

# TEXAS DEMOCRATIC PARTY TALKING POINTS

## Raise Teacher Pay

- House Democrats will be rallying at the Capitol on Tuesday to rally support for Rep. James Talarico's new bill this week that, if passed, will provide **the biggest teacher pay raise in Texas history.**
- 40% of Texas teachers work a second job to pay the bills. Thousands are leaving the profession. In Texas, teacher salaries are \$7,500 behind the national average -- putting us in the bottom half of states.
- Teacher quality is the #1 school-related factor influencing student success. We ask a lot from our teachers. In the aftermath of COVID, they are facing historic learning loss and an escalating mental health crisis.
- Teachers are also the latest target in the culture wars -- and due to our broken firearm policies, we ask them to be bodyguards from mass shooters.
- Texas has more teachers than any other state in the country. Texas has \$47 billion in unspent funds between our budget surplus and the "Rainy Day Fund."
- We can be in the Top 10 states for teacher pay and still have HALF of the unspent funds left over. Our bill will help us retain our best teachers and recruit the best and brightest into Texas schools.
- Funding schools is true property tax relief. Increasing school funding at the state level is the only sustainable way to significantly bring down local property taxes.