

TASA/TASB Legislative Conference 2025

The 89th Legislative Session at a Glance

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89th Legislative Session

- Convened January 14th
- 140 days in a Regular Legislative Session
- March 14th – Last day of bill filing
- June 2nd – Legislature adjourns “Sine Die”

Statewide Hot Topics for Session

- Further reducing property taxes
- Border security
- Election integrity
- Childcare accessibility and affordability
- Taxpayer funded lobbying
- Water infrastructure
- Rising costs of insurance
- Education Savings Accounts (ESAs)

Education

Hot Topics for Session

- School funding & Teacher Pay
- School safety
- Special education
- School start date
- TEA investigations
- Cell phone use in schools
- Bonds
- Educator preparation
- Educations Savings Accounts / Vouchers

State Financial Outlook for 89th

\$194.6 billion funds available for general purpose spending 2026-27 budget cycle

- 1.1% decrease from available funds for 2024-25 biennium

Includes \$23.8 billion left over from the current biennium

- \$4.5 billion was unspent for public education and education savings account

State's Rainy-Day Fund expected to be \$28.5 billion by end of FY 2027

- capped at 10% GR

Tax Revenue accounts for most revenue (sales taxes, motor vehicle taxes, oil and gas, etc.)

K-12 Senate Budget Highlights

*SB1

\$5.3 billion in additional funding, contingent on finance bill

- \$4.9 billion to FSP for teacher pay and Teacher Incentive Allotment
 - \$4,000 increase for all teachers
 - Additional \$6,000 for rural teachers
- Guaranteed Yield on golden pennies increases
 - \$132.40 (FY 26) and \$140.02 (FY 27)
- \$400 million for School Safety (\$200 million per year)
- \$1 billion for school choice/Education Savings Accounts
- No change in BA

K-12 House Budget Highlights

*HB1

\$4.85 billion in new funding, contingent on finance bill

- Guaranteed Yield on golden pennies increases
 - \$132.40 (FY 26) and \$140.02 (FY 27)
- \$400 million for School Safety (\$200 million per year)
- \$1 billion for school choice / Education Savings Accounts
- No change in BA
- \$450 million to offset premium increase for TRS

Senate Committee on Education K-16 Membership

Brandon Creighton, Chair
Donna Campbell, Vice-Chair
Paul Bettencourt
Brent Hagenbuch
Adam Hinojosa
Phil King
José Menéndez
Mayes Middleton
Tan Parker
Angela Paxton
Royce West

Senate Committee on Finance Membership

Joan Huffman, Chair

Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa, Vice Chair

Carol Alvarado

Paul Bettencourt

Donna Campbell

Brandon Creighton

Peter Flores

Bob Hall

Lois Kolkhorst

Robert Nichols

Angela Paxton

Charles Perry

Charles Schwertner

Royce West

Judith Zaffirini

House Public Education Committee Membership

Brad Buckley, chair
Diego Bernal, vice-chair
Alma Allen
Trent Ashby
John Bryant
Charles Cunningham
Harold V. Dutton, Jr.
James B. Frank
Gina Hinojosa
Todd Hunter
Helen Kerwin
Jeff Leach
Terri Leo-Wilson
Alan Schoolcraft
James Talarico

Newly Created: Subcommittee on Academic & Career-Oriented Education

Trent Ashby, chair
James Talarico, vice-chair
Harold V. Dutton, Jr.
Todd Hunter
Alan Schoolcraft

House Appropriations Committee Membership

Greg Bonnen, chair

Brian Harrison

Tom Oliverson

Mary Gonzalez, vice chair

Donna Howard

Angelia Orr

Jeff Barry

Venton Jones

Toni Rose

Nicole Collier

Stan Kitzman

Lauren A. Simmons

Mano Deyala

Janie Lopez

Shelby Slawson

Caroline Fairly

J.M. Lozano

Carl Tepper

Cassandra Garcia
Hernandez

John Lujan

Denise Villalobos

Barbara Gervin-Hawkins

Christian Manuel

Armando Walle

Vikki Goodwin

Armando Martinez

Gene Wu

Finance Bills

- Establish enrollment vs. attendance-based funding
- Increase Small and Mid-sized School Allotments
- Make FSP inflation adjustments
- Amend percentage that an ISD needs to maintain its local property value to no less than 80% of the comptroller's margin of error for the property value study
- Create a Fine Arts Allotment

School Safety Bills

- Establish permissible uses of the School Safety Allotment under the FSP
- Require at least one-armed security officer to be present during regular school hours at campuses that have an instructional facility as defined by TEC 46.001
- Allow a school security officer to be a reserve deputy sheriff or an honorably retired peace officer who has met certain requirements
- Create an Office of Youth Health and Safety

Student Services Bills

- Relate to discipline of students receiving SPED services
- Require parent notification of district corporal punishment policies or prohibition of corporal punishment
- Expand the criteria for identifying students at risk of dropping out of school to include “chronically absent”
- Broaden excused absences to include mental health related doctor appointments
- Add antisemitism to the definition of bullying for the purpose of school discipline policies
- Enroll public school students in a virtual education program as an alternative to expulsion

Taxation and Bond Bills

- Require a vote of sixty percent for any rate above the voter approved rate (including I&S)
- Establish limits on increases of commercial properties
- Establish set asides of surpluses for compression
- Prohibit seeking bonds for a period after a failed election
- Limit purchasing personal property with bond funds

Technology and Textbook Bills

- Relate to school policies regarding student use of personal electronic devices, including during instructional time
- Relate to the provision of virtual instruction and waivers and modifications allowed by the commissioner of education to calculate ADA
- Prohibit the purchase of materials on the SBOE rejected list
- Prohibit the purchase of materials not adopted by the SBOE

School Choice Bills

- Will Gov. Abbott declare school choice as emergency item?
- Both chambers set aside \$1 billion in budget for ESAs
- Lt. Gov. Patrick's top policy priority (SB 2 filed January 24)
 - Creates an ESA program within comptroller's office to pay for education related expenses of approved families
 - Allows approved parents to submit a request for payment to an educational service provider through comptroller contracted "educational assistance organizations"
 - Defines eligibility as children eligible to attend a TX public school or enroll in a public school's prekindergarten program
 - Funds equal to \$2,000 for those not enrolled in a private school, \$10,000 for those enrolled in a private school, or \$11,500 if the student is enrolled in a private school and has a disability
 - Establishes lottery system if there are more applicants than there are spots

School Choice Bills, cont.

Other filed school choice bills would establish:

- A parental empowerment program administered by the comptroller
- An ESA program and an insurance premium tax credit for contributions
- An ESA program for certain student populations
- A budget savings program administered by the comptroller making an appropriation of a portion of those savings

Parent Bills

- Create an Office of Inspector General at TEA to investigate complaints by parents of children enrolled in public schools
- Require an SBOE-appointed ombudsman to serve as a formal complaint mechanism for parents
- Propose a constitutional amendment protecting the rights of parents to raise their children

Administrative/Governance Bills

- Establish a constitutional amendment protecting private schools from state and local regulations
- Affect the purchase, review, or prohibition of school library materials
- Prohibit the use of social media platforms by children
- Mandate district policies on student use of personal communication devices

Admin/Governance Bills, cont.

- Establish community censorship
 - Prohibit taxpayer funded lobbying
 - Prohibit an ISD from procuring training, insurance products and risk pool participation, goods or supplies from a buy board
- Prohibit an ISD or charter employee from engaging in political advocacy for or against a candidate, measure, or political party
- Apply lobbyist registration requirements to a person who provides legal services to a political subdivision
- Prohibit conflicts of interest in hiring certain school vendors

Admin/Governance Bills, cont.

- Related to the admission to public schools of children unlawfully present in the US and eligibility of those children for benefits under the Available School Fund
- Mandate the reporting of the number of children known or reasonably believed to not be US citizens enrolled in a public school and request for reimbursement
- Prohibit certain government entities from requiring DEI training

Admin/Governance Bills, cont.

- Affect scheduling of the first day of a school year
- Require notification if a full-time nurse, counselor or librarian is not assigned
- Require display of the Ten Commandments
- Exempt students from required immunizations for enrollment
- Reduce pre-k tuition or provide free full day pre-k for certain children

Employee Relations/Benefits Bills

- Restrict superintendent severance pay
- Limit superintendent and charter school CEO salaries
- Address teacher compensation
- Restrict wage deductions for classroom teacher dues payments

Accountability Bills

- Assess statewide only what is required by federal law
- Establish a commission to study assessment and accountability
- Amend the CCMR bonus
- Direct the commissioner to apply for federal waiver to expand the scope of tests
- Expand the number of student achievement indicators

Curriculum Bills

- Require parental approval for a student's participation in human sexuality instruction in public schools (opt-in)
- Prohibit use of AI during instruction
- Change social studies graduation credit requirements (make .5 credit in ECO with emphasis on PFL a requirement vs. an option)

Special Program Bills

- Implement some of the recommendations of the Texas Commission on Special Education Funding
- Establish a framework for the licensing of specific education professionals as licensed specialists in school psychology in Texas