AMERICANS THINK TEACHERS DESERVE $7,500 MORE THAN THEY ARE CURRENTLY PAID, NEW GLOBAL SURVEY REVEALS

KEY FINDINGS – USA:

The US public think that teachers are underpaid by $7,500. While wages for a starting secondary school teacher have remained largely stagnant in the US since 2013, hovering at just over $44,000 per annum, five years ago people considered this to be more than what they thought was a fair wage ($41,000). Today, they consider it to be markedly below a fair wage, which they now place at around $51,500. This is just above the minimum salary US respondents said they would consider to become a teacher ($51,000), the third highest of all the countries surveyed after Germany and Switzerland (both over $62,000). US teachers sampled think this is more than $10,000 too low, however, arguing that a fair wage would be $62,000.

US teachers report they are working some of the longest hours of all the countries surveyed. Teachers in America estimate their hours at 50 per week, the sixth highest polled after New Zealand (52.12), Singapore (52.04), Chile (51.31), the UK (50.97), Hungary (50.47). However, the
The US ranks 16th out of 35 countries in the Global Teacher Status Index, just behind Panama and just ahead of Finland.

Half of US respondents (50%) believe teachers should be paid according to the results of their pupils, compared with 24% who are against the notion of performance related pay. This is close to average for the survey, compared with 79% of people in Egypt support performance related pay, more than in any other country surveyed, and 21% in Finland, the lowest polled. Support for performance related pay has fallen considerably in the US since 2013 when 80% were in favour.

Almost one in eight US respondents (78%) instinctively view teachers as influential, the fourth highest of all the countries surveyed after China (85%), Ghana (81%) and Indonesia (79%). A similar number of US respondents (78%) also instinctively see teachers as inspiring. In general, when it came to positive implicit responses to teacher competence measured by rapid reactions to word pairs describing teacher competence, the US (81.4%) was the fourth ranked country out of 35 polled after Ghana (86.4%), China (85.8%) and Singapore (81.6%).
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When US respondents were asked to rank 14 professions including doctors, nurses, librarians and social workers in order of respect (with 14 being the highest and 1 the lowest), headteachers were ranked the 6th lowest of all the countries surveyed, behind first placed Malaysia but ahead of last placed Brazil.

Americans’ faith in their education system is increasing. When asked to rate the quality of their education system out of 10, US respondents said 6.7, a marked increase from 2013 when they rated it 5.9. This places the US 11th of all the countries polled in 2018, just ahead of the UK (6.5) but behind Canada (6.8). By contrast, Finland topped the rankings when it came to rating their education system (8.06) while Egypt came last 3.8.

The US ranks 16 in the GTSI out of 35 countries, just behind Panama and just ahead of Finland. Teacher status has stayed the same in the US relative to other countries polled since the survey was last conducted in 2013. In 2013 it ranked at number 9 out of 21 countries surveyed then, and of those 21 countries it continues to rank at number 9 now.
Teachers in the US think the status of their profession is lower than the American public do. When only polling teachers, the US status score falls from 48.7 out of 100 to 37.1 out of 100, a difference of -11.5. This makes the US one of only 13 countries in which teachers saw their status as being lower than the general public do, and the second biggest underestimation of status by teachers of all the countries surveyed after Portugal (-16.49).

When asked to rank 14 professions including doctors, nurses, librarians and social workers in order of respect, on average US respondents ranked secondary school teachers the 12th lowest of all the countries surveyed. The highest ranking for secondary school teachers of all the countries polled this year was China.

Over four in 10 (42%) Americans would encourage their child to become a teacher, the fifth highest of all the countries surveyed after India (54%), China (50%), Ghana (50%) and Malaysia (49%). This is a marked increase from 2013 when only a third (33%) of US respondents would encourage their child to become a teacher. By sharp contrast, the country in which the lowest proportion of respondents would encourage their child to become a teacher was Russia (6.1%).
> Over a third of US respondents (37%) said the most comparable profession to teachers are librarians, followed by 23% who said social workers and 10% who said nurses. The US is one of 10 countries that chose librarians as the most similar profession, compared with 18 that said social workers. By comparison, only three countries – China, Russia and Malaysia – said teachers were most like doctors. The US view on which profession is most comparable to teachers has not changed since 2013.

> Over four in ten (44%) US people think pupils respect their teachers. This is the 11th highest of all the countries surveyed, but some way behind first-placed China where 81% of respondents believe pupils respect their teachers. A higher proportion of US people think pupils respect their teachers in 2018 than in 2013 (37%).
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Influential v Not influential Association Word Association with Teacher and Response Times.