



## Representative Dan Huberty



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### **Public Education Update**

Summer is over and the school year has begun for students, teachers and parents across the state. Back at the Capitol, the House Committee on Public Education has scheduled two more hearings for later this Fall, in order to consider the final interim charges the committee was instructed to review. The first of these committee hearings will cover the interim charge dealing with school discipline and school-based policing.

During the 83rd Regular session, Senate Bill 393, relating to children who commit Class C misdemeanors, and Senate Bill 1114, relating to the prosecution of certain misdemeanor offenses committed by children, were both passed by the legislature, signed by Governor Perry and engrossed into law. The Public Education committee was jointly charged with the House Committee on Corrections to assess the impact of both of these bills. It will be exciting to work together with a joint-committee in order to ensure that the judicial laws surrounding school discipline are effective and implemented as they were originally intended. As a committee, we want to ensure that the judicial policies and initiatives designed to reduce referrals are effective without having a negative impact on the schools or the students.

The Public Education committee's final hearing will examine the current role of the Harris County Department of Education (HCDE) in serving school districts. It will be a top priority to review the programs and services that are offered by HCDE to assist school districts with operational efficiency. This is a very important interim charge for District 127 and the Houston community as a whole. The HCDE supports the educational needs of 25 school districts in Harris County. They offer many educational support services that are extended to children, adult learners, educators, local governments, charter schools and taxpayers. In addition, the committee will work to reveal any costs or savings that HCDE is providing to school districts and will make recommendations for improvements that can be made as we begin the new school year.

Sincerely,

Dan Huberty  
State Representative- District 127

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## Get back-to-school for Humble ISD & Huffman ISD

The start of the new 2014-2015 school year is coming up soon. Need information about the upcoming semester? Don't look any further than the Humble ISD *Your Schools* newsletter or the Huffman ISD website.

To access the Humble ISD *Your Schools* Newsletter, click [here](#). Have a great year!

For information on all things Huffman ISD, including their new app, [visit their website by clicking here](#).

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## New high school graduation mark set by Class of 2013

Commissioner of Education Michael Williams announced today that the Texas high school on-time graduation rate has set another all-time high, reaching 88 percent for the Class of 2013. The graduation rate for the Class of 2013 is 0.3 percentage points higher than the previous record set by the Class of 2012 and marks the sixth consecutive year the rate has increased.

<b>CLASS YEAR</b>	<b>GRADUATION RATE</b>
Class of 2013	88.0 percent
Class of 2012	87.7 percent
Class of 2011	85.9 percent
Class of 2010	84.3 percent
Class of 2009	80.6 percent
Class of 2008	79.1 percent
Class of 2007	78.0 percent

Out of 328,584 students in the Class of 2013 Grade 9 cohort, 88 percent graduated. An additional 4.6 percent of students in the Class of 2013 continued in high school the fall after their anticipated graduation date and 0.8 percent went on to receive GED certificates. "The Class of 2013 continues an ongoing trend of success in the classroom which has translated into more high school diplomas," said Commissioner Williams. "With additional flexibility now provided to school districts, we should expect graduation numbers to remain strong with all students better prepared for life after high school in college, the workplace or military."

The latest graduation figures are among the findings highlighted in the Texas Education Agency's report, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 2012-13*. Other notable graduation findings from the report include:

- Across racial/ethnic groups, the graduation rate for the Class of 2013 reflects all-time highs for Hispanic (85.1 percent) and African-American (84.1 percent) students.
- Asian students in Texas had the highest graduation rate (93.8 percent) in the Class of 2013 Grade 9 cohort.
- White students posted the second highest graduation rate (93 percent).
- Females in the Class of 2013 Grade 9 cohort had a higher graduation rate (90.3 percent) than males (85.9 percent).
- The graduation rate for economically disadvantaged students in the Class of 2013 Grade 9 cohort was 85.2 percent, an increase of 0.1 percentage points over the Class of 2012. In comparison, the graduation rate for economically disadvantaged students in the Class of 2007 Grade 9 cohort was 68.8 percent.

Commissioner Williams noted that Texas has seen graduation rates increase steadily for African-American, Hispanic and white students since the Class of 2007. During that time, the graduation rate difference between white students, African-American and Hispanic students has narrowed – but a gap still exists.

(continued on next page)

## New high school graduation mark set by Class of 2013 (continued)

Class Year	African-American	Hispanic	White
2013	84.1	85.1	93.0
2012	83.5	84.3	93.0
2011	80.9	81.8	92.0
2010	78.8	78.8	91.6
2009	73.8	73.5	89.7
2008	71.8	70.8	88.8
2007	70.7	68.5	88.2

“As a state, we continue making progress in our shared goal of educating every student,” said Commissioner Williams. “While the graduation trend continues to be strong, these figures also tell us there is still more work to do in closing the achievement gap.” The U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is the federal entity with primary responsibility for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the United States. In 2003, the 78th Texas Legislature passed legislation requiring dropout rates be computed according to the NCES dropout definition.

A dropout is defined as a student who is enrolled in public school in Grades 7-12, does not return to public school the following fall, is not expelled, and does not: graduate, receive a GED certificate, continue school outside the public school system, begin college, or die. The Texas Education Agency report shows that the longitudinal dropout rate for the Class of 2013 Grade 9 cohort was 6.6 percent, an increase of 0.3 percentage points from the Class of 2012, with the rate for Asian students at 3.0 percent, white students at 3.5 percent, Hispanic students at 8.2 percent and African-American students at 9.9 percent.

Out of 2,189,442 students who attended Grades 7-12 in Texas public schools during the 2012-13 school year, 1.6 percent were reported to have dropped out that year, a decrease of 0.1 percentage points from 2011-12. Other dropout findings from the report include:

- For the 2012-2013 school year, the number of dropouts in Grades 7-12 decreased to 34,696, a 4.4 percent decrease from the 36,276 students who dropped out in 2011-12.
- A total of 3,187 students dropped out of Grades 7-8, and 31,509 dropped out of Grades 9-12. The Grade 7-8 and Grade 9-12 annual dropout rates were 0.4 percent and 2.2 percent, respectively.
- Across racial/ethnic groups, the 2012-13 Grade 7-12 dropout rates showed Asian students at 0.6 percent, white students at 0.8 percent, Hispanic students at 2.0 percent and African-American students at 2.3 percent.
- The Grade 7-12 dropout rate for males (1.8 percent) exceeded the rate for females (1.3 percent) in 2012-13. More males dropped out from Grade 9 (5,029) than from any other grade. By contrast, more females dropped out from Grade 12 (4,161) than from any other grade.

To read the complete *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2012-13* report, visit the TEA website at [www.tea.state.tx.us](http://www.tea.state.tx.us).

### Texas ALTA Regional Dyslexia Conference

The Texas Chapter Academic Language Association is holding a Regional Dyslexia Conference Friday, October 10th through Saturday, October 11th in Austin, Texas. A capitol tour will begin at 4PM on the 10th, where attendees will gather in the rotunda of the Texas Capitol. Dinner will be served that evening. The conference will take place the following day and will feature talks about the dyslexia evaluation process, social and emotional aspects of dyslexia, and more. For more information, click [here](#).

## State Senator Brandon Creighton of Conroe sworn in by Governor Rick Perry

On August 26, 2014 in Austin, newly elected State Senator of SD-4 was sworn in by Governor Rick Perry in the Texas House of Representatives Chamber. Representative Huberty attended this memorable event and looks forward to working together with Senator Creighton next session.



Rep. Huberty w/State Senator Creighton



Senator Creighton being sworn-in by Gov. Perry



Rep. Huberty at the ceremony w/Jim & Robin Lennon and Chris Parker



Rep. Huberty w/Senator Tommy Williams



Rep. Huberty w/Tax Assessor-Collector Mike Sullivan

## **SSI grades 5 and 8 STAAR mathematics requirement suspended for 2014–2015**

School districts and charters have been advised by Commissioner of Education Michael Williams that due to the transition to revised statewide curriculum standards in mathematics, State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) assessments for grades 5 and 8 mathematics will be administered only once in the 2014–2015 school year.

As a result, the Student Success Initiative (SSI) requirement that students in grades 5 and 8 must pass the STAAR mathematics assessment in order to move onto the next grade level will be suspended for the coming school year. “There are substantial challenges associated with implementation of the revised mathematics statewide curriculum standards in the STAAR grades 3–8 assessments,” said Commissioner Williams in his May 1 letter to superintendents. “For the 2014–2015 school year, districts will use other relevant academic information to make promotion or retention decisions for mathematics.” Commissioner Williams noted this suspension of the 5th and 8th grade mathematics requirement applies only for the 2014–2015 school year. State law requiring students in grades 5 and 8 to pass the STAAR reading exam in order to proceed to the next grade level will still be in effect. The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the statewide curriculum standards, are reviewed and updated on a regular basis by the State Board of Education. As TEKS revisions are made, changes are subsequently made to the assessment program to maintain a strong, direct, and effective link between the TEKS and statewide assessments.

Revised TEKS in mathematics were adopted by the State Board in April 2012. The revised TEKS for kindergarten through grade 8 will be implemented in classrooms and in the grades 3–8 assessment program in the 2014–2015 school year. Because performance standards for STAAR grades 3–8 mathematics will not be set until after the spring 2015 administration, retest opportunities for STAAR grades 5 and 8 mathematics will not be offered in May and June of 2015. This is similar to the approach used in spring 2012 for the first administration of STAAR. To learn more about STAAR mathematics, please visit: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/staar/math/>.

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## **DPS Reminds Texans to be Prepared during Hurricane Season**

With three months remaining in the 2014 Hurricane Season, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) is reminding residents to review their emergency plans and stay prepared for the potential threat of hurricanes or tropical storms. Historically, August and September are the more active months of a hurricane season, which began June 1 and continues through Nov. 30.

“Although we are already halfway through the hurricane season, Texans should never underestimate the potential for storms to form, especially as we continue through the more active portion of a typical season,” said DPS Director Steven McCraw. “DPS urges residents to remain alert and to continue making preparations to protect their loved ones and property from any possible tropical storm or hurricane.” All Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coastal areas are subject to hurricanes and tropical storms. Hurricanes can cause catastrophic damage to coastlines with winds exceeding 155 miles per hour, and storms can impact areas several hundred miles inland. In addition, hurricanes and tropical storms can also spawn tornadoes, create storm surges along the coast, cause extensive flooding and produce strong rip currents.

Here are several measures residents can take now to prepare for potential storms:

- Assemble an emergency kit that includes essential documents, supplies and provisions.
- Review hurricane evacuation maps, and select a route for you and your family.
- Plan how all family members and pets will evacuate safely.
- Consider any special needs for individuals with disabilities or the elderly.
- Stay informed about changing weather conditions in and around your area.

For more information on these tips and other ways to prepare for the 2014 Hurricane Season, please visit: [www.texasprepares.org](http://www.texasprepares.org).

## TEA releases 2014 STAAR tests

The Texas Education Agency has announced the release of more than 40 State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) tests for 2014. The following released STAAR tests and answer keys are now accessible on the Texas Education Agency website.

### STAAR Grades 3–8

GRADE	RELEASED TEST FORM/ANSWER KEY
3	2014 Reading 2014 Reading (Spanish) 2014 Mathematics 2014 Mathematics (Spanish) 2014 Mathematics (Modified)
4	2014 Reading 2014 Reading (Spanish) 2014 Mathematics 2014 Mathematics (Spanish) 2014 Mathematics (Modified) 2014 Writing 2014 Writing (Spanish)
5	2014 Reading 2014 Reading (Spanish) 2014 Mathematics 2014 Mathematics (Spanish) 2014 Mathematics (Modified) 2014 Science 2014 Science (Spanish) 2014 Science (Modified)
6	2014 Reading 2014 Reading (Modified) 2014 Mathematics 2014 Mathematics (Modified)
7	2014 Reading 2014 Mathematics 2014 Mathematics (Modified) 2014 Writing
8	2014 Reading 2014 Reading (Modified) 2014 Mathematics 2014 Mathematics (Modified) 2014 Science 2014 Science (Modified) 2014 Social Studies 2014 Social Studies (Modified)

### STAAR End-of-Course

CONTENT AREA	RELEASED TEST FORM/ANSWER KEY
English Language Arts	2014 English I 2014 English I (Modified) 2014 English II 2014 English II (Modified)
Mathematics	2014 Algebra I 2014 Algebra I (Modified)
Science	2014 Biology 2014 Biology (Modified)
Social Studies	2014 U.S. History

## **TEA releases 2014 STAAR tests (continued)**

The Texas Education Agency releases two types of test questions for the STAAR test on a set schedule: test forms and sample questions. A test form is a set of released test questions previously administered together to Texas students. Sample test questions are small subsets of test questions released from the STAAR test banks. These test questions may have been previously administered to Texas students. A subset of STAAR Modified test questions is being released for grades 3, 4, 5 and 7 reading, and grades 4 and 7 writing.

The Texas Education Agency released the first test forms administered in the spring for each general STAAR assessment in 2013 and 2014. The agency will follow a similar release schedule for 2015 and 2016 and then every third year thereafter.

The Texas Education Agency releases STAAR assessments on a regular basis to assist educators and parents in better understanding the expectations of STAAR assessments and the rigor associated with them. To access and view all STAAR assessments released for 2014, visit the Texas Education Agency website at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/staar/testquestions/>.

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## **Statement on Unconstitutional Public School Finance Ruling**

Yesterday, District Court Judge John Dietz released the first ruling regarding public school finance litigation in Texas. Properly financing public education in Texas is an issue that needs to be continually monitored and tweaked to ensure that the needs of parents, teachers, and most importantly students are met.

However, it is the responsibility of lawmakers to revise our school finance system, not one judge. It has become clear that the Texas Legislature must act decisively this coming session to craft a fair and balanced system that gives every student in Texas the best public education possible. I am confident that the legislature can come together to improve upon our current school finance system.

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## **State of Texas Accountability System Video**

The Texas Education Agency recently created a video to offer a quick overview of the State of Texas Accountability System and what goes into the annual ratings of schools, districts and charters. Take a minute to watch this brief clip to learn the formula for a successful school: <http://youtu.be/cbEgrdijuc8>

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## **Important Dates to Remember**

### **Monday, September 1 - Labor Day**

Our offices will be closed in observance of the Labor Day holiday

### **Friday, September 5**

First Day to Apply for a Ballot by Mail for the November General Election - [www.harrisvotes.com](http://www.harrisvotes.com)

### **Monday, October 6**

Last Day to Register to Vote for the November General Election - [www.hctax.net](http://www.hctax.net)

### **Monday, October 20 - Friday, October 31**

Early Voting for the November General Election - Locations and Ballots available at [www.harrisvotes.com](http://www.harrisvotes.com)

### **Tuesday, November 4**

General Election Day - Location information and ballots available at [www.harrisvotes.com](http://www.harrisvotes.com)