

Legislative Talking Points

Salary

- Education is the key to supplying a highly skilled workforce in West Virginia. High quality public education systems attract business and industry to the state. A highly skilled workforce will not be possible without skilled teachers and support professionals who are paid a competitive salary.
- West Virginia must provide its education employees with a decent middle-class living commensurate with our surrounding states and with other professions with similar education requirements within our state.
- Every school district in our state is experiencing staffing shortages and having trouble filling vacancies. This is not just a problem in specific geographic locations or certain subject areas but is an issue for all school systems. Pay must be addressed for all education employees regardless of their zip code or subject matter.
- The average salary for a West Virginia teacher dropped from 30th in the nation in 1993 to 48th in 2007. The 5% salary increase in the 2018-19 school year was long overdue and simply not enough to make our salaries competitive with our surrounding states. We must continue to put significant money into salary increases if we are to recruit and retain quality employees.
- West Virginia teacher salaries trail that of their colleagues in our surrounding states quite significantly. Average salary differences between a WV teacher and our surrounding states— Kentucky is \$7,310 higher; Maryland is \$24,119 higher; Ohio is \$12,358 higher; Pennsylvania is \$21,756 higher; Virginia is \$5,623 higher; and the national average is \$14,841 higher.
- The Economic Policy Institute (EPI) conducted a recent study regarding how teacher pay compares to similar jobs within the state. The EPI research shows that in West Virginia the pay gap is more than 21% less for a teacher than someone working in another profession requiring a similar degree.
- The Legislature must pass legislation to build upon the 5% salary increase from last session and continue such increases until our salaries reach a competitive level.