



# TSTA NEWS

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## **Texas per-student funding dropped during the current school year**

Texas is spending less to educate a student in its public schools during the current school year than it did in 2017-18, according to the latest National Education Association analysis of school finance data.

Based on figures obtained from the Texas Education Agency, NEA determined that Texas is spending an average of \$10,712 per student in average daily attendance (ADA) for 2018-19. This is \$71 less per student than the average \$10,783 spent in the previous school year and more than \$2,900 below the national average of \$13,658.

Texas ranks 39<sup>th</sup> among the states and the District of Columbia in this key indicator of education support and is one of only seven states spending less per student in ADA than last year.

Average daily attendance in Texas increased by 1.35 percent, or about 68,200 students, between last year and the current school year, but public education spending increased by only 0.69 percent, about half the rate of the ADA increase, NEA researchers said. This includes spending from all sources – state, local and federal – for operating expenses but does not include spending for capital improvements or debt service. The ADA for 2018-19 was based on the fall semester.

The average teacher salary in Texas increased from \$53,334 in 2017-18 to \$54,155 in 2018-19, NEA reported, but still trailed the national average of \$61,700 by more than \$7,000.

“The hole that Texas leaders have been digging for our children’s future keeps getting deeper,” said Noel Candelaria, president of the Texas State Teachers Association, the NEA’s Texas affiliate. “These figures mean overcrowded classrooms, high teacher turnover and a growing threat to the Texas economy.”

“We are happy that the Legislature is taking steps this session to increase state funding for public schools, but this will be only a down payment. It will take several more sessions to fully overcome years of neglect and misplaced priorities,” Candelaria added.

“School finance changes must include guaranteed pay raises for all teachers and all other school employees who devote every day to educating our children and providing for their safety and well-being,” he said.

Based on financial data from each state’s education department, NEA’s estimates for ADA spending in 2018-19 range from highs of \$24,589 in New York and \$23,007 in Alaska to lows of \$7,395 in Utah and \$7,409 in Idaho.