

The list of barriers below represents the overarching and systemic challenges, identified by FIT Leaders, that prevent North Carolina from creating and fostering the career qualities required to be First in Teaching. They are also, therefore, our greatest opportunities to elevate the teaching profession beyond what is experienced in any other state. In addition to the FIT Career Qualities, participants indicated that feeling respected is an important aspect of being treated as a professional and that the barriers below have an impact on how respected they feel.

**While the emphasis here is on teaching, each of these barriers have a direct impact on teachers' ability to be effective and positively impact student success.**

## Administrative Burden

- **Defined:** Too much administrative paperwork and ever-shifting programs/priorities
- **Teacher voice:** I have to spend so much time doing paperwork, administrative tasks, and responding to ever-shifting priorities that I don't have time for my students.

## Inadequate Facilities

- **Defined:** Inadequate physical infrastructure and facilities in many of our schools prevent teachers from fostering a positive teaching and learning environment
- **Teacher voice:** My school should feel like a professional environment and reflect the importance of what I do with and for students every day.

## Inadequate Teacher Evaluation

- **Defined:** Inadequate teacher evaluation process and implementation
- **Teacher voice:** The teacher evaluation system does not provide timely and constructive feedback that allows me to promptly adapt to meet the needs of my students.

## Inflexible Schedule

- **Defined:** Lack of workday flexibility to meet urgent personal needs
- **Teacher voice:** I deserve reasonable flexibility to handle family and medical issues, like other professionals.

## Lack of Access to Equitable Resources

- **Defined:** Inequitable distribution of resources for higher-needs classrooms and lack of access to resource decision-making overall
- **Teacher voice:** I do not have adequate access to resources (both physical and professional development) to do my job and meet the needs of my students.

## Lack of Career Opportunities

- **Defined:** Lack of career advancement for teachers
- **Teacher voice:** I deserve to have career advancement opportunities, without having to leave the work I love in the classroom. The organizational structure should be designed to empower teams of teachers to work together and apply their individual strengths better.

## Lack of Connectedness

- **Defined:** Lack of connectedness - to the community and other professionals
- **Teacher voice:** I deserve the same professional networking opportunities that other professions enjoy.

## Lack of Recruitment and Preparation

- **Defined:** Persistent vacancies and inadequate educator preparation/support
- **Teacher voice:** I want to be in an industry where teachers are actively recruited into the profession and have access to high-quality preparation and the on-boarding supports enjoyed by other professionals. I also want to be part of a diverse workforce that includes a wide-range of perspectives to benefit student success.

## Lack of Strong School Leadership

- **Defined:** Lack of strong school leaders who attract, retain, and support great talent
- **Teacher voice:** I want my principal to be equipped to create a school culture that attracts and retains great educators who are committed to excellence and working towards a shared vision for student success. I also deserve a school leader who will support my unique professional needs and empower me to innovate in my classroom and with my colleagues.

## Lack of Time to Plan and Collaborate

- **Defined:** Lack of protected planning and collaboration time
- **Teacher voice:** I do not have the time and opportunity to plan and collaborate with my colleagues, so we can adapt our practices to meet the ever-changing needs of our students and community.

## Negative Perceptions

- **Defined:** Negative perception of the teaching profession
- **Teacher voice:** I do not feel like my profession is valued by the general public, which leads to less support from my community and fewer people who want to join me in this important work.

## Outdated Compensation Model

- **Defined:** Lack of a competitive compensation model that adjusts with cost-of-living, values high performance and impact, attracts top talent, and addresses staffing demands
- **Teacher voice:** My compensation should be competitive with surrounding states and incentivize me to expand my reach and effectiveness to more students and/or colleagues, teach high-demand skills/courses/students, and/or work in high-needs schools.

## Teachers Play Too Many Roles

- **Defined:** Lack of adequate wrap-around supports for students (nurses, psychologists, etc.) spreads teachers thin and diverts their attention away from instruction
- **Teacher voice:** I have to spend so much time supporting wrap-around needs for my students that I don't have time to focus on their academic needs.

