

*Some of the information in this report has not changed from previous reports but provides needed context for each area. **Bolded words** or phrases within the text of this report have been used to signal new initiatives, strategies and work. EL-4 has five major areas and a response to each of them follows.*

- 1. The superintendent shall not fail to take all reasonable and prudent actions with respect to the hiring and continued employment of din5(in)-ctmpeloye(s, s-3(h7-3(e)4ac)7rtio(h)-T.**

Budget reductions limited our ability to hire new employees in 2023. We adjusted our focus to retaining our existing staff. In some cases, staff were involuntarily transferred into different positions. Reductions are always challenging, but our goal was to make the necessary budget reductions through natural attrition, rather than laying off employees. As the dust settled, we were very successful with this approach, achieving nearly all our administrative and certificated reductions through attrition. Statutory deadlines did force us to make some reductions prior to the state legislature finishing their budget. Therefore, we were forced to non-renew some provisional employees.

We followed our collective bargaining agreements to reduce the total number of budgeted positions, both certificated and classified. Certificated positions were initially reduced by not renewing provisional contracts. It was a bit of a puzzle to honor the continuing contracts of some employees working in programs that were reduced. For instance, elementary and middle school librarian positions and instructional coaches were reduced. We were able to transfer employees into other teaching positions for which they were qualified.

As retirements, resignations and leaves came in, we emphasized rehiring teachers that had their provisional contracts non-renewed. Many of our newly hired teachers also enhanced the diversity of our workforce. It was a priority for us to bring back staff that better represent our diverse student population. **Nearly all our teaching staff were hired back.** We also prioritized bringing staff back to schools that would have been impacted by a disproportionate number of provisional teachers. Cordata Elementary is a great example. They had six classroom teachers who held provisional contracts and faced non-renewal. We successfully rehired all six teachers and by doing so, maintained consistency amongst the staff which is critically important to supporting a school with Cordata's demographic makeup.

Classified staff reductions were also quite challenging to navigate. Many positions were reduced initially by 45 minutes. This approach effectively prevented layoffs but did spread the impact across more positions. **Since that initial reduction, we have worked to restore hours to as many positions as possible. Also, nearly all staff that had reduced hours were offered the chance to transfer into different positions with increased hours.** It is still a goal of ours to restore the hours of the positions.

Our Department of Facilities and Sustainability also made some reductions by leaving open positions unfilled. Over the past months, some of those positions have been filled. This includes some custodial hours and journeyman positions. The department continues to evaluate which

school year (August 2022-January 2023). This year, for the same period (August 2023-January 2024), our overall need decreased by about 1,500. This data suggests two thi

Monthly job postings for both classified and certificated substitute pools. In years past, the

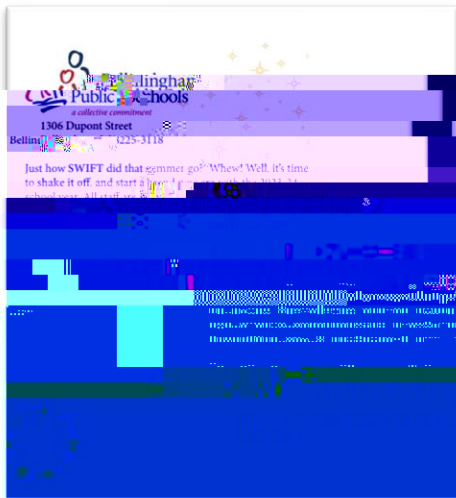
[Additional photos from the surprise visits are found here.](#)

[A compilation video of the 2023 Promise Awards was shared in spring 2023.](#)

There were also multiple posts and short videos about the Promise Awards shared on social media.

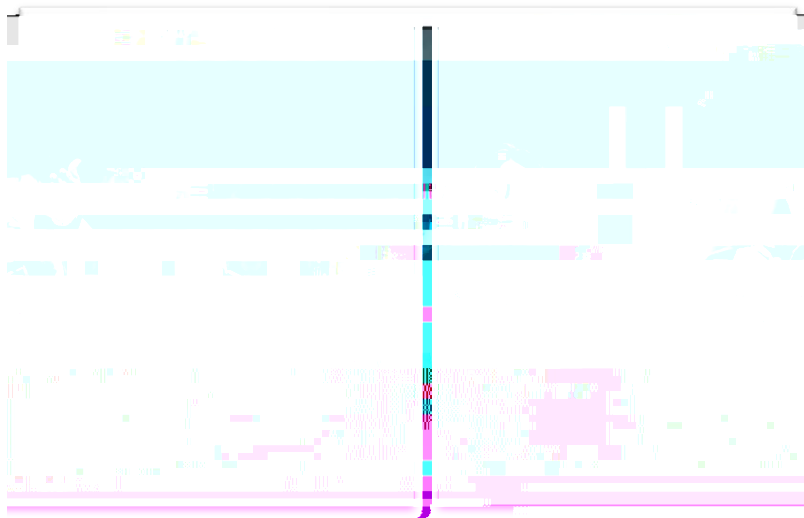
2) Retirements

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- 3) **Staff Kick Off:** The All Staff Kick-Off Celebration was held on Aug. 30, 2023 at Civic
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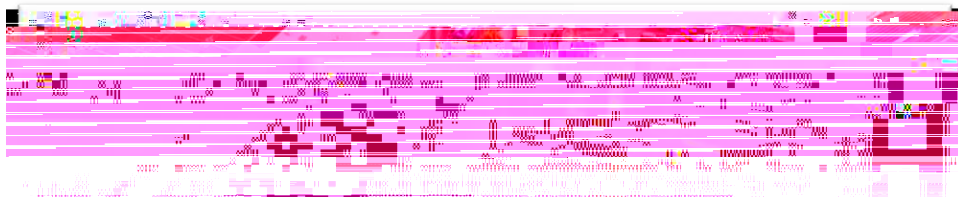


The social media post for this year's staff kickoff event garnered nearly 434 likes on Instagram and 83 likes on Facebook and included a drone flyover.

[Photos from the 2023 Kick Off are also available on Flickr.](#)



[See drone flyover video and social media post.](#)





Post highlighting the culinary arts classes and teachers in BPS (food pun alert!) See Promise story below.



Several posts in this reporting period shared updates on the Sustainability Advisory Committee, the district's new Climate Action Plan (adopted Sept. 2023), and updates highlighting the important work of transportation, facilities and operations staff.

BPS partners with local film company on Treaty Day history: (Published online Feb. 1, 2023)

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2023/02/01/bps-partners-with-film-company-on-treaty-day-history/>

The road to healthy school food comes full circle for BPS (Published online Feb. 17, 2023)

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2023/02/17/the-road-to-healthy-school-food-comes-full-circle/>

Senior photo shoots and yearbooks, now part of Project Free Education (Published online Feb. 22, 2023)

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2023/02/22/senior-photo-shoots-and-yearbooks-now-part-of-project-free-education/>

AP Human Geography provides early access to college-level rigor: (Published online Feb. 23, 2023; included in spring 2023 InsideSchools)

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2023/02/23/ap-human-geography-provides-early-access-to-college-level-rigor/>

Culinary electives teach cooking skills and important life lessons: (Published online Feb. 24, 2023; included in spring 2023 InsideSchools)

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2023/02/24/culinary-electives-teach-cooking-skills-and-important-life-lessons-along-the-way/>

Middle School Math: Building students ready for high school math, career, college: (Published online March 27, 2023; included in spring 2023 InsideSchools)

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2023/03/27/middle-school-math-building-students-ready-for-high-school-math-career-college/>

Shuksan artists inspired by the work of Alma Thomas: (Published online May 2, 2023)

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2023/05/02/shuksan-student-artists-inspired-by-the-work-of-alma-thomas/>

Music Educators learn world music drumming in summer workshop: (Published online Sept. 11, 2023)

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2023/09/11/music-educators-learn-world-music-drumming-through-summer-workshop-experience/>

Project Free Education: Fifth Grade Strings (Published online Sept. 27, 2023; included in fall 2023 InsideSchools)

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2023/09/27/project-free-education-5th-grade-strings/>

Community Partners

The volunteer coordinator continues to support over 25 community partners and meets quarterly alongside the Executive Director of Family Engagement, Isabel Meaker, to discuss district updates, share resources and ideas on how to support our students and families. Based on the

Professional learning connects to the strategic areas of work in The Bellingham Promise

throughout the school year of the administrator and certificated staff member around these goals supported refinements to teaching and learning in a continuous improvement process.

Paraeducator Training and Professional Development

As reported previously, the federal *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) requires all Bellingham Public Schools paraeducators and substitute paraeducators to meet minimum employee requirements and provide training on the Fundamental Course of Study. The human resources department monitors and ensures that all employed paraeducators required

Building supports for our beginning educators of color through affinity groups and recruiting mentors of color.

Using a blend of BEST grant and Title IIA funding, we have a Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) leading the mentoring of new teachers, alongside other duties. The TOSA coordinates the assignment and support for mentors needed to support our novices. She also provides ongoing professional development for our mentors and communicates with district and building administrators to coordinate support for our novice educators. All new teachers receive support from mentors that can include classroom setup, co-planning, regular classroom observations with feedback, learning focused conversations and guided observations in veteran teachers’ classrooms.

In addition to mentoring, we provide our novices with monthly small-group job-alike sessions facilitated by our TOSA in conjunction with content leaders.

The BEST grant has allowed us to build a comprehensive system for new teacher induction that includes ongoing reflection, evaluation, and improvement. **We are hopeful to be able to apply and qualify for BEST grant funding for the 2024-25 school year.**

	Fall 17-18	Fall 18-19	Fall 19-20	Fall 20-21	Fall 21-22	Fall 22-23	Fall 23-24
Elementary	7	14	9	11	17	26	6
Middle	11	8	3	8	9	4	4
High							

*The number of novice educators has increased from 15-20 since this fall data was gathered.

b. Provide appropriate training for all employee classifications required by law.

Vector Training

We offer trainings in our district to approximately 2,400 staff. In order to effectively train all staff during each school year, as well as minimize the need for substitutes, we use a combination of both in-person and online trainings. Both training methods have inherent benefits.

The district is continuing our **online training program through Vector Training** for all employees. **Beginning this past fall, all new employees are assigned Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Prevention (full course) as well as the following mandated trainings assigned to**

all staff annually: Child Abuse: Mandatory Reporting, Bullying: Recognition and Response and Health Emergencies: Overview. In addition, a refresher course of the Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Prevention training is assigned each year to returning staff in an “at risk for bloodborne pathogens” position.

All employees receive C (refresh BT 0 1 90mp8tTm 0 n(nnua)4(l)] TJ ET 1 141.62 649.78 Tm 0 g n.

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