



SIPUC Survey Data Summary and Analysis

The data summary and analysis of the SIPUC Survey of 1064 Teachers is arranged into 4 sections:

- Descriptive Statistics

- Noteworthy Inferential Statistics

- Analysis of 2 Open-Ended Questions

- What We Learned and Recommendations for Practice

The 1064 teacher respondents submitted the survey during the first two weeks of April 2020 which was the beginning of the COVID-19 Crisis Distance Learning in Minnesota.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS:

Age

The mean age of the 1064 teachers was 41 with the youngest teacher 21 and the oldest 69

Gender

77.3% Female, 22.5% Male and .2% non-binary or other

Children living at home

57% reported children living in the home

24% one child, 42% two children, 25% three children and 9% four or more children

22% of children were preschool or younger

35% of children were elementary age

School Size

21% work in schools with less than 500 students

18% work in schools of 501-1000 students

31% work in schools of 1001-2500 students

30% work in schools of more than 2501 students

Teaching Experience

59% had 11 or more years

29% had 4-10 years

12% had 3 years or less

Grade Level Taught

3% Preschool
41% Elementary
25% Middle School
31% High School

Special Education Teachers

23% of respondents were Special Education Teachers

School Learning Platforms

24% Google Schools
23% Schoology
10% Infinite Campus
8% Power Schools
1% Blackboard
.2% Haiku

Frequency of Contact with Students

60% reported daily communication with students was required

Contact with Parents

57% reported required contact with parents
29% reported no required parental contact.

Student Access to Internet

43% reported students do not have reliable access to high speed internet
14% reported not knowing the internet access availability of students

Virtual Office Hours

76% reported keeping some sort of virtual office hours

Plans to Review Student Performance Data

54% reported adequate or great planning
46% reported insufficient or no planning

Satisfaction with Training Provided by District

77% reported some or a great deal of satisfaction with district training
23% reported little or no satisfaction with district training

Confidence in School Leadership during COVID-19 crisis

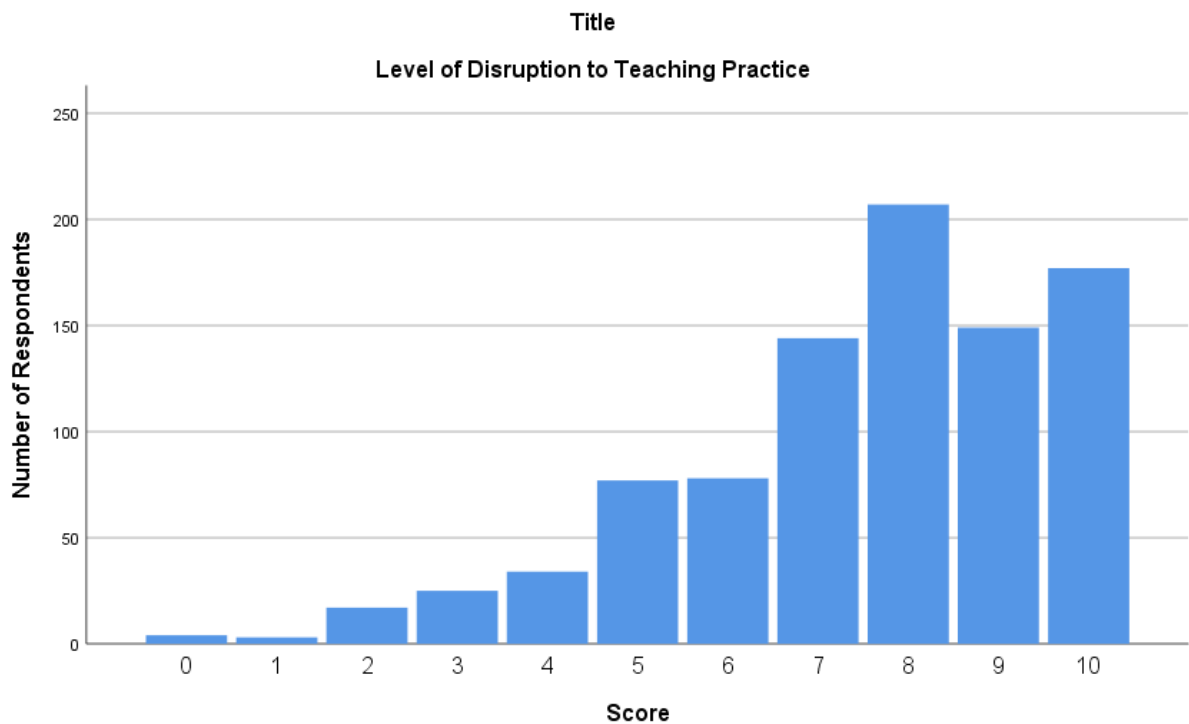
53% expressed great confidence in their School Leadership

39% expressed some confidence

8% reported feeling little or no confidence in school leadership

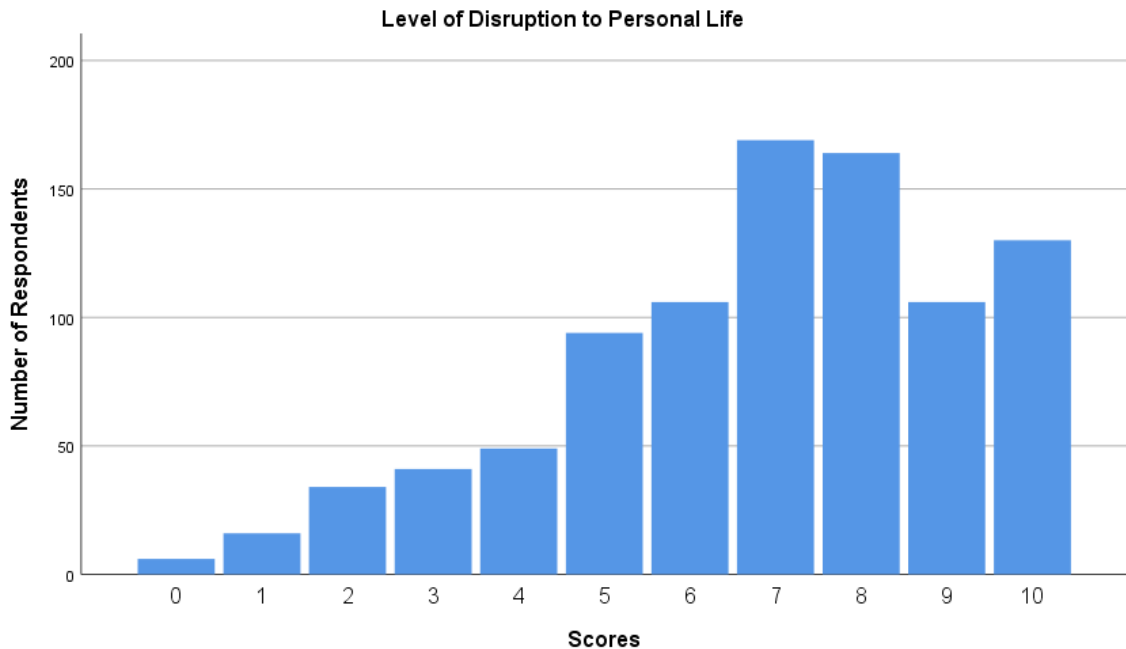
Level of Disruption to Teaching Practice

Teachers appraised the level of disruption to their teaching practice with a scaled question, the scale ranged from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning the lowest level of disruption. As a group, respondents indicated that they felt their teaching practice was highly disrupted ($M=7.51$, $SD=2.09$). About 74% of respondents appraised this question with a score of 7 or higher.



Level of Disruption to Personal Life

Teachers appraised the level of disruption to their personal life with a scaled question, the scale ranged from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning the lowest level of disruption. As a group, respondents indicated that they felt their personal life was moderately disrupted ($M=6.84$, $SD=2.35$). About 63% of respondents appraised this question with a score of 7 or higher.



Noteworthy Inferential Statistics

Disruption to respondents’ personal life that results from the COVID-19 school closure crisis is positively correlated to the level of disruption to their teaching practice: $r(914) = .42, p < .01$. The higher the disruption on their teaching practice, the higher the disruption to their personal life and vice versa. It is important to note that neither one causes the other; both areas of functioning are associated. Having indicated that, the strength of the association is moderate.

Having kids living with respondents does not have an impact on the level of disruption to their teaching practice. However, **respondents with kids at home reported a higher level of disruption to their personal life** ($M=7.11$) than those without kids at home ($M=6.49$), $t(912) = -4.043, p < .05$.

Female respondents reported a higher level of disruption to their teaching practice ($M=7.59$) than male respondents ($M=7.25$), $t(912) = -2.060, p < .05$. However, **gender of respondents does not have an impact on the level of disruption to their personal life.**

Grade level does affect the level of disruption to respondents’ teaching practice. Among all, elementary grade teachers reported the highest level of disruption to their teaching practice ($M=7.88$), than preschool ($M=7.25$), Middle School ($M=7.04$), or High School teachers ($M=7.29$), $F(3, 740) = 7.294, p < .001$. There was no statistically significant difference among the other three groups. However, **grade level teaching of respondents did not have an impact on the level of disruption to their personal life.**

Years of teaching experience does affect the level of disruption to respondents' teaching practice. Among all, those with less than 3 years of teaching reported a lower level of disruption ($M=6.21$) than respondents with 4 to 10 years of experience ($M=6.74$) and those with 11 or more years of teaching experience ($M=7.01$), $F(2, 908) = 14.616$, $p < .001$. In general, for all groups, **the more years of teaching experience a respondent has, the higher the level of disruption to their teaching practice.**

Years of teaching experience did affect the level of disruption to respondents' personal life as well. However, here the only difference observed was between **respondents with less than 3 years of experience, who reported lower levels of personal disruption** ($M=6.21$) than those with 11 years of teaching experience or more ($M=7.01$), $F(2, 908) = 5.503$, $p < .05$. There was no other difference found among the groups.

Special Education teachers experience a higher level of disruption to their teaching and professional practice than do regular education teachers. Overall special educator's disruption to teaching level ($M=7.8$) is higher than the reported regular education teachers ($M=7.36$). Pre-school Special education teachers reported the highest level of professional practice at ($M=8.53$). Personal life disruption for special educators ($M=6.94$) was slightly but not significantly higher than regular educator personal life disruption levels ($M=6.71$)

Analysis of 2 Open-Ended Questions:

1. **Can you manage teaching from home during the COVID-19 crisis while addressing other responsibilities (e.g., household, children spouse)?**
2. **What is your greatest concern?**

Can you manage teaching from home during the COVID-19 crisis while addressing other responsibilities (e.g., household, children spouse)? 6 themes emerged

1. **Teachers overwhelmingly regard the situation as manageable but stressful and negative.**

"It is very hard to balance. Hoping it will become easier with time!"

"I'm doing it but It's tough. Really tough."

"It has been by far the biggest challenge I have faced in my years as an educator."

"I can manage but with lots of stress and concern."

2. Teachers report managing their own children's education while teaching at home is difficult.

"It's very hard to be a great parent keeping two kids busy and keeping up with school kids, My own kids are losing out and it breaks my heart. They have fears and worries too that get missed due to my husband and I working."

"I don't have any children which makes a huge difference! I don't know how people with kids do it."

3. Teachers overwhelmingly report relying on support system (spouse, partner, daycare)

"My spouse is at home and is doing a great deal of extra work at home while I teach."

"Depends on childcare needs. If my spouse is home I can manage with greater ease, if my spouse is working it requires a greater juggling act."

"If daycare closes I have 3 children 5 and under to take care of and teach online."

4. Teachers report struggling to maintain work/life balance (daily life schedule)

"I feel as though I am on call 24/7 for the students which is a bit frustrating."

"And I still have to take care of chores and supper each day because my spouse is working outside of the home."

"I am managing, but certainly not at my highest levels. Because I have so much live interaction with my students, I have no flexibility to step away and help my own children navigate their school work."

"-I can manage, but none of the above will meet the expectations I hold for myself as a teacher, parent, or spouse. Basically, I will just be getting by."

5. Technology access from home is reported as issues for some teachers

"My Internet isn't fast enough, so I go in to school."

6. Teachers remain HOPEFUL!

"We will make it work!"

"Unique situation for all, do your best and make it work."

What is your greatest concern? (Four major themes emerged)

1. Mental health and well being of students, parents and teachers

The categories of students, parents, teachers, and nutrition shared common connections that led to the theme of mental health/well-being. Within this theme, the idea of basic needs, emotional and physical, were present. Moreover, survey respondents expressed concerns regarding the needs of their students, their students' parent, and their own needs. In a generalized way, the theme made clear the concern that the Covid-19 pandemic had proven disruptive to all parties with a vested interest in the education of children. For students and teachers, disruption has occurred on two fronts; those are, the home and teaching/learning settings. The strain of trying to provide learning opportunities for students, combined with the juggling of home life responsibilities has proven daunting. Moreover, parents are faced with potential job loss and amplified expectations of support (e.g., helping with learning, meals, monitoring their children). With schedules disrupted for all parties involved in the educational process, the potential for emotional, mental, and physical deterioration as clear.

"The mental, behavioral and emotional health of my students"

"keeping my students healthy emotionally and physically"

"my own (teacher) mental health"

"...working parents falling farther behind helping kids"

"...overwhelmed parents"

"Poverty is high in my district and I worry about student nutrition"

"...Academics is the least of my concerns...I am worried about everyone's mental health"

2. **The COVID-19 crisis distance teaching associates negatively with many aspects of student learning.**

Student participation, student support and assessment are issues. Teachers are concerned that some students have failed to show up for online class. Moreover, even those who do show up may not be productive. Teachers need to rely upon parents, to a large extent, to help ensure attendance and participation in the teaching/learning process. However, parents are feeling overwhelmed themselves. Parents may be struggling to address their own mental, emotional, and financial needs, which translates into limited capacity to provide support for their own children. Teachers are frustrated because they worry about the educational deficit in educating their students, while many are also trying to assist their own personal children.

Teachers aren't able to see and interact with their students to provide the necessary supports for learning. At the same time, teachers are concerned that those students with limited or no support at home will be academically unprepared for the next school year. Although disengaged parents are problematic during normal educational times, this disengagement nearly guarantees lost, if any, education for children during the learn-at-home time necessitated by Covid-19.

"What will become of the students who fall behind that have no home support by this same time next year?"

The assessment concern was derived from two categories, learning and grading. Some teachers expressed concern that it was difficult to determine whether learning had occurred, and others weren't certain whether or how they should issue grades. Implicit was the idea as to whether grades would represent learning with any degree of accuracy.

"I have almost 500 students and I haven't heard anything about grades for this trimester."

"With limited training, it is difficult to assess learning even if we are trying to be flexible."

3. **Distance teaching inhibits ability of teachers to perform critical teaching functions**

Learning equity, lost learning, special needs and social interaction are teacher concerns. Teachers expressed concerns that students would regress; that is, lose already obtained knowledge and skills. Teachers identified potential learning gaps that would occur, in large part due to the differences in support structures in the home. Teachers were clear that they could not see how learning could be equitable when the levels of parental support vary. In addition to concerns of parental support, there were concerns expressed regarding the online format of teaching. Teachers questioned whether distance education could ever produce equitable learning, especially in some subjects.

“Students falling behind due to lack of time for parents to help them at home.”

“The inequity in resources, parent assistance, and participation.”

Special education teachers noted that parents still had expectations that they would meet the individualized instructional components of a child’s program, but the logistical considerations compromised the ability to deliver those individualized needs. In addition, there was a sense that special education children would regress at an even greater rate than many regular education students, similar to the idea of student regression for those with little to no parental support at home.

“Students with special needs not getting their individualized direct instruction that they need to learn, they are going to lose skills.”

“Being a Special Education teacher, our students often need lots of one-on-one and prompts to stay focused or reteaching of concepts. Many of my current students are avoiding working with me. It's unrealistic for teachers to visit with students face-to-face. Even online chatting by students is hard when kids avoid it.”

Teachers expressed concern over both student/teacher interaction and peer-to-peer interaction and relationship building. Younger students may have little or no peer or teacher direct interaction. Social interaction is an integral part of learning, so there is a sense that learning and well-being are compromised by a lack of peer-to-peer and teacher-student interaction.

“What concerns me the most is the lack of personal contact with my students. I don’t get to share as many examples with them that help the lessons come to life and help them to understand what they are learning is important for their futures.”

“Still being able to maintain/foster personal connections with students. Relationships are everything and it is much more difficult to reach as many students in that way through online learning.”

4. Teachers have technology, internet access, family and work-life balance concerns.

Technology concerns related to internet access and/or capacity which impacts not only students but teachers as well. Some teachers noted unreliable or limited internet bandwidth to limited their teaching capacity or student learning capacity. Teachers reported that some students had no access to Internet. Beyond Internet, teachers noted that some platforms, such as Schoology, did not work as they should initially. Training and support for online teaching is another big issue as the change to distance learning because of COVID-19 occurred very quickly.

Family and work/life concerns permeated many of the teacher concerns.

“The expectations that we teachers will magically know how much to assign, be available for responses at all times of the day, and supposedly work our regular hours without distraction (I have two kids at home that need help in all their schoolwork as well). I also am not allowed to go outside during my contract time, which is hard if my kids want to go outside and I can't watch them (my husband is an essential worker, so it is all on me).”

“The expectation of teaching and caring for my own children (priority #1) and teaching my students (obviously another top priority). It gets complicated fast, but we are doing the best we can.”

“My job has gotten harder. I have not worked harder in my job even on my busiest days than I have during this past couple of weeks. It is mentally exhausting - learning all the new technology, supporting families in their own crisis, finding resources for families, supporting staff who are also struggling. I am afraid that administrators will think this is a gravy train for teachers - like we have it so good working from home. I would rather be at the school any old day.”

What we learned and recommendations for practice:

We are all in this crisis together! Teachers have answered the call and are working hard to serve students but not without issues. **Students come first for teachers no matter what the delivery system!**

Concern: Teachers all over the state feel their teaching practice and personal lives are highly disrupted. The differences between size of school, age of teachers, experience, grade level, gender is slight when it comes to the disruption of life and teaching as all groups feel disrupted.

Recommendation: We need to honor these feelings, be kind to each other and realize connecting with each other on a personal level continues to be important every day in every situation. It is necessary to find intentional ways to show how much teachers and staff are valued as they work in uncertain times.

Concern: Teaching from home with children at home (both pre-school and school age) is difficult and causes extra stress and worry. Daycare may not be an option or daycares can close.

Recommendation: Schedules need to be flexible to accommodate families and teaching duties. The issue should be addressed in an open and caring manner while searching for viable solutions.

Bright spot: Teachers feel confident in school leadership to lead through the COVID-19 crisis...a good thing!

Recommendation: Keep communication and decisions focused on doing what's best for students, teachers, staff and the community as a whole.

Concern: Special education teachers feel more disrupted than any other group of teachers.

Recommendation: Make sure special education teachers are supported and their students' learning and well-being enhanced.

Concern: Overall, more experienced teachers feel more disrupted in their teaching than to younger teachers.

Recommendation: Take time to visit and encourage someone who is struggling be they young or old, staff, student or parent. It pays dividends.

Concern: Internet access for students and staff continues to be an issue.

Recommendation: Staff technology should be updated to the highest level - School districts must work with staff and technology providers to ensure that staff and students have access to high speed connectivity.

Concern: Training and support for teaching is a real concern for half of the teachers surveyed.

Recommendation: Ongoing training and support for staff should be part of the weekly routine for all teaching staff.
Weekly staff meetings should be held virtually to encourage staff communication and socialization. Include members of the support staff in meetings to facilitate the message that we are in this together.

Concern: Parent support is needed for student learning but is often lacking or parents have just given up. Students can be disengaged or unable to learn independently without parent support.

Recommendation: We need to continue to reach out and support discouraged or disinterested parents and students. Communication plans with students and parents must be clear and set-up in a two-way mode to ensure schools can adjust to the changing needs of families.

Concern: Mental, emotional and physical health (of students, parents, teachers and staff) continue as serious and often silent issues during this crisis.

Recommendation: Districts can have weekly mental health checks with students, families, and staff.

If possible, provide employee assistance programs that also serve dependents. Make these programs visible to families so they are aware that the services are available in the region. Personal wellness of staff is a very important element of successful teaching. Active wellness committees are a very proactive approach to supporting positive staff climate.

Bright spot: Support systems exist and are valued and necessary.

Recommendation: Thank a caregiver, spouse, colleague, friend or community member!

Teachers are hopeful!

Remember: We are all in this together!