



89th Legislative Session Agenda

SCHOOL FUNDING

Our Position: Texas public schools are currently experiencing a perfect storm of funding impacts. The significant rise in inflation since 2019, the expansion of state mandates, and declining enrollment have forced Arlington ISD, and districts across the state, to adopt deficit budgets. We embrace the opportunity to work with legislators on solutions that put Texas back on track to funding our students at previously attained levels. **We ask our legislators to provide sustainable, accountable, and predictable funding for Texas students and classrooms.**

- Continue to allot public funds to Texas public schools and to oppose voucher legislation, ensuring all children have access to a high-quality education.
- Increase the per-student basic allotment funding to acknowledge increased classroom costs due to inflation and accommodate educator compensation increases.
- Base school funding on student enrollment rather than attendance.
- Fund the identification and needs of the growing special education student population to ensure students get the services and education they deserve.
- Continue to increase access to affordable health insurance options for public school employees.
- Create property tax appraisal legislation that ensures school funding is not impaired.

SAFETY

Our Position: Students and staff should feel safe and supported in all Texas schools. The Arlington ISD Board of Trustees, our community, and our staff members have demonstrated our commitment to safe and productive school environments through community-supported bond elections, prioritization of local funds, and full compliance with state safety requirements. We appreciate the state's attention to this policy priority and stress that additional state resources are needed to meet the needs of our students. **We ask the legislature to partner with school districts to provide sufficient, flexible, and comprehensive supports that ensure all students are protected in classrooms.**

- Build on previous proposals to enhance student security through increased funding of the school safety allotment.
- Stabilize safety funding streams for school districts and avoid reliance on grant funding.
- Prioritize and increase support for student and staff mental health identification and services with flexibility to meet local needs.
- Fund Multi-disciplinary Threat Assessment Teams for every school district to ensure appropriate staffing and effective intervention to stop violence before it occurs.

ACADEMIC GROWTH

Our Position: *Students and staff in Texas deserve an educational experience that promotes academic growth and inspires students to learn both content and skills that prepare them for a bright future. Arlington ISD students receive exceptional experiences through daily classroom instruction and expansive program offerings. We welcome the opportunity to showcase our strengths and identify areas for growth through accountability. We believe that a comprehensive system, beyond standardized testing, will enhance transparency in school performance and provide a more accurate picture of the valuable services schools offer. **We ask our legislators to focus on proven academic supports and a viable accountability system.***

- Utilize a fair, transparent accountability system for all schools in Texas that receive public funds.
- Reduce the over-reliance on STAAR as a measure for student and school success in the accountability system.
- Accelerate access to research-based early childhood learning through enrollment-based funding for full-day pre-K for all 4-year-old students.
- Continue to allow local school districts the autonomy to adopt TEKS-aligned instructional resources that best reflect our student population.

*The Texas Education Agency points out that “the board and superintendent work together as a team to provide the best possible education for the students they serve.” **We urge our legislators to respect and preserve the autonomy of our locally elected trustees, empowering them to lead in the best interests of our students and communities, securing a brighter future for Texas.***