

State of Texas  
Texas Senate

P.O. Box 12068  
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711-2068  
(512) 463-0107  
FAX (512) 463-8810



11451 KATY FREEWAY, SUITE 209  
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77079  
(713) 464-0282  
FAX (713) 461-0108

**Paul Bettencourt**  
DISTRICT 7

Paul.Bettencourt@senate.texas.gov

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**Contact Information**  
Robert Flanagan | (713) 464-0282  
Robert.Flanagan@senate.texas.gov

**Houston ISD Trustees Have Made a Mockery of the Texas Open Meetings Act With Multiple Violations**  
*Sen Bettencourt will file legislation to change HISD Board Structure as new Board of Governors seems inevitable*

**Houston** - Texas Senator Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) says daily published reports and workshop statements regarding the interim HISD superintendents replacement and then the board's recent reversal strongly indicate that HISD trustees have repeatedly violated the Texas Open Meetings Act which governs the conduct of local government meetings. These open meetings statutes are top down guidelines for effective and transparent public meetings for the thousands of local governments in Texas and cannot be dismissed by any governing body.

**"The simple fact that 5 trustees spoke to and hired a replacement interim Superintendent on Thursday, and then apparently confirmed that fact at a board workshop on Sunday, indicates that this is the first major violation of the Texas Open Meetings Act,"** said Senator Bettencourt. **"The second clearly occurred yesterday when, without a posted meeting, the entire HISD board apparently announced the reversal of the last appointment and reappointed the previous interim superintendent. These superintendents are not the problem, the HISD Board of Trustees is!"**

Yesterday, HISD trustees gathered at a press conference to apologize for their behavior over the last 10 months but took no questions afterwards leaving other non-HISD officials to answer questions directed at trustees.

**"Again, instead of waiting for a posted HISD board meeting later this week to announce their decision to retain the former interim Superintendent, they clearly must have made that decision by yesterday. These actions by the HISD board of Trustees have sadly made a mockery of the Texas Open Meetings Act, period."** added Senator Bettencourt.

Senator Bettencourt started working on legislation to change the composition of the HISD Board of Trustees after an earlier board meeting this summer that turned raucous as well, with multiple citizens being removed from the meeting. The draft legislation will bring at-large trustee representatives into the board mixture replacing an equal number of district trustees in a hybrid form of governance.

**"I became alarmed at the state of the HISD board as far back as discussions in Austin that Kashmere HS has been on the State's Improvements Required (IR) list for nine years, in addition to the waiver that was granted by TEA for Hurricane Harvey this year. The board's decision to fire their internal auditor was also a red flag in the face of good government. Finally, the latest HISD board meeting last week where racial epithets were hurled by board factions at each other, tells not only me but the public, that the time will come for a new Board of Governors, selected by the TEA Commissioner, to inevitably replace the existing board of trustees,"** concluded Senator Bettencourt.

Senator Bettencourt serves on the Senate Education and Higher Education Committees and is a member of the State of Texas Commission on Public School Finance. He also represents a portion of HISD in SD7 and has previously stated his intention to file an HISD government reform bill later this year.

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