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### The great motivator

Re: April 27 commentary "School reform won't be a cure-all."

We already have great teachers and improved teaching methods. That's not the problem.

The problem is Gov. Rick Perry and his rich cronies underfunding education, which guarantees overcrowded classrooms, unruly students and overworked, underpaid teachers. This is coupled with the egregious apathy of parents who, for various reasons, are out to lunch.

Are we serious about fighting poverty and dropout rates? Then forget about the revamped pedagogy fairy.

Instead of luring parents to PTA meetings with "goodie bags," federal, state and local governments should consider paying qualifying parents (income-based) who have one or more children attending grades K-12 public schools \$7,500 per student per year (perhaps capping the offer at two children) if the student successfully advances with 90 percent attendance and a B average. Nothing motivates like cold, hard cash.

This would guarantee better attendance and higher grades but also give households a leg up from chronic poverty.

**DARRIN LITTLE**  
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