

✓ Increase school funding

According to the Legislative Budget Board, funding for public education decreased \$9.8 billion in constant dollars between FY 2020 and FY 2025 — due in large part to a flat Basic Allotment during years of high inflation. School districts across the state are passing deficit budgets and reducing staff. The Legislature should prioritize additional dollars for public education so that schools can recruit and retain teachers, meet state safety and security mandates, and address a shortage of funding for special education.

✓ Balance property-tax relief with investments in schools

The Texas School Alliance applauds the Legislature's efforts to reduce the property-tax burden in recent years and supports continued relief for property owners. However, tax relief should not come at the expense of Texas students. The Legislature should make responsible investments in property-tax relief while also prioritizing additional funding for public schools.

✓ Strengthen teacher recruitment

Public schools have faced a historic teacher shortage, and while teacher turnover has decreased in the last couple of years, many schools still struggle to find fully certified educators. Legislators should invest in programs that are proven to bring high-quality teachers into the profession, including college teacher-prep programs and local "grown your own" programs. School districts need greater flexibility to find the teachers they need.

✓ Increase support for workforce development programs and courses

The opportunities for students to be career ready have improved significantly in recent years. For increased engagement and student success, workforce development policies should be tied to CTE programs, with increased state support for high-demand fields such as healthcare, technology, and construction trades. State policies that encourage collaboration with industry partners will help schools tailor programs to meet local economic needs.

✓ Maintain local flexibility regarding instructional materials

The Legislature should ensure that districts retain local control and flexibility to choose instructional materials that best meet student needs and community standards. Lawmakers should also maintain full funding of the Instructional Materials and Technology Allotment. School districts need greater predictability and transparency in the cycle of State Board of Education instructional materials reviews in order to best utilize funding allotments. Districts need access to a wide range of High Quality Instructional Materials.

✓ Ensure transparency in the accountability system

The state can improve predictability by submitting the state accountability manual to school districts by July 15 of the upcoming year. The state should also transition from using End of Course exam scores for graduation purposes to using College Career Military Readiness (CCMR) scores, and the state should align CCMR outcomes bonuses with CCMR accountability. School districts need more options in assessments for accountability purposes.

✓ Offer school-choice options that are accountable to parents and the public

The Legislature should expand support for innovative models that give more choice within accountable public schools, such as magnet programs or specialized STEM academies, rather than diverting funds to private or for-profit institutions. All schools receiving taxpayer funds should be held to the same standards for academic performance and fiscal transparency.

