

Senate Committee on Education
Public Hearing February 1, 2011

My name is Mary Ann Whiteker. I am Superintendent at Hudson ISD, a midsize school district of 2600 students in East Texas. After experiencing the opportunity to serve on the Interim Select Committee for School Finance, I have a new appreciation for the value of testimony being short and concise. Due to the financial challenges we are facing, I would ask that you consider granting flexibility to school districts regarding mandates established over the years. I know there will be several presenting today; therefore, I will limit mine to 3:

1. Amending 22:1 class-size mandate (TEC 25.112, 42.005(c))to a district average would allow campuses/districts the flexibility to create learning environments driven by the education needs of the students. Multi-campus districts could target schools with high needs students, allowing smaller classes on those campuses. Smaller districts would not have to create 2 or more extremely small classes when that "23rd" student enrolled in the district. Another option would be to raise the cap to 25:1, which would save my district \$223,335.
2. Removing the restrictions placed on bilingual/ESL funding to allow districts to use those funds to pay salaries would provide tremendous relief to those districts with bilingual or ESL programs. Hudson ISD receives \$71,000. Our payroll costs for the ESL classes exceeds \$436,121, which includes the additional \$28,000 stipend for the ESL certification. Although the intent was to insure supplemental resources for these programs, we need the funds to pay for the most critical component - the teacher.
3. For districts/campuses that have academic ratings of acceptable or higher, allow those districts flexibility to use compensatory dollars to fund any of the academic programs. In other words, this would allow districts to supplant rather than supplement. Hudson ISD has a target revenue of less than \$5000 per student, with a foundation fund of \$12,435,000, **\$1,445,980** is dedicated to **compensatory programs**. We have had to create programs to quality for these dollars.

I have provided a short list of additional mandates with the costs associated with implementing these requirements in my district. Thank you for your time and attention. I will be happy to address any questions or comments you may have.

Mandates	Description	FTE	Budget
Instructional Programs			
Accelerated Math and Reading Instruction			
Peavy		2	\$ 91,395
Bonner		3	\$ 108,307
MS		1	\$ 46,095
7th Grade Diagnostic Reading Instrument	Training		
Dyslexia		1	\$ 51,785
Compensatory Programs for At-Risk	Accelerated programs, software programs, tutorials		\$ 1,371,111
Dropout Prevention	Social Worker, County Non-traditional High School	1	\$ 51,271
Gifted/Talented	Training, Testing - students served within regular classroom		\$ 31,083
Coordinated Health Program	Stipend		\$ 3,000
4X4	Science	1	\$ 40,719
Religious Literature Instruction	Within regular program		
College Credit Program	AP training, Dual Credit Transportation, tuition reimbursement		\$ 16,521
Credit by Exam			
End of Course Exams	Accelerated instruction		Unknown
Physical Fitness Assessment			
Class Size Limit	22:1 compared to average of 25:1 (Mid-level salary)	5	\$ 223,335
Assessment & Accountability			
Test Administration/Security	Training, using existing employees		\$ 25,052
AEIS Hearings			
FIRST			
Human Resources & Employee Relations			
Cost of Benefits with State Pay Increase	TRS, Medicare, unemployment compensation, workers' compensation		\$ 213,715
TRS benefits above state minimum salary schedule	Retirement contributions by district		\$ 93,961
Retirement Benefits contribution during 1st 90 days of employment			\$ 9,147
Contribution for Health Insurance	TRS-Care Plan		\$ 70,560
Continued Group Health Benefits after Resignation	Option to remain on districts' group health insurance until end of plan year		

Leaves of Absence	Sub-pay for 5 state personal leave, Jury Duty, short-term military leave		
Criminal Background Check			\$ 2,500
Hiring Independent Hearing Examiners and Court Reporters			
Safety Training - Extracurricular Athletic Activities	CPR Training		
Automated Defibrillators	AEDs, training		\$ 1,200
DAEP	Certified staff		\$ 126,699
Governance and General Adminisntration			
Integrated Pest Management Program	Licensed and certified personnel to perform pest control, training, supplies	1	\$ 38,121
Reporting Requirements			
PEIMS	Personnel, software, training	5	\$ 174,341
Electronic Student Records System	Equipment, training		\$ 40,000
Bilingual Education	Stipends, supplies, additional personnel		\$ 267,626
Truancy Complaints	Officer, court costs, home visits		\$ 45,000
Public Notices			
Campus Ratings	Newspaper		
AEIS Hearings	Newspaper		
Budget and Proposed Tax Rate Notice and Hearings	Newspaper		\$ 448
FIRST	Newspaper		\$ 166
Parental/Student Notifications			
Assessment results			
Student Report Cards	Data Mangement Corp		\$ 1,045
Inappropriately Certified or Uncertified Teachers			\$ 150
Class Size Limit Waiver			
Fingerprinting			\$ 1,500
TOTAL			\$ 3,145,853