



2024-25 EDUCATOR EXIT SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT



Utah State Board of Education

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2024-25 EXIT SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with [Utah State Code 53G-11-304](#) and as authorized by [Board Rule R277-325](#), the Utah State Board of Education distributes an exit survey to educators who leave their current employment within a charter school or school district (local education agency or LEA). This survey is available throughout the year, and personnel in charter schools and school districts are instructed to administer the survey whenever an educator terminates employment. Educators who transfer positions within a school or district (e.g., promotion, switching schools within the same district) do not complete this survey.

Information in this report is based on responses from 1,383 educators who left their positions between July 1, 2024, and July 31, 2025. Based on historical data, Utah’s educator attrition rate has remained around 10%. This report provides a synthesis of data obtained on the reasons educators were leaving their current positions.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

While the term **educator** in this context refers to all general education classroom teachers, preschool teachers, special education teachers, counselors, school and district-based specialists, and administrators, more than 80% of the responses obtained capture the sentiments of classroom teachers, school specialists, and specialized service providers. The term **specialized service provider** refers to school nurses, audiologists, psychologists, speech therapists, etc.

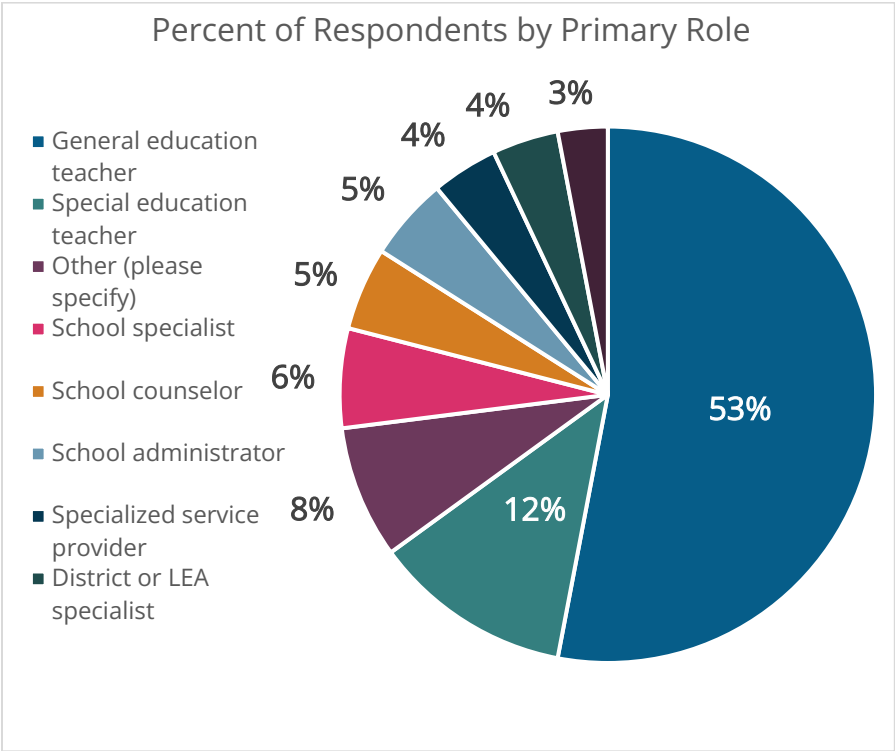
Throughout this report, the terms **early-career educator**, **mid-career educator**, and **late-career educator** are used to describe educators with three or fewer years of experience, those with four to ten years of experience, and those with ten or more years of experience, respectively. To differentiate between educators who are

accepting alternative employment in education and those who are leaving the profession, the terms transferrer and leaver are used. **Transferrer** refers to educators who leave a position in one charter school or school district to accept a position in another charter school or school district, whereas the term **leaver** refers to educators who leave a position in education without securing another position. In this report, the term **departing educators** refers to all educators who completed the exit survey.

PARTICIPANTS

A total of 1,383 valid survey responses were received between July 1, 2024, and July 31, 2025. Of these responses, 53% were from general education teachers and 12% were from special education teachers. Attrition in Utah has remained constant, with about 90-91% of teachers being retained each year. The survey indicates that fewer than 10% of educators plan to leave. Figure 1 shows the distribution of other educator roles included in this summary.

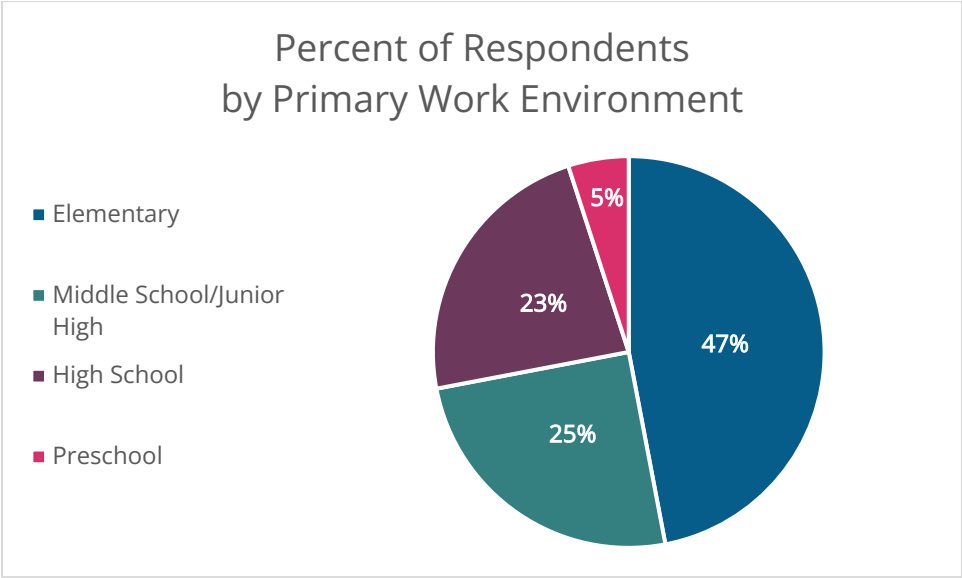
FIGURE 1: PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS BY PRIMARY ROLE



Note: Figure 1 shows responses to the question “Which of the following best describes your primary role?”

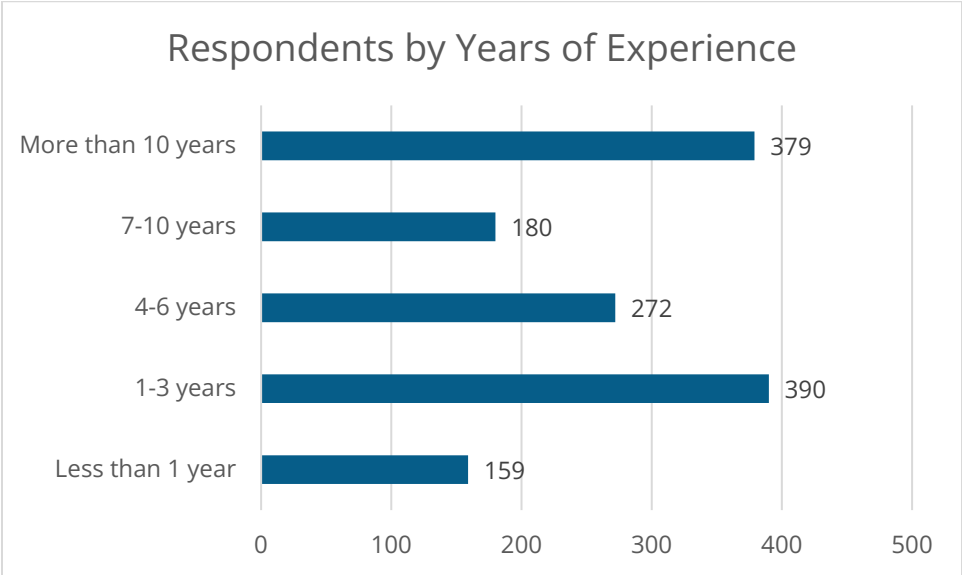
Departing educators left positions in preschool, elementary, middle school/ junior high, and high school and represented educators across all years of experience subgroups. These data are summarized in Figures 2 and 3.

FIGURE 2: RESPONDENTS’ PRIMARY WORK ENVIRONMENT



Note: Figure 2 shows responses to the question “Which of the following best describes the environment in which you function in your primary role?”

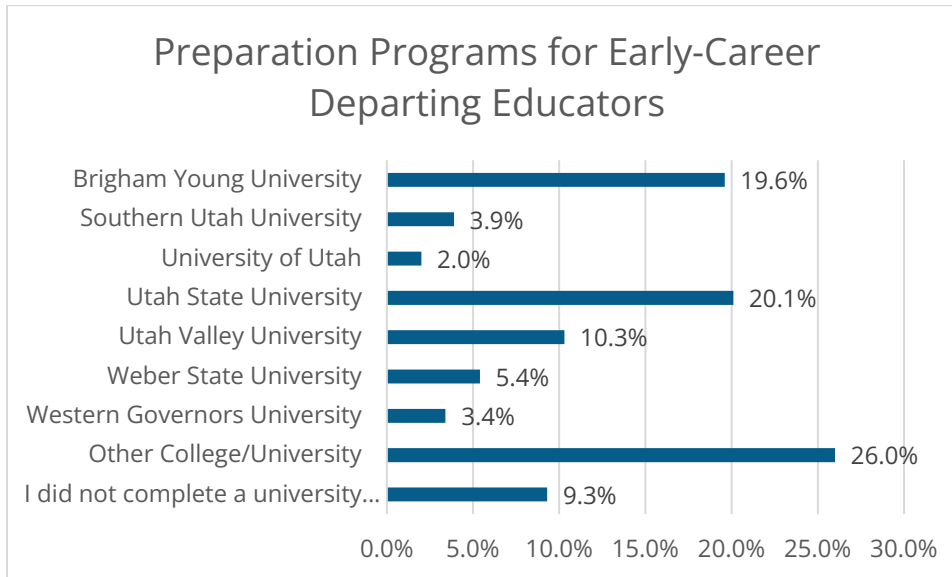
FIGURE 3: RESPONDENTS BY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE



Note: Figure 3 shows responses to the question “As of today, how long have you worked as an educator in any capacity in the state of Utah?”

Of the 1,383 responses received, 549 educators (40%) indicate that they have been in their position in Utah for less than three years. These educators were asked to identify the university teacher preparation program in which they received their training. Almost 10% of these educators indicated they had not finished a university education program, while 26% reported completing a program at an out-of-state (“other”) college or university. The breakdown for state university programs is summarized in Figure 4.

FIGURE 4: PREPARATION PROGRAMS FOR EARLY-CAREER DEPARTING EDUCATORS



Note: Figure 4 shows the responses to the question “In which university teacher preparation program did you receive your training?” Only educators with three or fewer years of experience were asked to answer this question.

The Exit Survey does not address the exiting educator's license level. According to data from the CACTUS (Comprehensive Administration of Credentials for Teachers in Utah Schools) database, around 67% of educators who start on a LEA-specific license are still working at year three; 80% of educators who began with a professional license are retained.

LIMITATIONS

The analysis presented here does not account for every question asked in the survey. It also does not represent the perspectives of all educators who left their positions in 2024-25, nor does it capture all possible analyses of the available data. Presented here is one set of analyses that provides insight into the reasons educators are leaving their positions in Utah. Additionally, the length and time required to complete the survey may discourage some educators from completing the survey. Completion of the full survey was not required to accept an educator's response as valid. However, all responses included in this summary represent cases where educators completed at least half of the survey.

REASONS FOR LEAVING

When discussing teacher attrition, it is important to acknowledge that some educators leave their current positions to accept other educational roles. In the past two school years, over 20 schools have closed, and student enrollment has dropped by more than 16,000 as of October 1, 2025. Reasons for leaving become more complex amid school closings and changes in student demographics. The LEA may no longer need the position or have asked an educator to take a position that they were unwilling to take. Elementary FTE fell by over 70 FTE from 2024-25 to 2025-26. Educators may be leaving LEAs for better opportunities and see the change as positive.

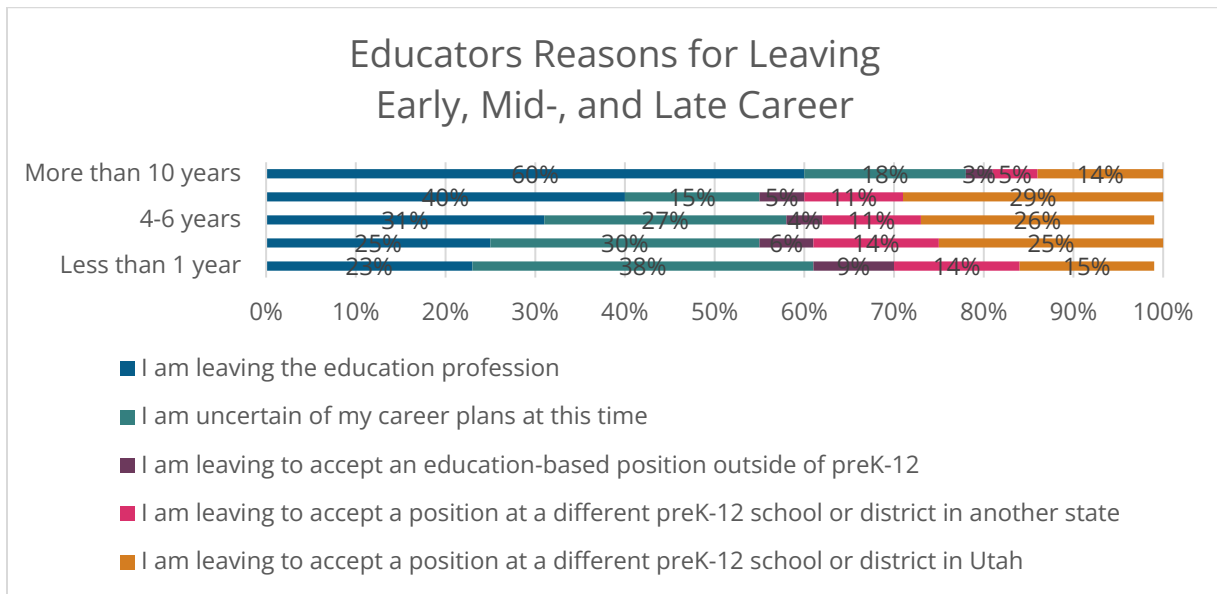
To help ascertain the future employment plans of departing educators, respondents were asked to indicate whether they were accepting another position within education (herein referred to as **transferrers**), leaving the profession, or uncertain about their career plans (educators in both groups are herein referred to as **leavers**). Overall, 22% of departing educators indicated that they were accepting a different PreK-12 position in Utah, while 11% were accepting a similar position in another state. Five percent of educators accepted education-based positions outside PreK-12. Thus, around 39% of departing teachers can be considered transferrers. The highest percentage of departing teachers (37%) indicated they were leaving the profession entirely. Twenty-five percent reported uncertainty about their future career plans, suggesting that approximately 60% of departing educators are leavers with no immediate plans to return to classrooms. The subsections below provide further disaggregation of these data. These percentages have remained consistent for the last several years.

REASON FOR DEPARTURE BY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

As shown in Figure 5, among the 444 early-career educators, 24% indicated they were leaving the profession entirely; among the 359 mid-career educators, 35%; and among the 331 late-career educators, 60%. Thus, based on responses to this survey, the primary source of attrition (teachers lost without intent to return) is among educators with ten or more years of experience in Utah. However, when

asked to explain why they were leaving the profession, 74% of late-career educators indicated that retirement had a major influence on their decision to leave.

FIGURE 5: EARLY-, MID- AND LATE-CAREER EDUCATORS' REASONS FOR LEAVING

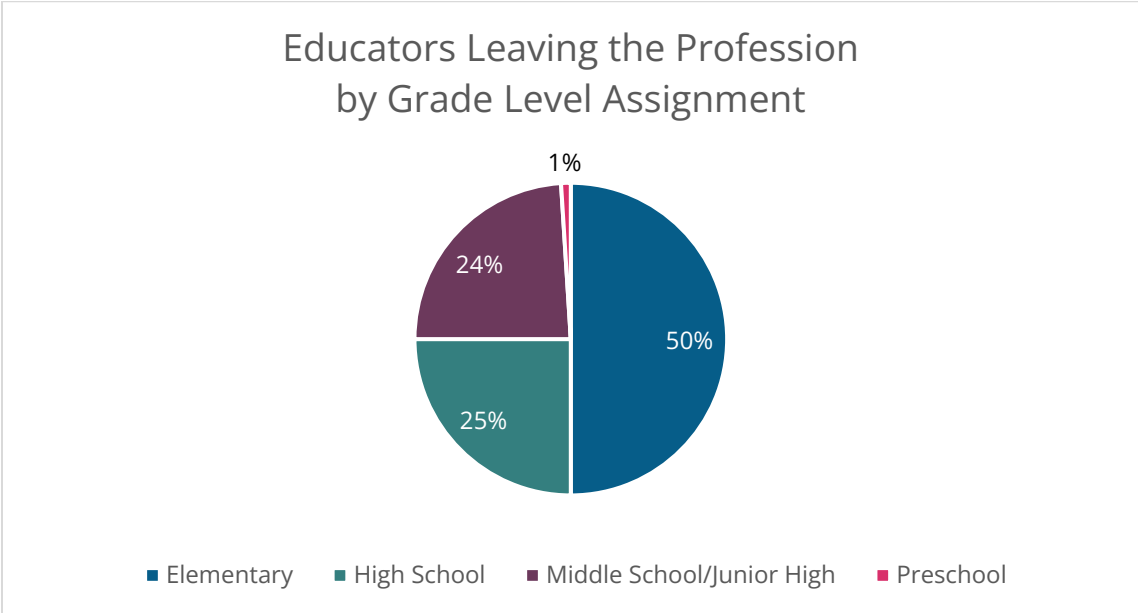


Note: This figure shows the distribution of reasons for leaving among early-, mid-, and late-career educators. Early career educators have three or fewer years of experience; mid-career educators have between four and 10 years of experience; and late-career educators have more than 10 years of experience.

REASONS FOR DEPARTURE BY GRADE LEVEL ASSIGNMENT

As shown in Figure 6, of the 430 educators who indicated they were leaving the profession entirely, 1% were preschool educators, 50% were elementary educators, 24% were middle school educators, and 25% were high school educators. Thus, based on responses to this survey, the primary source of grade-level attrition is among elementary educators.

FIGURE 6: EDUCATORS LEAVING THE PROFESSION BY GRADE LEVEL



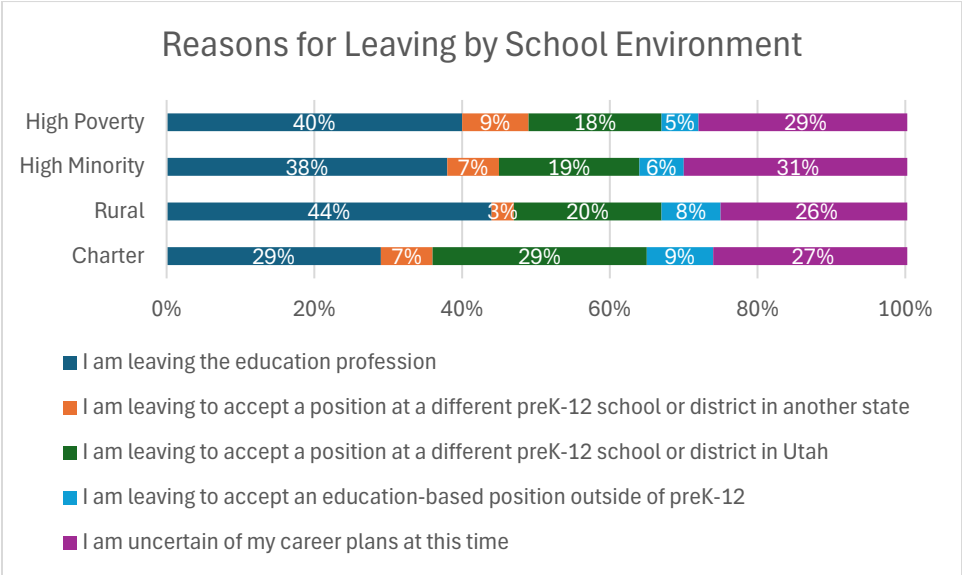
Further examination of responses from exiting educators by grade level reveals that 6% of preschool educators leaving their positions were leaving the profession. In comparison, another 9% were uncertain about their future career plans. Among responding elementary educators, 33% were leaving the profession and 23% were unsure of their future career plans. For responding middle school educators, 30% were leaving the profession and 21% were uncertain about their plans. Whereas among departing high school educators, 33% were leaving the profession and 17% were uncertain about their plans. Thus, among all grade-level subgroups, 31% of educators are leaving the profession.

REASON FOR DEPARTURE BY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

A series of optional questions at the end of the survey asked educators to provide additional demographic data related to the nature of the school environment in which they were employed. As shown in Figure 7, of the 200 educators who indicated they were employed in a high-poverty school environment, 40% are leaving the profession entirely. This percent has remained steady since the survey was administered in 2024-25. This percentage for educators in schools identified as

high-minority was similar to that in the previous two surveys (38%). Among educators who marked the school as rural, 44% were leaving the profession. It is important to note that respondents were allowed to self-report whether they were working in a rural, high-poverty, or high-minority school, and their responses may reflect broad definitions of school types. In charter schools, 29% of departing educators were leaving the profession entirely and 44% were transferring within education. It is important to note that because these questions were optional, they do not capture responses from all educators who completed the survey. Charter Schools continue to have lower teacher retention and fewer fully qualified professional, licensed educators than districts.

FIGURE 7: REASONS FOR LEAVING BY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT



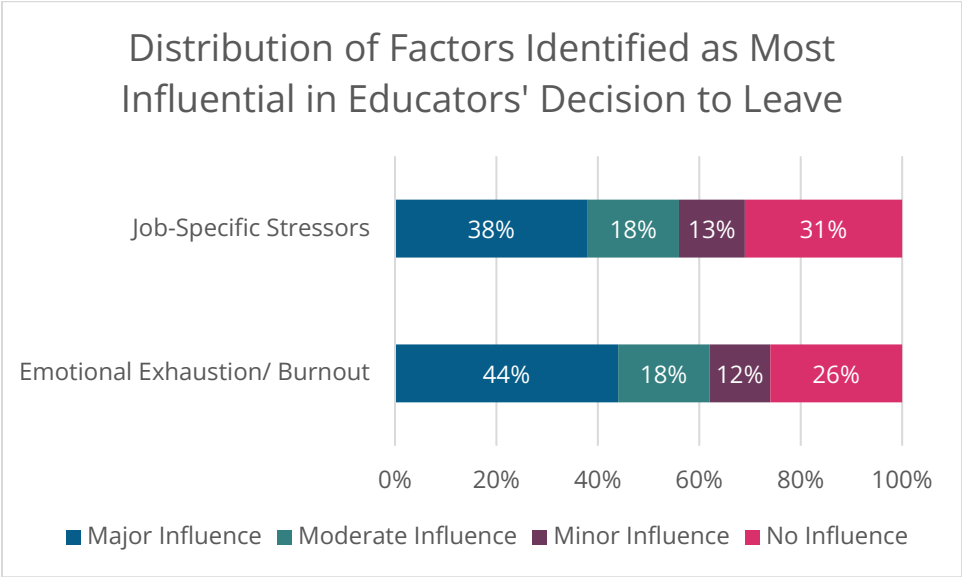
FACTORS INFLUENCING EDUCATORS' DECISIONS TO LEAVE

To help ascertain which factors contribute to educator attrition, departing educators were asked to rate a series of factors for their influence on the educator's decision to leave their position: major, moderate, minor, or no influence. Ten factors were presented to all responding educators and an additional five were presented to educators who indicated they were leaving the profession. This section summarizes teachers' perspectives on the influence of each factor. The 10 factors presented to all educators are outlined first, followed by the factors presented only to those leaving the profession.

FACTORS INFLUENCING DECISION TO LEAVE AMONG ALL DEPARTING EDUCATORS

Among the most influential factors in educators' decisions to leave their current position were emotional exhaustion/burnout and job-specific stressors. A total of 44% of educators indicated that emotional exhaustion/burnout had a major influence on their decision, while 38% indicated that job-specific stressors had a major influence. These percentages have remained steady since the 2023-24 survey. An additional summary of responses for these two influences appears in Figure 8.

FIGURE 8: FACTORS IDENTIFIED AS MOST INFLUENTIAL IN EDUCATORS' DECISION TO LEAVE



Note: This figure shows educators' ratings associated with whether the indicated factors had a major, moderate, minor, or no influence on their decision to leave their current position

UNDERSTANDING PERSPECTIVES OF EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION, BURNOUT, AND JOB STRESS

Given the difficulty of discerning the nuances in how different educators interpret terms such as “emotional exhaustion,” “burnout,” and “job-specific stressors,” any educator who indicated that these were major influences on their decision to leave was allowed to elaborate on their thinking. Specifically, these respondents were asked: “You indicated that emotional exhaustion, burnout, and/or job-specific stressors had a major influence on your decision to leave your position. We would appreciate more detailed information on the contributing factors to these feelings. Please provide additional details you feel may help us better understand the nature of your sentiments around the emotional exhaustion, burnout, or job-specific stressors that are contributing to your decision to leave your current position.” Teachers frequently cited a lack of support from school leadership and an unrealistic workload in their responses. For example:

- “Inadequate support for classroom behaviors. Every year, I was asked to take on huge behavior issues. Our school was sent students who were kicked out of their other schools, and yet we were given no extra help to handle these situations. That added onto the multiple behavior issues that exist in every single classroom led to absolute exhaustion after every single school day.”
- “There is way too much work to be done and expected of teachers and hardly any time to implement the work or the professional development that is expected of us. This causes added stress to the home and personal life of educators. I was not able to fulfill my other roles in my life, such as being a parent, spouse, etc.”

Another common sentiment was feeling a lack of recognition, respect or general accountability from within and beyond the school.

- “I have been in education for 20 years. Teaching has always been a stressful and demanding job, but over the years, the challenges have grown. I believe

this is due to a decline in discipline, increasing parent issues, and a general lack of respect for teachers. Educators today are expected to do far more than just teach...”

- “Teacher burnout has been a significant factor in shaping how long I can realistically envision myself remaining a positive and effective force for students. The constant scrutiny and the numerous procedural hurdles imposed by the district can be discouraging, particularly for educators who are deeply passionate about teaching, genuinely care for their students, and are committed to continual improvement...”
- “There is only so much time in one day. More continues to be added to the schedule with nothing taken away. Parents have more say than the teachers do. Teachers are never supported when there is an issue.”

Educator responses also expressed a lack of training, support, and/or resources, contributing to feelings of exhaustion and stress. Survey respondents mentioned specific incidents of lack of professionalism among school leaders or staff, as well as extremes in student behavior, as leading to exhaustion. A sample statement from these themes includes:

- “Disruptive students who cause the same problems every day, all year long; lack of leadership in the building and the district to properly address problem students; not being taken seriously even with 18 years of proven success; administrators with their own agendas who want all the credit.”
- “In the classroom, I had many students with poor behavior. Whether in a classroom of regular students or a classroom of mixed regular and special education IEP students, 30-50% of the students showed inappropriate behavior. I am not talking about simple misbehavior such as forgetting materials. The students were immature and purposely tried to disrupt the classroom...”

TEACHER PAY

Another factor listed as a major influence on respondents’ decision to leave was job salary and benefits (20%). Though recent pay increases are acknowledged and

appreciated, for some teachers, the pay has not kept up with the steeply rising cost of living in many areas.

- “Teachers are being asked to do more and more for less and less money when you take inflation into account. PAY YOUR TEACHERS. Cost of living is through the roof and salaries are not keeping up.”
- “I am an art teacher in a 29-hour position. With over 250 students and back-to-back classes, the job required many more hours than allotted. I worked 4-5 hours at home every day, including weekends, plus at least one all-nighter a week. With little to no funding for art supplies, I was providing over 2/3 of the supplies with my own paycheck. It is very, very hard to walk away from the students and a job I love! But the math and the exhaustion started to not make sense.”

Many teachers felt that the profession in general did not receive compensation commensurate with their responsibilities.

- “The education system pays teachers for 40 hours, but no one only works 40. As an English teacher, my grading is not multiple choice, or something I can quickly grade with an answer key like a Math teacher might. I have to read essays, and give specific feedback and grades...”

A heavy workload was among the top stressors that leaving educators reported as factors in their decision. Many educators also felt that the pay did not reflect what was expected of them. A major source of frustration was the lack of prep time, which forced them to do lesson planning and grading in their own time, work that amounted to unpaid overtime.

- “Expectations with teachers felt ever-growing at the charter. Lunch duty, after-school supervision of the building, lots of CTM reports, but no additional time to do that, taking over our limited prep times.
- We tried to bring up the concerns, but time and time again, we were shut down. There was an ‘is what it is’ type of response to my plea for restored prep time.”

CONCLUSION

In 2024-25, of the 1,383 respondents, 30% indicated that they planned to remain in education in some capacity. For late-career educators, this number dips to 21% of respondents planning to remain in education. Generally, teachers who identify themselves as working in high-poverty or high-minority environments are planning to leave the profession in higher numbers. Educators who are leaving education continue to identify emotional burnout and job-specific stressors as the top reasons. For educators with more than 10 years' experience, retirement was the most influential factor in their decision to leave education. While respondents leave for a wide variety of personal and professional reasons, lack of pay and support were frequently recurring themes.