



2025 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Reform ADA Funding Formula

Advocate for a revised ADA funding formula to better address the unique challenges faced by districts in South Texas, such as United ISD, which serve high populations of low-income and bilingual students. **A shift towards an enrollment-based model** or an increase in funding weight for these student groups would more accurately reflect their needs, including challenges related to poverty, language barriers, and absenteeism due to health or family circumstances. This reform is essential for ensuring equitable resources and support for students most in need. **HB 236 (Landgraf) HB 683 (Bernal) SB 233 (Johnson) HB 276 (Bucy) HB 1157 (Hinojosa)**

Fund and Strengthen Anti-Vaping Programs

The vaping epidemic has significantly affected our district, leading to an increase in student placements at alternative campuses following the passage of HB114. To effectively combat this issue, we urge consideration of legislation that funds comprehensive anti-vaping initiatives, focusing on both prevention campaigns and intervention programs. These efforts are crucial to curbing the rise in vaping and supporting healthier student outcomes.

Fund School-Based Mental Health Centers

With rising concerns around vaping addiction, suicidal ideation, and threats, our district has been forced to secure limited funding to provide mental health support through Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) and Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselors (LCDCs). **However, these resources are insufficient for a student population of nearly 41,000. We urge the creation of formula-based funding for school-based mental health centers, ensuring sustainable support that considers both community resources and the growing mental health needs of students.** **HB 1728 (Plesa) SB 176 (Menéndez) HB 462 (Guillen)**

A-F Accountability System

The delayed and incomplete release of A-F accountability data by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for the second year has created significant challenges for school districts. Without full data, districts cannot make informed decisions on budgeting, staffing, and resource allocation, nor can they adequately identify and address student learning gaps, which could have lasting effects on academic performance and post-secondary readiness. We urge intervention in the ongoing lawsuit related to the A-F system and advocate for a phased approach to accountability changes. Implementing a hold-harmless policy in the initial year, followed by a gradual increase in expectations, would allow schools time to adapt without facing unfair penalties. This strategy would promote a more equitable, transparent, and sustainable accountability framework for all Texas districts

Implement Service-Based Funding for Special Education Program Services

UISD serves approximately 10,000 students in special populations, including those needing services for Dyslexia, Section 504, and RtI, which require extensive evaluations under state and federal mandates. Meeting these requirements places a substantial financial burden on the district. To ensure compliance and provide high-quality services, it is essential to implement funding based on the actual services provided to special education students. Prior legislation proposed service-based funding reforms, including a per-evaluation allotment and a tiered funding model based on service intensity. **Adopting such measures would ensure that districts receive adequate resources to support individualized student needs while meeting legal obligations.** **SB 149 (Menéndez) SB 568 (Bettancourt)**

Address the Local Optional Homestead Exemption (LOHE) in the School Finance Formula

Independent school districts (ISDs) that offer a Local Optional Homestead Exemption (LOHE) and are not subject to recapture face unique funding challenges, impacting over 760,000 students across 120+ districts. Currently, recapture districts offering LOHE are compensated through a formula cap, creating an inequitable system for non-recapture districts that offer the same exemption. **We propose a supplemental appropriation and a permanent solution to fully recognize the LOHE in the school finance formula.**

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has a surplus of over \$1 billion in Foundation School Program funding for the 2023-2024 school year. A one-time funding recognition of 50% of the LOHE, as allowed by statute, would cost approximately \$150 million, with United ISD's share being \$6 million. Cypress Fairbanks ISD, which faces a \$34 million impact, is also advocating for this change alongside their legislative delegation. TEA has exercised similar provisions in 2000 and 2009 without legislative action, demonstrating precedent. Furthermore, SB2 (88-2) passed after the deadline for districts to repeal their LOHEs for the 2023 tax year, highlighting the urgency for immediate and long-term relief. **HB 152 (Raymond) HB 558 (Schofield) HB 1153 (Hull)**

Full-Day Funding for Pre-Kinder

SB 163 (Menéndez) HB 693 (Bernal) SB 42 (Zaffirini)

Funding for Special Education Evaluations

HB 1192 (Hinojosa) SB 555 (Johnson)

Increase Special Education Transportation Rate

HB 1542 (Raymond)