

Salaries and Wages in Texas Public Schools

2008–09 Superintendent Survey Highlights

Survey Information

- 1,030 Texas public school districts received the Superintendent Survey questionnaire.
- 867 districts responded, representing 84 percent of districts in Texas. 829 districts responded in 2007–08.
- 40 districts reported having an interim superintendent and are not included in the analysis.
- Survey participants may not have answered all questions.
- Survey data is effective August 2008.

Superintendent Salaries

The average superintendent salary for 2008–09 is \$113,334, a 3 percent increase from 2007–08. Average superintendent salaries range from \$79,493 in districts with less than 500 students to \$272,347 in districts with more than 50,000 students. Half of reported salaries are less than \$99,000.

Pay Increases

Ninety percent of respondents (743) had a returning superintendent for 2008–09. These superintendents saw an average pay increase of 4.2 percent. Twenty percent of returning superintendents (151) did not receive a pay increase.

Performance and Retention Bonuses

Six percent of respondents (45) gave a bonus to the superintendent. For each of the past five years, 5 to 6 percent of districts have provided their superintendent a bonus. Most bonuses are paid to the superintendent to reward job performance or continued service. The average bonus paid was \$9,339, or 7 percent of the superintendent's salary. Reported bonus amounts range from less than \$1,000 to more than \$30,000. Half of reported bonuses were \$5,000 or less.

Superintendent Experience

Superintendents have been in their current position for an average of four years and have an average of seven years of total experience as a superintendent in any district. Most superintendents (61 percent) have been the superintendent in only one school district. Of the 84 districts (10 percent) with a new superintendent for 2008–09, 65 percent hired a superintendent with no previous experience in the position.

Tax-Deferred Investment Contributions

Ten percent of districts (84) contribute to a tax-deferred investment account for the superintendent, down slightly from 11 percent last year. These contributions are in addition to required Teacher Retirement System (TRS) contributions. The average district contribution to these accounts in all responding districts is \$7,426. This is a significant 20 percent decrease from 2007–08 when the average contribution was \$9,338. Several districts that had made significant contributions in previous years have new or interim superintendents that are not receiving the same benefit. Seventy-four percent of districts (65) making contributions require at least one year of service for the district's contribution to be vested.

Transportation Benefits

Forty-six percent of responding districts (381) provide a vehicle or car allowance to the superintendent. Most of these districts (83 percent) provide an annual car allowance to cover all or part of the cost of a personal vehicle for the superintendent. The average annual vehicle allowance is \$5,934, up 5 percent from 2007–08.

Health Insurance Benefits

Insurance premiums are separated into employee-only and employee-plus-family coverage. Premiums and district contributions were analyzed independently. Thirty-nine percent of superintendents (320) reported employee-only rates with an average monthly premium of \$379. Forty-nine percent (408) reported employee-plus-family rates with an average monthly premium of \$867. Premiums for both categories of coverage did not increase significantly over last year because TRS ActiveCare rates did not change for 2008–09 and most districts use these plans for employee health insurance. The average annual district contribution for superintendent health insurance

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premiums in 2008–09 is \$5,489, up 3 percent from last year. Districts contribute an average of 81 percent of the employee-only premium and 66 percent of the employee-plus-family premium for superintendents. Thirty-nine percent of respondents (281) pay the total cost of health insurance for the superintendent regardless of the type of coverage that the superintendent elects.

Other Benefits

- Fifty-nine percent of districts (487) provide the superintendent with an allowance for cell phone and/or internet service. The average annual allowance is \$1,083.
- Forty-four percent of respondents (365) pay dues for the superintendent's membership to civic, private or professional organizations and clubs. The average annual expense to the district for the superintendent's membership dues is \$845.
- Fourteen percent of superintendents (112) receive a housing benefit—79 percent provide a residence, 12 percent provide a residence plus a housing allowance, and 9 percent provide a housing allowance only. The average housing allowance provided is \$4,917.
- Seven percent of respondents (57) provide the superintendent with an annual allowance for business expenses. The average annual allowance is \$4,022.
- Seven percent of respondents (59) provide a life insurance policy for the superintendent that differs from life insurance benefits provided to other district employees. These policies have a median face value of \$242,000 and have an annual premium cost to the district of \$1,702.
- Twenty-five districts (3 percent) provide the superintendent with a long-term disability policy that is different from that provided to other employees. The average annual cost to the district is \$2,682.
- Ten districts (1 percent) purchased additional TRS service credits for the superintendent at an average cost to the district of \$22,178.

Description of Survey

The Superintendent Salary Survey is a compilation of superintendent salary and benefit information submitted to TASB HR Services during the fall semester of the 2008–09 school year. Invitations to participate in the web-based survey were e-mailed to 1,030 school districts.

Accurate and timely information helps school officials set educator salaries. The data in 2008–09 Superintendent Report can be used by local boards to effectively recruit, retain, and reward superintendents through the development of competitive compensation packages. All superintendent compensation packages are unique and are tailored to the needs of the superintendent and local school district. There may be other benefits or pay elements provided to superintendents that are not represented here. The information reported in this survey details the most common elements of superintendent compensation packages in Texas.

Survey Methodology

Standard statistical and mathematical calculations were used in compiling and analyzing the data. Statewide trends are presented according to enrollment group except where otherwise identified.