

**DEUELL FIGHTS TO OVERCOME DISTRICT DISPARITIES AND PUBLISHES DISPARITY LIST FOR SENATORIAL DISTRICTS**

Despite the budget shortfall faced by lawmakers this legislative session, Greenville Senator Bob Deuell has been an advocate for fixing the inadequacies of the school finance system from the start. And he refused to concede the mission even as his colleagues prepared to take a different approach last week. In what some observers say could be part of the opening statement in the next school funding lawsuit, Deuell put a spotlight on the state’s grossly inequitable school funding system Friday night. After taking the Senate floor, he noted that the top 100 best funded school districts have property tax rates of \$1, while the lowest 100 school districts levy an average tax rate of \$1.16. The physician-senator then proceeded to read a list highlighting the lowest and highest revenue per student in each senatorial district:

SENATOR	LOWEST	HIGHEST	DISPARITY
Kevin Eltife, R-Tyler	\$3,926	\$6,981	\$3,055
Bob Deuell, R-Greenville	\$4,576	\$6,261	\$1,694
Robert Nichols, R-Jacksonville	\$4,407	\$7,367	\$2,960
Tommy Williams, R-The Woodlands	\$4,615	\$7,064	\$2,449
Steve Ogden, R-Bryan	\$4,694	\$8,646	\$3,952
Mario Gallegos, D-Houston	\$4,890	\$5,668;	\$778
Sen. Dan Patrick, R-Houston	\$4,772	\$6,024	\$1,252
Florence Shapiro, R-Plano	\$5,194	\$7,418	\$2,224
Chris Harris, R-Arlington	\$4,836	\$5,706	\$870
Wendy Davis, D-Ft. Worth	\$4,797	\$6,880	\$2,083
Mike Jackson, R-LaPorte	\$4,863	\$5,984	\$1,121
Jane Nelson, R-Flower Mound	\$4,770	\$7,050;	\$2,280
Rodney Ellis, D-Houston	\$4,890	\$5,292	\$402
Kirk Watson, R-Austin	\$5,102	\$6,282	\$1,180

<b>John Whitmire, D-Houston</b>	\$4,887	\$6,459	\$1,572
<b>John Carona, R-Dallas</b>	\$4,780	\$5,856	\$1,076
<b>Joan Huffman, R-Southside Place</b>	\$4,804	\$6,876	\$2,072
<b>Glenn Hagar, R-Katy</b>	\$4,710	\$7,935	\$3,225
<b>Carlos Uresti, D-San Antonio</b>	\$3,831	\$12,400	\$8,569
<b>Chuy Hinojosa, D-McAllen</b>	\$4,678	\$9,548	\$4,870
<b>Judith Zaffirini, D-Laredo</b>	\$3,732	\$10,908	\$7,176
<b>Brian Birdwell, R-Granbury</b>	\$4,118	\$7,750	\$3,632
<b>Royce West, D-Dallas</b>	\$4,884	\$5,430	\$546
<b>Troy Fraser, R-Horseshoe Bay</b>	\$3,896	\$6,864	\$2,968
<b>Jeff Wentworth, R-San Antonio</b>	\$4,426	\$6,109	\$1,683
<b>Leticia Van de Putte, D-San Antonio</b>	\$3,759	\$5,573	\$1,814
<b>Eddie Lucio, D-Brownsville</b>	\$4,304	\$7,321	\$3,017
<b>Robert Duncan, R-Lubbock</b>	\$4,390	\$12,979	\$8,589
<b>Jose Rodriguez, D-El Paso</b>	\$4,614	\$5,083	\$469
<b>Craig Estes, R-Wichita Falls</b>	\$4,425	\$7,488	\$3,063
<b>Kel Seliger, R-Amarillo</b>	\$4,432	\$12,387	\$7,955

*Those with disparities greater than \$3,000 are highlighted.*

No one disputed or discounted Deuell's case. But the prevailing attitude has been and is: "We're doing the best we can do this session." It's the same theme heard during the 2009 legislative session.

“For the life of me, I cannot understand why we would not use (the Rainy Day Fund) to help equalize this system,” Deuell told his colleagues.

Those in control have set a goal of replacing the target revenue system by 2017. Sen. Wendy Davis, D-Ft. Worth, complimented Deuell for doing “a beautiful job of pointing out what’s broken about school funding in the state of Texas and why it’s so desperately needs to be fixed.” Sen. Mario Gallegos, D-Houston, asked that Deuell’s presentation be transcribed and placed in the Senate Journal. *Someone quickly noted that it will save school finance lawyers some time and cost.*