



House of Representatives
Public Education Committee

RE: Interim Charge 3

I am writing on behalf of the Texas Association of School Psychologists and licensed specialists in school psychology (LSSPs) practicing across the state. Essential Corrective Action 2.c. will be greatly impacted by COVID-19 school closures. Many evaluations were suspended during the stay home order. However, students continued virtual learning, and these days counted against evaluation timelines. There were students awaiting consent for special education services in the spring. Consent for these students is being signed by parents this school year. Therefore, data obtained regarding the total number of requests made in which the reason for request indicates a claim that the child should have been referred for an initial evaluation prior to the 2020-2021 school year will be impacted. This must be taken into consideration when monitoring the progress of the TEA's compliance.

Due to the pandemic, there are students from the spring that are currently being evaluated this fall. There are also the additional fall referrals for special education testing. The Committee may want to consider providing TEA with resources so they may dedicate technical assistance and resources to ensure the availability of bilingual evaluators, educational diagnosticians, and school psychologists in the short-term, like they did in 2018. Additionally, due to the uncertainty of the pandemic, schools may be forced to close due to stay home orders, which will cause further delays and a backlog of evaluations. Availability of evaluations staff members will be critical to ensuring all students are evaluated in a timely manner, and provided the necessary supports and services.

Thank you,

Texas Association of School Psychologists (TASP)