



September 14, 2020

To: House Public Education Committee, Chairman Huberty and Vice Chairman Bernal  
Re: Request for Information, Interim Charge 1, Question 1

Chairman Huberty, Vice Chairman Bernal, and members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a response to Interim Charge 1: *Can the state delay implementation of the teacher incentive pay program to push it out to the next biennium? If so, what would be the impact on the current budget, as well as budget implications for the 2022- 23 biennium?*

This letter is submitted on behalf of Galveston Independent School District , a TIA cohort A District, serving more than 7000 students. We strongly urge the Texas Legislature to continue the Teacher Incentive Allotment's current and projected funding levels as-is, without any deferment. As a cohort A district, Galveston ISD participated in a rigorous process that resulted in 40 exceptional educators earning distinction in the 2019-2020 year for a total of \$581,850. Galveston ISD, although property rich, participates in the equalized wealth system of Texas public school finance. Our payment to state this year will exceed \$21mil. I mention this to contrast that 76% of Galveston ISD children are considered economically disadvantaged. The work that we have done over the last 10 years in aligning compensation with talent, our investment of time, money and resources to developing a fair and rigorous local designation system has finally enabled us to fund increased compensation for our top teachers while providing them incentives to continue serving campuses once abandoned for a more comfortable experience. Galveston educators persist despite salaries lower than other Galveston County ISDs. They persist to serve the students that need them the most. The Teacher Incentive Allotment recognizes the enhanced needs of some students over others and we now can celebrate, through teacher compensation, the additional efforts inherent in serving the under-served in our state.

For the last three years, Galveston ISD has partnered with the Texas Center for Educator Excellence (TxCEE) in the design, development and implementation of Student Learning Objectives. SLO's provide for laser focus on the needs of classrooms and children right here in Galveston. There is aligned rigor that yields significant academic achievement results for our students. In combination and in alignment with the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS), Galveston teachers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and strategies to significantly impact learning for our students. While our first 40 designated teachers now recognize the promise of differentiated compensation for excellence, we have many more exceptional teachers that can now see a pathway to remain in the classroom and earn their worth.

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Prior to the TIA, Galveston ISD supplemented learning performance measures through local revenue. We also engaged with partners to leverage grant funds so that extraordinary hard work and results were compensated. Years of ideating and refining the process revealed a nexus with the TIA project. Our efforts for the last 10 years are now realized in significant compensation for outstanding teacher leaders.

Now is not the time to rest on the laurels of a few; across the state we have identified learning exemplars that can be taught, refined, inspected and finally rewarded. There are many more exceptional teachers in Texas that deserve to become the best version of their teacher-self and significantly impact student learning.

The Teacher Incentive Allotment provides pathways for our district's educators to make significantly more money sooner in their careers, and it focuses attention on a more equitable distribution of our talent. As lawmakers, you are about to be faced with several difficult decisions. Your focus on investments that make the most significant impact on student learning and teacher retention is now called upon.

In appreciation of your time and service to Texas,



Kelli Moulton, Ed.D.  
Superintendent - Galveston ISD