

2025 Kansas Teacher Retention Survey – Executive Summary

The 2025 Kansas Teacher Retention Survey marks the third statewide administration of the study (2021, 2023, 2025), representing over **60,000 educator responses** across three survey distribution cycles and providing one of the strongest longitudinal educator workforce datasets in the nation. The 2025 findings reflect responses from **over 21,000 teachers statewide**, representing urban, suburban, and rural districts.

Overall Statewide Trend

- **Teacher Engagement (emotional connection, commitment, and motivation to the profession) increased 3% since 2023**
- **Teacher Disengagement (emotional withdrawal, reduced commitment, and declining motivation to the profession) decreased 6%**
- **Retention Risk (teachers who are more likely than not to leave the profession at some point or retire in the next three years) declined 4%**
- Participation data confirms continued strong statewide representation.

Kansas is showing improvement specific to engagement and retention— but pressure points remain severe and structurally important.

Who is Most Likely Leaving the Teacher Profession

The highest educator disengagement and turnover risk is concentrated among:

- Teachers with **4–11 years of experience**
- Teachers working **second jobs** (≈35%)
- Educators who have worked in **multiple districts**
- Specialized educator roles (English Language Learners, social workers, librarians)
- Teachers whose children attend school **outside their district**.

These groups signal **critical instability in the mid-career pipeline**.

Strengths to Maintain & Leverage

Kansas continues to perform well in areas that buffer against burnout and stabilize schools with respondents indicating:

- **Strong relationships with colleagues**
- **Positive relationships with principals**
- **High principal quality and communication**
- **Positive perception of district size & location**
- **Access to quality teacher technology**
- **General approval of school safety (though pressured by behavior trends)**



These “Maintain & Leverage Drivers” are high satisfaction indicators **and predictive of retention**, meaning they are critical stabilizers already working well statewide.

Persistent & Urgent Challenges

Despite progress, several systemic pain points remain:

- **Student behavior and safety**
- **Teacher workload**
- **Mental and emotional health strain**
- **Compensation and salary growth**
- **Public respect for teaching**
- **Variable leadership trust at district/board levels**

These challenges mirror national trends and are increasingly tied to sustainability of the profession.

What Most Impacts Engagement & Retention (Validated Predictive Drivers)

Seven **Evaluate & Invest Drivers** are statistically proven predictors of engagement and likelihood of staying:

1. Society's view of the teaching profession
2. Support for handling challenging student behaviors.
3. District attention to teacher mental & emotional health
4. Salary growth potential
5. Quality of professional development
6. Vision and leadership of the district's Board of Education
7. Current salary

These drivers form Kansas **highest-impact roadmap** for improvement.

Teacher Voice — What Educators Are Saying

Over **30,000 qualitative comments** reveal strong emotional alignment with the data:

Teachers overwhelmingly describe:

- Behavioral crisis conditions
- Emotional exhaustion
- Financial strain
- Desire for transparency, trust, and follow-through
- Skepticism that feedback leads to change.

Teachers remain deeply committed to students — but increasingly question sustainability.



Kansas educators remain:

- **Purpose-driven and committed.**
- **Supported by strong principals and colleagues.**
- **Increasingly engaged compared to 2023.**

...but they are also:

- **Emotionally strained**
- **Financially pressured**
- **Frustrated with behavior systems**
- **Concerned about public respect**
- **Unsure meaningful action will occur.**

Retention will not improve through isolated initiatives. It improves by investing deliberately in the **seven validated drivers**, most predictive of engagement and stability.

Strategic Imperative

If Kansas:

- **Invests in the seven key drivers.**
- **Protects the nine strengths already working.**
- **Acts visibly on teacher feedback.**

Then the state can:

- Strengthen retention.
- Stabilize the workforce.
- Improve educator wellbeing.
- Support student learning outcomes.

Foundation of the KTRI

The **Kansas Teacher Retention Initiative (KTRI)** is a statewide, research-based study capturing the experiences, engagement, and retention needs of Kansas educators across 2021, 2023, and 2025. With more than 100,000 teacher responses, KTRI provides one of the strongest educator workforce datasets in the country.

The study is led by the **Educator Perceptions & Insights Center (EPIC)**, an organization committed to elevating teacher voice and delivering actionable, data-driven insights to help Kansas retain and support great educators.