



# Klein ISD Legislative Priorities

<b>School Funding and Finance</b>
<b>Adequacy, Equity and Tax Effort Issues in School Finance</b>
<p>Advocate for a school finance system that provides access for all students and increases the equalization of wealth to students across the state. The school finance system is financially inefficient because every district does not have equal access to the same dollars per weighted average daily attendance. There are funding gaps between districts across the state. The system needs to ensure that substantially equal tax effort per student should yield substantially equal funding per student. In numerous cases, property poor districts are taxing at a higher level than their wealthier counterparts while receiving substantially less in revenue per student.</p>
<b>Maintenance &amp; Operations Tax Rate</b>
<p>Advocate for legislation allowing the setting of the tax rate for maintenance and operations at the discretion of the locally elected board of trustees in the same manner that the debt service rate exists currently.</p>
<b>Boost the Formula</b>
<p>Advocate for legislation that would provide additional resources in order to meet the needs of our growing at-risk population coupled with higher academic standards set by the state.</p>
<b>MUD District Impact Fees Allowed Per Water Code</b>
<p>Advocate for the amendment of the Local Government Code 395.022 to exempt school districts from paying impact fees imposed by other political subdivisions such as municipal utility districts, water conservation improvement districts, public utility districts or other such districts that have previously constructed facilities for the purpose of providing water or wastewater services and financed such through taxpayer supported bonds.</p>
<b>Technology</b>
<p>Advocate for an increase in the funding per student to support the purchase of technology and instructional programs and materials.</p>
<b>Residential Treatment Center</b>
<p>Advocate for special funding above the current per pupil allocation for students placed in residential treatment centers.</p>
<b>Funding for College-Ready Assessment &amp; Teacher Training</b>
<p>Advocate for the state to fund college-ready assessments like the PSAT, SAT, and ACT, as is written in Texas Education Code §39.0261. Advocate for removing the cap on teacher professional development reimbursement for districts participating in the Texas Advanced Placement Incentive Program as is written in Texas Education Code §28.053(d)(1).</p>
<b>TRS</b>
<p>Advocate for the preservation of the current defined benefits plan. Advocate for increased state funding to assist with TRS-/ActiveCare and TRS-Care health care costs.</p>

## **Local Control and Unfunded Mandates**

### **Start Date**

Advocate for reversing legislation that dictates school start dates. Advocate for allowing local districts to determine the start date of the school calendar.

### **Elections/Dates**

Advocate for local control of the date for local elections.

### **Unfunded Mandates**

Oppose unfunded mandates. For example, using the provisions of SB 507, the attorney general determined that a school district must provide equipment to each school in the district that provides student special education services upon request from a single parent or other interested party. This unfunded mandate could cost Klein ISD in excess of \$1.3 million.

## **Assessment & Accountability**

### **State Accountability**

Oppose the upcoming A-F rating scale. Advocate to adopt a new state rating scale as the A-F rating scale is not research-based, does not synthesize a broad array of available success criteria, and is not an accurate representation of school performance. Such a rating scale may also be highly detrimental to schools with a high percentage of low socioeconomic students as poverty is the single best predictor of low school performance than any other factor.

Advocate for a comprehensive state accountability system that is based on multiple measures of student achievement and success and that adds value for students, staff, and teachers, as well as locally defined criteria in areas deemed important to the community.

### **High-Priority Learning Standards**

Advocate for the development of high-priority learning standards by the State Board of Education. Advocate for the restructuring of the statewide student assessment program for grades 3–8 and high school so that it assesses only high-priority learning standards (readiness standards could be used on an interim basis).

### **Assessment**

Advocate for the use of computer-adaptive assessments to be given throughout the school year for the purpose of providing immediate feedback to students on their progress in meeting learning goals and to guide teachers in providing personalized instruction.

## **Anti-Vouchers Unless Public School Rules & Regulations Apply**

Oppose private-school vouchers, tuition tax credits and other such programs funded with public tax dollars when those entities are not governed by the same state laws as public school districts. However, if vouchers are considered, then:

- Private schools that accept vouchers must be required to accept all students, be held to the same accountability standards as public schools, and offer free and reduced meals to those students who qualify under the federal program.
- The state must assume responsibility for how home schools use voucher funds.