

MCALLEN AFT NEWS

McAllen AFT, 1500 Dove, McAllen, TX November, 2012 Volume 20, Issue 3

CLASS SIZE AND RETENTION

In this issue:

CLASS SIZE AND TEACHER RETENTION?

Most love teaching because they love children, but the much larger class sizes makes some teachers feel as if all their efforts were futile; they will seek jobs in industry.

- If other districts around us continue to keep classes smaller we will begin to lose teachers to those districts as openings occur;
- Increased class size is not nearly as paramount as the stress involved with the STAAR testing. We have had very effective teachers decide to retire because of high stakes testing;
- Teachers are becoming frustrated with the increase workload and increase in expectations. Teachers & administrators who are close to retirement are going to be leaving the profession as well;
- Teachers are frustrated and tired. This is not the profession we all dreamed of when we started. The testing mandates have caused low morale and less creativity with our staff;
- We believe when teachers have a chance to enter the private business sector for more, or at very least, comparable income, they will leave the teaching profession due to the "pressure cooker" environment created by high stakes testing, the reduction in funding for public education with increased demands by both federal and state law, the lack of support and appreciation for public education demonstrated by our elected officials, and the fact that public education has been sent a resounding message by the Texas legislators that we are doomed to failure;
- Teacher retention will drop. We are expecting between 8 and 10% dropping;
- We had 10% resign or retire this year. Neighboring district about the same;
- There are more retirements mid-year than ever in the district's history;
- We have teachers changing professions. We have lost quality science teachers and have not been able to replace them.

Love Children	1
Frustrated With Large Classes	1
State Board Place 2	2
Legislative Kickoff	2

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A LITTLE BIT OF EVERYTHING

State Board of Education District 2 Precincts counted—100%

Cortez	203, 247	53.8%
Turner	163,255	43.2%
Nelson	11,079	2.9%

In an after election footnote, we want to mention to all of you that the **AFL/CIO endorsed Ruben Cortez for District 2 State Board of Education**. After 30 years, we now have a person from the Valley representing us on the State Board of Education. We are especially excited to have input into the State Board of Education.

Ruben made numerous contacts with us during the election process asking for our input into all areas of Texas education.

As we move forward, we hope this new ally will help with a better future for students.



**THEIR FUTURE
 OUR FIGHT!**

Texas AFT Legislative Kickoff

Coming up on Saturday, December 1, 2012, from 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. will be the Texas AFT Legislative Kickoff for the 2013 session in Austin.

The kickoff will be held two blocks from the capitol building in downtown Austin, in the Great Hall at the Family Life Center, First United Methodist Church, at 13th and Lavaca Street. Lunch and afternoon refreshments will be provided.

Participants will be presented with the following:

- *expert, up-to-the-minute briefings on the players at the capitol and the legislative lay of the land;
- *hands-on training in how to influence the legislative process on our key Issues; and
- *focused discussion and planning for legislative mobilization around the 2013 session at the local, regional, and statewide level.

McAllen AFT will bring a team who will play a role in the local's legislative lobbying efforts.

In addition, each regional coordinator is invited to bring a team made up of all organizers and member/activists from the region who will take part in grass-roots legislative lobbying. More details will be given to our members as soon as we have more details.