

National Survey of Education Professors: Final Data

The survey is based on a nationwide, randomly selected sample of 716 teacher educators at four-year colleges in the United States. It was conducted by mail, Internet, and telephone between November 9, 2009 and March 8, 2010. The margin of error for the 2010 data is four percentage points. Many questions in the survey were originally asked in a 1997 study called *Different Drummers: How Teachers of Teachers View Public Education*, which was based on a telephone survey of 900 professors of education conducted in the summer of 1997; these data are also included here. The margin of error for the 1997 data is three percentage points. In addition, data from other surveys of teachers, parents, and the general public are included for several questions where the comparisons are appropriate.

Numbers may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. The 2010 data presented here are weighted by gender (see “Trend Data,” Appendix A, p. 54). An asterisk indicates less than one percent and a dash indicates zero. N/A indicates a question did not appear on the 1997 survey.

Q1. Thinking about the U.S. system of university-based teacher education, which comes closest to your overall view:

2010	1997	
22	N/A	On the whole the system works very well—it only needs minor tinkering
66		There are many good things about the system but it also needs many changes
9		The system has so much wrong with it that it needs fundamental overhaul
3		Not sure

Teacher education programs can impart different qualities to their students. Which of the following qualities do you think are most essential and which are least essential? Use a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 means it is least essential and 5 means it is absolutely essential.

Q2. Teachers who are themselves life-long learners and constantly updating their skills

2010	1997	
*	*	1 — Least essential
*	1	2
2	2	3
15	13	4
82	84	5 — Absolutely essential
1	-	Not sure

Q3. Teachers who are deeply knowledgeable about the content of the specific subjects they will be teaching

2010	1997	
*	*	1 — Least essential
1	1	2
7	8	3
30	34	4
62	57	5 — Absolutely essential
1	-	Not sure

Q4. Teachers who maintain discipline and order in the classroom

2010	1997	
*	1	1 — Least essential
4	3	2
18	21	3
39	38	4
37	37	5 — Absolutely essential
1	*	Not sure

Q5. Teachers trained in pragmatic issues of running a classroom such as managing time and preparing lesson plans

2010	1997	
1	1	1 — Least essential
3	3	2
17	17	3
38	39	4
42	41	5 — Absolutely essential
1	-	Not sure

Q6. Teachers who are well-versed in theories of child development and learning

2010	1997	
1	*	1 — Least essential
4	4	2
19	13	3
40	37	4
35	46	5 — Absolutely essential
1	*	Not sure

Q7. Teachers who will have high expectations of all their students

2010	1997	
*	1	1 — Least essential
*	1	2
4	5	3
25	22	4
69	72	5 — Absolutely essential
2	*	Not sure

Q8. Teachers who stress correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation

2010	1997	
2	3	1 — Least essential
10	12	2
28	33	3
37	34	4
23	19	5 — Absolutely essential
1	-	Not sure

Q9. Teachers who understand how to work with the state’s standards, tests, and accountability systems

2010	1997	
5	N/A	1 — Least essential
9		2
20		3
42		4
24		5 — Absolutely essential
1		Not sure

Q10. Teachers trained in and committed to implementing differentiated instruction in their classrooms

2010	1997	
1	N/A	1 — Least essential
2		2
9		3
34		4
51		5 — Absolutely essential
3		Not sure

Q11. Teachers who actively use technology and online resources to improve instruction

2010	1997	
2	N/A	1 — Least essential
5		2
19		3
44		4
29		5 — Absolutely essential
2		Not sure

Q12. Teachers who are trained to address the challenges of high-needs students in urban districts

2010	1997	
1	N/A	1 — Least essential
3		2
15		3
39		4
39		5 — Absolutely essential
4		Not sure

How close does each of the following come to your own view—very close, somewhat close, not too close, or not close at all?

Q13. Teacher education programs are too often seen as cash cows by university administrators

2010	1997	
17	25	Very close
26	28	Somewhat close
43	54	Total
22	23	Not too close
21	18	Not close at all
44	41	Total
13	6	Not sure

Q14. Most professors of education need to spend more time in [K–12] classrooms

2010	1997	
35	48	Very close
38	36	Somewhat close
73	84	Total
15	11	Not too close
8	3	Not close at all
23	14	Total
4	2	Not sure

Q15. Teacher education programs are often unfairly blamed for the problems facing public education

2010	1997	
39	41	Very close
32	41	Somewhat close
71	82	Total
16	13	Not too close
8	4	Not close at all
24	18	Total
5	*	Not sure

Q16. Too many education students have trouble writing essays free of mistakes in grammar and spelling

2010	1997	
34	34	Very close
33	41	Somewhat close
67	75	Total
22	19	Not too close
7	5	Not close at all
29	24	Total
4	1	Not sure

Q17. Teacher education programs need to do a better job weeding out students who are unsuitable for the profession

2010	1997	
39	52	Very close
34	35	Somewhat close
73	86	Total
19	10	Not too close
6	3	Not close at all
24	13	Total
3	1	Not sure

Q18. Fear of litigation has made it harder to remove unsuitable teacher candidates from teacher education programs

2010	1997	
25	N/A	Very close
28		Somewhat close
53		Total
21		Not too close
14		Not close at all
35		Total
12		Not sure

Q19. Teacher education programs often fail to prepare teachers for the challenges of teaching in the real world

2010	1997	
19	22	Very close
31	41	Somewhat close
50	63	Total
32	24	Not too close
15	12	Not close at all
47	36	Total
4	1	Not sure

Q20. Too many cooperating teachers lack the disposition and skills to be effective models for today's student teachers

2010	1997	
17	N/A	Very close
31		Somewhat close
48		Total
29		Not too close
15		Not close at all
44		Total
8		Not sure

Q21. Which comes closer to your own philosophy of the role of teachers?

2010	1997	
84	92	Teachers should see themselves as facilitators of learning who enable their students to learn on their own
11	7	Teachers should see themselves as conveyors of knowledge who enlighten their students with what they know
5	1	Not sure

Q22. Which comes closer to your own philosophy of your role as teacher educator? To prepare future teachers to:

2010	1997	
68	N/A	Be change agents who will reshape education by bringing new ideas and approaches to the public schools
26		Work effectively within the realities of today's public schools—e.g., state mandates, limited budgets, and beleaguered administrators
6		Not sure

Q23. For the public schools to help the U.S. live up to its ideals of justice and equality, do you think it's more important that they:

2010	2008^A	
20	11	Focus on raising the achievement of disadvantaged students who are struggling academically
73	86	Focus equally on all students, regardless of their backgrounds or achievement levels
7	3	Not sure

Q23A. Which comes closer to your own view about the philosophy of schools in high-poverty neighborhoods? That these schools should:

2010	1997	
17	N/A	Encourage disadvantaged students to challenge the larger society, whose rules are stacked against them
69		Focus on teaching social, math, and literacy skills to help disadvantaged students succeed within the rules of society as it is
14		Not sure

A. Comparison data are from Farkas, Steve and Ann Duffett. 2008. *High-Achieving Students in the Era of NCLB* (Part 2), 77, question 26 (Washington, D.C.: Thomas B. Fordham Institute). This was a survey of third through twelfth grade public school teachers.

From your professional perspective, how important is it for teachers in public schools to do the following in their classes? Is it absolutely essential, important but not essential, or not important?

Q24. Teach “21st century skills” such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and global awareness

2010	1997	
83	N/A	Absolutely essential
15		Important but not essential
2		Not important
1		Not sure

Q25. Teach math facts such as memorization of the multiplication tables in the early grades

2010	1997	
36	N/A	Absolutely essential
51		Important but not essential
11		Not important
3		Not sure

Q26. Rely on student portfolios and other authentic assessments

2010	1997	
35	N/A	Absolutely essential
51		Important but not essential
11		Not important
3		Not sure

Q27. Teach phonics and phonemic awareness when teaching literacy in the early grades

2010	1997	
44	N/A	Absolutely essential
41		Important but not essential
7		Not important
8		Not sure

Q28. In your judgment, how easy or difficult a mission is it to implement differentiated instruction on a daily basis in the classroom?

2010	2008^B	
29	35	Very difficult
52	48	Somewhat difficult
81	84	Total
11	12	Somewhat easy
4	4	Very easy
15	16	Total
4	1	Not sure

Q29. Which comes closer to your own view? Generally speaking, new teachers are more likely to be effective if they teach classes where the students are:

2010	1997	
33	N/A	Grouped homogeneously by ability
28		Mixed in ability
28		Neither—grouping doesn't have an impact on new teachers' effectiveness
11		Not sure

How close does each of the following come to your own view—very close, somewhat close, not too close, or not close at all?

Q30. More often than not, teacher tenure is an obstacle to improving the schools

2010	1997	
15	18	Very close
33	34	Somewhat close
48	52	Total
28	29	Not too close
20	18	Not close at all
47	47	Total
5	1	Not sure

B. Comparison data are from Farkas, Steve and Ann Duffett. 2008. *High-Achieving Students in the Era of NCLB (Part 2)*, 76, question 22 (Washington, D.C.: Thomas B. Fordham Institute). This was a survey of third through twelfth grade public school teachers.

Q31. Lower-income students in inner-city schools have a greater need for structured, teacher-directed instruction than middle class or suburban students

2010	1997	
13	N/A	Very close
26		Somewhat close
39		Total
26		Not too close
29		Not close at all
54		Total
7		Not sure

Q32. When a public school teacher faces a disruptive class, it probably means he or she has failed to make lessons engaging enough to the students

2010	1997	
12	17	Very close
38	44	Somewhat close
50	61	Total
30	27	Not too close
17	12	Not close at all
47	39	Total
3	*	Not sure

Q33. Which is closer to your own view?

2010	1997	
35	33	Competition for rewards such as spelling bees or honor rolls is a valuable incentive for student learning
48	64	Schools should avoid competition among children and foster cooperation
17	3	Not sure

Q34. Which is closer to your view about teaching a core body of knowledge such as Shakespeare, the Constitution, and great books like *To Kill a Mockingbird*?

2010	1997	
67	N/A	Students must gain a shared understanding of this core body of knowledge—it's wrong to let them graduate without it
18		This unfairly imposes one group's cultural values on others and it's irrelevant to many students
15		Not sure

Q35. When teachers in grades [K–12] assign their kids specific questions in such subjects as math or history, is it more important that:

2010	1997	
20	12	The kids end up knowing the right answers to the questions or problems
66	86	The kids struggle with the process of trying to find the right answers
14	3	Not sure

Q36. Which is closer to your view?

2010	1997	
42	38	Early use of calculators in elementary school grades can hamper children from learning basic arithmetic skills
37	57	Early use of calculators will improve children’s problem-solving skills and not prevent the learning of arithmetic
21	6	Not sure

Q37. When it comes to students who are new immigrants, what should the public schools’ primary goal be? To help new immigrants:

2010	1997	
36	N/A	Absorb America’s language and culture as quickly as possible, even if their native language and culture are neglected
47		Maintain their own language and culture even if it takes them longer to absorb America’s and culture
18		Not sure

Q38. From what you know or have heard about the process of professional accreditation of education programs—for example, through organizations like NCATE or TEAC—is it your sense that receiving accreditation means:

2010	1997	
7	N/A	A guarantee of top-notch quality
46		A base-line of acceptable quality
41		Very little other than procedural compliance
6		Not sure

Q39. Which comes closer to your view of alternative teacher certification programs that are not run by schools of education?

2010	1997	
47	N/A	They threaten to compromise the quality of the teaching force in the public schools
32		They are a good way to attract unconventional talent to the public schools
21		Not sure

Here are some questions about alternative routes to the education field. For each, please indicate if you think it is generally a good idea or a bad idea, or if you don't know enough to say.

Q40. Recruiting people for school leadership who have proven track records of success from other fields such as business, law, and the military

2010	1997	
33	N/A	Generally a good idea
42		Generally a bad idea
21		Don't know enough to say
3		Not sure

Q41. Programs like Teach For America that recruit and place high-achieving college graduates in struggling public schools

2010	1997	
63	N/A	Generally a good idea
20		Generally a bad idea
13		Don't know enough to say
4		Not sure

Q42. Teacher preparation programs administered by school districts or charter management organizations that certify their own teachers

2010	1997	
17	N/A	Generally a good idea
51		Generally a bad idea
27		Don't know enough to say
5		Not sure

Q43. When it comes to removing unsuitable teacher candidates, does your program mostly rely on:

2010	1997	
46	N/A	A formal and systematic process for identifying and removing unsuitable candidates
23		An informal process that relies on individual professors to counsel out unsuitable candidates
11		Students themselves to drop out when they realize they are not suited for teaching
3		Something else/combination
17		Not sure

Q44. About how many of the students graduating from your teacher education program this school year do you think will be great teachers?

2010	1997	
-	N/A	None
10		A few
34		Some
45		Most
4		Virtually all
8		Not sure

Q45. How often have you personally come across students who you seriously doubt have what it takes to be a teacher?

2010	1997	
*	1	Never
20	26	Rarely
20	27	Total
62	60	Sometimes
15	12	Often
77	72	Total
3	1	Not sure

Q46. As you may know, charter schools operate under a charter or contract that frees them from many of the state regulations imposed on public schools and permits them to operate independently. Do you favor or oppose the idea of charter schools?

2010	2009	2008	
Ed Professors	General Public ^C	Classroom Teachers ^D	
44	64	42	Favor
34	33	45	Oppose
23	3	14	Not sure

(There is no Q47.)

C. Comparison data are from Bushaw, William J. and John A. McNee. 2009. "Americans Speak Out: Are Educators and Policy Makers Listening?: The 41st annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools." *Phi Delta Kappan*, 91, no. 1 (September).

D. Comparison data from Duffett, Ann, Steve Farkas, Andrew J. Rotherham, and Elena Silva. 2008. *Waiting to be Won Over: Teachers Speak on the Profession, Unions, and Reform*, 24, question 83. (Washington, D.C.: Education Sector). This was a survey of K-12 public school teachers.

Here is a list of different education reforms. For each, please indicate if you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose.

Q48. Having a core curriculum with specific knowledge and skill standards spelled out for each grade level

2010	1997	
29	N/A	Strongly favor
49		Somewhat favor
78		Total
15		Somewhat oppose
5		Strongly oppose
20		Total
2		Not sure

Q49. Requiring kids to pass tests demonstrating proficiency in key subjects before they can graduate

2010	1997	
18	N/A	Strongly favor
43		Somewhat favor
61		Total
25		Somewhat oppose
11		Strongly oppose
36		Total
3		Not sure

Q50. Requiring teachers to pass tests demonstrating proficiency in key subjects before they are hired

2010	1997	
37	N/A	Strongly favor
41		Somewhat favor
78		Total
13		Somewhat oppose
7		Strongly oppose
20		Total
2		Not sure

Q51. Requiring a minimum of five years before tenure is awarded and strengthening the formal teacher evaluation process

2010	1997	
42	N/A	Strongly favor
37		Somewhat favor
79		Total
12		Somewhat oppose
4		Strongly oppose
16		Total
6		Not sure

Q52. Making it easier to terminate unmotivated or incompetent teachers—even if they are tenured

2010	1997	
51	N/A	Strongly favor
36		Somewhat favor
86		Total
8		Somewhat oppose
2		Strongly oppose
10		Total
4		Not sure

Q53. Giving financial incentives to teachers whose students routinely score higher than similar students on standardized tests

2010	2008^E	
11	11	Strongly favor
20	23	Somewhat favor
30	34	Total
30	25	Somewhat oppose
35	39	Strongly oppose
65	64	Total
5	3	Not sure

E. Comparison data are from Duffett, Ann, Steve Farkas, Andrew J. Rotherham, and Elena Silva. 2008. *Waiting to be Won Over: Teachers Speak on the Profession, Unions, and Reform*, 19, question 20. (Washington, D.C.: Education Sector). This was a survey of K–12 public school teachers.

Q54. Giving financial incentives to teachers who work in tough neighborhoods with low-performing schools

2010	2008^F	
38	34	Strongly favor
45	46	Somewhat favor
83	80	Total
9	11	Somewhat oppose
5	7	Strongly oppose
14	17	Total
3	3	Not sure

Q55. Holding teacher education programs more accountable for the quality of the teachers they graduate

2010	1997	
32	N/A	Strongly favor
41		Somewhat favor
73		Total
16		Somewhat oppose
6		Strongly oppose
21		Total
6		Not sure

Q56. Some suggest that the best way to measure teacher effectiveness is to assess students' skills and knowledge when they first come to a teacher and to measure them again when students leave to see what progress was made. Others disagree. How would you rate this as a way of measuring teacher effectiveness?

2010	2008^G	
13	15	Excellent
35	34	Good
47	49	Total
32	29	Fair
16	20	Poor
48	48	Total
4	2	Not sure

F. Comparison data are from Duffett, Ann, Steve Farkas, Andrew J. Rotherham, and Elena Silva. 2008. *Waiting to be Won Over: Teachers Speak on the Profession, Unions, and Reform*, 19, question 23. (Washington, D.C.: Education Sector). This was a survey of K–12 public school teachers.

G. Comparison data are from Duffett, Ann, Steve Farkas, Andrew J. Rotherham, and Elena Silva. 2008. *Waiting to be Won Over: Teachers Speak on the Profession, Unions, and Reform*, 19, question 27. (Washington, D.C.: Education Sector). This was a survey of K–12 public school teachers.

Q57. One focus of the Obama administration’s education agenda is to open up every avenue possible to recruit new teachers. Which comes closer to your own view?

2010	1997	
40		This is on the right track—times have changed, and we need to do whatever it takes to draw qualified people to the teaching profession from nontraditional sources
39		This is on the wrong track—only university-based education programs provide the theory, pedagogy, and clinical experiences necessary to produce the highest quality teachers
22		Not sure

Q58. As you may know, the No Child Left Behind Act requires states to set standards in math and reading and to test students each year to determine whether schools are making adequate progress, and to intervene when they are not. This year, Congress is deciding whether to renew the No Child Left Behind Act. What do you think Congress should do?

2010	2009^H	
1	21	Renew the legislation as is
9	28	Renew with minimal changes
52	30	Renew with major changes
34	22	Not renew at all
5	-	Not sure

Q59. For holding schools accountable, should all state governments adopt the same set of educational standards and give the same tests in math, science and reading, or do you think that there should be different standards and tests in different states?

2010	2009^I	
49	72	Adopt the same set of educational standards and give same tests
36	19	Should be different standards and tests
16	9	Not sure

H. Comparison data are from *Education Next*-PEPG. 2009. "Survey of Public Opinion." Cambridge, MA: *Education Next* and the Program on Education Policy and Governance, Harvard University.
 I. Comparison data are from *Education Next*-PEPG. 2009. "Survey of Public Opinion." Cambridge, MA: *Education Next* and the Program on Education Policy and Governance, Harvard University.

Q60. Which of the following describe you?

2010	1997	
3	N/A	Dean
8		Department Chair
14		Adjunct
64		Tenured or tenure-track faculty
12		Non-tenure track or clinical faculty
7		Something else
*		Not sure

Q61. Is the college or university where you work located in an urban, suburban, or rural area?

2010	1997	
39	39	Urban
33	27	Suburban
25	34	Rural
3	*	Not sure

Q62. Do you teach:

2010	1997	
74	87	Bachelor's level courses
75	73	Master's level courses
27	28	Doctoral level courses
5	N/A	Something else

Q63. In what subjects, if any, do you consider yourself a specialist?

2010	1997	
15	16	Adolescent or child development
8	13	Arts
7	7	Computer science or technology
10	10	Education policy
18	15	Education research
10	11	Educational administration
13	18	Education psychology
16	17	Elementary education
10	21	English or language arts
3	5	Foreign language education

(Q63 Continued: In what subjects, if any, do you consider yourself a specialist?)

2010	1997	
12	13	Foundations of education
3	4	Health or sex education
8	12	Higher education
20	26	Instructional methods
9	10	Math education
4	3	Physical education
9	11	Reading
9	8	Science education
10	12	Social studies or history
12	11	Special education
4	4	Generalist/not specialist
25	22	Something else

Q64. For how many years have you taught at the college level?

2010	1997	
17	11	1-5 years
22	21	6-10
18	17	11-15
14	15	16-20
30	36	More than 20

Q65. Have you ever been a [K–12] classroom teacher?

2010	1997	
80	83	Yes, have been [K–12] teacher
20	17	No, have not

(Ask if “Yes” in Q65.)

Q66. About how many years has it been since you were a [K–12] classroom teacher?

2010	1997	
19	11	1-5 years
19	21	6-10
16	16	11-15
16	17	16-20
30	34	More than 20
1	1	Not sure

Q67. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, Independent or something else?

2010	1997	
13	16	Republican
51	50	Democrat
27	31	Independent
4	3	Something else
5	1	Not sure

(Ask if “Independent” in Q67.)

Q68. Do you lean toward the Republican party, the Democratic party, or do you not lean either way?

2010	1997	
(n=187)	(n=270)	
13	15	Lean Republican
49	41	Lean Democrat
35	43	Do not lean
4	1	Not sure

Q69. How old are you?

2010	1997	
5	2	34 or younger
15	17	35-44
25	42	45-54
42	33	55-64
13	7	65 or older

Q70. Do you consider yourself:

2010	1997	
85	91	White
6	4	Black or African American
4	2	Hispanic
1	1	Asian/Pacific Islander
2	1	Something else
2		Mixed (voluntary)
1		Native American (voluntary)

Q71. Are you:

2010^J	1997	
50	50	Male
50	50	Female

J. For explanation of weighting by gender, see “Trend Data” in Appendix A.