

# Turning Policy Into Action In Texas Public Education



The 2023 Texas Impact Network Annual Report

A joint venture between



EDUCATE TEXAS  
at COMMUNITIES FOUNDATION of TEXAS

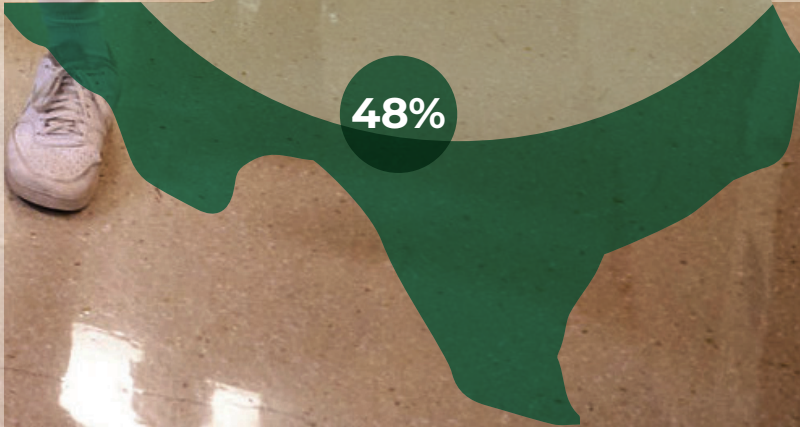




**IMPACT NETWORK**

**2.5M**  
students

or **48%** of Texas public school enrollment attend districts served by the Texas Impact Network



# IMPACT NETWORK

## 2023 Annual Report

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Letter From Executive Director Ben Mackey 3
- Thank You To Our Partners 4
- Who We Are 6
- Where We Work 8
- Our Impact 10
- Our Advocacy 13
- Program Highlights: 14
  - Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) 14
  - Additional Days School Year 16
  - College, Career & Military Readiness 18
  - CFO Strategy Network 19
- Campus Spotlight: David L. Walker Elementary, Crowley ISD 21
- District Spotlight: Aldine ISD 25
- Our Founders 29



This is at **the heart of our work** with the Texas Impact Network: providing school system leaders across the state with the support and partnership they need to accomplish big things on behalf of their students.

## LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEN MACKEY

One of the first things you learn as a teacher is: you can't do this job alone.

As a beginning teacher, you learn classroom management by observing a mentor teacher down the hall. You pick up pedagogy from a reading specialist. A counselor comes alongside you to support a student in crisis. If you're lucky, you have your professional growth nurtured by a thoughtful principal. Maybe you eventually become a principal yourself.

If you do, you quickly learn you can't do that on your own, either. You may be seen as the leader of your school, but you're still dependent upon your teachers to reach the students, your executive director for support and coaching, your communications team to share out vital updates, and your bus drivers to get the kids in the building. And if you find yourself in central administration, the support and buy-in of your superintendent and fellow team leaders are essential if you are to accomplish anything.

Having now experienced public education in Texas from each of these angles, I have to say that the further up in central staff you go, the more challenging it can become as you're further and further away from the daily teaching and learning. While it may seem like you have more direct decision making power, you actually are further from the classroom and the work. You might have the ability to make system decisions but you need to do so in partnership and collaboration with those who are in the classroom and community who see the students on a daily basis.

This is at the heart of our work with the Texas Impact Network: providing school system leaders across the state with the support and partnership they need to accomplish big things on behalf of their students.

Let's face it: the past few years have been traumatic, for students, teachers, and leadership alike. The COVID-19 pandemic may be officially over, but schools are still managing the fallout, both in terms of student enrollment and achievement, all while contending with major uncertainty surrounding everything from state funding to basic safety.

But in spite of all this, the past year has been a time of tremendous growth across Texas school systems. Districts across the state are meeting the urgency of this moment by taking bold actions and implementing the student-centered reforms of House Bill 3 (86 R) – leading to increased success for students.

For the first time, this report includes data not only on districts participating in programming like the Teacher Incentive Allotment and Additional Days School Year, but also how these programs impact other key metrics like teacher retention and student achievement (see our Program Highlights on [pg. 14](#)).

It's been an honor to lead the Texas Impact Network over this past year and see the hard work of partners. I have learned so much from working alongside leaders like Principal Nicole Montgomery ([pg. 21](#)) and Superintendent LaTonya Goffney ([pg. 25](#)), who embody the perse-

verance and dedication of so many Texas educators. They are not merely implementing new policies – they are bringing a vision to life. And even they (you may be sensing a theme here) can't do it alone.

And neither can we. The work of our organization is made up of over a dozen partners who curate personalized experiences for districts that meet their unique circumstances (see [pg. 8](#) for an overview) across the multi-year implementation of these complex programs. This support can range from regularly-convened learning communities to intensive technical assistance.

We've been encouraged and amazed by the impact our regional backbone partners have had on individual districts. That's why, moving forward, we plan to deepen our work with our regional conveners and explore shared metrics to which we can all hold ourselves accountable. We're also considering broadening our implementation support to other policies beyond HB 3 that promise to benefit districts and students alike – including broadening access to advanced math pathways through SB 2124 (88R) and expanding dual credit options through the community college investment of HB 8 (88R).

I am incredibly excited about the opportunities ahead for our Texas school systems, and I can't wait to see what the future has in store for our work.

In gratitude,  
**Ben Mackey**

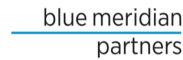
# A THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

The Texas Impact Network would not be possible without the hard work and foresight of so many individuals and institutions.

It is rooted in the transformative power of House Bill 3 (86R), which was the work of Governor

Abbott, Lt. Gov. Patrick, the members of the 86th Texas Legislature, and the Texas Commission on Public School Finance.

Our work is made possible by each of our valued investment partners:



It is further enabled by the support provided by each of our respective founding organizations—the Commit Partnership and Educate Texas at the Communities Foundation of Texas.

We are deeply indebted to each of the thousands of teachers and administrators across the state alongside whom we have the opportunity to work.

Systems change takes time, but it's our hope that by collaborating across sectors and silos,

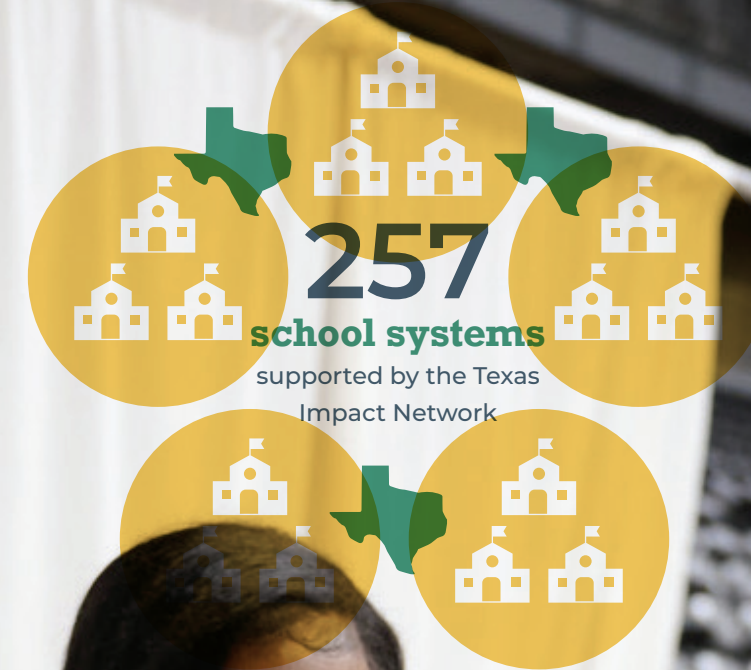
we can accelerate towards the ultimate goal—improved student outcomes across Texas.

That's why we came together to found the Network, and why we hope you'll join us in this work: When we widen our network, we broaden our impact.

In gratitude,

**John Fitzpatrick,**  
Executive Director

**Todd Williams,**  
Founder & CEO



# WHO WE ARE

## The Opportunity

House Bill 3 (86R) transformed public school finance in Texas. Passed by the Texas Legislature in 2019, it not only added \$3.25 billion annually to fund public schools but also created three equitable, innovative funding opportunities that target our state's highest-need students with up to \$4 billion in additional investments.



**\$3.25B**  
received  
annually

to fund public schools  
throughout Texas



**\$4B**  
in additional  
investments

made possible through  
innovative policies

These three data-proven policies are:



### Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA)

Funding for school systems that identify and reward their most effective educators to help keep them in the classroom and further incentivize them to teach at rural campuses and/or those with high rates of economic disadvantage.



### Additional Days School Year (ADSY)

Funding to provide up to 30 additional days of instruction to enhance teacher pay and planning time and prevent summer slide for students who tend to lose some of the achievement gains they made during the previous school year.



### College, Career, & Military Readiness (CCMR) Outcomes Bonus

Equitable funding granted to school systems for each student that both:

- ▶ graduates from high school demonstrating college readiness and;
- ▶ completes a successful postsecondary transition to college, career, or the military.



### Broad, diverse and effective implementation

A diverse spectrum of school system partners representing a variety of regions and sizes across Texas demonstrate the equitable potential of HB 3 and its innovative funding opportunities through meaningful implementation that leads to improved student outcomes.



### Regional technical assistance capacity to ensure continued support

School systems are provided relevant technical assistance by partners invested in their success and aware of what the region needs because they also live there.



### Preservation of HB 3 (86R) school finance reform

The opportunities of HB 3 lead to improved student outcomes across Texas, and policymakers sustain the commitments made in the 2019 legislative session.

# WHO WE ARE

## The Strategy

The Texas Impact Network supports pioneering school systems to develop, implement, and evaluate the evidence-based strategies funded through the passage of HB 3. We work with regional and statewide partners to create proof points and blueprints for success and facilitate a network of peers sharing their best practices and strategies for assisting school systems in realizing the potential of HB 3's core innovations.



Desired Outcomes:

# WHERE WE WORK

To achieve broad, diverse and effective implementation of the core impact areas of HB 3 legislation, the Texas Impact Network works with nine regional partners and manages four statewide programs to provide direct technical support to school systems across Texas.



North Texas/Statewide



El Paso County



Central Texas



Permian Basin



Houston



McLennan County



Rio Grande Valley



Tarrant County

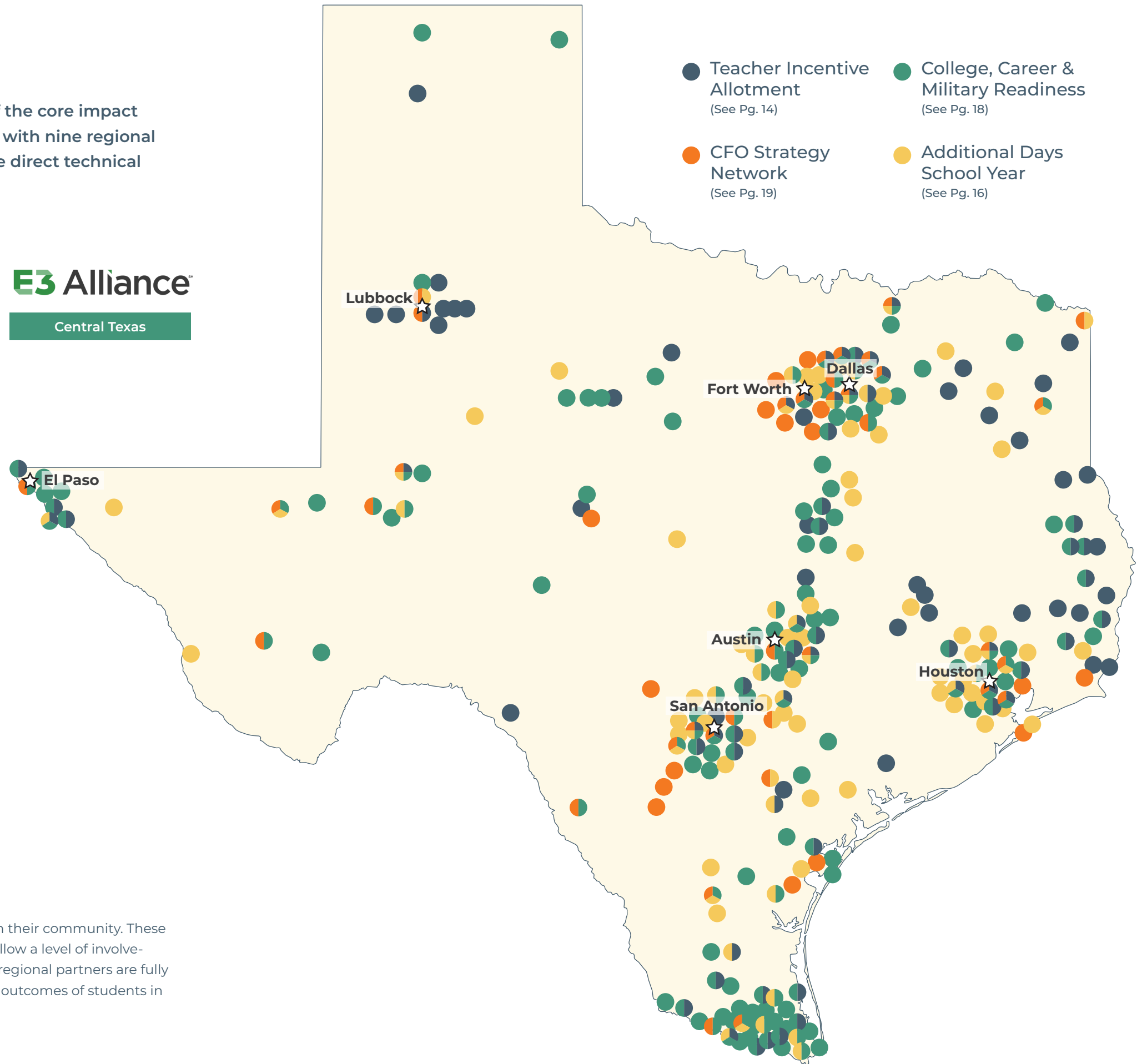


Bexar County

## About Our Regional Education Partners:

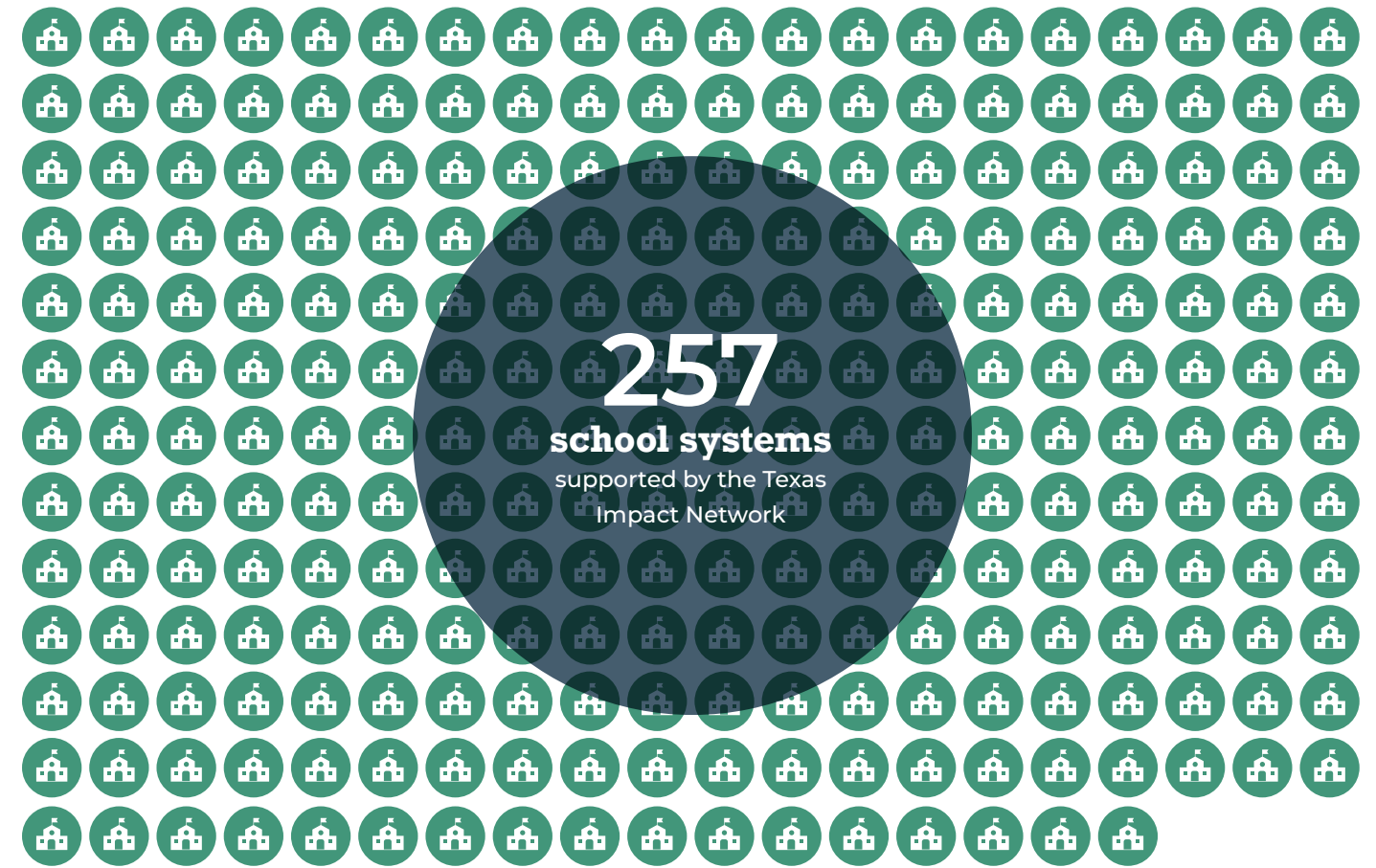
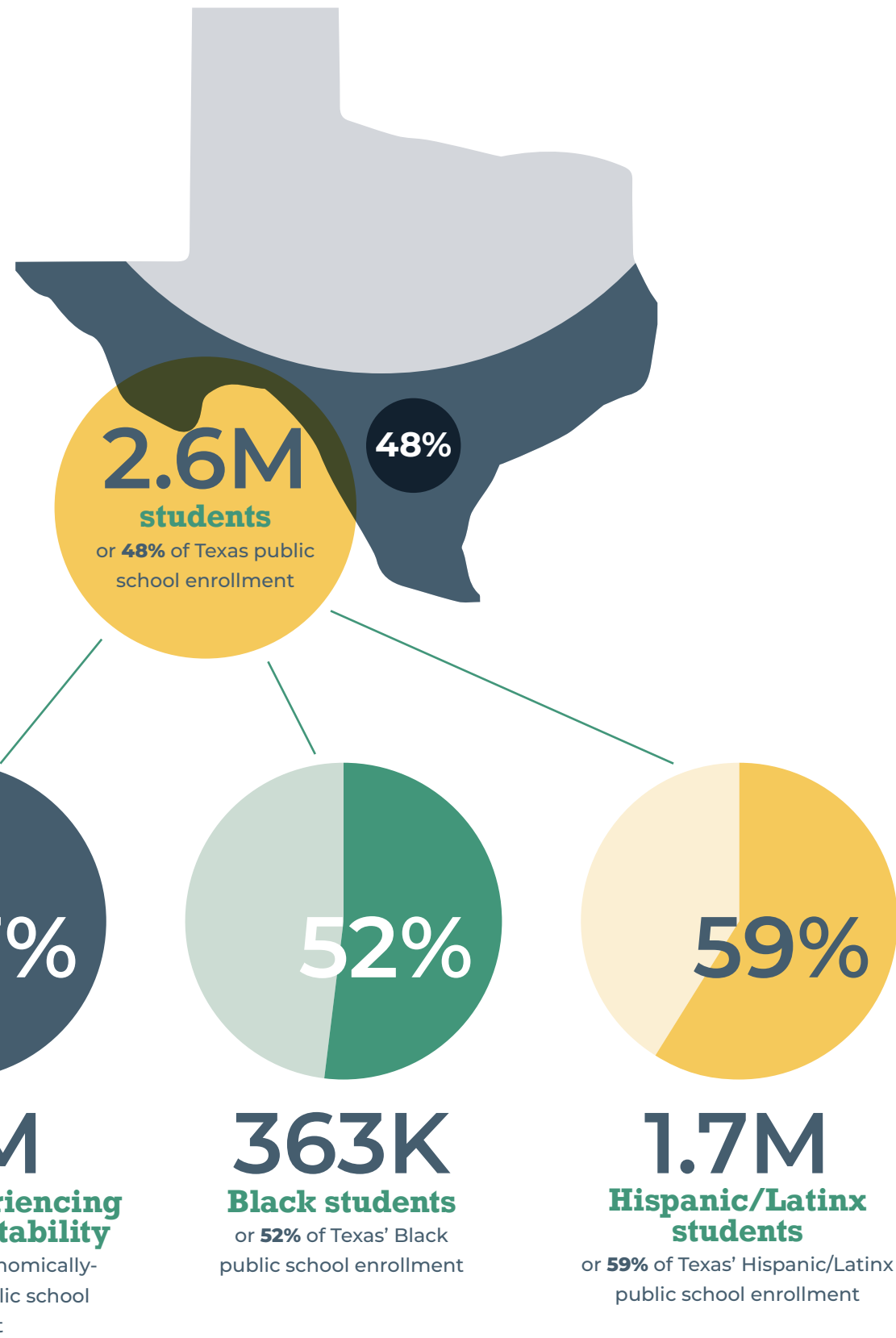
Regional partners offer focused support to a portfolio of school systems in their community. These partners have established relationships with school system leaders that allow a level of involvement that can only be achieved with personal, trusted support. Selected regional partners are fully aligned to the mission of the Texas Impact Network and work to improve outcomes of students in their communities.

- Teacher Incentive Allotment (See Pg. 14)
- College, Career & Military Readiness (See Pg. 18)
- CFO Strategy Network (See Pg. 19)
- Additional Days School Year (See Pg. 16)

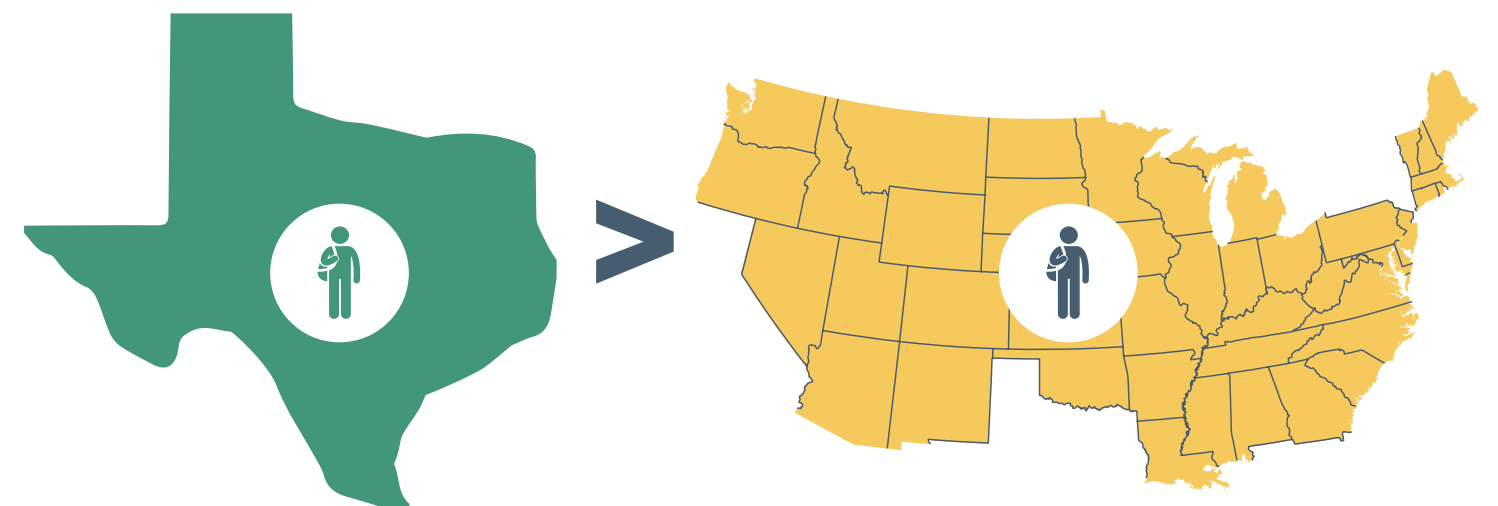


# OUR IMPACT

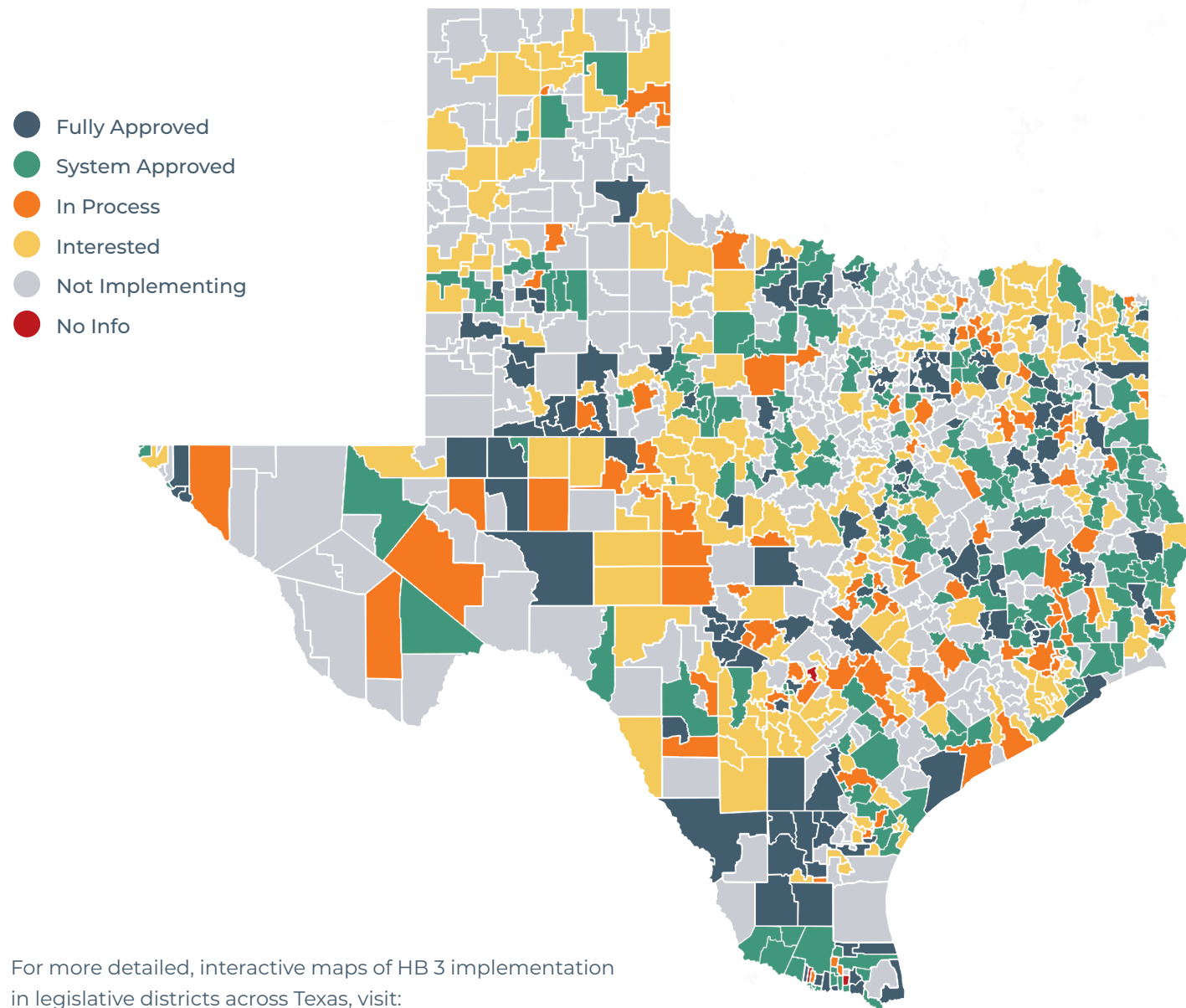
Through these avenues of support, the **Texas Impact Network** is currently reaching:



Total number of students impacted is **larger than K-12 enrollment of 46 different US states**

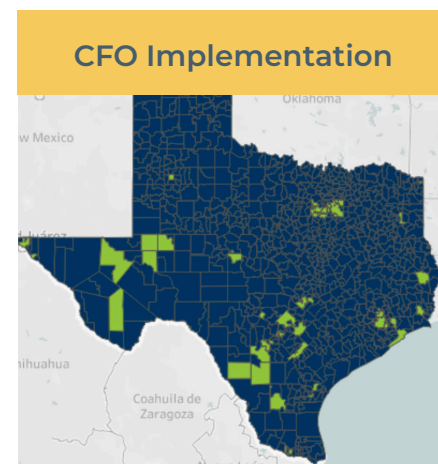
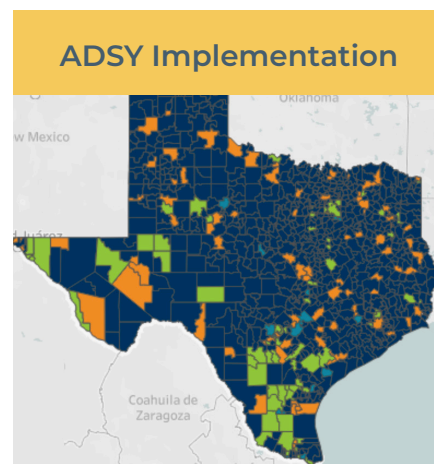
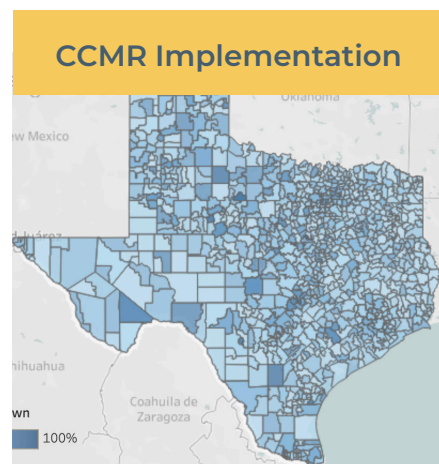


## TIA Implementation Across Legislative Districts



For more detailed, interactive maps of HB 3 implementation in legislative districts across Texas, visit:

<https://commitpartnership.org/dashboard/hb3>



## OUR ADVOCACY

The Texas Impact Network plays a supporting role in advocating for a sustained commitment to equitable school financing through a multi-channel approach that includes sharing HB 3 implementation data, identifying and lifting the voices of champions, and sharing stories of courageous and exemplary models.

### DATA

The HB 3 Implementation Dashboard provides real-time information on the interest and participation of districts in the Teacher Incentive Allotment and Additional Days School Year initiatives across the state of Texas. Daily updates provide an accurate snapshot for:

- ▶ Legislators to understand the status of statewide adoption and involvement of their constituent school systems
- ▶ School systems to share the status of peer implementation and prompt consideration of adoption
- ▶ Regional partners to demonstrate the status of implementation and inform recruitment and support efforts

Learn more by visiting:

<https://commitpartnership.org/dashboard/hb3>

### STORIES

The close relationships our regional partners have with school systems allow the Texas Impact Network to identify passionate, student-centered practitioner voices to promote HB 3. We have placed superintendents, staff, and principals on panels, hosted them at legislative meetings, and provided other platforms (e.g. blogs, social media, presentations) to tell their stories of implementation and student benefits.

### VOICES

The depth and breadth of the Texas Impact Network enables us to quickly and effectively demonstrate a strong, united message across school leaders statewide. The Texas Impact Network employed this capability most recently for an April 2023 hearing of the House Education Committee in which several Network-affiliated superintendents testified in support of expanding the Teacher Incentive Allotment:



“Without a doubt, HB 3 has been the most meaningful legislation in decades to support public schools... The practice of recruiting and rewarding teachers with demonstrated success with students is growing across the United States, and I am grateful and proud that Texas is on the forefront of this movement with the Teacher Incentive Allotment.”

▶ **LUBBOCK ISD SUPERINTENDENT KATHY ROLLO, HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE HEARING, 4/4/2023**



Scan here to watch a legislative “Lunch & Learn” on CCMR funding moderated by Texas Impact Network Executive Director Ben Mackey



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## Teacher Incentive Allotment

**+3.3M**  
students

or **61%** of the state's student population attend systems that have either fully implemented or are in the process of implementing TIA

**+1.4M**  
students

or **26%** of the state's student population attend systems that have fully implemented TIA

61%

26%

**6,246**  
teachers

have received a TIA designation

### Statewide Participation

The Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) was designed to **attract and retain highly effective educators at traditionally hard-to-staff schools** by providing a realistic pathway for top teachers to earn six-figure salaries. In order to access the allotment, school systems must:

- ▶ Develop a rigorous plan to implement a high-quality educator evaluation system with input from teachers and other stakeholders, ensuring validity and reliability of measures
- ▶ Submit an application for approval to the Texas Education Agency
- ▶ Implement the system's plan with fidelity

**485**  
school systems

have either fully implemented or are in the process of implementing TIA

**168**  
school systems

have fully implemented their system's TIA plan

### Our Support

**96 school systems** have received Network support in the implementation of TIA through technical assistance provided by **Commit Partnership, CREED, E3 Alliance, Dr. Socorro Espinoza, Good Reason Houston, Kreuz Consulting, and Steady State Impact Strategies.**

**96**

**school systems**

received Network support in the implementation of TIA

**1.3M**

**students**

or nearly **24%** of Texas students attend Network-supported TIA systems

**IMPACT NETWORK supported**

**976K**

**EcoDis students**

or nearly **30%** of Texas EcoDis students attend Network-supported TIA systems

### The Impact:

Average teacher-retention rate in 2021-2022 school year is higher at TIA districts:

Texas' average teacher retention: 85%



TIA districts' average teacher retention: 95%



Teachers at TIA districts earn more than teachers at non-TIA districts:



teachers in TIA districts make:

**\$1,750**

**MORE** than teachers in non-TIA districts, on average



Master teachers (highest TIA distinction) make:

**\$20,000**

**MORE** than their base salary, on average

**2X**



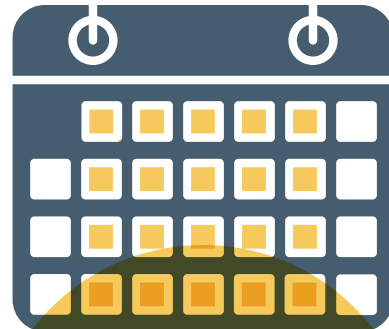
Campuses with TIA designated teachers serve twice the rate of students from the most economically challenged neighborhoods – suggesting TIA teachers are serving on the campuses where they are needed most.

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## Additional Days School Year

**60K**  
students

attended an elementary campus with additional days in the 2021-2022 school year



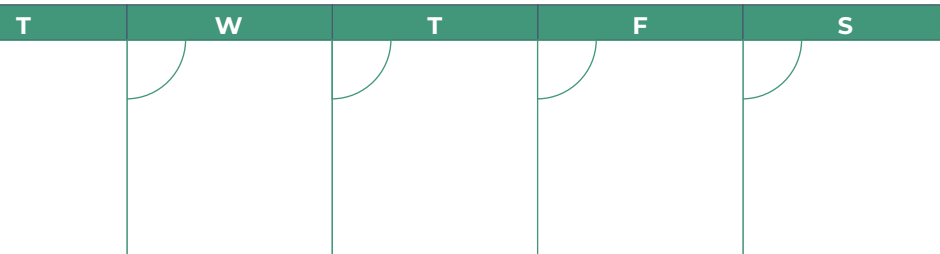
**20**  
days

on average, added to school year calendars at these campuses



**104**  
school systems

across the state are increasing instructional time on at least one of their elementary campuses



Average growth in state accountability score from 2019-2022

All Campuses:

**+3.1**

ADSY Campuses:

**+5.1**

ADSY Campuses:

**+5.9**



### Statewide Participation

The Additional Days School Year (ADSY) provides elementary schools with funding to cover up to 30 additional half-days of instruction using one of three potential models:

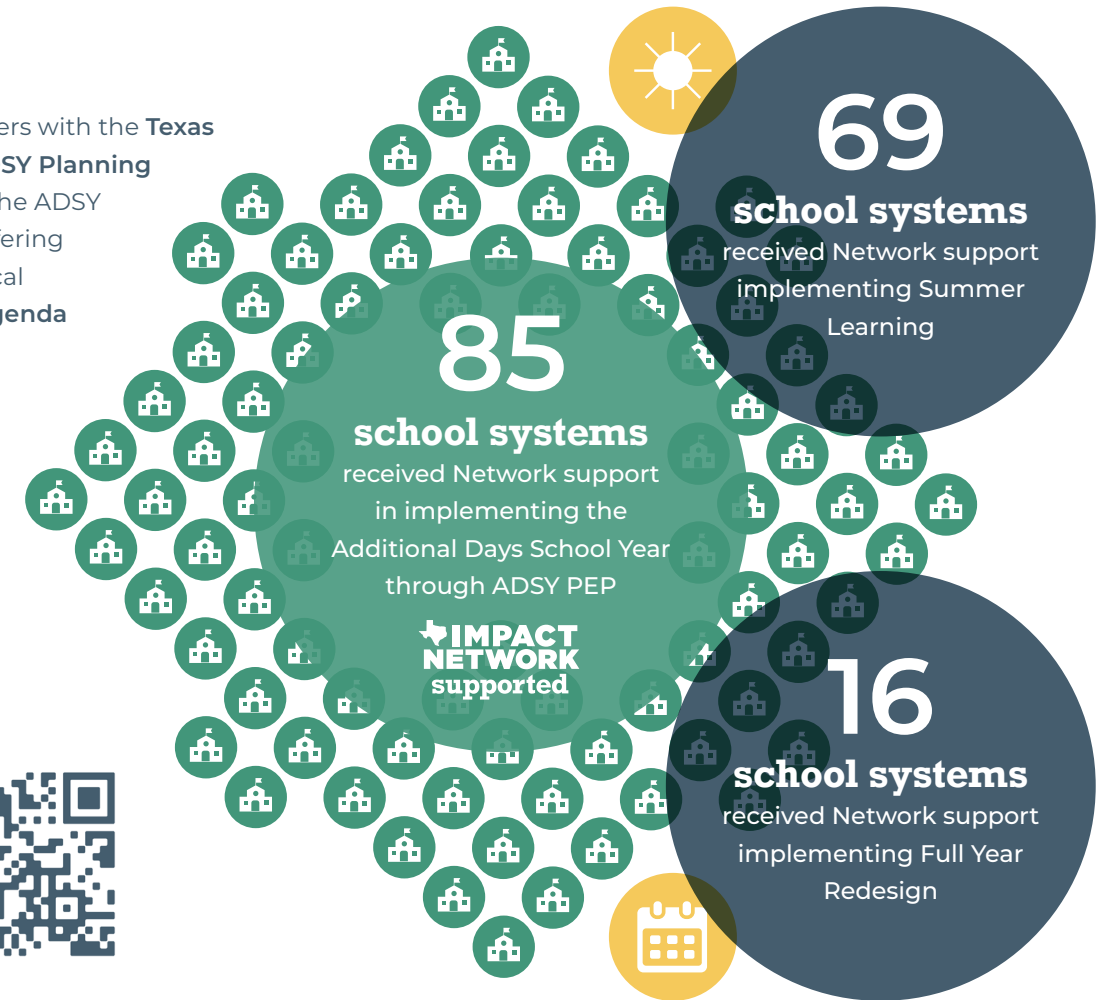
- **SUMMER LEARNING:** A base 180-day calendar and up to 30 days of summer programming for a targeted subset of students.
- **INTERSESSIONAL CALENDAR:** A base calendar of 180 days with up to 30 additional days interspersed over the full year for accelerated learning and enrichment with a subset of students.
- **FULL YEAR REDESIGN:** A revamped 210-day calendar and revised daily schedules to increase time for teacher planning, staff collaboration, student enrichment, and breaks during the school day.

### Our Support

The Texas Impact Network partners with the Texas Education Agency to run the **ADSY Planning and Execution Program (PEP)**. The ADSY PEP is a competitive program offering planning year grants and technical assistance from **The Learning Agenda** to design and implement a plan for extending the school year for elementary students using either the Summer Learning or Full Year Redesign models.



To learn more about ADSY Summer Learning, scan the QR code to see TEA's ADSY PEP Summer Learning Impact Report



### The Impact

Between the 2019 and 2022 school years, ADSY campuses demonstrated larger gains in their state accountability score than campuses on standard schedules, and ADSY campuses supported by the Network grew more than other ADSY campuses.

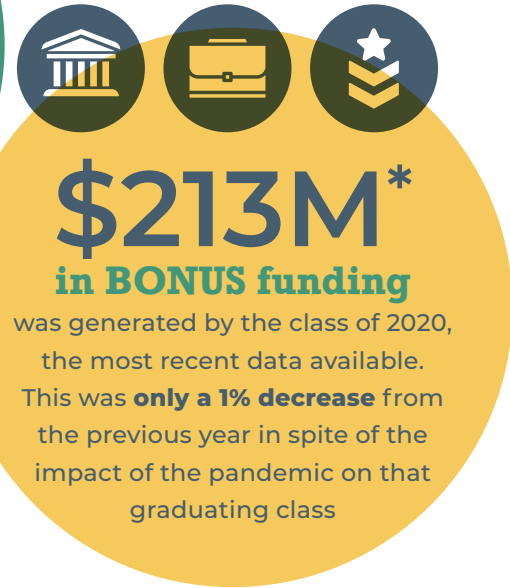
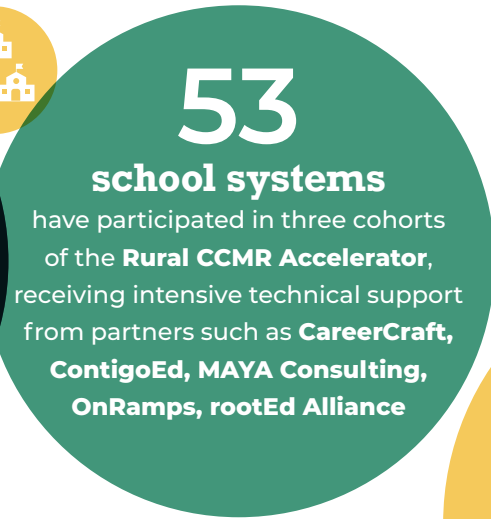
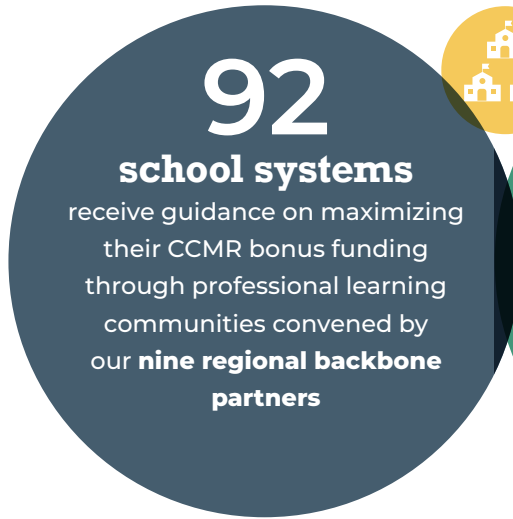
Campuses that implemented the Full-Year Redesign with Network support saw especially large gains in accountability scores:

Campus	2019	2022	Growth
Menchaca Early Childhood in Southside ISD	58 (F)	88 B	+30
Bush Elementary in Alief ISD	71 (C)	88 B	+17
Clark Intermediate in Spring ISD	63 (D)	79 C	+16
Walker Elementary In Crowley ISD [see Campus Spotlight, pg. 21]	66 (D)	94 A	+28

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## College, Career & Military Readiness

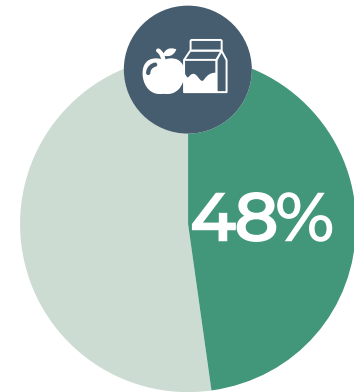
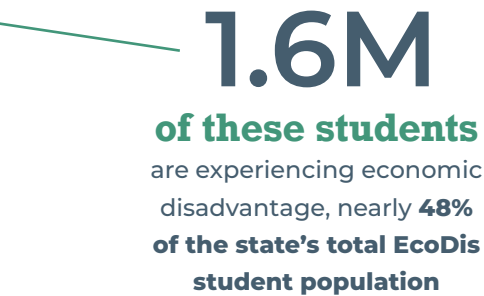
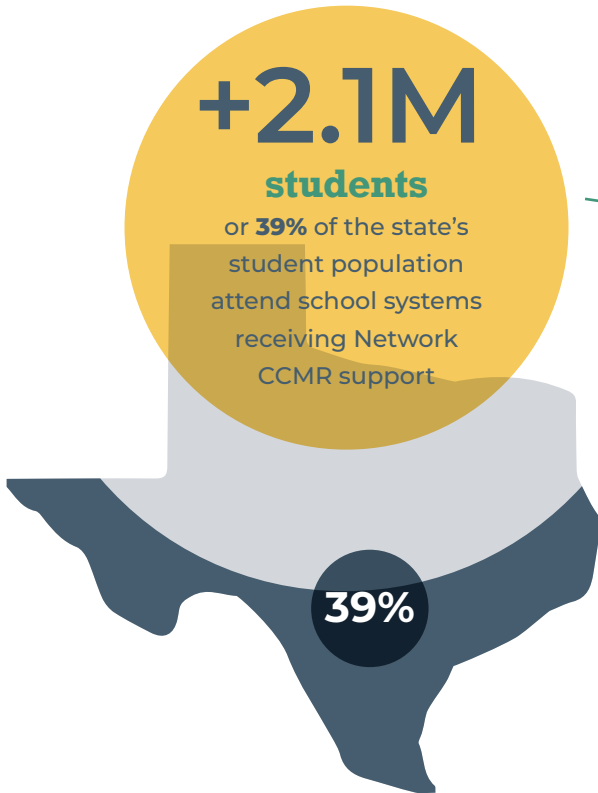
RURAL CCMR  
ACCELERATOR



**Statewide Participation**

School systems receive the **College, Career & Military Readiness (CCMR) Outcomes Bonus** when students take the next step in their career planning by enrolling in postsecondary institutions, completing an industry approved credential, and/or enlisting in the military by the fall after graduation. These outcomes bonuses are distributed equitably, with more funds awarded for students experiencing economic disadvantage.

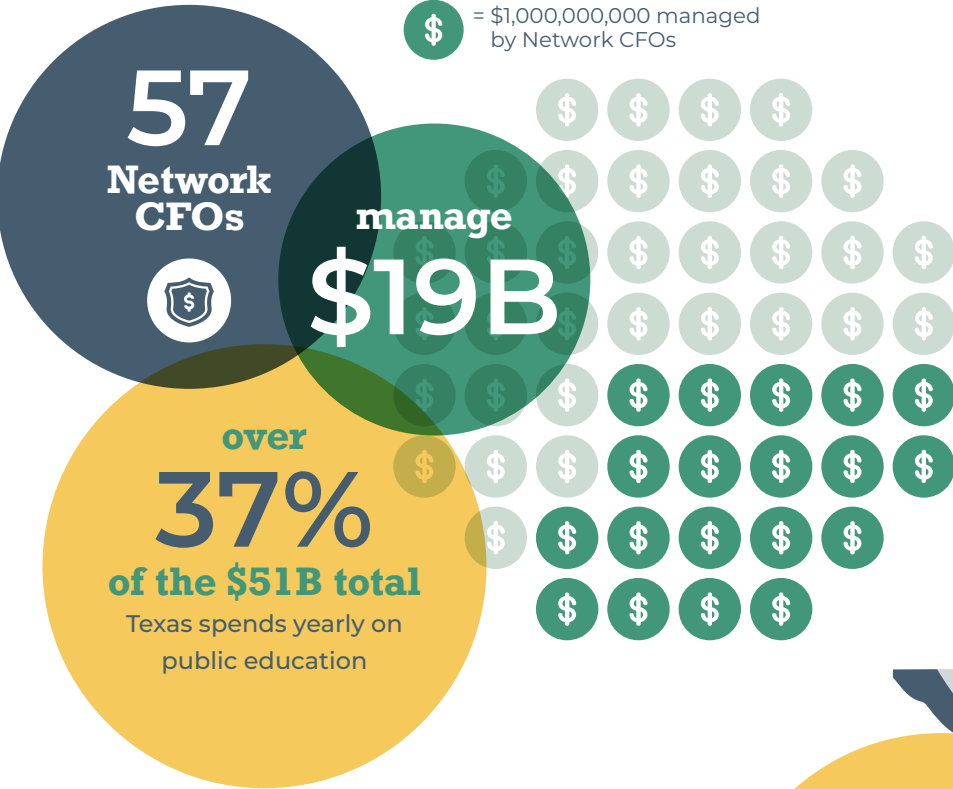
**Our Support:**



\*CCMR bonuses are calculated based on student outcomes from two years prior, making it too early to measure the impact of district and Network initiatives in this area.

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## CFO Strategy Network



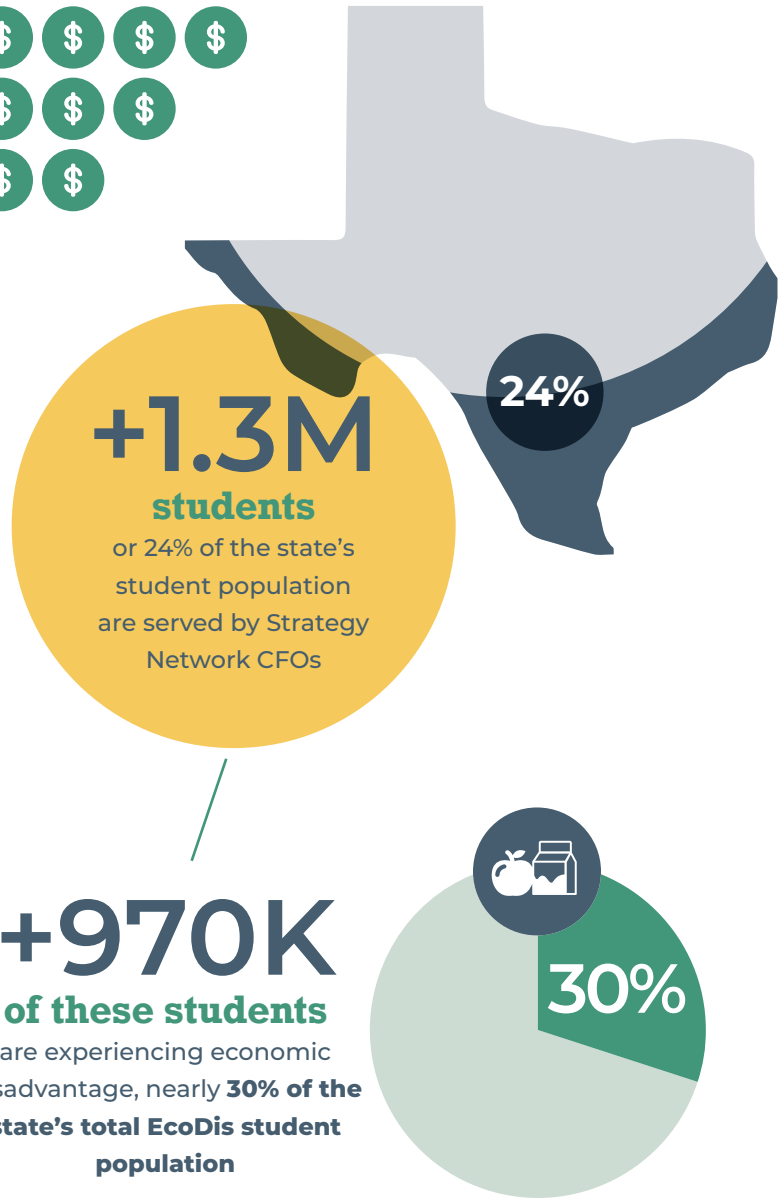
**Our Support**

Chief Financial Officers in Texas school districts play a pivotal role in the success of the students they serve. This is especially true given the opportunities inherent in HB 3. The **Texas CFO Strategy Network**, facilitated by **Education Resource Strategies (ERS)**, brings together school district finance leaders from across Texas who are committed to transforming outcomes for students.

**The Impact**

"This process really made us step back and scrutinize what it is we were doing and most importantly why we were doing it... It really pushed us to think about how [we are] going to improve student achievement... This work that we're doing [has] created unity amongst the team because it is going to impact every individual around the table, and every school."

► CFO NETWORK PARTICIPANT





## CAMPUS SPOTLIGHT: DAVID L. WALKER ELEMENTARY, CROWLEY ISD

Principal Nicole Montgomery's fifth graders wanted to go to science camp. "They brought a whole presentation to us and told me to make 'a reasonable decision,'" Montgomery recounted later, laughing.

But with the state standardized test around the corner, Crowley district administrators were wary. "They were like, 'Why would you let them go?' I'm like, 'It's science camp! They're about to take the science STAAR! This will help them.' And bam, we came back and we [have] the highest [STAAR scores] in the district. It didn't matter. They needed that break."

"That break" was made possible by the fact that Montgomery's school, David L. Walker Elementary, has fully redesigned their calendar with the support of the ADSY PEP. The additional time was also a major factor in the school's ultimate success in growing student outcomes – though far from the only one.

Prior to Montgomery joining at the outset of the 2021-2022 school year, Walker had spent over a decade being considered "Improvement Required," a failing grade on what subsequently became our A-F accountability system. "They actually went through about eight principals [in 11 years]," said Montgomery, "And so the board wanted to change the trajectory of the school."

Crowley's trustees, through the leadership of Superintendent Michael McFarland, accomplished this by implementing the Accelerating Campus Excellence, or ACE, school turnaround model. This involved identifying Principal Montgomery as a highly effective leader of struggling schools, and giving her the opportunity to rebuild the campus' teaching corps from across the district, staffing the most effective teachers where they are needed most.

"Culture, especially with ADSY, is very important because we are together all year long, and I want to make sure you're a good fit," Montgomery said. "It's kind of like meeting a husband or something. I want you to meet my family first... Teachers would say, 'Okay, I walked with her, and I don't think it's going to be a good fit for our culture.' And I listened because they know who they need in this building. Even in a teacher shortage. My supervisor was fussing at me. He was like, 'You better take this person.' I'm like, no. I just couldn't risk just anybody coming."

Principal Montgomery may have a penchant for making her admins nervous, but she more than earned her autonomy when the school soared to an A-rating of 94 in the state's accountability system after just one year of her leadership – something she attributes not only to the additional instructional time but also the ways in which it was used.

“We started July 14th,” she explained. “And that gave us time to do intense interventions. And it was strategic. They tested when they came, and then we put them in intervention based on where they were. And we worked that way for 30 days on just building the gaps that the students came to us with.” Her Assistant Principal Luis Gonzalez-Nunez continued: “By opening the school earlier and having those additional days frontloaded, not only do you build that capacity in students, but teachers are more aware of where their students are coming from and have an idea of what instruction needs to take place.”

The teachers that Montgomery did ultimately recruit to serve at Walker are now eligible for TIA designations, with Crowley receiving its full TIA system approval earlier this year (also with support from the Texas Impact Network through Steady State Impact Strategies). That’s on top of the pay increase all Walker employees receive from working more days. And, according to Superintendent McFarland, “once we calculate everything, most of [the TIA designated teachers] will be here at David Walker.”

In addition to effective educators, the campus has also been providing students with high-quality instructional materials as an early participant in the Texas Education Agency’s COVID Recovery Instructional Materials Support Initiative (CRIMSI). As McFarland put it: “The instructional practices are equally as important as the amount of time... You have to increase instructional time, but if you increase instructional time, and you continue to do what you were doing before, it’s not going to make any difference.”

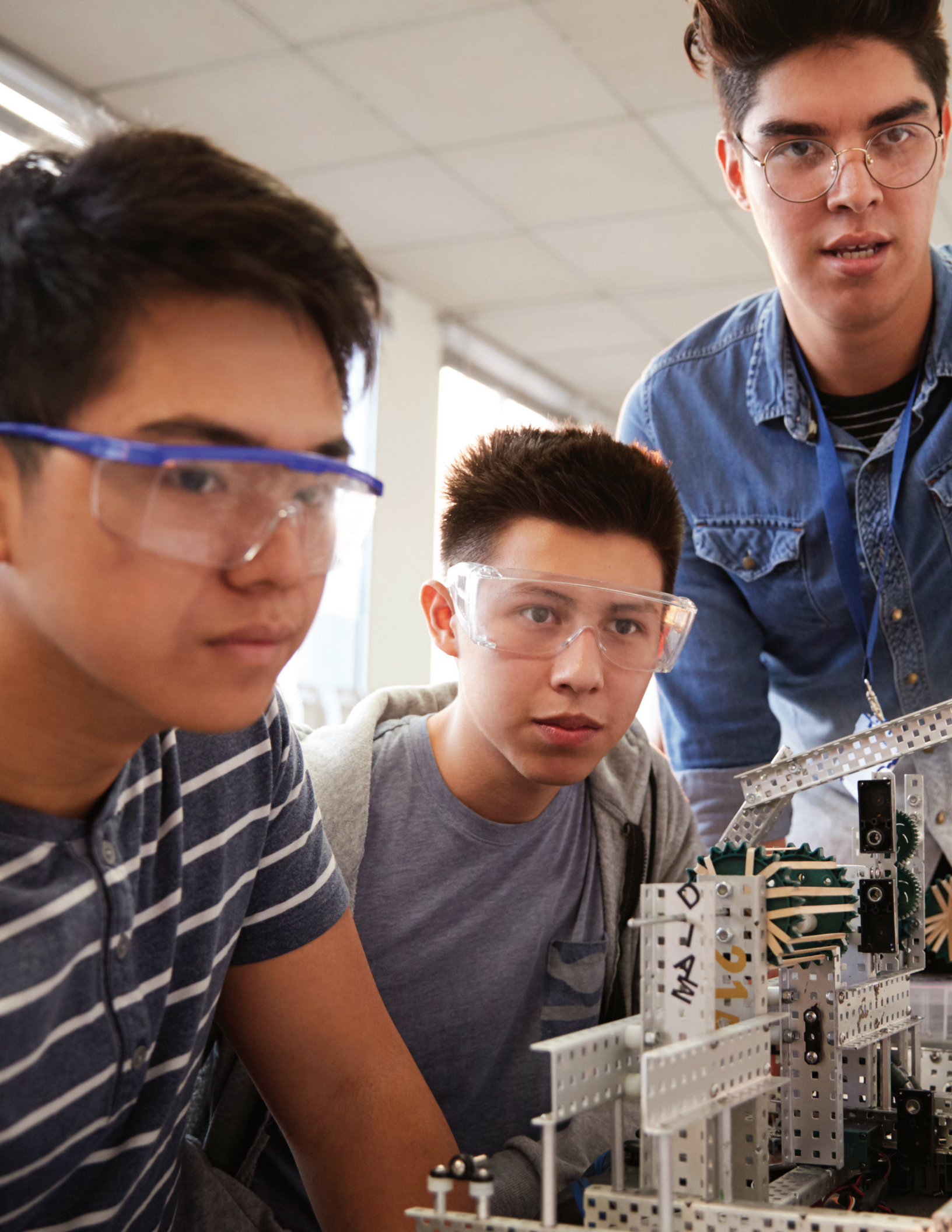
Montgomery and her team are definitely doing things differently and seeing a major impact as a result. It may take more days, longer hours, and increased costs to achieve (something the district is also managing with the support of the CFO Strategy Network). But to educators like second-grade teacher Anne Bristow, the student growth makes it all worth it:

“I mean, sometimes you might be a little bummed maybe, like, ‘Oh we have to go back, our break’s a little shorter.’ But then once you’re here you completely forget about it... If [students] were here [last year] and took the MAP at the end of the year and the beginning [of the next], you can see they either stayed the same or grew. Whereas the ones who weren’t here, you can see where they dropped and didn’t retain anything from the previous year if they were at a different campus. This is what I’m here for. I want good results. So I’m fine with [additional days] because I’m getting the outcome that I want with students.” ♦



*Scan the QR code to learn more about David L. Walker's explosive growth.*





## DISTRICT SPOTLIGHT: ALDINE ISD

For Dr. LaTonya Goffney, “the best thing that happened” in the early days of her hiring as Aldine ISD Superintendent in 2018 took place at 4 p.m. on a Friday.

“I was tired,” Superintendent Goffney recalled. “And I was like, who is she? What is **Good Reason Houston?**”

Alex Hales Elizondo, then-CEO of the Harris County-area collective impact organization, came in for her appointment “and two, three hours later, time had gone that quickly,” Goffney said, as though it still surprised her. “It was what I needed, to have a thought partner, someone who knew potential options for us. The strategies that I had [used previously as superintendent] in Cold Spring or Lufkin were not going to work in a district like Aldine. Not because of the size, but because of the context.”

With 90% of students experiencing economic disadvantage, Aldine ISD has one of the highest concentrations of poverty of any school system in the state – and this was reflected in the student outcomes at the time. Goffney is quick to add: “Context is not an excuse. Zip code is not an excuse for low expectations. But how do you get better, faster, and what are some strategies that can help? And [Elizondo] mentioned ACE.”

Goffney was unfamiliar with the school turnaround model (discussed more in the previous section) and uncertain a trip to North Texas would be possible given the deficit budget she’d inherited. But Good Reason Houston made a visit to ACE campuses in Dallas and Fort

Worth possible for her and her team. Sheleah Reed, Goffney’s Chief of Staff and second hire, remembers: “I looked over at one of my colleagues and said, ‘we’re doing ACE.’ And they said, ‘no, we’re not. She’s just here thinking about it.’”

“That was January. We launched that school in August.”

Two schools, actually: Worsham and Goodman Elementary Schools. Two schools that, since that visit in 2018, went from being considered “Improvement Required” (what would now be an F rating) to becoming two of the highest performing campuses in the district.

And they were just getting started.

### Valuing Educators

“What’s this TIA stuff? I want to do it.”

That’s the text message from Goffney that Reed remembers being her introduction to the then-new state policy. “I mean, that’s all she sends. And my job as the Chief of Staff is to tap my neighbor on the shoulder and [say] ‘we’re doing it. What do you need?’”

For Goffney, the program was not just a way to reward teachers but a means to address a systemic issue she’d identified when she arrived at the district. “At the time, 90-95% of our teachers were considered highly effective [under the current evaluation]. And only 28% of our students were reading on grade level by third grade... When we were launching ACE, we had to get a third party in order to come in and say, who are our top tier teachers so that we can

incentivize them to go to our ACE campuses?”

Goffney was unsatisfied with “workarounds.” So the district, led by Human Resources Chief Javier Villareal, rolled out the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS), first as a pilot at select campuses and then districtwide. But they didn’t do just that. They also developed student growth measures for every subject from fine arts to P.E. to ensure every teacher was eligible for the allotment.

“I’ll be honest with you, at one point I thought we had bitten off more than we could chew,” Goffney said with a laugh. “We are the largest school district that’s [implemented TIA] with all teachers. If you are a teacher in Aldine and you impact students,” you are eligible for a bonus of up to \$28,000 by demonstrating growth for all your students.

“We have been strategic about that,” she continued. “Initially I thought we had maybe done too much. But I don’t think when it comes to teachers, who are the ones who are going to help us more than anything else, it can be understated.” Now, thanks to T-TESS, Goffney knows who her most effective educators are – and she’s retaining nearly all of them. And thanks to TIA, their excellence is reflected in their pay.

One of those master teachers is Peggy Showaker, a 38-year educator with deep roots in Aldine (her father was also a teacher who wrote curriculum for the district). “[TIA is] a good award for me because it truly does

look at me as a teacher and the growth that I have with my kids,” Showaker reflected. “And my goal, 100% of my goal, is for my children to grow. Do I want them to make a 100 on the STAAR? Yeah, I’d love that. But I just want my children to grow. I celebrate growth all year long.”

“I feel very proud,” the master teacher continued, “because I feel like between the evaluation system and the allotment, the state looks at your growth. It makes me feel proud that someone beyond my peers, someone beyond my principal, someone beyond even the district sees what I’ve done.”

Thanks to the incredible growth of all her students, Showaker has earned the highest TIA designation – and some well-earned time off as a result. “Most of my career I have worked two, three, sometimes four jobs, especially in the summer. But I feel like for the very first time, I can breathe. I’m planning to go visit family for the first time. I don’t feel like I need to do extra work. So the allotment itself is very impactful on my wellbeing and my sense of security.”

This summer, Ms. Showaker and over 350 Aldine teachers received their first TIA bonus payments as the result of a process that began in 2019. The TIA application itself, for which Aldine received **technical assistance from the Texas Impact Network through Good Reason Houston and Kitamba**, began in 2020 and finally concluded earlier this year. The “wellbeing and sense of security” for Showaker and others was made possible by the hard work of a dedicated human resources team. And the growth of her students shows why that hard work is worth it.

“I had one little boy who has not been successful academically,” says Showaker. “And so on his Renaissance,

which comes before the STAAR, I was like, ‘oh my gosh, buddy, look what you did! You jumped from like fourth grade to sixth. Like you just skipped fifth grade, buddy!’ Renaissance is a different test than the STAAR, but he got to see, he did grow... He hadn’t passed the STAAR last year or the year before. But he said, ‘I really think I could get it this time, Ms. Showaker. I really think I can.’ I feel like it came from that continuous conversation [about] growth.”

### Engaging Families

TIA was not the only major initiative launched in the immediate wake of Dr. Goffney’s hiring.

The district had already begun a strategic planning process and a curriculum audit, both of which were brought to fruition in the following years. And with the emergence of ACE and other innovative school models in the district, a new department was created in 2019 to manage these new “choices and opportunities,” a key phrase for Aldine’s leadership.

“The Office of Transformation is the speedboat [going] around the large ship to look and learn and see what’s great out there to come back and pilot,” explains Chief Transformation Officer Adrian Bustillos. “And [when] we have great success: How can we replicate it throughout our system?”

One of the office’s “great successes” has been the implementation of the Full-Year Redesign school calendar on several elementary campuses with the support of the **Texas Impact Network’s ADSY Planning & Execution Program**. The effort began in early 2020. “Making up for learning loss during the summer was our original focus for ADSY,” Superintendent Goffney says. “I’m so glad we did.”

The launch of the full-year calendar at Vines Early Childhood and Ermel Elementary was so successful, in fact, the two campuses retained nearly 100% of their teachers after year one in spite of the additional days. (You can learn more about those schools in last year’s edition of this report.) This may be due, in part, to the increased planning time teachers get with the redesigned calendar. But Bustillos also reports that “teachers are coming specifically to work at these [Office of Transformation campuses] because they believe in the work we’re doing and they want to be part of something new and great.”

Parents, likewise, reported gratitude for the project-based learning and increased childcare during the summer months, but also said that in certain situations it caused complications: “I have a child at Vines. My son or daughter goes to Harris or Smith. They have different calendars. We’re having difficulty matching,” Bustillos summarized. “So we looked at our data and said, this is promising. Let’s expand that option so that everyone in that community can have this opportunity.”

Now, in response to community feedback, all four campuses that share a feeder pattern also share a full-year calendar. And the two campuses that began implementing it this school year are already seeing progress as a result.

Norman Dionisio has been principal of Harris Elementary for four years. He started his education career at the same school: “Harris gave me the chance, it opened the door for me to different opportunities. With the community embracing me as one of their own, I thought it is just my responsibility to give back. Harris is



“It makes me feel proud that someone beyond my peers, someone beyond my principal, someone beyond even the district sees what I’ve done.”

not an easy place, not an easy task, but I embrace the challenge and the community as a whole.”

“Our students have been through a lot,” Dionisio continued. “They’re economically disadvantaged, not because of their choosing. And we want to give them a chance to get out of that generational poverty.”

Dionisio sees the ADSY as “a vessel” for working toward that goal. “It’s not ADSY that’s making us successful,” but rather everything that the additional time allows for: deeper relationships with students, more opportunities to engage with families, more time spent with high-quality curriculum. But there’s also a more fundamental value being added.

“A lot of times, the school is the only stable environment that [my students] experience,” Dionisio concludes. “I’m not discounting

the families that I serve, but sometimes because of the responsibilities that they have to take on, our students need a lot more, right? Being in school gave them that. Adding 30 days of that stability is worth it.”

### Supporting Students

The projects pursued by Dr. Goffney and her team in the years since her hiring have been broad, reaching every corner of the large district. But if you were looking for one place that embodied the student-centered decision making driving Aldine’s senior leadership, you might look to Avalos P-TECH.

Named for a longtime member of the school community, Avalos was one of a series of Pathways in Technology-Early College High Schools (P-TECH) campuses opened by the Office of Transformation starting

in 2019. The school is technically only one-third an Aldine high school, though: the other two wings of the building are considered campuses of Lone Star College.

Incoming freshmen choose from one of five industry pathways: Computer Networking, Cybersecurity, Paralegal Studies, Teaching & Training, and Non-Destructive Testing. Regardless of the specific track chosen, all students graduate with an associate degree.

That means each Avalos graduate will automatically generate CCMR Outcomes-Bones Funding for the district (starting two years from now with this year’s first graduating class). “We knew with the outcomes-based funding, we were missing an opportunity,” said Superintendent Goffney. “More importantly, we want our students to graduate with more

than a high school diploma, but with choices and opportunities.”

So Goffney and her team joined the **Texas Impact Network’s CCMR Professional Learning Community**, convened in Harris County by Good Reason Houston. “Iron sharpens iron,” Goffney states. “We don’t have to be alone. There’s power in networks.”

Armed with data insights and new strategies, Aldine began to “hyper-focus on CCMR,” culminating in the creation of an Office of College, Career & Military Readiness in 2021. Now, “with the strategy from our postsecondary office making sure students complete their [financial aid application], we have had a record number of scholarships.”

This increased postsecondary success on the part of her students will, in turn, benefit the district in a few years’ time. “And that’s exciting,” says Goffney, “because we can take that money and put it back. The goal moving forward is to continue to take the money that we earn and bake

it back into our students and our processes so we can get even more.”

Aldine Chief Financial Officer Stan Osborne confirms this is already taking place (with support, in turn, from the **Impact Network’s CFO Strategy Network**). The outcomes bonus makes up only a small fraction of Aldine’s entire budget, even if it were completely maximized. Aldine leadership approaches it with intentionality, anyway, using it to fund advisor positions on campuses like Avalos.

“I’m really thankful for this school,” says Melanie Chavez, an Avalos senior (who previously attended Showaker’s Stephens Elementary). The school not only taught her about the emergent field of non-destructive testing, but also “how to build my resume... They set me up for my future.”

“It was a hard experience at first,” she continued, reflecting on the difficulty of meeting college-level expectations while also reckoning with the onset of a global pandemic. (It is worth

naming that the COVID-19 crisis is further “context” in which all of the above occurred.) But, much like her educators, Chavez was inspired to overcome her challenges by considering her responsibility to the next generation.

“I have a younger brother; he’s three years old right now,” she said. “Him being born was a big reason why I’m still here, you know? Because I want to set the example, and then one day maybe in the future he might decide to come here. It’s a big opportunity and I hope he takes it.”

Chavez is exploring fields beyond non-destructive testing, but she is still grateful for the “backup plan” her high school has provided – not to mention how her degree looks on that resume. “Texas A&M actually offered to pay my tuition because I’m coming from an early college high school with over 30 credits.”

Chavez will be studying molecular and cellular biology and minoring in health at TAMU-San Antonio with a full ride this fall. After that? “There is a possibility that I could go to med school, but as of right now, I’m just thinking of being a molecular biologist and studying cancer, actually. And if anything, if I go into that and I don’t really like it, I can always just go back to med school, you know. Things happen, so it’s normal.”

For students across Aldine ISD, these kinds of choices and opportunities are increasingly “normal.”

And as Superintendent Goffney is fond of saying: If it can happen here, it can happen anywhere. ♦



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The Commit Partnership is a collective impact organization composed of 200+ partners across Dallas County and the state of Texas supported by a dedicated 'backbone' staff of 60+ professionals.

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The Partnership's 'true north' goal is that by 2040, at least half of all 25-34 year old residents, irrespective of race, will earn a living wage. To increase living wage attainment, it must equitably increase educational success aligned with high demand jobs, maximizing the cumulative impact from providing a quality early education to ensuring that every student graduates high school ready for college, career, and/or military and able to access and complete a strong postsecondary education.

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