



Texas Association of School Boards  
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*Serving Texas Schools Since 1949*

March 26, 2009

Dear Senator Shapiro and members of the Committee:

I'm Tami Keeling, a school board trustee from Victoria. On behalf of my school district and the Texas Association of School Boards, I am testifying in **support of SB 1313**.

Thank you for hearing the concerns of the education and business communities and revisiting the laws impacting CTE courses offered by Texas school districts. SB 1313 is a positive response to many of our concerns and there are many provisions in this bill that we appreciate. For example:

**School districts have been struggling to find ways to allow students to meet the 4x4 requirements and still have enough time in their schedules for CTE courses and internships.** Several provisions in SB 1313 would help us address this problem:

- (1) The bill authorizes state grants to incentivize universities, businesses and school districts to partner and develop innovative CTE courses that simultaneously:
  - (a) Fulfill advanced 4x4 math or science credits;
  - (b) Allow students to earn college credit; and
  - (c) Prepare students for employment in high-demand occupations.
- (2) SB 1313 requires TEA to include model CTE curricula in its "Best Practices Clearinghouse." This would allow districts to leverage each other's good work to positively impact student success. It would also maximize the effectiveness of the state's CTE grants by giving all districts access to model CTE courses that are developed through those grant-funded partnerships I just spoke about.
- (3) In my district, we offered two new CTE courses this school year: a "Process Technician" course and a "Process Technician Safety" course. These courses were developed through a partnership between the district,

local industry, and the community college. In the near future, students who are interested in this field can graduate from high school with only nine hours short of an associate's degree in Process Technology. The remaining nine hours are offered at our local community college. Process Technicians earn roughly \$40.00 an hour starting, plus benefits. These are "gold collar" jobs. These types CTE courses provide a "triple win" - a win for education, a win for the business community and a win for the student. We support SB 1313, because we want to see more CTE "triple wins" in Texas.

**Another challenge school districts have in offering CTE courses is the additional cost involved.** For example, my district estimates that it costs an average of 15% more to offer a CTE course than to offer a regular academic course. SB 1313 provides a funding allotment to help districts cover the additional costs of certain CTE courses. Thank you for that additional funding.

In closing, I would like to thank you for SB 1313. For the reasons I have mentioned and as a result of several other provisions, this legislation will help school boards make rigorous and relevant CTE courses more easily accessible to our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lanni Keulig". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.