

# ***Compensation Package/Job Satisfaction For The School-based Speech-Language Pathologist***

***Final Report***

*Prepared for:*

***Vermont Speech-Language  
Hearing Association***



## SLP Compensation Package & Job Satisfaction Study

## Background & Methodology

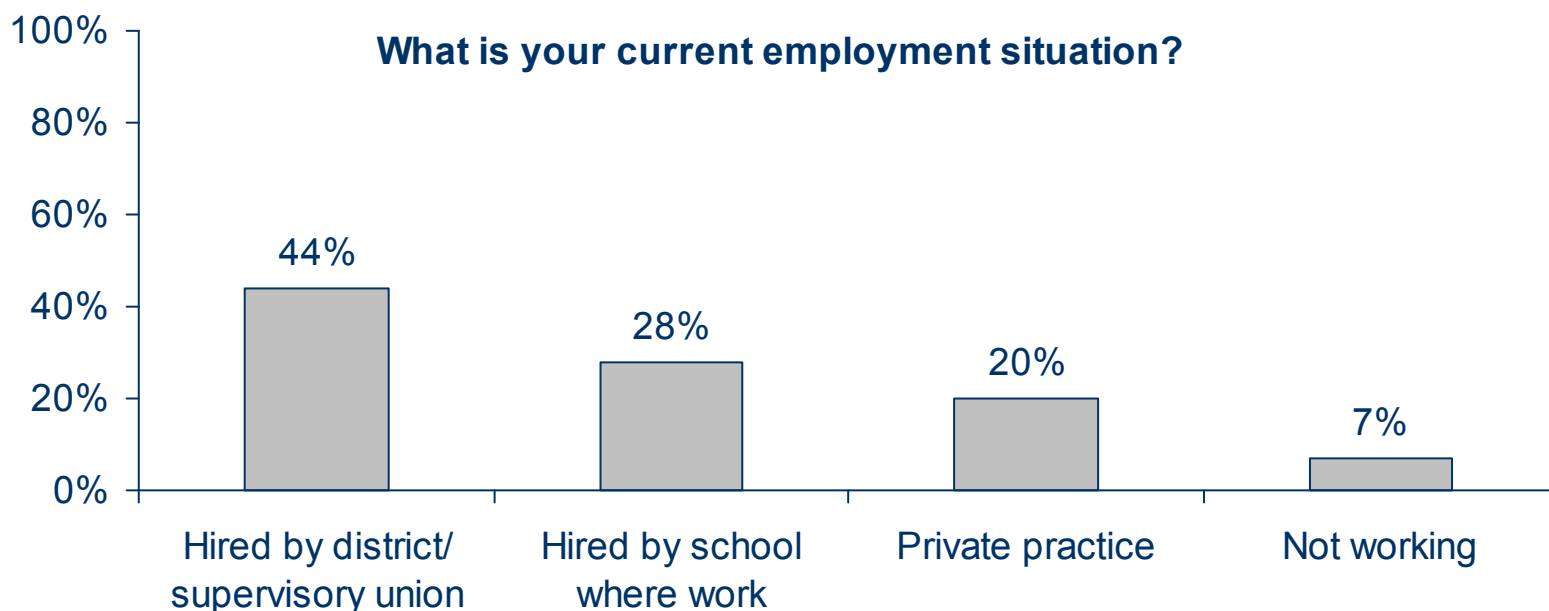
- ⊕ The Vermont Speech-Language-Hearing Association (VSHA) together with the Vermont Coalition on Personnel Shortages in Speech-Language Pathology is interested in better understanding critical factors that drive recruitment and retention of SLPs in school settings. They contracted with Spalding Marketing, a survey based market research firm in Woodstock, Vt. to undertake a survey of SLPs in the state.
- ⊕ To accomplish these goals, 338 online survey invitations were sent to Vermont SLPs. There are roughly 380 SLPs currently holding a Vermont license, not all of which are school based practitioners and not all had accessible email addresses. *SurveyMonkey*, a low cost online survey provider, was the survey host.
- ⊕ The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) sent 317 of the survey invitations (to ASHA certified VT SLPs) on September 4, 2007, and VSHA sent out the rest. Only 290 were delivered successfully due to account blocking by a particular email carrier. By September 7, nearly half of the total ending sample of 125 had been completed. The survey was closed out on October 1, 2007. The final response rate was 43%. *For blind online surveys a response rate of 4% to 5% is typical.*



## Section I: Current Status

# Nearly half of SLPs are hired by their district or supervisory union

⊕ One in five SLPs are in private practice, and relatively few (7%) are not currently working.

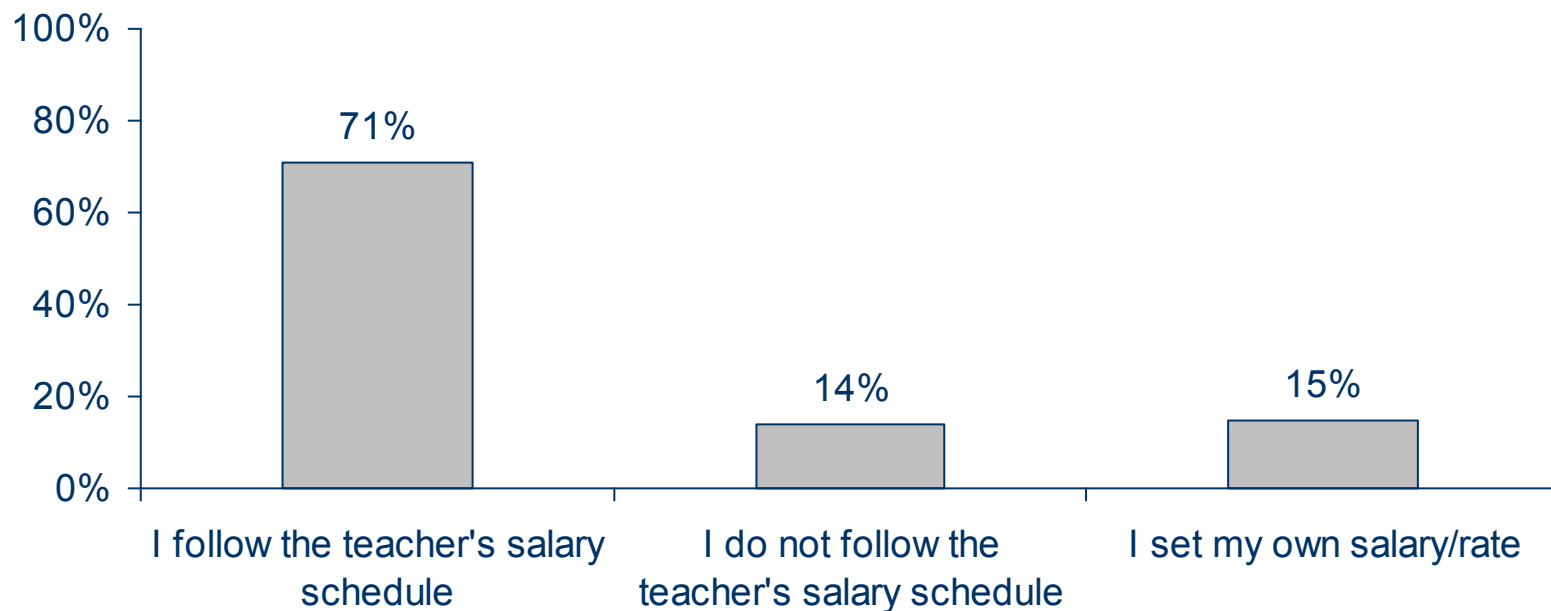


Base: total responding to question (n=123)  
Question 1.

# 7 of 10 SLPs follow the teacher's salary schedule

⊕ One in six (15%) sets his/her own salary rate.

What is your current salary based on?



Base: total responding to question (n=111)  
Question 2.

# Those who do not follow the teacher's salary schedule are compensated according to their number of years experience

- ⊕ Speech language pathologists who do not follow the teacher's salary schedule were asked how their current salary was calculated.
- ⊕ 14 SLPs responded to this question as follows:
  - Number of years of experience I have (n=13)
  - Number of college credits I have (n=4)
  - Other (n=6): CCCs, VT SLP License, competitive starting salary with % annual increases, position/title hired for, was not credited for years of experience in medical setting, a percentage of the rate the center charges.

Base: those who do not follow the teacher's salary schedule (n=14)  
Question 2a.

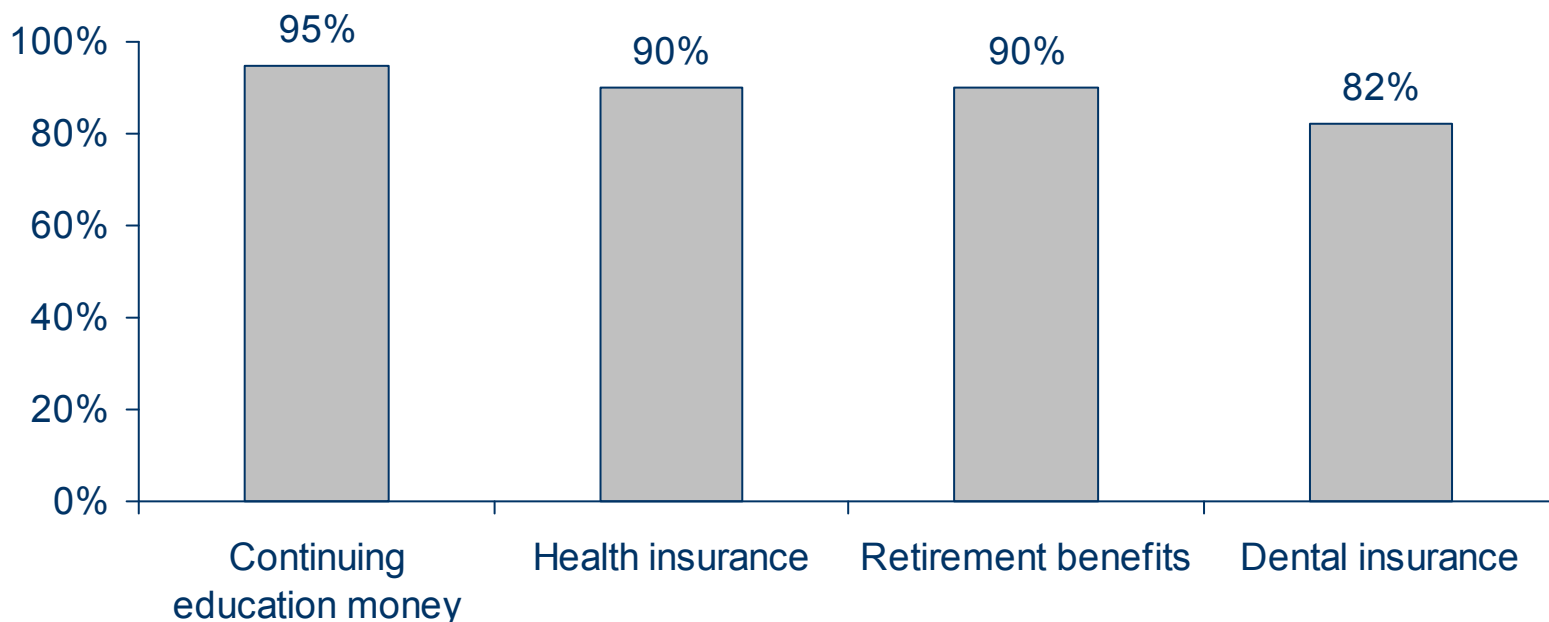
**Small base size: interpret with caution**

**Analytical note: due to small number of respondents, numbers are shown instead of percentages**

# Most SLPs in Vermont receive medical and retirement benefits as well as CEUs

- ⊕ Most SLPs receive health and retirement benefits as well as continuing education monies.

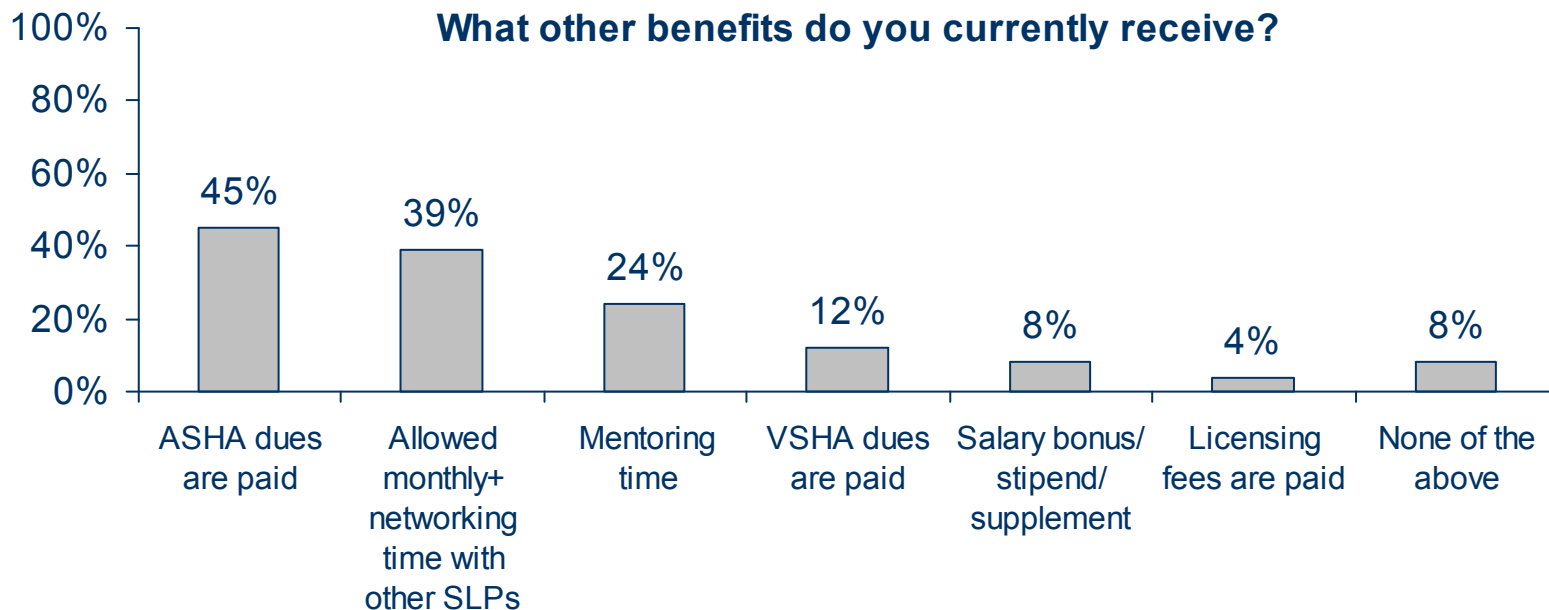
What type of benefits do you currently receive?



Base: total responding to question (n=93)  
Question 3.

# Payment of ASHA dues and monthly networking or collaboration time are received by about 4 in 10 SLPs

- ⊕ 4 SLPs mentioned benefits not listed in the survey as follows: Mileage is fully reimbursed (last year I billed \$2,100 in mileage); Vacation time; Network with district SLPs quarterly, after school hours mainly; I'm given time to work on committees both at the state & national level

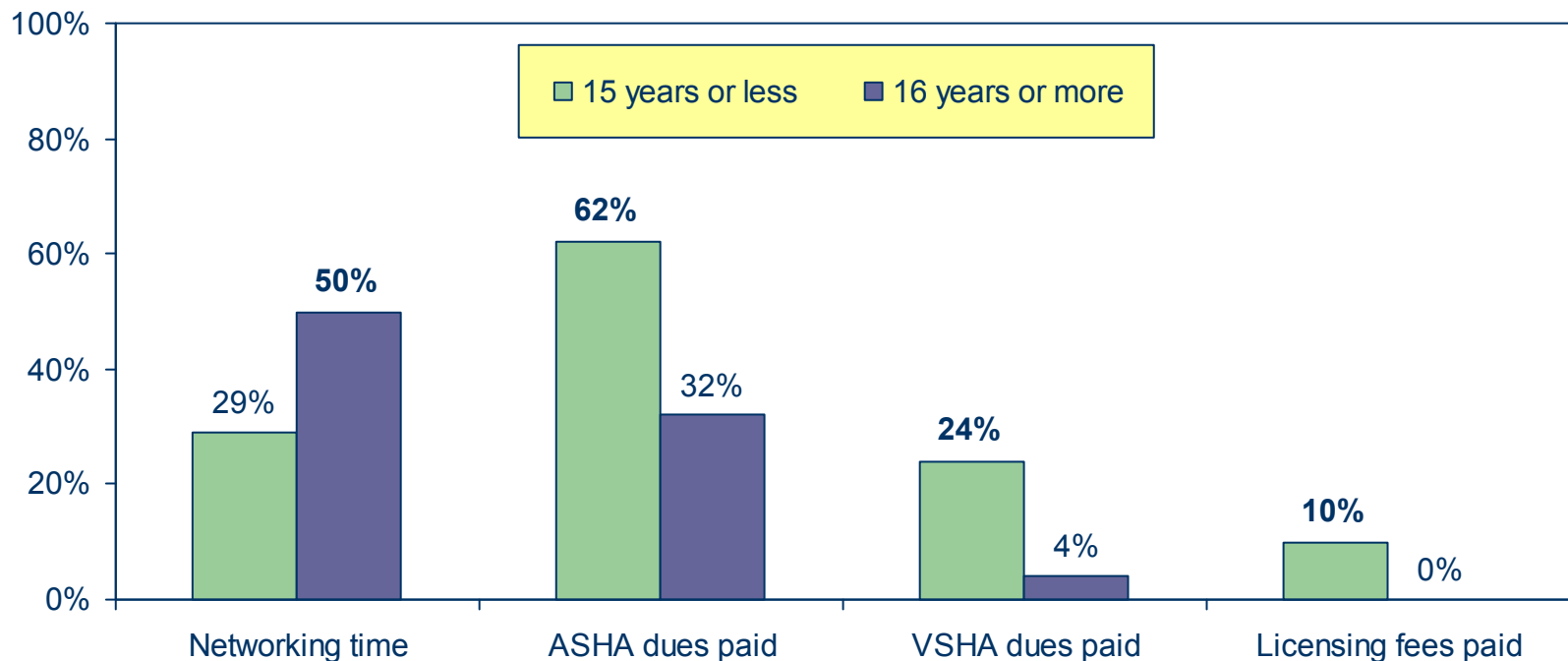


Base: total responding to question (n=51)  
Question 4.

# SLPs newer to the field are more likely to have national/state dues & licensing fees paid

- ⊕ SLPs with 16 years or more experience are more often allowed time to network/collaborate with colleagues

What other benefits do you currently receive?



Base: total responding to question (n=51)  
Question 4.

**Bold = statistically different**

## 5 cited salary bonuses ranging from \$1,000 to \$6,000

- ⊕ Speech language pathologists who received a salary bonus, stipend or supplement were asked to indicate the amount of that bonus.
- ⊕ 5 SLPs responded; the amounts they reported cover a \$5,000 range:
  - \$1,000
  - \$2,500 (mentioned by 2)
  - \$4,800
  - \$6,000

Base: those who receive a bonus (n=5)  
Question 4a.

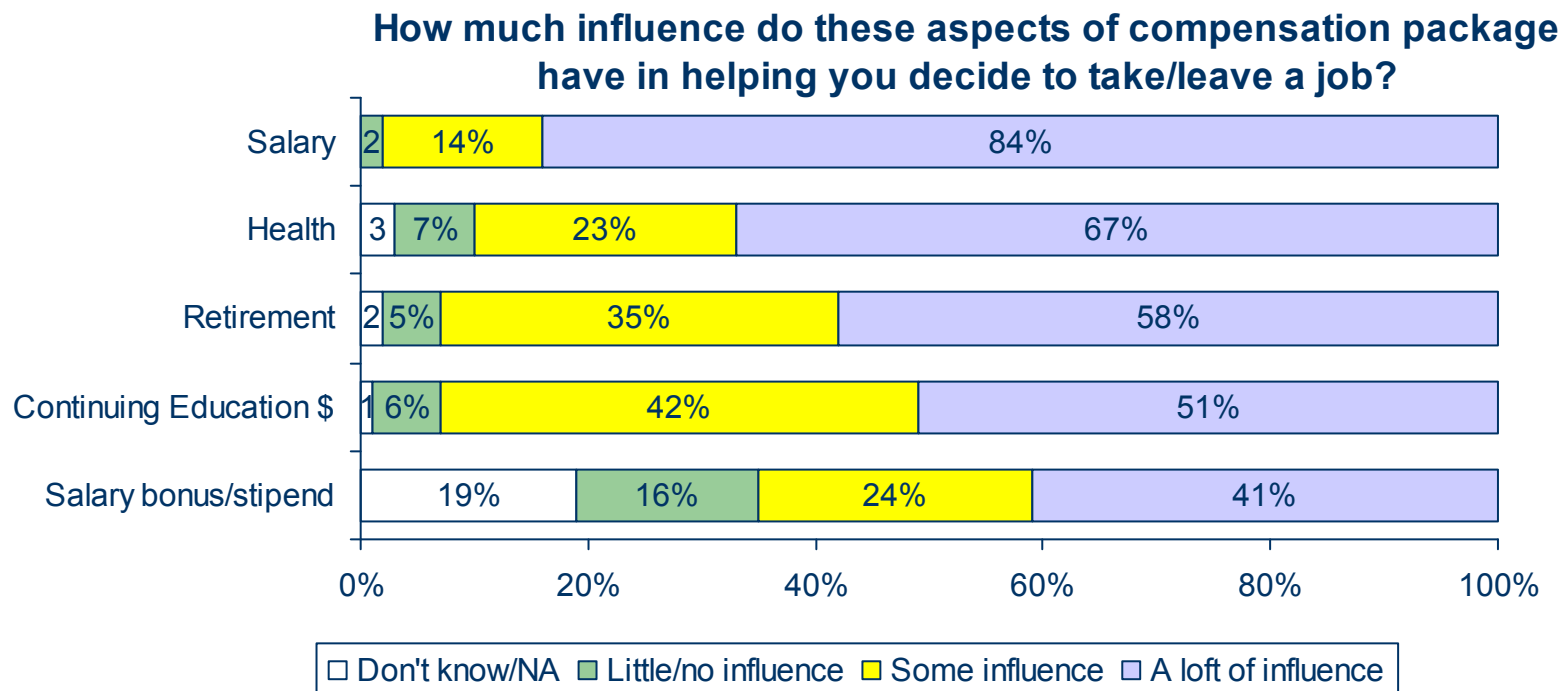
**Small base size: interpret with caution**  
**Analytical note: due to small number of respondents, numbers are shown instead of percentages**



## Section II: Perceptions of Your Work

# Salary and health benefits lead the list of benefits most valued, followed by retirement benefits and CEUs

- ⊕ 4 in 10 say that a salary bonus or stipend has a lot of influence on the decision to leave or stay.



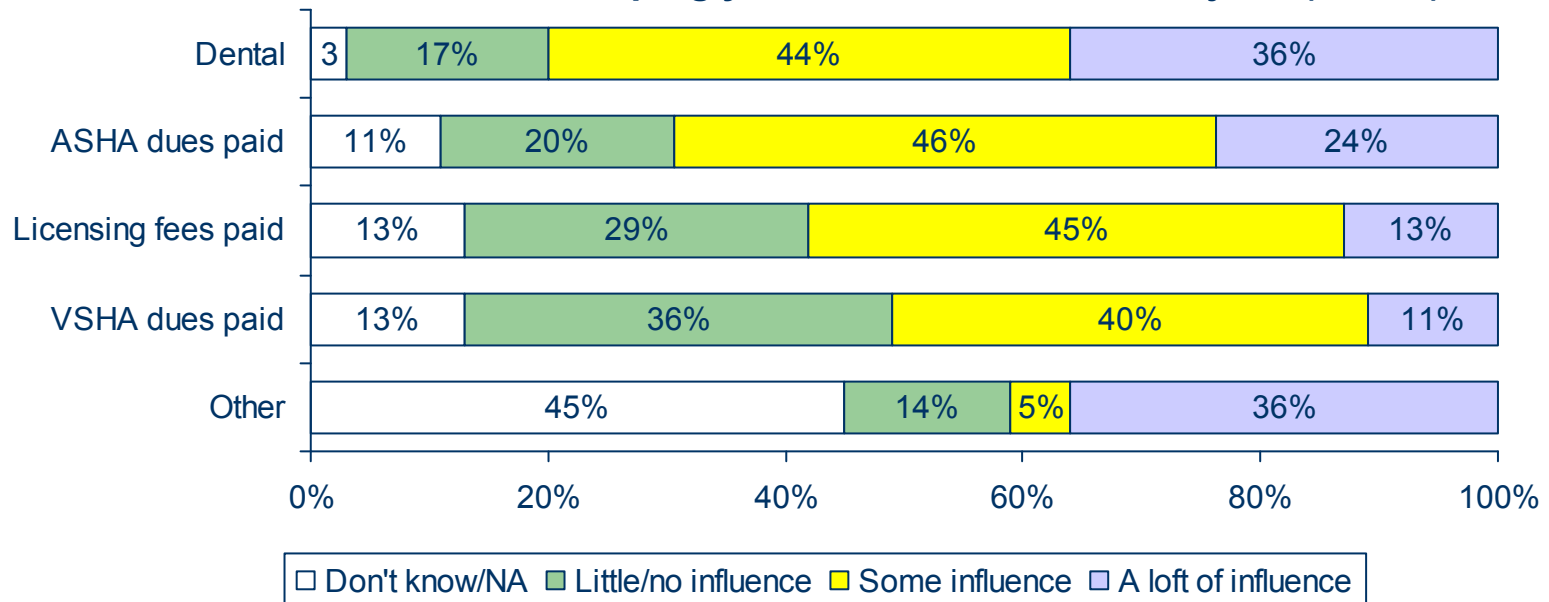
Base: total responding to question (n=115)  
Question 5.

Graphical note: for legibility, % signs have been deleted for data values of less than 5%

# Reimbursement for licensing fees and organization dues are less influential benefits

- ⊕ It is more important to ASHA members that their national dues are paid for than that their state organization dues are reimbursed.

**How much influence do these aspects of compensation package have in helping you decide to take/leave a job? (cont'd)**



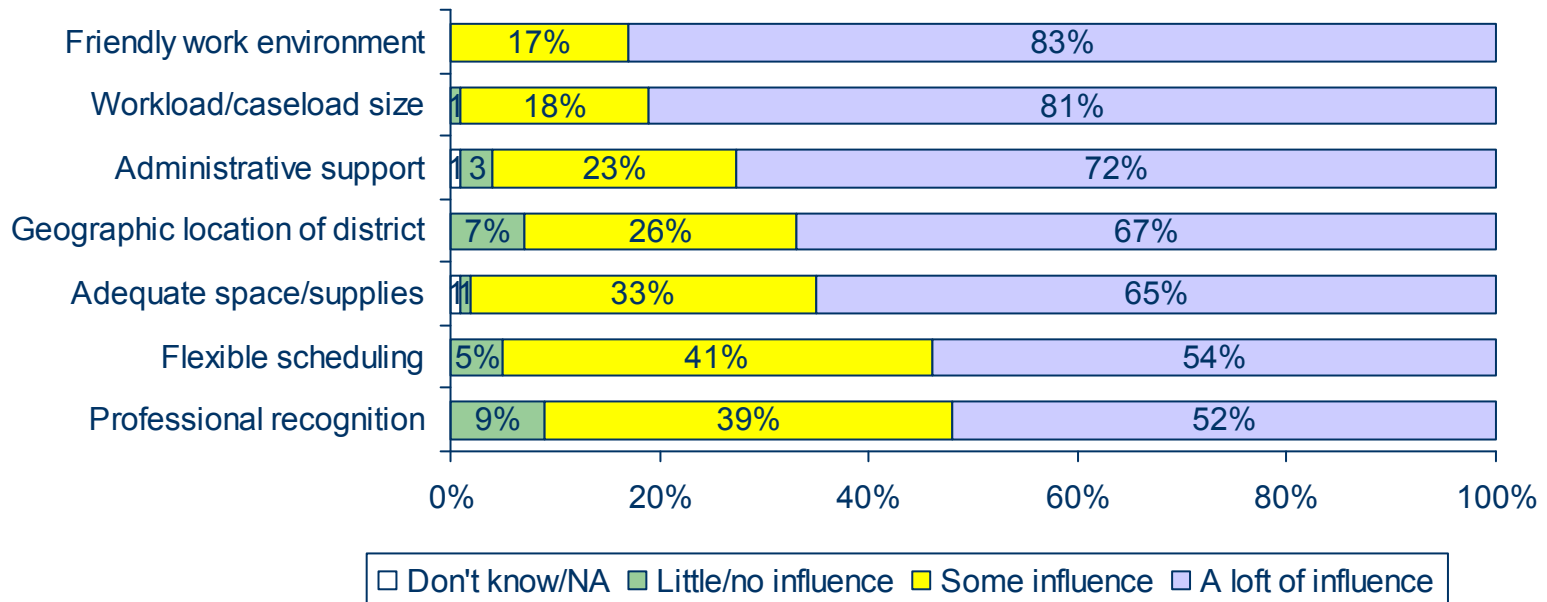
Base: total responding to question (n=112)  
Question 5.

**Graphical note: for legibility, % signs have been deleted for data values of less than 5%**

# A supportive work environment and staff as well as a manageable caseload have a strong impact on the decision to stay or leave their work

- ⊕ The location of the job and space to work in are cited by more than half as having “a lot of influence”. Half say flexible scheduling and professional recognition are highly influential.

**How much influence do these other factors have in helping you decide to take/leave a job?**



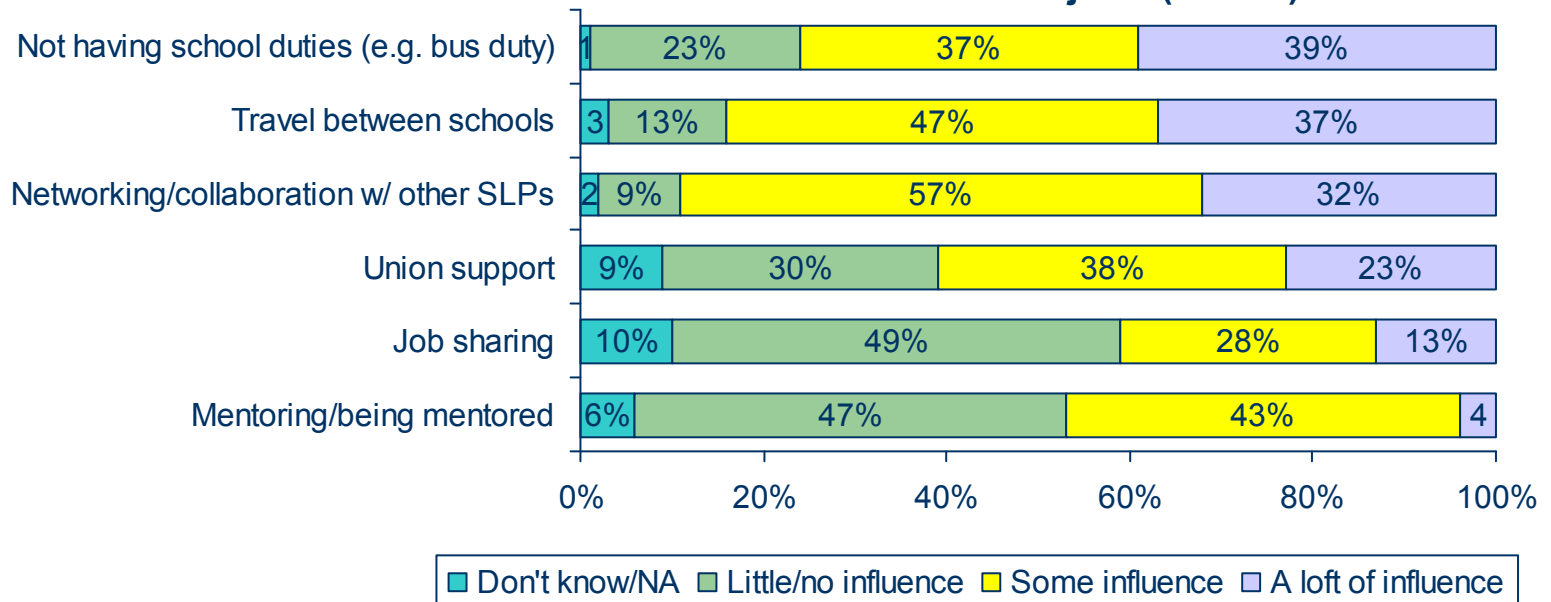
Base: total responding to question (n=115)  
Question 6.

**Graphical note: for legibility, % signs have been deleted for data values of less than 5%**

# Mentoring or being mentored and job sharing are least influential as attraction or retention factors

- ⊕ School duties and the need to travel between or among schools is a real consideration of one in three surveyed.

**How much influence do these other factors have in helping you decide to take/leave a job? (cont'd)**

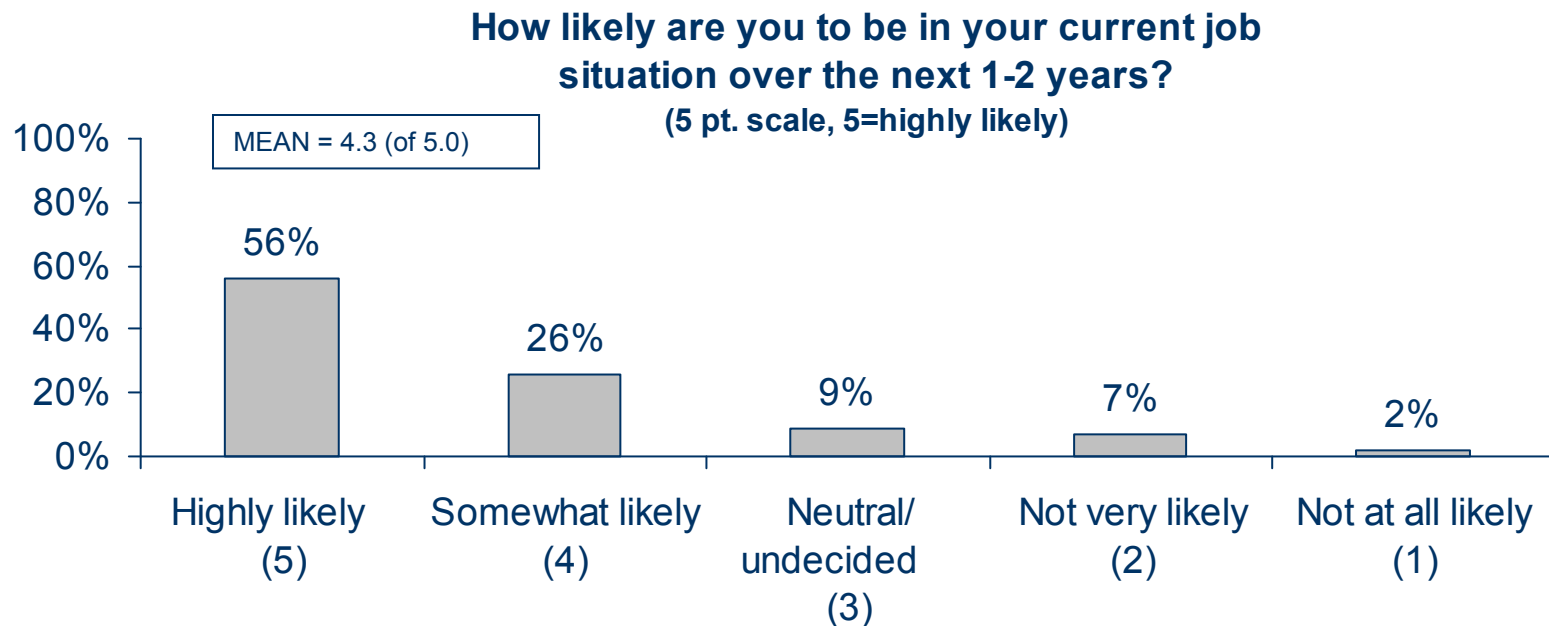


Base: total responding to question (n=115)  
Question 6.

**Graphical note: for legibility, % signs have been deleted for data values of less than 5%**

# On average, Vermont SLPs are “somewhat likely” to be in their current job situation in the next 1-2 years

⊕ More than half say they are highly likely to be in their current position.



Base: total responding to question (n=113)  
Question 7



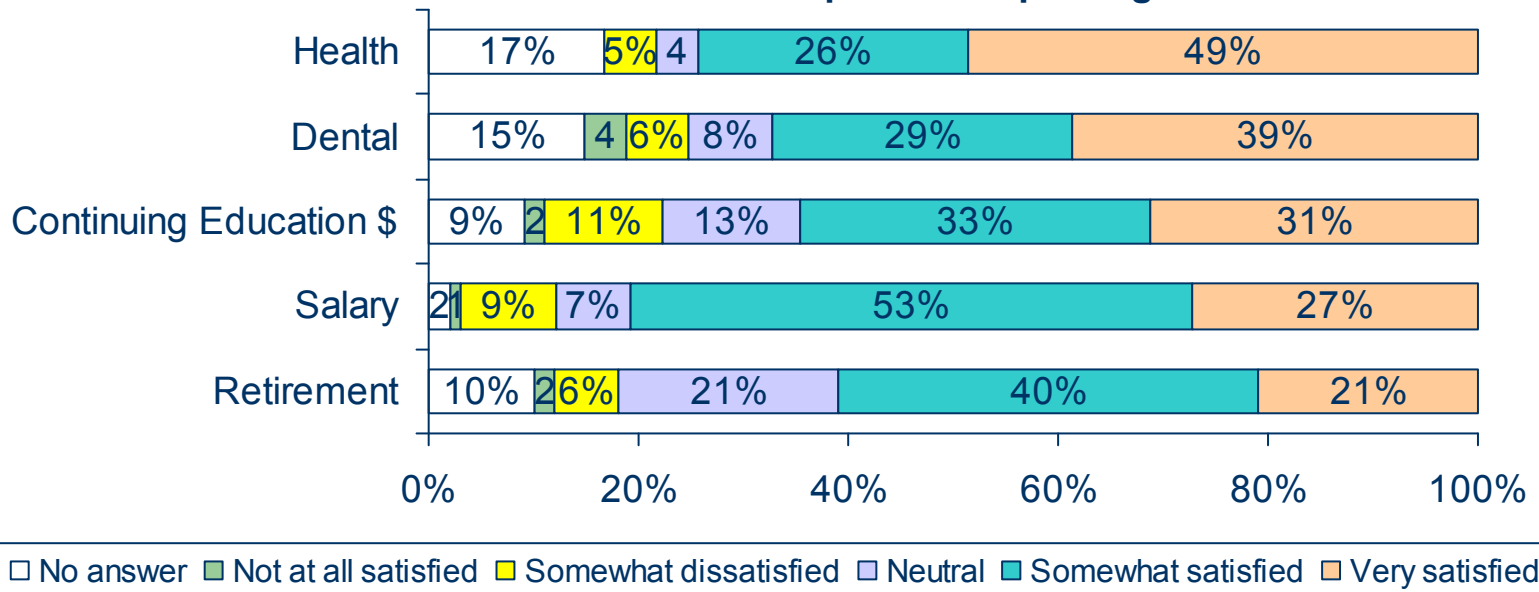
## Section III: Job Satisfaction

# SLPs are most satisfied with health benefits and dental benefits

⊕ Relatively few are *dissatisfied* with medical, educational, and salary or retirement benefits.

➤ However, only 27% report being very satisfied with their salaries.

**How satisfied are you with these aspects of your current compensation package?**



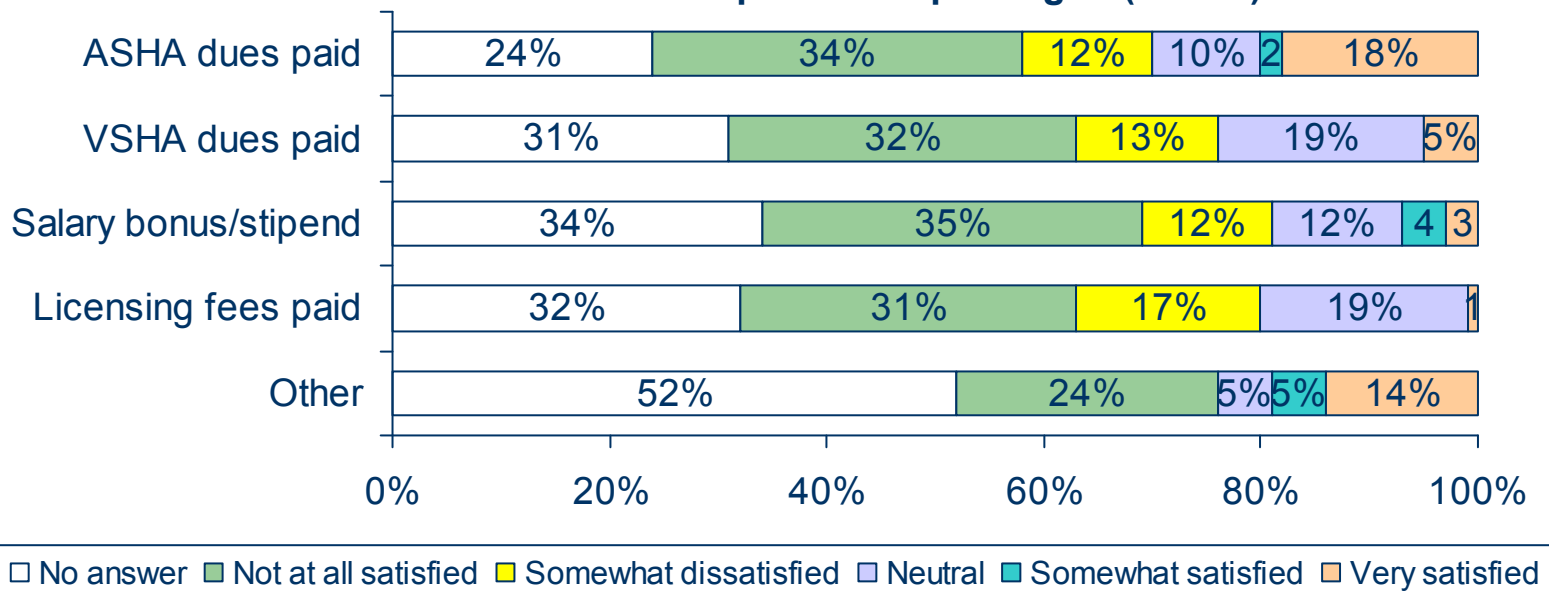
Base: total responding to question (n=108)  
 Question 8.

**Graphical note: for legibility, % signs have been deleted for data values of less than 5%**

# Lower levels of satisfaction are reported for having dues and fees paid, and bonuses

- ⊕ About 45% are dissatisfied with dues and licensing reimbursement, as well as with a salary bonus.

How satisfied are you with these aspects of your current compensation package? (cont'd)



Base: total responding to question (n=108)  
Question 8.

Graphical note: for legibility, % signs have been deleted for data values of less than 5%

# Gap Analysis

- ⊕ The following slide compares how influential various factors are with how satisfied SLPs are on those factors. This is called a “gap” analysis and is done by taking the % answering the top scale point on importance (or in this case influence) questions and subtracting the % answering the top scale point in rating on that factor.
  - For example, 84% said salary has “a lot of influence” in their decision to take or leave a job. A lot of influence is the highest rank on the 3 point scale of influence: a lot of influence (3), some influence (2), and little/no influence (1).
  - However, looking at satisfaction, only 27% gave a rating of highly satisfied, where highly satisfied is a “5” on the scale.
- ⊕ For this study, the analysis should be interpreted “loosely” as the number of scale points varied for these two questions.

# Salary, and secondarily retirement benefits, show the greatest “gaps” in delivery against expectation

Influence vs. Satisfaction of Compensation Package Attributes	% A lot of influence*	% Highly satisfied**	"Gap"
Salary	84	27	-57
Health	67	49	-18
Retirement	58	21	-37
Continuing Education \$	51	34	-17
Salary bonus/stipend	41	3	-38
Dental	36	39	+3
ASHA dues paid	24	18	-6
Licensing fees paid	13	1	-12
VSHA dues paid	11	5	-6

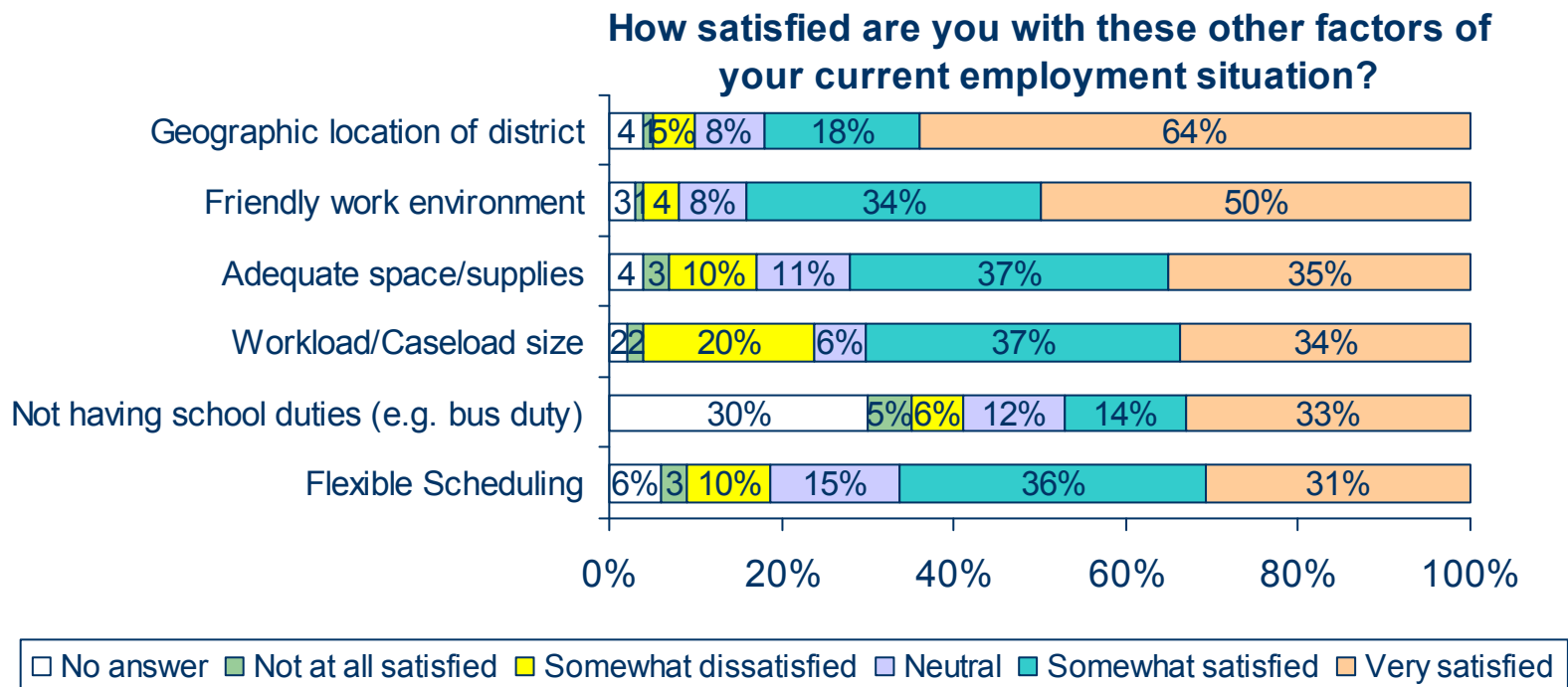
Base: total responding to question (n=108)  
Question 5. vs. q. 8.

\*% rating 3 on a 3 point scale, \*\*% rating 5 on a 5 point scale.

Note: interpret Gap analysis loosely. Number of scale points varied between the two questions.

# SLPs are most satisfied with the location of their district, the friendliness of their work environment as other factors in their employment situation

- ⊕ There is some room for improvement on workload (22% dissatisfied) and adequate space/supplies (13% dissatisfied).



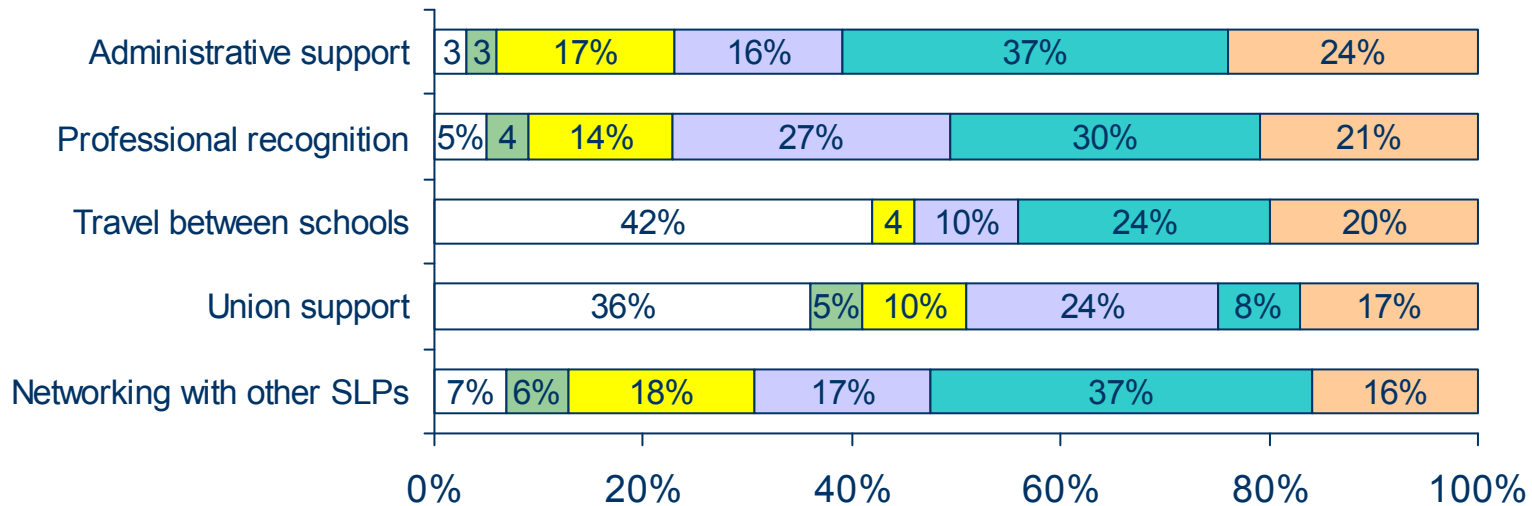
Base: total responding to question (n=107)  
Question 9.

**Graphical note: for legibility, % signs have been deleted for data values of less than 5%**

# There is opportunity to improve satisfaction levels on administrative support, professional recognition, and networking

- ⊕ Union support and travel between schools exhibit a substantial level of non-response - perhaps those factors do not apply to certain respondents.

How satisfied are you with these other factors of your current employment situation? (cont'd)



□ No answer   ■ Not at all satisfied   ■ Somewhat dissatisfied   ■ Neutral   ■ Somewhat satisfied   ■ Very satisfied

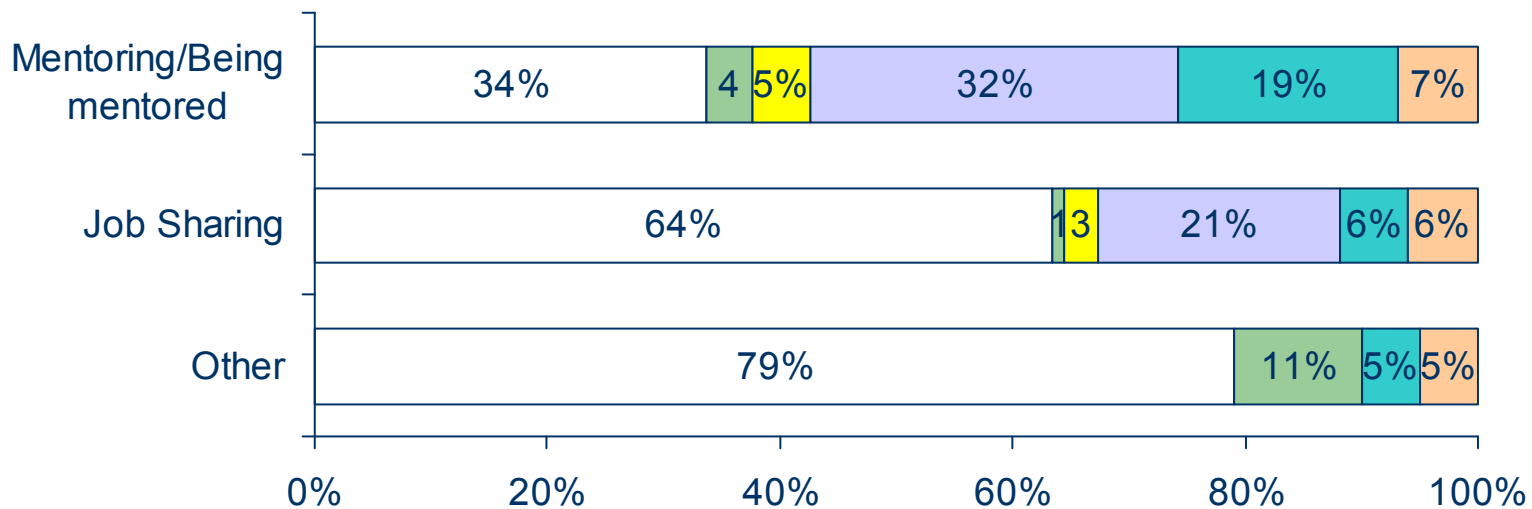
Base: total responding to question (n=107)  
Question 9.

Graphical note: for legibility, % signs have been deleted for data values of less than 5%

# Low satisfaction also exists on factors less influential in the stay/leave dynamic: job sharing and mentoring

- ⊕ The high levels of “neutral” ratings on satisfaction is consistent with the relative lack of importance of these factors as “drivers” in the stay/leave decision.

**How satisfied are you with these other factors of your current employment situation? (cont'd)**



□ No answer   ■ Not at all satisfied   ■ Somewhat dissatisfied   ■ Neutral   ■ Somewhat satisfied   ■ Very satisfied

Base: total responding to question (n=107)  
Question 9.

**Graphical note: for legibility, % signs have been deleted for data values of less than 5%**

# Workload, admin support, and a “friendly” work environment could all be improved

Influence vs. Satisfaction of Other Factors in Employment Situation	% A lot of influence	% Highly satisfied	“Gap”
Friendly work environment	83	50	-33
Workload/Caseload size	81	34	-47
Administrative support	72	24	-48
Geographic location of district	67	64	-3
Adequate space/supplies	65	35	-30
Flexible Scheduling	54	31	-23
Professional recognition	52	21	-31
Not having school duties (e.g. bus duty)	39	33	-6
Travel between schools	37	20	-17
Networking/collaboration with other SLPs	32	16	-16
Union support	23	17	-6
Job Sharing	13	6	-7
Mentoring/Being mentored	4	7	+3

Base: total responding to question (n=108)  
Question 6. vs. q. 9.

## Satisfaction summary: mean ratings (based on a 5 pt. scale where 5=highly satisfied, 1=not at all satisfied)

### MEAN SATISFACTION WITH ASPECTS OF COMPENSATION PACKAGE

⊕ Health	4.4
⊕ Dental	4.1
⊕ Salary	4.0
⊕ Continuing Education \$	3.9
⊕ Retirement	3.8
⊕ ASHA dues paid	2.4
⊕ VSHA dues paid	2.0
⊕ Licensing fees paid	1.9
⊕ Salary bonus/stipend	1.9

### MEAN SATISFACTION WITH OTHER FACTORS OF CURRENT EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

⊕ Geographic location of district	4.5
⊕ Friendly work environment	4.3
⊕ Travel between schools	4.0
⊕ Adequate space/supplies	3.9
⊕ Not having school duties	3.9
⊕ Flexible Scheduling	3.9
⊕ Workload/Caseload size	3.8
⊕ Administrative support	3.7
⊕ Professional recognition	3.5
⊕ Networking/collaboration with other SLPs	3.4
⊕ Union support	3.4
⊕ Job Sharing	3.3
⊕ Mentoring/Being mentored	3.3

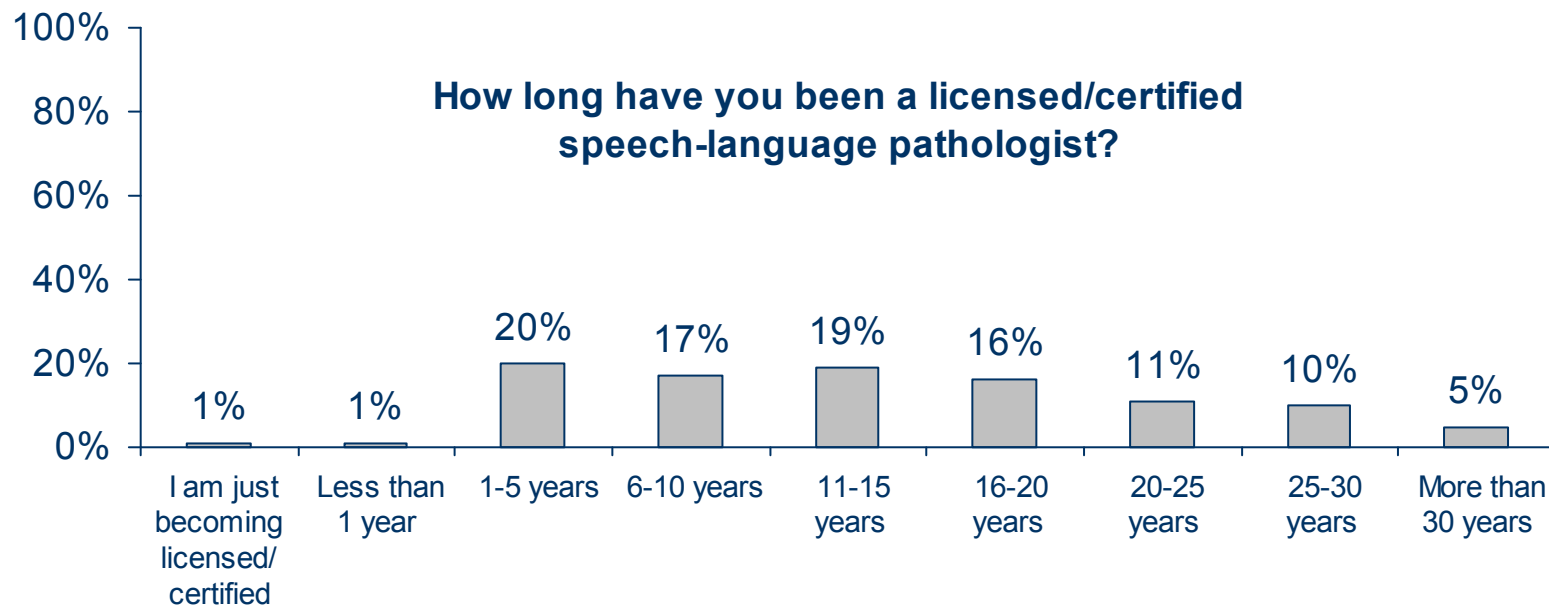
Base: total responding to question (n=105)  
Questions 8., 9.



## Section IV: Demographic Information & Classification

# One in five (22%) surveyed are new to the profession and 4 in 10 have been practicing for 10 years or less

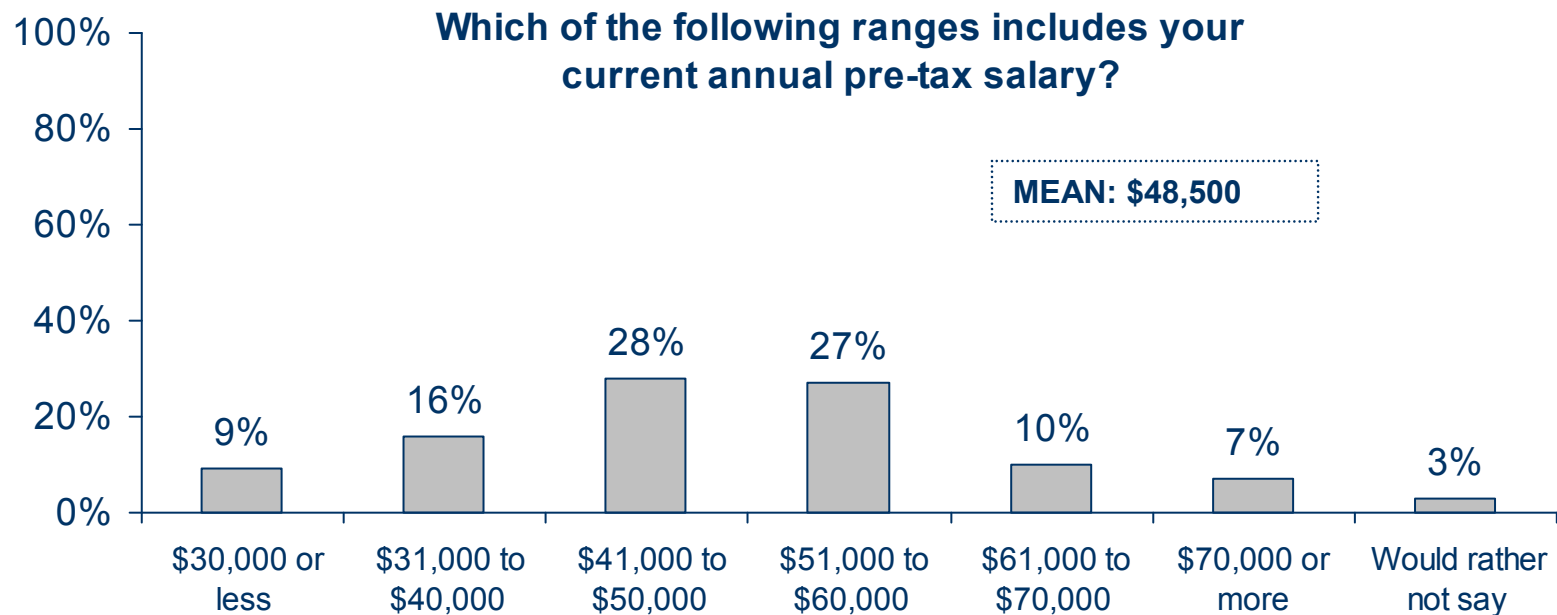
⊕ Of note is that one quarter of the population has been practicing for 20 years or more.



Base: total responding to question (n=115)  
Question 10.

# About half of SLPs in Vermont (47%) make in excess of \$50,000 per year

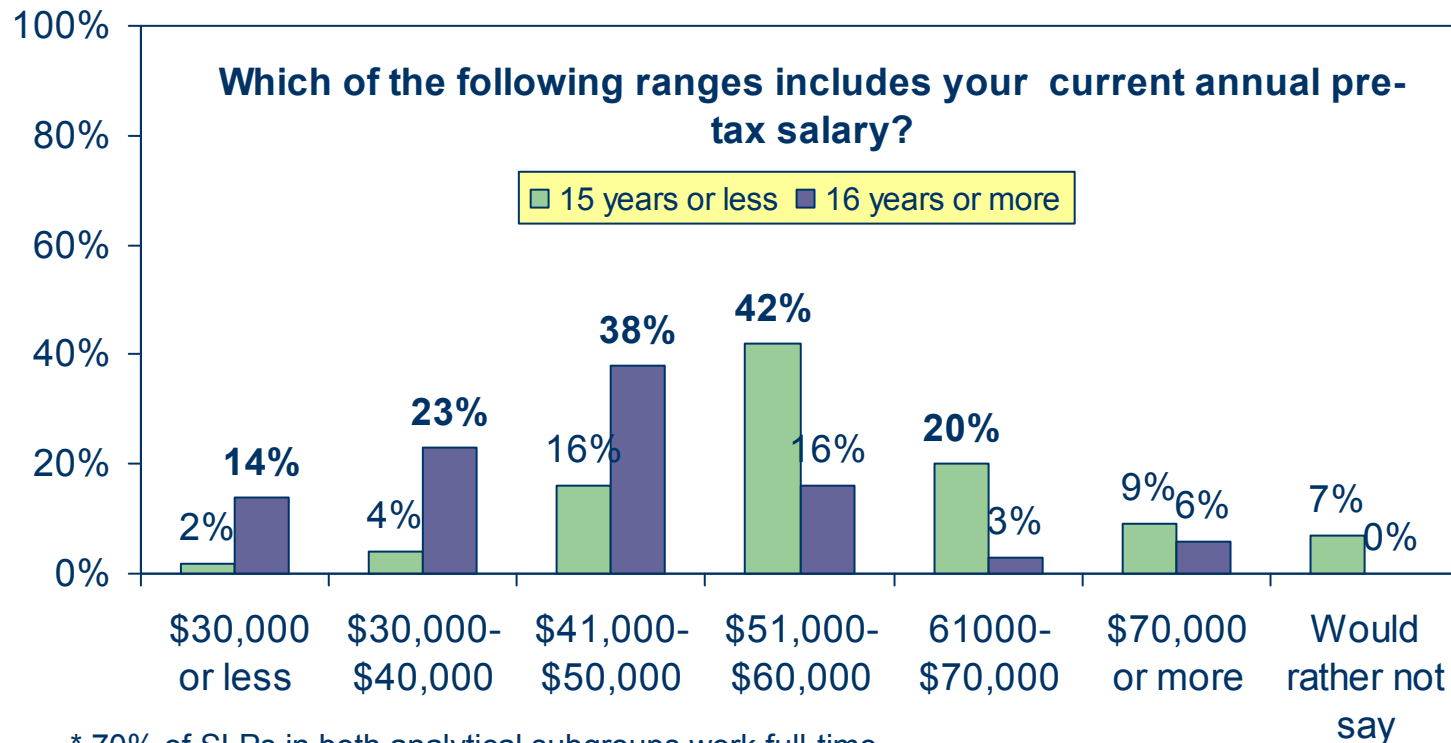
- ⊕ Using the midpoint of each range, an average (weighted) can be calculated. On average, SLPs in Vermont make \$48,500.



Base: total responding to question (n=109)  
Question 11.

## SLPs with more experience are generally making lower salaries than SLPs with less experience

- ⊕ 75% of SLPs with 16 years or more experience make \$50,000 or less.
- ⊕ 71% of SLPs with 15 years or less experience make in excess of \$50,000.

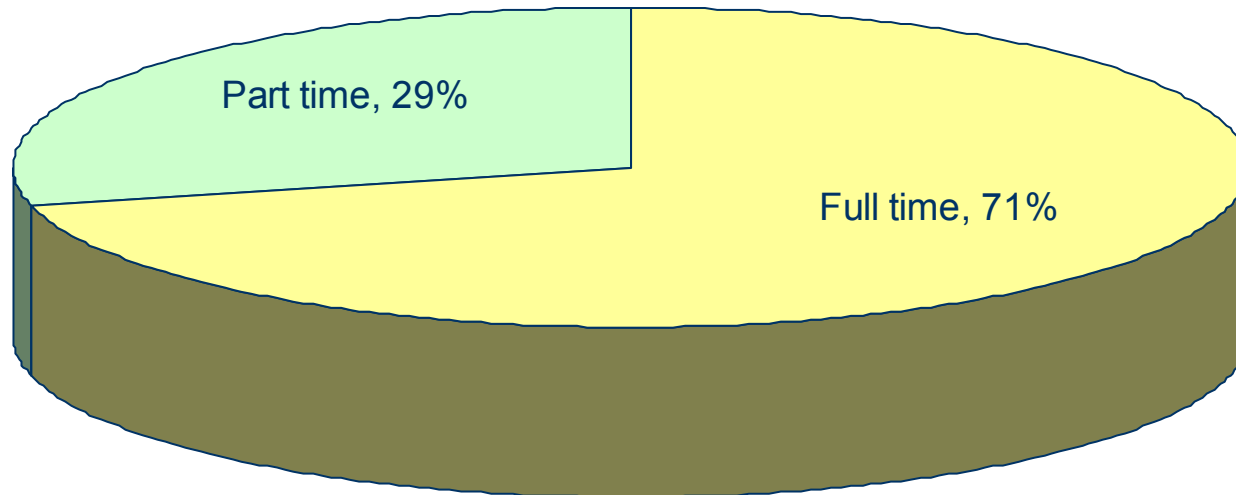


Base: total responding to question (n=109)  
Question 11.

**Bold = statistically different**

## 7 of 10 are employed full-time

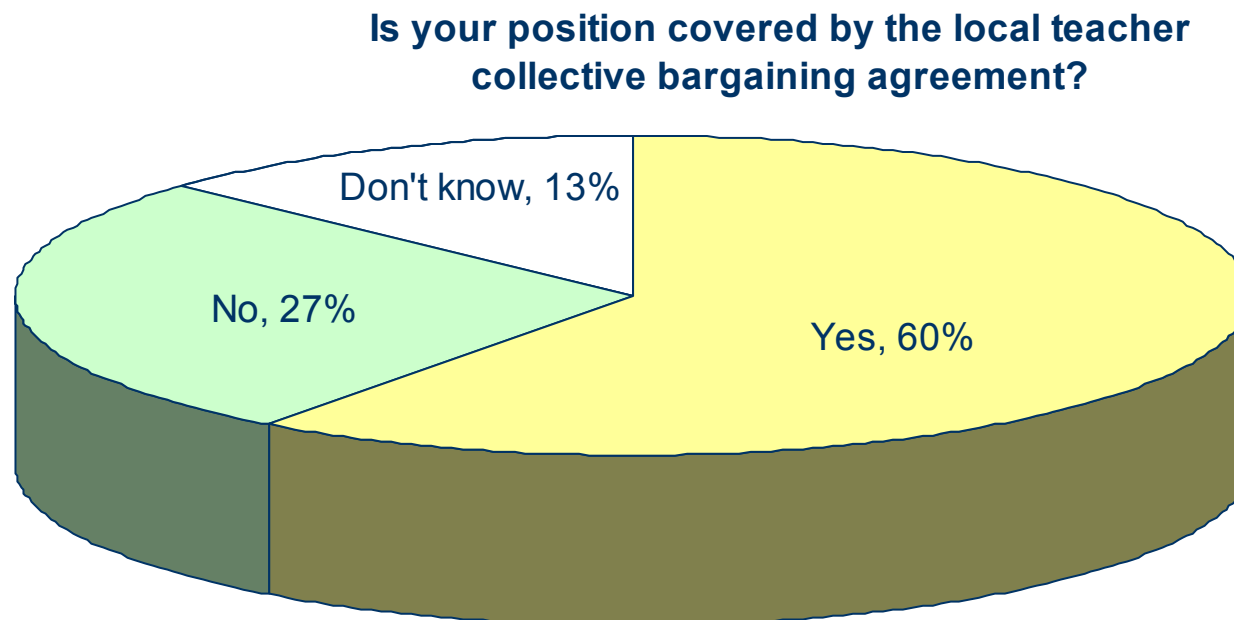
Which of the following describes your current employment situation?



Base: total responding to question (n=109)  
Question 12.

# 60% of those responding to the survey say their position IS covered by the local teacher collective bargaining agreement

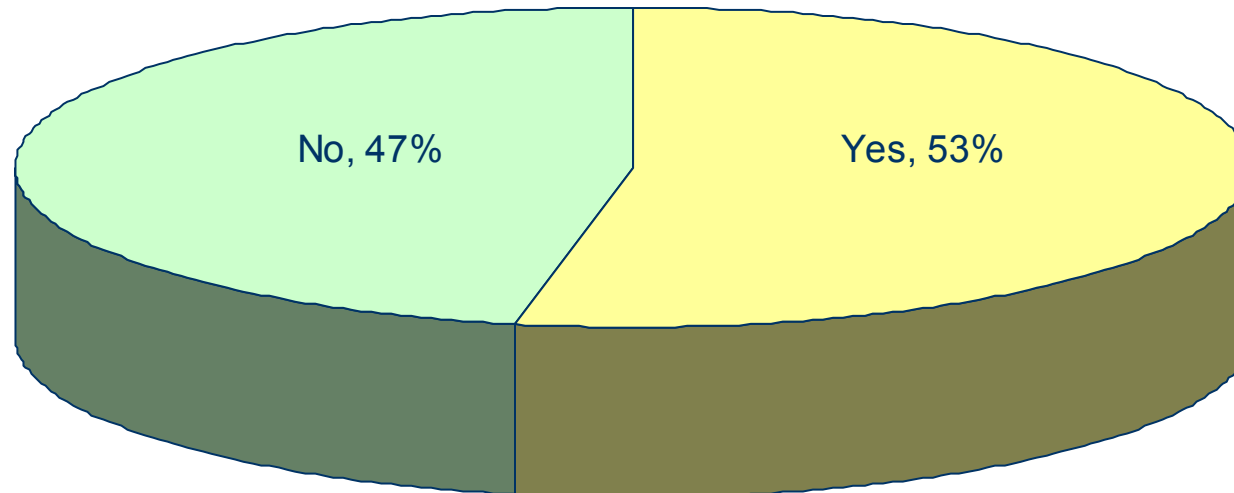
⊕ 13% do not know whether they are members of a bargaining unit.



Base: total responding to question (n=104)  
Question 13.

# Half of those responding graduated from UVM's SLP masters program

Are you a graduate of UVM's SLP Masters program?

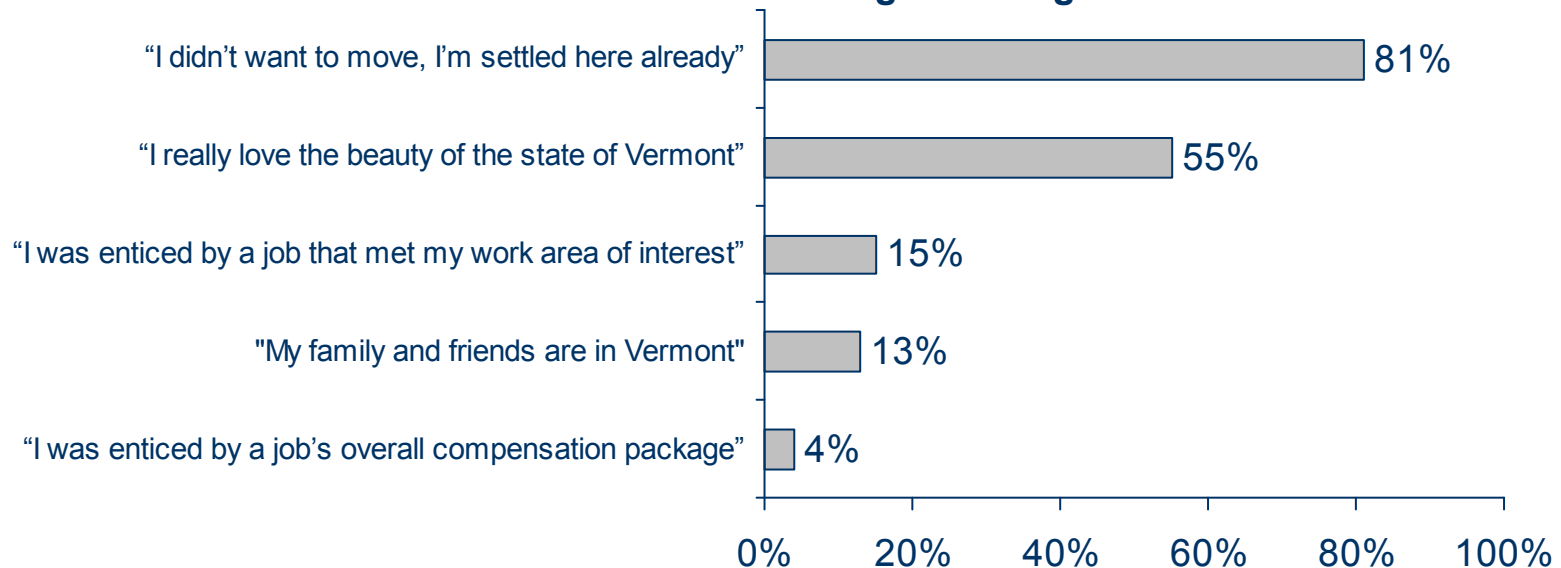


Base: total responding to question (n=114)  
Question 14.

# Most UVM SLP Masters program graduates who chose to stay in Vermont were already settled and didn't want to move

- Interesting, only 4% said they were enticed by a job's overall compensation package.

Which of the following were key factors in your decision to stay in Vermont after graduating from UVM?



Base: graduates of UVM's SLP Master's program who chose to stay in Vermont after graduating (n=53)  
Question 15.

# Current Employer

- ⊕ Addison NE Supervisory
- ⊕ ANESU
- ⊕ Barre City Elementary/Middle School (3)
- ⊕ Bennington Rutland Supervisory Union
- ⊕ Burlington School District (3)
- ⊕ BVSU
- ⊕ Caledonia Central Supervisory Union
- ⊕ CESU
- ⊕ CSSU (2)
- ⊕ Essex Town School District (4)
- ⊕ Ferrisburgh Central School/ Contracted Employee Weybridge Elementary School & Waldorf School
- ⊕ Franklin County Home Health Agency (2)
- ⊕ Franklin Northeast Supervisory Union
- ⊕ Georgia Elementary and Middle School
- ⊕ Hartford School District (2)
- ⊕ Home Health organization
- ⊕ Landmark College, Putney, VT (currently employed as a reading specialist, not as an SLP)
- ⊕ Manchester Elementary Middle school
- ⊕ Military
- ⊕ Milton Town School District

Base: total responding to question (n=63)  
Question 17.

## Current Employer (continued)

- ⊕ Oak Grove School--Brattleboro, VT
- ⊕ OENSU Early Childhood Programs
- ⊕ Orange Windsor Supervisory Union
- ⊕ Rutland City Schools (3)
- ⊕ Self employed (6)
- ⊕ So. Burlington School District (2)
- ⊕ Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union (2)
- ⊕ Spaulding High School
- ⊕ Springfield Schools (3)
- ⊕ St. Albans City School
- ⊕ SVSU (2)
- ⊕ Swanton Elementary School
- ⊕ Twinfield Union School (2)
- ⊕ Vergennes Union Elementary School
- ⊕ Washington South Supervisory Union (Contract With)
- ⊕ WCSU
- ⊕ Windham Southwest Supervisory Union
- ⊕ Windsor City Schools/ Windsor SW Sup Union (2)
- ⊕ WNESU

Base: total responding to question (n=63)  
Question 17.

## 5 of 9 SLPs currently not working are retired, 3 are “burned out”

⊕ Speech language pathologists who are not currently working can be described as follows:

- Retired (n=5)
- Burned out on this type of work (n=3)
- Pursuing other career interests (n=2)
- Stay-at-home parent (n=1)
- On maternity leave (n=1)

Base: those who are not currently working (n=9)  
Question 18.

**Small base size: interpret with caution**

**Analytical note: due to small number of respondents,  
numbers are shown instead of percentages**

# Executive Summary – Compensation Package & Job Satisfaction Survey

- ⊕ Only 1 in 5 SLPs is in private practice.
- ⊕ 7 in 10 SLPs are compensated on the teacher's salary schedule.
- ⊕ On average, SLPs working in Vermont schools make \$48,500.
- ⊕ Salary shows significant gaps relative to its level of influence in taking a job. Only 27% say they are "very satisfied" with their salary, though 80% are "very or somewhat" satisfied.
- ⊕ Only 8% say they receive a salary stipend and 40% say this has "a lot of influence" on a decision to stay or leave. Satisfaction on salary stipends received is very low, presumably because most don't receive one.
- ⊕ Salary, followed by a friendly work environment and manageable workload lead the list of factors that most influence (over 80% of those surveyed) the decision to stay or leave a job.

# Executive Summary – Compensation Package & Job Satisfaction Survey (continued)

- ⊕ 1 in 5 SLPs is dissatisfied with caseload/workload.
- ⊕ Most receive medical, retirement and continuing education benefits. These are all highly valued, especially health and retirement benefits. They contribute “a lot” to a decision to stay or leave their job. Health and continuing education benefits exhibit high levels of satisfaction.
- ⊕ SLPs with 16 years or more experience are more often in private practice, more often allowed time to network/collaborate, are more highly satisfied with flexible scheduling, and to be making LOWER salaries. 75% make \$50,000 or less. 49% are highly likely to remain in their current job over the next 1-2 years.
- ⊕ SLPs with 15 years or less experience are more likely to have ASHA/VSHA dues and licensing fees paid, and they are also more satisfied with these aspects. They place more value on administrative support, location of the school district, and not having school duties. They are more highly compensated. 71% are making in excess of \$50,000. 69% are highly likely to remain in their current job over the next 1-2 years.

# Executive Summary – Compensation Package & Job Satisfaction Survey (continued)

- ⊕ Having school duties and the need to travel between or among schools is a real consideration for recruitment/retention for one out of three surveyed.
- ⊕ 1 in 5 SLPs is dissatisfied with the level of administrative support and 70% indicate that this contributes “a lot” to their decision to stay or leave a job. Some respondents specified that a better understanding of SLP roles would help.
- ⊕ Close to 1 in 5 SLPs is dissatisfied with the level of professional recognition received in schools and half say this is highly influential in their decision to stay/leave their job.
- ⊕ Nearly all are likely to be in their jobs this time next year – 56% very likely and 82% very or somewhat likely.
- ⊕ 6 in 10 SLP positions in schools are covered by the local collective bargaining unit.
- ⊕ Half of the respondents graduated from UVM’s Masters program. Most graduates chose to stay in Vermont because they were already settled and didn’t want to move.
- ⊕ 9 respondents indicated that they were currently not working: 5 were retired and 3 were “burned out”.