

Dear La Porte Community,

The 87th Texas Legislature convened on Jan. 12, and there are several items of importance to La Porte ISD and other public school districts across Texas. Our Board of Trustees has unanimously approved La Porte ISD Legislative Priorities, which will support our advocacy as we visit with state lawmakers throughout the legislative session.

Full funding (ADA, etc.) for school district virtual schools

COVID-19 has exposed the education market to for-profit virtual learning schools as well as charter schools; we support full ADA funding for ISD virtual schools that are limited to each individual local school district.

Hold harmless funding for 2020-21 (a current school year issue but needs to be a legislative issue in 2021)

The Texas Legislature has the ability to address the current fiscal year; this would be an attempt to ask the legislature to direct the Texas Education Agency to hold school systems harmless on funding for the 2020-21 school year based on COVID-19's impact in student enrollment, attendance and compensatory education funding.

Waiver for accountability ratings/sanctions based on 2020-21 data (a current school year issue but needs to be a legislative issue in 2021)

The Texas Legislature has the ability to address the current assessment and accountability system; we believe the accountability system should NOT include label ratings or sanctions based on 2020-21 results. (A school district should demonstrate the efforts used to provide a meaningful education throughout the school year).

Property value growth

La Porte ISD opposes any effort to divert local property tax revenues that taxpayers are told will be used to support local public schools to non-public education purposes.

School safety

Advocate for increased funding of the School Safety Allotment and local flexibility to ensure districts can adequately meet student and staff safety needs.

Disaster relief

Advocate for additional funding for resources to assist school districts impacted by events, such as hurricanes or tornadoes, which result in portions of real estate being declared natural disaster areas.

Move charter school expansion (new and existing charters) from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to the State Board of Education

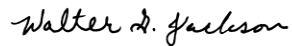
There are two types of charter expansion: new charter system application and expansion of current approved charter system. Under current law, a brand-new charter application is approved by TEA then submitted to the State Board of Education (SBOE) for formal approval. However, charter systems that are already approved may apply for an expansion of their charter system and only the Commissioner of Education approves/denies the expansion requests. We support requiring the SBOE to approve/deny all charter applications (new and expansion).

Modify the current accountability system to require an indexing component utilizing a Risk Load Analysis format and methodology

The current accountability system does not take into consideration the wide range of variances between students.

La Porte ISD supports the use of an index system that considers many factors that impact students, staff, schools and school districts. The Risk Loads Analysis is an example of a credible system that indexes various factors and the impact those factors have on student outcomes.

In your service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Walter D. Jackson".

Dr. Walter Jackson

Superintendent of Schools