



Input on HB 1551

Regarding parental notification concerning alleged employee misconduct

April 22, 2025

The **Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)** offers the following input on HB 1551 by Rep. Hickland:

ATPE is deeply committed to ensuring all educational settings are safe and secure environments where students, school employees, and volunteers can be productive. In particular, we are dedicated to high professional and ethical standards for educators, in addition to high educational standards. We also share Rep. Hickland's concern that parents should be notified of alleged criminal conduct of a district employee, particularly those of a sexual nature. ATPE believes these requirements should apply to all educational settings, including private schools and any homeschool arrangements or learning pod settings in which one or more of the students are not the educator's own children.

ATPE has consistently supported high standards for educator conduct, including ensuring that all potential educators are screened prior to serving in a classroom and that they undergo meaningful professional practice and ethics training. We have opposed the Texas Education Agency's attempts to remove the testing of teacher ethics from educator certification examinations. We have also supported the removal of any person who abuses their position as a school employee by engaging in an inappropriate romantic or physical relationship with a student, including placement of such individuals on a do-not-hire registry. We will continue to support requirements that strengthen professional and ethical conduct in the classroom.

Our suggestion for strengthening this bill is that this statute apply equally to all educational settings—including private schools, learning pods, and homeschool cooperatives—particularly now that they will be receiving state money due to the passage of SB 2. Families who choose private educational settings deserve to have the same disclosure requirements from their schools as those who choose public or charter schools. Requiring all schools, no matter their classification, to report alleged sexual crimes to parents will help ensure that every student is kept safe and will continue to build trust between families and the schools they choose for their children.

For additional information, contact ATPE Governmental Relations at (800) 777-2873 or government@atpe.org.

The Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE) is the leading educator association in Texas and has been a strong voice for Texas educators since 1980. With its strong collaborative philosophy, ATPE speaks for classroom teachers, administrators, future, retired and para-educators and works to create better opportunities for the more than 5 million Texas public schoolchildren. ATPE is the ally and the voice of Texas public school educators.