

Prospect Ridge Academy Employee Compensation Overview

Compensation Overview

As a charter school, Prospect Ridge Academy manages its human resources functions and budget independently but in conjunction with our authorizing school district, Adams 12. Prospect Ridge has its own employee compensation system, which has been developed with input from board members, administrators, and teachers. The goals of Prospect Ridge's compensation system are as follows:

1. Reflect competitive market rates
2. Reward employee performance
3. Ensure internal pay equity
4. Provide consistent pay administration
5. Present clear communication of the compensation program to staff

Salaries and benefits make-up just over 50 percent of the school's operating expenses; thus, the human resources at Prospect Ridge are clearly the school's most substantial and valuable assets. Prospect Ridge's compensation system allows the school to manage this significant portion of the budget in a competitive and fiscally responsible way. The Prospect Ridge Board of Directors has made competitive employee compensation a priority in its budget planning process, which can be seen by the percentage of total expenditures that staff salaries and benefits have comprised of the total budget.

Prospect Ridge Academy's budget, and by implication its salary pool, is affected by several consistent factors each year, all of which must be considered when determining the portion of the budget that is available for salaries and benefits. Some of those factors include; percentage increase or decrease of state funding, successful open enrollment, number of classes each teacher has and class size, successful fundraising efforts, and successful local programs.

Unlike the traditional step-increase pay structure utilized by most Colorado public school districts, Prospect Ridge compensates its employees on the basis of performance, years of service, education level and competitive market data. The Prospect Ridge compensation system starts with a base salary within a salary range and then in subsequent years uses evaluation information to provide performance raises, and additional bumps in accordance with Master's degree completion. Prospect Ridge uses a salary matrix to objectively include performance measures into salary calculations.

The evaluation rubrics used to measure staff performance are directly tied to the school's strategic plan and mission and vision. Work is done each year to update the evaluation rubric through a collaborative process including the board of directors, administration and instructional staff. This collaborative process works well to establish a credible evaluation tool that is then incorporated into salary calculations.

At Prospect Ridge, calculating annual salary increases is a two-step process:

1. Each year, the board and administration determines the amount of money available for salary increases based on the new funding received from the state. Assuming the budget will support increased salaries, an average percentage is calculated for all raises, and this number is used as the basis to determine the salary increases for the year.
2. Each employee's evaluation rubric scores is used to identify that employee's performance raise for the coming year, with the total of all raises not exceeding the total for salary increases for the year as determined by the budget.

Original salary offers for new hires are determined based on years of experience, and degrees earned. The salary range for base salaries is benchmarked against but does not match the Adams 12 salary schedule.

Compensation Philosophy

It is PRA's belief compensation should be tied to performance and a person's contributions to the school. We believe that it is in the best interest of both the school and our employees to fairly compensate our workforce for the value of the work provided.

Incoming staff new to the school are compensated based on a combination of market conditions, experience, education level, and their unique talents they may bring to PRA. Salary ranges will be maintained in a document which will serve as a guide for staff compensation. PRA will also establish a salary cap for certified staff and employee's compensation will only exceed the cap on an exception basis. The salary guide will be reviewed, at a minimum annually, and be updated to stay competitive in the market and adjust to school conditions. School leadership has the authority to deviate from this guide for hard-to-staff positions and specialized talents.

Merit increases are based on an employee's performance. Performance objectives for employees will be set on an annual basis and will include individual contributor, team, and school-wide elements. We believe the success of the school is driven by all staff contributing in all three of these areas. Performance against these objectives will be evaluated annually. The amount of merit pool dollars available for distribution to staff is determined on a yearly basis through a review of the school's financial performance and outlook, recommendations of PRA administration and approval by the board of directors. Distribution of merit to individual staff members is at the discretion of school administration.

Compensation outside of base pay is allotted for work that is distinctly different than an employee's primary responsibilities. Examples, both current and contemplated, include: grade level team lead, athletic coach, new curriculum coordinator, on-the-spot bonuses, etc. These additional compensations are assessed and renewed on an annual basis.

Market adjustments, also known as leveling, are salary adjustments for an employee or group of employees that have fallen outside comparable salaries to other similar positions in the market. Market adjustments do not occur in conjunction with annual merit increases. These adjustments are determined based on market analysis, school performance, and the discretion of school leadership and are utilized on an as needed basis.

Other Compensation

Prospect Ridge offers employee compensation in other forms than salaries. These include employee benefits, reduced cost staff services, staff appreciation events, coaching stipends, and enhanced professional development. Prospect Ridge's compensation package includes the following benefits for employees that work a minimum of 31 hours per week:

- Medical Insurance: choice of two United Healthcare plans (premium for one plan is 100% covered, 90% of premier plan is covered)
- Dental Insurance through United Concordia (100% covered by PRA)
- Vision Insurance through VSP (100% covered by PRA)
- Short Term Disability Insurance (premiums are paid 100% by PRA)
- Long Term Disability Insurance (premiums are paid 100% by PRA)
- \$50,000 Term Life Insurance (premiums are paid 100% by PRA)
- The Colorado Public Employee's Retirement Association (PERA) covers all Prospect Ridge Employees. Employees contribute 8 percent of their gross income to the PERA fund and Prospect Ridge contributes an additional 18 percent on the employee's behalf.
- Voluntary 401K (through PERA and 403b tax deferred savings plan)

In addition to the benefits listed above, Prospect Ridge Employees have a number of valuable opportunities and rewards, including:

- Prospect Ridge Academy school enrollment for children of staff members for the school year of the date of hire for certified staff or if working at least 30 hours per week for classified staff.
- For full-time employees, a reduced rate of 20% for MESA (Miners Enrichment for School-Aged children) program for elementary children of staff, and 50% of full-time Kindergarten tuition.
- Ongoing professional development opportunities. Outside professional trainers are often brought in for specific content area training. Prospect Ridge has also contracted the services of a certified Induction Program for its staff at a cost of \$2,000 per participant.
- Ongoing leadership opportunities: each year staff participates on Sub-Committees of the board as well as internal professional teams to enhance the school program.
- Ongoing employee recognition events such as Staff Appreciation Week.
- The opportunity to be part of a community and to work in a professional and supportive environment!