

-----Original Message-----

From: Linda Bridges, TFT President [mailto:getactive@tft.org]

Sent: Wednesday, May 17, 2006 11:03 AM

Subject: 5/17/2006 Texas Teacher Action!



Teacher Action

From the Texas Federation of Teachers

5/17/2006

Contents of this issue:

- [Texas House Passes HB 1--Tax Cuts Now, Education Cuts Tomorrow](#)
- [From the Affiliates: 16 in Corpus Christi Nationally Board Certified](#)
- [Summer Swap: Two on College Enrichment Programs](#)
- [TFT Is There To Help When and Where You Need It!](#)

[Texas House Passes HB 1--Tax Cuts Now, Education Cuts Tomorrow](#)

The Texas House passed HB 1 last Friday. The bill now goes to Governor Perry's desk for approval. Here's how TFT President Linda Bridges characterized the bill:

"The bill that passed today is a one-year sugar fix followed by a long-term starvation diet...When the legislature comes back in session next January, lawmakers will face a budget crisis created by the unfunded promise of property-tax reduction made in the bill passed today. That new budget crisis will be resolved in one of two ways: Either the tax cuts promised today will prove illusory. Or--more likely--the modest pluses achieved today for education will be canceled out by the need to grab every dollar of available revenue to sustain the property-tax cuts promised today."

The bill includes a \$1,500 annual raise for teachers, full-time counselors, school nurses, and librarians (counting the restoration of \$500 you were already promised for the health-care supplement as salary to reach the \$2,000 figure touted by legislative leaders). Even this small increase may prove a mirage. Under the bill, school districts can use the state dollars to fund whatever local raise may already have been promised. In addition, some 300,000 school support personnel get only \$500 for their health insurance. It took a major grassroots lobbying effort by TFT members and other teachers and support personnel to keep the legislative leadership from killing this funding altogether. And remember, all this came at a time when the state has an \$8.2 billion surplus. Next year, when the budget crisis created by this bill strikes home, we expect to face that same battle again. TFT is already gearing up for that fight.

The measure also includes "vouchers lite"--authority for the commissioner to turn neighborhood schools over to private operators. And it allocates \$100 million in the first year and even more later for "performance pay" tied to student test scores. By next January--with the elections safely behind them, the new legislature will face a new budget squeeze. Given legislative actions in the special session, you can imagine what this could mean for schoolchildren and current and retired school employees. The 2006 elections will be more important than ever, and we expect to be more active than ever.

[From the Affiliates: 16 in Corpus Christi Nationally Board Certified](#)

The Corpus Christi AFT reports that 16 teachers and counselors, including eight CCAFT members, currently are certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. They include seven elementary professionals and nine middle and high school professionals. All have completed rigorous requirements for national certification, including multiple assessments of their teaching techniques and submission of extensive portfolios. TFT and CCAFT were instrumental in obtaining financial assistance from the state and district to help these professionals earn national certification and the \$1,500 annual local stipend that accompanies it.

[Summer Swap: Two on College Enrichment Programs](#)

Join TFT!

Not a member of TFT? Why wait to become a part of the best teachers' organization in Texas? [Put us to work for you today!](#)

Spread the Word! Get a [friend](#) to subscribe to the **TFT Teacher Action** to receive your free TFT lunch bag in appreciation of your efforts!



[Send](#) today's Teacher Action to a friend now!

You can also [Sign up now](#) for the **TFT Legislative Hotline** updating you on legislative issues affecting you here in Texas and in Washington DC.

**Working Families
e-Activist Network**

Texas Tech University has a campus in Junction which offers summer credits in many of the art disciplines. It is great! You stay in cabins, eat in the mess hall and have time during the day to float on the Llano River, and the price for tuition, room and board is very reasonable. It is a great version of adult summer school/camp!

Julie Jones
Austin

Check with the area community colleges and universities because many offer summer programs/camps for middle school and high school students. These are great for the kids to see firsthand the college scene, plus receive super enrichment and educational experiences.

Sherry Deichman
Lewisville

The individual sender is solely responsible for the contents of this message. Distribution of the message does not imply endorsement of the product or service by the Texas Federation of Teachers or its affiliates.

Send Us Your Summer Swap Suggestions and Win an iPod

Know a great place in Texas to take the kids for summer vacation? Solid courses to meet continuing ed requirements? Cool camps to work or send the kids? Where to find good summer jobs? Navigate to www.unionvoice.org/campaign/summerswap2006 to share your ideas with thousands of Texas teachers. We'll post your entries in future issues of Teacher Action and award an iPod at the end of the summer for the most popular suggestion. All contributors whose entries appear in Teacher Action will receive a free insulated TFT lunch bag.

TFT Is There To Help When and Where You Need It!

With the school year winding down, it's reassuring to know a TFT representative is nearby if you need one. TFT is the only Texas teacher organization with local offices organized to provide direct representation for teachers and school employees. Our local federations are on the front line in fighting for fair pay and quality work environments and offer workshops around the state in practical professional development, high-quality mentoring and teacher-tested training. Whether it's protecting teacher rights, mobilizing a powerful voice for teacher pay, or tackling the many other issues teachers face, TFT is there to help. Click to the TFT Web Site at www.tft.org to contact your nearest TFT representative or call 800-222-3827.

This message was sent to xxx. Visit your [subscription management page](#) to modify your email communication preferences or update your personal profile. To stop ALL email from Texas Federation of Teachers Teacher Action, click to [remove](#) yourself from our lists (or reply via email with "remove" in the subject line).