

Tampa Lifestyle for Teachers

Tampa is a desired destination for a lot of Gen-Z and millennial workers.

Sure, the weather is great. After all, you don't have to shovel sunshine!

Yet that's not the only thing Tampa can hang its hat on – after all, most of Florida is blessed with the same beautiful weather.

There's something else about Tampa that is drawing workers. Research in 2018 from recruiting website Handshake indicated that Tampa was eighth on the list of American cities where students in the South most wanted to work. Moreover, it was the only Florida city on that list – not Miami or Orlando or Fort Lauderdale or Jacksonville.

To get in on this trend, post-college workers targeting Tampa as a teaching destination will want the best information about Hillsborough County – the schools, the sights, all the reasons to live and work in the area.

After all, Tampa is about much more than America's best Cuban sandwiches and a great NHL hockey team, though those are obvious points of pride.

And many of the best aspects are tailor-made for teachers and their students, providing learning opportunities inside and outside of the classroom.

Here are some ways you as a new teacher in Tampa can best connect to the experiences which make Tampa the place to be.

Teach outside the classroom



The Tampa Bay region and especially the city of Tampa have a lot of tourist attractions which can double as resources for teachers who want to get creative with their lesson plans.

Are you a biology teacher? ZooTampa at Lowry Park and the Tampa Aquarium bring natural wonders from around the world to your town.

Do you teach art? The downtown Tampa Museum of Art and Florida Museum of Photographic Arts beckon, and the USF Contemporary Art Museum are treasured resources to show students beauty and creativity.

How about history? Learn more about the rich heritage of the Tampa Bay region at the Tampa Bay History Center, Ybor City State Museum, SS American Victory Mariners Museum and Henry B. Plant Museum.

And the Glazer Children's Museum entertains kids of varying ages while also informing them about math, science and literacy.

These places only scratch the surface of what Tampa has to offer so you can expand your experiences, and those of your students, well beyond the traditional classroom.

Competitive teacher pay



Living and teaching in Tampa has plenty of financial benefits, especially for those starting their professional life. Consider:

Hillsborough Schools has competitive starting salaries. For a teacher with zero years of teaching experience, the beginning salary is \$38,201. That is very comparable to other large school districts in Florida, such as Miami-Dade (\$31,080-\$40,710), Broward County (Fort Lauderdale area, \$32,000-\$39,600) and Orange County (Orlando area, \$29,160-\$37,320) according to jobs.teacher.org.

Starting pay for Hillsborough Schools teachers also compares well with that of other major school districts in the Southeast including Atlanta (\$30,500-\$40,010), Charlotte-Mecklenberg (\$32,330-\$33,210), New Orleans (\$28,510-\$40,910) and Nashville (\$31,380-\$34,680).

And that money will stretch farther in Florida than in other Southeast states because...

No state income tax, and more money savers



Among southern states, only Florida and Texas have no personal state income taxes.

That alone gives Florida an advantage. And the most recent quarterly Cost of Living index report showed that the Tampa Bay area was one of the most affordable major markets to live in as featured in Creative Loafing Tampa Bay from the C2ER Cost of Living Report.

Now let's look at all the ancillary advantages of living in Florida's subtropical climate.

No need to buy snow tires. That's a few hundred bucks saved right there.

Very low heating bills. Since temps in Tampa rarely drop below 50 degrees (and usually don't even dip under 60), you won't need to heat your home or apartment very often. Lots of open-window days around here even in December.

But what about the summers, you say. Won't my A/C bills be higher? Maybe a little, but summers get plenty hot all over the country. And did you know that Tampa has never had a 100-degree day in its recorded weather history? The water of Tampa Bay and the nearby Gulf of Mexico help keep things a bit cooler and breezier than some other parts of Florida.

Think of all the things you won't need to buy anymore if you're coming from a cold part of the country to come and teach in Tampa: A heavy coat. Gloves. Scarves. Wool hats. Those savings can all add up.

The financial advantages of teaching in Tampa combined with all of the things to see and do, including the fact that Hillsborough County's population keeps growing along with the number of schools being built: there's every reason for a talented teacher to want to set roots in Hillsborough County.

