



Raise Your Hand Texas believes in creating a world-class school system that fuels a brighter future for all Texans. To do so, we must continue to invest in our students through high-quality programs and increased funding, ensure public dollars remain in public schools, ensure our teachers have the support they need, and enhance public accountability. Let's build the future of Texas, together. This work takes all of us, because the future of Texas is in our public schools.

### Measure What Matters

Texas has long been a national leader in innovative approaches to school accountability. However, our current accountability system places too much emphasis on standardized testing. The Texas Legislature can continue to lead the way by reducing the high-stakes nature the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) holds in the Texas Education Agency's A-F district and school rating system. Texans deserve an accountability system that more accurately reflects the many contributing factors of a good school and quality education. Our schools do more than administer the STAAR test, and our students are more than one test on one day. It's time to Measure What Matters.



What Schools Provide → What the State Measures

### Policy Recommendations

- ▶ Remove all high-stakes testing consequences for students
- ▶ Limit STAAR test scores to 50% of any domain or the overall score for districts and schools in the state's accountability ratings system
- ▶ Expand the scope of Texas' A-F accountability ratings system to include factors beyond STAAR test scores

### Public Dollars Must Remain in Public Schools

Students, parents, communities, and businesses rely on public schools to provide high-quality education and ensure a bright future for Texas. Vouchers divert public education funds to private schools, neglect our most vulnerable students, and lack transparency when it comes to spending and outcomes. The Texas Legislature must invest in the only education system capable of serving the large and diverse student population of Texas.

### Policy Recommendations

- ▶ Support school choice and innovation within the Texas public school system
- ▶ Oppose any form of vouchers that use taxpayer dollars to subsidize private schools and vendors

### A comparison of district schools and private school vouchers

	Public School Districts	Private School Vouchers
Required to accept all students	✓	✗
Require annual assessment aligned to state curriculum to track student progress	✓	✗
Public reporting and accountability for use of taxpayer funds	✓	✗
Public reporting and accountability for student performance	✓	✗
Require closure or state management for multiple years of low performance	✓	✗
Comply with federal protections for students with disabilities	✓	✗

## Teachers Make the Difference

High-quality teachers are strongly linked to student achievement, significantly increasing high school graduation rates, college completion rates, and salary earnings. However, a myriad of challenges exacerbated by the pandemic and public attitude towards education are pushing teachers out of the profession. Now more than ever, the Texas Legislature should support retention, recruitment, and development practices that strengthen our teacher workforce. When Texas supports its teachers, Texas supports its future.

**77%**

of Texas teachers have seriously considered leaving the profession

## Policy Recommendations

- ▶ Support teacher retention through increased compensation and benefits packages, adequate administrative support, and sustainable work environments
- ▶ Invest in teacher recruitment strategies, including scholarships for aspiring teachers
- ▶ Strengthen teacher development by raising the standards for all education preparation programs and providing meaningful professional development opportunities

**41%**

of Texas teachers seek more income from second jobs

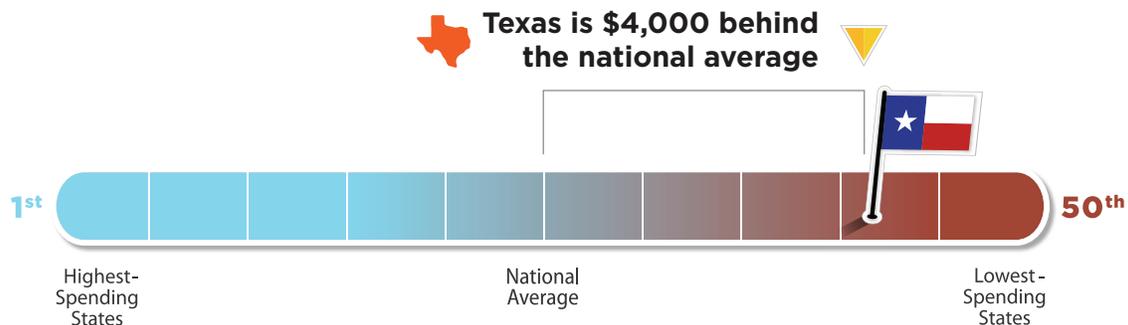
## Money Matters in Education

Over the last three years, Texas has seen double-digit inflation, placing a tremendous amount of pressure on our educators and students. The federal stimulus funds expire in 2024, and the current school finance formulas are not flexible enough to keep up with ongoing demands. Texas lawmakers will have a substantial amount of funding this legislative session – over \$27 billion in additional general revenue and over \$13.6 billion in our state’s Rainy Day Fund. Investing in public school students should be a priority every session, because the future of Texas depends on well-funded public schools.

## Policy Recommendations

- ▶ Increase the state’s overall investment in our public school students and in public education programs
- ▶ Create an automatic annual adjustment to the basic allotment – the building block for per-student funding – to address inflation and growing needs of our schools

Even after HB3 (2019) increased investment in public schools, Texas still ranks in the bottom 10 for per-pupil spending.



### For more information, contact:

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