

SECTION VI

A Process for Evaluating a Comprehensive, Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program

Guidelines for Evaluating the Comprehensive, Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program

Rationale and Purpose

Evaluation is a critical component of a developmental guidance and counseling program and ensures accountability. The purpose of evaluation is to determine the value of the program, its activities, and staff in order to make decisions or to take actions regarding the future. The evaluation will measure the delivery of services (the process evaluation) and outcomes (product evaluation). This ongoing process provides information to ensure continuous improvement of the guidance program and gives direction to necessary changes.

Evaluation is a process that includes eight steps:

1. Stating the evaluation questions,
2. Determining the audiences/uses for the evaluation,
3. Gathering data to answer the questions,
4. Applying the predetermined standards,
5. Drawing conclusions,
6. Considering the context,
7. Making recommendations, and
8. Acting on the recommendations.

Counselors and the counseling program play a vital role in assisting teachers and other staff in the integration of school guidance objectives with other instructional goals and objectives. In turn, the evaluation should be a collaborative effort among all those involved in the program. Evaluation activities enable counselors and others to:

- determine the impact of the guidance program on students, faculty, parents, and school climate;
- know if they are accomplishing their goals;
- identify what remains to be accomplished;
- identify effective components of the program;
- eliminate or improve less effective components of the program;
- adapt and refine the guidance program and implementation process;
- identify unintended consequences of the program (both positive and negative);
- identify other areas that need to be addressed;
- establish goals for the counselors' professional development;
- determine staffing needs and workload adjustments;
- determine additional resources required to adequately carry forward the program; and
- provide accountability information to educators and the community.

Basis of the Evaluation

The program definition and design provides clear standards for evaluation of both the program and the staff who conduct it. The program definition identifies the students or other persons and groups served by the program, identifies the competencies acquired as a result of participation in the program, and describes how the program is organized to help students learn and use these competencies. The definition also dictates the appropriate roles for the school counselor, and the job description specifies those roles for carrying out each counselor's specific responsibilities in implementing the program. The design outlines the program's structure and priorities such as determining who the high priority students are, the primary outcomes to be achieved, and establishing weightings for resource allocation.

Questions to Be Answered Through Evaluation

In this section, four categories of evaluation questions are suggested as a minimum number for evaluating the effectiveness of the developmental guidance and counseling program.

1. How effective have the program improvements been?
2. Does the program meet the program standards?
3. Have students become competent in the high priority content areas?
4. How well are counselors performing their roles?

At the local level, additional questions may be generated.

Considerations for answering the four categories of questions in evaluating the developmental guidance and counseling program and the school counselor staff are provided below.

1. *How effective have the program improvements been?*

Program improvement identifies the objectives and strategies to be accomplished through implementation of a list of tasks within an expressed time line. It provides a basis for determining whether the objectives and the time lines were met. Further, it supports judgements as to the effectiveness of the improvements in attaining goals and provides the basis for the next set of program improvements.

As a result of designing program improvements, new expectations for counselor performance emerge. These expectations form the basis for the setting of professional growth goals by school counselors. Similar to program improvement plans, professional growth plans establish the objectives for developing specific skills or knowledge, identify the strategies for attaining the objectives, and specify the time lines.

2. *Does the program meet the program standards?*

A fully implemented and supported guidance and counseling program will have a measurable impact on students, parents, faculty, and the school climate. Because the evaluation is based on explicitly stated standards, data collection and analysis will describe the level of implementation of the program, the effectiveness of the guidance program, and the level of goal attainment.

The program standards can be categorized into two types: (a) qualitative design standards and (b) quantitative design standards. Examples of qualitative design standards for each component of the guidance program are:

- *Guidance Curriculum*: The specific curriculum standards to be emphasized, the specific competencies to be developed, and the age-appropriate results to be reached by students.
- *Responsive Services*: The systematic and timely response to requests from students.
- *Individual Planning*: The listing of activities which facilitate individual planning at priority grade levels.
- *System Support*: The listing of activities and programs which best meet the school community's needs and use the counselors' professional skills.

Examples of quantitative design standards are the same for each component of the guidance program. The standards are expressed in terms of (a) the numbers of students/staff/parents served by each program component, (b) the percentage of counselor time allocated to each component, and (c) the amount of time counselors use each of their professional competencies.

A data-gathering process is indicated in order to ascertain whether the program standards have been met. Assessment by pre-activity versus post-activity comparisons, short answer questionnaires, essays, improved attendance, scores and grades, and improved student behaviors provides quantitative data, while attitude surveys, verbal feedback, parent and teacher observations, case studies, and checklists provide qualitative data about the impact of the program.

Data to demonstrate implementation of the **guidance curriculum** activities might include information about the guidance curriculum schedule, the number of students and classes which received services, and the demonstrated competencies achieved by the students. This documentation should not require appreciably more paperwork than records counselors normally keep of services performed.

Responsive services performed by the counselor might be a tally of students seen individually and in groups, the kinds of concerns they had, and the number of referrals to other agencies and alternative programs. The number of parent consultations which were conducted and the kinds of concerns they had such as schedules and other in-school concerns, family problems, and/or student behavior should also be collected. Information regarding student and/or parent satisfaction and time lapse between request and follow-through is useful in determining the optimum student/counselor ratio.

Individual planning can be demonstrated by listing the types of information and activities provided for each grade level, and the student plans and/or schedules which result from those activities.

System support can be demonstrated by a listing of involvement in schoolwide or districtwide activities either as a leader or participant, the number of clients served, the kinds of consultation provided and level of satisfaction, as well as the individual professional development plan developed by the counselor.

3. *Have students become competent in the high priority content areas?*

Evaluating student competency development in a guidance program is critical to keeping the program efforts on target and efficient while simultaneously making the best use of the resources available. Effective evaluation must be carefully planned to include needs assessment and development of goals, targeting competencies, specifying expected results by grade level and setting objectives for specific activities.

Methods of Data Generation

The measurement of students' learning in a guidance program can be done both quantitatively and/or qualitatively. Data can be gathered both formally and informally. The measurement technique must be appropriate to the objective being measured.

Learning Domain	The Measurement Technique
Cognitive	Tests: objective, true-false, multiple choice, matching, short answers, essays, academic grades
Affective	Structured reaction questionnaires, open-ended questions, ratings, checklists, rankings, multiple choice, inventories, art work, attitude surveys

Other methods which can be used to gather multifaceted data about student growth include case studies, pretest-posttest comparisons, participant-nonparticipant (control group) comparisons, goal-attainment scaling, and follow-up studies.

4. *How well are the counselors performing their responsibilities?*

Because the quality of the guidance program is inextricably linked with the performance of the school counselor, counselor performance evaluation is critical to the improvement and maintenance of the developmental guidance and counseling program. The developmental guidance and counseling program framework also includes standards for the counselor's job performance, expressed in the responsibilities of the professional school counselor and in each counselor's specific job description in the local program.

Using the counselor's job description as a guide, a relevant performance evaluation system and instrument can be used. School counselors should be appropriately supervised. Whenever possible, evaluations of school counselors' performance should be the responsibility of certified counselors or someone specifically trained in school counselor supervision and evaluation.

The goal of performance evaluation is for each staff member to reach optimum competence in using their professional skills. Delineating these skills and using them as indicators of quality performance are critical to meaningful counselor evaluation. Based on the standards and on observable and measurable behaviors, counselors' performance is rated from clearly outstanding to unsatisfactory.

As with the other kinds of evaluation, the purpose of a counselor performance evaluation system and the evaluation instrument is to provide the data and the vehicle for drawing conclusions and making decisions/recommendations/plans. A primary use of counselor performance evaluation is to identify competencies that are strong and those that need strengthening for each counselor, with the latter becoming targets for professional growth plans.

A counselor performance evaluation is based on roles and related competencies needed to implement a developmental guidance and counseling program. The TEA recommended evaluation instrument may be used and tailored to fit the local guidance program and designated responsibilities of the counselors.

Counselor performance evaluation is done as exemplified below.

- *Evaluation Question:* How does this counselor's use of relevant competencies rate according to district/professional standards?
- *Audience:* 1) counselor, 2) counselor supervisor, 3) school system.
- *Data to Answer the Question:* techniques for data-gathering include written reports, calendars (weekly, monthly, yearly), records and data presentations, questionings, observations (live or recorded), logs, self-reports, feedback, materials used (e.g., counseling session plans, guidance session handouts), accuracy of information presented.
- *Standards:* relevant competencies, performance indicators, and descriptors included in the evaluation form.
- *Conclusions:* expressed as ratings and based on the data gathered through the above-mentioned techniques.
- *Contextual Considerations:* (possibilities: new counselors, counselors in new situations such as new schools, new administrators, and the emergence of new challenges; unique, short-term personal problems which make the evaluation period unusual).
- *Recommendations:* can be explicitly stated by relating them to performance indicators and descriptors; improvement needs identified at the indicator level are deficiencies; improvement needs identified at the descriptor level indicate possible performance enhancements.
- *Plans for Action:* are developed as professional growth plans to address needs for performance improvement.

Audiences/Uses for the Evaluation

Once questions to be answered by the evaluation have been developed, the next step in the evaluation process is to determine who will receive the evaluation results and who will use the evaluation results.

The evaluation results should be reported to:

- (a) those who have been recipients of the program such as students, parents, and teachers;
- (b) those who have implemented the program such as counselors and guidance program managers;
- (c) those who have administered or set policy such as administrators, superintendents, school board members; and
- (d) those who have supported the program, either financially or personally such as taxpayers, volunteers, and community groups.

Evaluation results should be used to make further program improvements. Counselors and administrators will use the results to make modifications to the program and to compare the implemented program with the program standards. Administrators and policy-makers will utilize the evaluation to make decisions about the content, quality, and effectiveness of the services and to allocate financial and staffing resources for the program. They also will utilize the information to describe the program to the community or to seek the community's support for program improvements.

Conclusion

In summary, evaluation is an on-going process of program renewal. It begins with the development of questions to be answered by the evaluation and ends with making and acting on the recommendations generated by the findings. It:

- is based on explicitly stated standards;
- uses data to answer the evaluation questions;
- draws conclusions after analyzing the data and the context in which the data was gathered;
- answers questions about the effectiveness of the whole guidance program and of the four individual components of the program; and
- is the basis for making decisions about future program improvements and directions.

Acknowledgements

Guidance Advisory Committee 2004

Dr. Patricia Henderson, former Director of Guidance Northside ISD and Counselor Educator University of Texas at San Antonio and Our Lady of the Lake University, San Antonio	John Lucas Guidance and Counseling Texas Education Agency
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Guidance Advisory Committee 1998

Our sincere appreciation to the 1998 Guidance Advisory Committee for their willing and able assistance in the revision of the guide.

Dr. Carolyn Crawford Department Head, Counselor Education Lamar University	Archie McAfee High School Principal Plano ISD
Rosella DeAnda Elementary Assistant Principal Socorro ISD	Linda Rhone Middle School Principal Sabine ISD
Sydna Gordon Parent Garland, TX	Sarah Smith Parent Austin, TX
Karen Greenwade President-elect Texas School Counseling Association	Dr. Larry Sullivan Superintendent Texarkana ISD
Dr. Carolyn Greer President-elect Texas Counseling Association	Constance Thompson Director of Elementary Guidance Houston ISD
Dr. Patricia Henderson Director of Guidance Northside ISD	Jesus Vela, Jr. Coordinator, Guidance and Counseling Mission ISD
Robin Hightower Parent Midland, TX	Melinda Wheatley Parent San Antonio, TX
Dr. Hardy Murphy Assistant Superintendent Fort Worth ISD	

Guidance Advisory Committee 1989-90

This guide was developed under contract with the Texas Association for Counseling and Development and written by Dr. Patricia Henderson, Director of Guidance, Northside Independent School District. A Guidance Advisory Committee was established to offer input into the development of this document. We wish to express our sincere appreciation to the Guidance Advisory Committee for their help in developing this document.

Sandra Aikins
Counseling Coordinator
Plano ISD

Genevieve Brown
Coordinator of Secondary Education
Sam Houston State University

Della Berlanga
Coordinator for Guidance
Corpus Christi ISD

Sylvia Clark
Vocational Guidance Specialist
Texas Education Agency

Delia Garcia
Assistant Superintendent, Instruction
Fort Bend ISD (retired)

Jeanette Honey
High School Counselor
Abilene ISD

Elayne Hunt
Coordinator of Guidance
Ector County ISD

Jesse Juarez
Junior High School Counselor
Laredo ISD

Richard Lampe
Assistant Professor
Department of Counseling and Guidance
East Texas State University

Bill Lawson
Director of Guidance
Temple ISD

Carolyn Melton
Past-President, Texas School Counselor Association
Director, Student Assistance Program
Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD

Mary Martha Miller
Director of Guidance
Los Fresnos ISD

Hardy Murphy
Director, Affirmative Action
Fort Worth ISD

Gail Revis
Director, Elementary Guidance
Houston ISD

Gloria Richards
Director of Guidance
Austin ISD

Martha Salmon
President
Texas Association for Counseling and Development
Executive Director, The College Board

Allen Sullivan
Executive Director, Student Support Services
Dallas ISD

Jesse Zapata
Associate Professor, Counseling Education
University of Texas at San Antonio

The Guidance Advisory Committee of 1989-90 held meetings on November 8, 1989, February 13, 1990, and February 22, 1990.

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Appendix A:

EDUCATION CODE

CHAPTER 33. SERVICE PROGRAMS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

SUBCHAPTER A. SCHOOL COUNSELORS AND COUNSELING PROGRAMS

§ 33.002. CERTIFIED COUNSELOR.

- (a) This section applies only to a school district that receives funds as provided by Section 42.152(i).
- (b) A school district with 500 or more students enrolled in elementary school grades shall employ a counselor certified under the rules of the State Board for Educator Certification for each elementary school in the district. A school district shall employ at least one counselor for every 500 elementary school students in the district.
- (c) A school district with fewer than 500 students enrolled in elementary school grades shall provide guidance and counseling services to elementary school students by:
 - (1) employing a part-time counselor certified under the rules of the State Board for Educator Certification;
 - (2) employing a part-time teacher certified as a counselor under the rules of the State Board for Educator Certification; or
 - (3) entering into a shared services arrangement agreement with one or more school districts to share a counselor certified under the rules of the State Board for Educator Certification.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995. Amended by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1276, § 6.005(a), eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

§ 33.003. PARENTAL CONSENT. The board of trustees of each school district shall adopt guidelines to ensure that written consent is obtained from the parent, legal guardian, or person entitled to enroll the student under Section 25.001(j) for the student to participate in those activities for which the district requires parental consent.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 33.004. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT.

- (a) Each school shall obtain, and keep as part of the student's permanent record, written consent of the parent or legal guardian as required under Section 33.003. The consent form shall include specific information on the content of the program and the types of activities in which the student will be involved.
- (b) Each school, before implementing a comprehensive and developmental guidance and counseling program, shall annually conduct a preview of the program for parents and guardians. All materials, including curriculum to be used during the year, must be available for a parent or guardian to preview during school hours. Materials or curriculum not included in the materials available on the campus for preview may not be used.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

§ 33.005. DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAMS. A school counselor shall work with the school faculty and staff, students, parents, and the community to plan, implement, and evaluate a developmental guidance and counseling program. The counselor shall design the program to include:

- (1) a guidance curriculum to help students develop their full educational potential, including the student's interests and career objectives;
- (2) a responsive services component to intervene on behalf of any student whose immediate personal concerns or problems put the student's continued educational, career, personal, or social development at risk;
- (3) an individual planning system to guide a student as the student plans, monitors, and manages the student's own educational, career, personal, and social development; and
- (4) system support to support the efforts of teachers, staff, parents, and other members of the community in promoting the educational, career, personal, and social development of students.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995. Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1487, § 2, eff. June 17, 2001.

§ 33.006. COUNSELORS.

- (a) The primary responsibility of a school counselor is to counsel students to fully develop each student's academic, career, personal, and social abilities.
- (b) In addition to a school counselor's responsibility under Subsection (a), the counselor shall:
 - (1) participate in planning, implementing, and evaluating a comprehensive developmental guidance program to serve all students and to address the special needs of students:

- (A) who are at risk of dropping out of school, becoming substance abusers, participating in gang activity, or committing suicide;
 - (B) who are in need of modified instructional strategies; or
 - (C) who are gifted and talented, with emphasis on identifying and serving gifted and talented students who are educationally disadvantaged;
- (2) consult with a student's parent or guardian and make referrals as appropriate in consultation with the student's parent or guardian;
 - (3) consult with school staff, parents, and other community members to help them increase the effectiveness of student education and promote student success;
 - (4) coordinate people and resources in the school, home, and community;
 - (5) with the assistance of school staff, interpret standardized test results and other assessment data that help a student make educational and career plans; and
 - (6) deliver classroom guidance activities or serve as a consultant to teachers conducting lessons based on the school's guidance curriculum.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995. Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1487, § 3, eff. June 17, 2001.

§ 33.007. COUNSELING REGARDING HIGHER EDUCATION.

- (a) Each counselor at an elementary, middle, or junior high school, including an open-enrollment charter school offering those grades, shall advise students and their parents or guardians regarding the importance of higher education, coursework designed to prepare students for higher education, and financial aid availability and requirements.
- (b) During the first school year a student is enrolled in a high school or at the high school level in an open-enrollment charter school, and again during a student's senior year, a counselor shall provide information about higher education to the student and the student's parent or guardian. The information must include information regarding:
 - (1) the importance of higher education;
 - (2) the advantages of completing the recommended or advanced high school program adopted under Section 28.025(a);

- (3) the disadvantages of taking courses to prepare for a high school equivalency examination relative to the benefits of taking courses leading to a high school diploma;
- (4) financial aid eligibility;
- (5) instruction on how to apply for federal financial aid;
- (6) the center for financial aid information established under Section 61.0776;
- (7) the automatic admission of certain students to general academic teaching institutions as provided by Section 51.803; and
- (8) the eligibility and academic performance requirements for the TEXAS Grant as provided by Subchapter M, Chapter 56, as added by Chapter 1590, Acts of the 76th Legislature, Regular Session, 1999.

Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1223, § 1, eff. June 15, 2001.

Appendix B:

School Districts: Commissioner's Rules Concerning Counseling Public School Students

§61.GG.

Chapter 61. School Districts

Subchapter GG. Commissioner's Rules Concerning Counseling Public School Students

Statutory Authority: The provisions of this Subchapter GG issued under the Texas Education Code, §33.007, unless otherwise noted.

§61.1071. Counseling Public School Students Regarding Higher Education.

- (a) In accordance with Texas Education Code (TEC), §33.007, a counselor shall provide certain information about higher education to a student and a student's parent or guardian during the first year the student is enrolled in a high school or at the high school level in an open-enrollment charter school and again during the student's senior year.
- (b) The information that counselors provide in accordance with subsection (a) of this section must include information regarding all of the following:
 - (1) the importance of higher education, which:
 - (A) includes workforce education, liberal arts studies, science education, graduate education, and professional education to provide broad educational opportunities for all students;
 - (B) furthers students' intellectual and academic development; and
 - (C) offers students more career choices and a greater potential earning power;
 - (2) the advantages of completing the recommended high school curriculum or higher, including, at a minimum, curriculum programs which:
 - (A) provide students with opportunities to complete higher-level course work, particularly in mathematics, science, social studies, and languages other than English, thereby:
 - (i) increasing students' readiness for higher education and reducing the need for additional preparation for college-level work;
 - (ii) preparing students for additional advanced work and research in both career and educational settings;
 - (iii) allowing students, in certain instances, to receive college credit for their high school course work; and
 - (iv) enabling students to be eligible for certain financial aid programs for which they would otherwise be ineligible (e.g., the TEXAS grant program);
 - (B) enable students to receive an academic achievement record noting the completion of either the recommended program or higher; and

- (C) provide students who elect to complete the distinguished achievement program with an opportunity to demonstrate student performance at the college or career level by demonstrating certain advanced measures of achievement;
- (3) the advantages of taking courses leading to a high school diploma relative to the disadvantages of preparing for a high school equivalency examination, including:
 - (A) the progressive relationship between education and income; and
 - (B) the greater possibility for post-secondary opportunities (including higher education and military service) that are available to students with a high school diploma;
- (4) financial aid eligibility, including:
 - (A) the types of available aid, not limited to need-based aid, and including grants, scholarships, loans, tuition and/or fee exemptions, and work-study;
 - (B) the types of organizations that offer financial aid, such as federal and state government, civic or church groups, foundations, nonprofit organizations, parents' employers, and institutions of higher education; and
 - (C) the importance of meeting financial aid deadlines;
- (5) instruction on how to apply for financial aid, including guidance and assistance in:
 - (A) determining when is the most appropriate time to complete financial aid forms; and
 - (B) completing and submitting the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or any new version of this form as adopted by the U.S. Department of Education;
- (6) the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's Center for Financial Aid Information, including its toll-free telephone line, its Internet website address, and the various publications available to students and their parents;
- (7) the Automatic Admissions policy, which provides certain students who graduate in the top 10% of their high school class with automatic admission into Texas public universities; and
- (8) the general eligibility and academic performance requirements for the TEXAS grant program, which allows students meeting the academic standards set by their college or university to receive awards for up to 150 credit hours or for six years or until they receive their bachelor's degree, whichever occurs first. The specific eligibility and academic performance requirements, along with certain exemptions to these requirements, are specified in Chapter 22, Subchapter L, of this title (relating to Toward Excellence, Access and Success (TEXAS) Grant Program). The general requirements include:
 - (A) Texas residency;
 - (B) financial need;
 - (C) registration for the Selective Service or exemption from this requirement;

- (D) completion of the recommended high school program or higher or, in the case of a public high school that did not offer all of the courses necessary to complete the recommended or higher curriculum, a certification from the district that certifies that the student completed all courses toward such a curriculum that the high school had to offer;
- (E) enrollment of at least three-quarters time in an undergraduate degree or certificate program within 16 months of high school graduation, unless an allowable exemption is satisfied; and
- (F) no conviction of a felony or crime involving a controlled substance, unless certain conditions are met.

Source: The provisions of this §61.1071 adopted to be effective July 14, 2002, 27 TexReg 6027.

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COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

TITLE VI, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; THE MODIFIED COURT ORDER, CIVIL ACTION 5281, FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT, EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, TYLER DIVISION

Reviews of local education agencies pertaining to compliance with Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964 and with specific requirements of the Modified Court Order, Civil Action No. 5281, Federal District Court, Eastern District of Texas, Tyler Division are conducted periodically by staff representatives of the Texas Education Agency. These reviews cover at least the following policies and practices:

- (1) acceptance policies on student transfers from other school districts;
- (2) operation of school bus routes or runs on a nonsegregated basis;
- (3) nondiscrimination in extracurricular activities and the use of school facilities;
- (4) nondiscriminatory practices in the hiring, assigning, promoting, paying, demoting, reassigning, or dismissing of faculty and staff members who work with children;
- (5) enrollment and assignment of students without discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin;
- (6) nondiscriminatory practices relating to the use of a student's first language; and
- (7) evidence of published procedures for hearing complaints and grievances.

In addition to conducting reviews, the Texas Education Agency staff representatives check complaints of discrimination made by a citizen or citizens residing in a school district where it is alleged discriminatory practices have occurred or are occurring.

Where a violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act is found, the findings are reported to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education.

If there is a direct violation of the Court Order in Civil Action No. 5281 that cannot be cleared through negotiation, the sanctions required by the Court Order are applied.

TITLE VII, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 AS AMENDED BY THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 1972; EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11246 AND 11375; EQUAL PAY ACT OF 1964; TITLE IX, EDUCATION AMENDMENTS; REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 AS AMENDED; 1974 AMENDMENTS TO THE WAGE-HOUR LAW EXPANDING THE AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT ACT OF 1967; VIETNAM ERA VETERANS READJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1972 AS AMENDED; IMMIGRATION REFORM AND CONTROL ACT OF 1986; AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990; AND THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1991.

The Texas Education Agency shall comply fully with the nondiscrimination provisions of all federal and state laws, rules, and regulations by assuring that no person shall be excluded from consideration for recruitment, selection, appointment, training, promotion, retention, or any other personnel action, or be denied any benefits or participation in any educational programs or activities which it operates on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or veteran status (except where age, sex, or disability constitutes a bona fide occupational qualification necessary to proper and efficient administration). The Texas Education Agency is an Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer.

