

# Survey Results from Principals of the Indiana District

*November 2020: 28 of 48 School principals responding*

## **Q1 - What of importance did you gain from the Regional intro to the Concordia Plan Compensation Decision Support Tool? What was missing, confusing, or headed in a wrong direction?**

- All was clear. Just wish that our congregation could follow it and pay their teachers accordingly.
- I believe the compensation tool provides a more accurate picture of where our employees' salaries should be. However, I anticipate that our congregations will not support using the tool as even the low end salary calculated by the tool is a significant increase from where our salaries are currently at.
- I viewed the Prezi and felt that it was a good intro - I would be interested in continuing to learn the direction.
- Our Associate Pastor watched the webinar. We are meeting at the end of this week to discuss. We have already approved our budget for 2021 but needed to have an understanding for the future.
- I was not at the meeting, and I did not look into this.
- We have not yet used this as a tool. Lacking is clarity as to what percentage of the district guidelines we would be using. There is only a range and not clarity as to how close to district guidelines we are, it is our goal to get close. Where are the guidelines for the district the high, middle or low?
- "I believe the lack of communication. If this has been studied over the past three years, this information and research details prior to the current year would have been helpful.
- It would be nice to see how this trend will roll out over the years to come. There is a lot of uncertainty.
- The ECE part is very different. We are creating our own plan for ECE."
- N/A
- "Not sure about the additional compensation philosophies such as 7.65% for Social Security for called workers (these same workers get a housing allowance which reduces their tax year AGI) or advanced degrees as a percentage of salary. Secondly, what is the forecasted base increase for purpose of planning 3-5 years ahead? Third, what is philosophy behind 35yr+ salary cap? The CPS max salary is low compared to max salary of area school teacher salaries."
- Sharing the tool was interesting. Convincing the supervising boards that this is the way to go will become a bit of an issue for us. We were not meeting the guidelines before and this would increase numbers for our synodically trained teachers but I doubt it will change the minds of our governing people.
- The need to prepare for the large increase and what alternatives we can come up with, especially when giving during this pandemic is down almost 30%
- No LCMS scale to compare for the teacher tools.
- Might be too early to tell. What education to churches is being given to inform them of the importance of church worker wages and how to create goals for improving those wages?
- "Missing - nothing yet
- Confusing - The experience level tops out at 30 yrs
- Wrong direction - nothing yet"

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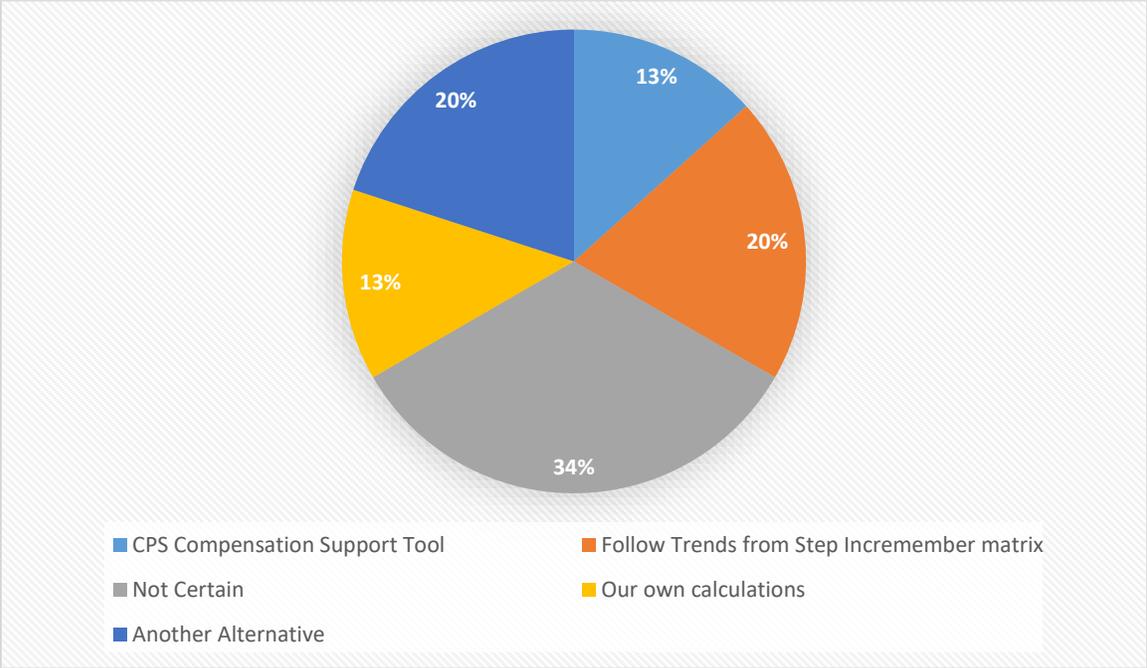
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- This new tool is really no help at all. The range is too great. It will lead to inconsistency among churches and schools within the area and state. It does not allow for any way to compare the previous scale with the new one to see where our staff falls within the new guidance.
- Did not attend.
- It was helpful to see "real life" scenarios as examples. However, we operate on the calendar year, so the timeline of receiving this information does not make it possible to implement for our next budget.
- I thought it was fairly informative and helpful.
- I was already familiar with the compensation tool. I had several conversations with Cody Dodson and had run compensation recommendations prior to the regional meeting.
- Compensation adjusted for region of US. Higher salary rates for newer teachers to encourage saving and retention
- "I think there should be some further discussion and explanation on the use of salary bands to implement this tool long term. As you mentioned the workers who were in the building for an extensive duration might have gotten the short end of the stick when entering, and this tool emphasizes better compensation to newer employees so that market forces can grow their savings. This could incentivize older employees to leave or could make older employees get the short end of the stick on their coming into church work and later in their career.
- I also think administrators and maybe Concordia professors need to do a better job emphasizing the savings plans to teachers fresh out of college. "
- As a first look at the tool, the presentation gave a good overview. The examples were helpful. Looking back at the presentation I'm not sure I fully remember all of the explanation that was given when you presented it. Getting into the tool and playing is most valuable to begin to see the specifics for my ministry.
- I was not able to attend a regional meeting. I reviewed the contents that were emailed, but I feel as though I missed important context, explanation, and discussion.
- Very helpful intro. Nice to have a demo site to run scenarios. Definitely the right direction...with a single access point wherever you are located, with location specific honing tools using zio.
- Gained clarity of District's plan going forward.
- Information that we could use to help make a decision.
- Good Q/A for those who needed to catch up to the information. Not much missing. Very introductory which was good to encourage those to continue gaining familiarity with the tool and to read the information embedded within the tool.
- "Easy to use.
- Young teachers' calculation had a significant raise.
- Veteran teachers' calculation had a significant cut.
- "Preschool was lower and needed to use the teacher index
- It is set up for newer teachers to make more money- working to retain teachers."

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Q2 - What will your school/church use to determine Compensation for the upcoming academic year?



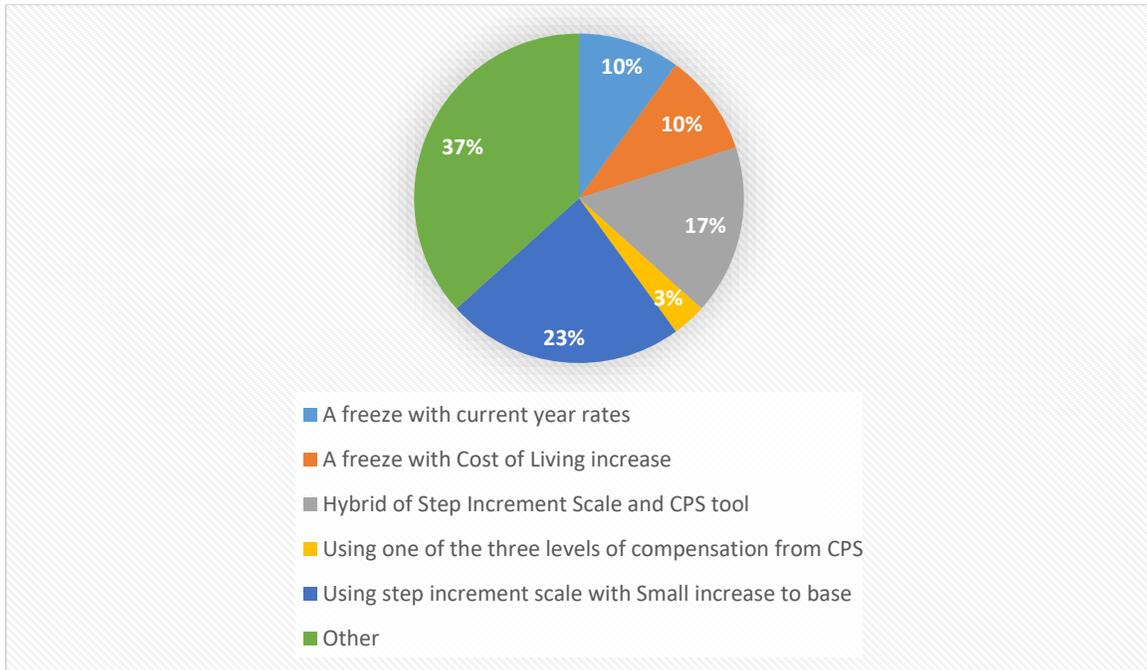
### Another Alternatives

- A combination of the compensation tool and the District pay scale interpreted for 2020-21
- Combination of CPS tool and District Matrix Step increment
- District Guidelines
- For teachers who have less experience and will not see a decrease in pay, we will use CPS tool. For those veteran teachers, they will receive a cost of living increase
- Combination of District guidelines and own calculations

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## Q3 - As the school/church leaders study Compensation and Benefits, I anticipate



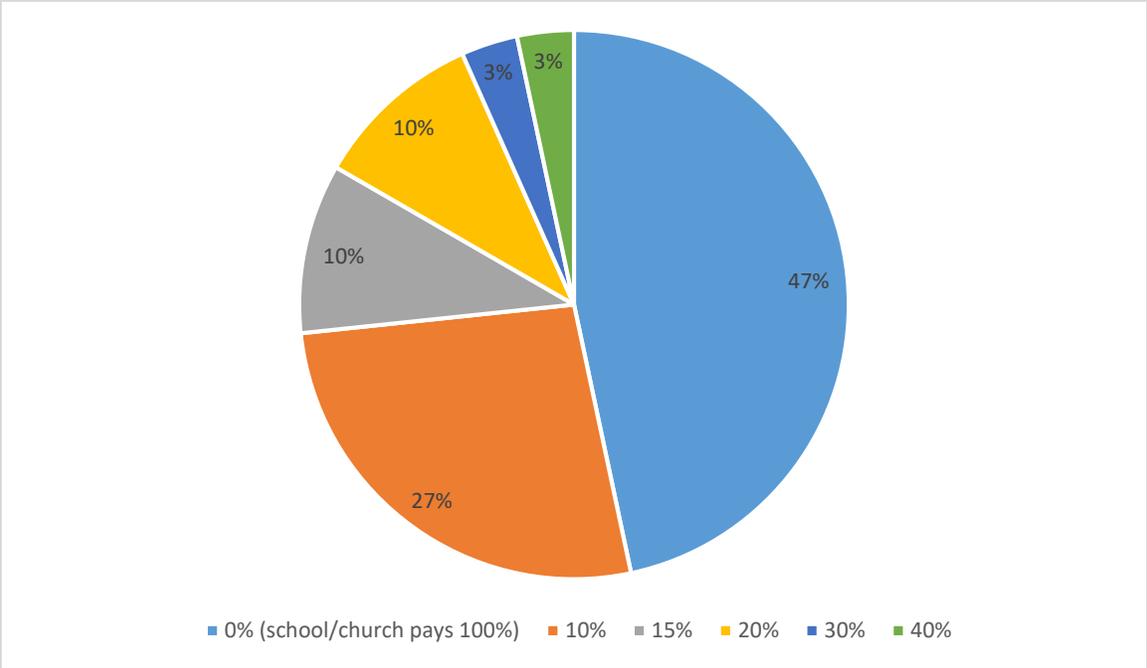
### Other:

- Creating our own tool
- Follow the trends set in the Step Increment Matrix the District provided in previous years
- Freeze across the board, currently at 67% of district, and now are losing a benefit for spouse coverage in our health insurance, causing potential issues for retention
- I am not really sure what direction the church leadership may go. I have shared the compensation tool with them but we have not met or had initial discussions.
- Not certain at this time
- Undecided at this time. Much depends on the COVID impact and enrollment. A freeze may be a possibility or even a cut somewhere
- We are at .9 of the lower range of the tool. Over the next few years, I hope to get to the average or above
- We are not sure at this point. We pushed raises until Jan of the school year so we are still 12 months away from this going into effect.
- We don't know yet
- We will be at 85% district guidelines with 50% sharing on healthcare

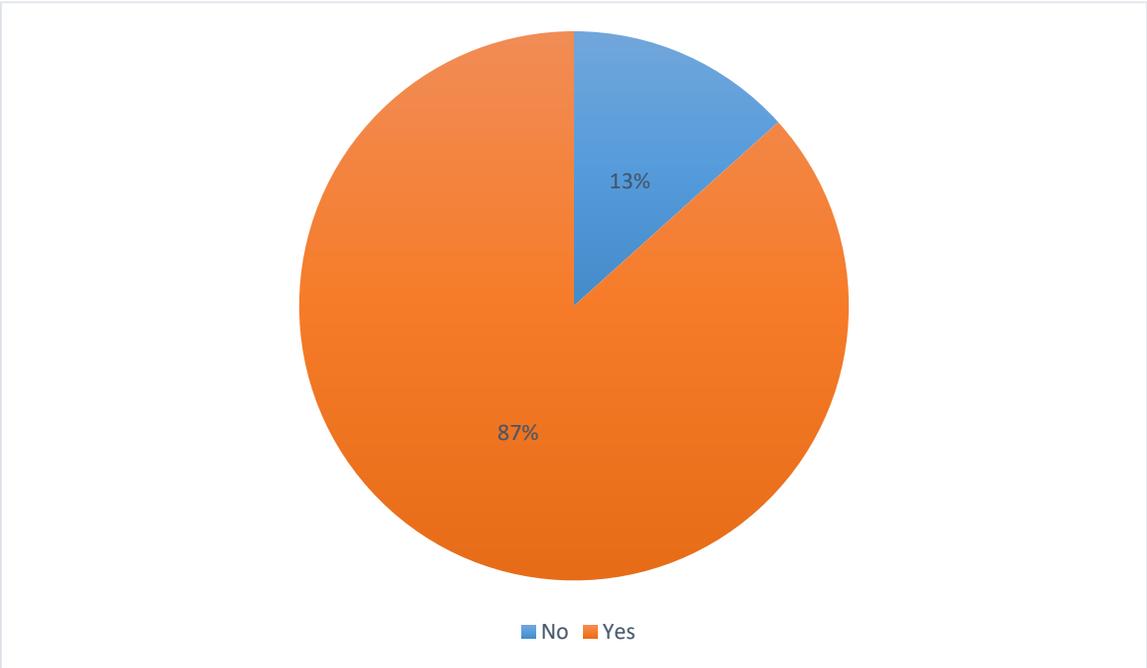
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**Q4 - What percent of the Health Benefit do your employees contribute to their plans? Please mark the number closest to your policy**



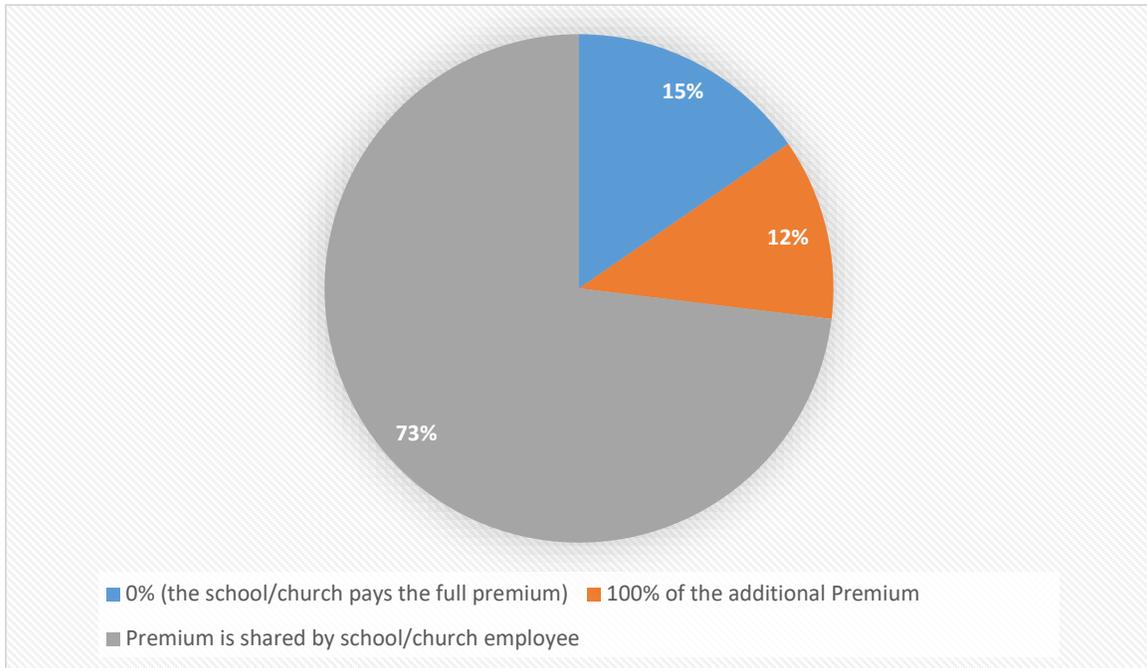
**Q5 - Does your school/church provide Health Care options to cover more than the employee (coverage for spouse and/or family)?**



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**Q6 - How are the premiums for this extended coverage assessed? The employee is responsible for:**



**Q7 - Your school/church provides options to cover more than the employee. What is your policy for how the premiums are assessed?**

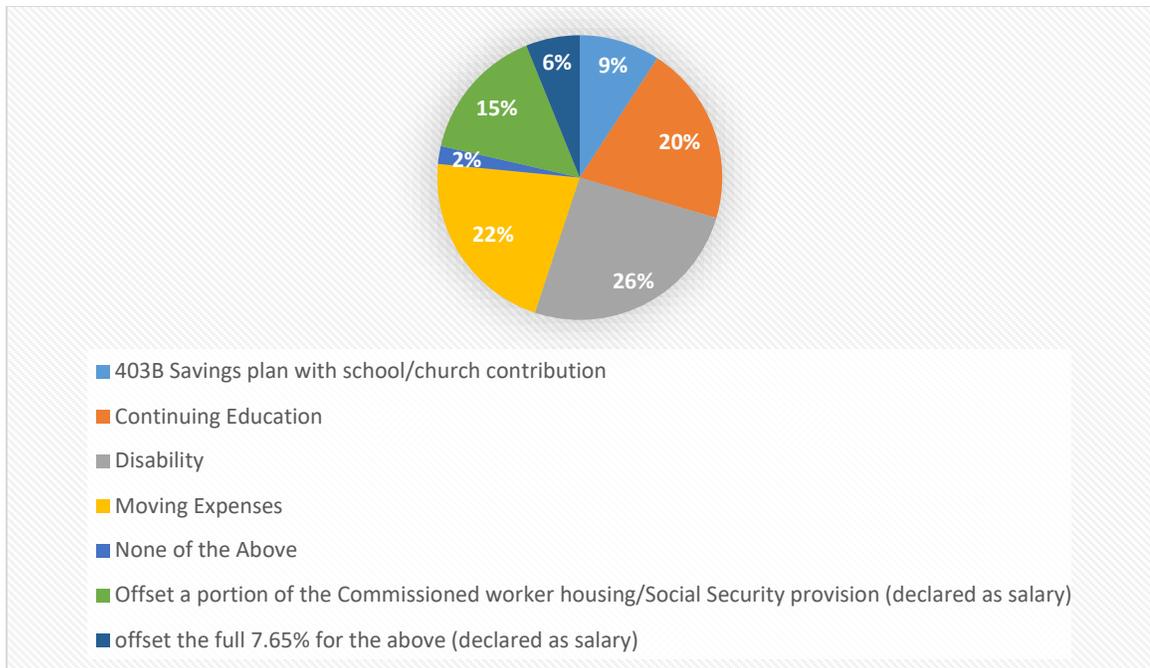
- Employee families may elect to be enrolled in the health insurance however the employee is responsible for 100% of the premium for those family members.
- If they do not have an option to be covered by another employer, we will cover them (spouse). Children are covered at the choosing of the employee.
- Employee pays 50% of the difference between single and family plan
- We cover 100% of children. We cover 50% of spouses.
- Employee pays 12% worker and children. Employee pays 100% spouse.
- The church/school offers to cover the employee and spouse if the spouse's place of employment does not offer coverage. We also offer employee and family. The employee does not have to pay anything for family member coverage or for self. The church/school covers it all at this point in time.
- 20%
- 50% of dependent coverage is provided.
- spousal carve out will go into effect 1/21
- 100%
- 25% of the HDHP premiums are covered by the employee.
- School pays fifty percent of the coverage for a worker's children and zero percent for their spouse.
- The employee covers 15% of spouse/child coverage.
- 65% of all dependants are covered by church and 35% by the employee.

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- The employee pays 10% of the insurance premium for themselves and for their dependents. Spouses are not covered by the church.
- Our school currently provides coverage for spouse and family with the worker paying 15% of the premiums.
- 25% of the difference from self/spouse to family
- For the current year the church covers 100% of employee benefits and 95% of dependent coverage. Over the next 5 years this is projected (only the first year of this plan has been approved) to increase to employee responsibility for: 10% of own health, 10% of dependent health, and 100% of self and dependent vision and dental.
- The school provides coverage for the worker and dependents. The school pays for 100% of the premium.
- Per Pay period deduction (pretax)
- 50/50 split for spouse, children, and/or family.
- If the spouse is eligible for insurance at their place of work then they must choose their insurance. If they don't the employee pays 100% for the spouse.
- School pays 88% worker and children. Spouse pays 100% if added onto plan.
- 10%
- 50% of coverage
- if the spouse is not employed

**Q8 -Which other benefits do employees receive from your school/church? Mark all that apply.**



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## **Q9 - What are your thoughts about the Compensation Decision Support Tool?**

- Trinity has not followed the district guidelines for teachers and at this point only offers about 70% of the recommended salaries. I do not see that changing much in the near future.
- I like the tool and the rationale of the salary determinations. However, I think to go from what we are currently using to using this new tool will not be realistic in our particular situation.
- I haven't had the opportunity to spend enough time with the tool to make an informed comment. We are looking at our system overall and trying to determine whether we add "professional tracks" to our model - to enter administration, strive to be a master teacher, etc...
- Currently need to learn more
- NA
- We haven't worked through it enough to speak to it. We want to be able to let our teachers know where they stand in comparison to district guidelines - this does not allow this."
- Over the past years, we have strived to be at 100% of the District guidelines. We just took that step of faith this past year to move our faculty and staff to that level. Creates an interesting plan that now needs to be changed and represented to our congregation. It is hard to predict using the current scale. Possibly more information on forecasting will help with the uncertainty.
- N/A
- Not realistic to move all employees into plan. More realistic to hybridize plan with past district scale model and new CPS model. Potential freeze of advanced year salaries and increase of new teacher salary until compensations level.
- I like that is financially based on the community within the location of the school. People cannot use the excuse that the numbers correlate with the large communities.
- as write this....NOT realistic.
- "I am used to the IN District scale.
- I don't like the fact that the compensation tool does not have an LCMS path for the teachers scales to compare. As the administrator I am only at 70% of the middle range while the teachers are between 101% and 1-7 % of that same scale."
- again, too early to tell
- It will be under serious consideration, but we need more time to plan. Most salaries are comparable, but a few need to be looked at due to a drop or in one case, a large increase.
- See above.
- No opinion.
- It seems like a great tool, but we just need more time to create a transition plan. We operate on the calendar year, not a fiscal calendar.
- I hope ministries begin using this tool and compensating employees at a higher rate. This will ensure long term success and retaining high quality educators.
- It forces churches to have conversations about salaries and finances, which are important conversations to have. However, it takes longer to determine salaries as there are more options. It is also a change, and Lutherans are known for not liking changes (although I like changes!)
- I have a board member comparing salary rates of the current Indiana District Scale and the Compensation Decision Support Tool. He will bring an analysis to the Board by mid-January.

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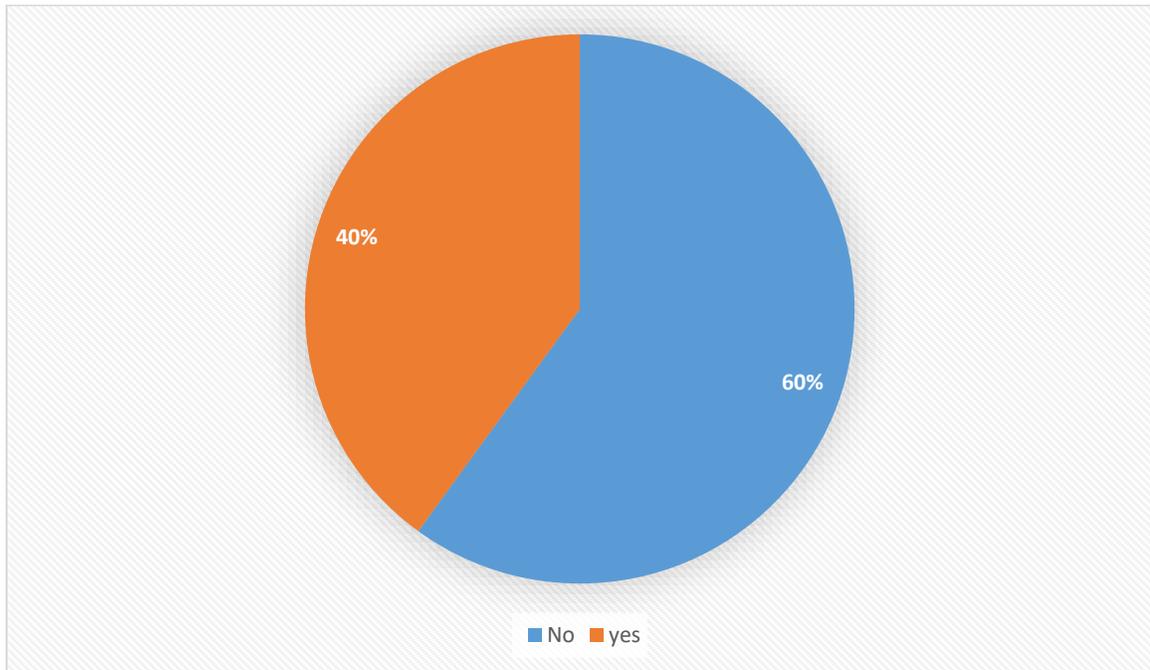
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- "it would be nice to be able to ""plug in"" multiple workers into one pdf and keep the intro and conclusion which are identical among all workers to reduce redundancy.
- The idea of a range could lead to a discriminatory pay scale, I understand the rationale behind it and the math which justifies it, but this could lead to a church/school paying one employee on the low range to save money and another one the high range for any reason and be truthful in saying they use the ""district recommended pay scale"" "
- I've only been in the tool once. I feel it is robust with a lot of data going in to it, a lot of factors a part of it, and a lot of flexibility in how the congregation/school works with it. I like that it is based on local conditions. All of that makes it much more complex than looking at a one-page spreadsheet. I believe the opportunities for training and coaching for me as principal and also for church leaders will be instrumental in making this a success. I believe this is a good way to go. I know it will be a process.
- I imagine it will be difficult to implement. Change is always difficult and finding the current threshold in the new system will take some effort. However, I would also imagine that once we establish a baseline in the new system, it will be beneficial moving forward.
- Should move forward with it. I believe our school will begin using it in 2021-22. And it will be a helpful tool system wide.
- Helpful, but not currently realistic for our congregation and county's relatively high cost of living.
- It messed up our compensation plan that was approved by the congregation and we have to start all over.
- I appreciate the tool for the purpose of national unity, local market balance, and lower-middle-upper range. I don't agree with some provisions such as Social Security, advanced degrees, etc.
- In the short term, there will be some confusion and uncertainty of its relevance, which may also cause some conflict with the institutions; however, in the long-run I can see it being a benefit.
- We like it as it is easier but it is a big shift, heavily loaded at the beginning.
- it's time for this

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**Q10 - I recognize this is an important and challenging matter for schools, and I am willing to participate in a 30-minute panel interview with Kevin via zoom that will be recorded and shared with leaders across the District as they work through Compensation this year.**



**Q11 - What else do you think is important to share that this brief survey did not cover?**

- "I hate talking about money when it comes to my job. The Lord has always provided for me and my family.
- What I am concerned about is the amount of qualified individuals who are currently looking for jobs within our Lutheran schools. We are starting the process of replacing a K/1 teacher and our secretary. Not only are they going to be hard to replace, but both of them went above and beyond what the job paid.
- After this year, and all the additional pressures that are being put on teachers and schools, I wonder how many qualified candidates we will have for these positions?"
- I believe that communication is the key. If the study has been in place for several years, then the churches and schools should have had several years of information to prepare for the change. Change isn't a bad thing. Not sure that I had missed it prior? Maybe I did. However, our elders had no idea either of the change, they prepare office staff and pastoral salaries and income.
- Importance of all additional benefits included in worker compensation like advanced degrees, called vs contract worker, offset philosophies, continuing education, retirement contributions, etc.
- I appreciate the work put into this guidance. I would love to move toward this plan but am concerned about convincing the governing authorities this is the way to go.
- Calvary Lutheran, Indianapolis already met with the District executive in this area for a conference call.
- This topic is one I have a large interest in and would love to help in any way possible.

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- "The pension component of the retirement planning was not touched on, I think it is important for employees to understand this when they look at their whole retirement planning picture.
- It would be nice for the district to provide certain scenarios about the 403(b) ROTH vs traditional for employees to determine which is better for them to contribute toward especially factoring in the housing allowance, spousal income, and HSA accounts which an employer might contribute toward."
- This is a difficult change for Trinity and we are trying our best to work through it.
- n/a