2026 Teaching and Learning Conditions Colorado (TLCC)

Statewide Highlights

Full results by school and district are available at tlccsurvey.org

Overview

The 2026 TLCC survey reflects continued positive momentum in educator perceptions of working conditions, alongside persistent structural challenges and emerging areas of need. Over 42,000 Colorado educators participated, representing 48.1% of the workforce.

Educators report that schools are positive places to work and learn. At the same time, constraints related to time, variability in support for specific groups, and readiness for emerging demands such as artificial intelligence (AI) are key areas for attention.

What Matters Most

Strong and Improving School Conditions

- 90% say their school is a good place for students to learn
- 89% are satisfied with their choice to enter the profession
- 87% say their school is a good place to work
- 85% report effective school leadership
- 85% report strong student supports and clear behavior expectations
- 80% report reasonable class sizes

Implication: Colorado schools are building on a strong foundation of positive climate, resources, and professional commitment.

Time is the Primary Structural Constraint

- 68% report adequate time for professional learning
- 64% report adequate time for planning
- 60% report initiatives are given enough time to determine effectiveness
- 51% report enough time to meet expectations within contracted hours

Implication: Without addressing time and competing priorities, improvement efforts will have limited impact.

Positive Conditions Are Not Experienced Equally

While overall conditions are positive, experiences vary across roles and contexts. Statewide averages can mask meaningful variation. Leaders should explore variations in responses by placement and role.

Implication: Improving average conditions is not enough. Systems must focus on ensuring consistent experiences across roles and schools.

Retention is Driven by Relationships

Educators gave feedback on what factors encourage them to stay in their schools:

- Relationships with colleagues (89%)
- School leadership (76%)
- School mission (74%)

Implication: School culture and leadership are central levers for retaining educators.

Where to Focus Action

Uneven Experiences for New Staff

- 84% report adequate overall job and classroom support
- 61% report receiving personal support
- 64% report meeting with a mentor regularly

Implication: Early-career support is inconsistent; strengthening onboarding and mentoring is critical.

Mixed Conditions for Education Support Professionals (ESPs)

- 94% are satisfied with their profession
- 72% report opportunities for advancement
- 57% report stress from changing duties
- 39% report adequate compensation

Implication: Role clarity, compensation, and job stability for ESPs are key opportunities.

AI: High Use, Low Readiness

- 66% of educators use AI tools
- 54% feel comfortable using AI
- 40% of leaders report having clear guidelines
- 32% feel prepared for future changes

Implication: AI use is advancing faster than system readiness, creating a gap in guidance, capacity, and consistency.

Key Takeaways

- Positive momentum in working conditions
- Addressing time and workload is essential to improving working conditions
- New staff and ESPs need targeted support
- Retention is driven by relationships
- AI use is growing, but readiness is lagging

Leaders can use these findings to prioritize high-impact conditions, address system-level barriers, and strengthen educator experience to improve retention and student outcomes.