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March 29, 2010  
The Honorable Florence Shapiro  
Chair, Senate Committee on Education  
Sam Houston Bldg., Room 440  
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Senator Shapiro:

The Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) and the Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) appreciate your effort to support effective teaching and to overhaul the current teacher appraisal system through Senate Bill 4 (SB4). Therefore, we offer this written testimony *on* Senate Bill 4 for your consideration.

SB4, as introduced, would create a number of logistical and legal problems for districts. Districts are required to complete all summative conferences regarding a teacher's appraisal no later than fifteen days prior to the last day of instruction (approximately May 6<sup>th</sup>). However, the Texas Education Agency's (TEA's) 2011-12 student assessment calendar shows that the STAAR results for Algebra I, and II, Physics and other end-of-course exams may not be posted online until June 4, 2012. Were SB 4, to take effect and require teacher appraisals to be based substantially on state test results, summative conferences would have to be conducted during the summer, which would violate TEA's regulations and be unworkable in many circumstances.

We understand that you intend to offer a committee amendment that will delay the portion of the bill related to appraisals by two years. By then, TEA expects that STAAR and end-of-course test results will be reported to districts within two weeks after the test is administrated. Therefore, the committee substitute alleviates our respective organizations' primary concern.

TASA and TASB continue to have concerns about the workload increases that will occur when the changes to the appraisal process take effect in two years. Current law requires an annual appraisal, while SB 4 mandates semi-annual appraisals, which will double the workload. SB 4 also eliminates a district's discretion to choose not to appraise "proficient" teachers annually. Given the expected revenue cuts, districts have and are continuing to reduce non-teaching staff – precisely the people who would be called on to perform the increased number of appraisals required by this legislation.

Finally, many school board members and administrators have expressed concern that this bill would place too much emphasis on state assessment results. While they are not opposed in concept to student achievement, including assessment results, being a factor in a teacher appraisal, they believe that the fifty percent measurement outlined in SB4 is too high.

Thank you for considering our concerns. If I can provide you with any additional information on these issues, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Dominic Giarratani  
Assistant Director  
Texas Association of School Boards