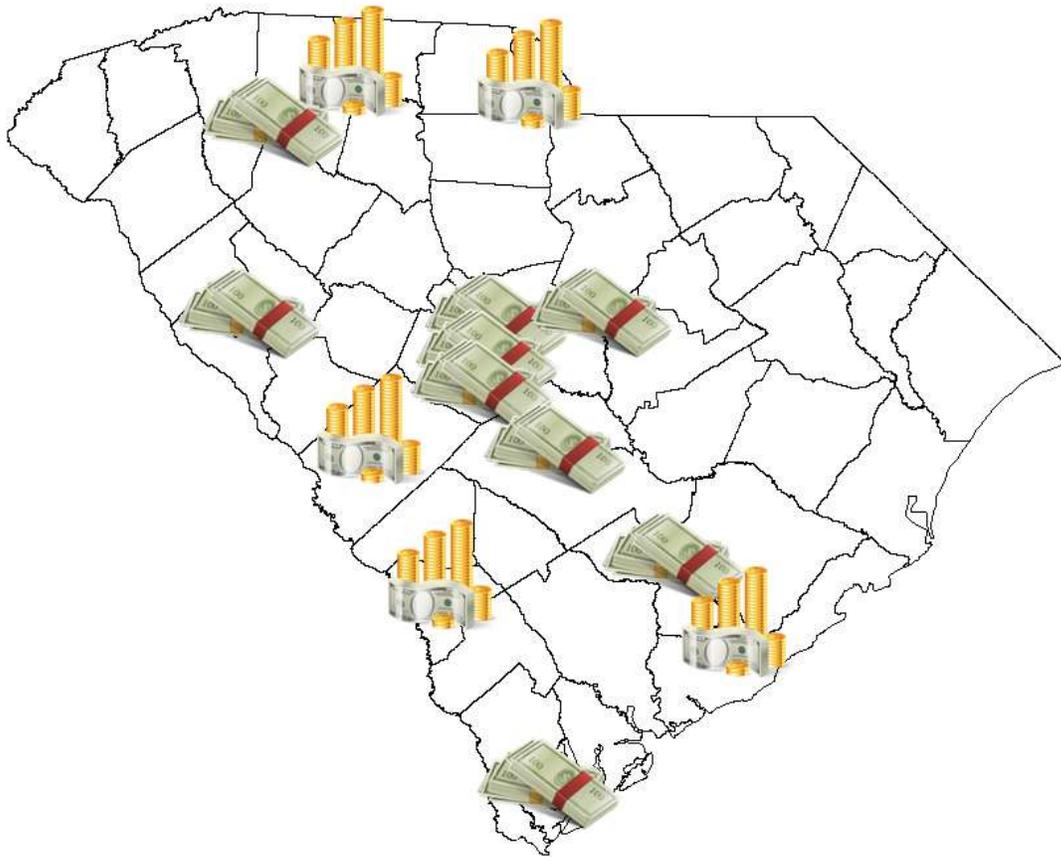


South Carolina's

Top Ten
Overpaid

Non-teaching "Educators"



Background: Public schools in South Carolina are funded at an average of \$11,700 per student. State officials estimate that only 44 cents per educational dollar actually reaches the classroom in South Carolina. While South Carolina’s classroom teachers earned an average salary of **\$47,000** in 2011, many of their state and district leaders took home compensation packages of four to five times that value.

This “top ten” list is based on a review of the contracts and amendments of all public school district superintendents in South Carolina, as well as the publically available tax information for nonprofit organizations claiming to represent public education in South Carolina. Superintendents’ contracts were obtained through Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. The “winners” were not selected for taking home the largest compensation packages, but because their salaries and benefits were most disproportionate to their responsibilities and accomplishments or furthest from the income level of the parents and teachers they serve.



#10. **Molly Spearman**, Executive Director of the School Administrators Association (SCASA)

Estimated Compensation: **\$127,350+**

The 2009 tax filing for SCASA details a base salary of \$117,000 for Spearman as well as \$11,000 in “other compensation.” While SCASA claims it is not a public body –and therefore not subject to FOIA laws– staff members including Spearman enjoy participation in South Carolina’s State Retirement System on par with full time public employees. The organization collected over \$1.2 million in government contracts and taxpayer reimbursed dues and fees for 2009. The same year SCASA reported nearly \$70,000 in “lobbying and political expenditures” to the IRS.

9. **Joseph Pye**, Superintendent of Dorchester School District Two

Base Salary: **\$137,000**

Pye’s contract details a number of reimbursements and deferments that minimize his income tax exposure.

These include reimbursements for personal memberships in multiple social clubs and professional associations; a \$12,000 per year general expense account; and over \$15,000 in annual contributions to retirement and deferred compensation plans. Pye and his



family also enjoy full medical and dental coverage as well as special additional provisions for extra cancer insurance coverage. In the event of a disability, Pye would collect 75% of his salary and if he is unilaterally terminated at any point, then he remains entitled to the balance of his salary and benefits for the year. Pye's contract further specifies automatic pay hikes that track rises in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) when CPI rises faster than the growth in the base salaries of teachers.. He enjoys sixty-five days worth of vacation and accumulated annual leave each year.

Dorchester District Two enrolls 22,000 students and has been rated "Average" by the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) for four of the last five school years. Thirty percent of the School District's entering high school freshmen fail to graduate within four school years.



#8. **Roger Smith**, Executive Director of the South Carolina Education Association (SCEA)

Estimated Compensation: **\$140,000+**

The SCEA is the National Education Association (NEA) affiliate for South Carolina. Roger Smith replaced Aaron Wallace as SCEA Director in 2010, when the SCEA was placed under NEA trusteeship. The reorganization followed years of membership loss and management turnover. The most recent publically available tax filing for the SCEA indicates Smith's predecessor Wallace was salaried at \$145,252 in 2009. While most state affiliates work to raise money for the national NEA organization, the SCEA is a net recipient of funds from that union, receiving \$4.8 million from 2005 to 2010. As Director of the SCEA, Smith oversees approximately \$100,000 per year in lobbying and political expenditures in South Carolina.

#7. **Darrell Johnson**, Superintendent of Greenwood School District Fifty

Base Salary: **\$148,000**

Johnson enjoys a further \$17,800 in annual contributions to his annuity, as well as a term life insurance policy valued at \$100,000. He collects a minimum of \$1,000 per month in "reimbursements" for travel within the districts and is entitled to an annual medical exam each year. Johnson's family is provided comprehensive medical insurance, including dental coverage, and his initial contract included six months of payments for housing and relocation expenses.

The median family income in Greenwood County is \$50,000. District Fifty enrolls 8,700 students. District Fifty average



SAT scores in 2011 were 99 points below the U.S. average. The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) reports that 20% of public high school students in District Fifty fail to graduate on time.



#6. **Cynthia Wilson**, Superintendent of Orangeburg Consolidated School District Five

Base Salary: **\$165,000**

Wilson's contract specifies \$165,000 as a guaranteed minimum compensation, protecting her from budget cuts impacting other district employees. She is entitled to a minimum annuity contribution of \$8,000 per year, specified to rise to \$13,000 next year, and increasing each year thereafter based on the School Board's discretion. The District provides Wilson a mobile phone, a laptop computer, a home fax machine, a home telephone line, and a life insurance policy of \$165,000. She is also issued reimbursement for disability insurance premiums, with benefits valued at \$109,000 annually. Wilson's contract not only included payments for moving expenses to cover her relocation from Texas to South Carolina, it also provided her with the "transition" expenses of maintaining two residences for thirty days, including regular travel back and forth

between the two states.

The median family income in Orangeburg County is \$40,000. Consolidated District Five enrolls 6,300 students. The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) rated the district "Below Average" or D" for absolute student performance and "At-Risk/Unsatisfactory" or "F" for year-to-year growth in student performance.

#5. **Stephen Hefner**, Superintendent of Lexington/Richland School District Five

Base Salary: **\$186,000**

The District's contract with Hefner specifies more than a month in sick and leave days each year as well as a term life insurance policy of \$100,000. Hefner enjoys nearly an additional \$19,000 a year in direct contributions to his annuity, which rises in proportion to his base salary. He has both a district provided mobile phone and a minimum monthly "reimbursement" of \$850 for travel within the District. Hefner is also entitled to an annual physical exam and a minimum of three months pay if the School Board unilaterally terminates his employment.



Lexington/Richland School District Five, commonly cited as among the best in South Carolina, earned an average 2011 SAT scores 250 points below

the highest achieving public school district in neighboring North Carolina, where the participation rate was higher.



#4. **Rallie Liston**, Superintendent of Spartanburg School District Four

Base Salary: **\$191,000**

In addition to reimbursements for travel and professional membership dues, Liston is reimbursed for membership in a civic club of his choosing. He also enjoys his choice of tax-sheltered annuities and an annual bonus of up to \$6,000 based on student performance on standardized tests. His contract is automatically renewed if the school board does not evaluate his performance each year (a process that spur additional raises) and it specifically guarantees he will never suffer a year-to-year pay cut. Liston's initial contract in 2008 specified a further \$21,000 per year in an "annuity/housing allowance."

The median family income in Spartanburg County is \$53,000. District Four enrolls just 2,700 students. District Four average SAT scores in 2011 were 84 points below the U.S. average. The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) reports that 24% of public high school students in District Four fail to graduate on time.

#3. **Valerie Truesdale**, Superintendent of Beaufort County School District

Base Salary: **\$206,000**

Truesdale's base salary is a guaranteed minimum, protected from across the board cuts to district compensation levels, but also guaranteed to a percentage increase each year that tracks increases (if any) to the base salaries of teachers in the district. Her contract further specifies twenty vacation or leave days each year, sixty of which can be carried over. She enjoys a \$100,000 term life insurance policy, a mobile phone, a laptop computer, and both fax and telephone lines at her home. She is afforded \$850 each month for automobile transportation within the District and a complete annual physical exam every year. If the board chooses to unilaterally discharge the Superintendent, she remains entitled to either six months' salary or the balance due on the contract



The Beaufort County District earns an "Average" performance rating from the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) and a "Below Average" rating for year-to-year progress. Thirty nine percent of entering freshmen fail to graduate within four school years. The County's median family income is \$66,000 and the District enrolls 19,000 students.



#2. **Katie Brochu**, Superintendent of Richland School District Two

Base Salary: **\$215,000**

Brochu's salary level rises automatically each year, tracking the percentage increases for certified District employees. She was provided \$10,000 in reimbursements for her 300-mile relocation from Dayton, Georgia to Richland County, South Carolina. Her contract details 15 days of annual leave (plus recognized holidays), as well as 30 days per year in sick leave, a number that the board can double upon request. Brochu enjoys a monthly allowance of \$850 for transportation within the district and over \$18,000 per year in contributions to an annuity plan. Additionally Brochu is also specified as a participant in the South Carolina State Retirement System. If the board chooses to unilaterally discharge the Superintendent, she

remains entitled to either six months' salary or the balance due on the contract. In 2016 (her 6th year) she will receive a one-time "longevity" bonus of \$25,000.

Richland County School District Two enrolls 25,000 students. The County's median family income is \$62,000. In 2011, the District's average SAT score was 11 points behind the US average and 300 points below the best public school district in North Carolina. The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) reports that over a quarter of entering freshmen in Richland Two will not graduate high school within four years.

#1. **Paul Krohne**, Executive Director of the School Boards Association (SCSBA)

Estimated Compensation: **\$215,000+**

According to a 2009 IRS filing for the School Boards Association, Krohne received over \$182,251 in "reportable compensation" and another \$72,711 in "other compensation from the organization and from 'related' organizations." That same year, SCSBA collected a million dollars in taxpayer funded membership dues from elected school board members. SCSBA earned another \$3.4 million through exclusive contracts with the South Carolina State Department of Education and individual school districts, as well as through taxpayer funded fees for School Board Members to attend SCSBA conferences. Details of Krohne's present day compensation are unavailable, as SCSBA claims it is not subject to Freedom of Information (FOIA) requests. SCSBA reported over



\$100,000 in spending on political lobbying of state lawmakers in its 2009 tax filing.

Honorable Mentions:

-**Harold McClain**, Allendale Superintendent: **\$110,000** base salary; earns four and a half times the countywide median family income of \$24,000; district has state's lowest on-time high school graduation rate.

-**Lynn Moody**, Rock Hill Superintendent: **\$164,500** base salary; District provides an additional \$19,700 (12% of base salary rate) each year to a tax sheltered annuity account for Moody, the highest rate among all district superintendents in South Carolina.

-**Mabel Elizabeth Everitt**, Aiken Superintendent: **\$166,160** base salary; enjoys both a district furnished/maintained/insured automobile "for her business use and reasonable personal use" as well as reimbursement for travel in her own privately owned car. District is rated "Average" in student achievement by EOC.

-**Russell Booker**, Spartanburg Seven Superintendent: **\$173,000** base salary; additional \$12,000 per year for in-district transportation within a district of just 50 square miles. In addition to the state's largest travel compensation for a district superintendent, Booker enjoys the most expensive whole life insurance coverage, with a minimum \$250,000 in coverage. One-in-four district freshman don't graduate high school within four years and the district is rated "Average" by the EOC. If fired, Booker can still collect up to two years in compensation from the district.

-**Nancy McGinley**, Charleston Superintendent: **\$199,000** base salary; in late 2009, when the District announced a \$16 million budget cut, Superintendent Nancy McGinley received both a \$15,000 a year pay increase, as well as a retroactive \$18,000 bonus. Later that school year, a poll from the Charleston Teacher Alliance reported that 65% of district teachers believed McGinley had not eliminated non-essential spending by administrators.

