



Opposition to SB 3

Unnecessarily and inappropriately usurping
the curriculum writing process

August 10, 2021

The **Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)** offers the following input in opposition to **SB 3** by Sen. Hughes. The State Board of Education (SBOE) is the legal and appropriate forum for writing statewide curriculum and has carefully refined its process to minimize the role of politics in developing instructional content. By expropriating this authority, SB 3 would confound this process.

1. **SB 3 would inappropriately usurp the statutory role of the SBOE.**

Chapter 7 of the Texas Education Code establishes that the authority to adopt statewide curriculum standards rests with the SBOE, not the Texas Legislature. This authority is one of the primary functions of the board, along with soliciting and reviewing instructional materials. By mandating the SBOE adopt specific curriculum standards, SB 3 would inappropriately usurp the statutory authority delegated to a separate elected body specifically established for that purpose.

2. **SB 3 would bypass educators and the well-established SBOE process for review and adoption of curriculum standards.**

The SBOE adopts and reviews the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) on a routine basis through a well-established process that includes educators and stakeholders. Each round of review and revision involves collaboration between content experts and dozens of educators, as well as multiple rounds of public input. SB 3 would bypass this important deliberative process designed to ensure review and revision of curriculum standards is guided by academics and not politics.

3. **SB 3 would misapply curriculum standards to dictate instructional methods.**

When writing curriculum standards, the SBOE does not dictate how classroom teachers are to present the mandated curriculum. This is based on the foundational principle that professional educators should be entrusted to select the approach that will inspire optimum engagement from individual students. SB 3 presumes to mandate how a teacher must teach in addition to restricting the campus and district role in shaping curriculum based on local input from parents and voters.

ATPE's opposition to SB 3 is irrespective of specific theories or pedagogical approaches. As the state's largest association of educators, we respect and trust the highly trained professionals in our membership to decide how best to implement the required TEKS. The Legislature should do the same.

In its attempt to usurp the curriculum writing process, SB 3 fundamentally warps the way curriculum standards are written and misunderstands how they are applied in actual classrooms. Furthermore, the confusion created by attempting to encode TEKS simultaneously in statute and rule along with the pedagogical restrictions proposed by SB 3 would have a chilling effect on classroom instruction and efforts to motivate civic engagement. **ATPE respectfully urges legislators to OPPOSE SB 3.**

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.