

# CHANGE IN EDUCATION

## How the pandemic has affected education today.

HOOVERCHALLENGER.COM SPRING 2022

The rise of teachers leaving their profession has created a big impact on education. Since the pandemic began, there have been more teachers leaving their profession. A reason this has happened is due to the amount of stress they have in the workplace. Being overwhelmed with stress, having insufficient pay, having unrealistic federal and state mandates, student discipline challenges, and lack of influence and respect are factors that led to this big issue. Teachers have had enough and decided to leave teaching during this time.

Not only have they had this big decision in mind, but the pandemic was also the last straw that helped them decide enough is enough and leave teaching early. This is most common with public school teachers. Studies show that teachers younger than 40 who left early due to the pandemic were particularly likely to attribute the move due to their pay not justifying the stress and the risks of COVID-19.

"I believe more teachers are leaving due to stress, anxiety, and their jobs being changed so much. Also, them dealing with so many things they didn't have to deal with before," school counselor Janet Stribling said.

The pandemic has affected education nationwide. It has created an increase of teachers' shortage throughout the United States and there is a difficulty replacing them. Not only has it affected teachers greatly, but it also created a big toll on principals as well.

"As a principal, the pandemic has made decision making more complicated as the health and safety of students and the community play into those decisions," principal Sherry Poole said.

During the pandemic, as new teachers were excited to go into the classrooms, it has created obstacles for them. Instead of going in the classroom, their first year became virtual.

"The pandemic was a curve ball as my first year teaching was completely virtual. Not knowing who my students were or how they looked created a disconnection that I now enjoy inside the classroom," algebra teacher Bradley Warner said.

Even students can see that stress has impacted teachers making this decision.



"I think more teachers are leaving is because of stress on staff and teachers and not having that passion for teaching anymore like it faded away over time," junior Andrea N'Goran said.

Teachers leaving education has a great impact on students. This caused students to have less support in the classroom and create losses in relationships between students and teachers.

"When good teachers leave, students suffer the losses both academic and emotionally. It is hard to say goodbye to a teacher that has a great relationship with you, and you feel safe with learning," Poole said.

There are ways we can help educators nationwide cope with stress. As they can get very overwhelmed in the workplace, it's important to have resources and find ways we can help them.

"I believe we should provide more teacher assistants and provide mental health days for them. Also provide mental health resources for them and provide more planning time for them due to most days not having enough planning time and breaks throughout their busy schedules that accumulate too much stress," Stribling said.

Students also believe that districts should provide mental health days for teachers that gather too much stress in the workplace.

"I BELIEVE WE SHOULD PROVIDE MORE TEACHER ASSISTANTS AND PROVIDE MENTAL HEALTH DAYS FOR THEM. ALSO PROVIDE MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES FOR THEM AND PROVIDE MORE PLANNING TIME FOR THEM DUE TO MOST DAYS NOT HAVING ENOUGH PLANNING TIME AND BREAKS THROUGHOUT THEIR BUSY SCHEDULES THAT ACCUMULATE TOO MUCH STRESS." STRIBLING SAID.

"The district should probably raise the salary for staff and teachers or require teachers to get three to five days of release from teaching like a break for their mental health but can only use it after six months of the new school year," N'Goran said.

Not only can school districts help with this issue, but students can help with this issue as well. Students' behaviors are a big factor that accumulate to educators being stressed in the workplace. What can help educators have less stress is by students re-evaluating themselves and check how their behavior is affecting their teachers.

"I think students can help with teachers coping with stress by thinking about how their behavior affects their teachers," N'Goran said.

To prevent these issues there are ways we can help. We can have mental health days, provide mental health resources, and give training on social-emotional learning for teachers that may help decrease the amount of stress they contain in the workplace.

## FACTS

- AS OF MARCH 2021, MORE THAN HALF OF THE NATION'S TEACHERS (54%) CONSIDERED LEAVING THE PROFESSION IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS
- CREATED A 20% INCREASE OVER PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS
- 84% OF TEACHERS REPORTED THEIR WORK MORE STRESSFUL NOW BEFORE THE PANDEMIC STARTED
- 37% OF TEACHERS SAY THEY WERE "SOMEWHAT" OR "VERY" UNSATISFIED WITH THEIR JOBS.



## RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

- CALM: MEDITATION AND RELAXATION APP BEHIND THE CALM SCHOOL INITIATIVE WHICH OFFERS TEACHERS ACCESS TO EXERCISES AS WELL AS AN ONBOARDING PACKAGE TO INTRODUCE MINDFULNESS
- PODCASTS LIKE "TEACHER SELF-CARE PODCASTS" AND "TEACHER'S AID" DIVE INTO TOPICS OF SELF CARE AND MANAGING TEACHER STRESS
- BOOKS LIKE "TODAY I MADE A DIFFERENCE" CAN HELP EDUCATORS OVERCOME OVERWHELMINGNESS TO RECONNECT WITH THEIR MOTIVATION OF TEACHING
- WEBSITES LIKE "RESILIENT EDUCATOR" BRING TOOLKITS, NEWS, AND VIEWS SELF-CARE SPECIFICALLY FOR TEACHERS



photo courtesy of flicker and plinclipart.com

HOOVERCHALLENGER.COM SPRING 2022