

TAXPAYER PROTECTION PROJECT

HOUSTON'S FAT CAT SUPERINTENDENTS: THE HIDDEN BENEFITS

How Some of Texas's Highest-Paid Public Employees Are
Systematically Underreporting Their Compensation

WRITTEN BY **James Quintero and Jennifer Windh**
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KEY POINTS

- **The Texas Education Agency (TEA) understates** the total compensation for some of Texas's highest-paid superintendents.
- **Though they oversee fewer people many superintendents** have drawn a higher salary than the Governor.
- **These districts have circumvented Texas's transparency** requirements, making it difficult for taxpayers to know what their superintendents actually cost.
- **The largest discrepancy** between reported compensation and actual compensation exceeds \$300,000.
- **Legislators should implement** more stringent transparency requirements and a reasonable cap on superintendent total compensation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) requires school districts to report superintendent compensation annually and to publicly post the superintendent's employment contract. That mandated transparency is why Texans regularly see news stories ranking the state's highest-paid superintendents ([Quintero, 2026](#)). The highest earners on those lists are reported to receive more than \$500,000 a year—far more than the \$400,000 salary of the President of the United States or the \$153,750 salary of the Governor of Texas ([The Texas Tribune, 2026](#)).

But the TEA salary figures do not always tell the full story.

For some of the highest-paid superintendents, the pay reported to TEA significantly understates their total compensation. Their employment contracts provide for additional cash payments and retirement contributions that are not available to teachers or other employees in their districts.

We reviewed the employment contracts of four of the highest-paid superintendents in the Houston area to estimate their total 2025–2026 compensation and examine how their compensation packages differed from what was reported to TEA.

Compensation packages for the following four superintendents are examined in this report:

1. **Klein ISD Superintendent Dr. Jenny McGown**

Ranked #5 Highest Paid in Texas according to TEA

Total Pay Reported to TEA: \$508,554

Estimated Actual Total Pay: \$738,407

2. Houston ISD Superintendent Mike Miles

Ranked #10 Highest Paid in Texas according to TEA

Total Pay Reported to TEA: \$462,000

Estimated Actual Total Pay: \$768,849

3. Lamar CISD Superintendent Dr. Roosevelt Nivens

Ranked #14 Highest Paid in Texas according to TEA

Total Pay Reported to TEA: \$446,146

Estimated Actual Total Pay: \$637,277

4. Tomball ISD Superintendent Dr. Martha Salazar-Zamora

Ranked #19 Highest Paid in Texas according to TEA

Total Pay Reported to TEA: \$431,554

Estimated Actual Total Pay: \$499,866

The compensation packages for these highly paid superintendents are complex and include a wide variety of compensation types beyond base salary. The major non-salary components we identified across the four contracts include:

- **Supplemental payments to cover the superintendents' required TRS contributions.** All four superintendents received these payments.
- **Employer contributions to tax-deferred retirement accounts,** including 401(a), 403(b), and 457(b) plans. All four superintendents received additional retirement contributions.
- **Extra vacation and leave days that can be converted to cash.** Unlike most district employees, several of these superintendents received substantial additional leave days that could be cashed out as a lump-sum payment. Dr. McGown (Klein ISD) was awarded 65 additional vacation days for 2025–2026, Dr. Nivens (Lamar CISD) received 55 additional vacation and leave days, and Miles (Houston ISD) received 25 additional leave days.
- **Performance incentive payments.** Miles (Houston ISD) received a \$173,660 performance incentive payment in September 2025 ([Galvan & Goin, 2025](#)).
- **Longevity payments.** These payments may be provided as cash or, in some cases, as additional retirement contributions. Dr. McGown (Klein ISD), Dr. Nivens (Lamar CISD), and Dr. Salazar-Zamora (Tomball ISD) all received longevity pay in 2025–2026.
- **Insurance reimbursements.** Dr. Nivens (Lamar CISD) and Dr. Salazar-Zamora (Tomball ISD) received reimbursements for life insurance and other insurance costs.
- **Cash expense allowances.** Dr. McGown (Klein ISD) received a \$42,000 expense allowance in 2025–2026.

Taken together, these additional forms of compensation can substantially increase a superintendent's actual compensation beyond the total pay figure reported to TEA.

All of these unusual forms of additional compensation are concerning because they make it difficult for taxpayers to understand what they are actually paying their superintendent. When significant portions of compensation are excluded from the salary figure reported to TEA, it also raises serious questions about transparency and whether taxpayers are being given a complete picture of the cost of their district's highest-paid employee.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Public school leadership is a position of public trust. Superintendent compensation should reflect responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars, with exceptional pay requiring exceptional justification. Every dollar spent on excessive administrative compensation is a dollar that could instead support teachers and students.

To ensure transparency and fiscal responsibility, we propose a three-part approach to addressing excessive and undisclosed superintendent compensation: a reasonable cap on total compensation, full public disclosure of all compensation, and a rigorous exemption process.

Total Compensation Cap

Cap total annual superintendent compensation at \$250,000, including salary, bonuses, allowances, retirement contributions, deferred compensation, and all other financial benefits.

Public Transparency

At least 30 days before a board vote, districts must publicly post:

- Proposed contracts, amendments, and exemption requests with supporting documentation.
- A standardized summary of total annual compensation, all compensation components, and comparison with average teacher pay.

Material changes restart the 30-day review period. All approved documents must remain publicly available on district websites for at least three years.

Rigorous, Transparent Exemption Process

Districts seeking to exceed the cap must obtain an annual, one-year exemption from the Texas Commissioner of Education, demonstrating:

1. **Necessity:** Compelling evidence that higher pay is essential to recruit or retain a qualified superintendent.
2. **Teacher pay:** Competitive teacher salaries and demonstrated prioritization of teacher compensation.
3. **Fiscal responsibility:** Reasonable compensation relative to district finances, enrollment, and resources.
4. **Transparency:** Districts must hold a separate board vote on the exemption application and must publicly post the exemption application, supporting evidence, and commissioner decision.

Exemptions expire after one year and require independent justification for renewal.

Expected Impact

A \$250,000 cap would primarily affect higher-paying districts, particularly larger ones.

According to data collected by TASB, the statewide median superintendent base salary was \$156,818 in 2025–2026 ([TASB, 2025](#)). The median base salary was \$367,303 in districts with 50,000 or more students. There are approximately 15 districts statewide of that size.

The press reported that more than 100 Texas superintendents earned over \$300,000 in 2024–25 ([Sander, 2025](#)).

Because the proposed cap covers total compensation, not just salary, more districts would be affected than salary data alone suggests.

Klein ISD Superintendent Dr. Jenny McGown

Ranked #5 Highest Paid in Texas according to TEA

Total Pay Reported to TEA for 2025–2026: **\$508,554**

Estimated Actual Total Pay for 2025–2026: **\$738,407**

Hidden Pay: \$230,000

Summary of Klein ISD Superintendent's Compensation

	2023–2024	2024–2025	2025–2026
Cash Compensation Components			
Base Salary	\$386,250	\$397,838	\$409,773
TRS Contribution Salary Supplement	\$27,225	\$28,463	\$28,875
Expense Allowance	\$36,000	\$42,000	\$42,000
Unused Vacation Days Payment	\$87,973	\$90,702	\$121,328
Retirement Contribution Compensation Components			
Supplemental Retirement Contribution	\$4,641	\$4,359	\$4,931
Supplemental Retirement Plan	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
Additional Supplemental Retirement Plan	–	\$40,000	\$46,500
Longevity Pay	–	–	\$45,000
Estimated Total Pay	\$582,089	\$643,361	\$738,407
Base Pay Reported to TEA	\$404,430	\$412,519	\$421,801
Total Pay Reported to TEA	N/A	N/A	\$508,554
Amount Underreported	\$177,659	\$230,842	\$229,853

Superintendent McGown's Compensation Components

The following section identifies the major components of Superintendent McGown's compensation, explains how each component functions, and provides the relevant contract language. Where necessary, we describe the methodology used to calculate the value of each benefit.

Cash Compensation Components

Total cash compensation estimated to be **\$601,976** for 2025–2026.

- 1. Base Salary.** McGown's salary was set at \$375,000 for the 2022–2023 school year, with guaranteed minimum annual raises. For this analysis, we assumed a 3% annual increase each year, yielding an estimated **\$409,773** base salary for 2025–2026.

"The District shall provide the Superintendent with an annual salary in the sum of Three Hundred and Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$375,000.00) predicated on 235 work days each year. For each year that this Contract is in effect, beginning with the 2022–2023 school year, the Superintendent shall receive a minimum annual percentage raise in an amount equal to the percentage raise provided to full-time classroom teachers for that school year." (Klein ISD, 2025, p. 3).

- 2. TRS Contribution Salary Supplement.** Texas public school employees are required to contribute 8.25% of their gross salary to the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS), subject to a salary cap. McGown's contract requires the district to make an additional salary payment equal to her required employee TRS contribution. In other words, the district reimburses McGown for a retirement contribution that other employees must pay themselves. We estimate the value of this salary supplement at **\$28,875** for 2025–2026.

"As supplemental salary, the District shall pay an amount equal to the Superintendent's portion of the monthly contribution to the Texas Teacher Retirement System (TRS) in the percentage amount required by the TRS for the account of the Superintendent. This additional salary supplement shall be paid to the Superintendent by regular monthly payroll installments and shall be reported as creditable compensation to TRS." (Klein ISD, 2025, p. 5).

- 3. Expense Allowance.** McGown receives a \$3,500 cash payment every month (**\$42,000 annually**), ostensibly to cover her costs to travel within the school district. The contract does not require her to submit documentation of expenses.

"In addition to the annual salary above, the Superintendent shall receive a Three Thousand Five Hundred dollars (\$3500) allowance per month during the Superintendent's employment with the District to cover the costs of reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the continuing performance of the Superintendent's duties under this contract." (Klein ISD, 2025, p. 12)

- 4. Unused Vacation Days Payment.** McGown is awarded 65 extra vacation days that she may cash out every year. We calculated her "daily rate of base pay" to be the sum of her Base Salary and the TRS Contribution Salary Supplement, divided by the 235 workdays specified in the contract language. For this analysis, we assume McGown cashes out all the awarded days, for an estimated payment of **\$121,328**.

"The Superintendent may take sixty five (65) vacation days, the days to be in a single period or at different times. The vacation days taken by the Superintendent will be taken at such time or times as will least interfere with the performance of the Superintendent's duties as set forth in this Contract. On June 30 of every year this Contract is in effect, all unused vacation days accumulated by the Superintendent will be paid in lump sum to the Superintendent at the Superintendent's then current daily rate of base pay, based on 235 work days each year." (Klein ISD, 2025, p. 15)

Retirement Contribution Compensation Components

Total retirement contribution is estimated to be **\$136,431** for 2025–2026.

- 1. Supplemental Retirement Contribution.** Public school employees are required to contribute 8.25% of their gross income, up to \$350,000, to the TRS. As described above, McGown's contract requires the district to reimburse her for this employee contribution. But McGown's estimated 2025–2026 base salary exceeds the \$350,000 TRS salary cap by \$59,773. Under this contract provision, the district nevertheless pays McGown an amount equal to 8.25% of that income above the salary cap—estimated at **\$4,931**—even though she is not required to make a corresponding TRS contribution on those earnings.

"To the extent the Superintendent's TRS contribution is capped as part of the TRS Salary Cap for those members who joined TRS on or after September 1, 1996, the District shall determine the monetary amount that would have been contributed to TRS as part of the Superintendent's portion of the monthly contribution to TRS had the Superintendent's salary not been capped (the "Capped Amount"). The

District shall make a yearly contribution on or before June 30 of each year during which this Contract is in effect in the amount of the Capped Amount to a Supplemental Retirement Tax Deferred Plan or plans (the "Plan") established for the benefit of the Superintendent under Section 403(b), Section 457(b), and/or Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code ("Code")." (Klein ISD, 2025, p. 15).

2. **Supplemental Retirement Plan.** Each year, McGown receives a contribution of **\$40,000** into a retirement plan. This is separate from the \$46,500 contribution described above.

"The District shall contribute to a Supplemental Retirement Plan for the benefit of the Superintendent in an amount equal to Forty Thousand and No/100 Dollars (\$40,000.00) per year." (Klein ISD, 2025, p. 6).

3. **Additional Supplemental Retirement Plan.** For the 2025–2026 school year, McGown began receiving an additional **\$46,500** retirement contribution.

"Beginning June 30, 2026, the District shall make a contribution on or before June 30 of each year during which this Contract is in effect in the amount of \$46,500 to a Supplemental Retirement Tax Deferred Plan or plans (the "Plan") established for the benefit of the Superintendent under Section 403(b), Section 457(b), and/or Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code ("Code")." (Klein ISD, 2025, p. 15).

4. **Longevity Pay.** Each year, McGown receives a longevity payment into a retirement plan. For the 2025–2026 year, she received **\$45,000**.

"If the Superintendent remains continuously employed by the District through November 15, 2025, the longevity payment shall be forty-five thousand dollars (\$45,000)." (Klein ISD, 2025, p.7).

Houston ISD Superintendent Mike Miles

Ranked #10 Highest Paid in Texas according to TEA

Total Pay Reported to TEA for 2025–2026: **\$462,000**

Estimated Actual Total Pay for 2025–2026: **\$768,849**

Hidden Pay: \$307,000

Summary of Houston ISD Superintendent's Compensation

	2023–2024	2024–2025	2025–2026
Cash Compensation Components			
Base Salary	\$380,000	\$380,000	\$462,000
TRS Contribution Salary Supplement	\$27,225	\$28,463	\$28,875
Unused Vacation Days Payment	\$40,081	\$40,203	\$48,314
Performance Incentive Plan	–	\$ 126,730	\$173,660
Relocation Stipend	\$25,000	–	–
Retirement Contribution Compensation Components			
Annual Service Purchase	\$56,000	\$56,000	\$56,000
Estimated Total Pay	\$528,306	\$631,396	\$768,849
Base Pay Reported to TEA	\$380,000	\$380,000.00	\$462,000
Total Pay Reported to TEA	N/A	N/A	\$462,000
Amount Underreported	\$148,306	\$251,396	\$306,849

Superintendent Miles's Compensation Components

The following section identifies the major components of Superintendent Miles's compensation, explains how each component functions, and provides the relevant contract language. Where necessary, we describe the methodology used to calculate the value of each benefit.

Cash Compensation Components

Total cash compensation is estimated to be **\$712,849** for 2025–2026.

1. **Base Salary.** Miles's salary was set at **\$462,000** for the 2025–2026 school year.

"Beginning on July 1, 2025, the Superintendent's annual base salary shall be set at Four Hundred Sixty-Two Thousand dollars (\$462,000)." (Houston ISD, 2025, p. 4).

2. **TRS Contribution Salary Supplement.** Texas public school employees are required to contribute 8.25% of their gross salary to the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS), subject to a salary cap. Miles's contract requires the district to make an additional salary payment equal to his required employee TRS contribution. In other words, the district reimburses Miles for a retirement contribution that other employees must pay themselves. We estimate the value of this supplement at **\$28,875** for 2025–2026.

"The District shall supplement the Superintendent's annual salary beginning with the Effective Date and

continuing for each payroll through the term of this Agreement, by an amount equal to the Superintendent's portion of the monthly contribution to the Teacher Retirement System of Texas ("TRS") required for the Superintendent, for the base salary set forth in Section 3.1 of this Contract." (Houston ISD, 2025, p. 5).

3. **Unused Vacation Days Payment.** Miles is awarded 25 extra vacation days that he may cash out every year. We calculated his "daily rate of base pay" to be the sum of his Base Salary and the TRS Contribution Salary Supplement, divided by the 254 workdays specified in the contract language. For this analysis, we assume Miles cashes out all the awarded days, for an estimated payment of **\$48,314**.

"The Superintendent may take...25 days of vacation per year of this Contract, which may be accumulated and carried forward up to a total of 35 days. At the conclusion of any Contract Year, at the Superintendent's discretion, accrued but unused vacation days accumulated by the Superintendent during his employment by the District will be paid in a lump sum to the Superintendent or his survivors at the Superintendent's then current daily rate of base pay based on a 254-day work year." (Houston ISD, 2025, p. 6).

4. **Performance Incentive Pay Plan.** A large part of Miles's compensation is based on hitting performance benchmarks established in collaboration with the board. In 2025, he received an additional **\$173,660** in incentive pay (Galvan & Goin, 2025).

"The Superintendent is entitled to Performance Incentive Pay. For each year, the total Performance Incentive Pay amount is calculated as a percentage of half of the base salary amount for the year of the evaluation. The percentage equals the number of points out of 100 total points on the Performance Incentive Pay Plan Rubric..." (Houston ISD, 2025, p. 17).

Retirement Contribution Compensation Components

Total retirement contribution was specified to be **\$56,000** for 2025–2026.

1. **Annual Service Purchase.** Each year, Miles receives a \$56,000 contribution to a retirement plan.
"The District shall contribute on an annual basis to a Service Tax Deferred Plan or plans (the "Plan") established for the benefit of the Superintendent under Section 403(b), Section 457(b), and/or Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code ("Code") a lump sum of \$56,000.00." (Houston ISD, 2025, p. 6).

Lamar CISD Superintendent Dr. Roosevelt Nivens

Ranked #14 Highest Paid in Texas according to TEA

Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) 2026–2027 President
Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) 2025 Superintendent of the Year Award
The School Superintendents Association (AASA) 2026 National Superintendent of the Year

Total Pay Reported to TEA for 2025–2026: **\$446,146**

Estimated Actual Total Pay for 2025–2026: **\$637,277**

Hidden Pay: \$191,000

Summary of Lamar CISD Superintendent's Compensation

	2023–2024	2024–2025	2025–2026
Cash Compensation Components			
Base Salary	\$344,020	\$354,340	\$364,971
TRS Contribution Salary Supplement	\$27,225	\$28,462	\$28,875
Unused Vacation Days Payment	\$26,776	\$82,489	\$117,883
Longevity Pay	-	\$21,260	\$25,548
Life Insurance Reimbursement	-	-	\$10,000
Retirement Contribution Compensation Components			
Supplemental Salary Deferral Contributions	\$61,000	\$62,000	\$65,000
Contributions to Employer Paid Plan	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$25,000
Estimated Total Pay	\$474,021	\$563,551	\$637,277
Base Pay Reported to TEA	\$354,341	\$364,971	\$398,439
Total Pay Reported to TEA	N/A	N/A	\$446,146
Amount Underreported	\$119,680	\$198,580	\$191,131

Superintendent Nivens's Compensation Components

The following section identifies the major components of Superintendent Nivens's compensation, explains how each component functions, and provides the relevant contract language. Where necessary, we describe the methodology used to calculate the value of each benefit.

Cash Compensation Components

Total cash compensation is estimated to be **\$547,277** for 2025–2026.

1. **Base Salary.** Nivens's salary was set at **\$364,970.88** for the 2025–2026 school year.

"The District shall provide the Superintendent with an annual salary in the sum of Three Hundred Sixty-Four Thousand Nine Hundred Seventy and 88/100 Dollars (\$364,970.88), which amount shall be increased each year by an amount equal to the greater of (a) the percentage raise given to the District's teachers or (b) a percentage mutually agreeable to the Board and the Superintendent." (Lamar CISD, 2025, p. 4).

2. **TRS Contribution Salary Supplement.** Texas public school employees are required to contribute 8.25% of their gross salary to the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS), subject to a salary cap. Nivens's contract requires the district to make an additional salary payment equal to his required employee TRS contribution. In other words, the district reimburses Nivens for a retirement contribution that other employees must pay themselves. We estimate the value of this supplement at **\$28,875** for 2025–2026. *"[T]he District shall supplement the Superintendent's salary by an amount equal to the Superintendent's portion of the monthly member contribution to the Texas Teacher Retirement System ("TRS") beginning on the first day of the term and continuing for each payroll during the term of this Contract..."* (Lamar CISD, 2025, p. 7).

3. **Unused Vacation and Leave Days Payment.** Each year, Nivens may cash out 20 vacation days, 20 state/local leave days, and 15 local sick leave days. We calculated his "daily rate of base pay" to be the sum of his Base Salary, the TRS Contribution Salary Supplement, Longevity Pay, and Supplemental Salary Deferral Contribution (described below in the "Retirement Contributions" section), divided by the 226 workdays specified in the contract language. For this analysis, we assume Nivens cashes out all the awarded days, for an estimated payment of **\$117,883**.
"Vacation, Holiday and Personal Leave. The Superintendent may take, at the Superintendent's choice, twenty (20) days of vacation annually...At the end of each year of the term of this Contract, the District shall pay in a lump sum to the Superintendent any accrued but unused vacation or personal days, up to a maximum of twenty (20) days paid each year, at the Superintendent's daily rate of pay, as of the payment date. The daily rate shall be calculated by dividing the compensation reported to the Texas Teacher Retirement System by 226..."
"Payment for State and Local Leave. On or before June 30th of each year during the term of this Contract, the Superintendent, at his discretion, shall be paid for up to twenty (20) accrued but unused state and/or local days at his daily rate..."
"Local Sick Leave Days. In addition to the number of local leave days granted to all employees by District policy, the Superintendent is hereby granted fifteen (15) additional local leave days each year of the Contract... On or before June 30th of each year during the term of this Contract, the Superintendent, at his discretion, shall be paid for up to fifteen (15) accrued but unused Additional Local Leave Days at his daily rate..." (Lamar CISD, 2025, p. 4).

4. **Longevity Pay.** Nivens began receiving monthly longevity payments in June 2024. For the 2025–2026 school year, this is an additional 7% of his salary, which we calculated to be worth **\$25,548**.
"In order to encourage continuity of leadership in the District, the District wishes to provide additional compensation to the Superintendent as a reward for reaching certain longevity goals. These longevity payments shall be made as follows:...If on May 31, 2025, the Superintendent is employed with the District, the District shall pay the Superintendent, as additional compensation for longevity, an additional seven percent (7%) of his monthly salary per month for twelve months beginning on June 1, 2025." (Lamar CISD, 2025, p. 8).

5. **Life Insurance Reimbursement.** Nivens is reimbursed up to **\$10,000** per year for the purchase of a life insurance policy.
"The District shall reimburse the Superintendent for the annual premiums toward the purchase of a life insurance policy having an aggregate face amount of three times (3x) the amount of the Superintendent's annual salary as stated in 3.1...The reimbursement to the Superintendent for life insurance shall be up to a maximum of \$10,000 per year." (Lamar CISD, 2024, p. 5).

Retirement Contribution Compensation Components

Total retirement contribution was calculated to be **\$90,000** for 2025–2026.

1. **Supplemental Salary Deferral Contributions.** Each year, Nivens receives a supplement to his salary equal to the amount needed to max out his employee contributions to both a 403(b) and a 457(b) plan. Because Nivens is over 50, he is entitled to make additional “catch-up” contributions to these accounts. The maximum contribution to each account for an individual over 50 is \$32,500 for 2026, so we calculated the value of this supplemental salary at **\$65,000**.

“[T]he District shall add to the monthly Salary of the Superintendent the amount needed each month to contribute the maximum salary reduction contribution permitted by the Code for a 403(b) and 457(b) plan, including, if applicable, the additional deferral allowed for plan participants who are age 50 or older and other age-based catch up provisions (“Additional Salary”) by the end of the calendar year.” (Lamar CISD, 2025, p. 7).

2. **Contributions to Employer Paid Plan.** Each year, Nivens receives a contribution into a retirement plan, specified at \$25,000 for 2025–2026.

“The District shall contribute to the Supplemental Retirement Plan an amount equal to Twenty-Five Thousand and No/100 Dollars (\$25,000.00).” (Lamar CISD, 2025, p. 7).

Tomball ISD Dr. Martha Salazar-Zamora

Ranked #19 Highest Paid in Texas according to TEA

Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) 2024-2025 President
Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) 2025 Golden Deeds for Education Award
Texas Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (TALAS) 2026
Superintendent of the Year Award

Total Pay Reported to TEA for 2025-2026: **\$431,554**

Estimated Actual Total Pay for 2025-2026: **\$499,866**

Hidden Pay: \$68,000

Summary of Tomball ISD Superintendent's Compensation

	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Cash Compensation Components			
Base Salary	\$356,930	\$367,638	\$371,314
TRS Contribution Salary Supplement	-	-	\$20,272
Longevity Pay	\$32,000	\$56,000	\$60,000
Cancer and Life Insurance Premiums	\$1,280	\$1,280	\$1,280
Retirement Contribution Compensation Components			
Supplemental Salary Deferral Contributions	\$45,000	\$46,000	\$47,000
Estimated Total Pay	\$435,210	\$470,918	\$499,866
Base Pay Reported to TEA	\$433,930	\$469,638	\$431,314
Total Pay Reported to TEA	N/A	N/A	\$431,554
Amount Underreported	\$1,280	\$1,280	\$68,312

Superintendent Zamora's Compensation Components

The following section identifies the major components of Superintendent Zamora's compensation, explains how each component functions, and provides the relevant contract language. Where necessary, we describe the methodology used to calculate the value of each benefit.

Cash Compensation Components

Total cash compensation is estimated to be **452,866** for 2025-2026.

- 1. Base Salary.** Zamora's salary was set at **\$371,314** for the 2025-2026 school year.

"Effective as of July 1, 2025, the District shall provide the Superintendent with an annual base salary in the amount of Three Hundred Seventy One Thousand Three Hundred and Fourteen Dollars (\$371,314.00)." (Tomball ISD, 2025, p. 3).

- 2. TRS Contribution Salary Supplement.** Texas public school employees are required to contribute 8.25% of their gross salary to the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS), subject to a salary cap. Zamora's contract requires the district to make an additional salary payment of 4.70% of her eligible compensation to cover a portion of her required employee TRS contribution. In other words, the district reimburses Zamora for a retirement contribution that ordinary employees must pay themselves. We assume that "eligible compensation" is the sum of Zamora's base pay and longevity payments and calculate the value of this supplement at **\$20,272** for 2025–2026.
"As supplemental salary, the District shall pay a portion of the Superintendent's monthly retirement contribution to the Texas Teacher Retirement System (TRS). The District shall pay 4.70% of the Superintendent's total eligible compensation per month to TRS, and the Superintendent shall pay all additional amounts." (Tomball ISD, 2025, p. 4).
- 3. Longevity Pay.** Zamora began receiving monthly longevity payments in the 2023–2024 school year. For the 2025–2026 school year, she received **\$60,000**.
"During each contract year of this Contract, the District shall add to the annual salary of the Superintendent an amount equal to Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$60,000), payable in equal monthly payroll installments..." (Tomball ISD, 2025, p. 4).
- 4. Cancer and Life Insurance Premiums.** According to Zamora's contract, the district reimburses her for cancer insurance and purchases life insurance for her, up to **\$1,280** per year.
"[T]he District shall pay one hundred percent (100%) of the annual premium associated with such cancer plan up to an amount not to exceed \$560.16. The District shall provide the Superintendent with life insurance coverage of \$500,000; provided, however, that the District shall not be required to pay more than \$720 towards the annual premium associated with such coverage." (Tomball ISD, 2025, p. 4).

Retirement Contribution Compensation Components

Total retirement contribution was specified to be **\$47,000** for 2025–2026.

- 1. Retirement Account Contribution.** Each year, Zamora receives a contribution to 403(b) and 457(b) retirement plans. For the 2025–2026 year, that contribution was **\$47,000**.
"On the last pay cycle of June 2026, and on the last pay cycle of each June thereafter during the term of this Contract, the District shall add to the salary of the Superintendent an amount equal to Twenty-Three Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$23,500) to a voluntary 403(b) plan and Twenty-Three Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$23,500) to a voluntary 457(b) plan." (Tomball ISD, 2025, p. 3).

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



James Quintero is the policy director for the Texas Public Policy Foundation's Taxpayer Protection Project. He joined the Foundation in 2008 and his work has generally focused on local government matters, especially where it involves taxes, spending, and debt. His work has been featured in the *New York Times*, *Forbes*, *Fox News*, *Breitbart*, and more.

Quintero received a B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin and an M.P.A. from Texas State University. He is currently seeking a Ph.D. in public policy from Liberty University. In 2022, he was appointed to serve a three-year term on the Commission for Lawyer Discipline.

Quintero and his wife, Tricia, are blessed with five beautiful children and faithfully attend Bannockburn Baptist Church.

Jennifer Windh is a mother of three and author of *The Tomball ISD Reporter* on Substack. She advocates for better school nutrition and transparent and accountable school governance. She holds a Master of Public Policy from Georgia State University and a bachelor's degree in economics from Duke University.



901 Congress Avenue | Austin, Texas 78701 | (512) 472-2700 | www.TexasPolicy.com