



MCALLEN AFT NEWS



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EDUCATION CUTS—HOW IT EFFECTS YOU

TEXAS AFT HOTLINE

Posted on April 1, 2014 by Texas AFT Staff

The effects of the deep budget cuts passed by those in control at the state capitol in Austin in 2011 are still being felt. More than \$1 billion in grant funding was wiped out and most of that loss has not been made up. For instance, we are still waiting for the restoration of \$200 million for full-day pre-kindergarten expansion grants. (Only \$30 million of that amount for pre-K has been added back to the biennial budget for 2014-2015, and it's not earmarked for full-day pre-K expansion grants.)

Per-pupil funding for school districts was cut by \$4 billion in 2011, and we are still \$600 million short of making up that loss in 2014-2015. But that understates the problem. As the Center for Public Policy Priorities pointed out in a study of the budget cuts last year, school funding has not made it back anywhere close to the pre-recession level we had reached in

2008. By that yardstick, current funding levels reflect “a \$611 per -student drop in funding from pre -recession levels or \$18,330 per classroom of 30 students.”

Meanwhile, the number of students enrolled in our public schools has grown by roughly 85,000 per year to more than five million, and fully 60 percent of them are economically disadvantaged, high-need children.

Sen. Wendy Davis, candidate for governor, is making a big issue of the ongoing funding cuts in her election contest with Attorney General Greg Abbott, and she invites you to tell your story about the cuts' effect on you and yours. Here's that invitation, in her own words: “Back in 2011, Greg Abbott's allies in Austin slashed education funding in Texas by \$5.4 billion. When Texas school districts sued to have their funds restored, Abbott defended the



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HOTLINE

“Now, he’s out on the campaign trail talking about a new early education ‘plan,’ even though he’s championed slashing \$200 million from early education in Texas.

“To me, that kind of hypocrisy is astonishing.

“Texas families have witnessed the devastating effects these budget cuts have had on schools. We’ve heard Greg Abbott’s side of the story. Now, I want to hear yours.

“How have cuts to Texas education affected your family—your children or grandchildren, nieces or nephews? Click here to let us know! <http://www.wendydavistexas.com/landing/e140401ed/>

“Back in 2011, I filibustered massive cuts to Texas schools. I’ve since fought to get those funds restored. And though we’ve made progress, Greg Abbott is still fighting us on this issue.

“It’s time we let him know exactly how his anti-education record has hurt Texas families.

“Tell me your story here.

“I hope to hear from you. And thank you in advance for sharing.”

- See more at: <http://texasaftblog.com/hotline/?p=3679#sthash.XTMGzymb.dpuf>

Posted on [April 3, 2014](#) by [Texas AFT Staff](#)

The U.S. economy has yet to make up the jobs lost in the Great Recession, and the long-term unemployed are still suffering the consequences. Since the start of this year, the federal program of extended unemployment benefits has been suspended, adding still more misery to the lot of these fellow Americans. Texas teachers and school employees, themselves still struggling to recover from the deep budget cuts and layoffs imposed in the recession’s wake, can empathize.

Now a bipartisan deal on unemployment insurance has been reached in Congress, but not everyone is on board. Two million Americans are waiting for federal lawmakers to release the benefits held hostage since December.

Please help pass this bill in the Senate. It is not only morally right but also economically beneficial to pass this bill. The whole economy is strengthened when we invest to help the unemployed. **Tell the Senate we need this now.**

- See more at: <http://texasaftblog.com/hotline/?p=3685#sthash.R3yRTc2m.dpuf>