

## Senate Bill 4 on Teacher Certification, Performance and Appraisal

### Testimony on the Proposed Bill by Ellen Wood For Hearing March 29, 2011

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today on SB 4. My name is Ellen Wood, and I am a concerned citizen of Dallas. After a 20 year business career and 5 years working in the philanthropic community, I co-founded a new non-profit called the Teaching Trust which is working to improve practices and policies that impact educators with a particular focus on developing transformational leaders for high need schools.

There were four key sections in SB 4 that I would like to highlight my support for:

1. Section 4. At the transition from Provisional to Standard Certificate (end of year 3), the bill provides for a review, to determine ***if the teacher is effective prior to automatically earning the right to receive a term contract*** which comes with additional obligations to the district.
2. Section 6. This adds that the recommended appraisal process must provide that at least 50% of the appraisal is based on quantitative measurements of the teacher's effectiveness in the improvement in student achievement. Rather than have teachers with data from a standardized test have all of their quantitative component depend on standardized tests, half of the 50% (or 25%) could be other objective measures which would be similar to teachers who do not have standardized tests in their core area. ***The key point is incorporating "objective measures" in the evaluation as nearly everyone we have spoken with about the current process says the subjective nature of using exclusively PDAS and the uneven implementation creates lack of transparency in the appraisal process.***
3. Section 7. This adds an Individualized Professional Development Plan for all teachers. ***Perhaps a better word may be a Professional Growth plan...as the point is all teachers no matter what appraisal rating should be growing in achievement each year, just like all students.*** In the past being on a "growth plan" has only been used for teachers who are falling "below expectations" or are directionally headed to being marked down. Having every professional on a plan is a great management tool. In fact ***all administrators or supervisors should be accountable for the growth in the teachers they supervise and that should be part of their evaluation, just as teachers will now be accountable for the growth in their student's achievement through adding those measures to their appraisal.***
4. Section 10. This creates a mid-management certificate in teacher-leadership for highly effective teachers. This is an ***excellent strategy to highlight the potential to develop mid management in a school***, as too much falls on the principal currently. Career pathways have never really existed in teaching, and this could be a step in the right direction, to allow the best teachers to have roles developing other teachers in their schools (perhaps teach half day, and instruct/develop other teachers half day). In effect, ***these teachers become the professional developers of other teachers on their campus.*** On-site, real time professional development receives the highest impact, so why not have the most effective teachers leading it for the benefit of their peers?