

THE TEACHER SALARY PROJECT

# TACKLING THE CHALLENGE OF RAISING TEACHER PAY, STATE BY STATE

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# To ensure that students from all backgrounds

have equitable access to teachers who are qualified and experienced, former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan asked each state in our nation to gather stakeholders to explore this issue and document the scope of the problem and the state's proposed solutions in a State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators (equity plan). The Teacher Salary Project paid close attention to the responses. Knowing how critical having capable and stable teachers is to any school, we want to know what approaches states are adopting to address one essential component of their teacher recruitment and retention policy: teacher pay.

As states currently work to develop Consolidated State Plans under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), The Teacher Salary Project hopes they will meaningfully address the teacher pay gaps that too often keep talented teachers from working in our neediest schools and hard to staff subjects. This brief summarizes how the state equity plans address teacher salaries, with the goal of inspiring attention and innovation around teacher pay as states propose specific strategies that target the root causes of inequity in schools under ESSA. Whether states are submitting their Consolidated State Plans in April or September 2017, stakeholders should review other states' approaches and spark conversation and new, innovative ideas on this important topic.

A key finding from our review is that while many states acknowledged in their stakeholder conversations that low teacher pay hampers their ability to attract and retain teachers, far fewer states actually proposed a strategy or solution to address this issue, raising interesting questions as to why this might be the case. When teachers are not paid professionally, students suffer the consequences; the recommendation of The Teacher Salary Project is that stakeholders in each state press their leaders to explore options for raising teacher pay, beginning with the philosophies and proposals included in state's equity plans.

“We believe that systems need to be established to draw the right candidates into traditional and nontraditional career pathways, support the candidates through effective induction and mentoring programs, increase salaries, increase the opportunities and resources available for teachers to work in hard to fill subjects and hard to fill areas.” –from *Arizona’s Equity Plan*

## **OVERVIEW**

With the December 2015 passage of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), states and districts across the country are revisiting their teacher quality initiatives—including their equity plans—and reevaluating which approaches work, which are allowable, and which are fundable under the new law and its new equity requirements. As states develop their ESSA Consolidated State Plans, they must determine how best to incorporate the strategies in their equity plans. In light of recent concerns in nearly every state about teacher shortages and the need to attract more talented candidates to the field, these considerations should include serious attention to significantly improving teacher pay.

As a non-profit, non-partisan organization, The Teacher Salary Project shares the U.S. Department of Education’s ideal of improving student success by improving teacher quality for all students. Specifically, The Teacher Salary Project is committed to raising awareness about the impact of inadequate compensation on the teaching profession. Because salaries in high-poverty districts tend to be lower than those in better resourced communities, competitive, professional compensation is all the more important for ensuring that all students have equitable access to great teachers. Out of the 52 equity plans reviewed, 39 mentioned compensation as a relevant factor. This brief summarizes the state equity plans’ root cause analyses and strategies as they relate to teacher salaries, with the goal of promoting cross-state sharing of strategies, so that each state can learn from, and build on, the ideas of the others.

A photograph of two women in a meeting. The woman on the left is wearing a headband with a geometric pattern and is pointing at a laptop screen. The woman on the right is gesturing with her hands as if speaking. The image has a warm, orange-toned overlay.

## EQUITY PLAN REQUIREMENTS

The U.S. Department of Education required each state education agency (SEA) to meet with stakeholders, identify the equity gaps specific to their state, analyze root causes of each equity gap, and propose strategies for eliminating the equity gaps. States were also required to explain how they would monitor, evaluate, and report on progress toward eliminating their equity gaps.<sup>1</sup>

Each SEA's plan had official sign-off by the chief state school officer, and was then submitted for review and approval. It is important to note that states are not required by law to implement their plans. However, the requirements for stakeholder engagement, data analysis and root cause analysis were intended to help create plans that are meaningful and useful and that have buy-in and political support from stakeholders. Moreover, the requirements to monitor and publicly report on progress will ideally lead to plans that are continuously improved and sustained for the long run. Another factor that will support successful implementation is stakeholder engagement at all levels—from individual constituents to leading national organizations—holding state leaders accountable for implementing what they have promised, and promoting successful implementation by lending support. The Teacher Salary Project is one such organization that is working to promote effective implementation of strategies in the equity plans related to teacher pay.

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1. States took a variety of approaches to completing their equity plans, including tasks forces, small SEA teams, very large (e.g., 200 people) stakeholder convenings, smaller convenings of various association leaders, online stakeholder engagement, and technical support from their regional centers and national organizations such as the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders, the Council on Chief State School Officers, and the Equitable Access Support Network.

“While teachers are not primarily motivated by pay, OSDE believes that pay parity is nonetheless critical to fostering an environment in which education is valued and attracting and retaining top talent is enhanced. To this end, OSDE leadership is advocating for regional pay parity. By making Oklahoma teaching salaries more comparable to those in neighboring states, we hope to more effectively recruit and retain great teachers.”

—from Oklahoma’s Equity Plan

## **ANALYSIS OF TEACHER PAY IN EQUITY PLANS**

To document and showcase states’ perspectives on the issue of teacher compensation, The Teacher Salary Project reviewed each state’s equity plan with the aim of determining the ways in which teacher salaries were described and addressed. Out of the 52 equity plans reviewed (including one each for Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia), 39 states’ equity plans mentioned compensation as part of the root causes of their equity gaps, as an equity gap itself, or as relevant context. Thirteen state plans had no significant mention of teacher salaries either as a strategy, a root cause behind equity gaps, or in any other context.

Of the 39 plans that cited teacher compensation as a relevant issue in the data or root cause analysis, less than two-thirds, or 24 plans, also mentioned ways to address these low salaries in their strategies section. Despite the fact that the federal guidance specified that strategies should directly correspond to the root causes identified, 15 states perceived low teacher salaries as contributing to gaps in equitable access to excellent teachers, but were unable or unwilling to detail how to combat this problem with a clear strategy. The fact that low teacher pay was at times left out of the strategies section speaks to an issue The Teacher Salary Project has long grappled with - the fact that raising teacher salaries is a goal that many education leaders are unsure how to achieve, especially because of the vast costs associated with it, complex public education funding systems, and controversial approaches to increasing pay for only some teachers under constrained budgets.

To help states consider the range of possible ways to address teacher pay as an equitable access strategy, we summarized the most common and innovative ways the 24 states that did attempt to “tackle the impossible” by including salary-related strategies did so (see page 9). While some states only briefly mention salaries in their strategies, others have much more comprehensive recommendations.

“Recognizing the insufficiency of teacher and principal salaries to attract and retain excellent educators in our high-poverty, isolated small- and high-risk schools, incentives for teaching in a high-poverty school are important to the Maine DOE’s equitable access planning.” –from Maine’s Equity Plan

## DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although our review of the state equity plans revealed that stakeholders acknowledge the worth of the teaching profession and the importance of salaries for recruiting and retaining excellent teachers in our highest-need schools, it also was clear that in many cases this did not translate into an attempt to improve teacher pay. It is important for education leaders to ask why this is the case. Was it purely a question of what is affordable? Were leaders apprehensive about dealing with a controversial policy? Was it not clear that the research supported improved salaries? Was there lack of consensus on the desirable approach to improving teacher pay? What is it about improving teacher pay — a concept that very often is supported in theory — that makes it so challenging to address in any concrete way?

As states revisit their equity plans and work with stakeholders as part of the ESSA planning process, several recommendations include:

Learn from one another’s present and past experiences working to improve teacher pay to determine which approaches are likely to work in a particular state or district context. See the text in this brief for the details of each state equity plan’s teacher pay strategies.

Review the recent Economic Policy Institute research on teacher pay. The EPI concluded that gap between pay for teachers and pay for workers from comparable backgrounds is currently the biggest it’s ever been - and is continuing to grow. <http://www.epi.org/publication/the-teacher-pay-gap-is-wider-than-ever-teachers-pay-continues-to-fall-further-behind-pay-of-comparable-workers/>



Review the research on prospective teachers' perspectives on teacher pay as a dis-incentive. For example, a study by McKinsey & Company (see <http://mckinseyon-society.com/closing-the-talent-gap/>) asked high-performing college students:

- If they did well in teaching, would they be paid appropriately
- Could they support a family on their salary
- Does it pay appropriately for the skills and effort they would bring
- Are starting salaries competitive
- Would salaries increase appropriately over time

For each, they found that the students saw teaching as less attractive than the alternate careers they were considering.

Work with leaders at all levels to address this challenging issue. This may include governors, legislators, chief state school officers and principals, but it also may include teacher leaders, school leaders, district leaders, and community or business leaders. The governors in Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Tennessee have all put forth proposals to address teacher pay (see, <http://bit.ly/1PTtX1q>, <http://argusne.ws/1L3D48k>, and <http://1.usa.gov/1nLxbrH>). Other states are showcasing innovative district or charter school approaches, such as the New York City Equity Project charter school (see [www.tepcharter.org](http://www.tepcharter.org)).

Increase salaries or offer tax incentives of teachers in Title 1 schools incentivizing teachers to remain in the classroom.

Honor teachers who have the National Board Certification with a professional salary for as long as they teach.

Create a professional teaching ladder with 'mentor' and 'master' teachers that allows those groups to earn more money, as they have at San Jose Unified, California. <http://sanjoseteachersassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/2016-2019-SJTA-CBA-v1608.pdf>

Raise local tax revenue specifically for increasing teacher salaries, like suburbs do and the way Denver did with ProComp and a \$25 million dollar annual bond.

Explore the wealth of resources that The Teacher Salary Project offers to help build political and public will for tackling the challenging issue of improving teacher pay. These include feature length and short films that tell the story of how low pay impacts teacher recruitment, retention and performance, and links to relevant research, articles, blog posts, and statistics (see [www.teachersalaryproject.org](http://www.teachersalaryproject.org)).

## IMPROVING PAY STATE BY STATE

The Teacher Salary Project reviewed all 52 state equity plans to identify how they address the critical issue of teacher pay. Below, we detail the language pulled from the equity plans on this topic, with the goal of promoting cross-state sharing of strategies so that each state can learn from and build on the ideas of the others as they determine effective and proactive strategies to address inequity by securing the teachers needed for every student to succeed.

### THE TEACHER SALARY STRATEGIES ADDRESSED IN STATE'S EQUITY PLANS INCLUDED:

- Increasing salaries overall
- Increasing starting salaries
- Increasing long-term salary potential
- Ensuring salaries are competitive to recruit and retain teachers
- Salary increases for hard-to-staff schools
- Salary increases for hard-to-staff subjects
- Salary increases based on teacher effectiveness
- Bonuses based on teacher effectiveness
- Changing the teacher salary scale or system
- Tiered certification process, increased salaries at higher certification phases
- Improving human capital management systems in ways that specifically include pay
- Identifying promising district practices related to teacher pay

The Teacher Salary Project did not follow up on states' implementation of these strategies; nor does this brief evaluate the research supporting these strategies. Rather, the intention of this brief is to serve as a starting point for inspiring states in the ESSA consolidated planning process to think about the possibilities for improving teacher pay in their states.



## Alabama

- “We will advocate for development and funding of a tiered certification process. The tiered certification process would increase salaries and responsibility and decrease professional oversight and support as a teacher or leader progresses through certification phases of intern, novice/resident, professional, master, and expert/instructional specialist.” (23)
- “The ALSDE will provide support and resources for districts with high-needs schools in order to improve their recruitment, hiring, induction, and compensation practices for better access to excellent teachers and leaders.” (26)
- “Advocate for increasing teacher/principal salaries so that salaries are competitive in high-needs schools. Recognizing the insufficiency of teacher and principal salaries, the ALSDE will pursue available grants in this area.” (28)

## Alaska

- “As part of House Bill 278, the Alaska State Legislature instructs the Department of Administration to “present to the legislature a written proposal for a salary and benefits schedule for school districts.” (2)
- The Department of Administration has contracted with CAEPR to develop three responsibilities and action steps for each. One of these responsibilities is: “Salary & benefits schedule for teachers and principals, including a review of current salary schedules, a profile of current benefits, geographic & job differentials, and identification of issues for consideration.” (32)
- Salary & benefits schedule for teachers & principals involves the following action steps: “Describe different salary structure models; inventory and describe benefits to different AK districts; discuss how compensation structures attract teachers, retain teachers, and incentivize improvement; explore types of pay differentials; solicit stakeholder input.” (32)

## Arizona

- “Key Concern Strategies” #2: “Human Capital Management Systems for Teacher Retention and Recruitment” -- “We believe that systems need to be established to draw the

right candidates into traditional and nontraditional career pathways, support the candidates through effective induction and mentoring programs, increase salaries, increase the opportunities and resources available for teachers to work in hard to fill subjects and hard to fill areas.” (46)

- “Each of the states bordering Arizona provided pay raises to teachers in 2015 while AZ continues to reduce its education funding.” “Districts [report] losing teachers to...those communities [that] pay considerably more.” (46)
- “One strategy to address recruitment and retention: “Increase Salaries – make teaching a viable career to keep them in the classroom.” (47)
- “Salaries have not kept up with neighboring states even after economic recovery. This leads to fewer people entering the field and more teachers and leaders choosing to leave the field in order to support their families or have greater opportunity for advancement.” (48)
- Strategy: “Increase teacher salaries through a dedicated legislative appropriation in order to meet or exceed national averages within three years.” (49)

## Delaware

- Senate Bill 254 “establishes parameters for an improved educator compensation system.” The committee has been working to consider alternative compensation structures and career pathways for educators aligned with the parameters set forth in the bill, such as providing educators with a meaningful career pathway, including higher starting salaries and recognition for working with high-need students, and significant leadership opportunities for career advancement that keep talented educators in the classroom.” (62)
- “The state’s salaries for our newest educators are not on par with surrounding states. About 40 percent of our educators leave within the first five years, at least in part because of low early career salaries. Any proposal by the committee will involve more state funding for educator salaries to better recognize the invaluable role educators play in the lives of our children. Current educators will have the option of remaining in the current system or switching to the new system designed by the committee.” (62)

## D.C.

- “DCPS’s launches of the IMPACT teacher evaluation system and the corresponding LIFT program have resulted in a career ladder system where high-performing teachers in low-income schools receive significant monetary compensation and professional development opportunities in recognition of their work.” (6)

- “DCPS has designed incentives for its best teachers to assign to and teach in high-poverty schools through IMPACTplus, which makes the highest performing teachers in the lowest income schools eligible for the largest bonuses. In addition to larger bonuses for teachers in low-income schools, DCPS has expanded its bonus structure to include a specific financial add-on for the most successful teachers in its 40 lowest-performing schools. Teachers can receive up to \$20,000 if rated as “highly effective,” which is ten times higher than the bonus offered to teachers at low-poverty schools... While DCPS does not believe that additional compensation causes its dedicated and hardworking teachers to work any harder, they do believe that recognizing and compensating teachers as true professionals makes DCPS a district where great teachers want to stay.” (32)
- DCPS Leadership Initiative For Teachers (LIFT): “LIFT is a five-stage career ladder that provides high-performing teachers with opportunities for advancement inside the classroom, as well as additional responsibility and increased recognition and compensation.” (33)

## Hawaii

- “Provide a lump sum/bonus for teachers who work in high poverty/high minority schools – HIDOE will explore compensation adjustments in the next round of union negotiations.” (49)
- “Provide incentives to have experienced teachers remain or transfer to high poverty/high minority schools with more targeted bonuses.” (45)

## Idaho

- “It is clear that Idaho has a global problem in teacher pay and retention as it sits near the bottom of the U.S. in teacher compensation. Fortunately, a bill to increase teacher pay significantly over the next five years passed the Idaho Legislature in 2015. This bill will make Idaho salaries more competitive with surrounding states, thus assisting in meeting the goal of increasing teacher retention and recruitment.” (17)
- “Career Ladder: five year phase-in for increased teacher salary beginning July 1, 2015. This will establish a funding model for school districts for instructional staff that would be variable based on a compensation system consisting of two rungs: the residency rung and the professional compensation rung. In order for instructional staff to move from the residency rung to the professional rung, they would need to meet minimum criteria based on individual professional learning plans, evaluation, and student achievement.” (25)

## Illinois

- “Illinois is currently working on statutory changes to how school districts are funded. Specifically, there is a large disparity in funding between districts depending upon location. While teacher salary is only one aspect of a budget for a district, the amount of salary one receives becomes important when considering that the majority of young teachers have student loans to repay. So too, high poverty and high minority districts have a lower operational and instructional budget from which to provide resources to teachers and students.” (22)
- “ISBE will utilize current IBSE communication strategies to ensure that teacher candidates and practicing teachers are aware of federal loan forgiveness programming.” (36)

## Indiana

- “Stakeholders proposed that the SEA provide guidance and recommendations on compensation models that include credit for teachers taking on professional development roles within their schools, which includes additional compensation for “mentor” and “master” teachers.” (25)

## Kentucky

- “Recognizing the insufficiency of teacher and principal salaries to attract and retain excellent educators in our high-need schools, KDE will work with districts to develop a teacher compensation system through the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF).” (28)
- State level policy review included: “School districts can provide additional compensation for mentors. Leadership and mentor fund”; “Salary supplement for National Board Certified Teachers of \$2000.” (47)

## Maine

- “Longevity incentives for educators: Recognizing the insufficiency of teacher and principal salaries to attract and retain excellent educators in our high-poverty, isolated-small and high-risk schools, incentives for teaching in a high-poverty school are important to the Maine DOE’s equitable access planning.”
- “The Maine DOE will seek funding from the legislature to pilot longevity incentives with a small group of high-poverty schools and isolated-small schools.” (21)

## Nevada

- “Passage of AB483 in the 2015 legislative session requires the board of trustees of each school district to reserve for each fiscal year a sum of money sufficient to pay an increase in base salaries (not to exceed 10%) for not less than 5% of teachers and administrators employed by the school district, beginning in 2016-2017. This bill eliminates the requirement that the program of performance pay and enhanced compensation be the subject of collective bargaining and require that consideration be given to implementation of the program in the lowest-rated underperforming schools.” (31)

## New Mexico

- “In an effort to make the teaching profession more attractive, New Mexico has increased salaries for beginning teachers by 13% in the last two years.” (30)
- “Beginning with the 2014/15 school year, the New Mexico Pay for Performance Pilot program established incentive pay pilot programs to reward New Mexico’s best teachers and principals throughout the state. Based on analysis conducted for New Mexico’s Educator Equity Plan, Pay for Performance awards will be prioritized for districts and schools with high proportions of economically-disadvantaged students.” (31)

## New York

- “A second area for LEA consideration is compensation model reform. Most LEAs have traditional lockstep salary schedules in place, making it near impossible for teachers to close the 25% difference in starting salaries in comparison to other professional fields. In combination with efforts to address the recruitment and retention of top talent, LEAs may choose to increase starting salaries, provide compensation for strong classroom performance, and incentives for working in high-need schools or hard-to-staff subject areas.” (79)

## North Carolina

- “Through the new teacher and principal evaluation system and the local flexibility provided by the Race to the Top Grant, opportunities for teachers and principals to earn incentives based on student performance increased significantly. As other funds become available, incentive initiatives support with RttT funds will serve as models for the recruitment and retention of effective teachers and principals in rural and urban districts that traditionally have difficulty in this area.” (37)
- “Several studies have identified salary as a factor when potential employees decide



whether or not to accept a particular assignment. Using the low wealth funding and the Disadvantaged Student Supplemental Funding (DSSF), local systems can offer salary incentives to attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools or address working conditions...that might attract teachers to the schools.” (37)

- “The state and LEAs offer teachers a variety of incentives to enter the field, stay in teaching, and work in hard-to-staff schools and content areas. One way the state offers incentives is through recent changes to its teacher compensation scale. North Carolina uses a step scale for teacher compensation. The scale provides salary increases for each five years of experience. Actions enacted by the NCGA placed greater emphasis on increasing the bottom levels of the scale, resulting in raises of up to 18% for teachers in their first few years of teaching. These increases in the early years were designed to attract teachers to the profession and to provide an increased incentive for teachers to stay in the classroom during the time in which teachers tend to leave the field and when teachers are growing in terms of their effectiveness in the classroom.” (37)
- “The state provides an incentive to LEAs to hire teachers based upon their quality, rather than the cost required to compensate them. Teachers and other school personnel in North Carolina are paid on a state salary schedule based on education level and experience. School systems are allotted teaching positions based on student enrollment, rather than dollar amounts. Therefore, the salary is paid for whatever person the LEAs hires into the position. Consequently, there is an incentive for LEAs to hire teachers with more experience and pay them higher salaries, since the base pay is borne by the state.”
- “In the 2015-2016 school year, the State plans to allot to LEAs approximately \$80.3 million through the state DSSF to address the capacity needs of their system to meet the needs of disadvantaged students. Funds are allocated based on a formula that considers the percentage of students living in a single parent family, the percentage of students eligible for federal ESEA Title I, and the percentage of students who have at least one parent with less than a high school diploma. Each LEA must submit an annual action plan and budget to the NCSBE. It is expected that LEAs will include teacher recruitment and retention, using the Teacher Working Conditions Survey as a tool, in their plans.” (38)
- “NCBTs are paid a salary differential of 12% of their state salary for the life of the certificate, which is ten years initially and renewable each ten years...Grant renewal credit and salary differential payments are two examples of how the state is dedicated to retaining quality educators in classrooms across the state.” (39)

## North Dakota

- “Create guidance and resources for school districts on ability to offer signing bonuses to attract highly qualified experienced teachers. Provide a mechanism to share practice being utilized within the state.” (17)

- “Pay existing staff to get further educated or endorsements for hard to fill positions such as ELL or special education.” (17)
- “Encourage districts to explore and implement merit pay that awards effective teachers for improving student achievement.” (19)

## Oklahoma

- “While teachers are not primarily motivated by pay, OSDE believes that pay parity is nonetheless critical to fostering an environment in which education is valued and attracting and retaining top talent is enhanced. To this end, OSDE leadership is advocating for regional pay parity. By making Oklahoma teaching salaries more comparable to those in neighboring states, we hope to more effectively recruit and retain great teachers.” (26)

## Oregon

- “Introduce recruitment incentives: ...Recruitment incentives could include but are not limited to scholarships to work in targeted schools, loan forgiveness, and recruitment bonuses in high-need locations.” (45)

## Rhode Island

- Strategies to address lack of competitive compensation: “Assemble a task force focused on elevating education professions...This task force will be divided into three subcommittees that each assume ownership for studying one of the following topics: ...Implementing sustainable, innovative, and competitive compensation policies.” (49)

## South Carolina

- “The SCDE will advocate for greater salary equity in South Carolina. Although the gap in salary is not statistically significant, there is a gap that many of our stakeholders noted impacts the recruitment of excellent educators. Stakeholders told us the approximate \$3000 in salary becomes a contributor especially when the districts does not have other perks to offer and when a new teacher must pay more in travel expenses to come to a rural district. Several district representatives were clear that a lower salary has caused them to lose effective educators to neighboring, higher paying districts.” (32)
- “The bulk of stakeholders in South Carolina agreed that the inequities in teachers’ salaries cause inequities in the pool of excellent educators who commit to teaching in high

minority high poverty learning environments.” (37)

- “Teaching salaries need to be competitive in order to attract new talent into the field.” (37)
- “The SCDE will meet with members of The Teacher Salary Project...[TSP provides] services such as providing compensation models and strategies to consider in order to obtain equity in educator salaries. The objective of this meeting will be to glean strategies that will assist South Carolina in ensuring equity in our high poverty, high minority schools.” (37)
- “The SCDE will pull together an internal working group to consider revision of the state salary schedule and minimum salary for new teachers. Raising beginning teachers’ salaries is a priority of the new administration, and we are ready to prioritize funding streams in order to undertake this effort.” (37)
- “By Fall 2017, the SCDE will meet with The Teacher Salary Project. Evidence = Meeting agenda(s) and/or notes.”
- “By Fall 2018, South Carolina will publish defined strategies for ensuring equity in teachers’ salary among high poverty, high minority and low poverty, low minority schools and districts.”(37)

## Tennessee

- “Current, critical strategy in addressing equity issues is the state’s recently updated compensation policy. Ensuring a competitive salary is a key component of a human capital system designed to attract and retain highly effective teachers. Previously, the rigid nature of the state minimum salary structure limited the ways that districts could recognize teachers for exceptional performance. In June 2013, the State Board of Education, after more than a year of discussion and research, passed a more streamlined version of the state minimum salary schedule and revised the state’s differentiated pay policy. The policy was updated to provide additional guidance and clarity for the law, originally passed in 2007, requiring all school districts to implement some form of differentiated pay for educators. The state provided a number of technical assistance offerings to support district planning, including a series of intensive workshops for a select group of interested districts as well as statewide training sessions. Between January and June 2014, districts submitted their differentiated pay plans and updated salary schedules. Districts proposed a range of innovative strategies to ensure that effective teachers have the opportunity to earn additional pay through performance-based compensation, taking on additional instructional responsibilities, or serving in hard-to-staff schools or subjects. “ (32)
- “More than a hundred districts developed plans to recognize teachers taking on additional responsibilities, and nearly half of districts included hard-to-staff elements.

One-third of districts included some type of individual, school, or district performance incentive.”(33)

- “Both the changes to base salary in some districts, as well as the hard to staff incentives help to attract a high quality supply of candidates. Hard-to-staff school stipends offer a way for districts to address access by incenting highly effective teachers to serve where they are most needed. The performance bonuses also help to address teacher retention affecting both supply and access. Technical assistance resources and individual consulting are available to districts as they draft future year plans.” (33)
- “While we recognize changing pay alone is unlikely to solve an equity issue, we believe its competitiveness is integral to attracting and keeping great teachers in the profession.” (42)

## Texas

- “Both policy and practitioner stakeholders noted that non-competitive salaries and the lack of opportunities for advancement often discourage excellent teachers from remaining in the education field.” (29)
- “To address the compensation issue for excellent teachers, in 2005, Governor Perry established a performance-pay grant program for Texas public schools known as the Governor’s Educator Excellence Grant (GEEG) program...Later, in 2006, the Texas Legislature authorized two additional performance-based pay programs for Texas teachers.” (29)
- “Texas Educators Excellence Program (TEEG) provided performance pay for teachers in almost 2,250 schools with large percentages of economically disadvantaged students and either high scores or significantly improved scores on state standardized assessments for math and reading.” (29)
- “District Awards for Teaching Excellence (DATE) provided funds to districts to develop a strategic compensation plan in which at least 60 percent of each grant award was given to teachers who had made a demonstrable impact on student achievement.” (29)
- “TEA has created a pilot program known as the Educator Excellence Innovation Program (EEIP). This program, which began in the spring of 2014, is designed to help districts systematically transform their human capital management systems by implementing comprehensive research-based strategies incorporating best practices in the areas of teacher recruitment, mentoring and induction, development, retention, and strategic compensation. As a major component of the EEIP grant, each of the 17 EEIP districts is piloting a performance based incentive pay program to reward and retain high-performing teachers.” (30)
- “Creating Turnaround Educator Pipelines (CTEP) program...is piloting Public Impact’s Opportunity Culture models at select campuses in two of Texas’ Title I districts...”

The strategic use of paraprofessionals, self-paced digital learning, and remote teachers reduces the number of teachers needed, with the savings used to substantially increase the teacher-leader's salary anywhere from 20 to 130%. The Opportunity Culture model not only provides excellent teachers with career advancement opportunities and salaries competitive with other professions, which are keys to recruitment and retention, but also extends the reach of excellent teachers so that more students have access to them.” (30)

## Washington

- “Low salaries (both beginning salaries and earnings potential) exacerbate these challenges, particularly in our high-poverty rural schools and high-poverty districts adjacent to wealthier districts. The state funded average base salary and additional supplemental compensation paid by districts through local levy funds varies widely across the state, resulting in inequities in the hiring capacity of school districts.” (145)
- “Few districts have used their Title II, Part A allocation for developing and implementing mechanisms to assist schools to effectively recruit, hire and retain highly qualified teachers and principals. These strategies could include (a) providing monetary incentives such as scholarships, signing bonuses and differential pay in academic subjects or schools with teacher shortages.” (194)
- “We believe that the failure to full funding basic education in Washington State, specifically teacher salaries, has negatively affected the equitable distribution of excellent educators.” (208)
- “The compensation provided to teachers and principals within Washington state is inequitable and not fully state funded, which is a violation of the Washington Constitution and the Supreme Court order as a result of the McCleary case.” (208)
- “The average base salary is affected both by grandfathered school districts which receive more compensation based on grandfathered salary allocation models, as well as the staff mix in school districts with teachers with more years of experience and additional degrees and levels of education. Supplemental compensation in the form of TRI (time, responsibility, and incentive) packages funded through local levies for basic education can increase compensation substantially.” (208)
- “...initial analysis of the equity gap data created for this plan reveals that many of the school districts with large equity gaps of student access to highly qualified, experienced and in field teachers are also the same school districts with large funding gaps: both lower average base salaries and substantially less supplemental compensation through local levy funding. These school districts are unable to recruit, hire and retain an educator with the same credentials as a school district with large supplemental compensation packages. Through the reliance on local levy funding to provide market based compensation for



basic education, the state is not able to provide equitable opportunities to all students within the state, particularly for students of color, students in poverty and students who receive English language learner and special education services; which contributes to the opportunity gap.” (209)

- “The low starting salaries and limited lifetime earnings of teachers affect both how many college graduates are entering the teaching profession and the rates of teach attrition...both poor working conditions and low compensation affect a teacher’s decision to remain in a specific school district or within the profession.” (209)
- “The Equity Plan Leadership Team and stakeholders identified that the full funding of basic education and compensation reform was one of the main strategies to provide equitable access to excellent educators....The team recommends the Superintendent Dorn’s Funding Plan, as outlined below:
  1. Initiate levy reduction
  2. Initiate statewide collective bargaining for compensation, benefits, regional cost-of-living adjustments, and workday definition
  3. Review and address short and long-term statewide system capacity issues related to the expansion of full-day kindergarten and class-size reduction
  4. Require the non-partisan Quality Education Council to create two new work-groups that will:
    - a. Design a better process to recruit and retain teachers and
    - b. Annually study and report on the state’s evolving program of basic education and the financing necessary to support the program.

The Equity Plan Leadership Team will collaborate with the OSPI to incorporate the equity data analysis with Superintendent Dorn’s funding proposal to show the connection between equity gaps and low salaries and supplemental compensation.” (211)

- Other strategies for compensation reform: “Expand National Board Certified Teacher Challenging School Bonus”; “Research Differential Compensation Options”; “Research Housing Allowance Options...in urban school districts, the cost of living is so high that most teachers’ salaries are inadequate to support renting or buying housing within the city.” (212)

## Wyoming

- “Teacher salary was a focal topic of discussions to determine equity gaps and identify root causes during the first and second committee meetings, respectively. However, it did not substantiate to the level of an equity gap that would be addressed in the Wyoming equity plan. This is due, in part, to the recent passage of a bill (WY SF0010) approved by the Wyoming legislature to increase teacher salaries in the 2014-15 school year. The

Wyoming Education Resource Block Grant Model (the “funding model”) provides salaries for each personnel category and adjusts the salaries by individual school district characteristics. Through a series of court cases, the Wyoming Supreme Court required that the State of Wyoming finance formula account for differences in teacher education and experience in determining district funding for salaries. The average compensation amount for each personnel category in the model is computed individually for each district based on education, experience and span of control for administrators in accordance with state statute...For each personnel category, the district average salary is calculated up or down depending on the relation to the statewide average...The computed average salary is further adjusted by the district’s RCA to account for cost differences between different regions in the state. As a result, the State’s School Funding Model ensures salaries are equitably distributed across the state, and this was determined not to be an equity gap that needed addressing by the Committee.” (26-27)

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Nínive is the Producer of *American Teacher*, and founder of The Teacher Salary Project, an organization dedicated to addressing the urgent need for a complete cultural shift in the way our society values and supports teachers. She is a veteran teacher with almost ten years' experience in the classroom, including experience in both charter schools and large comprehensive high schools. She is the cofounder and former executive director of 826 Valencia, and served as the CEO of 826 National, a literacy nonprofit that galvanizes volunteers around the country to support teachers and help students improve their writing skills. She holds a Master's Degree in Education in Teaching and Curriculum from the Harvard University's Graduate School of Education.

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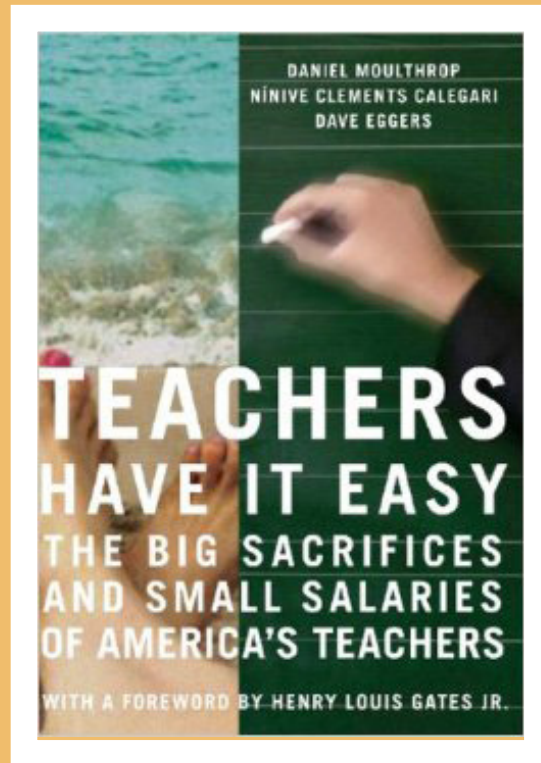
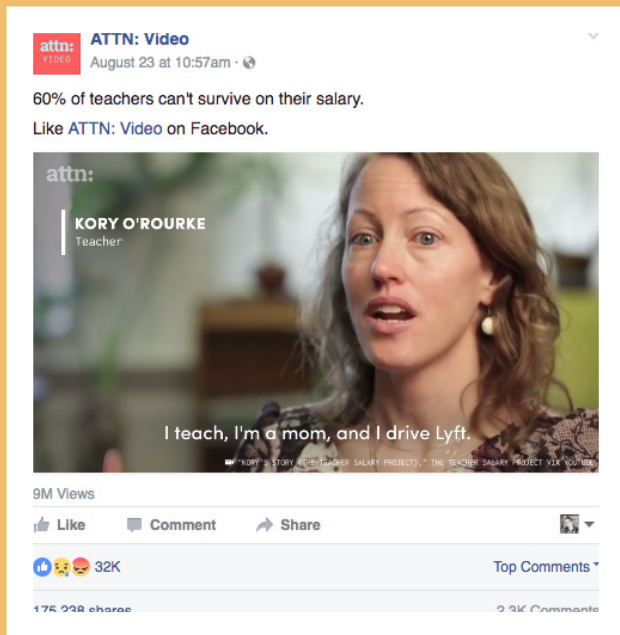
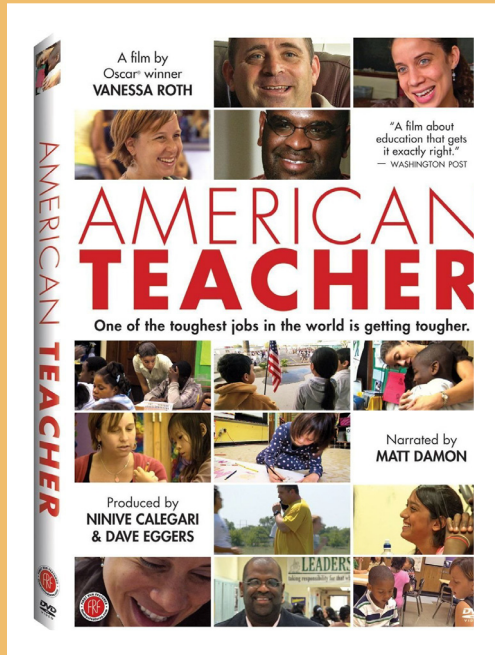
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