

2013

Exit Interview

I met with [REDACTED] a [REDACTED] at Fox River, on [REDACTED] 2013. The intent of the meeting was to conduct an exit interview with [REDACTED] in light of her recent resignation from the district.

Exit interviews are conducted as a way for the District to gain feedback from employees in an effort to improve programs such as safety, training, and the hiring process to name a few. The honest and open feedback of an employee exiting the district can sometimes be invaluable to us making improvements that will positively affect all employees and ultimately students.

[REDACTED] was asked a series of questions from why she is leaving the district to the adequacy of training to finally any improvements we could make. This was [REDACTED] first year with the district.

[REDACTED] had expressed several reasons for seeking employment in another district [REDACTED] was hired at North Cape) and leaving our district. First, she was given a higher salary at North Cape and she liked that North Cape still maintained a "pyramid" or salary structure. She is interested in furthering her education and North Cape offered salary increases for credits earned. She felt that presented a better opportunity for her. Additionally, she expressed her concerns about the culture in the building stating that no one eats lunch together, no one wants to do anything together, she felt like she couldn't recognize her students' birthdays with a 10 minute party (emphasizing that for some of the kids she worked with, this was important and may be the only recognition they get). She expressed that she felt so afraid to do anything and that she just wanted to be able to teach and not have everything she does micromanaged. The final reason for leaving was based on the fact that the Assistant Superintendent resigned. "Someone who brought light and positivity into the district wasn't invited back. That made me nervous of what the future would be like."

[REDACTED] said she talked to the principal about her concerns about both salary and the grad credits.

[REDACTED] had several things that were satisfying about her position: She said she had an incredible amount of resources to do the job, her needs were always met (the Director of Special Ed was always helpful knowing the laws and requirements) and the building was filled with GREAT teachers.

When asked about the least satisfying part of the job, she indicated that being "under the microscope" was the least satisfying. She felt she was a professional, capable teacher and would have liked some freedom and flexibility in teaching. She also stated that there were never any individual comments to teachers about things they are doing well. The only positive comments were given as a group like "I have the best teachers". She felt that positive comments to individual teachers would be welcomed. She also liked the U Rock program and recommended several teachers.

To improve the position, she thought it would be nice to have more flexibility. One example she cited was a social skills program that the special ed teachers recommended based on the student group they worked with. [REDACTED] felt that it was very difficult to convince others it was a necessary program for her students. She even felt like others were getting angry because she continued to bring it up. In the end the program was approved and she explained how the students learned and demonstrated what they had learned. In a field trip to Marty's, the students were expected to greet the waitress, order their own food and pay for it. By the way in which she spoke about the restaurant trip, she appeared very pleased with the outcome and proud of what was accomplished by the students. This is the kind of professional freedom she spoke of earlier that would make the job better.

[REDACTED] felt she received adequate training to be able to do her job effectively, pointing to the fact that the guidance provided by the Special Ed Coop and the Director of Special Ed was what allowed her to excel in her job. She felt the Director of Special Ed was very responsive to her needs. She also felt that her mentor and the Director of Special Ed provided her with support, especially when she needed it.

Regarding sufficient feedback about her performance, she felt she received feedback but didn't feel it matched the summative score. She had always received high praise for the work she had done but she felt her score did not reflect the high praises she received. She also emphasized that she does not mind being evaluated or even scored.

[REDACTED] provided a few recommendations to us to help create a better workplace. First, she emphasized that teachers need to be trusted in the building. Second, she stated the importance of individually recognizing teachers. Finally, she also thought it would be important to have some teacher "fun" activities. She further explained that since the teachers are "pitted against each other so much" that more teambuilding skills are needed so the staff can learn to trust each other.

Other feedback provided by [REDACTED] included the fact that WGSD has top quality teachers with knowledge and expertise. If they would be given more praise and professional flexibility, teachers would want to work here and students would want to learn because they enjoy coming to school.

To consider working in the district again, [REDACTED] stated that there would have to be a system where a teacher could work their way up recognizing the work they do. Also, the system would have to be clear on where they could go and how they could get there. Finally, the administration would need to demonstrate appreciation for the teachers.

Denise