East Fort Worth Montessori Academy

Local Designation System

Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA)

Adopted 22–23 SY | Revised 23–24 SY | Updated 25–26 SY

District 220811 | ESC Region 11

★ Tracked Changes Legend ★

NEW / UPDATED TEXT | ~~REMOVED TEXT~~ | All changes summarized on final page

SECTION 1: EFWMA TIA Timeline and Eligibility

What will the EFWMA TIA Timeline look like?

EFWMA currently plans to implement the TIA in phases. The table below shows milestones for each phase.

Phase	System Application or Revision	Data Capture Year	Data Review	System Approval	Funding to the District	Status
Phase 1	Spring 2021	2021–2022	Fall 2022	Spring 2023	Fall 2023	Complete
Phase 2	Spring 2023	2023–2024	Fall 2024	Spring 2025	Fall 2025	Complete
Phase 3	**Spring 2026**	**2025–2026**	**Fall 2026**	**Spring 2027**	**Fall 2027**	**In Progress**

Who is eligible for a designation?

- Grades 1–5 Math and Reading Teachers

*To be eligible for a designation, employees must be coded as **087, Teacher** and must be the teacher of record for **a minimum of 151 instructional days** during the school year.

Attendance and Absence Policy

Teachers may not exceed 8 absences in a school year in order to qualify for a TIA designation (excluding FMLA-protected leave). ~~A teacher cannot use more than 8 days in a school year to qualify for designation (This excludes FMLA).~~

NEW – Hardship Review Process: If a teacher surpasses the 8-day absence threshold due to a medical emergency, serious illness, bereavement, or other circumstances beyond the teacher's control, the District TIA Coordinator, the campus Human Resources representative, and the campus Principal will convene a hardship review meeting within 10 business days of the teacher reaching the threshold. The purpose of this meeting is to:

- Review the nature and documentation of the absences in question;
- Determine whether the absences were outside the teacher's reasonable control;
- Explore any available district support, leave options, or FMLA protections applicable to the situation;
- Make a good-faith determination about the teacher's continued eligibility, which may include a formal waiver recommendation to the Superintendent.

This process is designed to support teachers in their time of need and ensure that extraordinary circumstances do not unfairly disqualify a highly effective teacher from a designation they have otherwise

earned. The final eligibility determination rests with the Superintendent in consultation with legal counsel as appropriate.

SECTION 2: Student Growth Measures

How will student growth measures be used to determine designations?

EFWMA's designation system ensures that student growth measures mirror the Texas State Performance Standards for the Teacher Incentive Allotment. For a teacher to earn a designation, their students must meet or exceed the growth expectations below.

Updated per HB 2 (89th Texas Legislature, 2025): A new Acknowledged designation level has been established by TEA, effective for the 2026–27 school year. The table below presents both the EFWMA Local Performance Standards (Scenario A) and the TEA Statewide Performance Standards (Scenario B).

Scenario A – EFWMA Local Performance Standards

Designation	% Students Meeting/Exceeding Growth	Notes
Acknowledged	~~Not adopted~~ **Under review – see Scenario B**	New level per HB 2
Recognized	≥ 70%	EFWMA Local threshold
Exemplary	≥ 75%	EFWMA Local threshold
Master	≥ 80%	Aligned with TEA Master standard

Scenario B – TEA Statewide Performance Standards (HB 2, September 2025)

Designation	% Students Meeting Growth	Statewide Percentile	Notes
Acknowledged	≥ 50%	Top 50% of TX Teachers	NEW per HB 2
Recognized	≥ 55%	Top 33%	Lower than EFWMA local
Exemplary	≥ 60%	Top 20%	Lower than EFWMA local
Master	≥ 70%	Top 5%	Same as EFWMA local

*The percentage of students meeting or exceeding growth expectations for eligible teachers will be used to calculate a weighted performance score, compared against an overall cut-score that also accounts for teacher observation ratings. It is therefore possible to earn a designation with slightly lower or higher student growth when the observation component compensates.

Texas Value-Added Model (TX VAM) Integration

Effective 2025–26, EFWMA will annually download and review the Texas Value-Added Model (TX VAM) report from the Texas EVAAS Platform. TX VAM provides a measure of each eligible teacher's contribution to student academic growth, controlling for factors outside the teacher's control. VAM data will be used to pressure-test district designations and ensure alignment between locally assigned designations and statewide growth measures.

Alignment targets (per TEA Data Validation rubric): Kendall's τ correlation between district designations and VAM designations ≥ 0.50; proximity score ≥ 70%. Results of the VAM comparison will be presented to the designation committee and the Board of Trustees annually prior to final designation decisions.

SECTION 3: Teacher Observation

What teacher observation instrument will be used?

For EFWMA's Teacher Incentive Allotment, the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) will be used to determine designations for all eligible teachers.

How will teacher observations be used to determine designations?

EFWMA's designation system ensures that teacher observation ratings are aligned with the Texas State Performance Standards for the Teacher Incentive Allotment. For a teacher to earn a designation, their average rating for T-TESS Domains 2–3 must meet or exceed the levels below.

Scenario A – EFWMA Local Observation Standards

Designation	Avg T-TESS Rating (Domains 2–3, out of 5)	Notes
Acknowledged	**≥ 3.5 (under review)**	See Scenario B for TEA standard
Recognized	≥ 3.7	EFWMA Local (aligned with TEA)
Exemplary	≥ 3.9	EFWMA Local (aligned with TEA)
Master	≥ 4.5	Aligned with TEA

Scenario B – TEA Statewide Observation Standards (HB 2, 2025)

Designation	Avg T-TESS Rating	% of Possible Points	Statewide Percentile
Acknowledged	≥ 3.5	≥ 70%	Top 50%
Recognized	≥ 3.7	≥ 74%	Top 33%
Exemplary	≥ 3.9	≥ 78%	Top 20%
Master	≥ 4.5	≥ 90%	Top 5%

*All ratings in each dimension of Domains 2–3 must be 'Proficient' or higher for a teacher to be eligible for designation. The average rating for eligible teachers will be used to calculate a weighted score. Twice each school year (Fall and Spring), appraisers are required to calibrate the scoring rubric to ensure fidelity of implementation.

Appraiser Calibration

EFWMA requires all appraisers to complete T-TESS calibration twice annually, once in the Fall semester and once in the Spring semester. Each appraiser should retain their T-TESS certification documentation in the TIA Binder and their HR personnel folder.

If, following a teacher observation, the root cause of a low score is determined to be appraiser inconsistency rather than teacher performance, the appraiser must complete a T-TESS module refresher before conducting further TIA-related observations. This determination will be made by the campus principal in consultation with the District TIA Coordinator.

SECTION 4: Weighting and Cut Scores

How will components be weighted to determine designations?

All eligible teachers will receive a performance score based on the weighted components listed below.

Scenario A – EFWMA Local Weighting (Current)

Component	Weighting
Student Growth Measure (MAP Pre/Post Data)	**60%**
T-TESS Domains 2–3	**40%**

Scenario B – TEA-Aligned Weighting (Recommended for 26–27 Review)

Component	Weighting
Student Growth Measure (TX VAM / STAAR-based)	**50%**
T-TESS Domains 2–3	**50%**

What are the cut scores for each designation level?

Scenario A – EFWMA Local Cut Scores

Designation	Cut Score (out of 100)	Status vs. TEA
Acknowledged	Under review	See Scenario B
Recognized	**64.2**	ABOVE TEA minimum
Exemplary	**68.4**	ABOVE TEA minimum
Master	**75.0**	Aligned with TEA

Scenario B – TEA Performance Standards (50/50 Weighting)

Designation	Approx. Cut Score	Notes
Acknowledged	~42.5	50% growth + 3.5 obs × 10
Recognized	~64.5	55% growth + 3.7 obs × 10 (50/50)
Exemplary	~69.0	60% growth + 3.9 obs × 10
Master	~80.0	70% growth + 4.5 obs × 10

SECTION 5: Calculation Examples

How is a teacher's performance score calculated?

The examples below demonstrate how scores are calculated under both Scenario A (EFWMA Local) and Scenario B (TEA-Aligned). Review both carefully to understand the impact of each scenario.

Scenario A – EFWMA Local (60% Growth / 40% Observation)

	% Students Meeting Growth	Avg T-TESS Rating (Dom 2–3)	Score	Result
Teacher A	55%	3.8	63.4	Not designated
Teacher B	75%	3.5	73.0	Recognized ✓

Teacher A Calculation (Scenario A – NOT designated):

Growth: 55 ÷ 100 × 60 = 33.0

T-TESS: 3.8 ÷ 5 × 40 = 30.4

TOTAL: 33.0 + 30.4 = 63.4 = Below the recognized cut score of 64.2 ✗

Teacher B Calculation (Scenario A – Recognized):

Growth: 75 ÷ 100 × 60 = 45.0

T-TESS: 3.5 ÷ 5 × 40 = 28.0

TOTAL: 45.0 + 28.0 = 73.0 = Recognized (≥ 64.2) ✓

Scenario B – TEA Statewide (50% Growth / 50% Observation)

	% Students Meeting Growth	Avg T-TESS Rating	Score	Result
Teacher A	55%	3.8	**65.5**	**Recognized ✓**
Teacher B	75%	3.5	**75.0**	**Exemplary ✓**

Teacher A Calculation (Scenario B – Recognized): NEW result under TEA standards

Growth: 55 ÷ 100 × 50 = 27.5

T-TESS: 3.8 ÷ 5 × 50 = 38.0

TOTAL: 27.5 + 38.0 = 65.5 → Recognized (≥ ~64.5) ✓

Teacher B Calculation (Scenario B – Exemplary): NEW result under TEA standards

Growth: 75 ÷ 100 × 50 = 37.5

T-TESS: 3.5 ÷ 5 × 50 = 35.0

TOTAL: 37.5 + 35.0 = 72.5 → Exemplary (≥ ~69.0) ✓

Key insight: Teacher A earns NO designation under Scenario A but earns Recognized under Scenario B. The board's selection of a scenario has a direct impact on which teachers receive designations and allotment funding.

SECTION 6: Action Plan Narrative

How does EFWMA monitor and improve the TIA system?

EFWMA implements a continuous improvement cycle to ensure the integrity, validity, and fairness of the TIA designation system. The following six action steps guide annual system review and improvement.

Action Step 1 – Quarterly Data Analysis

Campus leadership convenes quarterly to review teacher observation data alongside student growth data. The District TIA Coordinator tracks the correlation coefficient between T-TESS scores and student growth outcomes at each checkpoint (October, January, April, June). The target is a positive correlation of r ≥ 0.24. If the correlation trends negatively, root cause analysis is conducted in collaboration with instructional coaches and appraisers.

Action Step 2 – Completion of Annual Data Collection

By August 15 of each year, the campus principal (T-TESS completion), data manager (student growth calculations), and TIA Coordinator (data file compilation) ensure that 100% of eligible teachers have valid, complete data submitted for TIA review. An internal 13-checkpoint validation is completed before any data file is forwarded to TEA. Previously, incomplete data submission for some eligible teachers led to negative correlation results; this step directly addresses that issue.

Action Step 3 – TX VAM Download and Designation Pressure Test

Each November, following the release of the prior year's VAM data by the Texas EVAAS Platform, the TIA Coordinator downloads the TX VAM report and compares district designation decisions to VAM-indicated performance for each eligible teacher. The comparison calculates Kendall's τ correlation (target ≥ 0.50) and proximity score (target ≥ 70%) between local designations and VAM designations. Findings are presented to the Superintendent and campus Principal. Any meaningful discrepancies are reviewed and addressed before final designation decisions are made.

Action Step 4 – Multiple Data Scenarios

Between February and April of each year, the TIA Coordinator uses the TIA Excel Analysis Tool to model multiple designation scenarios, including: (1) formative evaluation vs. summative-only data; (2) 50/50 vs. 40/60 growth-to-observation weighting splits; (3) compensatory vs. non-compensatory calculation models; (4) state SGM performance standards vs. district-set SGM performance standards; and (5) Scenario A local cut scores vs. Scenario B TEA-aligned cut scores. Results are compiled into a comparison report for the Superintendent and Board of Trustees by May.

Action Step 5 – Guidebook Updates

Following the completion of scenario analysis, the TIA Guidebook (this document) is updated by May 30 to reflect the board-approved designation scenario, any changes to performance standards, updated funding amounts under HB 2, and any new TEA guidance. All eligible teachers receive the updated guidebook and sign an acknowledgment form confirming they have reviewed and understand the designation system.

Action Step 6 – Stakeholder Designation Decision

A formal designation committee, which includes the Superintendent, TIA Coordinator, campus Principal, and a teacher advisory representative, convenes in July to review all scenario data, TX VAM comparison results, and individual teacher performance portfolios for each eligible teacher. Designation decisions are documented with data-based justification. A final Step 2 validation simulation is run before TEA submission to confirm the projected score is ≥ 60%. All eligible teachers receive written notification of their designation status no later than August 6.

SECTION 7: Funding and Spending Plan

When will funds be distributed?

All funds will be distributed as a stipend in one lump sum payment prior to August 31st of each year. Teachers may alternatively elect to receive four monthly stipends (May through August). All TIA designation allotment payments qualify for TRS (Teacher Retirement System) and are classified as supplemental pay.

How much funding does each designation generate?

Updated per HB 2 (89th Texas Legislature, 2025), effective 2026–27 school year:

Designation	Previous Allotment Range	HB 2 Allotment Range	EFWMA Campus Rate (prior)
Acknowledged	Not funded	**$3,000–$9,000**	N/A – new level
Recognized	$3,000–$9,000	**$5,000–$15,000**	$6,387 (prior rate)
Exemplary	$6,000–$18,000	**$9,000–$25,000**	$12,775 (prior rate)
Master	$12,000–$32,000	**$12,000–$36,000**	$23,291 (prior rate)

How will funds be distributed?

Initial Designation Year:

- 90% to the designated teacher (less applicable TRS contributions)
- 10% to the district (TIA implementation, PD, T-TESS calibration, TEA fees)

Subsequent Years (if performance score falls below Recognized cut score):

- 50% to the designated teacher (less TRS contributions)
- 40% to the campus to be spent on teacher compensation for highly effective non-eligible teachers or hard-to-staff positions
- 10% to the district (implementation costs)

Note: This redistribution does not apply to teachers designated through National Board Certification (NBCT) status, who maintain the 90/10 split while their certification remains active.

National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT):

- 90% to designated teacher (less TRS contributions)
- 10% to district (NBCT cohort costs)

Per HB 2: Beginning in the 2026–27 school year, eligible NBCTs will transition to the new 'Nationally Board Certified' designation category. SBEC will review National Board certifications for alignment with Texas standards by December 31, 2026.

EFWMA NBCT Cohorts

Each year, EFWMA will accept applications for an ESC Region 11-sponsored NBCT cohort. The district will select up to 2 candidates from the application pool.

- District-paid coverage of NBCT fees: $950
- District contribution to ESC Region 11 fee: up to $300–$650
- Total participant out-of-pocket cost: $1,250 less than pursuing certification independently

SECTION 8: Stakeholder Communication and Processes

How will stakeholders be informed?

1. Twice annually, appraisers complete T-TESS calibration to ensure rubric fidelity (Fall and Spring).
2. Campus leadership meets quarterly to review observation data and student growth data to identify trends or concerns.
3. Campus leaders use systematic approaches, including DDI and PLCs, to address root causes when observation data and growth data diverge.
4. Superintendent attends quarterly data meetings.
5. In April, teachers will be informed of their eligibility for a TIA designation.
6. All stakeholders, Board of Trustees, Site-Based Committee, families, and staff will be informed of TIA through Board Meetings, Site-Based Committee Meetings, Family Engagement Meetings, Staff Meetings, and parent newsletters.
7. In February, EFWMA will announce approval or denial of designations. Teachers will receive four monthly stipends (May–August) or one lump sum by August 31st.
8. Teachers are reminded that campus designations are valid for 5 years, provided T-TESS and student outcome expectations continue to be met.
9. **Documentation requirements: Quarterly campus meeting notes (Sign-In Sheets, Agendas, Meeting Notes SAM format) should be scanned and stored in a central location. All principal data meetings with teachers and coaches must include SAM documentation.**

APPENDIX: Tracked Changes Log

Revision Date: June 2026 | **Revised by:** EFWMA TIA Coordinator | **Approved by:** Superintendent (Same person, Mrs. Durosimi)

The following table summarizes all changes made to this document during the 2025–26 revision. Green text throughout the document indicates additions; red strikethrough indicates deleted content.

#	Section	Change Made	Reason / Authority
1	Section 1 – Timeline	Added Phase 3 (2025–26) row to timeline table	Ongoing TIA participation; reflects current cycle
2	Section 1 – Absences	Added Hardship Review Process: if a teacher exceeds 8 absences due to circumstances beyond their control (medical, emergency, etc.), District TIA Coordinator, HR, and Principal will meet within 10 business days to review eligibility.	New district policy to support teachers in hardship situations; ensures equitable application of absence rule
3	Section 2 – Student Growth	Added Scenario A vs. Scenario B tables for student growth thresholds. Added Acknowledged designation level (TEA HB 2, 2025).	TEA HB 2 (89th Legislature, 2025); TEA TAA Letter, September 25, 2025
4	Section 2 – VAM	Added full TX VAM integration narrative: annual download, alignment targets (τ ≥ 0.50, proximity ≥ 70%), and board reporting requirement.	TEA Data Validation rubric; Spring 2026 validation report Checks 2–3 scored N/A due to no VAM integration
5	Section 3 – Observation	Added Scenario B (TEA statewide) observation thresholds; added percentage-of-points column per HB 2 guidance.	TEA HB 2 / TAA Letter; districts using T-TESS may reference % of possible points
6	Section 3 – Calibration	Added clarification: if the root cause of the low observation score is appraiser inconsistency, the appraiser must complete the T-TESS refresher before further TIA observations.	Addresses Check 9 failure (0% observation alignment, Spring 2026 validation)
7	Section 4 – Weighting	Added Scenario B weighting option (50/50 split) alongside existing Scenario A (60/40). Added Scenario B cut score approximations.	Action Step 4: data scenario testing; TEA reviewer feedback on local cut scores exceeding state standards
8	Section 5 – Examples	Added full Scenario B calculation examples for both Teacher A and Teacher B, showing different designation outcomes under TEA-aligned standards.	Board decision support illustrates direct impact of scenario selection on teacher eligibility
9	Section 6 – Action Plan	Added full Action Plan Narrative (6 steps) describing quarterly monitoring, data collection, TX VAM review, scenario testing, guidebook updates, and designation committee process.	Response to Spring 2026 TEA validation score of 16%; required improvements to reach ≥ 60% Step 2 score
10	Section 7 – Funding	Updated all allotment amounts to reflect HB 2 increases effective 2026–27: Acknowledged $3K–$9K (new); Recognized $5K–$15K; Exemplary $9K–	TEA TAA Letter, September 25, 2025; HB 2 funding formula changes

		$25K; Master $12K–$36K. Added NBCT transition note per HB 2.	
11	Section 8 – Communication	Added documentation requirements (SAM format) and centralized storage requirements for meeting notes.	TIA Binder compliance and data validation documentation requirements