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Education Committee Hears 5 Bills By Bettencourt To Expand Protections For Texas Students
SB1230, SB1231, SB933, SB1256 & SB1476 take major steps in protecting all Texas school children.
All promote the transparency and prevention of inappropriate student/teacher relationships.

Austin, Texas - Expanding on Senate Bill 7 from the 85th Legislative session, which gives protections from inappropriate student/teacher relationships, Senator Bettencourt laid out 5 bills to the Senate Education Committee in his effort to protect all Texas students, not just those in the public school system, from the continuous plague of inappropriate student-teacher relationships. **"SB7 stopped 'passing the trash' in the public school system and this package of legislation would ensure that the 'trash' is not 'passed' into Texas private schools either,"** said Senator Bettencourt.

These five bills are paramount to ensuring a safe environment in schools for students and teachers across the state. Those that violate public trust and prey on our students must be stopped from ever being employed anywhere in Texas education system.

Data from the Texas Education Agency shows that investigations into alleged teacher-student misconduct has increased 240% to 429 in four years. The Agency opened 1,384 educator investigations in 2018, up from 866 in 2014.

These 5 bills would make the following broad changes:

- SB 1230 and SB 1231 would provide private schools the same protection currently given to public schools under Senate Bill 7.
- SB 933 would create an Office of Inspector General in the Texas Education Agency to root out waste, fraud, and abuse. This OIG bill has 26 co-authors in the Texas Senate.
- SB 1256 would create "Do Not Hire" registry not just for educators who were involved in an inappropriate relationship with a student but also for any employee that is involved with Texas students.
- SB 1476 would ensure that the Texas Education Agency has a clear system in place when an allegation of misconduct is found to be unsubstantiated.

Testimony was taken from several witnesses on the bills with Jennifer Allmon, who testified on behalf of the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops adding, **"People that harm children are not welcome in any school in Texas."**

"The bills were heard in the Senate Education committee chaired by Senator Taylor, and were supported favorably in public testimony. In fact, no one testified against them in person," continued Senator Bettencourt.

Senator Bettencourt's goal is to continue the effort to stamp out this plague of inappropriate student-educator relationships in Texas and ensure that anyone involved in this type of behavior no longer has any place in the Texas education system. Follow the progress of the bills at <https://capitol.texas.gov/>.

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