

**Testimony  
of  
Mike Falick  
Member – Board of Trustees  
Spring Branch Independent School District**

**State of Texas  
Senate Committee on Education  
March 17, 2009**

## Summary of Testimony

- Introduction
  - Madam Chairwoman and Distinguished Members of the Committee
  - Mike Falick, Member of the Board of Trustees and Legislative Liaison, Spring Branch Independent School District
  - 32,000 students on 46 campuses, representing the diversity of the State of Texas
- Strong believer in public school accountability.
- Current accountability system is past its useful life cycle.
- The accountability system needs to be redesigned or overhauled.
- A stronger accountability system should measure progress of the system to the stated goal, influence behavior of those in the system to meeting the goal, and inform all stakeholders of the system's performance towards the goal.
- Senator Shapiro – thank you for your leadership on this issue.
- Positives
  - A clearly defined goal of postsecondary success.
  - Deemphasizing high stakes testing in grades 3-8.
  - Allowing student choice in high school course selection.
- Issues
  - Still too much emphasis on one state exam.
  - The proposed system continues the practice of death by single cell.
- Recommendations
  - Continue to refine the definition of postsecondary readiness – the whole system hinges on the getting this right.
  - Provide for some system of proportionality.
- Thank you for your time and commitment.

## SPRING BRANCH INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

### LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR THE 81<sup>ST</sup> SESSION OF THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE

Adopted by the Board of Trustees on July 28, 2008

#### FINANCE

Spring Branch ISD believes that the current funding system needs to be modified to provide funding to meet cost increases caused by

- inflation
- growth, and
- changes in student demographics.

To meet these needs, the school finance system must include

- a biennially updated index that captures all district costs
- annual increases in State funding to meet cost increases due to the combination of growth and inflation.

In addition, the finance system should

- permit unlimited local voter-approved enrichment to allow school districts to supplement funding to meet community expectations, and
- eliminate Chapter 41 recapture, including the recapture of voter approved local enrichment.

#### ACCOUNTABILITY

Spring Branch ISD believes that it is time to replace the current accountability system with an accountability system that

- has as its sole focus the goal of ensuring that all students complete high school and are prepared, without remediation, to obtain a two-year Associate's Degree, a technical certification, or a four-year Baccalaureate Degree
- assesses students based on annual academic, non-academic growth and development of 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce skills
- utilizes multiple assessments
- rewards success based on overall student performance, and
- mandates corrective action for chronically deficient performance in student sub-populations.