

TESTIMONY ON SB 778 : SPECIAL EDUCATOR ON CAMPUS AND DISTRICT
PLANNING COMMITTEE

Good morning, and thank you for the opportunity to address the committee on SB 778. I am Lynse Pawelek representing a small shared service arrangement in south Texas with member districts in Pleasanton, Poteet, Jourdanton, Charlotte , and McMullen county and also representing TCASE. Last session SB 2044 passed the Senate and House Public Education committees and this committee without opposition and we are here to encourage your support once again.

Several key points for your consideration:

- Success for all students in Texas is a high priority and schools have made great gains in recent years to close the learning gap between groups of students resulting in improvement in student achievement
- As inclusion models for instruction have increased the presence of a special education teacher on campus and district level committees is imperative
- Special educators are key stakeholders with expertise in accommodating and modifying for students with academic, emotional and physical challenges
- Input and perspectives from the special education representatives will aid the process and campus and district planning.
- Continue to support the local flexibility with the language of "if practicable" for small campuses or districts without direct representation or with itinerant or contracted personnel
- Special educators have additional training and skill sets to provide assistance on these committees and with 65% of students with disabilities receiving instruction in general Ed classrooms in our state, special educators are critical members for campus and district planning

Thank you again for the opportunity to address the committee and I ask that you support this legislation gains this session.

Lynse Pawelek
Atascosa -McMullen Cooperative
Pleasanton, Texas
(830) 569-1355
lpawelek@pisd.us