



2021 Legislative Agenda

FUTURE-READY EDUCATION FOR THE WHOLE CHILD

Promote the Texas Whole Child Initiative to ensure that:

- ❖ Each student is healthy, physically and emotionally safe, engaged in learning, supported by qualified, caring adults, and challenged academically.
- ❖ Each student is prepared through a well-rounded education so that high school students in Texas are college, career, and military ready upon graduation.
- ❖ Each student is provided access to social and emotional learning and the support necessary to maximize their potential.

IMPROVE EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS

- ❖ Ensure resources and support for educator preparation programs and on-going professional learning programs including training to recognize and address the social and emotional needs of students.
- ❖ Provide resources and time for induction and mentoring programs for new teachers.
- ❖ Provide resources for on-going, job-embedded professional learning opportunities and leadership training opportunities to meet the changing needs of students and the profession.

ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- ❖ Enact a flexible system of assessment and accountability to better meet the changing needs and complex diversity of Texas students. A new system should not primarily depend on high stakes, multiple choice testing.
A new system should:
 - Focus on high-priority learning standards.
 - Include elements of the Texas Whole Child Initiative and elements each community considers important.
 - Reduce the number of tests to only those required to meet Federal requirements and reduce the length of the tests to a developmentally appropriate length of time.
 - Provide an alternative assessment method that allows students to graduate when they are unable to pass an End of Course (EOC) test after multiple attempts.

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ADEQUATE AND APPROPRIATE FUNDING

- ❖ Provide appropriate funding that fully funds House Bill 3.
- ❖ Appropriately fund staff, materials, and resources necessary for mandated accelerated instruction to meet the Student Success Initiative and graduation requirements.
- ❖ Include funding to support English Language Learners, reduce socioeconomic disparities, and for high-quality early childhood programs, including full funding of Pre-Kindergarten for all students.
- ❖ Increase funding for the Technology and Instructional Materials Allotment and professional learning.
- ❖ Oppose any effort to create vouchers, a tax credit scholarship program, or other programs that would fund private school tuition or homeschooling at the expense of public schools.

AUTONOMY AND FLEXIBILITY

- ❖ Strengthen autonomy and flexibility for locally elected trustees to respond to the needs of their students and communities.
- ❖ Ensure that new statutory requirements become effective only when such requirements are fully funded by the Legislature. Reduce existing mandates and ease administrative requirements.

Future-Ready Education for the Whole Child

- ❖ Promote the Texas Whole Child Initiative to ensure that:
 - Each student enters school healthy and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle.
 - Each student learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults.
 - Each student is actively engaged in learning and is connected to the school and broader community.
 - Each student has access to personalized learning and is supported by qualified, caring adults.
 - Each student is challenged academically and prepared for success in college or further study, and for employment and participation in a global environment.
- ❖ Ensure each student is prepared through a well-rounded education so that high school students in Texas are college, career, and military ready upon graduation by:
 - Providing access to all academic subjects. Students need proficiency in subjects beyond those tested by the State Assessment Program including fine arts, history and civics, foreign languages, and physical education and health.
 - Providing access to Advance Placement, International Baccalaureate, and/or Dual Credit courses to all interested students.
 - Providing a rigorous and relevant curriculum that emphasizes future-ready skills and processes including collaboration, critical thinking, communication, and creativity.
 - Providing access to multiple enrichment activities including athletics, fine arts, clubs and student organizations.
 - Continuing multiple graduation pathways that allow students to pursue interests and passions.
 - Providing instruction to develop global literacy skills and dispositions that allow students to understand and act on issues of global significance.
 - Providing opportunities for both student voice and student choice. Voice and choice help students to self-assess and self-manage their own personal learning journeys.
- ❖ Ensure access to Social and Emotional Learning and the support necessary for students to maximize their potential by:
 - Providing programs in social and emotional learning including anti-bullying, anti-harassment, and drug and alcohol programs.
 - Providing counseling services.
 - Providing mental health services.

Improve Educator Effectiveness

- ❖ Ensure resources and support for educator preparation programs and on-going professional learning programs to help classroom teachers, school leaders, and other educators to maximize student learning.
- ❖ Provide resources and time for induction and mentoring programs for new educators.
- ❖ Provide resources for on-going, job-embedded professional learning opportunities and leadership training opportunities to help educators:
 - Meet the changing needs of students and the profession.
 - Deeply understand content.
 - Improve their pedagogical and assessment skills.
 - Understand children of poverty and equity issues.
 - Provide support for social and emotional learning.
 - Leverage technology to enhance learning.
 - Design tasks that promote learning and engagement in a student-centered setting.

Assessment and Accountability

- ❖ Enact a flexible system of assessment and accountability to better meet the changing needs and complex diversity of Texas students. A new system should:
 - Focus on high-priority learning standards so that students have adequate instructional time for deep and complex understanding.
 - Continue with possible modifications and additions, the inclusion of nonacademic factors found in the Community and Student Engagement Self-Evaluation.
 - Include elements of the Texas Whole Child Initiative and elements each community considers important.
 - Allow for multiple measures for assessment such as portfolios, rubrics, student interviews, narrative writing, and oral testing as a collective means to determine student achievement and progress.
 - Reduce the number of tests to only those required to meet Federal requirements and reduce the length of required tests.
 - Provide an alternative method that allows students to graduate when they are unable to pass an End of Course (EOC) test after multiple attempts.
 - Repeal the A-F letter grade accountability rating system and simplify the current highly-complicated accountability system.
 - Provide for public reporting of data without the assignment of ratings.

Adequate and Appropriate Funding

- ❖ Provide appropriate funding that fully funds the changes of House Bill 3. Appropriations for public education should:
 - Appropriately fund staff, materials, and resources necessary for mandated accelerated instruction to meet Student Success Initiative and graduation requirements.
 - Provide funding for support programs and extended time to help students meet state standards.
 - Provide funding for social and emotional learning, counseling, and mental health services.
 - Not include any effort to create vouchers, tax credit scholarship programs, or other programs that would divert funding from public schools to private school tuition or homeschooling with little or no academic or financial accountability.
 - Repurpose funds dedicated to the current state testing program by reducing the amount of testing and applying the funds to support teaching and learning assessed through multiple measures.
 - Include funding to support English Language Learners and reduce socioeconomic disparities, and for high-quality early childhood programs, including full funding of Pre-Kindergarten for all students.
 - Fund professional learning, including additional professional learning days, to improve instruction and address students' evolving needs.
 - Increase funding for the Technology and Instructional Materials Allotment so that districts can provide necessary instructional materials and instructional technology resources and delivery systems to engage students in digital learning to ensure they are future-ready.

Autonomy and Flexibility

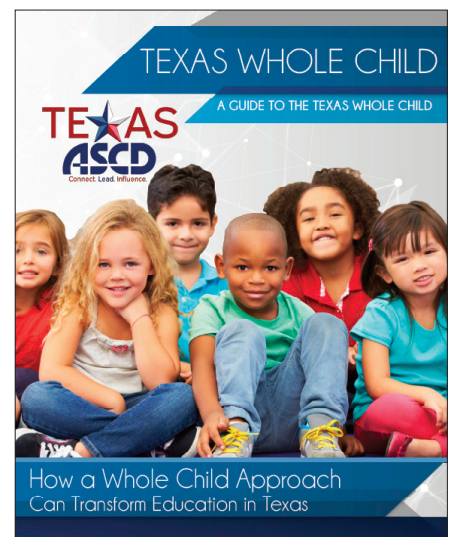
- ❖ Strengthen autonomy and flexibility for locally elected trustees to respond to the needs of their students and communities.
- ❖ Ensure that new statutory requirements become effective only when such requirements are fully funded by the Legislature. Reduce existing mandates and ease administrative requirements.

The 5 million students in Texas public schools are the future of Texas. Legislative actions and decisions must promote their success through the development of the Whole Child. The Texas Whole Child Initiative is based on the concept that, in order for a child to be educated successfully, he/she must be: healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged.

It is time for Texas policymakers to embrace the Texas Whole Child Initiative and provide a well-rounded education that is authentic, relevant, and rigorous while emphasizing future-ready skills and processes.

Texas ASCD calls on the Texas Legislature to adopt the following recommendations during the 2021 Legislative Session.

- 1 Adopt the Texas Whole Child Initiative.
- 2 Improve Educator Effectiveness.
- 3 Embrace a flexible system of assessment and accountability.
- 4 Provide adequate and appropriate funding.
- 5 Autonomy and Flexibility.



About Us

The Texas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (Texas ASCD) is a professional organization with over 3,000 members. Texas ASCD serves Texas public educators and advocates for policies that allow educators the flexibility to teach in ways that are most effective for the diverse Texas population. This advocacy benefits the whole child and results in better educational outcomes for the entire state. Texas ASCD membership represents all strata of public education professionals including teachers, principals, superintendents, curriculum directors, staff developers, university students and professors.



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