



AUGENBLICK,
PALAICH AND
ASSOCIATES



Stakeholder Survey: Initial Results

Amanda Brown, APA

Presentation to the Senate Committee on Education
and the House Committee on Education
Little Rock, Arkansas
October 5, 2020

Presentation Overview

- Description of survey and respondents
- Initial findings will be presented in the following areas:
 - Definition of college and career readiness
 - Staff attraction and retention
 - Perceptions of funding system
 - Areas of concern related to education resources and funding in the state
- Review of next steps

Stakeholder Survey Distribution

- Online survey available to all educators and the community
 - Was open from September 3rd-18th (formally closed on the 21st)
- To publicize the survey, the study team distributed a notice to:
 - All superintendents and charter system directors, who were invited to take the survey and distribute it to their staff and families
 - All state educator professional associations
 - All newspapers in the state, using a media contact list provided by ADE

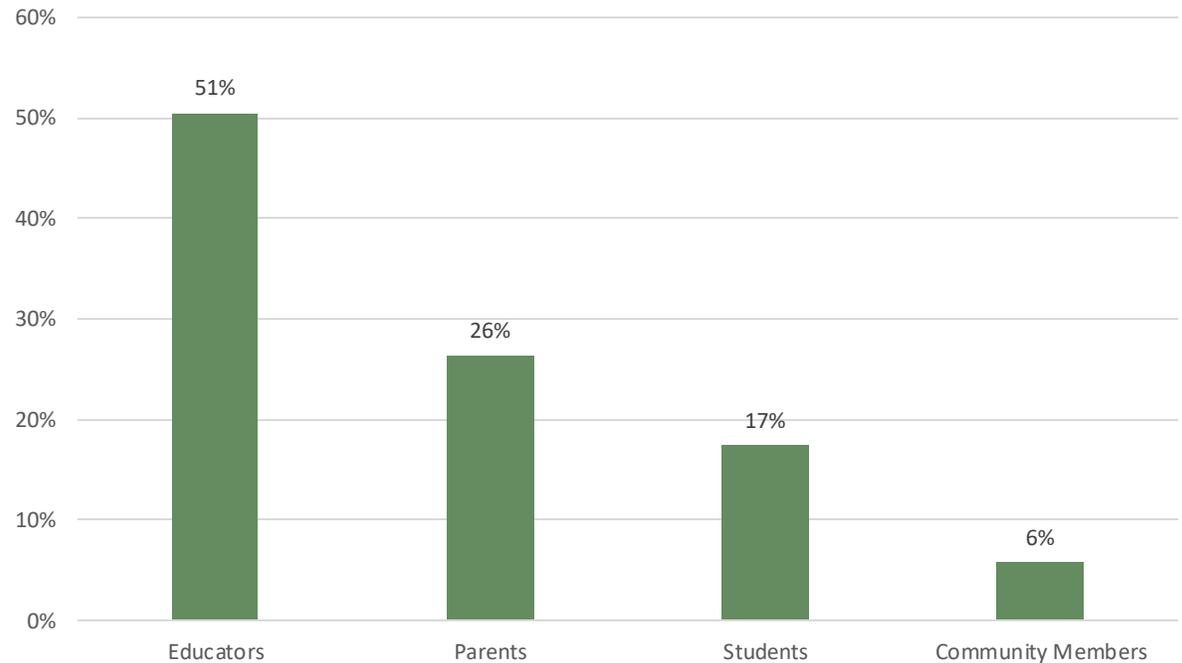
Stakeholder Survey

- Two online survey versions were created: a detailed educator version of the survey, and a more streamlined community survey for parents, students, business leaders and community members

Question Area	Format	Educator Survey	Community Survey
College and career readiness	2 open responses, 1 question block	x	x
Staff attraction and retention	2 open responses, 3 question blocks	x	
Perspectives on the funding system	2 question blocks	x	x
Areas of feedback/concern regarding education resources and funding	1 question block, up to 13 open responses based upon selections	x	x
Specific feedback on the resource matrix and additional categoricals	2 question blocks, 1 open response, and for each of the 11 matrix/categorical areas- 1 additional question block and 1 open response	x	
Any other feedback to share	1 open response	x	x

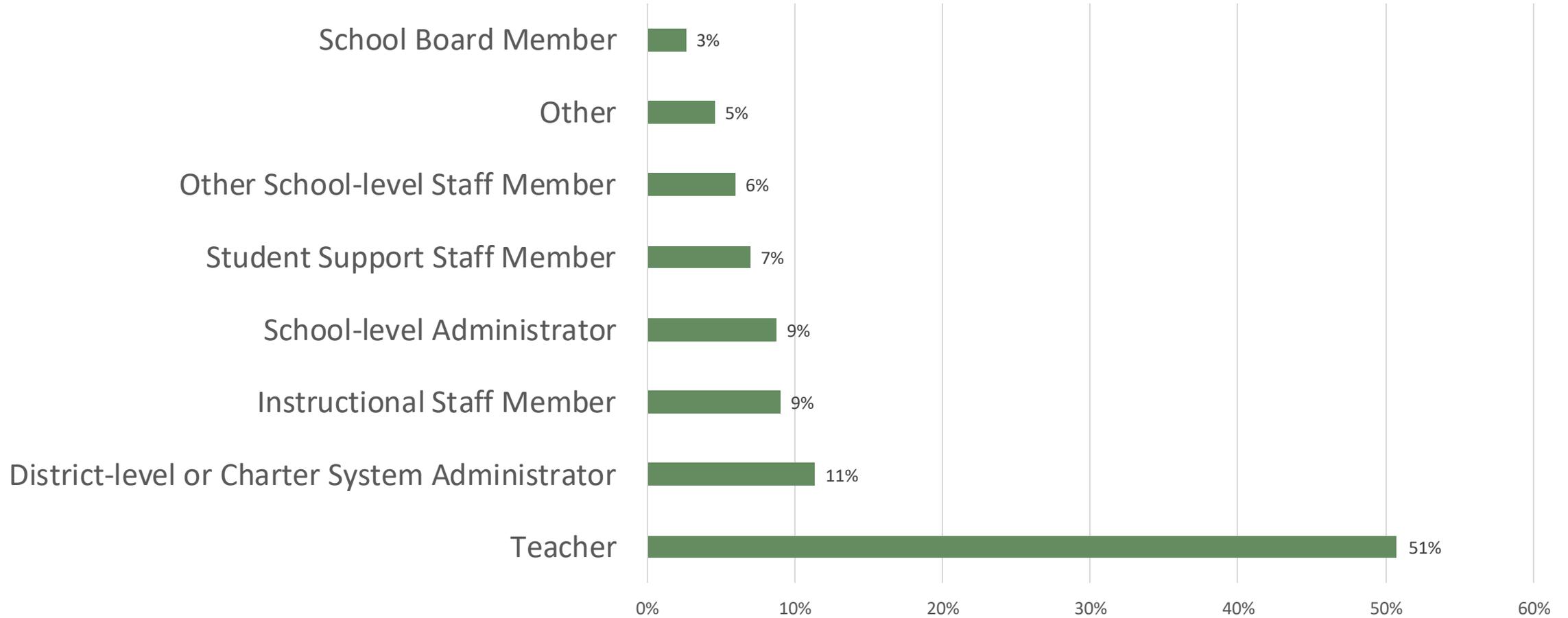
Stakeholder Survey Respondents

- 3,025 individuals participated in the stakeholder survey, roughly split equally between educators and community members from over 170 different districts/charter systems.



Stakeholder Survey Respondents

Educator Roles



Stakeholder Survey Representativeness

- The public stakeholder survey was intended to provide an opportunity for stakeholder engagement, much like public testimony or open listening sessions
 - The intent was not to have perfect representation or be a statistical sample, but to get feedback from those that were interested and willing to participate
- However, we do examine who participates to understand how it may impact the results
 - Educator responses were more weighted toward larger, urban districts in the Central region
 - In the final report, we will examine if responses varied by locale (as rural districts tend to be smaller and more decentralized)
 - For community responses, there was a high level of participation in less than 10 districts and in one charter system (representing about 50% of parent and student responses)
 - Examined results with and without the charter system to determine what impact this had

Today's Initial Results

- As the survey closed on the 21st, today's initial results will be presented at a fairly high level
 - Minimal inclusion of open response questions at this time
- In each survey area the questions asked will be reviewed, and the questions that will be addressed in today's presentation have been bolded
 - All others will be further explored in future presentations and in the report

Feedback Questions

College and Career Readiness

- Both educators and the community were asked:
 - What does it mean to be college and career ready in Arkansas?
 - **What should be included in the state's definition of college and career readiness?**
 - Any other feedback to share regarding college and career readiness?

Educator Survey Results

Definition of College and Career Readiness

- When **educators** were asked to “please indicate whether the following components should be included in how the state defines college and career readiness:”

Potential Definition Element	Strongly agree	Agree
Developing behavioral skills such as dependability, perseverance, working effectively with others, adapting, and managing stress	81%	12%
Learning capabilities such as critical thinking, collaborative problem solving, as well as information and technology skills	74%	20%
Participating in career exploration and planning	67%	27%
Developing financial literacy	66%	26%
Receiving college and career advisement	62%	32%
Participating in career and technical education (CTE)/career-focused courses	58%	33%
Learning academic content knowledge	58%	37%
Being prepared to enter a postsecondary institution without needing remediation	53%	33%
Meeting assessment benchmarks, such as those measured by the ACT	23%	50%

Community Survey Results

Definition of College and Career Readiness

- When **community members** were asked to “please indicate whether the following components should be included in how the state defines college and career readiness:”

Potential Definition Element	Strongly agree	Agree
Developing behavioral skills such as dependability, perseverance, working effectively with others, adapting, and managing stress	49%	40%
Learning capabilities such as critical thinking, collaborative problem solving, as well as information and technology skills	46%	42%
Developing financial literacy	42%	41%
Receiving college and career advisement	41%	46%
Participating in career and technical education (CTE)/career-focused courses	39%	43%
Participating in career exploration and planning	38%	48%
Being prepared to enter a postsecondary institution without needing remediation	33%	40%
Learning academic content knowledge	31%	54%
Meeting assessment benchmarks, such as those measured by the ACT	21%	50%

Survey Questions

Staff Attraction and Retention

- Educators were asked:
 - **What factors (positive or negative) impact your school or district's ability to attract and retain staff?**
 - **Are there any staffing positions/areas that are particularly difficult to attract and retain qualified staff?**
 - What other factors (positive and negative) do you believe impact your district or charter system's ability to attract and retain staff?

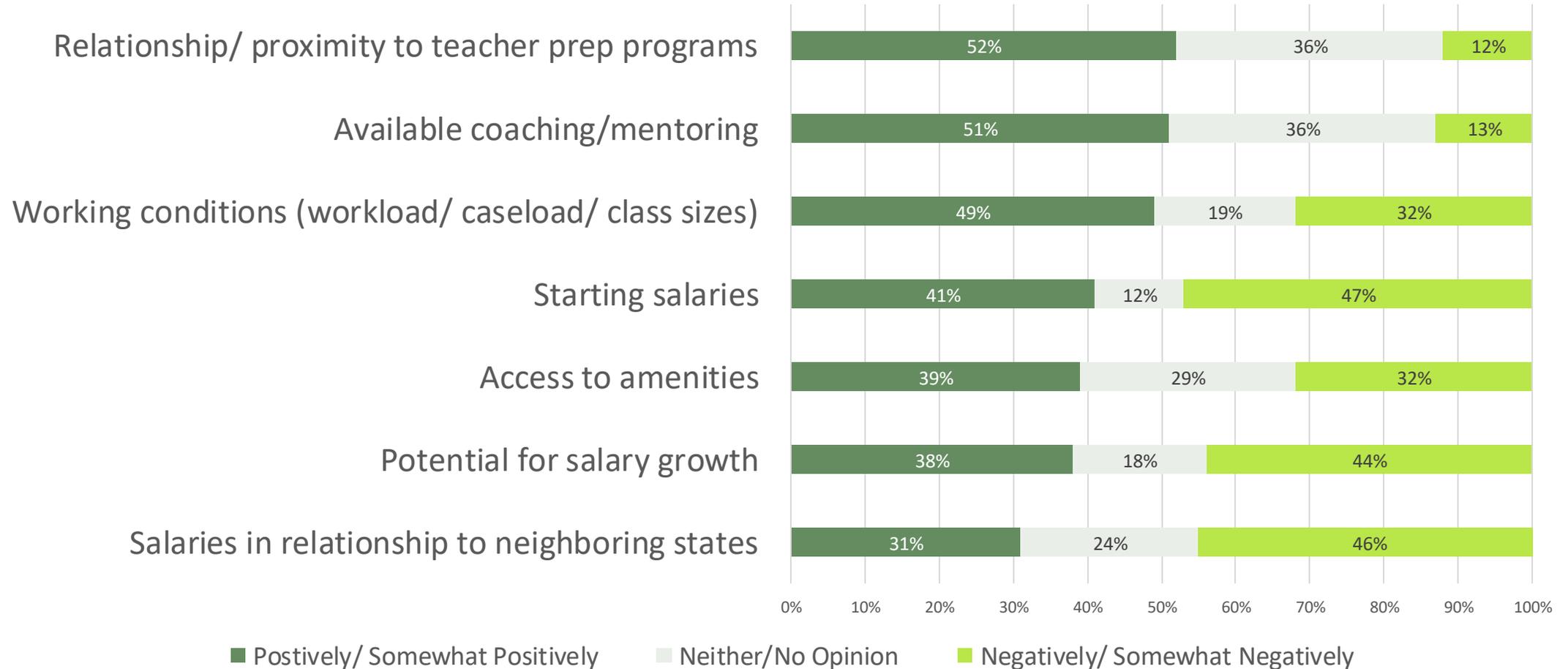
Educator Survey Results

Factors that Influence Staff Attraction

- The factors that the highest percentage of educators said **positively** influenced attraction were:
 - Relationship with/proximity to teacher preparation programs, available coaching/mentoring and working conditions (workload/caseload/class sizes)
- The factors that the highest percentage of educators said **negatively** influenced attraction were:
 - All salary related: starting salaries, salaries in relationship to neighboring states and potential for salary growth

Educator Results

Factors that Influence Staff Attraction, Chart



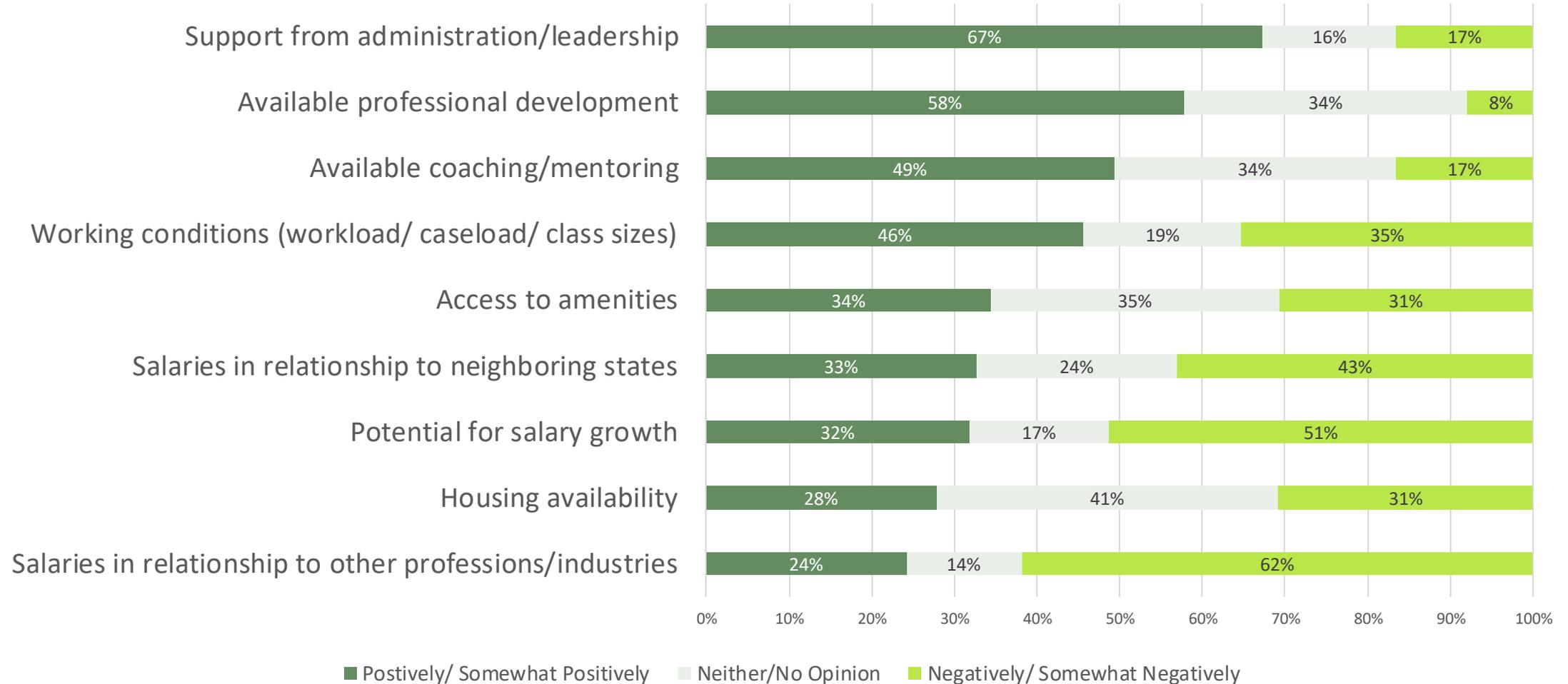
Educator Survey Results

Factors that Influence Staff Retention

- The factors that the highest percentage of educators said **positively** influenced retention were:
 - Support from administration/leadership, available professional development, available coaching/mentoring and working conditions (workload/caseload/class sizes)
- The factors that the highest percentage of educators said **negatively** influenced retention were:
 - Similarly all salary related: salaries in relationship to other professions/industries, salaries in relationship to neighboring states and potential for salary growth

Educator Results

Factors that Influence Staff Retention, Chart



Educator Survey Results

Hard to Fill Positions

- When educators were asked “Are there any specific position areas that are difficult for your district or charter system to attract and retain staff?”:

Answer	%
Special education teachers/staff	56%
Math teachers	39%
Science teachers	29%
Other	16%
Instructional support staff	13%
Nurses	9%
CTE teachers	8%
Other pupil support staff	8%
Administrators	7%
Counselors	6%

- Of the 160 “other” write ins, frequently noted other positions were: bus drivers, paraprofessionals, speech therapists, and other teachers (art, music, English and foreign language)

Survey Questions

Perspectives on Funding System

- Educators and community members were asked:
 - **Whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements regarding:**
 - **The equity, responsiveness (to student needs and district characteristics), flexibility and transparency of the education funding system in Arkansas**
 - **If schools and districts were using resources effectively**

Educator Survey Results

Perspectives on Funding System (Part 1)

- The majority of **educators** agreed that the system was responsive to the different needs of specific student groups, but disagreed that it ensured similar education opportunities for all students, responds to the different needs of school districts due to certain characteristics, or equitably distributed funding to school districts

Question	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly disagree/ Disagree
Responds to the different needs of students (such as low income, special education and English Learners)	55%	38%
Ensures similar education opportunities for all students	40%	54%
Responds to the different needs of school districts (size, location, enrollment changes)	36%	53%
Equitably distributes funding to school districts	34%	50%
Allocates funding in a manner that is clear and understandable	32%	46%
Responds to the different needs of charter systems	29%	13%

Community Survey Results

Perspectives on Funding System (Part 1)

- **Community responses** tended lean towards positive agreement compared to educator responses; however, when student responses were excluded, they tended to be more negative

Percentage of Respondents that “Strongly Agreed” or “Agreed”		
	All Community Responses	Community Responses, Excluding Students
Responds to the different needs of students (such as low income, special education and English Learners)	59%	31%
Ensures similar education opportunities for all students	63%	38%
Responds to the different needs of school districts (size, location, enrollment changes)	54%	45%
Equitably distributes funding to school districts	45%	32%
Allocates funding in a manner that is clear and understandable	45%	27%
Responds to the different needs of charter systems	44%	27%

Educator Survey Results

Perspectives on Funding System (Part 2)

- A majority of **educators** agreed that the schools and districts spend resources efficiently, while disagreeing that (1) where a student lives does not determine the quality of their education, (2) taxpayers are treated equally across the state, and (3) it is easy to understand how funding is determined and allocated

Question	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly disagree/ Disagree
Schools spend resources efficiently	56%	25%
Districts spend resources efficiently	53%	29%
Similar districts are funded fairly in relationship to one another	38%	36%
The current funding system is flexible enough to allow schools and districts to decide how resources should be used to serve students	35%	42%
Where a student lives does <u>not</u> determine the quality of their education	26%	69%
Taxpayers are treated equally across the state	25%	56%
It is easy to understand how funding is determined and allocated	21%	61%

Community Survey Results

Perspectives on Funding System (Part 2)

- **Community responses** were consistent with educator responses when student responses were excluded

Percentage of Respondents that “Strongly Agreed” or “Agreed”		
Question	All Community Responses	Community Responses, Excluding Students
Schools spend resources efficiently	41%	50%
Districts spend resources efficiently	33%	44%
Similar districts are funded fairly in relationship to one another	42%	41%
The current funding system is flexible enough to allow schools and districts to decide how resources should be used to serve students	30%	40%
Where a student lives does NOT determine the quality of their education	44%	30%
Taxpayers are treated equally across the state	49%	30%
It is easy to understand how funding is determined and allocated	45%	24%

Survey Questions

Opportunity to Provide Feedback on Any Education Resource Area

- Educators and community members were asked:
 - **Outside of COVID-related issues for the current school year, in what education resources and funding topics would you like to provide feedback?**
 - A series of options was listed including: capital needs, class sizes, educational opportunities, educator salaries or experience, efficiency of funding/resource use, equity, funding (overall or for certain student groups, schools, or districts/charter systems), instructional resources, school safety, student support resources, supports and services for specific student groups, and tax burden
 - Respondents could also select “other” and share any feedback outside of these categories
 - Respondents could then provide feedback on each topic selected via open text response

Educator Survey Results

Opportunity to Provide Feedback on Any Education Resource Area

- Educators chose to provide additional feedback on the following areas:

Answer	%
Educator salaries or experience	31%
Class sizes	19%
Student support resources (student mental health, counseling, nursing, etc.)	17%
Supports and services for specific student groups (special education, low income students, English learners, gifted students, career and technical education students)	13%
Instructional resources (teachers, instructional coaches, tutors/interventionists, etc.)	13%
Funding (overall or for certain student groups, schools, or districts/charter systems)	12%
School safety	11%
Equity	10%
Educational opportunities (advanced courses, career and technical education, extracurriculars)	9%
Capital needs (construction, maintenance, etc.)	9%
Efficiency of funding/resource use	6%
Tax burden	4%
Other area	3%

Educator Survey Results

Examples of Feedback on Top Resource Area Categories

- **Educator salaries or experiences**

- Responses overall were focused on the need to increase teacher salaries for reasons including:
 - Growing workload/requirements, competitiveness to other professions, competitiveness to other states/districts
 - Feedback addressed starting salaries, compensation tied to advanced degrees and additional years of experience, as well as the top end where teachers “capped out”
- Salary discrepancies between districts, particularly in smaller, rural districts were also highlighted

- **Class sizes**

- Feedback was primarily to reduce class sizes, particularly in the lowest grades
 - Better outcomes for students, more personalization and one-on-one support, and more manageable class size for teachers

Educator Survey Results

Examples of Feedback on Top Resource Area Categories

- **Student support resources**

- Nearly all responses were about needing additional mental health support for all students
 - Many suggested that this was a growing need
 - Suggestions varied from more counselors, social workers, behavior specialists and therapists
 - Some responses also raised concerns for educator mental health

Community Survey Results

Opportunity to Provide Feedback on Any Education Resource Area

- Community members chose to provide additional feedback on the following areas:

Answer	%
School safety	19%
Student support resources (student mental health, counseling, nursing, etc.)	18%
Supports and services for specific student groups (special education, low income students, English learners, gifted students, career and technical education students)	17%
Educational opportunities (advanced courses, career and technical education, extracurriculars)	16%
Educator salaries or experience	16%
Class sizes	14%
Funding (overall or for certain student groups, schools, or districts/charter systems)	12%
Instructional resources (teachers, instructional coaches, tutors/interventionists, etc.)	10%
Equity	8%
Efficiency of funding/resource use	8%
Capital needs (construction, maintenance, etc.)	8%
Tax burden	5%
Other area	5%

Community Survey Results

Examples of Feedback on Top Resource Area Categories

- **School safety**

- Varied feedback related to health and safety procedures related to COVID-19, the need for schools to be safer generally, lack of security in some buildings, the need for SROs at all schools, and regarding active shooter situations (associated drills, prevention, security, gun control and armed staff).

- **Student support resources**

- Feedback was predominately about needing more mental health support for students, as well as full-time nurses. Specific concerns were raised about student mental health during COVID-19 and with remote instruction.

Survey Questions

Resources in the Funding Matrix and Additional Categoricals

- Educators were asked:
 - Would you like to share any specific feedback on the following components of the state's funding matrix?
 - **Are there any resource areas that are not currently addressed in the matrix that you believe should be?**
 - Would you like to share any specific feedback on additional funding provided outside of the matrix for specific student groups or purposes (ESA, ELL, ALE, high cost special education, or professional development)?

Educator Survey Results

Resources in the Funding Matrix

- The most frequently noted resources that educators thought should be addressed in the funding matrix that are not currently included:
 - Student mental health
 - School resource officers (SROs) and school safety/security
 - Dyslexia support
- Other areas noted by multiple respondents included: assistant principals, gifted, interventionists, preschool, special education, support staff, and technology (including wifi/broadband)

Next Steps

- Analysis of feedback on specific matrix areas and additional categoricals (October 19th “Review of Resources in the Matrix” presentation)
- For report:
 - Detailed review of all open responses
 - Additional disaggregation of responses
 - For example: administrator vs. teacher, rural vs. urban/suburban responses



Questions?