



TEXAS ASSOCIATION FOR THE
GIFTED & TALENTED

December 12, 2018

The Honorable Justice Scott Brister
Commission Chair
Texas Commission on Public School Finance

Re: Proposed Gifted Education Recommendation

Dear Commission Members,

The Texas Association for the Gifted & Talented (TAGT) respectfully submits the following comments regarding the proposed school finance recommendations. We understand the recommendations reflect a comprehensive effort to redesign the entirety of our state's funding system to reflect the needs of the 21st century. However, the recommendation to eliminate the G/T allotment is misguided.

G/T Recommendation Flawed

The proposed recommendation to reallocate the Gifted and Talented Allotment Funds marginalizes the importance of this funding. With the state under scrutiny from the U.S. Department of Education for failing to serve students identified for special education services, this recommendation positions the state to fail to serve gifted students.

Though, as the Commission notes, there is a statutory requirement to provide G/T services regardless of how they are funded, the recommended reallocation would undermine G/T programming in Texas. Without the G/T allotment, this statutory requirement becomes unfunded and, with little accountability required from the state in fulfilling the requirements for G/T services (outside of current financial audits), this becomes an unfunded, less regulated requirement

As a result, parents will have to advocate at the local level to urge their school board to adopt a policy on funding gifted education. This is burdensome and a high threshold for parents.

Requiring TEA to report annually to the legislature on G/T identification, as recommended by the report, does not ensure funding is being spent on gifted education, nor does it ensure that the number of students served is

maintained. This proposal will put Texas back in the spotlight for leaving another school population vulnerable.

G/T Allotment Exists for a Reason

This school finance plan would have us believe that schools will still serve gifted students. That may be true, but parents will have to advocate for their children at every school and at every grade level. Yet, the whole reason the Texas Legislature established the gifted allotment was because school districts were not identifying gifted students appropriately.

Don't Stop with the G/T Allotment

For the sake of increasing the Basic Allotment, the Commission's recommendations eliminates the gifted allotment along with many others. If that is the case, why not eliminate all the other student-centered allotments and leave it in the hands of schools to do the right thing and serve students as they see fit?

Thank you for providing this opportunity to submit these comments.

Respectfully submitted,



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