

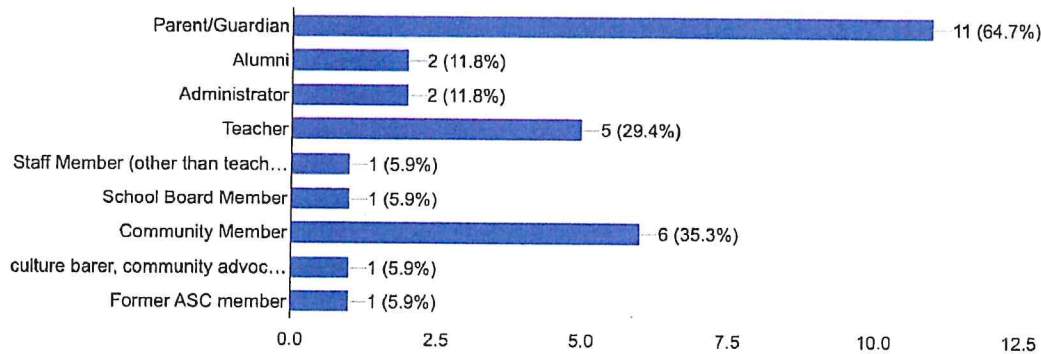
Strategic Planning Community Survey: Southeast Island School District

Who took the survey? 17 respondents *(some identified more than one role)*

1. Please select what you consider to be your primary role or include "other" if necessary



17 responses



What are the top 3 issues facing our students today?

#1 Top Issue

- Mandated curriculum
- lack of self worth and community value
- Basic needs- a safe home, food, good water, a functional loving family unit.
- Teachers/administration being political activists and cause divisiveness
- **parental support** - reading to children and helping with homework
- **Parent and community engagement.**
- Old curriculum - needs updated. Some of the material we have at the school was there when my children were in school and they have been out for sometime.
- **Properly staffed** school
- not caring about their education
- **Turnover** may be the biggest, though for myself and my daughter, it has not had a felt negative impact. I do not know the causes of turnover here, or if housing is a big factor.
- Lack of social-emotional/interpersonal communication skills
- **The need for teachers of upper level math** across the district(VTC if necessary)
- **job market opportunities**



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- Not having rigorous classes taught by area specialists
- Consistency and structure of learning expectations
- Behavior issues taking teachers time away from curriculum, and students behaving due to **lack of staff** and lack of consequences
- critical thinking skills

#2 Top Issue

- **Ignorant Parents** and Teachers
- lack of identity and direction or purpose
- Hope in a future in which an education can actually help them obtain.
- That school funding is connected to test scores, kids are trained to get better test scores to get more money for the school.
- too much time spent testing
- Anxiety and social and emotional issues.
- Adult engagement/support with our youth - frequently see same few people showing up to events/school functions. Would love to see increased support/encouragement from our adults.
- Support staff that actually supports the teachers and aids.
- **parents who care**
- I have heard (from other people) complaints about literacy and math issues with older students. I do not see this issue with the instruction quality from Joel Jenson and Rocky (who are no longer here).
- **Lack of options** (electives, extracurricular activities, etc)
- **Electives & CTE opportunities to explore** (ie:welding, construction, forestry...)
- training for placement into jobs
- negative school climate in some of the schools
- Trust in the system and the learning environment that is ever-changing faster than the system can keep up with
- Freezing buildings in the fall and winter (52-54 degrees last year in the classrooms for eight weeks was not acceptable!
- fact checking skills

#3 Top Issue

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- Social Pressure (like "what are your pronouns")
- lack of motivation inspiring teachers
- Learning how to be productive members of a community, in which they are proud to be citizens.
- Learning life skills, i.e. budgeting.
- work days - get interrupted by meetings
- Student engagement, connecting to academics with a balance of non-curricular opportunities.
- Post school career/life planning - many of our students graduate and fail to successfully go on to college or complete a trade school.
- **Teacher retention.** Pay them, pay them well.
- warm clothing
- Honestly, it FEELS like people want to add activities and programs, but I am not sure we have the leadership manpower to do everything people want. I grew up going to (many) much bigger schools, and I am used to one person heading up maybe one or two things. Maybe three including their teaching job. Here, it seems like more than that. I am not sure what the balance is, because I do think the students need opportunities, but I kind of think we need a better overhead view of what we are trying to fit onto people's plates, and see if we can pick activities that hit more than one need and cut down the overall load.
- Organized sports and extra activities of interest
- wages to provide a living
- No VTC classes
- Information/Options Overload
- Repeat illnesses and infections from school not being sanitized and staff and students not hand washing needs addressed
- keeping small schools open

3. In your opinion, what are the 3 biggest strengths of our district? (what would you not want to go away?)

#1 Biggest Strength

- **Teacher Autonomy**
- flexibility
- Unique location and opportunities.



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- Hopefully rebuilding what was destroyed by the last leadership.
- **Teachers** are there for the students - academically and activities
- Students!
- Great leadership - we have a great leader in our superintendent this year and a much more supported leadership team
- **Teachers**
- Technology
- Closeness. Familiarity. My daughter knows and is recognized. This means that she is safer because people know when someone is in the building who may not belong, and if I am looking for my daughter, most people know who I am asking about.
- Community networks
- flexibility within our classrooms
- small class size with individualized focus
- 4 day school week
- Unique educational opportunities
- Resilience
- **long serving staff**

#2 Biggest Strength

- Direct Parent Involvement
- ability to connect with local community
- **We have teachers willing and able** to help students.
- **Holding on to a great teacher**, the only reason my kids are enrolled
- **Teachers and staff work well together** to make all students successful
- **Staff** are dedicated to students.
- **Amazing and dedicated staff/support team** - our teaching and support staff are truly dedicated to our students and their needs.
- **Teacher's aids**
- **Teachers who care**
- Small size means that the school can focus on the actual needs of individual students. Or this is how I perceive it.
- Small classes
- wealth of knowledge among staff (although not often tapped)
- skill training and certification programs (scuba, merchant marine, welding, etc.)

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- archery program
- Commitment and Effort
- With every re-shuffling of the positions, new perspectives, ideas, strategies are planned and can see how those accomplished make a difference and those that do not have various cause and effects needing addressed.
- **the new superintendent**

#3 Biggest Strength

- Remote locations provide real experiences and challenges.
- creative potential
- We have decent facilities.
- The School Board chose a **solid leader** this time.
- District gives students opportunities to explore many sports, career pathways.
- Supporting community.
- School board focused on the success and needs of our students - open to listening to our stakeholders, transparent (as allowed), and without any agenda.
- **Principal**
- 4 day week, walking distance to school
- Students and parents have a lot of access and influence. I would have felt a lot more of an outsider in a larger school, I feel like.
- Incorporating the outdoors/natural world in scholastic studies
- interesting location with many community member/parents with unique skills
- safe and positive extracurricular environment
- outside the box mentality (teachers having ability to choose how to teach)
- Staff - Student Ratio
- Faith that things can improve when everyone works together to turn obstacles into opportunities for success and growth!
- creative solutions

4. In your opinion, what are the 3 biggest areas for improvement in our district?

#1 Biggest Area of Improvement 17 responses

- **Staff Retention;** Admin, teachers, paras



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- **teacher recruitment and incentive**
- Building community pride.
- Organization and communication in the Athletic Department. Our sports dressing seasons start late with poor communication to parents.
- Communication from administration down
- Adequate funding.
- Increase public confidence in our schools - although we may not have ability to offer the variety of classes that larger schools offer, the content/student engagement/school test scores could speak louder and draw folks to our district
- **Pay your good employees a good wage**
- Better school building
- Forward planning of student extracurriculars. Being able to see on the calendar the season start date for things like baseball season (and if anyone is lined up to coach, how many students are needed to make it viable, deadlines to make it happen, when meets/travel happens).
- Outdated attitudes on child behavior and development - teachers need continual training on new research on how best to support developmental and emotional needs appropriately. Too much "toughen them up," "boys will be boys," etc. Research has shown us enough to know these attitudes do not serve children
- Upper level math teachers-certified to teach HS math
- focusing on classes needed for success in trade school/ college
- building trust with parents
- 5 Day school week
- Planning, coordination, and communication
- arrest student loss to home school

#2 Biggest Area of Improvement

- **Attracting Admin and staff** that aren't all wound up about fixing what isn't broken.
- address local needs such as culture, fishing,
- Building community trust by being consistent and accountable.
- Teach classes and skills that help prepare kids for life, i.e. budgeting. It seems like school mainly teaches kids skills to go to college, not skills needed for the real world..
- Communication with community members

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- **Attracting and keeping staff.**
- **Teacher retention** - would love to see more consistency in our teacher retention; this impacts our students immensely. Would love to strive for better teacher satisfaction.
- Cut toxic people, from any position
- better curriculum with timely logins
- I know we need more community teachers for older grade electives. This affects my own thoughts about what SISD has to offer my 3rd grader as she gets older.
- **Better qualified teachers**
- **Stronger elementary teacher** to teach foundational skills
- **understaffing of teachers**
- community involvement/feeling welcome in certain schools
- **Full Time Paraprofessional Staff**
- Consequences for students with bad behaviors and Consistency
- find ways to meet home school needs in the school

#3 Biggest Area of Improvement

- Teacher housing is appalling.
- hands on activities/outdoor/local elders
- Bringing students in the community back into the classroom
- Helping youth find out in Jr High their professional life goals and tailor focus and resources to support them.
- Funding for all students to do all sports
- Getting a "shared" vision for all of our schools.
- Community engagement/support our of schools.
- More understanding and education for staff on mental health of students
- Supplies for the school have it on going, paper towels, toilet paper and so on. It is crazy that each school has to order its own!
- Higher academic standards
- Organization in Administration
- Parent and community involvement
- consistent leadership
- **Reducing Turnover and retaining good staff**
- Building safety and warmth



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- improve support for intensive students to increase retention

5. If money was not an issue, what should be done to make our District the 'ideal district' for ALL students in our community? (think as BIG as possible).

- More equipment and time to do place-based learning, developing CTE/Marine-based education such as a "Week at Sea", the trades, small engine repair, diesel mechanics, marine electronics, etc. . .
- Identify the common values of local people or just use the Southeast Traditional Tribal Values developed at the Elders Forum in 2004 (possibly minus the creator part) incentivize school employees, pay teachers the best salary in the state, additionally, using a points system give bonuses to teachers whose students excel in various ways, such as relating to the above mentioned values, projects, presentations, grades, hobbies outside of school, volunteering, self motivation, etcetera using a points system contribute to teacher's retirement for student success that occurs beyond high school also relating to the above mentioned values, going to college, apprenticing, owning businesses, volunteering, generally being empowered/empowering people, etc. create an investment fund to sustain future funding needs
- More teachers so instruction can be differentiated between levels. Better teacher housing. Provide instruction that students and the community can be excited and proud about- not just the status quo state standards.
- Find out earlier what youth's professional/career path they are choosing/moving towards and build training, as much as possible around that.
- Educational trips, subsistence hunting and trapping trips, traveling to other regions in Alaska for a month to learn the. culture.
- Providing curricular and extracurricular opportunities for our students to think BIG.
- Increased electives, specifically focused on life skills and greater financial understanding. Improved teacher housing in all our site locations. Increased pay/benefits to entice teacher retention. After school tutoring for those patients needing extra assistance to achieve

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success in our schools. Higher post school career drive and completion of college or trade school programs. Growing our staff to advance in school careers.

- You have to support the "arts" music, art, poetry etc... It is a known FACT that these help in education development and help with mental health.
- New building, a real library, upto day technology, certified para and special education paras for whatever school should need them, extra hands to help
- I imagine a larger number of young teachers would be curious about living and teaching in an Alaska rainforest if the cost of coming were less. I would give the students more field trips to encounter things like the horses on the island, museums, learning about native culture by visiting the carving sheds or having cultural ambassadors/students from Haida/Tlingit share from their culture. Or visiting the airfield to learn about aviation/mechanics. I am not sure how much of this the older students get. What would it be like for students to explore museums other students experience, like the MoMA in VR? That would be horribly expensive for a class to have enough equipment, and maybe met through simpler means, but it could be more engaging. Augmented reality has also been used to teach science, though I do not know the current state of the art for classroom instruction. Another budget ideal would be transportation for students who live on the south side to participate in after school activities. Not sure where this currently stands. Lastly, no budget means we could afford to pay travel for students to compete in the region or travel for competitions.
- Hire the BEST teachers you possibly can
- Vocational type electives for hands-on experiences
- I would love to see our district be able to offer more certification and post graduation placement opportunities including military recruitment options. Success for students translates to success for the district, and should translate into attracting more students.
- Hire teachers that are area specialists, bring back VTC classes and creative TB Thursday electives (open to all students in the district), find a way to fund sports travel (which is a major barrier in kids being able to participate), bring back science fair, offer more CTE courses and workshops like Native paddle and metal art, and continue to offer college trips, STREAM week, and other means for district-wide interaction.
- Full Time Student enrollment(5 day week), Full Time Staff(Invest in Staff = Retention)
- Heated, safe, warm upgraded facilities with state of the art technology and smart boards and solid curriculum the same, equal to or greater than the available Homeschool curriculum for every student and at least two paraprofessionals per class to help protect students from



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those with behavioral issues and those needing assistance with IEP's and better education ratios for improved retention of education!!! Bring back music!

- a return to electives at central school one day a week to improve elective opportunities

6. What should our District NOT be willing to compromise or give up as we move forward?

- The four day, block schedule, teacher autonomy, support to try new directions in education.
- A commonly agreed upon set of values/principles such as the traditional tribal values mentioned above should always be maintained. We should never sell out our students for crappy restrictions imposed by certain funders. We should never allow teacher tenure to dictate what is best for students.
- The unique opportunities our island has to offer.
- Ethics and putting student needs at the center.
- Sports, vo-tech, art, music
- Providing a safe school community for students and staff.
- Focus on student needs - avoid cuts to our student programs.

7. What other comments or concerns would you like the team to consider as they build this plan?

- Don't let "school" get in the way of an education. Do NOT try to emulate big schools, carve out our own identity that is uniquely ours.
- Develop an entirely new, ultimate, plan. Don't settle for less. Every time someone says "but", take time and think about how it can be done and done better. To build a plan is to create it, rather than just cutting and pasting. Let us use what we have observed in our life experiences to generate a plan that works. Stick to our common values. Just because "we've always done

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it that way" is not good enough. This country is young in terms of cultural development. This is a great opportunity to affect the future of our region and beyond in a positive way.

- There should be a focus of building community from the classroom out. Citizenship starts in school and translates to the community. Community pride is lost after the loss of school pride. We need to rebuild in a way where people want to come and stay.
- That from prior to the previous Superintendent quitting a year ago, that her approach was very destructive and has burned a lot of bridges. Just to be aware of the landscape you're moving forward in. Wishing you success on your plan and the new year! I've heard good things about the new SI.
- Trying to provide a funding source to "grow our own." We have some fantastic classified employees that need to be supported to grow as professionals.
- Communication is critical to our success - continue to be open to listening to our stakeholders/students and address, to the best of our knowledge/ability, in a timely manner.
- The times we live in are very challenging, and the school district needs to adapt to the times. Kindness understanding and basic common sense need to in everyone's hearts
- I do not know what a duty free lunch is or a plan period that is not on my own time. I love how close I live to school but it can also be a problem also
- Not piling too much on individual kids or adults. I think about how many activities an individual student usually does in a bigger school compared to here to have enough for that activity to happen. How competitive they usually are, and thus the difference in level of push from the student themselves to participate. I was in Acadec, JROTC, Art Club in high school, and I was really busy and did not do most JROTC extracurricular activities. That is just three things, though they had more people involved and more moving parts than a typical indoor soccer season here.
- Moving forward, the focus needs to really be on the HOW we are going to accomplish the items that are needed to move forward. Just because we write a mission on a paper does not make it a reality, it is the actions and the monitoring, sometimes difficult, of those items that give us the actual basis if we are moving forward or not. Voices from ALL stakeholders then should be heard from again to see if "they" believe progress is being made.
- Our focus needs to be on preparing students to succeed after graduation and give direction. I want to see each and every student be able to transition into productive and successful careers as adults. That is the single greatest measure of our worth as a district.



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- We have had so many changes over the past few years. The turnover in staff has been astronomical. We have lost area specialists, and so many students. This district feels really weak and unorganized right now--"shaky." Change is not necessarily a bad thing, but it needs to be additive in nature. Many of the changes over the last few years have taken away the very things that made our district strong and unique, which gave it advantages over others on the island. Now people are hesitant to enroll with us, mostly doing so when they do not have other easy options. I think we are in a much better place now than we were when all these changes started 3 (or so) years back. I feel like we finally have the right kind of leader to move us forward. However, we still have a lot of work to do. It will take time to build back up to what we once were, and even longer to surpass it. I am confident that we have the seeds for this success, but we all just need to give each other some grace, and find ways to work together to make this happen.
- Insurance needs looked at, we are spending too much in insurance to hire fulltime paras. Potential for opting out of insurance to provide their own insurance stipend at a percentage of what it costs the district and staff now. Needs group brainstorming to solve this problem.
- Thank you for taking the time to reach out, please work hard to return the aging school building to its former grander (heated) and ensure the students and staff's safety and well being so it can be a place of community and individualized learning through play and fun! These efforts for strategic comprehensive action planning are greatly appreciated and much needed! Good luck, you guys got this!!!
- staff teachers to meet parent and student needs at small sites