

Why Fair Funding



Americans agree that a child's future should not depend on his or her heritage, parents' income or neighborhood. Our sense of justice insists that America be the land of opportunity where all of its citizens are considered equal.

Some people may wonder why funding schools fairly is an issue we need to talk about. They may ask: Aren't schools okay now?

For many years in Texas, many schools were not fine. Based on the wealth of their community, the quality of schools children attended in Texas was vastly different.

Before Fair Funding

There were tremendous differences in the amount of money available to educate children in public schools. Prior to 1995, some of the wealthiest school districts spent \$10,000 for each of their students and had low school tax rates. Poorer school districts could only spend \$3,000 a year for each student and had much higher school taxes. That was a difference of \$7,000. That was the difference between a very basic education and a high quality education.

What did having less money and higher taxes in a school district mean for children? It meant that some children:

- learned in buildings that were unsafe
- had fewer learning opportunities
- tried to learn in overcrowded classrooms
- were taught by under-paid teachers
- were taught by poorly trained teachers

Fair Funding for Education

In 1993, our state policymakers in Austin came up with a new way of funding our schools that is equitable. That means that the funding for all school districts would be fair.

Equity is one of the most important components of our state school funding system. In fact, the equitable support Texas gives its schools is seen as a good example for other states as they change their unfair school systems.

Since fair funding to all schools in Texas (after 1995), more students:

- are receiving a better quality of education
- are learning in fewer unsafe buildings
- have access to more special programs
- have access learning with computers
- are graduating with the courses that will prepare them to go to college.

When our state policymakers ensure a system of fair funding for schools, it sends the message that indeed every child is capable and is worthy of receiving the best quality education possible. With fair funding everybody benefits by having schools that are excellent. Excellent

schools are not just for the families with the greatest financial advantages.

With fair funding:

- Children learn more,
- Schools succeed,
- Colleges grow,
- Communities thrive,
- Taxes are equitable and
- Businesses get a strong workforce.

Texans need to say no to those who want to weaken the system by excusing a few from tax limitations or by allowing a few schools to spend more than anyone else, privileging a few to the detriment of the many. To go back to the old funding system is to go back to an unjust funding system. Texas and its school children deserve better. The future of our state demands better.

Excerpted from www.texans4fairfunding.org, sponsored by the Texas Latino Education Coalition.

For more information on Texans for Fair Funding see [web site launch article](#) or visit www.texans4fairfunding.org.

For more information on the Texas Latino Education Coalition visit www.texans4fairfunding.org or call 210-444-1710.

Comments and questions may be directed to them via e-mail at feedback@idra.org .

[©2004, IDRA. This article originally appeared in the *IDRA Newsletter* by the Intercultural Development Research Association. Every effort has been made to maintain the content in its original form. However, accompanying charts and graphs may not be provided here. To receive a copy of the original article by mail or fax, please fill out our [information request and feedback form](#). Permission to reproduce this article is granted provided the article is reprinted in its entirety and proper credit is given to IDRA and the author.]

Close Window