Facts About Teachers

Why do teachers matter so much?
➢ Studies prove that a great teacher can impart a year and a half's worth of learning to a student in one year.
➢ Good teachers over a sustained period can help students overcome the disadvantages of poverty.
➢ Teachers work an average of ten hours per day and 1,927 hours per school year.

On U.S. societal views of teaching:
➢ 61% of U.S. adults think teachers are underpaid given their level of training and importance to society.
➢ 77% of U.S. adults feel teaching is among the most underappreciated professions in the U.S.
➢ A 2015 survey found that only 4.2% of college freshmen are considering majoring in education, the lowest rate in 42 years.
➢ 76% of U.S. adults agree that many of the smartest people in society don't go into teaching because being a teacher doesn't pay enough.

On teacher salaries:
➢ Only 4.7% of college juniors would consider teaching at the current starting salary. 68% of college students said they would consider the teaching profession if it paid 50% more than the current occupations they were considering.
➢ In 1970 in New York city, a starting lawyer going into a prestigious firm and a starting teacher going into public education had a differential in their entry salary of about $2,000. Today, including salary and bonus, that starting lawyer makes $160,000, while starting teachers in New York make roughly $45,000.
➢ If teacher pay had risen in proportion to per-pupil spending since 1970, the average teacher would make more than $120,000 today.
➢ The average starting salary for teachers in our country is $39,000; the average ending salary - after 25 years in the profession - is $67,000.
➢ As of 2015, teachers' weekly wages are 23% lower than those of other college graduates.
➢ The wage gap between teachers who belong to a union and all other professions is -19.6%; for non-union teachers the wage gap jumps to -25.5%.
➢ Teachers are priced out of home ownership in 32 metropolitan areas.
➢ 99.5% of teachers reported spending their own money on their students or classrooms during the 2012-2013 school year. Of the $3.2 billion spent overall on school supplies that year, $1.6 billion came directly from teachers' pockets.

On teacher turnover:
➢ 46% of teachers in public schools leave the profession within five years.
➢ In the next 10 years, more than 1.8 million of the 3.2 million teachers will become eligible for retirement.
➢ 14% of teachers leave the profession each year; in urban districts, the turnover is higher; 20%.
➢ High turnover of American teachers costs our country over $7 billion every year.
➢ Of teachers who leave the profession for reasons of dissatisfaction, poor salaries are the cause for 61%.