



**Press Release**  
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## Texas Funding for Schools Much Lower Than Before Recession

In response to the Great Recession, the Legislature chose to make extensive cuts to school funding instead of using the Rainy Day Fund to protect Texas school children, putting the state's economy and long-term prosperity in jeopardy.

State and local funding for preK-12 education is 11.2 percent below 2008 levels in Texas after adjusting for student growth and inflation, according to a report released by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a non-partisan policy research organization based in Washington, D.C.

"These cuts have undermined our ability to educate our children and there will be consequences for the Texas economy," said Chandra Villanueva, education policy analyst at the Center for Public Policy Priorities. "Good schools and an educated workforce foster economic growth, and we are undermining our own recovery by reducing our investment in education."

The federal government's failure to continue emergency financial aid to states and school districts also hurt. Federal dollars from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act helped Texas avoid education cuts initially, through fiscal 2011, and the federal Education Jobs Fund softened the blow to Texas school districts in 2012. But Texas' unwillingness to replace the federal money with state dollars led to \$5.3 billion in state preK-12 cuts in the 2011 legislative sessions.

Texas's preK-12 education cuts hurt the state's economy in the short- and long-term. The cuts have extended the recession by causing both public- and private-sector job losses, slowing the pace of economic recovery. In the first school year (2011-12) of the biennial state budget cycle alone, the funding cuts have forced school districts throughout Texas to lay off more than 25,000 teachers and support staff and to obtain waivers to exceed classroom size limits.

Reducing investment in schools also has long-term economic consequences. A strong education system is essential to creating and maintaining a thriving economy. Businesses need a well-educated workforce, and education cuts hurt the state's ability to produce workers with the skills needed to compete in a global economy.

"Across much of the country, kids are going back to school to find more crowded classrooms, and – in some cases – shorter school weeks," said Phil Oliff, policy analyst at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and author of the report released today. "That's no way to develop our future workforce and build a strong economy."

The Center's full report can be found at: <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=3825>



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**For More Information**

For more information or to request an interview, please contact Brian Stephens at [stephens@cphp.org](mailto:stephens@cphp.org) or 512.320.0222, ext. 112.

**About the Center**

The Center for Public Policy Priorities is a nonpartisan, nonprofit policy institute committed to improving public policies to make a better Texas. You can learn more about the Center at [CPPP.org](http://CPPP.org).

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