Judge Suzanne Parisien

King County Superior Court

Longitudinal Analysis: 2020 and 2024 KCBA Judicial Officer Surveys

I. Executive Summary

The 2020 and 2023–2024 King County Bar Association Judicial Officer Surveys together constitute the most comprehensive attorney-based evaluations of King County Superior Court judges available to the public. Across both surveys — covering nearly a decade of documented attorney experience — Judge Suzanne Parisien ranked at or near the very bottom of the evaluated bench in every single measured category without exception.

She received a combined total of 269 attorney evaluations across the two surveys, a volume that forecloses any argument of statistical unreliability. The pattern documented here is not a single data point, not a bad year, and not a thin sample. It is a sustained, multi-year record of performance assessed as the worst or near-worst on the Superior Court bench by the attorneys who appeared before her.

Among all judges evaluated in both surveys, across both surveys, no other judge owns the bottom like Parisien. Judge Parisien ranked #51 of 52 judges on composite in 2020 and #49 of 49 judges on composite in 2024 — last place. The peer group improved between surveys; she did not keep pace.

II. Survey Background and Methodology

The KCBA Judicial Officer Survey is conducted on a quadrennial cycle for King County Superior Court judges. It is administered by an independent research firm, distributed to all attorneys with documented court appearances before the evaluated judges, and requires respondents to certify that they are evaluating only judges before whom they have personally appeared.

The 2020 survey covered 52 judges and was based on 1,357 completed attorney responses from a pool of more than 8,300 invited. The 2023–2024 survey covered 49 judges with 20+ evaluations, based on 1,057 recorded responses from 7,396 invited. Both surveys use a five-point scale: Unacceptable (1), Below Expectations (2), Acceptable (3), Very Good (4), Excellent (5).

The composite rankings in this report are constructed by taking the unweighted arithmetic mean of all category scores — the most transparent and reproducible method available. The KCBA explicitly notes that the categories are not necessarily equal in importance. That caveat applies here as well — but it cuts both ways: Judge Parisien ranks at or near the bottom regardless of which category is examined or how they are weighted. The all-judge benchmark is computed as a response-weighted aggregate across all judge-level ratings — meaning judges with more evaluations carry proportionally more weight — which we consider the more reliable representation of bench-wide performance than a simple average of category means.

III. 2020 Survey Results

Judge Parisien received 171 evaluations in the 2020 survey — well above the 20-response minimum and above the survey median.

Category	Parisien	Peer Avg	Gap	Rank
Legal Decision Making	3.60	4.08	−0.48	#48 of 52
Integrity & Impartiality	3.71	4.18	−0.47	#50 of 52
Demeanor, Temp. & Communication	3.81	4.27	−0.46	#49 of 52
Administrative Skills	3.93	4.24	−0.31	#46 of 52
COMPOSITE (4-category avg)	**3.76**	**4.22**	**−0.46**	**#51 of 52**

In 2020, on Integrity & Impartiality 10.3% of attorneys selected "Unacceptable." On Legal Decision Making, 7.8% did the same.

IV. 2024 Survey Results

Judge Parisien received 98 evaluations in the 2024 survey — above both the survey mean of 72 and the median of 64.

Category	Parisien	Peer Avg	Gap	Rank
Virtual Appearances (new 2024)	3.96	4.32	−0.36	#49 of 49
Legal Decision Making	3.70	4.15	−0.45	#47 of 49
Integrity & Impartiality	3.87	4.29	−0.42	#48 of 49
Demeanor, Temp. & Communication	3.81	4.31	−0.50	#49 of 49
Administrative Skills	3.99	4.29	−0.30	#45 of 49
COMPOSITE (5-category avg)	**3.87**	**4.28**	**−0.41**	**#49 of 49**

By 2024, Judge Parisien ranked dead last of all 49 evaluated judges on the overall composite.

V. The Weighting Argument — It Only Gets Worse

The KCBA deliberately did not design the survey to produce a composite score, noting that the categories are not necessarily equal in importance. The unweighted average used throughout this report is the most transparent and defensible baseline. But the weighting question deserves direct examination — because the answer is unambiguous.

A reasonable reviewer prioritizing the categories most central to judicial function would weight Legal Decision Making and Integrity & Impartiality more heavily than Administrative Skills. The quality of legal rulings and the integrity of conduct on the bench go to the heart of what a judge is. Administrative competence matters — but it is the most operational and least judicial of the four categories.

Her two weakest scores — in both absolute terms and by rank — are precisely Legal Decision Making and Integrity & Impartiality in both surveys:

Category	2020 Score	2020 Rank	2024 Score	2024 Rank
Legal Decision Making (most critical)	3.60	#48 of 52	3.70	#47 of 49
Integrity & Impartiality (most critical)	3.71	#50 of 52	3.87	#48 of 49
Demeanor & Communication	3.81	#49 of 52	3.81	#49 of 49
Administrative Skills (least critical)	3.93	#46 of 52	3.99	#45 of 49

Her strongest category in both years is Administrative Skills — the least judicial of the four. **Any weighting scheme that prioritizes the categories most central to judicial function produces a composite worse than the unweighted average — not better.** The unweighted average is therefore the most conservative and most favorable presentation of her record available.

VI. The Steiner Question — Disqualification by Any Reasonable Standard

In 2020, Judge David Steiner ranked #52 of 52 with a composite score of 3.47, based on exactly 20 evaluations — the survey's stated minimum threshold for inclusion. Judge Parisien's 171 evaluations are 8.5 times that sample.

Steiner's result is statistically borderline by the survey's own rules. The KCBA set the 20-evaluation minimum precisely because results below that threshold are considered too unreliable to publish. A result of exactly 20 is, in practical terms, indistinguishable from a result of 19 — which would have been excluded entirely. Steiner's inclusion is not a demonstration of reliability; it is the narrowest possible passage through the survey's own reliability gate.

Any single outlier response among Steiner's 20 evaluations could materially shift his composite score. One attorney with a personal grievance, one unusually positive evaluator, or one data anomaly can move the needle significantly in a sample this small. By contrast, a pattern observed across 171 independent evaluations is robust to individual variation by definition.

Steiner's result should be treated as statistically unreliable and **effectively disqualified.** Setting it aside, Judge Parisien is the worst-performing judge on the King County Superior Court bench in the 2020 survey. In 2024, this question does not arise — she ranked #49 of 49, dead last, with no caveat required.

Across both surveys the conclusion is the same: **Judge Parisien is either the worst-performing judge on the King County bench, or she is the worst once a basic reliability filter is applied. There is no reading of this data in which she is not last.**

VII. Longitudinal Comparison: 2020 vs. 2024

The four categories present in both surveys allow for direct comparison. The table below shows the movement in Parisien's scores, the movement in peer averages, and the resulting change in her gap from the bench-wide mean.

Category	2020	2024	Δ Score	2020 Avg	2024 Avg	Gap Change
Legal Decision Making	3.60	3.70	+0.10	4.08	4.15	Marginal improvement
Integrity & Impartiality	3.71	3.87	+0.16	4.18	4.29	Marginal improvement
Demeanor & Communication	3.81	3.81	0.00	4.27	4.31	Gap widened
Administrative Skills	3.93	3.99	+0.06	4.24	4.29	Essentially flat
4-cat. Composite	**3.76**	**3.84**	**+0.08**	**4.22**	**4.28**	**Fell further behind**

In Demeanor, Temperament & Communication — the category that measures the most immediate experience attorneys have of a judge's courtroom conduct — her score did not improve at all between 2020 and 2024, while the bench-wide average continued to rise. The gap in that category widened.

On the composite, she moved from #51 of 52 to #49 of 49. Both represent the same relative position: last or functionally last on the evaluated bench. The bench that surrounded her changed significantly over eight years — yet in each survey, conducted independently, with different pools of attorneys and different cohorts of judges, the result was the same.

VIII. Key Findings

Finding 1: The Worst-Performing Judge Over This Period

Among all judges evaluated in both surveys, Judge Parisien has ranked at or near the very bottom of every measured category in every survey. Across both surveys, no other judge owns the bottom like Parisien.

Finding 2: Consistent Failure to Meet the "Very Good" Threshold

In both 2020 and 2024, Judge Parisien failed to achieve a score of 4.0 in any evaluated category. The bench-wide average exceeded 4.0 in every category in both surveys. The gap is not marginal — it is structural and persistent.

Finding 3: Repeated High "Unacceptable" Ratings on Integrity

In both surveys, approximately 10% of responding attorneys rated Judge Parisien "Unacceptable" on Integrity & Impartiality. A pattern of sustained near-double-digit "Unacceptable" ratings on judicial integrity, across two independent surveys spanning nearly a decade, is an extraordinary finding.

Finding 4: The Peer Group Improved; She Did Not

Between 2020 and 2024, the bench-wide averages rose in every comparable category. Judge Parisien's modest absolute score improvements did not keep pace. She finished last in Demeanor & Communication in both surveys — with an identical score of 3.81.

Finding 5: 269 Evaluations Over Nearly a Decade Is a Definitive Record

The combined weight of 171 evaluations in 2020 and 98 in 2024 — a total of 269 attorney assessments — is not a sample that can be dismissed as unrepresentative or driven by outliers. Each evaluating attorney certified, as sworn officers of the court, that they had personally appeared before the judicial officer being evaluated.

Finding 6: The Steiner Caveat — She Is Effectively Last in 2020 As Well

Judge Steiner's 20-evaluation result in 2020 sits exactly on the survey's minimum reliability threshold and should be treated as statistically unreliable. Setting it aside, Judge Parisien is the worst-performing judge in both surveys. In 2024, she is last outright — no caveat required.

Finding 7: The Bench Improved. She Did Not Move.

The ranking charts apply identical color thresholds across both surveys — red indicates a composite score below 3.90. In 2020, eight judges fell below that threshold. In 2024, one does. Between the two surveys, the King County bench lifted the bottom of its distribution upward. Judges who were in the red tier in 2020 improved sufficiently to exit it by 2024. Judge Parisien is the sole exception — the only judge on the 2024 bench still below 3.90. This is not a coloring inconsistency between the charts. It is among the most significant findings of the longitudinal analysis.

IX. Composite Rankings: Both Surveys

2020 — Bottom Five of 52 Judges

Rank	Judge	Composite	Evaluations
#48	Moore, Catherine	3.82	—
#49	Chung, Samuel	3.81	—
#50	Amini, Susan	3.77	—
#51	Parisien, Suzanne	3.76	171
#52	Steiner, David	3.47	20 (minimum threshold)

2024 — Bottom Five of 49 Judges

Rank	Judge	Composite	Evaluations
#45	McCoy, Adrienne	4.030	40
#46	Holloway, Jason	3.988	42
#47	Chung, Samuel	3.958	115
#48	Amini, Susan	3.902	61
#49	Parisien, Suzanne	3.866	98