



# Legislative Update

November 15, 2022

Prepared for the Denton ISD Board of Trustees



## Mission Statement

Empowering lifelong learners to be engaged citizens who positively impact their local and global community.

## In pursuit of excellence...

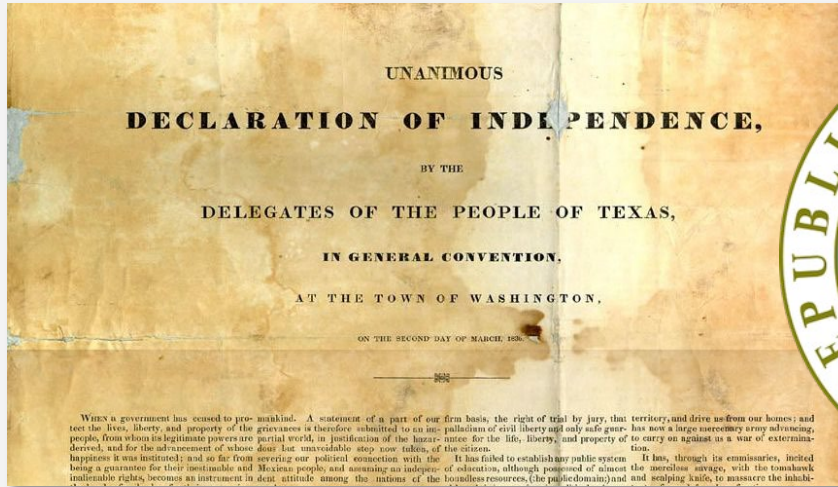
We will advocate for public education across the state and nation.

“A general diffusion of knowledge being essential to the preservation of the liberties and rights of the people, it shall be the duty of the Legislature of the State to establish and make suitable provision for the support and maintenance of an efficient system of public free schools.”

**The Texas Constitution**  
**Article 7, Section 1**



Texans have long been concerned about the education of their children. The Texas Declaration of Independence in 1836 listed the failure of the Mexican government **"to establish any public system of education, although possessed of almost boundless resources..."** among the reasons for severing political ties with Mexico.





# Upcoming Legislative Dates

General  
Election Day

**NOVEMBER 8, 2022**

88<sup>th</sup> Legislative  
Session Ends

**MAY 29, 2023**

**JANUARY 10, 2023**

88<sup>th</sup> Texas  
Legislative  
Session Begins



01

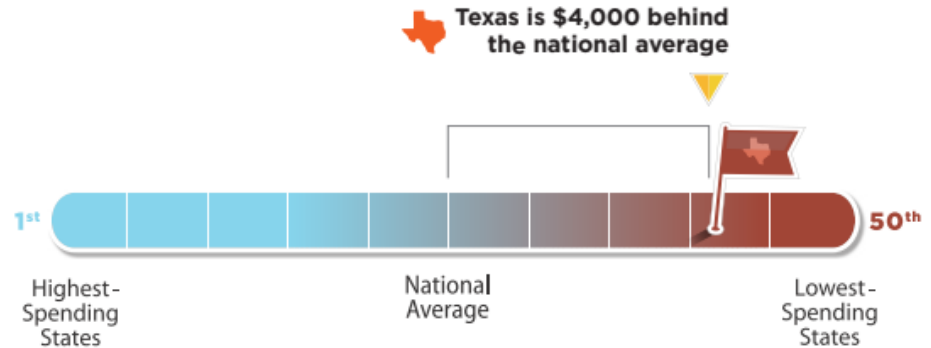
School Finance,  
Local Control, &  
Taxpayer Advocacy

## Money Matters

A high-quality and well-funded public education system is essential to help every child reach their full potential.

Texas ranks in the bottom 10 states in per-student funding, with student population that is over 60 percent low socioeconomic.

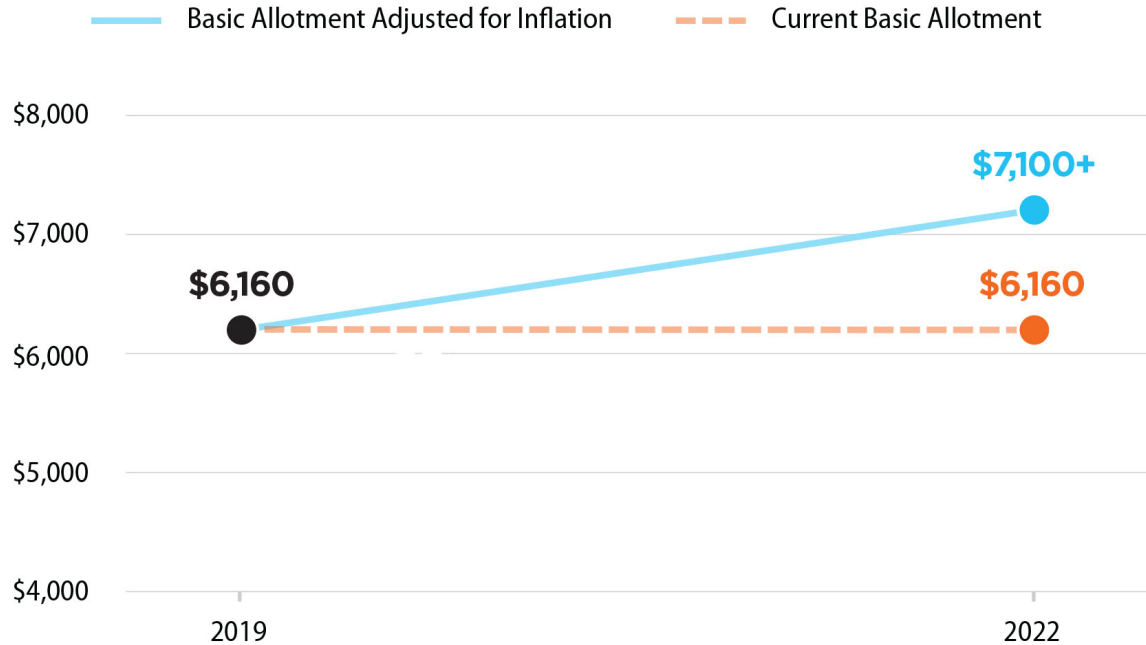
### Even after 2019, Texas Still Ranks in the Bottom 10 for Per-Pupil Spending





# Money Matters

## Keep Pace with Inflation: Unlock Texas School Funding<sup>2</sup>



## Texas' Historic Fund Balance

**Big Moves:** The largest fund balance in Texas' history — \$44 billion — is projected for the state by the end of fiscal year 2023.

The balance is the remaining funds after accounting for all current appropriations, incoming revenues and carry-over fund balances.

**The Source:** As Texas' economy has bounced back, we've had record-breaking sales tax revenue. Plus, we saw greater tax collections on oil and natural gas as demand increased this year. The \$44 billion includes:

- Texas' general revenue fund (\$27 billion)
- Remaining recovery funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (\$3 billion)
- Economic stabilization fund, a.k.a. the rainy day fund (\$14 billion)

## Impact to Denton ISD

Denton stands to lose \$7 million at the end of 2024 when House Bill 3 formula transitions and the current grant ends.

We would need our hold harmless to be extended or basic allotment to be increased by at least \$160.





## When Property Taxes Rise, State Keeps School Funds

The Denton ISD supports the following initiatives to reduce property taxes for local taxpayers and enhance student outcomes.

### **Property Tax Reduction:**

- Restore the state's share of funding to 50% allowing for local property tax reduction.
- Restore funds for the Instructional Facilities Allotment (IFA).
- Restore funds for the Existing Debt Allotment (EDA).

### **Enhance Student Outcomes:**

- Fund schools based on student enrollment rather than attendance.
- Increase the basic allotment to allow for inflation and index the basic allotment to adjust when inflation rises.
- Eliminate Unfunded Mandates.

## Enhance Taxpayer Advocacy, Transparency and Eliminate Inefficiencies

The Denton ISD supports the following initiatives to enhance taxpayer input, promote transparency and eliminate big government redundancies.

### **Protect Taxpayers:**

- End untruthful bond ballot language in order to promote truth in taxation and transparency.
- Ensure all taxpayers have a voice in Austin through public school advocates.
- Prioritize local control where transparency is greater and elected officials are held accountable.

A blue-tinted photograph of a police officer with a beard, wearing a uniform with a 'POLICE' badge, leaning forward to talk to a young child in a park. The child is wearing a hooded jacket and has a backpack. In the background, there are trees, a fence, and other people. A white rectangular border is overlaid on the image, framing the text.

02

**School Safety &  
Mental Health  
Resources**



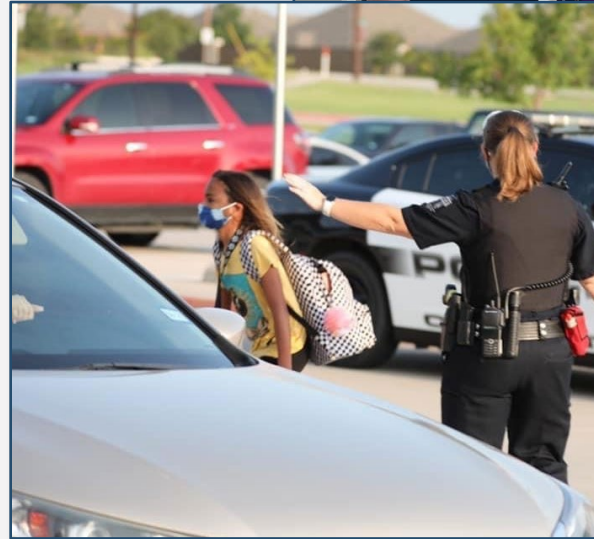
# School Safety

**Our current year school safety allotment is budgeted at \$304,722. (\$9.82 weight per budgeted ADA 31,350)**

School Resource Officers serving Denton ISD:

- 9 SROs, 1 Lt in Denton
- 1 Denton County Sherriff
- 1 Corinth SRO
- 6 SROs from Little Elm

**Total cost: \$1,446,334**



## Mental Health in Students

20%



20% of children experience a **mental health concern** each year

2 in 5



Nearly 2 out of 5 school-aged children experience a **mental health need** each year

2<sup>nd</sup>



Suicide is the 2<sup>nd</sup>-leading cause of death in adolescents; 15% have a suicidal plan, and 9% of these will **attempt suicide**

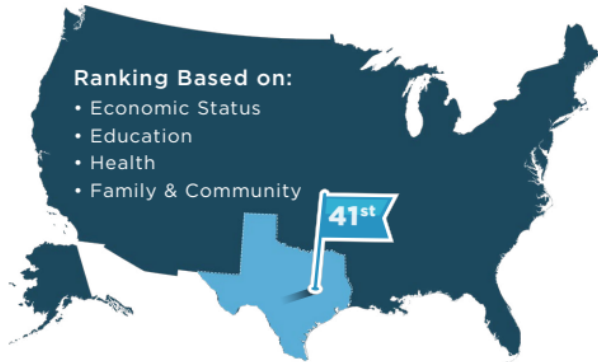
67%



67% of Texas youth with a **major depressive episode** do not receive mental health services

# Mental Health in Students

Texas is ranked 41st in overall child well-being, including indicators related to economic status, education, health, and certain family and community traits.



Approximately one in six school-aged youth experiences impairments in life functioning, including impacts on academic achievement, due to mental illness. The number of students experiencing mental illness increases as young people grow older.

Outside of the student's home, schools are the most likely place where mental health concerns will be detected. Fortunately, the earlier mental health concerns are detected and addressed, the more likely a student is to avoid the onset and/or progression of mental illness. Many times, signs of deteriorating mental health are noticeable well before a mental illness emerges.

## Schools Cannot Continue to Carry all the State's Burdens

Measures to address safety, security and mental health:

- Provide adequate funding to broaden mental health supports for students and adults.
- Increase the school safety allotment, place allotment in “Other Programs” for funding purposes so that funds are allocated to districts and not supplanted and allow local control for implementing safety measures.
- Increase outside resources for mental health, to allow schools to no longer be the primary resource for student mental health.

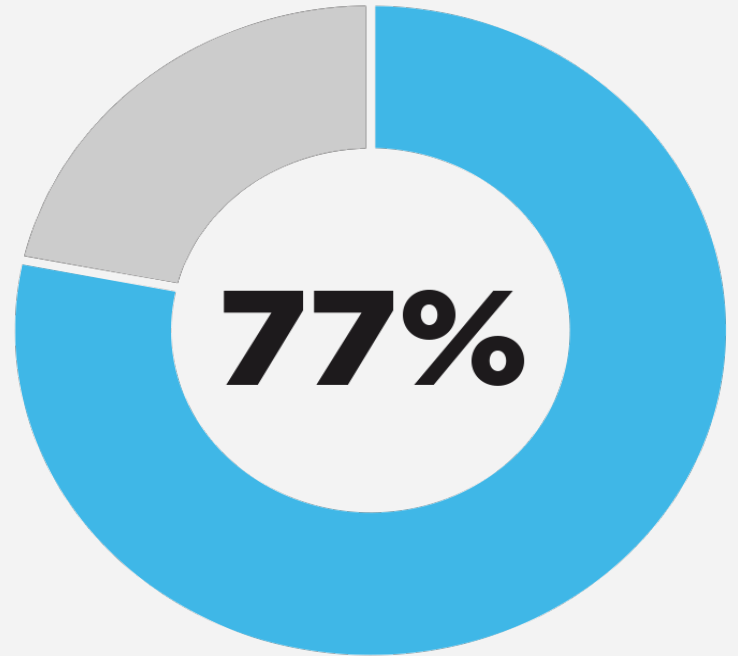


03

## Staff Recruitment and Retention

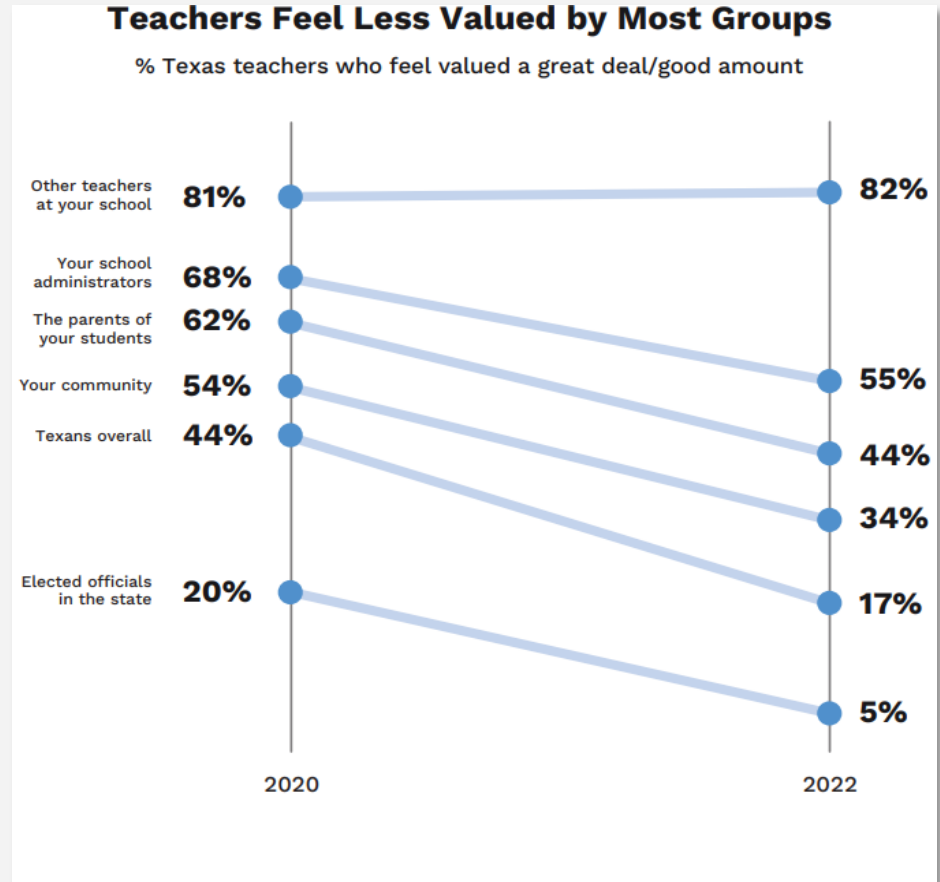
## Texas Teachers Have Seriously Considered Leaving

- 77% of Texas teachers seriously considered leaving the profession in 2022 due to:
  - High levels of stress
  - Feeling undervalued
  - Excessive workload
  - Administrative burdens
  - Poor pay and benefits

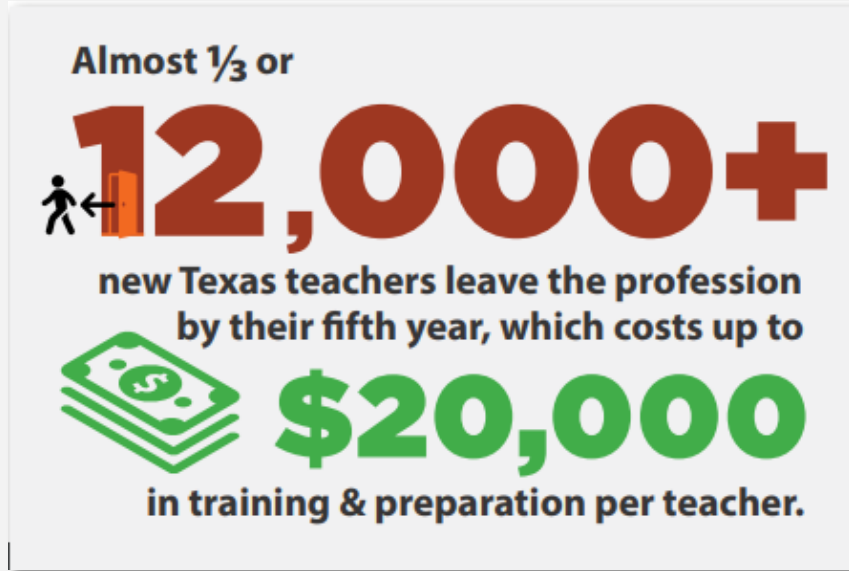




# Teachers Feel Less Valued



## Teacher Retention



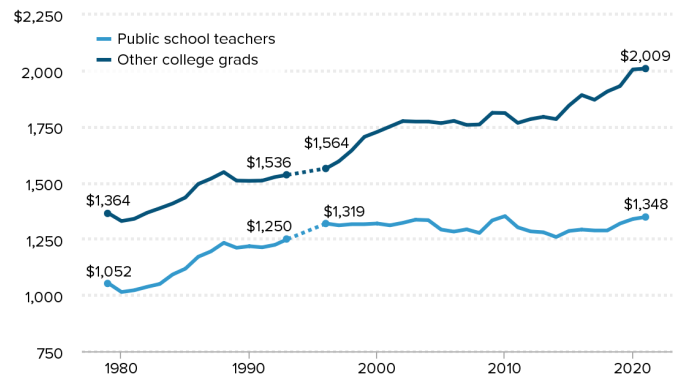
The quality of our education system and the long-term viability of our economy are inextricably linked to the effectiveness and diversity of our teachers.

Inadequate pay and a lack of respect for teachers have caused fewer young people to enter the teaching profession in recent years. Compounding this challenge are the need for better teacher preparation and less reliance on alternative certification programs.

# Teacher Pay

## Teachers' weekly wages have remained relatively flat for 25 years

Average weekly wages of public school teachers and other college graduates, 1979–2021



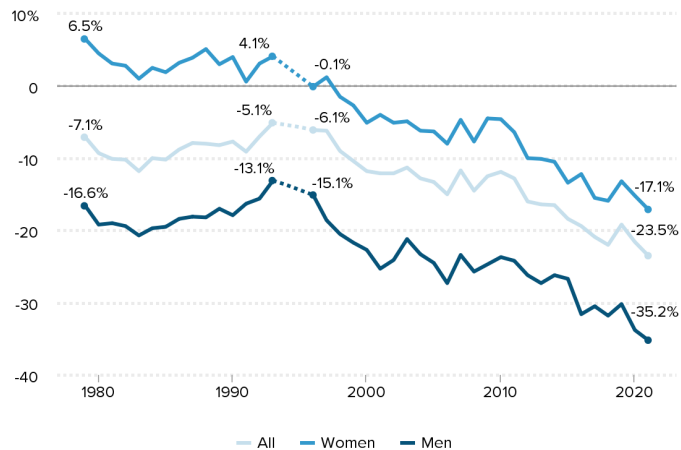
**Notes:** Figure shows average weekly wages (2021\$) of public school teachers (elementary, middle, and secondary) and other college graduate (nonteacher) peers. Data points for 1994 and 1995 are unavailable; dotted lines represent interpolated data. See [Allegretto and Mishel 2019](#), Appendix A, for more details on data and methodology.

**Source:** Author's analysis of Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group data accessed via the EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.29 (EPI 2022a), <https://microdata.epi.org>.

Economic Policy Institute

## Teachers earn 23.5% less than comparable college graduates

Public school teacher weekly wage penalty (or premium) for all teachers and by gender, 1979–2021



**Notes:** Figure shows regression-adjusted weekly wage penalties (or premiums) for public school teachers (elementary, middle, and secondary) relative to their college-educated, nonteaching peers. Data points for 1994 and 1995 are unavailable; dotted lines represent interpolated data. See [Allegretto and Mishel 2019](#), Appendix A, for more details on data and methodology.

**Source:** Author's analysis of Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group data accessed via the EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.29 (EPI 2022a), <https://microdata.epi.org>.

Economic Policy Institute

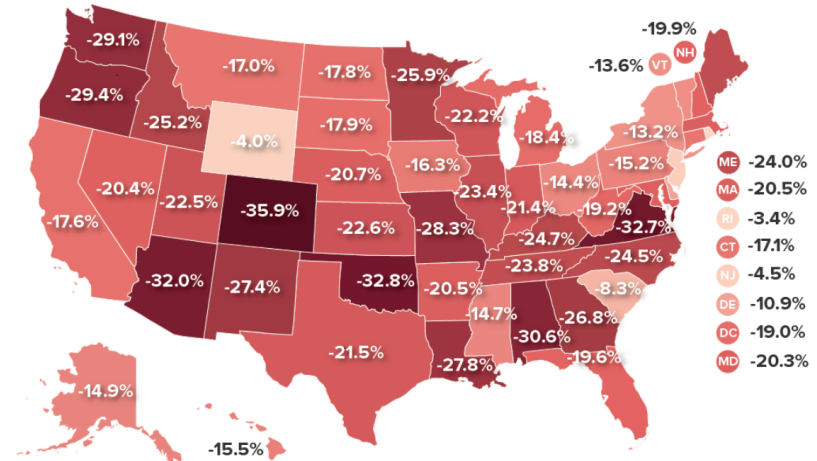
# Teacher Pay

## Key Findings:

- Inflation-adjusted average weekly wages of teachers have been relatively flat since 1996.
- The relative teacher wage penalty grew to a record high in 2021.
- The benefits advantage for teachers has not been enough to offset the growing wage penalty.
- The relative teacher wage penalty exceeds 20% in 28 states.

## How underpaid are teachers in your state?

Depending on the state, teachers make between 3.4% and 35.9% less than other comparable college-educated workers



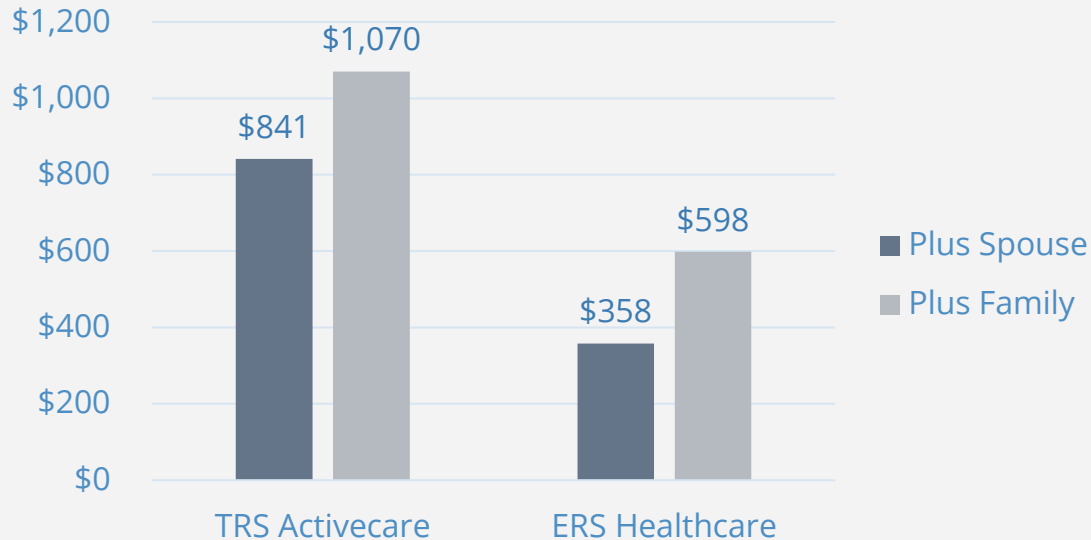
**Notes:** Figure shows state-specific regression-adjusted weekly wage penalties for public school teachers (elementary, middle, and secondary) relative to their college-educated, nonteaching peers. See [Allegretto and Mishel 2019](#), Appendix A, for more details on data and methodology.

**Source:** Author's analysis of pooled 2016–2021 Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group data accessed via the EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.29 (EPI 2022a), <https://microdata.epi.org>.

Economic Policy Institute

# TRS Activecare vs ERS Healthcare

## 2022-2023 Monthly Premium Rates



### Monthly Difference -

Plus Spouse:  
\$483 more expensive

Plus Family:  
\$472 more expensive

### Annual Difference -

Plus Spouse:  
\$5,796 more expensive

Plus Family:  
\$5,664 more expensive

## Measures to Address Teacher Recruitment and Retention

- Elevate the teaching profession by initiating a statewide campaign to support and advocate for the teaching profession.
- Provide state-funded benefits for educators like paid leave for new parents, reduced insurance premiums and deductibles, State Parks and Recreations or DMV benefits, etc.
- Provide pay incentives to recruit new teachers and retain veteran teachers that is separate and apart from the Teacher Incentive Allotment.
- Allow flexibility in certifications to allow districts to fill high-need openings.
- Suspend the TRS penalty for rehiring retired teachers.
- Provide state funding to compensate student teachers while working in school district classrooms.



A pencil is positioned diagonally across the frame, resting on a multiple-choice test paper. The paper features several rows of questions, each with four circular options labeled A, B, C, and D. A white rectangular box is superimposed over the center of the image, containing the number '04' and the text 'Reduced Testing'.

04

Reduced Testing

# Testing and Accountability

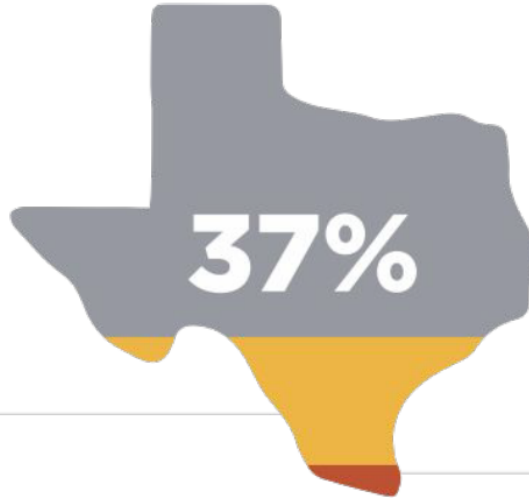
The state's accountability (A-F) system is disproportionately based on a single end-of-year test that does not adequately consider a student's academic growth. Additionally, it is the only measure of accountability ratings in grades 3-8.



## Texans are Skeptical of STAAR

Before COVID-19, the STAAR test was widely unpopular with parents, educators, lawmakers, and students.

Just 37% of Texans express confidence that state standardized tests effectively measure how well students are learning.



Of those, only 6% express high confidence in the state standardized test.

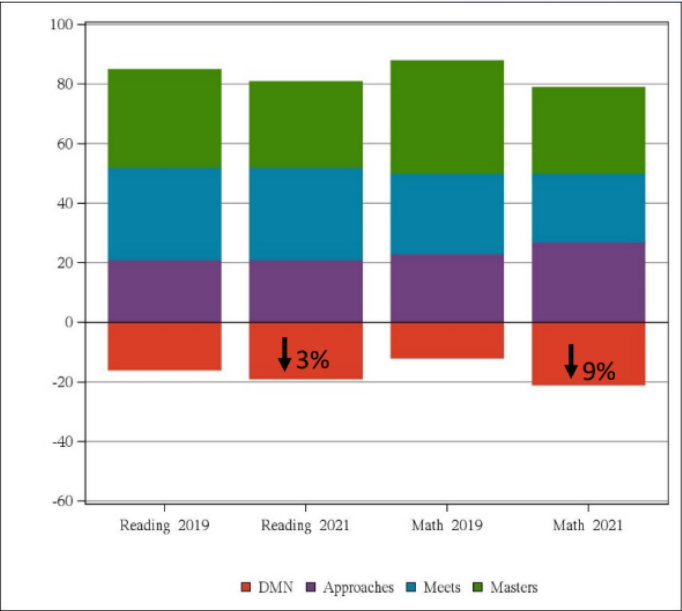
*Source: Raise Your Hand Texas Foundation Poll 2020: Texans Trust Teachers*

# 2021 STAAR Testing Analysis

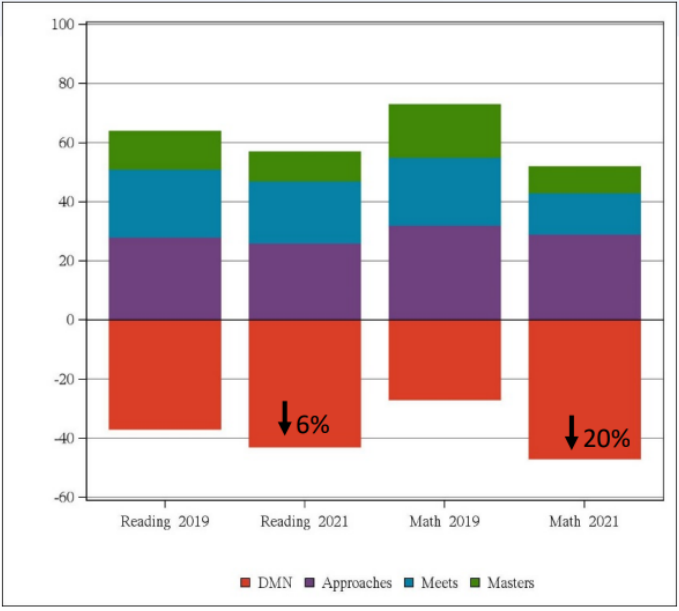
## Non-Economically Disadvantaged

vs.

## Economically Disadvantaged



- In 2021, non-economically disadvantaged students represent 41% of all tested students.
- 87% of non-economically disadvantaged students tested.



- In 2021, economically disadvantaged students represent 59% of all tested students.
- 86% of economically disadvantaged students tested.

## Meaningful Accountability

- Advocate against the use of a single summative test for accountability and develop a comprehensive method of measuring student progress and success by including broader, diversified data points and indicators which inform classroom instruction.
- Allow school districts to locally determine the parameters and methods for remediation for student who do not perform satisfactorily on state assessments.
- Allow students alternate methods, such as successful passage of national assessments, for students to complete matriculation and advancement through courses without penalizing school districts.
- Ensure accountability measures are meaningful and appropriate for each grade level.



05

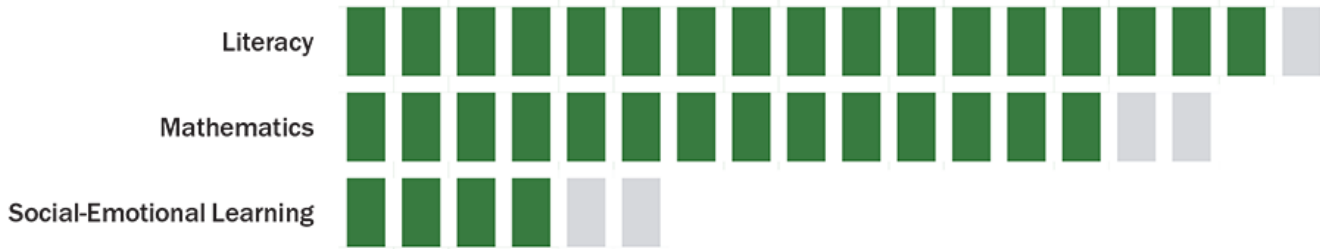
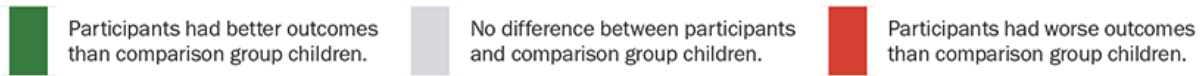
Quality Pre-K  
Programs



# Quality Pre-K Programs

**Figure 1**  
**Impacts of Preschool at School Entry**

Each box represents a separate evaluation of a preschool program.



Note: Evaluations usually include many measures of child outcomes across different domains. Additional domains not included here are described in the full report.

## Pre-K and Early Childhood

- Advocate for fully funded pre-k either by formula or increase in early childhood allotment.
- Advocate for transportation funding for pre-k.
- Advocate for pre-k facility funding.



06

Charter School  
Accountability &  
Opposition to Vouchers

# Charter School Funding

Charter schools and traditional schools should be held to the same high standards while serving all students in their communities.

Charter schools were founded on the promise of fostering locally developed, innovative approaches to educating children, especially with our most at-risk students. Some charter schools remain true to this vision. Unfortunately, for many Texas communities, the rapid expansion of charter schools has resulted in taxpayer inefficiencies, unequal access for students, and a parallel system of publicly funded schools.



**Charter Schools**



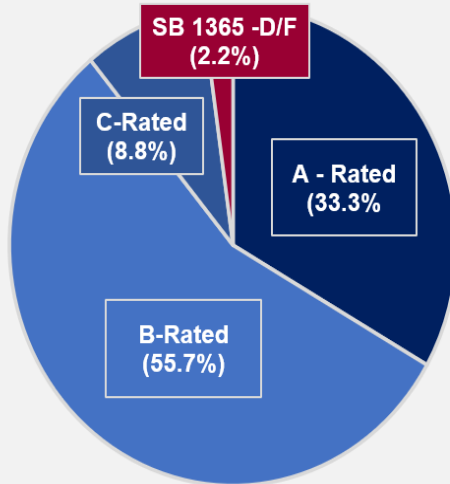
**School Districts**

**Charter schools receive more than \$1,100 per student in additional funding and have fewer regulations compared with neighboring urban and suburban district schools.**

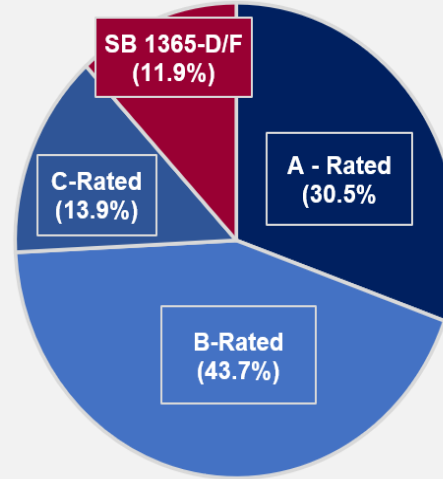
# Charter School Ratings

**School Districts and Charters – A-F Ratings:** For the 2021/22 school year, standard accountability school districts outperformed standard accountability charters based upon TEA’s academic accountability rating system. In comparison to charters, 14.8% more school districts earned academic ratings of A or B. In addition, only 2.2% of school districts received SB1365-D/F ratings, while 11.9% of charters received SB1365-D/F ratings.

School Districts: 2022 A-F Ratings

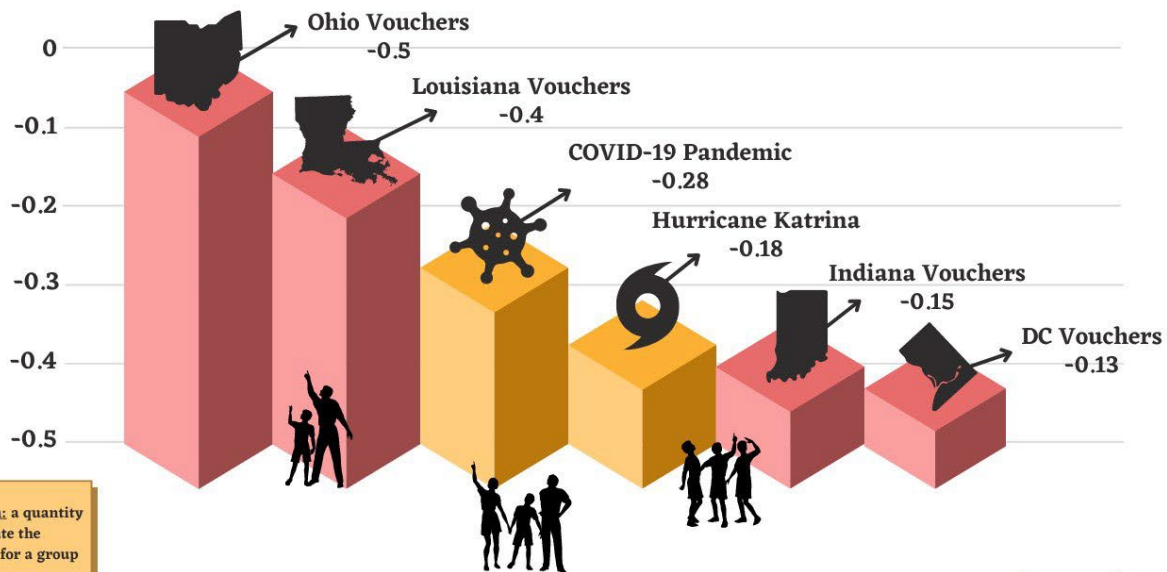


Charters: 2022 A-F Ratings



# Vouchers

## Voucher Impacts on Student Outcomes As Harmful as Natural Disasters (Measured in Standard Deviation)



**Standard Deviation:** a quantity calculated to indicate the extent of deviation for a group as a whole.



## Vouchers & Charter Schools

- Advocate for aligned and equal accountability measures compared to school district
- Advocate for more freedom for school districts to offer schools of choice and unconventional learning methods such as virtual learning
- Advocate against waste involved with two duplicate school systems.
- Advocate for school districts to receive the same basic allotment as charter schools

<b>WHICH OPTION OFFERS CHOICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY?</b>		
A comparison of district schools, charter schools and private school vouchers		
	Public Schools	Private School Vouchers
Required to accept all students	✓	✗
Require annual assessment aligned to state curriculum to track student progress	✓	✗
Reporting and accountability for use of public funds	✓	✗
Public reporting and accountability for student performance	✓	✗
Require closure or state management for multiple years of low performance	✓	✗
Comply with federal protections for students with disabilities	✓	✗

## District Efforts



# LEADing for Legislative Impact

*Presented by LEAD Denton*

**April 27th**  
5:00-7:00 pm

**Denton High School Auditorium**  
1007 Fulton St  
Denton, Tx 76201

Educators make up one of the largest voting bases in the state of Texas. Positive legislative change is possible and influenced by our votes as educators. In order to better understand the implications of the upcoming legislative season, we invite you to take part in the first of a series of informational sessions to deepen your understanding of educational policy. The topics discussed in these sessions will equip stakeholders to answer questions like:

- How do I advocate for change?
- Where do I find information on local and state policy?
- How do I influence policy?

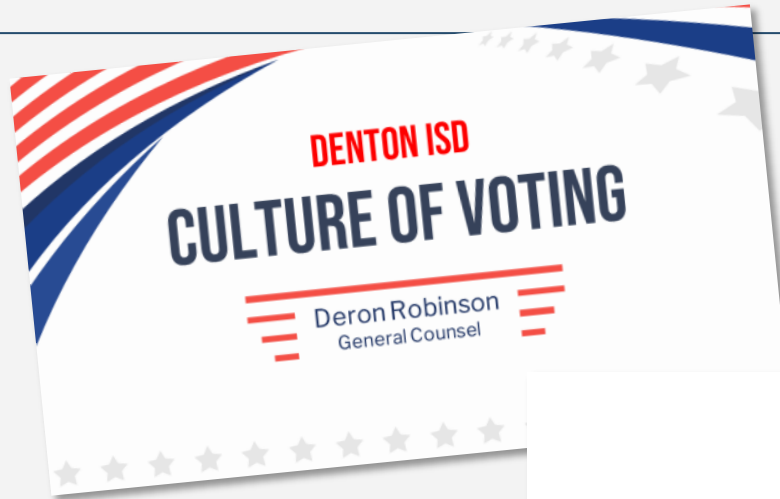


**LEADing for Legislative Impact**  
Session 2 - July 20th  
6:30-8:00 pm

**Denton ISD Central Office Board Room**  
1307 N. Locust St  
Denton, Tx 76201



## District Efforts



Educators will prepare students to be thoughtful, active citizens who have an appreciation for the basic values of our state and national heritage and who can understand and productively function in a free enterprise society.

**TEC 4.001: PUBLIC EDUCATION MISSION & OBJECTIVES, OBJECTIVE 5**