

Ohio Education Association

Educator Staffing Shortage

OEA urges the Ohio General Assembly adopt the recommendations from the Educator Voice Academy Cadre on Teacher Recruitment and Retention to provide a comprehensive solution to the educator staffing shortage.

Competitive Teacher Pay – Increase State Minimum Teacher Salaries

Students deserve teachers whose value is respected with competitive salaries, benefits, and working conditions.

- OEA is proposing an increase in the state minimum teacher salary from \$30,000 to \$50,000, with state support to local school districts to fund necessary salary increases.
- Competitive salaries and benefits are critical to addressing the growing teacher shortage and pay gaps between educators and comparably educated professionals in other fields.
- The education profession and the students they serve should not be left behind in the race to attract and retain talented Ohioans.
- For the 2021-2022 school year, Ohio's average starting salary for professional educators with a bachelor's degree and no prior experience was \$38,942, ranging from \$28,000 to \$49,585, depending on the school district. Of the 566 districts with salaries in OEA's database, 351 (62%) had starting salaries below \$40,000, and 215 (38%) had starting salaries above \$40,000.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention – OEA Educator Voice Academy Recommendations

OEA is calling for a comprehensive set of solutions to the teacher shortage so that all students have access to dedicated, licensed educators who receive the supports needed to succeed.

- Ohio is at a crossroads. Investing in the recruitment and retention of well-prepared and well-supported educators will create a brighter future for students, communities, and the state.
- Left unchecked, the growing educator shortage crisis will lead to larger class sizes, fewer course offerings, less individual attention, and lower quality instruction for students.
- The time for action is now. Between 2010 and 2018 the number of students enrolling in Ohio teacher preparation programs declined by almost 50%. During the same time the percentage of students completing teacher preparation programs declined by almost 35%. (Center for American Progress)
- The OEA Educator Voice Academy report on teacher recruitment and retention makes a variety of recommendations for the Ohio General Assembly to consider:
 - **Salary:** Increase state minimum starting teacher salary from \$30k to \$50k.
 - **Funding:** Update and Fully Fund Fair School Funding Plan

- **Reduce the cost of licensure:** Fund local “Grow Your Own” Programs that help pay higher education costs; Provide state grants to attend educator preparation programs in hard-to-staff grades/subjects; Create and fund apprenticeship pathways to licensure (included in HB 33 state budget); Allow student teachers to be paid and/or provide tuition waivers during student teaching; Establish Ohio funded student loan relief programs based on need/hard-to-staff grades/subjects.
- **Teacher preparation:** Better align teacher preparation programs with the realities of PK-12 schools.
- **Feedback from educators:** Incentivize district use of feedback instruments such as the Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) survey.
- **Job openings and employment data:** Collect data that highlights grades/subjects/districts where consistent teacher shortages are occurring; Include teachers in state workforce development programs that provide financial supports for training to get licensed for “In Demand” jobs.
- **Retirement:** Fully fund Ohio public pensions; Call upon the U.S. Congress to repeal federal laws that can reduce Social Security benefits for individuals who receive a public pension by repealing the federal “Government Pension Offset” and “Windfall Elimination Provision”, commonly known as GPO/WEP.