

Community Leadership Committee
Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District
83rd Session, 2012-13

August 23, 2012

The Honorable Dan Patrick
P.O. Box 12068
Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Senator Patrick:

The Cypress-Fairbanks ISD Community Leadership Committee (CLC) is comprised of approximately forty individuals who represent various stakeholders in the community served by Cypress-Fairbanks ISD. We appreciate the time and attention you have afforded our committee in the past and look forward to working with you going forward.

Please find enclosed the CLC Legislative Priorities for the 83rd Legislative Session. As during the 82nd Session, we are most concerned about legislation affecting funding for public schools, accountability and local control. We wanted you to have this document and be aware of our position on funding for vouchers and other programs that take funding away from public education.

Given the \$5.3 billion cut made to public education as a result of legislation during the last session, putting further financial pressure on school districts by diverting funds to other school choice options, especially those that are not required to meet accountability standards set by the State and Federal Governments is onerous and not necessary. Public school districts already offer school choice by providing magnet schools and inter-district transfers. Policies allowing districts to improve and expand these public school choice programs such as additional transportation funding for students choosing to attend a school other than their neighborhood school would be more effective for the largest number of students.

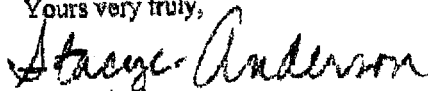
In addition, the CLC is particularly concerned that further diverting funds from public school districts without fixing the current school finance system that does not provide equitable funding to districts such as Cypress-Fairbanks ISD will significantly impact the quality of the education that our district can provide. As you are aware, CFISD receives about \$1,100 less per student than Tomball ISD and has already cut \$106.5 million from its operating budget during the recent four years prior to, and including the 82nd Legislative Session.

If you wish to correspond with our Committee, please send correspondence to me at my residence address at 15703 Quiet Bay Ct., Houston, TX, 77095. Your correspondence will be made available to the Committee.

If you prefer, please send correspondence to:
Cypress-Fairbanks Community Legislative Committee
P.O. Box 692003
Houston, Texas 77269-2003

We appreciate your representation of our community and your support of public education.

Yours very truly,



Stacey Anderson
Cypress-Fairbanks Community Leadership Committee Chair

Cypress-Fairbanks ISD **83rd Legislative Session Priorities**

- **Adopt a school finance system that is adequately funded to meet the legislature's college and career readiness academic standards, reflects current costs of education and is equitable to all school districts.**
 - Design a funding system that meets the mission and policy statements currently contained in statute. Restore the \$5.3 billion cut.
 - Narrow or eliminate the funding gap between school districts.
 - Utilize a portion of the Rainy Day Fund as needed to balance the state budget.
 - Oppose legislation that diverts funding from public education such as voucher programs and support policies that allow districts to improve and expand public school choice programs already in existence.

- **Restructure the public school accountability system.**
 - Reduce the amount of high stakes testing.
 - Eliminate the requirement that an end-of-course exam count 15% of a student's final course grade and eliminate the cumulative score requirement.
 - Include a variety of measures that address the whole student.
 - Eliminate the evaluation of districts and campuses based on a single lowest indicator.

- **Allow districts the flexibility to manage classroom personnel based on individual school and student needs within the context of state budget cuts and state accountability.**
 - Eliminate the requirement that remediation provided to students who fail state assessments be delivered in a setting that requires a 10:1 student teacher ratio.
 - Repeal Chapter 42 spending requirements for special programs.

- **Allow additional local control and flexibility to districts enabling them to operate more efficiently and eliminate unfunded mandates.**
 - Redefine seat time requirements for funding and course credits to enable districts to have the resources to develop online instructional programs.
 - Eliminate standard school start date.
 - Eliminate the additional school district costs associated with joint elections.
 - Require the identification of a district fiscal note for any proposed legislation.