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Teacher Retention: Compensation

Compensation influences teacher recruitment and retention throughout the teacher pipeline, including cultivating a well-prepared, stable, and racially and ethnically diverse educator workforce. Initial compensation can attract candidates to the field and help retain early career educators. Some research has found that the impact of increased salaries on teacher turnover is especially influential for inexperienced teachers, an important consideration given the challenges of retention in the first few years of a teacher's career.

**Teacher Salary Increases Overtime
(FY15-FY23)**

	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY19	FY20	FY23
Level 1	\$32,000	\$34,000	\$34,000	\$36,000	\$40,000	\$50,000
Level 2	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$42,000	\$44,000	\$50,000	\$60,000
Level 3-A	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$42,000	\$54,000	\$60,000	\$70,000
Level 3-B	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$42,000	\$54,000	\$60,000	\$70,000

Source: LESC Files

The Legislature has made significant investments to address teacher compensation. The New Mexico Legislature has focused on educator pay since the early 2000s. In the *Martinez* and *Yazzie* lawsuit, the judge found high-quality teachers are critical to student success and that paying teachers a reasonable salary is necessary to attract and retain high-quality teachers.

New Mexico Legislative Investments in Teacher Compensation

The Learning Policy Institute research finds teachers are more likely to choose to enter the workforce when teacher salaries are competitive. Teachers' salaries affect the supply of teachers, including the distribution of teachers across districts, and the quality and quantity of individuals preparing to be teachers. Salaries also appear to influence teacher attrition; teachers are more likely to quit when they are able to access higher paying job opportunities. Raising teacher pay both addresses the immediate teacher workforce crises and can help stabilize the profession in the long term.

Raising Minimum Salaries. During the 2022 legislative session, the Legislature increased minimum teacher salaries to \$50 thousand for level 1 teachers, \$60 thousand for level 2 teachers, and \$70 thousand for level 3 teachers. Additionally, the Legislature appropriated \$19.2 million for a 3 percent increase for public school employees and \$101 million for an average 4 percent increase for all school personnel.

Incentive Pay for K-5 Plus and Extended Learning Program Participation. During the 2022 legislative session, the Legislature appropriated \$64 million for targeted compensation increases for teachers participating in K-5 Plus and Extended Learning Time programs. The general fund appropriation to the state equalization guarantee, the pool of money distributed through a funding formula, includes \$64 million to provide an additional average 3 percent salary increase for all public school personnel who work in a K-5 Plus school pursuant to the K-5 Plus Act or an Extended Learning Time program.