



# TSTA NEWS

TEXAS STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

316 W. 12th St., Austin, TX 78701 • 877-ASK-TSTA • www.tsta.org • Fax 512-486-7049

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Contact: Clay Robison  
512.476.5355, ext. 1313; clayr@tsta.org  
Cell: 512.535.8994

## **TSTA: ESAs are entitlements without accountability; may be worst voucher idea yet**

Texas State Teachers Association President Noel Candelaria issued the following statement today on Senate Bill 3:

“The Texas State Teachers Association strongly opposes Senate Bill 3 because it would siphon tax dollars from under-funded public schools to create a new taxpayer-funded entitlement—a so-called education savings account (ESA)—for a select number of families. The ESA entitlement may be the worst idea that voucher and privatization advocates have come up with yet. With little or no public accountability, recipients would be able to access an account, possibly with a debit card, loaded with our tax dollars to pay for private school tuition or buy items like family computers to help home-school their children.

“The most recent studies in several other states continue showing that voucher programs don’t improve academic outcomes. At a time when our public schools are already under-funded, the Texas Legislature needs to improve funding for our neighborhood public schools, where the vast majority of Texas’ 5.3 million school children will continue to be educated, not divert tax dollars to unaccountable and ineffective privatization schemes for a relative handful of kids.

“Senate Bill 3, if enacted, would cost Texas’ public schools as much as \$2 billion a year, according to an analysis by the Center for Public Policy Priorities. That would be shameful, especially since Texas already spends about \$2,700 less per student in average daily attendance (ADA) than the national average.”