

From: Spring Branch Speaks <updates@springbranchspeaks.com>
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2012 12:25 PM
To:
Subject: Kick Off 2012 - Spring Branch Speaks



Spring Branch Speaks

... to make our voices heard in Austin.

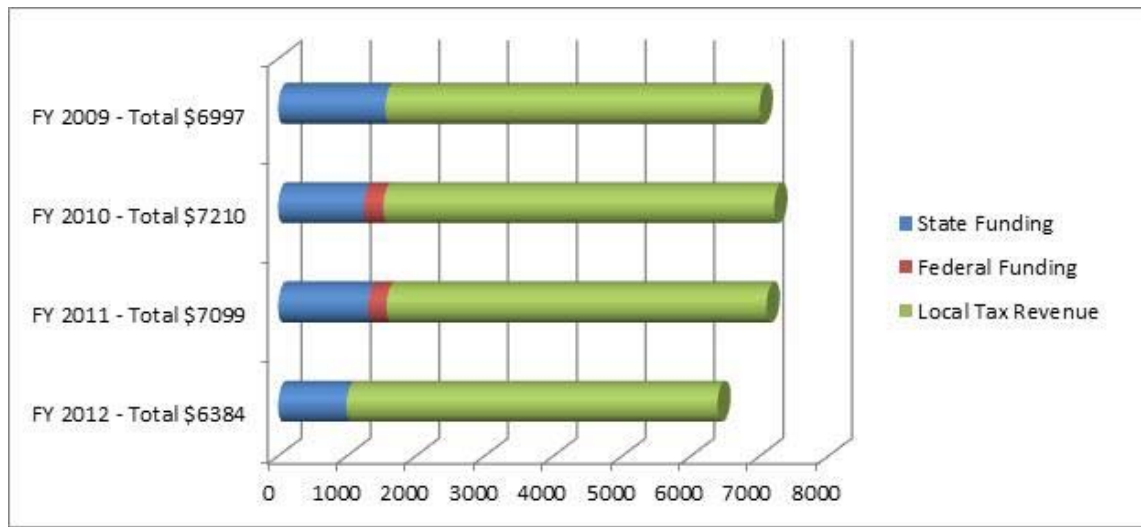
Dear *Spring Branch Speaks* members:

Happy New Year! Here are a few topics to be aware of as the year begins...

Confusing Statements Continue

Over the past month, we have heard from some of you questioning public statements made by politicians regarding public school finance. The phrase in question: "we increased state funding for education during the last session" is misleading; it does not represent the reality experienced by school districts across the state.

Here's a breakdown of how a SBISD student was funded by the state of Texas, and the Federal government, over the last six years. Texas didn't have to fully fund their own students for the years 2009-2010 & 2010-2011 because they used federal "stimulus" money. The overall funding for public school students in Texas has decreased due to legislation passed in the last session. As a result, school districts began the school year being forced to cut programs, increase class sizes, and lay off massive numbers of teachers and staff. Next school year every Texas school district will see a repeat of the loss of millions of dollars.



Elections Coming Up

With primaries currently scheduled in April for State Legislature seats, **Spring Branch Speaks** is meeting with candidates for our state representative positions to better understand their views on education and education funding. As we learn more, we will forward information and links for these candidates so you can make an informed decision at the polls.

End of Course Exams

The new "end of course" exams are scheduled to be administered in less than three months, in March 2012. Representative Rob Eissler, Chairman of the House Public Education Committee, plans to hold a hearing in Austin on January 23rd about these exams and their potential impact on our schools and high school students. **Spring Branch Speaks** is gathering information to see if there is an opportunity for us to use our voices to support our students. [Click here and here for two good articles outlining the tests and how they could change the landscape for our high school students.](#)

Survey on Education Funding

Senator Dan Patrick is conducting an online poll to learn more about his constituents' opinions on education funding as it relates to sales taxes and taxes in general. Please take a few minutes to weigh in:

http://www.senate.state.tx.us/75r/senate/members/dist7/req_survey04.php

Membership Drive - You Can Help!

Spring Branch Speaks wants more members so we can increase our collective voice in support of our neighborhood schools and kids. Please take a minute and forward this email to your friends, family members, and neighbors, and encourage them to sign up for our updates. Just ask them to visit www.SpringBranchSpeaks.com and add their email to our list.

As always, if you have any questions about these issues, please send us an email. Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

[Spring Branch Speaks](#)

Parent-organized community outreach with SBISD in mind.

Spring Branch ISD educates a diverse community of 32,000 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	Emily Van Buren
Chris Vierra	

