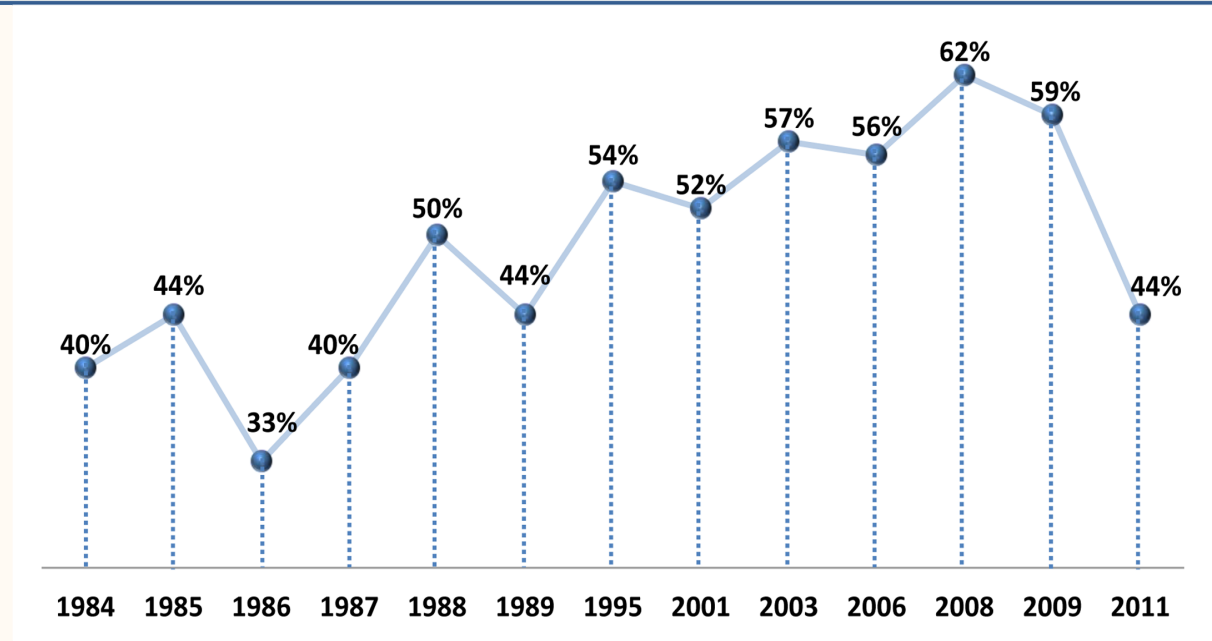


**Build higher levels  
of job satisfaction  
with professional  
learning**



# Teacher satisfaction has dropped 15 points

Teacher Job Satisfaction through the Years (% Very Satisfied)



Base: Teachers (2011 n=1,001)

Q905. Question text in 2011, 2001, 1987, 1986, 1984: All in all, how satisfied would you say you are with your job as a teacher in the public schools?; Question text in 2009, 2008, 2006, 2003, 1995, 1989, 1988, 1985: All in all, how satisfied would you say you are with teaching as a career?

Source: **MetLife. (2011).** *The MetLife survey of the American teacher: Teachers, parents and the economy.* New York: Author. (14). Available at [www.metlife.com/teachersurvey](http://www.metlife.com/teachersurvey).



# Professional learning has a role in satisfaction rates

**72%** of teachers with low job satisfaction (vs. 86% with high) reported that their school or district provides **adequate opportunities for professional development**.

**44%** of teachers with low job satisfaction (vs. 27% with high) reported that **time to collaborate with other teachers has decreased** during the past 12 months.

**33%** of teachers with low job satisfaction (vs. 20% with high) reported that there has been a **decrease in professional development opportunities** during the past 12 months.

Source: **MetLife. (2011).** *The MetLife survey of the American teacher: Teachers, parents and the economy.* New York: Author. Available at [www.metlife.com/teachersurvey](http://www.metlife.com/teachersurvey).



# What can teacher leaders do?

Create a safe learning environment

- Trusting
- Confidential
- Reflective
- Collegial

Source: **Armstrong, A. (2012, May)** Build higher levels of job satisfaction. *The Leading Teacher*. Oxford, OH: Learning Forward. Available at [www.learningforward.org/news/teacher](http://www.learningforward.org/news/teacher).



# What can teacher leaders do?

Provide opportunities for teachers to contribute to

- Professional learning plans
- School governance
- Decision making
- Education policies

Source: **Armstrong, A. (2012, May)** Build higher levels of job satisfaction. *The Leading Teacher*. Oxford, OH: Learning Forward. Available at [www.learningforward.org/news/teacher](http://www.learningforward.org/news/teacher).



# Download the article and accompanying tools

Read the full article, published in *The Leading Teacher* (May, 2012). Available at [www.learningforward.org/news/teacher](http://www.learningforward.org/news/teacher).

**THE LEADING Teacher**

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EVERY EDUCATOR ENGAGES IN EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING EVERY DAY SO EVERY STUDENT ACHIEVES

## Build higher levels of job satisfaction

COLLEGIALITY, LEADERSHIP ARE KEY FACTORS FOR TEACHERS

**By Anthony Armstrong**

Teacher job satisfaction has dropped dramatically in just two years. In 2009, 59% of teachers were very satisfied with their jobs. In 2011, that number dropped to 44%, according to *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Teachers, Parents and the Economy* (MetLife, 2011, p. 13). This represents the largest drop in teacher satisfaction since the annual *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher* first started tracking teacher satisfaction in 1984, and the lowest level of teacher satisfaction in the past 24 years.

A recent research paper from The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers at the Harvard Graduate School of Education examines how working conditions predict teachers' job satisfaction and career plans. The study found that working conditions were the most important factor in teacher satisfaction: "Teachers who teach in favorable work environments report that they are more satisfied and less likely to plan to transfer or leave the profession than their peers in schools with less favorable conditions, even after controlling for student demographics and other school and teacher characteristics" (Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2012, p. 5).

The same study went on to make the link between teacher satisfaction and student achievement growth (Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2012, p. 5), so the importance of teacher satisfaction cannot be overstated.

One of the study's goals was to determine which factors within favorable working environments are most important for predicting teachers' job satisfaction. Interestingly, the conditions most important for teacher satisfaction were "the ones that shape the social context of teaching and learning" (Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2012, p. 27). While typical working condition requirements were important, such as safe facilities, adequate resources, and lesson preparation time, the study found that the three most important elements for teacher satisfaction are

1. Collegial relationships, or the extent to which teachers report having productive working relationships with their colleagues;
2. The principal's leadership, or the extent to which teachers report that their school leaders are supportive

*Continued on p. 4*

Teryl Hansen, director of teacher leadership for the Arizona K12 Center, creates an atmosphere of collegiality through games such as Jenga that offer what she calls equity of voice.

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