

RESPECT: You deserve it

Challenges

Address the teacher shortage

There is a growing teacher shortage in Pennsylvania. If we don't do something about it, our students will pay the price.

↓32% Drop¹

in number of college students completing PA teacher prep programs between 2013-14 and 2017-18

↓74% Drop¹

in number of Instructional I certificates issued between 2012-13 and 2018-19 by the Dept. of Education

Reduce student loan debt

The sheer weight of student loan debt is a real barrier to attracting new educators.

PA Average Student Loan Debt:
\$37,061²



Attract more educators who are people of color

Many school districts would like to hire more people of color but can't find them.

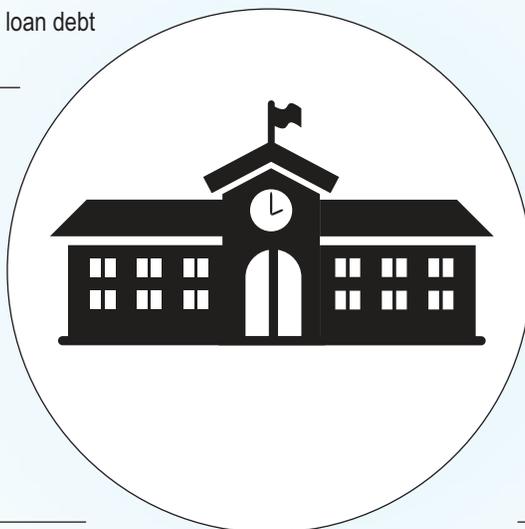
PA Minority Educators

PA Minority Students

4%³ < **29%**³

Take it to \$45K

The minimum teacher salary set by state law hasn't increased since 1988. That means 2,660 educators make less than \$45,000 and many work second and third jobs to make ends meet.



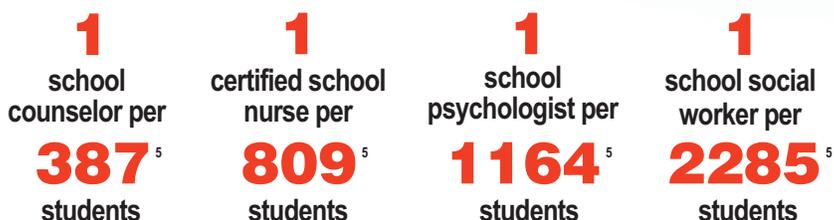
Fund more teaching assistants

Teaching assistants are invaluable members of the classroom team. They help improve student test scores in reading and math, reduce tardiness and absenteeism, and support inclusion of students with disabilities.⁴



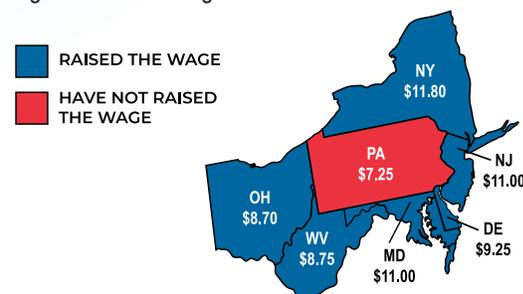
Invest in more school nurses, counselors, psychologists, and social workers

These skilled professionals help students navigate challenges at home and school and keep them safe, healthy, and ready to learn. There just aren't enough of them in Pennsylvania's schools.



Raise the minimum wage

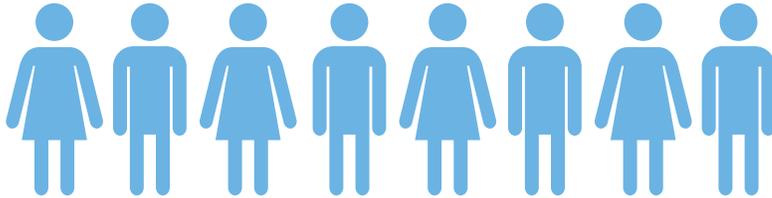
All of Pennsylvania's neighboring states have higher minimum wage rates than our state.



Sources: ¹Pennsylvania Department of Education ²"Student Debt and the Class of 2018," The Institute for College Access & Success, September 2019 ³"Diversifying the Teaching Profession: How to Recruit and Retain Teachers of Color," Learning Policy Institute, April 2018 ⁴Cathi Hill, "The Role of Instructional Assistants in Regular Classrooms: Are They Influencing Inclusive Practices?" The Alberta Journal of Educational Research Vol. XLIX, No. 1, Spring 2003, 98-100. Charles T. Clotfelter, Steven W. Hemelt, & Helen F. Ladd, "Teaching Assistants and Nonteaching Staff: Do They Improve Student Outcomes?," CALDER Working Paper No. 169, October 2016. ⁵"School Safety Task Force Report," August 2018

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The RESPECT initiative is one of PSEA's top priorities. RESPECT's goals are to tackle Pennsylvania's educator shortage, attract a new generation of educators to the profession, and keep our schools and students safe and healthy.



Solutions

- 1** Reduce student loan debt by enacting loan forgiveness programs.
- 2** Attract more educators who are people of color by expanding initiatives that broaden and diversify our educator workforce, like the advanced training grant program Gov. Tom Wolf launched in 2018 that awarded \$2.1 million in grants to 11 universities last year.
- 3** Fund more teaching assistants by finding the resources to help schools hire them.
- 4** Invest in more school nurses, counselors, psychologists, and social workers by improving professional-to-student ratios and providing state funding to school districts.
- 5** Take it to \$45K by passing SB 656 or HB 1545, which will provide state funding (included in the basic education subsidy base for future years) to school districts with teachers who earn less than \$45,000.
- 6** Raise the minimum wage so Pennsylvania is competitive with our neighbors.