

Ohio State DC Knowles To Make \$1.9 Million Per Year With Buckeyes



Ohio State's new defensive coordinator Jim Knowles will be the highest-paid college football assistant next season.

Knowles will coach in his final game for Oklahoma State on New Year's Day against Notre Dame before coming to Columbus on Jan. 2, 2022. He will make a \$1.9 million base salary as part of a three-year contract, becoming the Buckeyes' highest-paid assistant.

The deal would have been the fourth-most of any assistant coach in college football behind Clemson defensive coordinator Brent Venables, Clemson offensive coordinator Tony Elliott and Texas A&M defensive coordinator Mike Elko. However, Venables and Elliott have found head coaching positions with Oklahoma and Virginia, while Elko is a candidate for the vacancy at Duke.

This season, Ohio State's highest-paid assistant coaches were then-defensive coordinator Kerry Coombs and offensive coordinator Kevin Wilson, who earned \$1.4 million a year.

On top of his base salary, Knowles will be eligible for several incentive-based bonuses, potentially totaling as much as \$726,750.

- **Big Ten East Title:** 8.5% of base salary (\$161,500)
- **Big Ten Championship Title:** 4.25% of base salary (\$80,750)
- **College Football Playoff Bowl Game Appearance:** 17% of base salary (\$323,000)
- **Non-College Football Playoff Bowl Game Appearance and 9 Wins:** 4.25% of base salary (\$80,750)
- **College Football Playoff Semifinal Appearance:** 21.25% of base salary (\$403,750)
- **College Football Playoff Final Appearance:** 25.5% of base salary (\$484,500)

Knowles would only receive one of the playoff bonuses; if the team wins its semifinal game, his bonus would be 25.5%, but if it loses, his bonus would be 21.25%. He will also receive a lump-sum, one-time signing bonus of \$138,850.

Marshall Levenson of PokesReport.com reported that Oklahoma State offered him \$1.3 million per year to stay with the Cowboys. Hence, the lucrative contract – the largest ever given to an Ohio State

assistant - was necessary to land Knowles. He was also a target for Florida and Penn State.