



Update for the Santa Fe Community - Legislative Priorities

Dear Santa Fe students, staff, parents, and community,

The purpose of this letter is to provide a brief update about two critical public school discussion points with our Texas Legislature. Our goal is to keep the Santa Fe community informed, but also to solicit your help in supporting our Santa Fe students and community. Here are a few important updates for you as our legislators begin their third special session next week:

TEA "Letter Grade" Accountability:

As you may be aware, the Commissioner of Education recently delayed the release of School and District Letter Grades due to multiple lawsuits and inequities surrounding the Letter Grade criteria. In a recent *2022 Poll, 98% of educators indicated a lack of confidence in the A-F grading system. In addition, 83% of Texans believe that the Texas Education Agency should not base A-F Letter Grades entirely on a single STAAR test.

We want our Texas lawmakers to recognize the public's expectations of educational accountability by expanding how we measure and assess the performance of our schools. The current A-F accountability system ignores dozens of invaluable indicators of school quality (safety, job training, extracurricular activities, fine arts, character education, family engagement, etc.). We believe that Santa Fe deserves an accountability system that increases the transparency of school performance for all valuable services that our schools provide for our students and community.

School Funding:

Texas is currently \$4,000 behind the national average in *per-pupil spending. The basic allotment (general funding per student) has not increased in Texas since 2019. Santa Fe ISD, along with most Texas public schools, has seen an overall decrease in state funding over the past two years. With double-digit inflation, this means that school districts are being forced to cut major costs in all areas.

Texas lawmakers will be sitting on a multi-billion-dollar surplus during this special legislative session. We are asking that they invest in our students and schools! More specifically, we are asking for an increase in the basic allotment for every public school student. This will allow school districts to maintain daily operational costs, invest in innovation, and provide the best possible education for our students.

(*) Raise Your Hand Texas, Charles Butt Foundation 2022 Texas Poll, <https://charlesbuttdn.org/2022txedpoll>

How can you help?

We are asking for your help in promoting these needs with our legislators. We encourage you to contact our local representatives and voice your concerns. We are fortunate and blessed to live in a great community, and we want to continue serving our students and stakeholders while still honoring all Santa Fe taxpayers. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have more questions. Feel free to click on the links below to advocate for these needed changes. Thank you for all your help and support!

Sincerely,
Kevin M. Bott, Ed.D.

Links to Contact our Texas Legislators

[Representative Greg Bonnen](#)
[Senator Mayes Middleton](#)