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Texas Education Policy Alert

Weekly Update

IDRA's weekly email alert includes legislative updates, opportunities for action to make your voice heard, bills to watch and other information through the session until it closes in late May.

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Coming Up: Week of April 24, 2023

Hearings this week will address:

- School safety proposals to increase armed personnel in schools
- Increases to school safety funding
- Changes to training and emergency response systems to threats in schools
- Definitions of social work services in schools

Bill to End Corporal Punishment Goes to House Floor

This Wednesday, the Texas House will consider ending corporal punishment in Texas. It's time! [See our factsheet on the bill.](#)

See IDRA's issue brief, [Hitting Hurts: The Case for Ending Corporal Punishment in Texas](#), and [infographic](#).



Monday

Higher Education Committee
10:00 a.m. ([See notice](#))

Monday

Youth Health & Safety Select Committee
1:30 a.m. ([See notice](#))

Tuesday

Public Education Committee
8:00 a.m. ([See notice](#))

[Watch hearings live](#)

[Watch past hearings](#)



Wednesday

Education Committee
([Notice pending, check here for updates](#))

Thursday

Subcommittee on Higher Education
([Notice pending, check here for updates](#))

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Highlights from Last Week

Hearing on Bill to Prevent Identity-based Bullying

The House Committee on Youth Health and Safety held a hearing on House Bill 4625 on Monday, April 17. This is an important bill to strengthen Texas laws prohibiting and preventing identity-based bullying and harassment in schools. Families, advocates and policymakers spoke for the bill at the hearing and a news conference.

Approximately one in four students in this country experience bullying related to their race, national origin, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation. Students across the state have been increasingly reporting alarming examples of identity-based bullying in schools – fueled in part by misinformation spread as a result of recent efforts to attack and undermine diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in education.

Action: Encourage [members of the Youth Health and Safety Committee](#) to vote for HB 4625. [Get more info on the bill here.](#)



Watch the news conference for HB 4625 held by IDRA, Texas Legislative Black Caucus and Senate Hispanic Caucus



Watch key moments in the HB 4625 hearing featuring advocates, parents and students describing identity-based bullying in their schools.

Anti-DEI Bills

Last week, the Texas Senate passed two bills that would limit diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and academic freedom at colleges and universities. Senate Bill 17, the “anti-DEI” bill, bans designated offices for DEI and related training in higher education campuses. It also restricts the use of diversity-related statements in the hiring process for staff and faculty.

Senate Bill 18 discontinues the practice of faculty tenure in higher education. Without tenure, faculty could be subject to limiting their research proposals, grants, scholarship and community engagement activities.

Together, the bills restrict the diversity of the student body, faculty, and the academic freedom and rigor of higher education research, teaching and learning.

Testimony Presented Last Week

[Understanding Discipline Policies and Practices is Key to Strengthening School Safety and Student Success](#) – IDRA Testimony for HB 4449, submitted by Alisha Tuff to the Texas House Committee on Youth Health and Safety, April 17, 2023 - [See video](#)

[Texas Must Prohibit and Prevent Identity-based Bullying in Schools](#) – IDRA Testimony for HB 4625, submitted by Paige Duggins-Clay, J.D., to the Texas House Committee on Youth Health and Safety, April 17, 2023 - [See video](#)

[Expanding the Bilingual Certified Teacher Workforce Can Extend Secondary Dual Language Programs](#) – IDRA Testimony for HB 3303, submitted by Chloe Latham Sikes, Ph.D., to the Texas House Public Education Committee, April 18, 2023 - [See video](#)

[Revisions to Texas Civics Education Are Redundant](#) – IDRA Testimony against HB 2273, submitted by Chloe Latham Sikes, Ph.D., to the Texas House Public Education Committee, April 18, 2023

[Texas Has Alternatives to Recapture Discounts to Keep Equitable Funding in Schools](#) – IDRA Testimony against HB 3028, submitted by Chloe Latham Sikes, Ph.D., to the Texas Senate Education Committee, April 20, 2023

[HB 2615 Would Disproportionally Target Marginalized Students to Pursue Vocational Education Pathways](#) – IDRA Testimony against House Bill 2615, submitted by Steve Kemgang to the Texas House Public Education Committee, April 20, 2023 - [See video](#)

[Keep Academic Rigor for College Preparation by Rejecting HB 2615](#) – Joint testimony against HB 2615 submitted to the Texas House Public Education Committee, April 20, 2023

[Censored Restrictions on Instructional Materials Lead to Classroom Censorship, Discrimination and Compromise Students' Education](#) – IDRA Testimony against HB 1804, submitted by Chloe Latham Sikes, Ph.D., to the Texas House Public Education Committee, April 20, 2023

Tools & Resources

You can make your voice heard in House committee hearings through the [electronic comment portal](#)!

[Learn more about IDRA's policy recommendations for Texas](#)

See our Infographic: [5 Data Snacks on IDRA's Policy Priorities](#)

Read the [Policy Agenda for the Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition \(TLEEC\)](#)

[How to Testify before the Texas Legislature](#), Infographic



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IDRA is an independent, non-profit organization whose mission is to achieve equal educational opportunity through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college.

Reach Out To Us



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