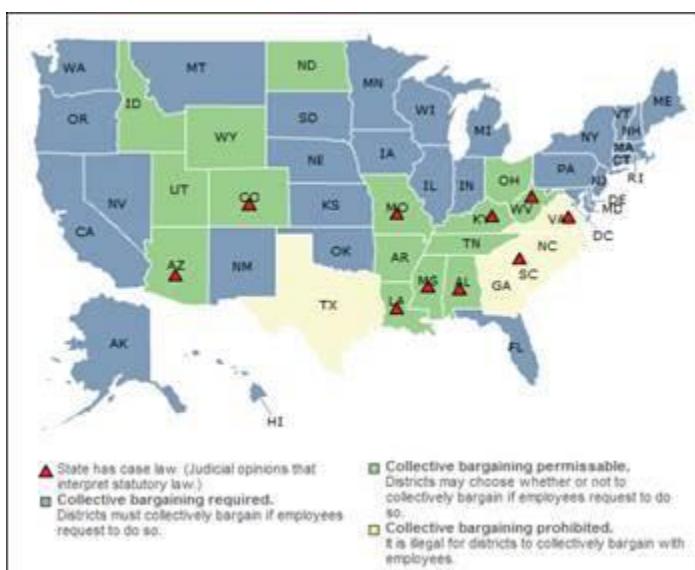


Would You Make as Much Without a Union? Check the Facts

Michigan became a Right to Work state in 2012. Wisconsin banned teacher bargaining the previous year and just adopted its own Right to Work law. What's it like to teach in Texas, where collective bargaining has been prohibited by law for many years? It turns out having a union to bargain for you makes a very big difference, including how much you make.

Bargaining is outlawed in just 5 states (Texas, Georgia, North and South Carolina and Virginia), but is 'permissive' in many more. That means management can bargain if it wants to. Imagine how that turns out. To make that decision easier, most of those states also restrict bargaining in various ways.



Some of these states have also imposed Right to Work laws, some haven't. The result is a complicated and uneven environment in which unions represent their members.

But what's the effect on teacher wages?

Teacher Salaries and Union Strength

State	Average Starting Salary	Bargaining	Right to Work	
New Jersey	\$48,631			
Alaska	\$44,166			
New York	\$43,839			
Wyoming	\$43,269	P	x	Wage bargaining prohibited
Maryland	\$43,235			
Connecticut	\$42,924			
Pennsylvania	\$41,901			
California	\$41,259			
Hawaii	\$41,027			
Massachusetts	\$40,600			
Delaware	\$39,338			
Rhode Island	\$39,196			
Louisiana	\$38,655	P	x	Local Laws Control Bargaining
Texas	\$38,091	X	x	Bargaining Prohibited
Virginia	\$37,848	X	x	Bargaining Prohibited
Illinois	\$37,166			
Washington	\$36,335			
Alabama	\$36,198	P	x	Local Laws Control Bargaining
Michigan	\$35,901		x	
Vermont	\$35,541			
Nevada	\$35,358		x	
Florida	\$35,166		x	Layoff not bargainable
Kentucky	\$35,166	P		Local Laws Control Bargaining
Indiana	\$34,696		x	Work Hours not bargainable
Minnesota	\$34,505			
New Hampshire	\$34,280			
Tennessee	\$34,098	P	x	Bargaining Severly Limited
Georgia	\$33,664	X	x	Bargaining Prohibited
Oregon	\$33,549			
Wisconsin	\$33,546	P	x	Bargaining Severly Limited
Kansas	\$33,386		x	
Iowa	\$33,226		x	
Ohio	\$33,096	P		
Utah	\$33,081	P	x	Local Laws Control Bargaining
Arkansas	\$32,691	P	x	Wage bargaining prohibited
West Virginia	\$32,533	P		Local Laws Control Bargaining
South Carolina	\$32,306	X	x	Bargaining Prohibited
Colorado	\$32,126	P		Local Laws Control Bargaining
North Dakota	\$32,019	P	x	
New Mexico	\$31,960			
Arizona	\$31,874	P	x	Local Laws Control Bargaining
Maine	\$31,835			
Oklahoma	\$31,606		x	
Mississippi	\$31,184	P	x	Local Laws Control Bargaining
Idaho	\$31,159	P	x	Layoff Not Bargainable
Nebraska	\$30,844		x	
North Carolina	\$30,778	X	x	Bargaining Prohibited
Missouri	\$30,064	P		
South Dakota	\$29,851		x	
Montana	\$27,274			

Higher teacher salaries are much more common in states that don't suppress union strength. Other factors, no doubt, impact these salaries, cost of living, for one and how long these various laws have been in effect, for another. But the advantage of advocating together for better pay is pretty clear.

But after all, that's just common sense.