



April 1, 2025

To: Senate Committee on Education K-16
Re: Testimony FOR Senate Bill 2252

Good afternoon, Chairman Creighton, Vice Chair Campbell, and Members:

My name is Kelle Kieschnick, Vice President of Policy with Texas Business Leadership Council testifying in support of SB 2252. TBLC is a non-partisan, statewide network of CEOs and senior executives. We believe that investing in early education is crucial for developing a skilled workforce and maintaining a globally competitive Texas.

Early literacy and numeracy are foundational to a child's academic and future career success. For example, students who are not on grade-level for reading by 3rd grade are **four times more likely to not graduate from high school on time and significantly less likely to complete a two-or four-year college degree**¹ yet it is estimated that over 60% of jobs in Texas will require a postsecondary credential by 2031.²

We commend you, Chairman Creighton, for the measures included in **SB 2252** to address these challenges in 3 notable ways:

1. The bill requires the **use of approved reading and numeracy screeners** for K through 3rd grade students and parental notifications. This consistent, statewide approach ensures that educators and parents have reliable data to identify and address learning gaps before they widen.
2. **Proactive targeted interventions** will help students identified as at-risk to get caught up by 4th grade.

¹ Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2012). Double Jeopardy: How Third-Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation.

² Carnevale, A.P (2022). After Everything: Projections of Jobs, Education, and Training Requirements through 2031.

3. **Expansion of Reading and Math Academies** will ensure that educators are more effective. Our classroom teachers have the biggest impact on student improvement, and we applaud this focus on professional development.

We appreciate the bill's efforts to increase funding for early education and **respectfully suggest amending this so that Pre-K students generate the Early Education Allotment weight** to provide districts with more resources to offer high-quality Pre-K so that more students will be kindergarten-ready.

This bill takes bold steps to improve student outcomes. By identifying academic struggles early, intervening effectively, and empowering educators and families with the tools they need, this bill lays the foundation for a more skilled workforce and a more competitive Texas.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Kelle Kieschnick
Vice President of Policy
Texas Business Leadership Council
kkieschnick@txblc.org