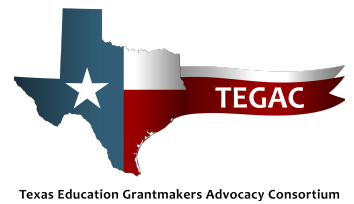


# SCHOOL FINANCE



*OUR GROWING TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM IS UNDERFUNDED. AS LOCAL SCHOOL TAXES INCREASE, STATE FUNDING DECREASES, LEAVING PER STUDENT FUNDING FLAT. THE LACK OF SUBSTANTIAL STATE INVESTMENT OVER TIME HAS MADE SCHOOLS OVER-RELIANT ON PRIVATE PHILANTHROPY TO FILL THE STATE'S DUTY TO FUND PUBLIC EDUCATION.*

Credible data around school finance is difficult to collect and even more difficult to easily understand and analyze. The funding formulas are exceedingly complex, and the size of the Texas education system magnifies the challenge with more than \$40 billion spent each year across 1,200 school districts and 5 million students. Lawmakers and other policymakers, public education advocates, and other interested education stakeholders (including Texas families and taxpayers) need credible information on school finance that is easily digestible. This data should address the needs of an equitable and adequate education as well as how to most effectively spend the state's resources.

In 2016, TEGAC commissioned the Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPP) to partner with Dr. Michael Marder at the University of Texas to combine his longitudinal research on student performance with their expertise on school finance. Together, they explored trends and correlations in the school finance data between various investments we make in our schools and the outcomes the education system produces for our children.

The first phase of this analysis focused on a longitudinal analysis of how school districts absorbed the legislative cuts made in 2011 and was published in late 2017. This work builds on TEGAC's initial investment in a 2012 Children At Risk study that looked at the immediate impact of the 2011 cuts in Texas public schools.

In January 2018, TEGAC hired polling experts Baseline & Associates, Inc. to assess Texas voters' appetites for increasing school funding. Further, in 2018 - 2019 TEGAC is partnering with CPPP, the Commit Partnership, Metro 8 Chambers of Commerce, Texas Association of Business, education associations, school districts, and other traditional and unexpected education stakeholders to build a "big tent" of high-quality, politically relevant data, shared messaging, and coordinated activities among a diverse array of groups to create broad consensus around meaningful school finance reform policy challenges and solutions.

Learn more about our 2018 research findings and 2019 policy recommendations on the second page.

**TEXAS EDUCATION GRANTMAKERS ADVOCACY CONSORTIUM**

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# SCHOOL FINANCE

## 2018 RESEARCH FINDINGS

### CONSEQUENCES OF THE TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING HOLE OF 2011-16

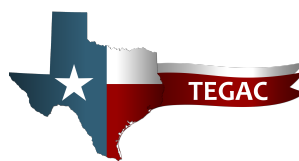
- Education spending in the state of Texas remains below pre-recession levels of 2008 for students in every grade, and services for students with the highest needs saw the greatest declines.
- A \$3.2-billion-dollar investment is required to bring 2016 funding up to 2008 pre-recession levels.
- Elementary schools with the greatest percentage of low-income students were spending 21 percent less on students who fall behind and 40 percent less on bilingual education than in 2008.

### SCHOOL FINANCE OPINION POLL

- 71 percent favor increasing the state share in order to provide property tax relief.
- 85 percent of Texans favor a requirement that local education tax dollars sent to the state must be used for public education, and not used to fill other budget shortfalls or fund other programs.
- 68 percent of Texans favor increasing the state's share of public education dollars from the current 38 percent to 50 percent.

## 2019 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase the state's share of public education funding in Texas, particularly for our highest need student populations.
- Require local education tax dollars sent to the state be used for public education, and not used to fill other budget shortfalls or fund other programs.
- Invest in a skilled and dynamic workforce to achieve the state's 60x30TX workforce goals.



Texas Education Grantmakers Advocacy Consortium

Contact: Jennifer Esterline, 512-796-4530 or [jennifermesterline@gmail.com](mailto:jennifermesterline@gmail.com), [tegac.org](http://tegac.org), @TEGACTX