David Feigen, 2019 Legislative Session Update

* Session concluded end of May - 140 days
* Overall tone: some successes; caveat “more work to do”
* Areas that did not make progress
  + child protection and students in foster care; CPS reform was unsupported
  + maternal mortality and maternal health care
  + State did not do anything to address its highest uninsurance rate for children in the country
* At the start of session, lawmakers were intent on addressing school finance. Business leaders, advocates, academics, districts collaborated and weighed in with their support, providing 30 recommendations. This framework largely stayed in place:
  + HB3 passed
  + Full day preK funded
  + Must meet provisions by Sept. 1 or ask for waivers
  + Districts asking for waivers for preK funding need to prove they’re part of a partnership; waivers up to 3 years based on application
  + $72.6 million ask, $31 million received for Early Childhood Intervention
  + New early literacy standards - time from Kindergarten to 3rd grade
    - 3rd grade reading proficiency is an indicator for later achievement
    - *“Before 3rd grade, students are learning to read. After 3rd grade, students are reading to learn.”*
    - Standards need to apply to reading academies
  + TEA now has to focus on new rulemaking
* Early Education Allotment
  + Not a grant or one-time allotment, it’s ongoing; “incredibly prescriptive”
  + Uses a 0.1 rate for each ELL or EcoDis students - totalling $780 million
    - Used for early education, dual language programs, full day preK
  + Required districts to provide full day preK for 4 y/o
* Child Care Center Safety
  + Austin American Statesman’s 12 part series “[Unwatched](http://gatehousenews.com/unwatched/overview/site/statesman.com/)” on childcare and safety released in December 2018, [Videos](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1OMqROkxK6203lN6knMOKlFGAuitQUmv)
  + Illegal Operations Unit formed to crack down on unsafe childcare facilities
  + How does the amount of caregivers in a childcare facility correlate to safety?
    - Ratio one adult to eleven 2 y/o
* Areas of focus moving forward:
  + improve child safety
  + oversight of CDCs
  + data and transparency
  + caregiver to child ratios
  + pregnant parenting youth
  + nutrition; increase access to healthy foods
  + active play standards
  + cutting ½ screen time
  + trauma informed care
  + suicide prevention strategies

Read more information at the following:

[Texans Care for Children - Recap Report on Key Kids’ Issues of the 2019 TX Lege Session](https://txchildren.org/posts/2019/6/24/recap-report-on-key-kids-issues-of-the-2019-tx-lege-session)