

Thank you for your subscription to Rep. Dan Huberty's Monthly Newsletter. If you wish to unsubscribe, please use the SafeUnsubscribe option at the bottom of this email.



December 23, 2015,

Dear Fellow Texan,

This newsletter is coming to you early to wish you Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. As a reminder, my office is closed starting today, December 23rd, and will be closed through January 4, 2016. If there is an urgent matter that you need assistance with, please contact us via email. [Click here to find out how to contact us.](#)

This month I, along with my staff, have been working diligently on school finance with the Public Education committee, as well as illegal immigration with the State Affairs committee. You can read more about the recent state affairs hearing and the basics of school finance below. Additionally, now is the time for our high school juniors and seniors to start thinking about college. In this newsletter, you'll find information about the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA), and how to make college affordable for you and your family.

I hope you and your family have a Merry Christmas. We will see you again in January.

Sincerely,

Dan Huberty



## What's Going on in Austin?

### Gov. Abbott Appoints Morath As Texas Education Commissioner

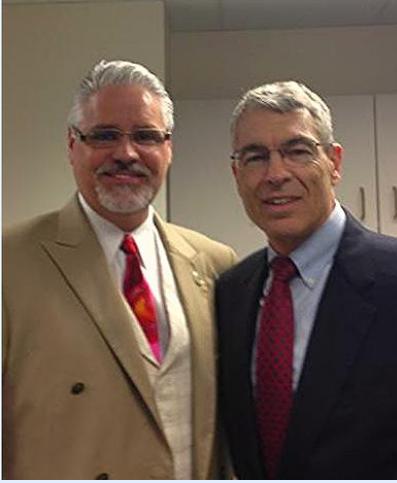
Governor Greg Abbott appointed Mike Morath to be the Commissioner of the Texas Education Agency. He will oversee the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the state's 1,200 school districts and charter schools.

[Read The Full Press Release from Gov. Abbott Here!](#)



### State Explores Flexing Legal Muscles on Immigration

In a recent House State Affairs committee hearing, lawmakers from across the state and law enforcement discussed the importance of cracking down on illegal



Rep. Huberty with Steve McCraw of Texas DPS at the State Affairs hearing earlier this month.

immigration and so-called, "Sanctuary Cities."

The hearing included testimony from city- and county-level law enforcement officials, immigration lawyers from the American Immigration Lawyers Association of Texas, the Texas Department of Public Safety, and the Office of the Attorney General.

[Read More on the Texas Tribune!](#)

## Texas House of Representatives Christmas Tree Ornament Tradition



Each year, Speaker Joe Straus and his wife Julie Straus invite the Legislative Ladies to the annual Christmas Tree Decorating Luncheon. Each district is responsible for creating an ornament, and the ornament is hung on the massive Christmas tree in the Texas House of Representatives. This year's tree is 27 feet tall and is adorned with ornaments from each of the 150 House Districts. This year's ornament was made by Nolan Otis.

Below, the Huberty family poses with The Otis family and the ornament on the House Floor.



## College Readiness and FAFSA

Every January millions of high school seniors, college students, and parents sit down together to fill out the dreaded FAFSA form -- one of the most essential steps in the financial aid process. The Free Application for

Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the basis for almost all student aid, loans and grants. It is important to start the financial aid process as early as possible because aid is given out on a first come first serve basis. The FAFSA form can be filed as early as January 1st preceding the academic year that you are requesting financial aid, which consists of 12 months from July 1st to June 30th. For example, the 2016-2017 academic year lasts from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017. A FAFSA can be filed for this academic year any time between January 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017. Visit [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) for detailed instructions and helpful resources. There you can fill out the forms, save your information, and click to file online.

The FAFSA form can be quite confusing, and even more intrusive than the Federal tax form because it asks not only about income but assets of parents and students. Here are some key tips to remember when navigating your financial aid process.

- Timing is everything. January is the ideal time to get the FAFSA out of the way. Many schools award aid money on a first come, first serve basis until funds are depleted.
- Financial Aid is income-driven, but assets count too. The FAFSA formulas assume that students should be able to spend 20% of their assets on college. For parents, the rate maxes out at 5.64%. Moving money out of children's account over to a 529 account shields it from consideration as a child asset in FAFSA calculations.
- Be prepared for different aid packages. Financial aid awards can vary greatly, even at schools of similar academic quality. Most financial aid packages include a mixture of grants, low-interest loans, and work-study opportunities.

## Policy Focus

### School Finance and What It Means for You

Over the course of the last four years, Texas courts have heard arguments over the state's public school funding system. On September 1, 2015 the Texas Supreme Court heard oral arguments in the state's appeal of a 2014 lower court ruling that struck down its system of funding public schools as unconstitutional. It was the last, major step before the high court rules in the case.

Over 600 school districts sued the state in 2011 after state lawmakers slashed \$5.4 billion from public education to help balance a post-recession budget shortfall. During the long-running lawsuit, they have argued that the Legislature is violating its constitutional duty to provide an adequate and efficient public school system, enacting large cuts even as rigorous new testing and accountability systems raised the bar on expectations.

Since making those cutbacks in 2011, lawmakers have added back more than 90 percent of what they took away, while also enacting policy measures aimed at reducing the burden on student performance.

The nine member, all Republican, state Supreme Court have not indicated when they may rule on the case, although many experts familiar with the case believe the ruling may come shortly after the primary election in March. The current case is the seventh time since 1984 that a case challenging the state's school finance system has reached the state's high court. Regardless, this is an issue that the legislature must address with a special session or during the upcoming 85th session.



## House District 127 December Events

### December 1, 2015

Rep. Huberty met with the Texas Chapter of Public School Options in our District Office. You can find more about the organization here at [PublicSchoolOptions.org](http://PublicSchoolOptions.org).



### December 8, 2015

Rep. Huberty Speaking to the Lake Houston Area Chamber of Commerce Leadership Lake Houston Class V.



## December 8, 2015

Rep. Huberty at the Elected Officials Reception with the Lake Houston Area Chamber of Commerce. Below are some of the elected officials that were honored at this reception.



L to R: Precinct 4 Constable Mark Herman, Harris County Sheriff Ron Hickman, Humble ISD Trustee Heath Rushing, Ron Servis with Harris County Judge Ed Emmett, Harris County Tax Assessor-Collector Mike Sullivan, Justice of the Peace, Precinct 4, Place 2 - Laryssa Korduba, State Rep. Dan Huberty, Humble ISD Trustee Robert Sitton, Humble ISD Trustee Charles Cunningham, Humble ISD Trustee Nancy Morrison, Harris County Commissioner, Precinct 4 R. Jack Cagle, Humble ISD Trustee Angela Conrad, Judge Ken Wise and Houston City Council Member Dave Martin.

## Upcoming Events

### January 2016

See an event you're interested in? Click the links on each date to learn more about the event's details. Under each link, you can find R.S.V.P. information, exact times, locations, and much more.

This color box indicates an event in or near House District 127.

This color box indicates an event in Austin, Texas.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	31	1 <b>HAPPY NEW YEAR!</b>	2
3	4	5	6	7 <a href="#">LHACC Public Affairs Meeting</a>	8	9
10	11	12	13	14 <a href="#">BizCom - Humble</a>	15	16
17	18 <b>Martin Luther King Jr. Day</b>	19	20	21	22 <a href="#">Annual Awards Extravaganza</a>	23 <a href="#">Family Time Hearts of Gold Gala</a>
24	25	26	27	28	29	30 <a href="#">Huffman FFA Auction Buyers</a>

						<a href="#">Luncheon</a> <a href="#">HLSR Boots &amp; Buckles Ball</a>
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

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