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OSPI NEWS RELEASE: Superintendent Reykdal Proposes Plan to Increase Retention of Washington’s Educators

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Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Chris Reykdal, State Superintendent



Superintendent Reykdal Proposes Plan to Increase Retention of Washington's Educators

At the direction of the Legislature, OSPI convened a workgroup to recommend changes to ensure Washington's school funding model provides competitive salaries for school employees. OSPI submitted a proposal with streamlined recommendations to the Governor and Legislature for consideration in the 2023 Legislative Session.

OLYMPIA—October 20, 2022—Students have more success in school when they have access to educators that are highly skilled, reflect the diversity of the students they serve, and are retained within their communities. In a press conference today, State Superintendent Chris Reykdal outlined a budget proposal to support Washington's educators and reduce turnover.

Under Reykdal's proposal, the Legislature would provide hiring bonuses for positions that are harder to fill, increase the salary allocation for all school employees to adjust for inflation, address inequities in the current school funding model, and fund neighboring school districts in areas with higher costs of living more equitably.



“Our educators are critical to the fabric of our school communities,” **Reykdal** said. “High rates of teacher turnover have proven impacts on students’ academic success, as well as on feelings of connection and stability among teachers within the school. This proposal aims to reduce teacher turnover and more equitably fund our school districts.”

How School Employee Salaries Are Funded

In Washington, the Legislature distributes funds to schools through the Prototypical School Funding Model, which uses factors like student enrollment numbers and the cost of living in the local community to determine staffing levels. School districts then work with their local labor associations to decide on a salary schedule that meets their local needs.

The Legislature uses “regionalization factors” to fund schools, which are a percentage increase in state funding of up to 18%. School districts’ eligibility is based on home values in the community. Regionalization factors provide needed funding to retain educators in school districts with higher community property values.

Because regionalization factors are assigned by individual school district, many areas across Washington see significant differences in state funding between neighboring school districts. In these cases, the school districts with lower regionalization factors struggle to hire and retain employees because a neighboring district can offer higher salaries. In turn, the school districts with lower regionalization factors also see higher turnover rates.

In addition, the Legislature provides an “experience factor” – through a 4% increase in funding – for school districts whose educators have above average years of experience and advanced degrees.

OSPI’s Proposal

The proposal the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) submitted to the Governor and Legislature for consideration in the 2023 Legislative Session aims to support recruiting and retaining a diverse educator workforce with competitive salaries reflective of current economic conditions.

To support school districts in hiring high-quality educators in hard-to-fill positions and regions, OSPI’s proposal would provide a one-time, \$10,000 hiring bonus to special education teachers; a one-time, \$5,000 hiring bonus to instructional and administrative staff at eligible high-poverty schools; and annual bonuses for teachers and paraeducators endorsed in dual language and working in dual language education programs.

In addition, to fund neighboring school districts more equitably, OSPI’s proposal would provide a 6% increase to base salaries for all school employees and would lower the maximum regionalization factor from 18% to 12% and assign these factors by county, instead of by school district.

Finally, to more accurately cover the salary costs of educators who are more experienced or who hold advanced degrees, OSPI’s proposal would expand eligibility for the experience factor to districts whose educators have more experience *or* have more advanced degrees, instead of both.

In addition to these changes to the state’s school funding model, OSPI has also submitted proposals to the Legislature to support Washington’s teacher workforce in becoming more reflective of the students they serve. While only half of Washington’s students are White, roughly 86% of the state’s teaching workforce is White.

Washington’s beginning teachers (those with three or fewer years of experience in the profession) continue to outpace the growth in racial diversity of the total teaching workforce, with 23% of beginning teachers in the 2020–21 school year being teachers

of color, compared to just 13% of the total teaching population being teachers of color.

OSPI has submitted multiple proposals to the Governor and Legislature to build on this progress, including, but not limited to, expanding the state’s mentor program for new teachers—a proven strategy for retaining teachers within their school and within the profession—as well as through the creation of a teacher residency program, which would eliminate many of the financial barriers for college students on a path to earn a teaching certificate.

“I applaud the Legislature for their commitment to regularly examining the state’s salary allocation model for school employees to ensure it’s still reflecting current economic conditions and meeting the needs of our state,” **Reykdal** said. “I look forward to working with them on the details of this proposal.”

The proposal to make Washington’s educator compensation model more equitable is the sixth in a series of transformational budget and policy proposals Superintendent Reykdal will unveil through November called *Washington State Innovates: K–12 Education for the 21st Century and Beyond*.

For More Information

- [OSPI’s Educator Compensation Model Budget Request](#)
- [OSPI’s Report to the Legislature: K–12 Basic Education Compensation Advisory Committee](#)
- [Other Proposals in OSPI’s Washington State Innovates Series](#)

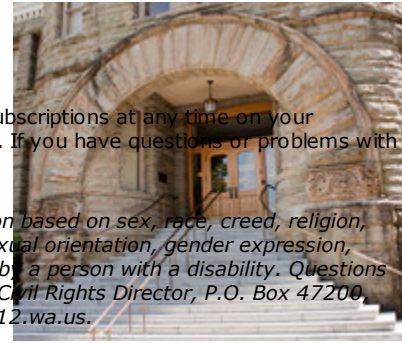


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