



SCHOOL OF THE NATIONS

聯合國學校

2021 Teacher Survey Results

Edited: 25 October 2021

Every school has its own student body, culture, and work environment. At School of the Nations (SON), we are naturally looking for teachers who will thrive at our school. While our website and application process were both designed to provide a detailed picture of the school environment, our current teachers can offer further insight into what staff—especially those from overseas—will likely experience when they arrive.

In January 2021, an anonymous survey was conducted among all teachers. The analysis that follows summarizes some insights from the survey’s key findings.

KEY FINDINGS

- Four out of five teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the school prioritizes “student learning and development” over all other objectives.
- 98% of teachers would recommend SON as a place to work—54 out of 55 teachers. At the same time, there was almost universal agreement that some teachers would thrive more at School of the Nations than others.
- The most common qualities given for the attributes of a teacher who would thrive at SON were being flexible, open-minded, positive, humble, collaborative, reflective, resourceful, resilient, and aligned with the vision of the school. The school was described as a distinctive place to work, one that required humility and flexibility from teachers to integrate into and flourish.
- Teachers had very high satisfaction with their role at the school: every teacher reported that the people they worked with help each other when needed. 85% of teachers felt that their work was valued by the school, reported a sense of meaning and purpose from teaching at SON, and were satisfied with their compensation.
- The vast majority of teachers reported positive feelings toward their administrator/supervisor. While the support and assistance felt by teachers was good, this could be further improved.
- Most teachers reported that the school cares about its staff, is improving, and that they are personally making efforts to understand the school’s vision and to contribute to its progress. Some teachers indicated mixed feelings about the school, especially those who reported that they were not as active in understanding and contributing to its aims.

- While there were no unfavorable impressions of the school’s Baha’i-inspired approach, understanding varied and some challenges were shared around its implementation.
- Students are viewed highly by teachers at SON, generally considered sweet, kind, questioning, and energetic. However, this was not uniform, and some issues were identified in some of the students.
- In describing highlights, several teachers mentioned that the school felt like a big family with colleagues helping and caring for each other. Some individual challenges were also expressed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

KEY FINDINGS	1
RESPONDENTS	2
NUMERICAL RESPONSES	4
QUALITATIVE DESCRIPTIONS	8
CONCLUSION	11
APPENDIX A: Recommending SON to others	12
APPENDIX B: Attributes of a teacher who would thrive at SON	14
APPENDIX C: Working Environment	16
APPENDIX D: Vision and Approach	18
APPENDIX E: Challenges	21
APPENDIX F: Survey participation e-mail	22
APPENDIX G: Data Analysis Decisions	23
NOTES	24

RESPONDENTS

On 8 January 2021, an anonymous online survey was given to 94 eligible teachers, specifically “*full-time or part time teachers or teacher assistants including those involved in student support.*”

Of these, 55 teachers completed the survey (59%) which is comparable to the typical response rate of such surveys (53%)ⁱ and is considered high enough to give insight into the sentiments of our teachers as a whole.ⁱⁱ Although the responses submitted spanned a continuum from positive and negative, because participation was short of universal the possibility of selection bias exists and is a noted limitation of this and similar surveys.

There was a strong response rate from across the four departments in the school, commensurate with the staffing levelsⁱⁱⁱ. Responses by department were roughly balanced between international and non-international teachers, except in Kindergarten that had few

(11%) responses by international teachers. Over 96% of total responses came from full-time teachers; for the sake of simplicity, we will simply refer to “teachers” in this report^{iv}.

From the responses, arts and general subjects are mostly taught by international teachers 20/23 (87%) while homeroom instruction is more evenly balanced. Chinese language courses are exclusively taught by teachers from Greater China, a subject that involves roughly half of our local educators (15/29).

Specialized Subject Area 專門學科領域	Passport 護照	
	International 國際	Macau / Mainland China / Hong Kong 澳門/內地/香港
Arts (Drama, Visual Arts, Music, Voice) 藝術 (戲劇、視覺藝術、音樂、聲樂)	6	-
Chinese Language 中文	-	15
Kindergarten or Primary Homeroom 幼稚園或小學班 主任 & Other 其他	5	8
Social Studies, Science, English, Physical Education, ICT, Math, Psychology, METL, French, Business, etc. 社會科學、科學、英語、體育、電腦科、數學、心理 學、METL、法語、商科等。	14	3
Student Support (Incl. Special Ed, Inclusive, Speech Therapy, ELL) 學生支援 (特教、融合、語言治療、第二語言)	1	3
Total	26	29
	47%	53%

There were roughly an equal number of teachers completing the survey from Macau, Mainland China, and Hong Kong compared with international teachers from other places, 53% to 47% respectively. It was observed that responses were comparable between these groups, so these figures were reported together.

For the question, “How long have you worked at SON?” it was observed that the average teacher has been at SON for 4.5 years—four years for international teachers and roughly 5 years on average for educators from the Greater China region.

How long have you worked at SON? 你在聯國學校工作多久?	Passport 護照	
	International 國際	Macau / Mainland China / Hong Kong 澳門/內地/香港
First year 第一年	2	3
1 to 3 full years 1-3 年	10	9
4 to 6 full years 4-6 年	10	2
More than 6 full years 6 年以上	4	15
Average	4.0	5.1

NUMERICAL RESPONSES

Top School Priority

Four out of five teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the school prioritizes “student learning and development” over all other objectives.

I feel that the school prioritizes student learning and development above all else. 我覺得校把學生的學習和發展放在首位。	Responses	
Agree 同意 & Strongly agree 強烈同意	44	80%
Neutral 中等	9	16%
Disagree 不同意	2	4%

Some of the 25 responses:

- Students are supported throughout the day in all areas...academically as well as character building.
- The school always reflects and takes action to change things to see how to help and support the students better.
- SON sets focus on learning and development with various programs, such as Book Week and Project Week.
- “I do feel the school prioritizes student learning but every now and then, there is also an equally strong feeling that there is a mismatch between prioritizing learning with actual implementation of expectation and policies.”
- Each of our teachers is in the service of students. 我們每位老師都是在為學生的服務。

Recommending the School to Others

98% of teachers (54 out of 55) would recommend SON as a place to work. At the same time, the even split between staff recommending the school to “most” and to “some” teachers suggest a widespread view that some educators would thrive at School of the Nations more than others.

For additional context, teachers were also asked to explain their responses. All these responses are included in Appendix A.

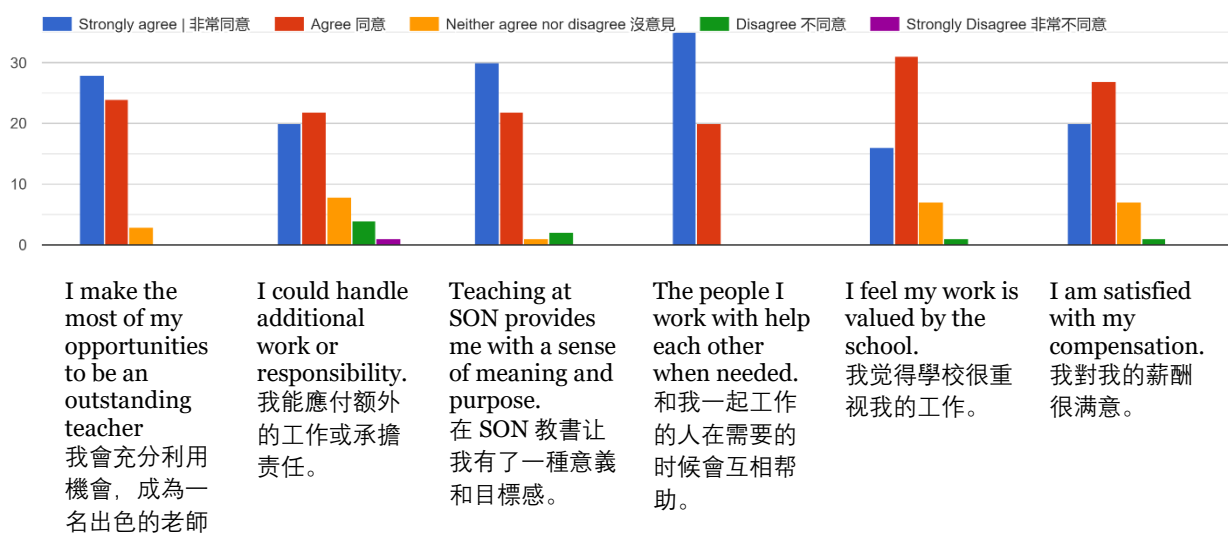
Recommendation 建议	No.	%
I would recommend SON to most teachers 我會向大多数老師推薦 SON	27	49%
I would recommend SON to some teachers 我會把 SON 推薦給一些老師	27	49%
I would NOT recommend SON to any teachers 我不會向任何老師推薦聯合國的工作。	1	2%

Another question asked teachers to “Describe the attributes of a teacher who would thrive at SON 合適教師--請描述能在 SON 成長和發展的教師特徵.”

The most common qualities included being **flexible, open-minded, positive, humble, collaborative, reflective, resourceful, and aligned with the vision of the school.** The school was described as a distinctive place to work, one that required humility and flexibility from teachers to integrate into and flourish.

Appendix B contains the detailed responses that were felt to be most relevant in elaborating upon this further.

My role 我的職責



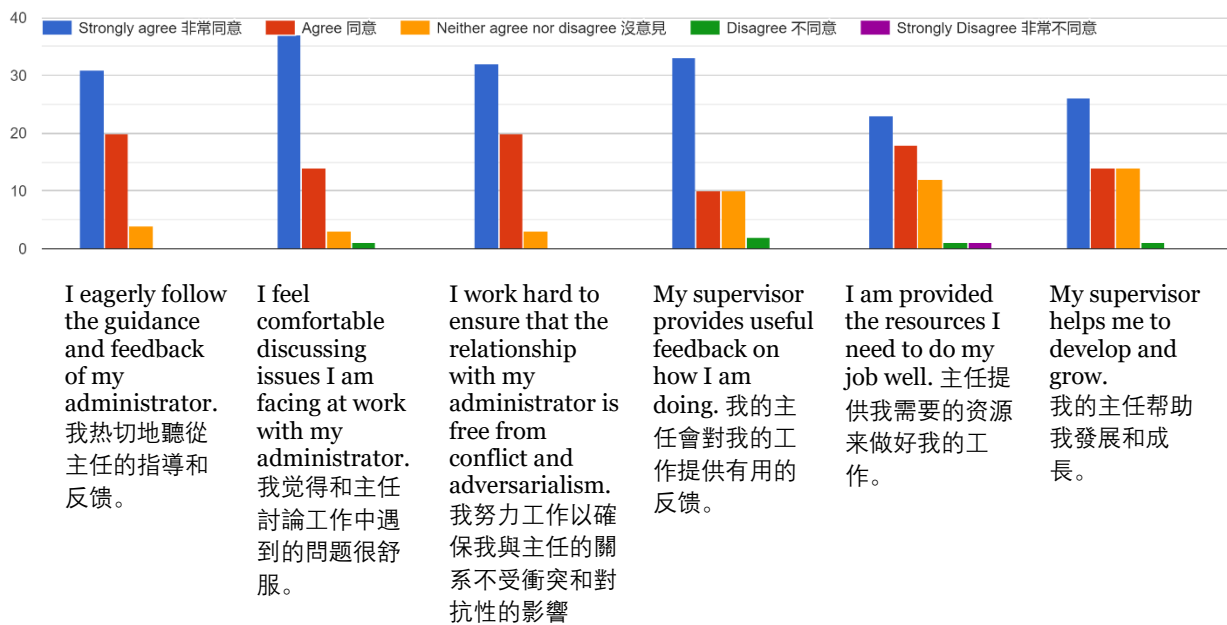
The responses suggest that overall, teachers have high satisfaction with their role at the school.

The findings indicate that collaboration among colleagues is extensive—every teacher agreed or strongly agreed that “*the people I work with help each other when needed.*” 52/55 (94%) reported having a sense of meaning and purpose from teaching at SON. 12/55 (22%) of teachers did not agree that they could handle additional work or responsibility.

47/55 (85%) of teachers agreed that their work was valued by the school. However, the high ratio of “agree” responses to “strongly agree” suggests that this view, while widely held, may not be as strongly felt.

The same number of teachers, 47/55 (85%), felt satisfied with their compensation. (The global average is around 39%^v)

My Administrator (or Supervisor) 我的主任



The responses above underscore the positive feelings that almost all teachers have for their administrator/supervisor, with data suggesting that this is accomplished by efforts from both sides. Over 90% of teachers felt that their supervisors create a warm environment, while some 70% of teachers feel they have sufficient support.

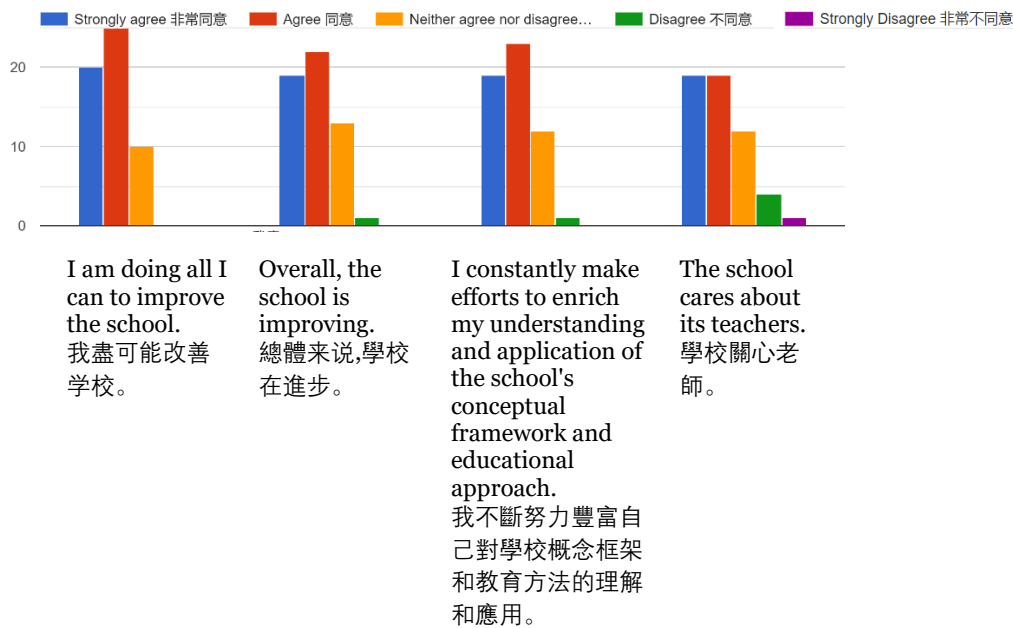
Teachers self-assessed that they were making strong efforts to “*eagerly follow the guidance and feedback of my administrator,*” 51/55 (93%) and to “*work hard to ensure that the relationship with my administrator is free from conflict and adversarialism,*” 52/55 (95%).

Addressing the openness of the relationship, 51/55 (93%) of teachers “*feel comfortable discussing issues I am facing at work with my administrator.*”

Concerning resources and support, 43/55 (78%) reported their “*supervisor provides useful feedback on how I am doing.*” 41/55 (75%) shared that they were “*provided the resources I need to do my job well,*” and 40/55 (73%) felt their “*supervisor helps me to develop and grow.*” 2/55 (4%) teachers explicitly disagreed with the above three statements, and 10 and 14 teachers (18%, 25%) respectively selected “*neither agree or disagree,*” suggesting some ambivalence in this area.

When the statement “*My supervisor helps me to develop and grow*” is analyzed by department, support is perceived most highly in Kindergarten and drops off in Middle School and Secondary^{vi}. It is undetermined whether this phenomenon is common across K-12 schools generally or if it highlights actual differences among departments at the school.

The School 學校



The majority of teachers reported that the school cares about its staff, is improving, and that they are personally making efforts to understand the school’s vision and to contribute to its progress.

We can observe that 45/55 (82%) of teachers agree they are doing “*all I can to improve the school,*” and 42/55 (76%) feel they “*constantly make efforts to enrich my understanding and application of the school's conceptual framework and educational approach.*”

Considering the institution, 38/55 teachers (69%) felt that “*The school cares about its teachers,*” while 41/55 (75%) agreed that “*Overall, the school is improving.*” Explicit disagreement with these two statements was 9% and 2% respectively, while around 23% teachers selected “neither agree or disagree” for both questions—suggestive of ambivalence.

Interestingly, the greater teacher’s efforts were to understand and apply the school’s framework and approach, the stronger they felt that the school was improving^{viii}. If causality exists in this relationship, it speaks to the impact of a constructive attitude on satisfaction with the school. Further insight into views of the school held by teachers can be found in the qualitative descriptions of the school’s Working Environment.

QUALITATIVE DESCRIPTIONS

To provide greater insight into areas of the school, such as the working environment and student body, teachers were asked to share their perspectives at length. Like the quantitative data, roughly 80% of what was written by teachers might be described as positive, 15% as neutral or mixed, and 5% as negative. To reduce the equivalent of eighty pages of feedback down to a handful of paragraphs, a disproportionate number of positive comments were removed. We hope this achieves a good balance between brevity and comprehensiveness—allowing prospective staff to get insight into the perceptions of teachers currently at the school to reflect on their own suitability.

Parts of original comments are quoted below which, along with others, are included in the Appendices.

Working Environment - *What it is like to work and teach here, to collaborate with colleagues, and to be supervised and guided.* 工作環境--在这里工作和教學是怎麼，與同事合作，被監督和指导。

Teachers described their colleagues as “friendly,” “willing to lend a hand when needed,” “lovely,” “easygoing,” “generally positive,” “respectful,” “warm,” and “serious and responsible.”

The school environment was described as, “friendly and innovating,” “awesome,” “enjoyable,” “positive and friendly,” “professional and quick paced,” “challenging,” “harmonious,” “peaceful,” and “like a big family.”

In their relationship with their administrator, most though definitely not all, felt “respected and trusted” and that they had “flexibility” and “freedom.”

One Primary teacher wrote that “administration do not seem to involve themselves too closely in the day to day planning and delivery of lessons. Their focus seems to be more on the overall direction and quality of the programmes and curriculum that is being provided to the students.” And that signs of the two extremes may occasionally arise in the “challenge to find the right balance between too much administrative input, where teachers feel they are being micromanaged, and not trusted as professionals, and too little input, where teachers are left to follow their own inclinations and preferences entirely.”

Another teacher explained that the lack of ‘traditional’ supervision and guidance from the administration may come across as “strange to new teachers” who may misunderstand this as “lack of support.”

Vision and Approach - *describe the values and priorities of the school, the characteristics and influence of the school's Baha'i-inspired approach to education, and the adjustments you have made personally and professionally to contribute to the school's aims.* 遠景和方式--描述學校的價值觀和優先事項，學校受巴哈伊信仰啟發的教育方法的特點和影響，以及你為實現學校目標所做的個人和專業調整。

All teachers had a favorable impression of the school’s Baha’i-inspired approach, although understanding and implementation varied. Some teachers were not clear about the school’s framework.

One teacher commented on the school's aim to “train our students to be outstanding not only in academic performance, more important is the moral structure which will guide their whole life. We train the young minds for both individual growth and contribution to the society,” and “striving for excellence in all areas; striving to build an environment of unity, absence of prejudice, collaboration and cooperation among students and between staff and students; seeking to deepen our understanding of student differences and how different pedagogical approaches impact different students; seeking to continuously examine and reexamine our curriculum for it to be better fitted to the needs and challenges of life in the twenty first century.”

Even though we are still at the early stages of learning about translating our vision into reality, some signs were noted: “The Baha'i-inspired approach to education can be evidenced in the way students consider each other, their environment, global issues and the happy feel in the corridors and classrooms. There is an environment of serving others, in small ways every day and in larger community projects. Assemblies are enjoyable and there is a sense of everyone sharing the same visions and goal for the school, parents, students and community.” Another teacher shared, “My lessons do not involve anything that is competitive anymore.”

From the responses it seemed that several teachers expressed that they found the approach of our school unclear, one writing “The schools aims are not clear, the idea of this being a Baha'i-inspired school is very confusing for me...For many teachers that lack of clarity simply leads to a feeling of unease because people don't know what is expected.”

Student body—describe the characteristics of our students plus how they interact with each other, engage with learning, behave, and interact with teachers. 學生--描述我們學生的特點，以及他們如何與他人互動，如何參與學習及行為狀況，如何與老師互動。

Transformation in students' inner life and resulting behavior requires an equally large change in how they are viewed and treated by others. Upon entering the school community, new teachers naturally begin to reflect on how they can best support students to realize their vast potential.

From the survey responses, students are viewed very highly by teachers—generally considered sweet, kind, questioning, and energetic.

One observation that was reflective of several descriptions of students was:

“As in most schools, our students are diverse in their attitudes and abilities. However, I have found that the majority of my students are motivated to do well in their studies and as a result they are conscientious about their schoolwork. In general, the students get on well together, and they tend to be kind and helpful towards each other when classmates are experiencing problems and difficulties. While this is not always the case, it is generally true. They tend to be eager to discuss many topics and are not hesitant to express their opinions and ideas. The majority are respectful and courteous with teachers the great majority of the time.”

Challenges

If you have experienced or observed significant challenges or shortcomings at the school that may be relevant to prospective teachers, please constructively share them here. 如果你在學校經歷或觀察到重大的挑戰或缺點，可能與未來的教師有關，請留下你寶貴的建設性意見。

Teachers who are considering joining our efforts may well benefit from learning of the challenges of current staff, recognizing that their own experience may be different. In fact, no two comments mentioned the same point, suggesting that many of the challenges experienced were individualized. The points raised included: sometimes the school runs short on space, orientation can be further improved, organizational structures could be refined, “flexibility” tends to be a quality of a successful teacher along with “resilience and self-reliance,” the school does place limitations on course content selection, expectations are perceived high by some, and the support teachers received can be increased.

Beyond the above summary, each of the challenges that were shared by teachers are included in Appendix E. Sometimes, to preserve the anonymity of teachers and staff or to avoid focusing on secondary or unique matters, some responses will be summarized, indicated clearly in [brackets].

Highlights and Impact

Describe some of the best memories you have experienced at the school and the impact that working at SON has had on you. 請描述一些你在學校經歷的最美好回憶，以及在 SON 工作對你的影響。

Every day, interacting with the students—they are funny and sweet and interesting.

“I have been working at school for about 8 years. My best memories with the school is the people that I have worked with here (teachers, officers and janitors). I feel here is a big family or a community, people are love, kind, helping each other.”

“Seeing younger students at recess time and interacting with them. Seeing parents come to the school and have opportunities to interact with the class that their children are in by reading a story or volunteering in some other capacity. Watching members of the community visiting the school and interacting with students or the school community.”

“Students closing ceremonies, staff fun gatherings, school various celebrations make me understand that I'm part of a big family and putting our strengths together we can do achieve great things.”

I most enjoyed the training I received about the school's vision and conceptual framework.

Every morning, friends from the curriculum group will greet the children to enter the school. This kind of heart-to-heart closeness, especially in the cold winter, makes me feel very, very warm.

It feels like a big family, with colleagues helping and caring for each other. Supervisors are understanding towards employees. “感覺就像一個大家庭一樣，同事之間互相幫助，互相關心。領導對於員工來說較寬容。”

The opportunity to work in an international setting has helped me learn a lot. I have become familiar with various international curricula which I would otherwise have

limited exposure to. Working with individuals who are thinking deeply about education has opened my eyes to new possibilities to grow as an educator.

“When I was offered the position I currently hold, it was a new experience for me and I was unsure I could do it justice. However, I came to understand that the skills I already had, together with my years of teaching experience, added to my enthusiasm for my subject, were more than enough to get me through the steep learning curve of teaching from K2 to P6 students. I love that I have a space that I can develop and adapt to my teaching and the resources as I need, and that I have a lot of autonomy within the rigid structure of the fixed curriculum to work with the wide range of skills and attitudes the students present in class.”

“Some of my best memories of the school have been when we have helped each other at challenging times which has helped me to become the person I am today.”

Other feedback:

Please elaborate on any of your responses above or share any other comments. 請详细说明您以上任何分享内容或添加其他任何意见。

“The school is not like a typical international school, like those with which teachers who have worked in international schools before may be familiar. It is rooted in the local culture and does not seek to impose a certain ‘western’ style of education on students, even though the curriculum and resources may have elements of a ‘western’ style of education. The school does not seem to espouse ‘western’ notions of education or think that they are inherently better than ‘eastern’ or more ‘traditional’ styles of education. It seeks to gain insights from both. People who come to the school thinking that a ‘western’ style of education is the best may not find that their views align with the school. There is no education system in the world that is perfect, and the school seems to be looking at what is available and build on the strengths of programs that seem to align most with its philosophy.”

CONCLUSION

The responses from teachers provide insights into many aspects of the school and we hope they allow prospective teachers to evaluate whether they would make a good fit in the school.

While 54 out of 55 of teachers would recommend SON as a place to work, there was almost universal agreement that some teachers would thrive more at School of the Nations than others. The school was described as a distinctive place to work, one that required humility and flexibility from teachers to integrate into and flourish. Being open-minded, positive, collaborative, reflective, resourceful, resilient, and aligned with the vision of the school were also mentioned as key attributes to thrive at the school. Indeed, it was apparent from the wide range of responses to some of the questions was how one’s attitude, in addition to the school environment, greatly impacts perceptions and overall satisfaction.

The survey also identified several important areas where the school can improve, that would likely lead teachers to feel more valued and supported. Everyone involved with the school shares in the task of bringing it into greater alignment with its vision and ideals. The school has confidence that this survey—and the daily efforts of teachers and administrators alike—will contribute to the trust and communication needed by the school to both address challenges and build on successes, as it advances.

APPENDIX A: Recommending SON to others

All comments

“I have been treated with respect and welcomed into the school with lots of support from admin. There is a wonderful community of supportive professional teachers. The students are generally lovely to teach. The school recognises teachers who go the extra mile to serve others.”

“Those teachers who are able to accept what the school is trying to do and willing to contribute to it, willing to be positive in the workplace and think how to make the school better, not those who are constantly finding fault with the school and complaining about what needs to change, or those who think they know better than others, have a condescending attitude towards local people and local culture.”

“As I am comfortable here, hope others too can feel the same!”

In an international school with a large number of Chinese, foreign teachers are not used to teaching, and Chinese teachers need time to adapt, so not every teacher is suitable for this environment. “一所中國人比較多的國際學校，外國老師教不習慣，中國老師要時間適應，所以不是每一位老師都適合這種環境。”

“As I believe every teacher has their own characteristics and his/her own way of teacher, which may not necessary match/suit the way how SON is approaching or allowing the teachers to expand their own way of teaching.”

“I have personally recommended SON to a friend of mine who you have chosen to interview.”

“I would only recommend people who are creative and adaptable.”

Good teacher training and learning atmosphere, worthy to recommend to everyone. “良好的師資培訓和學習氛圍，值得向大家推薦。”

“If the teacher is familiar with the history, pro and cons of working at SON, understands the framework and it's application/weakness thereof and is willing to join.”

Not all teachers are suitable for SON. Schools have certain requirements for teachers. Teachers with experience and passion for education are suitable. “不是所有老師都適合聯合國學校，學校對老師有一定要求，有經驗對教育有熱情的老師才適合。”

“If you are person with a positive attitude then SON is the place to be!”

“It is like Marmite some people either like it or not.”

[I would recommend the school to others] because the school does not have so much work pressure for teachers, other traditional school teachers are very stressed. “因為本校對於老師來說沒有那麼大的工作壓力，其他傳統學校老師是很有壓力的。”

“SON is a school with 30 years of experience, and the way the school started and has developed is incredible. The school is flexible and helpful.”

“SON is very inclusive. If any teacher comes here, if he is willing to improve himself, the teacher will become a better service provider.”

SON reveals deep humanistic care, which will bring teachers a sense of achievement and happiness. “SON 透露出濃濃的人文關懷，會給老師們帶來成就感及幸福感。”

“I think the school is special and has the potential to be very excellent or very terrible depending on the strengths of the Admin and teachers. The recruitment process needs to be very rigorous and more careful.”

“The school's vision can nurture people who will contribute to humanity in the future, and teachers have a lot of flexibility in their teacher, and the administrators are friendly and supportive.”

It depends on whether the teacher's personality and specialty are in line with the SON's academic environment. “要視乎那個老師的個性及專業是否合乎 SON 的學情。”

“I think, under the current regime, new teachers and teachers with specific views and experiences would suffer from being treated in less than a professional way, so would be more suited to schools that can offer that management style.”

“The school is an unique school in Macau. We are not just teaching knowledge for children. We are actually planting a seed to grow with different gems and the plant could grow healthily and to service to others.”

“I love to work at SON, and I have grown and learned so much in this work environment, naturally, I feel happy to encourage others to have the same great opportunity as me.”

Not Directly Related

“I will only explain to the teacher that is suitable to SON.”

“Similar to different learning needs and approaches in students, we would expect and respect different teaching professionals and their own doing in education. However, I believe right match fits the best! I would recommend our school to most teacher who share the common thoughts which aligned with school's vision in education.”

“A very good school work work and improve yourself”

I am an honest and trustworthy person and I will tell the truth. “我是一個誠實有信的人，我會實話實說。”

APPENDIX B: Attributes of a teacher who would thrive at SON

Select comments

Teachers should appreciate the values of the school.

“The teachers should be open minded and humble to learn how to approach to the vision rather than hold his own experience from before.”

“Understanding of SON's vision and culture; Appreciate peer learning and peer support; Development in teaching strategies with an open mind and positive attitude.”

A teacher who would thrive at SON would have the following attributes: Responsibility, Flexibility, Caring, Resourceful, Able to use initiative, Empathetic, and Creative.

“Flexible to teaching and working, neutral towards beliefs and always stay positive in all circumstances.”

“Flexible, cooperative, humble, and service attitude

“Flexible. Be prepared to find a unique way of doing things. Someone who is a warm sharing caring person who wants to provide the best service they can to the school, community, parents, students.”

To work here is to be inclusive, to be willing to learn, and to have the courage to accept new things, because this is not only a school, but also a multicultural and harmonious community. “要在本校任職應有包容的胸懷、持續的學習力和接受新事物的勇氣，因為這裡不僅是一所學校，還是一個多元文化共融的氣氛和諧的社區。”

“I believe it is important for the teachers to have open minded for them to work in SON, as the school does not have too much space for teacher to expand their own way of teacher. Teachers must be able to adjust themselves easily in order to cope with the school smoothly.”

“Independent and ready to embrace tests - probably with clear reasons about why they are here and a realistic expectation that no organization is perfect in all ways. Good at negotiating a workload and lifestyle to ensure they keep their energy up. Responsible and realistic. Then they thrive. For teachers from outside China there is the additional pressure of being far from home so if they have pressing family commitments elsewhere, maybe not a good choice.”

“Independent, positive, resourceful, open, flexible, kind”

Studious, modest, inquisitive, and able to explore and think independently. “好學、謙虛，善於發問，並且能獨立探索及思考。”

Not really sure as expectations change from year to year of what is being expected as a teacher, but I would assume: Hard worker, Reliant, Consultative, Relaxed, Have the thirst and drive for all to do well, Patience in abundance when things do go a certain way, Accepting of different religions including Baha'i Faith, and Research the Baha'i Faith before coming. These are some of them.”

“Open mind, Sense of cooperation, Team unity and harmony, Respect everyone, Continuous reflection.

“Open minded. Flexible and adaptable. Kind and compassionate. Willing to collaborate in exploring how best to attain the high aims and goals of the school. A good communicator; willing and able to discuss and consult with colleagues about all manner of issues and

challenges which arise in the day to day operation of the school. Patient with students, and willing and able to take the long view of student development, learning and maturation. Able to communicate well with parents, students and administrators. Open to new learnings and new understandings and trying new approaches and methods of teaching. ”

“Open, willing to learn, humble, attitude of collaboration and wanting to help and support others--teachers and students alike, positive attitude, willing to do what is necessary to create an environment where people are united and joyful, able to overlook the personal faults of others and constructively look at what can be done to improve things.”

“Positive people that want the students to succeed.”

“Someone who is open-minded, values character development, believes in cooperative discipline, cares about global issues and contributing to society, etc.”

Teachers who have a global perspective and are committed to the growth of their students.

“都是具有全球視野和為學生的成長而努力的老師。”

“Teachers who are constantly having to compare SON with their previous schools or those keep referring to their home country whenever they find things in Macau not to their liking will not be suitable at SON (nor Macau)”

“Thick skinned!”

“Teachers work in SON needs to be flexible and open-minded. Things are changing rapidly in this ever-developing school. Teachers also need to be collaborative and willing to try work as a team. ”

“The ones who can go with the flow and are open minded.”

“They could see themselves growth and enjoy teaching at the school. They reflect their teaching and accompany with others. They enjoy learning new objective which could improve their teaching or abilities. ”

Those who can work in Macau for more than four years, otherwise should consider going else. “能在澳門工作超過 4 年的人，若不能的話應該考慮其他地方。”

“Flexible and willing to learn and collaborate”

Examples of valuable but less relevant responses:

“If anyone who really wants to make a difference and change to world to a better place, SON is the one of the best place to start.”

“...a teacher that would strive at SON would be a teacher who would rather get dictated to and not be creative...”

The teachers should have passion about education and love of children.

“A teacher at SON should be well prepared to work hard for the school community. One with qualitative knowledge and sufficient experience can easily thrive at SON.”

APPENDIX C: Working Environment

Select comments

GENERAL:

“Colleagues are friendly and many are willing to lend a hand when needed. The supervisors are supportive towards our professional and personal development.”

“I felt comfortable and motivated in this friendly and innovating place.”

“I love my profession and I love my students! Teaching these awesome kids is a fantastic experience! Working in my department has been simply awesome! We have a lovely team that always looks out for each other.”

It is my home away from home.

“It is thoroughly enjoyable to work and teach at SON. Teachers collaborate well, and you are encouraged to think creatively about the lessons you deliver. The curriculum provides skills that will need to be taught, however how these are taught is not prescribed, meaning that you are able to use your experience and initiative to plan and deliver lessons. When you wish to be supervised and guided, the curriculum team will support, however often you are able to share experiences with your teaching colleagues to improve lessons.”

My colleagues are extremely easygoing people and are willing to share their knowledge and experience.

Staff are good. Always happy to work with and generally positive.

The staff, in general, is respectful. Of course, we will always feel more empathy with some of them, and this is normal in human relations.

The work environment feels generally positive and friendly. I think the school could do more for new staff when they arrive to make them feel more part of the school community...

“The work environment is professional and quick paced. Collaboration between colleagues is frequently and staff members generally have warm and often close relationships with each other both in and out of school.”

Colleagues - very good. Collaboration with management too, positive. Supervision very light touch, maybe too much so. One does not always know where one is succeeding or failing and in particular what school leadership thinks about one's strengths and weaknesses. I understand that judgements are made but not systematically shared, so you may find yourself second guessing whether you are approved of or not.

The school environment is very good, serious and responsible teachers can work on their own, and can learn from each other. Can be very good cooperation between teachers work together to complete. 學校的環境非常好，老師們能對自己的工作認真負責，并能相互學習。老師之間也能很好的合作，完成共同的工作。

The working atmosphere in our department is very good, everyone is willing to provide help whenever needed. It is very easy to seek for help.

Colleagues are happy, we receive guidance when we encounter problems, and solve these problems together. “和同事合作愉快，遇到問題會有指導，共同解決問題”

“This is the most challenging work environment I have experienced.”

The working environment is harmonious and there is no vicious competition. Most of the colleagues are friendly.

This working environment is the most peaceful environment I have ever seen.

“The school is like a big family. People work closely together and got lots of support from colleagues and Administrator.”

ADMINISTRATOR OVERSIGHT:

I feel that SON trusts teachers very much and will not supervise our work in too many ways, giving us a lot of space to develop our own teaching. In this way, I feel respected and trusted, and at the same time, I will have higher self-discipline and requirements for myself.

While teachers have to follow the curriculum and include all the necessary skills, much flexibility is given as to what instructional approaches we want to adopt to deliver the content, and I absolutely love that!

More harmonious working environment, compared with the traditional Chinese schools, our school to give teachers more room tailoring teaching at the school syllabus framework of respect for the teacher's personal views, according to personal style allows teachers to plan their lessons. “工作環境較和諧，與中國傳統學校比較，我校在學校的教學大綱框架下給予教師較大空間剪裁教材，尊重教師的個人意見，允許教師依照個人風格計劃自己的課程。”

I work in the primary section, where I find that there is a warm, supportive collegial environment among the teachers. The administration do not seem to involve themselves too closely in the day to day planning and delivery of lessons. Their focus seems to be more on the overall direction and quality of the programmes and curriculum that is being provided to the students. It is always a challenge to find the right balance between too much administrative input, where teachers feel they are being micromanaged, and not trusted as professionals, and too little input, where teachers are left to follow their own inclinations and preferences entirely.

This is a school that, by far, offers the best working environment in my experience. Never have I experienced such supportive administrative culture - that one can speak freely with the school director is something that is unique to this school. However, sometimes, the lack of a more 'traditional' supervision or guidance from the administration may make new teachers find it strange - and misunderstand this as lack of support from senior/more experience teachers (or admin) in supporting their professional development.

Supervisors and coordinators are easy going and respectful. I have never felt they put themselves in a superior positions. I like the freedom I have at SON. I don't have anyone telling me how to do things 'right' all the time. The school trust us as teachers. At least in the position I have is like that.

APPENDIX D: Vision and Approach

Select comments

CURRENT UNDERSTANDING

The school is committed to enhancing the physical, intellectual, and spiritual development of its students, as well as to enhancing their ability to care for their families and communities. “學校致力於提高學生體能、智能與靈性的發展，並提神其對家庭和社區的人文關懷的能力。”

The aim of the school is to cultivate students who can serve and contribute to the society. Therefore, moral education should permeate our teaching and great importance should be attached to students' qualities and orientation towards service. “學校的培養目標是培育出能為社會做出服務及貢獻的人。所以，在教學中要滲透品德教育及重視學生的服務行為。”

“The school prioritizes its values on 'Character Development' which is integrated in all subject areas throughout the day. We have been focusing on the 'Learner Profile' which teaches the students various virtues. The school's focus is to mould our students into learning problem-solving skills and be great future world citizens to make this world a better place to live in.”

The values of the school are that people learn to serve their community, a lifelong objective with selflessness at the center. The Baha'i Faith, as a religion, is not strictly played out in the school, but rather reflected in the way of doing things and how people are treated. “學校的價值觀是讓人學會服務大眾，是一個以無私為目標的終生教學；優先事項一定是學生的安全學習環境；巴哈伊的信仰並沒有克板地在學校渲染，而是以做事的方式去讓眾人感受。”

I appreciated the chance to work at SON. Because I totally agreed with the vision of the school that we train our students to be outstanding not only in academic performance, more important is the moral structure which will guide their whole life. We train the young minds for both individual growth and contribution to the society just like interwoven aspects of one necessary movement. We help our students to understand that we are parts of the world just like parts of a human body. I try to reflect as much as I can to see if the methods that I use are helping me approach the school's vision. I also try to make more space for my colleagues to reflect together.

Some of the central values of the school include: striving for excellence in all areas; striving to build an environment of unity, absence of prejudice, collaboration and cooperation among students and between staff and students; seeking to deepen our understanding of student differences and how different pedagogical approaches impact different students; seeking to continuously examine and reexamine our curriculum for it to be better fitted to the needs and challenges of life in the twenty first century. Great emphasis is placed on the ongoing process of character development. We are striving to inculcate the best human qualities in our students so that they may become effective servants of their communities and the world, working for the betterment of their communities and of the world. These are challenging times, and the world needs people who are capable of arising to meet and tackle the challenges of our present day.

The values are crystallized in the learner profile and it is the ambitious aim of raising children who will become collaborative servants of humanity with well-trained minds. The priorities are mixed since it is not a blank sheet—parents, teachers, DSEJ, practical considerations and outside cultural influences often have a big influence on what can be done and how the attempt is made to realize the vision. Hence it becomes [like] a

negotiation. I have adapted by endeavouring to become a more competent teacher and collaborative colleague as this is the foundation on which I can contribute to the more unique aspects of the values.

“The school seeks to guide its students to becoming global citizens who seek and engage in active service to the community. The school promotes the idea of being a committed contributor to social progress and the promotion of social justice, and these two core beliefs form the foundation of my philosophy of my teaching here at SON.”

EFFECTS & IMPLEMENTATION

The Baha’i-inspired approach to education can be evidenced in the way students consider each other, their environment, global issues and the happy feel in the corridors and classrooms. There is an environment of serving others, in small ways every day and in larger community projects. Assemblies are enjoyable and there is a sense of everyone sharing the same visions and goal for the school, parents, students and community. I try to contribute to this by making myself available to students during lunch, after school, Saturdays to help them in their studies. I attend all of the open days, art days, parent days and communicate as best I can with parents when they have concerns.

My lessons do not involve anything that is competitive anymore.

The school’s Baha’i inspired approach brings us to understand that each child under our care is ‘a mine rich in gems of inestimable value.’ As a teacher, we should make sure to provide a kind of education in which will help the students to feel capable, connected and able to contribute.

CLARITY

“A clear vision and approach and the school and teachers keep improving their way of education.”

“The academic priorities of the school doesn’t seem to be clear. The school needs to have a focus with the curriculum. There seem to be some confusion in terms of whether to design a curriculum or follow the international curriculum from examination bodies whose results are required from our students upon F6 graduation. I do not have issues with the Baha’i influencing in the school.”

The schools aims are not clear, the idea of this being a Baha’i inspired school is very confusing for me and I do not believe that they school itself has any idea about what that means. For many teachers that lack of clarity simply leads to a feeling of unease because people don’t know what is expected. For me personally I feel that it fits well for me because I am confident in my own self and do not worry about the school’s judgement of me.

The vision is a bit fragmented and the approach lacks clarity. The contribution I’ve made is to bring clarity usually with individual colleagues whenever possible and when asked.

LIMITATIONS TO IMPLEMENTATION

The school values the development of character in each individual, as well as achieving academic goals. To contribute towards the school aims, we are required to actively plan the learner profiles into each lesson, ensuring that the development character is conscious when planning and delivering learning experiences. Personally, not much is different as ‘child-centered’ learning is prioritized in my home country also. [One] personal adjustment I have had to make is in the delivery of devotions, however this is supported by the coordinators and staff in the school.

“I am aware that there is a learner profile, but I cannot claim to know much about how it links to the Baha’i inspired approach. I mostly just focus on ensuring that my kids are learning in a warm, respectful environment where they are allowed to bloom.”

Similar to many other religions, beliefs are always driven by good character and a positive approach to life. Thus, to me, as religiously neutral, it is more reasonable to put emphasis on good characters and a positive approach to life, than the religion itself. I professionally align some of the school's ‘approaches to learning’ to some of my teaching.

PERSONAL RESPONSES

Despite not being Baha’i, I loved their principles and the teachings that exemplified human connection and social cohesion and wellbeing, and this was a big reason why I chose the school over all the other job offers I received. However, as with all faiths, how each individual interprets and delivers the teachings has a big effect on those they seek to educate and guide.

I hope that I can do my best to make myself a model. First of all, I will become a person with high standards of ethics and strive to serve the school and society."

“The school is not a ‘grades’-based school. SON look more for ‘unity,’ for example, students learn that all religions are indeed one. I am not Baha’i, and my Baha’i colleagues are respectful and don't want to convince anyone about becoming a Baha’i. Basically, they never "talk" about they are Baha’i, but you can notice in their ‘deeds’ they are humble and helpful. It was my own curiosity who brought me to read some Baha’i books and—even that I don't think I will become Baha’i—but I really appreciate all of the Baha’i teachings, they are beautiful.”

I really appreciate the Baha’i-inspired approach.

APPENDIX E: Challenges

All comments

- “As Macau is small, at school we lack space.”
- Better organisational structure, gentler transition into orientation week for new staff, more peer support to younger and newly qualified teachers, longer lunch break or flexi hours in the afternoon.
- There could be better coordination and communication between departments. “各部門之間在協調和溝通上可以做得更好。”
- I think if the new teachers can receive a training about school conceptual framework is very important. Because it is very easy to get lost in the core of our role, the very busy daily work.
- [Feeling that the curriculum team should give teachers more latitude for content selection and that it should be less based on a single country.]
- [Strong feeling that teachers are not shown due “respect for their training and professional status by those that manage and administer them.” Felt that should all parties come together, through a “process of reconciliation,” “SON has the potential to be the Harvard or Oxford of the East.”]
- [Bad experience with HR involving mischaracterizations of statements.]
- [One teacher shared that her challenge was to “find more ways for my professional growth goals and serve my students better.”]
- “There may be a gap in communication between the longstanding core group and the teachers who come for a 2-4 years and maybe others who see work at the school as a job. Decisions are not always pushed down to the appropriate level which reduces the sense of ownership of some teachers and limits vertical collaboration. It is a tightrope to walk, of course, especially as the vision is more heartfelt by some than others.”
- Talk to experienced teachers. “和有經驗的老師交流心得”
- [A teacher felt that there were “unrealistic expectations” and dishonesty among “a few specific individuals in the school.” S/he added that they were grappling with finding the “intersection of my personal teaching philosophy and the meaning of Baha'i inspired education.”]
- “It was said earlier. New teachers could struggle unless they are very independent and or flexible.”
- Teachers who come here have to have a certain degree of resilience and self-reliance. They should be independent and able to set up a life for themselves without relying solely on the school community for social events and opportunities to get to know people. They should be self-sufficient and outward looking, willing to learn about the local culture and interact with people in the community at large. Without this, I think they will struggle. They should think carefully whether Macao, being a small place that is fairly quiet, is the right place for them, and consider how they feel they can build a network of friends after they arrive.
- [There needs to be more support from peers and administrators, along with structures for this]
- Interact actively with your colleagues or your administrator to get useful support. “積極跟您的同事或主任互動，您能從他們身上獲得有益的支持。”
- [Class sizes]
- “Too much inconsistency as compared to the Chinese department.”

APPENDIX F: Survey participation e-mail

8 January 2021

Dear Teachers,

As you know, every school is different. The main goal of recruitment is to identify those teachers who would thrive at our school. Therefore, it is crucial for those applying to us, especially from overseas, to have a good understanding of our student body, school culture, and work environment. While our new website provides a glimpse into this, hearing directly from teachers provides unparalleled insight into what they will likely experience when they arrive.

Accordingly, it is hoped that all teachers will submit a recruitment survey for this purpose before January 14. All full-time or part time teachers or teacher assistants, may complete this, including those involved in student support. We request that your responses reflect your overall feelings from the last calendar year and look past temporary conditions arising from the pandemic.

The survey is anonymous, and I will be the only person from the school to view the individual responses. This will ensure that identities cannot be surmised from combining the department and demographic information—in case this is of concern to you.

Once you receive your 8-digit numeric participation code from R__ or me, you may complete the survey below.^{viii}

APPENDIX G: Data Analysis Decisions

Of the 55 responses received, 40 completed at least one freeform response in English, 12 used Chinese, and 3 completed only the multiple-choice questions. The average responses exceeded 300 words per survey, suggesting strong engagement with the survey.

For full responses where *any* change was made—typo, grammar, clarification, omission—double quotes were removed.

A total of 4 participation codes were not valid—two were ‘12345678’ while two codes were typed incorrectly, with 1 and 5 incorrect digits. Since responses associated with these four codes were unique and showed thoughtfulness, they were all included. No valid codes were used twice and all but three teachers successfully obtained a code to enable them to participate anonymously.

The ‘supervisor’ considered for analysis will be the level administrator for the department selected in the survey, since the free response for supervisor name did not provide any important adjustments. One response was adjusted to preserve anonymity, as they alone fell under another supervisor.

To preserve anonymity, owing to the few responses from teachers from the Special Education Department and Curriculum team, these responses were instead included in the Primary and Secondary responses respectively, except for those questions dealing with their direct supervisor, where these five responses in total were matched to the supervisor.

For subject taught, one teacher selected “other.” To prevent de-anonymization, their responses were considered along with “Kindergarten and Primary Homeroom” teachers as they were from one of these Departments.

In the process of choosing only a few quotes for inclusion in the report and appendices, deliberate effort was made to ensure that the result was representative of the full set of comments, neither too positive nor too negative.

While the survey was anonymous, further steps were taken to ensure the confidentiality of responses, in case this was of concern to some respondents:

- 1) No personally identifiable information, such as name and email address, was requested or captured on the form.
- 2) The survey software (Google Forms) cannot collect IP addresses.
- 3) An anonymous participation code (used only to avoid duplicate entries) was given randomly to teachers. There was never a connection to individual teachers. Teachers were free to swap codes with others. Each code can only be used once.
- 5) The individual responses will be accessible to survey data analyst, through a secure account created for this purpose.
- 6) Prospective teachers and others from the school would only be given general reports drawn from the underlying data or individual comments not linked to department or demographic data. To further preserve confidentiality in reporting, combinations of answers containing a few teachers were sometimes aggregated with other groups.

The official version of this report is only available at <https://schoolofthenations.com/survey2021> to allow any future updates to reach all parties. Individual comments and sections from this report should not be extracted or shared on other platforms to ensure that context is maintained.

Any questions about this report or its methodology can be raised with the recruitment team recruitment@schoolofthenations.com or survey administrator sonhrsurvey@gmail.com.

2021 © School of the Nations, Macau

www.schoolofthenations.edu.mo

NOTES

ⁱ <https://surveyanyplace.com/average-survey-response-rate/>

ⁱⁱ Very high response rates sometimes signify undue coercion to complete the survey leading to hasty and thoughtless responses, while unduly low response rates often skew toward extreme opinions and are often not representative of reality—a common trait of online reviews for example. Further reading: <https://kkbiersdorff.wordpress.com/2009/09/16/how-many-is-enough/>

ⁱⁱⁱ **Participation by Department 部門**

Kindergarten 幼稚园	9
Primary 小学	22
Middle School 初中	10
Secondary 高中	14

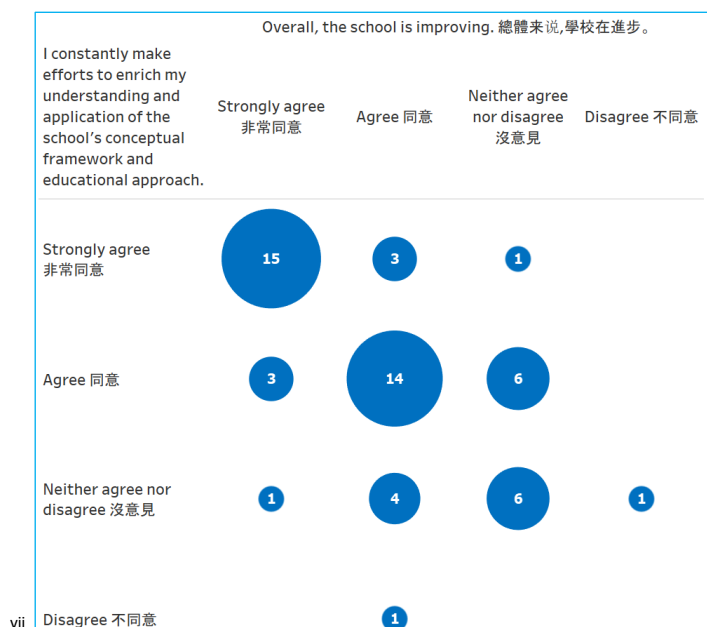
Teacher Status 教師狀態

I am a full-time teacher, coordinator, or administrator 我是一名全職教師、協調員或主任	53
I am a part-time teacher (10 or fewer weekly contact periods with students) 我是兼職教師(每周與學生接觸時間不超過 10 次)	1
I am a teaching assistant 我是助教	1

^v “In terms of salaries, 39% of teachers and 47% of principals are satisfied with the pay they receive, on average across OECD countries” from the 2018 OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/19cf08df-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/19cf08df-en>



vi



vii

^{viii} In June 2021, a draft of this report was shared with all teachers for feedback. One teacher mentioned she had not seen the email to participate. Another remarked that his submission—which was not positive—had not received. Despite some accommodation he was, unfortunately, not able to re-submit his responses. Regarding feedback on the report itself, one teacher felt some the questions placed too much accountability on the teacher and not on the school.