
Arizona Teacher Working Conditions Survey

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who is sponsoring this survey?

Arizona's Teacher Working Conditions Survey is the result of a partnership between AEA and NEA, Governor Napolitano's office, and the Center for Teaching Quality. The implementation of the survey was one of the charges of the Teacher Quality and Support Committee that Governor Napolitano commissioned in 2005.

2. Who created this survey?

The Teacher Working Conditions Survey was created by the Center for Teaching Quality, an independent, non-profit organization out of North Carolina, dedicated to ensuring that all students have access to high quality teaching. CTQ is currently working with states and school districts across the country to assess teacher working conditions. AEA reviewed and provided input on Arizona's version of the survey.

3. Why should my district or school participate?

The data from this survey is essential to improving the conditions in which teachers teach and students learn. This survey puts educator experiences and perceptions at the center of local and state efforts to recruit, retain, and support quality teachers. Further, research from a pilot survey in 18 Arizona districts and other states across the country suggests that certain working conditions are correlated with student achievement.

4. What working conditions does the survey address?

The survey addresses working conditions in five areas: Time, Empowerment, Leadership, Facilities and Resources, and Professional Development. Research indicates that these conditions are closely related to the challenges of recruiting and retaining teachers, as well as to student achievement. Additionally, questions are asked of new teachers and mentors about induction.

5. When will this survey occur?

The survey will be accessible online from March 12 through March 30.

6. How does the survey protect my anonymity?

The survey is completely anonymous. Participants respond to the survey via a randomized code. This code permits access to the survey and identifies the participant's school site, but not an individual teacher. These codes are created by the Center for Teaching Quality based only on the number of certificated employees at each school site; there is no way of knowing how individuals respond because the codes are not assigned to individual educators.

The code also makes it possible for each participant to submit the survey only once, thereby ensuring the reliability and veracity of the survey.

7. How will the codes be distributed?

CTQ has generated enough codes for all certificated personnel—including counselors, librarians, teachers, and administrators—at each site. Districts will receive packets that are sorted by building. The packets will include instructions and letters from the governor, each with a randomly generated code.

Districts and locals must devise a plan by which all certificated personnel receive a packet. Check with your AR or principal for more information.

8. How can locals and districts benefit from this survey?

CTQ will prepare a comprehensive report on the survey data, showing the correlations between teacher working conditions, student achievement, and the career intentions of educators. This data is intended to generate deep discussions at the building and district level about how to address teacher working conditions.

AEA believes that the survey data will prove enormously valuable, as it has in other states, in supporting site and district discussions about improving teacher working conditions.

Soon after the close of the survey CTQ will post data on the Arizona Teacher Working Condition Survey Web site (www.aztwc.org). You can visit that Web site now and see the results from the March 2006 pilot survey of approximately 20 districts and over 5,000 Arizona teachers and administrators.

Buildings where at least half of the certified staff complete the survey will be able to view their results and compare their building conditions to other schools and districts across Arizona.

9. What are the long-term plans to utilize survey data?

CTQ and AEA will partner to develop resources, tools, and training to help locals use the survey data in facilitating discussions to address working conditions. CTQ developed The Teacher Working Conditions Toolkit (www.teacherworkingconditions.org) to help communities and schools better understand and respond to the survey data. AEA is currently developing training strategies for our members.

At the state level, AEA and the Governor's office will use the survey results to drive policies that support teachers and their primary task—educating students. Arizona's policy makers must address the working conditions that those in the field identify as impacting student achievement and our ability to attract, retain, and develop high-quality teachers.

10. I'm busy already; what do I have to do to take the survey?

Participants may take the survey from any computer with network access between the dates of March 12 and March 30. All survey participants must have a randomized code to access and complete the survey. These codes will be distributed at your building; check with your association AR or building principal for information.

The survey takes approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete and is completely confidential.

11. Who else has taken this survey?

NEA and CTQ have partnered with several other states, including North and South Carolina, Kansas, Ohio, Nevada, and Mississippi. In the first phase of the survey, implemented in March of 2006, Arizona achieved the highest statewide response rate, 70%, of any state so far. AEA and our partners hope that the statewide survey of all buildings and districts will yield an equally impressive response rate.



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