

VOICES FROM THE CLASSROOM

A SURVEY OF AMERICA'S EDUCATORS



EDUCATORS
FOR EXCELLENCE

2018



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A SURVEY OF AMERICA'S EDUCATORS



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Table of Contents

2Introduction
3Letter to Teachers
5Methodology
8The Education Climate in 2018
10	.....Major Trends and Findings
11	..... Economic Security
19	..... Leading from the Classroom
23	..... Heard beyond the Classroom
27	..... School Safety and Discipline
31	..... Accountability
33	..... School Choice
34	.....Teacher Profiles
35	..... Early-Career Teachers
43	..... Teachers Working in Underserved Communities
49	..... Teachers of Color
53	.....Questionnaire and Topline Results
54	..... The Teaching Profession
71	..... Education Policy and Politics
89	..... Education Stakeholders
113	.....About Educators for Excellence
114	.....Endnotes

Introduction

We are thrilled to share with you the results of **Voices from the Classroom**, a groundbreaking, nationally representative survey that captures the views and opinions of educators across the country on a wide variety of education issues. As teachers, we know that all too often education leaders and legislators make decisions impacting our students and profession without first gathering the crucial insights from those of us charged each day with turning policy into practice. The purpose of this survey is to flip that dynamic on its head.

When our group of teachers came together in early January to develop the survey, we started by mapping out the topics we wanted teachers to weigh in on, so we—and policymakers—could better understand the common experiences and perspectives of teachers serving in diverse public school settings throughout the United States. We set out to identify shared successes and struggles of teachers regardless of whether they teach in an under-resourced, rural school district, an affluent suburban district, or a sprawling urban district. At the same time, we also wanted to see if teacher outlooks diverged by region, race, or years in the classroom, for example. Collaborating with our peers from across the country, we shaped questions to find out what teachers think about aspects of our profession, of education policy and politics, and of the stakeholders who shape education. And, as it turns out, there is a tremendous amount of consistency across the teacher community.

This past spring, a nationally representative sample of 1,000 current classroom teachers responded to our questions about what's working, what holds promise, and what needs to be changed in our schools, districts, unions, states, and at the federal level. Their feedback reflects the challenges teachers have consistently faced, as well as those that are unique to this particular moment in time. Of the many opinions they shared, a strong message resonated throughout the survey results: teachers are seeking the opportunity to lead and to be heard. We want career ladders that allow us to take on new and exciting roles without having to leave our classrooms or our students behind. Most importantly, we want to be heard beyond our classrooms, in our schools, districts, unions, states, and at the federal level, so that our experiences and expertise in the field can be leveraged to craft and refine smarter education policies.

We hope this survey will serve as a catalyst for administrators, district and union leaders, elected officials, and other education stakeholders to find ways to partner with teachers in designing the policies that will attract, develop, and retain talented educators and help their students reach their full potential.

Equally important, we hope that these findings will inspire our colleagues to keep actively pushing for the changes they want for their students and for their careers. Fellow teachers, speak to school administrators about why you should have a role in shaping policies, run for positions in your unions, author op-eds, and meet with elected officials to ensure you are heard. You are the experts. You see education policy up close and have invaluable insight into what teachers and students need to succeed. Demand a seat at the table!

In partnership,



Cristina Benz
N. Vizurraga
Christina Kim
Isaiah Sago
Lauren Lieberman
Cameron Maxwell
Tracy Michelle Netter
Matthew & Clark

Cristina Benz, ninth- through 12th-grade visual art teacher, Washburn High School, Minneapolis, MN

Matthew Clark, 11th- and 12th-grade humanities teacher, West Roxbury Academy, Boston, MA

Carol Johnson, sixth- and seventh-grade bridge/special education teacher, Theater Arts Production Company School, Bronx, NY

Kallie Jones, first-grade teacher, Mary E. McDowell Elementary School, Chicago, IL

Christina Kim, kindergarten through fifth-grade Title III instructional coach, Eastman Avenue Elementary School, Los Angeles, CA

Lauren Lieberman, fifth- and sixth-grade special education teacher, Kennelly School, Hartford, CT

Cameron Maxwell, seventh- and eighth-grade English language arts teacher, Global Technology Preparatory, Manhattan, NY

Tracy Michelle Netter, kindergarten through eighth-grade visual arts teacher, William K. New Sullivan Elementary School, Chicago, IL

Tiffany Moyer-Washington, eighth-grade English teacher, Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy, Hartford, CT

Daniel Pugliese, high school biology teacher, City on a Hill Charter School, Boston, MA

Isaiah Sago, high school math teacher, Dorothy V. Johnson Community Day School, Los Angeles, CA

Nivia Vizurraga, kindergarten through fifth-grade special education teacher, Bertrand Ave. Elementary School, Reseda, CA

Dear Educator,

Thank you. Every day, you use a complex set of skills and tireless passion to inspire children to learn and discover who they are, often in the face of great challenges beyond your control. Despite a lack of deserved recognition, you are a leader.

And you're not alone.

In this report, there are multiple voices—from a young teacher in a rural classroom worried if their preparation program adequately prepared them to differentiate instruction to a teacher grappling with the challenges of serving high-needs students in a big city. And despite different backgrounds and communities, teachers have striking similarities.

No matter their background, teachers across the nation shared their concerns over inadequate compensation and school safety, as well as their support for more leadership opportunities that keep them in the classroom and alternatives to overly punitive discipline.

Further, teachers everywhere almost unanimously agree they want more opportunity to be heard beyond their classrooms and to play a hand in shaping the policy that impacts their students and their profession. As one responder put it: “Teachers are the ones who see needs in the classroom, but they are probably the least consulted when it comes to policy decisions.” If there is one takeaway from this report, it is that we must create new avenues for teachers to exercise their leadership and expertise in the service of their colleagues and students.

The purpose of this survey parallels the mission of Educators for Excellence (E4E): to ensure that teachers have a leading voice in the policies that impact their students and profession. Developed by a team of 12 amazing, current classroom teachers, the survey results represent the voice of every public school teacher in the nation. By providing insight into educators’ policy preferences, we hope politicians, union representatives, and district and school leaders will consider you as they make decisions that affect your students and your classroom.

But this is only the beginning. Questions lead to more questions. We hope to take what we learned from you and your peers and conduct future surveys to learn how your opinions on these matters change over time and to gauge your views on the issues at the center of tomorrow’s classrooms.

We are extremely grateful to the E4E members who created our first nationally representative survey to make sure we captured the views of their colleagues on the most pressing issues affecting them and their students. After exhausting days with their students and colleagues, they took time in their evenings and weekends to make sure their peers across the nation had their voices heard. These Teacher Leaders embody E4E’s vision of teachers leading the change they want to see.

Sincerely,

Sydney Morris and Evan Stone
Co-Founders and Co-CEOs
Educators for Excellence





Methodology

The *Voices from the Classroom: A Survey of America's Educators* survey questionnaire was developed by a dozen Educator for Excellence (E4E) member teachers from across the United States. The instrument was written and administered by Gotham Research Group, an independent research firm, and conducted online from April 14, 2018, through May 6, 2018, among a nationally representative sample of 1,000 full-time public school teachers.

Survey Sample

The survey sample is representative of the national population of U.S. district and charter public school teachers and aligns with key demographic variables of gender, region, race, ethnicity, age, years of teaching experience, level of education attained, school type, and subjects taught.¹ Any E4E member participation in the survey is entirely coincidental. The data was weighted by years of teaching experience, level of education attained, race, and ethnicity.

Participation and Response Rate

Potential respondents were invited via email to participate in the survey. Respondents were screened to ensure they were U.S. adults over 18 years of age and currently employed full time as Pre-K through grade 12 public school classroom teachers in district or charter schools. Survey invites were sent out to 101,000 prescreened education professionals; 8,080 entered the survey, and 1,367 qualified and completed the full survey, resulting in a response rate of 8 percent. The margin of error is ± 3.1 percentage points for the full survey sample and higher among subgroups.

About Gotham Research Group

Gotham Research Group is a full-service research and consulting firm advising nonprofit organizations, corporations, and electoral campaigns on issues of communication, reputation, and strategy. Known widely for their *Trendcast*, Gotham's academic research on public opinion has been published in top tier academic journals, including *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *American Political Science Review*, and *American Journal of Political Science*.

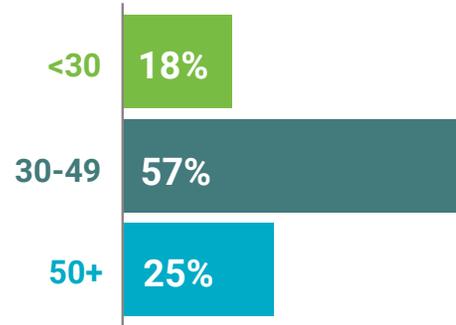
Survey Sample

The survey sample of 1,000 full-time teachers is representative of the national population of U.S. district and charter public school teachers.

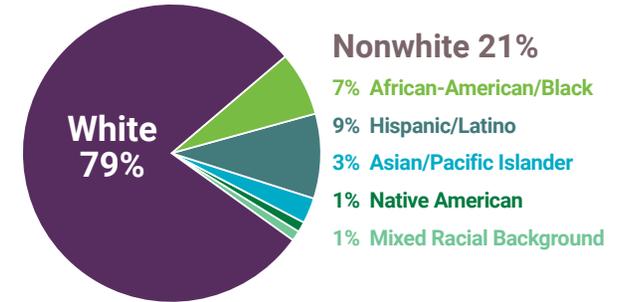
GENDER



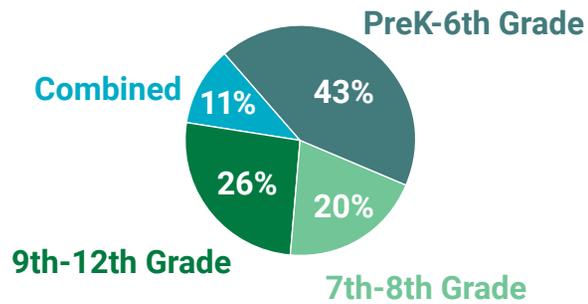
AGE



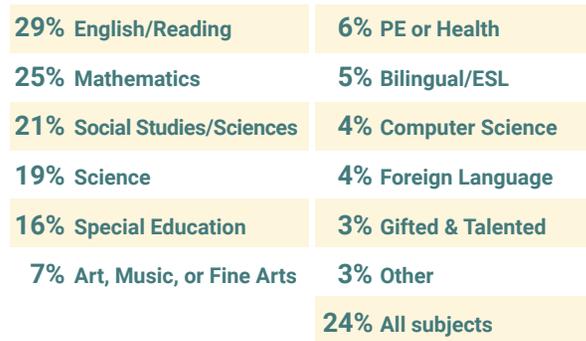
RACE/ETHNICITY



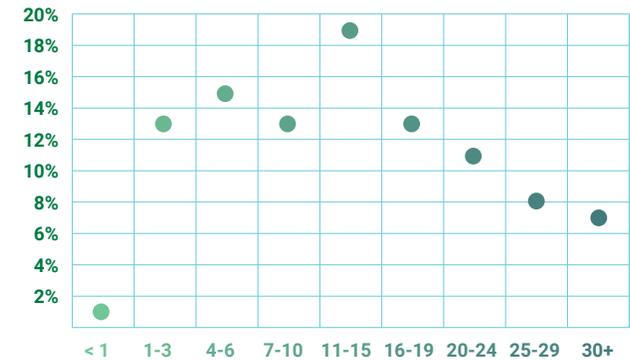
GRADES CURRENTLY TEACHING



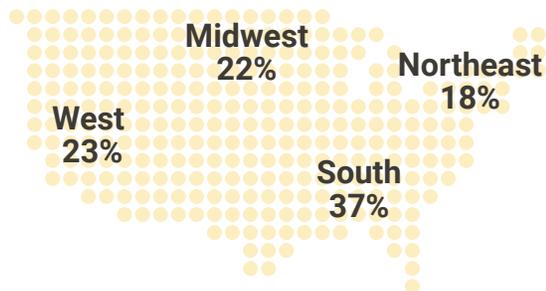
SUBJECTS TEACHING



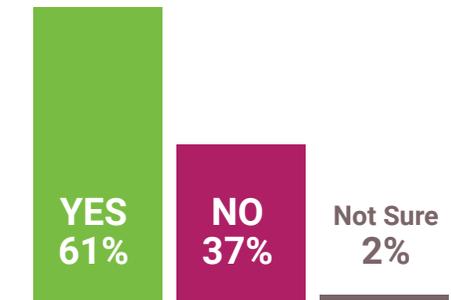
YEARS TEACHING



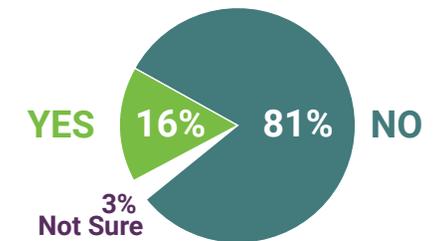
REGION



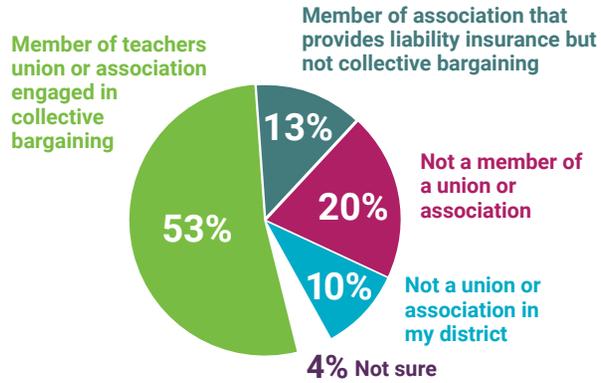
TENURE



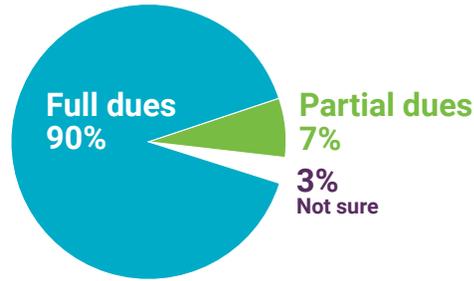
ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM



UNION MEMBERSHIP



UNION MEMBER TYPE (n=534)



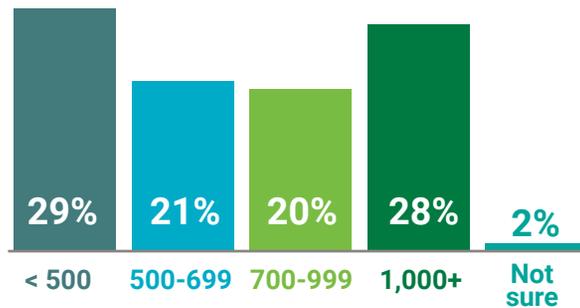
FAIR-SHARE FEES/AGENCY FEES (n=332)



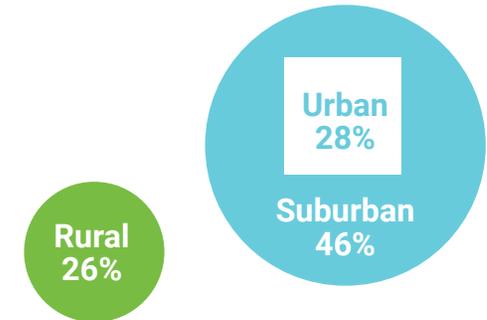
SCHOOL TYPE



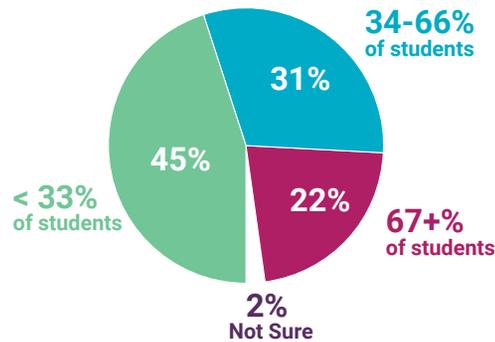
SCHOOL SIZE



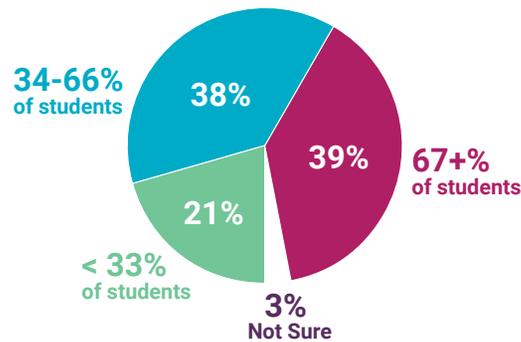
SCHOOL LOCATION



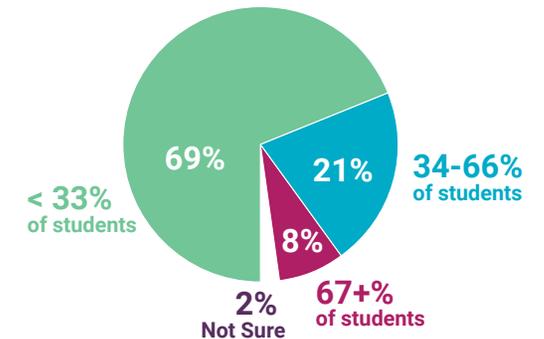
STUDENTS OF COLOR



STUDENTS FROM LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

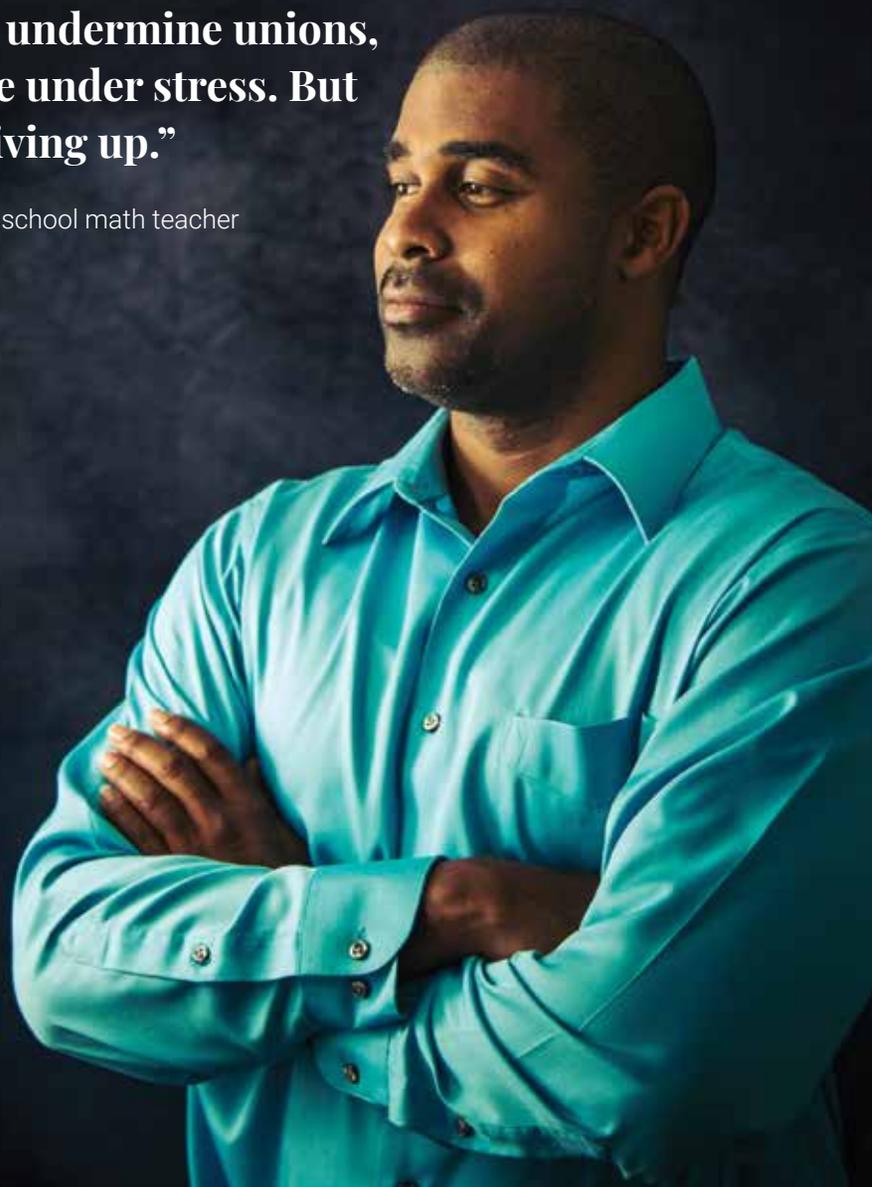


ENGLISH LEARNER STUDENTS



“From inequitable funding, to acts of mass violence, to attempts to undermine unions, teachers are under stress. But we’re not giving up.”

Isaiah Sago, high school math teacher



The Education Climate in 2018

This teacher survey, like all surveys, reflects sentiments at a particular moment in time. To understand the answers, it’s important to be aware of events and the education climate, more generally, at the time the survey answers were collected.

Among the diverse education issues dominating the headlines in spring 2018, there has been a single, unifying factor: teacher voice. This has been a year of highs and lows for teachers having their say, with teachers successfully advocating on behalf of themselves and their students across the country, speaking out against violence in their schools, and watching the Supreme Court hand down a verdict in *Janus v. American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, Council 31 (AFSCME)* that placed in jeopardy the power behind their collective voices.

Hundreds of thousands of teachers took to the streets this year, filling capitol buildings and running for office to bring about the changes they want to see for their students and for their profession. In the largest demonstration of teacher power in decades, teachers went on strike in state after state in 2018. They protested chronically underfunded education systems and advocated for increases to long-stagnant wages and benefits. Teachers flooded the airwaves to speak about how they have had to work one or more part-time jobs just to support their families² and shared images of crumbling,³ overheated,⁴ and underheated⁵ classrooms via social

media. And their advocacy struck a chord, with a *New York Times* survey finding that nearly three out of four Americans agreed that teachers should be better compensated.⁶ With the public behind them, striking teachers secured a 5 percent raise in salary in West Virginia, a \$2,000 raise and \$40 million investment in education funding in Oklahoma, and a 20 percent pay raise by 2020 in Arizona.

Educators weren't just striking for a better salary. They protested being asked to do more with less funding and fewer resources—years after the Great Recession and in the midst of a booming economy. The Center for Budget Policies and Priorities found that in 2015, the latest year for which comprehensive spending data are available from the U.S. Census Bureau, 29 states were still providing less total school funding per student than they were in 2008.⁷ In 19 states, local government funding per student fell over the same period, adding to the damage from state funding cuts. At the federal level, funding continues to be under threat from major budget cuts, such as President Trump's proposals to eliminate Title II funding in fiscal years 2018 and 2019. And the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights found that even in states with higher levels of funding for education, equity between and within districts remains elusive.⁸

As states and districts underfund or inequitably fund education, it is not surprising that teacher retention has suffered, with 17 percent of teachers leaving in their first five years in the classroom,⁹ and enrollment in teacher preparation programs has plummeted nationwide by 35 percent from 2009 to 2014,¹⁰ as fewer young people see education as a wise career choice. In this environment, states and districts have been struggling to recruit educators willing to teach in hard-to-staff schools, such as

those in rural areas and those serving low-income families, and in hard-to-staff subject areas, such as special education, bilingual education, and the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields.¹¹ The changing demographics of public schools present yet another challenge to districts and states looking to close the diversity gap between teachers and students, as research clearly shows that a lack of exposure to diverse educators harms students of color and white students alike.¹² According to the U.S. Department of Education, by 2024 students of color will make up 56 percent of the student population, yet 80 percent of teachers are white.¹³ With research showing that classroom teachers are the single most important in-school factor in improving student achievement, districts and states will need to improve how they recruit, develop, and retain talented and diverse educators.

In addition to signaling to potential educators that teaching is a stable profession, administrators will also need to reassure them that it can be a safe workplace. On February 14, 2018, a school shooting at Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, left 14 students and three staff members dead, shocking the nation. Student survivors and teachers spoke out in the months that followed, speaking to the media, communicating via social media, and organizing marches across the country with millions of participants.¹⁴ In 2018, as of June, more than 20,000 students attended a school where a shooting occurred, and casualties from school shootings were the highest ever in a single academic year.¹⁵ These tragedies thrust communities into contentious debates on how best to end incidents of school violence,¹⁶ with some arguing in favor of arming teachers and doubling down on traditional, exclusionary discipline, while others called for

stronger gun control,¹⁷ discipline strategies aimed at teaching students to make better decisions without sending them out of class,¹⁸ and fostering school climates that support students' social-emotional well-being.¹⁹

Lastly, in spring 2018, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in *Janus v. AFSCME*, a case that would put an end to automatic union membership and fair-share fees from non-members, potentially delivering new membership and revenue challenges for teachers unions. With weaker union representation, teachers' influence in education could also decrease, as unions have played a vital role in fighting for better wages and benefits while representing teachers within education and social policy debates. On June 27, 2018, after the survey was completed, the Supreme Court decided in favor of *Janus*.

This year, teachers spoke up on behalf of their students, calling for policy changes that would allow schools to better meet students' academic, social, and emotional needs. They made the case that students need equitable access to resources and should be able to learn in a supportive and inclusive school environment that honors the rights, identities, cultures, social-emotional needs, and potential of all students, regardless of their race, gender, family income level, or immigration status. If 2018 is any indication, teachers will not be content to return to their more traditional role of being the subjects of policy change. They are increasingly interested in becoming agents of change, leveraging their experience and expertise to improve our education system. If they are wise, policymakers will listen.

MAJOR TRENDS AND FINDINGS

A portrait of Cameron Maxwell, a man with dark, wavy hair, wearing a light-colored, button-down shirt. He is looking slightly to the left of the camera with a neutral expression. The background is dark, and the lighting is dramatic, highlighting his face and shirt.

**“We want to be in control of
our financial destinies and
have the resources to meet our
students’ unique needs.”**

Cameron Maxwell, seventh- and eighth-grade
English language arts teacher

Economic Security

Teachers are very concerned about their economic security, so wages, salaries, benefits, and job security are top of mind.

Economic issues are top of mind for educators today, who express significant concern about their own salaries and wages and the resources that are allocated to their students and the schools where they work. Across a wide variety of education issues, such as recruitment, retention, representation, retirement, and equity, teachers prioritize a range of financial solutions to bring greater stability and equity to our education system.

Teachers across the country are all too aware that their profession has lost economic ground over the past few decades, as states and districts have slashed education budgets. While the average college graduate working outside of teaching today is making an additional \$124 in inflation-adjusted dollars a week than they did in 2000, the average teacher is making approximately \$30 less.²⁰

Recruitment

To counteract the “teacher pay gap” teachers believe financial incentives, such as sign-on bonuses, higher starting salaries, or loan forgiveness programs, are best. When presented with 11 possible strategies to attract potential new teachers, current classroom teachers ranked the two financial incentive options the highest: supporting the targeting of funds to help fill hard-to-staff schools, such as those in rural schools or schools serving students from low-income homes, and to end persistent vacancies in hard-to-staff subject areas, such as special education, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), and bilingual and English as a Second Language.

ATTRACTING TEACHERS TO THE PROFESSION

Percent reporting “Excellent.”

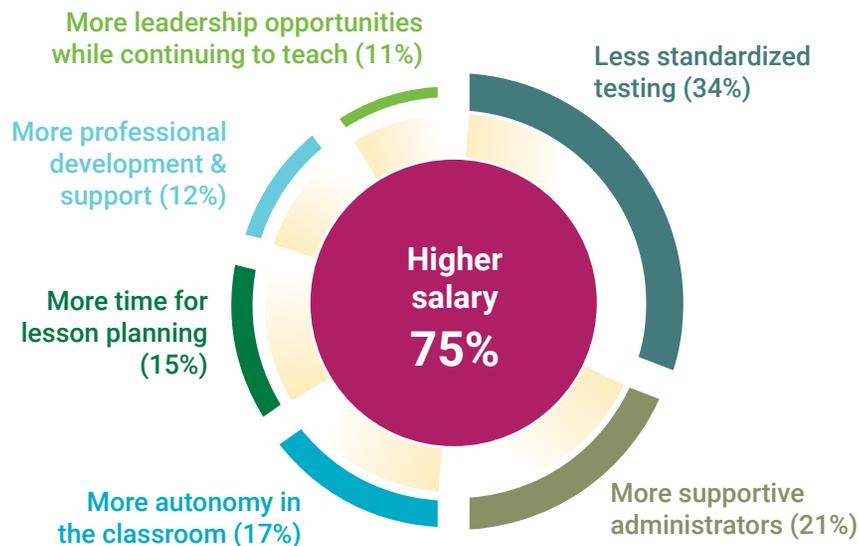
Financial incentives for serving in hard-to-staff schools	48%
Financial incentives for serving in hard-to-staff subject areas	46%
Make it easier to leave and return to teaching without losing benefits	36%
Leadership pathways to increase impact & salary	34%
Streamlined certification	33%
Pathways for paraprofessionals to become teachers	28%
Residency programs with hands-on experience	27%
Substantially higher starting salaries in exchange for smaller pensions	19%
Alternative certification pathways	18%
Actively recruit from other professions	17%
Raise entry bar to teaching (SAT, GPA, etc.)	15%

Retention

Similarly, teachers believe financial incentives should be utilized to stem attrition and reward teachers for excellence. Three out of four teachers responded that a higher salary would be the most motivating factor for them to continue being a classroom teacher for their entire career and that disputes over salary and benefits would be the most likely reason they would participate in a strike.

And teachers support financial incentives for those who teach in hard-to-staff schools or teach hard-to-staff subjects, take on leadership roles, receive National Board for Professional Teaching Standards accreditation, are performing well, or whose students are performing well.

MOTIVATING TEACHER RETENTION



REASONS TO STRIKE

Percent reporting "Very Likely."



FINANCIAL INCENTIVES TEACHERS FAVOR

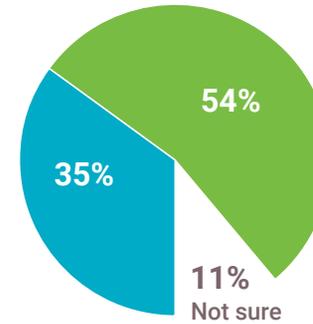
Teachers who work in hard-to-staff schools	89%
Teachers who take on leadership positions within the school or district	88%
Teachers who specialize in hard-to-fill subjects	79%
Teachers who receive accreditation from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards	75%
Teachers who receive multiple outstanding evaluations	74%
Teachers whose students show significant gains in test scores from one year to the next	56%

Representation

Expectations of teachers unions are straightforward and aligned with their financial focus; teachers are looking to their unions first and foremost to protect their salaries, benefits, and jobs. When asked to prioritize the union offerings, they continue to keep these traditional, financial roles at the top of the list.²¹

ROLE OF UNIONS

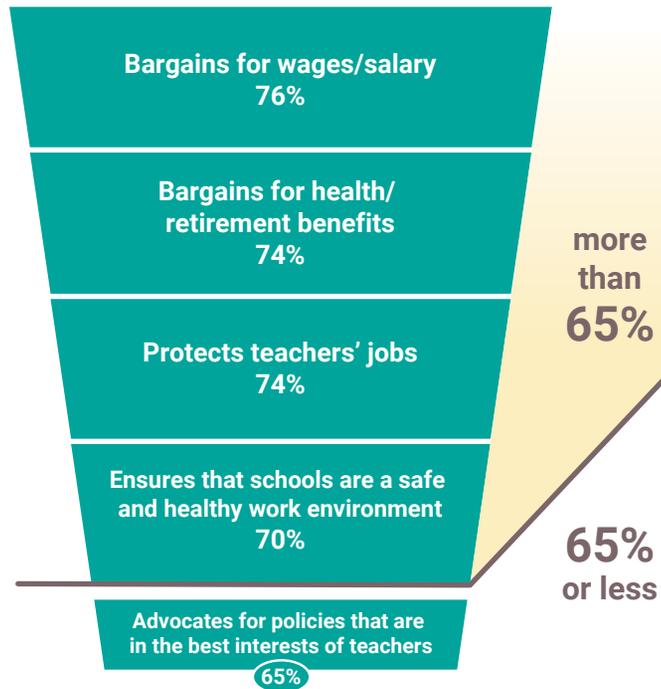
Put more focus than they currently do on issues such as improving teacher quality and student achievement



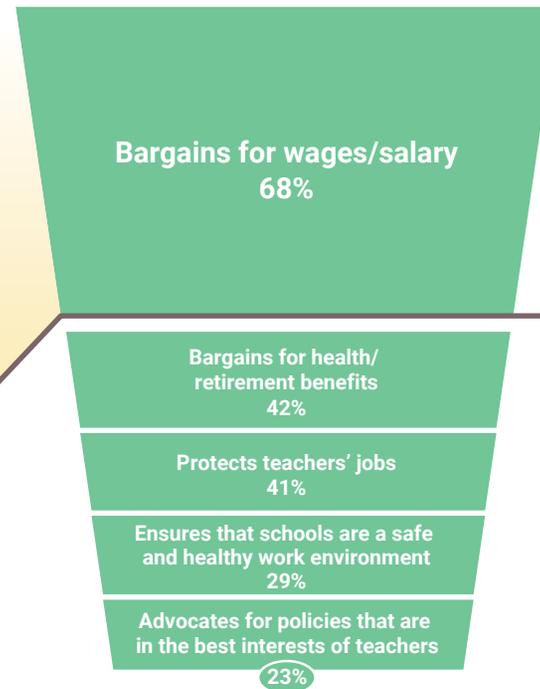
Mostly stick to traditional union issues, such as protecting teachers' salaries, benefits, and jobs

EXPECTATIONS & PRIORITIES FOR UNIONS

How important to you are each of the following for teachers unions to do? Percent reporting "Critically Important."



If teachers unions had more limited resources, how would you prioritize what the teachers unions do for members?



more than 65%

65% or less

There is some tension evident in teachers' perceptions of unions, with most teachers believing that unions currently charge higher dues than are warranted by the services they provide, and the top reasons given for not choosing to be a union member are financial in nature, such as not wanting to pay dues or not believing the union would help them financially. Union members themselves are

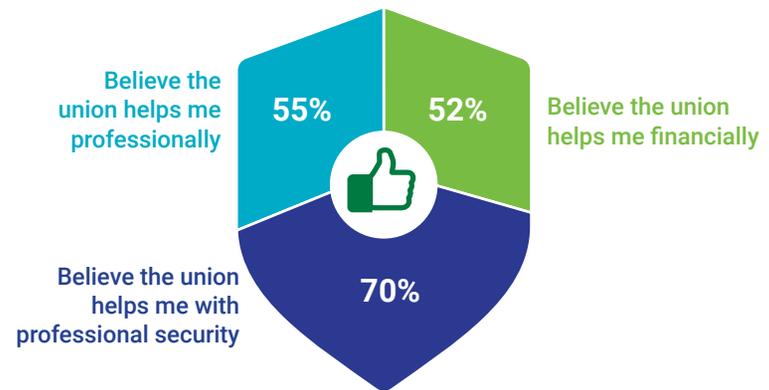
split between saying they are members solely because of the practical benefits the union provides versus the more emotional benefit of pride and solidarity. Yet, nearly nine out of 10 teachers overall recognize that without collective bargaining, their salaries and working conditions would be much worse.²²

PERCEPTION OF UNIONS

Percent chosen "Strongly Agree" or "Somewhat Agree."	Union	Nonunion
The union charges higher dues than are warranted by what it does for teachers.	54%	72%
Without collective bargaining, the working conditions & salaries of teachers would be much worse.	94%	77%
Without a union, teachers would be vulnerable to school politics or administrators who abuse their power.	92%	76%

REASONS FOR AND AGAINST UNION MEMBERSHIP

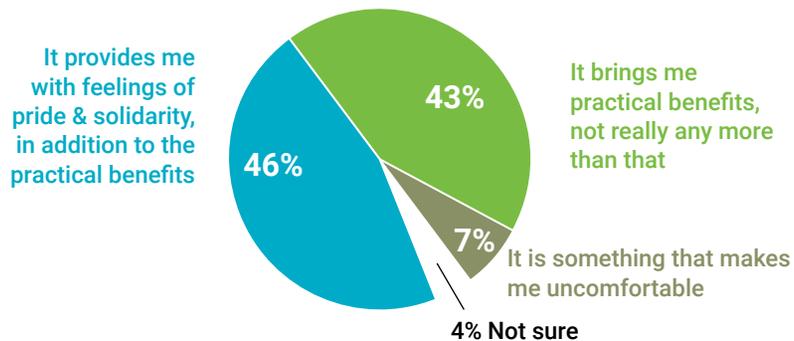
Union Members



Nonunion Members

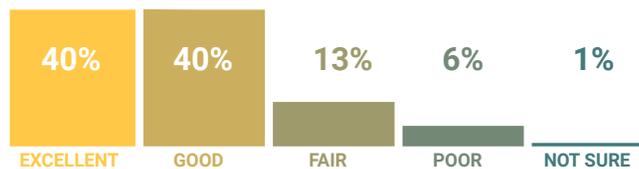


CONNECTION TO THEIR UNION

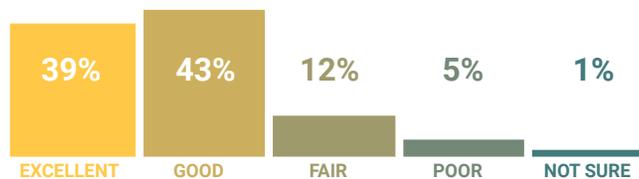


On average, four out of five of unionized teachers see their unions as doing an “excellent” or “good” job with regard to protecting teachers’ jobs and bargaining for benefits and salaries. However, one out of five unionized teachers said they would not be likely to opt in to the union if they were not automatically enrolled, which, given the Supreme Court’s ruling in favor of Janus in *Janus v. AFSCME*, could be problematic for the unions.

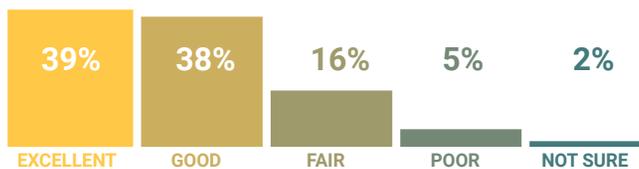
UNION EFFECTIVENESS



Bargains for wages/salary

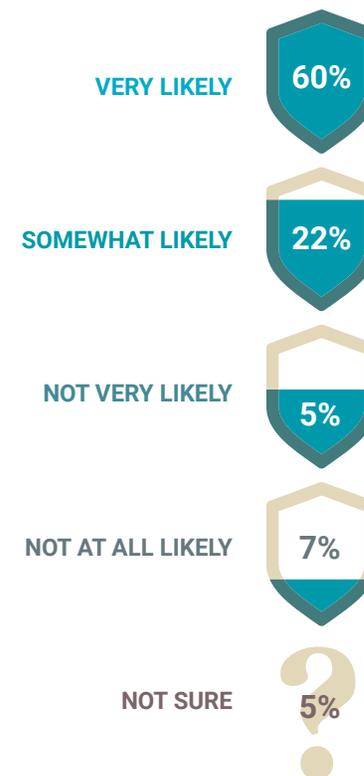


Protects teachers’ jobs



Bargains for health/retirement benefits

WILL UNION MEMBERS OPT IN?



Retirement

Financial stress among teachers is impacting how they see their retirement, with a substantial percentage of teachers interested in trading a higher salary for a smaller pension and almost one-third who are simply not sure. They also have less faith in the traditional pension system, with nearly equal percentages of teachers saying they would prefer either a pension or a defined contribution plan, such as a 401(k) or 403(b), which is more easily transferable across states and careers. It is worth noting also that approximately one in 10 teachers said they did not know enough about these retirement options to make a choice one way or the other.

SALARY VS. PENSION

Which one would you prefer when it comes to your salary and pension?



43%

A higher salary & a smaller pension



26%

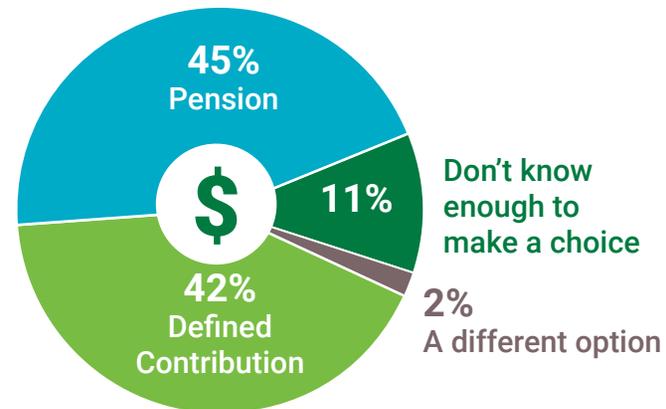
A lower salary & a larger pension



31%

Not sure

RETIREMENT BENEFIT PREFERENCES



Pension

A guaranteed retirement benefit in which employees receive a defined amount of benefit upon retirement, regardless of the performance of the investment pool. Pension amounts are typically determined by a formula that is based on years of service, vesting after a certain number of years, and earnings. Pensions are not transferable to other careers or states.

Defined Contribution Plan

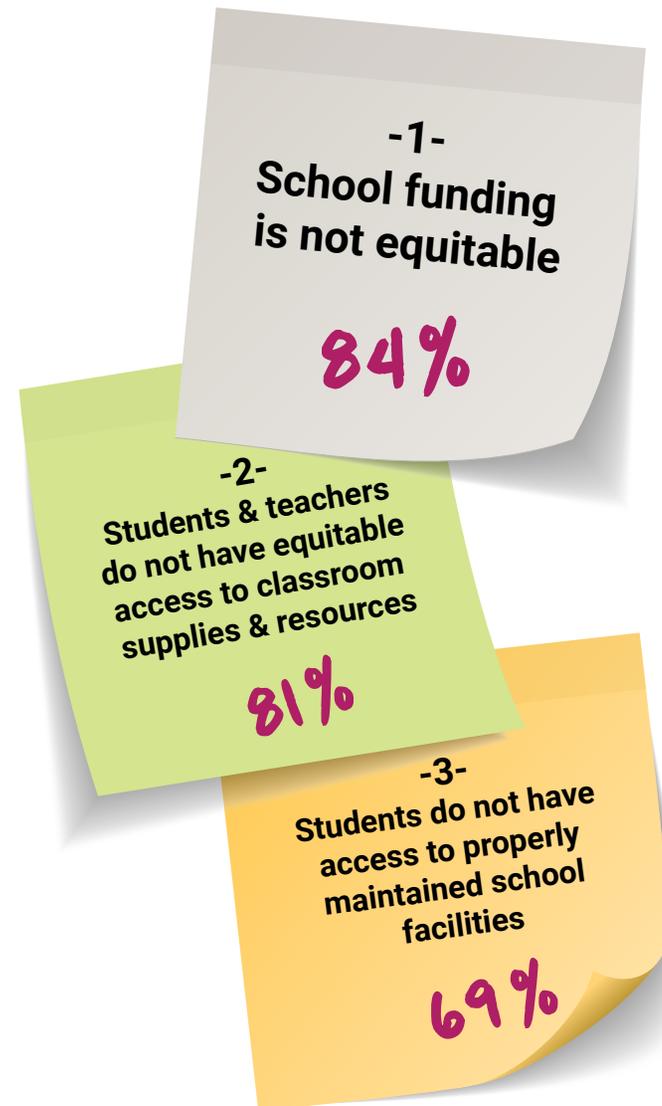
A retirement option in which you contribute a portion of your pay, and the employer matches a variable amount to your contribution. The benefit upon retirement depends on the plan's investment performance. This is best known as a 401(k) in the private sector, or a 403(b) in the nonprofit sector, and can be transferred between careers and states.

Equity

Teachers' economic concerns are not limited to their own financial well-being. Substantial majorities of teachers believe inequitable school funding, access to classrooms supplies and resources, and access to properly maintained school facilities are all problems in their own states. Their endorsement of financial incentives aimed at bringing more talented teachers to under-resourced students is just one way in which teachers are interested in moving away from the status quo to increase equity in the education system.

TOP THREE EQUITY CONCERNS OF TEACHERS

Percent reporting "Very Serious" or "Somewhat Serious" problem.



MAJOR TRENDS AND FINDINGS

“Teachers are passionate about what they do and want to grow, no matter where they are in their careers.”

Nivia Vizurraga, kindergarten through fifth-grade special education teacher



Leading from the Classroom

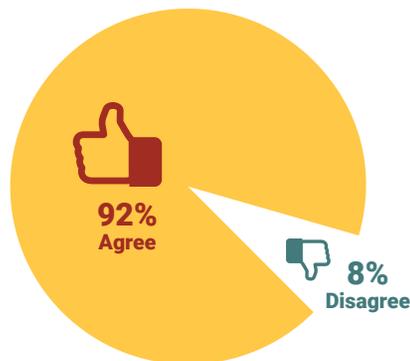
Teachers are seeking more opportunities to lead while staying in the classroom, particularly as they relate to career pathways.

As districts consider how best to attract and retain educators, in addition to financial incentives, they should identify how they can offer leadership opportunities to classroom teachers. A staggering 92 percent of teachers say they wish there were more opportunities to further their careers and professional skills while staying in the classroom. Despite this widespread desire, less than half of teachers indicate that they feel supported by their administration to take on leadership roles in their schools. This may contribute to nearly four in 10 teachers saying they feel pressure to become administrators in order to advance their careers as educators.

CAREER AND GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CLASSROOM

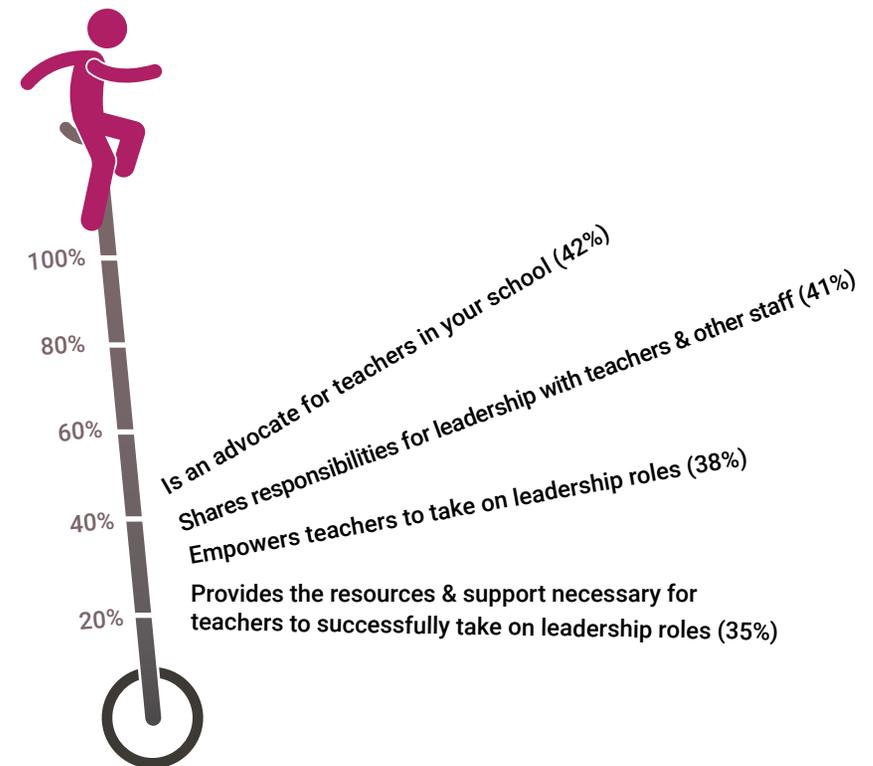
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"I wish there were more opportunities as a teacher to further my career and professional skills while remaining in the classroom."



LACK OF ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FOR LEADERSHIP

Which of the following, if any, best describe your school's administrative leadership?

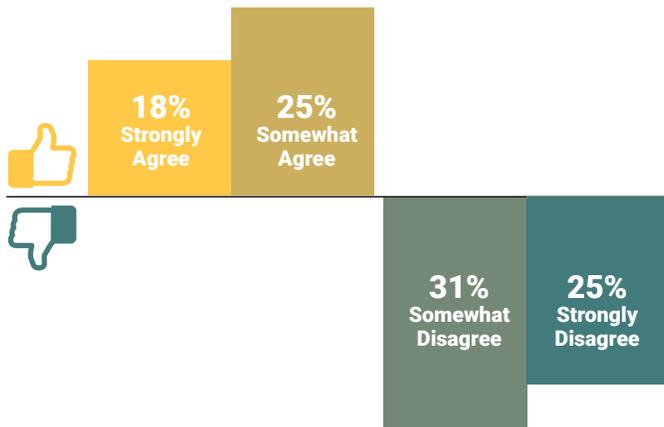


Teachers nearly unanimously agree that teachers should be compensated for taking on leadership roles in addition to their classroom responsibilities. However, when asked to weigh in on a range of leadership roles, it was clear that teachers want to lead from the classroom with or without additional funds.

PRESSURE TO BECOME ADMINISTRATORS

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

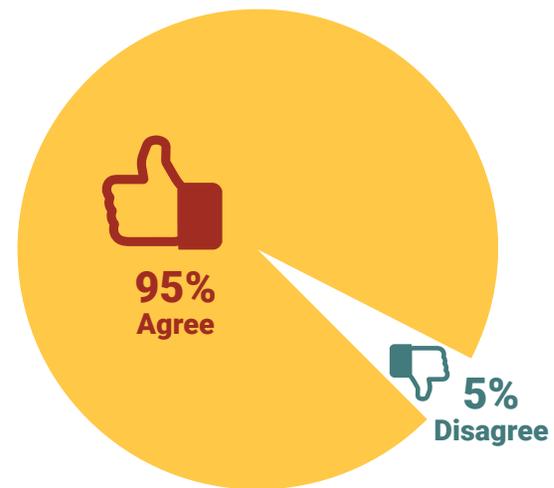
“I feel pressure to become an administrator in order to advance in my career as an educator.”



COMPENSATION FOR LEADERSHIP ROLES

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

“Teachers should be compensated for taking on leadership roles in addition to their classroom responsibilities.”

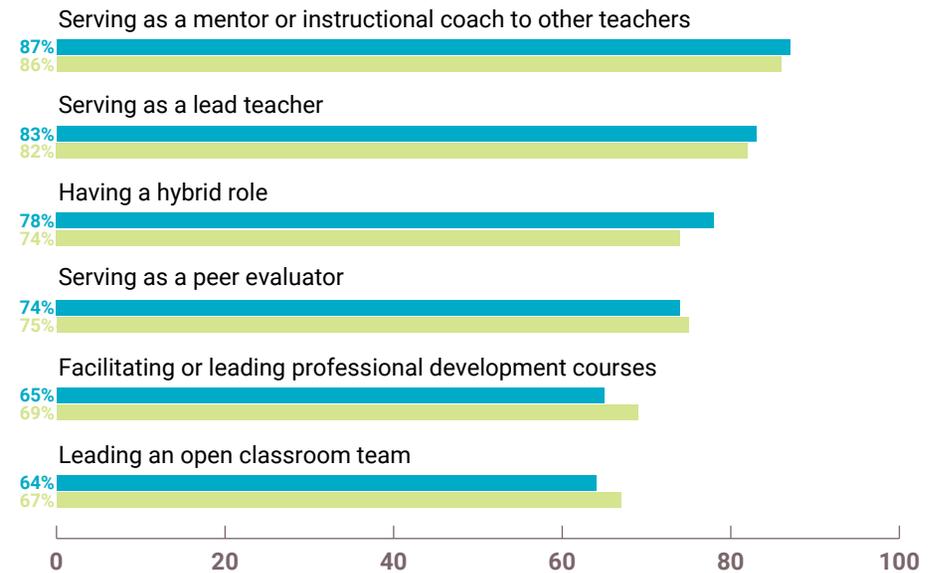


They are particularly interested in mentor and instructional coach, lead teacher, and hybrid positions, which would allow them to divide their time between classroom instruction and teacher development or planning roles. When asked to weigh in on a range of different leadership roles, the majority of teachers say they are interested in each option tested. In a split sample test, half of the teachers were asked if they would be interested in taking on the role for their career development, while the other half was asked if they would be interested in doing so if they were paid a stipend or received a salary increase. While teachers from these groups were very enthusiastic about each of the leadership opportunities, they are equally as interested in these leadership opportunities to further their careers as they are to increase their pay. These results punctuate how strongly teachers feel about taking on a leadership role, especially in light of the fact that economic concerns are top of mind for so many.

LEADERSHIP ROLES FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT VS. STIPENDS

How interested would you be in each of the following for your career development? Percent reporting “Very Interested” or “Somewhat Interested.”

How interested would you be in each of the following for your career development if you were paid a stipend or received a salary increase? Percent reporting “Very Interested” or “Somewhat Interested.”



MAJOR TRENDS AND FINDINGS

“Our hearts are always with our students. Teachers want to take action to strengthen schools and improve how we educate our kids.”

Christina Kim, kindergarten through fifth-grade Title III instructional coach



Heard beyond the Classroom

Teachers want more opportunity to be heard beyond their classroom and within their unions in order to shape policy at the school, district, union, state, and federal levels.

Teachers do not feel heard beyond the four walls of their classrooms, but they are eager to change this dynamic. No other question in the survey garnered a more unanimous response than the 96 percent of teachers who agreed that they wish there were more opportunities as a teacher to influence education policy that impacts their profession and students.

When asked a follow-up, open-ended question about why they want this opportunity, teachers clearly express that their on-the-ground perspective, experience, and expertise gives them the appropriate insight into what students need to be successful.

OPPORTUNITIES TO INFLUENCE POLICY

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"I wish there were more opportunities as a teacher to influence education policy that impacts my profession and students."



"Teachers know education best. They should have an active role in creating policy governing classrooms."

"We are on the front lines, so to speak. We are in the day-to-day fray and can see it through a clearer lens than those who are not in the classroom every day."

"Teachers are the ones who see needs in the classroom, but they are probably the least consulted when it comes to policy decisions."

"The people who write policy need to understand how that will actually translate into the classroom."

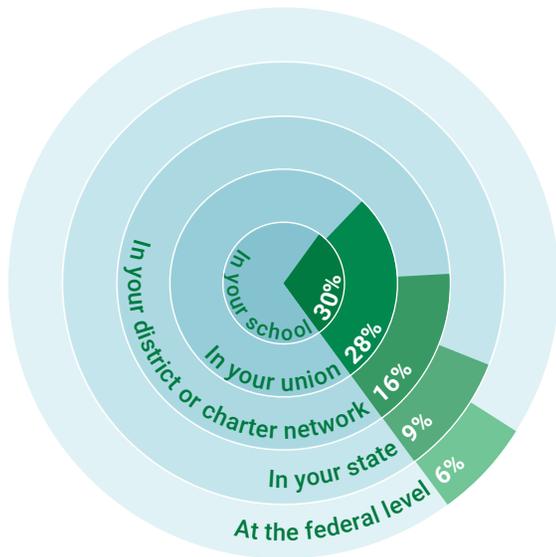
"Teachers are the ones in the classrooms with the students. We should be the ones advising to make decisions about the students."

"I feel like a lot of decisions are made by people who are not in the classroom or who haven't been in the classroom for very long before they became administrators."

Unfortunately, teachers do not feel their perspective is well represented in policy decisions at the school, union, district or charter network, state, or federal levels. Teachers believe that policy decisions in their schools best represent their perspective, with approximately one-third saying they are represented a great deal. The further teachers are from the decision-making body, the less represented they feel. Alignment decreases subsequently at the union, district or charter network, state, and federal levels, with just 6 percent of teachers saying they see their perspective greatly represented in policy at the federal level.

TEACHER PERSPECTIVE NOT REPRESENTED

Percent reporting "A Great Deal."



Given teachers unions' fundamental role as a voice for teachers, it is surprising that only about one out of four teachers believe their perspective is reflected a great deal within their union. This may explain why a full 31 percent of unionized teachers do not see their unions as "absolutely essential." Yet, possibly the best way unions can ensure teachers see them as aligned with their policy values and absolutely essential is to engage with teachers directly. Only about half of unionized teachers reported speaking with their union representative, attending a union meeting or event, or voting in a union election in the last year.

WANT VS. HAVE TO BE A UNION MEMBER



73%

I am a member of a teachers union because I **want** to be



27%

I am a member of a teachers union because I **have** to be

NEED FOR TEACHERS UNION

Do you think of teachers unions or associations as...?	Union	Non-union
Absolutely essential	69%	32%
Important, but not essential	25%	42%
Something you could do without	5%	16%
Not sure	1%	10%

Teachers' answers about where they want unions to focus their efforts are worth unpacking, especially following the Supreme Court's ruling in *Janus v. AFSCME*, as now unions will have to convince teachers that they are absolutely essential in order to retain their members and revenue. As it stands, more than one-quarter of teachers responded they are a member of a union because they have to be rather than because they want to be.

ENGAGEMENT IN THE UNION

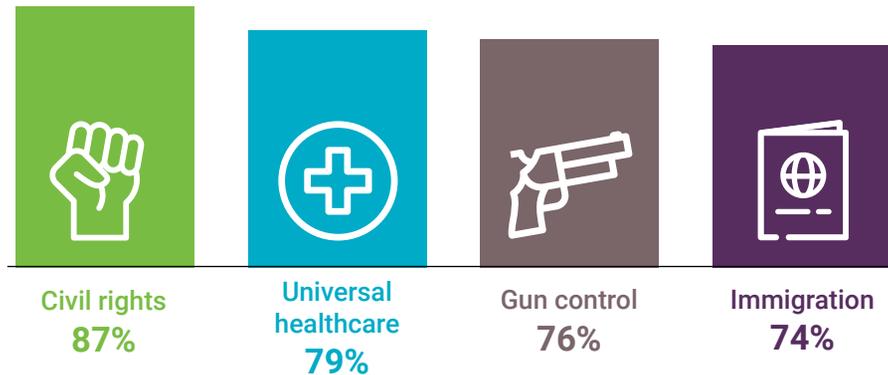
Which of the following union activities, if any, have you done in the past year?



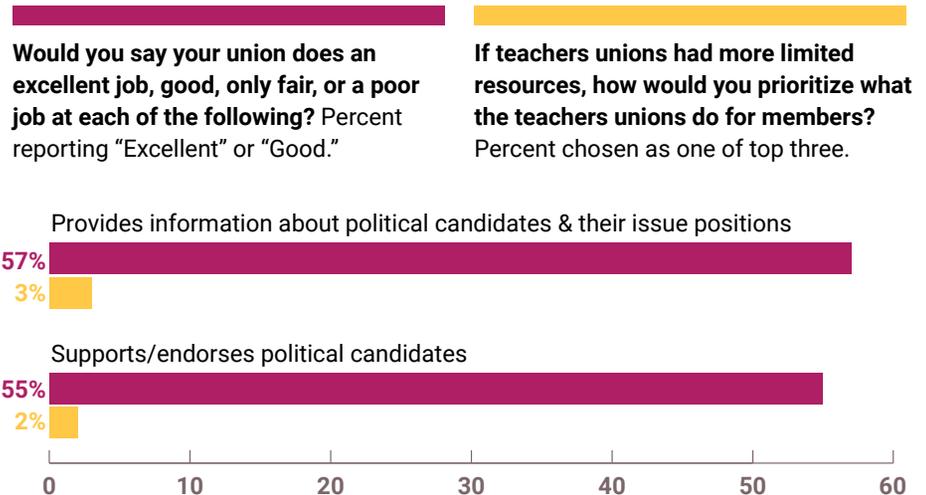
A large percentage of teachers said they think teachers unions should “mostly stick to traditional union issues, such as protecting teachers’ salaries, benefits, and jobs,” and only one in five teachers said advocating for social issues not specifically about education was critically important. Yet, when presented with specific social issues, substantial majorities said it was important for their union to engage on civil rights, gun control, universal healthcare, and immigration issues. And, while nearly half of teachers said their unions did an excellent or good job providing information about and endorsing political candidates, only a very small minority said doing so should be union priorities.

UNION’S ENGAGEMENT IN SOCIAL ISSUES

How important to you are each of the following social policy areas for teachers unions to engage with? Percent reporting “Critically Important” or “Important, but not Critical.”



POLITICS LACK PRIORITY FOR UNION MEMBERS



MAJOR TRENDS AND FINDINGS

A portrait of Cristina Benz, a woman with dark, curly hair, smiling and looking slightly to the right. She is wearing a black cardigan over a white top with a black geometric pattern. The background is dark and out of focus.

“Safe schools are built on strong relationships, mutual respect, and a desire to meet students where they are.”

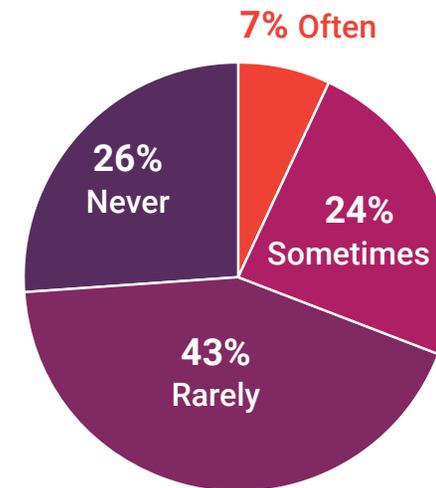
Cristina Benz, ninth- through
12th-grade visual art teacher

School Safety and Discipline

Teachers are concerned about school safety and want more training on how best to address school violence and improve student behavior using nonpunitive strategies.

In 2018, conversations about school climate, school safety, and student discipline intertwined, as politicians, administrators, teachers, and the general public sought to understand the causes of school violence and the steps that could be taken to make schools safe places for everyone. While nine out of 10 teachers believe their schools have an inclusive environment honoring the identities and potential of all their students, nearly one out of three teachers reported fearing for their own physical safety sometimes or often at their school.

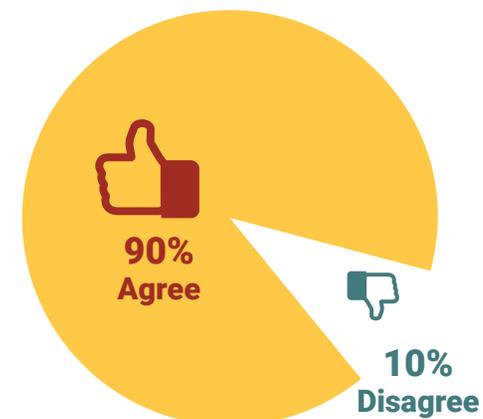
FEAR AT SCHOOL



INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement about your school?

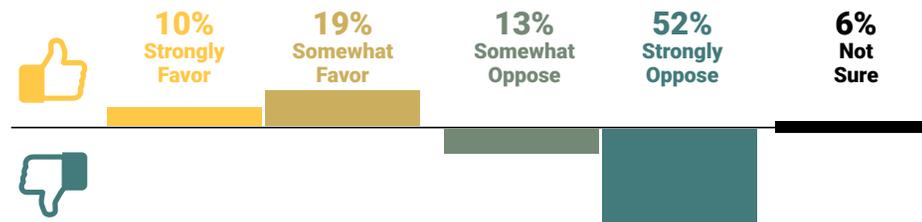
“My school is an inclusive environment that honors the identities and potential of all of its students.”



Teachers identified gun violence and school shootings as the safety issue they were most worried about, followed by physical bullying and fighting among students. Unfortunately, just a little over half of teachers believe their school does an excellent or good job at training them to address school violence. While the National Rifle Association and President Trump²³ have proposed training teachers to carry guns in schools as a way of making schools more secure, 65 percent of teachers oppose this idea, with more than 50 percent expressing strong opposition and only 10 percent saying they are strongly in favor.

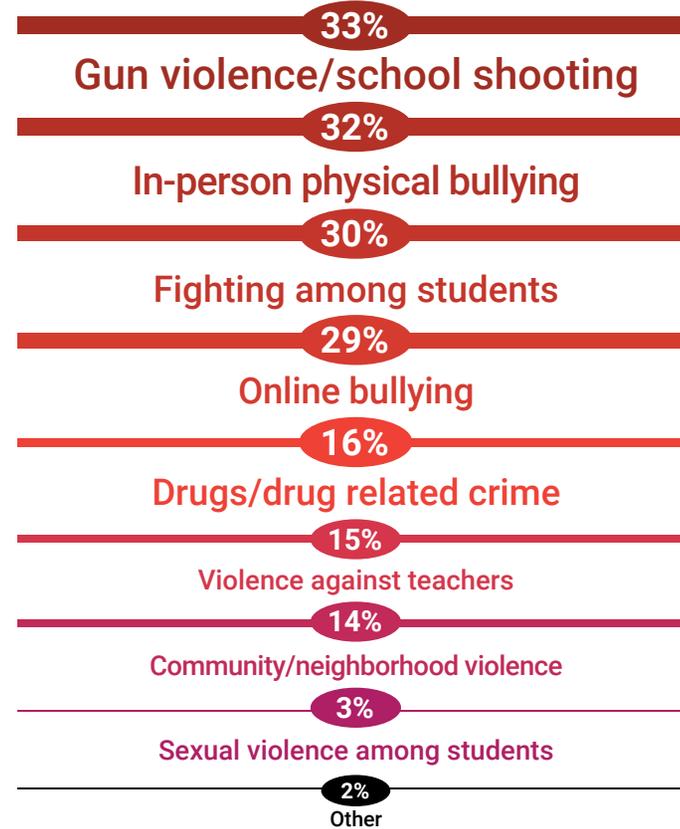
While some conservatives suggested that 2014 federal guidance on school discipline, which aimed to reduce disparities in discipline and reduce suspensions and expulsions, could be to blame for the school shootings,²⁴ teachers see the issue differently. When presented with an array of discipline strategies, teachers show the highest regard for positive behavior reinforcement and restorative practices, greatly preferring them to exclusionary measures, such as out-of-school suspensions and expulsion. In fact, when asked broadly about the areas in which they would like to have additional professional development and support, teachers selected alternatives to punitive discipline, such as restorative justice and positive behavioral intervention and supports (PBIS), as their top choice.

ARMING TEACHERS WITH GUNS



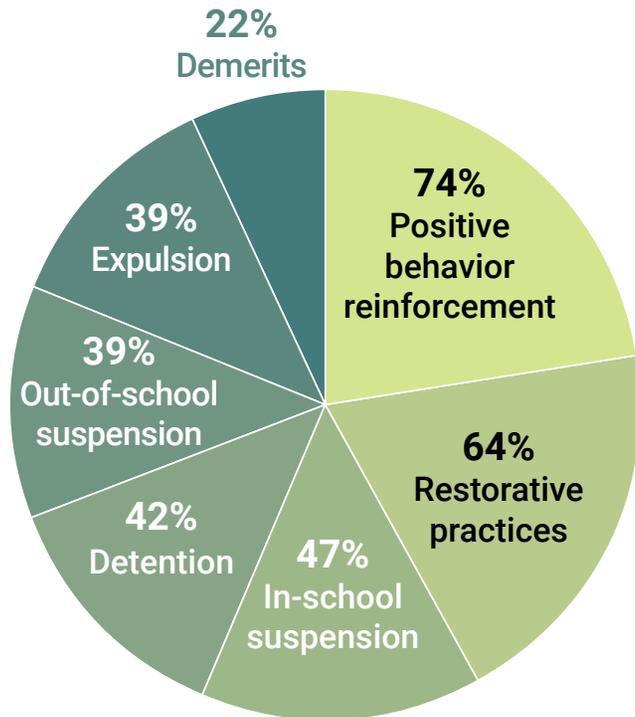
SCHOOL SAFETY CONCERNS

Percent chosen as one of top two concerns.



EFFECTIVENESS OF DISCIPLINE STRATEGIES

Percent reporting “Very Effective” or “Somewhat Effective.”



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PREFERENCES

Percent chosen as one of top three priorities.

Alternatives to punitive discipline	40%
Supporting unique learners	39%
Integrating technology in your classroom	38%
Social-emotional learning	36%
Family engagement	27%
Instruction aligned with your state’s standards	20%
Trauma-informed teaching	19%
Using data to inform instruction	17%
Culturally responsive pedagogy	15%
Other	2%
None of the above	3%

MAJOR TRENDS AND FINDINGS



**“We need to find ways to see
how our students are learning,
so we have actionable feedback
and can address inequities.”**

Kallie Jones, first-grade teacher

Accountability

Teachers believe student growth is the single most important factor in evaluating schools' and teachers' effectiveness but are interested in exploring nontraditional metrics.

The inclusion of student performance data as a component of teacher evaluations and school ratings has been a contentious move in many districts over the last 10 years. In many cases, the pushback from teachers and teachers unions has been characterized as opposition to the inclusion of any measures of student achievement. While it is true that teachers remain skeptical of the ability of standardized test scores to fully capture student learning, teachers strongly prioritize “measures of students’ academic growth” as the single most valuable metric in evaluating both schools’ and educators’ effectiveness.

With regard to evaluations of their own effectiveness, in addition to prioritizing students’ academic growth, teachers also pointed to students’ daily work, projects and portfolios, and observations performed by administrators and peers as valuable in evaluating their effectiveness.

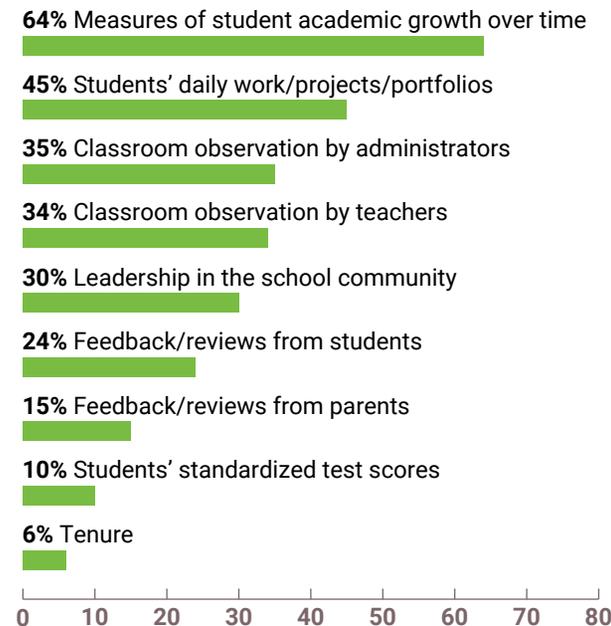
To evaluate a school’s effectiveness, in addition to students’ academic growth, teachers want measures of school climate and culture to be considered, such as disciplinary data, as well as feedback from students and parents. They are less likely to prioritize attendance data or graduation rates, which have more traditionally been used to measure school quality.

These findings suggest teachers may be much more open to incorporating students’ performance data into states’ or districts’ accountability systems, but more time must be spent identifying a set of measures

that assure teachers that their impact on students, and that of their school on students, is being more comprehensively and accurately reflected.

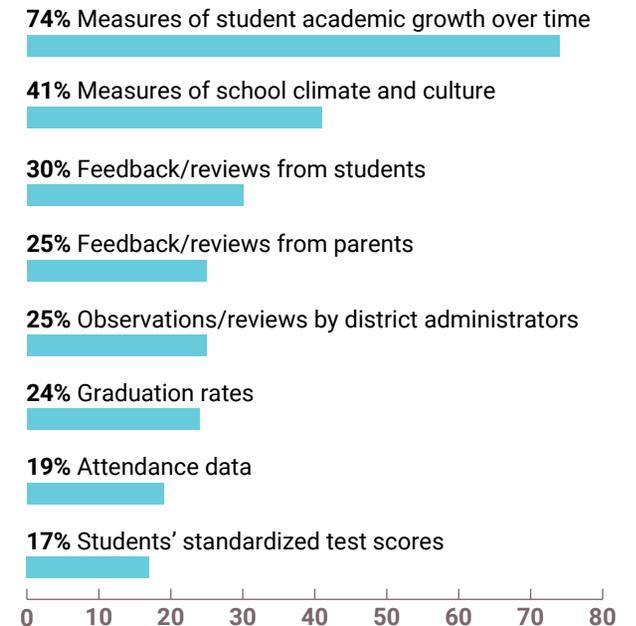
EVALUATING TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

Percent chosen as one of top three priorities.

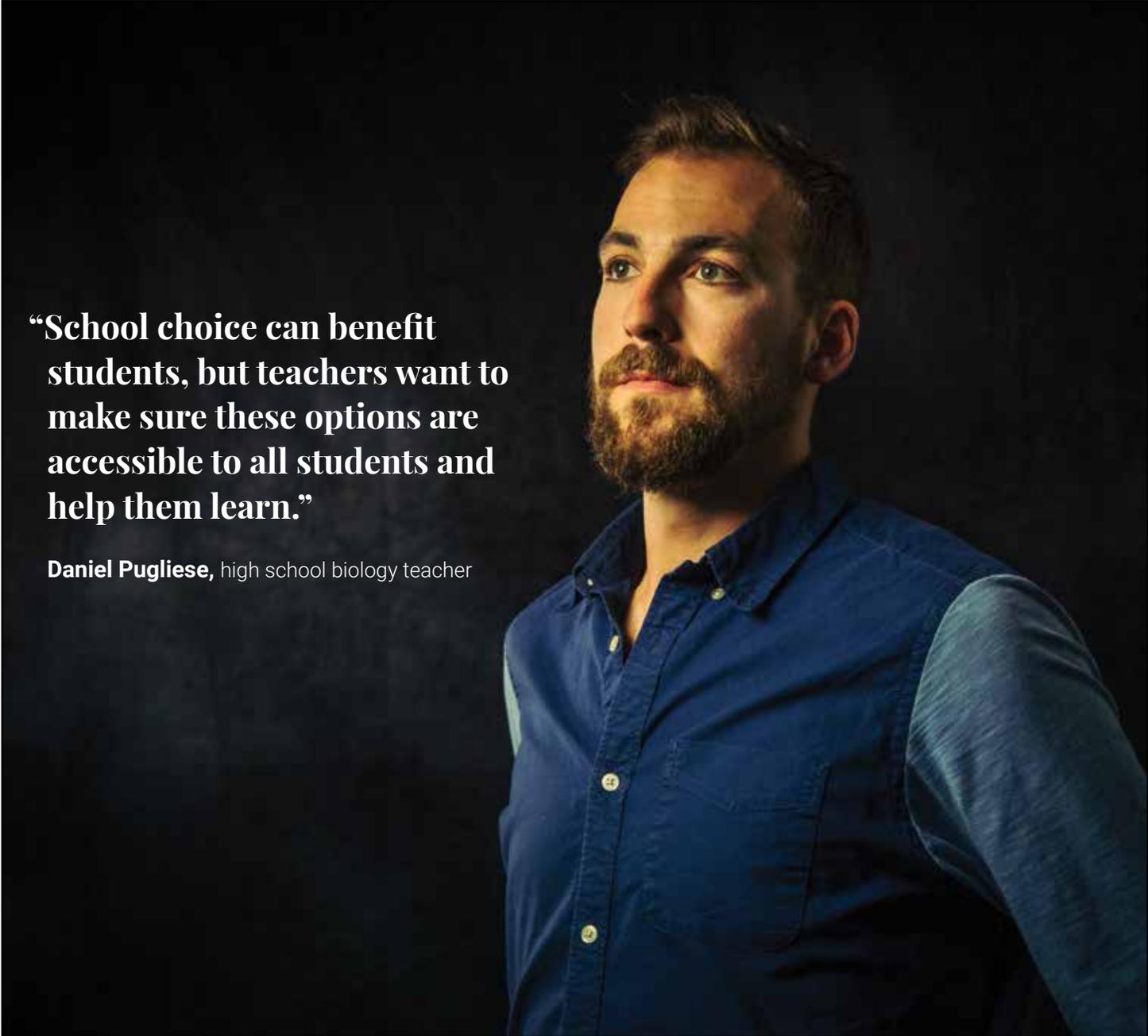


EVALUATING SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

Percent chosen as one of top three priorities.



MAJOR TRENDS AND FINDINGS



“School choice can benefit students, but teachers want to make sure these options are accessible to all students and help them learn.”

Daniel Pugliese, high school biology teacher

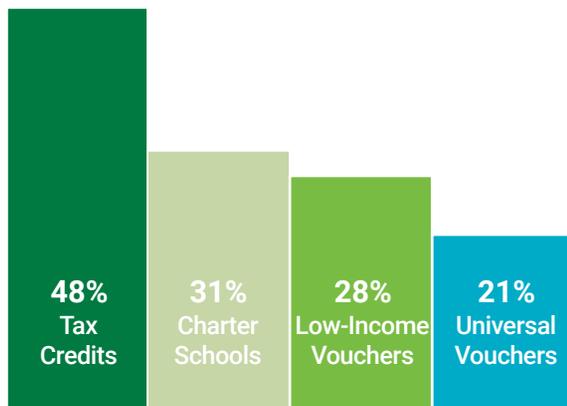
School Choice

Teachers are open to school choice, as long as they are not draining resources from public schools, are equally accessible to all students, and provide positive outcomes for low-income students.

When school choice options, such as charter schools, school vouchers, and school tax credits, were first introduced, they were framed as an opportunity to strengthen public schools. Experimenting with fewer regulations would lead to innovation, it was argued, and providing greater access to private schools would lead public schools to improve, in order to compete for students. Public school teachers and teachers unions have often opposed the creation or expansion of a number of school choice programs, and the survey results are

OPINIONS ON SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAMS

Percent reporting “Strongly Support” or “Somewhat Support.”



similar, with less than one-third of teachers saying they strongly or somewhat support universal school vouchers, school vouchers, and charter schools, with less than half supporting school tax credits for low-income students.

What is less expected, however, is that the survey results indicate that only a very small minority of teachers are actually opposed to all forms of school choice. In fact, a majority of public school teachers, including unionized teachers, support school choice as long as it doesn’t siphon funds from public schools, is equally accessible to all students, and doesn’t discriminate against students.

The opposition to siphoning dollars from public schools is not surprising in light of the significant cuts to state and local school funding over the past decade,²⁵ as public school teachers have been pressured to do more with less. Teachers’ desire for universal accessibility and helping the most vulnerable students succeed speaks to the goals of public education more generally, as does the need to ensure public dollars are being spent equitably to improve outcomes for all students. That a majority of teachers do not currently support charter schools, school vouchers, and school tax credits may be driven by their skepticism that these programs are currently delivering on their promise to offer every student an equal opportunity to succeed.

WHEN TEACHERS SUPPORT SCHOOL CHOICE

Doesn't shift funds from public schools	64%
Is equally accessible to all students	64%
Doesn't discriminate against students	58%
Increases academic achievement for low-income students	51%
Holds schools publicly accountable for the results of all students	43%
Provides completely free educational options to low-income families	39%
I don't support any form of school choice	6%

TEACHER PROFILES

The survey data is remarkably consistent across major demographic groups, by region, between unionized versus nonunionized teachers, and even considering school characteristics, such as grade levels taught or school size. We've profiled three standout groups of teachers because of their unique perspectives—teachers at the beginning of their careers, teachers who face significant challenges in underserved schools, and teachers of color. To follow is a snapshot of each of these important teacher groups' perceptions and how they approach their profession.



“My early-career colleagues and I are excited to grow together to become the best teachers we can be for our students.”

Matthew Clark, 11th- and 12th-grade humanities teacher

Early-Career Teachers

Whether by traditional or alternative pathways, teachers make their way to the classroom for the same reason: the students. A large portion have just begun their careers; currently, 18 percent of teachers are under the age of 30. But once there, these teachers face daunting challenges, such as underfunded and overcrowded schools, often without the proper training to meet the needs of their students. Despite their passion for teaching and their students, almost one in five of teachers leave the profession in their first five years.²⁶ Feedback from teachers in this survey provide a sightline into what works to recruit and retain teachers and underscores the need for policymakers to give teachers the tools they need to succeed early in their careers.

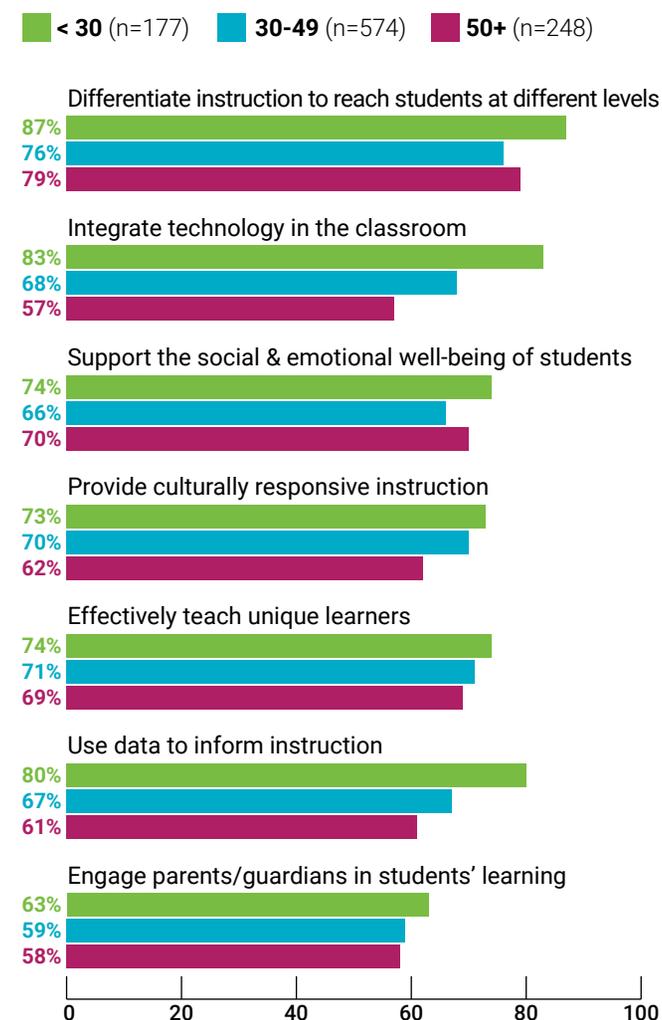
Further, while it is important to understand what our teachers think about today's education issues, it is also valuable to look to where teacher opinion is headed tomorrow. Identifying how early-career teachers differ from their colleagues across an array of issues offers a glimpse into the future of the teaching profession.

Feel better prepared for the modern classroom

Early-career teachers are more positive about the preparation they received before teaching and are more likely than their counterparts to say that their teacher preparation program prepared them for many critical, modern elements of teaching, including culturally relevant instruction, using data to inform instruction, differentiating their instruction to meet students' diverse needs, supporting students' social-emotional well-being, integrating technology in the classroom, and engaging parents and guardians in students' learning. This trend suggests that these programs may be evolving to better prepare teachers for the challenges of today's classrooms.

TEACHER PREPARATION BY AGE GROUP

Percent reporting "Very Well" or "Somewhat Well."



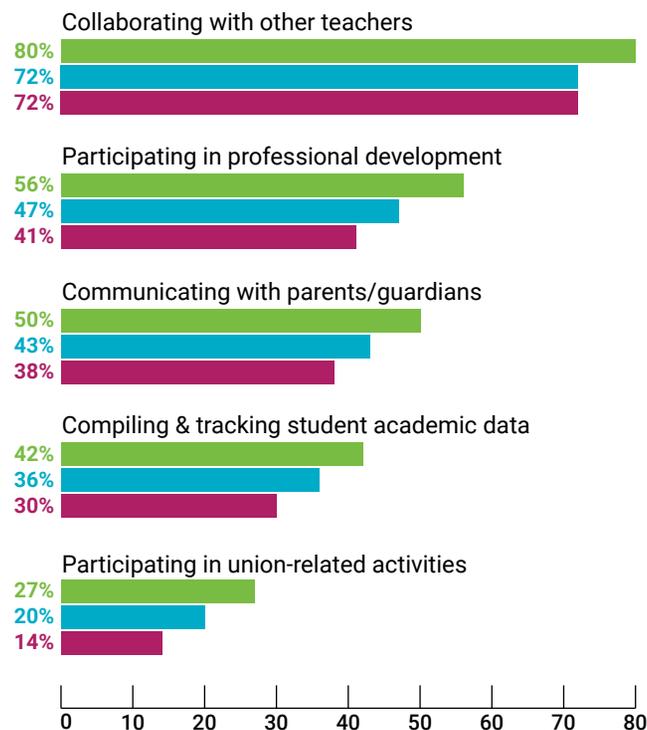
Eager to learn, collaborate, and innovate

Early-career teachers are more likely than their peers to want to spend more time devoted to professional development, particularly with regard to supporting unique learners, such as English Learners and students with special needs, and exploring alternatives to punitive discipline. They're also more interested in working closely with other teachers, whether collaborating with colleagues or participating in union-related activities. Teachers under 30 are also more interested in compiling, tracking, and analyzing student data and reaching out to parents to keep them engaged in students' learning. These trends signal that early career teachers are particularly open to learning from their peers and hone their skills as educators to better reach their students within their classrooms and beyond.

HOW TEACHERS WANT TO SPEND TIME AT WORK BY AGE GROUP

Percent reporting "Much More Time" or "Some More Time."

< 30 (n=177)
30-49 (n=574)
50+ (n=248)



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PREFERENCES BY AGE GROUP

Percent chosen as one of top three priorities.

< 30 (n=177) **30-49** (n=574) **50+** (n=248)

Priority	< 30 (n=177)	30-49 (n=574)	50+ (n=248)
Supporting unique learners	48%	36%	41%
Alternatives to punitive discipline	44%	40%	38%
Social-emotional learning	42%	37%	26%
Family engagement	29%	27%	27%
Trauma-informed teaching	26%	19%	16%
Integrating technology in your classroom	24%	38%	47%
Using data to inform instruction	22%	17%	15%
Culturally responsive pedagogy	18%	15%	12%
Instruction aligned with your state's standards	16%	20%	21%
None of the above	2%	2%	5%

More open to nontraditional pay and benefits

A greater percentage of early-career teachers are open to pay structures beyond traditional steps and lanes, favoring financial incentives to recruit and retain talented and diverse educators, including for teachers who work in hard-to-staff schools or in hard-to-staff subjects, who receive outstanding evaluations or national board accreditation, or who take on leadership positions in their school or district. Perhaps because pension tiers have been made significantly less generous over the years or because pensions in a number of states and districts are struggling with issues of long-term solvency, early-career teachers are more skeptical of pensions, as more than half would prefer a defined contribution plan, such as a 401(k) or 403(b), to a pension, and more than half would opt for a smaller pension in exchange for a higher salary. Nearly one in five teachers under 30 said they did not know enough to make a choice.

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FAVORED BY AGE GROUP

Percent reporting “Strongly Favor” or “Somewhat Favor.”

■ < 30 (n=177) ■ 30-49 (n=574) ■ 50+ (n=248)

	< 30 (n=177)	30-49 (n=574)	50+ (n=248)
Teachers who work in hard-to-staff schools	94%	89%	86%
Teachers who take on leadership positions within the school or district	91%	89%	83%
Teachers who receive accreditation from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards	88%	74%	67%
Teachers who specialize in hard-to-fill subjects	86%	78%	76%
Teachers who receive multiple outstanding evaluations	84%	74%	67%
Teachers whose students show significant gains in test scores from one year to the next	65%	54%	54%

SALARY VS. PENSION BY AGE GROUP

Which one would you prefer when it comes to your salary and pension?

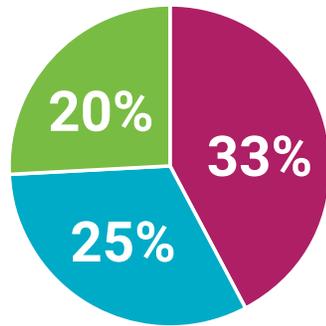
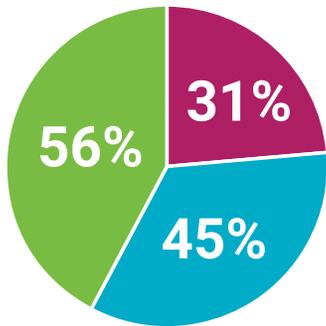
■ < 30 (n=177) ■ 30-49 (n=574) ■ 50+ (n=248)



A higher salary & a smaller pension



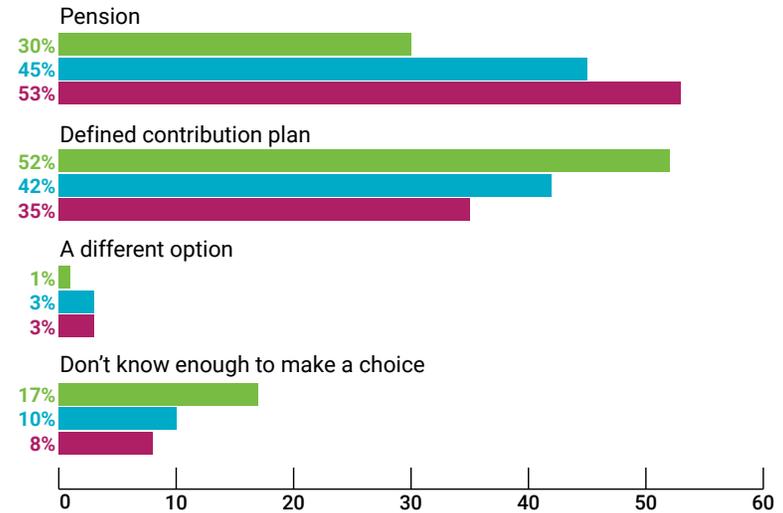
A lower salary & a larger pension



RETIREMENT BENEFIT PREFERENCES BY AGE GROUP

If you were able to choose, which one would you personally prefer for your retirement benefits?

■ < 30 (n=177) ■ 30-49 (n=574) ■ 50+ (n=248)

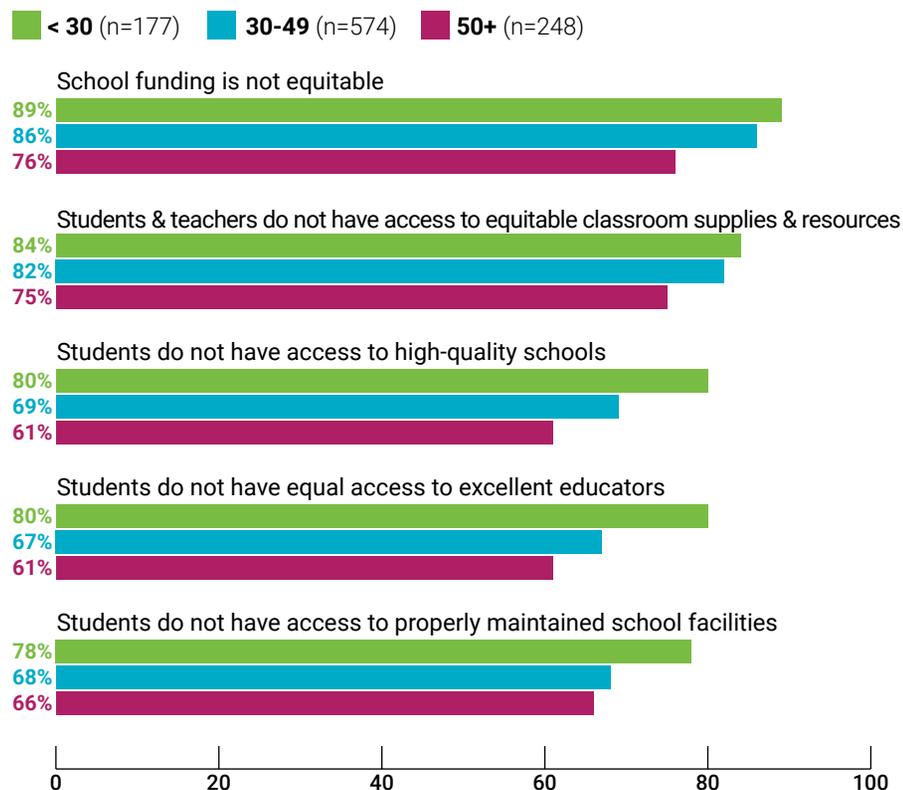


Concerned about educational inequity

While the majority of teachers across the country believe inequity in education is a serious problem in the United States, a higher percentage of early-career teachers see inequitable school funding and unequal access to high-quality schools, excellent educators, properly maintained school facilities, and classroom supplies and resources as serious problems. This may be because younger teachers often spend the early portion of their careers in some of the country’s more under-resourced, high-needs schools serving vulnerable student populations.²⁷ Further, early-career teachers say they are more likely than later-career teachers to strike over resources and support services for students.

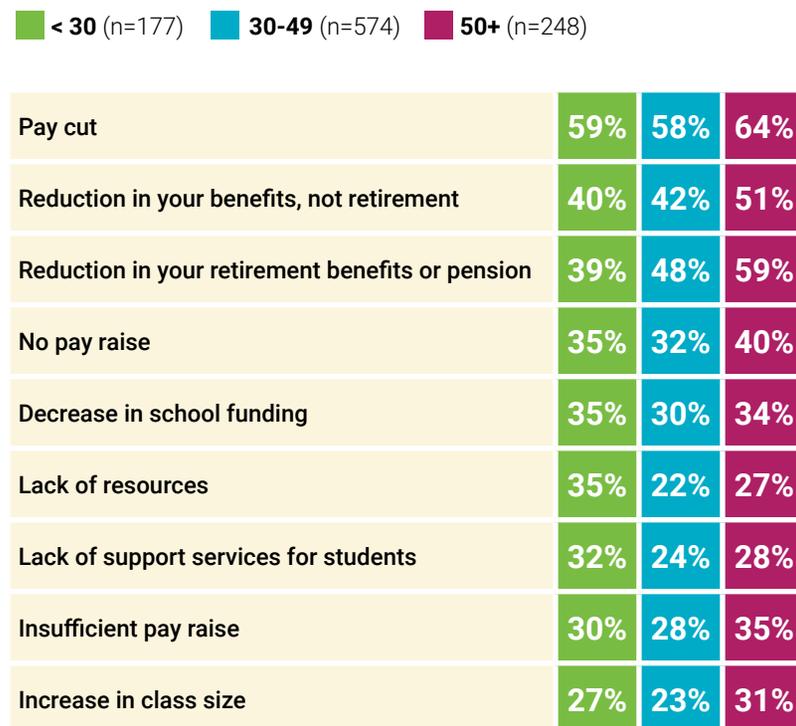
EQUITY CONCERNS IN STATE BY AGE GROUP

Percent reporting “Very Serious Problem” or “Somewhat of a Problem.”



REASONS TO STRIKE BY AGE GROUP

Percent reporting “Very Likely.”



More open to school choice

Early-career teachers are generally more open to school choice options than later-career teachers, particularly when they create opportunity for low-income students. These teachers are also much more supportive of low-income vouchers and tax credits to help low-income parents, the top two preferred school choice options among early-career educators. This may reflect the fact that teachers under 30 are more likely to teach in communities with students from low-income families that could benefit from these choice options.²⁸

WHEN TEACHERS SUPPORT SCHOOL CHOICE BY AGE GROUP

■ < 30 (n=177) ■ 30-49 (n=574) ■ 50+ (n=248)

Is equally accessible to all students	74%	60%	67%
Doesn't discriminate against students	69%	54%	61%
Doesn't shift funds from public schools	68%	62%	67%
Increases academic achievement for low-income students	68%	47%	48%
Provides completely free educational options to low-income families	54%	36%	34%
Holds schools publicly accountable for the results of all students	40%	43%	47%
I don't support any form of school choice	3%	7%	7%
Other	0%	1%	2%

OPINIONS ON SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAMS BY AGE GROUP

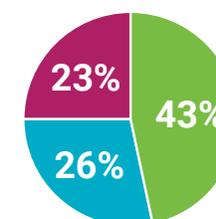
Percent reporting "Strongly Support" or "Somewhat Support."

■ < 30 (n=177) ■ 30-49 (n=574) ■ 50+ (n=248)

Universal Vouchers



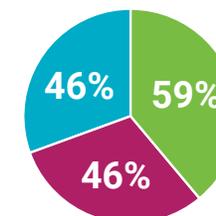
Low-Income Vouchers



Charter Schools



Tax Credits



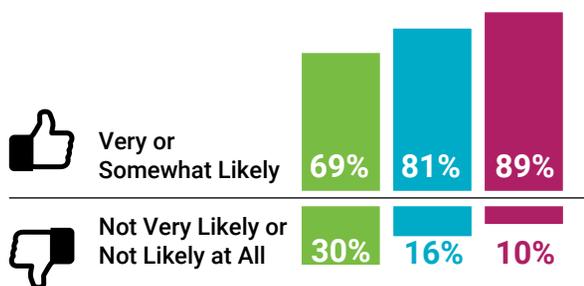
Less certain about career pathways

Early-career teachers are unsurprisingly less certain about whether or not they will spend their entire careers as classroom teachers than their more experienced counterparts, though the majority who say they are likely to leave the classroom do not plan to leave education altogether. The pressure they feel to become administrators to advance their careers further demonstrates that they do not see a clear path for themselves within the classroom.

CAREER CERTAINTY IN TEACHING BY AGE GROUP

As of now, how likely would you say you are to spend your entire career as a classroom teacher?

< 30 (n=177) **30-49** (n=574) **50+** (n=248)

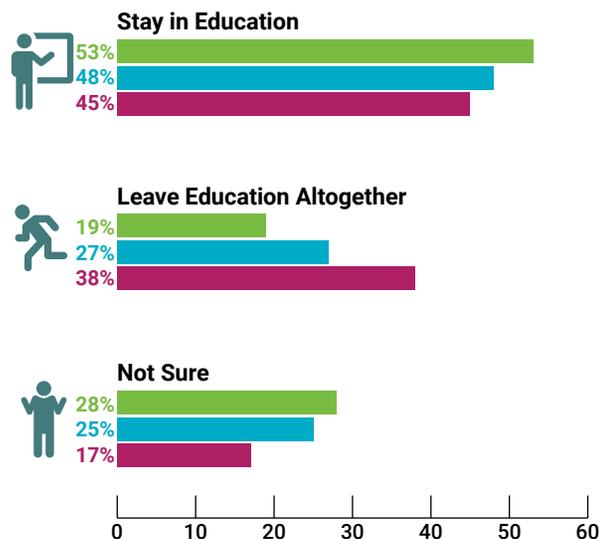


CAREER STABILITY IN EDUCATION BY AGE GROUP

As of now, do you expect to stay in the education sector, or leave the education sector altogether? (Among those not very likely, not likely at all, or not sure they will spend entire career as a classroom teacher.)

< 30 (n=55) **30-49** (n=107) **50+** (n=26)

Small base sizes; results directional.

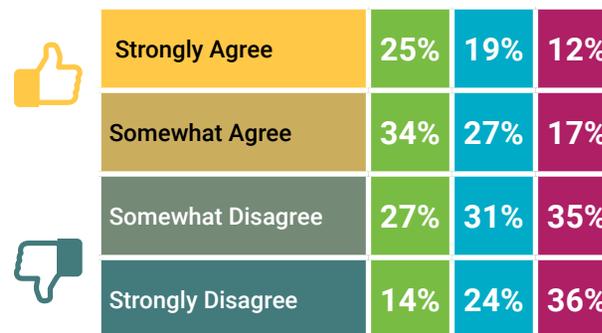


PRESSURE TO BECOME ADMINISTRATORS BY AGE GROUP

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"I feel pressure to become an administrator in order to advance in my career as an educator."

< 30 (n=177) **30-49** (n=574) **50+** (n=248)



TEACHER PROFILES

“The lack of resources to serve my students is startling. We have to dig deep to give them the experiences and environment they deserve.”

Lauren Lieberman, fifth- and sixth-grade special education teacher



Teachers Working in Underserved Communities

Inequities in our education system often prevent our most vulnerable students, such as those experiencing poverty and students of color, from receiving the supports to succeed. Their teachers' jobs are challenging as well, often serving students with the greatest needs in crowded classrooms in poorly maintained school facilities with few and, in many cases, outdated educational resources.²⁹ This can make it difficult to attract and retain high-quality educators where they are most needed. Responses from teachers in these underserved communities provide insight into the challenges they face and how we can improve historically underserved students' access to excellent educators.

More concerned about educational inequity

As a school's proportion of underserved students increases, the general sense of inequity increases among their teachers, particularly with regard to the basics, such as supplies and facilities.

EQUITY CONCERNS IN STATE FROM TEACHERS IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Percent reporting "Very Serious Problem" or "Somewhat of a Problem."

■ ALL TEACHERS (n=1,000) ■ LOW-INCOME (n=386) ■ STUDENTS OF COLOR (n=220)

School funding is not equitable	84%	86%	87%
Students & teachers do not have access to equitable classroom supplies & resources	81%	85%	86%
Students do not have access to properly maintained school facilities	69%	73%	74%
Students do not have access to high-quality schools	69%	72%	79%
Students do not have equal access to excellent educators	68%	69%	74%

Feel undervalued and underrepresented

Teachers with higher proportions of students from low-income households and students of color are less likely to feel valued by their districts, states, and students' parents. From a policy perspective, they also feel a greater amount of underrepresentation than their colleagues in their schools, districts or charter networks, their states, and at the federal level.

TEACHERS IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES FEEL UNDERVALUED

Percent reporting "Not Very Valued" or "Not Valued At All."

■ ALL TEACHERS (n=1,000) ■ LOW-INCOME (n=386)
■ STUDENTS OF COLOR (n=220)

Your colleagues	7%	5%	7%
Your principal	18%	21%	23%
Your students' parents/guardians	19%	25%	24%
Your district	36%	40%	46%
Your state	63%	69%	69%
The U.S. as a whole	73%	77%	75%

TEACHERS IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES FEEL UNDERREPRESENTED

Percent reporting "Not Very Much" or "Not At All."

■ ALL TEACHERS (n=1,000) ■ LOW-INCOME (n=386) ■ STUDENTS OF COLOR (n=220)

In your union	20% n=534	18% n=191	24% n=114
In your school	21%	24%	27%
In your district or charter network	39%	44%	46%
In your state	65%	71%	70%
At the federal level	75%	80%	77%

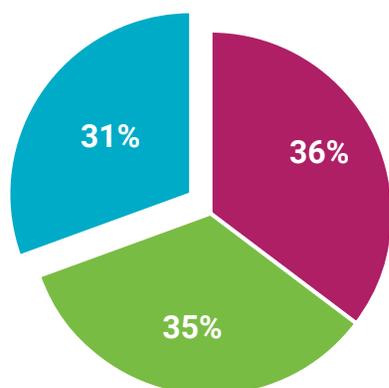
Feel the most unsafe, yet oppose arming teachers

Teachers in schools with higher proportions of low-income students and students of color feel unsafe the most often. They are more concerned than their counterparts with students fighting and community violence, and they believe their schools do not do as good of a job training teachers how to address school safety. These teachers do not, however, support arming teachers. This is particularly true for teachers of students of color, who are most opposed across any teacher subgroup, perhaps because they are aware that conscious or unconscious bias can lead teachers to perceive students of color as threatening.³⁰

FEAR AT SCHOOL FROM TEACHERS IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Percent reporting "Often" or "Sometimes."

■ ALL TEACHERS (n=1,000) ■ LOW-INCOME (n=386) ■ STUDENTS OF COLOR (n=220)

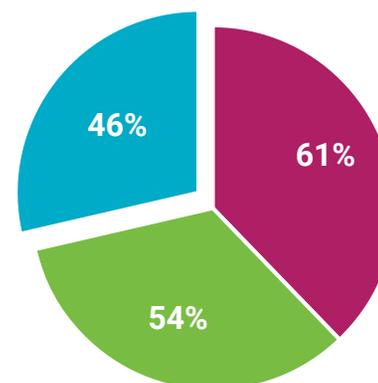


RATING SCHOOL VIOLENCE TRAINING FROM TEACHERS IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Would you say your school does an excellent job, good, only fair, or a poor job at training teachers on how to address school violence?

Percent reporting "Fair" or "Poor."

■ ALL TEACHERS (n=1,000) ■ LOW-INCOME (n=386) ■ STUDENTS OF COLOR (n=220)



SCHOOL SAFETY CONCERNS FROM TEACHERS IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Percent chosen as one of top two concerns.

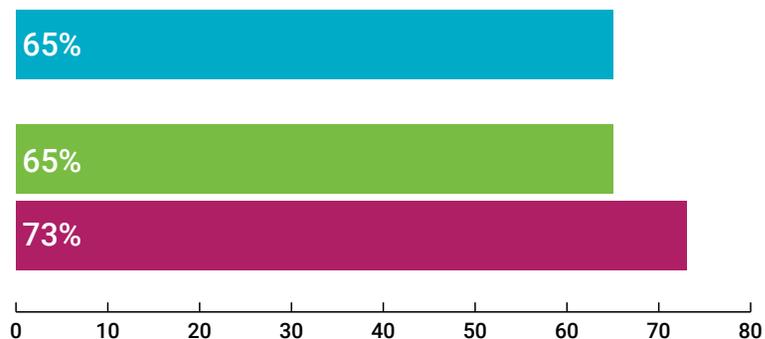
■ ALL TEACHERS (n=1,000)
 ■ LOW-INCOME (n=386)
 ■ STUDENTS OF COLOR (n=220)

Gun violence/school shooting	33%	27%	27%
In-person/physical bullying	32%	32%	30%
Fighting among students	30%	39%	46%
Online bullying	29%	19%	14%
Drugs/drug-related crime	16%	12%	8%
Violence against teachers	15%	15%	19%
Community/neighborhood violence	14%	27%	31%
Sexual violence among students	3%	2%	1%
Other	2%	3%	3%

TEACHERS IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES OPPOSE ARMING TEACHERS WITH GUNS

Percent reporting "Somewhat" or "Strongly Oppose."

■ ALL TEACHERS (n=1,000)
 ■ LOW-INCOME (n=386)
 ■ STUDENTS OF COLOR (n=220)



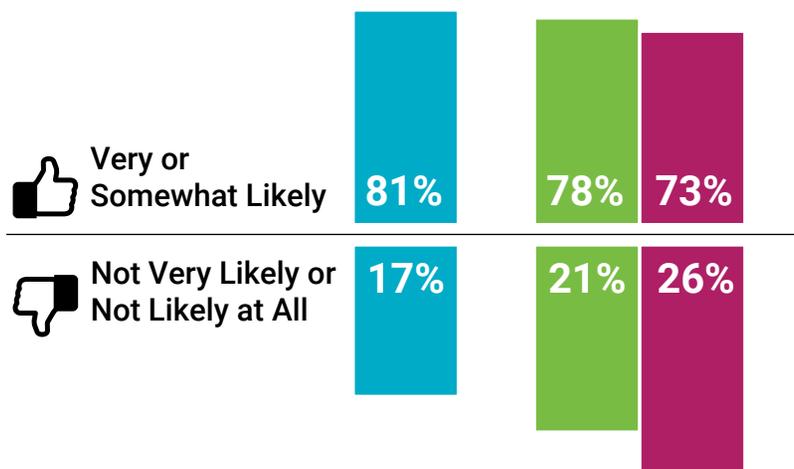
Committed to their students

Despite the challenges they face, the majority of teachers teaching in underserved schools plan to stay in the field, which is encouraging. And they seek more development and training in alternatives to punitive discipline, engaging with students' families, and trauma-informed teaching to better reach their students and put them on a path to success.

CAREER CERTAINTY IN TEACHING FROM TEACHERS IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

As of now, how likely would you say you are to spend your entire career as a classroom teacher?

■ ALL TEACHERS (n=1,000)
 ■ LOW-INCOME (n=386)
 ■ STUDENTS OF COLOR (n=220)



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PREFERENCES OF TEACHERS IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Percent chosen as one of top three priorities.

■ ALL TEACHERS (n=1,000)
 ■ LOW-INCOME (n=386)
 ■ STUDENTS OF COLOR (n=220)

Priority	ALL TEACHERS (n=1,000)	LOW-INCOME (n=386)	STUDENTS OF COLOR (n=220)
Alternatives to punitive discipline	40%	46%	47%
Supporting unique learners	39%	36%	36%
Integrating technology in your classroom	38%	33%	30%
Social-emotional learning	36%	33%	33%
Family engagement	27%	32%	32%
Instruction aligned with your state's standards	20%	21%	18%
Trauma-informed teaching	19%	23%	22%
Using data to inform instruction	17%	18%	16%
Culturally responsive pedagogy	15%	15%	18%
Other	2%	1%	1%
None of the above	3%	2%	3%

TEACHER PROFILES

“To make teaching an attractive career for talented people of all backgrounds, we must compensate teachers better for the work they do.”

Tracy Netter, visual arts kindergarten through eighth-grade teacher



Teachers of Color

Research shows that being taught by teachers of diverse background benefits all students and is particularly important for students of color, as teachers of color can serve as role models for students and make schools more welcoming and inclusive.³¹ Unfortunately, although students of color make up more than half of all public school students, teachers of color still comprise only 20 percent³² of the educator workforce. There has been progress in the last few decades, and districts have nearly doubled the percentage of teachers of color hired from the late 1980s to 2012.³³

The survey responses from teachers of color (21 percent of the survey sample) provide insight into how we can better recruit and retain a diverse and talented teacher workforce and close the teacher diversity gap in our schools. These trends overlap considerably with teachers under 30, as nonwhite teachers represent slightly more than the national average of teachers in this age group (24 percent versus 18 percent respectively).

Feel more prepared for the modern classroom

On the whole and similar to early-career teachers, teachers of color feel more prepared by their preparation programs to meet the needs of diverse learners in contemporary classrooms and in particular feel more prepared to use data to inform instruction, integrate technology in the classroom, and provide culturally responsive instruction. Some of the similarity with early-career teachers, who also feel more prepared in these areas, is likely due to the overlap of the populations of early career teachers and teachers of color.

HOW TEACHERS WANT TO SPEND TIME AT WORK BY RACE

Percent reporting "Much More Time" or "Some More Time."

■ NONWHITE (n=208) ■ WHITE (n=792)



58%
Professional
Development

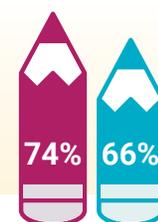


44%
Professional
Development

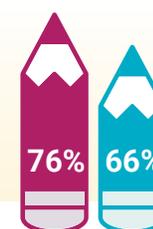
TEACHER PREPARATION BY RACE

Percent reporting "Very Well" or "Somewhat Well."

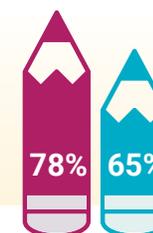
■ NONWHITE (n=208) ■ WHITE (n=792)



**Integrate technology
in the classroom**



**Provide culturally
responsive instruction**



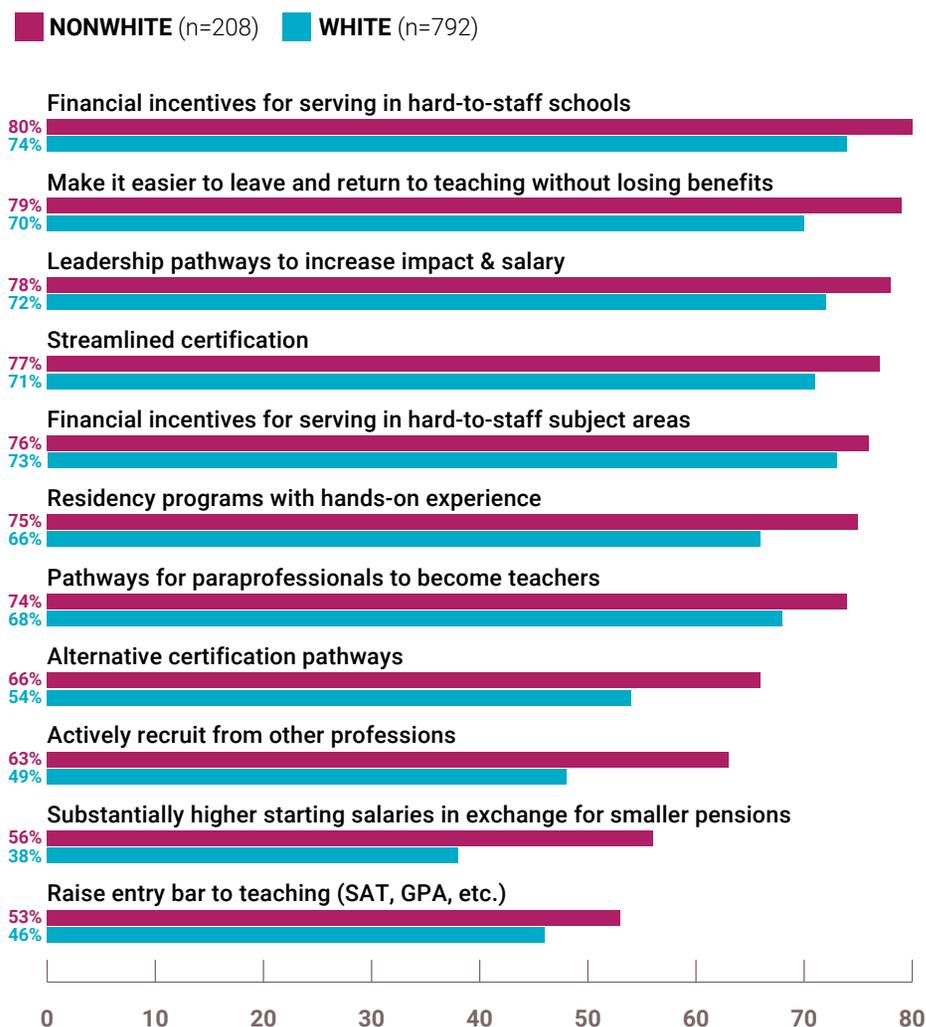
**Use data to inform
instruction**

More supportive of financial incentives and removing certification barriers

Teachers of color are especially supportive of innovative strategies to attract diverse and talented teachers to the profession. They most prefer financial incentives—both for those working in hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-staff subjects—to recruit candidates to the profession. And while they are generally more interested than their white peers in removing barriers to entry to the field by, for example, streamlining the certification process or allowing for alternative pathways, teachers of color are also more likely to support raising the bar to entry into the profession with higher GPA or SAT requirements. These responses suggest that teachers of color believe in creating more opportunities to bring new people into the profession and into schools and subjects where they are most needed while ensuring that they have the aptitude to succeed in the classroom.

ATTRACTING TEACHERS TO THE PROFESSION

Percent reporting “Excellent.”

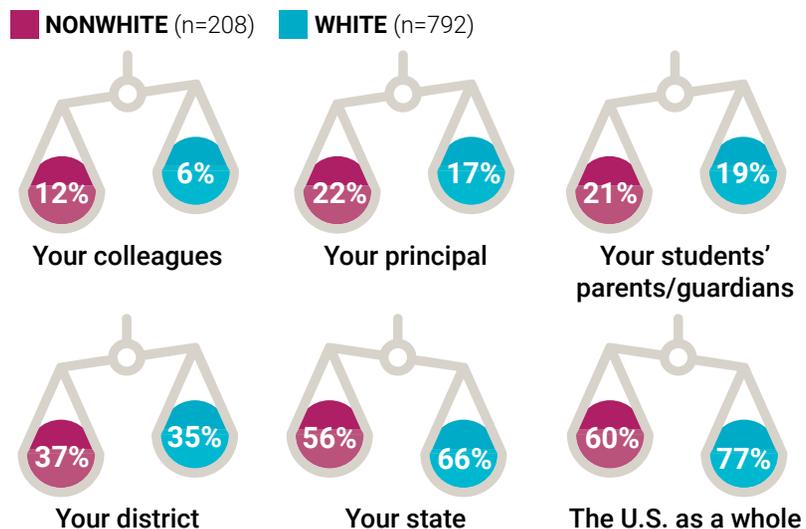


Feel less valued by those they work with most closely

Where teachers of color are more likely to say they feel valued by the U.S. as a whole than white teachers, they are more likely to say they do not feel valued by those closest to their work—their own colleagues and principals. This pattern fits with the larger issue of racism in the American workplace, in which people of color report feeling constantly on guard to address biases and discrimination at their job.³⁴

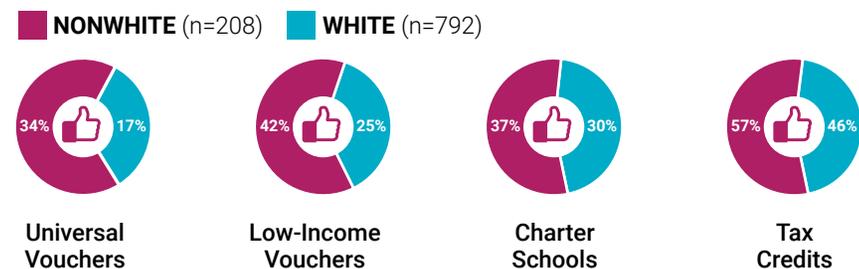
TEACHERS OF COLOR FEEL UNDERVALUED

Percent reporting “Not Very Valued” or “Not At All Valued.”



OPINIONS ON SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAMS BY RACE

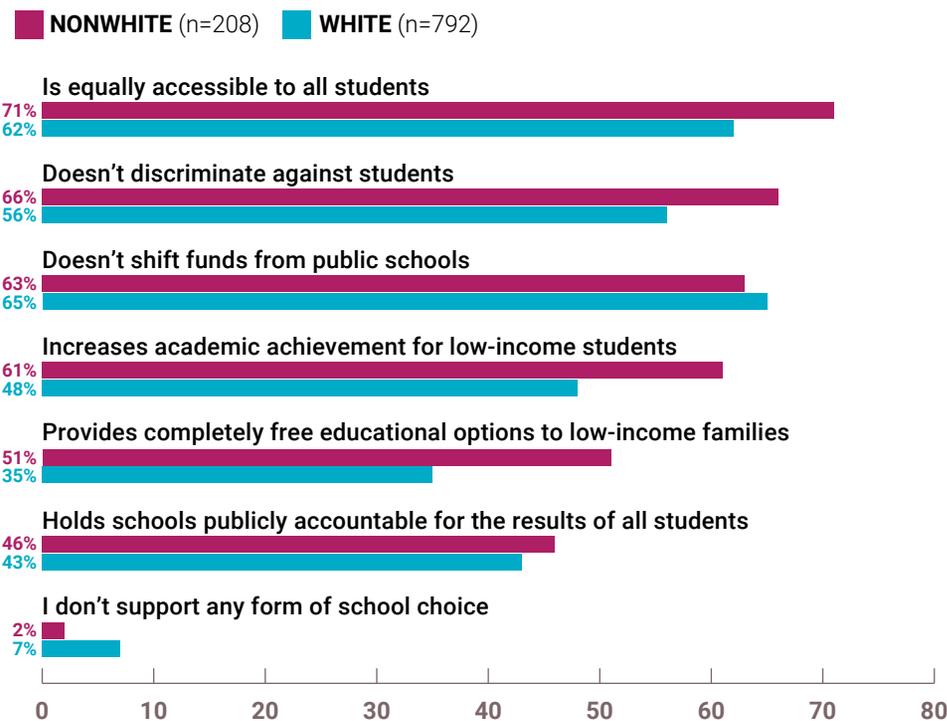
Percent reporting “Strongly Support” or “Somewhat Support.”



More supportive of school choice, in service of low-income students

Similar to early-career teachers, overall, teachers of color are much more supportive of school choice options, such as low-income vouchers, universal vouchers, tax credits for private school scholarships, and charter schools, than white teachers. At the same time, with the exception of shifting funds from public schools, teachers of color are more concerned that school choice options are accessible, free, and effective for vulnerable student populations than are white teachers. Teachers of color may be particularly interested in expanding educational opportunities because of the historical inequities that prevented students of color and other vulnerable students from receiving the excellent education to which they are entitled.

WHEN TEACHERS SUPPORT SCHOOL CHOICE BY RACE





VOICES FROM THE CLASSROOM

A SURVEY OF AMERICA'S EDUCATORS

CONTENTS

The Teaching Profession

- 54 Recruiting
- 55 Preparation
- 57 Day-to-Day Experience
- 59 Professional Development
- 60 Leadership from the Classroom
- 63 Retention
- 69 Retirement

Education Policy and Politics

- 71 Educator Voice
- 75 Accountability
- 77 Equity
- 82 School Safety
- 85 School Climate
- 86 Discipline
- 87 School Choice

Education Stakeholders

- 89 Sense of Being Valued
- 90 Administrators' Leadership
- 91 Teacher Unions
- 92 Union Priorities
- 100 . . . Union Membership and Engagement
- 106 . . . Repercussions of *Janus v. AFSCME*

Questionnaire and Topline Results

The following are all the topline results from the survey questionnaire. The questions and results are grouped by themes represented in the findings and do not necessarily appear in the order that they were asked.

NOTES

All numbers are percentages.

Due to rounding, not all percentages add to 100%.

Asterisks (*) indicate less than 1%; dashes (-) indicate that the question was not asked of a particular subgroup.

To view additional subgroup data, go to e4e.org/teachersurvey/data.

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Recruiting

Teachers believe financial incentives are the best strategy to attract talented and diverse candidates to the teaching profession. Teachers are less interested in recruiting teachers from outside of traditional teacher pathways or raising the bar for entry into the profession.

Total (n=1,000)
 Union (n=534)
 Nonunion (n=466)
 District (n=910)
 Charter (n=90)

Q. 24-34 Summary Table

How would you rate each of the following ideas for attracting talented and diverse candidates to the teaching profession? Percent reporting "Excellent."

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Financial incentives (e.g., sign-on bonuses, higher starting salaries, loan forgiveness) for teachers serving in hard-to-staff schools (e.g., rural schools or schools serving low-income students)	48%	45%	52%	48%	48%
Financial incentives (e.g., sign-on bonuses, higher starting salaries, loan forgiveness) for teachers serving in hard-to-staff subject areas (e.g., special education, STEM, bilingual/ESL)	46%	45%	47%	46%	40%
Making it easier to leave and return to teaching without losing retirement benefits, seniority, or other non-retirement benefits	36%	36%	37%	37%	32%
Leadership pathways in your school or district that allow you to increase your impact and your salary	34%	33%	34%	34%	32%
Streamlined certification/reciprocity (e.g., easier to obtain credentials when moving states, changing careers)	33%	32%	34%	33%	30%
Pathways for school aides and paraprofessionals to become teachers (e.g., grow-your-own models)	28%	28%	28%	28%	28%
Residency programs for hands-on experience	27%	25%	29%	26%	35%
Offering teachers substantially higher starting salaries in exchange for smaller pensions or other non-pension retirement plans when they retire	19%	17%	21%	18%	22%
Alternative certification pathways (e.g., Teach For America, Teaching Fellows, etc.)	18%	18%	18%	18%	25%
Actively recruiting and training candidates from other professions	17%	16%	17%	17%	14%
Raising the bar for entry into the profession (e.g., minimum SAT scores or GPA to become a teacher)	15%	17%	14%	15%	17%

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Preparation

Teachers do not feel that teacher preparation programs adequately prepare them for the classroom. Although teachers say that education programs were strongest at preparing them to provide and differentiate rigorous instruction, only one-third believe they did this “very well.” Teachers believe these programs prepared them least to engage family members in students’ learning and understand policy issues impacting the classroom. Overall, teachers prioritize hands-on, practical forms of training over instructional or observation-based training.

Q. 37-46 Summary Table

*How well would you say your teacher preparation program prepared you personally to do each of the following?
Percent reporting “Very Well.”*

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Provide rigorous academic instruction	34%	34%	33%	34%	32%
Differentiate your instruction to reach students at different levels in your classroom	32%	33%	30%	31%	38%
Integrate technology in the classroom	26%	24%	28%	26%	26%
Support the social and emotional well-being of students	26%	25%	28%	26%	26%
Provide culturally responsive instruction	26%	23%	29%	26%	29%
Effectively teach unique learners (e.g., special needs, English learners)	26%	26%	25%	26%	21%
Use data to inform instruction	23%	22%	26%	23%	25%
Successfully manage student behavior in the classroom	23%	21%	26%	22%	29%
Understand key policy issues impacting teaching and learning	20%	19%	21%	20%	21%
Engage parents/guardians in students’ learning	17%	18%	17%	16%	26%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

THE TEACHING PROFESSION Preparation

Q. 47

Which of the following, if any, do you believe are most important in preparing teachers to be successful in the classroom? Please select your top two choices. Percent chosen as one of top two choices.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Student teaching	46%	45%	47%	47%	37%
Training in classroom management	46%	46%	47%	47%	42%
Mentoring from other teachers	36%	37%	35%	36%	38%
Residency programs for hands-on experience	27%	27%	27%	27%	27%
Training in instructional strategies	23%	24%	22%	23%	30%
Extensive classroom observation	11%	10%	11%	10%	12%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
None of the above	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Day-to-Day Experience

Teachers across the board agree that they would like to spend more time collaborating with peers and on classroom instruction. Teachers consistently say that they want to spend less time on administrative paperwork and in staff meetings.

Total (n=1,000)
 Union (n=534)
 Nonunion (n=466)
 District (n=910)
 Charter (n=90)

Q. 11-23 Summary Table

For each of the following work-related activities, please indicate if you would like to spend more time, less time, or would you not change the amount of time you currently spend? Percent reporting "Much More Time" or "Somewhat More Time."

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Collaborating with other teachers	73%	74%	72%	73%	72%
Classroom instruction	62%	61%	63%	62%	68%
Coaching/supporting my colleagues	49%	52%	46%	49%	56%
Participating in professional development	47%	51%	42%	48%	40%
Analyzing data to inform student instruction	46%	47%	45%	46%	50%
Lesson planning	43%	44%	41%	43%	41%
Communicating with parents/guardians	43%	45%	40%	42%	52%
Compiling and tracking student academic data	36%	34%	37%	35%	38%
Preparing students for standardized tests	24%	23%	26%	23%	36%
Participating in union-related activities	20%	26%	13%	20%	23%
Grading student work	19%	21%	18%	19%	25%
Attending staff meetings	12%	13%	11%	11%	19%
Completing administrative paperwork	10%	10%	10%	9%	26%

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Day-to-Day Experience

Q. 11-23 Summary Table

For each of the following work-related activities, please indicate if you would like to spend more time, less time, or would you not change the amount of time you currently spend? Percent reporting "Much Less Time" or "Somewhat Less Time."

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Completing administrative paperwork	68%	67%	69%	69%	56%
Attending staff meetings	65%	65%	66%	66%	62%
Preparing students for standardized tests	55%	58%	52%	56%	45%
Grading student work	54%	54%	54%	55%	47%
Compiling and tracking student academic data	42%	44%	39%	42%	37%
Lesson planning	33%	30%	36%	33%	31%
Participating in professional development	32%	30%	34%	31%	37%
Analyzing data to inform student instruction	32%	33%	31%	33%	24%
Communicating with parents/guardians	25%	24%	25%	25%	24%
Participating in union-related activities	23%	28%	17%	23%	23%
Coaching/supporting my colleagues	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
Collaborating with other teachers	10%	10%	10%	10%	8%
Classroom instruction	9%	10%	9%	9%	8%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Professional Development

Ongoing professional development is an essential part of helping teachers grow and improve their craft. Teachers' top choices for additional development include alternatives to punitive discipline; supporting unique student populations, such as English learners and students with special needs; and integrating technology in the classroom.

Q. 48 Summary Table

In which of the following areas, if any, would you personally like to have additional professional development and support? Please select your top three choices. Percent chosen as one of top three priorities.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Alternatives to punitive discipline (e.g., restorative practices, positive behavioral intervention and supports)	40%	41%	39%	41%	31%
Supporting unique learners (e.g., English learners, students with special needs)	39%	38%	40%	39%	38%
Integrating technology in your classroom	38%	37%	39%	39%	32%
Social-emotional learning (SEL)	36%	39%	31%	35%	42%
Family engagement	27%	25%	29%	27%	31%
Instruction aligned with your state's standards	20%	18%	22%	20%	20%
Trauma-informed teaching	19%	22%	17%	19%	24%
Using data to inform instruction	17%	16%	19%	18%	15%
Culturally responsive pedagogy	15%	16%	13%	15%	15%
Other	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%
None of the above	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Leadership from the Classroom

The vast majority of teachers wish there were more opportunities to further their career and professional skills while remaining in the classroom, and nearly all teachers believe that they should be compensated for taking on leadership roles in addition to classroom responsibilities.

Total (n=1,000)
 Union (n=534)
 Nonunion (n=466)
 District (n=910)
 Charter (n=90)

Q. 68

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: *I wish there were more opportunities as a teacher to further my career and professional skills while remaining in the classroom.*

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net agree	92%	90%	93%	92%	91%
Net disagree	8%	10%	7%	8%	9%
Strongly agree	49%	48%	50%	49%	46%
Somewhat agree	43%	43%	43%	42%	45%
Somewhat disagree	7%	8%	6%	7%	9%
Strongly disagree	1%	2%	1%	2%	0%

Q. 70

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: *Teachers should be compensated for taking on leadership roles in addition to their classroom responsibilities.*

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net agree	95%	95%	96%	95%	97%
Net disagree	5%	5%	4%	5%	3%
Strongly agree	60%	58%	62%	60%	58%
Somewhat agree	35%	36%	33%	34%	39%
Somewhat disagree	4%	4%	3%	4%	3%
Strongly disagree	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Leadership from the Classroom

Nearly half of teachers feel pressure to become administrators in order to advance their careers. There are alternatives to leaving the classroom and becoming an administrator for teachers seeking career advancement, however, such as serving as a mentor or an instructional coach. These alternatives proved to be popular among surveyed teachers across the board. When framed as a paid versus unpaid career growth opportunity, however, teachers overall showed roughly similar levels of interest.

Total (n=1,000)
 Union (n=534)
 Nonunion (n=466)
 District (n=910)
 Charter (n=90)

Q. 69

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I feel pressure to become an administrator in order to advance in my career as an educator.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net agree	43%	43%	43%	42%	55%
Net disagree	57%	57%	57%	58%	45%
Strongly agree	18%	17%	18%	18%	18%
Somewhat agree	25%	26%	25%	24%	37%
Somewhat disagree	31%	31%	32%	32%	25%
Strongly disagree	25%	26%	24%	26%	19%

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Leadership from the Classroom

Q. 73-78 Summary Table

How interested would you be in each of the following [A: for your career development/
B: for your career development if you were paid a stipend or received a salary increase]?
(SPLIT SAMPLE) Percent reporting "Very Interested" or "Somewhat Interested."

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Serving as a mentor or instructional coach to other teachers (for career development)	87%	88%	86%	87%	90%
Serving as a mentor or instructional coach to other teachers (stipend/salary increase)	86%	84%	87%	86%	89%
Serving as a lead teacher (for career development)	83%	84%	81%	83%	81%
Serving as a lead teacher (stipend/salary increase)	82%	79%	85%	81%	88%
Having a hybrid role (for career development)	78%	79%	77%	78%	79%
Having a hybrid role (stipend/salary increase)	74%	73%	74%	74%	75%
Serving as a peer evaluator (for career development)	74%	75%	74%	73%	88%
Serving as a peer evaluator (stipend/salary increase)	75%	73%	77%	74%	79%
Facilitating or leading professional development courses (for career development)	65%	69%	60%	64%	69%
Facilitating or leading professional development courses (stipend/salary increase)	69%	71%	67%	69%	73%
Leading an open classroom team (for career development)	64%	63%	66%	62%	85%
Leading an open classroom team (stipend/salary increase)	67%	66%	67%	67%	63%

Split Sample A
Total (n=502)
Union (n=273)
Nonunion (n=229)
District (n=455)
Charter (n=47)

Split Sample B
Total (n=498)
Union (n=261)
Nonunion (n=237)
District (n=455)
Charter (n=43)

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Retention

Eight out of 10 teachers surveyed said they were somewhat or very likely to remain a classroom teacher for the remainder of their career, which means that 20 percent are considering a career change. Notably, most of those considering leaving plan to do so within less than five years, with half of them staying in the education sector.

Q. 64

As of now, how likely would you say you are to spend your entire career as a classroom teacher?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net likely	81%	84%	78%	81%	83%
Net not likely	17%	14%	20%	17%	15%
Very likely	50%	53%	46%	50%	45%
Somewhat likely	31%	31%	31%	31%	38%
Not very likely	12%	10%	14%	12%	11%
Not likely at all	5%	4%	6%	5%	4%
Not sure	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Retention

Q. 65

You mentioned you are not very likely to/not likely at all to/not sure you will spend your entire career as a classroom teacher. In your best estimate, when do you think you are most likely to leave the profession of classroom teacher?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter*
In less than a year	11%	9%	13%	11%	12%
In 1 - 2 years	26%	29%	24%	26%	27%
In 3 - 4 years	26%	25%	27%	27%	13%
In 5 - 6 years	14%	11%	16%	12%	37%
In 7 - 8 years	2%	4%	1%	2%	0%
In 9 - 10 years	6%	7%	5%	6%	5%
In more than 10 years	4%	6%	3%	5%	0%
Not sure	11%	10%	11%	11%	5%

Q. 66

You mentioned you are not very likely to/not likely at all to/not sure you will spend your entire career as a classroom teacher. As of now, do you expect to stay in the education sector or leave the education sector altogether?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter*
Stay in education	49%	53%	46%	49%	51%
Leave education altogether	26%	23%	29%	25%	40%
Not sure	25%	24%	25%	26%	10%

Total (n=189)
 Union (n=84)
 Nonunion (n=104)
 District (n=174),
 Charter (n=15)

*Small base size; results should be considered directional only.

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Retention

When asked what would motivate them most to stay in the classroom, teachers cite higher salaries as the number one priority. Further, they show significant support for incentivizing hard-to-staff positions and teacher leaders.

Q. 67

Which of the following, if any, would motivate you most to continue being a classroom teacher for your entire career? Now, please select what would be second-most motivating. Percent chosen as one of top two choices.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Higher salary	75%	69%	82%	75%	72%
Less standardized testing	34%	34%	34%	35%	30%
More supportive administrators	21%	23%	18%	20%	23%
More autonomy in the classroom	17%	19%	15%	17%	13%
More time for lesson planning	15%	14%	16%	14%	20%
More professional development and support	12%	12%	12%	12%	13%
More leadership opportunities while continuing to teach in the classroom	11%	11%	10%	10%	18%
Other	3%	4%	2%	3%	1%
None of the above	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Retention

Q. 57

How much would you favor or oppose giving financial incentives to teachers who receive multiple outstanding evaluations?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net favor	74%	70%	79%	74%	82%
Net oppose	18%	22%	14%	19%	13%
Strongly favor	34%	33%	35%	34%	30%
Somewhat favor	40%	37%	44%	39%	52%
Somewhat oppose	11%	13%	9%	11%	12%
Strongly oppose	7%	9%	5%	8%	1%
Not sure	7%	8%	6%	7%	5%

Q. 58

How much would you favor or oppose giving financial incentives to teachers whose students show significant gains in test scores from one year to the next?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net favor	56%	50%	63%	55%	68%
Net oppose	38%	45%	30%	39%	24%
Strongly favor	23%	20%	25%	22%	24%
Somewhat favor	33%	29%	38%	32%	44%
Somewhat oppose	21%	24%	17%	21%	17%
Strongly oppose	17%	21%	13%	18%	7%
Not sure	6%	6%	7%	6%	8%

Total (n=1,000)
 Union (n=534)
 Nonunion (n=466)
 District (n=910)
 Charter (n=90)

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Retention

Q. 59

How much would you favor or oppose giving financial incentives to teachers who receive accreditation from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net favor	75%	74%	75%	74%	78%
Net oppose	16%	17%	14%	16%	15%
Strongly favor	33%	31%	36%	33%	31%
Somewhat favor	42%	43%	40%	41%	47%
Somewhat oppose	11%	12%	10%	11%	12%
Strongly oppose	5%	6%	4%	5%	3%
Not sure	10%	9%	11%	10%	6%

Q. 60

How much would you favor or oppose giving financial incentives to teachers who specialize in hard-to-fill subjects, such as science, mathematics, or special education?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net favor	79%	76%	81%	78%	82%
Net oppose	17%	20%	14%	17%	14%
Strongly favor	40%	39%	42%	40%	45%
Somewhat favor	38%	37%	40%	38%	37%
Somewhat oppose	11%	12%	10%	11%	10%
Strongly oppose	6%	8%	4%	6%	4%
Not sure	4%	4%	5%	4%	3%

Total (n=1,000)
 Union (n=534)
 Nonunion (n=466)
 District (n=910)
 Charter (n=90)

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Retention

Q. 61

How much would you favor or oppose giving financial incentives to teachers who work in hard-to-staff schools, like rural schools, serving students from low-income households?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net favor	89%	87%	91%	89%	85%
Net oppose	8%	9%	6%	8%	10%
Strongly favor	47%	43%	51%	47%	43%
Somewhat favor	42%	44%	40%	42%	42%
Somewhat oppose	6%	5%	6%	5%	8%
Strongly oppose	2%	4%	1%	2%	3%
Not sure	3%	4%	3%	3%	4%

Q. 62

How much would you favor or oppose giving financial incentives to teachers who take on leadership positions within the school or district? (e.g., mentor teachers, model teachers, teachers who develop curriculum, peer evaluators, etc.)

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net favor	88%	86%	90%	88%	90%
Net oppose	8%	10%	6%	8%	6%
Strongly favor	44%	42%	46%	44%	44%
Somewhat favor	44%	44%	44%	44%	46%
Somewhat oppose	5%	7%	4%	5%	4%
Strongly oppose	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%
Not sure	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%

Total (n=1,000)
 Union (n=534)
 Nonunion (n=466)
 District (n=910)
 Charter (n=90)

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Retirement

Where most teachers (58 percent) do not believe there should be a tradeoff between salaries and pensions, if pushed to decide, they would prefer higher salaries over larger pensions. Teachers are split in their preference between a defined contribution plan and a pension, although unionized teachers are more likely to prefer a pension than nonunionized teachers, and one-third of teachers are not sure.

Total (n=1,000)
 Union (n=534)
 Nonunion (n=466)
 District (n=910)
 Charter (n=90)

Q. 35

Relatively speaking, if you had to choose, which one would you personally prefer when it comes to your salary and pension?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
I would prefer to have a higher salary and a smaller pension	43%	39%	48%	43%	51%
I would prefer to have a lower salary and a larger pension	26%	28%	23%	26%	21%
Not sure	31%	33%	29%	31%	27%

Q. 36

If you were able to choose, which one would you personally prefer for your retirement benefits?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Pension – A guaranteed retirement benefit in which employees receive a defined amount of benefit upon retirement, regardless of the performance of the investment pool. Pension amounts are typically determined by a formula that is based on years of service, vesting after a certain number of years, and earnings. Pensions are not transferable to other careers or states.	45%	50%	38%	46%	32%
Defined Contribution Plan – A retirement option in which you contribute a portion of your pay, and the employer matches a variable amount to your contribution. The benefit upon retirement depends on the plan's investment performance. This is best known as a 401(k) in the private sector, or a 403(b) in the nonprofit sector, and can be transferred between careers and states.	42%	40%	46%	41%	51%
I prefer a different retirement option	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%
I don't know enough about these retirement options to make a choice	11%	8%	14%	10%	16%

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Retirement

Teachers report that they would be most motivated to strike for financial reasons, such as pay cuts or reductions to benefits, including retirement benefits. However, a full third of teachers say they would very likely strike over concerns about inadequate resources for their students or decreases in school funding.

Q. 163-171 Summary Table

How likely would you be to participate in a teachers' strike for each of the following reasons?

Percent reporting "Very Likely."

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Pay cut	60%	59%	60%	61%	48%
Reduction in your retirement benefits or pension contribution	49%	51%	47%	50%	44%
Reduction in your benefits, not including retirement benefits	44%	45%	43%	44%	42%
No pay raise	34%	36%	32%	34%	39%
Decrease in school funding	32%	30%	33%	32%	30%
Insufficient pay raise	30%	31%	29%	30%	34%
Lack of support services for students	27%	27%	27%	26%	34%
Increase in class size	26%	27%	24%	26%	25%
Lack of resources	26%	26%	25%	25%	29%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

Educator Voice

Teachers state loudly and clearly that they want more opportunities to influence policy. And they feel that their influence on policy decreases the further the entity is away from the classroom, with their perspective being best represented at the school level and within their union, then the district, followed by the state level, until only one-quarter of teachers believe they have an influence at the federal level.

Q. 71

Do you agree or disagree with this statement: I wish there were more opportunities as a teacher to influence education policy that impacts my profession and students.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net agree	96%	97%	96%	96%	98%
Net disagree	4%	3%	4%	4%	2%
Strongly agree	60%	62%	57%	59%	61%
Somewhat agree	37%	35%	38%	37%	37%
Somewhat disagree	3%	3%	4%	3%	2%
Strongly disagree	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

Educator Voice

Q. 136

To what degree do you believe that your perspective as a teacher is represented in policy decisions in your school?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net great deal/somewhat	79%	79%	79%	79%	79%
Net not very much/none at all	21%	21%	21%	21%	21%
A great deal	30%	30%	29%	30%	29%
Somewhat	49%	49%	51%	49%	51%
Not very much	16%	16%	15%	16%	16%
None at all	5%	5%	6%	5%	5%

Q. 137

To what degree do you believe that your perspective as a teacher is represented in policy decisions in your district or charter network?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net great deal/somewhat	61%	62%	60%	60%	72%
Net not very much/none at all	39%	38%	40%	40%	28%
A great deal	16%	17%	15%	15%	22%
Somewhat	46%	46%	46%	45%	50%
Not very much	28%	27%	28%	28%	22%
None at all	11%	10%	12%	11%	6%

Total (n=1,000)
 Union (n=534)
 Nonunion (n=466)
 District (n=910)
 Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

Educator Voice

Q. 138

To what degree do you believe that your perspective as a teacher is represented in policy decisions in your state?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net great deal/somewhat	35%	38%	32%	34%	43%
Net not very much/none at all	65%	62%	68%	66%	57%
A great deal	9%	10%	7%	8%	12%
Somewhat	26%	28%	24%	26%	31%
Not very much	44%	45%	44%	45%	37%
None at all	20%	17%	24%	21%	20%

Q. 139

To what degree do you believe that your perspective as a teacher is represented in policy decisions at the federal level?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net great deal/somewhat	25%	28%	21%	24%	38%
Net not very much/none at all	75%	72%	79%	76%	62%
A great deal	6%	6%	6%	6%	7%
Somewhat	19%	22%	15%	18%	31%
Not very much	43%	43%	43%	44%	32%
None at all	32%	29%	36%	32%	30%

Total (n=1,000)
 Union (n=534)
 Nonunion (n=466)
 District (n=910)
 Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

Educator Voice

Q. 140

To what degree do you believe that your perspective as a teacher is represented in policy decisions in your union?

Percent reporting of union members only.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter*
Net great deal/somewhat	80%	80%	-	80%	77%
Net not very much/none at all	20%	20%	-	20%	23%
A great deal	28%	28%	-	28%	21%
Somewhat	52%	52%	-	52%	56%
Not very much	15%	15%	-	15%	23%
None at all	5%	5%	-	5%	0%

Total (n=534)

Union (n=534)

District (n=503)

Charter (n=31)

*Small base size; results should be considered directional only.

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

Accountability

Teachers express a desire for multiple methods of professional evaluation but prioritize measures of student academic growth as the most valuable. Students' daily work and classroom observations by administrators and peers are also valued measures of teacher effectiveness.

Q. 50

Which of the following, if any, do you believe are most valuable in evaluating teachers' effectiveness? Please select your top three choices. Percent chosen as one of top three priorities.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Measures of student academic growth over time (e.g., from the beginning of the school year to the end)	64%	61%	68%	65%	55%
Students' daily work/projects/portfolios	45%	46%	43%	45%	39%
Classroom observation by administrators	35%	33%	37%	35%	38%
Classroom observation by teachers	34%	37%	30%	34%	34%
Leadership in the school community (e.g., mentor teachers, model teachers, teachers who develop curriculum, peer evaluators)	30%	32%	28%	31%	25%
Feedback/reviews from students (e.g., student surveys)	24%	22%	26%	23%	28%
Feedback/reviews from parents (e.g., parent surveys)	15%	16%	14%	15%	21%
Students' standardized test scores	10%	8%	13%	10%	14%
Tenure	6%	7%	6%	6%	6%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
None of the above	2%	2%	2%	2%	0%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

Accountability

When it comes to evaluating school effectiveness, measurements of student academic growth were again the most valued among teachers. Teachers also say measures of school climate and culture are essential for developing a full picture of a school's effectiveness, in addition to feedback from students.

Q. 49

Which of the following, if any, do you believe are most valuable in evaluating a school's effectiveness? Please select your top three choices. Percent chosen as one of top three priorities.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Measures of students' academic growth over time (e.g., from the beginning of the school year to the end)	74%	72%	77%	75%	65%
Measures of school climate and culture (e.g., the number of disciplinary infractions, suspensions and expulsions)	41%	40%	42%	40%	47%
Feedback/reviews from students (e.g., student surveys)	30%	30%	30%	30%	35%
Feedback/reviews from parents (e.g., parent surveys)	25%	27%	24%	25%	29%
Observations/reviews by district administrators	25%	26%	24%	25%	29%
Graduation rates (if applicable)	24%	22%	26%	24%	19%
Attendance data	19%	21%	17%	19%	20%
Students' standardized test scores	17%	15%	20%	17%	20%
Other	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%
None of the above	3%	3%	3%	3%	0%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

Equity

The majority of teachers across the country are very or somewhat concerned about unequal access to resources, schools, excellent educators, and properly maintained facilities. Fifty percent of teachers surveyed think that inequitable school funding is a very serious problem, making this the most pressing equity concern among teachers overall.

Q. 141

In your opinion, how much of a problem is the following statement in your state? Students do not have equal access to high-quality schools.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net very/somewhat serious	69%	70%	68%	69%	70%
Net not a very serious problem/ not a problem at all	29%	28%	30%	29%	29%
A very serious problem	32%	32%	32%	31%	43%
Somewhat of a problem	37%	37%	37%	38%	27%
Not a very serious problem	21%	20%	22%	21%	20%
Not a problem at all	8%	9%	8%	8%	10%
Not sure	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

Equity

Q. 142

In your opinion, how much of a problem is the following statement in your state? Students do not have equal access to excellent educators.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net very/somewhat serious	68%	66%	70%	68%	67%
Net not a very serious problem/ not a problem at all	30%	32%	28%	30%	31%
A very serious problem	29%	28%	30%	29%	30%
Somewhat of a problem	39%	38%	40%	39%	37%
Not a very serious problem	21%	22%	21%	21%	21%
Not a problem at all	9%	10%	7%	9%	10%
Not sure	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

Equity

Q. 143

In your opinion, how much of a problem is the following statement in your state? School funding is not equitable.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net very/somewhat serious	84%	82%	86%	84%	79%
Net not a very serious problem/ not a problem at all	13%	15%	12%	13%	17%
A very serious problem	50%	49%	52%	51%	42%
Somewhat of a problem	34%	33%	34%	33%	37%
Not a very serious problem	9%	9%	9%	9%	12%
Not a problem at all	5%	6%	3%	4%	6%
Not sure	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

Equity

Q. 144

In your opinion, how much of a problem is the following statement in your state? Students do not have equal access to properly maintained school facilities.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net very/somewhat serious	69%	69%	70%	69%	68%
Net not a very serious problem/ not a problem at all	29%	30%	28%	29%	29%
A very serious problem	31%	32%	31%	31%	32%
Somewhat of a problem	38%	37%	39%	38%	36%
Not a very serious problem	21%	20%	21%	21%	21%
Not a problem at all	8%	10%	7%	8%	8%
Not sure	2%	1%	2%	2%	3%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

Equity

Q. 145

In your opinion, how much of a problem is the following statement in your state? Students and teachers do not have access to equitable classroom supplies and resources.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net very/somewhat serious	81%	81%	80%	81%	76%
Net not a very serious problem/ not a problem at all	18%	17%	18%	17%	23%
A very serious problem	42%	41%	44%	42%	43%
Somewhat of a problem	38%	40%	36%	39%	32%
Not a very serious problem	13%	12%	15%	12%	20%
Not a problem at all	5%	6%	4%	5%	4%
Not sure	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

School Safety

With concerns about school safety dominating headlines this year, approximately one-third of teachers say they often or sometimes fear for their own physical safety when they are at school. Gun violence, bullying, fights between students, and online bullying top the list of safety concerns for teachers.

Q. 151

When you are at school, how often do you fear for your own physical safety?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net often/sometimes	31%	33%	30%	29%	50%
Net rarely/never	69%	67%	70%	71%	50%
Often	7%	8%	5%	6%	13%
Sometimes	24%	24%	24%	23%	37%
Rarely	43%	41%	45%	44%	29%
Never	26%	27%	26%	27%	21%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

School Safety

Q. 152

Which of the following safety issues, if any, are you most concerned about at your school?

Please select your top two choices. Percent chosen as one of top two concerns.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Gun violence/school shooting	33%	32%	33%	33%	28%
In-person/physical bullying	32%	31%	34%	33%	27%
Fighting among students	30%	29%	32%	30%	31%
Online bullying	29%	31%	27%	29%	24%
Drugs/drug-related crime	16%	17%	15%	16%	19%
Violence against teachers	15%	15%	15%	15%	16%
Community/neighborhood violence	14%	13%	16%	14%	20%
Sexual violence among students	3%	3%	4%	3%	7%
Other	2%	2%	1%	2%	0%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

School Safety

When asked about the quality of their school's violence-prevention training, teachers' responses were divided, with roughly half saying that their training was fair or poor and the other half saying it is good or excellent. The majority of teachers oppose the idea that they should be trained to carry firearms in schools.

Total (n=1,000)
 Union (n=534)
 Nonunion (n=466)
 District (n=910)
 Charter (n=90)

Q. 153

Would you say your school does an excellent job, good, only fair, or a poor job at training teachers on how to address school violence?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net excellent/good	54%	55%	53%	53%	62%
Net fair/poor	46%	45%	47%	47%	38%
Excellent	15%	14%	15%	14%	19%
Good	39%	40%	38%	39%	43%
Fair	30%	29%	30%	30%	24%
Poor	16%	16%	16%	17%	14%

Q. 154

Do you favor or oppose the proposal to train teachers to carry guns in schools to protect students and teachers from armed intruders?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net favor	29%	27%	31%	28%	40%
Net oppose	65%	67%	62%	66%	58%
Strongly favor	10%	10%	10%	10%	19%
Somewhat favor	19%	17%	21%	19%	22%
Somewhat oppose	13%	10%	16%	13%	14%
Strongly oppose	52%	57%	47%	53%	44%
Not sure	6%	6%	6%	6%	2%

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

School Climate

The majority of teachers across all demographic groups agree that their schools provide an inclusive, welcoming learning environment for all students.

Q. 155

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement about your school? My school is an inclusive environment that honors the identities and potential of all of its students.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net agree	90%	89%	90%	89%	92%
Net disagree	10%	11%	10%	11%	8%
Strongly agree	40%	39%	42%	40%	44%
Somewhat agree	50%	50%	49%	50%	48%
Somewhat disagree	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	2%	2%	0%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

Discipline

Alternatives to exclusionary discipline are broadly embraced by teachers, including positive behavior reinforcement and restorative justice. Exclusionary practices such as detentions, in-school and out-of-school suspensions, and expulsions are viewed as less effective.

Q.156-162 Summary Table

In your opinion, how effective are each of the following discipline strategies at improving student behavior in your school? Percent reporting "Somewhat Effective" or "Very Effective."

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Positive behavior reinforcement	74%	72%	76%	73%	81%
Restorative practices (e.g., help students understand the consequences of their actions and make amends)	64%	63%	65%	63%	74%
In-school suspension	47%	47%	47%	47%	55%
Detention	42%	44%	40%	42%	47%
Out-of-school suspension	39%	36%	41%	39%	39%
Expulsion	39%	38%	41%	39%	44%
Demerits	22%	20%	23%	20%	36%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

School Choice

School choice is a nuanced issue among teachers. The majority oppose alternatives to district public schools, but teachers are supportive of school choice options provided the alternatives do not shift funds away from public schools and the alternatives guarantee against discrimination of students. In fact, only six percent of teachers said they opposed any form of school choice.

Q. 146-149 Summary Table

Do you support or oppose each of the following? Percent reporting "Strongly Oppose" or "Somewhat Oppose."

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Universal Vouchers: Using government funds to pay the tuition of all students who choose to attend private schools	75%	77%	74%	77%	62%
Low-income Vouchers: Using government funds to pay the tuition of low-income students who choose to attend private schools	66%	69%	63%	68%	50%
Charter Schools: The formation of charter schools, which are publicly funded but independently run. These schools are expected to meet promised objectives, but are exempt from many state and district regulations.	63%	70%	56%	67%	30%
Tax Credits: Tax credits for individual and corporate donations that pay for scholarships to help low-income parents send their children to private schools	44%	47%	42%	45%	38%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICS

School Choice

Q. 150

Please select all that apply to complete the following statement: "I support school choice when it..."

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Doesn't shift funds from public schools	64%	68%	60%	66%	44%
Is equally accessible to all students	64%	59%	70%	63%	71%
Doesn't discriminate against students	58%	54%	64%	58%	64%
Increases academic achievement for low-income students	51%	47%	55%	51%	55%
Holds schools publicly accountable for the results of all students	43%	43%	43%	43%	44%
Provides completely free educational options to low-income families	39%	37%	41%	37%	52%
I don't support any form of school choice	6%	6%	6%	6%	3%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Sense of Being Valued

The farther teachers get from their schools and districts—such as at the state or national level—the less valued they feel. Almost all teachers feel valued by their colleagues, but only a quarter feel valued by the United States as a whole.

Q. 51-56 Summary Table

As a teacher, how valued do you personally feel by each of the following? Percent reporting "Very Valued" or "Somewhat Valued."

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Your colleagues	93%	94%	92%	93%	93%
Your principal	82%	80%	83%	81%	83%
Your students' parents/guardians	81%	81%	81%	80%	84%
Your district	64%	64%	65%	64%	68%
Your state	37%	39%	33%	36%	45%
The U.S. as a whole	27%	25%	29%	26%	34%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Administrators' Leadership

Overall, teachers have tepid feelings about their schools' administrative leadership. While teachers say their administrators are best at advocating for students in their school and the school itself, these positive attributes are cited by less than half of teachers. Teachers are least likely to say their administrators promote a holistic approach to student learning (e.g., social-emotional learning, arts education, etc.), and 13 percent say that none of the positive options describe their administrators.

Total (n=1,000)
 Union (n=534)
 Nonunion (n=466)
 District (n=910)
 Charter (n=90)

Q. 63 Summary Table

Which of the following, if any, best describe your school's administrative leadership? Please select all that apply.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Is an advocate for students in your school	45%	43%	48%	46%	40%
Is an advocate for teachers in your school	42%	39%	44%	41%	42%
Evaluates teacher effectiveness using multiple measures	41%	39%	44%	42%	33%
Shares responsibilities for leadership with teachers and other staff	41%	40%	42%	42%	34%
Is fair in decision-making	41%	38%	44%	42%	31%
Empowers teachers to take on leadership roles (e.g., grade or subject leadership, mentor roles)	38%	37%	39%	39%	35%
Provides the resources and support necessary for teachers to successfully take on leadership roles (e.g., grade or subject leadership, mentor roles)	35%	31%	39%	35%	39%
Is an advocate for families in your school	34%	31%	37%	34%	34%
Guides the development of effective instruction in your school	31%	28%	34%	31%	32%
Promotes a holistic approach to student learning (e.g., social-emotional learning, arts education, etc.)	28%	27%	30%	28%	30%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%
None of the above	13%	15%	10%	13%	9%

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Teachers Unions

Eighty-five percent of all educators believe unions are essential or important, as do three-quarters of teachers who are nonunion members. Of current union members, 94 percent find the union to be essential or important.

Q. 80

Do you think of teachers unions or associations as...?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Absolutely essential	52%	69%	32%	53%	43%
Important, but not essential	33%	25%	42%	33%	34%
Something you could do without	10%	5%	16%	10%	14%
Not sure	5%	1%	10%	5%	8%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Union Priorities

Teachers want their unions to focus on the “bread and butter” issues and prioritize traditional union issues, such as protecting teachers’ salaries, benefits, and jobs.

Q. 81

Generally speaking, do you think that teachers unions or associations should...?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Put more focus than they currently do on issues such as improving teacher quality and student achievement	35%	35%	35%	35%	31%
Mostly stick to traditional union issues, such as protecting teachers’ salaries, benefits and jobs	54%	56%	52%	53%	61%
Not sure	11%	9%	14%	12%	9%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Union Priorities

Unionized and nonunionized teachers believe it is critically important for unions to: bargain for wages and salary, bargain for health and retirement benefits, protect teachers' jobs, ensure schools are a safe and healthy work environment, and advocate for policies that are in the best interests of teachers. Meanwhile, unionized teachers feel it is a lot less important for the unions to provide information about political candidates and their issue positions, and only 14 percent of all teachers said it was critically important for the union to support and endorse political candidates.

Total (n=1,000)
 Union (n=534)
 Nonunion (n=466)
 District (n=910)
 Charter (n=90)

Q. 83-97 Summary Table

How important to you are each of the following for teachers unions to do? Percent reporting "Critically Important."

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Bargains for wages/salary	76%	81%	71%	77%	66%
Protects teachers' jobs	74%	76%	72%	75%	58%
Bargains for health/retirement benefits	74%	78%	69%	75%	60%
Ensures that schools are a safe and healthy work environment	70%	72%	68%	71%	58%
Advocates for policies that are in the best interests of teachers	65%	68%	63%	67%	54%
Advocates for policies that are in the best interests of students	53%	53%	52%	53%	46%
Negotiates new ways to more meaningfully and effectively evaluate teachers	46%	51%	41%	47%	42%
Advocates to uphold teacher tenure	46%	50%	41%	47%	36%
Provides support and mentoring to new teachers	45%	46%	43%	45%	39%
Provides teachers with high-quality training and professional development	44%	46%	42%	44%	39%
Provides information on policy issues relevant to members	41%	43%	39%	42%	37%
Expands the career ladder for teachers by negotiating new and differentiated roles and responsibilities	35%	38%	32%	35%	37%
Provides information about political candidates and their issue positions	22%	22%	21%	21%	25%
Advocates for social issues that are not specifically about education	18%	18%	18%	18%	19%
Supports/endorse political candidates	14%	15%	13%	13%	20%

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Union Priorities

Teachers' preferences remain focused on improving compensation and working conditions when asked to rank their top three most important priorities for unions, if union resources were limited. The three least important roles were providing information about political candidates, supporting political candidates, and advocating for social issues not specifically about education.

Total (n=1,000)
 Union (n=534)
 Nonunion (n=466)
 District (n=910)
 Charter (n=90)

Q. 102

If teachers unions had more limited resources, how would you prioritize what the teachers unions do for members? Please select what you think should be the top most important priority for a teachers union. Next, select your second priority. Finally, select your third priority. Percent chosen as one of top three priorities.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Bargains for wages/salary	68%	68%	68%	68%	60%
Bargains for health/retirement benefits	42%	45%	40%	43%	34%
Protects teachers' jobs	41%	41%	42%	41%	49%
Ensures that schools are a safe and healthy work environment	29%	29%	28%	29%	24%
Advocates for policies that are in the best interests of teachers	23%	20%	26%	23%	18%
Handles members' problems and grievances	17%	20%	14%	18%	10%
Advocates for policies that are in the best interests of students	16%	14%	18%	16%	16%
Provides teachers with high-quality training and professional development	15%	14%	16%	15%	16%
Negotiates new ways to more meaningfully and effectively evaluate teachers	11%	12%	10%	11%	12%
Provides support and mentoring to new teachers	9%	9%	10%	9%	11%
Advocates to uphold teacher tenure	9%	9%	10%	10%	7%
Expands the career ladder for teachers by negotiating new and differentiated roles and responsibilities	8%	8%	8%	8%	10%
Provides information on policy issues relevant to members	4%	4%	3%	3%	12%
Advocates for social issues that are not specifically about education	2%	3%	2%	2%	5%
Supports/endorse political candidates	2%	2%	3%	1%	8%
Provides information about political candidates and their issue positions	2%	3%	1%	2%	7%
Other	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
None of the above	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Union Priorities

However, when asked to consider specific social issues that are not specifically about education, teachers say that civil rights, universal healthcare, gun control, and immigration are all important for union engagement.

Q. 98

Thinking about social issues that are not specifically about education, how important to you is the following social policy area for teachers unions to engage with? Universal healthcare.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net important	79%	82%	76%	78%	88%
Net not important	21%	18%	24%	22%	12%
Critically important	37%	39%	35%	36%	47%
Important, but not critical	25%	27%	23%	26%	23%
Somewhat important	16%	16%	17%	16%	18%
Not that important	10%	10%	11%	11%	4%
Not important at all	11%	8%	14%	11%	8%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS Union Priorities

Q. 99

Thinking about social issues that are not specifically about education, how important to you is the following social policy area for teachers unions to engage with? Immigration.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net important	74%	76%	72%	74%	77%
Net not important	26%	24%	28%	26%	23%
Critically important	25%	25%	25%	25%	32%
Important, but not critical	26%	27%	25%	26%	24%
Somewhat important	22%	23%	22%	23%	20%
Not that important	15%	15%	15%	15%	11%
Not important at all	11%	10%	13%	11%	12%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS Union Priorities

Q. 100

Thinking about social issues that are not specifically about education, how important to you is the following social policy area for teachers unions to engage with? Gun control.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net important	76%	79%	74%	76%	81%
Net not important	24%	21%	26%	24%	19%
Critically important	39%	41%	37%	38%	50%
Important, but not critical	21%	22%	20%	21%	17%
Somewhat important	16%	16%	17%	16%	14%
Not that important	11%	10%	13%	12%	8%
Not important at all	12%	11%	14%	13%	11%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS Union Priorities

Q. 101

Thinking about social issues that are not specifically about education, how important to you is the following social policy area for teachers unions to engage with? Civil rights.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net important	87%	90%	84%	87%	92%
Net not important	13%	10%	16%	13%	8%
Critically important	47%	49%	45%	46%	55%
Important, but not critical	24%	26%	21%	25%	14%
Somewhat important	17%	15%	18%	16%	24%
Not that important	6%	5%	7%	6%	2%
Not important at all	7%	5%	9%	7%	6%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Union Priorities

While most teachers believe their unions have a positive relationship with district leadership, a large portion do not. A quarter of all teachers and a full third of unionized teachers would describe the relationship between their teachers union and district leadership as mostly about conflict and distrust.

Q. 82

Today in your district, how would you describe the relationship between the teachers union or association and the district leadership?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Conflict and distrust	26%	34%	17%	26%	25%
Cooperation and trust	45%	56%	32%	46%	33%
There is no union or association	13%	1%	26%	11%	27%
Not sure	16%	10%	24%	17%	15%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Union Membership and Engagement

Unionized teachers are split between whether their union simply provides them with practical benefits or if it also provides them with feelings of pride and solidarity.

Q. 106

Which of these best describes what it means to you personally to be a member of a teachers union or association?

Percent reporting of union members only.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter*
It provides me with feelings of pride and solidarity, in addition to the practical benefits	46%	46%	-	45%	56%
It brings me practical benefits, not really any more than that	43%	43%	-	44%	30%
It is something that makes me uncomfortable	7%	7%	-	6%	14%

Total (n=534)

Union (n=534)

District (n=503)

Charter (n=31)

**Small base size; results should be considered directional only.*

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Union Membership and Engagement

All teachers, and in particular unionized teachers, believe their unions do best at protecting teachers' jobs, bargaining for benefits and salaries, and advocating for policies that are in the best interests of teachers. Unions do the least well at expanding the career ladder for teachers, advocating for social issues that are not specifically about education, and providing teachers with training.

Total (n=1,000)
 Union (n=534)
 Nonunion (n=466)
 District (n=910)
 Charter (n=90)

Q. 115-130 Summary Table

Would you say [UNION: your union does/ NONUNION: teachers unions do] an excellent job, good, only fair, or a poor job at each of the following? Percent reporting "Excellent" or "Good."

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Protects teachers' jobs	69%	82%	54%	69%	64%
Bargains for health/retirement benefits	64%	77%	50%	65%	56%
Bargains for wages/salary	64%	79%	47%	66%	50%
Advocates for policies that are in the best interests of teachers	63%	76%	49%	65%	42%
Handles members' problems and grievances	62%	76%	46%	63%	50%
Provides information on policy issues relevant to members	60%	75%	44%	62%	49%
Advocates to uphold teacher tenure	58%	72%	43%	59%	54%
Ensures that schools are a safe and healthy work environment	57%	69%	43%	58%	48%
Advocates for policies that are in the best interests of students	52%	62%	40%	53%	45%
Negotiates new ways to more meaningfully and effectively evaluate teachers	47%	60%	32%	47%	43%
Provides information about political candidates and their issue positions	47%	57%	35%	48%	34%
Supports/endorsees political candidates	44%	55%	31%	45%	36%
Provides support and mentoring to new teachers	44%	55%	32%	43%	48%
Provides teachers with high-quality training and professional development	42%	53%	31%	42%	42%
Advocates for social issues that are not specifically about education	38%	46%	29%	38%	37%
Expands the career ladder for teachers by negotiating new and differentiated roles and responsibilities	38%	43%	32%	38%	38%

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Union Membership and Engagement

These effectiveness ratings are in line with teachers' preferences for the roles unions serve and why they chose to be a member. Teachers join the union largely because they believe it will help them with professional security, help them professionally, and help them financially.

Total (n=534)
 Union (n=534)
 District (n=503)
 Charter (n=31)

*Small base size; results should be considered directional only.

Q. 107

Which of the following most accurately describes why you are a member of a teachers union?

Percent reporting of union members only.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter*
Believe the union helps me with professional security	70%	70%	-	70%	63%
Believe the union helps me professionally	55%	55%	-	55%	53%
Believe the union helps me financially	52%	52%	-	52%	45%
Agree with the union's education policy positions	38%	38%	-	39%	28%
Provides me with a feeling of pride and solidarity with my colleagues	34%	34%	-	33%	48%
Agree with the union's political positions	23%	23%	-	23%	31%
Agree with the union's policy positions that are unrelated to education	14%	14%	-	14%	19%
Other	5%	5%	-	6%	3%
None of the above	0%	0%	-	0%	0%
Not sure	2%	2%	-	1%	5%

Q. 108

Which of the following most accurately describes why you are member of a teachers union?

Percent reporting of union members only.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter*
I am a member of a teachers union because I want to be	73%	73%	-	74%	65%
I am a member of a teachers union because I have to be	27%	27%	-	26%	35%

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Union Membership and Engagement

Q. 114

Which of the following, if any, are the reason(s) you are not a member of a union? Please select all that apply.

Percent reporting of nonunion teachers only.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	Public	Charter*
Do not want to pay dues	42%	-	42%	42%	39%
Do not believe the union helps me professionally	19%	-	19%	20%	15%
Do not believe the union helps me financially	19%	-	19%	19%	16%
Disagree with the union's political positions	14%	-	14%	12%	28%
Disagree with the union's policy positions that are unrelated to education	11%	-	11%	10%	20%
Disagree with the union's education policy positions	6%	-	6%	5%	10%
Other (Please specify)	18%	-	18%	18%	12%
None of the above	18%	-	18%	18%	23%
Not sure	8%	-	8%	9%	7%

Total (n=466)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=433)

Charter (n=33)

*Small base size; results should be considered directional only.

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Union Membership and Engagement

Although teachers believe unions are important, more than half of all teachers believe teachers unions charge higher dues than are warranted by what they do for teachers, including most unionized teachers.

Q. 103

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The union charges higher dues than are warranted by what it does for teachers.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net agree	63%	54%	72%	61%	74%
Net disagree	37%	46%	28%	39%	26%
Strongly agree	21%	20%	22%	21%	20%
Somewhat agree	42%	34%	50%	40%	54%
Somewhat disagree	28%	32%	23%	29%	22%
Strongly disagree	9%	14%	4%	10%	4%

Total (n=1,000)

Union (n=534)

Nonunion (n=466)

District (n=910)

Charter (n=90)

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Union Membership and Engagement

Teachers union engagement is relatively low, with only about half of union members reporting that they voted in a union election, spoke to a union representative, or attended a union meeting in the past year.

Q. 109

Which of the following union activities, if any, have you done in the past year? Percent reporting of union members only.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter*
Read news from your union	61%	61%	-	63%	42%
Vote in a union election	53%	53%	-	54%	34%
Speak with your union representative	51%	51%	-	52%	33%
Attend a union meeting or event	50%	50%	-	50%	52%
Complete a survey from your union	48%	48%	-	50%	26%
Participate in a rally organized by your union	18%	18%	-	17%	28%
Take an online advocacy action organized by your union	15%	15%	-	14%	25%
Serve as an elected or appointed union representative	13%	13%	-	13%	18%
Other	1%	1%	-	1%	0%
None of the above	6%	6%	-	5%	7%

Total (n=534)

Union (n=534)

District (n=503)

Charter (n=31)

*Small base size; results should be considered directional only.

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Repercussions of *Janus v. AFSCME*

Despite the large impact it will have on their professions, teachers had heard very little about *Janus v. AFSCME*, even in April and May, months after the Supreme Court had heard arguments in the case, and a decision was expected in June. More than half reported that they had heard nothing about the case.

Even upon reading a brief description of the case, teachers struggled to make sense of this complex issue. Teachers' reactions to whether a ruling in favor of Mark Janus or AFSCME would have a positive impact on them and unions demonstrate teachers' lack of understanding about the landmark case and how it could impact them and their profession.

Total (n=1,000)
Union (n=534)
Nonunion (n=466)
District (n=910)
Charter (n=90)

Q. 131

How much have you heard or read about the Janus v. the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Supreme Court case?

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
A lot	7%	10%	3%	7%	11%
Some	15%	20%	10%	15%	15%
Not much	21%	23%	19%	20%	31%
Nothing at all	57%	47%	68%	58%	43%

Please read the following brief explanation about Janus v. American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) before answering the next few questions.

Janus v. AFSCME is a case currently before the Supreme Court between Mark Janus, an Illinois state employee, and the AFSCME union. While Mark Janus is not a member of AFSCME, AFSCME does represent him in collective bargaining with the state. The case is about the right of labor unions to collect fees from nonunion members for activities including representation for wages and benefits, grievances, and disciplinary matters.

By law in Illinois, the union has a duty to fairly represent all workers in a bargaining unit, including those who are not union members. AFSCME and other unions are allowed to charge nonunion workers minimum fees for this representation.

Mark Janus claims that as a nonunion member, he should not be required to any pay fees to the union. Janus's position is that paying fees to the union violates his First Amendment right to free speech, based on the argument that collective bargaining itself is political.

If the Supreme Court rules in favor of Mark Janus, the ruling will replace all other laws in all states about unions' ability to collect fees from non-members. Unions will no longer be able to collect fair-share fees from non-members, though they may still be required to continue to represent nonunion workers.

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Repercussions of Janus v. AFSCME

Split Sample A (AFSCME):
 Total (n=502)
 Union (n=273)
 Nonunion (n=229)
 District (n=455)
 Charter (n=47)

Split Sample B (Mark Janus):
 Total (n=498)
 Union (n=261)
 Nonunion (n=237)
 District (n=455)
 Charter (n=43)

*Small base size; results should be considered directional only.

Q. 132

If the case is ruled in favor of [A: the AFSCME union/B: Mark Janus], do you believe this will have a positive impact on you personally, a negative impact, or no impact at all? (Split Sample)

A: AFSCME UNION	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter*
Net positive	24%	28%	19%	23%	31%
Net negative	25%	29%	21%	25%	29%
Very positive	8%	9%	5%	7%	10%
Somewhat positive	16%	19%	14%	16%	21%
Somewhat negative	14%	14%	14%	14%	17%
Very negative	11%	15%	6%	11%	12%
No impact at all	36%	28%	46%	37%	24%
Not sure	15%	15%	14%	15%	16%

B: MARK JANUS	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter*
Net positive	23%	24%	21%	22%	33%
Net negative	24%	30%	17%	25%	15%
Very positive	8%	9%	7%	8%	11%
Somewhat positive	14%	15%	14%	14%	22%
Somewhat negative	17%	21%	12%	17%	13%
Very negative	7%	9%	5%	8%	2%
No impact at all	37%	30%	45%	37%	38%
Not sure	16%	16%	17%	17%	15%

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Repercussions of *Janus v. AFSCME*

Split Sample A (AFSCME):
Total (n=502)
Union (n=273)
Nonunion (n=229)
District (n=455)
Charter (n=47)

Split Sample B (Mark Janus):
Total (n=498)
Union (n=261)
Nonunion (n=237)
District (n=455)
Charter (n=43)

*Small base size; results should be considered directional only.

Q. 133

If the case is ruled in favor of [A: the AFSCME union/B: Mark Janus], do you believe this will have a positive impact on public employee unions in the United States, a negative impact, or no impact at all? (Split Sample)

A: AFSCME UNION	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter*
Net positive	28%	31%	25%	28%	34%
Net negative	47%	51%	43%	48%	44%
Very positive	9%	9%	9%	8%	12%
Somewhat positive	19%	22%	16%	19%	22%
Somewhat negative	26%	23%	28%	25%	31%
Very negative	22%	27%	15%	23%	13%
No impact at all	7%	5%	11%	8%	5%
Not sure	17%	14%	21%	17%	17%

B: MARK JANUS	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter*
Net positive	28%	29%	27%	29%	27%
Net negative	46%	48%	43%	46%	46%
Very positive	10%	13%	7%	10%	5%
Somewhat positive	19%	17%	21%	18%	22%
Somewhat negative	27%	25%	30%	26%	38%
Very negative	18%	23%	13%	19%	8%
No impact at all	7%	6%	8%	7%	9%
Not sure	19%	16%	22%	19%	18%

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Repercussions of Janus v. AFSCME

Split Sample A (AFSCME):
Total (n=502)
Union (n=273)
Nonunion (n=229)
District (n=455)
Charter (n=47)

Split Sample B (Mark Janus):
Total (n=498)
Union (n=261)
Nonunion (n=237)
District (n=455)
Charter (n=43)

*Small base size; results should be considered directional only.

Q. 134

If the case is ruled in favor of [A: the AFSCME union/B: Mark Janus], do you believe this will have a positive impact on teachers in the United States, a negative impact, or no impact at all? (Split Sample)

A: AFSCME UNION	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter*
Net positive	33%	33%	34%	33%	39%
Net negative	41%	45%	37%	42%	36%
Very positive	8%	9%	8%	8%	8%
Somewhat positive	25%	24%	26%	24%	31%
Somewhat negative	22%	19%	26%	22%	23%
Very negative	19%	26%	11%	20%	13%
No impact at all	7%	6%	8%	8%	2%
Not sure	18%	16%	21%	18%	23%

B: MARK JANUS	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter*
Net positive	31%	31%	31%	31%	34%
Net negative	42%	44%	39%	42%	40%
Very positive	10%	12%	8%	10%	7%
Somewhat positive	21%	19%	23%	21%	27%
Somewhat negative	27%	25%	30%	27%	35%
Very negative	14%	19%	10%	15%	5%
No impact at all	9%	8%	9%	9%	6%
Not sure	18%	17%	20%	18%	21%

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Repercussions of *Janus v. AFSCME*

Despite the absence of strong feelings about the impact of *Janus v. AFSCME*, teachers are clear about the importance of collective bargaining and their vulnerability in school politics in the absence of unions. When asked if they would be likely to actively opt in to their union if they were not automatically enrolled, eight out of 10 said they would be likely to do so. But for nonunion members currently paying fair-share fees, six out of 10 would be likely to opt out of paying any fees.

Total (n=1,000)
 Union (n=534)
 Nonunion (n=466)
 District (n=910)
 Charter (n=90)

Q. 104

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Without collective bargaining, the working conditions and salaries of teachers would be much worse.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net agree	86%	94%	77%	86%	86%
Net disagree	14%	6%	23%	14%	14%
Strongly agree	44%	58%	28%	45%	35%
Somewhat agree	42%	36%	50%	42%	51%
Somewhat disagree	11%	5%	18%	11%	11%
Strongly disagree	3%	1%	5%	3%	3%

Q. 105

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Without a union, teachers would be vulnerable to school politics or administrators who abuse their power.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter
Net agree	85%	92%	76%	84%	87%
Net disagree	15%	8%	24%	16%	13%
Strongly agree	52%	65%	36%	51%	54%
Somewhat agree	33%	28%	40%	33%	33%
Somewhat disagree	12%	6%	19%	13%	9%
Strongly disagree	3%	2%	5%	3%	4%

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Repercussions of *Janus v. AFSCME*

Total (n=534)
 Union (n=534)
 District (n=503)
 Charter (n=31)

*Small base size; results should be considered directional only.

Q. 111

How likely would you be in the coming year to consider opting out of your union membership?

Percent reporting of union members only.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter*
Net likely	18%	18%	-	15%	52%
Net not likely	79%	79%	-	81%	42%
Very likely	6%	6%	-	6%	14%
Somewhat likely	11%	11%	-	10%	39%
Not very likely	14%	14%	-	14%	8%
Not likely at all	65%	65%	-	67%	35%
Not sure	3%	3%	-	3%	5%

Q. 112

If you were not automatically enrolled into your union membership, how likely would you be in the coming year to actively opt in?

Percent reporting of union members only.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter*
Net likely	82%	82%	-	82%	84%
Net not likely	13%	13%	-	13%	10%
Very likely	60%	60%	-	61%	33%
Somewhat likely	22%	22%	-	20%	51%
Not very likely	5%	5%	-	5%	8%
Not likely at all	7%	7%	-	8%	3%
Not sure	5%	5%	-	5%	5%

EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Repercussions of *Janus v. AFSCME*

Q. 135

If the Supreme Court case rules in favor of Mark Janus, you would have the option to opt out of paying agency fees to a union. How likely would you be to opt out of paying agency fees to a union? Percent reporting of nonunion teachers only.

	Total	Union	Nonunion	District	Charter*
Net likely	61%	-	61%	60%	68%
Net not likely	22%	-	22%	22%	22%
Very likely	36%	-	36%	36%	38%
Somewhat likely	25%	-	25%	25%	30%
Not very likely	13%	-	13%	12%	20%
Not likely at all	9%	-	9%	10%	2%
Not sure	17%	-	17%	18%	10%

Total (n=332)

Nonunion (n=332)

District (n=298)

Charter (n=33)

*Small base size; results should be considered directional only.



About Educators for Excellence

Our nation's education system is leaving millions of students—including an overwhelming number of students of color and low-income students—unprepared for college, career, and life. Only one in 10 students of color and low-income students graduates from college in the United States. The result is an opportunity gap and divide along racial and class lines that threatens the future of our communities, economy, and democracy.

While research shows that classroom teachers are the single most important in-school factor in improving student achievement, their diverse voices are consistently left out of education policy decisions. Even though policymakers at every level of the system are talking about teachers, they rarely are talking with teachers.

Founded by public school teachers, Educators for Excellence is a growing movement of more than 30,000 educators, united around a common set of values and principles for improving student learning and elevating the teaching profession. With chapters in Boston, Chicago, Connecticut, Los Angeles, Minnesota, and New York, we work together to identify issues that impact our schools, create solutions to these challenges, and advocate for policies and programs that give all students access to a quality education.

Educators for Excellence is a nonprofit and proud to receive financial support from a diverse base of nonprofit, corporate, and family foundations as well as individual donors, including teachers and community members, who believe in the power of teacher-led change.

Our Vision

Educators for Excellence envisions an equitable and excellent education system that provides all students the opportunity to succeed and elevates the teaching profession.

Our Mission

Educators for Excellence ensures that teachers have a leading voice in the policies that impact their students and profession.

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