



HENDERSON TEACHER POLICY PLAN

During my time working with public schools across the state of Arkansas, I have seen firsthand the talent and brilliance of our students. As a new parent, there is nothing more frustrating and dismaying to me than to see my state near the very bottom of national rankings on college attainment, ACT scores, and student achievement. We need to build the public education system that our students and our state deserve.

Education is my campaign's top priority because I want what every parent, grandparent, and employer wants — to ensure there are opportunities for the students we invest in to stay in Arkansas, whether it be through a career, college, or vocational training. To get us there, I recognize that we must invest in teachers to an extent never done before in Arkansas. Our teachers are often unheard, undervalued, and underpaid. It's time to change that.

This campaign has a central goal on education: In 10 years, Arkansas should be the best state in the country to be a public school teacher. I am committed to making them the highest paid teachers in the country adjusted for cost of living, empowering them to make big impacts in our highest-need subjects and districts, and cutting away onerous administrative requirements. We need to trust educators.

WE CAN:

- **Pay teachers like the skilled professionals they are.** Arkansas teachers make less in real terms than they did before the Great Recession. When we force them to bear the brunt of spending cuts, our entire education system suffers. If we truly prioritize education, we can make Arkansas teachers the highest paid in the nation adjusted for cost of living in the next ten years. We propose an initial 10% increase in minimum teacher pay and a 3.6% annual increase for nine subsequent years.
- **Attract top leaders to classrooms in high-needs subjects and school districts** by offering financial incentives and loan forgiveness. Teacher shortages in rural and low-income communities are unacceptable, and as governor I will dedicate meaningful resources to ending them.
- **Partner with local school districts to bolster wraparound services** including college counseling, health and psychological services, and mental health counseling to give students the in-school supports they need and allow teachers to focus on their classrooms.
- **Replace administrative burdens for teachers** that are bureaucratic and time-consuming with responsive, common-sense alternatives. It's time to move towards a more flexible teacher support and evaluation system that provides more support to novice teachers and stays out of the way of proven educators as part of a system of shared accountability.
- **Protect against efforts to undermine the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System and ensure quality, affordable health care and benefits packages.** A comprehensive benefits package is a tool to attract and retain our best talent. In addition, educators who serve our children and communities for decades shouldn't have to worry about a secure retirement. They've earned it.
- **Recognize master teachers** for their expertise. Our most effective teachers should be given greater influence in schools and opportunities for advancement and recognition, including opportunities to become National Board Certified Teachers. If we allow them to step up, they will be excellent mentors for new teachers and fierce advocates for their students.
- **Award Governor's Innovation Prizes** to identify best practices in education and replicate them at scale. Arkansas is filled with brilliant leaders who have ideas that can lead to transformative change in our school system. I will empower them to make an impact beyond the walls of their own classrooms.



Henderson Teacher Pay Plan:

Year	10 and 3.6
0	\$31,800
1	\$34,980
2	\$36,239
3	\$37,544
4	\$38,895
5	\$40,296
6	\$41,746
7	\$43,249
8	\$44,806
9	\$46,419
10	\$48,090

Financing: Assuming state budgets grow at 2% annual inflation rate, education department budget should increase by \$500 million over the next decade. Assuming average teacher pay increases by 50% and Arkansas needs 3% more teachers in a decade, teacher salaries will increase from \$1.58 billion to \$2.45 billion, an increase of \$870 million (of that, \$340 million is keeping up with inflation and \$540 million is a true pay increase). To be able to accommodate this, the education budget must increase by an average of 3.4% per year. The first two years will cost, roughly, \$160 million total and affect 163 of Arkansas's smallest school districts. Over time, this can be paid for by reallocating Hutchinson's promised tax breaks for the wealthy, lowering the cost of corrections spending, and allotting collected internet state sales tax.

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TEACHER PAY PLAN: EXPLAINED

Henderson's short term goal: Increase minimum teacher salary by at least 7 percent because average teacher pay in Arkansas has fallen by over 7 percent in real terms since 2009.

Henderson's long term goal: Arkansas will have the highest teacher salaries in the nation, adjusted for cost of living. This will require a 50% pay increase over the next decade. Currently, Michigan ranks first in the nation for teacher pay. Our goal is benchmarked against their current salary schedule.

Example at scale:

Year	Michigan (1% annual growth)	Arkansas (4% annual growth)
0	\$72,424	\$54,486
1	\$73,148	\$56,665
2	\$73,880	\$58,932
3	\$74,619	\$61,289
4	\$75,365	\$63,741
5	\$76,118	\$66,291
6	\$76,880	\$68,942
7	\$77,648	\$71,700
8	\$78,425	\$74,568
9	\$79,209	\$77,551
10	\$80,001	\$80,653

*Cost of living multiplier = 1.12 for Arkansas. This means that the average year 10 salary is \$71,967 in Arkansas dollars. To achieve this result, minimum starting teacher salary should be about 2/3 of the target average salary, or \$48,000. Boosting teacher salaries by raising the salary floor will ensure that most gains go to least well-funded schools, while the state's highest-income districts are unlikely to be impacted by the hikes at all. Pay increases should begin with an immediate increase of at least 7 percent to offset real wage decline since 2009, then by an annual increase of between 3 and 4 percent. Note: an increase of the minimum starting salary to \$35,000 does not mean a pay raise for all teachers – of Arkansas' 15 largest school districts, only Pine Bluff and Pulaski County would likely be impacted by an increase to \$35,000.