

KELLER ISD 2021 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Keller ISD acknowledges that COVID-19 has drastically impacted every aspect of our lives. The District recognizes the difficult financial constraints and pressures that will be placed upon state leaders during the 87th Legislative Session, and it acknowledges that the session will be like no other before it. As the Texas Constitution implores, though, a general diffusion of knowledge is essential to the preservation of the liberties and rights of the people and, as such, Keller ISD believes education should be a priority in this legislative session. Therefore, the Keller ISD Board of Trustees, along with a committee of stakeholders across the district that includes parents and teachers, presents these priorities for the 87th Legislative Session.

STUDENT AND STAFF WELL-BEING

- » In light of the heavy toll COVID-19 has had on even our youngest citizens, Keller ISD asks that the legislature fund emotional and mental health supports for students and staff, based on local needs.

LOCAL CONTROL

- » Allow local school boards the authority to spend funds as the community deems necessary and appropriate, especially compensatory education funds, by removing unnecessary restrictions on state funds.
- » Refrain from adding any unfunded mandates or requirements on school districts.

ADEQUATE EDUCATION FUNDING

- » Funding put in place during the 86th legislative session must be maintained.
- » Special education funding should allow school districts to properly identify students and provide the required support in the least restrictive environment.
- » Allow for continued use of virtual learning options after the 2020-2021 school year to count for daily attendance by either allowing established school districts to develop their own online programs or restructuring the Texas Virtual School Network to allow for greater participation and flexibility.
- » Prevent any other drain on public school funding including any form of vouchers, charter school expansions, virtual schools that will draw students from current public school districts, or expanding resources to home-schooled students.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- » Eliminate the high-stakes nature of the STAAR exam for the 2020-2021 school year as early as possible in the session. This year's tests will not be an accurate reflection of performance or a fair representative sample of a student's, school's, or district's work.
- » Stop the use of high-stakes testing for student grade advancement.
- » Eliminate the A-F rating system for schools and districts, and replace it with a system that appropriately measures all factors of an effective education rather than relying so heavily on test scores.

ASSESSMENT

- » Reduce the emphasis on state-mandated testing that penalizes the student rather than guide instruction and identify learning problems.
- » Provide for one-time funding, controlled at the local level, to equip districts to close gaps that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- » Until 2023, allow districts to take COVID-19 and school closures into account during the individual graduation committee process to determine whether a student may graduate.
- » Remove the 2023 deadline for individual graduation committees to allow IGCs to be a permanent part of a district's ability to help students graduate.

