

# The hidden impact of COVID-19 on Texas educators

## *Rising health concerns, lower risk tolerance and benefit gaps*



The prevalence of impromptu online and hybrid learning environments in 2020 has dramatically changed teachers' workloads. As of November, 78% of Texas educators surveyed by Horace Mann were spending more time working than they were a year ago — and more than 37% were enjoying their jobs less than they did this time last year. Citing health and financial concerns, 22% of Texas educators are now considering leaving the profession or taking a leave of absence due to COVID-19, according to the November Horace Mann survey.

A total of 44% responded that they did not feel secure or only somewhat secure about their district's health and safety precautions. Further, many educators believe there are gaps in their employer benefits. About 78% were concerned their benefits would not cover unplanned time off due to a health-related issue, and 62% were concerned their health insurance would not adequately cover illnesses or health issues.

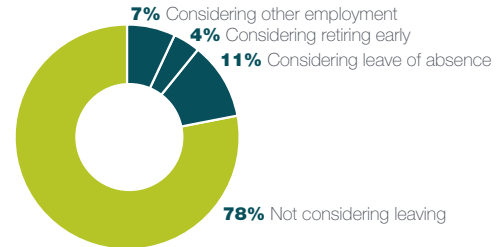
*"I love what I do, but when you have to face bills, it is disheartening. I can't make it on my own income."*  
 — Texas Fine Arts teacher

While greater financial support from federal and state governments would help to address the issues, school districts can independently take steps to encourage educator retention. School districts can provide more robust voluntary benefits to address gaps; offer programs to help educators more fully understand their medical benefits and avoid surprise bills; and provide secure online access to educational materials or a hotline to assist employees with their health and financial questions.

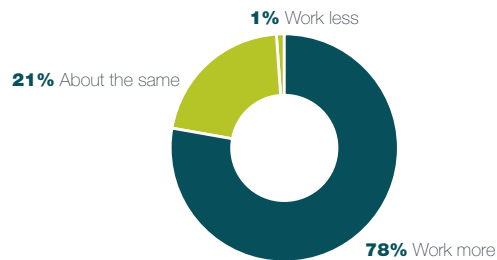
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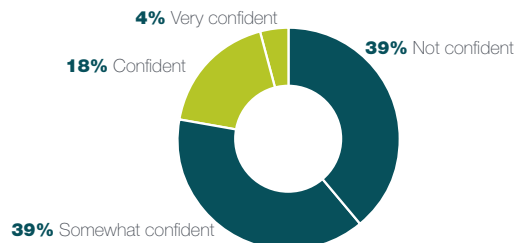
**Educators considering leaving due to COVID-19**



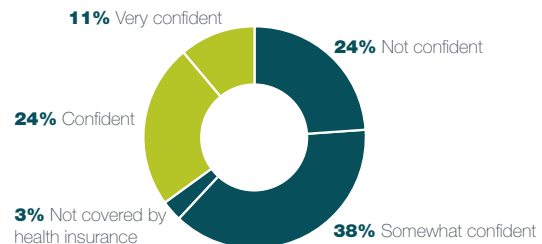
**Educator workload vs. a year ago**



**Educators' confidence that employer benefits will cover unplanned time off arising from a health-related issue**



**Educators' confidence that health insurance will adequately cover illnesses and health issues**



*This research is based on a survey of 83 Texas educators, including public school K-12 teachers, administrators and support personnel. The survey was fielded by Horace Mann in October and November 2020. SI-0000039TX (Dec. 20)*