

Special Report: Supporting Teachers in State-Funded Preschool



The 2017-2018 State of Preschool survey included supplemental questions intended to paint a clearer picture of state policies to support lead teachers in state-funded preschool. This is the second time a state preschool workforce supplement has been collected; the first was in the 2014-2015 survey. The new survey includes questions from the prior survey with modifications and additions to further clarify preschool program policies that specifically relate to state-funded preschool teachers in public schools and private provider settings.

The supplemental survey addressed three primary topics. The first is teacher qualifications, salary, and salary parity within state preschool and between preschool and public primary schools. States were asked to report the average salary for state-funded preschool teachers in public school and private settings, as well as if the preschool workforce is covered by a collective bargaining agreement. The second extended this review to fringe benefits including retirement, health care, and paid time off. The third topic is professional development supports including loan forgiveness and scholarships, mentoring, job-embedded professional development, paid planning time, and bonuses. While the tables in this section reflect policies at the program level, the analysis that follows focuses only on the largest program in states that fund more than one preschool program.

MANY STATES LACK PRESCHOOL TEACHER COMPENSATION POLICIES

As can be seen in Workforce Tables 1 and 2, most states do not have policies supporting compensation parity (including salary and benefits) for the state-funded preschool workforce. Those that do rarely include state-funded preschool teachers in private settings. Most states are silent on whether preschool teachers should be included in collective bargaining agreements, regardless of setting. Where collective bargaining policies are present, they apply only to preschool teachers in public schools.

Most state preschool programs allow preschool teachers to be paid less than early elementary school teachers (K-3), even when preschool teachers must have the same qualifications. Although 25 states require all preschool teachers to hold a bachelor's degree and certification, only Hawaii, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and Rhode Island also require equal starting salaries and salary schedules between all preschool and K-3 teachers. Alabama requires all preschool teachers to hold a bachelor's degree and has policies to ensure equal starting salaries and salary schedules with K-3 teachers, but does not require certification. Ten states require state-funded preschool teachers in both public and nonpublic settings to have a bachelor's degree but have starting salary and salary schedule parity policies only for preschool teachers in public schools. Twelve other states require a bachelor's degree but report no preschool teacher salary parity policies.

The lack of state policies for preschool teacher salary parity is clearly linked to disparities between public school and private sector teachers in state-funded preschool, as well as large gaps between preschool and K-3 teachers. As seen in Workforce Table 3, 28 states reported average preschool teacher salaries. In states requiring the same degree requirements for all teachers, almost 70% (of those with data) reported wage disparities where preschool public school teachers earned up to \$21,136 more than private preschool teachers in the same program. Disparities are even larger when comparing state-funded preschool teachers where a bachelor's degree is required to public school K-3 teachers. Preschool pay gaps of \$20,000 to \$30,000 per year are common.

Though infrequently recognized in state preschool policies, retirement, health care, and paid time off are important aspects of teachers' overall compensation. Workforce Table 2 shows that 21 states report having no policies to ensure comparable benefits with K-3 teachers. Of those states with policies in place, only Minnesota and Tennessee include state-funded preschool teachers in private settings for all reported benefits.

FEW STATES REQUIRE EQUAL SALARY FOR PRE-K AND K-3 TEACHERS WITH SIMILAR QUALIFICATIONS



states require at least a BA



states require BA + certification



states require BA + certification + salary parity

WORKFORCE TABLE 1: STATE POLICIES FOR PRESCHOOL TEACHER SALARY PARITY

STATE	Bachelor's Degree Required		Starting Salary Equal to K-3		Salary Schedule Equal to K-3	
	Public school	Private	Public school	Private	Public school	Private
Alabama	Yes	Yes	✓	✓	✓	✓
Alaska	Yes	No	✓		✓	
Arizona	No	No				
Arkansas	Yes	No				
California CSPP	No	No				
California TK*	Yes	NA	✓		✓	
Colorado	No	No				
Connecticut CDCC**	NA	No				
Connecticut SR	No	No				
Connecticut Smart Start*	Yes	NA				
Delaware	Yes	No				
District of Columbia ¹	No	Yes		✓		✓
Florida	No	No				
Georgia	Yes	Yes	✓	✓		
Hawaii*	Yes	NA	✓		✓	
Illinois	Yes	Yes				
Iowa Shared Visions	Yes	No	✓		✓	
Iowa SWVPP	Yes	Yes	✓		✓	
Kansas Preschool Pilot	Yes	Yes				
Kansas State Pre-K	Yes	Yes				
Kentucky	Yes	Yes	✓		✓	
Louisiana 8(g)*	Yes	NA				
Louisiana LA 4*	Yes	NA				
Louisiana NSECD**	NA	Yes				
Maine	Yes	Yes	✓		✓	
Maryland	Yes	Yes				
Massachusetts UPK	Yes	No				
Massachusetts Ch 70*	Yes	NA				
Michigan	Yes	Yes				
Minnesota HdSt	No	No				
Minnesota VPK	No	No	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mississippi	Yes	Yes				
Missouri	Yes	Yes	✓	✓	✓	
Montana	Yes	Yes	✓		✓	
Nebraska	Yes	Yes				
Nevada	Yes	Yes	✓	✓	✓	
New Jersey Abbott	Yes	Yes	✓	✓	✓	✓
New Jersey ECPA	Yes	Yes	✓	✓	✓	✓
New Jersey ELLI	Yes	Yes	✓	✓	✓	✓
New Mexico	Yes	No	✓		✓	
New York	Yes	Yes				
North Carolina	Yes	Yes	✓		✓	
North Dakota	Yes	Yes				
Ohio	No	No				
Oklahoma*	Yes	NA	✓		✓	
Oregon HdSt	No	No				
Oregon Preschool Promise	No	No	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pennsylvania RTL	Yes	No				
Pennsylvania HSSAP	No	No				
Pennsylvania K4 & SBPK	Yes	Yes				
Pennsylvania PKC	Yes	Yes				
Rhode Island	Yes	Yes	✓	✓	✓	✓
South Carolina	Yes	No	✓		✓	
Tennessee	Yes	Yes	✓		✓	
Texas	Yes	Yes	✓		✓	
Vermont	Yes	No	✓		✓	
Virginia	Yes	No	✓		✓	
Washington	No	No				
West Virginia	Yes	Yes	✓		✓	
Wisconsin 4K	Yes	Yes				
Wisconsin HdSt**	NA	No				
TOTAL	47	31	27	11	26	8
Guam*	No	NA			✓	

* All teachers are public school employees.

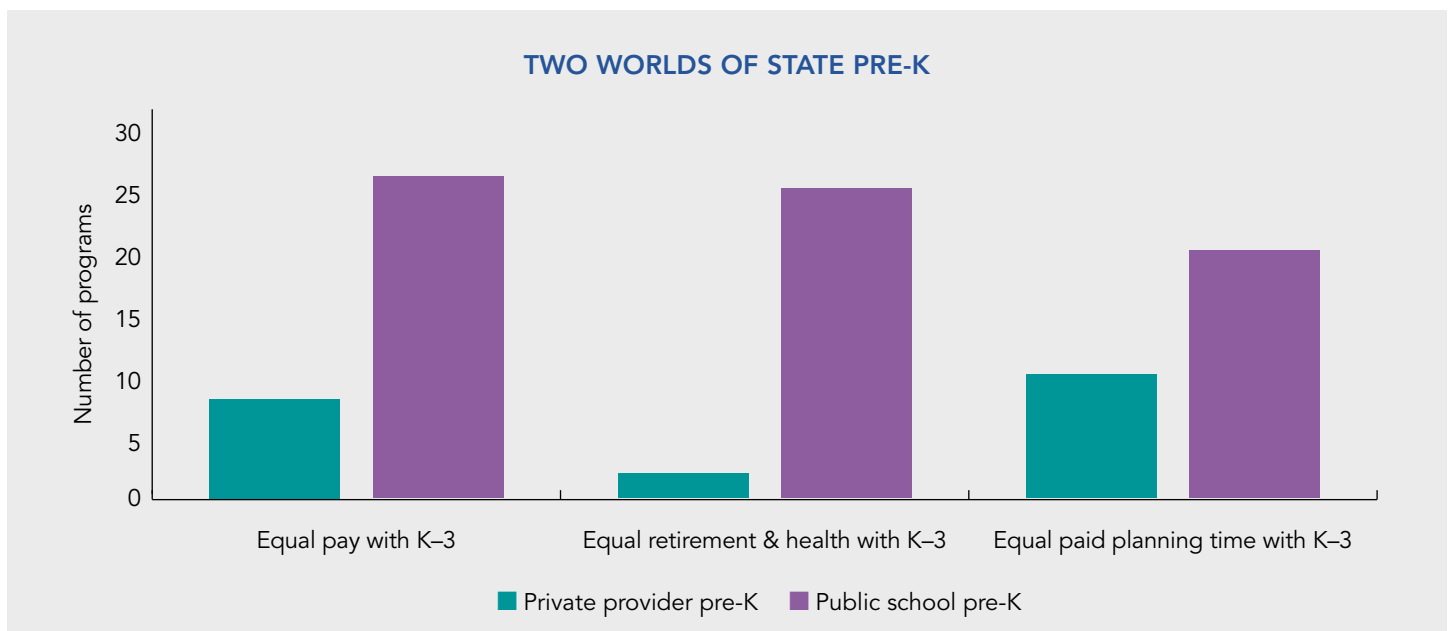
** All teachers are employed by agencies other than public schools.

¹ Public represents DCPS and PCS.

WORKFORCE TABLE 2: STATE POLICIES FOR PRESCHOOL TEACHER BENEFIT PARITY

STATE	Retirement benefits equal to K-3		Health care equal to K-3		Paid time off equal to K-3	
	Public school	Private	Public school	Private	Public school	Private
Alabama	✓		✓		✓	
Alaska	✓		✓		✓	
California TK*	✓		✓		✓	
District of Columbia ¹						✓
Georgia	✓		✓		✓	
Hawaii*	✓		✓		✓	
Iowa Shared Visions	✓		✓		✓	
Iowa SWVPP	✓		✓		✓	
Kentucky	✓		✓		✓	
Maine	✓		✓		✓	
Minnesota VPK	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Missouri					✓	
Montana	✓		✓		✓	
Nevada	✓		✓		✓	
New Jersey Abbott	✓		✓		✓	✓
New Jersey ECPA	✓		✓		✓	✓
New Jersey ELLI	✓		✓		✓	✓
New Mexico	✓		✓		✓	
North Carolina	✓		✓		✓	
Oklahoma*	✓		✓		✓	
Rhode Island	✓		✓		✓	✓
South Carolina	✓		✓		✓	
Tennessee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Texas	✓		✓		✓	
Vermont	✓		✓		✓	
Virginia	✓		✓		✓	
West Virginia	✓		✓		✓	
Wisconsin 4K	✓					
TOTAL	26	2	25	2	26	7
Guam*	✓		✓		✓	

*All teachers are public school employees.
¹Public represents DCPS and PCS.





TEACHER “SUPPORTS” RARELY SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

All but one state (Wisconsin 4K) has specific in-service professional development requirements for preschool teachers, and in states with mixed-delivery systems, nearly all have equivalent requirements for teachers in public school and private settings (see Workforce Table 4). Requirements differ across auspice in New Mexico but meet NIEER’s threshold of 15 hours per year in both settings. In D.C., private charter schools can set their own professional development policies, but the requirements for other public schools and nonpublic settings also meet NIEER’s threshold. However, many fewer states have policies requiring equivalent paid professional development time between preschool teachers and K–3 teachers, a gulf that only becomes larger when comparing state-funded preschool teachers in public schools with those in private providers.

Only 18 states have policies requiring K–3 equivalent paid professional development time for public school preschool teachers and nine have policies for preschool teachers in private settings. Similarly, 16 states have policies requiring K–3 equivalent paid time for public preschool teachers for planning, meetings, and reporting, which slides down to 7 states for private provider teachers. A slightly better picture emerges when looking at on-going classroom embedded support for preschool teachers, where 25 states report providing supports for some or all teachers in public schools and 22 for all or some teachers in private settings.

Workforce Table 5 reports on additional state policies to support teachers—scholarships and loan forgiveness, mentoring, coaching, and bonuses. Coaching was by far the most common support (similar to classroom embedded supports more generally), followed by scholarships. A small number of states offered loan forgiveness, primarily to teachers in public schools. Bonuses were offered by just 7 states, one of two benefits that were more likely to be offered to teachers in private providers than public school.

WORKFORCE TABLE 3: PRESCHOOL TEACHER DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND SALARY GAPS

STATE	Public and private pre-K teacher salary gap	Same degree requirement for public & private	Pre-K and public elementary school teacher salary gap		2017-2018 Lead pre-K teacher average annual salary		Public elementary school teacher average salary
			Public pre-K teachers	Private pre-K teachers	Public schools	Private schools	
Alabama	\$5,871	Yes	-\$4,382	-\$10,253	\$45,857	\$39,986	\$50,239
Arkansas	\$12,914	No	-\$8,824	-\$21,738	\$40,193	\$27,279	\$49,017
California CSPP	\$1,545	Yes	-\$51,126	-\$52,671	\$30,000	\$28,455	\$81,126
California TK	NA		-\$18,126		\$63,000	NA	\$81,126
Colorado		Yes	-\$21,889		\$30,500		\$52,389
Connecticut CDCC	NA			-\$36,475	NA	\$36,638	\$73,113
Connecticut SR	\$21,136	Yes	-\$15,339	-\$36,475	\$57,774	\$36,638	\$73,113
Connecticut Smart Start	NA		-\$15,339		\$57,774	NA	\$73,113
District of Columbia			\$26,415		\$86,898 ¹		\$60,483
Florida	\$0	Yes	-\$23,385	-\$23,385	\$24,336 ²	\$24,336 ²	\$47,721
Georgia	\$0	Yes	-\$17,868	-\$17,868	\$38,461	\$38,461	\$56,329
Hawaii	NA		-\$4,866		\$53,000	NA	\$57,866
Iowa Shared Visions	\$18,151	No	-\$4,182	-\$22,333	\$52,608 ³	\$34,457 ³	\$56,790
Iowa SWVPP	\$9,004	Yes	-\$5,520	-\$14,524	\$51,270	\$42,266	\$56,790
Kentucky		Yes	\$498		\$53,450		\$52,952
Louisiana 8(g)	NA		-\$5,256		\$45,000	NA	\$50,256
Maine		Yes	-\$483		\$51,180		\$51,663
Maryland		Yes	-\$24,614		\$45,147		\$69,761
Michigan	\$9,884	Yes	-\$20,621	-\$30,505	\$42,081	\$32,197	\$62,702
Minnesota HdSt		Yes		-\$23,237		\$34,545	\$57,782
Mississippi	\$18,741	Yes	-\$4,107	-\$22,848	\$39,000	\$20,259	\$43,107
Montana	\$0	Yes	-\$28,776	-\$28,776	\$21.51 per hour ⁴	\$21.51 per hour ⁴	\$52,776
Nevada	\$0	Yes	-\$7,812	-\$7,812	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$57,812
New Mexico			-\$2,745		\$45,094		\$47,839
North Carolina	\$10,490	Yes	-\$15,861	-\$26,351	\$35,000	\$24,510	\$50,861
Oklahoma	NA		-\$757		\$44,921	NA	\$45,678
Oregon HdSt		Yes		-\$33,430		\$29,713	\$63,143
Oregon Preschool Promise	\$0	Yes	-\$15,143	-\$15,143	\$48,000	\$48,000	\$63,143
Rhode Island	\$12,000	Yes	\$1,242	-\$10,758	\$68,000	\$56,000	\$66,758
South Carolina			-\$1,585		\$49,442		\$51,027
Texas		Yes	-\$1,142		\$52,025		\$53,167
Vermont	\$18,000	No	-\$11,527	-\$29,527	\$47,000 ⁵	\$29,000 ⁵	\$58,527
Virginia			\$5,596		\$56,861		\$51,265
Washington	\$8,036	Yes	-\$16,008	-\$24,044	\$39,167	\$31,131	\$55,175
West Virginia		Yes	-\$3,479		\$42,163		\$45,642
Guam*	NA				\$36,000	NA	Not Available

¹ Represents DCPS public school salary average only.

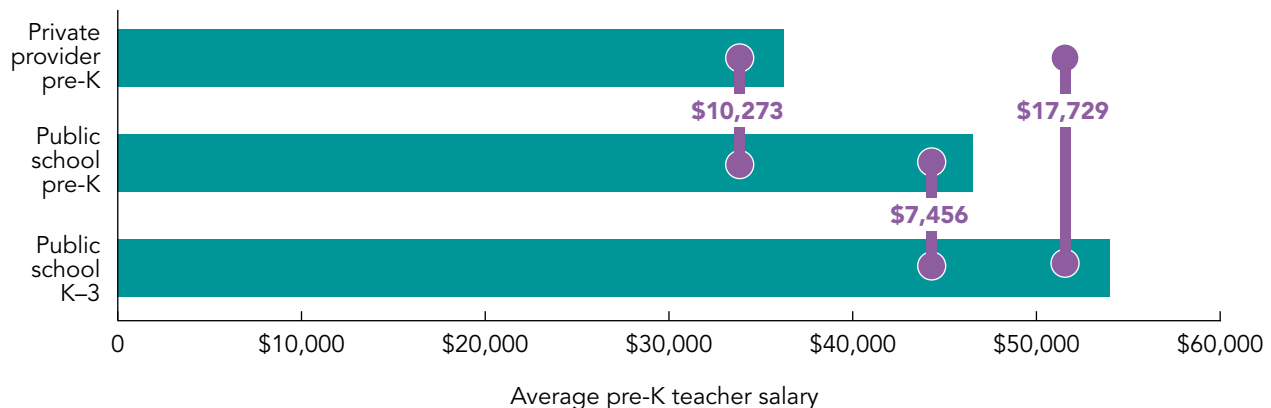
² Salary cannot be separated for public vs. private, so average of both is reported.

³ Reflects full-time equivalents only.

⁴ Calculated using reported hourly rate (\$21.51) and hours per week (28), and an estimated 40 weeks.

⁵ Reflects average within range reported.

PRE-K TEACHER SALARY GAPS WITH K-3



WORKFORCE TABLE 4: STATE POLICIES FOR PRESCHOOL TEACHER PD, COACHING, & PAID TIME

STATE	Same in-service PD requirements for public & private pre-K teachers	On-going classroom embedded support		Paid time equivalent to K-3		Professional development days	
		Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private
Alabama	Yes	Yes, all	Yes, all	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Alaska	Yes	Yes, some	Yes, some	Yes		Yes	
Arizona	Yes						
Arkansas	Yes						
California CSPP	Yes						
California TK*	NA			Yes		Yes	
Colorado	Yes						
Connecticut CDCC**	NA						
Connecticut SR	Yes						
Connecticut Smart Start*	NA						
Delaware	Yes	Yes, some	Yes, some	Yes		Yes	
District of Columbia ¹	No	Yes, some	Yes, all				Yes
Florida	Yes						
Georgia	Yes	Yes, all	Yes, all	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hawaii*	NA	Yes, all		Yes		Yes	
Illinois	Yes	Yes, all	Yes, all				
Iowa Shared Visions	No	Yes, all				Yes	
Iowa SWVPP	Yes	Yes, all				Yes	
Kansas Preschool Pilot	Yes						
Kansas State Pre-K	Yes						
Kentucky	Yes	Yes, some		Yes		Yes	
Louisiana 8(g)*	NA						
Louisiana LA 4*	NA						
Louisiana NSECD**	NA						
Maine	Yes			Yes		Yes	
Maryland	Yes						
Massachusetts UPK	No	Yes, some	Yes, some				
Massachusetts Ch 70*	NA						
Michigan	Yes	Yes, all	Yes, all				
Minnesota HdSt	Yes	Yes, all	Yes, all				
Minnesota VPK	Yes	Yes, all	Yes, all				
Mississippi	Yes						
Missouri	Yes	Yes, all	Yes, all				
Montana	Yes	Yes, all	Yes, all				
Nebraska	Yes	Yes, some	Yes, some				
Nevada	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Jersey Abbott	Yes	Yes, all	Yes, all	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Jersey ECPA	Yes	Yes, all	Yes, all	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Jersey ELLI	Yes	Yes, all	Yes, all	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Mexico	No	Yes, all	Yes, all	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New York	Yes						
North Carolina	Yes	Yes, all	Yes, all				
North Dakota	Yes					Yes	
Ohio	Yes						
Oklahoma*	NA			Yes		Yes	
Oregon HdSt	Yes	Yes, all	Yes, all				
Oregon Preschool Promise	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pennsylvania RTL	Yes	Yes, some					
Pennsylvania HSSAP	Yes						
Pennsylvania K4 & SBPK	No	Yes, some	Yes, some				
Pennsylvania PKC	Yes	Yes, some	Yes, some				
Rhode Island	Yes	Yes, all	Yes, all	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
South Carolina	Yes	Yes, all	Yes, all	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tennessee	Yes	Yes, some	Yes, some				
Texas	Yes	Yes, some					
Vermont	Yes	Yes, some	Yes, some	Yes		Yes	
Virginia	Yes			Yes		Yes	
Washington	Yes	Yes, all	Yes, all				
West Virginia	Yes			Yes		Yes	Yes
Wisconsin 4K	None		Yes, some				
Wisconsin HdSt**	NA						
Guam*	NA	Yes, all		Yes		Yes	

* All teachers are public school employees.

** All teachers are employed by agencies other than public schools.

¹ Public represents DCPS and PCS.

WORKFORCE TABLE 5: TEACHER DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT POLICIES

STATE	Scholarships		Loan forgiveness		Mentoring		Coaching		Bonuses	
	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private
Alabama	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		
Alaska										
Arizona	✓	✓							✓	✓
Arkansas							✓	✓		
California CSPP					✓	✓	✓	✓		
California TK*			✓		✓		✓			
Colorado										
Connecticut CDCC**		✓						✓		
Connecticut SR	✓	✓					✓	✓		
Connecticut Smart Start*	✓						✓			
Delaware	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓		
District of Columbia ¹		✓						✓		
Florida	✓	✓					✓	✓		
Georgia	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hawaii*					✓		✓			
Illinois	✓	✓								
Iowa Shared Visions	✓	✓			✓					
Iowa SWVPP	✓	✓			✓					
Kansas Preschool Pilot										
Kansas State Pre-K										
Kentucky	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Louisiana 8(g)*	✓				✓		✓			
Louisiana LA 4*	✓									
Louisiana NSECD**		✓				✓		✓		
Maine			✓				✓	✓		
Maryland		✓					✓	✓		✓
Massachusetts UPK		✓						✓		
Massachusetts Ch 70*										
Michigan	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		
Minnesota HdSt	✓	✓								
Minnesota VPK	✓	✓			✓	✓				
Mississippi										
Missouri							✓	✓		
Montana	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		
Nebraska	✓	✓					✓	✓		
Nevada	✓	✓					✓	✓		
New Jersey Abbott					✓	✓	✓	✓		
New Jersey ECPA					✓	✓	✓	✓		
New Jersey ELLI					✓	✓	✓	✓		
New Mexico	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New York										
North Carolina	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		
North Dakota	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓
Ohio										
Oklahoma*			✓							
Oregon HdSt										
Oregon Preschool Promise	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		
Pennsylvania RTL										
Pennsylvania HSSAP							✓	✓		
Pennsylvania K4 & SBPK										
Pennsylvania PKC		✓	✓				✓	✓		✓
Rhode Island					✓	✓	✓	✓		
South Carolina	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Tennessee			✓	✓			✓	✓		
Texas										
Vermont	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Virginia					✓					
Washington	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		
West Virginia										
Wisconsin 4K										
Wisconsin HdSt**										
TOTAL	26	28	9	3	25	18	33	32	3	7
Guam*					✓		✓			

* All teachers are public school employees.

** All teachers are employed by agencies other than public schools.

¹ Public represents DCPS and PCS.