



# 10 MINUTE MEETING



## Low Pay

### *The Stark Reality*

»At the start of the school year there were over 300,000 students without a certified teacher. This is directly attributable to low educator pay. Educators are leaving the profession, in part, because they cannot afford to remain any longer.

»Teacher pay has gone backwards in the past decade—decreasing by 12.2% in inflation-adjusted dollars from 2009 to 2018.

»Bonus programs have been in place for almost a decade and a half. The results are clear; bonuses are no substitute for adequate salaries, and bonuses will not solve the recruitment and retention crisis.

»When funds are diverted into bonus programs with rigid requirements from Tallahassee, local districts do not have the flexibility to meet their unique needs.

»On top of already low pay, in 2011 Senate Bill 2100 put a 3% tax on the educator salaries in the form of a mandatory contribution to the Florida Retirement System.

»The Legislature blames school districts for low pay saying that salaries are set at the local level. This is becoming increasingly untrue. Over the past decade, the Legislature and State Board of Education have implemented 15 laws or rules restricting local control over how salaries and raises are determined.

»Far too many education staff professionals, the backbones of our schools, make the minimum wage or just barely above it. All public school employees deserve a living wage.

»We won't recover from a decade of financial neglect overnight, which is why FEA is calling for a \$22 billion investment in Florida's students over the next decade.

»For the 2020-21, school year, we are demanding a \$2.4 billion increase as a down payment on the work to be done over the next decade.

»This investment will provide districts with the funding they need to increase teacher and education staff professional salaries by 10%.

»Beyond funding salary increases, this initial investment of funds will benefit students by providing districts with funds to bolster elective offerings that often keep students in school and help to complement their academic success.

### ***What can you do to make the decade of progress a reality?***

Text "feaactivist" to 31996 to ensure you receive the latest legislative updates and calls to action.

Make an appointment with your local elected officials before they return to Tallahassee for the 2020 legislative session in January! Do not let them get away with blaming your low pay on the district.

Continue to wear #RedforEd every Wednesday to show solidarity with your colleagues and to raise awareness among community members.

Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper encouraging support for our campaign to #FundOurFutureFL.

Share FEA content on social media.

To see a more in-depth examination of Low Pay, read the first part in our new series *Bad Policy & Low Pay: How Florida is Undermining Student Success* by visiting <http://bit.ly/low-pay>