
Education

Texas United Ways believe educational opportunities should be available to everyone so that all Texans reach their full potential and to secure a strong Texas workforce for years to come. After significant changes to the school finance system in 2019, as well as a school year with unprecedented challenges from the pandemic, lawmakers made some progress in stabilizing education funding, expanding early childhood opportunities, and strengthening the pathways to college and career for Texas students. Our network successfully championed a key bill to direct the tri-agencies—the Texas Education Agency, Texas Workforce Commission, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board—to develop a work-based learning strategic framework. We also supported the Texas Education and Workforce Alignment Act, which requires the tri-agencies to collaborate on state workforce goals and modernize data systems. Building on the early childhood wins from the last legislative session, state lawmakers set important student-teacher ratios for pre-kindergarten and strengthened pre-k partnerships. Lawmakers also supported several policies to improve bilingual education, increase student supports related to social emotional learning, and address student mental health.

Passed

Early Education

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| SB 2081 by Sen. Menéndez | ⋮ | This bill requires pre-k programs to have a class size limit of 22. |
| HB 725 by Rep. Patterson | ⋮ | This bill ensures pre-k eligibility for children who were in foster care in another state and have moved to Texas. |

Closing the Achievement Gap & Ensuring Equity in Education

- | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|
| SB 89 by Sen. Menéndez | ⋮ | This bill requires school districts to review and assess the impact of COVID-19 on students with disabilities and determine if compensatory education services are appropriate. |
| SB 462 by Sen. Lucio | ⋮ | This bill allows transportation allotment dollars to be used to transport a meal or instructional materials during a declared disaster. |

Passed

SB 560 by Sen. Lucio	This bill creates a strategic plan for the improvement and expansion of bilingual education.
SB 2066 by Sen. Menéndez	This bill updates the term “student of limited English proficiency” to the asset-based “emergent bilingual student.”
HB 30 by Rep. Talarico	This bill requires the Windham School District to provide an educational program for incarcerated minors that meets requirements for a high school diploma or that prepares people for the high school equivalency exam.
HB 159 by Rep. M. Gonzalez	This bill would add to the requirements for the educator preparation programs as well as staff development related to serving students with developmental, physical, and intellectual disabilities.
HB 1525 by Rep. Huberty	This omnibus education bill makes technical corrections based on the passage of HB 3 in 2019. It also delays the deadline for reading academy attendance to the 2022-2023 school year, requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to establish programs that support schools in implementing intensive supports to overcome the impact of the pandemic on student learning, allows funding for digital inclusion, increases Career & Technical Education (CTE) weights in the funding formula, allows school safety funds to be used on restorative justice practices, establishes a commission on special education funding, and strengthens guidance for pre-k partnerships.
HB 2256 by Rep. Guerra	This bill creates a bilingual special education certification to better serve with disabilities.

Key budget items include fully funding HB 3, the 2019 school finance bill; \$464 million in increases to formula funding based on changes in student weights/allotments; \$664 million for targeted programs to address student learning impacts from COVID-19. The budget also required legislative action to disburse \$16 billion in federal relief dollars, with a special legislative session likely to occur this fall.

Passed

School Climate & Student Well-being

SB 123 by Sen. Johnson

This bill requires integrating personal skills alongside positive character traits in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), with a focus on self-management, interpersonal skills, and responsible decision-making skills.

SB 179 by Sen. Lucio

This bill ensures school counselors spend more of their work time on supporting students and addressing student mental health needs.

SB 279 by Sen. Hinojosa

This bill requires that the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline & Crisis Text Line numbers be printed on student IDs for grades 6 and up, including higher education.

SB 2050 by Sen. Menéndez

This bill requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to adopt minimum standards for a school district's policy concerning bullying and to strengthen local district policy.

HB 2287 by Rep. S. Thompson

This bill allows the Collaborative Task Force on Public School Mental Health Services to request data from local entities and increases the amount of data that the task force reports on.

Pathways to College & Career

SB 165 by Sen. Blanco

This bill prohibits classes dropped because of COVID-19 in-person limitations from counting toward the dropped course limits.

SB 369 by Sen. Kolkhorst

This bill clarifies the parental opt-out option regarding the requirement to submit a financial aid application as a condition of high school graduation.

SB 788 by Sen. Creighton

This bill requires the tri-agencies to create a model data-sharing agreement for student data between secondary and post-secondary institutions.

Passed

SB 959 by Sen. Zaffirini	This bill prohibits classes dropped because of COVID-19 in-person limitations from counting toward the dropped course limits.
SB 1019 by Sen. Zaffirini	This bill clarifies the parental opt-out option regarding the requirement to submit a financial aid application as a condition of high school graduation.
SB 1102 by Sen. Creighton	This bill requires the tri-agencies to create a model data-sharing agreement for student data between secondary and post-secondary institutions.
SB 1230 by Sen. Taylor	This bill requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to make recommendations on how the student success-based funding can incorporate completion of shorter-term continuing workforce education programs.
SB 1277 by Sen. West	This bill requires the THECB to report student loan data and that it be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, sex, degree, type, and enrollment status in its annual financial aid report.
SB 1531 by Sen. West	This bill creates the Texas Reskilling and Upskilling through Education (TRUE) initiative aimed at strengthening workforce education.
SB 1615 by Sen. Bettencourt	This bill establishes the Texas Commission on Community College Finance.
HB 33 by Rep. Dominguez	This bill ensures students in dual credit courses receive academic advising.
HB 1247 by Rep. Lozano	This bill amends current law relating to formula funding and increases tuition rates for excess undergraduate credit hours at public institutions of higher education.
HB 1799 by Rep. Button	This bill expands the adult high school diploma charter school program.

Passed

HB 3767 by Rep. Murphy



This bill, also known as the “Texas Education and Workforce Alignment Act”, requires TEA, THECB, and TWC to collaborate on state workforce goals, designate career pathways, and modernize data systems.

Key budget items include \$486 million to fund higher education enrollment growth and \$110 million in additional higher education financial aid.