



COVID-19's Impacts on Nebraska Educators

Pandemic reveals educators can adapt to 'virtually' anything but need systems and policies that provide more resources to schools.

A new study suggests the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on Nebraska's PreK-12 educators, and by direct extension our children, may weaken the state's future workforce if not addressed quickly. Teachers are adjusting to remote learning the best they can — but at what cost?

In July 2020, CYFS and the Nebraska Department of Education conducted a comprehensive statewide survey to better understand the pandemic's immediate impacts on educators and educational systems. The data collected are representative of educators across Nebraska, including both rural and urban, and elementary and secondary schools. Phase one of this work sheds light on educators' experiences in the aftermath of school closures in the spring.

DATA INSIGHTS

- 1 There is reason to be very concerned about Nebraska students and educators.
- 2 Experiences and consequences are nuanced based on stakeholder groups, geographic location and teaching level.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NEBRASKA

- Significant numbers of Nebraska students disengage during school shutdowns, which may cause irreversible gaps in learning.
- Lost instructional time, disruptions in learning, and increased teacher and student mental health problems may result in a future workforce that is less well-prepared.
- Nebraska is at risk of losing a sizable portion of our trained and experienced educators due to the stress and challenges of the job.
- To keep Nebraska's students on track, we must uncover what is happening across the state's educational systems, listen to educators to understand their needs, and intervene immediately to help children be successful.

SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Statewide survey data represent educators from 243 of 244 of Nebraska's school districts.

6,938 PREK-12 TEACHERS
(28.5% response rate)

207 PRINCIPALS
(25.5% response rate)

84 SUPERINTENDENTS
(39.8% response rate)

FINDINGS

1

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Teachers reported strikingly low levels of student participation in remote learning, resulting in large numbers of Nebraska students missing critical instruction.

2

REMOTE LEARNING CONCERNS

Educators' top remote learning concerns include supporting students with special needs and limited family availability to support learning at home.

3

URBAN VS RURAL CHALLENGES

All teachers experienced challenges with remote teaching, but urban teachers experienced moderate to extreme challenges consistently and significantly more than rural teachers.

4

EDUCATOR PERSONAL WELL-BEING

The pandemic has taken a toll on educators' physical and mental health — regardless of where they live and who they teach.

Student Participation

More than 40% of teachers reported that only up to 50% of their students participated in remote learning. This means that about half did not. This was especially concerning for urban and secondary students.



50% OF STUDENTS did not participate in remote learning (reported by 40% of teachers)

Remote Learning Concerns

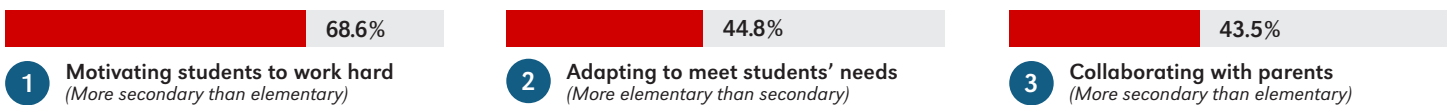
TOP 3 CONCERNS ABOUT STUDENT PARTICIPATION:

- 1 **Family availability** (teachers, principals, superintendents)
- 2 **Students' special needs** (teachers, principals, superintendents)
- 3 **Student motivation** (especially urban & secondary teachers)

Significantly more urban teachers expressed these concerns compared to rural teachers. Nearly all superintendents (90.5%) rated lack of family availability as a top concern.

Urban vs Rural Challenges

TOP 3 TEACHING CHALLENGES: Significantly more urban teachers expressed these challenges compared to rural teachers



Educator Personal Well-being

TOP 3 PERSONAL CHALLENGES:

1. Stress/mental health issues
2. Blurred work/home boundaries
3. Caring for children at home

MODERATE TO EXTREME JOB STRESS:



2/3 OF TEACHERS experienced moderate to extreme job stress



9/10 PRINCIPALS & SUPERINTENDENTS experienced moderate to extreme job stress

More educators are experiencing significant job stress during COVID-19 compared to pre-COVID-19. Teachers, principals and superintendents across the state expressed high levels of challenges with stress and personal well-being, regardless of where they live (urban, rural) and who they teach (elementary, secondary).

This study was conducted by the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools in partnership with Nebraska Department of Education and funded by the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Office of Research and Economic Development.