



RECOMMENDATION TO SUNSET COMMISSION

3. Allow LSSPs to practice in private schools.

Background

TSBEP Rule 465.38 defines Psychological Services in the Schools. It states, "The specialist in school psychology license permits the licensee to provide school psychological services only in Texas public schools. A person utilizing this license may not provide psychological services in any context or capacity outside of their employment or contract with public schools."

The intent of this rule, when written, was to prevent the LSSP from providing services outside of the school setting, such as in hospitals, clinics, and in private practice. LSSPs are trained and have experience in helping all children to achieve educational success, whether in public or private school settings. This rule prohibits the LSSP from working with students in private school settings and limits the allowable services to students educated in private school settings. As a result, students in private schools are denied access to these specialized, psychological services that are afforded to students in the public school system, which, in turn, may prevent students with disabilities or social/emotional concerns from receiving needed services.

Applicable Current State/Federal Law

Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 501

How Issue is Addressed in Other States

Nationally, 81% of school psychologists are employed in public school settings. School psychologists also work in private schools and university settings. The range of services provided in the private school setting is consistent with best practices in school psychology which includes providing only school psychological services and only in the area of one's competence.

Benefit to the Community

This provision would give more Texas school children broader access to school-based psychological services. There are 1,750 private schools in Texas, serving 306,394 students. If approximately 10% of school-age students experience learning difficulties and educational disabilities, these schools represent more than 30,000 children who are not receiving targeted, evidence-based interventions designed by school psychologists to improve their learning experiences.

Financial Cost to the State

None