



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 18, 2024

Gregory-Portland Independent School District

CONTACT:

Crystal Matern, Chief Communications & Engagement Officer

Office: (361) 777-1091, ext. 1031 | **Cell:** (361) 332-1476 | **Email:** cmatern@g-pisd.org

G-PISD School Board approves Pay Raise and Retention Stipend for School Teachers & Staff effective for 2024-25 School Year

The Gregory-Portland ISD Board of Trustees approved an investment of \$2 Million to support teachers and staff for the coming 2024-25 school year at a regular meeting on June 17, 2024. Pay adjustments will include a 1% salary increase from the mid-point for teachers, nurses, librarians, paraprofessionals, clerical/technical and auxiliary staff as well as all administrators. The first-year teacher salary will increase to \$62,000 per year at G-PISD. Additionally, all employees will receive a one-time \$2,000 retention stipend.

“We are extremely proud to be the highest-paying school district in our region and highly competitive across the state with the salaries we are able to provide all employees in their various roles. As your proud superintendent, I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for your dedication and hard work. Your commitment to our students and community does not go unnoticed,” said Superintendent Dr. Michelle Cavazos. “It is important for our staff and community to keep in mind that the State Legislature has not provided any meaningful contributions to increase public school funding in recent years that would in any way support or offset substantial payroll costs for school districts or rising economic inflation.

“Governor Greg Abbott recently rejected a special session to consider increasing funds for education and we have no reason to believe based on history or present knowledge, that funding support will be coming for public schools. Meanwhile, the largest portion of any school district budget is salaries, usually between 80 to 85 percent based on the state average. G-PISD’s salaries currently account for 93 percent of our annual budget.”

Dr. Cavazos mentioned that the only teacher-specific funding support from the state in recent years rewards a handful of high-performing educators above and beyond locally provided salaries. “This state-mandated and state-directed Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) program is beneficial because our teachers can meet criteria for high performance and receive a portion of limited state provided incentive dollars as a result,” she said. “Less than 25 percent of our educators receive the state funded incentive and 100 percent of teachers will continue to receive district-provided salaries under the existing and limited funding formula for school districts.”

The district’s Assistant Superintendent for Business-Finance & Operations, Dr. Ismael Gonzalez III, echoed this sentiment and expressed a need to plan strategically for the financial road ahead. “The state has labeled G-PISD a ‘high wealth district,’ and that can be misleading for the public because our ‘wealth’ is not accessible unless we pass school bonds with voter approval,” he said. “These voter-approved funds, known as I & S Debt Service or bond dollars, come with restrictions. For day-to-day operations, including employee compensation, districts utilize Maintenance and Operations, or M&O, revenues.”

Board President Tim Flinn said he is grateful for the due diligence performed on the part of the district to maintain transparency and continue to find ways to support teachers and staff as much as possible considering funding constraints. “It’s unfortunate that the state has not provided adequate funding for public school districts, even though I know some legislators who continue to make attempts to bring this item back to the table. My fellow G-PISD board members and I know a lot of other Trustees in districts around the state, and we have heard and seen that more and more are adopting deficit budgets and having to cut back where they can because funding for schools continues to be an issue for all of us.”

Dr. Cavazos shared, “We are looking ahead to the 89th Legislative Session beginning January 14, 2025, and

wondering what's in store for Texas public schools. The outcome will impact G-PISD and all public school districts, including our teachers and staff whose professions are those that directly educate, inspire, and empower our students. In the meantime, here in G-PISD we are fortunate to have found a way to continue

providing a one percent pay increase to those who work most closely with our students and to limit reoccurring costs for the district by supplementing that increase with a one-time retention stipend.”

Among other initiatives, the district created a Compensation Planning Committee this school year to review financial information and recommend actions the district can take going forward. “We are grateful to the Long-Range Compensation Committee for their diligence in reviewing our current financial situation and providing thought-provoking suggestions and input to support our high compensation, while also ensuring fiscal responsibility,” said Dr. Cavazos. The Compensation Planning Committee consists of representatives from all employee groups, as well as family and community members. In the years ahead, Dr. Cavazos said the district will continue to consider school bond opportunities to access I&S revenue which is 90-percent funded by local industry and not bound to recapture payments. These opportunities are for one-time capital outlay projects and cannot be used annually to operate a school district.

The approved salary and retention stipend investment will be part of the district's 2024-25 budget, slated for adoption in August. Pay increases will be reflected in district pay beginning on or before September 20th, 2024.

ATTACHED: [Teacher Salary Schedule 2024-2025](#)

LEARN MORE ABOUT SCHOOL FUNDING:

- [ABC-13 Houston: “ ‘We have a problem’: Public schools in Texas face funding shortfalls”](#)
- [Spectrum News 1: “Texas public school district warn of budget deficits amid stagnant funding”](#)
- [Texas School Coalition: “The Past Decade in Texas School Finance”](#)
- [Texas Association of School Boards \(TASB\): “The Truth about School Finance in Texas: Myth vs. Reality”](#)
- [Texas Education Agency \(TEA\): Foundation School Program for Wealth Equalization](#)

##

1200 Broadway Blvd • Portland, Texas 78374

www.g-pisd.org facebook.com/[gpisdwildcats](#) • twitter.com – @GPISD1