

SALARY STUDY COMMITTEE REPORT

AIKEN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT JANUARY 19, 2016



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ms. Rosemary English, Board Chair

Mr. Levi Green, Board Vice Chair

Mr. Keith Liner, Board Member

Mr. Wesley Hightower, Board Member

Dr. Sean Alford, Superintendent

Ms. Joy Shealy, Executive Director for Middle Schools

Ms. Tomiko Smalls, Human Resources Director

Mr. Carl White, Principal

Ms. Jenny Floth, Accounting Systems Manager

Mr. Tray Traxler, Comptroller

BACKGROUND

- District contracted with Student-Centered Education Consulting Group, LLC (SCECG) to conduct a salary study
 - District desired an independent study rather than a staff-led one to ensure unbiased results
- Study conducted during 2014-2015 school year
- Results presented by SCECG to the Board on May 12, 2015
 - Recommendations; 15 total
 - Salary comparisons

STARTING POINT

- The Board created the salary study committee to evaluate the results and consider recommendations.
- First meeting held August 2015
 - Near 5 – 6 month process
- Developed scope and purpose
- SCECG recommendations served as a “baseline.”
 - Evaluated recommendations
 - Some more significant than others.
 - All were considered and discussed.
 - Most will be implemented in some form, but not all.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

In order to meet the needs of our students and our community, and to provide the best education possible, the District wishes to retain and recruit highly qualified teachers and competent support staff.

The purpose of the Salary Study Subcommittee is to revise current salary schedules and create a new methodology for assigning service credit, based on results of the salary study and other analysis.

The revised salary schedules will be simple to use and understand and will offer competitive compensation that is desirable to current and prospective employees.

SCECG RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Convert all salary scales to range from 0 to 25 steps (26 steps total).
 - Establish separate salary schedules for each position and convert current overlapping scales. Each position will have a scale.
 - Establish a standard step increase for all positions in the district.
 - Clean, easy-to-understand scales are needed.

SCECG RECOMMENDATIONS

2. For new hires, develop a standard method of giving service credit for work in other districts or work outside of education.
3. Teacher salary scales at all certificate levels are competitive, exceeding the average of the study districts.
4. Administrative salaries need to be increased to be competitive. Most are in the mid to lower 80% of the same positions in the study districts.

SCECG RECOMMENDATIONS

5. The Comptroller position is averaged in with the Associate Superintendent's scale. It is recommended that the position be changed to Chief Financial Officer and placed at the Deputy Superintendent's level.
6. Principal and Assistant Principal scales need to be addressed and are not competitive.
7. Principals' salaries should be converted to one scale. The size of the school should be addressed by adding assistant principals or giving a supplement for larger schools.

SCECG RECOMMENDATIONS

8. Nurses, therapists, and other professional support personnel should be paid on the teachers' scale.
9. Counselors should be paid on teachers' scale and removed from the administrative schedules. Head counselors will have additional days added to their contracts, as needed.
10. Teacher aides, special education aides, and lab supervisors should be paid on the same aide schedule.

SCECG RECOMMENDATIONS

11. Maintenance jobs should have three levels for pay - worker, skilled, and highly skilled - with a career path established so that with more education and experience, a person can become a supervisor at the highest skill level.

12. Wages paid for School Food Service (SFS) workers need to be increased.

13. Accounting specialists need to have wages increased. These specialists are at 86% of the average paid in the study districts and are mission critical people.

SCECG RECOMMENDATIONS

14. Administrative support positions should be changed to a different structure with corresponding scales. Establish a career path starting at a school clerk which could end in the district office with more experience and training.
15. Bus drivers are at 94% of the study districts. To ensure that the district keeps an ample supply of drivers, an increase in that scale is recommended.

COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS

- There is a lack of consistency from scale-to-scale and many times within a single scale.
 - Teacher and NJROTC scales are 23 steps.
 - Classified/Hourly scales are 17 steps.
 - Administrative/Salary scales are 8 steps.
 - Step increments (%) vary.
- Existing scales may be confusing to first-time or infrequent users.

COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS

- Overlapping scales add difficulty if desiring to adjust the salary range for a select position.
- Service credit has been allowed only for critical need positions, with specific stipulations and limitations. Implementing new methodology for applying service credit would incentivize new hires.
 - District would need to be mindful of current employees, if service credit is allowed for new hires.
 - Other districts' formulas for service credit were studied.

COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS

- When ranking teachers' salaries, Aiken is generally top six highest in the State among 81 districts, through step 22.
 - Some districts' scales extend beyond step 22.
- Aiken's salary ranges for administrators were considerably lower than the study districts.
- Starting pay for assistant principals oftentimes is not competitive enough to attract current teachers to the position.

COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS

- Aiken's scales would become more competitive and/or attractive for all positions, with an increase in the number of steps within a pay scale and with the application of service credit.
- Hourly rates and salaries for many positions are competitive with counterparts.
- Segregating pay scales for principals by level seems warranted, while scales based on student enrollment may not be equitable.

COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS

- There are currently 50 pay scales in use. Each pay scale may involve a number of, many-times unrelated, positions. This number needs to be reduced for simplification and efficiency.
 - Like jobs should be grouped to reduce the number of pay scales.
 - There are currently 37 maintenance positions paid over 15 pay scales. Those can be grouped by skill level.

COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS

- There are inconsistencies with job titles. This often leads to confusion for those not familiar with the current organization chart.
- The Board has worked to address the competitiveness of some positions in recent years, even prior to the salary study.
 - Assistant principal, bus driver and food service manager salaries were increased in past budget cycles.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – STEPS

SCECG 1

- The Committee recommends the adoption of 25 step scales, with the exception of the Chief scale which will span 15 steps.
- All scales would start at step 0.

S C A L E	Current # of Steps	Increase in # of Steps
Teacher/NJROTC	23	2
Classified/Hourly	17	8
Administrative/Salaried	8	17
Assistant Principal	8	17

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – STEPS

SCECG 1

- The Committee recommends that step increments within a scale be consistent.

SCALE / POSITIONS	Proposed Step Increments
Teacher*/NJROTC*	2.00%
Classified/Hourly positions	2.00%
Salaried – Directors, Principals, Assistant Principals, Coordinators, Supervisors, Nurses and Other Professional Staff	1.50%
Salaried – Executive Director , Chief Officer	1.25%
*for additional steps	

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – SCALES

SCECG 10, 11, 12, 14

- In order to reduce the number of pay tables, similar positions (based on skill level, by pay or both) were grouped.

PAY SCALES – HOURLY POSITIONS		
Support I	Support VI	Administrative Assistant to the Board & Superintendent
Support II	Bus Driver	
Support III	Aide	Foreman & Maintenance Managers
Support IV	SFS Manager	
Support V	Clerk/Office Staff	

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – SCALES

SCECG 5, 6, 7, 13

- Continued -

PAY SCALES – SALARY POSITIONS		
Professional I	Assistant Principal – 200	High Principal
Professional II	Assistant Principal – 210	Director I
Nurse	Assistant Principal – 220	Director II
Supervisor	Elementary Principal	Executive Director
Coordinator	Middle Principal	Chief Officer

- The salary schedule will be accompanied by a “key” to link a position to any scale that is non-specific by title.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – SCALES

SCECG 8, 12, 15

- The total number of scales would be reduced by 40%, with the proposed scales from 50 to 29 scales (including the teacher and NJROTC scales).
- Contrary to SCECG's recommendation to pay the positions from the teachers scale, the Committee developed a salary scale for nurses and therapists (professional II scale).
- The starting pay for bus drivers (2.0%), food service managers (2.0%), and assistant principals (2.5%) was increased in order to make pay more competitive and attractive.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – CREDIT

SCECG 2

- The Committee proposes applying service credit for all new hires.
- Service credit will determined by formula and the factors shown below.

P O S I T I O N S	Factor for “Like” Experience	Factor for “Similar” Experience
Executive Director	1.0	0.50
Principals	1.0	0.25
Assistant Principals	1.0	0.25
Other Salary Positions (non-teacher)	1.0	0.25
Classified/Hourly Positions	1.0	0.25

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – CREDIT

SCECG 2

- Doctorate and Master + 30 degrees will be taken into consideration when determining service credit for non-teachers. In doing so, the District will eliminate the separate supplements currently paid to non-teacher employees with Doctorate and Masters + 30 degrees.
- Service credit calculations will also factor National Board Certified (NBC) teacher supplements for anyone receiving a NBC supplement immediately before hire, when the supplement is lost as result of the hire. [A typical scenario would have a classroom teacher becoming an assistant principal.]

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – CREDIT

SCECG 2

- Service credit for positions paid from the Support I, Support II, and Support III pay scales is recommended to be capped at Step 2 of the respective pay scale.
- Service credit for any position paid from one of the remaining hourly pay scales is recommended to be capped at Step 4 of the respective pay scale.
- Chief Officers would not receive service credit.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – CREDIT

SCECG 4

- To address the competitiveness of administrative salaries, the committee recommends that retroactive service credit be applied to current employees in the following positions:
 - Executive Director
 - Principal (all levels)
 - Assistant Principals (all contract lengths)
 - Director I and Director II
- The estimated cost of retroactive service credit for the above positions plus the adoption of the chief scale is approximately \$394,000.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – OTHER

SCECG 1, 3

- Because of the significant cost associated with adding two steps to the teachers scale and the NJROTC scale at one time, the Committee recommends phasing in the teacher steps over two years.
 - Adding step 23 (the 24th step of a 0 – 23 scale) in year 1
 - Adding step 24 (the 25th step of a 0 – 24 scale) in year 2
- The estimated cost for adding only one step in year 1 of the implementation is approximately \$507,000.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – OTHER

SCECG 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

- During its work, the Committee remained mindful that the frozen teacher step from the 2010-2011 school year had not yet been restored. The estimated cost to restore that step and move affected teachers up the teacher scale by one additional step is an estimated \$836,000.
- The total estimated costs of the retroactive service credit, adopting the chief officer scale, adding one step to the teacher and NJROTC scales for 2016-2017, and restoration of the frozen step is approximately \$1,737,000.
 - This figure does not include the cost of the “normal” step increase for teachers and non-teachers.

SUMMARY

- Because of on-going budget preparations and the significant “behind-the-scenes” work associated with the adoption and implementation of new salary scales, the Committee asks that the Board approve the proposed 25 step scales for use in 2016-2017.
 - Adoption of the new scale alone does not guarantee any pay increases.
 - If the Board did not approve retroactive service pay or a step increase, employees would be placed at the steps comparable to current pay.
 - Retroactive service pay and step increases will be considered during the budget process.

SUMMARY

- The Committee recommends that step increases be handled in the same manner for all employees. In other words, non-teachers should receive a step increase if teachers receive a step increase.
- Because service credit calculations will be new, the Committee recommends periodic reviews to ensure that calculations are producing the desired results. Other aspects of the salary study should also be reviewed periodically.

SUMMARY

- If retroactive service credit is not approved for 2016-2017 for any of the named positions (or none of them), the Committee recommends that service credit not apply for new hires into that position until retroactive service credit applies.
- Example: If retroactive service credit for principals is not approved for 2016-2017, a new principal hire would start at step 0. If retroactive service credit for principals is approved for 2017-2018, the new principal hire from 2016-2017 would benefit at that time (along with other principals). Any other principal hires in 2017-2018 or thereafter would receive service credit.

SUMMARY

- In future years, the Committee recommends that the District explore increasing the teacher scale beyond 25 steps to accommodate teachers who reach the top step well in advance of their retirement date.
- While some positions could be affected immediately as result of retroactive service credit, the Committee believes that all positions benefit long-term as a result of the increased number of steps and the recommended consistent handling of step increases in the budget process.

SUMMARY

- As alluded to in slides 27, 29, 31, and others, some of the Committee's recommendations may require a phase-in. Salary adjustments for retroactive service credit, additional steps on the teachers scale, and the frozen step would be contingent on the budget process and may require implementation over multiple years.
- The Committee recommends that retroactive service credit for those employees impacted by the lack of step increases from 2008-2009 through 2013-2014 be considered during future budget cycles.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS?
