



Council For Lifelong Learning Teacher Pay

Fact Sheet

September 2001

<p>1. Does the Legislature have any direct control over how much teachers are paid?</p>	<p>Article I, Section 6 of the Florida Constitution provides that in Florida, "the right to bargain collectively shall not be denied or abridged." Accordingly, teacher pay is a product of collective bargaining between teachers and their employer (each individual school district).</p> <p>Therefore, the Legislature has no direct role in determining teacher salary, and no indirect one, other than the general role of establishing state funding for public education in the annual <i>General Appropriations Act (GAA)</i>.</p>
<p>2. How is the district salary schedule determined?</p>	<p>In Florida, each public school district, after collective bargaining activities, adopts a salary schedule for instructional personnel in that district. Chapter 447, F.S., governs collective bargaining in Florida, including school district employee collective bargaining.</p>
<p>3. In setting teacher salaries, what must the district consider?</p>	<p>Section 230.23(5)(c), F.S., provides that school districts shall adopt a salary schedule or salary schedules designed to furnish incentives for improvement in training and for continued efficient service to be used as a basis for paying all school employees.</p> <p>Prior to 1997, school boards, in determining the salary schedule, had to consider the prior teaching experience of a person designated state teacher of the year by any state in the United States (Ch. 97-190, L.O.F.).</p> <p>In 1997, the Legislature added a requirement that a portion of each employee's compensation be based on performance; and that, in developing the salary schedule, the district school board seek input from parents, teachers, and representatives of the business community (Ch. 97-212, L.O.F.).</p> <p>In 1999, the Legislature required that the performance provision of each employer's compensation be five percent (Ch. 99-398, L.O.F.).</p> <p>In 2000, the Legislature required school boards to consider prior professional experience in the field of education gained in positions in addition to district level instructional and administrative positions. This was done so districts would</p>

	<p>consider experience, such as corporate training or educational sabbaticals taken to work in specialized areas like marine biology at Sea World, etc. (Ch. 2000-301, L.O.F.)</p> <p>In 2001, the Legislature addressed the issue of credit being given to teachers who move to new districts by establishing a policy to treat out of district teaching experience the same as in district teaching experience. (Ch. 2001-47, L.O.F.)</p>																																																							
<p>4. On average, what are teachers paid in Florida?</p>	<p>According to the Florida Department of Education, the average salary paid to a Florida public school teacher in the school year 2000-01 was \$38,230. This represents an increase of \$1,508 (4.11 percent) over the average salary of \$36,722 for the 1999-2000 school year.</p> <p>The following table sets forth the districts that provide the highest average teacher salary and the lowest average teacher salary in Florida, according to the education level of the teacher.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="672 947 1458 1472"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">Lowest and Highest** District Average Teacher* Salary by Degree, 2000-01</th> </tr> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Degree Level</th> <th colspan="2">Lowest</th> <th colspan="2">Highest</th> <th colspan="2">Difference</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Salary</th> <th>District</th> <th>Salary</th> <th>District</th> <th>Dollars</th> <th>Percent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Bachelor's</td> <td>27,382</td> <td>Union</td> <td>39,159</td> <td>Palm Beach</td> <td>11,777</td> <td>43.01</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Master's</td> <td>31,034</td> <td>Union</td> <td>47,197</td> <td>Dade</td> <td>16,163</td> <td>52.08</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Specialist</td> <td>29,418</td> <td>Franklin</td> <td>55,548</td> <td>Sarasota</td> <td>26,130</td> <td>88.82</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Doctorate</td> <td>27,539</td> <td>Gadsden</td> <td>55,501</td> <td>Dade</td> <td>27,962</td> <td>101.54</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Degrees</td> <td>28,920</td> <td>Union</td> <td>44,065</td> <td>Dade</td> <td>15,145</td> <td>52.37</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Lowest and Highest** District Average Teacher* Salary by Degree, 2000-01							Degree Level	Lowest		Highest		Difference		Salary	District	Salary	District	Dollars	Percent	Bachelor's	27,382	Union	39,159	Palm Beach	11,777	43.01	Master's	31,034	Union	47,197	Dade	16,163	52.08	Specialist	29,418	Franklin	55,548	Sarasota	26,130	88.82	Doctorate	27,539	Gadsden	55,501	Dade	27,962	101.54	All Degrees	28,920	Union	44,065	Dade	15,145	52.37
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<p>5. What is the national average teacher salary?</p>	<p>Nationally, the average teacher pay is \$40,574 (source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics).</p>																																																							
<p>6. Does a direct comparison of teacher salary between various states produce a true picture of all factors that affect those averages?</p>	<p>No. Several factors make such a direct (unadjusted) comparison largely invalid. First of all, cost-of-living must be taken into consideration. Most states with higher pay also have higher costs-of-living in goods, services, and housing. Second, compensation in the form of other (non-salary) benefits is not reflected in salary (See Question 7). Third, it should be noted that Florida does not assess sales tax on groceries or medicines, nor does it assess a state income tax,</p>																																																							

	<p>as many other states do. Finally, Florida is a high growth state and hires a much greater percentage of first time teachers than most states. Since beginning teachers make a lower wage, this fact brings down the state average teacher salary for Florida and other high growth states.</p> <p>Other factors affect the average teacher salary in different states or even in different districts within Florida and should also be taken into consideration when comparing average salaries. These factors include: (1) the number of instructional personnel in the district; (2) the type of degree of the individual; (3) the number of years of experience; (4) whether the teacher is paid from an in-field or out-of-field contract; and (5) annual or continuing (tenure) contract status.</p>
<p>7. What other benefits do Florida teachers receive in addition to salary?</p>	<p>Bonuses: The 2001-2002 General Appropriations Act provides for an \$850 bonus for all teachers with a previous year satisfactory evaluation. There are also bonuses for achieving national certification, success in teaching Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate classes, and mentoring. The School Recognition Program provides bonuses of up to \$100 per student to all schools with improved student performance regardless of the school's grade. These school recognition awards are frequently used by the schools/school advisory councils to provide nonrecurring bonuses for teachers.</p> <p>Benefits: Employers pay Social Security, retirement, and medical plan benefits. All instructional personnel are provided with professional liability insurance coverage for monetary damages and the cost of defense for claims made against them in the performance of their professional duties (Ch. 2001-46, L.O.F.). Teacher and school district administrator death benefits are provided for the families of teachers who are killed through some unlawful act in the performance of their professional duties (Ch. 2001-180, L.O.F.).</p> <p>Excellent Teaching Program: Teachers get assistance and bonuses of up to \$7,800 per year for pursuing and achieving national certification and mentoring other teachers. (See the Excellent Teaching Program Fact Sheet.)</p> <p>Teachers Lead Program: Teachers receive approximately \$100 each for the purchase of classroom supplies through the Teachers Lead Program.</p>

	<p>Scholarships; Loan Forgiveness: There are a variety of scholarships and loan forgiveness programs for teachers or prospective teachers.</p>
<p>8. What are the applicable statutes and rules?</p>	<p>Section 230.23(5)(c), F.S. -- Compensation and Salary Schedules Ch. 447, F.S. -- Labor Organizations (Collective Bargaining provisions)</p> <p>2001-2002 General Appropriations Act, S.A. 119</p>
<p>9. Where can I get additional information?</p>	<p>The Florida House of Representatives Committee on General Education (850) 414-9780</p> <p>Florida Department of Education www.firn.edu (teacher salaries, experience, and degree level)</p>