

TEACHERS AND THE GREAT ECONOMIC DEBATE

Meet Sam. He has taught high school in North Carolina for four years. He shops at your local grocery store, uses the dentist down the street and buys gas when his gauge says LOW. Note, however, that Sam is more than a consumer in your community. He's a driver of the North Carolina economy.

Sam is a world-class teacher. Of the nearly 100,000 teachers in the state, Sam and his counterparts are the ones who make the difference between a child graduating from high school or dropping out, understanding concepts or simply memorizing information, and growing up to earn a decent living or not. According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, having a teacher like Sam for just one year can raise a child's cumulative lifetime income by \$80,000. Just think of Sam's economic impact through class after class during his career.

North Carolina needs well-educated, prepared students now more than ever. The Center for Education and the Workforce predicts that by 2020, 61% of new jobs in the state will require post-secondary education. To fill those positions with North Carolinians, we will have to produce 20% more degree-holding workers by the end of the decade. Raising the productivity of our K-12 institutions will be critical, and core to their success is the ability to recruit, train and support world-class teachers.

On that, we all seem to agree—but when we begin to discuss specific strategies for securing world-class teachers in every classroom in the state, debates arise.

IEI convened a working group of statewide education stakeholders to identify the key issues at the center of our debates. The group pinpointed four related topic areas:

While there is no single definition, groups from across the state were eager to answer the question "What are the features of a world-class teacher?" Their response:

A world-class teacher is a(n)

Collaborator- Aware of the need for collaboration with colleagues, parents and other groups, they create and are members of dynamic teams.

Innovator- An entrepreneurial and creative spirit enables them to continually adapt their teaching styles as technologies and approaches evolve.

Driver- Their approach to instruction affords students the opportunity to direct learning, discover new ideas, gain peer insight and make connections.

Learner- They develop and improve their teaching skills to produce the best learning outcomes and continually improve their content knowledge through professional development.

Facilitator- The individual needs of students are met through targeted best practices, expert instruction and content.

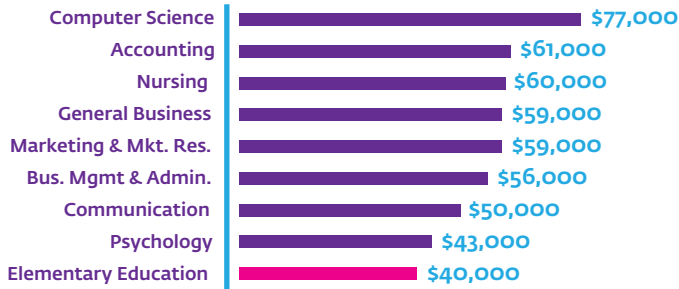
Advocate- They understand the crucial role education plays in economic development, and use that knowledge as they advocate for their students, community, and profession.

COMPENSATION

Higher pay.” It is a rallying call heard often about teacher salaries, but the call is deceptive in its simplicity. For some, the call is about making teacher pay in North Carolina more competitive with other professions or with teachers in other states. To others, an effective teacher compensation system reflects the value that particular teachers create, as measured through student achievement or other indicators of teaching excellence. Pay differentiation is yet another approach, with greater compensation given to teachers who accept more demanding teaching assignments or teach high-need subjects.

For others, a competitive compensation system is about more than a paycheck; it includes building career ladders for classroom teachers that allow for greater responsibility and pay without taking them out of the classroom. Teaching is one of the few fields where it is normal for an individual to enter the profession and retire decades later with the same title and position. Proponents of career ladders note their use in high performing school systems such as those in Finland and Singapore. These countries generated significant growth in student performance within a single generation.

Median Salaries of the Most Popular College Majors



Source: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. Based on 2010 Census Figures.

Starting state salary: \$30,800

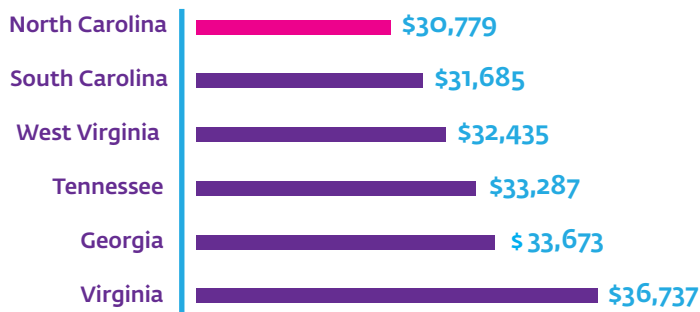
Local district salary supplements: \$0-6,031

Time in service to earn \$40k from state: 16 yrs.

Average teacher salary in NC: \$45,933

National rank in average teacher pay: 46th

Average Starting Teacher Salaries



Source: National Education Association. Salary data for 2011-2012.

Those calling for a different compensation system in North Carolina point out that we traditionally do not reward our world-class teachers differently from their peers. They argue that rather than increasing the baseline salary of all teachers based on years of service, as is done now, the state must create new structures that motivate all and reward the best. There is no consensus, even among proponents, for how best to do this and the respective roles that monetary and non-monetary components would play.

As we search for the path forward, important questions for consideration include: What baseline salary can attract high quality teaching candidates to the field? Will incentives be used to recruit world-class teachers to our most challenged schools and to subject areas that are hardest to fill? What system of evaluation and rewards best aligns with student success? Which non-pay incentives will be significant in the state’s compensation system? How can we learn from the experiences of other countries, states or industries as we develop a competitive compensation system for teachers?

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Beyond admission requirements yielding high quality teacher-candidates, the IEI working group was clear on the need to consider high professional standards across a teacher's career continuum, particularly for licensure and annual reviews. They noted that rigorous professional standards will drive a well-defined model of a world-class teacher and elevate the quality of all teaching.

Licensure in North Carolina relies heavily on completing a state-approved training program and the candidate's performance on standardized tests. Because out-of-state training programs supply almost 30% of NC's teachers, licensure standards are an important checkpoint for teacher quality, as are annual reviews. Both licensure and annual review seek to measure subject knowledge and pedagogical skill, i.e. the ability to convey content effectively to students. In North Carolina, annual reviews now include growth in student performance, complementing a traditional reliance on classroom observation by administrators.

Other states across the country evaluate teachers using different combinations of performance indicators, including classroom observation, lesson plan review, and teacher self-assessments. Perhaps the biggest change in recent years has been the adoption of test-based student achievement metrics capturing student growth, proficiency or both.

Some observers suggest we take note of the standards used in high performing systems around the world. In Finland, teacher-training programs are highly selective, admitting just 10% of applicants, all of whom must be in the top quarter of their academic class. Tuition-free, teacher training takes seven years to finish, granting a masters' degree. Once inside the classroom, Finnish teachers are expected to spend just as much time planning, building lessons and analyzing student needs as they are instructing to be effective teachers. Singapore uses a similarly rigorous screening process for entry into its National Institute for Education.

In thinking about standards and teacher quality, key considerations include: How do we ensure high levels of teacher effectiveness over the career continuum? Which indicators are most meaningful? Should all teachers be licensed in the subject matter they teach? How will we set performance levels? Do other states, countries or industries offer useful lessons on how to measure our teacher talent?

PROFESSIONAL TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Setting professional standards is only part of ensuring integrity and quality outcomes in any field. Like other professions, world-class teaching requires ongoing investments in skills and knowledge. Research on teaching effectiveness and on how we learn has driven important changes in the content and delivery of professional development. For many years, professional development relied mostly on one-off seminars given after the teacher's workday ended. Today, state-of-the-art learning opportunities should (1) be delivered at school during the work-day; (2) be research-based and standards-driven; (3) focus on grade level or discipline-specific content and skills; (4) include effective demonstrations with practice time; and (5) incorporate follow-up coaching. Challenges remain, however. For example, research suggests it takes 3-5 years for new innovations (e.g., technology, practices, standards) to be effectively incorporated through professional development. If the focus of training changes too often, it will not have the time needed to be effective.

NC's Professional Teaching Standards:

- Demonstrate Leadership
- Establish a Respectful Environment for a Diverse Population of Students
- Know the Content They Teach
- Facilitate Learning for Their Students
- Reflect on Their Practice
- Contribute to the Academic Success of Students

Source: NCDPI

30% - The number of NC middle school students being taught by math and science teachers not licensed in their disciplines

In the United States, teachers spend an estimated 40-100 hours per school year on professional development, compared to 10-20 hours per week in Finland. North Carolina requires teachers to document at least 75 hours of professional learning every five years to renew a teaching license, though most teachers complete much more.

IEI's working group noted that effective professional development involves more than structured lessons; it must include time to collaborate and plan with peers. Of 34 developed, international peers, US teachers spend significantly less of their school day on lesson planning—only 3-5 hours per week—though many spend far more than this outside the regular workday.

Important questions about professional development include: How can the state best provide professional development that effectively develops and supports world-class teachers? What can we learn from other states, countries and professions about developing high quality talent?

ELEVATING THE STATUS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Successfully addressing any one of the above three areas will strengthen the teaching profession in North Carolina; wisely addressing all of them will elevate it. The IEI working group was clear—any serious effort to increase the number of world-class teachers in North Carolina requires specific attention to the real and perceived status of the teaching profession. Compensation systems, standards and professional development influence teacher, prospective teacher and public views of the profession. Perceptions are also affected by the level of teacher influence over setting and administering those aspects of the profession that most impact their success. This includes compensation, standards and training, but also extends to other areas, such as how teachers spend their time.

Finally, given the changes in the world around us, many employers now routinely offer part-time, part-year, or job sharing opportunities to employees who need such flexibility. The IEI working group wondered whether schools might retain more of their world-class teachers if they could offer similar flexibility. Of course, as is true in every industry, details would need to ensure manageability and predictability for all parties involved.

50% - US teachers receive about half the non-instructional time of peers in other developed countries

80% - NC teachers who say they have enough time and resources for professional development

62% - NC teachers who say professional development is differentiated to meet their needs

As we think about professionalizing teaching, questions abound. How would changes to compensation, standards and professional development impact the perceptions of our most promising teacher candidates and our world-class teachers about the profession? What roles do—and should—teachers play in setting and administering those parts of teaching that most impact teacher success? What are the flexible workplace options that exist in other states, countries, and professions?

US teacher turnover rates are far higher than the highly regarded professions of engineering, higher education and architecture.

5-year annual district turnover rates: 5.4%-26.1%

THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION FOR OUR STATE

Changes to our economy demand that we increase student achievement rates while underscoring the need for more world-class teachers like Sam in classrooms across the state. It is time to determine how North Carolina will recruit, reward, and retain these teachers who will drive our economy forward.