

# Building A Stronger Texas: Long-Range Plan for Public Education

## Equity and Access

**Overarching Vision:** *Equity and access* means that all children get what they need to learn, thrive, and grow.

- All students will be served by effective schools that provide high-quality systems of support, both in school and out of school, which are monitored for effectiveness and designed to improve equitable outcomes for all students, especially those with the greatest needs.
- All student demographic groups will be held to high expectations, supported, and enabled to reach their potential and goals, and all performance gaps will be closed.
- Texas public schools will have funding that is equitably based on student needs and is efficient, sustainable, and responsible to taxpayers.
- All students will be knowledgeable about and have access to a variety of pathways and opportunities linked to work, career, and educational choices.
- All students and staff will have access to and utilize relevant technology to enhance student learning, academic outcomes, and opportunities for college and career readiness.
- All students, particularly students who are traditionally served at low-performing schools and/or who are considered at risk, will have educators who effectively facilitate their learning, development, and success.

The State Board of Education recommends that

1. **Texas Education Agency (TEA), higher education, and research institutions** conduct ongoing research and identification of inequities to guide effective implementation of policy decisions/systems change.
2. **TEA and school districts** utilize the State Board of Education–adopted *2018–2023 Long-Range Plan for Technology* to guide the planning and implementation of local district policy. (See Appendix D of this plan.) **State policymakers** and **TEA** should work to ensure schools have access to tools that allow teachers to more effectively differentiate instruction where effective use of those tools by teachers has proven to raise student outcomes.

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3. **State policymakers, locally elected boards, and appointed governing boards** regularly identify inequities, update policies, and distribute funding and resources aligned with improving student outcomes, based on quality peer-reviewed research and the experience of local educators, in all schools and with all demographic groups.
4. **State policymakers** and **TEA** provide a greater array of no-cost or low-cost resources to support high quality, aligned curriculum and instruction for all educators.
5. **State policymakers, locally elected boards** and **appointed governing boards** advance policies to increase educator and principal effectiveness through enhancing compensation systems, particularly compensation that encourages effective teachers to teach in schools not meeting state accountability goals. Enhancements should be meaningful, differentiated, sustainable, and developed in concert with local stakeholders.

# Building A Stronger Texas: Long-Range Plan for Public Education

## Student Engagement and Empowerment

**Overarching Vision:** All students are actively engaged in and equipped to be invested in their own academic and personal growth to achieve educational, civic, financial, career, and interest goals.

- The Texas public education system will be student centered with opportunities embedded from early learning through graduation to achieve college, career, military, and workforce readiness.
- The Texas public education system will ensure a myriad of meaningful in-school and extended-school-day/-week enrichment opportunities for student involvement and participation based on the needs and resources of the school district and the local community.
- The Texas public education system will welcome and include student voices as integral partners in discussions and decision making.
- The Texas public education system will embed teaching and learning experiences to build and foster healthy and confident individuals who embody and exhibit empathy, courage, respect, optimism, and grit.
- Quality early learning programs through third grade, including formula-funded full-day prekindergarten, will be fully funded, supported, and recognized as the building blocks to future academic and social success, including the goal of reading and math on grade-level by third grade.

The State Board of Education recommends that

1. **Public school districts, in collaboration with school counselors and workforce boards,** create or utilize systems or frameworks such as the Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs to allow students to discover passions and interests for college and career pathways from elementary school through graduation, including ongoing and systemic career advising using labor market and career information about a wide range of global occupations and ways to achieve them.
2. **TEA and the legislature** financially incentivize an integrated and data-driven academic and nonacademic multitiered system of support (MTSS) on every campus to identify and connect all students with appropriate support services, including supports for behavioral

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health, mental health, and intrapersonal and interpersonal effectiveness (see the Texas Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs on page 16-17).

- TEA and the legislature financially incentivize an integrated workflow management system to enable the identification of students needing support, increase the effectiveness of school counselors, and monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of support services.

3. **The legislature** and **TEA** ensure that state assessment systems are more integrated, less disruptive, and more beneficial to students and teachers. The assessment systems should also be highly inclusive of campus-level practitioners in their design. State assessment and accountability systems should seek to focus on multiple measures of assessing and reporting student performance outcomes (e.g., State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness [STAAR], career and technical education [CTE] certifications, portfolios, capstone projects, community service projects).
4. **The legislature** expand high-quality early learning opportunities for children, including formula-funded full-day prekindergarten, that further the goal of closing any gaps in educational proficiency by third grade.
5. **School districts, community members, business, education service centers, and local workforce boards** actively assist teachers working with businesses and industry to gain hands-on experiences that can be incorporated into the classroom.
6. **School districts** provide multiple enrichment and leadership opportunities (e.g., clubs, organizations, teams, projects, internships) in addition to athletics, fine arts, and student council.
7. **TEA, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), and the SBOE** strengthen the alignment between the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS).
8. **Students, families, educators, and school counselors** ensure students take ownership of their educational journeys and personal and interpersonal effectiveness by pursuing success through active engagement with education and by taking advantage of opportunities to access business and community resources.

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## Family Engagement and Empowerment

**Overarching Vision:** All families are actively involved in their students' education at all levels.

- Texas will have an education system and culture of trust that welcomes and values every family as an active partner by building relationships.
- All cultures that interplay with the education system will be valued and welcomed into the process for student success.
- All current and future forms of communication will be fully utilized to engage, empower, and connect with all stakeholders.
- The state and school districts will have systems and resources in place to engage, empower, and support families as they navigate through the complex educational process.

## Recommendations

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The State Board of Education recommends that

1. **TEA** create a division of family engagement and empowerment that is a resource for families. Through this division, **TEA** will:
  - Create a family support call center and online portal to be managed by an education service center to assist families in navigating the public school system.
  - Create an advisory council on family engagement and empowerment to inform all state and local policymakers on best practices on family and school partnerships and develop objective metrics that could be included in a state accountability system.
2. **State policymakers** and **TEA** incorporate objective family engagement and empowerment metrics that are incentivized and rewarded in the state accountability system.
3. **School districts** and **communities** (e.g., **institutions of higher education, businesses**) build and foster relationships, address differences, and support advocacy in partnership with **families**.

# Building A Stronger Texas: Long-Range Plan for Public Education

## Educator Preparation, Recruitment, and Retention

**Overarching Vision:** All Texas students will be served by a consistent and abundant talent pool of highly effective teachers and leaders who positively impact students and student learning.

- Texas will have educator preparation programs that produce an abundant talent pool of highly effective educators who have mastered the content and pedagogy needed to teach the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills at the level those expectations are written.
- Texas educators will be well equipped and trained to meet the diverse needs of the classroom environment.
- Texas will have an effective support system for educators that builds instructional capacity through ongoing, quality professional development and mentoring programs.
- The teaching profession will be valued and esteemed by the public, families, students, and policymakers.
- Texas will have a compensation system that facilitates the recruitment and retention of high-quality educators.
- Educators will have opportunities to advance their careers while directly impacting the classroom, including increased compensation and leadership opportunities, based on their effectiveness, aspirational goals, and challenging school environment.
- Texas will have effective and empowering educator and administrator evaluation systems that reward student achievement, assure educator growth, and promote career paths.
- Every campus will have effective leadership utilizing high-quality instructional leadership and human capital and resource management.
- Every district/charter school will have highly effective executive leadership and governing boards focused on improving student outcomes.

## Recommendations

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The State Board of Education recommends that

1. **Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs)** collaborate and partner with **school districts** to align teaching methods and strategies and develop clinical training and practicum

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experiences to better prepare educators to meet student needs and improve student outcomes.

2. **EPPs** include educator and education leadership training on trauma-informed practices, cultural responsiveness, the incorporation of social and personal effectiveness practices, the creation of a positive school culture and climate, the education of highly mobile students, positive discipline practices, mental and behavioral health interventions, parental involvement strategies, and data analysis and data-informed decision-making.
3. **State policymakers** and **TEA** increase overall teacher quality by improving the standards and rigor associated with educator preparation and the state's EPPs.
4. **SBEC, SBOE** and **TEA** have meaningful performance-based accountability processes, standards, and measurable outcomes for educator preparation programs that ensure new educators are classroom- school-ready.
5. **EPPs, school districts, professional associations, and community organizations** provide timely guidance, training, mentoring, and support for educators and support for new, early career, and veteran teachers.
6. **The legislature** and **school districts** establish and sustain competitive salaries and career paths for educators through innovative compensation plans, induction programs, professional development, mentoring, and administration.
7. **The legislature** allows and support compensating and incentivizing educators who teach in hard-to-staff subject areas or low-performing, urban, rural, or challenging schools.
8. **TEA, the legislature, school districts, professional associations, and industry partners** provide incentives and support for teachers to engage in internships, externships, leadership opportunities, and ongoing professional development as part of continuing education.
9. **The legislature** and **institutions of higher education** provide greater flexibility in a coordinated fashion to state higher education institutions regarding the 120-hour degree plan for teacher education programs while maintaining the rigor and integrity of these programs.