

California Montessori Project Governing Board

Summary of Compensation and Benefits Survey Data for Executive Director

April 2019

Prior to any Board action to approve any decisions regarding executive compensation (including approval of base salary increases, incentive compensation, bonuses, etc.), the Board must first exercise due diligence (review of comparable compensation practices) to ensure compliance with IRS restrictions on excess compensation for nonprofit executives, including a charter school Executive Director (“ED”) and other positions with substantial influence over the affairs of the organization. The Board’s review and approval of the executive compensation must occur: initially upon hiring the executive; whenever the term of employment, if any, is renewed or extended; and whenever the officer’s compensation is modified. However, separate review and approval is not required if the modification of compensation extends to substantially all employees.

In reviewing the reasonableness of compensation for nonprofit executives, the IRS considers “compensation” broadly and will look at the value of salary, as well as non-fixed compensation (incentive compensation/bonuses), and benefits. If the IRS determines compensation is not reasonable, severe consequences may result. Thus, the best way to avoid risk of penalties is to go through the process of establishing reasonable compensation in advance of any salary increase, and for the Board to properly document it has engaged in such a process. This approach will also meet the legal requirements specific to California nonprofits under the California Nonprofit Integrity Act.

The following is a summary of our findings following review and comparison of a sampling of total compensation levels received by public school leaders in California. Compensation figures are from the State Controller’s Office for the 2017 calendar year. Student enrollment figures are from the California Department of Education for the 2017-18 school year. The Executive Director of the California Montessori Project oversees multiple schools with a total student population of approximately 2,700. Based on these facts, this study compared salary packages of like classifications – specifically, Superintendents of similarly-sized School Districts. The seven districts surveyed in this summary have an average student population of approximately 3,000. Of the seven districts sampled, the average total compensation package (base salary plus other compensation) for district leaders is \$253,140. The average base salary is \$214,065. The median base salary is \$213,107.

Moraga Elementary School District	1,851 Students
Superintendent	
Total Compensation Package	\$241,887
Base Salary	\$213,107
Other compensation (insurance and retirement)	\$28,780
Piedmont City Unified School District	2,596 Students
Superintendent	
Total Compensation Package	\$269,210
Base Salary	\$218,492
Other Compensation (insurance and retirement)	\$50,718
Cucamonga Elementary School District	2,431 Students
Superintendent	
Total Compensation Package	\$216,823
Base Salary	\$193,458
Other Compensation (insurance and retirement)	\$23,365
Orinda Union Elementary School District	2,546 Students
Superintendent	
Total Compensation Package	\$238,081
Base Salary	\$210,019
Other compensation (insurance and retirement)	\$28,062
El Segundo Unified School District	3,453 Students
Superintendent	
Total Compensation Package	\$301,733
Base Salary	\$243,391
Other compensation (insurance and retirement)	\$58,342
Cypress Elementary School District	3,923 Students
Superintendent	
Total Compensation Package	\$253,690
Base Salary	\$215,663
Other compensation (insurance and retirement)	\$38,027
Delano Joint Union High School District	4,219 Students
Superintendent	
Total Compensation Package	\$250,555
Base Salary	\$204,326
Other compensation (insurance and retirement)	\$46,229