



## 89th Legislative Session Platform

Mental Health America of Greater Houston empowers the community through mental health education, advocacy, and connection to care. We envision a future where mental health is prioritized, and every person lives a life of dignity, resilience, and hope.

### 1. **House Bill 2880 (Thompson): Mental Health Campus Designation (AWARE)**

The *Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education (AWARE)* designation recognizes campuses that have implemented strong mental health and wellness practices, including counselor support, educator training, community partnerships, and multi-tiered support systems. Texas has made significant strides in addressing mental health in schools, and HB 2880 acknowledges the districts leading the way. *HB 2880 celebrates campuses focused on student wellness, resilience, and psychological safety, creating supportive environments where students can excel academically and thrive in every aspect of life.*

HB 2880 allows Texas to highlight what schools are getting right while creating a clear pathway for schools that want to strengthen their students' wellness and resilience through robust, school-connected mental health supports. **With AWARE Campus Designation, schools improve access to mental health services by creating clear referral pathways, resource mapping, and points for parental engagement.**

### 2. **House Bill 3551 (Cunningham): Parental Rights for Discipline-Involved Youth**

Despite current statute TEC §37.023, which includes parents, districts often exclude them from the planning process due to the lack of mandatory language for parental engagement. Specifically, districts argue a "meeting" isn't required and are not obligated to involve parents in their child's return to campus, neglecting a basic parental right. *HB 3551 ensures parents can provide feedback and make reasonable decisions about their child's re-entry into the general education environment.*

As Governor Greg Abbott said, "In Texas, parents matter – and so do the needs of their children." Parents, especially those whose children are returning from DAEPs or JJAEPs, are best equipped to contribute to the re-entry planning process. **HB 3551 requires schools to involve parents in coordination meetings and to seek feedback and share discipline records, even if parents cannot attend in person.**

### 3. **House Bill 3536 (Thompson): Reauthorize the Mental Health Task Force**

The Collaborative Task Force on Public School Mental Health Services developed a framework for evaluating over 1,200 school districts' use of public funds for mental health supports. The Task Force is set to expire in December 2025. *HB 3536 extends the Task Force until 2031 and allows new memberships with terms while aligning its work with the Safe and Supportive Schools Program and addressing the need for strong community partnerships.*

Reauthorizing the Task Force ensures continued evaluation of state funds, maximizing their impact to create healthier school environments, improve student outcomes, and sustain mental health support systems. **HB 3536 helps districts use state funds effectively, fostering a transparent system that benefits all students and leads to lasting improvements in educational outcomes.**

#### **For questions or comments, please contact:**

Rebecca Fowler, Director of Public Policy and Government Affairs  
Mental Health America of Greater Houston  
Cell Phone: (512) 228-0205 | Email: [rfowler@mhahouston.org](mailto:rfowler@mhahouston.org)