



Greetings Madame Chair and Honorable Senate Education Committee Members!

My name is **Joyce Stevens** and I serve **Northside ISD** in **San Antonio, TX**, as the **Director of Academic Technology Services**. I am here today to thank you for your creative and intensive legislative efforts towards passage of the **Instructional Materials Allotment**, which will be of significant benefit to school districts across Texas. Districts both large and small with varying levels of local resources can benefit from a predictable funding stream to continue best practices in educational technology.

Texas legislators have had the foresight to plan for the changing nature and scope of instructional materials. No longer limited to hardbound textbooks only, nearly all of today's instructional materials publishers provide a vast array of online resources and supplemental materials in digital media. Many districts wish to unburden today's students from a heavy backpack and instead equip them with hardware from which to access their district's adopted instructional materials on a 24/7 basis. Movement in this direction really allows us to address the diverse learning styles of our students, moving beyond the printed page only to inclusion of visual and multimedia resources - resources which can also be more easily and frequently updated and corrected. This will ensure our students have access to the latest knowledge available, as soon as breakthroughs come to light. Very helpful and insightful indeed!

Another component of the proposed Instructional Materials Allotment that school districts across Texas very much appreciate and celebrate is that this legislation also incorporates the purposes formerly allowed through the Technology Allotment. The Texas Educational Code stipulated that districts could use the Technology Allotment to:

- provide for the purchase by school districts of electronic textbooks or technological equipment that contributes to student learning; and
- pay for training educational personnel directly involved in student learning in the appropriate use of electronic textbooks and for providing access to technological equipment for instructional use.

Some districts opted to use Technology Allotment funding to move towards greater levels of student access to technology, in alignment with the goals of the Texas Long Range Plan for Technology. Other districts have opted to utilize the Technology Allotment funding to target goals in Teaching and Learning and Educator Preparation - to fund the training personnel directly involved in student learning. HB 6 included an amendment to more clearly spell out this continued allowable purpose in the newly proposed Instructional Materials Allotment - and I firmly believe that this legislative intent will be essential to continued best practices.

In Northside ISD, we have utilized Technology Allotment funding to staff **Campus Instructional Technologists** at our K-12 campuses. These certified teachers, many of whom have advanced Educational Technology degrees, support the core and enrichment teachers in SBEC Standard V - supporting curricular standards with instructional technology. We also call upon these staff members for support in the use of an online grade book, online instructional management system, orienting teachers towards the use of TEA's Project Share, and supporting online testing such as TELPAS and EOC assessments. These personnel also work closely with us to ensure that the images on newly deployed hardware include our instructional textbook software, with the appropriate grade levels and subject areas. They also orient teachers and students in the use of interactive white boards, iPod Touch carts, Netbooks, document cameras, and innovative Web 2.0 tools. One of our CITs who came to us from out of district shared an observation that in Northside ISD - largely due to our

instructional technology support - our hardware does not go unused. Northside ISD received NSBA's Technology Leadership Network Salute Award in recent years, and we attribute much of our success to the Citizen's Bond Program and to our Campus Instructional Technology staffing.

Currently, leaders in our district are looking to the Instructional Materials Allotment as a **legislative lifeline** to continue best practices in supporting teachers and students with educational technology. We have taken Board action, being followed with Human Resources actions, to reduce our staffing numbers of Instructional Technologists by half. We are continuing to utilize local funds - as we have before - to fund a number of these positions. With a passage of the Instructional Materials Allotment, we would be able to augment and supplement our own funding for more optimal campus coverage.

In conclusion, I again thank you for helping to craft this legislative vehicle. As you send it on its way to conference committee, I would ask that the legislative intent and purposes formerly available in the Technology Allotment be maintained in the IMA. In addition, it will be most advantageous to districts if this can be fully funded for this coming biennium. This Instructional Materials Allotment will afford districts the resources needed to move towards Target Tech goals as outlined in the Texas Long Range Plan for Technology!