



MORGAN MEYER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DISTRICT 108

July 7, 2020

Honorable Mike Morath, Commissioner
Texas Education Agency
101 Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Commissioner Morath:

Thank you for your thoughtful leadership as our public schools face unprecedented challenges. I'm keenly aware of the magnitude of your role in making life-changing decisions for more than 5 million students across Texas during this pandemic and appreciate your commitment to student wellbeing and achievement.

As a member of the Texas House Public Education Committee and a Commissioner to the Education Commission of the States, I'm writing you today to respectfully request that TEA re-consider resuming STAAR testing in the 2020-2021 school year. Continuing the pause in testing will allow our public schools, administrators and teachers to continue focusing on the health, safety, wellness and learning of our students.

However, if STAAR testing must resume, then I request that TEA eliminate the high stakes and negative consequences for students, including prohibiting advancement to the next grade, preventing students from graduation or impacting students' eligibility for Talented and Gifted programs. While it's critical that we gain an understanding of COVID's impact on public education, we should not punish students based on their performance on the 2020-2021 test.

Additionally, it's my intention to file a bill that protects students from punitive action based on STAAR test results, ensuring that there is legislative policy protecting students and parents. In the wake of a pandemic that has upended our schools and our lives, the stakes are high enough – there's no need to raise them even higher.

I welcome cooperation with TEA to tackle the new challenges we face as voices for public education. I know we agree that our top priority must be providing a high-quality public education to every student in Texas and ensuring that gaps in performance due to the pandemic are remedied as quickly as possible.

Commissioner Morath, your diligent work to address the expansive needs of Texas school children is greatly appreciated. Thank you in advance for considering this important request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Meyer".

Representative Morgan Meyer
Member, Texas House Public Education Committee