

**Subject: Statement**

(received July 27, 2018, anonymous)

Regrettably, I recently chose to leave my position as a teacher with DISD and found employment with a new district. I want to emphasize that this was a difficult decision because I cared for my students, loved my coworkers, and believed in the work that was being done on my campus to improve the lives of students; however, mandates from the district, along with the district's TEI evaluation system did not seem to align with the mission of doing what is best for kids or helping to support teachers. TEI actually served me well in my time at the district, and I received pay raises, but the system is so innately unfair and easy to rig that I did not feel comfortable being a part of it. I first noticed how incredibly unfair it was when a teacher that was in my PLC team continually received evaluation scores that were far lower than the rest of the team. While there is room for evaluations to be lower between teachers for many indicators, we participated in a PLC and lesson planned together, so there was no reason that this teacher should have received lower marks for lesson planning or having an objective driven lesson other than bias by the evaluator. We shared resources as a team and presented the same lessons, and some of us would be told that our lessons were well aligned, rigorous, and focused, while others would be told that they did not meet the mark. This bias was then reflected in teacher's summative evaluation scores which directly affect pay. It was very frustrating to watch my coworker essentially be targeted by our administrator in this way. Additionally, the same metrics are used for teachers regardless of what population of students they are working with. So when one teacher gets all of the modified special education sections, and another gets all of the sheltered/English language learner sections, and the other teacher on the team gets all of the motivated/advanced students, it seems unfair that the same evaluation instrument is used for each. This is particularly true when considering student surveys. Students that are more advanced or motivated will be more inclined to highly rate a teacher of a challenging core content class because they can appreciate the content, but if you teach all modified sections or sheltered sections, these students may not appreciate the course as much and that will be reflected in your survey outcomes. And because the survey component counts equally for teacher evaluation regardless of student population this seems unfair. I also did not appreciate the fact that we were offered state and local days to take off for illness or personal business, but because attendance is a component of TEI, if you actually use these days you could potentially be penalized financially. I also watched as many instructional decisions were made based upon how they would impact TEI observations and evaluations, and not whether they would be best for student learning. This is particularly true in regards to the emphasis of ACP testing, which does not align with AP or ACT standards. Ultimately, I think the presence of, and opportunity for continued bias in evaluations, along with other issues with TEI, make it an undesirable system for teachers to work under that will ultimately discourage teacher retention. TEI seems to reward teachers that work with gifted or advanced students and punish or stagnate the teachers who work with other populations. I would be curious what proportion of DTR teachers teach modified or sheltered sections of core content courses as opposed to advanced sections, and I would argue that if more DTR teachers are working with advanced populations, that is either a flaw in the evaluation system, or a misallocation if the best teachers.