



Mrs. Deann Lee, Millsap ISD Superintendent: A Capital Visit

As an advocate for Millsap ISD and public education in Texas, I recently made a trip to Austin. My trip included training, legislative updates, and visits with legislators that included the Chair of Public Education in the House and Senate.

On Monday I spoke with Senator Craig Estes' education staffer as he was not in Austin. I had the opportunity to meet with a new Senator, Bryan Hughes. I appreciated the visit to educate him on issues about public education. That was followed by a very productive meeting with Representative Phil King. Although we agreed to disagree on a couple of things, I do believe we have a mutual understanding in areas that will benefit our public schools.

I met with one of our biggest champions, Representative Dr. Gary VanDeaver. Rep. VanDeaver is a retired Superintendent from East Texas and is on the House Public Education Committee. He feels vouchers are dead (in the House) for this session but encourages us to keep voicing our concerns in case the issue resurfaces.

School finance and insurance for educators are two big issues with the most difficult solutions. I was also able to meet with House Pensions Chairman Dan Flynn concerning TRS Care. The TRS-Care program provides health benefits for over a quarter million retired public education employees and their dependents.

Regarding school funding, I spoke with Josh Sanderson, Deputy Executive Director of the Equity Center. The Equity Center is comparing their plan with the proposed House and Senate plans to study similarities and how they might continue to leverage progress on more equity. I believe we might make strides in the area of allotments/weighted funding for public schools.

With March 10 as the deadline for filing bills, it is time to hold on – the ride throughout the rest of the session is going to be interesting. Public schools are for the public good. Thank you for the opportunity to advocate for our children's education.

Mrs. Deann Lee,
Millsap ISD Superintendent