



**Woodland Public Schools  
Staff Survey Comment Analysis  
June 3, 2015**

The comment theme summary was developed in an attempt to identify common themes by first reading all of the comments collected throughout the survey. A theme is identified as a result of having multiple participants referencing similar issues or concerns across constituencies. This summary is not intended to represent all comments submitted; rather it attempts to represent the prevailing themes. Sample comments supporting each theme were cut/pasted verbatim into the report.

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## Staff members offered suggestions to improve communications.

I would like to see more communication between Woodland and Yale Elem. At times we are not informed about things going on in Woodland and we feel left out of the loop.

Improved communication across the district is needed. I'm not sure what the best approach is for this. Woodland is a growing area and as a school district we need to have a solid protocol to follow in regards to communication. The Primary School is improving in this area, but I'm not sure about the other schools.

Better communication from the top down, especially with all the new testing.

Whenever there is a change in the day, e-mail it. Whenever you've made a decision not to let someone come outside for recess, e-mail it.

Better communication and direction from leaders

Change: transparency to teachers/staff, communication clear and when needed (sometimes we find out things from newspapers, not from the district)

Communication and transparency would be a tremendous step in helping to improve staff confidence in our building and district leadership.

Communication is a real issue. We are often left in the dark about events that affect our building. When concerns are voiced, they are not acted upon, or if they are acted upon there is no follow-up to let us know what was done to address the situation.

We need better communication at all levels, but especially the district. We never know what is going on, what the plan is and do not get responses to emails, etc. The building level is much better than the district, but often last minute with little notice for meetings, etc.

More communication from the district level. It was difficult finding out news about my own school from the news paper rather than the administration.

I think communication with parents and the community can be improved. Being up front and honest with them will increase their trust. Encouraging the media to be present for positive school events will help with our image.

When concerns are communicated but then ignored, or worse yet, when communication occurs and then that person is retaliated against, it DISCOURAGES communication.

I feel email could be used more effectively as a form of communication. I want to be able to feel confident that emails will be read, even if I just get a short response, since I know emails can get overwhelming.

## Staff members would like to feel more supported.

More support for employees. I feel that I am not being given the tools I need to do really well in my position.

Curriculum materials are outdated. There is no rotating curriculum adoption cycle like there used to be. We are often left to our own devices to develop curriculum (little district support).

I am not provided with the appropriate technology to complete my work and am expected to utilize my own technology outside of the classroom to do this work.

Yes, support with the mandated curriculum (or lack thereof). We have had to devise our own material for English Language Arts this year. It has been difficult to find time and resources. I would hope that we will get training on our new ELA material that is soon to be adopted.

With all the changes in the past year, it has been overwhelming. I believe administration is trying to be supportive, but I also don't believe that they understand the magnitude of how much it takes to meet their very high expectations. It seems that there is never a lull to enjoy our accomplishments and progress; it is just followed by another, even more complex expectation. I'm worried about the burnout rate. I'm not expecting the administration to lower their expectations, but be more understanding of our high work load.

More support in the classroom for high needs students.

More than once I've had serious parental issues where I need support from administration and I get none.

Better support of the teachers and less support of the students and parents. District, needs to support the teachers and listen to our needs and concerns without the presents of the person or principal you have concerns with. Better concern of updated books, educational material that are needed in the classroom.

Lead and support! The lack of timeliness in making decisions, the lack of information disseminated to staff, and the "interviewing" process in the change of positions have left people feeling anxious, awkward and unsupported.

It would be nice to see teachers supported more in the district and that our voices were heard and meant something. We have a lot of meetings and spend a lot of hours discussing things but then nothing ever comes of it or the administration does what they wanted to do in the first place.

Actually listen and support the teacher. We are usually treated guilty until proven innocent but it should be the other way! Why is a student opinion stronger and more important than the teacher?

## **Staff members would like more input when decisions are made.**

Many times the teachers most involved are not asked their opinion on things. When we are asked to give input it is because it looks good and it is the right way to do things but the decisions have already been made by "higher" powers.

Sometimes decisions are based on the personal opinions of the leadership rather than anecdotal information provided by the teachers.

I am not treated as an individual. I am treated as part of "the whole". Even then I am not included in pertinent conversations or decisions regarding my students and schedule.

It seems that those who hold the power to make important decisions are disconnected and not supportive of classroom teachers and true student learning.

In regard to policy and curriculum to my content area, decisions are being made at the district level in regard to my school that do not include my department.

When decisions are being made regarding the schools, I wish the district would listen more closely to what the public wants, or at least hear their concerns. As an employee and community member it doesn't feel like they take our concerns/questions/advice seriously.

Make decisions with the input of staff. Inform staff of the decision making process. Support staff with upcoming changes.

Teachers shouldn't be treated as less or disregarded in decision-making when they're the ones working directly with students on a daily basis. If there wasn't such a disconnect between people in positions of authority & those who aren't, if we were all treated as if we're on the same team, the culture would change.

Teachers are often left in the dark on most district-initiated decisions, and we are usually the last to know about something that affects our classrooms. Moving forward the district needs to be more transparent with its employees to garner the trust that it needs to have to thrive.

Why are we not involved in the decision making? Example: Recess teachers are the experts in their area, but the PBIS team ( many who don't even work with kids, or work one on one with kids) make the decisions and go to the trainings.

I think the members of our school board are fantastic and appreciate the time and effort they dedicate towards the betterment of our school district. It does concern me however that they can impact decisions in the area of best practices/curriculum... those decisions should be left to the people that have expertise in those areas.

I believe that we would all benefit from an increased emphasis on clearly defined procedures for decision-making district-wide.

## Staff members shared concerns about student safety and how disciplinary practices are handled.

Additionally, the administration could have more effective discipline and attendance policies so that the teacher is not responsible for dealing with all the discipline issues. It would be nice if my main focus could be planning for my lessons and then teaching and interacting with students who are there to learn instead of using my time to deal with the few problem students. Moreover, there is a significant issue with students knowing they can get "away" with a lot of things because the discipline is so lackadaisical. Students also know there are no consequences for coming to class completely unprepared and it is acceptable to sit in class and do nothing if they choose.

Support is not always forthcoming, particularly from administrators. While our work environment is generally very positive, there's often a lack of concern from administrators about discipline in the classroom and student accountability.

I think professional development around positive discipline and non-violent communication with practice and support would have a positive impact on school culture for our whole school community (students, staff, parents,...)

In all my years, I have never seen such a discipline problem!!! We are catering, enabling, and rewarding to the problem students and forgetting about the students that are responsible/respectful daily. We are creating MONSTER'S!!

Our school and the district need to hold students more accountable in terms of attendance and discipline infractions. A culture needs to be created that emphasizes pride in achievement.

We sometimes hear about student bullying, but there is also adult bullying and little recourse. The bullying is in the form of intimidation, gossip, and inappropriate conversation.

I think there is a lot more bullying and harassment going on, especially in the halls, than we admit.

Safety is a huge concern that seems to be on the back burner. I hope this is being addressed in the reconfiguration. I believe that students don't always feel safe because of bullying issues. I believe that our school needs to have consequences for students that bully over and over.

Some students do not feel safe because they are bullied. While I have seen the amount of bullying decline, it is still a big problem

Most students feel safe, but many have concerns about bullying. Especially with the repeat offenders on the playground. Playground plan is in effect and beginning to work.

## **Staff members would like more opportunities for meaningful training/professional development.**

More professional development with newly adopted curriculums.

There is no standard for training in my department and it is left to the teachers.

I feel that much of our training this past year took away from my personal, and my department's attempt to prepare for SBAC and Common Core. It was redundant and mostly irrelevant.

We have had to devise our own material for English Language Arts this year. It has been difficult to find time and resources. I would hope that we will get training on our ew ELA material that is soon to be adopted.

I think we are already headed in the direction of making professional Learning Communities a priority by designating specific shared time for collaboration and small group professional development time to best address the needs of students by designing interventions and supports, tracking progress, and working together.

We also need continued professional development in best practices, along with a clear message that we are all expected to be continuously learning and moving toward best practices.

The district has not provided any training on the curriculum we are to use to meet Common Core standards. The district also provides no common prep times nor department time to collaborate in order to meet the demands set forth by new standards.

Have trainings that have to do with our specific duties.

It seems that there is a lot of training opportunities for certified staff which takes them away from their classrooms, but IA's don't often have that same opportunity, yet often we are expected to take on the same role as a certified teacher. If we are expected to do this, we should have proper training as well.

Specific training aimed at improving my knowledge in order to fully do the job I was hired to do.

I would like more opportunities to attend training for my particular position, in order to address my particular weaknesses and strengthen my curriculum.

Gather personnel from different schools for professional development that would benefit all, no matter the school or grade level.

Growth opportunities- I would like more opportunities for growth. Whether that be a book study with colleagues, small side training... A way to research/read/learn about teaching to encourage our growth. I feel I am personally encouraged, but not as a collective whole do I feel we are encouraged to grow together.