



Memo: NEA Educator Finance Omnibus Survey 2024 Select Highlights

Date: October 4, 2024

To: Stacey Pelika, Marissa Blais, Melissa Hershcopf, Erika Taylor; NEA

From: Jania Marshall, Kristen Conrad; SSRS

Overview

In 2024, the National Education Association (NEA) partnered with SSRS to conduct a survey to better understand a wide variety of issues impacting educator personnel in the United States.

Educator personnel (both those currently employed in education and those retired from a role in the education field) were surveyed from May 14 – July 7, 2024. A mixed mode (self-administered online and phone) survey was conducted among three different sample sources: 1) the NEA member list, 2) the probability-based SSRS Opinion Panel and 3) nonprobability/opt-in panels. Total sample size was $n=3,655$ and respondents included both NEA members and non-members. The education personnel surveyed for this research included PK-12 teachers/SISPs, PK-12 ESPs, higher ed faculty, higher ed ESPs and retired educators. All results are weighted to reflect all educators within the United States. Retired educators are excluded from the weighting because reliable benchmarks could not be obtained.

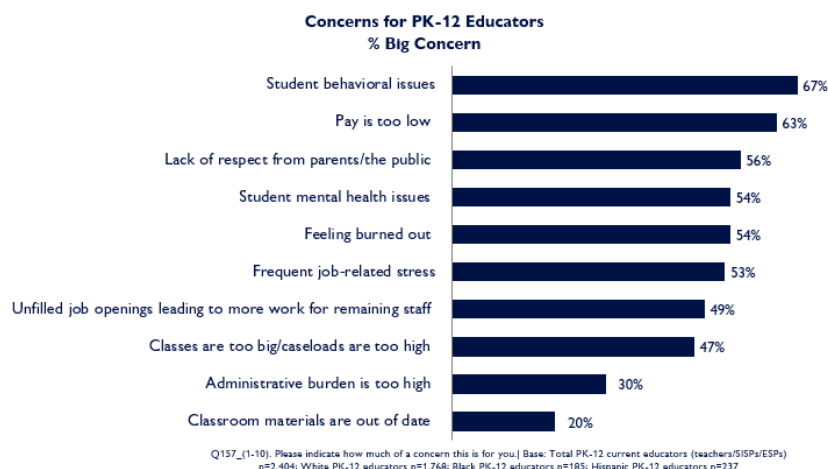
Survey topics included: housing, medical/sick leave, electoral priorities, health and safety, artificial intelligence (AI), disability rights and inclusion, NEA priorities and issues facing educators, union memberships, educator finances and out-of-pocket spending and student loans. This memo highlights key findings from some of the key topic areas among all educators, higher ed faculty, PK-12 teachers/SISPs, ESPs (which include both PK-12 and higher ed ESPs) and retired educators.

Note when reading this memo: subgroup significant differences at the 95% confidence level are denoted with superscript letters.

Educator Issues and Satisfaction

The majority (84%) of those currently working in education are very satisfied/satisfied with their job as an educator. Higher ed faculty and ESPs have higher satisfaction levels compared to PK-12 teachers/SISPs (89%, 87% and 80%, respectively). While job satisfaction is high, satisfaction with the conditions facing educators is considerably lower; the majority (70%) of all current educators say they are dissatisfied/very dissatisfied with the conditions they are facing. Frustration is highest among PK-12 teachers/SISPs (78% dissatisfied/very dissatisfied) compared to higher ed faculty (61%) and ESPs (61%).

Top concerns for PK-12 teachers/SISPs are student behavioral issues (67%) and low pay (63%). Lack of respect, student mental health issues, burnout, and job-related stress represent a second tier of concerns for PK-12 educators. Across several concerns,



differences exist by racial groups. Black and Hispanic PK-12 educators are more likely to rank low pay as a big concern compared to White educators (74%, 76% vs 59%, respectively). In addition, Black and Hispanics are significantly more likely than Whites to be concerned about

unfilled job openings leading to more work for remaining staff, administrative burdens being too high and classroom materials being out of date.

Similarly, higher ed educators (faculty and ESPs) see low pay as a very serious problem (47%). As with PK-12 teachers/SISPs, low pay is more likely to be a serious issue for Black and Hispanic educators than White (64%, 56% vs 42%, respectively). Student mental health issues (41%) and feeling burned out (38%) round out the top three issues for higher ed educators.

Housing

More than half (60%) of current educators live in the same community where they work. For more than one in four (27%) of those individuals, it is a financial strain for them to live in that community. Just 2% of educators say their employer offers housing assistance, but among those who are offered assistance, nearly half (40%) take advantage of the offering.

Among those not living in the community they work in, more than half (51%) say they could not afford to live there, or it would be a financial strain for them to live there. ESPs are significantly more likely to not be able to afford to live in the same community they work in compared to PK-12 teachers/SISPs and higher ed faculty (41% vs 26% and 22%, respectively).

Medical/sick leave

PK-12 teachers/SISPs are significantly more likely to be provided medical leave by their employer (90%) compared to higher ed faculty (57%) and ESPs (73%). Interestingly, a sizeable proportion of higher ed faculty are unsure if they have medical leave (29%), and an additional 11% know they do not receive medical leave (significantly higher than PK-12 teachers/SISPs and ESPs). The average number of medical leave days provided by employers is 9 days, while the average number of PTO days among those without leave is 10 days. While medical leave is less likely to be offered among higher ed faculty compared to PK-12 teachers/SISPs, both groups have similar levels of agreement that they have enough medical leave to meet their needs (60% and 57% agreement, respectively). White educators (higher ed faculty and PK-12) are significantly more likely to feel they have adequate medical leave compared to Black and Hispanic educators (61% vs 48% and 40%, respectively).

Health

In the past 12 months, nearly one in three (30%) current educators and their families have skipped preventive or routine medical appointments due to other financial priorities. Additionally, nearly one in four (24%) current educators and their families have

skipped acute/spontaneous medical appointments in the last year due to other financial priorities, and 19 percent have skipped filling a prescription for the same reason.

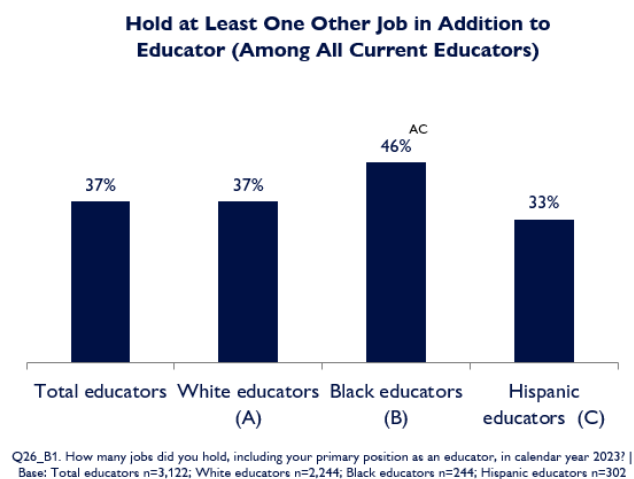
Racial differences exist, such that Hispanic and Black educators and their families are significantly more likely than are White educators to have skipped preventive or routine medical appointments and filling a prescription in the past 12 months due to other financial priorities.

In the past 12 months, nearly one in four (24%) current educators have had a moderate or serious problem paying for medical expenses. Additionally, 18 percent have had a moderate or serious problem paying health insurance premiums in the last year.

Differences exist by racial group, such that Black educators are significantly more likely than are their White and Hispanic counterparts to have had a moderate or serious problem paying for medical expenses in the past 12 months. In addition, Hispanic and Black educators are significantly more likely than are White educators to have had a moderate or serious problem paying health insurance premiums.

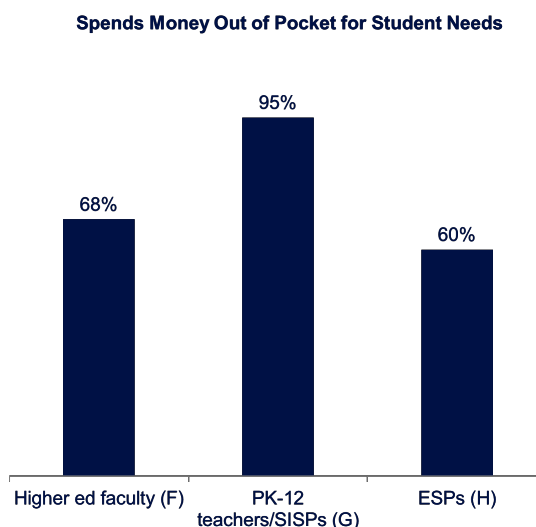
Multiple jobs

Almost two in five (37%) of current educators hold at least one other job in addition to their primary job in education. Of those working more than one job, just over half (51%) hold an additional position outside of education, while 43% have a position within education. One-third (34%) of those working multiple jobs work their additional position during the academic year. Again, differences exist by racial groups. Black educators are significantly more likely to hold multiple positions compared to their White and Hispanic counterparts.



Out-of-pocket spending

The majority of educators (77%) spent out of their own pockets for student needs in the 2023-2024 academic year. The vast majority of PK-12 teachers/SISPs (95%) spend out of their own pockets for student needs compared to 68% of higher ed faculty and 60% of ESPs.



Usage of tax credits/deductions and social support programs

WIC (Assistance to Women, Infants and Children):

White current educators (A): 1%
Black current educators (B): 4%^A
Hispanic current educators (C): 5%^A

Higher ed faculty (F): 1%
PK-12 teachers/SISPs (G): 1%
ESPs (H): 3%^{FG}

Current PK-12 teachers/SISPs are significantly more likely to take the educator expense deduction and the child tax credit than other educator personnel, while ESPs are more likely to take the Earned Income Tax Credit. Current White educators are more likely

Medicaid:

White current educators (A): 3%
Black current educators (B): 11%^A
Hispanic current educators (C): 9%^A

Higher ed faculty (F): 2%
PK-12 teachers/SISPs (G): 3%
ESPs (H): 8%^{FG}

than Black and Hispanics to take advantage of the educator expense deduction (33% vs 25% and 24%, respectively). Black educators utilize the Earned Income Tax Credit at a higher rate (26%) than Whites and Hispanics (10% and 14%). The majority (78%) of retired educators did not take any of the asked-about tax credits/deductions on their most recent tax return.

*Source: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-reminder-for-schoolteachers-up-to-300-in-classroom-expenses-deductible-for-2024#:~:text=WASHINGTON%20E2%80%9420As%20educators%20gear%20up,in%202024%20remains%20at%20%24300.>

Black and Hispanic educators and ESPs use social support programs such as free groceries, Medicaid, WIC and SNAP at higher rates than their White counterparts. The majority of current White educators (76%) do not use any support programs compared to 43% of Black and 62% of Hispanics.

Most (80%) retired educators participate in some form of health insurance program (Medicare Parts A & B, C, D, supplemental insurance, Medicaid, health insurance through a former employer, or the ACA). More than half (57%) participate in Social Security.

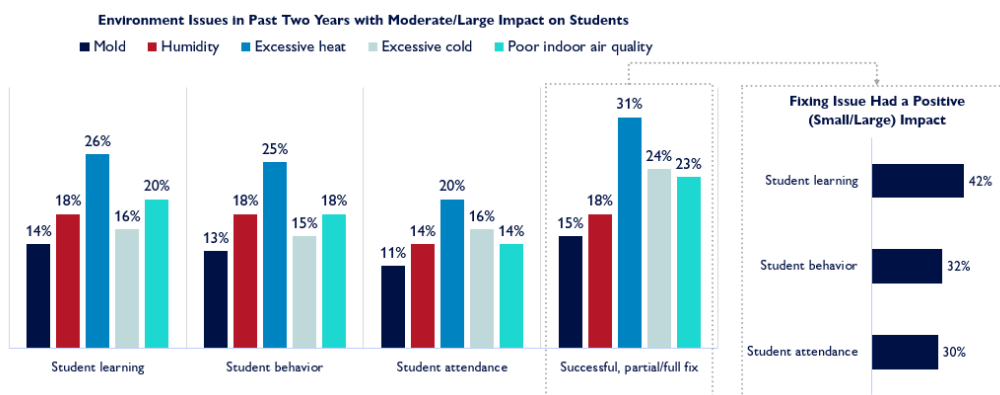
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP):

White current educators (A): 3%
Black current educators (B): 10%^A
Hispanic current educators (C): 6%^A

Higher ed faculty (F): 2%
PK-12 teachers/SISPs (G): 2%
ESPs (H): 8%^{F,G}

Health and safety

Excessive heat is the top facility-related issue to impact student learning, behavior and attendance. Among educators who say the issue was at least partially repaired, 42% say making the repair has had a positive impact on student learning, while 32% see improvement in behavior, and 30% saw attendance improve.



Artificial intelligence (AI)

Usage of AI among educators is low, but there is interest in periodically incorporating its use for some educator tasks and to support student development. For PK-12 teachers/SISPs, in addition

to low usage, there is limited professional development in AI and its usage. The majority have not received professional development on AI topics.

At present, just 7% of all current educators say they use AI regularly, and half (51%) have never used AI. Higher ed faculty are more likely to use AI at least occasionally, if not regularly (40%) while ESPS are most likely to have never used it (66%). Moreover, higher ed faculty are more likely to have established a policy about student use of AI compared to PK-12 teachers/SISPs (52% vs 15%).

For all PK-12 teachers/SISPs and higher ed faculty educators, the top areas they would consider utilizing AI tools at least sometimes are to support emergent bilingual learners (79%) and students with disabilities (79%). They are least likely to consider using it for assessing student work (62%) and helping students with assignments (54%).