



February 10, 2025

Members of the Senate Finance Committee  
Texas Senate  
P.O. Box 12068  
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Chair Huffman and Members of the Committee:

The Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) appreciates the opportunity to provide input to the committee regarding funding for public education in the upcoming 2026-27 biennium.

First, we are grateful for last session's formula funding for the guaranteed yield and additional funding for items including school safety and the Teacher Retirement System. We also acknowledge the substantial property tax cuts for school district taxpayers enacted last session.

This session, we appreciate the chair's legislation (SB 1), which provides additional funding for school safety and for Lt. Governor Dan Patrick's commitment to increasing teacher compensation. Our state faces both a severe decline in the number of newly certified teachers and an exodus of experienced teachers. School districts need resources and measures to help recruit and retain a quality workforce, especially as we work together to meet Governor Greg Abbott's goal of Texas education being ranked number one in the nation. The increase in the golden penny yield along with the \$450 million to offset TRS-ActiveCare premiums is also greatly appreciated by TASA members.

During this legislative cycle, the state is fortunate to have a large amount of funds available, which provides the Legislature with the ability to prioritize increased funding for public schools. In 2019, the Legislature provided an infusion of additional revenue for school districts; however, six years later, a 22 percent increase in inflation has substantially reduced the purchasing power of that funding. In addition, the past year brought a dramatic decrease in Medicaid reimbursements for Texas students with disabilities. This year, most school districts are experiencing deficit budgets and serious financial challenges.

The membership of TASA respectfully requests sustainable state funding for our public schools, with sufficient local control to meet the needs of more than 1,000 school districts, 8,000 campuses, and 5.5 million students. Considerably increasing the Basic Allotment would provide much-needed resources with local flexibility to:

- Provide an automatic pay increase for teachers and other non-administrative staff (including related costs for retirement).



- Help close the large funding gaps for special education — especially for those students with the greatest needs — and for school safety.
- Provide much-needed relief for higher insurance costs, utility bills, transportation costs, and other necessities for running public schools.

We urge the Legislature to include in the General Appropriations Act an annual adjustment of the Basic Allotment for inflation, just as the Legislature did in TEA Rider 3 in the General Appropriations Acts in seven of the eight years from Fiscal Year 2008 through Fiscal Year 2016. This mechanism, authorized in Texas Education Code Section 48.051(b), would provide stability for Texas schools to keep up with rising costs and rising expectations for students.

It is important to recognize the need for increased funding for special education, which is needed to close the \$2 billion gap between what formulas provide and what school districts spend to educate students with disabilities. This gap was exacerbated with the recent changes to Medicaid reimbursement under the School Health and Related Services (SHARS) program. In addition, TASA members believe all Texas students should be funded based on enrollment, rather than attendance, and this is especially true for students receiving special education services who may have health conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to make recommendations on the need for increased funding for Texas public schools. We look forward to working with you on this matter as SB 1 moves through the legislative process. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,



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

---