



TSTA NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 26, 2021

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Texas falls farther behind most states in two key indicators of education funding

Despite increased education funding from House Bill 3, the 2019 school finance law, Texas this year fell farther behind the national average in two key indicators, per-student spending and teacher pay, the National Education Association's latest report on state-by-state education spending shows.

Texas now trails the national average in per-student funding per average daily attendance (ADA) by almost \$3,300, NEA estimates, dropping Texas from 37th to 39th among the states and the District of Columbia. Texas lags behind the national average in average teacher pay by more than \$7,400, falling from 27th to 28th.

"As we have said before, House Bill 3 was only a down payment on real school finance reform in Texas, and now only two years later, we are falling farther behind," Texas State Teachers Association President Ovidia Molina said.

"As these figures illustrate, the Legislature needs to do more than honor its commitment to House Bill 3 and pretend that is enough. Lawmakers must increase their commitment to school funding and ensure that all Texas school children and educators have the resources they need for classroom success."

She added: "During this session, as our schools are still struggling to emerge safely from this pandemic, legislators also must appropriate all of the almost \$18 billion in federal stimulus money allocated to Texas as additional funding for school districts. Our school children cannot afford for them to leave it sitting on the table or use it to replace state education funding. That is not what Congress intended."

After a jump of almost 14 percent in per-student spending in Texas for the 2019-20 school year, the first year following the enactment of House Bill 3, this year's increase was much less, only about 1.5 percent, NEA reported, based on data provided by the Texas Education Agency.

Texas funding per ADA increased from \$11,770 in 2019-20 to an estimated \$11,947 in 2020-21, while the national average in ADA spending increased from \$14,602 to \$15,240, or about 4.37 percent, almost three times Texas' rate.

Average teacher pay in Texas increased from \$57,090 in 2019-20 to \$57,641 this year, an increase of about 1 percent, NEA reported. The national average increased from \$64,133 to \$65,090, an increase of 1.49 percent.

The Texas State Teachers Association is an affiliate of the National Education Association.