

Texas Classroom Teachers Association

P.O. Box 1489
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Testimony to the Senate Education Committee Regarding CSSB 3/ CSSB 468 By Holly Eaton, Director of Professional Development and Advocacy March 8, 2011

We oppose this bill for several reasons:

- The bill temporarily allows furloughs for teachers of up to seven noninstructional days. We have been working with Senator Shapiro and subgroup of senators to on temporary measures to provide relief for school districts to address temporary budget situations, and we would prefer to discuss the issue of furloughs more thoroughly in this forum to address key issues and parameters (such as when this tactic could be used, which categories of personnel would be affected, and what the temporary timeline would be).
- The bill **permanently** removes 2010-2011 salary floor for teachers, changes nonrenewal notice deadlines, voids contracts for teachers' failure to maintain certification, and exempts retire/rehire teachers from minimum salary and contracts. We object to permanent changes of this nature to address the current budget shortfall, and would hope to continue our discussion on short-term remedies in the workgroup previously mentioned.

Given the stated goal of preserving the classroom from cuts to the maximum extent possible, we believe it is incumbent upon the legislature to ensure that the state puts more, not less structure, into place to minimize cuts that are directly detrimental to the classroom. For example, we understand that the provisions in the bill temporarily suspending districts' FIRST ratings is an attempt to enable districts to tap into their reserve funds to address the budget shortfall without that counting against them under FIRST. However, given concerns expressed by Senator Shapiro and other members about how school districts account for local district expenditures, particularly in the area of personnel, we would suggest that a better way to protect districts which tap into their fund balances is to temporarily suspend the FIRST indicators related to fund balances, but to continue FIRST ratings on other indicators. At a time of significant budget shortfalls, it is particularly important to keep an early warning system in place to identify districts with serious financial issues.

In fact, there's been a drift by local school districts in recent years towards increased spending on things other than direct instructional expenses as

demonstrated by the attachment showing how increases in teacher salaries have not kept pace with increases in state and local expenditures per pupil.

We note that there are aspects of the bill that we don't have particular concerns about, such as the elimination of pest control mandates, fitness tests for certain students and extending the telecommunications discount. However, many of the other flexibility measures in this bill directly and permanently affect the classroom, which seems contrary to the goal of preserving the classroom to the maximum extent possible from being impacted by the budget shortfall.



Comparison of increases in teacher salaries to increases in state and local expenditures per pupil. Increases are aggregate percentage increases above the 1991-92 school year. Prepared by Texas Classroom Teachers Association.

School Year	Total Expenditures per Pupil	Percentage Increase from 1991-92	Operating Expenditures per Pupil	Percentage Increase from 1991-92	Average Teacher Salary ¹	Percentage Increase from 1991-92	Average Student/Teacher Ratio	Teacher Salary per Pupil	Percentage Increase from 1991-92
1991-92	\$4,452		\$3,939		\$29,041.00		16.3	\$1,782	
1992-93	\$4,774	7.2%	\$4,214	7.0%	\$29,935.00	3.1%	16.3	\$1,837	3.1%
1993-94	\$4,898	10.0%	\$4,360	10.7%	\$30,521.00	5.1%	16.1	\$1,896	6.4%
1994-95	\$5,057	13.6%	\$4,504	14.3%	\$31,223.00	7.5%	16	\$1,951	9.5%
1995-96	\$5,358	20.4%	\$4,756	20.7%	\$32,001.00	10.2%	15.7	\$2,038	14.4%
1996-97	\$5,282	18.6%	\$4,717	19.8%	\$33,038.00	13.8%	15.6	\$2,118	18.9%
1997-98	\$5,597	25.7%	\$5,002	27.0%	\$34,133.00	17.5%	15.5	\$2,202	23.6%
1998-99	\$5,853	31.5%	\$5,217	32.4%	\$34,949.00	20.3%	15.3	\$2,284	28.2%
1999-00	\$6,354	42.7%	\$5,668	43.9%	\$38,287.00	31.8%	15.2	\$2,519	41.4%
2000-01	\$6,638	49.1%	\$5,915	50.2%	\$39,122.00	34.7%	14.9	\$2,626	47.4%
2001-02	\$6,913	55.3%	\$6,167	56.6%	\$40,049.00	37.9%	14.8	\$2,706	51.9%
2002-03	\$7,088	59.2%	\$6,317	60.4%	\$41,479.00	42.8%	14.7	\$2,822	58.4%
2003-04	\$7,708	73.1%	\$6,861	74.2%	\$41,768.00	43.8%	14.9	\$2,803	57.3%
2004-05	\$8,916	100.3%	\$7,084	79.8%	\$42,645.00	46.8%	14.9	\$2,862	60.6%
2005-06	\$9,269	108.2%	\$7,229	83.5%	\$43,105.00	48.4%	14.9	\$2,893	62.4%
2006-07	\$9,629	116.3%	\$7,466	89.5%	\$45,971.00	58.3%	14.7	\$3,127	75.5%
2007-08	\$10,162	128.3%	\$7,826	98.7%	\$47,283.00	62.8%	14.5	\$3,261	83.0%
2008-09	\$11,024	147.6%	\$8,342	111.8%	\$48,334.00	66.4%	14.4	\$3,357	88.4%
2009-10	\$11,567	159.8%	\$8,572	117.6%	\$49,544.00	70.6%	14.5	\$3,417	91.8%

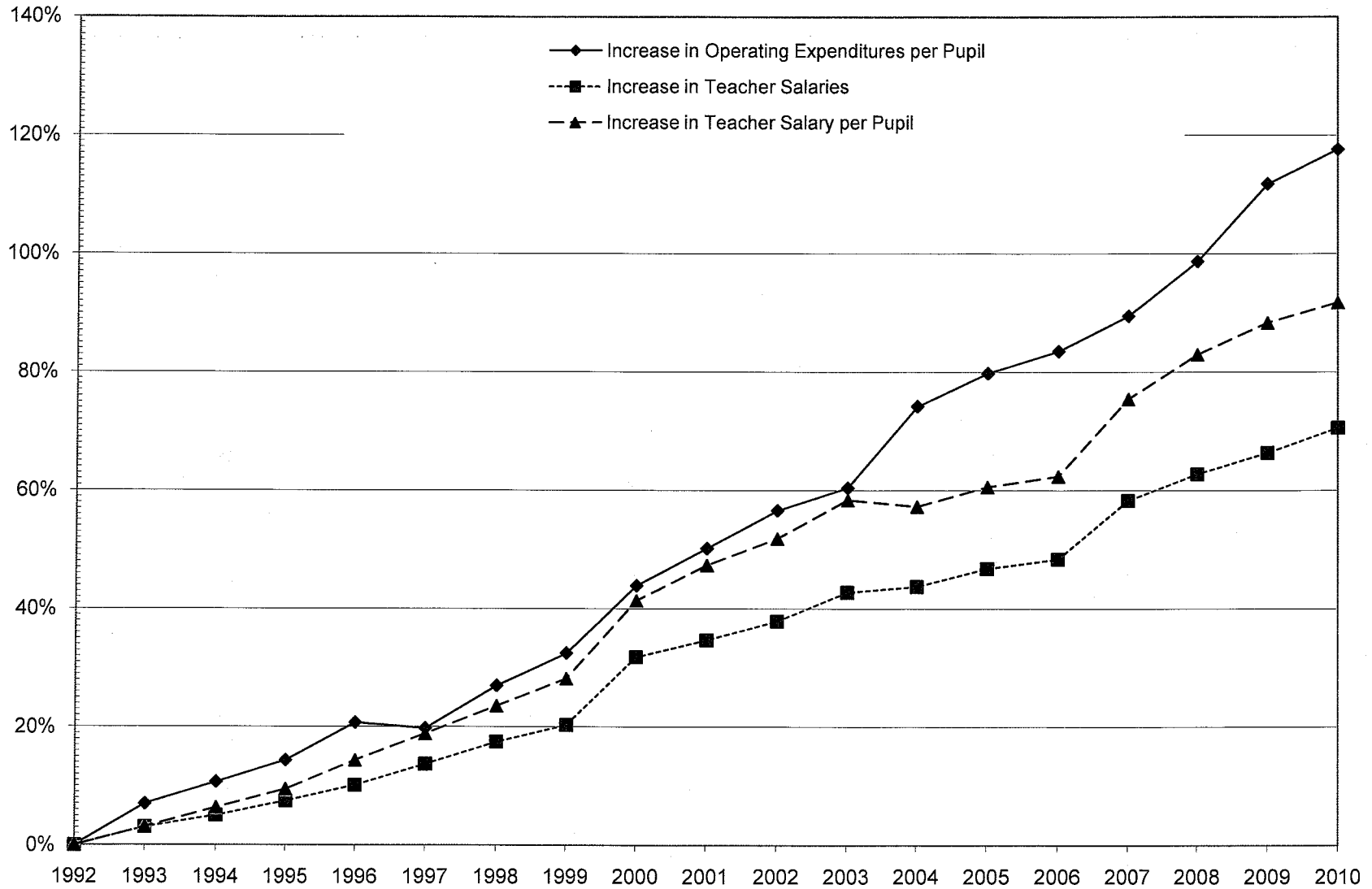
Teacher salary if average teacher salary per pupil had kept up with increases in operating expenditures per pupil **\$56,215**

Difference (amount by which teacher salaries have fallen due to insufficient dedication of revenues to salary increases) **\$6,671**

Source, Snapshot and Pocket Edition, Texas Education Agency

¹ Average teacher salaries include pay for supplemental duties such as career ladder, extracurricular activities, etc.

Percentage Increase in Operating Expenditures vs. Teacher Salaries



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Testimony to the Senate Education Committee Regarding CSSB 443 By Holly Eaton, Director of Professional Development and Advocacy March 8, 2011

We oppose CSSB 443 for several major reasons:

1. It would change current class size caps of 22:1 in grades K-4 to a district-wide average of 21:1, while still allowing waivers.
2. It would dramatically increase the number of districts and campuses that would be exempt from class size limits and other important laws under the "excellence exemptions" section of the law.

Regarding the bill's change to the current 22:1 class size caps in grades K-4 in the name of cost-savings to school districts, given the great amount of flexibility districts currently have if they can't meet the cap, we absolutely see no need to make **permanent** changes in a 25-year old state law that many experts believe has contributed to the nationally-recognized success of our elementary students. Given the changing demographics of the student population in Texas such that an increasing number of students are economically disadvantaged, it is even more critical now to ensure that class sizes remain small in order for these students to receive the additional attention they need.

Current law provides for all kinds of accommodations if a district can't meet the cap - the cap doesn't apply for 12 weeks of the school year, the district can easily get a waiver from the state to increase class sizes that's good for a whole school year. Over the last 19 years, only 10 waivers have been denied and some 3,000 have been granted, so it's easy for a district to get one (see attached information from TCTA Public Information Act request). But one of the key safeguards in the waiver process is a requirement for the district to notify the parents of the students who will be affected by the waiver that their child's class size will increase. So all the checks and balances are in place - districts have an incentive to meet the law, or explain why they can't to parents and taxpayers via the waiver process. If they can't, they can fill out a 1-page waiver and tell the parents whose children will be affected. The commissioner reviews the situation to make sure it's educationally sound and grants the waiver for a year. If some districts don't meet the administratively



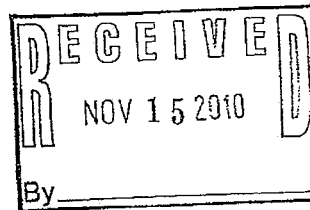
TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

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Robert Scott
Commissioner

November 9, 2010

Paige Williams
Texas Classroom Teachers Association
700 Guadalupe
Austin, Texas 78767



Re: **Public Information Request No. 14193**

Dear Ms. Williams:

Based on your request for public information, the Texas Education Agency (Agency) has located information responsive to your request. The information is provided with this letter, along with a copy of your original request. In addition, Agency staff provides the following: additional responsive documents have met the required retention schedule (5 years) and have been destroyed per Record Series Item No. 1.1 and Agency Item No. 701-253.

There are no charges for fulfilling this request and this particular request is considered closed. If you have any questions, or wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me at 512-463-9290, or via e-mail at PIR@tea.state.tx.us.

Sincerely,

Pablo Carrasquillo
Public Information Coordinator

Enc: Original Request
Responsive Document

10/27/2010

**DENIED WAIVERS REPORT
CLASS SIZE WAIVERS
LETTER DATE FROM 01/01/1984 TO 10/28/2010**

Received	District No.	District	Letter Date
06/22/1992	111901	GRANBURY ISD	
03/03/1993	227901	AUSTIN ISD	04/17/1992
02/26/1993	220901	ARLINGTON ISD	03/22/1993
06/04/1993	158906	VAN VLECK ISD	03/23/1993
10/24/2000	129906	TERRELL ISD	06/23/1993
			11/15/2000



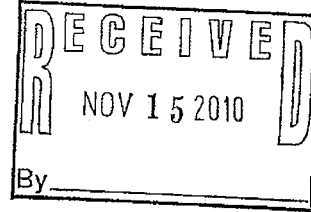
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Robert Scott
Commissioner

November 10, 2010

Paige Williams
Texas Classroom Teachers Association
700 Guadalupe
Austin, Texas 78767



Re: Public Information Request No. 14254

Dear Ms. Williams:

Based on your request for public information, the Texas Education Agency (Agency) has located information responsive to your request. The information is provided with this letter, along with a copy of your original request.

There are no charges for fulfilling this request and this particular request is considered closed. If you have any questions, or wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me at 512-463-9290, or via e-mail at PIR@tea.state.tx.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Pablo Carrasquillo'.

Pablo Carrasquillo
Public Information Coordinator

Enc: Original Request
Responsive Document

**Class Size Waivers - Granted to School Districts
1993-1994 through 2010-2011**

Please note the reporting requirement started with 1993-1994 school year

School Year	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Districts	289	261	205	202	202	193	168	144	140	144	148	160

School Year	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Districts	171	124	137	141	145	111*

* As of today the count is not the count for the year.