



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Adrian Rodriguez
Phone: 214-478-5921
E-Mail: Adrian.rodriguez17@verizon.net

Texas LULAC Condemns SBOE's Subcommittee for Lack of Hispanic Representation Among the Expert Group Reviewing/ Revising the ELAR Standards

On February 29, 2008, the State Board Of Education (SBOE) subcommittee, appointed by Chairman Don McElroy, recommended and appointed a group of "experts" to review the English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR) standards prepared by an independent contractor. Texas LULAC is highly concerned that a knowledgeable expert in the field of bilingual education and ESL was not appointed.

Texas student demographics show that Hispanics comprise 47% of the total public school enrollment. The SBOE has neglected the needs of a significant portion of the Texas student population by not appointing Hispanic researchers to the expert review panel.

According to Adrian Rodriguez, co-chair of the Texas LULAC Legislative committee, "The actions of the SBOE subcommittee will only serve to widen the achievement gap for Hispanic students. The entire Texas community will suffer if we cannot properly attend to the literacy, language, and learning needs of Hispanics and other minority groups. Proper representation will alleviate these problems."

We strongly recommend the SBOE appoint Hispanic researchers to review the current ELAR document to ensure each standard reflects the needs of English Language Learners. In addition, the Spanish Language Arts and English as a Second Language Standards should not be relegated to second-class status. Rather than waiting to address the Spanish Language arts and English as a Second Language Standards after ELAR, which places bilingual students at a disadvantage, revisions for **all** standards should be considered simultaneously.