



Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition Urges State Leaders to Oppose Private Voucher Schemes

The Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition condemns state leaders' recent support to divert public funds from public schools under the false guise of "parental choice." Under a voucher plan, Texas families will be left with fewer choices, poorly funded public schools, and a diminished public education system dedicated to serving all, including those with the greatest needs. Public funds should remain in public schools, the critical hubs of our communities.

Gov. Greg Abbott recently announced his support for an education savings account plan, one type of voucher proposal, for "every child in the state of Texas." Later the same week, the State Board of Education rescinded its full-throated opposition to "all attempts to divert public dollars away from public schools in the form of vouchers."

The State Board of Education has decided to stay out of the voucher debate, leaving it to the Legislature – where numerous bills that would divert public funds to private schools have already been filed – to decide whether public funds will remain in public schools.

Public school advocates must stand firm against any attempts to pilfer money from our state's 5 million public school children. Support of or submission to any voucher plan is a betrayal of our students, their families, educators, and the communities we all live in.

Public funds should go to the schools that educate, care for, and raise our Texan children. Any plan to divert public money to private schools will reduce the services public schools can provide and make it harder to keep teachers we need employed. At the same time, children may be subject to more discrimination from private schools, which don't have to serve all students equally. This means that students with disabilities, in special education, bilingual education, or of diverse religious and gender identities could be denied admission and educational services.

We need not look far to see how voucher plans are playing out in other states. In Arizona, the vast majority of families applying for vouchers [already enroll students in private schools](#), letting the vouchers just act as a subsidy to those already attending. And even after decades of voucher systems in effect, researchers have found there is [no evidence that they significantly increase student achievement](#).

The best way to strengthen public schools is to strengthen public schools: invest in basic and weighted funding, support high-quality teachers and programs, and encourage authentic engagement with schools' diverse families and communities.

Public accountability won't follow the public money given to fund private school tuition. Private schools won't be required to accept all students, no matter their needs. The public won't be able to decide if the investment is worth it. Private schools will cherry-pick the easiest- and cheapest-to-serve students, leaving those with the greatest needs in public schools with reduced funding, further eroding our system.

Voucher plans don't bring Texas schools any closer to accountability, transparency, or serving all students. Let's support our public schools that stay in the hands of all Texans.

We call on policymakers, at the statehouse and State Board of Education, to staunchly and loudly oppose voucher plans in any form and to support the full funding of public schools.

For questions, contact TLEEC either through Jaime Puente, at Every Texan (puente@everytexan.org), Dr. Chloe Latham Sikes at IDRA (chloe.sikes@idra.org), or Fátima Menéndez at MALDEF (fmenendez@maldef.org).

References

Fischer, H. (September 8, 2022). Most applying for Arizona vouchers already go to private schools. Arizona Daily Star.
Spector, C. (February 28, 2017). Vouchers do not improve student achievement, Stanford researcher finds. Stanford University News.

The [Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition](#) (TLEEC) is a collaborative of over 32 organizations and individuals with the mission to improve the quality of public education for all children, with a focus on racial equity. We advocate at the local, state and national levels for high-quality teaching, curriculum and instructional practices and bilingual education for English learners, as well as fair funding and enhanced college access and success

TLEEC Member Organizations

Austin Justice Coalition	Texas Hispanics Organized for Political Education (HOPE)
ARISE Adelante	Texas League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
Breakthrough Central Texas	Texas NAACP
Children at Risk	Texas State Teachers Association (TSTA)
Coalition of Texans with Disabilities	The Arc of Texas
Dr. Hector P. García G.I. Forum	The Education Trust
Easterseals Central Texas	The Texas Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (TADOHE)
Ethnic Studies Network of Texas (ESNTX)	UnidosUS (formerly known as NCLR)
Every Texan	
IDRA	
McNeil Educational Foundation for Ecumenical Leadership	
MEASURE	
Mexican American Civil Rights Institute (MACRI)	
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	
San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	
Texas American Federation of Teachers	
Texas Association for Bilingual Education (TABE)	
Texas Association for Chicanos in Higher Education (TACHE)	
Texas Association of Mexican American Chambers of Commerce (TAMACC)	
Texas Center for Education Policy at the University of Texas – Austin	