



Texas Education CAFE™ Advocacy Network

Texas Policy Weekly Update

Each week, we are sharing the latest news about what's happening in Texas education policy and how you can make your voice heard.

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Previous issues

- Week of March 22, 2021: (English) (Español)
- Week of March 29, 2021: (English) (Español)
- Week of April 5, 2021: (English) (Español)
- Week of April 12, 2021: (English) (Español)

<u>Make sure you keep receiving these notices by subscribing to the Texas Education</u>
<u>CAFE Advocacy Network!</u>

Coming Up: Week of April 19

Hearings this week will address:

- Creating a statewide strategic plan for high-quality bilingual education
- Supporting the bilingual educator workforce through high school career options
- Bill that harms students and promotes discrimination by sex and gender identity in school athletics
- Creating a special education voucher program for supplemental services
- Advancing inequitable and narrowed curriculum standards and constraints on teachers



You can watch the hearings live online. Each hearing covers multiple bills (click the links below to see the agendas). For hearings in the Texas House, you can submit comments about any of the bills being discussed during the hearing using an online portal (even if they've moved on to a different bill).



Monday, April 19

Higher Education Committee 10:30 a.m. (See notice)

Tuesday, April 20

Public Education Committee 8:00 a.m. (See notice)

Wednesday, April 21

Higher Education Committee 7:30 a.m. (See notice)

Watch hearings live

Watch past hearings



Monday, April 19

State Affairs Committee 9:00 a.m. (See notice)

Tuesday, April 20

Senate Education Committee 9:00 a.m. (See notice)

Wednesday, April 21

Higher Education Committee 8:00 a.m. (See notice)

Watch hearings live

Watch past hearings

Submit Your Comments this Week

IDRA holds virtual office hours to walk you through the process of submitting public comments online

Every Monday afternoon, IDRA helps students, families, educators and community members submit their own comments on education bills being debated by Texas lawmakers that week. #ShareYourStory

Wirtual Office Hours

Got 15 minutes to spare? Join us anytime between 4:30 - 5:30 to advocate for yourself, students and public schools!

- Get into appropriate education bills - Write your story
- See how to use the comment portal - Submit your position enline for Texas legislators!

Mondays @ 4:30 pm cdt

Sign up here:
https://ldra.news/Mondays

Education Policy Testimony Help -

What happens during IDRA's virtual office hours?

- Get information on bills that will be heard by lawmakers that week.
- Summarize your own story and how a proposed bill would impact schools in your community.
- See how to use Texas' online public comment portal so you can share your thoughts and ideas with lawmakers. Submit your comments!

Mondays • 4:30-5:30 pm cst Bilingual event in English & Spanish

Register Now!

Register once to get the link and come back any time.

Note: IDRA will assist with bill information and the comment process, not on influencing a participant's position.

Video Advocacy Campaign

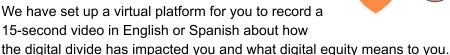
Digitally Divided, Community United

Students, Parents, Educators: How has the digital divide impacted you?

We need your voice! Record a 15-minute testimony

A new digital equity video campaign will uplift the voices of Texas community members impacted by the digital divide.

The Texas Legislature is considering measures to support broadband access. Using a virtual platform, we are inviting students, families, community members and educators to share their stories about how the digital divide has impacted their learning and their lives. Education equity is a key component of the digital divide.



It's a fun way to have an impact!

Get details

Highlights from Last Week



Araceli Garcia, IDRA **Education Policy** Fellow, testified to the Texas Senate **Education Committee** for SB 2066 on April 15, 2021, to change the language used in the Texas Education Code to label students from "limited English proficient" to the more asset-based "emergent bilingual."

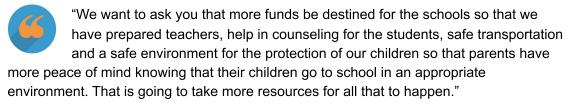


Parents submitted their own testimony about school funding. Here are excerpts:



"I'm asking for resources so that all districts have trained teachers so that all students can achieve a high level."

Raquel Negrete



- Mari Orozco



"We ask for funds so that all schools have more trained teachers to help all the children who have fallen behind."

Susana Mares



"Teachers are going to have a bigger job. They are going to need more psychologists to support them. With all that is happening, the pandemic, the confinement and everything, somehow is going to have collateral damage. So, you need allocate funds to have either train the teachers more or hire specialized personnel to treat anxiety and stress."

Brenda García

IDRA submitted the following testimony last week.

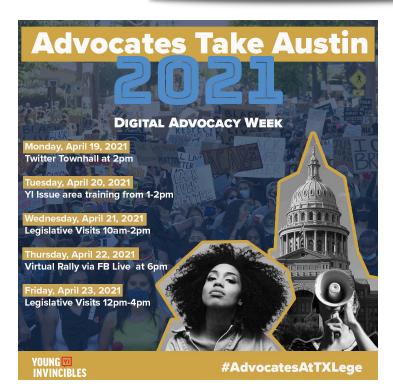
- SB 2066 Makes a Simple Change for a Big Impact to Emergent Bilingual <u>Students</u> – IDRA Testimony for SB 2066, presented to the Senate Education Committee, April 15, 2021
- HB 4403 Supports Student Advising for Dual Credit IDRA Comments on HB 4403, submitted to the House Higher Education Committee, April 15, 2021

- <u>Texas Must Create a Statewide Plan for Improving Bilingual Education</u> IDRA
 Testimony for SB 560 presented to the Senate Education Committee, April 12, 2021
- HB 3485 Makes Discipline Data More Accessible to Parents and Families –
 IDRA Testimony for House Bill 3485 presented to the House Public Education
 Committee, April 13, 2021
- Adopt HB 3638 to Establish an African American Studies Advisory Board –
 IDRA Testimony for HB 3638 presented to the House Public Education Committee,
 April 13, 2021
- HB 59 Strips Schools of the Local Funding They Need for Equitable and Adequate Education – IDRA Testimony against House Bill 59 submitted to the House Ways & Means Committee, April 12, 2021
- <u>Texas Must End Juvenile Curfew Ordinances to Help Break the School-to-prison Pipeline</u> IDRA Testimony for HB 561 submitted to the House Juvenile Justice and Family Issues Committee, April 12, 2021

The Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition submitted the following testimony last week.

<u>Suspending Nonessential Testing and High-Stakes Accountability During</u>
 <u>Disaster Supports Students and Communities</u> – TLEEC Written Testimony for
 HB 3668 submitted to the House Education Committee, April 13, 2021

Student Advocacy Week



Are you a young person in Texas ready to lead the fight for justice?

Starting Monday April 19, 2021, join Young Invincibles for #AdvocatesAtTXLege, a virtual advocacy week.

Students across Texas are pushing for a transformative health care and higher education agenda — from protecting financial aid to fighting for mental health support and student debt relief.

Students are coming together to win the changes our communities deserve! Activities include a Twitter Townhall, rally, legislative training, and opportunities to meet with offices!

See the schedule and register

Tools & Resources

Texas House Public Comment Portal

How to testify in the #txlege Twitter thread by the Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition (TLEEC)

How to Testify before the Texas Legislature, Infographic

<u>Learn more about IDRA's policy</u> <u>recommendations for Texas</u>

Join the Texas Education CAFE Advocacy Network!







See infographic

See infographic

