



Texas Student Walk Outs Continue a Proud Tradition of Civic Leadership

TLEEC Supports Students' Freedom to Protest in Support of Immigrant Families and in Defense of Freely Accessible Education

February 6, 2026

As students lead walkouts in defense of their neighbors, families and friends across Texas, TLEEC stands with them in support of their right to peacefully protest against the violent atrocities being committed by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). For 25 years, the Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition (TLEEC) has advocated high-quality public education with a focus on racial equity for all children. TLEEC's history stands on the shoulders of students who led walkouts at the height of the civil rights movement.

We empathize with student organizers and those participating in walkouts across the country, especially here in Texas. From Fort Worth to Houston, San Antonio to El Paso, in cities and smaller towns, young people are pushing back against the dangerous climate of fear and chaos the current federal administration has manufactured through violent immigration enforcement.

On Friday, January 30, Governor Abbott directed the Texas Commissioner of Education, Mike Morath, to investigate Austin ISD following student protests at one of its campuses. He threatened to withhold public school funding from schools where walkouts take place. On Monday, February 2, Attorney General Ken Paxton vowed to investigate Austin ISD in response to the recent student protests. The Texas Education Agency released [guidance](#) on February 3 about their plans for investigating educators and school districts in relation to student walkouts.

These actions undermine students' First Amendment right to freedom of expression and arbitrarily punish school communities that prioritize student safety as students learn to exercise their civic responsibility. TLEEC recognizes Texas students for continuing the state's tradition of community defense through civic engagement.

History demonstrates how student walkouts have propelled major social change for the public good.

The [1968 Chicano student walkouts](#) in Edgewood ISD drew national attention to school funding inequities when 400 students walked out of their school to protest unfair funding, lack of appropriate resources and a shortage of qualified teachers. The walkouts led to court challenges to the state's school finance system, which continues to shape and affect students' educational opportunities today.

Today, students face increased ICE activity in neighborhoods and near schools. [Research](#) tells us that enforcement activities disrupt learning, hurt students and families, result in [lower attendance](#) and achievement, and threaten [students' rights](#) to safely attend public schools regardless of their immigration status.

We know that Texas students persevere in the face of all threats, including those inflicted on communities by ICE. They will continue to organize, support their peers and defend their educational opportunities. We stand with Texas students who are demanding their right to attend schools that are welcoming and safe places for all students, regardless of their backgrounds.

The member organizations of TLEEC unequivocally support students' freedom to express solidarity through peaceful protest. We support student-led actions that demand safety and well-being for all young people and their families to freely and safely access schools.

We will continue to advocate for equal educational opportunities for students, including immigrant students, and stand in solidarity with all who pursue these objectives.

Resources to Support Students

- [ACLU of Texas Students' Rights Hub](#) – resources help K-12 students, parents, educators and advocates create inclusive schools where students are safe, supported and treated with dignity
- [IDRA SEEN Resource Hub – We All Belong](#) – classroom lessons, including a set on the Edgewood Walkout of 1968
- [IDRA – Education of Immigrant Children](#) – resources for educators, families and advocates
- [SEAT Restorative Civic History Zine](#) – tells a story about students facing Texas-sized issues that impact our futures.

For questions, please contact TLEEC either Chloe Latham Sikes, Ph.D., at IDRA (chloe.sikes@idra.org) or Jaime Puente at Every Texan (puente@everytexan.org).

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Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition (TLEEC) is a collaborative of organizations and individuals with the mission to improve the quality of public education for all children, with a focus on racial equity. The coalition convenes organizations and individuals who advocate in the interest of public school students at the local, state and national levels.

TLEEC Signatory Member Organizations

ACLU of Texas	SEAT (Students Engaged in Advancing Texas)
Asian Texans for Justice	Texas Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (TALAS)
Coalition of Texans with Disabilities	Texas American Federation of Teachers
Educators in Solidarity (EIS)	Texas Association for Bilingual Education (TABE)
Ethnic Studies Network of Texas (ESNTX)	Texas Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (TADOHE)
Every Texan	Texas Hispanics Organized for Political Education (HOPE)
Houston Community Voices for Public Education	UnidosUS (formerly known as NCLR)
IDRA	
Latino Texas Policy Center	
McNeil Educational Foundation for Ecumenical Leadership	