

# Strategic Compensation Strategies Incentivize Effective Teachers to Stay in the Classroom and Dramatically Improve Student Outcomes

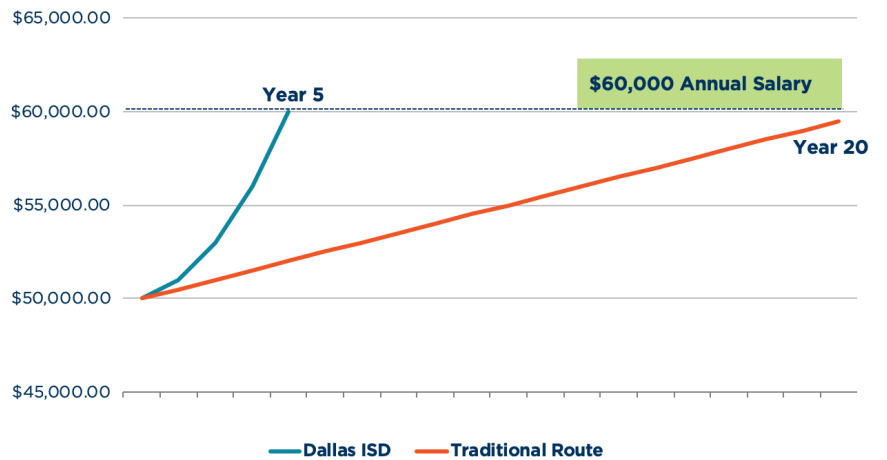
Teachers are the single most impactful in-school factor in determining student achievement . A truly great teacher can have a transformative impact on a student’s academic and life trajectory. Yet, **nearly every Texas school district compensates teachers based on seniority, regardless of classroom effectiveness**. As a result, school districts lack a differentiated breakdown of the effectiveness of their educators, and effective teachers are not incentivized to teach in challenging, high-needs campuses, where they are needed most.

## Texas Teachers Should be Rewarded for the Impact They Have on Student Outcomes

Dallas ISD identifies and rewards highly effective teachers through a robust teacher evaluation and compensation system, called the Teacher Excellence Initiative (“TEI”), with great success.

**Educators can earn significantly more, sooner:** Dallas ISD teachers can earn a \$60K salary by their fifth year, instead of by their 20th year under a traditional route. Dallas ISD’s most effective teachers now make between \$80,000 and \$90,000, allowing them to stay in the classroom and support their families.

**Teacher Salary Schedule, Dallas ISD TEI vs. Traditional Seniority Pay**



**These systems boost retention of effective teachers:** Nearly 90% of teachers rated proficient or higher in Dallas ISD stayed in the district, substantially higher than the state average of 83%.

**Systems like TEI benefit all teachers, not just those assessed as effective.** While Dallas’ effective teachers benefitted from an immediate and often substantial raise, the rest of the district’s teachers were not left behind. A multiple-measure teacher evaluation system allows districts to **differentiate professional development** based on specific and identified teacher needs, **pair beginning teachers with highly effective mentors**, and **strategically staff high-needs campuses**.

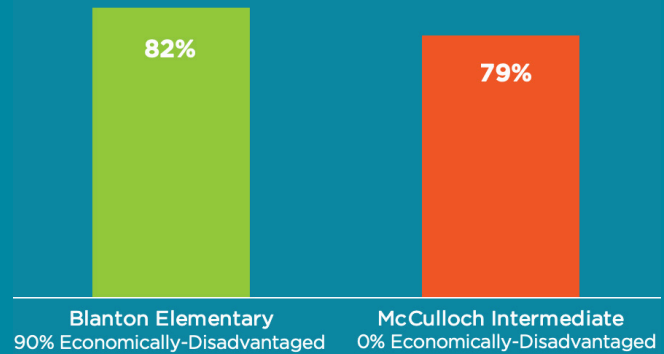
## School Finance Commission Recommendations

In line with the recommendations of the Texas Commission on Public School Finance, the state should provide new formula funding, at **\$100 million annually** beginning in the 2019-2020 school year for those **districts that choose to develop a multi-measure evaluation system to identify and reward their most effective educators** with meaningfully higher salaries.

This funding should grow at a rate of an additional \$100 million each year, reaching **\$1 billion per year in the 2028-2029 school year**. Evaluation systems created with this funding may be locally developed with teacher input, subject to TEA guidelines and approval. Districts should also have the option to implement a TEA-developed system.

## Same Students, Same Neighborhood, Different Results

After three years under ACE, Blanton Elementary, a chronically-failing Dallas ISD campus with 90% economically-disadvantaged students, outperformed Highland Park ISD's McCulloch Intermediate School with 0% economically-disadvantaged students on the 5th grade STAAR math exam. An astounding **82% of Blanton 5th graders met standard** on the STAAR math exam, compared to 79% of McCulloch 5th graders.



## Robust Teacher Evaluation Systems are Good for Educators, but Better for Students

Impactful teachers stand to gain significantly from multi-measure evaluation and compensation systems, but **students, particularly those with the highest needs, stand to gain more**. School districts across Dallas-Fort Worth (Dallas, Fort Worth, Garland and Richardson ISD) have leveraged the use of quantitative and qualitative measures to identify and strategically staff their most effective educators at their most challenged campuses through a model called Accelerating Campus Excellence ("ACE"). As a result of ACE:

- **10,000 students in Dallas and Fort Worth ISD no longer attend a failing school.**
- **94% of ACE campuses in Dallas and Fort Worth ISD met standard** after the first year of implementation, after an average of 4 consecutive years as "Improvement Required" or "F" under new accountability system.
- ACE campuses in Dallas and Fort Worth experienced **upwards of 40 percentage point gains in reading and 67 percentage point gains in math** in less than 3 years.
- **Classroom behavior improved dramatically.** In Garland and Richardson ISDs, ACE campuses saw between 21% and 78% fewer discipline occurrences after just four months.

## Supporters



1. RAND Corporation, *Evaluating Value-Added Models for Teacher Accountability*, 2003.
2. Dallas ISD, *TEI and Achieving Improved Student Outcomes*, 2018.
3. Ibid.
4. Dallas ISD and Fort Worth ISD *STAAR Reading and Math at Meets*, 2015-2018
5. Garland ISD, Richardson ISD, *ACE Fall 2018 Data*
6. Smith, Corbett. *A Dallas ISD elementary in the heart of Pleasant Grove tops Highland Park in STAAR math exams*. May 16, 2018.