

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Public Education  
For HB 1605

Compiled on: Wednesday, March 22, 2023 12:06 AM

Note: Comments received by the committee reflect only the view of the individual(s) submitting the comment, who retain sole responsibility for the content of the comment. Neither the committee nor the Texas House of Representatives takes a position on the views expressed in any comment. The committee compiles the comments received for informational purposes only and does not exercise any editorial control over comments.

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Hearing Date: March 21, 2023 8:00 AM





Mark Russell

Self

Houston, TX

I am writing to register my opposition to HB 1605. I strongly oppose HB 1605 because it will have harmful effects on parental rights in education in the areas of curriculum, transparency, teacher relationships, and the right to redress government.

HB 1605 would centralize curriculum control away from elected education officials, affect teachers' lesson-planning process, and establish a way to deny parents the right to see their own child's school information. It would reduce the statutory authority of the State Board of Education and locally elected school board trustees over curriculum selection. It would also reduce the statutory authority of Independent School Districts over their own employees.

In conclusion, I oppose HB 1605.

Thank you.

Jena Russell

Self

Houston, TX

I oppose HB 1605 because it will have harmful effects on parental rights in education in the areas of curriculum, transparency, teacher relationships, and the right to redress government.

HB 1605 would centralize curriculum control away from elected education officials, affect teachers' lesson-planning process, and establish a way to deny parents the right to see their own child's school information. It would reduce the statutory authority of the State Board of Education and locally elected school board trustees over curriculum selection. It would also reduce the statutory authority of Independent School Districts over their own employees.

Thank you.

Lori Adamczyk

SELF

The Woodlands, TX

respect local control over instructional materials

Dede Fox

Dede Fox

The Woodlands, TX

Respect local control over instructional materials. This bill takes the decision making out of the hands of locally elected school boards (who approve instructional materials purchases) and local teachers and administrators, who best know the needs of students and their community standards. I'm a retired Texas public school educator (40 years) and a parent/grandparent of Texas public school educated children.

Sierra Betancourt

Self-Iola ISD Trustee

Iola, TX

I oppose HB1605. This bill as written threatens parental rights, impedes with the local control of ISDs and undermines great teachers, by turning them into facilitators.

Courtney Smith, Mrs.

Self-teacher

Iola, TX

As a 21 year veteran teacher and administrator, I do not want to see Texas move to a more technology-based, “stock” curriculum. Taking the “burden” of planning time away from teachers is taking our creativity and the art of teaching, ruining the opportunity for authentic instruction and relationships with our students. Master teachers know how to assess our students, ascertain their instructional needs, and monitor and adjust to help them attain grade level performance. So often, I find that novice teachers do not understand the TEKS but possess amazing instructional ideas and creativity. If anything needs to change, it is the time spent helping new teachers understand the depth and complexity of their TEKS as well as how they fit with vertical alignment. And if we would go back to increasing behavior expectations for students and holding them accountable from the very beginning for work ethic and grade level achievement, our scores would soar and students might actually like attending school. I know for sure you’d have a very dedicated crop of teachers recommitted to serving the students of Texas. If this bill passes, you will have further mass exodus of your most experienced, dedicated champions for Texas students.

Holly Moudy

Swlf

Franklin, TX

I strongly oppose HB 1605 and request it to be removed from consideration at the hearing. This bill will have harmful effects on parental rights in education in the areas of transparency, teacher relationships, right to redress government and curriculum.

Cyral Miller, M s

Self

Austin, TX

I urge you to vote AGAINST this bill! This bill will effectively require teachers to teach to a script, penalizing them for deviations from a standardized curriculum; it will provide a low threshold to trigger a curriculum review, which could be easily manipulated by conservative special interests.

Elyssa McCuiston

Self/Teacher

Austin, TX

I am concerned about the rigidity this bill would create. As a teacher, one of the paramount skills I am learning is flexibility, or the ability to respond to unexpected situations, student needs, and days that don't go at all according to plan. Being forced to implement a prescribed curriculum, from prescribed materials, with little ability to adapt it based on student needs or interest, does not sound like the recipe for an engaging and successful education system. Also, why include that weaselly exemption for the Establishment Clause, and the Establishment Clause only, of the First Amendment, unless you're trying to sneak in some religious indoctrinating into public schools and preventing parents who disagree with THAT from having the tools to fight it?

Tricia Kim  
Public School Parent  
Austin, TX

Please OPPOSE HB 1605. Texas already turned down the national common core curriculum. Please oppose an unvetted state common core curriculum. The TEA has not engaged parents in any decision to make radical changes to public school curriculum. Texans have only learned of this attempt to drive curriculum from the top-down this week, with no parent input.

HB 1605 disrespects teachers as professionals, by micromanaging whether and how teachers prepare and deliver lessons. My understanding from teacher reports and research into the Amplify curriculum show that the curriculum is scripted and timed, not allowing teachers the autonomy to pace their instruction to meet the needs of the students they know best.

Additionally, the punitive language in the bill states teachers will be protected from disciplinary proceedings only if they use state-approved materials “with fidelity” (undefined and subjective term). (Sec. 22.05125) Our understanding from teachers who have used the Amplify curriculum is that “fidelity” can mean that teachers will receive negative evaluations if they do not finish the scripted curriculum in the allotted time, regardless of the needs of their students.

Under the pretense of protecting teachers’ time and “rights,” HB 1605 incentivizes school districts to limit teachers’ lesson preparation and time spent creating and/or selecting instructional materials. (Secs. 11.164, 21.4045). This curriculum approach will hasten the departure of our best teachers, vs. "dumbing down" their teaching to a scripted curriculum that is not sensitive to the learning needs of their students. These specified mandates seem designed for district disruption and for pushing out good teachers, increasing the attrition of veteran professional educators.

Cookie cutter, top-down direction from TEA is not excellence. It's not what we value in our Texas public schools and is a poor excuse for education. Our teachers and our children deserve better. Please take the time to read critical feedback from teachers who have used Amplify – and listen to their concerns that coercing districts into using materials with tightly scripted curriculum, with content that isn’t developmentally appropriate, will erode the teacher-student relationship and push out good teachers.

Lauren Wojcik  
Self, technical solutions consultant  
Manor, TX

I have a problem with this bill's requirement that school districts make available access to parents to all instructional materials 30 days before the school year begins and even after the school year has ended. This seems like an onerous burden on our educators and does not allow for spontaneity or creativity in lesson planning. We should support our educators who are working hard every day to deliver engaging, age-appropriate instruction per existing curriculum standards.

I also object to the low threshold for a curriculum review. Texas already has in place statewide curriculum standards which outline what students are to learn in each course or grade. Our school districts should be focused on educating students, not on appeasing parents.

Carl Jones  
TDP Rural Caucus NJ  
Spicewood, TX

I urge all House Public Education Committee members to quash this bill. It is a state infringement on our public schools, teachers, students and parents. I say to Rep Buckley “back off”. Don’t try to censure our teachers. Let them teach! They have far more credentials to teach than you do. Mind your own business! The great state of Texas is a bastion of freedom and disdains government intrusion into our schools.

Casey McCreary, Dr.

Texas Association of School Administrators, Texas Association of Community Schools, Instructional Materials Coordinators' Association

Austin, TX

TASA, TACS, & IMCAT appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony “on” HB 1605. A cornerstone priority of our members is local control and flexibility, as districts must be able to respond to the differing needs of students, educators, parents, & the communities they serve. We offer the following considerations:

The initial funding for HB 1605 is a carve out of approximately half a billion dollars from the IMTA already allocated to local school districts. Additionally, the statutory language has the program continuing in perpetuity, ensuring a great cost to the IMTA.

-Our priorities state that we must advocate for increased funding for the IMTA to ensure districts can provide adequate technology & instructional materials to meet higher student standards. Also, to oppose any carveouts from IMTA that decrease the number of funds to school districts.

-Districts are prioritizing school safety & security needs, which TEA estimates will cost \$2.1 billion to meet the new minimum standards. Is the funding for this bill coming out of the \$5 billion the Appropriations Committee has set aside for public education, or is it coming out of the \$1 billion for instructional materials & technology?

Future & ongoing funding for HB 1605 provisions appear to be a carveout that drains districts' IMTA, & leaves no local discretion on the selection of materials.

-TEA's use of IMTA to pay for OERs, the review process, the TRR website, & the parent portal, will drastically reduce district historical & current levels of IMTA funding. Would the Legislature consider a separate & new funding source for these provisions?

Provisions of the bill would require renegotiation of individual teacher contracts & limit teacher innovation.

-Small school districts that do not have the staff to complete the “non-contractual” requirements excepted from this legislation would be disproportionately impacted.

-The Legislature has long recognized that the state should not dictate teaching methodology e.g., TEC §28.002(i). The bill would limit methodology to that of TEA's chosen instructional material vendor(s).

-The term “with fidelity” insinuates teachers would be limited to scripted instruction, a one-size-fits-all approach that is not suited to meet the individual needs of students.

The legislation, while well-intentioned, substantially limits local control & increases the State Agency's presence in student learning. The aspects of the legislation that produces an allotment are only a tiny piece of the permanent changes the statute presents, which will affect all districts regardless of if they participate in the grant program. TEA continues to utilize District IMTA, which is meant for student material expenses, to create other programs or Agency initiatives. This legislation only expands the TEA's ability to divert these funds from districts & charters. We look forward to working with Chairman Buckley to address our concerns with the noted provisions of the bill.

Carolouise Ortiz

self/retired

Montgomery, TX

Vote NO on HB 1605. Please oppose this unnecessary, big brother bill! Respect local control of our public schools and instructional materials. Leave the decision making in the hands of locally elected school boards (who approve instructional materials purchases) and local teachers and administrators, who best know the needs of students and their community standards.

James Bowman

Self

Lago Vista, TX

Public schools must be proprietary.

Erin Greene  
self  
Kingwood, TX

I am OPPOSED to this bill since it subverts local control. Schools should be able to pick their own curriculum not the state.

Zack Penn  
Student Parent GCISDparents.org  
Eules, TX

This bill undermines parent authority. This bill should not have made it this far as it does not represent the values of the parents in the state of Texas.

Susan Burek  
Self: I am a Parent and an advocate for people with disabilities  
Austin, TX

Thank you for allowing me to testify regarding HB 1605. My name is Sue Burek and I live in Austin, Texas. I'm a parent, an advocate for people with disabilities, and a member of several advocacy organizations that serve families with children with disabilities, including Texas Parent to Parent, Protect Texas Fragile Kids, and Loving Hearts for All.

I am testifying AGAINST HB 1605, which would effectively require teachers to teach to a script, penalizing them for any deviations from a standardized curriculum, and it will provide a low threshold to trigger a curriculum review, which could be easily manipulated by conservative special interests.

Please vote AGAINST HB 1605. Thank you very much for your consideration of my request.

Linda Evans, Ms  
Self  
Conroe, TX

I am a concerned citizen, former teacher, mother and grandmother. I support good public schools for all children. HB 1605 is a bad bill!

It takes the decision making out of the hands of locally elected school boards (who approve instructional materials purchases) and local teachers and administrators, who best know the needs of students and their community standards. We do not need TEA or any state agency micromanaging school districts.

Do not vote for HB 1605!

Becky Shaheen  
Self  
Austin, TX

Taking away the creativity our teachers have by continuing to micromanaging how they teach is not the direction we need to go. Think of your most beloved teachers. Seriously, pause for a second and think about them. I remember a couple of mine very vividly. One gave me my love for chemistry. She taught like her hair is was on fire (and honestly that probably almost happened in her teaching career). I can't even imagine her teaching her beloved subject if she had to do so with a watered down curriculum (which I hear even has scripts ??). Well, she wouldn't. She's the type to say, "then fire me". What about the teacher you thought of? What did you love about him/her? If I had to guess, they deeply loved the subject they taught and/or they loved teaching kids. They did little nuanced things that made them special. Vote against this bill if you believe in teachers. We have the TEKS. I taught for years and never once did lesson plans without referring to them. Our teachers are professionals and I know MANY who hold master's degrees. This session is and these education bills are ones I will be watching very closely. I do not claim a political side. I vote for the best choice. I will be watching how votes are cast, especially when it comes to the thing I stand up for the most...public education. Vote against HB 1605.

Heather Roell  
self, freelancer  
Austin, TX

Please vote against this bill. Teachers that have used Amplify or similar products in the classroom report that the curriculum is not developmentally appropriate for children and “does not allow time to give children extra help” because “everybody has to be on the same lesson at the same time. As a parent with a student with both learning disabilities and being Gifted and Talented, this is not okay. Sometimes certain children need more time sometimes they need advanced time. Having everyone on the same lesson at the same time will not be good for our students and will lead to classroom behavior issues. This will also be an issue for the teachers.

Trista Bishop-Watt  
Good Reason Houston  
Houston, TX

As a nonprofit that works with school districts to implement high-quality instructional materials, Good Reason Houston supports HB 1605’s proposal to streamline the process of vetting instructional materials and ease the way for districts to adopt curricula that are on grade level and aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKs).

High-quality instruction is critical to student success. A study from The New Teacher Project found that only 17% of students' work in elementary reading classrooms was at grade level. This discrepancy in rigor leads to a series of unacceptable consequences, which HB 1605 seeks to remedy.

1. Currently, students are not receiving the necessary instruction to remain on track. Only 51% of students statewide are reading on grade level by third grade. HB 1605 corrects this by setting up a streamlined, rigorous vetting process for instructional materials, requiring the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to consider quality, grade-level appropriateness, and alignment to TEKs. It incentivizes districts to adopt the vetted materials by providing additional funding and technical support. This approach is proven to work. The TEA is piloting a program that puts high-quality instructional material in classrooms with great success. By swapping curricula alone, these districts improved grade-appropriate assignments by 39%.
2. In order to supplement subpar curricula, teachers are spending up to 250 hours per year selecting instructional materials, leading to burnout and exacerbating the current teacher shortage. On average, teachers work 54 hours a week and report spending up to 10 of those hours searching for and developing curricular resources. HB 1605 rightly shifts the burden of providing quality curricula to school districts rather than teachers.
3. Parents are not able to follow how well their child is developing when materials are not up to standard. Students may receive A’s or B’s on coursework but STAAR results show they are below grade level, causing confusion for parents. HB 1605 provides parents with the ability to follow along with what their child is learning in the classroom. The parent portal would give parents necessary tools to take an active role in their student's learning and reinforce key concepts at home.

In our work supporting school districts through implementing high-quality instructional materials, we have found a steep cliff in terms of funding after initial adoption and a need for effective implementation support. Some districts spend between \$120-\$150 per student per year for instructional materials in each subject. As the Committee considers HB 1605, we respectfully ask you to carefully consider the sections of the bill regarding funding and technical support to ensure the correct balance is struck to incentivize districts to implement effective curricula.

Daphne Hoffacker  
The children of Texas  
Austin, TX

I'm very concerned about this bill. At a time when we're losing record numbers of teachers because of interference from the state (and our deplorable state-sponsored culture wars), it is inconceivable that we would put any money at all toward canned curriculum and not invest heavily in the expertise of our teachers in the classroom. **GET GOVERNMENT OUT OF OUR CLASSROOMS** and stop wasting tax payer money on private companies instead of our public employees. We need to keep our teachers in the classrooms and this is not going to accomplish that goal. Stop the madness and say no to HB 1605.

Paula Hilliard  
self  
San Antonio, TX

Here are a few Parental Rights and Teaching Profession Rights concerns within this bill:

Section 46. changes Ed Code 31.154. For a parent to see the online portal of own Minor Child's instructional material, a parent must never share what they discover. For example, at a board meeting? With a fellow-parent? With an administrator? If a parent shares, they may be denied access to their child's instructional material. This is sweepingly harmful of transparency and parental authority.

Can one legislator remember their parents being threatened like this when we had hardback textbooks? What is the problem these changes are fixing?

Furthermore the bill states that if a parent does share, the entity who owns the copyright (in the case of certain Amplify OER, it may be the TEA) shall work with district staff to PERMANENTLY cut off the parent. To protest this, the parent can file a grievance, but we know that process is broken and fails parents nearly every time, regardless of the merit.

We also know that "all evidence" must be attached at Level One of the FNG process. This means if a parent does not attach proof, the grievance is going to be dismissed. If they do, the parent is committing another "offense" under this new bill, justifying PERMANENT cutting off.

Section 6 further REMOVES and WEAKENS parental rights by amending 26.0061. To have a material review, a parent would have to obtain signatures from 25% of parents at a campus. That is an extremely high bar, and prohibitive. To this, every lawmaker should say: A parent's rights do not rest in whether or not he or she can obtain 800 signatures from other parents.

Even if the impossible 25% standard were achieved, the board of trustees can still say "No" we won't look at it, according to authority bestowed within this bill, which may make this bill unconstitutional.

Finally, TEACHERS should not be prohibited from the ability to write lesson plans without an act of the government granting them this basic responsibility of their profession. With Sections 9, 3, 11 and 1 working in combination, it sure seems teachers can't write lesson plans unless expressly permitted to by a government body. This will remove creativity and individualized relationship from the teacher-student interaction which is so critical to learning.

I pray the conversation today sheds light on what exactly this bill would do to help children.

Please oppose HB 1605. Thank you.  
Also, please request the fiscal note.

Kate Greer  
The Commit Partnership  
Dallas, TX

HB 1605 is a critical piece of legislation that can address pressing problems facing our state's education system: students learning below grade level, teacher burnout and a lack of transparency for parents.

Far too many Texas students are not learning at grade level, which in part is a result of the fact that greater than 80% of their classroom content is below grade level. Passing HB 1605 would ensure that all Texas school systems could opt into accessing free, quality, grade-level materials to ensure we are adequately preparing students for the future.

HB 1605 provides essential support to Texas teachers. Research shows that teachers typically spend up to 10 hours a week searching for and developing curricular resources. HQIM is a solution identified by the Teacher Vacancy Task Force to provide teachers with the resources and support needed to succeed and stay in the classroom.

Finally, HB 1605 would create transparency for Texas parents regarding their children's education. The parent portal would provide insight into the classroom's content and give parents the tools necessary to take an active role in their student's learning and reinforce key concepts at home.

Maggie Wertz

Self, education consultant

Katy, TX

The Honorable Brad Buckley

The Honorable Alma Allen

The Honorable Steve Allison

The Honorable Charles Cunningham

The Honorable Harold V. Dutton, Jr.

The Honorable Cody Harris

The Honorable Brian Harrison

The Honorable Cole Hefner

The Honorable Gina Hinojosa

The Honorable Ken King

The Honorable Oscar Longoria

The Honorable Matt Schaefer

The Honorable James Talarico

March 21, 2023

Honorable Members of the House Public Education Committee,

I am writing today to share my experience and express strong support for the use of High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) in school districts across the state and share the impact I have seen when districts make the choice to implement HQIM across all classrooms.

Aldine ISD is a large urban district which began implementing High-Quality Instructional Materials in 2020 order to ensure that their students had access to rigorous, on-grade level lessons and activities while removing undue burdens of planning these lessons from teachers who already have enough on their plates. I was on a team of consultants from 2019 to 2022 who partnered with the district to support their implementation of ELA HQIM. With this implementation, I have seen the biggest shift in students being given complex, grade level text to read, write, think, and speak about on a daily basis. Instead of it being left up to a specific campus or teacher priority and knowledge of writing lessons based in complex text, the variables are diminished, and students know they will come to school each day being challenged at their grade level.

I also have seen the impact when a district does not implement an HQIM, specifically at the kindergarten to second grade level, when it is critical for students to be taught how to read with a systematic and explicit foundational skills program. During the pandemic when school was virtual, I watched as a first grader I was a care giver for was being taught how to read with a flawed and non-research-based curriculum. He struggled on a daily basis to master the skill of decoding in order to begin to fluently read written text. This was the same story when he entered second and third grade. When I advocated for his teachers to use an HQIM with him, I was met with blank stares and encouragement to teach phonics at home. I was also reassured that he would receive extra support so he would be okay. He was not. If his teachers' district would have been using systematic and explicit foundational skills program from the start, then he would not already be behind at the beginning of his schooling.

As a lifelong educator, I have seen first hand the powerful and positive impacts from implementing High-Quality Instructional Materials and applaud the legislature for considering providing more resources for school districts to implement this initiative for the benefit of all Texas public school students.

Best,

Maggie Wertz, , Education consultant and former teacher and Assistant Principal

Bonnie Seelig  
self retired  
Spicewood, TX

Not in support of this HB 1605. This bill is not supporting transparency, teacher relationships, right to redress government schools and curriculum. The Texas Education Agency is not supporting parents in their failure to investigate and remove teachers who violate the law. Yet this bill gives them more power.

Cindy Abramowitz  
Home  
Austin, TX

I am not for using a standardized state curriculum in public school. Local control of materials by educators should be allowed. In my case, my kids are performing at an advanced level academically, and having teachers use standard materials is not of value to their learning. My kids already score in the top percentage for standardized state and other testing, and standard grade level materials are already too easy for them. Allow flexibility in what they learn. If my 6th grader is already able to learn high school level math and science concepts, why have her teachers use standard materials and keep her at a lower level.

Laura Weaver  
retired/self  
The Woodlands, TX

Please vote against HB 1605. Our communities want to manage their own public schools; we do not need the State to dictate what instructional materials are used. Our local teachers and administrators have a much better idea of what is appropriate for the community. Do not take this important job away from the school boards we have chosen, and the educators we respect. Texas parents want to keep decisions over instructional materials in the hands of the people we trust. Oppose HB 1605.

Minda Caesar  
Self -- Trustee, Spring Branch ISD (testifying in my personal capacity)  
Houston, TX

While I appreciate the voluntary nature of this bill, I believe it is absolutely essential that districts be allowed to select the best instructional materials for their children. Control over instructional materials, scope and sequence has enabled Spring Branch ISD to close gaps, improve learning and our 2022 TAPR results show that our teachers have driven learning and academic improvement to exceed pre pandemic levels while closing gaps and driving academic success. I am registering AGAINST this bill. Thank you for your consideration.

James Dennis  
self  
Austin, TX

This entire bill isn't bad, but moving curriculum review from elected official (State Board of Education) to an appointed individual (Commissioner) is so un-Texan that it's baffling. How you can claim to be a Texan and Republican while also trying to move power away from elected official to appointed ones is beyond me. Don't talk about small/local government and then try to do stuff like this.

Sheyenne Brown  
Self  
Amarillo, TX

Amarillo moms say NO to Amplify & it's woke agenda to corrupt our children. We are pulling out of public school by droves because of this curriculum.

Jami Hanes  
Self/Family special Ed assistant  
Amarillo, TX

Amplify is not a program that Texas should accept as curriculum. We want the ability to choose locally what is best for our students.

Jamie Haynes  
Texans Wake Up  
Canyon, TX

HB1605 - Against  
Please vote no. This will remove local control, eliminate teachers and move in facilitators and create state curriculum. ISDs will be lured to accept the free product to improve STAAR scores instead of pay for a locally controlled product.

Mitzi Higginbotham  
Self  
Reklaw, TX

Children's classroom experience has been rapidly shifting away from classical teaching to a facilitation model of "instruction." Teaching without teaching. The STAAR is overemphasized, and the teacher is more and more burned out and shoved away from what being an educator once meant. We are not creating lifelong learners, and teaching is no longer fun, for many reasons. We are seeing classic teachers leave the profession in droves, and politicians scratch their heads, as if it is a mystery why. Parents and experienced teachers know that the schools of today are not like they were ten or twenty years ago.

This bill is not addressing any of the problems parents (and teachers) identify. Fewer and fewer Texas students have mastery over the basics they need to help ensure our free society, as Chapter 4 of Education Code states. Parents want a return to the basics and desire a return to textbooks in certain subjects. We see the dangers of Open Education Resource material combined with lack of transparency with the taxpaying public. Our schools are being managed as data-centers and our children treated as commodities, and we call upon brave legislators to block legislation that is perpetuating the problems in Texas education.

The Texas Education Agency has not been a friend to parents – failing to investigate serious and documented violations of law, harming countless families. These bills would grab even more power away from voters, silence parents, weaken teachers, school boards and the SBOE, and continue the transfer of power, influence, and our children's data to the TEA and its big money allies.  
Texas Education 911 Position: DANGER BILLS

We oppose these bills and believe them to be dangerous. HB 1605 and SB 2565 will have harmful effects on parental rights in education in the areas of transparency, teacher relationships, right to redress government, and curriculum; major aspects which concern Texas K-12 families. And, there is NO FISCAL NOTE, even while extensive per pupil spending is included in the bill. These bills reduce the statutory authority of the SBOE and locally elected school board trustees over the curriculum selection, and in ISDs, over their own employees. Rather than the TEA reviewing curriculum and giving the SBOE only a few months to review a minimum of 200 curricula as these would have it, we would like to see SBOE properly budgeted and staffed to do this work. The TEA must leave the primary responsibility for curriculum selection to the elected officials. We see a grab by a state agency that has been unfriendly to parents and overseen a serious decline in academic achievement, student behavior and teacher satisfaction. We do not want education to be one-size fits all for the entire state by the use of Open Educational Resources and a TEA-chosen "book" and vocabulary words for each grade. These bills will go far to eliminate the I in ISDs and turn the SBOE into some modicum of a rubber- stamp committee of the TEA.

Laurie Duke  
self, parent, former educator  
FORT WORTH, TX

HB 1605 has some good points. There is no doubt that much of a teacher's time can be spent searching for text that is high interest and high-quality. If you are serving in a primarily black & brown community it can become even harder. If the "certain curriculum" is not culturally relevant it absolutely will impede teaching the foundational skills. If it is forced and required to be used then it also will immediately undo any benefit to educators/students. Flexibility is a must when working with children. Posting assessments is problematic and time consuming and could potentially invalidate data if parents have access. Not to mention a huge burden on districts/teachers to post all differentiated content. In its current form I ask that you oppose HB 1605.

Carolyn Mitchell, Rev  
Texas Women for Justice  
CONROE, TX

I encourage you to oppose HB 1605 and respect local control over instructional materials. This decision making should be in the hands of locally elected school boards (who approve instructional materials purchases) and local teachers and administrators, who best know the needs of students and their community standards. Thank you.

Darla Imgram, Mrs  
Concerned grandparent and Randall Co Precinct Chair  
Amary, TX

PLEASE vote against HB 1605! This would centralize curriculum control with unelected bureaucrats and remove the people's voices!

Diane Tooley  
None  
Canyon, TX

As a mother, grandmother and great grandmother, I am totally against the Amplify curriculum. By continuing with the content in that curriculum, the innocence of our children is being stolen. I have read enough of the curriculum to know that parental authority is being challenged and the subtle way it's being done is atrocious.

Beverly Bailey, MS  
911 Texas - TEXANS WAKE UP - CONSERVATIVE PATRIOTS 4 TEXAS  
Amarillo, TX

we loose local control with this bill and because amplify curriculum is from TEA they have already proven they can't be trusted to choose and get material to be appropriate for the entire state

Jennifer Hicks  
Parent  
Amarillo, TX

I request that HB 1605 be removed from consideration. I have seen the destruction caused to my local elementary school this year when the Amplify curriculum was implemented. Many families have pulled their children out of school because of the harmful content found in this curriculum and my family will be leaving at the end of this school year as well. We are losing students and teachers because of this curriculum. We can NOT allow our children to be taught in this manner. This bill will usher in more instructional resources like Amplify. This bill weakens parental rights, moves away from local control, and shifts the teaching profession further away from what makes teachers special, into replaceable facilitators. We need highly qualified and trained teachers - not a computer. Our schools are for education, not indoctrination. Parents like myself want a return to the basics of education and local control.

Sean Anderson, Mr

Self

Amarillo, TX

Hello,

I am very disappointed in Amplify Texas and the handling of concerns about what our kids are learning. Along with all the other issues and examples I've seen, I personally reviewed Grade 2, unit 2. All 4 stories were themed around "tricking" to win. Skills were called tricks. A consistent theme means intention. No moral discussion about earning to win with 7 year olds. The other theme was the importance of Zeus rounding up all the other gods to introduce them to the god of WINE, PLEASURE, and theater. Again, 7 year olds. Why are we promoting this vs hard work, perseverance, and being forthright?

The other red flag we've dealt with is the insinuation of "conspiracy theorists" or "racists" at school board meetings by the proponents of the curriculum. If you can't prove the positives then you attack the character of people with concerns. A sad part of today's society. If it were conspiracy, many things wouldn't have already been removed from the curriculum. The actual conspiracy is the subversive ideology being taught to our children which is, and will lead to more kids struggling to obtain proper education that helps them excel. So I ask. Is the betterment of our youth the focus or is it money and ideology? Look around our kids are struggling. We don't need big companies collecting big money that are heavily influenced creating curriculums. We need parents working with others to create curriculums in our own communities. Thank you.

Londo Kolp

Self

Amarillo, TX

Recently the Amarillo Independent School District was given a standardized curriculum known as Amplify Texas by TEA. Upon reviewing this curriculum it has been found to be wildly inappropriate for Elementary age students with texts including quotes such as "Mexican men do not like their women strong", and crafts that involve first graders making idols of false Mayan gods out of salt dough, I can't imagine how we could ever trust any standardized curriculum coming from TEA ever again. They have only agreed to make changes to the curriculum after parent outcry even though this material was said to have already been fully vetted and deemed appropriate. What is to happen to local control when we move to a state standardized curriculum making changes to said curriculum would be virtually impossible for a community that is 8 hours away from Austin. I know they state that it would be optional, but when schools are struggling with funding as it is and they are presented with the option for a free curriculum from the state or purchasing their own I don't see this turning out well for those of us opposed to the states chosen learning apparatus. Not to mention the fact they have now changed the STARR test to "align" with said curriculum- what choice is a superintendent to have then, when they see free and better test scores with standardized? Please stop this standardizing of standards this is the same fight against common core, it's just found a new name- standardized.

Connie Brown

Self

Amarillo, TX

Please vote against this bill! We lose control. TEA has proven they cannot be trusted....we do not want state wide curriculum!  
No! Vote no!

Pat Bohlender

Self

Canyon, TX

We have too much Government control!! Local school districts need to be able to choose from a wide variety of resources! The Amplify curriculum is not a quality throughout. Many sexually explicit content has been found and shown on National media! It's hidden within textbooks and not in title. This is criminal what we are allowing done to our most precious asset (our children). So much pressure is placed on teachers and they now have to be aware of what's on the next page!! They cannot innocently read a story (book) as what's on next page not only has the LGBTQ rainbow but also vulgar words and explicit drawings!!

Vote NO

LINDA LEE

self

Austin, TX

I do not support this bill. This bill will effectively require teachers to teach to a script, penalizing them for deviations from a standardized curriculum; it will provide a low threshold to trigger a curriculum review, which could be easily manipulated by special interests. Teachers are in the classroom as professionals to help students explore the world we live in from many points of view. This places more hardships and control on the the learning environment.

Lauren Hickmott

Self- parent and teacher

Amarillo, TX

I firmly believe that school curriculum should be a local decision and NOT a state wide decision. Amplify was bought by TEA and has been a complete disaster in Amarillo. Amarillo ISD is having to figure out how to fix it and spend a lot more money when it should not have been purchased for Amarillo in the first place.

Melanie Johnson, Mrs.

self- tutor

Amarillo, TX

I completely oppose this bill, it takes away the parents voice and it takes away from the independent school districts. Please vote NO!

Kim Horton

Self/substitute teacher with math teaching degree.

Weatherford, TX

Chair Buckley and Public Education Committee,

This bill threatens transparency to parents regarding their own children.

Section 46 establishes a trap that can strip involved parents of their rights to access instructional material. A parent who discovers a problem with the instructional materials cannot discuss it with the board of trustees or show proof of any copyright materials that may be obscene or sexualizing (as parents have reported with Mike Morath's "Amplify" OER), violate parent rights, the law, or the constitutions. If the parents do, they violate TEA standards, triggering the publisher to work with district staff to permanently deny the parent access to instructional materials. (DO PUBLIC LIBRARIES HAVE SUCH ENFORCEMENT!?)

If parents don't show "copyrighted" proof, their complaint is meritless and dismissed. This handcuffing of parents is dangerous to our children and to good and caring teachers. An argument can be made that it may violate the constitution and a person's right to redress their local government without retaliation.

For the parent who takes the risk and shares evidence, Section 11 explains exactly how they may be punished. No access to: - material used by a teacher, principal or instructional leader

-lesson plans, unit plans, modules

-their child's books, workbooks, online services or media, digital media, their child's email or Google classroom, other applications used as part of instruction, videos, and more.

Inexplicably, Section 5 can affirmatively deny a parent the right to see their own child's graded assignments. It can require a working parent to come physically to the school during work hours, even if all instruction is in digital format, which dissuades parents from seeing what is being taught, a form of obfuscation.

We want more transparency, not less.

I urge the committee to vote against this bill to protect children and parents whose right is to make all education decisions for their children not the state.

For Texas Freedoms!

Kim Horton

Blessings

Gentry McLean

self, attorney

Austin, TX

The curriculum review provisions of this bill are the kind of bureaucratic nonsense driving teachers away from our public school system. I can't help but wonder if helping to destroy public schools isn't the real purpose. Please vote against this bill.

Vanessa Seaberg

Self parent

Amarillo, TX

Amplify is supposedly a new standardized curriculum brought to Amarillo straight from TEA. I know parents all over our city have been fighting for months against the inappropriate material in Amplify- it has really become a thorn in our side and to think that with standardized curriculum we can't just make a plea to our local school board to make changes but would now have to make that plea to the state is not acceptable. I stand against this bill and call on my elected officials to do the same- remember you don't just represent me, but our children the next generation depends on you to ensure they don't become indoctrinated to despise their country, faith and heritage.

Susan Moffat

Self, retired

Austin, TX

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 1605, which would have the net effect of obligating Texas public school teachers to teach to a script. At a time when schools across the state struggle to find qualified educators, this kind of governmental overreach will make it infinitely harder to recruit and retain the smart creative teachers we need.

Texas teachers need respect and adequate pay, not more burdensome state mandates. Please reject HB 1605.

Thank you for your consideration and your service to our state.

Jennifer Miller

Self

Weatherford, TX

I oppose this bill as it threatens transparency to parents regarding their own children by establishing a trap that can strip involved parents of their rights to access their child's instructional material.

Brenda Platt  
Wise County Precinct 19 Chair  
Bridgeport, TX

Bill Analysis: HB1605

This bill threatens transparency to parents regarding their own children.

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We want more transparency, not less.

Shelley McCarty, Mrs.

Self

Aledo, TX

This is a terrible Bill. Taking away any parental rights from a parent is wrong!! Absolutely against this Bill!

Shona Wright

Self, parent, self employed

Amarillo, TX

Please consider removing Amplify Curriculum from AISD. Education should be administered without political agenda, race, or sexual orientation. Amplify deems to desensitize our children by normalizing, violence, sex, homosexuality, and the broken family unit. A solid curriculum needs to teach children to navigate through school understanding how to socially treat each other and understand grade level skills in order to be successful AND nothing else. As parents, it is our job to PARENT by determining when it is appropriate for them to learn and understand certain social and political issues not the schools and especially not in elementary. Let's get back to the TEKs and relying on teachers to choose age appropriate literature like they have done for decades. Discipline and accountability will solve the bully problems not social and emotional learning for everyone and no discipline for the offender.

I know it's an incredibly hard position to decide on curriculum that fits all of Amarillo and I don't envy the process, but can we please NOT pick one that is trying to indoctrinate them on any political or social standing?

Mary Favret

self

The Woodlands, TX

I request you respect local control over school instruction materials. This bill will only allow teachers to go rouge with demanding the purchase of the materials, but no control over what is taught and very little control over if teaching of these materials actually happens.

Deb Hillis  
Self  
Clarendon, TX

I do not support this bill. It continues to erode local control of what is being taught to our children. They are being indoctrinated and not taught the basics of learning!!!!

Mark Ellis, Mr  
Self  
Amarillo, TX

This gives TEA too much influence. Parents, the state, and local school officials should have the influence. Amplify, a product enforced by TEA is a badly disguised indoctrination program they have already slipped into many districts. The legislature needs to make that harder for them rather than easier.

Amy Woodell  
PTA  
Austin, TX

Please vote No on HB 1605. This takes all creativity out of teaching and basically gives teachers a script to follow. In a profession that is famously underpaid and challenging, this would take away any joy/pride in teaching. Our teachers are quitting in higher numbers than ever.....Vote no on this bill. It will cause teachers to quit in even higher numbers. No on this restrictive bill,

Kim Brownlee  
self- business manager  
Weatherford, TX

This bill threatens transparency to parents regarding their own children.  
Section 46 establishes a trap that can strip involved parents of their rights to access instructional material. A parent who discovers a problem with the instructional materials cannot discuss it with the board of trustees or show proof of any copyright materials that may be obscene or sexualizing (as parents have reported with Mike Morath's "Amplify" OER), violate parent rights, the law, or the constitutions. If the parents do, they violate TEA standards, triggering the publisher to work with district staff to permanently deny the parent access to instructional materials. (DO PUBLIC LIBRARIES HAVE SUCH ENFORCEMENT!?)  
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-lesson plans, unit plans, modules

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We want more transparency, not less.

Jodi Duron, Dr.  
Texas Association of Midsize Schools  
Elgin, TX

On behalf of the Texas Association of Midsize Schools we are testifying "ON" the bill. There are aspects of this bill that we support and other aspects that raise concern for our membership. We support the voluntary nature of this bill that allows districts to choose to participate. However we do not support the incentivizing of districts to "pay them to participate". We believe IMTA monies should be spread equitably to support the needs of all districts in Texas. We would welcome the opportunity to further discuss modifications to the bill to support the range of districts (ie. size and demographics) in Texas.

Erica Lawrence

self

Spring, TX

My name is Erica. I am a Native Texan, mother to 4 school-aged children who attend public schools. We have lived all over Texas: Alice, Corpus Christi, Addison, Mansfield, Benbrook/Aledo, Justin/Roanoke, and now in The Woodlands. And have attend public schools in these areas. This proposed legislation is legislative micro-managing. This bill takes the decision making out of the hands of locally elected school boards (who approve instructional materials purchases) and local teachers and administrators, who best know the needs of students and their community standards. Furthermore, this proposed bill will give the appointed Commissioner of Education and the TEA authority, cutting out local stakeholders. We have other pressing issues than limiting the ability of local districts to select instructional materials.

Lee Hickmott

Self

Amarillo, TX

I strongly oppose HB 1605 and SB 2565 .

Problem:

Children’s classroom experience has been rapidly shifting away from classical teaching to a facilitation model of “instruction.” Teaching without teaching. The STAAR is overemphasized, and the teacher is more and more burned out and shoved away from what being an educator once meant. We are not creating lifelong learners, and teaching is no longer fun, for many reasons. We are seeing classic teachers leave the profession in droves, and politicians scratch their heads, as if it is a mystery why. Parents and experienced teachers know that the schools of today are not like they were ten or twenty years ago.

This bill is not addressing any of the problems parents (and teachers) identify. Fewer and fewer Texas students have mastery over the basics they need to help ensure our free society, as Chapter 4 of Education Code states. Parents want a return to the basics and desire a return to textbooks in certain subjects. We see the dangers of Open Education Resource material combined with lack of transparency with the taxpaying public. Our schools are being managed as data-centers and our children treated as commodities, and we call upon brave legislators to block legislation that is perpetuating the problems in Texas education.

The Texas Education Agency has not been a friend to parents – failing to investigate serious and documented violations of law, harming countless families. These bills would grab even more power away from voters, silence parents, weaken teachers, school boards and the SBOE, and continue the transfer of power, influence, and our children’s data to the TEA and its big money allies.

Bill Analysis:

This bill threatens transparency to parents regarding their own children.

Section 46 establishes a trap that can strip involved parents of their rights to access instructional material. A parent who discovers a problem with the instructional materials cannot discuss it with the board of trustees or show proof of any copyright materials that may be obscene or sexualizing (as parents have reported with Mike Morath’s “Amplify” OER), violate parent rights, the law, or the constitutions. If the parents do, they violate TEA standards, triggering the publisher to work with district staff to permanently deny the parent access to instructional materials. (DO PUBLIC LIBRARIES HAVE SUCH ENFORCEMENT!?)

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-lesson plans, unit plans, modules

-their child’s books, workbooks, online services or media, digital med

Gayla Grunau

Self

Amarillo, TX

We oppose these bills and believe them to be dangerous. HB 1605 and SB 2565 will have harmful effects on parental rights in education in the areas of transparency, teacher relationships, right to redress government, and curriculum; major aspects which concern Texas K-12 families. And, there is NO FISCAL NOTE, even while extensive per pupil spending is included in the bill.

Lee Spiller, Executive Director  
Citizens Commission on Human Rights- Texas  
Austin, TX

Against-

One of our major concerns has to do with Section 46 of the bill- the Parent Portal section of the bill.

The bill clearly states that parent access will be subject to terms and conditions:

"(3) accept user terms and conditions, including a condition that the instructional material cannot be shared."

We believe this will create an avenue by which local school boards can retaliate against parents, for "sharing" even when such "sharing" is to inform or complain to a legislator, a school board member, or even the press, when they find errors or objectionable content.

The bill should recognize the benefit of parents being able to share the data, not for money, but for the public purpose of improving or or correcting things they believe are problems.

In reviewing mental health content in the most recently approved Health instructional materials approved by the State Board of Education, we found numerous screenings or self assessments, plus much content that appeared to urge underaged students to seek "professional help." And yet to access the materials on the SBOE, we had to click a button agreeing not to reproduce.

Thankfully, a local school district did not make one agree to such a condition to access the materials.

We urge the bill author and the committee to ensure that parents can access digital teaching materials in the same manner as they could if they were a paper textbook, including the parent being able to make the choice of copying a section and then using this to inform elected officials or the public as to what they are seeing.

Janelle Davis  
Self  
Celina, TX

I am a parent of 3 public school children in Prosper ISD. Our schools are failing our children. The technology use is killing their ability to learn and the effectiveness of their learning. The screens are causing health problems. Get the technology out of the classroom. Go back to a classical model of education and let the teachers TEACH. They have become nothing but facilitators for digital learning and this is not working for our kids. I am AGAINST this bill.

Maureen Voosen  
self - public education parent  
Austin, TX

Overall the bill places undue burdens on districts and too much power onto the unelected (and not responsible to voters) TEA and commissioner.

Anne Newman  
Self/consultant  
Fair Oaks Ranch, TX

Please oppose HB 1605.

Deborah Leiber  
self  
THE WOODLANDS, TX

I am a Texas resident. All three of my children attended and graduated from Texas public schools and my grandchildren will soon start attending Texas public schools. I am opposed to the provisions of proposed HB 1605. It is imperative that we respect local control over instructional materials. This bill takes the decision making out of the hands of locally elected school boards (who approve instructional materials purchases) and local teachers and administrators, who best know the needs of students and their community standards. I respectfully request that you do not support HB 1605.

Sincerely,  
Deborah Leiber

Jean Card, Mrs  
Myself  
The Woodlands, TX

I believe children should have access to books about every subject they want information about. Parents can guide their kids, answer their questions, help them learn to be discerning about any & all information. Librarians are trained to choose books for their libraries & make appropriate recommendations to teachers & students. I consider it an infringement on good education for legislators to usurp this prerogative. I do not agree that legislators have the right to ban books from student & public use.

Maria Nicholas  
Eagle Forum  
Farmers Branch TX, TX

Please support HB 900

April Allen  
Self  
Austin, TX

Vote no!

Colby Nichols  
Fast Growth School Coalition  
Austin, TX

Written Testimony on House Bill 1605  
Submitted to the House Public Education Committee  
On March 21, 2023  
By Greg Smith, Ph.D., Executive Director, Fast Growth School Coalition

Chairman Buckley and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Fast Growth School Coalition, the collective voice of our state's fastest-growing school districts.

We encourage you to consider further refinement of the legislation to ensure that decisions regarding curriculum and instructional materials rest with local school districts in consultation and collaboration with locally-elected school board trustees, district superintendents, school principals, teachers, and parents.

We appreciate the goal of your legislation and recognition that curriculum and instruction decisions are best made locally, closest to the students our public schools serve. It's important that local school districts and their locally-elected trustees maintain choices under this proposed legislation.

Thank you for your leadership and this opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 1605.

Renee La Rue, Ms.  
self, retired professor  
Conroe, TX

I believe this is an attempt to diminish local control over school districts. We do NOT need another layer of "administrators" from outside the district telling us what's best for our children. For as long as we've had public schools in Texas, the idea of local control has been paramount to the idea of public education. Let's keep it that way.

Debra Leff  
Self  
Austin, TX

Have you ever taught school? I did for 40 years. There is no possible way to stick to a completely standard curriculum. Children ask questions, historical facts are added to our modern understanding of history, math, etc. Why must we take our teachers to court if they are allowing all facts to be shared? Who's next? The lawyers, the bankers? This is just negligent pandering. I am against this bill.

Ruth York, (1) VP; (2) Interim Chair  
(1) Tea Party Patriots of Eastland County; (2) Texas Family Defense Committee; (3) self (Direct sales)  
CISCO, TX

We oppose HB 1605. This bill has several mechanisms designed to reduce parental access to instructional materials, even their own child's graded assignments, or to make reviewing materials difficult by, for example, restricting hours of access. We need more parental involvement, more transparency, not less.

Vote "No" on HB 1605.

Sara Kitchen, MS  
Self, Vision Impairment Education Specialist  
Austin, TX

I am opposed to HB 1605. As a teacher, I know that the standard curriculum is appropriate some of the time and HIGHLY INAPPROPRIATE at other times. Teachers need to have freedom to meet students needs, not to be chained to what somebody who probably knows nothing about children or education created. Standardized curricula have a place as scaffolding that should be loosely followed when appropriate and adapted to connect to the students and their community, which is what all teachers strive to do. State regulation only kills education because lawmakers are completely ignorant about what works, as demonstrated repeatedly. State funding, on the other hand, including support for teacher training that applies to their students, higher pay: these are the things that would improve public school. NOT HB 1605.

Randall Dvorak  
Self  
Palacios, TX

Vote NO on this bill  
Leave local control of education

Tracy Hanes

Families Engaged for Effective Education/self

Victoria, TX

HB 1605 and SB 2565 would remove the people's voices and centralize curriculum control with unelected bureaucrats, affect teachers' lesson-planning process, establish a way to deny parents the right to see their own child's school information

- I oppose HB 1605 and its cousin SB 2565.

- I request these be removed from consideration and for their authors to withdraw support for these (seemingly TEA-written) bills. Question for legislators: Where did the Commissioner of Education derive the authority to expend ~\$50 million on the Open Educational Resource "Amplify"? Please review Texas Ed911 analysis below which I support.

[https://mcusercontent.com/cb5061685f74d0462721fd48d/files/467a29a1-95aa-cb50-aff5-5e79b62e0b1d/HB\\_1605\\_Analysis.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1pDoOk\\_TFCZMnYC5dFXC0PudTx60-BcV1za3N-L4x1iH2CISCjbfXkbrc&mibextid=kdkkhi](https://mcusercontent.com/cb5061685f74d0462721fd48d/files/467a29a1-95aa-cb50-aff5-5e79b62e0b1d/HB_1605_Analysis.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1pDoOk_TFCZMnYC5dFXC0PudTx60-BcV1za3N-L4x1iH2CISCjbfXkbrc&mibextid=kdkkhi)

Jackie Besinger

Self

Austin, TX

The bill has some good parts, but corrections on obvious limitations on SBOE's powers and authority need to be considered. Section 21 limits SBOE instructional review process to only "accept" or "reject"- strikes compliance with TEKS under 28.002 The SBOE should have more power over policy as well as curriculum. TEA should not control what belongs to the SBOE as this is why we have elected bodies.

Therefore I am against this bill.

Anna Weiler

Self

Pflugerville, TX

Please pause on this bill. We have had no time to consider it and no input has been asked by the people it affects the most.

Tania Vazquez, Ms.

Self, Caregiver/Mother

Weatherford, TX

Please protect our children from sexually explicit material in school.

Margie Frasier

Central Texas Tea Party

Temple, TX

I approve of Brad Buckley's bill to bring back essential knowledge and skills to the public school system. It has strayed far from what education should be. Time to teach our young children reading, writing, math, and history again. And definitely teach them about the basics of the Constitution and why it matters.

No more teaching on perversion instruction. Go back to the truest basics that children need to eventually become solid citizens, and hardworking individuals who love and serve and support one another. Not this selfish desire to be out for whatever you can get away with as you harm the young children around you.

Wanda Ulrey

self

Victoria, TX

Vote No on HB 1605!

Kim Snyder-Jackson

Self - Mother of 4 and Voting Texan

Austin, TX

Please OPPOSE HB 1605. Texas already turned down the national common core curriculum (as well they should have), but now we are faced with having a state common core curriculum. The TEA has not engaged parents in any decision to make radical changes to public school curriculum. I am concerned that millions of dollars in taxpayer funds are being invested in an unvetted state curriculum. Texans have only learned of this attempt to drive curriculum from the top-down this week, with no parent input.

HB 1605 disrespects teachers as professionals, by micromanaging what and how teachers prepare and deliver lessons. My understanding from teacher reports and research into the Amplify curriculum show that the curriculum is scripted and timed, not allowing teachers the autonomy to pace their instruction to meet the needs of the students they know best.

Additionally, the punitive language in the bill states teachers will be protected from disciplinary proceedings only if they use state-approved materials “with fidelity” (undefined and subjective term).

(Sec. 22.05125) Our understanding from teachers who have used the Amplify curriculum is that “fidelity” can mean that teachers will receive negative evaluations if they do not finish the scripted curriculum in the allotted time, regardless of the needs of their students.

Under the pretense of protecting teachers’ time and “rights,” HB 1605 incentivizes school districts to limit teachers’ lesson preparation and time spent creating and/or selecting instructional materials. (Secs. 11.164, 21.4045). This curriculum approach will hasten the departure of our best teachers, vs. “dumbing down” their teaching to a scripted curriculum that is not sensitive to the learning needs of their

students. These specified mandates seem designed for district disruption and for pushing out good teachers, increasing the attrition of veteran professional educators.

Cookie cutter, top-down direction from TEA is not excellence. It's not what we value in our Texas public schools and a poor excuse for education. Our teachers and our children deserve better. Please take the time to read critical feedback from teachers who have used Amplify – and listen to their concerns that coercing districts into using materials with tightly scripted curriculum, with content that isn’t developmentally appropriate, will erode the teacher-student relationship and push out good teachers.

HB 1605 is detrimental to our schools. Please VOTE AGAINST HB 1605