

Strategic Plan  
Information and Advocacy Report



TO: Board of Education  
FROM: Ms. Sara Errthum, Coordinator of Human Resources  
DATE: January 17, 2022  
RE: Information and Advocacy Report-Human Resources

**Overview:**

Board Goal II: Well-Being- We will provide support systems for our students and staff  
⇒Objective: Support and retain faculty and staff  
⇒Indicator 2: Quality of Applicant Pool  
⇒Indicator 4: Employee Retention Rate

**Indicator #2: Quality of Applicant Pool**

The quality of the applicant pool is increasingly important as we fill vacancies on a continuous basis and to support our strategic plan's objectives. As of December 27, 2021\*, we have had a total of 82 postings to fill for the 2021/2022 school year. In the previous school year, we had seen a decrease in the number of postings and applications due to the pandemic. Based on the data you'll see throughout this report, we are seeing a return to pre-pandemic numbers. A couple of factors contribute to this, including that we were able to return to school in person for the 21/22 school year. Additionally, some positions that became open in 20/21 carried over into 21/22.

Table #1, below, reflects the number of postings and applications for positions filled during the 19/20 and 20/21 school year as well as the year to date data for positions filled in the current 21/22 school year. The data includes both full-time and part-time postings; certified, support, and administrative vacancies; and long-term substitute teacher vacancies. The data does not reflect co-curricular or coaching vacancies or short-term substitute information.

Data for the entire school year is based on the school year calendar dates (i.e. 07/01/19-06/30/20). Positions posted in January 2018 with a start date for the 2019/2020 school year are included as a recruitment effort for the 2019/2020 data. Year round positions are included in the school year for which the person starts. The full school year data will always be lagging; however, this will give us the opportunity to view trends from year to year from a more holistic perspective rather than a point in time only. We know that much can happen in the second half of the year. Data from a point in time for the current school year will also continue to be included.

**Table #1: Candidate Pool 19-20, 20-21 & 21/22**

Applicant Type	19/20	20/21	21/22 (YTD*)
Certified Staff	560	411	574
Support Staff	254	110	199
Total Number of Postings	74	65	82
Total Number of Applicants	814	521	773

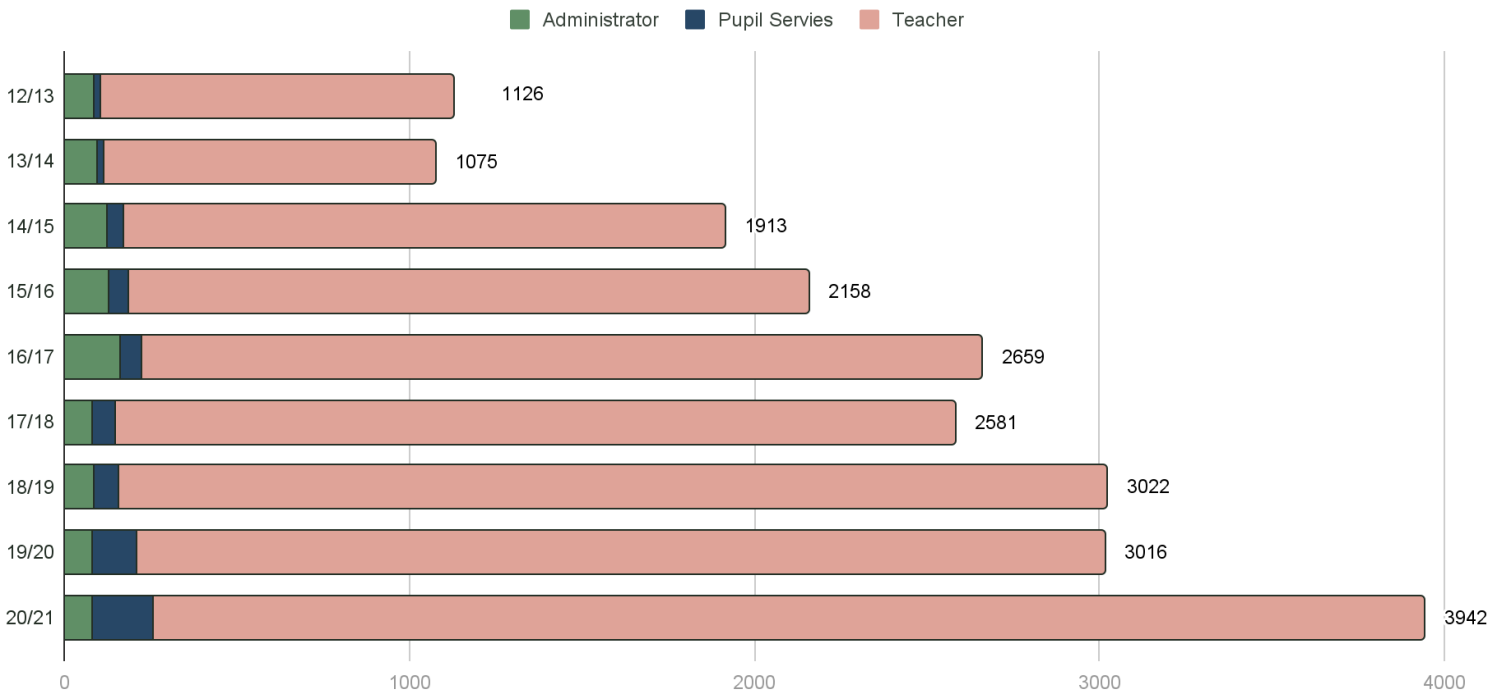
The unemployment rate in past years has typically been at a record low, with the exception of last year. During 2020, the national and statewide rate increased significantly, with it reaching 14.7% in April 2020. Since then, the unemployment rate has decreased and returned to similar pre-pandemic rates. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the national unemployment rate was 4.2 % as of November 2021, and the unemployment rate in Wisconsin is 3.0 %. Furthermore, the unemployment rate in Dane County is 1.4% and in Iowa County is 1.5%.

With low unemployment rates, we continue to experience a high level of competition between employers for talent. Furthermore, the entire nation is experiencing what is being called “The Great Resignation”. There is a historic number of US workers choosing to leave their current jobs to explore something new or, more commonly, retire following the pandemic. The education industry has been experiencing shortages for several years, and we continue to notice challenges within the talent pipeline for some positions. The Great Resignation only increases this challenge. According to American Association of School Personnel Administrators (AASPA), as the older generations approach retirement age, districts are seeing a record number of retirements and are left without any pipeline of recent graduates to fill the open roles. AASPA also notes that job postings that had 300 applications in the early 2000s are now receiving an average of 0 to 5 applications. Staffing crises have led to some schools closing entirely for short periods. New and worsening challenges born out of the pandemic have pushed the issue to a breaking point.

Additionally, many individuals entering college are choosing career paths outside of education. As you can see in Table #2, there continues to be an increase in the need for emergency licenses due to the continued shortage of qualified applicants and individuals completing the appropriate preparatory programs to become an educator in Wisconsin. DPI has been reporting this information since the 2012/2013 school year, and the most recent data from the 2018/2019 school year demonstrates our need to continue to pivot and think creatively about our District’s staffing needs and recruitment efforts. For example, we continue to identify our hiring needs much sooner (January) so that we may recruit candidates at job fairs, university expositions, and state conferences. In addition, we are utilizing social media, online sites geared towards education (Handshake), and other resources to publicize our district and build our candidate pools.

**Table #2: Emergency Licensing Data (DPI Data)**

### Emergency Licensing Data



The unemployment data, individuals leaving the profession and requests for more emergency licenses help us understand why we are seeing a downward trend in our candidate pool.

As the data suggests, we are faced with a very competitive environment when we are finding and hiring qualified applicants for our district. Our Human Resources Team continues our strategic efforts to rise above the challenges. Table #3 reflects the sourcing methods used to notify the successful candidates of our vacancies. The Wisconsin Education Career Access Network (WECAN) applicant system continues to be a main resource to bring candidates to our district for all positions; however, we continue to consider other systems that may be more user friendly and reach more candidates based on feedback, specifically for support staff positions.

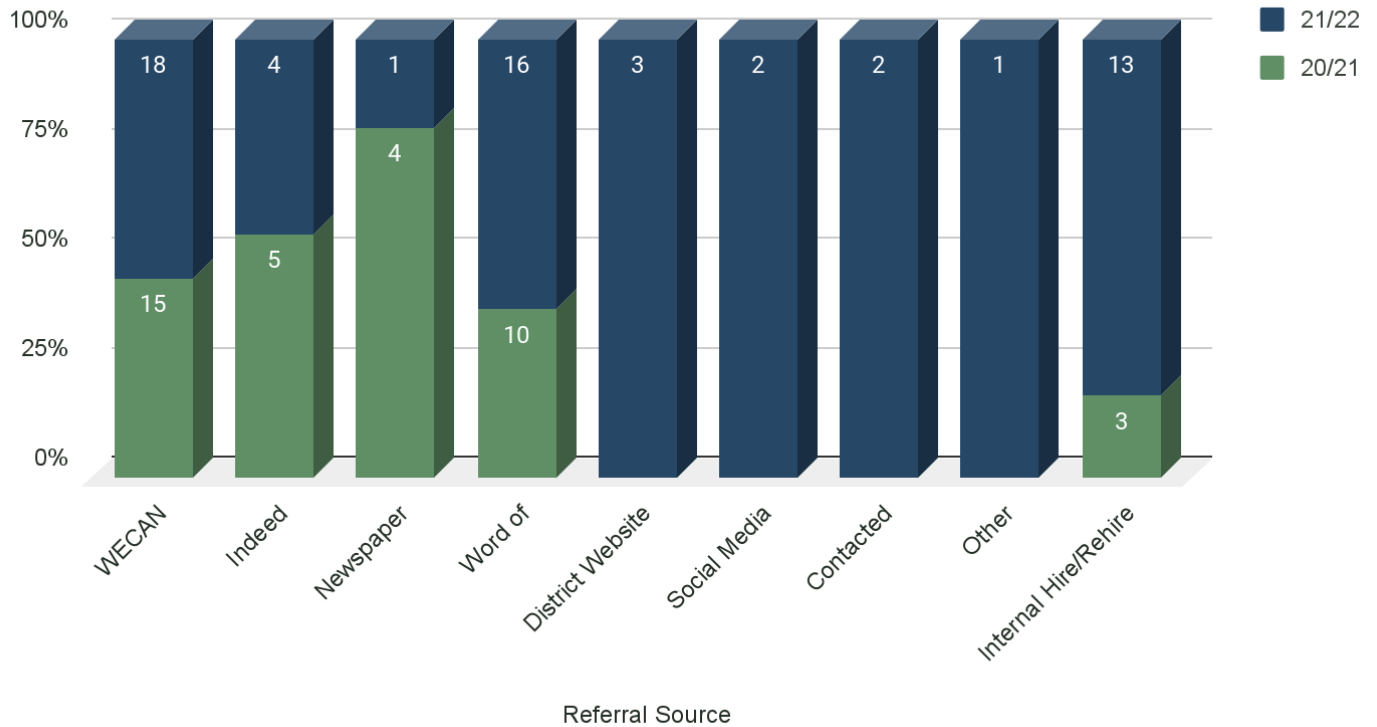
Our next most effective method continues to be word of mouth. Our employees (current and former) as well as our community help spread the word and share opportunities to bring talented and qualified individuals into our District. In 2019, the Board of Education approved a system that permitted employees an honorarium for referring quality candidates to our vacancies. The thinking behind this plan is to leverage our trusted and dedicated current employees to recommend other high performing applicants. Employees who recommend candidates who are hired are eligible to receive \$100 after six months of service or a substitute has completed 20 days. We continue to communicate this program to our employees once a month in the HR updates and have the information available on our website.

When candidates are sourced by Human Resources, we are conducting specialized talent searches, marketing our job opportunities, and connecting candidates to our application process through customized communications and tools. We are providing a higher touch and connecting with potential candidates before they apply by responding to questions to increase interest in joining our team. Potential candidates have

shared that having language in our posting about who to contact for questions sets us apart from other districts and state that they appreciate the opportunity to explore their questions prior to applying.

**Table #3: Recruitment Sources**

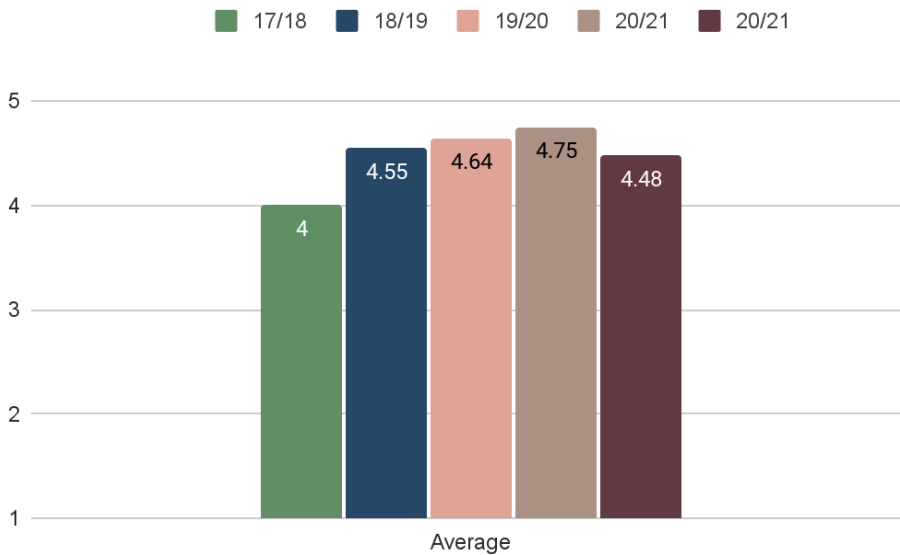
### Candidate Referral Sources



Once our employees have been successfully hired and completed their first 30 days, we ask them to complete a survey that gives us valuable feedback about their candidate experience and for improving our recruitment efforts. New employees rate their candidate experience on a scale of one to five, with five being the highest value. Table #4, below, showcases the average ratings from the survey results. We continue to focus on the overall candidate experience, as it is an opportunity for us to stand out from our competition.

**Table #4: Candidate Experience Rating**

**Candidate Experience - Average Overall Rating 4.51**



**Indicator #4: Employee Retention Rate**

This evening’s Personnel Transactions identifies a small number of staff members who have submitted a timely request for retirement. Employees planning to retire at the end of the school year and receive District retirement benefits, must notify the Board by January 15, 2022, per the Employee Handbook. We understand that making the decision to retire is never an easy one and with the pandemic, we know that it can be even more difficult as the last two years have not been a “normal” school year.

The District has received twenty (20) voluntary resignations so far this school year. Last year at this time, we had a combined total of eighteen (18) voluntary resignations and retirements. Based on the voluntary resignations (non-retirement) to date, this accounts for a teacher turnover rate of 1.03%. As you may recall, we had two (2) faculty resignations in August contributing to this metric.

The state and local education industry average turnover rate according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics was released as 25.7%<sup>1</sup> for 2020. The District’s overall turnover for 2020/2021 school year was below the average, at 16.53%. While our data crosses years, it’s important to note that we are seeing turnover at a lower rate.

Table #5 provides a reflection on the district’s resignations and retirements.

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<sup>1</sup>U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Economic News Release: <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/jolts.t16.htm>

**Table #5: Rates of Resignation and Retirement  
(Not Represented in FTE's)**

	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22 (YTD*)
Total Number of Retirements	8	3	10	10	7	~5
Total Number of Resignations	28	42	41	33	52	22

\* As of January 12, 2022

**Table #6: Voluntary Turnover Rate by Classification (Non-Retirement)**

	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22 (YTD*)
Faculty	2.09%	7.81%	0.51%	3.13%	5.76%	1.03%
Paraprofessional	19.35%	18.75%	9.38%	21.21%	33.33%	9.38%
Special Ed Paraprofessional	19.44%	29.41%	6.25%	25.00%	16.67%	6.90%
Food Service	20%	40%	0%	5.26%	27.78%	18.18%
Custodians	16.67%	5.56%	5.26%	10.00%	57.89%	5.26%
Other	--	--	--	13.04%	13.04%	13.70%

\* As of January 3, 2022 Personnel Transactions

Successful onboarding of employees at all levels is extremely important. We have a dedicated onboarding experience for our teaching staff at the beginning of each school year; however, we do not have a similar program for our non-teaching staff. We have an opportunity to improve ways of providing a similar experience to other staff at the beginning of the school year and throughout.

Table #7 provides a glimpse at the reasons for departure from the organization. To obtain this information, Human Resources implemented an exit survey beginning in 2017. There are a few limitations to this data: not every individual exiting the system elects to complete the survey (yet, all are provided information to do so); moreover, not everyone who participates answers every question on the survey. In an effort to promote candid responses, the survey is anonymous. That noted, the data is still worthy of review. As you can see the number of participants completing or attempting to complete the survey doesn't allow for great data.

**Table #7: Why Are Employees Leaving?**

Reasons for Leaving	18-19	19/20	20/21	21/22
Retirement	30% (3)	–	37.5% (3)	20.0% (1)
Relocating	10% (1)	40% (2)	–	20.0% (1)
Dissatisfied with present pay	–	40% (2)	–	20.0% (1)
Family reasons	–	–	25.0% (2)	20.0% (1)
Personal reasons	20% (2)	–	12.5% (1)	–
Dissatisfied with present benefits	20% (2)	20% (1)	–	–
Dislike management policies and practices	–	–	–	–
Dislike fellow colleagues	–	–	–	–
Returning to school	–	–	–	–
Entering the military	–	–	–	–
Dissatisfied with present job responsibilities	–	–	12.5% (1)	–
Not enough work to do	–	–	–	–
Dissatisfied with working conditions	–	–	–	–
Dissatisfied with supervisor	–	–	12.5% (1)	–
Dissatisfied with opportunities to advance here	–	–	–	20.0% (1)
Inadequate job security	–	–	–	–
Dissatisfied with current leadership's vision	20.0% (2)	–	–	–

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## **Conclusion**

We believe the Mount Horeb Area School District remains a destination district. Among the primary factors are: geographic location, district educational philosophy, working conditions, instructional support, respected and knowledgeable employees, and competitive employee benefits/salaries. The data presented in this report shows our cross-functional efforts to recruit and retain faculty and staff. Our focus remains to recruit and retain high quality staff.