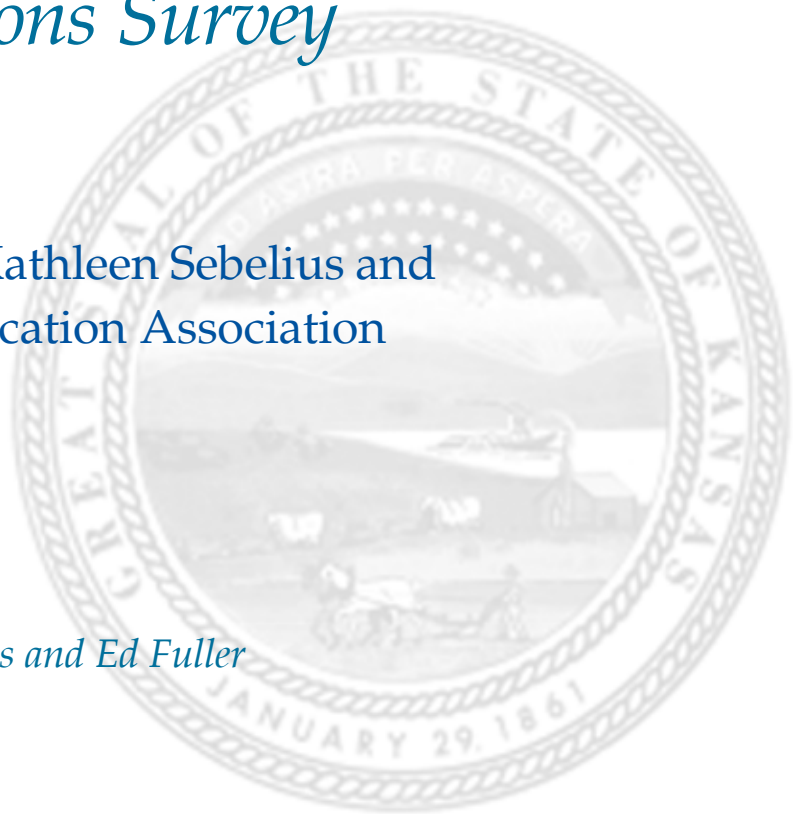


Creating Conditions for Student and Teacher Success

*A Report on the
2006 Kansas Teacher
Working Conditions Survey*

Submitted to Governor Kathleen Sebelius and
the Kansas National Education Association

By
*Eric Hirsch and Scott Emerick
with Keri Church, Cynthia Reeves and Ed Fuller*



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The Center for Teaching Quality improves student learning through developing teacher leadership, conducting practical research and engaging various communities. To accomplish this mission, the Center for Teaching Quality strives to shape policies that ensure:

- **Students**, no matter what their background or where they go to school, are ready to learn; with
- **Teachers** who are caring, qualified, and competent with vast content knowledge and the ability, through quality preparation and ongoing development and support, to ensure that all children can learn; in
- **Classrooms** that have adequate resources and provide environments conducive to student learning; in
- **Schools** that are designed to provide teachers with sufficient time to learn and work together in collaboration with a principal who respects and understands teaching; in
- **Districts** that have policies and programs that support the recruitment, retention and development of high quality teachers in every school; in
- **States** that have well-funded systems that include rigorous preparation and licensing with evaluation tools that ensure performance based standards are met; in a
- **Region** that works collaboratively, using common teaching quality definitions, sharing data, and working across state lines to recruit, retain and support high quality teachers; in a
- **Nation** that views teaching as a true profession and values teachers as one of its most important resources.

Table of Contents

List of Tables and Figures	iv
Acknowledgments	v
Executive Summary	vii
Introduction	1
About the Survey	2
About the Respondents	2
About the Report	3
Major Findings	4
1. Teacher Working Conditions Are Student Learning Conditions	4
2. Teacher Working Conditions Affect Future Employment Decisions	12
3. Kansas Teachers and Administrators View Working Conditions Differently	18
4. Kansas Compares Favorably to Other States on Working Conditions Indicators	20
5. There Is a Working Conditions Gap in Kansas	21
Domain Analyses	23
Time: Ensuring Kansas Teachers Have the Opportunity to Work Collaboratively to Meet the Needs of all Students	23
Facilities and Resources: Ensuring Teachers Have the Resources to Help All Children Learn	26
Empowerment: Ensuring Those Who Are Closest to Students Are Involved in Making Decisions that Affect Them	27
Leadership	29
Professional Development: Ensuring Teachers Can Continually Enhance Their Knowledge and Skills	30
Recommendations	32
1. Ensure the Data from the Kansas Teacher Working Conditions Survey Is Used by Educators and Develop Assistance for Working Conditions Reform	32
2. Invest in Schools and Teacher Leaders Who Can Create Positive Teacher Working Conditions	33
3. Close the Working Conditions Gap by Targeting Resources and Engaging Communities in Schools	34
4. Make Teacher Working Conditions Data a Permanent Part of Kansas Education Reform	35
Appendices	37
A. Statistical Models for Student Achievement	37
B. Statistical Model Explaining Teacher Turnover	40
Notes	43

List of Figures and Tables

Figure

1. Aspect of Working Conditions Teachers Believe Is Most Important to Student Learning	5
2. Aspect of Working Conditions Teachers Believe Is Most Important to Continue Teaching in Their School	13
3. Amount of Non-Instructional Time Teachers Indicate They Have Available by School Type	24
4. Amount of Time Teachers Indicate Spending on School-Related Activities Outside Regular School Work Day in an Average Week of Teaching	25

Table

1. Working Conditions by Student Achievement Quartiles	7
2. Correlations Between Working Conditions and Other Factors and Math Achievement	8
3. Differences in the Perceptions of Stayers, Movers and Leavers on Teacher Working Conditions Questions	12
4. Correlations Between Working Conditions and Future Employment Intentions	14
5. Working Conditions Perceptions Based on Future Employment Intentions of Kansas Educators	15
6. Teacher and Principal Perceptions of Select Teacher Working Conditions Questions	19
7. Teacher and Principal Perception of School Leadership Efforts to Address Working Conditions	20
8. Percentage of Teachers Agreeing with Working Conditions Questions from 2006 CTQ Working Conditions Initiatives	20
9. Elementary School Working Conditions by Proportion of Economically Disadvantaged Students	21
10. Elementary School Working Conditions by Minority Population Served	22
11. Perception of the Presence of Facilities and Resources by School Type	27
12. Teachers' Role in School Decision Making	28
13. Differences in the Percent of Teachers Who Report Needing Versus Receiving Professional Development Support	31

Acknowledgments

CTQ would like to acknowledge the leadership of Governor Kathleen Sebelius. Her willingness to listen to and act on the voices of teachers is the impetus for this initiative. Her leadership in Kansas and across the nation has brought considerable attention to issues that influence teaching quality and student learning.

CTQ would like to thank Blake West, President of the Kansas National Education Association, whose leadership in designing, implementing and capitalizing on the data in this survey has been instrumental to making the initiative a success. The vision of his predecessor, former KNEA President Christy Levings was crucial for launching the initiative. Wade Anderson, Peg Dunlap and their colleagues at KNEA also provided helpful suggestions and support throughout the initiative. KNEA supported and ran a help desk that helped ensure teachers' voices were central to the initiative. Connie Boydston of KNEA deserves special recognition for her attention and patience in responding to hundreds of questions about the survey.

Patrick Woods, Office of the Governor, was the point person for Governor Sebelius and instrumental in finding financial support for the initiative. At the Kansas Department of Education, with leadership from interim Superintendent Dale Dennis, Kelly Spurgeon and Todd Lowe helped provide school-level data necessary for the statistical analyses.

Without key partners who helped conduct the Teacher Working Conditions Survey, our analyses would not be possible. Phil Kaufman and Chris Andrews at LearnNC hosted the online survey and provided data reports for all eligible schools. Ed Fuller helped organize and manage the data and also provided virtually all statistical analyses throughout the report.

Most importantly, we would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the approximately 22,000 dedicated educators who were willing to share their time and input while they are striving to ensure that Kansas students achieve at the highest levels. We hope this data and these findings will help you make your school a great place to work and learn.

Executive Summary

The 2006 Kansas Teacher Working Conditions Survey has provided data from approximately 22,000 educators for almost 1,000 schools across the state. These data can be used to assess whether teachers believe their schools are good places to teach and learn and to spur data-driven reform strategies. Emerging research from across the nation demonstrates that school working conditions—time, teacher empowerment, school leadership, professional development, and facilities and resources—are critical to increasing student achievement and retaining teachers. As Governor Sebelius has noted, “the insights of educators will provide valuable information in our efforts to enhance the teaching and learning environments in our schools.”

Findings

1. Teacher Working Conditions are Student Learning Conditions

Significant and often strong connections were documented between success on the state math assessment and certain conditions of work being present in a school. Of critical importance is the perception that the faculty is committed to helping all children learn, significant at both the elementary and secondary level. Having a safe and supportive environment with sufficient instructional resources is a necessity for teachers to be successful with students. The influence of working conditions on student learning is documented throughout the report, including these examples:

- *Agreement that the faculty is committed to helping every student learn is a significant indicator of elementary mathematics success.* For every 10 percent of teachers who agree that the faculty is committed to helping all children learn, a 2.7 percent increase in students passing the math assessment can be estimated.
- *Perceptions of school safety are significant in explaining middle school math achievement.* For every 10 percent of teachers who agree that their school is safe, a 2.3 percent increase in students passing the assessment can be estimated.
- *Teachers’ agreement that there is sufficient access to instructional technology help to explain student success in math at the high school level.* For every 10 percent increase in the percentage of educators who agree that there is sufficient instructional technology, a 1.1 percent increase in the proportion of students passing the mathematics assessment can not be estimated.

2. Teacher Working Conditions Affect Future Employment Decisions

School leadership and empowerment are essential to retaining teachers. Effective leadership that provides sufficient planning time and empowers teachers in a trusting environment where they feel supported is the key ingredient to lowering teacher turnover and creating climates

Significant and often strong connections were documented between success on the state math assessment and certain conditions of work being present in a school.

where all students can succeed. Ensuring that teachers are respected as educational experts appears to be particularly important, as it was the greatest predictor of future employment plans at both the elementary and high school levels. Additionally, finding time for educators to focus on instruction is a critical component to teacher satisfaction.

3. Teachers and Administrators View Working Conditions Differently

There are considerable gaps between the perceptions of teachers and administrators regarding the degree to which school leadership addresses teacher concerns. On all questions, the 456 principals responding to the survey were significantly more likely than the almost 19,000 teachers to note that positive working conditions were in place, and that leadership was making efforts to address these conditions.

In general, teachers in Kansas noted more positive working conditions than educators in Arizona, Ohio and Clark County, Nevada (Las Vegas), and registered similar results to North Carolina, all locales that conducted similar working conditions initiatives.

4. Kansas Working Conditions Compare Favorably to Other States

In general, teachers in Kansas noted more positive working conditions than educators in Arizona, Ohio and Clark County, Nevada (Las Vegas), and registered similar results to North Carolina, all locales that conducted similar working conditions initiatives.

5. There is a Working Conditions Gap in Kansas

While there is little variation in perceptions based on individual teacher background and demographics, there are consistent differences in perceptions between schools. Not all schools have the types of teaching and learning environments necessary to retain teachers and ensure student success. Unfortunately, some of the disparities in the presence of working conditions can be explained by a variety of factors and influences related to the students served in those schools. Schools serving a lower percentage of economically disadvantaged students consistently had more positive working conditions, particularly in the area of teacher empowerment.

Recommendations

From these findings and the domain analyses, we offer the following recommendations for Kansas to enhance efforts to improve teacher working conditions.

1. **Ensure the Data from the Kansas Teacher Working Conditions Survey Is Used by Educators and Develop Assistance for Working Conditions Reform**
 - Create standards or guidelines for teacher working conditions so all schools understand the key elements of building a positive school climate.
 - Create assistance teams to help schools where important conditions of work are not present.
 - Require that working conditions data be used as part of the school improvement planning process.
 - Create some incentives for schools that initiate data-driven plans to improve working conditions.
 - Design and deliver (with principals and teachers from schools with the most positive teaching and learning conditions) professional development, web-based tools and other supports for analyzing and using data.
2. **Invest in School and Teacher Leaders Who Can Create Positive Teacher Working Conditions**
 - Establish clear expectations and/or standards for what principals need to know and be able to do in recruiting and retaining teachers as well as creating positive teaching and learning conditions.

- Design and deliver professional development with principals from schools where teachers indicate there is an atmosphere of trust and respect.
 - Ensure principal evaluations include some indicators of using working condition results to improve teaching and learning conditions.
 - Partner with institutions of higher education to ensure new principal candidates graduate from programs that provide them with the knowledge and skills they need to create positive school climates and build an atmosphere of trust.
 - Consider areas where teachers can be appropriately engaged in decision making and ensure they have the data, knowledge and skills necessary to make the right decisions.
 - Ensure policies and practices are in place that make clear how decisions will be made and then clearly communicate the results and rationale back to faculty.
3. **Close the Working Conditions Gap by Targeting Resources and Engaging Communities in Schools**
- Ensure that working conditions analysis and reform is a community effort.
 - Document successful community engagement practice in schools serving high-poverty populations through a thorough examination of working conditions data.
 - Provide resources specifically for high-poverty schools to address working conditions.
4. **Make Teacher Working Conditions Data a Permanent Part of Kansas Education Reform**
- Conduct a Teacher Working Conditions Survey every other year to assess progress on critical conditions identified as having a significant impact on teacher retention and student learning.
 - Establish an oversight committee of policymakers and practitioners to coordinate the survey and manage the design and implementation of strategies to improve working conditions.
 - Other data must be gathered, considered and triangulated when examining findings from the Kansas Teacher Working Conditions Initiative.

Comprehensive, sustained efforts to improve teacher working conditions will ensure the state's most important educational resource—its dedicated teaching corps—is able to help every child in Kansas learn.

Teachers must have the resources and support they need to serve all students well. Comprehensive, sustained efforts to improve teacher working conditions will ensure the state's most important educational resource—its dedicated teaching corps—is able to help every child in Kansas learn.

Introduction

For virtually any business or organization, the conditions in which employees work drive their satisfaction and productivity. Schools are no different. Improving teacher working conditions—time, professional development, leadership, empowerment, and facilities and resources—will improve student learning conditions and help retain teachers.

National research demonstrates the importance of addressing school conditions to improve teacher retention. Teachers who leave schools cite an opportunity for a better teaching assignment, dissatisfaction with support from administrators and dissatisfaction with workplace conditions as the main reasons why they seek other opportunities.¹ Teachers indicate that a positive, collaborative school climate and support from colleagues and administrators are the most important factors influencing whether they stay in a school. In national surveys, teachers identified excessive workload, lack of time and frustration with reform efforts as areas in need of focus and improvement.² Additionally, a recent survey of 2,000 educators from California found that 28 percent of teachers who left before retirement indicated that they would come back if improvements were made to teaching and learning conditions. Monetary incentives were found to be less effective in luring them back.³

A recent survey of 2,000 educators from California found that 28 percent of teachers who left before retirement indicated that they would come back if improvements were made to teaching and learning conditions.

Addressing these working conditions and building a sense of trust in schools are critical factors in reforming schools, as both have been linked to greater teacher effectiveness.⁴ One of the most extensive examinations of working conditions data revealed “a clear but difficult lesson: if we want to improve the quality of our teachers and schools, we need to improve the quality of the teaching job.”⁵

Kansas educators, stakeholders and policymakers have recognized that teacher working conditions are an essential element for retaining teachers and improving student achievement. Working conditions survey results from across the country indicate that improving teacher working conditions—time, professional development, leadership, empowerment, and facilities and resources—will improve student learning conditions and help retain teachers. Findings from teacher working conditions surveys in North Carolina, South Carolina, Nevada (Las Vegas) and Arizona have all demonstrated that supportive school environments, where teachers are partners in decision making with school leaders who have a strong instructional emphasis, were critical to keeping teachers and improving student learning.⁶

Teacher working conditions matter, and Kansas schools and districts need to consider and respond to data from those whose perceptions matter most: their own classroom teachers, so that they can gauge the successes and areas of concern in their own schools and communities. By hearing directly from school-based educators who intimately understand working condition issues, policymakers will have the opportunity to make data driven decisions for developing policies that make Kansas schools better places to work and learn.

About the Survey

Under the leadership of Governor Sebelius, in partnership with the Kansas National Education Association and the United School Administrators of Kansas, Kansas became just the second state in the country to gather and release school-level teacher working conditions data for all schools with sufficient response rates.

In developing the 2006 Kansas Teacher Working Conditions survey instrument, the Center for Teaching Quality (CTQ) drew from and improved upon survey questions from previous efforts to develop school climate and working conditions surveys in North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Nevada, Ohio and Arizona. CTQ worked with a stakeholder group in November 2005 to customize a Kansas survey which improved upon an existing set of core working conditions domains and questions used in previous statewide assessments and reflected Kansas specific interests and context. The final survey included 28 questions with multiple subparts, as well as demographic information. The survey was administered in February 2006.

With over half of all Kansas school-based licensed educators responding in almost 1,000 schools, the population in the survey is representative of schools and districts across the entire state.

The survey asked all school-based licensed educators (teachers, principals, assistant principals and other licensed staff) to assess school conditions in the areas of time, professional development, facilities and resources, school leadership and teacher empowerment. Ultimately, 21,770 professional educators (out of over 41,000 for a 52.65 percent response rate) from virtually every district in the state responded to the survey. Almost 1,000 Kansas schools and more than 200 school districts achieved a sufficient response rate on the survey to access unique data results for their respective school or district.

Public access to school-level results (where there was sufficient response rates) has been available since April 20, 2006, on the web at www.kansastwc.org.

About the Respondents

With over half of all Kansas school-based licensed educators responding in almost 1,000 schools (approximately 550 elementary schools, 150 middle schools 250 high schools), the population in the survey is representative of schools and districts across the entire state. Cumulative respondent information culled from the demographic section of the survey, include:

- Approximately 19,000 of the survey respondents were classroom teachers (88 percent), 456 were principals (two percent), 175 were assistant principals (one percent), and about 2,000 were other licensed educators working in the school (9 percent).
- More than one-third (36 percent) of the survey respondents had at least 20 years of experience in education. Only four percent were in their first year of teaching and about one-quarter (22 percent) had less than seven years of educational experience.
- About one-third of respondents (34 percent) have been teaching in their school for more than ten years, and about one-third (30 percent) have been in their current school three years or less. Thirteen percent were in their first year in their school at the time of the survey.
- Three-quarters (77 percent) of survey respondents were female. Ninety-six percent of educators responding were White.

- About 1,000 of the respondents indicated that they were prepared through an alternative route (5 percent), with the vast majority being prepared in a traditional four-year program.

Respondents were well educated. Only 46 percent had just a B.A. or B.S. (and more than half of those educators had accrued more than 15 credit hours in addition to their degree). Fifty-two percent had an M.A. or M.S., and a full twenty percent indicated having thirty or more credit hours above their Master's degree. Two percent had an advanced degree at the Ph.D. level.

About the Report

This report could not be written until data were made available by the Kansas Department of Education on student achievement and school, teacher and student background characteristics. With this data, various analyses were done to better assess the connection between working conditions, student learning and the future employment plans of teachers.

This report demonstrates that teaching and learning conditions are critical to increasing student achievement and retaining teachers. Teachers' responses on the Kansas Teacher Working Conditions Survey help to explain a significant amount of the differences across schools in student performance on achievement in math. Teacher working conditions, particularly the presence of supporting, trusting environments where teachers feel respected also help to explain teachers' future employment plans. Five primary findings are documented in the report:

1. Teacher Working Conditions are Student Learning Conditions
2. Teacher Working Conditions Affect Future Employment Plans
3. Teachers and Administrators View Working Conditions Differently
4. Kansas Compares Favorably to Other States on Working Conditions Indicators
5. There is a Working Conditions Gap in Kansas

In addition to the general findings, in-depth analysis of each of the five teacher working conditions domains is also provided. Teachers' responses are explored, general trends are presented and broad recommendations for reform are offered.

Ultimately, the success of the Kansas Teacher Working Conditions survey hinges on schools and districts using the findings to prompt discussions with practitioners, stakeholders and the general public to ultimately make improvements identified as necessary by their own teaching corp. The recommendations are intended to help develop and implement customized, data-driven reforms integrated with broader school and district improvement plans.

This report indicates the importance of teacher working conditions for improving student learning and teacher retention, consequently making efforts to reform working conditions worthy of considerable time and resources. Teachers must have the resources and supports they need to serve all students well, and without comprehensive and sustained efforts to improve teacher working conditions, much of Kansas's notable teacher recruitment and school reform efforts could go unfulfilled.

This report indicates the importance of teacher working conditions for improving student learning and teacher retention, consequently making efforts to reform working conditions worthy of considerable time and resources.

Major Findings

Finding One: Teacher Working Conditions Are Student Learning Conditions

Research from previous initiatives in North and South Carolina and Nevada (Las Vegas) demonstrated clear connections between the conditions of work faced by teachers and their ability to impact student learning. Across these states, aspects of all five teaching and learning conditions domains—time, empowerment, leadership, professional development, and facilities and resources—were connected to improved school-level performance on state assessments.¹

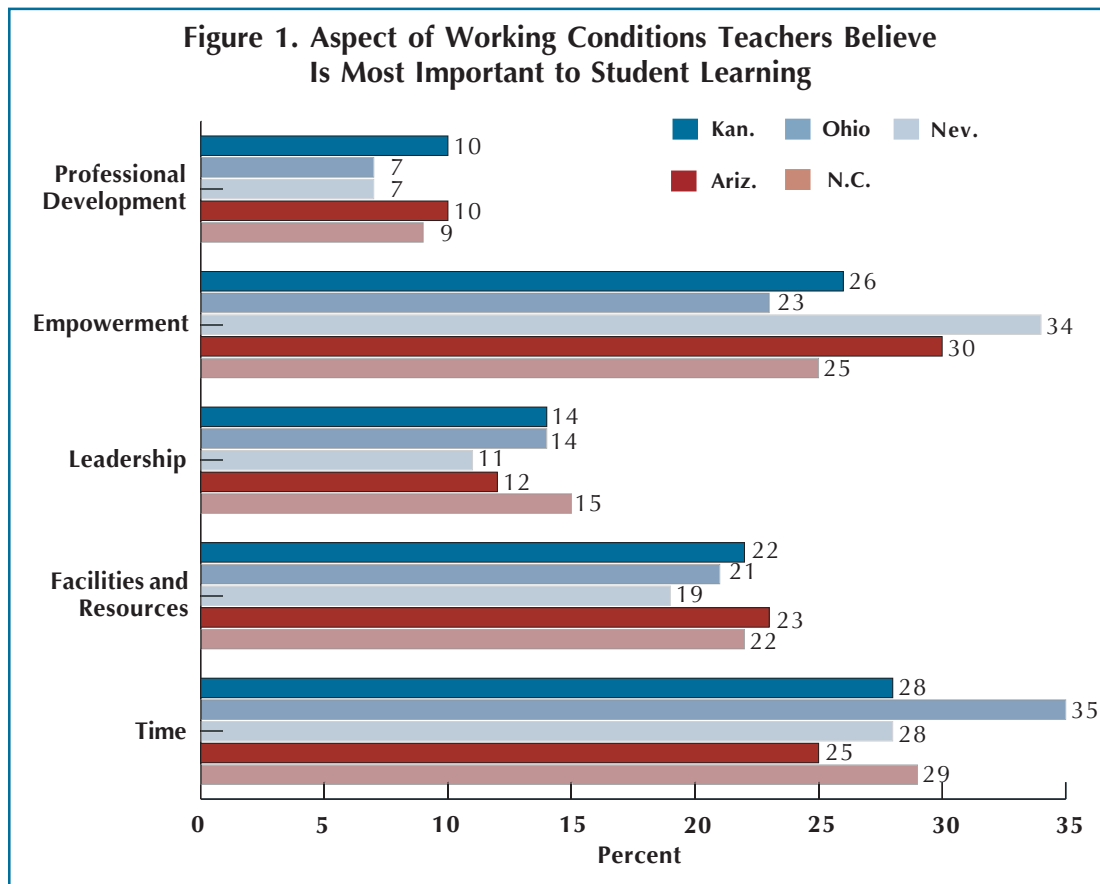
Teachers are clear as to which domains they believe are most critical to improving student learning. In general, teachers in Kansas and across the nation believe that if they are given sufficient time and control over what they do, their students will learn (Figure 1). *Kansas teachers in particular believe that sufficient time and empowerment are the keys to their success with children.* About one-quarter of educators (28 percent) believe time—encompassing issues such as class size, non-instructional time available, non-essential duties assigned, interruptions and paperwork—and empowerment (26 percent) are most critical. Having sufficient resources and facilities was viewed as most important by more than one-fifth (22 percent) of educators. Kansas teachers were slightly more likely than their peers from across the country to indicate that professional development was the most important (10 percent) factor in improving student learning.

In general, teachers in Kansas and across the nation believe that if they are given sufficient time and control over what they do, their students will learn.

Several sets of analyses were conducted to better understand the connections between working conditions and student learning. First, working conditions domains and questions were analyzed by looking at math performance² by achievement quartile. Second, correlations between working conditions and math achievement were examined. Finally, statistical models for student achievement (again using math results) were created in order to see the relationship between learning and working conditions while controlling for important student, teacher and school characteristics.

Variation in Working Conditions Relative to Student Achievement

There are consistent and significant differences in the presence of working conditions between high and low achieving schools at all levels (Table 1). In particular, teacher empowerment appears critical. Looking at the math results, the gap in empowerment—issues such as teacher role in decision making, processes for making collective decisions, and perception of expertise—between high and low achieving schools was greater than any other working condition. This finding is not surprising given that more than one-quarter (26 percent) of Kansas educators indicated that empowerment was most critical to them in improving student learning.



Gaps in the presence of working conditions are also evident between low- and high-achieving schools in the areas of leadership and facilities and resources. Limited difference in the perception of professional development—access, resources and effectiveness—appears between schools based on achievement.

Some trends can be seen by examining the top five questions with the greatest variance between low and high performing schools. Consider the following:

- First and foremost, parent and community support of teachers and the school is different in high and low achieving schools.* At all school levels, there was a greater gap on the two questions examining the role and support of parents and the community than any other questions on the survey. This is especially true at the middle school level where only one-third (36 percent) of educators in low achieving schools indicated that parent and community members contribute to school success compared to two-thirds (66 percent) in the highest achievers.
- Support within the school is also critical.* Big differences can be seen in the general presence of an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect and a belief that teachers are trusted to make sound decisions about instruction. At the elementary level, slightly more than half (53 percent) of educators note an atmosphere of trust in low achieving schools compared to 71 percent in the highest achieving schools. That support appears to include clearly defined processes for making collaborative decisions within the school.

Gaps in the presence of working conditions are evident between low- and high-achieving schools in the areas of leadership and facilities and resources.

- *Perceptions of school safety at the secondary level vary significantly between high and low achievers.* In both middle and high schools, about three-quarters of teachers in low achieving schools agree that their school is safe, compared to more than 90 percent in the highest quartile.
- *Differences in resources may influence achievement at the secondary level.* Sufficient office equipment and supplies at the middle school and instructional technology at the high school level varied greatly between low and high achievers. While 62 percent of educators in the lowest achieving middle schools note sufficient office equipment, 83 percent of teachers in the highest achieving schools agree that they have what they need. At the high school level, 61 percent of teachers in lowest achievement quartile indicated sufficient access to instructional technology compared to 77 percent in the highest quartile.

Correlations between Working Conditions and Student Achievement

The relationship between working conditions and student achievement becomes more clear by examining the correlations between the five domains and student achievement as measured on the Kansas mathematics assessment (Table 2).

Four out of five working conditions are significantly correlated with the percentage of students passing the math assessment at all levels. Only teacher perception of professional development is not significantly correlated with student achievement.

As would be expected, student characteristics, in particular the proportion of students eligible for free and reduced lunch, was most highly correlated with achievement.

In particular, teacher empowerment appears critical in Kansas. On the survey, teachers noted that time and empowerment were most important to them in improving student learning (Figure 1), and when looking at connections to math, teacher role in classroom- and school-level decisions is important to student performance.

As would be expected, student characteristics, in particular the proportion of students eligible for free and reduced lunch, was most highly correlated with achievement. Strong, significant and negative correlations with achievement can be found for the proportion of economically disadvantaged, minority students and English Language Learners served. High student attendance rates were connected to improved performance.

Aspects of teacher background were also significantly correlated with student achievement. As no measure of school level turnover was available, teacher response to a question on the survey about their future employment plans was used to gauge interest in leaving the school. A higher proportion of teachers wanting to leave had a significant and negative impact on achievement at the elementary and high school levels. Teacher qualifications were significantly connected to achievement at the elementary level, but not at the secondary level.

Table 1. Working Conditions by Student Achievement Quartiles

Domain Average (percent that agree/strongly agree with question)	Lowest Quartile	2nd Quartile	3rd Quartile	Highest Quartile	Difference Between Highest/Lowest
Elementary School					
Time Domain	2.89	2.92	2.92	3.10	0.21
Facilities and Resources	3.51	3.63	3.60	3.75	0.24
Empowerment	3.17	3.34	3.39	3.55	0.38
Leadership	3.39	3.57	3.58	3.70	0.31
Professional Development	3.39	3.43	3.35	3.53	0.14
Parents and community members contribute to student success	45.8%	57.5%	64.8%	68.4%	22.6%
Teachers are supported by the community in which they teach	50.5%	59.9%	61.8%	70.2%	19.7%
The faculty has an effective process for making group decisions and solving problems	46.6%	54.0%	56.4%	64.3%	17.7%
There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect	53.0%	64.0%	65.8%	70.5%	17.5%
In this school we take steps to solve problems	62.7%	71.7%	73.4%	76.8%	14.1%
Middle School					
Time Domain	3.04	3.06	3.23	3.21	0.17
Facilities and Resources	3.40	3.46	3.75	3.77	0.37
Empowerment	3.01	3.23	3.40	3.46	0.45
Leadership	3.32	3.31	3.59	3.59	0.27
Professional Development	3.34	3.34	3.46	3.43	0.09
Parents and community members contribute to student success	36.3%	50.0%	57.4%	65.6%	29.3%
Teachers are supported by the community in which they teach	41.9%	52.7%	60.1%	64.4%	22.5%
Teachers have sufficient access to office equipment and supplies	62.0%	69.1%	82.2%	83.3%	21.3%
Teachers and staff work in a school environment that is safe	73.7%	81.4%	88.1%	92.2%	18.5%
Teachers are trusted to make sound professional decisions about instruction	53.4%	60.0%	65.3%	70.6%	17.2%
High School					
Time Domain	3.05	3.06	3.16	3.15	0.10
Facilities and Resources	3.50	3.50	3.64	3.74	0.24
Empowerment	3.07	3.16	3.37	3.39	0.32
Leadership	3.20	3.22	3.44	3.40	0.20
Professional Development	3.23	3.14	3.31	3.25	0.02
Parents and community members contribute to student success	40.4%	49.1%	58.4%	61.2%	20.8%
Teachers are supported by the community in which they teach	42.9%	48.7%	56.7%	61.8%	18.9%
Teachers have sufficient access to instructional technology	60.8%	63.4%	66.8%	76.5%	15.7%
Teachers and staff work in a school environment that is safe	78.3%	85.2%	91.0%	91.9%	13.6%
The school leadership consistently enforces rules for student conduct	39.5%	38.4%	56.7%	52.4%	12.9%

Note: Working conditions domain averages are a composite of questions that statistically were found to cohere together in explaining the listed working condition concept. All questions are on a one to five scale with one being the lowest and five being the highest possible composite.

Table 2. Correlations Between Working Conditions and Other Factors of Math Achievement

Correlates	Elementary Performance (Passing 5th Grade Math)	Middle School (Passing 8th Grade Math)	High School Performance (Passing 10th Grade Math)
Working Conditions			
Time Domain	.170***	.184*	.195**
Facilities and Resources Domain	.233***	.423***	.331***
Empowerment Domain	.355***	.399***	.402***
Leadership Domain	.251***	.262***	.268***
Professional Development Domain	.082	.121	.101
Teacher Background			
Percentage of Teachers Not Fully Qualified	-.140**	-.053	-.016
Percentage of Alternatively Certified Teachers	.034	-.121	-.131*
Percentage of Novice Teachers	-.087	-.051	-.103
School Size (student enrollment)	-.087	-.033	-.158*
Future Employment Intentions (proportion indicating a desire to stay in current school)	.181***	.082	.205**
Student Characteristics			
Percentage Economically Disadvantaged	-.431***	.610***	-.483***
Percentage Minority Students	-.402***	-.484***	-.426***
Percentage English Language Learners	-.316***	-.382***	-.154*
Attendance Rate	.137**	.367***	.250***

Note: Data are correlation coefficients. The closer to 1.0 or -1.0, the stronger the correlation between variables. In social sciences, a .3 is generally accepted as a relatively strong connection

* p < .05 (two-tailed), ** p < .01 (two-tailed), ***p < .001 (two-tailed)

Statistical Models of Working Conditions—Explaining Student Achievement in Mathematics

The correlations were used to explore different configurations of variables to model against the school-wide percentage of students passing or scoring exemplary on the state's math assessment at the 5th grade, 8th grade and 10th grade levels (Appendix A).

This modeling moves beyond correlation by controlling for various factors to better determine whether there is a direct relationship between working conditions and achievement in light of the multitude of factors that influence student learning.

For student achievement, an Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression was run with independent variables entered in four blocks: working conditions domain questions, teacher background variables, student variables and school characteristics. Variables were then standardized and converted into a 0-to-100 scale to aid in the interpretation of results.

Various configurations of working conditions domains and individual questions were explored in an attempt to create the most robust models that could explain the greatest proportion of variance in achievement performance. A few things to note:

Correlations were used to explore different configurations of variables to model against the school-wide percentage of students passing or scoring exemplary on the state's math assessment at the 5th grade, 8th grade and 10th grade levels.

- Modeling is difficult given the strong connections between variables. Separating the working conditions domains was particularly difficult as teachers often view them similarly across schools. The correlation between working conditions domains was high, particularly between empowerment and leadership. This “multicollinearity” makes it difficult to find significant connections as the variables often weaken each other in the model. So, many of the questions which were correlated with achievement or varied across performance quartiles were not included in the final model, due in large part to the fact that their “explanatory power” was shared by many factors as teachers’ perceptions of these working conditions are so interrelated.
- The amount of variance the blocks explain is dependent on the order in which they are entered for the OLS achievement models. As this analysis is most concerned with the connection between student achievement and working conditions, the teacher working conditions block was entered first.
- The differences in achievement found in the models are also dependent on a host of factors which are not related to working conditions: alignment of the assessment to standards, missing data, and how significant a difference there is across schools on some of the background and working conditions factors and achievement. Each of these will be different for each model.

Finally, findings from the models are presented to show estimated impact on achievement based on a change of 10 percent of a school faculty agreeing that a particular working condition is in place. Often, the gains in overall passage rates sound small, but two things are important to note.

Findings from the models are presented to show estimated impact on achievement based on a change of 10 percent of a school faculty agreeing that a particular working condition is in place.

- Given the complexity of schools and the multitude of factors influencing student learning, no single variable is likely to make a large impact in and of itself. Even poverty level of students, the factor research shows consistently has the greatest impact on achievement in most research models, has a modest effect when considered with this complex context of related factors.
- If agreement on any individual working condition factor increased by 20 or 30 percent, or many working conditions were improved simultaneously, large and meaningful gains could be expected.

Elementary School Performance: An Examination of 5th Grade Math Scores

The statistical model for elementary performance explained more than one-third (36 percent) of the variance in school-level achievement (Appendix A). The working conditions block explained up to 16 percent of the difference in achievement across Kansas elementary schools. Consider the following:

- *Agreement that the faculty is committed to helping every student learn is a significant indicator of elementary mathematics success.* For every 10 percent of teachers who agree that the faculty is committed, a 2.7 percent increase in students passing the math assessment can be estimated.

- *Teachers' agreement that steps are made within the school to solve problems is predictive of achievement.* For every 10 percent increase in the percentage of educators who agree steps are made, a 1.2 percent increase in the proportion of students passing the mathematics assessment can not be estimated.
- *Teacher belief that the number of students they teach is reasonable was statistically significant in explaining achievement.* A .5 percent increase in the percent of students scoring a passing mark or above on the math assessment can be expected for every 10 percent increase in educators agreeing their student load is reasonable.

Interestingly, one working conditions variable was significant in explaining math achievement, but in a negative way. For every 10 percent of teachers who agreed that efforts were made to reduce paperwork, a one percent decline in elementary math achievement could be expected. This could be due to the fact that those schools where efforts are made to reduce paperwork had more severe paperwork problems that needed to be addressed from the outset.³

The working conditions block explained up to 12 percent of the differences in achievement across Kansas middle schools.

While working conditions influence overall performance on the state's assessments, student and school characteristics explain at least 20 percent of the differences in achievement across schools. In particular, the proportion of economically disadvantaged and minority students served are significantly and powerfully connected to achievement. For every 10 percent increase in the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced lunch, a 1.7 percent decline in overall proficiency could be expected. A 1.8 percent decline in math passage rates could be estimated for every 10 percent increase in minority students served. The percentage of special education students served was significantly and positively related to math achievement.

Middle School Performance: An Examination of 8th Grade Math Scores

The statistical model for middle school performance explained almost half (48 percent) of the variance in school-level achievement (Appendix A). The working conditions block explained up to 12 percent of the differences in achievement across Kansas middle schools. Consider the following:

- *Perceptions of school safety are significant in explaining middle school math achievement.* For every 10 percent of teachers who agree that their school is safe, a 2.3 percent increase in students passing the assessment can be estimated.
- *Teachers' need for professional development in classroom management is connected to achievement.* For every 10 percent increase in the percentage of educators in a school who expressed a need for more professional development in classroom management, a two percent decline in the proportion of students passing the mathematics assessment can be estimated.

At the middle school, working conditions explained less of the achievement differences than at the elementary or high school levels. The proportion of high-poverty students had the greatest effect on achievement. For every 10 percent increase in the proportion of economically disadvantaged students served, a 3.4 percent decline in math passage rates could be estimated.

High School Performance: An Examination of 10th Grade Math Scores

The statistical model for high school performance explained 42 percent of the variance in school-level achievement (Appendix A). The working conditions block explains up to one-fifth (19 percent) of the differences in achievement across Kansas high schools. Consider the following:

- *Agreement that the faculty is committed to helping every student learn is a significant indicator of high school mathematics success.* As was the case at the elementary level, faculty commitment to all students is extremely important to student learning. For every 10 percent of teachers who agree that the faculty is committed, a 1.4 percent increase in students passing the assessment can be estimated.
- *Teachers' agreement that there is sufficient access to instructional technology helps to explain student success in math.* For every 10 percent increase in the percentage of educators who agree that there is sufficient instructional technology, a 1.1 percent increase in the proportion of students passing the mathematics assessment can be estimated.
- *Educator belief that parents contribute to school success was significant.* A 0.4 percent increase in the percent of students scoring a passing mark or above on the math assessment can be expected for every 10 percent increase in educators agreeing that parents are contributors.⁴ While this working conditions factor is significant, it is at the less rigorous $p < .1$ level (two-tailed). See appendix A for more information on the significance, standard error, etc.

The working conditions block explained up to one-fifth (19 percent) of the differences in achievement across Kansas high schools.

While working conditions influence overall performance on the state's math assessments, student and school characteristics explain at least 23 percent of the differences in achievement across schools. As was the case for both elementary and middle schools, the proportion of economically disadvantaged students served is significantly and powerfully connected to achievement. For every 10 percent increase in the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced lunch, a 4.1 percent decline in overall proficiency can be expected. At the high school level, the proportion of minority students served was statistically significant.

Additionally, the future employment intentions of the faculty have an influence on math achievement. If more than 15 percent of teachers at a school responding to the survey indicated a desire to leave, a .03 percent decline in math pass rates can be expected.

Overall, the findings from this section support the notion that teacher working conditions are student learning conditions. Significant and often strong connections were documented between success on the math assessment and certain conditions of work being present in a school. *Of critical importance is the perception that the faculty is committed to helping all children learn.* This proves significant at both the elementary and secondary level. *Having a safe and supportive environment with sufficient instructional resources is a necessity for teachers to be successful with students.*

Finding Two: Teacher Working Conditions Affect Future Employment Decisions

The survey data demonstrate what individuals familiar with the schools already know: teacher attrition is a serious problem facing many districts, and working conditions are a potentially powerful lever to help address the issue.

The survey data demonstrate what individuals familiar with the schools already know: teacher attrition is a serious problem facing many districts, and working conditions are a potentially powerful lever to help address the issue.

Most teachers are satisfied with their current workplace. Across the state, 79 percent agree that their school is a good place to work and learn. These feelings are evident as approximately 86 percent of Kansas teachers say their goal is to stay at their current school (referred to as “stayers”) and the remaining fourteen percent were equally divided between those who want to move to a new school but stay in teaching (called “movers”) or leave the teaching profession entirely (referred to as “leavers”).

Evidence throughout the survey data indicates that *teachers with positive perceptions about their working conditions are much more likely to want to remain teaching in their current school* (Table 3). Leavers are more positive than movers, most likely because those who are leaving teaching do so not just due to dissatisfaction, but other non-teaching related causes (retirement, personal reasons, etc.).

- Only one-third (35 percent) of movers agree that the faculty takes steps to solve problems, compared to 70 percent of those who want to stay. Agreement that these steps are taken are an important predictor of increased elementary achievement.
- The greatest differences between stayers and movers are in the areas of leadership and empowerment. *Stayers are more than 2.5 times more likely to note the presence of effective and supportive leaders than their colleagues who want to teach elsewhere.*

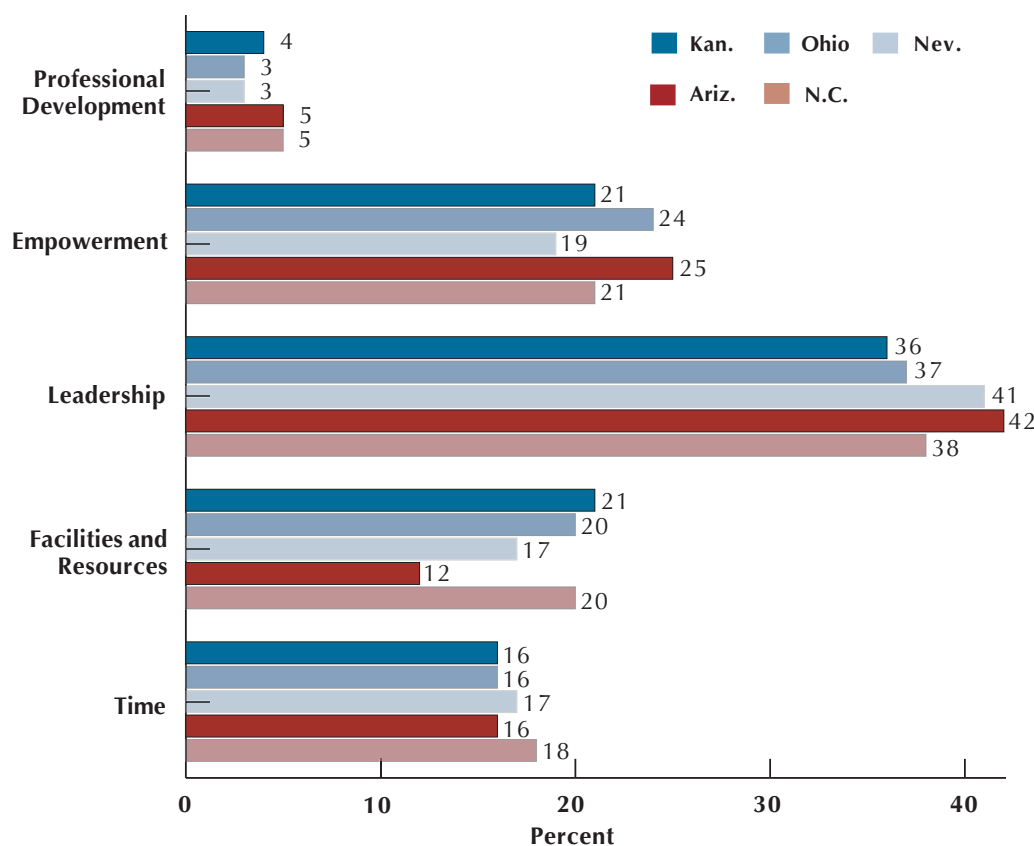
Teacher Working Conditions Survey Question	Percent of Teachers Who Agree		
	Stayers	Movers	Leavers
Teachers feel comfortable raising issues and concerns that are important to them	60%	24%	41%
Overall, the school leadership is effective	61%	24%	43%
The faculty has an effective process for making group decisions and solving problems	52%	22%	33%
Teachers are allowed to focus on educating students with minimal interruption	52%	28%	35%
In this school we take steps to solve problems	70%	35%	52%
School leadership consistently supports teachers when needed	65%	26%	48%
Parents and community members contribute to student success	58%	39%	45%
Teachers are supported by the community in which they teach	60%	34%	38%

These disparities are not just in whether working conditions are present, but in whether or not school leadership makes efforts to improve them. *Teachers who want to stay in their school are far more likely to believe leadership is working to improve working conditions than teachers who want to move schools.* While about half of teachers who indicate a desire to stay in their current school believe that leadership makes a sustained effort to address empowerment (50.3 percent) and leadership issues (44.2 percent), less than one-fifth of those who indicate a desire to move schools agree with the same statements (18.8 percent agree on empowerment and 17.8 percent agree on leadership).

Teachers who want to stay in their school are far more likely to believe leadership is working to improve working conditions than teachers who want to move schools.

This connection to school leadership—its presence in communicating vision and creating a positive and supportive atmosphere, as well as in addressing teacher concerns about climate—is critical. *When asked to select which of the working conditions most influenced retention decisions, leadership was by far the most important* (Figure 2). More than one-third of Kansas educators listed leadership (36 percent), strikingly more than any other working condition. While empowerment (21 percent), and facilities and resources (21 percent) were also indicated as important by about one-fifth of teachers, only 4 percent of Kansas educators listed professional development as the most critical working condition influencing retention decisions.

Figure 2. Aspect of Working Conditions Teachers Believe Is Most Important to Continue Teaching in Their School



Leadership and empowerment had the strongest correlations with whether or not teachers intended to stay in their current schools.

Evidence was found to support this emphasis on leadership. *While all working conditions are significantly correlated with teachers' future employment plans, leadership and empowerment had the strongest correlations with whether or not teachers intended to stay in their current schools.* (Table 4). This is the case at all school levels. While few teachers were likely to note that time and professional development were the most critical factor in their desire to remain teaching in their school (Figure 2), each area was significantly correlated with intent to stay or move. Weaker correlations are seen under intent to leave than move given the diversity of reasons for leaving teaching (retirement, personal reasons) compared to moving. *Movers want to teach elsewhere because of the support they receive from leadership and their engagement in classroom and school decisions.*

Table 4. Correlations Between Working Conditions and Future Employment Intentions

Working Conditions and School Level	Intent to Stay	Intent to Move	Intent to Leave
Elementary time	0.369***	-0.316***	-0.199***
Elementary facilities and resources	0.321***	-0.296***	-0.147***
Elementary empowerment	0.465***	-0.409***	-0.238***
Elementary leadership	0.430***	-0.430***	-0.156***
Elementary professional development	0.260***	-0.183***	-0.191***
Middle school time	0.388***	-0.341***	-0.187*
Middle school facilities and resources	0.248**	-0.371***	0.033
Middle school empowerment	0.365***	-0.477***	-0.020
Middle school leadership	0.397***	-0.461***	-0.080
Middle school professional development	0.228**	-0.322***	0.012
High school time	0.295***	-0.274***	-0.136*
High school facilities and resources	0.331***	-0.320***	-0.139*
High school empowerment	0.455***	-0.415***	-0.218***
High school leadership	0.446***	-0.390***	-0.232***
High school professional development	0.385***	-0.319***	-0.220***

Note: Data are correlation coefficients. The closer to 1.0 or -1.0, the stronger the correlation between variables. In social sciences, a .3 is generally accepted as a relatively strong connection.

* p < .05 level (two-tailed), ** p < .01 level (two-tailed), ***p < .001 level (two-tailed)

The connection between working conditions and future employment plans can be seen through an analysis of working conditions in schools where few educators want to leave their current position and those where a significant proportion of educators are looking to work elsewhere or leave the profession (Table 5).⁵ *Significant gaps exist in the presence of all working conditions in schools where high turnover can be expected, particularly on questions that relate to the presence of supportive, trusting environments where teachers are engaged in school decision making.*

Table 5. Working Conditions Perceptions Based on Future Employment Intentions of Kansas Educators

Domain/Question (percent that agree/ strongly agree)	Lowest Expected	Moderate Expected	High Expected	Difference Between Highest/Lowest
Elementary Schools				
Time Domain	3.15	2.97	2.81	0.34
Facilities and Resources	3.56	3.43	3.13	0.43
Empowerment	3.70	3.67	3.48	0.22
Leadership	3.72	3.63	3.33	0.39
Professional Development	3.57	3.44	3.30	0.27
There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within the school	72.7%	67.3%	49.9%	22.8%
Teachers are trusted to make sound professional decisions about instruction	72.4%	64.5%	50.2%	22.2%
Teachers are centrally involved in decision making about educational issues	58.5%	49.2%	38.1%	20.4%
Teachers feel comfortable raising issues and concerns that are important to them	66.6%	61.8%	46.6%	20.0%
Teachers are respected as educational experts	62.3%	55.6%	42.5%	19.8%
Middle School				
Time Domain	3.28	3.13	2.96	0.32
Facilities and Resources	3.68	3.60	3.50	0.18
Empowerment	3.38	3.34	3.13	0.25
Leadership	3.63	3.47	3.30	0.33
Professional Development	3.44	3.39	3.35	0.09
Efforts are made to minimize the amount of routine administrative paperwork	47.6%	37.4%	27.5%	20.1%
There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within the school	69.9%	62.8%	50.9%	19.0%
Teachers have a reasonable number of students overall, affording them time to meet the educational needs of all students	67.2%	57.5%	48.5%	18.7%
The school leadership consistently supports teachers when needed	70.7%	61.2%	52.5%	18.2%
Teachers have reasonable class sizes, affording them time to meet the educational needs of all students	68.9%	58.5%	50.9%	18.0%
High School				
Time Domain	3.30	3.04	2.96	0.34
Facilities and Resources	3.77	3.54	3.45	0.32
Empowerment	3.50	3.19	3.04	0.46
Leadership	3.57	3.26	3.13	0.44
Professional Development	3.42	3.20	3.09	0.33
School leadership consistently supports teachers when needed	71.8%	54.9%	47.6%	24.2%
Overall, the school leadership in my school is effective	65.6%	50.8%	43.2%	22.4%
Teachers are respected as educational experts	58.7%	42.3%	37.3%	21.4%
Teachers are supported by the community in which they serve	63.4%	51.7%	42.2%	21.2%
The school leadership communicates clear expectations to parents and students	64.9%	51.0%	44.1%	20.8%

The creation of an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect is the question where the greatest differences were documented for elementary schools and second greatest gap for middle schools between high- and low-turnover schools.

- Leadership and empowerment have the greatest variation between schools where low and high turnover can be expected at all levels. In particular, *the creation of an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect is the question where the greatest differences were documented for elementary schools and second greatest gap for middle schools between high- and low-turnover schools.* As expected, about three-quarters (73 percent) of the faculty note an atmosphere of trust in low-turnover elementary schools compared to only half in schools where more than 15 percent of teachers intend to leave.
- *Other conditions connected to trust and mutual respect vary tremendously between high- and low-turnover schools.* Trust to make sound decisions, respect as experts and comfort in raising issues are all far more prevalent in elementary and high schools where low turnover could be expected. The role of school leadership is particularly important at the high school level where overall effectiveness, clear communication of expectations and support all varied greatly between schools with expected high and low turnover.
- *Class size and student load are important to future employment plans at the middle school level.* At the middle school level, about one-fifth (18 or 19 percent depending on question) more educators noted satisfaction with their class size and student load in expected low-turnover schools. The question with the greatest variance between expected high- and low-turnover schools was a belief that efforts are made to reduce routine paperwork. About half (47 percent) of educators in expected low-turnover schools agree that this is the case versus only a quarter (28 percent) in high-turnover schools.

Statistical Models Examining Working Conditions and Teacher Turnover

To better understand the connection between working conditions and future employment plans, statistical models examining the impact of several factors on expected turnover were created. Binomial logistic regressions were run based on the percentage of teachers on faculty who responded to the survey indicating a desire to leave that school, either to move to another or leave the profession altogether.

Elementary School Teacher Turnover

At the elementary level, the model examined the impact of working conditions and other student, school and teacher characteristics for schools with an expected turnover rate of 15 percent or greater (discussed throughout the section as a “high expected rate”). *Working conditions are the primary factor in determining whether schools have a high expected turnover rate.* The following working conditions were significant in predicting the likelihood of having an expected turnover rate greater than 15 percent.

- *If 40 percent or less of the faculty in a school believed they are respected as educational experts, the school is 2.7 times more likely to have a high expected turnover rate.*
- *Schools where 85 percent or less of teachers feel their school is safe are 2.7 times more likely to have an expected turnover rate of at least 15 percent of the faculty.*
- *If more than 40 percent of the faculty believed they need to work a second job during the school year, schools are 1.7 times more likely to have a high expected turnover rate.*

- *If three-quarters of the staff indicate that they feel supported by the community in which they teach, schools are 47 percent less likely to have a high expected turnover rate.*
- *If 80 percent or more of the faculty agree that they take steps in their school to solve problems, the school is 48 percent less likely to have at least 15 percent of their teachers indicating a desire to leave.*

While working conditions results had the greatest effect on future employment plans, other factors were also important contributors to expected turnover. Size, proportion of minority students and achievement results all significantly influenced the expected turnover rate in elementary schools.

- Elementary schools with 500 or more students were 2.2 times more likely to have an expected turnover rate of 15 percent or greater.
- Schools with a minority student population of 20 percent or greater were 2.1 times more likely to have a high expected teacher turnover rate. While this finding is consistent with other research, the proportion of minority students was not a significant factor at the secondary level.
- If less than 75 percent of students have at least a passing score on the mathematics assessment, the school is 47 percent less likely to have a high expected turnover rate. In other words, it appears that schools with lower student performance are less likely to have high expected teacher turnover. The impact, however, is small and math achievement is not significantly connected to future employment plans at either the middle or high school levels.

Size, proportion of minority students and achievement results all significantly influenced the expected turnover rate in elementary schools.

Middle School Teacher Turnover

At the middle school level, the model examined the impact of working conditions and other student, school and teacher characteristics for schools with an expected turnover rate greater than 16 percent (discussed throughout the section as a “high expected rate”). While two working conditions factors are significant in explaining future employment plans, the poverty status of students attending middle schools had the greatest impact. Schools were 3.1 times more likely to have a high expected turnover if more than half of the student body was economically disadvantaged. Additionally:

- *If schools have a higher rating (3.35 or above) in the time domain—encompassing class size, student load and non-instructional time available—they are 83 percent less likely to have a high expected turnover.*
- *If three-quarters or more of the faculty believe that the school leadership is effective, that school is 80 percent less likely to have a high expected turnover.*

High School Teacher Turnover

For high schools, the model examined the impact of working conditions and other characteristics for schools with an expected turnover rate of greater than 20 percent (discussed throughout the section as a “high expected turnover rate”). No student or teacher characteristics have a significant impact on future employment plans in the model.

- *Educator perception that they are respected as educational experts had the greatest impact on whether schools would have a high expected turnover rate.* Schools where 30 percent or less of the faculty agreed that this respect is present are 2.6 times more likely to have a high expected turnover.
- Overall leadership was also critical. *Schools where leadership conditions are less likely to be in place (3.00 or less on the leadership domain average) are 2.5 times more likely to have a high expected turnover rate.*
- *High schools in which at least 55 percent of educators believe that efforts are made to protect them from non-essential duties are 62 percent less likely to have a high expected turnover rate.*

Ultimately, the many models and correlations paint a consistent picture. School leadership and empowerment are essential to retaining teachers. *Effective leadership that provides sufficient planning time and empowers teachers in a trusting environment where they feel supported is the key ingredient to lowering teacher turnover and creating climates where all students can succeed.* Ensuring that teachers are respected as educational experts appears to be particularly important as it was the greatest predictor of future employment plans at both the elementary and high school levels. Additionally, finding time for educators to focus on instruction is a critical component to teacher satisfaction. In particular, ensuring teachers have adequate time to teach by protecting them from non-instructional duties and minimizing paperwork was found to decrease teacher turnover.

Finding Three: Kansas Teachers and Administrators View Working Conditions Differently

While some differences in the perceptions of working conditions could be expected between “bosses” and “employees” in any industry, the disparity between principals and teachers is extremely large in Kansas. *On all questions, the 456 principals responding to the survey were strikingly more likely than the almost 19,000 teachers to note that positive working conditions are in place, and that leadership is making efforts to address them* (Table 6).

Ensuring that teachers are respected as educational experts appears to be particularly important as it was the greatest predictor of future employment plans at both the elementary and high school levels.

Similar gaps in perception exist between teachers and other school-based licensed educators, but these differences are strikingly smaller than the difference between teachers and principals. The gaps in perception between teachers and principals are greatest in the areas of leadership (.79 gap on a one-to-five scaled domain average) and empowerment (.81 gap), the two working conditions educators say are most important in calculating their future employment plans (Figure 2). Some findings of note:

- *Principals are more than twice as likely as teachers to believe that teachers are centrally involved in decision making about educational issues.* Additionally, while only half (49 percent) of teachers believe that schools have an effective process for making collaborative decisions, more than four-fifths of principals (83 percent) believe this is the case.
- *While most principals (95 percent) and teachers (78 percent) believe that their school is a good place to work and learn, principals are much more emphatic in their views.* Only about one-third (31 percent) of teachers “strongly agree” that their school is a good place to work compared to two-thirds (68 percent) of principals.

Table 6. Teacher and Principal Perceptions of Select Teacher Working Conditions Questions

Agreement on Select Working Conditions Questions	Teachers Agreeing	Principals Agreeing
The non-instructional time provided for teachers in my school is sufficient	38%	61%
Teachers have sufficient access to appropriate instructional materials and resources	67%	90%
Teachers are centrally involved in decision-making about educational issues	43%	93%
There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within the school	60%	88%
The faculty has an effective process for making group decisions and solving problems	48%	81%
Professional development provides teachers with the knowledge and skills most needed to teach effectively	58%	86%
Overall this school is a good place to work and learn	78%	95%

Principals, in aggregate, believe they are engaging teachers, through an effective process, in collaborative decision making. Further, principals consistently believe their schools are trusting, respectful environments while more than one-third of teachers do not. Given how critical these issues are to teacher retention, schools and districts should take note of these findings. It is not necessarily that principals do not want to address these issues, but that they do not perceive they are issues to the same extent as teachers.

Principals are not only far more likely to believe that positive working conditions are present, but also that school leadership—a concept that includes, but is not limited entirely to the principal—makes sustained efforts to address any teacher concerns that exist (Table 7). A “perfect storm” of factors coming together is evident in the data.

Principals consistently believe their schools are trusting, respectful environments while more than one-third of teachers do not.

- First, as noted previously, educators indicate that leadership and empowerment factors are the most critical influences on teachers future employment plans (and are significant factors in explaining student learning).
- Second, teachers believe that school leadership efforts to address working conditions are least likely to occur in the areas of leadership (41 percent) and empowerment (47 percent).
- Third, the greatest gap between teacher and principal perception in whether efforts are made to improve conditions is in the areas of leadership and empowerment. Principals are about twice as likely as teachers to believe that sustained efforts are being made to address concerns in both areas.

Using the data to ensure all faculty have similar perceptions about the conditions of work—both positive and negative conditions—in a building is essential in order to move forward with school improvement planning. The data here indicate a need to prioritize leadership and empowerment in that planning.

Table 7. Teacher and Principal Perception of School Leadership Efforts to Address Working Conditions

School leadership makes a sustained effort to address teacher concerns about	Teachers Agreeing	Principals Agreeing
The use of time in my school	49%	93%
Facilities and resources	58%	93%
Empowering teachers	47%	95%
Leadership issues	41%	89%
Professional development	59%	92%

These wide disparities between the perceptions of principals and teachers documented in Kansas have also been found in other studies in North Carolina, Arizona, Nevada (Las Vegas), and Ohio. It is an important finding—a finding that calls for school-based, data-driven working conditions conversations and professional development for both principals and teacher leaders. Until all educators can agree on the relative presence of working conditions, sustained reforms to improve school climate will not be prioritized.

Finding Four: Kansas Compares Favorably to Other States on Working Conditions Indicators

Until all educators can agree on the relative presence of working conditions, sustained reforms to improve school climate will not be prioritized.

Areas of relative strength are evident when comparing working conditions in Kansas to other states using the same set of core working conditions survey questions (Table 8—also see www.teachingquality.org/twc/whereweare.htm for more information on other state initiatives). On most questions on the survey, teachers in Kansas noted slightly more positive working conditions than educators in Arizona, Ohio and Nevada (Las Vegas) and slightly less positive perceptions than North Carolina educators.

It should be noted that some working conditions measures were low across all states (for example, no more than 53 percent of teachers in any state agreed they were centrally involved in educational decision making). And while state data trends presented in this report are valuable for informing state policymaking and education decisions, local decisions should still be driven by unique district and school-level data.

Table 8. Percentage of Teachers Agreeing with Working Conditions Questions from 2006 CTQ Working Conditions Initiatives

Teacher Working Conditions Questions	Kan.	N.C.	Ariz.	Ohio	Nev. (Las Vegas)
There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within the school	62%	64%	62%	50%	58%
Teachers are trusted to make sound professional decisions about instruction	61%	72%	62%	56%	52%
The school leadership communicates clear expectations to students and parents	63%	72%	67%	56%	65%
The faculty are committed to helping every student learn	87%	85%	72%	82%	82%
Overall, the school leadership in my school is effective	59%	64%	62%	NA	58%
Teachers have sufficient access to instructional technology	64%	74%	62%	56%	70%
Teachers are centrally involved in educational decision making	44%	53%	38%	36%	35%

Kansas educators were almost unanimous and more likely than any other location to agree that faculty are committed to helping every student learn (87 percent), an important finding given the strong connections documented in this report between that question and student achievement.

However, some areas of emphasis for the state are also evident. *Of particular importance is the slightly lower perceptions documented in the overall effectiveness of school leadership.* Only 59 percent of Kansas educators agree that overall, school leadership is effective, a lower percentage than every participating location, except Las Vegas, Nevada.

Finding Five: There Is a Working Conditions Gap in Kansas

Few differences between individual teachers appear to make a difference in how educators perceive working conditions. Teachers, regardless of gender, education, race, ethnicity and route into the profession view working conditions similarly. There are slight variations in perceptions of working conditions based on years of experience in both the school and the profession. The newest (first year in particular, and to a lesser extent second or third year) educators are more positive about their conditions of work in all five areas than more veteran educators.

While there is little variation in perceptions based on individual teacher background and demographics, there are consistent differences between schools. Not all schools have the types of teaching and learning environments necessary to keep teachers and ensure student success. Unfortunately, some of the disparities in the presence of working conditions can be explained by a number of factors related to the students served in those schools. *Schools serving a lower percentage of economically disadvantaged students consistently had more positive working conditions, particularly in the area of teacher empowerment* (Table 9). While elementary schools are shown in Table 9, the findings are similar at the secondary level.

Teachers, regardless of gender, education, race, ethnicity and route into the profession view working conditions similarly.

Table 9. Elementary School Working Conditions by Proportion of Economically Disadvantaged Students

Working Conditions (Domain and Percent Agree/Strongly Agree)	Percentage Economically Disadvantaged				
	Low poverty 0–25%	25.1- 50%	50.1- 75%	High poverty 75.1%- 100%	Difference between high and low poverty
Time Domain	2.93	3.05	2.96	2.83	0.10
Empowerment Domain	3.76	3.60	3.56	3.53	0.23
Facilities and Resources Domain	3.59	3.43	3.25	3.03	0.56
Leadership Domain	3.68	3.58	3.50	3.46	0.22
Professional Development Domain	3.44	3.45	3.40	3.47	-0.03
Parents and community members contribute to student success	82.2%	61.2%	48.5%	33.9%	48.3%
Teachers are supported by the community in which they teach	76.4%	61.5%	54.2%	45.2%	31.2%
Teachers are trusted to make sound professional decisions about instruction	65.6%	66.1%	59.8%	48.2%	17.4%
There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within the school	70.1%	63.7%	61.8%	54.0%	16.1%
Teachers have sufficient access to office equipment and supplies	82.1%	80.5%	79.5%	69.5%	12.6%

While a gap is not evident in the area of professional development,⁶ and is less prominent in time, it is large for empowerment, leadership and facilities and resources. Empowerment is particularly important as the questions where the greatest disparity between high- and low-poverty schools can be seen involve community and parent support. *Teachers in schools serving more affluent student populations are significantly more likely to note that the community contributes to student success (82 percent versus 34 percent) and provides support (76 percent versus 45 percent).* There was also wide disparity on these two questions between high- and low-achieving schools (Table 1).

Teachers in high-minority schools are more likely to note unreasonable class sizes and student loads.

Similar, but smaller gaps can be seen in schools serving high-minority populations (Table 10). While the greatest variation is still in empowerment issues, it is not just about community contribution to student success, but critical decisions around classroom materials and assessment. Teachers in high-minority schools are more likely to note unreasonable class sizes and student loads. Interestingly, the leadership gap is not present for schools with minority populations. Teachers in schools where at least one-quarter of the students are minorities are slightly more likely to note the presence of strong and supportive school leadership.

Table 10. Elementary School Working Conditions by Minority Population Served

Working Conditions (Domain and Percent Agree/Strongly Agree)	Percentage Minority Population Served			
	Low minority (0–10%)	10.1–25%	High minority (25.1% or above)	Difference between high and low minority
Time Domain	3.10	2.92	2.84	0.26
Empowerment Domain	3.65	3.62	3.57	0.08
Facilities and Resources Domain	3.49	3.39	3.20	0.29
Leadership Domain	3.54	3.62	3.56	-0.02
Professional Development Domain	3.40	3.44	3.48	-0.08
Teachers play a significant role (large or primary) in selecting instructional materials	59.7%	48.8%	35.9%	23.8%
Teachers have reasonable class sizes	67.9%	52.9%	44.6%	23.3%
Teachers have a reasonable number of students overall	64.9%	50.8%	42.1%	22.8%
Parents and the community contribute to student success	66.9%	62.0%	47.4%	19.5%
Teachers play a significant role (large or primary) in setting grading and student assessment practices	53.0%	45.1%	34.7%	18.3%

Schools also vary on teaching and learning conditions by school type. Teachers in elementary schools, in general, are far more likely to report that teaching and learning conditions are in place. Middle school teachers, while more negative than elementary educators, are more likely to cite the presence of working conditions than high school teachers. The areas where there are the greatest differences are in the areas of leadership and empowerment, both critical to retaining teachers.

Domain Analyses

Analyses are presented in each working conditions area to better understand trends across the Kansas.

Time: Ensuring Kansas Teachers Have the Opportunity to Work Collaboratively to Meet the Needs of all Students

Quality teaching is dependent upon time. To successfully meet the needs of diverse students, teachers need time to collaborate with colleagues, discuss and observe best practices, and participate in professional development that prepares them for changing curriculum and the challenges of teaching in the 21st century. Unfortunately, survey data from educators in states across the country consistently indicate that time available to teachers is the working condition of single greatest concern to educators, and a majority of teachers are not satisfied with the time they have to complete key aspects of their job.

In their 1994 report *Prisoners of Time*, the National Education Commission on Time and Learning declared that to their detriment, American schools were controlled by the clock, which governs how material is presented to students and what opportunity they have to master it. The Commission issued a series of recommendations to re-center schools around learning, rather than time, one of which was to provide teachers with the professional time and opportunities necessary for them to do their jobs well.¹

Because American teachers are so busy teaching, they lack the opportunity to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of their instruction.

Over a decade later, time still emerges as a working condition of great concern for teachers. According to the 2003-2004 Schools and Staffing Survey, the average public school teacher reports spending 52.8 hours per week on teaching and other school-related activities.² Since most teachers have only a few hours per week of non-instructional time during the actual school day, they spend early mornings, nights, and weekends preparing instructional materials, assessing students and communicating with parents, in addition to serving on school committees and staffing various extracurricular activities.

Because American teachers are so busy teaching, they lack the opportunity to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of their instruction. In order to promote best practices and meet the needs of diverse students, schools need to reconsider and redesign the ways that teachers spend their time both individually and working collaboratively with other educators.

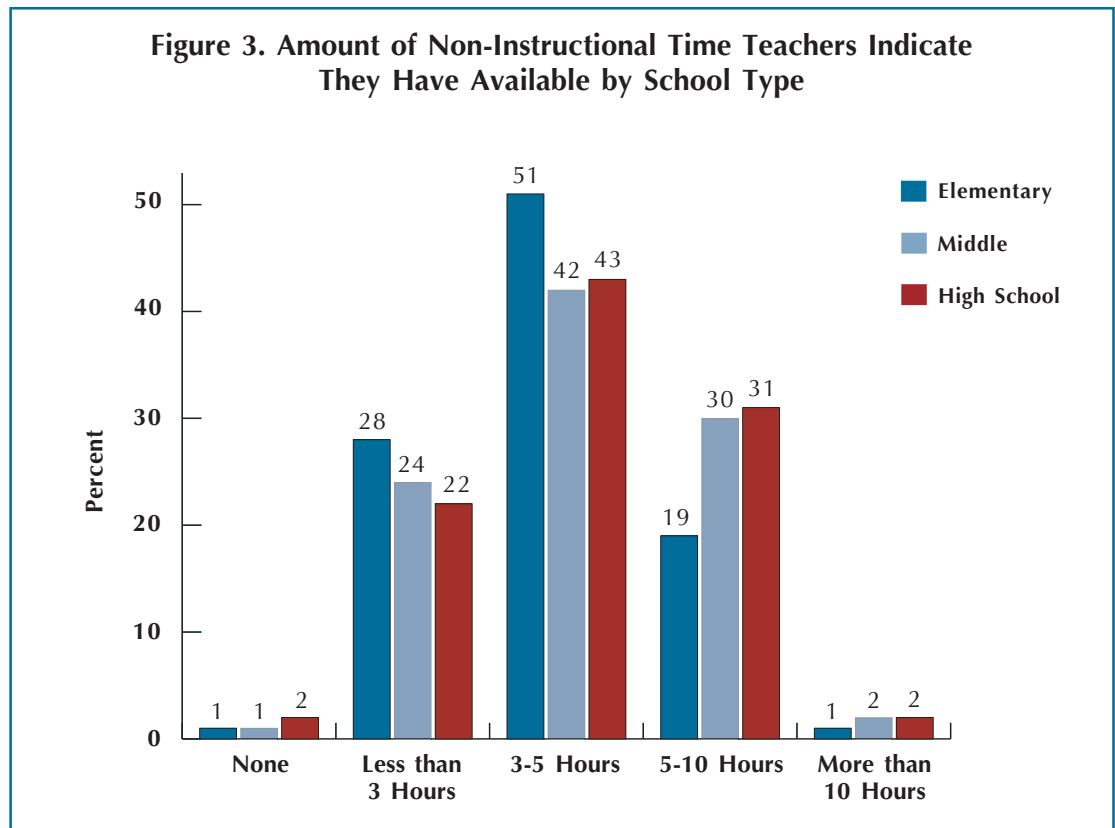
Time is of particular importance to this Kansas working conditions analysis because of two significant findings:

- Time was the working condition that educators were most likely to note as most important for improving student learning (28 percent); and
- Time was the area where educators were least likely to note that important working conditions were in place at every level. A majority of educators noted insufficient non-instructional time, too many duties and an abundance of paperwork, in addition to working numerous hours beyond the school day and days beyond their contract.

Only 39 percent of Kansas teachers believe that the non-instructional time they receive is sufficient to help them meet the needs of their students and improve instruction.

The following trends were noted in analyzing educators’ responses in the area of time.

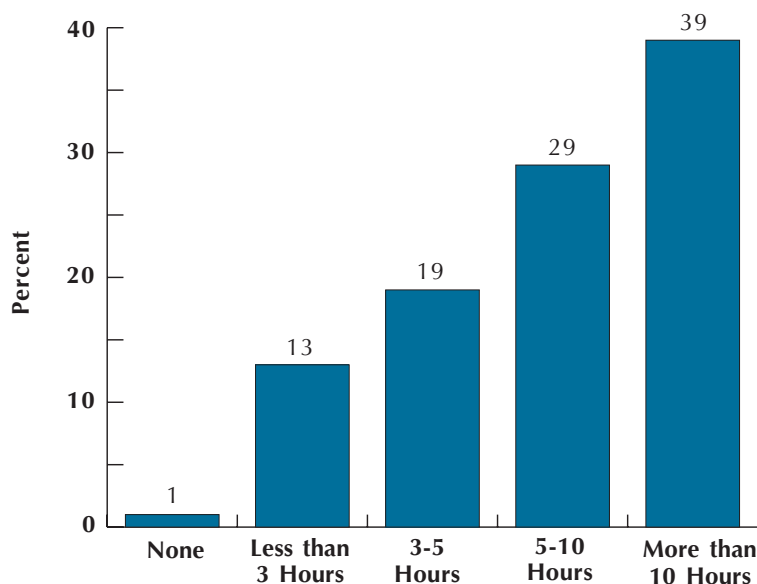
- **Teachers report the need for more planning and collaborative time.** Only 39 percent of Kansas teachers believe that the non-instructional time they receive is sufficient to help them meet the needs of their students and improve instruction. The problem is particularly acute at the elementary level where only one-third (33 percent) agree their time is sufficient compared to 42 percent of high school educators, but almost half of middle school teachers (49 percent).
- This issue is apparent when the amount of non-instructional time received is examined (Figure 1). *Three fourths of teachers receive, on average, less than an hour per day of non-instructional time.* Only 20 percent of elementary educators receive at least five hours per week, compared to 32 percent of middle school educators and 33 percent of high school teachers. About one-quarter of Kansas teachers receive less than three hours per week during the school day to plan and collaborate. It is not surprising, then, that *only 42 percent of teachers agreed that they receive sufficient time to collaborate with colleagues.*



- Even this limited time may often be infringed upon with non-instructional duties or paperwork. Less than half of teachers (43 percent) agree that they are protected from duties that interfere with their essential role of educating students. *Sixty-two percent of teachers reported that one to three hours of their weekly non-instructional time is spent on supervisory duties.*
- *Due at least in part to this lack of planning time, teachers work on school-related activities outside of the school day.* More than two-thirds (68 percent) of teachers report working at least five hours a week, on average, on school-related activities and 39 percent report averaging ten hours or more (Figure 3). Virtually all of these hours are spent on school-related activities such as instructional preparation, grading. While two-thirds of teachers spend three hours or less on activities involving students (tutoring, coaching, etc.), only 18 percent report that same amount for school-related activities that do not directly involve students. And while two-thirds of teachers note working at least one hour per day on school-related activities, less than half (48 percent) of principals estimate that teachers put in that much time.

Sixty-two percent of teachers reported that one to three hours of their weekly non-instructional time is spent on supervisory duties.

Figure 4. Amount of Time Teachers Indicate Spending on School-Related Activities Outside Regular School Work Day in an Average Week of Teaching



- *A majority of teachers not only put in significant time outside of the school day, they work well beyond the number of days in their contract.* More than half (54 percent) of Kansas educators report typically working 10 or more days beyond their contract and three-quarters (72 percent) report working 6 or more days. These two time factors are often exacerbated by teachers seeking additional work to supplement their income. More than one-third (36 percent) agreed that it was necessary for them to work a second job during the regular school year.

Facilities and Resources: Ensuring Teachers Have the Resources to Help All Children Learn

The condition and design of school buildings, and the types of materials, technology and media that teachers and students encounter in their school environment all influence teaching and learning. The physical setting of a school and its related resources should be considered as much more than an institutional backdrop. They should be considered essential elements of positive teacher working and student learning conditions. A growing body of research confirms that the quality of facilities contributes directly to teacher turnover rates and student performance.

Along with their obvious influence on the health, safety and morale on everyone who works and learns in the school, facilities and resources are also essential in creating the type of hands-on, technology-based learning experiences that students need to develop 21st century knowledge and skills.

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Given the relevance of facilities and resources to an assortment of pressing education reform goals across the country, the lack of attention in addressing these conditions is dispiriting. The 2003-2004 Schools and Staffing Survey found that inadequate conditions persist in many schools. The study found that 32 percent of public schools are using at least one temporary building and 9 percent have enrollment that exceeds the capacity of their current permanent and temporary buildings.³

The immediate need for dramatic improvement in school facilities and resources will present both considerable costs and tremendous opportunity. In the next five years alone, according to the George Lucas Foundation, nearly \$100 billion will be spent nationally on building and renovating schools. Beyond the financial costs, school construction and redesign also provides an ideal opportunity to create learning spaces more responsive to the needs of students and conducive to the kind of teaching and learning that will happen in the 21st century.

In general, teachers were positive about the facilities and resources available to them. At least two-thirds, and often three-quarters or more of educators noted the presence of sufficient resources and equipment to do their job (Table 11).

- *Kansas educators were more likely to agree that facilities and resources were in place in their school than other domains within the survey.* In general, and across different school levels, the majority of educators reported that they have sufficient resources and equipment. Additionally, more than four-fifths (85 percent) of educators agree that teachers and staff work in a school environment that is safe. Most educators report having sufficient access to reliable communications technology (80 percent) and office equipment (76 percent).

Table 11. Perception of the Presence of Facilities and Resources by School Type

Facilities and Resources Areas	Elementary	Middle School	High School	TOTAL
Teachers have sufficient access to instructional materials and resources.	71%	67%	65%	68%
Teachers have sufficient access to reliable communication technology.	81%	81%	79%	80%
Teachers have sufficient access to office equipment and supplies.	79%	72%	73%	76%
Teachers have adequate professional space to work productively.	64%	66%	61%	63%
Teachers have sufficient access to a broad range of professional personnel.	66%	68%	63%	65%
Teachers have sufficient access to instructional technology.	69%	61%	64%	66%
Teachers have sufficient training and support to fully utilize the available instructional technology.	46%	46%	43%	45%
Teachers and staff work in a school environment that is safe.	89%	82%	82%	85%

- Educators have access to instructional technology, but not to the training and support needed to effectively use that technology.* While two-thirds of educators report having sufficient access to instructional technology, less than half (45 percent) agree that teachers have sufficient training and support to fully utilize that technology. This finding is consistent across all school levels.

Empowerment: Ensuring Those Who Are Closest to Students Are Involved in Making Decisions that Affect Them

Teaching has historically been a profession in which practitioners enjoy some degree of autonomy in their classrooms, but many decisions affecting their work are controlled by administrators and policymakers. Everything from hiring, budgeting, scheduling, textbook and technology selections to professional development and curriculum is often in the hands of others. Treating teachers as professionals, by entrusting them to make decisions about classroom instruction and building-level direction, and also by offering opportunities for advancement throughout the teaching career, makes teaching more attractive to prospective teachers and encourages current teachers to stay in the profession. Results from teacher working conditions surveys across the country indicate that educators who believe their leadership makes a sustained effort to empower teachers are more than twice as likely to express a desire to remain at their school than educators who do not.

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Beyond the obvious benefits of retaining more teachers, in terms of both financial savings and student learning gains, schools have much to gain from teachers who assume leadership roles

Kansas educators appear to be more involved in decisions related to their own teaching than to the school as a whole.

within their schools and districts. Empowering teacher leaders enhances the support provided to novice colleagues through mentoring and teacher-led professional development. Teacher leaders’ knowledge of students and effective teaching practice can also help inform many ongoing education reform initiatives within schools and districts.

The following trends were noted in educators’ responses to items about teacher empowerment.

- *Kansas educators appear to be more involved in decisions related to their own teaching than to the school as a whole* (Table 12). Teachers feel trusted to make decisions regarding instruction in their own classroom, but much less empowered to influence important school decisions outside their classroom door. Of particular importance is the lack of influence teachers have on their own continued development and learning. More than half (55 percent) indicate that teachers play a small role or no role at all in selecting in-service professional development opportunities available to them.

Please indicate how large a role teachers have at your school in each of the following areas:	Role Indicated by Kansas Teachers				
	No role at all	Small role	Moderate role	Large role	Primary role
Selecting instructional materials and resources	3%	15%	29%	38%	16%
Devising teaching techniques	2%	10%	25%	43%	20%
Setting grading and student assessment practices	5%	17%	28%	37%	13%
Determining the content of in-service professional development	18%	35%	30%	15%	2%
Establishing and implementing policies for student discipline	15%	31%	30%	21%	3%
Deciding how the school budget will be spent	47%	36%	13%	3%	<1%
School improvement planning	8%	25%	32%	30%	6%
Hiring new teachers	40%	31%	19%	9%	<1%

- This lack of influence over school-level decisions such as hiring and budget may explain why half of educators in the state do not feel empowered. *Overall, less than half of Kansas teachers (44 percent) agree that teachers are centrally involved in decision making, and only five percent strongly agree with this statement.*
- *Another cause could be the lack of a clearly defined decision making process that appropriately engages teachers.* Less than half (48 percent) of teachers report that there is an effective process for making group decisions and solving problems in their school.

Leadership

There is no single factor more important for attracting educators, retaining teachers and improving schools than a skilled and knowledgeable leader who is responsive to the needs of all teachers and students. Whereas principals were traditionally responsible for management, teacher hiring and community relations, the growing emphasis on accountability and equity has greatly expanded the principal's scope of work. Principals now act as instructional leaders, school reformers and interpreters of student data to make informed decisions. Given the tremendous scope of work for school leaders, leadership is considered as an intentionally broad concept in teacher working conditions surveys across the country, so principals, assistant principals, and a wide assortment of accomplished teachers can all be included within the "leadership" designation.

A report from the Wallace Foundation (2004) revealed that leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school and that leadership effects are usually largest where and when they are needed most.⁴

The qualities of effective leadership they identify include strong communication with teachers and the community, fostering shared beliefs, protecting teachers from factors that distract from teaching, direct involvement in curriculum and instruction, and involving teachers in the design and implementation of policies.⁵

Effective leadership is also essential for retaining quality teachers. Across the several states that have conducted a Teacher Working Conditions survey, educators consistently rank leadership as the most important factors affecting their willingness to remain teaching at their school.

Kansas educators were generally positive about the concept of leadership in their respective schools. The domain average for leadership was 3.48 (on a one-five scale of satisfaction), ranking as the second highest of five working conditions, behind only facilities and resources. More than half (58 percent) of teachers agreed that overall, their school leadership was effective. However, as noted in prior sections, this proportion is lower than in other states with similar data such as North Carolina, Arizona and Ohio.

- *Teachers were most positive about leadership on issues related to communicating clear expectations and handling teacher performance evaluations effectively.* About two-thirds of teachers believe that school leadership communicates clear expectations to students and parents, and 70 percent believe performance evaluations are handled in an appropriate manner.

It is also important to note that questions in this section of the survey focused on school leadership, not necessarily the principal. In fact, less than half (44 percent) of teachers identified the principal as the person who most often provides instructional leadership. A full 23 percent of all survey respondents said other teachers were the people most often providing instructional leadership. While the principal is essential, many other educators play critical roles in different aspects of school leadership.

There is no single factor more important for attracting educators, retaining teachers and improving schools than a skilled and knowledgeable leader who is responsive to the needs of all teachers and students.

Teachers were less positive in some areas of leadership, particularly related to consistent enforcement of conduct and comfort raising concerns.

- Only 53 percent of educators agree that the school improvement team provides effective leadership in their school.
- About half (53 percent) of educators agree that school leadership consistently enforces rules for student conduct.
- And only 56 percent of teachers agree that teachers feel comfortable raising issues and concerns that are important to them.

The importance of leadership and its connection to both achievement and retention have been noted. Ensuring that school leaders have the support they need to create trusting school environments where teachers are comfortable raising issues and empowered as partners in decision making is critical.

Professional Development: Ensuring Teachers Can Continually Enhance Their Knowledge and Skills

Given the complexity of teaching and learning in today's schools, high quality professional development is necessary to ensure that all teachers are able to meet the needs of diverse student populations, effectively use data to guide reform, and become active agents in their own professional growth.

Not all professional development is created equal. Schools and districts need to focus on providing high-quality professional development that will have the greatest impact on student learning.

Not all professional development is created equal. Schools and districts need to focus on providing high-quality professional development that will have the greatest impact on student learning. To create effective learning communities within schools, principals should encourage ongoing professional development through collaboration. Activities such as modeling lessons, collectively reviewing student work, engaging in peer review and conducting action research can provide meaningful opportunities for growth within the school day.

Consider the following professional development trends noted in the Kansas Teacher Working Conditions Survey.

- *Only a slight majority of teachers were positive about the professional development they received.* More than half (58 percent) of Kansas educators agree that professional development provides teachers with the knowledge and skills most needed to teach effectively. Similarly, 59 percent of educators agreed that sufficient resources are available for teachers to take advantage of professional development activities.
- *When teachers did receive professional development, they were relatively pleased with the results.* Teachers were much more positive about specific opportunities for which they received at least 10 hours of development over the past two years. In all areas of professional development provided, more than 80 percent of educators believe that it was incorporated into their instructional methods and more than 75 percent agreed that professional development improved student learning.

- Teachers in Kansas want and need more professional development to differentiate instruction in order to meet the educational need of all learners* (Table 13). Of all professional development areas, educators noted a need for additional support in working with special education students (51 percent) and closing the achievement gap (47 percent). Unfortunately, there are significant gaps between the percentages of teachers reporting a need for these two aspects of professional development and the amount received. Only 19 percent of Kansas educators had at least ten hours of professional development in working with special education students—2.5 times less than the proportion of educators who indicated that need additional support. *Only in reading strategies did a majority of Kansas educators receive at least ten hours of professional development over the past two years.*

Teachers in Kansas want and need more professional development to differentiate instruction in order to meet the educational need of all learners.

Table 13. Differences in the Percent of Teachers Who Report Needing Versus Receiving Professional Development Support

Professional Development Area	Need Additional Support	10+ Hours Over Past Two Years
Special Education – disabilities	51%	19%
Special Education – gifted	20%	3%
Limited English Proficiency	21%	10%
Closing the Achievement Gap	47%	28%
Your Content Area	15%	48%
Methods of Teaching	20%	44%
Student Assessment	27%	47%
Classroom Management Techniques	23%	21%
Reading Strategies	35%	61%

This disparity in the areas where teachers say they need additional support and the opportunities they receive could be due to the previously noted lack of influence teachers have on giving input into professional development opportunities made available to them. Few teachers indicate that they are involved in determining the content of in-service programs. More than half of Kansas educators at every level—elementary, middle and high school—reported they played little or no role at all in determining the content of their professional development.

While new teachers are more likely to receive at least ten hours of professional development in expected areas such as classroom management techniques (39 percent versus 19 percent for those with 11 years or more experience) and methods of teaching (51 percent versus 42 percent for more veteran educators), they are less likely to have received significant opportunities in student assessment and closing the achievement gap.

Recommendations

Governor Sebelius, in conducting this survey, has made a commitment to listening to educators and reforming schools in order to create the working conditions necessary for teachers to be effective with children.

Research has consistently demonstrated that the conditions teachers face in their schools and classrooms, although often overlooked, are essential elements to teacher retention and student success. The 2006 Kansas Teacher Working Conditions Survey has provided data from almost 22,000 educators for almost 1,000 schools across the district to assess whether teachers believe their schools are good places to teach and learn and to use that information to spur data-driven reform strategies. The good news is that more than three-quarters of Kansas educators (79 percent) believe their school is a good place to work and about one-third (32 percent) strongly agree.

Unfortunately there is no silver bullet to creating trust and respect. It cannot be legislated or regulated.

This positive perception is important as the findings from this survey indicate that many of the same things will improve both student achievement and teacher turnover—providing an atmosphere of trust and respect where educators are viewed as experts and are making decisions that impact their classroom and school. Unfortunately there is no silver bullet to creating trust and respect. It cannot be legislated or regulated. It needs to be built collaboratively within each building, by teachers, school leaders, parents and the entire community. And while effective school leadership is necessary to creating this positive school climate, it is not sufficient to ensure that teachers get the time, resources, support and learning opportunities they need.

Policies alone will not make the difference. Survey results indicate that districts, schools and communities can and should do considerably more to improve teacher working conditions. This report found that successful undertakings to improve these conditions could significantly improve student achievement and help to stem teacher turnover.

Recommendation One: Ensure the Data from the Kansas Teacher Working Conditions Survey Is Used by Educators and Develop Assistance for Working Conditions Reform

Teacher working conditions data provides schools, districts and the state with a new resource to identify areas that can become a part of school improvement planning. This data is not about any individual, and it will take the entire faculty within the school to ensure critical teacher working conditions are in place. The data should be part of a comprehensive school improvement planning process and aligned with other strategies to ensure schools are staffed with high-quality, effective teachers. The Kansas National Education Association has been working with its membership to understand and use the data since its release almost a year ago. These resources can serve as a springboard to a more concerted, systematic statewide effort to help schools. Some ideas to consider:

- *Create standards or guidelines for teacher working conditions so all schools understand the key elements of building a positive school climate.* For example, North Carolina has a set of teacher working conditions standards and Ohio has School Climate Guidelines for schools. The state should create an advisory board or other body to oversee drafting these standards and coordinating how to assess whether they are present and how they can be improved.
- *Create assistance teams, to help schools where important conditions of work are not present.* The Clark County School District (Las Vegas, Nevada) has created a model worthy of examination. The district has released teachers and brought back retired principals trained in interest-based problem solving by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services to serve as school facilitators in analyzing data and reforming conditions. Educators—principals and teachers—could be made available from schools with positive working conditions for consultation, site visits, etc.
- *Require that working conditions data be used as part of the school improvement planning process.* Analysis of data from the survey (or if there was insufficient response, other measures of working conditions) should be encouraged. Models and assistance for School Improvement Teams must be provided if this is to be a requirement.
- *Create some incentives for schools that initiate data-driven plans to improve working conditions* (i.e. A per teacher or pupil allocation to actualize the plan). A “venture capital” fund (with state and/or private funds) could be created with resources available for schools to improve working conditions, thereby encouraging schools to look at and utilize their data.
- *Design and deliver (with principals and teachers from schools with the most positive teaching and learning conditions) professional development, web-based tools and other supports for analyzing and using data.* This professional development should be targeted at school teams that include the principal and teachers. The Center for Teaching Quality has provided some materials that can be used as a foundation at www.teacherworkingconditions.org.

Kansas teachers were consistent and strong in their assertions throughout the survey—they want to work in schools organized for their success led by a principal who can create a supportive environment where teachers are respected and viewed as experts.

Recommendation Two: Invest in Schools and Teacher Leaders Who Can Create Positive Teacher Working Conditions

Kansas teachers were consistent and strong in their assertions throughout the survey—they want to work in schools organized for their success led by a principal who can create a supportive environment where teachers are respected and viewed as experts. Creating an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect was found to be one of the most important factors in explaining teachers’ employment intentions in Kansas. School leaders must be able to create safe environments, where teachers are encouraged to take reasonable risks, and all can have input into school direction without fear of reprisal. Many principals were not trained in programs that included this type of preparation. Providing professional support for them is critical. Consider the following:

- *Create clear expectations and/or standards for what principals need to know and be able to do in recruiting and retaining teachers as well as creating positive teaching and learning conditions.* Particular emphasis should be placed on building trust and developing appropriate distributed leadership approaches. Assess current standards for school administrators and ensure these expectations reflect key competencies for improving conditions. Ensure these standards are clearly and consistently communicated.

- *Design and deliver professional development with principals from schools where teachers indicate there is an atmosphere of trust and respect.* Consider making this professional development mandatory for new principals.
- *Ensure principal evaluations include some indicators of creating positive teaching and learning conditions.* Principal evaluations should focus on the extent to which schools use working conditions data for improvement—not on the data results themselves to judge principals. School leadership should convene conversations about the data with staff. Working conditions are about schools, not individuals, and it will take the entire school to improve them.
- *Partner with institutions of higher education to ensure new principal candidates graduate from programs that provide them with the knowledge and skills they need to create positive school climates and build an atmosphere of trust.* All school administration programs should be reviewed on clear, consistent standards for providing aspiring principals with preparation in creating positive working conditions and distributed leadership models.

One of the most powerful findings in the report is the importance of parent and community engagement and support to both student achievement and teachers' decisions about where to work.

Teachers, when empowered by school leaders, must be ready to take advantage of these opportunities by making informed decisions that not only improve their classroom, but the school. To do so, teachers must have sufficient time during the school day, to work collaboratively and serve on committees.

- *Consider areas where teachers can be appropriately engaged in decision making and ensure they have the data, knowledge and skills necessary to make the right decisions.* Professional development should be created and delivered by accomplished teacher leaders who help all educators understand how to create efficient and effective distributed leadership models.
- *Ensure policies and practices are in place that make clear how decisions will be made and then clearly communicate the results and rationale back to faculty.* A majority of teachers on this survey did not believe there were effective processes in place for making group decisions. Teachers will only be partners in decision making if their role is clear and opportunities are available for meaningful input.

Recommendation Three: Close the Working Conditions Gap by Targeting Resources and Engaging Communities in Schools

One of the most powerful findings in the report is the importance of parent and community engagement and support to both student achievement and teachers' decisions about where to work. Unfortunately, there is a large and pervasive gap in the support received based on the type of students served. Teachers serving high-poverty populations were far less likely to note that the community was engaged and supportive. This not only influences their work in the classroom, but contributes to the overall climate of the school and feelings of expertise and respect. While resources are available through the Kansas Department of Education such as parent guides for curriculum standards, more needs to be done to address this issue and improve working conditions in schools serving the state's neediest students.

- *Ensure that working conditions analysis and reform is a community effort.* Professional development and training should not just be targeted at educators, but at the community at large. The business community, higher education and parents are all integral to the

success of schools and can be strong, stable partners in long term working conditions reform. Communication about how working conditions data can be used by each of these audiences (businesses to promote local schools, universities to make more strategic placement of teacher candidates in supportive clinical settings, etc.) and how *they* can help schools address concerns should be developed and disseminated.

- *Document successful community engagement practice in schools serving high-poverty populations through a thorough examination of working conditions data.* While each school has a different context, much can be learned from schools where teachers have indicated that critical conditions of work are in place and the community is a supportive, engaged partner. With data on almost 1,000 schools, successful schools could be identified, practices documented, lessons culled, and practical strategies disseminated for improving working conditions.
- *Provide resources specifically for high-poverty schools to address working conditions.* A venture capital fund has already been suggested as a strategy for creating incentives for schools to use working conditions data. Priority should be given to high-poverty and high-minority schools given the working conditions gap documented in the report.

Recommendation Four: Make Teacher Working Conditions Data a Permanent Part of Kansas Education Reform

While important data has been gathered through the 2006 Kansas Teacher Working Conditions Initiative, it is only a snapshot in time. Schools change rapidly. Principal and teacher turnover in many schools is chronic, new policies and practices at the school, district and state level change the way schools operate, new businesses move in and out of the community, etc. Gathering data on working conditions is essential for monitoring improvements and the impact of new policies and practices. Evidence from North Carolina (where a similar survey has been conducted three times), demonstrates that working conditions results improved in schools where educators indicated that they had used prior survey results. These improvements were most evident in the areas of teacher empowerment and leadership, both critical in retaining teachers and improving student learning.¹

While important data has been gathered through the 2006 Kansas Teacher Working Conditions Initiative, it is only a snapshot in time.

- *Conduct a Teacher Working Conditions Survey every other year to assess progress on critical conditions identified as having a significant impact on teacher retention and student learning.* Given the scope and expense of conducting an initiative, and the need to give schools time to assess and reform working conditions, conducting a survey every other year (as is done in North Carolina) provides sufficient data but would not overwhelm educators.
- *Establish an oversight committee of policymakers and practitioners to coordinate the survey and manage the design and implementation of strategies to improve working conditions.* Many recommendations have been offered. An explicit and representative group, under the leadership of Governor Sebelius, should be created to oversee all aspects of documenting and improving teacher working conditions.

Finally, other data must be considered and triangulated when examining findings from the Kansas Teacher Working Conditions Initiative. One area of data that would be invaluable, but appears to be unavailable, is annual school-level turnover data and a systematic survey of Human Resources directors as to the reasons provided by teachers when they exit a school or

A thorough audit of the state's data system should be undertaken to ensure that policymakers, practitioners and the public have sufficient information on teaching quality in their schools.

system. The report presented here could only assess the impact of working conditions on expected turnover from survey data on teachers' expected future employment plans. *While important and telling, these are no substitute for actual school-level turnover.* Collecting turnover data at the state and district level does not account for teacher movements from school to school. It is this turnover, unfortunately usually away from high-poverty, high-minority populations, that is so critical to guiding school, district and state policy. A thorough audit of the state's data system should be undertaken to ensure that policymakers, practitioners and the public have sufficient information on teaching quality in their schools. Guiding principles and resources can be found on the Center for Teaching Quality's Teaching Quality Data Systems Roadmap at www.teachingdata.org.

Teachers must have the resources and support they need to serve all students well. Comprehensive, sustained efforts to improve teacher working conditions will ensure the state's most important educational resource—its dedicated teaching corps—is available and able to help every child in Kansas learn.

Appendix A. Statistical Models for Student Achievement

Statistical Models for Elementary Student Achievement

OLS Regression on the Percentage of Students with a Passing Score or Above on the Kansas 5th Grade Mathematics Assessment

Model		Unstandardized Coefficient		Std Coefficient	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.277	0.510		0.543	0.587
	Percent Students Minority	-0.155	0.051	-0.224	-3.047	0.002
	Percent Students Economically Disadvantaged	-0.209	0.040	-0.352	-5.219	0.000
	Attendance Rate	0.007	0.005	0.058	1.263	0.207
	Percent ELL Grade 5	0.038	0.019	0.119	2.019	0.044
	Percent Not Tested Grade 5	-0.713	0.326	-0.098	-2.190	0.029
	Turnover	-0.105	0.054	-0.087	-1.943	0.053
	Size < 200	0.009	0.016	0.026	0.540	0.590
	Size > 500	-0.033	0.017	-0.094	-1.949	0.052
	Percent Students Special Education	0.237	0.103	0.108	2.293	0.022
	2	(Constant)	0.085	0.486		0.175
Percent Students Minority		-0.176	0.049	-0.255	-3.555	0.000
Percent Students Economically Disadvantaged		-0.166	0.038	-0.279	-4.342	0.000
Attendance Rate		0.005	0.005	0.040	0.919	0.359
Percent ELL Grade 5		0.032	0.018	0.099	1.765	0.078
Percent Not Tested Grade 5		-0.626	0.307	-0.086	-2.038	0.042
Turnover		0.007	0.058	0.006	0.121	0.904
Size (Less than 200 students)		0.011	0.016	0.034	0.710	0.478
Size (Greater than 500 students)		-0.027	0.016	-0.076	-1.681	0.094
Percent Students Designated as Special Education		0.273	0.097	0.125	2.813	0.005
The faculty are committed to helping every student learn		0.271	0.060	0.205	4.529	0.000
In this school we take steps to solve problems		0.115	0.033	0.178	3.501	0.001
Efforts are made to minimize the amount of routine administrative paperwork I am required to do		-0.093	0.035	-0.129	-2.676	0.008
Teachers have a reasonable number of students overall, affording them time to meet the educational needs of all students		0.054	0.026	0.104	2.081	0.038
The professional development received in closing the achievement gap provided strategies incorporated into your instructional delivery methods	0.033	0.024	0.058	1.382	0.168	

Model Summary					
	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate	Change in Adj R Sqr
Working Conditions	0.409	0.167	0.156	0.127	0.156
Student and School Characteristics	0.617	0.381	0.358	0.111	0.201

Statistical Models for Middle School Student Achievement
OLS Regression on the Percentage of Students with a Passing Score or Above on the Kansas 8th Grade Mathematics Assessment

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.811	0.040		20.318	0.000
	Percent Students Minorities	-0.032	0.093	-0.041	-0.346	0.730
	Percent Students Economically Disadvantaged	-0.423	0.084	-0.571	-5.043	0.000
	Percent Not Tested Grade 8	-1.185	0.589	-0.150	-2.013	0.046
	Teacher Turnover	0.085	0.104	0.057	0.815	0.417
	School Size	0.000	0.000	-0.023	-0.273	0.785
	Percent Students Special Education	0.310	0.231	0.094	1.340	0.182
2	(Constant)	0.600	0.083		7.229	0.000
	Percent Students Minorities	-0.010	0.086	-0.013	-0.118	0.906
	Percent Students Economically Disadvantaged	-0.338	0.079	-0.458	-4.307	0.000
	Percent Not Tested Grade 8	-1.145	0.542	-0.145	-2.115	0.036
	Teacher Turnover (Percentage of educators indicating a desire to move or leave)	0.151	0.096	0.102	1.569	0.119
	School Size	0.000	0.000	0.025	0.316	0.752
	Percent Students Special Education	0.338	0.212	0.103	1.595	0.113
	Teachers and staff work in a school environment that is safe	0.231	0.068	0.247	3.386	0.001
	Teachers Indicated Needing Additional Support in Classroom Management Techniques to Effectively Teach Their Students	-0.199	0.060	-0.209	-3.330	0.001

Model	Model Name	R	R Sqr	Adj R Sqr	Std. Error	CHG Adj R Sq
	Working Conditions	0.544	0.296	0.287	0.124	0.385
	Background Variables	0.715	0.512	0.483	0.106	0.197

Statistical Models for High School Student Achievement

OLS Regression on the Percentage of Students with a Passing Score or Above on the Kansas 10th Grade Mathematics Assessment

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Stat. Sig.
		Coefficients		Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.806	0.024		34.222	0.000
	Percent Minority Students	-0.129	0.073	-0.129	-1.756	0.081
	Percent Economically Disadvantaged Students	-0.408	0.073	-0.374	-5.593	0.000
	School Size >600	-0.032	0.023	-0.085	-1.359	0.176
	Percentage Not Tested Grade 10	-0.595	0.152	-0.218	-3.909	0.000
2	Turnover Rate >15	-0.053	0.017	-0.169	-3.136	0.002
	(Constant)	0.548	0.061		8.929	0.000
	Percent Minority Students	-0.107	0.071	-0.107	-1.512	0.132
	Percent Economically Disadvantaged Students	-0.342	0.071	-0.313	-4.807	0.000
	School Size >600	-0.016	0.023	-0.043	-0.710	0.478
	Percentage Not Tested Grade 10	-0.617	0.144	-0.227	-4.279	0.000
	Turnover Rate >15	-0.030	0.017	-0.095	-1.779	0.077
	Teachers have sufficient access to instructional technology	0.112	0.040	0.155	2.809	0.005
	The faculty are committed to helping every student learn	0.142	0.063	0.128	2.247	0.026
Parents and community members contribute to student success	0.041	0.023	0.098	1.771	0.078	
The school leadership consistently enforces rules for student conduct	0.048	0.035	0.078	1.365	0.174	

Model Summary(c)		R	R	Adj R	Std Error	Change:
Model			Square	Squre	of Estimate	Adj R Sqr
	Working Conditions	0.453	0.205	0.191	0.140	0.191
	Background Variables	0.664	0.441	0.418	0.119	0.227

Appendix B. Statistical Model Explaining Teacher Turnover

Statistical Model Explaining Elementary School Teacher Turnover

Logistic Regression on Intention to Leave Their Current School (At Least 15 Percent Indicate a Desire to Move to a New School or Leave Teaching Altogether)

	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Poverty (Greater than 50 percent of students economically disadvantaged)	-0.463	0.332	1.948	0.163	0.629
Student Achievement (LESS than 75 Percent Pass Grade 5 Math)	0.758	0.325	5.430	0.020	2.133
Minority Students (Greater than 20 percent)	-0.636	0.298	4.566	0.033	0.529
Small School Size (LESS than 200 students)	0.181	0.316	0.327	0.567	1.198
Large School Size (Greater than 500 students)	0.812	0.377	4.650	0.031	2.253
Novice Teachers (Greater than 15 percent with 3 years experience or less)	0.183	0.264	0.481	0.488	1.201
Leadership Domain (Greater than 3.00)	-0.548	0.422	1.687	0.194	0.578
Empowerment Domain (Greater than 3.00)	-0.426	0.377	1.279	0.258	0.653
Teachers Agree Sufficient Time is Available to Collaborate with Colleagues (Greater than 55 percent agree)	-0.437	0.300	2.125	0.145	0.646
Teachers Agree Efforts are Made to Minimize Paperwork (Greater than 45 percent agree)	-0.228	0.322	0.500	0.480	0.796
Teachers and Staff Work in a School Environment That is Safe (LESS than 85 percent agree)	0.986	0.274	12.913	0.000	2.680
It is Necessary to Work a Second Job During the Regular School Year (Greater than 40 percent agree)	0.551	0.268	4.216	0.040	1.736
Teachers are Respected as Educational Experts (LESS than 40 percent agree)	1.093	0.342	10.237	0.001	2.983
Teachers are Supported by the Community in Which They Teach (Greater than 75 percent agree)	-0.636	0.341	3.478	0.062	0.530
In This School We Take Steps to Solve Problems (Greater than 80 percent agree)	-0.656	0.294	4.969	0.026	0.519
Constant	-0.304	0.611	0.248	0.618	0.738

Statistical Model Explaining Middle School Teacher Turnover

Logistic Regression on Intention to Leave Their Current School (At Least 16 Percent Indicate a Desire to Move to a New School or Leave Teaching Altogether)

	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Poverty (Greater than 50 Percent Students Economically Disadvantaged)	1.133	0.572	3.925	0.048	3.104
Minority Students (LESS than 20 Percent Minority Population)	0.195	0.533	0.134	0.715	1.215
Student Achievement (LESS than 55 Percent Pass Grade 8 Math)	-0.780	0.552	1.998	0.157	0.458
Small School Size (LESS than 200 students)	0.224	0.528	0.180	0.672	1.251
Large School Size (Greater than 600 students)	0.837	0.525	2.537	0.111	2.309
Novice Teachers (Greater than 15 percent of the faculty with 3 years experience or less)	-0.192	0.457	0.176	0.675	0.825
Time Domain (Greater than 3.55)	-1.757	0.567	9.589	0.002	0.173
School Leadership is Effective (Greater than 75 percent agree)	-1.587	0.594	7.149	0.008	0.204
Teachers are Centrally Involved in Decision Making about Educational Issues (Greater than 65 percent agree)	0.727	0.753	0.931	0.335	2.069
Constant	-0.148	0.343	0.187	0.665	0.862

Statistical Model Explaining High School Teacher Turnover
Logistic Regression on Intention to Leave Their Current School (At Least 25 Percent Indicate a Desire to Move to a New School or Leave Teaching Altogether)

	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Poverty (Greater than 40 percent economically disadvantaged)	-0.129	0.482	0.071	0.790	0.879
Minority Students (Greater than 15 percent minority population)	0.213	0.566	0.142	0.706	1.238
Novice Teachers (Greater than 15 percent of teachers with 3 years experience or less)	-0.121	0.472	0.066	0.797	0.886
Student Achievement (Greater than 70 percent pass grade 10 math)	0.261	0.436	0.359	0.549	1.298
Small School Size (LESS than 200 students)	0.672	0.442	2.309	0.129	1.959
Large School Size (Greater than 600 students)	-0.576	0.620	0.865	0.352	0.562
Leadership Domain (LESS than 3.00)	0.924	0.415	4.950	0.026	2.520
Facilities and Resources Domain (Greater than 3.00)	-0.938	0.762	1.516	0.218	0.391
Teachers are respected as educational experts (LESS than 30 percent agree)	0.954	0.432	4.875	0.027	2.595
Teachers are protected from duties that interfere with their essential role of educating students (Greater than 55 percent agree)	-0.980	0.592	2.738	0.098	0.375
Constant	-1.342	0.868	2.388	0.122	0.261

Notes

Introduction

1. National Center for Education Statistics. *Teacher Attrition and Mobility: Results for the Teacher Follow-up Survey, 2000-01*. Washington, D.C.: NCES 2004-301, August 2004.

2. Loeb, H., Elfers, A., Knapp, M., and Plecki, M. with B. Boatright. "Preparation and Support for Teaching: Working Conditions of Teachers" *Working Paper #2*. Seattle, Wash.: Center for the Study of Teaching Policy at the University of Washington, May 2004.

3. Futernick, Ken. *A Possible Dream: Retaining California Teachers So All Students Learn*. Sacramento: California State University.

4. For example, see Rosenholtz, S. J. (1989). *Teachers' workplace: The social organization of schools*. New York, N.Y.: Longman; Talbert, J., McLaughlin, M., & Rowan, B. (1993). "Understanding context effects on secondary school teaching." *Teachers College Record*, 95(1), 45-68, and Bryk, A.S. and Schneider, B. (2002). *Trust in Schools: A Core Resource for Improvement*. New York. Russell Sage Foundation.

5. Ingersoll, Richard M. *Who Controls Teachers' Work?: Power and Accountability in America's Schools*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003.

6. Hirsch, Eric. *Teacher Working Conditions are Student Learning Conditions: A Report of Governor Easley's 2004 Working Conditions Initiative*. Chapel Hill: Southeast Center for Teaching Quality, 2005 and Hirsch, Eric. *Listening to the Experts: A Report on South Carolina's 2004 Teacher Working Conditions Initiative*. Chapel Hill, N.C.: SECTQ, 2005. Hirsch, E. and Emerick, S. with K. Church and E. Fuller. *Teaching and Learning Conditions are Critical to the Success of Students and the Retention of Teachers*. Hillsborough, N.C.: Center for Teaching Quality, December 2006. Hirsch, E. and Emerick, S. with K. Church and E. Fuller, *Teacher Working Conditions are Student Learning Conditions: A Report on the 2006 North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey*. Hillsborough, N.C.: CTQ, February 2007. *Arizona Teacher Working Conditions: Designing Schools for Educator and Student Success*. Hillsborough, N.C.: CTQ, March February 2007. All reports available online at www.teachingquality.org.

Major Findings

1. Hirsch, Eric. *Teacher Working Conditions are Student Learning Conditions: A Report of Governor Easley's 2004 Working Conditions Initiative*. Chapel Hill: Southeast Center for Teaching Quality, 2005 and Hirsch, Eric. *Listening to the Experts: A Report on South Carolina's 2004 Teacher Working Conditions Initiative*. Chapel Hill, N.C.: SECTQ, 2005.

2. Math assessments were selected for analysis as they tend to be more resistant to background characteristics and sensitive to school-level factors. For more information on the Kansas math assessment and its alignment with state standards and scoring, see <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=156>.

3. The same finding was documented in math achievement at the elementary level in a similar initiative in Clark County, Nevada. See Hirsch, E. and Emerick, S. with K. Church and E. Fuller. *Teaching and Learning Conditions are Critical to the Success of Students and the Retention of Teachers*. Hillsborough, N.C.: Center for Teaching Quality, December 2006.

4. While this working conditions factor is significant, it is at the less rigorous $p < .1$ level (two-tailed). See appendix A for more information on the significance, standard error, etc.

5. Low, middle and high turnover is defined differently at each level based on an analysis of the data in the survey. At the elementary level, low turnover = 0 to 5 percent, moderate = 5.1 to 15 percent and high = 15.1 percent or more. For middle schools, low = 0 to 8 percent, moderate is 8.1 to 16 percent and high = 16.1 percent or more. At the high school level, low = 0 to 10 percent, moderate = 10.1 to 20 percent and high = 20.1 percent or greater.

6. This finding is similar to analyses done in North Carolina where teachers in high-poverty schools were more likely to note the presence of positive working conditions in the areas of professional development and time. Two hypotheses were offered in that report. First, that NCLB and other federal resources are currently being spent from Title II disproportionately on class size reduction (in the time section) and professional development. Also, teachers in high-poverty schools, having never experienced the resources, support and opportunities of their peers in more affluent settings, may be more likely to have positive perceptions of what others may consider substandard working conditions.

Domain Analyses

1. National Education Commission on Time and Learning. (1994). *Prisoners of Time*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

2. National Center for Education Statistics. (2006). *Characteristics of Schools, Districts, Teachers, Principals, and School Libraries in the United States: 2003-2004 Schools and Staffing Survey*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

3. Strizek, G.A., Pittsonberger, J.L., Riordan, K.E., Lyter, D.M., & Orlofsky, G.F. (2006). *Characteristics of schools, districts, teachers, principals, and school libraries in the United States: 2003-04 schools and staffing survey (NCES 2006-313 Revised)*. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

4. Leithwood, K., Louis, K., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). *How leadership influences student learning*. New York: The Wallace Foundation.

5. Waters, J., Marzano, R., & McNulty, B. (2004). "Leadership that sparks learning." *Educational Leadership*, 61(7) 48-51.

Recommendations

1. Hirsch, E. and Emerick, S. with K. Church and E. Fuller, *Teacher Working Conditions are Student Learning Conditions: A Report on the 2006 North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey*. Hillsborough, N.C.: CTQ, February 2007.