



## Input on HB 6

Regarding disciplinary policies in public schools

March 18, 2025

The **Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)** offers the following input in support of **HB 6**:

We want to acknowledge and thank Chairman Leach for his work on this critical issue of classroom discipline. As an organization dedicated to advocating for the needs of educators and students, we believe this legislation represents a critical step in ensuring safe classrooms where educators can teach and students can learn.

The 2025 ATPE Legislative Program—adopted July 9, 2024, by a vote of the ATPE House of Delegates, a governing body of the association’s educator members—states:

**ATPE supports measures to ensure all educational settings are safe and secure environments where students, school employees, and volunteers can be productive. ATPE recommends that school districts and the state:**

- **Immediately remove any student who threatens or physically assault a school employee, a volunteer, or another student to an alternate placement as determined by district policy and in accordance with state and federal law. The student’s parent or guardian should be notified in accordance with state and federal law.**
- **Make personnel standards and curriculum for all disciplinary alternative education programs commensurate with public education requirements.**
- **Utilize resources to identify, deter, and/or recover students from human trafficking, gang involvement, and/or substance abuse.**
- **Require accurate coding and reporting of incidents at schools.**
- **Require comprehensive training for all staff in Chapter 37 (relating to student discipline) as well as annual notification of and/or updates on campus/level procedures regarding compliance with Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code.**

Overall, ATPE appreciates that HB 6 seeks to address disruptive student behavior, remove students who engage in serious misconduct, and refocus the learning environment on teaching instead of managing discipline. We appreciate the attempts made in the bill to minimize disruption to student learning while issuing a consequence, and we would like to see this aim strengthened to ensure the best possible learning environment for these students.

*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.*

We would note that, as drafted, the bill primarily addresses a single dimension, expulsion, within the broader topic of student discipline and management. One suggestion ATPE would offer is to embrace your desire to improve the classroom teaching environment by expanding HB 6 to address more student discipline efforts. For example, we would suggest pulling in the discipline language from SB 27 by Sen. Creighton, language related to improving educator practice regarding classroom management like that found in HB 222 by Rep. Talarico, and concepts around parental engagement training like those found in HB 123 by Chairman Dutton. These additions would make this a more well-rounded discipline bill by combining solutions on multiple aspects of training and discipline .

We do have a couple of concerns, regarding the section on referral to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP). First, as per our ATPE Legislative Program, we would like to see DAEP programs in Texas strengthened, with curriculum provided that equals what students would receive at their home campus and certified educators teaching that curriculum. Secondly, we are concerned about encouraging districts that may not be well suited to the task to nonetheless pursue the creation of a local virtual DAEP. Virtual programs have been shown to have a mixed record of success at best, and students assigned to DAEP will already be missing their normal instructional environment. It is important that we not have further disrupt the student's education. Our concern is that a poorly instituted or under-resourced virtual DAEP will cause more, not less, disruption to a student's educational progress. While we would not remove the ability of a district to establish its own virtual DAEP, we do think this is a place the best first step is creation of a model program by one or a small group of districts, best situated to the task, that could then be utilized by other districts statewide alongside the support of local in-person educators.

Finally, we appreciate the recognition of the potential disproportionate impact on homeless students and the attempts in the bill to ensure their rights are protected and minimal disruption is made to their learning environment.

ATPE supports HB 6 and its efforts to provide better support for teachers, safer schools, and a focus on ensuring that the educational needs of students removed from the classroom continue to be met. We are ready and willing to work with the Chairman Leach to bring the legislation to its fullest potential.

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