

# Alaska's Public Education Crisis

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**ANCHORAGE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION**

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Connecting Educators • Inspiring Students

# EMERGENCY / CRISIS

STEP 1: Recognition

STEP 2: Inventory

STEP 3-7: Take the necessary actions to resolve the situation and save yourself and those you care for.

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In an emergency: (Estimates based on research and real experiences.)

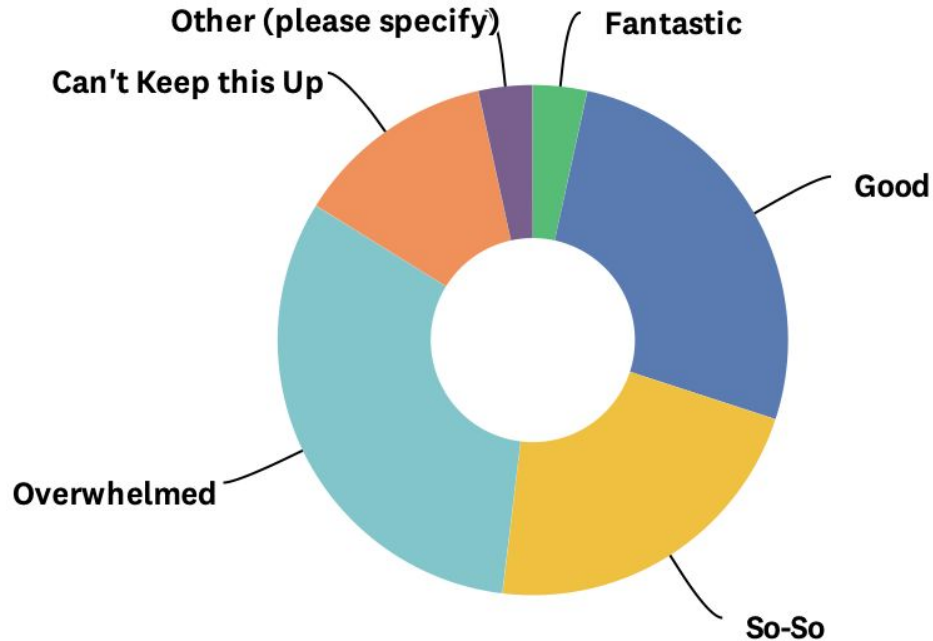
- 1) 40% freeze and become unable to act
- 2) 40% get hysterical, are inappropriate and do not act sensibly
- 3) 10-20% are able to take prompt and effective actions.

Notes: - Emergencies generally come in two different forms: immediate vs. emerging.  
- We urgently need action. We need competitive salaries and a defined benefit to compete with other states to retain educators.

# Q2 How did you feel about your workload this year?

Answered: 786 Skipped: 6

May 2023 data.



Notes: - 45% say their workload is unsustainable.  
- In another survey, educators shared 70% did not have a healthy work-life balance.

## **A respected educator shared this with the ASD Board last week!**

In our district, I hear daily from people wanting to leave the field or want out of their classroom. It's really, really bad. I don't know how much you guys realize that. It is heartbreaking beyond words. The people who I know who are amazing educators with master's degrees and 10+ years... are looking elsewhere. I want to raise a major red flag... we only have about 700+ members still in Tier 1/2. As you know, retirement-wise, there's little reason for Tier 3 to stick around. Tier 1 & 2 are only sticking around to get their bennies.

This IS a crisis. I don't care about politics regarding the BSA, but I am telling you... people are done. They are looking for jobs elsewhere. Hell, I'm looking.

I won't even get into the stuff that is happening right now. I'm just telling you... this isn't situational. This has been how we have been functioning, and no positive seems in sight.

My point of this email is to make sure you fully understand where educators are at... it's not good.

# Resignations at an all time high while FTE is down 15%.

## 22.23 School Year:

- 400 - Resignations: 13%
- 215 - first 5 years or 53%
- 161 - first 3 years 40%
- 234 - elementary grades 58%  
( Alaska Reads Act  
Responsibilities?)

NOTE: There were 256 resignations as of January 31,  
2023 with 52 more FTE than in 23.24 school year.

## 23.24 School Year:

- 254 - As of January 31, 2024
- 132 - first 5 years or 52%
- 112 - first 3 years 44%
- 45 - mid-year resignations  
(have already walked off  
the job)

NOTE: ASD budget for 24.25 has 100 fewer FTE.

# POSITION VACANCIES

- Averaged between 120 and 160 educator vacancies over the last four years. (Elementary teachers are now hard to fill.)
  - Over 180 TA position vacancies for 23.24 school year.
  - Classes are covered by substitutes, other teachers, TA's, remote learning, etc.
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Impact on student outcomes and compromised safety.

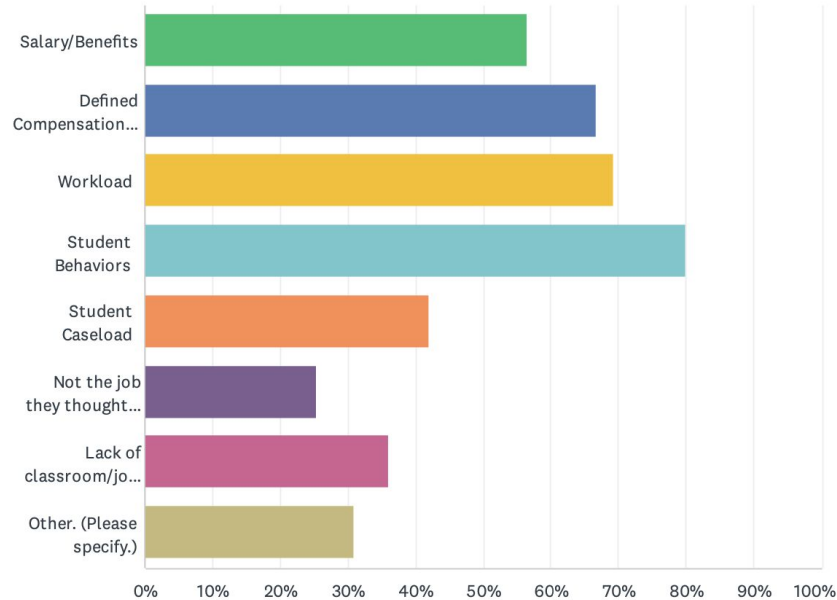
1. Larger class sizes
2. Classroom coverage
3. Student to teacher ratios for special education students and self contained classrooms
4. Increase student behaviors.

Notes: - 2nd year in a row with fewer than 3000 educators.  
- Enrollment is down 12%, Educators are down 16%. That is equivalent to 57 additional educators.

**Q6 On average, 200-300 educators leave ASD every year, but upwards of 400 of our colleagues are leaving this school year. Why do you think so many are leaving the Anchorage School District?**

**May 2023 data.**

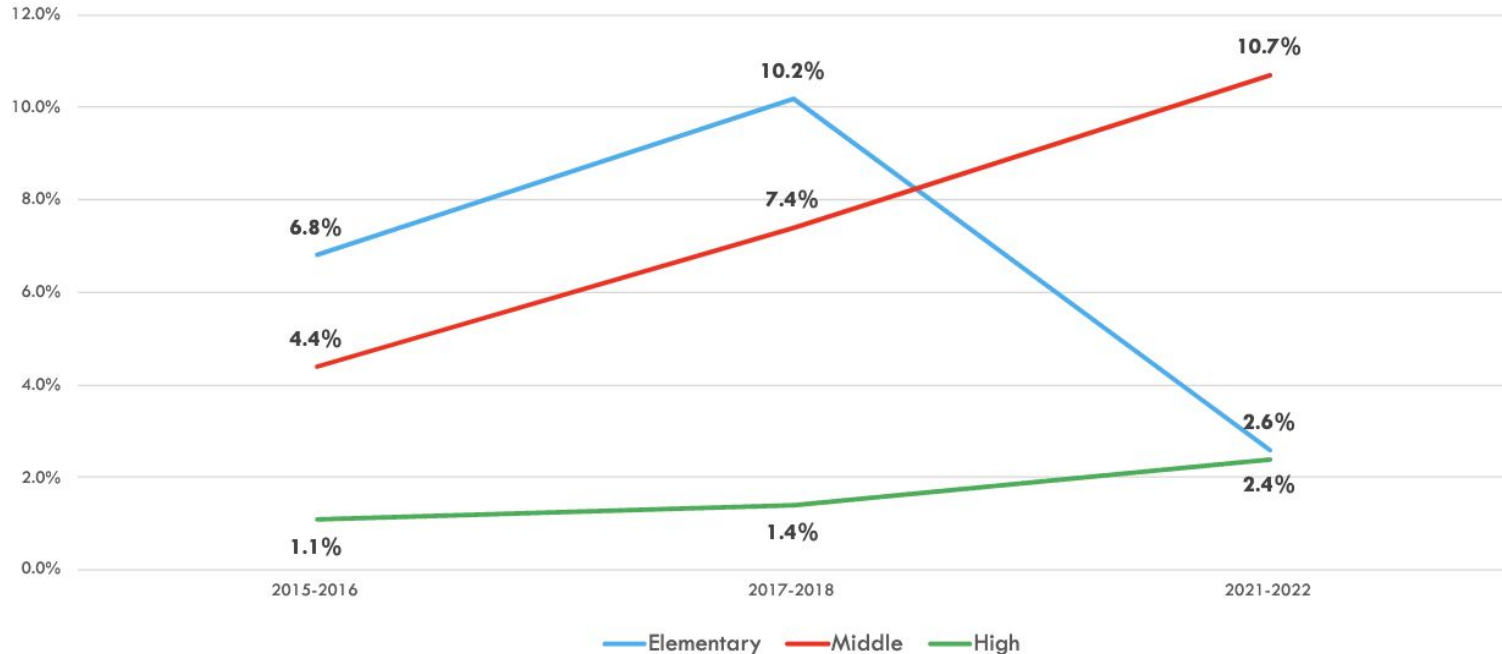
Answered: 790 Skipped: 2



- Notes:
- In another question, educators were asked what would support their student outcomes.
  - 52% said increased staffing: coverage, smaller class size, subs, etc.
  - 48% said increase in student attendance.
  - 65% said a decrease in student behaviors.

# 3: STUDENT "FIGHT AND ASSAULT" NUMBERS HAVE RISEN DRAMATICALLY FROM 2015-2016 TO 2021-2022 (EXCEPT ELEMENTARY)

ASD "Level" Comparison Average % of Fights/Assaults





## Second year life skills teacher who has turned in her notice or resignation!

*"I wanted to bring some concerns to your attention about the condition of my classroom at South High School.*

*Like every school, South is severely understaffed. I am the only permanent staff member in my classroom. I have a long term sub who has been with me since the beginning of the school year, but she is leaving on February 2nd. There is a building sub who has been coming in to be an extra body since the beginning of November, but he is not contractually assigned to my classroom.*

*I have 9 students in my classroom and will be getting a 10th student tomorrow (Jan 10th). The amount of students is not only unsafe, it is also illegal. All of my students receive intensive needs funding. One of my students qualifies for a 1:1 and he is not receiving that service due to staffing shortages. I should have at least four adults in my classroom at all times to meet the legal requirement of no more than 3 intensive needs students for every one staff member.*

*You may recall that I reached out to you at the beginning of the school year with this same issue. Nothing has changed. I am still getting hit, kicked, bit, having my hair pulled, and getting head-butted by a behavior student in my classroom on a daily basis. He is not only hurting me, but other students as well. He is the student who is legally supposed to have a 1:1 according to the IEP.*

*I understand that the entire district is understaffed, but I cannot continue to work in an unsafe environment. According to the contract, I am entitled to a safe work environment. My classroom is not safe. My students are not safe. I am not safe.*

*Please advise on how to best move forward with these concerns. I am willing to go directly to the school board and superintendent to advocate for the help that I need in my classroom. I love my students and I do not want to leave them, but if I cannot get the help that I need in my classroom, I will be forced to leave the teaching profession as a whole to protect my health."*

Thank you,  
South Anchorage High School Life Skills Teacher

## Kindergarten educator and students experience!

This educator has an extremely dangerous and violent student that she has been doing everything in her power to educate. As of November 11, the teacher no longer had the Behavior Support Team available to her and was on her own. The student continued to exhibit very violent, destructive behaviors. This Friday, the student destroyed her classroom, broke the TV, and threw things that endangered other students and staff. Prior to a room clear, he punched a peer and kicked another in the groin. He also threw a whiteboard at the psych's face. The student has bitten the principal numerous times, breaking the skin. This is not an acceptable situation. The district cannot ensure the safety of the students, the teachers, or the principal.



## **Without proper staffing, students are put in dangerous situations. First grader experience.**

I received a call this afternoon from the music teacher letting me know that a student of mine had left their class. Thankfully, my radio was on, and I made it down the hall just in time to see this student exiting the building. I told him to stop, but instead, he ran. I radioed for help but got NO response. I ran at full speed and caught up to him before he crossed the street. I am so thankful there were no cars and that he was safe. This could have gone very differently.

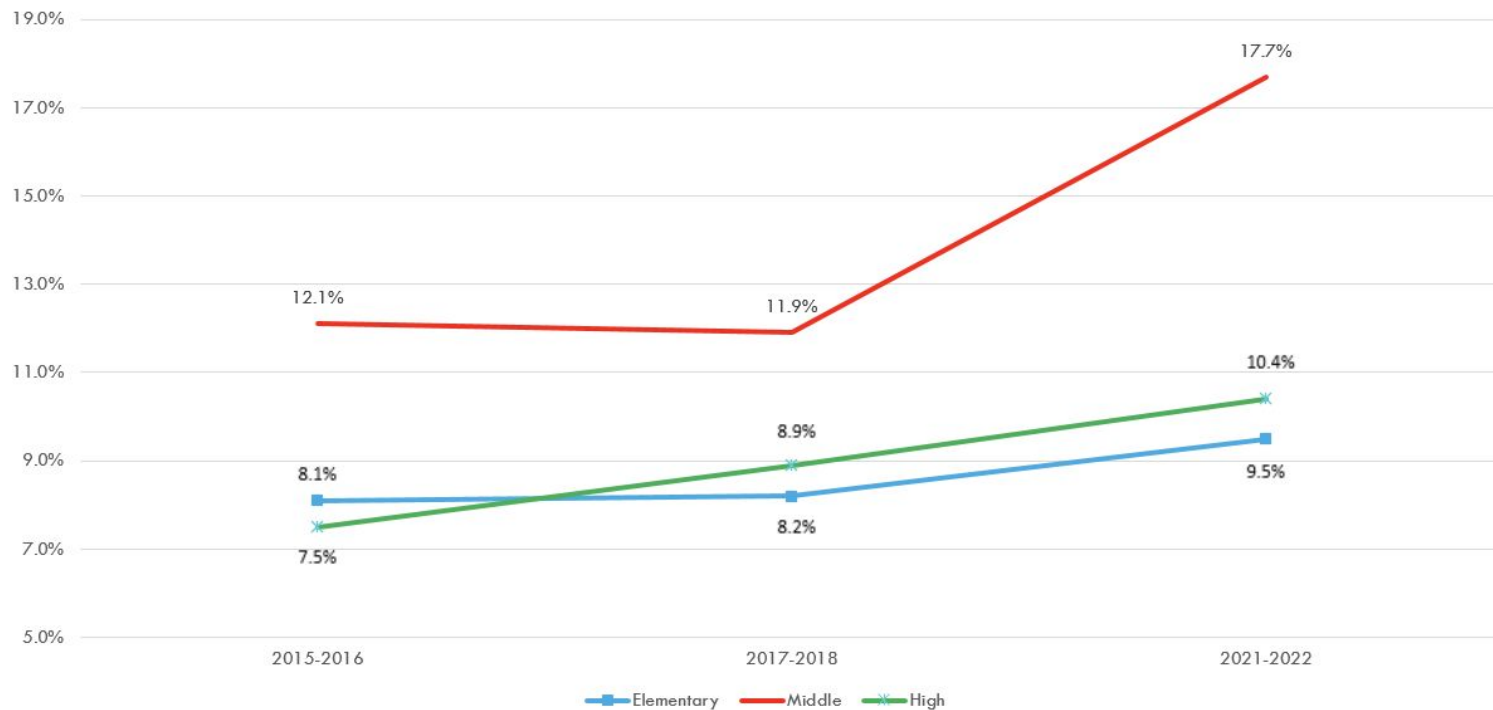
In reflecting on this situation, I feel ill. I could have missed the call. I could have been fast enough. There could have been a speeding car. The list goes on.

It disturbs me that no one responded to my radio call for help. I was alone with a student outside the school near a busy street.

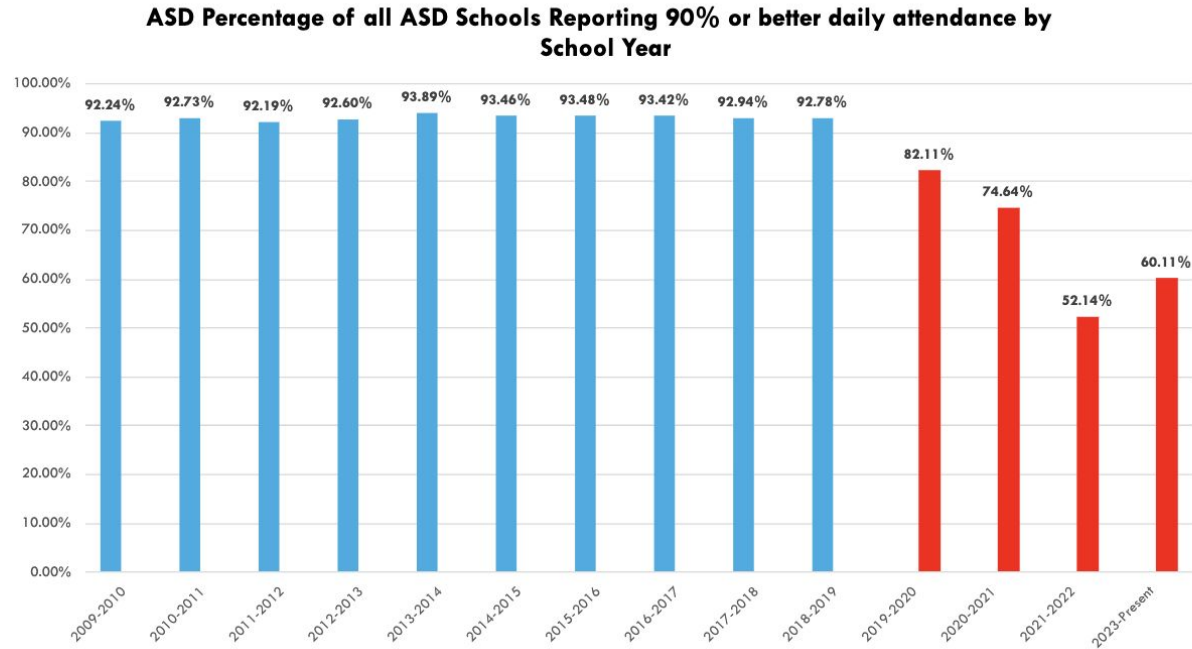
I am terrified that one of my students is going to get hurt this year. I do not know how much longer I can do this job.

# 4: OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS ARE UP IN ALL ASD DIVISIONS

Divisional Comparison of O.O. Suspensions by % of student population



## 5: STUDENT ATTENDANCE HAS FALLEN DRAMATICALLY SINCE 2018-2019



You want to know the student experience... absenteeism at a level never experienced before: schools are understaffed, subs, TAs, and student teachers are teaching classrooms more and more as teachers resign midyear. Behaviors are up, classrooms are constantly being evacuated... this is the student experience.