83rd Session Select Interim Charges
Relating to Higher Education and Education

January 9, 2014

Higher Education

- Review and evaluate the success of *Closing the Gaps by 2015*, the strategic plan for higher education adopted in 2000. Coordinate with the Higher Education Coordinating Board on the next set of long term goals for higher education and monitor their progress.

- Study and make recommendations regarding the impact of technology on higher education instruction, including online courses and massive open online courses (MOOCs), and their impact on higher education excellence, cost, and funding requirements.

- Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Higher Education, 83rd Legislature, Regular and Called Sessions, and make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance and/or complete implementation. Specifically, monitor the following:
    - SB 414, relating to a study and report regarding authorizing certain public junior colleges to offer baccalaureate degree programs to address regional workforce needs;
    - SB 62, relating to the vaccination against bacterial meningitis of entering students at public and private or independent institutions of higher education;
    - SB 28 (2011), relating to eligibility for a TEXAS grant and to administration of the TEXAS grant program; and
    - HB 1244 (2011), relating to developmental education and the assessment of student readiness under the Texas Success Initiative and to students enrolled in developmental education at public institutions of higher education.

Education

- Examine STAAR writing scores for elementary, middle and high school students. For grade levels tested in writing, review the types of writing required. Explore the need for targeted professional development in writing. Review the redesign of high school English EOC exams. For the entire STAAR assessment program, review accommodations available to eligible students as a result of the elimination of the

STAAR Modified exam pursuant to changes in federal accountability regulations. Additionally, review the redesign of the STAAR Alternate assessment.

- Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Education, 83rd Legislature, Regular and Called Sessions, and make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance and/or complete implementation. Specifically, monitor the following:
    - HB 5, relating to public school accountability, including assessment, and curriculum requirements; providing a criminal penalty;
    - HB 1926, relating to the operation of the state virtual school network and courses provided through other distance learning arrangements;
    - SB 376, relating to breakfast for certain public school students; and
    - HB 617, relating to transition and employment services for public school students enrolled in special education programs.