



A Short Response to the Innovation Ohio Report “Ohio Teachers and Collective Bargaining: An Analysis”

Matt A. Mayer, President
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First, we welcome Innovation Ohio to the public policy debate. Innovation Ohio joins the existing pack of progressive think tanks—Policy Matters Ohio, ProgressOhio, the Center for Community Solutions, Economic Policy Institute, and the Center for Working Class Studies—advocating for the same set of policies for Ohio. We will continue to do our best to keep up with these groups.

Next, we are perplexed that Innovation Ohio (and the Ohio Education Association), given the report’s findings that teachers make more outside of collective bargaining, does not support Senate Bill 5. Specifically, the report found that **“the BLS data reveal that the more states erode teachers’ rights to collectively bargain, the more it likely will lead, on average, to higher salary increases.”** Perhaps they believe teachers would rather have more process than higher pay.

Finally, the report found that **“Ohio’s kindergarten, elementary, middle school and high school teachers saw their salaries, on average, drop 3.8% between 2008 and 2009.”** This finding, based upon a limited national survey, conflicts with the more comprehensive school district data from the Ohio Department of Education.¹ The ODE data shows that, instead of pay cuts, teachers across Ohio saw their median pay increase from 2008 (\$49,951.40) to 2009 (\$50,557.50) by \$606.00, or 1.2 percent. Ohio teachers’ median pay rose even higher from 2009 to 2010 (\$52,001.00), as the median pay jumped by \$1,443.50, or 2.9 percent.

As the financial projections of the 613 school districts show, by 2015, 91 percent of Ohio’s school districts will reach severe deficits. Compensation packages will swallow 96 percent of projected revenues. With local taxes already high, homeowners across Ohio likely will not support increased operational tax levies. We look forward to seeing our friends on the left and the OEA provide solutions to this mounting crisis. For a district-by-district financial review, please see the easy-to-read charts at www.buckeyeinstitute.org/reports.

¹ Ohio Department of Education, District Data – Teacher Information 2008-2010, Interactive Local Report Card Home (accessed on February 28, 2011) available at <http://ilrc.ode.state.oh.us/Downloads.asp>.