

# Protect Dropout Recovery Schools

## The Problem

Dropout Recovery Schools (DRS) are public schools that help students who have dropped out of high school get back on track. Across Texas, 13% of public charter schools and 2% of ISD schools are DRS. Combined they serve nearly 30,000 students.

A DRS designation ensures the fair evaluation of those schools under the state's A-F accountability system. Right now, in order to receive that designation, schools must serve students in grades 9-12 and at least 50 percent of their students must be 17 years old. But data shows that 45 percent of high-school dropouts are 16 years old or younger. This means that schools may not qualify as a DRS despite serving large percentages of students who have dropped out.

## The Solution

Making minor changes to update the qualification requirements to be considered a DRS would ensure that the ISD and charter school campuses providing these specialized programs are evaluated fairly under the state's A-F accountability system. Dropout Recovery Schools are serving some of our most vulnerable students and perform a vital role in getting these students prepared for the workforce.

## SB 879 and HB 998 will:

Follow TEA recommendations by updating enrollment criteria and recognizing high schools as Dropout Recovery Schools based on how many of their students are 16 years old or older.

Krissel Rogriguez graduated from Premier High School - San Juan in 2019 with a Phlebotomy Technician Certification as part of the CTE program offered at the campus. With the industry-based certification and diploma she received from the ResponsiveEd school, Rodriguez was immediately hired as a phlebotomy technician at Knapp Medical Center in Weslaco. Rodriguez credits the program for giving her the focus and motivation to begin a meaningful career in healthcare.