

SHARE:

[Join Our Email List](#)

Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition Sends COVID-19 Recommendations to State Leaders

Multi-sector Coalition Cautions Leaders to Distribute Emergency Funds Equitably

San Antonio, April 23, 2020 - Today, the Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition (TLEEC) sent a letter to Governor Greg Abbott, Commissioner of Education Mike Morath, and Commissioner of Higher Education Harrison Keller, urging the leaders to distribute and monitor federal COVID-19 emergency relief funds equitably.

The groups recommended that emergency funds be targeted to address the needs of English learners, students of color, students living in poverty, students with disabilities and others who are disproportionately impacted by educational inequities.

"During these unprecedented times, what is certain is that historically-marginalized students are likely to be left behind if immediate interventions are not put into place by our state agencies," said Ana Ramón, deputy director of advocacy at the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA). "The virus is exacerbating existing inequities, which could be mitigated or made worse, depending on the actions taken by policymakers."



The coalition also requested that state leaders convene task forces and workgroups comprised of families, educators, stakeholders and advocates to advise on an equitable response to the educational needs of all students. Because very little guidance has been issued by the federal government on the equitable use of funds, coalition members are concerned that the unique needs of many students will not be met.

"Families, students, and other experts must be a part of the immediate- and long-term response to COVID-19," said Fátima Menéndez, legislative staff attorney at the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF). "State leaders cannot create responsive and fair policies that protect students' rights if they do not understand how all students are impacted."

TLEEC makes a number of recommendations to state leaders, including:

- Target emergency relief funds equitably;
- Support the social, medical, mental health and life needs of students;
- Ensure accountability and transparency in the use and distribution of funds; and
- Ensure protections for English learners.

[See a copy of the letter, including all recommendations.](#)

The organizations that signed on to the letter are:

- ARISE Adelante
- Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPP)
- Dr. Hector P. García G.I. Forum
- Houston Community Voices for Public Education
- Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA)
- McNeil Educational Foundation for Ecumenical Leadership
- 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
- Teach Plus Texas
- Texas American Federation of Teachers
- Texas Association for Bilingual Education (TABE)
- Texas Association for Chicanos in Higher Education (TACHE)
- Texas Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (TALAS)
- Texas Association of Mexican American Chambers of Commerce (TAMACC)
- Texas Center for Education Policy at the University of Texas - Austin
- Texas Hispanics Organized for Political Education (HOPE)
- Texas League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
- Texas NAACP
- UnidosUS (formerly known as NCLR)

Media contact: [Christie L. Goodman, APR, IDRA Director of Communications, christie.goodman@idra.org, 210-807-0016](#)



[SIGN UP FOR EMAILS](#)

The Intercultural Development Research Association is an independent, non-profit organization. Our mission is to achieve equal educational opportunity for every child through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college. IDRA strengthens and transforms public education by providing dynamic training; useful research, evaluation, and frameworks for action; timely policy analyses; and innovative materials and programs.

We are committed to the IDRA valuing philosophy, respecting the knowledge and skills of the individuals we work with and build on the strengths of the students and parents in their schools.