

## REPORT

# Teacher Salary and Benefits in Houston

Curious about teaching, but wondering what your finances will look like? We've created this salary and benefits report so you'll know what to expect.

In this report, you'll find information on:



Teacher salaries



Benefits



Cost of living



Job security



Career growth

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# How much do teachers in Houston earn?

Your salary will depend on your district, as well as your experience level and credentials.

What does that mean in concrete numbers? In this section, we'll share example salaries from around the city.

## Starting salary

The starting salary is what you'll make in your very first year as a teacher, right out of your teaching program. Starting salaries vary from district to district, but are still comparable around the Houston metro area.

In the chart below, check out starting salaries for beginning teachers around Houston—and keep in mind that the average starting salary across Texas as a whole was \$44,582 for the 2020-21 school year. (1) That means you'll be making very competitive pay as a beginning teacher in Houston!

All salaries are for the 2021-2022 school year unless otherwise noted.



To learn more about each district, check out the profiles at our Schools & Community page. Visit [houston.teach.org/schools-community](https://houston.teach.org/schools-community).

District	Salary for first-year teachers with a bachelor's degree
<a href="#">Aldine ISD</a>	\$58,000
<a href="#">Alief ISD</a> (2020-21)	\$57,400
<a href="#">KIPP Texas Public Schools</a> (2020-21)	\$53,000
<a href="#">Pasadena ISD</a>	\$57,619
<a href="#">Spring Branch ISD</a>	\$59,000
<a href="#">YES Prep Public Schools</a> (2020-21)	\$56,000
<a href="#">Houston ISD</a>	\$58,869

## Average salary

Average salary refers to what all teachers make, on average—so that includes people who have advanced degrees and have been in the job for years.

**The average salary for Houston teachers is around \$60,000. That's comparable to teaching salaries in other major Texas cities or suburban areas. (2)**

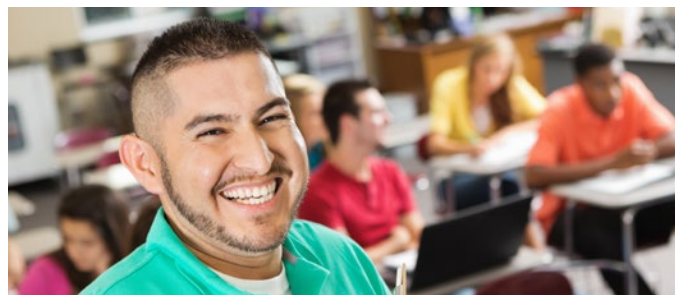
The chart below shows salaries for Houston teachers with a decade of experience. These salaries do not include extra certifications, incentives or after-school positions like coaching, all of which can increase your pay. All salaries are for the 2021-2022 school year unless otherwise noted.

District	Salary for teachers with 10 years of experience and a master's degree
<a href="#">Aldine ISD</a>	\$61,202
<a href="#">Alief ISD</a> (2020-21)	\$76,264
<a href="#">Pasadena ISD</a>	\$62,491
<a href="#">Spring Branch ISD</a>	\$63,790
<a href="#">Houston ISD</a>	\$61,185

## Increasing your salary

There are a number of ways you can increase your salary as a teacher. Advanced degrees, such as a master's, are one way to bump up your pay. Many districts also offer "longevity" incentives, meaning you'll receive a bonus for every year you stay with the district.

You can also earn more by leading certain extracurriculars, like yearbook, choir or sports



teams. Pay for these roles can range from a few hundred to several thousand dollars, depending on the activity and your school.

### Example

Say you're a high school math teacher in Aldine ISD, and you're interested in coaching soccer. Your pay could add up like this (3):

$$\begin{array}{rcl}
 \$500 & \text{Longevity pay for 5 years in the district} & \\
 58K & \text{Starting salary} & \\
 3K & \text{Critical needs subject area stipend} & \\
 + 3.5K & \text{JV soccer coach} & \\
 \hline
 \$68,000 & \text{Total Salary} & 
 \end{array}$$

The Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) offers significant pay increases to teachers who meet certain benchmarks, including National Board Certification. National Board Certified teachers receive a "Recognized" TIA designation, which means extra funding for both you and your district. Recognized teachers can earn an additional \$3,000-\$9,000, depending on your district. (4)

You can also earn a higher starting salary if you teach in a critical needs area, such as math, science or special education. For example, you could earn:

$$\begin{array}{rcl}
 + \$3,000 & \text{per year to teach special education in Aldine ISD (5)} & \\
 + \$3,000 & \text{bonus to teach a critical shortage subject in Houston ISD (6)} & 
 \end{array}$$

# Can I have a comfortable life as a teacher?


The short answer to this question is yes!

The longer answer is yes, and it's also smart to compare your salary to the cost of living in your community. Houston's cost of living is about 8% lower than the national average, so your teacher salary will go further than it would in other cities! (7)

Extra financial supports, like loan forgiveness and housing assistance programs, can also make your daily expenses more affordable.

## How does teaching compare to other professions in Houston?

On average, teacher pay in Houston is comparable to other popular fields. And remember, teachers usually work 180-190 days each year—compared to 260 work days a year in most other professions. Take a look at this chart to compare average salaries across Texas (2):

Industry	Job	Days of work per year	Average salary
Education	Teacher	187	\$60K 
Administration	Bookkeeper	260	\$45K
Social Services	Community Health Worker	260	\$45K
Art and Design	Graphic Designer	260	\$47K
Law	Paralegal or Legal Assistant	260	\$48K
Technology	Web Developer	260	\$68K
Healthcare	Registered Nurse	260	\$85K



# Benefits

Most teachers in Houston enjoy excellent benefits. In this section, we'll break down what that can look like.

## Health

Health benefits vary from district to district. That said, as a public school teacher, you can expect comprehensive medical, dental and vision benefits for you and your family.

## Retirement

In Texas, you'll receive retirement funds through the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS). You can receive retirement benefits if you:

- Are 65 and have completed at least five years of in-state teaching service.
- Are 62 and your combined age and years of service equal at least 80. (8)

## Vacation

You're probably aware that teachers get a long summer break. You can use this time for professional development, to relax, to work elsewhere or whatever else you like. Some schools offer summer positions for teachers, such as summer school classes or curriculum development jobs.

Other vacation days will vary by region, but during the school year, you'll usually get the same vacation days as your students.

You can expect:

- Spring break
- December holiday break
- National holidays off
- Paid personal & sick days during the school year



## Professional development

You can increase your knowledge and your pay through additional classes after you become a teacher. Many schools offer tuition reimbursement and paid professional development leave for teachers.

Tuition reimbursement can make your education cheaper, and it helps schools retain top-notch educators. Your school may also cover leave and expenses for you to pursue professional development such as conferences or trainings.

## Loan forgiveness and discounts

Public school teachers can get thousands of dollars in financial support, including student loan forgiveness. That means that if you meet certain criteria, you won't need to pay back the rest of your loans.

Below, we'll go over a few loan forgiveness programs.



## Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program

The Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program benefits public school teachers with federal student loans. To qualify, you'll need to:

- Teach in a school that serves low-income students.
- Teach full-time for five consecutive academic years.
- Have taken out your loans before the end of your five years of service.

Math, science and special education teachers can receive up to \$17,500 in loan forgiveness. If you teach a different subject, you can still get up to \$5,000 in forgiven loans.

To learn more, visit [studentaid.gov/manage-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/teacher](https://studentaid.gov/manage-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/teacher).

## Perkins Loan Forgiveness

You can get up to 100% of your Perkins loans forgiven if you teach a shortage area subject in a school that serves low-income students. These subjects include:

- Math
- Science
- Special education

To learn more, visit [studentaid.gov/manage-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/perkins](https://studentaid.gov/manage-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/perkins).

## Public Service Loan Forgiveness

If you work in public service—meaning government or nonprofits—you may qualify to have your student loans forgiven. To get this benefit, you'll need to:

- Work full-time in a public service field for 10 years. This includes teaching!
- Make 10 consecutive years of student loan payments during that time.

To learn more, visit [studentaid.gov/manage-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/public-service](https://studentaid.gov/manage-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/public-service).



## Housing assistance

Housing is expensive, and affording a house can be a major concern. Fortunately, Houston teachers have options to cover the cost of buying a home.

### Good Neighbor Next Door

Good Neighbor Next Door is a program through the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The program offers public service professionals, including teachers, 50% off the list price of a home in a revitalization area. In exchange, you'll commit to living in the home for at least 36 months.

To learn more about Good Neighbor Next Door, visit [https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/housing/sfh/reo/goodn/gnndabot](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/sfh/reo/goodn/gnndabot).

### Texas State Affordability and Housing Corporation

The Texas State Affordability and Housing Corporation (TSAHC) helps teachers, public service workers and low-income families become homeowners. TSAHC offers a wide range of home-buying support, including:

- Mortgage tax credits
- Down payment assistance
- Fee waivers

To learn more about the TSAHC's housing programs, visit [tsahc.org](https://tsahc.org).

# How much job security will I have as a teacher?



Now is a great time to become a teacher. Teachers are in high demand across Texas, and the number of teaching opportunities is projected to grow in the coming years. (9)

You'll have extra job security if you get licensed in a critical need shortage area. In Texas, shortage areas currently include (10):

- Computer Science
- English as a Second Language
- Math
- Special Education

## Can I grow in my career as a teacher?

One of the great benefits of teaching is that it opens the door to many other career paths. As an educator, your path might lead into any number of fields, such as classroom leadership, school leadership, education policy or educational products.

Let's get a little more specific about what career growth can mean. If your heart is in the classroom, you can teach and grow into specialized leadership roles. You could become a teacher leader who offers instructional support and feedback to colleagues. Or as a mentor teacher, you could help student teachers and early career educators develop their teaching chops and strategies.

Classroom leadership roles also come with extra pay. For example:

**Up to \$1,200** to become a mentor teacher in Houston ISD (6)

**\$500** to mentor a first-year teacher in Spring Branch ISD (11)

Interested in life outside the classroom? School administrators are community leaders and have their own pay scales. For example, you could earn:

**\$63K-\$110K** to be an elementary school assistant principal in Aldine ISD

**\$85K-\$136K** to be a middle school principal in Aldine ISD (3)

**\$67K-\$103K** to be dean of students or an assistant principal in Houston ISD (12)

**\$108K-\$173K** to be an elementary school principal in Pasadena ISD

**\$131K-\$190K** to be a high school principal in Pasadena ISD (13)

To learn more about career growth possibilities, visit <https://www.teach.org/explore/career-paths>.



To learn more about career growth possibilities, visit [connecticut.teach.org/career-paths-connecticut](https://connecticut.teach.org/career-paths-connecticut).

**This report is meant as a general overview or starting point—but there's a lot more info where this came from! A TEACH for Houston coach can answer all your questions about what it's like to be a teacher in Houston. Visit [houston.teach.org/services/coaching](https://houston.teach.org/services/coaching) to set up a free session.**

## References

- (1) "Teacher Pay and Spending: How Does Your State Rank?" National Education Association. April 23, 2021.
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- (13) Administrative Salary Schedule. Pasadena Independent School District. [PasadenaISD.org](https://pasadenaisd.org).