

**May 15, 2025**

To: Senate Committee on Education K-16

Re: CS House Bill 2

Position: For

Honorable Chair Creighton and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the students and families of Texas, thank you for this bill. This version of HB 2 reflects years of serious study and input: from the Governor's Teacher Vacancy Task Force to the Commission on Special Education Funding to ongoing efforts to improve early learning and postsecondary readiness.

At EdTrust, we subscribe to a mantra clearly supported by national research: it's not as simple as *how much* money you spend, but *how you spend it* that makes a difference for students.

So *how much*? This version of HB 2 truly represents an historic commitment of dollars, surpassing HB 3 (2019) in funding for public education. For those narrowly focused on the Basic Allotment, this increase is multiplied by our existing student-centered weights and adds a vehicle for future inflationary adjustments tied to the golden penny yield.

But what is truly worthy of support is *how* this bill translates an \$8 billion investment into the material resources that will improve opportunities and outcomes for 5.4 million Texas students.

It cannot be repeated enough: teacher quality is the most significant in-school factor impacting student success. There is no investment more necessary, strategic, or impactful than ensuring every student has access to well-prepared, experienced, and effective educators. This bill sets Texas on a path to restore the teaching profession as the most important job in Texas – where high-quality pathways to preparation and certification are accessible and attractive; where early career support is abundant; and where compensation better reflects the transformative impact that experienced and effective teachers have on the lives of students.

We all agree: strong foundations in reading and math unlock students' potential and opportunities in their education and in life. With Texas ranked 37th in 4th grade reading proficiency and just 36% of low-income 3rd graders reading on grade level, this bill invests in proven strategies to meet our most fundamental obligation to students and families by maximizing community partners to expand PreK access and ensuring intervention as soon as possible when our youngest learners are falling behind.

Last, but certainly not least, this bill reinforces the ultimate outcome for students – success beyond high school – by funding pathways into high-demand careers and ensuring state and districts performance remain focused on the actual college and career outcomes of our K-12 graduates.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Feinstein  
State Director  
The Education Trust in Texas