

A charter school superintendent in Texas is paid \$870,000 per year to operate a school of 1,000 students.

Diane Ravitch's March 18 [blog](#) points to a [Texas charter school of 1,000 students that pays its superintendent \\$870,000 annually](#)—\$870 per student per year! This is shocking but not surprising. The privately-operated, tax-funded charter school industry has been fraud-ridden since day one of the charter school debacle. Remember Bill Lager's ECOT theft of hundreds of millions? The Ohio charter school industry has been riddled with fraud and corruption since the inception of charters.

Attention has been recently focused on the universal voucher scheme. Fraud and corruption in the charter industry in Ohio and elsewhere throughout the nation has been flying under the radar.

[Diane Ravitch's blog](#)

[This Charter School Superintendent in Texas Is Paid \\$870,000 a Year to Run a District with 1,000 Students](#)

[By dianeravitch](#)

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ProPublica and the Texas Tribune reported the curious tale of the guy [who is probably the highest-paid school superintendent in the state](#). His base salary of \$300,000 is the tip of the iceberg. He oversees small schools in three districts with a total of about 1,000 students.

Over the last three years, the head of a small charter school network that serves fewer than 1,000 students has taken home up to \$870,000 annually, a startling amount that appears to be the highest for any public school superintendent in the state and among the top in the nation.

Valere Public Schools Superintendent Salvador Cavazos' compensation to run three campuses in Austin, Corpus Christi and Brownsville exceeds the less than \$450,000 that New York City's chancellor makes to run the largest school system in the country.

But Cavazos' salary looks far more modest in publicly posted records that are supposed to provide transparency to taxpayers. That's because Valere excludes most of his bonuses from its reports to the state and on its own website, instead only sharing his base pay of about \$300,000.

The fact that the superintendent of a small district could pull in a big-time salary shocked experts and previewed larger transparency and accountability challenges that could follow as Texas moves to approve a voucher-like program that would allow the use of public funds for private schools.

Cavazos' total pay is alarming, said Duncan Klussmann, an associate professor at the University of Houston Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies.

"I just can't imagine that there'd be any citizen in the state of Texas that would feel like that's OK," Klusmann said.

Details concerning Cavazos' compensation, and that of two other superintendents identified by ProPublica and The Texas Tribune, drew a sharp rebuke from the association that advocates for charter schools across the state.

"It's not acceptable for any public school to prioritize someone's personal enrichment ahead of students' best interests," Brian Whitley, a spokesperson for the Texas Public Charter Schools Association, said in a statement. He added that any payment decisions made at the expense of students should be reversed immediately....

At least two other Texas charter school districts have also paid their superintendents hundreds of thousands of dollars on top of what they publicly reported in recent years, our analysis found.

Dallas-based Gateway Charter Academy, which serves about 600 students, paid its superintendent Robbie Moore \$426,620 in 2023, nearly double his base salary of \$215,100, the latest available federal tax filings show. Pay for Mollie Purcell Mozley of Faith Family Academy, another Dallas-area charter school superintendent, hit a high of \$560,000 in 2021, despite a contracted salary of \$306,000. She continued to receive more than \$400,000 during each of the two subsequent years, according to tax filings.