## The SCEA Unveils New Nationwide Data on Educator Pay and School Funding

*Teachers in South Carolina are making less than they did 10 years ago;*
*South Carolina is one of only three states with decrease in average teacher salary*

COLUMBIA — On Tuesday, The South Carolina Education Association (The SCEA) and the National Education Association (NEA) unveiled findings from four national reports on educator pay and school funding. The reports cover multiple topics including school staff wages and college faculty pay, as well as state spending on students. The reports paint a dire picture about the state of public education in America.

The big takeaway? Educator pay has failed to keep up with inflation. In fact, teachers today are making $2,179 less, on average, than they did 10 years ago when you factor in inflation.

"The reports on educator and support professional salaries are yet another alarm sounding in South Carolina's dire educator and school staff shortage crisis," said high school science teacher and The SCEA President Sherry East. "As our Senators begin debate on a budget proposal that fails to guarantee a raise to most educators, the national data shows that South Carolina is one of only three states with a decrease in average teacher salary, even without adjusting for inflation."

Throughout the ongoing pandemic, educators have gone above and beyond to make sure students receive the public education they deserve. In every community across South Carolina, they are partnering with parents and families to ensure their students thrive. However, the teacher shortage crisis, fueled by low teacher pay and declining morale, as well as chronically underfunded public schools, is pushing educators to the brink. This trajectory is not sustainable.

"If this state is serious about tackling the educator shortage, part of the solution must include improving pay for teachers at all career stages and for the long term," said East. "South Carolina must appropriate funds to increase all educator salaries and this funding must come without budgetary gimmicks that require educators to jump through unnecessary hoops."

Moreover, South Carolina has fallen to the bottom three in terms of salary change for education support professionals (ESP) and to the bottom two for teacher salary change.

"We know that teachers with lower starting salaries are more likely to leave the profession," East said. "20 percent of educators making less than $40,000 leave within their first five years, compared to only 11 percent of those paid $40,000 or more. Educators shouldn't have to work multiple jobs to make ends meet. If legislators in South Carolina want every classroom to have the qualified teacher students deserve, they will address this issue in this year's budget."

The four reports are:

- Rankings and Estimates, which provides a wide array of school funding statistics and includes the average teacher salary by state and nationally.
- Teacher Salary Benchmark Report, which provides information from nearly 12,000 school districts on average pay for new teachers, as well as additional career points.
- ESP Earnings Report, which offers a breakdown of educational support professional (ESP) pay in K-12 and higher education.
- Higher Education Faculty Salary Analysis, which looks at full-time faculty and graduate assistant salaries at the national, state, and institutional level.

To view the reports, please click here. This website also features an interactive map that shows where states rank on educator pay and student funding.

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*The South Carolina Education Association (The SCEA) represents members employed in public schools throughout South Carolina and is an affiliate of the largest professional association of educators in the country. As the leading advocate for the schools South Carolina students deserve, The SCEA works to promote quality public education and to support public school employees.*

The SCEA: Your Voice. Our Power. **Their Future.**