

# Here's the Bellwether report commissioned by SCALA

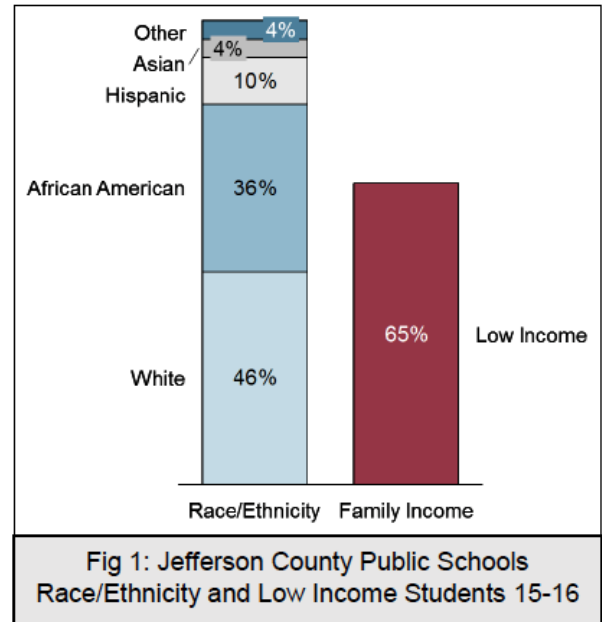
A report commissioned by the Steering Committee for Action on Louisville's Agenda (SCALA) states that JCPS needs empowered leadership in order for students to succeed and lists "the strong influence of the teachers' union" and the school board's broad authority as barriers to change.

With possible state intervention in JCPS looming, SCALA, a private group of 70 business, nonprofit and religious leaders, hired national nonprofit Bellwether Education Partners to look at the impact of state intervention in other urban school district. The report cost SCALA members \$50,000, according the [Courier Journal](#).

Critics have [taken aim at SCALA](#), arguing that its leaders are trying to undermine public education.

In its report dated September 2017, Bellwether noted SCALA's education subcommittee "has concluded that structural change to district governance and leadership is required to achieve the dramatic improvement JCPS students deserve."

According to the report, 43 percent of 11th grade students meeting the ACT's college-ready benchmarks, and 63 percent of high-school graduates were



The report offers this breakdown of JCPS students.  
| Bellwether Education Partners report

college and career ready. The report also notes that leadership at JCPS is in flux because it has an interim superintendent.

Bellwether gave examples of state interventions in Denver; Washington, D.C.; Lawrence, Mass.; and Springfield, Mass. Three of the school districts renegotiated teacher contracts to include performance-based pay, and all four case studies mentioned the introduction or increased prominence of charter schools, though the report notes that charter schools remain controversial in Denver and Washington, D.C.

While Louisville currently elects its school board, the Bellwether report notes two alternative oversight models: both have the mayor and/or governor appointing school leaders who are advised by community stakeholders.

“In districts where entrenched policies, politics, and power structures protect a status quo that does not serve students, governance reform may provide a needed catalyst for accelerated and dramatic improvement,” the report states.

Successful government reforms, according to Bellwether’s report, could lead to “strong, accountable leaders” having more autonomy to run individual schools, data-driven instruction and a focus on retaining quality educators.

According to the liberal watchdog group Media Matters, Bellwether is one of the groups “increasingly funded by a handful of conservative billionaires and for-profit education companies — often without proper disclosure ...(that) push state-level education legislation that makes way for [greater private profiteering](#) — while leaving traditional public schools further behind.”

Read the report below:

[Bellwether Education Partners report](#) by [insiderlouisville](#) on Scribd