



Teachers Self Report They Don't Work Large Amounts of Uncompensated Time

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With schools set to reopen their doors in the upcoming days, millions of children will see their months-long summer vacations abruptly end and the regular school day begin. So too, will their teachers.

As teachers head back to the classroom, their rhetoric about working large amounts of uncompensated time will surely arise. But as the Buckeye Institute has shown with its *Five More Myths About Collective Bargaining Reform*, the myth that a majority of teachers work hundreds, if not thousands, of hours of uncompensated time is nothing more than that, a myth.

According to data derived from the *Bureau of Labor Statistics American Time Use Survey* (<http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2008/03/art4full.pdf>), large percentages of teachers self-report that they do no work during the summer months. Now the argument has been made that since teachers spend time grading, developing lesson plans and so on after hours, this extra time more than compensates for the extended breaks during the summer months. But as the data shows, teachers themselves report that they typically spend 40 hours or less working during the average week – hardly the grueling schedule that they claim to have. While exceptions certainly exist, on average, a teacher's work schedule is no more demanding in terms of hours than those of many other professionals.

The difference: teachers get over three months off each year (2 months in the

summer and more than thirty days during the school year).

Additionally, when making the argument that teachers work hours beyond the typical workday, it leads to the false assumption that everyone else must work the standard 9-5, and nothing more. The data again disagrees. While some teachers do a little work over the weekend, so too do many working professionals. In fact, the data shows that the average non-teaching professional spends more time working on the weekend than the average teacher.

No one doubts that teachers work hard during the school day at what they do, and some work hours beyond the typical workday. But so too do other working professionals who don't get those three months off to boot. So, the next time a teacher says they work large amounts of uncompensated time, direct them to their profession's own admission that shows their peers don't and then explain that the current system doesn't allow administrators to reward them for their work, but requires them to be paid exactly what their peers who do the bare minimum get paid.

To review other Buckeye Institute reports such as *Five More Myths About Collective Bargaining Reform*, please visit www.buckeyeinstitute.org/reports