

# Teaching for Tomorrow

How Supporting  
Teachers Today Shapes  
Classrooms Tomorrow



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## Introduction

Early research from the Walton Family Foundation-Gallup *Teaching for Tomorrow* study demonstrates that professional development, opportunities for collaboration with peers, and the quality and availability of materials and equipment have a positive impact on public school teachers' overall satisfaction with their workplace. By extension, these factors are associated with a greater desire to remain employed at their current schools and in the profession.

The Walton Family Foundation and Gallup conducted two follow-up surveys focused on professional development and materials and equipment to learn more about opportunities for improvement in these important aspects of teachers' work lives. Those surveys, conducted in January and April 2025, respectively, demonstrate that while most teachers are participating in professional development opportunities, there are indications these opportunities are not being maximized, and that the most beneficial types of professional development are often those that teachers are participating in the least frequently. Significant segments of teachers also lack the materials and support they need to do their jobs properly, including foundational and curricular materials and human resources, such as special education teachers, teaching assistants and paraprofessionals.

Remedying these deficits will help not only retain more teachers in the profession but also ensure that students have a more engaging experience, given the linkages between teacher and student engagement established in the *Teaching for Tomorrow* and *Voices of Gen Z* studies.

The following findings summarize the most critical learnings that building leaders, district leaders and policymakers should understand about the experience of public school teachers in the United States.

Seventy-seven percent of teachers who agree they have the materials and equipment they need to do their jobs right are satisfied with their school as a place to work, compared with 44% of teachers who do not have the materials and equipment they need. Similarly, 80% of teachers who rate their opportunities for professional growth positively are satisfied with their jobs, compared with 53% of teachers who do not believe they have adequate opportunities for development.

CHART 1

Two foundational components of teachers’ workplaces — professional development and materials and equipment — significantly impact teachers’ job satisfaction.

How satisfied are you with your place of employment as a place to work?

% Extremely satisfied or somewhat satisfied with workplace

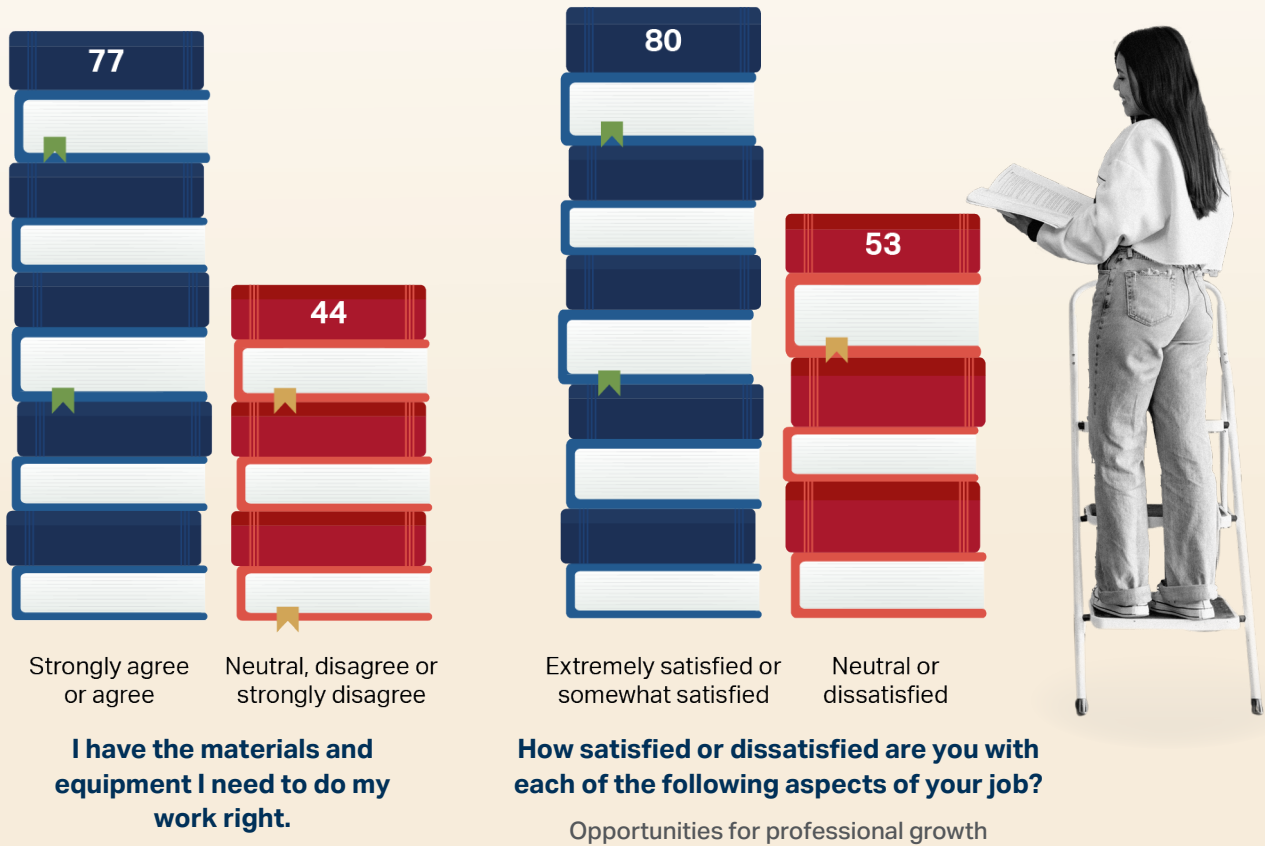
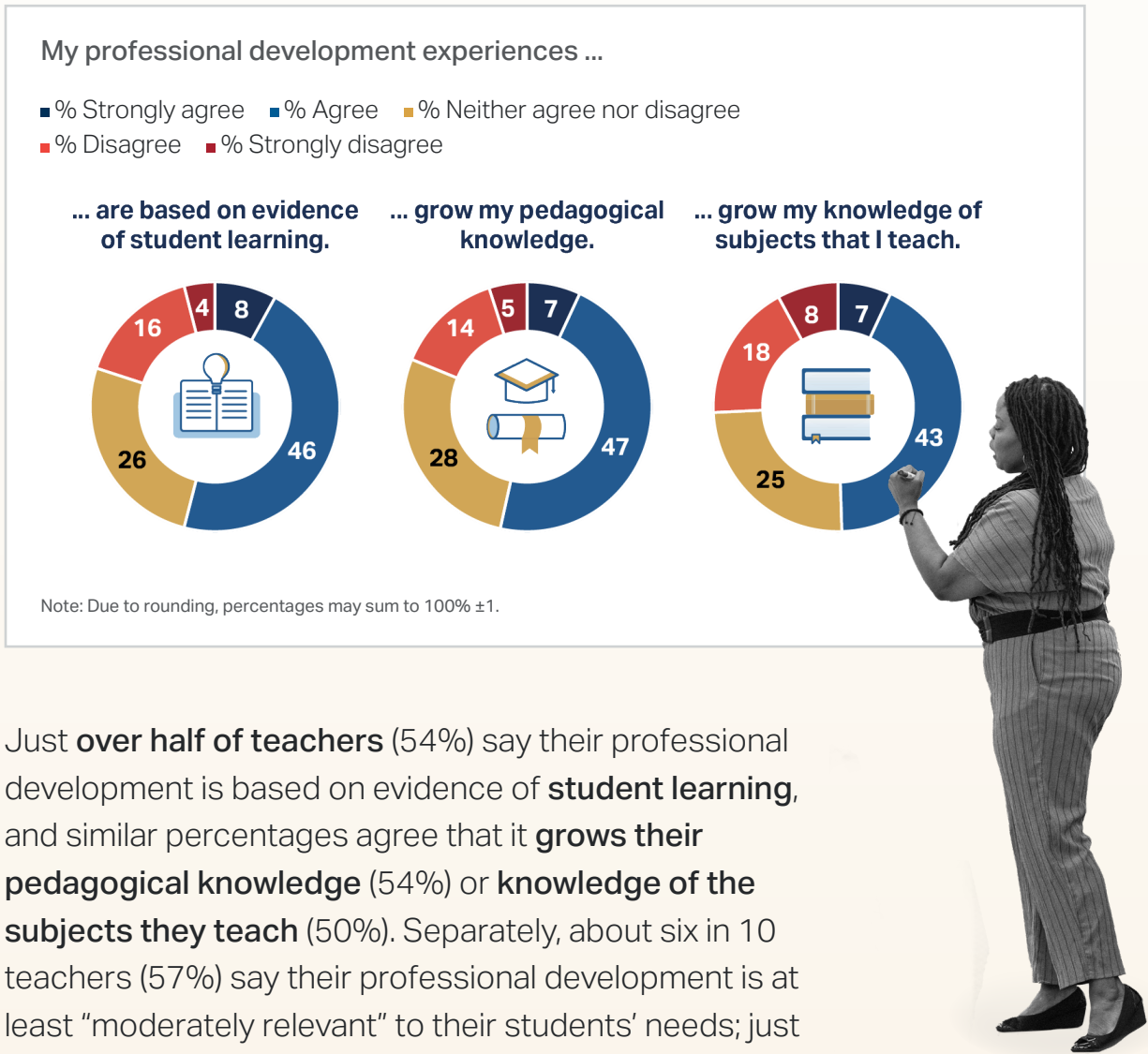




CHART 2

About half of teachers say their professional development is not grounded in students' needs or learning.



While any amount of collaborative planning has a positive effect on teachers’ engagement and development, teachers who have **weekly collaborative planning meetings** report even **larger gains** than their peers who do so on a less-than-weekly basis.

CHART 3

Collaborative planning is the most valuable kind of development in which teachers engage.

How valuable, if at all, [is/are] \_\_\_\_\_ for your ongoing development as a teacher?

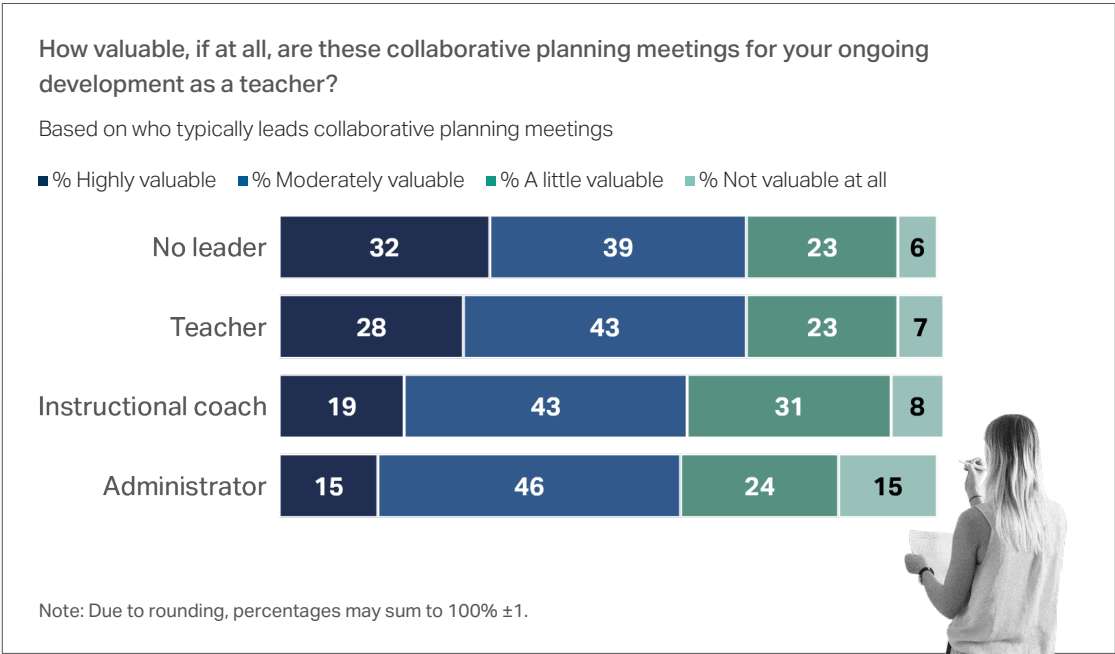
- % Highly valuable
- % Moderately valuable
- % A little valuable
- % Not valuable at all
- % Not applicable



Note: Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100% ±1.

CHART 4

**Collaborative planning meetings led by other teachers — or those with no leader at all — are the most valuable.**



The perceived value of collaborative planning meetings is also influenced by who is leading the meetings; or perhaps more accurately, who is not leading them. Teachers are **most likely** to find meetings with **no leader** or meetings **led by a teacher** to be **most valuable** (both at 71% highly or moderately valuable). Slightly fewer teachers find meetings led by instructional coaches (62%) or administrators (61%) to be valuable.

Teachers are **most likely** to say that **observing others' teaching** is the **most valuable activity** for their development (43%), followed by being mentored by another teacher (25%) and receiving feedback from classroom observations (21%). Classroom observations are the type of coaching teachers say they receive most often, while just **one in three teachers** report having the opportunity to **observe their peers and learn from them**. These findings on perceived effectiveness and frequency of use suggest a need to reevaluate teacher coaching methods.

CHART 5

Teachers say that observing their peers' teaching is notably more valuable than being observed.

Which of the following types of mentorship, coaching, feedback or observation has had the greatest impact on your development as a teacher?

% Selected

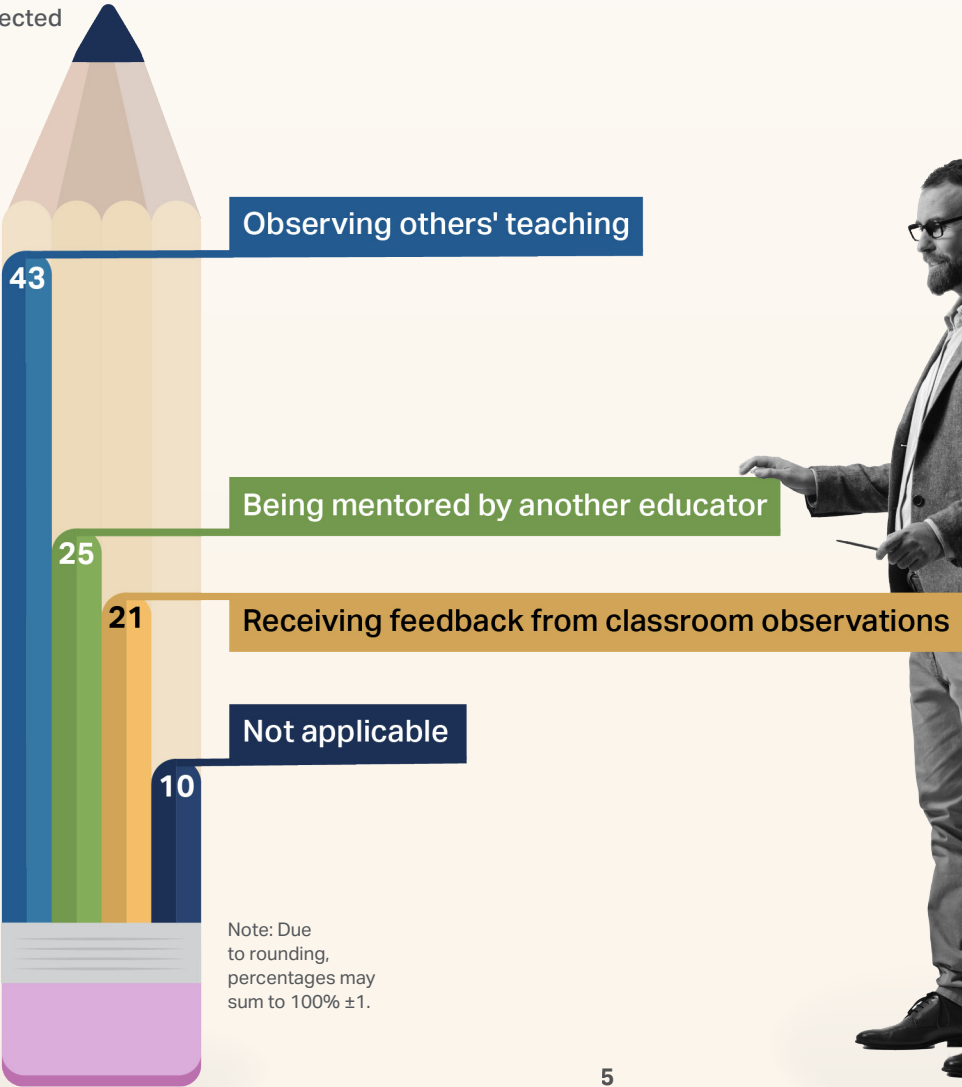
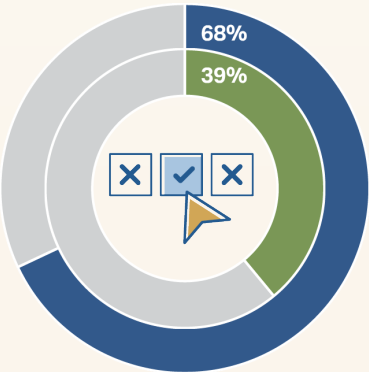
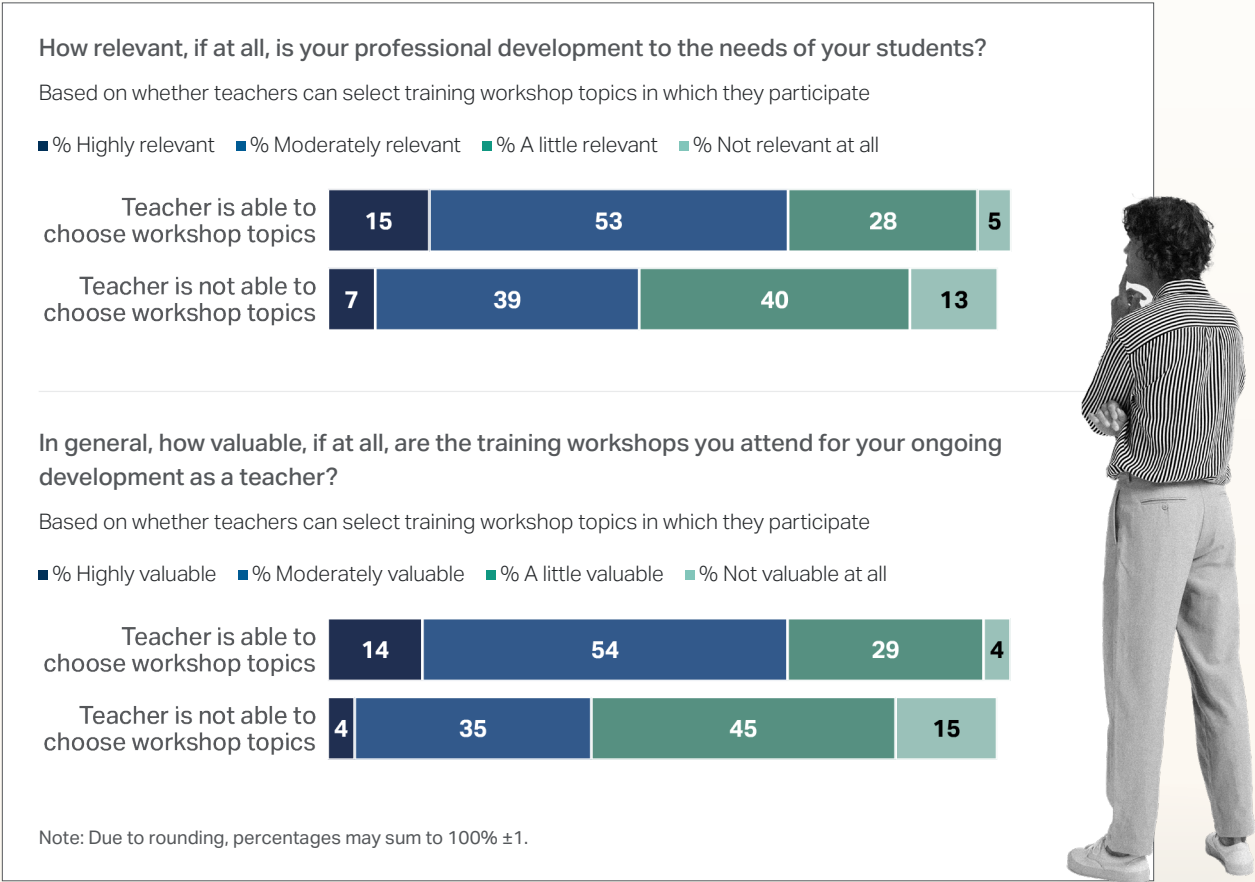




CHART 6

Training workshops are most valuable when teachers have a say in which ones they attend.



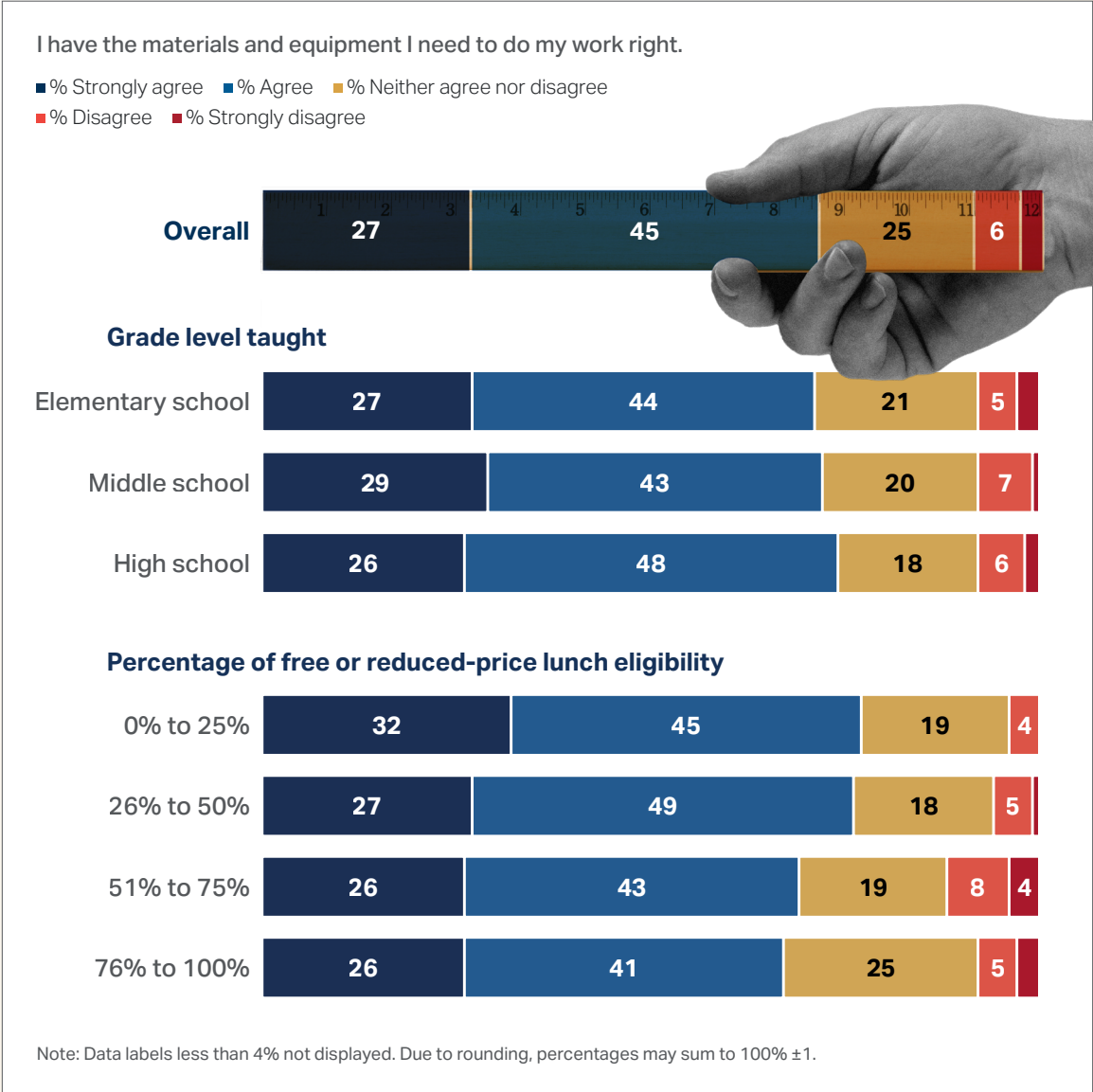
About two-thirds of teachers **(68%)** who **get to choose** which workshops they attend say those workshops are at least moderately valuable, while **39%** of teachers who have **no say** in which workshops they attend feel those workshops are valuable.

Similarly, **68%** of teachers who can **choose the workshops** they attend say their professional development is **at least moderately relevant** to their students' needs, compared with **46%** of teachers who **do not have any agency** in selecting workshop topics.



CHART 7

Over one in four teachers do not have the materials and equipment they need to do their jobs.



Just **one in four teachers** (27%) **strongly agree** they have the **materials and equipment** they need to teach their students, with an additional 45% agreeing. While budgets and other resource constraints are likely significant barriers to these materials, many teachers also cite administrative hurdles. **One in three** teachers say their school's **process to request and acquire materials** and resources is **"very difficult"** (5%) or **"somewhat difficult"** (30%).

CHART 8

Teachers are most likely to cite people resources as something they are lacking.

Do you have more than enough, the right amount or not enough \_\_\_\_\_?

■ % Not enough   ■ % The right amount   ■ % More than enough  
■ % Not applicable to my role/classroom

Teacher assistants, aides or paraprofessionals

Behavior intervention specialists

Mental health resources for students

Special education teachers or support staff

Instructional coaches

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100% ±1.



About two-thirds of teachers say they do not have enough teaching aides or paraprofessionals (65%); behavior intervention specialists (64%); mental health resources, such as counselors or social workers (62%); and special education teachers and support staff (62%).

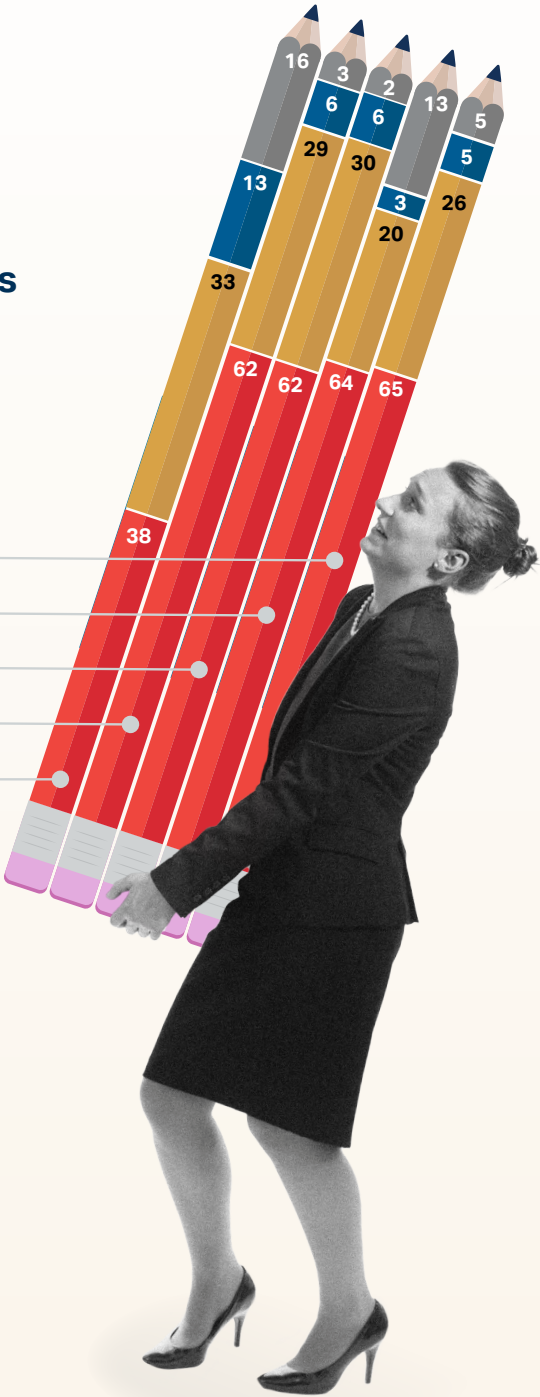
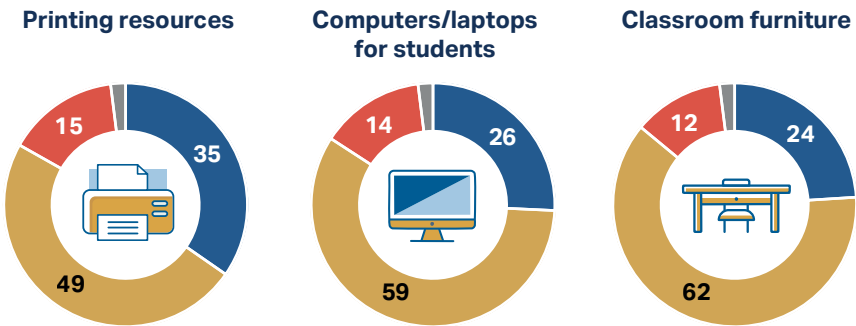


CHART 9

**At least one in four teachers do not have enough basic materials.**

Do you have more than enough, the right amount or not enough\_\_\_\_\_?

■ % Not enough ■ % The right amount ■ % More than enough ■ % Not applicable

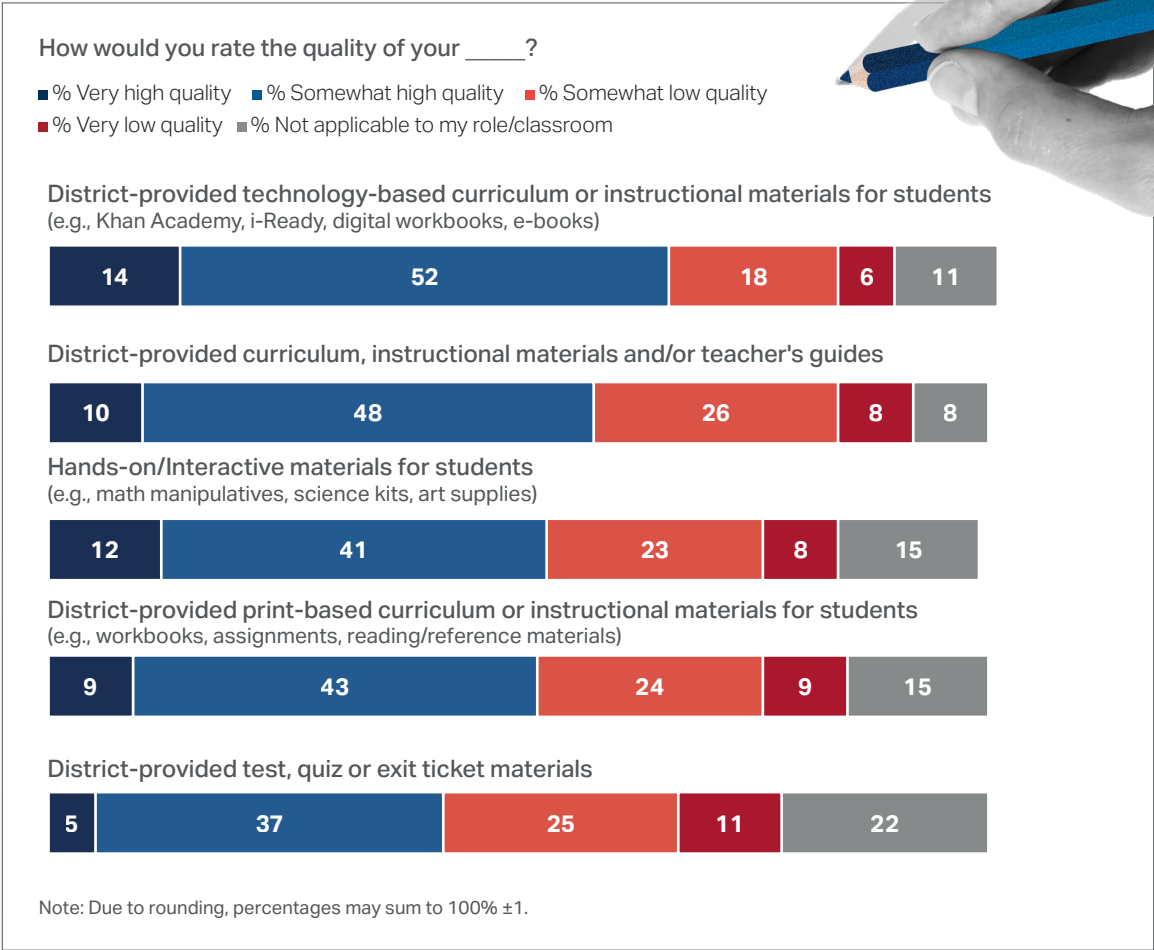


Note: Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100% ±1.

A notable percentage of teachers say they **do not have enough classroom furniture** (24%) and **computers or laptops** for student use (26%), while 35% do not have enough printers, paper, ink or other printing-related materials.

CHART 10

Curricular materials suffer from a lack of quality.



Between 5% and 14% of teachers say their test and quiz materials, print-based curriculum, instructional materials and teacher guides, technology-based curriculum and hands on materials are “very high quality.” Between 24% and 36% say those materials are “somewhat low quality” or “very low quality.”

## Methodology

Results are based on three web surveys of K-12 public school teachers conducted Oct. 29-Nov. 25, 2024, Jan. 13-31, 2025, and Apr. 17-May 19, 2025. Teachers were recruited from the RAND American Teacher Panel, a nationally representative, probability-based panel of U.S. public school teachers. More information about the RAND American Teacher Panel is available [here](#).

The final samples were weighted to match the school- and teacher-level demographics of K-12 public school teachers in the U.S., including school level, student poverty, student race and Hispanic ethnicity, school size, school urbanicity, teacher gender, teacher race and Hispanic ethnicity, and teacher years of experience. Targets for these characteristics were retrieved from the National Center for Education Statistics. Teacher-level characteristics were based on the 2020-2021 National Teacher and Principal Survey, while school-level characteristics were based on the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 Common Core of Data.

For results based on the survey conducted Oct. 29-Nov. 25, 2024 (Chart 1) with 1,989 U.S. teachers, the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 2.3$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level. For results based on the survey conducted Jan. 13-31, 2025 (Charts 2 through 6) with 2,046 U.S. teachers, the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 2.3$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level. For results based on the survey conducted Apr. 17-May 19, 2025 (Charts 7 through 10) with 2,167 U.S. teachers, the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 2.6$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

Margins of error for subgroups are higher. All reported margins of sampling error include computed design effects for weighting. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.





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