



Dan Patrick

Lieutenant Governor of Texas
President of the Senate

Interim Charges

Education

- **School Choice:** Study school choice programs enacted in states across the nation, examining education savings account and tax credit scholarship programs in particular. Examine the implementation process used in other states and what impact these programs have had on student academics and state and local district budgets. Make recommendations on which choice plan could best serve Texas students.
- **Charter School Approval, Expansion, Revocation:** Study the approval, expansion, and revocation of public charter schools in Texas, including the implementation of SB 2 (83R) and other legislation. In particular, examine the issues surrounding the disposition of state property when charters are revoked, non-renewed, or cease to operate. Make recommendations regarding policies to ensure an efficient and effective transfer and disposal of state property that preserves state interest while ensuring that certain investment capital and the bond market supporting charter construction remains robust. In addition, make recommendations if needed to clarify policies regarding expansion of existing high-quality charter schools in Texas. Additionally, examine facility funding for charter schools in other states and make recommendations on facility funding assistance for charter schools in Texas.
- **Teacher Preparation, Retention, Shortages:** Study teacher shortage and retention issues in Texas and evaluate educator preparation programs to determine if these programs are preparing educators for the rigors of the 21st century classroom. In particular, examine the shortages of ELL, special education, and STEM educators across the state and identify the issues creating a shortage. Make recommendations to improve educator preparation throughout the state and increase certification rates. **(Joint Charge with Senate Higher Education)**
- **Efficiency/Productivity Review:** Conduct a comprehensive performance review of all public schools in Texas, examining ways to improve efficiency, productivity, and student academic outcomes. Study performance-based funding mechanisms that allocate dollars based upon achievement versus attendance. Identify any state mandates which hinder student performance, district and campus innovation, and efficiency and productivity overall.
- **Broadband Access:** Evaluate digital learning opportunities in classrooms and examine existing barriers to schools' ability to provide a digital learning environment. In particular, study the availability of affordable broadband access to

school districts across Texas. Examine different options for improving access to broadband service in all areas of the state, for districts and student homes. Make recommendations on a statewide plan for building the necessary infrastructure to provide a competitive, free-market environment in broadband service.

- **Teacher-Student Relationships/Student Safety:** Study the recent rise of inappropriate teacher-student relationships, the impact of social media interaction between teachers and students, and examine the current efforts by the Texas Education Agency, schools, law enforcement, and the courts to investigate and prosecute any educator engaged in inappropriate relationships. Determine what recommendations, if any, are needed to improve student safety, including increasing agency staff, adjusting penalties, and strengthening efforts to sanction educators' certificates for misconduct. Study and address the issue of prevention through training and education of school employees.
- **County School Systems:** Examine the structure and performance of the two remaining county-based school systems, Harris County Department of Education and Dallas County Schools. In particular, study the efficiency of these entities and determine whether those services are duplicative with education service centers or could be absorbed by education service centers.
- **School Board Governance, Low-Performing Schools:** Examine current school board governance policies and practices and make recommendations that could improve the focus, attitudes, and outcomes of Texas school boards, districts, and students. Study existing board training requirements for public schools and make suggestions to educate school board trustees of policies that could achieve better student outcomes, particularly within the framework set for low-performing schools in House Bill 1842 (HB1842)(84R).
- **Monitoring Charge:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Education and make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, and/or complete implementation. Specifically, monitor the following: **1)** Legislation establishing state intervention procedures for public schools with academically unsuccessful ratings of at least two consecutive school years; and providing school districts the ability to be designated as a district of innovation; **2)** Initiatives to build a high-quality pre-kindergarten grant program; **3)** Legislation to raise standards of teacher preparation programs and establish a more consistent, high-quality accountability system; **4)** Program to require the placement and use of video cameras in self-contained classrooms or other settings providing special education services to students; **5)** Legislation to address training support for counselors, and advising courses for middle school students; and **6)** Legislation to establish criteria for alternative measures of assessments to meet high school graduation requirements.

Higher Education

- **HB 5 Implementation, 60x30TX/Higher Education Alignment:** Monitor the ongoing implementation of HB 5 (83R), and examine current projections for preparation of Texas high school students for postsecondary education and workforce training. Examine best practices and recommend strategies to align the implementation with the 60x30TX higher education plan, including, but not limited to, dual credit, credit transferability, and fields of study. **(Joint Charge with Senate Education)**
- **Performance Funding for GAIs and Community Colleges:** Study current funding methods for both general academic institutions and community colleges, examining current performance-based methods of funding for community colleges. Review funding methods used in other states and make recommendations on how to incorporate and/or change student outcome measures in institutional funding to benefit students and promote the education needs of a rapidly growing and changing workforce.
- **Tuition Deregulation and Student Debt:** Examine and make recommendations regarding tuition and student debt at public institutions of higher education in Texas. Specifically, study how Texas compares to peer states, variance between institutions, how accountability measures can be used to impact tuition, and increases in tuition since 2003.
- **Tuition/Fee Waivers, Tuition Set-Asides, Financial Aid:** Conduct a review of all tuition and fee waivers and exemptions, as well as tuition set-asides currently in law, and examine how students who do not receive the benefits of either bear these resulting costs. Study how other states treat similar populations, whether federal benefits are available, and make recommendations to ensure the efficacy of waivers and exemptions, and tuition set-asides. Examine current financial aid programs, studying their efficacy, and make recommendations on how to provide programs to meet the needs of all students in light of the recent repeal of the state's Top 10% Scholarship program and B-On-Time program.
- **General Academic Institution(GAI)/Health Related Institution(HRI) Funding:** Conduct a comprehensive review of funding for GAIs and HRIs, examining whether the methodology for funding the same courses is equitable and productive. Make recommendations on how to update and streamline the current funding methods, to provide a consistent methodology that focuses on student success and innovative strategies. Include in the review a focus on tuition-revenue generating special items and formula and research funding for new medical schools.
- **Baccalaureate Degrees at Community Colleges:** Study regional workforce needs in the state and make recommendations on whether metrics should be applied to authorize public community colleges to offer certain baccalaureate degrees in order to meet the regional workforce needs.

- **Monitoring Charge:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Higher Education and make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, and/or complete implementation. Specifically, monitor the following: **1)** Initiatives designed to create effective, clear transfer pathways for students, including the newly enacted multidisciplinary studies associate degree; **2)** Implementation and progress of the Math and Science Scholars Loan Repayment Program; and **3)** The progress of the pilot program enacted by the 83rd legislature relating to improving student loan default rates and financial aid literacy among postsecondary students.
- **Teacher Preparation, Retention, Shortages:** Study teacher shortage and retention issues in Texas and evaluate educator preparation programs to determine if these programs are preparing educators for the rigors of the 21st century classroom. In particular, examine the shortages of ELL, special education, and STEM educators across the state and identify the issues creating a shortage. Make recommendations to improve educator preparation throughout the state and increase certification rates. **(Joint Charge with Senate Education)**

Inter-Governmental Relations

- **Annexation:** Identify areas of concern in regards to statutory extraterritorial jurisdiction expansion and the processes used by municipalities for annexation, specifically reviewing whether existing statute strikes the appropriate balance between safeguarding private property rights and encouraging orderly growth and economic development. Make recommendations for legislative action, if necessary.
- **Local Ordinance Integrity:** Examine the processes used by home rule municipalities to adopt ordinances, rules, and regulations, including those initiated by petition and voter referendum. Determine if additional statutory safeguards are necessary to ensure that ballot language accurately describes proposed initiatives. Identify ways to improve transparency and make recommendations, if needed, to ensure that local propositions and the means by which they are put forth to voters, conform with existing state law.
- **Disaster Preparedness Planning and Coordination:** Review natural disaster preparedness planning and coordination in the wake of a growing range of threats. Evaluate whether existing processes maximize regional cooperation to rebuild housing and infrastructure, and allow for the timely dissemination of funds to units of local governments for reconstruction following a federal declaration. Develop recommendations, if necessary, to improve the efficiency of disaster recovery efforts, incorporating best practices identified from other states, as well as lessons-learned from past reconstruction efforts in Texas.
- **Municipal Management Districts:** Study the means by which the Texas Legislature reviews the creation of municipal management districts (MMDs) by special law to determine if different processes should be used to evaluate new MMDs created within populated or developed areas from those created over undeveloped areas. Identify ways to better assess how the services and improvements of a proposed

MMD within populated or developed areas will supplement and enhance those provided by other local governments, as well as if the territory of the proposed MMD encompasses or overlaps area that is already within other assessment or taxing entities. Make recommendations, if necessary, to improve the notice provided to individuals and businesses within populated or developed areas proposed for inclusion in an MMD.

- **Supreme Court ICP Ruling:** Review existing statute and rules that govern the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs in light of the recent Supreme Court decision in *Inclusive Communities Project, Inc. vs. TDHCA, et al.* and recommend if any modifications are necessary to conform to the decision.
- **Debt Transparency in the Voting Booth:** Examine ways to improve government accountability in elections regarding the issuance of public debt. Include a review of the information that is currently provided to individuals in the voting booth and provide statutory recommendations, if necessary, to improve transparency.