

Texas Association of School Boards

August 30, 2021

The Honorable Harold V. Dutton, Jr.
House Committee on Public Education
PO Box 12068
Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

Re: Support for House Bill 233

Dear Chairman Dutton and Members of the House Committee on Public Education:

The membership of the Texas Association of Community Schools (TACS), Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA), Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) and Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA) are submitting this written testimony in support of Representative Dan Huberty's House Bill 233 as filed.

We appreciate the following provisions of the bill:

Requiring accelerated instruction only for students in grades 3-8 who fail to perform satisfactorily on a STAAR reading or mathematics exam.

- Failure on STAAR science or social studies exams is likely due to deficits in reading comprehension, thus providing targeted reading instruction will help students improve achievement in other subject areas.
- The STAAR science and social studies tests are administered only once during grades 3-8 and are not state assessed again until the US History and Biology end-of-course exams. It is unclear what the focus of accelerated instruction should be for a student who fails the grade 5 science or grade 8 social studies exams due to the gaps in time between test administrations and the different TEKS assessed in high school.

Requiring supplemental instruction be provided individually or in a group of no more than 10 students, unless the parent or guardian authorizes a larger group.

- Even with COVID relief funding, the 3:1 ratio currently in statute is not feasible for many districts. The second wave of the pandemic has led to a shortage of teachers in general, including substitute teachers, with district leadership struggling to staff classrooms. In addition, since the school year began many teachers must quarantine or have COVID themselves compounding the shortage.

Requiring a superintendent or designee to meet with a student's accelerated learning committee after a student fails to perform satisfactorily on a test in the same subject area on two subsequent consecutive attempts.

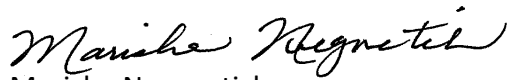
- This change allows more time to provide targeted instruction for a student struggling in a particular subject area.

Allowing the commissioner to waive accelerated learning committees and accelerated instruction requirements for one year.

- This provision acknowledges the hard work of district staff and leadership with the improvement of student achievement and will allow more local decision-making as to how and when accelerated or supplemental instruction is best provided.

The members of our organizations respectfully urge you to vote HB 233 out of committee today.

Sincerely,



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Assistant Director
Texas Association of School Boards



Casey McCreary
Associate Executive Director
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