

Office of Complaints, Investigations, & Enforcement

Exceptional Item #5



General Description:

To provide students, families, and taxpayers with assurances of ethical conduct in the school system through increased financial, assessment, and governance oversight.

Justification:

The creation of the Office of Complaints, Investigations & Enforcement is one recommendation from the State Auditor's Office (SAO) report, which was conducted at the request of the Commissioner of Education Michael Williams, regarding TEA's 2010 investigation of the El Paso Independent School District.

Specifically, the SAO report concluded that the Agency should create an office of complaints, investigations, and school accountability and appoint a senior executive officer to oversee that office. The senior executive officer should approve key decisions related to the overall investigative function, as well as individual investigations.

Audit: An Audit Report on the Texas Education Agency's Investigation of the El Paso Independent School District (Report Number 13-047): <http://www.sao.state.tx.us/reports/report.aspx?reportnumber=13-047>

Additional Information:

Didn't TEA recently receive funds for this office?

- In August 2014, the Legislative Budget Board and Office of the Governor approved TEA's request to transfer \$1 million dollars from the Foundation School Program to agency operations in 2015 in order to begin staffing this new office. With those dollars we were able to hire 15 of the 23 FTEs; however these funds will not become a permanent part of TEA's budget.

What happens if the exceptional item does not get funded?

- The agency needs these funds in order to fully staff the new office and make it 100% operational. If these funds were not provided, we would likely ask for the transfer of funds again and try to search for any other available funds within our current budget.

What will this money allow TEA to do?

- Prior to the formation of the Office and the hiring of the new staff, the agency conducted 12 special accreditation investigations in 2013-2014. With the additional funding and FTEs, TEA will be able to conduct 27 special accreditation investigations in 2014-2015 and an additional 9 investigations in 2015-2016, for a total of 36 on-site, special accreditation investigations per year.

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Funding Request:

- **FY 2016:** \$1,928,000
- **FY 2017:** \$1,928,000

- **Total:** \$3,856,000

Additional Details:

- **FTE Total Request:** 23
- **MOF:** General Revenue