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### **South Dakota's average teacher salary increases 8.8 percent**

PIERRE, S.D. – Average teacher salary in South Dakota is on track to meeting a statewide target average of \$48,500, which legislators adopted in 2016 as a part of the Blue Ribbon education funding package.

Average teacher salary in Fiscal Year 2017 was \$45,625. That represents an increase of 8.8 percent from Fiscal Year 2016, when the average was \$41,940. Several districts, including Wall, Gayville-Volin and Mobridge-Pollock, saw increases of more than 20 percent, with Leola nearing a 30 percent increase.

"This is good news," said Gov. Dennis Daugaard. "We knew that it would take some time to meet the target salary goal, and schools are making great progress in that direction already. I'm confident this upward trend will continue in the years to come."

"Beyond the data, I have heard anecdotally from a number of educators that the increase in teacher salaries has boosted morale," said Secretary of Education Dr. Melody Schopp.

Schopp also noted that, while the funding increase for teacher salaries was a highlight of the Blue Ribbon package, there were other critical components aimed at improving teacher recruitment and retention. One of these components was funding for a statewide program for mentoring teachers new to the profession. For school year 2017-18, the program is serving 356 new teachers in districts across the state – with 279 veteran teachers providing guidance and support to their less-experienced colleagues.

Teacher compensation data for FY17, by school district, will be available Friday on the [Department of Education's School Finance Accountability Board webpage](#).