

Survey: Most US Public School Teachers Pay for Students’ School Supplies

Posted June 29, 2018

Category : Education/Family

Unlocking Word Meanings

Read the following words/expressions found in today’s article.

- 1. **shell out** / **ʃel aʊt** / (idiom) – to spend one’s own money
Example: I **shelled out** \$100 to buy books for my poor students.
- 2. **reimburse** / **ri-əm' bɜrs** / (v) – to repay a person with the same amount he/she spent
Example: My company **reimbursed** me for all my business trip expenses.
- 3. **insufficient** / **ˌɪn-sə' fɪʃ-ənt** / (adj) – not having the enough amount
Example: The school had an **insufficient** number of books, so some students had to share.
- 4. **go out of (one’s) way** / **ɡoʊ aʊt əv weɪ** / (idiom) – to do something beyond what is expected
Example: I admire her for **going out of** her **way** to take care of her sick student.
- 5. **solicit** / **sə' lɪs-ɪt** / (v) – to ask for support
Example: I will try to **solicit** funds for our project.

Article

Read the text below.

Majority of public school teachers in the United States **shell out** their own money to purchase school supplies, according to a recent survey.

The survey, which was conducted by the US Federal Department of Education, revealed that 94% of public school teachers spent an average of nearly \$480 on school supplies like notebooks and pens for the school year 2014-2015. The said amount was never **reimbursed**.

Findings further revealed that this situation applied to teachers who taught in either urban or rural public schools. They also spent on school supplies regardless of their students’ socio-economic status.

Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers, stated that the survey findings clearly implied that there is **insufficient** funding in the country’s public schools.

Because of this, teachers in different states held protests to express their disappointment and to demand a higher wage. Weingarten asserted that teachers are very passionate in helping their students, which is why they will **go out of** their **way** to fight against underfunding.

Aside from spending their own money, some teachers have tried exploring different means to continuously accommodate their students’ needs.

Bruce Hogue, a teacher from Denver, **solicits** from private donors to fund the supplies for his students’ science experiments. Hogue successfully gained financial support from NASA, the US Geological Society, and private businesses like Lockheed-Martin.

On the other hand, New York-based preschool teacher Andy Yung tried raising money for his classroom projects through DonorsChoose.org. This website lets teachers list down different classroom needs and ask for funding for students’ trip fees, projects, and supplies.

Viewpoint Discussion

Enjoy a discussion with your tutor.

Discussion A

- Do you think it is acceptable for teachers to spend their own money on students’ school supplies? Why or why not?

- How do you think US public schools should handle the issue of underfunding?

Discussion B

- In what situations do teachers usually go out of their way to help their students? Discuss.

- Why do you think some teachers go out of their way to help their students?