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## **ATPE denounces TEA decision to use federal funds to supplant state funding**

*“TEA’s decision flies in the face of what Congress intended when it created the ESSER II funding,” says state’s largest educator association.*

**AUSTIN—The Texas Education Agency (TEA)** recently announced plans to use federal funds intended to support schools in closing COVID-19 learning gaps to instead supplant state funding for the just-concluded 2020-2021 school year. The June 3 announcement comes on the heels of early reports of dramatic learning loss as captured by state standardized testing results.

In a letter to Texas school administrators, TEA indicated that Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief II (ESSER II) funds will be used to help offset state funding under the hold harmless provision promised to school districts for the 2020-21 school year. This move contradicts the intent of ESSER II, which was passed by Congress in 2020 in order to help schools tackle the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting learning loss.

“The Texas Education Agency’s decision flies in the face of what Congress intended,” said ATPE Executive Director **Shannon Holmes**. “We are disappointed by the commissioner’s refusal to listen to educators and his refusal to provide schools with every resource they have available to help get our students back on track as quickly as possible.”

Per TEA’s letter, the state does not anticipate it will be able to provide districts with a complete estimate of how overall funding will be affected until September. ATPE will be monitoring the situation as it unfolds.

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### **About the Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)**

Founded in 1980, ATPE is the leading educators’ association in Texas with approximately 100,000 members statewide. With its strong collaborative philosophy, ATPE speaks for classroom teachers, administrators, and future, retired, and para-educators and works to create better opportunities for Texas’ five million public school students. | [atpe.org](http://atpe.org)

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