

Will the Teacher Retention Riddle Ever be Solved

Kirk Daigle Holloway Middle School

Whitehouse Independent School District

106 W Wildcat Drive Whitehouse, TX 75791

daiglek@whitehouseisd.org

Principal Certification

Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

The University of Texas at Tyler

Summer 2017

Abstract

The teacher retention riddle has been a perplexing problem facing academia for years. Why do teachers tender their resignations at such alarming rates? What are some of the factors causing a large portion of teachers to re-evaluate their career decision within the first five years of becoming an educator? A review of the literature referenced several studies from universities, institutions, and organizations. The referenced reports provided deeper insight to some root causes of why teachers leave their professional passion. A survey was also conducted to ensure the report's line of thinking was consistent with the aforementioned reports. The survey focused on four areas: participant's background data, educational support, monetary considerations, and emotional ties to education. The data and survey both came to the conclusion that teacher resignations are, for the most part, preventable. The survey suggested that a lack of district and campus administrative support were determining factors for exiting the education profession. The survey, as well as the review of the literature, indicated that dismal compensation rates are also factors driving teachers away. It is my opinion, based on the evidence presented, that the teacher retention riddle will not be solved until district and campus administration listen without bias to their exit survey results. Furthermore, state or federal legislatures should compare the monetary loss of continuity to compensation and determine an adequate pay table. This pay table needs to be one that allows a teacher to dress the part of a professional rather than reflective of their blue jean salary.

Will the Teacher Retention Riddle Ever be Solved

After spending twenty years in the military, I thought I had grown accustomed to transfers and people coming in and out of my life like a revolving door. Making new friends, with the understanding that I or they would be moving to a new location within a few years, had become the norm. Trust me when I tell you, the military has nothing on education!

After my military experience, I became a teacher. I have taught for five years now. I have been on the same campus the entire time. During this time, I have seen individuals from every administrative position and almost every teacher's position replaced with new faces. It is also worth noting that during these five years, there are only five teachers that have been on campus longer than I. Much like the military, in education, teachers transfer or leave the profession for different reasons. Heading into my sixth year of public education, I too have become one of these statistics. I also resigned my current teaching position and transferred to a new school district. It is also worth noting that along with my resignation, another teacher (that had been on this campus for 23 years) resigned her position as well. As of now, there are only three teachers with more than five years of campus service.

Why is teacher retention so low? Is it due to ever increasing state intervention or is it due to poor pay? Is teacher retention stymied by the lack of campus or district support? Does the lack of parental support or co-teacher support have anything to do with teacher retention? Maybe it is the climate of the campus that causes teachers to pack their bags and move on. This study will investigate several of the significant causes of why teachers choose to resign their position at such an alarming rate. Supportive evidence of teacher retention will be gathered from various state and federal agency sponsored analysis, reliable Internet resources, self generated

Principal and Human Resource questionnaires, and a self generated survey completed by my colleagues.

A sense of local inclusion and local relevance will be provided with the inclusion of the questionnaires and survey. The local data could also determine if local retention rates are unique or equal to national outcomes. Data collected will be analyzed in order to determine the reasons why teachers resign and what (if anything) can circumvent this action.

As an administrator, the research into low teacher retention would provide greater insight of why some choose to exit the teaching profession. Being cognizant of the teaching profession's retention rate will enable an administrator to make better decisions toward cultivating a positive campus climate and creating a campus vision. The impact an administrator has on teacher retention is critical. These factors would help smooth some of the low retention variables on a campus. Based on the collected and analyzed data, this report will provide suggestions to help administrators solve the riddle of teacher retention and curb the alarming rate at which graduated professionals are exiting their dream of being a teacher.

Review of Literature

Issue Prognosis

Career retention is serious business. A business with the ability to retain a career minded professional achieves two goals: one - stability within the cooperation and two - continuity amongst veteran employees and those new to the profession. Make no mistake, education is serious business. The business of educational teacher retention is alarmingly low. While other professions enjoy much higher retention rates, education does not. Burrige (2016) used a 2015 TEA - Information Management System - graph to illustrate the attrition rate of teachers from

2010 - 2015. The graph shows an attrition rate of 37% over the five year study. An NPR report Westervelt (2016), states that eight percent of teachers leave the profession each year. An extensive study was performed by Goldhaber and Gross from the University of Washington and Player from Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (2011). Teachers who had high SAT scores were more inclined to leave the profession. The analysis also showed that highly effective and marketable teachers are more likely to exit the profession than move from school to school within or between districts. The study went on to reveal that this fuels the debate regarding the rewards of teaching not being enough to attract and keep the more talented individuals. Barnwell (2015) reported on teacher retention and makes note that stipends or “Combat Pay” does little as an incentive to recruit or retain teachers.

Analyzing the Research Literature

There are several factors to consider when attempting to solve the teacher retention riddle. This report will place the information gleaned into three separate categories. Category 1: Financial / Monetary Support, Category 2: Support, Category 3: Policy & Data. To further the discussion of teacher retention and the multitude of reasons why teacher retention is so low, let’s address each category one at a time.

Category 1: Financial / Monetary Support

A *Research News* article by Schaffhauser (2014), referred to a study by the Alliance for Excellent Education and states that national monetary losses for not retaining teachers is somewhere between \$1 - \$2.2 Billion. Phillips (2015), also mentions these same losses. Phillips continues by stating that school conditions was more of a factor of attrition than

low incomes. He added that the teaching profession is now America's largest occupation and raising the income across the board would be difficult. Using a National Center for Education Statistics, 1994–1995 Teacher Followup Survey, Ingersoll and Smith (2003), show that 29% of teachers exiting the profession were dissatisfied. When asked about the reason of their dissatisfaction, three fourths of them mentioned low compensation. Following this line of thinking, Wu (2012), addressed the lockstep compensation systems where less effective teachers could be earning more than highly qualified teachers and districts cannot provide a pay raise to more qualified teachers (p. 25).

Category 2: Support

Westervelt (2016), reported that Linda Darling-Hammond, President of the Learning Policy Institute stated that working conditions and support are the biggest factors for keeping teachers employed; more so than low pay, disrespectful students, or uncooperating parents. Barnwell (2015), echoed the same sentiment and said that there are several reasons for the dismal retention rate of teachers. The most significant reason was the alarming rate at which school districts place new teachers in underperforming school systems with little to no support. McLaurin, Smith, and Smillie (2009), also stated in their report that the lack of teacher support in the form of teacher mentoring, professional development, or positive support systems were major factors in the high attrition rate (p. 5). In a report titled *The Irreplaceables*, it is stated that 75% of the teachers who exited the profession said that their major issues were things that their

school could have controlled and they would have continued in the profession had their issues been resolved (Wu, 2012, p. 13).

Category 3: Policy & Data

Policy, Local or State Politics, and Data analyzation are areas that are growing concerns for the teaching profession. In *The Ticking Clock of Teacher Burnout*, Walker (2016, Sept.), described his daydream of only working as a teacher part-time. He then moved to Finland, only to realize that teachers there spend one-third less time providing instruction to students than do American teachers. The majority of time allotted to Finnish teachers is spent planning or performing data analysis (p. 2). This report continued by comparing the amount of time US teachers spend providing student instruction to other nations who significantly outperform us. He noted that in each case, we spend more time providing instruction, which allows less time to analyze our efforts. In another article, Walker (2012, Oct.), turned the tables a bit and interviewed three Finnish teachers who are now teaching in the US. They stated that they didn't enjoy teaching as much in America as they did in Finland. Major factors were the loss of autonomy and the feel of untrust. They also mentioned there were far too many observations, too many assessments, and forced curriculum with little input. A high level of stress not seen in Finland was commented on. One of the teachers contemplated a career change. The other two teachers were not as excited about teaching as they were in Finland.

Offered Resolutions

The search to solve the riddle of teacher retention is littered with variables. Attrition can be a result of a myriad of issues. Ingersoll and Smith (2003) offer a few suggestions. They start with an increase in pay. However, they noted the tax burden this would create based on the sheer volume of teachers across the nation. Other suggestions were more in line with teacher support in one form or another. A mentoring program for new teachers and an induction program were mentioned as resolutions (p. 4 - 5). Burrige, Lowrey and Horn (2016), discuss how rigorous instructional preparation prior to entering the teaching profession and post-hire professional development are keys to unraveling the retention riddle (p. 5).

Methodology

Active Participants

In order to facilitate the gathering of data regarding teacher retention, I focused on gaining access to as many teachers as possible. The convenience sample of participants were contacted through email and social media to satisfy this objective. Ninety-seven teachers accepted the consent form to participate in the teacher retention research, see Appendix A. Of the 97 participants, 10 had started the survey, 34 teachers had opened the survey, and 53 teachers had submitted their results. Participants consisted of teachers with a variety of years of experience.

The Action Research Instrument

A questionnaire was created and utilized to harvest responses from the target audience. The survey accomplished several objectives. These objectives were to maximize teacher participation, divide the participating group between teachers willing to seek other employment

and those not, and determine the reasons why dissatisfied teachers are willing to terminate employment.

To generate data for the research, the survey consisted of 18 questions. The questions were divided into the following categories: Participant Background Data, Educational Support, Monetary Considerations, and Emotional Ties to Education. The qualifying criteria questions detailed what “seriously considered” means in the survey. It also asks questions regarding the reasons why a career change had been considered. Educational support questions took into account local support from principals and resources, and state and federal educational policies. Questions about the ratio of workload related to payscale were also asked in this section. The emotional ties to education consist of the emotional impact of teaching on the teacher. For the specific questions addressed in each category see Appendix B. The questionnaire provided both qualitative and quantitative research data. The questions were asked in a style to derive qualitative information. Participation breakdown for each question provided the quantitative measurement.

Procedure

The procedure used to distribute the questionnaire was via social media and email. In either case, email or social media, every participant was provided a consent form with a link to the questionnaire. Their willingness to continue to the questionnaire acknowledged their consent to the survey. What follows are the questions arranged according to their reporting category.

Analysis of Data

The questionnaire completed by teacher participants from June 4th - July 15th 2017, offers a wealth of data related to teacher retention. For the purpose of this action research paper,

the eighteen questions were arranged according to the subject criteria in which they fell rather than numerically from 1 - 18.

The four criterias addressed in this action research paper are as follows: participant background data, Figures 1 - 5; educational support, Figures 6 - 11; monetary considerations, Figures 12 - 15; and emotional ties to education, Figures 16 - 18. The data collected from each question has been provided below. A quantitative look at the data has been performed in order to provide a qualitative summary of each question's significant findings.

Results

Participant Background Data - Figures 1 - 5

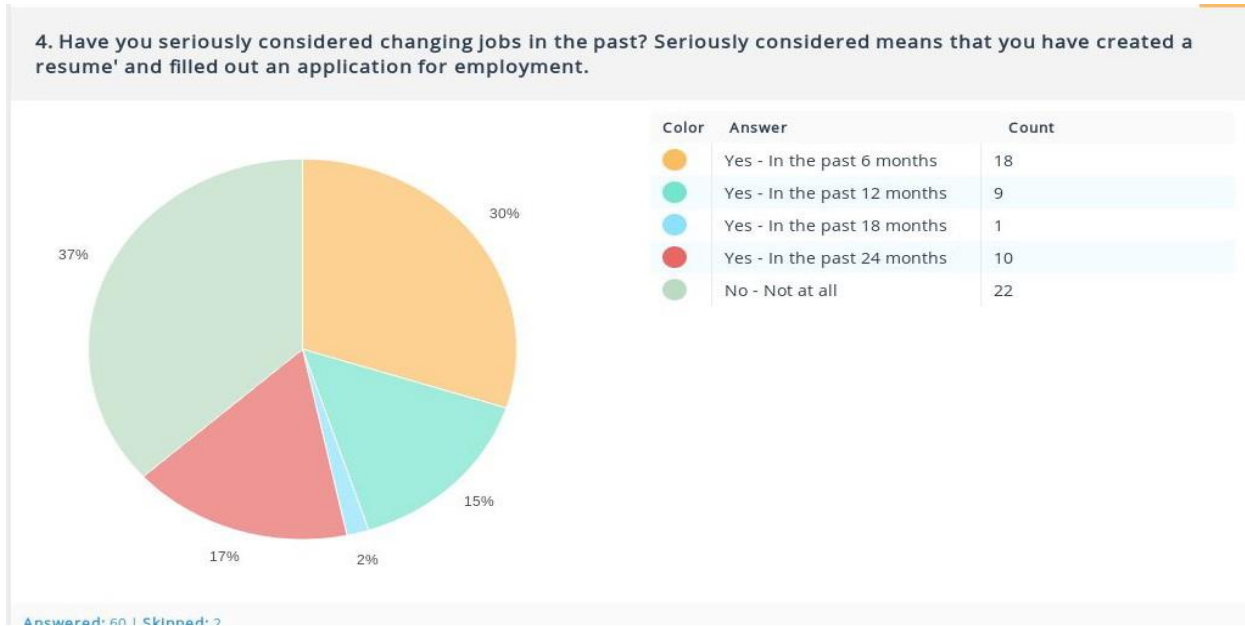
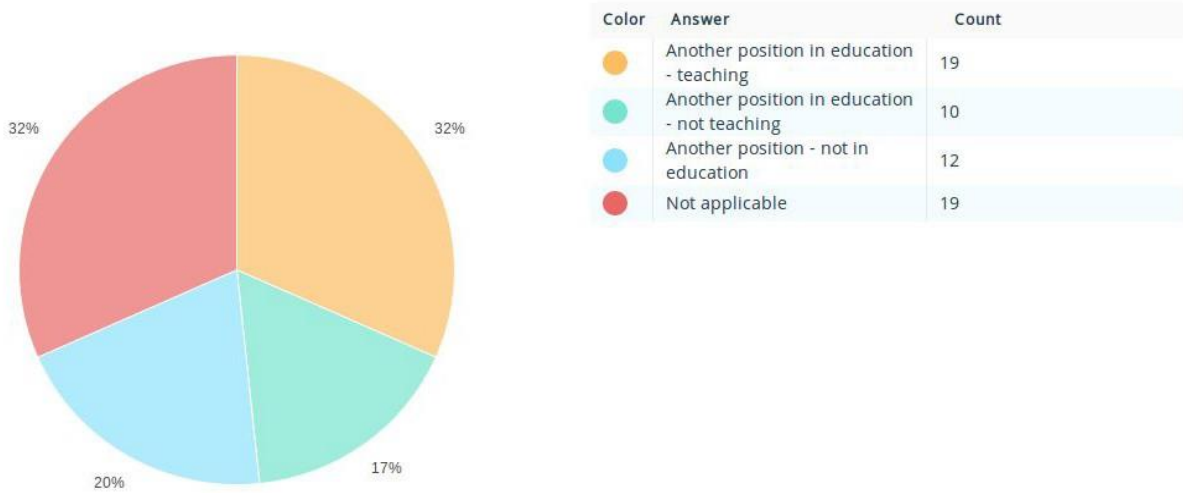


Figure 1. Seriously considered changing jobs. When asked if they had considered resigning their positions, 37% of the participants said never, while 30% said that in the past 6 months they had considered it.

5. If you seriously considered resigning your position within the past 24 months, What were you mainly looking for?



Answered: 60 | Skipped: 2

Figure 2. Do resigning teachers want to exit education or find another teaching position? It is worth noting that of the teachers who seriously considered resigning in the past 24 months, 51% were looking for something outside of education while 49% of the participants were satisfied seeking employment within education.

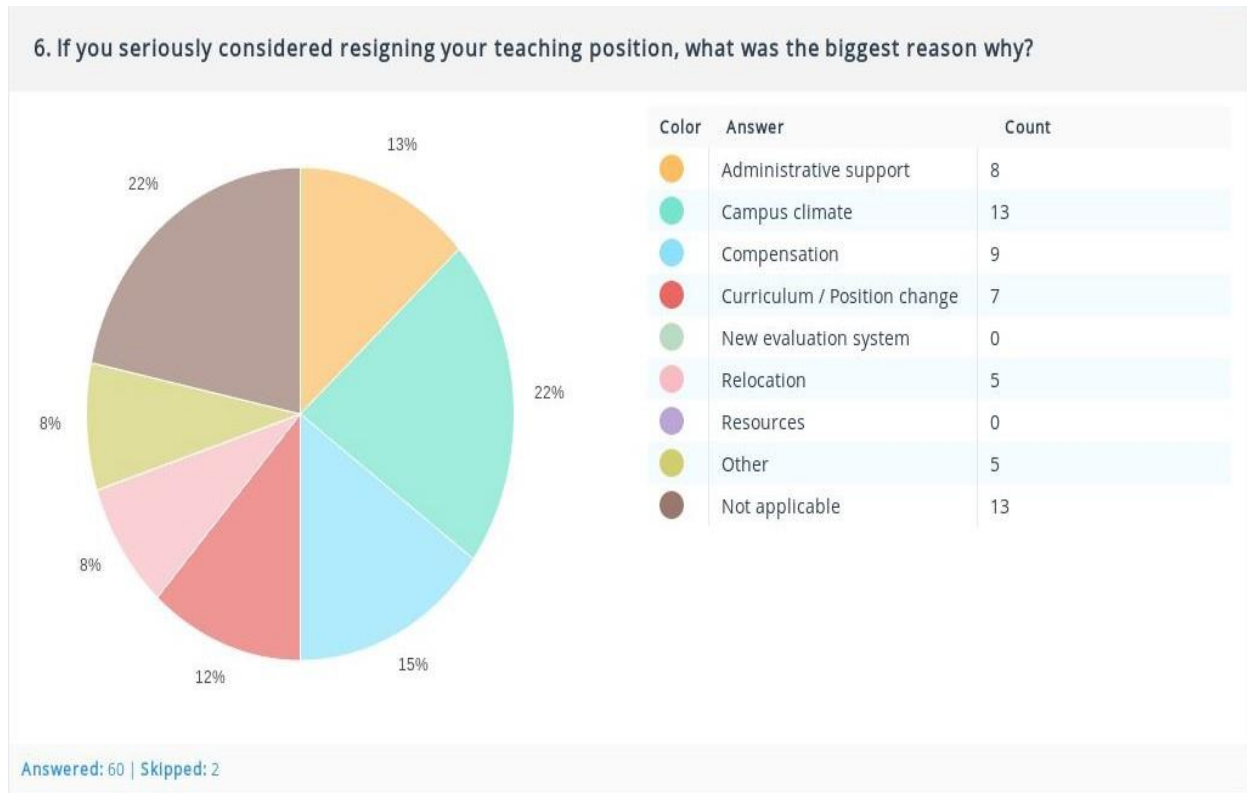


Figure 3. Reason why teachers seriously consider resigning their position. This question asked for reasons why teachers had considered resigning their position. Given a wide variety of choices, 22% stated that the biggest contributor was campus climate. Another 22% chose the “not applicable” response. Forty percent of the participants chose among compensation (15%), administrative support (13%) and curriculum/Position change (12%) respectively.

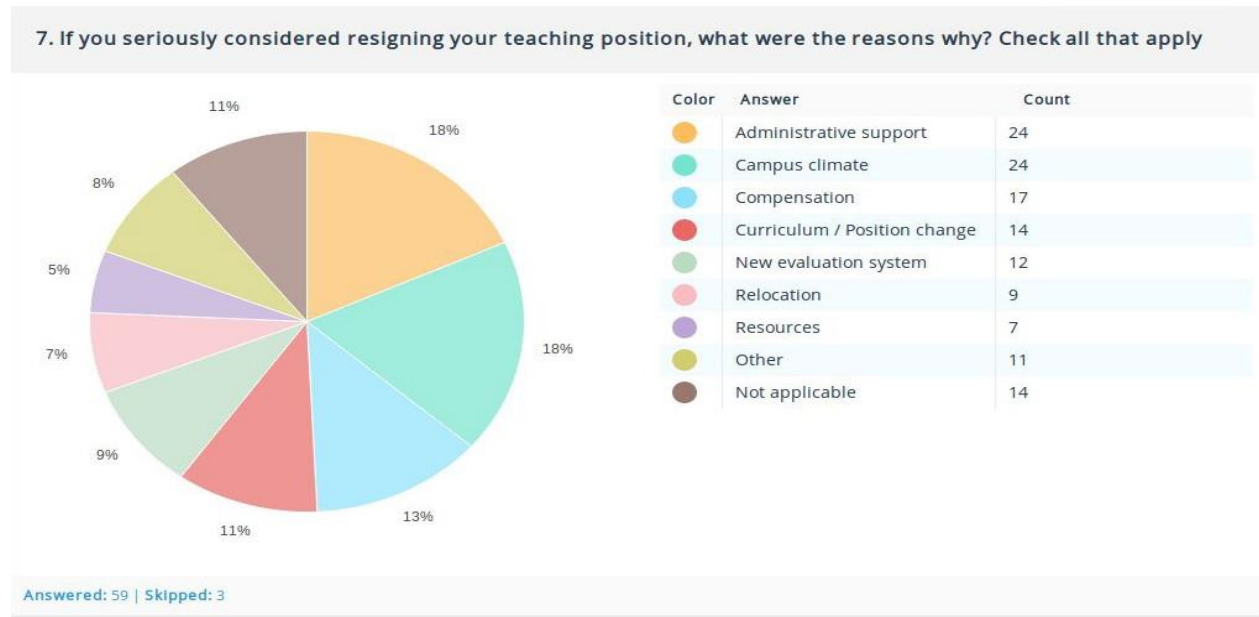


Figure 4. Serious consideration of resigning teaching position. In this question, when asked again to provide reasons why the participants had considered resigning their positions, they were given the choice to provide all that apply. Eighteen percent of the participants chose administrative support and another 18% chose campus climate. Compensation was found to be a factor for 17% of the participants. Also, when the data from question six was compared to the data from question seven. Question six had no indication that the new evaluation system was the main reason to consider resigning. However, question seven illustrated that nine percent, 12 teachers out of 59, considered the new evaluation system a reason to resign.

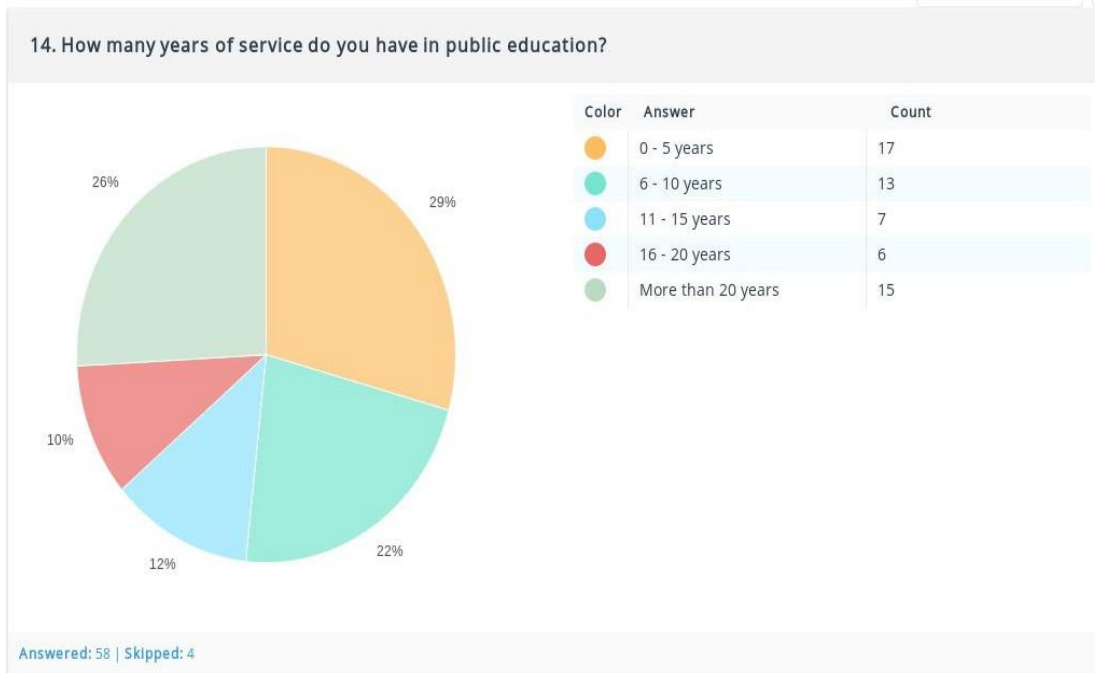


Figure 5. Years of public education service. Fifty one percent of the teachers who participated in the survey fell between a first-year teacher and 10 years of experience. One quarter of the participants had more than 20 years of experience.

Educational Support - Figures 6 - 11

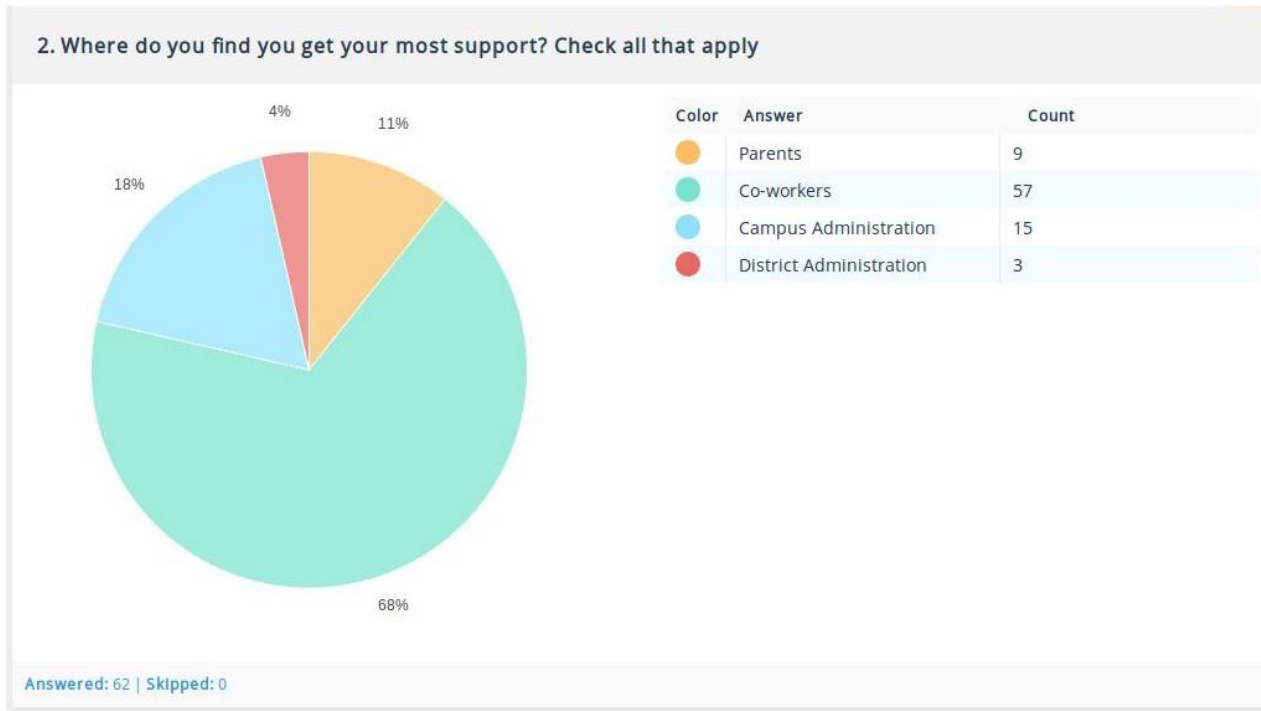


Figure 6. Most support given to teachers. Question two illustrates where teachers felt they gained the most support. It was noted that 68% of those surveyed found their most support from co-teachers, while the least chosen response was district administrative support; at 4%.

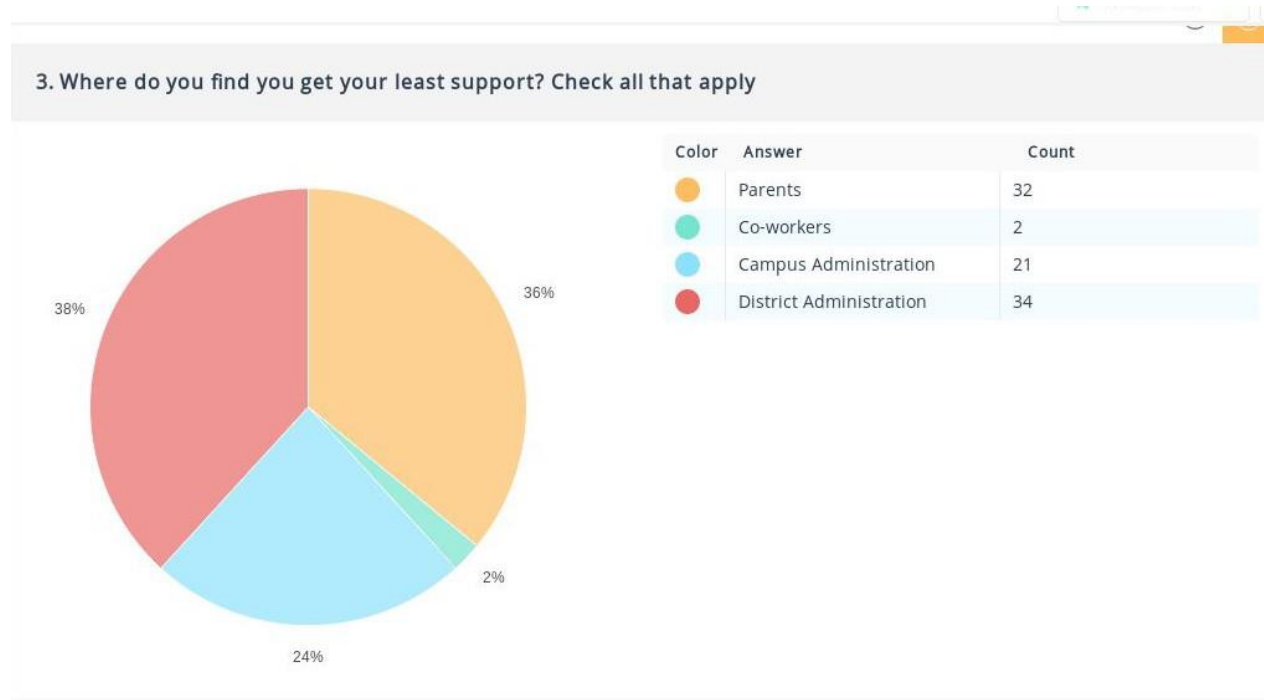


Figure 7. Least support given to teachers. This question confirmed the data collected in the above question. Thirty eight percent of the participants felt that they received the least amount of support from district administration. The data collected in this question of the survey reflects once again that teachers feel the least amount of support from district administration. Parents and campus administration came in at 32% and 21% respectively.

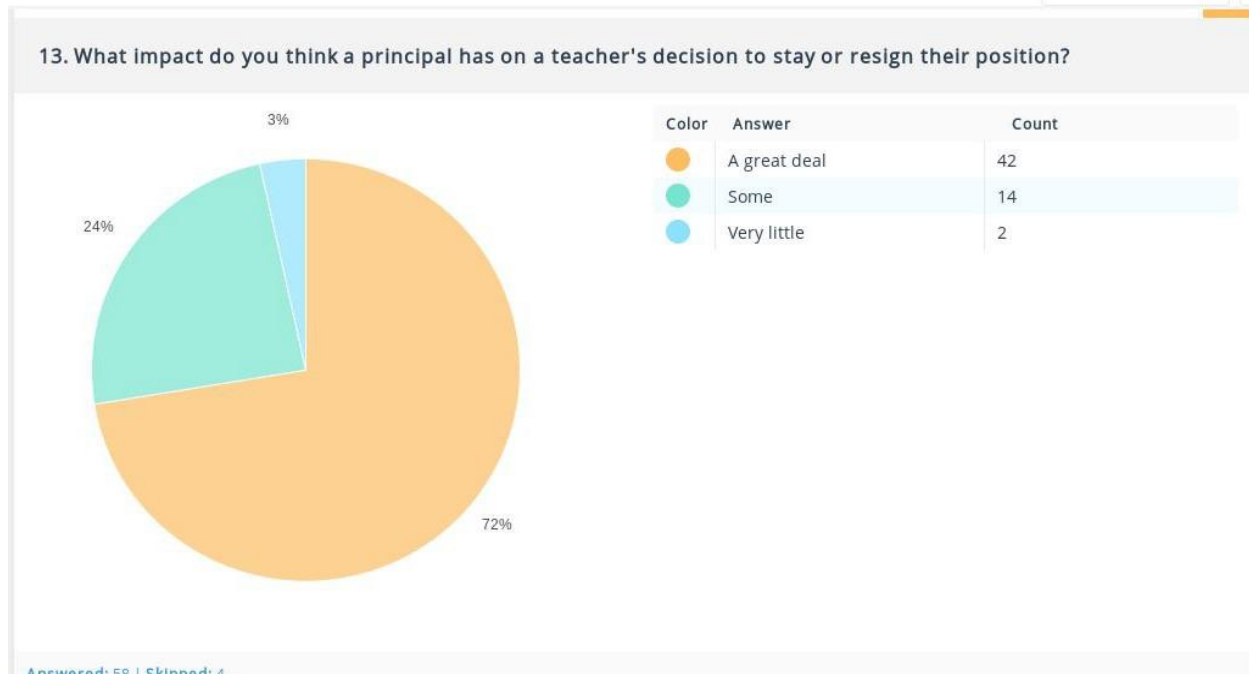


Figure 8. Impact of principal on resignation decision. A significant 72% of those who participated in the survey stated that the impact on a teacher's decision to resign their position was greatly influenced by the principal. A relatively small 3% thought that the principal was not relevant in their decision to resign their position.

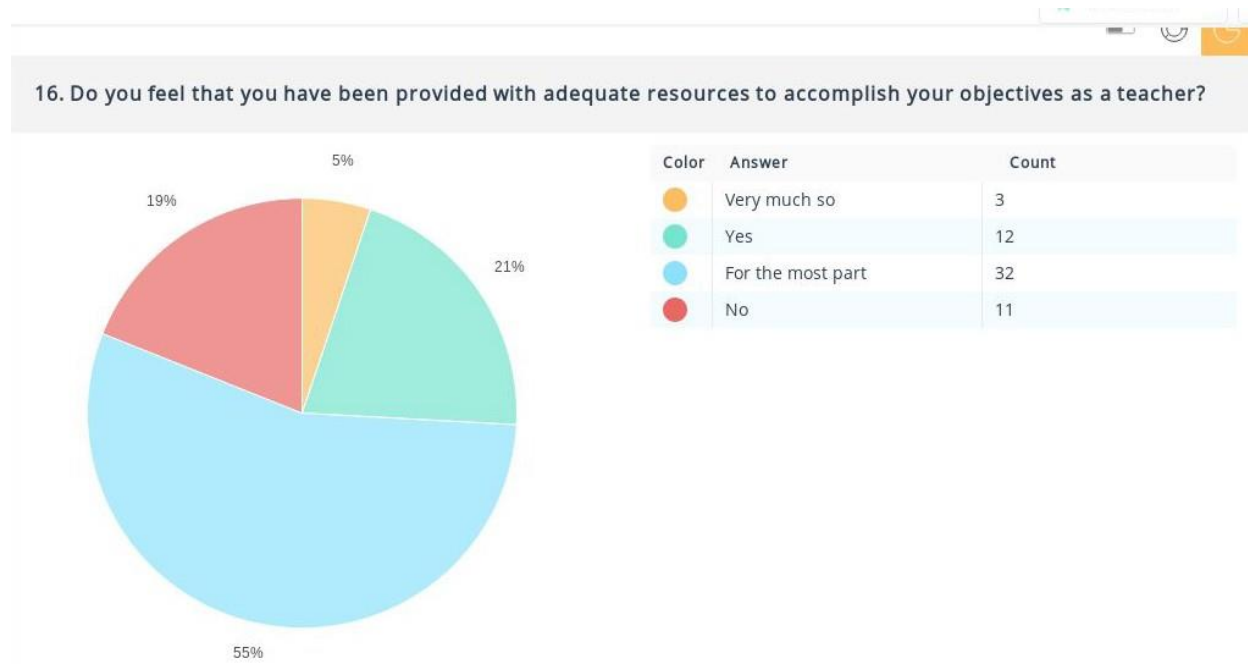


Figure 9. Adequate resources to accomplish teaching goals. A majority of 55% stated that for the most part they have been provided for, while 19% of the teachers who took the survey felt that they were not provided adequate resources at all. Only 5% of the participants felt they had a great deal of support.

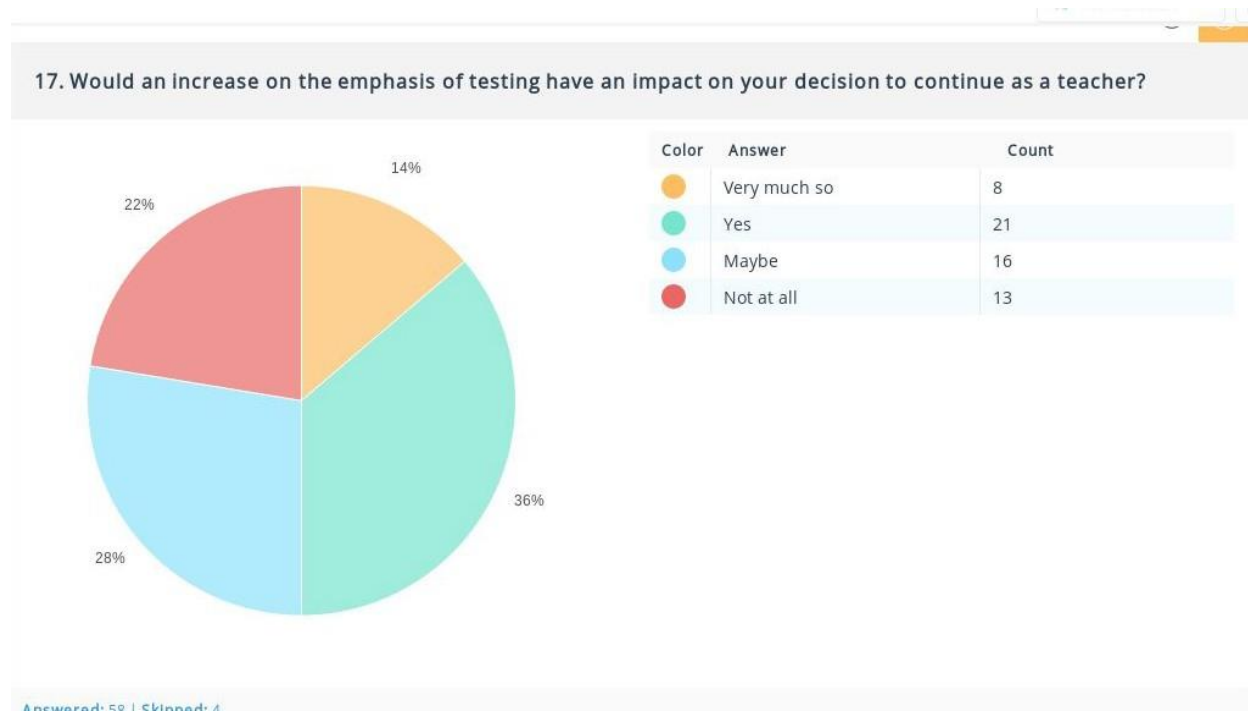


Figure 10. The testing emphasis increase and its impact on continuing as a teacher. When asked if an increase in testing had an impact on their decision to continue as a teacher, 50% stated that it would. Of this 50%, 14% of the teachers chose the response of “very much so” and 36% chose “yes.” A minority of 22% stated that testing would not be a factor at all.

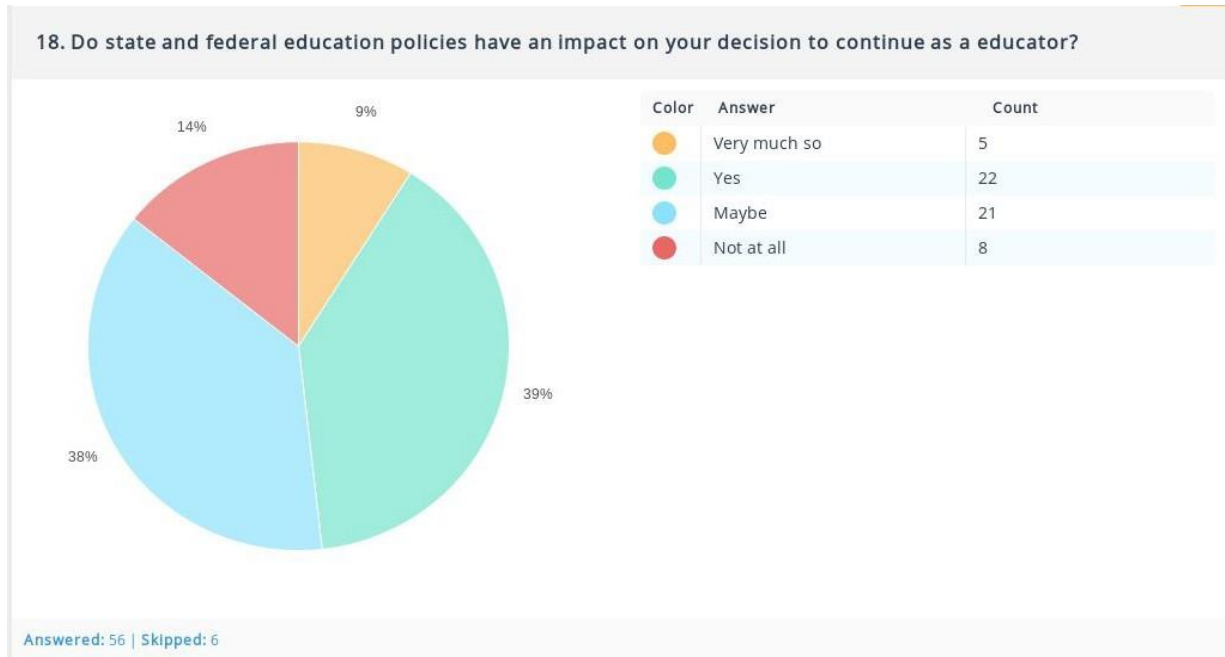


Figure 11. State and federal education policies. Most participants felt as though state or federal education policies had an impact on their decision to continue in education. Forty nine percent of those participating express feelings that state and federal education policies would impact their decision. An outnumbered 14% stated that policy would not have an impact on their decision.

Monetary Considerations - Figures 12 - 15

8. For the sake of this survey, if you were offered a position in a different career path. The compensation and benefits are equal to what you have now. In the new position, at the end of the day, (when you leave work) you are done for the day. How likely would you be to accept the new position

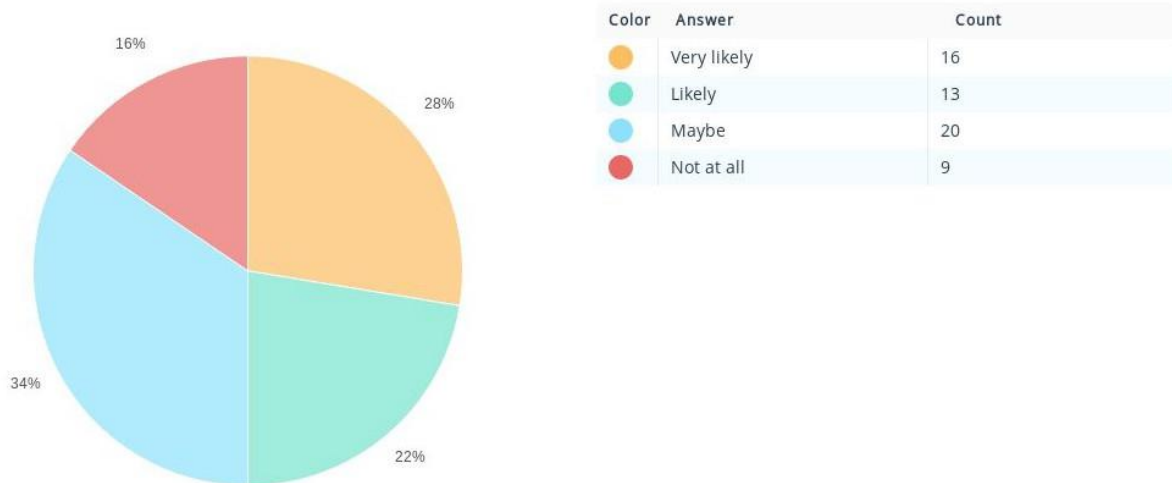


Figure 12. Consideration of a different career path. Participant's consideration of a different career path was focused on in this question. A hypothetical opportunity was presented to the teachers. The opportunity was described to have pay and benefits the same as their current position, however there was no work to take home. Half of the participants determined they were very likely (28%) or likely (22%) to resign their teaching position for the new position. Only 16% of the teachers stated that the hypothetical opportunity would not affect their decision at all.

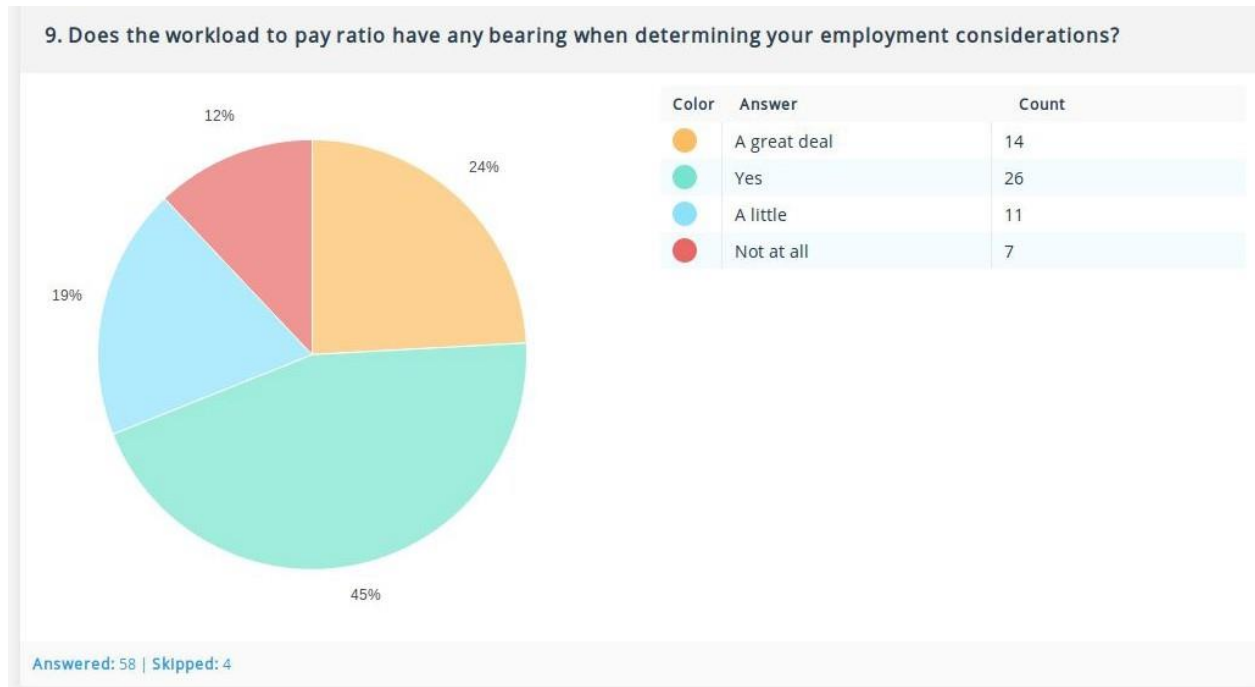


Figure 13. Workload to pay ratio. In this question, 69% of the participants decided that workload to pay ratio has a bearing on determining employment considerations. Of the 69%, it was worth noting that 24% stated it had “a great deal” of bearing on their decision. While 45% of the 69% stated that “yes” it had bearing. Only 12% decided that workload to pay ratio was “not at all” a factor in employment consideration.

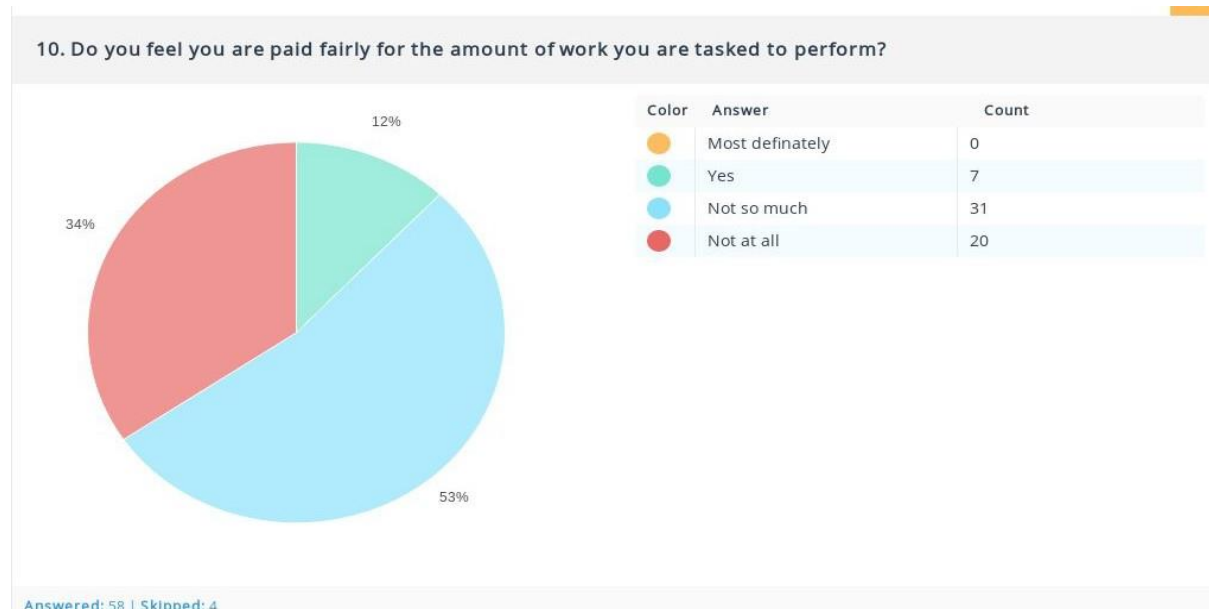


Figure 14. Fair pay for the amount of work performed. The participants were asked if they thought they were compensated fairly for their duties as a teacher. Of the teachers who participated in the survey, 87% of them stated that they were not compensated equal to the tasks performed. A small minority of 12% determined they felt equally compensated for the amount of work they perform.

15. In a study created by PayScale.com, 7 out of the 30 Worst Paying College Majors for 2016 was related to education (23%).



Answered: 57 | Skipped: 5

Figure 15. PayScale.com worst paying college majors for 2016. My attempt with this question was to illustrate how many teachers did or did not know where their profession ranked in a compensation survey conducted throughout the United States. Of the 62 participants a significant majority of 95% correctly found the statement to be true. Only 3 participants thought the statement provided by PayScale.com was false.

Emotional Ties - Figures 16 - 18

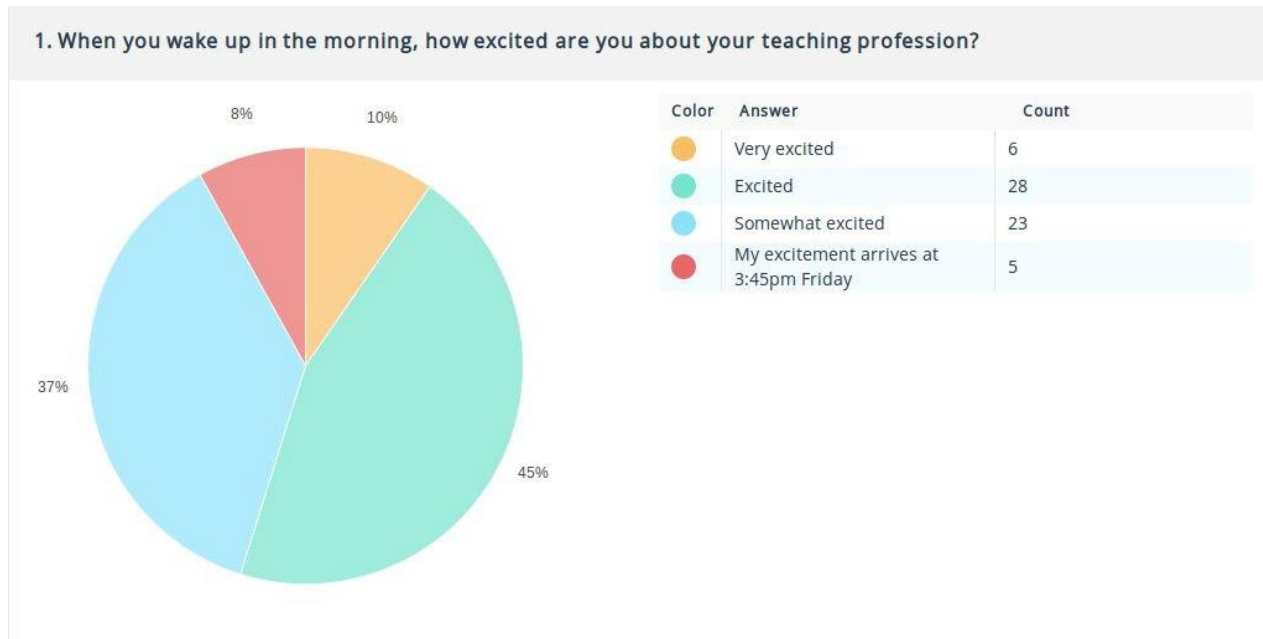


Figure 16. Excitement felt for the teaching profession. The question posed here is an emotional one. Of the participants, 92% represented a group who was excited about their teaching profession at first light. Eight percent of the participants stated that their excitement about their teaching profession began at 3:45pm on Friday.

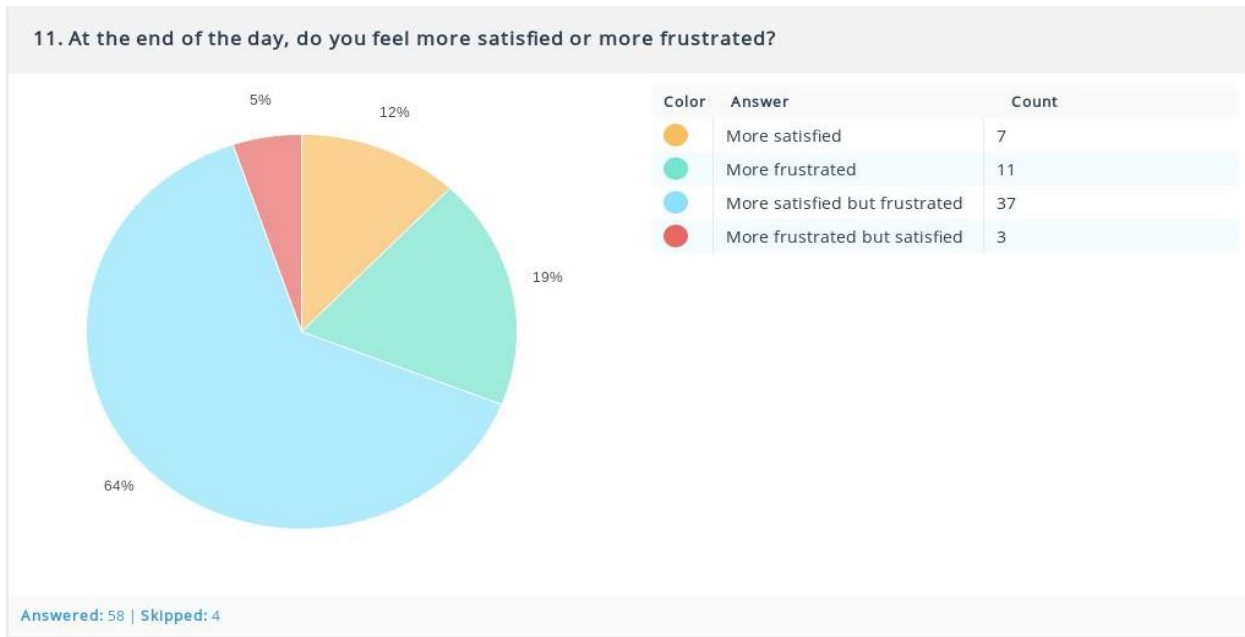


Figure 17. Satisfaction or Frustration at the end of the teaching day. This was another emotional question with regard to how teachers felt at the end of the day. A considerable 88% of those who participated in the survey felt some measure of frustration at the end of the day. The frustration measured from 19% “more frustrated,” 64% “more satisfied but frustrated,” or 5% “more frustrated but satisfied.” Only 12% of those who participated in the survey felt completely satisfied at the end of the day.

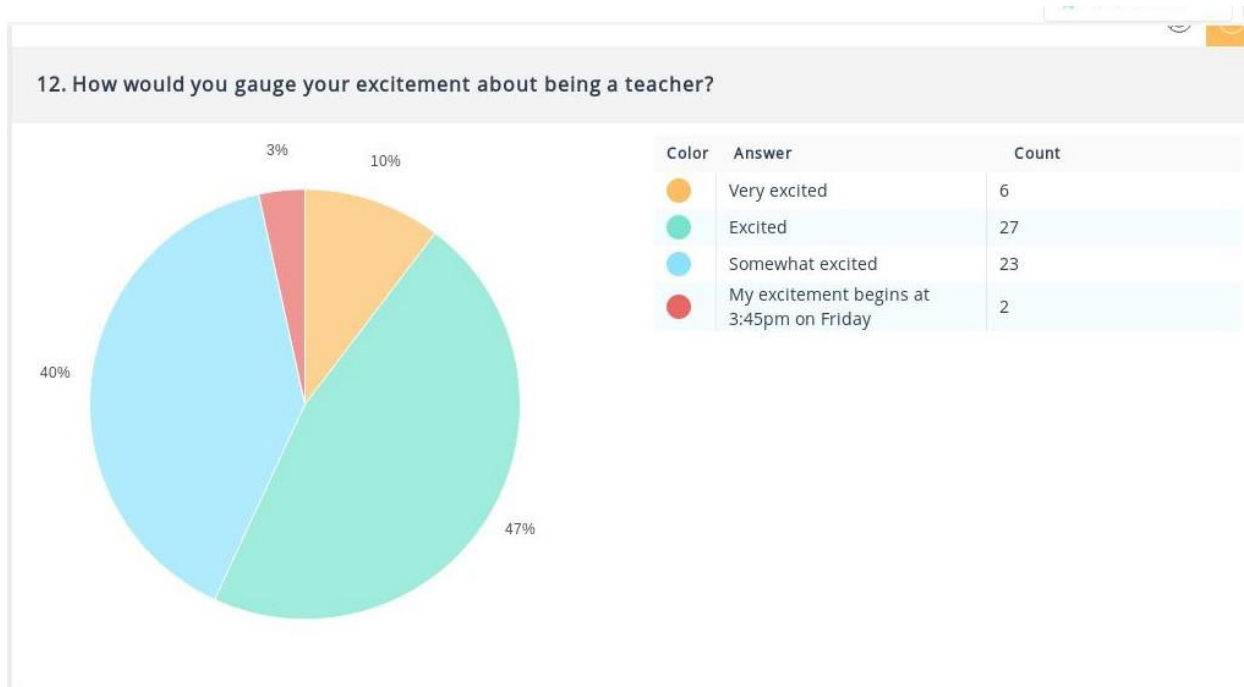


Figure 18. Excitement about being a teacher. This question is similar to the other two emotional evaluation questions. However, this question gauges the participant's overall excitement about being a teacher. It was revealed that only 3% of the teachers surveyed were only excited after the final bell on a Friday afternoon. The other 97% illustrated excitement for being a teacher.

Implications for Teaching, Supervision, and Research

Limitations of the Study

Being conducted during the summer months was the chief limitation of this study. As we all know, this is when teachers take a break from education and recharge their batteries for the upcoming year. Due to this, teacher participation was dependent on social media networking and emails to colleagues. In addition, the survey window was only six weeks in length. This limited participation to less than 100 teachers. Another significant limitation was the limited number of questions asked. Asking more than 18 questions jeopardizes the reliability of the survey. One must question if the participants are honestly answering the questions, or are they going through the motions while humoring the creator of the survey.

Discussion and Conclusions

I began this action research paper with prejudice in mind. I wanted the results to illustrate that I was correct in my thinking that most teachers resign their positions due to unfair compensation. I centered the premise of my research on answering the riddle of teacher retention. Why are retention rates for teachers so low? For the purpose of this research paper, I chose to focus on four areas to analyze. The areas of focus were: Qualifying Criteria, Educational Support, Monetary Considerations, and Emotional Ties to Education. What follows are my assessments of the data gleaned from each section.

Participant Background Data

This section of the survey was generated to determine who was participating in the survey and why had they considered ending their service as a professional educator. The survey captured a wide variety of educators. Of the participants surveyed, 51% had 10 years or less of

teaching experience; while 26% had more than 20 years. The research discovered 63% of those who participated in the survey had considered resigning their teaching position within the past 24 months. Of the 63%, who considered leaving, 20% stated they would not consider education as a replacement.

Educational Support

This section attempted to determine if educational support was a contributing factor to their contemplation of resignation. The survey revealed that 68% felt their greatest support came from other teachers. The survey also noted participants feel their least amount of support was provided from either the district, parents, or campus administration. Those percentages were 38%, 36% and 24% respectively. Furthermore, 81% felt they were provided with adequate resources to fulfill their duties as an educator. However, 78% thought that an increase in testing (as a data rich resource) would be a contributor to their decision to stay or go. Also noted in this section, 72% of the participants stated that the principal had a major impact on their decision to leave. The survey also revealed that 35% of those who considered resigning chose reasons that could have been prevented on a campus level. These 35% participants stated that administration and campus climate were their biggest reasons for their contemplated resignation. One underlying factor was the new evaluation system. Twelve individuals affirmed this was a consideration for leaving.

In summary, the majority of teachers felt that a lack of support from the district, parents, or campus administration, and an increase in testing were contributing factors to the loss of educators.

Monetary Considerations

This section was utilized to determine if monetary compensation was a major contributor to teacher resignations or is the old adage, teaching is a work of heart, still alive today? Interestingly enough, 87% of teachers surveyed stated that they felt they were not fairly compensated. During the survey, one of the questions proposed a situation in which the participant was offered a new career where the pay was equal to a teacher's pay and the workload was similar. However, there was no additional work to take home at the end of the day. The question was then asked, "Would you consider resigning your teaching position?" Fifty percent of the participants said yes and an additional 34% stated that based on the scenario, they would consider resigning. The very next question piggybacked on the prior question and asked if workload to pay ratio was the same, would you consider resigning? Sixty-nine percent stated that they would indeed make the transition.

Emotional Ties to Education

In order to prove the old adage is not the status quo today, three questions were asked with regard to emotional ties to education. The first question asked if they were excited about being a teacher when the alarm goes off before the teaching day begins. Ninety-two percent stated they were. However, only 10% of the 92% stated they were very excited. The question that followed, addressed satisfaction and frustration levels. It was noted that only 12% felt completely satisfied by the end of the day. Nineteen percent of the participants felt totally frustrated at the end of the day. Almost twice the amount of satisfied teachers. The final question in this section gauged the participant's overall excitement of their chosen career. While 43% stated they were somewhat excited to not at all, only 10% said they were very excited about

being a teacher. According to the data teachers are not excited about teaching, and are feeling frustrated.

Implications for Educational Leadership

The data implies that teachers are tired of working for little to no compensation. This survey has illustrated that teachers are not as satisfied with their positions as they were in the past, and are now branching out from the education career field to find other less stressful careers with better compensation. Surprisingly, a good portion of the problems lie with those attempting to fix the problems. Districts, principals, and school administration were key factors that if addressed properly could curb the resignation avalanche. The data also showed that across the board, from new teacher to very experienced teachers, there is an increasing number of dissatisfied educators.

Implications for Further Research

With the vast amount of variables involved in the riddle of teacher retention, further research would be beneficial in developing a clearer picture of why teachers choose to tender their resignation. Indicators identified on exit surveys from district human resource offices would be helpful in further defining some of the root causes. Administrative interviews at the school and district level would also be beneficial in the search to solve the teacher resignation riddle. Alternative models of education have been successfully implemented in other countries. Educators with experience in those countries as well as experience in the United States have commented that these models would not be successful here due to the overabundance of testing, lack of planning time, and the lack of teacher autonomy in the classroom. Perhaps it is time for us to explore new learning models for our students and for the benefit of retaining our educators.

References:

- Barnwell, P. (2015, May 27). The ongoing struggle of teacher retention. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/05/the-ongoing-struggle-of-teacher-retention/394211/>
- Burridge, A., Lowrey, S., and Horn, C. (2016). Staying in the field: Teacher retention patterns in Texas. Retrieved from http://www.uh.edu/education/research/institutes-centers/create/reports-pub/CREATE_TeacherRetention_March%202016.pdf
- Goldhaber, D., Gross, B., & Player, D. (2011). Teacher career paths, teacher quality, and persistence in the classroom: Are public schools keeping their best?. Retrieved from <http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/alfresco/publication-pdfs/1001432-Teacher-Career-Paths-Teacher-Quality-and-Persistence-in-the-Classroom.PDF>
- Ingersoll, R. & Smith, T. (2003, May). The wrong solution to the teacher shortage. *Educational Leadership*, 60 (8), 30-33. Retrieved from http://www.gse.upenn.edu/pdf/rmi/EL_TheWrongSolution_to_theTeacherShortage.pdf
- McLaurin, S., Smith, W., & Smillie, A. (2009, November). Teacher retention: Problems and solutions. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED507446.pdf>
- Phillips, O. (Reporter). (2015, March 30). Revolving door of teachers costs schools billions every year. *NPR – National Public Radio*. Retrieved from <http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2015/03/30/395322012/the-hidden-costs-of-teacher-turnover>
- Schaffhauser, D. (2014). The problem isn't teacher recruiting; It's retention. *The Journal*. Retrieved from <https://thejournal.com/articles/2014/07/17/the-problem-isnt-teacher-recruiting-its-retention.aspx>
- Walker, T. (2016, September 29). The ticking clock of teacher burnout: On average, American educators spend more hours with students than their international counterparts—and that may not be a good thing. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/09/the-ticking-clock-of-us-teacher-burnout/502253/>
- Walker, T. (2016, October 7). The disproportionate stress plaguing American teachers: Unrealistic standards

- put educators on an anxiety-ridden trajectory. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/10/the-disproportionate-stress-plaguing-american-teachers/503219>
- Walker, T. (2016, November 28). When Finnish teachers work in America's public schools: There are more restrictions to professional freedom in the United States, and the educators find the school day overly rigid. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/11/when-finnish-teachers-work-in-americas-public-schools/508685/>
- Westervelt, E. (Reporter). (2016, October 24). What are the main reasons teachers call it quits?. *All Things Considered @ NPR – National Public Radio Podcast*. Podcast retrieved from <http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2016/10/24/495186021/what-are-the-main-reasons-teachers-call-it-quits>
- Wilson, J (2016, November 28). Principals own the morale of teachers [Web log Comment]. Retrieved from http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/john_wilson_unleashed/2012/08/principals_own_the_morale_of_teachers.html
- Wu, M (2012). The irreplaceables: Understanding the real retention crisis in America's urban schools. Retrieved from http://tntp.org/assets/documents/TNTP_Irreplaceables_2012.pdf
- (2002, August 20-22) Unraveling the "teacher shortage" problem: Teacher retention is the key. Retrieved from <http://chalkboardproject.org/sites/default/files/ment-18.pdf>

Appendix A

Blank Informed Consent Letter

May 28, 2017

Dear Colleagues,

I am currently seeking a Masters of Educational Leadership and Principal Certification through the University of Texas at Tyler. A crucial component for completing this program is conducting an original educational research study. I have chosen to study teacher retention. My goal for this research project is to gain a better understanding of why teachers choose to leave their chosen profession.

This research will gather data from reliable education resources, state and federal studies, various credible Internet resources, and a survey that I am asking for your participation with. The survey consists of questions designed to get your opinion on areas pertaining to teacher retention.

The survey is available at the following link:

<https://www.surveylegend.com/s/awu>

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey.

All personal information and responses will be kept confidential and only used for research purposes. No names will be included in the research report and appropriate confidentiality protocols will be followed.

Thank you for taking part in this research project. Your assistance is greatly appreciated and valued. If you have any question or concerns, please feel free to email or call. My contact information is listed below.

By clicking the link to the survey and partaking in the survey, you are providing your consent to the terms listed above and are allowing me the use of your survey information as part of my research data.

Thank you,

Kirk Daigle
Dogan Middle School
903-329-1441
Kirk.Daigle@gmail.com

Appendix B

Participant Background Data

4. Have you seriously considered changing jobs in the past? Seriously considered means that you have created a resume' and filled out an application for employment.

Yes - In the past 6 months

Yes - In the past 12 months

Yes - In the past 18 months

Yes - In the past 24 months

No - Not at all

5. If you seriously considered resigning your position within the past 24 months, What were you mainly looking for?

Another position in education - teaching

Another position in education - not teaching

Another position - not in education

Not applicable

6. If you seriously considered resigning your teaching position, what was the biggest reason why?

Administrative support

Campus climate

Compensation

Curriculum / Position change

New evaluation system

Relocation

Resources

Other

Not applicable

7. If you seriously considered resigning your teaching position, what were the reasons why?

Check all that apply

Administrative support

Campus climate

Compensation

Curriculum / Position change

New evaluation system

Relocation

Resources

Other

Not applicable

14. How many years of service do you have in public education?

0 - 5 years

6 - 10 years

11 - 15 years

16 - 20 years

More than 20 years

Educational Support

2. Where do you find you get your most support? *Check all that apply*

Parents

Co-workers

Campus Administration

District Administration

3. Where do you find you get your least support? *Check all that apply*

Parents

Co-workers

Campus Administration

District Administration

13. What impact do you think a principal has on a teacher's decision to stay or resign their position?

A great deal

Some

Very little

16. Do you feel that you have been provided with adequate resources to accomplish your objectives as a teacher?

Very much so

Yes

For the most part

No

17. Would an increase on the emphasis of testing have an impact on your decision to continue as a teacher?

Very much so

Yes

Maybe

Not at all

18. Do state and federal education policies have an impact on your decision to continue as a educator?

Very much so

Yes

Maybe

Not at all

Monetary Considerations

8. For the sake of this survey, if you were offered a position in a different career path. The compensation and benefits are equal to what you have now. In the new position, at the end of the day, (when you leave work) you are done for the day. How likely would you be to accept the new position.

Very likely

Likely

Maybe

Not at all

9. Does the workload to pay ratio have any bearing when determining your employment considerations?

A great deal

Yes

A little

Not at all

10. Do you feel you are paid fairly for the amount of work you are tasked to perform?

Most definitely

Yes

Not so much

Not at all

15. In a study created by PayScale.com, 7 out of the 30 Worst Paying College Majors for 2016 was related to education (23%).

True

False

Emotional Ties to Education

1. When you wake up in the morning, how excited are you about your teaching profession?

Very excited

Excited

Somewhat excited

My excitement arrives at 3:45pm Friday

11. At the end of the day, do you feel more satisfied or more frustrated?

More satisfied

More frustrated

More satisfied but frustrated

More frustrated but satisfied

12. How would you gauge your excitement about being a teacher?

Very excited

Excited

Somewhat excited

My excitement begins at 3:45pm on Friday