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August 19, 2022

IDRA's 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.

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See previous editions of [Knowledge is Power](#) and related resources online.



## Keller ISD Latest School District to Censor Books

One day before the start of classes, Keller ISD ordered that schools remove from the library, classrooms and its online library catalog "all books that were challenged last year" by the end of the day. The district plans to review these 41 books again under new district policies, even though the books were already returned to district shelves following a challenge.

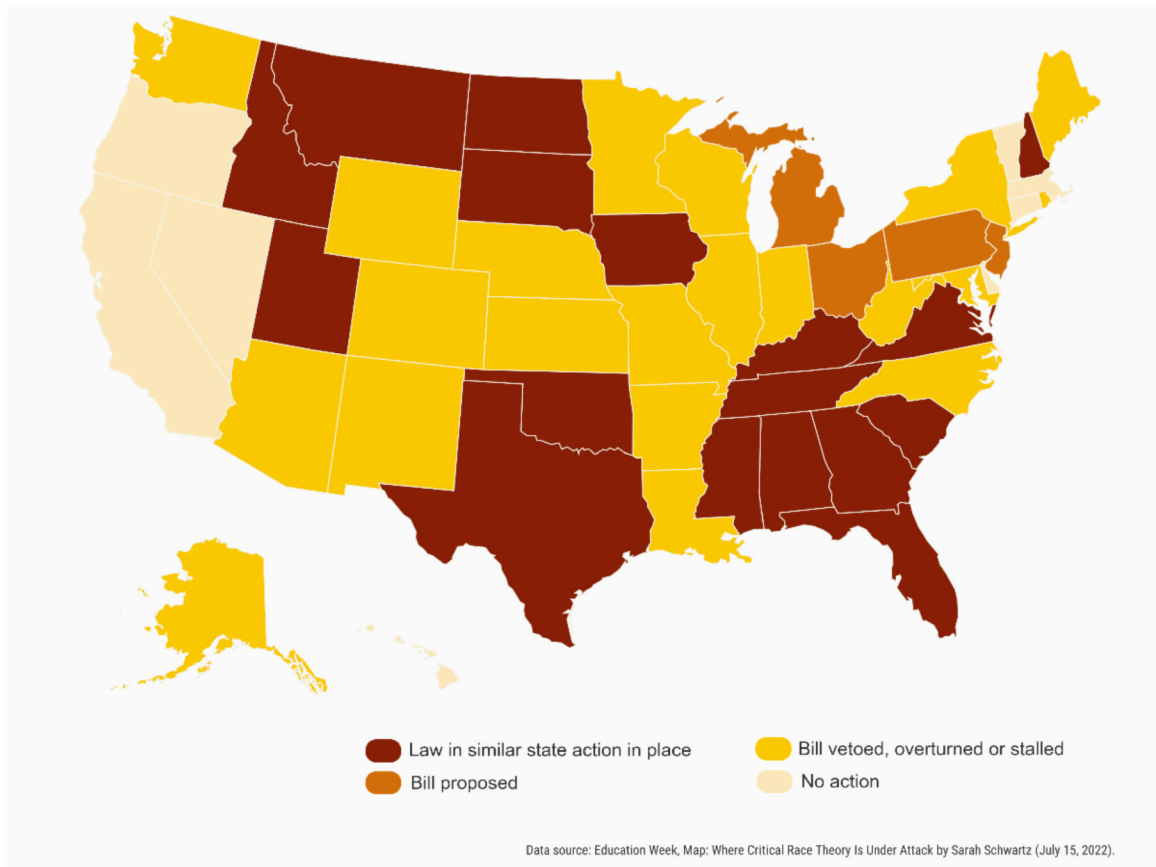
IDRA, ACLU of Texas, and several other civil rights organizations [sent a letter yesterday](#) to Keller ISD urging the district to correct this violation of the First Amendment and the Texas Constitution by immediately returning books to the shelves. The letter states that "More than half of the books that Keller ISD has ordered removed from all library and classroom shelves

relate to LGBTQ+ themes and characters, race and the United States' history of racism, or anti-Semitism and the Holocaust." Books under review include the *Bible* and *Anne Frank's Diary: The Graphic Adaptation*.

The district's actions are part of a disturbing trend of school districts engaging in censorship in a misguided effort to comply with Texas's Senate Bill 3, and further underscore the need for the vague law to be repealed.



## 17 States Have Classroom Censorship Policies



## IDRA Presents Preliminary Findings Showing Negative Impact of Classroom Censorship

As states established classroom censorship policies, IDRA has been monitoring and analyzing the impacts of these policies through direct educator surveys and focus groups, student and family engagement, published reports from other organizations and media outlets, and an extensive legal review of egregious actions taken by some school districts to comply with the new state policies.

In [testimony](#) before the Texas House Public Education committee recently, Chloe Latham Sikes, Ph.D., IDRA Deputy Director of Policy, addressed the charge to monitor public school curriculum and materials, and she described the impacts of state classroom censorship policies. The committee held the interim hearing to review the state's new classroom censorship bill, Senate Bill 3, leading up to its 2023 session.

IDRA found four main negative impacts to schools and students from classroom censorship bills:

- Weakened quality curriculum;
- Lower teacher, staff and student morale;
- Limited real-world learning and leadership opportunities for students; and
- Threats to students' civil rights and safe school climates.



## Other Policy Advocacy News

### A Call for Authentic School Family Engagement

IDRA submitted [written testimony](#) calling on the Texas legislature to support policies that build connections and collaboration between schools and families. In contrast to traditional parent involvement models that “prioritize a few loud voices over the majority of parents and assume an antagonistic relationship between the school and community,” IDRA’s model is “inclusive of all families, especially families that may be historically marginalized from school engagement and is focused on building strong parent-educator partnerships to improve schools and raise students’ academic achievement.” See IDRA’s [Six Principles for Family Leadership in Education](#).

### Texas Board Considers Ethnic Studies Expansion

The Texas State Board of Education is currently reviewing the state’s social studies curriculum standards. Board members are examining recommendations from various workgroups, including one on the expansion of ethnic studies curriculum. Chloe Latham Sikes, Ph.D., Deputy Director of Policy, presented [testimony](#) in favor of the proposed changes on the basis that ethnic studies positively benefits all students.



## Webinar: Tools for Teaching in a Climate of Classroom Censorship



## Tools for Teaching in a Climate of Classroom Censorship

Free Webinar

August 24, 2022 • 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm ct

Get details & register at <https://idra.news/ToolsRegister>



Educators across the country are committed to making sure students receive a strong, truthful education in our public schools. But vague classroom censorship policies, and their residual chilling effects in multiple states, aim to shut down free expression in schools. As a result, students stand to be completely unprepared to engage in thoughtful discussions of real-world issues and solutions.

IDRA recently launched the [We All Belong – School Resource Hub](#) designed for educators, families and policy advocates who want to make sure students receive a strong, truthful education in our public schools.

In this webinar, you will...

- See a demo of IDRA's new School Resource Hub for educators. The website has original and curated lesson plans and tools for teaching history and current events about race and gender in today's classroom censorship climate.
- Get an overview of America is Me (AIM) framework with five intercultural skills to promote students' understanding of equity issues. AIM serves as a foundation for original lessons in the hub by Dr. Kelly Ferguson and Dr. Marlon James.
- Hear students discuss why inclusive education is important to them.

[Register Now!](#)



## Survey on the Effects of Classroom Censorship

### How has classroom censorship affected you?

By design, the new School Resource Hub is responding to the needs of educators, students and families. Please help by letting us know how classroom censorship policies are affecting your classroom, your child or your own education. **Help us spread the word!**

[Educator Survey](#)

[Student Survey](#)

[Family Survey \(English\)](#)

[Family Survey \(Español\)](#)





## Advocacy Tools

### IDRA Southern Education Equity Network

A community forum and resource hub for advocates of strong inclusive public education

- ✓ Get advocacy how-to tools
- ✓ Share policy & action updates
- ✓ Plan actions with your group

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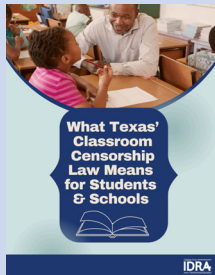


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Intercultural Development Research Association

Visit the  
**SEEN**  
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#### Guide to Texas Classroom Censorship Bill

See Texas SB 3  
School Guide



#### Lessons Learned from our Classroom Censorship Advocacy

See Advocacy  
Guide (PDF)



#### Building Supportive Schools from the Ground Up

See Report (PDF)

Children First  
**IDRA**  
— Transforming Education

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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