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State's largest educator association reacts to Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick's priorities

ATPE is dismayed that bills enabling the flow of new funding for Texas public schools—which educate more than 5.5 million students, yet are operating at funding levels set in 2019, before historic inflation—are not on Patrick's list of top priority bills

The **Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)**—the largest public educator organization in Texas—releases this statement from **Executive Director Shannon Holmes**:

“We are dismayed that school funding is not among Lt. Gov. Patrick's top 25 priorities for the 2025 Texas legislative session. We certainly knew and expected a school voucher program to be one of his top priorities, but we had retained hope that public school finance would also be on his list. Of course, this probably shouldn't be a surprise given that the first meeting of the Senate Committee on Education K-16 solely focused on private school vouchers. After last session, it's clear that simply putting money into the budget bill does not equate to prioritizing passage of the bills that will allow that money to be spent.

“In our meetings with the lieutenant governor's office, as well as with the governor's office and the House speaker's office, the ATPE lobby team has carried forward our members' numerous funding-related concerns. Our teachers and other public school employees need financial relief to stay in the profession. Our school districts can't cover the cost of the meaningful safety reforms implemented by the Legislature. They also can't keep up with the cost of special education for our most vulnerable students.

“Even if school funding makes it into Patrick's priorities 26 through 40, the lieutenant governor has already made it clear that he prioritizes vouchers over every other Texas priority, including the needs of more than 5.5 million Texas public school students.”

For more information about ATPE Governmental Relations, please visit atpe.org/txlege.

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About the Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)

Founded in 1980, ATPE is the leading educators' association in Texas with nearly 80,000 members statewide. With its strong collaborative philosophy, ATPE speaks for classroom teachers, administrators, and future, retired, and para-educators and works to create better opportunities for Texas' more than five million public school students. | atpe.org