

SANTA FE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. BOX 370

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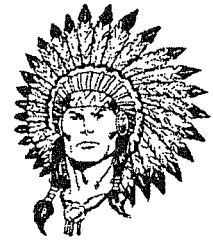
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March 7, 2011

Dear Senate Education Committee members,

As you review and consider Senate Bill 468 and SB443, as Superintendent of Schools of Santa Fe ISD, I respectfully request your specific support for the increased flexibility of our locally elected Board of Trustees in regards to the management and operations of our schools. As proposed in SB 468 and SB443, the flexibility for local decisions will be critical as we navigate through these uncertain and difficult financial decisions.

Santa Fe ISD is currently funded at a low Target Revenue (\$4645) and we continue to conscientiously scrutinize each expenditure as it relates to student achievement and success. It will be important as we work with our staff and community in budget reductions to include options that are supported by constituents, as well as those that have minimal impact on classrooms. It is my belief that the bills with increased flexibility will assist us and others in determining and implementing some necessary reductions.

By providing options for consideration, such as salary reductions, furlough options and relief from the 45 day notice deadline, our local governance will be able to review and make determinations based on our specific district and student needs. Additionally, through flexibility with RIF and the Nonrenewal process in order to reduce additional potential costs, we also request that you sincerely review these restrictions when establishing guidelines for future decisions and costs that will ultimately affect the children of our district.

In regards to SB443, also relating to measures intended to provide flexibility and cost savings to districts, the controversial class size concern is another for which review and consideration may assist in difficult decisions for our local board to manage costs and minimize the impact on students. While we support the 22 or 21-1 ratio, we also feel some flexibility in this area will assist in allowing local entities to use reasonable and best determinations when considering all options for our classrooms and students.

I appreciate your interest in accepting input and recommendations from school districts, and would be happy to provide additional information as needed or required. Thank you for the diligence with which you assume your responsibilities in charting the future of education for public school children of Texas and specifically for those in Santa Fe, Texas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leigh Wall".

Leigh Wall, Ed.D.

Superintendent of Schools, Santa Fe ISD