

## Administrative salaries top school district payrolls

Delaware School Superintendent Salaries					
Kent County	# of students	Superintendent	Ass't Super.	Ass't Super. II	Total Expense
Cassidy Rodney School District	7,143	\$143,891	\$130,404	\$128,398	\$402,693
Milford School District	4,370	\$161,448	\$117,506		\$278,954
Polytach School District	1,147	\$152,946	\$132,781		\$285,627
Capital School District	6,179	\$147,854	\$114,090		\$261,944
Smeyna School District	4,460	\$133,280	\$116,458		\$249,738
Lake Forest School District	3,930	\$156,769			\$156,769
Campus Community School	893	\$82,564			\$82,564
New Castle County	# of students	Superintendent	Ass't Super.	Ass't Super. II	
Colonial School District	10,430	\$185,000	\$148,000	\$156,000	\$489,000
Red Clay Consolidated School District	15,721	\$189,721	\$156,043	\$129,843	\$475,757
Christina School District	17,280	\$193,720	\$117,844	\$119,016	\$399,397
Brandywine School District	18,113	\$187,876	\$132,183		\$299,268
New Castle County Voc-Ed School District	4,109	\$152,838	\$134,275		\$287,113
Appoquinimink School District	8,193	\$162,878			\$162,878
Sussex County	# of students	Superintendent	Ass't Super.		
Cape Henlopen School District	4,490	\$157,306	\$121,719		\$279,025
Indian River School District	8,388	\$138,720	\$124,748		\$263,468
Woodbridge School District	2,512	\$158,404	\$101,676		\$260,080
Seaboard School District	3,367	\$149,888			\$149,888
Sussex County Voc Tech School District	1,249	\$136,779			\$136,779
Laurel School District	2,588	\$116,371			\$116,371
Delmar School District	1,140	\$113,315			\$113,315

Governor's Salary: \$132,500

Source: Committee General's Office, Dept. of Education

By Don Stein graph

**Superintendent and assistant superintendent salaries top district salaries. Downstate positions compare favorably to upstate salaries that have larger student populations and more schools.**

By Melissa Steele, Staff Writer

Dover Post

Fri Aug 22, 2008, 11:16 AM EDT

Dover, Del. -

Last spring's contentious state budget session left one thing for certain — the state is not bringing in the kind of revenue it had over the past two decades. The years of monetary surpluses have made way for revenue deficits and, by all financial indicators, the upcoming fiscal year is sure to be another tight one.

The state Department of Education came under scrutiny early on in the budget process, with some questioning the amount of money administrators are paid at the district level.

While legislators raised the possibility of cutting salaries and restructuring government, in the end little was accomplished along those lines.

### Administrative salaries

"There wasn't one administrative position considered, not one single cut," said Sen. Colin R.J. Bonini, R-Dover South. "The problem is all the cuts were going to go on the teachers ... a lot of fear was being spread. I don't think it's fair for the entire thing to fall on the teachers."

The reason only teacher positions were considered for cuts was because administrators' contracts go to December, essentially exempting them from any reductions.

A bill sponsored by Bonini would have given school boards the ability to make cuts across the board in tight budget situations regardless of when a contract expires. Though it died in committee,

he plans to introduce it again next legislative session.

"I think people should be well compensated but there are layers and layers of administrative costs," Bonini said.

Rep. Robert Walls, D-Milford, said he had many phone calls last session about potential teacher lay-offs. Other constituents were critical of administrative salaries in the school districts.

"We're going to have a couple of rough years, the way I see it," Walls said. "We may have some tough decisions to make — some cuts salary-wise and some restructuring."

At \$161,448, the Milford School District has the highest paid superintendent in the county and sixth highest in the state. The district has five schools and 4,070 students.

An assistant superintendent — listed as a chief financial officer on the district webpage — makes \$117,506, according to figures provided by the controller general's office.

Walls declined to say whether he thought they were too high or not.

"I would rather see the figures before I make a comment," he said.

Milford School Board President Marvin Schellhouse and Vice President Deborah O'Neill did not return phone calls requesting comment.

### **District school boards approve local salaries**

Ultimately, the voter-elected school board controls a school district's budget and its salaries.

In the Caesar Rodney School District, with 7,143 students enrolled, the superintendent receives \$143,651 with two assistants making \$130,404 and \$128,398, a total of \$402,453, the largest combined package in the county and third largest in the state.

Only upstate school districts Colonial at \$489,000 and Red Clay at \$455,757 exceed CR's totals. Their student populations are 10,430 and 15,721, respectively.

Caesar Rodney School Board President Dave Henderson said he doesn't think the salaries are too high, especially when district taxpayers are paying only approximately 20% of the salary. The state picks up the rest of the tab.

The district, however, recently decided to renew administrative contracts for one-year instead of three in the event cuts are needed, he said.

"We don't want to lose any administrative position," Henderson said. "However, with budget cuts they way they are and if we have to do away with a position, we wouldn't renew it."

Other administrative positions have been combined for cost savings, such as one of the assistant superintendents and director of curriculum, he said.

In the Polytech School District — made up of one high school with a student population of 1,147 — the superintendent tops the administrative salaries at \$152,946 and has an assistant making \$112,751.

Despite being only one school, Polytech School Board President James Collins said he believes the administrators earn their pay.

“Whatever the salaries are, we feel justified in that we have a quality program at Polytech,” he said. “We try to be competitive with the schools in our county.”

The Polytech superintendent still has the same responsibilities as those in charge of other, larger school districts and there’s the possibility the district may someday grow, he said.

If, however, the state addresses administrative salaries in the future, Collins said they’ll consider it then.

“Whatever mandates come down, we’re obligated to follow them,” he said.

Email Melissa Steele at [melissa.steele@doverpost.com](mailto:melissa.steele@doverpost.com)