

Question: List up to three specific things that the District could do to improve in the areas of staff recruitment, retainment, and professional development.

(184 responses)

1. Top Pay. More 4 day work weeks built into the calendar
2. incentives such as 401.k, increased salary
3. Go to local colleges job fairs, bonus for teachers who stay, more personal days to attend PD
4. incentives, bonus' and continued raises
5. The majority of people who have left our building is due to other districts offering more money-- everyone who leaves says that they wish they did not have to and they love being at Shettler, but they have to go where they are offered more
6. Increase wages
7. pay people for the years they already have (every time there is a posting, I know amazing, experienced, gifted people who would love to come here, because they see how much I love it and am so happy with my move here, but they can't leave a district where they have 10 or 20 years in without taking such a huge pay cut that it's not even reasonable to consider)
8. Decrease demands on staff (that looks different for different roles), increase pay, have staff be more involved in decision making.
9. Fixing flaws in the contract-using language that is applicable to everyone and not so subjective as to when it does and does not, promoting more staff mental health time/activities
10. Recruitment: Promote school/staff community as welcoming and supportive. Retainment: Continue to negotiate ways for compensation and opportunities to take time off for any reason throughout the year. Professional development: Continue to survey the needs and wants of the staff and perhaps clarify what the PD is going to be about
11. More whole team building. Every employee is included.
12. Not entirely sure, but as I get more familiar with the school, I would want to feel trusted and have autonomy in my teaching
13. increase the number of Physical education teachers at all levels.
14. make sure all available resources are used on staff that interact with students, create a culture that we are all in this together for the student's best interest in achievement
15. Honesty, appreciation and understanding. Will keep good employees.

16. Smaller class sizes.
17. Pay more, lower the number of preps (some teachers have 5),
18. higher pay (starting pay), merit pay
19. 1. Classroom management. Let the teachers do the positive reinforcement with PBIS but the administration should put the hammer down. We have lost a lot of teachers due to the poor behavior and lack of real, tangible consequences. 2. Class sizes. Again, they are continually growing. Teachers cannot meet the needs of their students with this many kids in a class. 3. More resources for teacher support.
20. Increase pay to make us a more desirable district to teach in, find ways to highlight each staff member's positive impact on the district, academic and behavioral supports need to be available with a reasonable timeline.
21. We will retain staff if we listen to them and value their time and effort. Don't put more on employees plates without taking things off.
22. smaller class sizes, give staff more of their years from previous teaching jobs, address classrooms in old buildings with broken furniture and boards (don't put a bandaid on it)
23. Salary
24. Continue to increase pay to reflect the work being done. Address behavior issues more quickly and implement consequences for poor student behavior. Hire more academic interventionists.
25. Start being a CHAMPION for Your Staff...Fight to Retain Us with reasonable pay increases & realistic job expectations (100% growth in reading & math for ALL 29 students in a second grade classroom to earn a mere Proficient Rating is ABSURD), Fight to retain us by valuing my professional knowledge and my time (I don't need PD walking me through a new tool to teach a new curriculum, I can read.), and Fight to retain us with kindness and respect in communications and interactions (If you say you will get back to me by Friday, aim for Thursday!).
26. Well the big thing is pay. Speaking as an employee of the district, these are the things that have bothered me over the years: having to use my personal days or get docked to chaperone district events for my kids. This happened during camps, DC trips, day trips to Chicago, etc. While other out of district staff would just call in sick to be able to do these things with their kids. This could also be a perk for staff to live in the district and have their children attend Fruitport. Could we explore not differentiating absent days? Also please respect staff time with the PD and don't just plan "busy work" as kids call it. I could use that time to grade, organize, plan better instruction, etc. Another thing (and I know this is a calendar thing) but could we explore the Thursday before spring break being an optional PD day? Like if you don't want to use a personal day you can come in, but if you have kids and want to be able to afford plane tickets you can fly out on Wednesday night. There is a huge difference in price and since we can only travel during the most expensive times of the year it would help immensely. I have heard this from many people throughout the district as well. And many students are absent anyway.
27. Retainment - I don't believe it's about pay. It's about building climate and culture. I've heard some

of the worst bullies in the district are some of the veteran teachers. Hold all staff accountable for their actions! Professional Development - other districts are using reading coaches to go in and work with staff. The idea of on site support is key. If the teacher doesn't implement the support - hold them accountable. Staff Recruitment - post early and get the best candidates possible.

28. Getting negative behaviors of students under control would help a lot. When teaching becomes difficult due to student behaviors you start seeing teachers look elsewhere. Decrease class sizes. Ask teachers what kinds of professional development would be helpful and then provided THAT at delayed starts, etc

29. Let staff wear jeans everyday if they are still looking professional. Have staff sick and personal days be "any days and not allotted to sick or personal. More money for classroom resources/competitive pay

30. As far as staff recruitment and retainment, I would suggest seeing more consistency with the contract. For example, teachers get reimbursed for certification (as stated in contract), and ancillary staff does not. Another example is that teachers may earn comp time, and ancillary staff is allowed "flex time", but only allowed to be used in short increments that same week. These may seem like "small" details, but do make a big difference for recruitment and retainment.

31. Pay, listen to staff needs, RESPOND to staff needs

32. Annual district focus, increase support/training opportunities for staff

33. Merit pay, more special education staff, improved pay for noon supervisors and IAs so we are more likely to retain staff in these positions.

34. Wages need to be competitive.

35. Pay more. Provide lunch once a week. Hire more support staff to assist with challenging students.

36. Looking at creative perks

37. All employees are important. Treat them as such and retainment might increase. No one wants to feel like an unwanted child!

38. I really don't know what we do to attempt to keep staff. Competitive wages? Tuition reimbursement with a contract attached to stay for so long after graduation? Extra help in the classrooms who have many children that are harder to teach, even if this is parent or family volunteers. More paid time off. I would love to see us do away with delayed start and half days like other local schools have done and then do more longer weekends/weeks off throughout the year. Mona Shores is a great example of this. Maybe having more time away from the school and not having to use vacation time would help.

39. Reduce class sizes, have consequences for those who have d

40. Pay scale equitable to Ottawa County/other area schools, incentives to retain teachers
41. Salaries
42. Higher pay, better benefits,
43. Highlight staff achievement raises for teachers and support staff
44. Not sure, but I really hope we are paying our teachers and staff adequately and that they are supported by our district.
45. Competitive wages, improved retirement options, paid advanced academic degrees, allow paid leave for mental health days
46. Instructional assistants need more training and better pay for retainment
47. Increase starting pay, continue to balance the pay schedule and repair damage by their salaries being frozen, increase the amount pay for sick days that staff doesn't use to incentive them Not to use the days with ultimately saves the district money
48. Don't know anything of how this happens so cannot comment
49. Build Climate and Culture among staff, offer competitive wages and benefits, provide recognition for a job well done
50. Pay more
51. 1. Pay teachers for what they are worth 2. Lessen their load & stop putting more on their plate 3. Provide them with the Health and Wellness days that the state said can be given to them ~ Like Shores! Trust your staff that they will use those hours to keep them from being drained, etc.
52. We need to provide a lot more support for classroom management and A LOT more support for student behaviors. We are not getting the support we need. Students are not respectful to staff and do not receive any consequences and the behavior continues. Teachers are overwhelmed with work and the pressure to improve test scores. We have to do too much work outside of the school day.
53. Ensure that staff who come into the district with experience are compensated for that level of experience
54. Better pay for instructional assistants.
55. Increase staff compensation.
56. Better buildings, multiple insurance options, and more space for the early childcare center
57. Smaller class sizes & cleaner buildings

58. pay more, make sure all staff is included on things, better contracts for clerical
59. More support by having more staff. Fewer class sizes, less disruptions, more focused work.
60. attend local universities/colleges on a "recruitment" type day, continue to provide the wonderful support that administration has been providing in the last 2 years!! We want to feel valued and right now, I feel valued. Thank you.
61. increased salaries, paid tuition, more all-staff celebrations
62. allow staff to attend professional development, be more intentional with good mentors, continue to off staff mental health time
63. Hire more employees to help with the load of student discipline. Hire more employees for academic and behavior interventions at the high school level.
64. pay your teachers more so they don't take jobs somewhere else.
65. Mental health days, morale boosters
66. Professional development in all areas of education
67. Offer incentives such as a bonus or PTO for every 5 or 10 years of employment
68. Bonus to retire every year, money new staff members could use to buy a house in the district like Holland did and longevity bonus for veteran staff
69. Pay attention to those that are "strangers" applying to the district. Diversify
70. More staff coverage so teachers feel able to complete professional development opportunities at ISD
71. Improve student behavior, decrease teacher tasks not directly connected to teaching, make staff feel professionally valued
72. Seek a younger staff using a buyout for older staff.
73. Increase staff wages.
74. Teacher assisting or student teachers from surrounding colleges in more buildings, give teachers options on PD they would like to attend, reduce prices for adult meals in cafeteria

75. Be honest and help with large class sizes.
76. Better pay for aides and training
77. Upgrade the buildings
78. None
79. None
80. Emphasize teachers not teaching their opinion. I have been told by many that that is becoming a problem in high school and it worries me for my children's future. Example, do not teach my kid to be a Democrat or a Republican, just teach them about the government. It's their choice what they want to be. 2nd ex: Teach kids about They're body and health education, but absolutely never teach them it's okay to change their gender. That is not the school's place to plant in their head.
81. Listen to what the parents have to say when it comes to a staff members
82. Health, dental and vision insurance. No private companies!
83. Better facilities.
84. The teaching wage to start is too low to attract talent.
85. Supervisors are not perfect listen to the individuals in each department
86. Salary
87. Adequate pay, flexibility, find additional ways to engage staff and keep them motivated. After school yoga or painting class, etc.
88. Not sure
89. Include more benefits. Eliminate the teacher parent communication.
90. continue to support staff, set contracts and calendar before end of school year
91. Competitive pay, more classroom support
92. Pay them more. They deserve it.
93. Keep high standards, a line teachers/staff who have the same values as the parents and community
94. If staff feel like they are part of sections, get equal/ fair pay & have a decent work environment they will come.
95. Happy atmosphere, Respect for one another
96. Higher Pay

97. Identify potential teachers before college graduation. If a coach can teach, hire them. Recruit locally and pay appropriately. Stop the nepotism and cronyism - it is blatant and obvious.
98. More incentives, better pay
99. decrease classroom sizes, increase teacher pay, and increase the number of support staff available to teachers.
100. PD for staff in team building to help staff feel valued, learn empathy for other staff members, and learn how to work well with other teachers on their team/grade level.
101. More funding for classrooms and more teachers
102. Pay better. No secret. The best schools pay their teachers what they are worth.
103. Pay incentives
104. Offer a better compensation package which I know is much easier said than done!
105. More compensation
106. Pay scale does not appear to reflect a district that values its teachers, doesn't appear able/willing to pay to recruit staff compared to other districts
107. 1 - Dedicated class size caps. Any district that could hold elementary classes at 20 would gain incredible staff. 2 - Pay. This is a big deal. 3 - Teacher autonomy- ensure teachers are heard and their opinions are given hefty weight in decision making around academics and student behavior.
108. You pay more pretty simple
109. Offer continued education
110. I don't have an answer for this because I think Fruitport has some of the best staff around!
111.N/a
112. 1. Increase pay to match other local districts 2. Honor steps for other teachers wanting to move into the district. 3. Have relevant professional development by age and or department
113. Maybe hold after hrs food and drinks for staff
114. more condensed school schedule - less half days late start days and random days off. increased community resources - there's a serious lack of child care in the Fruitport area for young families and teachers that may want to move here.

115.	Look beyond Fruitport alumni, require continuous education in academics and athletics, take action based on surveys
116.	There are teachers working there that have done and said horrendous things. They've been reported. Nothing seems to ever be done. Hold staff accountable for their influence on our children's mental health.
117.	Display your academic environment as one who caters to everyone
118.	Unsure.
119.	n/a
120.	I feel like the longevity in our district is pretty great. We haven't seen the huge turnover many other districts are seeing
121.	I suspect better pay and benefits.
122.	Competitive pay, benefits, raises, retention bonuses.
123.	Listen to staff needs and concerns, make staff feel valued and heard, competitive compensation
124.	Please stop doing late start. This is extremely hard on working families. It would be so much better to have an early release on Fridays or an occasional Friday off
125.	NA
126.	Better pay and staff training.
127.	Create collaborative groups for staff and community building relationships
128.	Listen to the union
129.	Improve facilities
130.	We need to get away from treating everyone the same. Develop a performance bonus program.
131.	treat staff with respect and show appreciation often
132.	I applied and didn't even get a chance for an interview.
133.	I hope our staff feel appreciated! Hopefully if staff do leave, the district is performing exit interviews to know what can be done differently if anything. I also think the tenure of many teachers shows how well the district is doing. I think recruiting alumni is always the best idea!

134.	More jobs, retention bonuses, more varied pd
135.	Treating staff well with a good salary and benefits package is the obvious place to start. Leadership that supports innovative ideas and is willing to take calculated chances is the best recruitment tool I know of. Word of mouth is a powerful tool, whether it is positive or negative. If teachers are talking with peers about feeling valued and appreciated, they will tell their colleagues.
136.	I would love to see some project based learning training
137.	Pay them what they are worth
138.	More pay, more staff in classrooms, smaller class size
139.	Consider those that have attended the school themselves and live in the district for jobs. These people have a vested interest in the success of the schools already and also probably have community connections that can help with a sense of belonging. Make sure our current staff are making wages that are keeping up with the rates of inflation and continuing insurance costs as well. Lastly, involve them in professional development decision making. This will make it more relevant to their needs versus what the ISD is trying to propagate.
140.	ALL teachers need to regularly attend refresher classes about dealing with special education students and how they can help and work with the special education teachers to help these students be successful.
141.	Tough one, but how do you evolve past the administration being on one side and the teachers the other? Or the requirement for teachers to continue their education despite they have a degree, that sounds like a downer as well. The nation is seeking these answers, got no solutions
142.	Give us a fair raise- look at the amount of money the district receives from the state and the amount our class sizes bring in, we deserve at least half of that money, if not more. Lower class sizes to be comparable with surrounding districts (SL, Mona Shores, etc.). PD should all be done online.
143.	Competitive pay (bureaucratic pay increases stopped until competitive pay rivals surrounding districts); teacher veto power on District policies (majority rule, TU representative); Agile strategies for horizontal/vertical career growth.
144.	Quit micromanaging, respect them and get to know them, show compassion and empathy-they have trauma too, increase pay, offer support with fidelity, let them vet curriculum they are using, give them a voice and actually listen.
145.	Hiring dedicated staff
146.	back up your teachers better when parents or students make false accusations, Fruitport Focus needs to regularly highlight positives of student learning. A lot of good things happen there that the community doesn't know about. g
147.	I wish there was a way to weed out staff that are not engaged with students or the content area. There are many wonderful teachers at FCS, but definitely some who should not be in the profession. I'd also love to see a more diverse staff as well.

148.	Healthcare, wages, retirement
149.	Share on social media, bonuses for staff to stay, ask teachers what they want professional development on
150.	Increase pay, give staff supervising paras time to coach or pay them like you would a mentor or athletic coach
151.	Keep up staff morale, always good to keep the wages competitive
152.	New middle school
153.	Allow discipline on to bus drivers
154.	Courses on being more open to students with special needs
155.	Competitive pay, PLCs?
156.	Listen to parents and staff about concern with some teachers
157.	The pay scale for all para-professionals needs to be re-evaluated. With specific focus on the job duties and details of our program room paras. They do so much and their pay does not reflect their job duties.
158.	Set the example. Treat all staff the same
159.	Guided study hall classes for struggling students. Community mentors.
160.	This is difficult as higher education facilities are corrupt and teach false ideologies.
161.	Better pay, better benefits and be treated like a person
162.	No particular thoughts on this.
163.	Increase teacher pay, promote community involvement to staff by giving them time to volunteer in the community
164.	Increase salaries and benefits for employees
165.	Keep being innovative, take care of our educators
166.	Pay the teachers more, allocate more money to the classrooms, lunch rooms, and enrichment areas.
167.	If the teachers/staff are supported by the admin in what is 'right' for the students aside from outside pressures they will respond accordingly.
168.	Unknown

169.	I know some staff remained in the same step for multiple years. Give them back those steps that they earned.
170.	Better pay and improve morale of current staff
171.	Salary
172.	more support staff, specifically at younger levels (paraprofessionals for K, 1, 2?)
173.	Not sure
174.	You are on the right track as a district with the superintendent Jason Kennedy. Many staff enjoy working with him. Each building could use more welcoming office staff. Retainment could easily be team teaching a different subject to continue to grow and not stay the same for 20 years. In the building where they teach, give plaques or stars for every year they have been at FCS for everyone to see. Everyone can be competitive, just need to find the right thing to give them a spark.
175.	Offer incentives such as discounts on vacation packages, monthly food stipend for help at home if they need it, 0% interest short term emergency loans, etc.
176.	Incentives to existing employees to recruit friends, colleagues, and plan more social events for staff, y'all work hard, need to have more fun together!
177.	Provide competitive pay, including longevity steps, increase student teachers from universities, by offering veteran teachers a bonus for mentoring a student teacher.
178.	Have to continue to lose the negative attitude that was caused by former Superintendent and board, be open to suggestions
179.	Hire people who actually want to be there and not be there just for a paycheck. Hire people who aren't difficult to work with. Hire someone who works well with others and not make the work environment a hostile environment and makes everyone want to leave or not to come back into work. Also hiring enough noon supervisors to keep all students safe outside and in other areas of the school.
180.	A better early childhood facility. Better insurance options. Better pay
181.	Better pay
182.	Referral bonus for new hires and years of service recognition
183.	Better pay for teachers, more financial support for classrooms
184.	1) Seek out and value staff voice and input 2) Consider who is teaching what - new teachers usually have more preps, veteran teachers less preps and advanced courses - new teachers are feeling burnt out and leave 3) Start recognizing our staff more regularly. Get in their rooms. Post

on our pages all the innovative and responsive ways they are teaching and supporting kids. Praise our staff for their effort and care.