

December 10, 2020

MICHAEL L. SMITH

The Hon. Eric Holcomb

Governor of the State of Indiana

Governor Holcomb,

I write you today on behalf of my colleagues who have served since early 2019 on the Next Level Teacher Compensation Commission. It has been my pleasure to serve with this group of loyal and dedicated Hoosiers, and we are especially pleased to deliver with this letter our final report regarding findings and recommendations in response to your charge.

Since February of 2019, we have met often. The meetings and research we reviewed have been supported by staff from your office and informed by our conversations with policymakers in the General Assembly, the Indiana Department of Education and content experts throughout the state and from around the nation. We have also taken advantage of listening sessions with hundreds of Indiana teachers and school district administrators while also processing public input from more than 1,000 Hoosier educators and citizens submitted via our webpage.

You asked us to determine what constituted competitive pay for teachers in our state and to deliver actionable recommendations for achieving it. Our report is dedicated to those tasks and intentionally avoids scope creep in our work.

We hope that you will appreciate these efforts to focus on solutions and understand that we share your sense of urgency to improve the competitiveness of our teachers' pay relative to neighboring peer states and to other professional career choices aspiring talented teachers might be attracted to in this modern economy. Our report provides more than 30 recommendations that address cost savings, policy changes and potential sources of new revenues to enhance our capacity to increase teacher pay. We believe that many of these recommendations can be implemented in the very short run and recognize that others will require additional time.

We look forward to presenting our report to you and sharing it publicly in the very near future. Thank you for allowing us to do this important work on behalf of all stakeholders in our state's public education system.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.