SECTION #2: SALARY

Table 2.1. Superintendent base salary 2025–2026 (Q13) and enrollment (Q8)

	Min	25%	**Median**	75%	Max	N
Fewer than 300	50,000	100,000	**117,850**	140,000	220,000	236
300 to 999	60,000	125,535	**144,342**	166,229	268,000	561
1,000 to 2,999	80,000	150,000	**173,163**	200,000	435,000	610
3,000 to 4,999	108,000	184,625	**214,100**	239,250	388,052	220
5,000 to 9,999	113,000	203,000	**227,000**	260,000	374,000	177
10,000 to 24,999	150,000	215,941	**248,000**	290,350	412,002	109
25,000 to 49,999	200,000	245,000	**295,000**	324,000	452,000	29
50,000 to 99,999	320,000	326,568	**363,982**	375,950	426,000	5
100,000 or more	125,000	173,750	**254,000**	319,750	325,000	4
Total						1,951
Mean Salary			**178,111**			

Findings: Consistent with results since the inception of the study, median salaries generally demonstrate an increase as district enrollments increase. However, caution should be taken with interpretations for enrollments above 24,999 due to smaller sample sizes.

Table 2.2. Superintendent base salary (Q13) and gender (Q5)

	Min	25%	**Median**	75%	Max	N
Female	60,000	134,475	**165,000**	214,000	382,000	581
Male	50,000	136,980	**168,677**	212,090	452,000	1,369
Total						1,950

Findings: Keeping mind that males are overrepresented in the superintendency (73%) compared to females (26%), the median salary of male superintendents was slightly higher than that of females for only the 7th time in the last 14 years.

Female superintendents earned approximately 98% of what males earned in 2025–2026.

Table 2.3. Superintendent base salary (Q13) and racial/cultural group (Q6)

Race/Cultural Group	Min	25%	**Median**	75%	Max	N
American Indian or Alaska Native	83,000	115,750	**139,276**	165,002	266,610	16
Asian	221,162	239,028	**262,000**	272,500	412,002	7
Black or African American	83,480	178,725	**225,000**	266,443	375,950	87
Hispanic or Latino	80,000	170,750	**224,350**	266,250	452,000	74
Two or more races	86,957	122,000	**150,993**	190,962	309,000	25
White (not Hispanic or Latino)	50,000	135,000	**165,000**	205,000	435,000	1,706
Other	130,000	165,000	**192,000**	195,000	239,000	5
Prefer not to answer	80,000	128,750	**157,756**	206,250	374,000	24
Total						1,944

Findings: As in previous editions of the study, where sufficient numbers of respondents existed, some variation was noted in median salaries. Superintendents who identified as Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino had higher median salaries than superintendents who identified as White.

Care should be taken in interpreting the data because of the small number of respondents in some groups and the overrepresentation of superintendents who identified as White, making definitive analysis difficult, if not inappropriate. Some of the variation in median salaries may be due to the fact that higher percentages of superintendents who identified as Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino worked in larger and more urbanized districts and those contexts associate with higher median salaries.

Table 2.4. Superintendent base salary (Q13) and terminal degree (Q12)

Degree Type	Min	25%	**Median**	75%	Max	Count
CPA	175,000	183,146	**191,292**	208,146	225,000	3
Ed.D	80,000	160,000	**196,000**	236,750	452,000	723
Ed.S	60,000	120,000	**140,000**	166,567	291,700	283
J.D	124,000	208,496	**223,125**	263,500	298,500	10
M.A./M.S./M.Ed (Master's degree)	50,000	130,000	**153,235**	185,000	394,000	740
MBA	96,000	164,625	**189,500**	231,708	290,700	12
Ph.D	79,000	153,625	**196,875**	229,250	360,000	124
Other	83,835	157,500	**182,000**	211,626	340,000	47
Total						1,942

Findings: Where sufficient numbers of responses existed, superintendents with either an EdD or PhD had higher median salaries.

Table 2.5. Superintendent base salary (Q13) and district description (Q9)

Type	Min	25%	**Median**	75%	Max	N
Rural	50,000	125,206	**147,000**	174,000	311,488	1,253
Suburban	92,700	188,643	**220,000**	257,282	435,000	545
Urban	79,000	185,761	**217,500**	264,250	452,000	153
Total						1,951

Findings: The median salary in rural districts was lower than that of suburban and urban. Some of the difference is likely related to rural districts having smaller enrollments on average than suburban and urban districts.

Table 2.6. Associate superintendent base salary (Q14) and district enrollment (Q8)

Enrollment	Min	25%	**Median**	75%	Max	Omitted	N
Fewer than 300	81,000	86,580	**112,000**	132,000	154,000	217	236
300 to 999	56,000	105,000	**125,000**	141,250	241,322	445	561
1,000 to 2,999	76,150	120,000	**138,911**	160,000	275,000	189	610
3,000 to 4,999	89,000	135,000	**165,000**	190,000	285,000	13	220
5,000 to 9,999	85,000	142,046	**174,500**	195,000	310,000	3	177
10,000 to 24,999	92,000	151,146	**175,000**	200,000	301,200	1	109
25,000 to 49,999	120,000	180,000	**200,000**	220,000	270,000	1	29
50,000 to 99,999	179,000	205,544	**221,352**	239,985	275,000	1	5
100,000 or more	165,000	191,666	**218,331**	239,166	260,000	1	4
Total						873	1,951

Findings: Consistent with findings in previous editions of the study, base salary for assistant/associate superintendents increased as enrollment increased. It is noted that in districts with lower enrollments, these positions often do not exist.

Table 2.7. High school principal base salary (Q15) and district enrollment (Q8)

Enrollment	Min	25%	**Median**	75%	Max	Omitted	N
Fewer than 300	50,000	74,000	**85,000**	95,000	143,000	91	236
300 to 999	52,424	90,000	**100,000**	115,000	228,913	74	561
1,000 to 2,999	65,000	103,000	**120,000**	133,500	275,000	55	610
3,000 to 4,999	70,000	115,000	**135,000**	161,798	265,000	21	220
5,000 to 9,999	82,000	124,675	**144,000**	170,469	240,000	9	177
10,000 to 24,999	89,000	120,000	**140,000**	165,000	215,000	8	109
25,000 to 49,999	100,000	130,000	**157,000**	170,000	209,000	0	29
50,000 to 99,999	135,000	146,250	**152,012**	154,334	155,267	1	5
100,000 or more	85,000	118,750	**152,500**	178,250	188,000	0	4
Total						261	1,951

Findings: Consistent with findings in previous editions of the study, in almost all cases, the larger the student enrollment of the district, the higher the mean base salary for the high school principal when sample sizes exceeded 28 responses. Omitted responses are due mostly to some districts not having high schools or the position of high school principal.

Table 2.8. Middle school principal base salary (Q16) and district enrollment (Q8)

Enrollment	Min	25%	**Median**	75%	Max	Omitted	Count
Fewer than 300	50,000	74,750	**84,500**	95,000	155,000	160	236
300 to 999	52,424	85,000	**98,385**	115,000	185,000	251	561
1,000 to 2,999	60,000	98,000	**114,090**	130,000	255,000	63	610
3,000 to 4,999	69,000	108,990	**129,359**	152,949	225,000	16	220
5,000 to 9,999	80,000	112,614	**130,000**	154,552	230,000	13	177
10,000 to 24,999	86,000	105,000	**125,000**	155,000	207,000	5	109
25,000 to 49,999	80,000	125,000	**148,000**	157,500	195,000	2	29
50,000 to 99,999	120,000	135,000	**142,140**	145,679	149,876	1	5
100,000 or more	120,000	127,500	**135,000**	156,500	178,000	1	4
Total						514	1,951

Findings: Similar to their high school counterparts, middle school principal base median salaries were related to district enrollment and generally increased as district enrollment increased.

Table 2.9. Elementary school principal base salary (Q17) and district enrollment (Q8)

Enrollment	Min	25%	**Median**	75%	Max	Omitted	N
Fewer than 300	50,000	75,000	**82,000**	93,000	166,500	106	236
300 to 999	58,000	85,000	**95,000**	110,000	256,000	43	561
1,000 to 2,999	50,000	94,375	**107,535**	125,000	250,000	25	610
3,000 to 4,999	60,000	100,000	**120,000**	145,000	205,000	12	220
5,000 to 9,999	75,000	104,486	**124,780**	150,000	220,000	11	177
10,000 to 24,999	82,864	100,000	**120,000**	142,500	196,000	6	109
25,000 to 49,999	70,000	112,500	**129,818**	145,000	195,000	2	29
50,000 to 99,999	105,000	123,750	**132,785**	138,947	149,079	1	5
100,000 or more	85,000	111,250	**121,500**	134,250	168,000	0	4
Total						208	1,951

Findings: Elementary school principals generally followed the same trend as their high school and middle school counterparts: median salary increased as enrollment increased. Since the study's inception, median base salaries in districts with enrollments of fewer than 1,000 students have yet to exceed $100,000.

Table 2.10. Beginning teacher base salary (Q18) and district enrollment (Q8)

Enrollment	Min	25%	**Median**	75%	Max	Omitted	N
Fewer than 300	34,000	41,408	**43,000**	48,005	74,500	9	236
300 to 999	33,000	42,661	**46,056**	50,252	132,000	6	561
1,000 to 2,999	35,000	45,000	**50,000**	54,400	140,000	10	610
3,000 to 4,999	36,000	48,000	**53,441**	60,000	130,000	6	220
5,000 to 9,999	40,000	48,195	**52,143**	60,000	115,000	7	177
10,000 to 24,999	35,000	48,760	**52,750**	60,000	80,000	1	109
25,000 to 49,999	40,000	50,150	**55,000**	60,000	80,000	0	29
50,000 to 99,999	53,610	55,403	**58,000**	60,426	61,703	1	5
100,000 or more	48,943	51,039	**53,369**	56,250	60,000	0	4
Total						42	1,951

Findings: As in previous years, where numbers were sufficient, there appeared to be a relationship between district enrollment and beginning teacher salary in this year's results.

Table 2.11. Ratio of median superintendent salary (Q13), beginning teacher salary (Q18), and district enrollment (Q8) 2025–2026

Enrollment	Superintendent Median Salary	Beginning Teacher Median Base Salary	4–year Comparison
Fewer than 300	**117,850**	**43,000**	**2.74:1 (25–26)** 2.73:1 (24–25) 2.74:1 (23–24) 2.65:1 (22–23) 2.60:1 (21–22)
300 to 999	**144,342**	**46,056**	**3.13:1 (25–26)** 3.02:1 (24–25) 3.10:1 (23–24) 3.00:1 (22–23) 3.10:1 (21–22)
1,000 to 2,999	**173,163**	**50,000**	**3.46:1 (25–26)** 3.38:1 (24–25) 3.50:1 (23–24) 3.45:1 (22–23) 3.45:1 (21–22)
3,000 to 4,999	**214,100**	**53,441**	**4.00:1 (25–26)** 3.84:1 (24–25) 4.00:1 (23–24) 3.92:1 (22–23) 3.80:1 (21–22)
5,000 to 9,999	**227,000**	**52,143**	**4.35:1 (25-26)** 4.07:1 (24-25) 4.21:1 (23-24) 4.25:1 (22–23) 4.20:1 (21–22)
10,000 to 24,999	**248,000**	**52,750**	**4.70:1 (25–26)** 4.54:1 (24–25) 4.53:1 (23–24) 4.70:1 (22–23) 5.00:1 (21–22)

Note: Samples sizes were not sufficiently robust for meaning analysis for enrollments above 24,999 students.

Findings: A metric of importance in the private sector is the ratio of the entry level worker compensation to the base salary (without incentives) of the CEO. The four-year calculations for median entry-level base salary of teachers were presented compared with the median base salary of superintendents arrayed by district size. **The average ratio of superintendent salary to starting teacher salary was 3.53:1.** This year's data suggest that the ratios between median superintendent salary and median salary for a starting teacher are consistent with those reported over last five years across enrollment groups and much lower than those found in the for-profit business environment.

For comparison, the AFL-CIO (2025) reported in their *Executive Pay Watch* study that the 2024 ratio of CEO base salary to entry level employee base salary for the 500 largest publicly traded corporations in the United States was 285:1. Source: https://aflcio.org/paywatch

SECTION #3: EVALUATION

Table 3.1. Frequency of performance evaluations (Q49)

Frequency of Evaluation	Frequency	Percent
Annually	1,730	88.40%
Biennially (every 2 years)	27	1.38%
More than once a year	130	6.73%
Never	29	1.49%
Other	25	1.28%
Missing	14	0.72%
Total	1,951	100%

Findings: Approximately 88% of superintendents were evaluated annually, whereas only 2% were evaluated every two years. There were no differences in frequency of evaluation based on gender.

Table 3.2. Does your employment agreement specify the process, measures, and indicators to be used for your formal performance evaluation? (Q45)

	Count	Percent
Yes	877	44.95%
No	1,055	54.05%
Missing	19	1.00%
Total	1,951	100%

Findings: Similar to the previous three years, approximately 45% of superintendents have the process, measures, and indicators used for their formal evaluation specified in their employment agreement. There was no significant difference by gender.

Table 3.3. Is your formal performance evaluation linked to goals, objectives or directions specified in the previous year's performance? (Q46)

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	1,283	65.77%
No	646	33.06%
Missing	22	1.17%
Total	1,951	100%

Findings: There was a significant increase in the percentage of superintendents who have their performance linked to objectives/directions from previous evaluations. Approximately 66% of respondents reported having the provision, compared to 50% last year.