

Date: October 13th, 2022

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Task Force Members Present: Josue Tamarez Torres, Alexandra Fain, Ashley Osborne, Brandon Chandler, Brian Kruk, Chane Rascoe, Chris Tatum, Christie Volmer, Cynthia Hopkins, Dave Lewis, Diana Barrera Ugarte, Eric Hale, Faye Urich, Greg Rodriguez, Janie Coheen, Jason Hewitt, Jay Killgo, Jean Streepey, Jennifer Kuehne, Judd Marshall, Kimberly Davis, Kisaundra Harris, LaTonya Goffney, Leah Tunnell, Linda Galvan, Melina Recio, Norma Castillo, Pam Fisher, Rick Rodriguez, Roland Hernandez, Sadie Atha, Sergio Estrada, Sherry Taylor, Suzanne Kirkland, Tiffany Kilcoyne, Tiffany Klaerner, Valerie Haywood, Vania Amado

Task Force Support Present: Kelvey Oeser, Kyla Jaramillo, Natalie Brown, Ivan Nieves, Jessica McLoughlin, Melissa Yoder, Emily Garcia, Grace Wu, Matthew Holzgrafe

Session: Opening Session

Welcome and Logistics

The Teacher Vacancy Task Force Chair, Josue Tamarez Torres, welcomed the Task Force to the meeting. Mr. Tamarez Torres reviewed the Task Force charge, meeting norms, outcomes, and the Task Force roadmap. He discussed the framework for developing recommendations. Deputy Commissioner Kelvey Oeser reminded Task Force members of the role of TEA (Texas Education Agency) versus the Task Force in the work moving forward. She reviewed some of the actions taken between the meetings to further the recommendation process.

House Committee on Public Education Joint Hearing on the Teacher Workforce Update

Mr. Tamarez Torres shared that on September 20th there was the House Committee on Public Education Joint Hearing on the Texas Workforce. He introduced the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) chair Jean Streepey and Deputy Commissioner Oeser who were also on the panel. He reviewed the initial trends from discussion and then SBEC chair Jean Streepey shared a summary of her testimony. Deputy Commissioner Oeser shared a summary of policy considerations and introduced Commissioner Mike Morath.

Remarks from Commissioner Mike Morath

Commissioner Morath thanked the Task Force for their efforts and contributions. He emphasized that he is frequently sharing the Task Force trends. He shared some additional considerations for the Task Force around increasing compensation for teachers not only through overall funding increases, but also through more strategic staffing support. He highlighted some trends seen in both data across our state, as well as across other states. He reviewed how school funding over time has increased based on per pupil funding. He discussed an overall cut of education in 2011-2012, and how since then there has been a significant and sustained increase in per pupil spending each year. He discussed how when school budgets increase the district decides how to spend the money based on the needs of the district, and that the funding increase may not always translate into higher pay. He shared how when we look at our trends as a state we have hired more teachers per pupil as funding has increased and the we currently have the lowest student to teacher ratio in

our recent history. He reminded participants that average teacher to student ratios are not the same as class size, and that these ratios may be low due to a number of factors, including hiring teachers who co-teach classes, or adding some smaller classes while other class sizes remain high. Commissioner Morath shared that Texas employs more teachers than other states. He shared a comparison of Texas to California. Texas has fewer students than California, but far more teachers and lower pay. The Commissioner discussed that the legislature is interested in increasing teacher pay but discussed the trade-off between hiring more teachers and paying teachers more. He shared that if student and teacher ratios would have been maintained at the 2012-2013 ratio, teachers would have an average pay increase of \$4,000. He shared that there are always trade-offs that decision-makers and policymakers must consider.

Q&A Panel Discussion

Mr. Tamarez Torres started the Q&A discussion with questions submitted by Task Force members in advance. A Task Force member asked questions about the State Board of Education (SBOE) concerns around edTPA. The Commissioner shared that different stakeholders had different concerns, but that one concern that was voiced was how the shift could potentially impact vacancies. He discussed that edTPA is a performance assessment aligned to what new teachers need to do, and that Texas had a six-year transition plan to monitor data, phase in implementation, and ensure no negative impact to teacher supply. Jean Streepy added that SBEC recognized the increase in alternative certifications candidates and the variance across preparation in those programs. She shared that edTPA is an assessment aligned to what teachers are expected to do in the classroom, and that this assessment is the same regardless of pathway, guaranteeing that all teachers with a standard certification have had to demonstrate performance at the same level. The Commissioner shared that many states that shifted away from edTPA did so because they did not have the intentional, six-year transition rollout plan like Texas.

Another Task Force member asked if TEA will financially support residency programs. The Commissioner shared that TEA does not appropriate funds but has invested current funds into residency programs. He shared that the question about future funding was more of a legislative appropriation question.

Deputy Commissioner Oeser shared that there were several questions about staffing ratios in the chat and what is included in those ratios. She stated that there was concern that individuals could read the ratios as 15 students in a class and recognized that many classes have more students. She shared that the ratios are driven by total number of students divided by total number of instructional staff and that some of the instructional staff may not have their own class. She emphasized that the student to teacher ratio is different from class size, especially core content class size. She reflected on better ways to represent this information so there are no misconceptions that we need to raise all class sizes, instead we need to rethink staffing ratios in other ways.

A Task Force member asked if anyone had done a study on supplemental pay of extracurricular activities and if any other states spend as much money on football programs as Texas does. The Commissioner shared that TEA has not explicitly done a study on this. He talked about the supplemental stipends used to pay extracurriculars and talked about the life of an athletic coach and the long nights they experience. The Commissioner added that in his visits to school systems across the state it is common for him to see very large class sizes but multiple adults supporting students in these classes in competition-based programs (band, choir, athletics, etc.), but it is rare to see that in a core content class. He talked about how staffing models can look quite different even within a school.

Mr. Tamarez Torres thanked the panel and the Comissioner.

Working Groups Update

Mr. Tamarez Torres reviewed some shifts of recommendations across working groups to mitigate redundancy, allowed time for the group to provide input, and asked the group to transition to their working group.