



TSTA NEWS

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TSTA on School Finance: It's time for a start, not a study

Poll: Increasing state investment in public schools is key to lower property taxes

Texas State Teachers Association President Noel Candelaria issued the following statement.

“When the governor opened the special session call to school finance, he suggested another school finance study, but it’s time for a start, not a study. Our students, teachers and local taxpayers should not have to wait another two years for the Legislature to take action on this very important issue.

“TSTA applauds the Texas House for taking up a school finance bill that would take an important first step toward increasing state support for our public schools and providing real and lasting relief for local property taxpayers. You can’t do one without the other.

“The state share of education funding has slipped from 45 to 38 percent over the past 10 years; the time to reverse that trend is now. The cost of this declining state commitment to public education, according to findings published by the Texas Tribune based on LBB figures, amounts to an \$18.6 billion shift on to the backs of local property taxpayers.

“HB21 and HB30 would provide funds to enable many local schools to provide additional classroom resources for our students and better pay for our teachers. It’s time for the state to pay its fair share of education funding, instead of making local property taxpayers bear the burden of unfunded state mandates.”

Key TSTA Polling Results

During the regular session and again before the special session started, TSTA worked with a bipartisan polling team to conduct statewide polls that asked voters about issues facing the Legislature, including some of the key issues on the special session call. Here are some key findings:

- A 61 percent majority considered increased funding for Texas public schools and property tax relief “very important,” including a majority from both political parties. No other special session issue tested was considered “very important” by a majority of voters.
- In both polls, a sizable majority said the Legislature should use the Rainy Day Fund to increase state funding for public schools, including a majority of Republican voters.
- 67 percent (66 percent of Republicans) said increasing the state share of education funding would do more to provide property tax relief than a rollback election when taxes increase by 5 percent.