



Resolution in Response to State Underfunding of Rural Public Schools Alpine Independent School District

WHEREAS Alpine Independent School District has served as the center of the rural, remote community of Alpine, Texas in Brewster County for over 100 years;

WHEREAS Alpine ISD serves 950 students across 1,900 square miles, a geographic area six times larger than Houston ISD, with a state-determined allotment of \$9.8M in state and local funds;

WHEREAS Alpine ISD operationalizes our community's core values of *honesty, respect, responsibility, compassion, fairness, and accountability* by providing our children with learning experiences to be responsible, productive, and successful citizens of an ever changing world;

WHEREAS Alpine ISD is a persistently underfunded rural school district, ranking in the bottom two percentile in Texas in funding per student need (WADA), receiving \$1M less in funding than if we were funded at the state average funding per WADA;

WHEREAS Alpine ISD has experienced record-setting inflation in fixed costs since 2019 while state funding has remained unchanged, including 36% increases in fuel costs, 12% increases in insurance policies, 35% increases in health insurance costs, and 14% increases in food service costs;

WHEREAS Alpine ISD is projected to be penalized with an additional \$1.2M loss in funding during the 2023-24 school year due to the state withholding funding from a school district when the local county appraisal district (CAD) fails the Texas Comptroller's Property Value Study (PVS), resulting in Alpine ISD receiving \$1.2M less than its allocated funding amount and potentially becoming the lowest funded school district per student need in Texas;

WHEREAS the Formula Transition Grant from HB 3 (2019) is set to expire before the 2024-25 school year, resulting in Alpine ISD receiving even less funding per student (an additional \$1M+ loss) than the district has received in the last decade of operations;

WHEREAS underfunded districts like Alpine ISD have relied on short-term federal ESSER funds to close inflationary and formula-driven funding gaps over the past three years, but will lose this funding source of approximately \$500,000 per year in the 2024-25 school year;

WHEREAS the State of Texas is positioned with a \$32B budget surplus, \$1.4B of which is from not paying school districts their full, current allotments due to CAD/Comptroller disputes over the last biennium, a problem the state could solve for 230+ districts and 670,000+ students across Texas with a legislative solution (specifically, moving to current year tax collections);

WHEREAS first year teachers in Alpine ISD earn a salary of \$35,190, compensation that is marginally above the state minimum salary, as is true in many rural districts across the state;

WHEREAS Alpine ISD has enacted many local measures to address the district's chronic underfunding, including increasing funding and increasing internal efficiencies, however, true financial reform for rural districts requires state legislative action to fix funding formula inequities that are causing this persistent underfunding;

WHEREAS factors listed in this resolution combine to persistently underfund rural districts who, without state legislative action, could be forced onto a path of financial insolvency;



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Alpine Independent School District**

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the community-elected Board of Trustees of the Alpine Independent School District calls on Governor Greg Abbott, Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick, Speaker of the House Dade Phelan, and the Texas Legislature to **prioritize adequately funding all Texas public schools at least to the allotment levels set by current state law;**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alpine ISD Board of Trustees calls on the Texas Governor and Legislature to **fix the intentional underfunding and financial punishment of school districts for CAD/Comptroller disputes by calculating a district's local share of funding on their local collections, not state assigned values;**


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alpine ISD Board of Trustees calls on the Texas Governor and Legislature to **increase the state minimum salary schedule for teachers and provide additional, sufficient funding specifically to rural districts to help them fund teacher salary increases;**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alpine ISD Board of Trustees calls on the Texas Governor and Legislature to **address the root causes of persistent underfunding of rural school districts so that all Texas communities can continue to be served by their local public schools.**

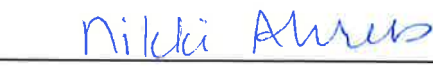
RESOLVED this 28th day of June, 2023.



Eddie Natera
President



Mary McCallister
Vice President



Nikki Ahrens
Secretary




Joe Portillo
Board Member



Lt. Jimmy Morris
Board Member



Haley Babb
Board Member



Dr. Adrian Billings
Board Member