

# 2023 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



## HOW LAWMAKERS CAN SUPPORT SUCCESS FOR TEXAS STUDENTS

### 1 Support legislation to facilitate effective and efficient operations for public education

- Increase the basic allotment to \$7,000 and support indexing the basic allotment for the increasing cost of education.
- Eliminate unfunded mandates and provide new funding above the basic allotment for all new mandates.
- End the use of rising property values assessed through school districts to fund state responsibilities outside of education. (Foundation School Program: State share – 54%; Local share – 46%)
- Allow local control of tax rate and meaningful discretion of local tax dollars, including allowing districts to restore lost funding due to compression by accessing Voter Approved Tax Rate Election (VATRE) funding without an election.
- Support the ability of taxing entities to belong to organizations and to have representative educator and taxpayer voices in the legislative process.
- Oppose the transfer of public funds to private entities through vouchers or voucher schemes (e.g., education savings accounts, tuition tax credits, etc).
- Continue to advocate for additional funding for increases in the Existing Debt Allotment (EDA), the Instructional Facilities Allotment (IFA), and the New Instructional Facilities Allotment (NIFA) so that districts can adequately fund new building projects for growth.
- Add support for debt service, including protection from negative effects of increases in the Homestead Exemption and Additional State Aid for Homestead Exemption.
- Oppose restrictions to local taxing entities related to bond elections including the requirement of a supermajority to pass a bond.
- Simplify bond ballot language to be more transparent and less confusing for voters.
- Support funding based on student enrollment.
- Revamp the formula to determine fast-growth school district status in order to address Fast Growth Formula discrepancies between small and large districts.
- Exclude the Fast Growth Schools Allotment from offsetting Formula Transition Grant revenue.
- Fully fund special allotments, such as the Fast Growth Schools Allotment, the Formula Transition Grant, and the Instructional Materials Allotment.
- Support legislation that enhances the recruitment and retention of highly qualified educators and oppose additional barriers such as the edTPA Certification exam.
- Provide funding, outside of the school finance formula, for a minimum of one police officer per school for every school in the State.

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### 2 Support effective and equitable state accountability systems

- Reform the A-F reporting system for the 2023-2025 biennium.
- Support a state academic accountability system that engages both state and local measures to more accurately assess the effectiveness of a school or district.
- Ensure state assessments are appropriate in length, frequency, and content.

### 3 Support legislation that leads to the transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness of the charter school system

- Establish parameters for the growth of charter schools that include reporting requirements to allow local community schools the ability to properly plan for enrollment fluctuations.
- Oppose the suspension of municipal zoning requirements and the granting of eminent domain for charter schools.
- Support any mechanism that requires any entity receiving state aid for education to be held accountable for the use of that money and allow for transparency in reporting.
- Require charter schools to treat student discipline infractions the same as community public schools, including requiring the provision of a disciplinary alternative education program and not allowing students to be expelled for discretionary discipline infractions (e.g., truancy and dress code).

### 4 Support legislation to address Teacher Retirement System (TRS) needs

- Advocate for the timely release of sufficient healthcare data from TRS to districts that request it.
- Advocate loosening restrictions on allowable hours to work in a school district for certain retirees.
- As promised, provide financial stability for retired educators by adequately funding the TRS pension and insurance programs to provide long-term sustainability.

**PROUD PAST. BOLD FUTURE. WE ARE EMS ISD.**