



Opposition to HB 28

Regulating educational materials and activities

August 24, 2021

As the largest educator association in Texas, the **Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)** appreciates this opportunity to provide input on **House Bill (HB) 28 by Rep. Steve Toth**, which would require additional disclosure of teaching materials and regulate teaching and teacher training. ATPE opposes the bill due to the additional burden it would place on educators and districts to disclose teaching materials beyond what is already required under Texas law, as well as the bill's inappropriate regulation of pedagogy.

Section 1 of HB 28 would require regular public disclosure of teaching materials and activities, which includes presentations, lectures, assemblies, or any other event facilitated by the school district, as well as teaching materials used in any course for which students receive academic credit. The bill would require such information to be disaggregated by subject and grade and to include the procedures used for approving teaching materials and activities, among other requirements. Not only would this level of micromanagement undermine the professionalism of educators, it would also create an undue burden that will zap their energy and time. **We believe current law is sufficient. Section 26.006, Texas Education Code, already allows any parent who wants to see teaching materials can request them from their child's teacher.**

Section 2 of HB 28 goes beyond the purview of the legislature by explicitly dictating how teachers of *any* K-12 course must discuss a current event or a "widely debated and currently controversial issue of public policy or social affairs." Rather than defining the pedagogical practices of educators, the legislature traditionally works with the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) to develop educator preparation standards designed to ensure that educators learn to present information in a balanced and responsible way. Furthermore, Texas educators are bound by their Code of Ethics in 19 TAC 247, which states that educators must "be of good moral character and be worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state." HB 28 would also remove educators' ability to engage students in activities that would involve communication with their elected leaders, stripping them of an important tool that teaches civic engagement to youth.

Section 28.022(a)(4) would bar *all* training that may include the concepts included in the bill, rather than just barring districts from requiring such training. This could result in districts dropping certain trainings that educators want to attend, such as implicit bias training, out of an abundance of caution. Limiting the ability of educators to participate in the professional learning community of their choosing again undercuts their professionalism and hinders personal and professional growth, which is essential for young educators.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to **OPPOSE HB 28**. Further questions and comments can be directed to the ATPE Governmental Relations team at government@atpe.org or (800) 777-2873.

The Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE) has been a strong voice for Texas educators since 1980. It is the leading educators' association in Texas with approximately 100,000 members statewide. With its strong collaborative philosophy, ATPE speaks for classroom teachers, administrators, future, retired and para-educators and works to create better opportunities for 5 million public schoolchildren. ATPE is the ally and the voice of Texas public school educators. For additional information, contact ATPE Governmental Relations at (800) 777-2873 or government@atpe.org.