



Teacher pay: Now is the time

The need is urgent:

- A third of the teachers who began teaching this year won't be in the classroom five years from now, and low pay is a major reason why.
- Average teacher pay in Texas lags \$6,500 behind the national average, even after the 2019 raises.
- Since 2002, the Legislature has refused to increase the state's \$75 monthly contribution to each school employee's health insurance, even though rising health care costs continue to erode the take-home pay of thousands of educators.
- According to a TSTA survey, teachers spend \$738 a year to buy classroom supplies not provided for them by the district. Spread across all 350,000 Texas teachers, this represents a potential \$250 million annual subsidy for elected officials who shortchange public education.
- Almost 40 percent of teachers take extra jobs during the school year to meet family financial needs, a TSTA survey found. About 53 percent are seriously considering leaving the profession.
- House Bill 3 was a good start, but the governor and the Legislature need to do more. Not only does average teacher pay lag woefully behind other states, Texas trails the national average in spending per pupil by nearly \$3000 per student.

The money is there:

To keep Texas schools and teachers from falling even further behind, the governor and the Legislature must do more to maintain the spending levels of House Bill 3. To help, lawmakers can tap into the \$11.6 billion Rainy Day Fund.

For all teachers, not just a few:

TSTA opposes "incentive" or "merit-based" pay plans, largely based on STAAR scores, which single out a few teachers for extra pay. The best way to keep effective teachers in the classroom begins with raising teacher pay in Texas to the national average.

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