



# FRUITVALE ISD

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 Fruitvale ISD. We strongly urge the Texas Legislature to continue the Teacher Incentive Allotment's current and projected funding levels as-is, **without any deferment**. Our district has 1 Master teacher, 5 Exemplary teachers, and 3 Recognized teachers and received \$121,091 dollars to help further teacher compensation. We have invested time, money and resources to developing a fair and rigorous local designation system that enables us to fund increased compensation for our top teachers while providing them incentives to teach on low income, rural campuses.

Fruitvale ISD is one of the best districts in the state, but teacher retention is an issue for us when teachers can go to a larger district and receive a higher salary. We find ourselves as a training ground for new teachers who then move away because of compensation, they love our school. We are high poverty with a large percentage of McKinney Vento students and need to maintain stability with our staff. This program has incentivized our staff, helped us retrain great teachers, motivated our instructional support staff and improved student growth. Our teachers see the opportunity to earn more money through student growth measures. The money is only provided to those who meet rigorous standards of achievement such as our 36 year high school math teacher who is a Master teacher now, she is continuing to teach when she could have retired and brings in 100% passing on Algebra 1 with over 50% earning advanced recognition on state testing. This incredible teacher stayed, kept working, through COVID for the chance to earn a great salary in education that would up her retirement.

As soon as we learned about this opportunity the state legislatures approved we have worked diligently holding meetings, doing surveys, engaging stakeholders, attending training, and more in order to be able to designate our great teachers for this program. This took countless hours on my part every week for the past year to ensure my teachers would be able to have this opportunity. The work has not been in vain as I was able to hand out money to some of the best teachers in the state who have been very successful with our rural high poverty students.

During this time, when teachers are questioning the profession because of the extreme amount of work being required of them teaching in person and virtual students, it would be wrong to pull away the promise of the teacher incentive allotment. They have already been given all of the information and have been told this money would be given to them for the next five years. We need to be providing more incentives for teachers to stick with education not less during this time. We have great success in a public school with kids, we need to continue to make





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great opportunities to the teachers who are diligently working hard- let's reward our best teachers. It has been a blessing, a wonderful motivator and a well deserved incentive to my best teachers.

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. We greatly appreciate the Legislature's recognition of attracting and retaining the very best educators, and we ask you to follow through on your commitment by funding the Teacher Incentive Allotment in full. I feel like this would be a PR DISASTER to take this away after schools have invested so much time and effort into preparing for this program. I would be happy to take any questions as I have been a part of this first round of preparation, meetings, surveys, community engagement, applications and delivery of notifications to staff. There were many tears shed when they found out they were designated.

This program also provides a great way to pay teachers on merit instead of just on years of service, let's give high achievers the opportunity to excel. They would have it in any other career path why not education.

Sincerely,

*Rebecca Bain*

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