

# Tolar ISD TIA



# TIA Overview

House Bill 3 was passed by the 86th Texas Legislature in 2019 and signed by Governor Greg Abbott. This sweeping and historic school finance bill provided more money for Texas classrooms, increased teacher compensation, and established the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA). HB 3 is one of the most transformative Texas education bills in recent history.

## What is the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA)?

TIA was established to retain and attract highly effective teachers in hard-to-staff schools while providing outstanding teachers an accessible pathway to a six-figure salary. Unlike previous education programs, the Teacher Incentive Allotment is not a grant. Teachers do not elect to participate in TIA or apply to be a part of TIA. TIA is authorized in two sections of the Texas Education Code (TEC) 21.3521 (Local Optional Teacher Designation System) and 48.112 (Teacher Incentive Allotment).

Local optional teacher designation systems allow districts to identify and designate highly effective teachers using single or multi-year appraisal data. The allotment components allows districts employing designated teachers to receive additional funding through the Foundation School Program.

TIA elevates the education profession by recognizing and rewarding effective teaching and incentivizing outstanding teachers to remain in the classroom and improve student outcomes. Districts use TIA funds to retain their best teachers, recruit promising new teachers, and incentivize teachers to work in high-needs schools and difficult-to-staff positions.

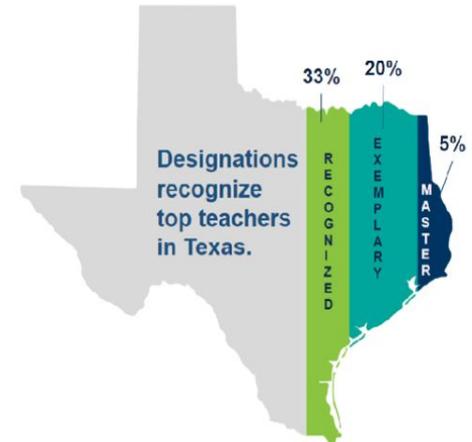
# TIA Overview

## Designations & Allotments

Designations are distinctions awarded to highly effective teachers at the state level by TEA. There are three levels of designation: Recognized, Exemplary, and Master.

Allotments are monetary awards generated by designated teachers that are awarded for the five years of designation. Allotment amounts are based on three different factors:

1. Designation level
2. Campus socioeconomic data
3. Rural/non-rural status of the district
  - **Recognized** = Performance of Top 33% of Texas teachers; allotment range: \$3,000-\$9,000
  - **Exemplary** = Performance of Top 20% of Texas teachers; allotment range: \$6,000-18,000
  - **Master** = Performance of the top 5% of Texas teachers; allotment range: \$12,000-32,000



# First Pathway to Designation - Available to All Teachers



## National Board Certification

The Recognized designation may be earned through National Board Certification. National Board Certification is available in 25 certificate areas across 16 disciplines with emphasis on grade levels from PK through 12th grade.

## Who is eligible?

- Must possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution.
- Completed three years of successful teaching in one or more early childhood, elementary, middle, or secondary school
- Hold a valid state teaching license for each of the three years of verified employment.

Any staff member interested in becoming a National Board Certified Teacher is encouraged to consult the site below for more information: <https://www.nbpts.org/>

## What is required to become a National Board Certified Teacher?

To become a Board-certified teacher, eligible candidates must demonstrate advanced knowledge, skills, and practice in their individual certificate area by completing four components.

- Component 1: Content Knowledge - computer based assessment taken at a testing center
- Component 2: Differentiation in Instruction - portfolio based and submitted through an electronic submission
- Component 3: Teaching Practice and Learning Environment - portfolio based and submitted through an electronic submission
- Component 4: Effective and Reflective Practitioner - portfolio based and submitted through an electronic submission

## What is the cost of National Board Certification?

The initial cost for each of the four components is \$475, with the total cost for the initial attempt of all four components being \$1,900. Retake attempts require an additional fee. For each assessment cycle a teacher plans to take components, a \$75 non refundable and non transferable registration fee is required and must be paid before purchasing a component. TEA will reimburse the cost after the teacher has completed the process.

# Second Pathway to Designation - Implemented in Phases

## Local Designation Systems

Districts may create a local system to designate high performing teachers as Recognized, Exemplary, or Master for a 5 year period based on results of single or multi-year appraisal data.

At minimum, the local designation system must be based on data from:

- **Teacher observation** based on the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS)
- **Student growth measures** are determined by the district. Districts may use third-party or district-created pre-tests and post-test, Value-Added Model(s), Student Learning Objectives, and/or portfolios. Student growth measures are reviewed and approved by TEA during the system application process. When selecting a growth measure for TIA, districts must consider the capacity of district and campus personnel to consistently implement each growth measure with fidelity across campuses and teaching assignments.

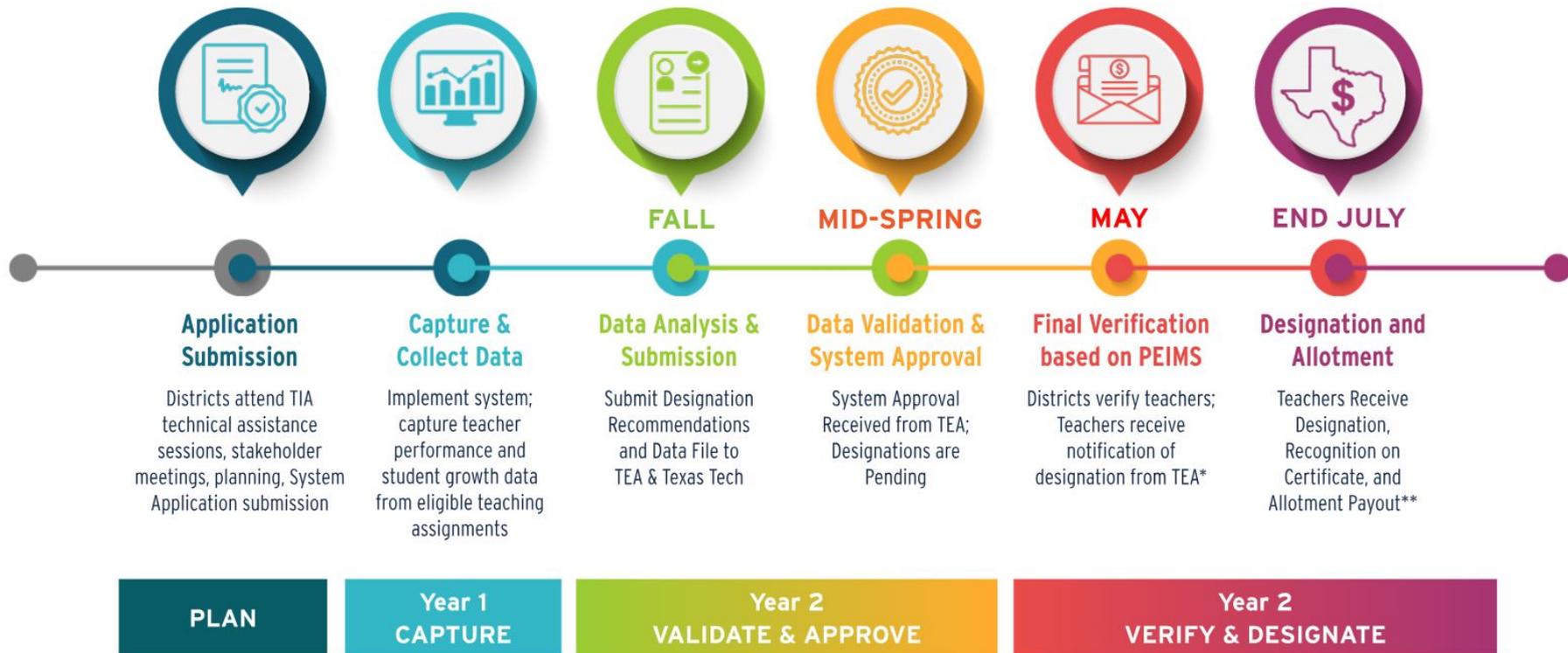
**All assessment decisions are validated through the district processes for fidelity and approved by the district and TEA.**

# Local Designation System Application and Approval

Prior to issuing designations, districts go through an application and approval process.

- **Application.** TIA technical assistance sessions, stakeholder meetings, planning, System Application submission **(April 15, 2025)**
- **Year One: Data Capture Year.** System implementation, capture teacher performance and student growth data from eligible teaching assignments. **(School Year 2025-2026)**
- **Year Two: Data Submission, Validation, System Approval, and Designation.** Districts analyze collected data and submit to Texas Tech University for data validation. If a district's system meets the validation standards, a district's system is approved, and teachers can be awarded designation. Should a district not pass data validation, the system will not be approved, and no teachers will receive a designation. **(February 2027)**

# Timeline



\* To receive the designation, teachers must remain employed in a 087-classroom teaching position.

\*\* To receive the full allotment, teachers must remain employed with Tolar ISD through the August payout date.

**In partnership with Texas Tech, TEA annually monitors the quality and fairness of local designation systems.**

As part of the validation process, Texas Tech University will:

- Review alignment between teacher observation ratings and student performance ratings.
- Review alignment between student performance ratings and value-added ratings for applicable teachers.
- Review data validity by appraiser/rater, by campus, across campuses in the district, and by teaching assignment.
- Validate District data to state data by comparing the T-TESS performance and student growth outcomes as compared to the statewide performance expectations.

**Teachers must maintain continuous employment as a 087-PEIMS coded classroom teacher throughout the process to be eligible for a designation and allotment.**

# TOLAR ISD

## PROPOSED LOCAL DESIGNATION SYSTEM

The designation system in Tolar ISD would include the following statutorily-required components:

- **Teacher Evaluation.** Teachers in eligible TIA subject areas will receive full evaluations using the Texas Teacher Evaluation & Support System (T-TESS), including walkthroughs and at least one, mutually agreed-upon formal observation. The teacher performance component is based on the results in Domains 2 and 3 of the summative End of Year Conference. Teachers with ratings below the minimum performance criteria will not be considered for TIA eligibility
- **Student Growth.** Student growth measures differ for each eligibility group.

**When selecting a growth measure for TIA, the District considers the capacity of district and campus personnel to consistently implement each growth measure with fidelity across campuses and teaching assignments.**

# Eligible Teaching Assignments - PHASE ONE

## Category 1: NWEA MAP

The District will offer fall and spring assessments using MAP tests in the subjects and grades listed below.

Eligible Teacher Group (Category 1)	T-TESS Observation	Student Growth Measure	Total
Teachers of <b>Reading</b> in Kindergarten and Grades 1 through 3, Teachers of <b>Mathematics</b> in Kindergarten and Grades 1 through 3. Includes Intervention, SPED, and Dyslexia Teachers	40%	60%	100%
Eligible Teacher Group (Category 1)	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Growth
Teachers of <b>Reading</b> in Kindergarten and Grades 1 through 3, Teachers of <b>Mathematics</b> in Kindergarten and Grades 1 through 3. Includes Intervention, SPED, and Dyslexia Teachers	NWEA MAP (Fall/BOY)	NWEA MAP (Spring/EOY)	Adequate growth is determined by NWEA based on each student's RIT score.

# Eligible Teaching Assignments - PHASE ONE

## Category 2: STAAR Results with Released STAAR for Pre-Test

Specific grade levels and subject areas will use **STAAR results with released STAAR for Pre-Test** to measure student progress.

Eligible Teacher Group (Category 1)	T-TESS Observation	Student Growth Measure	Total
Teachers of 5th grade Science, 8th grade Science, 8th grade Social Studies, and High School US History and Biology.	40%	60%	100%
Eligible Teacher Group (Category 1)	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Growth
Teachers of 5th grade Science, 8th grade Science, 8th grade Social Studies, and High School US History and Biology.	STAAR released exam (given at the beginning of the year)	STAAR assessment results	Adequate growth will be determined by a “closing the gap” model.

# Eligible Teaching Assignments - PHASE ONE

## Category 3: STAAR Results with Previous Year STAAR for Pre-Test

Specific grade levels and subject areas will use **Previous Year STAAR results for Pre-test** to measure student progress.

Eligible Teacher Group (Category 1)	T-TESS Observation	Student Growth Measure	Total
Teachers of Grades 4-8 STAAR Reading, Grades 4-8 STAAR Math, English I, English II, and Algebra I. Includes SPED and Dyslexia Teachers.	40%	60%	100%
Eligible Teacher Group (Category 1)	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Growth
Teachers of Grades 4-8 STAAR Reading, Grades 4-8 STAAR Math, English I, English II, and Algebra I. Includes SPED and Dyslexia Teachers.	Previous Year STAAR Results	STAAR assessment results	Adequate growth will be determined by scoring a ½ point or 1 point on the STAAR Transition Table

# Eligible Teaching Assignments - PHASE ONE

## Category 4: CIRCLE

Pre-K will use CIRCLE to measure student progress.

Eligible Teacher Group (Category 1)	T-TESS Observation	Student Growth Measure	Total
Pre-K Teachers ELAR only	40%	60%	100%
Eligible Teacher Group (Category 1)	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Growth
Pre-K Teachers	CIRCLE - Wave 1	CIRCLE - Wave 3	Adequate growth will be determined by a district's determination- four of five of the subtests increase by one level or maintain the highest level.

# Future Expansion

After successful completion of Phase One, Tolar ISD will continue to investigate opportunities to include other eligible teachers in future phases.



# Designations

- Once earned, teacher identification is applied to an individual's teaching certificate and is valid for a **five-year period**.
- The designated teacher has the opportunity to move to a higher designation level during the five-year period if their performance qualifies them under a district's local designation system (and the state approves the new designation). If this occurs, the five-year clock restarts for the teacher's designation.
- The designation is not tied to a specific grade, subject, or campus. Teachers can change their teaching assignment or move to another district and maintain their designation. If a teacher moves to a position in a district that is ineligible for TIA allotment funding, then the teacher will maintain their designation for the five-year period, but the state will generate no TIA funds. If the teacher were to move back to a TIA-eligible position within the five-year period, then the TIA allotment funds would flow from the state to the district and campus where the teacher is currently teaching.

# State Performance Standards

The District's local TIA designation system must be based on performance standards set by the state of Texas. Based on statewide analysis of teacher observations and student growth measures, the Texas Education Agency recommends the following guidelines for designations.

Designation	Percent of Teachers (statewide)	T-TESS Evaluations (Domains 2 and 3)	Student Growth Percentage
Master	Top 5%	Average $\geq$ 4.5 (90%)	At least 70% of students
Exemplary	Top 20%	Average $\geq$ 3.9 (78%)	At least 60% of students
Recognized	Top 33%	Average $\geq$ 3.7 (74%)	At least 50% of students

More information can be found on the TEA website: [\[Teacher Observations\]](#) and [\[Student Growth\]](#)

# Example

Dimension	Distinguished	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing	Improvement Needed	(Score)
2.1 Achieving Expectations	●					5
2.2 Content Knowledge		●				4
2.3 Communication			●			3
2.4 Differentiation			●			3
2.5 Monitor and Adjust		●				4
3.1 Routines, Procedures			●			3
3.2 Managing Behavior		●				4
3.3 Classroom Culture	●					5

The scores for these eight dimensions total up to 31, so the *evaluation percentage* would be  $31/40 = 77.5\%$ .

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Recognized	Top 33%	Average $\geq 3.7$ (74%)	At least 50% of students

In Tolar ISD, TIA designations are based on the **TIA score**, which is a 100-point scale-weighted combination of the *evaluation percentage* (EP) and *student growth percentage* (SGP).

$$\text{TIA Score} = 40(\text{EP}) + 60(\text{SGP})$$

In other words, the evaluation percentage (from T-TESS) accounts for **40%** of the TIA score, and the student growth percentage accounts for **60%** of the score.

For Category 1-4 teachers to qualify for a designation, a teacher's TIA score must be at or above the levels listed in this chart.

Designation	TIA Score	Calculation Method EP-40% SGP- 60%	Connection to State Performance Standards
Master	78	$40(90\%) + 60(70\%)$	T-TESS 4.5/5 = 90%, with 70% growth
Exemplary	67.2	$40(78\%) + 60(60\%)$	T-TESS 3.9/5 = 78%, with 60% growth
Recognized	62.6	$40(74\%) + 60(55\%)$	T-TESS 3.7/5 = 74%, with 55% growth

Note: By state guidelines, to earn a designation, a teacher must score at least "Proficient" in each of the eight dimensions in Domains 2-3 on T-TESS.

Example: A teacher has the following data:

TTESS average is 3.9 (31/40=78%), and Student Growth is 62%

TTESS Score = 78% x **40%** of evaluation weight = 31.2

Student Growth Score = 62% of student meeting expected growth x **60%** of total weight for student growth= 37.2

$31.2 + 37.2 = 68.4$

Final score = 68.4

Proposed Teacher Designation Submission for Validation = **Exemplary**

# TISD Allotment

Once approved, a teacher's designation level relates directly to the amount of the allotment received by the district. Student need, as identified by compensatory education allotment, is the other factor in determining this amount. In other words, teachers generate greater allotment when they work at schools with more significant economic needs. Funding amounts change yearly and amounts are released in April each year.

**Here are the campus allotments for 2023-2024.**

Campus	Recognized	Exemplary	Master
Tolar Elementary	\$5,530	\$11,059	\$20,432
Tolar Junior High	\$5,298	\$10,596	\$19,660
Tolar High School	\$5,362	\$10,723	\$19,872

# Spending Plan Requirements

Districts must spend **90% or more of the allotment on teacher compensation on the campus** where the designated teacher works. Up to 10% of the allotment may be used by the district to support the local designation system or to support teachers in earning designations.

For the purpose of compensation, a teacher is defined as student-facing instructional staff. This may include instructional aides and paraprofessionals, classroom inclusion support teachers, and other staff members who primarily work directly with students in an instructional setting.

Districts are notified of their annual allotment in late April and **must spend all funds by August 31** of the same calendar year. Spending requirements and timelines do not apply to fees reimbursed through TIA.

# Spending Plan Allowable vs. Prohibited

## **Allowable Spending for at Least 90% of the Allotment**

- Stipends or salary increases for designated teachers
- Stipends or salary increases for other teachers at the campus of the designated teacher(s)
- Compensation for other staff at the campus of the designated teacher(s) whose primary responsibility is instructing students
- Benefits and retirement contributions for teachers at the campus of the designated teacher(s)

## **Prohibited Spending for at Least 90% of the Allotment**

- Compensation for school leaders
- Compensation for non-instructional staff (including instructional coaches that do not teach)
- Compensation for central staff or staff at a different campus from the designated teacher(s)

# Spending Plan Allowable vs. Prohibited

## **Allowable Spending for Up to 10% of the Allotment**

- Professional development for teachers
- TIA assessment costs
- Rubric costs, appraiser rater training, or certification
- Other student growth costs
- Central supports, such as funding for TIA coordinator or HR needs
- Compensation for staff associated with TIA needs or with professional development, such as school leaders or instructional coaches
- Recruitment, such as job fairs
- Benefits and retirement contributions for teachers

## **Prohibited Spending for Up to 10% of the Allotment**

- General administrative expenses
- Compensation for staff not associated with TIA needs nor with professional development

# Tolar ISD Proposed Spending Plan

- TISD TIA spending plan will spend **90%** of the incentive allotment to the designated teacher and will retain **10%** of allotment funds that may be used to support the designation system.
- Teachers will receive **100%** of allotment funds by earning a Recognized designation via National Board Certification.
- TIA compensation is an annual allotment provided by the state and is subject to availability of state funding allocations.



# Tolar ISD Proposed Spending Plan

- TIA designated teachers will receive TIA compensation in partial payments, half in May and the other half in August as a retention bonus each year that they generate funding for a TIA designation.
  - If teacher leaves district prior to receiving final payment in August, remaining funds stay with the district and will be dispersed at **the campus either among remaining TIA identified teachers or other high-performing teacher and/or paraprofessionals**
  - If teacher retires at the conclusion of the school year they will receive 100% of generated funds (minus payroll deductions as necessary)
- TIA compensation stipends will be included in the annual wages reported to the Teacher Retirement System and will be used when calculating retirement benefits.
- The district will deduct the TRS contribution and because the stipend will be included in payroll, and it is subject to taxes.

# Example of Teacher's TIA Payout



A teacher receives a TIA designation of Exemplary and the allotment amount provided to the district by the state is \$10,723.

$$\$10,723 \times 90\% = \$9,650.70$$

TRS contribution and taxes on \$9,650.70 is \$1,930.14 (note these numbers will vary by teacher)

$\$9,650.70 - \$1,930.14 = \mathbf{\$7,720.56}$  (**\$3,860.28 paid in May and \$3,860.28 paid in August as a retention bonus**)

\*\*This payment will not replace the district's current pay structure. For those who earn a distinction and generate allotment funding, the payment will be an additional state stipend completely separate from a teacher's salary.

# TRS Considerations

All TIA compensation is TRS eligible. **The TRS has limits (10% or 10,000 increase per year) on eligible salary increases in the last 3 or 5 years prior to retirement. This could limit the extent to which the TIA compensation paid in those years is TRS eligible.** A member can “work out of the limit” – the member will need to contact a TRS Benefit Counselor when they are ready to retire to determine if this limit will impact their retirement annuity calculation. Districts should be prepared to assist teachers with a TRS creditable compensation determination. Districts may pay employee and employer contributions from the 90% portion of the allotment or the 10%, as those benefit payments are considered to be included in overall compensation.



# Q&A

Here are some answers to frequently asked questions.

## **1. How long is the TIA program supposed to be in effect?**

Short answer: Forever

Detailed answer: The Teacher Incentive Allotment is funded through the Foundation School Program, which means it won't disappear without rewriting current laws.

## **2. I teach a subject (Reading or Math) that is Category 3. Am I required to participate in TIA?**

Short answer: Yes

Detailed answer: For all teachers in the eligible "designation group," there are two requirements:

- The teachers must have a full T-TESS appraisal, and
- Their students will be required to take assessments for pre/post-tests.

## **3. In the initial phase, do the teachers have to "apply" for their designation or complete additional paperwork?**

Short answer: No

Detailed answer: There is no formal application that the teacher must complete. The process will be something like this: Data is collected for all the teachers (see Q4), but then it is aggregated to see who qualifies for a designation. Then, the District will notify the qualifying teachers that their names will be submitted to the state to officially award these designations. The only additional "paperwork" teachers may need to complete is a roster verification at the end of the data collection year. This will ensure that we know which students are tied to each teacher.

#### **4. During the data collection year, who is collecting this data?**

Short answer: District-level administration and campus admin

Detailed answer: Data from T-TESS can be pulled from DMAC. Data related to student growth measures can be pulled from the NWEA/MAP website, and CIRCLE. A district-level administrator will perform these queries privately and securely. Data moves only between District administration and the state agencies that validate it. No teacher or student information is shared beyond these two entities.

#### **5. If I get a designation as a teacher, how long does it last?**

Short answer: 5 years

Detailed answer: After a “data capture” year, teachers enter a “designation year” in which TEA approves their designation. This designation will stay on a teacher’s certificate for four more years (5 total). The designation stays with the teacher, even if they change campuses or switch districts (in Texas).

**6. Suppose, as a teacher, I go through data collection (in Year 1 of the cycle) and successfully earn a designation (in Year 2 of the cycle). Do I have to complete data collection AGAIN in the following school year?**

Short answer: Maybe

Detailed answer: A teacher's designation is good for 5 years, so a teacher will not lose this status if data collection is incomplete. However, after an initial designation, the District can always submit new data on a teacher in subsequent years to try and earn an even *higher* designation. Regarding student data...For teachers with designations, their students will still complete pre/post-testing, as with MAP Growth, and complete the T-TESS evaluation process.

*Very detailed answer:*

Every year, the district wants to give designations, and we must submit data on the entire teacher group. So that complicates things. Katie Garner, a TIA Specialist at TEA, answered the question this way:

*The caveat is that essentially every year is a data capture year if the District is putting forth designations. Less data = more risk with correlation and other checks. If you waive appraisals for designated teachers, who would potentially have very strong correlation between their observation and student growth measure, then that's less individual data points acting in your favor... Our best guidance is, feel free to use appraisal waivers, but know the risks and use sparingly.*

## 7. Is there a limit on how many teachers can earn a designation?

Short answer: No

Detailed answer: Any teacher can earn a designation. The system is NOT a “competition,” and one teacher’s award will NOT prevent another from receiving the same. However, the fact that a teacher is *eligible* does not guarantee that the teacher *will* reach a designation level. In fact, most probably won’t earn a designation, at least within the first few years of the program. The state estimates that only one-third of eligible teachers might earn a designation in a given year. (If *everyone* is a “Master” or “Exemplary” teacher, then those titles don’t mean anything.)

*Very detailed answer:*

When the District submits data to the state to verify our designations, the state completes a validation process on the data. Our designations could be denied if we fail to meet any of their checkpoints. So, that complicates things. Cody Brown, a TIA data specialist at TEA, answered the question this way:

*No, designations are not capped, however, we do look at the overall proportion of designations... The amount of designations you are giving should make sense for your district and campus context. For example, if a district decided to designate 20% of their teachers as “Master” teachers when across the state we see 5%, then it would raise a red flag [in the data validation process]. However, you as a district are not capped at [any percentage]. My suggestion would be to evaluate how your district and campuses compare to the rest of the state in terms of performance to help evaluate how much above or below those marks you believe you should be.*

**8. What if a teacher is a retiree/rehire...can they get a designation and be compensated through TIA?**

Short answer: Yes

Detailed answer: Teachers who are retirees or rehired can earn a TIA allotment. As far as how that affects their money, some of that is related to whether they are part-time or full-time. With the support of the district, the employee would need to contact TRS and ask about his specifics and how earning an allotment might change anything. These are individual case situations.

**9. If a teacher has a student who has a pre-test or post-test that created a score from a parent “opt-out” and required the district to score the test resulting in a 0, would that count towards the student growth percentage?**

Short answer: Yes

Detailed answer: There isn't truly an opt-out in state testing. To keep consistency, the state-scored test will be included in the calculation of the student growth percentage for the eligible teacher. This is a good time to explain to parents and talk about individual growth based on the student's BOY scores.

# Survey

