

## **Contemporary Education Issue**

*What do you see as one crucial contemporary education issue in America? Please explain why you selected this issue and, in your opinion, and research, what can realistically be done to address it.*

I think there are many issues in education today that need to be addressed in order for our students and staff to thrive. In my opinion, one of the most important issues is teacher burnout. In the United States, “44% of teachers in K-12 education said they very often or always feel burned out at work....K12 and university teaching are the top jobs with the highest burnout rates in the US” (Bouchrika, 2023). When trying to address a problem, the causes must first be identified. Unruly students, lack of mental health resources, lack of adequate funding, uncooperative parents, and lack of support from schools and administration are all situations that cause teachers to be stressed and eventually lead to teacher burnout. The vast number of problems warrant a vast number of solutions. One solution is to conduct mandatory parent-teacher conferences to discuss resolutions to student academic needs, discipline infractions, parenting responsibility, and their role in the education of their son/daughter. Often, the parents who attend parent conferences are not the parents to whom teachers need to speak. Mandatory conferences for parents would force the parents to take accountability for the performance of their child in school. So much of the oneness of responsibility has fallen on the teacher, but the parents and students are not held accountable, and this is a significant contributing factor to the teacher burnout. Additionally, quarterly check-ins with students, parents, and teachers could decrease the gap in communication between families and teachers and help to reduce behavioral and academic issues, but parents need to also initiate and engage because ultimately the student is their child. With this change, teachers can dedicate more energy to their lessons, methods, and life outside the classroom. Mental health resources for teachers can also be used to aid in reducing teacher burnout. Going to a school and having to smile and be patient with students and

parents every day can be mentally and physically taxing. Yes, teachers have bad days as well, yet the career requires to brave a happy face and press forward. If teachers had accessible resources for mental health, they could engage in more self-care and learn to process their emotions better. Teachers are humans and struggle with emotions just like students do. According to Freeman, “teachers are especially vulnerable to burnout because the nature of the profession is contingent upon the mental and intellectual capacity of the individual; teachers rely on their creativity, content knowledge, and overall intellect on a daily basis. Burnout has been known to have an impact on the health, relationships, and self-esteem of teachers, subsequently causing their quality of work to decrease and their efficacy to decline” (2016). Both teachers and students deserve to have help and guidance when needed. Considering the crisis of the teacher shortage in America, this response could be extensive, but hopefully enough can be extrapolated to recognize teacher burnout as a contemporary issue in education today.

## References

BOUCHRIKA, I. (2023, January 23). *Teacher burnout statistics: Challenges in K-12 and higher education*. Research.com. Retrieved February 27, 2023, from <https://research.com/education/teacher-burnout-challenges-in-k-12-and-higher-education#:~:text=In%20the%20United%20States%2C%2044,Gallup%20Poll%20on%20occupational%20burnout>.

FREEMAN, D. R. (2016). *Factors that contribute to burnout in Vocational Education Teachers*. Retrieved February 27, 2023, from [https://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/freeman\\_dwionne\\_r\\_201605\\_edd.pdf](https://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/freeman_dwionne_r_201605_edd.pdf)