



Higher Education Curriculum Review Teams HB 3263 / SB 1348 *FACT SHEET*

What these bills do:

- Create “higher education curriculum review teams” to review and make recommendations to the State Board of Education regarding all proposed TEKS revisions. These teams ensure that proposed TEKS:
 - (1) are factually accurate and aligned with contemporary scholarship;
 - (2) serve to prepare students for college; and
 - (3) serve appropriate instructional purposes.
- Set minimum qualifications for participation on these teams, including at least five years of higher education teaching experience in the subject under review and a terminal degree in that subject area (or a doctoral degree in education).
- Create a blind scoring system for selecting nominees.

What they do not do:

- These teams would not replace the existing TEKS adoption process conducted by the SBOE. They add an additional level of review to the existing process to ensure accuracy and college-readiness.

Problem addressed:

- In recent curriculum adoptions, the SBOE has made hundreds of changes to curriculum standards drafted by teams made up of teachers and scholars – without allowing scholars to review the heavily revised standards to ensure that they still prepare students to succeed in college.
- State board members have politicized the adoption of standards by appointing unqualified “experts” to review the TEKS. Recent examples include:
 - Social Studies: Among the six board-appointed experts were David Barton, a former Texas Republican Party vice chairman who had earned only a bachelor’s degree in religious education; and the Rev. Peter Marshall, a conservative evangelical minister in Massachusetts with no relevant advanced degree or teaching experience.
 - Science: Among the six board-appointed experts were Stephen Meyer, who is vice president of the Discovery Institute (an anti-evolution think tank in Seattle); and two other supporters of intelligent design/creationism who signed the Discovery Institute’s “Dissent from Darwinism” statement.
- As recently as this past January, state board members refused to set even minimum qualifications for “experts” it appoints to provide advice on the revision of new curriculum standards.
- When respected scholars and scientists, including Nobel laureates, pleaded with state board members in 2009 not to water down instruction on evolution in science curriculum standards, then-board chairman Don McLeroy insisted that the board “stand up to experts.”
- Educators and scholars – even from the conservative Fordham Institute – have sharply criticized state board members for their “politicized distortions of history” in new social studies standards.