

Alexandria City Public Schools FY20 Compensation Study

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PHASE 1 MARKET COMPARISONS

**Paraprofessionals
School Psychologists
School Principals
Senior Leadership
Transportation**

December 20, 2019

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Alexandria City Public Schools—FY20 Compensation Study
Phase 1 Report
December 20, 2019

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Background and Methodology

Alexandria City Public Schools engaged Segal Waters Consulting to assess the market competitiveness of ACPS’ base pay and total compensation offerings for selected job categories, including:

- Paraprofessionals
- School Psychologists
- School Principals
- Senior Leadership
- Transportation

The 22 job titles included in this analysis are shown in **Table 1**.

**TABLE 1
BENCHMARK JOB TITLES**

Paraprofessionals	Senior Leadership
Paraprofessional I	Chief Academic Officer
Paraprofessional II	Chief of Student Services, Alternative Programs & Equity
Paraprofessional IV	Chief Financial Officer
School Psychologists	Chief HR Officer
School Psychologist	Chief of Accountability
School Principals	Chief Operating Officer
Principal, Elementary School	Chief Technology Officer
Principal, Middle School	Executive Director, Elementary Instruction
Principal, K-8 School	Executive Director, Secondary Instruction
Principal, High School	Transportation
	Bus Driver
	Bus Monitor
	Bus Driver Trainer
	Auto/Equipment Mechanic II
	Parts/Supply Inventory Supervisor

For this analysis, the competitive market includes as all Virginia school divisions that are members of the Washington Area Board of Education (WABE), listed below:

- Arlington Public Schools
- Fairfax County Public Schools
- Falls Church City Public Schools
- Loudoun County Public Schools
- Manassas City Public Schools
- Manassas Park City Schools
- Prince William County Schools

The data used in our analysis reflect Fiscal Year 2020 pay ranges and benefit offerings in effect as of December 2019. We compiled the information from each school division's website and other publicly available reports, as well as documents and data collected through personal contact with the divisions' human resources staff.

To identify and validate appropriate job matches with each school division, we reviewed salary scales, job classification lists, job descriptions, organizational charts, and departmental website information.

This report contains a summary of the study findings. Detailed findings for each job category have been delivered separately.

Findings

Base Pay

Error! Reference source not found. **Table 2** on the next page shows ACPS' base pay market position in two ways:

A **Market Ratio**, which reflects ACPS' salary rate as a percent of the market average. Ratios highlighted in red indicate where Alexandria is at least five percent below the market average (that is, a ratio of 95% or less).

A **Market Rank**, which reflects ACPS' rank among the school divisions for base pay. Those highlighted in red indicate where Alexandria is in the bottom half of the school divisions (that is, ranked below the median salary).

Overall, we found that the following 13 job titles have below-market salary rates:

- Paraprofessional IV (LPN)
- Principal, Elementary School
- Principal, Middle School
- Chief Academic Officer
- Chief of Student Services
- Chief Financial Officer
- Chief Operating Officer
- Executive Director, Elementary Instruction
- Executive Director, Secondary Instruction
- Bus Driver
- Bus Driver Trainer
- Auto/Equipment Mechanic II
- Parts/Supply Inventory Supervisor

TABLE 2
BASE PAY COMPARISONS
PARAPROFESSIONALS

Job Title	Pay Range Minimum		ACPS Market Ratio	ACPS Market Rank
	ACPS	Market Average		
Paraprofessional I	\$16.92	\$16.43	103%	3 of 8
Paraprofessional II	\$17.42	\$16.96	103%	2 of 8
Paraprofessional IV (LPN)	\$19.04	\$23.62	81%	3 of 3

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Job Title	Pay Range Midpoint		ACPS Market Ratio	ACPS Market Rank
	ACPS	Market Average		
School Psychologist (10-month)	\$81,750	\$79,015	103%	3 of 8

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Job Title	Pay Range Midpoint		ACPS Market Ratio	ACPS Market Rank
	ACPS	Market Average		
Principal, Elementary	\$119,807	\$127,795	94%	6 of 8
Principal, K-8	\$119,807	Insufficient market data		
Principal, Middle School	\$125,795	\$132,982	95%	7 of 8
Principal, High School	\$161,250	\$144,013	112%	2 of 8

Figures in red are at least 95% below the market average or are ranked in the bottom half of all school divisions

TABLE 2 *continued*
BASE PAY COMPARISONS

SENIOR LEADERSHIP

Job Title	Pay Range Midpoint		ACPS Market Ratio	ACPS Market Rank
	ACPS	Market Average		
Chief Academic Officer	\$161,250	\$174,007	93%	6 of 8
Chief of Student Services	\$161,250	\$171,831	94%	4 of 6
Chief Financial Officer	\$161,250	\$171,609	94%	6 of 8
Chief HR Officer	\$161,250	\$162,898	99%	4 of 8
Chief of Accountability	\$161,250	Insufficient market data		
Chief Operating Officer	\$161,250	\$172,917	93%	5 of 7
Chief Technology Officer	\$161,250	\$162,247	99%	4 of 8
Executive Director, Elementary Instruction	\$130,129	\$137,334	95%	4 of 7
Executive Director, Secondary Instruction	\$130,129	\$137,334	95%	4 of 7

TRANSPORTATION

Job Title	Pay Range Minimum		ACPS Market Ratio	ACPS Market Rank
	ACPS	Market Average		
Bus Driver	\$18.48	\$19.38	95%	7 of 8
Bus Monitor	\$15.48	\$14.75	105%	3 of 8
Bus Driver Trainer	\$19.61	\$22.00	89%	7 of 8
Auto/Equipment Mechanic II	\$20.81	\$22.70	92%	7 of 7
Parts/Supply Inventory Supervisor	\$20.81	\$22.36	93%	5 of 6

Figures in red are at least 95% below the market average or are ranked in the bottom half of all school divisions

Health Benefits

As part of total compensation, we compiled information on the current cost and cost sharing arrangements for medical, dental, and vision plans offered to full-time employees at each of the comparator school divisions.

To estimate each school division’s per-employee cost for these benefits, we weighted the cost for each plan by ACPS’ current enrollment distribution among the coverage tiers (53% employee-only coverage, 20% employee-plus-one coverage, and 27% family).

Table 3 shows the estimated average monthly employer cost. Since some school divisions maintain different cost sharing arrangements by employee group, we segmented the information into two categories: Administrators and Support Staff. Additional details can be found in the Health Benefits section of the individual reports for each employee group.

In general, we found that ACPS’ costs for PPO coverage are somewhat higher than the market average, about \$200 per person per month higher for administrators and about \$270 per person per month higher for support staff. For HMO coverage, however, ACPS’ costs are somewhat lower for administrators and slightly higher for support staff.

TABLE 3
ESTIMATED WEIGHTED AVERAGE¹
EMPLOYER MONTHLY COST FOR
HEALTH-RELATED BENEFITS

	ACPS	Market Average	Dollar Difference
Administrators			
PPO, Dental, and Vision	\$1,130	\$934	\$196
HMO, Dental, and Vision	\$705	\$755	(\$50)
Support Staff			
PPO, Dental, and Vision	\$1,267	\$999	\$268
HMO, Dental, and Vision	\$922	\$862	\$60

It is important to note that health plan costs can vary for many reasons, including plan design (deductibles, co-insurance rates, etc.), coverage limits and exclusions, network size and provider rates/negotiated discounts, plan size (number of enrollees), plan experience, administration expenses, and funding arrangement (self-funded or insured), as well as other factors. In other words, higher costs do not necessarily reflect a “richer” benefit and lower costs do not necessarily reflect a “lower” benefit.

¹ Estimated weighted averages are based on ACPS’ enrollment distribution as of 10/1/2019.

Retirement Plan Contributions

We also collected information on each school division's contributions to retirement plans, including both primary and supplemental plans.

All of these school districts participate in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS), which has a consistent 2019 contribution rate of 15.68% for all occupational categories in this study except transportation jobs. For transportation employees in VRS, employer contribution rates vary by employer and are determined actuarially by the System administrator¹.

In addition, three of the comparator school divisions also offer supplemental retirement savings plans (Arlington, Fairfax County, and Prince William).

Table 4 shows the 2019 total employer contribution rate including contributions to both VRS and the maximum matching contribution to any supplemental plans. Additional details can be found in the Retirement Benefits section of the individual reports for each employee group.

**TABLE 4
EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTION RATES
TO RETIREMENT PLANS IN 2019**

Employee Group	ACPS	Market Average	Difference
All Groups Except Transportation	15.68%	16.94%	-1.26 percentage points
Transportation Employees	1.21%	7.90%	-6.69 percentage points

It is important to note that, despite any differences in current contribution rates, most employees in these school divisions participate in the same retirement plan (VRS) and are therefore eligible for the same retirement benefits as their counterparts in other Virginia school divisions.

¹ Transportation employees in Fairfax County PS are covered by the Fairfax County Employees Retirement System (FCERS) instead of VRS.

Total Compensation

Similar to the base pay comparisons, we calculated a market ratio and market rank for each job title's total compensation (including base pay and employer costs for health and retirement benefits), as shown in **Table 5** on the next page.

The **Market Ratio** reflects ACPS' total compensation costs as a percent of the market average. The **Market Rank** reflects ACPS' rank among all surveyed school divisions for total compensation.

Overall, we found that most jobs have a similar market position for both base pay and total compensation, as summarized below.

Job Title	Base Pay Market Position		Total Compensation Market Position	
	ACPS Market Ratio	ACPS Market Rank	ACPS Market Ratio	ACPS Market Rank
Paraprofessional I	103%	3 of 8	108%	1 of 8
Paraprofessional II	103%	2 of 8	107%	2 of 8
Paraprofessional IV	81%	3 of 3	86%	3 of 3
School Psychologist	103%	3 of 8	104%	2 of 8
Principal, Elementary	94%	6 of 8	95%	6 of 8
Principal, Middle School	95%	7 of 8	95%	7 of 8
Principal, High School	112%	2 of 8	111%	2 of 8
Chief Academic Officer	93%	6 of 8	93%	5 of 8
Chief of Student Services	94%	4 of 6	94%	4 of 6
Chief Financial Officer	94%	6 of 8	94%	4 of 8
Chief HR Officer	99%	4 of 8	99%	4 of 8
Chief Operating Officer	93%	5 of 7	93%	4 of 7
Chief Technology Officer	99%	4 of 8	99%	4 of 8
Executive Director, Elementary	95%	4 of 7	95%	4 of 7
Executive Director, Secondary	95%	4 of 7	95%	4 of 7
Bus Driver	95%	7 of 8	98%	4 of 8
Bus Monitor	105%	3 of 8	106%	3 of 8
Bus Driver Trainer	89%	7 of 8	92%	7 of 8
Auto/Equipment Mechanic II	92%	7 of 7	92%	6 of 7
Parts/Supply Inventory Supervisor	93%	5 of 6	92%	5 of 6

Figures in red are at least 95% below the market average or are ranked in the bottom half of all school divisions

TABLE 5
TOTAL COMPENSATION COMPARISONS
PARAPROFESSIONALS

Job Title	Pay Range Minimum and Benefits Costs		ACPS Market Ratio	ACPS Market Rank
	ACPS	Market Average		
Paraprofessional I	\$26.88	\$24.98	108%	1 of 8
Paraprofessional II	\$27.46	\$25.60	107%	2 of 8
Paraprofessional IV (LPN)	\$29.33	\$34.28	86%	3 of 3

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Job Title	Pay Range Midpoint and Benefits Costs		ACPS Market Ratio	ACPS Market Rank
	ACPS	Market Average		
School Psychologist (10-month)	\$108,133	\$103,625	104%	2 of 8

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Job Title	Pay Range Midpoint and Benefits Costs		ACPS Market Ratio	ACPS Market Rank
	ACPS	Market Average		
Principal, Elementary	\$152,158	\$160,687	95%	6 of 8
Principal, K-8	\$152,158	Insufficient market data		
Principal, Middle School	\$132,982	\$166,766	95%	7 of 8
Principal, High School	\$200,099	\$179,672	111%	2 of 8

Figures in red are at least 95% below the market average or are ranked in the bottom half of all school divisions

TABLE 5 *continued*
TOTAL COMPENSATION COMPARISONS

SENIOR LEADERSHIP

Job Title	Pay Range Midpoint and Benefits Costs		ACPS Market Ratio	ACPS Market Rank
	ACPS	Market Average		
Chief Academic Officer	\$200,099	\$214,852	93%	5 of 8
Chief of Student Services	\$200,099	\$213,808	94%	4 of 6
Chief Financial Officer	\$200,099	\$212,079	94%	4 of 8
Chief HR Officer	\$200,099	\$202,001	99%	4 of 8
Chief of Accountability	\$200,099	Insufficient market data		
Chief Operating Officer	\$200,099	\$214,441	93%	4 of 7
Chief Technology Officer	\$200,099	\$201,248	99%	4 of 8
Executive Director, Elementary Instruction	\$164,098	\$172,601	95%	4 of 7
Executive Director, Secondary Instruction	\$164,098	\$172,601	95%	4 of 7

TRANSPORTATION

Job Title	Pay Range Minimum and Benefits Costs		ACPS Market Ratio	ACPS Market Rank
	ACPS	Market Average		
Bus Driver	\$26.01	\$26.65	98%	4 of 8
Bus Monitor	\$22.98	\$21.72	106%	3 of 8
Bus Driver Trainer	\$27.16	\$29.63	92%	7 of 8
Auto/Equipment Mechanic II	\$28.37	\$30.81	92%	6 of 7
Parts/Supply Inventory Supervisor	\$28.37	\$30.89	92%	5 of 6

Figures in red are at least 95% below the market average or are ranked in the bottom half of all school divisions