

We ask a great deal of our teachers, and no one disputes the fact they deserve a salary that reflects that. Many of our constituents have asked for information as to the General Assembly's past and ongoing study and work regarding educational funding.

The following information provides some context into these matters:

- Teachers are employees of the school district they work for, and the local school board sets their salaries.
- In the 2021 Regular Session, the Arkansas General Assembly passed the **largest** percentage increase in educational adequacy funding in the last fifteen (15) years, and, in 2022, that amount was increased again.
- In 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022, the minimum teacher salary rose annually.
- The table below shows historical growth of the salary minimums set forth in the Arkansas Code and in the Base Salary (**excluding benefits**) in the foundation formula contained in the matrix, which is used to calculate foundation funding.\*

Changes in Teacher Salary Measures FY2008-FY2023(Projected)

Measure	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023 Prj.
<b>Teacher Salary Minimum in</b>																
Arkansas Code § 6-20-2305	\$29,244	\$29,244	\$29,244	\$29,244	\$29,244	\$29,244	\$29,244	\$29,244	\$30,122	\$31,000	\$31,400	\$31,800	\$32,800	\$33,800	\$34,900	\$36,000
Growth Over Previous Year		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.00%	2.91%	1.29%	1.27%	3.14%	3.05%	3.25%	3.15%
Empowering Acts									Act 1087 of 2015	Act 1087 of 2015	Act 246 of 2017	Act 246 of 2017	Act 170 of 2019			
<b>Base Salary Provided in</b>																
<b>Foundation Funding</b>																
Matrix	\$43,702	\$44,575	\$45,493	\$46,428	\$47,382	\$48,356	\$49,306	\$50,256	\$50,671	\$51,093	\$51,736	\$52,386	\$53,444	\$54,517	\$55,747	\$57,000
Growth Over Previous Year		2.00%	2.06%	2.06%	2.06%	2.06%	1.96%	1.93%	0.83%	0.83%	1.26%	1.26%	2.02%	2.01%	2.26%	2.25%
Empowering Acts	Act 273 of 2007	Act 273 of 2007	Act 1474 of 2009	Act 1474 of 2009	Act 1039 of 2011	Act 1039 of 2011	Act 1467 of 2013	Act 1467 of 2013	Act 1248 of 2015	Act 1248 of 2015	Act 743 of 2017	Act 743 of 2017	Act 667 of 2019	Act 667 of 2019	Act 614 of 2021	Act 614 of 2021

*\*Statistics are based on districts having at least 500 students.*

- In 2019, the Arkansas General Assembly passed legislation raising the minimum pay for teachers by \$4,000 over the following four (4) years to \$36,000.
- The funding given to every school district for teachers' salaries has steadily increased every year through the funding matrix, which is \$70,000+ for FY22\*.

More specifically:

• Base Salary	\$56,999.92
• Benefits	\$12,539.98
• Health Insurance	\$2,045.90
• TOTAL	\$71,585.80

*\*This does not include the \$52 million in state dollars for extra funding for districts to reach the new salary minimum.*

*\*These amounts do not include additional expenditures that are borne by school districts.*

- In 2021, the Arkansas General Assembly passed legislation that aided in raising the average teacher salary by creating the Teacher Salary Equalization Fund. The act outlines a statewide target average of \$51,822 for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years.
- The average teacher salary in Arkansas is \$50,456, which does not include the health and retirement benefits a teacher may receive.

- Below is a recent report of average teacher salaries for Southern states for the last three (3) reported years:

SREB States	2018 COLA Adj. Salary	2018 NEA Avg. Salary	SREB States	2019 COLA Adj. Salary	2019 NEA Avg. Salary	SREB States	2020 COLA Adj. Salary	2020 NEA Avg. Salary
Georgia	\$54,600	\$56,329	Georgia	\$55,751	\$57,095	Georgia	\$59,497	\$60,578
Delaware	\$52,058	\$62,422	Oklahoma	\$52,760	\$52,397	Texas	\$54,670	\$57,090
Texas	\$51,640	\$53,334	Delaware	\$51,390	\$63,662	Oklahoma	\$54,654	\$54,096
Kentucky	\$50,991	\$52,952	Texas	\$51,294	\$54,121	Alabama	\$53,428	\$54,095
Tennessee	\$50,332	\$50,958	Alabama	\$50,785	\$52,009	Delaware	\$53,051	\$64,853
Alabama	\$49,946	\$50,568	Tennessee	\$50,480	\$51,349	Tennessee	\$50,937	\$51,862
<b>Arkansas</b>	<b>\$49,096</b>	<b>\$49,096</b>	Kentucky	\$49,990	\$53,434	Maryland	\$50,868	\$73,444
North Carolina	\$48,182	\$51,234	North	\$49,454	\$53,940	Kentucky	\$50,739	\$53,907
Louisiana	\$47,561	\$50,359	<b>Arkansas</b>	<b>\$49,438</b>	<b>\$49,438</b>	<b>Arkansas</b>	<b>\$50,456</b>	<b>\$50,456</b>
Maryland	\$46,878	\$69,627	Maryland	\$48,098	\$70,463	Virginia	\$50,052	\$57,665
Oklahoma	\$46,458	\$46,300	Louisiana	\$47,047	\$50,288	North	\$49,642	\$54,150
Mississippi	\$46,341	\$44,926	Mississippi	\$46,328	\$45,105	South	\$48,992	\$53,329
Virginia	\$46,012	\$53,091	South	\$45,926	\$50,882	Mississippi	\$48,839	\$46,843
South Carolina	\$45,128	\$50,182	Virginia	\$45,755	\$53,267	Louisiana	\$48,744	\$51,566
Florida	\$43,054	\$48,168	West Virginia	\$45,688	\$47,681	W. Virginia	\$47,745	\$50,238
West Virginia	\$42,606	\$45,642	Florida	\$42,853	\$48,314	Florida	\$43,346	\$49,102
<b>Regional Avg.</b>		<b>\$52,199</b>	<b>Regional</b>		<b>\$53,340</b>	<b>Regional</b>		\$55,205
<b>National Avg.</b>		<b>\$60,768</b>	<b>National</b>		<b>\$62,304</b>	<b>National</b>		\$64,133

**Data Sources**

NEA Average Salaries: National Education Association (NEA), Rankings of the States and Estimates of School Statistics (2019, 2020, and 2021) COLA Adjusted Average Salaries: Missouri Cost of Living Data Series, Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (2018, 2019, and 2020)

- In the past few years, the Arkansas General Assembly has enhanced funding amounts for school districts where a large majority of students qualify for the national lunch program.
- In 2021, the Arkansas General Assembly stabilized teachers' benefits. Just this week, public school employee health insurance premiums were announced to likely be decreasing, based on Plan Year 2023 rates approved by the State Board of Finance.

- Below is what has been appropriated to the Arkansas Department of Education for the past six (6) fiscal years for teacher insurance, which includes \$35 million of one-time funds in 2022:

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Supplemental Millage (2HU)	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000
General Facilities Funding (326)	8,100,000	8,100,000	8,100,000	8,100,000	8,100,000	8,100,000
Public School Employee Health Insurance (446)	56,790,122	56,962,602	57,071,074	57,246,216	57,373,600	57,520,322
Additional School Employee Health Insurance (59X)	15,000,000	15,000,000	15,000,000	15,000,000	15,000,000	35,000,000
One Time Adtl School Employee Health Insurance (59X)					20,000,000	20,000,000
Restricted Revenue Reserve (59X)						35,000,000
	89,890,122	90,062,602	90,171,074	90,346,216	110,473,600	165,620,322

- Below is the Department’s Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) calculations, based on calendar year participants, including the one-time Restricted Reserve funds:

Fiscal Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Supplemental Millage (2HU)	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000
General Facilities Funding (326)	8,100,000	8,100,000	8,100,000	8,100,000	8,100,000	8,100,000
Public School Employee Health Insurance (446)	56,790,122	56,962,602	57,071,074	57,246,216	57,373,600	57,520,322
Additional School Employee Health Insurance (59X)	15,000,000	15,000,000	15,000,000	15,000,000	15,000,000	35,000,000
One Time Adtl School Employee Health Insurance (59X)					20,000,000	20,000,000
Restricted Revenue Reserve (59X)						35,000,000
	89,890,122	90,062,602	90,171,074	90,346,216	110,473,600	165,620,322
Calendar Year Participants			542,579	549,505	553,888	
Per Participant			166	164	199	

- In 2017, the Arkansas General Assembly passed legislation creating a tax credit for teachers who purchase supplies for his or her classroom. In 2021, the General Assembly doubled that tax credit, raising it from \$250 to \$500 for single filers and \$1000 for married teachers.
- The current proposal regarding teacher salaries has a recurring annual fiscal impact and thus is much broader and more expensive than just using one-time surplus funding.
- Ultimately, long before this proposal, the General Assembly was already studying teacher pay in advance of the 2023 Regular Session as part of adequacy. Additional salary funding increases for teachers are likely after the current adequacy study is completed.