Santa Maria ISD



TEACHER INCENTIVE ALLOTMENT

TEA

RECOGNIZED

EXEMPLARY

MASTER

T-TESS

VISION:

EVERY STUDENT EMPOWERED, EVERY VOICE VALUED, EVERY FUTURE BRIGHT

MISSION:

INNOVATE, INSPIRE, EQUIP EVERY STUDENT TO SUCCEED

2026 - 2027

Interim Superintendent

Dr. Marco A. Lara

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The School Board meets regularly on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the Santa Maria ISD Central Administration Office or the Santa Maria ISD Cafeteria. Special meetings may be called and held as necessary.

In compliance with Texas Open Meetings laws, written notice of both regular and special meetings will be posted on the Santa Maria ISD website and at a publicly accessible location at the Central Administration Office, located at 11119 Military Rd, Santa Maria, TX 78592, at least three business days prior to the scheduled meeting time. In emergency situations, meetings may be held with a minimum of two hours’ notice, in accordance with applicable legal requirements. Please refer to the Board Meeting schedule for specific dates and times.

All meetings are open to the public. However, in certain circumstances, Texas law permits the Board to convene in a closed session, from which the public and others are excluded.

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Teacher Incentive Allotment Overview

House Bill 3 (HB 3) was passed by the 86th Texas Legislature in 2019 and signed into law. This legislation established the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) to reward, retain, and recruit effective teachers in the classroom. Through the TIA, teachers have the opportunity to earn one of four designations: Acknowledged, Recognized, Exemplary, and Master. These teacher designations generate supplemental compensation in addition to the district's compensation plan.

There are two pathways to earning a designation:

- National Board Certification
- Local Designation System

By statute, the amount of the allotment generated by teacher designations is dependent upon the designation level of the teacher, the social-economic status of the campus where the teacher serves as well as the rural status of the campus. The TIA is designed to reward the top 50% of teachers across the state of Texas.

Master Teacher

A Master teacher designation generates between $12,000 - $36,000 in additional funding and is awarded to the top 5% of teachers across the state based on their teacher observation data and student growth outcomes.

Exemplary Teacher

An Exemplary teacher designation generates between $9,000 - $25,000 in additional funding and is awarded to the top 20% of teachers across the state based on their teacher observation data and student growth outcomes.

Recognized Teacher

A Recognized teacher designation generates between $5,000 - $15,000 in additional funding and is awarded to the top 33% of teachers across the state based on their teacher observation data and student growth outcomes.

Acknowledged Teacher*

An Acknowledged teacher designation generates between $3,000 - $9,000 in additional funding and is awarded to the top 50% of teachers across the state based on their teacher observation data and student growth outcomes.

National Board Certification

National Board Certification is a voluntary advanced professional certification for PreK–12 educators that identify teaching expertise through a performance-based, peer-reviewed assessment. Teachers are certified based on standards set by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). National Board Certified Teachers will earn an automatic Recognized Designation.

2025-2026 TIA Generated Allotments (Summer 2026)

	Recognized	Exemplary	Master
SANTA MARIA H S	**$8,792**	**$17,584**	**$31,306**
SANTA MARIA M S	**$8,827**	**$17,654**	**$31,423**
TONY GONZALEZ EL	**$8,780**	**$17,560**	**$31,267**

Projected Amounts for 2026-2027 TIA Generated Allotments (Summer 2027)

	Acknowledged	Recognized	Exemplary	Master
SANTA MARIA H S	**$8,792**	**$14,653**	**$24,445**	**$35,168**
SANTA MARIA M S	**$8,827**	**$14,712**	**$24,538**	**$35,308**
TONY GONZALEZ EL	**$8,780**	**$14,633**	**$24,413**	**$35,120**

National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) are eligible to earn a designation if they meet the following criteria:

- Hold an active lifetime, one-year, or standard Texas certification issued by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) in a teacher, reading specialist, or Legacy Master Teacher class of certification. Teachers with an intern or probationary certificates are not eligible.
- Hold an active National Board certification.
- NBCT directory listing reflects Texas residency and/or employment.
- Reported by the above Texas school system in a role ID coded as 087 during that year's Class Roster Winter Submission in February.
- Once earned, the designation will remain active until July following the expiration of the National Board certificate.

TIA Minimum Performance Standards

To implement the Teacher Incentive Allotment, House Bill 3 required the setting of "performance and validity standards" to ensure that the identification of highly effective teachers under the four designation categories – Master, Exemplary, Recognized, and Acknowledged – yield reliable and comparable results across the state.

All cohort applicants are expected to use performance standards along with district teacher observation and student growth data to determine which teachers qualify for designations. Part of the data validation process includes a review of the accuracy of how district systems align their designations to the statewide performance standards

TEA Teacher Observation Minimum Performance Standards

The following table shows the minimum average scores across T-TESS domains 2 and 3 to achieve each level of designation (Acknowledged, Recognized, Exemplary, and Master).

TEA Teacher Observation Minimum Average Ratings

Designation Level	Minimum Average Score Across Domains 2 & 3
Acknowledged	3.5
Recognized	3.7
Exemplary	3.9
Master	4.5

Teachers in each of the four designated categories tend to have scores above these minimum averages, however, the overall holistic review may allow for scores that are nominally lower than these stated minimums in some cases. In Santa Maria ISD, to be eligible to earn a designation, the teacher must have a minimum score of proficient in each dimension for Domains 2 and 3.

TEA Student Growth Performance Standards

The percentages below are the TEA statewide performance standards for student growth in each of the four teacher designations levels, regardless of the student growth measure used. Teachers in each designation category will generally exceed these minimum averages. At Santa Maria ISD, the student growth chart below references the current designation level thresholds to be recommended for each level.

TEA Student Growth Performance Standards

Acknowledged Teacher	Recognized Teacher	Exemplary Teacher	Master Teacher
50% of students met or exceeded expected growth.	**55%** of students met or exceeded expected growth.	**60%** of students met or exceeded expected growth.	**70%** of students met or exceeded expected growth.

Under the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA), the Texas Education Agency (TEA) provides recommended minimum growth and T-TESS proficiency standards to guide local designation systems. While these benchmarks serve as a reference, Santa Maria ISD retains the flexibility to establish performance standards that best reflect the district's unique context, instructional priorities, and student needs.

Santa Maria ISD may scale growth measures and T-TESS proficiency thresholds as necessary to ensure a valid, reliable, and equitable system that maximizes teacher designation opportunities while staying aligned with TEA requirements. All locally developed criteria will be regularly reviewed to ensure they meet data validation standards and effectively differentiate levels of teacher effectiveness.

Santa Maria ISD Designation System

Plan Development

Stakeholders & Feedback

Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) Strategic Planning

During the 2020–2021 academic year, Santa Maria ISD established a TIA Strategic Planning Committee to develop the district's local teacher designation system in alignment with the statewide performance standards. The committee included district leaders, campus-based administrators, and teachers representing every grade level, campus, and content area.

Throughout the planning year, the committee gathered ongoing feedback from various stakeholder groups, including focus groups, district meetings, and campus forums. Input from these sessions was carefully reviewed and incorporated into the final design of Santa Maria ISD's local teacher designation system to ensure it reflected the perspectives and needs of all stakeholders.

Committee Decisions

The TIA Strategic Planning Committee addressed three key questions to design the district's Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) system:

1. Who can qualify for TIA designation?
    a. Eligible Campuses and Teaching Assignments
    b. Will we expand eligibility to all teachers in future years, or will some be excluded initially?
2. How will teachers qualify for TIA designation?
    a. Observations
    b. Student Growth Measures
    c. Optional Components
    d. Performance Standards and Weighting/Teacher Categories
3. How and when will Santa Maria ISD compensate teachers?
    a. Distribution of Funds
    b. Timing and Mode of Compensation

Pathways to Designation in Santa Maria ISD

The committee identified two primary pathways for designation in Santa Maria ISD:

1. **National Board Certification**
2. **Santa Maria ISD District Designation System**.

To ensure inclusivity, the TIA committee recognizes that all teachers and courses are eligible for designation through **Student Learning Objective (SLO) student growth measures**. This approach supports a fully inclusive district designation system.

TIA System Evaluation and Expansion

Santa Maria ISD will continue to engage with teachers throughout the school year, to address any questions or concerns. The district will also collect ongoing feedback from stakeholders to support the continuous improvement and refinement of the TIA system.

Teacher Evaluation: T-TESS

The Texas Teacher Evaluation & Support System (T-TESS) is the state-adopted teacher appraisal instrument, consisting of four Domains. For the purposes of Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA), only data from **Domains 2 and 3** will be used in the calculation to determine teacher designations.

T-TESS Domains 2 and 3

To calculate the TIA score, only T-TESS **Domains 2 and 3** are considered. These domains focus on **instruction** and the **learning environment**. In Santa Maria ISD, teachers must earn a minimum score of proficient (3) in each dimension within these Domains to be eligible for designation.

- Instruction (Domain 2)
  - Achieving Expectations (Dimension 2.1)
  - Content Knowledge and Expertise (Dimension 2.2)
  - Communication (Dimension 2.3)
  - Differentiation (Dimension 2.4)
  - Monitor and Adjust (Dimension 2.5)
- Learning Environment (Domain 3)
  - Classroom Environment, Routines, and Procedures (Dimension 3.1)
  - Managing Student Behavior (Dimension 3.2)
  - Classroom Culture (Dimension 3.3)

T-TESS Observations for TIA Eligible Assignments

- A **45-minute observation** will be scheduled, with the teacher being provided a 1-2 week window to select the date. ***The observation must take place in a TIA eligible course.***

T-TESS Composite Score

The T-TESS score is calculated as an average of the summative scores for the Instruction (D2) and Learning Environment (D3). Below is an example of how the T-TESS Composite score is calculated.

T-TESS Dimension	Summative Rating
2.1 Achieving Expectations	3
2.2 Content Knowledge	3
2.3 Communication	3
2.4 Differentiation	3
2.5 Monitor & Adjust	3
3.1 Classroom Environment	4
3.2 Managing Behaviors	3
3.3 Classroom Culture	3
	25/8 = 3.125
T-TESS Composite Score	**3.13**

Student Growth Measure

Student Growth Instrument

The instrument used to measure student growth varies on grade level and subject area.

Current Designations -

- All Grade Levels and Courses are eligible through Student Learning Objectives (SLO's).

Student SLO Rosters

- Students who meet all three criteria will be included in a teacher's student growth calculation:
  - The teacher is the teacher of record at the last day of the 1st 6 weeks
  - The teacher is the teacher of record at the end of the 1st semester
  - The teacher is the teacher of record in March of the Spring Semester
- Teachers will be asked to verify their student rosters for inclusion in the TIA Growth Calculation each April. Campus Administrator and Teacher will collaborate to finalize and verify student growth targets and calculation.
- Teachers may recommend adding or removing from their roster based on extenuating circumstances. All final decisions will be made at campus level.
- For Semester-based courses, growth will be measured using a beginning of the semester growth measure and an end of the semester growth measure. Students must be on the teacher's roster for both time points to be included in the calculation.
- If the teacher is reassigned after the Beginning of the Year assessment (SLO) and receives a new group of students, the teacher and district will work together to determine the appropriate student roster for Student Growth calculations when possible.

NOTE:
The overall TIA SLO Score is also subject to scaling. The following data may be used for alignment and data validation:

- ***VAM data related to STAAR***
- ***STAAR Growth Data***
- ***NWEA MAP***
- ***MCLASS***
- ***iReady/iStation***
- ***Circle CLI***
- ***IBC's (Industry Based Certifications)***
- ***TSI***
- ***ACT/SAT***
- ***Advanced Placement***

Maintaining the integrity of Santa Maria ISD TIA system requires that student growth measures are administered fairly and consistently across the district. To ensure all students have the opportunity to demonstrate their full potential, the following conditions must be met. This section also outlines procedures for addressing testing irregularities, reporting suspected educator misconduct related to TIA student growth measures, and local consequences for violations of the student growth measure integrity.

Student Growth Measure Security and Confidentiality

Maintaining security and confidentiality of student growth measures helps to ensure that student performance is accurately measured as a part of our TIA system. In order to maintain student growth measure security and confidentiality:

- student growth measure test administration procedures should be followed exactly as provided by the campus administrator and SLO process
- students must be actively monitored during student growth measure collection
- students may not receive assistance to complete student growth measures, beyond what is allowable by the test provider or prescribed by a governing student committee as applicable to STAAR or other standardized assessment programs (e.g., ARD, LPAC, 504, etc.)

Serious Student Growth Measure Testing Violations

The following educator conduct represents serious student growth measure testing violations to security and confidentiality:

- intentionally administering the assessment to less than 95% of students
- tampering with or falsifying student responses
- *discouraging students from doing their best on the BOY SLO*
- communicating false potential penalties and/or consequences for poor performance on the EOY SLO
- exempting or preventing a student from participating in student growth measures
- failing to implement sufficient procedures to prevent student cheating
- encouraging or assisting an individual to engage in any conduct described above
- manipulating accommodations to artificially inflate student growth outcomes

Reporting Suspected Student Growth Measures Testing Violations

The following steps should be taken by any Santa Maria ISD employee to report suspected student growth measure testing violations:

- immediately report the suspected violation to the campus administrator
- campus administrator will review the information to determine report credibility and whether or not the report includes a student growth measure testing violation
- credible student growth measure testing violations are reported to the district's Central Administration and HR office
- TIA Coordinator will communicate with Human Resources (HR) to continue the investigation, which could include interviews of campus staff and students, assembly of signed statements, and collection of any evidence

Local Penalties for Tampering with Student Growth Measure Integrity

Any person who violates, assists in the violation of, or solicits another to violate or assists in the violation of student growth measure integrity, as well as any person who fails to report such a violation or fails to cooperate in an investigation, is subject to local penalties, such as:

- placement of reprimand letter in personnel file,
- employment dismissal.

TIA Eligibility & Scoring

Teacher Eligibility

To be eligible for a **TIA designation** through Santa Maria ISD a teacher must:

- Be coded as a **teacher (code 087)** in **eSchool,** which is reported to TEA through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS);
- Receive district salary compensation that aligns with the **PEIMS teacher** coding for a minimum of **90 days at 100% of the day** or **180 days at 50-99% of the day**.
- Be the **teacher** for the same eligible course at the BOY through the EOY SLO process.
    - Note: If the district assigns a teacher to a new teaching assignment after the BOY SLO process, resulting in a new set of students, the teacher and district will collaborate to determine the TIA student roster for growth calculation.
- Additionally, the teacher must have all TTESS dimensions in Domains 2 and 3 rated as a 3 (proficient) or higher.

Scoring

TIA designations are determined based on the TIA score, a weighted combination of the **teacher appraisal composite score** (from Domains 2 & 3) and **student growth composite score**. To determine annual teacher eligibility for a TIA designation, the following steps are completed during the district-level end-of-year data analysis:

1. **Student Growth Calculation:**

   A student will only be counted once per teacher in the growth calculation for the SLO process.

2. **SLO Alignment and Assessment Consideration:**

   Santa Maria utilizes one of the TEA approved methodologies to determine student growth.

Important Reminder:

- This methodology ensures that teachers are not in competition with one another to earn a distinction. All teachers within a grade level, subject area, or course can earn a designation if their students show sufficient growth.
- For subjects with multiple years of data, the district average will be computed using data from multiple years.

Designation Calculation & Score Ranges

The composite score for designation is calculated using:

- 60% of the student growth score
- 40% of the T-TESS score

All calculations will be rounded to two decimals. Once the TIA Score is calculated, the designation will be recommended. In Santa Maria ISD to be eligible for a designation, a teacher must have a minimum score of proficient in each dimension for Domains 2 and 3.

Note:

- ***60% of the student growth score and 40% of the T-TESS score weighting may be subject to change depending on the number of total designations.***
- ***The overall TIA Calculated Score is also subject to scaling.***
- ***VAM data related to STAAR may be used for data validation alignment.***
- ***Other assessments such as MCLASS, NWEA MAP, IBC's Industry Based Certifications, ACT, TSI, SAT, Advanced Placement may also be considered when creating designations.***
- ***SLO's should align to standards found within these exams to ensure the best results in SLO TIA Alignment.***

Data Submission

TIA data and **designation recommendations** will be submitted to **Texas Tech and TEA** for validation of all eligible TIA teachers in **October** following the data collection year. To ensure that TIA data and designations are submitted to Texas Tech and TEA, the teacher must remain employed in a **Teaching (087)** position in **Santa Maria ISD** through the **end of the school year** during data validation.

Important Note:
TEA will determine the final TIA designations. Santa Maria ISD will submit proposed TIA designations in October for Data Validation, which will be completed by Texas Tech. TEA will notify the district of the final results in Spring (February) following data submission.

TIA Designation Evaluation and Frequency

Teacher eligibility for a TIA designation is evaluated annually. Each year when a teacher receives a T-TESS evaluation and has approved student growth measure data, a TIA score will be calculated, offering the teacher an opportunity to earn a designation.

In accordance with TEA guidelines, the following rules apply:

- Teachers with an existing TIA designation will **not be resubmitted annually** during their five-year designation period if they continue to meet the same designation level. For example, a teacher who earns an **Exemplary Designation** will not be resubmitted in subsequent years if they continue to meet **Exemplary criteria**, including the minimum appraisal and student growth requirements. The same rule applies to teachers who earn and maintain a **Master Designation**.
- Teachers with an existing designation **may be resubmitted for a higher designation** within the five-year validity period if their performance qualifies. For example, a teacher who previously earned a **Recognized Designation** may be submitted for a **Master Designation** if they meet the required TIA score and component minimums.
- Teachers with an existing designation will **not be resubmitted for the same or a lower designation** during the five-year validity period.

Update: To ensure continuity of TIA Designation, teachers who currently hold a **TIA Designation** (Master, Exemplary, or Recognized) should be submitted for renewal in Year 5 using performance data collected during Year 4.

TIA Allotments by Campus

The Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) program is available to all Texas school districts and open-enrollment charter schools. The amount of TIA funding generated is determined by a formula that considers campus characteristics, including student socioeconomic status and campus location:

- Campuses with greater student needs based on socioeconomic factors generate more TIA funds per TIA designated teacher.
- Rural schools generate more TIA funds per TIA designated teacher based on a higher multiplier to account for challenges such as teacher recruitment and retention in rural areas.

For more information about the TIA allotment calculations, see TEA's Teacher Incentive Allotment page.

Projected Amounts for 2026-2027 TIA Generated Allotments (Summer 2027). Actual Amounts will be updated in April 2027.

	Acknowledged	Recognized	Exemplary	Master
SANTA MARIA H S	**$8,792**	**$14,653**	**$24,445**	**$35,168**
SANTA MARIA M S	**$8,827**	**$14,712**	**$24,538**	**$35,308**
TONY GONZALEZ EL	**$8,780**	**$14,633**	**$24,413**	**$35,120**

For more information about the specific amount of TIA funds generated by TIA designated teachers at every campus across the state, see TEA's Teacher Incentive Allotment Funding Map. **Allotment amounts are recalculated by TEA every April.**

TIA Designation Compensation

Distribution of TIA Compensation

As required by statute, **90% of TIA funds** must be distributed directly to teachers and no more than 10% allocated to support elements of TIA. Santa Maria ISD has distributed TIA funds as follows:

- **90% Minimum** of the teacher TIA allotment will be distributed directly to the individual **TIA-designated teacher,** after deducting fees for **TRS, federal income tax**, and other **benefits.**
- **No more than 10%** of the teacher TIA allotment will be reserved at the **district level** to support the **oversight of the implementation of TIA a**nd the ongoing development of **TIA resources and professional development.** including the Employer TRS and Benefits Contribution.

Eligibility for TIA Compensation

- **If a Designated Teacher leaves the district** before **Winter Roster Verification** (typically in late February) the Designated Teacher will **not receive** any **TIA funds** because the district **will not generate** any TIA funds from the state.
- If a Designated Teacher transfers campuses within Santa Maria ISD during the school year, the district will provide the funding to the Designated teacher based on the campus where the Designated Teacher worked during **Winter Roster Verification** (usually in February).
- If a Designated Teacher moves to **another district** after the Winter Roster Verification then the Designated Teacher ***may* receive** the allotment of funds generated by the state at the original campus, provided the teacher was designated at the campus during the Winter Roster.
- Designated Teacher must be reported by the Designating District in the Class Roster Winter Submission as meeting eligibility criteria:
    - Employed by the designating district in a 087-teacher role as of the last Friday in February.
    - Met or will meet the creditable year of service requirement by the end of the school year
- A Designated Teacher must maintain a valid designation status to be eligible for the annual Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) distribution. A Designated Teacher who is on employment suspension may remain eligible to receive a TIA distribution, subject to district review and approval.
- A Designated Teacher shall not be eligible to receive a TIA distribution if, at the time of distribution, has had their teacher certificate revoked, suspended, voluntary surrender, or permanent surrender status and/or is listed on the District's Do Not Hire List.
- In such cases, the TIA funds associated with that teacher may be used, in accordance with the District's applicable requirements, to provide a one-time recruitment/signing bonus for a replacement teacher assigned to the same campus and/or be redistributed among eligible Designated Teachers assigned to that campus.

Frequency of TIA Compensation

TIA compensation is an annual allotment provided by the State and subject to the availability of state funding allocations.

- Santa Maria ISD will provide TIA compensation to teachers through a **lump sum payment** (as a check/EFT from the district) on or **before August 30** of each year that a teacher generates funding for a TIA designation.

TIA compensation stipends will be eligible for use when calculating retirement benefits for TRS-eligible staff. Employees are responsible to pay the employee benefits and tax costs in excess of what TIA funding covers. Actual TIA compensation amounts distributed will be subject to deductions for federal income tax, Medicare tax, and TRS contributions. These deductions will be included as part of the employee's annual wages, which are reported to both state and federal governments, as well as the Teacher Retirement System (TRS).

Santa Maria ISD Resources

- If you have questions, please contact Rene Salinas, District TIA Coordinator

Texas Education Agency Resources

- TEA HB3: Teacher Incentive Allotment Details
- TEA HB3: Teacher Incentive Allotment FAQ
- TEA Teacher Incentive Allotment
- TEA Teacher Incentive Allotment Funding Allotment Map
- TEA Student Growth Performance Standards Document
- TEA Teacher Observation Performance Standards Document