



**Texas Appleseed  
Written Testimony for HB 1942  
Senate Education  
May 17, 2011**

While HB 1942 includes some very positive provisions aimed at eliminating bullying in Texas schools, Texas Appleseed opposes HB 1942 due to the “forced transfer” provision of the bill (Section 25.0342) that allows school administrators to transfer the student being disciplined to another campus within the district. *While this provision is aimed at providing parity with provisions that allow a child who is the victim of bullying to choose to go to another school, **true parity would give the parent of the student being transferred a voice in the process**, a provision that is missing but could easily be added to the language of the bill.*

**While we agree that bullying in schools must be addressed, transferring an accused student to another campus is the wrong approach and unlikely to be an effective, long-term solution to the problem of bullying in schools.** Transferring the child to another campus does not address the underlying behavioral issue and places the accused bully in contact with new victims. Further, research has shown that students who bully often are the product of abuse, or have been victims of bullying themselves.<sup>i</sup>

**Transferring the child to another campus is likely to lead to even poorer outcomes, placing students who are forced to transfer on a “school to prison” track.** Studies around school mobility have shown that students who frequently change schools are more likely to have behavioral issues, more likely to repeat a grade, more likely to dropout, and have lower levels of academic achievement.<sup>ii</sup> *This could lead the student down a road that will create more – rather than fewer – victims.*

Moreover, research shows that individual interventions are not as effective in reducing overall bullying behavior as programs that are focused school-wide.<sup>iii</sup> Well-designed programs not only work to significantly reduce and prevent bullying, they have also been shown to decrease other behavioral problems in schools.<sup>iv</sup> These programs would work to avoid the transfer of any student – bully or victim – to another campus.

This bill includes provisions that encourage use of effective programs – and these proven approaches are the programs public policy should support and encourage. Forced transfer is not an effective solution for schools or students.

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<sup>i</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, *Bullying in Schools* available at <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/files/RIC/Publications/e07063414-guide.pdf> (last visited March 21, 2011).

<sup>ii</sup> U.S. Gen. Accounting Office, *Elementary School Children: Many Change Schools Frequently, Harming Their Education 7-8* (1994).

<sup>iii</sup> Indiana University, *Safe and Responsive Schools, Early Identification and Intervention: Bullying in Schools*, available at <http://www.indiana.edu/~safeschl/SrsBullying.pdf> (last visited March 21, 2011).

<sup>iv</sup> *Id.*