

Dear Governor Abbott:

We are writing to express our concern about the Senate Bill 313, which we believe has many unintended, negative consequences to Texas Public Schools. We respectfully ask you to veto this bill. Here are some of our concerns:

- The Bill is unnecessary. The State Board of Education already has changed its adoption and review process for the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills to ensure the curriculum can be taught within a school year.
- SB 313 will force a compulsory and arbitrary set-aside of 25% of the funds the State Board of Education has to distribute to districts to go to anything but classroom content (such as computer hardware). SB 313 disrupts the State Board of Education's ability to support classroom content in a timely manner, as the board will no longer have the flexibility to match the needs regarding classroom content with the availability of funds as those change from year to year.
- The board is getting ready to revise the English Language Arts curriculum (the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills or TEKS), and the textbook proclamation limits could delay new English textbooks for classrooms or could result in less use of spelling, handwriting, and grammar books for elementary and

middle schools.

- The elected State Board of Education worked hard to ensure that the curriculum emphasizes patriotism as required by state law and includes discussion of the Founding Fathers and documents, American Exceptionalism, America's rich religious heritage, character education and the achievements of Ronald Reagan. It did so over the objections of many in academia and education. Re-opening the social studies curriculum ahead of schedule puts these hard-won conservative gains at risk.
- This bill could move the Texas standards closer to the federal "Common Core" standards. Like supporters of Common Core, proponents of this bill have used the catchphrase "Inch Deep, Mile Wide" to complain that the Texas standards require students to know too much. The fact that the state board has chosen to adopt measurable, grade-level-specific skills in the curriculum is precisely what differentiates the Texas standards from the federal "Common Core" standards.
- The bill contradicts itself. One section prevents the board from changing the curriculum in a way that requires issuing new textbooks, but Section 7 of the bill requires the board to evaluate whether new textbooks are needed every time the curriculum is revised.

- The bill costs the state more than \$9 million in this biennium.

Senate Bill 313 makes it more difficult for the State Board of Education to ensure quality education in Texas public schools, and we recommend a veto.

Thank you for your consideration.