

# CLC-81st reviews key legislative issues

*Texas Legislature to begin session on Jan. 13*

The Texas Legislature was ordered in 2006 by the Texas Supreme Court to correct constitutional deficiencies in the public education funding system stating that it had evolved into an unconstitutional statewide property tax. Now, almost three years later, legislators have yet to provide school districts with a sound solution for the school finance system.

To address this issue, as well as several other legislative issues that will be discussed in the 81st Legislative Session, CFISD commissioned the Community Legislative Committee-81st (CLC-81st)—made up of 43 community members—to examine and evaluate how the district has been and will be directly impacted by state decisions. Three key areas identified by the committee as fundamental in protecting the district's continued fiscal and academic successes are: school finance, accountability and local control.

Key issues being discussed and carefully analyzed by the committee include target revenues, unfunded mandates and transportation and high school allotments. After studying the central issues that influence CFISD's daily decisions, CLC-81st will finalize legislative priorities to recommend at the January Board meeting. These priorities will be conveyed to state legislators and to the Cy-Fair community-at-large.

Under the leadership of community co-chair Michael Brezina and district co-chair Dr. Cheryl Salyards, associate superintendent for governmental relations and communication, the most important goal of CLC-81st is to ensure that the Cy-Fair community and district employees understand the legislative proposals and the actions taken by state legislators. The committee disseminates key legislative facts through letters, emails and the district website at [www.cfishd.net](http://www.cfishd.net). Members of the committee also communicate with legislators via emails and phone calls. During the 81st Legislative Session, state representatives can be contacted at their Austin offices (see *Your Elected State Officials* for contact information).

CLC-81st has held two meetings this school year and will continue to meet regularly through May 2009 to discuss the district's legislative priorities for the 81st Legislative Session. State legislators will convene at the State Capitol beginning on Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2009 and will conclude the 81st Session on Monday, June 1, 2009.

For more information about the CLC-81st, contact Dr. Cheryl Salyards, associate superintendent for governmental relations and communication, at 281-517-6332 or via email at [cheryl.salyards@cfisd.net](mailto:cheryl.salyards@cfisd.net). Visit the district website, [www.cfishd.net](http://www.cfishd.net), to stay informed on legislative issues impacting public education.

## Dates of Interest

### Session Begins

**Tuesday, January 13, 2009** (1st day) 81st Legislature convenes at noon

**Monday, June 1, 2009** (140th day) Last day of 81st Regular Session; corrections only in house and senate

### Session Ends

**Sunday, June 21, 2009** (20th day following final adjournment) Last day governor can sign or veto bills passed during the regular legislative session

**Monday, August 31, 2009** (91st day following final adjournment) Date that bills without specific effective dates (that could not be effective immediately) become law

## Contact Information

### YOUR ELECTED STATE OFFICIALS

#### CFISD 81st Legislative Delegates (2008)

State Sen. Dan Patrick, Dist. 7: Local-713-464-0282; Austin: 1-512-463-0107  
 State Sen. John Whitmire, Dist. 15: Local-713-864-8701; Austin: 1-512-463-0115  
 State Sen. Kyle Janek, Dist. 17: Local-713-272-8929; Austin: 1-800-445-2635  
 State Rep. Patricia Harless, Dist. 126: Local-281-376-4114; Austin: 1-512-463-0496  
 State Rep. Corbin Van Arsdale, Dist. 130: Local-281-469-9130; Austin: 1-512-463-0661  
 State Rep. Bill Callegari, Dist. 132: Local-281-578-8484; Austin: 1-512-463-0528  
 State Rep. Gary Elkins, Dist. 135: Local-832-912-8380; Austin: 1-512-463-0722  
 State Rep. Dwayne Bohac, Dist. 138: Local-713-460-2800; Austin: 1-512-463-0727

This is the most current contact information available to CFISD and is subject to change. For addresses, go to *About CFISD, Legislative Contacts* at [www.cfishd.net](http://www.cfishd.net). Websites for Texas Legislator's Information are: [www.tcais.org](http://www.tcais.org) and [www.capitol.state.tx.us](http://www.capitol.state.tx.us).

## 2008 Legislative Summit

The Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District (CFISD) hosted its first annual Legislative Summit, in conjunction with Region IV, on Saturday, Oct. 18 at Aldine's M.O. Campbell Center, located at 1865 Aldine Bender.

Cy-Fair residents and district employees, along with members from surrounding school district communities, participated in the nonpartisan, local forum that focused on issues affecting the business community and school districts.

During the 3-hour event—from 9 a.m. until noon—community members were given the opportunity to hear Houston-area legislators speak about educational and business issues that are on the table to be addressed during the upcoming 81st Texas Legislative Session, which will convene in January.

The idea of having a regional forum, first originated in CFISD and later opened to other Region IV school districts, was designed to give local voters from Houston-area school districts the opportunity to learn the positions taken by their local officials on the issues affecting public education and the business community.

Opening speeches, addressing key legislative topics, were given by Sen. Dan Patrick, R-District 7; Rep. Rob Eissler, R-District 15, Chair of Public Education; and Rep. Scott Hochberg, D-District 137.



Sen. Dan Patrick, Dist. 7, Rep. Scott Hochberg, Dist. 137 and Sylvester Turner, Dist. 139, address the audience by answering questions regarding key legislative topics. The legislators were members of a panel during the Legislative Summit (sponsored by CFISD and neighboring school districts) held Oct. 18 at the M.O. Campbell Center.