

June 13, 2022



Dear Commissioner Morath,

PROMOTING EXCELLENCE • CREATING THE FUTURE

After the recent tragedy in Uvalde, we must acknowledge and recognize the need to re-evaluate the priorities of the Texas educational system. For decades, Texas education has increased focus on standardized testing and curriculum alignment. While both of these areas have their place in education, it is this board's opinion that they have overshadowed many other vital aspects of successful educational models. Forcing each district into following the same narrow structure without regard to environment, culture, and community creates a multitude of problems. Tying funding to test results, prevents districts from spending money where they have identified and documented needs. (Safety systems, staffing, etc.)

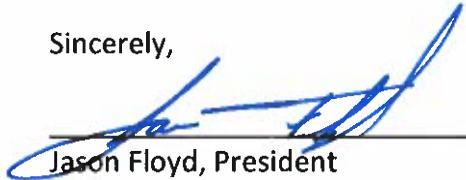
Our state spends over 900 million on standardized testing. This does not include the hundreds of thousands each district spends individually on testing. This money should be allocated to more pressing needs of teacher retention and mental health.

A majority of districts struggle annually to give staff a mere 2% wage increase to what is already an underpaid position. If Covid has taught us anything, it is that our teachers are irreplaceable and at the same time, underappreciated. Not surprisingly, we are currently experiencing a mass exodus of teachers from the profession. Texas students cannot be successful without qualified and well-trained teachers. Increasing state funding for teacher retention is vital.

Most importantly, TEA must acknowledge and face the need for an extensive focus on mental health. How many more students must die for TEA to prioritize student mental health? All schools need more licensed therapists, support staff, and education for our teachers. The fact that their child passed the STAAR means very little to a parent that has lost their child to suicide or a school shooting. Texas children are suffering, while TEA continues to push forward with a technology and data driven agenda. These impersonal priorities remove the very thing our children need the most- personal connections and relationships.

We cannot stand by any longer and continue to accept the projected path of Texas education. The Texas education system needs to be restructured with a new focus on student health, a return to community decision-making, and correcting teacher salaries. Texas students deserve better. We must raise our voices in unison to make sure that these needs are met.

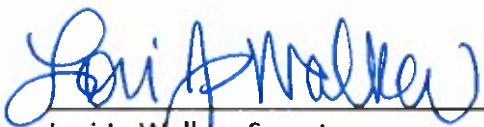
Sincerely,




Jason Floyd, President
Calallen ISD Board of Trustees




Dr. Lana Carr, Vice President
Calallen ISD Board of Trustees



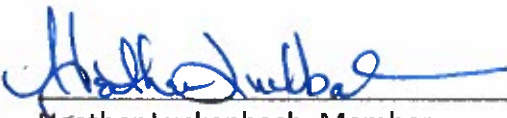
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