



TSTA NEWS

TEXAS STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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More teachers forced to moonlight

Forty-four percent of Texas teachers moonlight during the school year, and 61 percent take extra jobs during the summer to make ends meet, according to a survey by Sam Houston State University commissioned by the Texas State Teachers Association.

Some 60 percent of respondents said they were seriously considering leaving the teaching profession, a marked increase over the 46.7 percent who were considering a career change when a similar survey was conducted in 2010.

The moonlighters work, on average, almost 14 hours a week at their extra school-year jobs. Most – 83 percent – said they believed their teaching quality would improve if they quit the extra jobs, and 91 percent said they would quit moonlighting if their teaching salaries were high enough to allow it. But respondents, on average, said they would need a \$9,188 annual raise in their teacher pay to make up for the extra income. That figure roughly corresponds to the margin -- \$8,273 – by which the average teacher salary in Texas lags behind the national average.

This is the highest percentage of teachers to report moonlighting since TSTA started sponsoring the survey, “Texas Teachers, Moonlighting and Morale,” more than 30 years ago. In 2010, the most recent year the survey was conducted, 40.8 percent of teachers held extra jobs during the school year and 56 percent during the summer.

That was before the Legislature slashed \$5.4 billion from the public education budget in 2011. Since then, the average teacher salary in Texas has dropped by \$528.

As recently as 2008, only 28 percent of teachers reported moonlighting during the school year, and only 22 percent had extra jobs when the first survey was conducted in 1980.

“Dedicated educators shouldn’t have to juggle extra jobs to support their families, but the financial reality of being a teacher in Texas leaves them little choice,” said TSTA President Rita Haecker. “Even so, they remain strongly committed to the needs of their students. Our elected officials need to give these professionals the professional pay that they deserve.”

The average salary of teachers participating in the latest survey was \$50,967 a year, and their average classroom experience was 16.9 years. Some 64 percent were the major breadwinners in their households.

Overall, the average teacher salary in Texas, based on data for the 2012-13 school year, was \$48,110. That was 38th among the states and the District of Columbia and was \$8,273 below the national average, according to the National Education Association.

The survey respondents also reported:

Spending an average of \$697 a year from their own pockets on school supplies, an increase of more than \$130 from three years ago.

Spending an average of \$408 each month on health insurance, an increase of almost \$200 from 2010.

Working an average 18 hours a week outside the classroom on school-related work – in addition to their moonlighting jobs.

Overwhelming opposition – 95 percent – to letting a single standardized test determine whether a student gets promoted.

The online survey of 306 teachers was conducted last spring by Dr. Robert Maninger, Dr. Sam Sullivan and Dr. Daphne Johnson of Sam Houston State University. Some 80 percent of the participants were women, 48 percent had graduate degrees and they represented all grade levels and urban, suburban and rural school districts.