

Key Findings

TEXAS FOUNDATIONS SPEAK: ASSESSING SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION ADVOCACY

SURVEY FINDINGS

- ✘ Vision & Purpose
- ✘ Methodology
- ✘ Key Findings
 - + Grantmaker Survey
 - + General Public Sentiment
- ✘ Conclusions & White Paper

THE REALITY OF THE CROSSROADS



- ✘ Education is at a critical moment in Texas, with cuts at approximately \$5.4 billion from public schools
- ✘ Foundations across the state are already reporting an increase in requests for assistance
- ✘ Existing efforts to close the achievement gap between low-income students and their more advantaged classmates are being dismantled or dramatically scaled back
- ✘ Competition for scarce resources forcing grantmakers to choose between innovative programming & basics of maintaining core programming in public schools
- ✘ Interest among philanthropists in addressing the root legislative cause of these cuts has increased

SURVEY DESIGN

- ✘ Administered by third-party evaluation vendor
- ✘ 52 unique funders of 110 completed survey
- ✘ 18 questions covering:
 - + level of comfort with funding advocacy and policy initiatives
 - + level of knowledge about the IRS laws regarding foundation grantmaking in advocacy and policy
 - + level of interest in funding public education policy, critical issues facing public education in Texas, and grantmaking priorities in education.

SURVEY RESULTS

- ✘ Texas grantmakers care about education policy a lot!
- ✘ Still confused about the laws governing nonprofit lobbying and foundation advocacy
- ✘ More than half said they had not made any grants in advocacy or public policy in the past three years.

SURVEY RESULTS (CONT.)

- ✘ Most inclined to fund policy research and analysis, less likely to fund campaigns to influence public opinion
- ✘ Biggest fear: the impact of massive budget cuts in education.
- ✘ Clear disconnect between what foundations see as largest threat and where foundation resources are being invested

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✘ Mobilize Education Advocacy Taskforce
- ✘ Train Foundation Staff and Boards on Advocacy Basics and School Funding
- ✘ Support Efforts to Improve and Protect Public School Finance
- ✘ Move Beyond Grants for Research and Fund Direct Advocacy

TEXAS FOUNDATIONS SPEAK

- ✘ Foundations have the tools to help stop the budget cuts by making strategic grants and using our own coordinated voices.
- ✘ The question becomes: Do we have the vision and courage to do all we can to protect public education?

QUALITY OF SCHOOLS

What grade would you give U.S. public schools as a whole?

	1985	1995	2005	2010	2011
A & B	• 27%	• 20%	• 24%	• 18%	• 17%
C	• 43%	• 50%	• 46%	• 53%	• 51%
D	• 12%	• 17%	• 13%	• 20%	• 23%
FAIL	• 3%	• 4%	• 4%	• 6%	• 7%

43rd Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll 2011



QUALITY OF SCHOOLS

What grade would you give the public schools in your community?

	1985	1995	2005	2010	2011
A & B	• 43%	• 41%	• 48%	• 49%	• 51%
C	• 30%	• 37%	• 29%	• 33%	• 32%
D	• 10%	• 12%	• 9%	• 11%	• 11%
FAIL	• 4%	• 5%	• 5%	• 5%	• 5%

43rd Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll 2011

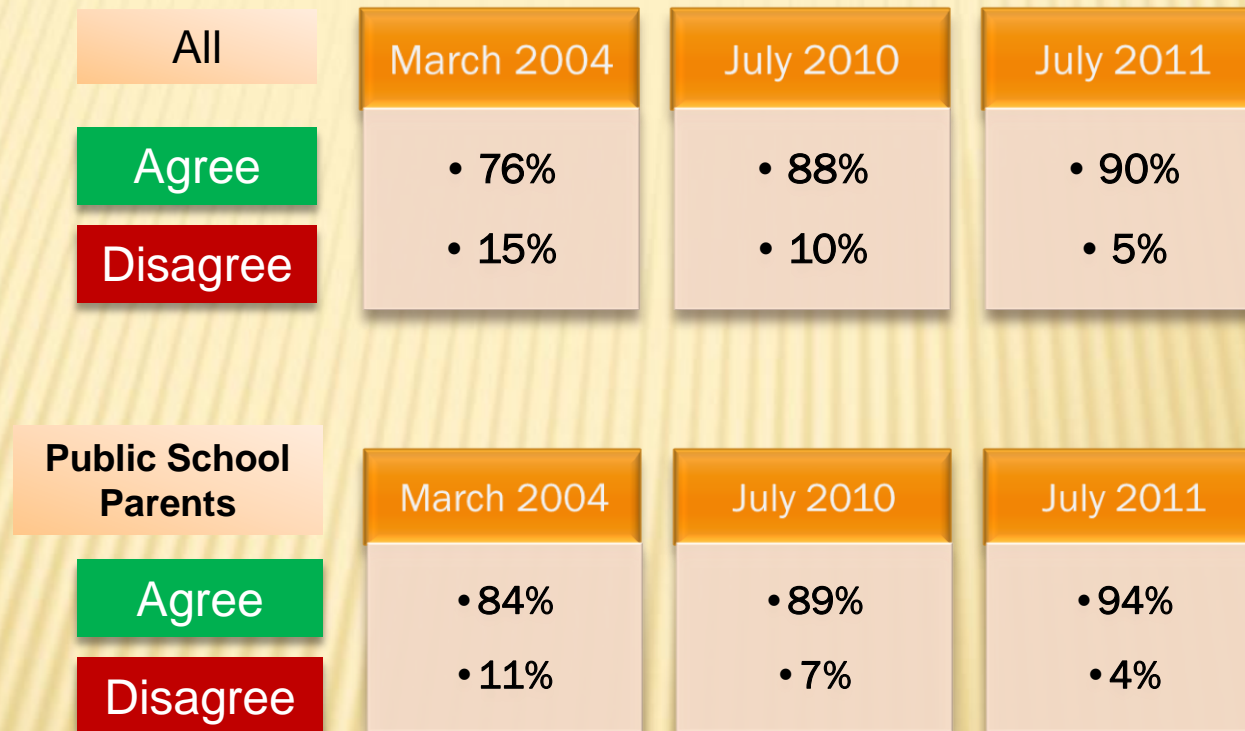


BIGGEST PROBLEM FACING SCHOOLS



PUBLIC EDUCATION IN TEXAS

Do you agree or disagree that Texas schools need more State money?



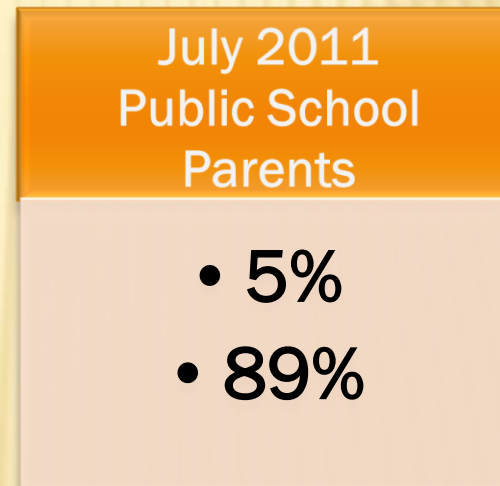
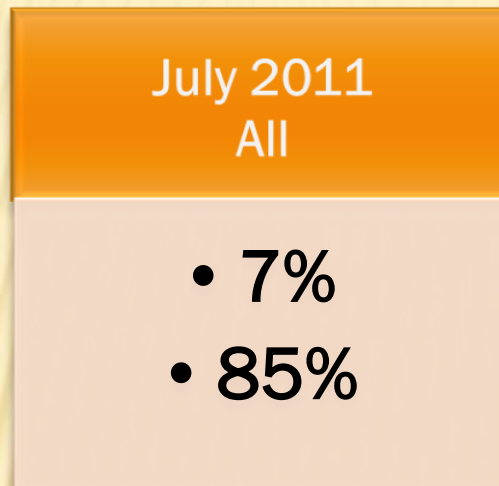
Texas Poll 2011, conducted for TASB



PUBLIC EDUCATION IN TEXAS

Do you believe Texas Legislature made education a priority
in the 2012-2013 State budget?

YES
NO



Texas Poll 2011, conducted for TASB



PUBLIC EDUCATION IN TEXAS

Which of the following statements most closely reflects your view of the Legislature's decision to cut public education funding?

	July 2011 All	July 2011 Public School Parents
\$4B FSP cut was necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2%
\$4B FSP cut was too much	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 12%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 11%
Public school funding should not have been cut	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 75%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 80%

Texas Poll 2011, conducted for TASB



PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING

82ND TEXAS LEGISLATURE

For the first time since Gilmer-Aikin in 1949, Legislature failed to fund current law

Foundation School Program current services State aid was decreased by \$4 B

Special programs, grants and allotments were reduced by \$1.3 B

Total true decrease to public education is \$5.3 B



CYCLE OF FOUNDATION ADVOCACY

