



IDRA Policy Priorities for the 2023 Texas Legislative Session – Third Special Session

IDRA's mission is to achieve equal educational opportunity for every child through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college. To do this, IDRA works to promote educational justice, build excellent and equitable schools, and protect the civil rights of systemically-excluded students in Texas, particularly those who are Black, Latino and/or emergent bilingual students.

Put children first...



Secure fair school funding

Ensure excellent educational opportunities for emergent bilingual students

Promote culturally-sustaining school climates that support all students

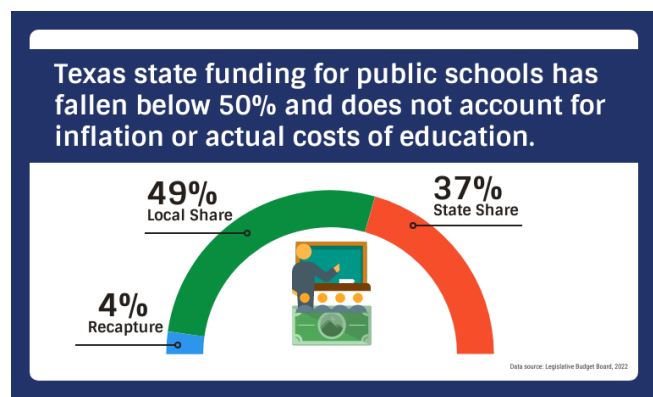
Create safer schools without harmful discipline practices

Secure

Fair School Funding for All Students

Public schools are essential to society's collective success. All students deserve to go to excellent, well-funded public schools that prepare them to access and succeed in college and beyond. But not all Texas schools have sufficient funding to provide students with the education and opportunities they deserve.

State funding for public schools remains below 50% and does not account for inflation or actual costs of education.



IDRA Policy Recommendations

The state school funding system should be based on actual costs to provide equitable education to students, including students of color, students from families with limited incomes, and students who require additional programs, supports and services. The legislature can make sure public school students have excellent, well-funded and well-resourced schools. During this special session, IDRA urges the legislature to...

- 🌱 Increase the basic allotment by at least \$1,000 and adjust for inflation.
- 🌱 Increase targeted student funding for students in bilingual education and special education.
- 🌱 Invest in evidence-based in-school programs, including Early College High Schools and high-impact intervention programs.
- 🌱 Keep public funds in public schools by opposing private school voucher programs (e.g., education savings accounts, tax credit scholarships).

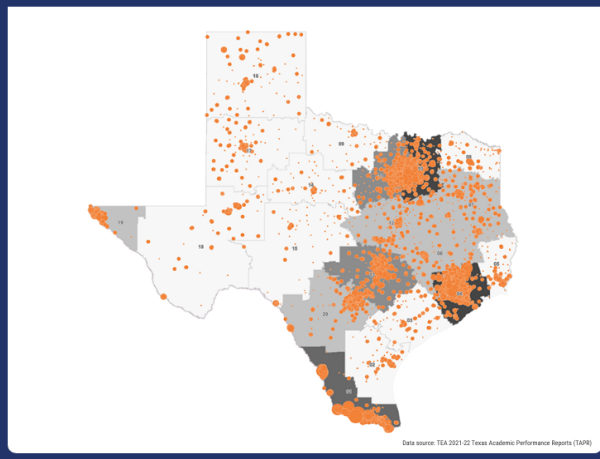


Ensure

Excellent Educational Opportunities for Emergent Bilingual Students

Emergent bilingual students have the right to excellent schools that support bilingualism and biliteracy in both a student's home language and English.

Certified bilingual education teachers are in short supply and have been for over 30 years.



Strong programs for emergent bilingual students are well-funded, have high-quality teachers, and accurately track students' progress and needs. But certified bilingual education teachers are in short supply and have been for over 30 years.

Now is the time to address the bilingual teacher workforce to support high-quality bilingual education programs for all eligible students.

IDRA Policy Recommendations

The legislature can make sure emergent bilingual students have equitable and excellent education. During this special session, IDRA urges the legislature to...

- Expand educator support for high-quality bilingual programs, training and technical assistance for educating emergent bilingual students.
- Address the bilingual teacher shortage through preparation and certification pathways.
- Ensure students who speak languages other than English, and their families, have access to quality public education without barriers regardless of citizenship.



Promote

Culturally-Sustaining Schools that Support All Students

All students deserve to learn in culturally-sustaining school environments that affirm their racial, ethnic, gender and other identities. Culturally-sustaining schools create positive, safe and supportive school climates for all students to receive high-quality educational opportunities to succeed.

Recent classroom censorship policies have made schools less safe or supportive for students, especially for students who are Black, Latino and identify as LGBTQ+, and are significantly more likely to experience identity-based discrimination.

Censorship policies weaken curriculum quality

IDRA surveys with educators show

Two thirds of students specifically request lessons on race...

and history, current events and forms of discrimination that they have experienced.

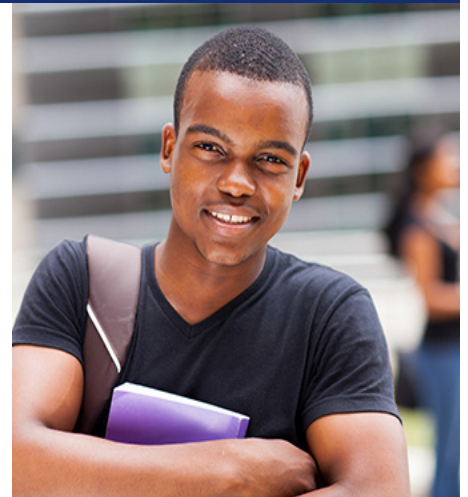
58%

of educators report negative impacts of censorship policies on classroom discussions, curriculum and content selection.

IDRA Policy Recommendations

The legislature can make sure students attend culturally-sustaining and supportive schools. During this special session, IDRA urges the legislature to...

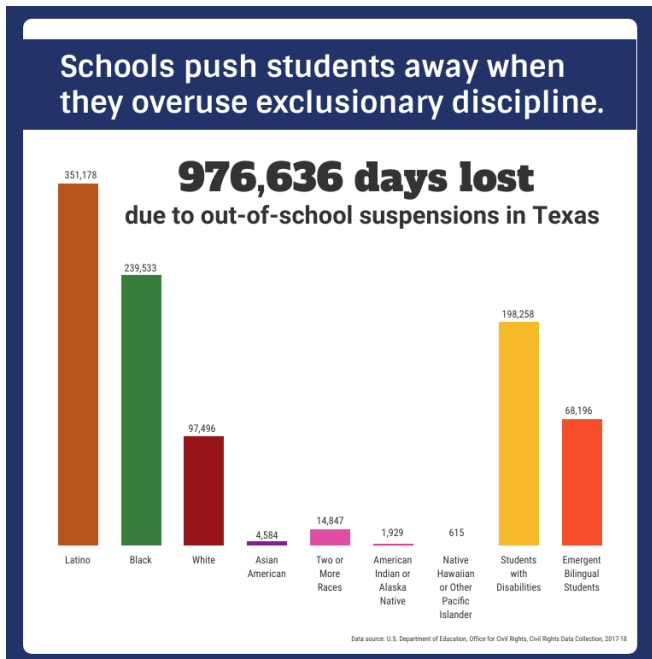
- Support opportunities for meaningful school family engagement plans.
- Strengthen laws designed to prevent and remedy identity-based bullying and harassment.



Create

Safer Schools Without Harmful Discipline



All students deserve safe and welcoming schools that do not use harmful discipline and school police to punish young people. To achieve this, schools must be able to invest in the people and programs that build strong campus climates and foster the relationships that keep everyone safe.



Yet, Texas schools regularly practice ineffective exclusionary discipline and costly surveillance strategies. Texas remains one of 19 states that allow corporal punishment of students. These policies do more harm than good.

IDRA Policy Recommendations

The legislature can make sure students have access to safe and welcoming schools. During this special session, IDRA urges the legislature to...

-  Invest in effective alternatives to exclusionary discipline that address root causes of challenging behavior.
-  Promote training for teachers and school staff in effective classroom management techniques.

