

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

At

Catalina HS

1. List in three words what you like about being a teacher in this district?

- Individual time with student.
- Opening student's minds.
- Students.
- Greater variety of subjects.

2. Do the working conditions at your school help, hinder, or have no effect on your teaching?

- Yes to all three. They help because this district is so big and administrators don't bother us. 1010 does not value creativity at site. Only value creativity that comes from them. Central administration
- Never see administrator. If I send referrals, I never get a response. Was promised chemistry books and did not get them for 8 months. It is hard to get things done with administrator.
- Have books that are 10 years outdated. Not sure if this is district. Getting new books is impossible. If we get books Sabino takes them.
- Administrators have not taught Ex Ed. Don't get responses from 1010. Can go 3-6 months because there is no one who has CPR training.
- At Tucson, we are losing really good teachers. Teachers need to be listened to not just heard. We are here to be creative and help kids. Need to be given leeway to do our jobs.
- It seems that it is top down when it's not appropriate since each school is different. Too much testing. It's been a negative impact.
- There are a lot of cultures in this district.
- District did listen to teachers on pay scale.
- Hinder- discipline isn't collaborative.
- Administrators don't include teachers to board meeting. Never discussion on decisions being made. Teachers are never asked on changes or never told. This is not only in Ex Ed classes, but in other classes.
- 20 minutes IEP training. We are totally not in compliance. Don't have enough time to do it all.
- Problems with inclusion teachers. No one knows their role.
- Have slots missing in our school. Giving people stipends to Ex Ed. Thinking of leaving TUSD. I Do IEPs at home. No loyalty. New teachers get bonuses and Teachers who have been at TUSD for years get nothing.

- If a position is open and it is out of district. Instead of opening the position in house. Had a great principal and knew the laws and sent him to Sabino.

3. Do you feel supported by your principal, mentor, district staff, superintendent, and school board?

- Who are these people? There are not mentors.
- I have been here 3 years and never got a mentor. 2nd year did not get any help. None of the things that they teach you will not help you or is not useful.
- Principal supports me. District level has taken away power from supplies, personnel; try to put in cookie cutter.
- The schools are doing things in different ways.
- You can't teach Sabino way at Tucson High.
- Have disproportionate. Could not meet the needs for 30 kids. Too many kids in one class. Can't manage that many kids in one class room.
- Brings quality to kids that don't have IEPs.

4. Within your classroom environment what are some of things you would like the district to know?

- 27 - 1 has been a nice positive. I'm seeing smaller classes.
- Lost a lot of kids to Sabino because of the 27 cap. I lost 8 kids to Sabino. Kids drop and go to others schools and charter schools.
- My Roster changes
- 27- 1 is a joke! Reality is in regular Ed class room we can handle 32. Give us 32. Ex Ed, special Ed classes need to be lower as well as elementary. In High School we get what we get and have to teach. Have kids in class room can't read a periodic table. They don't get the basic stuff. Teach them how to read and teach them how to speak Spanish we are so close to border.
- Have a student who reads in a 3rd grade level and can't bring them to the level that he/she needs in one year.
- Why are kids in 9th grade with 3rd grade level reading? Parents have been given the right to retain and blame teachers when their child fails. Then they wonder why they can't pass the standardized tests.
- The kids are tired of tests.
- Huge issue with 24 students who have all kinds of issues with problems when they can have 27 Ex Ed students.

5. Concerning the year-to-year student placement process (balanced classrooms), how satisfied are you?

- There is not enough balance in any real ability to teach.

- Teacher was told by her principal that a really good teacher gets more kids.
- In high school we have to specialize.
- Better student learning.
- It's not balanced. A bunch of ADHD and the other students need to go to library to focus.
- I have 4 girls and the rest boys. How do you balance out schedule?
- Dr. Sanchez has done some good things; however he does not listen to the teachers.
- If a teachers has a specialty in education. Still have 50% of special Ed students. Was told because she has a degree in psychology.
- I have a lot of Autistic kids in her class. She receives support for these kids and wishes the same for Special Ed.

6. What single element do you feel “most” gets in your way of achieving your classroom and professional goals?

- Lack of parent support. Parent is blamed for failing student. Student does the work
- Lack of support from Administration. Lack of parent support.
- Lack of support from Admin, District, Principal. What do you do?
- Lack of supplies. Teachers have to pay for supplies. Was told that grades should be saved in computer. What happens when computer crashes and you lose all your grades.
- More support from TEA.

7. How do you feel about the teachers' union (or association) and its effectiveness in representing your interest and in championing the teaching profession?

- This is a loaded question, teachers be careful you are talking to Administration.
- I was not able to get signed up in the 2 years I was in TUSD.
- Appreciate the Union supporting teachers regarding the pay salary.
- I wish they would take out a little bit on each pay check. Don't like the way it is handled.
- I like that the Union represents me. We only have 1 representative. Used to have 2 representatives at each site. Losing too many members.
- Feel that Administration is mad at you.
- TEA suffers from the same problem. American management. This generation takes for granted what has created. District negotiator will lie to the board. TEA is support and without TEA there is NO support.

Other input:

- I make less money now than I did 8 years ago. Other professions make more money than a teacher.
- Teachers are valued less.
- District does not appreciate teachers and the state does not value education and Administration would keep the teachers in the loop and work together it would work. Instead we are told what is going to be done their way.
- Administration does not understand teaching. It takes a teacher at least 3 years to understand how to teach. Put administrator on a teacher salary and give them a stipend in a place where they are.
- Teachers are overwhelmed with everything they need to do. Why can't we keep good teachers?
- Most people choose to work elsewhere because they want more pay and less stress.
- Upset because new teachers get paid more money and bonuses when I've been here for years.
- I stay at TUSD because I want the kids to succeed. I want to know when we are going to be allowed to teach again.