



## 85<sup>th</sup> Legislative Agenda Talking Points

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### School Funding

1. As a Chapter 41 school (a property wealthy district), we pay a certain amount of property tax dollars back to the state every year in what is known as recapture. This is what is also known to many as “Robin Hood.” While state legislators would like to us to believe “their” contribution to schools has increased, the reality is that the amount of recapture being collected has increased, giving the state the ability to “increase” their contributions to education. However, the **actual** state contribution outside of the money collected through recapture has decreased. During the massive budget cuts to state finances following the last recession, education saw a historical drop in funding. While most state agencies have seen their funding increasing since then, the Texas education system has never returned to being fully funded. Because the State still does not fully fund our education system, the District is required to lean on our taxpayers to help us fulfill the State’s responsibility. The state should fully restore funding to the public education system
2. At a minimum, the state should be able to fund education by keeping up with population plus inflation when allocating funds.

### Vouchers

1. Vouchers, and the broader issue of school choice, are being touted as the “civil rights issue of the 21st century” because they would provide poor children with an “escape from failing schools.” However, the amount of a voucher would not be enough to cover tuition at most private schools. Only more affluent families with the means to pay the balance of their children’s tuition would truly benefit. This would leave the very children vouchers are supposed to help left behind in schools with even less funding than before.
2. School choice already exists in Texas, with transfers, magnets, and charter schools. In fact, in 2013, the Legislature raised the cap on the number of charter school operators in Texas from 215 to 305 by 2019 — the largest charter school expansion since 2001.
3. Texas public schools have already endured massive funding cuts, and a broken (and unconstitutional) school finance system is yet to be fixed by the Legislature. Texas ranks in the bottom third of states for per-pupil expenditures, despite having one of the healthiest (if not the healthiest) economies in the U.S. and a rich reserve.
4. At a time when the state’s public schools are being held to increasingly rigorous accountability standards, lawmakers should not allow public, taxpayer dollars to be spent at private or religious schools that do not have to meet the same standards — either for students or for teachers.

### Assessment

1. While CISD does not “teach to the test,” there is still an emphasis placed on the state examination because of state standards and accountability. CISD believes in students truly learning subject content instead memorizing potential testing material without a true understanding.
2. As Action Item 3 states, nationally Norm Reference Tests provide useful diagnostic data on a student’s learning whereas the states standardized test do not.

## **A-F Accountability System**

1. The A-F System misrepresents a large portion of what happens in schools by reducing an entire school and a district to a single mark. A single mark for an evaluated area cannot fully capture the complexity of schooling, therefore not giving the public useful or accurate information about their schools.
2. The A-F system uses a single indicator for 55% of their grade, the STAAR exam, and does not give a school or district diagnostic information for needed area improvements.

## **Local Control**

1. Coppell ISD would like the legislature to maintain or improve legislation relating to the **District of Innovation**. What is a District of Innovation? The District of Innovation concept, passed by the 84th Legislative Session in House Bill 1842, gives traditional Independent School Districts most of the flexibilities available to Texas' open-enrollment charter schools. What are the flexibilities? Districts will have the flexibility to implement practices similar to charter schools, including exemptions from mandates such as: school start date, certain student discipline provisions, 90% attendance rule, use of planning and preparation periods, class-size ratios, teacher appraisal requirements, site-based decision-making processes

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