

DATE:9/25/2020

Chairman Dan Huberty
House Committee on Public Education
Texas Capitol
EXT E2.124
1100 Congress Ave, Austin, TX 78701

RE: Question 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?*

Dear Chairman Huberty:

My name is Simone Joyce and I am a teacher at Uplift Heights Preparatory High School. I am constituent of House District 64, which is represented by State Representative Beckley.

I grew up as a child of the military with a long line of teachers on my mother's side of the family. Since joining the education field in 2014 I have been able to facilitate the growth and broaden the outcomes of several scholar's futures. I had the honor of starting with Uplift Heights High School in 2016 with their very first senior class, a class of 65 scholars. I teach science, specifically 11th and 12th grade Biology (as part of the International Baccalaureate) and Anatomy & Physiology. Some of my most memorable experiences with scholars have been the hands-on investigations and inquiry-based lessons. To prepare scholars for both the rigor of college and career I invited a local school that would provide a hands-on experience for scholars with their cadavers. Through this experience scholars were able to make concrete connections between the abstract, in class learning of the human body and the tangible in person experience. I still have scholars today that rave about how the experience changed their way of thinking.

Having the right colleagues for support and the right tools make these eye-opening experiences possible. The TIA allows me to spend more time focusing on making sure scholars reach their fullest potential both academically and in life. For the population I serve it is imperative that they have teachers that are dedicated to their growth and with the TIA I am relieved of the financial burden and given the freedom of growing myself as a teacher.

When a scholar is taught by a great teacher, they have the door of opportunity opened for them. When a teacher is taught by a recognized teacher the walls are broken and the world is open to them. There is a difference between the outcome of a scholar who has a teacher with experience and a scholar who has a teacher without experience. That difference is usually a lack of confidence in their own ability and the skills required to be successful outside of school. The TIA allows for schools, especially those that are in underrepresented areas with low income scholars like Heights, to retain effective teachers and be an influence for positive change in both the scholar's lives and our community.

There is no shortage of research that supports the benefits of teacher retention on schools, scholars, and communities. The TIA provides an incentive to attract and retain exceptional

teachers for their scholars. With a boost in morale in trust of the education system scholars are empowered and invested in their education with the added benefits of enriching the community through the anchor that schools provide.

I would like to take the time to express my sincere gratitude to you for your overwhelming support for the public schools in Texas. Your encouragement of education has ripple effects to make positive changes in scholars, their families, and our community. Thank you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Simone Joyce". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Simone Joyce
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Dallas, TX 75287