

Ki Charter Testimony
Superintendent Jerry Lager
Senate Education Committee Hearing
March 26, 2018

Good morning Chairman Taylor and members of the committee. My name is Jerry Lager, Superintendent of Schools for Ki Charter located in San Marcos, serving students in residential care and the SMCISD boundaries. I am also a proud veteran. We service the most high needs students across the US and Texas, seeing approximately 700 students a year. I'm here today to testify on how Ki Charter has created benefits and compensation to care for our teachers.

We pay teachers above the local ISD, 1% per year of Ki Charter service, capping at 5%. We pay all paraprofessional salaries, offer competitive benefits, offer a 403b match and provide a gym membership, to encourage healthy living.

Along with special education certification stipends, lead teacher and lead instructional assistant stipends, we offer military stipends to all veterans and dependents of veterans. All of our teachers are certified in their content areas as well as certified in special education.

In hiring veterans and family members we have staff and students speaking the same language. These children have gone through what very few in our society have gone through and our veterans and family members offer a unique advantage in this already tough environment.

Ki Charter acknowledges the sacrifices these men and women have made for their countries and are grateful they continue their service to society by choosing to educate America's youth.

We aggressively encourage growth and pay for professional development for all employees. Our professional development is three tiered; intensive training geared towards mental health, training needed at the campus level and personal professional training each employee would like to receive. Training and development is not only good for the organization, but is a major motivator for individuals. We understand that in doing so, we will lose valuable members who will advance in their careers. We are ok with this as these individuals have given us, and the students 100% and we need to ensure they can expand their talents and flourish in other districts.

Our employees focus on their mission knowing their leaders will support them. Teachers stay because they are making a difference in the lives of struggling students. Our leadership appreciates the challenges the teachers face by educating the most at-risk students with the highest degree and this is why we offer competitive compensation and benefits. Ki Charter leadership encourages our teachers to not only educate, but to be a difference in the lives of the students.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. I am happy to answer any questions.

