

EPSB and KBE Research Practice Collaborative

Title: Sustaining Kentucky’s Educator Workforce: Insights from Practice, Policy, and Vibrant Learning

Purpose: To gather insights from Kentucky education stakeholders on what drives educator retention, why mid-career teachers leave, and how vibrant classroom learning environments (especially in literacy and numeracy) influence teacher satisfaction and career persistence.

Research Questions:

- Why do educators choose to stay in the teaching profession long-term, and what specific supports or conditions contribute most to their continued commitment?
- What are the primary factors contributing to mid-career teacher attrition in Kentucky, and what targeted strategies might help retain experienced educators during this critical phase of their careers?
- How does creating and experiencing vibrant learning environments—especially in literacy and numeracy—impact educator satisfaction and support their long-term retention in the profession?

Participants:

- Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) members
- Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) members
- KDE staff members
- Classroom educators (early-, mid-, and late-career)
- School and district administrators (representing urban, suburban, and rural districts)
- Educator preparation program faculty
- Education-focused community stakeholders

Design Overview:

Phase 1 Group Formation & Preparation	Phase 2 Small Group Discussions and Stay Interviews	Phase 3 Analysis and Synthesis	Phase 4 Reporting and Dissemination
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Form three small groups, one for each research question.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use facilitation guides to gather personal insights and recommendations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore themes from the small group discussions and stay interviews.	Prepare a summary report including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key themes from each group

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure appropriate representation in geography, professional roles, school level, and teaching experience. • Share pre-session materials including guiding questions and discussion norms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboratively generate possible strategies, innovations, and policy considerations. • Record and transcribe with consent for later synthesis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify patterns, unique insights, and diverging views. • Review other existing data sources (e.g., Impact Kentucky Working Conditions survey). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct quotes from participants • Recommended strategies and supports • Implications for policy and practice <p>Deliver presentations to EPSB and KBE.</p>
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Proposed Action Item:

I would ask the board to entertain a motion to approve the creation of special committees—appointed by the KBE and EPSB chairs and composed of KBE members, EPSB members, KDE staff, and external partners—for the purpose of understanding and supporting Kentucky’s educator workforce, with a particular focus on factors influencing educator retention and the role of vibrant learning environments in promoting teacher satisfaction and career persistence.