

WINDHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT

Schools in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Will WSD employees get a raise?

All WSD employees received raises during the 2009-2010 school year. No employees received an additional raise for 2010-2011.

2. Didn't the Regional Administrators, Division Directors and the Superintendent get a raise this year? It looks like they did when you compare last year's salaries to those for 2010-2011.

No, those staff members received a raise *last* year. The WSD Board of Trustees typically approves the WSD budget in August and then reviews the Superintendent's performance for the year. In August 2009, after the Budget was approved, the Chairman directed an increase in the Superintendent's salary that was effective September 1, 2009. Shortly after the budget was approved, the Superintendent recommended a change to the Windham's organizational structure. The change, which was approved by the Board, eliminated the Continuing Education Division and created the Information Technology Division which resulted in the writing of a new job description for the new division director. In the process of writing the job description and establishing a salary for that position, the positions for Regional Administrators and Division Directors were reviewed. (These positions are not included in the salary surveys conducted every two years by Human Resources.) This review included an analysis comparing Windham executive level positions with those of school districts of similar size, as well as, executive level TDCJ staff. As a result of the review, the Superintendent with the concurrence of the Chairman authorized a raise for these positions that was effective January 1, 2010.

3. When will I get a Salary Analysis for this school year?

We will not send out a salary analysis this year. We hope to resume that process for the 2011-2012 school year.

4. Were any changes made to the Locality Supplement Plan?

No. The Locality Supplement Plan was unchanged for the 2010-2011 school year.

5. Will teachers still get step raises?

Yes, if eligible. WSD uses the Board approved Teacher/Librarian Salary Plan to pay teachers and librarians. There are 21 steps for up to 21 years of creditable service. All WSD teachers who are eligible to earn a creditable year of service *will move up a step*. A creditable year of service is defined as working at least 90 days during the school year.

6. What about locality steps? Will WSD unfreeze the locality step raise?

WSD pays teachers and librarians based on a combination of the Teacher/Librarian Salary Plan and the Locality Supplement Plan. The Locality Supplement Plan is determined by surveying local public school salaries.

WSD will not *unfreeze* the locality step raise. Those staff members employed on August 31, 2003 have been and will continue to be frozen on the locality step they were on that school year as long as they remain at the same campus. Those staff members employed between September 1, 2003 and August 31, 2007 have been and will continue to be frozen on the first step of the locality schedule adopted for those school years as long as they remain at the same campus. And finally, those staff members employed between September 1, 2007 and August 31, 2009 will be frozen on the single step of the locality schedule adopted for those school years as long as they remain at the same campus.

However, once a current employee requests a transfer to another campus, the current Locality Supplement Plan adopted for the 2010-2011 school year will take effect. This locality schedule is administered as a single step.

7. Will principals get a raise?

The salaries for principals were adjusted for the 2009-2010 school year to address the compression of salaries at that level. In addition, the staffing requirements were adjusted last year. There are no changes for principals for the 2010-2011 school year.

8. Will paraprofessionals get step raises?

Yes, if eligible. Some paraprofessionals are paid on a six-step salary schedule. Personnel assigned to a Grade 7, 9 or 11 position are advanced a step on the schedule if they earn one year of creditable service with the district. Paraprofessionals who have advanced to step six are at the top of the pay scale. The *name* of the steps did change this year. For 2009-2010 the steps were 0-5. For the 2010-2011 school year the steps are 1-6. In other words, if you were on step 5 last year you are now on step 6. You do not get a raise. We just re-named the steps. Anyone on step 0-4 last year should go up a step and receive the step

raise, if you worked at least 90 days for the school year. This one can be confusing. Any paraprofessionals with a question may email, Kathy White at Kathy.White@wsdtx.org

9. What about diagnosticians and counselors?

The Counselor/Diagnostician Salary Plan did not change for the 2010-2011 school year. Counselors and diagnosticians are paid according to this salary plan which now incorporates the stipend given to this group in past years. Also, the Locality Supplement Plan will continue to be applied to counselors and diagnosticians in addition to the Counselor/Diagnostician Salary Plan.

10. If I do get a step raise, when will it be effective?

All salary changes are effective September 1, 2010 and are reflected on your **October** paycheck.

11. If I didn't get a raise, will my paycheck remain the same?

Your paycheck not only includes your salary, but also takes into account deductions for insurance, TexFlex, 403B contributions, retirement and more. Although WSD will continue to pay the full health insurance premium for each full-time employee and one half of the family premium, *your portion of the family premium increased*. An increase in insurance premiums may result in a lower paycheck. There may also be changes in premiums for long-term and short-term disability as well as life insurance. Please check your individual account on www.ers.state.tx.us

12. Why do teachers on the same unit make different salaries?

Remember, salaries are based on a *combination* of the salary schedule and a locality supplement. Teachers employed with WSD on August 31, 2003 were *frozen* on which ever locality step they were on that school year. That step was dependent on their years of service with the WSD on that date. All teachers hired *after* that date were frozen on step 0 of the locality supplement schedule. Therefore, teachers with 20 years of service each, but on different steps of the locality schedule are paid different salaries. This is true across the district.

13. How does our salary compare to public school districts?

Windham conducted a survey of teacher salaries across the state in the summer of 2009. Every school district where a WSD campus is located was surveyed. This information was then used to determine the current Locality Supplement Plan.

WSD literacy teachers average about 18 years of experience while vocational teachers average about 13 years. With this in mind, WSD salaries are favorably comparable in the vast majority of locations across the state. It's unlikely that WSD will ever be able to compete with economic hot spots such as Houston, San Antonio, Dallas and Edinburg.

However, other benefits should be considered with salary comparisons. Teachers routinely work 7 hours per day and have no other duty requirements (lunch or bus duty) or evening activities that they must attend. Also, WSD teachers work 220-day calendars which results in overall higher salaries than their counterparts in public school. Consequently, the higher yearly salary for our staff results in higher TRS benefits. In other words, when public school teachers work extra jobs at the mall during summer break, the salary that they earn is not included in their TRS retirement benefit.

Last, WSD pays 100% of the premium for health insurance for full-time employees and 50% of the family health insurance premium. Human Resources has developed a chart comparing each local school district's insurance benefits to ours. In some cases, the 50% that we pay towards the family portion of health insurance means that our employees are paid more than 60% more than their local counterparts.

We anticipate conducting another salary survey in the summer of 2011.

If you have questions, please keep in mind that WSD employs over 1,200 employees. **Specific questions regarding individual salaries must be put in writing.** In addition, the WSD website has been updated with the 2010-2011 WSD Salary Plans and Locality Supplement Plan. Please view this information, under the Employment tab on our website: www.wsdtx.org.

Questions regarding years of service should be e-mailed to Stacye.Tullos@wsdtx.org.

Questions regarding individual salaries should be e-mailed to Kathy.White@wsdtx.org.

Questions regarding health insurance should be e-mailed to Paula.Jannett@wsdtx.org.

Questions regarding withholdings, retirement contributions, taxes or commissary/barbering deductions should be e-mailed to Dina.Valenta@wsdtx.org.

Thank you.