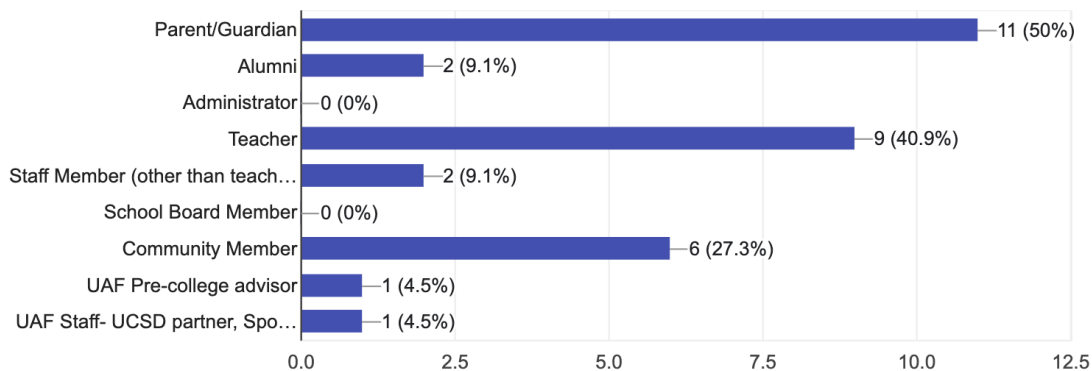


Community Survey: Unalaska City School District (Strategic Planning)

Who took the survey? 22 respondents *(some identified more than one role)*

1. Please select what you consider to be your primary role or include "other" if necessary

22 responses



2.What are the top 3 issues facing our students today?

#1 Top Issue

Quality of education
Lack of support for LGBTQIA+ kids!!!
Mental health
School readiness/performing at grade level
Academic preparedness
School budget and the changes this causes with personnel turnover, class size, and other resources
Education that is competitive with the larger school districts and those in the lower 48.
Lack of home structure
Low academic performance especially in areas of Reading and Math
Language Learners, ESL Teacher, Art education, Physical Education in the Elementary.
Social Media
Social Media

*reading and writing on grade level
Severe lack of support for special education needs. English Language learners, speech, reading specialist, para support for teachers.
Risky sexual activities
Feeling connected, valued, safe, and belonging.
Motivation for knowledge
Lack of academic focus
HS Math
Mental Health
High incidence disabilities
Mental Health

2 Top Issue

Afterschool childcare. Parents in Unalaska work a lot of hours and many students spend a lot of time after school unsupervised, specifically younger students. Afterschool extra curricular activities could help ease this burden.
Intellectual Freedom
Mental Health
*There needs to be another SPED teacher at EVER
Underpaid support staff. We need to pay our paras, subs & sped aides a living wage. We can't hire & retain good people because even the city pays a higher wage. This leads to burnout for our current paras, aides and teachers who struggle through instead of having the support they need.
Alcohol and drug use
Future career.
Living in an uncertain world
non-bias basic teaching
Mental Health - HW / sports / work load
Drug and alcohol
low attention spans
Airfare prices/cost of living

#3 Top Issue

Retaining teachers and staff
Opioid awareness
Lack of comprehensive sex education
Drug and alcohol misuse
Lack of intrinsic motivation
Focus on testing over mastery of the lesson
Practical life skills. From personal finance to maintaining their own vehicles.
Admin that is unable/unwilling to connect and show they care
Lack of opportunities to learn and advocate more for mental health
New teacher curriculum professional development. Both Bridges and Collaborative Classroom are teacher intensive and require time for teachers to learn and plan. New teachers show up and it's up to other teachers to make time to help them with materials. I would like to see this be worked into the start of the school year, so we support teachers better and help them understand our curriculum materials.
Need for Representation
Parental Support
*supporting ELs and teacher burn out
Parent involvement - we need ptas or community councils to support our staff. There is going to come a time when we need to fundraise for arts, sports etc. this is an avenue most Alaska school districts utilize. As a parent I never felt invited into the school until becoming staff.
Screen addiction
Navigating school, sports, and life.
Receiving a meaningful and useful education

Community Survey: Unalaska City School District (Strategic Planning)

Lack of funding and teacher support
Sexual (non) education
Lack of things to do
Low command of the English language, reading writing, speaking
Social media

3. In your opinion, what are the 3 biggest strengths of our district? (what would you not want to go away?)

#1 Biggest Strength

Small class size
Student-focused education & care
Small tight-knit community of caring individuals
Diversity
Extra curricular activities
School budget
The community.
Supportive parents
Sense of community
City Funding, Community Support for education.
School Culture (every student feels welcome)
Class Size
The staff works diligently to help students progress.
Small class sizes
Good teacher/student relationships
Our students
We provide a way above average education
Teachers. Each teacher needs to be supported for longevity
Most staff genuinely cares

Community Survey: Unalaska City School District (Strategic Planning)

community/school support in tragedy

Teachers who are committed to students learning

Caring community

#2 Biggest Strength

Community involvement

Financial aid and scholarships for graduating seniors.

Smaller class sizes

Small class size

Dedicated staff

safety

The community.

Community support

Small student population

Diversity within our teachers and support staff that match our community.

Our Staff (Paras, Teachers, and Administration)

Scholarship Opportunities

Staff wants to implement good teaching that is supported by the science of reading, etc.

Majority of Teachers who have heart for their kids

Small class size

A great staff (including leadership)

A sense of team work

Small classroom sizes

Willing to spend money on students / travel / tech

Dedicated Teachers and Administration

#3 Biggest Strength

Opportunity for students to be involved in activities and sports

Community & school support for extracurricular activities

Historically financially healthy

Community Survey: Unalaska City School District (Strategic Planning)

Quality of teachers
Supportive community
Our small town that takes care of kids
The community.
Small class sizes
Parent and community involvement in school
EVE has used Bridges in Mathematics with Fidelity for over 10 years and we strongly believe in the curriculum but also trust that Math Learning Center would make necessary updates when it's time to update our curriculum materials.
Our Diverse Student Body
Sense of Community
Offering help after school to students such as intervention groups
Healthy lunches this year!
Caring staff
A sense of community
Our Kids
Embracing community support
principal open to listening to comments
Opportunities to try new things/careers
Parents trust us. We need to hold onto that and increase it.
Financially stable

4. In your opinion, what are the 3 biggest areas for improvement in our district?

#1 Biggest Area for Improvement

Pushing the kids to reach their full potential
LGBTQIA+ SUPPORT
Teacher retention
Teacher and admin diversity

Community Survey: Unalaska City School District (Strategic Planning)

Wider selection of electives. The district should support other learning options found on line if a student has an area of interest not offered by the district

I think the school has lost a lot of its element of fun in recent years and I am so tired of hearing my kids complain about not wanting to go to school which supprises me because my nephews and nieces elsewhere LOVE school. Where's the fun?

Improvements that should be made? Automation, or technologies that are in this decade. So students and staff with the swipe of a card, attendance, meals, etc. are accounted for.

Additional hours for teachers to plan for rigorous lessons at the same time comply with the state's requirement on the Read's Act.

Utilizing Community resources/entities for learning opportunities. Coast Guard, NOAA, ADFG, UFD, Q-tribe, APICDA, APIA, UAF, UAA. Businesses (Welding, Diving, Processing Plants) Field trips to essential places around town along with classroom visits that help student connect with career opportunities (Yes elementary too!)

Non-athletic Extracurricular Activities (Music, Drama, and Art)

Advanced Placement (AP) opportunities

*Support professional development when new curriculum materials are adopted

SPED - we have got to grow the number of sped teachers & support staff (speech, reading specialists, paras etc)

Meeting mental health needs

To provide more electives

We rely too much on technology

Funding

Community Survey: Unalaska City School District (Strategic Planning)

mental health staff / support/encouragement / resources
Teacher stability/retention
Teachers need to be better at their classroom management and making sure all students are being engaged. The classes have a lot of teacher talk and often many of the students are not paying attention.
Increase staff- full time teachers, another counselor, & aides

#2 Biggest Area of Improvement

Maintaining the facility
Opioid abuse & alcoholism awareness
More extra curricular opportunities
Support and understanding for struggling students
Help high school students enroll in dual credit courses. Most high schools offer this,. Our kids are at a disadvantage in this area
Untrained teachers who don't actually have understanding of classroom management and don't lead by example where bullying and respectful treatment are concerned
Larger classroom sizes.
More ELL support
Additional school hours where instruction on reading intervention can take place without taking away recess from elementary kids.
Recreational Education. This place is amazing. Many of our students live in bunkhouses with no opportunities to play. Hike, Bike, ski, kayak, hunt, fish, geocache, photography, Art.

Community Survey: Unalaska City School District (Strategic Planning)

Utilization of Online Resources
Career Exploration as a program
You might think about having professional development at the end of the school year when new curriculum is being adopted instead of 3 days before students arrive.
Better pay for support staff so we can keep quality workers
More electives like child development and cooking
Provide more extra curricular options (not a lot for kids to do here on the island)
Provide students with more class options
Teachers
currently : support during tragedies, as there was no tangible support available for those that have happened this year
Providing more Teen friendly activities
Parent Teacher connection. Working with parents more instead of working around them.
Variety of classes- art, sciences, cultural/traditional

3 Biggest Area of Improvement

Helping prepare students for life outside of the small town
More afterschool programs for kids who are not interested in sports.
More intervention for kids who have tough home lives and are displaying problematic behaviors at school and to their peers
Art and music opportunities, instead of spending so much money on sports

Community Survey: Unalaska City School District (Strategic Planning)

Counselor position encompasses too much. There should be one at the elementary school, and one for the jr high/ high school
Recognition of our diversity and an investment in ESL resources
Emphasize careers outside of college.
Do more to retain EFFECTIVE teachers and get rid of the ones that are not rather than just rehiring everyone
Get rid of the unsafe and toxic climate of valuing staff if they get into the good side of admin. This is becoming so tiring to watch.
Later start the school year, shorter Christmas break.
Support for ELL Students (especially in High School)
Teacher Retention
*Small class sizes in the elementary and an additional special education teacher
Upgraded playgrounds at both schools
Eliminate phones in classrooms.
Provide more vocational courses
Bussing issues seem too prevalent
Curriculum
support / follow-through for teacher improvement
Community solidified against illegal drugs
Professional development in the areas of differentiation in instruction. Such as teaching students with diverse learning needs
Budget for CTE and college courses

5. If money was not an issue, what should be done to make our District the 'ideal district' for ALL students in our community? (think as BIG as possible).

Not sure what more money can do for the students.
A safe space for LGBTQIA+ students and those who don't participate in sports (ie, kids who may be interested in the arts, chess, languages, gaming, etc...)
More physical activity options and perhaps even a program for physical activity in the mornings similar to the Program developed in Naperville district 203 in Naperville, IL. Huge impact on students' academic performance, mental health, physical health, etc.
Opportunities for drama, dance, art, and other areas where non-academic and non-athlete students can shine. Highly challenging academic classes for top performing students, with the goal of preparing them for top tier colleges and universities. Emphasis on community engagement and volunteering. Basically, opportunities for all different types of students to succeed. Also a focus on hiring experienced, knowledgeable, and passionate teachers.
Provide Advanced learning paths, and opportunities to get hands on experience in different types of real work to help the student develop broader interests and an understanding of their own aptitudes
I would love to see a progressive and inclusive school that allows for a variety of learning types and attracts the best teachers. I would love to bring back the play and the fun. I wonder if the lack of teacher morale is due, in part, to the compensation packages? But certainly teachers who love their job and love the district and bring that joy to their students is essential.
Qualified paras for every SPED student.
New HS building (grade bands near each other, space for band practice, better insulation between rooms for noise reduction, window fans included, wider 5/6 and JH lockers, etc)
Invest on the staff's professional development not just on improving efficacy but in building relationships so no member is under valued and overworked. Provide more programs for students that will prepare them for college careers.

Community Survey: Unalaska City School District (Strategic Planning)

Hire additional PE teacher or split PE Teacher to cover both buildings similar to how it is done with Music.

Hire an art teacher or invest in extensive art opportunities for students during the school day.

Purchase buses so we don't need to rely on an external company and can hire suitable, reliable drivers.

I would like to have our school include more opportunities to help students in the arts - including visual art, drama, and music. Our student body has some incredible talent, and I know if we had more opportunities for students to display their talents to the community (whether in choir, musicals, plays, etc), I feel students who might not be as engaged in athletics would participate. Having a greater focus on the arts might also open up opportunities for students to display their talents even in statewide functions including in the All-State Solo Ensemble Festival and Honor Choir.

More elective courses that cater to life skills and art. Better campus safety/security. More student events and clubs. More guidance counselors. All classes should be streamlined on Google classroom for better communication and transparency. Cost of living allowance or more housing opportunities for all staff.

We need a reading specialist, math specialist, and another special education teacher. New Chromebooks for upper elementary since the ones they have are not able to do the MAPS testing. A PE teacher. A sound system for the gym at EVE.

We would hire 2 more SPED teachers in elementary and reading & speech specialists for both schools.

More for the kids to do after school. Like a trampoline park.

High school building could use some upgrades (getting a bit dated)

Hire more teachers--for more electives, fewer preps being taught by individual teachers, keep class sizes small.

Pay great teachers more to keep them here. They are what matter to the students in the school - their inspiration and their in the classroom support.

more ELL support, more SEL support

New airport with regular flights from Alaska, Delta and United

Community Survey: Unalaska City School District (Strategic Planning)

Hire another special education teacher, hire a reading specialist, hire an ELL teacher, increase pay for 9 month classified employees to encourage retention. Train paraprofessionals to assist in small groups and instruction, bring in trainers and build in more inservice days to help teachers become better at meeting all needs.

More after school opportunities to participate in fun things like clubs that include academic skills, like robotics, lego clubs, novel study groups, cooking, or whatever. Bring learning to life at the district buildings because our classes alone cannot battle the screen time that students are being sucked into at home.

Being able to offer a variety of classes to reach all student needs/interest.

6. What should our District NOT be willing to compromise or give up as we move forward?

Accountability of everyone to ensure the students needs are met

Scholarships!!!

The sense of community

Excellent preschool program. Excellent library and librarian. Teacher salaries and benefits, so we attract and retain the best teachers. Teacher independence.

Small
Class sizes

Community involvement and that amazing connection that some employees bring to the table because they know who the kids are and genuinely care for them.

Nothing. Everything should be open to discussion and change.

There is not a lot that is going well at the school, so big changes might be the best bet.

Everything that is for the good of all stakeholders.

Student Travel. Families want their students to have opportunities when they get to high school. Families will move off island if these opportunities are not available and our enrollment will suffer.

Community Survey: Unalaska City School District (Strategic Planning)

I think our District should not give up on its focus in bringing a more rigorous curriculum to our students. Our student body is incredibly intelligent, and I want to make sure that we can do as much as we can to ensure students can be successful regardless on where they decide to go after High School.

We shall not give up our classroom sizes or business structure

Professional Development

Edalyns lunches! Soooo much better than the past several years!

Music

Immediate safety and health

Safety

Classroom size - student to teacher ratios

n/a

High paid, high quality teachers

Extracurriculars. Although activities like sports are crazy expensive out here they are keeping our students from just going home and being on screens. I would love to see more creative extracurriculars that start younger where students can learn and be social. These are important life skills and prepare our students for a fulfilling life.

Quality of education; umbrella term to cover safety, accessibility, valuable instruction from excellent teachers, supportive & modern leadership, quality resources for students & staff

7. What other comments or concerns would you like the team to consider as they build this plan?

Be conscious of the rampant opioid abuse in our community and how that and fentanyl are a huge problem in our town right now.

Please be critical thinkers

The school spends a lot of money on sports, which benefits only certain students. Can this money be spread around to benefit more students?

Keeping 5th grade at EVE should be considered. 4th and 5th grade should attend until 3:15

Community Survey: Unalaska City School District (Strategic Planning)

I absolutely HATE what happened to the 5th/6th grade playground. 5th/6th learners are still kids and all toys were removed with no replacement. The monkey bars and slide were so useful for growing kids, as well as for the community in general. Make that playground better!!!!

Stop living in the 1980's. Automation has come to the world and this district needs to embrace it. From the reader board by the district office, which is severely out of date, to the laptops the students use, there needs to be a more aggressive plan for replacements and updating technology.

Our school day (start/release) has been the same for a long time, but I think it is due for some attention. A common conversation piece between elementary teachers has been that we feel like our day flies by and we could really use additional time. An additional 30 minutes of instruction each day could be really helpful. Surely this would cut into the hour prep at the end of the day and would require that prep to be spread throughout the week, but many feel like that prep isn't as effective as it could be.

I don't have any in particular.

While I think homework is essential for practicing concepts, it is a poor way to measure comprehension. Some concepts from Mindful Teaching and Common Core, integrated with traditional teaching, could be very beneficial. The students lack critical thinking exercises and skills that is essential for growth. With technology, students' phones are capable of being more than for entertainment and messaging. We have the capabilities now to control, mostly, what they are able to use their phones for, if connected to our school network.. why not make them use what is more comfortable for them to encourage research. Google Classroom should be required.

Although we seem to have less kids, our population of needs are great. A reading, math, and EL specialist is needed. Competitive pay for paraprofessionals.

Community Survey: Unalaska City School District (Strategic Planning)

In the high school we need to work harder at creating community and support for our kids. It's extremely clickish. Kids don't have really any pep rally's, sports or activities to build community. They just come to school slosh through and leave, unless they are highly involved in a sport. But the kids in sports aren't the majority of ones dealing with loneliness & depression. I hear all the time from teens that it's so lonely here. I also hear this from many teachers. The PCR does a ton for the elementary and even middle school kids. But high schoolers are left lacking.

It is so expensive to live here. I know quality candidate that won't apply here because of this fact. Let's hire the best.

Students need to read and write more (actually write). I have concerns with innovations such as Chatgpt etc.

We need longevity out of staff. Recent administrative hiring have been extremely detrimental to the school district

n/a

What else can we do to incentivize our staff to stay, lower prices airline tickets, or more adult healthy activities to engage in?

There seems like there was a time when our small class sizes were enough for us to meet all needs. Students are coming with lower attention spans, lower educational and language levels, and higher incidence of disabilities. They are not just catching what is being taught and more and more of our students are failing to make the progress needed to succeed in school.

Reliable bus schedule