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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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Coming Up: Week of May 10

Hearings and activities this week will address:

- supporting bills to expand access to ethnic studies,
- working with partners to oppose bills that limit student engagement, and
- supporting the expansion of early college high school access.

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).



Thursday, May 13
Higher Education Committee
8:00 a.m. ([See notice](#))

[Watch hearings live](#)

[Watch past hearings](#)

Monday, May 10
Senate Education Committee
4:00 p.m. ([See notice](#))

Wednesday, May 12

Senate Higher Education Committee
9:00 a.m. ([See notice](#))

[Watch hearings live](#)

[Watch past hearings](#)

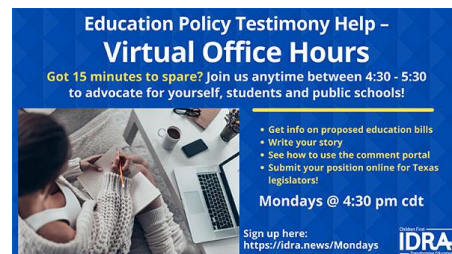
Submit Your Comments this Week

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

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!



Education Policy Testimony Help -
Virtual Office Hours
Got 15 minutes to spare? Join us anytime between 4:30 - 5:30 to advocate for yourself, students and public schools!

- Get info on proposed education bills
- Write your story
- See how to use the comment portal
- Submit your position online for Texas legislators!

Mondays @ 4:30 pm cdt

Sign up here:
<https://idra.news/Mondays>

IDRA
Institute for Democracy & Economic Freedom

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

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

Register Now!

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

Texas House to Vote on Bill that Limits Speech, Ideas and Participation in Schools

The Texas House vote that was expected last week on HB 3979 is now scheduled for **today**.

This is a very harmful bill that would prohibit Texas schools from discussing important topics related to race, gender and justice in social studies, government, civics and history courses. HB 3979 attempts to control students' and teachers' thoughts and discussions of current events and social justice issues in

schools. It mischaracterizes the important conversations about diversity and equity that are happening in schools, homes and workplaces across the country.

Additionally, the bill would prohibit schools from accessing private funding for certain curriculum development and materials and would prohibit students from participating in civics activities for course credit.

You can help! Call your Representative and ask them to vote AGAINST HB 3979!



Don't silence teachers

The Texas House will vote soon on HB 3979 that would prohibit instruction & classroom discussions about certain concepts related to race, sex, diversity & discrimination in social studies, history, government and civics courses.

See how HB 3979 conflicts with the TEKS
<https://idra.news/TEKSanalysis3979>



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Institute for Democracy & Educational Reform and Action

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4 ways HB 3979 would be an expensive mess...

- 1** It could have a huge price tag, **throwing out textbooks** and requiring new ones and teaching materials.
- 2** HB 3979 forces schools and the state to **rely only on tax money** to develop curriculum and training. No business or foundation investment will be allowed anymore.
- 3** HB 3979 causes **conflicts with existing TEKS**, which specifies what teachers must teach, that will have to be sorted out – costing more taxpayer money.
- 4** HB 3979's limits on free speech are **constitutionally questionable**, which will be expensive to defend in court.

 **Vote No on HB 3979** 

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Texas House: On the Floor Monday

Several education bills are scheduled for the floor of the Texas House today ([see notice](#), subject to change).

HB 1504, which would promote a robust and equitable curriculum for all students. [See IDRA testimony.](#)

HB 3979, which would limit free speech in social studies education and other elements that would hurt children's education. See story above.

HB 2802, which would allow TEA to seek an assessment waiver allowing districts to support students during a crisis. [See TLEEC testimony.](#)

HB 3485, which would make discipline data more accessible to parents and families. [See IDRA testimony.](#) [See video testimony.](#)

HB 4403, which would provide focused student advising for dual credit. [See IDRA testimony.](#)

HB 2344, which would authorize use of a writing portfolio assessment.

HB 3298, which would create a computer science strategic advisory committee and establish a computer science and technology applications professional development grant program for public school teachers.

HB 1776, which would require "founding documents" to be posted in all schools and that high schools offer a corresponding elective course

HB 144, which would require supplemental information in IEPs during COVID-19.

Texas House: On the Floor Tuesday

Several education bills are scheduled for the floor of the Texas House Tuesday ([see notice](#), subject to change).

HB 2554, which would further the inequitable practice of funneling students of color into vocational education. [See IDRA testimony.](#)

HB 1744, which would help to address the teacher shortage in bilingual education. [See IDRA testimony.](#) [See video testimony.](#)

HB 3430, which would create a grant program for community schools.

HB 4509, which would require supplemental information in IEPs during COVID-19.

Highlights from Last Week

Coalition Actions to Stop HB 3979

Coalitions across the state took steps to encourage policymakers to oppose HB 3979 (see story above).

The list is growing fast. Stay turned to IDRA & TLEEC social media accounts for updates:

- Twitter [@IDRAedu](#)
- Twitter [@TxTLEEC](#)
- Twitter [@IDRAeduFellows](#)
- Facebook [IDRAed](#)
- Instagram [IDRAed](#)

IDRA released its analysis: [HB 3979 Conflicts with Established TEKS and Proven Effective Teaching Strategies](#)

And the Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition released a factsheet: [HB 3979 would limit speech and engagement in Texas classrooms!](#)

Vote NO on HB 3979
HB 3979 would limit speech and engagement in Texas classrooms
OPPOSED BY:

- African American Chamber of Commerce of San Antonio
- ARISE Adelante
- American GI Forum, Miguel Hernandez Jr. Memorial Chapter
- Anti-Defamation League
- Bexar County Education Coalition
- Big Thought
- Breakthrough Central Texas
- Children's Defense Fund - Texas
- Clint ISD
- Coalition of Texans with Disabilities (CTD)
- Dallas Black Clergy for Safety Equity and Justice
- Dallas CORE
- Dallas ISD
- Dallas Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation
- Dignity for All Texas Students
- Easterseals Central Texas
- The Education Trust
- Every Texan
- The Excellence and Advancement Foundation
- Generation Citizen
- Fort Bend ISD Equity Coalition
- Fort Worth ISD
- Girls Empowerment Network
- Greater Arlington Chamber
- Houston Area Urban League
- Houston Community Voices for Public Education
- Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA)
- Jewish Federation of Ft. Worth & Tarrant County
- Latinos for Education
- Leadership ISD
- League of Women Voters of Texas
- Longview Chamber of Commerce
- Lumin Education
- Mansfield Area Chamber of Commerce
- McNeil Educational Foundation for Ecumenical Leadership
- Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)
- Mexican American School Board Members Association (MASBA)
- National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies (NACCS) - Tejas Foco
- National Association of Social Workers - Texas Chapter
- North Dallas Chamber of Commerce
- North Texas Commission
- ONE Houston
- Open Comal Schools Safety
- Pastors for Texas Children
- Plano Chamber of Commerce
- Richardson Chamber of Commerce
- Richardson ISD
- Shalom Austin
- Spark Change Project
- Stand for Children
- Texas Appleseed
- Texas American Federation of Teachers (Texas AFT)
- Texas Association for Bilingual Education (TABE)
- Texas Association for Chicanos in Higher Education (TACHE)
- Texas Association of Mexican American Chambers of Commerce (TAMACC)
- Texas Council for the Social Studies
- Texas Criminal Justice Coalition (TCJC)
- Texas Hispanics Organized for Political Education (HOPE)
- Texas League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
- Texas NAACP
- Texas Social Studies Supervisors Association
- Texas State Teachers Association
- Texas Urban Council of Superintendents
- Transformation Waco
- UnidosUS (formerly known as NCLR)
- United to Learn
- Uplift Education

May 10, 2021 1:00 pm

Video Advocacy Campaign

Digitally Divided, Community United

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

We need your voice! Record a
15-second testimony

Get details

Digitally Divided, Community United
Got 15 seconds?

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

The Texas Legislature is considering bills to support broadband access.

Join our video campaign!
Share your story about how the digital divide has impacted your learning & your life.

We need your voice!
Record a 15-second testimony in English or Spanish

It's a fun way to have an impact!

<https://idra.news/VideoAdvocacy>

IDRA
Transferring Education

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

[Learn more about IDRA's policy recommendations for Texas](#)

Join the Texas Education CAFE
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IDRA Education Policy Priorities for Texas

- ★ Fair Funding for Strong Public School Education
- ★ End Harmful Discipline to Create Safer Schools
- ★ Grow & Sustain School District Health
- ★ Excellent Education for Emergent Bilingual Students
- ★ College Preparation & Access that Expands Opportunities
- ★ A Comprehensive Equity Approach to Addressing COVID-19's Impact on Schools
- ★ Keep the Public in Public Education

<https://idra.news/TxEDPolicy1>

Children First
IDRA
Transforming Education

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: [\(English\)](#) • [\(Español\)](#)
- Week of April 19, 2021: [\(English\)](#) • [\(Español\)](#)
- Week of April 26, 2021: [\(English\)](#) • [\(Español\)](#)

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