



## Texas Association of School Personnel Administrators

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November 13, 2014

To: Members of the Sunset Advisory Commission

The Texas Association of School Personnel Administrators (TASPA) opposes the abolishment of the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and the transfer of its functions to the Commissioner of Education.

As you are aware, the SBEC consists of 12 voting members, a representative from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Texas Education Agency. The Board oversees the certification of over 300,000 certified teachers and over 70,000 administrators currently employed in Texas public schools in addition to thousands of educational aides, thousands of candidates enrolled in educator preparation programs and others currently certified but not employed in Texas public schools. Compare that to the boards such as the Medical Doctors with 19 board members and an estimated 62,000 licensed or Dentists with 15 board members and 13,000 licensed.

The utilization of an advisory board is not adequate to govern the preparation, certification and discipline of professional educators. Even if the commissioner consults an advisory board, the deliberations will not be open and transparent to the education community and interested public. An ever-changing advisory committee appointed by the commissioner will not have the same impact nor receive the same responsiveness as the SBEC Board.

We believe that an independent board comprised of experienced practitioners and business/community representatives should be responsible for the policy creation that protects and promotes the education profession. Developing certification standards, educator preparation standards, and granting and revoking educator certification should not be vested in a single individual. A potential for conflicts of interest will be created by having the individual who rules on grievances brought against schools also have the sole authority to determine who may obtain certification and who is eligible to work in Texas schools.

In closing, TASPA supports the continuation of a separate board comprised of teachers, counselors, superintendents, educator preparation program representatives and community leaders that permits educators to be responsible for governing their own profession and enforcing the Educator Code of Ethics, including the suspension and revocation of certificates. That authority should not rest solely with the Commissioner. Educators in Texas are entitled to a professional board that deliberates and makes decisions in open forum as do other professions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Melva V. Cárdenas  
Executive Director