

Faculty Representative Report

11/30/2023

A main concern continues to be teacher pay, particularly as compared with surrounding districts. I have heard concerns that rates of staff turnover will continue to go up this year if salaries do not begin approaching parity with what other teachers in Massachusetts are paid. Especially given the inflation over the past three years, salaries in many cases have *decreased* in real terms when adjusted for inflation — I know for example that I make less now as a 4th year teacher than I did in my first year in 2020-2021, relative to the CPI.

I would like to emphasize that teacher salaries are an important provision for the long term stability of the school. Turnover due to teachers looking for more lucrative opportunities elsewhere helps no one. It initiates a hiring process that is time consuming for department chairs and for administrators. It is detrimental to the sense of community for students, who lose teachers that have built relationships with them. Turnover also affects student achievement and the excellence of the curriculum we offer at AMSA. New teachers naturally need time to adjust to the curricula that they are teaching here. In many cases, mine included, new teachers need time to adjust to teaching in general. And none of this is to mention the loss of expertise on existing curriculum when a current teacher leaves.

Aside from teacher salaries, I have also heard an increased level of anxiety amongst teachers about scheduling for the coming year. These anxieties, unlike those about salaries, differ in their tenor and their source and so I do not think focusing on any one in particular would give the correct impression. However I think they all arise from the increased uncertainty around scheduling this year: With union contract negotiations around the corner, the particular parameters of the schedule (minimum class sizes, class loads, etc.) might be subject to change for the first time in 3 years. I would like to emphasize that this is not a bad thing, and that there is particular enthusiasm among many teachers for making the scheduling process smoother and more equitable! The schedule impacts the lives of teachers all day, every day, and its construction is of the utmost importance to how the school is run. Therefore any uncertainty around its construction is simultaneously both exciting and potentially scary. Regardless of whatever changes are made this year, I think all of the teachers would agree that those changes deserve close attention and care — the schedule is something we absolutely need to get right.