To Honorary Senators

Statements follow that were given by Leroy Terrio and John Coffey, two of the board members for Charter School, Jean Massieu Academy of Garland, Texas.

1. JMA – Charter School provides instruction in ASL (American Sign Language) , and an ASL environment, to fulfill the requirements of the students' Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
2. The rating criteria for JMA does not take into account the percentage of Special Education students.
3. Alternative achievement tests and appropriate standards of measurement should be used for the students of JMA who hold a "Special Education" status.
4. Tests should be normed for the Special Education Students. In compliance with the students' IEP tests normed for Deaf / HH and Special Education students must be used to track the progress of such students. Specialized schools, such as JMA, cannot use a "one-size fits all" measurement tool, such as the TAKS for the entire student body. In cases where there are no standardized normed tests for a particular disability, criterion referenced tests must be used to track the progress of such a group.
5. Exemption Status: The Texas School for the Deaf is exempt from using the TAKS, however JMA *does not* have the exemption for their Deaf & Multi-HC Deaf students from taking the TAKS.

Therefore, JMA's board of directors have felt that JMA may have been harmed by having to give the test to also all Deaf & Multi-handicapped Deaf students the TAKS tests so it resulted in having JMA earning the *"Not Acceptable"* rating. JMA has tried to beat the odds by having the students make as big leap as possible, even if they had mostly transferred just within a year ago from local underachieving public schools.

JMA's board of directors pray that a unique charter school like JMA be considered while the Senate votes on the bill that may promptly kill this school, even though JMA provided better education for the Deaf & Multi-handicapped Deaf than the public schools had, where the Deaf were mainstreamed with the normal students.