

Written Testimony on SB 866

Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education

April 12, 2011

TCASE is aware that a number of students with dyslexia receive instruction from reading specialist in Texas public schools. We commend this current effort and feel it has had a positive educational impact on students diagnosed with dyslexia.

We also thank Senator Deuell for working with the study group during the Interim and bringing SB 866 forward.

In Section 1 of the bill that addresses educator preparation we are in agreement that it will be a positive step for potential teachers of academic subjects to be trained in identifying and serving students with dyslexia, however, we are concerned regarding the development of the training. While experts in higher education are important in the process, teachers in public school classes will implement any training provided. For this reason we believe that input on the training for public educators should also have input from appropriate teachers and/or curriculum specialist from school districts.

In Section 4, 38.0032, addressing the use of technology in the classroom, SB 866 states that the agency "shall develop a plan" for integrating technology into the classrooms to address the needs of students with dyslexia. The section then states that the commissioner "shall adopt rules requiring each school district to provide" the adopted plan. We feel that while it is appropriate for the agency to research and develop a plan, during this time of tight resources it is inappropriate for the plan to be mandatory.