

Classified Staffing Salary Allocation Method

Proposal Summary

Allocate resources to school districts for classified staff salaries based on state-employee job classifications. Specifically, districts would be allocated salary resources for state-funded K-12 classified units based on the weighted average salary of permanent full time state employees in a specified set of classifications for each group of school classified staff.

Background and Historical Funding and Practice in Washington

Basic education funding formulas drive 1 classified staff for each 58.75 students. The 1:58.75 ratio represents an enhancement over the 1:60 ratio that had been in place for nearly 30 years. School districts are allocated funding for salaries associated with these funded staffing units based on a **single** salary allocation; 225 districts receive the minimum salary allocation for their classified units of \$31,865 in 2008-09, the remaining 71 districts receive a higher allocation ranging between \$31,868 and \$36,777.

Districts hire many more classified staff than basic education staffing ratios drive; the state drives 16,546 classified FTE staff as of March 2008; districts employed 19,720 as of October 2007 in the basic education program. (Districts employ many more classified staff in other education programs. In 2006-07, state funded units approximated 22,266 in all basic education programs; districts employed 36,883 staff, all basic education programs.) In 2007-08, state salary allocations average \$29,388 for the state-funded K-12 classified staff; school districts pay an average salary of \$38,908 (preliminary data).

The state compensation system, for state employees, contains over 2,000 job classifications, each with a salary range of 12-13 steps, including variation for working conditions. Many state employees are represented by unions and bargain differential salary and working conditions. The state schedule is transparent and meticulously maintained by the Department of Personnel. The schedule is kept up-to-date with a biennial survey of state salaries compared to the private market; policymakers routinely boost the salary of specific categories when the state schedule is out of step with the larger employer market.

General Concept

Superintendent Bergeson's proposal:

- a) allocates classified staffing resources in a single allocation with a single weighted average salary;
- b) breaks the current classified staffing ratio into discreet common-sense categories, to be established in a legislative document;
- c) links the state's salary allocation for K-12 classified staff to weighted average salaries of the permanent full time employees in a similar category (or set of categories) in the state classification system; and,
- d) where no state salary schedule exists, the state K-12 allocation is re-based to the level districts are currently paying.

Breaking the current K-12 classified staffing ratio into discreet categories serves multiple purposes; the most important is the ability to allocate funds for salaries that are comparable to what districts must pay. Unblocking the single allocation into categories also will allow the state to identify the appropriate number of staff (staff per students) that the state should allocate based on state education system priorities. Further, the state can

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maintain the formulas over time by comparing how many staff districts must employ to how many the state allocates (are new categories emerging?) and by comparing appropriate salary benchmarks to keep salary allocations current with district reality (actual salaries paid, local market drivers, state salary schedule).

Specifics of Proposal

Key assumptions of this proposal:

- the proposal does not change the current system of full bargaining rights for classified employees paired with state funding for base salary and Cost-of-Living-Adjustments (COLA) for allocation purposes only;
- salary allocations across districts will be equalized by the state over two years so that all districts will receive the top allocation in the 2010-11 school year;
- benchmarking K-12 classified salary allocations to state salary schedules would begin in the 2011-12 school year after current allocations were fully equalized.

The categories identified for classified staff include:

- Instructional and Non-instructional aides
- School secretaries
- Grounds keepers
- Maintenance workers
- Professional/director/supervisor
- Technology
- Central administration (finance office)
- Custodians
- Service Workers / All Other
- Student and Staff Safety

Appendix A lists the potential K-12 classified staff categories and the potential associated state job classifications.

PRELIMINARY K-12 Actual Salaries Compared to State Employee Salaries

	K-12 Weighted Average Salary (2007-08 Preliminary)	K-12 Weighted Avg Salary as % of Max. State Allocation (\$35,227)	State Weighted Average Salary (April 2008 Annualized)*	State Weighted Avg Salary as % of Max. State Allocation (\$35,227)	K-12 Weighted Avg Salary as % of State Weighted Avg Salary
Instructional Aides	\$29,574	84%	Too few employees	---	
Non-Instructional Aides	\$29,681	84%	Too few employees	---	
School Secretaries	\$35,234	100%	\$31,367	89%	112%
Grounds Keepers	\$38,840	110%	Need more data	---	
Maintenance Workers	\$46,164	131%	\$47,331	134%	98%
Technology	\$53,853	153%	\$68,561	195%	79%
Central Administration	\$38,670	110%	\$47,515	135%	81%
Custodians	\$34,378	98%	\$29,085	83%	118%
Service Workers / All Other	\$44,998	128%	\$38,044	108%	118%
Student/Staff Safety	\$40,475	115%	\$40,144	114%	101%
Professional / Director / Supervisor	\$64,892	184%	\$52,009	148%	125%

*Permanent full-time state employees, statewide; does not include higher education employees.

Findings of Comparisons of K-12 Salaries to State Employee Salaries—Additional Work Needed

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1. Generally, aligning K-12 categories to state employee categories is a straight-forward comparison, fairly easily made. The proposal needs to be discussed with a workgroup of K-12 human resource officers and Department of Personnel resource officers. The specific categories proposed here should be reviewed in more detail to ensure best alignment.
2. Grounds Keepers, requires additional research with the Department of Personnel.
3. The Professional/Director/Supervisor category needs to be re-evaluated, and the data above should be considered preliminary. The state data does not include employees in the Washington Management Service, and likely should to more accurately reflect the mix of employees that school districts must employ.
4. Very few Instructional Aides are employed by the state. The K-12 salary allocation should be re-based to reflect actual salaries paid in the 2007-08 school year and then inflated with future COLAs.
5. Data on salaries paid for K-12 safety staff is preliminary. OSPI reports may not appropriately segregate this category of staffing and we must survey school districts to identify the appropriate annual weighted salary to compare to state employees.

Specific Proposal with Phase-in Recommendation

1. Allocate Classified Staff resources to school districts in the form of a single ratio allocation with a single weighted average salary.
2. Create the LEAP document to identify salary (and ratio) allocations by category. Equalize K-12 classified salary allocations across school districts in the upcoming biennium; in the 2010-11 school year all districts would be allocated the maximum allocation. (At this point, there is no difference by category in the allocations.)
3. In the 2011-12 school year, identify the goal for K-12 salary allocations based on state employee actual weighted salaries (with adjustments made for Aides) and fund at least 25% of the increase needed to reach this goal. Implement the remaining increases over the next three years, to fully implement the new structure in a total of six years.