



PRESS RELEASE

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HB 5 Architect Named 2013 Texas Public Schools *Friend of the Year*

**Friends of Texas Public Schools honors Jimmie Don Aycock
at its 9th annual Friend of the Year fundraising dinner on December 9, 2013
at the Frontiers of Flight Museum in Dallas, 5:30pm to 8:00pm.**

Jimmie Don Aycock, Chairman of the House Public Education Committee, led the passage of what is arguably the most important piece of education legislation in decades during the 83rd Texas Legislature.

"House Bill 5 passed and was signed into law, reversing a decades-old trend toward more and more testing and high-stakes accountability that has been strangling our public schools and students in Texas," said Blake Powell, President of Friends of Texas Public Schools and partner in the school law firm Powell & Leon. "Chairman Aycock is a true statesman and champion for what's right versus what's popular, and popular for too long has been more testing and less learning."

The Friend of the Year Award was established by Friends of Texas Public Schools to honor those rare individuals who clearly see beyond the sensational headlines and often negative politics and understand the success of Texas public education is everyone's business.

Chairman Aycock filed HB 5 with the intent of loosening the state's grip on the Texas public education system and allowing educators more flexibility and local control. HB 5 provides a hint of relief from high-stakes testing, reducing the number of end-of-course exams from 15 to 5, and rewrote graduation requirements to include a provision for a pathway to graduation along a career or technology track. "Every kid is not destined for college," Powell said. "HB 5 provides a viable careers pathway for those kids."

Representative Aycock serves House District 54, which includes Killeen, Salado, Lampasas, part of Fort Hood, and surrounding areas. Prior to his election to the state legislature in 2006, Rep. Aycock served on the boards of Central Texas College and the Killeen Independent School District.

"Chairman Aycock was a champion for public school students throughout the 2013 legislative session, leading the Texas House of Representatives against ardent opposition driven by testing companies, the Texas Association of Business, and their lobbyists," said Blake Powell, president of Friends of Texas Public Schools. "For that we are proud to honor him as our 2013 Friend of the Year."

For more details about attending this event, or if you would like to consider a table sponsorship, please contact Amber Fulton at afulton@fotps.org.

Friends of Texas Public Schools is a 501c(3) nonprofit, grassroots organization dedicated to restoring public confidence in our schools by promoting their many strengths and achievements. We believe the people of Texas have a right to know that, in spite of the many challenges they face, our public schools are achieving more today than ever in their history, and that the incessant, negative and oftentimes disrespectful conversation about public education is counterproductive to progress. To learn more visit www.FOTPS.org.