

From: Spring Branch Speaks <updates@springbranchspeaks.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2011 5:21 PM
To:
Subject: Spring Branch Speaks - School funding update & last push

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Spring Branch Speaks

... to make our voices heard in Austin.

We are now at the halfway point of this legislative special session. Last week, the House of Representatives debated school funding, and they passed their version of SB 1, the bill that outlines how to allocate education funds. The bill now moves to conference committee - 5 appointed Senators and 5 appointed Representatives - for final negotiation. Then, a final version of SB 1 will be put to a straight Yes/No vote in both the Senate and the House, and when passed will go to the Governor for signature into law.

Update on issues critical to SBISD.

Thank you for your efforts last week. Your emails and calls last week definitely had an impact:

- The PreK testing amendment, after much discussion, was withdrawn and never presented to the House for consideration. We will continue to watch and are hopeful that it will not come up again in the special session. We want to thank our House delegation, especially Rep. Beverly Woolley, Rep. Jim Murphy, and Rep. Jessica Farrar, for their strong work last Thursday opposing this amendment in support of our schools and programs.
- The "voucher" bill, offering compensation for removing students from the public education system, has stalled "in committee", which means it has not been approved to move to the House for full consideration.

In the Final Push - next Call to Action

As the conference committee negotiates a final version of SB 1 - a version that must pass in both the House and the Senate - there is an amendment that is a huge benefit to SBISD, and all school districts across our state.

The "Patrick amendment", put forward by Rep. Diane Patrick (R -Arlington), provides that the cuts in SB1 apply only to the next two budget years, and then resets education funding to the law in place before this session. Without this amendment, education funding - the total amount and district allocations - could change drastically every two years because there would be no law obligating a baseline level of funding. Districts would not be able to plan more than 2 years out, and education funding could be redesigned every legislative session (exactly what has happened this year due to the budget shortfall). A baseline funding law has been in place since 1949; removing the law exposes SBISD to more uncertainties in future funding.

We expect the conference committee to finalize the education allocation bill in the next day. We ask that you please email or call the Senators and

Representatives ASAP and, in your own words, include the following request:

- **Keep the Patrick amendment on SB 1 that limits this allocation plan to the next two budget years. The Patrick amendment gives our school districts more certainty for budget planning.**

Senate Conference Committee:

Sen. Robert Deuell	Bob.Deuell@senate.state.tx.us.	512-463-0102
Sen. Robert Duncan	Robert.Duncan@senate.state.tx.us	1-888-723-0408
Sen. Chuy Hinojosa	Juan.Hinojosa@senate.state.tx.us	1-888-812-0531
Sen. Florence Shapiro	Florence.Shapiro@senate.state.tx.us	512-463-0108
Sen. Tommy Williams	Tommy.Williams@senate.state.tx.us	1-888-514-8930

Easily cut and paste: Bob.Deuell@senate.state.tx.us;
Robert.Duncan@senate.state.tx.us; Juan.Hinojosa@senate.state.tx.us;
Florence.Shapiro@senate.state.tx.us; Tommy.Williams@senate.state.tx.us

House of Representatives Conference Committee:

Rep. Jim Pitts	Jim.Pitts@house.state.tx.us	1-888-823-9190
Rep. Rob Eissler	Rob.Eissler@house.state.tx.us	512-463-0797
Rep. Charlie Geren	Charlie.Geren@house.state.tx.us	512-463-0610
Rep. John Otto	John.Otto@house.state.tx.us	1-888-644-2670
Rep. Mike Villarreal	Michael.Villarreal@house.state.tx.us	512-463-0532

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Charlie.Geren@house.state.tx.us; John.Otto@house.state.tx.us;
Michael.Villarreal@house.state.tx.us

Thank you for your continued support throughout this process.

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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	Pam Goodson
Darci Hubbard	Susan Kellner
Valerie Paul	Chris Vierra