



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

January 23, 2018

Dear Public School Finance Commissioners:

Today, you have a historic opportunity to start the process of fundamentally overhauling our school finance system and public education.

We all know that our system is broken, and it is long past time we do something lasting about it. Decades of fruitless school finance litigation have led to a system that the Texas Supreme Court called "Byzantine." The court is correct, but I go further than that. The system is complicated, indeed incomprehensible to most, and unmoored from the fundamental imperatives to drive student achievement, teaching excellence and future economic success.

I have three goals for this commission. First, change our defective structure of school finance. We must redesign a system that wisely invests money in our children's future by prioritizing spending that is proven to improve student outcomes. Second, create a system that fosters innovation to modernize our education system for the next generation. There are many districts, campuses and teachers doing great things already, and we need to learn from them and replicate their success statewide. Third, we must explore alternatives to the burdensome and inefficient property tax upon which our system far too heavily relies.

I have great hope that recommendations will come from this commission that overhaul our entire school finance system. We must aspire to do better for our students, parents and taxpayers. This commission is our state's first step toward that goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Abbott".

Greg Abbott
Governor

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