

Center for Practice Engaged Education Research (C-PEER)

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **DENVER**

TLCC User Guide: Educator Retention

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How can leaders use TLCC survey evidence to identify, understand, and address factors influencing educator retention and turnover in their school/district?

The **Teaching and Learning Conditions Colorado (TLCC) Survey** is a statewide survey required by Colorado statute and administered by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) every two years. The survey gathers feedback from educators and school leaders about the conditions that shape teaching and learning in Colorado schools. Because results are reported at the school level, TLCC data provides valuable insights into how educators experience their work environment and how those experiences relate to educator retention.

The TLCC survey measures several key aspects of the teaching and learning conditions experienced by school staff, referred to as "constructs." Because concepts such as *professional climate, staff leadership*, or *student behavior support* cannot be measured directly; each construct is measured through a group of related survey questions. The TLCC constructs have been evaluated using established statistical methods and have consistently demonstrated that they measure meaningful aspects of school conditions that are associated with important outcomes, including student academic performance and educator retention. **Appendix A** lists the TLCC constructs and survey items included in the 2026 administration.

Research Based

The Center for Practice Engaged Education Research (C-PEER) at CU Denver partners with CDE to study how TLCC results relate to important school outcomes, including teacher retention. The goal of this work is to translate research into practical guidance that school and district leaders can use to strengthen their schools. C-PEER's approach is grounded in three key ideas:

- Student academic outcomes, educator retention, and student behavior are interconnected and influence one another.
- Teaching and learning conditions at the school level matter for both educators and students.
- Schools operate within broader district and community contexts that shape outcomes and the effectiveness of improvement efforts.

Together, these ideas highlight the importance of understanding both the conditions within a school and the context in which the school operates when planning for improvement.

Using TLCC Results to Improve Teacher Retention

The TLCC User Guides are designed to help leaders use TLCC survey results as part of their continuous improvement efforts. This guide is focused on using TLCC results to inform efforts aimed at i**mproving teacher retention**. It supports school leaders and staff in taking the following steps:

1. Focus on the TLCC constructs that are most strongly connected to teacher retention.
2. Use your school's TLCC results to investigate potential areas for improvement.
    a. Identify school conditions (TLCC constructs) that may be contributing to current teacher workforce challenges.

b. Examine question-level results to better understand the specific conditions within the school driving construct-level findings.
c. Validate findings with additional school data as part of root-cause analysis.

3. Select improvement strategies:
    a. Identify related quick wins, moderate changes, and long-term strategies.
    b. Prioritize actions supported by research and aligned to identified needs.
    c. Plan to monitor progress over time using TLCC and other relevant data sources.

Colorado Overview

Although often discussed together, teacher turnover and retention measure different aspects of workforce stability. Turnover captures staff movement, including educators who change positions, schools, or districts, as well as those who leave the profession. Retention focuses on whether educators remain in their school, district, or profession over time. Two schools may have similar turnover rates but very different retention stories. Turnover shows where staffing changes occur; retention helps explain why they occur and what factors may be influencing educators' decisions to stay or leave.

Before the pandemic (2017–2020), turnover varied more across schools and districts, reflecting differences in local conditions. Following the pandemic (2021–2023), turnover increased across most contexts, making staffing challenges more widespread. As a result, retention data, particularly educators' perceptions of working conditions, offer a more actionable picture of workforce stability.

The Teaching and Learning Conditions Colorado (TLCC) Survey includes several measures related to retention, including educators' intent to remain at their school, their reasons for staying or leaving, and whether they view their school as a good place to work.

CDE tracks educator employment patterns including whether educators remain in the same position, teaching assignment, or district for one, three and five years. These data are reported at the state and district level through the CDE Retention Dashboard, which supports local conversations about recruitment and retention (CDE, 2026), available here: https://ed.cde.state.co.us/educatortalent/researchandimpact/retention-dashboard

Colorado Educator Turnover and Retention Challenges

Colorado has faced persistent challenges recruiting and retaining qualified teachers for more than a decade. In 2017, House Bill 17-1003 formally recognized educator shortage areas and required the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to annually report vacancy, shortage, and hiring data.

Before the pandemic, staffing challenges were already significant. In 2019–20, districts reported 7,242 unfilled teaching positions (13% of all statewide positions) at the start of the school year. More than 1,100 positions either remained vacant or were filled using shortage mechanisms such as long-term substitutes or emergency authorizations. Turnover was particularly high in rural and small districts, where nearly one in five teachers left their district annually. Pandemic-related declines in educator preparation program enrollment and completion further restricted the supply of new teachers.

Recent data suggest some stabilization in the educator workforce, but not a return to pre-pandemic conditions. In 2024–25, districts reported 7,792 unfilled teaching positions (14% of all positions

statewide). Shortages remain most severe in rural and small districts, where roughly 7% of positions are identified as shortage areas, compared with about 2% in nonrural districts.

Retention remains a challenge. Approximately 10% of teachers leave Colorado's public-school workforce each year, and nearly one-third leave within five years. Additional teachers move between districts, highlighting the importance of school- and district-level working conditions in retaining educators.

Colorado's experience mirrors national trends. Teacher shortages and turnover were concerns before the pandemic and remain so today. Although national teacher turnover has declined from post-pandemic peaks, it remains above pre-pandemic levels, and educator mobility continues to be a defining feature of the workforce (RAND, 2025; NCES, 2024).

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C-PEER's research combined TLCC results with key school and district data to investigate what predicts teacher retention (i.e., whether teachers reported they intended to stay at their school in the subsequent year, reasons why, and whether they indicated their school was a good place to work).

Key Teaching and Learning Conditions

The TLCC constructs most strongly related to teacher retention include specific aspects of the school context that school leaders and other stakeholders can influence in the short term, including the following:

- **Support for Educator Wellbeing** – the degree to which staff feel valued, connected, and supported at their school, including having a sense of belonging, job satisfaction, respectful relationships, and access to mental health support.
- **Professional Climate** and **Staff Leadership** – the degree to which staff see leadership as creating a safe, trusting, and collaborative environment where they have voice, influence, and shared responsibility for school direction and improvement.
- **Student Behavior** (supports) **–** whether staff see student behavioral expectations as clear and consistently enforced, believe students have access to trusted adults and appropriate behavioral supports, and experience the school as a place where students know how to act and can focus on learning safely.

See Appendix A for a complete list of the TLCC survey items for each of these constructs.

Other School Factors

Instructional conditions, staffing patterns, organizational supports, student demographics, and community contexts occur together and interact in ways that create unique school environments. To address this complexity, we applied an analytical approach that made it possible to examine how different aspects of schools combine to create organizational capacity. In addition to the teaching and learning conditions identified above, C-PEER identified two other aspects of schools that are significant predictors of teacher retention, their capacity to support academic success (***Academic Capacity***) and to support wellbeing (***Wellbeing Capacity***).

Academic Capacity includes the following:

- Average teachers' years of experience
- Student-to-teacher ratio
- Schoolwide average teacher evaluation ratings for Teacher Quality Standard 1: Pedagogical content knowledge
- Schoolwide average teacher evaluation ratings for Teacher Quality Standard 3: Teachers plan and deliver effective instruction and create an environment that facilitates learning for their students
- Frequency of student behavior disruptions
- Overall perspective (school mean scale score) of **Instructional Practice: Supportive Conditions** (*TLCC Construct*)

Wellbeing Capacity includes the following:

- Student access to school counselors
- Student access to school psychologists
- Schoolwide average teacher evaluation ratings for Teacher Quality Standard 2: Establishing a safe, inclusive and respectful learning environment for a diverse population of students.
- Overall perspective (school mean scale score) of **Instructional Practice: Meeting Diverse Student Needs** (*TLCC Construct*)
- Overall perspective (school mean scale score) of **Instructional Practice: Shared Responsibility for Learning** (TLCC Construct)

See Appendix B for how each of the metrics included in these factors were measured.

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The broader research literature converges with the C-PEER analysis, providing a strong empirical foundation for interpreting TLCC results as indicators of school and district conditions that matter for educator retention.

Over time, research has consistently shown that teacher retention is shaped by a combination of school organizational conditions, leadership stability and quality, professional relationships and networks, psychological resources (including self-efficacy and mental health), and equity related climate factors (CPRE, 2005; Palma-Vasquez et al., 2022; Baker & Koedel, 2025; DiNicola et al., 2026). Post pandemic evidence reinforces a longstanding conclusion: staffing challenges—especially in high poverty and urban contexts—are driven by more than shortages in teacher supply; organizational conditions produce persistent turnover. Many key working conditions that deteriorated further during the pandemic and have not fully recovered. Post pandemic retention challenges increasingly reflect degraded working conditions, sustained stressors, and erosion of trust and autonomy, rather than temporary crisis effects (Palma-Vasquez et al., 2022; Baker & Koedel, 2025; DiNicola et al., 2026).

Leadership Matters

Teacher turnover often rises following principal departures, particularly in high-poverty and urban schools and in systems experiencing chronic leadership instability, making leadership continuity a key retention lever (DeMatthews et al., 2022; Diliberti & Schwartz, 2025). Although principal turnover has

fallen from its pandemic-era peak, rates remain elevated and continue to disrupt staffing in high-need schools (DiNicola et al., 2026).

Leadership quality is equally important. More effective principals are more likely to retain high-performing teachers while facilitating the exit of persistently low-performing teachers (Grissom & Bartanen, 2018). Research since the pandemic suggests that effective leadership depends on sustained support, organizational coherence, and consistent resource provision rather than short-term crisis management (Matthews et al., 2022). These practices align closely with the TLCC **Professional Climate** and **Staff Leadership** constructs.

Teachers' professional relationships and networks also influence retention. Strong professional networks are associated with greater collective efficacy, stronger implementation of reforms, and higher levels of relational support and shared decision-making (Daly et al., 2010; Waddell, 2010). Pandemic-related disruptions to teacher collaboration and professional communities, especially for early-career teachers, continue to contribute to burnout and attrition (Davis & Park, 2025).

Collectively, this research reinforces the importance of the TLCC **Professional Climate** and **Staff Leadership** constructs, which capture teachers' perceptions of trust, safety, collaboration, voice, and shared responsibility. Leadership practices that build relational trust, maintain organizational coherence, and provide meaningful opportunities for teacher influence are consistently associated with lower turnover and stronger retention, particularly in high-poverty and high-stress settings (CPRE, 2005; DiNicola, Keskin, & Master, 2026; Grissom & Bartanen, 2018).

Teacher Self-Efficacy and Well-Being

Teacher self-efficacy is a key factor in educator persistence. Leaders can strengthen self-efficacy through meaningful feedback, instructional support, professional learning opportunities, and professional autonomy (Akkuzu, 2014; Colson et al., 2021).

Stress, emotional exhaustion, and compassion fatigue increase the likelihood that teachers will consider leaving the profession, particularly when organizational support is limited or workplace stressors are chronic (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017; Sharifian et al., 2023). Research since the pandemic suggests that well-being is shaped less by workload alone than by whether educators feel supported, valued, and empowered to exercise professional judgment. These dimensions are directly reflected in the TLCC **Support for Wellbeing** construct (Morris et al., 2025).

Student behavior and school discipline systems also influence retention. Unclear behavioral expectations, inconsistent enforcement, and limited access to behavioral supports increase teacher stress and reduce perceived safety, making it more difficult to sustain instructional focus (Baker & Koedel, 2025; Palma-Vasquez et al., 2022). These conditions are captured by the TLCC **Student Behavior** construct.

For educators of color, racialized school climates and race-based stress remain important retention challenges. Effective leadership and access to meaningful professional learning can help mitigate these pressures (Grooms et al., 2021; Sun, 2018). Recent research and practitioner evidence suggest these equity-related dynamics continue to shape retention, highlighting the importance of examining

differential experiences when designing retention strategies (National Education Association, 2025; El-Mekki, 2025).

Collectively, this research suggests that the TLCC constructs measure actionable school and district conditions that leaders can influence to strengthen educator well-being, increase persistence, and improve retention.

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TLCC results provide data that describes the teaching and learning conditions within schools as staff members see them. **Staff Leadership** is also a critical TLCC construct related to teacher retention. We recommend using a collaborative process that engages the teachers within schools to make meaning of that data and identify strategies for improvement that relate to teacher retention.

C-PEER research establishes a starting point for making meaning of your TLCC Results related to improving teacher retention. This includes the steps described below.

1. **Numbers of Respondents**. Describe how many and which types of school staff members responded to the TLCC survey at your school.
2. **Teacher Retention Challenges**. Describe the degree to which teacher retention may be a challenge for your school. Review teacher responses to the following questions that measure teacher retention (grouped under the **Overall General Reflection** and the **Future Plans** topics in the TLCC School Summary dashboard).
    a. I would recommend this school as a good place to work.
    b. Which of the following best describes your plans after the end of this school year?
    c. Indicate the extent to which each of the following encourages you to remain working at your current school.
3. **Construct Level TLCC Results**. Review TLCC Construct descriptions and associated items associated with teacher retention (See Appendix A) including *Professional Climate, Staff Leadership, Support for Educator Wellbeing, Student Behavior, and the three Instructional Practice constructs.* Predict school-level results (Percent Favorable) for each construct.

    Use the TLCC ***School Summary*** dashboard to identify strengths and growth opportunities associated with each of these constructs; consider the following:

    - What percent of teachers responded favorably? Have the percent favorable responses increased or decreased since the 2024 TLCC administration? By how much?
    - Select an external comparison point to benchmark school results against (i.e., state, district, region, district setting, school level). How do responses for this school compare to other schools for each point of comparison?
    - With regards to factors related to teacher retention, what are potential school strengths? What are the potential school growth areas?
    - Identify priorities for further analysis.

4. **Question-Level Details.** Results for individual survey questions help explain the construct-level results. They may also point out aspects of the school to celebrate or prioritize for improvement. Investigate ***teacher responses*** to the items associated with each of the constructs above.

   Prioritize reviewing item-level results when construct results are surprising, indicate an opportunity for growth, or for which teacher responses vary significantly from other respondent groups. See Appendix A for specific items to prioritize by construct. Consider the following:

   - Which items(s) did teachers respond to most favorably?
   - Which were rated least favorably?
   - Do item-level results point to strengths?
   - Do they suggest conditions that could be improved at the school?
   - Identify conditions that could be improved to investigate further.

5. **Verify with Additional Evidence**. Additional evidence that will be relevant to use in verifying your TLCC results depends on what is available locally. In general, the following are likely sources of additional evidence: documentation of school/district processes and resources; observations of classrooms; and additional student, family or staff perception data. It may also be helpful to engage directly with educators in the school (through informal discussions, focus groups, or interviews) to determine the degree to which the most recent TLCC results are consistent with their current experiences at the school.

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Before identifying the most relevant action steps and improvement strategies it is important to
1) Explicitly describe the community context of the school (see relevant factors identified above), and
2) Describe school staffing as it relates to overlapping characteristics of students served by the school.

Students do not experience school in a single demographic category, rather their experiences are determined by their many identities which combine to shape belonging, expectations, access to rigorous coursework, and supports (Zhang & Gao, 2024). The key *overlapping* student characteristics to consider and describe in relationship to staff available to support them include poverty (FRL status), multi-language learning (if they are English language learners), and special needs (special education identification).

It will also be critical to review additional data related to the school's *Wellbeing Capacity* and *Academic Capacity* to use this data in both the root cause analysis and selection of improvement strategies. See Appendix B for information about where to access this data.

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Below we identify recommended action steps and improvement strategies to improve teacher retention organized by TLCC constructs. These recommendations are intended to be used as a ***starting point***, not a checklist, and must be ***adapted to fit the local context***.

For each TLCC construct, strategies are grouped by a timeframe to support realistic planning and implementation. This draws on the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM), which recognizes that change in schools develop over time as educators build understanding, confidence, and new practices. Even when action steps can be taken quickly, meaningful improvement depends on sustained shifts in practice, relationships, and systems. The timeframes include the following:

- **Quick Wins** are action steps that can be implemented immediately using existing structures, authority, and resources. They improve day-to-day conditions but may not be sustained without follow-up.
- **Moderate Changes** can begin within the current school year but require consistency over time to be effective.
- **Long-Term Strategies** require planning, structural redesign, or sustained resources.

Support for Educator Well-Being

Quick Wins	
Immediate action steps that improve day-to-day working conditions and reduce educator stress and isolation.	
Review staff responsibilities and reduce or pause nonessential initiatives, meetings, or duties during high-stress periods.	**Why it Helps:** Reduces overload and helps staff focus on the most essential responsibilities. **Research Connection:** Chronic overload and competing demands contribute to emotional exhaustion, stress, and reduced job satisfaction, particularly when educators experience little control over their workload. **Key Sources:** (Baker & Koedel, 2025; Morris et al., 2025; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017)
Protect planning periods and reduce interruptions that take away from preparation time.	**Why it Helps:** Creates more manageable working conditions and reduces stress associated with unfinished work. **Research Connection:** Lack of protected time contributes to burnout and decreases educators' ability to meet expectations within contracted hours. **Key Sources:** (Ingersoll, 2001; Morris et al., 2025)
Provide clear communication about priorities, expectations, and upcoming changes.	**Why it Helps:** Reduces uncertainty and helps staff anticipate demands. **Research Connection:** Frequent changes, unclear expectations, and organizational unpredictability increase stress and emotional fatigue. **Key Sources:** (Baker & Koedel, 2025; DeMatthews et al., 2022)
Publicly acknowledge staff effort, emotional	**Why it Helps:** Reinforces that educators' work and wellbeing are recognized and valued.

Quick Wins	
labor, and contributions.	**Research Connection:** Recognition and professional respect are associated with stronger job satisfaction and emotional connection to the workplace. **Key Sources:** (Hamel et al., 2025; Waddell, 2010)
Create internal coverage plans that make it easier for educators to take needed leave without guilt or excessive disruption.	**Why it Helps:** Reduces barriers to taking time away when educators are sick, overwhelmed, or managing personal needs. **Research Connection:** Educators are less likely to use leave or seek support when absence creates additional stress for themselves or colleagues. Workplaces that normalize recovery and reduce logistical barriers to leave support long-term wellbeing and retention. **Key Sources:** (Morris et al., 2025; Sharifian et al., 2023)

Moderate Changes	
Strengthen and implement practices throughout the school year that help educators feel supported, connected, and emotionally sustained in their work.	
Audit workload expectations, additional duties, competing initiatives, and after-hours responsibilities to identify problematic patterns to address.	**Why it Helps:** Use this strategy when staff report stress from shifting responsibilities or unmanageable workloads. Frequent changes and unclear expectations increase fatigue and make it harder to plan. Clear, consistent systems help reduce stress and improve stability. **Research Connection:** Burnout is strongly associated with chronic workload stress, role fragmentation, and insufficient organizational support. **Key Sources:** (Madigan & Kim, 2021; Morris et al., 2025; Palma-Vasquez et al., 2022)
Establish systems that minimize last-minute changes to schedules, duties, instructional expectations, and coverage responsibilities.	**Why it Helps:** Use this strategy when staff report stress from shifting responsibilities or unmanageable workloads. Frequent changes and unclear expectations increase fatigue and reduce stability. Clear, consistent systems help staff plan ahead and lower stress. **Research Connection:** Organizational instability and rapidly shifting expectations contribute to emotional exhaustion and reduced retention. **Key Sources:** (Baker & Koedel, 2025; DeMatthews et al., 2022)

Moderate Changes	
Provide staff learning opportunities on stress management, emotional regulation, compassion fatigue, trauma-informed practice, and educator wellbeing.	**Why it Helps:** Use this strategy when staff report high stress, emotional exhaustion, or low job satisfaction. Teaching involves significant emotional demands, and without support, this can lead to burnout. Providing skill-building opportunities helps educators manage stress and sustain wellbeing. **Research Connection: Teaching** involves significant emotional labor, and chronic exposure to student distress without support contributes to compassion fatigue and attrition. **Key Sources:** (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Miller & Flint-Stipp, 2019; Sharifian et al., 2023)
Strengthen peer support and mentoring structures, particularly for new and early-career educators.	Why it Helps: Use this strategy when staff report low belonging or professional isolation. Strong peer support increases connection, reduces isolation, and helps educators navigate challenges more effectively. **Research Connection:** Supportive professional relationships are associated with stronger retention, belonging, and emotional wellbeing. **Key Sources:** (Daly et al., 2010; Melzak et al., 2025; Wator et al., 2025)
Analyze patterns in TLCC wellbeing data across staff groups (e.g., grade level, demographics, departments) to identify differences in how educators experience school conditions.	**Why it Helps:** Use this strategy when some groups report lower belonging, higher stress, or less trust. Experiences vary across roles and identities, and identifying patterns helps target support where it is most needed. **Research Connection:** Educator experiences of stress, belonging, and support differ across identity, role, and context. **Key Sources:** (Grooms et al., 2021; Sun, 2018)
Strengthen systems for student behavioral and mental health support, including intervention teams, counseling, MTSS processes, and	**Why it Helps:** Use this strategy when staff report high stress related to student behavior or limited support. Clear, consistent systems reduce isolation and help educators manage complex student needs more effectively. **Research Connection:** Access to strong behavioral and mental health supports for students is linked to improved teacher wellbeing and retention.

Moderate Changes	
behavior response protocols.	**Key Sources:** (Baker & Koedel, 2025; Henriksen & Gruber, 2024; Palma-Vasquez et al., 2022)
Review substitute coverage systems and leave practices to identify barriers that discourage educators from taking needed time off.	**Why it Helps:** Use this strategy when staff report high stress or difficulty managing workload. Barriers to taking leave increase fatigue and burnout. Improving coverage systems helps educators step away when needed and sustain wellbeing. **Research Connection:** Limited access to substitutes and pressure to avoid absences contribute to chronic stress and emotional exhaustion. **Key Sources:** (Baker & Koedel, 2025; Ingersoll, 2001)

Long-Term Strategies	
Embed lasting changes in structures that support educators' wellbeing.	
Audit workload expectations, duties, competing initiatives, and after-hours responsibilities to identify patterns contributing to stress and overload.	**Why it Helps:** Use this strategy when staff report high stress or difficulty meeting expectations within contracted hours. Excessive or overlapping responsibilities increase fatigue and reduce sustainability. Identifying and prioritizing core work helps create more manageable and focused expectations. **Research Connection:** Chronic workload stress, role fragmentation, and limited organizational support are strongly associated with burnout and attrition. **Key Sources:** (Madigan & Kim, 2021; Morris et al., 2025; Palma-Vasquez et al., 2022)
Develop systems that reduce last-minute changes to schedules, duties, instructional expectations, and coverage responsibilities.	**Why it Helps:** Use this strategy when staff report stress from shifting responsibilities or unmanageable workloads. Frequent changes and unclear expectations increase fatigue and reduce stability. Proactive systems and clear communication help educators plan ahead and manage demands more sustainably.

Long-Term Strategies	
	Research Connection: Organizational instability and rapidly shifting expectations contribute to emotional exhaustion and reduced retention. **Key Sources:** (Baker & Koedel, 2025; DeMatthews et al., 2022)
Provide staff learning opportunities related to stress management, emotional regulation, compassion fatigue, trauma-informed practice, and educator wellbeing.	**Why it Helps:** Use this strategy when staff report high stress, emotional exhaustion, or low job satisfaction. The emotional demands of teaching can lead to burnout without support. Building these skills helps educators manage stress and sustain wellbeing over time. **Research Connection:** Teaching involves significant emotional labor, and chronic exposure to student distress without support contributes to compassion fatigue and attrition. **Key Sources:** (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Miller & Flint-Stipp, 2019; Sharifian et al., 2023)
Strengthen peer support and mentoring structures, particularly for new and early-career educators.	**Why it Helps:** Use this strategy when staff report low belonging, trust, or professional connection. Strong peer support reduces isolation and helps educators navigate challenges more effectively, especially early in their careers. **Research Connection:** Supportive professional relationships are associated with stronger retention, belonging, and emotional wellbeing. **Key Sources:** (Daly et al., 2010; Melzak et al., 2025; Wator et al., 2025)
Analyze patterns in TLCC wellbeing data across staff groups (e.g., departments, grade levels, demographics) to identify differences in how educators experience school conditions.	**Why it Helps:** Use this strategy when some groups report lower belonging, higher stress, or less trust. Experiences are not uniform across roles or identities, and identifying these patterns helps target more equitable and effective supports. **Research Connection:** Educator experiences of stress, belonging, and professional support are not uniform and may differ across identity, role, and school context. **Key Sources:** (Grooms et al., 2021; Sun, 2018)
Strengthen systems for student behavioral and mental health support, including intervention teams,	**Why it Helps:** Use this strategy when staff report high stress related to student behavior or limited support. Weak or inconsistent systems can leave educators feeling solely responsible for complex needs. Stronger systems reduce isolation and support more sustainable practice.

Long-Term Strategies	
counseling, MTSS processes, and behavior response protocols.	**Research Connection:** Access to comprehensive behavioral and mental health supports for students is linked to improved teacher wellbeing and retention. **Key Sources:** (Baker & Koedel, 2025; Henriksen & Gruber, 2024; Palma-Vasquez et al., 2022)
Review substitute coverage systems and leave practices to identify barriers that discourage educators from taking needed time off.	**Why it Helps:** Use this strategy when staff report high stress or difficulty managing workload. Barriers to taking leave increase fatigue and burnout. Improving coverage systems helps educators take needed time off and sustain wellbeing. **Research Connection:** Limited access to substitutes and pressure to avoid absences contribute to chronic stress and emotional exhaustion. **Key Sources:** (Baker & Koedel, 2025; Ingersoll, 2001)

Professional Climate and Staff Leadership

The action steps and improvement strategies in the table below address challenges related to **Professional Climate** and **Staff Leadership**. Consider how to prioritize your approach based on local context. For example, a school experiencing recent leadership turnover may need to focus first on trust, communication, and consistency. A school with stable leadership but low staff voice may need stronger systems for shared decision making. Schools serving high-needs student populations may need to pair climate strategies with additional supports related to workload, student behavior, or staffing capacity.

Quick Wins	
Immediate action steps that strengthen trust and improve day-to-day conditions.	
Hold staff listening sessions and identify one shared concern that can be addressed quickly through visible follow-up actions.	**Why it Helps:** Helps staff see that concerns are heard and acted on. See: Data-Informed Instruction Strategy Guide. **Research Connection:** Relational trust and teacher voice matter because staff are more willing to engage, share concerns, and support improvement when leaders respond visibly and follow through. **Key Sources:** (Brewster & Railsback, 2003; Ford, 2019; Klar et al., 2024)

Quick Wins	
Provide "You said" "We did" updates	**Why it Helps:** Shows that staff feedback leads to visible action. **Research Connection:** Trust and leadership credibility matter because transparency and consistency increase confidence in leadership decisions and future change efforts. **Key Sources:** (Ford, 2019; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998)
Protect and provide structure for collaboration time for teams, leaders, and teacher leaders.	**Why it Helps:** Preserves time for teams to solve problems and improve practice. See: Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) Strategy Guide Core Component 2: Supporting Structures for PLCs. **Research Connection:** Protecting collaboration time matters because honoring shared time builds trust. Sustained collaboration depends on dedicated time and routines. **Key Sources:** (Burns et al., 2018; Klar et al., 2024; Shen & Wu, 2025; Stoll et al., 2006; Tan et al., 2024)
Publicly recognize staff expertise.	**Why it Helps:** Boosts morale and reinforces that staff contributions are valued. **Research Connection:** Professional respect and teacher leadership matter because staff are more likely to contribute their expertise when it is visible and valued. **Key Sources:** (Ma & Marion, 2024; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998)
Clarify school priorities and reduce competing demands.	**Why it Helps:** Reduces overload and helps staff focus on what matters most. See: Common Mission and Vision Strategy Guide and Community Schools Strategy Guide Core Component 3 for guidance in establishing school priorities. **Research Connection:** Coherence matters because clear priorities reduce fragmentation and help staff focus effort on the most important work. **Key Sources:** (Hallinger, 2011; Robinson et al., 2008)
Maintain a visible leadership presence through regular classroom visits, participation in staff activities, and consistent communication about school culture and goals.	**Why it Helps:** Makes priorities and values more visible in daily practice. **Research Connection:** Leader presence matters because regular interaction helps build relationships, keeps priorities clear, and reinforces what the school values. **Key Sources:** (Tan et al., 2024; Toikka & Tarnanen, 2024)

Moderate Changes	
Develop and strengthen structures that sustain collaboration, support shared leadership, and growth.	
Create formal teacher leadership roles and teams with clear decision-making responsibilities	**Why it Helps:** Uses staff expertise and shares leadership workload. See: Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and Community Schools Strategy Guide Core Component 1: Community School Coordinator and Core Component 4: Collaborative Leadership and Shared Decision Making **Research Connection:** Distributed leadership matters because schools are stronger when expertise, responsibility, and leadership capacity are shared across staff. **Key Sources:** (Lin, 2022; Shen et al., 2020)
Design (or adapt) collaboration structures (e.g., PLCs) around learning, inquiry, and ongoing improvement of teaching practice.	**Why it Helps:** Makes team time more useful and connected to classroom needs. See: PLCs Strategy Guide: Guidance for Implementation **Research Connection:** Professional learning communities (PLCs) matter because collaborative inquiry helps educators improve instruction, solve problems, and learn from practice together. **Key Sources:** (Burns et al., 2018; Huffman, 2003; Shen & Wu, 2025; Stoll et al., 2006; Tan et al., 2024)
Develop a clear staff feedback process.	**Why it Helps:** Creates dependable ways for staff to provide input to shape decisions. See: Community Schools Strategy Guide Core Component 1. **Research Connection:** Ensuring psychological safety and creating mechanisms through which feedback can be provided make it more likely that staff will raise concerns, share ideas, and participate in improvement. **Key Sources:** (Bas & Tabancali, 2020; Edmondson, 1999; Klar et al., 2024)
Provide coaching and professional learning for teachers and leaders to strengthen communication practices that build trust.	**Why it Helps:** Strengthens leadership practice and day-to-day relationships. See: Coaching Strategy Guide. for guidance on implementing coaching **Research Connection:** Trust-building communication matters because stronger relationships and clearer interactions improve leadership effectiveness and staff belonging. **Key Sources:** (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Hill et al., 2022; Klar et al., 2024; Meyer et al., 2023; Minott, 2024)

Moderate Changes	
Improve new teacher/staff mentoring and onboarding systems.	**Why it Helps:** Newer staff feel connected and supported early. **Research Connection:** Belonging and professional connection early in their tenure helps new staff integrate, build confidence, and contribute to the school more quickly. **Key Sources:** (Melzak et al., 2025; Wator et al., 2025)

Longer-Term Strategies	
Embed lasting changes in culture, leadership, and organizational systems.	
Embed shared leadership practices that distribute responsibility and decision making across staff.	**Why it Helps:** Creates sustainable leadership capacity across the school. See: Shared Leadership Guide and Community Schools Strategy Guide Core Component 4 **Research Connection:** Distributed leadership matters because schools are stronger when expertise, responsibility, and leadership capacity are shared across staff. **Key Sources:** (Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Papadakis et al., 2024; Tan et al., 2020)
Keep a shared vision at the center of improvement	**Why This Helps:** Keeps improvement efforts focused and consistent over time. See: Common Mission and Vision Strategy Guide, and Community Schools Strategy Guide Core Component 3 **Research Connection:** Shared vision matters because common goals align effort, sustain momentum, and guide decisions over time. **Key Sources:** (Huffman, 2003; Robinson et al., 2008; Tan et al., 2024; Toikka & Tarnanen, 2024)
Create stable and supportive working conditions through clear expectations, reliable communication, consistent follow-through, and supportive responses to staff concerns	**Why This Helps:** Makes the workplace more sustainable and predictable. **Research Connection:** Professional climate matters because fair, safe, and dependable working conditions support psychological and physical safety, wellbeing, trust, and sustained engagement. **Key Sources:** (Berkowitz et al., 2022; Edmondson, 1999; Hoy, 1990)

Longer-Term Strategies	
Create lasting structures and collective efficacy.	**Why it Helps:** Builds shared ownership and confidence in improvement efforts. This includes teacher leadership teams, collaborative planning systems, and shared decision-making processes that elevate teacher expertise. See: Community Schools Strategy Guide Core Components 3 and 4 **Research Connection:** Teacher expertise and collective efficacy matter because schools improve when staff believe they can solve problems together and have meaningful influence. **Key Sources:** (Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Lin, 2022; Shen & Wu, 2025; Tan et al., 2024)
Build systems for continuous improvement through shared professional learning.	**Why it Helps:** Helps the school adapt, learn, and improve over time. See: PLC Strategy Guide for guidance in creating effective professional learning communities. **Research Connection:** Organizational learning matters because schools improve when educators regularly reflect, adapt, and strengthen practice together over time. **Key Sources:** (Hill et al., 2022; Klar et al., 2024; Louis & Murphy, 2017; Meyer et al., 2023; Shen & Wu, 2025)
Sustain protected time and structures for collaboration	**Why it Helps:** Makes collaboration a consistent part of how the school operates. See: PLCs Strategy Guide Core Component 2 **Research Connection:** Collaboration matters because ongoing shared learning and collective problem-solving require time, routines, and organizational support. **Key Sources:** (Burns et al., 2018; Louis & Murphy, 2017; Stoll et al., 2006)
Build a culture of trust, and shared responsibility where staff feel comfortable sharing ideas, concerns, and feedback	**Why it Helps:** Creates a workplace where staff feel invested and respected. See: Community Schools Strategy Guide Core Component 1 **Research Connection:** Trust and voice matter because they increase engagement, collaboration, and willingness to contribute to improvement. **Key Sources:** (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Ford, 2019; Hoy, 1990; Leis et al., 2017)

Student Behavior Supports

The action steps and improvement strategies in the table below address challenges related to **Student Behavior Supports**. Consider how to prioritize your approach based on local context. For example, a school experiencing inconsistent expectations across classrooms may need to focus first on building clarity and alignment around behavioral expectations. A school with strong expectations, but high rates of disruption may strengthen access to behavioral and mental health support. Schools serving high-

needs student populations may prioritize relationship-centered and trauma-informed approaches alongside academic support. Rural and small schools may need flexible strategies based on limited staffing and access to resources, while larger schools may need more structured systems to ensure consistency across teams and grade levels.

Quick Wins	
Immediate actions that strengthen consistency, relationships, and day-to-day behavioral conditions.	
Clearly define and communicate shared behavioral expectations across all school settings.	**Why it Helps:** Reduces ambiguity and creates predictable environments for students and staff. See: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Strategy Guide_ Component 2. **Research Connection:** Inconsistent expectations increase variability in responses and contribute to escalation and exclusionary discipline patterns. **Key Sources:** (Broda et al., 2025; Darling-Hammond et al., 2019; Welsh, 2023)
Develop shared language and aligned behavior response practices across staff.	**Why This Helps:** Improves consistency in how behavior is interpreted and addressed across classrooms. See: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Strategy Guide_ Component 2. **Research Connection:** Variation in educator responses leads to inconsistent student experiences and inequitable outcomes. **Key Sources:** (Broda et al., 2025; Welsh, 2023;)
Ensure each student has access to at least one adult they trust.	**Why it Helps:** Strengthens connection, belonging, and engagement. See: Trauma-Informed Education Strategy Guide_Component 1. **Research Connection:** Strong relationships and emotional supports improve engagement and reduce behavioral challenges. **Key Sources:** (Balfanz et al., 2024; Henriksen & Gruber, 2024; Williford et al., 2023)
Embed relationship-building and regulation routines into daily practice.	**Why it Helps:** Supports student self-regulation and reduces disruption throughout the day. See: Trauma-Informed Education Strategy Guide_Component 2. **Research Connection:** Consistent relational and regulation practices improve behavior and classroom climate. **Key Sources:** (Broda et al., 2025; Wink et al., 2021; Henriksen & Gruber, 2024)
Regularly review behavioral data (e.g., office discipline referrals, suspensions, attendance patterns,	**Why it Helps:** Connects behavioral outcomes to school systems rather than individual students. See: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Strategy Guide_Component 3. **Research Connection:** Behavior reflects broader school conditions and can be improved through data-informed cycles.

and classroom-level disruptions).	**Key Sources:** (Bryk et al., 2015; Colorado Department of Education, 2024)

Moderate Changes	
Strengthen and refine systems that are already in place, emphasizing consistency, alignment, and implementation across classrooms.	
Strengthen and consistently implement Tier 1 (universal) behavioral supports based on school level behavioral trends (e.g., reteaching expectations, aligning classroom routines, strengthening consistent responses across settings)	**Why it Helps:** If TLCC results suggest inconsistent behavioral expectations or variability across classrooms, strengthen and consistently implement Tier 1 (universal) behavioral supports based on school-level behavioral trends. Creates a consistent foundation across classrooms that reduces variability in expectations, routines, and responses to behavior. When students experience predictable environments, they are more likely to engage in learning and less likely to exhibit disruptive behaviors. When applied consistently over time, these supports reduce variability and improve student engagement. See: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Strategy Guide_Component 1. **Connection:** Tier 1 systems are most effective when educators consistently implement shared expectations and routines. Variability in practice, rather than absence of systems, often drives behavioral challenges and inequitable outcomes. **Key Sources:** (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Welsh, 2023;)
Strengthen and consistently implement Tier 2 (targeted) behavioral supports for students with emerging needs. (e.g., check-in/check-out systems, small group interventions, behavior contracts, mentoring supports, or targeted social-emotional skill instruction)	**Why it Helps:** If TLCC results suggest frequent behavioral disruptions or concerns about students receiving needed supports, strengthen and consistently implement Tier 2 (targeted) behavioral supports for students with emerging needs. Provides additional structure and ongoing support for students with emerging behavioral needs, allowing schools to respond early and consistently rather than reactively. See: SWPBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory_Tier 2 **Research Connection:** Targeted supports are effective when they are implemented consistently over time and adjusted through ongoing feedback, rather than applied intermittently or inconsistently. **Key Sources:** (Blaze et al., 2014; Broda et al., 2025; Sugai & Simpson, 2012)

Moderate Changes	
Provide staff training in trauma-informed and co-regulation practices.	**Why it Helps:** If staff report difficulty responding consistently to student behavior or managing escalation, provide ongoing staff learning and coaching in trauma-informed and co-regulation practices. Builds educator capacity to respond to behavior with consistency, awareness, and support, improving real-time interactions and reducing escalation. It also supports teachers in managing their own responses, which directly impacts classroom climate. See: Trauma-Informed Education Strategy Guide_Component 1. **Research Connection:** These practices require adult learning, reflection, and repeated use to become effective. Behavior outcomes improve as educators refine how they interpret and respond to students. **Key Sources:** (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019; Henriksen & Gruber, 2024; Rodgers & Hassan, 2021; Wink et al., 2021;)
Embed relationship-centered and emotion regulation practices schoolwide.	**Why it Helps:** If TLCC results suggest students lack trusted adult connections or staff report weak student relationships, strengthen consistent use of relationship-centered and emotion regulation practices across classrooms. Supports students in developing the skills needed to manage emotions and behavior, while also strengthening classroom environments and reducing disruptions over time. These practices also help reduce teacher stress by improving daily interactions. See: Trauma-Informed Education Strategy Guide_Component 3. **Research Connection:** Mindfulness, co-regulation, and relationship-centered practices improve emotional regulation, behavior, and school climate when implemented consistently across a school, rather than in isolated classrooms. **Key Sources**: (Broda et al., 2025 ; Henriksen & Gruber, 2024)
Clarify and align shared expectations for relational practices.	**Why it Helps:** Ensures that all students experience consistent, supportive interactions with adults, reducing variability in how relationships are built and maintained across classrooms. See: Trauma-Informed Education Strategy Guide_Component 1 **Research Connection:** Inconsistent relational practices contribute to inequitable behavioral outcomes, as differences in educator responses shape how students are interpreted, supported, and disciplined. **Key Sources: (**Chapman et al., 2023; Welsh, 2023)

Moderate Changes	
If behavioral concerns vary across classrooms or teams, use collaborative team structures (e.g., PLCs, grade-level teams) to review behavioral data and align interventions	**Why it Helps:** Creates opportunities for educators to identify patterns in office discipline referrals, classroom disruptions, attendance concerns, or repeated behavioral incidents and develop more consistent responses across classrooms. Collaborative review helps align interventions such as reteaching expectations, targeted student supports, behavior plans, or check-in/check-out systems, reducing isolation and variability in practice. See: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Strategy Guide Component 3. **Research Connection:** Collaboration and shared decision-making improve working conditions and reduce variability in practice, strengthening both behavioral systems and teacher retention by building collective responsibility for student outcomes. **Key Sources:** (Berry & Shields, 2017; Bryk et al., 2015)

Long-Term Strategies	
Embed sustainable, system-level approaches that support behavior through consistency, relationships, and integrated supports.	
Fully implement Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) /Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) frameworks across academic, behavioral, and intervention systems	**Why it Helps:** If schools experience inconsistent responses to behavior, fragmented interventions, or difficulty identifying appropriate levels of support for students, integrated MTSS/PBIS frameworks help create a coherent system for prevention, intervention, progress monitoring, and behavioral support across levels of need. These frameworks improve consistency across classrooms and reduce fragmentation between teams and services. See: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Strategy Guide_Component 2 AND Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Strategy Guide_Component 1&2 **Research Connection:** Integrated, tiered systems improve behavioral outcomes by aligning expectations, supports, and interventions across classrooms and staff, reducing variability in how behavior is addressed and increasing consistency across the school. **Key Sources:** (Blaze et al., 2014; Broda et al., 2025; Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Sugai & Simpson, 2012; Welsh, 2023)
Develop integrated systems that coordinate academic, behavioral, and mental health	**Why it Helps:** If students experience overlapping academic, behavioral, and emotional needs that are addressed separately across teams or programs, integrated systems improve coordination between educators, intervention staff, counselors, and behavioral supports. Recognizes that student behavior is connected to multiple, overlapping needs and ensures that supports are

Long-Term Strategies	
supports across teams, services, and intervention processes	coordinated rather than siloed. This approach reduces gaps in services and creates more responsive and effective systems for students. See: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Strategy Guide_Component 2. **Research Connection:** Behavior is shaped by interconnected systems, including academic demands, emotional regulation, and environmental supports. Coordinated approaches improve outcomes by addressing the full range of factors influencing student behavior. **Key Sources:** (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Henriksen & Gruber, 2024)
Embed trauma-informed practices into schoolwide systems, routines, policies, and staff expectations	**Why it Helps:** If schools experience frequent behavioral escalation, inconsistent adult responses, or overreliance on punitive discipline, trauma-informed systems help create more predictable, relationship-centered, and emotionally supportive environments. Creates predictable, supportive environments that reduce reliance on reactive or punitive discipline. When trauma-informed practices are embedded across the school, students experience greater safety, consistency, and support in managing behavior. See: Trauma-Informed Education Strategy Guide_ Components 1 & 2. **Research Connection:** Trauma-informed approaches improve school climate and reduce behavioral incidents by shifting responses from control to understanding, emphasizing relationships, predictability, and emotional regulation as core components of behavior support. **Key Sources:** (Darling-Hammond, 2019; Henriksen & Gruber, 2024; Rodgers & Hassan, 2021)
Reduce reliance on exclusionary discipline practices (e.g., suspensions, expulsions, classroom removals, and other forms of removing students from instruction)	**Why it Helps:** If schools experience frequent student removals from instruction, repeated disciplinary incidents, or inequitable discipline outcomes across student groups, restorative and relationship-centered approaches help maintain student connection to learning while improving accountability, engagement, and behavioral support. It also promotes more equitable approaches to discipline across student groups. See: Trauma-Informed Education Strategy Guide Component 1. **Research Connection:** Exclusionary discipline is associated with increased disengagement, lower academic outcomes, and inequitable impacts across student populations. Alternative, relationship-based approaches lead to improved engagement and more positive behavioral outcomes. **Key Sources:** (Darling-Hammond, 2019; McNeil et al, 2016; Sullivan et al. 2014)

Long-Term Strategies	
Develop clear schoolwide systems for behavioral referrals, Tier 1 and 2 intervention access, student support processes, and coordinated follow-up for behavioral concerns e.g., behavior referral pathways, student support team processes, check-in/check-out referrals, intervention tracking systems, restorative response protocols, or MTSS-based behavioral problem-solving teams	**Why it Helps:** If teachers experience inconsistent responses to student behavior, unclear referral pathways, limited access to interventions, or inconsistent follow-through after behavioral incidents, schools may need more clearly defined systems for how students access support. Establishing coordinated processes for behavioral referrals, Tier 2 supports, student support team involvement, progress monitoring, and follow-up improves consistency across classrooms and reduces teacher isolation in managing behavioral concerns. Reduces teacher stress, burnout, and frustration associated with managing inconsistent or unsupported behavior, making classrooms more sustainable environments for both students and educators. See: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Strategy Guide_Component 1. **Research Connection:** Teacher retention is strongly influenced by working conditions, including the extent to which educators feel supported in managing student behavior. Schools with inconsistent systems and higher behavioral challenges are more likely to experience turnover and staffing instability. **Key Sources:** (Berry & Shields, 2017; Boyd et al., 2010; Edwards et al., 2024)
Align behavioral expectations and intervention practices with teacher support structures (e.g., coaching, collaborative planning time, behavioral consultation support, staff debrief processes, and access to intervention teams or specialists)	**Why it Helps:** If teachers are expected to manage increasing behavioral needs without sufficient collaboration, coaching, or intervention support, implementation becomes inconsistent and contributes to staff frustration and burnout. Aligning behavioral practices with teacher support structures helps educators respond more consistently to student needs while reducing isolation in behavior management. See: Trauma-Infomed Education Strategy Guide_Cmponent 3 **Research Connection:** Teacher effectiveness, retention, and placement are shaped by school conditions, including behavior systems. Misalignment between student needs and staff supports contributes to burnout and turnover, while aligned systems strengthen both student outcomes and staff stability. **Key Sources:** (Boyd et al., 2010; Edwards et al., 2024; Henriksen & Gruber, 2024)

Long-Term Strategies	
Integrate behavioral goals, implementation monitoring, and behavioral data review into ongoing school improvement planning processes *(e.g., reviewing office discipline referrals, intervention participation, attendance patterns, implementation consistency, or behavioral outcomes during school improvement cycles and leadership team meetings)*	**Why it Helps:** If schools struggle to sustain behavioral initiatives, respond consistently to emerging behavioral concerns, or monitor whether supports are being implemented effectively, integrating behavioral supports into school improvement processes creates ongoing structures for review, adjustment, and accountability. This helps schools refine supports over time rather than relying on isolated initiatives or reactive responses. See: Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Strategy Guide_Components 3 & 4. **Research Connection:** Continuous improvement models emphasize iterative cycles of inquiry, testing, and adaptation. Schools improve behavioral outcomes when they regularly review implementation and use multiple data sources to guide decision-making and refine supports over time. **Key Sources: (**Bryk et al., 2015; Colorado Department of Education, 2024)

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TLCC survey results can serve as an important source of evidence during annual or multi-year school and district improvement planning. The survey provides insight into the teaching and learning conditions that influence both student outcomes and educator retention. Improvement teams can use TLCC results to support two key planning activities:

- Conducting Root Cause Analysis
- Selecting Research-Based Improvement Strategies and Action Steps

Conducting Root Cause Analysis

Educator retention is closely connected to student academic outcomes. If a school has experienced significant staff turnover, staffing shortages, or survey results suggest educators are unlikely to remain at the school, improvement teams should examine the TLCC constructs most strongly related to retention:

- Support for Educator Wellbeing
- Professional Climate
- Staff Leadership
- Student Behavior (supports)

Begin by identifying areas of strength and areas for growth at the construct level. Then examine item-level results to better understand the specific experiences contributing to those broader patterns. This two-step process—examining both construct-level and item-level results—can help improvement teams identify root causes that may be contributing to their student performance challenges.

Resources: See *Making Meaning of Your TLCC Results (above)* for guidance on interpreting survey results and *Investigating 2026 TLCC Survey Results* (separate tool) for instructions on using the state-provided TLCC dashboards

Additional C-PEER research identified other school and district factors associated with differences in student outcomes. These factors generally fall into two categories:

- Academic Capacity
- Wellbeing Capacity

Reviewing data related to these areas provides additional insight into potential root causes. See Appendix B for recommended data sources. Note schoolwide perspectives on the three TLCC Instructional Practice constructs are part of these additional factors.

Selecting Research-Based Improvement Strategies and Action Steps

Once improvement teams have identified likely root causes, they can use those findings to select improvement strategies and action steps that directly address the conditions identified through the TLCC survey. This guide includes research-based recommendations aligned to the TLCC constructs that have been shown to predict teacher retention. Recommendations are organized into:

- Quick Wins (actions that can often be implemented immediately)
- Moderate Changes (strategies requiring additional planning or coordination)
- Longer-Term Strategies (system-level changes that typically require sustained implementation efforts)

For each strategy, the guide provides:

- The relevant TLCC construct and focus area
- A description of the strategy
- Information about why the strategy may be effective
- Connections to supporting research including references for further learning

Improvement teams should prioritize strategies that address the specific root causes identified through their review of TLCC data rather than selecting strategies based solely on areas of low performance. Focusing on the underlying conditions driving survey results increase the likelihood that improvement efforts will produce meaningful and sustainable changes for both students and educators. Note: additional research-based recommendations shown to predict student academic performance are provided in the TLCC User Guide: Student Academic Performance.

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TLCC Constructs that C-PEER research indicates predict teacher retention are provided below. For each we include a short description of the “big idea” captured by the construct and the items used to measure it. The items are ordered by the strength of their relationship with teacher retention measures. Items in italics are not in particular order.

Support for Educator Wellbeing

This construct captures the degree to which staff feel valued, connected, and supported at their school, including having a sense of belonging, job satisfaction, respectful relationships, and access to mental health support. The following items are used to measure this construct:

- My work at this school makes me feel satisfied.
- I feel like I belong at my school.
- If I was concerned about my mental health, I would have access to the support I need.
- I have at least one colleague at my school that I trust.

Professional Climate

This construct reflects the quality of the working environment in a school, including leadership, staff relationships, trust, and collaboration. It indicates whether educators feel respected, safe, and supported—and whether they can engage openly, contribute to decisions, and work toward a shared, student-focused vision. The following items are used to measure this construct:

- School leadership works to build trust among staff.
- Our work together is guided by a shared vision that is student focused.
- Our school is a safe place to work.
- I regularly engage with colleagues at my school.
- This school is led by an effective team.
- School staff show respect for each other.
- School staff feel comfortable raising important issues with school leadership.
- School leadership puts suggestions made by staff into operation.

Staff Leadership

Reflects the extent to which educators believe they are valued as professionals and have meaningful opportunities to influence their school’s direction. It captures whether staff can contribute their expertise, collaborate to solve problems, take on leadership roles, and actively participate in important decisions and improvement planning. The following items are used to measure this construct:

- Staff have an appropriate level of influence on important school decisions.
- There is a process in place for collaborative problem solving in this school.
- Staff have leadership opportunities in this school.
- Staff professional expertise is valued.
- School staff have meaningful opportunities to participate in the school's improvement planning process (e.g., Unified Improvement Plan, school-based improvement).

Student Behavior (supports)

This construct captures whether staff see student behavioral expectations as clear and consistently enforced, believe students have access to trusted adults and appropriate behavioral supports, and experience the school as a place where students know how to act and can focus on learning safely. The following items are used to measure this construct:

- Rules for student behavior are enforced in a consistent manner.
- Students have the behavioral supports needed to be successful in school.
- Students know how they are expected to act in the school.
- This school is a safe place for students to learn.
- Students at this school have at least one staff member they can trust to support them with personal concerns.

Support for Student Wellbeing

Factor	Measure	Access
Student access to school counselors	Number of students per counselor in district	https://ed.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/staffstatistics Staff to Pupil Ratio (click on)
Student access to school psychologists	Number of students per school psychologist in district	https://ed.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/staffstatistics Staff to Pupil Ratio (click on)
Teacher Effectiveness Ratings for TQS 2: Establishing a safe, inclusive and respectful learning environment for a diverse population of students.	Percent of teachers within the school rated Proficient, Accomplished, or Exemplary for TQS 2	https://ed.cde.state.co.us/educatortalent/researchandimpact/educator-effectiveness-metrics "Quality Standards" Dashboard Select: Academic Year, Quality Standard 2, District, School Add: Proficient, Accomplished, and Exemplary (percentages)

Academic Support Capacity

Factor	Measure	Access
Teacher Experience	Average teachers' years of experience	
Student-to-teacher ratio	Pupil/ Teacher ratio	https://ed.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/staffstatistics Staff to Pupil Ratio (click on) Teacher by School tab (in excel worksheet)
Schoolwide teacher evaluation ratings for TQS 1: Content knowledge and pedagogical expertise	Percent of teachers within the school rated Proficient, Accomplished, or Exemplary for TQS1.	https://ed.cde.state.co.us/educatortalent/researchandimpact/educator-effectiveness-metrics "Quality Standards" dashboard Select: Academic Year, Quality Standard 1, District, School Add: Proficient, Accomplished, and Exemplary (percentages)
Schoolwide teacher evaluation	Percent of teachers within the school rated Proficient,	https://ed.cde.state.co.us/educatortalent/researchandimpact/educator-effectiveness-metrics

Factor	Measure	Access
ratings for TQS 3: Instructional practice grounded in student development, informed by assessment, and designed to foster critical thinking, collaboration, and communication	Accomplished, or Exemplary for TQS 3.	"Quality Standards" dashboard Select: Academic Year, Quality Standard 3, District, School Add: Proficient, Accomplished, and Exemplary (percentages)
Frequency of student behavior disruptions	Average number behavior incidents (reported to the state) / number of classrooms.	Schools provide this data to the district and the state, but it is not currently available publicly. For a list of the types of behavior incidents reported to the state: https://ed.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/disciplinestatistics.

Community Context

Factor	Measure	Access
School neighborhood socioeconomic status	Income-to-poverty ratio (IPR), percentage of family income that is above or below the federal poverty threshold.	https://data.census.gov/table?q=C17002 Filter by state, county, and the next layer down that captures the school neighborhood (e.g., county subdivision or census track(s))
The percentage of homes in the county where English is not the primary language	U.S. Census data, counties in Colorado. File set S1602, Limited English Speaking Households.	https://data.census.gov/table?q=C17002 Filter by state, county, and the next layer down that captures the school neighborhood (e.g., county subdivision or census track(s)). "Topics" = Populations and People -> Language Spoken at Home

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