Texas Education Agency

To the Administrator Addressed

Commissioner Mike Morath

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DATE:	**February 26, 2026**
SUBJECT:	**Strategic Compensation Cohort – Applications Due April 1**
CATEGORY:	**Teacher Incentive Allotment, Strategic Compensation**
NEXT STEPS:	**Submit a cohort application by April 1, 2026**

Overview

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is accepting applications for the 2026-27 Strategic Compensation Cohort, a multi-year technical assistance opportunity that supports school systems in developing and implementing strategic compensation systems aligned with House Bill 2 (HB 2), 89th Regular Legislative Session, requirements for the Enhanced Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) designation.

About Enhanced TIA

Enhanced TIA is a designation that districts may apply for to access additional funding. To earn this designation, school systems must build evaluation systems and compensation plans for both teachers and campus leaders. Once obtained, the Enhanced TIA designation allows districts to receive an additional 10% on top of their TIA funds to support the implementation of a performance-based compensation system.

For teachers, school systems must:

- Include all teacher types as eligible for designation in a TEA-approved local teacher designation system for TIA.
- Replace the step and ladder pay scale with a compensation plan based on performance and move away from across-the-board pay raises.
- Implement a targeted distribution model and other appropriate quality control systems.
- Adopt an approach to teacher assignment based on student needs that includes strategic scheduling for early grades and high-need campuses and students.

For principals and assistant principals, school systems must:

- Develop a refined principal evaluation system consistent with the TIA approach.
- Replace the step and ladder pay scale with a compensation plan based on performance and move away from across-the-board pay raises.

About the Strategic Compensation Cohort

This opportunity directly supports school systems' efforts to go beyond a TIA system and earn an Enhanced TIA designation through alignment with statutory expectations and statewide performance and compensation priorities.

School systems selected for the cohort will receive:

- Intensive, multi-year technical assistance focused on designing and implementing a high-quality, districtwide strategic compensation system.

- Guidance that supports local systems in meeting HB 2 requirements for Enhanced TIA, including strong alignment between compensation, teacher and administrator effectiveness, and student growth.
- Support in transitioning to a comprehensive, districtwide compensation model that reinforces recruitment, retention, and instructional quality.

Cohort Application Information

The 2026-27 Strategic Compensation Cohort application is now available.

School systems interested in joining the 2026–27 Strategic Compensation Cohort must submit an application by **April 1, 2026**. Application submissions will require approval and sign-off from the district superintendent. School systems will be selected for this opportunity based on multiple factors, including, but not limited to, TIA status, Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) ratings, and evidence of readiness to plan for and implement broad-scale change in their organization.

Questions

For questions, please email tia@tea.texas.gov.