



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

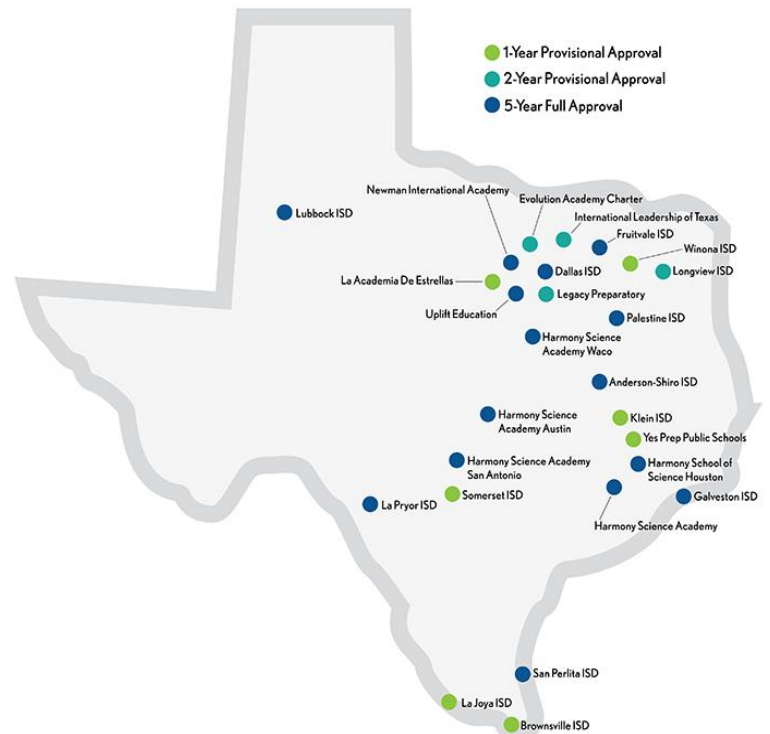
Chairman Huberty, Vice Chairman Bernal, and members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a response to Interim Charge 1, HB3 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?*

This letter is submitted on behalf of Best in Class and the Texas Impact Network, along with 14 other organizations listed below. Best in Class and the Texas Impact Network are joint ventures powered by Educate Texas and the Commit Partnership that support school systems in program design and effective design and implementation of key initiatives aimed to improve learning outcomes, including strategic evaluation systems and strategic compensation for effective educators.

The Teacher Incentive Allotment provides clear pathways for strong local teacher designation systems that seek to increase student performance and more equitably distribute the state’s most effective teachers to campuses that need them the most. Since the TIA’s passage, Best in Class and Texas Impact Network have been directly consulting with more than 50 school systems across the state to help develop rigorous and fair systems that recognize and financially reward top teachers for their work. Many districts have already received approval for their TIA systems. The map to the right shows their geographic diversity.

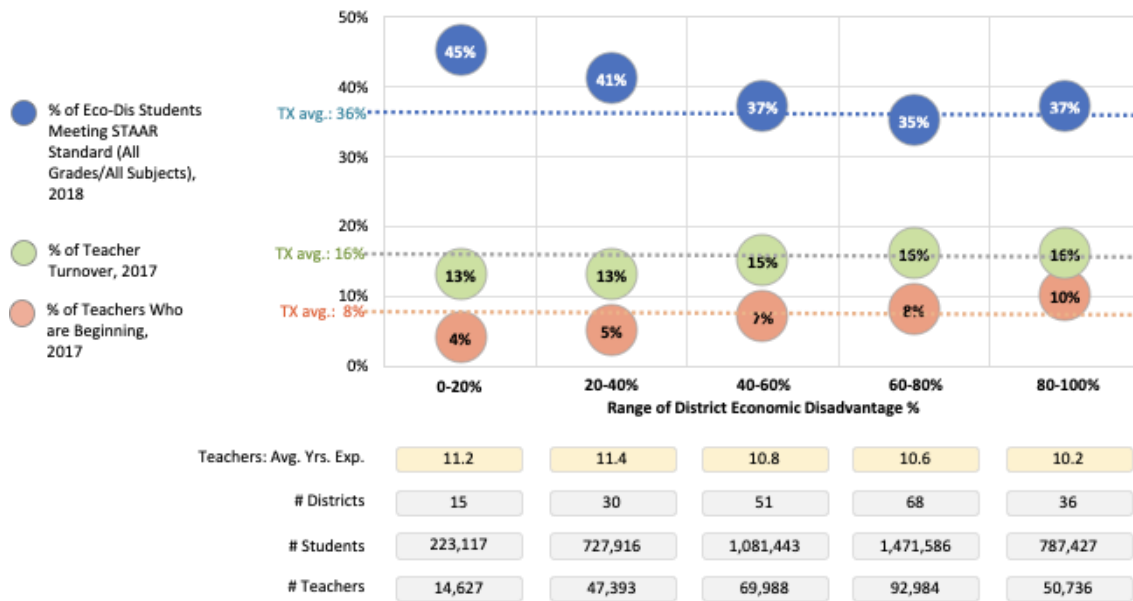
This allotment is one of the best ways we can attract those who want to do excellent work to impact the lives of our most challenged students. Having our best teachers serve students with the greatest needs is the most concrete and tactical way to equitably distribute human capital. Further, equipping students with even average educators (rather than those in the bottom 5% of performance) has been shown to increase a



student’s future lifetime earnings by more than \$250,000 per classroom¹. Placing highly effective educators in front of students can only compound those effects.

Currently, most school systems in Texas operate on a seniority-based pay system that offers equal compensation increases year over year, regardless of performance. This system has led to teachers with more experience choosing to work in schools with less poverty. Campuses with higher concentrations of poverty suffer from higher teacher turnover rates and employ a higher percentage of beginning educators.

Eco-Dis Student Achievement vs. Teacher Characteristics, by District Eco-Dis Rate (200 Largest ISDs)



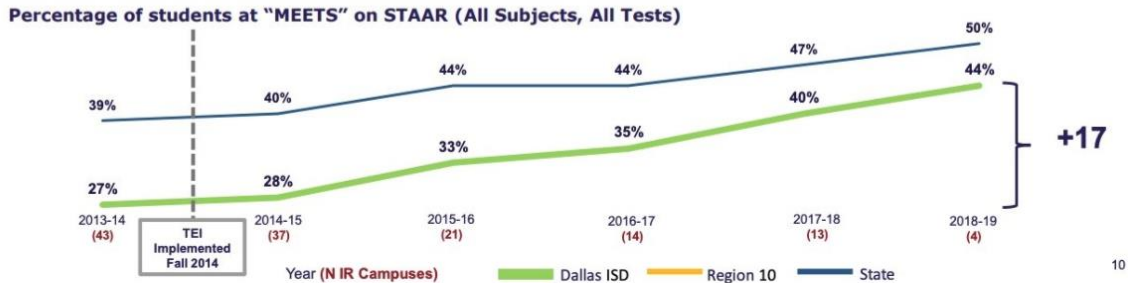
Strong evaluation and compensation systems encourage highly effective educators to remain in the classroom and lead to improved student learning, as evidenced by data from Dallas ISD.

¹ Raj Chetty: Measuring the Impacts of Teachers II: Teacher Value-Added and Student Outcomes in Adulthood

Results: Teacher Retention against the State and Region



Since 2014, Dallas ISD has reduced teacher turnover while significantly narrowing the STAAR achievement gap with the state.



Best in Class is an authorized technical assistance provider for TEA, and we are actively working alongside Education Service Centers across the state to equip them with necessary knowledge, competencies and skills needed to help school systems implement the TIA. In recent weeks, school districts and ESCs have voiced increasing concern about funding sustainability for HB3 and the TIA.

Developing and adopting a fair and rigorous evaluation and compensation system is complex work. It involves staff from nearly every department within a school system, requires hours of stakeholder input sessions, and is dependent on board approval. Districts typically spend 2-3 years from start to finish. This month, school systems that had developed a strategic educator evaluation system before the passage of HB3 were rewarded for their vision, and nearly 4,000 educators received up to ~\$30K in compensation increases (see appendix). Since HB3's passage, more than 800 additional school systems have submitted letters of intent to undertake this challenging work and hundreds have invested money, time and goodwill to create a strong evaluation and compensation system that enables them to access the TIA and properly reward their best teachers. **This work is far too important, and districts have already invested too much time, money and goodwill, for this program to be discarded or even delayed before much of it has a chance to take effect.**

The interim charge's question about deferring payments because of the Legislature's fiscal position is one that has the potential to upend the significant progress that is already underway. Creating pathways for educators to make significantly more money sooner in their careers has always been important, but delaying the implementation or state-funded backing in the midst of a pandemic sends the wrong message. Teachers have been -- and always will be -- the number one in-school factor for a student's learning. During COVID, we've seen a spotlight on strong educators, many of whom will one day reap the benefits of the TIA. Delaying state funding could create ripple effects that result in districts delaying system development, or worse, it could make way for a complete dismantling of the allotment in future years.

The push to delay the Teacher Incentive Allotment is concerning because it is not clear what mechanism the state could use to do so, other than altering the underlying statute. The Teacher Incentive Allotment was passed unanimously by the Legislature, but it was not without pushback. An attempt this session to delay the Teacher Incentive Allotment would further open up the statute to changes, potentially watering down the high-quality and rigorous standards that are currently attached to the allotment.

A bipartisan group of School Finance Commission members studied this policy throughout 2018 and agreed that incentivizing strategic compensation in Texas was a worthwhile endeavor. The Legislature recognized this and adopted the vision when Chairmen Huberty and Taylor authored House Bill 3, which was ultimately passed unanimously in May 2019. Legislators ensured the Teacher Incentive Allotment was created in a way that was uniquely Texan and honored local control, and the Texas Education Agency collaborated with Texas Tech University to ensure the Legislature’s vision became a reality for educators. We are less than 15 months out since the historic bill’s passage, and **the Legislature cannot undo this important work now.**

We recognize the fiscal constraints legislators are facing. Expected costs for the TIA this biennium are roughly \$90 million, and we firmly believe there is no more worthy investment than the one you make in the Texas students and teachers. This is \$50 million less than the expected cost of the program at the bill’s passage (see www.thetexasplan.com).

Chipping away at House Bill 3 undermines the work of the 181 legislators who committed themselves to ensuring educators had a pathway to a six-figure salary, the 825 school systems that have submitted letters of intent to apply for TIA dollars and devoted time and energy to create quality systems, and the 3,900 teachers who received designations of Recognized, Exemplary or Master just last month. But behind these first 3,900 stand thousands more who have stepped up to deliver quality instruction to 5.4 million Texas schoolchildren and who see the TIA as a way to finally earn compensation commensurate with their impact.

House Bill 3 is the most important step this state has taken toward increasing equity and improving outcomes in our school finance system. Our organizations are firmly against any consideration of programmatic changes or structural alterations next session. We respectfully urge you to maintain your commitment to strategic compensation systems.

Respectfully,

Dominique McCain
Managing Director, Best in Class

Bridget Devlin
Executive Director, Texas Impact Network

Todd Williams
CEO, The Commit Partnership

Additional Supporting Organizations:

- Dallas College School of Education
- Dallas Regional Chamber
- E3 Alliance
- Educate Texas
- Leadership ISD
- Read Fort Worth
- RGV Partnership
- Tarrant To and Through
- Teach Plus
- Texas Business Leadership Council
- Texas District Charter Alliance
- Teach For America Texas
- The Education Trust – Texas



Appendix: District/Region Specific HB3 Implementation Stories on the Teacher Incentive Allotment

- New State Program Picks San Perlita: <https://www.valleymorningstar.com/2020/08/26/new-state-program-picks-san-perlita-school-district/>
 - Lubbock ISD kicks off new Texas Teacher Incentive Allotment program: <https://www.everythinglubbock.com/news/local-news/lubbock-isd-kicks-off-new-texas-teacher-incentive-allotment-program/>
 - Ector County ISD teachers in line for incentive pay: https://www.oaoa.com/news/education/ecisd/ecisd-teachers-in-line-for-incentive-pay/article_78ebcd52-e315-11ea-ad68-9ffee6f06134.html
 - Thousands of Texas teachers set to receive pay increase, TEA says (San Antonio): <https://www.ksat.com/news/local/2020/08/26/thousand-of-texas-teachers-set-to-receive-pay-increase-tea-says/>
 - Some RGV teachers can now earn six-figure salaries: <https://www.valleycentral.com/news/some-rgv-teachers-can-now-earn-six-figure-salaries/>
 - Opinion: Successfully educating children requires investments in good teachers: <https://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/editorials/2020/08/04/successfully-educating-children-requires-investments-in-good-teachers/>
 - Longview ISD one of 26 districts in state chosen for new teacher incentive program: https://www.news-journal.com/news/local/longview-isd-one-of-26-districts-in-state-chosen-for-new-teacher-incentive-program/article_1e30774e-e93e-11ea-8263-73ccec5cbc72.html
 - TEA rewards teachers with pay raise amid pandemic: <https://www.krgv.com/news/tea-rewards-teachers-with-pay-raise-amid-pandemic/>
 - Anderson-Shiro County ISD receives Lone Star Award (Anderson-Shiro): <https://www.navasotaexaminer.com/article/news/ascisd-receives-lone-star-award>
 - Some Texas teachers are getting the biggest pay hikes of their careers. Here's how (Galveston): <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/education/article/Some-Texas-teachers-are-getting-the-biggest-pay-15541479.php>
 - State awards incentives of \$350K to Palestine teachers: https://www.palestineherald.com/education/state-awards-incentives-of-350k-to-palestine-teachers/article_cb649b18-f4a4-11ea-add7-d356b4acdea7.html
 - Harmony Science Academy Austin approved for new state teacher incentive program: <https://www.statesman.com/news/20200903/harmony-science-academy-austin-approved-for-new-state-teacher-incentive-program>
 - Frisco ISD considering teacher incentive allotment program: https://starlocalmedia.com/friscoenterprise/news/fisd-considering-teacher-incentive-allotment-program/article_06b903f8-42b6-11ea-a366-a3ca4ce4fed1.html
 - Tyler ISD to provide state-funded incentive pay to high-performing teachers: <https://www.kltv.com/2020/05/28/tyler-isd-provide-state-funded-incentive-pay-high-performing-teachers>
 - Teachers Across Texas Have Potential To Earn Six Figures Yearly, With New State Program: <https://www.nbcdfw.com/news/local/carter-in-the-classroom/teachers-across-texas-have-potential-to-earn-six-figures-yearly-with-new-state-program/2434789/>
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