TEA Legislative Update

AN OVERVIEW OF THE 2017 LEGISLATIVE SESSION AND IMPACT TO TEA
Legislative Bills Impacting TEA

- Governmental Relations tracked more than 1,000 education- or agency-related bills that were filed this session. Additionally, IT staff reviewed each of these bills for data collection and IT impact.

- Of these 1,000 bills, 145 bills made it through the entire process and have already been signed into law by the Governor or were awaiting final approval by June 18th.

- 26 of the 145 bills have confirmed data collection or IT impact and 23 bills are being re-evaluated for data collection and IT impact.
HB 156 establishes a pilot program in designated public high schools in certain municipalities for placement of students in Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps programs as an alternative to placement in disciplinary or juvenile justice alternative education programs.

HB 22 reduces the number of accountability domains from five to three and adds and deletes data from the domains as established by HB 2804 from the 2015 legislative session.

HB 2442 relates to the minutes of operation required for public school districts, charter schools, and other education programs.

HB 674 relates to students enrolled in a grade level below grade three in a public school being enrolled in a positive behavior program instead of being suspended.

SB 2080 relates to a requirement that school districts and open-enrollment charter schools report certain information regarding children with disabilities who reside in residential facilities.
Legislative Bill Highlights – Data Collection Impact

- **SB 2084** relates to the calculation of average daily attendance for public school students in blended learning programs.

- **SB 22** relates to the establishment of a Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) program and to the repeal of the tech-prep program.

- **HB 441** relates to operation of public schools on Memorial Day. This legislation prevents schools from holding school on Memorial Day.

- **SB 3593** relates to instruction in career and technology education provided by public schools, including instruction in technology applications, cybersecurity, and computer coding, and to consideration of completed practicums and internships in school accountability ratings.
Legislative Bill Highlights – IT Impact

- All data collection bills will have IT impact.
- HB 8 relates to cybersecurity for state agency information resources.
- HB 1081 relates to the new instructional facility allotment under the foundation school program.
- HB 3349 relating to creating an abbreviated certification program and probationary and standard certificates for trade and industrial workforce training.
- HB 1839 relating to the preparation, certification, and classification of and professional development for public school educators.
Classroom Connectivity Initiative

AN OVERVIEW OF THE INITIATIVE AND CURRENT STATUS
Classroom Connectivity: Project Objectives

1. Increase the number of campuses in Texas that can support a digital student learning environment with internet connectivity that meets the federal bandwidth target.

2. Educate districts on networking strategies that will enable districts to meet the current (100Mbps/1000 students) and long term (1Gb/1000 students) FCC internet bandwidth targets. Educate districts on costs for comparable services to increase affordability.

3. Distribute state matching funds for E-rate Category 1 fiber projects that will allow districts to reduce their local funding share and take full advantage of the federal E-rate Category 1 program. TEA requested $25M in our Legislative Appropriations Request to be used for eligible E-rate Category One fiber projects to fund connectivity to the school.

4. Increase district awareness of resources available to assist with E-rate Category 1 fiber projects for connectivity to the schools and Category 2 networking projects within the schools.
E-rate is a federal discount program that makes telecommunications and information services more affordable for schools and libraries. To receive federal E-Rate discounts, school districts and charter schools have to provide a “local funding share.”

E-rate discounts range from 20% to 90% of the cost of services, depending on poverty levels and location (urban or rural), therefore the local funding share varies.

State matching funds reduce the local funding share for Category 1 fiber projects by providing a dollar-for-dollar match. Therefore, if Texas provides $25,000,000, the federal government will provide $25,000,000.

Districts with E-rate discount of 80% to 90% can have their Category 1 fiber project fully funded.
Classroom Connectivity: How does State Matching work?

Example:

District is pursuing a $100,000 special construction fiber project and is eligible for 70% discount E-rate funding

- **E-rate** will contribute $70,000 and the local share for the district is $30,000
- **The state matching** will contribute 10% of the project or $10,000
- **E-rate program** will match the 10% and contribute $10,000 towards the local share.
- The district local share is reduced to $10,000.

E-rate will pay 80% ($80K), the State will pay 10% ($10K) and the school district only has to pay the remaining 10% ($10K), saving the district an additional $20,000.
Classroom Connectivity: Current Status

- E-rate Funding Year 17 resulted in 51 Form 471s filed for special construction projects
  - representing 61 special construction projects from 46 districts and 3 consortiums
  - State match requests range from $10 to $2,093,334
  - Total State Match estimate for all 51 applications is $8,063,461
  - Results in an additional $8,063,461 match from the E-rate program

- There are still over 300 districts that are believed to need fiber and can benefit from the matching program
Classroom Connectivity: Current Status

- **Assistance with Category 1 Fiber projects**
  - Strategy recommendations
  - RFP assistance
  - E-rate filing assistance
- **TEA has partnered with EducationSuperHighway (ESH)**
  - 70 districts received assistance in Funding Year 17
  - Anticipate that 300 more could use assistance
- **ESH Compare & Connect K12**
  - Online tool to assist in determining competitive rates
  - Especially if contract is up for renewal
- **Category 2 strategy assistance**
Classroom Connectivity: Important Upcoming Dates

E-rate Funding Year 18 is the last year state matching funds will be available

Projects for E-rate funding year 2018 must begin immediately

- E-rate funding year 2018 Projects Must Begin Now
- E-rate Form 470 must be filed in January
- E-rate Form 471 must be filed Feb - Mar
- State Matching Funds become Available Until August 2019
Resources:

- Texas Classroom Connectivity team: classroomconnectivity@tea.texas.gov
- EducationSuperHighway: www.educationsuperhighway.org
- ESH guide - Network Essentials for Superintendents: https://www.educationsuperhighway.org/networkessentials/
- ESH guide – School WiFi Buyer’s Guide: https://www.educationsuperhighway.org/buyersguide/
- ESH Resource page https://www.educationsuperhighway.org/resources/
Fall Cybersecurity Webinars

- Webinars are targeted for the educational communities.

- Upcoming Webinars
  - Wednesday, September 13, 2017 1:00-2:00 pm
  - Wednesday, October 11, 2017 1:00-2:00 pm
  - Wednesday, November 8, 2017 1:00-2:00 pm

- TEA will release a To the Administrator Addressed (TAA) letter about the webinar series in mid-July that will include additional information regarding the subject matter.