

Kansas Teacher Exit Survey: An Overview

Purpose

The Kansas Teacher Exit Survey (KTE) was developed by Educate Kansas and the TASN Evaluation Team. The survey's aim is to assist Kansas school districts, cooperatives, and interlocals in identifying trends in educator attrition and to inform the development of strategies to address educator turnover. The KTE assesses two types of attrition that are of importance at the state and/or district level, including leaving the education field entirely or transitioning out of district to a new role within the field of education. For both types of attrition assessed, the KTE evaluates educators' background, future plans, and the level of importance that a variety of factors played on educators' decision to leave their position. For educators leaving the field, the KTE assesses factors that would influence the respondents' decision to return to an education position.

Miller, E., Fletcher, L., Gaumer Erickson, A. S., Seidel, C., Green, K. (2024). *Kansas Teacher Exit Survey*. KSDE Technical Assistance System Network.

Background

Teacher retention is a significant challenge for state and local education agencies across the United States. According to the Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS) administered every two to three years by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 7.9% of all public-school educators nationally and 12.2% of educators in Kansas left the field during the 2021–22 school year. Of the 44 states with reliable data, Kansas had a higher attrition rate for public school educators than 42 states, 4.9% points higher on average. Nationally, 7.9% of educators and 7% of Kansas educators moved from one school to another (Taie & Lewis, 2023).

Annually, KSDE generates the Kansas Special Education Attrition Report. In alignment with the timeframe reported by NCES, KSDE found that 16.4% of special educators in Kansas left the field in 2021–22, which created a need for 674 substitutes to cover unfilled special education positions. In 2022–23, the attrition report demonstrated that 13.1% of special educators in Kansas left the field (Stewart, 2023). To expand upon information gathered by KSDE, the KTE was developed to capture district-level data to inform decision making.

Development

To create this survey, we leveraged multiple existing teacher retention and exit surveys, including the Teacher Follow-Up Survey (TFS) within the National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS) as well as several state-specific exit surveys.

National Teacher and Principal Survey

The TFS is a longitudinal survey that assesses the one-year retention rate of NTPS participants. Both the TFS and NTPS are collected and run by the NCES. The NTPS surveys public and private K–12 school principals and teachers in the 50 states and the District of Columbia and has been administered during the 2015–16, 2017–18, and 2020–21 school years. The NTPS was adapted from the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), which was administered by NCES seven times from 1987–2012. In 2020–2021, the TFS consisted of a sample of 10,300 teachers who indicated that they were staying at their school, working at a different school, or leaving the

teaching profession in 2021–22 (Taie & Lewis, 2023). These surveys have been studied widely, with thousands of studies using these surveys to examine issues of teacher attrition and retention (Cox et al., 2017; Tourkin et al., 2004; <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/>; <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ntps/>).

State-Developed Exit Surveys

In addition, we incorporated survey items utilized in the Ohio and Nevada Educator Exit Surveys. The Ohio Educator Exit Survey was developed by the Ohio Department of Education (DOE) and the Regional Education Lab Midwest. Ohio school districts administer the survey in their own context to understand turnover of their teachers and educational aides. The survey captures information about educator background, future plans, reasons for leaving, and working conditions of their school. The Nevada Teacher Exit Survey is adapted from the Virginia Model Teacher Exit Questionnaire and focuses on educators' overall experience in the school district, reasons for leaving (e.g., personal, benefits/compensation, leadership and support, policies, and the school community), incentives to stay, and background/demographic information. To review the surveys, please see guidance from the Ohio and Nevada DOE

(<https://ohiohrc.org/exit-survey>;

<https://doe.nv.gov/boards-commissions-councils/teacherret-recruitadv/may/support-materials/>).

References

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