



**Author:** Joshua Lee, Raphael Caballes  
**School:** Duncanville High School  
**YMCA:** Oak Cliff

**City:** Dallas

## **STATE AFFAIRS FORUM PROPOSAL**

1 **Title or Purpose:**

2 Mental Healthcare access through police reform  
3  
4

5 **Major Area to be Affected:**

6 Elementary, Middle, and High School teachers in Texas and the entire population of Texas.  
7  
8

9 **Justification:**

10 According to an observational study done by the [learning policy institute](#), the rate of teachers  
11 leaving in 1992 was about 5.1% of the total teaching population, this rate peaked in 2005 to  
12 8.4%, and has settled at 8% since. This 3% difference alone accounts for 90,000 additional  
13 teachers needing to be hired in 2005 than in 1992. According to a national survey, 46 percent  
14 of teachers report high daily stress during the school year.<sup>20</sup> This is the highest rate of daily  
15 stress among all occupational groups, tied with nurses, also at 46 percent, and higher than  
16 physicians, at 45 percent. High levels of stress that continue for a long time may cause health  
17 problems, like high blood pressure and heart disease. During pregnancy, stress can increase  
18 the chances of having a premature baby (born before 37 weeks of pregnancy) or a low-  
19 birthweight baby (weighing less than 5 pounds, 8 ounces) 5-8 ounces is already a low-  
20 birthweight for infants [March of Dimes.org](#). The consulting group [McKinsey & Co. surveyed](#)  
21 [1,000 employers](#), and 90 percent reported that the pandemic was affecting the behavioral  
22 health of their employees. The Kaiser Family Foundation found that rates of [anxiety and](#)  
23 [depression](#) have quadrupled during COVID-19. Esurge reports, Teaching may now be the most  
24 stressful profession period, according to a [RAND survey](#) from June 2021, which found, among  
25 other things, that teachers were almost three times more likely to report symptoms of  
26 depression than other adults.  
27  
28  
29

30 **Proposal for Action:**

31 My proposal aims to expand mental health benefits to teachers' insurance, the Teacher  
32 Retirement System (TRS). Currently the TRS provides mental health aid for "stress, anxiety,  
33 worry, depression, insomnia, sleep problems, social anxiety, and substance abuse" via "easy  
34 lessons" by phone, text, or email. This proposal aims to cover several different types of mental  
35 health disorders ranging from ADHD, bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder (BPD),  
36 obsessive compulsive disorder, and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) to name a few.  
37 Additionally, expanding aid options to licensed therapy, peer support, marriage counseling, and  
38 medication to name a few.  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43

44 **Results to be Expected:**

45 With the implementation of this proposal, we expect to see a positive impact on teacher  
46 retention and growth in the field. With this proposal practically further incentivizing teaching it  
47 is reasonable to assume that people will be more likely to join and stay in the field.