



## Obama: We Need More Teachers – Romney: Not So Fast

By Teresa Wendt on Jun 12, 2012 in 2012 Election News, A Broken System, Featured, Politics

Last week was difficult for President Obama: Jobs numbers worse than expected; news of high-level administrative leaks; and President Clinton praising Mitt Romney on his business experience. Many were surprised when on Friday morning Team Obama hastily called for a press conference.

But some days things just go from bad to worse. President Obama had to backtrack his comment that the private sector was doing fine and reemphasize he push for more jobs in the public sector.

President Obama 6/8/2012: “The truth of the matter is that, as I said, we’ve created 4.3 million jobs over the last 27 months, over 800,000 just this year alone. The private sector is doing fine. Where we’re seeing weaknesses in our economy have to do with state and local government.”

### Is the private sector doing just fine?

The press conference and subsequent clarification may have raised even more questions than the week had already wrought. At 8.2% few would argue that the private sector is indeed not doing fine. At its worst under the previous administration unemployment was less than 6.5%.

### Then, is the problem that the public sector is in dire shape?

Obama Campaign Advisor, David Axelrod on ABC’s “This Week” 6/10/2012: “The president is out of touch — out of touch? We have lost 250,000 teachers in the last couple of years.”

Not according to the Romney camp.

The [Huffington Post](#) 6/8/2012 headlined an article, “Mitt Romney Mocks Obama For Wanting More Firemen, Policemen, Teachers”. For some, adding firefighters, police and teachers to the equation invokes a sympathy response.

Mitt Romney 6/8/2012: “He wants another stimulus, he wants to hire more government workers,” Romney [said at a press conference](#). “He says we need more firemen, more policemen, more teachers. Did he not get the message of Wisconsin? The American people did. It’s time for us to cut back on government and help the American people.”

### So, who is right? What are the real numbers?

From the [Washington Post](#) 6/11/2012: According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), the unemployment rate for government workers last month was just 4.2 percent (up slightly from 3.9 percent a year ago). Compare that to private-sector industries such as construction (14.2 percent unemployment), leisure and hospitality services (9.7 percent), agriculture (9.5 percent), professional and business services (8.5 percent) and wholesale and retail trade (8.1 percent).

### While looking at numbers, how about the effectiveness of our education program?

[Andrew Coulson of the Cato Institute](#) analyzed education employment numbers compared to enrollment along with education dollars spent compared to student test scores. The graphs lead little to the imagination.

From 1970 to 2011 student enrollment increased a modest 8.5% while employment increased dramatically over 92%. During that same time period student test scores remained relatively stable but cost increased from an average \$50,000 per student K-12 education to over \$150,000 adjusting for inflation.

At a point where nearly fifty percent of the population does not pay income tax and our debt continues to spiral out of control it seems only prudent that all government programs are closely reviewed. This study from the Cato Institute should give us all cause to pause.

**What do you think?**

Is it possible that this president feels beholden to the teachers' union? Is he trying to strike a chord with sympathetic American voters? It is entirely conceivable that we do not need more teachers right now. Perhaps the public sector, as a whole, needs reform.

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