

## Thrive with Texas AFT

Texas AFT is dedicated to building power for Lone Star State educators, whether they're in the classroom or retired, K-12 or higher education, classified or certified.

There are countless big-money interests who are intent on starving, shaming, and shuttering our public schools to line their own pockets. **But we believe in something more powerful than corporate greed or political grift: people power.**

## About Our Union

Texas AFT represents 66,000 public school employees in K-12 and higher education. As such, our union's priorities reflect the interests of teachers, counselors, librarians, custodians, bus drivers, and all the other people who make our schools work.

You deserve to thrive both at work and in your personal life. Through local and state advocacy, high-quality professional development programs, and wide array of benefits, Texas AFT is here to help you do just that.

## Join Us

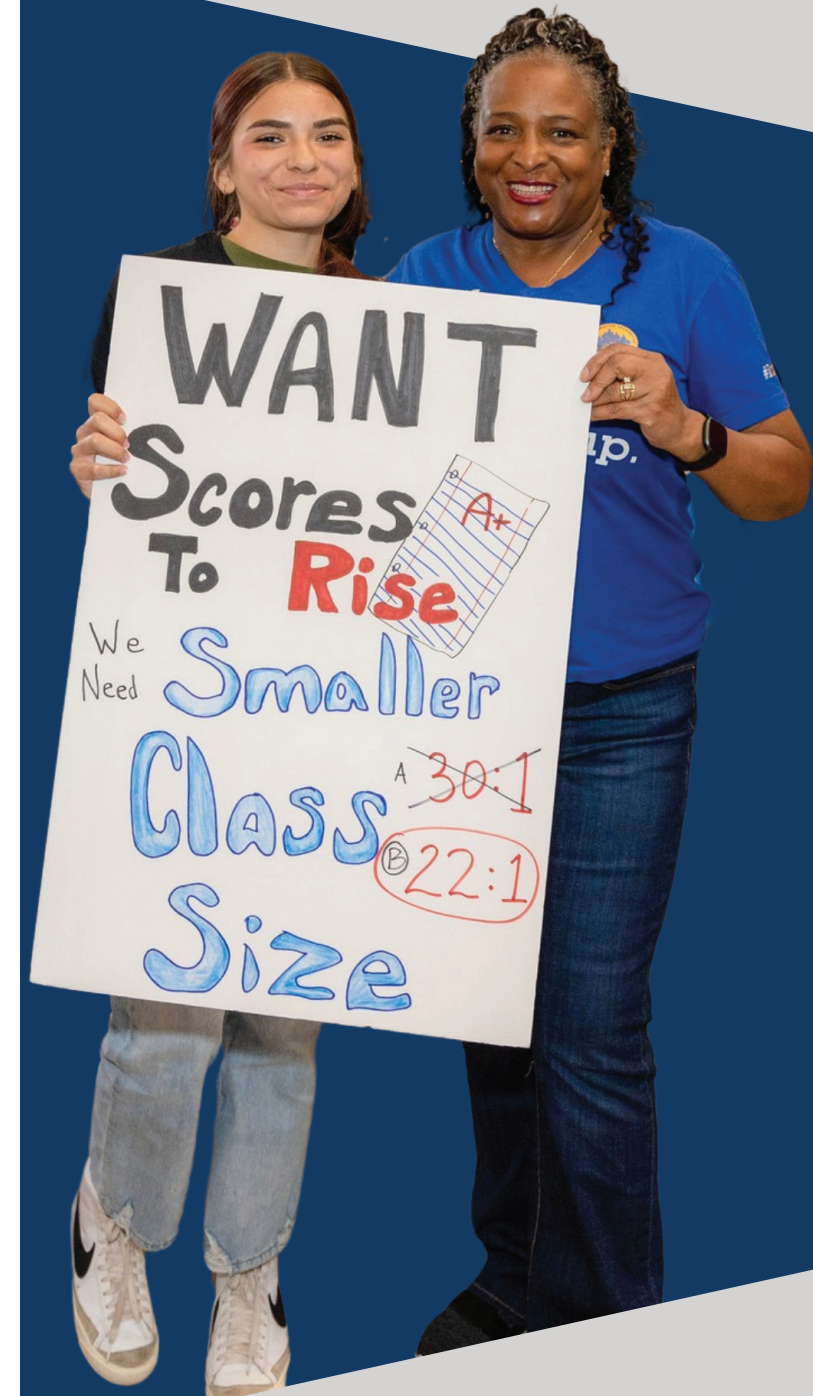
We invite you to join our union. Texas AFT is the strongest voice for public school employees. Join online at [join.texasaft.org](https://www.join.texasaft.org).



A Union of Professionals  
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# Educator's Bill of Rights



**SCAN TO THRIVE**



# Our Rights as Texas Educators

## You have a right to manageable workloads.

In a fall 2023 tracking project, public school employees across the state reported to us that they worked an average of 50 hours each week in their main job. There are too many responsibilities heaped upon educators and too few protections on their time. We're demanding a defined work schedule, smaller class sizes, and fewer added duties.

## You have a right to paychecks that reflect the worth of your work.

With inflation, Texas teachers make less today than they did 10 years ago. Meanwhile, many of our support staff members and paraprofessionals are trying to scrape by on wages near federal poverty levels. Our lawmakers must pass a major increase to the basic allotment that funds our schools and guarantee across-the-board raises.

## You have a right to affordable, high-quality health care.

Pay raises mean nothing if the cost of your health care outpaces them. It's past time the state raises its minimum health care premium contributions and ensures our retired educators can access the care they need without bankrupting themselves or their families.

## You have a right to a safe, healthy working environment.

The 88th Legislature put just 28 extra cents per student in the state's school safety fund. Meanwhile, 98% of Texas students attend a school without proper staffing of nurses, counselors, and psychologists. And 90% of Texas school employees have told us that they worry their campus could be the site of a mass shooting.

## You have a right to teach the truth without fear.

Public education — pre-K through higher education — is a fundamental pillar of American democracy. Attempts to whitewash our history or censor classroom discussions are part of a larger effort to weaken the very institutions that prepare students to engage in that democracy. We demand an end to the attacks on the freedom to learn.

## You have the right to grow as a professional with the support you need.

Remember Reading Academies? What about all the other (usually unpaid) required trainings you've been mandated to do? You should have the time, space, and agency to grow as an educator with effective, empirically based, compensated professional development opportunities. (That includes Texas AFT Bridges Institute programs!)

## You have the right to a life outside of work (work-life balance).

75% of Texas AFT's K-12 members say they're experiencing burnout, with over half reporting they don't have the space or time to prioritize their own well-being or self-care after work. In higher education, 60% of members say they're so exhausted by the end of a workday that they're unable to do anything else. Constant fatigue shouldn't be a side effect of your job.

## You have a right to a secure, dignified retirement.

Our retired educators shouldn't have to come hat in hand to the Legislature every year for a modest pension increase. The hard-won cost-of-living adjustment approved by voters in 2023 was a one-time fix. TRS retirees need their automatic pension increases and required Social Security enrollment.

## You have the right to organize with your colleagues for a better future.

Yes, Texas has unions, and yes, Texas AFT is one. That's why we're leading the charge to force this state to provide the same labor protections and guaranteed rights to teachers and school staff as it does to other public employees like firefighters and police officers. We won't get collective bargaining rights unless we demand them.

## You have the right to a seat at any table making decisions about your job.

Our members have told us that one of their biggest concerns is the lack of educator input into state-level policies like testing, school funding, licensure, and evaluation. Remember when TEA initially failed to put teachers on its Teacher Vacancy Task Force? Wherever decisions are made about us, they cannot be made without us.

# Our Path to Thriving Texas Public Schools

We are losing educators in droves in Texas schools, from teachers to bus drivers to classroom aides to librarians. Even in higher education, faculty and staff are heading for the exits.

Those losses have a ripple effect, making day-to-day tasks harder for the staff who remain and leaving students without the services and support they need.

**In a state with the world's eighth-largest economy, we can and must demand better.**

Every educator, parent, and community member who signs on in support of our **Educator's Bill of Rights** brings us closer to introducing it in the 89th Legislature and applying enough pressure on lawmakers to pass it.

Can your colleagues across Texas count on you to join our campaign by signing our campaign pledge? Can we count on your to share our campaign with your colleagues? Together, we have the power to make a difference. Join our campaign to champion an Educator's Bill of Rights.

## Your Right to Thrive

It is not enough for you to survive as a Texas educator; you deserve to thrive. You do everything in your power to support your students, but those students are best served when you're taken care of.

Our union's fight to thrive is about creating sustainable working (and learning) conditions with more planning time, fewer added duties and paperwork, and resources to prevent burnout before it starts.

Texas AFT and our 66,000 members across the state — active and retired, certified and classified, K-12 and higher education — are developing an Educator's Bill of Rights. We're bringing this Bill of Rights to the Legislature in 2025.



*"We are the most aggressive union of teachers and school employees in the state of Texas. And we're proud of that fact!"*

— Zeph Capó, Texas AFT President

## The only way to thrive as educators ...

Our state leaders have ignored what public school employees and students need for too long. The 89th Legislature starts in January 2025, and we want to put the pressure on lawmakers to pass a real **Educator's Bill of Rights** that guarantees much needed pay raises, improvements to working and learning conditions, and more.

# Act Now!

Here are ways you can support our campaign to win an Educator's Bill of Rights:



Sign on to our Educator's Bill of Rights at [thrive.texasaft.org](https://thrive.texasaft.org).



Share our Bill of Rights with your coworkers and ask them for their support.



Sign up to attend one of our Educating Texas webinars: [thrive.texasaft.org](https://thrive.texasaft.org)



Join Texas AFT and become a union member: [join.texasaft.org](https://join.texasaft.org).