



Texas School Public Relations Association

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Aledo ISD Board Vice President Bobby Rigues named TSPRA's 2011 Key Communicator

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AUSTIN, TX, July 20, 2011 – The Texas School Public Relations Association (TSPRA) has named Bobby J. Rigues as the association's 2011 Key Communicator. Rigues, who serves as vice president for the Aledo ISD Board of Trustees, earned this prestigious award which recognizes his significant contributions to the public understanding of the public schools in Texas through effective communications. His simple message to “Make Education a Priority” during the Texas legislative year became a rally cry for school districts and their communities as the legislature tackled the state budget.



Rigues will receive his award, sponsored for the first time by SchoolMessenger, from TSPRA President Tim Carroll at the 2011 Texas Association of School Administrators/Texas Association of School Boards Convention to be held September 30 to October 2. Over 6,000 public school officials are expected to attend this year's event held in October at the Austin Convention Center, Austin, Texas, where Rigues will be honored.

“TSPRA is proud to honor Mr. Rigues as our Key Communicator, as it is among the highest awards our association bestows,” said TSPRA President Tim Carroll. “The 617 school districts and 32 legislators and professional associations supporting the “Make Education a Priority” initiative show the strength of this campaign.”

Rigues has a passion for being a positive influence for younger generations and he is devoted to serving public schools. Born in Crystal City, Texas, and a graduate of Tarleton State University, Rigues was the first in his family to earn a college degree. After graduation with a Bachelor of Science in Education, he served for seven years as a teacher and coach before pursuing a career as an agent for State Farm Insurance for the past 22 years. Now in his third term as a board of trustee for Aledo ISD, Rigues' dedication to education has led him in a personal effort to raise local awareness about the challenges with the current school finance system and the inadequate funding of public schools in Texas. His letter-writing campaign in Aledo grew into a statewide resolution adoption campaign urging legislators to make education their top priority when developing the state budget. Rigues has shared that message in numerous interviews with print, on-line, radio and television media that have spread the word throughout the state.

In January 2011, Rigues held a press conference to announce a milestone for the campaign securing a majority of Texas school districts that had adopted the resolution. The press conference, held in an over-flowing room in the Austin Convention Center, garnered over an hour and a half of television coverage statewide, print stories in the major daily newspapers and radio coverage. Afterwards, Rigues delivered almost 5,000 letters to the Texas Capitol and presented them to legislators in front of television and newspaper cameras as “Make Education a Priority” signs filled the background.

At the March 12 Rally for Texas Schools in Austin, Rigues spoke to 12,000 supporters of public education about public school finance while conveying the urgency that public schools are facing. He has also spoken at a public school rally held in the packed Athens ISD football stadium and at an informational gathering held by a Fort Worth political organization. Rigues’ website (www.schoolpriority.com) brought further support to the campaign, highlighting the issues surrounding public education finance and encouraging people to get involved.

In his letter nominating Rigues for TSPRA’s Key Communicator award, TASB Communications Manager Dax González wrote, “For all his communications and advocacy accomplishments, it is perhaps Bobby’s charisma, passion and commitment that have been the largest determinants of the campaign’s success. He worked early to bring other trustees into the campaign as partners, not just supporters – giving rise to a motivated cadre of stakeholders who worked tirelessly to promote the campaign’s mission and message.”

TSPRA Executive Director Linsae Snider states, “Mr. Rigues proactively ignited a fire of support for public schools that continues to burn in the hearts of taxpayers, educators, parents and business leaders. What began as a simple petition drive in one school district grew into a Texas-sized movement that has contributed significantly to the field of public school communications.”

Since 1981, TSPRA has recognized a Key Communicator for outstanding contributions to public education through effective communications. The recipient may be a legislator, educator, or a professional in another field who has improved school communications, or a member of TSPRA who has contributed outstanding service to the profession of school communications. Recipients have included leaders from business, media, PTA, politics, and education. A complete list of past recipients can be found on TSPRA’s website at www.tspra.org/awards/key-communicator/list-of-key-communicators.

TSPRA has secured SchoolMessenger as the sponsor for the 2011 Key Communicator Award. TASA/TASB Convention attendees are asked to stop by SchoolMessenger’s booth on Saturday, October 1, from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. to meet and congratulate Rigues.

Marcia Coker, Wylie ISD, chairs TSPRA’s 2011-2012 Professional Awards Committee which includes: Kari Hutchinson, Comal ISD; Tammy Kuykendall, Duncanville ISD; Beth Trimble, DeSoto ISD; Arianna Vazquez-Hernandez, Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD; and Christy Willman, Lamar CISD. For more information, contact Linsae Snider, TSPRA Executive Director, at 512-474-9107.

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Sponsor of
the Texas School Public Relations Association’s
2011 Key Communicator Award