



February 27, 2023

Members of the Article III Subcommittee on Appropriations  
Texas House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, Texas 78768

Dear Chairman VanDeaver and Members of the Subcommittee:

The Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) appreciates the opportunity to provide input to the subcommittee on Article III regarding funding for public education for the upcoming 2024-25 biennium.

The state has an unprecedented amount of funds available during this legislative cycle, which provides the legislature with the ability to prioritize increased funding for public schools. Historic legislation was passed in 2019 providing additional revenue for school districts. Unfortunately, double-digit increases in inflation over the last several years has substantially reduced the purchasing power of that funding increase.

Considerably increasing the basic allotment would supply additional funding to school districts, provide an automatic pay increase for teachers and other non-administrative staff, reduce recapture, and provide some discretionary spending at the local level. We urge the legislature to provide an inflationary adjustment to the basic allotment to allow districts to keep up with rising costs. This change would also increase the state's share of public education funding, which is currently around 32 percent of school district Maintenance and Operations.

The state should also move toward funding schools based on enrollment versus Average Daily Attendance (ADA). While a move to this method would be costly, there are ways the legislature could phase into this model over a period of time e.g., begin with funding special education based on enrollment versus ADA.

Increased funding for special education is also important as it has never been adequately funded in Texas. The U.S. Department of Education found Texas in violation of federal law that prohibits states from decreasing funding for students with disabilities from year to year and fined the state in 2019. Recently, the Texas Commission on Special Education Funding, that included members of the Texas House, found that the state has been underfunding LEAs for special education purposes by \$1.8 billion.

We recommend significantly increasing the amount of the School Safety Allotment (SSA). Currently, the state funds approximately \$9.72 per student with no minimum amount for smaller school districts, who currently receive insufficient funding through the allotment and must supplement the SSA.

Thank you for the opportunity to make recommendations on the need for increased funding for public schools and we look forward to working with you on this matter further. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy Beneski", written in a cursive style.

Amy Beneski  
Deputy Executive Director, Governmental Relations  
Texas Association of School Administrators