
TOP

TEAM OPTIMIZING PROJECT

INSPIRED PURPOSE • LASTING IMPACT • TRANSFORMATIONAL RESULTS

Narrative Report for North Slope Borough School District TOP Survey 3

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Dr. Barbara L. Adams, Adams Analytic Solutions



and

Jerry Covey, JSC Consulting, LLC





INTRODUCTION

North Slope Borough School District (NSBSD) is participating in a proactive approach to leadership, workforce engagement, and teacher retention called Team Optimizing Project (TOP). TOP gathers workforce information and uses it to better understand the employment experience that teachers are having. The district can then use these results to engage teachers and administrators in collaborative efforts to increase workforce success.

TOP applies a third-party research-based systems model to understand and track teacher satisfaction with their work, social, and basic needs environments throughout the school year and to share that data with the school district to ensure a timely, well informed district response to address educator concerns and thereby reduce turnover and increase teacher success. The research design includes a series of surveys sent to teachers during the school year to gather teacher input and evaluate effectiveness of it based on district responses to aggregated results.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Survey 3 was administered online March 11-29, 2019, using Survey Monkey. At the beginning of the year, Superintendent McDonald worked with his administrative team and TOP consultants to develop survey questions and timelines. He also engaged directly with teachers to prepare them for the surveys and share talking points regarding the purpose and value of the surveys. Additionally, email reminders specifically for this survey were sent to teachers throughout the survey window to encourage a strong response.

The final response rate was 54% (104 complete responses out of 193 invites). This response rate provides a medium level of confidence that we have sufficient representative data to support data driven engagement and collaboration between teachers and administrators.

SURVEY QUALITY AND STRUCTURE

The survey questions were created by researchers with extensive experience in the field of education in Alaska. In-depth input from district personnel played heavily into the question development. In addition, the survey was reviewed by other experts in teaching and education administration providing an elevated level of face validity and strong content validity. The survey included 31 multiple-choice questions with the response options: 6-absolutely, 5-mostly, 4-more than not, 3-not quite enough, 2-a little bit, 1-not at all, and 0-not applicable. An additional six open-ended questions allowed for narrative responses.

Cronbach alpha was calculated for the full survey and each of the scales, providing strong measures of reliability all above the acceptable level of 0.70 except for the Efficacy Scale.

SCALE	NUMBER OF ITEMS	CRONBACH ALPHA
Survey 2	31	0.93
Work Environment	5	0.72
Leadership	5	0.92
Community	7	0.90
Efficacy	4	0.60
Quality of Life	6	0.73
Strengthening the Workforce	4	0.78



CASE SUMMARIES OVERVIEW

Survey questions have been arranged in a thematic format across each of the six scales measured. Narrative comments for each scale identify and rank questions in the categories of Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement (OFIs).

OVERALL SCALE SCORES, PAGES 1-2

A review of the NSBSD case summaries for Survey 3 reveals that the overall mean score continues to trend toward the positive (3.5 and above) although it is lower than the previous two surveys. The standard deviation has remained below the acceptable score of 1.0 or below.

	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 3
Mean	4.4	4.0	3.7
Std. Deviation	0.82	0.82	0.90

SUMMARY PLACEMENT OF THE SIX SCALES MEASURED IN SURVEYS 1, 2, AND 3

The table below shows the six scales that have been measured in the last three surveys and the ranking in each survey. For example, Quality of Life placed fourth in Survey 1 and jumped to second place in Survey 2, and maintained the same ranking in Survey 3.

<u>Survey 1</u>	<u>Survey 2</u>	<u>Survey 3</u>
1. Leadership	1. Efficacy	1. Efficacy
2. Community	2. Quality of Life	2. Quality of Life
3. Efficacy	3. Community	3. Work Environment
4. Quality of Life	4. Leadership	4. Community
5. Strengthening the Workforce	5. Work Environment	5. Strengthening the Workforce
6. Work Environment	6. Strengthening the Workforce	6. Leadership

Following is a closer look at individual scale scores and themes with comments for each scale that offer additional insights into information provided by teachers who responded.

WORK ENVIRONMENT SCALE, PAGES 3-9

Work Environment (questions 1-5) is the third highest scoring scale in Survey 3. As indicated below, the mean score remains in the positive range with the standard deviation just above the acceptable score of 1.00. However, within the questions, there is significant disparity in both the mean and standard deviation scores.

	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 3
Mean	3.8	3.6	3.6
Std. Deviation	1.09	1.00	1.01

STRENGTHS

Question 4 (*I feel accepted in the school where I teach*) received the highest mean score of 4.9. Question 1 (*the resources I have this year allow me to meet the academic and*



developmental needs of all students I teach) received the second highest mean score of 4.0. The standard deviation scores for these two questions were in the 1.27-1.30 range.

OFIs

The mean score for question 5 (based upon support I'm receiving, I am finding better ways to deliver instruction that is aligned with the performance level of the students I teach) falls in the middle of the five questions with a 3.5; however, it scored the highest standard deviation in this scale with a 1.66.

The two lowest mean scores in this scale were directly related to professional development. Question 3 (the professional development emphasis to integrate local cultural knowledge and activities into classrooms has supported the learning of the students I teach) and question 2 (the professional development I'm receiving is aligned with the support system the district has in place for teachers) received mean scores of 3.0 and 2.7, respectively. Both questions had a standard deviation score in the 1.50 range.

Mean and standard deviation scores for these three questions highlight the opportunity for administrators to collaborate with teachers to better understand, define, and deliver professional development that meets teachers' needs.

OPEN ENDED RESPONSES

Responses were coded and analyzed for themes specifically on the open-ended question associated with the Work Environment Scale.

Q6: How has the school environment supported your growth as a teacher this year?	Name	Grounded
	◇ 1 Strength	61
	◇ 2 OFI	54
	◇ support	25
	◇ work environment	25
	◇ work challenges	21
	◇ teachers	21
	◇ administration	21
	◇ 2 OFI & work challenges	20
	◇ 1 Strength & support	19
	◇ 2 OFI & work environment	17
	◇ 2 OFI & administration	15
	◇ principal/asst	15
	◇ 1 Strength & teachers	15
	◇ students	13
	◇ communication	13
	◇ district	12
	◇ professional development	12



Of the comments provided on this question, respondents shared about the same amount of Strengths and OFIs focusing predominantly on ideas of *support* and *teachers* on the positive side and on *work environment*, *work challenges*, and *administration* on the challenging side.

The exemplars provided here highlight several of the overall Strengths around the three topics of *support*, *teachers*, and *communication*, with additional connections to *principals* and *collaboration*.

- *My fellow teachers offer help and support when they have the opportunity to help.*
- *My co-teachers are very supportive in all the inquiries I have. My supervisor, the vice principal is always open for communication.*
- *The support and collaboration time I get with my grade level teammates has supported me the most- that time to collaborate and share what is working and ideas is invaluable.*
- *I feel supported by my fellow teachers when I need help and guidance. My principal is extremely understanding, respectful, and approachable with the help that I need. Sometimes, I think that the system as whole is the challenge. I don't always feel like we have all the answers, but I do love the staff that I work with, and know I have grown, and get to grow every day.*
- *Not being micromanaged has supported my growth as a teacher this year.*
- *The staff that I work with are friendly and respectful to each other. We are a family that help each other when needed.*
- *I am constantly learning from my students about what works best for each of them individually. To be honest, I have never received meaningful professional development from this school district. All of my new ideas come from collaborating with my coworkers, talking to my students, and reading educational literature.*
- *[Our school] is the best school in the district because of the strong and supportive administrative team and the amazing team of teachers that we have here.*
- *I feel very comfortable and free to ask questions and get help as I need it.*
- *Our school administration has allowed us to focus on the needs of the children as individuals. Our school administrators have been a great support for our needs as teachers to their best of their abilities.*

The exemplars provided here highlight several of the overall comments around the topics of *work environment*, *work challenges*, and *administration* from an OFIs perspective.

- *This school has a very toxic environment. The admin changes expectations on an hourly basis, and we never know what is expected of us.*
- *It hasn't. The school environment at [our school] is very competitive and negative. Teachers are always being compared to each other and never given praise for what they do.*
- *The support stinks within our school site. I have never worked for a district that is falling apart so badly in the past two years. We have 0 direction. We have 0*



Professional Development that helps make us better teachers. Our in-services from the District have been so repetitive and useless.

- *It hasn't made me grown. I feel more torn down this year than last year, when though I am at the same school in district.*
- *Our school has had much upheaval this year, so the school environment has not been a place for my growth. Lack of leadership was the main problem. Any growth was due solely to my own initiative.*
- *It has not fostered growth. It has been hostile and unwelcoming. I feel like the accomplishments I am making as a teacher with my students are in spite of the school environment, not because of it.*
- *Frankly, I feel like I've been left to fend for myself as a teacher, with minimal instruction, materials, and resources provided by central office. Requests for additional materials and support are not replied to or responses are minimal.*
- *Half the year was practically no support from district office, but it has improved.*
- *Colleagues help one another best when we're able to collaborate during in-service days, but that's not valued enough at the district level. We need to use our own expertise, those who have been here awhile, and insist, find ways, to get parents and other local 'stakeholders' involved in how we run our school day-to-day.*
- *It has not. There is not support from administration or from my colleagues. Everyone is out for themselves.*

LEADERSHIP SCALE, PAGES 10-16

Leadership, the focus of questions 7 through 11, saw a significant downward trend in the mean score from Survey 1 to Survey 3. Even though there was a very slight decrease in the standard deviation, it is well above the acceptable score of 1.0 or below.

In Survey 3, Leadership received the lowest mean score of 3.367 (rounded to 3.4) and the highest standard deviation score of any scale in this survey.

	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 3
Mean	4.5	4.0	3.4
Std. Deviation	1.13	1.57	1.52

STRENGTHS

Question 10 (*one of the great advantages of teaching in this school is the sense of collegiality we have as teachers and administrators*) received the highest mean score of 3.6. It also received a high standard deviation score of 1.75.

OFIs

The following questions have the lowest mean scores (3.2-3.4) and the highest standard deviation scores (1.63-1.86).

Question 7: *In my school, there is evidence that two-way communication between teachers and administrators supports teachers and improves student outcomes.*



Question 8: *In my school my principal aligned staff with the goals that guide our school and district.*

Question 9: *My principal played a significant role in supporting my professional growth as a teacher.*

Question 11: *Actions by leadership created a safe school environment that supports my work as a teacher.*

Responses to these questions highlight the need for communication and collaboration around principal support for teachers’ professional growth, school and district goals, and creating a safe school environment that better supports the work of teachers.

OPEN ENDED RESPONSES

Responses were coded and analyzed for themes specifically on the open-ended question associated with the Leadership Scale.

Q12: How have school and district leadership influenced your success as a teacher this year?	Name	Grounded
	administration principal/asst	70
	principal/asst	70
	administration	63
	2. OFI	59
	1. Strength	52
	support	38
	appreciated	29
	professional situation	29
	communication	28
	work environment	17
	teachers	17
	frustration	16
	dysfunctional	13
	responsibilities	12

Of the comments provided on this question, there were just slightly less Strengths than OFIs. Based on the question itself, the predominant codes came in the form of *administration* and/or *principal/asst* (as shown in the top 3 codes of the list). For the Strengths comments, thoughts focused on feeling *appreciated*, receiving *support*, their *professional situation*, and *communication* as demonstrated with these exemplars.

- *I have had the opportunity to teach in a healthy learning environment where our principal supports the education of all students and helps to find solutions to difficult issues that arise throughout the school year.*
- *The school leadership is very supportive and accepting of new ideas.*
- *My principals set the stage that open communication is the norm. I am glad that I feel safe to share ideas and thoughts (this has not always been the case in my school). My principals respect me as an educator and will listen to my thoughts and ideas.*
- *By giving me the leeway to teach.*
- *Our current principal gives constructive criticism and gives good feedback on teaching methods.*



- *[M]y school principal has been extremely helpful and taken a strong interest in supporting emerging teachers such as myself.*
- *[C]urriculum and Instruction personnel have been very supportive and encouraging when we had so many teachers leaving or absent all the time!*
- *They allow teachers time to work together.*
- *I can freely communicate with my administration.*
- *They are usually willing to listen to ideas, and I feel that most of their decisions are made with good intentions.*
- *I was provided clear expectations, so I knew what needed to be done in order to meet the expectations.*

For the OFI comments, thoughts also focused on *support, communication, and professional situation*, as well as *frustration and work environment* as demonstrated with these exemplars. The dissonance created by mirrored responses in Strengths and OFIs is a factor of the school itself.

- *It hasn't.*
- *We work as individuals here - there is minimal community dialog, both via district leadership or school leadership.*
- *My fellow teachers and staff colleagues have influenced my success by being constantly open to collaboration and input, as well as always being willing to review any assignment/lesson plan/unit I have developed and offer constructive criticism. I do not feel that this is the case with administration or the district. We as teachers attempt to give feedback, and the response is always why we are wrong. We never receive a response that acknowledges our concerns, but which rather focuses on irrelevant details that do not address our concerns at all.*
- *There is little communication between admin and teachers.*
- *I have not felt successful this year. Only being talked down to and made to feel like I was doing a lot of things wrong, especially when it came to classroom behaviors and contacting parents.*
- *The district needs to hear what the school needs are instead of the district telling us what we need to do with teaching the students. We need to close the gap of where our students need to be.*
- *Again, we need professional development time dedicated to helping teachers TEACH; that is, ask us what we need support with, what that support looks like, and time to develop this on-site without paying consultants thousands of dollars when our best resources are right here. It's a chronic protocol in public education and hiring outside consultants for professional development seldom provides any real, workable, 'place-based' tools. For example, we're told, "Do what you need to, to keep yourself healthy." However, there is no real help. Here is an idea that many school districts use. Offer online health apps with benefits such as reduced deductibles, awards such as points that can be used to purchase health products. Send licensed counselors to work with*



TEACHERS and STAFF twice a year (November and February) and aid us in dealing with life.

- They haven't. They have fostered an atmosphere of fear between colleagues and have closed lines of communication.
- They have had a negative impact on my teaching this year. Poor leadership all the way around. The heart of the leadership failure is bad communication.

COMMUNITY SCALE, PAGES 17-25

The Community Scale, the largest in the survey, includes seven questions. This scale remains slightly positive although the mean score has dropped considerably from the prior surveys. Also, please note, the standard deviation has increased slightly indicating more diversity among respondents.

	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 3
Mean	4.5	4.2	3.5
Std. Deviation	1.21	1.06	1.22

STRENGTHS

Question 14 (*I feel accepted in the community where I teach*) received the highest mean score of 4.4 in this scale and the only question to receive a score above 4.0. Questions 19 (*I would recommend teaching in this community to other educators*) and 18 (*including the culture of the community in my school produced positive outcomes connected to the intended purpose*) both had the next highest mean score of 3.6.

The standard deviation scores for these three questions range from 1.42-1.71, which are higher than desired and clearly indicate a wide range of responses by teachers completing the survey.

OFIs

The mean scores for the last four questions in this scale ranged between 3.1 and 3.4. Standard deviation scores of 1.32-1.70 indicate the need for further investigation.

Question 13: *Engaging with our community members about education has strengthened my success as a teacher this year.*

Question 15: *There is a positive relationship between the parents and the school that supports the educational growth of the students I teach.*

Question 16: *The community values have positively impacted my work with the students I teach.*

Question 17: *The relationship between the school and community supports a positive learning environment for the students in our school.*

The mean and standard deviation results strongly suggest the need to revisit strategies aimed at communicating effectively with parents, building community support for education, increasing awareness of community events, and incorporating the values of the community into the daily operations of the school.



OPEN ENDED RESPONSES

Responses were coded and analyzed for themes specifically on the open-ended question associated with the Community Scale.

Q20: What are some positive and challenging aspects of your relationship with the community this year?	Name	Grounded
	◇ 2 OFI	73
	◇ community	67
	◇ 1 Strength	53
	◇ parents	41
	◇ students	38
	◇ support	25
	◇ involvement	24
	◇ school	19
	◇ teachers	18
	◇ academic performance	18
	◇ relationships	17
	◇ communication	16
	◇ behavior	12
	◇ attendance	10

Of the comments provided on this question, there were about two-thirds the Strengths compared to the OFIs. Strengths focused on the various players involved: *community, parents, and students* as well as the general topics of *support, friendly, and relationships*.

- *I have open communication with the parents of my students. They are very helpful and supportive.*
- *Positives: I feel like I have made more friends in the community this year.*
- *The community is generally very supportive.*
- *My parents will come to my meetings most of the time unless they are truly busy and cannot make it. The parents of my students support what I do.*
- *The positive being the discipline support I have received from parents, despite having several challenging students.*
- *Positively, I have seen my students make tremendous gains not just academically, but in confidence, communication, and coping skills as well.*
- *I have a large group of parents that are very involved with their child's progress. I also have a small group that does not communicate with me and their children have poor attendance and low growth.*

The OFIs focused more specifically on *involvement, communication, academic performance, and behavior* while still discussing the same set of players: *community, parents, and students* as demonstrated through these exemplars.



- *Some challenging aspects seem to be that the community have a lot of misinformation regarding teachers and our benefits from the district. Additionally, parental involvement is low at my school.*
- *Have seen more parental involvement and community involvement for sports and fundraising. Have not seen much involvement for academics.*
- *I feel appreciated and welcomed by some community members. I know there is always the factor that we are outsiders, as much as we get involved in community activities. I do feel appreciated and respected by some community members (mostly Native staff who know me), but the community is very hands-off, and I think we can do more to encourage and nurture relationships.*
- *Getting people in the village to come to the classrooms for help is hard. However, everyone is nice.*
- *There has been a lot of drama and miscommunication, mostly because of social media. The district needs to work out a system to combat the miscommunication and negative PR on social media. If that is all people are seeing/hearing, that is what they are going to believe.*
- *Positive: the Inupiat values are wonderful goals. Challenges: when people do not value the Inupiat Values in their daily lives.*
- *I have found that some community members are craving involvement in the school, but our school and the educators in it are finding it difficult to bridge that gap.*
- *Some challenges are those that I have seen affect students outside the walls of the school building. Although I am not involved, I have seen how alcohol and drug usage has directly affected students' emotional and physical wellbeing which causes challenges for students' ability to be academically, emotionally, and socially successful both in the classroom and in their personal lives outside of the school walls. Of course, this is not the case for all students; however, several students are experiencing these challenges and have voiced them to me throughout the year.*
- *There still seems to be a divide/ conundrum with having outsiders coming in and teaching. On one hand, the community is quick to put down those who come in from outside of the community, but then on the other hand they also thank us. Sometimes it feels as if I am being torn between 2 thoughts and it is hard to know where we, as teachers, fall with the community. Another challenge is many community members talk about preparing students for higher education yet there is little help with attendance/tardiness/accountability for students.*
- *We are talking about getting students' knowledge up to grade level, but all parents aren't following through.*
- *The challenge is that there are still a lot of parents that are not actively involved with their child's education and not supporting the teacher which makes it challenging, when trying to deal with negative behavior that effects the whole class.*
- *Parents are supportive of initiatives that are hands-on but not supportive when it comes time to follow through.*



EFFICACY SCALE, PAGES 26-31

With a mean score of 4.5, Efficacy is the highest scoring scale in this survey. The table below shows how consistent the mean score has been across the three surveys. The standard deviation score for Efficacy is one of the lowest for any scale in this survey, which indicates a closer range of responses from teachers. Caution should be used with the scale given the reliability measure was not strong (see Cronbach alpha on page 1 of narrative).

	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 3
Mean	4.5	4.5	4.5
Std. Deviation	1.08	1.06	1.00

STRENGTHS

Question 24 (*I believe I am successful in my teaching assignment this year*) received a mean score of 5.0 and a standard deviation score of 1.04.

Although the following three questions have mean scores above 4.0 (4.5, 4.5, and 4.1, respectively), respondents continue to express a need for professional recognition and positive relationships.

- Question 21: *People I work with care about me and my success.*
- Question 22: *Someone at work has evaluated my development as a professional educator.*
- Question 23: *Recognition and support by colleagues has contributed to my professional growth.*

The standard deviation scores for these three questions are between 1.32-1.84, which should strongly invite collaborative dialogue to better identify, understand, and respond to workforce needs.

OPEN ENDED RESPONSES

Responses were coded and analyzed for themes specifically on the open-ended question associated with the Teacher Efficacy Scale.

Q25: What is one piece of advice you would give to your administrators to better support your classroom practice?	Name	Grounded
	◇ 2. OFI	94
◇ principal/asst	74	
◇ teachers	48	
◇ communication	38	
◇ students	30	
◇ behavior	21	
◇ classroom	20	
◇ administration	19	
◇ support	19	
◇ appreciated	17	
◇ discipline	16	



The comments provided on this question were predominantly OFIs given the nature of the question. Responses focused on teachers, communication, students, behavior, and classroom.

- *Communicate clearly and concisely about expectations, what is happening. Gather input from all staff and then make a decision and not put it up for vote. Be conscientious individual teaching styles without trying to change them.*
- *Stop treating teachers like they're stupid children. Start treating teachers as professionals who don't have to be told every single thing. Allow them to make decisions as a group, rather than the top-down management we have now.*
- *Listen to us - take our concerns more serious. When we say we have a problem, come out to the village and investigate that problem, don't wait for months until the problems are so huge that the damage is irreparable.*
- *Communication is key!*
- *More human interaction and communication. Less computer-time and VTC nonsense.*
- *Listen to peers.*
- *Get to know your teachers and stop avoiding those with opinions different from your own.*
- *Better communication. We do not know what is happening for the upcoming week. Never a good word about what we are doing for the students.*
- *Stop changing the curriculum every year! We are in the classroom, not you. We know our students far better than you do. Stop making decisions for teachers that do not impact you.*
- *How to better differentiate to the levels of students in the class.*
- *Get training on appropriate accommodations for each disorder, get manipulatives that reduce stress, anxiety, depression, and PTSD like Aaron's putty, glitter jar.*
- *More informal observations.*
- *The observations are to help teachers grow professionally. When time is not taken to have pre and post conferences, the rest of it is a waste of time.*
- *Come into the classrooms and see what is happening and how they can support teachers and students.*
- *Come visit our rooms. Not as part of an evaluation or observation but just to see what is going on. Support us in what we are doing and help us grow instead of just listing all of the things we are doing wrong.*
- *I would advise my administrator to do more walk through and give feedback. I would like to hear that I am doing something good.*
- *Recognition for the neat things that go on in various classrooms.*
- *It would be nice to see administrators walking the halls, interacting with the staff/teachers, peeking in classrooms to build positive relationships.*
- *Work to create a set of disciplinary standards from the 1st day of school and hold the students accountable from start to finish.*
- *More support for teachers with discipline that is required to have a productive classroom.*



- *Institute disciplinary procedures, answer emails, stand up for teachers when they come under fire.*
- *Get supplies ordered on time and delivered so that they can be used during the class they are ordered for.*
- *We are in need of quality intervention material. We are in need of interventionists.*
- *More PLC time and PD that services what our site needs - send out a survey to figure out what we need/want.*
- *Work on productive use of PLC's. Get teachers to come up with some solutions for problems instead of being told what to do. Align standards to curriculum and find material that meets students where they are at...more engaging.*
- *Support teachers when they need it (i.e. discipline, resources, etc.). Otherwise, leave them alone and let them teach!*
- *Debriefing time after incidents involving students to discuss prevention, provide background information, etc. What does the community expect of the teachers? I would like to see more involvement from the community in our school--parents rewarded for coming to school functions (assemblies, conferences, game afternoon). I would ask the community to come up with ideas for rewards...points given to students when parents come to school, parent names put into a drawing for a prize, parent recognition at award assemblies, etc.*
- *Never be embarrassed to ask, you won't know if you will not ask.*

QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE, PAGES 32-39

The Quality of Life Scale is the second highest scoring scale in the survey although the mean score has shown a downward trend since the first survey. The standard deviation score is slightly above the acceptable score of 1.0 or below.

	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 3
Mean	4.4	4.3	4.0
Std. Deviation	0.92	1.07	1.04

STRENGTHS

The question with the highest mean score of 4.7 was question 26 (*I am satisfied with my housing situation this year*). Question 27 (*I appreciate the quality of life I have here*) scored the second highest mean score of 4.3. Question 30 (*I am comfortable with the logistics of living – food, clothing, shopping, entertainment, etc.*) placed third among the six questions with a mean score of 3.9.

OFIs

Questions 28 (*I have access to technology at home that meets my personal needs*) and 29 (*I was able to create and maintain a balance between my work and my personal life*) both came in fourth with the same mean score of 3.7.

With the lowest mean score of 3.4, question 31 (*my health needs are satisfactorily met in the community*) scored last among the six questions.



Standard deviation scores for all of the questions in this scale range between 1.39 and 1.73 indicating a wide range of opinions and invite conversations between teachers and administrators on how to identify and address the teachers' quality of life concerns.

OPEN ENDED RESPONSES

Responses were coded and analyzed for themes specifically on the open-ended question associated with the Quality of Life Scale.

Q32: How are quality of life decisions impacting you in your current job?	Name	Grounded
	◇ 2 OFI	63
	◇ work challenges	56
	◇ services	42
	◇ 1 Strength	34
	◇ health	28
	◇ travel	20
	◇ expenses	14
	◇ personal	13
	◇ family	13
	◇ work environment	12
	◇ time	11
	◇ housing	11
	◇ isolated	10
	◇ contracts	10

Of the comments provided on this question, there were half as many Strengths as OFIs. Strengths focused on statements of independence often coded as *attitude*, *personal*, or *individual*. Many responded with a basic statement like “no negative impact” or just “none”.

- *They are not. I craft my personal life.*
- *I have everything I need. Life is good.*
- *In more positive ways, I have learned to adapt to the living conditions thus impacting my job in a good way.*
- *I haven't any quality of life issues because I don't beat myself with concern about what I don't have - whatever life brings, I'm grateful for it. Quality of live issues don't impact my job.*
- *This is expected in the bush.*
- *This is one of the big reasons I keep returning.*
- *I have a high quality of life because I choose to enjoy each day and enjoy living at the top of the world!*



OFls focused on *work challenges, services, health, travel, expenses, and family* as demonstrated with the following exemplars.

- *I put in more effort in my career and that takes away from my ability to enjoy weekends to refresh myself and be with family. Preparing to teach is on-going.*
- *The feeling like I can't call in sick because there isn't enough subs to cover my teaching position. Have to decide am I well enough to go into work or students go without a teacher for the day or more.*
- *Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is a constant challenge with the limited services.*
- *The mail service has been very inconsistent. This is troublesome. The internet and phone service go out once in a while. The internet service is very slow.*
- *There is impact on my health overall. This affects how I perform at work. I put in too many hours. It can take a month to get supplies here from reasonably priced vendors such as Amazon. Fresh fruits and vegetables do not happen here and that has impact on nutritional balance. It is difficult.*
- *Ravn is inconsistent and loses packages. Things that are shipped have disappeared. I can't rely on them to get my food shipments so fresh produce and quality meats are difficult to get before going bad. This impacts my health which impacts my job and makes me want to leave the district.*
- *Family medical needs are not available here. Everything else I can deal with. The biggest issue is that I have not gotten a raise in [many] years, but the cost of living continues to increase, so I am, in fact, losing money by continuing to work here.*
- *It is difficult to get out of the village when the airline is so unreliable, and the price of tickets is ridiculous.*
- *I need more access to health care (more flights per year for medical. Two is not enough when we do not have care here.*
- *The community is extremely remote, airfare to Utqiagvik is extremely expensive and I have grown tired of feeling isolated.*
- *You have to fly to Anchorage if you have an issue, food prices are too high.*
- *I don't get to separate work from life. Nor do I have a machine (my own fault) to let me get out of town. There is no place to go be anonymous, like a random coffee shop. So, I'm always on the spot. And that's tiring.*
- *It sometimes becomes lonely being an outsider. I have grown as a person, which I absolutely love.*
- *I hate paying per gigabyte for internet connection. I spend a lot of money for the privilege of entering grades and planning lessons in my spare time.*
- *They impact my job every day. This community is horrible when it comes to child care. I worry about my children every day and that distracts me from my job.*



STRENGTHENING THE WORKFORCE SCALE, PAGES 40-45

Strengthening the Workforce scale ranked fifth out of six scales and showed a very small increase from the previous survey; however, the mean score is significantly lower than Survey 1. The standard deviation has continued to increase on all three surveys. Recall that this scale changes topics from survey to survey, with Survey 1 focusing on human resources, Survey 2 addressing systems to support teachers, and Survey 3 specifically regarding teacher evaluation.

	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 3
Mean	4.4	3.2	3.4
Std. Deviation	1.08	1.31	1.40

STRENGTHS

Question 36 (*at this time, I want to continue teaching in this school next year*) shows the highest positive response with a mean score of 4.4. This question was the only question in this scale to have a mean score above 4.0.

OFIs

With a mean score of 3.6, question 35 (*I am satisfied with the way my teacher evaluation was conducted this year*) was the only question with a mean score in the 3.0 range. This question also had a standard deviation of 1.86, which is among the highest in Survey 3.

Both questions 33 and 34 had mean scores below 3.0. Question 34 (*the time and work required for the teacher evaluation process this year was worth the effort*) had a mean score of 2.9. This question also had the highest standard deviation score of any question in Survey 3 (1.87) signaling a wide range of responses.

Question 33 (*the teacher evaluation tools and process positively affected my practice as a teacher*) received the lowest mean score of 2.8 and a standard deviation score of 1.76.

The standard deviation scores for this scale are very high indicating diverse responses by teachers participating in the survey. These responses warrant a collaborative dialog between administrators and teachers that is focused on strengthening teacher evaluation.



OPEN ENDED RESPONSES

Responses were coded and analyzed for themes specifically on the open-ended question associated with the Strengthening the Workforce Scale.

Q42: In your view, what factors are driving teacher turnover in your district?	Name	Grounded
	◇ 2. OFI	97
	◇ administration	74
	◇ teachers	46
	◇ professional situation	35
	◇ appreciated	32
	◇ support	29
	◇ compensation	28
	◇ community	27
	◇ frustration	26
	◇ behavior	26
	◇ attitude	26
	◇ decisions	24
	◇ contracts	22

Of the comments provided on this question, there were nearly no Strengths and an abundance of OFIs, as is warranted given the question. The OFIs covered lots of territory with most comments targeting *administration*, *teachers*, *professional situation*, and feeling *appreciated*. These exemplars attempt to demonstrate the themes as well as the variety of responses shared.

- *The isolation from natural families and the uncertainty of administration and the choices people in charge make. Every year is different. Teachers are expected to do more each year without taking away prior expectations. More are added each year and each year resources are becoming more limited.*
- *In my view, the factors that are driving teacher turnover in this district are poor school/district leadership, a lack of an ability to adapt to the conditions, lack of a "true" social life, travel inconvenience and expense, and lack of a purpose due to the educational low-expectations. However, it should be noted that poor school/district leadership and/or frustration with school/district leadership is what drives the other factors mentioned. Strong leadership can solve most problems as it pertains to teacher turnover.*
- *There is no incentive to keep people. If we had internet at home or rewards for things, I think that people would be more inclined to stay. There are so many things that the district could do but aren't. There is no sense of value for teachers.*



- *The districts overreach and not allowing schools to have the autonomy to meet the needs of the students and community. Also, the lack of a solid teacher contract and teachers not feeling safe in our district's schools.*
- *Poorer than other districts pay. Decreasing benefits. Lack of competent administration.*
- *Administrative turn-over is affecting the quality of my teaching job.*
- *Difficult students and low achievement; poor leadership with regard to curriculum; difficult lifestyle due to remote location, weather, distance from family; expensive to live here.*
- *Lack of parental acceptance of teachers, lack of parental support of child's education i.e, getting kids to school on time, helping with homework, communicating with teachers.*
- *Poor support from district office, poor community support, poor training for teaching and living in the arctic, hiring low quality/incompetent admin and district staff.*
- *Factors that drive turnover in this district include the remote sites, lack of support and input from Central Office, and disrespectful behavior and clear disinterest from the students.*
- *We are unsupported in our classrooms. The teachers work ten times harder than anyone else in the district, but yet the admin level staff get better housing, vehicles, bills paid, plane tickets, etc. The administrative turnover is terrible, and it creates unease for teachers. Teachers are constantly asked to change what they do, and it's frustrating. You're not able to master your craft. Even our teacher leaders have no leadership. They just fill out intervention paperwork. There is no respect for seniority.*
- *I've heard teachers mention two factors - the desire to be with family who are elsewhere, and the lack of entertainment or similar opportunities to explore on weekends. I believe that issues with school and district administration frustrate some as well. But I know that all the teachers are frustrated by students who wander halls and do not attend classes and engage in the learning opportunities that we are providing them. And I suspect a primary factor contributing to low teacher retention is that teachers want to know their work counts for something lasting and positive.*
- *Mainly the fact that teachers don't feel supported or wanted by the district. It constantly feels like a battle, where teachers are tolerated because they are needed, but no one wants them here. Next, the contract battle which supports the above, the feeling that you can't speak openly (even if you are being supportive) without your job on the line. The pay is adequate but isn't competitive anymore. There are no incentives for new teachers to stay. There really is no reason to stay unless you have built up enough years in the state to stay until retirement.*