



SALARY GUIDE 2026

School Therapists

What schools pay SLPs, OTs, PTs, psychologists, counselors, social workers and assistants, how that compares with other settings, and how to use it in your next contract.

\$83,080

Median K-12 pay for an SLP

39%

Of SLPs work in K-12 schools

17%

Projected SLP job growth, 2025 to 2035

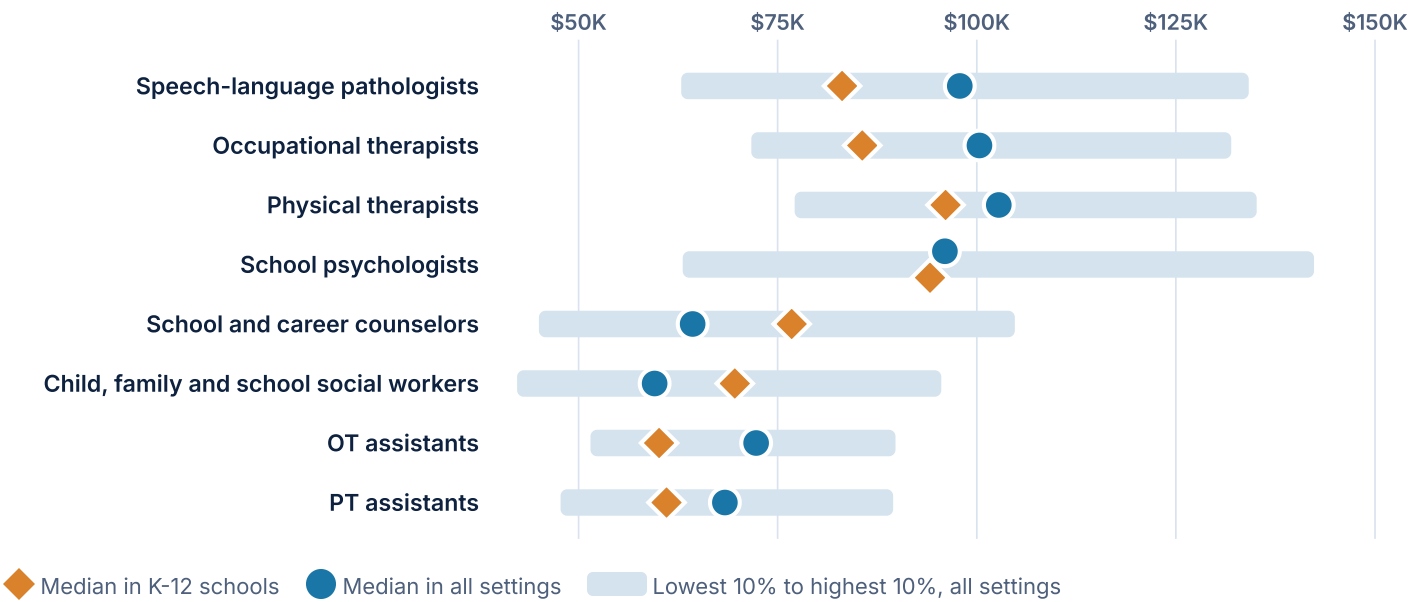
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School roles in this guide

Built from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data: wages for May 2025 and job projections for 2025 to 2035.

What schools pay

National median pay in K-12 schools against the median for the same role in every setting. A median is the middle: half earn more and half earn less. These include every experience level.



Schools pay SLPs and OTs nearly \$15,000 less than the all-settings median. For PTs the gap is less than half that, and school psychologists are nearly even. Counselors and social workers earn more in schools than they do overall.

ROLE	K - 12 MEDIAN	K - 12 HOURLY	ALL SETTINGS	SCHOOLS VS. ALL	LOWEST 10%	HIGHEST 10%
Speech-language pathologists	\$83,080	\$39.94	\$97,870	-\$14,790	\$62,900	\$134,160
Occupational therapists	\$85,610	\$41.16	\$100,330	-\$14,720	\$71,690	\$131,950
Physical therapists	\$96,080	\$46.19	\$102,760	-\$6,680	\$77,140	\$135,140
School psychologists	\$94,120	\$45.25	\$95,990	-\$1,870	\$63,070	\$142,330
School and career counselors	\$76,760	\$36.91	\$64,330	+\$12,430	\$45,020	\$104,770
Child, family and school social workers	\$69,620	\$33.47	\$59,550	+\$10,070	\$42,280	\$95,530
OT assistants	\$60,110	\$28.90	\$72,300	-\$12,190	\$51,490	\$89,780
PT assistants	\$61,050	\$29.35	\$68,380	-\$7,330	\$47,750	\$89,510

HOW TO COMPARE

Compare by the day, not the year

BLS works out hourly pay by dividing the annual figure by 2,080 hours, a full year of 40-hour weeks. School contracts are usually shorter than that, so annual and hourly figures can make school pay look lower than it is for the days you work.

An example

Median pay divided by 190 days for schools and 260 days (52 five-day weeks) for all settings.

ROLE	SCHOOL, PER DAY	ALL SETTINGS, PER DAY
Speech-language pathologists	\$437	\$376
Occupational therapists	\$451	\$386
Physical therapists	\$506	\$395
OT assistants	\$316	\$278
PT assistants	\$321	\$263

On this example calendar, the school day rate comes out ahead for every role shown. Your contract days decide it, so ask for them before you compare offers.

Georgia pay

Median annual pay in Georgia, May 2025. This covers all settings, not just schools.

Speech-language pathologists	\$96,760
Occupational therapists	\$104,010
Physical therapists	\$102,700
School psychologists	\$99,110
School and career counselors	\$63,720
Child, family and school social workers	\$47,510
OT assistants	\$75,920
PT assistants	\$72,800

How to read this

190 days is a round number for illustration, not BLS data. Contracts vary, and some school roles run 11 or 12 months. 260 days is before any paid time off. Swap in your own numbers.

These are base wages. Benefits, pensions, caseload and paperwork time aren't included.

Small groups

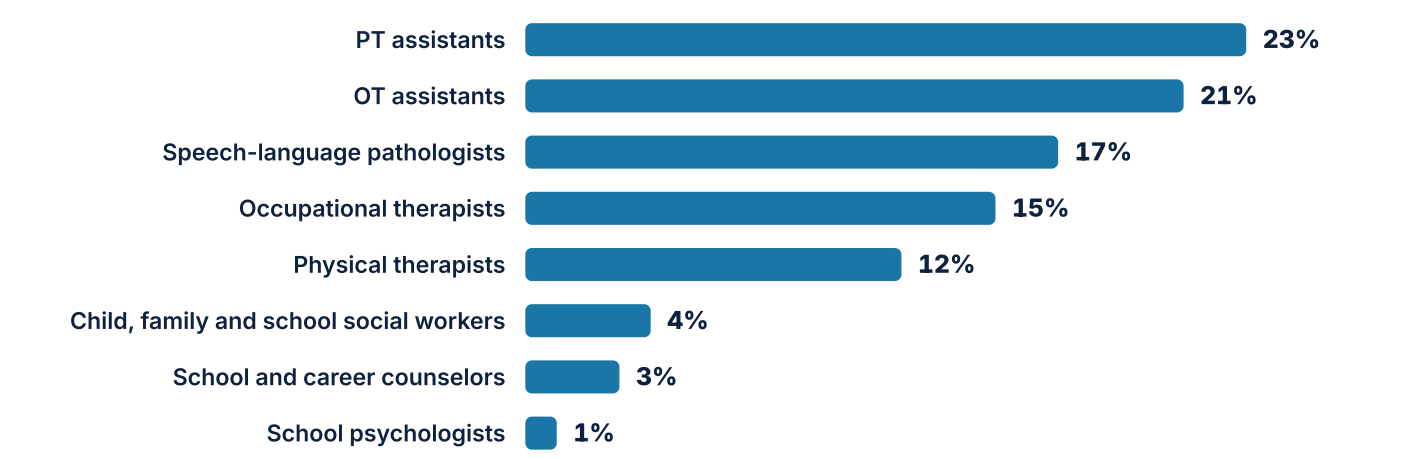
Treat the K-12 medians for assistants as rough. BLS counts about 2,840 OT assistants and 590 PT assistants in K-12 schools, far fewer than the other roles here.

School SLP assistants aren't in this guide because BLS doesn't report them as a separate job.

OUTLOOK

Where the job growth is

Projected U.S. job growth from 2025 to 2035, across all work settings. BLS expects about 12,500 SLP, 10,000 OT and 13,400 PT openings a year, on average.



Assistants have the fastest projected growth, but few of them work in schools. SLPs pair strong growth with a large school presence: 39% of SLPs work in K-12 schools.

Who works in schools

Jobs in K-12 schools, May 2025, and their share of all U.S. jobs in that role.

ROLE	JOBS IN K - 12 SCHOOLS	SHARE OF THE ROLE
School and career counselors	173,950	49%
Speech-language pathologists	72,130	39%
Child, family and school social workers	64,500	16%
School psychologists	53,670	84%
Occupational therapists	20,390	13%
Physical therapists	6,650	2%
OT assistants	2,840	6%
PT assistants	590	under 1%

WHAT TO DO

Five ways to use this in your next contract

1. Get the contract days in writing.

Divide the pay by the days. That's the number to compare, not the annual figure.

2. Ask what the rate covers.

Evaluations, IEP meetings and paperwork can be paid differently from direct service. Find out before you sign.

3. Pick your floor before the first call.

Start from the K-12 median for your role, then adjust for your state, your years of experience and your credentials.

4. Count more than the rate.

Benefits, license fees, CEUs and travel time can change what an offer is really worth.

5. Compare onsite and teletherapy separately.

Ask about caseload, schedule and equipment for each one.

Looking for your next school role?

Hire School Staff places school therapists on contract, onsite or by teletherapy. See what's open now, or join the [School Therapist Network on LinkedIn](#) to compare notes with other school therapists. Group members get a free 30-second video intro.

See open school jobs →

METHOD AND SOURCES

K-12 figures are the BLS estimates for Elementary and Secondary Schools. "School and career counselors" is the BLS group Educational, Guidance, and Career Counselors and Advisors, which includes college and career advisors. Pay ranges cover all settings. National job counts leave out the self-employed.

The Occupational Outlook Handbook also reports a wider "educational services" group that includes colleges, so its figures can differ a little from the K-12 figures here. For SLPs it shows \$83,120.

- BLS Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, May 2025: national, Elementary and Secondary Schools, and Georgia.
- BLS Occupational Outlook Handbook, job outlook 2025 to 2035.