

## State salary report shows running a school district is often the best job in town

By LIV FINNE | Jun 1, 2023 

BLOG



Earlier this week, using public records, I posted the salaries of the highest-paid school employees in Washington state for the 2021-22 school year. As a tax-funded monopoly system, it's important for the public to be informed about how much school leaders are paid and how effective the system is at educating children. After further research, I found there is more to report about this topic.

Below is a table on K-12 School Employee Salaries as reported by the Washington State Fiscal Information,

<https://www.fiscal.wa.gov/K12/K12Salaries>

Here are some of the most notable findings. The Sunnyside school district superintendent received a \$559,000 salary, nine times the average family wage in that area. The Tacoma School board paid out for two superintendents. Normally districts have only one superintendent, aided by one or more deputy superintendents. Carla Santorno, who retired in 2021 as superintendent, received a salary of \$343,000. Her successor, Josh Garcia,

received a salary of \$348,000. Unless these amounts were pro-rated, it means that in 2021-22, the Tacoma School District paid nearly \$700,000 in superintendent salary.

These public-dollar sums do not include employee benefits , which amount to about \$50,000 per person.

Under the current system school administrators have almost no incentive to be careful stewards of public money – their pay is unrelated to student learning levels. In fact, administrators have every incentive to get more pay, and are often able to convince willing school board directors to approve these large pay increases. Public schools have plenty of money, so there is no lack of funding for this purpose.

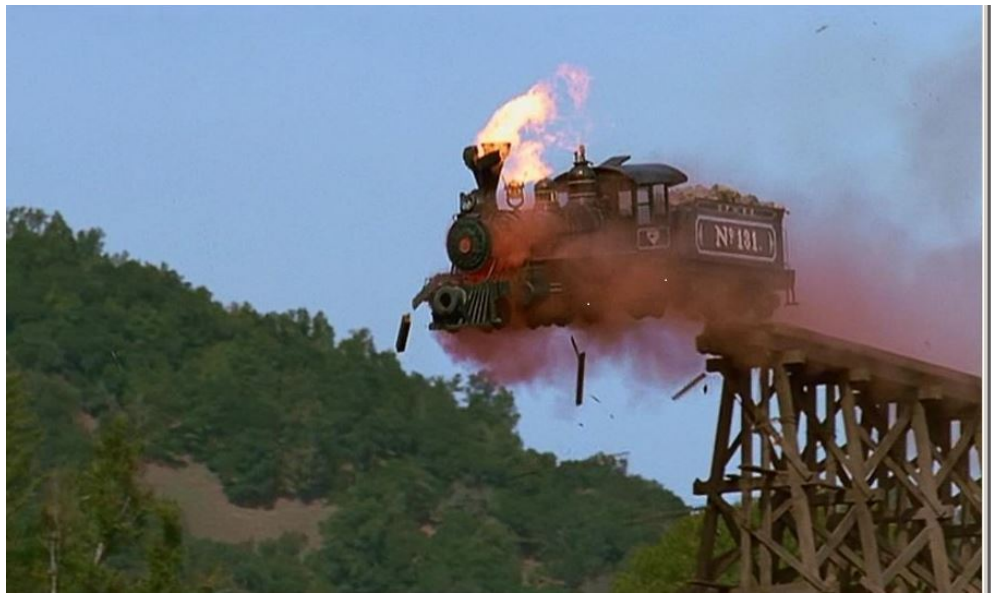
Since a centralized monopoly has little accountability to the public, the best solution is to allow parents to have school choice. Only when school superintendents face the possibility of losing parent-directed funding to homeschooling, charter public schools or private schools will they start making spending decisions consistent with the public interest, and for the benefit of teachers and students.

In the meantime, more people recognize the public schools have become a lucrative jobs program for administrators. In many Washington communities, running the school district is the best job in town.

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<https://open.spotify.com/episode/4NwHjtOxodPDgxFwoRwf4G?si=VSxzY2GiTMiU7Lm8-B9YDw&nd=1>

It's amazing that the liberals will go after the CEOs of the most "successful" companies in the country for their outlandish and undeserved (in their view) compensation packages. CEOs are compensated according to what the board and management believe is fair to keep the company moving in a strong, competitive and profitable direction. BUT, at the same time we see school superintendents making six figure salaries and the product they so proudly roll off the production line is subpar and declining in quality year after year. Most of these "supers" wouldn't make it in mid-management in the business world. It wouldn't take a Lee Iacocca to tell us what is wrong with the education system, and it starts at the top.



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