

Speaker Joe Straus's Interim Charges
House Committee on Public Education
October 2017

1. Determine, to the extent possible, the scope of financial losses, including facilities, that resulted from Hurricane Harvey. Recommend possible state actions, such as changes to student counts or property valuation, to mitigate any negative impact on districts and ensure governance structures and parameters allow for effective responses. *(Issued on September 14, 2017)*
2. Recommend any measures needed at the state level to prevent unintended punitive consequences to both students and districts in the state accountability system as a result of Hurricane Harvey and its aftermath. *(Issued on September 14, 2017)*
3. Examine the educational opportunities offered to students displaced by Hurricane Harvey throughout the state and the process by which districts enroll and serve those students. Recommend any changes that could improve the process for students or help districts serving a disproportionate number of displaced students. *(Issued on September 14, 2017)*
4. Review current state mechanisms for identifying and rewarding educators through state-level strategies. Examine how providing additional funding to enhance compensation in districts facing a shortage of experienced, highly rated teachers would affect retention and teacher quality, in addition to whether it would encourage teachers to provide additional services through extracurricular activities, tutoring, and mentoring.
5. Examine research-based options for evaluating student achievement beyond standardized test scores, including adaptive and portfolio assessments. Examine the scope of the current Texas essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in grades with the state assessment, including the format, assessment calendar, and the limits of instructional days, if any. Determine if it is appropriate to limit TEKS to readiness standards that can be taught in less than the school year. Review current Student Success Initiative testing and make recommendations on its continuation or repeal. Review the ability of the state to waive standardized testing for students with significant cognitive disabilities.
6. Examine programs in public schools that have proven results meeting the needs of and improving student achievement for students with disabilities, with an emphasis on programs specializing in autism, dysgraphia, and dyslexia. Recommend ways to support and scale innovative programs for these students, including providing supplemental services, or incentivizing public-private partnerships or inter-district and charter school collaborations. Monitor the implementation and funding for the pilot programs authorized in H.B. 21 (85R) and review the Texas Education Agency's compliance with S.B. 160 (85R), which prohibits special education student caps.
7. Review the charter school system in Texas. Determine if changes are needed in the granting, renewal, or revocation of charter schools, including the timeline for expansions and notification of expansions to surrounding districts. Review the educational outcomes of students in charter schools compared to those in traditional schools, and to what extent schools participate in the alternative accountability system. Monitor the implementation of facilities funding for charter schools. Consider differences in state funding for charter schools compared to their surrounding districts and the impact on the state budget. Consider admissions policies for charters, including appropriate data collection to assess demand for additional charter enrollment, compliance with access by students with disabilities and the

effect of exclusions of students with criminal or disciplinary histories. Consider differences in charter and district contributions to the Teacher Retirement System on behalf of their employees and make appropriate recommendations to support the retirement benefits of all public school teachers.

8. Monitor the agencies and programs under the Committee's jurisdiction and oversee the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 85th Legislature. In conducting this oversight, the committee will also specifically include: H.B. 21 (85R), H.B. 22 (85R), and S.B. 179 (85R).