



House of Representatives  
Public Education Committee

RE: Interim Charge Interim Charge 1[F]

I am writing on behalf of the Texas Association of School Psychologists and licensed specialists in school psychology (LSSPs) practicing across the state. The Texas Association of School Psychologists (TASP) supports a comprehensive approach to school safety, which includes increasing both the psychological and physical safety of students in schools. Effective school safety requires a comprehensive approach that balances physical and psychological safety. This is critical. Overly restrictive measures can make students feel less safe and undermine the learning environment. Districts must provide comprehensive school mental and behavioral health services. Funds allocated under this bill include costs associated with providing mental health personnel and support, as well as providing behavioral health services. School psychologists (i.e., licensed specialists in school psychology [LSSPs]) are specially trained to provide mental and behavioral health services in schools. School psychologists support the implementation of evidence-based efforts to prevent school violence, improve school safety, and foster safe and supportive learning environments. School psychologists provide counseling to individual students and groups of students, provide mental health first aid, and provide professional development related to student mental and behavioral health to school staff. School psychologists implement suicide and violence prevention policies and practices, including suicide risk and threat assessment. It is recommended that there be 1 school psychologist for every 500 students; however, the Texas ratio is 1 school psychologist for every 2,752 students. This shortage results in limited access to mental health services for students, and an inability to provide preventative and early intervention services. The review should include information regarding whether or not funds were used to employ new school psychology positions. The review should ensure districts are not overly funding physical safety measures at the expense of psychological safety measures.

Thank you,

Texas Association of School Psychologists (TASP)