A HIGH QUALITY TEACHER FOR EVERY CLASSROOM

Goals:

- → Long-term plan to improve teacher compensation for regional competitiveness.
- → Policy changes to strengthen and sustain the teacher pipeline.

Facts:

- Oklahoma started the 2014-2015 school year about 1,000 teachers short.
- Oklahoma has teacher shortages in rural, suburban and urban areas throughout the state and in nearly every grade level/ subject area.
- Oklahoma has approved 500 emergency teaching certificates for teachers who are not yet fully qualified in the area they are teaching.
- Oklahoma has 40,000 more public school students than in 2008, but fewer teachers.
- Oklahoma's average teacher salary is more than $3,200 below the regional average and the lowest of surrounding states.

Solutions:

- Increase teacher pay to the regional average.
- Establish policies/incentives to recruit students into colleges of education.
- Establish policies/competitive compensation packages to keep teacher graduates in Oklahoma.
- Streamline certification process for out-of-state teachers who are highly qualified and want to teach in Oklahoma.
- Ease financial restrictions for retirees who want to return to the classroom.
- Establish policies to support new educators in their first three years of teaching.

COMMON-SENSE TESTING

Goals:

→ Increase instruction time.
→ Direct more resources to the classroom.

Facts:

- Oklahoma spends more than $17 million a year on state and federally mandated tests.
- State and federal laws require Oklahoma to administer 26 tests each year.

Solutions:

- Replace EOI test with ACT, increasing instruction time and decreasing testing costs.
- Reduce state-mandated testing to include only those tests the federal government requires.
- Improve the accountability system to support schools, improve instruction and inform parents.
- Make permanent parent and teacher involvement in Reading Sufficiency Act retention decisions.
- Remove state requirement mandating test scores as a factor in teacher evaluations until full implementation of TLE.

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