



Center *for* Public Policy Priorities

Future Legal Challenges and Political Issues

TTARA School Finance Symposium
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www.cppp.org

Texas Constitution

Article 1 - BILL OF RIGHTS

Section 3 - EQUAL RIGHTS

All free men, when they form a social compact, have equal rights, and no man, or set of men, is entitled to exclusive separate public emoluments, or privileges, but in consideration of public services.

Article 7 – EDUCATION

Section 1 - SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE OF SYSTEM OF PUBLIC FREE SCHOOLS

A general diffusion of knowledge being essential to the preservation of the liberties and rights of the people, it shall be the duty of the Legislature of the State to establish and make suitable provision for the support and maintenance of an efficient system of public free schools.

Article 8 - TAXATION AND REVENUE

Section 1-e - ABOLITION OF AD VALOREM PROPERTY TAXES

No State ad valorem taxes shall be levied upon any property within this State.

Texas Education Code

Sec. 42.001. STATE POLICY. (a) It is the policy of this state that the provision of public education is a state responsibility and that a thorough and efficient system be provided and substantially financed through state revenue sources so that each student enrolled in the public school system shall have access to programs and services that are appropriate to the student's educational needs and that are substantially equal to those available to any similar student, notwithstanding varying local economic factors.

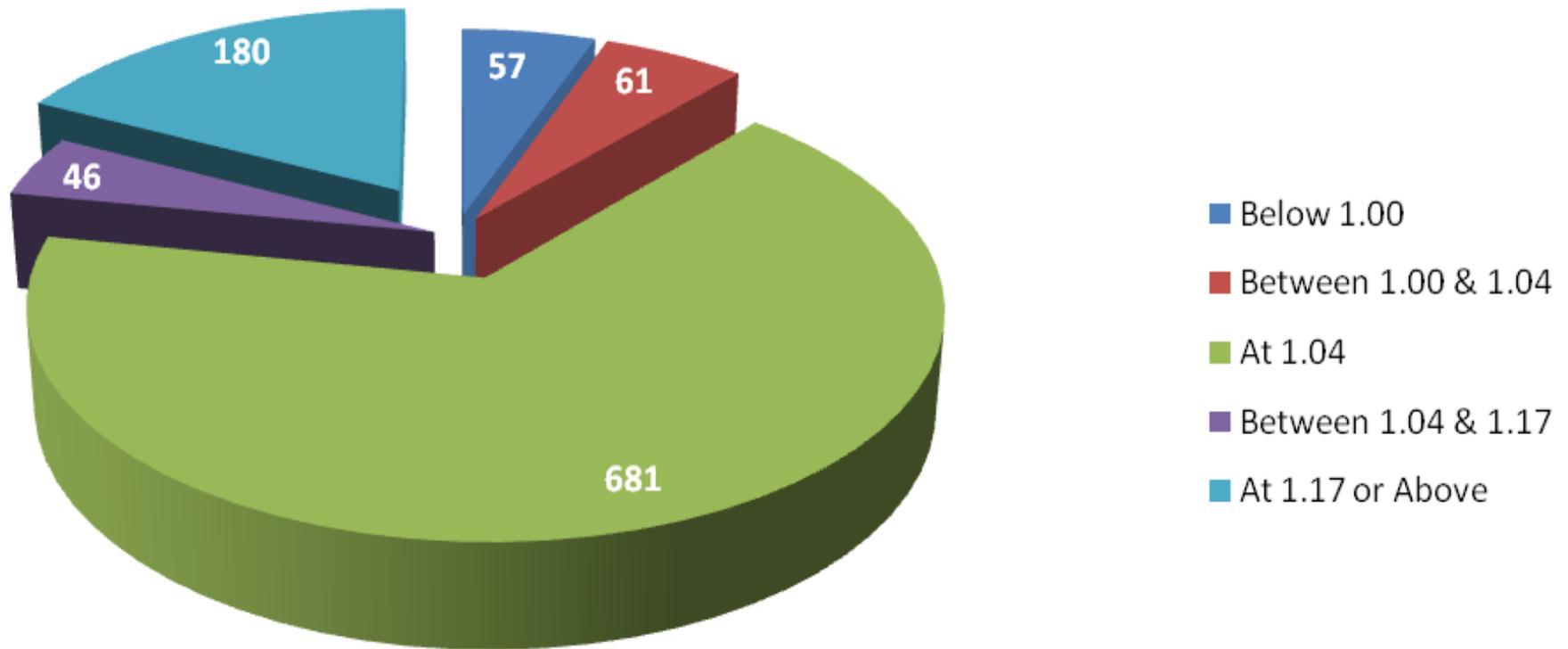
(b) The public school finance system of this state shall adhere to a standard of neutrality that provides for substantially equal access to similar revenue per student at similar tax effort, considering all state and local tax revenues of districts after acknowledging all legitimate student and district cost differences.

The Struggle

“Another need is for distribution of the bulk of state aid in Texas upon some adequate basis of local ability and need. Nearly every school man in Texas will accept this statement as sound theoretically; but he will also tell you in his franker moments that his professional and perhaps even biological existence would be threatened if he took a vigorous stand in its favor in his own community. Well-to-do districts are unwilling to sacrifice state aid.... Most of us prefer to take our democracy in theory rather than practice and see to it that, whenever practical changes become unavoidable, the other fellow, as far as possible, shall pay the bill.”

Dean B.F. Pittenger, The University of Texas School of Education
December 1939

School District Adopted Tax Rates 2009-10



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