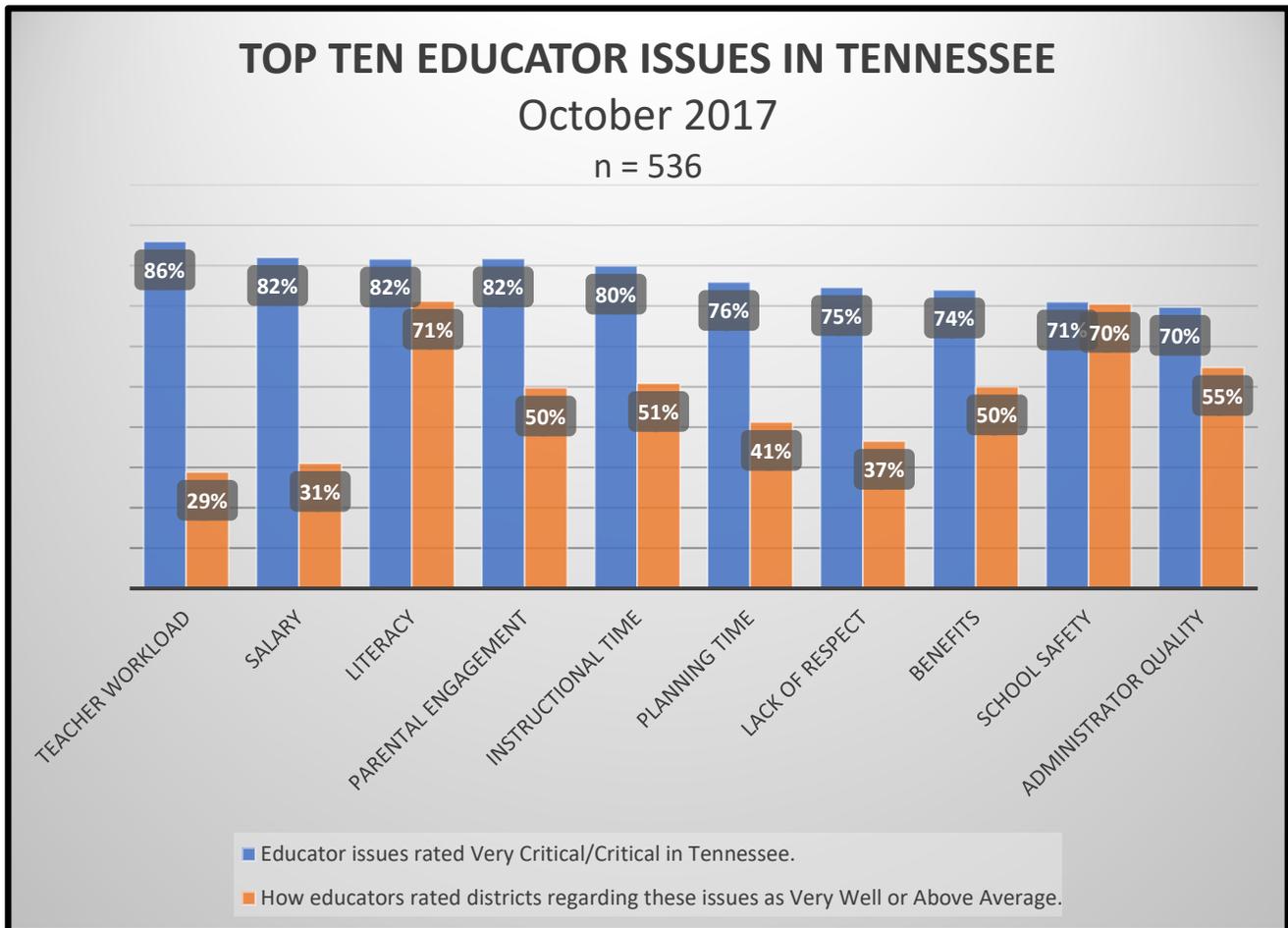




Professional Educators of Tennessee 2017 State of Tennessee Education Report

Professional Educators of Tennessee produced their annual membership survey. Responding to this survey were 536 educators from over 81 districts. Educators were asked to rate the following issues as being *Very Critical*, *Critical*, *Somewhat Critical*, or *Not Critical*: Administrator Quality – Benefits – Hunger - Instructional Time - Lack of Respect – Literacy - Parental Engagement – Planning Time – Poverty – Professional Learning - Quality Resources – Salary - School Safety – Standards - Teacher Evaluation – Teacher Quality – Teacher Workload – Technology (or lack thereof) – Testing.

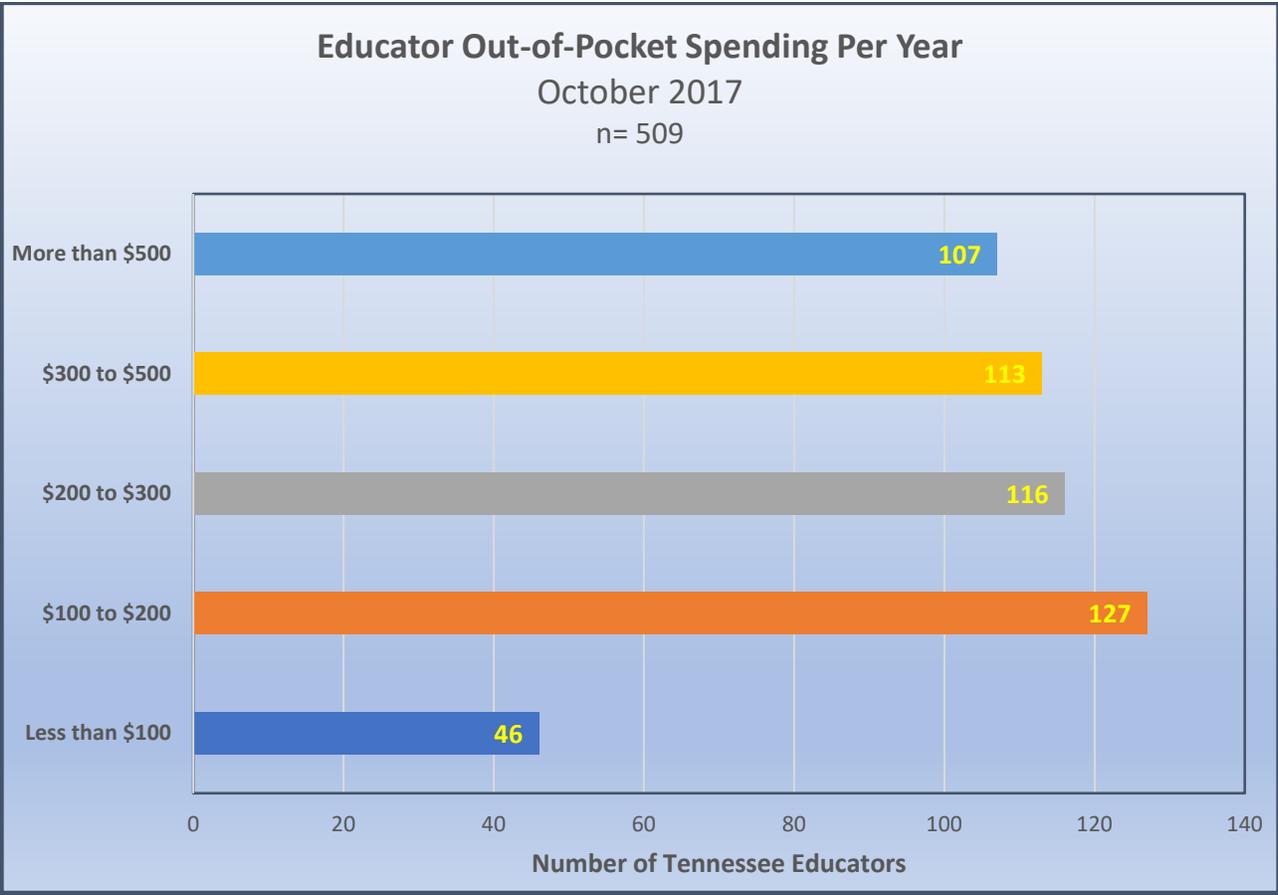
The following survey question took these same issues and asked educators to rate how they felt their district or school addressed them. According to the survey (in order), the top 10 most critical issues were: Teacher Workload, Salary, Literacy, Parental Engagement, Instructional Time, Planning Time, Lack of Respect, Benefits, School Safety, and Administrator Quality.



What is interesting to note on this survey is not just which issues educators thought was most critical but how they perceived their districts/schools as meeting these issues. Teacher workload was the #1 most critical issue followed by Salary, Literacy and Parental Engagement.

What is equally interesting is how educators perceived their districts addressing these issues. Only 29% of educators rated their districts as being above average concerning their workload. Educators rated districts at 31% above average for addressing salary issues. Whereas Literacy and School Safety were also considered critical issues, educators rated their districts well regarding them.

In addition, we also surveyed educators regarding their out-of-pocket spending. Ninety-one percent indicated they spent more than \$100 a year with 21% stating they spend more than \$500 per year out-of-pocket. One educator stated they spent more than \$1000 per year while another stated they spent more than \$2000.



Conclusion

These results are somewhat aligned with previous findings from surveys that we have conducted in the past. Also of significant note was which issues were not considered as critical by educators. Ranked 11-19 were Teacher Quality, Testing, Poverty, Quality Resources, Technology (or lack thereof), Hunger, Teacher Evaluation, Standards, and Professional Learning. In regard to Professional Learning, training provided outside of the district appears to be more specific to educator needs. We were surprised to find that Testing and Teacher Evaluation were not in the top 10 most critical issues. However, two hundred fifty (250) educators left comments in the open-ended question and test, tests or testing was mentioned 68 times. [Teacher] evaluation was mentioned 19 times. Another issue that was not listed above but was mentioned in the open-ended question was class-size. Class-size was a concern for several respondents and we also feel it is it a critical issue. However, the number one issue is undoubtedly excessive educator/teacher workload. Stakeholders at all levels should make it a priority to work together in order to reduce excessive educator workload at the same time providing salary increases that will actually go into the teachers' paychecks and not just to the district coffers. Additionally, we feel it is also imperative that the state should ensure that classrooms are adequately funded and work to reduce teacher out-of-pocket expenditures.