Educator Teaching Experience During COVID-19

WHAT ARE EDUCATORS SAYING ABOUT TEACHING DURING COVID-19?

Our work at Equity Institute includes working with and supporting educators on building best practices that are grounded in equity and culturally responsive pedagogy. As we all moved rapidly to online platforms to teach, without any adequate training, we want to acknowledge the importance of centering equity in how we support students. We asked classroom educators throughout the country to share their distance learning teaching experience during the COVID-19 Pandemic. It is important to voice the perspective of teachers in order to understand their experience and find commonalities that we can use to be intentional in supporting our community as we move into the future.

GUIDANCE ON HOW TO INTERPRET THIS REPORT

Teacher experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic are wide and varied, especially from state-to-state, locality-to-locality. With this in mind, we know this data does not universally cover all of the experiences of educators across our nation. Here are some thoughts to keep in mind as you interpret and apply this data to your own context.

- We want this data to inform leaders, districts, and organizations in the development of initiatives, during and post COVID-19, that support classroom teachers with distance learning. However, it’s important to bear in mind that our data set included a limited number of respondents - ninety-five to be exact. Given the sample size, it’s impossible to have a highly accurate depiction of teacher experiences. You should try to balance our data and information with your own observations of the challenges and opportunities your schools and/or districts face.
- As previously mentioned, this data and information is aimed at school, district, and organization leaders looking to adequately support their educators during and post-COVID-19. We hope this information can spur a bias towards action and not only inform our target audience. While many different stakeholders can find value in this data and information, we’re targeting system leaders because we feel they have the greatest ability to influence large-scale teacher support initiatives.
- Consistent, ongoing support is key. Generally speaking, people’s feelings, attitudes, and needs during these unprecedented times are dynamic, meaning they may constantly change. Considering this, routine assessments of how educators are feeling and what supports they need should be regularly conducted. Our data captures a particular moment in time; the survey was conducted mostly in April 2020.

This has been a learning experience for myself and my students. To all educators, continue to do your best because that’s all that we can do.

REPRESENTATION

Respondents are educators from the following states. The highest response rate was from Rhode Island at 38%, followed by California at 19%.

GRADES TAUGHT

Respondents are educators who teach Pre-Kindergarten to Higher Education. The largest percentage of respondents teach Elementary at about 33% and Middle School at about 30.75%.
We need to pause, to reflect, and to prioritize being human at this time.

Flexibility is key with distance learning.

I really enjoy e-learning!

I am concerned about students’ experience overall and worth this is exacerbating inequalities. Many students are still working or are caregivers or are dealing with a great number of issues.

While I enjoy incorporating technology into my lessons, it can’t replace in person lessons and connections I have had with students.

It’s been a big shift. Our team came together on day one. They were new to Zoom. Our school group and leadership have been very supportive.

It’s been difficult to transition to distance learning because students need to be more independent in this situation.

This is super challenging when you have children at home.

I would like families and students to know that I don’t want to add to any stress they are under. I would like the administration to also provide this message to families and faculty.

All of my students received a Chromebook; however, they don’t all have access to internet or it is unstable.

Our district has provided every student with the physical necessities that they need: Chromebook, charger, case, WiFi. However, some students may not have time — which is a resource we can’t exactly provide.

As a low income city we need better access to technology for all of our students.

Parents do not all have the digital literacy skills to successfully help their students.

Attendance data is done differently everywhere and it means something different for kids.

Some students need to share resources/time with siblings, including having to babysit, and can’t be behind the screen to take attendance.

Without good attendance and by having student population that does not have full access and possibly very difficult home situations, this situation is not conducive to learning.

Communication ranged from outstanding to no communication at all. The 35% who chose “neutral” consider it the same as in-person teaching.

I communicate daily with all families for our daily schedule. Many parents are on Zoom at some point with my students each day. I communicate with parents whose children have not completed assignments. It is very open and honest.

We have little to no communication with families at our school and it has become even worse now that we are teaching from home.

82% of the respondents claimed to feel supported by their administration. The remaining 18% stated they needed the following to excel during remote learning:

- Collaboration when problem-solving
- Check-in on teachers and their well-being
- Provide timely and frequent feedback
- Listen to teacher concerns
- Have trust, freedom, and empathy
- Flexibility with lesson planning
- Address inequity and access to technology
- Set clear expectations to all, including families
- Be understanding of family life at home
- Provide opportunities for Professional Development

EI Support During and Post COVID-19

Continue to provide a virtual space for educators, leaders, and the community to connect.

Develop equity centered resources.

Provide equity and culturally responsive based webinars.