



## Teacher Pay Issue Brief

### Background

#### **Historical Overview of the Teacher Salary Structure**

Salaries for North Carolina's K-12 public school classroom teachers are linked to a State-set salary schedule based upon years of teaching experience. Until the State faced a huge budget deficit in 2009, the schedule included what had generally been thought of as a guaranteed annual increase to a teacher's base salary (known as step increases). The lack of pay increases continued for several years with North Carolina's teachers receiving just one 1.2% salary increase between 2009-14.

North Carolina offers a salary supplement of 12.5% for teachers who gain certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Many local school districts provide additional supplements to teacher salaries (local supplements). In school year 2017-18, 111 local school districts provided a local salary supplement, ranging from an average of \$108 (Mitchell) to \$8,649 (Wake).<sup>1</sup>

### Recent Funding/Structure Changes

- *2013-14*
  - A budget provision eliminated advanced degree supplements (10% differential) for teachers who had not yet started an advance degree program.
- *2014-15*
  - Teachers received a 7.0% average salary increase (included longevity pay). Longevity pay was folded into the pay raise and is no longer paid separately.
  - Salaries for beginning teachers (Years 0 to 4) increased from \$30,800 to \$33,000
  - The salary schedule was dramatically restructured. Instead of annual increases, salaries were locked-in for five-year bands. Salary was capped at 25 years of experience (\$50,000).
- *2015-16*
  - Salaries for beginning teachers (Years 0 to 4) increased from \$33,000 to \$35,000. All other base salary levels remained the same.
  - Salary remained capped at \$50,000.
  - All teachers received a \$750 bonus.
  - Teachers at the highest step on the salary schedule received a \$1,000 bonus.
- *2016-17*
  - Teachers received a 4.7% average salary increase.
  - Teacher salary schedule restored annual step increases for years 0-14.
  - Teacher salary schedule retained five-year bands for years 15-19 and 20-24.
  - Teachers at the highest salary step received a \$1,000 bonus. Salary was capped at \$51,000.
  - Established merit bonuses:

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<sup>1</sup> NCDPI Statistical Profile Online: <http://apps.schools.nc.gov/statisticalprofile>; Table 20

- Top 25% of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teachers statewide and for each LEA in reading growth scores receive \$3,400. (Can receive \$6,800 total).
- AP/IB/CTE teachers can earn up to \$2,000, \$50 increments based on student scores.
- Differential pay pilot programs for advanced teaching roles starting in 2017-18.
- *2017-18*
  - Teachers received a 9.6% average salary increase over the biennium (includes 4.7% in 16-17).
  - Step increases awarded; \$300 increase at step 25 and above. Salary was capped at \$51,300.
  - \$385 one-time bonus for teachers at years 25+.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading, AP/IB/CTE/Cambridge AICE teacher bonuses made permanent.
  - New \$2,150 teacher bonuses Grades 4-8 Math and Grades 4-5 Reading
- *2018-19*
  - \$700 additional base salary at step 25+. Salary is capped at \$52,000.
  - Teacher bonuses Grades 4-8 Math and Grades 4-5 Reading made permanent at \$2,000

**North Carolina’s Ranking for Average Teacher Pay<sup>2</sup>**

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NATIONAL RANKING</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NATIONAL RANKING</u>
2002-03	24 <sup>th</sup>	2014-15	40 <sup>th</sup>
2008-09	28 <sup>th</sup>	2015-16	41 <sup>st</sup>
2009-10	36 <sup>th</sup>	2016-17	39 <sup>th</sup>
2013-14	47 <sup>th</sup>	2017-18 <sup>3</sup>	37 <sup>th</sup>

**NCSBA POSITION**

NCSBA commends the General Assembly for the meaningful pay raises in recent years to certain groups of teachers. However, NCSBA firmly believes that teachers should be compensated commensurate with the responsibility and accountability that comes with the position. Just as the public and state leaders expect North Carolina’s teachers to exceed the national average, so to should their average salary exceed the national average.

The General Assembly must continue to provide annual across-the-board salary increases in order to recruit and retain high-quality teachers in the classroom. The legislature should also recognize the value of veteran teachers by awarding additional compensation to make-up for the recent years with no increases.

Other changes to compensation should be considered:

- Reinstate salary supplements for teachers who earn Master’s and Advanced Degrees.
- Create a team bonus for reading and math teachers. For instance, K-2 teachers provide the foundation for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading teachers to receive a bonus, therefore, they too should get a share of the bonus. Same with math bonuses.

<sup>2</sup> National Education Association (nea.org), Rankings of the States and Estimates of School Statistics (annual)

<sup>3</sup> Iowa Legislative Services Agency estimate using data from NEA and U.S. Census Bureau 2017 American Community Survey