



NEOED

2023 REPORT HR TRENDS IN EDUCATION: **RETENTION**

RETENTION

Welcome

The Retention Report expands upon the 2023 Trends Report, providing further analysis into retention and how to improve it at your institution.

Like the 2023 Trends Report, **we used survey data from 300+ HR professionals in education**. Our respondents included HR generalists, directors, managers, administrators, etc. from a variety of institutions: four year colleges (35%), two year colleges (29%), K-12 (29%), and more (7%). The survey was conducted in December of 2022.

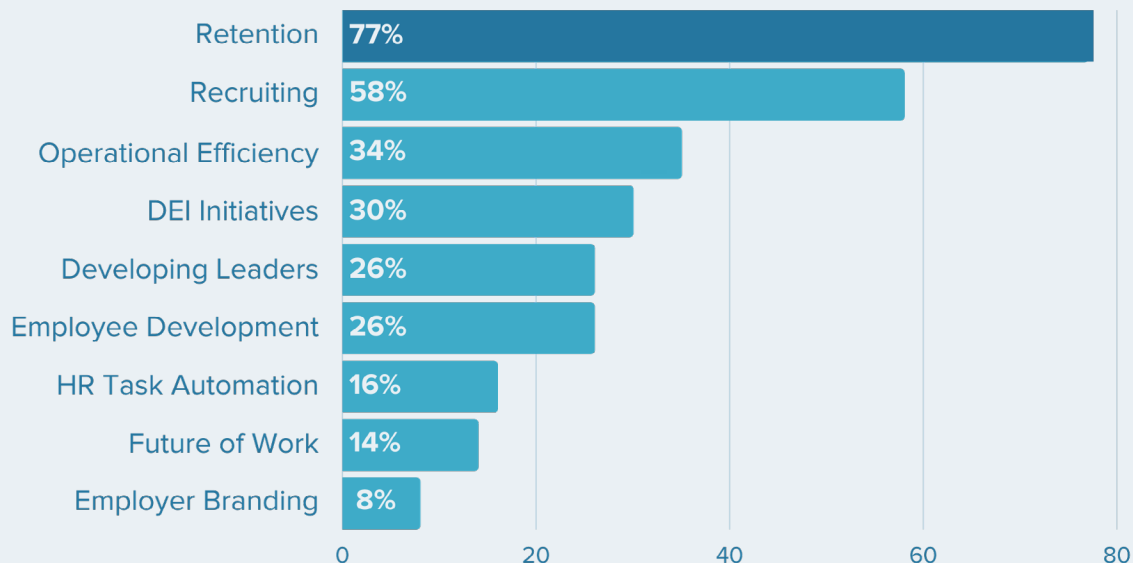
Overview

Key Takeaway: *Providing raises and bonuses will always impact retention, but the biggest cause of educator turnover is burnout. Protecting work-life balance, boosting morale, and improving culture are practical ways to keep your staff around longer.*

With a majority of educators planning to leave their jobs sooner than planned, it makes sense to focus on retention. 78% of education HR professionals felt similarly, citing retention as one of their top three priorities in 2023 (Figure 1). Let's examine **WHY** retention is a top priority and **HOW** to improve it.

Figure 1

Top Priorities in 2023



Why Retention

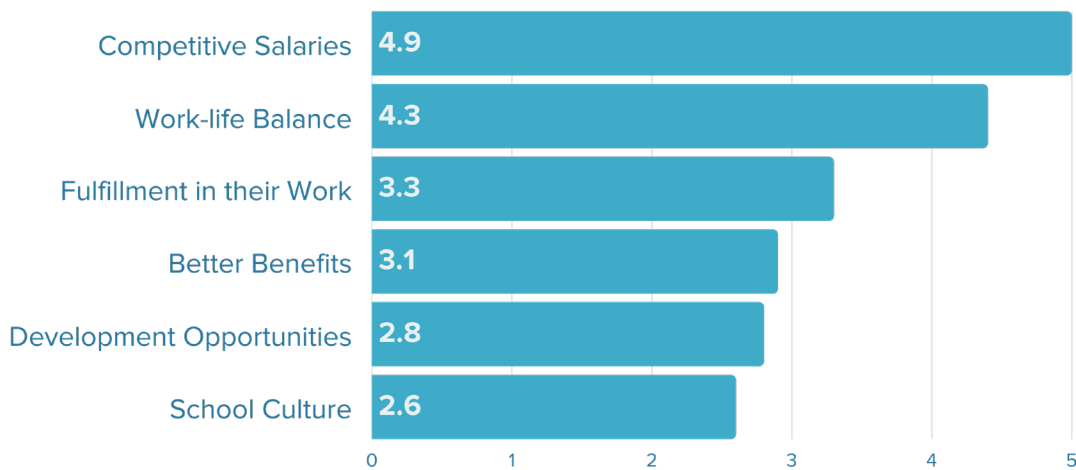
According to SHRM, each employee departure costs about one third of that person's annual pay, meaning higher retention requires less recruitment resources and saves money. Improving retention is addressing the root cause instead of the symptom.

To increase retention, you need to know what employees care about and why they're leaving.

When asked what current employees care about the most, 50% of HR professionals listed competitive salaries and 25% listed work-life balance as most important. Figure 2 is the average of all respondents' rankings on a scale of 1–6.

Figure 2

What Employees Care About the Most



Tip: What do your employees care about the most? Use Figures 2 and 3 to create a list and then validate it with an employee survey and exit interviews. Once validated, you can start prioritizing and addressing employee needs.

How to Improve Retention

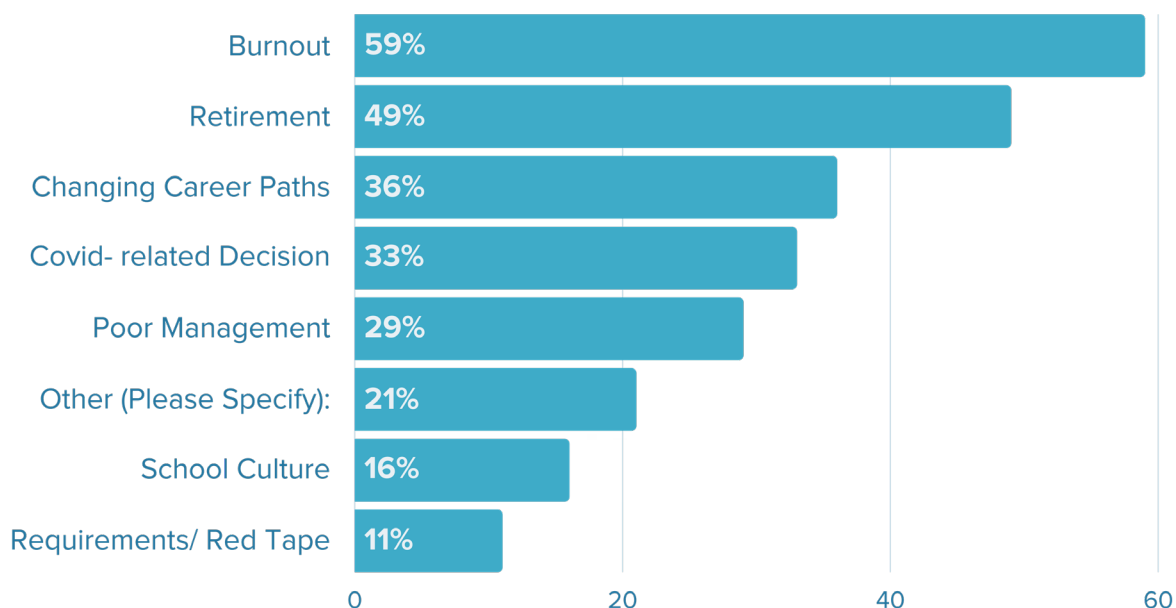
We've looked at what employees in education care about. Now let's explore why they left their jobs in 2021 and 2022. **According to HR professionals, the top three reasons were burnout (59%), retirement (49%), and changing career paths (36%).**



A **2022 Gallup poll** supports this data, citing K–12 (44%) and higher education (35%) as having the highest levels of burnout among all other industries.

Figure 3

Top Three Reasons for Employee Turnover in 2021 and 2022



Conduct Exit Interviews

Does your HR team conduct exit interviews? Gathering employee feedback during the offboarding period is critical, providing the blueprint for ways to improve retention. You may not be able to address everything, but identifying a few realistic opportunities in 2023, like school culture, can go a long way.

Improve Culture

The number of people graduating from teacher programs has been **decreasing over the past decade**, while the percentage leaving education has been on the rise. Though you can't control the national narrative, you can make education at your institution a more attractive career path for current staff and future candidates. This starts with culture.

According to a Columbia University study, 57% of employees at high culture organizations were very satisfied with their jobs and only 14% were very likely to leave. Conversely, only 7% of employees at low culture organizations were satisfied with their jobs and a whopping 48% were very likely to leave. The message is clear – culture directly impacts employee job satisfaction, turnover, and productivity.

In our survey, only **30% of HR pros said their institution has a strong culture**, whereas 70% said their culture was average or weak. In today's job market, average culture can't compete with many private sector companies or the third of schools with strong culture.



30%
Strong
Culture



70%
Weak/ Average
Culture

NEXT STEPS

Thanks for reading the
Retention Report by NEOED.

We hope these peer insights, data analyses, and resources have been helpful.

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