



CONCERNS REGARDING S.B. 2083 AUTHORED BY SENATOR SHAPIRO

The Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education has the following comments and concern regarding provisions within S.B. 2083.

The Chairperson is to be commended for her continuing interest in and support for quality programs for students with disabilities. We believe that S.B. 2083 is well-intentioned but would provide little information which would yield reliable data capable of altering or adjusting a school districts special education program for the following reasons:

1. The time restriction of 15 minutes does not allow for the type of data collection useful for such a complicated matter as special education program analysis. In an effort to include all districts and staff in these “surveys” and all parents of all students with disabilities, the bill sacrifices scientific sampling for total coverage. We would question the validity of such results.
2. The survey information is designed primarily to attempt to measure “satisfaction” in its subjective state without regard to objective criteria to support such satisfaction. Such subjective information is of little value in determining the quality of a special education program.
3. If a school district’s program is to be measured in any valid manner, factors such as demographic distribution within a given district, standardization of measurement, scientific design, etc. would need to be insured. This bill does not ensure any such design.
4. Most significantly, the bill purports to measure a special education program’s “quality” but fails to identify any of the variables which have been identified through scientific research as indicators of quality programming. This is no improvement upon the current means of program monitoring provided at the federal and state level.

The idea that TEA should identify best practices for school districts to adhere to in providing special education services is a fine aim. Such a concept, as envisioned by Senator West in his bill, S.B. 1725, designed to identify such factors related to preventing drop-outs would be one means of accomplishing the goals of S.B. 2083. This bill will consume a great amount of the

available resources but yield little of practical value to parents or school districts. Instead, it could lead to false data and questionable results. Better would be a bill designed to identify those aspects within a school district which lead to student success, those factors which lead to parent and consumer satisfaction, those factors which lead to teacher success and retention within the profession. If this bill were to provide a grant to a reputable research based university or college to study such factors, TCASE would endorse it wholeheartedly. Despite its aspirations, TCASE cannot support the bill in its current version.

438081