

EDUCATION



Victoria Independent School District Superintendent Sheila Collazo (Michael Milliorn | Victoria Advocate)

# Pay Increases

## VISD teachers and staff receive district-wide bump

MICHAEL MILLIORN

Teacher pay has been the focal point of discussions on improving public education in Texas at the legislative, district and community levels. The passage of House Bill 2 and rightsizing efforts at the Victoria Independent School District (VISD) will increase pay across the district. For the fifth consecutive year, all staff members at VISD will receive a pay increase under the 2025-202 Employee Compensation Plan. The plan was approved by the VISD Board of Trustees at an Aug. 7 special-called board meeting. “This is a priority for VISD, for me, for the board and for our administration, to make sure that we are compensating our staff as best as possible,” Sheila Collazo, VISD superintendent of schools, said. “We have to turn every stone to

see where the savings can happen. There have been a number of areas where we’ve been able to secure additional funds. It’s about efficiencies and economy of services.” House Bill 2 defines teachers as those who instruct for four or more hours each school day. These teachers may receive funds allocated through the Teacher Retention Allotment (TRA). Those who teach less than four hours each day or are full-time staff members in non-teaching positions do not qualify for TRA funds. Teachers at the district with zero years of experience will receive a \$1,000 pay increase, \$500 from the Support Staff Retention Allotment (SSRA), provided by the state, and \$500 from local dollars, funded through rightsizing efforts. Teachers with one to two years of experience will receive a \$1,500 pay increase, \$500 from the SSRA and \$1,000 from local dollars.

Teachers with three to four years of experience will receive a \$2,500 pay increase and those with five or more years of experience will receive a \$5,000 pay increase from TRA funds. “House Bill 2 provided two different [funding outcomes] depending on district size,” Collazo said. “Because of the size of Victoria ISD, we received the \$2,500 and the \$5,000 [pay increase values].” Under House Bill 2, districts with fewer than 5,000 students will receive \$4,000 for each classroom teacher with three or four years of teaching experience and \$8,000 for those with five or more years of experience. Districts with more than 5,000 students receive \$2,500 for each teacher with three or four years of experience and \$5,000 for those with five or more years of experience. The VISD 2025-2026 Employee Compensation plan provides

SEE TEACHERS, A2

EDUCATION

# SB12: What is the effect on area schools?

MICHAEL MILLIORN

Parents with students attending public schools this fall may have experienced new elements in the back-to-school process. Parents and guardians were tasked with reviewing a consent form relating to their students’ school health services. In order for students to receive health services or take part in wellness programs during the school year, parents had to give their permission through the consent forms provided by their school district. Parents were given the choice to not give their consent as well. Senate Bill 12 (SB12), passed during the 89th Texas Legislative Session, required school districts to notify parents of their right to opt-out of

health-related services. The bill requires parental consent before a child can receive healthcare services as well. Many deadlines set by school districts for submitting the healthcare services consent form have passed. If a parent did not opt-out of granting permission for their student to receive healthcare services at their school by the form submission deadline, they effectively opted-in. The bill aims to expand parental choice in a wide range of educational instruction on public schools, including healthcare services and access to medical records. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) was tasked with developing a process

SEE SB12, A3



The Texas Capitol Building in Austin (The Texas Tribune)

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SCIENCE

## Victoria teacher: Exploring science in a world that questions it

KAREN GOODE

I teach science to young minds in Texas. Every day, I watch curiosity bloom like a petri dish under perfect conditions I also watch it wilt when doubt creeps in—not the healthy kind that asks “why?” but the heavy kind seeded by a world that questions whether science even matters. This is the paradox of teaching today. We live in an age where rockets land themselves and artificial intelligence

writes poems, yet climate science is dismissed, vaccines are debated, and teachers like me sometimes wonder if we’re still seen as trusted guides. But science is not about blind belief. It’s about observation, testing, failing, and trying again. It’s as human as breathing. And when students begin to see that, they connect the dots—not just between molecules and matter, but between their lives and the bigger world.

SEE SCIENCE, A2



(Pexels.com)

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Hot with abundant sunshine



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