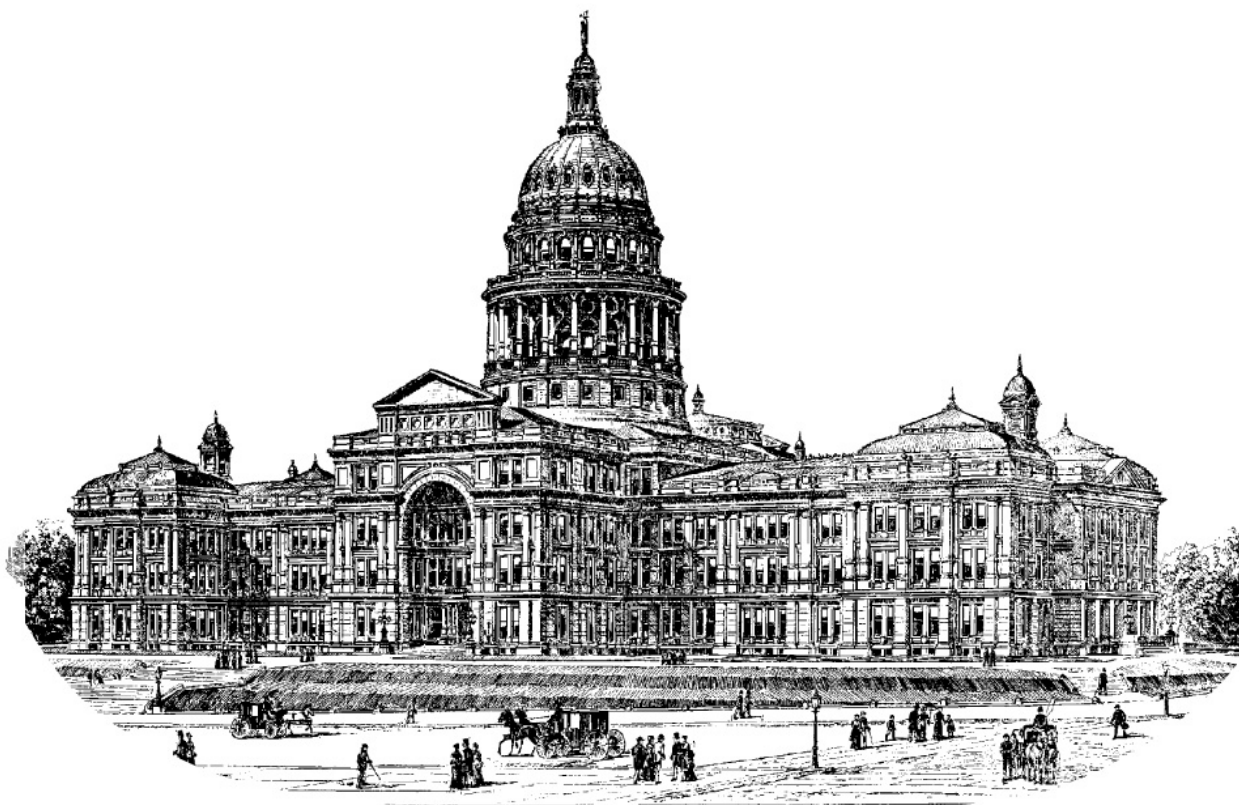




INTERIM REPORT

TO THE 83RD TEXAS LEGISLATURE



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC EDUCATION
JANUARY 2013

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION
TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
INTERIM REPORT 2012**

**A REPORT TO THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
83RD TEXAS LEGISLATURE**

**ROB EISSLER
CHAIRMAN**

**COMMITTEE CLERK
JENNA WATTS**



Committee On
Public Education

January 2, 2013

Rob Eissler
Chairman

P.O. Box 2910
Austin, Texas 78768-2910

The Honorable Joe Straus
Speaker, Texas House of Representatives
Members of the Texas House of Representatives
Texas State Capitol, Rm. 2W.13
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Mr. Speaker and Fellow Members:

The Committee on Public Education of the Eighty-second Legislature hereby submits its interim report including recommendations for consideration by the Eighty-third Legislature.

Respectfully submitted,

Handwritten signature of Rob Eissler in black ink.

Rob Eissler, Chair

Handwritten signature of Scott Hochberg in black ink.

Scott Hochberg, Vice Chair

Handwritten signature of Alma Allen in black ink.

Alma Allen

Handwritten signature of Jimmie Don Aycock in black ink.

Jimmie Don Aycock

Handwritten signature of Harold Dutton, Jr. in black ink.

Harold Dutton, Jr.

Handwritten signature of Ryan Guillen in black ink.

Ryan Guillen

Handwritten signature of Dan Huberty in black ink.

Dan Huberty

Handwritten signature of Mark Shelton in black ink.

Mark Shelton

Todd Smith

Mark Strama

Randy Weber

Scott Hochberg
Vice-Chairman

Alma Allen, Jimmie Don Aycock, Harold Dutton, Ryan Guillen, Dan Huberty, Mark Shelton, Todd Smith, Mark Strama, Randy Weber

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

INTERIM STUDY CHARGES

- Conduct a review of the University Interscholastic League (UIL) and make recommendations as needed.
- Monitor state and local implementation of the new state assessment system (STAAR), specifically the impact on students, instruction, teachers, and graduation or promotion rates. Review how districts are implementing the requirement that the end-of-course assessment count for 15 percent of the student's course grade. Recommend any changes to graduation or testing requirements that promote instructional rigor and support postsecondary readiness while appropriately limiting an overreliance on standardized testing.
- Evaluate the charter schools system in Texas. Examine success and failure stories in Texas and other states. Review the educational outcomes of students in charter schools compared to those in traditional schools. Identify any best practices and how those practices may be applied statewide. The study should include recommendations.
- Review and make recommendations on the effectiveness of Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs) and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Programs (JJAEPs) in reducing students' involvement in further disciplinary infractions. Determine the appropriate role of disciplinary alternative placements in promoting education achievement and how technology could be used to supplement education services. Consider appropriate placements in DAEPs or JJAEPs and consistent funding models for those programs. Consider options for counties without a JJAEP or inefficiently few placements in a JJAEP. Identify positive behavioral models that promote a learning environment for teachers to appropriately instruct while addressing any behavioral issues and enforcing student discipline.
- Review methods and best practices in Texas and other states to encourage more parental and community involvement in the education of Texas children.
- Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction and the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 82nd Legislature.

Conduct a review of the University Interscholastic League (UIL) and make recommendations as needed.

BACKGROUND

The University of Texas at Austin (UT) created the University Interscholastic League in 1910 to support public school debate and athletic teachers. Today, UIL provides educational extracurricular academic, athletic, and music contests for Texas schoolchildren. According to UIL, interscholastic competition encourages youngsters to enrich their education and expand their horizons.¹

The UIL continues to operate as part of UT Austin. As a result of this connection, the UIL is subject to all policies and state laws applicable UT Austin, including open records and required financial audits.

PARTICIPATION

Approximately 2.2 million students participate annually in UIL sponsored academic, music and athletic activities.²

UIL SPONSORED EVENTS

Academic Events

(includes A+ Academics)

Accounting, Art, Calculator Applications, Computer Applications, Computer Science, Creative Writing, Current Issues & Events, Cross- Examination Debate, Lincoln Douglas Debate, Dictionary Skills, Editorial Writing, Extemporaneous - Informative Speaking, Extemporaneous - Persuasive Speaking, Feature Writing, Headline Writing, Impromptu Speaking, Listening, Literary Criticism, Maps, Graphs & Charts, Mathematics, Modern Oratory, Music Memory, News Writing, Number Sense, One-Act Play, Oral Reading, Poetry Interpretation, Prose Interpretation, Ready Writing, Science, Social Studies, Spelling, Spelling & Vocabulary, Storytelling

Music Events

Band - Concert Performance, Band - Music Reading Evaluation, Choir - Concert Performance, Choir - Sight Reading, Marching Band, Medium Ensemble Performance, Solo-Small Ensemble Performance, Music Theory, Orchestra - Performance, Orchestra - Sight Reading

Athletic Events

Baseball, Football, Six-Man Football, Softball, Girls Volleyball, Boys and Girls: Basketball, Cross Country, Golf, Soccer, Swimming & Diving, Track & Field, Tennis, Team Tennis, Wrestling

GOVERNANCE

The University Interscholastic League is governed by member school districts. The Legislative Council is the rulemaking body for the UIL. The Council is comprised of twenty-eight public school administrators representing the diversity of Texas school districts. Rules adopted by the Legislative Council must receive approval from the Commissioner of Education before they are implemented.

The Commissioner of Education appoints the eleven-member State Executive Committee to settle disputes and investigate alleged rule violations.³

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The Interscholastic League Advisory Council (ILAC) was established in statute in 1990. The Council is charged with making recommendations to the governor, the legislature, the Legislative Council of the UIL and SBOE. The ILAC is tasked to study student eligibility, geographic distribution of UIL resources and gender equity.⁴

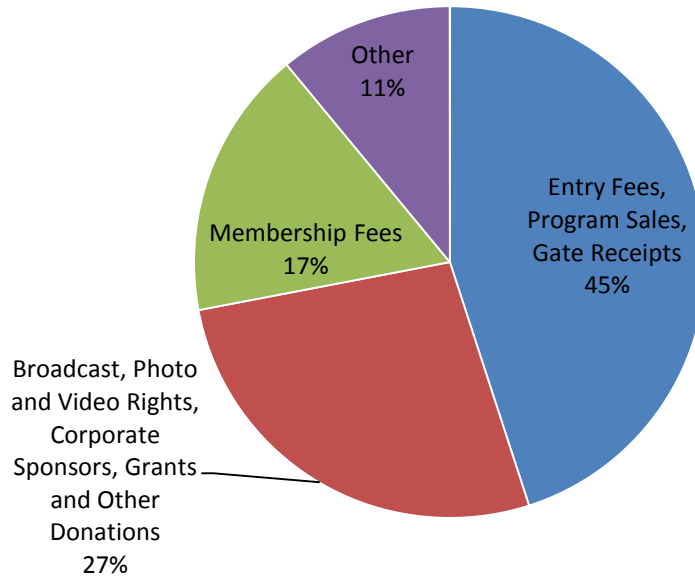
The Medical Advisory Committee was formed in 2001 to address student-athlete's health and safety issues. The Legislative Council and the Commissioner of Education must approve all recommendations from the Medical Advisory Committee before becoming policy.⁵

FINANCIAL

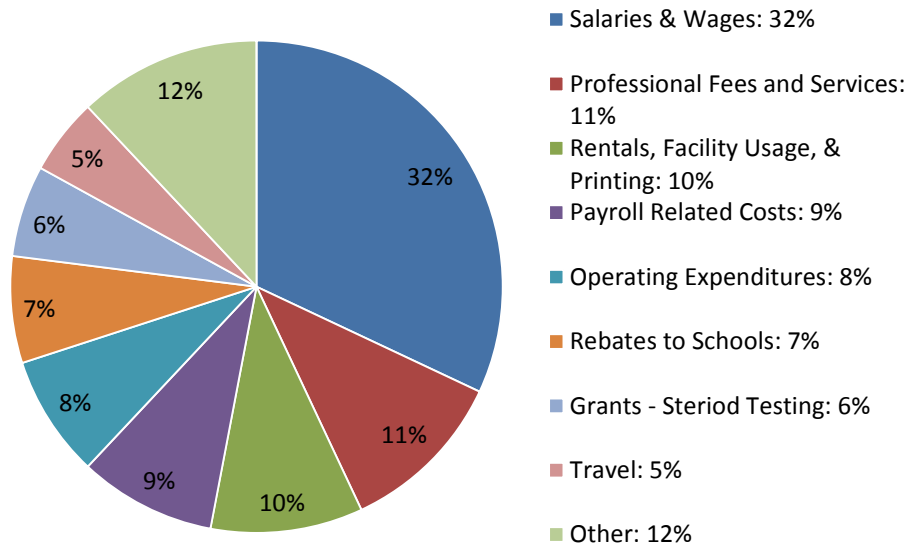
The primary sources of revenue for UIL include:

- Membership dues from member schools;
- The admission price for individual sports state competitions;
- An annually determined percentage of admission prices for state level contests;
- 15 percent of football and 16 percent of basketball post district gate receipts;
- Proceeds from radio and television broadcasting and telecasting contracts; and
- Corporate sponsorships.

2010-2011 Revenue
Total Revenue: \$10,982,272



2010-2011 Expenses
Total Expenses: \$10,835,235



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Update the role of the Interscholastic League Advisory Council to meet the future needs of UIL and students.
- Continue to encourage the Medical Advisory Committee to monitor health and safety issues of all student participants.
- Continue to monitor eligibility and classification issues related to any school choice expansion.

Monitor state and local implementation of the new state assessment system (STAAR), specifically the impact on students, instruction, teachers, and graduation or promotion rates. Review how districts are implementing the requirement that the end-of-course assessment count for 15 percent of the student's course grade. Recommend any changes to graduation or testing requirements that promote instructional rigor and support postsecondary readiness while appropriately limiting an overreliance on standardized testing.

BACKGROUND

Texas students were administered assessments under the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) system during the 2011-2012 school year for the first time. Senate Bill (SB) 1031 (80th Legislature, Regular Session) authorized the development of the new assessment system (STAAR) to replace the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). SB 1031 required that students in grades 3-8 be assessed annually in reading and mathematics. Additionally, SB 1031 required students to be administered a writing exam in grades 4 and 7, a science exam in grades 5 and 8 and a social studies exam in grade 8. Finally, the bill established end-of-course assessments for students earning high school credit in the foundation curriculum.

End-of-Course Exams

English Language Arts*	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
English I	Algebra I	Biology	World Geography
English II	Geometry	Chemistry	World History
English III	Algebra II	Physics	US History

**The ELA STAAR EOC is administered in two parts -- reading and writing.*

The amendments to the assessment system required changes to high school graduation requirements. SB 1031 required students to earn a cumulative score in each of the four foundation subject areas that averages to satisfactory performance. In order for a score to be included in the calculation for the cumulative score, the score must indicate a minimum level of performance as determined by the commissioner. The bill also requires that a student's performance on an end-of-course assessment account for 15 percent of the student's final course grade.

House Bill 3 (81st Legislature, Regular Session) additionally required students to perform satisfactorily on the English Language Arts (ELA) III and Algebra II exams to earn a diploma under the recommended plan.

During the 82nd Session, the House passed HB 500 to respond to the criticisms that the graduation requirements were confusing and overly relied on assessment to determine if a student is awarded a high school diploma. HB 500 would have required students to perform satisfactorily on English III, Algebra II, one science EOC, and one social studies EOC to receive a recommended high school diploma. The bill also eliminated the requirement that the end-of-

course assessments determine 15 percent of a student's course grade. House Bill 500 was never considered by the full Senate therefore did not become law. Even with the failure of HB 500, the public and members of the Texas House of Representatives remained interested in the assessment issue.

During the January 23, 2012 committee hearing many members of the public expressed concern regarding the implementation of the 15 percent requirement. Witnesses articulated concerns about using brand new end-of-course assessments to determine student grades that contribute to class rank and grade point average which determine college admissions.

Following the January public hearing, the Commissioner of Education gave school districts the authority to defer implementation of the 15 percent requirement for the 2011-2012 school year. Approximately 1150 districts and charters informed the commissioner that they would not be implementing the 15 percent requirement for the 2011-2012 school year.⁷

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The agency set two cut scores identifying the three performance categories listed below:

- Level III: Advanced Academic Performance
- Level II: Satisfactory Academic Performance
- Level I: Unsatisfactory Academic Performance

The commissioner decided to phase-in the final standards over four years. The commissioner established phase-in standards and a final recommended standard for the end-of-course assessments. The phase-in standard for Level II would apply to the first four school years of STAAR EOC with entering freshmen in 2015–2016 being the first cohort of students required to meet the recommended standard for Level II. The Level III standard will phase in for English III reading, English III writing and Algebra II over two-years.

RESULTS

The agency released statewide STAAR EOC results in June 2012. The results were not surprising, but definitely indicated a need for improvement. The results for ELA I Writing were particularly low with slightly less than half of the students tested not meeting Level II performance (see chart on next page).

**STAAR 2012 Statewide Results for EOC Levels II and III
First Administration**

English I Writing				English I Writing	
Phase-In 1 Std.		Final Recommended Std.		Final Recommended Std.	
Level II: Satisfactory		Level II: Satisfactory		Level III: Advanced	
#	%	#	%	#	%
182,681	55	115,434	34	10,468	3
<i>334,831 students tested</i>				<i>334,951 students tested</i>	

English I Reading				English I Reading	
Phase-In 1 Std.		Final Recommended Std.		Final Recommended Std.	
Level II: Satisfactory		Level II: Satisfactory		Level III: Advanced	
#	%	#	%	#	%
227,396	68	153,017	46	26,458	8
<i>334,831 students tested</i>				<i>334,831 students tested</i>	

Algebra I				Algebra I	
Phase-In 1 Std.		Final Recommended Std.		Final Recommended Std.	
Level II: Satisfactory		Level II: Satisfactory		Level III: Advanced	
#	%	#	%	#	%
275,858	83	129,839	39	55,839	17
<i>333,527 students tested</i>				<i>333,527 students tested</i>	

Biology				Biology	
Phase-In 1 Std.		Final Recommended Std.		Final Recommended Std.	
Level II: Satisfactory		Level II: Satisfactory		Level III: Advanced	
#	%	#	%	#	%
277,616	87	131,084	41	28,885	9
<i>319,022 students tested</i>				<i>319022 students tested</i>	

World Geography				World Geography	
Phase-In 1 Std.		Final Recommended Std.		Final Recommended Std.	
Level II: Satisfactory		Level II: Satisfactory		Level III: Advanced	
#	%	#	%	#	%
258,655	81	128757	40	43,180	13
<i>320,925 students tested</i>				<i>320,925 students tested</i>	

LOCAL IMPACT

The STAAR EOC results have created challenges for local school districts when advising students. Students not passing a STAAR EOC will have three opportunities each school year to retake the test. Students are not required to retake the class before retaking the test. Districts will be responsible for advising each student of the appropriate intervention (ex. retaking the course, summer school, etc.) to help the student perform satisfactorily on the assessment and accumulate enough points to meet the cumulative score requirement.

GRADE 3-8 STAAR

High school students were not the only students administered STAAR during spring 2012. Students in grades 3-8 were administered STAAR exams in reading and mathematics. Additionally, students are administered a writing exam in grades 4 and 7, a science exam in grades 5 and 8 and a social studies exam in grade 8.

The standards on the STAAR Grade 3-8 were not set until fall 2012 and parents and districts will not receive results until January 2013. Statewide results will also be available in January.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Repeal the requirement that the end-of-course assessments determine fifteen percent of a student's course grade.
- Establish clear graduation requirements for students.
- Continue to monitor the impact of STAAR implementation on graduation rates.
- Monitor the implementation of the new state accountability system to prevent an overreliance on standardized testing in evaluating school performance.

Evaluate the charter schools system in Texas. Examine success and failure stories in Texas and other states. Review the educational outcomes of students in charter schools compared to those in traditional schools. Identify any best practices and how those practices may be applied statewide. The study should include recommendations.

BACKGROUND

Senate Bill 1 (74th Legislature, Regular Session) authorized the State Board of Education to grant charters to higher education institutions, governmental entities, or non-profits to operate public charter schools. Charter schools are free public schools that provide a public school option to traditional districts for parents and students. Charter schools are subject to fewer state laws than traditional public schools (see chart on next page). However, charter schools are subject to the accreditation and accountability systems to ensure oversight on behalf of Texas taxpayers who support these schools.

The purpose of charter schools, as specified by Texas Education Code Chapter 12, are to: (1) improve student learning; (2) increase the choice of learning opportunities within the public school system; (3) create professional opportunities that will attract new teachers to the public school system; (4) establish a new form of accountability for public schools; and (5) encourage different and innovative learning methods.

The State Board of Education approved 20 first generation charter schools in 1996. Since then the charter movement has grown from 20 charters to 205 active open-enrollment charters operating on 575 campuses as of November 2012. State law currently limits the number of open-enrollment charter schools to 215. In 2011, Texas charter schools served approximately 155,000 students, which is about 3% of Texas public school enrollment.⁹ Over 101,000 students are on waiting lists for charter schools, even though Texas added 43 charter campuses and 30,000 seats in 2012-2013.¹⁰

Areas of Autonomy Afforded to Open-Enrollment Charter Schools

- **Student/teacher ratio and class size**
 - *Is outlined in charter application which is considered part of the contract for charter; school must follow what was set forth in the application or have an amendment request approved by the commissioner of education*
- **Certification requirements**
 - *Teacher certification not required unless stated in charter application that certification is required*
 - *Must be highly qualified in core academic areas per NCLB*
 - *Degreed*
 - *Demonstrating subject matter competency*
 - *State requirement for charter school teachers is high school diploma*
 - *Certification is required for special education and bilingual/ESL*
 - *No certification requirements for administrators other than the requirements outlined in charter application; some school officer training required*
- **Governance as outlined for traditional districts in TEC, Chapter 11, Subchapter C**
 - *Most open-enrollment charters are operated by nonprofit entities with boards that are not elected; therefore, nonprofit entity bylaws determine board composition, terms of office, and ways in which board members are selected and removed from office*
 - *TEC, §12.1054(a)(2) allows an exemption to charters rated acceptable or higher for two of the last three years so that employees may serve on the charter holder board provided that the employees do not constitute a quorum*
 - *TEC, §12.1055(b) allows an exemption to nepotism restrictions for charters rated acceptable or higher for two of the last three years*
- **Educator issues – TEC, Chapter 21**
 - *Does not apply to open-enrollment charters except for §21.006, the requirement to report an educator's misconduct*
- **Student discipline**
 - *TEC, Chapter 37 does not apply to open-enrollment charters except for §37.0021 – Use of Confinement, Restraint, Seclusion, and Time-Out, §37.015 – Reports to Local Law Enforcement; Liability, and §37.022 – Notice of Disciplinary Action*
- **School calendar**
- **Admissions policies** *(must be officially documented in charter documents)*
 - *State law allows for lottery or first come, first served (TEC §12.117)*
 - *May provide for the exclusion of a student with a documented history of a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or discipline problems listed under TEC, Chapter 37, Subchapter A (TEC §12.11(a)(6)(A))*
 - *May require audition for charter schools specializing in performing arts (TEC §12.1171)*

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STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Texas students were administered assessments under the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) system during the 2011-2012 school year for the first time. The performance gap between charter students and non-charter students varied between subjects.

On the Algebra I EOC, 75% students in charters performed satisfactorily at the phase-in standard while 82% of students in traditional ISDs achieved that level. The difference was smaller for English I Reading. Sixty-four percent of charter students performed at the phase-in standard for satisfactory performance, while 68% of non-charter students performed at that level.¹²

ACCOUNTABILITY AND INTERVENTIONS

State and federal laws subject charter schools to agency accountability, monitoring, and intervention activities, including the state’s systems of accountability and accreditation in the same manner that they are applied to traditional school districts. The primary components that are included within the state’s system of oversight are:

- Texas Accountability Rating System
- Federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)
- Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) and Financial Audits
- Performance-Based Monitoring (PBM)
- Accreditation Status Assignment
- Interventions and Sanctions.¹³

The Texas accountability system is in transition as a result of a new student assessment system and the accountability changes authorized by House Bill 3 (81st Legislature, Regular Session). The last accountability ratings issued to districts and charters were in August 2011.

In August 2011, approximately 30% of charter schools earned one of the two highest ratings -- Exemplary and Recognized in 2011. Thirty-five charter schools representing 17.6% of charter schools received an Academically Unacceptable rating. Roughly 50% of school districts and charter schools were rated Academically Acceptable.¹⁴

District Ratings

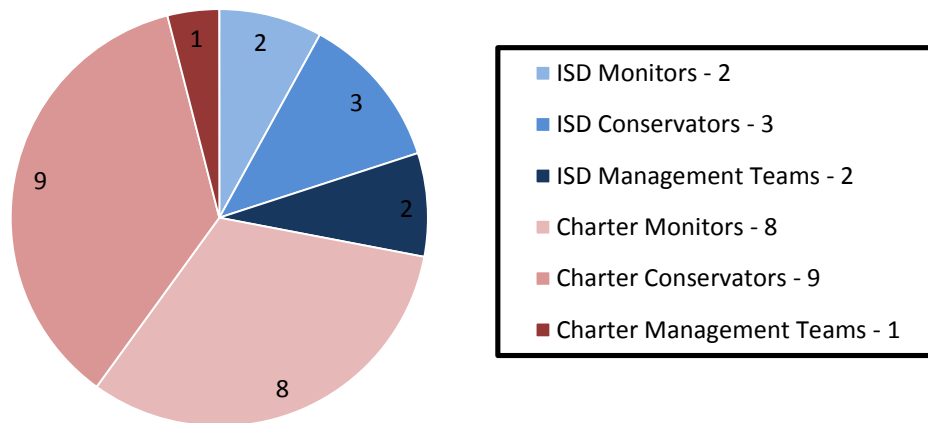
Accountability Rating	2011	
	Count	Percent
Exemplary	45	4.4%
Recognized	381	37%
Academically Acceptable	553	53.7%
Academically Unacceptable	50	4.9%
Not Rated: Other	0	0%
Total	1029	100%

Charter Ratings

Accountability Rating	2011	
	Count	Percent
Exemplary	17	8.5%
Recognized	45	22.6%
Academically Acceptable	100	50.3%
<i>Standard Procedures</i>	54	27.1%
<i>AEA Procedures</i>	46	23.1%
Academically Unacceptable	35	17.6%
<i>Standard Procedure</i>	23	11.6%
<i>AEA Procedures</i>	12	6%
Not Rated: Other	2	1%
Total	199	100%

As of November 2012, the agency was intervening in 18 charters, 9% of charter schools. TEA had eight Monitors, nine Conservators and one management team working to correct issues identified in the accountability and monitoring processes established in state and federal law. By comparison, the agency was intervening with seven independent school districts, less than 1% of school districts.

TEA Interventions Districts and Charter



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Only expand charters at a rate that the agency can effectively ensure quality.
- Streamline procedures for closing low-performing charters to allow growth of quality charter schools.

Review and make recommendations on the effectiveness of Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs) and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Programs (JJAEPs) in reducing students' involvement in further disciplinary infractions. Determine the appropriate role of disciplinary alternative placements in promoting education achievement and how technology could be used to supplement education services. Consider appropriate placements in DAEPs or JJAEPs and consistent funding models for those programs. Consider options for counties without a JJAEP or inefficiently few placements in a JJAEP. Identify positive behavioral models that promote a learning environment for teachers to appropriately instruct while addressing any behavioral issues and enforcing student discipline.

BACKGROUND

SB 1 (74th Legislature, Regular Session) created the current disciplinary alternative education programs (DAEP). The legislation required every school district to create a DAEP to serve students removed from their regular classroom. The Legislature created the DAEPs to provide an option for students that would minimally disrupt their educational progress.

PLACEMENT AND OUTCOMES

During an April 2012 hearing, the committee was presented an overview of a statewide study by the Council of State Governments Justice Center, in partnership with the Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M University, of nearly 1 million Texas public secondary school students, followed for at least six years.¹⁵ The study looked at data pertaining to all seventh graders in 2000, 2001, and 2002. Tony Fabelo who worked on the study shared the major findings of the Breaking Schools' Rules study.

Key placement findings presented to the committee included:

- *Majority of students are suspended or expelled between 7th and 12th grades.*
- *Just three percent of suspensions/expulsions are the result of misconduct for which the state mandates removal of the student from the classroom.*
- *African-American students and students with particular educational disabilities especially likely to experience discretionary violations.¹⁶*

Students involved in the formal school discipline system often have negative academic outcomes. According to the testimony, the Breaking Schools' Rules study identified several outcomes of student involvement in the school discipline system including:

- *Suspension/expulsion increases the likelihood of student repeating a grade, dropping out, or not graduating.*

-
- *Discipline actions increase the likelihood of juvenile justice involvement, particularly for those repeatedly disciplined.*¹⁷

Of the 928,940 students in the study group, a majority (60%) of students had disciplinary actions. The report indicates that 31% of students with disciplinary actions are retained compared to 5% of students with no disciplinary actions. Ten percent of students with disciplinary actions dropped out of school while only two percent of students with no disciplinary actions dropped out of school. Of the students in the study group with disciplinary actions, 23% had contact with the Juvenile Justice System compared to only 2% of students with no disciplinary actions.¹⁸

RECENT PEIMS DATA

The Texas Education Agency annually collects data on disciplinary placements in Texas. The most recent data provides some reasons to be optimistic. Over a five year period from school year 2006-07 to 2010-11, disciplinary placements have been decreasing even while student enrollment increased. In the 2006-07 school year, 105,093 students were removed to a DAEP, while 86,863 students were removed in 2010-11 representing 1.71% of the student population. Discretionary expulsions have also been decreasing. In the 2006-07 school year, 7260 students were expelled for a discretionary reason, but in the 2010-11 school year 4312 were expelled for discretionary reasons.¹⁹

DISTRICT USE OF INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Many districts report using instructional technology to bridge the gap between the regular classroom and the disciplinary alternative education program. Mesquite ISD invested in technology and training to support student learning in the DAEP.²⁰ Southside Independent School District recently implemented a virtual education program for its DAEP students. The online environment allows students at different levels in different classes to continue their education. Teachers and students have reported satisfaction with online learning, and the district is looking to expand the program.²¹

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to monitor the trends of disciplinary placements.
- Encourage districts to use the flexibility of the Instructional Materials Allotment to provide technology and instructional materials to best meet the academic needs of students in alternative education settings.

Review methods and best practices in Texas and other states to encourage more parental and community involvement in the education of Texas children.

BACKGROUND

There is a common understanding that students, parents, educators and community members working together can improve student achievement.

According to a research review *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Achievement*, Henderson and Mapp conclude "that students with involved parents, no matter what their income or background, were more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs.
- Be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits.
- Attend school regularly.
- Have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school.
- Graduate and go on to postsecondary education."

The review asserts focusing on supporting parental involvement results in greater academic gains for students.²²

TEXAS MODELS

At the June 19, 2012 public hearing the committee heard about programs focusing on parental and community involvement. East Dallas Community Schools engage parents in their children's educational journey to improve academic outcomes for its students. E3 Alliance works to engage the larger community to align goals and resources to improve education. Each program is described below.

East Dallas Community Schools

The committee heard testimony from Terry N. Ford, Executive Director of East Dallas Community Schools (EDCS). Ms. Ford stressed the importance of early parental involvement to improve student achievement. EDCS also works with young kids and new parents to focus on learning.²³

East Dallas Community Schools serve children from birth through third grade. To meet the needs of their children the school offers several programs:

- **Accredited Montessori Primary and Elementary Classes** to provide early interventions for young children designed to encourage children to take initiative and work independently.

-
- **Parents as Teachers Program** that includes personal visits with a trained parent educator, child health screenings, group meetings to provide parenting and child development education, and a resource network to connect parents with community resources.
 - **After- and Before-school Care (ABC) Program** provides stimulating and affordable care.
 - **Pregnancy to Three (P-3) Program** provides a systematic approach to addressing the needs of low-income, inner-city children from birth to age three by engaging parents.
 - **Reading Program** focuses on helping all students read at or above grade level.
 - **Playtime** helps children manage emotional and behavior problems.
 - **Summer School Program** reinforces previously taught information.²⁴

One of the most impressive outcomes for EDCS is that "in a neighborhood where less than half of entering freshmen graduate from high school, 95% of EDCS graduates earn their diplomas, with 89% of those graduates attending college."²⁵

E3 Alliance

The committee heard testimony from Susan Dawson, President & Executive Director, E3 Alliance. Ms. Dawson focused on the importance of community engagement to support and improve public education in a central Texas. E3 Alliance does not provide direct services, but instead tries to be a catalyst for change. E3 Alliance's model for change consists of three parts:

- Making available accessible, understandable and objective data;
- Engaging the community to build collective support for public education; and
- Systemically aligning resources based on data.²⁶

The E3 Alliance created the Blueprint for Educational Change and the annual Central Texas Education Profile. The Blueprint for Educational Change is Central Texas' strategic plan to build the most successful educational pipeline in the country. It details the top strategic actions that must be accomplished by 2015:

- All children enter kindergarten school ready;
- Eliminate the achievement gap while improving overall student performance;
- All students graduate high school, college and career ready;
- Central Texas as a community prepares children to succeed in life.²⁷

RECOMMENDATION

- Encourage schools to partner with parents and community members to improve student performance.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ University Interscholastic League website: <http://www.uiltexas.org/about>
- ² University Interscholastic League. Brochure: *Who is the UIL?*
- ³ University Interscholastic League. Brochure: *Who is the UIL?*
- ⁴ Texas Education Code §33.084.
- ⁵ University Interscholastic League website: <http://www.uiltexas.org>
- ⁶ University Interscholastic League. Annual Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2011-2012, October 2012.
- ⁷ Texas Education Agency website: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=2147505601>
- ⁸ Texas Education Agency. (August 2012). PowerPoint presentation: *Overview of STAAR, Legislative Briefing*.
- ⁹ Texas Education Agency. Snapshot 2011.
- ¹⁰ Texas Charter School Association Survey, 2012.
- ¹¹ Texas Education Agency. Written Testimony. House Committee on Public Education. February 17, 2012.
- ¹² Texas Education Agency. Division of Student Assessment.
- ¹³ Texas Education Agency. Written Testimony. House Committee on Public Education. February 17, 2012.
- ¹⁴ Texas Education Agency website: <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/account/2011/statesummary.html>
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- ¹⁶ Tony Fabelo, Ph.D., Director of Research, Council of State Governments, Justice Center. Written Testimony. House Committee on Public Education Interim Hearing, April 30, 2012.
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