

## Who We Are



SAISD is a family-oriented, urban community of thriving neighborhoods, well established businesses — including the downtown and central business district — historic sites and world renowned museums.

The District retains approximately 90 percent of its school age population.

- Third largest district in Bexar County with approximately 54,000 students
- Student Teacher ratio of 17 to 1
- Approximately 93 percent of students are economically disadvantaged
- Ethnic composition: 91 percent Hispanic; 7 percent African American; 2 percent White (non-Hispanic)

## SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

141 Lavaca Street, San Antonio, TX 78210  
(210) 554-2200 • [www.saisd.net](http://www.saisd.net)

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Ed Garza, President

Olga M. Hernandez, Vice President

Arthur V. Valdez, Secretary

James Howard, Asst. Secretary

Debra Guerrero, Trustee

Steve Lecholop, Trustee

Patti Radle, Trustee

Dr. Sylvester Perez, Superintendent

## GOVERNMENTAL & COMMUNITY RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

Carmen Vázquez-González, Executive Director

518 E. Magnolia Ave., San Antonio, TX 78212

(210) 554-2233

# Legislative Priorities for the 84th Texas Legislative Session 2015



**JANUARY 2015**



San Antonio Independent School District

## Priorities for the 84th Texas Legislative Session

The San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD) has developed legislative priorities committed to its **mission**: To transform SAISD into a national model urban school district where every child graduates and is educated so that he or she is prepared to be a contributing member of the community.

**Specifically, SAISD endorses or seeks legislation that would:**

### ★ HOUSE BILL 5

---

#### • **Ensure necessary resources to support full implementation of HB 5**

Expanding course offerings requires preparation and coordination, as counselors and registrars need professional development to assure that students and parents are making fully informed academic choices and that transcripts are interpreted consistently across the state.

- **Guidance Counseling** - Support legislation that would improve funding for guidance counseling so that districts are able to hire the sufficient number of qualified staff to support students in making informed decisions on their personal graduation plans and also to support the proper implementation of HB 5.

### ★ FINANCE

---

- **Instructional Materials Allotment** - Support legislation that would provide sufficient state funding to ensure districts are able to deliver high quality content aligned with state standards. In addition, support the ability of districts to receive the full allotment in the first year of the biennium, prior to July 31, in order to purchase these materials in a timely manner.
- **Technology Allotment** - Support re-creating a technology allotment that would allow ISDs to thrive in the 21st Century with hardware, software and all technology infrastructure that continues innovation, including online testing and curriculum delivery technology initiatives, as the current IMA funding is insufficient to cover both materials and technology.
- **Student Success Initiative** - Increase funding to allow districts to provide necessary remedial/accelerated instruction for those students failing one or more STAAR/EOC assessments.
- **Prekindergarten** - Provide full state funding for full-day Pre-K programs for students classified as Title I eligible.
- **Formula Funding Updates** - Support legislation that would update the Cost of Education Index, Transportation, Bilingual and Compensatory Education formulas to more effectively meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student body.

- **Storm Water Drainage Fees** - Support legislation that exempts school districts from storm water drainage fees similar to law currently in place for university facilities.

### ★ ACCOUNTABILITY/ASSESSMENTS

---

- **TSI** - Sites administering the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) need to disaggregate the data by content to allow ISDs to provide appropriate instruction and interventions.
- **Reduce Assessments** - Reduce the number of assessments given to 3rd through 8th grade students by aligning state tests with the federal requirements. This alignment would reduce the number of tests by three: Writing in 4th and 7th grades and Science in 5th grade.
- **Graduation Review Committees** - Support legislation to allow districts to develop graduation review committees for those students who do not pass one or more EOCs by their senior year. These committees could examine the student's high school portfolio and determine if a student has mastered content, thereby allowing the student to graduate and receive a high school diploma.
- **Establish Cap on the Hourly Rate of Professional Service Providers** - Support legislation to provide a set rate for professional service providers. Districts, who have campuses identified "Improvement Required" under the state accountability system, should not have to compete for state-mandated professional services. Currently, the State sets a minimum hourly rate of \$75 per hour, but has no cap on this hourly rate. For Districts that do not have the funds to pay as much as \$120 per hour, plus mileage, plus accommodations, few options are available.
- **Teacher Attrition Calculation** - Support legislation to improve the Texas Annual Performance Report (TAPR) as district teacher attrition is reported. Attrition rates for districts are skewed if they employ teachers from Alternative Certification Programs who commit to a two-year term of employment. In the alternative, the State should require Districts to report the number of teachers by alternative certification program so that the attrition rate can be put in context.

### ★ CHOICE AND CHARTERS

---

- Ensure the quality of open enrollment charter schools and virtual schools by (1) creating clear and consistent processes for approval and expansion and (2) holding charter schools and virtual schools to the same standards for transparency and accountability that apply to other public schools.
- Oppose any school choice legislation that would divert tax dollars from public schools and oppose legislation that would remove governance from locally-elected school boards.