



SENATOR JOSÉ MENÉNDEZ DISTRICT 26

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Senator José Menéndez Issues Statement on Omnibus Public Education Bill

San Antonio, Texas – Senator José Menéndez issues a statement after filing the Senate Democratic Caucus' Omnibus Public Education Bill, SB 40, for the 3rd called Special Session.

Senator José Menéndez released the following statement:

Today, we are taking a stand for what is really needed in Texas Public Education – fully funding our public schools. I will not stand by idly as leadership continues to bring back another voucher bill that threatens our already chronically underfunded public school system. For two decades Texans have said *NO* to vouchers, education savings accounts, and other so-called initiatives that seek to divert taxpayer dollars from the schools we are constitutionally responsible for supporting.

I filed SB 40 today, alongside my colleagues, to take a stand for real parental empowerment and educational choices. I contend that a robust public education is the foundation for opportunity for every child in this state. Until we can afford to support that, we certainly cannot afford to write blank checks to schools that lack the rigorous accountability and regulation of public education. Our bill seeks to address the real longstanding needs of public schools through:

- Raising the Basic Allotment (BA) and making it adjust to inflation moving forward;
- Switch to Enrollment Based funding, rather than the current Average Daily Attendance formula;
- Switch to Service-based Intensity Funding Formula for Special Education;
- Increase the School Safety Allotment from \$10 to \$100 per *enrolled* child;
- Create a Mental Health Allotment;
- Providing Paid Parental Leave and creating this allotment for all district employees; and
- Providing Free, Universal Pre-Kindergarten for all Texas children.

I stand firmly against any form of school voucher. I am ready and eager to work with all of my colleagues and make the most of our time back in Austin to address.

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