

**March 29, 2011**

Madame Chair and members of the Senate Committee on Education,

My name is Robert Calvert. I am the Chief Information Officer for Fort Bend Independent school district, the 7<sup>th</sup> largest school district in Texas, educating approximately 69,000 students annually.

Before I begin, I would like to thank Senator Huffman for listening to the concerns of the Administrators, Teachers, Parents and Students in and around Fort Bend ISD and then subsequently introducing Senate Bill 217 to which we support.

The events that have lead me to testify before you today began just over 3 years ago. During the 2007-2008 school year, one of our campuses had identified and corrected grade changes twice during the school year for 37 students. A more in depth investigation was launched and specific students were identified as suspects. These students were suspected of changing attendance and grade records as well as authoring emails from teacher accounts to unsuspecting parents and searching for Teacher Test banks just to mention a few activities.

As a result of a steep escalation of hacking activities specifically designed to seriously disrupt District and campus operations; exactly 2 years and 11 months ago from today, the Fort Bend ISD police, in conjunction with the Secret Service and a local police special task force, executed warrants on the homes of 4 Fort Bend ISD students. Additionally, on the day the warrants were served, the District conducted a broad academic investigation interviewing more than 70 students to determine the depth and breadth of the hacking activities.

During the months of the investigation, District staff worked tirelessly throughout each day and night identifying and closing potential network weaknesses. As one area of potential weakness was identified and closed, the hackers would work to find another way into the network. Becoming frustrated, the hackers had begun executing a plan to steal computers from other campuses, re-program them and then re-install the stolen computers back into the school. Once the re-programmed computers were replaced in the schools, the hackers would have an undetectable "back door" that would provide them unfettered access to the District's network.

Following the academic investigation, 11 students from 3 different High Schools were assigned to DAEP. However, placement of these students into DAEP did not reduce the District's exposure to the threat of these students due to the fact that the DAEP program utilizes the District's network just like their home campus. Placement of these students into DAEP required that the DAEP staff be extraordinarily careful to ensure that none of these specific students would have access to computers at any time. Lastly, had these students wanted to create more disruption the DAEP network access would have provided them another opportunity to so from inside the District's walls.

In closing Fort Bend ISD supports this Bill to provide school district's more flexibility in assigning expulsion to students that commit the offense of breach of computer security and happy to answer any of your questions.

Presented by:  
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Fort Bend ISD