

King said he would also support an anticipated push by the Texas Senate to create education savings accounts that would allow families to pay tuition for private schools, as well as efforts to increase funding to charter schools to build facilities.

~ State Rep. King Outlines Goals for 85th Session | Weatherford Democrat

AN OPEN LETTER TO MY REPRESENTATIVE PHIL KING,

Thank you for representing our local interest in Austin. I have always respected your resolve for democracy. With the 85th Legislative Session around the corner and in light of your public position on specific issues related to education, I would like the opportunity to visit and discuss in detail the consequences associated with education savings accounts, funding charter schools and other issues that can negatively impact public schools.

Public schools are for the public good. As an Aledo ISD trustee and an advocate for public education, I truly believe we both want the same thing; the best possible system to educate all children in the most effective and efficient manner. I cannot think of thirteen stronger words found in our Texas Constitution for the purpose of education – “being essential to the preservation of the liberties and rights of the people.”

The environment to privatize public schools grows with each legislative session. We have been fortunate in Texas. Legislators, advocates, educators, and parents passionate about public schools have held the line. However, with each session, reformers continue to morph their message. Today, the term “voucher” is now camouflaged with the words “education savings account.”

As an open letter to you, I am asking for your help. I am asking to visit and discuss the facts regarding privatization, vouchers, for-profit charters, school funding and testing. I would like to discuss solutions that are centered on accountability, transparency, and community engagement.

I want to try something different – I want to do this with the public. I believe one of the solutions to improving our schools is public engagement. As elected officials, we need to do a better job of educating the public about the issues affecting our local schools. As a trustee, I know I need to do a better job.

I will call soon to set up an appointment. Throughout our visits, I would like to open our conversations to the public to keep them informed – to seek their input. I take this opportunity to invite superintendents, trustees, educators, pillars of the community, and parents to ask questions on both sides of the issues.

We are all in this together – public education is everybody’s business. Let’s communicate and collaborate. Let’s respect the process of critical thinking and find creativity at the center of solutions.

With Much Appreciation,

Bobby J Rigues, Aledo ISD Trustee (brigues@att.net)