
From: Spring Branch Speaks <updates@springbranchspeaks.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 3:01 PM
To:
Subject: SBS: Call To Action - On the Right Path

Spring Branch Speaks

... to make our voices heard in Austin.

Dear ***Spring Branch Speaks*** Member:

This past Tuesday marked the beginning of the 2013 Texas Legislative session. We want to thank Speaker Joe Straus for promoting education in his opening day remarks to the Texas House of Representatives:

"Our priorities should begin where our future does - in public education.

More than 5 million children are enrolled in our public schools, which is more than the total population of 29 states. More than 3 million of them are deemed economically disadvantaged, and almost 1 million of them speak limited English.

The education of all our students will determine whether Texas is a land of prosperity or lost opportunities. There should be no sacred cows when it comes to our children - including our accountability system. For more than a decade, this state has used an increasingly rigorous series of standardized tests to measure academic excellence.

But by now every Member of this House has heard from constituents at the grocery store or the Little League fields about the burdens of an increasingly cumbersome testing system in our schools. Teachers and parents worry that we have sacrificed classroom inspiration for rote memorization. The goal of education is not to teach children how to pass a test, but to prepare them for life. The goal of every teacher is to develop in students a lifelong love of learning, and we need to get back to that goal in the classroom.

To parents and educators concerned about excessive testing - the Texas House has heard you. We will continue to hold our schools accountable. But we will also make our accountability and testing system more appropriate ... more flexible ... and more reasonable." [\[click here for full comment text\]](#)

We agree that education should be a priority for our state. And with the recent news of higher than expected revenue - Texas has a surplus from the last two years of \$8.8 billion - we are hopeful that the 2013 legislature will return funding to our schools. SBISD's budget was cut over 7% by the 2011 legislature; returning education funding to pre-2011 levels would benefit all our children, teachers, and schools.

CALL TO ACTION:

Please take a few minutes and send an email to thank Speaker Straus for prioritizing education for this session, and let our local legislators know that we expect education issues, including funding & testing, to be at the top of their lists, too. Below is a distribution list of our local Representatives and Senators.

Rep. Joe Straus, Speaker	district121.straus@house.state.tx.us	512-463-1000
Sen. Joan Huffman	Joan.Huffman@senate.state.tx.us	512-463-0117
Sen. Dan Patrick	Dan.Patrick@senate.state.tx.us	512-463-0107
Sen. John Whitmire	John.Whitmire@senate.state.tx.us	512-463-0115
Rep. Dwayne Bohac	Dwayne.Bohac@house.state.tx.us	512-463-0727
Rep. Sarah Davis	sarah.davis@house.state.tx.us	512-463-0389
Rep. Jessica Farrar	Jessica.Farrar@house.state.tx.us	512-463-0620
Rep. Jim Murphy	Jim.Murphy@house.state.tx.us	512-463-0514
Rep. Sylvester Turner	Sylvester.Turner@house.state.tx.us	512-463-0554

Easily cut and paste:

district121.straus@house.state.tx.us, Joan.Huffman@senate.state.tx.us,
Dan.Patrick@senate.state.tx.us, John.Whitmire@senate.state.tx.us,
Dwayne.Bohac@house.state.tx.us, sarah.davis@house.state.tx.us,
Jessica.Farrar@house.state.tx.us, Jim.Murphy@house.state.tx.us,
Sylvester.Turner@house.state.tx.us

Thank you for taking 5 minutes to start off our conversation with our lawmakers. Spring Branch Speaks will continue to monitor activity in Austin, and will let you know when opportunities arise for our collective voice to weigh in support of our neighborhood schools.

Sincerely,

Spring Branch Speaks

PS - If you are interested in following bills or issues that our Legislature are addressing this year, please visit Texas Legislature Online at <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us>.



[Spring Branch Speaks](#)

Parent-organized community outreach with SBISD in mind.

Spring Branch ISD educates a diverse community of 34,000 students on 46 campuses, including 57% economically disadvantaged students and 33% limited-English-proficient (ESL) students.

(Forward this email to your family and friends - ask them to join, too:

www.SpringBranchSpeaks.com)

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Legislative Committee:

David Davenport	Angela Martinez Gallagher
Pam Goodson	Darci Hubbard
Susan Kellner	Karen Peck
Emily Van Buren	Chris Vierra

