

Meeting Date (?) 02/28/2017

Subject Matter* (?) BISD resolution
This must match rolling agenda entry

Department of Origin* EXECUTIVE

Submitted By* Hugh R. Walker

Type of Meeting* BCD Special Regular

Classification* Public Hearing Consent Statutory Regular

Ordinance* None First Read Second Read First & Only Read

Strategic Initiative* Public Safety Service
 Economic Development Infrastructure
 Quality of Life

Agenda Item Description* Consideration of a proposed resolution supporting the Bryan Independent School District's and other districts' effort to have the Texas Legislature repeal the rating system utilizing A through F grades for schools and districts, and develop a community-based accountability system that empowers school districts to design their own internal systems of assessment and accountability.

Summary Statement* According to information provided by the Bryan Independent School District (BISD or District), the Texas Legislature has enacted legislation requiring the Commissioner of Education (Commissioner) to implement a public school rating system that will assign A through F grades to schools and districts beginning with the 2017-18 school year. At least sixteen (16) states have implemented a similar rating system utilizing A through F grades for schools and districts and, to date, there is no definitive research that suggests these ratings improve student or school performance.

Staff Analysis & Recommendation*

In a recent statewide survey conducted by the State Board of Education, an overwhelming majority of Texans do not want high-stakes, standardized test scores to serve as the primary basis for a public school rating system. The majority (55%) of the A through F grades are based on the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR), a high-stakes, standardized test that does not accurately measure student learning. The STAAR appears to provide little meaningful information to guide student learning, inform teachers, or report academic progress to parents.

The Commissioner's proposed rating system utilizing A through F grades for schools and districts includes five (5) domains and numerous unrelated indicators to determine a single grade, leaving the public with an invalid, disconnected reflection of school quality. Furthermore, the Commissioner's proposed rating system utilizing A through F grades for schools and districts creates a false impression about students, ignores the unique strengths of each school, and unfairly reduces each student's worth to the school's assigned grade.

The District and the community should embrace meaningful accountability that informs students, parents, and teachers about the learning needs of each student and each school. The state's future prosperity relies on a high-quality education system that prepares students for college and careers, and without such a system Texas' economic competitiveness and ability to attract new business will falter.

Based on this information, City staff recommends that the City Council approve the proposed resolution, which calls on the Texas Legislature to repeal the rating system utilizing A through F grades for schools and districts and develop a community-based accountability system that empowers school districts to design their own internal systems of assessment and accountability that, while meeting general state standards, allows districts to innovate and customize curriculum and instruction to meet the needs and interests of each student and their communities. Additionally, a new system should reduce the use of high-stakes, standardized tests, encompass multiple assessments, reflect greater validity, and more accurately reflect what students know and can do in terms of the rigorous standards.

Along with the City staff recommendation, the Bryan College Station Chamber of Commerce's 2017 State Legislative Action Plan includes the following under the heading of "Public Education": "Support the removal of the harmful A-F labels from the current state accountability system." According to the Texas Association of School Administrators, as of February 16, 2017, 514 Texas school districts and three (3) organizations, including the Bryan Independent School District and the College Station Independent School District, have adopted resolutions opposing the A-F school rating system.

Options*

(In Suggested Order of Staff Preference)

1. Approve the proposed resolution.
2. Amend the proposed resolution and then approve, which may require consideration at a future City Council meeting.
3. Do not approve the proposed resolution and provide direction to staff.
4. Other.

Funding Source*

NA

Attachments

Chamber_2017LegislativePlan.pdf	21.58MB
TASA2017LegisPriorities_VariousArticles.pdf	5.96MB
02182017_BISD_Resolution_StateGradingSystem.docx	15.26KB

Please detail attachments and note attachments available for viewing in City Secretary's Office:

1. Bryan College Station Chamber of Commerce's 2017 State Legislative Action Plan
2. Texas Association of School Administrators' 2017 Legislative Priorities and various articles from across the state
3. Proposed resolution

Dept. Head Signature



Deputy City Manager Signature



City Manager Signature



City Attorney Signature

Janis K. Hampton