

Submitter: Linda Merritt
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2953

As a parent whose children have been negatively impacted by a lack of funding, I can tell you that this places a significant burden on parents to fill in the gaps. It leaves our children either all together behind and shoves those on the margins out of services. I cannot overstate the harm caused to families in our communities. My children have been underserved their entire educational careers. When there is a rare occasion that they are served they begin to thrive, but then services are removed as there is only funding for the lowest performing children such as the bottom 7%. I've been told by the school that while my children have great potential just are not low enough performing to get the full support to move into their potential. To know you have the potential to do better, but to not receive the support needed is overwhelmingly harmful. This lack of funding puts me in opposition to staff that should be my children's support, but they now are gatekeepers to the resources they need. The school administrators and teachers feel they have to protect resources and my children are just not low enough, though they may be 4 or more years behind in some areas. I've spent years fighting the system that tries to exclude and not support my children's needs. I hear from fellow parents that they are experiencing exactly the same issues. We already have a high enough burden with special needs children, and we don't need another mountain to climb. I believe this underfunding is at the root of many of the issues. Please fully fund our children's education. There is so much potential and so many left behind. Their lives are forever being impacted by poor education. And our society is seeing the results of the legacy of poor education.