

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Public Education
For SB 418

Compiled on: Tuesday, May 16, 2023 3:35 PM

Note: Comments received by the committee reflect only the view of the individual(s) submitting the comment, who retain sole responsibility for the content of the comment. Neither the committee nor the Texas House of Representatives takes a position on the views expressed in any comment. The committee compiles the comments received for informational purposes only and does not exercise any editorial control over comments.

Hearing Date: May 16, 2023 8:00 AM

Sharla Ferguson
T.I.S.D.
Temple, TX
NO.

Mike Bickham
Self - High School Teacher / Football Coach
Bartlett, TX

No - totally disagree with the transfer of students between public schools.

Clay McChristian
Graham HS
Graham, TX

Please do not support this bill. It is a terrible idea. Do not mess up HS athletes by making the same mistakes that were made at the college level. Thanks

Ashley Chohlis, Superintendent
Poth ISD
Poth, TX

I oppose this bill. This Bill will hurt our small rural district. It is a desirable district for the area and we do not have the facilities nor the staff to accommodate the number of students who would likely land on our doorstep. Additionally, the minimal amount we charge in tuition for transfers helps pay for the additional teachers and materials we need to educate our transfer students.

Krystal Hatfield
Hook Elementary School
Stephenville, TX

I OPPOSE SB 8. As a member of our state legislature, I urge you to say no to any education savings account or voucher. Instead, let's focus on strengthening our public schools by addressing important issues such as school safety, teacher shortages, and student achievement. We should invest in quality public school choice and innovative programs that benefit all students, rather than diverting public tax dollars to private schools that are not accountable to taxpayers.

Texas public education funding is already ranked amongst the bottom 10 states in the nation, as reported by Education Week - Quality Counts. Diverting much-needed money from our public schools to private institutions through voucher programs would further exacerbate this issue and hinder the ability of our public schools to provide a quality education for all students.

Furthermore, private schools are not required to accept all students with a voucher, and they are not held to the same accountability standards as public schools. Taxpayer dollars should not go to private institutions that do not have to play by the same rules as public schools, and vouchers expose taxpayers to the risk of fraud.

Moreover, voucher programs reduce equitable access to educational opportunities, weaken rights for students with disabilities, and have a long history of expanding beyond their intended scope, resulting in increased state spending on programs that benefit private schools and businesses. Research also shows that vouchers do not improve student achievement.

Lastly, vouchers impose a burden on middle- and lower-class families, as they rarely cover the full cost of private school tuition, leaving families to pay the difference, which could be thousands of dollars. This places an unfair financial burden on families who may already be struggling financially.

It is crucial to prioritize the needs of our public schools and ensure that public tax dollars remain in public schools. Vouchers have a detrimental impact on our public education system, and we must protect the rights and opportunities of all students in Texas.
NO TO SENATE BILL 8!

Grant Gilson
West Orange Stark
Orange, TX

We need MORE support not LESS.

Leslie Cantu
Self
STEPHENVILLE, TX

I OPPOSE SB 8. As a member of our state legislature, I urge you to say no to any education savings account or voucher. Instead, let's focus on strengthening our public schools by addressing important issues such as school safety, teacher shortages, and student achievement. We should invest in quality public school choice and innovative programs that benefit all students, rather than diverting public tax dollars to private schools that are not accountable to taxpayers. Texas public education funding is already ranked amongst the bottom 10 states in the nation, as reported by Education Week - Quality Counts. Diverting much-needed money from our public schools to private institutions through voucher programs would further exacerbate this issue and hinder the ability of our public schools to provide a quality education for all students. Furthermore, private schools are not required to accept all students with a voucher, and they are not held to the same accountability standards as public schools. Taxpayer dollars should not go to private institutions that do not have to play by the same rules as public schools, and vouchers expose taxpayers to the risk of fraud.

Moreover, voucher programs reduce equitable access to educational opportunities, weaken rights for students with disabilities, and have a long history of expanding beyond their intended scope, resulting in increased state spending on programs that benefit private schools and businesses. Research also shows that vouchers do not improve student achievement.

Lastly, vouchers impose a burden on middle- and lower-class families, as they rarely cover the full cost of private school tuition, leaving families to pay the difference, which could be thousands of dollars. This places an unfair financial burden on families who may already be struggling financially. It is crucial to prioritize the needs of our public schools and ensure that public tax dollars remain in public schools. Vouchers have a detrimental impact on our public education system, and we must protect the rights and opportunities of all students in Texas.

NO TO SENATE BILL 8!

Glenda Smith, Ms

Self retired

Point, TX

We need to allow for school choice for all parents. The rich can always do that, but we must allow all parents the opportunity to select the best sch for their children. This in turn will encourage facing schools to step up their game. It should be the choice of the parents and not the choice of our legislators our elected officials do not have the right to make parents decisions for them

Glenn York, Mr

Self

Eules, TX

Parents should. Have the right to choose what children are taught

Amy Bushong

Belton ISD

Temple, TX

This absolutely will not work I am a teacher and know this voucher system will cause chaos. People need to be attending the school they are zoned to attend.

Nancy Burke

self- educator-

Friendswood, TX

No to ANY Voucher Program. We deserve better.
Yes to any teacher pay raises- They deserve better

Susana Palacios

self

The Woodlands, TX

Please keep Texas Public schools strong by providing the funding to keep strong teachers in the classroom and oppose vouchers!

Bobby Fowler

Self - Teacher/Coach

Belton, TX

I am opposed to the transfer fo students between public schools for the purpose of any extra-curricular activity without the parents moving to the inter-transfer district. Please oppose SB 418.

Mitchell Knauth

Self

San Antonio, TX

Please do not allow students to transfer between schools for athletic or athletic-related purposes.

Jeffrey Mucha

Self. Teacher.

BELTON, TX

I am for this proposal because the children of teachers should be allowed to attend in the same district in which their parents teach and work.

Gladiola Campos, Ma

Teachers union

Austin, TX

I would love to invite you to step into a public title 1 classroom for one day and see if you can survive. You doing this to us, is a slap in the face. I challenge you to come and be with us, and show us what we can do..

Leslie Rose

self

TEMPLE, TX

I do not believe we should have a school voucher system.

Jennifer Thimpson

Self, parent

Allen, TX

Senator Paxton, you must know because you live in our school district at Lovejoy ISD is on the brink of financial collapse. You have through your legislation forced some of the best teachers in the state to leave our ISD. The whole point of excellent education is to develop students to their greatest capacity. Lovejoy has not had enough special education teachers. The sped program is in complete disarray. So forcing more special education students in the districts what do you think is going to happen? At some point common sense must prevail until you start funding teachers to stay teaching. All this other stuff is irrelevant Half of the physics classes in the high school have no teacher, how are you helping the situation by forcing transfer students in the schools that already don't have teachers to teach the students that are currently enrolled. Our district is on the brink of financial collapse, and it was once one of the most highly sought after districts in the state. What you're doing makes zero sense. You must find a way to fund these districts so they can continue to excel in education, which is the whole point. I have been in Lovejoy ISD for 17 years. And I am completely stunned to see what's happening and to see someone as smart, as supposedly, these elected officials are cannot figure out a solution to fund these school districts. And I am a republican and a hard, right, Republican and what is happening is complete nonsense.

Kyle Williams

Austin Independent School District

Austin, TX

I encourage members to vote no on this bill. As a public school teacher, I know that charter schools are not the right solution to our education crisis. Vouchers allow charters to receive state funding with uncertified and unqualified instructors (I can't really call them teachers), and charters aren't even required to account for the money they receive from the state, nor are they held to the same standards as public schools. Thus allowing this bill to pass will undermine quality education that our children need to become intelligent, free-thinking citizens. I also resent that this bill is being worked on and hearings are being held without consideration of what voters want, and without their knowledge, and that only invited testimony is being considered. It is undemocratic and I again strongly urge you to vote no and reject this bill. Thank you.

Stephanie Merrifield

Self - stay at home mom of 4

Fairview, TX

We are a family of 6. My 4 kids attend Lovejoy because we simply cannot afford private school for our large family. I am concerned that Paxton as my representative would spend any time making it harder for public school to fund when no per student increases have been given to public schools since 2017. There are only 2-3 schools that charge tuition in the state of Texas. This is not worth the committees time to spend time on this bill. Paxton has more important things to do for the state of Texas.

Keith Shull

Fellowship Academy

Midlothian, TX

I support the school choice initiative and all the related proposed bills

KellieAnne Dercks

My three children at Lovejoy ISD

Fairview, TX

No. Just no. The state is not even fully funding the students who live in our district, then trying to take away our ability to charge tuition to fill the gap, then trying to tell us we HAVE to take on more (partially funded) students who don't live here, all while sending our tax dollars to other districts! Or just holding on to it for who knows what else. It feels like public education is intentionally being pushed to a breaking point. This is absolutely wrong for my three children and our beloved schools (which we paid and continue to pay a lot of money to be able to go to). Also...Mike Goddard is a wolf in sheep's clothing and should have zero influence on this decision!

Stephanie McCaffity

self/attorney

Lucas, TX

Without proper funding, public schools must find innovative ways to fund their schools and programs. My school district Lovejoy ISD increases revenue by charging transfer students tuition. They should be able to continue this. Senator Paxton does not care about Texas public schools.

Caroline Saucedo

TSTA

San Antonio, TX

Vote no

Chuck Haag

High school employee

Temple, TX

Let's teach kids who will be voting constituents. That they can't just vacate a tough situation.

Our government and courts have created a society that doesn't know the meaning of responsibility & accountability.

Kimberly Reinhardt

self - woman and children of TX

Corpus Christi, TX

The transfer of studnets between schools should be seamless, and course no disruption of the students' education. Your bill treats our students, which you obviously do not care about anyhow since you pardon murders and continue to allow our schools to be a place for right-wing fanatics to go hunting for children. You are a disgusting human who had no soul.

Chuck Haag

Public school employee

Temple, TX

Vote NO

Karen Liska

Taxpayer/ parent

Houston, TX

Big state government should not be telling us what to do with our neighborhood schools! This is government overreach in a BIG way!!

You are looking like democrats/ give everything away!!

Stop!

Carolyn Williams

TSTA

Lubbock, TX

Letting parents have open transfers overcrowds some schools

Jennifer Thompson

Self, parent

Lucas, TX

To add more to the comments that I've already submitted: currently in Lovejoy ISD and surrounding districts there are not enough special, education, teachers and administrators to handle the students that we have. Which is actually against the law to not provide for the 504 plans. So you all are creating a situation where massive lawsuits can and should be brought. And the fact that you're having Dr. Goddard come down there and speak on these types of bills when he is at a private school that charges \$25,000 in tuition is absolutely ludicrous. Why haven't you had a Lovejoy ISD superintendent come down and speak on the floor about all the financial crisis that we are facing? There are literally not enough physics teachers at our school to teach the classes so kids are having to sit in a lecture hall with no teacher. This is what you are funding with regard to education in the state of Texas completely unacceptable. You people should be smart enough to figure out real solutions instead of pitting groups against each other. We had a very successful school district and now it's in shambles because of everything you all are doing. Clearly, that must be the goal.

Beth Johnson

Self

Lucas, TX

This bill and voucher system is taking precious dollars from public schools and cutting many public school districts off at the knees. These bouncers will significantly impact the financial stability of some great school districts that are already struggling to balance their budgets due to recapture. Based on my understanding, the bill will allow government funds to be directed towards private schools at a higher \$ amount than their public school counterparts because there is no recapture. Paxton is not speaking for the majority of her constituents as her children and her family will greatly benefit from this bill given they attend Prestonwood, a private school. Please vote no to this bill and help save public schools.

Rodrigo Reyes

Self

Thrall, TX

I OPPOSE SB 418 and I ask you do the same.

We see the mess the transfer portal is in college sports, and this bill will only create the same issues for public schools.

Jennifer Thompson

Self , parent

Lucas, TX

I am a republican. But you all are way out of line.

I always think it's good for our community to have a collective conversation about the Scholar program and the benefits that we think it brings for our district.

However, that ability to have that important conversation and to make our own choice about our program is on the verge of being taken away by proposed state laws.

If SB418 passes the house, not only will Lovejoy be prohibited from charging tuition to make up the difference between what it costs to educate a Lovejoy student vs the meager funds that the state provides, additionally, the state will mandate its own version of a transfer program, dictating the students that Lovejoy must admit and in which order. We will not have the ability to just say that we won't have a transfer program anymore.

If you want Lovejoy ISD school district to just shut down, then just force it to shut down, but this is a death by 1000 cuts. Such a shame to have such fantastic teachers and curriculum being dismantled I thought we wanted to have strong quality education.

Danny Henderson

BISD

Fort Worth, TX

I am vehemently AGAINST SB 418!!!

Tracie Robinson, Assistant Superintendent

Westwood ISD

Palestine, TX

SB 418 harms our public schools.

CSSB 8 clearly acknowledges that private schools and vendors will not be required to comply with federal and state protections for students with disabilities, protections public schools are required to offer.

?

?? SB 8, as passed by the Senate, would cost Texas over \$1 billion per year to support its version of a voucher program. This would be one of the largest voucher programs in the country while Texas' public schools are still funded in the bottom 10 states in the country. The committee substitute being offered by Rep. Buckley will be even more expensive due to the new student eligibility provisions. In addition, the committee substitute offers no funding protection to public schools as the Senate version of SB 8 did with a \$10,000 five year "hold harmless" for districts with fewer than 20,000 students.

Jason Fossett

Belton ISD

Belton, TX

Students should attend the school district in which they live. There should be very very limited transfer between schools

Dan Jones

self

Temple, TX

please pass this bill

Chris Kovatch

Self

Orange, TX

The concept of this bill is mind boggling. The logistics it would require would pose a huge weight on already stretched districts. The challenges of trying to plan for potential influxes of students and capacity checks 4 times per year coupled with managing testing/report cards is unrealistic.

The legislature should focus its efforts of equitable funding and accountability for underperforming districts. Not addressing the root problem just further perpetuates the issue.

Mike Peters

Educators

Fort Worth, TX

This bill is unnecessary. Students can already transfer to other public schools with only the loss of 1 year of varsity eligibility. To change this will change the core principle of our athletic governing body, the UIL, which is a level playing field for the spirit of competition. This law will hurt more young people than it will help.

Martha Zeiher, 78624

Self / self employed

Fredericksburg, TX

I am opposed to SB8. I live in a small rural county with one elementary school, one middle school, and one high school. My husband and I have been / are volunteer mentors in the school system. We have seen first hand what a public school education means to kids and how it can bring them out of low-income situations to success. School vouchers will destroy public education in our county.

At a recent school board forum (we had an election May 6), EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THE CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES CAME OUT AGAINST SCHOOL VOUCHERS. That speaks volumes. . .

Your time would be much better spent on revising and improving the "Robin Hood" system of school funding so that our public schools keep most of the money they raise through taxes.

And oh, by the way . . . I am vehemently opposed to using my tax dollars to support religious schools. I believe in the separation of religion and state, and the Founding Fathers would agree. This practice will be discriminatory against low income students, as they still wouldn't be able to afford a private school.

Vote NO on SB8. Let Abbott take the fall for this bad idea.

Ava Drake

Self/Special Education Bus Monitor

Temple, TX

I am for transportation of students. It is required every day for them to obtain the proper education they require.

Phillip Reeder, DR

Self, retired physician, parent of child completely educated in public school system

Woodway, TX

Please oppose all publicly-funded payments to "private" schools. Any such payments divert taxpayer money away from already underfunded public education. Such payments to private schools promotes endorsement of exclusive dogma counter to the established principles of democracy and will ultimately damage the beneficial cohesiveness of our diverse communities. Any action which may degrade truly public education threatens the economic and social future of all communities since our goal of public education is to produce a discerning literate populace and skilled labor force.

Genesis McCormack

Self

Rosebud, TX

I support this bill. This bill protects the choice of parents to enroll their children in the school they feel best suit the needs of the children and the values of the family. Many other states have had "school choice" for many years and it's time Texas gets caught up and gives s hill choice to parents.

Jodi York

Self/retired

Amarillo, TX

I support school choice. Money should follow children.

Maria Elena Forina, Mrs

Self retired teacher

Alamo, TX

It's important to empower parents to have a say in their children's education. We want education not indoctrination

Denise Wilson

Self

Canyon Lake, TX

Tax payers have the right to decide where their children and their monies go, not corrupt socialist governments!

Tina Beaver

Self, self

Rockwall, TX

Yes on school choice SB418.

Greg Smith, Dr.

Fast Growth School Coalition

League City, TX

The Fast Growth School Coalition is against SB 418 as the state should not be mandating what appears to be a Public School Voucher based on capacity which is not determined by space alone due to a lack of instructional capacity, lack of resources, including FTE's, and UIL games that is open for parents and students to choose based on playing time or program effectiveness as a priority over team.

Nawal Kaileh, Ms

Self

Houston, TX

I need school choice and parents right too involved in their kids, education and others all the time.

Keith Keenright

Self - retired

Trinity, TX

School choose is the only way a child can obtain the proper education. The parent should have a choose on what type of education their children will learn . Education should be for preparing the child for a future in the work force.

Liz Alexander
Kisd
Lampasas, TX
No

Ashleigh Vasquez
Bill
Austin, TX
Na

Matthew Vander Perren
TX Public school kids
Fairview, TX

My family is for public school choice. Boundaries should not determine which kids are able to get the best public education. And open seats certainly shouldn't only be available to those that can afford them with tuition. I appreciate your support for SB418

Casey Hendrix
Self
Lucas, TX

Please strongly consider passing SB 418.

We hope that this will be the resolution for those that are simply trying to find better alternatives when income levels are affected, especially those who have below average incomes. While my husband and I are not below poverty level, and would most likely not be considered for any financial assistance, and we would be forced to leave district if the out of district tuition costs go up to 9K per year(which is proposed for years ahead).

I ask that you please consider those of us in the middle class who are working hard to give their children a solid education and need options or the same opportunities as others for better schools in our area.

Kendal Simpson
Self
Lucas, TX

I am a Lovejoy parent and I do not support this bill. Our tuition program is precisely the kind of capitalistic, locally-driven, market-based solution that conservatism in the most traditional sense SHOULD applaud. To take this program away not only will hurt Lovejoy students to the tune of \$1 million in lost revenue for programs, which the state undoubtedly will not replenish as it refuses to increase the basic student allotment enough to even keep up with inflation. Furthermore, it will punish a thriving, top-performing independent school district for its success. And for what? Our ability to charge tuition hurts absolutely no one. It certainly doesn't deprive students looking to move from under-performing school districts from better educational opportunities anymore than your proposed voucher program, which will also require families to cover the delta between tuition costs and the \$8k voucher value. I oppose this bill wholeheartedly.

Elizabeth Roberson
self, stay at home mom
Lucas, TX

I am against SB 418.

Brett Roberson

Self

Lucas, TX

I'm against SB 418

Billie Phillips

Self retired public school educator

Mckinney, TX

I totally disagree with this

John Tedor, Dr.

None

San Antonio, TX

Support any/all conservative bills/actions re: improving TX schools.

Laura Lanford

Self, counselor of teenagers

Belton, TX

I support school choice. In any other area of life, our right to choose goes unquestioned. I choose where to live, I choose a phone plan, an electric power plan, I choose which grocery store to shop at. Parents' right to choose where and how their children are educated should not even be questioned! A society in which I can freely choose whether to order a taco or burrito but cannot choose what, where, how and by whom my children are being taught is ludicrous. Schools must be held accountable to PARENTS.

Marlene Wood

Self

Houston, TX

Please pass this bill for School choice.

Norman Polly, Mr

Self

Houston, TX

No Busing to other Schools just to fill Quotes only when Bullying goes on and the Situation is not Fixed

Barbara Davis-Staley, Mrs.

Texas State Teachers Association-Retired

Tyler, TX

Vote NO om any voucher bill.

Kristi Sellers

Individual comment

Silsbee, TX

Please support this bill. It will improve the educational overall. Competition is a great motivator.

Doreen MARTINEZ

Spring ISD

Katy, TX

I am a public educator with 30+ years. I am opposed to any type or form of a voucher that will take away funds from public schools. The majority of our Texas children are in public school. We educate every child who enters our school, irregardless of the learning levels, abilities, disabilities, discipline issues, and more. We need our public funds to educate our children. I ask you to please vote no on any bill that will negatively impact the future of our public school children.

Trisha Fraser

Self

Cypress, TX

Parents should have the right to choose a chill in the district, in which we pay taxes, that supports the academic and extracurricular needs of the student.

Arlene Lewis

Myself

Austin, TX

SN 418

Jennifer Thompson

Self, parent

Lucas, TX

I am in favor of our current transfer program as Lovejoy has designed it. It gives priority to our teachers' children to bring their kids with them to Lovejoy, it allows the district to evaluate applications and set expectations and requirements for the students we accept (e.g. academic standards, behavior standards, and attendance standards). I am not in favor of Austin dictating how we run our transfer program. They want to mandate a lottery system, for example. My understanding is that the amount Austin pays per transfer today doesn't cover the full cost of educating a student (which includes the I&S side of our taxes) so the tuition is meant to close that gap. Under the current funding model, and without the revenue we are collecting at present, we will need to make much more painful cuts in Lovejoy. I've been told we will be facing deep cuts to programs (likely fine arts and athletics) that no one will want. Already, we lost the rigorous GT class model in 3rd grade this year because we couldn't maximize the class size. Even though my kid is older, I find that to be a very painful and unfortunate program cut. The tuition revenue helps us avoid more program cuts, at least in the short term. (Long term, there's no way around the fact that Austin needs to increase funding.) Transferring a student into Lovejoy is going to be a lot less attractive if we have to eliminate classes (8 period day, elective options, GT programming) and extracurriculars that students currently enjoy. One big question I have is, why is SB 418 a priority when they really need to have a serious discussion about overall public Ed funding? That should be one of their highest priorities, and I don't trust that it's going to get done at all this session. But eliminating one of our revenue streams is, apparently, what Senator Paxton wants to do instead.

Yes, there are class size waivers. But at some point if the bill doesn't provide districts enough flexibility to plan for capacity, then it could create the scenario I suggested. If that's accounted for in the bill, then there's one less bad thing in it.

Ultimately this bill isn't necessary. Allow ISDs to have local control to set policy that works for them. Allow ISD tax dollars to stay in education instead of lining the state coffers to pay for other things. Increase funding to, at minimum, account for inflation. On these basic things, our legislature is failing.

Meredith Roddy

Hutto ISD

Austin, TX

As a Texas Public School Administrator, I strongly urge you to oppose SB8. It is nothing more than a diversion of public funds to private educational systems with no financial accountability or transparency to the state, taxpayers, or communities. SB8 will not benefit the children of Texas and has the potential to divide and segregate communities in a detrimental manner. In its history, Texas has never provided public dollars for private education through legislation or appropriation and should not begin to do so now.

Thank you for your attention to my comments.

Dr. Meredith Roddy

Megan Elbrecht

self

Austin, TX

I'm a 1st grade teacher with 15 years experience in public education. I currently have a class of 26 seven year old's because of staffing shortages (legal limit used to be 22 FYI). We don't have enough text books or school supplies. The behaviors are extreme but there is nothing admin can do...their hands are tied. I didn't get lunch breaks this year because I had to cover cafeteria duty after our lunch monitor quit with no warning. My class consists of students from India, Russia, Africa, America, France, and Cuba- 3 do not speak English, 2 are Autistic, 2 are dyslexic, and 4 have extreme emotional issues. They are challenging....but they are all still amazing. They matter. They deserve a great education too. The vouchers will not provide them with that, they aren't going to private schools....most of them won't be allowed in and you know that. The vouchers will steal more supplies, more teachers, more opportunities from them and you know that. They are children of Texas, they are our future, and they deserve more from the adults who speak for them (you). Leave the voucher talk behind and put your focus and energy into funding public schools and providing a fair education for all of your Texas children.

John Tedor

Self & family - retired

San Antonio, TX

We support SB 418

Cheryl Fox

Parents and School Districts of Texas

Spring, TX

Vote no on SB 8

Michael Skinner

Public Schools

New Caney, TX

Charters are not required to serve all students Private done have to give the STAAR exam. This makes comparing the two unfair

Stephanie Meshell

self / High School Principal

Houston, TX

Please vote NO to this bill! We have neighborhood schools to help our community thrive. When you open up the transfer of students you no longer have diversity in your students. This also hurts UIL athletic programs.

Jessica Adams

Self

Lubbock, TX

Transportation should be available for all transfer students- not just transfers between schools. Schools that decide to close should automatically make provisions for transfer needs to be fulfilled.

Susan Parker

Self

San Antonio, TX

I wholeheartedly support this bill ! There are many situations, including bullying, unwanted sexual grooming and attention, and sexual assault where a student needs to get a transfer.

Patricia Dicoste, Ms

Retired educator

Bellaire, TX

Please stand up to the powerful and deep-pocketed groups pushing our state to fund private schools over public schools that are open to all students. As a taxpayer, I oppose spending \$500M+ in just the initial years on vouchers to private corporations. This will either raise my taxes, or drain funding for public schools.

Please vote to oppose SB8 on Monday. Don't let defunding public education move to the House floor!

This will only break our public education.

God Bless

Mica Baize

Hamilton ISD

Hamilton, TX

No. Please stop trying to undermine public school funding.

Kimberly Bloemer

Sept

Allen, TX

I strongly oppose this bill. It hurts Lovejoy school district. I pay higher taxes and live in a great school district. School of choice will hurt schools more when families flock to top schools and leave less favorable schools to struggle even more with less funding.

Kristine Kistka

Self - mother/housewife

Lucas, TX

I do not support SB 418. The passing of this bill would negatively affect my children's education and our small school district would struggle more than it already is.

Katherine Urbanic

Lovejoy ISD current transfer student

Allen, TX

I am writing to encourage your support of SB 418.

Charter schools receiving public funds are barred from charging tuition - a public school should be no different. This is also a matter of equity - ability to pay should never be a barrier to a quality public education.

Lovejoy Independent School District is trying to operate like a private school while still receiving public funds - not only hand selecting students to raise the district profile, but now also asking for tuition deposits months in advance. Under the current system a new student transferring into Lovejoy would pay \$9,000 per year, \$117,000 from K-12, for public school! Open seats at a public school should not be only for those who can afford exorbitant tuition.

Thank you for your time and support of SB 418.

Mark Paxton

self

Allen, TX

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is time to put the brakes on the passage of SB 418 before chaos takes over our public schools. This legislation is hailed as what most Texans want, but do they really want what is coming? The Governor and Lt. Governor are advocating for this Bill, but apparently are not worried about the consequences. Are we ready to close underperforming schools and bus the students to others?

The numbers don't add up.

Many school districts that have new facilities and have passed bonds to build more schools are budgeted to provide quality education for the students they have. The funds provided by the State only make a small portion of the actual costs and are paid basically on a daily rate for student attendance. Adding more students to districts costs more money. There is no data that says adding more kids to a district is good. As long as ad-valorem taxes are the primary source funding public schools, the property owners paying the taxes should have a say how their tax dollars are spent. The Governor and Lt. Governor are strangely ignoring our property values.

I live in Collin County. I've tried to justify the pros and cons of this bill, and determine how anyone in the County would benefit by having unabated transfers. I don't believe allowing transfers into our district without raising taxes is feasible. Anyone that claims there is no added costs over the state funded formula is just misinformed.

The numbers don't add up.

Everyone agrees that a child's education starts with the parents, and followed by the teachers. SB 418 is going to add to teacher workload. Let's raise teacher pay at underperforming schools, and hire better teachers rather than letting the kids leave and closing schools. Districts are challenged to hire and retain quality teachers. Most districts allow a teacher to enroll their own children within the school district. SB 418 reduces an accompanying child's eligibility for transfer behind handicapped, disadvantaged, military, police, and firefighters. How can we recruit good teachers if they can't bring their own children?

According to SB 418, the elite, private schools will be major beneficiaries. Not only will the State be funding most of the transfer tuition, but the private schools will also retain the ability to discriminate who will be allowed to enroll, and not be required to accept like numbers of handicapped and disadvantaged. Shouldn't anyone with passing grades and no behavioral issues be welcomed at the private schools if the State is paying their tuition?

Does any lawmaker believe that making transfers easy will not negatively affect athletics? Texas has always maintained stringent rules for high school transfers for athletic reasons. Are we now ready for unabashed recruiting and team building at our public high schools?

SB 418 is NOT what most Texans want! It's not feasible, it's not fair, and it's not right.

Cassie Webb

Lovejoy ISD parent and educator

Allen, TX

So that everyone is aware, one of Senator Paxton's main testimonials for this bill came from a superintendent who did nothing to lower tuition from an all time high for at least an entire year if not two full years. Has anyone cross examined her witnesses and called forth others willing to pay tuition for exemplary public schools outside of their attendance zone? Perhaps he saw merit to charging tuition before this seeming about-face. Today there are still about a hundred students whose families are willingly paying tuition, yet there one disgruntled family is providing testimony alongside Dr. Goddard. The evidence seems unbalanced and not wholistic. Ideally the outdated student allotment would at minimum reflect inflation, the Covid 19 setbacks, and the unprecedented teacher exodus and we wouldn't need to lean on tuition to fund our budget for a superior academic experience, but the reality has us in a different place. This is not shocking information: an elite education costs more than the current student allotment. The superintendent has stated that "Lovejoy ISD anticipates an expenditure of \$11,861 to educate each resident student in average daily attendance." Lovejoy ISD provides an elite education available to all residents and all paying transfer students. We do not discriminate based on academic 'giftedness' or creed as do most private schools. We offer the option for new transfer students to pay \$9k (returning families pay \$4k), or the other choice is that people can buy a home listing for a minimum of \$600,000 (if they are lucky) in order to be served by this district. Feel free to check Zillow for the full range! If the same proposed dollar amount followed public school transfer students as private school transfer students, charging tuition would be redundant, but this is not the current reality. Also, if transfer student families were saddled with the same I&S property tax multiplier that resident families were, then we could talk more about tuition fairness. I ask that the legislature consider an equitable amount of funding following a student whose family chooses private or public school. In the meantime, please allow us to seek an autonomous, creative, and free market solution that maintains and supports an excellent education while the current state formula falls short of its constitutional duty. I am proud to have made Lovejoy ISD my choice for my child, and I hope the Texas legislature will support my choice and my child.

Bridgette Kershner

Self

Austin, TX

Please support public education and teachers by using the money we have to give raises and more money per student. Stop trying to destroy public education.

Shelia Willis-Reeves

Self/School Psychologist

Temple, TX

Yes

Charlotte Smith

Self - Mom, Wife, Sales

LUCAS, TX

Please log my opposition to HB 418 (Paxton) - I am a mom with 3 children, 2 of which old enough to be a proud student in a Texas public school. I have become very disheartened to see politicians who are leading this great State of Texas to which I was born into try to undermine Texas students every chance they get.

My kids deserve to have the basic allotment increased to handle the actual costs of educating a child in our Texas schools. My child does not deserve to have dollars taken away from them in order to fund anything else except for education. Shame on you for taking precious earned tax payer dollars in the form of recapture and stick it in a rainy day fund and not use it for education.

Dr. Michael Goddard is probably one of the most unethical people I have had the 'privilege' to observe. Please be aware of all of the points he is making against Lovejoy ISD and do your own fact checking. He came into a district with severe budget issues and was unable to handle the work that needed to be done. Under his tenure he increased our transfer student tuition bill AND led the shutting down of 1 of our 3 elementary schools. In what world does he think that public schools don't need more funding when he saw the inner workings himself. It must be nice for him to sit in a place that charges a pretty penny to attend and not have to answer to anyone on the standards they provide or the students they turn away.

As a body of legislators – I implore you to do the hard work to have a serious discussion about public education funding as a whole and stop messing around with these piecemeal bills. Significantly raise the allotment per child and base it on enrollment.

Winifred Gilmore, Ms.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

Texas City, TX

Public dollars should remain in public schools. Vouchers to wealthy private schools dilute funding to public schools and I feel the state of Texas is violating church and state.

Kathleen Alling

self / community member, parent and voter

Allen, TX

Please log my opposition to SB 418. It will hurt not only my youngest who will be a freshman in high school next year, but also my neighbor's children who are just starting elementary school and ALL students within our district. My oldest graduated in 2021. I have a son graduating in two weeks and I am extremely concerned with state of funding for our public schools. In spite of the dwindling support from Austin, our schools still educate and prepare intelligent, bright, motivated children who become informed voters and active members of the community. I can't express enough how negatively this would impact the children of this district. One of the main reasons we moved to Texas in 2010 was the quality education. If this bill passes, not only will our district suffer, but education as a whole will feel the consequences. Funding definitely needs to change in Austin, but this is not the way!

Leslie Berry, Superintendent

Kelton ISD, Superintendent

Wheeler, TX

Please allow transfers, however schools need to be able to consider attendance and discipline when accepting students. Students need to be present to learn. Students should not be able to transfer if they are already a discipline issue.

Traci Dennis-Witter

SELF Public Educator Administrator

Temple, TX

Yes, I support the transfer of student bill.

Gretchen Johnson

Self

Garland, TX

Our family is in favor of SB 418. As a parent of a child that has special needs not all school or school districts can meet the best standards of education support and inclusive environment. I drive my son 25 min one way to a better accommodating and supportive school district for him. We ask that our choice be tuition free. We appreciate your support of SB 418.

Monica Clift

self; school counselor

McKinney, TX

I am asking the committee to vote NO to the passage of SB 418 as it is not good for students or families. By allowing the open transfer of students, unnecessary strain will be put on existing schools. Families that move into a zone after the beginning of school will undoubtedly be placed on another campus. I'm a school counselor in Frisco, and my daughter has been transferring to my campus and now the feeder middle school for my campus for 7 years. By putting this bill into law, you will cause much devastation to children of school staff in my district because our students will no longer be guaranteed transfer. **YOU ARE CHANGING THE RULES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE GAME** for the students that are already enrolled as transfers and are established in their current schools. If this law takes effect, my daughter will not be able to continue attending the school she currently attends in the feeder pattern she has been in since kindergarten. Our schools will fill up, and she will be third in line for transfer according to this bill. Students like her in my district will be pulled from the only schools they have ever known and placed in new schools with students they don't know. It is hard enough for children now any way. This is unfair to those of us who were doing exactly what we were allowed to do. Moving my daughter in her 8th grade year to a new school would be catastrophic to her mental health and wellbeing. If this bill is going to pass, at least make concessions for those of us school employees that already have children in our feeder patterns so as not to disrupt their mental health and well being. Make the provision of this bill regarding the transfer of employees students only take effect on new students; those that already have a history of being able to transfer should be grandfathered in as long as their parent remains employed by the district.

On my campus alone, not allowing employees to continue guaranteed transfer before others would affect 9 employees and 14 students. I imagine that number is consistent across Frisco ISD. Our schools are full. Our students would not be able to transfer and put our families into chaos. It is simply not fair that we have been able to transfer our students for years, and now our children will have their lives interrupted because of the directives of this bill. This is not what is right for children. Having consistency and order in a child's life is what is most important. They are already established in our school's feeder patterns because up to to this point they have been allowed to transfer.

I hope this committee takes into consideration of what passing this bill would do to the employees and our children who already have been transferring for years. To subject these students to such a harsh change when they are thriving on campuses they have been allowed to attend for years would be wrong. Please consider voting NO altogether, or at least allowing employee kids guaranteed transfer.

Donna Grant

Grand Prairie ISD

Grand Prairie, TX

I am very opposed to allowing students to transfer between schools for athletic purposes. This can lead to active recruiting that the UIL has always opposed. High School athletes should not be exploited by who offers outrageous incentives for them to attend their high school. This would sanction and allow high schools to create super powers with the "top recruits" every year attending their schools. I see it ultimately leading to disinterest for our student athletes to even want to play in high school. Not all students are super stars, they simply participate to add value to their high school experience. Let high school kids be kids and stay in the community that they grew up in and not be shopped all over the state and sold to the highest bidder. This bill is ridiculous.... and it hurts kids, schools and communities.

Rebecca Warren
Conroe
Conroe, TX

I want to be able to put my children in a school that I feel will better educate them !

Tyler Simpson
Self
Lucas, TX

As a parent of multiple students at Lovejoy ISD, I am disappointed by the proposal to prevent schools from charging tuition for out-of-district transferees. Lovejoy has utilized this market-based method to supplement its funding for some time. The district has come to rely on the supplemental funding to offer additional programs that are not usually available at public schools. As a conservative voter, I believe in market-based solutions that reward school districts. This bill does the opposite--it forbids a market-based solution to a funding gap, and it punishes one of the best public school districts in the state by taking away about \$1 million in tuition-based funding. Make no mistake, this bill will hurt student achievement for my children and others in the Lovejoy community. I urge you to vote "no," or amend the bill to remove the tuition prohibition.

Pat Dicoste, Ms
Self
Bellaire, TX

Please do not destroy our public education.

Jill Lankford
Self/retired educator
Midland, TX

This bill allows for nothing other than inequality in all extra curricular activities. Football specifically and all other sports. I see this as a state version of the collegiate NIL which I oppose as well.

Sharon Gillespie, Ms.
SELF
Austin, TX

I served as an Assistant Attorney General of the State of Texas in the Land and Title section, defending title to the public free school lands of Texas. As a former public-school educator, nothing could have made me prouder as I believe in the promise of a free, publicly sponsored education to all Texas' children. To take from the Permanent Free School Fund to provide private education to those who want it is tantamount to undermining the concept of free public schools in our state. We must strengthen funding for public education through shoring up those funds, not depleting them to provide private education. Please vote "NO" on this bill.

Courtney Moeller
Self/Parent
Rosebud, TX

I am a parent who chose to transfer my children to another district in which we do not reside. My family along with many other community members voiced concerns over an abatement that our school district wanted from a solar company. Even after hearing from the community, our school board voted everything through without batting an eye. That is when we decided to take our children out of the district and try to find a school district that is listening and respecting their community voices. We were turned down from one of the small surrounding schools even though they were not at full capacity yet for the grade level. We did find another school who happily took us in as transfers because of our children's academic success as well as their character. I believe every family should have free choice as to where they want their children to get their education.

Cristina Zinna
Self
McKinney, TX

I support tuition free school transfers. My neighborhood has several title 1 schools with no other options- yet I pay a 10% increase in taxes every year on a 500k home.

Jeremiah Spurgin
Self
Mckinney, TX

We pay a 10% tax increase every year and yet only have title 1 schools in our neighborhood

Corey Kistka
Self
Lucas, TX

I oppose SB 418. A key component of home values and therefore the amount of property taxes is the quality of the school district. A better school system is directly proportional to higher home values. Residents in Lovejoy ISD have made the decision to pay higher property taxes because they value the education children receive at Lovejoy. It is not equitable for a family living in another district to avoid paying a premium on their property taxes and yet still get the benefit of Lovejoy ISD. The only reason Lovejoy is able to charge tuition to non-residents is because families are willing to pay for the quality of the education. This dynamic is imminently fair and equitable. Moreover, it creates an incentive for ALL school districts to offer the best education environment possible. SB 418 penalizes high quality school districts. It does not "level the playing field", rather it seeks to lower the quality of high performing districts to eliminate the gap in education quality rather than holding low quality school districts accountable for their poor performance.

Bruce Wiuff
Self
MCKINNEY, TX

We are in favor of sb418

Mun Ju Leininger
Self
Melissa, TX

I support bill SB 418 which allows students to transfer to different districts and also disallows public schools from charging tuition. Public schools who receive funding from the state and Federal government should not also charge tuition for free public education.

Joe Barnett, CTO
Frenship ISD
Wolfforth, TX

Providing vouchers without requirements related to public schools weakens both the originating school and destination school institutions.

John Hsu
self / engineer
Allen, TX

My family is also in support of public school choice. We believe Texas students should be able to transfer between public schools with open seats and not have to pay tuition for public school education. Thank you for your support on SB 418.

Miranda Ruvalcaba

Lubbock ISD

Lubbock, TX

I believe this bill places undue hardships on teachers by not allowing districts to give preference to children of employees. In a time where we are already facing teacher shortages, an added benefit of working for a school is the ability to bring your child to work with you to avoid the additional cost of childcare. I for one live outside of my current district and would have faced extreme difficulty if my children had not been allowed to attend campuses within the district.

This promotes teachers leaving urban schools to work in the suburban districts where their children can be on the same schedule as them. I know of many teachers who bring their children to their campus with them, giving them additional investment in their school.

Also, I believe this bill undermines school districts accountability to their students. Public schools have always been required to teach all students that live in their attendance area. This bill undermines a districts ability to retain its students and at the same time promotes districts not serving ALL students.

Please reconsider this bill. Support and prioritize teacher retention. Support teaching all kids.

Laida Benavides

self

Laredo, TX

Many concerns regarding this bill. It is unfair to the district's taxpayers to have to educate students from other school districts. Having to accept students from other districts into our campuses could lead to safety concerns such as having to move students out to portable classrooms when a campus is at capacity. Our district's taxpayers had passed a \$408 million bond 10 years ago to build new schools to move students out of 300 portable classrooms.

Annie Compton

Self

Austin, TX

I request a NO vote on SB 418

Alesia Burnett, Mrs

LOVEJOY ISD

Fairview, TX

Vouchers are not the answer- they will hurt more students
Teachers need more!

Katherine Bronson

Self

Mckinney, TX

It's awful! Why would you create a bill that harms the public school system ...literally the future of TX. Why wouldn't you make tx a star example of how to fund education and keep amazing teachers? It is so short cited!

Katherine Bronson

Self

Mckinney, TX

As a republican voting parent I can't see the logic here. Why wouldn't you support education for majority your state? You are crippling the next generation.

Pam Arceneau

Self

Lucas, TX

This bill will severely hurt our school district financially and we're already struggling now. It's appalling that Paxton would betray our school district in this way. This is over a million dollar loss to our small school district that has already lost so much in recent years. We will not be able to recover from such a blow. It's devastating.

Megan Gaskins, Mrs.

Self

Conroe, TX

No to vouchers

Aubrey Stock

Self (Stay-at-home parent)

Allen, TX

My name is Aubrey Stock and I would like to log my strong opposition to SB 418. I have a young family with four children, the oldest being 9 years old. My two oldest children are currently in elementary school in Lovejoy ISD. Our family made the choice and sacrifice to live within the district boundaries of Lovejoy ISD. My husband currently works two jobs and I was also working up until having our fourth child. We knew the challenges of the cost of living associated with Lovejoy ISD but it was our CHOICE to move here for our children's education. I feel that the charging of tuition for transfer students is not only in full compliance with the text of TEC 25.038 but also aligns with the legislative intent of that statute and past lawmakers' understanding that districts would need to address funding gaps, particularly in the case of non-resident students. I would also argue that the current bill is dangerously incongruent with the Texas Supreme Court's ruling in Love v. City of Dallas where the Texas Supreme Court clearly stated that the legislature could not require school districts to "construct buildings and levy taxes for the education of non-resident pupils." Transfer students do not bring the full funding of resident students and that funding gap must be addressed. That funding gap should not (and cannot, via Love v. City of Dallas) fall on my taxpayer shoulders for non-resident students and because the committee seems to have no interest in a meaningful change to our per-student funding, a transfer tuition payment seems more than appropriate. I also feel Lovejoy's tuition program protects my parental choice and sacrifice to live within district boundaries and the local control and decision-making of our district. I do not support a state-mandated transfer program that requires our district to bend to the State's determination of "priority students" and acceptance criteria. For example, I find it extremely concerning that the children of staff are listed third in priority when we are in an unprecedented teacher shortage situation. I am also disturbed at the likely logistical nightmare that will come with the committee's expectation that all school districts magically implement a transfer program by September 1st of this year should this bill pass. In conclusion, I would urge the committee to think extremely carefully about the financial, legal, conceptual, and logistical ramifications of SB 418. It should be rejected on every one of those fronts and I hope the committee will do just that. Please reject SB 418. Thank you for your time.

Amy Vander Perren

Texas Kids

Fairview, TX

Kids in Texas deserve public school choice. Not based on boundaries or exclusivity, but based on what is best for each child. Last session, there was legislation that eliminated tuition at public schools. My children along with 350 other kids were accepted to Lovejoy ISD through a process that included testing, STAAR results, fees, and transcripts, without tuition. Just months later, we found out they would be returning to a tuition model. We hope you'll agree that a public school with available seats shouldn't come with a private school tuition, and only made available to those who can afford it. SB418 will have a financial impact to Lovejoy ISD. I hope you'll find a way to support a top performing district through additional allotment and teacher incentives. Thanks in advance of your support of SB418.

John Herrmann

Self - Engineer (PE)

Taylor Lake Village, TX

Public Education - teaching students to love our country, our State, and to be prepared to contribute to society, is a fundamental responsibility of the legislature. Parents - tax payers- must be able to control the process. Texas schools have become bloated with administrators and the primary goal of education has been obfuscated. It is time for Texas to lead a renaissance in teaching by allowing school choice and fostering competition between public and private schools. Let us decide with our tax money how best to rear our children and prepare them for the future. Please pass parental choice in schools. God bless Texas.!

Amy Staab

Self

Lucas, TX

I want to express my opposition to SB 418. This bill will hurt my student and all in public schools. This bill limits local control with more mandates from the state without any increase in basic allotment and state funding. It will increase class sizes, by mandating up to capacity transfers without increasing the basic allotment to cover the expense of added students and removes the ability for local school districts to make up the difference with tuition for transfer students. This lack of funding passes on fees to parents for transportation, fine arts classes, etc., when the taxpayer is sending more money to the state than our schools are getting in return. With an increasing population and a time when teachers are leaving the profession in record numbers, it is more important than ever for Texas to start to properly fund our public schools. You were elected to represent ALL Texans. Public school students deserve the same funding as the proposed school choice transfer amount. Thank you for your consideration.

mark york

self - Manager

altair, TX

SB 8 The Only School Choice Bill Moving through the legislature.

This is not really regarding SB 418 but SB 8! Doesn't show up in the search so I randomly picked 418.

I am weighing in to tell you that I support school choice in Texas, but I want school choice that reaches more students and has more options for Texas parents. I am not satisfied with the substitute language yall submitted to Senator Brandon Creighton's original SB8 bill language. However, I do support and appreciate Chairman Buckley's attempt to garner some school choice options in Texas despite the thoughtless opposition.

Chandra Grayer, Paraprofessional

Temple Independent School District

Temple, TX

n/a

Theresa Williams, Superintendent

Plano ISD

Plano, TX

May 16, 2023

House Public Education Committee

Texas State Capitol

E2.036

1100 Congress Avenue

Austin, TX 78701

Dear Chairman Buckley and Committee Members:

Plano ISD opposes SB 418 because it undermines local control. Our district has local policies in place to govern how we accept and manage transfers of students from outside of our district boundaries. Replacing our local transfer policy with a statewide policy would weaken the entire concept of an independent school district's responsibility of educating students in our communities.

Additionally, one of the tools we offer to attract and retain teachers is the ability to bring their students to attend the district in which they work. SB 418 may remove our flexibility to continue to offer this system to our teachers and their students. Currently, Plano ISD uses our population projections and expected growth (or decline) to make long-term budgeting and planning decisions. SB 418 would remove our ability to predict our student population in the years to come and increase volatility in budgeting and planning processes.

Lastly, a statewide open enrollment system could create scenarios where students or parents are transferring students to improve their athletics opportunities or manipulate class rank.

Sincerely,

Dr. Theresa Williams

Plano ISD Superintendent

Delaina Bishop

Self/ Parent of young school age children in public schools

Austin, TX

I OPPOSE this bill.

sharon kofahl

self

allen, TX

This bill does NOT represent public schools and does NOT represent the wishes of the people YOU represent. I live in the Lovejoy school district and just can not believe she not only voted for this bill but also authored this! This bill will hurt public schools, like Lovejoy ISD which is where my child attends.

This bill will only help those voters who already send their child/children to private schools and those who will financially benefit from funding going to private schools.

Does Paxton have a child in private schools? Does she stand to financially gain if money is moved from public to private schools? How does this help the public schools which are already struggling financially? By passing this bill, schools such as Lovejoy will be financially damaged in will need to further cut our programs. How can she support this? WHY did she author this and support this when it will HURT the district schools that she supposedly represent?

I do NOT support this.

Jennifer Marshall

Self

Midland, TX

I vote no and am against any funding from the government for homeschooling and private school students. I am against any efforts by the government to have a say in curriculum and assessment for homeschool, private school students.

Robin Dale

Parent

Lucas, TX

As a parent, I strongly oppose SB 418.

Britt Rayburn

Self, web designer

Lucas, TX

Against, this would be devastating to our school district

Safah Adams

Myself

Lucas, TX

I oppose SB418

Brian Dale

Parent

Lucas, TX

I oppose SB 418!

Laura Shah, Mrs.

Self

Lucas, TX

I oppose HB 418. This is not beneficial to all the children who have already lost teachers, support, programs and funding in the LoveJoy ISD district.

Rachel Butler

Self, stay at home mom

Lucas, TX

My children go to Lovejoy School District and I oppose this bill.

Jacquelyn Thomisee

Self

Lucas, TX

I oppose this bill as it will negatively impact our school district.

Courtney Beal
Lovejoy ISD
Lucas, TX

I opposed this bill for my 4 students at Lovejoy ISD. This only hurts our current students and does not help our school district. It also hurts our teacher's and their children. Above all else... we should be protecting our teachers during this time. Very disappointed that Paxton brought this bill. We need to keep our public schools strong.

Sarah Brown
self
Allen, TX

Please vote NO on SB 418!

Jenna Tilton
self
MCKINNEY, TX

Public school is simply that...Public. Schools should not be charging tuition for a child's right to public education, especially if that child can walk to school. Our son is zoned for a different district that is 4.3 miles from our home in Fairview, Texas. Lovejoy ISD's elementary school, Puster, is 1 mile from our house. We attended Puster last year when they had revoked the tuition, thinking the tuition-free bill would pass in Austin. My son's first school experience (kindergarten) was there. I was actively involved, volunteering at the school weekly. Then, without any communication from the school board (I found out on social media), all of a sudden it was going to be \$4,000 to attend. Without locked-in tuition. Without a guarantee of a spot. Our whole world and community we had built just unraveled. My son is having success at his zoned school district, but it was a very difficult transition for him at first. This bill would guarantee that there is a choice in school, and archaic district boundaries wouldn't impact where a student is educated.

brian thomas, teacher
Self - Teacher
Hutto, TX

As a Public School Teacher and coach, I strongly urge you to oppose SB8. It is nothing more than a diversion of public funds to private educational systems with no financial accountability or transparency to the state, taxpayers, or communities. SB8 will not benefit the children of Texas and has the potential to divide and segregate communities in a detrimental manner. In its history, Texas has never provided public dollars for private education through legislation or appropriation and should not begin to do so now.

Thank you for your attention to my comments.

Cheraina Dunn, Mrs
Mother of students in public school in Lovejoy ISD
Lucas, TX

I oppose this bill. This hurts public education. Please take care of our public Ed kids!

Kim Rollins
Public school supporter
Fairview, TX

I do not support this bill

Susan Elliott

Mom of public school students

Lucas, TX

This does not support public education for my child specifically, or really any child

Jackie Besinger

Self

Austin, TX

I am in favor of SB418.

Parents should be able to enroll their children in the school that best fit's the Childs needs, this is what school choice really is.

Jackie Besinger

Adriane Counts

Myself

Lucas, TX

I oppose SB418

Michelle Wilde

Self

Allen, TX

This bill does not support public education. This bill will negatively impact many aspects of public schools and will further debilitate the ability for public schools to be able to fund important academic, fine arts and athletic programs forcing public schools to have to drastically cut very important programs for all students. Please consider the serious impact to public schools that this bill impacts and support public schools.

Linda Parsel

Self

Dallas, TX

School vouchers. It is unconscionable that the legislature would use taxpayer money to provide a rebate to peop,e who are sending their children to private schools. Taxpayers should not help the wealthy pay tuition!! Vouchers will never cover tuition for even the poorest of private schools and it defunds public education . NO ON ANY VOUCHER PROGRAM . It is attack on the middle and lower income Texans.

Holly Dominguez

Self - public school parent

Fairview, TX

As a parent of multiple public school parents I am gravely concerned. This bill not only does not provide the funding for opening boundaries to students outside the district it also puts multiple pressures on the quality of education and the tax payers property values.

Zenobia C. Joseph, Educational Consultant/Policy Analyst

Self - A+ WRITERS Consulting

Austin, TX

School-to-Prison Pipeline [Paxton et al.]: SB 418 Codifies Race Discrimination against Black Males!

1. Statutory Authority: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (“Title VI”) “is a Federal statute and provides that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance” (FTA C 4702.1B, 2012, Ch. I-7).

“Discrimination refers to any action or inaction, whether intentional or unintentional, in any program or activity of a Federal aid recipient, subrecipient, or contractor that results in disparate treatment, disparate impact, or perpetuating the effects of prior discrimination” (Ch. I-2).

2. Apprenticeship of Observation: Lortie (1975) posits that teachers often teach the way they were taught. “For Black boys born in 2001..., the Sentencing Project estimates that one in every three will end up incarcerated,” Congressman Bobby Scott noted in 2012. Require culturally-relevant pedagogy training to curtail discipline problems.

3. Discrimination: SB 418 codifies race discrimination by denying students, primarily Black males, with a disciplinary history from transferring between public schools.

4. Strike Exclusionary Provisions: Strike Sec. 25.036. Transfer of Student Lines 11-27 (p. 4/14); Lines 1-6 (p. 5/14). In part, “(g) A school district may deny approval of a transfer under this section only if: ... (2) at the time a student seeks to transfer: (A) the student is: (i)suspended or expelled by the district in which the student is enrolled; or (ii)placed in a disciplinary alternative education program or a juvenile justice alternative education program[.]”

4. Inclusionary Recommendation: For discretionary removals, require an administrator from both school districts, a counselor, and teacher to review the student’s record to determine how to support the transferee in getting a new academic successful start. For mandatory removals, convene a transfer committee; comply with the court order, as applicable, to determine a safe placement for the student rather than codifying discrimination—outright transfer denial.

5. Research: "Breaking Schools' Rules" (Fabelo, 2011). "Of the nearly 1 million [Texas] students studied, ... African-American students and those with particular educational disabilities were disproportionately likely to be removed from the classroom for disciplinary reasons. The great majority of African-American male students had at least one discretionary violation (83*%), compared to 74% for Hispanic male students, and 59% for white male students" (p. x).

6. Title VI Disparate Impact: Joseph, Z. C. (2009). “I-35 Divide” Conundrum: Can a True Community-University Partnership Grant Austin’s Gifted/Talented K-12 African-American Males Access to College? Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy(XV), 9-35. My scholarship remains germane.

Thanks. ~zsj

Ivey Janecek, Mom

Mom of public education student

Lucas, TX

This will hurt public education & our kids. Do not agree with this bill.

Wanda Nealy Ward, Mrs.

Self

Corsicana, TX

Good morning. My comments refer to the proposed school choice bill, serving children with special needs and more to the point, those in special education programs. While there has been much discussion on providing services to special needs, I have yet to read anything that specifically addresses the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDEA, and is for students who qualify for special education services. This is the part of the Elementary, Secondary Education Act that deals with the general education students and curriculum. Chapter 1 also serves these students with other special needs who do not meet eligibility to receive special education services. While IDEA provides funding for these students, Title 1 does not. As a matter of fact, unless students qualify for specific areas, funding will not be provided to the ISDs to receive the services. This also means that unless students meet eligibility to receive SPED services, the services that they had previously been provided will not be provided in the ISD. On the other hand, private and charter schools can choose the students with whom they want to serve. Due to the distinction between general public ISDs, charter and private schools, it would be virtually impossible for Governor Abbott to demand that the public schools provide these services. These IDEA funds follow the student. Not vice versa.

I am a retired SPED server who provided services for over 34 years in Corsicana. I certainly hope that this information serves you well. And I can be reached at Wanda Nealy-Ward, 214-477-3744(Cell) or 903-872-7604(Home).

PLEASE SHARE WITH HOUSE AND OTHER STATEWIDE LEADERSHIP!

Camille Simpkins

Mom for public school education

Mckinney, TX

This will negatively impact our schools. This will also handicap school communities from thriving. This will not help public schools as there is no plan in place to support the schools this IF this passes. Let's raise the budget for each student and change from ADA to students enrolled. We can do better!!

Brent Hawkins, Dr

Self

Livingston, TX

We have to include human capital in any discussion about capacity. In our school district we have facilities that could meet additional students needs but we can not increase our student enrollment in areas because we will not be able to staff those positions. In order to not have an unintended consequence staff would need to go back to 45 day prior to the first day of instruction resignation period without penalty in order to be able to remotely staff for transfer students. I would also add that this bill could have catastrophic consequences to smaller schools in the state. Thank you

Sandy Hayes, Ms

Self

Georgetown, TX

Parents should have all rights in placing their children where they feel the best and safest education would be for the ones they care the most about. Please pass the bill that protects school choice. Thank you

Sandy Hayes

Gary Freeman, Dr

self

Fort Davis, TX

SB 14 Public education is grossly underfunded in Texas. There us no point in making payments to students who want to go to private schools unless the state provides the same amount of money for public schools on a per student basis

Lindsey Pollock, Dr.

SELF

Houston, TX

As a Texas resident, parent, teacher AND voter,

I beseech you to vote AGAINST S.B. 8.

This bill would expand the number of required high-stakes standardized tests from 20 to 48 a child would be required to take over the course of their K-12 experience. It will narrow the curriculum even more.

School voucher proposals have come up many times in the legislature, and deservedly died when they are recognized by members of all parties as what they are -- attempts to privatize education and shift funds away from public education.

The latest iteration frames the issue as "parental choice," when in fact the real choice would lie with the private schools, which can accept or reject students at will based on which students are cheapest and easiest to educate. At-risk and Special Education students would be, as always, left to public schools with ever-tighter budgets.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lindsey Pollock

Ada T. Simmons, Mrs.

AKA Chi Zeta Omega Chapter Plano TX

McKinney, TX

HB 42, hb10, sb4300

Jeana Leon

self- teacher

Mckinney, TX

I am a teacher in Frisco ISD and my daughter goes to the school where I teach instead of our neighborhood. She will be in 2nd grade next year and has gone to this school since kindergarten. Our school has very high enrollment and will be closed to transfers next year. If this bill passes, it means that I will not be able to bring my daughter to my school. This would be very hard for her since she has many friends there and doesn't know anything different than being at my school. She does not have any friends in our neighborhood and it would be a hard adjustment if she wasn't able to go to my school.