

**REPORT OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL AND TRAINING**

**PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER
COMPENSATION**

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



HOUSE DOCUMENT NO. 7

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
1998**



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Personnel and Training

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Dear Governor Allen, Members of the
General Assembly and the Board of Education:

Section 22.1-289.1 of the Code of Virginia requires the Department of Personnel and Training to conduct a biennial review of the compensation of teachers and other occupations requiring similar education and training.

Enclosed for your review and consideration is the 1997 report that has been prepared in response to this Code requirement.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Charles E. James, Sr.", written in black ink.

Charles E. James, Sr.

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Michael E. Thomas
Secretary of Administration

The Honorable Beverly H. Sgro
Secretary of Education

PREFACE

Section 22.1-289.1 of the Code of Virginia requires the Director of the Department of Personnel and Training to conduct a biennial review of the compensation of teachers and other occupations requiring similar education and training. This report is submitted in fulfillment of this requirement for 1997.

The review was conducted by the Office of Compensation Management of the Department of Personnel and Training. Assistance was provided by the Virginia Department of Education and the Virginia Education Association. In addition, local school divisions and private firms throughout the Commonwealth provided information.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 1987 Session of the General Assembly amended Section 22.1-289.1 of the Code of Virginia to require a biennial review of the salaries paid to public school teachers in the Commonwealth. A preliminary report was prepared in December, 1987 and the first biennial report was published as House Document Number 4 in June, 1989.

The legislation states that the review of teachers' salaries shall be reported to the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Board of Education by June 1 of each odd-numbered year. The legislation specifies that: "It is the goal of the Commonwealth that its public school teachers be compensated at a rate that is competitive in order to attract and keep competent teachers."

In order to comply with the legislative requirement, two indicators of competitiveness were reviewed:

1. a comparison of Virginia teachers' entry-level salaries with salaries of jobs having similar qualification requirements in private industry and state government; and
2. turnover and recruitment of Virginia teachers.

In the 1996-97 school year, teachers' entry-level salaries are 2.24% below entry-level private salaries, but exceed entry-level salaries of Virginia state employees by 4.32%. The 1997 data show that the competitive position of Virginia public school teachers' salaries has not changed significantly since the 1995 biennial report was published. The 1995 report revealed that teachers' entry-level salaries were below those of private industry by 2.4%, and were above entry-level salaries of Virginia state employees by 3.0%.

Localities report that most teachers who leave do not leave for competitive reasons, but for reasons such as retirement, family responsibilities, medical, and relocation. However, a significant turnover and recruitment problem is noted by the localities for special education teachers; this has been a continuing problem since the original report in 1987.

For informational purposes, the average salary for Virginia teachers and a comparison with other states are provided in Appendix 3.

INTRODUCTION

In reviewing the salary data in this report, it should be noted that summary data compare average entry-level salaries paid to Virginia teachers with entry-level salaries paid by private firms and the Commonwealth of Virginia. The average entry-level salaries paid to Virginia school teachers summarizes data from all school districts.

The school systems establish their teachers' salaries and, therefore, teachers in any one locality may be paid more or less than the average. Thus, the findings of this report may not apply to the competitive position of teachers in each specific school system.

COMPARISON OF VIRGINIA TEACHERS' ENTRY LEVEL SALARIES
WITH PRIVATE INDUSTRY AND STATE SALARIES

Entry-level salaries for public school teachers were compared to salaries for newly hired employees in private industry. For the purpose of this report, entry-level salaries provide the best measure of the competitiveness of teachers' salaries because school boards compete directly with private firms for new college graduates in many of the degree areas that prepare graduates for public school teaching. Also, the duties of, and market for, experienced teachers and private employees may not be comparable.

A survey was sent to 256 businesses in Virginia requesting hiring, or entry-level salary data for recent college graduates with specified educational degrees. The degrees selected were comparable to the various subject areas found in the teaching profession. Similar data also were obtained from compensation surveying firms and universities. The data were grouped into the following general categories:

BUSINESS
SOCIAL SCIENCES
LIFE SCIENCES
HUMANITIES
PHYSICAL SCIENCES

Salaries paid by private industry, other states, and Virginia state government were averaged and compared to the average entry-level salary for teachers in all localities. (See Appendix 1 for a matrix of average salaries.)

The 1996-97 school year average entry-level salary for Virginia's public school teachers, with bachelor's degrees and no experience, is \$24,774. The entry-level salary of private and state jobs requiring similar education and training is \$25,329, or 2.24 % above the Virginia teacher average entry-level salary. In 1994-95, the average private entry-level salary for firms and other states was 2.4% above Virginia's public school teachers (See Appendix 1).

The 1996-97 average entry-level salary of Virginia state employees in positions requiring similar education and training as that required for teachers is \$23,748 (See Appendix 2). The average entry-level teacher salary is 4.32% above the state employee entry-level salary. In 1994-95, the teacher salary was 3.0% above the state employee salary.

Private industry and state employee salary data are based on the salaries of employees working approximately 234 days a year, whereas teacher salaries represent approximately 200 work days (approximately 14.5% less than private and state employees). If the salary data are adjusted to reflect this difference, the average entry-level salary for Virginia's public school teachers (\$24,774) becomes 14.44% above the adjusted average entry-level salary of private industry (\$21,649), and 22% above the adjusted average for Virginia state jobs (\$20,297). In 1994-95 the adjusted differences were 14.26% and 20.5% respectively.

In considering whether to adjust salary data to reflect the difference in the number of days worked, it may be appropriate to consider several factors. First, the length of the school year is determined by State law. Second, individuals deciding between teaching and other occupations may be attracted to the shorter work year. Third, career advancement opportunities for teachers differ from those available to individuals in other occupations.

Appendix 3 shows a history of Virginia teachers' average salaries for the years 1981-1996. It also shows where the average salaries rank in relation to the other states for those same years.

TURNOVER AND RECRUITMENT OF VIRGINIA TEACHERS

Turnover and recruitment statistics are used as measures of competitiveness. Normally, it is best to determine turnover rates by category of reason for leaving so that non-competitive reasons may be factored out. However, only total turnover data is available for Virginia public school teachers. The last comprehensive report on turnover among teachers was published by the Virginia Department of Education for the 1989-90 school year. In this report, entitled "Survey of Teacher Contract Terminations," an overall turnover rate of 6.1% was indicated.

This year, the Department of Personnel and Training sent a turnover and recruitment survey questionnaire to all 134 school districts. The districts were asked to indicate the total number of teachers for the 1995-96 school year. Of these, they were asked to cite the number not returning for the 1996-97 school year and the reason, by category, for their not returning. The survey also asked them to identify the most critical areas for retention and recruitment of teachers.

One hundred fourteen (114) school districts responded to the survey. Of 68,199 teachers reported by the school districts for 1995-96, 4,011 did not return in 1996-97, for an approximate turnover rate of 5.9%. This rate is very close to the rate noted in the 1989-90 contract termination study noted above, and with the 1995 survey report (6.0%).

The reason most often cited for teachers leaving a school district (47.9% of the 4011) was in the "other" category, which includes retirement, death, family responsibilities, medical, and relocation. Spousal transfer was the next most common reason (26.0%). Transfer to a higher paying school district was the reason 12.6% left, while 4.8% indicated that accepting a non-teaching position was the reason. (NOTE: It should be cautioned that these data are only approximate, since a number of school districts do not keep statistics on turnover by reason category and, therefore, could not provide complete information.)

For comparison purposes, the Commonwealth of Virginia's employee turnover rate for all reasons for the year 1995-96 was 10.76%. For those Commonwealth job classes used in the private sector survey, the turnover rate was 9.13%.

Almost 90% of the districts indicated that turnover was not a significant problem for them, while 61% indicated that recruiting was not a problem. However, for those who did indicate a recruitment problem, most often cited as a reason was an inadequate pool of qualified applicants in their area.

As in previous reports, the most prevalent problem in attracting and retaining teachers was in special education. Of the districts responding, 78% reported such problems. Problems in foreign languages (29%) and science (21.%) were the next most critical areas reported. Many of the school districts also indicated that recruiting technology education teachers was a significant problem.

APPENDIX 1

**ENTRY LEVEL SALARIES FOR RECENT COLLEGE GRADUATES
WITH BACHELOR DEGREES AND NO EXPERIENCE
WORKING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND PRIVATE INDUSTRY**

	<u>DPT</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>COMP.</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>MSU</u>	<u>VIRGINIA</u>	<u>GROUP</u>	
	<u>SURVEY</u>	<u>EMPLOYEE</u>	<u>NACE</u>	<u>RESOURCE</u>	<u>STATES</u>	<u>COLLEGES</u>	<u>AVERAGE</u>	
							<u>AVERAGE</u>	
BUSINESS								
Accounting	24,717	23,401	29,676	30,197	22,072	30,393	30227	27,240
Bus Admins	24,722	24,855	27,554	29,806	26,813	28,506		27,043
Economics	24,557	24,985	29,734	31,297			27725	27,660
Marketing	25,408	25,582	27,051	29,391		28,658	26149	27,040
Agri Busin	22,000	23,401	25,784			26,415		24,400
								26,677
SOCIAL SCIENCES								
History	22,744	23,495	24,879				22749	23,467
Sociology	22,417	23,495	21,543		20,911	24,232	18661	21,877
Psychology	22,582	19,582	22,541	27,006			21388	22,620
								22,654
LIFE SCIENCES								
Health/PE	21,142	22,404	24,599		20,655			22,200
Biology	22,697	26,774	23,587	30,245	23,312		23164	24,963
Nursing	27,259	27,966	31,735		24,434	32,927		28,864
Environ Sci	29,517	24,923	25,994	32,526	21,276		24545	26,464
								25,623
HUMANITIES								
Art	19,742	19,582	23,604			24,081	18705	21,143
Fine Arts	18,361	19,582	23,604					20,516
English	23,074	21,407	23,321		20,016	22,102	19826	21,624
For Language	21,483	21,407	25,424				22573	22,722
Communications		21,407	23,665	29,021		25,224		24,829
Education		27511	23861			25742	27640	26,189
								22,837
PHYSICAL SCIENCE								
Math	24,403		30,050	34,970		32,055	30396	30,375
Statistics	25,244	23,401		34,181			28064	27,723
Chemistry	33,127	27,966	30,048	34,308	24,086	31,261	25109	29,415
Physics	25,411		30,796	36,514		31,972	29646	30,868
Geology	21,483	25,582	31,602		25,805	31,606	19310	25,898
								28,856
NACE								
COMP. RESOURCES								
MSU								
VIRGINIA COLLEGES								
							AVERAGE:	25,329

= National Association of Colleges and Employers
 = Compensation Resources Inc.
 = Michigan State University Career Services/Placement
 = College of William & Mary and Virginia Polytechnic Institute

APPENDIX 2

**COMMONWEALTH CLASSES WHICH RECENT COLLEGE GRADUATES
WITH NO EXPERIENCE COULD ENTER FOR THE 1997 FISCAL YEAR**

<u>DEGREE</u>	<u>REPRESENTATIVE STATE CLASS</u>	<u>FY 96/97 MINIMUM SALARY</u>	<u>DEGREE AVERAGE</u>
BUSINESS			
Accounting	Accountant	23,401	23,401
Bus. Admin	Agency Management Analyst	25,582	24,855
	Grants Specialist	23,401	
	Business Manager A	25,582	
Economics	Labor Market Analyst	21,407	24,985
	Planner	27,966	
	Budget Analyst	25,582	
Marketing	Agri Marketing Agent	25,582	25,582
Agri-Bus	Agricultural Inspector	23,401	23,401
SOCIAL SCIENCES			
History	Historian A	21,407	23,495
	Archaeologist	25,582	
Geography	No Match		
Sociology	Probation Officer	25,582	23,495
	Social Worker	21,407	
Psychology	Psychologist Assistant	19,582	19,582
LIFE SCIENCES			
Health/PE	Environmental Health Specialist	23,401	22,404
	Health Educator	21,407	
Biology	Microbiologist	25,582	26,774
	Wildlife Biologist	27,966	
Nursing	Registered Nurse	27,966	27,966
Environ Science	Environ Prog Specialist	23,401	24,923
	Water Cont Enforc/Comp Spec	27,966	
	Environmental Inspector	23,401	

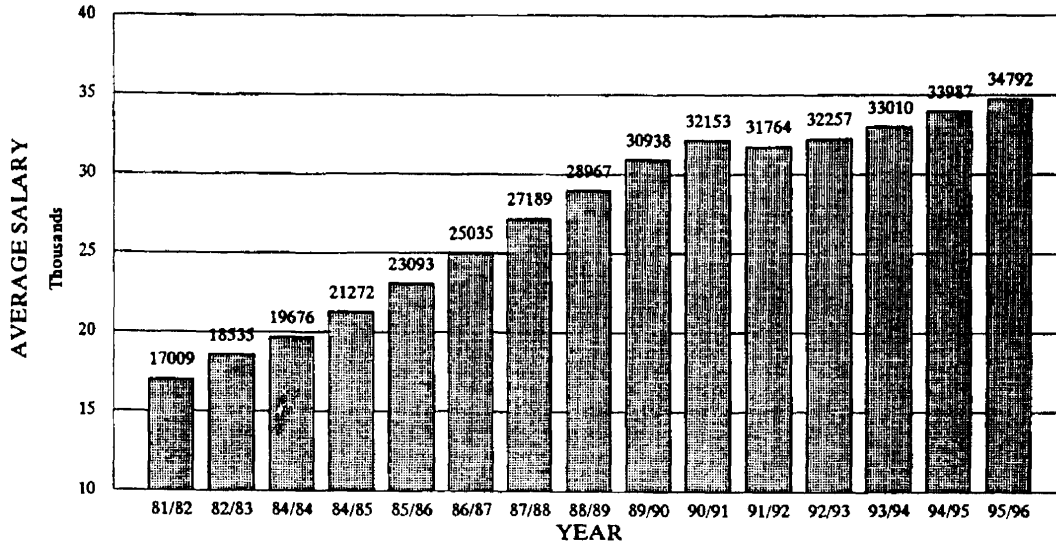
APPENDIX 2 (CONT'D)

**COMMONWEALTH CLASSES WHICH RECENT COLLEGE GRADUATES
WITH NO EXPERIENCE COULD ENTER FOR THE 1997 FISCAL YEAR**

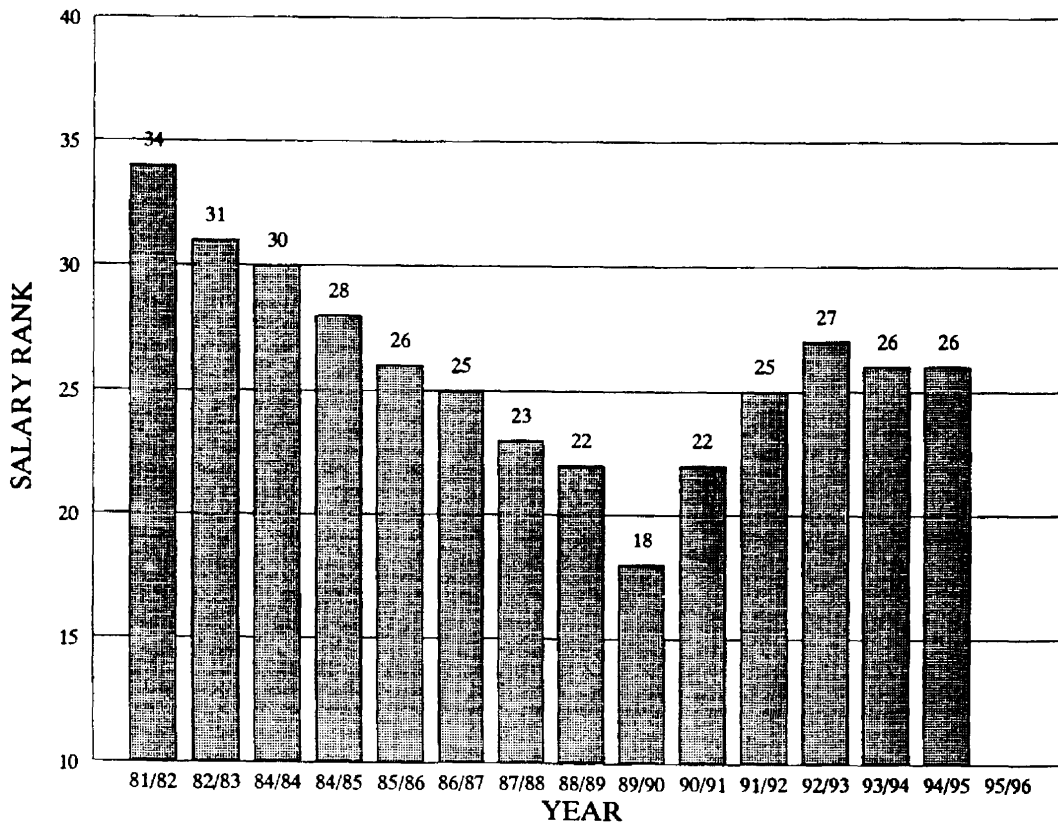
<u>DEGREE</u>	<u>REPRESENTATIVE STATE CLASS</u>	<u>FY 96/97 MINIMUM SALARY</u>	<u>DEGREE AVERAGE</u>
HUMANITIES			
Art	Graphic Artist	19,582	19,582
Fine Arts	FAM Educ Asst	19,582	19,582
	FAM Asst Registrar	19,582	
English	Pub Relations Asst Specialist	21,407	21,407
	Library Assistant	21,407	
Foreign Lang	Research Specialist	21,407	21,407
	Archivist A	21,407	
Communications	Pub Relations Asst Specialist	21,407	21,407
Education	Academic Teacher	27,511	27,511
PHYSICAL SCIENCE			
Math	No Match		
Statistics	Statistical Analyst	23,401	23,401
Chemistry	Analytical Chemist	27,966	27,966
Physics	No Match		
Geology	Soil Scientist	25,582	25,582
	AVERAGE:		21,683

APPENDIX 3

AVERAGE ANNUAL SALARIES FOR VA TEACHERS FOR THE YEARS 1981-1996



VIRGINIA AVERAGE SALARY RANKING FOR THE YEARS 1981-1995



SOURCE: Department of Education Superintendent's Annual Reports For Virginia and Virginia Education Association

