

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Public Education  
For HB 2162

Compiled on: Wednesday, March 22, 2023 12:06 AM

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Hearing Date: March 21, 2023 8:00 AM

Tracy Shannon

MassResistance/ and self

Kingwood, TX

I do not support this bill because it will not allow for the removal of sexually inappropriate books in public schools where minors have access to the libraries and can peruse books and check them out without their parents' oversight. A parent may have access to see what titles were checked out through an online portal, but they have no idea what the content of that book is. The reviews provided in the Follett and Destiny systems are provided by American Library Association-approved gatekeepers who don't believe in safeguarding children from harmful pornographic material. Parents have a reasonable expectation that their children will not encounter sexually graphic or explicit content in the course of a school day. This bill would prohibit removing these books. Getting books considered and marked as mature content is a very arduous process and it doesn't stop librarians from promoting these books as "banned books" and marketing them to the children during "banned books weeks". Children deserve safeguarding. Children are required to report to schools and most parents cannot afford a private school education. Therefore, they have no choice but to send them to schools that are sexually indoctrinating children and scandalizing them with sexually explicit/graphic books, LGBTQ propaganda, and racial ideology. This bill would also prevent reconsideration of a book for 10 years. This is ridiculous and would protect harmful materials from being removed while also preventing good materials from being reconsidered for inclusion in the collection. Sometimes the review committees get it wrong.

As a parent that has challenged many books in my district, I can testify to the fact that the review process is arduous and biased at every step of the process in favor of sexualizing children. Please reject this poisonous bill.

Trenace Dorsey-Hollins  
Parent Shield Fort Worth  
Fort Worth, TX  
March 21, 2023

To: House Public Education Committee  
Re: Written Testimony Submitted FOR House Bill 2162

Honorable Chairman Buckley and Members of the House Public Education Committee,

My name is Trenace Dorsey-Hollins, a proud parent of two public school students and the leader of Parent Shield Fort Worth. Parent Shield Fort Worth is a grassroots movement of parents, guardians, caretakers, and community members who strongly believe every child should receive a high-quality education that develops their potential and prepares them to be successful adults. Like all of Texas, Fort Worth continues to grow and attract more people. In order to build the foundations for future prosperity and quality of life, early literacy must be an issue that we address head on.

Unfortunately, in the city of Fort Worth, over 64% of our children are unable to read on grade level and only 13% of our high school students score high enough on the SAT or ACT to be considered college, career or military ready. That means that out of every ten 3rd grade students, only three are meeting basic reading standards. This infuriates me and the hundreds of parents who are a part of Parent Shield Fort Worth. Something must be done differently to ensure our babies can read and, more importantly, have the opportunity to succeed in life.

Parent Shield Fort Worth supports House Bill 2162 because it simply does what we have known for decades works when it comes to early literacy. We should no longer wait until 3rd grade to intervene when we can equip our educators sooner with the data and resources, they need to use evidence-based reading strategies and empower parents with accurate information about how their children are doing and the ability to act with their choice of intervention.

On behalf of Parent Shield Fort Worth, I urge you to vote for HB 2162 because it:

- ? Removes outdated “three-cueing” and “balanced literacy” approaches from teacher preparation programs
- ? Reinforces the “science of reading” as a proven method and provides public transparency to know how well schools are implementing it
- ? Offers science-based instruments capable of providing diagnostic information that teachers can use to deliver targeted intervention
- ? Empowers parents with reliable information about their child’s reading progress and provides resources for them to receive additional tutoring and intervention services
- ? Focuses on early intervention in grades K-3, allowing educators and parents to work together to course correct sooner rather than later

If passed, this bill would bring the urgent focus needed for educators, families, and communities to tackle the issue of early literacy. We applaud Representative Dutton for introducing this piece of legislation and urge you to support HB 2162 for our babies and their futures. A literate Texas is a great Texas.

Sincerely,

Trenace Dorsey-Hollins  
Founder, Parent Shield Fort Worth

Lisa Wan  
Texans for the Right to READ  
Fort Worth, TX

I support Texas school librarians who are highly trained professional educators that select books based on local policies, approved by our school board. I trust school librarians, not out-of-state vendors, to determine if content in books is appropriate. And parents, not the state, are responsible for determining what their children read.

Casey McCreary, Dr.

TX Association of School Administrators, TX Association of School Boards, Raise Your Hand TX, TX Association of Community Schools, TX Elem. Principals & Supervisors Assoc.

Austin, TX

Dear Chairman Buckley & Committee Members:

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 2162. While our organizations appreciate Rep. Dutton's efforts to support the reading skills of our youngest students, the Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA), the Texas Association of Schools Boards (TASB), the Texas Association of Community Schools (TACS), the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA) and Raise Your Hand Texas (RYHT) must respectfully offer this written testimony in opposition to the bill. Our rationale is as follows:

HB 2162 mandates a district contract with & pay a private, third party tutoring service with taxpayer dollars without any accompanying eligibility requirements for the outside entity or accountability measures.

-Our organizations have grave concerns with this provision. TX teachers have been through the state's rigorous reading academy training and earned certifications for the Science of Teaching Reading (STR) by passing the state-developed exam. Outside entities whose tutors have not demonstrated proficiency through these scrupulous training requirements or demonstrated achievement on the STR exam do not have the same high-level qualifications that TX K-3 teachers and principals have through these state programs. The Legislature requires reading academy training in statute, the TEA has designed the content and implementation, and the SBEC has approved the STR examinations. Entrusting our youngest children with personnel from outside entities who don't have the same qualifications as the teachers in our public schools is counter to all state expectations regarding reading skills. The lack of any accountability provisions after a district contracts with an outside entity is equally worrisome.

High-stakes testing for students in K-2.

-TX early reading instruments were established as progress monitoring tools, to inform instruction by alerting a teacher to a student's areas of strength and weakness in reading skills. The instruments are not designed for the same purpose as STAAR and to use a student's performance on these diagnostic tools as a rationale for contracting with a third party outside of the public school system leads to a high-stake environment which is not the intended use of early reading instruments.

HB 2162 dictates methodology.

-The Legislature has long recognized that the state should not dictate methodology used by a teacher or the time spent by a teacher or a student on a particular task or subject. For example, TEC §28.002(i) restricts the SBOE from adopting rules that designate methodology or time. By forbidding Texas teachers from using a particular methodology a precedent is set that could be to the disadvantage of students.

Thank you for considering our input on HB 2162.

Respectfully,

Dr. Casey McCreary, TASA

Whitney Broughton, TASB

Dr. Crystal Dockery, TACS

Mark Terry, TEPSA

Bob Popinski, RYHT

Susan Burek

Self: I am a Parent and an advocate for people with disabilities

Austin, TX

Thank you for allowing me to testify regarding HB 2162. My name is Sue Burek and I live in Austin, Texas. I'm a parent, an advocate for people with disabilities, and a member of several advocacy organizations that serve families with children with disabilities, including Texas Parent to Parent, Protect Texas Fragile Kids, and Loving Hearts for All.

I am testifying IN SUPPORT OF HB 2162, which instructs school districts to administer reading instruments to diagnose student reading development and comprehension and identify students at risk for dyslexia or other reading difficulties, and to provide phonics-based reading intervention programs to students to students who have reading deficiencies. The reading intervention programs may not include "three-cueing" methods.

Please vote to APPROVE HB 2162. Thank you very much for your consideration of my request.

Elizabeth Wilson

myself- mom of children with multiple learning differences/ dyslexias

DALLAS, TX

This is a GREAT bill! The three-cueing approach to reading is counterproductive because it reinforces the habits of poor readers and does not give them the systematic and explicit teaching necessary for them to be able to make the connection between the spoken and the printed word. It is not based on the science of reading.

That said, the language in this bill throws kids into perpetual RTI and never contemplates a disability such as dyslexia. By not contemplating a disability districts would be violating IDEA. IDEA includes the Child Find mandate. Child Find requires all school districts to identify, locate and evaluate all children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities. This obligation to identify all children who may need special education services exists even if the school is not providing special education services to the child. This includes all children who are suspected of having a disability, including children who receive passing grades and are "advancing from grade to grade." (34 CFR 300.111(c)) The law does not require children to be "labeled" or classified by their disability. (20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(3)(B); 34 CFR 300.111(d)).

Trista Bishop-Watt  
Good Reason Houston  
Houston, TX

Early literacy is fundamental to learning in virtually every subject area in K-12 education. Good Reason Houston supports the proposed changes offered by HB 2162, specifically, the emphasis on phonics-based instruction, effective assessment, and early interventions for students who need support.

HB 2162 would require the use of a reading assessment for grades K-3 using an instrument approved by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Currently, use of these instruments is discretionary and while most school districts do use some form of early literacy assessment, quality varies, making data comparisons difficult.

Under HB 2162, early literacy assessments must be valid and reliable, provide progress monitoring, offer diagnostic tools for teachers, and screen for dyslexia. These criteria create a more robust system for supporting early literacy and importantly the results of these assessments also allow for targeted support and interventions.

Early intervention when students are falling behind in reading can be critical for their future in education. Students who are not reading on grade level by 3rd grade are substantially less likely to catch up with their peers. By setting requirements for reading interventions to support students who are not meeting assessment targets, HB 2162 ensures students most in need have direct support using high-quality instructional materials and tutoring provided by teachers who are trained through a literacy achievement academy.

In considering HB 2162, we respectfully ask the committee to consider the quality of tutoring services under Section 28.0063. While we support the addition of this section and families having access to third-party tutoring if their child continues to fall behind after years of district support, we would also support an amendment to the bill to establish a standard for quality of private tutoring services. Our recommendation would be to charge the TEA with adopting a list of high-quality private tutoring services for parents to choose from. This would ensure families and taxpayers know that the services being offered to children are effective. The following language could be added to the bill for this purpose:

(b) A parent or guardian of a student described by Subsection (a) may select a tutoring service not provided by the school district or open-enrollment charter school from the list of vendors approved by the agency under Subsection (e) to address the student's reading deficiency.

(e) The commissioner shall maintain a list of approved tutoring service vendors for use by school districts and parents under Subsections (a) and (b). The approved vendor list must be available online in an accessible format. In reviewing vendors for approval, the commissioner must consider:  
the quality of the tutoring services offered;  
the quality of instructional materials utilized by the tutoring service; and  
any available data concerning outcomes for students who have received tutoring through the service

Steven Aleman  
Disability Rights Texas  
Austin, TX

Disability Rights Texas respectfully requests that HB 2162, as introduced, be revised before final passage to ensure that the procedures for assessment of reading ability and proficiency do not in any way imply that Child Find duties under federal and state special education law may be set aside by school districts and charter schools. Consistent reading difficulties by a child might indicate that a child has a disability, such as Dyslexia. Such children must not be denied appropriate referral for special education evaluations.

Rebecca Holmes

Self

Dallas, TX

I support ending three-cueing and appreciate the assessment and instruction aligned to the science of reading. However, this bill does not contemplate that a student who has struggled for two years might be a student with a disability in need of an evaluation via IDEA. Texas has a history of violating IDEA for students with dyslexia. This bill currently does not consider or include students with disabilities. Even \$1,000 is worth only about 10 hours of private instruction in my area...a drop in the bucket of what is needed. And a private evaluation is more than \$2,000. What is needed is proper evaluation and intervention MUCH sooner than 2 years via IDEA. Thank you

katie Brenner

STaem

San Antonio, TX

I am a parent of three Dyslexic students, plus many more who live this road.