



PLANO ISD LEGISLATIVE REPORT

May 16, 2017

PLANO ISD LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 85TH REGULAR SESSION

THE PLANO ISD LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES AND ISSUES ARE LISTED BELOW AND ARE CORRELATED WITH FILED BILLS THAT EITHER SUPPORT OR RELATE TO THE PRIORITY.

1. TRANSPARENCY IN TAXATION, OR “TAXPARENCY”

Not many Texas property taxpayers know that increased school tax payments due to property value growth and/or recaptured funds have benefited the State’s General Revenue fund rather than school district operating budgets. Because of these increased local payments, the State’s share of funding education has fallen 6.5% since 2008, leaving local taxpayers paying for a larger percent of education funding.

Plano ISD supports transparency with taxpayers by modifying required public announcements, notifications, and property tax statements to show the taxpayers:

- a. How much of the school district M&O (Maintenance & Operations) tax revenue is retained locally and how much is:
 - i. sent to the State due to increased recapture and/or
 - ii. used to fill the hole caused by a reduction of State funding made possible by local property value growth.
- b. An accounting of how all property taxes collected in the name of public education is being spent by the State.

BILL RESEARCH

Increase tax transparency by demonstrating whether all property taxes collected for public education are going to public education. (Pending filed and analyzed legislation)

Oppose diversion of state funds from public schools.

SUPPORTS

- [HB 2 by Rep. John Zerwas](#) is a supplemental appropriations bill. It has no direct consequence for public education funding.

➤ **Status:** 4/19/17 - HB 2, Senate referred to Finance

- [SB 1407 by Sen. Van Taylor](#) and [HB 1890 by Rep. Giovanni Capriglione](#) would require local taxing authorities to issue as part of the property tax bill a break-down of the school districts' funding.

➤ **Status:** 5/15/17 - SB 1407, House referred to Ways & Means

➤ **Status:** 3/22/17 - HB 1890 referred to Ways & Means, pending

CONCERNS

- [SB 3 by Sen. Larry Taylor](#) and [HB 1335 by Rep. Ron Simmons](#) would allow for the establishment of educational savings accounts and tax credits that divert public funds to private schools.

➤ **Status:** 5/12/17 - SB 3, House referred to Public Education

➤ **Status:** 4/27/17 - HB 1335 referred to Public Education; pending

2. PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

- Historically, Plano ISD as a "Chapter 41" district has contributed more than \$1.52 billion in recapture payments to the State of Texas since the 1993 inception of the funding structure. This redistribution of local property tax collections, attributed to taxpayer's rising property values, is being directly remitted to the state general fund.
- We support a school finance system that provides automatic adjustments to the basic allotment and each of the weighted property wealth values relative to the rates of inflation and population growth in the current or any future public education funding system utilized by the State.
- In addition, the current law permits school districts to lower the M&O tax rate in the future; however, school districts could be required to hold a second election to go back to the rate that was previously approved in the prior election. To assure that public independent school districts have greater ability and incentive to provide local property tax relief, we support eliminating the possibility that future increases to a Maintenance and Operations rate previously approved by taxpayers might cause the district to subject voters to the cost of another election to ratify that same rate again.

BILL RESEARCH

Allow local school districts to lower tax rates with the authority to return to previously voter-approved rates without an additional election.

SUPPORTS

- [HB 27 by Rep. Drew Springer](#) would make changes to the tax code regarding the consideration of the use of property or a comparable property when appraising property for property tax purposes.

➤ **Status:** 5/11/17 - HB 27 referred to Ways & Means; placed on General State Calendar

- [HB 390 by Rep. Howard](#), [HB 486 by Rep. Gary VanDeaver](#) and [SB 1267 by Sen. Larry Taylor](#) would allow districts to raise tax rates to the highest Maintenance & Operations (M&O) rate adopted since 2007.

➤ **Status:** 3/22/17 - HB 390 referred to Ways & Means; pending

➤ **Status:** 5/11/17 - HB 486, Senate referred to Education

➤ **Status:** 5/8/17 - SB 1267 referred to Education; not again placed on intent calendar

3. ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Support a system of assessment and accountability that values student growth and achievement over standardized, high-stakes testing. The system should focus on measuring and rewarding multiple metrics developed locally, including student growth, rather than punitive sanctions and labels, such as the A-F rating. The system should be developmentally appropriate and reduce testing redundancy.

BILL RESEARCH

Reform the state accountability system to use a variety of measures and recognize academic proficiency, growth and graduation rates rather than on punitive actions toward schools, teachers and students.

RELATES

- [HB 1336 by Rep. Jeff Leach](#) would require the financial management report submitted by school districts to include any expenses related to administering the STAAR test.
 - **Status:** 4/24/17 - HB 1336 referred to Public Education; committee report sent to Calendars
- [HB 1776 by Rep. Trenton Ashby](#) and [SB 1288 by Sen. Larry Taylor](#) would remove the U.S. History end of course exam and instead, require students entering 9th grade in the 2018-2019 school year, to take the civics test administered by the United State Citizenship and Immigration Services.
 - **Status:** 5/5/17 - HB 1776, Senate received from house
 - **Status:** 3/13/17 - SB 1288 referred to Education
- [HB 2614 by Rep. Dan Huberty](#) would give districts the option to administer preliminary college preparatory assessment instruments annually to 8th and 10th grade students at state cost.
 - **Status:** 5/12/17 - HB 2614, Senate referred to Education
- [HB 2767 by Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins](#) would require that any changes to the accountability system may not be implemented before the second school year after the rule is adopted unless the commissioner is required by law to adopt and implement.
 - **Status:** 4/18/17 - HB 2767 referred to Public Education; pending
- [HB 2782 by Rep. Terry Wilson](#) would prohibit the commissioner from conducting accountability evaluations in a way that provides for a designated distribution of ratings.
 - **Status:** 5/15/17 – HB2782, Senate referred to Education
- [HB 3209 by Rep. Larry Gonzales](#) requires TEA to enter into a MOU with regional day school programs for the deaf regarding performance evaluation requirements for accountability purposes.
 - **Status:** 5/10/17 - HB 3209, Senate referred to Education
- [HB 3635 by Rep. Matt Krause](#) would include as a requirement for eligibility for a district to become a DOI additional standards that would be established by the commissioner including academic performance and financial accountability standards.
 - **Status:** 5/9/17 - HB 3635 referred to Public Education; committee report sent to Calendars

- [SB 1173 by Sen. Charles Perry](#) and [HB 2997 by Rep. Justin Holland](#) would change the accountability system such that Domain 4 would not apply to middle, junior high and elementary campuses as well as districts that contain only those campuses.
 - **Status:** 5/15/17 - SB 1173 referred to Education; committee report printed and distributed
 - **Status:** 4/25/17 - HB 2997 referred to Public Education; pending
- [SB 2049 by Sen. Larry Taylor](#) requires districts to administer one or more Texas Success Initiative (TSI) assessments in reading, writing, and math to students in grade 11.
 - **Status:** 5/2/17 - SB 2049 referred to Education; pending
- [SB 2051 by Sen. Larry Taylor](#) relates to the state public school accountability system. The provisions of this bill generally apply to SY 2017-2018.
 - **Status:** 5/15/17 - SB 2051 referred to Education; committee report printed and distributed

Repeal the A through F Rating System and empower school districts to develop their own system, while meeting general state requirements.

- [HB 22 by Rep. Dan Huberty](#) would reduce the number of domains from 5 down to 3. It maintains domain letter grades A-F, but unlike current law, does not require an overall rating to be assigned to schools and districts.
 - **Status:** 5/11/17 - HB 22, Senate referred to Education

Improve funding for English Language Learners by increasing the current funding weight for bilingual students.

Increase Career and Technical Education weight.

4. SUPPORT EARLY CHILDHOOD/PRE-K EDUCATION

Support complete funding for full-day Early Childhood Programs serving students from at-risk populations. Early Childhood Programs are the most proactive programs in public education because they enable students to enter Kindergarten with the literacy, math, and social/emotional competencies needed to be successful. Plano ISD has high quality programs and trained staff to address the needs of at-risk children to capitalize on early brain development that establishes a child’s social competence, cognitive skills, emotional well-being, language, literacy skills, and physical abilities and is a marker for well-being in school and life resiliency.

BILL RESEARCH

Expand funding for high-quality Pre-K.

RELATES

- [HB 357 by Rep. Dan Huberty](#) would expand the existing pre-K program to include children of seriously injured or killed in the line of duty peace officers, firefighters, and emergency service workers.
 - **Status:** 4/24/17 - HB 357, Senate received from the House

- [HB 4084 by Rep. Tomas Uresti](#) requires the commissioner to adopt a uniform schedule that provides the period during which school districts may enroll students in a prekindergarten program for the following school year.

➤ **Status:** 4/3/17 - HB 4084 referred to Public Education

5. PROVIDE FLEXIBILITY REGARDING INTEREST & SINKING FUND TAX RATE

In years that debt payments on outstanding bonds would require a lesser tax rate than the previous year, we would like the ability to maintain the same tax rate as the previous year and use the surplus revenue to retire debt at a faster rate. A portion of existing law allows districts to levy taxes to make debt payments before they come due. However, the laws governing tax rate notices and adoption do not. We ask that these laws be amended to provide that flexibility.

6. FUNDING-RELATED PRIORITIES

- Support adequate funding for Texas public schools to ensure students have access to an education that prepares them for postsecondary success.
- Oppose the use of public funds for vouchers, tax credits, education savings grants, portability measures, or any other mechanisms to privatize public education.

Reform School Finance to provide for an adequate and equitable public school finance system.

RELATES

- [HB 21 by Rep. Dan Huberty](#) increases the basic allotment from \$5,140 to \$5,350 per student, each year of the biennium.

➤ **Status:** 5/11/17 - HB 21, Senate testimony taken in committee

- [SB 1481 by Sen. Larry Taylor](#) would add open education resource materials to the instructional material and technology allotment for districts.

➤ **Status:** 5/16/17 - SB 1481, House scheduled for public hearing

- [SB 2144 by Sen. Larry Taylor](#) establishes the Texas Commission on Public School Finance, charged with making recommendations for improvements to the current school finance system or for a new method of financing public schools.

➤ **Status:** 5/16/17 - SB 2144, House scheduled for public hearing

Update the Transportation Allotment to allow Chapter 41 districts to apply the amount it would receive in transportation funding as a credit against the total amount of recapture.

Update the Cost of Education Index to address the cost of living and educating students in Austin.

Improve funding for at-risk students by increasing the current funding weight.

Improve funding for English Language Learners by increasing the current funding weight for bilingual students.

Increase Career and Technical Education weight.

Increase the Compensatory Education Index weight to benefit low-income students.

Exclude contributions made by school districts to the federal social security system from the amount subject to recapture by the state under Texas Education Code, Chapter 41. (Pending filed and analyzed legislation)

Fully fund endorsement strands in House Bill 5 from the 83rd Legislative Session. (Pending filed and analyzed legislation)

Oppose unfunded mandates.

7. TERMINATION OF CHAPTER 21 EMPLOYEES UPON FELONY CONVICTION

Empower districts to immediately terminate Chapter 21 employees upon felony conviction without delays due to statutory notification requirements.

8. EXCUSE ATTENDANCE FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE EXEMPT FROM FINAL EXAMS

A school district may excuse a student from attending school during the administration of a final examination for a course in which the student is enrolled if the school district allows the student, because of a good attendance record and high student academic achievement, to be exempt from the administration of the final examination. We support that a student whose absence is excused based on the aforementioned criteria, shall be counted as if the student attended school for purposes of calculating the average daily attendance of students in the school district.

- [HB 1516 by Rep. Jeff Leach](#) would allow school districts the option to exempt certain students from attendance during final exams without the risk of losing funding based on the resulting decrease in average daily attendance.

➤ **Status:** 5/11/17 – HB 1516 referred to Public Education; transferred to Calendars Committee

9. BILLS OF INTEREST

- [HB 23 by Rep. Dan Huberty](#) eliminates the transportation allotment, the high school allotment, and the staff salary allotment.

➤ **Status:** 5/5/17 - HB 23, Senate received from House

- [HB 1865 by Rep. Matt Krause](#) relates to the scheduling of the first and last days of school for students by school districts.

➤ **Status:** 4/25/17 - HB 1865 referred to Public Education; pending

- [HB 2155 by Rep. Donna Howard](#) relates to a college readiness memorandum of understanding between a school district and a public institution of higher education.

➤ **Status:** 5/11/17 - HB 2155 referred to Higher Education; placed on General State Calendar

- [HB 2209 by Rep. Mary Gonzalez](#) relates to improving training and staff development for primary and secondary educators to enable them to more effectively serve all students.
 - **Status:** 5/5/17 - HB 2209 referred to Public Education; Committee report sent to Calendars
- [HB 2442 by Rep. Ken King](#) modifies language related to instructional time to allow the statutory minimum time requirements to apply to certain non-instructional times of the day.
 - **Status:** 5/11/17 - HB 2442, Senate referred to Education
- [HB 3024 by Rep. Four Price](#) allows licensed nurse under Chapter 201 of Occupation Code to remove student from UIL activity if person believes student may have sustained a concussion.
 - **Status:** 5/11/17 - HB 3024, Senate testimony taken in Committee
- [HB 3145 by Rep. Joe Deshotel](#) would require boards of trustees to adopt a recess policy, and review and revise that policy at least every five years.
 - **Status:** 5/10/17 - HB 3145 referred to Public Education; placed on General State Calendar
- [SB 1398 by Sen. Eddie Lucio](#) modifies the requirements for placement of video cameras in special education classrooms.
 - **Status:** 5/16/17 - SB 1398, House scheduled for public hearing
- [HB 3203 by Rep. Pat Fallon](#) requires that school boards with a student enrollment of 5,000 or more make either a video recording of open meetings or a recording if the meeting is a telephone conference call meeting.
 - **Status:** 5/1/17 - HB 3203 referred to Government Transparency & Operations; scheduled for public hearing
- [HB 3349 by Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins](#) would allow a person with significant industry/trade work experience and an industry/trade license to have access to an abbreviated teaching certificate preparation program.
 - **Status:** 5/15/17 - HB 3349, Senate received from House
- [HB 3427 by Rep. Matt Shaheen](#) states that districts can no longer deny students' requests to enroll in electronic courses if the district or school offers "substantially similar" courses.
 - **Status:** 5/2/17 - HB 3427 referred to Public Education; no action taken in committee
- [HB 3437 by Rep. Joe Moody](#) would require the Texas Education Agency to develop and operate a special education recovery program for students who may have been negatively affected by the agency's use of a performance indicator under the PBMAS.
 - **Status:** 5/12/17 - HB 3437 referred to Public Education; returned to Local & Consent Calendars Comm.

- [HB 3439 by Rep. Linda Koop](#) allows a school district to contract with a charter school for the district to partner with the charter school to operate a district campus and share teachers, facilities, or other education resources on that campus.
 - **Status:** 5/8/17 - HB 3439 referred to Public Education; placed on General State Calendar
- [HB 3632 by Rep. Joe Moody](#) waives the timeline for requesting a due process hearing if the parent of the student is a service member and unable to request a hearing.
 - **Status:** 5/10/17 - HB 3632, Senate referred to Education
- [HB 3692 by Rep. Joe Deshotel](#) would ensure that the performance of teachers' students on student performance instruments like the STAAR would not be a criterion on which a teacher would be evaluated.
 - **Status:** 4/10/17 - HB 3692 referred to Public Education; pending in subcommittee
- [HB 3853 by Rep. Garnet Coleman](#) provides additional state aid (in an amount determined by the commissioner) to assist the district in contracting the services of a behavioral health professional for each campus in the district or that behavioral health services are made available through a contract with one or more behavioral health professionals beginning with the 2018-2019 school year.
 - **Status:** 5/2/17 - HB 3853 referred to Public Education; pending
- [HB 4193 by Rep. Ron Simmons](#) creates a "credit account program" for students that have an IEP or are covered by Section 504.
 - **Status:** 4/27/17 - HB 4193 referred to Public Education; pending
- [HB 4226 by Rep. Tomas Uresti](#) requires the special education continuing advisory committee to conduct its meetings according to the open meetings requirements of Government Code Chapter 551.
 - **Status:** 5/9/17 - HB 4226 referred to Public Education; committee report sent to Calendars
- [SB 1317 by Sen. Carlos Uresti](#) would mandate that the first day of teacher service may not be earlier than the seventh business day before the first day of student instruction.
 - **Status:** 4/26/17 - SB 1317 referred to Education; placed on intent calendar
- [SB 1566 by Sen. Lois Kolkhorst](#) would allow school boards to compel a district's chief financial officer or chief academic officer or anyone holding an equivalent position to appear at executive sessions or to testify at public hearings held by the board.
 - **Status:** 5/16/17 - SB 1566, House scheduled for public hearing
- [SB 1605 by Sen. Brandon Creighton](#) requires the largest 50 school districts to maintain a database of its finances on its web site.
 - **Status:** 5/16/17 - SB 1605, House received from Senate

- [SB 1634 by Sen. Larry Taylor](#) would allow districts that provide fewer than 180 days of instruction the ability to reduce the required number of teaching days for a teacher without reducing the educator's salary.

➤ **Status:** 5/9/17 - SB 1634, House committee report sent to Calendars

- [SB 2052 by Sen. Larry Taylor](#) would not allow districts to start school before the THIRD Monday in August unless the districts operate a year-round system or under certain circumstances for districts over 190,000.

➤ **Status:** 5/4/17 - SB 2052 referred to Education; pending