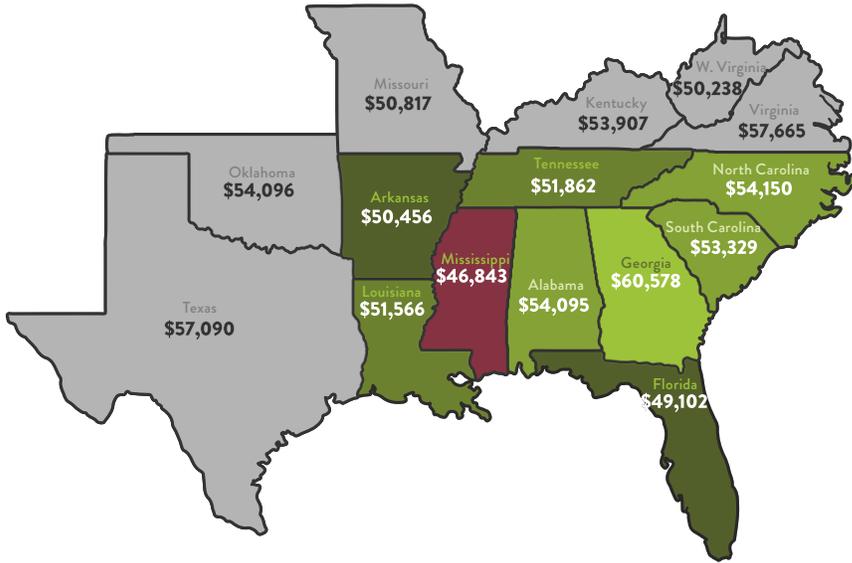


LOW TEACHER SALARIES THREATEN OUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

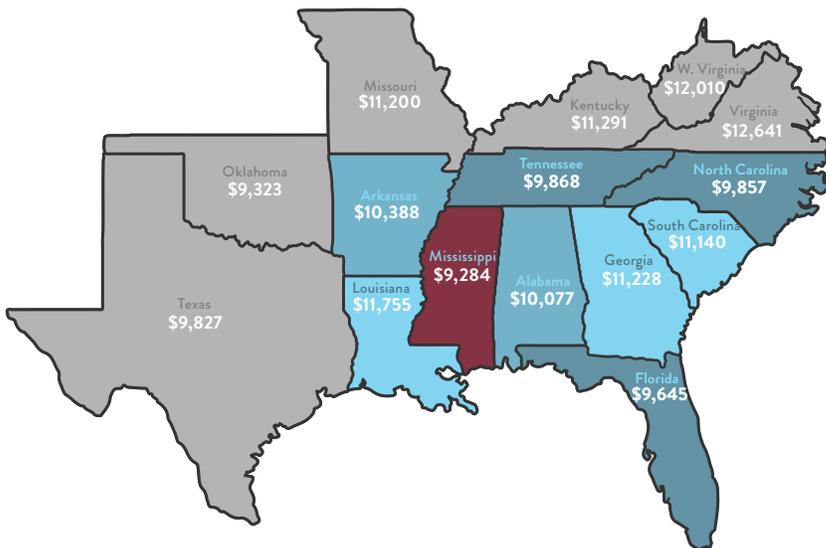
Mississippi teacher salaries are the lowest in the nation, causing teachers to work two or more jobs to pay their bills and contributing to a teacher shortage crisis.

Average Teacher Salary



Some have alleged that the MAEP requires an unreasonable investment in our children. Fully funding the MAEP for FY2022 would require an additional \$577 per student. Arkansas invests about \$1,100 more, per student, than does Mississippi. Teacher salaries are the primary driver of this disparity.

Average Per-Student Spending



Underfunding at the state level leads to local tax increases

Statewide MAEP funding to school districts is less than statewide spending on teacher salaries and benefits. A 2021 PEER report found communities raised local taxes significantly to make up for the deficit in state funding.

Teachers tell us...

I cannot stay in education and provide for my household.

My teacher friend is a single parent with two children, and twice during the last school year we took up donations so he could keep his house. He has a master's degree and works a second job and literally cannot afford to live on his teacher's salary.

I know more teachers leaving the field than coming in. Every bit of it has to do with pay. Not benefits – we've got great retirement coming – but I have to make it to the finish line. I have to survive and provide for my family. I'm the breadwinner.

As a single parent with two children, I'm forced to add degrees and certifications, and I'm still barely surviving.

If we want teachers to stay in the field, pay is the issue. It all comes back to pay.

Superintendents tell us...

The shortage is much more pronounced, and pay has a very big part in attracting folks to the profession and keeping them.

Normally our high school would have 20-40 applicants in a subject area. Now they are happy to have 2-5 applicants.

The teacher shortage is becoming more severe every year. There are large pockets of openings in districts that typically do not have any openings.

I am fearful of our ability to continue filling positions with high quality teachers if we do not see pay increases.

It is urgent... teacher pay must be competitive with similarly educated professionals and the Southeast average to attract the best minds to education.

Sources and Data

Statewide, school districts' total expenditures on teacher salaries and benefits exceed the statewide MAEP appropriation. The most recent study by The Parents' Campaign Research & Education Fund found that total FY2020 expenditures on teacher salaries and benefits statewide exceeded the statewide MAEP appropriation to school districts by \$111-million.

- FY2020 statewide expenditure on teacher salaries and benefits: \$2,343,877,183
- FY2020 statewide MAEP appropriation to school districts: \$2,232,836,888
- Of 140 traditional school districts, 73 spent more on teacher salaries and benefits than they received in their MAEP allocations. (Every charter school spent less on teacher salaries and benefits than it received in its MAEP allocation.)
- Salary expenditures used in these comparisons were those of teachers only and did NOT include salaries of principals, superintendents, or other administrators; secretaries; custodians; bus drivers; or other non-certified personnel.

Average teacher salaries are from 2019-2020, the most recent state-to-state comparison available. (Source: Average Salaries of Public School Teachers - Rankings of the States FY2020, National Education Association)

Per-student spending data is from FY2019, the most recent state-to-state comparison available. (Source: Survey of School System Finances FY2019, U.S. Census Bureau)