

Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks

11.3: *Human resource policies ensure that competitive and just salaries, benefits, and professional growth opportunities are provided for all staff.*

I. What does this benchmark indicate for school performance?

Benchmark 11.3 is about ensuring that the best faculty and staff are hired and retained by the school and provided appropriate, competitive and just wages and benefits and ongoing professional development. Schools that are able to provide appropriate salary and benefits packages are likely to have fewer turnovers of employees and these employees experience greater job satisfaction. While salary alone does not determine employee satisfaction and retention, fair compensation does impact morale. Schools require faculty and staff who can provide an excellent education. This requires that faculty remain current in their discipline and acquire new skills to effectively use technology and other resources as well as classroom management and student development strategies for today's learners. A school that invests in the professional development of its faculty and staff demonstrates its commitment to lifelong learning and excellence.

II. As a review team member, what evidence do I look for?

These are some questions which will help to frame this item:

- Are salary scales and salary information clearly prepared, written and posted for appropriate review?
- Does the salary scale construction process benchmark and address the requirements and accountability standards for position?
- Do salary scales identify skills, market factors, longevity, performance and other factors?
- Are benefit packages prepared and documented with appropriate materials on line and in print to inform and direct all employees? (Review these materials for accessibility, comprehension and market status as well as acceptance.)
- Are the benefits packages benchmarked with reputable sources?

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- Does the benchmarking occur yearly?
- Is professional development scheduled, attended and evaluated by all staff in the school?
- Are there clear documented examples of outcomes associated with all professional development planning?
- Does each individual include professional development as integral to their individual growth plan and view this as a resource and expectation?
- Are resources available to support individual and team growth in multiple areas related to school mission and vision?
- Are the social justice teachings of the Church reflected in all salary scales, professional development and benefits?
- Is there mentoring provided for ongoing career and leadership development which is supported and related to succession planning at all levels, not simply the leadership?
- What is the availability of workshops and sessions on retirement planning? Are they available at least twice yearly?

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III. What are the key differences between the levels of the rubric?

At level **3-Fully Meets Benchmark,**

compensation policies are developed and salary scales are benchmarked to known selected competitors. There is a biannual review of all salary scales with recommendations for changes. A variety of benefits packages are available to employees and include health, vision, dental, life insurance and retirement contributions. Professional development funds are available to support degree completion and ongoing professional development training.

At level **4-Exceeds Benchmark,**

compensation and benefits packages exceed local competitors, in presentation, review and competitiveness. Employees are incentivized to engage in meaningful professional development that supports the strategic goals of the school. Systematic training is provided on new technologies and other management protocols. Retirement planning sessions and resources are regularly available to all employees and evaluated by the staff. Benefits packages and HR policies reward healthy lifestyles and employee contributions to retirement.

At level **2-Partially Meets Benchmark,**

salary scales are developed but not regularly benchmarked with appropriate entities. Also these scales are not widely shared. Benefits packages are not competitive with the local market and are not wholly understood by staff. Policies on professional development are unclear and institutional support is limited. Training to support new initiatives and technologies is limited.

At level **1-Does Not Meet Benchmark,**

benefits are limited and in some areas not offered to all employees, with discrepancies regarding policies. Salary scale is not competitive with the local market. Professional development is not encouraged.

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IV. What are some key suggestions for improvement?

To move from level 1 to level 2,

- Offer benefit packages to all employees.
- Provide information and access regarding benefit packages.
- Ensure a salary scale that is benchmarked to the local market.
- Create a climate of support for professional development and growth for all staff.

To move from level 2 to level 3,

- Review and benchmark salary scale to local and/or other professionals' salary scale standards (regional, national) biannually.
- Review all benefits packages biannually and develop a plan to improve attractiveness of benefits.
- Clarify institutional commitment to professional development. Include intentional budgeting in the financial planning.
- Develop a training plan that addresses institution-wide training and development needs as well as individual professional development.

To move from level 3 to 4,

- Review current benefit packages and revise to increase attractiveness and competitiveness with other educational and comparable professions.
- Develop a strategic plan for professional development that aligns individual goals with institutional strategic priorities. Include in the regular budget.
- Establish the role of the administrators and leaders in creating a culture of excellence supported by ongoing professional development.
- Provide opportunities for health and wellness and financial planning education for all employees
- Build a culture of expectation regarding excellence and healthy life styles.

V. What are key terms for common understanding? (Refer to NSBECS Glossary for terms listed below.)