



TEACHER SALARY

The following are the Texas State Teachers Association's comments before the Texas Senate Finance Committee on October, 9th, 2023.

The Texas State Teachers Association (TSTA) advocates that lawmakers must address teacher compensation in order to ensure that Texas public schools are providing a quality education for Texas students. Texas teachers are the backbone of the education system and the state must provide teachers with the resources and compensation needed to properly serve students.

Texas public schools are under-funded and teachers and support staff are underpaid. Teachers need a significant lasting pay raise, not limited salary bumps and one-time stipends that have been previously proposed. School support staff, many of whom aren't even paid livable wages, need substantial pay increases as well.

Texas trails the national average on average teacher salary. Based on the National Education Association's recent rankings of education spending among the states for the 2022-23 school year, the average teacher pay in Texas now is about \$60,000 a year, \$7,700 less than the national average. Texas teachers with the most experience face a greater pay gap. During the 2021-22 school year, Texas' average top salary was \$64,739, more than \$13,000 less than the national average of \$77,931. Texas ranked 39th among the 47 states that reported top teacher salaries.

Trailing teacher salaries are creating an unsustainable Texas education system. Recent surveys have shown that 70 percent of Texas teachers have considered leaving the teaching profession with many citing inadequate pay as a major reason for their career shift considerations. According to TEA, 12 percent of Texas teachers left their jobs during the 2021-22 school year, the largest attrition rate since 2007-08.

Texas educators love teaching and are passionate about providing a quality education for students, but increased costs of living have pushed many teachers away from the underpaid profession. Continuing to underpay teachers will lead to more teachers leaving the classroom and less graduates entering the profession, furthering the teacher shortages that many school districts face.

Surveys indicate that 41 percent of Texas teachers say they had to take second or third jobs during the school year to meet the needs of their families. Our educators deserve better, they deserve the opportunity to spend their free time with their families, loved ones, and communities instead of at a second job.