



TSTA NEWS

TEXAS STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION 8716 N. Mopac Expressway, Austin, TX 78759 • 877-ASK-TSTA • www.tsta.org • Fax 512-486-7049

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 15, 2018

Contact: Clay Robison
512.476.5355, ext. 1313
cell: 512.535.8994

TSTA: Letter grades are a way to blame children and educators for the failure of state leaders

Noel Candelaria, president of the Texas State Teachers Association, released the following statement:

“We haven’t seen all the school district grades yet, but we remain strongly opposed to the new A-F grading system. It is based largely on STAAR scores, a misleading, incomplete way to gauge student success, and it was designed by the governor and the legislative majority to pass the blame for their own failures to children and educators.

“This governor and this legislative majority have repeatedly refused to adequately fund public schools. Texas now spends \$2,300 less per student per year than the national average, and money makes a difference in education. It makes a difference in class sizes, the quality of facilities, teacher retention and the availability of bilingual and special education programs. The importance of these factors is magnified by the fact that 60 percent of public school students in Texas are from low-income families and many have limited English skills.

“As many as half of the teachers who will enter the profession this fall won’t be in the classroom five years from now because the state refuses to pay them professional salaries. And four of every 10 teachers in the classroom this year will be taking second jobs to make financial ends meet for their families, according to a recent TSTA survey on teacher moonlighting and morale.

“Poor school funding also deprived thousands of special education students of the services to which they were entitled by federal law, following the placement of an illegal cap on special education enrollments. The cap has been lifted, but the funding problem persists.

“Instead of addressing these and other critical needs of our students, our state leaders are trying to hide their own failings by assigning arbitrary, misleading letter grades to under-funded school districts.”