Texas Special Education Continuing Advisory Committee Membership

- **Gwyn Boyter (Austin)** Stakeholder: Charter School representative. Term expires: February 1, 2015. Gwyn Boyter is superintendent of the University of Texas-University Charter School. She is a member of the American and Texas Associations of School Administrators, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and Texas Charter School Association Executive Council. She is also a member of the Phi Delta Kappa Professional Education Association and Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society in Education. Boyter received a bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degree in educational administration from the University of Texas.

- **Mel Capelo (Pasadena)** Stakeholder: School administrator. Term expires: February 1, 2013. Ismael "Mel" Capelo of Pasadena is an elementary school principal. He is a member of the Texas Council for Exceptional Children, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association, Texas Association of Gifted and Talented, and Texas Council for Administrators for Special Education. He is also a trustee of the Pasadena Knights of Columbus. Capelo received a bachelor's degree from the University of Texas Pan-American and a master's degree in educational administration from Texas Southern University. He is currently pursuing a doctorate degree from the University of Houston-Clear Lake.

- **Rose Marie Cruz (Laredo)** Stakeholder: Parent. Term expires: February 1, 2013. Rose Marie Cruz of Laredo volunteers as a special education advocate, helping to educate parents on their children's educational rights. Since 1984, Cruz has volunteered her services at schools in Germany, Hawaii, Georgia, and Texas. She is a former member of the District Education Improvement Committee for the United Independent School District and former member on the Textbook Review Committee for Texas in 2004. Cruz received a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Texas at San Antonio. She is a parent of a child with dyslexia, ADD, and dysgraphia.

- **Debra B. Emerson (Austin)** Stakeholder: Representative from child welfare agency responsible for foster care. Term expires: February 1, 2013. Debra Emerson is the child protective services state director for the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. She is a member of the National Association of State Adoption Programs, National Association of State Foster Care Managers, and Interagency Foster Care Committee. In Harris County, she formerly served on the Children's Assessment Center Partner Council and the Child Abuse Task Force. Emerson earned a bachelor's degree from Oregon State University and a master's degree from the University of Washington.

- **Julia Erwin (Montgomery)** Stakeholder: Parent. Term expires: February 1, 2013. Julia W. Erwin of Montgomery is a former sales representative for West Publishing Inc. She is a member of the State Bar of Texas and a past member of the Texas Young Lawyers Association. She is also an officer of the Stewart Creek Elementary Parent Teacher Organization and Autism Speaks, and a volunteer for Montgomery Little League. Erwin received a bachelor's degree from Texas Tech University and a law degree from the University of Houston.

- **Vickie Mitchell (Montgomery)** Stakeholder: Special Education Consultant. Term expires: February 1, 2015. Vickie Mitchell of Montgomery has worked in public schools, universities, Education Service Center, and as a consultant. She is a member of the National Division of Career Development and Transition (DCDT) and past president of the Texas DCDT. She is a member of the Texas A&M Project Advisory Committee for the Bridges to Career, the Institute for Person-Centered Practices a collaborative initiative between the University of Texas and Texas A&M, and past member of the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities. Dr. Mitchell received her bachelor's degree from Northwestern State University-Louisiana, her master's from Louisiana Tech University-Ruston, and doctorate from Texas A&M University-College Station.

- **Debbie Unruh (Austin)** was appointed, by Governor Rick Perry, as the Chief Ombudsman of the Independent Ombudsman's Office of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department in November 2010. Prior to this appointment, she served as the Jail Administrator and Captain of the Randall County Sheriff's Office for over 12 years. Debbie has a long history of public service and currently serves as a Governor's appointee on the Crime Victims' Institutes Advisory Counsel and to the Continuing Advisory Committee for Special Education. She serves on the Prisoner Re-Entry Project Advisory Board and is a member of Texans Who Care for Children, the National Ombudsman Association, Texas Ombudsman Association, and the Juvenile Justice Association. Ms. Unruh holds a BS from Wayland Baptist University, a BS from Newport Beach University, a Master Peace Officers Certification from Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officers Standards and Education (TCLEOSE) and a certification in mediation from the University of Texas. She has been recognized by the Women's Network for Outstanding Career Achievement.

- **Susan 'Stormi' Johnson (Palestine)** Stakeholder: Teacher. Term expires: February 1, 2015. Susan 'Stormi' Johnson is a diagnostician and special education teacher in the Palestine Independent School District and Anderson County Juvenile Detention Center. She is a member of the East Texas Diagnostician Association and Texas Educational Diagnostician Association. She is also board secretary of Anderson Cherokee Community Enrichment Services. Johnson received a bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at Tyler and a master's degree in communication from Stephen F. Austin State University, and completed her educational diagnostician certification from the University of Texas at Tyler.

- **Melissa Columbus Keller (Lakeway)** Stakeholder: Parent. Term expires: February 1, 2015. Melissa Columbus Keller is an advocate for children with special needs. She is a member of the National Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments, Deaf-Blind Multihandicapped Association of Texas, Texas Parent 2 Parent, and U R our Hope. Her professional career consisted of working for former U. S. Congressman Henry Bonilla and Texas Railroad Commissioner Charles R. Matthews. Keller received a bachelor's degree from the University of Texas of the Permian Basin and a master of business administration from St. Edward's University.

- **Geralda Morales-Whittemore (Brownsville)** Stakeholder: School administrator. Term expires: February 1, 2013. Geralda Morales-Whittemore is an assistant principal in the Brownsville Independent School District. She is a former teacher and guidance counselor, and past president of the Tip of Texas Counseling Association. Morales-Whittemore received a bachelor's degree and master's degrees in guidance and counseling, and supervision and administration from the University of Texas at Brownsville.

- **Nagla Moussa (Plano)** Stakeholder: Parent. Term expires: February 1, 2015. Nagla Moussa is a teacher at the Art Workshop. She is president of the National Autism Association of North Texas, chair of the Lifepath Systems Advisory Board, and a member of the Arc of Texas Government Affairs Committee. She is also a member of the National Autism Association, University of North Texas Autism Task Force, Arc of Dallas, and Easter Seals Autism Project and Human Rights Campaign. Moussa received a bachelor's degree from East Texas State University.

- **Heather Shults (White Settlement)** Stakeholder: Private School representative. Term expires: February 1, 2015. Heather Shults is a paralegal at the Law Office of J. Frank Thompson. She is a volunteer with the Down Syndrome Partnership of Tarrant County. Pulido received a bachelor's degree from Kaplan University.

- **Diane Taylor (Stephenville)** Stakeholder: Higher Education Representative. Term expires: February 1, 2013. Diane Taylor of Stephenville is an associate professor of special education and coordinator of the special education program at Tarleton State University. She is a member of the International Association of Special Education and Council for Exceptional Children. She is a past member of the Academy for Educator Development and Texas A&M University System Regents' Initiative for Excellence in Education. Taylor received a bachelor's degree from Tarleton State University, and a master's degree and doctorate degree in special education from the University of North Texas.

- **Jennifer Taylor (Houston)** Stakeholder: Student. Term expires: February 1, 2013. Jennifer L. Taylor of Houston is a student at the University of Texas at Austin (UT). She played UT Women's Club Volleyball and was a member of the Texas Exes Student Chapter. She also volunteered at the Dell's Children's Medical Center and Habitat for Humanity.

- **Paul Watson (Flower Mound)** Stakeholder: Parent. Term expires: February 1, 2013. Paul Watson of Flower Mound is a captain and safety analyst with Southwest Airlines. He is a founding board member, committee chair, and campus liaison for the Greater Lewisville Special Education Parent Teacher Student Association. He is also past committee chair and den leader for the Forest Vista Elementary School Cub Scouts. Watson served in the U.S. Air Force and received a bachelor's degree from the U.S. Air Force Academy, and a master's degree in international relations from Troy State University.

- **Erin Wilder (Pflugerville)** Stakeholder: Representative from an Agency providing transition services. Term expires: February 1, 2015. Erin is a Transition Specialist for the Division for Rehabilitation Services, where she has worked for 10 years. In this role, she supports counselors working with the transition population through consultation, training, and providing resources. She received her bachelor's degree in Psychology from Texas Tech University and a master's of education in Rehabilitation Counseling from the University of Texas. She is also a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor.

- **Myeshi Williams-Briley (Spring)** Stakeholder: Parent. Term expires: February 1, 2013. Myeshi Williams-Briley is an instructor at the Prairie View A&M University Office of Continuing Education and CEO of the Education, Support, Help and Intervention Therapy Center. She is a speaker for the Epilepsy Foundation of Texas Community Education Program and a member of the Barbara Jordan Ambassador Program Health Communication and Media Partnership. She is also health and wellness coordinator at Fallbrook Church, and a board member of the Rotary Club of Northwest Houston Sunset. Williams-Briley received a bachelor's degree from the University of Phoenix, and a master's degree in human services from Springfield College.