

# Scope for Paras, Custodial, Plant Ops., Bus Drivers and other Edu. Employees

April 2012



Democracy is, "government of the people, by the people and for the people." ~ Abraham Lincoln.

This means that we are not here to serve our government, but that our government is here to serve us — and we have the right to decide who will represent us and how we want to be represented. It means that we have one of the greatest rights any free people can have: the right to vote.

Your vote holds your local and national leaders responsible for the decisions they make. Your vote sends a message about the issues you think are important. Your vote affirms our rights as free citizens to elect our government and take part in democracy.

When you vote, you are able to elect individuals who concern themselves with the problems affecting you and your area. Please keep in mind that elected officials are extensions of their constituents.

Everything they vote for/do not for, support/do not support will influence you, your friends and family. So when you get information about candidates, make sure that you look for someone who will help with changes such as:

- raise teacher and support staff pay to levels exceeding the national average;
- keep quality state funded health insurance for all education employees;
- repeal the federal government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions that unfairly reduce Social Security benefits for educational retirees and other public employees

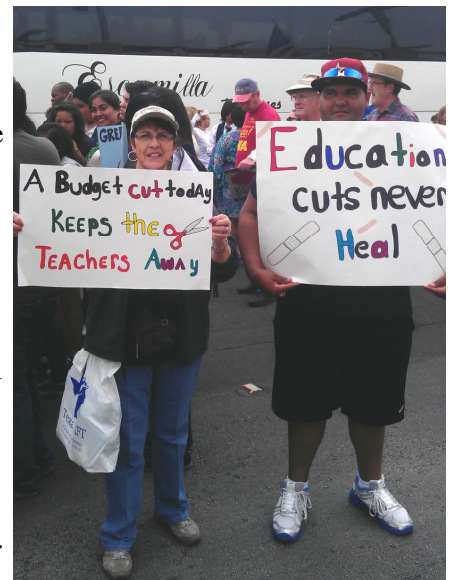


On Saturday March 24, 2012 the Save Texas Schools March and Rally was held at the Texas State Capitol. Students, parents, teachers and community leaders attended to show their support of Texas public education.

If Texans want their independent school districts to stay independent, they must fight for them. That was the message of the March 24 **Save Texas Schools** rally at the Capitol, as public education advocates gathered to turn 2012 into an education election.

Save Texas Schools launched last year with a similar rally during the heart of the 82nd legislative session (March 11, 2011), and while this year's was a much smaller affair, the core issue remained how Gov. Rick Perry and the Legislature effectively devastated districts statewide by cutting school funding by \$5.4 billion in the current two-year budget cycle.

In 2011, STS intentionally kept elected officials off the podium. This year, some of the loudest voices against the status quo were lawmakers. Many familiar faces, including most of the Travis County Democratic delegation, voiced their support for the movement. However, this was a bipartisan affair, and these strong words came from GOP State Board of Education member Thomas Ratliff: "Every time the state board of education or the Legislature comes to town, the 'T' in ISD is under attack," he warned. Travis County U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett (D), who warned the crowd: "The federal government isn't on the way with a rescue. We Texans have to rescue ourselves." That means ISDs will have to take more serious control of their own finances, and that may start sooner rather than later.



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