Faculty Salaries: five year trend
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In keeping with the theme of recruiting, retaining and rewarding teachers, the focus of this FastStats is faculty compensation. More specifically, the five-year trend of five critical elements of independent school compensation will be presented for both NAIS and SAIS teachers. An overview of the data\(^1\) indicates that SAIS teachers are not as well compensated when compared to their independent school colleagues from around the country.

The difference between SAIS and NAIS teachers is most obvious when taking a look at straightforward cash salary. You can see by the Median Teacher Salary graph that a steady gap of about $5,000, or about 10%, has remained between NAIS and SAIS teachers over the past five years.\(^2\) By any interpretation, that's a rather sizable difference.

The difference is less obvious when some key benefits are compared. For example, the annual Median Maximum Percentage of Salary Paid for Dependents Health Care that will be covered by the employer is 60% for NAIS schools and 50% for SAIS schools. Similarly, the annual Median Maximum Percentage of Salary Paid for Employee Health Care that is covered by the employer is 90% for both NAIS and SAIS schools. The Median Percentage Paid by the Employer for a Life Insurance Claim is 100% of the teacher's annual salary for NAIS and SAIS schools. Additionally, the Median School Contribution for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>NAIS - Dependents Health Care</th>
<th>NAIS - Employees Health Care</th>
<th>NAIS - Life Insurance</th>
<th>SAIS - Dependents Health Care</th>
<th>SAIS - Employees Health Care</th>
<th>SAIS - Life Insurance</th>
<th>NAIS - Retirement</th>
<th>SAIS - Retirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
<td>90.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
<td>90.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
<td>90.00%</td>
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<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
<td>90.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
<td>90.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
<td>90.00%</td>
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Retirement is 6% for NAIS schools and 5% for SAIS schools. A final statistic that was looked at for this analysis was teacher tuition remission. Little, if any, difference was found in that, both NAIS and SAIS schools’ median tuition remission was around 50%. In summary, there are variances in these key benefits, albeit not as profound as with cash salary, which favor NAIS teachers.

What are the reasons for these differences? To answer this question you might think about how teachers in independent schools are compensated. With a little bit of variation tossed in due to merit and specialty skills, the primary driving forces of salaries are experience and qualifications. Thus, is it possible that SAIS teachers are less experienced, thus less well paid? This would be a simple and powerful explanation. But alas, it is not the answer. For both SAIS and NAIS teachers the median years of experience are approximately 15, and one would expect such a finding since it makes no sense to expect a difference in experience over such large and diverse samples of teachers.

Is it possible that SAIS teachers are less qualified than NAIS teachers? I could not find any summary data on the credentials, specifically the percentage of graduate degrees, of SAIS versus NAIS teachers. As with experience, however, it would be an extreme long shot to suggest that SAIS teachers have significantly fewer such degrees, thus leading to significant differences in compensation.

Finally, is it possible SAIS teachers are just not the same caliber as NAIS teachers? Although collecting such data would be very difficult, it is statistically preposterous to think that a systematic difference in the quality of SAIS versus NAIS teachers could exist.
As most reading this have already guessed, the differences in compensation are likely due to a complex myriad of socio-economic reasons, which also distinguish the South from much of the rest of the country in many ways beyond the compensation of independent school teachers. But a reasonable summary for this FastStats might be that the financials at SAIS schools are generally more modest than at NAIS schools, which, among other things, leads to lower tuition rates, which in turn, leads to less revenue available to compensate teachers and other employees.

Editor’s Note: as more SAIS schools participate in the SAIS MISBO benchmarking survey, these results will become more robust. Participants in the survey can benchmark and have access to a wealth of data. Please see http://www.sais.org/statistics

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NOTES
1. The statistics compiled are based on 154 SAIS schools reporting data (of 365 total SAIS schools as of publication) and 1,156 NAIS schools. This amounts to approximately 12,000 SAIS teachers and about 80,000 NAIS teachers.
2. Although it’s possible that the gap is closing as indicated by the strong increase in the median SAIS salary for the 2012-2013 school year versus a much more modest increase for NAIS schools.
3. The fact that I could not find data on this question is rather ironic since almost all independent school profiles and opportunity statements indicate the percentage of teachers with advanced degrees.