TSTA NEWS

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TSTA: Once again, Greg Abbott claims to have discovered public education in an election year, but don't be fooled

Texas State Teachers Association President Linda Estrada issued the following statement:

Greg Abbott, the most anti-public education governor Texas has had in many years, has announced new funding that he claims will strengthen the Texas teacher workforce. Don't be fooled.

The announcement, coming during early voting and only days before Election Day, is not designed to help teachers or students, but to help Greg Abbott get reelected against a genuine pro-public education opponent, Gina Hinojosa.

The Abbott administration's support of public schools is among the worst in the country. Last year's increase in public education funding, about which Abbott continues to brag, was the first significant school finance bill in six years and didn't even keep up with inflation.

Consequently, many school districts are cutting programs and closing campuses as they struggle with budget deficits. The average teacher pay in Texas is about $8,500 less than the national average, and Texas' average per-student expenditure based on average daily attendance (ADA) is almost $5,000 less than the national average. No wonder there is a teacher shortage.

To make matters worse, Abbott rammed a private school voucher bill through the Legislature that is costing taxpayers as much as $1 billion this year and, if not repealed, will soon be costing public schools billions of dollars a year.

Once again, Abbott claims to have discovered public education in an election year, but he has had 12 years to support our teachers and students and has failed miserably. It is past time for a change in the governor's office.

The future of our students and our state depends on it.