

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

Recruitment of High Quality Teachers

March 25, 2016

- *Item 9.04 - Agreement with Urban Teachers for the Teacher Residency Preparation Program*

✓ Passed 5-3

✓ Partnership with a best in-class teacher residency model to supplement the pipeline of teacher candidates

Yes: Flores, Micciche, Bingham, Cowan, Solis

No: Blackburn, Nutall, Foreman

December 17, 2015

- *Item 9.09 - Agreement with Teach For America (TFA) for Recruitment Services*

✓ Passed 5-2

✓ Continued partnership with an established pipeline of high achieving new teachers to meet needs in critical shortage areas.

Yes: Flores, Micciche, Bingham, Cowan, Solis

No: Nutall, Foreman

Not Present: Blackburn

- *Item 9.10 - Approve the Critical Shortage Recruitment Incentives*

✓ Passed 7-0

✓ Supplemental salary incentives intended to recruit talented teachers in the areas of math, science, and bilingual education.

Yes: Flores, Micciche, Nutall, Foreman, Bingham, Cowan, Solis

Not Present: Blackburn

June 25, 2015

- *Item 8.17 - Approve 2015-2016 Salary Schedule*

✓ Passed 7-2

✓ Brings starting teacher salaries above \$50K, which is competitive with peer districts and above average nationally.

Yes: Flores, Micciche, Morath, Blackburn, Bingham, Cowan, Solis

No: Nutall, Foreman

Summary

These votes represent support for both continued and new partnerships with proven alternative certification programs as well as incentive packages for teachers in critical needs subject areas in order to supplement the pipeline of teachers to Dallas ISD.

- Since 2009, Teach for America (TFA) has supplied a total of 658 teachers to DISD (*Item 9.09 on 12/17/15*). In the 2015-2016 school year, 416 individuals affiliated with TFA were employed by Dallas ISD, nearly 50 percent of whom were alumni. Statistical analysis has shown that within Dallas ISD, TFA teachers, on average, outperform all non-TFA teachers with the same years of experience, yet a greater proportion of non-TFA teachers than TFA teachers remain in district classrooms for three years or longer. The average third year retention rate across four cohorts beginning in 2009 for TFA teachers was approximately 42%, while that of Non-TFA teachers was approximately 65%. Detailed analysis can be found [HERE](#).
- Urban Teachers (*addressed in Item 9.04 on 3/25/16*) is a teacher residency program currently operating in Baltimore, MD, and Washington, D.C., that requires aspiring teachers to commit to four years of work in an urban school system. During their first year, participants serve as residents at a school site and receive on-site coaching and support while studying to become teachers and completing master's degree coursework through John's Hopkins University School of Education. The following year, participants begin their three-year teaching commitment, complete master's degree coursework and continue to receive ongoing coaching at their site.
- The recruitment incentives (*Item 9.10 on 12/17/15*) are a series of salary supplements in order to attract teachers to Dallas ISD in the critical needs areas of math, science, and bilingual education.

Background, Context, and Pros/Cons

Discussion from the two board meetings listed above raised serious trustee concerns regarding teacher shortages experienced throughout Dallas ISD, and the passed proposals represent three distinct means to address such shortages. Much of the exchange regarding the Teach for America partnership during the December 2015 meeting revolved around the data presented to the board through an independent district report that demonstrated the effectiveness of TFA teachers compared with other non-TFA teachers in the district of similar experience levels (see full report [HERE](#)). Supporters of the motion referenced such data to argue that TFA teachers add proven value to the district and fill previously open positions without displacement of any current employees. Trustees Foreman and Nutall both expressed concern over the lack of experience and training of TFA teachers, and the high concentration of such teachers in low-performing, high-needs schools in their districts. Foreman argued that such funds would be better spent recruiting and hiring experienced teachers. Such concerns resurfaced in the discussion surrounding the partnership with the Urban Teachers program. Proponents of the partnership contended that the year of pre-service residency gave participants sufficient district exposure and training in order to then serve as an effective classroom teacher for the three years of service that follow. While all present board members voted in favor of the incentives package proposal, most echoed the sentiment that while such packages might be necessary to remain regionally competitive, they desired to see more innovative approaches to recruitment of talent to the Dallas ISD pipeline.

Discussion

A critical element to the strengthening of a public school system is the ability to attract high quality talent to serve in the district as teachers, administrators, and other district employees. 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. Since 2008, enrollment at teacher preparation programs has steadily declined in numerous large states across the nation. California experienced a nearly 53% decline between 2008-09 and 2012-13, while Texas lost nearly 12,000 in enrollment numbers over the same time period (an approximately 19% decline).¹ Meanwhile, the overall turnover rate has grown steadily from 11.9% in 2010-11 to 15.3% in 2012-13 statewide, and up to 17.8% in Dallas ISD specifically.² Given the current realities of the national, statewide and Dallas ISD talent pipeline, both Teach for America and the Urban Teachers programs bring additional, much needed teachers to the region to serve in many of the schools experiencing highest teacher shortages. Both programs have statistically proven track records of increased student achievement either in Dallas ISD or the demographically similar school districts of DC and Baltimore City Public Schools. Given that 80% of the District budget is allocated to personnel, it is critical to ensure that such personnel is of the highest quality. While recognizing that first and second year teachers still have yet to reach their maximum potential impact on student achievement, such teachers from these programs are more often than not significantly better than the alternative (vacancies and long-term substitutes). While incentive packages to recruit teachers to high needs subject areas are important to maintain Dallas ISD competitiveness in the region, the Board's call for more innovative ways to attract talent to the district pipeline are valid and essential to a sustained high quality teacher pipeline.

¹ Sawchuck, S. (2014, October 22). Steep Drops Seen in Teacher-Prep Enrollment Numbers. *Education Week*, pp. 1,10. Retrieved from Education Week.

² Haag, M. (2013, December 5). *How Dallas ISD Teacher Turnover Rates Compare to Other Districts*. Retrieved from Dallas Morning News Education Blog: <http://educationblog.dallasnews.com/2013/12/how-dallas-isds-teacher-turnover-rates-compare-to-other-districts.html/>