

# The Trojan

C U M B Y I N D E P E N D E N T S C H O O L D I S T R I C T

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Pursuit of Truth
- Funding Increase
- Too Many Administrators
- Education is Overfunded
- Community Input

## BEYOND RHETORIC: FACT VS MYTH

### Pursuit of Truth

This issue of The Trojan is dedicated to clearing up the confusion in regards to the misinformation concerning how public schools operate in the State of Texas. If WE as constituents and proponents of our community schools are going to change the minds of our legislators we must first discern fact from myth. By educating ourselves we can insure our legislators are knowledgeable on the issue of public education and being truthful when he/she speaks on the subject.

### Education Funding Increased

**Myth:** Public education spending increased \$3 billion. Some legislators say that's a 10% increase.

**Fact:** According to the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) funds for education increased \$1.8 billion or 3.7%. Often mentioned is the state lost \$3 billion of one-time stimulus funding. What isn't mentioned is the state used the one-time stimulus funds to **SUPLANT** state funding for reoccurring expenses, rather than using the money as intended to **SUP-**

### PLEMENT education funding.

Please note that the legislature did not fund for the increase of 170,000 new students entering the state's public education system. This is a \$4 billion dollar expense not funded by the state. It is also important to recognize that on top of a \$4 billion loss in per-student funding, lawmakers cut \$1.4 billion in education grants. Total cut \$5.4 billion.

### Too Many Administrators

**Myth:** There is a 1:1 ratio of teachers to non-teaching staff members. The ratio was 5:1 in 1970.

**FACT:** According to Moak, Casey and Associates, Texas didn't count all staff in the 1970s. Auxiliary personnel weren't counted until the PEIMS data system was established in the 1980s. This is not an apples-to-apples comparison. When looking at comparable data the ratio of teachers to non-teachers has not changed since the 1980s and has slightly declined, from 52% to 50% since 1989.

Fact is, Administrators only make up 1% of school employees statewide. Professional

support (9%), educational aides (10%), and auxiliary staff (27%). We need bus drivers, janitors, and cafeteria workers to take care of our students' needs along with teachers and administrators.

### Education is Overfunded

**Myth:** Texas pays more than \$11,000 per child on public education in state, local, and federal moneys.

**Fact:** According to the U.S. Census, Texas spends \$8,540 per student, ranking **42nd** in the country. The report states that Texas spends **less** per student than **all other states** on employee benefits. \$1,005 compared to \$2,263 nationally.

This ranking was pre-budget cuts.

### Community Input

Our legislators need community input just as our school district needs community input. WE must be educated so WE can form an accurate argument. Once WE are armed with the facts, WE can dispel rhetoric and political spin that misleads and creates community discourse.