

Funding Weights at Austin ISD

Student weights increase district funding for students who require extra resources, such as students with disabilities or those enrolled in bilingual education programs.

Compensatory Education

Low-income students generally start school less prepared, and over time, fall further behind without intervention, creating greater challenges to their schools.

The concept of compensatory education began in the mid-1960s with federal programs enacted as part of President Lyndon Johnson's "War on Poverty." The programs were designed to compensate for low-income children's environmental disadvantages by offering intensive classroom instruction.

The comp ed weight has not been modified since 1984.

At that time, the School Finance Working Group, consisting of members of nearly every educational organization in Texas, recommended a weight for comp ed of **at least** 0.4 to provide economically disadvantaged students with a minimum accredited education. The legislature cut the 0.4 recommendation in half and adopted a weight of 0.2.

In 2009–10, a Joint Select Committee on Public School Finance Weights, Allotments, and Adjustments issued a "Stakeholder Group" report that recommended an increase in the comp ed weight from 0.2 to 0.4.

Challenges of English Language Learners

English Language Learners require intensive resources to be successful in school, including

- high-quality instructional material and technologies;
- certified teachers;
- extended time to learn, such as additional tutoring and high-quality after-school and summer school programs;
- support services, including counseling, dropout prevention and other support programs; and
- parent engagement

For all students entering public school in Texas, schools must conduct home language surveys to determine the language normally used in the student's home.

Some students come to AISD with no formal education in their native country, and require instruction in their native

Student Diversity at Austin ISD

In 2018, 52 percent
of students were considered
economically disadvantaged, up from
48.8 percent in 1994

AISD's **ELL population** has increased
from **11.3 percent** in 1994
to **27 percent** in 2018

More than
94 languages
are spoken at AISD

language, while also learning English.

Districts also face challenges hiring bilingual/ELL teachers to support ELL newcomers and finding instructional materials for ELL students whose home language is not Spanish.

Bilingual/English as a Second Language

Bilingual education/ESL programs are designed to help students whose primary language is other than English to master basic English and participate effectively in the state's educational program.

A 2008 national study of 16 states that have bilingual add-on weights found Texas to be at the lowest end of what states have found necessary for ELL students, a range that can run up to two times the cost of non-disadvantaged students.