

January 2017

Dear Klein Community,

I hope you had a great holiday and a happy start to 2017! As we kick off the new year together, I want to share with you important information regarding the *unofficial* A-F accountability ratings set to be publicly released by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) this week.

During the 84th Texas legislative session, HB 2804 passed requiring the assignment of an A-F rating to all public schools and districts. This rating system is slated to begin in 2018; however, this week TEA will release unofficial “what if” ratings based on the grades each campus and district would have received had the system been in place. This “What If” A-F rating does not impact the *official* 2016 accountability ratings. The district and all campuses in Klein ISD are rated “met standard” in all four indices: student achievement, student progress, closing performance gaps, and postsecondary readiness.

Although some claim that this new A-F rating system provides a simplified explanation of school and district quality and improves student performance, there is no definitive research to show that any rating system, by itself, improves school performance. Also, the system is quite complex behind the grade. For example, the explanation of how to determine grades takes pages upon pages of technical explanation. I encourage you to check out this week’s 90 Second News available on the district webpage for a detailed explanation of some of the formulas used to calculate grades in this system.

This past fall, you may recall that our parents, students, and staff took a survey regarding future priorities for Klein ISD and the results were astoundingly clear: both parents and staff indicated that the district should de-emphasize standardized testing in our schools. With that feedback in mind, our Klein ISD Board of Trustees unanimously signed a resolution in December calling for the repeal of this A-through-F rating system. We are hopeful that the Legislature will make significant changes to this policy that forces a focus on standardized testing results, and we ask you to make sure your voice is heard by contacting your state legislature on this important issue.

In Klein ISD, we certainly want to be accountable to our students, families, and community; however, we don’t support an A-F rating system that is an oversimplification of the complexity involved in evaluating a campus or school system. A single letter grade is not and will never be representative of all that is occurring on our campuses and throughout our district.

Finally, Klein ISD will continue to focus on and put our energy into making our shared vision of *every* student entering with a promise and exiting with a purpose a reality. We will continue to engage in continuous improvement because it’s the right thing to do for our students and certainly not because of a complicated rating system that reduces the hard work of students and our Klein community to an oversimplified letter grade.



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Thank you for your continued support of Klein ISD students and educators. As always, should you have any questions or feedback, please take advantage of our Klein ISD Let's Talk system available on the Klein ISD website.

I wish you all the best in the new year!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bret A. Champion". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Bret A. Champion