



LAKE OF THE WOODS
School

Lake of the Woods School ISD #390
May 20, 2024 @ 6:00 PM
Working Session - ITV Room

Working Session:

1. Citizen's Forum

- a. Nathan Hayes

2. Reports:

- a. Board Committees
 - i. School Forest (Corryn Trask, Karla Robida, Tim Lyon)
 - ii. Building & Grounds (Boyd Johnson, Lynn Ellis)
- b. Superintendent (Jeff Nelson)
- c. PreK-12 Principal (Mary Merchant)
- d. Business Office (Shena Brandt)
- e. Activities Director/Community Ed. (Sam Lyon)

3. Adjourn

**Lake of the Woods School
Board Report
Jeff Nelson, Superintendent & Building/Grounds
May 20, 2024**

1. **Enrollment Update for May 2024** > 425 total enrollment for K-12 (down 2 students since the end of April).
Elementary K-5 Total 195 (down 4 from last month) School Readiness & VPK @ 32, K @ 23 (-4), 1st @ 40 (+1), 2nd @ 35 (-1), 3rd @ 24, 4th @ 36, 5th @ 37
Sr. & Jr. High School 6-12 Total: 230 (up 2 from last month) 6th @ 29, 7th @ 34, 8th @ 24, 9th @ 38 (+1), 10th @ 33 (+1), 11th @ 36, 12th @ 36
2. **Staffing Update**
 - 2.1. ULA and Non-renewals
 - 2.1.1. Resolutions for ULA and Nonrenewal staff included in board packet
 - 2.2. School Nurse Contract
 - 2.2.1. Redline Contract is included in the board packet
 - 2.2.2. Salary and insurance contribution increases consistent with other contract settlements
 - 2.3. Summer Custodial/Grounds Position
 - 2.3.1. Heather Northup will move to part-time to full-time position
 - 2.3.1.1. This will replace part-time custodial position vacated by John Batko when he was hired as Transportation Supervisor
 - 2.3.2. We will be advertising for a Summer/Seasonal Grounds/Custodial position
 - 2.3.2.1. This will replace the summer custodial position vacated by the retirement of Dawn Olson.
3. **Review and Comment Update**
 - 3.1. see attachment 2.b.i.Approval of building bond and capital projects levy
4. **School Finance Summer Workshop**
 - 4.1. see attachment 2.b.ii.2024_Finance_Classes.pdf
5. **Vacation Days - Tuesday, May 28 through Friday, May 31**
6. **Workplace Survey Update**
7. **Kudos and Celebrations**

Based on the information from our working sessions and communications with representatives from Ehlers and Widseth, I am recommending that the Board approve the submission of an application for Review & Comment for a general obligation school building bond of \$5,000,000. for the acquisition and betterment of school sites and facilities. This would include maintenance projects, and the completion of sites and grounds improvements. In addition, a proposed capital project levy authorization that will raise approximately \$400,000 for taxes payable in 2025. The capital projects levy authorization would be used for the acquisition and betterment of school sites and facilities, including deferred maintenance and renovation projects, acquisition, installation, and replacement, support and maintenance of software, educational software, software licenses, computers, improved technology equipment, networks, infrastructure, the cost of technology related personnel and training ; the purchase and replacement of school buses and school -related transportation vehicles; and the acquisition of curricula , textbooks and materials.

The broad scope is intentional at this point. The Board will have the opportunity to make adjustments to the proposed amounts and projects prior to the August 23 deadline for a formal resolution calling the election and formation of the actual ballot questions. This will allow some time for us to conduct stakeholder surveys and additional community engagement through various communication channels such as; social media, email, letters, phone calls, and in-person sessions.

The action for the Board at this time is to authorize the superintendent to submit all required information to the Commissioner of Education to request Review and Comment for proposed capital expenditures that would be funded through a combination of a capital project levy and school building bond.



**Executive Director
Rob Blankenfeld**

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Ext. 5

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TO: Superintendents
Principals
Business Managers
Bookkeepers
Interested persons!

FROM: Northwest Service Cooperative
Chris Wavra, Member Services

DATE: January 2024

SUBJECT: School Finance Workshops

The Northwest Service Cooperative (NWSC) will be sponsoring School Finance Workshops for all new Superintendents, aspiring Superintendents, Principals, Business Managers, Bookkeepers, School Board Members or anyone interested in learning the fundamentals of Minnesota school finance.

Dr. Bruce Jensen will be teaching four finance sessions on July 16, July 23, July 30 and Thursday, September 19, 2024. The sessions will be held at the NWSC, lunch will be on your own. Sessions are from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (September session is a half-day)

Deadline to register: July 5, 2024

The session agenda will be as follows:

July 16, 2024: Intro, Pupil Units, Taxes

July 23, 2024: Revenue Sources

July 30, 2024: Revenue Continued, UFARS, Budgets, Audits, Miscellaneous

September 19, 2024: Levy Sheets (1/2 day)

CEUs will be offered for each session. The cost of this workshop for all 4 sessions is a total of \$400 or \$125 per session. To participate, please register online at: <http://www.nw-service.k12.mn.us> or click here: **REGISTER HERE**

If you have any questions, please call Chris 218-681-0900 x3 or email: cwavra@nwservice.org

Thank you!



LAKE OF THE WOODS
School

2024 WORKPLACE CLIMATE SURVEY

Lake of the Woods School - ISD #390
Baudette, Minnesota

April 2024

Submitted By:
Lake of the Woods School
Accounts Payable/Administrative Assistant

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INTRODUCTION

In 2024, Lake of the Woods School's Accounts Payable/Administrative Assistant conducted a Workplace Climate Survey of all full-time employees at Lake of the Woods School. The results of this survey are presented in this report, and a comparison of Lake of the Woods School against other Minnesota and nationwide schools is disclosed as a conclusion.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Objective:

At Lake of the Woods School, we value your opinions and feedback as a member of our team. The purpose of this survey is to gather your thoughts on the current climate within our organization. Your responses will be confidential and used to inform and improve our workplace culture. This survey is anonymous. But please keep in mind that because we are a school, it is public information.

Results:

A total of 84 surveys were emailed out, with a response of 59 completed. This gave the survey a 70% return rate.

Analysis of the workplace safety portion of the survey reflects that a strong majority of employees feel safe working at Lake of the Woods School, with 92% in agreement with the statement. A strong majority of employees 90% feel that the facility is sufficient to support their goals. In contrast, a moderate number of employees coming in at 68% feel they work in a harassment feel workplace, and 66% feel they can voice their concerns/questions about workplace safety.

Examination of the peer relationships section of the survey discloses that a moderate majority of the employees feel that coworkers are able to constructively resolve issues by 66% of respondents, and 61% feel they can trust their peers. A slight majority, or 51% of employees feel that coworkers put the needs of the team above themselves.

A breakdown of the supervisor relationships statements suggests that a moderate majority of employees feel their supervisor is receptive to their feedback, 66% of respondents. A slight majority of respondents, 54% feel that their supervisor seeks out their input and feedback, and 56% feel that their supervisor is in touch with the needs of the employees. Conversely a minimal majority, 46% feel that the superintendent listens/acts on the feedback given to him and 37% feel the school board listens/acts on feedback given to them.

Exploration of the job satisfaction section of the survey exhibits that a moderate majority of the employees describe themselves as satisfied with their jobs, with 73% and 71% being proud to work for this organization. 68% of employees would see themselves working for Lake of the Woods School five years from now, and 51% are never seeking out new employment.

Finally, close to 50% of respondents were willing to give feedback at the conclusion of the survey. Ultimately 53% of respondents were willing to share activities that they feel have been beneficial to the work environment, 44% gave suggestions of how they would improve the workplace climate, and 71% gave suggestions of topics that should be addressed in the future.

In conclusion when comparing Lake of the Woods School's workplace environment with other schools throughout the state of Minnesota, Lake of the Woods School ranks higher overall with satisfaction in workplace climate by finishing with a 73% rate of satisfaction, compared to 52% of full-time licensed teachers wanting to leave the profession due to the climate of their school (MNSPIRE Survey, June 2022). According to the MNSPIRE survey, throughout the state of Minnesota, 81% of full-time licensed teachers are planning on continuing to teach, whereas 68% of Lake of the Woods School employees feel as though they will be remaining at their place of employment in five years. In comparison throughout the United States, 44% of teachers are very likely to spend their entire career teaching, and 33% are somewhat likely to spend their entire career teaching (The Voices from the Classroom Survey 2023, April 2023).

BACKGROUND

The Workplace Climate Survey came about as a suggestion from the public during a School Board Listening Session on March 11, 2024. The concern the public made known pertains to the enjoyment that employees take in their working environment at Lake of the Woods School, and its ability to retain employees over the long term. The school board will use this survey to determine areas in which working at Lake of the Woods School are positive and able to further one's enjoyment at the school. They will use the survey to demonstrate areas in which improvement can be made to create a working environment that is both rewarding and a constructive place of employment. They will also use the survey to take any comments or concerns, both positive and negative, that may aid in creating a working environment where employees feel a sense of pride and ensure that they are as productive as possible.

METHODOLOGY

Survey Design and Internal Marketing:

The Workplace Climate Survey was created within a District Cabinet Committee Meeting that included three school board members, the superintendent, the elementary and high school principal, several LWEM union members, several MSEA union members, and several AFSCME union members. The meeting took place on March 18, 2024 in which several sample survey questions were presented to the committee by the Superintendent. The entire District Cabinet Committee took those sample questions and considered them, altered them, came up with additional questions, and organized them to make the most effective survey that would allow the school board to gauge the work environment effectively.

Survey Categories:

1. Workplace Safety
2. Peer Relationships
3. Supervisor Relationships
4. Job Satisfaction
5. Survey Conclusion

Data Collection:

Lake of the Woods School used an anonymous Google Form to collect survey responses electronically, and provided paper copies for those that did not prefer to submit their answers online. The survey was distributed electronically via email to all full-time employees at noon on April 1, 2024. Paper copies were placed in the bus garage along with a lock box for physical copy submission. The electronic delivery of surveys included the survey link, the survey purpose statement, and a survey timeline. A reminder email was circulated on April 4, 2024 to ensure everyone had an opportunity to complete the survey. The survey closed at noon on April 5, 2024, and paper copies were collected at that same time as well. Survey responses were collected by the Accounts Payable/Administrative Assistant for processing.

Survey Collection Timeline:

Friday, March 26, 2024, 1:30 PM	Survey Sneak Peak via Email
Monday, April 1, 2024, 12:00 PM	Survey Distribution via Email & Paper Copy
Thursday, April 4, 2024, 10:00 AM	Survey Reminder via Email
Friday, April 5, 2024, 12:00 PM	Survey Close and Collection

SURVEY RESULTS

The following are definitions that will be used throughout the survey results to interpret whether the majority of employees agree or disagree with each statement given. Be aware when drawing positive/negative conclusions to a “Neither Agree/Disagree” response, as the context of the statement must be taken into consideration when reviewing the results.

STRONG: The level of agreement/disagreement with a positive statement, or the majority of respondents is $\geq 75\%$.

MODERATE: The level of agreement/disagreement with a positive statement, or the majority of respondents is $\geq 60\%$ but $< 75\%$.

SLIGHT: The level of agreement/disagreement with a positive statement, or the majority of respondents is $\geq 50\%$ but $< 60\%$.

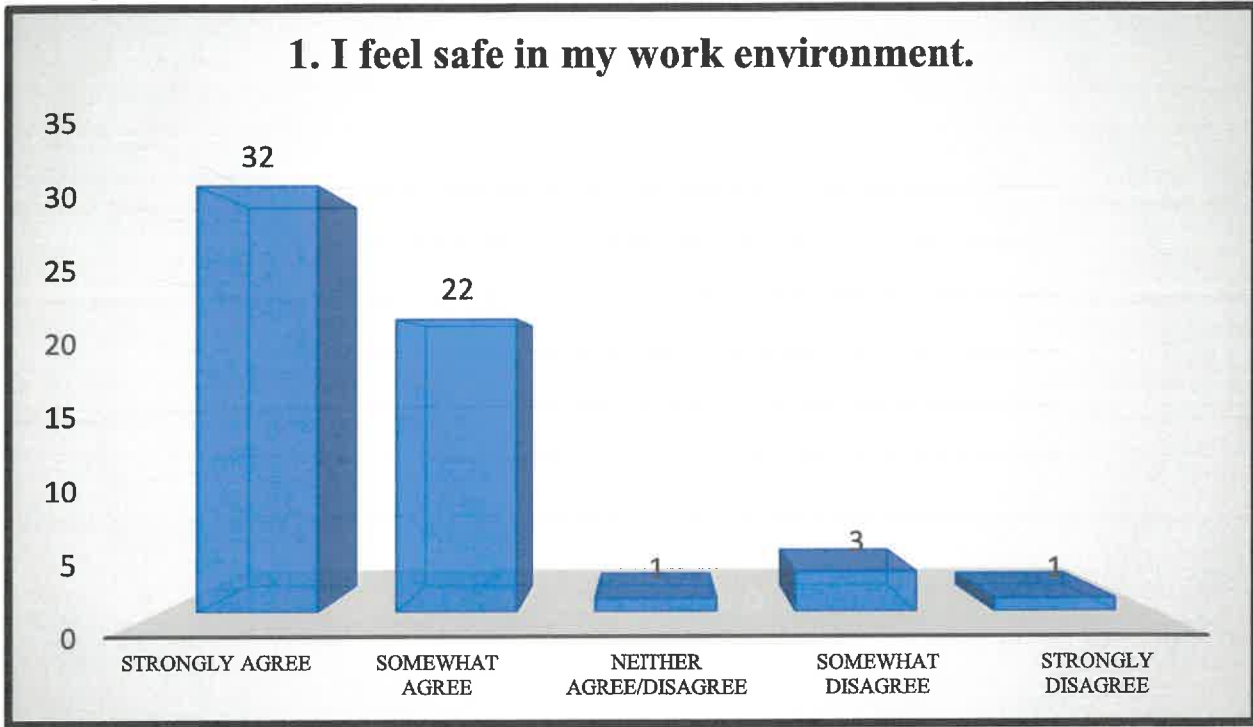
MINIMAL: The level of agreement/disagreement with a positive statement, or the majority of respondents is $< 50\%$.

CATEGORY: WORKPLACE SAFETY

STATEMENT 1: I feel safe in my work environment.

Agree: 92% Neutral: 1% Disagree: 7%

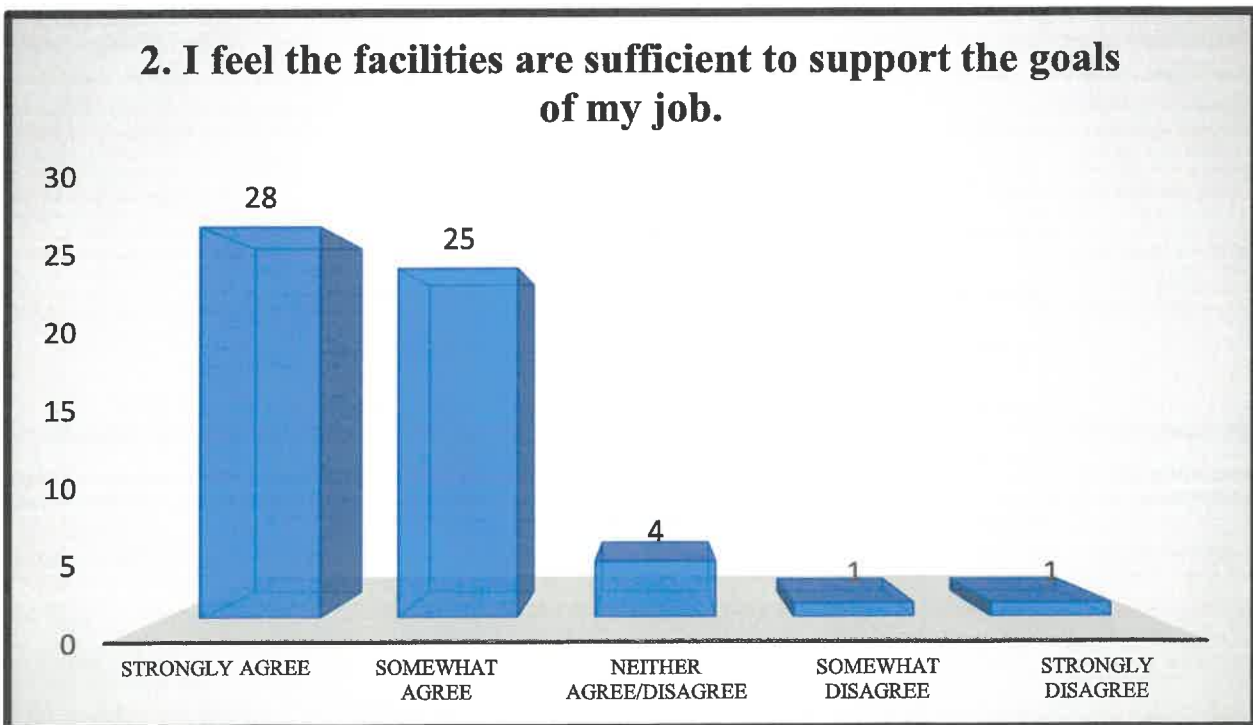
A strong majority of overall respondents feel safe in their work environment.



STATEMENT 2: I feel the facilities are sufficient to support the goals of my job.

Agree: 90% Neutral: 7% Disagree: 3%

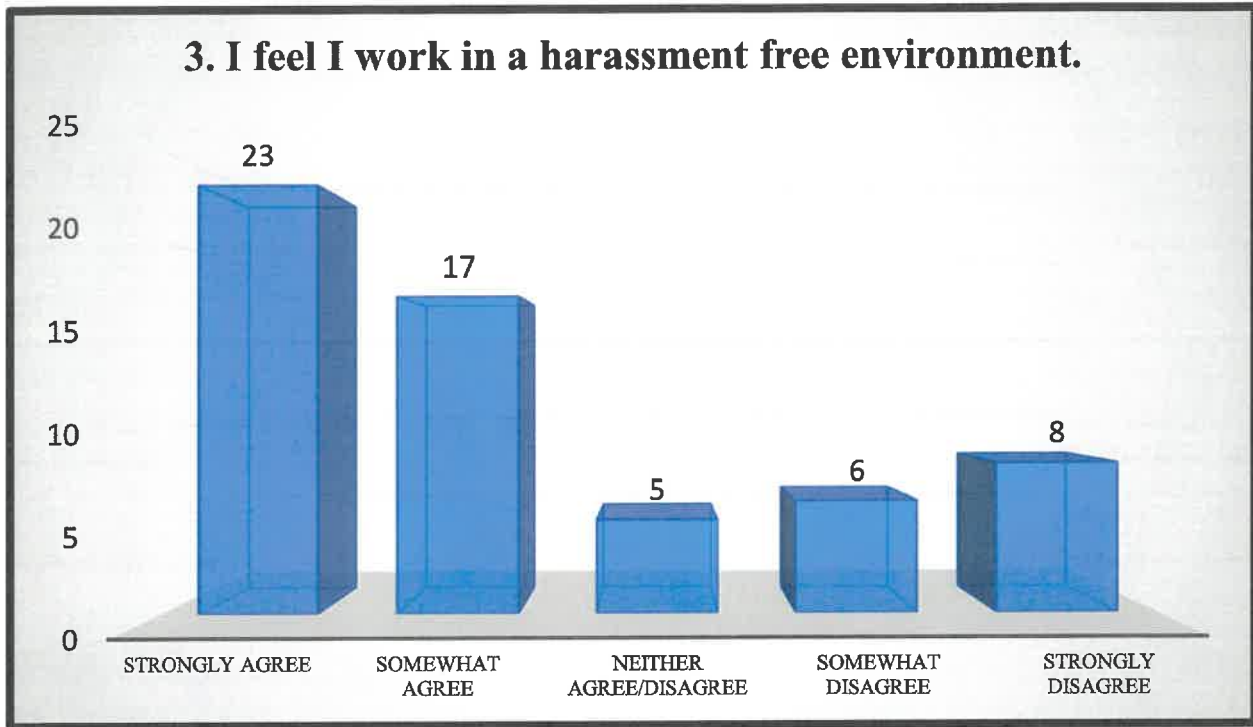
A strong majority of overall respondents feel the facilities are sufficient to support the goals of their job.



STATEMENT 3: I feel I work in a harassment free environment.

Agree: 68% Neutral: 8% Disagree: 24%

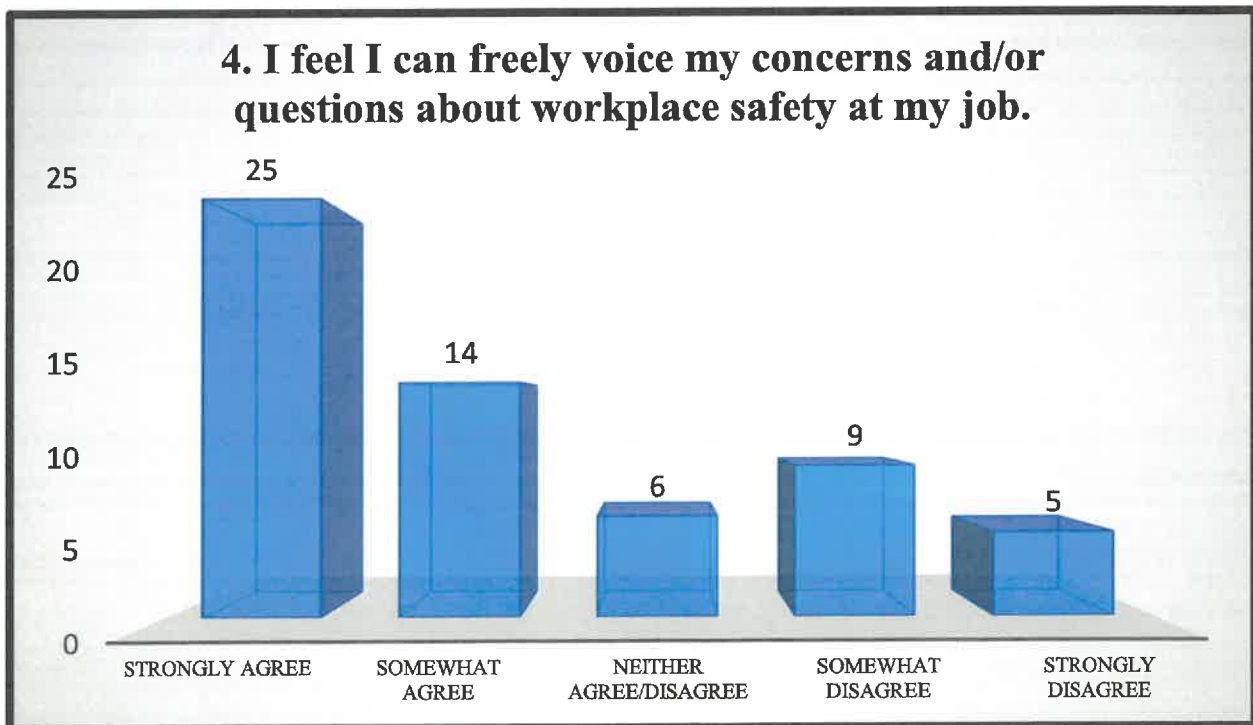
A moderate majority of overall respondents feel they work in a harassment free environment.



STATEMENT 4: I feel I can freely voice my concerns and/or questions about workplace safety at my job.

Agree: 66% Neutral: 10% Disagree: 24%

A moderate majority of overall respondents feel they can freely voice their concerns and/or questions about workplace safety at their job.



STATEMENT 5: Which category would you group yourself in?

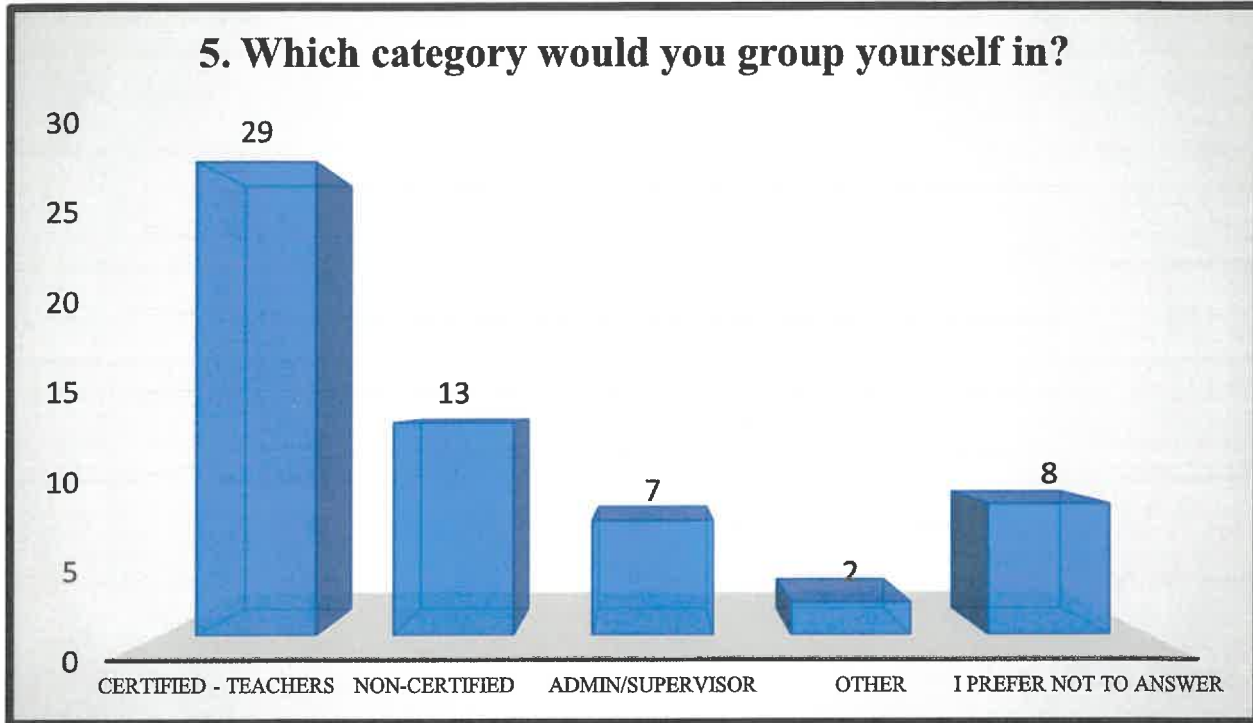
Certified Teachers: 49%

Non-Certified: 22%

Admin/Supervisor: 12%

Other: 3%

Prefer not to answer: 14%

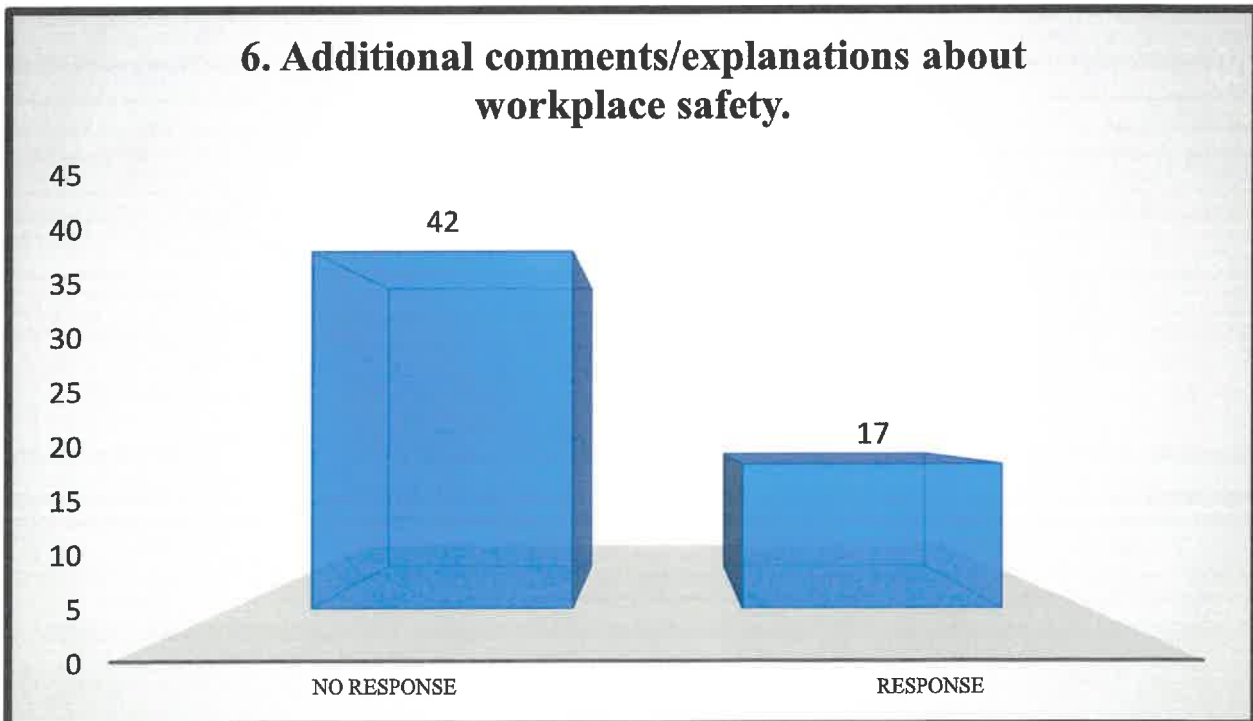


STATEMENT 6: Please provide any additional comments or explanations about your responses concerning workplace safety.

No response given: 71%

Response given: 29%

See Appendix A for responses.

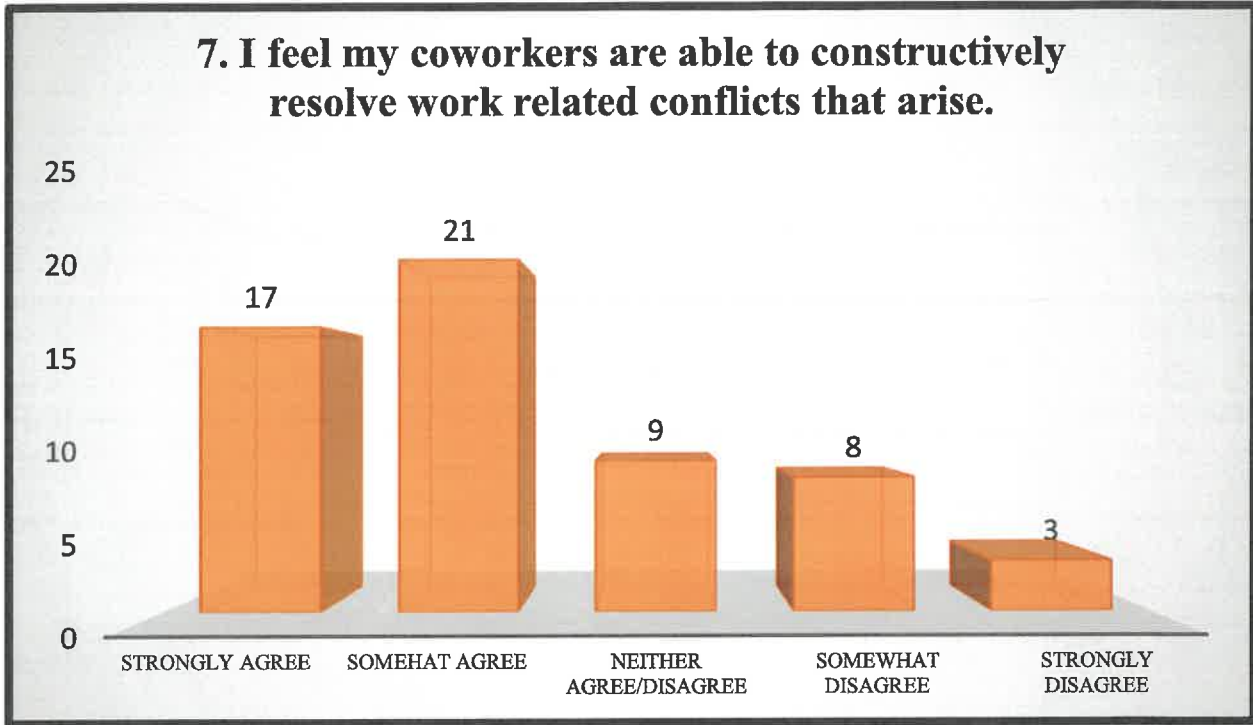


CATEGORY: PEER RELATIONSHIPS

STATEMENT 7: I feel my coworkers are able to constructively resolve work related conflicts that arise.

Agree: 66% Neutral: 15% Disagree: 19% (1 person did not respond.)

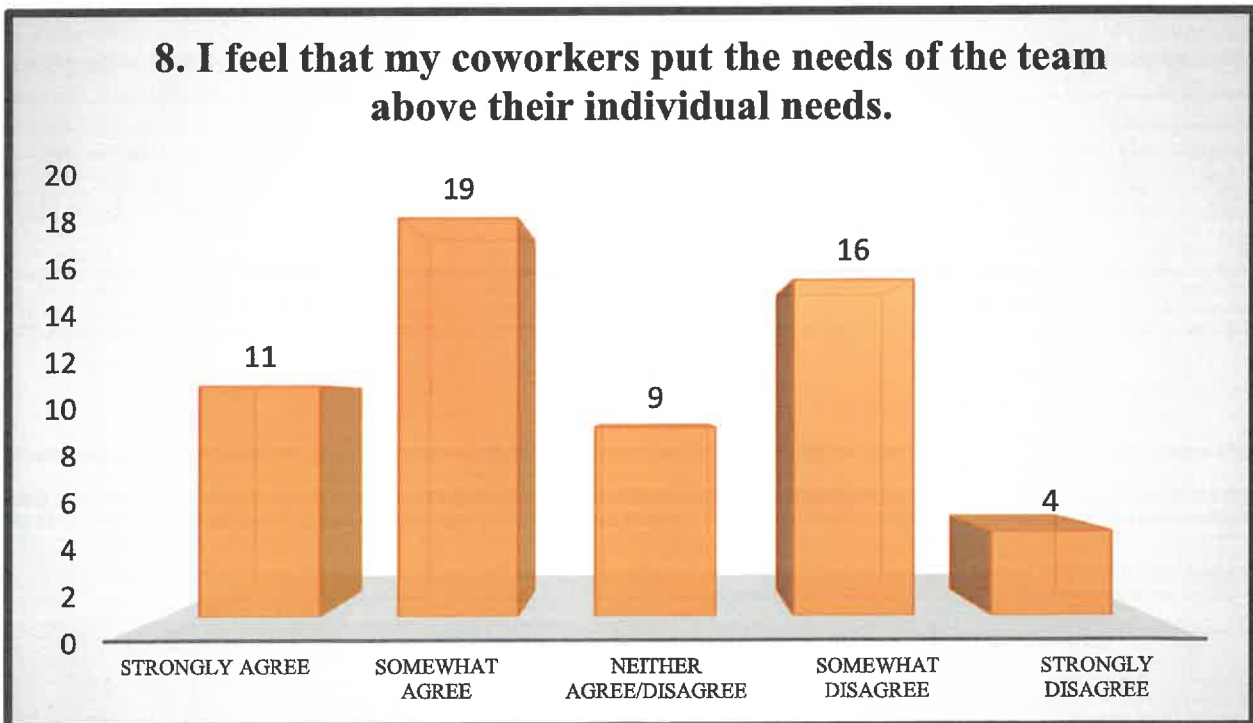
A moderate majority of overall respondents feel their coworkers can resolve work related conflict constructively.



STATEMENT 8: I feel my coworkers put the needs of the team above their individual needs.

Agree: 51% Neutral: 15% Disagree: 34%

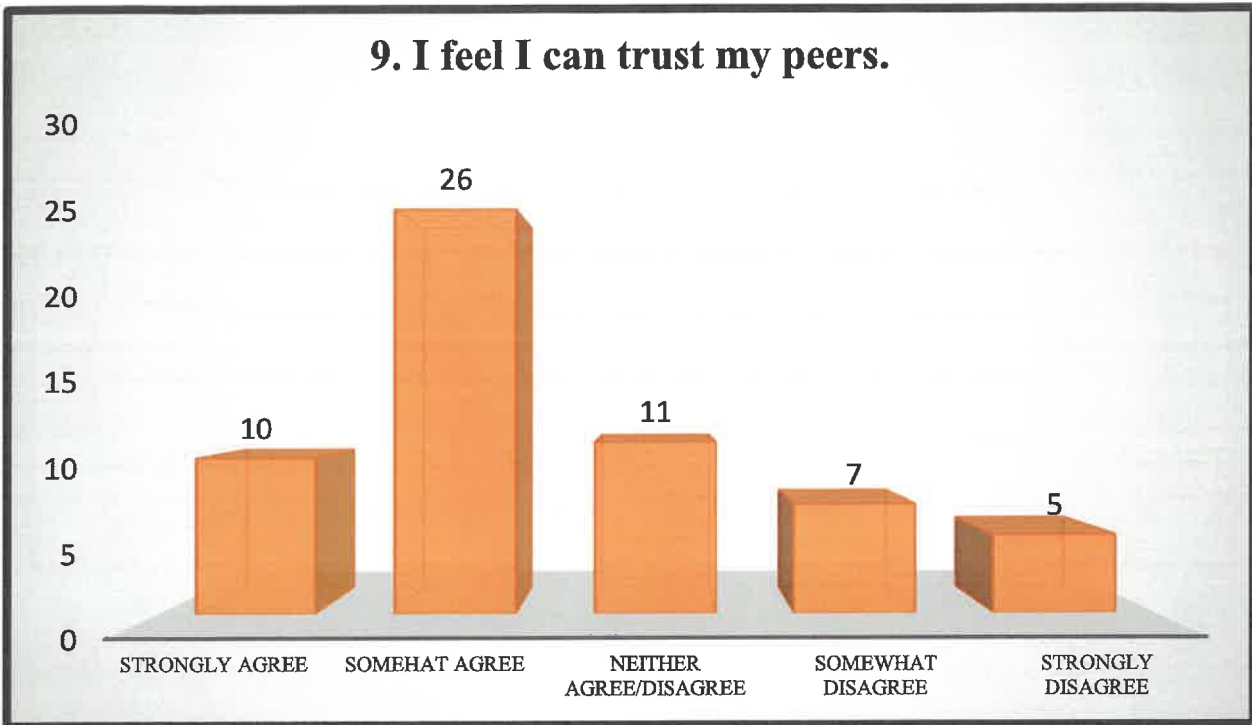
A slight majority of overall respondents feel their coworkers put the needs of the team first.



STATEMENT 9: I feel I can trust my peers.

Agree: 61% Neutral: 19% Disagree: 20%

A moderate majority of overall respondents feel they can trust their peers.



STATEMENT 10: How would you describe your relationship with your peers?

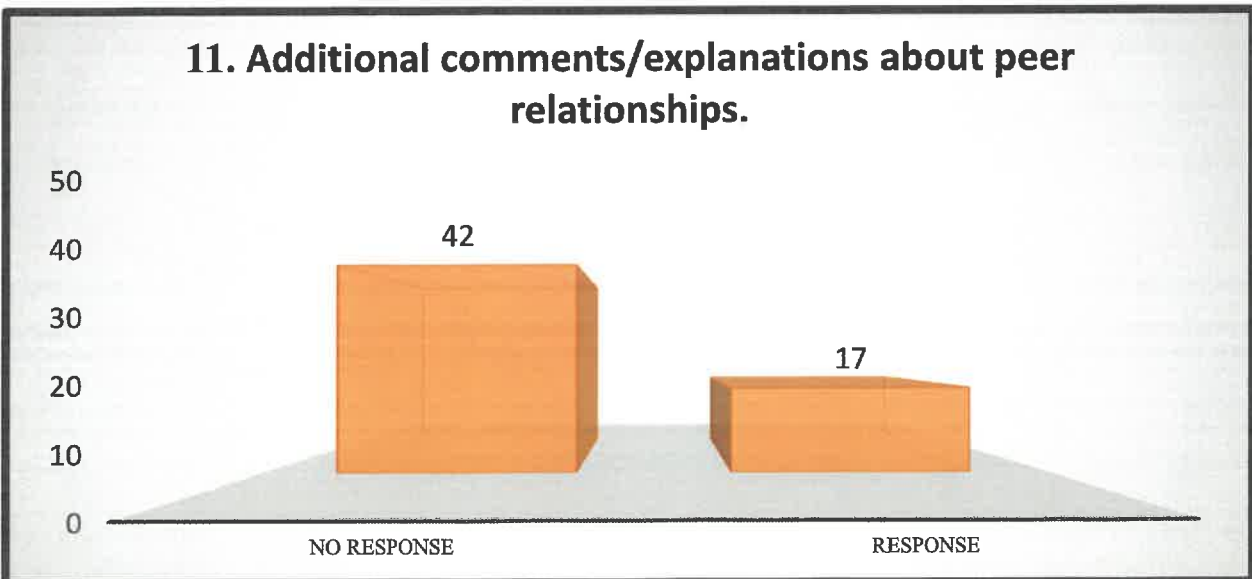
See Appendix B for responses.

STATEMENT 11: Please provide any additional comments or explanations about your responses concerning peer relationships.

No response given: 71%

Response given: 29%

See Appendix C for responses.

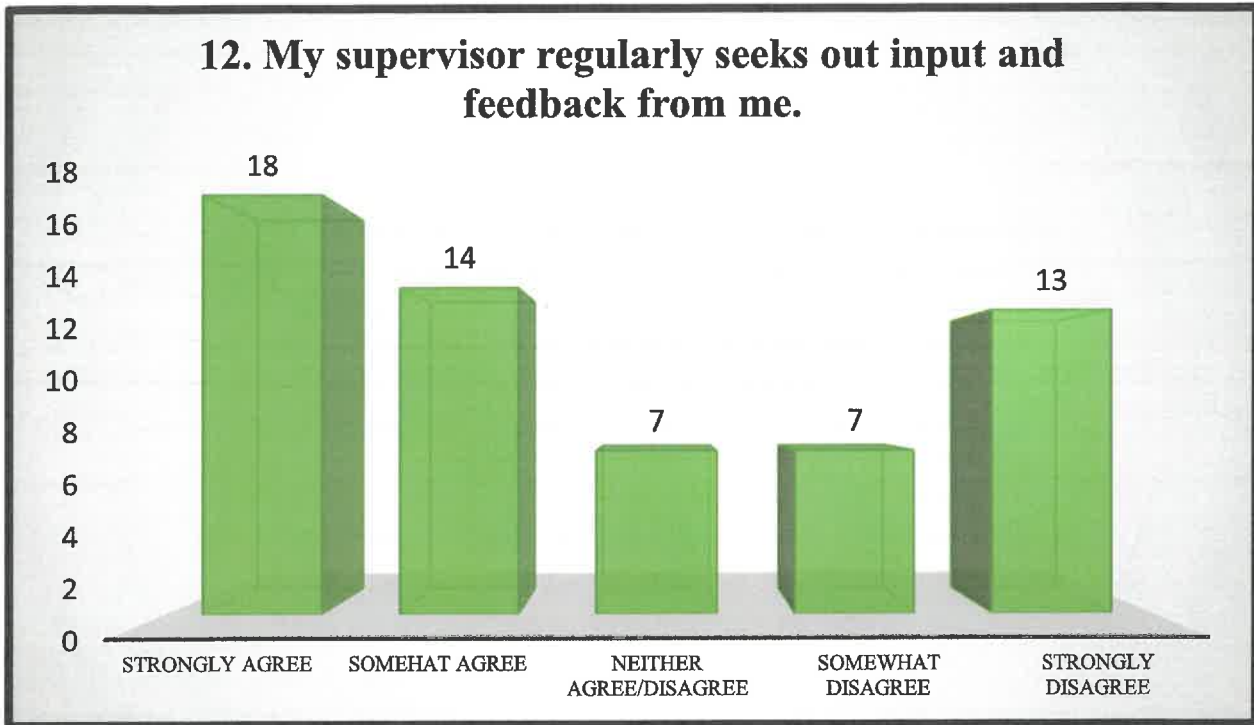


CATEGORY: SUPERVISOR RELATIONSHIPS

STATEMENT 12: My supervisor regularly seeks out input and feedback from me.

Agree: 54% Neutral: 12% Disagree: 34%

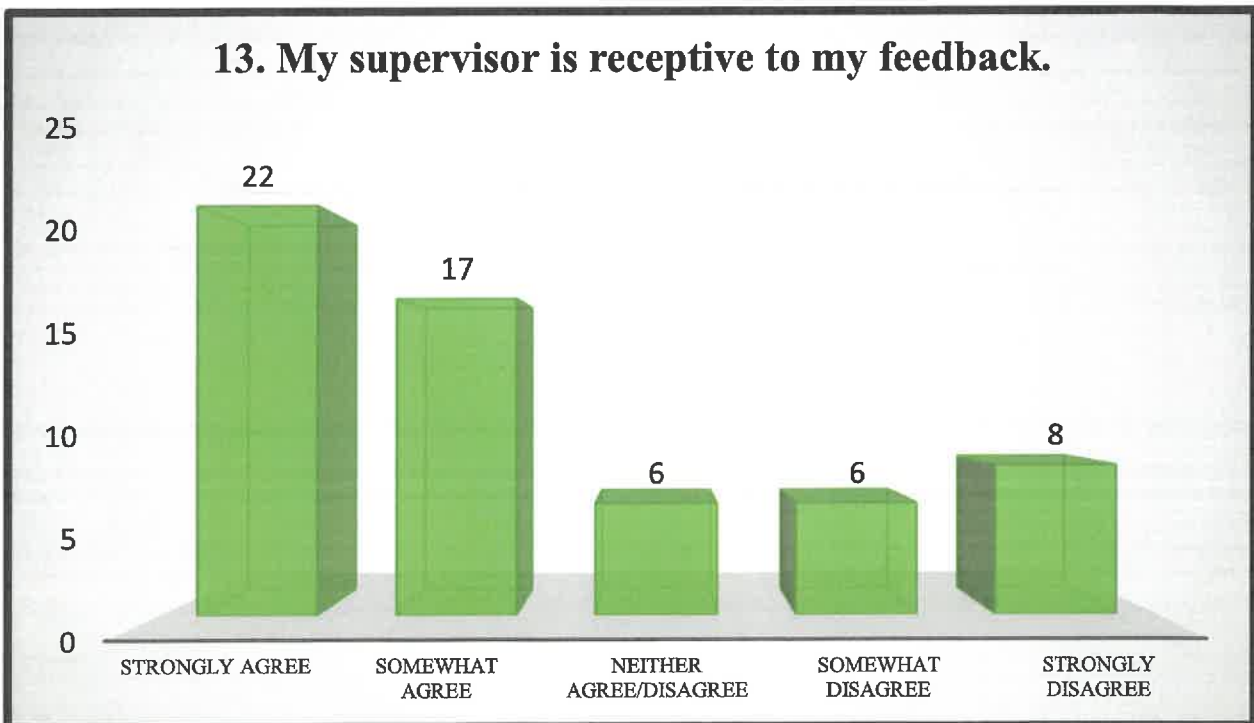
A slight majority of overall respondents feel their supervisor seeks out their input and feedback.



STATEMENT 13: My supervisor is receptive to my feedback

Agree: 66% Neutral: 10% Disagree: 24%

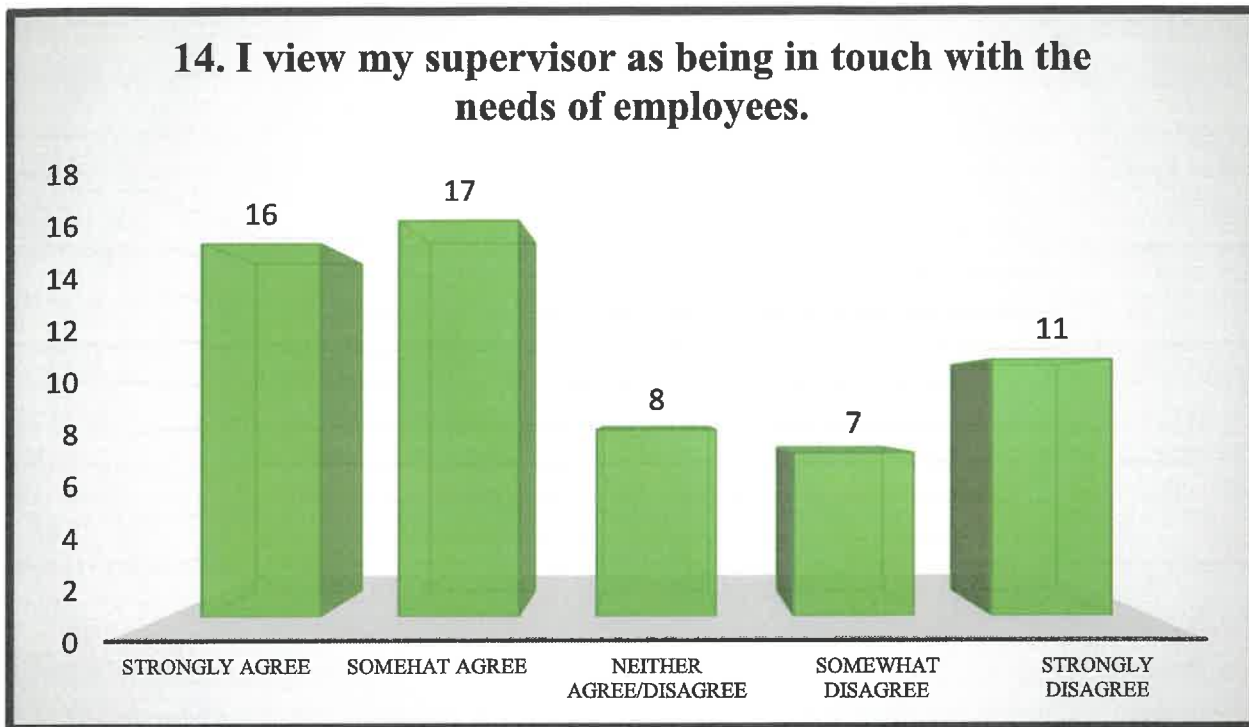
A moderate majority of overall respondents feel their supervisor is receptive to their feedback.



STATEMENT 14: I view my supervisor as being in touch with the needs of employees.

Agree: 56% Neutral: 13% Disagree: 31%

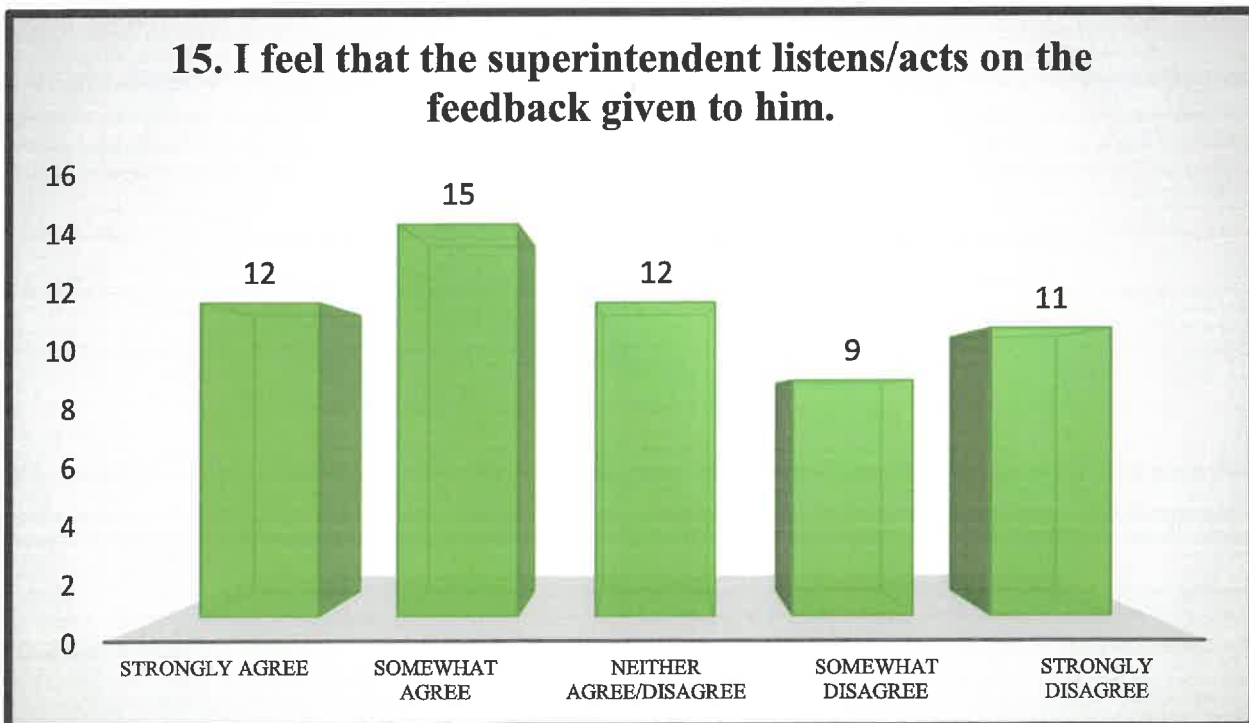
A slight majority of overall respondents feel their supervisor is in touch with the needs of employees.



STATEMENT 15: I feel that the superintendent listens/acts on the feedback given to him.

Agree: 46% Neutral: 20% Disagree: 34%

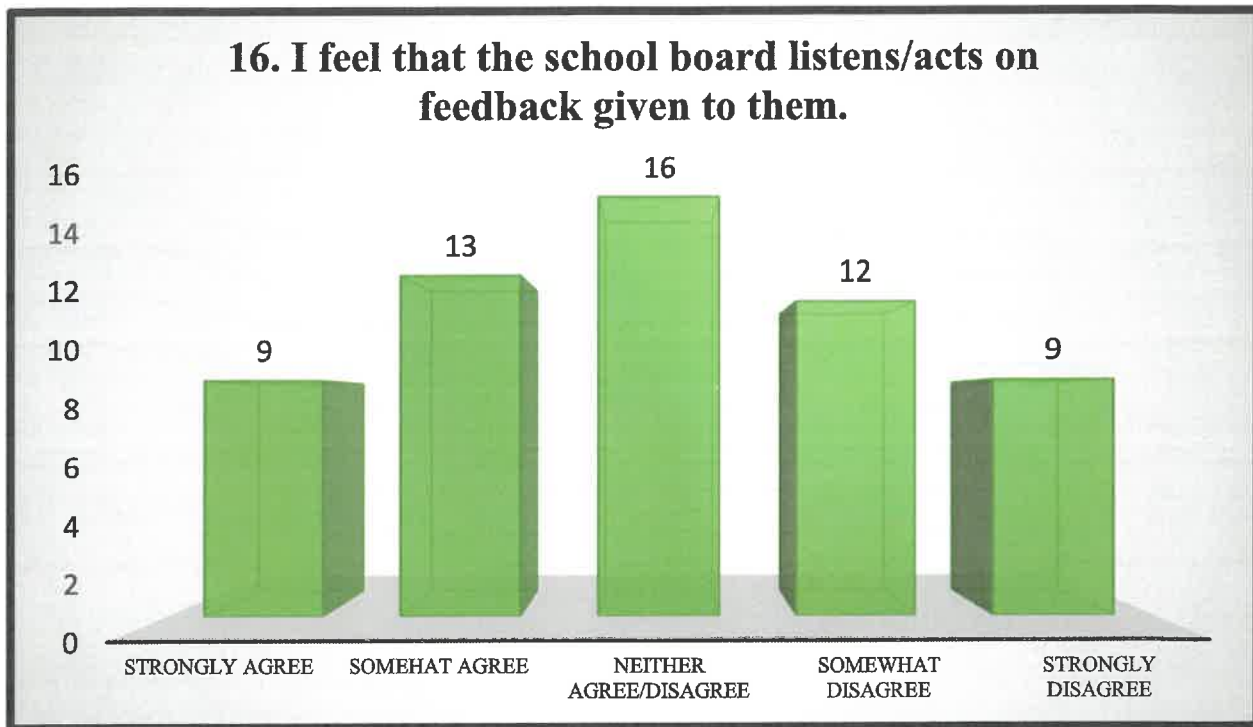
A minimal majority of overall respondents feel the superintendent listens/acts on their feedback.



STATEMENT 16: I feel that the school board listens/acts on the feedback given to them.

Agree: 37% Neutral: 27% Disagree: 36%

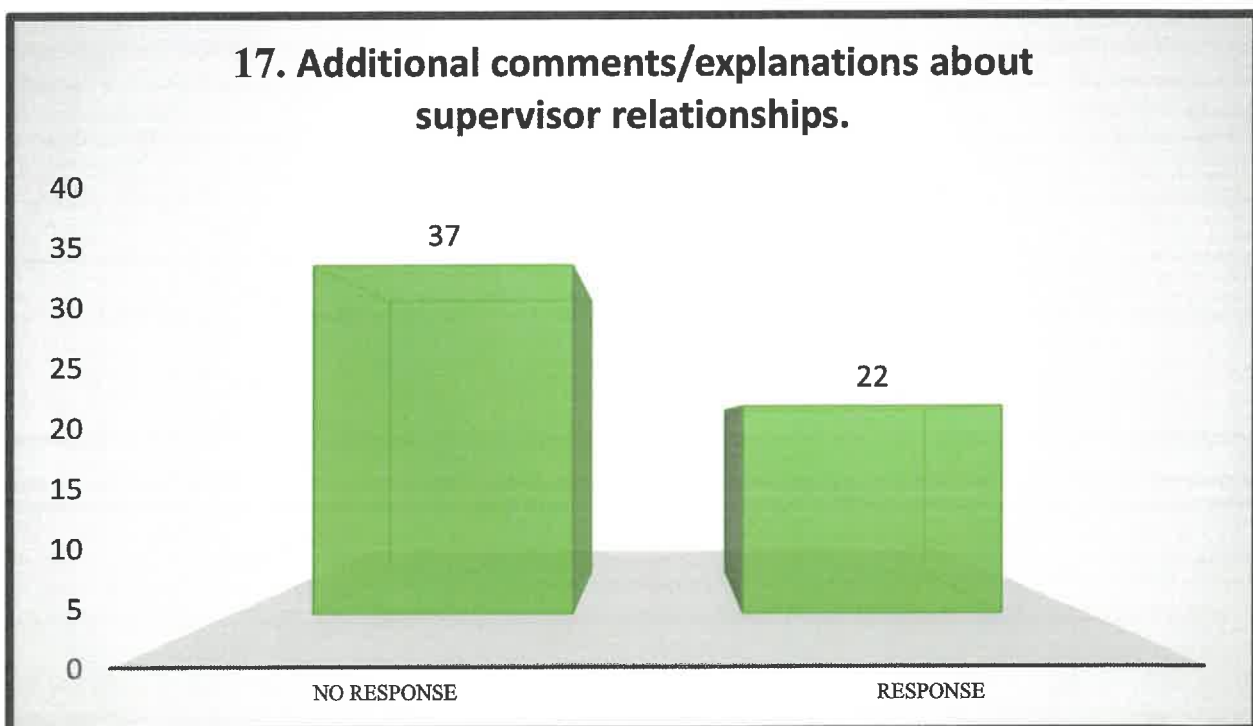
A minimal majority of overall respondents feel the school board listens/acts on their feedback.



STATEMENT 17: Please provide any additional comments or explanations about your responses concerning supervisor relationships.

No response given: 63% Response given: 37%

See Appendix D for responses.

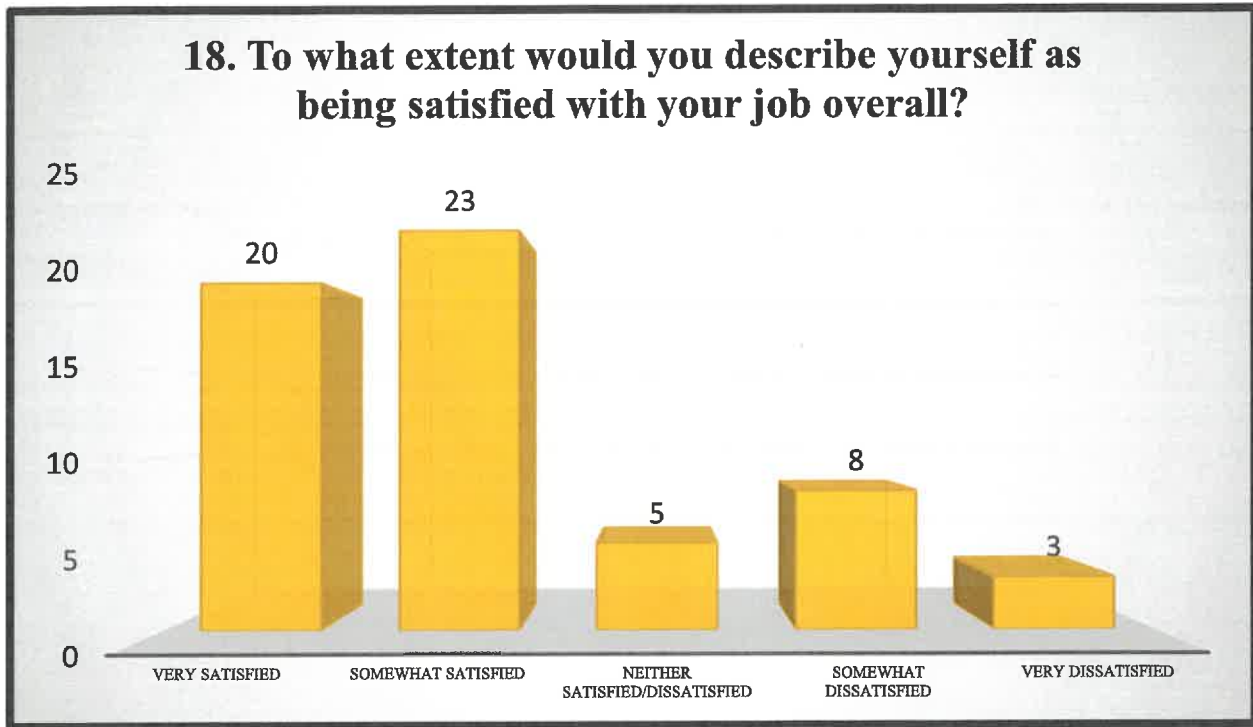


CATEGORY: JOB SATISFACTION

STATEMENT 18: To what extent would you describe yourself as being satisfied with your job overall?

Satisfied: 73% Neutral: 8% Dissatisfied: 19%

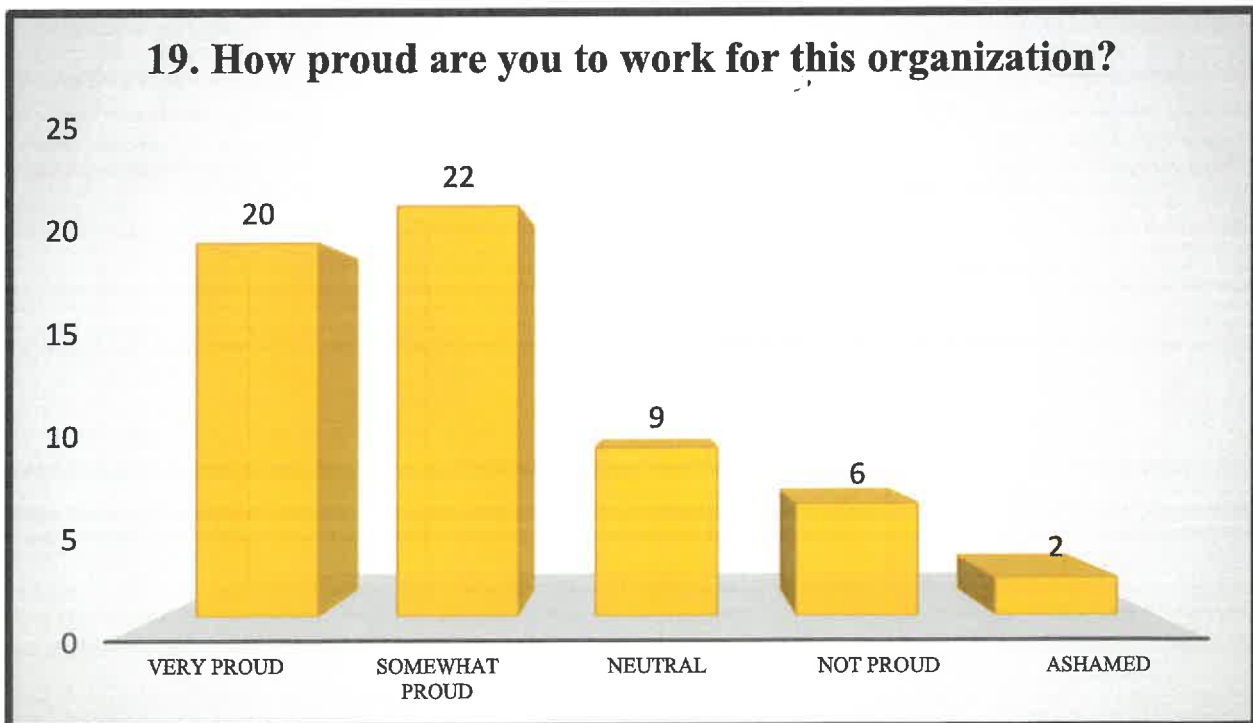
A moderate majority of overall respondents feel satisfied with their overall job.



STATEMENT 19: How proud are you to work for this organization?

Proud: 71% Neutral: 15% Not Proud: 14%

A moderate majority of overall respondents feel a sense of pride in the organization.

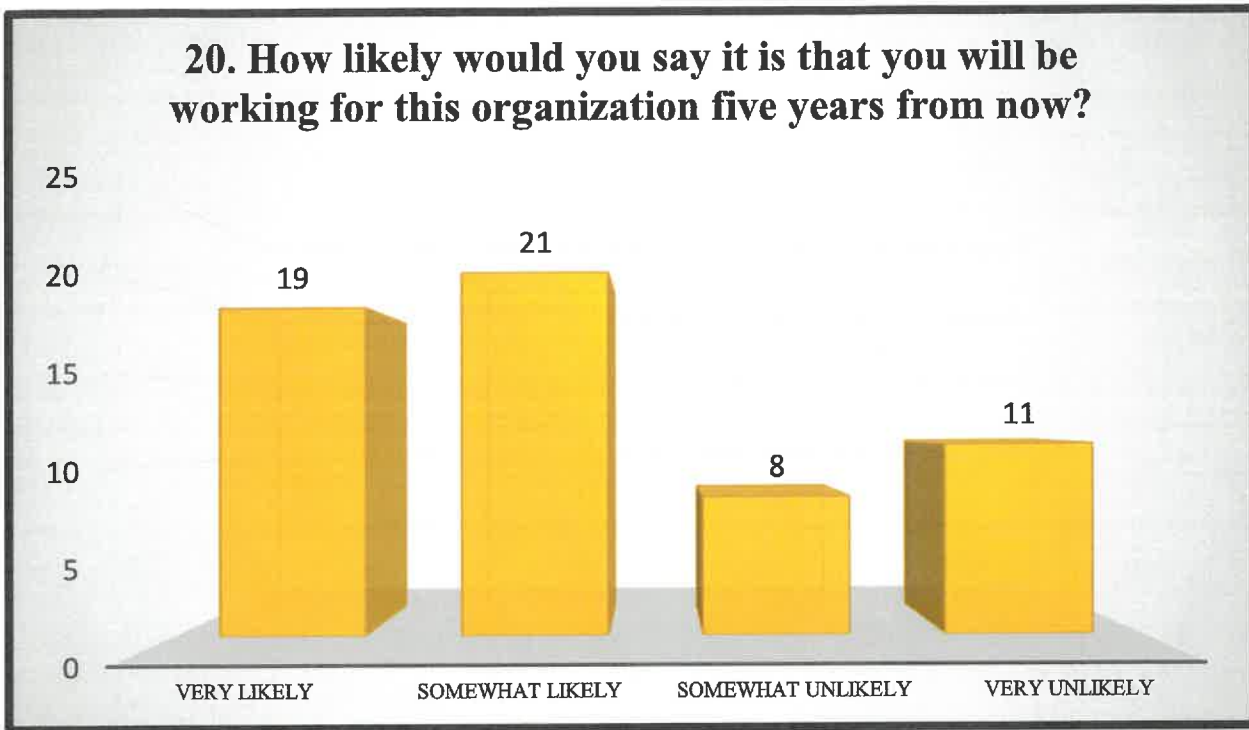


STATEMENT 20: How likely would you say it is that you will be working for this organization five years from now?

Likely: 68%

Unlikely: 32%

A moderate majority of overall respondents feel they are likely to be working for this organization in five years.



STATEMENT 21: How often have you actively looked for another job over the past year?

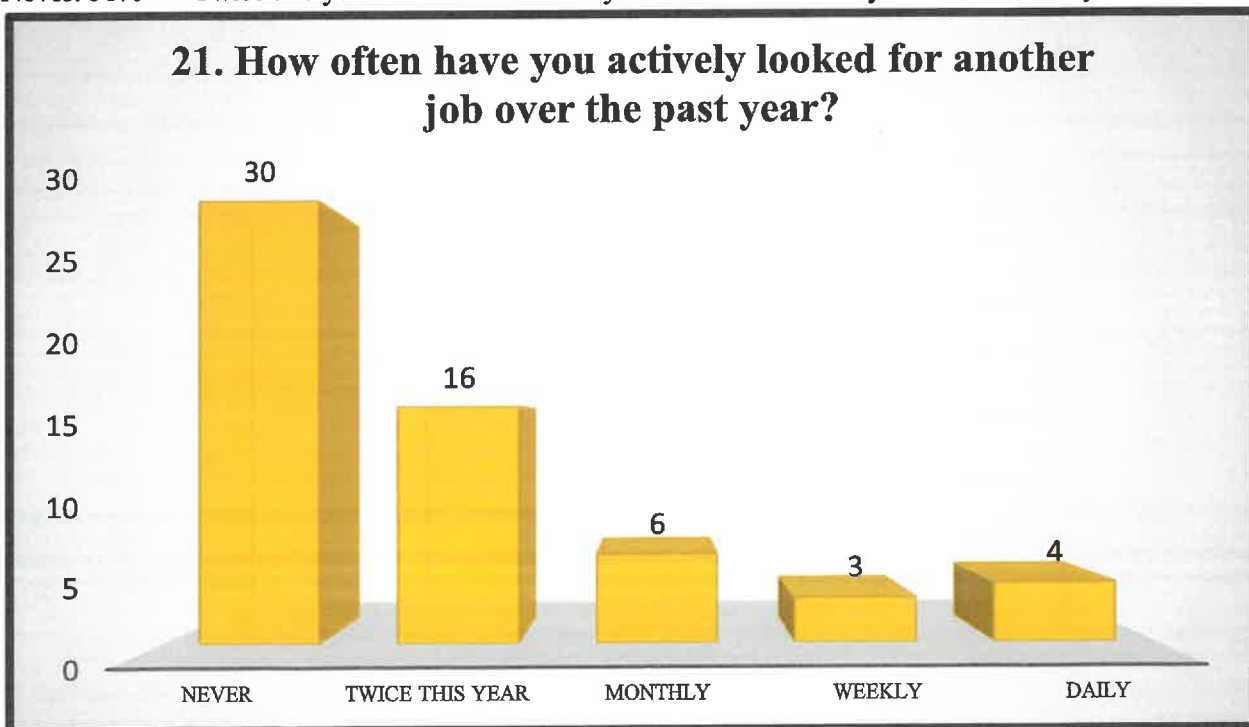
Never: 51%

Twice this year: 27%

Monthly: 10%

Weekly: 5%

Daily: 7%

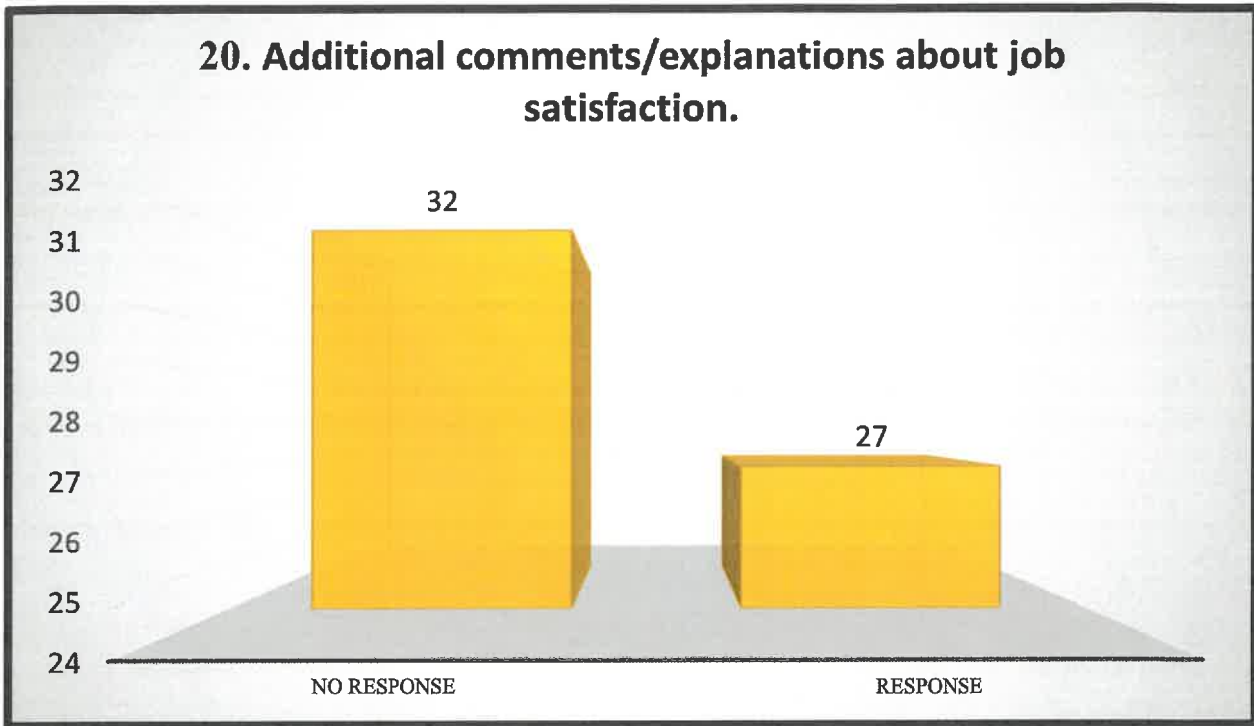


STATEMENT 22: Please provide any additional comments or explanations about your responses concerning job satisfaction.

No response given: 54%

Response given: 46%

See Appendix E for responses.



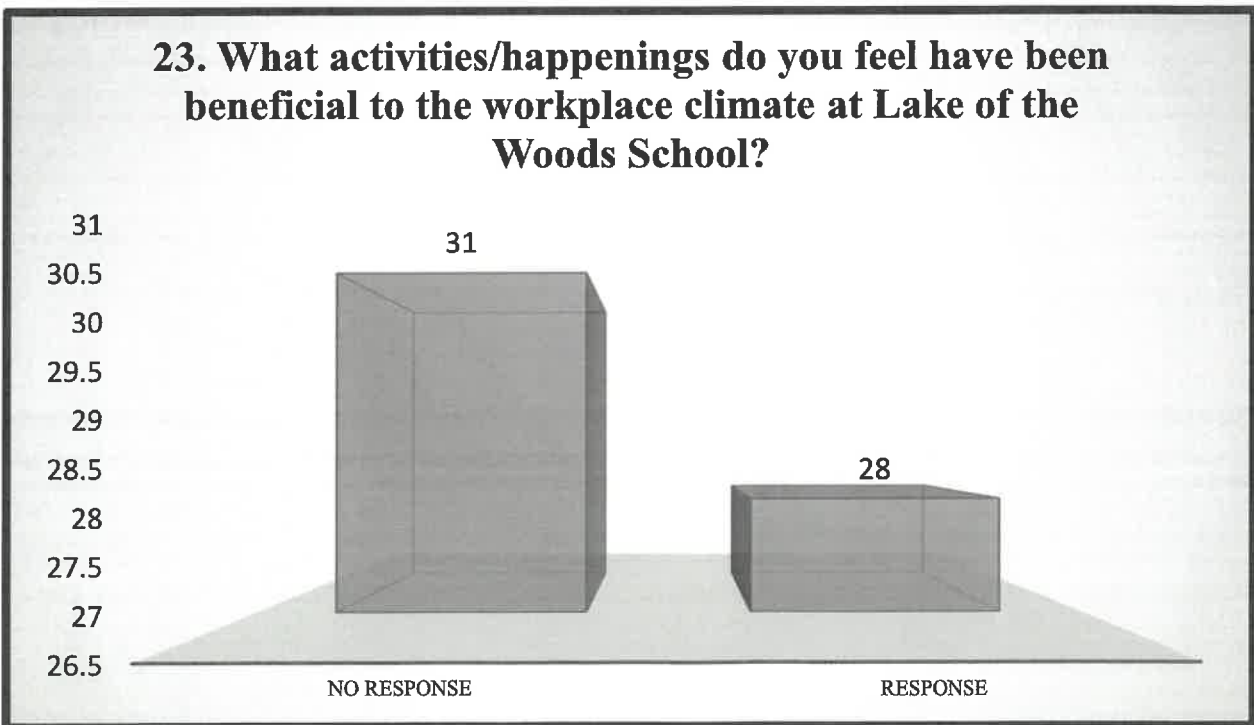
CATEGORY: SURVEY CONCLUSION

STATEMENT 23: What activities or happenings do you feel have been beneficial to the workplace climate at Lake of the Woods School?

No response given: 53%

Response given: 47%

See Appendix F for responses.

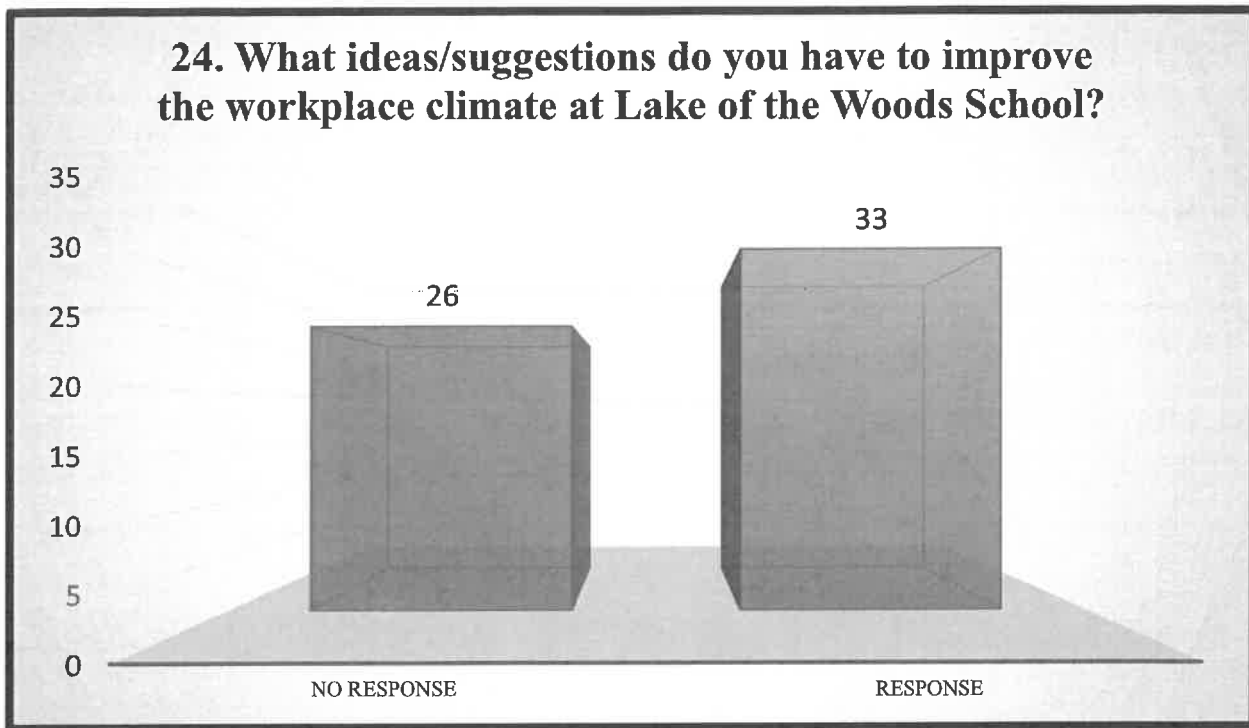


STATEMENT 24: What ideas or suggestions do you have to improve the workplace climate at Lake of the Woods School?

No response given: 44%

Response given: 56%

See Appendix G for responses.

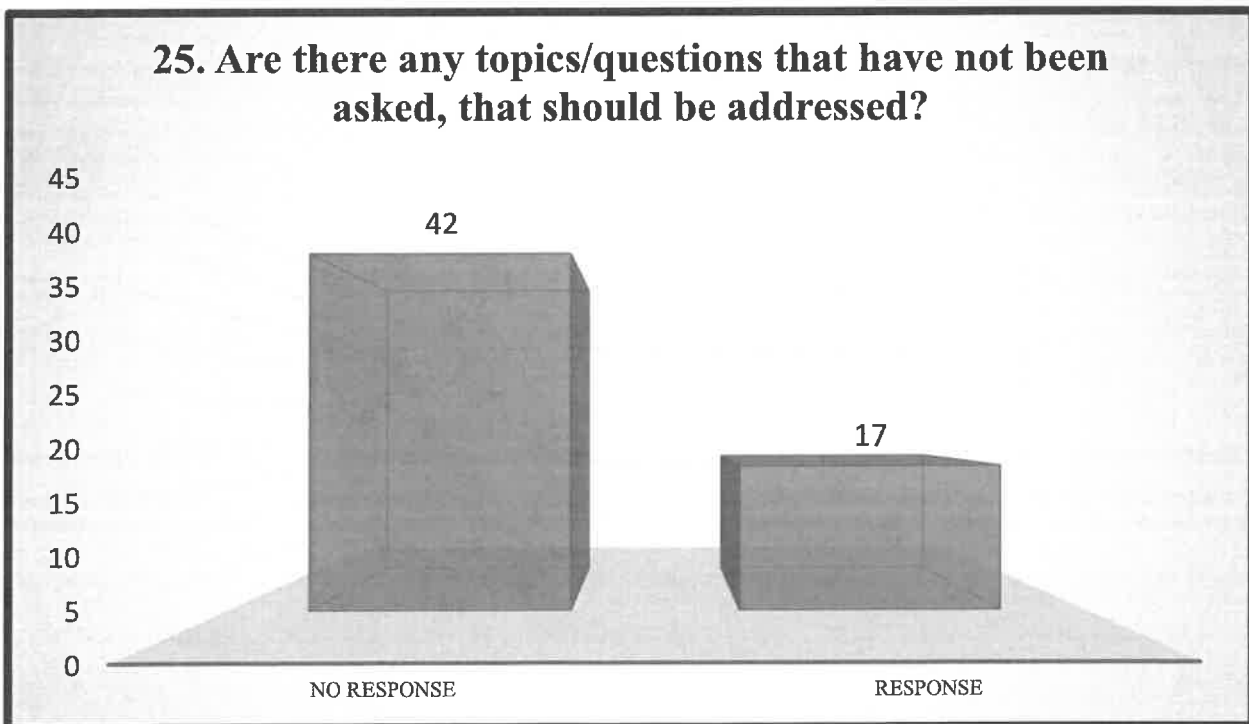


STATEMENT 25: Are there any topics or questions that have not been asked, that should be addressed?

No response given: 71%

Response given: 29%

See Appendix H for responses.



EDUCATION RESEARCH COMPARISON

MNSPIRE Survey 2022 (Minnesota Based)

- <https://mn.gov/pelsb/assets/%5BFinal%5D%20PELSB.Summary%20Report%20%28Updated%20for%20Accessibility%29%20tcm1113-544378.pdf>
- “The MNSPIRE survey specifically measured both preparation and retention, with the goal of developing a better understanding of how various aspects of the teaching career impact teacher retention and attrition.” (MNSPIRE Teacher Survey: Summary Report, June 2022, pg. 1)
- 15,766 surveys completed, by current licensed teachers (unexpired teaching license)
- What keeps you in the teaching profession (top 4 responses)?
 - Students = 76%
 - Colleagues = 48%
 - Economic reasons = 31%
 - School Climate = 15%
- What challenges do you face that could lead you to leave the teaching profession (top 4 responses)?
 - Public view of profession = 55%
 - Parents = 52%
 - School climate = 52%
 - Standardized testing = 46%
 - Economic reasons = 42%
- Which of the following best describes your immediate professional plans (all responses)?
 - Continue teaching = 81%
 - Continue working in education but leave teaching = 9%
 - Leave education entirely = 10%
- What issues influenced you to leave teaching in a public or charter school (top 4 responses)?
 - None listed = 51%
 - School climate = 30%
 - Lack of academic freedom = 16%
 - Economic reasons = 16%
 - Standardized testing = 16%
 - Parents = 9%

2023 National Teacher Survey (United States of America Based)

- <https://e4e.org/what-we-do/a-survey-of-americas-educators/voices-from-the-classroom-2023-a-survey-of-americas-educators/>
- https://e4e.org/sites/default/files/voices_from_the_classroom_2023.pdf

- “The Voices from the Classroom 2023 survey questionnaire was developed by 16 Educators for Excellence teacher members from across the United States. The instrument was written and administered by Penta Group Intelligence, an independent research firm, and conducted online from January 6 through February 8, 2023, among a nationally representative sample of 1,000 full-time public-school teachers.” (Voices from the Classroom 2023: A Survey of America’s Educators, April 2023, pg. 6)

- Question 19 asks, “As of now, how likely would you say you are to spend your entire career as a classroom teacher?”
 - Very likely = 47%
 - Somewhat likely = 33%
 - Not very likely = 12%
 - Not likely at all = 8%
 - Not sure = 1%

- Question 20 asks “On a scale of 0 to 10, how likely are you to recommend teaching to a friend, family member or acquaintance?” Of those surveyed 13% answered “0-not likely”, 5% answered a “1”, 7% answered “2”, 9% answered “3”, 8% answered “4”, and 12% answered “5”. Question 20’s answers feeds into question 21 which stated, “Which of the following best describes the primary reason you are not likely to spend the rest of your career as a classroom teacher?” (top 4 responses):
 - I want a higher paying job = 19%
 - I take too many additional responsibilities for which I am not compensated = 17%
 - I do not have enough support to address discipline issues = 12%
 - I want greater work-life balance = 11%

- Question 23 asks, “Now, which of the following do you think would be the most likely to retain teachers in the profession?” (top 4 responses):
 - Higher salary = 45%
 - Better benefits (such as better/more affordable health care options, student loan forgiveness, housing support, or improved family leave) = 10%
 - More supportive administrators = 8%
 - More societal respect for the profession = 6%

APPENDIX A

STATEMENT 6: Please provide any additional comments or explanations about your responses concerning workplace safety.

- I. Due to budget reductions, staff feel hesitant to voice their concerns.
- II. I feel like overall it is a safe place to work however, I have also seen things swept under the rug rather than being addressed with staff so they are all on the same page. I feel like there have been a couple of instances with students bring "weapons" to school that should have been addressed to all staff and also the parents of students so that rumors don't circulate and make the problem worse than the reality of the situation. I understand that we can't always know all the details but when there is a threat to other students, staff members should be made aware so they can be more vigilant in identifying situations that could be dangerous to other students and themselves.

It is upsetting to community members especially parents when they hear about issues at the school that involve safety and they are not made aware of what has happened by the school but are hearing it second hand.

I am also concerned that classroom's don't have "go" bags for fire drills, evacuation drills etc. If there were a real situation that required medical attention, I don't know if classroom teachers would be able to do so because there are not adequate supplies to deal with an emergency situation.

- III. I do not love the multi-gym door being locked from the inside. I get that we don't want people cutting through, but in the case of an emergency, there is only one door to exit.
- IV. As far as staff there are certain staff that are monitored closely, and there are some staff that should be monitored closely. There are fairness issues in this regard. Certain individuals appear to do whatever they please and there are no repercussions.
- V. Because the school is undergoing budget cuts, I feel that I cannot voice any concerns without potentially getting cut myself.
- VI. I appreciate having law enforcement at the school each morning in the commons and walking the hallways in the morning. Their presence is appreciated.
- As far as voicing my concerns or questions- I do feel comfortable doing that with administration and a handful of trusted co-workers. There are people I would not talk about my concerns about.
- VII. I feel safe at work. I am glad we updated the fob system. There are more updates that are past due that I hope can be taken care of in the next few years.
- VIII. #1- Somewhat agree because there is always a fear that a weapon will come into school during the "doors open" periods in the morning and afternoon. I somewhat trust the students here, but you never know what is going through someone's head.
- #3- Neither because while I have not been harassed, I know people have been openly reprimanded in front of others for doing or saying something that is "wrong" or disagreeable.
- #4- Somewhat disagree because of the reason given in #3 above. I don't want to be the next person reprimanded in front of my peers.

- IX. We are lucky to live in a community that is so tight knit. I feel very safe at the school and having my own children attending school. We take everything seriously and follow up with our administration.
- X. harassment - a few coworkers talk negative about coworkers and that does not feel good.
- XI. I would like to feel free to voice concerns. I do think I have to be so careful not to give specifics, otherwise I create a potential target out of a coworker, or myself. Candid conversations are reserved for a select few people that I believe will not be "out to get" me or others.
- I would like to feel safe in my working environment. I am concerned about kids "getting away with" physical aggression towards staff. Help is often minutes away and the meltdown is in full swing by the time staff arrives.
- XII. The administration is very dismissive when they are approached. They do not take staff members seriously and say things like "Now was that so hard" when it comes to student discipline. Admin members are not team players and do not support their staff when it comes to student discipline.
- XIII. I feel as though there is limited support when dealing with violent student behaviors. Concerns are often met with sarcasm and lack of empathy.
- XIV. To begin, I question whether my survey and all of my responses will even make it into the hands of the Board. I do hope that the Board takes my responses and the responses of others very seriously. The Board does not know what goes on in our school and has looked the other way as to the needs of our teachers and students.
- I strongly disagree that I work in a harassment free environment. I fear that this survey is not completely anonymous and that I could potentially lose my job for even completing it.
- XV. There are some elements of harassment and undermining from a few individual staff towards certain colleagues and the administration.
- XVI. In response to the harassment feeling. As a whole, when administrators are given the impression that you should not bring up any controversial issues at a staff meeting that get a frustrated response from admin. How do we ever bring up anything that we feel strongly about? When issues or questions are brought up that make admin uncomfortable. A mean and negative response is immediately given. As a staff, during our meetings; we feel that we cannot even bring up any issues that may make our superior admin person feel bad.
- Isn't this the place to hash out our feelings? Not feeling valued and listened to in our staff meetings makes it very difficult outside of our staff meetings. We have to vent about issues somewhere. We want to feel safe to do so in our circle of teachers. This has not been the case.
- XVII. I feel if I talk to Jeff Nelson about any aspect of my job, he either belittles me or says he will do something to help, and that is where it ends. Especially, with Student Discipline.

APPENDIX B

STATEMENT 10: How would you describe your relationship with your peers?

- I. Quiet
- II. With most, I feel comfortable talking to and working with, but there are many that I would rather not work with, as several like to cause drama and issues.
- III. Not well
- IV. Good
- V. Good for the most part.
- VI. Excellent
- VII. Working relationships
- VIII. In the high school, I feel that we work well together towards the goal, but some have their own agenda, or get upset when they don't get what they want.
- IX. I would describe my relationships with my peers as positive and professional.
- X. I feel like overall, I work well with my peers. I think I can ask for advice as needed and they are all willing to share ideas or help with situations that arise.
- XI. A few I can trust.
- XII. I get along with all of my peers. Many are good friends. Some I find hard to trust.
- XIII. It varies
- XIV. Good. The other [REDACTED] I work is amazing. She is the best [REDACTED] I have worked with at this school.
- XV. We are on good terms.
- XVI. Professional and appropriate
- XVII. I feel as though I have a strong relationship with many of my peers. Most are quite dedicated to their jobs.
- XVIII. Congenial
- XIX. Overall, I feel that I have a good relationship with my peers.
- XX. I have a handful of people I work with that I genuinely trust. I am friendly with everyone I come in contact with, both students and staff. There are people who I can be cordial towards, but don't gravitate towards based on their attitudes. I truly believe I need to surround myself with people who have a

positive attitude. Not every day is going to be easy in this profession, and we need people around us who will support, be positive, and build each other up.

- XXI. Good
- XXII. positive, trusting, work as a team
- XXIII. Contentious
- XXIV. Positive
- XXV. I feel I am able to count on just about every one of my coworkers. I feel that the majority of us have the common goal of doing what's best for students.
- XXVI. I get along with most of my peers and feel comfortable talking to most of them. I have a good number of staff that I feel I have a strong connection with.
- XXVII. Mostly good, but have had some conflicts at times.
- XXVIII. Good
- XXIX. Healthy
- XXX. work related
- XXXI. Good. I trust most people in my category would help me if I needed it.
- XXXII. Good
- XXXIII. Good. I feel that I can talk to my peers about challenges, we can resolve issues, and we can also have fun at work.
- XXXIV. Very strong with about 25%, adequate with the other 75%
- XXXV. Good
- XXXVI. I feel like my relationships with my peers are positive. I make my point to make them positive though, because there are plenty of people who prefer to find something to be upset about, complain about, or feel like something isn't good enough. I do wish that we had more time to be around each other because I think we all need time to reflect on good things and make relationships and talk about things outside of MTSS meetings, staff meetings, or the rare in-service. But, there is not enough time.
- XXXVII. Good
- XXXVIII. Supportive.
- XXXIX. ok..
- XL. Work and nothing else

- XLI.
Overall, I believe that I work well with the majority of my peers. I am a team player.
- XLII.
Cautious. And Empathic. And my heart breaks for them. We are trying so hard to be everything to every student. And we can't keep putting work ahead of our families- but we do.
- XLIII.
Fine - they help me professionally and are supportive
- XLIV.
Overall, I feel like I have a strong relationship with my peers but there is a big disconnect between departments.
- XLV.
Relationships with peers are great and I feel as though the teachers work well together.
- XLVI.
I have a great working relationship with my peers that is very professional and focused on our students' needs. I strongly feel that it is the teachers and support staff that are the glue that hold this school together.
- XLVII.
Positive and professional with the vast majority of staff.
- XLVIII.
Fine
- XLIX.
Excellent
- L.
Professional
- LI.
I feel strongly that our teachers as our peers have a good understanding of each other. Most of us feel the same way about not being heard about certain issues. But, if we are caught talking about those issues with each other, it looks like we are not being team member. We need to feel that we can talk together at any part of the day or year or within our staff meetings.
- LII.
Good with most of the staff.
- LIII.
We seem to get along
- LIV.
very good
- LV.
It's quite difficult since the school is feeling very disconnected to each other. Some relationships are good while others remain as acquaintances.
- LVI.
mostly good

APPENDIX C

STATEMENT 11: Please provide any additional comments or explanations about your responses concerning peer relationships.

- I. I feel comfortable talking with anyone in the high school, but not with all from the elementary side. I feel a negative vibe from that side of the building from a few that are very vocal. I know our worlds are different being on the high school side of things, but the morale in the elementary seems to be lower.
- II. I feel that oftentimes work related conflicts are left to be resolved amongst staff rather than administration making a decision. For example, teachers make their own recess schedules and Title teachers make their own schedules.
- III. We have a great school staff all around. Many are here for the right reasons and work hard at what they do. Some in the elementary are negative about their job and students. That's disheartening and brings staff morale down.
- IV. Hard to trust some of them as we know they tell administration
- V. The relationships I have with my colleagues have never been an issue.
- VI. I do not feel that our staff is united as well as they could be. I wouldn't say our working environment is positive, and this year has been especially negative with the changes of jobs, people leaving, accusations, and gossip. Many people just keep to themselves and there isn't as much mingling and support for each other as I've seen in the past. I prefer to stay out of the gossip and try to stick to my job and my students. In a situation of conflict or concern, I personally would go to the source I needed to resolve issues with and try to find a solution. There have been rumors that go around that make things awkward in our workplace. I'm truly sad that we aren't more of a team, working together, building each other up, cheering for each other, and supporting one another. We have a wonderful school, we have great and talented kids, we have a lot to be thankful for. There is a lot of potential here, but we just need to find the right spark - and shift more minds to think positively and unify as a group.
- VII. Our staff needs help with teamwork mentality. There hasn't been enough productive communication to address issues that could be small but become big. There are a few staff members that I actively avoid due to actions I've heard about that I want no association with. I trust most of my colleagues, but there are a few I do not trust at all.
- VIII. I think morale is not too good right now, so it does affect how we deal with each other.
- IX. #7- I somewhat agree with this because I feel like my peers are not NEGATIVE or TOXIC as has been said. They are mostly constructively working out their problems with each other and coming up with creative solutions. #8- I strongly disagree with this question. No one person should have to put their needs apart from a team outside of their family. This question is irresponsible and the idea of "taking one for the team" is one reason teachers are burning out and leaving this place.
- X. I feel tension when asking others to help when we are short staffed.
- XI. This is the worst possible time to conduct a climate survey.. Staff are getting released and not happy. A few positions will be changed and some not happy. A few can have the loudest voice. I appreciate the transparency of administration on the facts of our financial situation. There are many moving parts that resulted in where we are today. It is promising that we are already noticing financial improvements. There will be a need for staff to help promote a referendum. I believe that we need to support our

Superintendent. Teachers are leaving the Education Field across the nation. We are like other schools with some teachers changing careers. When staff become negative it is best for all to have that person make a career change. I feel that it is a positive decision to have a K-12 Principal. In the past, we have combined a Principal / Superintendent position.. That combination is not ideal. It is a hard position. Administration has always reassigned teachers to other positions as needed. Most staff work with administration to fill the needs for the school. This year we had some high resistance to administrations' right to assign positions. This has triggered continued events. We have a few staff that have displayed retaliation towards administration and a few coworkers. The negativity is not just directed towards administration. The negative comments are often targeted with defamation towards coworkers and administration. There should be a chain of command that is followed. Going directly to the individual they have a concern with is always the best first step. It is interesting how information is shared among staff. A friend tells a friend who tells a friend who tells soon many staff have some knowledge of events.. but no direct information. They know how they feel about what they hear .. as things are repeated facts change and the details of the truth can easily be misrepresented. If we have staff that are secretly audio taping conversations that can create an uneasy feeling. How many conversations are recorded and where is the limit? Is this activity legal? If it is legal is it ethical? If we have staff requesting copies of text messages and emails that can also create an uneasy feeling. I understand that we are a public institution and that we answer to the public. There is a level of uneasiness. Again where is the limit? Some staff tend to make negative comments about parents. Staff are hesitant to have their own children taught by teachers that are negative towards parents. This year there has been no boundaries with conversations. Students have over heard conversations from staff that they should not have heard. Community members and parents and other professionals have had questions on what they have also heard. I believe that a person should represent their place of employment in a positive way. In an educational setting, it is important for the marketing of our school to have awareness of how we represent this school in a positive way. In an educational setting , it is important for the marketing of our school to have awareness of how we represent ourselves and our school to the community. We want families to enroll children at our school. Negative conversations are not helpful. It is frustrating when a few staff elevate their level of concerns to make their grievances a higher priority . Situations can be exaggerated and often misrepresented. The ripple of negativity can become a false truth. The negative coworkers are on high alert for anything that is said or done that can be spun in a negative light. With a focus on negativity they struggle seeing goodness. There is no grace. There is a team that is created between coworkers. Trust is needed to keep the team healthy and strong. Most staff support and work well with everyone. Negative comments cause uneasiness and a lack of trust where coworkers keep distance and you get division. Administration is easy to work with. They are approachable and welcome conversations. They have more knowledge of individual staff that coworkers do not know. Decisions are often made on a bigger view than most understand. Lake of the Woods school is an awesome place to work. There is significant goodness that happens in these walls. I am happy to work at this school and I am proud of the dedication of staff including administration. We have some amazing parents that partner with us. Happiness is a choice.

- XII. We don't have time to resolve conflicts. No opportunity to debrief situations. It is easier to just move on instead of resolving. A little communication would go a long way. But, by the end of the day, we just need to leave.
- XIII. There are several staff members who think they are above everyone and need to constantly have their fingers in information that doesn't pertain to them. They also don't like being questioned by teachers.
- XIV. I don't see peer relationships being part of the morale issue that is very evident amongst the staff. Peers are the main reason I continue coming to work everyday.
- XV. There is a small clique of teaching staff who are very negative towards administration and their peers. They talk negatively and work to undermine the efforts of others when they don't agree with what they are doing.
- XVI. I do believe most staff puts the children's needs over their own, as in my opinion they should.

XVII. good crew

APPENDIX D

STATEMENT 17: Please provide any additional comments or explanations about your responses concerning supervisor relationships.

- I. There are times that the superintendent becomes upset when his decisions are questioned by teachers.
- II. I feel that sometimes administrators will listen to feedback, but will not necessarily take any action.
- III. As stated above, there have been times when supervisors say "Its always been done this way" which I feel is a very poor response when issues are brought up. I feel like supervisors don't always respond when questions are asked or you get a response and then nothing is done to resolve the question/issue. There have been times I have also felt very supported with student issues but this is not always the case for all staff including myself. I feel like supervisors are at times dismissive of issues that staff bring up which then causes more frustration amongst staff. The school board, I feel, needs to take a more active role in being in the school to see what is happening and actually talk to staff about concerns brought up.
- IV. I respect the supervisors in our school and believe they do a great job with staff and student management. Keep it up!
- V. I have not had enough interaction with the superintendent or board to accurately give feedback.
- VI. My supervisor very seldom seeks feedback. There are times, however, where it may be given anyway, and depending on the mood, it may be accepted, or it may be shot down and my supervisor appears quite annoyed.
- VII. I feel [REDACTED] has an open ear to ideas and suggestions. I feel Jeff has always been easy to talk to and get suggestions or advice from. I appreciate the school board members and all they do for our school, staff, and students.
- VIII. [REDACTED] so I don't have a lot of [REDACTED] to go on
- IX. I appreciate my supervisors' willingness to listen to me. I understand that they see the bigger picture. The supt acts on what can be acted on, keeping in mind the big picture.
- X. I strongly disagree with all of this. We are all in our silos and separate from administration. We are not a team. There are a few people who have special treatment and privileges from admin and it is not hidden from the rest of us that they have greater input on decisions. Many of the people in my category would also disagree that the school board acts on feedback. There are board members who seem to act on the whim of their friends and close associates.
- XI. I think Jeff needs to do better about being present and communicative with staff. He tends towards a Laissez-faire style of leadership, which isn't inherently bad, but means that he relies heavily on the competency of his staff to set direction and handle issues. I'm not suggesting a micro-management, but do think a more involved approach would improve support and climate.
- XII. I always feel like everyone is listening to my suggestions if I have any, or concerns....does anything typically happen to change it? Not sure...some things just tend to dissipate after being discussed.
- XIII. Conversations with Administration and conversations with the school board are both a two way street. The relationships that are built are the responsibility of both parties. I have always worked as a team. As

an employee, I have at times been instructed to make some changes.. I always look at those moments as a need for self growth. If there is something that I question or want clarification on, I will take time to evaluate the situation and reach out to administration for clarification as needed. If requested to make some changes = I will do as requested. I may not always agree with everything, but I will do my job. I support the superintendent. He has many strengths for our school. If we move forward with a referendum we will need his knowledge and leadership.

- XIV. Rarely do I hear from my supervisor- they are just as busy as I am. When I ask to visit, I am always accommodated and the meeting goes well. I don't know if I CAN talk to my school board. Does that break chain of command?? I wish people would just BE AROUND to see and hear what is happening. Also, why all the secretive talk?? It makes is hard to believe anyone. Secrets create spaces where rumors and contempt flourish. Be honest with the staff.
- XV. When it comes to the Superintendent and Principal, they only listen to feedback and support when it comes from certain teachers. I have learned that if you don't have family on the School Board, your values/opinions don't matter. You have to have a specific last name around here to have your ideas valued. As for the School Board, they all are so out of touch with reality and what is happening in our school settings. All they do is take the Super and Principals word. They never look into anything and they just agree with the blatant lies that they are presented from the Super and Principal. In a School Board Meeting doesn't know how many staff members have actually left mid year they think they left for more money, which is not true at all. They also admitted to not reading resignation letters or ever seeing a teachers exit interviews.
- XVI. First, it is very difficult to go to Jeff because the possibility of retaliation outweighs the potential of benefits of bringing anything to him. When we do bring things to his attention, he either responds sarcastically or basically asks us to solve it ourselves. The school board is no better.
- XVII. Jeff Nelson does occasionally ask for feedback, however, he becomes highly defensive and angry when he listens to the feedback. Frankly, giving him any sort of feedback (positive or negative) has proven fruitless because nothing is ever done about it anyway, which only hurts our students. The Superintendent is completely shut-off and unapproachable. He runs the school in a reactive manner and shows a complete lack of proactivity. For example, there are teachers that have not had evaluations in over 3 years. He has no idea about what teachers are doing in their classrooms which was his job when he was elementary principal. The Board should look in our personnel files and find out who has not had evaluations. They would know he is not doing his job. Another example of him not doing his job/zero follow-through is with the elementary reading goals. At the beginning of the school year, his big focus was improving reading scores. Teachers had to make an intervention plan and test students to see if their plan was improving their scores. Nothing ever came of it. There was no follow through to see if we were doing our jobs. Who does this ultimately affect...our students. He had a plan to help our students, but did nothing. I am also concerned about the Superintendent making decisions without the Board's approval. This winter he decided to move around elementary teachers mid-year due to a resignation. He also decided to let go of several teachers due to budget cuts well before the Board even approved cutting their positions. It just shows that the Superintendent does not follow protocols and chains of command. Shame on the School Board too. They are completely unaware and unwilling to listen to the concerns and needs of our staff. Tim Lyon casually mentioned in a recent meeting that he doesn't read the resignation letters and made the assumption that the recent 5 teacher resignations (2 special education, 1 science, 1 kindergarten, and 1 preK teacher) were due to not getting paid enough. And also asked the Superintendent if this was normal. Sadly, when the Superintendent stated that this was normal, all just took his word for it. Do your research School Board. This turnover rate is not normal and those teachers did not resign due to their salary. This turnover rate is extremely alarming and you should all be asking a lot of questions as to why this is happening.
- XVIII. I feel I can share my concerns, but that doesn't always mean that things can be changed.
- XIX. I do not know how the school board makes decisions.

XX. As an employee, we as a whole don't feel like we are heard. It's always said... "Let's form a committee to discuss this." Then, a committee is formed, and suggestions are made to that committee; however, that is as far as it goes. What we suggest, is never seen as valid. We always end up going with what our principal/or Sup decides upon anyhow. It's just extremely frustrating to not be heard. We would like to be heard at least part way? We have not felt like our supervisor has been in touch with what we are doing in the classroom for at least the last three years. This has been going on a long time. Issues as simple as asking for a different lunch rotation, or subbing out with paras for recess instead of always putting things on the teachers.

XXI. [REDACTED] I have not dealt with 15 & 16

XXII. I believe Jeff Nelson makes all of the decisions about the life of the school and the School Board "RUBBER STAMPS" whatever he says.

APPENDIX E

STATEMENT 22: Please provide any additional comments or explanations about your responses concerning job satisfaction.

- I. nothing to do in this county but be an alcoholic
- II. I am at the point of my career that I am not going to find a different job. I want to retire from here possibly in 15 years.
- III. I am satisfied with my employment and genuinely care for the community, staff, and students.
- IV. It is hard teaching grades 6-12 while keeping my standards high. I feel like I have been running a marathon all year with [REDACTED]. I love the class, but the addition of a prep with no additional work time has been difficult.
- V. My leaving had more to do with family, personal goals, and ambitions, not job dissatisfaction.
- VI. I LOVE what I DO, however I do not always love the climate that I observe here. The fact that staff often feel not heard and that some great teachers are leaving makes me feel sad.
- VII. I'm concerned that my values/beliefs may at some point be challenged and lead me to pursue another profession.
- VIII. I enjoy working at LOW School, and I enjoy my job! However, I am frustrated to be working for a district that does not hold our superintendent accountable for overseeing the school's finances. I am afraid that additional cuts will need to be made in the future due to mishandlings of the finances. It is frustrating that the district has to cut people and resources, which makes it more difficult for me to do my job.
- IX. I love this school. I'm proud of the things we do here. I do feel in this profession things can get stressful and the feeling of being underappreciated has happened. Outsiders and community members do not truly understand what we are dealing with. Kids are so different today than they were even 5 years ago, and definitely are different from what I remember my classrooms being like and the student behavior inside. We've been given a tall order and day after day of trying to cope with these things can make it overwhelming and stressful, leaving us feeling emotionally and physically exhausted before we leave the school for the day. I feel that teachers are not given enough time to prepare and get the mental breaks they need throughout the day. We cover recess and lunch duties between grade levels. We have 25 minute preps for music and gym, but after walking the students down to the multipurpose gym, stopping to use the bathroom, possibly being stopped by someone in the hall, you're given about 5-10 minutes before you have to go back and get them. This could be solved by having special teachers come and pick up the students from the classroom, and drop them off before getting their next class. I truly believe we all love teaching, we got into teaching because we loved the idea of teaching children and helping them grow, but with all the extra weight that falls on us it can quickly become an extremely heavy load.
- X. prior to this year I looked several times a week. I feel very good were I am now.
- XI. Dissatisfied with the wage. The wage is considerably less than other districts in the area. The job duties keep expanding without additional compensation. The wage does not reflect the cost of living expenses increases.

- XII. My job satisfaction is linked to how busy my job is. I am often stressed, and sometimes stretched too thin. I love what I do with students, and I feel like I have made a positive impact at our school, but it has come with personal sacrifices.
- XIII. I am hoping to [REDACTED] soon.
- XIV. I know my skills are transferable to other organizations. I know that if I am dissatisfied, disrespected, or not able to support my family with the income, I can and will leave. I am not feeling as loyal to this place as I once was.
- XV. I only reason I will not be here in 5 years from now is a planned [REDACTED].
- XVI. I am proud to be a member of the staff at LOW. We have a great team, we just have some people that tend to pass on negative perceptions out of their habit of being negative. There are ALOT of good things that happen here for our students and staff...sometimes it just seems like people like to draw out the negatives and dwell on them. It is unfortunate because the negative things spread out into the community and that is not what we should be known for.
- XVII. Use to enjoy my job
- XVIII. I enjoy my job. I like what I do. I look for new opportunities daily to improve my effectiveness.
- XIX. Education is an unpredictable environment. While I feel I am making a difference, and generally like what I do, the heartache that comes with the territory, the lack of respect from parents and students, and the lack of time to mentally recover from each day, have all led me to consider other careers. There are rare moments when get to collaborate and really TEACH with each other. It gets to be too much paperwork. Sometime the paperwork feels like it leads to little or no benefit.
- XX. I love the school here - my job here, the administration and coworkers are why we have chosen to live and raise our kids in Baudette.
- XXI. It is very hard to work for an organization where the newly appointed elementary Principal tells the Elementary staff that they have a reputation for being toxic. It is very disheartening working in an environment watching and learning about other staff members who have blatantly violated school policy with the Super/Principals knowledge and watching them continue to be at work acting like nothing has happened, while others are reprimanded for not violating policy which has resulted in the moral in the school district to be in shambles. Again, it just goes to show there is no consistency among discipline-whether is be staff or students.
- XXII. If pay wasn't an issue, I would already be gone. I am actively applying for other positions.
- XXIII. I am satisfied with my coworkers, however, very dissatisfied with our Superintendent and School Board.
- XXIV. There are more positives than negatives. Unfortunately, it only takes a few negative people to bring down the moral of others and give the impression that things are worse than they really are.
- XXV. The lack of feeling of job security due to budgetary issues has been unsettling.
- XXVI. Even though some of us have not looked for another position elsewhere; does not mean that we are not aware of other staff that have constantly looked elsewhere. With the recent supposed 'cuts', it is making many others look around the bend for other teaching positions. As a supervisor, one would think that

'retainment' of teachers is just as a concern if not more of a concern than retaining students. There have been many that have already left. I would not be surprised if more are heading out. The sneaky way supervisors make everything private and secretive is very disturbing. We are all tired of secrets! Please share more with our staff!!!

XXVII. As long as Jeff Nelson in "running the show" nothing will change. I feel he has intimidated most of the staff and the school board. Until this changes, attitudes and employee morale will not improve.

APPENDIX F

STATEMENT 23: What activities or happenings do you feel have been beneficial to the workplace climate at Lake of the Woods School?

- I. Promoting athletics and building a winning culture.
- II. I feel like the school Facebook page is always positive and shows community members what students are doing and is a great source of information. I think that the school forest is great for students to use and provides another learning environment that not all students get to experience.
- III. Positive talk, positive perspectives. There are many staff members that do a lot to make our work environment great. They go above and beyond. I hope they understand that they are appreciated and seen.
- IV. There has not been any that I can think of.
- V. PLCs are a great time to work with our co-workers. Having time to work in our classrooms is a must.
- VI. Support from principal, kind coworkers, safe environment
- VII. Events have been organized in that past but there is usually poor attendance. This particular survey I hope can be helpful and the information used.
- VIII. Christmas Dinner at Ballard's,
- IX. The Teacher of the Year celebration, the past staff Christmas parties
- X. We so often organize a potluck.
Last year it was organized to have a secret theme among the staff that students wouldn't know about. Example: Wear black, wear a college themed shirt, wear glasses. It was fun to have this secret from the students, but to see other teachers participate.
The end of the year we have a picnic in the courtyard, mainly the elementary teachers and staff attend. Each year at the end of the year we get elementary staff together to make "teacher tiktoks" for the kids end of the year assembly. The kids LOVE it and we have a good time making them and laughing together.
- XI. The recognition occasionally of a job well done. The surprise times of kindness like the roses
- XII. Social media presence has been awesome. The daytime games (volleyball, basketball, baseball) are really cool for our student body. The announcement screens in the commons are great, and probably can be utilized more.
- XIII. Staff gatherings and activities that foster a good climate, like dinners etc.
- XIV. Getting to talk with peers after school. Union meetings.
- XV. This survey, staff wellness challenges, open meetings about district challenges
- XVI. March Madness, Teacher of the Year celebrations,

- XVII. There haven't been any workplace activities
- XVIII. PBIS
- XIX. being able to go bowling for good behavior. Having the steam room
- XX. Adult SEL Classes offered to all Staff - Onward was a positive experience for Adult Social and Emotional Learning.
- XXI. I think having a k-12 principal will bring some cohesiveness eventually.
- The PBIS committee has the potential to create a positive change, but we need the other side of it.
- The school forest is a respite for me, and my class. Everything we do there has 100% participation and engagement.
- I am really enjoying the skills the kids are learning through our 1:1 technology. I appreciate that we have enough devices to go around.
- XXII. I don't feel that we have any activities or happenings in our workplace. We used to do Christmas parties, fishing on the Bay, and year-end potlucks/games just to name a few. But all of those have fizzled out because it is the teachers who have to plan those activities and teachers are flat out burnt out. Teachers are expected to dust their classrooms, clean the sinks, take out their garbage, supervise lunch and recess (only elem- HS doesn't supervise lunch), be okay with missed prep, deal with a para shortage, be a nurse, among other things without any extra gratitude while office staff and the superintendent get paid more for "taking on extra roles or extra miles" all while teaching a classroom full of kids and looking out for their wellbeing and making sure our own classrooms are a positive learning environment with great moral.
- XXIII. Giving [REDACTED] the Pre-k through 12th grade principal is a start, but change isn't going to happen without a change in overall leadership. Any study will show you that company satisfaction amongst employees starts with trust in the overhead leadership. Until this happens, things can't improve as much as they need to.
- XXIV. Our teachers and staff members are doing amazing things in their classrooms.
- XXV. Teacher of the Year Tea
- XXVI. N/A
- XXVII. I don't know of any. Mostly just work for the paycheck.
- XXVIII. By having a Superintendent who is a team player instead of a dictator would change the outlook with all of the staff in all departments. Therefor, I believe a new leader is needed to make this workplace climate more productive for all.
- Also, I feel having a Full time Activities Director/Community Education position is wasting valuable money since there is no "Community Education" with the exception of youth sports such as Summer Ball, Bear Cub Swimming, etc.

APPENDIX G

STATEMENT 24: What ideas or suggestions do you have to improve the workplace climate at Lake of the Woods School?

- I. I cannot think of any
- II. I feel as a whole we need to get better at actively listening to concerns of all staff and find constructive ways to resolve issues that are brought up.
It would be nice if administration showed appreciation to staff for their efforts with students by letting people know when they are doing something well.
- III. Support from administration.
- IV. Simple reminders of perspective. We live in a great community that supports education. We have a great staff that for the most part is dedicated to our school and kids. We have great supervisors and leaders that are here for the right reasons and have sound and logical expectations for staff.
A majority of communities and schools do not have the positive things happening that we do here. For a school of our size and isolation, we have wonderful things happening that our staff should be proud of.
- V. Showing appreciation, improving on communication skills, working together as a team, and being held accountable for our actions starting from the top all the way down to the students. I believe that becoming a 4 day week would be a sacrifice for everyone,
- VI. The entire school was in a panic when Mr. Nelson said that there was going to be major cuts. I wish that it would not have been an ominous threat of cuts, rather cuts on a need-to-know basis. I cannot emphasize enough how stressed the entire staff was.
- VII. Work security has taken its toll with layoffs, something only time can probably fix. Also, more unified discipline of the students with definite consequences shared between teachers so the teachers give a more unified front to the severe behavior problems that seem to be increasing. SMALLER CLASS SIZES (perhaps block scheduling can improve class sizes?)
- VIII. Take into consideration the feedback you get from this survey! If the feedback is positive, we move forward, if the feedback appears negative, we need to make a plan to improve.
- IX. Maybe an outside motivational speaker that helps people work through conflict
- X. I feel that the overarching reason for the negativity in the workplace is due to the budget cuts - losing coworkers, losing resources, losing opportunities for our students, and worrying about losing our own jobs. While celebrations and parties are a fun way to socialize with coworkers, I believe the best way to improve the workplace climate is to resolve the budget issues and prevent further financial concerns.
- XI. It would be nice if teachers could have duty free lunch so we could eat together in the lounge. Would be nice to have a PTA/PTO that would be able to fundraise so they could do nice things for the staff to give them the feeling of being appreciated. Lunch, snacks, etc.... It really takes just the little things!

I have brought this up before, but I feel that we need to be better about recognizing our staff and their accomplishments. Achievement awards for x-amount of years they've worked. They should be celebrated on our school media as well in house amongst co-workers. It could be as simple as an email that goes out to all staff recognizing them.

Manageable demands of the teachers. I think we are run way to thin and that affects our attitudes and excitement towards learning, because we're exhausted. No extra duty coverage (lunch and recess- in the past recess was covered by the gym teacher and lunch duty was covered by paras). Also doing a schedule where students went to music and gym back to back so you'd have a full 50 minute prep instead of two split preps?

Words of appreciation go a long way, and it isn't something we've heard much of in the past. Some people need those verbal or written reminders that they're doing a good job and to keep it up.

- XII. Talk to us to let us know what is going on rather than all of a sudden things change randomly
- XIII. The weight of financial insecurity is an intangible burden and once that is secure I feel that workplace climate will improve.
- XIV. staff opinions and insight being valued
- XV. There have been a few changes already this school year that will help climate in the long run. There needs to be a more proactive approach with staff concerns.
- XVI. Staff interaction activities that are fun and build up morale.
- XVII. We've had ideas and suggestions. We weren't listened to. Why should I believe this survey is going to make a difference?
- XVIII. I'd like more social opportunities, but that also requires us as a staff to commit to showing up to those opportunities - which I admit I haven't been great at.

I also think leadership can do more to be communicative in general. Within the budget chaos, it's been very quiet as to what the situation and plan has been. And I know those things take time, but even the attempt to address the staff about what possible avenues are and the opportunity to ask questions would be a good step.

The listening sessions were a good move, but that type of setting should have happened with staff earlier.
- XIX. Figuring out a way to not deal with all the extra duties: recess, lunch duty, walking duty and supervision in the commons, more common prep, time to be collaborative with peers....
- XX. More get togethers/activities
- XXI. Social time with staff would be beneficial so people get to know each other outside of passing in the hallways.
- XXII. Try getting poop in a group and figure out things before you jump to things.
- XXIII. More opportunities for Adult SEL Classes
Conflict Resolution Skills for Adults. / Drama Reduction Skills
Teambuilding Activities
- XXIV. Bring some balance to PBIS. We have the positive. It needs to be balanced with consequences. It isn't beneficial to promote "everybody gets a trophy" all of the time. There needs to be some recognition of students who strive to be better and some consequences for those who don't.

Fix relationships and build back trust. Bosses and school board: Stop and talk to us. Have a cup of coffee. Ask about our families, or a class project, or ANYTHING. These relationships need to be repaired, or the climate will not improve.

Build a para support system. They need a place to meet and people they can talk to about tough days. Of all the people who work with kids, our support staff endures the most concerning behaviors repeatedly.

Encourage our staff to become involved in the community. Having staff from the school serve on other organizational boards will build bridges between the school and the general public. This might mean that we have to miss an hour of work every month to attend a meeting, but the return on the investment will be immeasurable. LW staff on the Food Shelf, Rotary, Women of Today, Auxiliaries, Ruby's Pantry... this is where you will meet the public. This is where we will be seen.

- XXV. Sometimes I feel that the boss needs to be the boss and make the hard decisions. I have good relationships with my peers but it does seem like there are a few negative people who set the tone for the whole group. I think would be helpful and not out line for a supervisor to step and in and remind staff the importance of being professional and keeping inappropriate thoughts, feelings and words to themselves.
- XXVI. Starting fresh with the School Board and all Administration staff, especially when the Board Members say they know where is a moral issue but they don't know what to do about it. Why are some staff members considered Admin when they don't have any administration qualifications? Not being told that we are toxic and maybe a thank you every now and then. It would be nice to actually see board members present in the building. Having staff member's ideas valued and more follow through. At the beginning of the school year, staff were told to submit their lesson plans weekly into a shared drive. Now only like 4-5 staff members do that weekly. Where is the follow-through? And why don't ALL STAFF have to do that...sped, social workers, speech etc. don't have to they can make their schedules/lesson plans generic and redact any confidential information.
- XXVII. Start with evaluating the leadership at the top. When we are afraid to go to our leaders with concerns due to fear of retaliation, it does not make it a safe environment for anyone's mental health.
- XXVIII. We need a School Board that is willing to support the teachers. We need a School Board that is willing to do their research and educate themselves on how to be effective members.
- XXIX. Everyone in the organization contributes to the workplace climate. This is not something solely for the School Board or Superintendent to fix. We ALL need to be more skilled and willing to address issues through conflict resolution in a positive and professional manner, rather than resorting to negativity or undermining the efforts of those we don't agree with. Professional development in conflict resolution for all staff would be beneficial.
- XXX. More team building activities during teacher inservice or throughout the school year. Entire staff wide meetings once a quarter to reflect on positives and projects being worked on.
- XXXI. Events that would build team mentality between certified and non-certified employees.
- XXXII. Instead of having a hostile working environment and having "gag orders" on staff who are resigning their position, we need to listen to why these decisions are being made. If things do not change, I do believe the staff as well as the student enrollment will continue to decline.
- Stop making "uneducated and rash decisions" such as moving teachers around and putting teachers in classrooms that they unqualified to teach, when there are teachers in the building who are qualified to teach in the said classroom.

XXXIII. Obviously the budget is A major concern. I feel replacements of individuals responsible for this deficit Are in order, As tough of A decision As that might be somebody needs to be held Accountable.

APPENDIX H

STATEMENT 25: Are there any topics or questions that have not been asked, that should be addressed?

- I. student control, they seem to have free rein of the school, no staff to control them.
- II. Why are we removing the high school counselor position? We all know that mental health is extremely important especially during the middle school and high school years.
- III. Lots of things happen in our school that aren't presented at board meetings, too. I'd love for board members to come visit my classroom and have conversations with me as well as my colleagues. It's a great opportunity to stay informed, hear ideas, and be proactive.
- IV. I think everyone is trying their best. Everyone makes mistakes. We could be more encouraging to one another.
- V. Thank you for sending out this survey and asking for our voices to be heard. I appreciate that, and I hope through this process you'll be able to find some ideas or potential solutions to better our school environment. Happy staff are important to make things successful! We are here for the kids, but you can't pour from an empty cup.
- VI. I know there are people that think we need new leadership. I disagree with them. At this time of cuts and a need for a referendum, changing leadership would set us back and create more cuts in the near future. I know there have been financial mistakes, but I trust our leadership to make sound educational decisions, especially when they have accurate numbers from the business office. **MOST MINNESOTA SCHOOLS ARE MAKING BIG CUTS, WE ARE NOT ALONE.** Covid funds put a bandage on a statewide problem of not enough funding for public education. Also, when the question about staff leaving midyear comes up, this is a nationwide trend, because teaching is **HARD!**
- VII. The idea of consequences for behavior completely stopped after the pandemic. There is no accountability for students to behave. There is no lunch detention, recess detention, or after school detention. All of the memes/tiktoks about "the kid came back from the office 2 minutes later with a smile and a lollipop" are accurate. There is no increasing consequence for repeat behaviors. Teachers are now made responsible for doling out consequences (while also being responsible for giving bear bucks and PRAISE) and there is not enough energy to go around.

Doing lunch, recess, and walking duty is ridiculous to expect of the elementary teachers. At one point this was all done by volunteers. Grandmas, grandpas, moms, dads, community members. Ask someone to organize this if you can't do it yourselves. We need a PTA. We need families involved. We need to create an environment and community where we ALL expect kids to be gentle, kind, and polite.

There is just too much responsibility on the teachers. We are doing more duties in our everyday job than 10 years ago. We have to be lunch lady, recess aide, principal, enrichment coordinator, para, Title1, janitor. I know we have budget and staffing issues, but we are stressed and it is rubbing off on our students.

The style of communication of administration is to let things spread by rumors. One person is informed and somehow expected to pass that information on to the next person. There was one instance in which one of my coworkers (1) was told by administration that another coworker (2) was being transferred to a new position. 1 told 2 what administration had told them. 2 waited WEEKS for administration to tell them in person about the transfer and it never happened. 2 eventually had to ask administration about the transfer themselves! This has also been the communication style for the current transfers and staff eliminations. Instead of just calling a meeting or writing a quick email to say "these are the changes" or "these are the open positions," administration does nothing at all and communicates nothing at all.

VIII. N/A

IX. The school, no matter what, is going to be a more difficult place to work because we have so many outside forces that affect how we HAVE to work. IE: parents, tax payers, general public. The people and adults in this building are amazing, and deserve so much credit.

X. No

XI. Yes. There is an uneasiness that I hope will dissipate as we finish up with the cuts and re-structuring. PLEASE take time to rebuild relationships. You want us to be a good team player, but we don't feel like a team at all.

When do we have time to talk across departments? Why don't we? We are all connected. Please make a time for everyone to share an experience so we have something to talk about. And that experience should be more than the required trainings in Aug. Mix up work teams.

Why are people leaving mid-year? Who is doing the exit interviews? Exit interviews should be conducted by a neutral third party, such as a human resources representative, to put the employee at ease and to encourage honest responses. If an exit interview is conducted by a departing employee's direct supervisor, that employee may be unwilling to be candid.

XII. Why is Jeff Nelson appointed as Financial Chief Officer when hundreds of thousands of dollars cannot be accounted for. The boards answer of, we know where the money is, is not acceptable. The Board and Super cannot say of the checkbooks are "close enough" the balances should come down to within pennies not thousands of dollars. But yet, the Board refuses to ask the Super where are the receipts. The board is so quick to claim "the problem" has been address and is not longer a concern. However, would the prior [REDACTED] still be employed if SMS hadn't gotten rid of [REDACTED] resigned because the Super didn't hold [REDACTED] accountable even after several staff members had complaints about [REDACTED] and the outcomes of [REDACTED] inabilities to successfully do [REDACTED] job. When we didn't get paid on time, several staff members went to Mr. Nelson because they had bills to pay. His response was the see if you can pay at a later date. How much does the school district and the community have to suffer before the board realizes that their duties as a public official and hold the Superintendent to the standards that the school district and public deserves. Overall, all of these issues can be resolved by holding one person accountable and taking action with him. The corrupt School Board needs to STOP agreeing with everything Mr. Nelson says without further questioning on his end. All of the Board Members never question anything and look where that has gotten us (staff members and community members). Staff members are encouraged to use proper chain of command but why isn't the Super and Principal held to those same standards with no repercussion. Ex. [REDACTED] let all potential budget cut positions made aware that they are losing their job after this school year. [REDACTED] presented to the board how hard that was for [REDACTED] to do. But in reality, [REDACTED] didn't appear to have a hard time those affected at all. Some staff members heard they were losing their job from others before [REDACTED] even approached them. How is that following chain of command? The School Board also doesn't follow chain of command. Again, losing several qualified teachers mid year is not the norm despite the Board Members belief. Many of those teachers would still be here with the support from Mr. Nelson instead of his belittling, passive aggressive, dismissive, harassing attitude and responses when they asked for help. But the School Board doesn't see this side because they are not present in the school setting and don't ask questions let alone read exit interviews. It's pretty sad that the community had to push for this survey because the Board and Mr. Nelson didn't think this was necessary because they didn't see a moral issue within our school district.

XIII. I feel like these questions are skirting around the real issue. The morale is not due to direct workplace safety, peer relationships, or how well we perform our own jobs; the issues are from higher up than any of that and until that is addressed, employee mental health and the morale in the building cannot improve.

- XIV. I am very concerned about the financial state of our district. The Superintendent's job description clearly states that he/she is responsible for all of the financial and educational aspects of the district. Our district is at a severe budget deficit because the Superintendent did not do his job. As a result, many staff have lost their jobs which should not be taken lightly. Instead of not renewing the Superintendent's contracts, the Board approved him to also become CFO. If I were to break my contract, and educational responsibilities to my superiors, I would be fired.
In conclusion, I feel that in order to further the educational growth of our students, we need a School Board that will advocate for both our students and staff. This means that they need to replace the Superintendent with someone that is authentic, approachable, and open-minded as well as they need to replace themselves.
- XV. Yes .. Question:
Do you feel students are held accountable for their actions, and are you supported in your efforts to hold them accountable?

I think this has been an issue.
- XVI. I believe the District would much benefit from having "fresh blood" as the leadership team. I believe the School Board Members need to have training as to what their true position is required to be doing. This "Rubber-stamping" has to end as that is exactly why we are where we are now.

If the school board does not make a change, they are just as bad and should be replaced!

In one of the last Board Meetings, Tim Lyons stated "I don't even read Exit Interviews or Resignation Letters". This just shows he doesn't make clear knowledgeable decisions.

Our School is in a Financial Mess and then you, The School Board let Jeff Nelson appoin HIMSELF as "CFO"!
- XVII. Thanks for the effort of the survey.

**Lake of the Woods School
Board Report
Mary Merchant, PreK-12 Principal
May 20, 2024**

1.0 Mental Health Awareness Month

- 1.1 Resources provided by Hunter J. Nordlof Be Kind Foundation
- 1.2 Packets sent home with 4-12 grade students
- 1.3 Binders provided for teachers
- 1.4 Calming Corners/Kits, Mrs. Beckel applying for grants, starting with elementary

2.0 Prom

- 2.1 Auditorium setting went well, over 150 empty seats

3.0 High in Plain Sight

- 3.1 Officer Jermaine Galloway - Tall Cop presented
- 3.2 It is a nationally recognized program that provides training and education on drug trends, legal drugs to avoid detection, alcohol/drug clothing, signs and symptoms
- 3.3 Mrs. Beckel and I attended along with LOW Prevention Coalition
 - 3.3.1 Information will be shared with staff during August workshop

4.0 Tree Planting

- 4.1 6th grade planted trees around school property (football field area)

5.0 Mrs. Hayes

- 5.1 Tena Lorette long term substitute starting 5-17-24

6.0 Summer School June 3-14 for Elementary and High School

- 6.1 Elementary - Summer Camp, A Carousel of Fun!
 - 6.1.1 Attend LOW County Fair June 13th
- 6.2 High School - Credit Recovery, grades 6-11

7.0 Course Registration

- 7.1 Grades 8-11 completed
- 7.2 Grades 5-7 will complete May 20-22

8.0 Events

- 8.1 May 15, HS Choir to Care Center, 10:30 a.m.
- 8.2 May 15, MHS Induction and Scholarship Awards, 6 p.m.
- 8.3 May 16-17 Big Bog, Elementary students
- 8.4 May 17-18 Senior Trip
- 8.5 May 20, Activity/Athletic Awards, 10 a.m.
- 8.6 May 22, 9:10 a.m. Graduation Practice
- 8.7 May 24, HS PBIS Drawing, Kickball, popsicles
 - 8.7.1 Elementary Assembly in Auditorium

Lake of the Woods School District

Finance Committee Meeting

May 20, 2024

Monthly Budget Report

Revenue:

- YTD revenues are as follows:
 - State revenue is at 71% received
 - Federal revenues 103% received
 - Property Taxes are 49% received
 - Local revenues are 150% received
 - Food Service 88% received
 - Community Education 16% received
 - Total all Funds 61.5% \$5,742,260
- Grants for 2024
 - Title 401 \$120,726
 - Quarter 1 and 2 \$82,206.95 Spent
 - \$38,519.05 Remaining.
 - Quarter 3 expenses \$49,166.97
 - \$1,386.86 Finance 150 Summer Academic and Mental Health Support
 - Joyce Beckel's work in July and August has spent the remaining grant
 - Drawn and Spent \$0 Remaining
 - \$641.76 Finance 160 Reallocated Funds
 - Drawn and Spent \$0 Remaining
 - \$166.44 Finance 161 Reallocated Funds
 - Drawn and Spent \$0 Remaining
 - \$6,000 Farm to School First Bite Grant Food Service Fund 2
 - \$1,000 in Expenses Submitted for Quarter 1
 - \$2,500 in Expenses Submitted for Quarter 2
 - \$0 in Expenses for Quarter 3
 - \$0 in Expenses for Quarter 4
 - \$2,500 Remaining to be Drawn in Quarter 1 2024
 - Drawn and Spent \$0 Remaining

Expenditures

- YTD expenses are as follows:
 - Salaries and Wages are 75% expended.
 - Employee Benefits are 70% expended.
 - Purchased Services are 107% expended.
 - Supplies are 77% expended.
 - Equipment is 91% expended
 - Food Service 96% expended
 - Community Education 70% expended
 - Total all Funds 77% \$7,261,213

Summary all Funds

- Revenue 61.5% \$5,742,260
- Expenditure 77% \$7,261,213
- Spending Variance
- \$-1,518,953
- In the month of March:
 - \$688,276.15 Expenditures down \$103,115.61 from March
 - \$708,485.02 Revenues up \$180,873.98 from March
 - Spending Variance +\$20,208.87

Student Activity

- Student Activity Balance Report and Student Activity Transaction Report is attached.

Business Office Update

- Budget has been adjusted for the end of the school year
- The 2024-2025 Budget will be presented at the June 24th school board meeting

**Lake of the Woods School
Board Report
Sam Lyon, Activities Director/Community Ed.
May 20, 2024**

- 1.0 Assistant AD Position**
 - 1.1 Job Description
 - 1.2 Pay

**Lake of the Woods School
Board Report
Food Services, Jackie Pearson
May 20, 2024**

1.0 The kitchen had a great year and is looking forward to 2024-25 !

2.0 Milk Bid 2024-25 School Year

2.1 Covered in Shena's information