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Statement of gratitude to EPISD and their expert panel of Spanish Language Arts and Reading Teachers

Reviewing and improving upon existing Spanish Language Arts and Reading (SLAR) standards occurs periodically, approximately every decade. This review began in 2015; the final product of Kindergarten through 8th grade SLAR standards was voted on May 10, 2017.

I am here with the very distinguished honor to announce that every one of the recommendations - totaling over 20 pages of amendments - was voted upon unanimously, creating the best and most rigorous Spanish Language Arts and Reading standards the students of Texas have ever had.

The reason this is significant is because the work originates in Region XIX, the area which demonstrates the most success with English Language Learners - framing this course of study for every Language Learner and Dual Language Learner in the state.

Since El Paso has demonstrated mastery in this area better than anyone else, it makes sense that we would lead the way for the rest of the state of Texas.

The level of assistance my office has received in getting this done at the state level has been invaluable. The districts in Region XIX were all receptive and cooperative but EPISD is of particular note because of their willingness to devote time, resources, and plane tickets to ensure that the right professionals were available to help with such a critical project that is beneficial to over 5 million Texas students.

Once again I'd like to underscore my gratitude to Trustee Byrd, Superintendent Cabrera and the staff of EPISD for ensuring your staff Marianne Sotelo of Mesa Elementary, Lucia Palomino of Lundy Elementary, and Maru Raposo of Park Elementary, were part of the team that has set the example for the rest of the state of Texas. Success here in El Paso will ensure buy-in across the Lone Star State when we move to full statewide implementation.