



\$CHOOLS IN CRISIS: MAKING ENDS MEET

Q&A on the Chicago Teachers Contract Math

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1. How much compensation are Chicago Public School teachers being offered today?

Median teacher compensation will be:

\$ 74,859 salary
\$ 5,241 pension contribution
\$ 22,276 other benefits
<hr style="width: 100%; border: 0.5px solid black;"/> \$102,376 per teacher

2. How much time will they be expected to work for that pay?

This school year’s calendar revised the school day and year in order to bring Chicago schools up to 180 days of schooling—the average nationally. Chicago teachers are scheduled to work 177 days a year, amounting to 35.4 weeks. The contract is written for 208 days but includes 10 vacation days, 8 holidays, 10 sick days, and 3 personal days—or the equivalent of 1 day off for every 5.7 days of work.

The new calendar also lengthens the school day to 7 hours, meaning it is 4.5% longer than the national average of 6.7 hours.¹

3. How do Chicago teacher salaries compare to those for teachers elsewhere in the country?

The typical Chicago teacher will earn 32% more in salary than the 2012 national average for teachers of \$56,643² for the same average of 180 days of schooling.

	CPS Teachers	National Average
Salary	\$74,859	\$56,643
Benefits	\$27,517	\$18,962
Total	\$102,376	\$75,605
# of school days	180 days	180 days
# hours per school day	7 hours	6.7 hours

4. At issue in the Chicago teacher strike is whether teachers salaries are high enough given the amount of time they are expected to work this year, since the district recently revamped the school year and day to bring Chicago schools in line with national norms.

Given that Chicago is now on par with the national average on days of schooling, Chicago’s teacher salaries are also 32% higher than the national per day average.

Taking into account the longer school day is trickier, given that schools vary on teacher break times, etc. Assuming comparable staffing ratios nationally (CPS has one teacher for every 14 students), we find that the salary per minute for Chicago teachers still exceeds the national average by 26%.

¹ http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pss/tables/table_15.asp

² As projected by NEA rankings and estimates, 2012 (page 78).

5. After this change to lengthen the time students spend in school, how does teacher time worked compare to other relevant fields in the Chicago area?

While salaries do vary across fields, the average accountant in the Chicago area provides a useful comparison:

	Chicago Teachers	Chicago Accountants ³
Direct Pay	\$74,859	\$74,760
Benefits	\$27,517	\$12,709
Total Comp	\$102,376	\$87,469
Days of work	177	240
Weeks of work	35.4	48
Total comp per week	\$2,891.98	\$1,822.28

6. Also at issue is the basis for how teachers should be evaluated and compensated.

Traditionally, compensation has been based on longevity and degrees although more recent research has suggested that these qualifications are insufficient indicators of teacher effectiveness. In Chicago, 63% of teachers in 2011 had at least a master's degree and the average teacher has 13.6 years of experience.

³ Bureau of Labor Statistics http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_16974.htm

⁴ Source: Standard Teacher Service Record (TSR) Public Data Set.

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