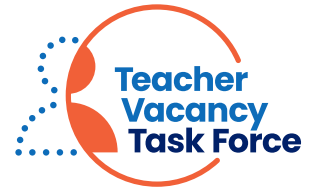


Teacher Vacancy Task Force Final Report | Executive Summary



Developing a Thriving Teacher Workforce in Texas | February 2023

The Teacher Vacancy Task Force (TVTF) was established in March 2022 by Governor Abbott to examine teacher retention and recruitment challenges across Texas. The TVTF met every other month from March 2022 to February 2023 with the primary objectives of understanding challenges school systems are facing related to teacher vacancies and developing recommendations for regulatory or other policy changes for the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the legislature. The TVTF was comprised of teachers and school system leaders in public education hailing from a variety of school systems and geographies and serving student populations that are representative of the diversity of Texas as well as a wide range of grade-levels and content areas.

Through examining research and evidence, considering the perspectives of educators across the state, and continuous stakeholder input, the TVTF developed recommendations focused on support for teachers in the key areas of teacher compensation, training and support, and working conditions. In order for these recommendations to be implemented and expanded, the TVTF recommends that they not only be offered as options for districts, but that additional funding be allocated at the level necessary for successful implementation.

Compensation

Theme 1: Increase Overall Compensation and Support Strategic Compensation Strategies

- A** Fund a significant increase in overall teacher salaries by increasing the basic allotment and other state funding mechanisms, while increasing the requirement that school systems invest new funding in teacher salaries
- B** Update the minimum salary schedule to reflect the value of Texas teachers and promote differentiated compensation
- C** Provide technical assistance for school systems to engage in strategic compensation, including through the Teacher Incentive Allotment, established by the 86th Texas Legislature, and staffing considerations to further increase and differentiate salaries

Theme 2: Enhance Teachers' Total Compensation Package

- A** Reduce the cost of healthcare insurance for teachers
- B** Prioritize teacher wellbeing through mental health supports, expanded access to childcare, and other benefits
- C** Temporarily subsidize the retire/rehire surcharge

Theme 3: Provide Incentives and Support for Hard-to-Staff Areas

- A** Subsidize certification and hiring incentives for Special Education and Bilingual Education Teachers
- B** Create targeted marketing campaigns and incentives to recruit teachers back into the profession
- C** Collect and report real-time data about teacher vacancies in tandem with the development of a statewide teacher employment web application

Training and Support

Theme 4: Improve the Pipeline and Pre-service Preparation of Novice Teachers

- A** Expand high-quality Grow Your Own pathways for high school students and paraprofessionals seeking to become certified teachers
- B** Establish and fund a Teacher Residency pathway and expand educator preparation program capacity to produce teacher residents through technical assistance support

Theme 5: Expand Training and Support for Teacher Mentorship and Teacher Leadership Opportunities

- A** Develop cooperating teacher and mentor teacher trainings that leverage job-embedded and research-based best practices
- B** Increase funding for and scale of the Mentor Program Allotment established by the 86th Texas Legislature
- C** Provide opportunities and technical assistance to create and expand teacher leadership roles

Theme 6: Provide Access to and Support for High-Quality Instructional Materials

- A** Expand awareness of and access to high-quality instructional materials to reduce time teachers spend searching for and creating materials
- B** Require educator preparation programs to integrate instruction on understanding high-quality instructional materials into coursework and provide training for faculty/staff on curriculum and assessment literacy best practices

Working Conditions

Theme 7: Demonstrate Respect and Value for Teacher Time

- A** Develop and conduct teacher time studies with school systems to inform staffing and scheduling policies and decisions
- B** Provide technical assistance to school administrators to redesign master schedules that increase teacher time for planning and development
- C** Expand training and technical assistance supports for school systems to design and implement strategic staffing models

Theme 8: Ensure Schoolwide Culture and Discipline Supports

- A** Expand access to additional counseling staff, services, and partnerships that support both students and teachers
- B** Provide preparation, training, and ongoing coaching for school administrators on best practices related to school discipline and fostering a supportive learning environment

