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Texas Policy Update

Statement from the Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition on the Passage of SB 3

(Austin • September 3, 2021) Last night, after two special sessions and despite statewide opposition from hundreds of students, teachers, parents, business leaders, historians and education experts, the Texas Legislature passed SB 3. The new classroom censorship bill moves now to the Governor's desk for his signature.

"We are disappointed that Texas policymakers spent yet another legislative session on this harmful, copycat policy that attempts to silence teachers, whitewash history, and deny students the opportunity to learn the truth," said Ana Ramón, IDRA deputy director of advocacy. "We will continue to work with the growing coalitions of individuals and organizations in Texas and across the country who are determined to create safe and culturally-sustaining schools for all students."

SB 3 supersedes the previous classroom censorship bill, HB 3979, that became law Wednesday. In addition to harmful restrictions on classroom discussions of race, racism and history, SB 3 institutes an expensive training program for educator compliance and repeals many important historical, diverse figures from learning standards in the prior bill.

Classroom censorship bills promote a revisionist U.S. history that whitewashes historical and current racial injustices and undermines the past and present experiences of Black, Indigenous, Latino and other communities of color. With this bill in place, students will not learn the content knowledge they need to critically analyze our society or learn how to act as empathetic leaders, advocates and allies in our democracy. They will no longer learn key historical facts or patterns.

Bills that whitewash curriculums like these, will have an intimidating effect on educators across the state. There have already been multiple instances of teachers and administrators being placed on leave and valued programs being canceled due to the chilling effect of similar legislation passed earlier this year. The additional burden of

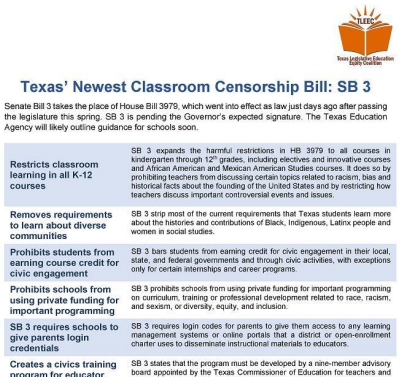
adhering to vague, restrictive, ahistorical, and at times contradictory learning standards is unfair to our teachers and students, especially as they continue to face challenges related to the pandemic.

This bill will make it harder for schools to address harmful discrimination experienced by students of color and to create safe, inclusive learning environments for all students.

We thank those lawmakers who took a stand against SB 3 for Texas youth and educators. This fight is not over, and we will continue to work with the many other organizations and individuals who continue to push toward justice for Texas students and educators.

For questions, please contact TLEEC through Ana Ramón (ana.ramon@idra.org). The **Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition (TLEEC)** is a collaborative of organizations and individuals with the mission to improve the quality of public education for all children, with a focus on racial equity. The coalition convenes organizations and individuals who advocate in the interest of public school students at the local, state and national levels.

Learn More



Texas' Newest Classroom Censorship Bill: SB 3

Senate Bill 3 takes the place of House Bill 3979, which went into effect as law just days ago after passing the legislature this spring. SB 3 is pending the Governor's expected signature. The Texas Education Agency will likely outline guidance for schools soon.

Restricts classroom learning in all K-12 courses	SB 3 expands the harmful restrictions in HB 3979 to all courses in kindergarten through 12th grades, including electives and innovative courses and African American and Mexican American Studies courses. It does so by prohibiting teachers from discussing certain topics related to racism, bias and historical facts about the founding of the United States and by restricting how teachers discuss important controversial events and issues.
Removes requirements to learn about diverse communities	SB 3 strip most of the current requirements that Texas students learn more about the histories and contributions of Black, Indigenous, Latinx people and women in social studies.
Prohibits students from earning course credit for civic engagement	SB 3 bars students from earning credit for civic engagement in their local, state, and federal governments and through civic activities, with exceptions only for certain internships and career programs.
Prohibits schools from using private funding for important programming	SB 3 prohibits schools from using private funding for important programming on curriculum, training or professional development related to race, racism, and sexism, or diversity, equity, and inclusion.
SB 3 requires schools to give parents login credentials	SB 3 requires login codes for parents to give them access to any learning management systems or online portals that a district or open-enrollment charter uses to disseminate instructional materials to educators.
Creates a civics training program for educator	SB 3 states that the program must be developed by a nine-member advisory board appointed by the Texas Commissioner of Education for teachers and

One Page Explainer:

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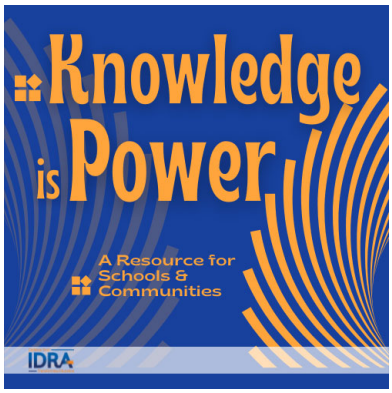

IDRA's new **Knowledge is Power** is a national resource for educators and advocates to help you do your work for equity and excellence in education in the midst of classroom censorship policies.

Watch our **website** for new resources, student testimony videos and news about how schools are navigating this new law.

Also see IDRA's statement today: **Texas Doubles Down on Classroom Censorship at Students' Expense**

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