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## **Use of COVID-19 relief funds to offset rising health insurance costs welcome news**

State's largest educator association thanks TRS and state leaders for this decision

The Association of Texas Professional Educators thanks the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) and state leaders for their decision to use federal COVID-19 relief funds to offset increasing health insurance costs for Texas educators. Thanks to this one-time use of \$435 million in federal funds, there will be no increase in the total premium charged by TRS to employers for any plan or tier for fiscal year 2022-23 self-insured plans—and, in fact, all regions will experience a decrease in the average total premium, ranging from ~1% to 20%.

The decision to use federal relief funds in this manner should prevent active educators from seeing their health insurance premiums climb next year. This news comes on top of the work TRS has recently done to regionalize the cost of TRS-ActiveCare premiums to be more responsive to variances in local health care costs across the state.

“We fully anticipate that school districts and charter schools will pass this savings along to educators during upcoming school year,” ATPE Executive Director Shannon Holmes said. “As we near the end of another challenging school year, when Texas educators—like all Americans—are dealing with the impact of inflation on their family budgets, this is a true bright spot.

“ATPE looks forward to continuing to work with TRS and state leaders to address the burden that high health care costs place on educators beyond the 2022-23 school year.”

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### **About the Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)**

Founded in 1980, ATPE is the leading educators' association in Texas with approximately 90,000 members statewide. With its strong collaborative philosophy, ATPE speaks for classroom teachers, administrators, and future, retired, and para-educators and works to create better opportunities for Texas' more than five million public school students. | [atpe.org](http://atpe.org)

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