



THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

UTAH EDUCATION
POLICY CENTER

EDUCATOR MOTIVATION, SATISFACTION, AND PERSISTENCE

*Educator Career and Pathway Survey (ECAPS) for Teachers
2019 Results*

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Introduction

The Educator Career and Pathway Survey (ECAPS) for Teachers was developed by the Utah Education Policy Center (UEPC) at the University of Utah in 2016. The ECAPS for Teachers addresses issues of teacher supply and demand, working conditions for educators, and influences on educator decision-making.

First administered in Fall 2017, the ECAPS for Teachers continues to provide insight into Utah's teaching force. In its second administration and again in partnership with the Utah State Board of Education (USBE), we advance our understanding of the factors that contribute to educators' career-related decisions.

Specifically, the ECAPS for Teachers explores teachers' decisions to enter the teaching profession; the influence of various factors on their decision to remain in, move within, or leave education; satisfaction with working conditions; and career intentions.¹ Again, the ECAPS for Teachers offers a unique perspective on these issues as it draws directly from the voices and experiences of Utah's teaching core. Findings from the survey can be used to inform policies and practices in recruiting, developing, and supporting teachers.

ECAPS Administration

In Fall 2019, the ECAPS for Teachers was emailed to all licensed teachers in Utah. Licensed educators were contacted using their Comprehensive *Administration of Credentials for Teachers in Utah Schools (CACTUS)* email.¹ For the purposes of our analysis and reporting, teachers are categorized as one of the following²:

- Stayers:** taught in a public school setting in Utah in 2018-19 and continued teaching in the same school in 2019-20
- Movers:** taught in a public school setting in Utah in 2018-19 and began teaching in a different school in 2019-20
- Leavers:** taught in a public school setting in Utah 2018-2019 and did not return to teaching in Utah in 2019-20
- New Teachers:** taught in a public school setting in Utah in 2019-20 for the first time
- Returning Teachers:** stopped teaching at some point in their careers but returned to teaching in Utah in 2019-20

¹ Educators were contacted using the primary email address provided in the CACTUS database.

² The analyses used de-identified data to protect the confidentiality of respondents.

The ECAPS survey was administered in an online survey platform.³ Of 39,047 educators appearing in the CACTUS database in 2018-19 and/or 2019-20, a total of 33,519 educators (or 85.8%) were “eligible” for participation (i.e., they were teachers or educator specialists in 18-19 or a new/returning teacher in 19-20)⁴.

Following receipt of participant information in October 2019, this administration of the ECAPS was launched in November 2019 and remained open for 6 weeks through December 2019. Email reminders were sent directly to licensed educators. This initial report provides descriptive information regarding teachers’ responses to the survey. Responses for teacher groups—stayers, movers, leavers, new teachers, and returning teachers—are also presented. Our next analysis will offer further data disaggregated by teacher and school characteristics, and further along with analyses of open-ended responses to survey items.

³ The licensed software used was Qualtrics (v. 2.0).

⁴ Within the context of this report, we consider individuals eligible for ECAPS if they were Teachers or School Based Specialists per CACTUS Educator Categories documentation published on 04/19/16 (<https://www.schools.utah.gov/file/95fbc2ac-0531-488c-a91d-6cc5a9d77727>).

Survey Respondents

In total ECAPS received 10,329 responses for the 2019 administration. Final usable data for this study included 8,816 teachers and teacher specialists (or 26.7%) who responded to the survey⁵. In this brief, sample size refers to the number of teachers who responded to a specific question. Again, no individual nor identifiable information are reported.

As illustrated in **Table 1. Respondents by Category**, 8,816 participants provided their teaching status—stayer, mover, leaver, new or returning—including 8,107 of whom taught in 2018-19 school year (**Figure 1. Respondents Teaching in 2018-19**) and 709 of whom taught in 2019-20 but not 2018-19 (**Figure 2. New and Returning Teachers Teaching in 2019-20**).

Table 1. Respondents by Category

	N	Percentage
Stayers	7412	84.1%
Movers	652	7.4%
Leavers	43	0.5%
New	500	5.7%
Returning	139	1.6%
New or Returning ^a	70	0.8%
Total	8816	100.0%

^a These respondents did not specify whether they had previously taught, only that they had not taught in 2018-19.

Figure 1. Respondents Teaching in 2018-19

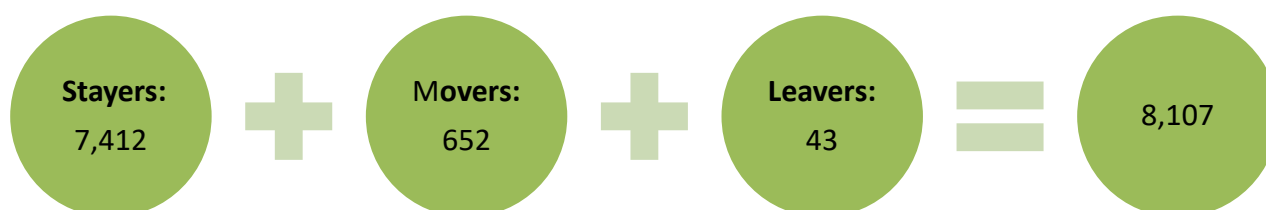
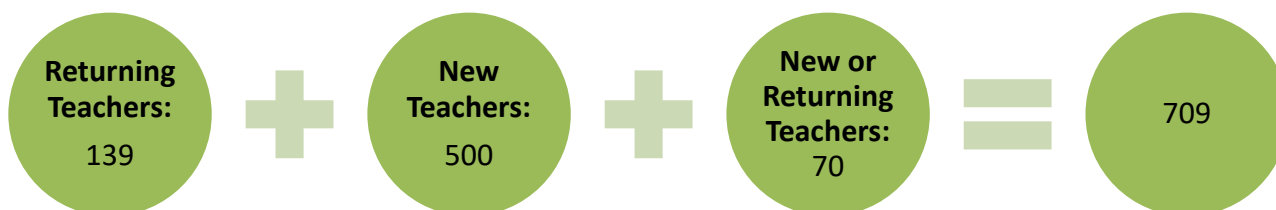


Figure 2. New and Returning Teachers Teaching in 2019-20



⁵ Of the 10,329 respondents, 1,513 individuals indicated a teaching category that was different from CACTUS records. For example, if a teacher indicated that she changed schools from 2018-19 to 2019-20 but was observed at the same school in the CACTUS data, they were excluded from our analyses because they completed the incorrect version of the survey.

Why Do Teachers Enter the Profession?

Teachers were asked to specify the extent to which various factors influenced their decision to become a teacher. Eighteen factors were provided for teachers to rate on a scale of 1 (“not at all influential”) to 5 (“extremely influential”). In total, 8,370 of 8,816 teachers responded to this set of items.

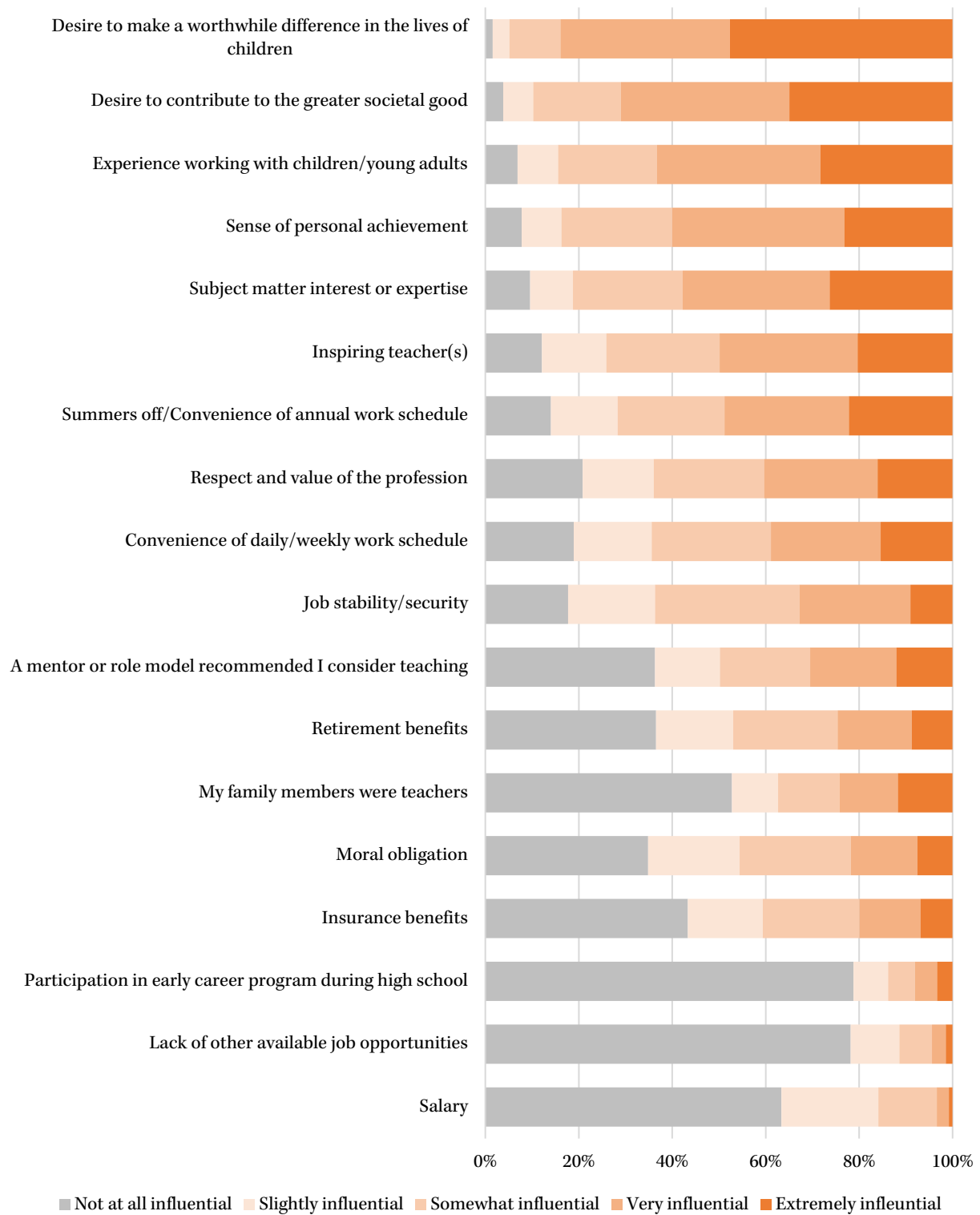
Figure 3. Influence of Various Factors on a Teacher’s Decision to Enter the Profession shows all possible factors in descending order, based on the percentage of participants who responded with either “very influential” or “extremely influential,” represented in the two darkest shades of orange on the right-hand side of the figure. The factors most commonly rated as very influential or extremely influential in participants’ decisions to become a teacher were:

- Desire to make a worthwhile difference in the lives of children (84%),
- Desire to contribute to the greater societal good (71%),
- Experience working with children/young adults (63%),
- Sense of personal achievement (60%), and
- Subject matter interest or expertise (58%).

The factors most commonly rated as “slightly influential” or “not at all influential” in participants’ decisions to become a teacher were:

- Lack of other available job opportunities (89%),
- Participation in an early career program during high school (86%),
- Salary (84%),
- Family members were teachers (63%), and
- Insurance benefits (59%).

Figure 3. Influence of Various Factors on a Teacher's Decision to Enter the Profession

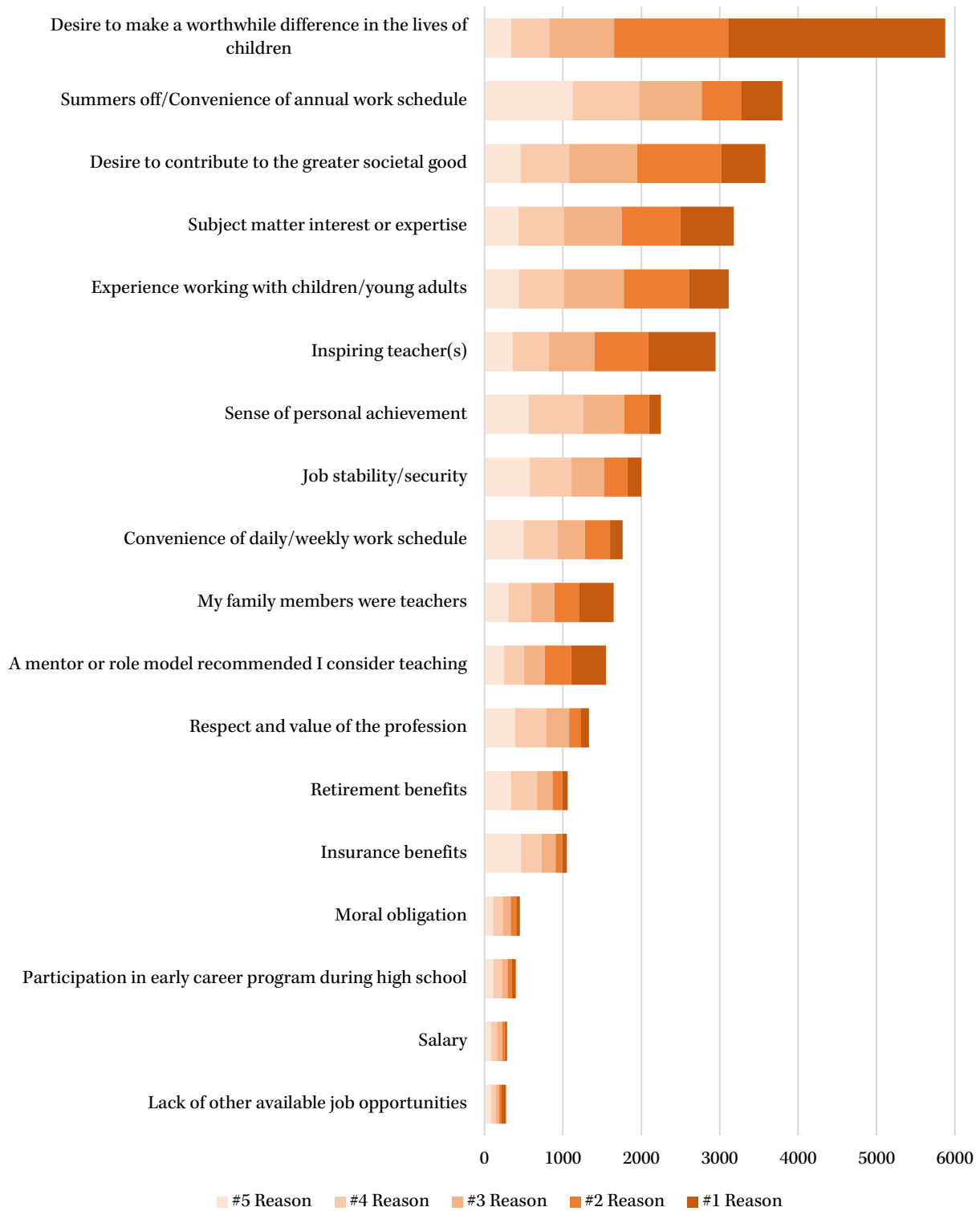


Next, teachers were asked to select their top five reasons from among these 18 factors for entering teaching and rank them in order of importance on a scale of 1 to 5. We counted the frequency with which each factor was cited as one of the top five reasons to enter teaching and then ordered these factors from most frequently cited to least frequently cited, as seen in **Figure 4. Top Ranked Factors that Influence Teachers to Enter the Profession.**

To a large extent, the most commonly cited top five reasons to become a teacher mirror our findings in **Figure 3.** For example, the most commonly cited number one reason to enter teaching was a *desire to make a worthwhile difference in the lives of children*, with 2,770 teachers ranking this as their number one reason to teach. In total, nearly 6,000 respondents indicated this as one of their top five reasons to enter the teaching profession. The second most common top reason to enter teaching is the convenience of the annual work schedule and summers off, though substantially fewer teachers (526) ranked this as their number one reason. Other frequently selected top factors included a desire to contribute to the greater societal good, subject matter interest or expertise, and experience working with children and young adults.

We also compared the top five factors by teaching category to determine whether there are any differences in the motivations of stayers, movers, leavers, returning teachers, and new teachers. Although there was some slight variation in the ordering of top reasons to become a teacher across groups, we did not find any substantive differences by teaching category. Across all groups, a desire to make a difference in the lives of children was identified as the most important reason for entering the teaching profession.

Figure 4. Top Ranked Factors that Influence Teachers to Enter the Profession



In addition to considering this collective set of reasons that teachers enter the profession, we also conducted a factor analysis of these survey responses to better understand the broader reasons that individuals choose teaching. Through these statistical analyses, we found that teachers’ reasons for entering the teaching profession grouped into two major areas – intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. As depicted in **Figure 5a. Influence of Intrinsic Factors on a Teacher’s Decision to Enter the Profession**, intrinsic reasons for entering teaching include motivations related to making a difference in the lives of children, a desire to contribute to the greater societal good, and experience working with children and young adults. **Figure 5b. Influence of Extrinsic Factors on a Teacher’s Decision to Enter the Profession** depicts extrinsic reasons teachers enter the profession, such as scheduling, job security, and benefits. *We note here that intrinsic factors were more commonly cited as highly influential than extrinsic factors.* For example, the most common intrinsic reason to enter teaching, a desire to make a difference in the lives of children, was cited as “very influential” or “extremely” influential by 84% of respondents, while only 59% of teachers identified the annual work schedule as “very influential” or “extremely influential.”

Figure 5a. Influence of Intrinsic Factors on a Teacher’s Decision to Enter the Profession

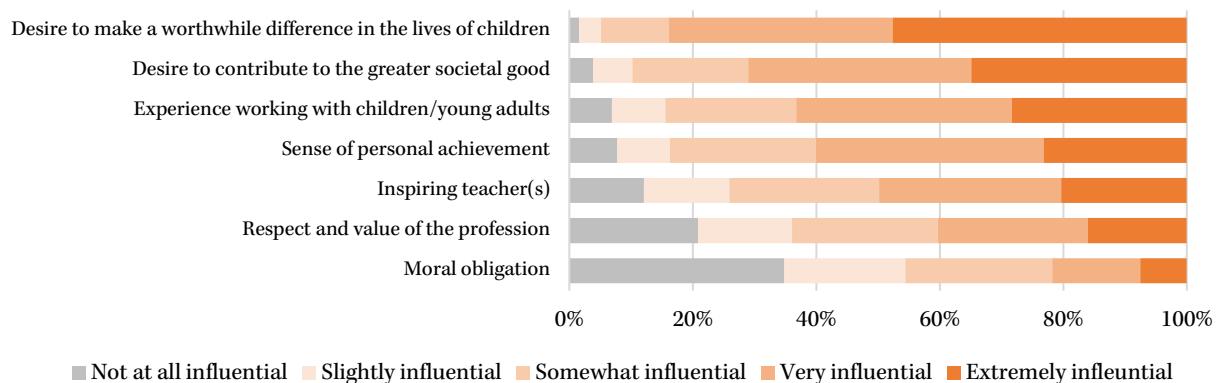
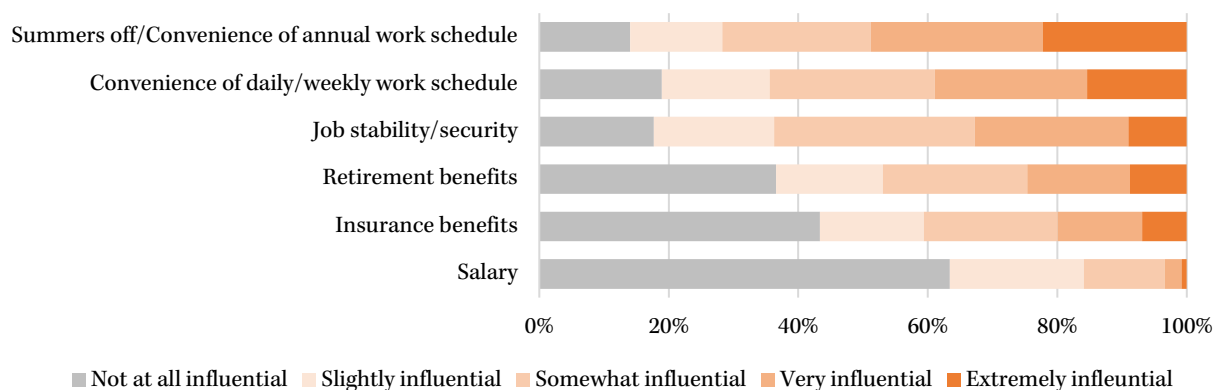


Figure 5b. Influence of Extrinsic Factors on a Teacher’s Decision to Enter the Profession



Why Do Teachers Remain in the Profession?

Respondents who taught in both 2018-19 and 2019-20 (stayers and movers) were asked to evaluate the influence of 30 factors on their decisions to remain in the teaching profession. These 30 factors overlap substantially with the 18 factors provided as reasons to become a teacher and also include additional factors related to working environment. Teachers were asked to rate these factors on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 represents “not at all influential” and 5 represents “extremely influential,” represented in the two darkest shades of orange on the right-hand side of the figure. In total, 7,390 teachers, including stayers, movers, and returning teachers, responded to this question.

Similar to **Figure 3, Figure 6. Influence of Various Factors on a Teacher’s Decision to Remain in the Profession** displays all possible factors in descending order, based on the percentage of participants who responded with either “very influential” or “extremely influential.” These factors are quite similar to the reasons teachers indicated for becoming a teacher. The factors most commonly rated as very influential or extremely influential in participants’ decisions to remain a teacher were:

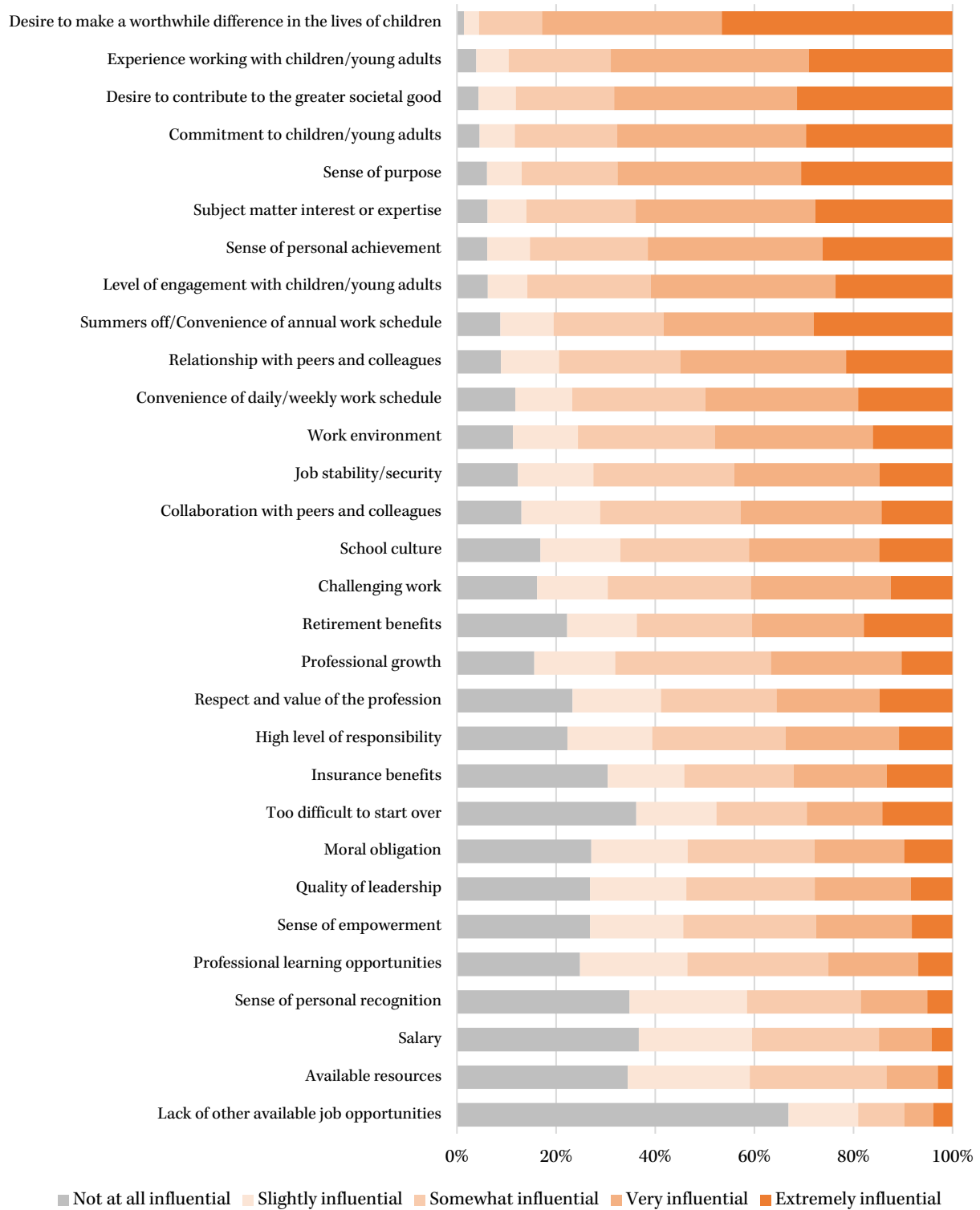
- Desire to make a worthwhile difference in the lives of children (83%),
- Experience working with children/young adults (69%),
- Desire to contribute to the greater societal good (68%),
- Commitment to children/young adults (68%), and
- Sense of purpose (68%).

The five factors with the most “slightly influential” or “not at all influential” responses in participants’ decisions to remain a teacher were:

- Lack of other available job opportunities (81%),
- Salary (60%),
- Available resources (59%),
- Sense of personal recognition (59%), and
- Too difficult to start over (52%).

Collectively, these findings suggest that teachers are primarily motivated to remain in teaching by more altruistic and intrinsically-focused factors, such as making a difference for children and contributing the society, rather than extrinsic factors such as lack of other opportunities and salary.

Figure 6. Influence of Various Factors on a Teacher's Decision to Remain in the Profession

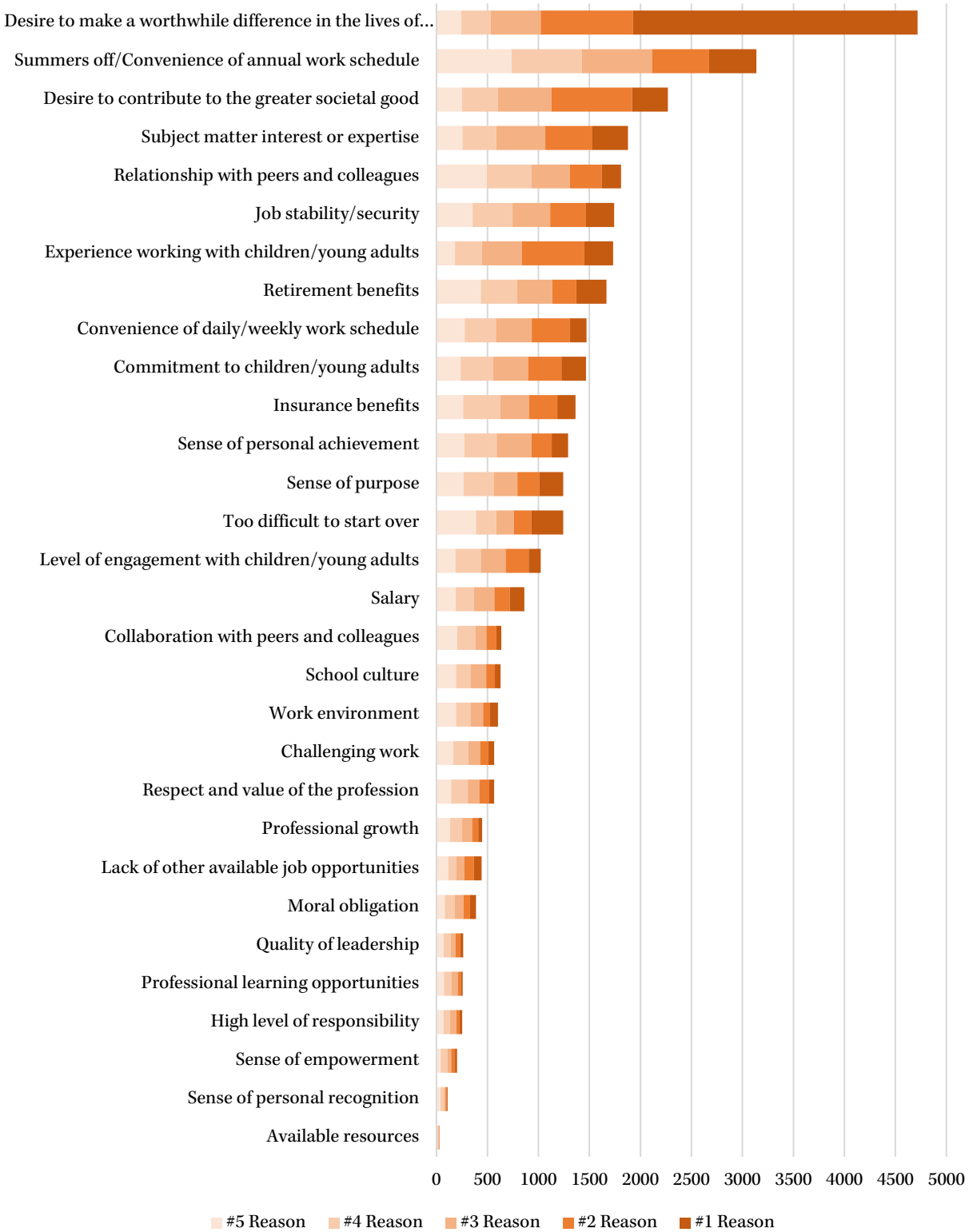


Next, teachers were asked to select their top five reasons for remaining in the teaching profession among these 30 factors and rank them in order of importance on a scale of 1 to 5. We counted the frequency with which each factor was cited as one of the top five reasons to enter teaching and then ordered these factors from most frequently cited to least frequently cited. The ten most frequently cited top factors are shown in **Figure 7. Top Ranked Factors that Influence Teachers to Remain in the Profession** in descending order.

As with our findings on why teachers choose to become teachers, the most commonly cited top five reasons to remain in teaching mirror our findings in **Figure 6**. The most commonly cited top reason to remain in teaching is a desire to make a worthwhile difference in the lives of children, with 4,717 teachers ranking this as one of their top five reasons to continue to teach. Other common reasons teachers indicated included convenient schedule, a desire to contribute to the greater societal good, subject matter interest or expertise, and relationship with colleagues. These reasons are nearly identical to the top ranked reasons teachers choose to enter teaching.

Similar to our analysis of why teachers enter teaching, we also compared these top five factors by teaching category to determine whether there are any differences in the motivations of stayers, movers, and returning teachers. Although there was some slight variation in the ordering of top reasons to remain a teacher across groups, we again did not find any substantive differences by teaching category. Across all groups, a desire to make a difference in the lives of children was identified as the most important reason for remaining in the teaching profession.

Figure 7. Top Ranked Factors that Influence Teachers to Remain in the Profession



Next, we again conducted a factor analysis of these responses for this question to better understand the broader reasons teachers choose to remain in the teaching profession. Here, we found that there are three general sets of factors that influence teachers, which we describe as student-focused factors, personal factors, and extrinsic factors. As shown in **Figure 8a. Influence of Student-Focused Factors on a Teacher’s Decision to Remain in the Profession**, nearly all teachers recognized the influence of students on their decision to continue to teach. For every student-focused factor besides moral obligation, over half of respondents responded with either “very influential” or “extremely influential,” demonstrating the important role students play in teachers’ decisions to remain in teaching. **Figure 8b. Influence of Personal Factors on a Teacher’s Decision to Remain in the Profession** illustrates the influence that various personal factors have on teachers. In this set of factors, we found that colleagues, work environment, and school culture are highly influential for many teachers. Finally, **Figure 8c. Influence of Extrinsic Factors on a Teacher’s Decision to Remain in the Profession** contains the extrinsic reasons teachers remain in the profession. These factors mirror the extrinsic reasons teachers enter the profession, with schedule and job security rated highly by respondents.

Figure 8a. Influence of Student-Focused Factors on a Teacher’s Decision to Remain in the Profession

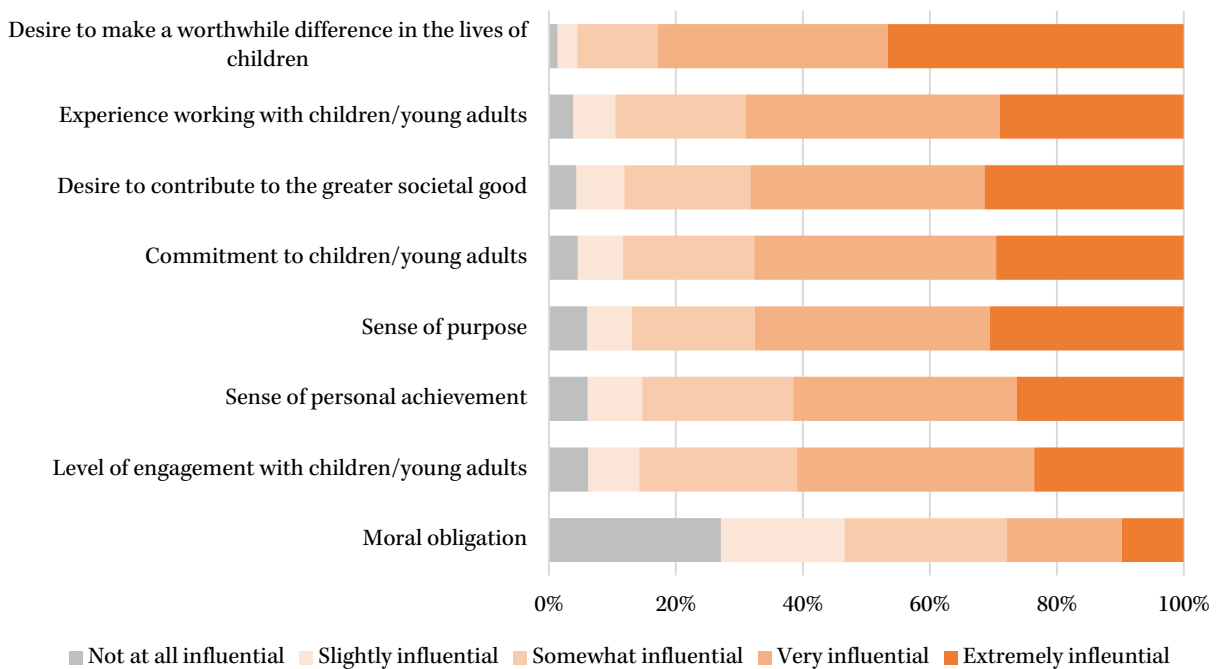


Figure 8b. Influence of Personal Factors on a Teacher's Decision to Remain in the Profession

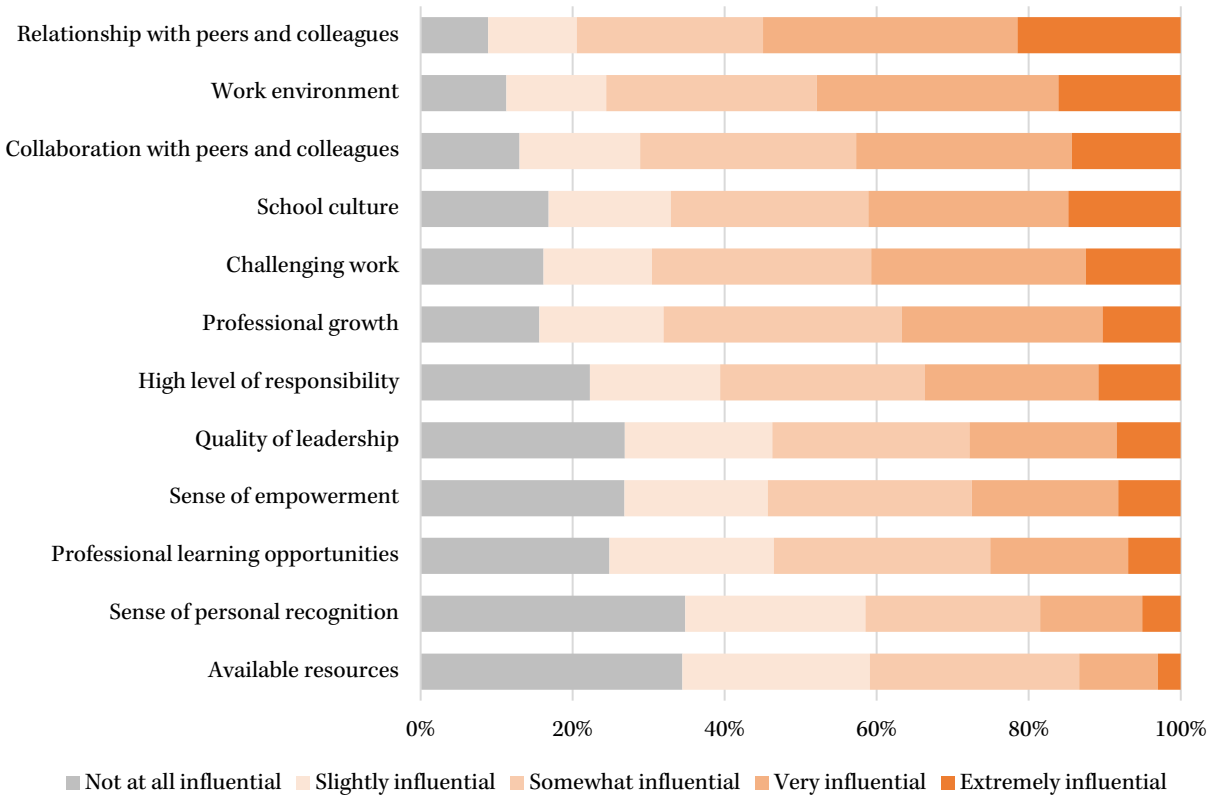
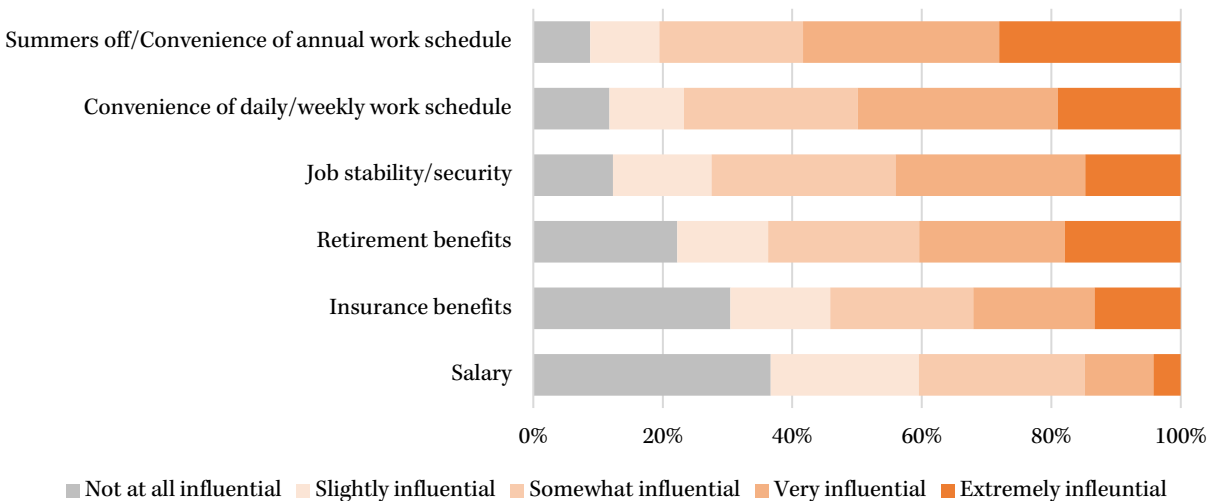


Figure 8c. Influence of Extrinsic Factors on a Teacher's Decision to Remain in the Profession



Teacher Satisfaction

Teachers were asked to describe their satisfaction with different aspects of their work, including their classrooms, their schools, student performance, professional support, economic factors, and leadership. Stayers, movers, and leavers were asked to reflect on the 2018-19 school year, and new and returning teachers described their perceptions of the initial months of the 2019-20 school year. Participants rated their level of satisfaction on a scale of 1-5, where 1 represents “not at all satisfied” and 5 represents “extremely satisfied.”

Figure 9. Stayers’ Satisfaction with Various Factors summarizes reports of satisfaction among 6,560 stayers who responded to the questions. Stayers most commonly reported that they were “highly satisfied” (which, in the context of this report means either “very satisfied” or “extremely satisfied”) with colleagues, working relationships, their job assignments, how ethically they were treated, and autonomy over their classrooms. At the other end of the spectrum, relatively few stayers reported high levels of satisfaction with student assessments/accountability, salary, reform, and performance-based compensation. These findings suggest, despite lacking financial compensation and negative views toward assessments and accountability, stayers are content with their day-to-day work, including interactions with their colleagues, how they are treated, and their classrooms. **Appendices A-E** at the end of this report provide additional details on how all teacher groups – new teachers, returning teachers, self-initiated movers, district-initiated movers, and leavers – rated all 46 satisfaction items in a format mirroring **Figure 9**.

To allow for comparison across all teacher groups, **Table 2. Factors Most Commonly Reported as “Highly Satisfied” by Respondent Group** depicts the five factors more commonly reported as “highly satisfied.” A total of 7,800 participants responded to this question. As illustrated in **Table 2**, there are relatively few differences among the teacher groups in regards to which aspects of teaching are commonly reported as “highly satisfied.” Across all teacher categories, colleagues were either the most or second-most common area of high satisfaction. Other commonly cited factors across subgroups included autonomy, job assignment, and additional factors related to colleagues, such as working relationships and collaboration.

Some factors were unique to particular subgroups. For example, job security was only rated as “highly satisfied” among self-initiated movers, and satisfaction with administration’s ability to encourage innovation was only cited as “highly satisfied” by returning teachers. Administration, for instance, only appeared among the five most commonly cited “highly satisfied” areas for new and returning teachers. New and returning teachers commonly reported feeling “highly satisfied” with how ethically they were treated, while this item did not appear among the top five factors for any other teacher group. UEPC’s future analyses will explore differences among teachers working in different types of schools.

Table 3. Factors Most Commonly Reported as “Dissatisfied” by Respondent Group parallels **Table 2** in its format while reporting factors that teachers labeled as either “not at all satisfied” or “slightly satisfied.” Across all groups, teachers commonly report being “dissatisfied” with performance-based compensation. Other factors that appeared across multiple groups included: reform measures, salary,

student discipline and behavior, and the impact of assessments and accountability. Unique to returning teachers was a highly “dissatisfied” rating for time commitment.

Figure 9. Stayers' Satisfaction with Various Factors

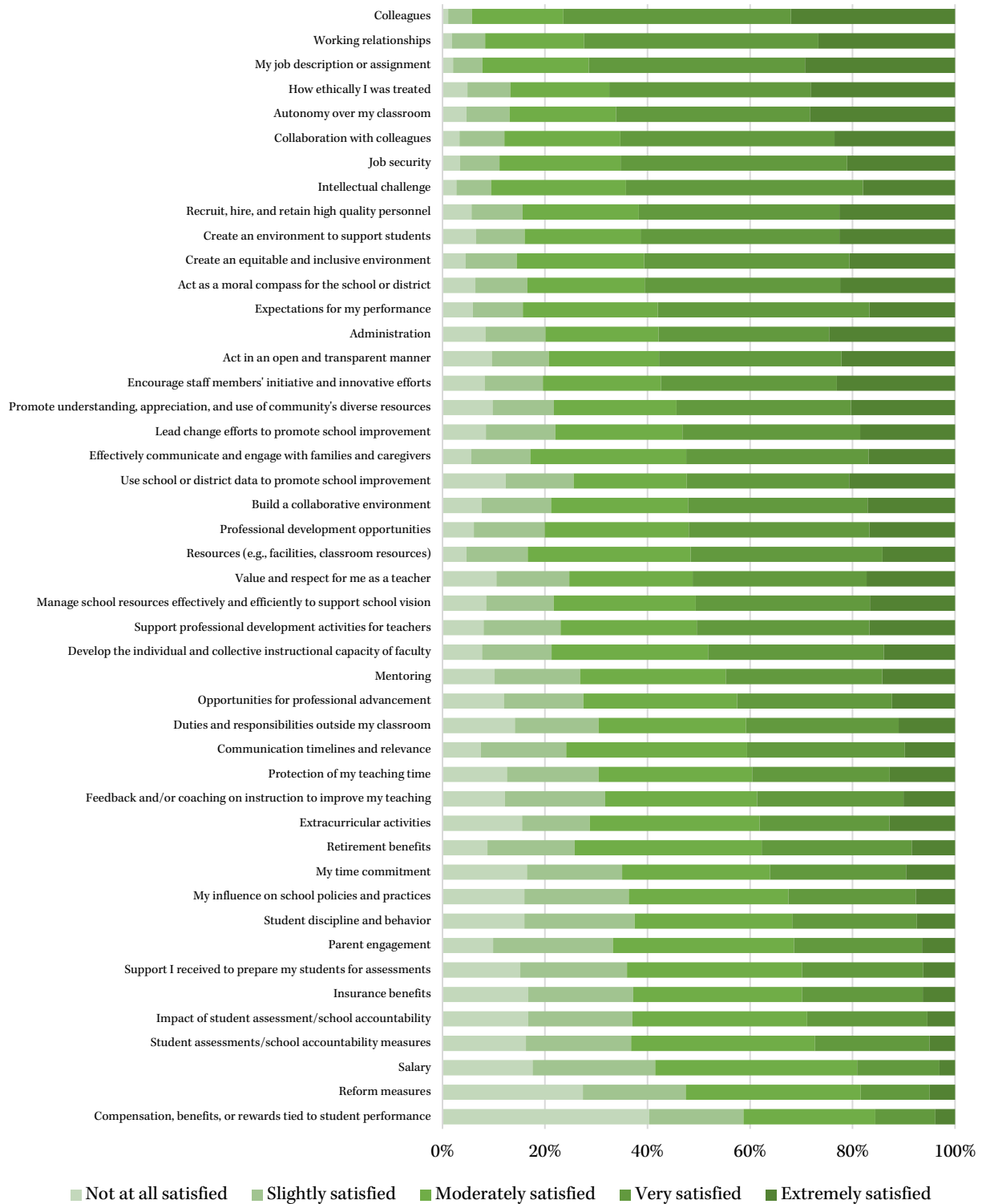


Table 2. Factors Most Commonly Reported as “Highly Satisfied” by Respondent Group

Stayers		New Teachers		Returning Teachers		Self-Initiated Movers		District-Initiated Movers		Leavers	
Colleagues	76%	Ethical Treatment	87%	Ethical Treatment	84%	Colleagues	58%	Colleagues	75%	Colleagues	82%
Working Relationships	72%	Colleagues	83%	Colleagues	82%	Job Security	57%	Classroom Autonomy	73%	Collaboration with Colleagues	82%
Job Assignment	71%	Administration	78%	Administration	81%	Classroom Autonomy	56%	Job Assignment	72%	Classroom Autonomy	79%
Ethical Treatment	67%	Classroom Autonomy	78%	Administration Encouraging Innovation	79%	Working Relationships	51%	Working Relationships	64%	Working Relationships	79%
Classroom Autonomy	66%	Administrative Support for Students	76%	Administrative Support for Students	78%	Job Assignment	50%	Collaboration with Colleagues	61%	Job Assignment	74%

Table 3. Factors Most Commonly Reported as “Dissatisfied” by Respondent Group

Stayers		New Teachers		Returning Teachers		Self-Initiated Movers		District-Initiated		Leavers	
Performance-Based Compensation	59%	Performance-Based Compensation	31%	Performance-Based Compensation	34%	Reform Measures	64%	Performance-Based Compensation	51%	Performance-Based Compensation	49%
Reform Measures	47%	Salary	30%	Salary	34%	Performance-Based Compensation	56%	Reform Measures	47%	Impact of Assessments and Accountability	41%
Salary	42%	Parent Engagement	25%	Insurance Benefits	32%	Support with Student Assessments	51%	Parent Engagement	44%	Reform Measures	40%
Student Discipline and Behavior	38%	Student Discipline and Behavior	24%	Reform Measures	31%	Influence on School Policies and Practices	49%	Influence on School Policies and Practices	43%	Support with Student Assessments	39%
Insurance Benefits	37%	Influence on School Policies and Practices	24%	Time Commitment	31%	Student Discipline and Behavior	49%	Support with Student Assessments	41%	Insurance Benefits	39%

As with our analyses of the reasons teachers enter and remain in the profession, we also conducted a factor analysis of respondents' levels of satisfaction with various aspects of their work to identify broader themes. We found that survey items related to satisfaction grouped into the following five categories: classroom, student performance, economic, administrative, and professional factors.

Figure 10a. Satisfaction with Classroom Factors by Teaching Category displays the mean level of satisfaction by teaching category for each of the three survey items that belong to the classroom area of satisfaction. To generate means, each respondent's rating of a particular item was averaged together within a given teaching category. "Not at all satisfied" was assigned a value of 1, "slightly satisfied" was assigned a value of 2, "moderately satisfied" was assigned a value of 3, "very satisfied" was assigned a value of 4, and "extremely satisfied" was assigned a value of 5. For example, the leftmost bar in **Figure 10a** has a value of 3.1, meaning that, on average, stayers rated the protection of their teaching time slightly above "moderately satisfied." This figure indicates that new teachers had the highest levels of satisfaction with protection of teaching time (3.7), while self-initiated movers had the lowest (2.9). For satisfaction with autonomy over one's classroom, new teachers have the highest satisfaction levels (4.1), and again, self-initiated movers have the lowest (3.5). For satisfaction with job assignment, new teachers and leavers were the most satisfied (4.0), and again, self-initiated movers were the least satisfied (3.4).

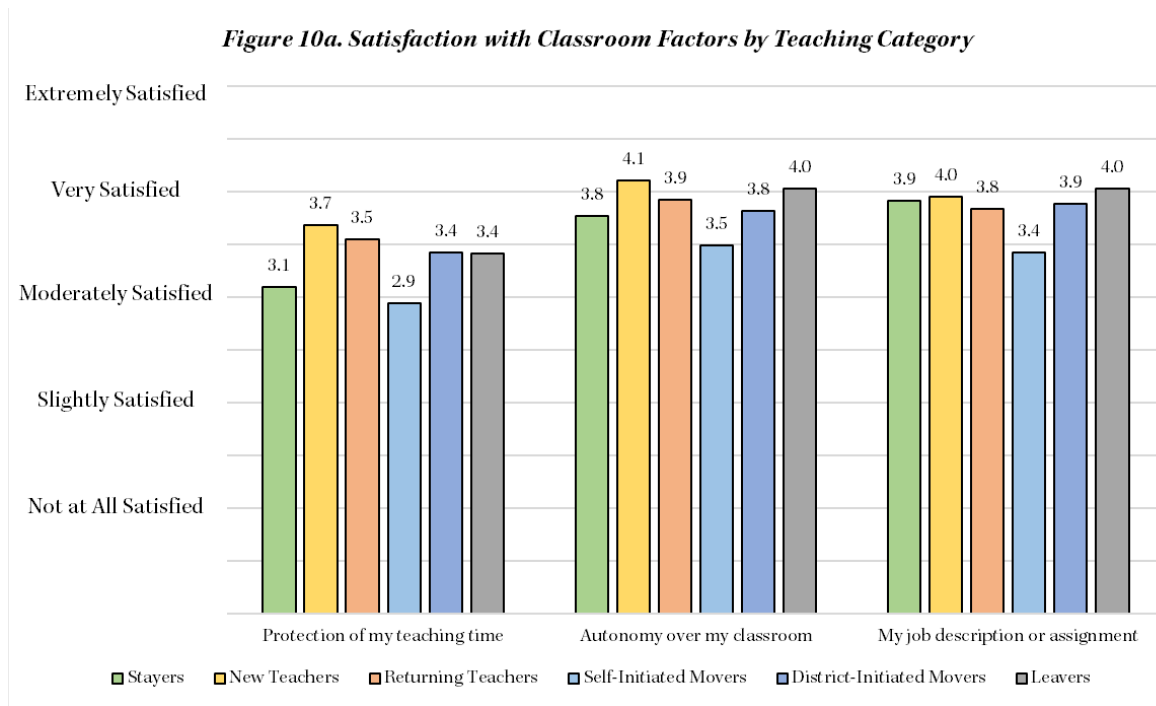


Figure 10b. Satisfaction with Student Performance Factors by Teaching Category parallels **Figure 10a** in design. Here, the mean levels of satisfaction with student performance factors are summarized by teaching category. Across all five items included in this category, we find that new teachers are the most satisfied, followed by returning teachers. Despite the variation by category, we note that, for all groups, performance-based compensation tends to have the lowest levels of satisfaction while feedback to improve teaching tends to have the highest levels of satisfaction.

Figure 10c. Satisfaction with School Factors by Teaching Category displays the mean levels of satisfaction with 13 school-specific areas by teaching category. As with student performance factors in **Figure 10b**, new and returning teachers tend to have the highest levels of satisfaction across all school factors. In most cases, self-initiated movers have the lowest levels of satisfaction across these school-specific factors. Satisfaction with colleagues and how ethically they were treated tend to be areas of high satisfaction across all teaching categories, while student discipline and behavior, parent engagement, and reform measures tend to be areas of lower satisfaction.

Figure 10d. Satisfaction with Economic Factors by Teaching Category contains the average levels of satisfaction with four economic-specific areas by teaching category. We find that new and returning teachers had the highest levels of satisfaction with salary, insurance benefits, and retirement benefits, while stayers and leavers had the highest levels of satisfaction with job security. Although there is little variation across teaching categories in the areas of salary, insurance benefits, and retirement benefits, we find greater variation in job security. Specifically, leavers rated this as 3.8, or nearly “very satisfied,” while district-initiated movers rated this as 2.9, or “moderately satisfied,” nearly an entire point lower than leavers.

Figure 10e. Satisfaction with Administrative Factors by Teaching Category summarizes the mean levels of satisfaction with 14 items related to school administrators by teaching category. Across all 14 items, new and returning teachers again report the highest levels of satisfaction on average. Stayers are the next most satisfied group in this category, followed by district-initiated movers and leavers, with self-initiated leavers reporting the lowest levels of satisfaction with administrators.

Figure 10f. Satisfaction with Professional Factors by Teaching Category displays the mean levels of satisfaction with seven aspects of professional satisfaction. As with other domains of satisfaction, we find that new and returning teachers often have the highest levels of satisfaction across these measures of professional satisfaction. Working relationships, collaboration with colleagues, and teaching as an intellectual challenge tend to be areas of high satisfaction across all teaching categories, while opportunities for professional advancement and duties outside of the classroom are a bit lower.

Collectively, these findings suggest that teachers who have spent less time in the profession (new teachers) or have recently spent time away from the profession (returning teachers) tend to be more satisfied with multiple areas of the teaching profession. As might be expected, self-initiated movers – those who opted to change positions – tended to be least satisfied with many aspects of teaching.

Figure 10b. Satisfaction with Student Performance Factors by Teaching Category

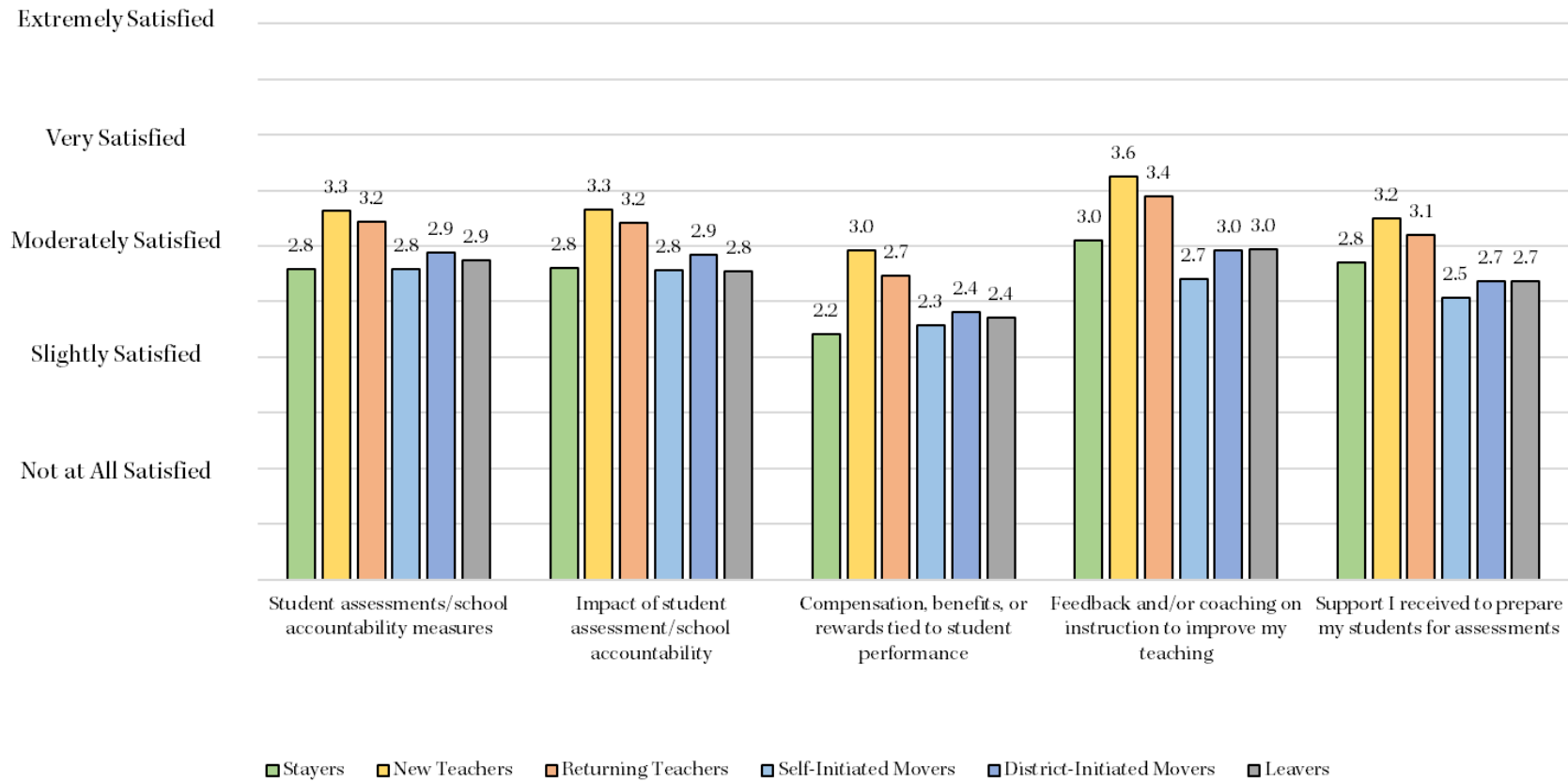


Figure 10c. Satisfaction with School Factors by Teaching Category

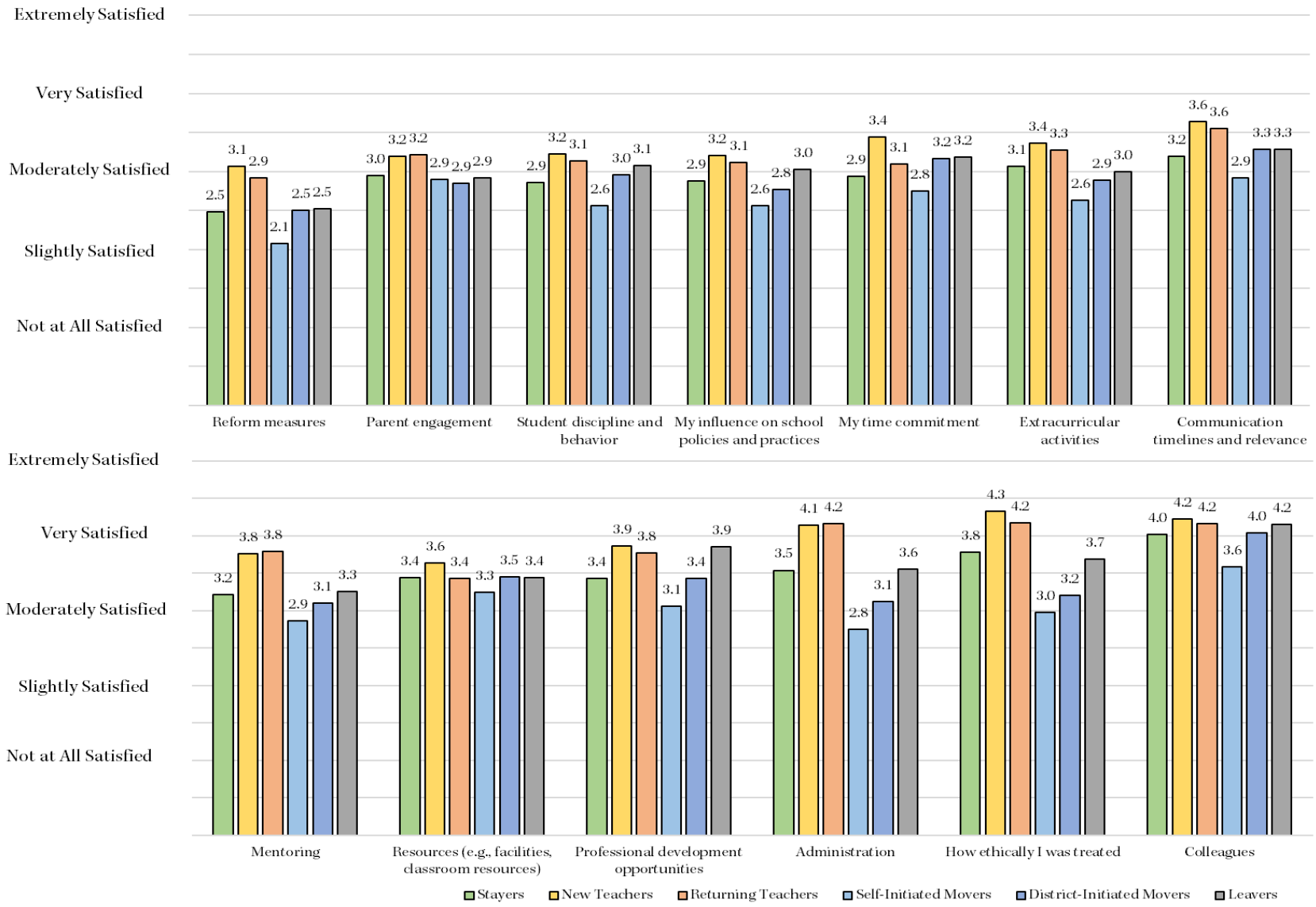


Figure 10d. Satisfaction with Economic Factors by Teaching Category

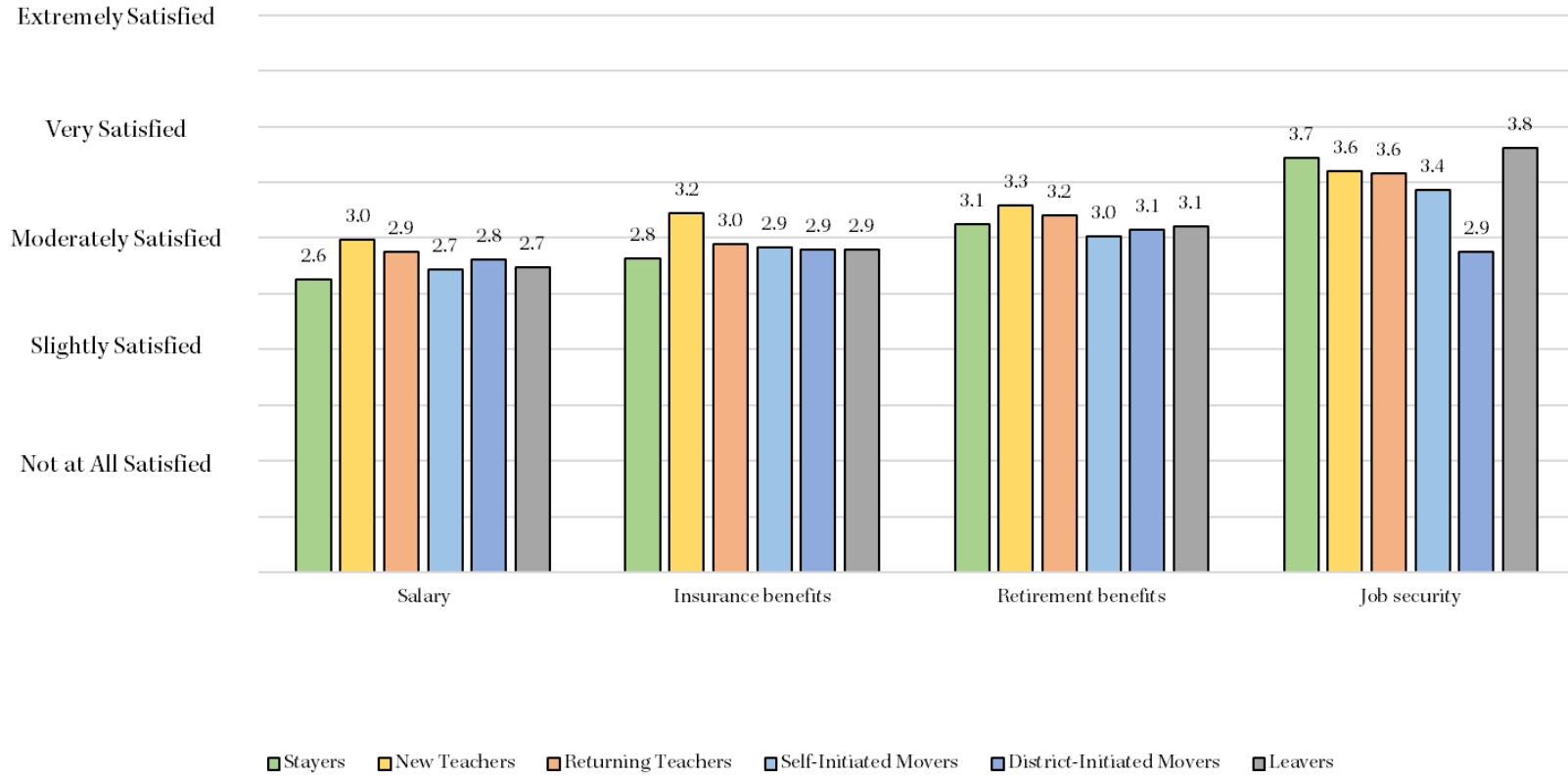


Figure 10e. Satisfaction with Administrative Factors by Teaching Category

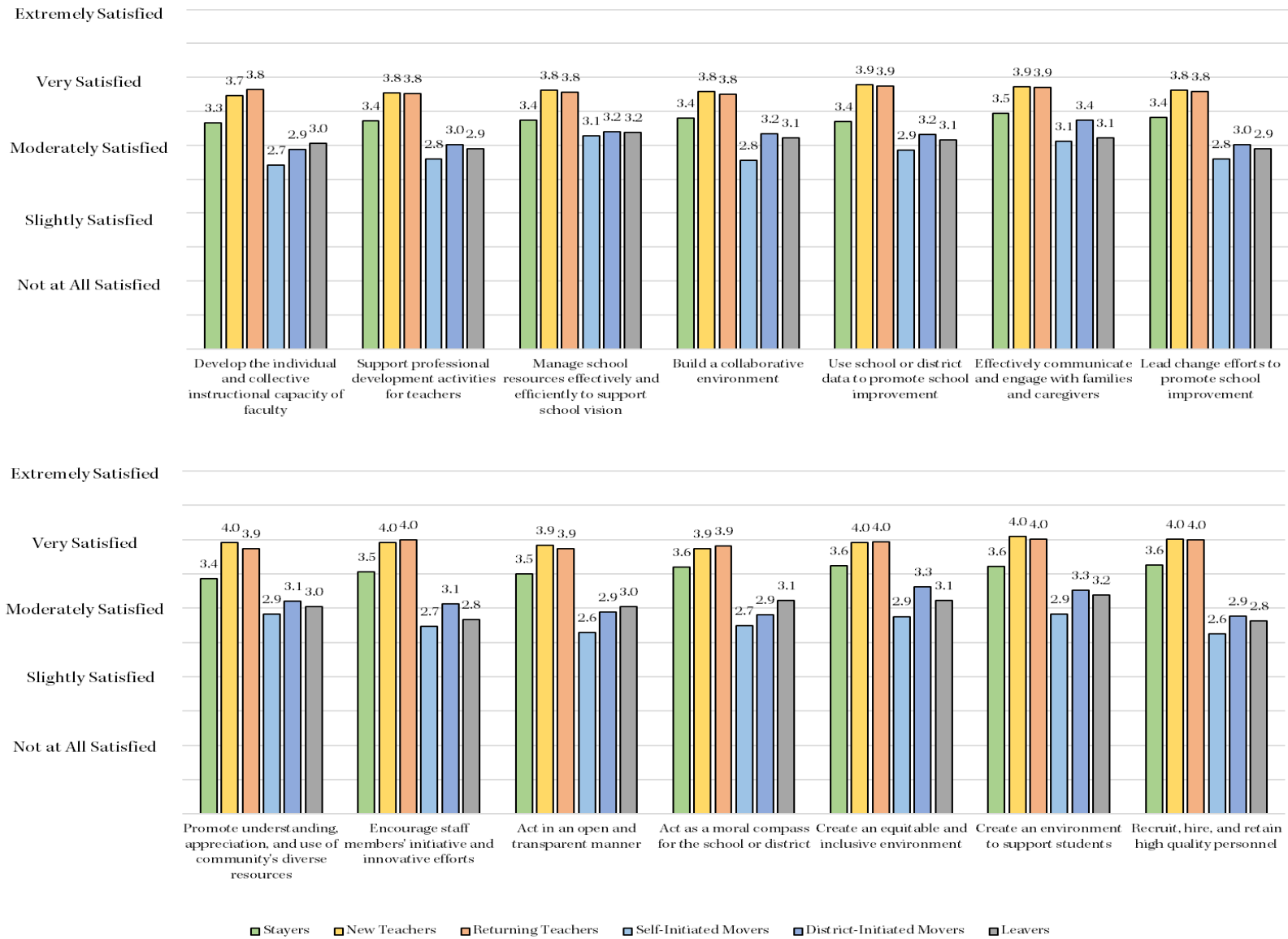
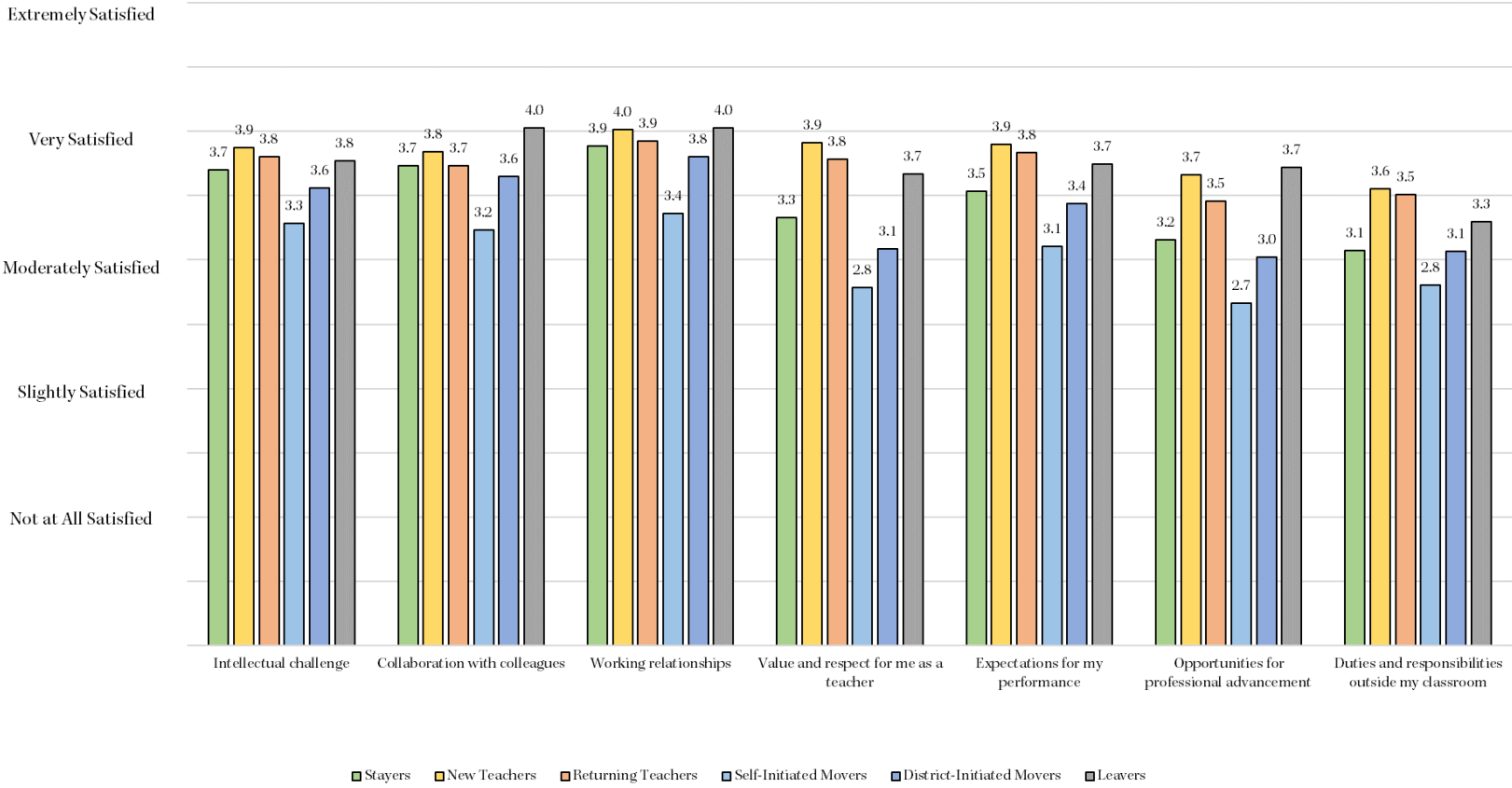


Figure 10f. Satisfaction with Professional Factors by Teaching Category



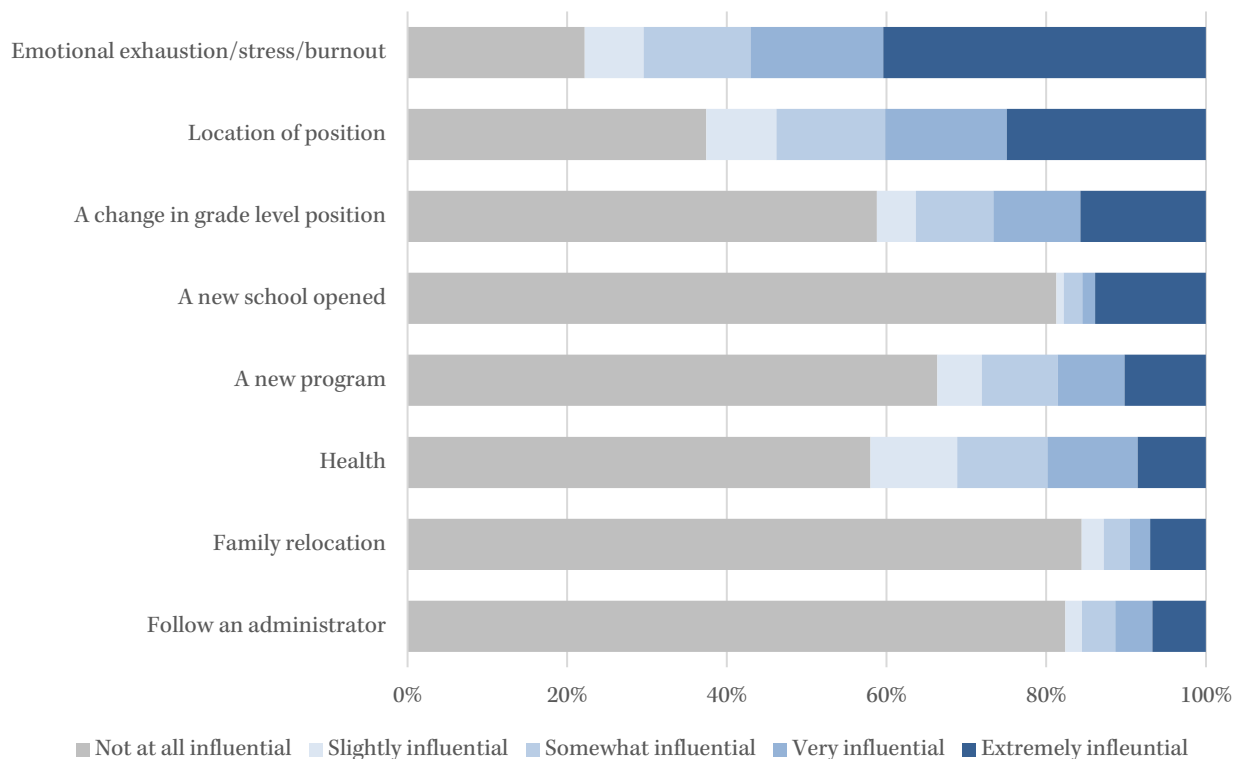
Why Do Teachers Transfer Schools and Why Do They Leave Teaching?

Movers were asked to describe their reasons for transferring to a different school in the 2019-20 school year. A total of 433 self-initiated movers rated how influential personal factors were on their decisions, and 139 district-initiated movers specified the reasons they were reassigned to different schools.

As depicted in **Figure 11. Personal Factors that Influenced Self-Initiated Movers’ Decisions to Transfer**, the most commonly cited reasons as “extremely influential” for self-initiated transfers were burnout, location of position, and a change in grade level. Among those that responded to the item, over half of movers cited burnout as a highly influential reason for transferring. Respondents also had the opportunity to select “other” and write in a reason for moving. For respondents who marked “other,” we conducted a thematic analysis. Most commonly, movers identified a new or better teaching opportunity elsewhere as their reason for transfer. “Other” common reasons were negative perceptions of school environment or administration, insufficient salary, and family or personal reasons.

Self-initiated movers were also asked what type of transfer they made. Nearly two-thirds reported moving to a different school in the same district, one third reported moving to a different district, and a small fraction of teachers reported teaching out of state or making some other type of transfer.

Figure 11. Personal Factors that Influenced Self-Initiated Movers’ Decisions to Transfer



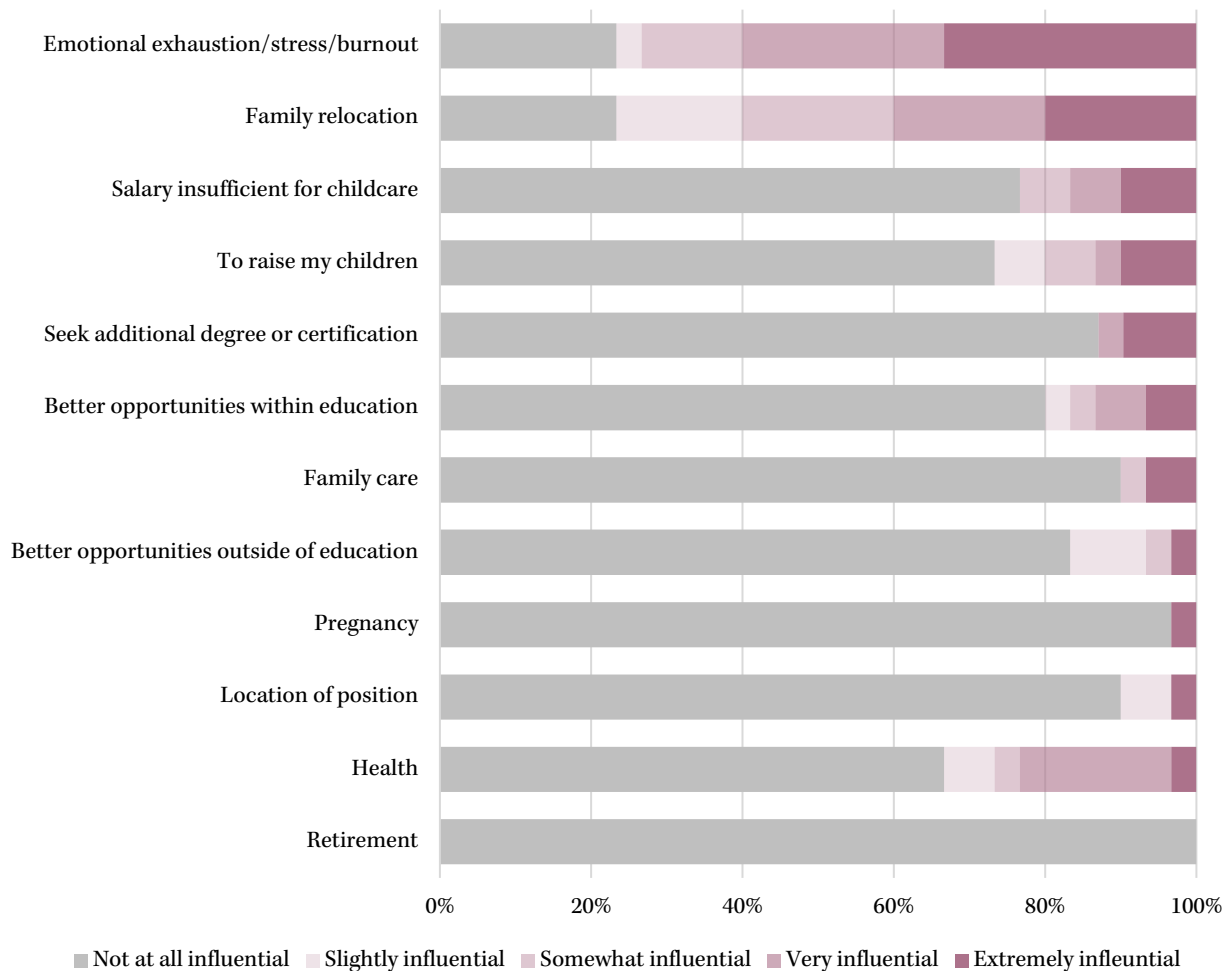
As illustrated in **Table 4. Reasons for Transfer among District-Initiated Movers**, when asked why their districts transferred them to different schools, a majority of respondents who were transferred (47%) indicated that their transfer was due to a merger or closure. The second most common reason for district-initiated transfer was due to reduced pupil enrollment (39%). For 12% of district-initiated movers, transfer was reported as due to budgetary issues. Respondents also had the opportunity to write in other reasons for their transfer that were not included in the response options. Among those that chose to provide their own reason, results from thematic analysis suggest that individuals were most often reassigned within their district to meet staffing needs. Others perceived that their transfer was due to administrator retaliation, a school closure or opening, or because they were promoted.

Table 4. Reasons for Transfer among District-Initiated Movers

Reason	Percentage
School and/or district merger or school closed	47%
Reduced pupil enrollment	39%
Budget cuts or budget shortfalls	12%
My performance evaluation results	2%
Did not obtain or maintain license	0%
Have not taken or could not pass the required test(s)	0%
Total	100%

Similarly, leavers were asked about their reasons for no longer teaching. Self-initiated leavers were asked to indicate the extent to which various factors influenced their decision to leave the teaching profession. As depicted in **Figure 12. Personal Factors that Influenced Self-Initiated Leavers' Decisions to Leave**, self-initiated leavers (n=30) most commonly cited burnout and family relocation as their reasons for leaving teaching. Respondents had the opportunity to provide their own response to this item if the response options did not fit their personal situation. Thematic analysis of responses suggests that these individuals most commonly left teaching for administrative or other non-instructional positions. Some individuals also cited health, stress, retirement, and other working conditions as factors. Self-initiated leavers rarely reported pregnancy or family care as reasons for leaving teaching, though a small number of leavers report that their teaching salary was insignificant for childcare.

Figure 12. Personal Factors that Influenced Self-Initiated Leavers’ Decisions to Leave



When district-initiated leavers were asked why they left teaching, all respondents indicated “other.” Write-in responses from these respondents suggest that most respondents left teaching for administrative or other non-instructional positions, such as instructional coaches or subject-area specialists.

All leavers, whether self- or district-initiated, were asked what they are now doing. Over 80% of respondents reported working in other K-12 education positions, and a small portion of respondents indicated they were either retired, working in post-secondary education, or caring for family members. Caution should be exercised when interpreting the findings of the leavers due to the small sample size.

Career Intentions

The ECAPS for Teachers asked stayers, new teachers, and returning teachers how long they plan to remain in a teaching position. A total of 6,630 teachers in this subset of respondents provided a response to this question. As depicted in **Table 5. How Long Teachers Plan to Remain Teaching**, most respondents stated that they will remain as long as they are able or until they are eligible for retirement. New and returning teachers, however, were much more likely to state that they would stay as long as they were able, while stayers were somewhat split between staying as long as able and until eligible for retirement. Returning teachers were more likely to state that they were undecided (26.0%) than new teachers (20.2%) and stayers (18.4%).

Table 5. How Long Teachers Plan to Remain Teaching

	Stayers	New Teachers	Returning Teachers
As long as I am able	30.4%	52.4%	43.9%
Until I am eligible for retirement benefits from this job	26.3%	6.0%	9.8%
Undecided at this time	18.4%	20.2%	26.0%
Until a specific life event occurs	5.9%	9.0%	6.5%
Other	5.7%	4.1%	6.5%
Until I get a promotion within education	5.1%	3.9%	4.1%
Until I am eligible for Social Security benefits	4.1%	0.7%	0.8%
Until I get a job within another field	2.9%	2.3%	1.6%
Until my loans or debt are paid off	1.0%	1.1%	0.8%
Until I am eligible for retirement benefits from a previous job	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%

Stayers, new teachers, and returning teachers were also asked if they had previously applied for another position, and the majority reported they had not. As illustrated in **Table 6. Job Seeking of Teachers**, 66% of teachers report that they have not applied for another position in education and 73% report that they have not applied for a position outside of education. Within the last 12 months, 15% and 8% of participants report applying for a position in education and outside of education, respectively. A similar percentage of participants, 18% to 19%, report applying for an education or non-education position more than one year ago. Collectively, these results suggest that the majority of Utah’s teachers are not actively seeking out other employment.

Table 6. Job Seeking of Teachers

	Applied for another position in education	Applied for another position outside of education
Yes, in the past 12 months	15%	8%
Yes, but not in the past 12 months	18%	19%
No	67%	73%

Mentorship Experiences

Although not the focus of this report, the ECAPS survey also asked teachers to share their experiences with mentorship and other forms of professional development during their first five years of teaching. These questions were asked in a collaborative effort with the Utah Teacher Fellows Program. The Utah Teacher Fellows Program conducts a research project annually, which they use to promote teacher-led solutions. **Appendix F. Respondents' Reports of Mentorship Experiences** contains a full summary of findings related to mentorship. As depicted in these supplemental materials, most ECAPS participants (82-95% depending on the teaching category) responded to these items. The majority of respondents (65%) reported that they had a mentor in their first five years of teaching, with 70% receiving both formal and informal mentorship. Mentorship was most common in teachers' first year of teaching, and this rate declined steadily through year five. Overall, respondents felt that mentorship was helpful, with nearly 50% reporting that mentorship increased their effectiveness "to a great extent" or "to a very great extent." When asked to assess the value of particular mentorship experiences, respondents reported the greatest value in receiving advice or suggestions from their mentors, followed by reflective conversation. Attending professional learning with a mentor, on the other hand, was not rated as highly.

Participation in various early-career support activities varied. While nearly 80% of respondents reported participating in ongoing and supportive communication regarding instructional practices, these rates are lower for activities such as training on understanding and using student data and participating in a network community of teachers. Perceptions of these support activities varied as well, with teachers finding the most value in common planning time and collaboration with other teachers and the least value in seminars for beginning teachers and training on student data.

Over half of participants believed that early-career teachers should receive three years of mentorship. A total of 63% of respondents report serving as a mentor, and approximately two-thirds of those individuals did not receive training on how to mentor. When asked whether they were open to the idea of mentoring half-time and teaching half-time, 62% of respondents agreed. Teachers are relatively split in their beliefs about whether mentorship has an influence on their decisions to remain in their current schools and the profession more generally. Just over half of teachers reported that mentorship was "slightly influential" or "not at all influential" on their decisions to persist, while the remaining respondents indicated that mentorship had higher levels of influence for them.

Putting It All Together

Summary of Findings

Through the ECAPS for Teachers, the UEPC gathered feedback from teachers across Utah to understand why they entered the teaching profession and when applicable, why they either continue to teach, change positions, or leave the profession. We also explored what teachers find most and least satisfying about their work and sought to better understand teachers' career intentions. When possible, we disaggregated teachers' responses by category, to better understand how stayers, movers, leavers, new teachers, and returning teachers differ in their perceptions of the teaching profession.

In our examination of the reasons that teachers enter the profession, we found that teachers are largely driven by altruistic intentions and intrinsic motivation, noting a desire to make a difference in the lives of children and contribute to the greater good of society. In contrast, teachers did not choose to teach due to extrinsic factors, such as insurance, salary, or lack of other options. These reasons are generally similar regardless of teaching category. When teachers were asked why they continue to teach, their responses were similar to those they gave when asked why they became teachers. Again, teachers attributed their persistence in the profession to altruistic and intrinsic factors rather than extrinsic ones.

Although there was some variation by teaching category, teachers commonly reported high levels of satisfaction with their colleagues, autonomy in their work, and their specific job assignments. We found lower levels of satisfaction related to financial compensation, accountability, and various reform measures.

Over half of respondents indicated they plan to remain in teaching for either as long as they are able or until retirement. Noteworthy, however, is the fact that 19% of respondents again reported that they are unsure how long they will continue to teach and a similar percentage report that they will eventually leave teaching for other reasons, such as a promotion within the education field or a job in a different field. Although we found that relatively few respondents have been actively seeking out other work in the recent past, there is reason to focus on and better understand the experiences of those who are less certain about whether teaching will be a lifelong career.

In order to understand whether and how Utah's teaching landscape has changed over time, we compared these latest findings with results from the ECAPS for Teachers administered in the 2017-18 school year. (For full details of our 2017-18 findings, see our previous report titled [Why Do Teachers Choose Teaching and Remain Teaching? Initial Results from the Educator Career Pathway Survey \(ECAPS\) for Teachers.](#)) Generally, we found very few shifts in responses. For example, a desire to make a worthwhile difference in the lives of children was still number one reason respondents gave when asked why they became a teacher, followed by a desire to contribute to the greater societal good. Reasons to remain in teaching have held constant as well, where again, a desire to make a difference in children's lives continues to be the number one reason to remain in teaching. We also found few differences in reports of how long teachers to remain in teaching and whether or not teachers have sought other work. In our prior survey, 57% of respondents reported they would remain in teaching either as long as they

are able or until they are eligible for retirement benefits from the position. In this latest survey round, we observed 53-57% of teachers providing one of these two responses, depending on their teaching category. In contrast, we observed slightly fewer individuals reporting that they have sought jobs either within or outside of education. For example, while 60% of 2017-18 respondents reported that they had never looked for another job within education, 67% reported that they had not in this most recent survey. We cautiously, but optimistically, interpret these findings as a positive indicator that the exodus from teaching may subside.

We also note that our total number of respondents is substantially higher in this survey. In 2017-18, 2,025 teachers participated, whereas this time we received responses from 8,816 teachers, representing a 26.7% response rate. This greater number of respondents and higher response rate allows us to examine responses by teaching category and will allow us to conduct the next rigorous and powered statistical analyses.

Implications and Next Steps

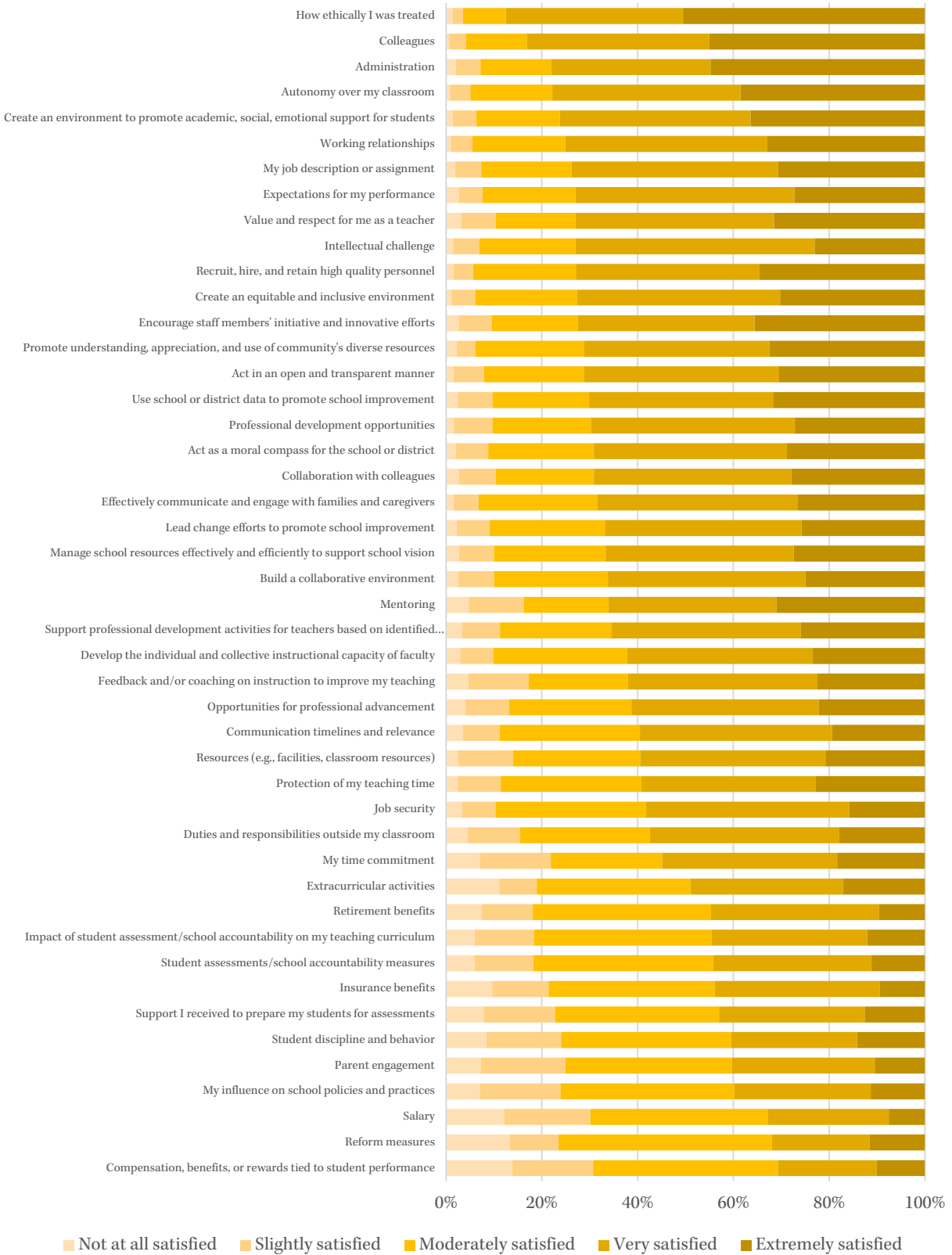
Collectively, these preliminary findings have implications for a variety of audiences. As teacher education program administrators, policymakers, and others with a vested interest in teacher recruitment seek to understand what draws individuals into the profession, our findings align with prior research and suggest that altruistic and intrinsic factors are most motivating.

Similarly, district and school leaders interested in improving retention efforts may be informed by our finding that teachers report similar reasons for remaining in the profession. Relevant to education leaders and policymakers, teachers find their colleagues, autonomy, and job assignments to be highly satisfying aspects of their work, while financial compensation, accountability, and reform are less so.

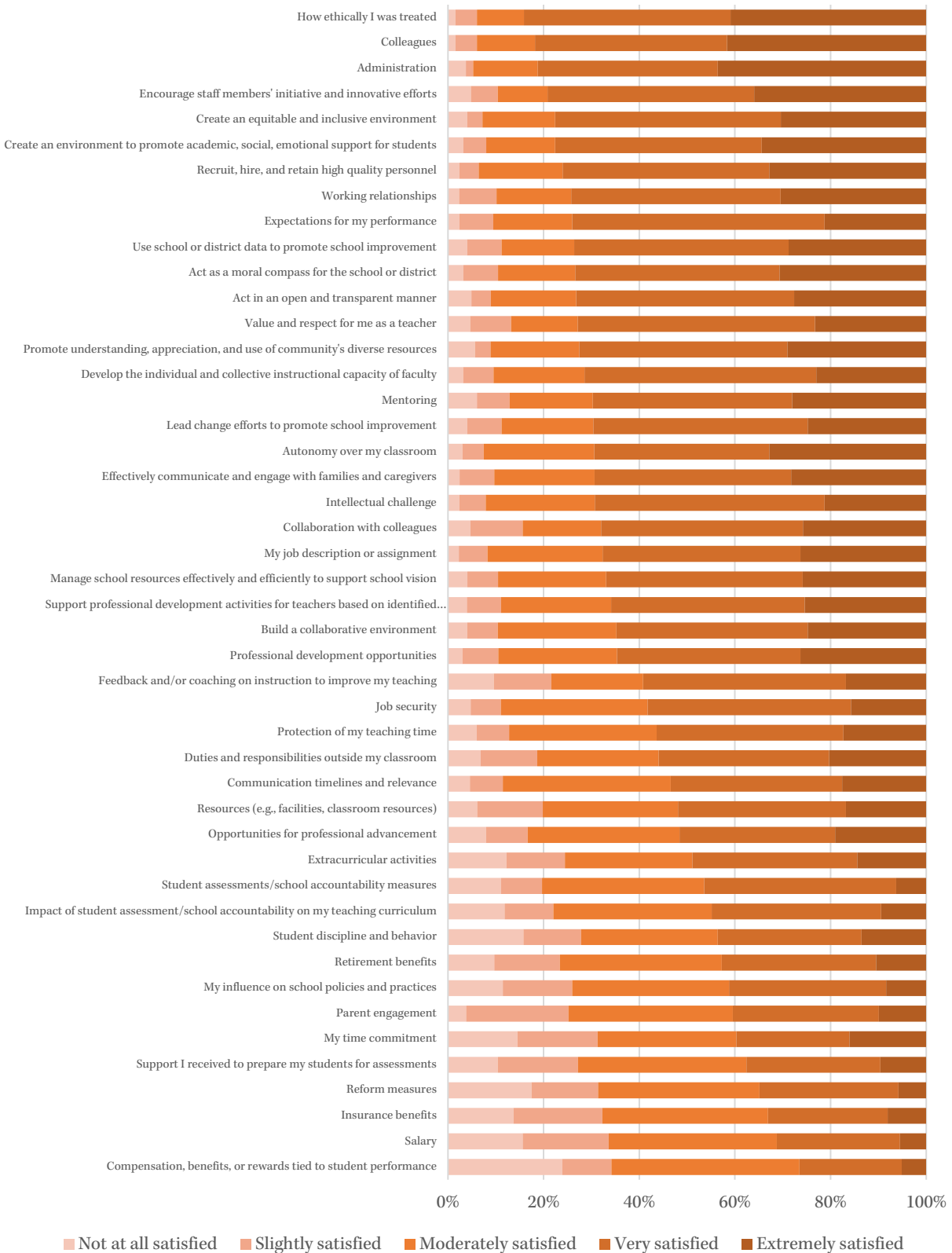
Despite the satisfaction that teachers experience in some facets of their work, there is room for improvement in the compensation teachers receive and the ways in which larger policies related to accountability and reform impact the day-to-day work of teachers. As teachers' satisfaction in these areas improve, we might expect to find that more teachers indicate a willingness to stick with teaching as a lifelong career.

This report offers an initial look at findings from the 2019-2020 ECAPS for Teachers. However, our analyses of the data continues. Our upcoming analyses will include how satisfaction and career plans are associated with school characteristics such as student demographics, achievement, locale, and sector. Additionally, we will further explore open-ended responses to generate a more nuanced understanding of teachers' experiences. We will also generate composite constructs and pursue further statistical analyses to identify significant differences in responses by teaching category and school type. Importantly, we will use regression analyses to determine whether particular survey responses are predictive of career intentions and other outcomes. We look forward to sharing these comprehensive findings with audiences across the research, policy, and practice arenas and to building upon our understanding of Utah teachers' career pathways.

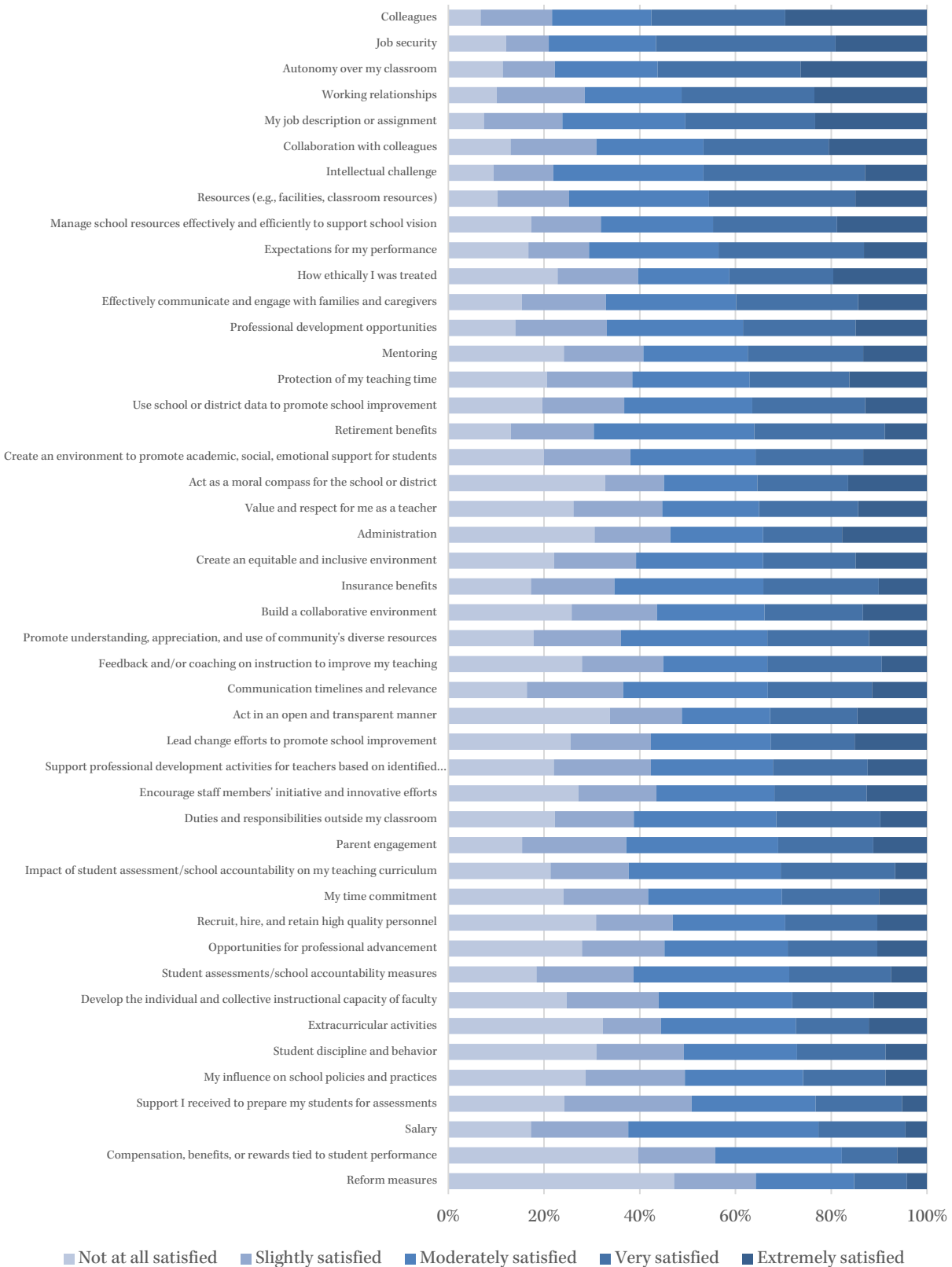
Appendix A. New Teachers' Satisfaction with Various Factors



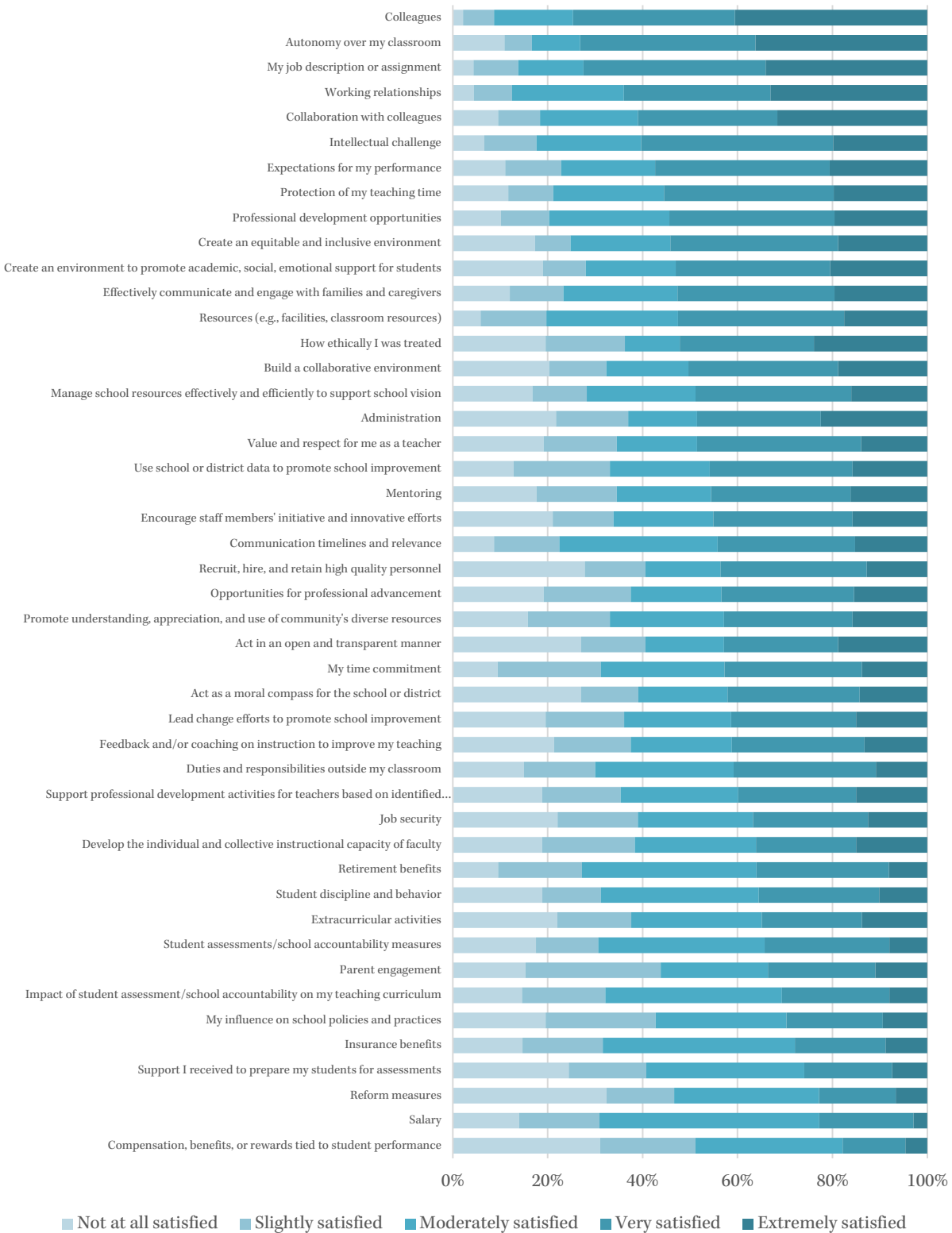
Appendix B. Returning Teachers' Satisfaction with Various Factors



Appendix C. Self-Initiated Movers' Satisfaction with Various Factors



Appendix D. District-Initiated Movers' Satisfaction with Various Factors



Appendix E. Leavers' Satisfaction with Various Factors

