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SUPPORT TRANSITION SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

PROBLEM

An adult with a disability is three times as likely as an adult without a disability to be unemployed in Texas. This disadvantage has its roots in childhood, when students with disabilities are far more likely to be expelled from school and often do not receive meaningful transition services for adult living. To be most effective, support services need to begin in school to ensure higher graduation rates and a strong transition to further education, employment, and independent living.

KEY FINDINGS

- Special education students in Texas face expulsion at a disproportionate rate: Special education students are 10 percent of Texas students, but they account for over 20 percent of all expulsions in Texas.¹
- Expulsion creates especially negative consequences for special education students: Research shows that removing these students from their regular classrooms can increase negative behaviors and interrupt academic gains.²
- In 2010, 70 percent of adults without a disability were employed in the state of Texas, while only 21 percent of adults with disabilities were employed.³

SUPPORT S.B. 35 BY SENATOR ZAFFIRINI

S.B. 35 helps students with disabilities achieve higher graduation rates and receive transition services for further education, employment, and independent living.

- The bill mandates transition planning for students with disabilities to begin before the student turns 14.
- The bill requires school districts to designate a school transition and employment services coordinator.
- The bill mandates the development of a transition and employment guide for students with disabilities.

¹ Texas Appleseed, *Texas' School to Prison Pipeline: Dropout to Incarceration*, 2007, www.texasappleseed.net.

² *Ibid.*

³ Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities, 2010, http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/public_policy/pubpolprior82.asp.