



TSTA NEWS

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TSTA: We will do everything we can to kill vouchers

Texas State Teachers Association President Ovidia Molina released the following statement:

Gov. Abbott is determined to pass a taxpayer-funded voucher bill in this next special session, and we educators are just as determined to convince legislators to kill it. Our public schools are under-funded, and the educators who work in them are underpaid. The governor's and the Legislature's constitutional responsibility are to those public schools, not to political donors who want to use tax dollars to promote and enrich private schools, without any public accountability.

The governor apparently is seeking an education savings account, or voucher, program similar to what the Senate tried to pass during the regular session last spring. The Legislative Budget Board said that bill would have cost taxpayers \$1 billion a year within a few years, with the cost continuing to rise — all to enrich private schools at the expense of public schools.

While the governor remains focused on vouchers, the average spending per student in Texas public schools is more than \$4,000 below the national average and our teachers are paid more than \$7,700 less than their peers are nationally. Vouchers will bleed these schools even more of the resources their students need. And most Texas students will remain in public schools, while vouchers will provide a taxpayer-funded subsidy for many parents who can already afford to send their children to private school but have been waiting for a government handout.

Just to be clear about this, education savings accounts, which the governor is proposing, are a form of voucher, regardless of how voucher proponents and the governor may try to sell them.