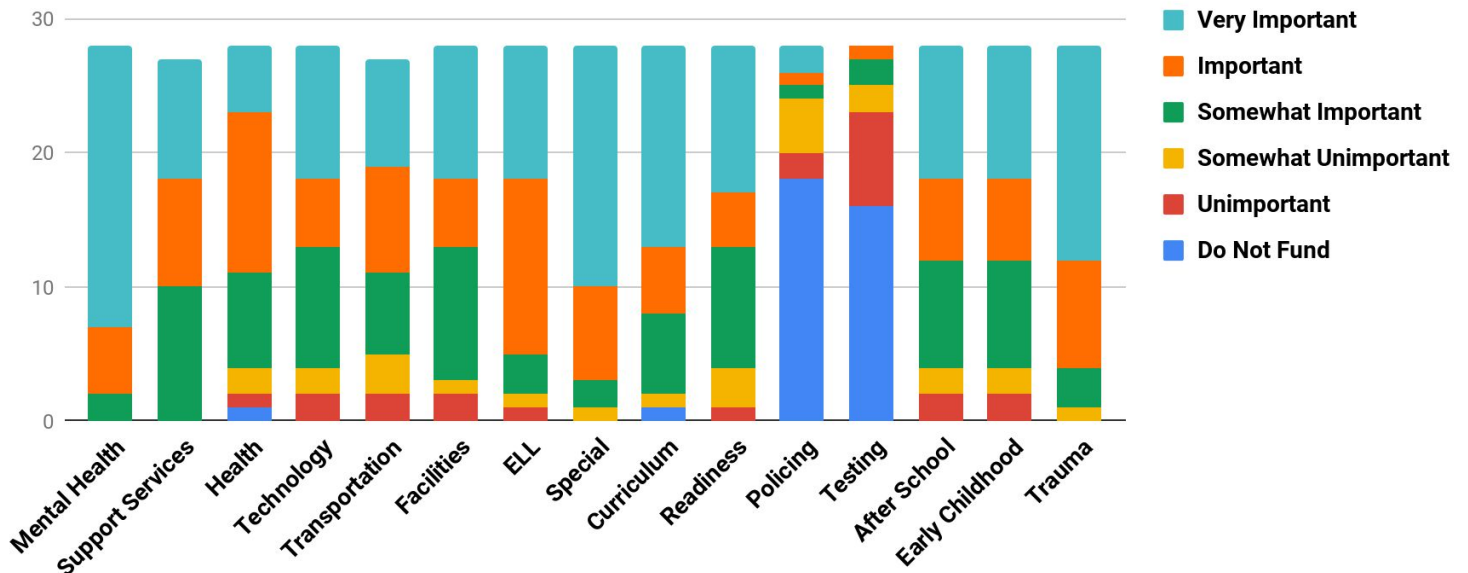
Kalamazoo results largely mirror the statewide results with a few exceptions:

- Testing and policing are even lower priorities, with testing scoring on average as below a 1.
- **Technology, support services, health, transportation, facilities, readiness, afterschool programs** score slightly lower than state
- **Mental health, ELL, Special Ed, and Trauma** all score slightly higher than state

Number of Responses: 28

Responses received from:

Climax-Scotts Community Schools, Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools, Kalamazoo Public Schools, Parchment School District, Schoolcraft Community Schools, Comstock Public Schools, Gull Lake Community Schools, Portage Public Schools, Vicksburg Community Schools



RESULTS: Ypsilanti

Score Averages:

1	Special education	4.63
2	Overcoming the technology gap	4.56
3	Equitable transportation	4.52
4	Early childhood education	4.44
5	Inclusive curriculum	4.37
6	Mental health services	4.33
7	Family support services	4.33
8	After school programs	4.19
9	Career readiness	4.15
10	School health services	4.07
11	Facilities and infrastructure	4.07
12	Trauma-responsive schools	3.96
13	Language resources	3.65
14	Standardized testing	1.70
15	More police in schools	1.37

Summary:

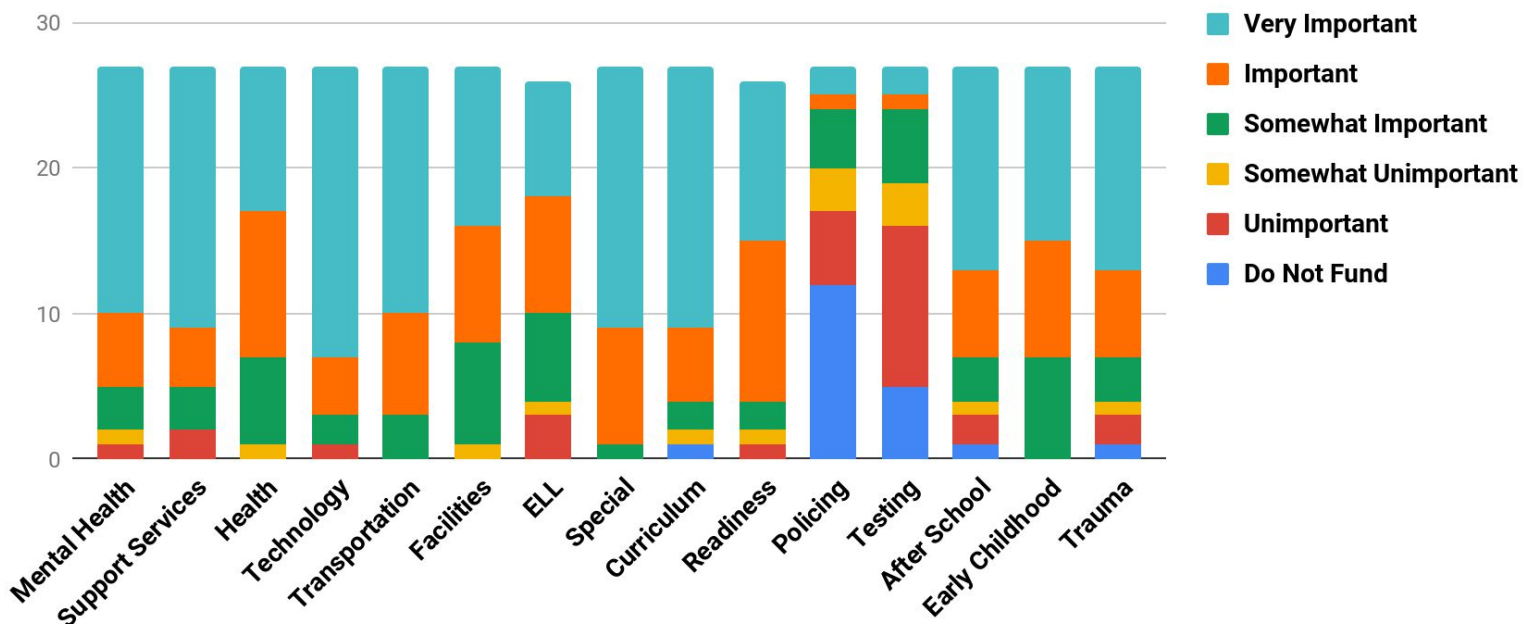
Ypsilanti results largely mirror the statewide results with a few exceptions:

- **Transportation is a higher priority**, scoring an average of 4.5 instead of 3.87
- **Policing was ranked an even lower priority** while Facilities, Testing and ELL were ranked slightly slower
- **All other categories scored higher** as priorities in Ypsilanti

Number of Responses: 27

Responses received from:

Ypsilanti Community Schools



RESULTS: Ann Arbor

Score Averages:

1	Family support services	4.50
2	Special education	4.45
3	Inclusive curriculum	4.41
4	Mental health services	4.39
5	Early childhood education	4.29
6	Language resources	4.28
7	After school programs	4.15
8	Overcoming the technology gap	3.98
9	Equitable transportation	3.96
10	School health services	3.92
11	Career readiness	3.87
12	Trauma-responsive schools	3.83
13	Facilities and infrastructure	3.77
14	Standardized testing	0.93
15	More police in schools	0.74

Summary:

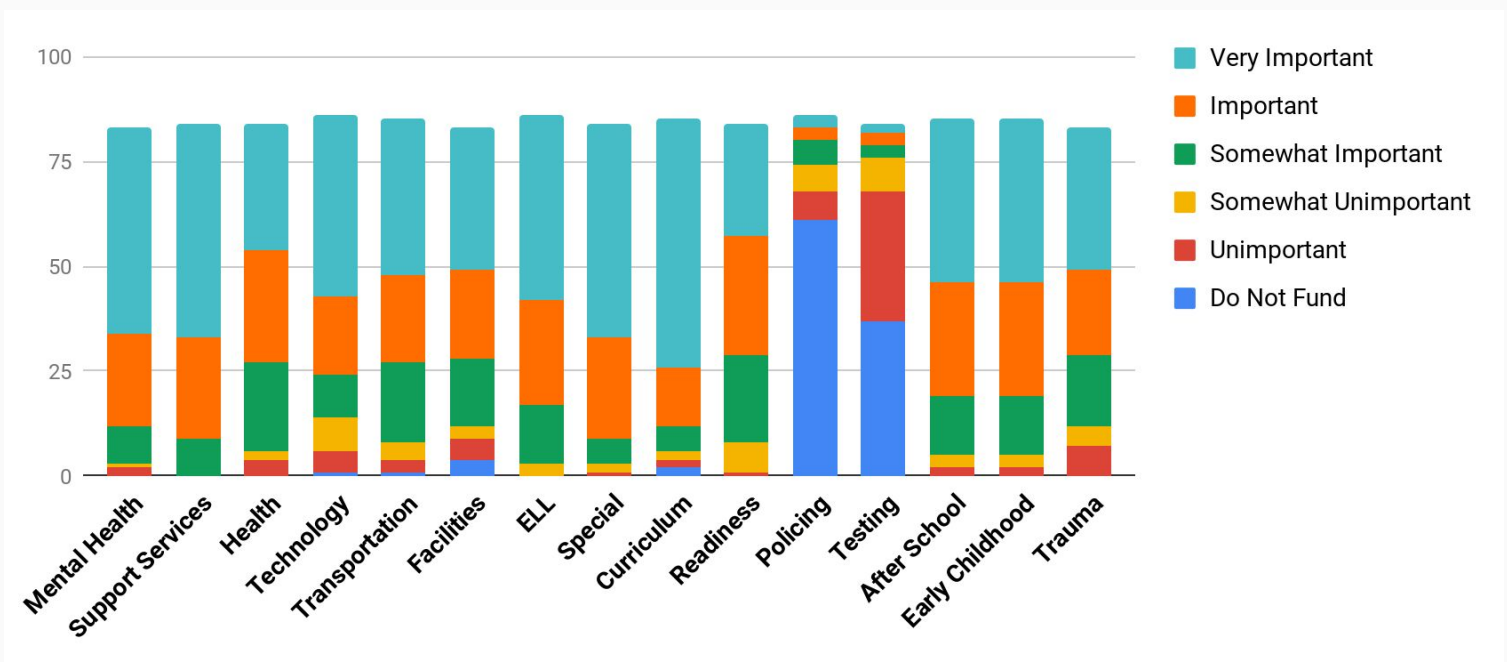
Ann Arbor results largely mirror the statewide results with a few exceptions:

- **Technology, facilities, readiness, and trauma** scored slightly lower than statewide results
- **Support services, transportation, ELL, curriculum, afterschool programs** all scored higher than the statewide averages
- Very low scores for **policing and testing**

Number of Responses: 86

Responses received from:

Ann Arbor Public Schools



RESULTS: Flint

Score Averages:

1	Facilities and infrastructure	4.88
2	Inclusive curriculum	4.82
3	Special education	4.78
4	Family support services	4.76
5	After school programs	4.67
6	Mental health services	4.61
7	Overcoming the technology gap	4.61
8	Career readiness	4.59
9	Early childhood education	4.56
10	School health services	4.50
11	Equitable transportation	4.22
12	Trauma-responsive schools	4.17
13	Language resources	4.11
14	More police in schools	2.89
15	Standardized testing	2.78

Summary:

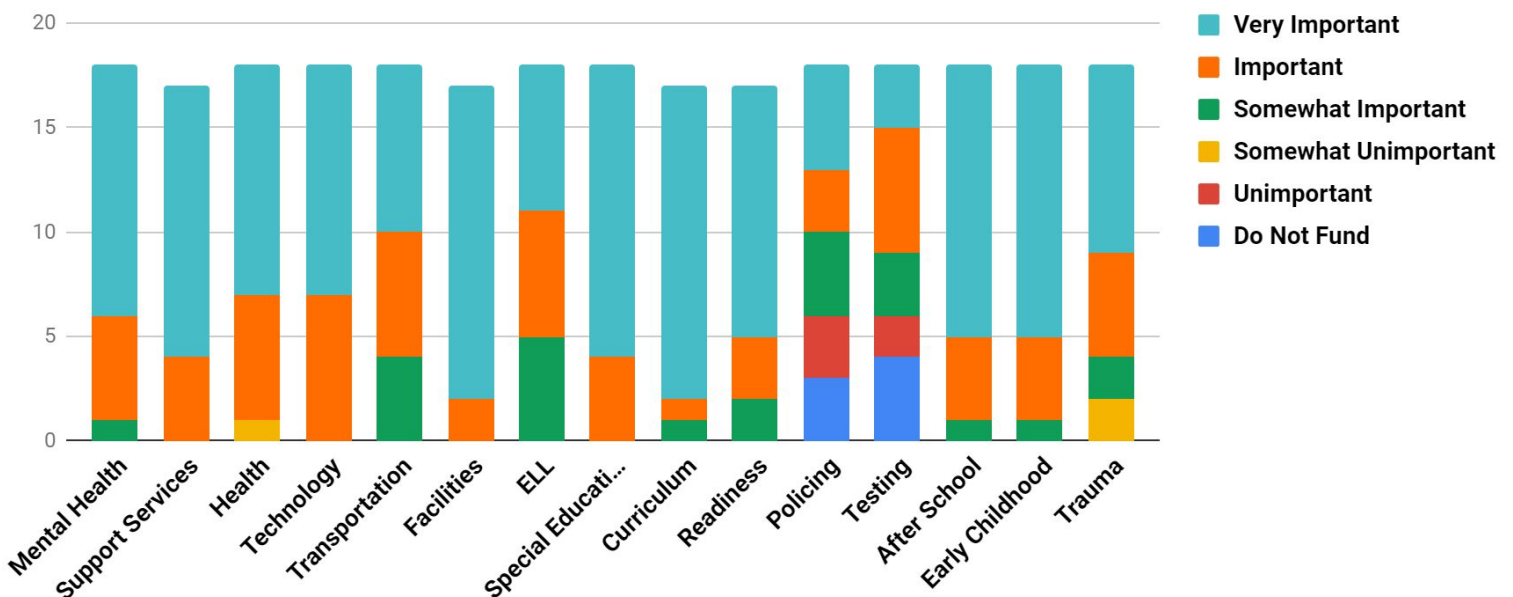
Flint results largely mirror the statewide results except:

- Scores in every category were consistently ranked higher than the state average

Number of Responses: 18

Responses received from:

Flint School District



RESULTS: Sault Ste. Marie

Score Averages:

1	Mental health services	4.38
2	Special education	4.33
3	Family support services	4.05
4	Early childhood education	3.95
5	School health services	3.86
6	Career readiness	3.81
7	Facilities and infrastructure	3.76
8	After school programs	3.58
9	Trauma-responsive schools	3.57
10	Overcoming the technology gap	3.55
11	Inclusive curriculum	3.52
12	Equitable transportation	3.48
13	Language resources	2.52
14	More police in schools	2.38
15	Standardized testing	1.95

Summary:

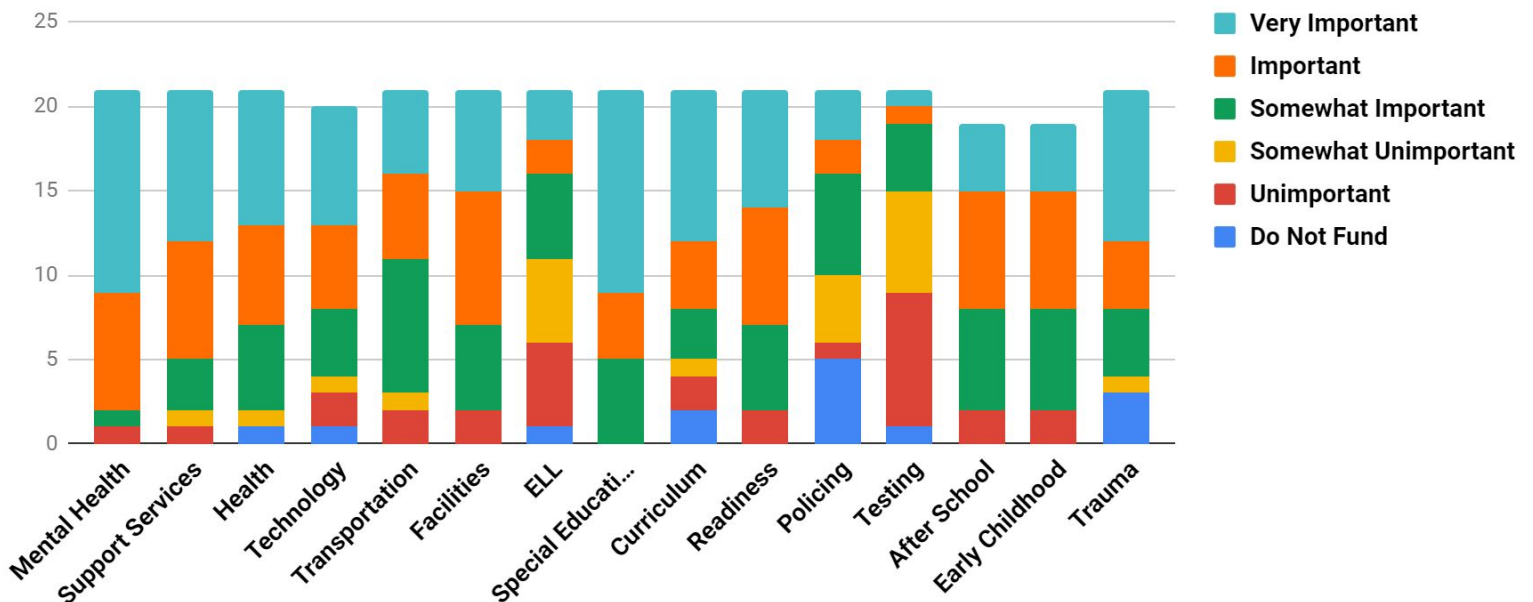
Sault Ste. Marie results largely mirror the statewide trends except:

- Scores overall lower, but reflect similar priorities
- Language resources scored much lower
- Technology ranked lower

Number of Responses: 21

Responses received from:

Sault Ste. Marie Area Schools



By Region and County

	Number of Votes	Mental Health	Special Education	Early Childhood	Support Services	Technology	Curriculum	Readiness	Facilities	After School	Trauma	Health	Transportation	ELL	Policing	Testing
Saginaw Region	157	4.29	4.08	3.97	4.00	4.20	3.97	4.12	3.90	3.92	3.77	3.79	3.78	3.16	2.46	2.01
Alcona County	19	4.16	3.94	3.58	4.00	4.26	3.74	4.05	3.67	3.50	3.74	3.63	4.11	2.79	1.21	1.47
Arenac County	2	3.50	4.00	4.00	2.50	4.50	2.50	4.50	3.50	3.00	2.00	2.50	1.00	2.50	1.50	3.00
Bay County	15	4.47	4.40	4.20	4.13	4.53	4.13	4.27	4.00	3.80	4.07	3.87	4.07	3.20	2.87	1.80
Gladwin County	0															
Huron County	0															
Iosco County	4	2.50	3.75	2.50	2.25	2.50	1.75	4.00	3.00	3.25	2.00	2.25	2.50	1.50	1.00	1.00
Midland County	26	3.77	3.65	2.96	3.31	4.00	3.27	3.65	3.31	3.38	3.27	3.27	3.16	2.31	2.54	1.58
Ogemaw County	0															
Oscoda County	1															
Saginaw County	82	4.52	4.18	4.38	4.3	4.23	4.28	4.24	4.16	4.27	4.04	4.06	3.93	3.62	2.74	2.27
Sanilac County	2	4	3.5	3	3.5	4.5	4.5	4	3.5	4	2.5	4	2.5	3	1.5	2.5
Tuscola County	5	4.8	5	4.8	4.4	4.6	4.8	4.4	4.4	3.8	4.2	4.6	4.6	3.6	2.75	2.4

	Number of Votes	Mental Health	Special Education	Early Childhood	Support Services	Technology	Curriculum	Readiness	Facilities	After School	Trauma	Health	Transportation	ELL	Policing	Testing
Lansing region	23	4.35	4.61	4.00	4.22	4.09	4.43	4.30	4.17	4.00	3.87	3.87	3.61	3.83	1.35	1.48
Clinton County	3	4.33	5.00	5.00	4.33	3.67	4.33	4.00	3.33	4.33	4.00	4.33	4.00	3.67	3.00	3.33
Eaton County	1	1.00	5.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	5.00	5.00	1.00	0.00	1.00	5.00	0.00	5.00	5.00
Gratiot County	2	3.50	4.50	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	4.50	3.00	3.50	3.50	3.50	4.50	0.00	0.00
Ingham County	12	4.67	4.50	4.50	4.33	4.33	4.67	4.08	4.50	4.42	4.58	4.25	3.83	4.42	0.92	1.17
Shiawassee County	5	4.60	4.60	3.00	4.60	4.60	4.60	4.60	3.60	3.80	3.00	3.40	2.60	3.00	1.20	1.00

By Region and County

	Number of Votes	Mental Health	Special Education	Early Childhood	Support Services	Technology	Curriculum	Readiness	Facilities	After School	Trauma	Health	Transportation	ELL	Policing	Testing
Traverse City Region	29	4.66	4.24	4.28	4.34	4.10	3.62	3.86	3.59	3.83	4.07	3.72	3.83	3.24	1.21	1.41
Antrim County	3	3.67	2.67	4.00	3.33	3.00	1.33	4.00	2.67	3.33	2.33	2.33	3.33	1.00	2.67	4.00
Alpena County	5	4.40	4.20	4.60	4.20	3.80	3.80	3.60	3.60	3.40	3.80	3.20	3.60	3.60	0.40	0.80
Benzie County	1	5.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	0.00
Charlevoix County	3	5.00	4.67	4.00	4.33	4.00	3.00	3.50	3.00	4.33	4.33	4.33	4.33	3.33	1.67	0.67
Cheboygan County	4	4.75	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.75	4.50	4.00	4.25	4.00	4.25	3.75	3.25	4.00	0.50	0.75
Crawford County	1	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	1.00
Emmet County	3	5.00	5.00	4.67	5.00	4.67	5.00	4.33	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.67	5.00	3.67	1.00	2.00
Grand Traverse County	4	4.50	4.50	4.00	4.25	4.00	3.00	3.75	4.00	3.50	4.00	4.25	4.25	3.75	1.50	1.25
Kalkaska County	1	3.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	4.00	4.00	0.00	1.00
Leelanau County	4	3.75	4.50	4.25	3.75	4.50	4.00	4.00	4.75	3.75	4.00	3.75	3.50	3.25	1.00	0.00
Manistee County	0															
Missaukee County	0															
Montmorency County	0															
Otsego County	0															
Presque Isle County	2	5.00	2.50	4.50	4.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	2.50	3.00	0.50	1.50	2.00
Roscommon County	0															
Wexford County	1	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	0.00	0.00

	Number of Votes	Mental Health	Special Education	Early Childhood	Support Services	Technology	Curriculum	Readiness	Facilities	After School	Trauma	Health	Transportation	ELL	Policing	Testing
Jackson Region	11	4.45	4.27	4.27	4.55	4.36	4.27	4.00	4.09	4.18	3.91	4.09	3.64	3.55	0.91	0.64
Hillsdale County	0															
Jackson County	7	4.86	4.14	4.29	5.00	4.29	4.43	4.00	3.71	4.43	3.86	4.29	3.71	3.71	0.86	1.00
Lenawee County	4	3.75	4.50	4.25	3.75	4.50	4.00	4.00	4.75	3.75	4.00	3.75	3.50	3.25	1.00	0.00