

Town Hall Meetings on Cuts to Public Education Funding

Come learn about the proposed state cuts to public education and the direct impact to our public schools in Houston and the state. ***Local officials and school administrators will discuss how these severe cuts will make changes in your schools, including classrooms, this fall.*** You will have an opportunity to voice your concerns and learn what can be done about it.

Save a Date!

When: **Saturday April 2, 2011***

Where: Jeff Davis High School, 1101 Quitman, Houston, TX 77009

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

*Refreshments will be available 9:30 -10:00am

When: **Saturday April 9, 2011**

Where: Lamar High School

Time: 10:00 a.m. -12:30 p.m., 3325 Westheimer, Houston, TX 77098

For further information, please call Nancy Lomax 713/688-7075. Co-sponsored by Parents for Public Schools-Houston, HISD Trustees and Houston ISD Council of PTAs.

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR MORE OPPORTUNITIES!

Reuniones comunitarias sobre la financiación de Educación Pública

Hay dos reuniones informativas sobre los recortes a la educación pública. *Los funcionarios locales y los administradores discutirán el impacto de estos recortes a las escuelas públicas de Houston.* Los asistentes tendrán la oportunidad de expresar sus preocupaciones y aprender lo que puedan hacer al respecto.

Recuerde la fecha!

Cuándo: Sábado 2 de abril de 2011*

Dónde: Jeff Davis High School, 1101 Quitman, Houston, TX 77009

Tiempo: 10 a.m.-12:30p.m.

* Se servirá un refrigerio a las 9:30-10:00am

Cuándo: Sábado 9 de abril de 2011

Dónde: Escuela Secundaria Lamar

Hora: 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., 3325 Westheimer, Houston, TX 77098

Para más información, por favor llame a Nancy Lomax 713/688-7075

Co-patrocinado por los padres de las escuelas públicas de Houston, la Mesa Directiva de HISD y el Consejo de Houston ISD de PTA's.

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OTHER OPPORTUNITIES:

Date: Wednesday March 30th, Houston parents are back at the capitol to meet with legislators to encourage them to minimize the impact to children and our schools.

This is a grassroots trip, initiated and organized by parents. As such, parents will be carpooling and caravanning instead of riding sponsored charter buses. No experience is required, and training will be provided. This will be an all-day trip - leaving at 7 a.m. and returning in the evening. If you would like to participate, rsvp texasedfunding@gmail.com with your name, email, cell number, school(s), and address. If you can, please also include the name of your state representative and state senator. You can find it at (<http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/>)

Date: Wednesday April 6, 2011

Event: SAVE OUR STATE – Statewide March, Rally and Legislative Lobby Day. Support Public Education & Other Services

11 a.m. – March from Waterloo Park to Capitol, Noon-1PM- Rally on South Steps of Capitol

1:30—4:30 Meeting with legislative offices

You can meet there or take a bus. Buses will be leaving from across the state, including the Houston area. For more information and to register go to www.april62011.org

STAY INFORMED. Legislative Updates

If you recall, the initial proposal of the Texas Legislature in January was for almost \$10 billion in cuts to public education which translates into 100,000 jobs in education—teachers, support staff, classes such as fine arts, sports, debate and other vital programs could disappear on campuses across the state. School closures and consolidations are also real possibilities- specifically in HISD. Larger classrooms sizes may be in our future this fall.

Recently, Governor Perry has agreed to use of part of the rainy day funds, \$3.2 billion, towards the current year's deficit. This is positive news. However, since Texas is facing a \$27 billion dollar deficit we still have a budget crisis. Paying down part of this year's deficit does not prevent severe cuts from happening to public education this upcoming biennium. It also does not address the structural deficit that was created in 2006. If this is not fixed, if they do not find more revenue, Texas will continue to face enormous shortfalls each year. Additionally, the legislature still has to decide what to do with the money they will have for the next 2 years.

They are deciding now where to invest and where to make cuts. This past week, the budget bill approved by the House Appropriations Committee this week calls for an \$8 billion cut to public education and does not utilize any of the Rainy Day Fund for the next biennium. The Senate version, on the other hand, calls for cuts of \$4 billion to public education and it is expected to utilize some of the Rainy Day Fund.

As they are in process of making these decisions, legislators need to know how you feel about it. We want to help ensure the final bill passed will minimize the cuts to education and our schools. Legislators need to know the priority you place on investing in education.

Just recently, HISD Trustee, Harvin Moore explains in depth the state and local tax revenue sources for public schools, implications of the state cuts and use of rainy day funds. March 16, 2011

http://www.yourhoustonnews.com/river_oaks/opinion/article_a0c50fc2-443a-5ea5-96e6-3ccdd7482a2c.html

Find Other Recent Articles that will give you greater understanding of the Rainy Day Fund as well as the Senate and House finance bills. Visit www.saveourschoolshouston.org

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE Grassroots advocacy initiatives are making an impact with legislators, so it is imperative to keep up our efforts at the state Capitol to show support for the education of all Texas children.

We want to encourage them to minimize the impact to children by not relying primarily on a cuts only approach to the deficit and seek a more balanced approach. Short term and long term solutions are necessary to help secure more revenue to adequately provide funding for public education now and into the future.

Some things that can help minimize the impact:

- use of the Rainy Day Fund
- access federal money to supplement public education funding
- work on fixing the structural budget problem

THINGS YOU CAN DO TODAY:

- 1) Contact the governor's office, your State House Representative and State Senator.
- 2) Contact the members of the Legislative Committees Relevant to public education funding.
- 3) Contact information & what to do, useful resources and other information can be found at www.saveourschoolshouston.org or www.texasedfunding.com

Please spread the word to others. It is important to also reach out to friends and family in other parts of Texas who have different legislators than we do here in Houston. After all, this affects almost 5 million children in Texas.