



Dr. Nugget Cunningham, Deputy Superintendent of Academics

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

Dear Representative and Staff,

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 myself, Nugget Cunningham, Deputy Superintendent of Academics, Grand Prairie ISD, almost 4400 educators and 28,190 students. I strongly urge the Texas Legislature to continue the Teacher Incentive Allotment's current and projected funding levels as-is, **without any deferment**. We have invested time, money and resources to develop a fair and rigorous local designation system that enables us to fund increased compensation for our top teachers while providing them incentives to teach at our lowest income, high needs campuses.

We are located in the Metroplex and serve a student population that is 78% low socio-economic and 29% English learners. We offer many choices to ensure our students and families have excellent educational opportunities with the most effective teachers.

Beginning in November of 2019 district representatives and teacher stakeholders participated in developing our TIA plan. We have spent ten months investing in the planning and preparation for TIA. Teachers and other stakeholders met virtually from home during our COVID-19 shut-down to create the GPISD Teacher Incentive Plan. Our teachers' evaluators have attended training sessions throughout the summer to learn how to calibrate TTESS evaluation.

We have created a system which meets all of TEA's readiness factors:

- Strongly calibrated teacher observation system
- Accurate measures of a teacher's impact on student growth
- Developed a local designation system approved by TEA
- Rolled out communication plan on our website based on TEA guidance
- Plan for spending allotment funds
- Sustainability of our local system

With the reactions to Covid-19, our teachers have worked diligently and taken on the additional responsibilities of serving our students virtually AND face-to-face. They have created innovative solutions to meet the state requirements for asynchronous instruction, have kept our students safe through sanitizing and social distancing while preparing students academically for college, career, and military readiness. Now is the best time to maintain our commitments to these teachers and to the students of Texas by funding the Teacher Incentive Allotment without any delay or deferment.

We truly appreciate your commitment to creation and funding of a program designed to attract and retain the very best educators. We hope you will maintain your commitment by funding the Teacher Incentive Allotment in full. We appreciate your serious consideration of this request.

Respectfully Submitted
Nugget Cunningham