

DELTA COLLEGE  
COUNSELING/ADVISING & CAREER SERVICES  
**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER**

Salary Range: \$30,370 - \$81,460

Personal Interests: Prefer activities working closely with young people.

Work Environment: Most teachers work in well lighted, heated, and ventilated schools.

**Description**

Elementary school teachers may attend staff meetings, serve on committees, attend workshops or in-service training activities, supervise outdoor and indoor play activities, and prepare bulletin boards. They also correct papers and tests, keep records and make reports, evaluate student performance, counsel pupils with academic and adjustment problems, discuss pupils' progress and performance with parents, prepare appropriate lesson plans that allow for varying ability levels among students, and supervise field trips.

As teachers move away from the traditional repetitive drill approaches and rote memorization, they are using more "props" or "manipulatives" to help children understand abstract concepts, solve problems, and develop critical thought processes. As children get older they use more sophisticated materials such as science apparatus, cameras, or computers. Kindergarten and elementary school teachers play a vital role in the development of children. What children learn and experience during their early years can shape their views of themselves and the world, and affect later success or failure in school, work, and their personal lives.

**Working Conditions**

Although many teachers usually work alone in a class with a group of students, an increasing number of schools are now providing teacher aides who are

supervised by the teacher, assist with clerical tasks, lunch and playground activities. Teachers are supervised by school administrators. About one public elementary school teacher in six is a member of a teaching team in which two or more teachers work closely together.

Each teacher is responsible for part of a group of students or for a particular subject area. Public elementary teachers spend an average of 36 1/2 hours per week in the classroom and additional 9 1/2 or more hours grading papers, attending meetings, keeping records, making reports, and supervising after school activities. Seeing students develop new skills and gain an appreciation of knowledge and learning can be very rewarding. However, teaching may be frustrating when dealing with unmotivated and disrespectful students. Occasionally, teachers must cope with unruly behavior and violence in schools.

**Training, Other Qualifications**

Programs in elementary education provide opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills needed to teach a large variety of subjects from kindergarten through eighth grade and specialized subjects in ninth grade. To be certified in Michigan at the elementary level, teachers are required to have either a major and a minor area of subject specialization or three minor areas. They are also required to complete an approved teacher training program with a bachelor's degree.

Requirements for regular licenses vary by state. However, all states require a bachelor's degree and completion of an approved teacher training program. About one-third of the states also require technology training as part of the teacher certification process. With growing minority populations in many parts of the country, it is important for teachers to establish rapport with a diverse student population. Some schools offer training to help teachers enhance their awareness and understanding of different cultures.

Delta College offers elementary education courses that apply to a 4-year degree. Students often start at Delta the first two years of study and then transfer to a 4-year college or university with an elementary education program. Interested students need to check with Counseling and Advising about which universities have a transfer agreement with Delta College.

### **Job Outlook**

Nationally, employment of elementary teachers is expected to increase about as fast as the average for all occupations through the year 2014. According to a recent study, elementary school enrollments are rising and will continue to do so in the near term. Because of greater population growth in the southern and western states, enrollment in kindergarten and elementary schools should increase in these regions, causing a greater demand for elementary teachers in these areas. Teachers who have expertise in integrating personal computer technology with classroom instruction will be in strong demand by school districts. Subject areas in demand include mathematics, science, special education, and bilingual education.

### **Earnings**

Salaries for elementary teachers depend on their education and teaching experience, school district budgets, unionization, supply and demand factors, and geographic location. Teachers working in urban areas usually have higher wages than those in rural areas. Average salaries (May 2006) for public school teachers employed in various Michigan school districts were:

<b>District</b>	<b>Annual Average</b>
Ann Arbor	\$74,260
Battle Creek	\$50,010
Bay City	\$55,310
Detroit	\$59,280
Flint	\$59,560
Grand Rapids	\$48,450
Jackson	\$50,000
Kalamazoo	\$49,800
Lansing	\$54,120
Muskegon	\$58,640

### **Related Occupations**

Workers in other occupations related to elementary school teacher are librarians, preschool teachers, child-care workers, school counselor, special education teacher, and secondary teacher.

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 Sources: Occupational Outlook Handbook, Michigan Occupational Information System, Delta College Catalog.

Career Center Bay City/Saginaw (989) 686-9072  
 Midland/Auburn (989) 495-4000 ext.9072  
 Frankemuth, Birch Run, Reese & Vassar: (989) 758-3400, ext. 9072  
<http://www.delta.edu/careercenter>

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