

Preventing and Addressing Bullying and Harassment in Texas Public Schools

A Call to Support HB 1405/SB 1445

April 23, 2025

We write as organizations committed to effectively addressing bullying and harassment in Texas schools. Bullying is [associated](#) with negative health outcomes, such as depression and suicide. The Texas Legislature must take action this session to enhance school safety, address youth mental health, and ensure that all students feel welcome and supported in school.

Our students are facing increasingly hostile school climates. Incidents of targeted bullying, harassment and hate crimes are on the rise in Texas and across the nation. In Texas, 4,099 bullying incidents were [reported](#) in 2023-24, an **11% increase** from the previous year.

Concerningly, a recent [report](#) from the Government Accountability Office found that **one in four students experienced bullying that was based on their religion, national origin, race, disability or sex**. Individuals from racial, ethnic and religious minority groups continue to be a primary target of hate crimes, with race-ethnicity and ancestry making up over half (52.5%) and religion making up nearly a quarter (22.5%) of all hate crimes reported.

Also troubling, the [FBI reported](#) an all-time high for reported incidents of hate crimes from 2018 to 2022. Alarming, **schools are the third most common place where hate offenses occur**, and school-based incidents have steadily increased in proportion to other hate crime locations.

While Texas has made significant progress in addressing bullying in schools, schools do not have a clear framework for conducting bullying investigations, and TEA does not collect data on the reasons students are targeted for bullying. In addition, teachers [report](#) feeling unequipped and afraid to effectively address targeted bullying and harassment due to misinformation and lack of training and guidance to appropriately report and intervene incidents involving allegations of discrimination.

The legislation in House Bill 1405 and Senate Bill 1445 will strengthen Texas laws relating to prevention and response to bullying and harassment by establishing the following provisions.

- Require schools to provide supportive measures to ensure student safety and continued access to educational programs and activities after reporting a bullying incident.
- Establish clear guidelines for documenting, investigating, and resolving reports of bullying to ensure fairness and transparency for all impacted participants.
- Ensure impacted students and families have a meaningful opportunity to participate in a bullying investigation and receive information regarding resolution.
- Require schools to collect and report data relating to bullying and harassment to better understand prevalence and tailor prevention programming.
- Clearly define and prohibit discriminatory bullying in schools.

- Affirm educators' responsibilities to report and respond to bullying incidents.

The undersigned organizations urge the Texas Legislature to hear and pass HB 1405 and SB 1445 this session. **Texas students can't wait.** For more information, contact Paige Duggins-Clay, J.D., IDRA's Chief Legal Analyst, at paige.duggins-clay@idra.org.

Signed,

IDRA
 Anti-Defamation League
 Asian Texans for Justice
 Black Parents and Families Collective
 CAIR- Texas
 Children at Risk
 Children Defense Fund Texas
 Coalition of Texans with Disabilities
 Every Texan
 Educators in Solidarity
 Girls Empowerment Network
 Latino Texas Policy Center
 Measure
 Methodist Healthcare Ministries

National Association for the Advancement
 of Colored People (NAACP)
 National Association of Social Workers
 Prevention Institute
 Students Engaged in Advancing Texas
 Texas Appleseed
 Texas American Federation of Teachers
 Texas Association of School
 Psychologists
 Texas Center for Justice and Equity
 Texas Legislative Education Equity
 Coalition
 Texas LULAC
 Texas State Teachers Association

