

2023 TASA Legislative Positions & Priorities

During the 88th session of the Texas Legislature, TASA will support or initiate legislation that aligns with the association's positions and priorities and work with other associations and groups to advocate for the following.

Local Control

A cornerstone priority of TASA members is local control and flexibility, as school districts must be able to respond to the differing needs of students, educators, parents, and the communities they serve.

Support local control of school finances and oppose measures that erode local discretion.

Oppose legislation or measures that seek to limit school districts' or administrators' ability to have representation before the Texas Legislature, state agencies, and the executive branch.

Support Districts of Innovation in their current form.

Education Funding

Advocate for an adequate and equitable school finance system that raises per pupil funding to the national average.

Support sustainable state funding for HB 3 (2019).

Advocate for local discretion with spending to ensure that the needs of students, staff, and communities are met.

Support the use of enrollment vs. attendance as the standard for school funding.

Property Value Growth

Oppose any effort to divert local school property tax revenues for non-public education purposes.

Foundation School Program (FSP)

Oppose any cuts to school district FSP funding.

Advocate for adequate and equitable formula-based funding that considers student and district characteristics to meet state and local standards.

Advocate for funding full-day pre-K programs through the FSP for all students.

School Safety

Advocate for increased funding of the School Safety Allotment and local flexibility to ensure districts can adequately meet student and staff safety needs.

Instructional Materials and Technology Allotment (IMTA)

Advocate for increased funding for the IMTA to ensure districts can provide adequate technology and instructional materials to meet higher standards for students. Oppose any carveouts from IMTA that decrease the amount of funds to school districts.

Facilities Funding

Advocate for additional funding for the Instructional Facilities Allotment (IFA), Existing Debt Allotment (EDA), and the New Instructional Facilities Allotment (NIFA). Oppose additional funding for charter school facilities until adequate state funding is provided to traditional school districts.

Accelerated Instruction

Advocate for a permanent state funding source for all required accelerated instruction. Support measures to reduce state-level prescriptive requirements and to increase local flexibility in meeting the instructional needs of students.

Disaster Relief

Advocate for additional funding for resources to assist school districts impacted by events, such as hurricanes or tornadoes, which result in portions of the state being declared natural disaster areas.

Charter Schools

Oppose the further expansion of publicly funded charter schools, including increases in the number of campuses under existing charters, unless charter schools are subject to the same accountability and transparency laws and regulations as community-based public schools, including those related to: special education requirements, public notices, school discipline, financial dealings (leases, mortgages, bond debt, contracts) transportation, bilingual programs, policy notices, employment contract policies, parental rights, lobbying and political expenditure restrictions, student data privacy, efficiency audits, lunch programs, and nepotism.

Support including in all legislation related to parental rights the same rights for charter school parents that parents of students in community-based public schools are entitled to, including due process rights relating to student discipline and expulsion.

Support requiring charter school board meetings to be held in person in each community they serve at least once per year.

Charter Schools (continued)

Support giving taxpayers more detailed information about prospective charter schools and their expansions, including the planned location, cost to the state and local school district, the academic and financial record of the school, and a meaningful process for taxpayers to provide their support or opposition to said charter in their community.

Advocate to improve transparency, notice, input, and consideration of the state and local district impact before a charter can be approved or expanded.

Advocate for the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to align its rules and processes to statutory requirements that mandate the agency consider a school district's statement of impact when considering a new charter application.

Advocate for the TEA to provide public notice when it violates commissioner rules related to charter expansion.

Advocate for tying the charter school "small and midsize allotment" to the same 5,000-student cap as the district small and midsize allotment.

Support legislation that increases local community involvement in the charter approval and expansion process like that required of traditional public school districts in bond and tax ratification elections.

Special Education

Advocate for increased state funding for special education students, especially for those with the greatest needs.

Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS)

TRS Pension Program

Advocate for the continuation of the current defined benefit pension program for TRS members and advocate for an annual cost-of-living adjustment for all retirees if a study of the fund determines it will not negatively impact the actuarial soundness of the fund.

TRS-ActiveCare

Advocate for increased state funding to assist with increased healthcare costs associated with TRS-ActiveCare and TRS-Care.

Teacher Shortage

Support measures that help with recruitment and retention of the workforce.

Advocate for the removal of state barriers for teacher candidates, such as expensive exams or requirements that deter candidates from entering the profession.

Support increases in flexibility and removal of rigid requirements in state-developed programs such as the teacher reading academies.

Advocate for the repeal of the 3:1 student-to-teacher ratio requirement for supplemental accelerated instruction (HB 4545, 2021).

Vouchers, Taxpayer Savings Grants, Virtual Vouchers

Oppose any state plan that would use vouchers, tax credits, taxpayer savings grants, tuition reimbursements, or any other means to divert public tax dollars to private entities, homeschooled students, or parents, with little or no academic or financial accountability or transparency to the state, taxpayers, or local communities.

Assessment & Accountability

Advocate for the establishment of a comprehensive accountability system that looks beyond high-stakes, multiple-choice exams to meaningful assessments that have value for students, parents, and teachers, as well as flexible measures that local communities value.

Oppose A–F campus and district ratings that oversimplify the complex work of schools and incentivize teaching to the test.

Advocate for an accountability system that does not automatically lower a district's overall or domain performance rating of A to a rating of B if the district has even one campus with an overall or domain performance rating of D or F.

Advocate that the state student assessment program be limited to only those assessments required to meet ESSA (federal) requirements.

Support the exemption from A-F accountability ratings for first-year campuses.

Advocate for local discretion in instructional planning and repeal of the accelerated learning committee requirements (HB 4545, 2021).

Advocate for local discretion in instructional planning and for the repeal of the one-size fits all 30 hours of supplemental accelerated instruction that must be administered to every student who fails any STAAR or EOC exam (HB 4545, 2021).