

KENNEDALE ISD  
TEACHER INCENTIVE  
ALLOTMENT

Guidebook



*This handbook's information is derived from Texas Education Agency resources, namely the 2025 Teacher Incentive Allotment Guidebook, which is linked [here](#).*

## **What is the Teacher Incentive Allotment**

The Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA), introduced through House Bill 3 (HB 3) by the 86th Texas Legislature in June 2019, aims to allow teachers to earn six-figure salaries. This optional program is specifically designed to encourage and reward educators who dedicate themselves to teaching in high needs areas and rural district campuses. The state seeks to attract, retain, and recognize outstanding teachers by implementing TIA.

Under TEC Section 21.3521, school districts can receive funding for each classroom teacher who earns a teacher designation. The allotments are based on the campus's designation and compensatory education poverty tiers. The higher the poverty tier (and/or rural definition), the higher the allotment.

**Master Teachers (top 5% of the state):** \$12,000, potentially increasing up to \$32,000\*.

**Exemplary Teachers (top 20% of the state):** \$6,000, potentially increasing up to \$18,000.

**Recognized Teachers (top 30% of the state):** \$3,000, potentially increasing up to \$9,000.

**Acknowledged Teachers (top 50% of the state):** Amounts TBD pending TEA rulemaking

**Part of HB2 passed in June 2025** – specifics pending TEA rulemaking

*\*Allotment amounts for Recognized, Exemplary, and Master designations will be increased following TEA rule making.*

For more information on campus allocations for KENNEDALE ISD, click [here](#).

**Note:** *A district may have a smaller or greater share of the state percentages for each designation level based on the overall academic growth of their students.*

Teachers can achieve a designation under the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) through two parallel pathways:

- (1) a locally developed teacher designation system, or
- (2) National Board Certification.

Educators who earn National Board Certification automatically receive a "Recognized" designation from the state. Meanwhile, teachers participating in eligible teaching assignments within a district's local designation system can earn a designation via the approved system.

National Board Certification is offered in 25 certificate areas across 16 disciplines, covering grade levels from Pre-K through 12th grade. For those interested in pursuing National Board Certification, additional details can be found on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards website at [www.nbpts.org](http://www.nbpts.org).

As part of the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA), the state reimburses \$1,900 of the \$2,000

in fees associated with the National Board Certification modules. This reimbursement is upon successfully completing the certification program, which takes approximately two years.

### Statutory Requirements for Locally Designed TIA Plans

Statutorily, there are three state requirements for any approved TIA system. The first two focus on the required components of the system:

- (1) Teacher Observations (Domains II and III of T-TESS or a state/locally approved rubric)
- (2) Student Growth Measures (Pre/Post-Test, VAM measures, SLOs, and/or Portfolios as determined by the district and approved by the state)

In addition, districts may choose to add additional local components, such as attendance, Domains I and IV of T-TESS, or other locally informed factors. It is important to note that the state does not review or consider any local component for system approval or validation.

The final requirement focuses on the monetary allotment itself:

- (3) 90% of the generated allotment must be spent for the purposes of teacher compensation at the campus where the designated teacher is/was employed.

### Teacher Eligibility Requirements

- Employed in a role ID coded as 087 (providing direct instruction to students) during class roster winter submission (February).
- Students can be rostered to multiple adults should the eligibility be appropriate.
- Employment must be for at least 90 days at 100% of the day or 180 days at 50–99% of the day (both requirements include the planning period).
- NBCT's who hold an active National Board Certification **and** are employed in a role ID coded as 087.

*\*Districts have the autonomy to phase in the eligibility over time by teaching “category,” to help ensure implementation fidelity leading to data validity.*

### TIA Designation Duration

Teachers earning an **Acknowledged**, **Recognized**, **Exemplary**, or **Master** designation through a district's Local Designation System retain it for five years. However, if their performance meets district criteria and is approved by the state, they can qualify for a higher designation within five years, resetting the five-year term.

Designations follow the teacher and are not tied to specific grades, subjects, or campuses. They remain valid if teachers change assignments or districts. However, if a teacher moves to a non-TIA-eligible role (e.g., instructional coach or campus leadership role), their designation remains active, but they would not generate an allotment for the district in that year. If they were to return to an eligible position during the five-year period, the allotment would again be generated for the district.

## Statewide Minimum Performance Standards for Teacher Observation and Student Growth

TEA has released Statewide Minimum Performance Standards for the two required TIA measures to guide districts in developing a TIA plan with rigorous standards. The Statewide Performance Standards for Teacher Observation (using T-TESS) and Student Growth (using STAAR) are as follows:

**Acknowledged** (the performance standards have not been developed by TEA at this time, the below are estimations)

- Minimum average score across Domains II and III - 3.5\* (3.5/5 = 70% of possible points)
- 50% of students meet or exceed their individual expected growth target

### Recognized

- Minimum average score across Domains II and III - 3.7\* (3.7/5 = 74% of possible points)
- 55% of students meet or exceed their individual expected growth target

### Exemplary

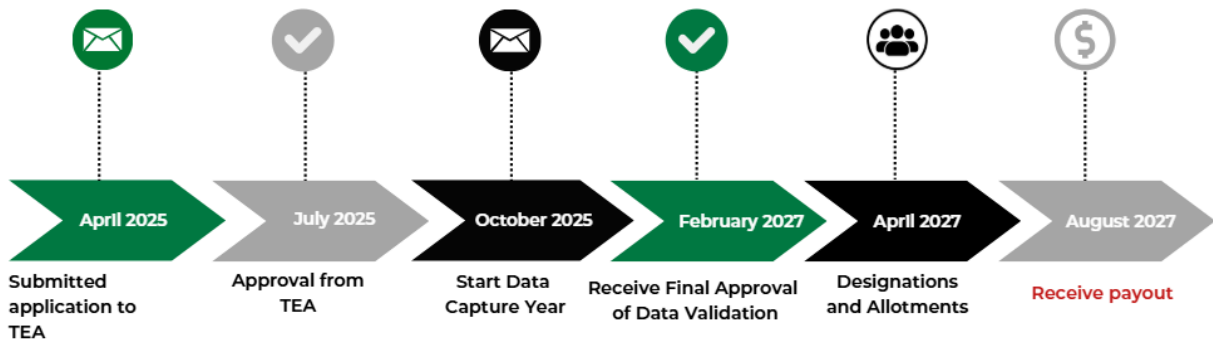
- Minimum average score across Domains II and III: 3.9\* (3.9/5 = 78% of possible points)
- 60% of students meet or exceed their individual expected growth target

### Master

- Minimum average score across Domains II and III: 4.5\* (4.5/5 = 90% of possible points)
- 70% of students meet or exceed their individual expected growth target

\*A minimum rating of three is required on all dimensions of Domains II and III for all designation levels.

## State Timeline for Determining TIA Designations



## Kennedale ISD's Locally Designed TIA Designation System

For the 2025-2026 school year, the TIA plan for Kennedale ISD includes the following teaching assignments:

- Pre-K
- K-3 Reading, K-3 Math, 5-8 Science
- 4-8 Reading, 4-8 Math, English I/II, Algebra I

Observation Rubric- Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) for the Teacher Incentive Allotment to ensure a valid and reliable teacher observation instrument.

### **Student Growth Measure**

- Pre-K: **Circle**
- K-3 Reading, K-3 Math, 5-8 Science: **NWEA MAP**
- 4-8 Reading, 4-8 Math, English I/II, Algebra I: **STAAR + NWEA MAP**

*Growth will be calculated by dividing the number of students who met the designated growth target by the total number of possible students.*

## **Components and Weights for Kennedale ISD's TIA Designation System**

### **School Year**

2025-2025

### **Teacher Observation**

30%

### **Student Growth**

60%

### **Professional Practices**

10%

### **Teacher Observation Score**

Utilizing T-TESS, the district will conduct at least one 45-minute formal observation for each eligible teacher, per TIA and T-TESS appraisal guidelines, scoring each dimension based on the following:

- Distinguished will be assigned a score of "5".
- Accomplished will be assigned a score of "4".
- Proficient will be assigned a score of "3".
- Developing will be assigned a score of "2".
- Needs Improvement will be assigned a score of "1".

These dimension scores will be averaged together equally to create an average score across domains II and III. Once this average is calculated, the following steps will take place:

**Step One:** If a teacher received an average of 3.7 on the eight Dimensions across Domains 2 and 3, they received a total of 74% of possible points ( $3.7/5 = 74\%$ ).

**Step Two:** This percentage will then be applied to the weight for observation under the district's system which is 30%.

*Example:* Eligible teacher who earned 74% of possible points, would receive 74% of the 30 available points for observation, resulting in a total numerical score of 22.5 points.

*\*Note: TEA requires that all teachers teaching in grades/subjects included in a district’s TIA plan be formally appraised during the data capture year.*

### Determining the Classroom Student Growth Score

The district will calculate student growth from BOY to EOY with all teaching assignments. The district will use the student growth measures outlined above to determine the percentage of students who met growth. The following calculation will be used:

**Step One:** compute the percentage of students who met or exceeded their expected growth target. **Step Two:** The district will then take that percentage and apply the 60% weight for student growth. Example: If an eligible teacher has 60% of students meet or exceed their growth target, that teacher would receive 60% of the 60 points possible for student growth, resulting in a score of 39.6 points.

In an effort to ensure fairness and consistency of the classroom student growth calculations, the district will utilize the following criteria and practices to calculate the % of students who met or exceeded expected growth for each eligible teaching assignment.

For a student to be included in a teacher’s classroom student growth calculation for a year-long course, they must be assigned to the teacher of record during three key checkpoints:

1. Fall PEIMS Snapshot
2. Winter PEIMS Snapshot
3. The end-of-year student growth assessment (mid-May).

At each checkpoint, all eligible teachers and school leaders will review and verify rosters to confirm which students are included in the TIA growth calculation.

Classroom student growth will be determined using all test scores from each eligible course that shares the same growth measure. For instance, if a teacher instructs both Reading and Math, the growth calculation will include all student scores from both subjects. The following example illustrates how classroom student growth is calculated when multiple subjects are involved.

$$\frac{\text{Total \# of students who met expected growth}}{\text{Total \# of students who were included in the calculations}}$$

### TIA Scorecard

After compiling the T-TESS and classroom student growth scores, the district will then calculate a final TIA score for each eligible teacher. The district will utilize the weights and measures to arrive at a final TIA score. See an example of the KISD Scorecard [here](#).

## TIA Implementation Fidelity

Kennedale ISD ensures the validity and reliability of teacher observation scores by implementing T-TESS with fidelity. All teacher appraisers are thoroughly trained, certified, and recalibrated annually through recertification. Appraisers norm their scoring by conducting in-person or video-based observations multiple times a year. District and campus administrators independently observe teachers, score them, and then compare evidence and final ratings to establish interrater reliability. Significant discrepancies in scores are addressed through continued calibration efforts.

Observation data is analyzed throughout the year across campuses, grade levels, and content areas to identify trends or irregularities. If data indicates teacher deficiencies, the district provides targeted professional development and support, including mentorship or instructional coaching. For evaluator related inconsistencies, additional training is provided to ensure accurate implementation of the observation process.

Kennedale ISD selected research-based, state-aligned student growth measures to ensure validity and reliability. The district's assessment team oversees the implementation of all assessments, adhering to state and vendor guidelines to maintain data integrity. Annual training is provided for administering student growth measures, and teachers conduct assessments during a designated window with oversight from the district Curriculum and Assessment team.

## Stakeholder Engagement

To ensure a broad perspective, a TIA Strategic Planning Committee was developed and included teachers, campus administrators, and district administrators. This stakeholder committee served as the primary architects of the system, making final decisions about the district's TIA plan, in partnership with district leadership.

The committee convened multiple times to deliberate key aspects of the system's design. After extensive discussions, the committee and district leadership decided on the TIA Plan for the 2025-2026 school year and Expansion for the 2026-2027 school year, focusing on a subset of eligible teaching assignments. This approach was chosen based on the availability of valid and reliable student growth measures across all grades and subjects in the district.

## KISD's Spending Plan for TIA Funding

The statute requires districts to spend at least 90% of their TIA allotment funds on teacher compensation at the campus where the designated teacher works. The remaining 10% may be set aside for costs associated with implementing and maintaining a local designation system, professional development, or the cost of TIA implementation.

- **70%** of TIA funds received by Kennedale ISD will be distributed directly to the designated teacher.

- **20%** of TIA funds received by Kennedale ISD will be consolidated at the campus level and evenly distributed among the following specified non-TIA designated teachers:
  - Reading & Math Interventionists
  - Special Education Resource & Inclusion Teacher
  - Dyslexia Specialists
  - GT Teachers
- **10%** of TIA funds received by Kennedale ISD will be reserved at the district level to support district oversight of the implementation of TIA and ongoing development of TIA resources.

### Frequency of Compensation

Teachers will receive their TIA compensation as a single, annual stipend paid in August. The amount is based on their TIA designation and the state funding allocated to the campus where they are assigned at the time of Class Roster Winter Submission.

### Impact of Compensation

TIA compensation amounts distributed will include deductions for federal income tax; Medicare tax and TRS contributions (including both the employee and employer's portion) as part of an employee's annual wages reported to the state and federal governments, as well as the Teacher Retirement System (TRS).

- **TRS Retirement Impact of Compensation:** TIA compensation stipends will be eligible for use when calculating retirement benefits for TRS- eligible staff. Employees are responsible to pay both the employee and employer benefits. All Teacher Retirement System (TRS) rules apply to incentives earned through TIA (please consult [TRS](#) for current rules).

### Fund Distribution

**New to the District:** Designated teachers hired before Winter Roster Verification will receive funding based on the campus where they are assigned at the time of verification. Newly hired designated teachers will follow the same spending plan.

**Movement of Teachers:** If a designated teacher moves between district campuses during the school year, the district will distribute TIA compensation based on the teacher's campus assignment at the time of the Class Roster Winter Submission.

**Retirement:** If a designated teacher retires through TRS at the end of the school year, Kennedale ISD will disburse the awarded funds directly to the designated teacher.

**Leaving the District:** If a designated teacher resigns, excluding retirement through TRS at the end of school year, they will forfeit any awarded funds. The district will not issue payment to the designated teacher, and the funds will be reallocated to the campus where the designated teacher was employed. Examples include:

- **Resignation before class roster winter roster submission:** The designated teacher will not receive an allotment per the spending plan, as the state will not generate funds for the district.

- **Resignation after class roster winter submission (during or at the end of the school year):** The designated teacher will not receive the TIA stipend, even if state funds are generated.

Kennedale ISD cannot recommend a teacher for a TIA designation if they do not remain in an 087 teaching position the year **after** the data capture year. For instance, if a teacher earns a designation based on 2025-2026 data but transitions to an assistant principal role in 2026-2027, the district will not be able to recommend that employee for designation, as they are no longer in the 087-teacher role at the time of data submission.

If Kennedale ISD does not employ a TIA-designated teacher at the TEA winter roster date (typically February), Kennedale ISD will not be responsible for paying TIA funds. In such cases, the designated teacher must coordinate with their new district.

## **2026 and Beyond**

While all Kennedale ISD teachers are eligible for a TIA designation through National Board Certification, the district is dedicated to ensuring all teachers have the opportunity to earn a designation under the local system. To achieve this, Kennedale ISD is working to implement student growth measures across all grades and content areas. During the upcoming planning phases within each school year, the district is looking forward to expanding the range of eligible grades and subjects. Kennedale ISD values its educators and will continue to seek stakeholder input as the TIA plan evolves.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### Cut Scores (Cut Points)

The minimum score needed to qualify for each tier of our Local Designation System (LDS). Cut scores are calculated by adding the minimum qualifying score for the designation out of a total of 100 possible points for perfect growth and observation scores. See the Designation Calculation Info sheet for a detailed explanation.

### Data Validation

The process where Texas Tech University evaluates our data on behalf of the TEA to determine if our Local Designation System is identifying teachers for designation appropriately. The big picture questions they are checking are: Are student growth and teacher observation scores related enough? Do we give out the expected number of designations? Are observation data and growth data similar across campuses and teaching assignments?

### Designation

One of four distinctions awarded to highly effective public school teachers. The **Acknowledged Teacher** designation is intended to signify that a teacher is in the top ½ of teachers in the state. The **Recognized Teacher** designation is intended to signify that a teacher is in the top ⅓ of teachers in the state. The **Exemplary Teacher** designation is intended to signify that a teacher is in the top ¼ of teachers in the state. The **Master Teacher** designation is intended to signify that a teacher is in the top 5% of all teachers in the state.

### Designated Teacher

A teacher that has qualified for any designation (Recognized, Exemplary or Master Teacher) based on growth and observation data, has been through the data validation process, and has received the official state designation on their SBEC certification. A teacher who has data that makes them eligible to receive a designation is **NOT a designated teacher** until after the district proposes designation, TTU has validated our district data, AND the TEA has awarded the designation.



*A designated teacher will come up in the TEA search and have the designation on their SBEC certificate.*

### Eligible Teaching Assignment (Eligible Assignment)

Any teaching role that is included in the data collection process towards a possible recommendation for designation. Eligible assignments are determined using the PEIMS Service ID for teachers on eligible campuses.

### Eligible Campus

A campus participating in data collection in our local designation system. The 25-26 data collection consists of 5 eligible campuses. Our 25-26 application will include all traditional K-12 campuses in the district.

### Expansion/Modification

The process by which school districts have the opportunity to add, change or remove eligible teaching assignments, eligible campuses, weighting and spending. Each year, districts with full system approval have the ability to submit an expansion/modification application.

### Local Designation System (LDS)

Also called **optional local designation system** in some parts of statute, the LDS is the mechanism through which districts determine the top third, quarter and five percent of teachers based on student growth, teacher observation and other possible local criteria. The teaching assignments we evaluate, the weight we use for growth vs. observation, minimum thresholds for scores, and any other factors we consider are used to propose teacher designations to TEA.

*This system of evaluation, proposal, validation and assignment of designations together comprises our LDS.*

### National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT)

NBCT is any teacher that has received certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (National Board). There are a wide array of standards (areas of certification) that represent almost all teaching assignments in Kennedale ISD. National Board certified teachers generate TIA funds, but are separate from our local designation system.

### Positive Correlation

In the context of our TIA data validation, a positive correlation means that there is a significant relationship between our student's growth scores and our teachers' observation scores. Positive correlation would mean that overall, teachers with higher observation scores have more students that meet expected growth and teachers with lower observation scores have less students that meet expected growth.

### Student Growth Measures (SGM's)

Any reliable, empirical system used to measure a student's increase in learning from beginning to end of year. Our current system utilizes the Pre-Test/Post-Test option for all data sets. Other potential future student growth measures Student Learning Objectives (SLO), Portfolios, or Value Added Measure (VAM).

### Property Right

Property rights are the theoretical and legal ownership of an object, piece of property, or tangible or intangible object. In the context of education, property rights are frequently mentioned in relation to contract types and the fact that when a termination of a contract occurs, the employee is entitled to a fair, impartial hearing before an independent hearing examiner. **State statute clearly states that TIA is not a property right.**

## Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA)

Technically, the Teacher Incentive Allotment is the name of the state funding generated for districts that have teachers who have been designated (as recognized, exemplary or master teacher) through the use of an optional Local Designation System. TIA funds are generated for the district based on their number of designated teachers and the percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students on the campus to which the teacher is assigned. 90% of those funds are required to be spent at the campus where the designated teacher is employed.

Informally, many districts use "TIA" to mean the entirety of the system, from determining designations to spending the allotment and systems that support the implementation of data collection.

### TIA Application

Technically, this is the official document in Microsoft Excel that houses all of the rules and information that relates to the TIA, including stakeholder planning, weighting, teacher and campus eligibility, observation calibration processes, student growth measures used and the district allotment spending plan.

Informally, our application can refer to the collective decisions made about each of these components more than the actual document itself.

### Weighting

In the TIA context, weighting refers to the relative amount that each component counts towards the overall teacher score that determines designations. With the KISD 2025-2026 data collection, the system is weighted at 60% Student Growth and 30% Teacher Observation and 10% T-TESS Domain IV (Professional Responsibility).