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Is Teacher Pay Adequate: Teachers' Opinions on Their Expectations, Requirements, and Pay in Columbia, SC

Presley Garrard
University of South Carolina - Columbia

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Is teacher pay inadequate?: Teachers' opinions on their expectations, requirements, and pay in
Columbia, South Carolina.

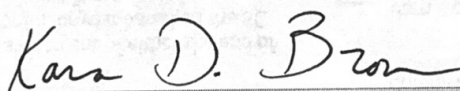
By

Presley Garrard

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for
Graduation with Honors from the
South Carolina Honors College

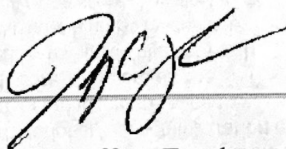
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Approved:



Dr. Kara Brown

Director of Thesis



Dr. Jeffrey Eargle

Second Reader

Steve Lynn, Dean

For South Carolina Honors College

Abstract

The notion of raising teacher pay has been a topic for discussion in the past decades. There are many reasons to raise teacher pay. This paper discusses expectations, requirements, and the professionalism of teachers as being some of the reasons for increasing teacher pay by analyzing peer-reviewed articles and journals. There is an argument that teacher pay does not need to be raised and this argument is acknowledged. In addressing teacher pay, primary research sought teachers' opinions on the demands and expectations of their job and their pay as an accurate reflection of such demands and expectations. This data was collected from a survey sent to secondary public school teachers in Lexington-Richland District 5 in April 2022. The results from the survey are then analyzed and discussed in this paper. Following the discussion of the results, two policy recommendations are given regarding teacher pay.

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Teacher Salary Schedule Table

**SCHOOL DISTRICT FIVE OF LEXINGTON AND RICHLAND COUNTIES
TEACHER SALARY SCHEDULE
PROPOSED FY 2021-2022**

ANNUAL SALARY BASED ON 190 DAYS - INCLUDES \$1,000 INCREASE (SENATE VERSION)

Prior Years Experience	Doctorate Degree 8A	Masters Degree + 30 Hrs 7A	Masters Degree 1A	Bachelors Degree + 18 Hrs 2A	Bachelors Degree 3A
0	53,289	49,447	45,603	41,604	39,853
1	53,492	49,618	45,766	41,852	39,985
2	54,376	50,208	46,389	42,305	40,327
3	54,700	50,286	46,537	42,793	40,586
4	55,054	50,395	46,714	42,915	40,766
5	55,528	50,471	46,854	43,261	41,068
6	56,974	51,556	47,940	43,853	42,043
7	58,423	52,642	49,024	44,866	43,058
8	59,871	53,728	50,110	45,842	44,034
9	61,316	54,812	51,195	46,856	45,048
10	62,763	55,898	52,280	47,833	46,023
11	64,209	56,981	53,365	48,847	47,037
12	65,657	58,069	54,450	49,823	48,014
13	67,105	59,153	55,536	50,836	49,026
14	68,550	60,237	56,621	51,812	50,003
15	69,997	61,323	57,707	52,825	51,016
16	71,443	62,408	58,791	53,801	51,993
17	72,890	63,492	59,877	54,815	53,006
18	74,349	64,587	60,992	55,947	53,993
19	75,371	65,458	61,802	56,491	54,666
20	76,469	66,297	62,602	57,220	55,375
21	77,799	67,344	63,598	58,095	56,227
22	78,557	68,005	64,222	58,660	56,775
23	79,326	68,674	64,853	59,236	57,329
24	80,118	70,111	66,280	60,360	58,414
25	81,320	71,163	67,274	61,265	59,290
26	82,540	72,230	68,283	62,184	60,180
27+	83,778	73,313	69,307	63,117	61,082

Introduction

In recent years, the debate over teacher pay has come to the attention of the public. In a 2020 survey, 80% of parents claimed to have a newfound respect for their students' teachers as they took on the small role of teaching their children in their homes; in that survey 77 % believed that teachers should be paid more (Osimo, 2020). There is no doubt that teachers play an important role not only in our society, but also in our communities. What is daunting is the arduous, yet rewarding, task of taking on the role and responsibility of becoming a teacher. Parents recognize this with 69% believing teaching is harder than their current job (Osimo, 2020). There are numerous requirements and expectations that make up becoming and being an excellent and successful teacher. Such requirements include educational experience, degrees obtained, and teacher certification. Expectations for teachers include characteristics and qualities such as being respectful, caring, considerate of students' needs, competency in one's subject of teaching, a deep knowledge of a variety of pedagogical strategies and the ability to employ such strategies, etc.

Within teaching students a specific subject, teachers are strongly encouraged and expected to engage, care for, know, and understand their students, and understand how their students learn and what their social and emotional needs are and the list of teacher expectations can and does go on and on (Durwin & Reese-Weber, 2021). Teachers not only fill the role of teacher in the technical way, but sometimes juggle multiple roles for many students like mentor, advocate, caregiver, friend, counselor, etc. (DePaul, 1998). To be a teacher demands more than just knowing how to present a topic or subject to a group of students. 'Teaching' encompasses

not only the ability “to show or explain how to do something,” but according to Amy DePaul, being a K-12 teacher encompasses a spiritual aspect, an aspect of caring, meeting students' physical, emotional, and educational needs (DePaul, 1998; Google, 2022). Teachers' impact and learning environments extend beyond the classroom into homes, communities, neighborhoods, and even around the world (Lanier, 1997). But despite all these good expectations, requirements, and necessities of being a teacher, there is an inaccurate reflection of these entities in teachers' paychecks.

Being a teacher comes with great cost and great expense. Teachers are not being paid enough for their occupation as 16% of teachers work a second or third job over the summer (Walker, 2019). Teachers are expected to do much more than we pay them for. Teachers' expectations and requirements go beyond their paycheck and this is something schools and communities should be concerned about. In Columbia, South Carolina, there exists a discrepancy in what is expected of teachers and their paychecks. This discrepancy extends into the paychecks of Lexington-Richland County School District Five secondary education first year teachers whose starting pay is just above the state's 40th ranked national average (NEA, 2021). By Michael Podgursky's definition, teachers are underpaid or their pay is inadequate when teacher pay is “substantially below that of workers in other professions with similar levels of education” (Podgursky, 2007, p. 2). Writer P. Claxton also makes a similar statement regarding teacher pay in that “the wages of teachers should be as men and women of equal native ability, education, special preparation and experience receive for other work requiring as much time, energy and devotion and involving approximately as much responsibility” (Claxton, 1920, p. 400).

It is along these lines that I will present my research to showcase that teachers in Columbia, SC are expected, and required, to do more in their occupation than those of other professions with similar levels of education and seemingly are paid less for more work, revealing inadequacy of teacher pay. My research seeks to find how teachers feel about their pay and whether their pay is adequate or not based on the expectations of teachers, their professional requirements, and the skill set required to be a teacher.

My research includes secondary sources that I analyzed as well as primary data from a teacher survey that I created and conducted. The survey used for data collection was completed by the high school teachers in the Lexington-Richland County at Dutch Fork, Spring Hill, Center for Advanced Technical Studies (CATE), Chapin, and Irmo High School. To argue for teacher pay inadequacy, it will first be important to establish what requirements and expectations come with taking a job as a teacher in Columbia, SC teaching secondary education (grades 9th-12th). Such requirements will range from required documents and education levels to teaching standards and pedagogy requirements. Teacher expectations can range from classroom management to treatment of students and communication among parents and students. Some of these expectations and requirements will be conveyed through the survey responses of teachers in Columbia, SC. After such requirements and expectations are established, a comparison of salaries from other occupations in South Carolina will be conducted to convey the inadequacy of teacher pay. Lastly, the hope is to conclude that there needs to be a raise in high school teacher pay and salary in Columbia in addition to the recent efforts to increase teacher pay. Higher teacher salaries should be something granted to all teachers across grade levels K-12 across the nation.

Literature Review: Teacher Expectations and Requirements

Doubtless, any profession comes with specific requirements and expectations, but the ones that accompany the duty of teacher are something unique and rather inspiring, yet daunting. The skills and qualities that come with being a teacher are necessary in being a successful educator both in and out of the classroom. What is interesting is that such characteristics can often go unsaid, yet first-year and veteran teachers learn these skills as they take on the taxing, yet rewarding, task of being a teacher. The skills and requirements necessary to be a teacher thus ensure that teaching is a profession. By profession, I mean work that requires a specific and unique skill set, certification, and training. A profession requires more education and training than an occupation does. Occupations are means of making money without any prior training or education.

In light of this definition, the work done before becoming a teacher is labeled “professional development” and “professional preparation” conveying that teaching is a profession since there is training and education necessary for teaching that comes prior to entering the profession. Well then, if teaching has the skills, certification, and training characteristic of a profession, then teachers should be paid as professionals. Unfortunately, many teachers do not feel they are treated as such professionals (Raabe, 2009).

Part of the argument that teachers are professionals is their skill, duty, and requirement regiment. Teachers across the world must have skills revolving around managing a classroom; just one of the skills and expectations that are required to be a successful teacher. Classroom

management involves how the classroom is physically set up, time management, interactions with students, classroom rules, and classroom procedures. Within the South Carolina Teaching Standards, also referred to as the 4.0 Rubric, there is an entire section dedicated to the classroom environment. This section includes sub-standards of respectful culture, engaging students, managing behavior, the physical environment, and expectations of students. Just looking at classroom management, a teacher is highly encouraged and expected to provide a classroom that is safe and promotes positive interactions and is an inclusive environment (SC Dept. of Ed., 2018). Note, this standard in and of itself does not even address the actual teaching of a particular subject or topic. This teaching profession begins immediately when students walk into a physical classroom.

The classroom itself has to be set up and fostered in such a way that students feel safe to be themselves, but also encouraged to learn. Teachers in South Carolina are expected to have classrooms that support inclusivity and learning; that students would be presented with opportunities to learn and are engaged. So, not only do teachers need to make the student feel safe and included but also engaged. Many have learned, including teachers, that it is not easy to keep students engaged and focused. Student engagement includes a student's motivation, interests, and their connectedness to a topic or situation (Durwin & Reese Weber, 2021, pp 356). The following is a list, though not exhaustive, of ways for teachers to keep and enhance student' engagement: Provide support, encouragement, and enthusiasm for material

- Make lessons meaningful and interesting to students
- Make lessons appropriately challenging
- Vary the tasks and activities in each lesson

- Use a flipped classroom model

(Durwin & Reese-Weber, 2021, pp 356-357).

Teachers not only have to do this for one student, but many, for all the students in their classroom and all the classes they teach, which can be as many as 8 in Columbia, SC, with a total of more than 100 students per teacher. Each student comes into the classroom with different preferences, stories, backgrounds, and experiences and teachers are asked to accommodate each of these students. Some students also need accommodation for disabilities which is a topic for another debate.

Additionally, by SC Teaching Standards the classroom itself should display student work and be set up to “maximize individual and group learning and to reinforce positive classroom culture” (SC Dept. of Ed., 2018, “Environment” section). It is clear that there are expectations of teachers that do not involve “teaching” in and of itself, but the atmosphere and environment that teaching and learning occurs in. This is not necessarily a checkbox skill that would come on a resume, but it is absolutely necessary in the profession of teaching, the ability to engage students and have a classroom atmosphere that is conducive to learning but also makes students feel safe and encouraged.

One of the other aspects of classroom management is time management. Teachers must effectively use their time to teach and conduct lessons within the given school day. High schools in Richland Lexington District 5 operate on what it is known as a block schedule. Students alternate between A and B days with a total of 8 classes, 4 per day. On a regular school day, school runs for about 7.5 hours across all high schools, with each class being about an hour and

half long. So, each teacher has 1.5 hours to deliver instruction. Most teachers only teach 6 classes total (3 per day) with either a planning or meeting period in place of their fourth period class. Teachers have to be efficient in their use of time making sure to stay on task to ensure students learn and comprehend appropriate standards for student testing. This includes using instructional time to its maximum, that “no instructional time is lost during transitions” (SC Dept. of Ed., 2018, “Instruction” section). This means teachers have to be aware of the clock and what their students are doing in the classroom.

But, what is key in ensuring one uses their time most effectively is planning. More often than not teachers need to plan extra, plan more than what is necessary. Students may catch on to a topic quickly or may need more time to process a task and teachers must plan accordingly. It is suggested that teachers plan two hours for every one hour of teaching and to think of every silly question a student might ask in regards to one’s lesson plan (DePaul, 1998). Without a doubt teachers should “be as prepared as [they] possibly can” and “plan relentlessly” (DePaul, 1998, p.7, p. 34). Teachers that are successful have plans; no wonder they are called ‘lesson plans’ because they must be planned ahead of time before they are presented to students.

Although, what is interesting is that most teachers have to do this planning outside of the school day because there is not enough time given during the school day; they are working overtime. A great analogy put forth by J.T. Lainer (1997) that perfectly addresses this concept of teacher work outside of school, “just as much of a lawyer’s work occurs outside the courtroom, so, too, should we recognize that much of a teacher’s work is done outside the classroom”

(Lainer, 1997, “New Tools and Environment” section). Planning is just one of those tasks that teachers do outside of the school day.

So, what exactly do teachers have to plan for? Lessons! Teaching! Daily activities! This is an essential part of being a teacher is the ability to compose lessons to teach within the classrooms. But planning such lessons and daily classroom activities are not as easy as it seems. There are numerous factors that have to be considered when teaching a lesson.

Now, when planning a lesson, the most important thing to consider is the students, not so much the content itself. If the student is not the center focus when preparing a lesson, the lesson is most likely going to miss the mark and not be engaging or meaningful to students. It’s the idea of teaching the students and not teaching the lesson plan (DePaul, 1998). Teachers have to consider the ability level of their students, their interests, their skill level, their likes, and dislikes. Any lesson must consider both high and low achieving students and the range of these students that are present in a classroom. Lessons have to be developed to reach ALL students, including those with disabilities, and this is not a walk in the park.

For example, in an algebra class a teacher can have students who have not quite mastered adding and subtracting but also have students who are prepared for more advanced math in the same classroom. There is difficulty in finding a lesson that works for both these students, yet teachers seem to accomplish this task daily. One of the hardest parts of planning a lesson is seeking to accommodate a range of low and high achieving students (DePaul, 1998). Some high school classrooms can contain students across all grade levels (9th-12th) and teachers have to consider skill level, developmental stage, and achieving level when creating such lesson plans. In

other words a lesson plan must consider “the age, knowledge, and interests of all learners” and present “opportunities to accommodate individual student needs” (Sc Dept. of Ed., 2018, “Planning” section). This is important in lesson planning so that students are all advancing and learning in the classroom. It requires a specific skill set to create such lesson plans that meet the needs of all students in a classroom.

In South Carolina, in order to teach at the high school level, one must be certified as a teacher. This involves taking certification exams and sometimes partaking in programs. Such certification and program participation is tied to professionalism. Certification implies that there is a set standard teachers must follow and set skills teachers must have or be aware of to be a teacher. This standard is reflective of professionalism in that all teachers will have these common standards to abide by while performing their job. It creates a professional atmosphere among teachers and their administration and coworkers.

According to the South Carolina Department of Education, a Professional certificate in South Carolina is received by achieving an acceptable score on the Praxis exam for the prospective teaching subject and a pedagogy assessment must be taken (SC Dept. of Ed., 2022). In addition, a future teacher in South Carolina must complete an “educator preparation program.” Once these are complete an educator receives an Initial certification, but this certification only lasts for three years and cannot be renewed (SC Dept. of Ed., 2022). This means for teachers to continue teaching they must advance to a Professional certificate in the midst of their teaching career. So, not only are teachers being asked to teach students, but they are being asked to keep up to date with certifications even if they have been teaching for consecutive years. To advance to a professional certificate a teacher must be employed in a South Carolina public school,

teachers need a Professional certificate, to partake in the induction program, and successfully complete a teacher evaluation (SC Dept. of Ed., 2022). This certificate only lasts five years; meaning the certificate has to be renewed.

It is vital that schools have qualified and able teachers to teach students, but it is costing teachers both time and money to keep their jobs. To renew one's Professional certificate in South Carolina, there is a process that can involve taking classes, programs, or coursework. It was only recently, June 26, 2020, that South Carolina removed the requirement of a graduate level class for teachers with only a bachelor's degree who were looking to renew their Professional certification (SC Dept. of Ed., 2022.) Significant testing, coursework, and additional requirements go into keeping one's teaching certificate. There are clearly many cases of teacher renewal that can occur, but, overall, there is some aspect of coursework and paperwork involved in keeping one's teaching certificate. The question comes to mind: when are teachers supposed to do this, during the school year? Over the summer when they are planning for the next school year or doing another job? According to Pew Research, "16% of teachers have non-school jobs over the summer" (Walker, 2019, para. 3) There not only seems to be a lack of time to do such things (albeit only needs to be done every five years) but a lack of money in teachers' pay. A teacher's pay should not only encompass their daily, weekly, and monthly time spent in school teaching and all the out of schoolwork required, but the additional task of keeping up with their teaching certificate.

With all these professional requirements it seems that teachers should be paid as professionals. As I defined before, teacher pay is inadequate if they are paid less than what their peers of similar levels of education are paid. According to the Economic Policy Institute,

teachers should be “compensated on par with their college-educated peers” to correctly characterize teaching as the profession it is (Garcia and Weiss, 2020, pp 1). This suggests that teachers are not being paid on par as their peers are which is a serious issue for the reason that teaching is a profession. Teachers report frustration at this underfunding though many would claim teaching a profession (Garcia and Weiss, 2020, pp 8).

An important question is if teachers are able to maintain a healthy and comfortable living style with their current salaries. According to an EdWeek research survey, teachers themselves consider their own financial burdens and the cost of living as reasons for an increase in teacher pay (Sawchuck, 2022). Given that the majority of secondary teachers have a bachelor’s degree, it is safe to assume many go into student loan debt after obtaining their degree. With teachers' current salaries, it can be difficult to begin making a profit as a first year teacher if they are paying off student loans and debt. Other financial burdens may arise like house payments, car payments, or dependents within the household. There are also medical emergencies and other incidents like flat tires or having pets that are cause for financial stress. These financial burdens are not just limited to teachers, but the impact on them is a little heavier given their salaries. For example, in South Carolina during the 2021-2022 school year, teachers were being paid on average less than \$40,000, but the cost of living in Lexington is \$1948 a month for a single household, including rent, transportation, utilities, and groceries, that totals to \$23,376 per year (Bailey, 2022 and Living Cost, 2022). That is a little more than half of the average of a teacher’s gross salary and these expenses do not include insurance, car payments, medical bills, student loans, house payments, and other expenditures as listed above.

Another argument for paying teachers more, one that seems most prominent in South Carolina and dare I say nationally, is to sustain the profession and schools; to keep teachers teaching and reduce the national teacher shortage. It is no secret that after COVID many teachers chose to leave the profession for numerous reasons including but not limited to stress, too high a demand or expectations, low pay, and burnout (Walker, 2021). So many teachers left the profession even before COVID, about 1 in every 10 teachers would leave the profession yearly (NY Times, 2021). In January 2020 there were 10.6 million working in education and as of February 2022, there are only 10 million (Walker, 2022). That's a loss of 600,000 educators in the U.S. within two years. South Carolina is no stranger to this loss of teachers. At the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, there was a vacancy of 1,603 reported by state schools and over 7,000 teachers across the state left the profession during that school year (Bailey, 2022 & Homan, 2022).

Higher pay may present itself as an incentive for teachers to remain in the profession or join the profession. Higher base salaries makes the profession more attractive and would encourage current teachers to remain in the profession (Garcia and Weiss, 2020). From personal experience, I have seen so many programs and scholarships offering preservice teachers payment for their schooling, bachelor's or masters. Sometimes this is even offered while working as a teacher in a school. Over the summer, South Carolina proposed a new state budget that would increase teacher pay by 10% (U.S. News, 2022). Within this proposal, South Carolina former governor candidate Joe Cunningham wants to increase the capacity and funding of the Teaching Fellows Program; a program that recruits high school students into the educational field (U.S. News, 2022, para. 9). It seems now a necessity to increase teacher pay because states, like South

Carolina, are finding themselves with a severe shortage of teachers and a hope that a higher pay will either bring them back or recruit new ones in.

All in all, there are many reasons for paying teachers more. In summary, higher pay would accurately reflect teaching as a profession, allow teachers to maintain a standard of living, make the profession more attractive, and to keep more teachers in the profession. What I seek to find is how teachers feel about their pay and whether their pay is adequate or not based on some of these reasons.

Counter Argument

There is a field of thought that claims teachers are not underpaid arguing that teachers are accurately paid for their skill level that is required for their job. Additionally, teachers receive numerous benefits within their salaries like health coverage, something that is “practically extinct in the private sector” (Biggs, 2018, para. 7). According to Andrew Biggs, who writes for the American Enterprise Institute, a public policy think tank, to say teachers are underpaid is to conversely suppose that doctors, nurses, firefighters and other professionals are overpaid (Biggs, 2019). What is interesting is Biggs challenges this idea of salary schedules based on education. He claims that “While teachers with more formal education earn more than less-educated teachers, more-educated teachers are not necessarily better at teaching” (Biggs, 2019, para. 12). This to me suggests that an alternative method to pay teachers would be performance-based pay; that regardless of the years of education, the quality of a teacher’s work should determine their pay. The issues regarding performance-based pay invokes a discussion of its own but that will not be addressed here.

Furthermore, there is also research regarding the number of hours teachers work outside of the school day. Even with such data there is an argument that teachers work significantly less than their professional counterparts with similar degrees or levels of education. The surface level argument is that teachers work only 9 months out of the year. When accounting for other factors, and including the vacations, “teachers work at most 83% as many hours as private-sector professionals” (Biggs, 2019, “Failed Labor Market Productions” section). This says that teachers are in fact working fewer hours than professions that have similar degrees. This implies that if teacher pay increased they would be paid more than their professional counterparts who work seemingly more hours and over a longer period of time than teachers do.

Additionally, in comparison to other professions, teachers should not be paid more because the benefits from teaching far outweigh the cost and their low quit rate indicates so. In 2017, the quit rate for the public education sector was 8.7%; the second lowest only to Federal public industry; in the private sector, there is only a 15.2% quit rate, the lowest in the private sector (Youngberg, 2018). This indicates that teachers are more satisfied with their jobs than other professions. If teachers were truly underpaid, there would be a higher quit rate. This is to say that although teachers are leaving, since the quit rate is so low, they are more generally satisfied with their job than the majority of other professions. A higher satisfaction implies that teachers are paid an adequate amount for their job as inadequate pay would lead to higher quit rates. Thus teachers do not need to be paid more.

Furthermore, as the argument claims, teachers receive more benefits in their job than other professions might not have. One example is retiree health care, coverage, and benefits (Biggs, 2020). Teachers also get social security benefits, pensions, paid vacation time, and summer’s off

(supposedly) (WGU, 2021). It is with these benefits that the teaching profession sees such low quit rates and in reality is not an underpaid profession. These benefits enhance the attrition rate of teachers and are not accounted for in their salary, yet are benefits other professions do not have and thus their pay should not be raised.

Teacher Salary In Comparison to Other Salaries

Below is the 2021-2022 salary schedule for teachers in Lexington and Richland Counties in the **Teacher Salary Schedule Table** (Lexington Richland District 5, 2021). Note that (1) this is for all levels of teaching, not just high school, and (2) the highest a teacher can ever be paid is \$83,778, but only with a Doctorate Degree AND 27 or more years of experience. On average it takes 4 years to complete a Bachelor's Degree, 2 additional years to receive a Masters Degree, and an additional 4 years to complete a Doctorate.

Teacher Salary Schedule Table

SCHOOL DISTRICT FIVE OF LEXINGTON AND RICHLAND COUNTIES					
TEACHER SALARY SCHEDULE					
PROPOSED FY 2021-2022					
ANNUAL SALARY BASED ON 190 DAYS - INCLUDES \$1,000 INCREASE (SENATE VERSION)					
Prior Years Experience	Doctorate Degree 8A	Masters Degree + 30 Hrs 7A	Masters Degree 1A	Bachelors Degree + 18 Hrs 2A	Bachelors Degree 3A
0	53,289	49,447	45,603	41,604	39,853
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4	55,054	50,395	46,714	42,915	40,766
5	55,528	50,471	46,854	43,261	41,068
6	56,974	51,556	47,940	43,853	42,043
7	58,423	52,642	49,024	44,866	43,058
8	59,871	53,728	50,110	45,842	44,034
9	61,316	54,812	51,195	46,856	45,048
10	62,763	55,898	52,280	47,833	46,023
11	64,209	56,981	53,365	48,847	47,037
12	65,657	58,069	54,450	49,823	48,014
13	67,105	59,153	55,536	50,836	49,026
14	68,550	60,237	56,621	51,812	50,003
15	69,997	61,323	57,707	52,825	51,016
16	71,443	62,408	58,791	53,801	51,993
17	72,890	63,492	59,877	54,815	53,006
18	74,349	64,587	60,992	55,947	53,993
19	75,371	65,458	61,802	56,491	54,666
20	76,469	66,297	62,602	57,220	55,375
21	77,799	67,344	63,598	58,095	56,227
22	78,557	68,005	64,222	58,660	56,775
23	79,326	68,674	64,853	59,236	57,329
24	80,118	70,111	66,280	60,360	58,414
25	81,320	71,163	67,274	61,265	59,290
26	82,540	72,230	68,283	62,184	60,180
27+	83,778	73,313	69,307	63,117	61,082

There are many arguments for why teachers should not be paid as much as their counterparts with similar degrees but to not pay teachers just as much, the impacts and implications are detrimental. Teaching as a profession has seemingly grown less appealing as 62% of parents say they do not want their kid to become teachers (Stanford, 2022). According to PDK International's 2022 Public Attitudes Toward Public Schools poll, some of the reasons given for why parents did not want their kids to become teachers included poor pay and benefits, along with the difficulties, stress, and demands of the job; there were even some reasoning for a lack of respect (Stanford, 2022).

By comparing salaries, degrees, and years taught, we can see that with more schooling a teacher will be paid more. As mentioned earlier, it will take teachers longer to pay off such debt and live a healthy and comfortable lifestyle with such low salaries.

Methods

My overall research strategy included secondary and primary research. My secondary research was conducted for my literature review and counter-argument. Primary research was conducted through a teacher survey. I resorted to secondary research for my literature review because it would best accomplish my goal of seeing what were previous arguments for higher teacher pay, what are current arguments for higher teacher pay, and what reasons teacher pay is considered inadequate. My primary research would best accomplish what were teachers' opinions on their pay and if they feel their current pay is inadequate or not.

For my literature review I used a few different resources to search for articles and peer-reviewed articles and journals. I used the University of South Carolina library database to search for peer-reviewed journals and articles. I relied on JSTOR and used their search engine to find articles and journals that were about teacher pay, teacher salaries, and teacher characteristics or professional qualities. While using JSTOR, I narrowed the publication date to within the past 5 years. This was to get data and publications that were relevant. I also used Google and Google Scholar to look for informal publication pieces as well; what were the public's thoughts on teacher pay and teachers' thoughts on their pay? I identified articles and journals that best fit my topic and the purpose of my literature review: what were possible reasons for paying teachers more? For the counter-argument, I used the same research process as stated above.

I first learned about South Carolina Teaching Standards 4.0 Rubric when I completed my practicum in Lexington Richland District 5 at Dutch Fork High School with Dr. Jeffery Eargle. As part of my practicum, I was to be familiar with the teaching standards and the 4.0 Teaching

Rubric for my observation of the classroom and assignments for my practicum. Without my practicum, I would not have known about the SC teaching standards. For my literature review, I reviewed the 4.0 Teaching Rubric analyzing what is expected of South Carolina teachers. Most of the references used from the rubric come from the “Exemplary (4)” column of the rubric (SC Dept. of Ed., 2018). This means I pulled characteristics of a teacher who fits the exemplar category. I chose this category because it would be beneficial to both teachers and students if teachers strived to be exemplary rather than “needs improvement (2)” or “unsatisfactory (1).” “Proficient (3)” would be satisfactory for a classroom but my assumption is that both administration and parents want teachers who are the best.

For the teacher survey part of my research, I decided to focus on the secondary teachers in Lexington-Richland District 5. I chose this district because of my personal experience there. In the spring of 2021, I completed a practicum for one of my classes at Dutch Fork High School (a secondary school in this district). My research was conducted approximately a year later in April 2022. To distribute my survey, I had to email each teacher the link to the survey to elicit their participation. The district could not send out my survey due to policy and accountability reasons. I was in communication with Dr. Vann Holden, the director of Planning and Accountability for Lexington Richland District Five about obtaining teacher responses for my survey. Initially, I had planned to conduct a parent survey as well, but parent emails are not public domain nor was the district conducting outside research at the time. As a result, I was unable to conduct the parent survey. As for the teacher survey, the principals of the schools were not able to email their staff and faculty the survey, thus I chose to email the teachers.

Knowing which schools I was going to email greatly helped in finding the emails to the teachers of those schools. I chose to email secondary public schools in Lexington-Richland 5 because of previous experience in a secondary school in this district. These schools included Center for Advanced Technical Studies (CATE), Chapin High School, Dutch Fork High School, Irmo High School, and Spring Hill High School. For each school, I went to their school website and under the section labeled “teacher” I would click on each teacher’s name which led to their website. I found that the district website often did not corroborate with the school’s website for teachers, however, the district website was not up to date. There were some teachers listed on the school website who were not listed on the district website, so I resorted to using each school’s website. My requirements for “teacher” were an individual who had a schedule in which they taught at least one class with students during the school day. This process was made smooth as each school had the teacher’s schedule (if there was one) on their website. As you can imagine this was rather tedious, but upon ensuring the individual met these teacher qualifications, their email was copied and put into a drafted email. Each email contained 10-15 teachers from that school, this format avoided it being a mass email and saved me time from emailing each individual teacher. Sometimes the school’s website did not have the teacher’s email so then I would either look at that teacher’s syllabus or search for them in the district’s staff directory.

In total, I sent 30 emails addressed to 373 teachers on April 19, 2022. Of those 373 emails, 27 of them either had an issue with their mailbox or their email was not found so these teachers were not emailed again for the sake of time. So, in total, 346 teachers should have received an email. Teachers were asked to respond to the survey by May 15th, which is when I closed the survey. This gave teachers 26 days to fill out the survey.

My survey was created using Survey Monkey, a website used to create surveys. Users can buy personal and business plans to use for themselves, workplace, or business. I created my survey over the course of a couple months having my thesis director look over the survey for any errors and questions that needed editing. During the months of June, July, and August, the data from the survey was collected and analyzed and thus included in the results of this thesis.

Survey Findings

Of the 346 teachers that were emailed, 119 completed the survey. That is a 34.4% completion rate. The survey on average took 4.5 minutes for teachers to complete, consisting of 18 questions ranging from fill in the blank, multiple choice, rating, and short answer questions.

These teachers teach a range of subjects from math to science to social studies, AP, CP, Honors, and so on. A summary of the subjects taught can be found under **Chart 6B**. The most common subjects taught were mathematics (21) and science (26). Many teachers taught numerous subjects, some teachers even taught all core subjects. I am pleased that many subject areas are represented in the pool of teachers that responded to my survey. There were many different electives represented as well including languages, physical education, performing arts, and visual arts. There were 10 teachers that focused on special education as well which makes my survey inclusive of teachers of all subjects and fields.

Majority of teachers, that is 78% of teachers, taught 6 classes this school year. As with the district's secondary school schedule being a block or AB schedule, this would imply teaching 3 classes a day with one planning period, in most cases. Additionally, 9 teachers taught more than 6 classes and only 17 teachers taught less than 6 classes.

Of this pool of teachers, individuals had been teaching anywhere from 1 to 34 years. On average teachers had taught for 10.5 years but this average is heavily impacted by the wide range of years taught. The number of years that was most frequent were 6 years or 12 years both with 9 respondents. Although, at least 70 teachers have taught for more than 10 years, that is about 60%

of teachers. Academically, for 87 teachers the highest degree they have received is their masters degree and two teachers mentioned they were currently pursuing their masters. Of those who chose master's as their highest degree, 5 teachers have two masters degrees and 15 have at least 18 or more credit hours in addition to their masters degree. This means only 20 of the 119 teachers do not have a master's degree.

This data implies that teachers are spending 5-6 years in school and potentially incurring student debt from loans in order to pay for college and graduate school. The No Child Left Behind Act passed in 2001 required teachers to obtain a bachelor's degree and full certification to be considered highly qualified teachers for the purpose of bettering the quality of education (Birman, 2007). Teachers are not required to obtain a master's degree but over 83% of teachers do, and some have even higher degrees. The reason why teacher's pursue a master's degree can be for many reasons, but one cannot neglect the fact that teachers receive a higher starting salary with a master's degree. This in part can be an incentive to have higher qualified teachers but it is not enough to compensate teachers for their hard work in obtaining the necessary degrees for their job. Further research would need to be conducted to see how long it took teachers to pay off student debt (if any) given their current salaries. A higher starting pay for teachers can ease the financial burden of student loan debt as they use their degrees in the field of education.

From the data, it is clear to see the salary schedule within the teachers' responses to the salary question. Only 4 teachers chose not to answer this question, so of the 115 teachers that responded, at least one respondent selected each salary range except for "100,001-110,000" and "110,000+." Thus it is safe to conclude no teacher is making 6 figures whether just on a teacher salary or with their teacher salary and second jobs. The salary range that had the most

respondents was “50,001-55,000” with 17 teachers choosing this range. Majority of the teachers fell between 40,001 to 65,000, with 86 teachers having salaries within this range. This conveys that there is a large range of salaries among teachers who work together whether in the same school or the same district.

Of the teachers I surveyed, only 6 teachers (5%) made more than \$85,000. Here is the breakdown of these teachers who made more than \$85,000. Two of these teachers had doctorates; the other teachers had master’s and one of those teachers had two master’s degrees. Three of these teachers had at least one additional job other than teaching. Two teachers had salary bonuses or stipends that increased their salary. There were 8 teachers whose highest degree was a doctorate but their salary was less than \$85,000. Three of those 8 teachers who had doctorates but made below \$85,000 had an additional job other than teaching. The question remains whether these salaries are a proper compensation to teachers.

The verdict according to my survey is no; teachers do not feel they are properly compensated. An overwhelming majority, that is 100 teachers (84%) would say “no” they are not properly compensated. On the topic of compensation, 98% of teachers thought it would be beneficial to raise teacher salaries. Only two teachers responded that it “might be” beneficial to raise teacher salaries, but no respondent chose “no.” Raising teacher salaries can allow teachers to feel properly compensated for their professions and decrease teacher turnover (Garcia and Weiss, 2020, pp 11). Also, teachers can increase and manage their standard of living with a higher salary as mentioned earlier. Although, one can argue that all professions would agree that it would be beneficial to raise their salaries, so why does this result matter?

According to my survey, about 45% of teachers have at least one second paying job, with 4% having at least 3 or more jobs. These jobs range from coaching to HR personnel to dealing with rental properties to tutoring and everything in between (see **List 13A** for complete list of teachers' second or third jobs). This data implies that almost half the secondary teachers in Lex Rich 5, either out of necessity or desire, have an additional job other than teaching.

Most secondary teachers in Lexington-Richland 5 serve over 100 students, that is, about 75% of secondary teachers teach more than 100 students. As 100 plus students was the highest available answer choice, who's to say a secondary teacher does not have 200 students? According to Lexington Richland 5, the student teacher ratio for grades 6-12th is 25:1(2022). Assuming the majority, and a teacher teaches 6 classes with no repeating student, then the teacher will have 150 students. It would have been beneficial to see if any of these teachers have more than 150 students, determining if the student to teacher ratio holds for secondary education in Lex Rich 5. Referring back to the section on teaching as a profession, each of these students have individual learning needs and teachers must teach in a way that can meet these needs as best as they can. The number of students adds to the task of being a teacher that further makes its appeal as a profession and a profession that should be compensated in kind.

I gave teachers a list of characteristics and asked them to rate the characteristics from “not at all important” to “extremely important.” The characteristics that 70% of the teachers labeled as extremely important were as follows: knowledgeable in your area of teaching (79%), proactive in planning (70%), flexible (76%), respectful (74%), considerate of students needs (74%), ability to adapt (75%) and caring (75%). The two characteristics I want to highlight here

are flexible and caring. These two characteristics are not something that can easily be taught or even learned in an academic setting.

From personal experience as a preservice teacher, I have discussed the ideas of being flexible and caring, but have not really been able to develop them. Thankfully, at least two of the education classes I have taken have placed an emphasis on being flexible and caring. Although I am aware of these characteristics, the position I am in as a scholar and student has not allowed me to develop such skills and characteristics. This means that most of these teachers are developing and learning to be flexible and caring throughout their career. One can argue that these two skills are needed in most any profession, but would 70% of people within that profession label caring and flexibility as extremely important? This begs the idea that teachers are constantly learning skills that are necessary in their profession. This matters because as we have seen 84% of teachers do not feel they are properly compensated and the skills required in their profession can play a factor into those feelings of inadequate pay.

The next piece of data provides some interesting insight into the work of a teacher beyond that of simply teaching. Teachers were asked how often they discipline students beginning with “never” to “always.” Now, given the teachers selected, they are likely teaching 14-19 year olds on any given day. I am aware that the meaning of “discipline” can be interpreted in many different ways and some teachers may not understand the difference between “discipline” and “punishment.” Although, it will be satisfactory to assume each teacher is familiar with Lex Rich 5’s Code of Conduct, which outlines behavioral misconduct and the appropriate consequences. More research would need to be done to evaluate what the most common disciplinary issue is within 9th-12th grade for these teachers. Regardless, 26 teachers

(about 22%) say they always or usually discipline students. Now, remember we are talking about 14-19 year olds and a portion of teachers find themselves dealing with disciplinary issues all or most of the time. In the South Carolina Teaching Standards it addresses *that* teachers should know how to discipline students within the classroom, but not how to respond to students in an appropriate manner when they are misbehaving. The standards say “The teacher addresses individual students who have caused disruptions rather than the entire class” and “The teacher attends to disruptions quickly with minimal interruption to learning” (4.0 Teaching Rubric, “Environment” section). There is no direction or guidance on *how* to do this but teachers are expected to know and be able to handle such disruptions.

The Code of Conduct does, however, outline the appropriate consequences for such misbehaviors or disruptions. Some of the level one infractions include 1.007 “creating or participating in a classroom disturbance that interferes with the instructional process,” “disrespect to teacher or staff member or other adult,” “class disruption or disruption of school activities,” and “misuse of Electronic Communication Devices” (Code of Conduct, 2021). I chose these particular infractions because they seem to me the most common in my limited experience in secondary classrooms. Often this would look like talking while the teacher was, back talking or arguing when a teacher asked a student to do something or stop doing something, and a lot of cellphone use at inappropriate times (when the teacher was teaching). One such consequence is to send the student out of the classroom. It would not be beneficial to the teacher, student, or the class if after every disruption the student was sent out of the classroom. This takes away from both the student, teacher, and classroom instructional time; i.e. instructional time is lost when sending a student out of the classroom, and not just for the student.

Teachers must properly navigate how to respond when students disrupt their classroom and often this can come in the form of discipline. It is very difficult to prepare teachers for such environments because each student is different and has their own voice which teachers have to learn how to respond to appropriately. What works for one student may not necessarily work for their peers. So, not only are teachers having to teach their designated subjects to students, they are also having to be mindful of disciplining students and managing the classroom *when* disruption occurs, not *if*. I claim this because only 2 of the 119 teachers said they “never” discipline their students. That means at some level, the other 117 teachers have had to discipline their students at some point. So, with discipline in mind, teaching is more than just teaching. A teacher’s salary should encompass *all* the duties and responsibilities of a teacher, even the ones that seem to take on the role of parent or guardian.

This idea of fulfilling a role other than teacher can be seen in the question that asked teachers to rate their agreement with the following statement: “I find that I fill a million roles in a day—parent, teacher, friend, hero, disciplinarian, counselor, etc. Teaching is often a secondary role” (DePaul, 1998, pp 18). This quite implies that there are other roles and responsibilities as teachers that come first or of more importance than teaching itself. Only 3 teachers did not agree on some level (one disagree, one slightly disagree, and one neutral). On the contrary, 116 teachers (97%) agreed with this statement to some level. Evidently, teachers feel that teaching comes next to other responsibilities like counselor or disciplinary. This brings forth that teachers are doing more than teaching and sometimes it is not even the primary role they fill in any given day. So to the arguments that claim that teachers have it easy, simply just to teach a subject, I argue that teaching involves more than content delivery. There are different responsibilities that

teachers are feeling the burden of in the classroom and that teaching content may sometimes be set aside to address other issues in students' lives.

One teacher offered an eye-opening comment that relates to this statement. The teacher wrote: there is a need to be

“willing to put your own needs (including physical and emotional well-being and religious and social interaction) as well as the needs of your family and friends on the back-burner due to the overwhelming demands of your job. Also, be willing to give up your time on weekends, holidays, summers to work for free in order to actually get finished all the work load that you are expected to produce.”

This one comment of a teacher encapsulates how much teachers are sacrificing in order to meet the demands and expectations of their jobs. With the additional roles of parent, guardian, counselor, etc. teachers are asked to teach students and all the responsibilities that come with that alone. Teachers are sacrificing so much in order to stay on top of their job because there are not enough hours in the “work” day to do what is necessary to be a teacher, at minimum, not even a “successful” teacher.

Out of 119 respondents, just a little over half of these teachers (52%) work on school related items outside of the school day either always or usually. Only one teacher said they never work on school related items outside the school. We see that 1 out of every 2 teachers is taking material home with them, or working beyond school hours, i.e. “overtime” so that they can function as a teacher. Such tasks they work on include answering emails (91%), grading student work, projects, essays, exams, etc. (84%), and planning lessons (83%). These were the top three

responses from teachers of what they do outside the school day. I was completely surprised by the answering of emails. This is not something that I had thought about or considered to be of such high response from this survey. I think we often neglect that email is the preferred and best way of communicating with a teacher. A teacher's personal number will cause too much stress on the teacher and students and parents should not have that kind of personal access to a teacher. There is little to no opportunity during the school day for teachers to answer such emails. Who knows the kinds of emails teachers are responding to and yet they are seemingly all work related.

I asked teachers to estimate the number of hours they work outside of the school day during the week. Of the 119 teachers that responded, 115 of those teachers commented that they work at least 1 or more hours outside of the school day. This means about 97% of teachers work on school related items outside the school day. This is an overwhelming amount of teachers that are having to work beyond their “9-5.” Most teachers put a range of hours and the breakdown can be seen in **Table 16B**. The most important thing to take from this is that 97% of teachers work beyond the school day, something their salary should account for. One teacher commented that they work “too many (hours) to count” and did not give a specified number of hours. This implies teachers can be overwhelmed with the amount of work they have to take home with them or do beyond the hours of the school day.

These hours are just during the school year. During the summer, the supposed “vacation” and “off” time that teachers have, we see teachers are in fact working on school related items. 83% of teachers work on school related items over the summer. So the reality that teachers have summers off is false. This is an overwhelming amount of teachers that are working on school

related items for the next summer. Additional research would be needed to see what exactly teachers are working on and if it relates to the content they are teaching in the classroom.

The last piece of data I want to highlight is teachers' level of agreement with a few statements seen in **Table 18A**. In particular, teachers' level of agreement with the statement “I am expected to do more than what my paycheck reflects.” Of the surveyed teachers, 113 either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, that is 95% of teachers believe this statement to be true with only four selecting neutral and two teachers strongly disagreed. This implies teachers feel they are not properly compensated and are doing more than what they are paid for. The thought is the tasks and responsibilities that come with being a teacher are not adequately reflected in their paycheck. This table does not encompass with which salaries teachers do not feel satisfied. The two teachers that strongly disagreed with this statement, one respondent did not put their salary and the other teacher selected the \$40,001-\$45,000.

Discussion

Teachers' responsibilities and requirements both in and out of the classroom supplemented with a general feeling of inadequate pay demands a raise in teachers starting pay in Lexington Richland District 5. An overwhelming number of teachers are feeling improperly compensated in their profession. My survey results showcase that less than 10% of teachers feel properly and adequately compensated for their profession. That is to say 90% or more of secondary education teachers in Lexington-Richland Five feel inadequately compensated for their profession.

This is such a large percentage of teachers that it pains me to see that most teachers feel they are not properly compensated for what they do, and it is without a doubt that their job matters. If an overwhelming majority of teachers responded in saying they do not feel they are properly compensated this should be an immediate red flag. As established earlier, South Carolina is no stranger to teacher shortages and feelings of improper compensation contribute to teachers leaving the profession. This data brings into question *why* do teachers feel they are not properly compensated and *what* can be done to ensure they do feel properly compensated. These results convey that there is a sense of improper compensation directly among teachers in Lexington Richland District 5. Although teachers should not be solely motivated by pay, it would be a pleasant benefit if teachers felt they were being properly paid for a job that is of the utmost importance and meets the criteria of a profession, meaning teachers should be regarded as professionals. If teachers feel they are rightly paid for what they do, they will remain in their field for much longer. Higher satisfaction and adequate feelings of compensation contributes to

lifelong loyal teachers dedicated to teaching students rather than worrying about being properly compensated. These results now show it is no secret how teachers are feeling about their paychecks and if their paychecks are an accurate reflection of their work.

Although, the question remains as to why teachers feel this way? From my data, we see teachers are working second or even third jobs. Teaching as a profession should not necessitate a second or third job to maintain a standard of living. This can be said about any profession; no profession should need to have a second job in order to pay bills or maintain a healthy and comfortable lifestyle. Teachers' second or even third jobs ranged from anything to everything from coaching to babysitting to teaching online to tutoring and the list goes on (List 13A). Teachers having second jobs should be frowned upon due to the taxing demands and expectations of teachers. Such demands and expectations were established in the literature review but can also be seen from the activities and duties that teachers do outside the school day (Table 15A and List 15A).

Teaching should not be a profession that necessitates getting another job for many of the reasons already stated. Teachers should be able to live off their salary. It is very possible that a higher salary will allow teachers to solely focus on teaching rather than worrying about financial burdens or the responsibilities of the two or three other jobs they may have.

Teaching is one of the only professions where it is common that they have a second job. People working in such professions as teaching should not need a second job to maintain a standard of living. The work that teachers do is absolutely necessary and education is of utmost importance in our society. Clearly, the nation cares about education because there are many laws

and policies in place to ensure students are getting an equitable and fair education. But students cannot be educated if they do not have teachers to teach them. If such a profession is deemed so important then we should pay teachers in such a way that reflects this importance and so they do not have to work an additional job.

A higher salary also benefits teachers who obtain extra supplies for their classrooms and students. Nationally, about 94% of teachers spend their own money on their students' behalf including supplies for school (Institute of Education Sciences, 2021). This implies schools are underfunded and/or that teachers feel that there is not enough or proper supplies in their classroom; so much so that they are spending their own money to obtain what they deem necessary to teach their students. This statistic illuminates another issue in education that would require another report in and of itself, school funding, but my main point here is that teachers may be able to provide more for their students, meeting their specific needs and still feeling properly compensated with a higher salary. Now just referring to these teachers, they must provide proper teaching material and supplies for their students. It would have been beneficial to have included a question asking if teachers spend their own money for material in their classroom and for their lessons. One teacher commented that they do "buy materials, prizes, etc." for their classroom as part of the work they do outside of the school day. Although I did not have a question directly related to teacher spending outside the classroom, with the national statistics previously given, we can assume at least some teachers are spending their own money on supplies for their job that should be provided by the school through the federal government, but I digress.

What is significant is that no teacher is making six figures. According to a study done by the Economic Policy Institute, nationally teachers make about 19% less than other professionals with similar levels of education (NEA, 2018). Putting this statistic with numbers, suppose one of these teachers is making \$90,000 with a doctorate degree (which is only about 5% or 6 of the 119 teachers surveyed), another individual with the same level of degree is then making \$107,100 according to this NEA statistic. Note that this level of pay for a teacher, reaching the upper end of \$80,000 and into the low \$90,000 is only after obtaining such high degrees and many years of teaching.

Teachers are performing tasks and responsibilities that are necessary in the classroom and for their job outside the school day. Teachers are working numerous hours outside the school day and even over the summer in order to keep up with the demands and expectations of their job. So it is a myth that “teachers have the summers off” because an overwhelming number of teachers work on school related items over the summer. As far as during the school year, the range of activities that teachers do outside the school day are astounding and it is clear that it is no small feat requiring some teachers to work anywhere from 10-20 extra hours a week outside the school day. Teachers are putting in extra hours to keep up with the demands of their job and are not feeling properly compensated for such extra hours as expressed by the teachers' responses in the survey. These extra hours can be in part why teachers feel inadequately compensated for their profession.

Some teachers spend these extra hours planning. According to teachers in Lex Rich 5, about 71% of teachers say that being proactive in planning is an *extremely* important characteristic or skill to be a teacher and 29% said it was somewhat important or important. In

order to be proactive in this planning, teachers have to conduct such lesson plans outside the school day.

Additionally, teachers are also fulfilling roles that are not outlined in their job description; being tasked with additional responsibilities, wanted or not. This can include acting as a parent, mediator, counselor, friend, etc. as an overwhelming percentage of teachers feel that teaching is not their only role and maybe not even their primary role in the classroom on any given day. Teachers are faced with many challenges that go beyond teaching which can help explain why they do not feel they are properly compensated or that their paycheck accurately reflects the work they do. These responsibilities such as caring for students, disciplining them, creating safe spaces, having patience, etc. are not often defined in curriculum or teaching standards as established in the literature review but are expectations. These expectations are often difficult to prepare and train for which necessitates the thought of an increase in base pay as teachers truly are acting in *loco parentis* in addition to their teaching duties.

While teachers are working to educate students they are also working to make students feel safe and cared for within the classroom. But the tasks that are needed to be done during the school day cannot be accomplished within the hours of any given school day. For this reason teachers work beyond school hours. Even so, due to inadequate compensation, teachers are working additional jobs to make more money and help pay bills. With these two big ideas in mind, we see that teachers do not feel properly compensated and their starting pay should be raised to accurately reflect all the hard work they do and help them maintain a comfortable standard of living without having to work an additional job.

Policy Recommendation

Before I give my policy recommendations, it is wise to consider the most recent efforts to increase teacher pay in Columbia, SC. In the spring of 2022, the Columbia Board of Education agreed to increase first year starting teacher salaries to \$40,000 for the 2022-2023 school year (Dunlap, 2022). The following school year would see a \$200 salary increase to continue increasing teacher pay over the years (Dunlap, 2022). Within Columbia, Lexington-Richland District 5 increased their first year teacher salaries to \$41,600, a \$1,747 increase from the previous year (Boddie, 2022). In addition to these efforts, Palmetto State Teachers Association proposes that teacher starting salaries increase to \$50,000 over the next five years in their 2023 legislative agenda (PSTA, 2022). There have been successful efforts to increase teacher pay in Columbia, SC, and specifically Lexington-Richland 5, but this is not enough.

Issue: Teacher Pay

Recommendation: First year teachers', with a bachelor's degree, base salary pay in Lexington Richland District 5 should increase from \$39,000 to \$55,000. The same salary schedule should be used and maintain the same amount of salary increase with the number of years teaching. This increases teachers' starting pay and their maximum salary. This new target salary allows first year teachers with a bachelor's degree to reach a salary of six figures after 30 years of teaching. This increase allows teachers to reach higher salaries sooner than before.

Rationale: About 45% of secondary education teachers in Lexington Richland District 5 have second or third jobs. Teachers are taking on two or even three jobs to pay bills, maintain a standard of living, and possibly provide materials for their students and classroom. Teaching as a

profession should not necessitate having an additional job to maintain a healthy and comfortable standard of living. Raising teacher salaries will lessen teachers' financial burden.

Additionally, teachers are working numerous hours outside the school day with 97% of teachers working at least 1 hour outside the school day on school related items. A teacher can work anywhere from one to thirty hours outside the school day on school related items. These tasks and responsibilities should be considered and compensated in teachers' salaries. Also, teachers do not have the summers off as 83% of teachers work on school related items over the summer. All the time and effort teachers put in to maintain their classroom and be a teacher should be a cause for an increase in their salaries.

Along with financial burdens and working "over time", the responsibilities and demands of teaching should foster a need to pay teachers more. Teacher turnover, burnout, and shortage are issues related to teacher salary and raising teachers' salary are part of the solution to these issues. Increasing teacher base salaries can help decrease teacher turnover, increase teacher retention, and make the pool of teachers larger for a given area.

Issue: Teacher Overtime

Recommendation: If teacher salaries are not raised, then teachers should be paid extra for hours spent outside the school day working on school related items, paid by the hour. There will be a maximum number of allowable hours a week teachers can be paid for outside the school day. Certain criteria must be met to be considered as work outside of the school day i.e. list of activities that would qualify as work outside the school day and activities that are necessary or crucial to a teacher's performance in school and the classroom or their job as a whole.

Rationale: According to my survey, 97% of teachers work at least 1 hour a week outside the school day and some up to 30 hours a week outside the school day. Teachers should feel they are being compensated for the “extra” hours that are being put in to keep up with curriculum, lesson plans, grading assignments, and other school related items like answering emails or filing school paperwork. If teachers are paid an hourly wage for working outside the school day, they may directly feel compensated for this extra work that is necessary for their performance as a teacher. The idea is that the work teachers do beyond the classroom is being recognized and compensated monetarily. Being paid for work that is necessary for one’s job that is done outside the regular 9-5, similar to overtime, should be compensated for. Being compensated for these hours may also encourage teachers to further improve their own skills within their profession whether that is creating better lesson plans, communicating and engaging with parents more, or finding ways to better engage students in the classroom. If teachers know that they are going to be directly compensated for any extra hours they put in to foster better learning environments or relationships with students and parents they may be more willing to put in those efforts to do so.

Conclusion

For the past few years, the role of teachers in the classroom and their jobs as professionals have been brought to the public’s attention. After covid, the task and duty of being a teacher became no small feat and the teacher shortage increased in South Carolina. Teachers face many challenges in their profession and one component of their job that has been brought to light is teacher pay. In Lexington Richland 5, a first year teacher who has a bachelor’s degree has

a starting salary of \$39,853. The question remains are secondary teachers in Lexington Richland 5 being properly compensated for their profession? The simple answer is no.

Teachers themselves do not feel properly compensated and this is cause for concern. The duties and responsibilities involved in being a teacher are not properly reflected in their paycheck. I have shown only some of the additional tasks and duties that are necessary for teachers in the classroom that are included in and go beyond teaching a particular subject to students. Teachers are working second and even third jobs to provide an extra source of income for their household. The reasons why teachers feel inadequately compensated will need more research in addition to research of why teachers may take second or third jobs in Lexington Richland District 5. Regardless, my data presented presses the issue that teachers should be paid more for their professions because their jobs are demanding and higher salaries have the potential to decrease teacher turnover and lessen the teacher shortage.

Appendix

Table 1A

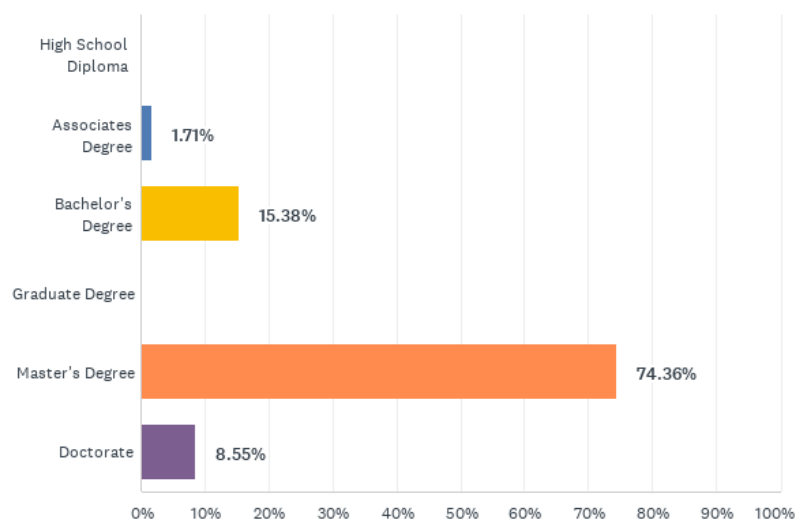
Q1 How many years have you been teaching?	
Answered	118
Skipped	1

Table 1B

1	5	7	11	13	18	23	30
1	5	7	11	13	18	24	30
1	5	7	11	14	19	24	31
2	5	7	11	15	19	24	32
3	6	8	11	15	19	24	34
3	6	8	11	15	20	24	More than 20
3	6	8	12	16	20	26	
3	6	8	12	16	20	27	
3	6	9	12	17	21	27	
3	6	9	12	17	21	28	
4	6	9	12	17	21	28	
4	6	9	12	17	22	29	
4	6	9	12	18	22	29	
4	6.5	9	12	18	22	29	
4	7	10	12	18	22	30	
4	7	10	13	18	23	30	

Chart 2A

Q2 What is the highest degree you have received?

**Table 2A**

What is the highest degree you have received?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
High School Diploma	0.00%	0
Associates Degree	1.71%	2
Bachelor's Degree	15.38%	18
Graduate Degree	0.00%	0
Master's Degree	74.36%	87
Doctorate	8.55%	10
Other (please specify)		27
	Answered	117
	Skipped	2

Chart 3A

Q3 If you are comfortable please select your current salary range. (For school year 2021-2022)

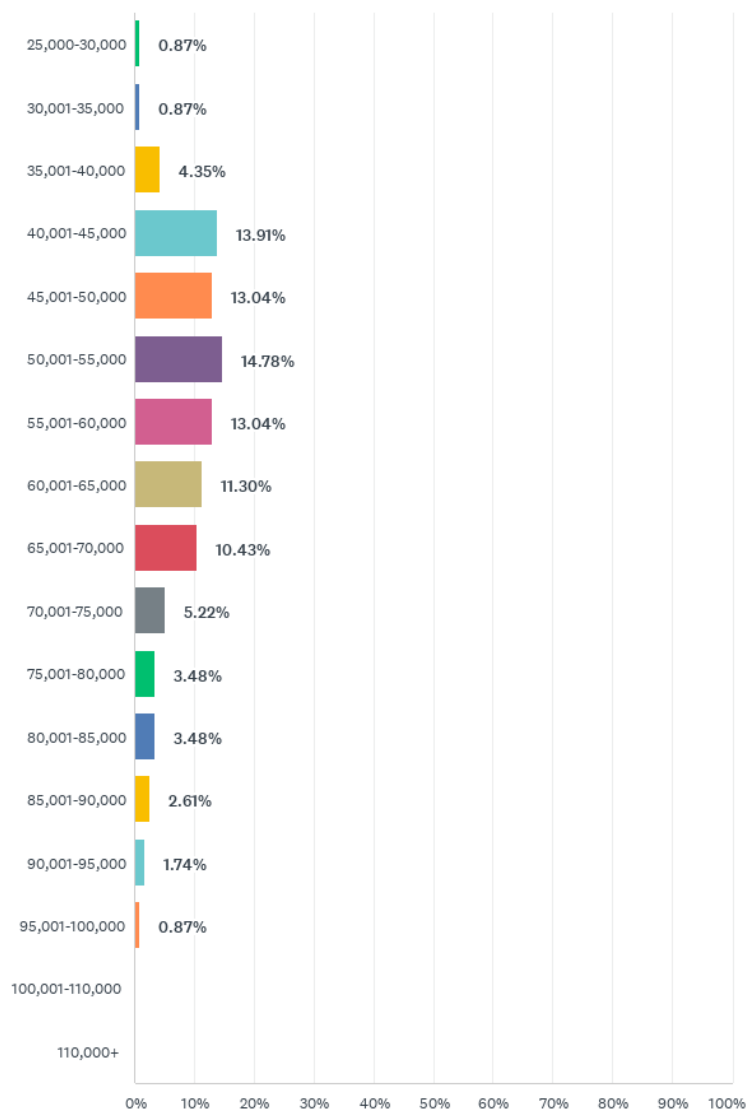
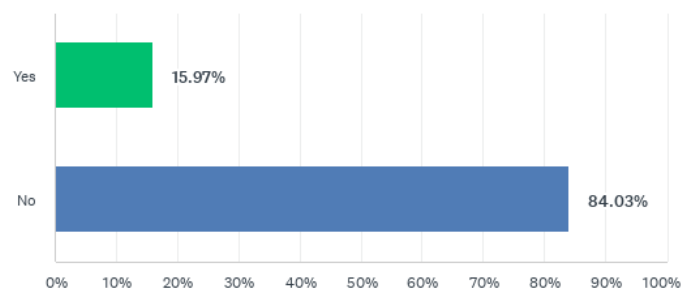


Table 3A

If you are comfortable please select your current salary range. (For school year 2021-2022)		
Answer Choices	Responses	
25,000-30,000	0.87%	1
30,001-35,000	0.87%	1
35,001-40,000	4.35%	5
40,001-45,000	13.91%	16
45,001-50,000	13.04%	15
50,001-55,000	14.78%	17
55,001-60,000	13.04%	15
60,001-65,000	11.30%	13
65,001-70,000	10.43%	12
70,001-75,000	5.22%	6
75,001-80,000	3.48%	4
80,001-85,000	3.48%	4
85,001-90,000	2.61%	3
90,001-95,000	1.74%	2
95,001-100,000	0.87%	1
100,001-110,000	0.00%	0
110,000+	0.00%	0

Chart 4A

Q4 Do you think you are properly compensated?

**Table 4A**

Do you think you are properly compensated?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	15.97%	19
No	84.03%	100
	Answered	119
	Skipped	0

Q5 Would you think it beneficial to raise teacher salaries?

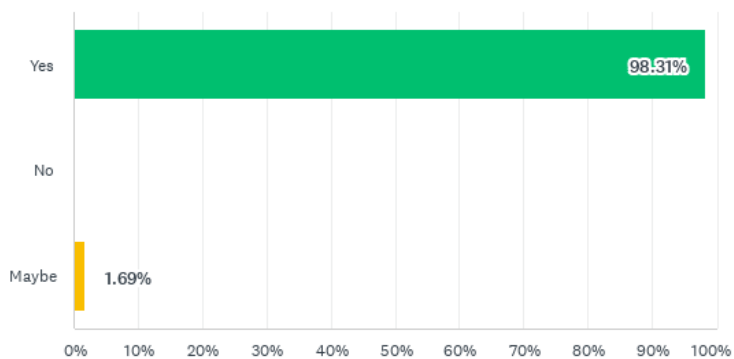
Chart 5A

Table 5A

Would you think it beneficial to raise teacher salaries?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	98.31%	116
No	0.00%	0
Maybe	1.69%	2
	Answered	118
	Skipped	1

Chart 6A

Question 6

Please write what subject(s) you taught.	
Answered	115
Skipped	4

Chart 6B

Subjects taught as commented by teachers:

Key: Note if an area is not highlighted is is considered OTHER or taught all subjects

Responses that have multiple subjects only one of the following major subjects was chosen.

CTE- Career and Technical Education

Key 1 (for chart 6B)

Subject	Elective	English	History	Language	Math	Science	Special Education
Color							

.5 Physical Education Teacher / .5 Study Hall Assistant	CATE	English	Health Science	Math - (Geometry CP, AP Statistics, Algebra 1 CP, Algebra 2 CP, Probability & Statistics CP, Math 7, Advanced Math 7, Geometry HN 8, Probability & Statistics CP 4x4, Geometry CP 4x4_	Psychology, US History, Human Geography	Social Studies // High School	Visual Art
7th, 8th, English 1, English 2, AP Literature, Teacher Cadet	Chemistry	English	Health Science 1 , Health Science 2, Medical Terminology	Math (Geometry, Prob and Stats)	Public Safety	Social Studies, mostly Economics and American Government	Visual Arts
Agriculture Education	Chemistry (CP, HN, AP)	English	high school	Math and Job Skills	Science	Social studies, Sports medicine	World Language
Algebra 1, Algebra 2, Algebra 3, Foundations of Algebra	Chemistry 1 CP, IB Chemistry SL 1, and IB Chemistry HL 2	English	High school English.	Math: Algebra 1 CP and AP Statistics	Science	Spanish	

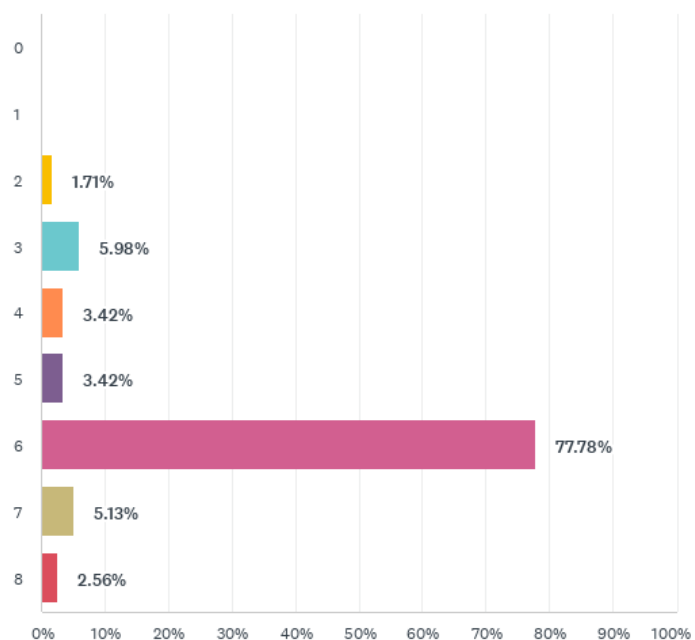
Algebra 2 HN, Precalculus CP, AP Calculus AB (for the 21-22 school year)	core subject	English	History	Mathematics	Science	Spanish
Algebra 3, Precalculus Honors, Calculus Honors	CTE	English 1	History/ Social Studies	Mathematics	Science	Spanish
All core subjects(math english science social studies) Job Skills, Career prep, Foods class, Personal Social Skills, PE/Art/Music, and behavior	CTE	English 1 CP, English 1 Honors, English 2 Honors	In LR5, I currently teach AP Biology, and Anatomy /Physiol ogy, however I have taught all of the sciences througho ut my career.	Mathematics	Science	Special ed
Anatomy & Physiology, Sports Medicine	Culinary/H ospitality	English 3, English 4, AP Language and Compositi on	Leadersh ip, Yearboo k, PE, Health	Mathematics	Science (multiple subjects)	Special Education
AP Biology, Anatomy and Physiology (Honors and CP), Biology 1	Dance	English II (Honors), English III (CP and Honors)	Math	Middle Level Science, SS and Mathematics/Se condary Science Biology and	Science, (biology, Chemistry) CTE Biomedical	Special Education

				Physical Science	Science		
AP Human Geography, AP Psychology, AP Government, AP Macroeconomics, Government, Economics, Current Events	Electricity	English, Journalism	Secondary Science	PE	Science, including AP courses	Special education	
AP Seminar and Research, Fundamentals of Computing	engineering , computer science, career exploration, life skills	English, Literacy	Math	Performing Arts	Secondary Math	Special Education	
Art	English	English, Mythology	Math	Physical Education	Secondary Social Studies	Special Education	
Biology 1 and AP Biology	English	Environmental Science, Physical Science	Math	Physics	Self-Contained Special Education	Special Education (Moderate Disabilities)	
Biology CP, Biology HN, IB Biology	English	ESOL and Spanish	math	Physics, Chemistry, Physical Science, AP Research	Social Studies	Special Education all subjects	

Biology, Honors Biology, AP Biology, Anatomy and Physiology, Honors Anatomy and Physiology, Honors Principles of Biomedical Systems, Honors Human Body Systems, Honors Medical Interventions, Honors Biomedical Innovations, Research	English	French 2, 3H, 4H; Journalism 1; Journalism 2-4/Yearbo ok	math	Physics, Physical Science	Social Studies - Human Geography (all levels), Psychology (all levels), US History (all levels)	Special Education Post secondary transition	
Business (Accounting, Business Law) Technology (Game Design & Development, Digital Multimedia, Desktop Publishing, Foundations of Animation)	English	Geometry, Algebra 2, Test Prep	Math	Pre-Calculus, Geometry Honors, Algebra 1	Social Studies & ESL	Theatre	

Chart 7A

Q7 How many classes did you teach?

**Table 7A**

How many classes did you teach?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
0	0.00%	0
1	0.00%	0
2	1.71%	2
3	5.98%	7
4	3.42%	4
5	3.42%	4

6	77.78%	91
7	5.13%	6
8	2.56%	3
	Answered	117
	Skipped	2

Q8 Please select approximately how many students you taught the 2021-2022 school year.

Chart 8A

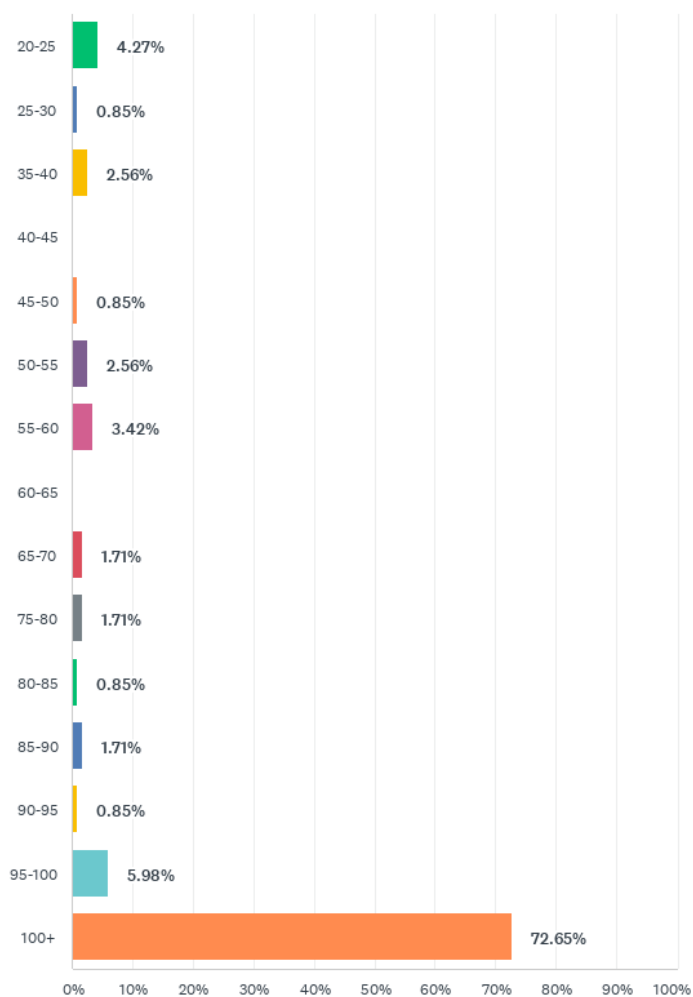


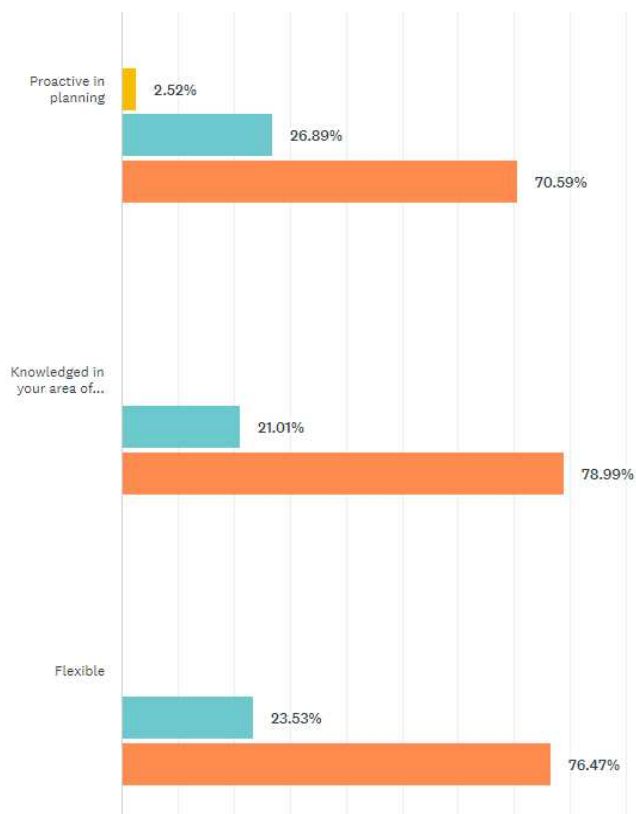
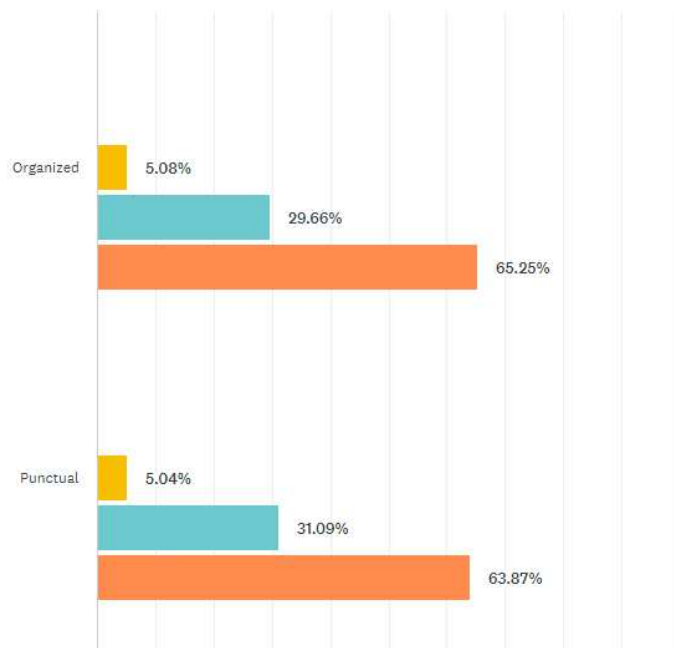
Table 8A

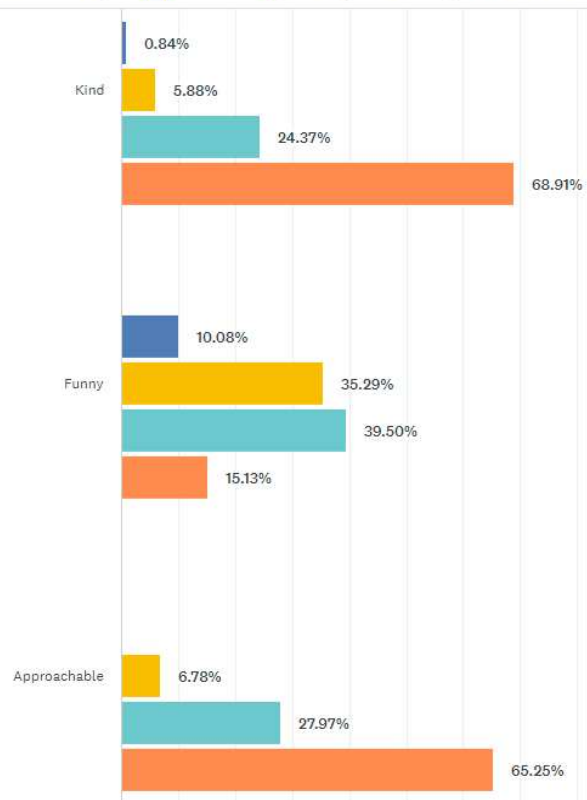
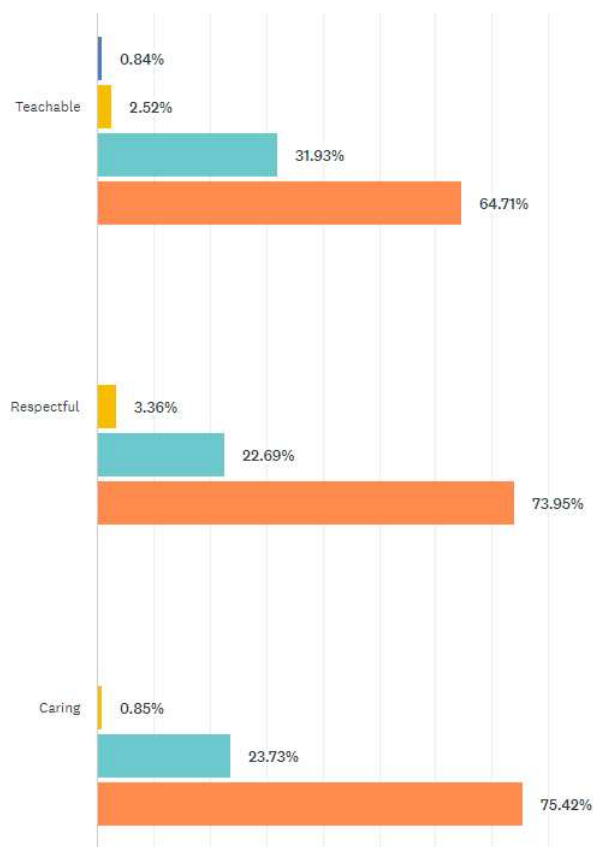
Please select approximately how many students you taught the 2021-2022 school year.		
Answer Choices	Responses	
20-25	4.27%	5
25-30	0.85%	1
35-40	2.56%	3
40-45	0.00%	0
45-50	0.85%	1
50-55	2.56%	3
55-60	3.42%	4
60-65	0.00%	0
65-70	1.71%	2
75-80	1.71%	2
80-85	0.85%	1
85-90	1.71%	2
90-95	0.85%	1
95-100	5.98%	7
100+	72.65%	85
	Answered	117
	Skipped	2

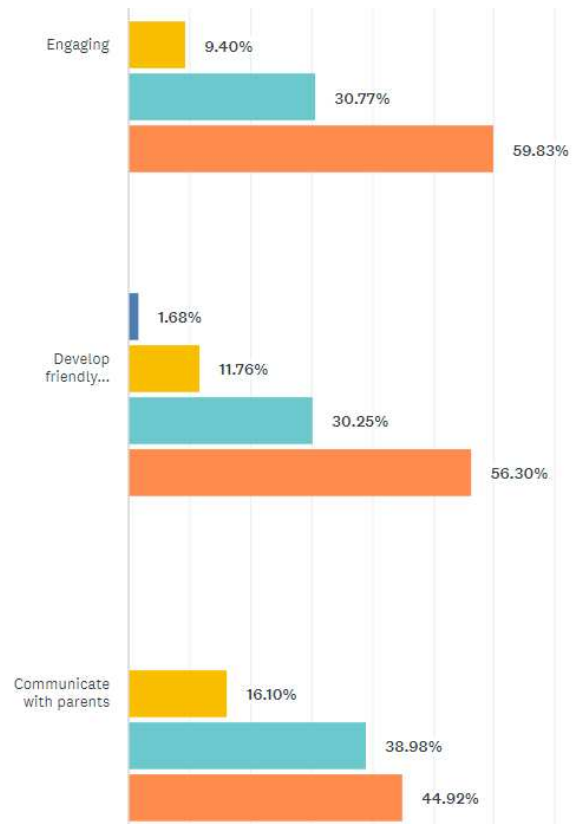
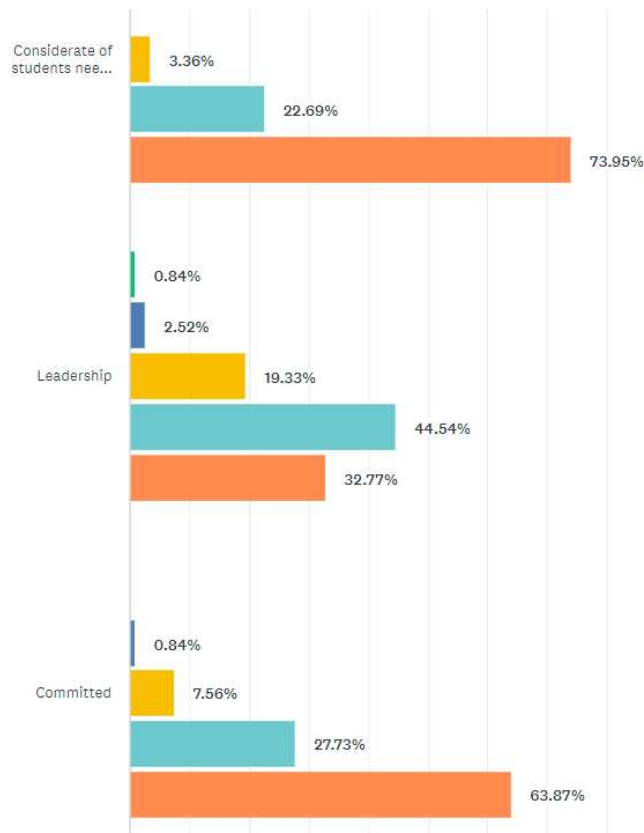
Chart 9A

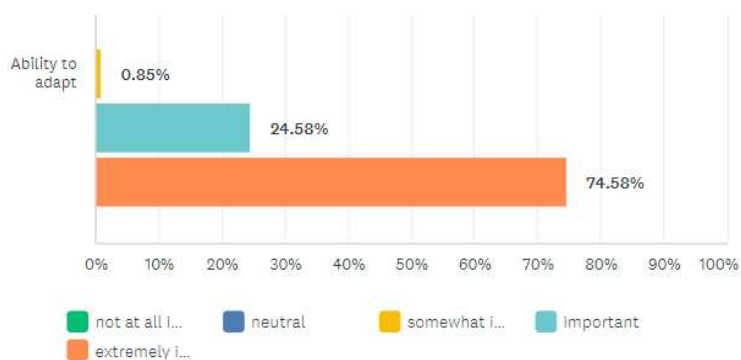
Please rate the importance of the following qualities or characteristics of being a teacher.

Answered: 119 Skipped: 0







**Table 9A**

Please rate the importance of the following qualities or characteristics of being a teacher.

	not at all important		neutral		somewhat important		important		extremely important		Total
Organized	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	5.08%	6	29.66%	35	65.25%	77	118
Punctual	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	5.04%	6	31.09%	37	63.87%	76	119
Proactive in planning	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	2.52%	3	26.89%	32	70.59%	84	119
Knowledgeable in your area of teaching	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	21.01%	25	78.99%	94	119
Flexible	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	23.53%	28	76.47%	91	119
Teachable	0.00%	0	0.84%	1	2.52%	3	31.93%	38	64.71%	77	119
Respectful	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	3.36%	4	22.69%	27	73.95%	88	119
Caring	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.85%	1	23.73%	28	75.42%	89	118
Kind	0.00%	0	0.84%	1	5.88%	7	24.37%	29	68.91%	82	119
Funny	0.00%	0	10.08%	12	35.29%	42	39.50%	47	15.13%	18	119
Approachable	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	6.78%	8	27.97%	33	65.25%	77	118
Considerate of students needs (learning, social, emotional)	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	3.36%	4	22.69%	27	73.95%	88	119

Leadership	0.84%	1	2.52%	3	19.33%	23	44.54%	53	32.77%	39	119
Committed	0.00%	0	0.84%	1	7.56%	9	27.73%	33	63.87%	76	119
Engaging	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	9.40%	11	30.77%	36	59.83%	70	117
Develop friendly student teacher relationships	0.00%	0	1.68%	2	11.76%	14	30.25%	36	56.30%	67	119
Communicate with parents	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	16.10%	19	38.98%	46	44.92%	53	118
Ability to adapt	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.85%	1	24.58%	29	74.58%	88	118
Other (please specify other characteristics that are important but not listed)											12
										A n s w e r e d	119
										S k i p p e d	0

List 9A

Others (comments of teachers)

- understanding
- intelligent
- ability to work well with other professionals in collaboration
- working with teams Scaffolding Presentation Curriculum Building Assessments Fair/Impartial Treatment Behavior Management
- passion to make a positive change, always searching for a better way to connect with students
- being really quick to grade things is a big plus—unfortunately, not so realistic most of time time
- willing to put your own needs (including physical and emotional well-being and religious and social interaction) as well as the needs of your family and friends on the back-burner

due to the overwhelming demands of your job. Also, be willing to give up your time on weekends, holidays, summers to work for free in order to actually get finished all the work load that you are expected to produce

- Ability to work for administrators who are dumber than you are
- You need patience
- Be ready to give up time afterschool and be required to spend overnights on field trips
- team player collaborator life-long learner
- Ability to multi-task, strong listening skills, collaboration with colleagues, trustworthy, perseverance
- The ability to accept and reflect upon constructive criticism

Chart 10A

Q10 How often did you have to discipline a student(s)?

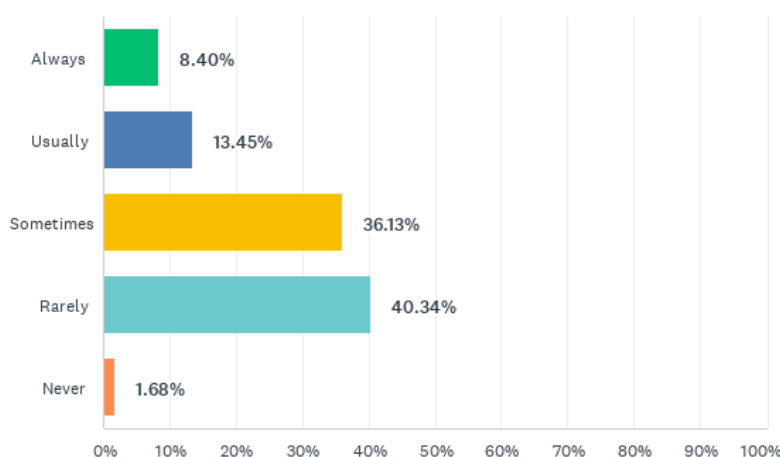


Table 10A

How often did you have to discipline a student(s)?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Always	8.40%	10
Usually	13.45%	16
Sometimes	36.13%	43

Rarely	40.34%	48
Never	1.68%	2
Answered		119
Skipped		0

Chart 11A

Q11 How much do you agree with this statement?"I find that I fill a million roles in a day--parent, teacher, friend, hero, disciplinarian, counselor, etc. Teaching is often a secondary role." -Lisa M. Shipley

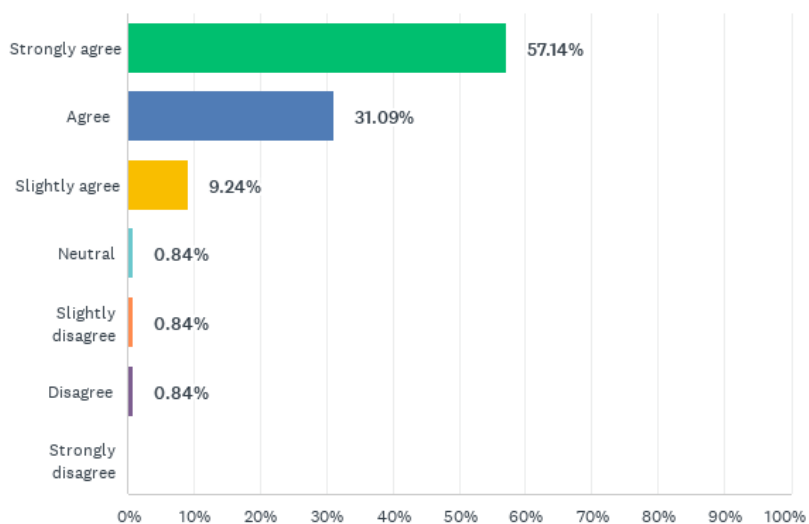


Table 11A

How much do you agree with this statement?"I find that I fill a million roles in a day--parent, teacher, friend, hero, disciplinarian, counselor, etc. Teaching is often a secondary role." -Lisa M. Shipley		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly agree	57.14%	68
Agree	31.09%	37
Slightly agree	9.24%	11
Neutral	0.84%	1
Slightly disagree	0.84%	1
Disagree	0.84%	1
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
	Answered	119
	Skipped	0

Q12 Do you have a second job? (i.e work other than teaching that you are paid for)

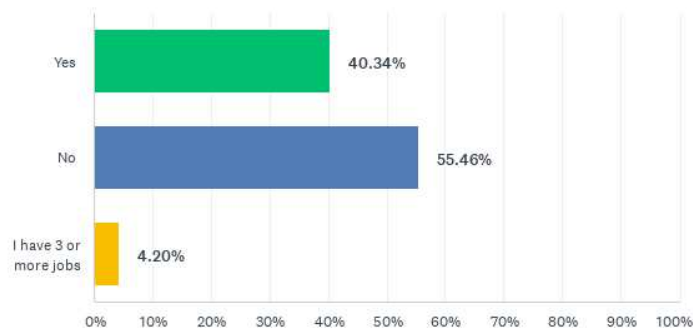
Chart 12A

Table 12A

Do you have a second job? (i.e. work other than teaching that you are paid for)		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	40.34%	48
No	55.46%	66
I have 3 or more jobs	4.20%	5
	Answered	119
	Skipped	0

List 13A

Q13 If answered yes or have 3 or more jobs, briefly describe what you do.

- Coaching 2 sports and have a small business
- I coach two sports outside of teaching.
- Teach college. Tutor. Homebound.
- HR personnel for a Pool company, Lifeguard, Secretary for a concrete company
- I work summers at a local bank as a teller.
- Score essays for College Board.
- I have 2-3 Jobs in management and service industry (which I typically make more money than I do teaching).
- Rental property
- Train teachers to use job skill curriculum for a curriculum developer.
- You need to figure in that I am national board certified and my district matches that bonus...so \$10000 is added to my salary as well as about another \$10000 for my coaching supplement...withoutthat i would not be satisfied

- Basketball Coach
- I coach two sports after school, do private lessons and conduct or work various camps.
- Adjunct Faculty at local University
- I am a coach and an official
- Professional Musician with SC Philharmonic, Run a small wedding music business, I teach for a second non profit school
- I'm a certified recovery coach and homebound teacher.
- I do more than 3 extra jobs so that I can earn a livable wage. All of them use the degrees or expertise I have from university.
- Not sure if this counts, but I tutor in our school's after school tutoring program 4 hours a week
- I take on 3-4 stipend paid roles that relate to my job. I am seeking an additional part time job in dance competition judging.
- I teach online to compensate
- I teach fitness classes at a local gym. I run the afterschool tutoring program. I proctor state assessments (ACT/SAT). I do homebound tutoring.
- Coaching - at least 2 sport seasons for 29 years
- Coaching, tutoring, and I also do summer school
- Tutoring, admin SAT/ACT, etc.
- Lab assistant at USC
- I write curriculum for one of the programs that I use in my class.
- teach graduate course, sponsor a club
- Tutor
- I do handiwork and painting outside during breaks from school.

- I do sales, inventory and organization for a successful upstart business.
- Rehab Houses and tutor
- I work for a Shakespeare library in DC (The Folger Shakespeare Library) conducting PD and writing lesson plans. I choose to do it--it's not essential to my survival financially.
- I teach workshops.
- I work as a paralegal at a law firm and I am a coach. I am also enrolled in a PhD program
- Homebound
- Tutoring
- Part-time packaging
- Coach, Driver Instructor, Bus Driver
- I am a mother, wife, caretaker of older parent, and I make custom textiles.
- Tutoring
- Babysit on weekends for extra money.

Chart 14A

Q14 How often do you work on school related items outside the school day?

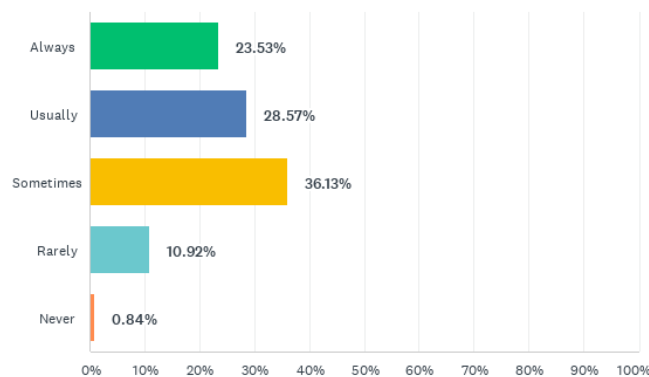


Table 14A

How often do you work on school related items outside the school day?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Always	23.53%	28
Usually	28.57%	34
Sometimes	36.13%	43
Rarely	10.92%	13
Never	0.84%	1
	Answered	119
	Skipped	0

Chart 15A

Q15 If you do work outside of the school day, please select all the following that you do.

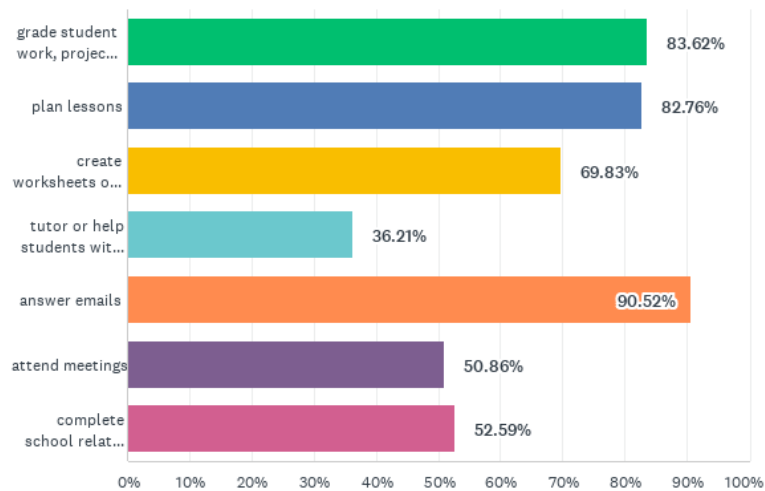


Table 15A

If you do work outside of the school day, please select all the following that you do.		
Answer Choices	Responses	
grade student work, projects, essays, exams, etc.	83.62%	97
plan lessons	82.76%	96
create worksheets or assignments	69.83%	81
tutor or help students with subject material	36.21%	42
answer emails	90.52%	105
attend meetings	50.86%	59
complete school related paperwork	52.59%	61
Other tasks (please specify)		23
	Answered	116
	Skipped	3

List 15A

Other as commented by teachers

- Work on extra curricular duties/assignments
- IEP paperwork
- Prepare for productions and theatre related events
- Create Project Examples Create Supply Orders Work within the classroom Classroom Management (Seating Charts, etc.) Collaborate with Co-workers Research for inspiration/lesson planning Monitor and Adjust current/prior assignments to improve on my teaching for semesters/years to come
- Buy materials, prizes, etc.
- coordinate field trips, activities
- write IEP's and contingency plans
- I set boundaries for myself
- Coaching. Practice/games
- student supervision duties, standardized testing administration

- IEPs
- Attend webinars
- Answer text and calls from students, create assignments for homebound students
- I did the entire list above my first 2-3 years of teaching. I have been able to pull back and only work 60-30mins prior to the start of the school day since I have created and planned for my subjects previous school years
- Lunch Duty (*This is not outside of the school day but it is an extra duty)
- Contact parents
- Use the state standards to create questions that test the standards.
- field trips, club meetings
- While it's not a tangible task, the students and job never really leave my mind--it's always with me.
- Write IEPs
- Pinterest/TPT ideas for lessons
- Prepare materials. Buy books. Read books that I am teaching in class.
- Attend PD sessions or classes to keep my content knowledge fresh

Table 16A

Q16

Please estimate the number of hours weekly that you work outside of the school day on school related activities/work.	
Answered	117
Skipped	2

Table 16B

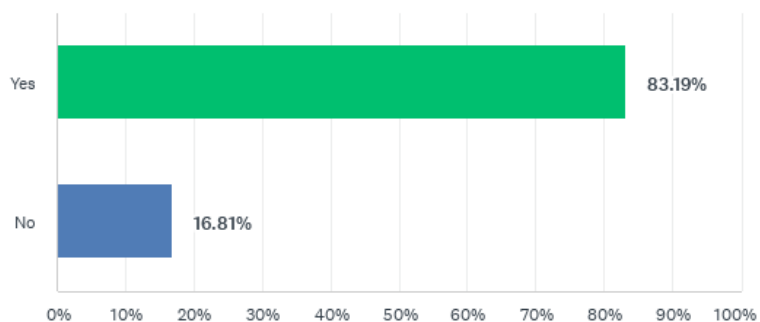
Table of hours given by teachers

0	2	3	5	5-10	10	10	10-15	14-20	20	85-90
0	2	3	5	5-10	10	10	10-15	15	20	During Sports season - 20-30
1	2	3	5	5-10	10	10	10-15	15	20	Outside of tutoring hours (that I am paid for), I work about 4 hours outside of

										school on school related tasks.
1	2	3	5	5-10 hours a week	10	10	10-15	15	20-25	Pending upon the time of year (yearbook deadline, grades due) it ranges from 5-20.
1	2	3 hours	5	5-10 hours a week	10	10	10-15	15	20-30	Too many to count
1	2	3 hours	5	5-15	10	10	10-15 hours	15	20-40	
1 hour	2	3-4	5	6	10	10 hours/ week	10-20	15	24	
1 hour	2 hours	3-5	5+	8	10	10 hr	10-20 hours	15	25	
1-3	2-10	3-6	5-6	8	10	10+	12	15 hours	25 - All paid.	
1-3 hours per week	2-3	4	5-6	8	10	10-12	12	15-20	30	
	2-4 hours	4	5-8	8	10	10-12 hours		16	30	
	2-5	4								

Chart 17A

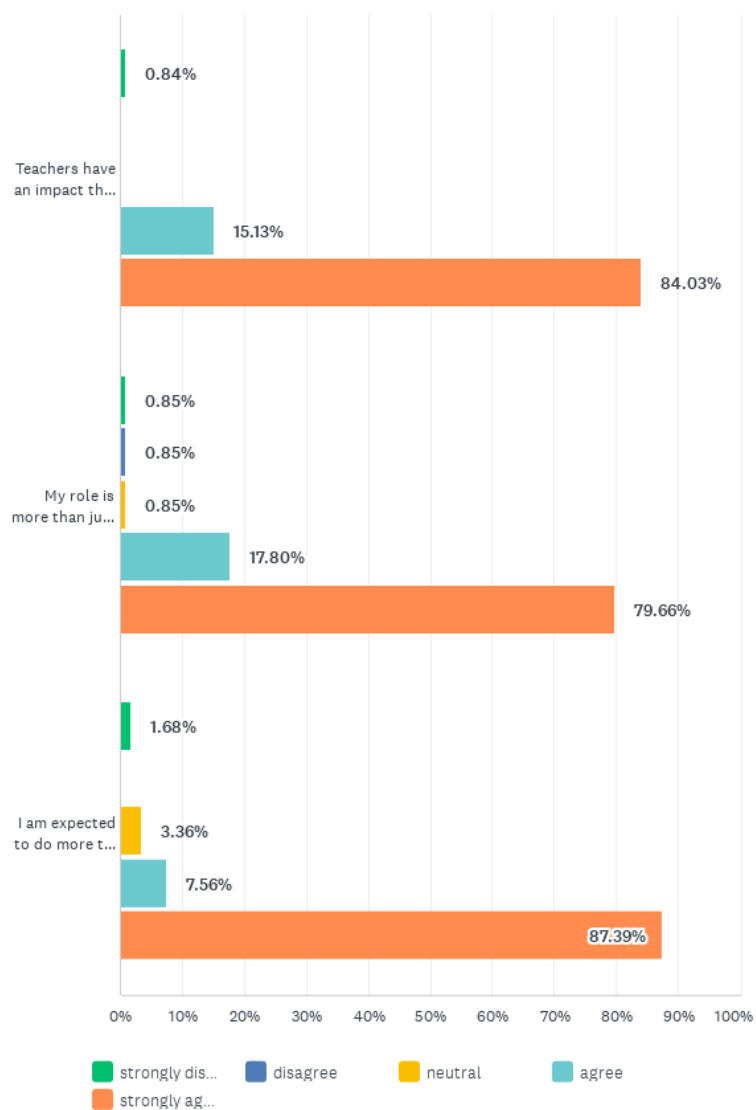
Q17 Do you work on school related material over the summer?

**Table 17A**

Q17	Do you work on school related materials over the summer?	
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	83.19%	99
No	16.81%	20
	Answered	119
	Skipped	0

Chart 18A

Q18 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:



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