



Rapid Response Evaluation:  
Comprehensive Compensation for Oklahoma Teachers

Report: 22-265-01  
December 2021



Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency  
State Capitol Building, Room 107  
2300 North Lincoln Blvd.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105  
[okloft.gov](http://okloft.gov)



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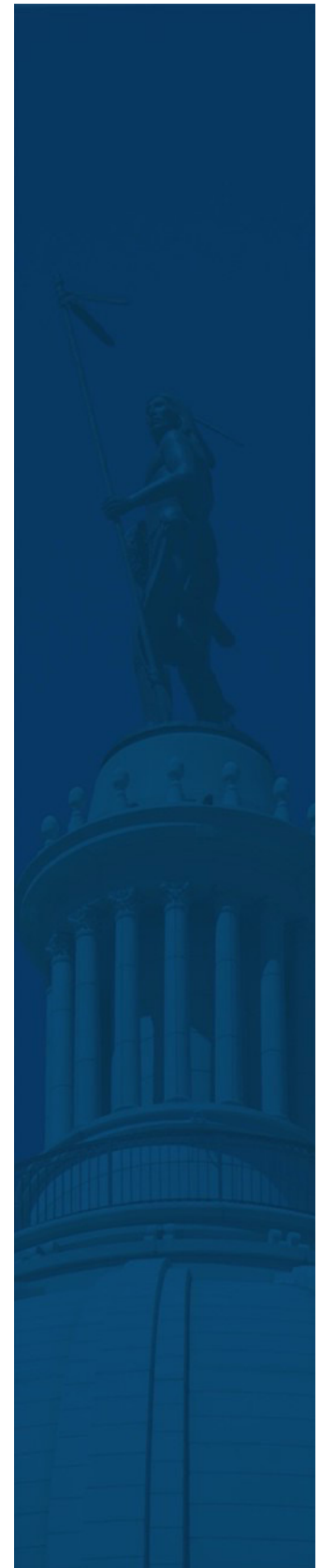
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**Key Questions:**

- How does comprehensive compensation for OK teachers compare regionally?
- How have compensation levels changed?
- How does cost-of-living factor into the State’s competitiveness?
- What are best practices being utilized by other states related to structuring teacher compensation?
- What role does OK’s teacher compensation have on recruiting and retaining classroom teachers?
- What factors are contributing to OK teachers leaving the profession or the State?

**Executive Summary**

In a school setting, teachers are considered the most influential aspect to a student’s academic progress. Accordingly, a majority of the resources dedicated by the State of Oklahoma to public education are expended on teacher salaries and benefits. Oklahoma has approximately 43 thousand public school teachers, and spends close to \$2.9 billion annually to fund their salaries and benefits.

Recent workforce trends, educational performance outcomes, and concerns about a potential teacher shortage have led policymakers to examine how teachers are compensated, how Oklahoma’s total compensation structure compares against the regional and national marketplace, to what degree compensation effects the workforce, and how other states are attracting and retaining quality educators.

With this evaluation, the Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency sought to provide a complete picture of the total compensation provided to public school teachers and determine the regional and national competitiveness of Oklahoma’s pay. LOFT’s research resulted in three key findings:

**Finding 1: When Adjusted for Cost-of-Living and Tax Burden, the Average Oklahoma Teacher Salary Ranks 1st Within the Surrounding Region and 21st in the Nation.**

Average Nominal vs Real Buying Power Public Teacher Salary							
State	NEA 2019 Average Unadjusted Nominal Teacher Salary	Rank	Tax Burden	Regional Price Parities	State	Real Buying Power Average Salary 2019	Rank
Colorado	\$54,935	1	9.4%	101.9	Oklahoma	\$55,161	1
Texas	\$54,121	2	8.0%	96.5	Arkansas	\$52,298	2
Oklahoma	\$52,397	3	8.2%	87.2	Texas	\$51,597	3
Kansas	\$51,082	4	10.1%	89.2	Kansas	\$51,483	4
Missouri	\$50,019	5	9.2%	88.7	Missouri	\$51,203	5
Arkansas	\$49,438	6	10.4%	84.7	Colorado	\$48,843	6
New Mexico	\$47,826	7	8.8%	91.1	New Mexico	\$47,878	7
Regional Average	\$51,403	*			Regional Average	\$51,209	*
U.S. Average	\$62,304				U.S. Average	\$54,459	

Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s analysis based on data from U.S. BEA, NEA and Tax Foundation  
 \*No ranking assigned.

Despite statements from both the National Education Association (NEA) and the U.S. Department of Education urging states and school districts to factor regional cost of living and purchasing power into salary comparisons, LOFT found no existing national comparison of teacher compensation factored for these variations.



<b>Regional Comparison District-Level Average Teacher Real Buying Power Salary Comparison</b>			
<b>State</b>	<b>School Districts Analyzed</b>	<b>Number of Districts with Higher Salaries than Oklahoma</b>	<b>Percentage of Districts with Higher Salaries than Oklahoma</b>
<b>Arkansas</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>59%</b>
<b>Colorado</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Kansas</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>84%</b>
<b>Missouri</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>New Mexico</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Texas</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Total Region</b>	<b>2,470</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>31%</b>

*Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from respective state education agencies*

Using data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, the NEA, and the Tax Foundation, LOFT adjusted state-level salary data to reflect the real buying power of teacher salaries and found Oklahoma's compensation levels are highly competitive both regionally and nationally. After adjusting for tax burdens and cost-of-living differences, the average Oklahoma teacher salary ranks as highest in the surrounding seven-state region and the 21<sup>st</sup> highest in the nation. Teacher benefits, which include retirement, the state-funded health insurance premium for employees, and contributions to Social Security, are

included in reported state salaries. Benefits paid to Oklahoma teachers are equal to a third of total compensation.

An analysis of the average salaries across 2,470 school districts in the seven state region revealed that only 31 percent of school districts offer higher average teacher salaries than Oklahoma's, after adjusting for real buying power.

### **Finding 2: Oklahoma's Compensation Structure Provides Limited Incentives and Options for Professional Growth and Income Potential**

The majority of Oklahoma's public schools utilize a traditional salary system structured around a series of "steps" and "lanes" that are based on educational attainment, professional development, and years of experience. Oklahoma's compensation structure is heavily weighted on the front end, with an emphasis on raising starting salaries, but provides limited income adjustments at the mid- and late-career points. Compensation primarily based on years of service applies a one-size-fits-most approach, limiting recognition of exemplary teaching, the varied skills or training required of certain subjects, or the market environment for difficult to fill positions. Additionally, there is little financial incentive for teachers to pursue post-graduate degrees. The use of teacher salary schedules also yields limited returns for Oklahoma teachers and may be contributing to shorter careers in the profession.

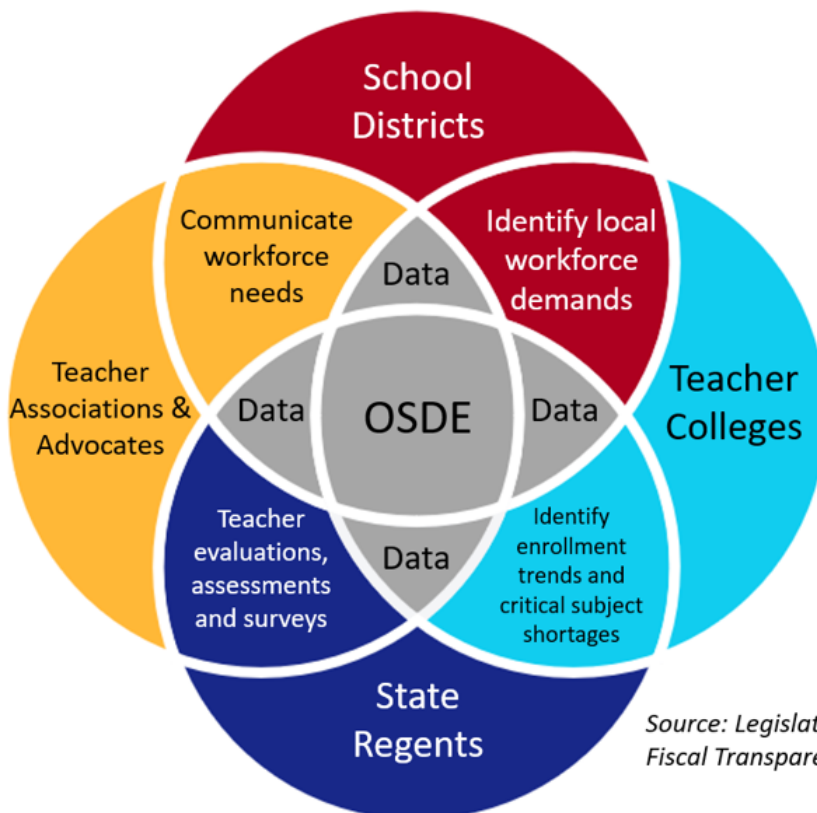
While state statute provides flexibility to Oklahoma schools to adopt independent salary schedules – and LOFT identified a few that are doing so – most utilize the traditional salary schedule that other states and large school districts have moved away from. Regional peers like Colorado and Texas are instead adopting innovative, market-based approaches to attract and retain high-quality teachers. From a state perspective, Kansas may be Oklahoma's greatest competitor for teacher talent, but at the school district level, LOFT found Dallas to be the most competitive.

### Finding 3: Lack of Data Prevents Oklahoma from Assessing Compensation's Role in Teacher Shortages

Like most states, Oklahoma is experiencing shortages in the teacher workforce due to attrition, retirement and a reduced pipeline of new teachers. However, unlike most states, the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) does not collect data detailed enough to identify the number of unfilled positions or concentrations of need, whether by subject area or geographic region. An average of 10 percent of public educators leave the profession annually, and Oklahoma's replacement rate is of concern. Since the 2010-2011 school year, Oklahoma has experienced a 25 percent reduction in the number of students earning degrees in the field of education. Over the past 10 years, graduates from Oklahoma's public institutions are enough to fill just 46 percent of the vacancies created from teachers retiring over the same period.

To better understand the challenges and potential opportunities within the teacher workforce, LOFT analyzed the Oklahoma educator pipeline from college campus to the classroom and found the following: communication gaps, poor data collection, and a lack of proactive strategies. LOFT did not observe an evidence-based, unified statewide strategy to address teacher shortfalls with recruitment or retention.

The limited coordination among the various stakeholders (depicted at left) stem from a lack of



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's creation

data and information from the classrooms and schools reaching the lead education agency, (OSDE), and other key education entities including the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and teacher preparation programs. For example, these stakeholders do not currently coordinate forecasting of teacher retirements, or identify critical shortage areas to direct undergraduates to during their coursework and certification process.

Additionally, teacher exit surveys do not currently capture data

about compensation's role in a teacher's decision to leave. Absent sufficient data about pay as a factor in teachers leaving the profession, it is reasonable to conclude that there are other drivers into those decisions. It is LOFT's assessment that, without a root cause analysis of teacher turnover, further investments into compensation will have limited impact on retention rates.



## Summary of Policy Considerations and Agency Recommendations

### Policy Considerations

The Legislature may consider the following policy changes:

- Amend statute to require OSDE to generate and provide the Educator Supply and Demand report annually to show specific teacher shortages by region, county, school districts and academic subjects. (70 O.S. § 6-21)
- Create a fund that targets specific academic subject areas or regional shortages in the State’s teacher workforce. Funds would be directed towards school districts that show critical need for certain teaching positions; districts would use the additional funds to incentivize individuals to fill hard-to-staff positions.
- Require the Oklahoma State Department of Education in coordination with the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to develop an annual report card on the effectiveness of teacher training programs in meeting the State’s workforce demands for educators, districts and specific subject areas.
- Require a biennial comprehensive teacher salary report from the Oklahoma State Department of Education with the report to include national and regional comparisons, cost-of-living differences and salary information by local school districts.
- Amend the definition of a teacher in statute to only include a classroom teacher with a valid certificate issued by and in accordance with the rules of the State Board of Education or the rules of the State Board of Career and Technology Education. Include only teachers with Jobs Code 210 and 213 under definition of a teacher. (70 O.S. § 1-116)



## Agency Recommendations

The Oklahoma State Department of Education should:

- Connect teacher certification program supply data to district-level demand data to identify areas of shortage and surplus.
- Work collaboratively with the State Regents to set parameters around the number of candidates to be prepared and trained in each certification area based on existing and predicted need.
- Develop cooperative agreements with the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) and surrounding state workforce agencies to track Oklahoma teachers in the workforce outside of Oklahoma. This data could identify motives or other underlying trends that could assist Oklahoma's workforce and the State Legislature in retaining educators.
- Enhance the Oklahoma teacher exit survey to allow for further information and data to be collected from outgoing educators.
- Make teacher mobility data at the school district level publicly available.
- Conduct a follow up interview with teachers who have left the profession a year after departure to provide further insight into teacher attrition.
- Adopt NCES' follow-up survey to obtain activity or occupational data for teachers who leave the position of a K-12 teacher and obtain current teaching assignment information to include state of residence, salary and teaching assignment for those who are still teaching.
- Promote and encourage local school districts to apply for the U.S. Department of Education's Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program.
- Provide cost-of-living calculations in future analysis and reports regarding teacher compensation.
- Incorporate comparable wage index (CWI) calculations into local school district salaries for future analysis and reporting similar to the approach taken by Arkansas, Colorado and Texas' analyzing salaries.
- Include State and school district salaries' real buying power on recruiting and marketing materials for teacher candidates and students.



## Introduction

In a school setting, teachers are considered the most influential aspect to a student’s academic progress. Accordingly, a majority of the resources dedicated by the State of Oklahoma to public education are expended on teacher salaries and benefits. Oklahoma has approximately 43 thousand public school teachers, and the State spends close to \$2.9 billion annually to fund their salaries and benefits.<sup>1</sup> These compensation payments account for 81 percent of all instructional expenditures and 46 percent of 2019 academic school year expenditures in kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) public schools.<sup>2</sup>

Recent workforce trends, educational performance outcomes, and concerns about a potential teacher shortage have led policymakers to examine how teachers are compensated, how Oklahoma’s total compensation structure compares against the regional and national marketplace, to what degree compensation effects the workforce, and how other states are attracting and retaining quality educators.

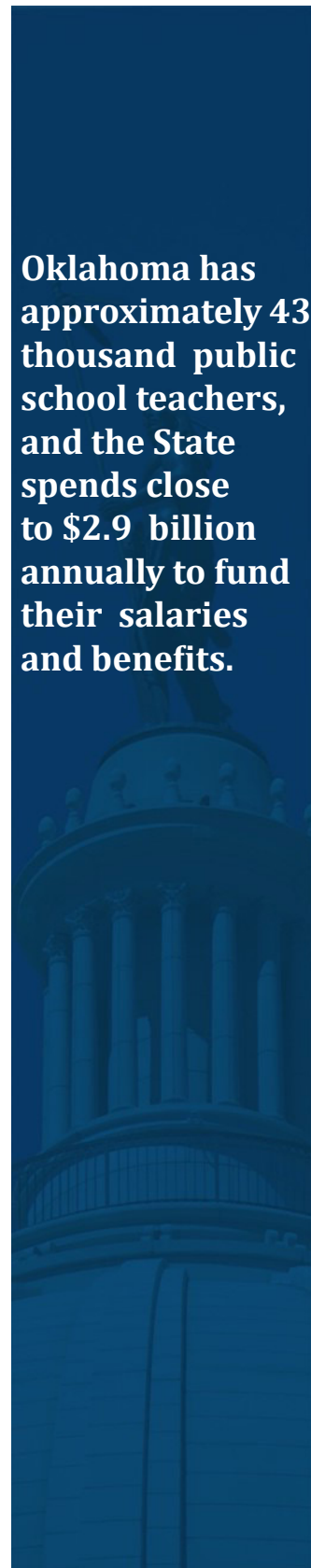
According to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), “teacher compensation is more than salary. It is a valuable total package that includes salary, extra pay, benefits, and pension.”<sup>3</sup> Teacher compensation is the sum of four parts: base pay, supplemental pay, benefits and deferred compensation.

Breakdown of Teacher Compensation	
Category	Brief Description
Base Pay	Base pay is commonly set by salary schedules, typically based on education level and years of experience.
Supplemental Pay	District or State-wide salary supplements (I.e., athletic coaching)
Benefits	Fringe benefits such as health insurance, Social Security and paid leave
Deferred Compensation	Teacher Retirement

Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's creation based on information from U.S. Department of Education

1. Information is for the 2019-20 academic school year, the latest year with complete data available. Total expenditures for classroom teacher compensation (Job Class 210 and 213, Object Codes 100 and 200 series plus 361 and 364. Object Code 361 and 364 are payments made to Management Organization under these Job Classes.)
2. LOFT’s analysis of teacher compensation is inclusive of both base salaries and benefits
3. [Teacher Compensation | U.S. Department of Education](#)

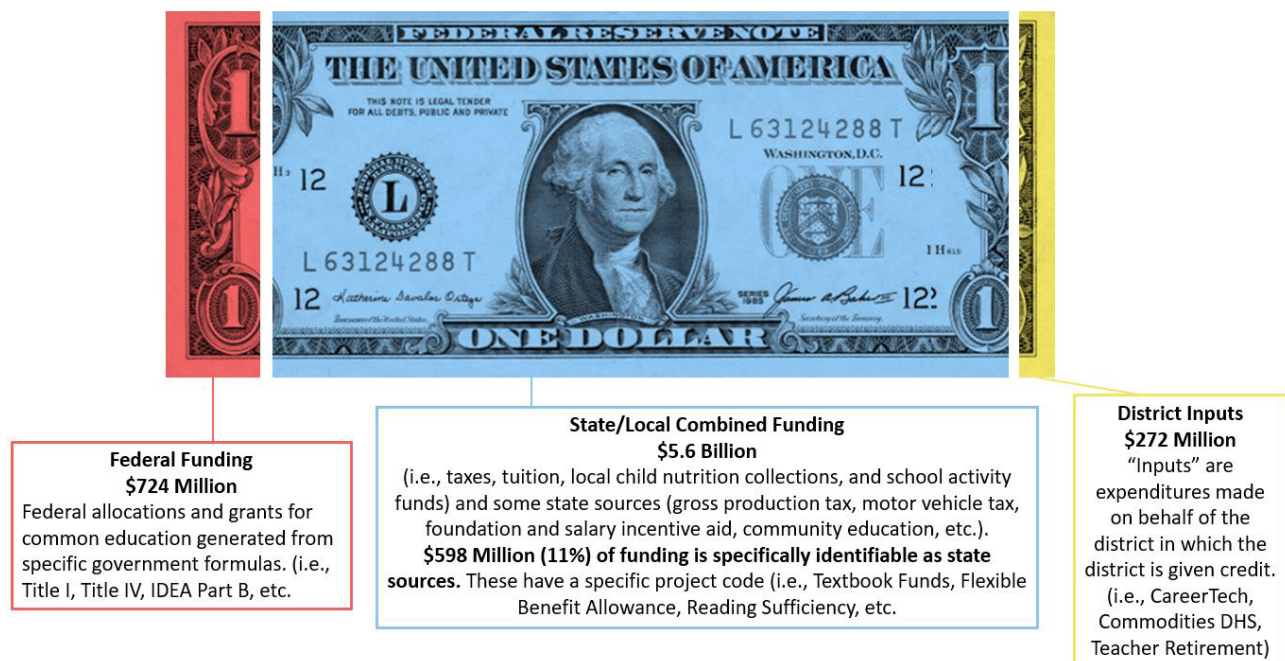
**Oklahoma has approximately 43 thousand public school teachers, and the State spends close to \$2.9 billion annually to fund their salaries and benefits.**



## Oklahoma K-12 Public Education Expenditures Overview

Oklahoma's K-12 public school system consists of multiple funding streams at the federal, state and local levels. In FY20, over \$6.6 billion in combined revenue sources funded Oklahoma's public education system. Figure 1 illustrates the total expenditures by revenue source in FY20.

**Figure 1: Total Oklahoma Education Expenditures by Source (FY20).** This chart illustrates all expenditures of the State's public K-12 education system by source. Combined, state and local funding provides approximately 85 percent of all funding for public education. According to OSDE, there are some expenditures that may not be identifiable by revenue source as **sources of revenue are not required** to have a specific Project Code and school districts are not required to track some expenditures with a specific Project Code.)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data and information from OSDE

\*Note: Limitations of data and coding expenditures by revenue source received from OSDE on Nov. 1, 2021

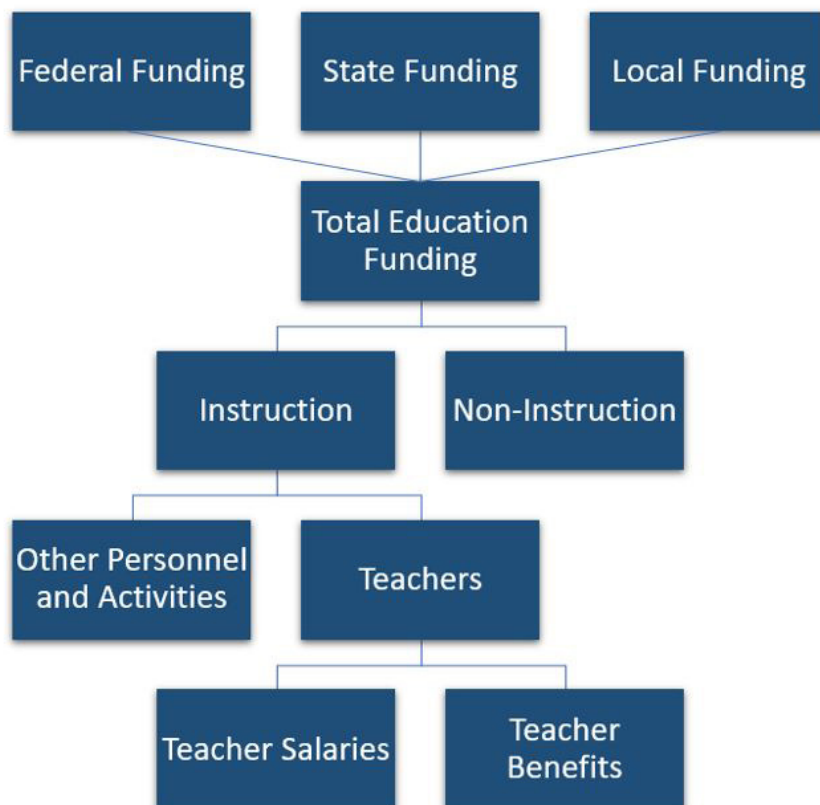
As described in Figure 1, Oklahoma public schools receive funding from federal, state and local sources. These monies are then spent on instruction and a range of non-instructional support activities such as administration, transportation, and operations, among various others.

As illustrated in Figure 2, Oklahoma expenditures can primarily be categorized into two main categories: instructional and non-instructional spending.



**Figure 2: Oklahoma Breakdown of Funding and Expenditures for Oklahoma Public Schools.** (This figure illustrates that Oklahoma schools receive funding from various sources and expenditures are primarily categorized into instructional and non-instructional spending.)

## Breakdown of Funding and Expenditures for Oklahoma Public Schools



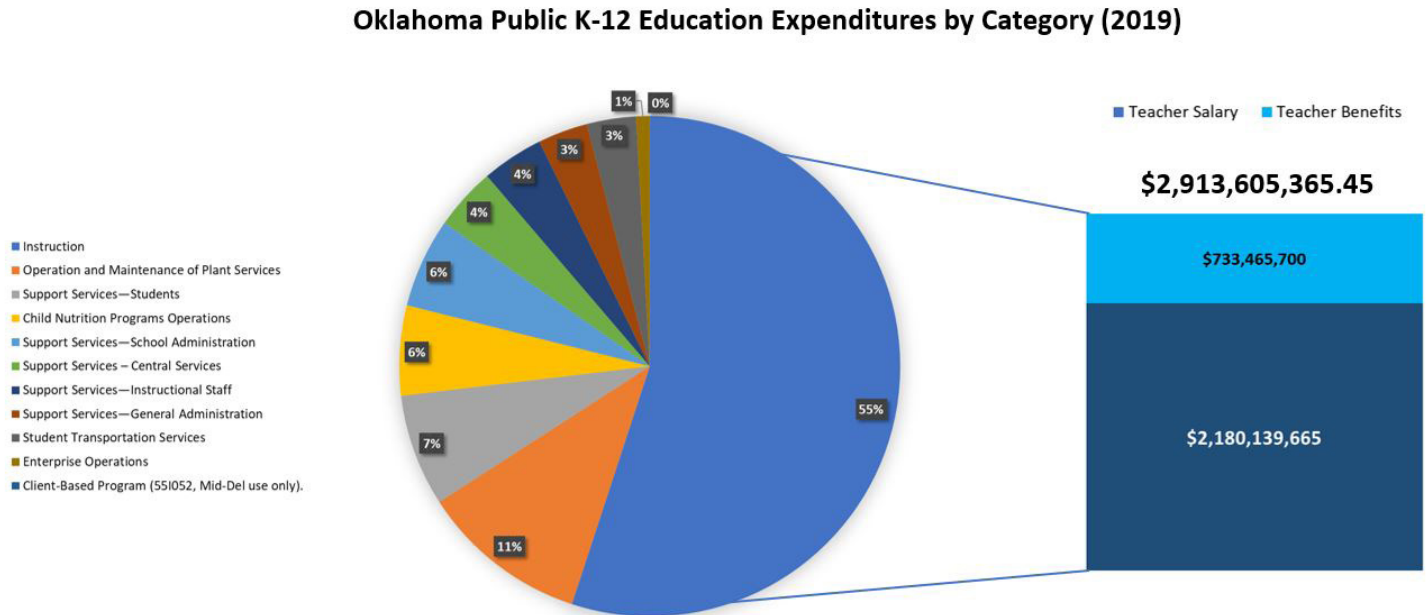
Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency

Teacher compensation is the largest component of the State’s public education system’s expenditures, accounting for 46 percent of all expenditures in 2019. The combined base salaries and benefits for teachers accounts for 81 percent of all instructional expenditures in 2019.<sup>4</sup>

**The combined base salaries and benefits for teachers accounts for 81 percent of all instructional expenditures in 2020.**

4. Analysis includes all teachers defined under statute.

**Chart 1: Oklahoma Public K-12 Education Expenditures by Category (2019).** (This figure illustrates total expenditures by category, reflecting instructional expenses account for 55 percent of all expenditures in 2019).



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s analysis based on data from OSDE and OCAS

**Historical Overview: Oklahoma Compensation Schedules and Trends**

Teacher pay in the United States is characterized by slow and gradual structural changes. Since the 1800’s, there have been only three major reforms in the models of teacher pay: an initial practice of paying teachers for room and board, a transition to a grade-based salary and finally the shift to the current salary schedule. Dating back to the late 1800’s, teacher salary schedules were designed and instituted to equalize wages among public school teachers across race, ethnicity and gender. Salary schedules have evolved as the industry norm, largely as a mechanism to control inequalities in compensation levels for teachers. Generally, salary schedules are based on two criteria: educational attainment and years of experience in the classroom. **Across the United States, the majority of teacher compensation policies and issues are handled at the local school district level with the majority of states granting school districts the autonomy to determine compensation structures and set salary amounts.** As of October 2021, Oklahoma is one of 14 states that requires all districts to pay a minimum salary amount to teachers based on a statewide salary schedule.

Local school districts must meet the mandatory minimum requirement set by OSBE but have the autonomy to establish their own salary schedules for teachers within their district, as long as they meet the required minimum pay levels. LOFT reviewed local school districts’ required minimum salaries for Oklahoma public school teachers compared to the State’s minimum salary schedule.<sup>5</sup> In 2021, the State’s minimum salary for a teacher with a Bachelor’s degree and no years of experience was \$36,601 and the highest minimum for a public school teacher with a Doctorate and 25 years of experience was \$54,395.<sup>6</sup>

5. 70 O.S. § 18-114.14

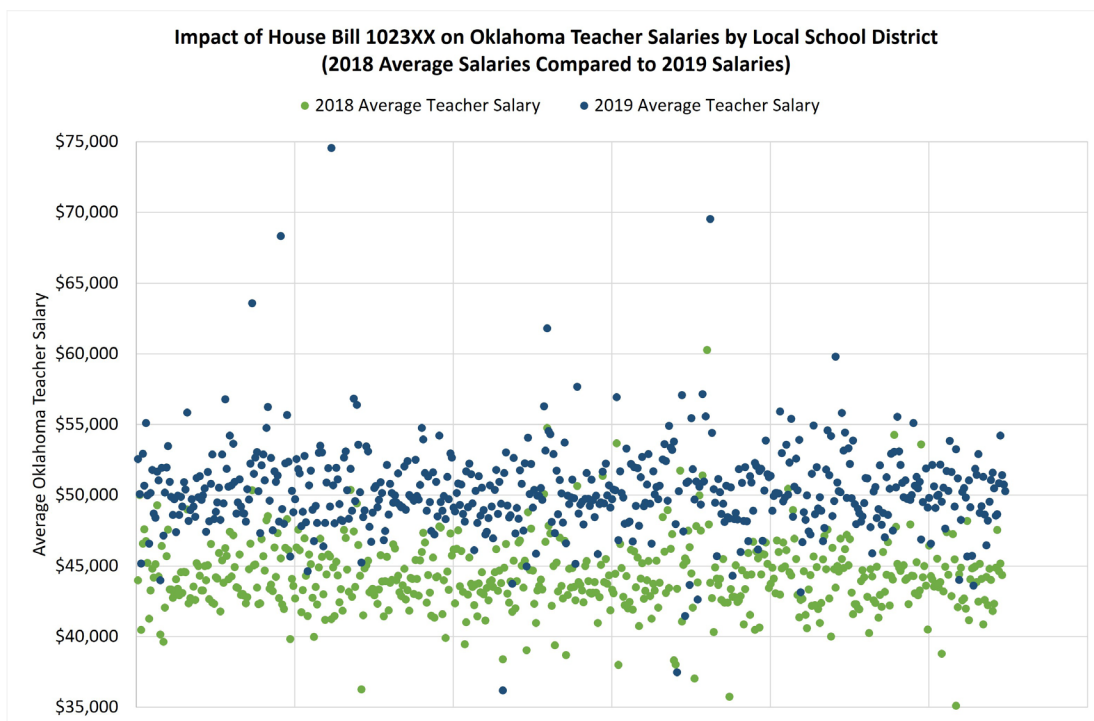
6. Please refer to Appendix C for Oklahoma 2021-2022 State Minimum Teacher Salary Schedule; [Previous Oklahoma State Salary Schedules](#)

Since 1990, the average compensation levels for Oklahoma’s public school teachers has experienced a linear increase, with compensation levels increasing by 134 percent over the past three decades. Between 2010 and 2020, compensation levels have increased by 22 percent.<sup>7</sup>

**2018 Oklahoma Teacher Pay Raise**

In 2018, the Oklahoma Legislature passed House Bill 1023XX, which increased the State’s minimum salary schedule and gave Oklahoma public school teachers an average pay raise of \$6,100.<sup>8</sup> Salary increases ranged from \$5,000 for a new teacher with a bachelor’s degree to a \$8,395 for a teacher with 25 years of experience and a doctorate.<sup>9</sup> At the time of the bill’s passage, the pay raise was projected to cost the state \$353.5 million in FY 2019.<sup>10</sup> Prior to this action, the last increase to the State’s minimum salary schedule for teachers was for the 2007-2008 school year.<sup>11</sup> LOFT’s analysis, shown in Chart 2, compares the average 2018 teacher salaries before the adjustments from HB 1023XX took effect in 2019.

**Chart 2: Impact of House Bill 1023XX on Oklahoma Teacher Salaries by Local School District.** (This scatterplot shows the average teacher salary for Oklahoma school districts before and after HB 1023XX took effect.)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s creation based on data from OSDE

7. Please refer to Appendix D to see Oklahoma average teacher salaries with inflation adjusted figures.  
 8. [Oklahoma HB 1023xx \(2018\)](#); [David Blatt, “The education funding package is a major step forward. There is more work to do, Oklahoma Policy Institute, April 3, 2018.](#)  
 9. [Oklahoma HB 1023xx \(2018\)](#)  
 10. [Fiscal Impact Report, HB 1023xx \(2018\) | Oklahoma House of Representatives](#)  
 11. [2007 Legislative Summary and FY’08 Budget Review | Oklahoma State Senate](#); [Alexa Lardieri, “Oklahoma Raises Teacher Pay, Teachers Say It’s Not Enough.” U.S. News, March 29, 2018.](#)



## Oklahoma Teacher Job Codes in OCAS:

**210: Teacher - Provides instruction, learning experiences, and care to students during a particular time period or in a given discipline.**

**213: Resource Teacher - Assists a classroom teacher by providing services to enrich the instruction of the students with special education needs.**

### Critical Scope Considerations

A critical scoping consideration encountered by states and researchers conducting evaluations of public school teachers is identifying how teachers are classified by states to ensure there is a true comparison. LOFT reviewed statutes from surrounding regional peer states to understand states' definitions of a "teacher" and the roles, responsibilities and positions included within the definition. LOFT found a lack of a standardized legal definition among states for the purpose of classifying a teacher. Some states include additional professional roles apart from the traditional classroom teacher. Many state statutes list specific duties, roles and responsibilities while other state statutes focus on the required credentials of a teacher.

In order to understand the State's teacher workforce, LOFT created an inventory of how surrounding regional peer states identify and classify public school teachers for the purpose of evaluating and comparing teacher workforce levels, attrition rates, pay structures and salary levels.

Table 1, presented below, compiles LOFT's analysis of statutory definitions of "teacher." Oklahoma has the broadest statutory definition of teachers among regional peers.

**Oklahoma's classification of a teacher, as referenced in statute, includes district superintendents, principals, librarians, and school nurses, among other roles, whereas most states limit the classification of a teacher to those certified personnel delivering instruction to pupils in classrooms.<sup>12</sup>**

12. The definition of "teacher" in 70 O.S. 1-116 (see table above) is **not used** to define which personnel are included in the State's minimum salary schedule for educators. See 70 O.S. § 26-103 for "certified personnel" definition. The salary schedule applies to teachers, principals, supervisors, administrators, counselors, librarians, school nurses, but not superintendents.

**Table 1: Definition of a Teacher by State.** (This table provides the definition of a teacher with the respective state statute by surrounding regional peer states in comparison with Oklahoma’s definition.)

State	Statute	Definition of a Teacher
Arkansas	AR Code § 6-17-1502	“Teacher” means any person, exclusive of the superintendent or assistant superintendent, employed in an Arkansas public school district who is required to hold a teaching license from the State Board of Education as a condition of employment.
Colorado	CO § 22-63-103	"Teacher" means any person who holds a teacher's license issued pursuant to the provisions of article 60.5 of this title and who is employed to instruct, direct, or supervise the instructional program. "Teacher" does not include those persons holding authorizations and the chief administrative officer of any school district.
Kansas	KS Stat § 72-2251	(A) "Teacher" means any professional employee who is required to hold a certificate to teach in any school district, and any teacher or instructor in any technical college, the institute of technology at Washburn university or any community college, including any professional employee who is a retirant from school employment of the Kansas public employees retirement system.  (B) The term "teacher" does not include any supervisors, principals or superintendents or any persons employed under the authority of K.S.A. 72-1134, and amendments thereto, or any persons employed in any administrative capacity by any technical college, the institute of technology at Washburn university or any community college.
Missouri	MO Rev Stat § 168.104	"Teacher", any employee of a school district, except a metropolitan school district, regularly required to be certified under laws relating to the certification of teachers, except superintendents and assistant superintendents but including certified teachers who teach at the prekindergarten level in a nonmetropolitan public school within a prekindergarten program in which no fees are charged to parents or guardians.
New Mexico	NM § 22-10A-2	"Teacher" means a person who holds a level one, level two or level three-A license and whose primary job is classroom instruction or the supervision, below the school principal level, of an instructional program or whose duties include curriculum development, peer intervention, peer coaching or mentoring or serving as a resource teacher for other teachers;
Oklahoma	OK Stat § 70-1-116	"Teacher" means any person who is employed to serve as district superintendent, principal, supervisor, a counselor, librarian, school nurse or classroom teacher or in any other instructional, supervisory or administrative capacity. The person shall not be deemed qualified unless the person holds a valid certificate issued by and in accordance with the rules of the State Board of Education or the rules of the State Board of Career and Technology Education, to perform the particular services for which the person is employed  "Teachers" means, for purposes of complying with the State Aid Law and other statutes, but not any other provision of law, which apportion money on the basis of teaching units or the number of teachers employed or qualified, all persons holding proper certificates and connected in any capacity with the instruction of pupils.
Texas	TX Educ Code § 5.001	"Classroom teacher" means an educator who is employed by a school district and who, not less than an average of four hours each day, teaches in an academic instructional setting or a career and technology instructional setting. The term does not include a teacher's aide or a full-time administrator.

Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on legal interpretation and construction of respective state statutes

It is LOFT's determination that an accurate and equitable comparison of teacher salaries must account for cost-of-living differentials and tax burdens.

Real Buying Power is the value of currency expressed in terms of the number of goods or services that one unit of money can buy.

## Finding 1: When Adjusted for Cost-of-Living and Tax Burden, the Average Oklahoma Teacher Salary Ranks 1<sup>st</sup> Within the Surrounding Region and 21<sup>st</sup> in the Nation

LOFT's research and analysis of public teacher compensation levels at the national, state and local levels reveal Oklahoma's compensation levels for public school teachers are highly competitive when adjusting for the real buying power.

In an attempt to identify the most complete data source for evaluating teacher compensation, LOFT researched and analyzed publicly available national reports, spoke with national experts, and reviewed data sets and methodologies. **LOFT found that no data source or organization providing national comparisons factored in cost-of-living variations and tax burdens within their analysis. LOFT found inconsistent standings and reportings of Oklahoma's teacher salaries across different national organizations; illustrating there is no consensus regarding teacher salary levels.** It is LOFT's determination that an accurate and equitable comparison of teacher salaries must account for cost-of-living differentials and tax burdens. When these factors are considered, along with salary and benefits, Oklahoma ranks 21<sup>st</sup> in the nation for teacher compensation. Both national education organizations and the U.S. Department of Education (ED) have communicated and recognize the importance of accounting for regional variations in cost-of-living and adjustments should be made when comparing teacher salaries.

### Where Other Entities Rank Oklahoma Teacher Salaries in 2020



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and National Education Association.

\*Note: BLS data is for Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education

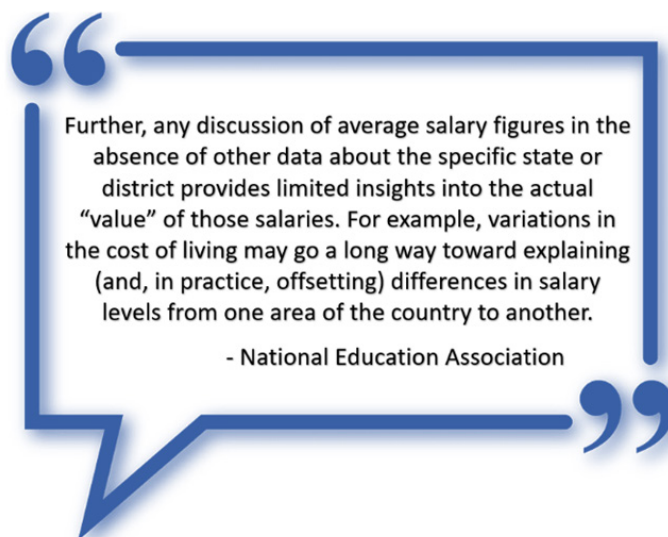
USA Today ranking on 2020 teacher salaries initially reported on September 10, 2020



### Real Buying Power Comparison: Surrounding Region (1<sup>st</sup> in the Region)

LOFT uses the regional price parities (RPPs) from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) and the state and local tax burden by state to identify the real buying power of teaching salaries across the country.<sup>13 14</sup>

LOFT’s analysis within Table 2 illustrates the change in nominal average teacher compensation levels for Oklahoma and neighboring regional peer states after the adjustments. As reflected in Table 2, after applying adjustments for both tax burdens and cost of living, Oklahoma is the only state within the region to be ranked higher than the national average. LOFT’s analysis finds that the real buying power of a dollar in Oklahoma is higher than regional peer states and the national average after adjusting for tax burdens and cost-of-living differences.



Further, any discussion of average salary figures in the absence of other data about the specific state or district provides limited insights into the actual “value” of those salaries. For example, variations in the cost of living may go a long way toward explaining (and, in practice, offsetting) differences in salary levels from one area of the country to another.

- National Education Association

**Table 2: Average Nominal vs Real Buying Power Public Teacher Salary.** (This table illustrates the difference between the nominal average salary compared to the real buying power of public teacher salaries in 2019 within the region.)

Average Nominal vs Real Buying Power Public Teacher Salary							
State	NEA 2019 Average Unadjusted Nominal Teacher Salary	Rank	Tax Burden	Regional Price Parities	State	Real Buying Power Average Salary 2019	Rank
Colorado	\$54,935	1	9.4%	101.9	Oklahoma	\$55,161	1
Texas	\$54,121	2	8.0%	96.5	Arkansas	\$52,298	2
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Regional Average	\$51,403	*			Regional Average	\$51,209	*
U.S. Average	\$62,304				U.S. Average	\$54,459	

Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s analysis based on data from U.S. BEA, NEA and Tax Foundation  
 \*No ranking assigned.

13. Please refer to Appendix E and F for Regional price parities and tax burden by state in 2019.

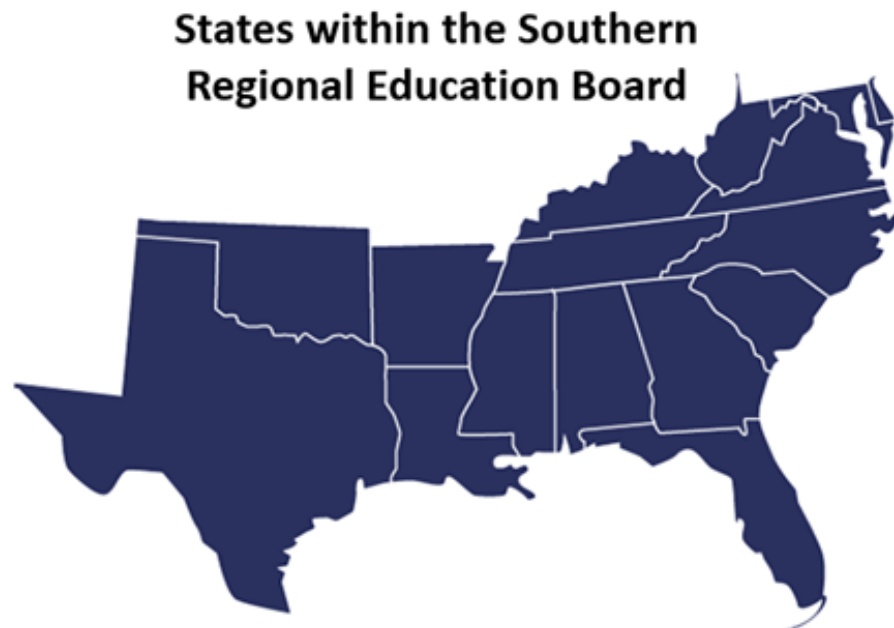
14. Regional price parities (RPPs) is a weighted average of the price level of goods and services for the average consumer in one geographic region compared to all other regions in the United States. RPPs measure the differences in price levels across states and metropolitan areas for a given year and are expressed as a percentage of the overall national price level.

### Real Buying Power Comparison: Broader Region (3<sup>rd</sup>)

To expand analysis beyond bordering states, LOFT examined average teacher salaries across states within the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), of which Oklahoma is a member.<sup>15</sup>

LOFT's analysis, found in Table 3, reveals Oklahoma's 2019 average nominal teacher salary ranked eighth highest among SREB states, unadjusted.<sup>16</sup>

Using the same methodology for the SREB analysis as in the prior regional analysis, adjusting for the real buying power of teacher salaries, Oklahoma's **average nominal salary in 2019 increased by \$2,764 (5%)** while **Maryland's teacher salary, initially ranked first among SREB states, decreased by \$6,212 (10%)**. Table 3 depicts that even before adjustments, Oklahoma is competitive among SREB states, ranking near the top of the region for average teacher salaries.<sup>17</sup>



*Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's creation*

15. The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that works with policymakers to help make informed decisions by providing independent, accurate data and recommendations.

16. Please refer to Appendix G for a comprehensive list of teacher pay increases enacted by SREB state legislatures from 2016-17 to 2019-20.

17. LOFT also researched and analyzed the SREB minimum salaries to show salary competitiveness for first-year teachers. Please refer to Appendix H for analysis.

**Table 3: Southern Regional Education Board States' Real Buying Power Teacher Salary Rankings 2019.** (This table provides a ranking of SREB by the highest average nominal teacher salaries and after adjustments for their real buying power in 2019.)

Southern Regional Education Board States' Real Buying Power Average Teacher Salary Rankings (2019)							
SREB State	NEA 2019 Average Unadjusted Nominal Teacher Salary	2019 Rank	Tax Burden	Regional Price Parities	SREB State	Real Buying Power Average Teacher Salary 2019	Real Buying Power Rank
Maryland	\$70,463	1	11.8%	107.7	Maryland	\$57,705	1
Delaware	\$63,662	2	10.3%	99.4	Delaware	\$57,450	2
Georgia	\$57,095	3	8.9%	93.2	Georgia	\$55,809	3
Texas	\$54,121	4	8.0%	96.5	Oklahoma	\$55,161	4
North Carolina	\$53,940	5	9.5%	91.7	Alabama	\$55,161	5
Kentucky	\$53,434	6	9.9%	87.4	Kentucky	\$55,085	6
Virginia	\$53,267	7	10.0%	101.3	Tennessee	\$53,238	7
Oklahoma	\$52,397	8	8.2%	87.2	North Carolina	\$53,234	8
Alabama	\$52,009	9	9.0%	85.8	Arkansas	\$52,298	9
Tennessee	\$51,349	10	7.0%	89.7	Louisiana	\$51,947	10
South Carolina	\$50,882	11	8.9%	91.5	Texas	\$51,597	11
Louisiana	\$50,288	12	9.2%	87.9	South Carolina	\$50,660	12
Arkansas	\$49,438	13	10.4%	84.7	West Virginia	\$49,323	13
Florida	\$48,314	14	8.8%	101	Mississippi	\$48,365	14
West Virginia	\$47,681	15	9.9%	87.1	Virginia	\$47,325	15
Mississippi	\$45,105	16	9.5%	84.4	Florida	\$43,626	16

Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from NEA, BEA and the Tax Foundation

### Oklahoma School District Minimum Teacher Salary Comparison, 2019 to 2020

In the 2019 Legislative Session, lawmakers appropriated funds to provide a pay raise to teachers beginning in the 2019-2020 school year. Although the legislation did not increase the State's minimum salary schedule, the bill provided funds so districts could pay out an average raise of \$1,220 to teachers.<sup>18</sup> LOFT reviewed Oklahoma school district minimum salary schedules for 2019 to 2020 to analyze year-to-year differences among districts' minimum salaries for Oklahoma teachers.

Analyzing the difference between minimum salaries for a first-year teacher with no years of experience and Bachelor's degree, **LOFT found that 69 percent of school districts increased their starting minimum salaries for teachers, higher than 64 percent of school districts who raised their salaries in Arkansas between 2019 and 2020. Additionally, school districts that raised minimum salaries did so at an average of three percent, but 44 districts increased their respective salaries by more than five percent and as much as 16 percent from 2019 to 2020.**<sup>19</sup>

18. Certified Personnel Pay Raises FAQ | [Oklahoma State Department of Education](#); See Oklahoma [House Bill 2765](#) and Oklahoma [Senate Bill 1048](#) for additional details regarding 2019 teacher pay raise.

19. Please refer to Appendix I for a review of Oklahoma school districts that increased minimum salaries over five percent between 2019 and 2020.



### Percentage of School Districts Which Increased their Minimum Teacher Salaries from 2019-2020



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from OSDE and Arkansas Bureau of Legislative Research

\*Note: Oklahoma school districts not receiving dedicated state funding from the State Aid Funding Formula have minimum salaries above the State's-statutory minimum.

### Oklahoma Teacher Benefits Analysis

Any comprehensive review of compensation must include employer-paid benefits. In Oklahoma, the state offers health insurance coverage to teachers and pays 100 percent of premiums through the State's HealthChoice option plan.<sup>20</sup> Supplemental pay for supervising extracurricular activities such as coaching are paid to select teachers by districts. These extra duties and responsibilities and associated supplemental pay are included in the teacher's yearly contract as the final salary amount with their school district.<sup>21</sup>

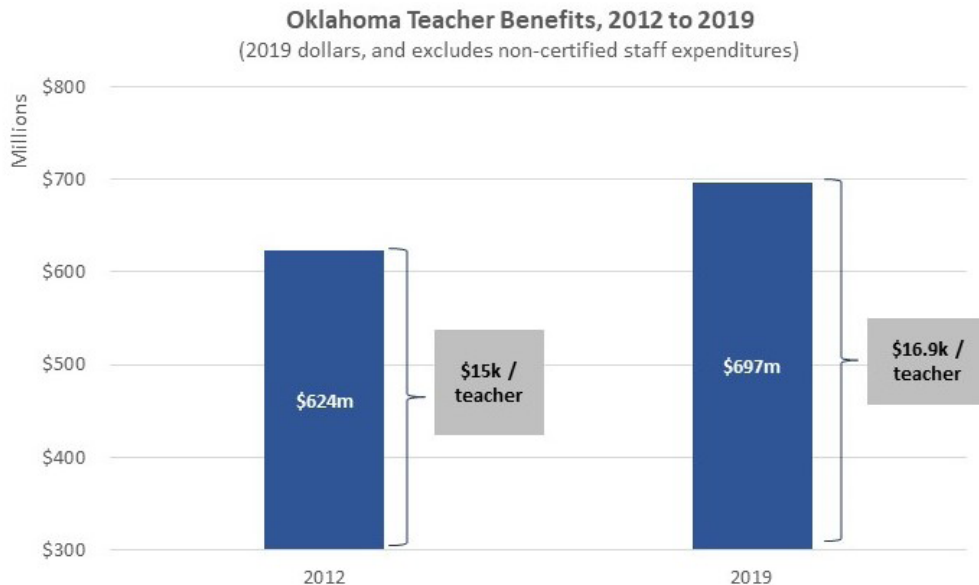
Total benefits paid to Oklahoma educators have increased 18.3 percent between 2011 and 2019 when adjusted for inflation, as Chart 3 below shows. This data, sourced from the State Department of Education's (OSDE) School District Financial Information website,<sup>22</sup> reflect **as of 2019, benefits equated to approximately 31 percent of the 'Real Buying Power Average Salary' established in Table 2.** These numbers have been adjusted for inflation.

20. [O.S. 70 § 26-105](#)

21. Per OSDE during LOFT's entrance conference with the agency, OSDE includes any supplemental pay in the figure when recording each teacher's salary. When calculating average teacher salaries OSDE uses each teacher's total salary figure in their calculation, which may include supplemental pay.

22. Oklahoma [State Department of Education OCAS Data](#)

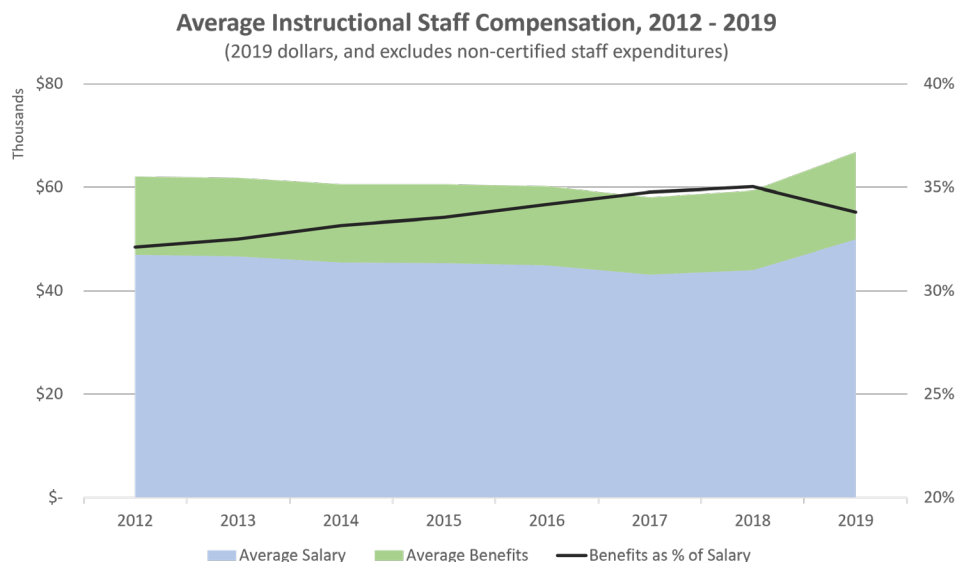
**Chart 3: Oklahoma Teacher Benefits (2012-2019).** Average benefits paid to Oklahoma teachers, including retirement and insurance, have increased by an average of \$1,900 per teacher since 2012. These numbers have been adjusted for inflation. Over this time period, inflation averaged 2% annually.



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s analysis based on data from OSDE and the Bureau of Labor Statistics

There has been a steady increase in the benefits package as a percentage of total compensation. Chart 4 below shows how the average benefit amount has increased relative to the average nominal salary, indicating that even without adjusting for Oklahoma’s lower cost of living and reduced tax burden, the benefits package available to teachers is growing. These numbers have also been adjusted for inflation.

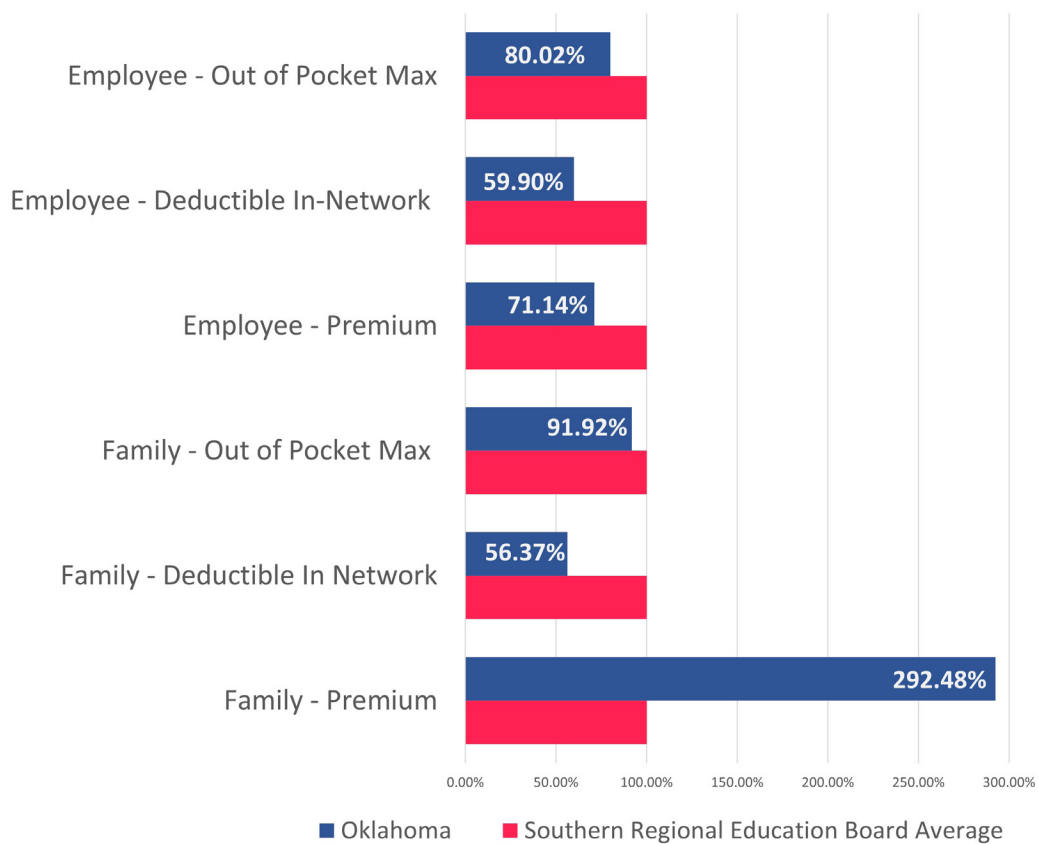
**Chart 4: Average Instructional Staff Compensation (2012-2019).** (Benefits paid to teachers as a percentage of compensation has increased, from 32.1% in 2012 to 33.8% in 2019, when adjusted for inflation. Over this time period, inflation averaged 2% annually.)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s analysis based on data from OSDE and the Bureau of Labor Statistics

LOFT conducted a comparative analysis of teacher healthcare costs covered by employer-paid benefits across 15 states, as shown in Chart 5. In all categories besides the premium for family health insurance, rates are less expensive in Oklahoma relative to the average. Texas is the most expensive state in this region and is approximately twice as expensive in each category compared to Oklahoma. Researching data from the National Association of State Retirement Administrators (NASRA), LOFT’s analysis found 80 percent of Texas Teacher Retirement System (TRS) members aren’t covered under Social Security.

**Chart 5: Analysis of teachers’ covered healthcare insurance costs.** This chart shows that Oklahoma is consistently less expensive for teachers’ health insurance than the regional average, except for annual premiums for family health insurance for Oklahoma educators. This is based on data from 2021 from the Southern Regional Education Board.



	SREB Average	Oklahoma
<b>Employee</b>	Out of Pocket Max	\$ 4,043.75
	Deductible In-Network	\$ 1,150.00
	Premium	\$ 953.16
<b>Family</b>	Out of Pocket Max	\$ 9,662.50
	Deductible In Network	\$ 1,940.00
	Premium	\$ 16,900.56

15 states are represented by the Southern Regional Education Board include Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. Maryland allows each county to set differing levels of health benefits and was excluded from this analysis.



LOFT also was able to review and contrast the structure of retirement benefits. Table 4, inset, shows the results of that analysis: Oklahoma requires a lower employee contribution while offering a higher employer contribution. Oklahoma requires a slightly longer vesting period than other states.<sup>23</sup> Finally, Oklahoma teachers are eligible to participate in social security, allowing for greater financial security. **Overall, Oklahoma is above average in contribution rates and average in terms of vesting periods and utilizing Social Security.**<sup>24 25</sup>

**Table 4: Oklahoma Teacher Benefits Analysis.** (LOFT evaluated Oklahoma’s Teacher Retirement System’s contribution rates, vesting period and participation in Social Security. Oklahoma offers a higher contribution rate. For the vesting period and Social Security participation, Oklahoma is roughly comparable to other states.)

Topic	Data Point
Contribution Rates	In Oklahoma, employers contribute \$1.46 for every \$1 invested by teachers. <b>Only 16 states offer a higher contribution rate.</b>
Vesting Period	In Oklahoma, new teachers fully vest after 7 years. <b>The average vesting period is 6.54 years.</b>
Social Security Participation	In Oklahoma, teachers can participate in Social Security. <b>35 other states allow teachers to participate.</b>

Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s analysis based on information from Bellwether Education Partners

### Oklahoma Local School Districts – Geographic Adjustments

While wage levels vary greatly across the country, there are also substantial differences within a state’s borders. **For example, within the state of Texas, the range of county-level cost-of-living and value of a dollar can be as different as that between New York and Oklahoma.** The last level of LOFT’s analysis examines the real buying power of public school teachers’ salaries across Oklahoma local school districts. For this analysis, LOFT used the comparable wage index (CWI), an index that measures local variations in the purchasing power of local school districts.<sup>26</sup>

The goal of any geographic cost index is to measure uncontrollable differences in the purchasing power of school districts so that comparisons among districts or across time can be based on real educational resources.  
- National Center for Education Statistics

Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s creation

23. Through HB1162, passed in 2017, teachers who join the Teacher’s Retirement System on or as of November 1st 2017, have a 7-year vesting period. Teachers who were already in the system as of that date have a 5-year vesting period.

24. [“Lifting the Pension Fog” by Sandi Jacobs et al., February 2017, National Council on Teacher Quality.](#)

25. As of 2020, 11 states have opted out of Social Security Participation.

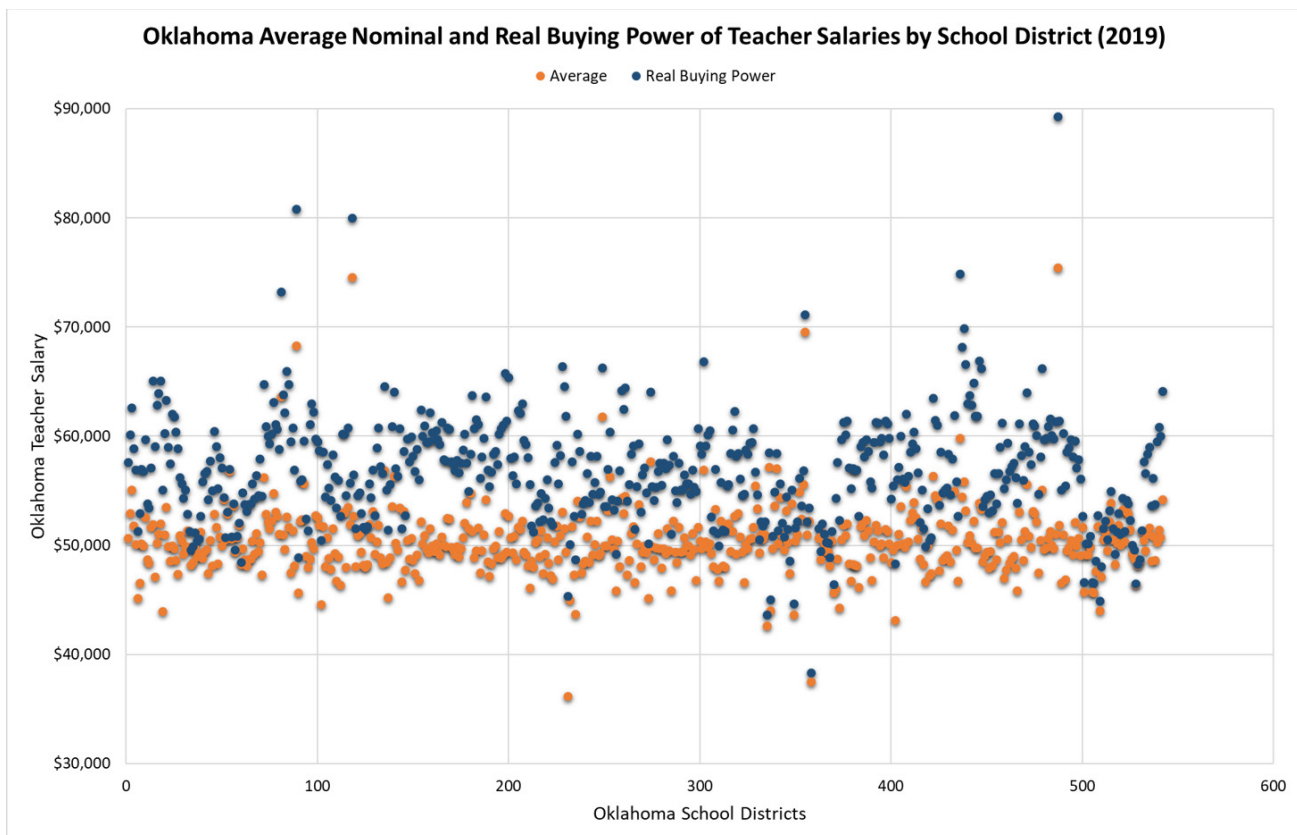
26. The Comparable Wage Index (CWI) is an index that was initially created by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to facilitate comparison of educational expenditures across locales (principally school districts, or local educational agencies—LEAs) or states (state educational agencies—SEAs).

27. Please refer to Appendix J for the 2019 CWI per county in Oklahoma.

28. LOFT’s analysis found that the Colorado Department of Education, Texas Education Agency (TEA), Hawaii Depart-

Chart 6 illustrates the difference between the nominal average and the real buying power of Oklahoma public teacher salaries, using the CWI from the U.S. Department of Education's (USDE) National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the state and local tax burdens from the Tax Foundation. The scatterplots in Chart 6 represent the 2019 CWI nominal and adjusted average salaries of all Oklahoma school districts.

**Chart 6: Nominal Unadjusted Average Oklahoma Teacher Salaries with Bachelor's Degree Compared with Real Buying Power of Salaries (2019).** (This chart compares the nominal average teacher salaries against the real buying power of local school district's teacher salaries for Oklahoma teachers.)



Due to Oklahoma's low cost-of-living and tax burdens, the real buying power of teacher salaries rises significantly at the local school district level. The CWI-adjusted salaries are more widely dispersed than the 2019 non-adjusted average salaries and, therefore, the CWI-adjusted salaries are not as compressed as originally shown within nominal average salaries. For example, in 2019, teachers instructing within the Oklahoma City public school district had an average salary of \$55,594 with one of the State's highest CWI at .897. However, after calculating for both the regional CWI and tax burdens, the average salary for teachers instructing within Oklahoma City public school district only increased by \$1,301, or 2 percent. Other local school districts located within other areas of the State with lower CWIs fared well after adjustments. For example, the average teacher salary in Okemah was \$50,587 but, after adjustments, the real buying power increased by 17 percent to \$59,385.<sup>29</sup>

ment of Education and the Arkansas Bureau of Legislative Research have consistently used CWI adjustments in annual teacher salary reports.

29. Calculations of CWI are based on a certified teacher with a minimum bachelor degree.

### Teacher Salary Real Buying Power Across State Lines

Policy conversations regarding teacher salary comparisons often include concerns about regional competitiveness, as teachers have the capability to move to states and districts offering higher salaries. However, both state and regional variations in the cost-of-living differences and tax burdens must be accounted for to provide a true comparison of salaries.

As Texas is perceived as Oklahoma’s greatest competitor for teacher talent, LOFT examined a scenario in which a public school teacher in Oklahoma County considers moving to Dallas County in Texas for a higher salary. **On paper, comparing the nominal average salaries from district and county levels, the teacher salary in Dallas appears higher. However, after adjusting for the state tax burdens and the county-level disparities in cost-of-living, the real buying power of the average teacher salary in Oklahoma County (\$52,644) is higher than it would be in Dallas (\$49,250).**

To obtain a regional perspective regarding variations in cost-of-living, LOFT analyzed and compared the unadjusted nominal average and real buying power of teacher salaries in Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas, as shown in Table 5. **LOFT’s analysis of 2,470 school districts’ average salaries analyzed within the surrounding seven state region finds only 31 percent of analyzed school districts offer higher average teacher salaries than Oklahoma’s real buying power teacher salary in 2019.**

*Table 5: Number and Percentage of School Districts within Region with Higher Salaries than Oklahoma’s Teacher Average Real Buying Power Salary (2019). (This table shows the number and percentage of school districts of all states within the surrounding region with higher average salaries than Oklahoma’s after adjusting for tax burdens and cost-of-living variations.)*

Regional Comparison District-Level Average Teacher Real Buying Power Salary Comparison			
State	School Districts Analyzed	Number of Districts with Higher Salaries than Oklahoma	Percentage of Districts with Higher Salaries than Oklahoma
Arkansas	295	175	59%
Colorado	178	9	5%
Kansas	286	241	84%
Missouri	558	64	11%
New Mexico	198	82	41%
Texas	955	189	20%
<b>Total Region</b>	<b>2,470</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>31%</b>

*Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from respective state education agencies*

**LOFT’s analysis of 2,470 school districts’ average salaries analyzed within the surrounding seven state region finds only 31 percent of analyzed school districts offer higher average teacher salaries than Oklahoma’s real buying power teacher salary in 2019.**

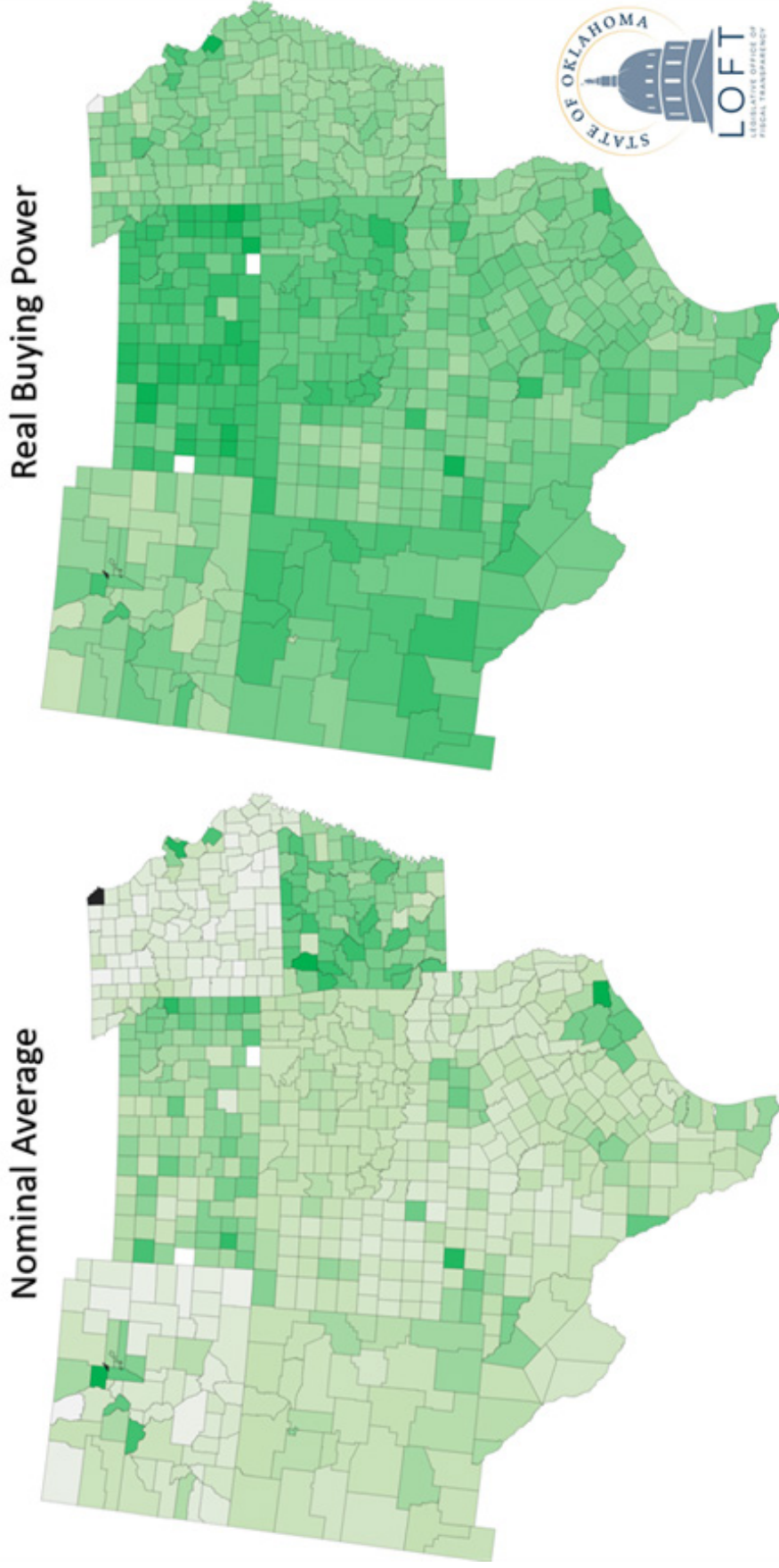
With Oklahoma school districts being near the top-third highest in pay, the State's pay levels are regionally competitive. However, after adjusting for state tax burdens and county-level disparities in cost-of-living, LOFT's analysis illustrates that the real buying power of Oklahoma teacher salaries exceeds the majority of teacher salaries in Colorado, Missouri, New Mexico and Texas. **While Texas is often mentioned in Oklahoma's salary comparisons, LOFT found Arkansas and Kansas' real buying power to be the most competitive to Oklahoma.** Less than one-third of school districts in Texas (20%) offer higher salaries than Oklahoma. Chart 7 maps school districts' average nominal and real buying salaries by county to provide a more accurate comparison between the two salary levels across states.

***Chart 7: State Comparison of Nominal Average and Real Buying Power Teacher Salaries Adjusted for Tax Burdens, Regional Variations and Cost-of-Living Differences (2019).*** (This chart combines two geographic maps to illustrate the difference between examining teacher salaries at the nominal average value compared to the real buying power of salaries after accounting for tax burdens and county-level disparities in cost-of-living. Darker areas of green are reflective of higher salaries levels within counties. LOFT mapped school districts' average nominal and real buying power salaries by county due to limitations in software to map data by school district boundaries for respective states within the region. )





Average Nominal vs Real Buying Power of Teacher Salaries by  
County Regional Comparison (2019)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from respective state education agencies, the Tax Foundation, NCES, and the Arkansas Bureau of Legislative Research.

\*Note: Dark shades of green are reflective of higher salaries.

This data makes clear that both the cost-of-living differences and state and local tax burdens are a significant factor in examining teacher pay and making comparisons between different regions and states. **LOFT’s analysis provides a more “apples to apples” method of examining teacher compensation levels by equalizing the value of a dollar and making comparisons based on real cost-of-living differences and tax burdens.**

**Real Buying Power National Comparison: (21<sup>st</sup> in the Nation)**

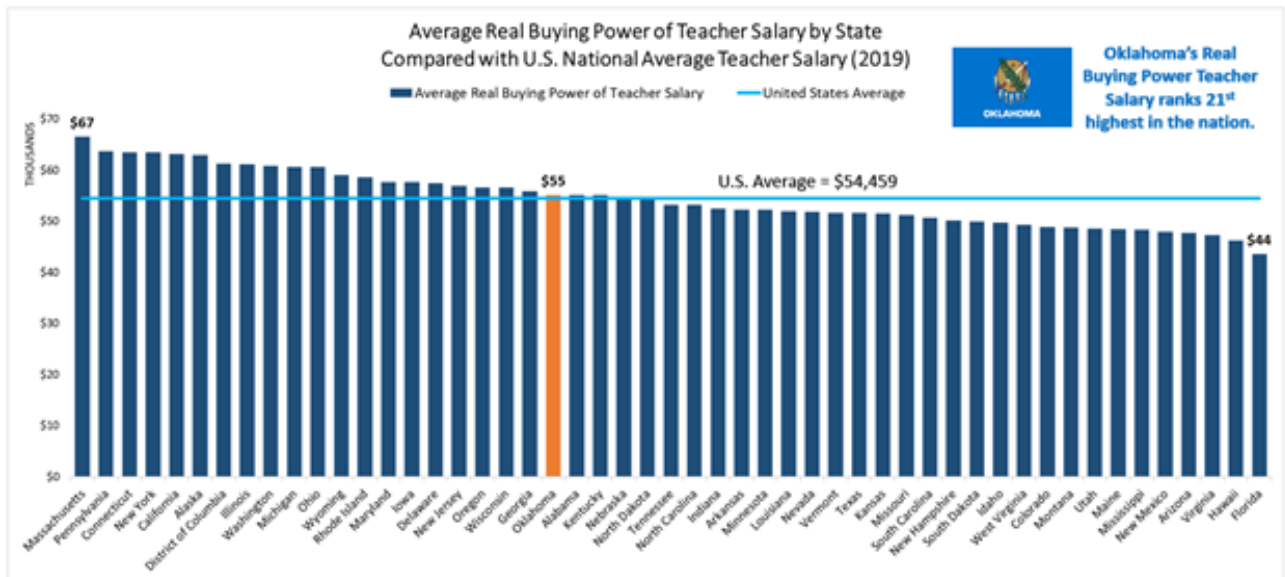
Chart 8 ranks all 50 states and D.C.’s teacher salaries by their real buying power compared to the U.S. average.<sup>30</sup>

After adjustments to determine the real buying power of teacher salaries, **Oklahoma is among 19 states and D.C. whose real buying power salary for public school teachers is above the U.S. average.**



**87.2%**  
Cost-of-living in Oklahoma as percentage of national average.  
Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s analysis based on data from BEA

**Chart 8: Average Real Buying Power of Teacher Salaries by State Compared with U.S. National Average Teacher Salary (2019).** (This chart shows the real buying power of all 50 states and D.C. compared with the U.S. national average; Oklahoma, highlighted in orange, is higher than the national average.)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s analysis based on data from NEA, BEA and Tax Foundation

30. After LOFT’s adjustments to determine the real buying power of states’ teacher salaries, LOFT calculated the U.S. average of states’ real buying power.

LOFT compared the nominal average teacher salaries against the real buying power of teacher salaries for all 50 states and D.C. Accounting for both tax burdens and cost-of-living differences, the majority of states shifted in their national rankings of teacher compensation levels. For example, **Hawaii's nominal average teacher salary (\$63,201) positioned the state as having the fifteenth (15th) highest salary in 2019, but after accounting for real buying power, Hawaii has the fiftieth (50th) lowest salary in the nation at \$46,249.**<sup>31</sup> The comparison of nominal and real buying power of all 50 states and D.C. and their respective positions is illustrated in Table 6 below. **LOFT's analysis, as shown in Table 6, illustrates that Oklahoma's nominal average teacher salary (\$52,397) was ranked as the thirty-fourth highest in the nation in 2019 but the real buying power of an Oklahoma teacher salary (\$55,161) elevates the State's national ranking to twenty-first in the nation.**

#### Hawaii Nominal vs Real Buying Power Teacher Salary



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from NEA, BEA and Tax Foundation

**Table 6: Nominal Average Teacher Salaries Compared with Real Buying Power (2019).** (This table compares the nominal average teacher salaries against the real buying power of states' teacher salaries for all 50 states and D.C.).

31. Results from an independent teacher compensation study commissioned by the Hawaii Department of Education shows Hawaii's cost of living and compression of salaries for experienced educators as the top challenges to recruiting and retaining public school teachers. Report can be found at: Hawaii Teacher Compensation Study.

State	Average Salary Ranking	NEA 2019 Average Nominal Teacher Salary	State & Local Tax Burden	Regional Price Parities	Real Buying Power Average Salary	Real Buying Power Average Salary Ranking
New York	1	\$85,889	14.1%	116.3	\$63,438	4
California	2	\$83,059	11.5%	116.4	\$63,151	5
Massachusetts	3	\$82,042	10.5%	110.4	\$66,510	1
District of Columbia	4	\$78,477	10.1%	115.2	\$61,242	7
Connecticut	5	\$76,465	12.8%	105	\$63,502	3
New Jersey	6	\$74,760	11.7%	116	\$56,908	17
Washington	7	\$73,049	9.8%	108.4	\$60,784	9
Maryland	8	\$70,463	11.8%	107.7	\$57,705	14
Alaska	9	\$70,277	5.8%	105.1	\$62,989	6
Pennsylvania	10	\$68,930	10.4%	97	\$63,671	2
Illinois	11	\$67,049	11.1%	97.4	\$61,198	8
Rhode Island	12	\$67,040	11.4%	101.3	\$58,635	13
Oregon	13	\$65,125	11.1%	102.2	\$56,650	18
Delaware	14	\$63,662	10.3%	99.4	\$57,450	16
Hawaii	15	\$63,201	12.7%	119.3	\$46,249	50
Michigan	16	\$62,170	10.0%	92.3	\$60,621	10
Vermont	17	\$60,672	12.3%	103.1	\$51,609	33
Ohio	18	\$59,713	10.3%	88.4	\$60,591	11
New Hampshire	19	\$59,182	9.7%	106.5	\$50,180	38
Wyoming	20	\$58,861	7.0%	92.8	\$58,988	12
Wisconsin	21	\$58,277	10.7%	91.9	\$56,628	19
Minnesota	22	\$58,221	12.1%	98	\$52,221	30
Iowa	23	\$57,489	10.8%	89	\$57,618	15
Georgia	24	\$57,095	8.9%	93.2	\$55,809	20
Nevada	25	\$55,950	9.7%	97.4	\$51,872	32
Colorado	26	\$54,935	9.4%	101.9	\$48,843	42
Nebraska	27	\$54,470	10.3%	89.5	\$54,592	24
Texas	28	\$54,121	8.0%	96.5	\$51,597	34
Maine	29	\$54,025	11.0%	99.3	\$48,421	45
North Carolina	30	\$53,940	9.5%	91.7	\$53,234	27
Kentucky	31	\$53,434	9.9%	87.4	\$55,085	23
North Dakota	32	\$53,434	8.9%	89.3	\$54,511	25
Virginia	33	\$53,267	10.0%	101.3	\$47,325	49
<b>Oklahoma</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>\$52,397</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>87.2</b>	<b>\$55,161</b>	<b>21</b>
Alabama	35	\$52,009	9.0%	85.8	\$55,161	22
Utah	36	\$51,858	9.6%	96.5	\$48,580	44
Tennessee	37	\$51,349	7.0%	89.7	\$53,238	26
Indiana	38	\$51,119	8.9%	88.7	\$52,502	28
Kansas	39	\$51,082	10.1%	89.2	\$51,483	35
South Carolina	40	\$50,882	8.9%	91.5	\$50,660	37
Idaho	41	\$50,757	9.6%	92.2	\$49,766	40
Montana	42	\$50,721	10.1%	93.5	\$48,768	43
Arizona	43	\$50,353	8.7%	96.3	\$47,739	48
Louisiana	44	\$50,288	9.2%	87.9	\$51,947	31
Missouri	45	\$50,019	9.2%	88.7	\$51,203	36
Arkansas	46	\$49,438	10.4%	84.7	\$52,298	29
Florida	47	\$48,314	8.8%	101	\$43,626	51
South Dakota	48	\$48,204	9.1%	87.8	\$49,906	39
New Mexico	49	\$47,826	8.8%	91.1	\$47,878	47
West Virginia	50	\$47,681	9.9%	87.1	\$49,323	41
Mississippi	51	\$45,105	9.5%	84.4	\$48,365	46

Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from NEA, BEA and Tax Foundation



## Finding 2: Oklahoma’s Compensation Structure Provides Limited Incentives and Options for Professional Growth and Income Potential

The majority of Oklahoma’s public schools utilize a traditional salary system structured around a series of “steps” and “lanes” that are based on educational attainment, professional development, and years of experience. This rigid pay structure provides limited opportunities for individual recognition or advancement, and is not responsive to market needs within school districts. However, school districts are not bound to this salary model, and LOFT identified some Oklahoma school districts that have adapted their pay structure.

### Oklahoma Minimum Salary Schedule

Local school districts must meet the mandatory minimum requirement set by the Legislature but have the autonomy to establish their own salary schedules for teachers within their district. **State statute requires every local school district to adopt a minimum salary schedule and states that “districts shall be encouraged to provide compensation schedules to reflect district policies and circumstances, including differential pay for different subject areas and special incentives for teachers in districts with specific geographical attributes.”**<sup>32</sup> According to the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), a district’s “local wealth” often determines its flexibility to offer higher starting salaries.<sup>33</sup>

School districts can and often do adopt individual district salary schedules that exceed the state-mandated minimum salary levels. LOFT reviewed local school districts’ required minimum salaries for Oklahoma public school teachers compared to the State’s minimum salary schedule and found wide variations in teacher salary schedules across school districts.<sup>34</sup> In 2020, the State’s minimum salary for a teacher with a Bachelor’s degree and no years of experience was \$36,601 and the minimum salary for a public school teacher with a Doctorate and 25 years of experience was \$54,395.<sup>35</sup> LOFT’s analysis in Chart 9 provides the minimum salary for entering teachers by local school district in 2020.<sup>36 37</sup>

32. 70 O.S. § 5-141

33. Local wealth is defined as the amount of collections from property taxes, gross production, motor vehicle taxes and other local funding sources. Information from SDE obtained from meeting held on October 8, 2021.

34. Appendix K provides an example of varied salary schedules and teacher pay across school districts.

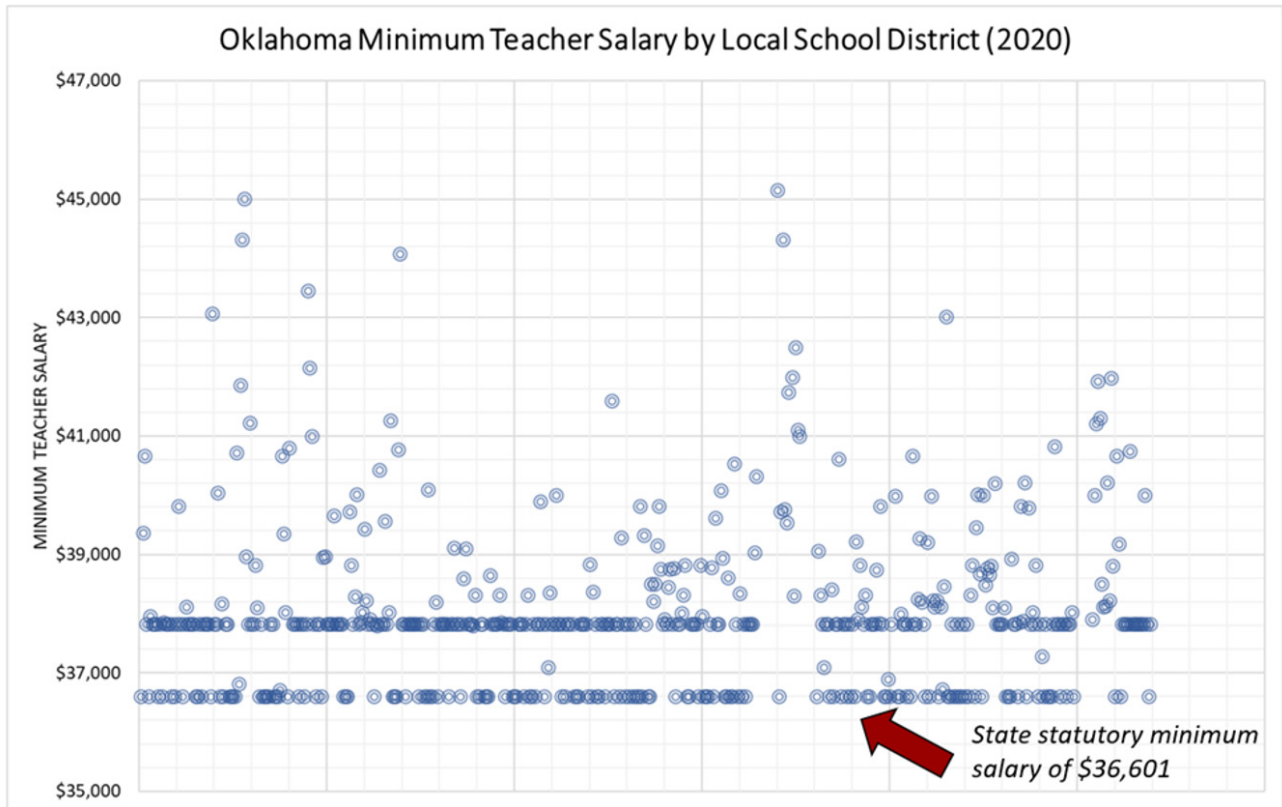
35. Please refer to Appendix C for State Minimum Teacher Salary Schedules

36. Charter schools are exempt from minimum salary requirements.

37 Please refer to Appendix L for Oklahoma average teacher salaries by school district and educational attainment in 2020.

State statute requires every local school district to adopt a minimum salary schedule and states that “districts shall be encouraged to provide compensation schedules to reflect district policies and circumstances, including differential pay for different subject areas and special incentives for teachers in districts with specific geographical attributes.”

**Chart 9: Oklahoma Minimum Teacher Salary by Local School District (2020).** (This scatterplot shows the minimum teacher salary for all local school districts in Oklahoma in 2020. Each blue dot represents one of the 508 school districts with a listed minimum salary; charter schools are not required to provide minimum salaries.)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from OSDE.

LOFT's analysis found that **367 school districts (72 percent) offered starting minimum salaries beyond the State's minimum requirement (\$36,601) in 2020.** Putnam City (\$45,161), Yukon (\$45,009), Deer Creek (\$44,323), Piedmont (\$44,322) and Grove (\$44,073) offered the top five highest starting salaries for Oklahoma teachers in 2020.

LOFT's analysis of time-series data from OSDE's minimum salary schedule reveals the State-mandated minimum salary increased by 52 percent over the last 20 years. **Between 2008 and 2018, the State's minimum starting base salary for an Oklahoma teacher held consistent at \$31,600.**<sup>38</sup>

38. Please refer to Appendix M for a trend of the State's minimum teacher salary.

### Challenges with Oklahoma’s Utilization of Traditional Salary Schedule

Oklahoma’s compensation structure is heavily weighted on the front end, with an emphasis on raising starting salaries, but provides limited income adjustments at the mid-and late-career points. **Compensation primarily based on years of service applies a one-size-fits-most approach, limiting recognition of exemplary teaching, the varied skills or training required of certain subjects, or the market environment for difficult to fill positions.** The use of teacher salary schedules also yields limited returns for Oklahoma teachers and may be contributing to shorter careers in the profession.

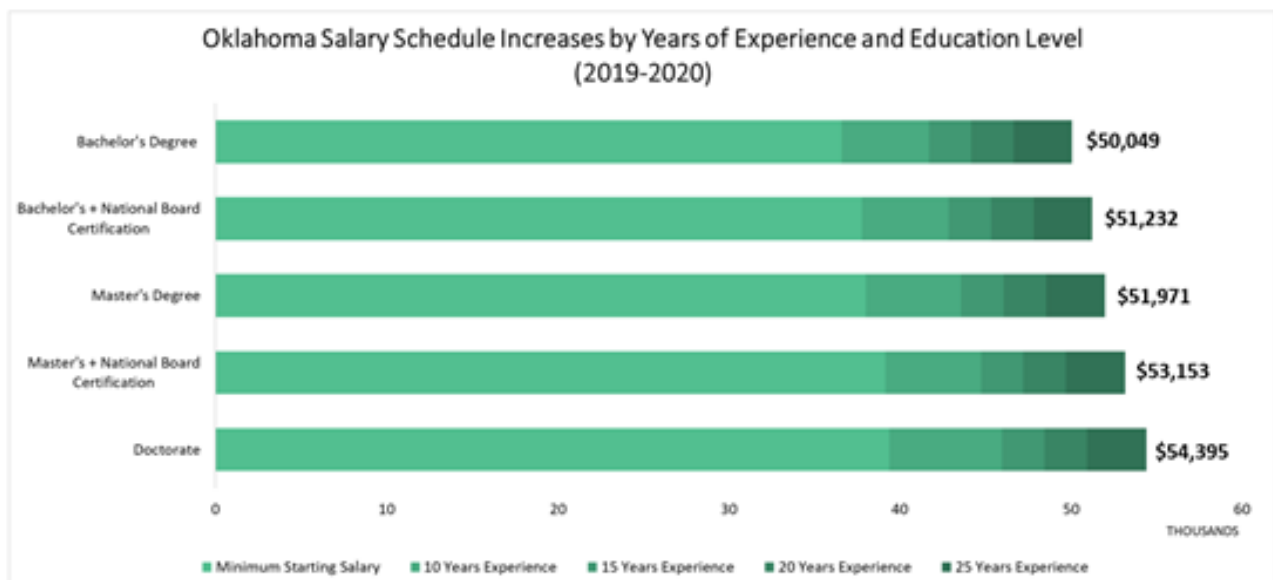
*"A potentially more efficient policy does not shift all teacher salaries equally. By differentially altering salaries across experience levels, one may obtain a more productive teacher labor force for a lower cost..... If the state wishes to maximize teacher productivity under the current budget, the shape of the salary schedule would need to be altered so that it is concave rather than convex - a shape similar to that in the private sector."*

- OBEC and OSSBA

Source: Excerpt from An Empirical Analysis of Teacher Salaries and Labor Market Outcomes in Oklahoma, a study commissioned by Oklahoma Business and Education Coalition, in partnership with the Oklahoma State School Boards Association (2015)

Oklahoma’s use of a traditional salary schedule has two main factors for pay adjustments: years of service and educational attainment. Under a salary schedule, teachers receive an automatic raise and move up a “step” on the schedule for every year of service. Teachers may move “lanes” and further increase their pay by obtaining additional certifications and education. However, LOFT found the increase in pay for post-graduate degrees is a poor return on investment for teachers. Chart 10, below, shows the 2019-2020 salary schedule increases over time by specific lane for Oklahoma teachers.

**Chart 10: Oklahoma Salary Schedule Increases by Years of Experience and Education Level (2019-2020).** (This horizontal stacked bar chart depicts the base salary of Oklahoma teachers as they progress through their careers at specific years of experience intervals and levels of education attainment under the State’s salary schedule from 2019-2020).



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s analysis based on data from OSDE

As demonstrated in Chart 10, an Oklahoma teacher with a Master's degree and 25 years of experience will earn a minimal annual salary of \$51,971, four percent more than the minimum salary for a teacher with a Bachelor's degree and 25 years of experience.

LOFT evaluated the cumulative impact that obtaining advanced degrees has on a teacher's salary. Hypothetically, if a teacher graduated with their Bachelor's degree, immediately became a teacher, and entered a Master's program, with two years of experience, they would earn \$37,035. Upon graduating from their Master's program and immediately entering a doctorate program, at the end of their fourth year, they would earn \$39,728. Using the salary increase data provided in statute and average tuition data from the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE), LOFT calculates that for a first-year teacher pursuing this path, **it would take 14 years of scheduled salary increases to offset the average cost of these degrees**, as depicted in Table 7.

**Table 7: Limited Return on Investment for Obtaining Further Education under Oklahoma Teacher Salary Schedule.** (This table shows the progression of a first-year teacher with a Bachelor's degree entering Oklahoma's public education system under the State-statutory minimum salary schedule. As the teacher earns additional education to advance lanes and earn additional income, their cumulative salary, based on increases, would take 14 years to offset their total education cost before earning additional education would yield a return. **This analysis does not take into consideration student loan interest, housing, meal plans, program-specific fees, or inflation, which would ultimately increase the amount of time needed to offset the cost of obtaining higher degrees. LOFT's analysis in the table also assumes all additional salary increases would be allocated to pay of the cost of obtaining further education.**)

Year of Experience	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	Doctor's Degree	Year over Year Salary Increase	Cumulative Salary Increase	Total Degree Cost
0	\$36,601			\$0	\$0	-\$32,748
1	\$37,035			\$434	\$434	-\$32,314
2		\$38,859		\$434	\$868	-\$48,973
3		\$39,294		\$435	\$1,303	-\$47,670
4		\$39,728		\$434	\$1,737	-\$45,933
5			\$41,590	\$1,862	\$3,599	-\$59,862
6			\$42,054	\$464	\$4,063	-\$55,799
7			\$42,517	\$463	\$4,526	-\$51,273
8			\$42,980	\$463	\$4,989	-\$46,284
9			\$43,444	\$464	\$5,453	-\$40,831
10			\$45,945	\$2,501	\$7,954	-\$32,877
11			\$46,438	\$493	\$8,447	-\$24,430
12			\$46,931	\$493	\$8,940	-\$15,490
13			\$47,424	\$493	\$9,433	-\$6,057
14			\$47,916	\$492	\$9,925	\$3,868

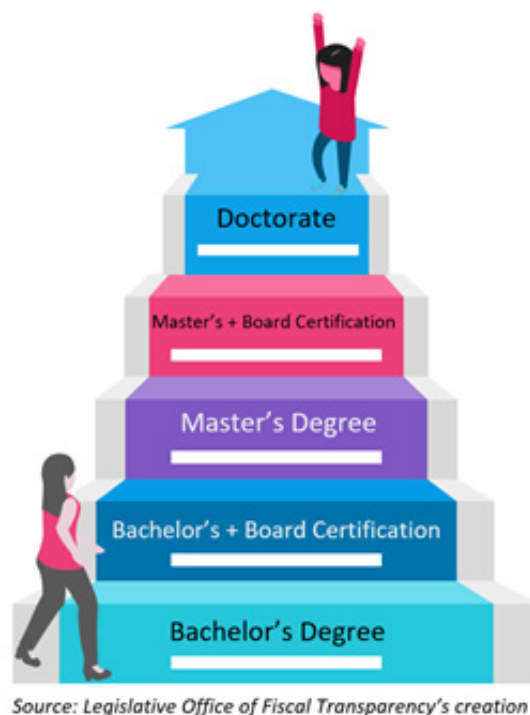
Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from OSDE and OSRHE



**A teacher obtaining a Doctorate or Master’s degree in any subject field is eligible to advance pay lanes in Oklahoma’s salary schedule.** As noted earlier, the existing salary schedule does not differentiate between subject areas taught. For example, pay between an 9<sup>th</sup> grade foreign language teacher and a 12<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher will not vary if both educators have five years of experience in the classroom and a Bachelor’s degree.

As shown by the salary schedule structure in Chart 10, the only professional advancement options communicated to teachers are investing in higher educational attainment and obtaining National Board Certification. Teachers who work in districts that utilize this type of salary schedule, and want to remain in the classroom, are limited to two pathways to move pay ladders and obtain a marginal salary increase. Of the states that use a “step and lane” salary schedule, Oklahoma’s criteria for achieving the highest level of pay is more restrictive than most, requiring 25 years of service and a Doctorate degree.

If urgent vacancies in hard-to-staff areas occur, districts can exceed their own salary schedule and offer signing bonuses to new teachers, depending on the flexibility of a district’s budget. For example, during the 2021-2022 school year, Oklahoma City Public Schools offered a one-time \$1,500 recruitment stipend to new special education teachers, secondary math teachers and secondary science teachers.<sup>39</sup>



### National Comparison of Teacher Compensation Structures

Across the United States, the majority of teacher compensation policies and issues are determined at the local school district level. **According to the 2012-13 U.S. Department of Education’s (ED) 2012-13 Schools and Staffing Survey, 89 percent of public school districts in the United States (U.S.) use a salary schedule for teacher pay.**<sup>40 41</sup>

Thirty-six states give districts the autonomy to determine compensation structures and set salary amounts; as stated previously, many choose to adopt the traditional “step and lane” salary schedule model. In contrast, Oklahoma is one of only 14 states that set minimum salary schedules and outline progression steps for districts, according to the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) and the Education Commission of the States (ECS). Among states in the region, Texas and Arkansas join Oklahoma in requiring districts to meet statewide minimum salary schedules.<sup>42</sup>

39. Hicham Raache “Oklahoma City Public Schools offers bonus money for newly hired science, math and special education teachers,” KFOR News, June 2, 2021.

40. [Schools and Staffing Survey](#)

41. Please refer to Appendix N for the percentage of public school districts using a salary schedule by state.

42. Please refer to Appendix O and P for a comprehensive list of states utilizing salary schedules.

**Data reflects that about half of teachers exit the profession at the five-year mark, corresponding to the five-year vesting period for teachers to be eligible for retirement benefits.**

### **Features of Compensation Structure Incentivizes Short-Term Commitments from Teachers**

The traditional salary schedule was structured for career teachers, but today's workforce is increasingly less inclined to make a lifetime commitment to one career. Oklahoma's current salary structure provides only a short-term incentive for new teachers to stay in the profession. **Data reflects that about half of teachers exit the profession at the five-year mark, corresponding to the five-year vesting period for teachers to be eligible for retirement benefits.**<sup>43</sup>

Similarly, recent pay raises have provided a short-term incentive for teachers either planning to retire or who returned to the classroom after retirement, as the average salary earned in the last three years of service is used as the salary level by which benefits are determined.

### **Alternatives to Teacher Salary Schedules**

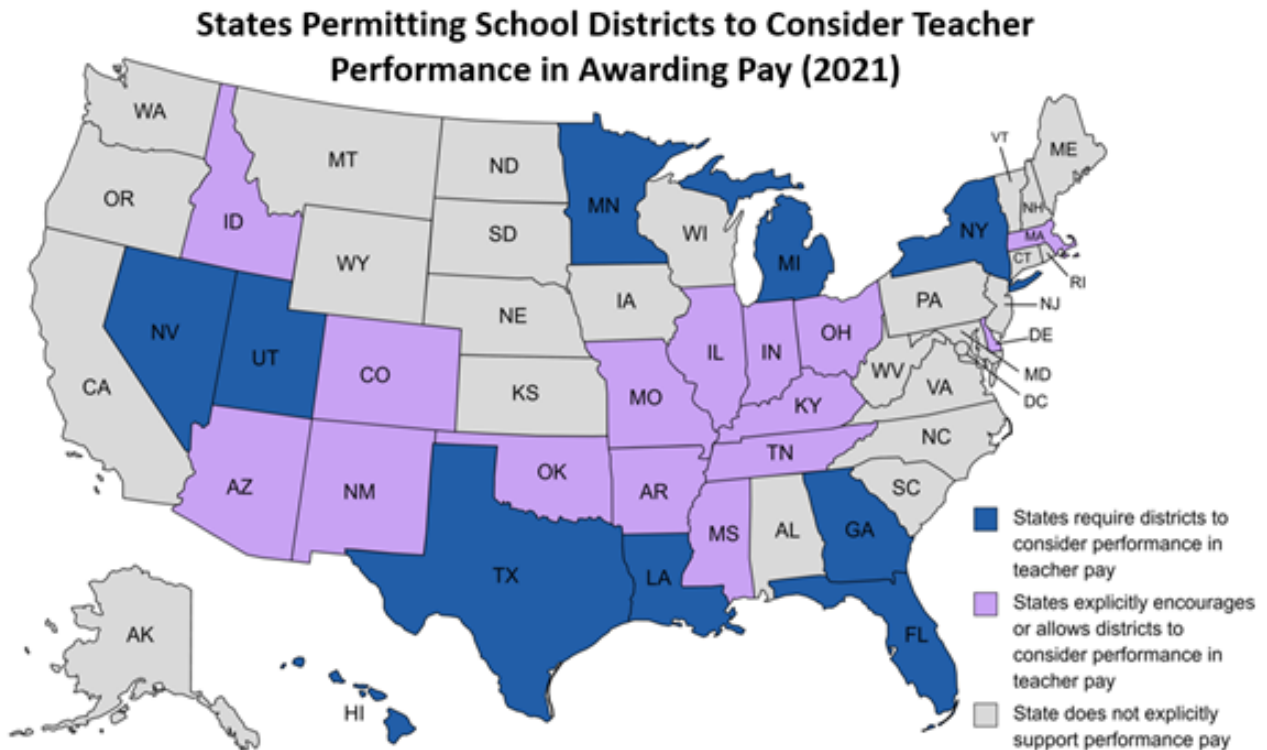
As an effort to shift away from traditional salary schedules, some states and local school districts are implementing different compensation structures and expanding leadership roles for teachers. One option being utilized is merit pay programs – often referred to as “performance pay,” which aligns a teacher's compensation to his or her performance in the classroom as measured by student achievement. This compensation model grew in national popularity in 2009 with federal funding incentives to increase student performance through the Obama Administration's ‘Race to the Top’ initiative. The Race to the Top program was a \$4.35 billion competitive grant administered through the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) to reward states for innovation in student teaching and outcomes and also encouraged states to implement performance pay systems.<sup>44</sup>

LOFT reviewed teacher compensation structures for all 50 states and the District of Columbia (D.C.) to determine states' flexibility in allowing school districts to provide merit pay for teachers. Figure 3 provides a detail of states that require school districts to consider teacher performance in awarding pay in 2021. **LOFT found that only 10 states require school districts to associate teacher performance with pay.**

43. LOFT's analysis of data from OSDE finds that 53% of teachers who started in the 2015-2016 cohort of new teachers had left teaching in Oklahoma schools by their fifth year. Further analysis of retention data is provided in Finding 3.

44. [Pay for Performance Proposals in Race to the Top](#)

**Figure 3: States that Require School Districts to Consider Teacher Performance in Awarding Pay (2021).** (This geographical map provides a comprehensive list of all states that apply performance metrics to awarding teacher pay in 2021.)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from NCTQ

As shown in Figure 3, fifteen states, including Oklahoma, provide flexibility to local school districts to develop and implement raises and compensation based on performance.

In 2006, the Florida Legislature passed the Special Teachers are Rewarded (STAR) plan, a merit pay plan that ranked teachers based on student's performance on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT).<sup>45</sup> In 2007, the Florida Legislature revised the performance pay plan, replacing STAR with the Merit Award Program (MAP) which required 60 percent of teacher bonuses to be based on student test scores.<sup>46</sup>

45\_Florida § 1012.22 required districts to adopt a salary schedule that linked part of instructional employees' salary to performance and to adopt a pay-for-performance policy for both school administrators and instructional personnel.

46. [Merit Pay for Florida](#)

**Oklahoma Statutes authorize Oklahoma school districts to implement incentive pay plans, with approval from the State Board of Education. Three Oklahoma school districts utilize a performance pay structure for teachers that factors in student performance: Stroud, Atoka, and Pawhuska.**

### Oklahoma Initiatives for Alternative Salary Structures

In researching salary schedules within Oklahoma’s public education system, LOFT identified three Oklahoma school districts which utilize a performance pay structure for teachers that factors in student performance: Stroud, Atoka, and Pawhuska.<sup>47</sup>

Stroud Public Schools’ ‘Academic Performance Production Bonus Plan’ program offers bonuses of up to \$500 to teachers and all other staff members based upon each grade’s performance on Oklahoma state assessments and ACT scores.<sup>48</sup>

Atoka Public Schools offers additional pay to high-performing teachers, as determined by student test scores and individual evaluations by school principals.<sup>49</sup>

In September 2021, the Pawhuska Board of Education authorized the implementation of an incentive pay plan for public school teachers. This compensation plan allows classroom teachers to receive bonuses based on students’ academic performance on Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) testing. Pawhuska Public Schools have utilized MAP testing in four previous school years. The first teacher bonuses will be calculated in May 2022, and they will be based upon student performance on MAP testing for the 2021-2022 school year.<sup>50</sup>

Oklahoma Statutes require the State Board of Education to develop a minimum of “five different model incentive pay plans” to be distributed to local school boards. Currently, there are no plans developed or distributed by the Board, and LOFT found no evidence of prior fulfillment of this statute.<sup>51</sup>

### Expansion of Teaching Certificates and Teacher Leadership Roles

In an effort to expand career and leadership opportunities for teachers, in 2018 the Oklahoma Legislature passed Senate Bill 980, which created two advanced teaching certificate categories for public school teachers — lead and master certificates. To qualify for the certificates, teachers must have a minimum of 5 years of experience for a lead certificate and 7 for a master, achieve ratings from the Oklahoma Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Evaluation System, and earn approval from both their local board of education and the State Board of Education.<sup>52</sup>

Lead and master certified teachers receive an additional \$3,000 to \$5,000 in compensation or the district’s daily rate of pay, whichever is higher. In their teaching contracts, these certified teachers are required to work an additional 10 and 15 days each year, respectively. Teachers with these certificates may have their teaching instruction time reduced to mentor other teachers.<sup>53</sup>

47. Examples from school districts identified by LOFT, research is not intended to be inclusive of all districts that may be utilizing some form of incentive pay.

48. [Stroud Public Schools](#), Academic Performance Production Bonus Plan. Kindergarten teachers through 2nd grade are also for bonuses – these grades do not participate in state testing.

49. Oklahoma Senate Interim Study, “The Possibilities of Teacher Qualitative Pay, October 20, 2021.

50. Robert Smith, “Pawhuska Public Schools implements incentive pay plan,” Pawhuska Journal-Capital, October 13, 2021.

51. O.S. 70, Section 5-141.2

52. [Oklahoma Senate Bill 980 \(2018\)](#); [70 O.S. § 6-190](#)

53. Ibid.



Senate Bill 980 directed OSDE to identify school districts to implement the teaching certificates on a pilot program basis. **OSDE has stated this has not taken place due to a lack of sufficient administrative funding to implement the provisions of the 2018 legislation.**<sup>54</sup>

### Case Study: Denver Public Schools (CO)

Denver (Colorado) Public Schools' Professional Compensation System for Teachers (ProComp) is recognized as one of the most well-documented models for incorporating measures of student performance into teacher evaluations.<sup>55</sup> Designed through a union and district partnership, following a multi-year pilot study, Denver voters approved a 2005 referendum to levy \$25 million in annual taxes to fund ProComp.<sup>56 57</sup> The initiative marked a move away from the district's long-standing practice of paying teachers based solely on years of experience and education. ProComp provides Denver teachers the opportunity to earn nearly a \$1,000 raise if their students make substantial progress on the Colorado Student Assessment Program.<sup>58</sup> **Research studies conducted by the University of Colorado at Boulder found consistent empirical evidence that teachers participating in ProComp were more likely to have higher retention rates than the Colorado state average.** The research also found that teachers associated with higher median student growth (MSG) had higher retention rates than their peers with lower MSG – statistically illustrating that ProComp's compensation strategy encouraged the most effective teachers to remain and discouraged the least effective teachers to stay.<sup>59</sup>

### Case Study: Dallas Public Schools (TX)

Dallas Independent Public School District (ISD) in Texas is one of the larger school districts in the nation, serving approximately 145,000 students across 230 schools.<sup>60</sup> Beginning in the 2015-2016 school year, Dallas ISD shifted from its previous step and lane salary schedule that paid teachers according to tenure and higher educational attainment and instead implemented the **Teacher Excellence Initiative** (TEI) program.<sup>61</sup> The TEI program utilizes pay "levels" to reward teachers according to classroom effectiveness.<sup>62</sup>

Table 8 shows the program's five pay levels: Unsatisfactory, Progressing, Proficient, Exemplary, and Master. New teachers are compensated according to a separate pay schedule their first



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's creation

54. LOFT communication with OSDE, received October 28, 2021; SB 980 stipulates if administrative funding is not available the OSDE is not required to implement the program on a pilot program basis.

55. [RAND Corporation](#), "Incorporating Student Performance Measures into Teacher Evaluation Systems," 2010.

56. With 97 percent of precincts reporting, 60,799 voters, or 58 percent, voted for the Professional Compensation system measure, while 42 percent, or 43,236, voted against it.

57. The raises will be funded with a tax increase under which each household will pay about \$24 per year per \$100,000 of the home's value. In 2019, \$33 million was collected for Denver's ProComp.

58. [The Denver Post: All eyes on plan linking teachers' pay, performance](#)

59. [Denver Professional Compensation \(ProComp\) Evaluation](#)

60. Dallas ISD: About

61. [Dallas ISD Compensation Resource Book](#), 2014-2015 School Year; "Fewer Dallas ISD teachers than expected to get top pay ranking," Dallas Morning News, May 13, 2021.

62. [Dallas ISD | Compensation Resource Book 2020-2021](#).

year, while returning teachers are eligible to advance pay levels over time based upon student achievement and individual evaluations by administrators. **Under the TEI program, “... teachers with as little as three years of service have access to a salary level equivalent of a teacher with 25 or more years of service, in the Dallas-Fort Worth market.”**<sup>63</sup>

**Table 8: Dallas Public Schools Teacher Excellence Initiative Levels and Annual Compensation.** (This table reflects the salary schedule progression and corresponding effectiveness level for teachers under the TEI system in Dallas Public Schools. This table is accurate as of July 2021.)

**Salary Schedule – Campus Professional: Teachers**

Teacher Excellence Initiative									
Days	Unsat	Progressing		Proficient			Exemplary		Master
		I	II	I	II	III	I	II	
187/191	\$47,000	\$57,000	\$57,500	\$64,000	\$67,000	\$72,500	\$76,000	\$84,000	\$100,000
195	\$49,011	\$59,439	\$59,960	\$66,738	\$69,866	\$75,602	\$79,251	\$87,594	\$104,278
205	\$51,524	\$62,487	\$63,035	\$70,160	\$73,449	\$79,479	\$83,316	\$92,086	\$109,626
207	\$52,027	\$63,096	\$63,650	\$70,845	\$74,166	\$80,254	\$84,128	\$92,984	\$110,695
215	\$54,037	\$65,535	\$66,110	\$73,583	\$77,032	\$83,356	\$87,380	\$96,578	\$114,973

To receive a Proficient II effectiveness level or above, teachers must go through the Distinguished Teacher Review, which includes a review of their quality of instruction, leadership, lifelong learning, and contributions to the profession.

Source: Dallas Public School System

Dallas Public School System maintains its own Compensation Department that analyzes the district’s subject area needs and conducts market research to determine what salaries are competitive for the region. For potential hires who are filling a “high-demand” position, the District has the flexibility to pay above the pay scale if the applicant has extensive experience and applicable knowledge for the position.<sup>64</sup>

**Dallas ISD & Texas Incentive Allotment**

The Texas Legislature recently created a pathway for all districts to recognize and pay their top-performing teachers higher salaries. In 2019 the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 3 which created the Texas Incentive Allotment (TIA) fund. This fund directs additional dollars to districts that assess and recognize exemplary teachers in their districts; 90 percent of those funds are then given to recognized teachers. According to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), TIA funds “create a path for outstanding teachers to earn a six-figure salary – thus, reducing the desire for highly effective teachers to leave the classroom.”<sup>65</sup>

In 2020, Dallas ISD participated in the TIA program and received \$28 million from the TIA fund, increasing its ability to provide additional teachers more raises through its own TEI program.<sup>66</sup>

63. “Dallas ISD’s teacher compensation system gets boost from TEA, receives \$28 million in HB3 funds,” [Dallas ISD News Hub](#), August 26, 2020.

64. Ibid.

65. [Texas Education Agency](#) | About: TIA

66. “Dallas ISD’s teacher compensation system gets boost from TEA, receives \$28 million in HB3 funds,” [Dallas ISD News Hub](#), August 26, 2020.

### Case Study: Iowa Public School System

With the aim of improving teacher retention, classroom instruction, and student achievement, the Iowa General Assembly authorized funding to create the state's Teacher Leadership Compensation (TLC) system in 2013.<sup>67</sup>

In Iowa's system, school districts receive funding from the Legislature to offer salary increases to high-performing teachers who participate in leadership positions including instructional coaching and peer mentoring. With approval from the Iowa State Department of Education, districts may tailor their TLC program and direct funding based on the districts' needs.

In the first year of implementation for the 2014-2015 school year, 39 districts received \$3.5 million in planning grants.<sup>68</sup> Since 2016, all 333 school districts in Iowa have participated in the program and received \$169.9 million in FY 22 from the Iowa Legislature.<sup>69</sup> **As of 2019, there were approximately 10,000 teachers receiving additional compensation for taking on new roles within the TLC program; supplemental compensation can range from \$1,000 to \$7,000.**<sup>70</sup>

A 2017 independent analysis conducted by the American Institute for Research (AIR) found that districts that participated in the TLC system did not show a significant change in student outcomes or teacher retention. **However, when assessing teacher survey data, AIR found that most teachers and administrators reported the TLC system had improved instruction and had a positive impact on the teacher's work climate.**<sup>71</sup>

**In 2019, 58% of local school districts fully or mostly met their student achievement goals; up 2% from 2018.**

*Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's creation based on data from Iowa Department of Education*

**Before TLC funding, the IKM-Manning School District did not have opportunities for staff to be paid for leadership. Any leadership taken on by staff was done through volunteerism. Staff was often not compensated for their extra effort, work and time. The TLC funding has allowed us to create a Teacher Leader System that provides compensation for leadership work.**

**- IKM-Manning School Teacher**

Iowa districts utilize internal assessments, universal screeners, and teacher observations as metrics to determine if they met their goals for improving student achievement. The Iowa Department of Education's 2020-2021 End-of-Year TLC report notes that in order to conduct a statewide analysis regarding TLC system's direct impact on student achievement districts, "common data sources and TLC implementation data would be needed to make causal inferences between TLC implementation and student achievement."<sup>72 73</sup>

### Federal Initiatives and Opportunities

67. Guidance on the Iowa Teacher Leadership and Compensation System | [Iowa Department of Education](https://www.iowa.gov/2019/01/15/2019-01-15-iowa-department-of-education-releases-guidance-on-the-iowa-teacher-leadership-and-compensation-system/)

68. [IowaGrants.gov](https://www.iowa.gov/2019/01/15/2019-01-15-iowa-department-of-education-releases-guidance-on-the-iowa-teacher-leadership-and-compensation-system/)


69. Teacher Leadership and Compensation System, 2016-2017 End of Year Report Summary | [Iowa Department of Education](https://www.iowa.gov/2019/01/15/2019-01-15-iowa-department-of-education-releases-guidance-on-the-iowa-teacher-leadership-and-compensation-system/); Miscellaneous Acts – Fiscal Notes | [Iowa Legislative Services Agency](https://www.iowa.gov/2019/01/15/2019-01-15-iowa-department-of-education-releases-guidance-on-the-iowa-teacher-leadership-and-compensation-system/)

70. Strengthening teacher leadership in Iowa | [Iowa Department of Education](https://www.iowa.gov/2019/01/15/2019-01-15-iowa-department-of-education-releases-guidance-on-the-iowa-teacher-leadership-and-compensation-system/)

71. [American Institutes for Research](https://www.iowa.gov/2019/01/15/2019-01-15-iowa-department-of-education-releases-guidance-on-the-iowa-teacher-leadership-and-compensation-system/)

72. 2020-21 Statewide End-of-Year Report Summary | Fall 2021 | [Iowa Department of Education](https://www.iowa.gov/2019/01/15/2019-01-15-iowa-department-of-education-releases-guidance-on-the-iowa-teacher-leadership-and-compensation-system/)

73. [In 2015, the OSDE Teacher Shortage Task Force recommended a program similar to Iowa's TLC.](https://www.iowa.gov/2019/01/15/2019-01-15-iowa-department-of-education-releases-guidance-on-the-iowa-teacher-leadership-and-compensation-system/)



The Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program (TSL) builds on the former Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) administered under the U.S. Department of Education and works to develop, implement and improve comprehensive Performance-Based Compensation Systems (PBCS) or Human Capital Management Systems (HCMS) for teachers, principals, and other school leaders (especially in high-need schools) who increase student academic achievement.<sup>74 75</sup> Through the TSL program, many local school districts have worked to create and enhance their comprehensive HCMS, and invested in high-quality educator evaluation systems in order to improve both recruitment and retention efforts and provide teachers targeted evidenced-based professional development. Currently, there is an ongoing evaluation of the 14 TSL grantees that received awards in 2017; the full evaluation report is expected in 2021.

In 2020, the TSL program awarded \$63.6 million in funding to 13 schools districts and entities from across the country; the total anticipated funding for these districts' grant proposals is approximately \$205 million.

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74. [Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program](#)

75. The Teacher and School Leader Incentive Fund (TSL) program was established by Sections 2211-2213 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as reauthorized on December 10, 2015, by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).



## Finding 3: Lack of Data Prevents Oklahoma from Assessing Compensation's Role in Teacher Shortages

With a national teacher shortage that is projected to worsen,<sup>76</sup> state education agencies and school districts across the country are grappling with the challenge of developing and retaining a top-tier educator workforce for all students. The shortage of qualified teachers in the classroom stems from two main sources: teachers leaving the profession and not enough people entering the profession.

The perception that teaching offers poor compensation may be a factor in people not entering the teacher pipeline. For those that do choose the profession, the limited opportunities for individual recognition and corresponding compensation may be contributing to decisions to depart teaching. LOFT concludes that Oklahoma is not utilizing an evidence-based strategy to address teacher shortfalls with recruitment or retention.

Data from a 2018 Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) report shows that, annually, an average 10 percent of public educators left the profession over the preceding six years.<sup>77</sup> More recently, OSDE reported that Oklahoma teachers had an 18.4 percent turnover rate between the 2019-20 and 2020-21 academic school year.<sup>78 79</sup>

To better understand the challenges and potential opportunities within the teacher workforce, LOFT analyzed the Oklahoma educator pipeline from college campus to the classroom and found the following: communication gaps, poor data collection, and a lack of proactive strategies.

Conversations with multiple stakeholders revealed specific challenges and gaps with data collection, sharing of information, communication, and a strategic vision among education entities working to address concerns for Oklahoma teachers and school districts.<sup>80</sup> Through conversations with stakeholders, LOFT's thematic analysis was able to conceptualize how education entities and stakeholders *could be* strengthening relationships and cooperating together to create a unified statewide strategy to address the State's teacher workforce challenges.

**LOFT finds the State's education entities have not presented an evidence-based strategic plan to address the ongoing challenges across Oklahoma's K-12 public education system.**

76. Economic Policy Institute, "The Perfect Storm in the Teacher Labor Market," 2019.

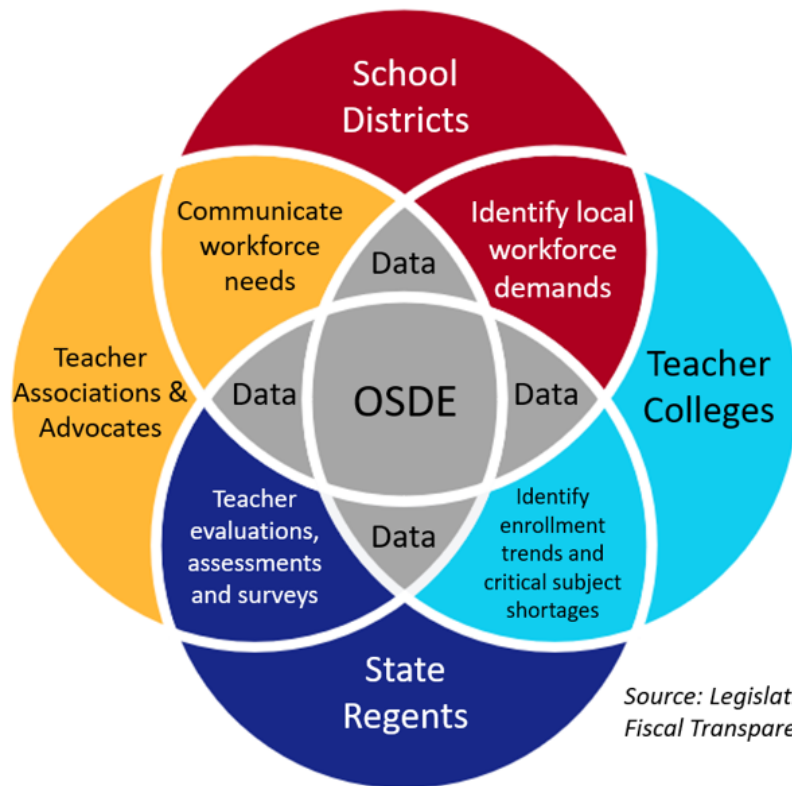
77. [2018 Oklahoma Educator Supply & Demand Report](#)

78. Interim Study on Teacher Shortage, October 13, 2021

79. Rate is inclusive of both leavers and movers

80. See Appendix B for a comprehensive list of all stakeholders LOFT engaged with during this evaluation.

**LOFT finds that many of the barriers hindering a strategic State response to challenges within the teacher workforce are due to a lack of data and information from the classroom and schools reaching OSDE, the lead education agency, and other key education entities including the OSRHE and teacher preparation programs.**



*Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's creation*

LOFT's Venn diagram infographic (above) illustrates the overlapping and interconnected relationships within the State's teacher ecosystem. Together, School districts, teacher colleges, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE), teacher associations and advocacy groups, and the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), should be coordinating with each other to collect and share data, provide feedback and information, and assist OSDE in understanding the systemic challenges inside Oklahoma classrooms and schools. The table below summarizes LOFT's observations and analysis regarding challenges and opportunities with Oklahoma's current system, based on stakeholder input.

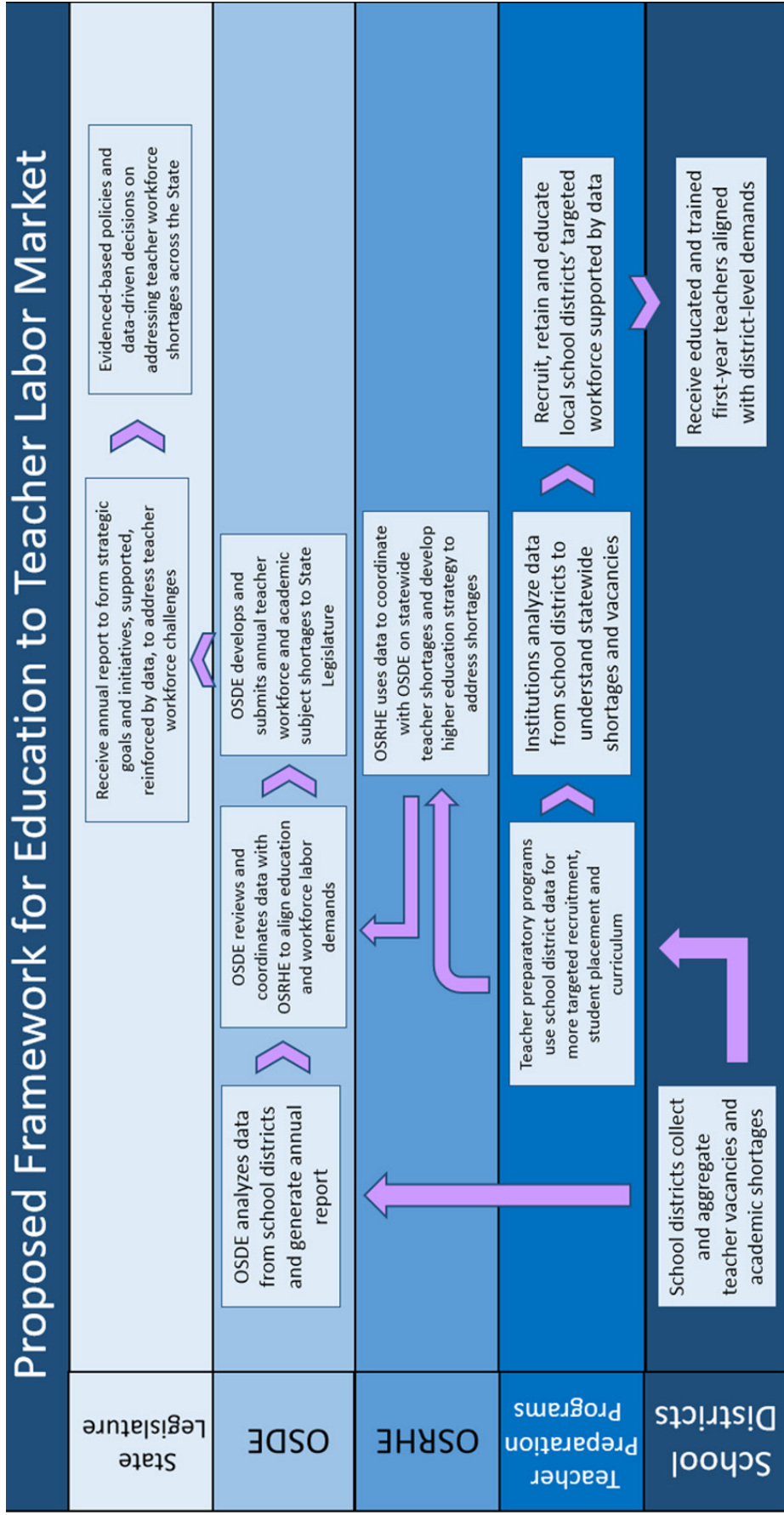
**Table 9: Challenges and Opportunities within State’s Teacher Workforce Ecosystem.** (This table summarizes LOFT’s challenges within the State’s teacher workforce ecosystem identified throughout the evaluation during conversations with key stakeholders; the table also provides solutions to addressing identified shortcomings.)

Identified Challenges	Brief Summary	Opportunities
<p>Poor Data Collection</p>	<p>Teacher preparation programs at Oklahoma public institutions described surrounding school districts' failure to provide specific critical data about subject area shortages, the number of unfilled teacher positions and other workforce demands.</p>	<p>Local school districts should provide teacher workforce shortage data to surrounding teacher preparation programs to enable institutions to identify and produce targeted graduates in key subject fields for surrounding schools. Numbers of retiring teachers should also be communicated to understand frequency of net migration of teachers.</p>
	<p>OSDE confirmed it does not collect data regarding unfilled teacher positions and critical subject areas shortages from local school districts.</p>	<p>Similar to other states, OSDE should collect an aggregated summary of unfilled FTE teacher positions and critical subject area shortages by school district and supply that information to the State Legislature and OSRHE annually.</p>
<p>Teacher Pipeline Fails to Meet the Shortages in Oklahoma's K-12 education system</p>	<p>The number of graduates earning Bachelor’s degrees within the field of education are not enough to even fill the vacancies created by retiring teachers.</p>	<p>OSDE, Oklahoma Teacher Retirement System and OSRHE should coordinate the forecasting of teacher retirements to better understand the teacher labor market demands and forecast teacher needs for the State.</p>
<p>Misaligned Graduates to Workforce Demands</p>	<p>LOFT observed that degrees conferred from teacher preparation programs are not aligned with the State's critical subject area shortages.</p>	<p>OSDE should annually report data about unfilled teaching positions and shortages in critical subject areas to the State Regents so that teacher preparation colleges can align programs and students to meet the State’s workforce demands.</p>

Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on conversations with key stakeholders

LOFT finds that many of the barriers hindering a strategic State response to challenges within the teacher workforce are due to a lack of data and information from the classroom and schools reaching OSDE, the lead education agency, and other key education entities including the OSRHE and teacher preparation programs. **LOFT finds incorporating a bottom-up approach, from classroom to OSDE, would assist in ensuring relevant decision makers have the necessary information to form strategic goals and initiatives, supported by targeted efforts, reinforced by data, to address teacher workforce challenges.** It is LOFT’s assessment that an effective statewide strategic plan begins at the school district level so that real-time data on teacher vacancies and academic subject shortages can be communicated to surrounding teacher preparation programs and directly to OSDE. Below, LOFT proposes a framework to connect the State’s education system more efficiently to the teacher labor market.

**Figure 4: Proposed Framework for Education to Teacher Labor Market.** (This figure illustrates the actionable steps required to incorporate a bottom-up and data-driven approach to address the State’s teacher shortage challenges.)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s creation



The proposed framework detailed on the previous page is similar to how the State currently approaches workforce issues within the private sector. For example, public education institutions currently coordinate with surrounding aerospace companies to understand the positions and skills required to fill vacancies and then work to recruit, retain and educate students for those specific occupations and skills. LOFT finds the same model can be applied in understanding and working cohesively with public institutions and OSDE to address the State's teacher workforce challenges.

### Poor Data Collection

During the evaluation, multiple stakeholders at different levels of the State's education system discussed opportunities to better leverage and share data across the system to address critical challenges for teachers. LOFT learned that teacher preparation programs at public institutions across the State **don't receive the necessary and specific data required to recruit and produce a targeted teacher workforce for surrounding local school districts**. Multiple interviews with stakeholders revealed that local school districts do not provide information about the overall number of unfilled teacher

**"In the absence of strong data systems that can highlight the broken points along the teacher pipeline, states and districts will continue to look for band-aids without resolving the underlying problems and the very real shortages which are not new but have gone on now for decades."**  
- National Council on Teacher Quality

Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's creation

positions or vacancies within critical subject areas. These statements were supported by a 2018 national report from the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ), which noted that Oklahoma does not publicly report teacher production data relevant to school district hiring needs.<sup>81</sup> LOFT sought to use data to identify critical teacher and academic subject shortages and concentrations by regions and county but was unable to complete the analysis due to data limitations from OSDE.



### State Example – North Carolina

North Carolina's State Board of Education requires and collects teacher workforce data annually from local education agencies to submit a comprehensive report

to the North Carolina General Assembly to update legislators regarding specific challenges in the State's teacher and school workforce. Every LEA reports teacher workforce data to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and State Board of Education annually where the data is then used to draft evidenced-based policies, generate the North Carolina School Report Card and ensure State leaders have timely accessible and accurate data on both area and subject specific workforce shortages in classrooms and schools across the State.

Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on North Carolina government reports and statutes.

81. [NCTQ Teacher Shortages and Surpluses 2018](#)



## State Example – New Mexico

The New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) plus the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Schools work with the

New Mexico State University College of Education Southwest Outreach Academic Research (SOAR) Evaluation & Policy Center to generate the New Mexico Educator Vacancy Report. The New Mexico Educator Vacancy Report designed to provide policy makers, superintendents, higher education, and other stakeholders with a clear picture of the staffing needs in K-12 schools across the state.

The report generates targeted vacancies by region, school district and academic subject area to assist the State in adapting their strategy to fill targeted shortages areas. Using evidenced-based data, New Mexico works to target public investments, resources and connect education stakeholders across the State regarding workforce challenges.

*Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on information from the New Mexico Public Education Department and the 2020 New Mexico Educator Vacancy Report*

**In an effort to identify and map where the primary shortages are in Oklahoma's K-12 education system, LOFT requested data from OSDE regarding the number of unfilled FTE teachers positions by academic subject (i.e., elementary, math, special education, etc.). However, the limited data collected by OSDE does not allow for detailed analysis.**

LOFT found it fairly standard in other states to collect data about teacher vacancies to provide to both their respective state legislatures and their surrounding public institutions to develop targeted public investments and strategies to address specific workforce shortages and challenges in classrooms.<sup>82</sup> LOFT identified Arkansas' Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ADESE) annual teacher workforce reports as one of the most descriptive and data-driven examples of communicating teacher workforce and academic subject shortages. ADESE uses a data-driven approach to illustrate the strength of Arkansas' teacher workforce, including students exiting the teacher preparation pipeline, to address academic subject shortages.<sup>83</sup>

Currently, per State statute, OSDE develops and provides an *Oklahoma Educator Supply and Demand Report* every three years to the State Legislature.<sup>84</sup> However, LOFT finds the three-year schedule (as opposed to annual) presents trends on historical data and not timely, accurate, and accessible data for the State Legislature to make real-time evidenced-based decisions like other states.

### **OK's Teacher Pipeline Fails to Produce Sufficient Graduates to Fill Teacher Shortages**

LOFT analyzed data from the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education (OSRHE) to explore trends in the number of college students enrolled in teacher education programs and graduates conferred with an education degree and their distribution among institution and field of study from 2010-11 through 2019-2020, the most recent year in which data is available.<sup>85</sup>

82. Please refer to Appendix R for an excerpt from North Carolina's annual report to North Carolina General Assembly on teacher shortages.

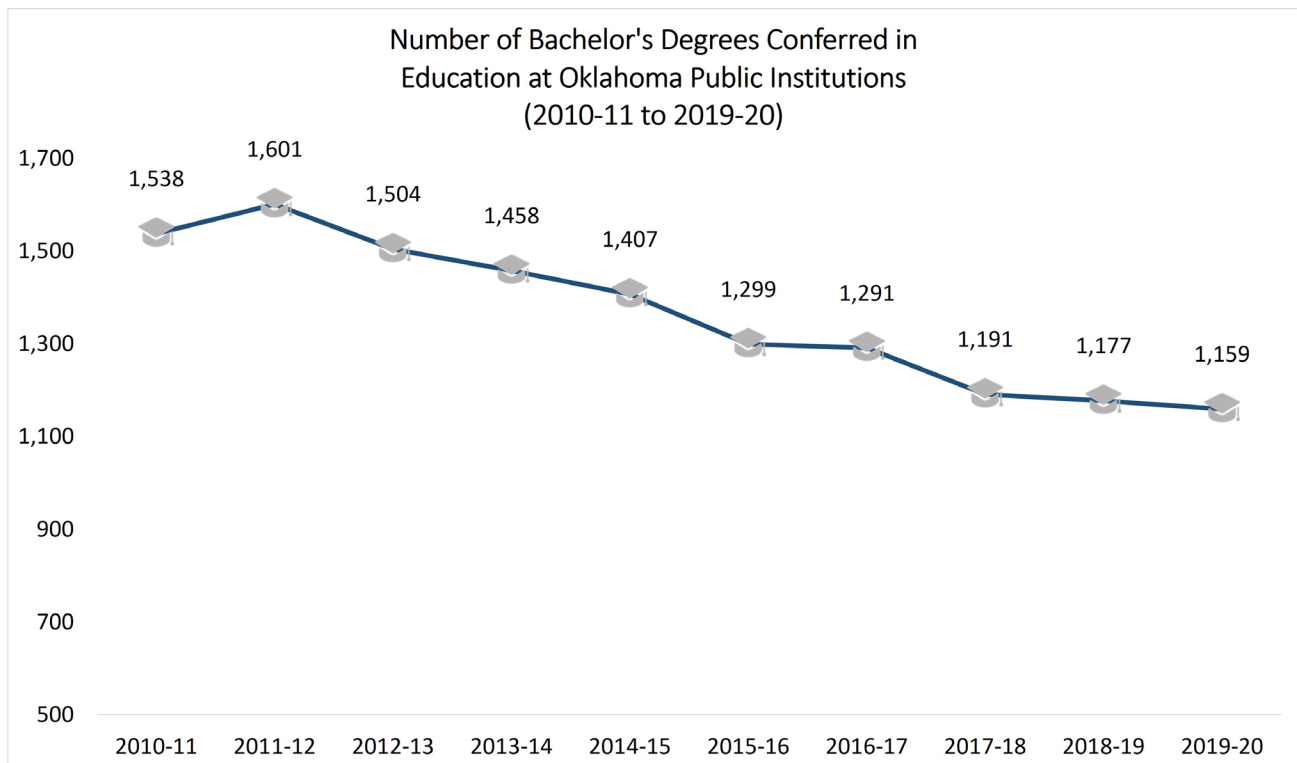
83. Please refer to Appendix S for the full table of teacher workforce and academic shortages from Arkansas' annual report.

84. 70 O.S. § 6-211

85. There are many pathways for teachers to become certified in Oklahoma, and this analysis only provides data on public institutions. Students may also earn degrees outside traditional education fields to become a teacher which are not accounted for in this analysis.

Oklahoma has multiple teacher preparation programs, preparing thousands of students to enter the classroom each year. However, the number of program students enrolled, and completers has been decreasing since 2011. **LOFT’s analysis finds that students enrolled in teacher education programs at Oklahoma institutions experienced an overall decline of 48 percent in student admissions from 2,018 students in 2011 to 1,056 students in 2020.<sup>86</sup>** Chart 11 depicts that since 2010-11, there has been a 25 percent reduction in the number of students earning degrees in the field of education.

**Chart 11: Number of Bachelor’s Degrees Conferred in Education at Oklahoma Public Institutions (2010-11 to 2019-20).** (This line chart shows a liner decline in the number of Oklahoma graduates at public institutions conferred with a Bachelor’s degree in the field of education.)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s analysis based on data from OSRHE

Less students selecting and graduating with education majors presents concerns for Oklahoma’s teacher pipeline and supply chain for school districts across the State. LOFT found nine of the 12 teacher education programs across Oklahoma’s public higher education system experienced declines in the number of education majors conferred with Bachelor’s degrees between 2010-11 and 2019-20.<sup>87</sup>

86. Please refer to Appendix T for the declining trend in students entering teacher education programs in Oklahoma.

87. Please refer to Appendix U for the trends in the number of Bachelor’s degrees in the field of education conferred by public institution.

LOFT analyzed the number of graduates conferred with Bachelor's degrees over time to see if the annual number of graduates produced met teacher labor market demands. As illustrated in Table 10, Oklahoma's public teacher preparation programs have not keep pace with the number of teachers retiring each year. **Over the past 10 years, 29,574 Oklahoma teachers have retired but Oklahoma's public institutions' have produced enough graduates to fill only 46 percent of the vacancies created from teacher retiring over this period.**<sup>88</sup>

**Table 10: Yearly Teacher Retirements Compared with Yearly OSRHE Graduates (2011-2020).** (This table shows that the number of graduates earning Bachelor's degrees within the field of education consistently fail to cover the teacher vacancies created by teachers retiring.)

Year	Yearly Teacher Retirements	Yearly OSRHE Graduates	Percent of Yearly Retirements Left Unfilled
2011	3,213	1,538	-52%
2012	3,183	1,601	-50%
2013	3,014	1,504	-50%
2014	2,946	1,458	-51%
2015	3,200	1,407	-56%
2016	2,990	1,299	-57%
2017	3,120	1,291	-59%
2018	2,852	1,191	-58%
2019	2,463	1,177	-52%
2020	2,593	1,159	-55%
<b>10-Year Trend</b>	<b>29,574</b>	<b>13,625</b>	<b>-54%</b>

Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from Oklahoma TRS and OSRHE

\*OSRHE data only includes Bachelor's degrees conferred.

teachers has increased over time, specific academic subject areas and grades are still experiencing critical teacher shortages. LOFT reviewed the academic subject areas in which emergency certifications are being granted and compared them with data regarding graduates in teacher preparation programs from Oklahoma's public institutions and found that **nine of the top 10 identified critical shortage areas were unfilled by graduates at Oklahoma public institutions in 2018, the largest gap being in the field of science and mathematics.**<sup>89</sup>

Table 10 only reflects the teacher shortages as identified by annual teacher retirements; these figures do not account for teachers who move districts or leave the profession entirely.

#### Misaligned Graduates to Teacher Workforce Shortages

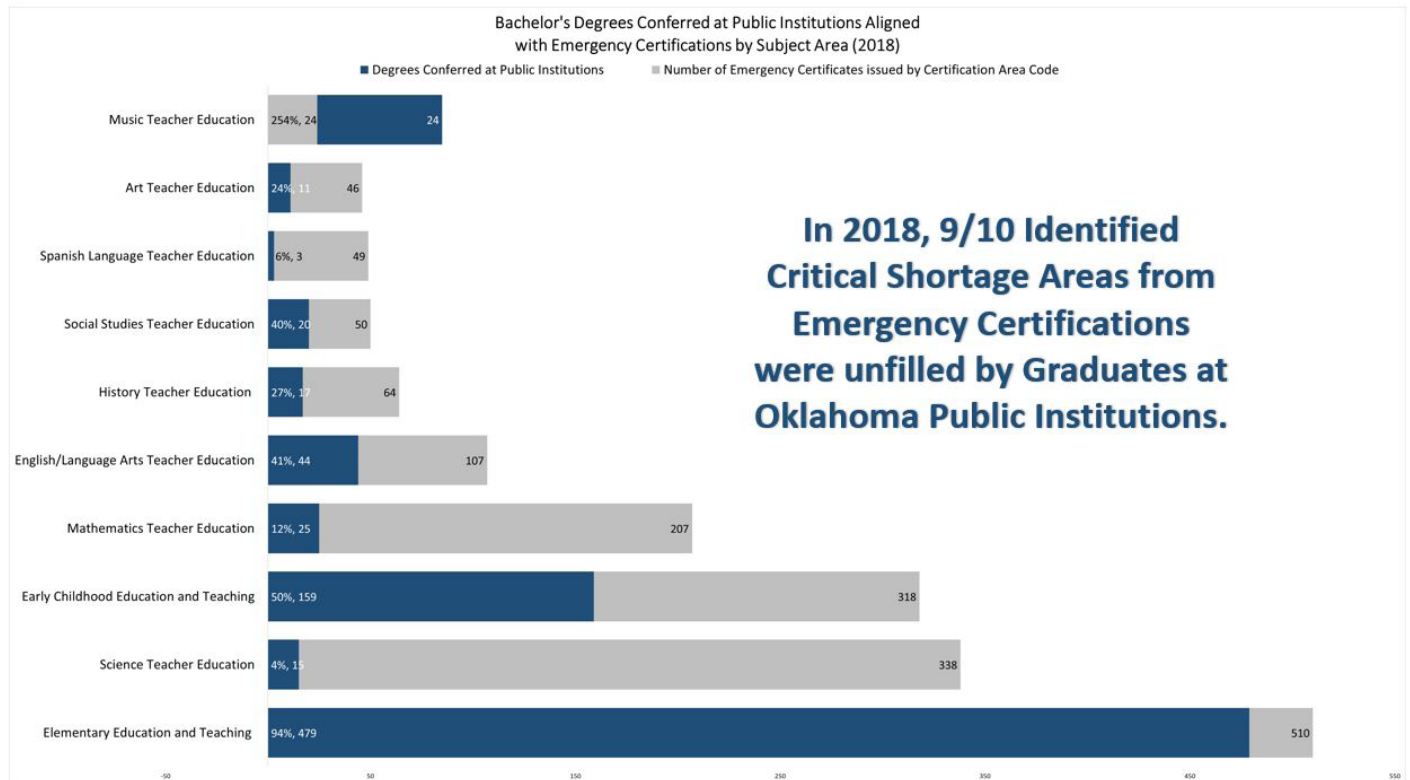
Over the last 11 years, there has been a steady increase in the number of classroom teachers in Oklahoma. **The most recent data as of 2021 shows the strength of Oklahoma's classroom teachers workforce to be 42,926; four percent above the number of teachers in 2011.** While the number of FTE classroom

88. LOFT recognizes this analysis only includes graduates from public institutions and that graduates from private institutions may also fill teaching positions.

89. OSRHE provided graduation data up to 2020 but 2018 was the latest data available from OSDE to align subject areas. Accordingly, 2018 data was utilized.



**Chart 12: Emergency Certifications by Subject Area Aligned with Bachelor’s Degrees Conferred at Public Institutions (2018).** (This vertical bar chart shows the aggregate number of conferred Bachelor’s degrees by education emphasis at Oklahoma public institutions aligned with the corresponding subject areas as identified by emergency certifications granted in subject area in 2018).



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s analysis based on data from OSDE and OSRHE  
 \*Note: LOFT’s analysis used 2018 data as that was the latest year data was available for both emergency certifications and graduation. Emergency certifications cannot be granted in Special Education.

LOFT identified two key drivers affecting teacher demand: a stagnant salary structure and poor retention rates.

### Salary Schedule Stagnation

As reported in Finding 2, Oklahoma’s use of traditional salary structures continues to emphasize starting salaries and not incentives nor innovated compensation systems for teachers to stay and grow within their professional field.

### Retention Rates

One of the major drivers of teacher demand is teacher attrition: teachers leaving their schools or the teaching profession altogether. Teacher retention is critical to proactively addressing teacher shortages and maintaining a strong educator workforce. Teacher retention, particularly the retention of effective and career-oriented teachers, reduces the strain on schools to fill classroom positions each school year and eliminates pressure on teacher college programs. In essence, **the higher the retention rates are for school teachers, the lower the pressure is on the supply chains for teacher preparation pipelines.**

LOFT reviewed teacher turnover and attrition rates over time to identify trends in Oklahoma’s teacher workforce. Table 11 provides the rate of teacher retention of first-year teachers, by cohort, for one and five years.

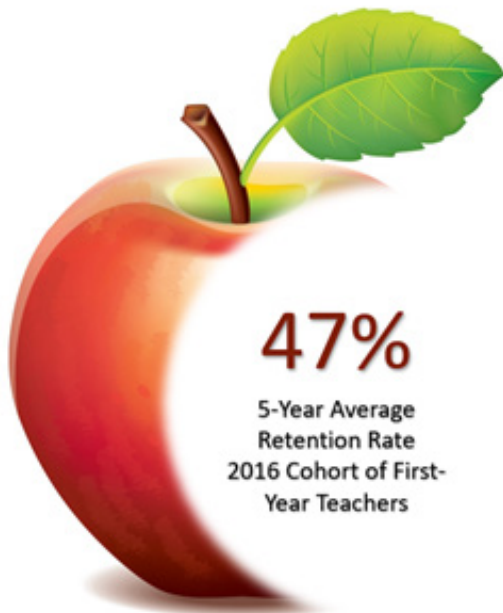
**Table 11: Rate of Teacher Retention by First-Year Teachers’ Cohort (2012-13 to 2019-20).** (This table provides trend data on the first and five-year retention rates of teachers by cohort.)

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
<b>In the initial school of assignment</b>								
One-Year	67%	67%	66%	64%	64%	68%	65%	69%
Five-Year	25%	23%	22%	21%	--	--	--	--
<b>In any Oklahoma public school</b>								
One-Year	86%	86%	85%	79%	83%	84%	83%	84%
Five-Year	54%	51%	49%	47%	--	--	--	--

Source: OSDE

Notes: Calculations include educators whose job description is *teacher* or *resource teacher* and have complete records across systems. First-year teachers are defined as those educators with no previous teaching experience. Retention rates are calculated as the unduplicated number of teachers who remained teaching in at least one of their initial schools/in the public school system after one/five year(s) as a percentage of all first-year teachers in the cohort. Teachers may or may not have other jobs within the school district. 2020-21 personnel data as of 06/10/2021.

LOFT’s analysis of teacher retention data from OSDE shows the number of teachers remaining in their initial school assignment is increasing, with 69 percent of first-year teachers remaining in their initial school in 2020-21. **LOFT’s analysis also shows that first-year teachers may leave their initial school assignment but an average of 84 percent of first-year teachers remain in the State’s public education system.** LOFT finds that first-year retention rates for teachers are strong, but challenges arise as Oklahoma teachers approach their five-year window. **Less than half of Oklahoma teachers who began their first year teaching in the 2015-2016 academic year (47%) were still teaching in their fifth year in the 2020-2021 academic year.** As discussed in Finding 2, this may be attributed to teachers reaching the previous five-year vesting period for teacher retirement.<sup>90</sup>



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s creation based on data from OSDE

To better understand teacher retention challenges, LOFT analyzed teacher turnover rates by all school districts. Chart 13 maps the average teacher turnover rate by county for the 2019-2020 academic school year, reflecting that Cimarron and Greer County had the highest teacher turnover rates. LOFT’s analysis of teacher turnover data provided by OSDE reveals 25 school districts had no teacher turnover (0%) in 2019-20 to include Arnett, Bowlegs, Grandview, Harmony and Lowery among others.

90. Teachers who join the Oklahoma Teachers’ Retirement System on or after November 1, 2017, will become vested when they have accumulated 7 years of eligible service (70 O.S. § 17-105). Previously the vesting period for Oklahoma teachers was 5 years.

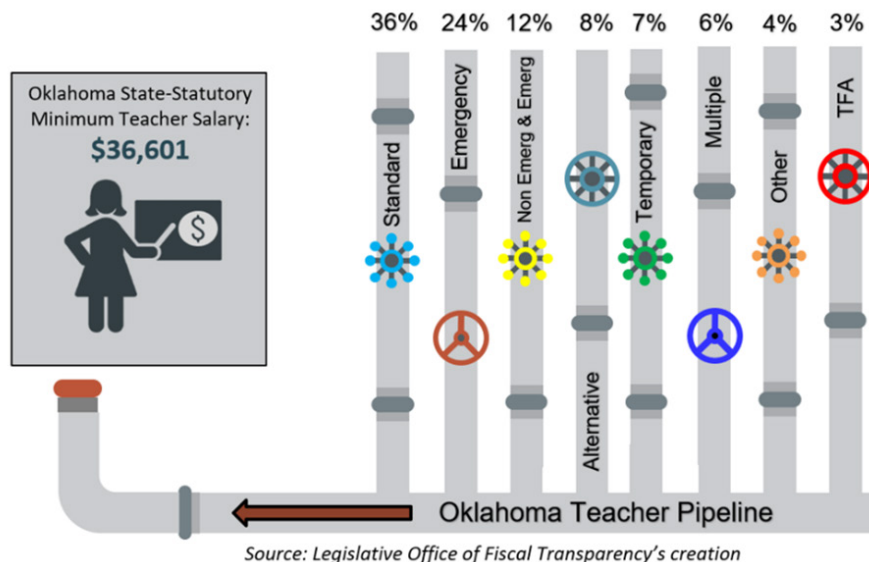


### Emergency-Certified Teachers

Oklahoma has four common teacher certification pathways: (1) traditional, (2) alternative paths, (3), other non-traditional paths and (4) emergency certification. Each of these avenues provide opportunities for individuals to become classroom teachers in Oklahoma schools. **Regardless of the pathway an aspiring teacher earns certification, all teachers are required to be paid the State-statutory minimum salary despite having different qualifications before teaching full-time.**<sup>91</sup>

Based on LOFT's conversation with administrative personnel at Oklahoma teacher colleges and interviews with school superintendents, this equitable salary approach may disincentivize some to take the traditional undergraduate route to graduate from a teaching training preparation program. **Teacher preparation programs shared real-world scenarios where students enduring academic burnout failed to earn their teacher certification and ventured on an alternative certification pathway to get in the classroom sooner with the same starting salary.**

### Oklahoma First-Year Teacher Certification Pipeline (2020-21)



LOFT reviewed how Oklahoma teachers are earning certifications into teaching positions by pathway. Table 13, provided by OSDE, shows a clear decline in the percentage of teachers completing a state-approved teacher education program through the traditional route.

**As highlighted in Table 13, in the 2012-13 academic year 56 percent of teachers earned their teacher certification by going through the traditional route but the latest data from 2020-21 shows that percentage has dropped to 36 percent; only 12 percent higher than those earning emergency certifications.**

91. Appendix V describes the requirements (or qualifications) by certification pathway before beginning teaching full-time.



**Table 13: Percent Distribution of First-Year Teachers by Certification Type.** (This table provides the percentage of first-year Oklahoma teachers by the type of certification earned to become classroom teachers.)

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Standard	56%	53%	50%	44%	46%	39%	37%	39%	36%
Emergency	0%	1%	4%	12%	13%	21%	29%	28%	24%
Non-Emerg. & Emerg.	1%	4%	7%	10%	11%	15%	15%	16%	12%
Alternative	16%	16%	14%	12%	11%	9%	10%	9%	8%
Temporary	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	7%
Multiple	9%	7%	5%	3%	3%	3%	2%	1%	6%
Other	13%	16%	15%	14%	12%	9%	4%	6%	4%
TFA	5%	5%	6%	5%	5%	4%	4%	3%	3%

Source: OSDE

*\*Note: Calculations include educators whose job description is teacher or resource teacher and have complete records across systems. Teachers may or may not have other jobs within the school or school district. First-year teachers are defined as those educators with no previous teaching experience. The alternative category includes the initial and standard options in the certification path. The Other category includes non-traditional Special Education certificate, paraprofessional teaching credential, and provisional certificate. TFA stands for Teach for America credential. The Temporary category includes the one-time, non-renewable certificates issued by the State Board of Education during the 2020-21 school year to applicants who had otherwise applied and met requirements for certification but were unable to complete competency exams or required clock/credit hours due to the COVID-19 pandemic. 2020-21 personnel data as of 11/01/2021.*

LOFT's research of other state teacher certification pathways found similar decreasing rates of teachers entering the profession through traditional certification pathways. **LOFT's analysis of teacher certification pathways in Texas found 42 percent of all new teachers in the 2020-2021 academic school year were from alternative pathways; an increase of 12 percent from 2012.**

Data from OSDE shows that in the 2020-21 academic school year, 3,039 emergency certifications were approved for 2,763 educators in Oklahoma's public schools.<sup>92</sup> Isolating the data, LOFT found that while 350 school districts employed teachers with emergency certifications in 2020-21, the concentration of these emergency-certified teachers were only in a handful of schools districts. **While Oklahoma has more than 500 school districts, over one-third of newly emergency-certified teachers in 2020-21 were employed in four school districts across the State: Tulsa (14%), Oklahoma City (13%), Putnam City (4%) and Lawton (3%).** LOFT's analysis of longitudinal data on emergency-certified teachers finds the voids in unfilled teaching vacancies is more of a concentrated challenge for specific school districts than a state-wide shortage.

92. Teacher Certification data Emergency certificates issued for SY20-21 End of Year (EOY) as of 2021-09-20 Effective Date 7/1/2020 to 6/30/2021.

**While Oklahoma has more than 500 school districts, over one-third of newly emergency-certified teachers in 2020-21 were employed in four school districts across the State: Tulsa (14%), Oklahoma City (13%), Putnam City (4%) and Lawton (3%).**

**Primary Factors of Teacher Attrition**

To assist with understanding the reasons contributing to educators leaving the classroom, LOFT examined teacher exit interview survey data between 2009 and 2020.<sup>93</sup> School districts use a standard survey form provided by the State Department of Education, however, **compensation and higher pay opportunities are not included as options within the survey.**

LOFT’s comparative analysis presented in Table 14 shows the number of teachers leaving from 2019 to 2020 fell by 7 percent. Table 14 further reveals that fewer Oklahoma teachers left the classroom for other schools (-27%), to move out of state (-18%) and for other employment (-27%) between 2019 and 2020. Additionally, there was a 51 percent growth in Oklahoma educators leaving due to medical reasons. While LOFT did not evaluate the specific impact of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on teacher attrition, these statistics and trends may be attributable to the novel pandemic during the 2020 academic school year.

**Table 14: Oklahoma Teacher Attrition Exit Survey (2019 to 2020).** (This table provides the self-reported reasons for Oklahoma teachers leaving their teaching positions in both 2019 and 2020; overall there was a decline in teacher attrition and specific reasons decreased.)

Self-Reported Reasons for Attrition	2019		2020		Year to Year Difference
	Number	Percentage of Total Attrition	Number	Percentage of Total Attrition	
No Reason Given	1,204	20%	1,035	18%	-14%
Retiring	718	12%	993	17%	38%
Other School	1,780	29%	1,306	23%	-27%
Out of State	204	3%	167	3%	-18%
Other Employment	676	11%	496	9%	-27%
Medical	100	2%	151	3%	51%
Marriage	14	0%	9	0%	-36%
Personal	746	12%	797	14%	7%
Deceased	39	1%	42	1%	8%
Leave of Absence	66	1%	65	1%	-2%
Maternity	78	1%	61	1%	-22%
Moving	282	5%	278	5%	-1%
Reduction	26	0%	40	1%	54%
Annexation		0%	9	0%	
Terminated	222	4%	253	4%	14%
Deployed		0%	1	0%	
<b>Overall Teacher</b>	<b>6,155</b>		<b>5,703</b>		<b>-7%</b>

Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s analysis based on data from OSDE

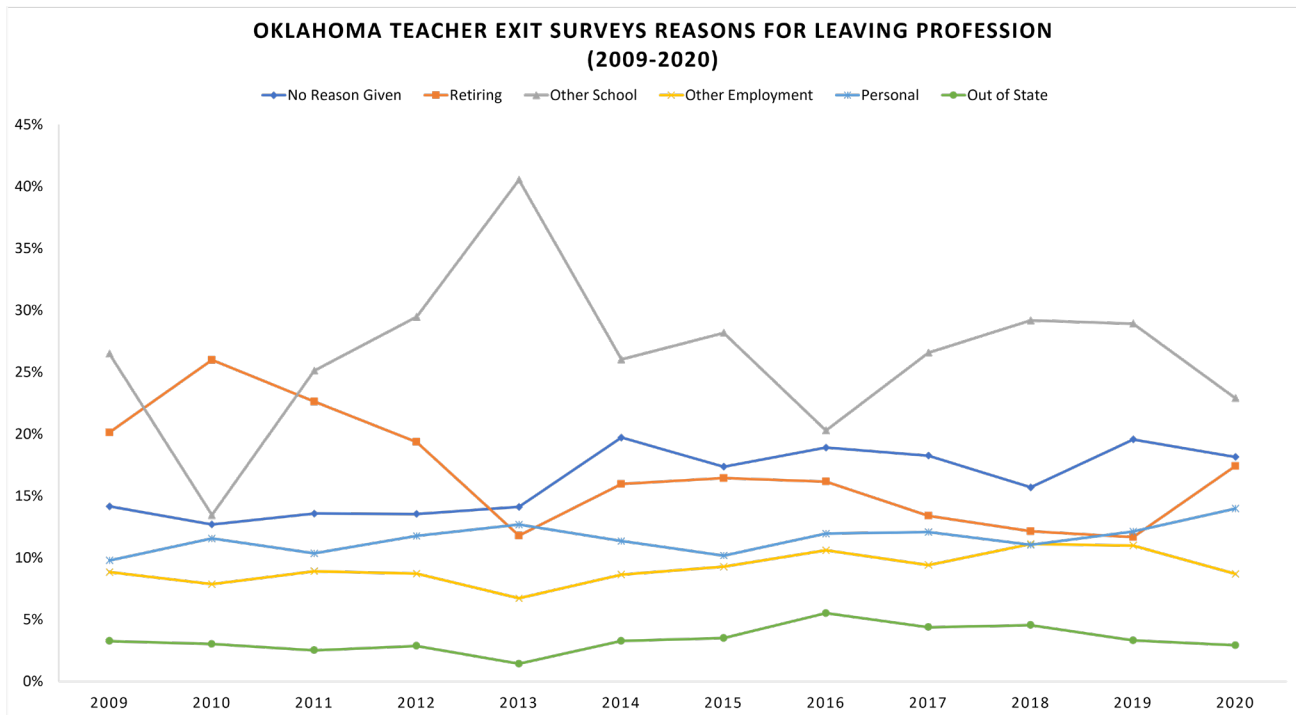
LOFT’s analysis, illustrated in Chart 14, reveals the primary drivers for teachers leaving their classroom or the profession is due to moving to a different school, personal reasons, and retirement; in 2020, these three indicators accounted for 54 percent of all reported reasons for leaving.<sup>94</sup>

93. Exit interviews are self-reported; however, LOFT’s analysis reveals there is a significant sample size of annual exit interviews for the results to be statistically significant.

94. Exit interviews are self-reported from leaving teachers and teachers have the option to not disclose a reason for leaving; in 2020 this accounted for 18 percent of all responses.

**Absent sufficient data about pay as a factor in teachers leaving the profession, it is reasonable to conclude that there are other drivers into those decisions. It is LOFT’s assessment that future investments into compensation will have limited impact on retention rates if not strategically targeted at root causes.**

**Chart 14: Oklahoma Teacher Exit Surveys Reasons for Leaving Profession (2009-2020).** (This line chart shows the percentage of teachers leaving the classroom and profession based on the top six self-reported reasons over the last 11 years.)

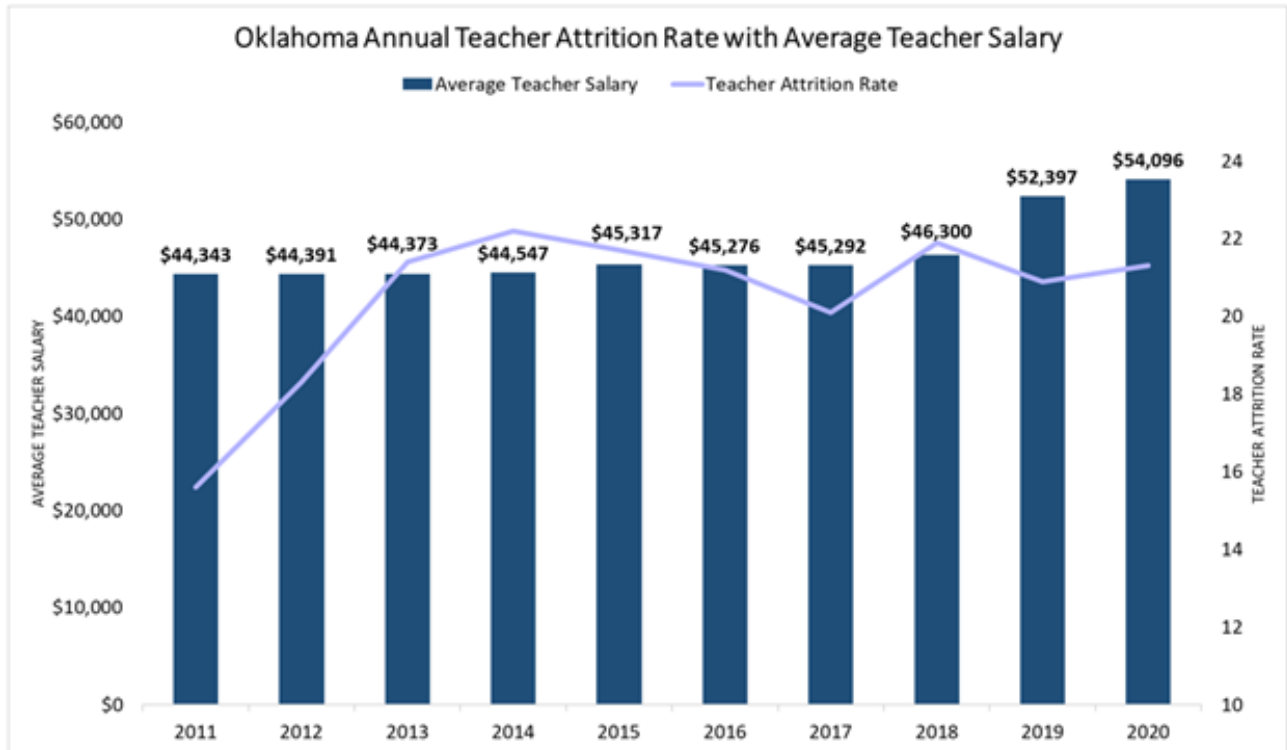


Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s analysis based on data from OSDE

**LOFT’s analysis found that teachers are three times as likely to leave the teaching profession for other employment (9%) than they are to be moving out of state (3%).** LOFT’s analysis of the longitudinal exit survey data from 2009 to 2020 reveals teachers moving to a different school, personal reasons, and retirement account for 55 percent of all reasons for teachers leaving annually. **The key takeaway from LOFT’s analysis of teacher attrition is that the majority of teacher attrition challenges, based on responses in teacher exit interviews, cannot be addressed through legislative policy changes.**

In reviewing annual teacher attrition data and comparing the trends with the average Oklahoma teacher salary, LOFT found that, despite the average Oklahoma teacher salary increasing over time, the annual teacher attrition rate continues to rise (see Chart 15). Even after the 2018 teacher pay raise, Oklahoma’s teacher attrition rate has remained at 21 percent. **Between 2018 and 2020, the average unadjusted Oklahoma teacher salary increased by 17 percent, but teacher attrition remained consistent at 21 percent.** LOFT’s analysis confirms a positive but weak statistical correlation (0.25) between the average Oklahoma teacher salary and annual teacher attrition rate over time.

**Chart 15: Oklahoma Annual Teacher Attrition Rate with Average Teacher Salary.** (This chart aligns the Oklahoma average teacher salary with the annual teacher attrition rate by academic school year and finds that the annual attrition rate continues to climb despite an increase in the average teacher salary.)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from OSDE and NEA

\*Note: Teacher attrition data is for inclusive of both leavers and movers.

### Additional Data Would Enhance Efforts for the State and School Districts to Improve Retention Efforts.

Opportunities exist to collect additional data to assist the State, school districts and schools to enhance teacher retention.

#### Teacher Exit Survey Instrumentation

In comparing teacher exit surveys from across the United States, **LOFT found most states are more descriptive than Oklahoma is with their survey instrumentation, capturing more detailed information from exiting educators.** Both North Carolina and Ohio have strong surveys that could be adopted for Oklahoma school districts for the purpose of enhancing retention efforts.





### State Example – Ohio

The Ohio Department of Education, alongside REL Midwest and a team of Ohio stakeholders, developed an educator exit survey for schools and districts.

The Educator Exit Survey includes items aligned to four domains: educator background, plans for the future, reasons for leaving current position and working conditions of the school. Ohio districts are now using the survey statewide to learn further from exiting teachers. Questions cover topics ranging from teachers' reasons for leaving and plans for the future to their perceptions of their school administration, facilities, professional learning, instructional support, teacher leadership, staff collaboration and collegiality, use of time, and student management.

*Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on information from Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest and Ohio Department of Education*

### Net Migration Outflow of Oklahoma Teachers

While the OSDE tracks the number of teachers who leave Oklahoma schools, the agency does not collect data on where they go. **According to self-reported data from teachers, between 2009 and 2020, an annual average of 207 teachers left the state.**<sup>95</sup> OSDE informed LOFT that it does not attempt to conduct a follow up interview or provide a survey to teachers who report this information. Being able to track the out-migration of Oklahoma teachers could provide further context into the reasons teachers leave Oklahoma's public education system and forecast patterns of migration outflows. For example, this data could assist the State and districts in understanding the competitive landscape for teachers. Tracking out-migration data has been identified as a national best practice from the U.S. Department of Education. The National Center for Education Statistics, a division of the U.S. Department of Education that administered national surveys of teachers until 2013, conducted its follow-up surveys in order to:

*"Measure the attrition rate for teachers, examine the characteristics of teachers who stay in the teaching profession and those who leave, obtain activity or occupational data for those who leave the position of a K-12 teacher, obtain current teaching assignment information for those who are still teaching, and collect data on attitudes about the teaching profession."*<sup>96</sup>

The national survey data was used by Congress, state education departments, federal agencies, private school associations, teacher associations and educational organizations to research and identify issues surrounding teacher turnover. This same methodology and instrumentation can be replicated at OSDE to obtain additional information about teacher turnover and enhance the data provided to the Oklahoma State Legislature.

95. OSDE surveyed 70,994 exiting Oklahoma teachers between 2009 - 2020. Of the sample size, 2,478 Oklahoma teachers indicated they left their teaching position to move out of state (equates to 3.5% of all responses).

96 NCES Schools and Staffing [Teacher Follow-Up Survey \(TFS\)](#)

**LOFT finds being able to identify where exiting teachers moved to and determine if they are teaching in a different state would provide further data on the migration patterns of teachers and assist the State and districts understand the competitive landscape for teachers.**

## Appendix A. Methodology

### Oklahoma Constitution, Statutes and Agency Policies

LOFT incorporated legal research methodology for a detailed analysis of state laws and governing policies found in various sources (constitution, statutes and administrative rules) to assist with the legislative history of Oklahoma teacher compensation, minimum salary schedules, revenues sources, and policy considerations.

### Teacher Compensation Data Collection and Verification

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) stated that teacher compensation data from the National Education Association (NEA) is the most cited and utilized data on teacher compensation as state education agencies report verified data directly to NEA and that data is strictly regulated and standardized across all states for reporting purposes.

According to information provided by the NEA to LOFT, “the average teacher salary is the gross salary regularly paid before deductions for Social Security, health insurance, and so on.”

“The NEA recognizes that each state’s department of education (DOE) has its own system of accounting and reporting for state executive and legislative branch purposes. As a result, it is not always possible to obtain completely comparable data for every state. For this reason, NEA Research encourages each state DOE to include any clarifying information that is necessary for a proper interpretation of the data supplied.”<sup>97</sup>

The NEA also confirmed to LOFT that “only classroom teachers should be included for the average teacher salary.”

LOFT’s analysis is inclusive of Oklahoma Charter Schools with the exception of minimum teacher salaries, as charter schools are not required to meet the minimum salary.

### Cost of Living and Tax Burden Adjustments

Using longitudinal data from both the U.S. Bureau of Economic Research (BEA), National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) from the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and the Tax Foundation, LOFT conducted cost-of-living adjustments and applied state and local tax burdens on teacher compensation levels to determine the real buying power of teacher salaries by state, local school district and county.

*The contents of this report were discussed with the State Superintendent and the Oklahoma State Department of Education throughout the evaluation process. Additionally, sections of this report were shared with the various agencies and stakeholders for purposes of confirming accuracy.*

*It is the purpose of LOFT to provide both accurate and objective information: this report and methodology has been reviewed by LOFT staff outside of the project team to ensure accuracy, neutrality, and significance.*

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97. [NEA Research and Publications](#)

## Appendix B: Stakeholder Interviews

This evaluation report summarizes and utilizes collected information from key stakeholders working within Oklahoma's common education system and within the realm of teacher compensation.

Interviews were conducted with stakeholders from:

- Oklahoma State Department of Education
- Education Commission of the States
- National Conference of State Legislators
- National Education Association
- Oklahoma Secretary of Education
- Oklahoma State School Boards Association
- Oklahoma State University
- New Mexico Public Education Department
- University of Oklahoma
- Northeastern State University
- University of Central Oklahoma
- Oklahoma Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
- Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
- Elk City Public Schools
- Altus Public Schools
- Ponca City Public Schools
- Norman Public Schools
- Yukon Public Schools
- Stroud Public Schools
- Lawton Public Schools
- Edmond Public Schools
- Guymon Public Schools
- Southern Regional Education Board
- Southern Legislative Conference

## Appendix C: Oklahoma 2020-2021 State Minimum Teacher Salary Schedule

Figure 5: 2020-2021 State Minimum Teacher Salary Schedule. (This figure provides the State minimum teacher salary schedule for Oklahoma teachers based on their years of service and educational attainment.)

**Joy Hofmeister**  
**State Superintendent of Public Instruction**  
**Oklahoma State Department of Education**  
**Accreditation Standards and School Personnel Records**  
**STATE MINIMUM TEACHER SALARY SCHEDULE**  
**2020-2021**  
**70 O.S. § 18-114.14**

Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, certified personnel, as defined in 70 O.S. § 26-103, in the public schools of Oklahoma shall receive in salary and/or fringe benefits not less than the amount specified in the following schedule. When determining minimum salary, "fringe benefits" shall mean only the employee's share of retirement, if paid by the district.

Year of Experience	Bachelor's Degree	*Bachelor's + National Board Certification	Master's Degree	*Master's + National Board Certification	Doctor's Degree
0	\$36,601	\$37,759	\$37,991	\$39,149	\$39,381
1	37,035	38,193	38,425	39,583	39,815
2	37,469	38,628	38,859	40,018	40,249
3	37,904	39,062	39,294	40,452	40,684
4	38,338	39,496	39,728	40,886	41,118
5	38,810	39,968	40,200	41,358	41,590
6	39,273	40,432	40,663	41,822	42,054
7	39,737	40,895	41,127	42,285	42,517
8	40,200	41,358	41,590	42,749	42,980
9	40,663	41,822	42,054	43,212	43,444
10	41,684	42,844	43,568	44,728	45,945
11	42,177	43,336	44,061	45,221	46,438
12	42,670	43,829	44,554	45,713	46,931
13	43,162	44,322	45,047	46,206	47,424
14	43,655	44,815	45,539	46,699	47,916
15	44,167	45,327	46,052	47,212	48,430
16	44,660	45,820	46,545	47,705	48,923
17	45,153	46,313	47,038	48,198	49,416
18	45,646	46,806	47,531	48,691	49,909
19	46,139	47,299	48,024	49,184	50,402
20	46,652	47,813	48,538	49,698	50,917
21	47,145	48,306	49,031	50,192	51,410
22	47,639	48,799	49,524	50,685	51,903
23	48,132	49,292	50,018	51,178	52,397
24	48,625	49,785	50,511	51,671	52,890
25	50,049	51,232	51,971	53,153	54,395

**Note: Teachers eligible to receive the National Board Certification bonus shall not be eligible to receive the additional salary increment set forth in this salary schedule.**

\*National Board Certification columns are for teachers who applied for and/or received National Board Certification after June 30, 2013.

Career/Technology Ag Teacher**	= Minimum Salary	+ \$2,600/year - 12 month contract
Other Career/Tech Teacher**	= Minimum Salary	+ \$2,200/year - 10 month contract
Special Education Teacher***	= Minimum Salary	+ 5 percent above the prevailing wage paid teachers of children who are nondisabled in the same school district.

\*\*Salary distribution per the policies and procedures manual of the Oklahoma State Board of Career and Technology Education.

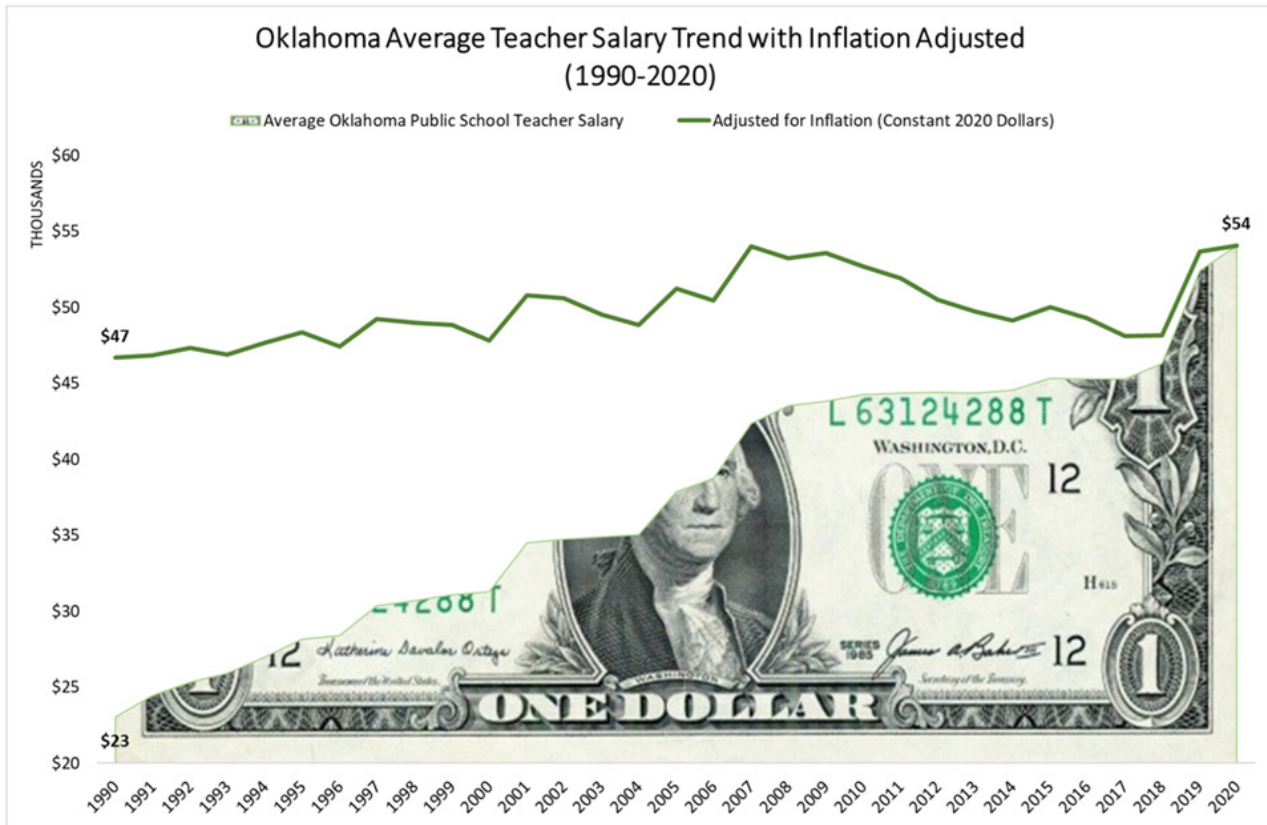
\*\*\*Salary distribution mandated by 70 O.S. § 13-110: Also includes Resource Teachers, Education Diagnosticians, and Speech Pathologists/Therapists.

The State Board of Education shall accept teaching experience from out-of-state school districts that are accredited by the State Board of Education or appropriate state accrediting agency for said districts. For the purpose of state salary increments and retirement, no teacher shall be granted credit for more than five (5) years active duty in the military service or out-of-state or out-of-country teaching experience as a certified teacher or its equivalent. Nothing in this section shall prohibit boards of education from crediting more years of experience on local salary schedules than those allowed for state purposes. The provisions of the above salary schedule shall not apply to teachers who have entered into postretirement employment with a public school in Oklahoma and are still receiving a monthly retirement benefit. (70 O.S. § 18-114.14)



### Appendix D. Oklahoma Average Teacher Salary Trend with Inflation Adjusted (1990-2020)

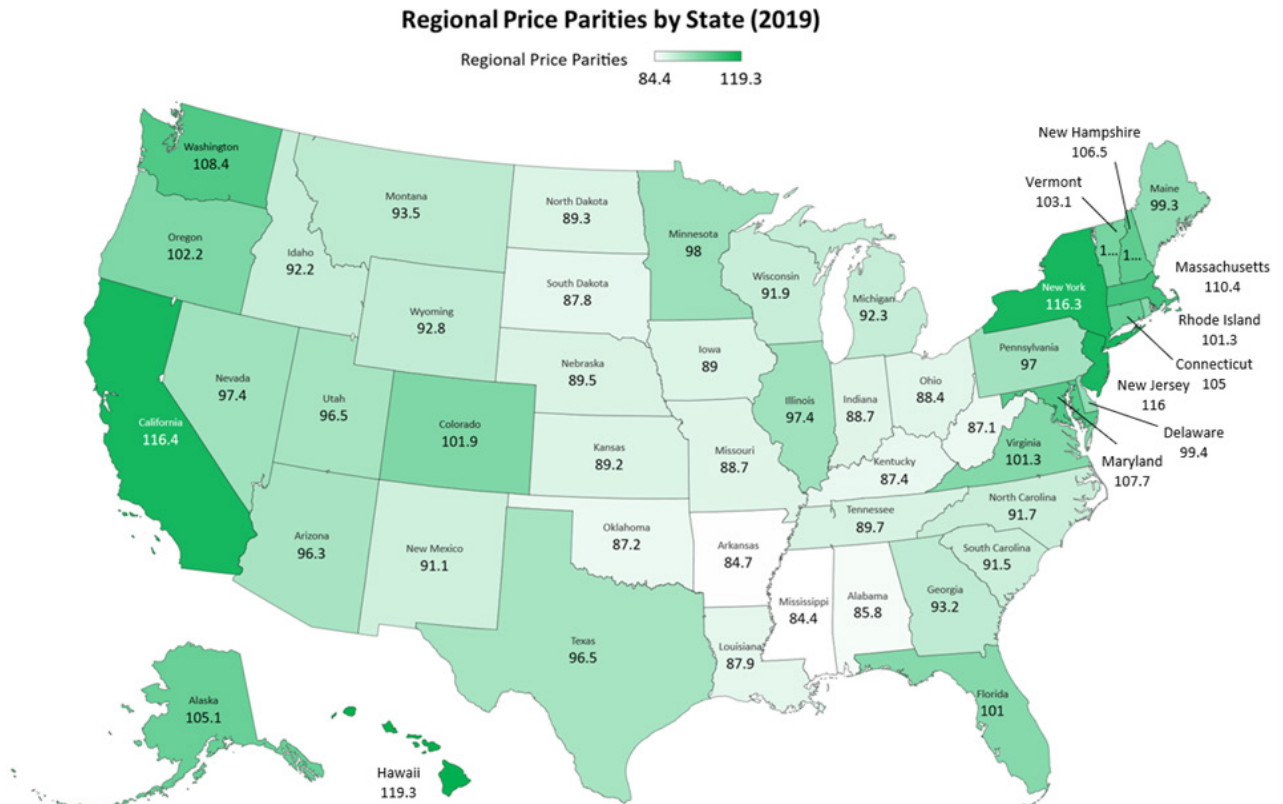
Chart 16: Oklahoma Average Teacher Salary Trend with Inflation Adjusted (1990-2020). (This chart provides the average unadjusted Oklahoma teacher salary and the inflation adjusted average salary in constant 2020 dollars over the last 30 years.)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from NEA

## Appendix E. Regional Price Parities by State (2019)

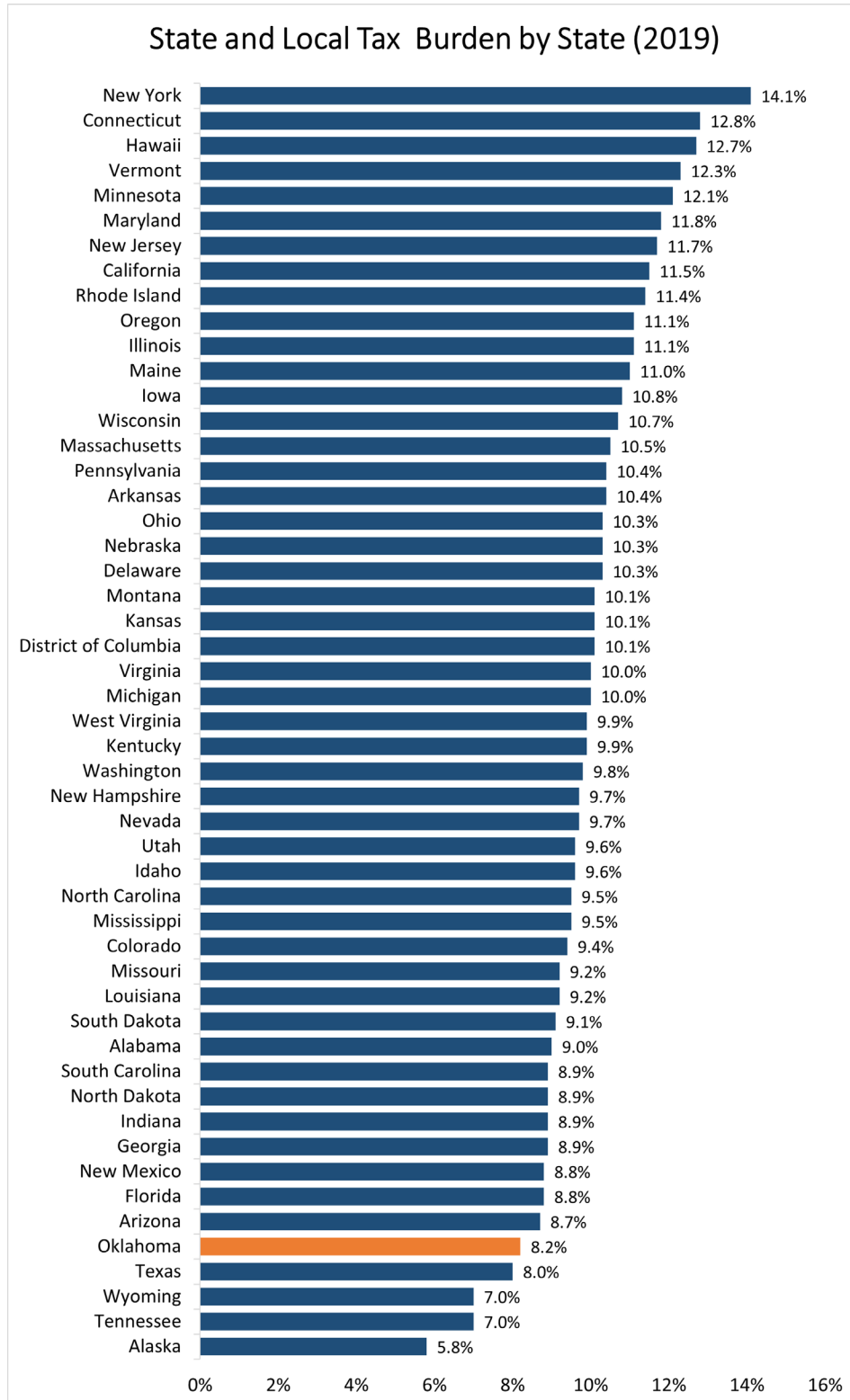
Chart 17: Regional Price Parities by State (2019). (This geographic map provides the regional price parity from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis for all 50 state and Washington D.C. in 2019. Darker shades of green are reflective of higher cost of living.)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

### Appendix F: State and Local Tax Burden by State (2019)

Chart 18: State and Local Tax Burden by State (2019). (This vertical bar chart provides the state and local tax burden for all 50 states and Washington D.C. in 2019, ranked from the highest tax burden to lowest.)



## Appendix G: Teacher Salary Increases in Southern Regional Educational Board States

Figure 6: Teacher Salary Increases in SREB States. (This figure provides information on teacher salaries for states grouped within the Southern Regional Educational Board.)

### Salary Increases in SREB States

Teacher pay increases enacted by SREB state legislatures in the past four years

#### 2019-20

Alabama	4%
Arkansas	\$1,000
Delaware	2%
Florida	\$2,000 (Florida Education Finance Program funds provided sufficient for such an increase; actual salary amounts determined locally via collective bargaining)
Georgia	\$3,000 (for employees funded through state Quality Basic Education formula)
Louisiana	\$1,000
Mississippi	\$1,500
Oklahoma	\$1,220 (either across-the-board or average raise in a district)
South Carolina	4% to 10.6%
Tennessee	2.5% (Basic Education Program funds provided sufficient for such an increase; allocations determined locally, does not apply to non-BEP funded positions)
Virginia	5% (3% raise took effect 7/1/2020; additional 2% as of 9/1/2020)
West Virginia	5% average

#### 2018-19

Alabama	2.5%
North Carolina	6.5% average
Oklahoma	15.8% to 18.3%
Tennessee	2% (BEP funds provided sufficient for such an increase; allocations determined locally, does not apply to non-BEP funded positions)
West Virginia	5% average

#### 2017-18

Georgia	2% (for employees funded through state QBE formula)
North Carolina	10% average over the biennium (2017-19)
Tennessee	4% (BEP funds provided sufficient for such an increase; allocations determined locally, does not apply to non-BEP funded positions)

#### 2016-17

Alabama	4% (for teachers who earn less than \$75,000 annually; 2% for teachers who earn more than \$75,000 annually)
North Carolina	4.7% average
Tennessee	4% (BEP funds provided sufficient for such an increase; allocations determined locally, does not apply to non-BEP funded positions)

Source: Southern Regional Education Board, [New Ideas in Teacher Compensation](#), Policy Brief | September 2020



## Appendix H. Southern Regional Education Board Minimum Teacher Salary Analysis

Table 15: Southern Regional Education Board States' Minimum Teacher Salary Rankings 2019 and 2020. (This table provides a ranking of states within the SREB by the highest starting minimum teacher salaries in both 2019 and 2020.)

Southern Regional Education Board States' Minimum Teacher Salary Rankings 2019 and 2020					
SREB State	2019 Minimum Salary	2019 Rank	SREB State	2020 Minimum Salary	2020 Rank
Maryland*	\$42,370	1	Maryland*	\$43,531	1
Delaware	\$41,829	2	Delaware	\$42,666	2
Alabama	\$39,301	3	Alabama	\$40,873	3
<b>Oklahoma</b>	<b>\$36,601</b>	<b>4</b>	Georgia	\$37,092	4
Kentucky	\$36,558	5	<b>Oklahoma</b>	<b>\$36,601</b>	<b>5</b>
North Carolina	\$35,000	6	Kentucky	\$36,558	6
Tennessee	\$35,000	7	Tennessee	\$36,000	7
Mississippi	\$34,390	8	Mississippi	\$35,890	8
Georgia	\$34,092	9	North Carolina	\$35,000	9
West Virginia	\$32,335	10	West Virginia	\$34,455	10
Florida*	\$31,900	11	Texas	\$33,660	11
Arkansas	\$31,800	12	Virginia	\$32,823	12
Virginia*	\$31,700	13	Arkansas	\$32,800	13
South Carolina	\$28,190	14	Florida*	\$32,237	14
Texas	\$28,080	15	South Carolina	\$28,190	15

Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from SREB and ABLR

\*State does not mandate a minimum salary amount. The minimum provided in analysis is the lowest minimum established by the state's school districts.

Note: Louisiana is a member of SREB but does not mandate a minimum salary amount. Data limitations prevented further analysis.

Table 16: Southern Regional Education Board States' Real Buying Power Adjusted Minimum Teacher Salary Rankings 2019 and 2020. (This table provides a ranking of SREB by the highest starting minimum teacher salaries and after adjustments for their real buying power in 2019.)

Southern Regional Education Board States' Real Buying Power Adjusted Minimum Teacher Salary Rankings 2019							
SREB State	2019 Minimum Salary	2019 Rank	Tax Burden	Regional Price Parities	SREB State	Real Buying Power of 2019 Minimum Salary	Real Buying Power Rank
Maryland*	\$42,370	1	11.8%	107.7	Alabama	\$41,683	1
Delaware	\$41,829	2	10.3%	99.4	Oklahoma	\$38,532	2
Alabama	\$39,301	3	9.0%	85.8	Delaware	\$37,747	3
Oklahoma	\$36,601	4	8.2%	87.2	Kentucky	\$37,687	4
Kentucky	\$36,558	5	9.9%	87.4	Mississippi	\$36,876	5
North Carolina	\$35,000	6	9.5%	91.7	Tennessee	\$36,288	6
Tennessee	\$35,000	7	7.0%	89.7	Maryland*	\$34,699	7
Mississippi	\$34,390	8	9.5%	84.4	North Carolina	\$34,542	8
Georgia	\$34,092	9	8.9%	93.2	Arkansas	\$33,640	9
West Virginia	\$32,335	10	9.9%	87.1	West Virginia	\$33,449	10
Florida*	\$31,900	11	8.8%	101	Georgia	\$33,324	11
Arkansas	\$31,800	12	10.4%	84.7	Florida*	\$28,805	12
Virginia*	\$31,700	13	10.0%	101.3	Virginia*	\$28,164	13
South Carolina	\$28,190	14	8.9%	91.5	South Carolina	\$28,067	14
Texas	\$28,080	15	8.0%	96.5	Texas	\$26,771	15

Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from SREB, Tax Foundation and U.S. BEA

\*State does not mandate a minimum salary amount. The minimum provided in analysis is the lowest minimum established by the state's school districts.

Note: Louisiana is a member of SREB but does not mandate a minimum salary amount. Data limitations prevented further analysis.

## Appendix I: Oklahoma School Districts with Five Percent or Greater Minimum Teacher Salary Increases from 2019 to 2020.

Table 17: Oklahoma School Districts with Five Percent or Greater Minimum Teacher Salary Increases from 2019 to 2020. (This table lists the Oklahoma school districts who increased minimum salaries for teachers by at least five percent between the 2019 and 2020 school year.)

School District	2019 Minimum Salary	2020 Minimum Salary	Percent Change 2019 to 2020	Dollar Change 2019 to 2020
SHAWNEE	\$37,081	\$43,011	16%	\$5,930
PIEDMONT	\$39,377	\$44,322	13%	\$4,945
ROCKY MOUNTAIN	\$36,601	\$40,668	11%	\$4,067
OKAY	\$36,601	\$40,668	11%	\$4,067
MCALESTER	\$36,601	\$40,667	11%	\$4,066
MUSTANG	\$37,512	\$41,220	10%	\$3,708
BROKEN ARROW	\$37,674	\$41,215	9%	\$3,541
OKARCHE	\$36,601	\$40,000	9%	\$3,399
DURANT	\$39,463	\$43,071	9%	\$3,608
ROLAND	\$36,601	\$39,789	9%	\$3,188
OWASSO	\$38,686	\$41,981	9%	\$3,295
YUKON	\$41,546	\$45,009	8%	\$3,463
THOMAS-FAY-CUSTER UNIFIED DIST	\$36,601	\$39,571	8%	\$2,970
MOORE	\$40,202	\$43,451	8%	\$3,249
HARRAH	\$37,077	\$39,767	7%	\$2,690
LOCUST GROVE	\$36,601	\$39,156	7%	\$2,555
CHICKASHA	\$36,601	\$39,117	7%	\$2,516
TUTTLE	\$36,601	\$39,101	7%	\$2,500
OAKDALE	\$36,601	\$39,041	7%	\$2,440
NOBLE	\$38,501	\$41,000	6%	\$2,499
SAND SPRINGS	\$37,601	\$40,001	6%	\$2,400
LIBERTY	\$36,601	\$38,927	6%	\$2,326
PANAMA	\$36,601	\$38,841	6%	\$2,240
SWINK	\$36,601	\$38,821	6%	\$2,220
WELCH	\$36,601	\$38,821	6%	\$2,220
BRISTOW	\$37,311	\$39,430	6%	\$2,119
BRIDGE CREEK	\$36,601	\$38,601	5%	\$2,000
OOLOGAH-TALALA	\$37,944	\$40,000	5%	\$2,056
JONES	\$37,542	\$39,541	5%	\$1,999
CLAREMORE	\$38,008	\$40,020	5%	\$2,012
COLLINSVILLE	\$36,601	\$38,500	5%	\$1,899
BLANCHARD	\$36,851	\$38,761	5%	\$1,910
OKLAHOMA CITY	\$39,001	\$41,000	5%	\$1,999
PUTNAM CITY	\$43,011	\$45,161	5%	\$2,150
WOODWARD	\$38,101	\$40,000	5%	\$1,899
CLEORA	\$39,356	\$41,270	5%	\$1,914
KINGFISHER	\$36,601	\$38,351	5%	\$1,750
SEMINOLE	\$38,398	\$40,205	5%	\$1,807
FAIRLAND	\$36,601	\$38,321	5%	\$1,720
GUTHRIE	\$37,531	\$39,281	5%	\$1,750
MIDWEST CITY-DEL CITY	\$36,601	\$38,300	5%	\$1,699
ENID	\$38,334	\$40,100	5%	\$1,766
BIXBY	\$40,120	\$41,935	5%	\$1,815
PONCA CITY	\$38,178	\$39,899	5%	\$1,721

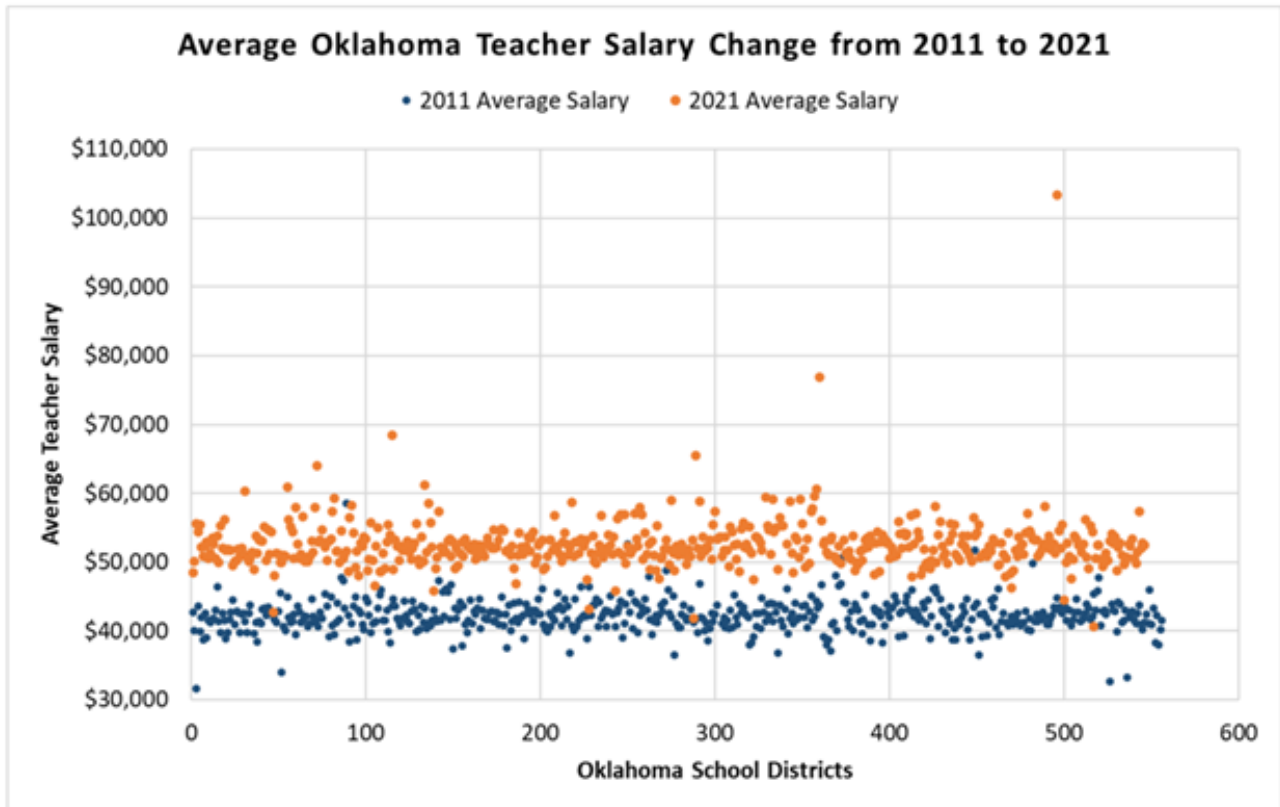
Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from OSDE





### Appendix K. Average Oklahoma Teacher Salary by Public School District (2011-2021)

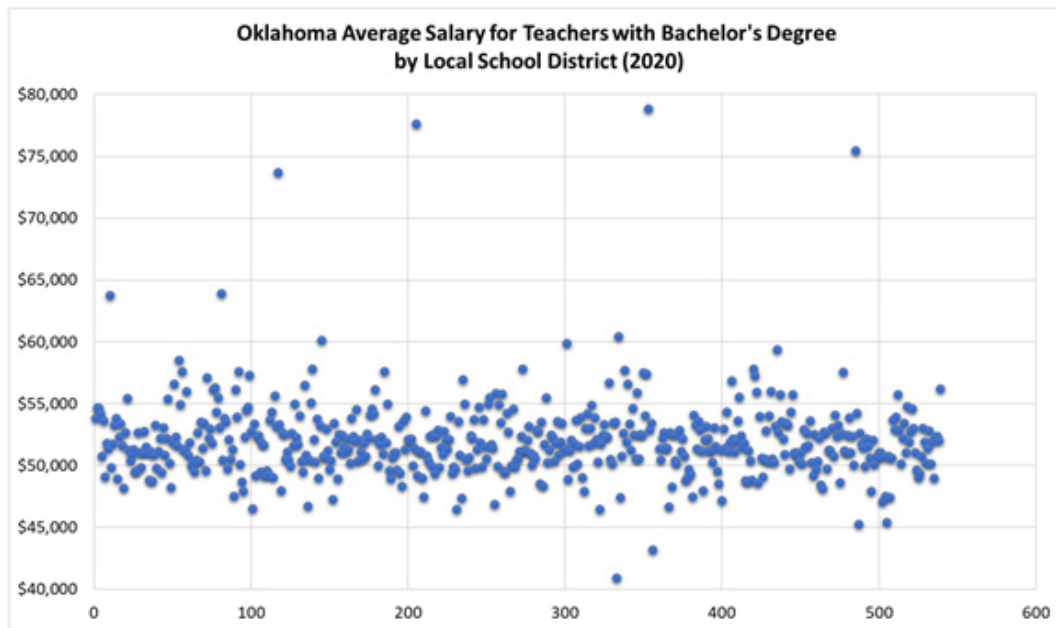
Chart 20: Average Oklahoma Teacher Salary Change from 2011 to 2021. (This scatterplot shows both the 2011 average Oklahoma teacher salary (reflected in blue) with the 2021 average Oklahoma teacher salary (reflected in orange) to show the 10-year change in the average teacher pay by Oklahoma school district.)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from OSDE

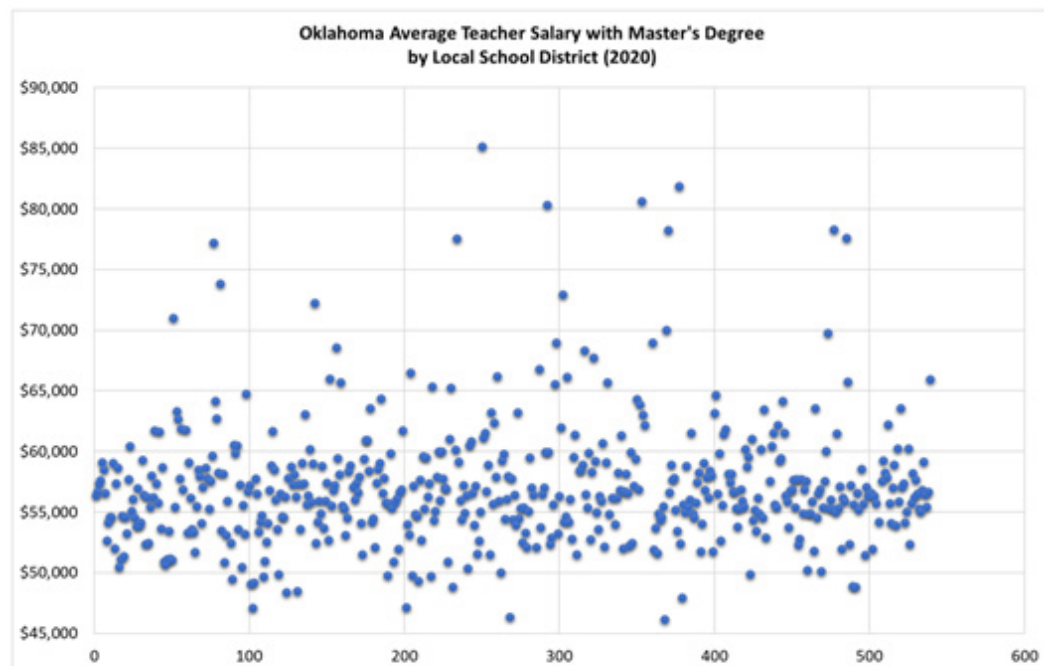
### Appendix L. Oklahoma Average Teacher Salary by Educational Attainment (2020)

Chart 21: Oklahoma Average Salary for Teachers with Bachelor's Degree by Local School District (2020): (This scatterplot provides the average salary for Oklahoma teachers with a Bachelor's degree by local school district in 2020.)



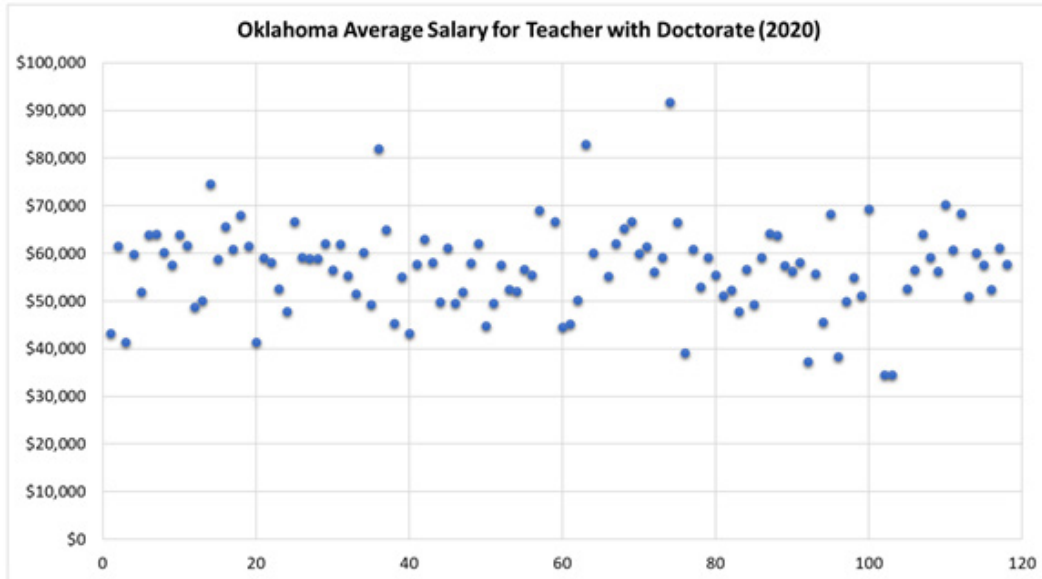
Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from OSDE

Chart 22: Oklahoma Average Salary for Teachers with Master's Degree by Local School District (2020): (This scatterplot provides the average salary for Oklahoma teachers with a Master's degree by local school district in 2020.)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from OSDE

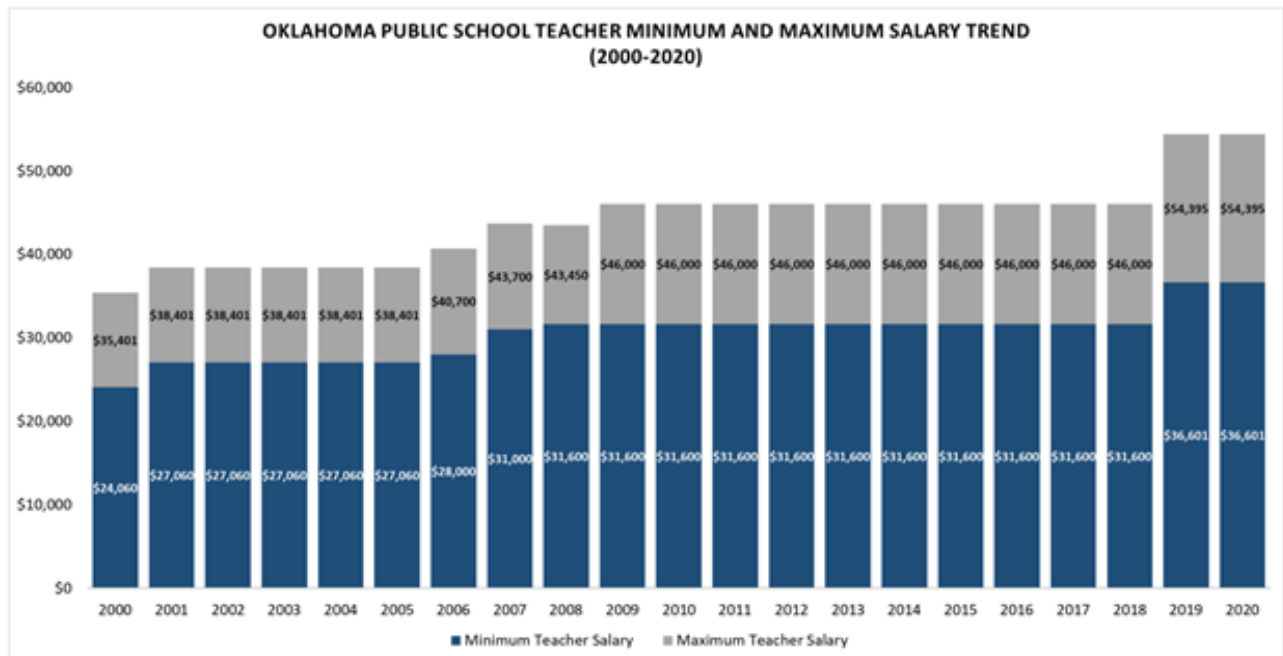
Chart 23: Oklahoma Average Salary for Teachers with Doctorate by Local School District (2020):  
(This scatterplot provides the average salary for Oklahoma teachers with a Doctorate by local school district in 2020.)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from OSDE

### Appendix M. Oklahoma Public School Teacher Minimum and Maximum Salary Trend (2000-2020)

Chart 24: Oklahoma Public School Teacher Minimum and Maximum Salary Trend (2000-2020). (This column chart provides the State-statutory minimum and maximum salary for Oklahoma teachers over the last 20 years.)



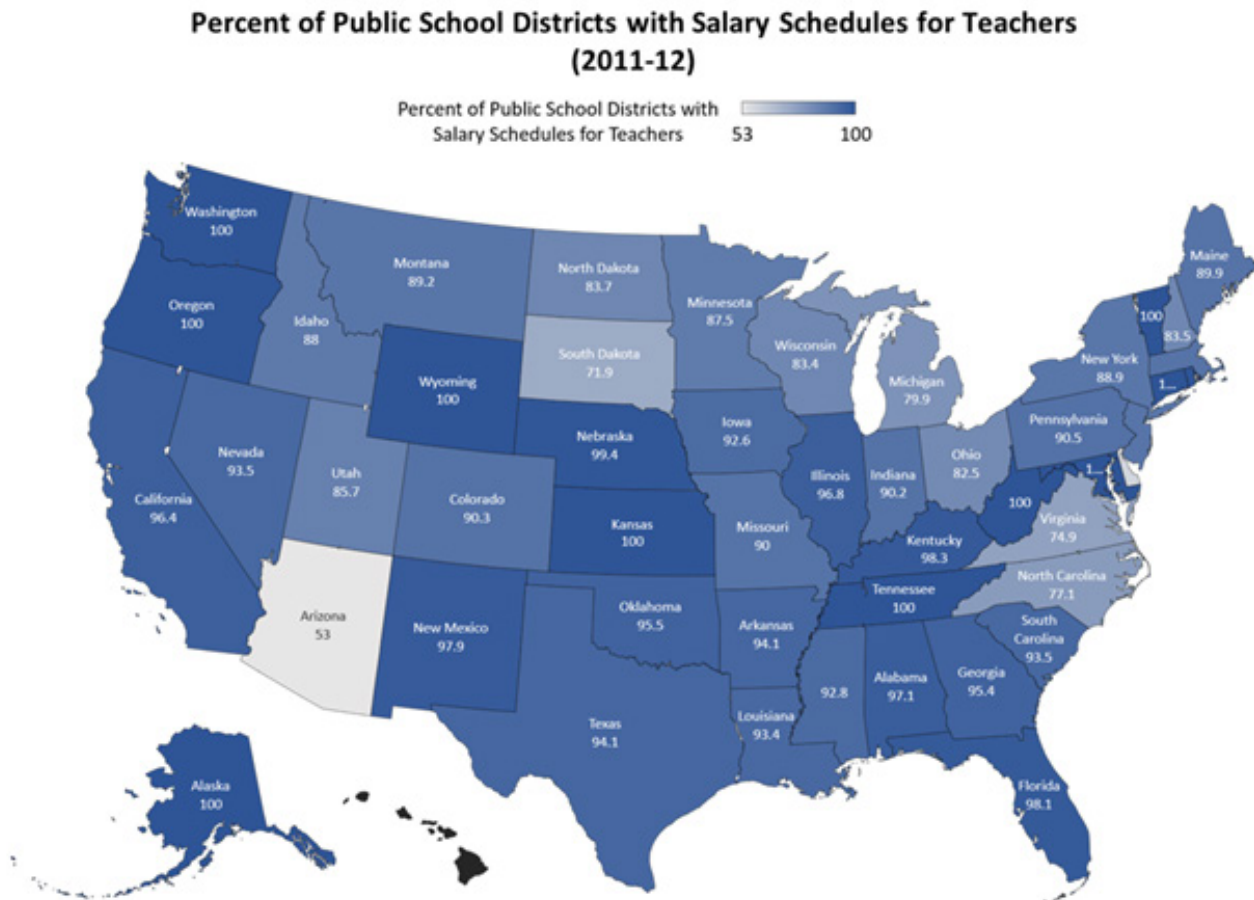
Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from OSDE

\*Note: Maximum salary is for teacher with Doctorate and 25 years of teaching experience.



## Appendix N. Percent of Public School Districts with Salary Schedules for Teachers (2011-12)

Chart 25: Percent of Public School Districts with Salary Schedules for Teachers (2011-12). (This geographic map maps the percentage of local school districts for all 50 states and Washington D.C. utilizing a traditional salary schedule for teachers in the 2011-2012 academic school year. Darker shades of blue are reflective of higher percentages of school districts using salary schedules.)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s analysis based on data from U.S. Dept. of Education  
 \*Note: Latest data available from U.S. ED. Hawaii did not meet reporting standards and are omitted.

## Appendix O. Comparison of States Participating in Salary Schedules for Public School Teachers

*Table 18: (State Comparison of States Participating in Salary Schedules for Public School Teachers) (This table provides information for all 50 states and Washington D.C. regarding the utilization of salary schedules.)*

State	Salary schedule	Citation
Alabama	Yes-salary schedule	Alabama Statutes 16-22-13.6
Alaska	No	Alaska Statutes 14.14.090
Arizona	No	Arizona Revised Statutes 15-502(A)
Arkansas	Yes-salary schedule	Arkansas Code 6-17-2403
California	Yes-minimum salary	California Education Code 45023.1
Colorado	No	Colorado Revised Statutes 22-63-401
Connecticut	No	
Delaware	Yes-salary schedule	Delaware Code Title 14 Section 1305
District of Columbia	No	
Florida	State mandates what guidelines must be considered to determine teacher compensation	Florida Statutes 1012.22(1)(c) (5)
Georgia	Yes-salary schedule	Georgia Code 20-2-212
Hawaii	Yes-salary schedule	CBA agreement 2017-2021
Idaho	Yes-minimum salary	Idaho Statutes 33-1004A; 33-1004E
Illinois	Yes-minimum salary	Governor JB Pritzker signed Public Act 101-0443, the "Minimum Salary Act," into law on August 22, 2019.
Indiana	State mandates what guidelines must be considered to determine teacher compensation	Indiana Code 20-28-9-1.5
Iowa	Yes-minimum salary	Iowa Code 284.3A, -15
Kansas	No	
Kentucky	Yes-salary schedule	Kentucky Revised Statutes 157.390

<b>State</b>	<b>Salary schedule</b>	<b>Citation</b>
Louisiana	No	Louisiana Revised Statutes 14:418
Maine	Yes-minimum salary	Maine Revised Statutes Title 20-A Section 13407
Maryland	No	Maryland Education Code 4-103
Massachusetts	Yes-minimum salary	Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 Section 40
Michigan	No	Michigan Revised School Code Act 451 of 1976 Section 380.1249; 380.1250
Minnesota	No	
Mississippi	Yes-salary schedule	Mississippi Code 37-19-7
Missouri	Yes-minimum salary	Missouri Revised Statutes 163.172
Montana	No	
Nebraska	No	
Nevada	No	Nevada Revised Statutes 391.160
New Hampshire	No	
New Jersey	Yes-minimum salary	New Jersey Statutes 18A:29-5
New Mexico	Yes-minimum salary	New Mexico Code 22-10A-7, -10, -11
New York	No	
North Carolina	yes-salary schedule	North Carolina Salary Schedule 2020-21
North Dakota	No	North Dakota Century Code 15.1-09-33(20)
Ohio	Yes-salary schedule	Ohio Revised Code 3317.13
Oklahoma	Yes-salary schedule	State Minimum Teacher Salary Schedule
Oregon	No	Oregon Revised Statutes 332.505
Pennsylvania	No	
Rhode Island	Yes-minimum salary	Rhode Island Code 16-12-5

State	Salary schedule	Citation
South Carolina	Yes-salary schedule	South Carolina Statutes 59-20-50
South Dakota	No	South Dakota Code 13-10-2
Tennessee	Yes-salary schedule	Tennessee Code 49-3-306
Texas	Yes-salary schedule	Texas Education Code 21.402(c)
Utah	No	Utah Code 53-8a-601
Vermont	No	
Virginia	No	
Washington	Yes-minimum salary	Revised Code of Washington 28A.400.200
West Virginia	Yes-salary schedule	West Virginia Code 18A-4-2
Wisconsin	No	Wisconsin Statutes 119.40
Wyoming	No	Wyoming Statutes 21-3-110(a)(ii)(A)

*Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from respective state education agencies and NCTQ*



## Appendix P. Statewide Teacher Salary Schedules (2020)

Table 19: State Teacher Salary Schedules (2020). (This table provides information for the 14 states utilizing the traditional teacher salary schedule.)

State	2019 Average Salary (National Rank)	Year	Starting Minimum with Bachelor's	Highest Minimum Salary	Requirements for Highest Minimum Salary	Citation
Alabama	\$54,095 (35)	FY2022	\$41,690	\$73,125	27 years and Doctorate	<a href="#">AL Salary Schedule, 2022</a>
Arkansas	\$50,456 (47)	2020-21 school year	\$34,900	\$47,050	15 years and Master's	<a href="#">A.C.A. §6-17-2403 (b)</a>
Delaware	\$64,853 (15)	FY2022	\$29,866	\$54,604	Step 17 and Doctorate	<a href="#">14 Del. C. §1305 (b), DE Salary Schedule</a>
Georgia	\$60,578 (19)	FY 2021	\$35,217	\$76,980	21 years and Doctorate	<a href="#">GA Salary Schedule</a>
Hawaii	\$65,409 (14)	2021-22 school year	\$37,993	\$64,545	6 years and Doctorate	<a href="#">HI Salary Schedule</a>
Kentucky	\$53,907 (36)	2021-22	\$29,804	\$46,211	20 Years and Master's or National Board for Professional Teaching Certified	<a href="#">KY Salary Schedule</a>
Mississippi	\$46,843 (51)	FY2021-22	\$37,000	\$69,870	35 years and Doctorate	<a href="#">MS Salary Schedule</a>
North Carolina	\$54,150 (33)	FY 2020-21	\$35,000	\$65,970	35 years and Doctorate	<a href="#">NC Salary Schedule</a>
Ohio	\$61,406 (17)	Effective 2019	\$30,000	\$48,690	5 years and Master's or Doctorate	<a href="#">R.C. §3317.13</a>
Oklahoma	\$54,096 (34)	2021-22	\$36,601	\$54,395	25 years and Doctorate	<a href="#">OK Salary Schedule</a>
South Carolina	\$53,329 (38)	2020-21	\$35,000	\$67,320	23 years and Doctorate	<a href="#">SC Salary Schedule</a>
Tennessee	\$51,862 (41)	2020-21	\$36,000	\$46,330	11 years and advanced degree	<a href="#">TN Salary Schedule</a>
Texas	\$57,090 (27)	2021-22	\$33,660	\$54,540	20 years	<a href="#">TX Salary Schedule</a>
West Virginia	\$50,238 (48)	2020-21	\$36,815	\$64,037	Doctorate	<a href="#">WV Salary Schedule</a>

Source: Education Commission of the States.

\*Note: Data and information is accurate as of October 29, 2021

## **Appendix Q: Oklahoma Statute Regulating Teacher Incentive Pay Plans (70 O.S. § 5-141.2)**

- A. In addition to incentive pay plans authorized pursuant to Section 4 of this act, the State Board of Education shall develop not fewer than five different model incentive pay plans and shall distribute information about each plan to every school district board of education. No plan developed by the Board or implemented by a school district board of education shall permit payment in any one (1) year of incentives to any one teacher amounting to more than fifty percent (50%) of the regular salary of the teacher, exclusive of fringe benefits or extra duty pay. Any incentive pay award shall be an annual award and shall not be a part of a continuing contract of a teacher. Any incentive pay awards received shall be excluded from the compensation of a teacher for purposes of calculating retirement pursuant to the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma and shall not be subject to taxes levied by the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (F.I.C.A.), to the extent an exemption is provided by federal law.
- B. A school district board of education may adopt an academically based, district incentive pay plan for the classroom teachers in the district. The district may adopt any incentive pay plan consistent with the requirements of this section, which may include any incentive pay plan developed by the State Board of Education pursuant to this section. The school district board of education shall appoint an advisory committee consisting of teachers, parents, business persons or farmers and other local citizens to advise the board in formulating an incentive pay plan. Prior to the adoption of a plan, the board of education shall place the plan on the school board agenda for public comment and shall submit the plan to the State Board of Education for final approval on or before March 1 prior to implementation of the plan during the succeeding school year. The board of education shall comply with the provisions of this subsection for any year a plan is to be modified.
- C. A school district shall be required to adopt and implement an academically based, district incentive pay plan for any school year following the receipt by the school district board of education, of a petition signed by twenty percent (20%) of the classroom teachers employed in the district which calls for the adoption of an incentive pay plan for the district.
- D. Student test scores shall not be the sole criterion for allocation of incentive pay under any plan developed or approved by the Board.
- E. For the purposes of this section only, "classroom teacher" shall mean any employee who holds certification and assignment outside the classification of administrator.
- F. The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules necessary for the effective implementation and administration of this section.
- G. Each school district board of education shall provide for a local evaluation committee which shall advise the board on which teachers are to receive incentive pay awards and the amount of each incentive pay award according to the plan.
- H. Nothing herein shall preclude a school district from supplementing any monies appropriated to the district for the purposes of funding the incentive pay plan of the district with monies from the general fund for the district. (70 O.S. § 5-141.2)

## Appendix R: North Carolina State-Wide Total Vacancies for Subjects by School Type (2019-2020)

Figure 7: North Carolina State-wide Total Vacancies for Subjects by School Type (2019-2020). (This figure provides a table from an annual report from the North Carolina State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction illustrating the number of vacancies across their public education system by academic subject area.)

**Table 11: State-Wide Total Vacancies for Subjects by School Type**

Subject Area	School Type	Number of Vacancies
Core (Math, ELA, Science, Social Studies)	K-5	273.5
Exceptional Children	K-5	137.2
Math	6-8	79.2
ELA	6-8	48.5
Science	6-8	56.7
Social Studies	6-8	39.5
Exceptional Children	6-8	82.0
Math	9-12	83.5
ELA	9-12	47.5
Science	9-12	44.6
Social Studies	9-12	20.3
EC	9-12	84.0
CTE	9-12	75.5

Source: North Carolina State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction 2019-20 State of the Teaching Profession in North Carolina

<https://www.cbs17.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/29/2021/08/REPORT-State-of-the-Teaching-Profession-12.15.20.pdf>

Comprehensive Compensation for Oklahoma Teachers

**Appendix S: Arkansas Academic Shortage Areas for the 2021-2022 School Year**

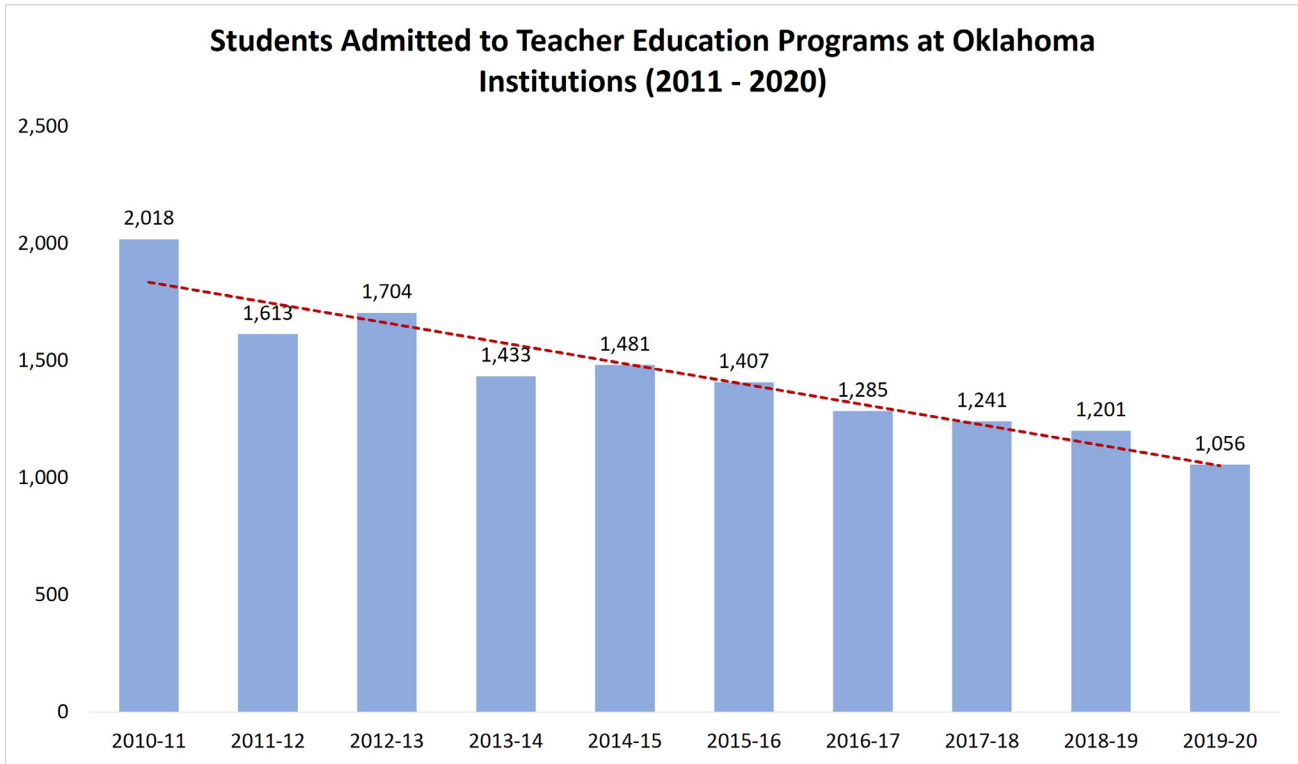
Table 20: Arkansas Academic Shortage Areas for the 2021-2022 School Year. (This table from Arkansas' Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ADESE) annual teacher workforce reports shows ADESE uses a data-driven approach to illustrate the strength of Arkansas' teacher workforce, including students exiting the teacher preparation pipeline, to address academic subject shortage.)

Area	Preparing			Potential New Hires			Long-term Subs			Teachers Out-of-Field (ALPs)			Potential for Need			Total Score	
	# of Teachers in Area by course (TIA)	Preparing for the license	Preparing as % of TIA	Preparing Score	First-time licenses	FTL as % of TIA	FTL Score	# People LTS	LTS as % of TIA	LTS Score	# ALPs	ALPs as % of TIA	ALP Score	# who are Veterans	Veterans as % of TIA		Veteran Score
Special Education	3,094	954	30.83%	30.83	411	13.28%	13.28	124	4.01%	40.08	357	11.54%	11.54	270	8.73%	8.73	84
Physics	1,780	24	1.35%	1.35	27	1.52%	1.52	5	0.28%	2.81	17	0.96%	0.96	135	7.58%	7.58	92
Art	1,308	102	7.80%	7.80	63	4.82%	4.82	14	1.07%	10.70	16	1.22%	1.22	119	9.10%	9.10	92
Chemistry	1,883	24	1.27%	1.27	38	2.02%	2.02	4	0.21%	2.12	29	1.54%	1.54	139	7.38%	7.38	92
French	138	5	3.62%	3.62	3	2.17%	2.17	0	0.00%	0.00	1	0.72%	0.72	13	9.42%	9.42	96
Mathematics	2,462	115	4.67%	4.67	116	4.71%	4.71	11	0.45%	4.47	43	1.75%	1.75	179	7.27%	7.27	96
Library	928	117	12.61%	12.61	90	9.70%	9.70	3	0.32%	3.23	46	4.96%	4.96	151	16.27%	16.27	98
Physical Ed/Health	5,875	284	4.83%	4.83	268	4.56%	4.56	9	0.15%	1.53	17	0.29%	0.29	473	8.05%	8.05	100
Business	1,791	77	4.30%	4.30	134	7.48%	7.48	2	0.11%	1.12	18	1.01%	1.01	162	9.05%	9.05	101
Computer Science	275	16	5.82%	5.82	56	20.36%	20.36	5	1.82%	18.18	11	4.00%	4.00	8	2.91%	2.91	101
Drama/Speech	698	30	4.30%	4.30	63	9.03%	9.03	2	0.29%	2.87	16	2.29%	2.29	39	5.59%	5.59	103
Life Sci (Biology)	1,735	106	6.11%	6.11	97	5.59%	5.59	1	0.06%	0.58	10	0.58%	0.58	135	7.78%	7.78	103
Spanish	421	38	9.03%	9.03	32	7.60%	7.60	3	0.71%	7.13	4	0.95%	0.95	23	5.46%	5.46	103
English / Lang Arts	2,697	256	9.49%	9.49	191	7.08%	7.08	12	0.44%	4.45	17	0.63%	0.63	183	6.79%	6.79	105
Social Studies	2,398	278	11.59%	11.59	191	7.96%	7.96	10	0.42%	4.17	41	1.71%	1.71	208	8.67%	8.67	105
Middle Ch – English	5,724	244	4.26%	4.26	277	4.84%	4.84	10	0.17%	1.75	29	0.51%	0.51	102	1.78%	1.78	105
Fam & Cons. Sci	639	56	8.76%	8.76	68	10.64%	10.64	2	0.31%	3.13	4	0.63%	0.63	67	10.49%	10.49	105
Elem Education	14,251	1,510	10.60%	10.60	873	6.13%	6.13	41	0.29%	2.88	49	0.34%	0.34	1,062	7.45%	7.45	106
Middle Ch – Math	5,018	254	5.06%	5.06	275	5.48%	5.48	7	0.14%	1.39	13	0.26%	0.26	92	1.83%	1.83	107
Agriculture	360	43	11.94%	11.94	34	9.44%	9.44	1	0.28%	2.78	1	0.28%	0.28	40	11.11%	11.11	107
Mid Ch – Soc Stud	4,697	267	5.68%	5.68	296	6.30%	6.30	9	0.19%	1.92	25	0.53%	0.53	104	2.21%	2.21	107
Middle Ch – Sci	3,767	202	5.36%	5.36	278	7.38%	7.38	5	0.13%	1.33	37	0.98%	0.98	73	1.94%	1.94	108
Music	1,437	225	15.66%	15.66	120	8.35%	8.35	5	0.35%	3.48	10	0.70%	0.70	121	8.42%	8.42	111
Counseling	1,346	537	39.90%	39.90	148	11.00%	11.00	3	0.22%	2.23	62	4.61%	4.61	194	14.41%	14.41	130
Ind. Tech. ***	82	44	53.66%	53.66	44	53.66%	53.66	5	6.10%	60.98	1	1.22%	1.22	12	14.63%	14.63	130
Gifted - Talented	446	253	56.73%	56.73	61	13.68%	13.68	1	0.22%	2.24	54	12.11%	12.11	53	11.88%	11.88	144
Journalism *	468	256	54.70%	54.70	196	41.88%	41.88	0	0.00%	0.00	2	0.43%	0.43	42	8.97%	8.97	187
Marketing **	229	85	37.12%	37.12	140	61.14%	61.14	0	0.00%	0.00	0	0.00%	0.00	22	9.61%	9.61	189

\* Includes English in "Preparing" and "FTL"  
 \*\* Includes Business in "Preparing" and "FTL"  
 \*\*\* Includes Agriculture in "Preparing" and "FTL"

### Appendix T: Students Admitted to Teacher Education Programs at Oklahoma Institutions (2011 – 2020)

Chart 26: Students Admitted to Teacher Education Programs at Oklahoma Institutions (2011-2020). (This chart provides the number of students admitted to teacher education programs at Oklahoma institutions over the 10 years.)



Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency’s analysis based on data from OSRHE



## Appendix U: Number of Bachelor's Degrees in the Field of Education Conferred by Oklahoma Public Institution

*Table 21: Number of Bachelor's Degrees in the Field of Education Conferred by Oklahoma Public Institution. (This table provides longitudinal data from all public teacher preparation colleges to provide the trend in the number of degrees conferred to students pursuing teacher degrees in Oklahoma.)*

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	% Change from 2010-11
CU	103	94	72	105	96	100	107	87	64	103	0%
ECU	119	136	138	107	112	103	101	91	97	82	-31%
LU	21	34	12	20	13	19	11	21	28	32	52%
NSU	320	312	262	257	260	225	211	186	152	161	-50%
NWOSU	83	80	92	78	74	74	94	56	79	71	-14%
OPSU	34	48	32	40	25	16	29	40	26	20	-41%
OSU	219	247	260	243	248	227	230	190	188	180	-18%
SEOUS	125	111	84	99	79	85	64	69	46	37	-70%
SWOSU	80	91	91	95	86	77	92	100	99	88	10%
UCO	228	235	196	196	202	188	166	170	197	194	-15%
OU	167	156	221	174	173	158	146	145	172	156	-7%
USAO	39	57	44	44	39	27	40	36	29	35	-10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,538</b>	<b>1,601</b>	<b>1,504</b>	<b>1,458</b>	<b>1,407</b>	<b>1,299</b>	<b>1,291</b>	<b>1,191</b>	<b>1,177</b>	<b>1,159</b>	<b>-25%</b>

*Source: Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency's analysis based on data from OSRHE*

### Appendix V: Requirements before Teaching Full-Time by Oklahoma Teacher Certification Pathway

Figure 8: Requirements before Teaching Full-Time by Oklahoma Teacher Certification Pathway. (This figure provides the list of requirements for aspiring teachers by certification pathway.)

Requirements <i>before beginning to teach</i> by certification pathway:	Comprehensive University-Based Teacher Education	Alternative Certification	Teach For America (TFA)	Emergency Certification	Para-Professional Certification	Substitute Teachers
Hold a bachelor’s degree	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	?
Complete an accredited TEP	YES					
Complete 15 weeks, on average, full-time internship in P-12 classrooms with carefully selected mentor	YES					
Complete 146 hours, on average, in P-12 classrooms before student teaching	YES		*			
Pass the OGET (content exam) and OSAT (subject exam for content teaching)	YES	YES	**			
Demonstrate a concentration of coursework in the content area in which seeking certification	YES	YES				
Pass the OPTE or PPAT test/assessment (professional exam on how to teach)	YES					
Complete coursework on student learning, classroom management, assessment, and students’ personal/developmental needs	YES					
Complete dyslexia training (early childhood, elementary and special education) and pass the Oklahoma Reading Test (special education)	YES					
Complete child welfare-related training: trauma-informed instruction, FERPA, substance abuse, child abuse, professional ethics & school law, etc.	YES					

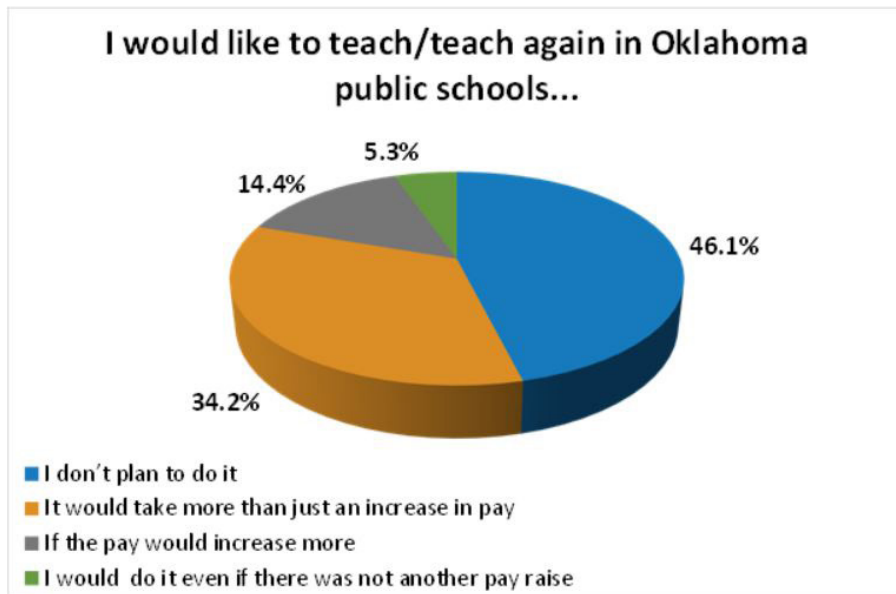
\*5 week institute includes up to one hour per day (up to 25 hours total, then) co-teaching a child/children, though may or may not be in the content area or grade level where placed. The institute is typically led by TFA alumni, a small percentage of whom completed university-based teacher prep programs.

\*\*Must take and pass two Praxis exams prior to teaching.

Source: Oklahoma Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (OACT)

Appendix W: Teacher Follow Up Survey

# Profile 4: Returning to OK public schools



– 2017 vs. 2019: If the pay would increase more, survey respondents are sig. more likely in 2019 than they were in 2017 to teach/teach again in Okla. Public schools (the first and last answer options are not comparable across years).

## Agency Response

- OSDE Response, December 8, 2021



JOY HOFMEISTER

STATE SUPERINTENDENT *of* PUBLIC INSTRUCTION  
OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

**TO:** Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency (LOFT)

**FROM:** Superintendent Joy Hofmeister

**DATE:** December 8, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Agency response to the Rapid Response Evaluation of Comprehensive Compensation for Oklahoma Teachers

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) would like to thank LOFT for its thorough work in the review of Oklahoma's Teacher Compensation. The OSDE found the LOFT staff to be professional in their communication and responsive to feedback and concerns. The evaluation will be an important resource for years to come.

Specifically, the OSDE appreciates LOFT's examination of teacher pay in terms of its relevance to a significant teacher shortage impacting the state's public education system in recent years. While a teacher shortage has been felt nationwide, the problem is particularly severe in Oklahoma and a handful of other states. While the state Legislature rightly stepped up with a pair of historic pay raises, the teacher shortage persists – and arguably will worsen in the wake of a pandemic that saddled educators with a heretofore new set of challenges and frustrations.

As LOFT notes, a nagging mystery remains concerning the teacher shortage if one accepts the report's conclusion that teacher pay in Oklahoma – when one factors in benefits, real buying power and a relatively low cost of living – is actually top in the region and 21<sup>st</sup> in the U.S. The teacher shortage, after all, is very real. OSDE appreciates LOFT's recognition that there are serious flaws with the current salary schedule, particularly that it does not provide strong incentives for mid- to late-career teachers to stay in the classroom, but the question remains: If teacher compensation in Oklahoma is better than public perception might suggest, what then is causing people to reject the profession?

Not surprisingly, there does not appear to be a simplistic answer. OSDE's Teacher Shortage Task Force, first convened in 2015, found insufficient pay to be far from the only factor spurring a teacher exodus. As part of the task force's work, a nationally recognized pollster in January 2018 surveyed thousands of Oklahoma teachers who were maintaining their teaching certification but were no longer teaching in Oklahoma. When asked why, many respondents pointed to low education funding, not being allowed to make decisions about instruction or inadequate support from administrators. The results did not render a definitive reason for the teacher shortage. Rather, the shortage can be attributed to diverse causes.

LOFT proposes that much more data is needed than is currently available for state leaders to deduce why Oklahoma continues struggling with a shortage of teachers. LOFT recommends that





JOY HOFMEISTER

STATE SUPERINTENDENT *of* PUBLIC INSTRUCTION  
OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

OSDE collect an array of detailed data from school districts and embark on various partnerships to get to the bottom of the teacher shortage. While OSDE agrees that such data would certainly be helpful, the Legislature may consider if this is the appropriate agency to collect and analyze the aforementioned information. Not only would this constitute an expansion of OSDE's mission, but the tasks would require a significant addition of resources and staff. Moreover, the Legislature has created a wholly separate agency – the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (OEQA) – charged with oversight of teacher preparation programs in higher education, yet nowhere does LOFT even mention OEQA as having a potential role in the erosion of the teacher pipeline. In the final analysis, OSDE believes the best way to promote the teaching profession is to give educators the support needed to do their jobs effectively.



JOY HOFMEISTER  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT *of* PUBLIC INSTRUCTION  
OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

***Finding 1: When Adjusted for Cost-of-Living and Tax Burden, the Average Oklahoma Salary Ranks 1<sup>st</sup> Within the Surrounding Region and 21<sup>st</sup> in the Nation.***

**Does the agency agree with the facts as presented?**

OSDE agrees with the facts as presented.

**Agency Comments and Clarifications**

- OSDE recognizes the Legislature’s commitment to competitive teacher compensation both in salary and in benefits and is grateful for the recent salary increases that have increased the average teacher salary across the state. Additionally, OSDE appreciates the recognition that many districts have gone above and beyond the requirements set by the Legislature to recruit and retain top talent in the state.
- While Oklahoma’s low cost of living and real buying power certainly create an added benefit for the state’s teachers, the fact that only 47% of teachers from 2016 remained in the profession after five years, as described in Finding 3, is astonishing. Further exacerbating the issue is the fact that colleges of education are only producing half the number of graduates needed to offset retirements alone. These issues cannot be overcome by cost of living and buying power.

***Finding 2: Oklahoma’s Compensation Structure Provides Limited Incentives and Options for Professional Growth.***

**Does the agency agree with the facts as presented?**

OSDE agrees with the facts as presented.

**Agency Comments and Clarifications**

- OSDE has recognized and advocated for more diverse pay structures for many years. In 2015, the very first iteration of Superintendent Hofmeister’s Teacher Shortage Task Force<sup>1</sup> recommended a teacher-leader program with extended contracts and additional pay – a structure akin to Iowa’s Teacher Leadership Compensation System highlighted in Finding 2. This recommendation resulted in HB 3114 The Empowering Teachers to Lead Act of 2016 and is referenced in its current form of SB 980 (2018). OSDE requested

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<sup>1</sup> Teacher Shortage Task Force Preliminary Report:  
<https://sde.ok.gov/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/Prelim.%20report%20Dec.%2015%202015.pdf>



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funds to pilot this program in the FY 18 budget in the amount of \$15,000,000, but ultimately no funding was appropriated.

### ***Finding 3: Lack of Data Prevents Oklahoma from Assessing Compensations' Role in Teacher Shortages***

#### **Does the agency agree with the facts as presented?**

OSDE partially agrees with the facts as presented.

- OSDE appreciates LOFT's recommendation to enhance the teacher exit survey tool to leverage it for additional data as to why teachers are leaving their current jobs.
- OSDE disagrees with the statement that "the state's education entities have not presented an evidence-based plan to address the ongoing challenges across Oklahoma's K-12 public education system." As previously noted, OSDE convened a Teacher Shortage Task Force in 2015, including stakeholders across the education landscape as is recommended by LOFT, which examined all aspects of the teacher shortage. The task force made annual recommendations on legislation, administrative rules and policies for both teacher recruitment and teacher retention. Copies of those reports are available on OSDE's website.<sup>2</sup>
- OSDE also does not lack for understanding the systematic challenges inside schools, as is asserted by LOFT. In addition to the Teacher Shortage Task Force, OSDE commissioned a survey of more than 32,000 teachers maintaining their certification, but not teaching in an Oklahoma classroom, to better understand why teachers have left the workforce.<sup>3</sup> With nearly 8,500 responses, the challenges that persist in the state's schools are clear. Those challenges include few opportunities for advancement, not enough support from administration, poor work environment, and restrictions that inhibit practicing the art of teaching. The study concluded:

*"...that while pay is a top concern of many former teachers and increasing pay could attract 31% of former teachers with active credentials back to Oklahoma's public school system, pay does not appear to be the only potential remedy for the teacher shortage."*

- While OSDE does not collect teacher vacancy information in the manner desired by LOFT, OSDE calculates, and is required to submit teacher shortage areas, to the U.S. Department of Education.<sup>4</sup> The state's methodology and results must be approved in order for teacher candidates to receive tuition assistance for pursuing a subject where

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<sup>2</sup> <https://sde.ok.gov/educator-effectiveness>

<sup>3</sup> <https://sde.ok.gov/documents/2018-01-22/teacher-survey-report>

<sup>4</sup> <https://tsa.ed.gov/#/reports>



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there is a designated shortage. Additionally, OSDE maintains an online tool to pair teachers with job openings in Oklahoma public school districts – OKTeacherMatch.com. The portal displays estimated salaries for each job opening, reflecting the average teacher pay and the job-seeking teacher’s degree level and years of experience. Teacher vacancy information could be pulled from this system based on district job postings.

### **Agency Comments and Clarifications**

- While OSDE is a willing partner to work with any entity that wants to engage in a conversation to address the teacher shortage, OSDE is neither the employer nor the producer of the teacher supply. OSDE is also not the state’s workforce development agency and is leery of a mission expansion to include tasks such as analyzing workforce trends and occupational data where it does not have expertise.

### ***Does the agency agree with the recommendations related to this evaluation?***

- OSDE cautions against changes to the statutory definition of “teacher” codified at [70 O.S. § 1-116](#) without extensive review for unintended consequences. For additional context, prior to July 1, 2016, the statutory definition of “teacher” was:

“Teacher” means any person who is employed to serve as district superintendent, principal, supervisor, counselor, librarian, school nurse or classroom teacher, or in any other instructional, supervisory, or administrative capacity, is defined as a teacher. Such person shall not be deemed qualified unless the person holds a valid certificate issued by and in accordance with the rules of the State Board of Education, to perform the particular services for which the person is employed; (70 O.S. § 1-116(1))

However, via [HB 3218](#), effective July 1, 2016, the statutory definition was amended to read:

**“Teacher” means any person who is employed to serve as a counselor, librarian, or classroom teacher or in any other instructional capacity.** The person shall not be deemed qualified unless the person holds a valid certificate issued by and in accordance with the rules of the State Board of Education, to perform the particular services for which the person is employed; *See* HB 3218 (2016).

The breadth of the definition of “teacher” was narrowed by removing persons employed as a district superintendent, principal, supervisor or in any other supervisory or administrative capacity. As one consequence of this amendment, certain personnel were then prohibited from receiving the Teachers’ Retirement System credit paid against the



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employee contribution. This change also excluded the removed positions within a school district from other requirements, including teacher evaluations ([70 O.S. § 6-101.16](#)), reporting of inappropriate behavior ([70 O.S. § 6-101.25](#)) and certain professional development requirements ([70 O.S. § 6-194](#)). A review of Title 70 also evidences that the definition in section 1-116 is utilized with respect to the following:

1. Teacher contracts with their public school employers ([70 O.S. § 6-101](#));
2. Teacher Leader Effectiveness / teacher evaluations ([70 O.S. § 6-101.3](#));
3. School Protection Act ([70 O.S. § 6-149.3](#));
4. The Teacher Preparation Act ([70 O.S. § 6-182](#));
5. The aforementioned professional development ([70 O.S. § 6-194](#));
6. Student transfers in the situation of a child of a teacher employed by the receiving school district ([70 O.S. § 8-113](#)); and
7. Bargaining unit / negotiations ([70 O.S. § 509.2](#)).

One year subsequent to narrowing the definition of “teacher,” the 2016 statutory definition was restored and OSDE does not believe there has been a modification to this term since that time. *See* [HB 2386](#). Finally, over the past five years, OSDE has been requested to provide analysis of various teacher pay raise proposals, using the aforementioned definitions of “teacher” in section 1-116, the definition of “certified personnel” in [70 O.S. § 26-103](#) and job codes associated therewith.

- OSDE agrees with the need for alignment between colleges of education and the existing teacher pool and has previously made recommendations that could bridge this divide. OSDE is a willing partner to collaborate on changes that may be necessary in the teacher pipeline.
- Regarding most of the remaining recommendations, OSDE does not have existing capacity to undertake these tasks.
  - To meet the existing requirement to compile and publish the Teacher Supply and Demand Study every three years, OSDE already employs a fulltime employee. As the report publishes data by year, expanding this requirement to annual is neither necessary nor feasible.
  - As mentioned previously, the OSDE is not the state’s workforce agency and does not have spare resources to dedicate to the implementation of some of these recommendations.