

ABOUT EDUCATION...

EDUCATION IN THE U.S.

- 17 states have free universal Pre-K education
- In 2022, the average public school teacher salary in the U.S. was \$66,397
- The national average-per-pupil spending is \$14,347
- High School Graduation Rate (National Average): 91%
- No High School Diploma Rate (National Average): 9%
- Bachelor Degree Rate (National Average): 35%
- Advanced Degree Rate (National Average): 14%
- In 2020, the overall 6-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time undergraduate students who began seeking a bachelor's degree at 4-year degree-granting institutions in fall 2014 was 64 percent.



EDUCATION IN TEXAS

- Texas does not have universal pre-K policy
- Texas had the second-highest number of book bans during the 2022-2023 school year, with 625 instances (behind Florida).
- The average Texas teacher salary is \$56,948.
- The Texas average-per-pupil spending is currently \$6,160; that basic allotment for state spending has not increased since 2019. Texas ranks 44th in the nation.
- High School Graduation Rate in Texas: 85.39%; Ranked in the US: #50
- No High School Diploma Rate in Texas: 14.61%; Ranked in the US: #50
- Bachelor Degree Rate in Texas: 33.12%; Ranked in the US: #28
- Advanced Degree Rate in Texas: 11.9%; Ranked in the US: #34
- The overall 6-yr graduation rate for first-time, full-time undergraduate students who began seeking a bachelor's degree at 4-year degree-granting institutions in Texas was 49%; Texas ranks 32 in the US.

DEMOCRATS

Democrats believe that every child, no matter who they are, how much their families earn, or where they live, should have access to a high-quality education, from preschool through high school and beyond.

- Democrats oppose private school vouchers and other policies that divert taxpayer-funded resources away from the public school system, including the program at issue in the recent *Espinoza* decision.
- Education is a public good and should not be saddled with a private profit motive.
- Democrats want to keep “for-profit” private charter businesses from receiving federal funding..
- Democrats will fight to significantly increase pay and benefits for all educators, in order to help recruit, retain, and reward high-quality teachers and support professionals, and will continue to support measures to help teachers pay for out-of-pocket classroom expenses.
- Democratic lawmakers maintain that banning books restricts children’s ability to think for themselves and that books can help change a reader’s attitude toward difference. Democrats believe that campaigns to censor books are unconstitutional.

Meeting the needs of the whole child is essential to help America’s students grow academically and improve their well-being. President Biden is committed to increasing and supporting the adoption of community school models across the country.



UNDER BIDEN

- President Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan which **allocated \$130 billion to K-12**. These funds have also used to increase compensation to teachers.
- Biden has established a **Student Debt Relief program**—\$42 billion in Public Service Loan Forgiveness.
- Biden signed the ***Bipartisan Safer Communities Act*** into law, the first major federal gun safety bill passed in nearly 30 years, and included historic levels of funding to address youth mental health, and an additional \$2 billion for the

Department of Education to create safe, inclusive learning environments for students and hire and train more mental health professionals for schools.

- Biden is also working to further extend the reach of **federal mental health programs** and investments into schools, and to leverage Medicaid funding to provide crucial health and mental health services at schools.
- Biden secured a nearly \$2 billion (or 11%) **increase in Title I funds**, which delivers critical resources to 90% of school districts across the nation and helps them provide students in low-income communities with necessary academic opportunities and supports. Additionally, the President has secured a historic \$1.3 billion (or 10%) **increase in Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** funds, which helps states support special education instruction and services for 7.4 million students with disabilities.
- Biden has proposed **expanding access to free community college** across the U.S., and other initiatives to make higher education less costly. In the president's budget for fiscal 2025, Biden called for increasing the amount of Pell Grants and establishing a “Reducing the Costs of College Fund.”

“There’s no such thing as someone else’s child. Our nation’s children are all our children.” President Joe Biden

UNDER REPUBLICANS

- Republicans continue to **attempt to pass vouchers**. They believe that a voucher program should be made universal, meaning that wealthy families whose children have never attended public schools may still get taxpayer dollars to fund the school of their choice. Federal funds would be “portable.” A national voucher program would enable private schools to be free “to control their admissions,” in other words, reject any students they don’t want.
- Republicans favor the *Educational Choice for Children Act*, a version of a tax credit scholarship voucher model which **allows donors to fund vouchers instead of paying taxes**, thereby adding to the federal deficit.
- Trump plans to shut down the Department of Education and give parents final say on what he calls a “pro-American education.” The four biggest programs at the department are student lending, Pell Grants, IDEA, and Title I.
- Republicans plan to create a new system to certify **teachers who “embrace patriotic values.”** They also plan to have parents directly elect school principals and adopt a “Parental Bill of Rights”.
- **Diversity initiatives would be defunded or banned** from universities and other public institutions under a slate of bills pending in Republican-led legislatures.
- Republican lawmakers in several states are seeking to impose **dramatic restrictions on sex education** amid an ongoing culture war over the teaching of topics like contraception and gender identity in public schools.
- They also want to **eliminate all record-keeping that recognizes trans students**, so that the federal government will only recognize the gender a child was assigned at birth. They would amend Title IX to include only “biological sex recognized at birth” declare that sex is a “fixed biological fact.”
- Republicans would also like to **give states the ability to opt out of any federal education program** and instead take the money they would have gotten and spend it as they wish.