



2017 Legislative Priorities

The Bay Area Schools Consortium (BASC) is committed to positively impacting the lives of children and fostering a strong Texas economy through public education. The Bay Area Schools Consortium is composed of nine school districts serving Galveston County and Harris County, representing more than 140,000 students. The Consortium consists of: Clear Creek Independent School District; Dickinson Independent School District; Friendswood Independent School District; Galveston Independent School District; Hitchcock Independent School District; La Porte Independent School District; Pasadena Independent School District; Santa Fe Independent School District; and Texas City Independent School District.

The board of trustees and superintendents from each of the member school districts have identified the following legislative priorities for the upcoming session:

Assessment and Accountability

1. Repeal the A-F accountability rating system until a new reliable assessment system is developed.
2. Limit the assessment program to include only English Language Arts and Mathematics in grades 3-8 and once in high school; Science once during a three year grade span of 3-5, 6-9 and 10-12; and assess English Language Learners annually in English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science.
3. Support the work of the Next Generation Commission and approve its recommendation to assess only readiness standards.
4. Re-authorize SB 149 as a reasonable alternative criterion in order for current senior students to graduate when they are unable to pass one or more End-of-Course Exams after multiple attempts.
5. Oppose school vouchers including the Education Savings Account until such time charter schools are held to the assessment requirements and accountability standards of public schools.

Public Education Funding

1. Direct the Legislative Budget Board to update the cost of education index so that it reflects today's cost of educating students in Texas and approve a financial phase-in plan to fund it.
2. Approve legislation which will hold school districts harmless from losing funding and no recapture above \$1.06 on the Maintenance and Operations tax rate for Chapter 41 school districts.
3. Increase funding under the Pre-Kindergarten grant program in order for all eligible students to participate in a full-day learning environment.
4. Increase state funding to assist with the rising health care costs associated with Teacher Retirement System (TRS) ActiveCare and/or authorize a pilot for school districts to opt out of the TRS ActiveCare Plan.
5. Oppose any new legislation which would pose, directly or indirectly, as an unfunded mandate on Texas public schools.