



ALEDO ISD BOARD MEETING TEMPLATE

MEETING DATE: November 18, 2013

AGENDA ITEM: Funding Request from Texas Taxpayer & Student Fairness Coalition

PRESENTER: Earl Husfeld

ALIGNS TO BOARD GOAL(S): Financial/Facilities – The District shall exhibit excellence in financial and facility planning, management, and stewardship.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- During the November 14, 2011 school board meeting, the Board of Trustees took action to join the Equity Center's school finance litigation group known as the Texas Taxpayer & Student Fairness Coalition.
- The District cost to date for this action has been the original funding request of \$1.00 per weighted average daily attendance (WADA). This cost of \$5,049.00 was paid from legal costs budgeted for the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS:

- As you are aware, the school finance litigation groups prevailed in the District Court trial and the state's school finance system was declared unconstitutionally inequitable and inadequate.
- Additionally, during the legislative session this year, the Legislature took steps to begin addressing the issue of equity in public school finance.
- As a result of the legislative actions taken this year, Judge Dietz has scheduled a January 2014 hearing to determine the impact, if any, these actions will have on his previous decisions.
- The following pages contain a letter and invoice from the Texas Taxpayer & Student Fairness Coalition explaining their request for an additional contribution of \$0.50 per WADA to cover the unanticipated expense of this action at the District Court level.

FISCAL NOTE:

The invoiced amount of \$2,633.00 would be paid from legal costs budgeted for the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION:

The Administration recommends the Board of Trustees authorize the expenditure of an additional \$0.50 per WADA (\$2,633.00) to the Texas Taxpayer & Student Fairness Coalition for additional litigation cost.

TEXAS TAXPAYER & STUDENT FAIRNESS COALITION

September 23, 2013

Ms. Earl Husfeld, CFO/Business Manager
Aledo ISD
1008 Bailey Ranch Rd.
Aledo, TX 76008-9520

Dear Ms. Husfeld:

As a member of the Texas Taxpayer & Student Fairness Coalition, you are well aware of the successes our Coalition has experienced. First, we prevailed in the District Court trial and the state's school finance system was declared unconstitutionally inequitable and inadequate. In addition, we also prevailed on the issue that the school finance system has created a de facto statewide property tax.

Then, as the legislative session progressed throughout the spring, our victory on the issue of equity became the major driver in school finance decisions. So much so, that the legislature put \$2.4 billion into raising the Basic Allotment from \$4,765 in 2012-13 to \$5,040 in 2014-15. In addition, the legislature put another \$1 billion into the elimination of the Regular Program Adjustment Factor. These actions will result in substantive funding increases in the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years for most of our members, ranging on average from \$250 to \$340 per WADA over the 2013-15 biennium. In addition, on several occasions, the need to address equity issues was used on the floor of each house as justification for passing the main school finance and appropriations bills.

Your work and willingness to contribute and finance the Fairness Coalition lawsuit are the reason for our success.

But, as you also know, our Fairness Coalition is having to go back to court in January to defend our gains and prove that even though some progress was made, the equity and adequacy gaps are still large and still unconstitutional.

This new retrial at the District Court level does represent an unanticipated expense and is the reason we are asking you and all Fairness Coalition members to contribute an additional \$0.50 per WADA to cover the additional cost.

Obviously, *we need every Fairness Coalition member to participate in this funding request*, but as we promised from the beginning that choice is completely up to you and your Board. Hopefully, you will join us in funding this additional litigation cost. Remember as you visit with your board, because we have prevailed. That means we have the expectation our legal fees will be refunded.

***Texas Taxpayer & Student Fairness Coalition · 400 W. 15th Street, Suite 300 · Austin, Texas 78701
(512) 478-7313 · Fax: (512) 478-6433 · email: info@equitycenter.org***

***Jerry Vaughn, Taylor ISD - President
Cathy Booth, Nixon Smiley ISD - First Vice-President
Brian Gray, Union Grove ISD - Secretary***

***Berhl Robertson, Lubbock ISD - VP, Litigation
Robert Westbrook, Milano ISD - VP, Finance
Doug Killian, Hutto ISD - VP, Communications***

An invoice for your district is attached. As always, thank you for your help and if you have any questions or need any assistance, please call.

Sincerely,



Jerry Vaughn
President, Texas Taxpayer & Student Fairness Coalition
Superintendent, Taylor ISD
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Texas Taxpayer & Student Fairness Coalition
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Texas Taxpayer & Student Fairness Coalition

400 West 15th Street, Suite 300
Austin, Texas 78701
512-478-7313

INVOICE

September 23, 2013

Ms. Earl Husfeld, CFO/Business Manager
Aledo ISD
1008 Bailey Ranch Rd.
Aledo, TX, 76008-9520

RE: School Finance Litigation

Total Invoiced Amount: \$2633

If the WADA we have calculated is higher than your estimate for 2013-14, please feel free to change the WADA estimate and lower your district's fee to the correct amount.

Please make check payable to:

Texas Taxpayer & Student Fairness Coalition

And note the NEW MAILING ADDRESS:

Mail to:

Texas Taxpayer & Student Fairness Coalition

**C/O Equity Center
400 West 15th Street, Suite 300
Austin, Texas 78701**

Thank you!

9/20/2013