

March 4, 2025

To: House Public Education Committee

Re: House Bill 2

Position: For

Honorable Chair Buckley and members of the House Public Education Committee,

The Commit Partnership and 19 organizations appreciate the opportunity to provide **written testimony in support of House Bill 2 (HB 2)** and its critical investments in Texas public education. With only 47% of students performing on grade level¹ and Texas' 2024 NAEP rankings in the bottom half of states for 4th grade reading, 8th grade reading, and 8th grade math, **we commend the House's commitment to data-driven strategies that improve student outcomes.** HB 2 takes important steps to strengthen Texas education and provides a strong foundation for further recommendations to enhance student achievement and workforce readiness. In particular, we applaud:

I. TEACHER INCENTIVE ALLOTMENT: HB 2 BUILDS ON PROVEN PROGRAMS, REWARDING AND GROWING OUR MOST EFFECTIVE EDUCATORS THROUGH TARGETED TEACHER COMPENSATION INCREASES

A strong teacher workforce is a top priority, as teacher efficacy is the most significant in-school factor affecting student success.² The Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) (HB 3; 86R) has advanced Texas' ability to recruit, retain, and reward top teachers through performance-based funding with incentives to teach on hard-to-staff campuses. Five years since its passage, TIA has strong statewide interest: around 69% of students attend TIA-participating school systems, and more than 26,000 teachers are designated.³ Moreover, TIA has proven effective in realizing intended program outcomes:

- **Significant increases in teacher salaries**, providing an average increase of over \$11,000 annually, making the profession more financially competitive.⁴
- **Higher student achievement**, as school systems implementing TIA have outperformed non-TIA systems in math and reading.⁵ Specifically, early adopters saw less pronounced pandemic-induced declines.
- **Stronger teacher retention**, as the state faces a 12.2% teacher attrition rate,⁶ TIA-designated teachers are eight percentage points more likely to stay in a teaching role in their district than non-TIA teachers.⁷
- **With the greatest impacts on retention and student outcomes for teachers with three to five years of experience**—an especially critical period in early career development.⁸

Continued and expanded investment in this critical program will sustain momentum in elevating the teaching profession and ensuring Texas' top teachers are adequately compensated and incentivized to teach where students need them

¹ Commit Partnership. [2024 STAAR Results Dashboard](#).

² Opper, Isaac M. (2019). [Teachers Matter: Understanding Teachers' Impact on Student Achievement](#). RAND.

³ Texas Impact Network. (2024). [Students- First Policy Implementation in Texas: the 2024 Texas Impact Network Annual Report](#).

⁴ Texas Education Agency. (2024). Senate Education Committee Interim Hearing Presentation September 18, 2024, The State of Education.

⁵ Kirksey, J. J., Lansford, T., Crevar, A. R., & Mansell, K. E. (2024). From incentive to impact: The Texas Teacher Incentive Allotment's path to improved retention and achievement. Texas Tech University. Center for Innovative Research in Change, Leadership, and Education.

⁶ Texas Education Agency. (2024). [Teacher Employment, Attrition, and Hiring](#).

⁷ Texas Education Agency. (2024). [Teacher Incentive Allotment Annual Report 2024](#).

⁸ Kirksey, J. J., Lansford, T., Crevar, A. R., & Mansell, K. E. (2024). From incentive to impact: The Texas Teacher Incentive Allotment's path to improved retention and achievement. Texas Tech University. Center for Innovative Research in Change, Leadership, and Education.

most. We applaud the House for its **commitment to TIA, aligning a significant investment with the desire of 87% of Texas voters who support boosting TIA funding.**⁹

II. ADDITIONAL DAYS SCHOOL YEAR (ADSY) PROGRAM: HB 2 ADDRESSES SUMMER LEARNING LOSS, SUPPORTS CLOSING ACHIEVEMENT GAPS, AND INCENTIVIZES SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO IMPROVE STUDENT OUTCOMES

Quality extended school calendars can mitigate learning loss and accelerate student outcomes. ADSY campuses, in particular, show improved proficiency rates for students furthest behind with the most academic gains among those who attended 25+ additional days. For example, these students saw a dramatic 17% point increase in meeting grade level STAAR math from 2022 to 2023 compared to their non-ADSY peers.¹⁰ **To scale similar outcomes across the state, we appreciate the adjustment to the ADSY base calendar requirement to 175 days, expansion of the program to middle schools, and additional formula funds for programs with additional days that show the greatest return on investment.**¹¹

III. RESOURCE CAMPUSES: HB 2 PROVIDES COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT FOR CHRONICALLY UNDERPERFORMING SCHOOLS ENACTING EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMMING

Improving low-performing schools is critically important to Texas' economic prosperity. Resource Campuses provide full-scope support for chronically underperforming campuses that implement a robust turnaround framework. When 26 campuses in North Texas implemented this type of framework, the proportion of F-rated campuses decreased from 69% to 8%, while A- and B-rated campuses increased from 0% to 50%.¹² **By modifying the Resource Campus criteria without sacrificing the fidelity of the model, Texas can make this program more accessible and spur dramatic improvements.**

IV. STATE COMPENSATORY EDUCATION ALLOTMENT: HB 2 INVESTS IN HIGH-IMPACT TUTORING TO CLOSE ACHIEVEMENT GAPS AND ENSURE STUDENTS ARE ON GRADE LEVEL

Achievement gaps between students experiencing economic disadvantage and their more affluent peers continue to persist: most recent STAAR scores show gaps of 28 percentage points between these students.¹³ However, schools implementing robust high-impact tutoring are seeing gains. Texas proudly boasts a robust intervention strategy for struggling students beginning in 4th grade at no cost to families to help change this tide. However, this resource-intensive approach was often paid for by COVID-19 federal relief funds. As these funds have expired, **increasing the weights of the Compensatory Education Allotment can provide a strong return on investment for transformational tutoring.**¹⁴ **We appreciate the efforts to increase the State Compensatory Allotment and respectfully suggest bolstering the proposed weights to more adequately support at-risk students and those struggling to learn on grade level.**

⁹ Ragnar Research Partners, Commit Statewide Poll. (Nov. 2024).

¹⁰ TEA PEIMS data; STAAR 2022-23.

¹¹ Commit Analysis and adapted from TEA Materials.

¹² Commit Analysis of TEA Accountability Scores.

¹³ Texas STAAR Aggregate Report. (2024)

¹⁴ Nickow, Andre Joshua, Philip Oreopoulos, and Vincent Quan. (2020). The Impressive Effects of Tutoring on PreK-12 Learning: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of the Experimental Evidence. (EdWorkingPaper: 20-267). Retrieved from Annenberg Institute at Brown University: <https://doi.org/10.26300/eh0c-pc52>; National Student Support Accelerator. (n.d.). [High Impact Tutoring: Equitable and Effective Student Learning Acceleration.](#); Washington State Institute for Public Policy. [Benefit-Cost Results](#). Accessed January 2025.

V. QUALITY TEACHER PREPARATION: HB 2 ENSURES TEACHERS ARE ADEQUATELY PREPARED TO BE TEACHERS OF RECORD

Between SY 23-24, 56% of newly hired Texas teachers were uncertified entering classrooms with little to no preparation.¹⁵ This alarming trend has had a severe effect in rural communities, where it is estimated that up to 75% of new hires were uncertified in the previous school year.¹⁶ Currently, Texas provides almost no dedicated state funding for teacher preparation, forcing aspiring teachers to choose pathways based on cost and convenience rather than quality. As a result, the fastest and cheapest route into the classroom is often skipping certification altogether.

Texas' growing dependence on underprepared teachers directly impacts:

- **Teacher retention** as 64% of uncertified teachers leave the profession by their fifth year compared to 34% of those who complete rigorous, university-based preparation.¹⁷
- **Student success** showing students taught by new, uncertified teachers lost the equivalent to four months of learning in math and six months in reading.¹⁸
- **A student's future economic opportunity** for every 10% increase in a student's exposure to uncertified teachers, their annual earnings drop by 5% just eight years after high school.¹⁹

HB 2 presents a pivotal opportunity to strengthen Texas' teacher workforce by taking a bold step forward, introducing key incentives to attract and retain well-prepared educators. **By investing in strategic reforms and funding high-quality pathways into teaching, HB 2 not only elevates the profession but also lays the foundation for long-term teacher retention. Most critically, the bill provides dedicated funding for teacher candidates, school districts, and high-quality educator preparation programs, helping to significantly reduce Texas' reliance on uncertified teachers.**

We appreciate the Legislature's commitment to addressing this issue by providing school districts with financial support to expand high-quality certification pathways, making teaching a more viable and sustainable profession. **By ensuring every student has access to a well-prepared teacher, HB 2 represents a critical investment in both Texas' education system and its future workforce.**

VI. HIGH SCHOOL ADVISING: HB 2 SUPPORTS A SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION FOR LIFE BEYOND COLLEGE INTO COLLEGE, CAREER, OR THE MILITARY

Texas public education is committed to preparing students for college, career, or the military. Additionally, 94% of Texans agree that high school students should have access to high-quality college and career advising.²⁰ We appreciate the House's focus to provide **support for Texas high school students in enrolling in postsecondary education, gaining**

¹⁵ [TEA Annual Report. \(2024\)](#)

¹⁶ Van Overschelde, Dr. Jim. (2024). [Rebuilding the Pipeline: Ensuring Texas Children Have Well-Prepared Teachers.](#)

¹⁷ Kirksey, J. J., (2024). Amid Rising Number of Uncertified Teachers, Previous Classroom Experience Proves Vital in Texas. Texas Tech University.

¹⁸ Kirksey, J. J., (2024). Amid Rising Number of Uncertified Teachers, Previous Classroom Experience Proves Vital in Texas. Texas Tech University.

¹⁹ Kirksey, J. J., (2025). [The Economic Benefits of High-Quality Teacher Preparation in Texas.](#) Texas Tech University.

²⁰ Ragnar Research Partners, Commit Statewide Poll. (Nov. 2024).

employment in careers that pay self-sustaining wages, and enlisting in the military through intentional, year-round guidance that ensures individualized support and fosters seamless transitions into life beyond high school bolstering Texas' workforce.

We applaud HB 2's efforts to support advising and respectfully suggest that the House consider ensuring these advisors receive specialized training through readily available modules provided by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board or the National College Access Network, for example. This kind of training can provide data-driven, personalized support that integrates college and career pathways as a both/and approach rather than an either/or choice.

VII. CLOSING

We sincerely applaud the House for its support of Texas public schools and investments to support every child having access to an excellent education. We look forward to continued collaboration to strengthen our student outcomes, workforce, and state's prosperity.

Gratefully,

Kate Greer
Managing Director, Policy & State Coalition
The Commit Partnership

Supporting Organizations:

