



# RESEARCH

## HB 3979 Frees Texas Students from State-Sponsored Racism

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Texas's "Partisanship Out of Civics Act" (HB 3979) is landmark civil rights legislation that protects Texas students from partisan indoctrination and state-funded racism, such as "critical race theory" and "culturally responsive teaching." Put simply, the bill reaffirms Texas's dedication to the 1964 Civil Rights Act by prohibiting racist doctrines in public K-12 teaching.

HB 3979 safeguards Texas students from falling prey to ideologies that deny our common humanity and, in so doing, flout the moral teaching of equality and individual liberty found in our Declaration of Independence. Sad to say, teachings that deny our common humanity, such as critical race theory, have been spreading across the country for some time. Thanks to this bill, our Texas students and their parents will no longer have to fear this coming to the Lone Star State.

To accomplish this, HB 3979 prohibits the following racist doctrines:

- that one race or sex is superior to another race or sex;
- that an individual, by virtue of the individual's race or sex, is inherently racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously;
- that an individual should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment solely or partly because of the individual's race;
- that an individual's moral character or worth is necessarily determined by the individual's race or sex;
- that an individual, by virtue of the individual's race or sex, bears responsibility for actions committed in the past by other members of the same race or sex;
- that with respect to their relationship to American values, slavery and racism are anything other than deviations from, betrayals of, or failures to live up to, the authentic founding principles of the United States, which include liberty and equality.

The bill also bars using our Texas kids as political props for lobbying purposes. However, and happily, the bill does nothing to impede the multiplicity of ways students can get involved *and receive class credit*. For example:

- Non-partisan voter registration.
- Attend city council meetings, courts, and the Texas Capitol to observe our political process.
- Political simulations—Mock trial, model UN, speech and debate.
- Student council—Run for student government, hold office, and enact designated duties.
- Philanthropic activity—Food bank, blood drives, fire station help, park cleanup, wildlife preservation, buddy program, tutoring and teaching peers and the community, etc.

Finally, and crucially, the bill protects teachers' rights to teach any current event they want to—with the only requirement that they do so from diverse and contending perspectives, without giving deference to any one perspective. This is essential to ensuring that teaching our kids does not degenerate into indoctrination.

For all these reasons, TPPF applauds the passage of the bill and urges Governor Abbott to sign it into law. This is an historic measure that ensures that our children will receive an accurate and proper education and not be subject to political indoctrination and state-sponsored racism. ★

