Overall, Florida educators have similar views and experiences as their national peers. Key differences include:

**BARRIERS TO LEARNING**

Florida teachers are more likely to say that family involvement in student learning (56% vs. 48%) and access to the internet and other learning resources out of school (55% vs. 48%) are not adequately available for their students.

Florida educators are more likely to agree that retaining high-quality teachers is a challenge (63% vs. 49%).

Teachers in Florida are more likely to receive discretionary funds from their school district or PTA compared to teachers nationally (84% vs. 55%) and spend slightly more of their own money on their classrooms than average ($548 vs. $530).

**FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

Florida educators are more likely to say it is important to make school information available in multiple languages (66% vs. 53%) and to provide opportunities and resources for summer learning (63% vs. 55%) in order to encourage family engagement with their student’s learning.

They are less likely to say that two important components of family engagement are happening to the degree they should: accommodating families whose schedules prevent attendance at school events or meetings (35% vs. 49%) and community partnerships to offer services to families and students (25% vs. 36%).

**FUNDING PRIORITIES**

Florida teachers are more likely to identify high-quality instructional materials as a funding priority (67% vs. 55%).

On average, Florida teachers have 18% fewer books per classroom than the national average (216 vs. 254).

Florida teachers are more likely to cite ebooks (49% vs. 41%) as classroom library needs. Additionally, ebooks are a top need for Florida teachers’ classroom libraries but do not appear as a top need nationally.

The national Teacher & Principal School Report series can be found at scholastic.com/teacherprincipalreport.
Ninety percent of Florida teachers and principals agree that many of their students face barriers to learning from outside of the school environment. Teachers report having students in their classrooms who face myriad situations that can impede learning:

- 85% experiencing family or personal crisis
- 80% living in poverty
- 78% in need of English language learning support
- 72% in need of mental health services
- 71% coming to school hungry
- 66% in need of healthcare services
- 62% homeless or in temporary housing

Resource needs in Florida are varied and significant, with teachers citing the following as NOT adequately available for their students:

**FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONDITIONS**
- 56% Family involvement in student learning
- 31% Strong staff-to-family connections
- 29% Strong connections between schools and communities

**OUTSIDE-OF-SCHOOL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT**
- 55% Access to the internet and other learning resources outside of school
- 53% Access to fiction and/or nonfiction books at home

**IN-SCHOOL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT**
- 41% In-school specialists to address students’ social and emotional needs
- 20% High-quality instructional materials

Within Florida, teachers in higher-poverty schools are more likely than those in lower-poverty schools to indicate their students lack adequate access to fiction/nonfiction books at home (65% vs. 28%) as well as family involvement in student learning (70% vs. 26%).

Equity in education needs to improve. That means making sure that personal and social circumstances—gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status—is not an obstacle to achieving educational potential.

Florida Elementary School Principal
The top five funding priorities among Florida teachers include:

- Higher salaries: 75%
- High-quality instructional materials: 67%
- Technology devices and digital resources in school: 53%
- Academic or social-emotional intervention initiatives and programs: 47%
- Additional high-quality staff to reduce student-to-teacher ratio: 46%

Eighty-four percent of teachers in Florida receive discretionary funds from their school district or PTA. In the past year, they have spent $548 of their own money on items for their students and/or classrooms.

There is a severe lack of quality instructional materials and textbooks in my district, and teachers are scrambling to find materials for their classrooms. A quality education cannot be provided with this hit or miss technique.

Florida Elementary School Teacher
FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Nearly all Florida educators say that involving families in children’s learning is important for student success (98%), but many educators need help engaging families (77%).

The top activities Florida educators identify as most important to help families engage in their children’s learning include:

- Maintaining ongoing, two-way communication with families (81%)
- Clearly communicating children’s learning goals for the school year (80%)
- Hosting and encouraging attendance at parent-teacher conferences (78%)
- Hosting activities and events that involve students, and encouraging family participation (69%)
- Making school information available in multiple formats (67%)

There are significant gaps between what Florida educators say is important and what is actually happening in schools. Among their top priorities, the largest gaps are in:

- Clearly communicating children’s learning goals for the school year: 80% importance, 54% happening
- Maintaining ongoing, two-way communication with families: 81% importance, 66% happening
- Hosting activities and events that involve students, and encouraging family participation: 69% importance, 61% happening

Great teachers understand the social and emotional needs of their students and their students’ family members. They know that people need to feel safe and calm in order to learn and grow.

Florida Middle School Teacher
Florida teachers indicate that the most effective formats for professional development include workshops conducted by outside consultants, authors or experts (67%), professional conferences (54%), and observing other teachers in their school or district (54%). The top areas in which Florida teachers would like professional development in the coming year include:

1. Instructional strategies in my subject area(s) - 62%
2. Incorporating technology into lessons - 53%
3. Strategies for working with families¹ - 42%

99% of Florida educators agree that they “want effective, ongoing, relevant professional development”

¹This item is a net of two items from the survey: “Strategies for working with students and families from all cultures” and “Strategies for improving engagement with families in support of their children’s learning.”
The top types of reading materials Florida teachers need in their classroom libraries are:

1. Culturally relevant titles 50%
2. eBooks 49%
3. Magazines 49%
4. Books in other languages 48%
5. Books published in the last 3-5 years 47%

NINETY-SEVEN PERCENT OF FLORIDA EDUCATORS AGREE PROVIDING YEAR-ROUND ACCESS TO BOOKS AT HOME IS IMPORTANT TO ENHANCING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.

The number one way Florida students gain access to books during the summer, as reported by educators, is the public library (72%). Other notable sources of books include:

- Teachers providing books 22%
- School/district providing books 13%
- Community partners providing books 11%
- Books in other languages 48%
- Books published in the last 3-5 years 47%

Data are from the Teacher & Principal School Report series of reports from Scholastic, conducted by research firm, YouGov. Findings are among 214 teachers and 33 principals from Florida. For the full national report and methodology, please visit www.scholastic.com/teacherprincipalreport.
Three in 10 Florida teachers set aside time for independent reading or read aloud to their students every school day (30%)—for an average of 22 minutes. Forty-six percent of literacy teachers set aside this time.

Almost three-quarters of Florida teachers say they wish that students were read aloud to or read a book of their choice independently more often (70%). This is more common among elementary school teachers than secondary school teachers (76% vs. 61%).

Among teachers who wish it occurred more often, the biggest barriers to independent reading are the demands of the curriculum not allowing enough time (87%) and that independent reading is not considered an important use of class time at their school (23%).

The top ways Florida educators promote reading among students include:

1. Talking with students about the importance of reading 76%
2. Talking with students about the books they read for fun 67%
3. Encouraging summer reading 66%
4. Encouraging students to use the school library 64%
5. Making books available for students to take home during the school year 61%

scholastic.com/teacherprincipalreport