



Voices from the Classroom 2024

Central Takeaways and Calls to Congress

Voices from the Classroom 2024—a nationally representative sample of 1,000 educators—reveals a profession in crisis. Teachers’ alarmingly low morale requires an urgent call for change: they want a more collaborative and dynamic profession; to learn about possibilities beyond the one-teacher, one-classroom model; and better support leveraging research-backed instructional practices and emerging technologies in the classroom. We must reimagine the teaching profession, creating one that is more collaborative, dynamic, sustainable, diverse, and rewarding. We must design modern classrooms ready to withstand the change of tomorrow.

“Other professions have shifted and innovated. Why not ours?”

Genelle Faulkner | High School
Biology Teacher, Boston, MA

THEME
1

Teachers continue to believe that their students are struggling: 70% report that their students are behind academically and 64% report that their mental well-being is worse compared to pre-pandemic.

- 70% of teachers say their students are behind academically compared to pre-pandemic—compared to 78% in 2022—and 64% say their students’ mental well-being is worse—compared to 79% in 2022.
- Only 23% of teachers believe that their school very effectively meets the academic needs of all of its students, including the unique needs of student subgroups.

THEME
2

Teachers’ outlook on the profession remains at an all-time low, following a precipitous drop during the pandemic: just 16% of teachers indicate they’d recommend the profession to others.

- Teachers are less likely to say they plan to stay in the classroom for their entire career than they were in 2022: 77% say this today, down nine points from 2022.
- Just 16% of teachers say they would recommend the profession to others.
- Teachers’ top three choices for how to better recruit and retain teachers are higher salaries, better benefits, and opportunities for higher pay for working in hard-to-staff schools or subject areas.

THEME
3

Though many teachers of color continue to report low levels of job satisfaction, their morale and outlook have improved significantly over the past few years, highlighting a stark divergence with the general population of teachers.

- The percentage of teachers of color reporting their students have recovered from the pandemic has increased more quickly than in the national sample: 29% of teachers of color reported their students were behind academically compared to pre-pandemic in 2022, while 15% say this today.
- Teachers of color are more likely to say they plan to stay in the classroom their entire career—90% compared to 77%—and that they’d recommend the profession to others—29% compared to 16%.
- This more positive outlook contrasts against a concerning trend specific to teachers of color: they are more likely to have been told to limit discussions of identity and oppression—46% compared to just 25%.

THEME
4

Teachers are calling for more collaborative and dynamic work environments, showing interest in strategic staffing approaches that break from traditional school models.

- Teachers agree with widespread calls to make teaching more collaborative and dynamic. Only 46% report that the profession is collaborative—meaning teachers have the opportunity to work and learn together—and 26% report that it is dynamic—meaning teachers have opportunities for growth.
- 64% of teachers report wanting to spend more time collaborating with colleagues, making it the top activity they wanted to spend more time on out of 13 options.
- Teachers are open to staffing innovation but need more support understanding it. 50% say they favor the idea of team-teaching, and 31% say they are open to it but want to learn more. 96% report they would be willing to add students to their class sizes in exchange for a \$10,000 salary increase.

THEME
5

While still positive, teachers' satisfaction with their unions' efforts to address "bread and butter" issues like salaries and improved working conditions is diminishing, and satisfaction with efforts to transform the profession remains low.

- Slight majorities of teachers report being satisfied with teachers unions' efforts to do what many think of as their primary role: advocating for teachers' salaries. 52% of teachers believe unions do an "excellent or good job" doing so, down from 64% in 2020.
- The percentage of teachers satisfied with their unions' roles in reimagining the profession has remained below a majority: 45% report satisfaction with unions' efforts to negotiate new ways to meaningfully and effectively evaluate teachers; 42% are satisfied with efforts to provide high-quality professional development; and 38% are satisfied with efforts to expand career ladders.

THEME
6

While districts across the country have adopted curricular materials aligned with the science of reading, teachers indicate that to truly shift literacy instructional practices, better support and training are needed.

- Legislative requirements that curricular materials align with the science of how kids learn how to read are now reaching the classroom: nearly two-thirds of teachers report that their district has implemented new curricular materials aligned to the Science of Reading in the past three years.
- Just a quarter of teachers who work in districts that have adopted these new materials say their instructional practices have shifted "very much" as a result. This number remains low for elementary school teachers—just 31%—who are most likely to be directly impacted.

THEME
7

Teachers express a mix of curiosity and hesitancy about the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the classroom, indicating a need for more training on the topic, while teachers of color specifically are already embracing its use and are eager to learn more.

- While some teachers—17%—are already confidently leveraging AI, and others—13%—oppose its use in schools altogether, the majority exist somewhere in the middle: they understand its utility, but they also say more training is needed, that they have concerns about its use, or both.
- Teachers of color already widely support the technology's use in schools. More than half report that it has the potential to transform schooling in a positive way, compared to only 14% of teachers nationally.

Calls to Congress

1. **Leverage and amplify teacher perspective in policy decision-making**—particularly during Teacher Appreciation Month but also year-round—by using the survey to strengthen your own policymaking and amplifying it on social media. Click [HERE](#) to share the survey findings on X (Twitter).
2. **Bridge the research to practice gap to support reimagination of the profession** by investing in research and development programs and supporting legislation that makes research more actionable. Examples include:
 - **HR.8319:** The Developing and Advancing Innovative Learning Models Act, which would authorize \$570M in annual competitive funding to develop innovative learning models and \$180 million in annual formula funding to support the adoption of these models in the classroom
 - **H.R.6691:** The New Essential Education Discoveries (NEED) Act, which would establish a new center dedicated to developing and disseminating innovative, cutting-edge practices and tools for teachers
 - **S.3392:** Advancing Research in Education Act (AERA), which would modernize the Education Sciences Reform Act (ESRA) by, among other things, requiring the creation of a system for disseminating accessibly formatted research findings and better engagement of teachers in research
 - The **Education Innovation and Research (EIR) program**, which funds the development, implementation, and evaluation of evidence-based, field-initiated innovations to improve achievement for high-need students