

**District Awards for Teacher Excellence
Texarkana Independent School District
2009-2010**

For the second year, the Governor's Educator Excellence Award Program made available to the district the District Awards for Teacher Excellence (DATE) grant. Texarkana ISD was chosen to participate in this noncompetitive grant and has been awarded \$451,166 for the 2009-2010 school year.

Grant Purpose

The grant purpose is to provide a system of financial incentives to award educators who demonstrate the ability to achieve higher levels of student academic performance. The stated TEA goal of the program is to create a financial incentive system for teachers and to increase student performance.

Grant Requirements

The grant specifies that at least 60% of the funds must be spent on teacher incentives and that up to 40% may be used for rewarding other campus personnel, recruitment and retention incentives, teacher mentoring, stipends, or increasing data capabilities to support instruction. Success must be measurable using objective, quantifiable measures and the teacher impact on student achievement must be measurable at the individual or "team" level. "Teams" may be made up of grade or subject area groups.

The Process

During the first year of the grant (2008-2009), in keeping with the grant purpose and guidelines, a district grant committee was formed to begin the process. The district committee met, reviewed the grant criteria, and developed district-wide performance measures for each campus for teacher incentives. In addition, the district committee prepared information and materials to explain the grant purpose to all staff. A framework was also developed to present to the district teacher compensation committee to receive their feedback and input on the overall incentive plan.

A district-wide teacher compensation committee was formed with representation from each campus. The committee was also balanced by teacher years of experience, grade level, TAKS tested areas, and elective teachers in order to receive good representation from all areas. The district grant committee presented the grant criteria and district-wide incentive plan framework to the teacher compensation committee and received input and feedback. Also, the district grant committee presented the information to several campuses.

For 2009-2010, the district-wide grant committee reviewed the criteria that was developed during the first year of the grant and elected to continue the performance incentive plan for teachers participating in the DATE grant.

Teacher Performance Teams

The committee defined the district-wide teacher performance teams for each campus as listed below for elementary, middle school, and high school campuses. Teachers in TAKS tested areas and other specific targeted area teachers are combined into a grade level team and are included in the 60% grant allocation while all other teachers are included in the 40% grant allocation based on campus-wide performance.

Performance Incentive Plan – Teachers

Elementary

- 3rd-5th grade teachers and other specified teachers - \$1,000 potential reward divided by number of tests given in specific grade level
- PK – 2nd grade teachers and other defined support teachers (fine arts, technology, etc.) - \$1,000 potential reward based on overall campus performance in each subject, divided between each subject area tested

District Awards for Teacher Excellence Continued

Middle School

- 6th, 7th, and 8th core area/TAKS tested grade level teachers, technology and resource special education - \$1,000 potential reward divided by number of tests given in specific grade level
- Support teachers (fine arts, elective areas, etc.) - \$1,000 potential reward based on overall campus performance in each subject , divided between subject area tested

High School

- 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th core area/TAKS tested grade level teachers and resource special education teachers - \$1,000 potential reward divided by number of tests given in grade level
- Support teachers (fine arts, technology, elective areas, etc.) - \$1,000 potential reward based on overall campus performance in each subject , divided between each subject area tested

OPTIONS

- 9th – 12th grade teachers - \$1,000 potential reward based on overall improvement for campus scores. Reward divided equally between tested subjects.

District-Wide Staff

- Dyslexia, ESL, Special Education Teachers - \$1,000 potential reward for support teachers based on campus improvement where majority of work time is allocated. Reward based on overall campus performance in each subject, divided between each subject area tested.

Note on determining campus/grade level/subject performance

The 2009-2010 student performance for each subject (whether determined by grade level or overall campus) must increase by one percentage point from the restated 2008-2009 results. The 2008-2009 results will be restated to include the changes to the accountability system for 2009-2010. These changes include only one administration of grade three reading and the inclusion of TAKS Accommodated tests in all subjects in all grade levels. If restated scores in 2008-2009 are 90% or above, then the 2009/2010 score must be 90% or above. Note **example** below:

2008-2009 District reading performance – 92%. Restated result – 88%. DATE target – 89%

Special grant eligibility provisions:

Teachers must be employed at the October 2009 PEIMS snapshot date. Teachers who leave employment prior to the end of the school year are not eligible. Teachers who leave the district not in good standing (asked to resign or have been terminated/nonrenewed) will not be eligible for the grant award. Teachers must work a minimum of 50% of a regular teacher schedule to be eligible. Part time teachers working at least 50% will be eligible for the percentage of the grant award equivalent to their work time percentage.

Board Approval for Rewards Less Than \$3,000

The grant guidelines require that the Board of Trustees approve grants to teachers of less than \$3,000. The committee has established a plan with rewards less than the recommended \$3,000 because the grant allocation was not sufficient to establish higher rewards based on the key elements established by the committee.

Summary

Texarkana ISD is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in the District Awards for Teacher Excellence Program. Staff should be reminded that this program was developed by TEA to stimulate growth in student performance and should not be viewed as a salary based pay increase. This grant provides a great opportunity for all staff to work collaboratively toward achieving our collective, primary goal of improving student performance and at the same time, personally rewards those teachers and staff members that give 110% to make success a reality for the students.