

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Public Education  
For HB 11

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Hearing Date: April 4, 2023 8:00 AM

Sylvia Campbell  
self, retired  
The Woodlands, TX

Dear Members of the Public Education Committee,  
I am writing to support an increase in the basic allotment for our public schools. This will go a long way toward improving our schools that serve the children of Texas. Our teachers have been under a lot of pressure of late, and they deserve raises. The best way for Texas to be competitive in the world is through education of our people. Please support HB 11 (or HB 100) to improve our public schools.  
Thank you,  
Sylvia Campbell

Laura Weaver  
self/retired  
The Woodlands, TX

Please support HB 11. Our Texas public schools are suffering from a lack of funding and our teachers are leaving the profession in droves - in part, because their expenses have been rising, their supplies are dwindling, and their salaries have not kept up with rising costs.

Our school districts and teachers deserve additional funding for both the basic allotment—the amount funded per student—and for teacher and staff salary increases. We are #49 in the nation for school funding. Our schools are not failing; our state is failing to fund our schools. Support more funding in the basic allotment and for teacher and staff salaries.

Stacy Roberts, Teacher  
Self  
Cedar Park, TX

As someone who took on a teaching position to fill a hole in my childrens' High School, I do not want the state telling my district they can only raise my pay every 5 years. I went through the effort to get certified. I took a massive pay cut and make less in my late 40s than I did at 25. I already don't make an appropriate pay for my experience, and this bills sees to make it even worse. We are struggling to get enough teachers due to lack of pay, compression of pay scale, let alone horrible working conditions. Do not make it harder.

Elizabeth Paulette  
Retired  
New Braunfels, TX

As HB 11 goes to hearing, I would like for the committee to consider retired teachers that need to go back the classroom, but currently are not being hired because districts have to pay a hefty amount towards TRS surcharges. Many teachers that decide to go back to the classroom often times do this because they have become widowed or a family member may become ill and they need to go back to work to be able to survive, but districts will not hire then because it is very expensive. The state should provide a fund to partially compensate districts that rehire retired teachers. Thank you, for taking the time to read my message.

Theresa Williams, Superintendent  
Plano ISD  
Plano, TX

Plano ISD opposes HB 11 because it allows teacher contracts to be broken without reason and removes local control by setting requirements on how much funding must be spent on teacher raises.

Carolyn Mitchell, Rev.  
Texas Women for Justice  
CONROE, TX

Our school districts and teachers deserve additional funding for both the basic allotment—the amount funded per student—and for teacher and staff salary increases. We are #49 in the nation for school funding. Our schools are not failing; our state is failing to fund our schools. Support more funding in the basic allotment and for teacher and staff salaries. I encourage you to support HB 11 and HB 100.

Whitney Broughton  
TASB Governmental Realitions  
Austin, TX

TASB, TACS, TEPSA, and TASA are testifying on HB 11 and offer the following comments regarding some provisions that may limit the ability of schools and teachers to tailor the education they provide to their local students. This bill removes SBOE oversight from SBEC's rulemaking process and allows a fully appointed board to determine the rules that govern the oversight, certification, and discipline of educators in the state. Removing SBOE oversight of a fully appointed body like SBEC weakens the ability of voters to have their elected representatives oversee the rulemaking process. The bill prohibits uncompensated continuing education or other training for classroom teachers beyond the hours required on January 1, 2023, which raises many questions. Training required by whom? Is this a moratorium on state-required training for teachers? Does this conflict with state adopted teacher standards? Will districts have to offset time or compensate staff for state-required trainings? For the past three years, our organizations have negotiated the terms under which a teacher cannot be sanctioned for contract abandonment. This culminated in 19 TAC §249.17, effective March 3, 2022. HB 11 departs from this rule by adding that a teacher has good cause to abandon their contract if they need to "forgo employment during a period of required employment under the teacher's contract." Such a broad reason for abandonment will essentially mean that all abandonment is supported by good cause. While we acknowledge there are situations where a teacher must leave their students, loosening the current abandonment rules will further exacerbate the teacher shortage. While we agree that phonics instruction is the best way to teach reading for most students, some students benefit from different methods of instruction. Mandating methodology prohibits teachers from using this method for a student who learns differently and diminishes the role of a professional educator. The bill proposes increased allotments for teachers, but this will likely lead to uneven distribution of funds to teachers across the state and to restricting schools from directing resources to areas of greatest need for their individual communities. Increasing the basic allotment is always the most fair and efficient way to distribute additional funding to school districts with the added benefit of automatically increasing compensation for teachers. The bill creates a mentor allotment cap for up to 40 mentors regardless of the district's size. High turnover rates and higher numbers of novice teachers will lead to funding these mentors locally. Our organizations believe partnership is required to ensure student success. This is why we respectfully ask that HB 11 seek to relieve the burdens felt by teachers by raising pay through the basic allotment, ensuring the longevity of the Teacher Retirement System, and decreasing the many mandates and reporting required of teachers.

Lisa Gertsch  
self  
Spring, TX

I very much support this bill! Please vote yes!

Samantha Deramo  
Self, elementary teacher  
Houston, TX

Please MODIFY HB 11.

My name is Samantha Deramo, and I am a taxpayer in Houston and request a significant increase to the Basic Allotment. I appreciate the focus on an increase in the Basic Allotment and teacher compensation. However, more is needed to provide funding for districts to cover the salary increase for all positions and to account for inflation since 2019. With a \$32 billion surplus, there is no better time than now for the State to fund our public schools adequately.

L Quentin Dixon  
Self/concerned citizen  
Spring, TX

Please support HB 11. Our teachers and schools deserve better pay, and our students deserve the investment of adequate funds to provide for a high-quality education to fuel future economic innovation in Texas.

Kim Bruch, Teacher  
Self/teachers  
Lockhart, TX

I am for an allotment which needs to be \$900

Regina Jones  
American Federation of Teachers (Cy Fair ISD teacher)  
Cypress, TX

I am a Texas Special Ed para who is obtaining my teaching degree and I am lobbying for public school raises for paras and teachers.

Wendy McRoberts  
Self  
Danbury, TX

Texas public schools are CRITICAL to rural education where most of our kids stay local, attend trade schools and take advantage of opportunities in the Gulf Coast Petro/Chem region.

Schools funding should be increased to allow more students to start technical programs in high school through dual credit options that offered my kids the opportunity to graduate early with college credit despite the limited courses available at their own school.

Texas kids deserve to be educated in their OWN COMMUNITIES, not sacrificing teachers and resources for a select few schools that aren't governed by the same standards.

Faye Holland  
self  
Austin, TX

It is imparitve to fully fun our Texas schools for future Texas. Stop diverting dollars to other expenses. Our kids need us. Each student needs to be treated with the same respect that students get in relation to the money that spent on them in other states. Texas can be the best in education instead of one of the lowest. Help the kids!

Amy Woodell

PTA

Austin, TX

I support a teacher pay raise and an increase in the basic allotment. I like the spirit of this bill. However, \$50 more per student will not keep up with inflation. \$455 teacher pay raise seems far too little, especially considering all the extra \$ in the state's budget.

priscilla quijas, ms

self/retired

houston, TX

Our education system needs a complete overhaul. We need to better prepare our children because they are the future. We need to teach our children finances so they can make our economy thrive. We need to teach our children better coping skills for better mental health and so many other important skills so they can create a stronger and happier nation. We need to pay our teachers , that are now risking their lives, higher wages to attract more knowledgeable candidates. We need the input and involvement of many great minds to make positive changes. Our NATION needs to increase education funding so schools have what they need to teach modern and cutting edge subjects so our Nation can survive and save this world. Education is where we need to invest!

Chris Donofrio

Self

The Woodlands, TX

I strongly support HB 11.

I urge you to pass it out of committee.

Teachers are becoming scarce. While there are many reasons, a key reason is inadequate pay. Teachers are not realistically compensated for the level of education they've achieved to become teachers. Unless this issue is properly addressed Texas will continue to see teachers leaving their jobs in favor of those that pay better, and teachers moving to other states that pay teachers more than we do.

We expect much from our teachers. This includes preparing future generations to be well-educated, critical thinkers. Unfortunately, political polarization and the state's increasingly intrusive role in determining what shall be taught, how it shall be taught, and which books will be banned without cause, prevent our teachers from achieving the above expectations. When I see what our teachers, and librarians as well, face day-in and day-out I wonder why so many just don't leave the profession.

HB 11 doesn't address political polarization or the state's increasingly intrusive role. It does, however, address the fact that Texas teachers are underpaid. There is no fiscal analysis for the bill. I believe the monetary values specified are too small. At a minimum they fail to account for inflation. For example, the value of \$80 cited on line 16, p1, effective around August 2009, should now be \$112.

I request all monetary values for compensation listed in the bill be increased by 50% to 60% for teachers without certification or less than 5 years of experience. I request that all monetary values for compensation be increased by at least 75% for teachers with certification and more than 5 years of experience.

Face it, we need to create a culture where someone wants to become a teacher because we value teachers and the work we expect them to do. We don't know how many college students wanted to become teachers but didn't due to the low pay.

This is a problem we can solve. This is an issue we can address and be honest with ourselves about the appropriate response. We need to encourage a culture that values the worth of teachers at least as much as other professionals such as engineers, doctors, and highly skilled blue-collar workers. We must always keep in mind that it was teachers that provided the education to such people.

And yes, teaching is an all-year job. While students get breaks during the year, teachers are still on the job.

Let's pay teachers what they are worth because they contribute so much the Public Good.

Let's pass HB 11 out of committee. Let's make it law.

Respectfully,

Chris J. Donofrio

Linda Evans, Ms

Self

Conroe, TX

Please vote YES on HB 11

Increase the allotment so we can Increase salaries for teachers and other staff by at least \$80/month, and make other changes to increase the salary schedule for teachers, librarians, counselors, and nurses. These hard working people deserve a raise!!

Amanda Matasick  
Self, Executive Assistant, Parent  
Humble, TX

Our kids deserve to attend fully funded schools. Our kids with specialized needs deserve to have the specialists that they require. Please fund our public schools!

Kate Greer  
The Commit Partnership  
Dallas, TX

Cultivating a highly effective teacher workforce is the best strategy to ensure all Texas students are equipped for lifelong academic and career success. Research consistently finds that teachers are the most important in-school factors affecting student academic performance, and all students deserve access to an effective and well-prepared teacher.

HB 11 offers strategic reforms related to educator preparation, compensation, and working conditions that we believe will result in overall growth in teacher quality and retention, which in turn will result in meaningful growth in student educational outcomes.

Notably, these strategic reforms include:

- 1) A focus on rigorous teacher pathways, including high-quality teacher residencies, which stand to not only strengthen the profession (candidates more likely to stay in the classroom, and likely to be more diverse) but also strengthen student learning and outcomes.
- 2) Support and incentivization of school system engagement in strategic compensation by expanding the Teacher Incentive Allotment (HB 3; 86R). HB 11's expansion of this allotment (proposing additional funding for designated teachers and a new "acknowledged" designation tier) provides more robust access to the benefits of TIA without sacrificing fidelity of the overall program. We encourage the Committee to continue to find ways to increase participation in the program, particularly for rural school systems with less capacity, via increased technical assistance grant programs and by providing a greater access to actionable data.

Elise Sheridan  
Self  
Webster, TX

Please keep funding public schools. We need more money towards our children's education. Please also vote no to private school vouchers. My son is in public schools and benefits from an IEP. Please do not take funding away. We need this for his livelihood and education. Thank you.

Cindy Fountain, Ms  
Self - retail merchandiser  
Cleburne, TX

I support this bill. Anything we can do to support our teachers and students is important and needed! Thank you.

Becky Calahan  
Philanthropy Advocates  
Austin, TX

### HB 11 Supports Teachers & Incentivizes Proven Teacher Preparation Models

As filed, HB 11 sends a strong signal that Texas philanthropy and the field have long known – teachers are the single-most important in-school factor for improving student academic performance. Building on the work of the Teacher Vacancy Task Force that Governor Abbott appointed, the Legislature has several key opportunities to address both the short- and longer-term staffing challenges our schools face and to recruit and retain the most effective educators possible. We appreciate the efforts made in HB 11 to advance many policies that would support our teacher workforce, and ultimately our students and communities.

Specifically, HB 11 addresses compensation of Texas educators through requiring a portion of the proposed increases to the basic allotment to go towards current teacher salaries and to adjustments to the current minimum salary schedule to distinguish between a teacher's certification route in addition to their years of service.

Philanthropy Advocates commissioned research by the University of Houston to examine how teacher certification is applied across Texas. This research reinforced that certification and preparation routes do impact attrition rates. In Texas, a substantial number of newly hired teachers will exit the profession within their first 5 years of teaching. Research has shown that high attrition rates are tightly linked to new teachers feeling unprepared to enter the classroom as the teacher of record. For the 2021-2021 school year, 20% of newly hired teachers held no teaching certificate. We believe the proposed HB 11 changes to the minimum salary schedule is an important factor in recruiting and retaining high-quality educators.

Further, HB 11 supports a proven workforce preparation model known as residency – common to many fields and professions. HB 11 would ensure Texas teachers had experiences in the classroom before becoming a full-time teacher of record, increasing the likelihood of these educators staying in the classroom longer and having a greater impact on student learning outcomes.

Further, HB 11 would ensure we are prioritizing our most vulnerable students by ensuring certification fees for special education and bilingual credentials are not prohibitive to teachers serving these students.

HB 11 sends a strong signal that Texas teachers should be valued professionals and the state is willing to invest in both them and their families. We appreciate that HB 11 extends supports to teachers such as making Pre-K available for their own children. We would like to see all school district personnel benefit from this Pre-K availability too.

HB 11 is a comprehensive approach to ensuring our Texas teacher workforce is supported and prepared to meet the needs of our students.

Frances Romero  
Tax payer in Cy-Fair ISD area  
Houston, TX

#### Members:

Please consider raising the basic student allotment to \$900. The \$50 increase currently in this bill would not allow enough money for Cy-Fair ISD to offer a pay raise to its 8,000 non-faculty employees (i. e. bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria workers, paraprofessionals, etc.). The cost of inflation has detrimentally affected spending power for school districts. A raise of \$900 in the basic student allotment is CRITICAL in order to sustain our ordinary operations with today's inflation. As a parent of a CFISD graduate and a current CFISD high school Senior, I wholeheartedly ask that members of this Committee please consider amending the \$50 increase to \$900.

Thank you for your attention.

Frances Romero  
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD taxpayer and parent

Tania Tasneem

UBH

Austin, TX

I am Tania Tasneem. Texan born, Pakistani raised, with a little twist of El Paso. I am a proud product of EPISD, UTeach alumna, 8th grade science teacher, and volleyball & track coach at Kealing Middle School in AISD (Go Hornets)! This is my 16th year serving as a classroom teacher and mentor for pre-service and novice teachers. When I gave testimony in September to the joint committee on Public Education and Higher Education, I asked you to focus on teacher retention by ensuring compensation and benefit models support teachers across experience and expertise levels. Sustain and expand practices like the Teacher Incentive Allotment and strategic staffing models that promote high quality residency, mentorship, and differentiated roles for veteran teachers.

It is disheartening to hear about the insult to this profession occurring as you work to improve the state's teacher workforce. The Texas Comptroller says schools need a \$900 increase per student just to keep up with inflation. The House budget proposes \$50 per student. Texas law says our classrooms are due \$1.6B transfer from the Permanent School Fund for books and technology but this budget proposes only \$1B. TEA says school districts are short \$2B for Special Education. The budget includes NO increase at all in SpEd funding. Texas teachers are already paid about \$8,000 a year below the national average. This budget proposes a \$455 a year increase in teacher pay.

In total, the TX House budget is short \$10.6B public schools would need just to maintain current funding.

It's time. It's time to do better for our 5.5 million kids in Texas public schools and invest in teachers, the humans closest to our students. Please make sure the house budget has a significant increase in per-student spending by increasing the basic allotment to account for inflation. At this time with a historic budget surplus, we can and should do better for our 5.5 million kids in Texas public schools and our teachers so that the mental, physical, and emotional loads we carry are valued.

Sandy Brown

Self

Ar, TX

As a constituent in your district, I am asking you to support Rep. Abel Herrero's bipartisan amendment to House Bill 1 that would prohibit the use of state funds for vouchers, education savings accounts, and other similar schemes.

I believe that vouchers are bad for Texas. They have passed in other states and have not been successful. They tend to help only students whose parents can already afford private schools. Students who use vouchers do not see better educational outcomes. Also, they take much-needed money from local neighborhood schools.

Furthermore, private schools are not required to accept voucher students and they are not held to the same accountability standards as public schools.

I do not agree with taxpayer dollars going to private institutions that don't have to play by the same rules as public schools and are not accountable to taxpayers.

I hope you'll support the amendment to HB 1 so we can focus on what's important for public education and not on vouchers.

Jodi Duron, Associate Director

Texas Association of Midsize Schools (TAMS)

Elgin, TX

On behalf of the Texas Association of Midsize Schools, representing nearly 225 public school districts, we are currently "neutral" on this bill, particularly as it relates to the small/midsize formula adjustment and the basic allotment. We support the move to enrollment-based membership funding (from ADA); however, we hope to see a greater increase to the basic allotment to address the growing needs and inflationary costs for all districts. Specific to the small and midsize formula, we recognize and appreciate that the author understands that the current formulas would negatively impact small and midsize districts and is carefully weighing options to ensure changes to the funding formula based on enrollment informs decisions moving forward, for the benefit of small and midsize districts.

David Troiano  
Self-Retired  
Highland Village, TX

I support this bill. It makes sense to me that in order to afford the infrastructure(e.g. classrooms, teachers) schools need a steady predictable income stream that is dependent on the enrollment, not on the attendance.

Laurie Solis  
Self  
Austin, TX

Thank you for proposing an increase in basic allotment. Our state of public education needs investment. Unfortunately \$50/student does NOT keep up with our campus needs, cost of living nor the inflation pressures our community of administrators, teachers, and staff work under every day.

.For my school district specifically, Austin ISD, with 73,384 students, \$50 per student equates to \$3.7 million.

Here's what that looks like in our budget:

- Each 1% raise for teachers and librarians costs about \$2.81 million.
- Each \$1 raise to starting pay for hourly staff, plus adjustments for people earning higher hourly salaries, would cost about \$6.9 million.
- Reducing elementary class size by one student costs about \$2 million.
- A \$1000 stipend for Special Education and Bilingual Teachers costs about \$2 million.
- Adding one counselor to each campus would cost about \$9.7 million.

Students shouldn't have to suffer the consequences of a budget that doesn't provide for their needs. The future of Texas requires investment in our students and the structure that supports our students (teachers, librarians, hourly employees, etc.).

Stephen Miller, CEO  
Self  
Lubbock, TX

Small, rural public-school districts provide the highest quality students for the enterprises with which I have been associated over the past couple of decades. Their teachers need to be paid adequately and siphoning off students with private schools will effectively kill these districts and the communities they are part of.

Christina Sellers, Mrs.  
Self  
Westworth Village, TX

I support raises for public educators including special education service providers like speech therapists, physical therapists, occupational and music therapists. I also support enrollment based funding. According to a 2018 policy brief from the The Center for Education Research and Policy Studies at UTEP, attendance based funding does not have its desired outcome of increasing attendance, but it does widen inequities in our public schools. I oppose attendance based funding and support enrollment based funding.

charlene shafer  
Self  
Cypress, TX

This bill needs to be modified. It will require a \$900 increase in the Basic Allotment just to cover inflation since 2019. We appreciate the attention to increase in the Basic Allotment and Teacher compensation, however, \$50 is almost an insult. It equates to about 0.5% increase for teachers, counselors, librarians, & nurses. Every employee needs a raise. With a \$32 billion surplus, there is no better time than now for the State to fund our public schools.

Arlis Olson  
TXUUJM  
San Antonio, TX

Enrollment based funding instead of attendance based funding is a much fairer financial option.

Jackie Besinger, Mrs  
Self  
Austin, TX

With all due respect I am against this bill.

Although this bill has some good intentions, it is important to note that teachers are in more need for better pay. This bill would have been better off if set strong emphasis on how much a teacher makes depending on factors such as their education level, experience and geographic location.

Cynthia Miller  
Self, voter, taxpayer and Texas resident  
Lubbock, TX

As a taxpayer In Lubbock ISD, please MODIFY HB 11 and HB 100 in Public Education Committee. Both bills include a \$50 increase in the Basic Allotment with a requirement that 50% of the increase be used for salaries for teachers, counselors, librarians, and nurses. I appreciate the focus on an increase in the Basic Allotment and teacher compensation, however, this amount is insufficient to provide funding for districts to cover an increase in salaries for all positions and to account for inflation since 2019. Considering there is a \$32 billion surplus, there is no better time than now for the State to fund our public schools adequately.

Joanna Warren, Deputy Director

Educate Texas

Austin, TX

Educate Texas thanks you for the opportunity to submit public comment HB 11. Teachers are the most important in-school factor affecting student growth, and we believe that all students deserve access to an effective and well-prepared teacher. HB 11 offers strategic reforms related to educator preparation, compensation, and working conditions that we believe will result in overall improvements in teacher quality and retention that will lead to meaningful growth in student educational outcomes.

Many Texas teachers lack the preparation and support needed to succeed. 20% of newly hired teachers held no teaching certificate in the 2021-2022 school year. This lack of preparation correlates with high attrition rates, and many beginning teachers will exit the profession within 5 years. New and underprepared teachers disproportionately teach our most vulnerable student populations, which exacerbates learning and achievement gaps. Further, teacher compensation has not kept pace with inflation and often fails to recognize teacher merit. We commend HB 11's response to teacher workforce challenges through its focus on research and practitioner-backed solutions: rigorous preparation routes, strategic compensation, and additional support.

HB 11's proposed Teacher Residency Partnership Program will expand student access to highly qualified and well-trained educators. When implemented with fidelity, residency programs foster candidates who are more likely to stay in the classroom, have a greater impact on student learning, and are more diverse. HB 11's focus on rigorous preparation not only strengthens the profession but will also strengthen student learning and outcomes.

HB 11 recognizes that increasing compensation for all educators is foundational for both recruitment and retention. Through expansions of the Mentor Program and Teacher Incentive Allotments, more school systems will have the opportunity to strategically compensate and further invest in their teachers. Further, the proposed increase to the Basic Allotment will put additional funds towards teacher pay increases.

HB 11 creates benefits for teachers beyond salary increases by establishing pre-kindergarten eligibility for children of classroom teachers and reimbursing teachers for the cost of certain certification fees. HB 11 prohibits districts from requiring uncompensated training and seeks to examine how teacher time is used by directing Texas Education Agency to provide technical assistance to help schools study the use of staff time, as well as how to refine schedules to streamline job-related duties during work hours.

Cultivating a highly effective teacher workforce is the best strategy to ensure all Texas students are equipped for lifelong academic and career success. We appreciate your consideration as HB 11 is discussed by the Legislature.