



## Press Release

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For Immediate Release

### Northwest ISD Joins Lawsuit against the State of Texas

At the November 14 Northwest ISD (NISD) school board meeting, the NISD Board of Trustees passed a resolution for NISD to join the Texas School Coalition (TSC) lawsuit against the state regarding the school finance system.

"I am proud of our board's leadership," said Karen G. Rue, Ed.D., superintendent. "Their action is in support of children throughout Texas. Through this litigation, our school board is looking to protect the welfare of children across the state by advocating for adequate funding for public education."

The resolution passed by the NISD board states:

The Board of Trustees believes that the presently existing statutory system for the financing of public education in Texas has and will continue to impair, unless reformed, the education available to the students within the District as well as the ability of the District to provide an appropriate education to students within the District.

As a "Chapter 41" district, Northwest ISD makes annual contributions to the state as recapture payments. In the past decade, Northwest ISD has contributed more than \$268 million to the state, which is then reallocated to other school districts. This year, Northwest will send more than \$17 million of its revenue back to the state.

The Texas School Coalition consists of other Chapter 41 school districts in Texas, including Northwest ISD, and the TSC Board of Directors has endorsed Haynes and Boone as the law firm to represent the interests of these public school systems.

The Texas School Coalition lawsuit is based on two claims: state property tax and adequacy. The state property tax claim asserts that districts lack meaningful discretion in setting their maintenance and operation (M&O) tax rate, and that the tax has become a de facto state property tax,

which is prohibited under the Texas Constitution. The adequacy claim asserts that districts lack sufficient funding under the current system to provide Texas schoolchildren with a constitutionally adequate education.

“The state has raised its expectations for school districts and student performance. While we certainly support higher standards, we also support a system that provides adequate funding to help us meet their requirements,” said Rue.

“In Northwest ISD, we are preparing our students to compete in a global marketplace. Our schools have programs and resources in place that our teachers, parents and community have come to expect. Whether it’s a career academy, a fine arts initiative, or instructional technology tools, our programs are designed to prepare students to be college and career ready.” Adequate funding is needed to support district-wide programs, and Rue says, “All schools across Texas should have the funding needed to equip students with skills needed to compete against graduates from other states and other parts of our globe.”

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