



WHO DOES WHAT

Elected officials at every level of government make decisions about public education. You get to pick them with your vote — so know who does what and research candidates before you vote!

LOCAL

School Board

1. Sets vision and goals for the district.
2. Hires and evaluates the superintendent.
3. Ensures district policies and processes align to goals and meet legal requirements.
4. Advocates on behalf of students and families.
5. Fosters parent and family engagement.
6. Approves placement of school bond referendums on local ballot to fund capital projects (school buildings, buses, technology).
7. Sets school district tax rate, seeking voter approval when necessary.
8. Reviews and approves the school district budget.
9. Determines with the superintendent and district CFO how funding is distributed within the district.
10. Reviews and approves district staffing guidelines, compensation plans, and salary scales.
11. Adopts policies regarding hiring, assigning, appraising, and terminating school district personnel.
12. Discusses key district issues in public school board meetings and receives public testimony on various issues including campus location, grades served, and attendance zones.

STATE

State Board of Education (SBOE)

1. Writes and approves the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the curriculum standard for all public-school students.
2. Reviews and adopts instructional materials.
3. Oversees the Texas Permanent School Fund, which pays for textbooks, some technology, and a small amount of general education funding.
4. Has veto authority over rules sent to it from the appointed State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC). SBEC oversees the educator code of conduct, educator preparation programs, and certification/recertification requirements for teachers and other public school educators.
5. Approves or vetoes the Commissioner's awards for NEW charter school networks (no authority over expansion of campuses through a charter amendment submitted by existing charter networks).
6. Conducts public hearings for key policy issues including new charter school network applications.
7. Approves school board training.

STATE (cont.)

Texas Legislature (Texas Senate and House of Representatives)

1. Writes laws governing all aspects of public education, such as:
 - A. Funding for public schools: 92% of public education funding is determined by the state legislature, with significant ability to direct funds toward particular programs or initiatives.
 - B. Testing requirements for Texas students (how much, high stakes, which tests).
 - C. Design of the accountability system for Texas districts and campuses (how to rate schools, what factors should be included in the accountability system, etc.).
 - D. Oversight of the TEA Commissioner, who can approve charter school network expansion.
 - E. Charter schools: Governance, operation, accountability, transparency, and expansion.
 - F. Teacher funding issues (how to fund teacher pay, healthcare, retirement, etc.).
2. The Texas House elects the Speaker of the House, who sets the agenda and appoints committee chairs in the House of Representatives, including the chair of the House Public Education Committee.

Texas Lieutenant Governor

1. Presides over the Senate and determines which bills will be heard.
2. Appoints Senate committee chairs including the chair of the Senate Education Committee.

Texas Governor

1. Appoints the Commissioner of Education who interprets and implements laws on funding, testing and accountability; oversees teacher certifications; and exercises sole approval over charter school expansion for existing charter school networks and approves new charter school network applications (subject to final approval by the elected State Board of Education).
2. Has the power to veto bills and has line-item veto over the state budget.
3. Sets emergency items during a regular session and has the authority to call special legislative sessions.

Significant authority exists with an appointed Texas Commissioner of Education and an appointed State Board for Educator Certification; however, those positions are not subject to elections. These positions are appointed by the Texas Governor.

FEDERAL

United States Congress (Senate and House of Representatives)

1. Writes and passes laws about public education issues, including assessment, accountability, funding, charters, vouchers, and more as a condition of receiving federal funds.
2. Passes the budget, including distribution of federal education funds.
3. Holds hearings on policy issues to carry out its oversight function.
4. The United States Senate also confirms Presidential appointments, including the Secretary of Education.

President of the United States

1. Appoints the Secretary of Education, who oversees the Department of Education.
2. Submits a draft budget to Congress, including education funding.
3. Has the power to veto bills.
4. Chooses policy agendas to promote priorities such as vouchers, charters, testing, and other important issues.
5. Declares federal emergencies and, with Congress, directs disaster relief.