

**FINAL REPORT OF THE DISTRICT 39
COMMUNITY REVIEW COMMITTEE
TO THE
DISTRICT 39 BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Teacher Recruitment and Retention in an Age of Teacher Shortage

The Role and Function of the Board of Education

Playground Dynamics

Guidebook for Parents of Children with Special Needs

Proposed Revisions to the District 39 CRC Procedures and Bylaws

June 2001

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**Final Report of the District 39 Community Review Committee
to the
District 39 Board of Education
June, 2001**

Introduction

The CRC is a volunteer organization composed of community members from many different community constituencies who work in an independent manner to examine issues of interest to the District 39 Board of Education, the community and to the CRC itself. The CRC works to develop documents and reports that the membership feels should be brought to the attention of the Board of Education and to the community at large.

Every year, the CRC seeks to develop a comprehensive list of potential topics Committee members and the constituencies they represent believe are important to the Board and the community. The Committee then engages in a very deliberate process of discussion and debate, winnowing this rather exhaustive list of potential topics into a manageable number the Committee can review, study and report on to the Board in June of each year.

This year, the Committee began with a list of nearly 40 potential topics. From this lengthy list, the Committee voted upon and narrowed its choices down to the five it now presents to the District 39 Board of Education. These five topics are:

- (1) Teacher Recruitment and Retention in an Age of Teacher Shortage;
- (2) The Role and Function of the Board of Education;
- (3) Playground Dynamics;
- (4) Guidebook for Parents of Children with Special Needs, and;
- (5) Recommended Revisions to the District 39 CRC Procedures and Bylaws.

Once these topics were selected, members of the Committee either volunteered for or were assigned to a specific subcommittee formed from the full membership. It is these subcommittees that engage in the research and produce the reports presented here to the Board of Education.

The following is a very brief description of each topic. A more substantial and thorough description of these topics, the methodology employed in completing each report, conclusions to be drawn from the research and recommendations to flow from this research is included in the body of this report.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention in an Age of Teacher Shortage

While modern technology, safe schools, competent administration, a concerned community and a knowledgeable and supportive school board are critical components to our children's education, the single most important component for providing the best education possible to our children is the classroom teacher. Unfortunately, our country is faced with a growing shortage of classroom teachers. Indeed, various studies have predicted that a shortage of two to five million teachers will occur within the next three to five years.

This study was undertaken in order to provide District 39 with the information necessary to attract and retain the quality teachers necessary to minimize the impact of this anticipated shortage of teachers. An essential component of the study was a comprehensive survey that was distributed to every District 39 teacher and which produced a 62% response rate. This response is strongly indicative of the concern that our teachers have about the future of education in our school district and the critical importance of attracting and retaining teachers.

The subcommittee researched the topic by engaging in a comprehensive literature review, interviewing administrators and teachers and conducting an informal focus group interview of teachers from a neighboring school district. The most important element of the subcommittee's methodology was, however, a comprehensive survey that was developed and distributed to all District 39 teachers. The subcommittee conducted this anonymous survey to provide a snap-shot of what our population of teachers thinks about aspects of our school district that relate to recruitment and retention.

The Role and Function of the Board of Education

This study examines issues regarding the role and function of the Board of Education. The research undertaken by the CRC and presented here is a direct outgrowth of many public forums held by the CRC in 1999 to capture stakeholder input on the District's long-range plan. At these forums, questions regarding the Board's effectiveness, Board members' abilities to communicate with one another and the unpleasant tenor of the Board's discourse were repeatedly raised. Rather than rely on these sentiments and conclusions articulated nearly two years ago, the CRC undertook to look at the literature on boards of education and then to survey the stakeholders in the district to determine whether or not these sentiments and conclusions were accurate.

The purpose of this study was two-fold: 1) to examine and summarize existing research on qualities of effective school boards; and 2) to use this research as a basis for seeking input from the community on their perceptions of school board performance in District 39. Finally, the subcommittee makes recommendations as to how the District 39 Board of Education can improve its ability to ensure that children in District 39 are provided the best education possible.

Subcommittee methodology included a review of the literature on what makes an effective school board, a community survey based on existing board of education self-assessment surveys to collect qualitative and quantitative data about the community's opinion of District 39 Board of Education performance and direct interviews with individual board members and teachers on their perceptions of the role and function of the District 39 Board of Education.

Playground Dynamics

Numerous studies confirm the prevalence of bullying among school children. It is generally acknowledged that teasing and other forms of bullying can be physically and emotionally abusive, especially on the playground where children interact freely. While schools focus on teaching academics, many lessons for life are learned on the playground.

The CRC subcommittee studying playground dynamics grew out of continuing concerns expressed by District 39 parents and teachers over episodes of bullying, teasing and exclusion during recess and before school. The subcommittee conducted surveys and interviews with staff at each school and in other districts to determine the extent of the problem and how schools address it. The subcommittee extended the survey to related topics of playground supervision, facilities and safety overall.

District 39 school principals, playground supervisors and nurses also offered their insights, experience and cooperation in response to subcommittee surveys and interviews regarding playground practices, incidence of injuries and injuries or complaints. A review of national studies and the findings of a previous CRC study on bullying were also an important part of the subcommittee methodology.

Guidebook for Parents with Children with Special Needs

Acknowledging that navigating through a maze of interlocking programs and overlapping services available to children with special needs can be stressful, this subcommittee of the CRC prepared a guidebook for the parents (both new and existing residents) of District 39 to orient them to the special services offered by District 39.

The guidebook prepared by the subcommittee is designed to provide parents of children with special needs: (1) answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ's) about District 39 special services; (2) a description of District 39 special services programs; (3) a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms, and; (4) a brief introduction to the Federal and State laws that impact special services.

Working very closely with Dr. Ray Lechner, Administrator for Student and Special Services and his staff, this subcommittee met with parents, staff and administrators of District 39 to compile this guidebook. The guidebook is designed to serve as an adjunct to and to dovetail with the information about District 39 special services to be found at the District 39 web site at <http://www.wilmette.nttc.org>.

Proposed Revisions to the District 39 CRC Procedures and Bylaws

The 2000/2001 Executive Board of the District 39 Community Review Committee (consisting of the President, the Vice President, the Secretary and the Superintendent) undertook to review the procedures and bylaws under which the CRC operates. It was the view of the Executive Board - with the support of the full membership of the CRC - that these procedures and bylaws were somewhat dated and thus merited analysis for possible revision.

The Executive Board concluded that certain provisions of the procedures and bylaws of the District 39 CRC merit further review. The 2000-2001 Executive Board concluded that this analysis be submitted to the 2001-2002 Executive Board for their further review and, potentially, their ultimate revision.

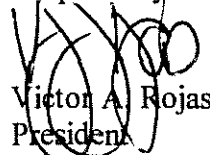
Conclusion

From time to time, the CRC chooses to pursue topics that some may consider controversial. In my role as President, I advised the membership to not be swayed or influenced by such critics nor to be swayed or influenced by the source of any such concerns. Rather, the Committee must select and pursue those topics that the membership truly believes are of critical importance to our community and to our children.

This was a particularly challenging year for the Committee. It is for this reason that I believe that the membership is to be commended for tackling difficult issues it believed merited review and study for the benefit and in support of the Board, the community and our children. It is also for this reason that I feel distinctly privileged to have led and served with such a talented and committed group of volunteers in service to their schools and their community.

I appreciate this opportunity to present this report to the District 39 Board of Education. I strongly believe that our work will be of significant value and direct relevance to the District 39 Board of Education, our community and, most importantly, our children.

Respectfully submitted,



Victor A. Rojas
President
District 39 Community Review Committee
2000-2001

**FINAL REPORT ON
TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION
IN AN AGE OF
TEACHER SHORTAGE**

**DISTRICT 39
COMMUNITY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

June 2001

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS:

**Ron Gilbert, Chair
Jody Beresford
Maria Collins
Tom Gutman
Mike Schuette
Carol Zsolnay**

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INTRODUCTION

Modern technology, safe schools, competent administration, a concerned community and a knowledgeable and supportive school board are all-important in having schools capable of providing our children with the education needed to be competitive in the future workplace and to be the educated citizens our community and country will require. However, the single most important component for providing the best education possible to our children is the classroom teacher.

Unfortunately, our country is faced with a growing shortage of classroom teachers. Indeed, various studies have predicted that a shortage of two to five million teachers will occur within the next three to five years.

This study was undertaken in order to provide District 39 with the information necessary to attract and retain the quality teachers necessary to minimize the impact of this anticipated shortage of teachers. An essential component of our study was a comprehensive survey that was distributed to every District 39 teacher and which produced a **62%** response rate. This response is strongly indicative of the concern that our teachers have about the future of education in our school district and the critical importance of attracting and retaining teachers.

METHODOLOGY

The subcommittee researched the topic in the following ways:

Review of the literature

This was of importance in establishing the scope of the impending teacher shortage, obtaining various views as to reasons for the anticipated shortage and developing ideas for how to best attract and retain teachers.

Interviews

At least two members of the subcommittee interviewed the following:

- Alice Reardon - Administrator for Personnel/Special Projects, Wilmette Public Schools
- Lynn Bialk – President, Wilmette Education Association
- Mary Louise Jackowicz - Vice President, Wilmette Education Association
- Sandra Stringer – Romona Principal
- Phyllis Constan – Central Principal
- Toni Shinnars – Harper Principal
- Raymond Fry – Highcrest Principal
- Margo Brewer – McKenzie Principal
- Christine Golden - Wilmette Junior High Principal

Informal Focus Group Interview

Subcommittee members conducted an informal focus group interview of teachers with 2-10 years of teaching experience from Middleton School in Skokie. The objective of this meeting was to learn how teachers, in general, speak about their profession, and issues of recruitment and retention.

Teacher Survey

A comprehensive survey was developed and distributed to all District 39 teachers in February, 2001. The subcommittee conducted this anonymous survey to provide a snap-shot of what our population of teachers thinks about aspects of our school district that relate to recruitment and retention.

The subcommittee felt that it was important to ask these questions and therefore be able to understand what works well and what needs changing before a crisis occurs. **This survey produced a 62% response rate.**

SUMMARY OF CRC RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations to the Administration and Board of Education are based on the survey results of 173 teachers, literature reviews and interviews with key employees of District 39. The survey results were very positive and showed the many good qualities of our school district, teachers and administrators. Wilmette should be proud. However, the survey results also showed us areas where we need to improve so that we continue to remain stronger than our competition and retain our quality teaching staff.

There were many positive comments from teachers, but there were also many negative remarks from teachers. The subcommittee viewed the survey results very positively. Most organizations do not take the time or have the opportunity to truly audit their own operations and personnel. We did, because we feel that to strive for continual improvement leads to better quality. There is no substitute for knowledge.

1. The CRC recommends that the Board of Education and the Administration look at the recommendations proactively. It is our goal to strengthen the positives and eliminate these negatives.
2. The CRC recommends that the Board of Education and the Administration visibly show more respect and support for our teachers. They should continue to encourage this among both the parents and children attending District 39 schools. Respect and support for employees is paramount in any organization.
3. The CRC recommends that the Board of Education and the Administration review carefully the top three issues that lead to teacher job satisfaction (Table 2.1). These issues are repeated as Conditions Needing Improvement (Table 2.2). They are:
 - District 39's lack of a contribution to teachers health benefits (both individual & family) that is competitive with other area school districts
 - More competitive "Take Home" salary or "Net Pay" with that of other districts
 - Improved tuition reimbursement for continuing education and/or advanced degrees

These issues were raised in response to almost every question in the survey even when the question did not relate to compensation. The majority of teachers' comments also pertained directly to these issues. This survey proves without exception that these issues are paramount to recruiting and keeping quality teachers on our staff.

4. The CRC recommends that the Board of Education, the Administration and the Teachers Union recognize the importance of District 39 contributing to the cost of individual and family health benefits for teachers and how it can affect the next teacher's contract. Negotiations should be a "win-win" proposition to meet the goals for both the Union and District 39. We should not forget that our responsibility is to keep our teachers.
5. The CRC recommends that the Administration review their recruitment process and formalize standard procedures. The Quality of Recruitment results (Table 3.3) along with the teachers comments showed there were too many facets of the recruitment process that rated in the average category or only slightly better. District 39 has numerous strengths but to retain our competitive advantage, we need to strengthen our internal controls over this very important process.
6. The CRC recommends that the Board of Education and Administration investigate why 22% of respondents who were new teachers in the last three years felt that their expectations were basically not met. (Section 5.0, Teachers' Expectations). These comments should be reviewed as to how we can continue to improve our district.
7. Other recommendations include:
 - Increased training and coverage by substitutes and paraprofessionals
 - Development of a formal mentoring program
 - Increase upwards from seven years, the number of years experience on the salary scale a teacher can bring to District 39

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In reviewing the literature, the subcommittee was looking for information in three areas: the reality of a teacher shortage, reasons for any shortage and how to attract and retain teachers.

The coming shortage of teachers across the United States has received a great deal of media attention in the past year. Reported shortages of two to five million teachers over the next two to five years have been reported, the term critical often being used. The following are excerpts from these publications:

- On Thursday, December 14, 2000, the Chicago Tribune printed the following: "Illinois public schools, which are already grappling with significant teacher shortages, could face a much bigger problem if student enrollment growth and teacher retirements continue at their current paces. A study released Wednesday by the Illinois State Board of Education estimates that about 20 percent of the state's 124,000 public school teachers are eligible for retirement within the next three years, and student enrollment is projected to climb nearly 5 percent by 2008."
- An article on a Recruiting New Teachers, Inc. web site states, "At a time when educational quality tops the public's list of electoral concerns, urban classrooms across the U.S. continue to suffer serious teacher shortages. Given the expected surge in public school enrollment, the problem of too few teachers is likely to get far worse before it gets better".
- An article in Education World states, "In some areas, competition over certified teachers has become so fierce that districts are promising signing bonuses, paid health insurance, subsidized housing, and more..."
- Editorial Projects in Education in a briefing paper on Teaching and America's Future, states "Across the nation, teachers are being wooed... It's just so competitive now", said R. Douglas Pretty, Director of Human Resources, for the 16,000 student Dearborn, Michigan school district, who hired more than 100 teachers this year. "We're all out at the same job fairs, after the same good candidates. We're very concerned about what the next few years are going to bring for us."
- A special section of the Chicago Tribune, "Education Today" published on Sunday, July 16, 2000 had on its cover the following: "Wanted: Teachers - A shortage of candidates and lavish salaries elsewhere mean a tough year for schools." This special section made such statements as: "The need to replace, attract and retain teachers will have to be addressed immediately, and the efforts need to be ongoing." and "The nation's schools are facing a teacher shortage caused by surging enrollments, an aging teacher force and low salaries. In the next ten years, the U.S. Department of Education estimates, schools across the country will need to hire 2.2 million teachers."
- Again from the Chicago Tribune News Services, "to tackle a teacher shortage, President Clinton announced an online drive to connect teachers to jobs. School districts across the country are scrambling to find tens of thousands of teachers. . ."
- The Christian Science Monitor wrote, "A pop quiz for the start of the new school year: take the highest number of students that ever attended United States schools (52.7 million). Add the lowest unemployment rate in 27 years. Factor in new laws mandating reduced class sizes. Question: where will the schools find the teachers they need to fill this fall's classrooms?"
- In a report by Linda Darling-Hammond, a member of the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, she writes, "There is no doubt that teacher demand will continue to increase over the next decade. Growing enrollments of students caused by increased birthrates and immigration, coupled with a large wave of retirements and turnover of younger teachers, have created the largest growth in the demand for teachers in America's history. The most well-

reasoned estimates place the total demand for new entrants to teaching at 2 million to 2.5 million between 1998 and 2008, averaging over 200,000 annually."

- The New York Times on January 11, 2000 wrote, "Educators have been warning for years that the country would face a crippling teacher shortage unless it raised teacher salaries and attracted fresh talent to the profession...the country has fallen so short of qualified teachers that schools have been forced to put any warm body in front of the classroom."
- The New York Times on January 10, 2000 wrote, "This shortage of competent teachers is one of the most glaring problems we face right now ... the shortage will only grow worse over the next decade as tens of thousands of teachers reach retirement age."
- Reuters Limited on June 19, 2000 reported that Intel was going to help teachers buy Silicon Valley homes and Santa Clara County has already slated plans to build a 40 unit apartment complex which will be rented to teachers at below market rates.
- The Illinois Teacher Salary study (1999-2000) showed that of the 24 elementary school districts surrounding Wilmette, District 39 salaries ranked 16th & 20th. Also, District 39 is one of only two districts that do not participate in the cost of their teachers' health benefits. (See Appendix A, B & C for the Illinois State Board of Education survey results)

Summary of Reasons from the Literature For the Shortage

- Growing salary gap between teachers and other college graduates
- Public and student disrespect
- Bureaucratic "red tape"
- Discipline problems
- Unending paperwork
- Unmotivated students
- Lack of instructional material
- Lack of teacher's influence over policy
- Administration not responding to staff problems
- Change in marital status
- Better job offers from another district
- Health Insurance & Other Benefits
- Increasing student populations

Summary of Suggestions from the Literature for Attracting and Retaining Teachers

- Signing bonuses
- Recruitment from other countries
- Housing assistance
- Payment of moving expenses
- Higher salaries
- Benefits
- Teaching options (experimental programs, charter schools & magnet schools)
- On-site day care
- Formal mentoring programs
- State income tax breaks
- Targeted rewards and recognition
- Flexible teaching options (part-time, job sharing enabling retired teachers to work without losing any pension benefits).

INTERVIEWS OF SELECTED ADMINISTRATORS

The subcommittee felt it was important to interview Alice Reardon, Administrator for Personnel/Special Projects, in order to learn the recruiting procedure used in District 39 and how she perceived the teacher shortage. The principals of all District 39 schools were also interviewed to see how they perceived:

- The teacher shortage
- The various factors that influenced the attraction and retention of teachers
- Their school reflected the recruitment & retention issues as indicated by the literature and interviews with teachers in other school districts.

There was great unanimity of opinion expressed by all the principals. They all agreed that a coming teacher shortage was a reality (some stressed the shortage would be greater in specific areas e.g. special education, mathematics, sciences and foreign language). Salaries and benefits were an important factor and such factors as mentoring programs, parking, distance to work, interactions with parents, security, class size, quality and quantity of paraprofessionals and physical space were also issues. However, there was no one condition that would cause a teacher to leave the district. Greater importance was given to planning time, respect, input into curriculum and teaching methods, relationship with administration and reimbursement for continuing education classes.

The interview with Lynn Bialk, WEA President, and Mary Louise Jackowicz, WEA Vice President, resulted in the same perceptions as those expressed by the principals. In the subcommittee focus group interview with teachers in other districts, we found agreement with the opinions garnered from the interviews with the principals of District 39. Summaries of all interviews appear in **Appendix E** of this report.

TEACHER SURVEY – INTRODUCTION

The subcommittee developed a confidential teacher survey consisting of 31 questions to highlight and evaluate issues that relate to the recruitment and retention of teachers in our district. For all teachers in our district, nineteen questions were to be answered. Teachers new to our district within the last three years were asked to answer 11 additional questions to determine their impressions of recent efforts at recruitment, mentoring and expectations teaching in District 39.

The survey included a mix of types of questions to gather information. On what respondents thought, to what degree and demographic data, ratings on five-point scales, fill-in-the-blank and multiple choice were used. On how they expressed what they thought open-ended questions and space for additional comments was used. The CRC leadership approved the survey after three drafts that included input from the 25 CRC members, administrators, school board members and teachers.

Prior to distribution of the survey it was publicized to the teachers twice. A notice announcing the survey and inviting participation was placed in each teacher's mailbox one week prior to the survey distribution. Then, when the survey was delayed a week due to revisions, a notice was placed next to the teacher mailboxes to alert teachers to the delay. The surveys were distributed to the 281 teacher mailboxes at the district's six schools on Friday, February 9, 2001 and responses were collected from return boxes placed in the office or teachers' lounge of each school on Friday, February 23, 2001.

During the two weeks before the due date, reminder notices were posted by the mailboxes at each school, the subcommittee chairman notified the head of the WEA to encourage teachers to respond and a presentation was made at the teachers' meeting at one of the schools. The week after the surveys were returned, we placed a "Thank You" notice in each school next to the teacher mailboxes.

To increase the chance for high participation and candid responses, anonymity of survey respondents was assured. Hence, respondents were not asked to identify themselves by name, school, grade or subject taught. To segment the results for possible trends, they identified themselves only as teaching a grade range (either K-4 or 5-8), being within an age range and within a range of years teaching in total and in the district.

Of the 281 surveys distributed to teacher mailboxes, 173 surveys were completed and returned which makes for a strong response rate of **62%**.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

1.0 SUMMARY OF RESPONSES BY SCHOOL, GRADE-LEVEL & YEARS

Below is a chart comparing the numbers and percentages of District 39 teachers versus responses by school, grade-level, and years in district.

Table 1.1

By School	Teachers	Responses		Percent of Total	
		No.	Percent	District	Responses
Central	42	29	69%	15%	17%
Harper	31	21	68%	11%	12%
McKenzie	36	19	53%	12%	11%
Romona	34	17	50%	12%	10%
Highcrest	70	45	64%	25%	26%
WJHS	68	42	62%	25%	24%
Total	281	173	62%		

Table 1.2

By Grade	Teachers	Responses		Percent of Total	
		No.	Percent	District	Responses
K thru 4	143	86	60%	51%	50%
5 thru 8	138	87	63%	49%	50%
Total	281	173	62%		

Table 1.3

By Years in District	Teachers	Responses		Percent of Total	
		No.	Percent	District	Responses
0-3	118	62	53%	42%	35%
4-8	68	37	54%	24%	21%
9-12	25	14	56%	9%	09%
13-19	28	25	89%	10%	15%
20 plus	42	34	80%	15%	20%
Total	281	173	62%		

Conclusion

Respondents to the survey mirrored our teachers very closely as shown in the Percent of Total teachers in the district & those who responded to the survey.

- By **School** and **Grade** (Tables 1.1 & 1.2), the representation is almost an even match.
- By **Years in District** (Table 1.3), respondents with 13+ years in the district are slightly over-represented (35% of respondents versus 25% of teachers) and respondents with 8 or fewer years in the district are slightly under-represented (56% of respondents versus 66% of teachers. Still, this group represents a majority of the survey respondents.)

2.0 RESULTS OF QUESTIONS ASKED OF ALL TEACHERS IN OUR DISTRICT

2.1 Experiences In Our District That Contribute To Retention

Below is a list of 35 statements that describe situations teachers sometimes experience in their profession. The statements were chosen because literature suggests that these are conditions that support teachers' job satisfaction. Respondents rated each statement on a 5-point scale by how strongly they agreed that they have experienced the condition working in District 39. The columns on the right show the percentage of respondents who chose a specific number rating. The list is arranged in order of the degree of agreement based on the following categories:

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral/Undecided 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

Avg Rating	Table 2.1a – Conditions that Contribute to Job Satisfaction	% of respondents				
		1	2	3	4	5
4.9	Compared to other districts, my health benefits are competitive.	0	0	2	5	93
4.3	The level of tuition relief for continuing education is adequate.	2	5	14	22	57
4.1	Compared to other districts, my salary is competitive.	1	5	11	45	38
4.1	I can do my job well without putting in too many extra hours.	2	8	12	35	43
3.5	The level of leadership and direction by administration is strong.	5	22	20	28	25
3.5	There is an adequate amount of paraprofessionals when I need them.	5	15	25	36	19
3.5	I do not experience bureaucracy when I try to get things done.	4	17	29	35	16
3.4	The level of mentoring and guidance for new teachers is good.	8	19	23	30	20
3.2	I do not need to spend my own money on supplies.	14	22	13	29	22
3.1	I believe teachers are appreciated by the community.	2	30	28	32	8
3.1	I am not overwhelmed by a lot of non-classroom duties.	8	33	16	32	11
3.1	There are adequate growth opportunities for me here.	7	23	31	25	14
3.0	Compared to other districts, I have sufficient planning time.	15	28	20	21	16
3.0	There is sufficient class-time to cover the curriculum well.	6	33	18	29	14
3.0	There is adequate coverage by substitutes when I need them.	11	34	17	22	16
2.9	Teachers in the district are guided well by their principals.	10	30	28	15	17
2.9	I am comfortable with the amount of pressure in my job.	5	38	20	30	7
2.8	I have enough resources to meet diverse needs of my students.	8	45	21	22	4
2.7	My students' parents have appropriate expectations of me.	5	48	27	16	4
2.7	My teaching is appreciated and valued here.	7	47	22	12	11
2.7	When problems arise, my superiors are supportive and helpful.	14	45	15	15	11
2.5	There is sufficient support to innovate and try new things.	11	51	18	14	6
2.5	I have had adequate training to use technology in instruction.	11	48	23	15	3
2.4	The number of transitions during the school day is fine with me.	13	54	17	13	3
2.3	Compared to other districts, my class size is manageable.	19	49	15	16	1
2.3	My students' parents are respectful of me.	13	61	15	8	3
2.3	My students' parents are helpful to me.	11	59	24	4	2
2.2	I believe the district's teaching methods are current.	18	53	19	9	1
2.2	I believe the curriculum I teach is up-to-date and successful.	21	57	14	7	1
2.2	There is a good amount of collaboration among teachers here.	28	38	18	11	5
2.1	I have enough influence over what I teach and how I teach it.	20	61	13	5	1
2.0	My students come to school well-prepared and ready to learn.	20	63	13	3	1
2.0	My students are well behaved.	20	62	13	5	0
2.0	I have enough instructional material available to teach well.	31	51	9	8	1
1.7	My students are motivated.	40	55	5	0	0

Below is the same chart as in Table 2.1a, but with columns on the right showing how ratings differ by grade-level of respondent. Ratings that differ between the two groups by ≥ 0.5 on the 5 point scale are in ***bold italics***. The list is arranged in order of the degree of agreement based on the following categories:

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral/Undecided 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

Avg Rating	Table 2.1b – Conditions that contribute to Teacher Job Satisfaction by Grade Level	Avg by Grade Level	
		K thru 4	5 thru 8
4.9	Compared to other districts, my health benefits are competitive.	4.9	4.9
4.3	The level of tuition relief for continuing education is adequate.	4.2	4.3
4.1	Compared to other districts, my salary is competitive.	4.1	4.1
4.1	I can do my job well without putting in too many extra hours.	4.3	3.9
3.5	The level of leadership and direction by administration is strong.	3.2	3.7
3.5	There is an adequate amount of paraprofessionals when I need them.	3.2	3.7
3.5	I do not experience bureaucracy when I try to get things done.	3.4	3.5
3.4	The level of mentoring and guidance for new teachers is good.	3.5	3.2
3.2	I do not need to spend my own money on supplies.	3.4	2.9
3.1	I believe teachers are appreciated by the community.	3.1	3.0
3.1	I am not overwhelmed by a lot of non-classroom duties.	3.1	3.0
3.1	There are adequate growth opportunities for me here.	3.1	3.0
3.0	Compared to other districts, I have sufficient planning time.	3.7	2.3
3.0	There is sufficient class-time to cover the curriculum well.	3.5	2.5
3.0	There is adequate coverage by substitutes when I need them.	2.9	3.0
2.9	Teachers in the district are guided well by their principals.	* 2.4; 2.6; 2.6; 2.9 ** 2.6; 4.2	
2.9	I am comfortable with the amount of pressure in my job.	3.1	2.7
2.8	I have enough resources to meet diverse needs of my students.	2.8	2.7
2.7	My students' parents have appropriate expectations of me.	2.6	2.7
2.7	My teaching is appreciated and valued here.	2.6	2.8
2.7	When problems arise, my superiors are supportive and helpful.	2.6	2.7
2.5	There is sufficient support to innovate and try new things.	2.5	2.4
2.5	I have had adequate training to use technology in instruction.	2.4	2.6
2.4	The number of transitions during the school day is fine with me.	2.8	2.0
2.3	Compared to other districts, my class size is manageable.	1.9	2.7
2.3	My students' parents are respectful of me.	2.2	2.3
2.3	My students' parents are helpful to me.	2.1	2.4
2.2	I believe the district's teaching methods are current.	2.4	2.0
2.2	I believe the curriculum I teach is up-to-date and successful.	2.3	2.0
2.2	There is a good amount of collaboration among teachers here.	2.4	2.0
2.1	I have enough influence over what I teach and how I teach it.	2.3	1.8
2.0	My students come to school well-prepared and ready to learn.	2.0	2.0
2.0	My students are well behaved.	2.1	1.9
2.0	I have enough instructional material available to teach well.	1.9	2.0
1.7	My students are motivated.	1.6	1.7

Note: These ratings are grouped by the school to which the survey was returned:

* Central: 2.4; Harper: 2.6; Romona: 2.6; McKenzie 2.9

** Highcrest: 2.6; WJH: 4.2

From Table 2.1b, there are nine categories in which there is a noticeable difference in the degree of agreement depending on whether the respondents are teaching in K-4 or 5-8. These may reflect the different needs of teaching the different age groups. For example, respondents teaching in K-4 are less likely to agree than those in grades 5-8 (by a difference of 0.5 to 1.4 on the five-point scale) that the following five conditions exist at their schools:

- I have enough influence over what I teach and how I teach it.
- The number of transitions during the school day is fine with me.
- Compared to other districts, I have sufficient planning time.
- There is sufficient class-time to cover the curriculum well.
- I do not need to spend my own money on supplies.

Respondents in grades 5-8 are less likely to agree than those in grades K-4 (by a difference of 0.5 to 1.0 on the five-point scale) that the following three conditions exist at their schools:

- Compared to other districts, my class size is manageable.
- The level of leadership and direction by administration is strong.
- There is an adequate amount of paraprofessionals when I need them.

Conclusions

Table 2.1a

Seven of 35 conditions that contribute to teacher satisfaction were rated by respondents as unfavorable in their experience in our district (3.5-4.9 on the 5-point scale). They are:

Compensation

- Paid Health Benefits
- Adequate Salary
- Tuition Reimbursement

Administration

- Leadership & Direction
- Bureaucracy

Other

- Number of Paraprofessionals
- Teacher Workload

In addition, there were eight more conditions where the respondents were either neutral or undecided (rating of 3.0 to 3.4). The administration should review the Teachers Comments & Suggestions in Section 2.3 as a starting point for understanding the issues that are important to teachers and how to improve them.

Table 2.1b

Because the ratings of nine conditions vary between K-4 and 5-8, it is likely that there are differences based on the grade-level and type of school situation. Something that may work well in one grade, may not be appropriate in another grade level. Thus, prior to implementing any changes, each change should be studied to determine how and if it would impact each grade differently.

2.2 Conditions Most Likely Needing Improvement

Teachers were asked to identify up to 3 of the 35 conditions on the list in Table 2.1a and 2.1b that they would most like to see improved. Sixteen of the conditions were selected by 6% or more of the respondents. The list is arranged in order of the percent of respondents wanting improvement based on the following categories:

Avg Rating	Table 2.2 – Conditions that Need Improvement	% of respondents	
		K thru 4	5 thru 8
4.9	Compared to other districts, my health benefits are not competitive	80	77
4.1	Compared to other districts, my salary is not competitive.	41	43
4.3	The level of tuition relief for continuing education is not adequate.	15	32
4.1	I cannot do my job well without putting in too many extra hours.	20	9
3.5	The level of leadership and direction by administration is not strong.	13	13
3.5	There is not an adequate amount of paraprofessionals when I need them.	5	14
3.1	I believe teachers are not appreciated by the community.	9	6
3.4	The level of mentoring and guidance for new teachers is not adequate.	6	8
3.0	Compared to other districts, I do not sufficient planning time.	13	1
3.0	There is not sufficient class-time to cover the curriculum well.	13	1
2.7	My students' parents do not have appropriate expectations of me.	6	8
2.7	When problems arise, my superiors are not supportive and helpful.	2	10
3.5	I experience bureaucracy when I try to get things done.	6	6
2.7	My teaching is not appreciated and valued here.	5	6
3.0	There is adequate coverage by substitutes when I need them.	5	14
2.9	Teachers in the district are not guided well by their principals.	0	6

2.3 Teachers' Comments & Suggestions – Improvement Issues

The following are *qualitative* comments from respondents grouped according to the 16 conditions chosen most often for improvement. The comments give an idea of *how* respondents describe *what* and *how* they want improvement.

- The number in the parenthesis () is the agreement rating of the statement from Table 2.2;
- The numbers in the brackets [%/%] are the percentages of K-4 and 5-8 respondents respectively, choosing the condition as one of three they would like addressed by the district.
- Similar comments made by more than one respondent are in parenthesis after the comment.

Sharing the Cost of Health Benefits - (4.9) [80%/77%]

- "Employees should have access to reasonable health benefits not totally deducted from base pay."
- "Many teachers will leave the district for other districts that provide it." (3)
- "No health benefits is a joke! We'll never hold on to quality, young teachers." (3)
- "What other profession doesn't offer these? How can I support and have a family?"
- "Lack of health benefits is a BIG reason to leave the district."
- "If I leave the district, this will be why." (2)
- "Health benefits are necessary. But paying \$2,400 out of a small salary is stressful."
- "Health benefits are not board funded, I pay over \$6,200/year out of my paycheck."
- "Health benefits for my family costs \$6,500. That is a lot for a single parent."
- "I pay \$7,000/year to minimally cover my family and me. This puts me back to 1990 wages--no increase in net over 10-11 years."
- "We have comprehensive plans, but they are NOT affordable. Now that I need family coverage, I had to borrow money to pay for it!"
- "My spouse lost the job that was covering our benefits. If employment isn't regained soon, I will have to take a job in another district that pays health coverage."
- "I don't use the benefits, but it is embarrassing that my colleagues who do need them must pay such large

Sharing the Cost of Health Benefits - (4.9) [80%/77%]

- amounts."
- "I would like to see the benefit package changed so we don't cover all of it."
- "I appreciate that it is offered, but it is way too expensive."
- "I am leaving the district for this reason."
- "NO HEALTH BENEFITS! Ridiculous!" (2)
- "Lack of health benefits turns off many young teachers!"
- "Good teachers are leaving because of no health benefits."
- "It is insulting to pay for my own health benefits when a part-time counter person at Starbucks gets them for free!"
- "This is ABSURD! Everyone has benefits, Even people who work at McDonalds!"
- "I know that the teachers bargained away their health care coverage: I remember that. But, it needs to be given back to bring up the pitiful morale."
- "Some sort of district-paid health benefits should be covered."
- "Health benefits must be added! It is a disgrace we do not get them!"
- "Quite honestly, I am thinking why wanting to obtain this "benefit" from my employer makes me feel that I am making an outrageous request."
- "Decent pay and benefits are required."
- "Some benefits would be better than none!"
- "No paid benefits for teachers should be a cause for shame in this district. Instead, it's viewed as a triumph of cost containment!"
- "Provide paid health benefits without a cut in salary."
- "The district keeps trying to pile on "other benefits" rather than deal with the most important issues."
- "I pay a big portion of my monthly salary for health benefits."
- "I can't afford to continue paying these rates."
- "The cost of benefits on top of uncompetitive salary makes it difficult to afford to work in an otherwise great district."
- "The lack of benefits here affects salary and causes poor health choices."
- "It is absolutely shameful that at the peak of my career and as a professional who is highly educated, I do not have paid benefits and feel like the "hired help."
- "It is an embarrassment for a district of our caliber not to offer health benefits."

Competitive Salary - (4.1) [41%/43%]

- "When comparing salaries, ours "sounds competitive", but it does not include health benefits--so that must be taken into consideration. Single and sole providers cannot afford to work here. Our salaries are a step between private schools and public schools with benefits."
- "Make salary competitive and all else follows!"
- "Once we subtract self-paid health benefits and TRS, our salaries are far below other districts."
- "Other districts pay much better."
- "The salary stagnates and forces younger and older teachers away."
- "I barely make ends meet and I work my tail off!"
- "Salaries have not kept up. After 30 years teaching, I'm struggling month-to-month."
- "I've lost thousands of dollars in lower earnings working for D39. I've subsidized the education of students in this district off the backs of my own children."
- "Salaries need to be more competitive with surrounding districts." (3)
- "New Trier's salaries are triple!"
- "Good teachers are leaving because of low salary."
- "Compensation is inadequate. We moonlight and this takes away from teacher dedication."
- "When I need to get an outside job to add to my income, my teaching suffers."
- "Higher salaries are important to both attract and keep good teachers." (3)
- "Higher salaries help morale."
- "The overall compensation we receive is well below those of surrounding districts."
- "Every year our salary gets further from the average of surrounding districts."
- "Stop just saying you appreciate my efforts; pay me for them."
- "We offer an excellent education, yet we are the lowest paid district in the township."
- "We have the lowest pay of all schools that feed into New Trier High School." (4)
- "Plainly, unless pay improves quickly, I will leave soon."
- "I live from paycheck to paycheck, drive an 11-year-old car and my roof leaks."

Competitive Salary - (4.1) [41%/43%]

- "The salary scale should eliminate the cap--it penalizes."
- "When I first began, I was just happy to have a job. As the years pass, reality sinks in. I still love what I do--but when my daughter said she was interested in teaching, my heart sank. How sad!"
- "I would like the salary scale schedule improved for dedicated long-term teachers."
- "I have an excellent reputation. Yet, I feel underpaid and undervalued and it is wearing me and my morale down."
- "My small step increases have not kept up with the increases I pay in premiums."
- "Working in this district is a financial hardship. I need a second job to pay my bills."

Tuition Relief For Continuing Education - (4.3) [15%/32%]

- "New certification rules require much training that D39 does not provide. Inadequate tuition reimbursement results in teachers absorbing the cost which is perceived as punishment."
- "The hiring of relatively young teachers with a B.A. requires an increase in the pool for tuition reimbursement."
- "There is virtually no relief, thus little incentive to take real courses."
- "I don't consider less than 20% reimbursement much help."
- "I must pay upfront and the district reimburses an unknown % at the end of the year. It is hard to plan my family's budget with such looming expenses."
- "It does not meet the cost of graduate course work."
- "I think I averaged \$100/class per grad class, but the cost was \$1200/class." (2)
- "What a paradox--a profession that professes the importance of lifelong learning, but doesn't support it for teachers."
- "In the end, supporting our education will help the students and the district."
- "I cannot afford graduate school."
- "I cannot afford to take classes and maintain health benefits without struggling."
- "The tuition relief available barely covers 1 semester hour."
- "Tuition is much more than the raises I get by moving up on the salary scale."
- "Money can be tight for single teachers living on their own."
- "Is there a possibility for full tuition waivers at a nearby university?"
- "It seems like a long process when reimbursement isn't guaranteed."
- "I am seeking a degree and other districts reimburse completely-- looks attractive."
- "NU or National-Louis should be teaching satellite programs for reduced tuition."
- "The pool of tuition reimbursement is inadequate for >250 teachers."
- "See the Skokie school districts for a better plan."

Putting In Too Many Extra Hours - (4.1) [20%/9%]

- "I put in many extra hours--at night, on the weekend, and during the summer without any recognition by administration or the BOE."
- "I work at least three weekend days per month at school. I plan my weekend and social life around school. And, I need to work at my current level to maintain my success and the success of my students."
- "Many elementary classroom teachers come in on weekends and holidays as well as staying late and taking work home. We work many hours for which we are not paid."
- "There are too many administration & parent groups that want time for their interests and there are a lot of meetings."
- "There are too many after school meetings—it seems many items could be accomplished in a memo."
- "I am exhausted before school even starts."
- "It is difficult to do this job without many extra hours."
- "There is far too much to teach and do without putting in extra hours."
- "There is too much paperwork and red tape in just teaching and dealing with students with special needs. The paperwork could be a full time job!"
- "Preparing report cards alone takes a minimum of 25 hours."

Leadership & Direction By the Administration - (3.5) [13%/13%]

- "District and building administrators. We have not chosen leaders who are intelligent, child-centered or supportive of teachers. They are poor role models for good management techniques. They are not supportive and seem dishonest and undermining with teachers. They show one face to the staff and another to parents and board members. We need administrators who know what we are doing and are appreciative and supportive. Our BOE is not the problem. It is our central administrators that are the big problem. I hope this is not going to fall on deaf ears."
- "No leadership! I haven't seen the superintendent in my school since September."
- "There is a lack of leadership, poor decision-making, loss of good teachers and low morale. Wilmette schools can no longer claim excellence."
- "Admin. leadership is non-existent. We are a school w/o an identity or vision."
- "No leadership from top end does not promote continuity."
- "The leaders at the district office take care only of themselves."
- "We need a superintendent who cares about Wilmette and has a vision versus someone who is parked here until retirement."
- "Support from administration is weak and inefficient."
- "Leadership is weak, anti-teacher and bureaucratic at building and district levels."
- "(There is) very little positive leadership in support of staff at the district level."
- "We need a leader, not a boss."
- "We need leaders as administrators."
- "We need a superintendent who is a leader and administrators who are knowledgeable and educators."
- "I don't feel administrators know what is going on in the classrooms. I rarely see them in the building, let alone in my class."
- "There is no overall sense of direction or continuity between and within schools."
- "The general administrative philosophy is punitive towards teachers--a position of control and power. Then, not being strong in areas which are important to the existence of the school populous. (sic)"
- "I would like to see new, informed, positive administrators."
- "The level of leadership needs to be upgraded to handle more discipline situations swiftly and maintain a positive atmosphere."
- "Everyone thinks the district admin. feels and treats us like we're the enemy. Unbelievable."
- "The administration is not focused or effective."
- "There is poor communication and support from the administration. They are more interested in dollars and politics than in what is right for students."
- "I don't feel at all appreciated by administration."
- "Administration rarely praises staff."
- "There is no leadership."
- "Leadership, administration has favorites and sends mixed messages to staff."
- "Administration does not understand the needs/purposes of special services."
- "We need supportive administrators who believe in us and defend our positions, especially to parents."
- "I feel lucky to have benefited from knowing my principal; however, there appears to be no leadership coming from the district office. "Passing the Buck" seems to apply too often. There is no "team."
- "Our administrators are not leaders in the field! They lack vision and a mission for our schools."
- "There is a problem with the district administration; the school administration is fine"
- "We need stronger leadership with administrators who respect teachers."
- "I don't believe our superintendent is capable of taking a stance on behalf of the teachers."
- "We need an administration that is strong enough to lead our schools in spite of the fact that our board is frequently unreasonable and difficult to deal with."
- "Some board members seem to be anti-teacher."
- "The leadership at the board level is an embarrassment. Oh, if they would only spend their time on important issues!"
- "Get some good leadership on the board and in the administration."

Paraprofessionals - (3.5) [5%/14%]

- "Many students need the help of a parapro to meet their needs."
- "The shortage of parapro who are qualified affects all students."
- "Parapro subs get taken away from me all the time. With no support for severe kids, other kids suffer as a result!"
- "If our inclusion program is to be successful, we need trained parapro."
- "Parapro need more support and we need more of them."
- "I have had children in my class go the entire year with substitutes as parapro or with completely useless aides."
- "For the last four years, I have had to work significant overtime because of no help from parapro."
- "With inclusion, parapro play an important role in our students' education and their compensation should be increased."
- "We have had four parapro from our team alone come and go so far this year."
- "Individuals turn down parapro jobs because they can make more money working part-time at Marshall Fields."
- "Students with difficulties or students who would be more successful separated to create a better total environment are grouped together because of staffing problems."
- "Parapro are usually substitutes."
- "This is a district-wide problem."
- "I am always short one parapro in my room."
- "There are too few parapro at my school."
- "There is insufficient inservice training for parapro. The children they work with have very specialized needs."
- "The stress of teaching increases every year because the number of special needs children and children with behavior disorders increases. Classroom teachers are expected to cope with these situations without having the training or adequate support."
- "Parapro are only available if a student "qualifies", but they are needed beyond this. It takes time and testing to qualify and parents can be hesitant to go through this process. So, children suffer in their early grades. I would like to see one parapro in each first grade classroom as a standard. Other nearby districts do this." (2)
- "Parapro for each grade."
- "With demands for individual attention, aides would help."
- "Parapro seem to have too much power over what they will and won't do. They are the least qualified in teaching the most needy--i.e. LD and At-Risk."

Appreciation Of Teachers By The Community - (3.1) [9%/6%]

- "Many parents have little respect for what we do. They take their children out of class for vacations and make excuses when they do not do their homework. Some parents undermine them by bad-mouthing them in the community and perpetuating rumors. They even do this in front of the children so students do not respect a teacher's authority."
- "Parents' attitudes towards teachers color how their children act towards and treat us which diminishes our effectiveness."
- "Feeling attacked creates a constant mode of defensiveness by staff."
- "Community appreciation is deteriorating."
- "Appreciation--I feel very little these days."
- "Maybe we all need to do more to promote the positive things we do."
- "Over the past few years, I do not believe that I am valued and appreciated."
- "As a teacher of a "special" I feel undervalued by my fellow teachers."
- "When BOE members publish articles in the newspaper criticizing our efforts, it is demoralizing."
- "Teachers are appreciated by some parents, but get a negative reputation from the board."
- "Because of many one-sided opinions published in the paper, the community is misinformed and this causes poor morale for teachers."
- "I don't think teachers are even on the radar screen of the BOE or community."
- "I truly love teaching and working with children after all these years. But, #39 continues to squelch that passion, over and over again!"
- "In many ways District 39 has slipped in the eyes of its teachers. We have to beg for a 1% raise and no benefits while our superintendent and other administrators get hefty raises. These people have no contact with the children. What message are we sending to attract and maintain the wealth of educators we have?"

Mentoring & Guidance For New Teachers - (3.4) [6%/8%]

- "New teachers need a stronger support system."
- "It is difficult to track down busy teachers to ask questions."
- "Help only comes when requested."
- "New teachers need more money spent on supplies to get their classroom up and running."
- "I did not receive enough guidance with the curriculum."
- "There is no true supportive nurturing of new staff." (2)
- "One-half day lecture on the entire computer system during New Teacher Training was NOT enough. I have never used an Apple and still need much instruction."
- "There is little mentoring and guidance--I felt I was thrown in with no support."
- "I want better mentoring for special services. I was left alone to figure things out."
- "New teachers need help, not criticism."

Sufficient Planning Time - (3.0) [13%/1%]

- "Elementary classroom teachers teach all subjects and have less planning time than other grade levels. We have to prepare for 5 to 8 lessons a day which includes gathering materials and grading papers. The time available when students are in "specials" is diminished by the time it takes to escort them to and from."
- "Diverse needs of students require well-planned lessons and teacher collaboration."
- "Schedules are such that very few teachers see each other, let alone plan."
- "I am a "specials" teacher and we are not given planning time in this district because it would cost money to hire new staff to give us the time to plan in our schedules."
- "We need more planning time for specials."
- "In special ed., there is no "planning time"--it is spent with student crises."
- "I spend four nights a week plus 4-6 hours on weekends on planning and administrative tasks. There is no planning time for special ed."
- "I want more collaboration time with department co-workers."
- "Some departments have no limits on work load--therefore no planning time guaranteed."
- "I would like designated planning time to plan, make phone calls to parents and outside practitioners."
- "Once a month have a ½ day planning time for teachers."
- "Maybe a few full days of planning time per year would be good."

Sufficient Time To Cover The Curriculum Well - (3.0) [13%/1%]

- "There is way too much curriculum to be covered in too little time. This results in just skimming the surface rather than looking deeper and it stresses teachers and students."
- "To improve this situation--teach the "big ideas" rather than isolated facts."
- "Each curriculum unit is huge, always trying to fit in the new. Are we forgetting some basics or not allowing kids to truly absorb all of it?"
- "There is just too much content--it is a negative driving force."
- "The curriculum is so jam packed that there is not enough time for BASICS."
- "There are too many aspects of each curricular area to be addressed in the amount of time we have to cover it. Consolidating and combining some areas would help."
- "Our curriculum is over-packed with concepts."
- "Science and social studies curriculums are too involved to cover all materials."
- "At 5-8 schools, gifted students are not given adequate assistance because teachers cannot teach their specific needs. Curriculum differentiation would help."
- "The district should provide special math enrichment for young children."
- "Additional staff is needed to meet the needs of high performing students." (2)
- "Speeding along causes too much stress for students and teachers."
- "I would like a slower pace to teach well and so students think at a higher level."
- "There is too much curriculum to cover in our school day." (2)
- "There is too much curriculum for kindergarten."
- "Our curriculum--does not encourage creativity. It is too packed and boring."
- "I am running in too many directions trying to meet the diverse needs of my class. This seems to be increasing each year."
- "There is not enough help, materials or time available to enrich or modify curriculum to meet the diverse needs of children in the classroom."
- "We tend to jump on the bandwagon before all the research is in--Trailblazers, full inclusion, etc."

- "Reading needs to be updated."
- "I would like to have more leveled reading materials in each classroom."
- "Use the "Four Blocks of Literacy." (2)
- "Trailblazers is unsatisfactory as the primary math program." (4)
- "The philosophy prohibiting math and reading grouping in 3rd and 4th grades is regressive and can't meet children's needs."

Parents' Expectations Of Me - (2.7) [6%/8%]

- "Some parents don't seem to realize that we have many students to deal with and that we can't spend all our time with their child. They want teachers to shoulder all the responsibility and accept all the blame."
- "I have too many meetings with parents of non-IEP kids who want something above and beyond for their child."
- "A tiny percentage of unreasonable parents dominate the scope and direction of curricular & interpersonal decisions."
- "Parents rule the school. They go directly to the principal with the smallest concerns. They should be directed towards working with (not against) their child's teacher."
- "The parents' expectations of me as a teacher is too demanding."
- "Some of the things parents have said to me this year are out of line."
- "Some parents are even verbally abusive."
- "Many parents do not understand the situation and expectations are too high under the circumstances."

Superiors That Are Supportive And Helpful - (2.7) [6%/8%]

- "Principals are rarely proactive."
- "My superiors don't seem to be able to make decisions and stick with them."
- "When problems arise, some superiors feel it is my fault."
- "No support. If anything, animosity."
- "Administration stands behind its parents over its staff."

Bureaucracy When I Try To Get Things Done - (3.5) [6%/6%]

- "This district organizational structure is deliberately bureaucratic and hierarchical."
- "I would like the district to make decisions based on student needs and program needs, not dollars all the time-- what is good for education."
- "Certain policies and administrators seem intent on making life difficult."
- "There are too many inconsistencies among administrators and between buildings."
- "Sometimes people say "no" too quickly."
- "Doing new and innovative things needs much too much upper level input."
- "A lot of the bureaucracy I've experienced seems to stem from the district-- to not shake things up with the parents. This gets in the way of getting things done."
- "Bureaucracy causes some good ideas from the SACs to fail."
- "The number of meetings can be overwhelming."

Substitutes - (3.0) [1%/6%]

- "On several occasions, I have had to fill in for teachers who have called in sick."
- "One cannot count on a substitute to carry out plans that are left."
- "Substitutes are not trained appropriately. Nothing but trouble with them."

Guidance From Principals - (2.9) [0%/6%]

- "Oftentimes principals don't appreciate the many different creative models of teaching."
- "We have too many meetings we are required to attend and in which we seem to discuss the same things over and over. It is very frustrating."
- "Guided by principals is the key. Manipulating faculty creates a distrustful environment."
- "The level of leadership and direction by the principal needs improving. We need to trust our superiors & know they are there to support us."
- "My principal needs to learn more appropriate management, organization and social skills. The principal is not approachable, nor helpful, nor sometimes capable."
- "We have a very erratic principal."
- "The principal is a disappointment." (3)

Conclusion

The three conditions listed for improvement by a large percentage of all the respondents relate to the teachers' compensation package. they are:

- Competitive health benefits (80%/77%)
- Salary (41%/43%)
- Adequate tuition relief for continuing education (15%/32%)

Other areas for improvement include time, support and leadership/guidance conditions. All of these are issues that affect job satisfaction and retention.

The CRC recommends that each of these areas should be prioritized and evaluated as to the impact on retaining teachers in District 39. The types and degrees of concern respondents should be evaluated for accuracy. For example, is it a "reality" or a "perception" that our total compensation package is "way behind" other schools in the area?

2.4 Evaluation Of Programs To Retain Teachers

Respondents were given a list of 17 programs that some districts have implemented to encourage teachers to continue working in their districts and in the teaching profession. Respondents rated the importance to themselves of each of the programs. The columns on the right are the percentage of respondents who chose each rating number. The categories of rating were:

1 = Very Important 2 = Important 3 = Neutral/Undecided 4 = Not Very Important 5 = Not Important at All

Avg Rating	Table 2.4a - Programs to Retain Teachers	% of respondents rating				
		1	2	3	4	5
1.1	Individual health benefit paid by district	91	6	1	1	1
1.4	Compensation package in the top 10-20% for area	74	18	6	1	1
1.4	Increased tuition reimbursement for my continuing education	68	25	5	1	1
1.7	Individual dental benefit paid by district	60	25	7	6	2
2.0	Stipends for mentoring new teachers	34	45	12	5	4
2.3	More professional growth activities/courses offered in-house	25	40	20	12	3
2.5	Part-time teaching options	28	26	22	9	15
2.5	Job-sharing teaching options	27	33	20	8	12
2.7	Optional new career tracks for advancement and promotion	18	31	31	10	10
3.0	Program to develop teachers into our district's administrators	14	23	35	9	19
3.0	Additional pay for performance evaluated by administration & peers--over and above years of experience and education	18	21	29	10	22
3.0	Part-time teaching positions for retired teachers	13	24	42	5	16
3.1	On-site childcare	20	16	29	11	24
3.1	Relocation incentives	5	12	42	15	26
3.3	Subsidized childcare	12	14	36	12	26
3.4	One-time bonuses/stipends for teaching hard-to-fill subjects	8	15	38	13	26
3.6	Housing subsidies	5	11	36	14	34

In addition to the programs listed above, there were numerous "write-in" suggestions of programs. We recommend that the district survey the teachers to see if these "write-in" ideas are of major interest to them. The "write-in" ideas were:

- TRS paid in part by the district (**3**)
- Better retirement
- PhD track on the salary scale
- Higher pay for special education teachers
- Stipends for professional growth
- Increased stipends for clubs, teams, dept. chairs
- More pay to retain paraprofessionals
- Planning release time
- Sick days for teachers' children
- Two year leave option

This is the same chart as in Table 2.4a above, but instead of showing the ratings spread over the 5-point scale, the two columns on the right show how the ratings differ by grade-level of respondent. Ratings that differ between the two groups by 0.5 or greater are in ***bold italics***.

1 = Very Important 2 = Important 3 = Neutral/Undecided 4 = Not Very Important 5 = Not Important at All

Rating	Table 2.4b – Programs to Retain Teachers by Grade Level	Importance Rating	
		K thru 4	5 thru 8
1.1	Individual health benefit paid by district	1.1	1.1
1.4	Compensation package in the top 10-20% for area	1.4	1.4
1.4	Increased tuition reimbursement for my continuing education	1.5	1.3
1.7	Individual dental benefit paid by district	1.8	1.6
2.0	Stipends for mentoring new teachers	2.0	2.0
2.3	More professional growth activities/courses offered in-house	2.2	2.3
2.5	Part-time teaching options	2.2	2.7
2.5	Job-sharing teaching options	2.3	2.7
2.7	Optional new career tracks for advancement and promotion	2.9	2.4
3.0	Program to develop teachers into our district's administrators	3.2	2.8
3.0	Additional pay for performance evaluated by administration & peers--over and above years of experience and education	3.1	2.8
3.0	Part-time teaching positions for retired teachers.	2.8	3.2
3.1	On-site childcare	3.0	3.1
3.1	Relocation incentives	2.9	3.3
3.3	Subsidized childcare	3.3	3.3
3.4	One-time bonuses/stipends for teaching hard-to-fill subjects	3.6	3.1
3.6	Part-time teaching positions for retired teachers	3.6	3.5

Conclusion

There is very clear agreement on the programs most important to the respondents:

- Health benefits
- Compensation in the top 10-20% for the area
- Tuition reimbursement
- Dental benefits

Part-time teaching options were more important to K-4 teachers. Optional career tracks and one-time bonuses for hard-to-fill subjects were more important to 5-8 teachers.

Teachers were asked to identify up to 3 programs from Table 2.4a that they would **most like** to see explored in our district. Below is the list of the 9 programs that were mentioned by 8% or more of the respondents teaching in either K-4 or 5-8. They are in descending order by the **total** percentage of responses.

Rating	Table 2.4c – Programs Requested to be Explored	% of Respondents	
		K thru 4	5 thru 8
1.1	Individual health benefit paid by district	80	79
1.7	Individual dental benefit paid by district	40	41
1.4	Increased tuition reimbursement for my continuing education	34	39
1.4	Compensation package in the top 10-20% for area	31	34
2.5	Job-sharing teaching options	19	8
3.1	On-site childcare	12	11
2.5	Part-time teaching options	16	2
2.0	Stipends for mentoring new teachers	6	9
3.0	Program to develop teachers into our district's administrators	5	8

2.5 Teachers' Comments & Suggestions – Requested Programs

The following are *qualitative* comments from respondents grouped according the program that they wish to be explored.

- The number in the parenthesis () is the rating on the 5 point scale
- The numbers in the brackets [%/%] are the percentages of K-4 and 5-8 respondents desiring that the district explore the program
- Similar comments made by more than one respondent are in parenthesis after the comment.

Individual Health Benefit Paid By District - (1.1) [80%/79%]

- "So Wilmette will become a place that teachers want to stay, instead of a stepping stone to higher paying districts."
- "Expecting that teachers will stay without benefits is silly. Other districts look for teachers with North Shore experience."
- "Benefits are important when competing for the same applicants with districts that offer them."
- "This is the most important part of any compensation package!"
- "Paid benefits are needed." (2)
- "It just greatly upsets teachers that we don't have paid health and dental benefits. It's professionally degrading."
- "I have over \$200 deducted from each paycheck from an already modest salary."
- "Health expenses outstrip raises."
- "Almost 10% of my salary goes for health care. No extra duty or committee work can replace that."
- "The absence of paid health benefits is a hidden cost to teachers in our district."
- "Lack of paid benefits makes District 39 a revolving door for new teachers." (5)
- "Health benefits are a source of stress as is."
- "The health and dental benefit plans we are offered now are way too expensive."
- "Teachers would not leave the district."
- "Health benefits are a big part of teacher retention."
- "Lack of paid benefits deters good applicants."
- "I know teachers who didn't accept jobs here because of health and dental benefits."
- "Without this, good young teachers leave the district in droves." (5)
- "Health benefits are paid for administrators--why not teachers."
- "Get with the 21st Century!"
- "We need to do something to encourage staff to come to District 39, then stay!"
- "Our district is a laughing stock."

Individual Dental Benefit Paid By District - (1.7) [40%/41%]

- "This option should be available."
- "Dental benefits would also help with morale."

Individual Dental Benefit Paid By District - (1.7) [40%/41%]

- "My December dentist bill broke me!"
- "I have not been to a dentist regularly because I don't have benefits and can't afford the extra money to do so."
- "Even though I pay my own benefit, no plan is available where I can use my own dentist."

Tuition Reimbursement For Continuing Education - (1.4) [34%/39%]

- "(Current) tuition reimbursement does not meet the costs of all area universities. With reimbursement and the "raise" when a "lane change" has been completed, it still takes a few years to make up the "loss." (ie. Tuition for 12 hours does not equal the reimbursement and the "raise").
- "Put more money into tuition reimbursement to help subsidize/alleviate the high cost of tuition. Many classes now run from \$1000-1500 for three credit hours."
- "A master's program costs \$13,000, but my salary will only increase by \$1000/year. Greater tuition reimbursement would help a lot."
- "Increased costs for professional growth should be fairly shared with the district--the faculty isn't a "cost"--it's an "asset!"
- "Promote real professional growth; develop in-house expertise and consultancy."
- "How can an educational institution not support going back to school like businesses do? It is ludicrous." (3)
- "Tuition costs are so high that I don't think I will ever be able to get my Master's."
- "Continuing ed. is extremely important for continued motivation and growth."
- "This would support teachers through the re-certification process." (2)
- "Courses for me are currently cost prohibitive."
- "If our district want teachers who are innovative, skilled and up-to-date, they need to help us with the training."
- "I would like to keep learning, but I can't afford it."

Compensation In The Top 10-20% For Area - (1.4) [31%/34%]

- "While I try not to make "money" the #1 determining factor in looking for a job, I am beginning to think twice about working for the district. I have talked to colleagues who work elsewhere and they are happy with staff and administration, as well as being paid more with benefits. In this time when teachers will be in demand, I feel strongly the district should change its compensation policy in order to attract and retain the qualified staff it has."
- "This will be attractive to ALL teachers--veteran, new."
- "I am hearing that more and more new teachers are looking elsewhere because of salary concerns. I don't want to keep losing these teachers. It affects morale. We work in teams. Stability is important."
- "I believe our compensation package should include single health and dental coverage and TRS contribution. Most of the neighboring districts include these benefits in addition to the higher salaries."
- "Total compensation is inadequate, period!"
- "This would prevent District 39 from being a stop on the way to fair compensation."
- "Good teachers are leaving. District 39 is becoming a training ground."
- "Younger teachers get some experience and move on to better paying jobs! Down the road, there will be a price to pay for teachers moving away from District 39. Our district was once "the place" to come to make a career. Not any more."
- "Pay me so I can work one job only--teach! I continue to look elsewhere for a teaching position."
- "Turnover has increased dramatically in the last five years."
- "Our teachers create an excellent learning environment. However, we are vastly under-compensated compared to neighboring districts."
- "Basic compensation had to be improved before anything else."
- "Compensate us as professionals."
- "I recently filled out a survey for my neighborhood and had to fill in the lowest salary range. How depressing to think I am at the top of my career in a "good" district."
- "We have the top test scores of the New Trier feeders, but have the worst compensation, by far."
- "A good package will encourage teachers to stay here." (2)
- "Don't say there is no money. There is plenty of money for technology!"
- "Money is a sign of value and respect."
- "Treat us as important people living in an area where the cost of living is significant."
- "My other district paid 100% of my TRS (9 1/2% of my salary)! Something should go into our retirement system paid by the district."
- "Compensation should be increased to reflect the importance of education in this community."
- "Our students are consistently in the top in state test scores. Believe me, it's not all the parents' doing!"
- "Make compensation equal to other North Shore towns--we aren't governesses!"

Compensation In The Top 10-20% For Area - (1.4) [31%/34%]

- "Supporting a family in this area is difficult."
- "It is impossible to live somewhat close to the school on our starting salaries."
- "The expertise and quality of teaching in Wilmette deserves compensation in the top 10-20%."
- "Compensation should be at the top 10% because of the expectations put on us."

Flexibility: Job Sharing & Part Time Teaching - (2.5) [19%/8%] & (2.5) [16%/2%]

- "These are good ways to offer flexibility and keep good teachers who for whatever reason cannot manage to teach full-time--children, parent-care, going to school." (2)
- "Any kind of flexibility should be explored."
- "We need a work environment that wants to support family life."
- "Job-sharing would retain good teachers who retire after maternity leave." (3)
- "We lose many teachers to pregnancy. Many would stay with this opportunity. I'll be interested in a few years." (2)
- "In my position, it would work well with little or no disturbance."
- "I would love to have this option when I start a family." (3)
- "Job-sharing, part-time, childcare would encourage parents to continue teaching." (2)
- "This would keep young teachers active in the profession."
- "I would like this and part-time teaching without losing tenure."
- "This is one way to cope with teacher shortages that affect all in a building."
- "Part-time options are important in today's society."
- "This could be a great way to keep a lot of teachers from getting burned out."
- "This is a good option for those in need without fear of losing insurance, tenure."
- "Job-sharing is a present-day reality everywhere."
- "Those with young children need these and childcare or they will look elsewhere."
- "I worked in Palatine where job-sharing worked well in grades 3-6."
- "I would be interested in part-time employment in retirement. This is a great way to keep experienced teachers." (4)
- "I am close to retirement and would like to stay active in the field."

On-Site Childcare - (3.1) [12%/11%]

- "I have a young child and would love to have him close."
- "Teachers would concentrate better with their kids safe and available."
- "This would attract a lot of teachers and make the choice of being a working mom more efficient." (2)
- "Childcare within the area would certainly keep me here and happy."
- "This would make it possible to retain young, female teachers."
- "This would give young teachers an incentive to stay."
- "On-site daycare would allow teachers to feel confident in the "nearness" of the children while they are working in our schools long-term."
- "How many women left once they began a family? Why not keep them--promote families and mean it! Do something new and innovative."
- "Since the majority of staff is of child-bearing age, this would keep good teachers."
- "Many teachers are leaving the district due to inadequate and expensive childcare."

Stipends For Mentoring New Teachers - (2.0) [6%/9%]

- "Stipends would encourage more people to mentor. We need mentors."
- "We are willing to help new teachers. Being compensated would get more people to do it."
- "Teachers must be compensated for all they do for new teachers."
- "There should be a stipend because it is a huge time commitment." (2)
- "Mentoring is so essential!"
- "New teachers need a good support system--stipends could help."
- "Mentoring new teachers is important and time consuming."
- "As our number of new teachers increases, so does the need for mentors."

To Develop Teachers Into District Administrators - (3.0) [5%/8%]

- "There are benefits to providing opportunities for advancement to interested teachers. It builds morale and acts as an incentive for teachers to keep reaching beyond the limits."
- "I think it would be an overall improvement. This would make more people feel like they were part of the overall system. Since almost no teachers are promoted from within, I tend to view it as an "us" versus "them"

situation."

- "Home-grown administrators may build better communications with the staff."
- --"The (current) philosophy of going outside has skipped worthy internal candidates."
- "Have an administrator program from a school offered. Northeastern used to offer classes here."
- "What a great idea!"
- "The best administrators are teachers, but particularly in-house ones."

Conclusion

80% of the respondents would most like to see District 39 contribute to the teachers' "individual & family health benefits." From the comments, it was clear that not all respondents choosing to have our district explore this program envision using it themselves. Rather, they saw it as a major defense against attrition among teachers who currently need to pay their own annual premiums.

Many viewed recent teacher attrition and the potential for future attrition as a result of the absence of a contribution to health benefits paid by District 39. Other programs chosen by a large percentage of respondents included: paid dental benefits, total compensation in the top 10-20% for the area and increased tuition reimbursement. Job flexibility that is "family-friendly" including job-sharing, part-time, and childcare was also important to some of the respondents.

3.0 EXPERIENCES OF TEACHERS NEW TO DISTRICT 39

Teachers with three or fewer years in our district were asked to complete a special section of the survey. The goal of the special section was to learn about the experiences of teachers who have been through the recruitment process with our district within the last three years. Here are some of the things that we learned from the 62 survey respondents who started work in District 39 within the last three years.

3.1 Total Years Experience Of Respondents New To District 39

Of the 62 teacher respondents new to our district within the last three years, here is the number of total years they have been teaching.

Total Years Teaching	% of Respondent
0 to 3	46%
4 to 8	46%
9 to 12	4%
13 to 19	2%
20 Plus	2%
	100%

Conclusion

92% of our district's new teacher respondents are within the first eight years of their teaching careers. This makes sense because teachers with this level of total experience have fewer barriers to switching districts--largely because they are likely to maintain their experience level on the teachers' salary scale (up to seven years experience in District 39) if they switch.

Although our district is hiring teachers with experience elsewhere, this same population of teachers is also at risk for leaving our district. The potential threat is that teachers with up to eight years experience are more mobile and thus, possibly more receptive to the idea of switching districts if they are dissatisfied. Since we have a sizeable population of teachers with eight or less years of experience, this may be a vulnerability for us.

3.2 What Teachers' Job Search Looked Like

Of the 62 respondents who were new to our district in the last three years, here is a breakdown of their job search.

Table 3.2 – Job Search Profile	% of Respondents
Applied to two or more districts when conducting their job search	95%
Were invited to interview at two or more districts where they applied	93%
Interviewed at two or more districts in Cook and Lake Counties	88%
Interviewed at one or more districts elsewhere in Illinois	17%
Interviewed at one or more districts outside of Illinois	10%
Were offered employment in two or more districts Note: 62% received 2-3 offers; 15% received 4+ offers	77%
Were offered employment in District 39, only	23%

Conclusion

93% of our new teacher respondents were invited to interview in multiple districts. This shows that District 39 is attracting highly qualified, desirable candidates who are making it through the initial selection process to the interview stage in several districts. Other districts in Cook and Lake counties are the biggest competitors for these qualified candidates, since 88% of respondents reported having interviews at two or more districts in these counties. A few respondents reported applying elsewhere in Illinois (17%) or out-of-state (10%).

77% of the new teacher respondents had received *two or more offers of employment* when they chose to accept positions in District 39. This is a compliment to our district's ability to attract qualified candidates who are weighing multiple offers. However, this can also be seen as a potential challenge to retain those teachers in our district. It may be easier for a recently hired teacher to re-apply to a district from which a position was offered previously, if he or she is dissatisfied with his or her current situation.

3.3 Teachers' Evaluation Of The District 39 Recruitment Process

Teachers new to the district in the last three years were asked to evaluate the quality of aspects of District 39 recruitment process *as they experienced it* within the last three years. The percentage after each item is the percentage of the 62 respondents who experienced the aspect and were able to rate it. Below is the list of aspects arranged in *order of quality* from worst to best (5-to-1).

1 = Excellent 2 = Very Good 3 = Average 4 = Poor 5 = Poor

Avg	Table 3.3 - Quality of Recruitment Process	% of respondents				
		1	2	3	4	5
2.8	Job posting in news or professional publications – 66%	10	25	53	5	7
2.7	E-mail contact with district personnel – 20%	8	26	58	8	0
2.6	Presentation and/or booth of District 39 at a Job Fair – 19%	0	46	46	8	0
2.5	Phone contact with district personnel – 89%	21	31	31	10	7
2.5	Letter contact with district personnel – 73%	8	41	39	8	2
2.4	Recruitment materials & brochures about District 39 – 77%	9	52	33	6	0
2.3	Promptness of appointments – 97%	32	34	22	6	6
2.3	The appearance of the District 39 offices – 95%	14	49	34	3	0
2.3	Job posting on the website – 80%	23	38	33	4	4
1.9	How I was treated during the initial interview – 98%	40	37	16	2	5
1.9	Professionalism of personnel I encountered – 97%	38	41	13	7	1
1.9	How I was treated during second interview – 88%	37	41	20	2	0
1.9	The appearance of the school and classrooms visited – 83%	35	42	23	0	0
1.8	Friendliness of personnel I encountered – 97%	41	37	15	5	2
1.8	Respectfulness of personnel I encountered – 97%	38	41	14	5	2
1.8	How I was treated during the teaching demonstration – 65%	43	37	15	5	0

Conclusion

The competition for teachers is at a premium and there are too many facets of the recruitment process that rated in the average category or only slightly better. We recommend, in light of the survey results, that District 39 review, audit and standardize their recruitment procedures.

3.4 Teachers' Evaluation Of Reasons They Chose District 39

The 62 Teacher respondents new to the district within the last three years were asked to rate on a 5-point scale the importance of reasons in their decision to accept a teaching position in our district. The categories of rating importance are:

1 = Very Important 2 = Important 3 = Neutral/Undecided 4 = Not very important 5 = Not at all important

Below is the list arranged in rank order of importance from most to least important. The comments in brackets [] were descriptions by the respondents.

Avg	Table 3.4 - Why Teachers Chose District #39	% of respondents				
		1	2	3	4	5
1.3	The subject and/or grade-level were what I wanted	72	28	0	0	0
1.6	I felt welcome during the recruitment and interview process	49	41	7	3	0
1.7	The reputation of the district.["Excellence/N.T.feeder/good kids, parents, resources"]	46	38	12	2	2
1.7	I liked Wilmette.["Near Chicago/N. Shore/supportive/grew up here/homey/safe/wealthy"]	45	40	11	4	0
1.8	I liked the teachers I met and/or would be working with	50	31	11	3	5
1.8	I liked the principal(s) I met and/or would be working with	47	31	14	4	4
1.8	I liked the facilities and physical resources I saw	42	41	12	2	3
1.9	I liked the type of students I observed	44	38	12	3	3
2.3	I liked the district's support for teachers	24	38	29	6	3
2.3	I liked the opportunities for career development	18	44	30	3	5
2.3	I liked the opportunities for professional development & continuing education	23	42	28	3	5
2.4	I was able to keep my experience credit on the salary scale	28	31	25	2	14
2.5	The school district is convenient to my home	27	28	22	8	15
2.6	Of districts I considered, District 39 made me the first offer	19	22	27	15	17
2.6	The starting salary was attractive	16	41	24	6	13
2.8	The compensation package was attractive	14	33	29	10	14
2.9	I liked the district's mentoring program	10	21	43	17	9

Conclusion:

Many of our recruits had multiple offers during their job search. Five of the eight reasons rated between "Very Important/1.0" and "Important/2.0" in their decision to choose our district are within the control of the people with whom they come in contact during the interview process (i.e., welcoming administrators, support staff, teachers, principals, students and the maintenance staff). The positive feeling our candidates get from interpersonal connections during the interview process is a credit to District 39.

Another important factor for choosing District 39 is the prestige of being a "feeder" school to New Trier High School. Although total compensation was less important in choosing our district, we do not want teachers leaving the district for the same reason after gaining valuable years of experience teaching in a district that feeds into a prestigious high school district. There were numerous teacher comments that addressed this topic in response to many of the survey questions.

3.5 Teachers' Comments - Positive Aspects Of Our Recruitment Process

The 62 respondents new to our district within the last three years described the three most positive aspects of applying to and interviewing with our district. Their responses fit into seven general categories of most positive experiences in the areas of:

- Meeting the Administrators
- Treatment During the Interview
- Helpful Personnel
- Good Organization and Efficiency
- Demonstration Lesson
- Meeting the Teachers
- The Facilities and School Atmosphere

Below, under the heading for each of the seven categories, are quotes from the surveys that show how respondents described what they found to be **positive** about District 39's recruitment process. Similar comments made by more than one respondent have a (number) after them:

Meeting The Administrators

- "They were friendly, professional and respectful. I knew they wanted the best qualified teachers for their district and they seemed genuinely interested in my professional background."
- "The interviewers were well-prepared, with excellent questions, professionalism and organization. They clearly explained and described the job expectations."
- "The professionalism of the administrator and principal during the interview and teaching demonstration made an impression on me."
- "One of the most positive aspects was my interview with the superintendent."
- "During my second interview, the superintendent was excited and pleasant!"
- "I found the principal I interviewed with very impressive."
- "The principal is the primary reason I am here."
- "The principal was great, very helpful."
- "The principals I interviewed with were very professional." (3)
- "The administration was welcoming, inviting and positive." (4)
- "I had very positive interactions with administrators."
- "The best part was the friendliness and demeanor of the administration."

Treatment During the Interviews

- "The attitude I experienced was one of respect for me as a peer in the profession rather than an applicant."
- "The entire process was clearly explained. There were no surprises."
- "I was treated so well during the first interview."
- "The administrators were extremely helpful during the interview."
- "They discussed important issues with me and also gave me a chance to talk."
- "I felt welcomed right away. My initial interview was welcoming and relaxed." (3)
- "I felt I had good rapport with the interviewers."
- "My three interviews were wonderful--good conversations, not intimidating."
- "My initial interview was wonderful and I didn't feel looked down on."
- "I was treated with honesty throughout my interviews."
- "I liked the climate of the interview."
- "I appreciated the initial interview. (The interviewer was) upfront about the advantages and disadvantages of the district."
- "The respectfulness of personnel gave the impression of people I would deal with."

Helpful Personnel

- "Everyone was very helpful."(2)
- "(The most positive aspect was) the friendliness of the staff I encountered.(6)
- "The Human Resource staff was helpful."
- "People were encouraging."
- "The accessibility of personnel was special."
- "The receptionist was very friendly."
- "The staff was supportive and friendly."
- "I had two or three calls from the administrator asking if I had questions."
- "The personnel I encountered were so friendly and professional."

Good Organization & Efficiency

- "Everything was handled in a timely manner."
- "The interviews were concise, not too long."
- "I was interviewing from out-of-town and things were scheduled around my availability."
- "They accommodated me because I was an out-of-town applicant."
- "The hiring process was very speedy."
- "The response time was quick. I appreciated the honesty and fast response."
- "(I appreciated the) quick decision by the district about hiring."
- "(I appreciated the) quick feedback and follow-through."
- "Response was quick and not in writing."
- "There was no "wait-time." I was offered a position immediately."
- "Promptness. The process went quick (with) great follow-ups."
- "I appreciated the prompt responses I received from the principal and HR recruiter."
- "I liked the application being available on the Internet as an Adobe document."
- "(I appreciated) the easy access of e-mail."
- "Job posting on the website made information more easily accessible."
- "The district was prompt in responding to my application."(3)
- "The process was very organized. I received a map and pamphlets in advance."

The Demonstration Lesson

- "I liked that a teaching demonstration was required."
- "Speaking to the classroom teacher where I would demonstrate was helpful."
- "Teachers were very helpful with my demo lesson." (2)
- "(I appreciated) being able to select my own lesson/subject for my demo lesson."
- "Teaching the practice class was a good activity."
- "The teaching demonstration revealed a nice group of kids."

Meeting the Teachers

- "Meeting the teachers and hearing about collaboration sounded great."
- "Meeting some of the teachers really solidified my decision."
- "Talking with other teachers was one of the most positive aspects." (2)
- "Talking to the other teacher in my subject area was positive."

The Facilities and School Atmosphere:

- "When I visited the school building, it was alive with children."
- "The school's atmosphere and the children's enthusiasm were unbelievably positive!"
- "The school environment was positive."
- "There were a lot of resources and materials."
- "The maintenance of the buildings--including the cleanliness of the bathroom at MEC--made an impression."
- "The school and district offices were nicely maintained."
- "Getting a tour familiarized me with the building." (2)
- "I liked the good facilities and technology."

Conclusion

It is clear from the positive comments of the recent recruits that those in charge of recruiting teachers, and others in the district who come into contact with applicants, are displaying characteristics that are meaningful to recruits. These include being welcoming, professional, respectful, enthusiastic, honest, positive, organized and prompt. It is important for District 39 to make sure all personnel are aware of the benefits to the district of displaying these characteristics to job applicants during the recruitment process.

3.6 Teachers' Suggestions – Aspects of the Recruitment Process Needing Improvement

The teachers new to District 39 within the last three years were also asked if there were aspects of the recruitment process that our district could improve or aspects of recruitment at other districts from which we could learn and emulate. The percentage of teachers responding:

No = 58%

Yes = 42%

Those answering "Yes" were asked to describe the areas they experienced that needed improvement and make suggestions. The areas are:

- Communication During the Interview Process
- The Interview Process in General
- Timing of Interviews
- Promptness of Interviews
- Content of Interviews
- Meeting Teachers and Touring the School
- Teaching Demonstration
- Pressure to Make a Decision
- Describing Compensation and the Contract
- Ways to Attract Candidates

Below are the respondents' qualitative comments of what could be improved and suggestions for improvement.

How to Improve the Communication During the Recruitment Process

- "There was confusion. Three elementary principals called me for interviews. No one marked off that I had been called. Better communication for scheduling is important. A better system through e-mail may help keep track of candidates."
- "More organization is needed. On the day I received my offer of employment, I also received a letter stating 'Thank you for applying, but there are no positions available.'"
- "It needs to be more organized. I was unaware of the 2nd interview time and date."
- "(There could be better) contact after the interview--I had to call to see if I was hired."
- "There was a long period, close to one month after the 1st interview, before I heard from the district. (At that time) I was told I would hear back in another week."
- "Disconnect the phone answering service! When I called to ask a question about the application process, I never spoke with a real person and it was a week before personnel answered my question. (It made me think) they weren't interested in me."
- "People were rude--cold on the phone."
- "Phone contact with personnel (could be improved.)" (2)
- "The other districts make much faster decisions and will inform you quickly."
- "Send a postcard to applicants that you received the materials for documentation."
- "Make clear what job opportunities are available at each school."

Suggestions of What/How to Improve The Interview Process

- "(At other districts) there was a streamlined selection process. There were not as many steps to their recruitment (effort.)"

- "There were too many interviews and the process was too drawn out."
- "Three interviews are a lot."
- "I had a very long period of time between my first and second interviews."
- "(Make it) less stressful."

How to Improve the *Timing of Interviews*

- "(I was) hired a few days before school began (and had) no time to plan."
- "I was interviewed in May, but not hired until the end of July, (which made) a frantic start to the year."

How to Improve the *Promptness of Interviews*

- "Keep scheduled appointments." "Improve promptness of appointments."
- "The principal was not prompt."
- "Meet appointment times (so candidates) spend less time in waiting areas."
- "In other districts, I didn't have to wait a long time for appointments."

How to Improve the *Content of the Interview*

- "(In a nearby district where) I was offered a job three years ago, they constantly referred to teachers as 'professionals.' They had an attitude of 'What can we do for you?' and not 'What can you do for us'. That impressed me."
- "(In another district, the) principal spoke highly of his school and staff, rather than defending why the salary is at its current rate, why benefits are not included and the fact that administration and staff do not get along. I was apprehensive about taking this position, but was also glad to know what was going on. I'm glad the principal was honest, but (thought) no school should be allowed to continue to run this way."
- "The principal focused on parents in the district and not on my specific position."
- "(The interview should) focus on me, not you."
- "I was an out-of-town applicant and there was one interviewer who was extremely rude in the first interview. There is no need to make interviewees feel intimidated or inadequate. It was an awful first impression."
- "I would have liked more background given about subjects such as full inclusion, the role of paraprofessionals, SSTs, etc."
- "The descriptions of courses and curriculum expectations were never clear."
- "(In another district) I was given specific knowledge of what I would be teaching."

How to Improve *Meeting the Teachers & Touring the School*

- "Invite the candidate on a building tour, don't wait for them to ask for it."
- "In (another district), I was introduced to the people I would be working with. I got a feel for the work environment."
- "Provide more contact to teachers already in the district so there is a personal connection beyond administrators."
- "Involve other teachers in the interview process (not just administrators.)"
- "(In another district), I was able to meet the principal as well as other staff I would be working with in my department."
- "I suggest giving a tour of the school during or after the interview."
- "I would suggest interviews with team teachers as well as with principal."
- "I would like to have spent less time at MEC and met fewer administrators in favor of a tour of the school and meeting more teachers and students."
- "I would have enjoyed talking with other people in the department I was hired for."
- "I would have liked to meet more teachers."
- "(Three years ago) I chose a position here over one at a school with better salary and benefits because I felt that the teachers I met at Wilmette were more impressive!"

How to Improve the *Teaching Demonstration*

- "When demo teaching, I had no help with who or what I would be teaching."
- "Teaching demonstration in front of all administrators was hard, since I didn't know the students."

How to Improve the *Pressure to Make a Decision*

- "Give more time to make my decision and give an acceptance."
- "Give more than 24 hours to think about our decision. It was too much information to think about in 24 hours and decide."

How to Improve *Describing Compensation & the Contract*

- "Explain the benefits package--what we do and don't receive. Everything seemed very vague. Our salary looked like it was more (than other districts), but it really wasn't because our benefits were included."
- "In another district, they gave pay and benefit information in the 1st interview."
- "The pay scale is misleading/artificially inflated (because of the lack of benefits.)"
- "I was not informed about union or benefits during contract signing."
- "(In another district) I was presented with salary schedule."
- "(I would have liked an) explanation of the 'salary package.'" (2)
- "(There was a) poor explanation of benefits. I didn't understand that there was no insurance or retirement."
- "Be more upfront about no insurance--if you don't ask, they don't tell."
- "(I would recommend) a better explanation of benefits available and more information presented, especially with health insurance options compared."
- "(I would like to see) more information at contract signing on health benefits."
- "The lack of benefits was not well explained. I was told there was a salary package."
- "Tell the truth about the salary not truly compensating for paying our own benefits."
- "Be more straightforward that benefits (paid by the district) are not included."

How to Improve *Attracting Candidates*

- "Be willing to "woo" applicants like what is done in business."
- "(Another district) recognized me as a good candidate, called me when there was an opening and pursued me. Wilmette only responded after calls and visits from me."
- "Improve job postings."
- "In other districts the website for teachers gives a better sense of what it is like to work there. Maybe our website could do this too."

Conclusion

These comments should not be viewed negatively, but rather as part of the overall quality improvement process. We recommend that the district review their recruitment procedures and continue to look for areas of improvement. An important area to address is the need to clarify the compensation package with recruits and eliminate any confusion.

4.0 MENTORING EXPERIENCES OF TEACHERS NEW TO THE DISTRICT

Currently, our district has programs of formal and informal mentoring that includes support between teachers who are new and veterans to each school. On a school-by-school basis, the mentor activity is handled differently by each principal and appears to be flexible and fluid. In addition, the district offers a series of lectures or workshops aimed at new recruits.

We asked the teachers who had been with our district for three years or less to evaluate their satisfaction with the mentoring process they experienced during their first year in the district. Since some of the 62 respondents were mentored up to three years ago, the programs that are now in place may not have been in place then and other changes may also have been made. They were rating their own experience, not what may be have implemented since.

1 = Very Satisfied 2 = Satisfied 3 = Neutral/Undecided 4 = Dissatisfied 5 = Very Dissatisfied

Table 4.0 - Teachers' Mentoring Experiences	% of respondents				
	1	2	3	4	5
Informal Mentoring, only – 42%	20	24	28	28	0
Formal & Informal Mentoring – 38%	49	23	14	14	0
Formal; Mentoring, only – 8%	40	20	40	0	0
No Mentoring at all – 10%	0	0	0	50	50

4.1 Teachers' Comments & Suggestions – Mentoring Experiences

When respondents were asked whether they had suggestions to improve the mentoring process, 42% responded "No" and 58% responded "Yes". Below are the comments and suggestions for improving mentoring by new teachers in our district within the last three years.

Those Having Informal Mentoring Only - 42%

- "I wish there was a formal program because I would not feel so guilty asking my mentor tons of questions all the time. I struggle in silence often because I know that my informal mentor is just as busy as I am!"
- "In my previous district, formal mentoring was in place. I was a mentee and a mentor in this program. Staff members were trained and paid to be mentors. It was very effective. A brief documentation of meeting with mentees had to be turned in."
- "I would have liked to have had a formal mentor."
- "My mentor teacher told me she/he was unlikely to share his/her work. I was completely on my own. I felt as if I was the new student in the lunchroom and no one would sit with me. I suggest mentors be chosen because they want to help, have time and are willing to go the extra mile!"
- "It would have helped to have had a formal mentor, not necessarily from the same grade level. This is a tough district in which to be a new teacher."
- "I had taught more years than my mentor."
- "I would have preferred a more formal mentoring system. In my building, the principal took the role as mentor. This was difficult at times because she could not answer questions about specific grade level items. There were times I didn't know who to ask about things. It would have been better if someone was responsible to help the first year teacher."
- "Given how many new teachers there are each year, mentoring should have a stipend so teachers have more incentive to mentor new teachers every year."
- "The teacher who mentored me was great. She answered many questions and helped me plan for the first six weeks of school."
- "Make a check list for the mentor to discuss with the new teacher--grade and building specific. The mentoring should last throughout the year."
- "Have a program to support the mentors and require them to be more involved."
- "I came as an experienced teacher and didn't need more formal guidance."
- "Have a formal mentoring program and designate a mentor for each new teacher. Develop district AND school-based handbooks. Have regularly scheduled collaborative time."

Those Having Informal Mentoring Only - 42%

- "I felt like I was imposing by asking already busy teachers who were not officially assigned to me to help me."
- "Make mentoring official. Ask mentors and mentees to set a designated time and ask for specific results. Non-tenured teachers should keep a journal."
- "I had a wonderful experience due not to the district's program, but because my partner was AMAZING! A wonderful person with such a giving personality--to me and her students. I feel that those who are mentored well do the same when it is their turn because it is so easy to remember how hard it was to start out."
- "My co-teacher was the only one willing to help me. Therefore, I suggest we have an implemented program with meetings and various activities."
- "When I started, there was no real mentoring program in place. My partner was my mentor--I think. But, she was not always helpful. My school is now trying to implement a peer mentoring program and it seems to work well."
- "I had to search out help. It was not provided. I have seen a big improvement at my school this year--there are peer coaches and mentors available to new teachers."
- "A veteran teacher was available and greatly helped me. I continue to use this teacher as a resource."
- "Offer some training for the mentor and possibly some incentive--some CPCD or CEI credit or a stipend. I am a mentor this year and have given large amounts of time assisting a new teacher."
- "There was no time scheduled in the day/week to meet with my co-workers in the department. This left me feeling very separated and isolated from knowing my co-workers, how they plan, how to organize units, what material to use, etc. Make a more formal, more structured mentoring program."
- "My colleagues in my department have been just great! I feel comfortable enough to call any of them for advice and am grateful to have their expertise available to me."
- "All teachers in the department were very helpful and organized."
- "People just took me 'under their wing.' However, something a little more formal would have been helpful."
- "The mentors became a survival mechanism to protect me from the brutality of the administration and some parents."
- "Make mentoring a formal experience with compensation."

Those Having Formal and Informal Mentoring - 38%

- "My mentor teacher was supportive, but was not always around to help me or give me guidance. I suggest: Ask teachers to mentor, pay them a stipend and train them on how to mentor new teachers in the district."
- "I would have liked more direction/assistance with curriculum and weekly planning. I appreciate the need for independence, but share more materials for daily instruction."
- "I think mentors should have a minimum of three years teaching in the district. There should also be more formal training for mentors including an explanation of expectations for mentors."
- "Encourage teachers with 1-2 years in the district to be a 'semi-mentor' to look out and help with curriculum and processes as best as possible. Also, reward mentors!"
- "We had a very successful mentoring program. We met weekly. It was consistent, supportive, collaborative and a huge help! Keep doing it!"
- "Everyone bent over backwards to help. People were extremely supportive and patient answering questions and concerns."
- "I was observed once. All staff helped with any questions I had. However, you need to set guidelines and have the mentor follow them."
- "I had a wonderful, generous mentor who should be paid for her time and energy!"
- "My mentor was a teaching partner and anxious to help me with everything. She was very kind and easy to work with. I really enjoyed it."
- "All questions were addressed and answered immediately. I never felt alone."
- "My mentor was paired with a new partner that year and most all mentoring went to that individual. Other teachers were wonderful!"
- "Have mandated meeting times and some form of accountability for mentors."
- "I was happy with the help my peers gave me, but my observations and experience with administration (principal) left a bad taste in my mouth."
- "My mentor was very helpful. She was on my team, which was great! She gave me ideas and allowed me to share ideas with her."
- "My mentor was excellent, a great help in the learning and pacing of the curriculum!"
- "All teachers have been extremely helpful at all times."
- "I was involved in a peer coaching program within my house. The program was very helpful and truly strengthened our team. However, do not make a team of all new teachers. My partner, SST, parapro and

myself were all new to Wilmette."

- "I am a specialist who travels between schools and would have liked a better explanation of the procedures for each school. I often feel "out of the loop."
- "The meetings were helpful, but it was difficult adjusting to procedures in each building--especially if you are in multiple buildings. A specific mentor would have been nice--someone in a similar situation to answer questions, show procedures, explain curriculum, etc."
- "I have been dissatisfied with the formal process and principal support. Other teachers made it possible for me to survive."
- "The formal meetings were somewhat interesting. Seeing/observing other teaching ideas would be neat."
- "The informal mentoring was being a member of a team and my team members were great. The formal program was very time consuming with too many useless meetings."
- "The "Teacher Talks" was a waste of time. Being with the teachers I'd be working with could have provided more information and help to me early on, so that I could have been more prepared."

Those Having Formal Mentoring Only - 8%

- "Pay mentors a stipend."
- "There was no set way to mentor."
- I was assigned to a mentor that "volunteered" her time, so I felt hesitant to use her for help at any time."

Those Having No Mentoring At All – 10%

- "I was supposed to have a mentor, but we never talked."
- "I was not mentored!"
- "I wasn't given much direction. When I asked about mentoring, I was given the impression that it was only for supervising student teachers or helping a teacher who isn't making it."
- "Special education services teachers should have mentors too."
- "Create a program. Pay the mentors so that new teachers don't feel like they are intruding upon them. The mentors need to be trained in how to mentor."
- "There was no support system. Assign mentors and make sure that mentoring takes place."
- "Provide a series of Mentor/NewTeacher Lunches."

Conclusion

The new teachers want to be paired with veteran teachers in a mentoring relationship. The current effort of pairing appears to be too informal to be of consistent quality for all new teachers all the time. Many good suggestions came from the new teachers about how to improve the mentoring program and to formalize it by including mentor training, guidelines of meetings or activities with mentees and mentor compensation. There may need to be a different type of mentor pairing for specialty teachers and/or those who work in more than one school.

5.0 HOW EXPECTATIONS WERE MET IN THEIR FIRST YEAR IN DISTRICT 39

Teachers new to our district within the last three years were asked how well their expectations for teaching in District 39 were met during their first year in the district and to explain their answers. The percentages differ between teachers in elementary grades versus middle/junior high grades.

Table 5.0 – Expectations Met During 1st Year	% of Respondents		
	K thru 4	5 thru 8	Total
Total Respondents by Grade Level	25	37	62
Not met at all	0%	4%	4%
Not met somewhat	8%	23%	18%
Met	30%	31%	29%
Well Met	48%	29%	37%
Very Well Met	14%	11%	12%

5.1 Teachers' Comments – First Year Expectations

Below are comments made by the teachers new within the last three years about how working in District 39 measured up to their expectations. The qualitative comments are grouped according to how well their expectations were met during their first year teaching in our district.

Those Whose Expectations Were Not Met At All - 4%

- "I am disappointed. You would expect teachers to be paid better, have insurance paid and so forth. I came here purposely knowing that District 39 is prestigious and produces educated well-rounded successful students. I am proud to be a member of the faculty but saddened by the lack of support."
- "I have been extremely disappointed in the district as a whole...I refuse to tolerate a board that dehumanizes my efforts and an administration that fails to stand up to a sometimes illogical community that does not trust that I hold their child's best interest at heart. I don't hold all parents to this judgment but the minority voice often seems to rule here. The excuse of "This is just a difficult district to survive in" is not acceptable. Let's move beyond survival to embracing one another and offering freedom and support that makes us all better people!"

Those Whose Expectations Were Not Met Somewhat - 18%

- "I am impressed with Wilmette in many ways, however, I always wanted to be a lifelong teacher in my first district. I do not plan to stay at District 39 for more than another two years. I need benefits and money to continue my education to put up with such demanding administrators, parents and curriculum timelines. I am thrilled with the experience, but need to be in an environment where I am clearly valued and one in which the demands on me are realistic. Wilmette though--what a great jumping off point!"
- "What keeps teachers in our district are the wonderful teachers we work with. This allows us to deal with all of the negatives--no benefits, parents who rule the schools, a higher administration that seems to constantly be against us rather than for us, and a school board that ---I don't even know what to say about them. Teachers will leave in droves if some of these things are not corrected. Friendships and enjoyable co-workers can only go so far until practicality sets in."
- "I expected to have some degree of autonomy in my teaching, but many teaching ideas have been imposed on me, which I don't always agree with. I feel a lot of my knowledge and talent in the field of teaching is not being used."
- "My expectation was that I was going to be part of a team that would help create a specific district-wide program and that hasn't happened."
- "I am disappointed with two things: lack of a health plan; and, being on a committee and making decisions on which the administration did not follow through."
- "I was disappointed in the low amount of administrative support and the inconsistencies I saw my first year."
- "The salary package is not competitive and there is some lack of administrative understanding and support."
- "The administration was much weaker and less supportive than hoped."
- "I did not feel appreciated. I felt the district office was working against me."
- "Please treat us like the professionals we are and make us feel valued."

Those Whose Expectations Were Not Met Somewhat - 18%

- "There is little contact with co-workers. I am accustomed to and comfortable with working as a team. This does not happen here."
- "The special make-up of my classroom was not explained prior to school starting. It was quite shocking to see the LARGE number of students with special needs. It has been challenging to meet their needs this year. If I had more advance warning, I may have been more prepared."
- "(During my first year) I was disappointed with staff morale. I felt that the administrator-faculty relationship was weak. By contrast, I feel fortunate to work in a safe, well-funded and well-supplied district. This year has been more positive."

Those Whose Experiences Were Met - 29%

- "I love the school, principal and staff that I work with. However, I am disappointed in the healthcare benefits, the higher administration's response to problems teachers are faced with, and the board of education's unprofessional demeanor during meetings and with one another."
- "I love the people I work with, the school, the kids, etc. It keeps me here. The benefits and tuition reimbursement really hurt me financially. At times I felt, and still feel, unappreciated! I would love to stay here though because we are a wonderful team. Let's not lose them."
- "Salary is not competitive and benefits not paid which makes finding ways to supplement your income A MUST! It would be nice to have one job to concentrate on! Tutoring should NOT be considered automatic to do along with teaching."
- "I never expected to be in a public school where parents were given so much authority and power. I spend slightly less than half of my time meeting with them, replying to daily calls from some, and writing notes and newsletters. I wish that time and effort could be put into the classroom and the children."
- "People were generally clear in their expectations, and if you ask for help. People are very helpful."
- "I wish I had more support, less students and more training--so I could have become familiar with the curriculum demands right away."
- "There were a lot of district demands that weren't explained prior to hiring."
- "I feel I have more to offer, but no one really seems to be interested. So, I close my door and do my job to the best of my ability to the children I serve."
- "It would be nice if the administration made the new teachers feel appreciated. It simply takes a note or a comment in the hall."
- "I have had a wonderful experience with my students and, for the most part, with parents. The principal has not been too helpful--just moody and unapproachable. Also, I was plagued with negative attitudes from staff members. I came in with an extremely positive outlook only to have it beat down. I must say, I intend to keep ignoring the negative because I do love my students!"
- "In the first year, everything was new and exciting. Teaching is still exciting, but in this district, morale erodes quickly."
- "My expectations for teaching were met. However, I did not expect to be so distracted by the amount of meetings for IEP students. I feel that my other students are suffering because I have to concentrate so much on one child in my room. The district needs to be more willing to provide aides if they are to embrace full inclusion."

Those Whose Expectations Were Met Well - 37%

- "Class size is significantly lower than my previous district (21 vs. 29), and I have learned a lot from the teachers I work with here. If it weren't for those things I would have already left to get a job elsewhere because the compensation/benefits package is not competitive and many board members exhibit no respect for teachers here. I was not fully aware of these problems when I came to work here. I applied to Wilmette simply because it was a New Trier feeder."
- "I expected the district to support its teachers with materials and supplies. I expected that everyone is an individual and has a unique approach. No one will hold your hand. The children here are at a great advantage over most kids because they live in Wilmette. The parents are very involved with their child's schooling."
- "I've really enjoyed learning more about the school and district and working with the staff and students. However, I'm beginning to realize that I can have an equally great experience elsewhere with a better salary and compensation."
- "District 39 was extremely helpful in helping me meet the needs of the curriculum as well as make the transition to a new school district."
- "The staff is very professional and dedicated to the lives of the children."
- "I was disappointed to hear all the talk of how the board of education behaves. It is surprising and disappointing."

Those Whose Expectations Were Met Well - 37%

- "I enjoy my job, but the negativity regarding the contract, union and school board are a disappointment."
- "The curriculum and expectations for students fit into my philosophy of education."
- "I love my current job!"

Those Whose Expectations Were Met Very Well - 12%

- "District 39 handled a huge volume of turnover very well. We were all a bit lost at first, but once things settled down, all went well."
- "Terrific staff, excellent students and community, diverse curriculum."
- "The principal was helpful throughout every step of the way!!"
- "Staff and faculty I work with are top notch; children and families are wonderful!"
- "Good staff, great school and community."

Conclusion

22% of the teachers new to District 39 in the last three years reported that their expectations were basically "not met". It is clear from the qualitative comments that there are many issues, even with teachers whose expectations were met, that could have a negative impact on retention. We recommend that these comments be reviewed to determine how we can continue to improve all teachers' experiences in District 39.

6.0 DEMOGRAPHICS OF TEACHER RESPONDENTS

6.1 Age breakdown of the teachers responding to our survey:

Age Range	% of Total
21 to 29	34%
30 to 39	21%
40 to 49	22%
50 Plus	23%
	100%

Conclusion

Our respondent teachers' age range is fairly evenly distributed across the decades, but with a heavier concentration of teachers in their 20s and 30s. This is a benefit to the district. **If** we can retain a great many of the younger teachers through retirement, we will be in good shape to withstand a teacher shortage even if it lasts a decade or more. (This is, in part, because our district is at full employment, fewer of our teachers are at the retirement age range and the number of students in our district is stable. Therefore, if we can stem unnecessary attrition, we will not need to substantially increase our number of teachers to serve our students.) There are, however, several potential concerns with a younger teaching staff:

- They may require more classroom support, guidance, development and training than an experienced staff. Our district has proportionately fewer experienced teachers to provide training and there is a cost to helping new teachers with the learning curve.
- A changing set of benefits may appeal to the young cohort as they progress through their career from being single to being married to becoming parents to nearing retirement.
- The younger group may be more mobile and therefore, less likely to stay in the district for a variety of reasons, both professional and personal.

6.2 Method, distance & time of commute of the teachers responding to our survey

Commuting Distance (One way)	% of Total
0 to 2 miles	8%
3 to 5 miles	17%
6 to 10 miles	25%
11 to 15 miles	19%
16 to 20 miles	20%
More than 20	11%
	100%

Commuting Time (One way)	% of Total
0 to 15 minutes	26%
16 to 30 minutes	27%
31 to 45 minutes	32%
46 to 60 minutes	11%
More than 60	4%
	100%

Note: 96% of the teacher respondents drive to work.

Conclusion

96% of the respondents travel to school by car. Half live eleven or more miles from school and nearly half have a one-way commute time greater than 30 minutes. Several of the teachers who reported commutes of 31-45 minutes noted that their commute times were creeping up to the 46-60 minute category. Several others added that their commuting time is greater *from* school than to school.

Length of commute in terms of time and distance does not appear to be a factor in retaining teachers. However, this may become a factor if there is an increase in commuting times to and from work because of the shortage of affordable housing on a teacher's salary. In all jobs, commuting time is becoming a far greater factor in choosing an employer.

6.3 Reasons For Choosing Teaching As A Profession

From a list of 27 statements, respondents were asked to select the five (5) top reasons why they chose teaching as a profession. The following is a list of the top sixteen statements in rank order by percentage for the 173 teachers responding to the survey.

Rating	Table 6.1 - Reasons for Becoming a Teacher	% of Total	
		K thru 4	5 thru 8
1	I wanted to work with children	76%	58%
2	I wanted to influence children's lives	62%	72%
3	I wanted to do good and inspire others	61%	58%
4	I wanted to work in a learning environment	35%	41%
5	I wanted a job where I could keep learning	32%	24%
6	I wanted the ability to innovate	24%	29%
7	I wanted to teach a particular grade or subject	11%	27%
8	I wanted to work in a positive setting	21%	15%
9	I wanted a field where I was appreciated/valued	10%	24%
10	I wanted to work in an active setting	16%	17%
11	I wanted to emulate a teacher I admired	18%	17%
12	I wanted to work in a challenging field	15%	13%
13	I wanted autonomy/freedom of running a classroom	10%	19%
14	I wanted to work in a respected field	12%	13%
15	I wanted to work in a profession	15%	8%
16	I wanted to work in a collaborative setting	9%	15%

In addition, respondents could write-in reasons that were absent from the list. Two of the "write-ins" received multiple mentions. If they had been on the list, more teachers may have chosen them and they are therefore worth noting as follows:

- "I wanted a creative job in a creative, dynamic setting where work is ever-changing."
- "Teaching is a gift with which I was blessed."

Conclusion

It may help for recruitment and retention efforts to keep in mind the reasons teachers are choosing to be educators of our children. The reasons for wanting to teach seem to be very different from the reasons people choose other professions like banking, law or industry in that

they exude a strong sense of idealism. As a district, we must continue to ask if we are doing what we can to keep this idealism alive?

6.3 Respondents' Teaching, Education & Career Paths

Years Range	% of Total Years Teaching	
	Total	District 39
3 or less	17%	35%
4 to 8	31%	21%
9 to 12	6%	9%
13 to 19	15%	15%
20 Plus	31%	20%

# of Districts Taught IN	% of Respondents
One	25%
Two	40%
Three	22%
Four	8%
Five	4%
Six	1%

Conclusion

Although 35% of the 171 teachers who responded were new to District 39 within the last three years, 83% of all respondents have four or more years experience as teachers. Also, 75% of respondents have worked in two or more districts. Both of these statistics indicate that we have teachers knowledgeable about the profession and able to make comparisons to other districts based on first-hand experience.

6.4 Respondents' Education Level

Highest Education Level	% of Respondent
BA/BS, only	12%
BA/BS & working towards MA/MS	18%
MA/MS/JD	58%
MA/MS+60;Working on PHD	12%

Conclusion

Our respondent teacher population is well educated with 70% of the 171 respondents having master's degrees or beyond and 18% who are currently working towards master's degree. This level of education is an exceptional asset for the children in our classrooms. In order to maintain this level of commitment to advanced learning among our teachers, we need to make sure that programs are in place to adequately encourage, support and reimburse these efforts.

6.5 Subject Areas Of Our Respondents' Degrees

Type of Degree	% of Respondent
BA/BS - Education	80%
BA Other Majors included: English, foreign language, psychology, political science, math, geography, social studies, nutrition, philosophy, business, marketing, advertising, public relations, theater, communication, natural resources, biology, music, history, speech & language, international studies, economics, art, film & video, child development	26%
MA/MS - Education	64%
MA/MS/JD Other Majors included: Law, Social Work, Speech, Art History, Economics, Human Development, Computer, MBA, Environmental Science, Library & Media	9%

Note: Percentages add up toward more than 100% because some of the teachers have multiple majors and/or degrees.

Conclusion

Although the majority of our teachers have one or more degrees in education and a grounding in that field, there is also a wide range of other degrees represented. This variety of knowledge is an asset to the schools in which these teachers teach.

6.6 Respondents Who Had Another Profession *Before* Becoming A Teacher

Prior Career	% of Respondents
No	80%
Yes Other careers: Financial services, advertising, public relations, design, law, media, systems, consulting, educational administration & retail	20%

Conclusion

80% of the 171 respondents start and continue in teaching. However, it is important to remember the value of teachers who decide upon teaching after years in another profession. Their varied professional backgrounds add value to the schools where they teach.

In a teacher shortage, our district may see more applicants with unconventional backgrounds. It is important to realize that our district is already being enriched by the diversity of teachers who started in other professions, so we should be open to new applicants with this profile. Of the 20% who had another career prior to becoming teachers, the number of years in that field ranged from 1 to 15 years. Some respondents reported that they continued in their profession on a part time basis to "continue to pay the bills".

6.7 Respondents Who *Stopped* Teaching & then *Returned* After Working In Another Field

Stopped Teaching	% of Respondents
No	94%
Yes	6%

Conclusion

Very few of our teacher respondents left the field, then returned. However, it is important to realize that teachers with this work profile are already contributing to our district and we should be open to new applicants like them, too.

6.8 Respondents Who *Interrupted* Their Teaching Career To Start a Family & Returned

Stopped Teaching	% of Respondents
No	84%
Yes	16%

Of the 16% who spent time away to be with their families, how long they were gone:

# of Years Away	% of Respondents
1 to 5	38%
6 to 10	25%
11 to 15	29%
16 Plus	8%

Conclusion

Nearly one-in-six of respondents re-entered the profession after taking time off to raise families. This is a population of potential teachers that should not be overlooked during recruitment. It is prudent to be a district that is considered "family supportive"--and keeps teachers in the district longer *or* keep them away from full-time teaching less during their years of raising their own children.

There is a benefit in maintaining contact with teachers who leave the district to raise their families. A portion of them will re-enter teaching and may be interested in returning to our district. Since our teaching population is mostly young and female, it may be that we are at greater risk for losing more of our teachers because they will start families. However, we should continue to maintain contact with these teachers with regular mailings and newsletters to show our interest level for future employment in District 39. (i.e., newsletters, birthday e-mails, etc...)

6.9 How Many Worked In Other Positions In Our District Prior To Teaching.

	% of Respondents
No	77%
Yes	23%

Note:

Of the 23% who had positions prior to being hired as a teachers, 90% held one position of either parapro (33%), sub (33%), student teacher (28%), or other (6%). Ten percent (10%) held two or more of the jobs listed above.

Conclusion

Another source of potential teachers are people who are familiar with our district because they are already working in it or have worked in it in the past.

APPENDIX A: TEACHER SALARY SCHEDULE

Source: Illinois State Board of Education Division of Research Teacher Salary Schedule 1999-2000 All Public School Districts in Illinois. Sent by Karol Chaska, Principal Planning Consultant, Research and Policy.

School/Feeder District	Salary \$\$		
	BA - Yr 1	MA - Yr 1	MA - Yr 10
New Trier Township			
Wilmette (District 39)	31,294	34,424	44,751
Kenilworth (District 38)	31,340	33,920	47,500
Glencoe (District 35)	30,400	32,900	45,850
Avoca (District 37)	31,552	34,075	45,434
Winnetka (District 36)	31,033	34,278	46,527
Sunset Ridge (District 29)	28,097	29,678	42,241
Evanston Township			
Evanston (District 65) (A)	32,722	35,657	50,719
Niles North & West			
Niles (District 71)	33,510	42,710	50,860
Skokie (District 68)	33,103	37,075	53,296
Skokie (District 69)	32,354	36,072	49,992
East Prairie (District 73)	34,962	40,492	49,008
Lincolnwood (District 74)	37,000	43,400	51,500
Morton Grove (District 70)	36,329	43,938	51,546
Golf (District 67) (A)	33,500	40,700	47,422
Skokie Fairview (District 72)	34,000	41,000	50,500
Skokie (District 73 ½)	31,671	34,697	47,659
Glenbrook North & South			
Northbrook/Glenview (District 30)	31,250	38,550	48,465
Northbrook (District 27)	31,810	34,335	43,580
West Northfield (District 31)	34,200	38,550	48,850
Northbrook (District 28)	33,250	35,825	43,535
Glenview CC (District 34)	28,824	37,487	51,072
Highland Park & Deerfield			
Bannockburn (District 106)	29,686	31,482	41,738
N. Shore—Highland Park (Dist.112)	30,500	34,919	45,363
Deerfield (District 109)	30,207	33,522	46,750
Average – All Districts	31,877	35,827	47,604

(A) Salaries in these districts include 8-8.5% tax sheltered retirement contribution paid or deposited by the district to TRS on behalf of teachers.

CONCLUSION:

District 39 salaries compared to other districts are as follows:

- BA – 1st Year 16th out of 24
- MA – 1st Year 16th out of 24
- MA – 10th Year 20th out of 24

APPENDIX B: SELECTED TEACHER FRINGE BENEFITS – POLICY COST

Source: Illinois State Board of Education Div. of Research--Teacher Salary Schedule 1999-2000--All Public School Districts in Illinois. Sent by Karol Chaska, Principal Planning Consultant, Research and Policy.

DC – Abbreviation for a district's contribution to health insurance benefits

School/Feeder District	Benefits & Contributions							
	Health Insurance				Life Insurance		Dental Insurance	
	Teacher		Family					
	\$\$	DC	\$\$	DC	\$\$	DC	\$\$	DC
New Trier Township								
Wilmette (District 39)	3,480	0%	5,160	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Kenilworth (District 38)	3,480	0%	8,640	0%	115	0%	-	
Glencoe (District 35)	Cafeteria plan of up to 3,480/100% for benefits.							
Avoca (District 37)	3,480	100%	5,160	0%	57	100%	346	100%
Winnetka (District 36)	Not Reported							
Sunset Ridge (District 29)	3,480	96%	8,640	80%	114	100%	114	0%
Evanston Township								
Evanston (District 65)	2,326	100%	5,961	0%	252	100%	326	100%
Niles North & West								
Niles (District 71)	5198	80%	11,532	80%	216	100%	278	80%
Skokie (District 68)	7004	70%	16,171	70%	231	60%	402	60%
Skokie (District 69)	3225	100%	4,126	0%	Yes		218	100%
East Prairie (District 73)	2520	97%	6,961	97%	132	100%	324	85%
Lincolnwood (District 74)	3096	75%	4,032	75%	106	100%	276	75%
Morton Grove (District 70)	5157	87%	1,087	67%	82	100%	279	90%
Golf (District 67)	5188	87%	6,758	40%	625	100%	247	100%
Skokie Fairview (District 72)	3080	82%	4,115	82%	99	100%	394	82%
Skokie (District 73 ½)	2322	100%	-	-	87	100%	402	100%
Glenbrook North & South								
Northbrook/Glenview (District 30)	3,540	100%	5,783	0%	180	100%	240	0%
Northbrook (District 27)	3,288	92%	4,393	66%	120	100%	336	100%
West Northfield (District 31)	2,668	92%	3,980	0%	49	100%	150	0%
Northbrook (District 28)	3,348	100%	6,910	60%	11	100%	315	100%
Glenview CC (District 34)	3,775	100%	2,438	20%	128	100%	419	100%
Highland Park & Deerfield								
Bannockburn (District 106)	2,892	100%	5,616	80%	198	100%	312	100%
N. Shore—Highland Park (Dist.112)	3,240	100%	4,680	60%	168	100%	568	100%
Deerfield (District 109)	3,480	100%	8,640	60%	86	100%	346	60%

CONCLUSION

Among all 23 districts reporting above (Winnetka did not report), District 39 and Kenilworth are the only two that do not pay a portion of an individual teacher's health benefit. Of the 21 districts that report paying a portion of the individual health benefit, the percentage paid ranged from 70-100%. Fourteen (14) of the 23 districts reporting also pay a portion of the teacher's family premium with the percentage paid by the district ranging from 20-97%.

APPENDIX C: NO. OF TEACHERS & AVERAGE # YEARS EXPERIENCE TEACHING

Source: Illinois State Board of Education Div. of Research--Teacher Salary Schedule 1999-2000--All Public School Districts in Illinois. Sent by Karol Chaska, Principal Planning Consultant, Research and Policy.

School/Feeder District	#Teachers	Average # Years Teaching
New Trier Township		
Wilmette (District 39)	236	13.5
Kenilworth (District 38)	38	18.1
Glencoe (District 35)	96	14.2
Avoca (District 37)	46	13.1
Winnetka (District 36)	139	12.0
Sunset Ridge (District 29)	42	11.6
Evanston Township		
Evanston (District 65)	556	14.5
Niles North & West		
Niles (District 71)	44	14.1
Skokie (District 68)	116	13.9
Skokie (District 69)	86	13.5
East Prairie (District 73)	35	12.5
Lincolnwood (District 74)	121	12.5
Morton Grove (District 70)	49	11.6
Golf (District 67)	42	11.3
Skokie Fairview (District 72)	45	11.2
Skokie (District 73 ½)	76	10.0
Glenbrook North & South		
Northbrook/Glenview (District 30)	83	17.5
Northbrook (District 27)	121	15.4
West Northfield (District 31)	69	14.3
Northbrook (District 28)	143	14.2
Glenview CC (District 34)	235	12.6
Highland Park & Deerfield		
Bannockburn (District 106)	18	16.6
N. Shore—Highland Park (Dist.112)	300	14.8
Deerfield (District 109)	203	12.2

Conclusions

Of the 24 districts listed above, Wilmette's teachers have taught an average of 13.5 years and tie for a rank of 12th. Eleven of the districts have teachers with more experience (13.9-18.1 years), eleven have teachers with less experience (13.1-10.0) and one district has teachers with the same number of years experience. Of the six New Trier feeder districts, District 39's teaching experience ranks 3rd of six.

APPENDIX D: Miscellaneous Comparisons of Tuition Reimbursement

The following are comparisons of tuition reimbursement programs from various north suburban elementary school districts:

Community	District	Description
Wilmette	39	\$20,000/year split among 281 teachers
Skokie	73 ½	\$20,-25,000/year split among 70-80 teachers
Highland Park	112	Teachers taking classes choose to be reimbursed or to move lanes on the salary scale. If they are reimbursed, they are paid \$240/semester hour up to \$720 for the school year.
Glenview		Teachers working beyond a Masters degree get \$200/credit hour up to 3 credit years or \$600 for 3 years. All teachers can count on the reimbursement.

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEWS WITH DISTRICT 39 PRINCIPALS & ADMINISTRATION

1.0 Alice Reardon, Administrator for Personnel & Special Projects

We learned from this interview that District 39 desires to "attract, hire and retain highly qualified, motivated faculty and staff". It is also anticipated that District 39 compensation will be "commensurate with and appropriate to the level of experience, professional attainment and job responsibilities of district employees". Other comments pertaining to the recruitment process are:

- The recruitment procedures being used by District 39, which include posting on the internet, newspaper ads, job fairs, personal referrals and communication with universities.
- The Administrative Council reviews hiring procedures annually in order to ensure that the procedures used are effective in finding high quality candidates as rapidly as possible. She said that current contract teacher language leaves little room for negotiating when attempting to hire a well-qualified candidate, and that an extensive study (to be completed by the end of 2001) has begun to compare District 39 compensation and professional growth opportunities in similar districts.
- An independent source surveyed 60 former faculty members regarded as highly desirable for retention by the District 39. The results of the internal exit survey produced the following reasons for leaving (17 responses out of 60 who received surveys):

Teacher Exit Survey Results	Per Cent
Family responsibilities	29%
Pursuit of personal goals or career changes	24%
Moving away	12%
Retirement	6%
Advancement opportunity	6%

Six respondents working in other school systems said they were attracted by higher salary(4), medical benefits at lower or no cost (4), advancement opportunities(4), flexible work arrangements (1) and tuition reimbursement (1). Ms. Reardon provided information on a November 2000 report on teacher attrition in District 39 by Colleen Kamin, Ph.D., Ltd. that compared attrition rates of District 39 with similar school districts in other parts of the country.

Teacher Exit Survey Results	Per Cent
District 39	16%
Other school districts	11%

Additional Information: Additional information can be found in an information item to Joan Hochschild, Superintendent from Alice Leman Reardon, Administrator for Human Resources, **Subject:** Update on Goal 12 - Personnel and a Report on Teacher Attrition in District 39 submitted November 15, 2000 by Colleen Kamin, Ph.D., Ltd.

2.0 District #39 Principals

Interviews were conducted during January to March 2001 with the following principals:

<u>Principal</u>	<u>School</u>
Phyllis Constan	Central
Dr. Toni Shinnors	Harper
Dr. Raymond Jay Fry	Highcrest
Margo Brewer	McKenzie
Sandra Stringer	Romona
Christine Golden	Wilmette Jr High

There was general agreement that even though our district is at full employment with no vacancies, a teacher shortage was real. They emphasized that this shortage was more serious in special education, math and sciences. It was also agreed that it is increasingly competitive to acquire and retain good teachers. Some mentioned that the downside to teacher turnover and the hiring of new teachers is the learning curve.

Areas mentioned pertaining to teacher retention included salary and benefits, mentoring (see Appendix E), class size (but not regarded as a present issue in the district), parking, parental flack and abuse, tenure, paraprofessionals, safety, planning and teachers wanting more freedom to deliver the curriculum. All of the principals said that many little things rather than a single problem can result in the loss of teachers. However, **the three major factors mentioned by all of the principals were:**

- Salary
- Benefits
- Lack of respect by parents & the Board of Education.

3.0 Informal Focus Group

We met with six teachers from the Middleton School in Skokie. Three of these teachers had 10 years experience, one had 2 years experience, one had three years experience and one had five years experience. As a group they gave many reasons as to why they chose teaching as a career. These reasons included the ability to affect the future of children and through them society, having a positive impact, love of learning, rewarding (can see progress), diversity within the school setting, having summers free, desire to belong to a community working with parents who are positively involved, enjoyment of field trips, etc. Other remarks included:

- They were happy with their school because of community support, cultural diversity, high regard for teachers, a culture of sharing, a feeling of freedom, the "tone of the building".
- As a group they felt that the school's mentoring program was important (\$ 500.00 per year is paid to mentors).
- Reasons that would prompt them to leave teaching or Middleton School that they mentioned were large class sizes (they felt that 17 was ideal, 20-24 acceptable), inadequate support from administration, inadequate teaching materials, extra hours, low salary, pregnancy (child care availability could influence decision to stay), lack of job flexibility, lack of tuition reimbursement, a better opportunity, lack of a vision for the future in school curriculum, internal politics (including competition between teachers) and lack of technology in the classrooms.
- They were impressed by the job sharing programs for teachers in Elmhurst and Glenview District # 34 and the on site child care in Deerfield.
- Negative opinions were expressed about Winnetka schools (parents too "in your face") and Glenview's attitude of "why aren't you doing this". Wilmette was perceived as not being as progressive or on the cutting edge with new methods.

4.0 Interview- Lynn Bialk, President, WEA

Mary Louise Jackowicz, Vice President, WEA

It was interesting to find that the perception of the issues involved in retaining and attracting teachers held by the WEA officers were in agreement with those views expressed by the principals, found in the literature, expressed by Alice Reardon and elicited from the teachers in our focused group. They felt that the shortage of teachers was real, that salary, benefits and respect for the teacher were major factors in retaining and attracting teachers. Issues such as mentoring programs, relationship with the administration, tuition reimbursement, greater say on curriculum issues, transportation to work, class size and physical space, planning time, extra hours, job flexibility, parking, safety and technology were also of importance. In addition, they mentioned:

- The new state law requiring 4 years for attaining tenure was meant to encourage stability and teacher quality; that applying for a teaching position in District 39 was a grueling process and only allowed a short time for making a decision.
- They agreed with the comments made by teachers in our Skokie focus group that Wilmette's image was suffering because it did not have an up to date curriculum and informed us that 250 teachers were members of the WEA.
- A need for a foreign language program and the benefits of subsidized child care were also mentioned.

APPENDIX F: MENTORING

DISTRICT 39 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH— THE OPPORTUNITY FOR MENTORING

The development of teachers is a critical topic for the continued success of District 39. Providing a professional development climate is one of the primary approaches that will make District 39 an employer of choice. However, the recent teacher recruitment and retention survey highlight some issues that appear to limit the potential of the District to attract and retain the faculty most vulnerable to opportunities outside the District and education. This CRC exploration will highlight some of the reasons why an enhanced mentoring program offers an opportunity to more effectively acculturate and acclimate new teachers so that they identify with District 39 as a special place to grow and build their professional skill set.

It is important to recognize that professional development of teachers and particularly new teachers involves more than the personal relationship and feedback that mentoring provides. Professional development is a career long process and includes investments that the District needs to make in teachers throughout their tenure by enhanced feedback mechanisms, development assignments, and institutional support through continuing education and tuition reimbursement. However, mentoring can provide an effective and low cost approach to building teacher competency, organizational (i.e. District 39) commitment, and enhanced professional identity.

The need for enhanced professional development activities is even more critical as the District looks at the demographic and generational changes that are characteristics of the current cohort of younger teachers and the upcoming Generation Y. Employers have numerous opportunities to prepare for the arrival of this new cohort. Consider the following: Generation Y prefer direct communication and management of their own destiny. Mentorships between Generation Y and the baby boomers can help facilitate the transfer of institutional knowledge within the District. At the same time, mentorships between Generation Y and Generation X may help ease tensions between the two groups.

The terms associated with mentoring and the characteristics and activities of mentoring are greater than simple induction and orientation during the first few weeks of the school year. Mentoring is the establishment of a personal relationship for the purpose of professional instruction and guidance that continues throughout the initial year of the new faculty.

From the literature on mentoring, ten characteristics inherent in any mentor-protégé relationship have been defined. They include:

- Mentor-protégé relationships grow through voluntary interaction. The mentor-protégé relationship has a life cycle (introduction, trust building, transfer, dissolution)
- People become mentors to pass on information to the next generation
- Mentors encourage protégés in setting and attaining short-and long-term goals.
- Mentors guide technically and professionally.
- Mentors teach protégés skills necessary to survive daily experiences and promote career-scope professional development.
- Mentors protect protégés from major mistakes by limiting their exposure to responsibility.
- Mentors provide opportunities for protégés to observe and participate in their work.
- Mentors are role models
- Mentors sponsor protégés organizationally and professionally.
- Mentors-protégé relationships end (sometimes amiably and sometimes bitterly).

District 39 has the opportunity to formalize an informal process that occurs today. The benefits that can occur include the following:

- Mentors gain the satisfaction of being able to transfer skills and knowledge accumulated through extensive professional practice.
- The protégé benefits by faster assimilation into the school environment, professional competence, and the introduction to teaching as a continually developing, lifelong career.
- The school district reduces its teacher attrition rate. In addition, it catches problems earlier that may affect the instructional process.

The State of Illinois has recognized many of these issues and is moving forward on a mandated program. Their 1996 policy paper indicated that the induction experience should occur over a two-three year period to ensure that new teachers are successful. Legislation is required to implement such a system in IL. However, District 39 need not wait for the legislative mandate. Instead, we need to recognize the research underlying the proposed program (i.e. 50% of beginning teachers leave the profession with five to seven years and a national annual 6.6% attrition rate of all teachers suggest the first years I the profession are the most challenging.

A strong formal mentoring program in District 39 not only encourages more teachers to remain in the profession, but also improves their instructional effectiveness. New teachers develop competence more quickly than those who must learn by trial and error.

Our district's ability to retain its teachers will moderate the need to recruit and train more instructional staff. If District 39 is going to ensure that all new teachers in the District participate in a truly meaningful induction and mentoring experience, it will have to make it a requirement and focus its resources and efforts accordingly.

APPENDIX G: REFERENCES

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APPENDIX H: District 39 CRC Anonymous Teacher Survey

Teacher Recruitment and Retention in the Age of Teacher Shortage.

(Distributed and collected 2/2001)

Dear District 39 Teacher,

Your input is very valuable! Please take time to fill out this confidential teacher survey developed by the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Sub-Committee of the District 39 Community Review Committee (CRC). We care a lot about our teachers in Wilmette and want the district to know what is important to you. Because of this, the survey is a bit long--nineteen questions for all teachers, plus, twelve additional questions for teachers new to our district within the last three years. A high response rate will ensure that all teachers' views are represented in our study of Teacher Recruitment and Retention to be formally presented to the District 39 Administration and Board of Education in June.

The survey responses will be tabulated confidentially and anonymously and will be reported in aggregate. Consequently, please do not put your name anywhere on the survey. If you misplace your questionnaire and need a replacement, send an e-mail to our sub-committee chairman, Ron Gilbert at syrlg@aol.com. IF you have more comments than space for a given question, feel free to continue on the back of the questionnaire or on a separate sheet of paper that you attach to this document. (Please remember to write the number of the question to which your comments pertain.)

Please return the completed survey questionnaire to a return box in the office of any District 39 school by Friday, February 23th, 2001.

Thanks in advance for your consideration, opinions and input!

Sincerely,

The Teacher Recruitment and Retention Sub-Committee of the CRC

About the CRC: Each year, the CRC studies topics of importance to the school district and its students. This year's topics are: Teacher Recruitment and Retention in an Age of Teacher Shortage, Playground Safety and Dynamics, Role and Function of Boards of Education, and Special Education Informational Materials for Parents. The CRC is the independent research arm of the District 39 Board of Education. It is comprised of volunteer representatives from the district's PTA/PTOs, faculty, administration, caucus and community members-at-large.

Now, please turn to the first page of the survey.

All teachers please answer Question 1 through Question 19:

Question 1) Make an "X" next to **the top five (5) reasons** why you chose teaching as a profession

- ☐ a. Wanted to teach a particular grade-level or subject
- ☐ b. Wanted to work in an active setting
- ☐ c. Wanted to work in a positive setting
- ☐ d. Wanted to work in a diverse setting
- ☐ e. Wanted to work in a community setting
- ☐ f. Wanted to work in a learning environment
- ☐ g. Wanted to work in a collaborative setting
- ☐ h. Wanted to do good and inspire others
- ☐ i. Wanted to work in a respected field
- ☐ j. Wanted to work in a challenging field
- ☐ k. Wanted to work in a profession
- ☐ l. Wanted to work with children
- ☐ m. Wanted to work in a field where I was appreciated and valued
- ☐ n. Wanted influence over curriculum
- ☐ o. Wanted a teacher's weekly schedule
- ☐ p. Wanted a teacher's schedule of summers and holidays off
- ☐ q. Wanted a job where I could keep learning
- ☐ r. Wanted the ability to innovate
- ☐ s. Wanted the autonomy and freedom of running a classroom
- ☐ t. Wanted to progress through the ranks to administrator
- ☐ u. Wanted the security of tenure
- ☐ v. Wanted good overall compensation
- ☐ w. Wanted good salary
- ☐ x. Wanted good health benefits
- ☐ y. Wanted good retirement benefits
- ☐ z. Wanted to emulate a teacher I admired
- ☐ bb. Other _____
- ☐ aa. Wanted to influence children's lives
- ☐ cc. Other _____

Question 2) Below is a list of possible situations that teachers, in general, sometimes experience in their profession. Please rate on a 5-point scale how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement *as it applies to your own experience working in District 39* by circling the corresponding number.

(1=Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3=Undecided/Neutral, 4= Disagree, 5=Strongly Disagree).

<u>Statement:</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Undecided/ <u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>
1. My students are motivated.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Compared to other districts, my salary is competitive.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I believe teachers are appreciated by the community.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Compared to other districts, my class size is manageable	1	2	3	4	5
5. I can do my job well without putting in too many extra hours.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I have enough instructional material available to teach well.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I believe the district's teaching methods are current.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I do not need to spend my own money on supplies.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Compared to other districts, I have sufficient planning time.	1	2	3	4	5
10. My students are well-behaved.	1	2	3	4	5
11. There is a good amount of collaboration among teachers here.	1	2	3	4	5
12. There is sufficient class-time to cover the curriculum well.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Teachers in the district are guided well by their principals.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I have enough resources to meet diverse needs of my students.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I am not overwhelmed by a lot of non-classroom duties.	1	2	3	4	5
16. My students' parents have appropriate expectations of me.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I have enough influence over what I teach and how I teach it.	1	2	3	4	5
18. The number of transitions during the school day is fine with me.	1	2	3	4	5
19. My students' parents are respectful of me.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Compared to other districts, my health benefits are competitive.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I am comfortable with the amount of pressure in my job.	1	2	3	4	5
22. The level of mentoring/guidance for new teachers is good.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I believe the curriculum I teach is up-to-date and successful.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I have had adequate training to use technology in instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
25. My students come to school well-prepared and ready to learn.	1	2	3	4	5
26. There is adequate coverage by substitutes when I need them.	1	2	3	4	5
27. The level of leadership and direction by administration is strong.	1	2	3	4	5
28. There is an adequate amount of paraprofessionals when I need them.	1	2	3	4	5
29. The level of tuition relief for continuing education is adequate.	1	2	3	4	5
30. There are adequate growth opportunities for me here.	1	2	3	4	5
31. My students' parents are helpful to me.	1	2	3	4	5
32. I do not experience bureaucracy when I try to get things done.	1	2	3	4	5
33. There is sufficient support to innovate and try new things.	1	2	3	4	5
34. My teaching is appreciated and valued here.	1	2	3	4	5
35. When problems arise, my superiors are supportive and helpful.	1	2	3	4	5

Question 3) List three item numbers from Question 2, above, that you would most like to see improved in our district and explain why:

a)# _____

b)# _____

c)# _____

Question 4) Below is a list of programs that some districts have implemented to encourage teachers in their districts and in the profession. Please rate *the importance to you personally* of each of the pro on a 5-point scale. (**1= Very Important, 2=Important, 3=Neutral/Undecided, 4= Not very important, 5= Not important at all**):

	Very important	Neutral/ Important	Not very undecided	Not at all important	Not impor
Programs	1	2	3	4	5
1. Part-time teaching options	1	2	3	4	5
2. Individual dental benefit paid by district	1	2	3	4	5
3. Individual health benefits paid by district	1	2	3	4	5
4. Job-sharing teaching options	1	2	3	4	5
5. Additional pay for performance, evaluated by administration and peers--over and above years of experience and education	1	2	3	4	5
6. More professional growth activities/courses offered in-hous	1	2	3	4	5
7. Stipends for mentoring new teachers	1	2	3	4	5
8. Compensation package in the top 10- 20% for the area	1	2	3	4	5
9. On-site childcare	1	2	3	4	5
10.Optional new career tracks for advancement and promotion	1	2	3	4	5
11. One-time bonuses/stipends for teaching hard-to-fill subjects	1	2	3	4	5
12. Relocation incentives	1	2	3	4	5
13. Program to develop teachers into our district's administrators	1	2	3	4	5
14. Subsidized childcare	1	2	3	4	5
15. Housing subsidies	1	2	3	4	5
16. Increased tuition reimbursement for my continuing education	1	2	3	4	5
17. Part-time teaching positions for retired teachers	1	2	3	4	5
18. Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5
19. Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

Question 5) List three programs from Question 4, above, that you would most like to see explored a options for our district and explain why:

a)# _____

b)# _____

c)# _____

Question 6) How many years have you been a teacher in District 39:
___3 or less ___4-8 ___9-12 ___13-19 ___20+

Question 7) In which grade levels do you currently teach ___K-4 ___5-8

Question 8) How many years *in total* have you been a teacher:
___3 or less ___4-8 ___9-12 ___13-19 ___20+

Question 9) In how many districts, *other than Dist. 39*, have you taught:___

Question 10) Did you have another profession before becoming a teacher:
___No___Yes (what profession and # of years in it)_____

Question 11) Did you interrupt your teaching career, then return to teaching after several years of raising a family: ___No ___Yes (# of years away)_____

Question 12) Did you interrupt your teaching career, then return to teaching after several years in another profession: ___No ___Yes
what profession and # of years in it: _____

Question 13) Did you work in District 39 in any of the positions listed below prior to being hired as a teacher in the district: ___No ___Yes (check all that apply) ___Student teacher ___Practicum
___Paraprofessional ___Substitute ___Other_____

Question 14) In what subject or subjects are your degrees:

BA: ___Education major ___Other (list)_____

MA:___Education major ___Other (list)_____

PhD:___Education major ___Other (list)_____

Question 15) What is currently your highest level of education: ___BA ___Working towards MA
___MA ___Working towards PhD ___PhD

Question 16) What is your age range: __21-29 __30-39 __40-49 __50+

Question 17) How many miles do you live from the school in which you teach:
___0-2 ___3-5 ___6-10 ___11-15 ___16-20 ___21+

Question 18) How many minutes is your average commute to school each day:

___ 0-15 ___ 16-30 ___ 31-45 ___ 46-60 ___ 61+

Question 19) How do you most often commute to school: ___ Car alone ___ Car Pool

___ Public Transportation (Which kind: ___ "L" ___ bus ___ Metra) ___ Other ___

Teachers: *Only answer Question 20 through Question 31 if you have been teaching in District 39 for three years or less. (All other teachers, please turn to the last page and read the bottom for final instructions.)*

Question 20) During your job search within the last three years, to about how many school districts did you apply, including District 39: ____1 ____2-4 ____5+

Question 21) Of those, in about how many school districts did you interview:
____1 ____2 ____3 ____4 ____5+

Question 22) About how many of the districts where you interviewed were within Cook or Lake Counties: ____1 ____2 ____3 ____4 ____5+

Question 23) About how many were elsewhere in Illinois: ____0 ____1-2 ____3+

Question 24) About how many were out-of-state: ____0 ____1-2 ____3+

Question 25) From how many districts did you receive offers of employment:
____1 ____2-3 ____4+

Question 26) When making your decision to accept a position in District 39, *how important to you* we each of the following reasons. Please rate each reason on a 5-point scale of importance. **(1= Very important, 2=Important, 3=Neutral/undecided, 4= Not very important, 5= Not at all important)**

<u>Reason:</u>	Very important	Important	Neutral/ undecided	Not very important	Not a factor
1. I felt welcome during the recruitment and interview process.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The subject and/or grade-level were what I wanted.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The compensation package was attractive.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The reputation of the district (explain)_____	1	2	3	4	5
5. I was able to keep my experience credit on the salary scale.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Of districts I considered, District 39 made me the first offer.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The starting salary was attractive.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I liked the principal(s) I met and/or would be working with.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I liked the teachers I met and/or would be working with.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I liked the facilities and physical resources I saw.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I liked the district's support for teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I liked the opportunities for professional development and continuing education.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I liked Wilmette. (explain)_____	1	2	3	4	5
14. I liked the type of students I observed.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I liked the opportunities for career development.	1	2	3	4	5

16. The school district is convenient to my home.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I liked the district's mentoring program.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Other (explain)_____	1	2	3	4	5

Question 27) Thinking back on the recruitment process that you experienced with District 39, how would you rate the quality of the following aspects of the process on a 5-point scale. (**1=Excellent, 2=Very good, 3=Average, 4=Fair, 5=Poor, N/A=if you did not experience this aspect**):

<u>Recruitment aspect:</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Very good</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>N/A</u>
1. Job posting in news or professional publications.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
2. Job posting on the website.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
3. Presentation and/or booth of District 39 at a Job Fair.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
4. Phone contact with district personnel.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
5. Letter contact with district personnel.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
6. E-mail contact with district personnel.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
7. Recruitment materials and brochures about District 39	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
8. The appearance of the district offices.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
9. How I was treated during the initial interview.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
10. How I was treated during second interview.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
11. How I was treated during the teaching demonstration.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
12. The appearance of the school and classrooms visited.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
13. Promptness of appointments.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
14. Friendliness of personnel I encountered.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
15. Professionalism of personnel I encountered.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
16. Respectfulness of personnel I encountered.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
17. Other (explain): _____	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

a) What were the three most positive aspects of your experience applying to and interviewing in our district and why:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

b) What were three aspects of the recruitment process that the district could improve and why:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Question 28) Are there aspects of the recruitment process in other districts that impressed you as an applicant and that District 39 could learn from and emulate: ____ No ____ Yes
(explain what) _____

Question 29) During your first year in District 39, did you receive formal and/or informal mentoring support from administration and peers?

Formal: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Informal: ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how satisfied were you with the level and type of mentoring and support you received:

☐ Very satisfied ☐ Satisfied ☐ Neutral ☐ Dissatisfied ☐ Very dissatisfied

Explain why: _____

Question 30) Based on your experience, do you have suggestions of how the mentoring process can improved: ☐ No ☐ Yes (Explain) _____

Question 31) In general, how well were your expectations for teaching in District 39 met during your first year in the district?

☐ Very well met ☐ Well met ☐ Met ☐ Not met somewhat ☐ Not met at all

Explain your answer: _____

For all teachers: This ends the survey! Thank you very much for your time and input. Please fold and staple or clip the survey and deposit it in a return box in any District 39 school office by Friday, February 23, 2001.