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PLANO ISD BOARD APPROVES RESOLUTION TO JOIN ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM LAWSUIT AGAINST THE TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

Plano, TX — During tonight’s Board Work Session (Sept. 19, 2023), the Plano ISD Board of Trustees [adopted a resolution](#) to join dozens of other North Texas school districts and many others across the state in a lawsuit against the Texas Education Agency. The litigation is in response to the lack of communication regarding the projected significant changes to the state’s A-F accountability rating system. School districts continue to wait on the finalized rules for the new standards that will impact every district and campus in the state.

Texas schools are rated with an A through F letter grade each year by the TEA. The system uses performance measures, methods and procedures based on student performance on the STAAR test, graduation rates, and College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) metrics. Those measures and methods are yet to be finalized, which is problematic and may significantly change this year’s rating despite seeing growth in student results.

Initially filed by Kingsville ISD, the lawsuit refers to TEA Commissioner Mike Morath’s failure to provide school districts with “a document in a simple, accessible format that explains the accountability performance measures, methods, and procedures that will be applied” for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years, in violation of state law. The suit seeks an injunction to stop the commissioner from issuing new ratings using retroactively, incomplete measures.

Plano ISD supports increased student performance standards and accountability; however, Texas school districts are legally required to receive adequate notice of how the standards will be applied. On March 6, 2023, Plano ISD urged TEA to re-evaluate the accountability system refresh in a [joint letter co-signed by 250 Texas school districts](#) and education organizations. The district continued to raise concerns to TEA, but with no formal grievance process to follow with the state agency, the only other option was to enter into litigation.

“As a Board, we have a responsibility to do our due diligence in the best interest of our students, staff and community,” Plano ISD Board President Nancy Humphrey said. “After months of communication and advocacy efforts with no success, this litigation is the only option left to ensure fairness, equity and transparency in our accountability system.”

Under the proposed new rules which again have yet to be finalized, the baseline to earn an A letter grade for a campus and the district in College Career Military Readiness (CCMR) is raised from 60% to 88% for the 2022-23 accountability year. However, the 88% measure would be retroactively applied to the Class of 2022 graduates. Although Plano ISD saw increases in STAAR scores even with the redesign of the test and the district has seen consistent growth in other nationally normed assessments such as the MAP (Measures of Academic Performance), the changes to the accountability system will likely lower the rating for Plano ISD and most districts in Texas. On September 12, the Commissioner announced a further delay in issuing the final rules for the accountability manual and the issuance of the 2023 ratings.

“Plano ISD teachers and principals have worked tirelessly despite the uncertainties to address student gaps and growth for our students,” Plano ISD Superintendent Dr. Theresa Williams said. “In TEA history, any other change as significant as this one has allowed districts to have a baseline-setting year, which we are not getting. Without a baseline reset year, we must use caution in comparing test scores from one year to the next as they are two very different assessments, with different methodologies. We must also use caution in the value we place on this year’s ratings. I don’t know any entity that believes it is fair to change the rules of the game after a game has already been played, or to even win a game when the rules are made up after the fact. It’s an injustice to our students and a disservice to our teachers to re-label their positive outcomes.”

Legal costs will be split among the participating school districts and will be minimal. Get more information on the A-F Accountability System refresh and recent STAAR assessment redesign, and find out why Plano ISD students, staff and schools are [More than a Score.](#)

About Plano Independent School District

The Plano Independent School District (Plano ISD) (www.pisd.edu) endeavors to foster the highest level of student learning. Plano ISD is located 20 miles north of Dallas, Texas and serves the residents of approximately 100 square miles in southwest Collin County, including 66 square miles in the city of Plano, northern portions of the cities of Dallas and Richardson and parts of the cities of Allen, Parker and Murphy. Plano ISD employs 6,500 staff members who serve nearly 50,000 students in 72 schools and 11 service facilities. Mission: Our Plano ISD learning community will educate, inspire and empower every student to activate their unique potential in a dynamic world.