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ATPE statement regarding Senate Bill 149

AUSTIN, TEXAS — Today, the state Senate passed Senate Bill 149. This bill prevents certain students who cannot pass a STAAR exam, from being denied the opportunity to graduate. It enables an individual graduation committee made up of the student’s teacher, parent, principal, and school counselor to decide if the student is ready to graduate by looking at other factors, such as coursework grades and attendance. Below is a statement from the state’s largest educator group, the Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE):

“ATPE believes that accountability systems should maximize student learning and help educators meet the unique needs of each individual student,” says Jennifer Canaday, Governmental Relations Manager. “Arbitrary standards based on standardized tests administered once a year should not be the ultimate determinant of a teenager’s fate and future. Not all students test well, and flexibility is needed. We believe educators working directly with a student are in the best position to know whether that student has achieved the learning necessary to graduate from high school. We support SB 149 as more of a common-sense approach to ‘assessing’ a student’s actual progress – one that will help us move away from our overreliance on standardized tests while at the same time giving struggling students additional opportunities to succeed.”

“We hope for a quick passage in the house,” says Monty Exter, ATPE lobbyist. “This bill can help students this school year. These students have had 13 years of education, and one test should not determine whether they’re left out in the cold.”



Jennifer Canaday
Governmental Relations Manager



Monty Exter
ATPE Lobbyist

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The Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE) has been a strong voice for Texas educators since 1980. It is the leading educators’ association in Texas with more than 100,000 members statewide. With its strong collaborative philosophy, ATPE speaks for classroom teachers, administrators, future, retired and para-educators and works to create better opportunities for 5 million public schoolchildren. ATPE is the voice of Texas public school education.