



# TSTA NEWS

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## **TSTA: Teachers taking extra jobs and subsidizing under-funded education budget**

As Texas teachers and students return to school this month, about four of every 10 teachers expect to take extra jobs outside the classroom to meet family expenses, a new Texas State Teachers Association survey of its members indicates.

Survey respondents also reported spending an average \$738 a year on non-reimbursed school supplies. Spread across all 350,000 Texas teachers, this represents a potential \$250 million annual subsidy that under-paid teachers are providing to Texas' elected leaders, who are neglecting their responsibility to adequately fund public education.

Some 39 percent of TSTA respondents said they needed second jobs during the school year to supplement their school salaries. This is a noticeable increase over the 31 percent who reported moonlighting in 2016, the last time TSTA commissioned a similar survey. Most teachers said the extra work affected their teaching but believed they had no choice financially.

Fifty-six percent of respondents said they had summer jobs when school was not in session, compared to 49 percent with summer jobs in 2016.

The average salary of the respondents was \$53,221, a few dollars more than the state average for the 2017-18 school year and \$7,300 below the national average, based on National Education Association (NEA) data collected from the states and the District of Columbia. This ranks Texas 29th in teacher pay.

Teacher salaries are increasingly eroded by rising health insurance premiums as well as out-of-pocket expenditures on classroom supplies. Survey respondents paid an average \$359 a month on health insurance, compared to \$326 a month two years ago. The \$738 annual school supply expenditure jumped from \$656 in 2016.

Teachers and other school employees shoulder a large part of rising health care premiums because the state hasn't increased its monthly per-employee contribution of \$75 since the current health insurance plan was implemented in 2002.

"This is what happens when the governor, the lieutenant governor and their legislative allies refuse to adequately fund public education. Teachers are being forced to take extra jobs to meet their families' needs as well as those of their students," said TSTA President Noel Candelaria. "The House approved legislation last year to improve public education funding by as much as \$1.8 billion during the current budget period, but Gov. Greg Abbott and Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick slammed the door on it."

Candelaria added: “Our teachers, nevertheless, remain dedicated to their students’ success, even if it means spending evenings and weekends at extra jobs away from their families. It’s time for our elected officials at the state Capitol to demonstrate the same kind of dedication to our children by providing the necessary resources.”

Per-student funding in Texas is \$2,300 less a year than the national average, according to the National Education Association.

The TSTA survey also found:

# Moonlighting teachers average 14.1 hours a week on their extra jobs. This is in addition to the 17 hours a week they spend outside the classroom on school-related work.

# Most teachers who moonlight (79 percent) believe the additional jobs are harmful to the quality of their teaching, and 85 percent would quit moonlighting if teaching paid them more. On average, they said, they would need an extra \$10,559 a year to quit their non-school jobs.

# Fifty-three percent of respondents said they were seriously considering leaving the teaching profession.

The online survey was conducted in May and June by Dr. Robert Maninger and Dr. Casey Creggan of the School of Teaching and Learning at Sam Houston State University. Some 974 teachers participated, and 62 percent were the major income earners for their families. Their average experience in the classroom was 17.2 years.

Forty-five percent taught kindergarten through 5th grade; 23 percent, grades 6-8; and 32 percent, grades 9-12. Fifty-one percent taught in urban school districts, 39 percent in suburban districts and 10 percent in rural districts.