



Just Fund It TX Quick Talk Guide

Are you ready to spread the word about school funding reform in Texas? A short talk during another group's meeting can be a terrific way to help people get informed and engaged. All you need is an audience and 15 minutes of their time. We promise to make it easy!

You will find all of the resources mentioned in this guide on the Just Fund It TX Resource page at <http://justfundittx.org/resources/>

What's the purpose of a quick talk about Just Fund It TX?

If you're reading this document, you're probably already aware that Texas school funding is inadequate, unfair, and convoluted. There are many ways to measure per student funding, and in all of them, Texas ranks far below average. That's not right for our state's students. It's not right for our schools and teachers. And it's not right for our state's future.

Texas can do better. And with your help, change could start this year. A long list of legislative officials from both parties and from across the state have indicated that school finance reform is part of their agenda for the 2019 legislative session. Just Fund It TX wants to hold them accountable for these campaign promises and make sure that we arrive at a school funding system that is adequate and fair to students and taxpayers alike.

People are eager to hear this message. It does not take long, and it isn't complicated. All you need is a group of people and a bit of time to do three things:

- **Inform** guests about how Texas funds public education and why our state's schools and students need more funding.
- **Take action** at the event by offering guests some quick and easy ways to do something right away. Our **Love Letters** give you a quick and memorable way to help people do this. More about that in a minute.
- **Engage** students and parents who want to get more involved by providing the tools and direction they need.

I want to share this message. Where do I start?

Our resource guide makes knowing what to do easy, once you connect with a group with a bit of time to share. Many groups have a good reason to be interested. And the Just Fund It TX message is a broad one – we need more money for public education, in every part of our state.

- **Find groups that are interested in this message, then ask for some time to speak.** You can share it at a neighborhood meeting, during a campus CAC or PTA meeting, at a student government meeting, at your place of worship after services, at a meeting of a local civic or business group, at your local retirement community, at your workplace...

Remember to help your audience understand why funding for public schools matters to them. If you're speaking to a business organization, remind them that today's students are tomorrow's employees. If you're talking with local realtors, remind them that strong schools create community and drive demand for housing. Schools are important, even for people who aren't directly involved with education as parents, students or teachers.

- **Use the resource guide to find everything you need:** a PowerPoint, Love Letter graphics, and more. We want to make it easy for you to help people speak up for Texas public schools.

How do I prepare?

Just Fund It TX wants to make this easy for you, so all of the materials you will need are provided on the Just Fund It TX resource page at <http://justfundittx.org/resources/>.

- **Watch the PowerPoint on our website to familiarize yourself with the issues,** and download a copy if you plan to use it at the meeting. It has great information that will help you lead your house party or talk with confidence and key facts.
- **Read the Love Letter FAQ and make two Love Letter postcards for each guest** – one to send to a senator and one to a house member. The FAQ offers some other options if time or money are too tight for printing. After your party, you will mail these to Just Fund It TX at the address in the FAQ. We will deliver these to the lawmakers listed on each card.
- **Print out your sign-in sheets,** which are also provided in the resource guide.
- **Print out any resources that you plan to hand out.** This is a great way to share additional information or to reinforce what you have already discussed. There are several options on the Just Fund It TX resource page. You decide which are most useful for your group.
- **Ask the meeting host about projection, Internet connections and how much time you will have.** This will ensure that the talk you plan matches the time and resources available to you.

Giving Your Quick Talk

Remember your key goals: to **inform** people about public school funding in Texas, help them **take action** immediately and **engage** them to stay involved.

You can get the key points across in about 15 minutes, if you need to: 10 for a quick run-through of the PowerPoint that hits the highlights and 5 for writing the Love Letters. It's far better to do a short presentation than no presentation at all. Here's a look at how you can use your time:

- **Introduce yourself and Just Fund It TX.** Circulate a sign-in sheet if people did not sign in as they arrived. Share handouts from the resources guide to offer information you don't have time to cover in a short talk.
- **INFORM by sharing the PowerPoint to help people understand the issues and how they can help.** The PowerPoint is on our resource page, and can be downloaded before your talk. It offers a clear and powerful look at public school funding in Texas, explained in a way that's valuable to people who are new to the conversation as well as people who are familiar with many of the issues. Run through this, and you will cover all of the most important bases. For a short meeting, you can skip some slides to focus on the highlights.
 - **State the problem.** Texas ranks far below the national average in per student funding for public schools. Increasingly, that funding comes from your local property taxes. Show a short video to explain the issues. Help the group you're speaking to see how this issue impacts them.

- **Explain the opportunity.** This year, the Texas legislature has promised to make public school funding reform a top priority. People across the state are working together to make sure they keep that promise.
- **TAKE ACTION right away by writing Love Letters.** The PowerPoint ends with a clear call to action: writing a Love Letter about a favorite public school. **Make sure to leave a few minutes for people to write a Love Letter on the spot, so you can collect them and send them to Just Fund It TX for delivery to the Capitol.**
- **Invite people to ENGAGE in more ways after the event.** Encourage people to take what they have learned and do more with it, by sharing this message with people they know, signing the Just Fund It TX petition, following Just Fund It TX on social media or committing to giving a talk like yours. **Use one of your minutes to encourage everyone to share their plans with the people sitting next to them. That helps turn their plans into a commitment.**
- **Hand out printed resources.** This is a great way to share information that does not fit into a quick presentation, especially if it includes information about becoming more engaged.
- **Say thanks** to everyone for caring about public education and working to make a difference.

About Love Letters

Love Letters about your favorite public school at the heart of every Just Fund It TX talk. It's a memorable way to show legislators that people care, are holding them accountable and expect more. Our goal is BIG – 5.4 million Love Letters. That's one for each public school student in Texas!

On the resource page, you will a Love Letter FAQ and some pdfs that let you print Love Letter postcards at home. You can also order [ready-to-go postcards from Zazzle](#) or another source if you plan ahead. If there's no time or money for printing, you can use index cards instead. On the front, people should write **I ❤️ My Texas Public School**. On the back, write **Just Fund It TX** and the tag line **We expect more. What's the plan?**

- **Each guest should write two Love Letters:** One to his or her Texas State House member and one to his or her State Senator. People can find their reps at <https://fyi.capitol.texas.gov>.
- **Make sure each letter includes the name of the legislator it's addressed to.** Just Fund It TX will gather the letters and deliver them to lawmakers at the Texas Capitol.
- **Personal stories are especially powerful.** Ask guests to include two things: what they appreciate about their public school and how they feel about being 43rd in the country in per student spending for public schools. The note can be simple – their child's name and a sentence about a favorite teacher, class, activity or moment at school. If there's time, people can also personalize their letters by adding their own drawings and doodles on the front to show things they love about their schools. They should also include their name & ZIP code.
- **Encourage guests to photograph and post their Love Letters on social media with #JustFundItTX.** This is another great way to spread the message.
- **Collect your guests' Love Letters and send them to Just Fund It TX.** Please include your name and who your state senator and representative are.

Here's the address:

**Just Fund It TX
1005 Congress Avenue
Suite 100
Austin, Texas 78701**

- **Let us know your letters are on the way!** Please email us at info@justfundittx.org using Love Letters in the subject line. Please tell us your name, the city or school district where you spoke, how many people attended, how many letters you collected and the name of your state rep and senator. (You can find that at <https://fyi.capitol.texas.gov>.) **THANK YOU!**

Just Fund it TX thanks YOU for joining us, and for your work to make a difference – for Texas students, Texas schools and Texas' future!

