



Preliminary Findings from the FCPS Working Conditions Survey

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About the FCPS WCS

- Survey designed in collaboration with working group of educators and based on North Carolina and other state teaching conditions instruments
- Questions in the areas of time, facilities and resources, decision making, leadership, professional development, community engagement and mentoring
- Responses from 8,642 FCPS educators (58%) including over 7,000 teachers and 166 principals

About the FCPS WCS

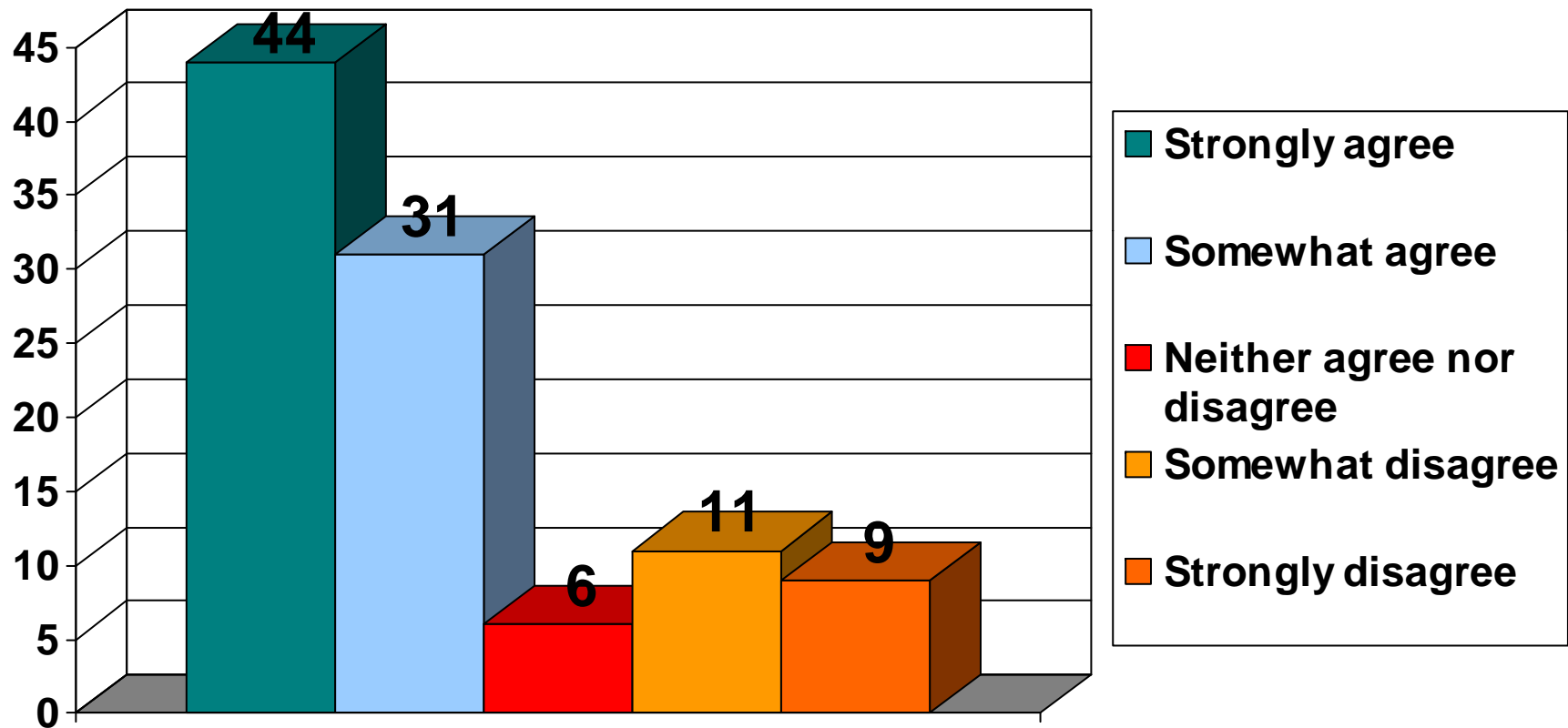
- Survey validated and a reliable instrument
- All school-based licensed educators were surveyed as our goal was to give voice to everyone about whether their school had positive working conditions
- The survey is about perception; but perception is reality for FCPS educators
- Interpreting the results is both an art and a science



Working Conditions in Fairfax County: Trends and Issues

Educators are Positive About Their Schools

Q: I am satisfied working in my current school



Leadership Factor

Question in the Leadership Factor	Percent Agreement
Overall, the school leadership in my school is effective	58%
School leadership makes a sustained effort to address teachers concerns about empowering teachers	56%
School leadership makes a sustained effort to address teachers concerns about school leadership	48%
Teachers receive feedback that can help them improve teaching	65%
The school leadership consistently supports teachers when needed	62%
Teachers feel comfortable raising issues that are important to them	62%
There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within the school	65%
Teachers are respected as educational experts	67%

Community Engagement and Support Factor

Question in the Community Engagement and Support Factor	Percent Agreement
The community we serve is supportive of this school	82%
Parents/guardians are influential decision makers in this school	67%
This school works directly with parents/guardians to improve the educational climate in students' homes	61%
This school maintains clear, two-way communication with parents and the community	80%
This school does a good job encouraging parental involvement	80%
Parents know what is going on in this school	79%
Teachers are supported by parents/guardians and the community in which they teach	67%
Parents/guardians and community members contribute to student success in this school	72%

Concepts Covered in Factors

- **Professional Development:** Professional development resources, quality and effectiveness
- **Facilities and Resources:** Access to instructional resources, office, communication, technology, and issues of space and safety
- **Workload:** Numerous issues (aligning curriculum, student learning, district/state requirements) contributing to overall workload and desire to remain teaching in their school

Professional Development Needs and Opportunities

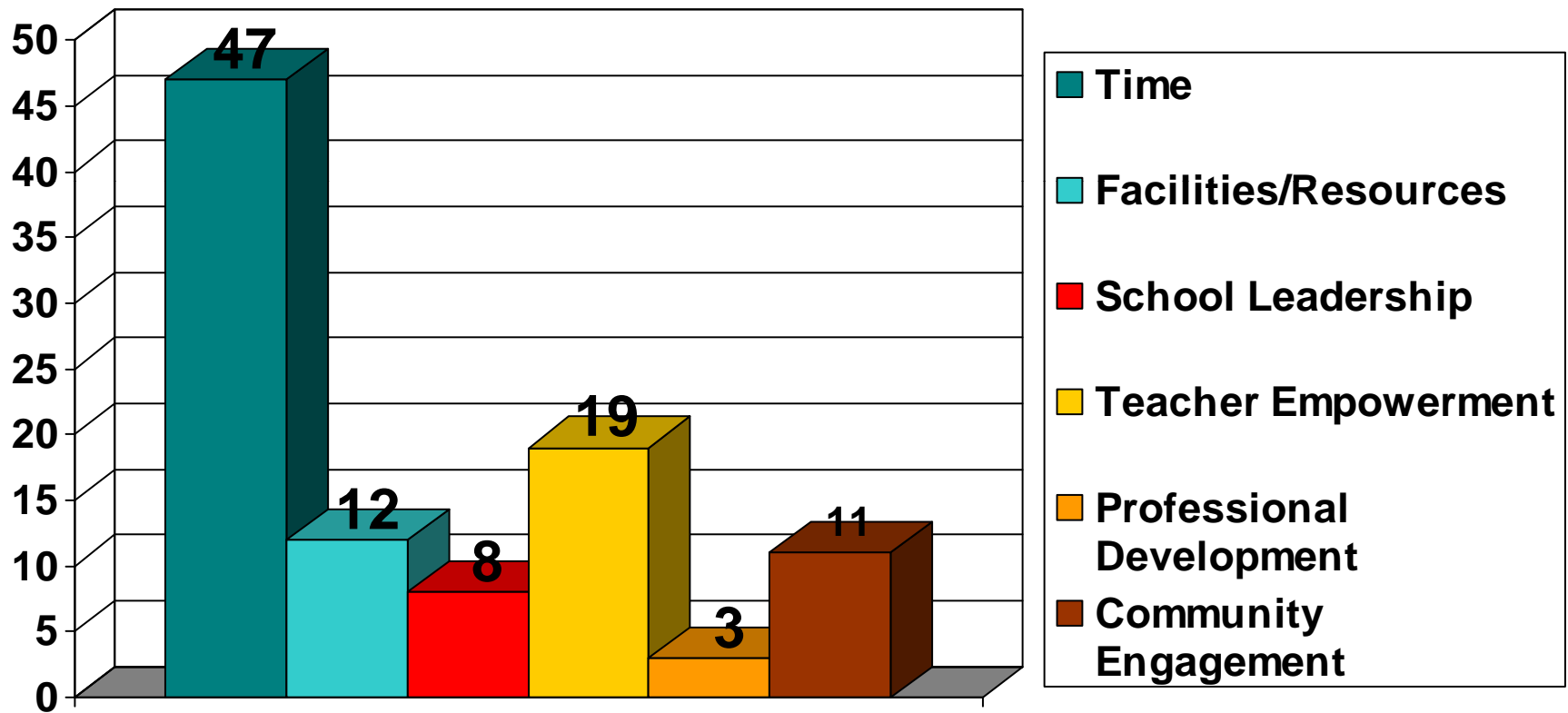
Professional Development Area	Need Additional Support (Teachers)	Need Additional Support (Administrators About Teachers)	10+ Hours Over Past 2 Years
Special Education – disabilities	37%	69%	22%
Special Education – gifted	22%	23%	10%
English Language Learners	16%	46%	9%
Using data for decision making	16%	40%	17%
Closing the Achievement Gap	31%	56%	12%
Content Area	17%	11%	45%
Reading Strategies	22%	32%	34%
Student Assessment	19%	31%	27%
Continuous Improvement	23%	21%	13%
School Improvement Planning	7%	13%	17%



**Working Conditions,
Especially Community
Engagement and Support,
is Significantly Connected
to Student Achievement**

Time is the Key to Learning According to Teachers

Q: Which aspect of your work environment is MOST important to you in promoting student learning



TWC Factors by Elementary Math Achievement

Working Conditions Factor	Math Performance by Quartile: Elementary				
	I (Lowest)	II	III	IV (Highest)	Difference
Leadership	3.24	3.52	3.62	3.91	.67
Professional Development	3.83	3.87	3.91	3.94	.11
Workload	4.16	4.16	4.18	4.13	-.03
Community Involvement	3.52	3.97	4.13	4.43	.91
Facilities and Resources	3.99	4.19	4.26	4.31	.32

TWC Questions by Elementary Math Achievement

Working Conditions Factor	Math Performance by Quartile: Elementary				
	I (Lowest)	II	III	IV (Highest)	Difference
Parents/guardians are influential decision makers	42%	64%	71%	85%	43%
Parents/guardians and community contribute to student success	54%	74%	82%	91%	37%
Teachers are supported by parents/guardians and the community in which they teach	56%	74%	80%	88%	32%
There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect	51%	64%	67%	77%	27%
The faculty has an effective process for making group decisions and solving problems	46%	56%	63%	72%	26%

Variables Run in Achievement Models

- **Students:** Poverty, Limited English Proficient, Ethnicity (prior achievement)
- **Teachers:** Provisional licenses, Highest degree earned, Average Years Experience, Faculty with 5 Years Experience
- **Schools:** Turnover Rate, Class Size, School Size, (Graduation for High Schools)
- **Working Conditions:** Five factor means

Mathematics Achievement

- Models explain about 51% of variance across all levels (elementary 51% to 77% secondary)
- Working conditions factors explain at least 9% and up to 42% of variation in math achievement community involvement, leadership and facilities and resources (negative) statistically significant
- Community involvement as strong a positive as poverty a negative on achievement
- Poverty, class size and average years of experience (negative) also significant

English Achievement

- Explain about 72% of variance across all levels (Elementary 75% to 79% Secondary)
- Working conditions factors explain at least 3% and up to 52% of variation. **Community Engagement** and Support and **Workload** statistically significant
- **Community Engagement and Support** the second strongest influence (behind poverty)
- Class size, Highest Degree Earned, LEP and Poverty statistically significant



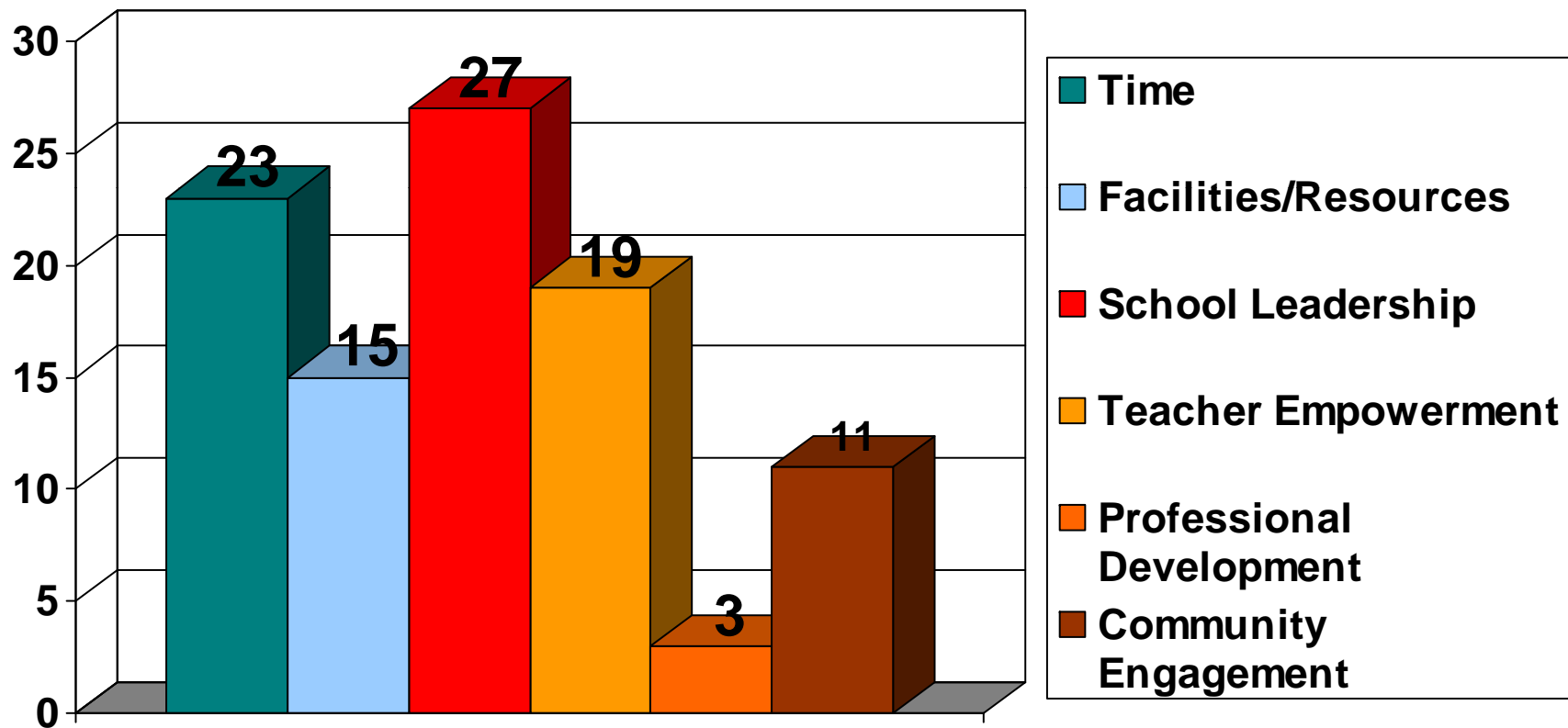
**Working Conditions
Influence Teachers' Future
Employment Plans**

Survey Respondents Want to Remain in Their School

- 9 in 10 want to continue working in their school (64% absolutely and 26% until a “better opportunity” comes along” 5% want to move, 5% want to leave
- Adequate support from school leadership (61% strongly agree), collegial atmosphere (60%), teaching assignment (56%) and empowerment to make decisions (52%) were all reported as influences on future employment plans. Salary (37%), and community influences like changing school demographics (10%), support from parents (22%), and the community environment where teachers live (23%) were less frequently noted

School Leadership is Key to Teacher Retention

Q: Which aspect of your work environment MOST affects your willingness to keep teaching your school



FCPS Working Conditions Survey Questions	Percent of Educators Agreeing		
	Stayers	Movers	Leavers
There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within the school.	67.1%	14.7%	47.2%
The school leadership consistently supports teachers when needed.	63.0%	14.7%	42.3%
Teacher performance evaluations are fair in my school.	71.3%	25.2%	59.1%
The faculty and staff have a shared vision.	64.1%	20.1%	47.6%
The leadership effectively communicates policies.	66.1%	22.6%	48.3%
Teachers receive feedback that can help them improve teaching.	66.3%	23.0%	50.6%
Teachers are trusted to make sound professional decisions about instruction.	73.6%	33.4%	50.6%
The school leadership communicates clear expectations to students and parents.	68.9%	30.0%	52.0%
The school leadership enforces rules for student conduct in a consistent manner.	56.6%	21.4%	41.9%
The faculty has an effective process for making group decisions and solving problems.	54.7%	19.7%	37.3%

Movers Do Not Believe Efforts are Made to Address Working Conditions

School Leadership Makes a Sustained Effort to Address Teacher Concerns About:	Percent of Educators Agreeing		
	Stayers	Movers	Leavers
New teacher support	63.9%	25.5%	50.7%
Empowering teachers	56.2%	18.5%	38.8%
Leadership issues	46.9%	10.4%	33.5%
The use of time in my school	51.9%	15.5%	31.1%
Community support	62.8%	26.8%	49.9%
Facilities and resources	64.1%	29.2%	51.7%
Professional development	63.2%	32.5%	48.4%

TWC Factors by Elementary Actual Attrition

Working Conditions Factor	Provisional Teacher Turnover Rate: Elementary				
	I (Lowest)	II	III	IV (Highest)	Difference
Leadership	3.71	3.49	3.61	3.49	.22
Professional Development	3.94	3.85	3.90	3.88	.06
Workload	4.14	4.15	4.17	4.16	-.02
Community Involvement	4.06	4.10	3.97	3.88	.18
Facilities and Resources	4.30	4.14	4.18	4.14	.16

TWC Questions by Elementary Actual Attrition

Working Conditions Survey Questions	Attrition by Quartile: Elementary				
	I (Lowest)	II	III	IV (Highest)	Difference
There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect	72%	62%	66%	60%	12%
Teachers are trusted to make sound professional decisions about instruction	79%	72%	76%	70%	9%
Teacher performance evaluations are fair in my school	75%	70%	70%	66%	9%
Teachers are respected as educational experts	75%	67%	73%	66%	9%
The physical layout of the school is conducive to discussions with colleagues about teaching and learning	71%	63%	66%	62%	8%

Correlations with Attrition

- Statistical models explained very little of actual attrition. Most powerful models with variables significant explained less than 10% of variance across schools
- Ran models instead against school average of those who indicated that they would stay in their school (“hard stayers”), not including those who said they would stay until a better opportunity presented itself
- 64% of FCPS teachers are “hard stayers”

Estimated “Hard Stayer” Models

- Models explained 66% of variance in the percentage of estimated “hard stayers” in FCPS. Working conditions explained 61%
- **Leadership, Workload and Facilities and Resources** were statistically significant
- **Leadership**, by far, had the greatest influence on estimated hard stayers, more than three times stronger than % LEP students
- Average years of experience (negative), and % LEP (negative) also statistically significant



Influences on Perceptions of Working Conditions in FCPS

Influences on Perceptions of Working Conditions

- The least experienced teachers are the most positive about working conditions. Teachers with 4-6 years experience are generally the most negative
- Poverty differences seen mostly in Community Engagement and Support Factor (92% agree that parents/guardians are influential decision makers in the low poverty quartile compared to 35% in highest poverty quartile)
- Variations can be seen across role group

FCPS Working Conditions Survey Questions	Percent Agreeing	
	Teachers	Principals
The faculty has an effective process for making group decisions and solving problems.	52.0%	92.8%
The school improvement team provides effective leadership at this school.	51.6%	92.1%
The school leadership enforces rules for student conduct in a consistent manner.	54.0%	93.4%
Efforts are made to reduce the amount of routine administrative paperwork that teachers are required to do.	37.8%	75.9%
The school leadership shields teachers from disruptions, allowing them to focus on educating students.	54.5%	92.1%
The school leadership consistently supports teachers when needed.	59.5%	95.8%
The faculty and staff have a shared vision.	60.9%	95.2%
There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within the school.	63.4%	95.8%
Teachers receive feedback that can help them improve teaching.	63.3%	94.0%

Principals Are More Likely to Perceive School Leadership is Making Efforts to Address Concerns

School Leadership Makes a Sustained Effort to Address Teacher Concerns About:	Percent Agreeing	
	Teachers	Principals
Leadership issues	44.3%	89.0%
Empowering teachers	53.4%	94.5%
The use of time in my school	48.9%	89.0%
Professional development	60.8%	93.9%
Community support	60.2%	92.6%
New teacher support	61.3%	92.0%
Facilities and resources	61.6%	90.8%

District Support of Administrators

- School-based administrators are positive about district support, noting engagement in decisions, cooperation within the district, etc. The greatest concern was time with only 34% saying they have sufficient time to focus on instructional leadership issues
- In schools where administrators noted greater leadership support from FCPS (clear central office mission, clear decision making, administrator PD a priority), teachers noted more positive school leadership conditions

Using the Data for School Improvement

- Data is about school improvement, NOT accountability. It must be used, but used appropriately to guide improvement strategies
- Data can be used to identify schools in need of greater assistance and those with positive working conditions
- Professional development and support for school-based conversation about the data
- Being clear on expectations about the presence of teaching conditions and school improvement



**For More Information, to Access Data, and to Find
Tools to Assist in School Improvement**

www.fcpswcs.org

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