

Extended Information Related to Teacher Recruitment, Retention, Compensation, Benefits and Incentives

Across all constituent groups at the regional meetings, for all three guiding questions, a theme of teacher compensation, benefits and incentives emerged. This theme was closely aligned and intertwined with comments related to a need for recruiting and retaining high quality teachers. The following three themes were extracted from each of the “top five” lists presented in the full report:

- Recruit/retain; salary & benefits
- Compensate educators with pay & incentives
- Pursue increased teacher pay and incentives

Hand-written information provided by constituents at the Regional Meetings was converted to type and is presented below. The comments are provided for the task force and for the reader to offer more specific information about the theme of teacher recruitment, retention, compensation, benefits and incentives. Although many of the data points are repetitive, it is offered to convey the full extent of perceptions on this topic and to demonstrate that regardless of the guiding question that was offered, this theme consistently emerged. Proceeding sections offer similarly themed information from the Stakeholder Listening Sessions as well as information submitted to the Blue Ribbon Task Force website.

Guiding Question #1

Responses Related to Teacher Recruitment, Retention, Compensation, Benefits and Incentives

Educators Responses:

- Money to attract and retain quality teachers
- Quality teacher vs warm body
- Quality teachers
- Consistent teacher compensation to attract and maintain high quality educators
- Money to retain and reward experience
- Retaining quality teachers, recruiting staff
- Keep quality educators in SD by paying them an acceptable living wage so they don't need a 2nd job during the school year and know they are valued
- Recruiting and retaining top quality and talented teachers
- High quality educators
- Retaining quality teachers
- Retaining quality well-trained teachers
- Keeping and rewarding our best teachers
- Teacher pay
- Competitive salary for teachers and administrators to keep our own in SD
- Salaries
- Salaries and insurance costs
- Teachers pay and benefits
- Competitive money wage
- Effective instruction
- Teacher total compensation package, pay/healthcare/continuing education/retirement

- Increase base for new teachers = those teachers making about the same as 2-10 yr. staff
- Provide a living wage for teachers so they can contribute to the local economy and not worry about survival
- Support staff pay
- Teacher salaries, funding
- Being able to have enough money to hire enough teachers (and support staff) for the amount of growth of the school
- Health insurance
- Teacher pay
- Competitive teacher pay
- Attract new employees
- Keep good employees
- Keeping and finding teachers in our districts
- Attracting and retaining quality teachers
- Teacher recruit and retention
- Keeping teachers in the profession and in the state
- Sped - tough area to fill
- Attracting and keeping quality teachers
- Shortage and quality of teachers
- Retention, not always new hires
- Staff retention
- Recruiting and retaining quality teachers, new teachers are faced with the challenge of where to work, based on salary
- Finding best teachers
- Quality staff
- SD needs to attract and keep highly qualified, highly educated teachers to teach SD schools
- Qualified applicants, there are none, all curriculum areas
- Keeping qualified teachers
- Keeping quality teachers in state
- Recruitment and retention of staff
- Retaining qualified people
- Increase salaries of teachers/support staff
- Competitive pay for all staff
- Fair wages and salaries, teaching supplies. Textbooks/teaching materials/supplies
- Not being able to fill open teaching positions
- Having qualified applicants for teacher jobs, retaining our good teachers, border states offer higher salaries, SD salaries are embarrassed
- Have ability to hire quality teacher
- Having qualified applicants for jobs and then not being embarrassed by the salary offered
- Funding needs to be in line with retention of teachers in competitive work force
- Small schools not being able to find teachers
- Funding to provide an adequate salary that is competitive with non-education jobs in the area
- It's important to fund all schools whether small or large. At present larger schools are pulling teachers from the smaller schools. That will only hurt our state as a whole and we in Yankton are losing so many to Neb/IA
- Keeping teachers not exporting them to other districts or other states
- Highly qualified staff
- Good quality teachers
- Recruit and retention quality staff
- Recruit and hold quality teachers
- Competitive salaries

- Salaries
- Funding adequate to allow teachers to teach in their preparation area of expertise
- Teachers need to make living wage, competitive wage
- Funding to increase staff size, to keep class size manageable, adequate prep time
- Provide a bridge for the salary gap
- Pay teachers enough to encourage young people to go into profession
- Keeping teachers in South Dakota, not border jumping
- Why be a teacher? Competitive salary
- You show what you value by what you are willing to pay for it
- Recruit more students into education
- Teachers humble, afraid to say how important their work is, won't argue for meaningful funding
- Pay enough, good teachers will stay
- Need salary and respect for teachers
- Money

Business Responses:

- Quality schools to attract workers
- Attracting and retaining quality teachers
- Salaries
- Keeping quality teachers and releasing teachers that need to go
- Recruit and retain quality teachers
- Retaining and attracting teachers
- Teacher pay
- Quality teachers
- Funding to ensure recruitment and retention of quality staff
- Enough to attract exceptional teachers
- Quality teachers
- Attract and retain quality teachers
- Retaining teachers, recruiting
- Benefit package more affordable - health care
- Teacher pay
- Teacher salaries
- Quality teachers, keep the best of the best
- Quality teachers/instruction
- Attracting the best qualified teachers for our kids that are possible
- Recruitment of high need teachers (scholarships/fast track)
- Student/teacher relationships, build a rapport
- Retention of quality teachers
- Funding for recruitment and retention of teachers
- Salaries

Community Responses:

- Salaries and benefits
- Increase teacher pay, too many administrators
- Resources to meet today's learning needs
- Maintain quality staff, teachers/student ratios for equality education
- Provide a salary to allow for professionals to develop skills to become master teachers w/o having to have multiple part time jobs
- Money for adequate teacher resources to teach in the classroom
- Maintain quality facilities/equipment with meaningful technology for all students
- Need to open up funding sources

Guiding Question #2

Responses Related to Teacher Recruitment, Retention, Compensation, Benefits and Incentives

Educators Responses:

- Salary schedule promised and not frozen
- Increase/build trust between state and schools - won't get money, won't give money because school won't spend
- State supported housing
- More teacher control over our own budgets
- Advanced scholarship programs for teachers in all areas
- Provide better benefits to our teachers, day care, tuition reduction for teacher kids in the state
- Incentives to keep teachers around
- Larger pools for health insurance to reduce cost (combine teacher health ins pool with state employees). Health insurance expenses and increasing expenses
- (State covers increases) what to continue to do about health insurance increases, above and beyond inflation
- Retain young teachers by loan repayment funding
- Loan forgiveness
- Costs of higher education for teachers (lower)
- Provide state employee benefits for teachers
- Designate money to only fund teacher pay
- Professional development opportunities

Business Responses:

- Tuition reimbursement, professional development based increases for teachers, more like a business
- Performance and merit pay structure explored for viability
- Tools and resources to support teacher retention
- Target teachers with specific interest and ability to teach with best tools

Community Responses:

- Teacher retention
- Quality, passionate teachers and staff
- Salaries and benefits
- Retaining top quality educators
- Retaining and attracting skilled teachers
- Maintain quality teachers, more money
- Keeping and recruiting quality teachers
- Provide for adequate teacher pay to attract and retain good teachers
- Increase teacher pay, too many administrators
- Raise teacher salary
- Resources to meet today's learning needs
- Teacher pay to keep good educators and smaller classes
- Teachers treated and paid as the professionals they are
- Quality educators who feel valued (well paid) that impacts the classroom experience
- Merit pay for teachers
- A salary schedule that attracts the best and brightest teachers in the country
- Funding important to me, fair reasonable and better teacher's salaries
- It's important to attract and keep quality teachers, funding needs to be adequate
- Spending reserves to pay teachers and keep quality teachers
- Ability to recruit and retain effective teachers

- Maintain quality staff, teachers/student ratios for equality education
- Quality teachers, pay, working conditions
- Funding for salary
- Provide a salary to allow for professionals to develop skills to become master teachers w/o having to have multiple part time jobs
- Equal funding for teacher pay
- Financial security for teachers salary over time
- Hiring quality instructors
- Brightest and best teachers
- Keep good teachers
- Increase teacher/administrator pay
- Teacher retention
- Recruit and retain quality teachers
- Teachers are most critical to success
- Quality teachers
- Teacher salary

Guiding Question #3

Responses Related to Teacher Recruitment, Retention, Compensation, Benefits and Incentives

Educators Responses:

- Find a solid dollar number for teacher pay and then find a solid, permanent income source that is written so it cannot be taken away the next year
- Look at loan forgiveness as an incentive in a broader scope
- Student loan forgiveness for all South Dakota schools
- Lower tuition going into education
- Offer teacher and teacher's kids ½ off tuition to keep them here
- Consider free college in state, tuition for teacher/educator's kids after x years of service
- Allow teachers to retire/rehire
- Bring in revenue by paying teachers more
- Do bonuses and incentives, fix the problem or provide a temporary solution. Be aware/wary of temporary solutions
- Keep money designated for teacher pay/education
- Look for avenues increase salaries
- Teachers should be on state health insurance
- Please don't consider merit pay

Business Responses:

- Listen to teachers about their needs as educators
- Provide funding that trickles down to teachers and not just to programs
- Teacher Pay Metric: allocate so that average pay goes up 4%, not on individual teacher pay
- Reward and keep good teachers
- Teacher scholarships and loans forgiven if in education

Community Responses:

- Improve conditions and quality of life for educators
- Improve teacher conditions
- Make the teaching profession more appealing and rewarding
- Dedicate the funding for education and nothing else (teachers)
- Please recognize that salaries must rise to keep teachers in education
- Teachers will leave SD if they don't get paid enough to repay school loans

Stakeholder Listening Session Comments

Comments from the Stakeholder Listening Sessions that are specific to teacher recruitment, retention, compensation, benefits and incentives are provided below. These comments are not verbatim and in some cases have been summarized across multiple listening sessions.

- Offer teachers financial assistance for paying their children's postsecondary tuition.
- Suggestion for teachers to be include in the state insurance pool.
- Give teachers more flexibility with sick leave and release days for PD.
- Offer teachers tax breaks, pay for their graduate credits and recertification credits.
- Help teachers with the cost of insurance.
- Pay mentor teachers a stipend for supporting new teachers.
- Pay graduate credit expense or provide tax cuts for teachers.
- Help with increasing health insurance costs would be important.
- Flexible salary schedules or off-schedule hiring is helpful for acquiring staff.
- A performance-based teacher pay system would help us reward the quality staff.
- Lost strong teachers to retirement who would have stayed if the retire-rehire policy was more favorable.
- Consider loan forgiveness for teachers.
- Give teacher loan forgiveness for pursuing administrative degrees.
- More scholarships for students going into teacher would be an option.
- Do not change the rules on teacher retirement benefits.
- Provide support mechanism for professionals with content knowledge to transition into teaching as easily as possible.
- Flexibility to pay teachers off the schedule to attract particular teachers.
- Provide continuing ed funds as support to teachers.
- Foremost issue is low teacher pay.
- Salaries that are too low are the bottom line.
- Our counselor and special ed teacher stayed for a couple years and then left for better pay across the border.
- Too many good teachers are leaving for more money.
- There is a need to increase the base salary in SD.
- Proximity to neighboring states with higher pay makes it more difficult for districts near the borders.
- A teacher who relocated with her family took a \$20,000 cut in salary between SD and a neighboring state.
- Near the border with IA and NE and we lose teachers to out-of-state schools who can pay \$12,000 more.
- Many teachers move out of education because of the pay issue.
- Consider assistance with college debt for future teachers.
- Our math teacher went to MN for a \$12,000 increase.
- Losing teachers across the border for \$12,000-\$15,000 salary increases.
- Just lost a teacher for an \$8,000 salary increase to another district.
- Money is core issue—teachers leave after they gain some experience.
- It is tough to talk about quality when there isn't enough money.
- A teacher indicated an \$8,000 salary decrease with a move from ND to SD.

Information Submitted to the Blue Ribbon Task Force Website

Comments submitted to the Blue Ribbon Task Force website specific to teacher recruitment, retention, compensation, benefits and incentives are provided below. These comments are not verbatim and in some cases have been summarized across multiple comments.

- Low salaries are contributing substantially to the challenge of retaining qualified staff.
- The number of teachers leaving classrooms is increasing the shortfall of teachers.
- Fewer students are enrolling in teacher preparation programs.
- The number of applicants for positions is minimal.
- Low pay is a key factor for teachers leaving positions.
- The number of applicants for teaching positions continues to dwindle.
- Teacher shortages are occurring statewide.
- Provide incentives/reimbursements for teachers to pursue National Board Certification
- Pursue alternative certification pathways to qualify more teachers for positions
- Offer loan forgiveness as a strategy to attract new teachers
- Utilize social networking and the Doe website for recruiting teachers