



Education Reform Commission

Teacher Recruitment, Retention & Compensation

Committee Meeting

Tuesday, October 13, 2015

Pam Williams, Chair

The GAE president and several local presidents, members and staff were present at this week's meeting. Dr. Sid Chapman made public comments at the end of the meeting stating that GAE represents the rank and file and the very heartbeat of teachers. He went on to say that teachers do not trust this process and that they want their retirement and state salary schedule to remain in place. Teachers are not very happy with the salary and compensation proposals coming forth from the ERC. That being said, GAE can support the subcommittee's recommendations to: reduce the number of observations on the TKES evaluation system; investigate state funding for student interns; investigate cancellable student loans; protecting planning time; and for the state to pay for the GACE exam. The committee focused on the written rationale to each of the recommendations. Details will be posted at [ERC website](#).

Tentative Recommendations:

1) No changes should be made for existing members of the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia, as TRS is one of the best run educator retirement programs in the country. Committee recommends that more options be made available to new hires. The committee noted this change could attract new teachers to the profession but it would probably not have any impact on teacher retention.

It is recommended that the retirement committees of the General Assembly study teacher retirement in the next few years. The study should examine actuarial assumptions and evaluate whether small TRS changes for new members or other alternatives for new educators implemented in the next few years would minimize the probability of future changes to existing teachers 10 to 15 years from now.

2) The committee recommends that Georgia set an "aspirational goal" a minimum salary that must be paid to all teachers. Further, a state minimum would not be tied to a state salary schedule. Allocation of money for Local Education Agencies (LEAs or local school boards) to further the goal of increasing teacher salaries with an emphasis on the starting pay. A goal is that Georgia would be at least the national average of teacher salaries, which is currently \$57,379. The current beginning salary of \$33,324 is a detriment to recruitment and retention efforts.

It is recommended that the state minimum teacher salary be increased to \$40,000 as quickly as possible. That said, the committee backtracked from this commitment and, referred to the minimum as an "aspirational goal." The committee believes that the General Assembly should continue adding to the total for teacher salaries.

With over 16% decline in enrollment in teacher preparation programs in Georgia in the last five years and only 28% of Georgia teachers remaining in education for the required ten years to become vested in TRS, it is clear that Georgia must make a statement that teaching is viewed as a profession worthy of a beginning salary for professionals.

In setting model teacher compensation plans and approving district plans, the State Board of Education (SBOE) should work to enforce a statewide minimum salary.

3) The General Assembly should investigate a state based funding program for giving classroom teachers compensation for supervising teacher interns.

This would improve mentoring for student and incentivize school leaders and teachers to assign supervising teachers. Help professional teacher model of more pay for more responsibility.

4) Protect planning time for teachers. The education community should work to protect the planning time for teachers. The climate survey for LKES should have a question related to the scheduling of planning time for their teachers.

One of the top complaints from our teacher community, lack of useable planning time hurts student focus. Teacher input sessions across the state revealed that this is a major concern for teachers.

5) The SBOE should adopt five model policies on teacher compensation and ensure that any charter system or IE2 application adopts one of these policies or develop a robust model on their own. At least one of these models should be rural focused and another urban focused.

Evidence looked at by the committee suggests that newer models will produce better results. Models Should Reflect the Following:

- Grandfathering of teachers into T&E, unless they wish to use the newer system.
- Should not significantly weight graduate degrees for salaries. Reimbursement models are preferable.
- Should allow additional pay for high needs subjects (e.g. STEM) and high need schools.
- Should allow additional pay for additional responsibilities and moving up on the career ladder scale (e.g. master teacher, department head).
- Should allow a faster ramp to the median salary
- Can include signing bonuses for tough to fill fields

6) Full year “clinical practice” for student teachers. The Board of Regents should study the benefits of moving to a full year clinical practice model for education degrees. Currently, there is no mandated length of time for student teaching – each institution is left to decide for themselves. The proposed clinical practice model should for the most part replace traditional coursework and not add semesters to the degree timeline. The study should include renaming Student Teaching to Teacher Intern or Teacher Candidate or a similar term.

Evidence from many groups showing this model best prepares college students for early success.

7) The SBOE should continue to develop strong induction programs. It should require all charter systems and IE2 applications to demonstrate commitment to a strong induction process. The General Assembly should investigate induction grants to help willing systems that want to improve their induction process. Lower the turnover rate of teachers, get better results for kids.

8) The General Assembly should recommend the State Board of Education modify TKES/LKES rules to allow flexibility for fewer classroom observations for experienced teachers after a baseline of good evaluations has been established.

Input from our teacher and administration community, focuses leadership time more accurately.

9) The General Assembly should investigate service cancellable student loans. This measure is intended to attract more students into teacher preparations programs, and increase the number of teachers in high demand areas such as math and science.

10) The General Assembly should develop a system to pay for the GACE tests for first-time teachers that are from Georgia. Many new teachers already carry student loan debts. This proposal will lessen the financial burdens of new teachers.

11) The committee recommends the following guidelines to apply to the best use and respect for our teacher's time:

- The SBOE should continue its return to a "normal" curricular adoption cycle, and keep a high bar before implementing major changes outside a 6 year cycle.
- The General Assembly and SBOE should apply a high bar to legislation and rules that add new requirements, training, or job functions for educators. Both groups should repeal or sunset rules/requirements when not needed.
- The SBOE and Local Boards of Education should work to make SLO assessments more consistent within the state.
- The PSC, SBOE, and DOE should continue to rollout the career progression model for teachers.

The next committee meeting was set for November 9, 8:30 a.m.