



## **|| The Truth About HB 3979 & SB 2202**

HB 3979/SB 2202 would limit the civic development of students as well as the ability of teachers and school leaders to guide student development in civic spheres. This legislation is in stark contrast to a core mission of the Texas public education system: ensuring all Texas children are able to fully participate now and in the future in the social, economic and educational opportunities of our state and nation.

### **Teachers are not teaching critical race theory.**

- i** Critical race theory is not a teaching method or a subject. It is a theoretical framework used by researchers to explore why people of color are marginalized. It is not a TEKS standard, not a learning outcome and not an academic subject in Texas public schools.

### **Teaching students about racism and white supremacy helps us move forward as a country.**

- i** Confronting the atrocities of the past helps students become more informed and empathetic civic leaders. A deeper understanding of our past helps students better understand the impact on our society today. With this knowledge, students will be able envision a better future. Scope answers questions including what will be done, what won't be done, and what the result will look like.

### **Avoiding discussions about the country's past and present does not help anyone.**

- i** If students are experiencing emotional distress, the solution is to help teachers understand how to best facilitate difficult conversations, not to remove the content.

### **The 1619 Project is not required in all history classes in Texas.**

- i** 1619 Project is a series of articles about the ways slavery shaped our nation. Very few teachers use 1619 Project articles as required instructional material. Those who do may be doing so in conjunction with state-approved curricular materials and textbooks, which means their students are receiving instruction from multiple perspectives on this topic.

### **Discussing controversial issues helps students develop empathy, learn respect for different points of view, and relate to the course content more deeply.**

- i** It also increases the rigor and depth of the instruction, which ultimately improves learning for students by developing their critical thinking, listening and speaking skills.

## **Students already learn about the founding documents and works of the country's founders in Texas social studies classrooms.**

- i** There are already many TEKS that require the teaching of the founding documents. The U.S. Constitution is mentioned at least 50 times in the K-12 TEKS and is explicitly addressed in almost every grade level.

## **The Texas Legislature does not set the state standards (TEKS) for education.**

- i** The Texas Education Agency and State Board of Education, in collaboration with educators from across the state, create the learning standards. There is a TEKS revision process for social studies already planned for fall of 2021. Legislating specific content will add an additional burden to revising the TEKS, which are typically created and reviewed by professional social studies educators and university professors who have detailed knowledge of TEKS vertical alignment and best practices in social studies scholarship.

## **Teachers have the training and expertise to determine how to teach the material.**

- i** Teachers are professionals who are trained in best educational practices and annually attend rigorous professional development to stay up-to-date on the TEKS and teaching complex content. Additionally, each community has its own unique issues and challenges, and teachers can determine locally what aligns with student interest and how to connect the local events or concerns to their content.

## **Public school districts and state agencies lack sufficient state funding for social studies, history, and civics professional development and curriculum development.**

- i** Many school leaders and teachers depend upon private funding to pay for professional development and curriculum development and already use these funds in ethical ways.