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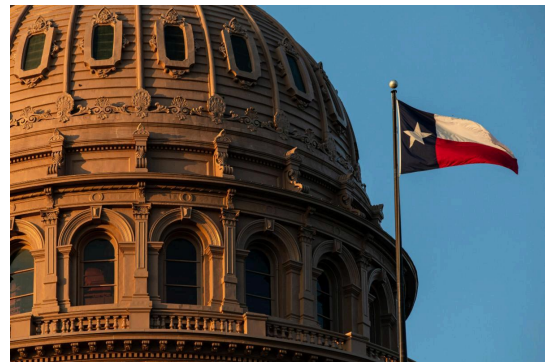
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Texas Education Policy Alert

Weekly Update

IDRA's weekly email alert includes legislative updates, opportunities for action to make your voice heard, bills to watch and other information. As state leadership calls special sessions, we will keep you updated.



The Fight to Keep Public Funds in Public Schools Continues in the Texas Legislature

The Governor last night called lawmakers to continue their work immediately in a fourth special session. During the third called special session that ended yesterday evening, lawmakers advanced two of the Governor's five special priorities. Fortunately, legislators did not make headway on the primary one: a private school voucher plan.

Hundreds of students, parents, educators and community members showed up at their local schools and the state capitol to successfully advocate that public funds be kept in public schools.

The Governor continued to prioritize private school vouchers over public school funding during the session. The Texas Senate passed two bills in early October: one to put forward small investments in public schools and teacher pay, and the other for a universal private school voucher plan.



Texas House legislators held strong against private school vouchers and proposed its own bill late in the 30-day session. The House bill combined increases to public school

funding, teacher pay, special education, and virtual instruction, the school accountability system and early literacy along with a private school voucher plan. This proposal failed to gain enough support and never had a public hearing.



In the final days of the session, lawmakers released a new version of this proposal. It was touted as a “deal” on vouchers, but nothing changed. Significant increases in public school funding, teacher pay and special programs are still being held as bait for a private school voucher program.

With the start of a fourth special session, lawmakers need to hear from Texans like you who want to keep public money in public schools to support our students. The House will hold public hearings on their voucher bill this **Thursday, November 9 at 9:00 am** and continue testimony on **Friday, November 10 at 9:00 am**, if needed.

Stay tuned for policy updates and ways to take action via our social media [@IDRAedu](#) and [@TxTLEEC](#).

Make Your Voice Heard, Submit House Public Comment!

You can [submit written comments](#) on the House voucher bill this Thursday.

If you live in the Austin area, come to the Capitol on Thursday, November 9 to [testify](#) against HB 1!

Educator Input Needed to Review Instructional Materials Rubrics

The Texas Education Agency is seeking educator and community input on new rubrics for reviewing state-approved instructional materials. This is part of implementing HB 1605, which creates incentives for school districts to use state-approved materials that adhere to the Texas censorship law and creates [state lists for books and vocabulary](#). The TEA will hold focus groups by subject area through November.

Tools & Resources

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

See our Infographic: [5 Reasons Vouchers Hurt Students](#)

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

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

New Infographic: [Texas Should Not Throw Away \\$500 Million](#)

Texas Special Session Alert!

Governor Abbott has announced a fourth special legislative session starting Tuesday November 7, 2023

What is a special session?

The Texas legislature normally meets every other year between January and May. The governor has the power to call "special sessions" that require legislators to meet outside the regular legislative session. The governor selects the topics to be addressed, which can include unfinished business from the regular session, emergencies or other important issues.

What is the time frame?

Special sessions are much shorter than regular sessions.

Regular Session	VS.	Special Session
5 days before meeting	Deadline for notices of public meetings & hearings	1 day before meeting
140 days	Duration	30 days

Special sessions are limited to the governor's announced topics.

The Governor announced four topics for this special session. IDRA will hold the line against any voucher proposals and promote legislation that protects students' civil rights.

The Governor's topics for this session include:

- Vouchers and school funding
- School safety measures and funding
- Increased immigration enforcement
- Border wall funding

November 2023

Get Involved!

There are opportunities for you to testify, contact your legislator, and stay involved! During a special session, things happen quickly, so be sure to stay connected with IDRA.

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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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