

Mary Helen Berlanga  
State Board of Education, District 2  
2727 Morgan Ave.  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78405

Governor Rick Perry  
1100 San Jacinto St.  
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Governor Perry:

I know that you are interested in running for another term as Governor of Texas and I know that the education of our children is important to you. It is for this reason that I am writing to you and pleading with you to remove Don McElroy as Chairman of the State Board of Education.

Since Don McElroy took over as chairman, it has been a disaster. Both, his positions on the English Language Arts and Reading document (ELAR) and his attitude towards our teachers have been very offensive. Many of our state representatives and senators comments have been ignored and they too are offended. You cannot afford to have Don McElroy in such an important position in our state.

It is not unusual for board members to voice different opinions and it is not unusual to have a split vote. What is unusual and totally unsatisfactory is the behavior of Don McElroy. Our board takes a vote on a motion and we expect TEA to follow what the majority has ruled. Unfortunately, Don McElroy is taking it upon himself to dictate what he wants done. He is trying to deceive our teachers but they are professionals and have realized his outright deceitfulness. He is bringing in teachers from out of state and ignoring the suggestions of our own Texas teachers in the development of English Language Arts and Reading standards.

He earlier called for experts including three special education experts, an early childhood education expert, an expert for dyslexia and an expert for African American children. He never, on his own initiative, included Hispanic experts. Any intelligent, logical person would have named an expert who had dealt with Hispanic children and language minority children since more that 2.6 million of the 4.5 million students in our public schools are Hispanic. Finally, the board, by a vote taken in March 2008 forced Don McElroy to include Hispanic experts in the development of TEKS for ELAR. However, after that vote the Hispanic experts were never brought in to discuss the TEKS with the English teachers, nor were they brought in to work with TEA. Instead, they were isolated and at that point where they were involved, there were several TEKS documents. The English teachers have also worked endless hours without compensation because a strong curriculum is vital to success in their classroom. Don McElroy was constantly interfering with that process, as well. In other words, Don McElroy has created havoc. There is

total chaos with the TEKS due to his actions. It is such a shame that after all these years of trying to improve education, we are taking steps backwards because of Don McElroy. As chairman of the State Board of Education he should be providing leadership to all board members but most important of all he should be trying to work with our Texas teachers who are in the classrooms across the state and who are educating our children. As chairman he cannot push his own personal agenda, and as the one in charge, he should show some objectivity and positive leadership as he represents the entire State Board of Education.

Let me reiterate how important the election of 2010 will be. Don McElroy has created an aura of deceit and divisiveness. Texas has a large population of Hispanics and he seems bent on alienating this very significant group of voters. He has managed to alienate our Texas teachers. For the sake of our great state do not allow this Master of Deceit to continue his very dangerous game.

Don McElroy should be replaced as chairman of the board with a moderate conservative who can work with all members of the State Board of Education and the citizens of this state. Thank you very much.

Yours truly,



Mary Helen Berlanga

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