

Delivering equitable education finance reform



HB3 Texas



POLICY WIN: TEXAS
\$6.5 billion
AN INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION AND EDUCATORS

the opportunity

In 2017, Texas ranked 37th among all states in education funding. Meanwhile, student outcomes were falling short of state goals: Only 22% of Texas eighth graders were achieving a postsecondary credential six years after their scheduled high school graduation, and postsecondary completion rates for students from low-income households stood at just 12%.

Among those joining forces to transform this system were four StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network members: The Commit Partnership in Dallas, E3 Alliance in Austin serving Central Texas, RGV Focus in the Rio Grande Valley and UP Partnership serving Greater San Antonio.

The result of their work, known as House Bill 3 (HB3) was signed into law in June 2019. The law represents an investment in education and educators of \$6.5 billion.



Today's Texas high school students are an integral part of the state's plan to ensure 60% of adults, 25-34 years old, hold a postsecondary credential by 2030.

THE CASE FOR SCHOOL FINANCE REFORM

22%

of Texas eighth graders were achieving a postsecondary credential six years after their scheduled high school graduation

12%

post secondary completion rates for students experiencing poverty

the collaboration

Work began at the end of the 2017 legislative session, when Gov. Greg Abbott created a bipartisan committee known as the Texas Commission on Public School Finance.

The whole process has been an incredible affirmation that if you have a large problem to solve, and you have the tools and the data to help solve it, **you can come together across the aisle and get it done.**

——— Todd Williams, The Commit Partnership

Along with their commitment to collaboration and data resources, Cradle to Career Network members contributed deep connections to the local and state business community, as well as policy expertise and relationships with state legislators and other officials.

The Commission worked in a deeply collaborative way, committing to collecting as much data and hearing as many viewpoints as possible. All in all, the group heard testimony from more than 155 stakeholders, including state officials, teachers, school district and campus leaders, parents, researchers, policy groups, government entities, nonprofits, foundations and businesses.

the result

After a year of dedicated work, the Commission produced a report with 35 recommendations, along with evidence and rationale for each. Of these recommendations, 31 made it into the final bill that Gov. Abbott signed into law in June 2019. The legislation significantly increases state funding for public education and distributes it more equitably, promising to improve early childhood education, reward exceptional teachers, increase support for college and career readiness and direct highly effective teachers toward the classrooms that need them most.



Data indicates that children who are kindergarten ready are three times more likely to meet the state's reading proficiency standards by third grade.

This successful state advocacy showcases the importance of coordinating strong, geographically diverse backbone organizations with a deep reliance on data to be the effective voice of students.

"The whole process has been an incredible affirmation that if you have a large problem to solve, and you have the tools and the data to help solve it, you can come together across the aisle and get it done," said Todd Williams, CEO of The Commit Partnership.

HB3 BILL SUMMARY

- Supports teachers and rewards excellence
- Focuses on learning and improving student outcomes
- Increases funding and equity
- Reduces and reforms property taxes and recapture