



Advocacy Advisory Committee

September 16, 2026

Meeting Minutes

The Advocacy Advisory Committee (AAC) met on September 16, 2026, from 5:00 6:30 p.m. – via Google Meets

The following attended the meeting:

AAC members:, Noelita Lugo, Natalie Fontenot, Teo Gutierrez, Jiae Kim Batra, Bardo Montelongo, Lorena Campos, Stacia Crescenzi, Rebecca Davenport, Linzy Foster, Lily McClure, Samhitha Nittala, Elina Sarkar, Evan Shreeve, Denise Simmons, Zayden Toohey, Callum Thomas, Susana Rodriguez-Jaimes, and Gretchen Pierce

Presenter: Paul Colbert

AISD Staff: Edna Butts

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Jiae Kim-Batra at 5:01 p.m. There was no public comment.

The committee welcomed new members, Teo Gutierrez and Susana Rodriguez-Jaime, students at Akins High School, Gretchen Pierce, the new ACPTA representative and Deirse Simmons.

Members approved the minutes of the May 26, 2026 meeting.

Edna Butts introduced Paul Colbert, the guest presenter. Paul Colbert represented District 132 in Houston from 1980 to 1992. He served as Chairman for Budget and Oversight of the Public Education Committee and as a member of the Appropriations Committee for eight years. Rep. Colbert co- authored several education reform bills, including HB 72, the Education Reform Act of 1984, and SB 1, the school finance reform bill passed in 1990. He is considered one of the foremost experts in Texas on public school finance and drafted or influenced much of the Texas school finance legislation from 1974 to 1992.

Rep. Colbert authored the final House version of the legislation creating the state's Economic Stabilization Fund, also known as the Rainy Day Fund.

Mr. Colbert explained that since 2019 the legislature has reduced the ability of districts to raise money while giving tax breaks to data centers. He provided historical information on the percentage of money school districts receive from the state and the percentage of the state's contribution to traditional public schools. He explained that the percentage of state funding is skewed because the percentage includes 100% funding for charter schools, because charter schools do not collect property taxes. In the 2023-34 school year, about 47.7% of Texas public school funding came from local sources like property taxes, 38.6% came from the state and 13.7% from the federal government.

He stated that there has not been a true cost of education study and the amount that is provided from the weights for special education, bilingual education, etc. is a small portion of the cost that is needed to provide those services. Additionally the state provided only 1/3 of the cost to comply with HB 3 (88th session) for the cost of implementing the safety and security mandates.

He also spoke briefly about the Economic Stabilization Plan, also known as the Rainy Day Fund. Mr. Colbert will follow up with written information.

The meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.