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Texas Education Policy Alert

Action Alert: Say No to Vouchers Video Campaign

Thanks to your advocacy, the House Public Education Committee did not vote out SB 8. Your calls to raise concerns on this bill matter.

Monday morning, May 15, the House Public Education Committee will hear **SB 8**, the harmful school voucher bill that takes public dollars away from public schools.

Since the committee will only be hearing invited testimony, there will be **no official public testimony**.

We have created a **video campaign** for concerned citizens to submit videos of yourself telling the committee why they should vote no on vouchers. This **will not** count as official testimony, but we will share the videos on social media and continue to tag legislators so they can hear our voices.

- SB 8 would take money away from public schools.**
- SB 8 would require parents enrolling their student in the private voucher program to waive their federal and state education protections, including for special education.**
- SB 8 does nothing to help the teacher workforce, close achievement gaps or address the needs of any public school students.**
- SB 8 takes away parent and community access to school decisions.**

Share Your Testimony - SB 8 (English)

Share Your Testimony - SB 8 (Spanish)

House Public Education Committee Contact Information

Continue to call the members below!

We especially recommend calling the members in red.

Chairman Rep. Brad Buckley - (512) 463-0684

Vice Chair Rep. Alma Allen - (512) 463-0744

Rep. James Talarico - (512) 463-0821

Rep. Steve Allison - (512) 463-0686

Rep. Charles Cunningham - (512) 463-0520

Rep. Harold Dutton - (512) 463-0510

Rep. Cody Harris - (512) 463-0730

Rep. Brian Harrison - (512) 463-0516

Rep. Cole Hefner - (512) 463-0271

Rep. Gina Hinojosa - (512) 463-0668

Rep. Ken King - (512) 463-0736

Rep. Oscar Longoria - (512) 463-0645

Rep. Matt Schafer - (512) 463-0584

Drop a Card or Submit Public Comment!

Submit written comments on the [House comments link](#) before Monday!

If you live in the Austin area, come to the Capitol on Monday, May 15 by 8 am to register against SB 8!

Resources You Can Use!

[IDRA School Funding Toolkit](#) that includes talking points and social messages.

5 reasons private school vouchers would hurt students



1 Private school vouchers drain money from public schools



Private school vouchers take scarce money from public schools – that serve 92% of Texas students – and give it to private school operators who are not accountable to taxpayers. Public schools stand to lose about \$10,000 per student in state and local funding. But the cost of running those schools remains. The lights have to stay on.

2 Funding private school vouchers means using taxpayer dollars to fund discrimination

Private schools are not required to serve all students, so they can deny admission, enrollment and educational services at their discretion. This includes students with disabilities, emergent bilingual students, students of different religions and diverse identities.



3 Voucher programs don't improve academic outcomes



Studies show that students who use vouchers to attend private school don't perform any better than their public school peers. On average, students attending private schools with vouchers did less well on tests relative to their similar peers in public schools.

The best way to strengthen public schools is to strengthen public schools!

4 Voucher programs subsidize affluent students already attending private schools



Most vouchers programs fall far short of covering the full cost of a private school education. The national average tuition for private school is more than \$12,000. This means that families are often left to cover additional tuition costs making the real beneficiaries of voucher programs families who can already afford to pay the difference between the voucher and the actual cost of tuition. Only wealthy families end up enjoying the subsidy of a private voucher.

5 Private schools lack state accountability for academic and financial performance



Private schools have almost complete autonomy for how they operate, including how they manage their finances and what they are required to disclose to parents and the public. Private schools are not required to administer the STAAR, to be rated under the state's A-F school accountability system, or to transparently account for their funds and spending.

It is the state's responsibility to provide excellent, well-funded public schools for all students.

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February 2023

Previous Testimony & Letters Against Voucher Bills

[Education Savings Accounts Are Inefficient, Ineffective and Unaccountable to Texas Students](#) – IDRA Testimony against SB 8, submitted by Chloe Latham Sikes, Ph.D., to the Texas Senate Education Committee, March 22, 2023 – [See video](#)

[Joint letter in support of the Texas House budget amendment to prohibit state funding for vouchers](#), April 5, 2023

[SB 8 Poses a Threat to Students' Civil Rights with Devastating, Discriminatory Impacts on Vulnerable Students](#) – TLEEC Testimony Against SB 8, submitted by Diana Long to the Texas Senate Education Committee, March 22, 2023

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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.

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