

The 2024 Texas Teacher Poll:

# The Value of the Texas Teaching Profession



# Letter from the Charles Butt Foundation

This year marks the fifth consecutive Charles Butt Foundation Texas Teacher Poll. The Foundation has invested in five years of robust poll research, data analysis, and outreach for one reason: We value Texas teachers.

We know teachers are the most influential element in Texas public education. They are the difference-makers for our students, their families, and the future health of our communities and state.

In our view, when you value someone, you listen to them. You affirm their perspective. Lastly, you take action and show your support. We have also heard in previous polls about their day-to-day challenges and proposed solutions as they teach the diverse body of more than five million students in Texas public schools. We have affirmed teachers' perspectives by systematically analyzing and sharing their input with the education field in Texas and across the country.

Based on this year's teacher poll data, there are three areas—"the three Rs"—where action and support would make the most difference for teachers: **Relationships, Resources, and Respect.**

Teaching is a highly relational profession. Teachers must be adept at the kinds of skills that build trust, engagement, and a sense of belonging. These skills are highly sought-after, take time to develop, and cannot be automated. School and district leaders must provide work environments that support **relationship**-building among teachers, students, and families. Teachers tell us they need autonomy and to feel trusted by administrators, and they want to work in schools with enough capacity and appropriate class sizes to foster meaningful connections in our communities.

School districts and the state must provide the **resources** teachers need to thrive. This includes flexibility in scheduling and leave policies so teachers may take care of their own needs. Teachers stress the importance of compensation for additional leadership or mentorship roles.

Above all, teachers need and deserve our **respect**. Paying teachers a living wage and recognizing how hard they work on behalf of our students, schools, and communities is the primary way to reflect how much we value them. Additionally, teachers tell us respect from school administrators looks like advocating on behalf of teachers, motivating them, and developing their skills.

What follows in this report are data, open-ended responses, and visualizations illustrating the urgent need for education leaders, researchers, and policymakers to prioritize the three R's to support the teaching profession. With a renewed focus on Texas teachers' relationships, resources, and respect, the profession will strengthen and thrive, and so will our students, families, and communities.



**Shari B. Albright**  
President





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# Key findings

**S**eventy-seven percent of teachers in the representative, random sample statewide poll say they are not paid a living wage. Indeed, adjusted for inflation, the median salary reported by public school teachers in the state in 2023 was \$5,000 less than it was in 2020.

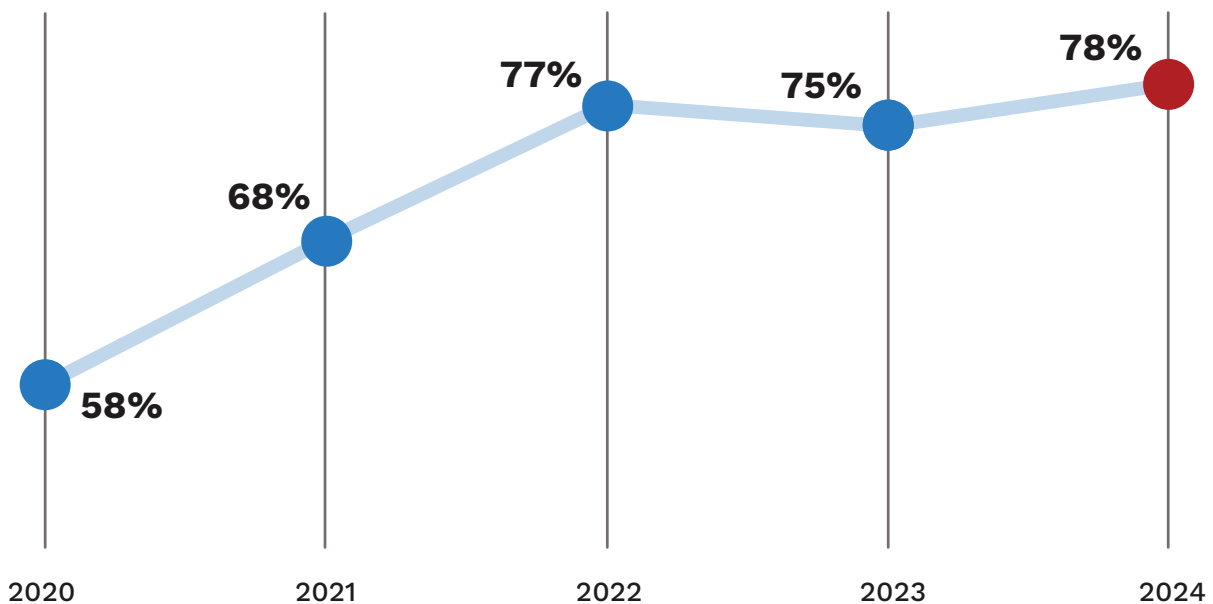
The share of Texas public school teachers in 2024 who call lack of funding one of the biggest problems facing their community's public schools has more than doubled since 2022, rising to become one of the three leading concerns in the Charles Butt Foundation's fifth annual Texas Teacher Poll.

Leading issues also highlighted in the 2024 poll are well-being and problems in the teaching profession, including low pay, poor working conditions, and a lack of support or respect.

Among a variety of challenges in working conditions, 62 percent of teachers say at least one of their classes has too many students for them to teach effectively. About seven in 10 say their campus does not always have resources available for them to take the personal time off they need.

## Teachers Considering Leaving the Classroom

% Texas teachers seriously considering leaving



Given these and other pressures, 78 percent of public school teachers in the state say they have seriously considered leaving their position in the past year. That has held essentially steady since rising steeply from 58 percent in 2020 to 77 percent in 2022.

That said, there are some bright notes. Seven in 10 teachers feel they have a great deal or good amount of influence on the instructional materials they use; about two-thirds say the same about the content they teach. The percentages of teachers who feel valued by their administrators and by their students' parents have increased since 2022. Encouragingly, comradery is high, with eight in 10 feeling highly valued by other teachers at their school.

The importance of appreciation and encouragement in the workplace is evident. Teachers who feel valued by their administrators and fellow teachers are more likely than others to express positive attitudes about their workplace across a range of measures. They also are less apt to have seriously considered leaving the profession.

The value of workplace support is highlighted in responses to an open-ended question asking teachers to describe the factors that encourage them to remain in the profession. Twenty-eight percent mention their colleagues, leading the list of reasons. An additional 14 percent cite support from their campus or district administrators.



Elementary school teacher reading to the class



Still, most teachers lack consistent support from their administrators. Fewer than half say their administrators regularly advocate for them in interactions with parents (45 percent) or provide opportunities for them to develop their teaching skills further (43 percent). The percentages fall sharply for motivating them to remain in the profession (30 percent) or encouraging them to advocate for their needs (27 percent). More say their administrators do these things, but only occasionally.

Thirteen percent of teachers are regularly encouraged by their administrators to pursue an additional paid role at their school; an additional 29 percent are occasionally encouraged to do so. Chances to earn additional pay are scarce, with fewer than three in 10 teachers saying their school has adequate opportunities for them to take on paid leadership roles, earn higher pay for effective teaching, or be promoted. As with workplace support, teachers who do have these opportunities are less likely than others to have seriously considered leaving their job.

Sixty-six percent of teachers say their school does have adequate opportunities for unpaid leadership roles. However, these have mixed impacts on retention and, at worst, can spur a backlash: Teachers who say their administrators regularly encourage them to take on additional unpaid roles are more likely than others to say they have seriously considered leaving.



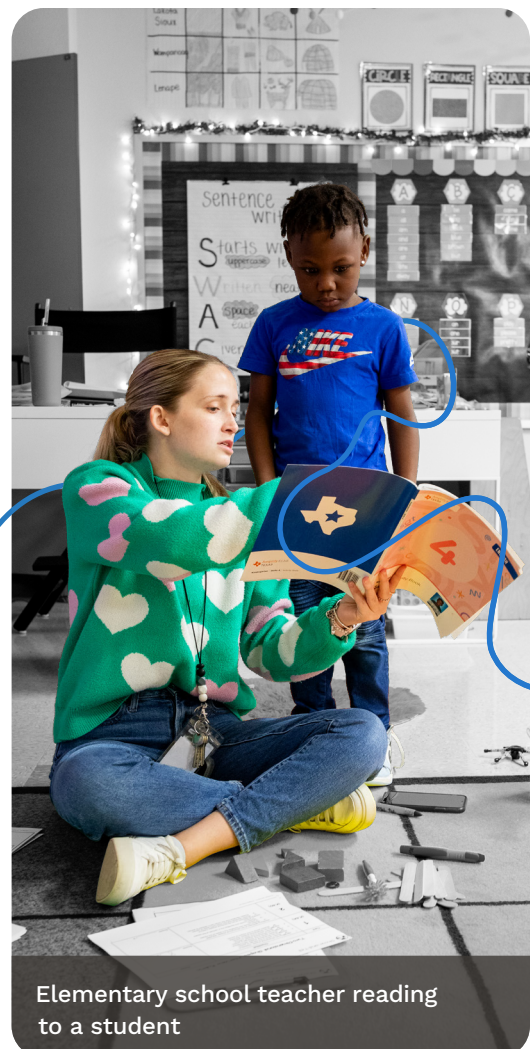
**“Lack of funding is the biggest issue because it affects everyone. We don’t have enough bus drivers, which affects families; we don’t have enough custodians, which affects the health of our students and teachers; we don’t have enough paraprofessionals who assist in classrooms, and we don’t have enough teachers. Increase pay across the board, and people might want to return to education.”**

— Texas public school teacher

Among other topics, the poll investigates teachers' experiences with mentoring, a role in which two-thirds have served, in most cases without pay or support. It also examines their use and ratings of instructional materials provided by their school or district. Ninety-one percent rate these materials positively for covering state standards, while about half say the same about their providing real-world tasks or reflecting students' interests or experiences.

The report also explores factors that teachers call most important in their choice of certification, their views on the barriers faced by their students, the factors they consider most important in school quality, and their attitudes toward school vouchers.

Among notable findings on these items, majorities of teachers say students at their campus face barriers including a lack of guidance in planning for life after high school, housing insecurity, food insecurity, and a lack of resources needed to participate in school events and activities outside the classroom. These reported barriers are especially prevalent among teachers in schools with more students from economically disadvantaged households.



Elementary school teacher reading to a student

In regard to school quality, a broad 84 percent of teachers say how well the school helps students learn self-management, interpersonal skills, and decision-making is highly important. Nearly as many say the same for supporting students' sense of belonging and preparing them for careers. Comparatively few say preparation for military service (29 percent) and standardized tests (23 percent) are highly important in school quality.

## About the poll

The results of the poll are from a representative statewide survey of 1,104 Texas public school teachers randomly selected from the Texas Education Agency's 2022-23 roster of 378,436 public school teachers in the state, matched with email addresses from MDR Education and the TEA's 2021-22 roster, where available. Data was collected via a secure online questionnaire March 4-April 2, 2024. Results have a margin of error of 3.5 percentage points for the full sample.<sup>1</sup> Sources of quotes from teachers included in the report are responses from open-ended poll questions.

The 2024 Texas Teacher Poll was directed by Jessica C. Enyioha, Ph.D., director of research; and Audrey Boklage, Ph.D., vice president of learning and impact; with Kendra Montejos Edwards, senior research associate; and Melissa Garza, Ph.D., senior research associate. The report was designed by John Jacob Moreno, multimedia designer, with Joel Goudeau, art director, and Lauren Reed, multimedia designer; with visualization support by Kurt Lockhart, senior program director of data insights; and web development support from Karen Wang, web developer. The lead analyst on this report is Allison De Jong, senior research analyst at Langer Research Associates, with Steven Sparks, Ph.D., research analyst; Lindsey Hendren, Ph.D., research associate; Jared Sousa, research associate; and Gary Langer, project director.

The Charles Butt Foundation expresses gratitude to the sample of teachers who participated in the poll and to the teachers who allowed their photographs to be featured in this report. The photography included in this report was captured by Anne Bannister, Brian Diggs, Joel Goudeau, and John Jacob Moreno. Findings and quotes in the report are not attributable to any teachers in the photographs.

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This report can be found online at: [CharlesButtFdn.org/2024TXTeacherPoll/](https://CharlesButtFdn.org/2024TXTeacherPoll/)

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<sup>1</sup> All differences described in this report have been tested for statistical significance. Those that are significant at the 95 percent confidence level (or higher) are reported without qualification. Those that are significant at 90 to less than 95 percent confidence are described as "slight" differences. Those that are significant at less than 90 percent confidence are not reported as differences.



# Biggest problems facing Texas public schools

**T**here is a sharp increase in the percentage of teachers who cite a lack of funding and resources as the biggest problem facing their community's public schools. In an open-ended question, 31 percent cite lack of funding, up 17 percentage points from its level in 2022.

The number of teachers mentioning school funding as the biggest problem facing public schools has increased sharply among teachers in cities (up 22 points, to 36 percent) and suburban areas (up 16 points, to 30 percent). It is lower, 20 percent, with essentially no change, among teachers in rural areas. It is up by 12 to 24 points in each region of the state, to 32 to 36 percent, except for East Texas, where it is essentially steady at about half that level.

While up sharply, mentions of school funding still trail issues surrounding the teaching profession as the topmost issue facing public schools; these are down six points since 2022 to 37 percent. Responses in this category consist of fewer than two in 10 teachers who specifically cite low teacher salaries (17 percent) or a lack of respect and support for the profession and educators more broadly (16 percent). Eleven percent of teachers mention their workloads and responsibilities.



Middle school band teacher instructing at the front of the class

Mentions of student well-being also rank prominently, cited by 33 percent, essentially unchanged since 2022. This includes 23 percent who point specifically to a lack of discipline or disruptive student behaviors and 7 percent who cite student apathy or lack of interest in education.

Other top problems (teachers were able to identify up to three issues each) include matters relating to parenting and family involvement, 22 percent; education quality, such as low standards, overcrowded classrooms and poor curricula, 16 percent; and issues with the teacher and staff workforce, including teacher shortages, too few certified teachers, or difficulty recruiting and retaining quality teachers, 16 percent. Each is roughly steady compared with 2022.

Among other issues, 11 percent of teachers mention political leadership and school administration as the biggest problem facing the public schools in their community, down 5 points from 2022. Nine percent mention interference from the state government or political bias and division in schools, and 8 percent cite issues surrounding standardized testing and accountability.

“

**“Teaching is an incredibly difficult job to do, much less to do well, and add to that difficulty the excessive amount of work (even with summers “off”) and minimal compensation, it is no wonder that few want to enter this profession and fewer stay in it longer. Funding that goes to the infrastructure necessary to decrease class sizes and increase teacher salaries will directly address the surface level problems with public education.”**

— Texas public school teacher

# Teacher morale and attrition

## Feeling valued

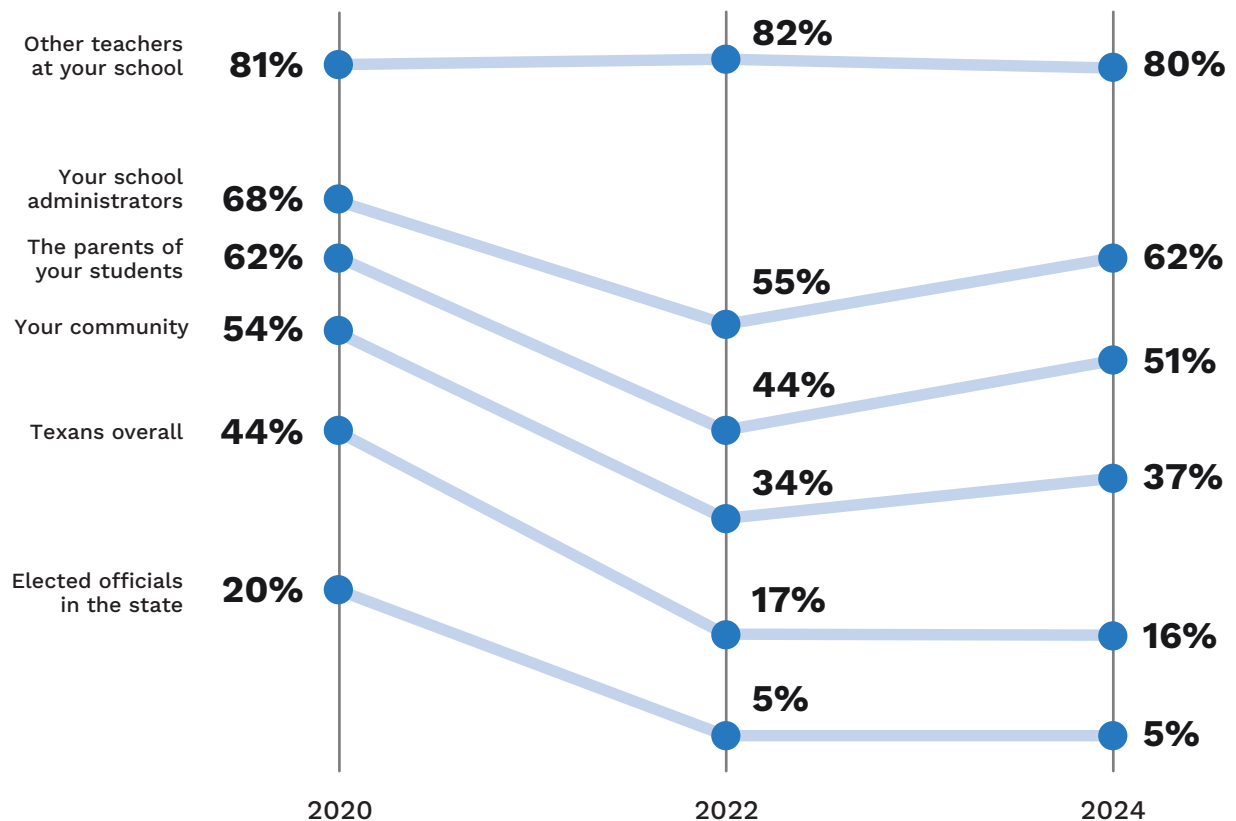
**T**eachers' sense of appreciation from their communities, Texans overall, and elected officials in the state have held at low levels after sharp declines during the pandemic. At the same time, morale shows some gains in other areas, with more teachers feeling valued by their school administrators, up 7 points since 2022, to 62 percent; and by parents, also up seven points, to 51 percent.<sup>2</sup>

Comradery has held strong throughout, with 80 percent of teachers feeling valued by other teachers at their school, essentially unchanged since first measured in 2020.

2 "Feeling valued," in these results, refers to teachers who report feeling valued a great deal or a good amount, as opposed to just some, a little, or not at all.

## Teachers' Sense of Feeling Valued Among Groups

% Texas teachers who feel valued a great deal or good amount





The largest increases since 2022 in feeling valued by parents occurred among teachers:

- With five or fewer years of experience (up 16 points),
- Who are Black (up 14 points),
- Who are younger than 45 (up 13 points), and
- In urban areas (up 13 points).

Teachers in West Texas also have one of the largest increases since 2022 in feeling valued by parents, up 14 points to 57 percent. Similar shares of teachers in Dallas/Fort Worth (55 percent) and Houston (54 percent) feel valued by parents, compared with 41 percent in East Texas, with teachers in Central (46 percent) and South/Southwest (49 percent) Texas in between. Increases in feeling valued by school administrators similarly are sharpest among teachers in West Texas, up 16 points since 2022. Seventy percent in West Texas feel valued by administrators, compared with 58 percent in Houston and East Texas. It is 61 to 64 percent elsewhere in Texas. In another regional gap, 46 percent of West Texas teachers feel valued by their community, dropping slightly to 34 percent in Dallas/Fort Worth and Houston, with other regions in between. Regional differences in feeling valued by other stakeholders are smaller or nonsignificant.

Other differences emerge by school type. Elementary school teachers (60 percent) are more apt than middle school (40 percent) and high school teachers (45 percent) to feel valued by their students' parents. Elementary school teachers also are slightly more likely to feel valued by their community, 41 percent compared with 34 percent among middle school teachers and 34 percent among high school teachers.

Fifty-nine percent of teachers at schools with fewer than a quarter of students from economically disadvantaged households feel valued by their community, compared with 31 percent of teachers at schools with three-quarters or more students from economically disadvantaged households. There also are significant gaps in feeling valued by administrators, 74 percent among teachers at schools with fewer students from economically disadvantaged households compared with 57 percent of teachers at schools with more students from economically disadvantaged households; and in feeling valued by other teachers at their school, 90 percent compared with 79 percent.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The share of students from economically disadvantaged households by campus was obtained from the Texas Education Agency's Economically Disadvantaged Reports. Details about these classifications can be found at <https://tea.texas.gov/reports-and-data/student-data/standard-reports/peims-standard-reports>. We define schools with "fewer" students from economically disadvantaged households as those with fewer than 25 percent of enrolled students designated as economically disadvantaged, and schools with "more" students from economically disadvantaged households as those with 75 percent or more so designated.



**“The state of Texas doesn’t trust public schools to serve their communities in ways that we know would work.”**

**— Texas public school teacher**

Morale is higher across the board among teachers who receive greater workplace support. For example, teachers who are regularly encouraged by administrators to advocate for their own needs are more likely than others to feel valued by their administrators (95 percent compared with 50 percent), their community (62 percent compared with 28 percent), parents (69 percent compared with 44 percent), other teachers at their school (93 percent compared with 76 percent), Texans overall (27 percent compared with 12 percent), and elected officials in the state (11 percent compared with 3 percent). The ability to take time off also matters. Among teachers whose schools have the resources for them to always take personal time off as needed, 84 percent feel valued by their administrators, compared with 37 percent among teachers who can rarely or can never take time off.

Teachers who feel they are paid a living wage are more likely to say they feel valued by various groups, including administrators (72 percent compared with 59 percent), parents (65 percent compared with 47 percent), their community (51 percent compared with 33 percent), and Texans overall (23 percent compared with 14 percent).

Greater classroom autonomy is also associated with feeling valued. Teachers who report more influence in the instructional materials they use, the content they teach, and the decisions about curriculum made by their school administrators are more apt to feel valued by other teachers at their school, their administrators, their community, and Texans overall. For example, feeling valued by administrators ranges from 73 percent among those who feel they have at least some influence on administrator decisions to 50 percent among those who feel they have little or no influence.

## Risk of attrition

The risk of teacher attrition remains a pressing issue. Seventy-eight percent say they have seriously considered leaving their position as a public school teacher in the past year, remaining high since increasing by 19 points from 2020 to 2022, during the first two years of the coronavirus pandemic.

Having seriously considered leaving the profession is prevalent across demographic groups. It is reported by seven in 10 or more teachers regardless of gender, educational attainment, race/ethnicity, salary level, urbanicity, region, and tenure. In one gap, it peaks at 86 percent among teachers who are Black, compared with 77 percent among teachers who are White and 77 percent among teachers who are Hispanic. The difference between teachers who are Black and teachers who are Hispanic is slight, given sample sizes.



Elementary school teacher supporting students in the classroom



Considering leaving is related to overall morale. Teachers who feel valued by their community, parents, school administrators, and Texans overall are 17 to 26 points less apt than those who do not feel valued (i.e., a little or not at all) to have seriously considered leaving.

Pay is far from the only factor in teachers' considerations about leaving the profession. Even among teachers who feel they earn a living wage, 71 percent have seriously considered leaving the profession in the past year. This rises to 80 percent of teachers who feel they are not paid a living wage.

Lack of opportunities for promotion in title, increased pay in recognition of effective teaching and paid leadership roles are each associated with having seriously considered leaving the profession. Teachers who lack these opportunities are 19 to 24 points more apt than others to say they have seriously considered leaving.

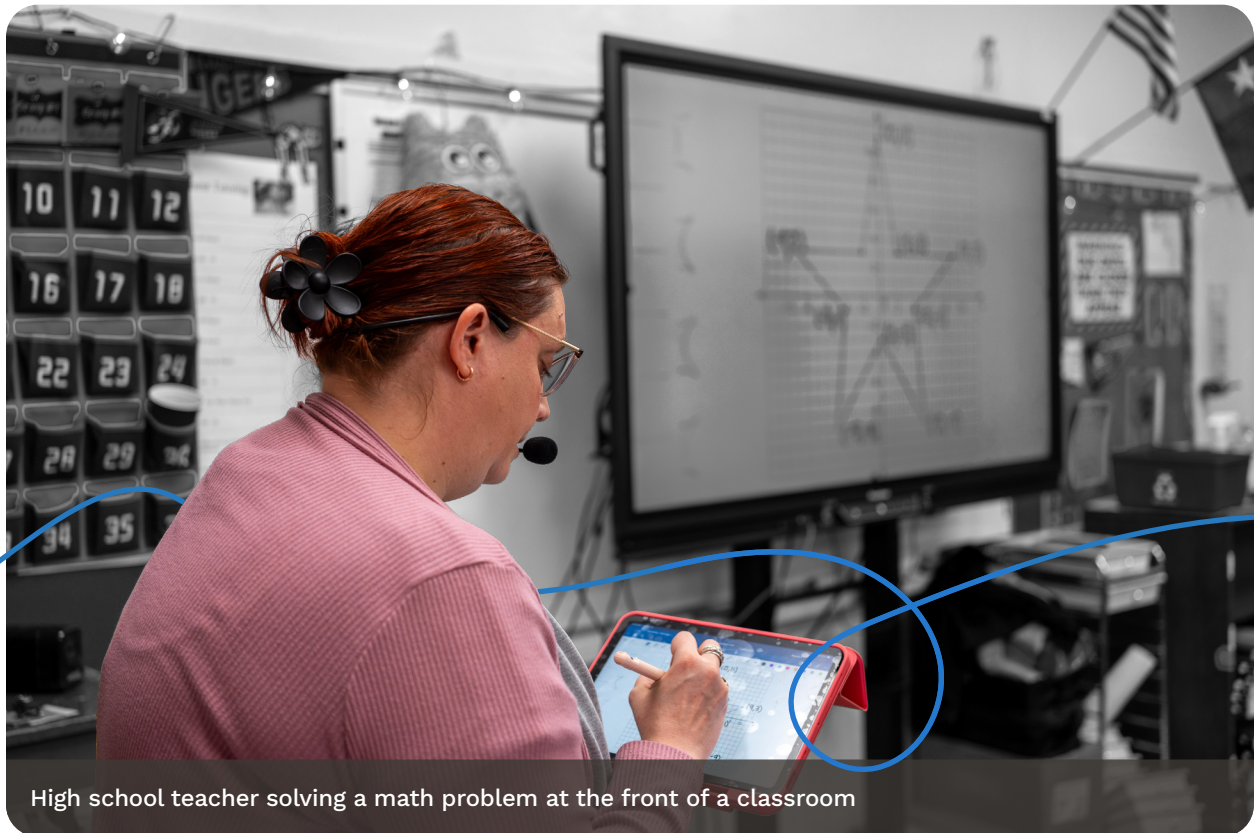


**“Budget cuts in districts are getting rid of electives, librarians, and special ed staff. With increasing student need and ever-increasing state testing we are stretching people too thin and they are quitting in droves.”**

— Texas public school teacher

The inability to take time off and feeling unsupported by administrators are among the strongest elements in the poll associated with having considered leaving the profession. Among teachers who say their school has resources for them to always take time off as needed, 61 percent have seriously considered leaving the profession. This jumps to 82 percent of those who only sometimes can take time off and 89 percent of those who rarely or never can.

Similarly, among teachers whose administrators regularly motivate them to remain in the profession, 63 percent have seriously considered leaving, compared with 78 percent of those whose administrators motivate them to remain in the profession occasionally and 90 percent of those whose administrators rarely or never offer this kind of support.



High school teacher solving a math problem at the front of a classroom

## Reasons to remain in the profession

Teachers were asked what factors—beyond the satisfaction of working with their students, given the prevalence of this response in previous research – encourage them to stay in the profession. Responses underscore the importance of collaboration and encouragement in the workplace.<sup>4</sup> Topping the list, 28 percent cite their colleagues.

As one teacher noted:

“Some factors are the relationships I have built with some of my peers. They literally make every day enjoyable and they continue to push me both professionally and personally to be better. The relationship I have with some of my team members also helps me with continuing wanting to show up every day.”

— Texas public school teacher

A quarter say they are driven by a love for the job and a sense of purpose.

“I help students learn to read and develop a love for reading. I am a teacher that follows a curriculum that helps students with dyslexia. While the procedures for this curriculum are given to me by my district, I can add my flare and love for learning to read. It helps my students know that reading might be difficult for them, yet they are developing strategies to learn to read well and in turn, begin to love reading!”

— Texas public school teacher

Even though asked to cite factors other than their students, 19 percent nonetheless say their students are a reason they stay in the profession.

Sixteen percent, especially teachers who have school-age children of their own, cite their schedule, including hours, vacation days, and summers off. One teacher noted, “besides wanting to be there for my students, the hours and schedule have a great appeal. I can be available to my own children as we all operate on the same school/work schedule.”

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<sup>4</sup> Two researchers independently conducted inductive coding of responses, developing 17 categories into which responses were assigned. The researchers reviewed and aligned on any codes on which they differed.

Among other reasons to stay, 14 percent expressed the importance of feeling valued by administrators.

“I have a great team. My principal is amazing and respects me as a professional. My immediate supervisor is encouraging and includes me in important decisions that affect my students.”

— Texas public school teacher

Another 14 percent mentioned curriculum, opportunities for creativity, their love of their subject, and classroom autonomy as reasons for remaining in the profession.

“I love when I get to be creative and design new lessons/activities for my students myself instead of sticking to a boxed curriculum. ... I love the field of education and learning, even if administrators and governments want to micromanage it to pieces.”

— Texas public school teacher

Nine percent provided responses related to job security or a satisfactory income. Eight percent expressed satisfaction with their school or district. One teacher said, “the school facilities are great and I enjoy the comradery of the other faculty and staff.”

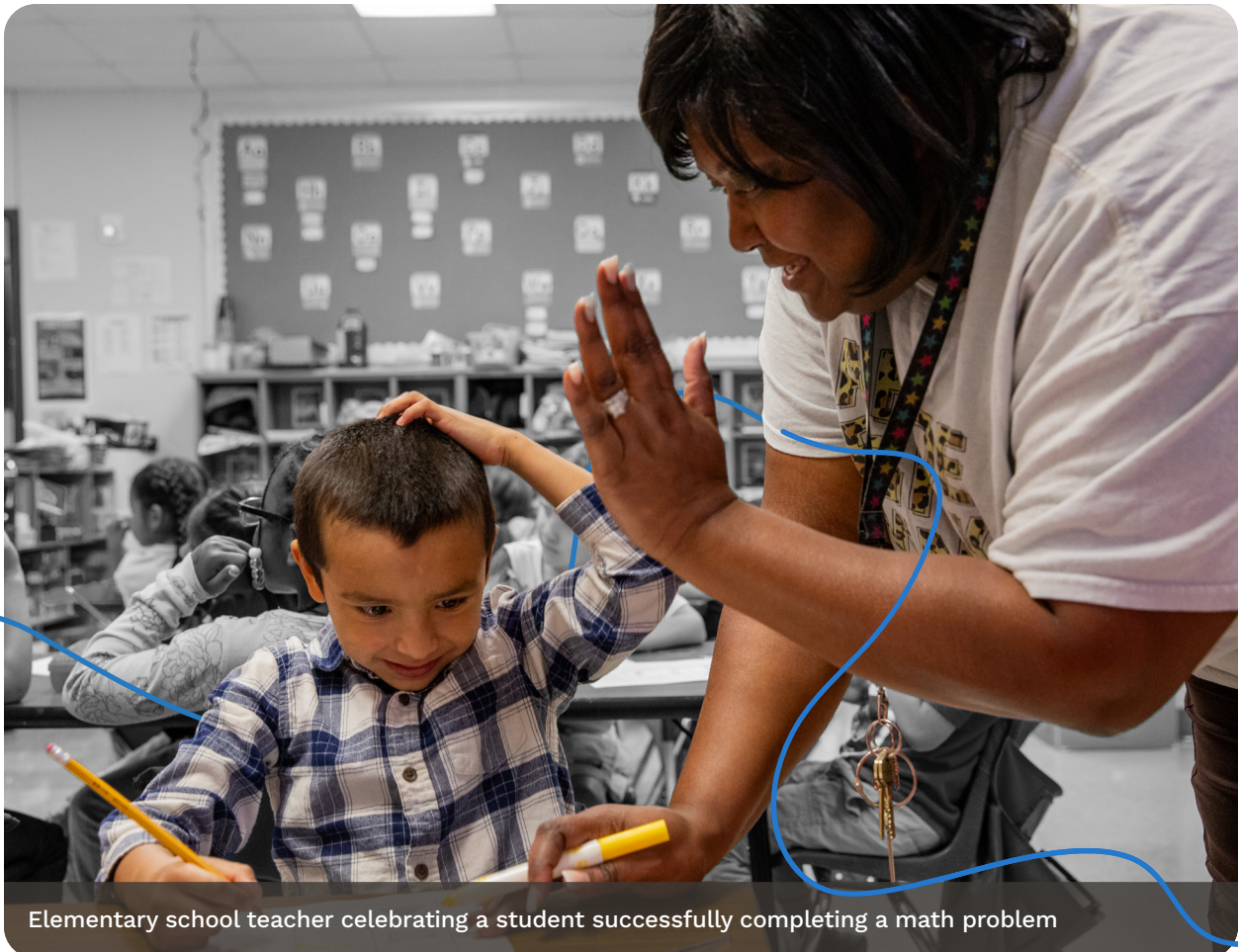


**“Many times it is the appreciation, gratitude, and support of my school administration that encourages me to remain in my current position.”**

— Texas public school teacher

Eight percent remain in the profession for the retirement benefits, largely saying they are “too close to retirement” to leave the profession. Seven percent say they have invested too much in their career or do not know what else they would be qualified to do. An additional 7 percent mention support they feel from their students’ families and the broader community.

Fewer, 4 percent of teachers, are encouraged to stay in the teaching profession because of opportunities for growth and/or advancement. Three percent mention benefits such as health insurance. In other responses, 2 percent cite athletics or coaching and 1 percent mention incentive pay as a reason they continue to teach.



Elementary school teacher celebrating a student successfully completing a math problem



# Teacher pay

**S**eventy-seven percent of teachers feel they are not paid a living wage, and median salaries have failed to keep up with inflation since it increased in 2021. Adjusting for inflation, the median teacher earned roughly \$5,000 less in 2023 than in 2020.

Teachers report a median gross annual salary before taxes of \$60,383 in 2023, up from \$55,220 in 2020 – a 9.3 percent increase. That compares with an 18.7 percent rise in consumer prices in Texas from 2020-2023.

Feeling underpaid peaks among teachers with lower salaries, though the sentiment is broadly felt even among higher earners. Eighty-one percent of those who earned less than \$55,000 annually last year say they are not paid a living wage, compared with 72 percent of those who earned \$65,000 or more.



Adjusting for inflation,  
the median Texas  
teacher earned roughly  
**\$5,000 less**  
in 2023 than in 2020

Reported median salaries differ by region, from \$65,000 in the Houston area to \$55,000 in East and West Texas. That said, median salaries by region do not entirely correspond to feelings of being paid a living wage, likely reflecting differences in costs of living. This sentiment peaks, at 82 percent, in Central Texas, where teachers in 2023 were most apt to say their pay was unfair.

Median salaries are much higher in urban (\$64,000) and suburban (\$60,000) areas than in rural ones (\$52,000). Suburban teachers (82 percent) are more likely than those in cities (72 percent) to feel they are not paid a living wage, with teachers in rural areas in between at 77 percent.

Pay is also higher among high school teachers, teachers with postgraduate degrees, and teachers with longer tenures than among their counterparts. Feelings of not being paid a living wage are again broadly expressed across each of these teacher groups, though the feeling is more prevalent among elementary school teachers (80 percent) than among high school teachers (71 percent).



Elementary school teacher waving to students on a school bus

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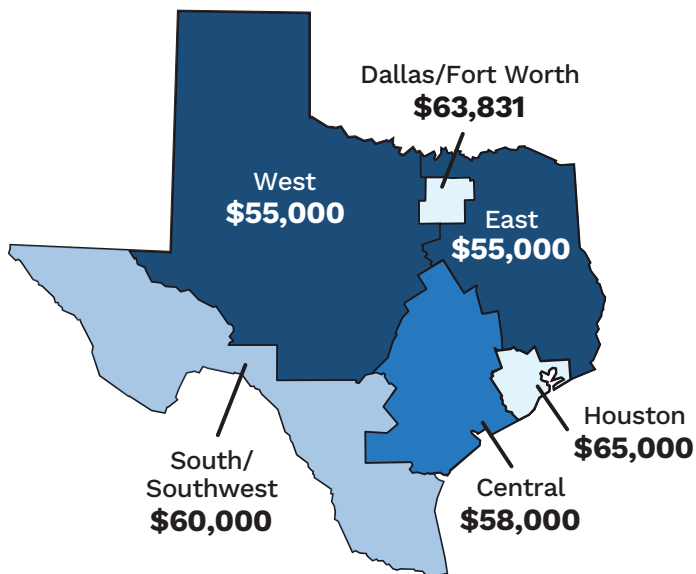
**“I’m able to stay [in the teaching profession] because I’m in a two income family. If I were single, I would need to seek better pay.”**

— Texas public school teacher

In another gap, the median reported salary among teachers who are women is \$60,000, compared with \$65,000 among men. Half of teachers who are men earn \$65,000 or more, compared with three in 10 teachers who are women. Teachers who are women (80 percent) are more likely than teachers who are men (66 percent) to say they are not paid a living wage.

Teachers who feel they do not earn a living wage were asked what salary would reflect a living wage. The median salary cited among this group is \$80,000. Half of teachers who feel they do not currently earn a living wage would need a salary increase of at least 32 percent to get there; about a quarter would need more than a 50 percent salary increase.

### Median Teacher Salary by Region



**77%**

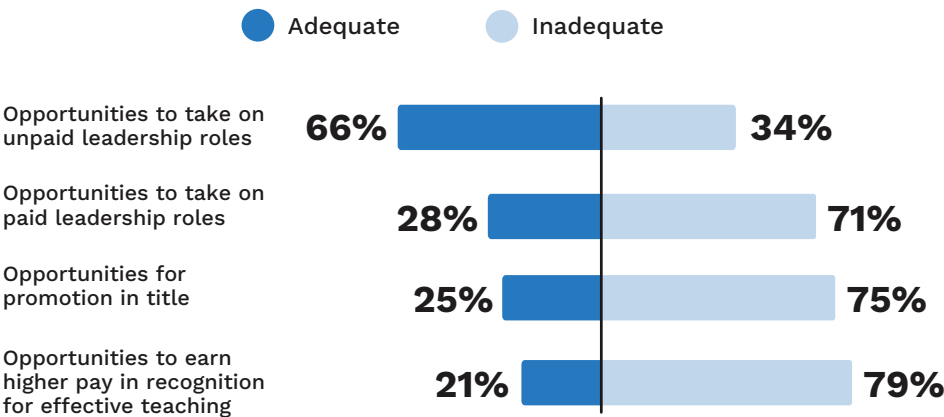
of Texas teachers do not feel they are **paid a living wage**

# Leadership opportunities and career advancement

Texas public schools provide limited opportunities for teachers to advance or supplement their wages. Fewer than three in 10 teachers say their school has adequate opportunities for them to take on paid leadership roles (28 percent), receive a promotion in title (25 percent), or earn higher pay for effective teaching (21 percent).

## Teachers' Opportunities for Career Development

% Texas teachers who report adequate opportunities



These opportunities could help stem teacher attrition. Sixty percent of teachers who report having adequate chances for a promotion in title say they have seriously considered leaving their position in the past year, increasing to 84 percent of teachers who say these opportunities are inadequate. In a similar gap, 62 percent of teachers who report adequate chances for paid leadership roles have seriously considered leaving, rising to 84 percent of other teachers. It is 63 percent among teachers who report adequate opportunities for incentive pay, compared with 82 percent of their counterparts.

While chances to earn additional pay are scarce, two-thirds of teachers say they have adequate opportunities to take on unpaid leadership roles at their school.

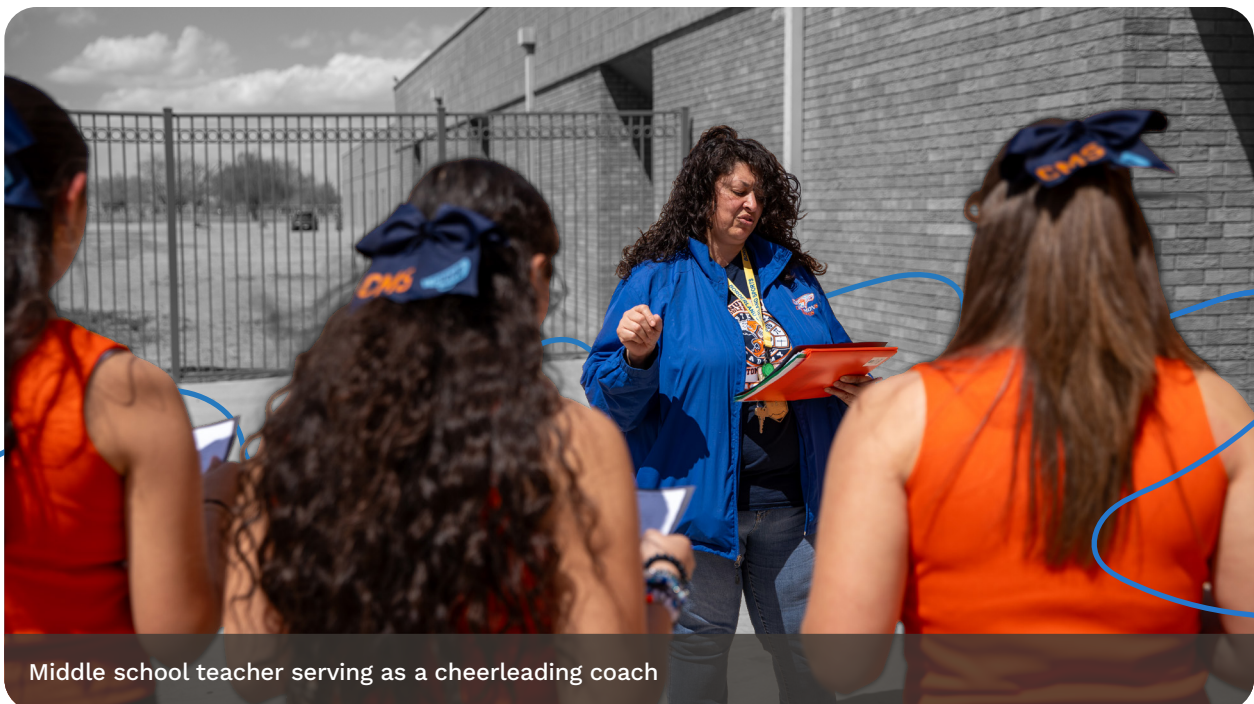
Opportunities to earn additional pay are not evenly distributed. Opportunities for incentive pay are more prevalent in schools with more students from economically disadvantaged households (25 percent) than in those with fewer students from economically disadvantaged households (10 percent). Additionally, teachers who are Black (36 percent) are slightly more likely than teachers who are Hispanic (24 percent) and significantly more likely than teachers who are White (16 percent) to say their school has adequate opportunities to earn higher pay for effective teaching.

Among other differences, teachers age 55 and older (35 percent) are more likely than those younger than 45 (25 percent) to say their school has adequate opportunities for paid leadership roles; teachers age 45 to 54 are in between, 31 percent. Paid leadership roles also are slightly more prevalent among teachers at schools with 1,000 or more students (31 percent) compared with those with fewer than 500 students (23 percent). It is 30 percent among teachers at schools with 500 to 999 students.



Teachers who are men (31 percent) are more likely than teachers who are women (22 percent) to say their school has adequate opportunities for promotions in title. Teachers who are Black (34 percent) are slightly more likely than teachers who are Hispanic (23 percent) and significantly more likely than teachers who are White (22 percent) to say the same. As with paid leadership roles, opportunities for promotion in title are more prevalent at schools with larger student enrollments. It is 29 percent at schools with 1,000 or more students, 25 percent at schools with 500 to 999 students, and 19 percent at schools with fewer than 500 students.

When looking at opportunities for unpaid leadership roles, these are more prevalent at schools with fewer students from economically disadvantaged households (75 percent) than at schools with more students from economically disadvantaged households (60 percent). Teachers who are White (70 percent) and teachers who are Black (69 percent) are more apt than teachers who are Hispanic (58 percent) to report adequate opportunities for unpaid leadership roles. The difference between teachers who are Black and teachers who are Hispanic is slight, given sample sizes. Seventy percent of teachers with more than 10 years of experience report adequate opportunities, compared with 59 percent of those with five or fewer years of experience.



Middle school teacher serving as a cheerleading coach

## Mentorship

One leadership opportunity – typically unpaid – is mentorship, a role in which two-thirds of teachers have served. This includes 59 percent who have mentored a teacher with fewer than three years of experience and roughly four in 10 who have mentored an intern teacher completing an alternative (44 percent) or traditional (42 percent) certification. Thirty-four percent of teachers say they have mentored a teacher with three or more years of experience.

Tenure is the largest differentiator in having ever served in a mentorship role. Eighty-two percent of teachers with more than 10 years of experience say they have served as a mentor, dropping to 59 percent of those with six to 10 years of experience and 30 percent of those with less than six years of experience.

Among those who have served as mentors, 37 percent received additional pay for taking on the role in their most recent mentorship experience. Fewer than half received supports such as planning or reflection time with their mentee, or dedicated observation time.

Only about a third have ever received training on how to mentor other teachers or resources about best practices in coaching adults. Eighty-five percent of those who received training found it at least somewhat helpful. That includes 29 percent who said the training was very helpful.



# 66%

of Texas teachers  
have served  
as mentors

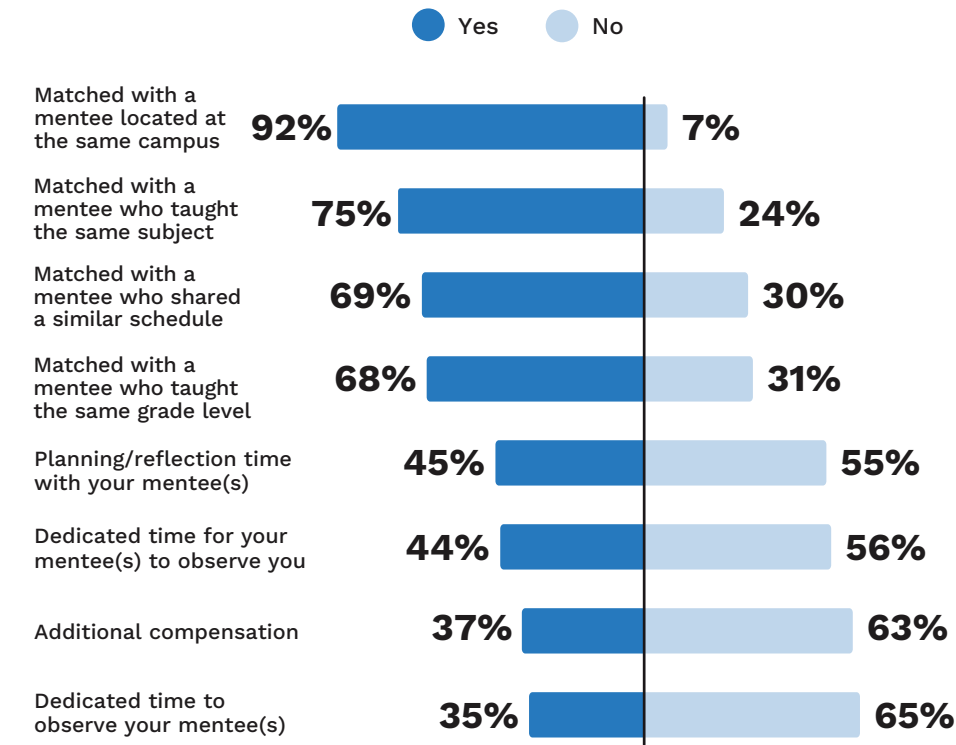
Efforts to match mentors and mentees are present. In their most recent mentorship experience, 92 percent of teachers who served as a mentor say they were located on the same campus as their mentee, 75 percent taught the same subject as their mentee, 69 percent shared a similar schedule, and 68 percent taught the same grade level.

By region, 41 to 45 percent of teachers in the Central, South/Southwest, and Houston-area regions have received additional compensation for mentoring, compared with 26 percent in West Texas and 23 percent in East Texas. Teachers in Dallas/Fort Worth are in between, at 36 percent. Additional pay for serving as a mentor is slightly more common in cities (42 percent) than in suburban areas (34 percent), and significantly more common compared with rural areas (23 percent).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The sample size of mentor teachers in rural areas is small, n=90, against a preferred standard of n=100 for subgroup analysis.

### Experiences of Teachers as Mentors

% Texas teachers who received each support in their most recent experience as a mentor



In another regional difference, prevalence of mentorship training peaks in the Houston area (43 percent), while it is lowest in East Texas (28 percent). It also is higher in urban (40 percent) than in rural schools (25 percent), with suburban schools (33 percent) in between.

Longer-tenured teachers are more likely than others to say they have received training on how to mentor another teacher; this ranges from 45 percent among teachers with more than 20 years of experience to 26 percent among those with 10 or fewer years of experience. Longer-tenured teachers (47 percent) also are more likely than those with less experience (22 percent) to say they were provided with time to observe their mentee(s). It is a similar pattern for time for their mentee(s) to observe them, 52 percent among longer-tenured teachers compared with 39 percent among those with 10 or fewer years of experience.



Middle school teachers engaging in a mentorship meeting

# Working conditions

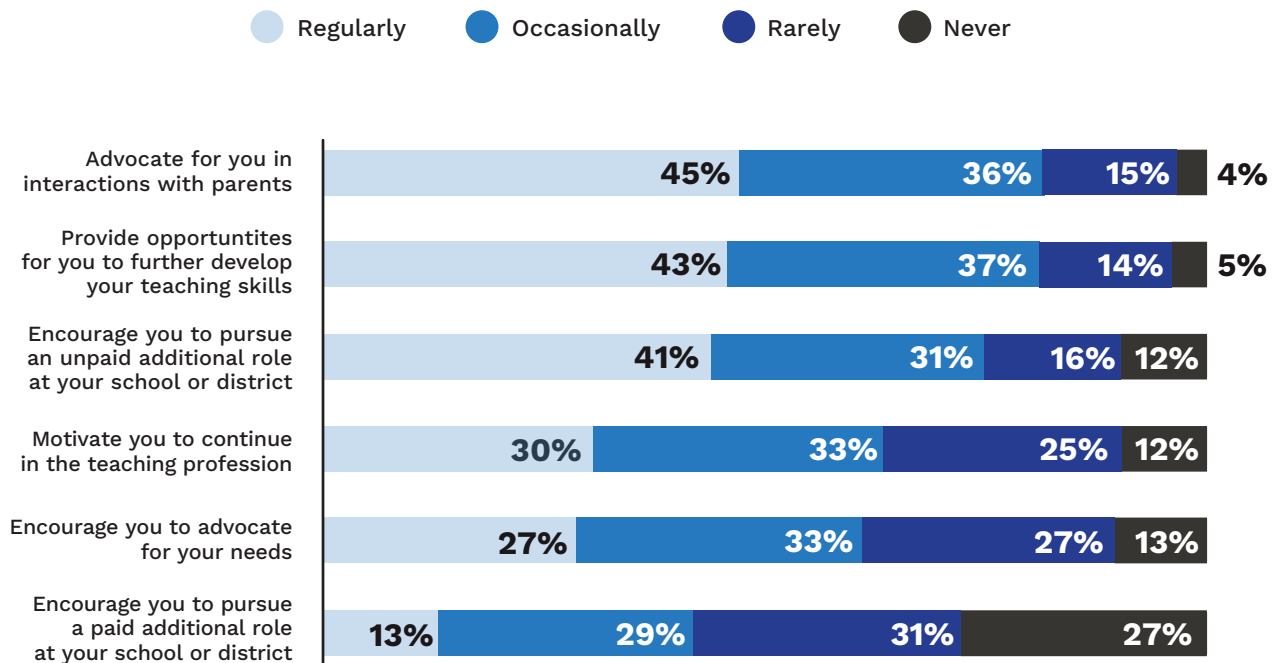
## Administrator support

Consistent support from school and district administrators is not fully present. Fewer than half of teachers say their administrators regularly advocate for them in interactions with parents (45 percent) or provide opportunities for them to further develop their teaching skills (43 percent). A little under four in 10 teachers say these do happen, but occasionally rather than regularly.

Roughly three in 10 teachers say their administrators regularly motivate them to continue in the profession (30 percent) or encourage them to advocate for their needs (27 percent). Thirteen percent are regularly encouraged to pursue an additional role at their school that is paid.

### Administrators Provide Many Types of Support and Encouragement to Teachers

% Texas teachers reporting how often their school or district administrators provide each type of support





“

**“I teach at a small school as a second-grade teacher. Our principal is fair with everyone and is always asking how she can help. The way she treats me makes me want to work for her one hundred and ten percent.”**

**— Texas public school teacher**

Support and encouragement received from administrators matter in making teachers feel valued. Teachers are far more apt to feel valued by their administrators when they regularly encourage them to advocate for their own needs (by 63 points), motivate them to continue in the profession (by 60 points), and advocate for them in interactions with parents (by 59 points), compared with teachers whose administrators rarely or never take these actions. The gap narrows, albeit to a still wide 49 points, for teachers who are regularly provided opportunities to develop their teaching skills, and 31 points for those who are encouraged to take on additional paid roles.



Elementary school teachers receiving support from their principal

Support from administration also mitigates the risk of attrition. Among teachers whose administrators regularly motivate them to remain in the profession, 63 percent have seriously considered leaving, compared with 78 percent of those whose administrators occasionally do this and 90 percent of those whose administrators rarely or never offer this kind of support. Further, in an open-ended question, 14 percent explicitly mentioned their administrators as a factor that encourages them to remain in the profession. As one teacher described:

“My principal and staff are the reasons why I have stayed in the teaching profession.”

— Texas public school teacher

Not all encouragement by administrators is well-received. Teachers who are regularly encouraged to take on unpaid additional roles are 13 points less apt than teachers who are rarely or never encouraged to take on unpaid roles to feel valued by their administration (52 percent feel valued by their administrators compared with 65 percent) and 13 points more apt to have seriously considered leaving their position in the past year (85 compared with 72 percent). Overall, 41 percent of teachers say their school or district administrators regularly encourage them to pursue an additional unpaid role. Thirty-one percent of teachers say administrators occasionally encourage them to pursue an unpaid role. Twenty-eight percent say administrators rarely or never encourage them to pursue an unpaid role.

“

**“Teachers often do not have the support they need and are overloaded with other duties, meetings, etc. that take up time and energy that could have been used in the classroom working with students.”**

— Texas public school teacher

There are differences in how frequently administrators take these actions among groups. Receiving regular motivation from administrators to remain in the profession is more common among teachers in rural areas (43 percent) than in urban (30 percent) and suburban (26 percent) areas. It also is more common among teachers in schools with fewer than 1,000 students (33 percent) than in those with 1,000 students or more (24 percent). By region, this form of motivation ranges from 41 percent in West Texas to 24 percent in the Houston area.

Teachers in West Texas also are most apt to say their administrators encourage them to advocate for their needs, 37 percent, compared with 21 percent in Houston and 21 percent in South/Southwest Texas. Falling in between are Central Texas (31 percent), Dallas/Fort Worth (29 percent), and East Texas (26 percent). Regional differences in teachers' reports of other administrator support are smaller or nonsignificant.

Teachers at schools with fewer students from economically disadvantaged households (55 percent) are more apt than those at schools with more students from economically disadvantaged households (42 percent) to say their administrators regularly advocate for them in interactions with parents. Teachers at schools with fewer students from economically disadvantaged households (56 percent) also are more likely than teachers at schools with more students from economically disadvantaged households (40 percent) to say their administrators regularly provide them with opportunities to further develop their teaching skills; and teachers at schools with fewer students from economically disadvantaged households (47 percent) are more apt than teachers with more such students (35 percent) to say their administrators regularly encourage them to take on unpaid additional roles.

There are relatively few differences across groups in being regularly encouraged to take on additional paid roles, though it is higher in cities (15 percent) and suburban areas (14 percent) than in rural areas (7 percent). As for unpaid roles, 48 percent of teachers younger than 35 say their administrators regularly encourage them to pursue unpaid additional assignments at their school or district, decreasing with age to 34 percent of teachers age 55 and older.

## Time off

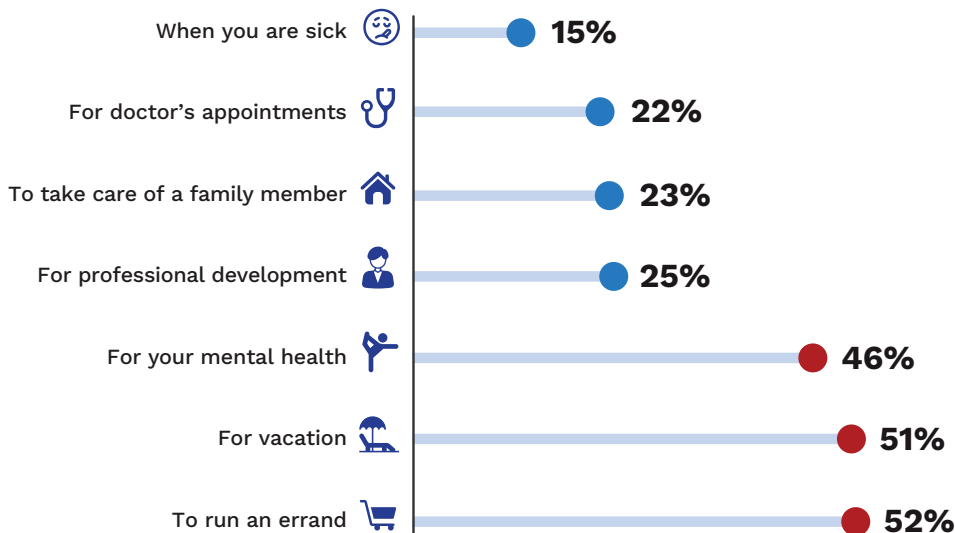
Teachers report challenges in their ability to take time off as needed for personal reasons. Twenty-eight percent say their campus always has resources available for them to take time off for personal reasons; 41 percent say this sometimes is the case; 17 percent say it is rarely the case; and 13 percent say it is never the case.

Fifty-nine percent of teachers say they are always able to take time off when they are sick. Forty-seven percent of teachers say they are always able to take time off for doctor's appointments, 43 percent say they are always able to take time off to care for a family member, and 40 percent say they are always able to take time off for professional development.

Twenty-six percent of teachers are always able to take time off for their mental health. Fewer teachers are always able to take time off for vacation (18 percent) or to run an errand (17 percent). Across these cases, 46 to 52 percent say they rarely or never are able to do so.

### Teachers' Ability to Take Time Off

% Texas teachers who rarely or never have the ability to take time off for each reason



Teachers ages 45 and older are more apt than teachers younger than 45 to say they always have the ability to take time off when:

- They are sick (67 percent compared with 52 percent),
- For doctor's appointments (54 percent compared with 41 percent),
- To take care of a family member (49 percent compared with 38 percent),
- For their mental health (30 percent compared with 23 percent), and
- To run an errand (20 percent compared with 14 percent).

Age differences in taking time for professional development are slight. There are no significant age differences in the ability to take time off for vacation.

In most cases, teachers who are men are more apt than teachers who are women to say they can always take time off. These include when they are sick (71 percent compared with 55 percent), to take care of a family member (54 percent compared with 40 percent), to run an errand (27 percent compared with 13 percent), for doctor's appointments (56 percent compared with 44 percent), for their mental health (35 percent compared with 23 percent), and for vacation (24 percent compared with 16 percent).

Teachers who are Black (43 percent) are more apt than teachers who are Hispanic (27 percent) and teachers who are White (23 percent) to say they can always take time off for their mental health. Regarding professional development, 56 percent of teachers who are Black say they can always take time off, compared with 40 percent of teachers who are Hispanic and 35 percent of teachers who are White.

By region, the ability to always take time off generally peaks in West Texas, while results in other regions are varied. In the largest gap, 57 percent of teachers in West Texas say they can always take time off to take care of a family member, compared with a low of 35 percent in Houston. Always being able to take time off to take care of a family member ranges from 41 to 47 percent across other regions of the state.

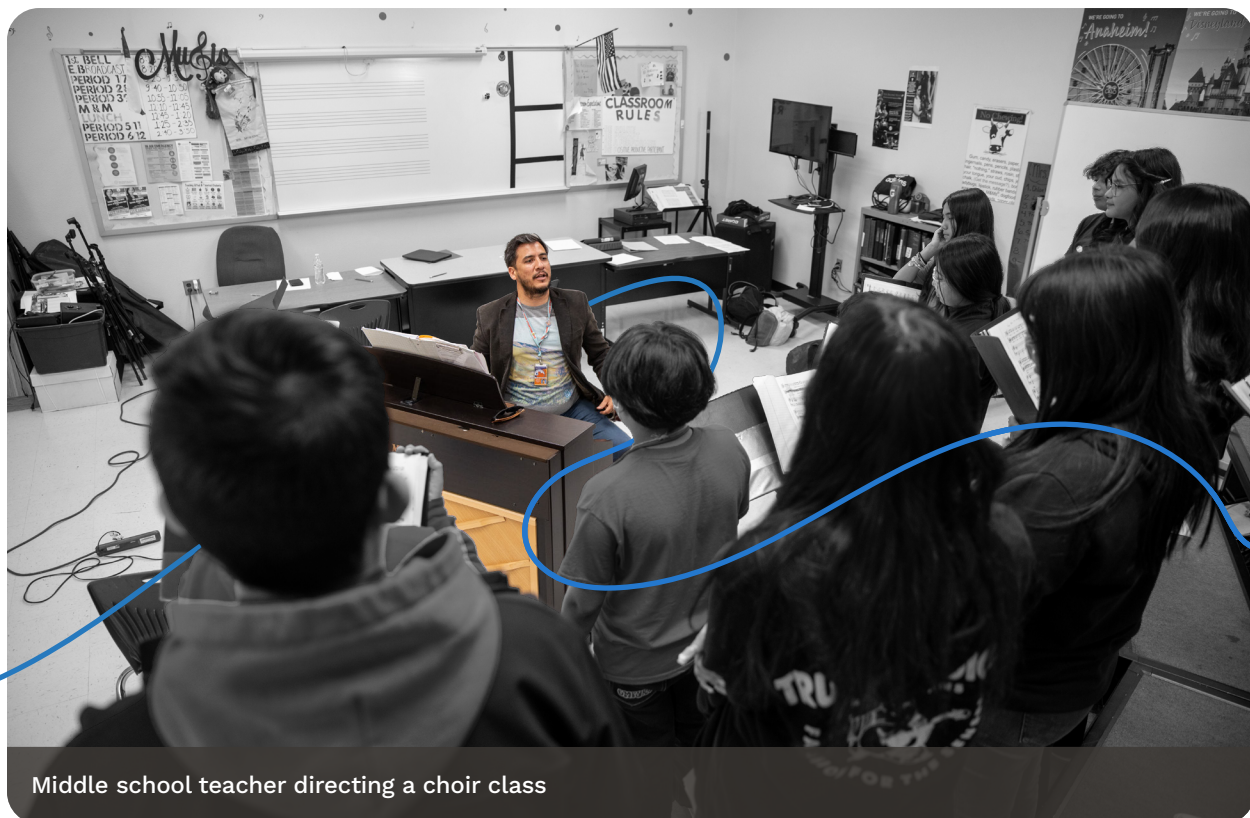


## Class sizes

Sixty-two percent of teachers say their largest class has too many students for them to teach effectively. When teachers are asked about the size of their largest (or only) class, teachers report an average of 25 students. One in five teachers report teaching a class with more than 30 students.

On average, high school teachers report that their largest (or only) class has 28 students, with nearly four in 10 saying they have a class with more than 30 students. Having 30 or more students is much less prevalent among middle school teachers (22 percent) and pre-kindergarten and elementary school teachers (8 percent).

Teachers at schools with 1,000 or more students also have larger class sizes. On average, their largest (or only) class has 29 students, compared with 24 at schools with 500-999 students and 21 at those with fewer than 500 students. Four in 10 teachers at schools with 1,000 or more students say at least one of their classes has more than 30 students, falling to 15 percent of those in mid-sized schools (500-999 students) and 8 percent in smaller schools (fewer than 500 students).



Middle school teacher directing a choir class

Among other differences, 27 percent of teachers in urban areas have a class with more than 30 students, compared with 16 percent of teachers in suburban areas and 9 percent in rural areas.

By subject, class sizes are smallest among special education teachers, who, on average, say their largest class has 17 students. That compares with an average of 22 to 23 students among English, social studies/history, science/technology, and math teachers.

Teachers with larger classes are more apt than others to say they have too many students to teach effectively. This reaches 83 percent of teachers with more than 25 students in their largest class, compared with 47 percent of teachers with 25 or fewer students.

In accord with their larger class sizes:

- High school (64 percent) and middle school teachers (66 percent) are more apt than elementary school teachers (54 percent) to report having too many students to teach effectively.
- Sixty-five percent of teachers in schools with 500 or more students say they have too many students to teach effectively, compared with 53 percent of teachers in schools with less than 500 students.
- Teachers in urban (65 percent) and suburban (61 percent) areas are more apt than teachers in rural (51 percent) areas to report having too many students to teach effectively.



**“Student to teacher class ratio—it is currently way too large!”**

**— Texas public school teacher**

# Instructional materials

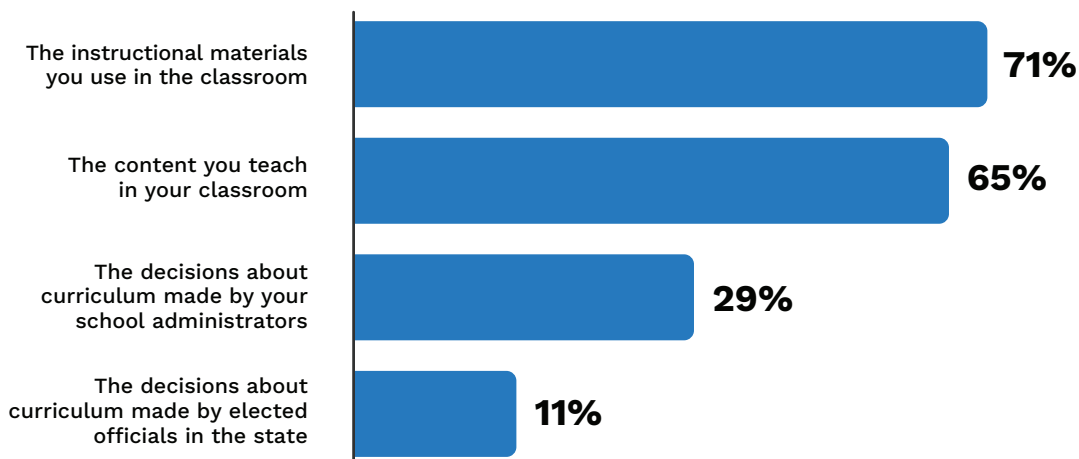
## Teacher autonomy

**M**ost teachers feel they have a great deal or good amount of influence on the instructional materials they use (71 percent) and content they teach (65 percent) in their own classroom, though few feel they can personally influence the decisions about curriculum made by their school administrators (29 percent) and state elected officials (11 percent).

Eighty-five percent of teachers say their school or district provides them with at least some instructional materials (e.g., curriculum, pacing guides, lesson plans, student worksheets, etc.). About half of all teachers, 48 percent, are required to use these materials in their classes.

### Teachers Report Influence on Classroom Material and Content

% Texas teachers who say they can personally influence each factor a great deal or good amount





**“I love when I get to be creative and design new lessons/activities for my students myself instead of sticking to a boxed curriculum.”**

**— Texas public school teacher**

Sixty-eight percent overall report regularly using school- or district-provided instructional materials. Seventeen percent are provided with these materials but do not regularly use them; 15 percent are not provided with them. More teachers say they regularly use materials they find online (86 percent) or create themselves (82 percent).

Thirty percent of teachers say school- or district-provided instructional materials are their primary source of classroom materials. Twenty-five percent of teachers say self-made materials are their primary source of classroom materials. Online materials are primary sources of instructional materials for 18 percent of teachers.

Sixty-two percent of elementary school teachers say they receive and are required to use instructional materials provided by their school or district, compared with 40 percent of middle school teachers and 33 percent of high school teachers. As such, elementary school teachers are least apt to feel they have a great deal or good amount of influence in the instructional materials they use in their classroom, 60 percent compared with 74 percent among middle school teachers and 84 percent among high school teachers. Elementary school teachers (57 percent) are least apt to report having influence in the content they teach, compared with middle school teachers (68 percent) and high school teachers (76 percent).

Among other gaps, 57 percent of teachers at schools with more students from economically disadvantaged households say they are required to use school- or district-provided materials, dropping to 35 percent of teachers at schools with fewer students from economically disadvantaged households. Teachers at schools with more students from economically disadvantaged households (65 percent) are less likely to feel they have a great deal or good amount of influence on the instructional materials they use in their classroom than teachers at schools with less students from economically disadvantaged households (81 percent).

Teachers with five or fewer years of experience are less likely than teachers with more than 20 years of experience to feel they have a great deal or good amount of influence on:

- The instructional materials they use (63 percent compared with 74 percent),
- The content they teach (57 percent compared with 70 percent), and
- The decisions about curriculum made by school administrators (20 percent compared with 33 percent).

Teachers who are required to use school- or district-provided materials (56 percent) are less likely than teachers who receive optional materials (74 percent) or no materials (71 percent) to feel they have a great deal or good amount of influence on the content they teach. At the same time, being provided with materials is positively associated with feeling valued by administrators – even when their use is mandatory. Among teachers who are required to use school or district-provided materials, 64 percent feel valued by their school administrators, as do 66 percent of teachers who receive optional materials. Feeling valued drops to 46 percent among teachers who do not receive any materials from their school or district.



Elementary school teacher facilitating a science experiment with the class



## Rating school- or district-provided materials

Ninety-one percent of teachers who receive school- or district-provided instructional materials rate them as excellent or good at covering state standards. Positive ratings for school- or district-provided instructional materials are lower on other dimensions, and lowest in those associated with relevancy, such as providing real-world tasks or activities (52 percent) or reflecting students' interests or experiences (51 percent).

There are relatively few differences among groups in these ratings, though gaps by age stand out. Teachers age 55 years or older are more apt than those younger than 35 years old to say the materials provided by their school or district do an excellent or good job at:

- Reflecting students' interests or experiences (65 percent compared with 41 percent),
- Making learning engaging for students (67 percent compared with 53 percent), and
- Meeting the needs of English Language Learners (65 percent compared with 46 percent).

Teachers age 55 years or older also are slightly more apt than those younger than 35 to give materials positive ratings for:

- Providing real-world tasks or activities (59 percent compared with 48 percent) and
- Reflecting the diversity of student identities (64 percent compared with 53 percent).

Additionally, teachers at schools with more students from economically disadvantaged households (53 percent) are less likely than those at schools with fewer students from economically disadvantaged households (74 percent) to say school- or district-provided materials do an excellent or good job at reflecting the diversity of student identities.



**“There are so many people making decisions about how to serve our students, without anyone asking the teachers who spend every minute of the day with them. We know our students, we spend our own time and money building relationships with them, yet are expected to ‘teach’ them curriculum that does not serve them in ways that does not connect with them. The students know this, and are disconnecting from their own education.”**

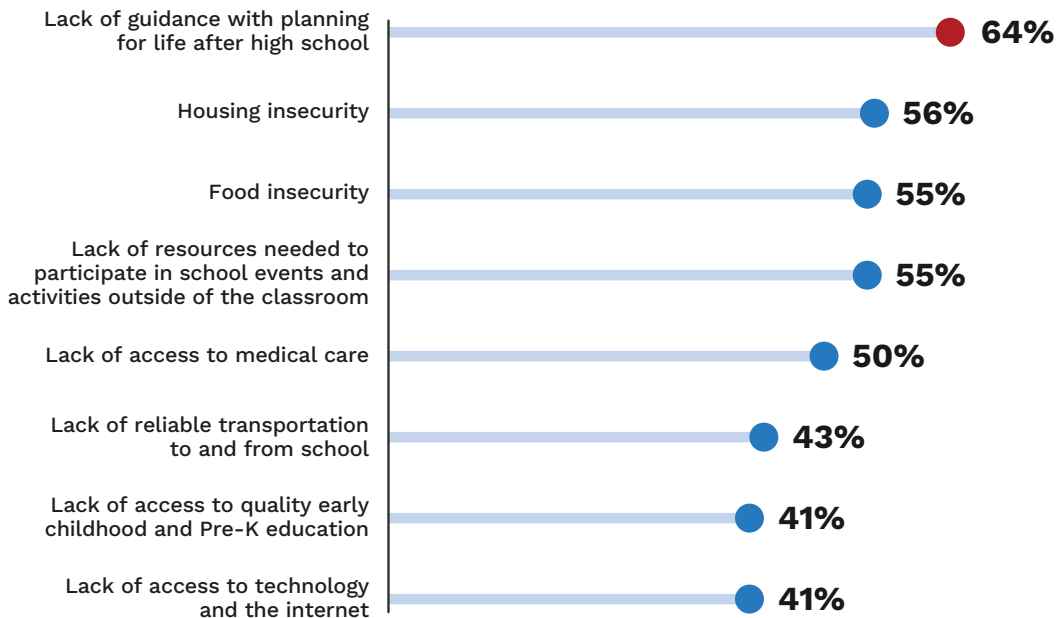
# Barriers for students

Teachers were asked about the challenges students face at their campus. Majorities of teachers cite barriers in multiple areas: a lack of guidance in planning for life after high school (64 percent), housing insecurity (56 percent), food insecurity (55 percent), and a lack of resources needed to participate in school events and activities outside the classroom (55 percent). Half of teachers say the same about a lack of access to medical care.

These reported challenges are 37 to 57 points more prevalent among teachers in schools with more students from economically disadvantaged households, compared with teachers in schools with fewer students from economically disadvantaged households. The widest gaps include housing insecurity (57 points), lack of resources to participate in events and activities (51 points), and food insecurity (49 points).

## Teachers Recognize Multiple Barriers for Students

% Texas teachers reporting each factor as a barrier or significant barrier for students at their campus



Differences in barriers emerge specifically at campuses with a majority of students of color. For example, 47 percent of teachers at campuses with majority students of color say a lack of reliable transportation is a barrier, compared with 27 percent of teachers at campuses with a majority of students who are White. Fifty-nine percent of teachers at campuses with majority students of color say a lack of resources to participate in school events and activities is a barrier, compared with 40 percent at campuses with a majority of students who are White.

Rural teachers are especially apt to see lack of access to technology and the internet as a student barrier (52 percent), compared with urban (40 percent) and suburban (38 percent) teachers. Sixty-five percent of rural teachers cite housing insecurity as a barrier, followed by 58 percent of urban teachers and 52 percent of suburban teachers. Gaps narrow or disappear on lack of reliable transportation, lack of resources needed to participate in school events and activities outside of the classroom, lack of access to medical care, food insecurity, lack of access to quality early childhood and pre-kindergarten education, and lack of guidance with planning for life after high school.



Elementary school teacher showing a student how to use a microscope

Regionally, the shares of teachers seeing several items as student barriers peak in South/Southwest Texas, including:

- Lack of resources needed to participate in school events and activities (63 percent in South/Southwest Texas and 46 percent in East Texas),
- Lack of access to medical care (57 percent in South/Southwest Texas), compared with 43 percent in West and Central Texas alike,
- Lack of guidance with planning for life after high school (71 percent in South/Southwest Texas), compared with West (59 percent) and Central (57 percent) Texas, and
- Lack of access to quality early childhood and pre-kindergarten education (47 percent in South/Southwest Texas), compared with East (35 percent) and West (33 percent) Texas.

Lack of reliable transportation peaks in Dallas/Fort Worth (50 percent) and South/Southwest Texas (49 percent), falling to 33 percent in East Texas.



**“I became a teacher because I was a student who was struggling and had very little encouragement from teachers or family. I knew in my heart, I needed to be an advocate for students just like me.”**

— Texas public school teacher

# Certification pathways

Teachers were asked to describe the importance of several factors in selecting their certification program. Factors associated with accessibility, such as time needed to complete the program (86 percent), cost (84 percent), and location (80 percent) top the list, each seen as very or somewhat important by at least eight in 10 teachers. The availability of desired grade and subject certification options (86 percent) also rises to the top, as does one marker of quality: accreditation by a university or college (84 percent). In each case, a majority of teachers say these factors were very important in choosing their certification program, peaking at 66 percent for accreditation by a university or college.

Fewer than half of teachers say a paid (48 percent) or unpaid (32 percent) student teaching, internship, or residency component was important in choosing their certification program. This includes 30 percent and 14 percent, respectively, who say these were very important.

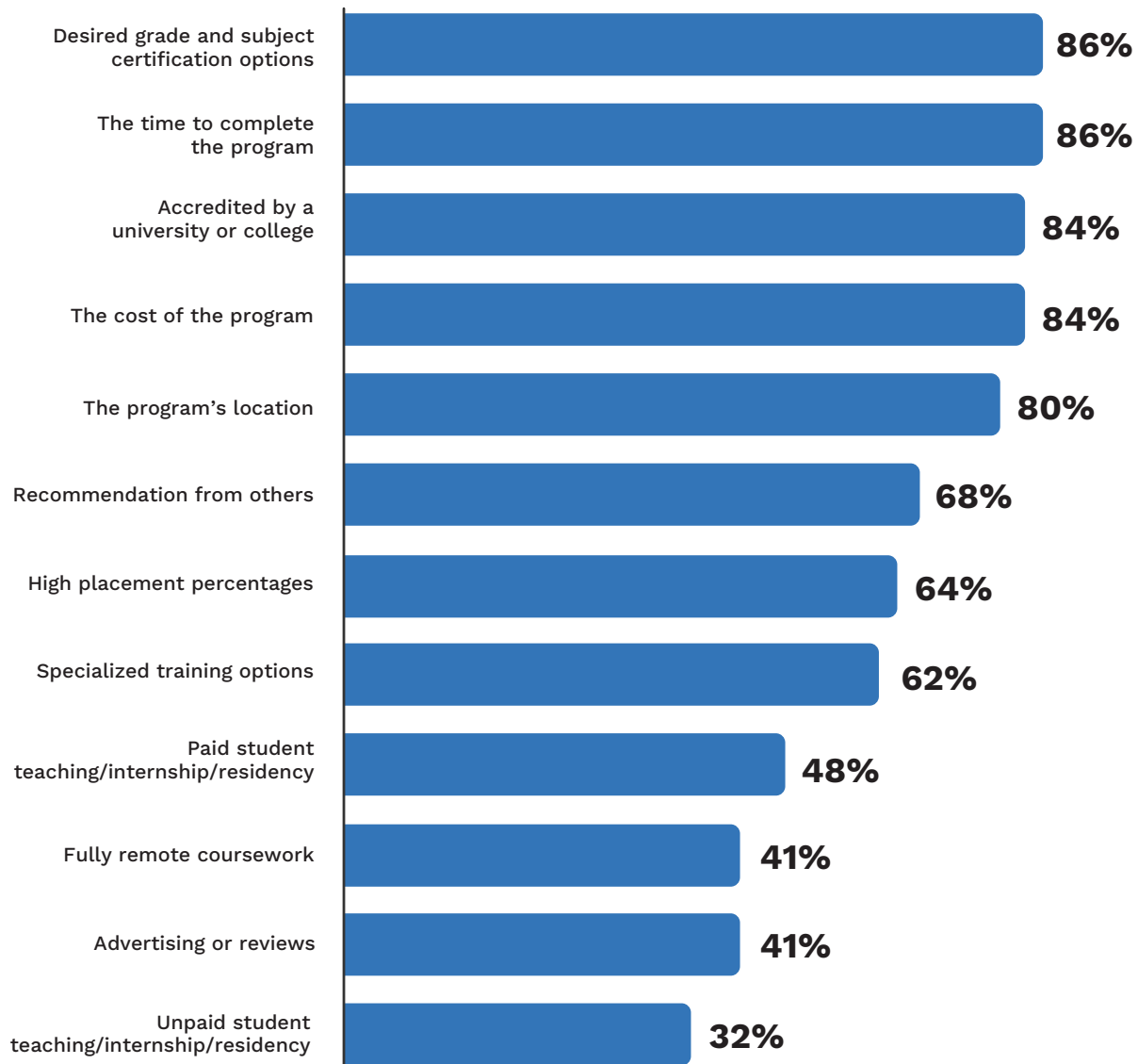


Elementary school teacher coaching student teachers



## Teacher Certification Program Priorities

% Texas teachers who considered each factor very or somewhat important when choosing their certification program



Teachers with alternative certifications are especially apt to say several items were very important in choosing their program. Forty percent of teachers with alternative certifications say fully remote coursework was very important, dropping to 22 percent of teachers with master's certifications and further, to 10 percent, of teachers with undergraduate certifications. Seventy-one percent of teachers with alternative certifications and 62 percent of teachers with master's certifications say completion time was very important, compared with 48 percent of teachers with undergraduate certifications. Paid student teaching or internships were very important to 42 percent of teachers with alternative certifications, compared with roughly two in 10 teachers with traditional master's (23 percent) or undergraduate (19 percent) certifications.

Conversely, teachers with traditional undergraduate (82 percent) and master's (86 percent) certifications are far more apt than teachers with alternative certifications (45 percent) to call accreditation very important.

Certification types vary across groups, and these differences partially inform priorities in choosing a teacher certification program. In one of the widest differences, alternative certifications are more common among certified teachers who have 10 or fewer years of experience (55 percent) than among those with more than 20 years of experience (31 percent). Teachers with 10 or fewer years of experience are more apt than teachers with 20 or more years in the field to say fully remote coursework (39 compared with 11 percent) and paid student teaching or internships (34 compared with 24 percent) were highly important in their choice of certification program. Teachers with more than 20 years of experience are more likely than teachers with 10 or fewer years of experience to prioritize accreditation (81 compared with 59 percent).

As in previous years, the 2024 poll finds that among certified teachers, alternative certification is more common among teachers who are men (56 percent) than teachers who are women (41 percent). The opposite is true for traditional undergraduate certification, more prevalent among teachers who are women (49 percent) than teachers who are men (33 percent).

Alternative certification is more common among teachers who are Hispanic (51 percent) than teachers who are White (40 percent), and at schools with more students from economically disadvantaged households (51 percent) than among those at schools with fewer such students (29 percent).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> It is also higher among teachers who are Black, although the sample of Black teachers with certifications is small,  $n=87$ .

# School quality

Teachers were asked about the factors they consider important in school quality. Topping the list, 84 percent of teachers say how well the school helps students learn self-management, interpersonal skills, and decision-making is extremely or very important. Broad majorities say the same for how well the school does on each of four additional items:

- Supports students' sense of belonging (79 percent),
- Prepares students for a career (78 percent),
- Prepares students for civic engagement (70 percent), and
- Prepares students for college (66 percent).

By contrast, relatively few teachers say preparation for military service (29 percent) and standardized tests (23 percent) are highly important in school quality.

Views among teachers about factors of school quality are largely consistent across demographic groups, though there are some differences. Teachers who are Black (34 percent) and teachers who are Hispanic (33 percent) are more likely than teachers who are White (15 percent) to place importance on how well a school prepares students for standardized tests. In another gap, 47 percent of rural teachers say preparation for military service is highly important, compared with 31 percent of suburban teachers and 23 percent of teachers in urban areas.



High school teacher preparing a student for graduation ceremony

Separately, 17 percent of teachers are very or somewhat confident that the state standardized test known as STAAR effectively measures school quality. Eighteen percent of teachers consider the time they spend preparing their students for the STAAR test a good use of instruction time, essentially unchanged since 2021.

Confidence that the STAAR test effectively measures school quality ranges from 10 percent to 25 percent across most demographic groups. Teachers' confidence that the STAAR test effectively measures school quality ranges from 25 percent among teachers who are Hispanic and 20 percent among teachers who are Black, dropping slightly to 11 percent among teachers who are White.

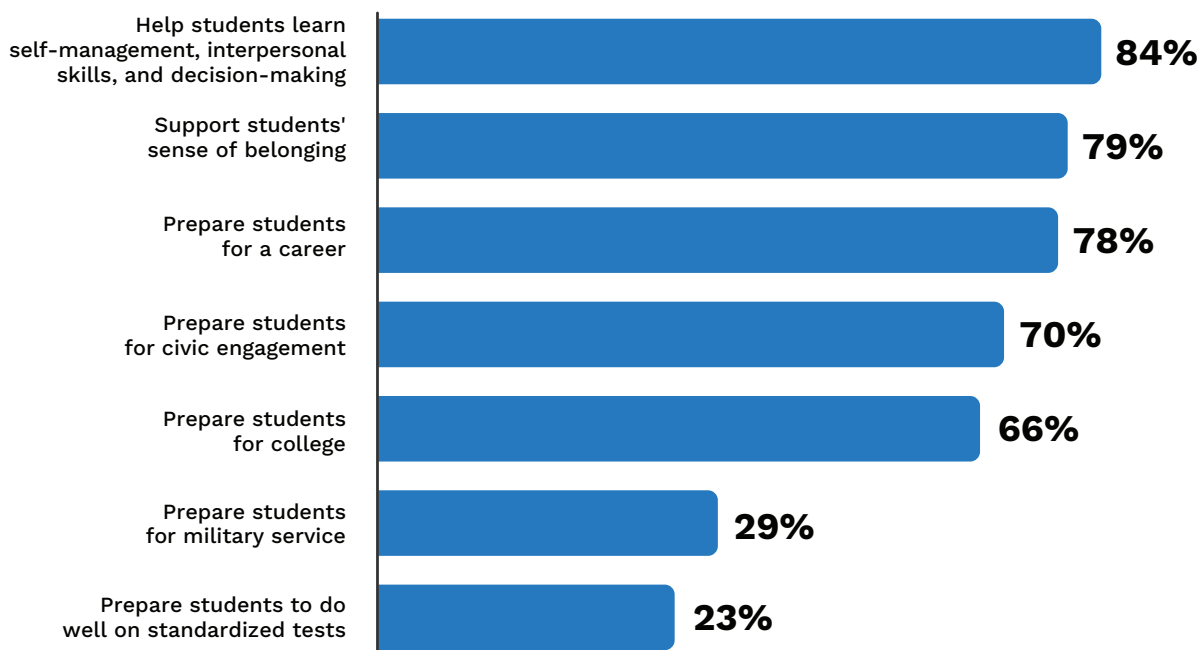


**“I feel that we are driven to teach to a test that is making our future leaders less capable of being wholesome individuals well prepared for the future.”**

— Texas public school teacher

## Teachers' Priorities for School Quality

% Texas teachers calling each factor very or extremely important



# School vouchers

**E**ighty-eight percent of teachers say they would be opposed to a voucher program in their community if it meant reducing the amount of funds distributed to local schools. Eighty-two percent of teachers would be opposed if private and religious schools that received taxpayer-funded vouchers had no state educational oversight. If either funding or oversight implications are present, 91 percent would be opposed.

Ninety-six percent of teachers who are Democrats oppose vouchers if at least one of the above described scenarios is present, as do 93 percent of teachers who are independents and 86 percent of teachers who are Republicans. Ideological differences are similar; 97 percent of teachers who are liberals oppose vouchers as presented, as do 93 percent of teachers who are moderates and 86 percent of teachers who are conservatives.

In strength of sentiment, majorities across partisan and ideological groups are strongly opposed to vouchers as described. Eighty-eight percent of teachers who are Democrats strongly oppose a voucher program if it reduces funds to local schools, compared with 77 percent of teachers who are independents and 71 percent of teachers who are Republicans. Nine in 10 teachers who are liberals strongly oppose a voucher program in this scenario, dropping to 80 percent of teachers who are moderates and 69 percent of teachers who are conservatives.



If the private and religious schools receiving vouchers had no state educational oversight, 86 percent of teachers who are Democrats would be strongly opposed to a school voucher program, compared with 69 percent of teachers who are independents and 62 percent of teachers who are Republicans. It is 85 percent among teachers who are liberals, 73 percent among teachers who are moderates and 60 percent among teachers who are conservatives.

Strength of sentiment also varies by school type, with 80 percent of teachers in traditional public schools strongly opposed to a school voucher program if funding to local schools is reduced, compared with 59 percent of teachers in charter schools. The gap in strong opposition widens, to 74 percent compared with 45 percent, if private and religious schools receiving vouchers had no state educational oversight.

“

**“The biggest problems facing public schools are excessive testing, low teacher salaries, inadequate alignment of curriculum with the new demands of society and the workforce, and the threat of school vouchers.”**

— Texas public school teacher

# Methodology

Sampling and data collection for this report were conducted by SSRS of Glen Mills, Pa., at the direction of [Langer Research Associates](#).

A sample of 46,976 Texas public school teachers was randomly drawn from the Texas Education Agency's 2022-23 list of 378,436 teachers in the state, stratified by region, race and ethnicity, years of teaching experience, and charter status. The poll sought to reach at least 100 teachers in each region of the state, as well as at least 100 teachers who are Black and at least 100 teachers who had two years of experience or less or were younger than 30.

Email addresses for 36,315 of the sampled teachers were matched and appended to the sample using two sources: the TEA's 2021-22 teacher list and teacher listings from list provider MDR Education. During field work, a sample was drawn for an additional 2,000 teachers who are Black, with emails obtained solely from the 2021-22 TEA list.

In all, 38,315 teachers were sent personalized email invitations from Dr. Shari Albright, president of the Charles Butt Foundation, with a unique passcode-embedded link to complete the survey online. The sample was released in two primary waves, with the second wave released to ensure adequate sample sizes of targeted subgroups. A third release specifically focused on teachers who are Black. Multiple email invitations were sent to all sampled teachers. Fieldwork was conducted from March 4-April 2, 2024.

Of the people invited, 34,934 did not click the invitation link, 2,179 did so but did not complete the poll, 75 were determined not to be current Texas public school teachers and 1,127 completed the survey. In quality control, cases without validated school and school district information were flagged, as were the fastest one percent of respondents in

total completion time and those who skipped more than 25 percent of the questions they received; these 23 cases were deleted. The final sample included 1,104 Texas public school teachers. The average time to complete the questionnaire was 18 minutes; the median time was 16 minutes.

Data were weighted to address unequal probabilities of selection based on the number of available email addresses and to match known parameters from the TEA list, including:

- Sex (male, female)
- Age (18-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60+)
- Race/ethnicity (White, Black, Hispanic, other)
- Highest degree earned (bachelor's or less, master's or higher)
- Tenure (2 years or fewer, 3-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-20 years, more than 20 years)
- School grade level (elementary, middle, high, combined, unknown)
- School enrollment (<100, 100-249, 250-499, 500-999, 1000-2499, 2500+, unknown)
- School's metro status (urban, suburban, rural)
- School's region (East, Dallas/Fort Worth, Houston area, Central, West, South/Southwest)

Weights were trimmed at the 2nd and 98th percentiles. The poll has a design effect due to a weighting of 1.44, for a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points for the full sample; as in all polls, error margins are larger for subgroups. Sampling error is not the only source of difference in polls.

Results are highly representative in terms of known demographic values.



**Years**

**of public opinion research  
of Texas teachers**

*Charles Butt*<sup>SM</sup>  
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