



Approved Leander ISD Legislative Priorities Texas 84th Legislative Session

Accountability

- **Testing Standards** - We support streamlining the TEKS and assessing essential standards. In addition, the Legislature needs to increase funding for the Student Success Initiative (SSI) as STAAR standards continue to rise.
- **ELL/LEP Students** - We support not counting English Language Learners/Limited English Proficient Students' (ELL/LEP) test scores toward district's rating for the first three years of their enrollment. The STAAR exam is a rigorous exam measuring college readiness and is significantly more difficult for students learning English. We support allowing state educators to propose the definition of failing schools based on various measures, as well as any other subsequent classifications/labels.

Finance

- **Capital Appreciation Bonds** – There is active opposition to the use of CABs in the current political landscape of the Texas Legislature. A district such as Leander ISD faces continued fast enrollment growth while property values remain primarily residential. If the State determines that as a matter of public policy, schools should be discouraged/limited from issuing CAB debt, and since LISD would be severely limited from being able to open schools for the continued growth, we propose that a bracketed bill be considered for LISD. In order to qualify for the requested dispensation, the district would demonstrate it could continue to build within the 50-cent debt limit with the issuance of CABs, and once demonstrated, the district would be relieved of its 50-cent test obligation, with the Board then authorized by statute to levy a tax in excess of \$.50 in order to issue Current Interest Bond (CIB) debt instead of CAB debt.

The district earned a [2014 Platinum Leadership Circle Award](#) from the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. The Program was developed to spotlight local governments that are: opening their books to the public; providing clear, consistent pictures of spending; and sharing information in a user-friendly format that lets taxpayers easily drill down for more detail.



Texas Comptroller
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- **50-Cent Test** - We support updating the 50-cent test law, allowing local communities to invest in school facilities to keep up with the phenomenal economic growth in this state. We support the State's effort in promoting business growth and providing facilities support. Fast-growth districts need flexibility as they try to add seats to match growth.
- **Instructional Materials Allotment** - We support the State Board of Education raising the Permanent School Fund payout to increase the amount of money going toward the Instructional Materials Allotment. We believe the State should move towards restoring the amount of aid going towards instructional materials (formerly through textbook funding) increase the amount of each IMA each ISD receives. In simple terms, LISD saw a reduction of funding for materials from about \$313 per pupil, per year, down to about \$71 per pupil, per year.
- **ASATR** – We support a transition plan that helps target revenue districts prepare for the impending funding cliff that will result in the elimination of Additional State Aid for Tax Reduction (ASATR) in 2017-2018. We see this as the unfulfilled promise the Legislature made when the funding formula was restructured in 2006.