

Employee FAQs about the TASB Pay Systems Review

Wink-Loving ISD

WINK-LOVING ISD



The HR Services division of the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) recently completed a pay systems review for Wink-Loving ISD. These frequently asked questions (FAQs) are designed to help employees better understand the review process and our pay system.

What is a pay systems review?

TASB HR Services reviewed our current compensation plans and pay practices, benchmarked our pay plans and pay rates against our external job market, and developed recommendations for adjustments designed to fit within the district's budget. The focus of the review was to ensure our pay is internally fair and competitive with our market peers. HR Services has conducted similar reviews for districts across the state for the past 30 years.

What is our job market and who are our peers?

A job market is a group of employers with whom you compete for labor and includes both employers you hire from and employers to whom you lose staff. Market peers differ by job type, with hourly jobs competing with local or close regional employers. The district may hire from farther away for salaried professional and administrative jobs. Also, the district may compete with private sector employers and other public sector employers for some jobs. A full list of market peers can be found in the final report presented to the Board of Trustees at its December 13, 2016 meeting.

What is a compensation plan?

A compensation plan is a grouping of pay structures designed to control pay within the district. Our district has three pay structures that group similar types of work. They include:

- Teachers and related instructional staff,
- Exempt (salaried), and
- Nonexempt (hourly).

Additionally, the district pays stipends for extracurricular duties.

The Board of Trustees approves our compensation plan each year and also may approve pay increases when adopting the annual budget.

What is a pay range?

Pay ranges define minimum and maximum pay guidelines for jobs within a pay structure. We aim to keep the middle, or midpoint, of each pay range closely aligned with market values, which helps keep all employees within a competitive range of pay. Jobs are assigned to a pay range based on the types of duties performed, skill requirements, responsibility, and market value. Pay grades are based entirely on the job requirements – not on employee qualifications, skills, or performance.

How are pay increases calculated?

For teachers, pay increases are calculated by applying a percentage increase, approved by the board, to the market average teacher salary. For all other employees, pay increases are calculated by applying the percentage increase approved by the board to the midpoint of each employee's pay range. This means the amount of increase is the same for employees in the same pay grade. Midpoint-based increases also help focus pay around market values. TASB recommended additional adjustments for certain employees to correct severe market or internal inequities.

Why is the district moving from step increases to general pay increases?

The teacher salary schedule is designed to be used as a hiring schedule for determining salaries of teachers new to the district. Continuing teachers will receive an increase each year based on board approval, with the size of the increase dependent on availability of funds in the budget. Each teacher will receive the same pay increase. Annual salaries are already differentiated to reflect years of teaching experience. Granting the same increase each year to all teachers will preserve that difference, rather than continuing to spread pay by experience. This also allows all district employees to receive consistent increases (e.g., everyone gets a 5% general pay increase).

What are some of the important take-aways from the pay systems review?

Some of the most important information from the TASB pay systems review includes:

- Sixty (60) percent of WLISD teachers have 10 or more years of teaching experience; these teachers in most districts represent only 50 percent of total teachers or fewer, so WLISD overall has an experienced teaching staff.
- In 2016-17, WLISD hired teachers with a range of prior experience, though most new hires had five or fewer years of experience at hire. WLISD should continue to focus improvements throughout its teacher pay structure to support recruitment and retention of teachers.
- Current WLISD teacher pay is considered competitive to market. Providing a 5 percent pay increase to all teachers, which equates to \$2,500 per continuing teacher, will help improve teacher pay to be one of the strongest in ESC Region 18.
- With few exceptions, hourly staff at WLISD are paid above local market values.
- Exempt, non-teaching staff at WLISD are paid on average slightly below market values. However, each surveyed position at WLISD is filled by a single employee, so individual years of experience factor into the market comparison more significantly than for a job with multiple incumbents. Adjustments have been recommended for those employees that are currently below market value.
- On average, WLISD pays above market for extra-duty stipends. Adjustments have been recommended for those stipends that are currently below market value.
- TASB has recommended eliminating the district's practice of granting "step raises." This will allow all employees within a pay grade to receive the same increase, including teachers.
- WLISD provides a very rich benefits package to employees. In addition to the 6 percent matching annuity, the district provides health benefits contributions that are 171 percent higher than the state median contributions.

What will my pay grade and pay rate be?

Compensation statements will be released by September that provide detailed information about your pay grade placement and pay rate. The new paygrade and rates will be, **effective September 1, 2017**, for the 2017-2018 school year.