

MINUTES

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Monday, December 7, 2015

10:00 AM

Capitol Extension, Room E1.028

Pursuant to a notice posted in accordance with Senate Rule 11.10 and 11.18, a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Education was held on Monday, December 7, 2015, in the Capitol Extension, Room E1.028, at Austin, Texas.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Larry Taylor, Chair
Senator Paul Bettencourt
Senator Sylvia Garcia
Senator Don Huffines
Senator Lois Kolkhorst
Senator José Rodríguez
Senator Kel Seliger
Senator Royce West

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr., Vice Chair
Senator Donna Campbell
Senator Van Taylor

The chair called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM. There being a quorum present, the following business was transacted:

The Chair laid out the following interim charge: Study the approval, expansion, and revocation of public charter schools in Texas, including the implementation of SB 2 (83R) and other legislation. In particular, examine the issues surrounding the disposition of state property when charters are revoked, non-renewed, or cease to operate. Make recommendations regarding policies to ensure an efficient and effective transfer and disposal of state property that preserves state interest while ensuring that certain investment capital and the bond market supporting charter construction remains robust. In addition, make recommendations if needed to clarify policies regarding expansion of existing high-quality charter schools in Texas. Additionally, examine facility funding for charter schools in other states and make recommendations on facility funding assistance for charter schools in Texas.

The following persons provided invited testimony (see attached witness list).

The Chair laid out the following interim charge: Study the recent rise of inappropriate teacher-student relationships, the impact of social media interaction between teachers and students, and examine the current efforts by the Texas Education Agency, schools, law enforcement, and the courts to investigate and prosecute any educator engaged in inappropriate relationships.

Determine what recommendations, if any, are needed to improve student safety, including increasing agency staff, adjusting penalties, and strengthening efforts to sanction educators' certificates for misconduct. Study and address the issue of prevention through training and education of school employees.

The following persons provided invited testimony (see attached witness list).

Senator West assumed the chair.

Senator Larry Taylor resumed the chair.

The Chair called the following persons to provide public testimony (see attached witness list).

Senator Huffines assumed the chair.

Senator Larry Taylor resumed the chair.

With there being no further business to come before the committee, Larry Taylor moved that the committee stand recessed subject to the call of the Chair.

Senator Larry Taylor, Chair

Nicole Sunstrum, Clerk