



Contact:

Clay Robison

512-476-5355, ext. 1233

512-535-8994

clayr@tsta.org

March 12, 2015

TSTA opposes virtual school vouchers, privatization

Today, the Texas State Teachers Association announced its opposition to SB894, the so-called virtual school expansion bill, because it would give our tax dollars in the form of vouchers to private online schools with little or no accountability.

“Instead of investing resources in our shortchanged neighborhood schools, this voucher bill would fleece taxpayers by handing out blank checks to for-profit private online school vendors that have a poor record when it comes to educational quality,” said TSTA President Noel Candelaria. “The Governor and other state leaders often say they don’t want Texas to become another California, but this bill would create a virtual education network similar to California’s, where online schools managed by the for-profit K-12 have had more dropouts than graduates.”

“Technology plays an important role in the classroom and in distance learning, but Texas doesn’t need a California style system where the online graduation rate is a fraction of the state’s overall graduation rate, and private online operators rake in millions of dollars every year from the taxpayers,” he added.

TSTA also opposes SB6, the A-F grading scheme for public schools, because it seeks to place the blame for struggling schools on hard-working educators and students. Candelaria said the A-F grading scheme has created confusion where it has been implemented and has only served as part of a three-step strategy to privatize neighborhood public schools by cutting funds, blaming others for that failure and handing schools over to outsiders who run schools for profit.

“The A-F campus grading scheme is a cloaking device for real transparency and offers nothing that would improve teaching and learning in the classroom,” Candelaria said.

