



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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June 30, 2025

The Honorable L. Louise Lucas, Chair
Senate Finance and Appropriations
General Assembly Building, Room 1404
201 North 9th Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

The Honorable Luke E. Torian, Chair
Chair, House Appropriations
General Assembly Building, Room 1223
201 North 9th Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

The Honorable Ghazala F. Hashmi, Chair
Senate Education and Health
General Assembly Building, Room 616
201 North 9th Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

The Honorable Sam Rasoul, Chair
House Education
General Assembly Building, Room 910
201 North 9th Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Chairs Lucas, Torian, Hashmi and Rasoul:

I am pleased to submit the enclosed report on the 2024 Virginia School Survey on Climate and Working Conditions, as required by [Item 123.G](#), (Chapter 2, 2024 SSI). The Appropriation Act provides that the “survey may include questions regarding school leadership, teacher leadership, teacher autonomy, demands on teachers' time, student conduct management, professional development, instructional practices and support, new teacher support, community engagement and support, and facilities and other resources.” The Virginia Department of Education surveyed classroom instructors and staff on their perceptions of school climate and working conditions. The report summarizes statewide findings on teacher perceptions of the learning environment, professional support, their relationships with students, and school leadership.

If you require additional information, please contact Rob Gilstrap, Assistant Superintendent of Educator Preparation and Licensure at (804) 750-8190 or rob.gilstrap@doe.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emily Anne Gullickson".

Emily Anne Gullickson, M.Ed. J.D.
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Enclosure

c: The Honorable Aimee Rogstad Guidera

REPORT ON THE 2024 VIRGINIA SCHOOL SURVEY OF CLIMATE AND WORKING CONDITIONS

Summary of State-level Results for Virginia Public High Schools

June 2025 Item 123.G, (Chapter 2, 2024 SSI)



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From January through March 2024, the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) jointly administered the 2024 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions (the Virginia School Survey) to classroom instructors and staff in Virginia public schools serving grades 9 through 12. The survey was also administered to students in grades 9 through 12; DCJS reported these results separately on the [Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety website](#). The Virginia School Survey represents the continued partnership that meets DCJS's legislative mandate to conduct a secondary school (grades 6 through 12) climate survey and VDOE's legislative mandate to conduct a working conditions survey of all licensed school personnel. It should be noted that this report is based solely on data collected from teachers during the 2024 survey administration. A significant delay in the data delivery to VDOE occurred due to the survey contractor, in partnership with DCJS, transitioning to a new platform. Additionally, because the Virginia School Survey alternates annually between surveying elementary/middle and high school classroom teachers, year-to-year comparisons should only be made between alternating years (e.g., 2022 and 2024), both of which targeted high school teachers, to ensure consistency in the respondent population and the comparability of results.

The 2024 survey results indicate that teachers reported positive perceptions of overall climate and working conditions. The data indicated that there was a six percent increase in teachers who agreed or strongly agreed that overall, their school was a good place to work and learn since 2022 (up from 63.6 percent to 67.4 percent). The 2024 results showed promising improvement in the domains of retention from the 2022 survey. According to the 2024 survey results, there was a seven percent increase of teachers who indicated they intended to continue teaching at their current school (from 76.6 percent to 81.9).

The 2024 teacher survey results reflect continued strengths in key areas of school climate and working conditions, with particularly high ratings for teacher autonomy, collegiality, student–adult relationships, and rigorous instruction, indicating that teachers feel trusted, supported, and empowered in their instructional roles. Most indicators remained stable or improved compared to 2022 demonstrating a generally positive teaching environment.

While the survey findings are largely positive, a few areas emerged where additional support may be needed. Demands on teacher's time received the lowest average rating, reflecting ongoing concerns about workload and time management. Measures such as student engagement, relationship among students, and managing student behavior received relatively lower scores, consistent with past survey results from pre-pandemic and pointing to continued opportunities to improve the student experience in high schools.

Looking ahead, DCJS and VDOE co-administered the Virginia School Survey during the 2024–2025 school year, focusing on school climate and working conditions among elementary and middle schools serving grades 6 through 8.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY FOR SURVEY

The 2024 Virginia School Survey administration represented a continued partnership between VDOE and DCJS to meet the agencies' respective legislative mandates for a secondary school climate survey, required by the [*Code of Virginia § 22.1-279.8*](#), and a working conditions survey, required by [*Item 123.G, Chapter 2, 2024 SSI Acts of Assembly*](#). Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VT) also supported this effort through a DCJS contract for survey administration.

The 2024 Virginia School Survey builds upon the successful administration of consolidated survey requirements for the first time in 2021.¹ DCJS and VDOE administered three versions of the survey during the 2024 administration cycle:

- a student survey for high school students,
- a classroom instructors survey for teachers and teacher's aides in high schools, and
- a staff survey for other licensed professionals and any interested non-licensed staff in high schools.

This report focuses on survey results from high school teachers consistent with VDOE's reporting requirements. Student survey results are reported elsewhere.² Results from the Virginia School Survey provide insights on teachers' perceptions of the school leadership and support, instructional practices and professional development, time and resource demands, and the overall teaching and learning environment. The survey is not intended to be evaluative but may be useful for understanding areas of strength and opportunity within school buildings. In addition, the 2024 survey results may provide schools and divisions with additional information to monitor ongoing progress towards a healthy and vibrant learning and working environment.

As was noted in the executive summary, this report is based solely on data collected from teachers during the 2024 survey administration. A significant delay in the data delivery to VDOE occurred due to the survey contractor, in partnership with DCJS, transitioning to a new platform.

¹ https://www.dcls.virginia.gov/sites/dcls.virginia.gov/files/law-enforcement/files/vscs/2021_virginia_school_survey_technical_report.pdf

² <https://www.dcls.virginia.gov/virginia-center-school-and-campus-safety/school-safety-survey/secondary-school-climate-survey>

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

DCJS and VDOE administered the Virginia School Survey to public schools serving students in grades 9 through 12, between January 11 and March 22, 2024. Schools were required to administer the survey to all licensed teachers in any public schools serving high school students. All surveys were completed online using school-specific access codes. This approach permitted each response to be linked back to the school while protecting respondents' identities. DCJS and VDOE provided each school with their access codes, and they were responsible for distributing them to their classroom instructors, staff, and students.

A review copy of the survey for classroom instructors and staff is available on the [VDOE website](#).

Communication and Outreach

To support implementation, DCJS and VDOE provided a communications template for schools and divisions to share with teachers. The template explained the purpose of the survey, assured respondents of the anonymity of their responses, and included detailed instructions for accessing the survey.

During the administration period, DCJS maintained an online survey response tracking system that schools and divisions could access to monitor the number of surveys submitted from their school and the response rates in near real-time. Schools aimed for a response rate of at least 80 percent per respondent group. The survey team sent automated email reminders to designated points of contact at key milestones – at the beginning, midpoint, and end of their survey window – to support participation. For schools that had not yet met the 50 percent response rate threshold, the survey team conducted targeted follow-up. These messages included school-specific response rate data, links to the monitoring dashboard, and reminders to re-share the access instructions. These efforts were part of a broader strategy to promote participation and ensure data quality.

Sample

The school sample consisted of over 350 schools serving grades 9 through 12 across all 131 school divisions. Parents were notified at least 30 days ahead of the survey and could opt their student out of the survey if they chose. All Virginia public schools serving high school students in grades 9 through 12 received instructions that directed them to invite all licensed teachers to complete the survey. Based on the schools' reports, 17,026 teachers participated in the survey.

Reporting

One goal of the Virginia School Survey is to provide data to divisions and schools to inform local efforts following survey completion. To support this goal, DCJS and VDOE generated and distributed two types of reports to divisions and schools. First, high schools (and their division) received a Snapshot Report provided they had at least ten responses and a response rate of at least 50 percent. The Snapshot Reports, which included the distribution of responses to each survey question, were designed to quickly provide data back to schools in an easy-to-use format. Second, the Division and School Summary Reports included data to facilitate comparisons across schools within a division, to the region, and to the entire state. The Summary Reports were distributed and highlighted key survey questions as well as measures of climate and

working conditions (e.g., aggregates of survey items to reflect higher-order constructs such as student engagement, relationships among students, teacher leadership and autonomy, and managing student behavior)

GLOBAL PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL CLIMATE AND WORKING CONDITIONS

The Virginia School Survey posed several questions to teachers to assess global perceptions of school climate and working conditions. Responses to these items reflect teachers’ overall impressions of their school. Table 1 summarizes responses to a sample global climate and working conditions question by respondent type.

In response to the prompt, “Overall, my school is a good place to work and learn,” 67.4 percent of teachers agreed or strongly agreed – an increase of six percent from 63.6 percent in 2022.

Table 1. Global Climate and Working Conditions: Mean Ratings and Percentages of Response Categories

Global Climate Measure	Year	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Overall, my school is a good place to work and learn.	2024	4.7	4.1	4.1	5.9	18.4	42.8	24.6
	2023	4.7	4.7	4.3	5.4	18.0	40.7	29.1
	2022	4.5	5.0	5.2	6.5	19.6	41.4	22.2
	2021	5.0	3.6	1.4	2.5	11.3	40.3	40.9

Note: Responses are based on a six-item scale ranging from “1-Strongly Disagree” to “6-Strongly Agree.” As such, mean responses at 4.50 or above are generally considered to be positive.

Note: While multiple years of data are displayed, comparisons should be made between alternating years (2022 and 2024) because the Virginia School Survey alternates between high school and elementary/middle school instructors.

IMPROVEMENT OVER TIME IN WORKING CONDITIONS FOR TEACHERS

The Virginia School Survey included several questions to capture respondents’ perceived changes over time in working conditions. Overall, 32.9 percent of teachers stated that their working conditions had stayed about the same (see Table 2). Teachers were split between reporting working conditions at their individual schools becoming better (27.2 percent) and becoming worse (27.3 percent).

Table 2. Perceived Change in Working Conditions by Teachers: Percentages of Response Categories

Perceived Change Measure	Year	Much Worse	Worse	Slightly Worse	Same	Slightly Better	Better	Much Better	I don't Know
Over the last year, working conditions in this school have become...	2024	4.7	9.9	13.6	32.9	10.8	12.1	4.3	12.7
	2023	5.4	10.6	13.1	28.9	8.4	11.6	6.2	15.8
	2022	13.2	21.6	20.0	24.3	7.4	9.2	4.4	-
	2021	4.8	-	13.7	36.2	13.7	-	14.1	17.5

Note: The 2021 administration used an abbreviated scale to measure this which used a six-item scale rather than the seven-item scale used in the subsequent administrations. Additionally, 2023 survey added an eighth response option –“I don’t know”– that was not present in the 2021 and 2022 administrations.

HIGH RETENTION OF TEACHERS

The Virginia School Survey asked questions about teachers’ intentions to remain at their school or in education. In response to a question about their immediate professional plans, **81.9 percent of surveyed teachers intend to continue working at their current school (see Table 3) and 88.6 percent of teachers indicated they plan to remain in the teaching profession.**

An additional 3.8 percent reported they would continue working in education but pursue a non-teaching position. Of all respondents, 2.4 percent reported they plan to retire, 4.2 percent said they would leave education to work in a non-education field, and one percent said they would leave education for other reasons.

Table 3. Summary of Immediate Professional Plans Reported by Teachers

Immediate Professional Plans	2024 (%)	2023 (%)	2022 (%)	2021 (%)
Continue teaching at my current school	81.9	77.8	76.6	83.6
Continue teaching in this division but leave this school	3.0	5.3	3.1	3.4
Continue teaching in this state but leave this division	2.8	3.0	3.5	2.7
Continue teaching in a state other than Virginia	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.2
Continue working in education but pursue a non-teaching position	3.8	4.6	4.8	3.2
Leave education to retire	2.4	2.2	2.9	2.1
Leave education to work in a non-education field	4.2	5.0	6.7	2.7
Leave education for other reasons	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.1

SUMMARY OF SURVEY MEASURES FOR TEACHERS

Teachers from schools serving high school students provided their insights for a broad range of topics measured in the teacher school climate survey. Table 4 shows each measure reflects a distinct aspect of teachers’ experiences and perceptions within their school environment. The

descriptions outlined below define how each measure was represented in the survey items, offering context for interpreting the results that follow.

Table 4. Key Measures and Descriptions in the School Climate Survey

Measures	Descriptions
Teacher Autonomy	The teacher’s perceptions on freedom and professional discretion in instruction, planning and assessment.
Respect	Whether teachers’ decisions feel valued, respected in their position, and whether they see policies improving at their high school.
Demand on Teacher’s Time	Whether teachers have the necessary planning and instructional time built into their day.
Teacher Collegiality	The extent to which teachers trust, respect, and support their coworkers.
Physical Environment	The adequacy of the school classrooms and facilities.
Student Engagement	How involved, applied, and interested students were in their classes.
Relationships among Students	The quality of peer relationships, including care, respect, and positive interaction among students.
Relationships between Students and Adults	The respect, care, and communication between students and teachers.
Rigorous Instruction	How teaching encouraged critical thinking, reasoning, and diverse perspectives.
Professional Growth Opportunities	The availability and quality of professional development and support.
Managing Student Behavior	The effectiveness and consistency of behavior policies and procedures.
Engaging with Families	Efforts to build positive partnerships between teachers and the student’s families.
School Leadership	Perceptions of the school administration’s communication, assessment, and support for teachers’ performance.

Table 5 summarizes teachers’ average responses across the key measures. **Seven of the thirteen measures in 2024 received average responses near or above the positive benchmark of 4.5, indicating generally favorable perceptions of school climate and working conditions.** *Teacher Autonomy* (5.0), *Teacher Collegiality* (4.9), *Physical Environment* (4.7), *Relationships between Students and Adults* (4.8), *Rigorous Instruction* (4.8), *School Leadership* (4.7), and *Engaging with Families* (4.5) all scored at or above the 4.5 threshold. **These areas reflect strong relational and instructional environments as perceived by teachers.**

Again, it is important to compare 2024 data to 2022, as the survey was administered to high school teachers in the even-numbered years. Some notable improved areas are *Professional Growth Opportunities* and *Respect*. In 2024, the mean rating for *Professional Growth Opportunities* was 4.2, which was a notable improvement from 2022 (mean response of 3.9).

Additionally, *Respect* also had an increase from a mean response of 3.9 in 2022 to a mean response of 4.2 in 2024. Both improvements indicated a positive shift towards valuing teachers' teaching profession. Most survey measures remained stable or showed modest improvement, indicating a generally positive and consistent climate in schools over time.

However, teachers overall also reported negative perceptions of demands on teachers' time, with the mean response of 3.9 being the lowest. In addition, demands on teacher's time saw a slight decline from 4.1 in 2022 to 3.9 in 2024, indicating that workload and time pressures continue to be a challenge for educators but are improving. Slightly less positive perceptions were also found in the areas of student engagement, relationship among students, and managing student behavior (mean response of 4.0, 4.2, and 4.2 respectively). Such measures have had similar scores in past administrations and indicate ongoing work to better these domains within public high schools.

Table 5. Summary of Teachers' Mean Response by Survey Measure Overall

Measure	2024	2023	2022	2021
Teacher Autonomy	5.0	4.8	4.9	4.7
Respect	4.2	4.3	3.9	4.1
Demand on Teacher's Time	3.9	3.4	4.1	4.0
Teacher Collegiality	4.9	5.0	4.8	NA
Physical Environment	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.9
Student Engagement	4.0	4.6	4.0	4.6
Relationships among Students	4.2	4.4	4.2	4.9
Relationships between Students and Adults	4.8	5.1	5.0	5.3
Rigorous Instruction	4.8	5.0	4.7	4.9
Professional Growth Opportunities	4.2	4.3	3.9	4.4
Managing Student Behavior	4.2	4.4	4.1	4.7
Engaging with Families	4.5	4.9	4.5	4.9
School Leadership	4.7	4.9	4.6	4.9

Note: Responses are based on a six-item scale ranging from "1-Strongly Disagree" to "6-Strongly Agree." As such, mean responses at 4.50 or above are generally considered to be positive.

Additional Note: The 2021 Administration did not collect data on Teacher Collegiality.

The 2024 survey administration asked teachers in their first three years of teaching whether they received any of four different strategies to support new teachers (Table 6). Respondents were most likely to be formally assigned a mentor (80.6 percent). Fewer had formal time to meet with a mentor (42.0 percent) and had release time to observe other teachers (31.5 percent). Teachers were least likely to have a reduced workload (13.8 percent).

Table 6. New Teacher Supports Overall

	2024 (%)	2023 (%)	2022 (%)	2021 (%)
Formally assigned a mentor				
Yes	80.8	64.0	87.7	87.8
No	14.7	24.5	7.1	6.1
Do not know	4.5	11.4	5.2	6.1
Reduced Workload				
Yes	13.8	18.1	15.8	14.8
No	69.1	55.9	64.9	62.4
Do not know	17.1	26.0	19.3	22.8
Release time to observe other teachers				
Yes	31.5	35.1	30.9	33.3
No	56.8	50.0	49.9	43.2
Do not know	11.7	14.9	19.2	23.5
Formal time to meet with mentor				
Yes	42.0	35.7	47.6	49.3
No	49.4	49.9	41.3	36.0
Do not know	8.6	14.5	11.1	14.7

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Results from the 2024 administration of the Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions provide a point-in-time estimate of teachers' perceptions of school climate and working conditions. With participation from 17,026 teachers representing more than 350 schools, the survey results offer a meaningful snapshot of current conditions in public high schools and highlight areas of both strength and opportunity for improvement.

Overall, teachers reported broadly positive perceptions of their working environment. Key strengths include high levels of teacher autonomy, strong collegial relationships, rigor of instruction, and positive relationships between students and adults. This indicates a strong interpersonal and professional environment in Virginia's public high schools. Perceptions of respect and professional growth opportunities have improved since 2022, suggesting a growing sense of value and investment in the teaching profession.

Of the teachers who **participated in the survey, over 80 percent indicated they intended to continue working at their current school.** This was a promising improvement from 2022 and reflects stronger stability in Virginia's teaching workforce.

Areas in need of improvement include student engagement, relationship among students, and managing student behavior, suggesting the need for continued focus on strengthening the student experience and peer culture within high schools. Also, teachers continued to express concern about the demands on their time, with this mean receiving the lowest average score (3.9). These remain persistent challenges as previous survey administrations have noted. Survey results are intended to inform local conversations about climate and working conditions within schools.

While state-level results convey how teachers feel about their school, additional conversations about school-level data can identify why they feel as they do and what changes could be made. VDOE encourages building administrators and division leaders to use local survey results to identify school improvement goals.

The Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions continues with survey administration in 2025. The 2025 administration added content that aims to capture additional data on teacher's time to assess potential solutions. DCJS and VDOE will continue to refine the school climate and working conditions measures included in the surveys.