

The Charter School Equity Act

The Problem

Some state and local officials are working to prevent public charter schools from opening or expanding – even though that is what Texas parents want.

- Local governments are unfairly discriminating against public charter schools by requiring them to follow different rules than ISDs and spend taxpayer money on lawyers and red tape instead of students.
- Some State Board of Education members are exploring a moratorium on all new public charter schools, despite long waiting lists and an already-rigorous state approval process. Rather than considering each charter application based on its individual merits, this policy change would restrict *all* opportunity without any justification.

The Solution

Remove—and prevent—unnecessary barriers to growth of high-quality public school options.

- Ensuring more public school opportunities are available to students means a stronger public education system for everyone. Families’ needs should be prioritized over politics.
- Texas law should require that local officials treat public charter schools fairly. The law should also remove political bias from the process of opening new public charter schools by ending the SBOE’s ability to arbitrarily veto charter school applications. Both of these solutions will ensure high-quality public charter schools are allowed to open and serve students who need them.

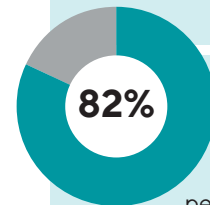
SB 28 will:

- Require local governments to follow the same process for zoning, permitting, and fee decisions for both ISDs and public charter schools.
- Respect local zoning authority to protect health and safety.
- Ensure local politics don't override state public education policy that is determined by state statute.
- Establish criteria for the SBOE to veto new charter school applications so the board cannot arbitrarily override the Texas Education Agency's recommendations

“In one case, to get zoning approval, we had to pay for a water line to supply residences with water, which cost us an additional \$400,000 and delayed the project by three months. Not only did we have to jump through all the hoops of building an additional water line that wasn’t even for the school, it took money away from our students and teachers. Instead of pencils, we were buying pipes for the city.”

RANDY SHAFFER

*Trinity Basin Preparatory,
Dallas*



82%

Research shows that both ISDs and charters are performing better as charter schools expand. From 2016 to 2019, **82%** of ISDs with charters in their attendance zones boosted their fifth grade reading scores—compared to 67% of ISDs without any charters.

HIGH DEMAND FOR PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

552 charter schools, or **65%**, have a waitlist.

More than **55,000** students are on charter school waitlists.

