

Teachers report worse pay and well-being compared to similar working population

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Credit: Max Fischer from Pexels

With more working hours and lower average base pay, the well-being of U.S. teachers continues to be worse than that of similar working adults—a consistent pattern since 2021, according to a new RAND

survey.

Managing student behavior, low salary and [administrative work](#) outside of teaching were the top-ranked sources of stress for teachers in 2024. Teachers reported working an average of 53 hours per week; 15 of these hours—or roughly one-quarter of their working hours—were outside of their contracts. This compares to 44 hours per week for similar working adults. Only 36% of teachers said their base pay was adequate, compared with 51% of similar working adults.

The RAND State of the Teacher [survey](#) is a nationally representative, annual survey of K-12 [public school teachers](#) across the U.S. The 2024 survey focuses on teacher well-being and high-interest factors related to job retention: sources of job-related stress, pay, hours worked and intentions to leave. Teacher data is presented in comparison to a separate 2024 American Life Panel companion survey, a nationally representative survey of working adults.

"This is RAND's fourth consecutive year collecting data that raises concerns about high stress and low pay in the teacher workforce," said Sy Doan, lead author of the report and a policy researcher at nonprofit, nonpartisan RAND. "Although teacher well-being seems to have stabilized at pre-pandemic levels, our data raise questions about the sustainability of the profession for Black teachers and [female teachers](#) in particular."

Black teachers reported working significantly more hours per week, on average, and were less likely to report satisfaction with their weekly working hours than their peers. They were also less likely to say their base pay was adequate than their peers, to report significantly lower base pay, and to say they intended to leave their job.

Female teachers reported significantly higher rates of frequent job-

related stress and burnout than male teachers, a consistent pattern since 2021. Female teachers also reported significantly lower base pay than their male peers but no differences in the number of hours they work per week.

Teachers who considered their current base salaries inadequate desired a roughly \$16,000 increase in base pay, on average, to consider their salary to be completely adequate.

This survey also indicates teachers are about as likely to report intending to leave their jobs as other working adults; 22% compared with 24% of other working adults.

Other authors of "Teacher Well-Being and Intentions to Leave: Findings from the 2024 State of the American Teacher Survey" are Elizabeth D. Steiner and Rakesh Pandey.

More information: Teacher Well-Being and Intentions to Leave: Findings from the 2024 State of the American Teacher Survey,

Provided by RAND Corporation

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