



Ligon Magnet Middle School

Campus Renovation Project

Project overview and community feedback

March 3, 2026

Goals for this Session

By the end of today's discussion, Board members will have had an opportunity to review:

- *Background information on the project options*
- *Feedback received from recent public engagement activities*
- *Staff's recommendation for the project*



Operational Effectiveness

Aim 17 | *Ensure that all students and staff have continuous, high-quality, and equitable access to facilities and technology (infrastructure and devices).*

Aim 18 | *Prioritize safety upgrades-including upgrading facilities, improving safety plans, and focusing on cyber-security.*

Strategic Plan Alignment



Family & Community Engagement

Aim 6 | *Provide clear, accessible, and consistent information about family involvement opportunities.*

Aim 7 | *Empower families and communities to partner in their children's learning and school improvement by honoring their perspectives and unique needs.*

Aim 12 | *Build strong relationships among staff, families, and community organizations in order to share resources and promote well-being.*



Background Information

Project Background

- In 2021, Ligon Magnet Middle School was included in a 3rd-party Facility Conditions Assessment. Ligon's campus was given a Facility Condition Index score of **30.4**, described as: **“Having reached the end of its useful or serviceable life. Renewal is now necessary.”**
- Following the assessment, the Board approved a renovation project with a budget of \$141M in order to bring the school up to current facilities standards.
- Preliminary “Visioning Sessions” were held in May 2025 to identify themes and priorities for future design elements.
- LS3P worked to create three construction proposals, presented to the Board at a December Facilities Committee meeting.

Project Options Overview

#1: Renovate Existing Building

Comprehensive renovation of the existing building, with students and staff moving to a temporary mobile campus built on top of the existing ballfields.

#2: Rebuild on Existing Location

Complete demolition of the existing Ligon facility, followed by construction of a new building on the current site. Students and staff relocate to a temporary mobile campus built on top of the existing ballfields.

#3: Build New Facility on Ballfields

Construction of a new building on current ballfield site. Students and staff continue learning in the current building during construction, which would then be demolished to create new athletic facilities.

Option 1: Renovate Existing Building

This option proposes a comprehensive renovation of the existing Ligon Middle School building. To ensure uninterrupted learning during construction, a temporary mobile campus will be established on the current ballfields to be utilized for students throughout the renovation period. Once the existing campus is renovated, students will move into the new building and the ballfields will be restored.



PHASE 1

BUILD TEMPORARY MOBILE CAMPUS



MOVE STUDENTS TO MOBILE CAMPUS



PHASE 2

RENOVATE EXISTING BUILDING



PHASE 3

MOVE STUDENTS TO RENOVATED SCHOOL



RESTORE BALLFIELDS

Timeline: 4+ years

Projected construction costs: \$102m+

Option 2: Rebuild on Existing Site

This option includes the complete demolition of the existing Ligon Middle School facility, followed by the construction of a brand-new school on the current site, positioned at the top of the hill where the existing school resides. To accommodate students during this transition, they would be relocated to a mobile campus set up on the ballfields.



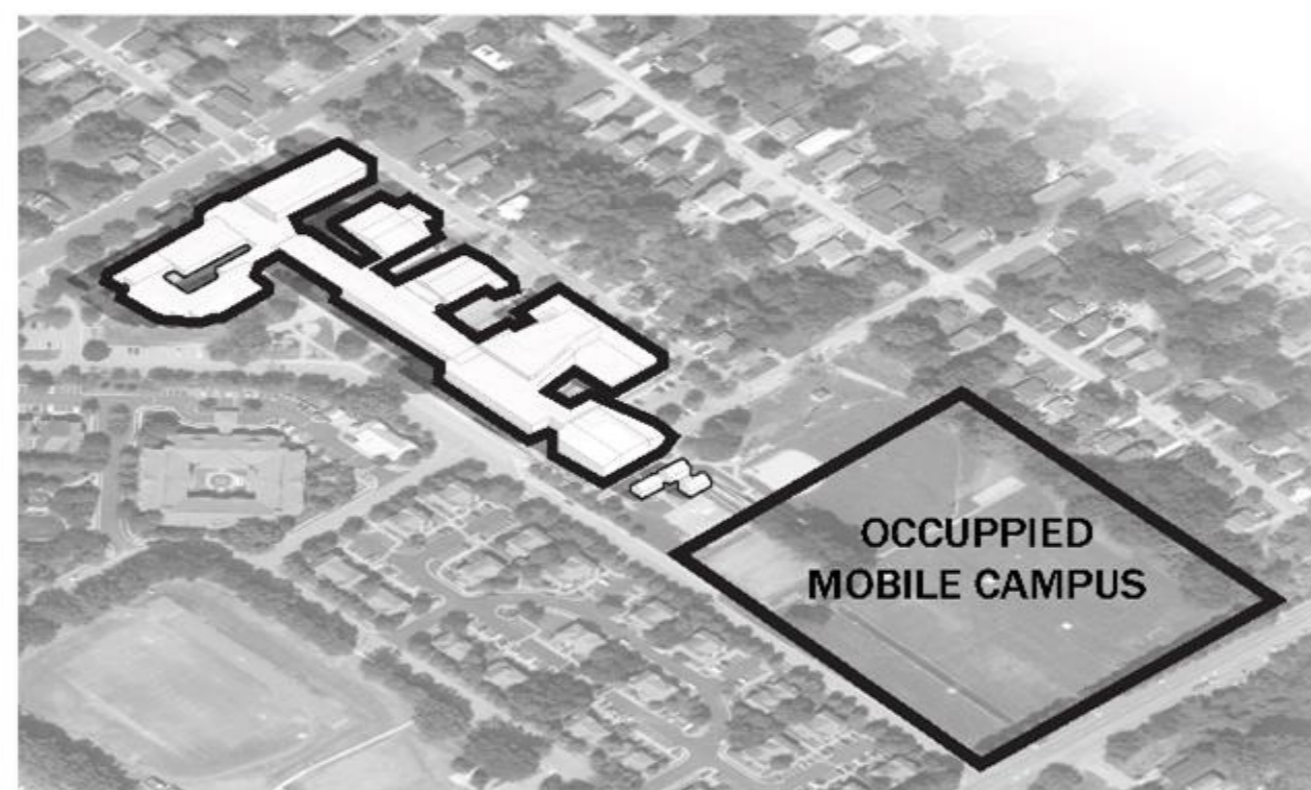
PHASE 1

BUILD TEMPORARY MOBILE CAMPUS



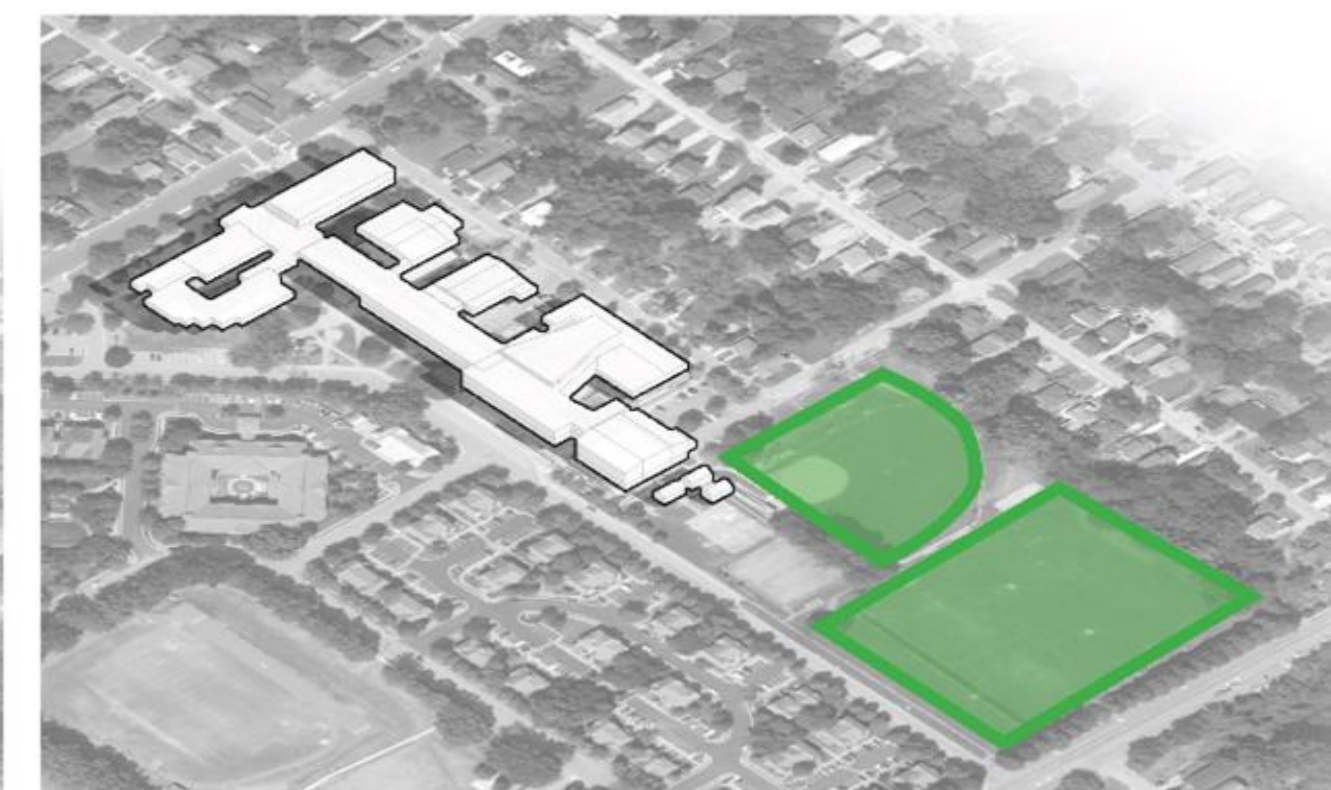
PHASE 2

DEMOLISH EXISTING BUILDING



PHASE 3

BUILD NEW SCHOOL



PHASE 4

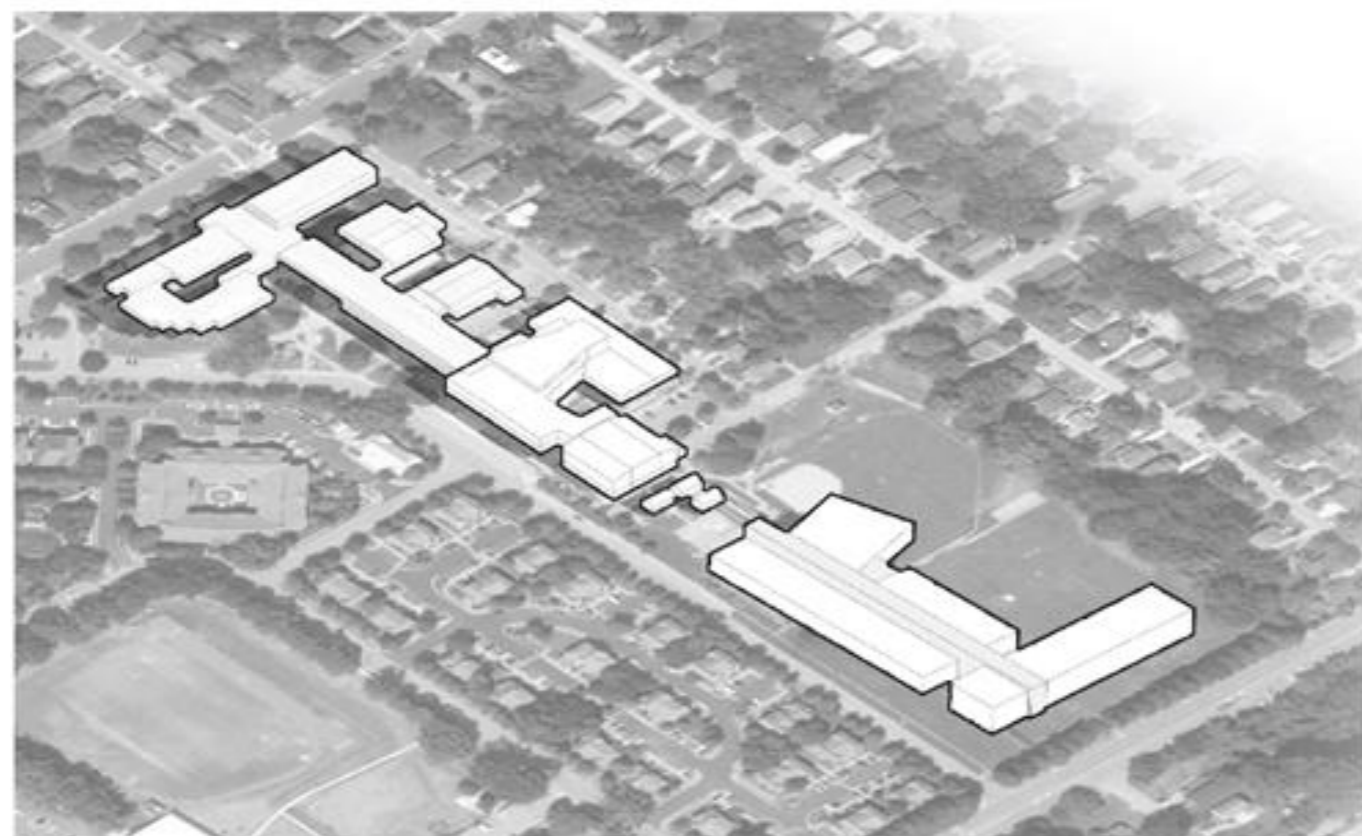
REBUILD BALLFIELDS

Timeline: ~5 years

Projected construction costs: \$147m+

Option 3: Build New Facility on Ballfield Site

This option proposes constructing a new middle school building on the site currently occupied by the existing ballfields. During the construction phase, students will remain in the current school building to ensure continuity of learning. Once the new facility is completed, the existing building will be demolished, making way for the development of new ballfields.

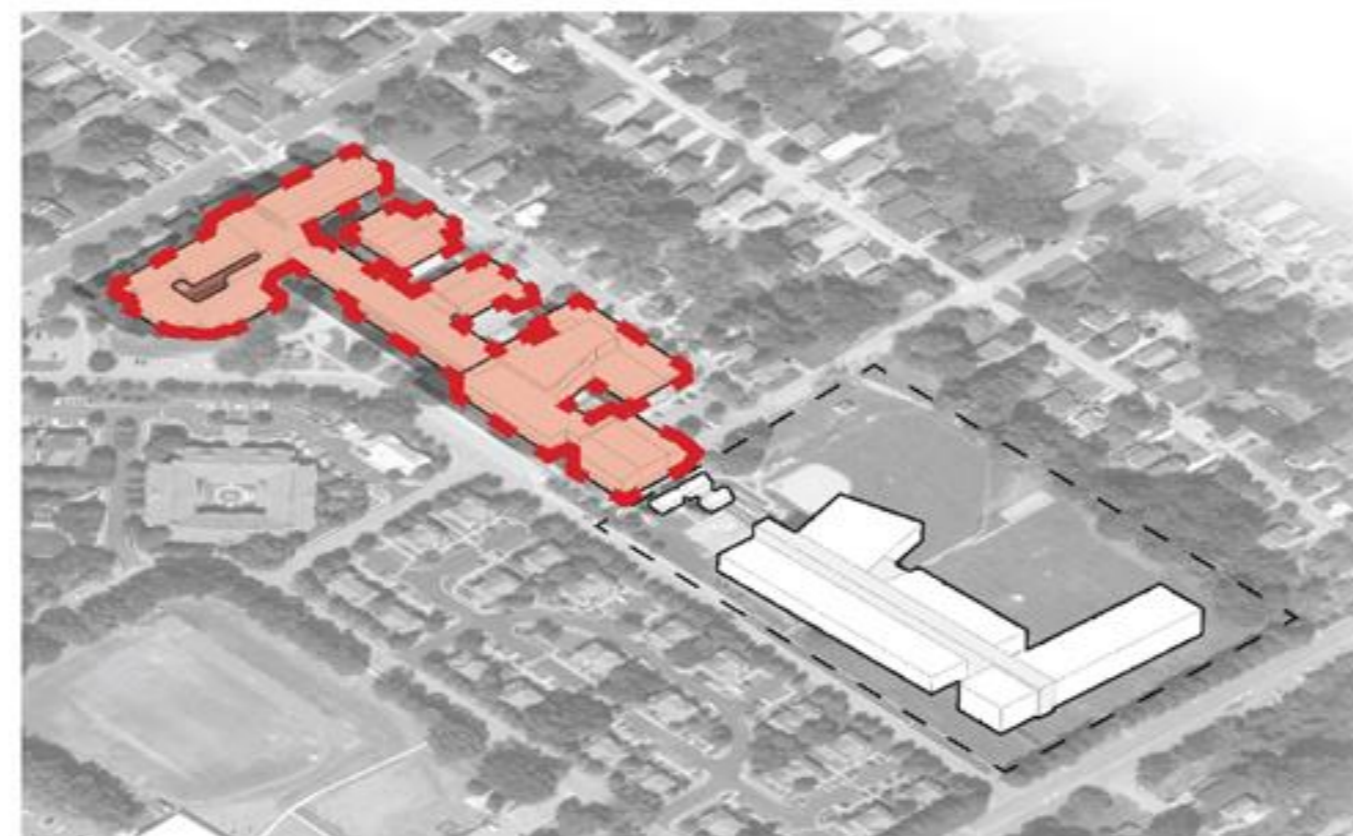


PHASE 1

BUILD NEW SCHOOL ON BALLFIELDS



STUDENTS STAY IN EXISTING SCHOOL



PHASE 2

DEMOLISH EXISTING SCHOOL



MOVE STUDENTS TO NEW BUILDING



PHASE 3

BUILD NEW BALLFIELDS

Timeline: 3+ years

Projected construction costs: \$121m+



Feedback from Public Engagement

Expanding Voices for Essential Partners

To ensure a transparent and inclusive process, the District launched a multi-channel listening initiative centered on three key pillars:

- **Digital Outreach (ThoughtExchange):** Captured community-wide priorities through interactive, crowdsourced feedback.
- **Information & Listening Sessions:** Provided staff, families, and community members to learn more about the construction proposals and have their feedback heard.
- **Direct Leadership Access:** Maintained open channels for contact with district leaders, providing an avenue for direct advocacy.

Session Types		Participation*
1 Ligon Project Webpage	→	1,946 views (as of Feb. 25, 2026)
1 ThoughtExchange	→	159 participants, 129 thoughts
2 Community Sessions (in-person)	→	35 speakers
1 Family Session (in-person)	→	15 speakers
1 Family Session (virtual)	→	40 participants
1 Staff Session (in-person)	→	11 speakers
Email Submissions	→	23 submissions

Expanding Voices for Essential Partners: TE Participation




 **159**
Participants

 **129**
Thoughts


 **2,247**
Ratings

Which of the following best describes where you live within Wake County?


%		Answer
9%	(12)	Northwestern Wake (Northwest Raleigh and Morrisville areas)
19%	(26)	Northern Wake (North Raleigh area)
9%	(13)	Northeastern Wake (Northeast Raleigh, Rolesville and Wake Forest areas)
4%	(5)	Eastern Wake (Knightdale, Wendell and Zebulon areas)
54%	(75)	Central Wake (Central Raleigh and Southeast Raleigh areas)
4%	(5)	Southeastern Wake (Garner area)
0%	(0)	Southern Wake (Fuquay-Varina area)
1%	(1)	Southwestern Wake (South Apex and Holly Springs areas)
2%	(3)	Western Wake (Apex and Cary areas)

Which of the following best describes your relationship with Ligon Magnet Middle?

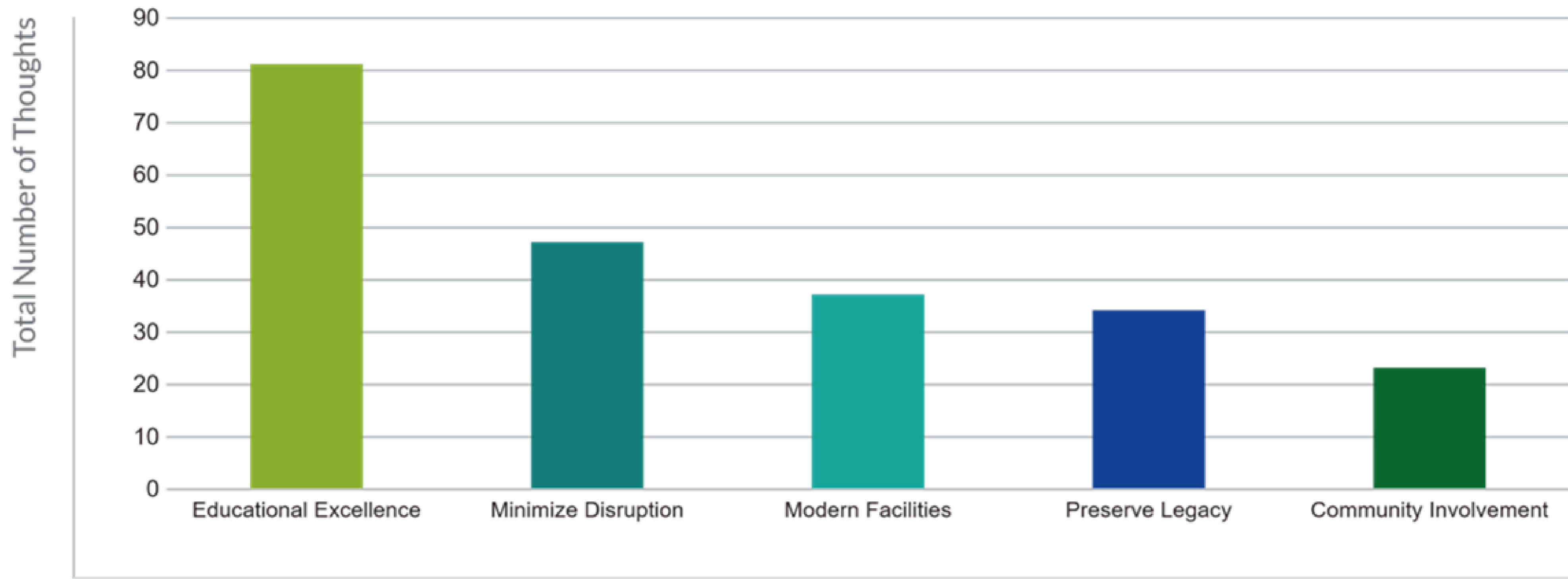
 **138**
Responses

%		Answer <i>(Multiple select)</i>
67%	(93)	Parent/ Custodian of Current Student
0%	(0)	Current Student
5%	(7)	Current Staff Member
19%	(26)	Alumni/ Former Student
20%	(28)	Community Member

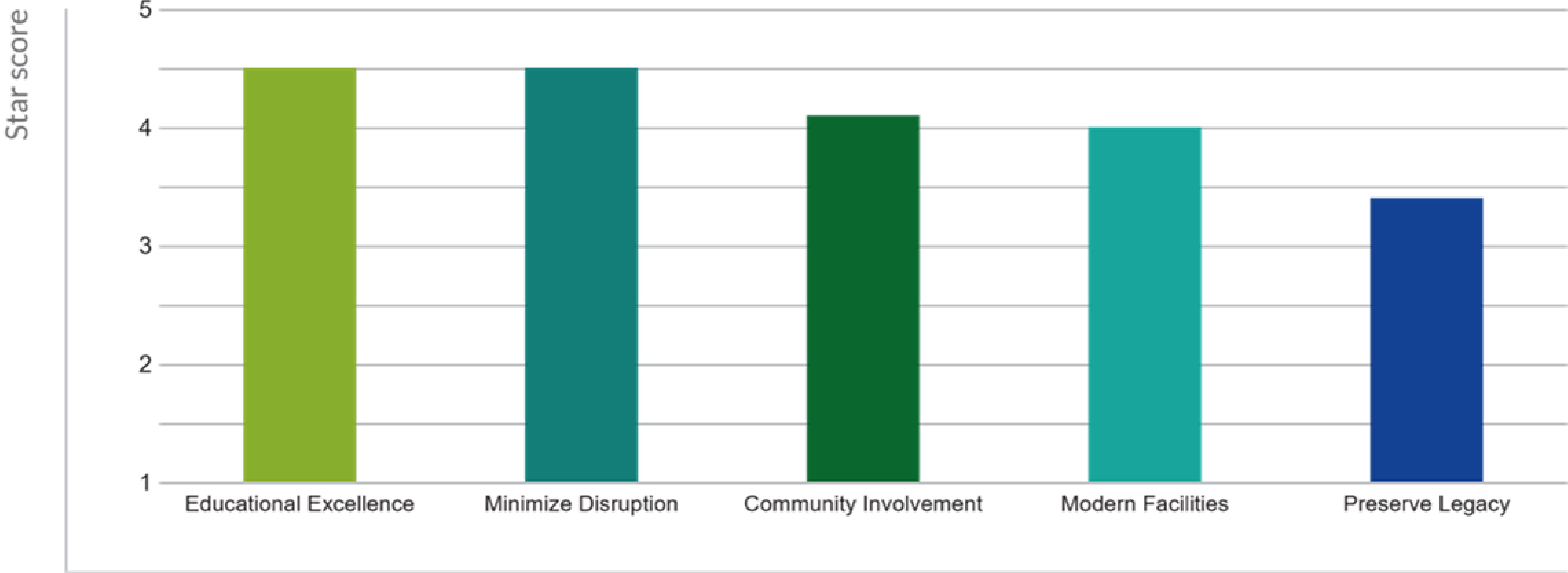
What is your race/ethnicity?

%		Answer
29%	(39)	Prefer not to respond
0%	(0)	American Indian or Alaskan Native
6%	(8)	Asian
9%	(12)	Black or African American
1%	(2)	Hispanic or Latino
0%	(0)	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
4%	(5)	Two or More Races/Ethnicities
51%	(69)	White
1%	(1)	Other

Expanding Voices for Essential Partners: TE Global Themes



Expanding Voices for Essential Partners: TE Global Themes





Expanding Voices for Essential Partners: TE Top Thoughts





Keep the students on campus It's the least disruptive to their education and middle school experience.

4.6  (24 )
Ranked #1 of 129

Maintaining opportunities for current students - the magnet program should be preserved throughout the renovation - option 3 My experience in Ligon's magnet programming was essential to my education - it was and is such a special part of Ligon

4.6  (20 )
Ranked #2 of 129

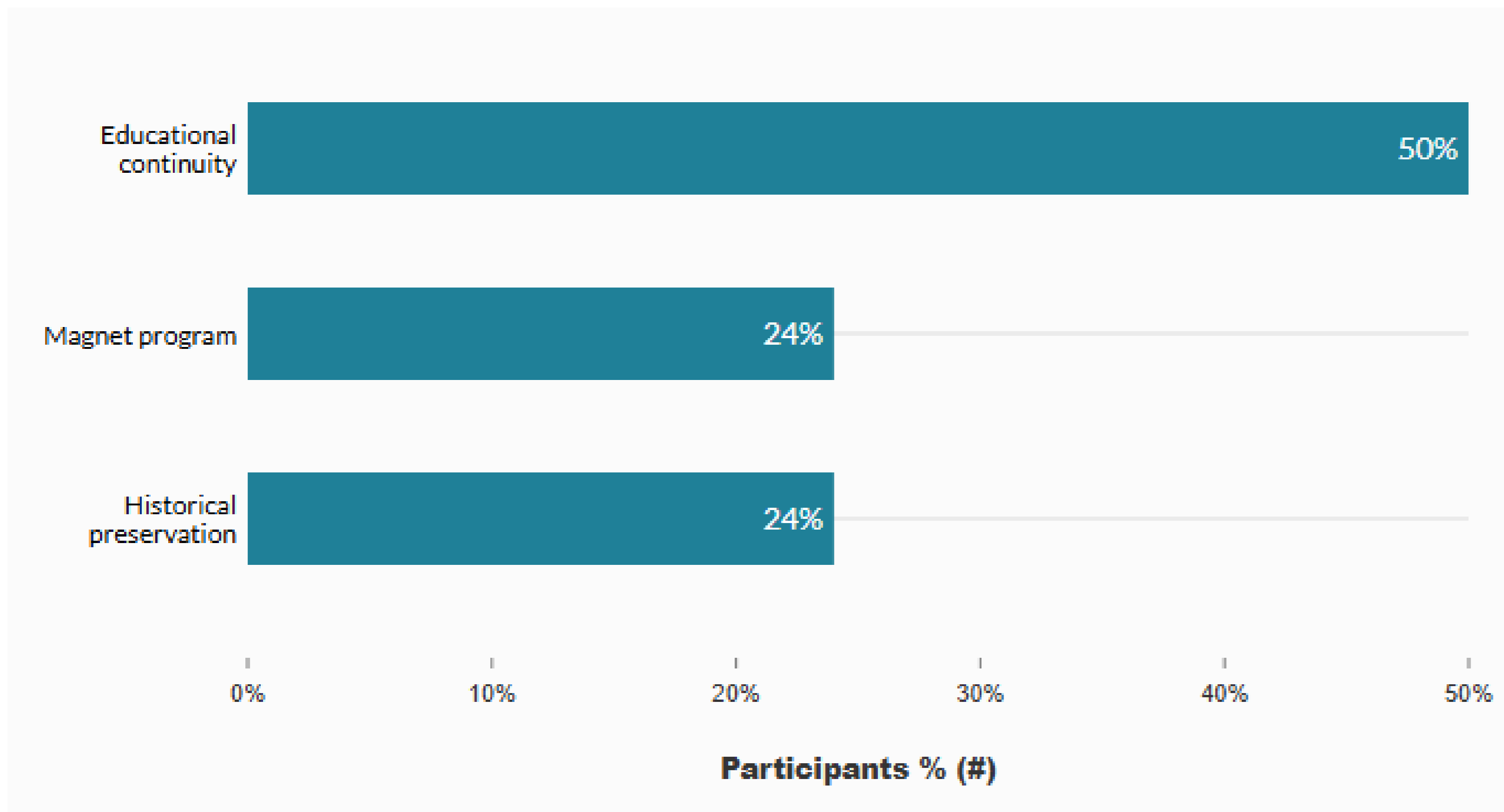
Current and future students and their learning environment- option 3 preserves their learning environment and helps us bridge to the new environment Minimizes disruption and builds towards our future

4.5  (24 )
Ranked #3 of 129

Expanding Voices for Essential Partners: Live Session Themes



Combined Themes from All Participant Groups



Participant Groups:

- Staff
- Family (Parents/Custodians)
- Alumni (Former Students)
- Community Members

Expanding Voices for Essential Partners: Staff Thoughts



Perspective & Voice

Staff feedback centers on the practicality of day-to-day school operations. Their primary concern is ensuring a healthy environment for teaching and learning, emphasizing space, modern facilities, and minimal disruption to classroom activities. While some staff members acknowledge Ligon’s historical identity and specialized programs, their comments primarily address the functionality and resources needed for both teachers and students.

Theme	Description/Examples
Educational continuity	Staff focus on minimizing disruptions for both educators and students, highlighting space constraints and functionality. One staff member reflected, “What is best for our faculty and students regarding space (anticipating growth)... The staff and students are in the building every day and the most common issue... is lack of space.”
Magnet program	Although staff recognize the unique opportunities a strong magnet offering provides, direct discussion about preserving or expanding the program was limited in their comments.
Historical preservation	Staff acknowledged the school’s traditions but did not provide detailed remarks about preserving historic structures; the emphasis was on a modern, practical building that meets daily needs.

Expanding Voices for Essential Partners: Family Thoughts

Perspective & Voice



Family members (parents or custodians of current Ligon students) consistently highlight the importance of a stable learning environment for their children. They place great value on maintaining the robust magnet offerings—particularly the arts and specialized electives—while also expressing a range of opinions on preserving the school’s historic elements. Most parents want an option that provides modern, safe facilities with as little disruption as possible to academic and extracurricular programs.

Theme	Description/Examples
Educational continuity	Families frequently express a desire to “minimize disruptions to learning” and keep students in a stable environment. One parent shared, “Keeping a stable educational learning environment... helps the kids learn.” Another wrote, “The cost and benefit to current and future students... The board’s responsibility is to those impacted now.”
Magnet program	Maintaining and protecting the magnet identity—and especially the arts—was a central concern for many families. A typical statement was, “Maintaining the magnet program! We have had family go through it for generations and it would be unfortunate to lose that.”
Historical preservation	While some parents stressed the need to “honor the legacy” and keep the older building’s memory alive, numerous family members also noted practical limits. One stated, “While it’s important to create a place to honor the legacy, the board’s responsibility is to the current and future students impacted.” Others favored “a new space with historical elements.”

Expanding Voices for Essential Partners: Alumni Thoughts



Perspective & Voice

Alumni often recall formative experiences that shaped their education at Ligon. They voice deep appreciation for both the magnet program and the school’s historic role in the community—particularly its significance in Southeast Raleigh. Some alumni stress the continuity of student programming, wishing current learners to enjoy the same arts and advanced programs that defined their own time at Ligon.

Theme	Description/Examples
Educational continuity	Alumni frequently promote a smooth, uninterrupted transition so current students can maintain Ligon’s core offerings. As one former student remarked, “It’s most important for students’ experience to be maintained... The arts are a big part of Ligon.”
Magnet program	The specialized programs at Ligon are described by alumni as a defining characteristic of their middle school years. “My experience in Ligon’s magnet programming was essential to my education—it was and is such a special part of Ligon,” wrote one graduate.
Historical preservation	Many former students highlight the school’s unique history. One comment read, “Ligon is an integral part of the community, and I would like to preserve JWL History with updated technology.” Others reference “staying on the hill” to honor the site’s longstanding significance to Raleigh.

Expanding Voices for Essential Partners: Community Thoughts

Perspective & Voice

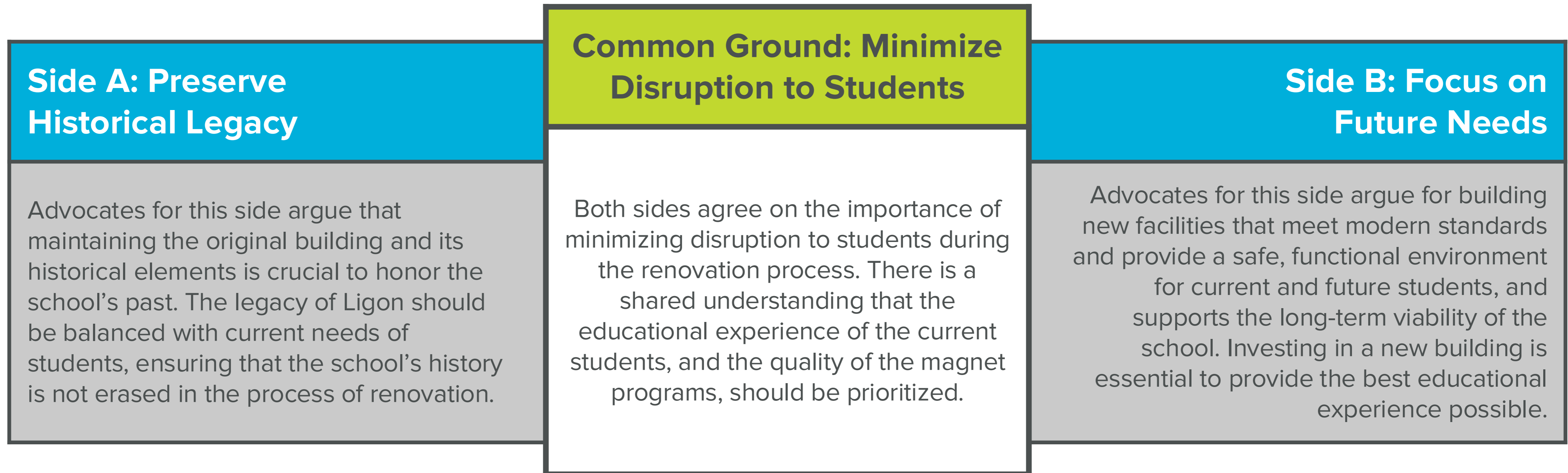


Community members include neighbors, broader residents of Wake County, and others with an interest in Ligon’s role beyond just student enrollment. They often discuss the renovation project in terms of sustaining local pride, balancing the needs of current students, and upholding Ligon’s longstanding function as a cultural and historical landmark. Cost efficiency and wise use of public funds also emerge in community perspectives.

Theme	Description/Examples
Educational continuity	Many community members underscore the long-term impact of “investing in future generations.” One noted, “We need to stop putting bandaids on education and start investing in future generations.” Others emphasize continuity in safe, modern facilities for students.
Magnet program	A recurring viewpoint is that preserving academic variety and specialized electives is important not just to families but to the broader community. Comments include, “Maintaining the integrity of the academic and magnet program experience... If these suffer, it hurts everyone.”
Historical preservation	Some community members focus on preserving local Black history and the unique cultural significance of Ligon. One individual stated, “That the Ligon High School main building is preserved to honor Southeast Raleigh Black History... Ligon Schools were the foundation.”

Expanding Voices for Essential Partners: Key Takeaway

Balancing Legacy & Future Needs



Questions?

Feedback, Thoughts & Ideas...