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American GI Forum Organization of Texas Inc.
Education Is Our Freedom and Freedom Should Be Everybody's Business

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Texas Senate Education Committee

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The Motto for The American GI Forum is: ***Education Is Our Freedom – and Freedom Should Be Everybody's Business!*** That is what brings us here today.

I want to thank all of you, for the work you do, in regard to the education of our future generations. Most of your work has been good for our children –but some ideas floating around today, can be very disastrous for students, who have no control of your actions, good or bad, driven by politics, rather than by genuine interest in our children's future.

GET RID OF THE STAAR Test and allow Texas teachers to teach our students, instruction which will be useful to them in solving real-life every-day problems, instead of just "teaching to the test." Why not use the "old-fashioned" method of testing, which gave teachers a better idea of a student's progress at the beginning of the school year, allowing time for corrective action, instead of waiting until the student fails, or drops out, in fear of the test. That system gave us some of the best medical researchers, educators, astronauts, military and even some very effective 2political leaders.

The STAAR results just released in June, show only a 55% passing rate on the English I writing test. "If there had been no phase-in of standards, only 46 percent of students would have passed reading, and 34 percent would have passed writing," and rates in other subjects are not much better. Texas should use end-of-course exam scores in Assessing high school performance and high school accountability ratings.

Teachers should be rated according to the effectiveness of their performance – and their compensation should be decided accordingly. Every teacher; however, should be provided the necessary tools and a reasonable student load.

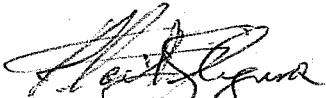
With a drop-out rate of more than 60% for Hispanics and more than 20% for Anglos and for Blacks, according to the ***Texas Public Schools 2010-11*** report, it should be quite clear, that the present system is not working – and will fall into greater disastrous results, if budget cuts in education are implemented. If anything, Rick Perry's extravagant trips in support of fellow-republicans, should be curtailed, and those millions of dollars in ridiculous security expenses, applied to the education fund.

What is happening to the millions of dollars for education from Texas Lottery? Millions of dollars worth of Texas natural resources are being harvested every day by Halliburton, Exxon, Chevron, etc., so why is our state struggling to educate our students?

By any chance, is it a partisan effort to choke our public education system out of funding, so that our students will be held hostage and economically coerced to choose the voucher system, which will make a few millionaire charter school owners even richer? Bear in mind that charter schools do not have to hire certified teachers – and have less government regulation.

According to the Freedom and Justice Foundation: **“Every child in Texas should be entitled to a first class education regardless of socio-economic background. Edgewood ISD is proof that private schools will use vouchers to recruit the most talented and academically motivated kids out of public schools. Perhaps, the students that most need academic help will be least served by vouchers. Even if a student could afford a private school education with the voucher system, he or she may be left behind.”**

David Dewhurst recently made a statement that he and Rick Perry are not going to be around forever – and *that* is a welcome bit of news. They should also take Sen. Dan Patrick with them. Patrick said, regarding school vouchers, “To me, choice is the photo ID of this session.” Mr. Patrick – I believe you are wrong on both counts and both are bad for our Great State of Texas. .



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Table 18 Students, Dropouts, and Annual Dropout Rate, by Grade and Gender, Texas Public Schools, 2010-11

Dropouts Grade	Students	Fema		Male		State	
		Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
Grade 7	365,181	241	0.1	288	0.2	529	0.1
Grade 8	362,710	515	0.3	486	0.3	1,001	0.3
Grade 9	403,682	3,528	1.8	5,382	2.5	8,910	2.2
Grade 10	347,847	2,870	1.7	4,254	2.4	7,124	2.0
Grade 11	319,371	2,860	1.8	3,982	2.5	6,842	2.1
Grade 12	323,623	5,148	3.2	4,809	3.0	9,957	3.1
Grades 7-12	2,122,414	15,162	1.5	19,201	1.8	<u>34,363</u>	1.6

The annual dropout rate was higher for males than females in all grades except Grades 8 and 12 (Table 20 on page 63). **In Grade 12, the rate was higher for females than males in each racial/ethnic group except Asians and Whites. The greatest difference in Grade 12 was between Hispanic females (4.5%) and males (4.0%).**

Annual Dropout Rates for Hispanic Students by Race

Of the 1,008,211 students in Grades 7-12 who identified their ethnicity as Hispanic in the 2010-11 school year, 655,219 (30.9%) identified White as their race, and 302,584 (14.3%) identified American Indian (Table 21 on page 65). Among Hispanic students, the dropout rate was highest for Whites (2.1%). Among multiracial Hispanic students, Grade 7-12 dropout rates for the three groups with the largest numbers of students were 1.8 percent for students identified as White and African American, 1.7 percent for students identified as White and American Indian, and 0.7 percent for students identified as White and Asian.

Table 20 (continued) Students, Dropouts, and Annual Dropout Rate, by Grade and Gender Within Racial/Ethnic Groups, Texas Public Schools, 2010-11

Students Female Group	Number	Male Percent	Dropouts				Annual		dropout rate (%)	
			Number	Percent	Female Number	Percent	Male Number	Percent	Female	Male
Grade 10										
African American	22,938	13.5	24,320	13.6	611	21.3	919	21.6	2.7	3.8
American Indian	897	0.5	1,004	0.6	21	0.7	—	—	2.3	3.3
Asian	5,958	3.5	6,287	3.5	—	—	40	0.9	0.3	0.6
Hispanic	78,897	46.5	82,820	46.4	1,703	59.3	2,460	57.8	2.2	3.0
Pacific Islander	212	0.1	245	0.1	—	—	—	—	1.9	1.2
White	57,826	34.1	61,013	34.2	482	16.8	764	18.0	0.8	1.3
Multiracial	2,793	1.6	2,637	1.5	30	1.0	35	0.8	1.1	1.3
State	169,521	100	178,326	100	2,870	100	4,254	100	1.7	2.4
Grade 11										
African American	21,171	13.5	21,733	13.4	569	19.9	834	20.9	2.7	3.8
American Indian	800	0.5	838	0.5	—	—	19	0.5	1.4	2.3
Asian	5,559	3.5	5,929	3.7	23	0.8	42	1.1	0.4	0.7
Hispanic	71,309	45.4	72,919	44.9	1,663	58.1	2,226	55.9	2.3	3.1
Pacific Islander	205	0.1	257	0.2	—	—	7	0.2	1.5	2.7
White	55,326	35.2	58,284	35.9	560	19.6	816	20.5	1.0	1.4
Multiracial	2,624	1.7	2,417	1.5	31	1.1	38	1.0	1.2	1.6
State	156,994	100	162,377	100	2,860	100	3,982	100	1.8	2.5
Grade 12										
African American	22,583	14.0	22,070	13.6	1,008	19.6	937	19.5	4.5	4.2
American Indian	799	0.5	785	0.5	25	0.5	28	0.6	3.1	3.6
Asian	5,474	3.4	5,687	3.5	77	1.5	88	1.8	1.4	1.5
Hispanic	73,552	45.7	72,456	44.5	3,326	64.6	2,864	59.6	4.5	4.0
Pacific Islander	225	0.1	236	0.1	9	0.2	5	0.1	4.0	2.1
White	55,957	34.8	59,299	36.4	663	12.9	851	17.7	1.2	1.4
Multiracial	2,308	1.4	2,192	1.3	40	0.8	36	0.7	1.7	1.6
State	160,898	100	162,725	100	5,148	100	4,809	100	3.2	3.0

