

**Anderson County Education Priorities**  
**86<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session in Texas**  
**November 2018**

**Respectfully sent to:**

Representative Cody Harris

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Austin, Texas 78768

Senator Robert Nichols

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**Anderson & Freestone County School Districts**

Cayuga – Student Enrollment: 568	District Staff: 109
Dr. Rick Webb, Superintendent	Mr. Tim West, Board President
Elkhart – Student Enrollment: 1,242	District Staff: 202
Dr. Lamont Smith, Superintendent	Mr. Kevin Bush, Board President
Frankston – Student Enrollment: 841	District Staff: 117
Mr. John Allen, Superintendent	Mr. Jerry Jones, Board President
Neches – Student Enrollment: 378,	District Staff: 66
Mr. Randy Snider, Superintendent	Mr. Van Brown, Board President
Palestine – Student Enrollment: 3,354	District Staff: 487
Mr. Jason Marshall, Superintendent	Mrs. Dyna Tutt, Board President
Slocum – Student Enrollment: 414	District Staff: 69
Mr. Cliff Lasiter, Superintendent	Mr. Daniel Bailey, Board President
Westwood – Student Enrollment: 1,594	District Staff: 257
Mr. Wade Stanford, Superintendent	Dr. Don Rice, Board President

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES 2019

1. **Funding** – We support additional state funding (via Average Daily Enrollment) for public school students to ensure an appropriate, modern-day education for all students. Additionally, we do not support a reduction in funding for some schools in order to provide extra money for other schools. Specific needs include:
  - a. An increase in the Basic Allotment
  - b. No significant change to the Mid-Size Schools Allotment and keeping the Small-Schools Adjustment in tact
  - c. An increase in the state's share of public education (50% minimum)
  - d. Property tax relief at the local level
  - e. Increasing technology funding and flexible use of Instructional Materials Allotment
  
2. **Teacher Recruitment and Retention** – State leaders needs to recognize the chronic teacher shortage situation, adopt an attitude of support for teachers, and support a plan to address this major problem. Specifics include:
  - a. Increasing pay and benefits for teachers in order to improve the quality and longevity of Texas teachers
  - b. Assistance in TRS-Active Care and TRS-Care health insurance
  - c. Maintaining the defined benefit Teacher Retirement System plan
  - d. Developing a Public Relations campaign geared at promoting the value of public education, public school teachers, and encouraging young students and adult students to become a Texas teacher.
  - e. Expanding the Grow Your Own grant and/or developing new partnerships to assist rural and low socioeconomic schools in attracting teachers
  
3. **School Safety** – We request additional state funding and support for security, safety, and mental health needs of students, staff – including training for counselors.
  
4. **Testing and Accountability** – We support eliminating the A-F School Rating System, returning to a more simple system such as Met Standard, and allowing for further local accountability system development. Specifics include:
  - a. An assessment program in grades 3-8 that aligns with federal testing
  - b. Removing all high school tests with the exception of the TSI at 10<sup>th</sup> grade
  - c. Developing a local Writing Assessment in grades 4 and 7
  - d. Providing greater accountability considerations for schools who have higher populations of SPED, EcoDis, Bilingual, etc students
  - e. Require the SBOE to streamline TEKS and limiting standards to each subject and grade level that can be effectively taught prior to yearly state assessments (STAAR tests)

5. **Full Day PreK** – We support complete funding for full-day PreK.
6. **College and Career Readiness** – We support a plan to further improve and expand college and career initiatives not one that restricts students to limited opportunities. Specifics include:
- a. Continue supporting dual credit programs funding both the school district and college to finance those programs
  - b. Supporting the local determination of appropriate industry certifications for state accountability purposes
  - c. Allowing the completion of career pathways (coherent sequences) to be recognized as a component of college/career readiness
  - d. Funding 8<sup>th</sup> grade career and technology classes
7. **Vouchers, Student Savings Scholarships, Etc** – We do not support vouchers or any form of public/taxpayer dollars being redistributed to private schools/education. We also do not support an expansion of charters unless they have same accountability and transparency rules as traditional public schools.
8. **School Governance** – We support legislation that provides greater control of school district at the local level. Specifics include:
- a. Furthering the use of Districts of Innovation and allowing for an expansion of ideas under the DOI designation
  - b. Continuing the components of HB 2610 which provides local control and reasonable flexibility of our yearly school calendars.

### **Other Organizational Platforms Supported**

Texas Association of School Boards  
Texas Association of Community Schools  
Texas Association of Mid-Size Schools  
Friends of Texas Public Schools

Texas Association of School Administrators  
Texas Rural Education Association  
Texas Association of Rural Schools  
Texas Parent PAC