

Why Legislators Must Reject the Cost Shift

Cost Shift – Would require most towns to pay at least 25% of the normal costs of their teachers' pensions, with the 25 most distressed communities capped at 5%.

The cost-shift will ultimately be passed on to local school budgets, resulting in:

- **Less money for local school resources**, including small classes, supplies, and student supports. Teaching and learning conditions will suffer, making the teaching profession less attractive.
- **Regressive property tax hikes**, especially in uncapped middle income and Alliance Districts whose taxpayers are asked to pay more with less ability to pay.
- **A slippery slope of passing on obligations of the state to cities and towns**. It breaks the seal on passing on a costly and unfair precedent that will only get worse in the future.
- **Penalizing districts with more experienced and prepared teachers** by linking increased payments by towns to their average teachers' salary. Teachers with more years of experience and higher levels of training get paid more, even in less wealthy districts. Preparation and experience are instrumental to student success. By penalizing districts for this, the state would be creating counter-productive incentives and, in some cases, penalizing needier districts for their success in attracting and retaining better prepared teachers.
 - **Teaching experience is positively associated with student performance**, as well as attendance, behavior, and other measures of success. Experience is also linked to better effects among teaching peers.¹
 - **Teacher preparation is linked to higher performance**, including higher test scores on assessments such as NAEP.² In fact, Finland, highly renowned for its education system, does not allow teachers to enter the classrooms until they've obtained their master's degrees.
- **Large unnecessary costs** over the total 2-year state budget ([see town-by-town runs](#)).
- **Putting a target on the backs of students, educators, and boards of education** who bear the brunt of the state's attempt to equalize wealth across cities and towns. It's the right problem to solve, but this is the wrong solution.

¹ <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/does-teaching-experience-increase-teacher-effectiveness-review-research>

² Linda Darling-Hammond, *The Flat World and Education: How America's Commitment to Equity Will Determine Our Future*, 2010.