



HB 2: EDUCATOR COMPENSATION

The following are the Texas State Teachers Association's comments delivered to the Texas Senate Committee on Education regarding Educator Compensation on October 6, 2026.

The Texas State Teachers Association welcomes the opportunity to comment on HB 2 monitoring and educator compensation. HB 2 passed in the 89th session, infused much needed dollars into Texas public schools, including the funding of the Teacher Retention Allotment and Support Staff Allotment for educators. Even with the pay increases the Legislature enacted for most teachers last year — the first statewide raises in six years — thousands of Texas teachers are still struggling to make ends meet for their families. Many are evaluating how much longer they can afford to remain in the teaching profession

Recently, TSTA in partnership with faculty at Sam Houston State University conducted a teacher moonlighting and morale survey covering a number of issues affecting teachers' ability to do their jobs. This year, 497 teacher members of TSTA participated, and 33 percent — one-third of them — said that, despite the pay bump, they still had to take extra jobs during the school year to meet their budgetary needs. This was the same percentage — 33 percent — who reported moonlighting during the school year the last time this survey was taken in 2024 — before the pay raises.

Teachers also reported spending an average of \$841 a year on school supplies for which they were not reimbursed and \$409 per month out of pocket on health insurance.

The 2025 pay increases, which covered most but not all teachers, were a step in the right direction, but they still fell short of what must be done to address Texas' shortfall of experienced teachers.

According to the National Education Association's annual rankings of education spending, the raises helped boost the average teacher salary in Texas for the 2025-26 school year to \$68,000, but that is still more than \$8,500 below the national average and ranks Texas 29th among the states and the District of Columbia. Even with the raises, Texas teachers on average are earning 3.67 percent less than they were in 2017, after salaries are adjusted for inflation.

Overall, Texas public school financing lagged nationwide averages, as Texas spent \$15,557 per ADA on public school funding in 2025-26, almost \$5,000 less per student than the national average, ranking Texas 40th. Even after the passage of HB 2, school districts are under pressure, as a range of school districts throughout the state have announced cuts, closures, and consolidations, including Austin, Houston, Fort Bend, San Antonio, Plano, and Fort Worth ISD. Countless more are struggling with deficit budgets as districts face continued rising costs and chronic state underfunding.

Texas educators value last session's pay raises, but there is still work to be done, as lagging employee compensation, district budget deficits, and school closures make clear that lawmakers should expand HB 2's public education investment in the 90th legislative session.