NOTE: This news release, which is being released to the press on November 10, is enclosed to provide you a quick view of some of the major findings and recommendations in the attached study. We urge you, however, to read the entire study soon.

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Baton Rouge, La., Nov. -- Teacher salaries in Louisiana should be increased, but the revenue for the increase should come from the local level, said the Public Affairs Research Council (PAR) in a 104-page study of "The Economic Status of Teachers in Louisiana," released today.

PAR stated that the possibility of getting increased revenue for salary raises may be better at the local level than at the state level.

The Council recommended that the present state-supported salary schedule be regarded as a "true minimum schedule," and that "higher local salary plans for teachers" be planned and implemented by local school boards.

Top priority should be given raises in beginning salaries for teachers, PAR said, in order to attract and hold more capable young people in the profession. The report also recommended that local school boards shorten the time required to teach the same salaries.

For the longer range, PAR recommended that school boards and administrators begin to work out "flexible" pay plans "which would allow them to recognize individual differences in teachers."

In the study, PAR compared Louisiana teachers' pay with pay of college graduates in more than 1,000 non-supervisory jobs in private employment in the state.

It found that in most cases "monthly" salaries of teachers were lower than salaries in private industry, and when converted to "annual" pay, teachers' salaries were usually significantly lower because of the nine-month work year for teachers.

The nonpartisan research agency noted, however, that the salaries of most college-trained persons in non-teaching jobs were determined "largely by their ability and performance on the job." This procedure is also followed to a certain extent in colleges and universities. In the public schools, however, teachers move up the pay schedule "in automatic lock step," depending on college degrees and years of service.

The Council said many school officials and citizens feel the public schools will never be able to pay really competitive salaries to attract the best talent so long as they must pay "all teachers" the same salaries.

In addition to normal pay increases for teachers whose work is satisfactory, the study said school boards should be in a position to pay "larger increments and higher top salaries for teachers who consistently render outstanding teaching service."

Likewise, school officials should establish provisions for "withholding increments from unsatisfactory teachers, after they have been given sufficient notice and have failed to improve their work."

PAR was critical of the "emphasis currently being placed on the high school extra pay program in Louisiana, since virtually the only teachers receiving extra pay are coaches and teachers in physical education, driver education, vocational education, band and music."

In Louisiana, PAR found practically no teachers in any of the required academic subject fields of English, mathematics, social studies, and science who received extra compensation.

PAR recognized that flexible pay plans, which are in effect in many school systems over the nation, "could not be made to work...where the board and its staff are distracted by partisan politics or swayed by considerations of favoritism or nepotism."

The report discussed some of the programs in use in various school systems over the nation that were designed to improve teaching by making the best use of teachers' talents. Incidentally, PAR said, many of these programs also had "flexible pay plans" that recognized the differences in individual teachers' abilities, willingness to work, performance, and their rate of professional growth.

These approaches include use of "teaching teams" in elementary grades and in given subject areas in high school. The teams give the students the benefit of the talents, interests, and specialized knowledge of several teachers rather than just one teacher.

At the same time, the master teacher who heads the team receives extra pay because he is responsible for the entire program of instruction carried on by the team. On large teams, other teachers with special abilities may share responsibility for parts of the team's program and also receive extra pay.

Other programs call for use of talented teachers during the summer for planning instructional programs and producing instructional materials. Still another makes use of top teachers to prepare and deliver lectures to large groups of students, covering course material that all must learn. The lecturers are the best teachers available in their subject areas, and the lectures are well planned and researched. Teachers used in these programs receive extra pay.

PAR noted that in 1959-60, some 958 coaches and physical education teachers in Louisiana public schools received an average of $689 in extra pay above salary scales, 282 agricultural teachers received an average of $1,695 extra, 309 home economics teachers received an average of $440 extra, and 359 band and music teachers received an average of $520 extra.

The extra pay above salary scales is provided these teachers on the basis that they work longer hours or a longer work year than teachers of academic subjects.

However, PAR said, this reasoning has been challenged by teachers in the academic fields who claim that "larger pupil loads, the preparation of lessons, grading papers, and extracurricular assignments cause them to work as many hours as teachers who receive added pay."
The report recommended that the legislature, the department of education, and local school boards consider changing present law and policy regarding extra compensation "to end the apparent discrimination against teachers in such important fields as elementary education, English, social studies, mathematics, science, and foreign languages."

Urging strong consideration of its recommendation for some means of recognizing superior teachers and for the possibility of establishing a longer work year, PAR said, "there is some question whether the taxpaying public...will ever be willing to provide salaries for nine months' employment which will be comparable to those paid other persons for 12 months' employment under existing rigid salary policies for teachers.

"There is also a question whether the same public will ever be willing to pay the least able and conscientious teacher in the schools the same salary which the public may heartily agree is due the most able and conscientious teacher."

PAR showed that in Louisiana, the state government in 1961-62 provided 77 per cent of all public school operating and construction revenues. This was almost double the 39 per cent provided by the state government in the average state.

This coupled with its belief that competition for increased money at the state level will be much greater in the future, are the reasons supporting PAR's recommendation that increased revenues for teacher pay raises come from the local level. PAR noted that all local school boards have substantial millages which they may yet levy with voter approval.

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