

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Teacher Excellence Initiative (TEI) is a Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD) initiative started in 2014-15 that replaced the previous tenure-based compensation system with an integrated system that defines, supports, and rewards teacher excellence.

In 2022-23, TEI was funded by General Operating funds, which included an administrative budget of \$570,000; a teacher benefits budget of \$49,307,774; and a TEI Expert Stipend cost of \$350,000. The total budget for the Digital Learning Mentoring and Support ESSER activity in 2022-23 was \$60,000.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS (EQs)¹

EQ1: How was the TEI program implemented?

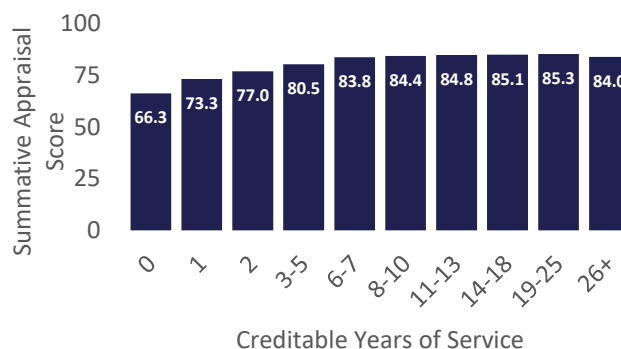
A total of 9,500 teachers received TEI Scorecards for the 2022-23 school year. Most teachers were either Hispanic or African American (72%) and female (69%). Twenty-one percent had earned at least a master's degree when they were hired. Teacher creditable years of service in the Dallas ISD ranged from zero (first-year teachers) to 56 years (mean = 10.4; median = 8.0).

EQ2: What were the results of the teacher performance component of defining excellence?

Summative Appraisal

- The mean summative appraisal score of 80.2 indicated that teachers were performing better on average than Proficient across the summative appraisal rubric.
- Average summative appraisal scores for first-year teachers (66.3) were significantly lower than teachers with more creditable years of service.
- Scores plateaued between six and seven creditable years of service (82.6).

2022-23 Average Summative Appraisal Scores by Creditable Years of Service



Source: Scorecard data file from Human Capital Management dated 10/05/23.

Note: $n = 8,749$ Dallas ISD teachers. Maximum possible summative appraisal score was 100.

EQ3: What were the results of the student experience component of defining excellence?

- Most student experience survey responses for elementary core (85%), elementary non-core (79%), middle school (69%), and high school (74%) teachers were positive.
- First-year teachers (73%) and teachers with at least 26 creditable years of service (73%) had the lowest percentage of positive responses on the student experience survey.
- The average percentage of positive responses trended slightly upward until two years of service and remained steady until between 19 and 25 years of service.

EQ4: What were the results of the Distinguished Teacher Review Process?

- In 2022-23, 2,652 teachers achieved DTR status, which was 28 percent of all district teachers.
- The percentage of DTR teachers was highest for teachers between 14 and 18 years of service (48%) and between 19 and 25 years of service (48%).
- The rate trended upward and peaked at between 14 and 25 years of service (48%) before trending downward at 26 years of service or more (42%).

¹ Trends from 2021-22 and 2022-23 for the TEI results can be found in the full report (Avila, 2022).

EQ5: What were the results of the rewarding excellence (compensation) system of TEI?

Evaluation Scores, Evaluation Ratings, and Effectiveness Levels

- While first-year teachers earned the lowest average evaluation score (62.4), the score gradually increased and remained consistent between six and seven creditable years of service (79.4).
- The largest percentage of teachers received an effectiveness level of Proficient I (34%).

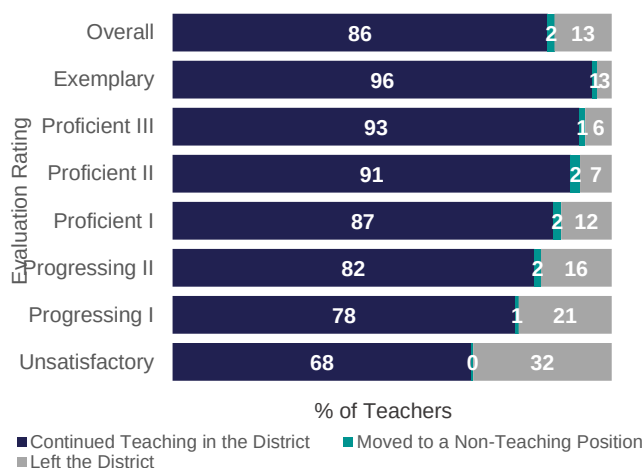
Salary Increases

- Only teachers who received an effectiveness level of Progressing I and above received a salary increase from 2022-23 to 2023-24.
- Teachers who received higher effectiveness levels in 2022-23 received higher salary increases for 2023-24 as compared to those with lower effectiveness levels.

EQ6: What were the retention rates for teachers?

- Overall, the rate of teachers who left the district remained steady from 2021-22 (14%) to 2022-23 (13%).
- In 2022-23, the rate of teachers who left the district generally decreased as effectiveness level increased, indicating that the district retained effective teachers at higher rates than less effective teachers

2022-23 Retention Rates by Evaluation Rating



Source: Scorecard data file from Human Capital Management dated 10/20/23.

Note: n = 9,324 teachers. n = 273 Exemplary. n = 713 Proficient III. n = 1,483 Proficient II. n = 3,316 Proficient I. n = 2,174 Progressing II. n = 1,086 Progressing I. n = 279 Unsatisfactory.

EQ7: What were the results of TEI by region?

- Teachers in Region V had the highest average scores for summative appraisal, total student achievement, base school STAAR, student experience points and also the highest percentage of DTR teachers, whereas Region IV had the lowest for all categories.

EQ8: What were the results of TEI by teacher groups?²

Teacher Retention

- Teachers who continued in the district and who moved to a non-teaching position generally had higher TEI scores than teachers who left the district.

Teacher Type

- First-year teachers, strategic pipeline teachers, and teachers with effectiveness levels below Proficient I had TEI scores below the district averages.

Specialty Campuses

- Teachers at choice and magnet campuses had higher TEI scores than the district for all categories.

Campus Characteristics

- Teachers at campuses with majority White students (N = 165) had higher TEI scores than teachers at campuses with majority Hispanic students (N = 7,708), teachers at campuses with majority African American students (N = 1,018), and the district across all categories.
- TEI scores of teachers at campuses with majority Hispanic students were nearly identical to district averages, and teachers at campuses with majority African American students scored within two points of the district average on their summative appraisal scores, student achievement scores, and student experience points.

School Level

- Teachers who taught at the elementary and high school level generally had TEI scores at or above the district average. Middle school teachers scored below the district average across all categories.

² In this section, TEI scores include mean summative appraisal score, mean total student achievement score, mean student experience score,

and mean percentage of teachers receiving an evaluation rating of Proficient I or higher.

EQ9: What were the teacher and administrator experiences with TEI?³

To collect feedback regarding experiences with TEI, online surveys were administered to Dallas ISD teachers and administrators who participated in the TEI evaluation system during the 2022-23 academic year. Of the teachers and administrators surveyed, 2,712 teachers (33%) and 330 administrators (53%) at least partially completed the survey.

TEI Knowledge, Overall Satisfaction, and Perception of Fairness

- Most teachers (75%) and almost all administrators (96%) reported at least intermediate TEI knowledge.
- A higher rate of administrators (90%) and teachers with higher effectiveness levels (53%) expressed high satisfaction (satisfied or very satisfied) with TEI than teachers at the lowest effectiveness levels (26%).
- A higher rate of administrators (81%) than teachers (39%) rated TEI as at least somewhat fair.
 - Additionally, teachers with effectiveness levels of Proficient II or higher (53%) perceived TEI as at least somewhat fair at a higher rate than other teachers (30% to 31%).
- Administrators (73%) and teachers (54%) most frequently reported that challenges facing lower performing schools compared to higher performing schools was the reason for perceived TEI unfairness.

Defining Excellence

Spot Observations, Extended Observations, and Summative Appraisals

- The rate of administrators who reported that they had conducted summative evaluations for staff members with whom they had worked for an insufficient amount of time remained consistent in 2022-23 compared to 2021-22 (23%).
 - The percentage of administrator respondents who at least sometimes felt pressure to inflate teacher observation scores trended slightly downward in 2022-23 (25%) compared to 2021-22 (26%).
- Administrators rated spot observations (96%), extended observations (98%), and summative appraisals (95%) as more helpful than teachers overall (spot: 68%; extended: 69%; summative: 69%), which was a similar pattern as teachers with higher effectiveness levels (75% to 77%).
- The rate of administrators (92%) and teachers with higher effectiveness levels (75%) who rated summative

appraisal feedback and spot observation feedback as aligned or very aligned exceeded the overall teacher rate (63%).

Student Experience Survey

- In 2022-23, higher rates of administrators (64%) than teachers (48%) rated Student Experience Survey feedback as helpful to teachers.

Supporting Excellence

- Less than half of teachers agreed that the 2022-23 district-sponsored (42%) and campus-sponsored (47%) professional development opportunities offered applicable strategies they were using in the classroom and were aligned with their professional development plans (42% to 45%).
- Teachers with higher effectiveness levels were more likely to agree that campus-level professional development was applicable (53%) aligned (51%), and helpful (65%) than other teachers (39% to 59%).
- A higher rate of administrators (52% to 97%) and Proficient II and higher teachers (49% to 74%) reported campus professional development was aligned with student achievement data, TEI spot observation data, and Student Experience Survey data than teachers at the lowest effectiveness levels (32% to 59%).
- Both administrators and teachers agreed that content-related instruction for special education was in the top three most needed topics of additional professional development.

Rewarding Excellence

- Administrators (66%) were more likely than teachers (40%) to agree or strongly agree that the district should differentiate teacher salary by effectiveness level.
- Administrators were more likely than teachers to agree that the TEI compensation system (a) supports the recruitment and retention of teachers, (b) differentiates salaries to reward teachers who perform well, (c) will positively affect the future of Dallas ISD teachers, and (d) will result in teachers making more money over time than the old system.

EQ10: What were the outcomes related to the ESSER funded Digital Learning Mentoring and Support activity?

- Forty-three percent of new teachers attended at least one Professional & Digital Learning (PDL) training, which did not meet the program goal of 50%.

³ Trends from 2021-22 and 2022-23 on the TEI teacher and administrator survey can be found in the full report (Avila, 2022).

- Across the eight PDL training sessions, 93% of attendees provided feedback, which met the goal of 90%.
- However, only 68% of participants responded favorably that they “gained knowledge and skills I can implement into my job”, which slightly under met the goal of 70 percent.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue successful efforts to retain highly effective teachers at higher rates than low performing teachers.

From 2018-19 to 2022-23, the rate of teachers who left the Dallas ISD remained relatively stable (13%). In addition, teachers at the highest effectiveness levels continued to stay in the district at higher rates than teachers at the lowest effectiveness levels in 2022-23, which was similar to previous years. Therefore, the district should continue their successful efforts to recognize highly effective teachers to encourage them to remain in the district.

Continue to focus on adapting professional development opportunities for teachers.

While both administrators and teachers agreed that classroom management and curriculum content training were among the top three most needed topics for professional development, the topics requested by teachers differed by effectiveness level. For example, teachers at the lowest effectiveness levels tended to choose sessions related to (a) classroom management, (b) effective lesson planning, and development, (c) social emotional learning, and (d) bias equity, and cultural understanding. Proficient II and higher teachers requested sessions related to technology digital integration and curriculum content training. Therefore,

continuing to provide differentiated PD by effectiveness level could meet the different professional development needs of teachers.

Continue efforts to expand professional development opportunities for teachers.

The overall rate of administrators and teachers who reported a need for additional professional development regarding the topics listed in the survey generally trended downward from 2017-18 to 2022-23. In addition, the perceived helpfulness of (a) campus professional development sessions and (b) district summer and fall PDL training sessions trended downward from 2017-18 to 2022-23. A continued focus on expanding the opportunities and topics for professional development could improve perceived need and helpfulness of future professional development.

Continue efforts to improve administrator and teacher perceptions of TEI compensation system.

In 2022-23, about half of administrators (44% to 52%) and less than a third of teachers (24% to 32%) responded favorably that the TEI compensation system (a) supports the recruitment of highly effective teachers (b) supports retention of highly effective teachers (c) differentiates salaries to reward teachers who perform well, (d) will positively affect teachers' futures with the Dallas ISD, (e) makes teachers feel better rewarded financially for what they do as teachers (teachers only), and (f) allows teachers to earn substantially more money over time compared to the old system. Additionally, from 2021-22 to 2022-23, favorable perceptions on these items have generally trended downward for both teachers and administrators. Improving administrator and teacher favorable perceptions on these items could improve overall teacher and administrator perceptions of TEI and bolster acceptance of the system.

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Denisse Avila, Ph.D., Evaluation Analyst I

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Dallas ISD Department of Evaluation and Assessment; Linus D. Wright Administration Building; 9400 North Central Expressway; Dallas, TX 75231.

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For more information, please contact Program Evaluation at evaluation@dallasisd.org.