

# **SMITHVILLE R-II SCHOOL DISTRICT PROGRAM AND DATA EVALUATION FORM**

## **I. PROGRAM/ DATA INFORMATION**

**Type of Program or Data:** Certified Staff Attendance, Overall Attendance, Staff Retention

**Personnel Responsible for Evaluation:** Kim Davis, Director of Human Resources

**Month of Program Review:** November 2024

## **II. EVALUATION OF PROGRAM/DATA**

**Evaluator Name:** Kim Davis

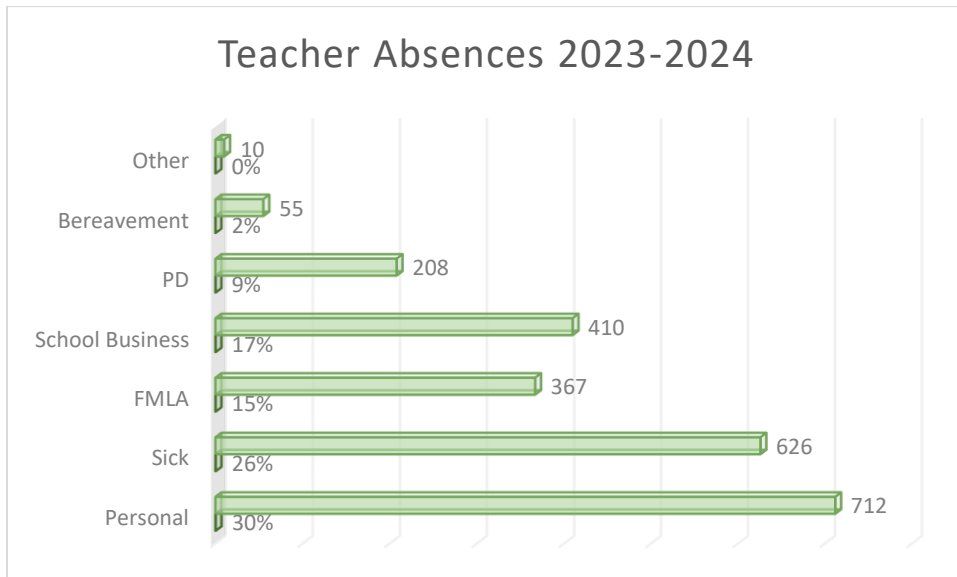
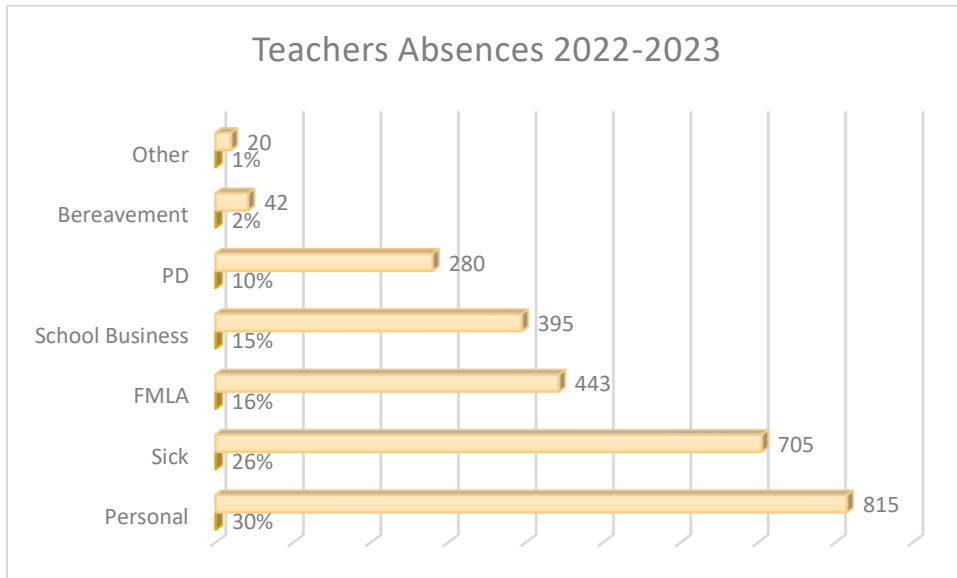
**Position:** Director of Human Resources

**Evaluative Criteria:** Previous program evaluations set 95% as the goal for staff attendance and 90% staff retention.

**Staff Attendance:** The percentages below represent the average attendance for staff over the last ten years between the months of August and May. They include absences for illness, personal time, professional development, school business (extracurricular activities) and long-term absences such as maternity/paternity and medical leave.

2014/2015 - 93%  
2015/2016 - 93%  
2016/2017 - 93%  
2017/2018 - 93%  
2018/2019 - 87%  
2019/2020 - 89%  
2020/2021 - 92% *COVID AMI*  
2021/2022 - 81%  
**2022/2023 - 86%**  
**2023/2024 - 88%**

Illustrated below are the absence reasons for Teachers over the previous two school years. As expected, the majority of absences are related to personal time or illness. The combination of annual leave related to personal and/or sick days account for a little over 50% of all leave. School Business absences are related to school events or activities and may be for only a partial or full day. On average, this category of leave is 16% of the total. Extended leave protected under FMLA is 15.5% of total leave. One must qualify for leave under FMLA eligibility rules. During the 2023-2024 school year, the average length of leave under FMLA was 52 days.



Filling absences with high quality substitutes became a challenge post pandemic. We made substantial progress over the last two years to increase our substitute roster. This was accomplished in part via creative recruitment and in part due to our increase in the substitute rates of pay. The chart below demonstrates the commitment of the Board to providing high quality substitutes for our staff and students.

In December of 2022, we were 24<sup>th</sup> out of 27 schools with a substitute rate of \$100/day. Our substitute pool was approximately 86 individuals. The fill rate was 82% by utilizing administrators and current staff teaching during their plan time. During the 2023-2024 school year, we tracked data for absences that were filled by internal staff and substitutes. Our substitute fill rate was 80% but when you add our internal staff covering for colleagues, the fill rate increased to 86%. As of October 2024, we have built our roster to 107 regular substitutes, 8 nurse substitutes, 4 administrative assistant substitutes, and 3 custodial substitutes. Our current substitute fill rate for the 2024-2025 school year is 98%.

TYPE OF SUBSTITUTE	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Regular Teacher Substitute	\$100/day	\$135/day	\$135/day
Regular Support Substitute	\$100/day	\$135/day	\$135/day
Retired Teacher Substitute	\$100/day	\$141/day	\$141/day
Long-term Teacher Substitute	\$200/day	\$200/day	\$200/day
Long-term Support Substitute	\$100/day	\$140/day	\$140/day
Nurse Substitute	\$100/day	\$120/day	\$120/day
Teaching During Plan Time	\$25/hour	\$35/hour	\$35/hour
Combined Classes	Na	\$141 split among teachers	\$141 split among teachers

**Staff Retention:**

Our goal is 90% retention of current staff. The retention rates among certified and classified staff in the Smithville School District over the last 10 years is illustrated in the chart below. Over the last two years, our staff retention rate remained 82%. In fact, 82% is our average retention rate since 2019. This is significantly less than our goal and, unfortunately, not out of alignment in the current climate in education.

ESIP (Early Separation Incentive Plan) was deployed in 2018 as one of many strategies to recover our reserve balance and improve our overall budget profile. SSD averaged 9 participants in ESIP over the four-year period. One of the stipulations of the ESIP was that the staff member was retirement eligible under PSRS/PEERS. Retirement impacts the rate of retention.

We have been fortunate to have veteran staff; however, this can result in a higher number of retirements each year. Retirement impacts the rate of retention. It is notable that 15 staff retired in the last two years even without the ESIP offering.

**2023-2024 Overall Data**

	Individuals Exiting	Total Employees
<b>Overall Retention</b>	63	344
<b>Certified Retention</b>	31	212
<b>Classified Retention</b>	32	132

10 Year Historical Retention Data								
School Year	Overall		Certified			Classified		
	%	#	%	#	Notes	%	#	Notes
2014-2015	84.80%	42	83.20%	32		88.50%	10	
2015-2016	86.70%	39	87.30%	25		85.40%	14	
2016-2017	87.90%	37	88.90%	22		86.10%	15	
2017-2018	87.70%	38	89.60%	20		82.40%	18	
2018-2019	81.02%	63	82.24%	38	6 ESIP certified	78.81%	25	13 Tier 1 Cuts / 2 ESIP classified
2019-2020	82.83%	57	86.54%	28	7 ESIP certified	76.61%	29	2 ESIP classified
2020-2021	81.01%	64	86.58%	29	7 ESIP certified	71.07%	35	8 ESIP classified
2021-2022	81.64%	65	85.72%	30	4 ESIP certified	75.70%	35	1 ESIP classified
2022-2023	81.82%	64	85.86%	29		74.75%	35	
2023-2024	81.82%	63	84.85%	31		75.76%	32	

Staffing our classrooms and buildings on a daily basis is critical for student success. Just as critical is recruiting and retaining highly qualified staff for our District. Annually we review the feedback provided by staff who have decided to leave the District. The Exit Survey data is shared with district and building Administrators to help drive continuous improvement.

At the end of the 2023-2024 school year, 33 of the 63 exiting employees responded to the survey. The top reasons for leaving SSD included retirement, personal (not job related), relocation, and career advancement. The greatest opportunity for improvement shared by the respondents was the need or desire for better work life balance.

**Concerns and Comments Regarding the Attendance Data:**

A staff retention rate of 82% is a concern at this time. This is compounded by the fact the enrollment in the nation’s schools of education has been in decline. Finding a suitable, appropriately certified, teacher presents challenges, especially in highly specialized areas such as Special Education, Foreign Language, and Science.

**Action Taken Regarding the Attendance Data and Staff Retention:**

1. Continue to explore ways to inform and incentivize staff to receive compensation for unused (accrued) leave days and identify how we compare to other local districts in this area.
2. Provide opportunities for staff to give feedback via our building visits and staff morale survey to maintain or improve our culture, processes and understanding of the most important challenges faced by our staff.

3. Continual collaboration with building leaders in evaluating the needs and effectiveness of supports for our staff in managing one's classroom and student behaviors.
4. Continued research and evaluation of SSD against other local and like districts to improve total compensation in this competitive market. This is a Board priority and initiative among our staff committees.
5. Professional Development is an important part of growth for individual teachers and provides an opportunity for collaboration among departments/teams. There is an awareness and an ongoing effort between District Administration and Building Principals to minimize the number of days in which staff are out of the classroom for PD or meetings. However, this is a delicate balance with curriculum work that needs to be accomplished while respecting the work/life balance of staff.
6. A restructure within central office to provide targeted support at the elementary and secondary levels implemented by Dr. Maus with the 2024-2025 school year by replacing the Superintendent for Academic Services and Professional Growth with an Executive Director of Grades 7-14 and an Executive Director of PreK – 6<sup>th</sup> grade.
7. A strategic initiative in human resources is to create a sense of belonging for all staff but with specific focus on new teachers and staff joining our district. We are providing opportunities for new staff to learn about the Smithville community and to social with peers outside of the workday. We are also working to acknowledge the work of all employee groups with personal notes and small tokens of appreciation.

**Comments of Evaluators/ Program Personnel:**

A child's best opportunity to learn is with their regular teacher and support staff. Administratively we understand the importance of attendance, as it directly impacts student achievement, is an indicator of morale experience, and results in direct and indirect cost savings. It is important to acknowledge that we have entered a period like no other in education. Business as usual is not the answer. Thoughtful collaboration with our staff is important in finding ways to recruit and retain teachers and support staff for all programs, in all buildings.