



# TSTA NEWS

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## **TSTA: Less than one-third of 1 percent of Texas teachers earn six-figure salaries**

Covering up his poor record on education funding and educator pay, Gov. Greg Abbott has been trying to mislead Texas teachers and voters with suggestions that six-figure salaries for teachers are more realistic than they really are under his administration.

Abbott has been promising six-figure salaries for teachers for four years. In his recent debate with his Democratic reelection opponent, Beto O'Rourke, he said the idea is "catching on around the state. If teachers will dedicate themselves to be these master teachers, they will be able to earn a six-figure salary."

After all the governor's claims and promises, however, only 1,040 of Texas' 369,000 teachers received six-figure salaries during the 2021-22 school year, according to figures that the Texas State Teachers Association obtained from the Texas Education Agency. Most of those are believed to be participants in the Texas Incentive Allotment (TIA), a limited merit-pay program created by the Legislature in 2019.

"Six-figure salaries apply to less than one-third of 1 percent of Texas' total teacher workforce," TSTA President Ovidia Molina said. "Abbott dangles pie-in-the-sky promises for educators, when the sad truth is that the vast majority of Texas teachers earn much less than six figures and will never earn anything close to six figures as long as Abbott remains in office."

"Abbott is simply trying to divert attention from the fact that the average teacher pay in Texas, about \$59,000 a year, is \$7,500 below the national average. The deficit is even worse, almost \$13,000, for Texas' highest-paid and most-experienced teachers. These teachers, who are at the top of their districts' pay scales, average \$63,600 in Texas, while their peers nationally average \$76,500 in pay," Molina added, citing figures from the National Education Association's most recent state rankings.

Inadequate pay is one reason that 70 percent of teacher respondents to a recent TSTA survey said they were seriously considering leaving the profession. Forty-one percent said they had to take extra jobs during the school year to meet their families' financial needs.

"If teachers want to realize the six-figure salaries they have earned and deserve, Texas needs to elect new leadership in Austin, beginning with a new governor who will deliver, not keep offering empty promises," Molina said.