

Texas cuts education jobs, shuttered dozens of schools

Chase Lawrence
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School districts across Texas are carrying out layoffs and cutting budgets and positions. At least 34 Texas public school campuses are slated for closure or consolidation through 2029 in the Independent School Districts (ISDs), while more than 800 education positions or salaries are being eliminated, cut or placed at risk.

Four campuses will be closed in the Judson ISD in San Antonio after trustees voted to eliminate 536 positions from the 2026–27 budget, with district officials saying most would be absorbed through vacancies and attrition. Of those cuts, 284 were tied to the previously approved campus closures.

Fort Worth ISD approved a plan to close 18 campuses by June 2029, as it faces declining enrollment and budget pressures. The district is also under state intervention following years of low academic ratings, raising the threat of still deeper restructuring. The plan to close and consolidate campuses is expected to save the district about \$77 million.

Crystal City ISD announced 72 layoffs, roughly a quarter of its workforce, as part of a financial recovery plan. The district is in a severe financial crisis, with a letter circulating to parents from the district reporting it has less than \$500 left after spending \$10.5 million in reserves over the past five years.

Carroll ISD voted to close Durham Intermediate School in Southlake beginning in the 2027–28 school year, while Arlington ISD voted to close Blanton Elementary School at the end of the 2025–26 school year.

Austin ISD, facing a roughly \$181 million deficit, is preparing major staffing reductions and class size increases. The district has also approved the closure of 10 campuses for the 2026–27 school year: Barrington, Becker, Dawson, Oak Springs, Ridgetop, Sunset Valley, Widén and Winn Montessori elementary schools, along with Bedichek and Martin middle schools.

International High School will also cease operating as a stand-alone campus/program, with students reassigned elsewhere. Austin ISD is also looking to cut staffing positions and increase class sizes from around 20 students to 27 in passing-rated schools.

Texas is notorious for closing down “failing schools,” i.e., schools that do not pass the state’s mandatory tests and a few other metrics, causing profound disruptions for children causing lower academic performance in the short run, lower high school graduation rates, college enrollment and earning potential later in life. The over 1,000 school closures in Texas since 2000 have also led to an increase in the number of teachers leaving the profession

amid a worsening teacher shortage.

The Trump administration has escalated the bipartisan policy of dismantling public education, breaking up the Department of Education in 2025. According to the Education Law Center at the NYU Metro Center, Texas is projected to lose \$1.76 billion in education funding this year as a consequence of Trump’s cuts to public education.

Texas’s Education Saving Account (ESA) program siphoned \$1 billion away from public schools. These funds are put into an account parents can use for private, religious, special private education or home school and do not go to public schools regardless of if they are spent or not, instead rolling over into the next year. If a student leaves the state, then the money is forfeited to the state’s General Revenue Fund, which serves as the state’s main checking account. While this account is used for education, it is also used for health and human services, the police, the judicial system and other expenses. Money going back into it does not necessarily go to public schools.

State funding for education has remained flat since 2019. Inflation has also pushed up operating costs. The illegal war against Iran will likely further push up costs indirectly as a result of inflation. The state funding formula—which relies on headcount to calculate funding per district—has led to a decrease in many districts’ funding as enrollment has fallen. This formula is the guaranteed minimum amount a district is entitled per student and is fulfilled first from local property taxes, and then the state makes up the difference. In the 2025–2026 school year, total enrollment dropped by over 75,000, the second highest drop in 40 years, constituting a 1.4 percent decrease. Using the \$6,215 basic allotment, that implies roughly a \$472 million reduction in funding.

According to STRIVE Public Policy Resources, the main driver for this was a decline in migration patterns, which otherwise offset lower birth rates. International immigration to the state decreased by nearly 48 percent, a decline of over 150,000 individuals, while domestic immigration fell by 21 percent, or just shy of 18,000 people. In all likelihood, a significant part of this decline is attributable to the Trump administration’s attacks on immigrants.

Of the recent enrollment drop, 60 percent was in grades K–5, meaning that there will likely be downstream effects for higher grades as the students currently enrolled are not replaced.

Demographer Bob Templeton, an expert at STRIVE Public Policy Resources called upon by the Texas Education Agency

during a state public education committee meeting, claimed public education enrollment could decline by as much as 400,000 students over the next four or five years. In his report, Templeton claims that the state could see a 90,000 student decline next year. More than 160,000 families have already applied for the state's voucher program, indicating a further shift away from public education.

Despite declining enrollment, the state still manages to overcrowd classes. While Texas has—on paper—an average student-to-teacher ratio of 15 to 1, the ratio suggested by the state, the average class size is 17 to 20 students. No cap exists on fifth through twelfth grade class sizes, with class sizes frequently averaging between 22 and 27 students. The Center for Public Education recommends 13 to 18 students for fifth through eighth grade, and between 15 and 20 students for grades 9 through 12.

Where is the money taken from education going? Corporate profit and imperialist war

So where does the money go that is “saved” by impoverishing teachers, crowding already overcrowded classrooms and, in general, destroying public education?

Tens of billions in tax subsidies from the state alone are given to multinational technology giants, major petrochemical and oil corporations and semiconductor manufacturers. Even a small portion of this would be more than enough to fully fund education.

Samsung secured some of the largest single property tax breaks in state history for its massive chip fabrication facilities in Taylor and Austin. In September 2025, Texas awarded Samsung Austin Semiconductor a \$250 million grant through the Texas Semiconductor Innovation Fund, on top of a federal CHIPS Act award that had originally been announced at up to \$6.4 billion and was later finalized at up to \$4.745 billion. Through legacy Chapter 313 agreements and local packages, the company reduced its school district property tax burden by billions over the life of its projects.

Meta and Microsoft have deployed billions of dollars into gigantic server hubs across Texas, including North Texas, the San Antonio area and El Paso, while the state's data center sales-tax exemption deprives public coffers of enormous sums. Qualifying data centers are exempt from the state's 6.25 percent sales tax on servers, storage hardware, software, electrical and cooling systems, emergency generators and electricity. The exemption cost Texas more than \$1 billion in Fiscal Year 2025 alone and is projected to cost nearly \$8 billion from 2026 through 2030.

Amazon is a huge holder of industrial space and server farms in the state, utilizing state and local exemptions to shield its cloud computing infrastructure from equipment taxes.

All of these companies are simultaneously reaping mega-profits off AI while carrying out tens of thousands of layoffs.

Historically, traditional energy giants have secured the largest share of property tax reductions under the state's legacy Chapter

313 program.

The same pattern extends across the petrochemical and oil giants concentrated along the Texas Gulf Coast. Good Jobs First's Subsidy Tracker lists a 2017 subsidy package for ExxonMobil and SABIC in San Patricio County of \$460 million, including Chapter 313 school property tax abatements approved by the Gregory-Portland School Board. It also lists \$234.6 million in local property tax abatements for Golden Pass Products, linked to ExxonMobil, and another \$55.4 million for Exxon Mobil Oil Corporation. Chevron Phillips Chemical Company LP is listed with a \$352.3 million local property tax abatement in 2020, in addition to a separate \$138.7 million abatement listed in 2013.

Dow Chemical, Chevron Phillips and Valero routinely rank among the largest cumulative recipients of school and county property tax discounts due to the oversized physical footprint of their chemical processing facilities.

The handouts in Texas are not merely an expression of the corrupt character of the Republican Party, but they are among the most acute expressions of broader trends in other states and the federal government, with tens of thousands of school jobs cut in 2025, and indeed worldwide. Germany, the UK, Australia and elsewhere are all cutting education. Faced with the internationalization of production, where capital can be easily moved wherever the largest return on investment is to be found, governments as well as unions have turned to offering the most favorable conditions for the corporations in a race to the bottom.

The money is also going to the prosecution of imperialist war. Trump has insisted that Washington must concern itself with only “one thing: military protection.” Behind this slogan stands the policy of the entire ruling class: no money for schools, teachers or basic social needs but unlimited resources for war, corporate subsidies and the enrichment of the financial oligarchy represented by both parties of Wall Street.

The fight for education as a social right must be taken up by the working class on an international and socialist basis.



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