



# UNITED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT INFORMATIONAL ITEM

**TOPIC:** BUDGET 2023-24 UPDATE

**SUBMITTED BY:** Laida P. Benavides, CPA **OF:** Chief Financial Office

**APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL TO SCHOOL BOARD:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE ASSIGNED FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION:** February 7, 2023

## **INFORMATIONAL REPORT:**

**Budget 2023-24 Process is ongoing. The following are budget preparation activities occurring this month:**

**\* Administration is holding Budget Planning meetings with the C&I department, Human Resources department and the Planning Department. Discussions have centered around projected enrollment for SY 2024, staffing projections, and compliance with Bilingual regulations.**

**\*Meetings with parents of those student affected by the proposed boundary changes took place last week and yesterday. If approved by the Board next week we will notify parents whether they were approved or not. Admissions department will work with both the sending and receiving campus staff to help with the transition of students.**

**\*The 88<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislative session is taking place in Austin. There continues to be more bills filed. As of Jan 26<sup>th</sup>, there were over 2300 bills filed with about 400 bills that could impact public education. Administration was able to meet with Senator Zaffirini's office, Representative Raymond and Representative King to share the bills that United ISD supports and which ones we do not support. Attached is a list of the bills discussed with our legislators.**



## **United ISD: Discussion on the 88<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session**

**BACKGROUND:** United Independent School District (“UISD”) is the 30th largest school district in the State of Texas. UISD currently has a student population of 41,457 of which 98% are Hispanic, 38 % are Emergent Bilingual (LEP) and 75 % are considered Economically Disadvantaged. UISD covers over 2,400 square miles, larger than the state of Delaware, so that over 1/3 of our student population will ride our school buses on a daily basis. In spite of our challenges, United ISD continues to excel in the state of Texas accountability rating system by earning an “A” rating in 2018, 2019 and 2022.

**The following are legislative bills filed which UISD supports:**

### **FINANCE RELATED BILLS**

**HB 31, HB 1376 & SB 263: Relating to the use of average enrollment for purposes of the public school finance system.**

United ISD, like many other districts, have experienced a drop in our attendance rates since the beginning of the pandemic. UISD has had to utilize funds received through the ESSER to make ends meet. These funds will expire at the end of next school year. Our pre-COVID attendance rate was 95.6% and for school year 2022 the attendance rate was at 92.5 % and currently we are averaging a 92.9% attendance rate.

**HB 610 (HJR 44) (filed by R Raymond): Relating to a temporary increase in the amount of the exemption of residence homesteads from ad valorem taxation by the school district.**

United ISD’s residences have experienced a tremendous amount of value growth in tax values especially with the increase in building materials. UISD supports any tax relief for our homeowners but strongly advocates for a hold harmless provision that assures our district does not lose state revenue.



**HB 882, SB 88: Relating to an annual adjustment to the basic allotment under the Foundation School Program to reflect inflation.**

United ISD supports increasing the basic allotment from \$6,160 to \$7,075 and the requirement that the basic allotment be subject to an annual inflation adjustment. Due to inflation and global supply issues, United ISD has experienced a substantial increase in various expenditures such as food commodities, fuel, building materials, technology equipment and wiring.

**HB1052: Relating to the use of enrollment purposes of the special education allotment under the Foundation School Program.**

United ISD supports funding based on special education individual student needs versus only enrollment.

**HB313: Relating to the compensatory education allotment for homeless students or students in foster care under the Foundation School Program**

United ISD supports additional funding from the state to aid in the education of our most marginalized populations which have increased significantly since COVID-19.

**HR/SALARY/BENEFITS/TRS RELATED BILLS**

**HB1284: Relating to the payment of certain employer contributions for retirees on the Teacher Retirement System of Texas who resume service.**

United ISD supports funding from the state to cover employer contributions for retirees of TRS who resume service.

**EARLY CHILDHOOD BILLS**

**HB 342, SB 38 (filed by Zaffirini): Relating to providing free full-day prekindergarten for certain children.**

United ISD strongly supports providing full-day prekindergarten to all eligible students with the financial support from the state to cover the costs for full-day services as opposed to the current half-day revenue received by districts.





**SB89: Relating to eligibility to certain children of classroom children for enrollment in a free prekindergarten program**

United ISD strongly supports this bill and would aid us with teacher retention and recruitment. The only criteria should be 4 years as of September 1st and be fully funded.

**INSTRUCTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY BILLS**

**HB1416 (HB4545): Relating to accelerated instruction**

United ISD strongly supports this bill if it reduces the number of hours that accumulate for students who fail End of Course assessments

**SAFETY BILLS (Given that all school districts are different levels of safety and security initiatives, we should be given the flexibility to determine the use of any safety related funding, even if pre-determined by the state)**

**HB655: Relating to the placement by a school district of a student who engages in habitually violent behavior**

United ISD supports this as it would assist us in engaging the student's family in determining the best instructional setting and ensuring safety for all.



The following are legislative bills filed which UISD does not support:

**HB170: Relating to certain requirements applicable to certain public entities that engage in lobbying**

**HB 221: Relating to a requirement that an election for a member of a board of trustees of an independent school district is partisan.**

**HB 557: Relating to the establishment of an educational expenses reimbursement program.**

**HB 114: Relating to the possession of ecigarettes on public school property or certain school events**

**HB114: Relating to the possession of e-cigarettes on public school property or at a school related function.**

**HB 863: Relating to the election date for the authorization of the issuance of bonds or a tax increase.**

This bill would require that bond elections or VATRE be held on the November uniform election date. UISD holds their board elections in November.

**HB1066: Relating to a psychological assessment of homicidal risk of a public school student following the student's expulsion or placement in a disciplinary alternative education for certain conduct.**

Given the shortage of psychologists in our community, we need to be given the opportunity to continue using the Behavior Threat Assessment to identify, assess, and manage potentially dangerous or violent situations and behaviors.



**SB475: Relating to the inclusion of School Safety Domain for evaluating districts and campuses under the public school accountability system.**

Given the changes to STAAR 2.0 and the Accountability Reset, we cannot allow our overworked administrators to include this as part of their accountability.