

**Testimony of Mike Falick President – Board of Trustees Spring
Branch Independent School District
Senate Committee on Education May 10, 2011**

- I. Introduction
 - A. Madam Chairwoman and Distinguished Members of the Committee
 - B. Mike Falick, President of the Board of Trustees, Spring Branch Independent School District
 - C. 32,500 students on 46 campuses, representing the diversity of the State of Texas
 - D. 57% low SES; 1/3rd ELL (51% pre-K – 2)
 - E. Spring Branch Goal: Premiere College Focused District in Texas
 - 1. Highest percentage of students taking SAT/ACT – 87% - of any District in Houston area
 - 2. Highest percentage of students rated “college ready” of any District in the Houston area
- II. Accountability
 - A. Testified in both House and Senate in 2009 on HB3
 - B. As then, Spring Branch remains a strong believer in public school accountability.
 - C. HB3 provided a clearly defined goal of postsecondary success with the stated goal, asked for by many, many constituents, to simplify the system and to deemphasize high stakes testing
- III. CSHB500
 - A. Transition Phase In
 - 1. Transition provision applies to next 2 classes of incoming 9th graders, and permits them to graduate either by taking and passing 4 TAKS tests or by satisfying prescribed EOC requirements
 - a. Critical transition piece that would keep kids from getting hurt while teachers adapt to the new curriculum and new EOC
 - 2. Simplicity
 - a. Driving force of HB3 was to make the accountability system simpler to understand
 - b. The current implementation of HB3 is extremely confusing
 - B. Local Control
 - 1. Districts have authority to determine locally whether, and how much, EOC scores contribute to course grades
 - C. Retaking Tests
 - 1. Students *may* (rather than must) retake tests
 - 2. ARD committees determine assessment requirements for identified special education students
 - 3. Enormous cost savings

Thank you for your time and commitment to the children of the State of Texas.