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New DPI report shows Wisconsin's education workforce is in crisis

Teacher retention major challenge, total teacher compensation has decreased since 2010

MADISON – A new report released today by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction found Wisconsin educators continue to leave the state's workforce at an alarming rate, and that educator compensation has decreased nearly 20 percent over the past 12 years when held constant in 2022 dollars.

[The DPI's 2022 Educator Preparation Program and Workforce Analysis Report](#), which analyzes data from the 2021-22 school year, found the state's education workforce challenges are largely driven by teacher retention in two key areas: when an aspiring teacher completes their program, and during the first few years in the profession. When holding dollars constant, there was a 19 percent decrease in compensation since 2010.

"This report shows what we've known for some time now: Our education workforce is in crisis," State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly said. "Wisconsin's kids are suffering from losing quality teachers. Solving this challenge starts with upholding the state's responsibility of funding our public schools. We have the resources, and we owe it to our kids to do more."

According to the DPI's analysis, about four out of every 10 first-year teachers either leave the state or the profession altogether after just six years (39.4 percent of new teachers), and only 68 percent of aspiring educators who complete an education preparation program were ultimately employed in a Wisconsin public school. Based on the DPI's licensure data, the subject area with the worst shortage area remains special education.

"Educating our future leaders is an incredible responsibility, and we are failing students and families," Dr. Underly said. "It's shocking we've allowed teacher compensation to decline in real terms. Not only do our teachers need to be paid appropriately, but they need to be respected and supported by our communities. Under my leadership, the DPI will continue fighting for our students, our families, our educators, and our public schools."

(more)

To determine a root cause of teacher retention challenges in the state, the DPI surveyed school districts on a voluntary basis in fall 2023. Among the 37 percent (165 districts) that responded to the survey, personal reasons, compensation, work-life balance, leaving for another profession, and workload were among the top reasons given for why educators left a district after the 2022-23 school year.

To support districts through these workforce challenges, the DPI recently launched [the Special Educator Induction Program](#), partnered with the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development to create a teacher apprenticeship program, and supported districts in [implementing state education and training career pathways](#). The DPI also ensures compliance with state requirements and support for effective educator preparation, educator effectiveness, mentoring, and educator licensing. More information on work in these areas can be found [on the DPI's website](#).

The purpose of this annual report is to provide the most complete picture possible to educators, employers, preparation programs, and others interested in addressing Wisconsin's education workforce needs. The full report, which contains a variety of other data analyses and complete survey data related to the education workforce, [can be found on the DPI's website](#).

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NOTE: This news release is available online on the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's website.