

██████████ 2013

██████████ Exit Interview

I met with ██████████ a ██████████ at Fox River, on ██████████ 2013. The intent of the meeting was to conduct an exit interview with ██████████ after she had recently resigned from the district to take a job at North Cape.

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.

██████████ 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 ██████████ fifth year with the district and her sixteenth year teaching.

██████████ had expressed the main reason for seeking employment outside the district was due to the climate and lack of leadership at the building level. She emphasized how this has caused much competition among teachers and how the climate has pitted teachers against one another. She also had several other reasons that she stated in the discussion. ██████████ felt that if a teacher was struggling, there was nothing proactive to help them succeed. In her interview she asked, "We differentiate for students, why wouldn't we differentiate for teachers?" She also felt that refraining from negative talk about teachers to other teachers would be a positive step. ██████████ also indicated the fact that the Assistant Superintendent was leaving (that according to the minutes, it did not appear he received a contract renewal) played a role as well as the fact that there was nothing done about the teacher survey. She pointed out that her and ██████████ were number 6 and 7 leaving the special education group (not sure if she meant just at Fox River). ██████████ felt that the Director of Special Education was very knowledgeable on special education law and should be used more often in any crisis situation. ██████████ indicated that when it is obvious that the Director of Special Education is not "liked", dissention ensues and solid decisions cannot be made because it becomes more about power and control versus what is best for the students. Finally she pointed to the IN9 notebooks as a way for students to constantly reflect. Using that same premise with teachers, she felt that when teachers reflect and share their reflections and how they feel, they are dismissed, deflected and not valued.

██████████ did not share her concerns with anyone in the district.

When asked about what was most satisfying about her position, she responded the people she worked directly with, Erin Dietz, Tianne Kelly and Mike Rosandich. She also enjoyed building a reading intervention program and, of course, working with the students.

Least satisfying was the lack of leadership and follow through. She articulated her dissatisfaction in the evaluation process, questioning how being in teacher's room for 10 minutes twice a year was enough time to truly evaluate the teacher.

█████ felt that, in general, if the administration perceived special education differently, the change would be positive. If they treated the special education students with respect and the special education teachers more as equals to other teachers, it would be a move in the right direction. Also, finding a balance between reading intervention and caseload would be helpful but she does understand that struggle.

█████ indicated her training was adequate to be able to do her job effectively however she felt she was only given adequate support 50% of the time.

Regarding sufficient feedback about her performance, █████ believed feedback was only at a single evaluation and not constantly throughout the year. Other than that, all feedback was generic and expressed at staff meetings, "I have a great staff".

To help us create a better workplace, █████ offered several ideas. First, she thought the U Rock awards would be more meaningful if they came from administration and not other teachers. The teachers value each other but she wanted to see the administration value the teachers. When implementing programs, she would like to see more feedback from teachers. She would have liked to not feel so "under the microscope" in her every day teaching. And finally, she thought if the administration was more respectful of how they treat people and not have such a "Getcha/Gotcha negative approach, that would create a better environment overall.

█████ expressed this, "I feel like there are high quality teachers and with the right climate and leadership, we could go to the moon and back." She quoted a line from *Remember the Titans* that she felt applied, "Attitude reflects leadership."

She would consider returning to the district if there was a more positive climate, if special education was valued, if special education was given planning time and meeting time like art, phy ed, etc., and if there was more of a team concept.

In closing, █████ expressed how mad she was that she had to leave, that the climate and lack of respect and lack of teamwork forced her to seek a job in a different district. She felt that meetings for the most part were ineffective. She did say she loved to hear her principal think out loud because she felt it was real "out of the box" thinking. Finally, it was important to █████ to clarify that she did not "take Tianne" with her to North Cape. Apparently those were the rumors in some of the negative talk █████ was speaking of. She clarified that Tianne was interviewed for the job first and then told █████ there was another opening.

Denise