



# Pflugerville ISD State Legislative Priorities 2022-23

Pflugerville ISD calls upon the Texas Legislature to advocate for the following priorities:

## Funding

- **Update use of district average daily attendance in calculation of student enrollment.**
  - ▷ Background: School funding based on enrollment in the 21st Century ensures budget certainty as opposed to seat time. ISD's budgets are the result of year-long planning and teacher contracts being signed in the spring. Keep the settle-up process in the summer.
- **Oppose any attempts by the legislature to target the fund balance of an ISD.**
  - ▷ Background: State policy based on financial prudence and best practices require ISDs to have a three-month fund balance to cover not only maintenance/ operation costs, but also unanticipated expenses.
- **Update TEA policies regarding Pre-K students.**
  - ▷ Background: Students who attend Pre-K are less likely to repeat a grade, three times as likely to be prepared for kindergarten, more likely to meet 3rd grade STAAR standards, and have greater post-secondary readiness. Increase the Early Education Allotment and make it formula driven. Also, update compulsory attendance law to apply to children who turn 4 yrs old.
- **Institute a state funded pay increase**
  - ▷ Background: The combination of the Covid Pandemic combined with the current economic conditions have created a historically difficult challenge in hiring and retaining teachers. Equally concerning is the decrease in prospective teachers graduating and entering the education profession. Both could benefit from the promise of greater state support regarding funding.
- **Truancy Intervention: Reinstatement of 90% attendance requirement for credit and removal of the 75% component.**
  - ▷ Background: as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic and subsequent shutdowns, the academic learning gap has increased tremendously across the state. The primary way to close this gap is via face to face instruction with a certified teacher and enforcing the 90% attendance requirement will remove the option for non-attendance within the home.

## Academics Assessment and Accountability

- **Flexibility in testing and norm reference assessing should be considered as growth measures.**
  - ▷ Background: We can no longer think in terms of our past accountability system to adequately address the growth of learning.

- **Pause academic ratings for campuses and districts.**
  - ▷ Background: Because of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis and pandemic, we believe the State should redress the accountability rating system. Testing should be continued but at a minimum the rating system should be paused. Many school districts have had and will have disruptions of operations, start and stopping of classes, social and emotional learning impact, remoting learning issues, which all affect the learning of children. We can no longer think in terms of our past accountability system to adequately address the growth of learning.

## Charter Schools

- **Oppose any legislation that promotes the creation and/or funding of new charter schools (virtual or traditional). For efficiency, prohibit charters from operating a new campus next to a traditional ISD campus rated B or higher. Finally, require charter schools to post waiting lists on their website.**
  - ▷ Background: Charters do not follow the same transparency and accountability requirements governing independent school districts (ISDs). Greater oversight regarding equity and enforcement of standards is needed.
- **Require SBOE to vote on all charter school expansion amendments, and require voter approval prior to SBOE consideration for approval. Additionally, local funding to charter schools and ISDs should be equalized.**
  - ▷ Background: Charter schools should not be created/expanded without local taxpayer approval. Additionally, Charter schools should not be funded at a greater rate per student than the ISD in which they are located. For example, PflISD receives \$5,541 per student while IDEA public schools receive \$6,543 per student.
- **Require charter schools to provide written parental notification of non-certified teachers and administrators in accordance with the ISD requirements.**
  - ▷ Background: If the state requires ISDs to be transparent about teacher quality, the same should apply to charters.
- **Allow voters to approve new charter schools.**
  - ▷ Background: Texas has allowed charter schools to bypass local voters and the democratic process in both the creation of charters, when and where charter schools can be placed, and the funding of facilities without local voter input. We believe the local voters of the school district should have a say in any operation of any type of school receiving public funds.

## Safety and Security

- **Increase state support for campus safety by funding district allocations designated for this purpose, including the purchase of ISD Police Vehicles.**
  - ▷ Background: School safety remains a high priority for ISDs. For large districts having to cover broad school boundaries, police vehicles are needed to provide security to staff and students.

## Human Resources

- **Due to teacher and substitute shortage, SBEC should allow flexibility with certifications and broaden certificate restrictions/requirements.**

▷ Background: Due to high demand and low availability of teachers, the state should allow flexibility by eliminating the TRS surcharge and allow an immediate return to work without a retirement reduction. Also, allow for reciprocal certification approval for teachers with certificates from other states.

For substitutes- extend provision to allow GED or equivalent to be eligible to serve as a substitute provided they are beyond high school age.

- **Impose consequences for breaking contracts mid-year without employer consent.**

▷ Background: teachers are breaking contracts at an excessive rate leaving ISD's without certified professionals for student instruction. While a report can be filed with TEA, it rarely results in actionable consequence. Recommend no moves approved without paygrade and/or title increase and possible consequences for receiving ISD if these criteria are not met.

## Other

- **Augment a district's accountability rating with earned academic distinctions.**
- **Add more career readiness indicators for A-F that go**

beyond certifications and programs of study, including participation in P-TECH and ECHS.

- **Update the title of school psychologists (Called LSSPs but it's confusing to parents).**
- **Expand uses of the student-centered allotments.**
- **Continue to allow school boards to have authority over textbooks purchased for the classroom and library.**
- **Encourage the state to develop a state-issued school bus only driving permit.**
- **Expand state funding and flexibility for school districts offering virtual education to its students.**
- **Similar to class size waivers, the state should consider similar flexibility related to requirements for acceleration committees in light of the teacher shortage.**
- **Create a discretionary fund for ISD's to utilize for retention of staff members who face individualized challenges such as: single parenting, child care, etc.**
- **Encourage ISD trustees to prioritize advocating to the State Board of Education (SBOE)**

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