

This is an open letter to my Texas State House Representative Phil King and Texas State Senator Craig Estes. As a school board trustee with a vested interest in public education, the purpose for this open letter is to educate and engage the public.

This is the second of two letters. The first can be found at: <http://bit.ly/kingletter1>

~ Bobby J Rigues

AN OPEN LETTER TO MY REPRESENTATIVE PHIL KING AND SENATOR CRAIG ESTES,

Representative King, as a follow-up to my original open letter requesting the opportunity to visit concerning public education matters, I would like to thank you and your staff for arranging our scheduled February 21st meeting.

Respectfully, I have included Senator Craig Estes in this open letter. The Senator's office has graciously accommodated my trip to Austin with a scheduled meeting on the same day.

Representative Phil King and Senator Craig Estes, as public servants, thank you for your diligent work. The magnitude of governance requiring your attention is truly respected. As a school board trustee, my focus is singular. I believe we can all agree public education is a cornerstone of democracy. Its singularity provides the foundation for our successes and continues to prove vital to the future of our society.

With the 85th Legislative Session underway, several education bills have caught our attention. Two at the top of my list are:

Senator Larry Taylor's (R-Friendswood) Senate Bill 3 on school choice – a bill I have heard described as Pandora's box. The other is House Bill 1333 by Representative Jason Isaac (R-Dripping Springs). This bill seems to have merit. Named as the "Teach Over Testing Act", this is a promising bill that addresses four main areas:

- (1) provides local flexibility related to testing (local control)
- (2) reduces the number of overall high stakes test students must take
- (3) removes the STAAR performance component from teacher evaluations
- (4) reduces the heavy weighted STAAR performance on the A-F campus labeling system

Other public education topics such from funding, governance, A-F accountability, and unfunded mandates are open for discussion as well.

As elected stewards, we share a constituency. To fulfill my promise as a trustee to govern and oversee to the schools of my district and with a shared interest in our 5.3 million Texas students, I look forward to our conversations.

With Much Appreciation,

Bobby J Rigues, Aledo ISD School Board Trustee