
Information Alert: Education Across the Nation

1 message

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EQUITY CENTER
*Advocating for the Fair Treatment
of Texas Taxpayers & Children*

Information Alert

Education Across the Nation

Texas Monthly recently ran a piece in which they graded Governor Rick Perry on his performance in eight areas critical to the state: Transparency and Ethics; Criminal Justice; Economic Development; the Environment; Public Health; Transportation; Higher Education; and of course, Public Education.

[Grading Rick Perry - Public Education](#)

Texas Monthly | July 16, 2014

State leaders face no greater challenge than a budget shortfall, and the hole left in the budget by the Great Recession was one for the ages: \$27 billion at the beginning of the 2011 session. With a new Republican super-majority in the House, tax increased and other forms of revenue were out, so massive cuts were inevitable. As one of the biggest pieces of the budget pie, public education was a fat target. Still, there was some good news: the state had roughly \$6 billion available in the Rainy Day Fun, which is set aside for a crisis. By nearly anyone's standard, it was definitely pouring in Texas. But the governor insisted that it wasn't.



A recent *New York Times* article explains how Texas' commitment to fiscal restraint damaged our education system. Julian Vasquez Heilig, an education researcher and professor at the University of Texas at Austin, said, "The achievement of Texas students will continue to drop if the state does not prioritize school funding." Adding, "the real issue is that we need to decide if we want a Cadillac education or a Kia education."

[Commitment in Texas to Fiscal Restraint Adds Burden for Education](#)

The New York Times | July 10, 2014

Stacked up against other states, Texas public schools have consistently ranked among the bottom five nationally in per-student spending. And even with a growing population of economically disadvantaged and English-language learning students, some performance measures are on the upswing.



On Tuesday, *The Atlantic* ran an article by Meredith Broussard regarding why poor schools cannot win at standardized testing. She says, "This story is about what happened when I tried to use big data to help repair my local public school. I failed. And the reasons why I failed have everything to do with why the American system of standardized testing will never succeed."

[Why Poor Schools Can't Win at Standardized Testing](#)

The Atlantic | July 15, 2014

You hear a lot nowadays about the magic of big data. Getting hold of the right numbers can increase revenue, improve decision-making, or help you find a mate--or so the thinking goes. In 2009, U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan told a crowd of education researchers: "I am a deep believer in the power of data to drive our decisions. Data gives us the roadmap to reform. It tells us where we are, where we need to go, and who is most at risk."

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