

# Where We Stand

Policy priorities for the future

**RAISE**<sup>®</sup>  
YOUR HAND TEXAS



## **We Believe**



The organizational values of Raise Your Hand Texas® are rooted in creating a world-class school system that fuels a brighter future for all Texans. For this reason, we have established seven core policy priorities — our true north — that guide our long-term work strengthening and supporting public schools in Texas.

# Public Dollars Must Remain in Public Schools

Only public schools, which educate 94 percent of students in Texas, can effectively and efficiently meet the state's demands for a well-prepared workforce and well-informed citizenry.

## Challenge

Vouchers divert scarce public education funds to private schools, which are not required to comply with federal protections for students with disabilities or report and track spending and student performance.

Which Schools Offer Choice and Accountability?		
	Public Schools	Private Schools
Required to accept all students	✓	✗
Required to meet academic and financial standards for accountability	✓	✗
Required to comply with federal protections for students with disabilities	✓	✗

## Where We Stand

We support keeping education tax dollars in public schools and investing in quality public school choice and innovative programs.

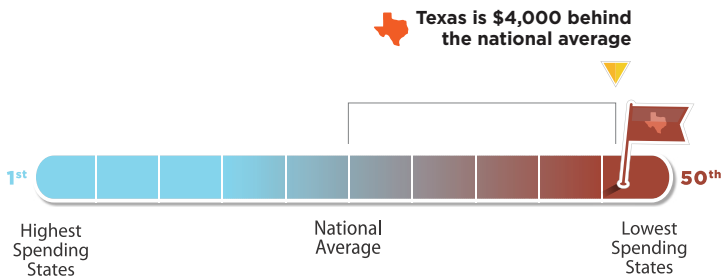
# Money Matters in Education

A high-quality and well-funded public education system is essential for every child to reach their full potential.

## Challenge

Texas ranks in the bottom ten states in per-student funding with a student population that is over 60% low-socioeconomic.

### Even After 2019, Texas Still Ranks in the Bottom 10 For Per-Pupil Spending



## Where We Stand

We support a school finance system that provides equitable outcomes for all students regardless of race, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, disability, or zip code.

# Teachers Make the Difference

The quality of our education system and the long-term viability of our economy are inextricably linked to the effectiveness and diversity of our teachers.

## Challenge

Inadequate pay and a lack of respect for teachers have caused fewer young people to enter the teaching profession in recent years. Compounding this challenge is the need for better teacher preparation and less reliance on alternative certification programs.

Almost a  $\frac{1}{3}$  or

 **12,000+**

new Texas teachers leave the profession  
by their fifth year, which costs up to



**\$20,000**

in training & preparation per teacher.

## Where We Stand

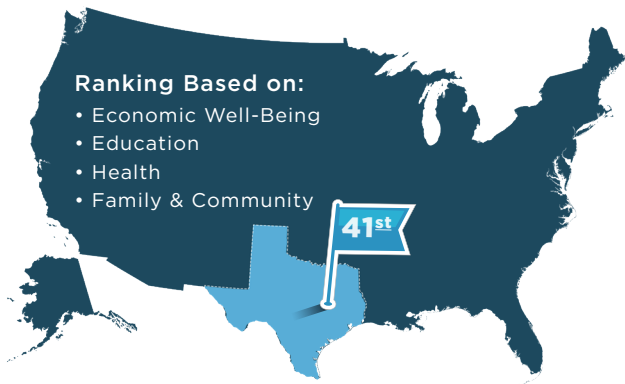
We support enhancing teaching as a career, attracting and preparing a strong teacher workforce, and retaining quality educators in the field.

# Serving the Whole Child Promotes Learning

Every Texas student needs a safe and healthy educational environment in order to meet their full academic potential.

## Challenge

Texas is ranked 41st in overall child well-being, including indicators related to economic well-being, education, health, and certain family and community traits.



## Where We Stand

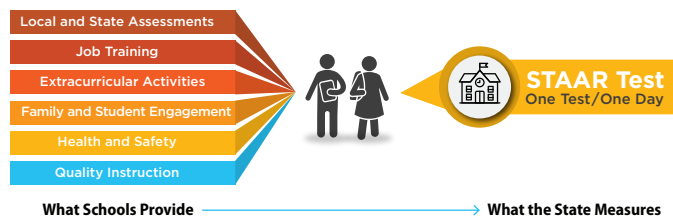
We support meeting the needs of individual students through high-quality pre-Kindergarten, mental wellness services, and other wraparound supports.

# Student Growth and Performance Should Be Measured Fairly

Texas public schools should be held to appropriate standards of academic performance by an accountability system that accurately reflects the continuous improvement of students.

## Challenge

The state's accountability (A-F) system is disproportionately based on a single end-of-year test that does not adequately consider a student's academic growth. Additionally, it is the only measure of accountability ratings in grades 3-8.



## Where We Stand

We support real-time assessments that inform instruction, measure individual progress, and serve as one of multiple measures reflecting a student's entire educational experience.

# Texas Communities Deserve an Equal Playing Field

Charter schools and traditional schools should be held to the same high standards while serving all students within their communities.

## Challenge

Charter schools were founded on the promise of fostering locally developed, innovative approaches to educating children, especially with our most at-risk students, and some charter schools remain true to this vision. Unfortunately, for many Texas communities, the rapid expansion of charter schools has resulted in taxpayer inefficiencies, unequal access for students, and a parallel system of publicly funded schools.



**Charter Schools**



**School Districts**

Charter schools receive almost **\$1,100 per student** in additional funding and have fewer regulations compared to neighboring urban and suburban district schools.

## Where We Stand

We support equitable funding as well as expansion and accountability policies that require publicly funded schools to equally serve all students within their communities. All schools should promote local innovation and respond to the communities in which they operate.



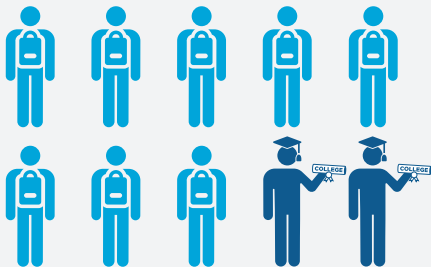
# Prepared Students Ensure a Brighter Future For Our State

Texans deserve a public school system that creates a highly skilled workforce capable of meeting tomorrow's challenges.

## Challenge

Only 20 percent of Texas 8th grade students in 2006 graduated from college by 2017. As such, Texas struggles to keep pace with current workforce demands and cannot solely rely on importing talent from other states.

**Only two out of 10 Texas eighth graders in 2006 graduated from college by 2017.**



## Where We Stand

We support research-based pathways to meet individual student needs as well as increased support for transitioning into college, career, or the military.



THE  
FUTURE OF  
TEXAS  
IS IN OUR  
PUBLIC  SCHOOLS

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