

December 18, 2020

Dear Governor Abbott and Commissioner Morath,

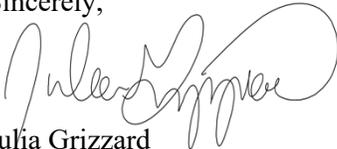
On behalf of 17 area school districts, 360,000 students, and close to 50,000 full-time employees, we are asking you to extend the ADA hold harmless funding protections for public schools for the remaining part of the 2020-2021 school year.

We appreciate your continued support and service during this unprecedented time. We know that you and your teams have been working constantly to respond to the educational needs of our students. As evident by last week's announcement of pausing A-F grades, you continue to recognize the deep effect that this pandemic has on our children and schools. **If hold harmless protections were to expire, Bexar County area districts would collectively lose approximately \$85,000,000 over the spring semester alone.** Districts in our region, like many across the state, have seen significant student enrollment drops and ongoing attendance issues as families make difficult decisions about the safety of their young ones during a global pandemic. Losing millions of dollars in funding while our students, families, and schools have greater needs would be catastrophic.

School districts across Texas have already chartered previously unknown territories at great expense in order to make in-person learning safe for students, staff, and families. Districts have dipped into their reserves to train teachers and staff on viral mitigation; hire full-time custodial staff to ensure safe, in-person learning environments are clean and disinfected; devote critical overtime hours for bus drivers to take on additional routes and to clean buses; arrange COVID-19 testing and contact tracing systems for staff and students; install plexiglass classroom and office dividers across thousands of campuses; and create new meal to-go systems to continue to feed children no matter their location. These expenses have yet to be fully reimbursed by state or federal support.

We know as the calendar year comes to a close, your offices will remain steadfast in responding to our state's ongoing needs. We believe that our fiscally responsible schools, with stable funding, will be critical to the recovery. The Bexar County Education Coalition stands ready to answer any questions you may have or to partner with you to work through solutions. Thank you for your consideration of this request and your leadership during these difficult times.

Sincerely,



Julia Grizzard  
Executive Director, Bexar County Education Coalition

*On behalf of and in partnership with the following Bexar County independent school districts:*

Dr. Dana Bashara, Alamo Heights ISD  
Roland Toscano, East Central ISD  
Dr. Eduardo Hernandez, Edgewood ISD  
Dr. Gary Bates, Fort Sam Houston ISD  
Gerardo Soto, Harlandale ISD  
Dr. Jeanette Ball, Judson ISD  
Dr. Burnie Roper, Lackland ISD  
Dr. Kenneth Rohrbach, Medina Valley ISD  
Dr. Sean Maika, North East ISD

Dr. Brian T. Woods, Northside ISD  
Dr. Brian Holt, Randolph Field ISD  
Pedro Martinez, San Antonio ISD  
Dr. Clark Ealy, Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City ISD  
Dr. Saul Hinojosa, Somerset ISD  
Dr. Marc Puig, South San Antonio ISD  
Rolando Ramirez, Southside ISD  
Dr. Lloyd Verstuyft, Southwest ISD

*The above signers represent approximately 360,000 students, 63% of whom are economically disadvantaged, and lead suburban, urban, fast-growth, recapture, military, and rural independent school districts ranging in enrollment sizes from 1,000 to 100,000 students*

CC:

Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick

Speaker Dennis Bonnen

Senator Donna Campbell

Senator Pete Flores

Senator Jose Menendez

Senator Judith Zaffirini

Representative Trey Martinez Fischer

Representative Steve Allison

Representative Diego Bernal

Representative Philip Cortez

Representative Barbara Gervin-Hawkins

Representative Roland Gutierrez

Representative Lyle Larson

Representative Ray Lopez

Representative Ina Minjarez

Representative Andrew Murr

Representative Leo Pacheco