

The Dallas ISD Board of Trustees has taken the following action on items related to:

Compensation of High Quality Teachers

October 15, 2015

- *Item 5.A: Teacher Excellence Initiative Update*

✓ No Board Action – Performance Monitoring Update

✓ View the briefing update presented to the Board [HERE](#) and the supplemental information [HERE](#)

May 20, 2014

- *Item 9.A.3 – Amendment to Board Policy DNA (Local) Performance Appraisal Evaluation of Teachers*

✓ Passed 7-2

✓ Performance pay will allow for a way to reward high performing teachers and attract quality talent.

Yes: Cowan, Blackburn, Micchiche, Bingham, Jones, Morath, Solis

No: Nutall, Ranger

Summary

This vote represented the formal adoption of the Teacher Excellence Initiative (TEI) as an overhaul of the teacher evaluation and appraisal system that had previously been known as PDAS. The approved appraisal system is the foundation for TEI as it establishes the three criteria by which teachers will be evaluated: Teacher performance, student achievement and student perception. Teacher performance is demonstrated through a variety of spot, extended or informal evaluations, while student achievement is measured through the use of standardized local, state, and national assessment measures as well as student learning objectives (SLOs) developed by teachers and approved by evaluators. The final criterion, student perception, is measured through the use of District-approved student survey instruments. Each teacher receives a final score in the above components (if applicable) and the sum of these components will combine to produce a summative evaluation rating (the extent to which each of the three criteria contributes to the summative rating depends on the category within which each teacher falls). The final step outlined in Policy DNA (local) is the use of the summative evaluation ratings to determine teacher effectiveness levels which subsequently dictates the level of compensation that the teacher receives.

Background, Context, and Pros/Cons

Discussion from the May 2014 board meeting demonstrated, amongst the majority of trustees, a dissatisfaction with the status quo evaluation system that had previously connected only years of experience and higher degrees to compensation increases. Most vocal in their support, Trustees Solis and Bingham voiced excitement around a bold new initiative intended to reward great teachers currently within the district and potentially even attract outside talent due to the relatively short amount of time teachers could feasibly progress to higher compensation levels. Trustee Micchiche expressed his support for the measure given that over time the policy had progressed to include a more substantial professional development component to help support and provide a roadmap for increasing teacher efficacy in alignment with expectations outline in the evaluation system. Micchiche also voiced support for the manner in which the system would be phased in, allowing time for educators to adjust and properly evaluate for themselves whether such a system fits your professional goals. Trustee Jones similarly expressed cautiously optimistic support for the initiative, echoing sentiments that the objective of TEI, to recognize, support and retain highly effective teachers for all students was critical, yet expressed reservations over the time it might take for such teachers to initially be recognized. She further emphasized the importance of annual performance reporting to ensure the system continues to respond to the needs of teachers, administrators and students.

Trustees opposed to the measure, Nutall and Ranger, both voiced concern over the creation of an environment that emphasized high stakes testing that didn't properly measure teacher effectiveness. While the TEI system includes multiple measures of student academic achievement as well as evaluation and student survey results, both Trustees were concerned with the proportion of the evaluation rating that was determined by academic achievement results. Trustee Ranger expressed further concern that other such pay-for-performance systems discouraged teacher collaboration and instead encouraged teachers to develop good test-takers rather than critical thinkers and well-developed individual children.

Discussion

A growing concern across school districts is the dissolution of professionalism in the way that educators are compensated, rewarding longevity over the ultimate goal of ensuring a quality educational experience for students. Objective 6 of the district Educational Philosophy as outlined in local board policy AE (Exhibit) places an emphasis on recruiting, developing and retaining highly effective personnel.

- Recruitment: As a bold and innovative new system, TEI's ability to link compensation to educator effectiveness (using a variety of comprehensive measurements) as well as the rate at which educators can see substantial increases in compensation gives Dallas ISD a unique recruitment advantage to attract quality teachers looking to impact student achievement and progress in their professional careers.
- Development: Wide professional development offerings aligned to performance expectations outlined in the evaluation system will continue to support teachers as they hone their craft and continue to work towards greater effectiveness ratings.
- Retention: TEI as a system works to retain highly effective teachers. After the first year of implementation, more than 70% of returning TEI-eligible teachers received a salary increase during the 2015-16 school year averaging \$2,739, with higher increases received by more effective teachers.¹ Furthermore, the retention of teachers who earned Proficient or above was demonstrated to be significantly higher (averaging approximately a 93% retention rate) than those who earned Progressive or Unsatisfactory (averaging, by comparison, approximately 68% retention).²

While certainly not a perfect system, the data validates the approval of TEI and its alignment with Board objectives and the overall goal of ensuring a highly effective teacher for all students. There currently exists a working task force focused on recommendations for further research-based improvements.

¹ TEI Board Briefing Update (powerpoint), October 15, 2015. Accessible [HERE](#)

² Ibid.