



RECOMMENDATION TO SUNSET COMMISSION

6. Maintain the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists

Background

In 1995, Senate Bill 1 recommended the Texas Education Agency no longer provide certifications to licensed psychologists and associate school psychologists. Therefore, credentialing became the responsibility of the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (TSBEP), who then created the license called the “Licensed Specialist in School Psychology” (LSSP). The TSBEP is the state agency authorized by state law to regulate the practice of psychology in the state of Texas, originally established by the Texas Legislature in 1969. The TSBEP provides oversight of all licensees and certified professionals involved in the practice of psychology. Those professionals include all psychologists, provisionally licensed psychologists, psychological associates, and licensed specialists in school psychology. According to the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), as of 2010, TSBEP had oversight of 6,547 licensees.

The TSBEP board consists of 9 members consisting of four LPs, two LPAs and three public members who are appointed by the Governor for six year terms. Additionally, one of the LP or LPA appointments must be a practice licensed specialist in school psychology. According to the DSHS, other health professionals regulated by state boards of examiners in Texas include professional counselors, dietitians, marriage and family therapists, medical physicists and speech language pathology and audiology.

Applicable Current State/Federal Law

- Texas Occupations Code, Title 3, Chapter 501- The Psychologists’ Licensing Act
- Texas Administrative Code, Title 22, Part 21

How Issue is Addressed in Other States

In 48 states, the practice of school psychology is regulated by the state department of education. In Texas and Louisiana, the practice of school psychology is exclusively regulated by state board of Psychologists. In recent years states have demonstrated interest in moving toward the regulation of school psychology by a board of psychologists, rather than a state department of education.

Benefit to the Community

TSBEP ensures the safety of the public through regulation of the practice of psychology within the state of Texas by competent, qualified professionals; including the Licensed Psychologist, Licensed Psychological Associate, and Licensed Specialist in School Psychology. The composition of the board includes four LPs, two LPAs and three public members who are appointed by the Governor for six year terms. One of the LP or LPAs appointed to the board must also be a practicing LSSP. These appointed board members ensure public safety through regulation including enforcement of the rules of practice including violations of the Act. The TSBEP should be maintained as the composition of the board affords informed regulation of the practice of psychology within the state of Texas, as those with knowledge and experience in psychology oversee the enforcement of the Act and rules. The TSBEP has disciplined members of the psychology profession appropriately based on the Act and rules.

Financial Cost to the State:

None