



# Higher pay for teachers and support staff

## Now is the time:

- 70% of teachers are seriously considering leaving the profession, and low pay is a major reason why.
- 12% of Texas teachers left their jobs during the 2021-22 school year, the largest attrition rate the state has seen since 2007-08.
- One in five of the new teachers hired last year were not certified. If Texas wants to address the teacher shortage, it needs to pay teachers professional salaries.
- Instead, average teacher salary in Texas lags \$7,500 behind the national average, even after the 2019 raises. Pay for support staff is even worse.
- 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 take-home pay.
- According to a TSTA survey, teachers spend \$846 a year to buy classroom supplies not provided for them by the district. Spread across all 370,000 Texas teachers, this represents a potential \$300 million annual subsidy for elected officials who shortchange public education.
- 41 percent of teachers must take extra jobs during the school year to make ends meet even though they find it to be harmful to the quality of their teaching.
- Texas also trails the national average in per pupil spending by hundreds of dollars per student.

## The money is there:

House Bill 3, passed in 2019, was a good start but the governor and the Legislature need to do more. Texas has a budgetary surplus of \$32.7 billion, meaning budget-writers will have more than enough money to pay for more school funding, including higher pay for teachers and support staff. TSTA is seeking a minimum salary increase of \$10,000 per teacher above the amount each teacher would have received pursuant to local salary schedules and compensation systems. This is approximately the amount by which the average Texas teacher salary would have increased if teachers had received a proportionate share of state funding increases over the past two decades. We are seeking pay increases of at least 7.5 percent for support staff.

## 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. Gov. Abbott has been promising six-figure salaries for teachers, but six-figure salaries through the Teacher Incentive Allotment applies to less than one third of 1 percent of Texas' total teacher workforce. The best way to keep effective teachers in the classroom begins with raising teacher pay in Texas to the national average.

