

**Tri-County
Educational
Cooperative**

Tri-County Educational Cooperative
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Terry Wyatt, Executive Director

September 13, 2011

To Whom It May Concern;

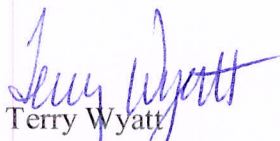
During the 2010-11 school year the Tri-County SSA, an organization of 10 school districts just north of Abilene, contracted with ACU to use two graduate students for the provision of speech therapy services to some of our schools. This partnership was extremely beneficial to Tri-County and the students in our districts. I like to think that it was a good work experience for the graduate students also. However, in addition to those expected benefits, we received another.

During the course of the year, Dr. Austin was one of the supervisors for the ACU graduate students. During the course of her duties, she conducted evaluations for students on her case load. As a matter of course in reviewing the student data and conducting the evaluations, Dr. Austin determined that our evaluation procedures, while technically correct, could improve in the area of dual language assessments. She requested a meeting with me, and we sat down together with my supervisor of speech services and my bilingual assessor.

In this meeting, Dr. Austin gave us excellent guidance on how we could adjust our assessment approach to ensure that we are properly evaluating students who have dual languages in their background. We took that information and put together some revisions to our assessment protocols. Now we have more confidence that we are properly assessing students in ways that ensure we are not misidentifying them as in need of special education, when in fact they need additional dual language assistance from their school.

Without Dr. Austin's efforts to make contact with us and to provide us the expertise and resources to make these adjustments, our program would not have made this growth step. I am appreciative of Dr. Austin's willingness to provide her professional assistance to our organization.

Sincerely,



Terry Wyatt
Executive Director, Tri-County SSA