

# Protecting Our Future: Understanding the Role of the State Board of Education (SBOE)

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March 27, 2024



The state board of education in Texas has a rich history, dating back to its establishment in 1866. Over the years, the formulation of the board has undergone significant changes, often influenced by the political authority of the time.

In 1876, the enactment of a new constitution led to the creation of a revamped State Board of Education (SBOE) that included the governor, the comptroller, and the secretary of state. This configuration remained in place until 1928, when an approved proposal granted the Legislature the authority to determine the board's composition and method of selection.

Subsequently, the Legislature expanded the board to nine members, appointed of course by the governor and subject to Senate confirmation. Members of the board were designated to serve staggered six-year terms, marking a significant shift in the structure and governance of the SBOE.

Throughout its history, the formulation of the State Board of Education in Texas has been subject to the ebb and flow of political powers, as various authorities sought to shape the board in accordance with their vision for education in the state.

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## **Timeline of the Texas State Board of Education**

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The Texas State Board of Education (SBOE) has undergone significant changes since its establishment in 1866. Here's a comprehensive timeline highlighting key developments and transformations:

**1866:** The state board of education was established with the initial formulation of 3 members: the governor, the controller, superintendent of public instruction.

**1867:** Texas had no SBOE.

**1876:** A new constitutional law creates a new SBOE that includes the governor, the comptroller, and the secretary of state.

**1928:** Voters approve a proposal allowing the Legislature to specify the board's composition and method of selection. The board is increased to nine members appointed by the governor, subject to Senate confirmation.

**1949:** The SBOE becomes an elected body, with members elected from congressional districts. The elected office of superintendent of public instruction is abolished, and the office of commissioner of education is created to be selected by the board.

**1971:** A total of 21 members were appointed by the governor.

**1981:** A total of 27 members were appointed "*due to reappointments*" by the governor.

**1984:** The Legislature enacts House Bill 72, replacing the elected SBOE with a 15-member appointed board to serve until January 1, 1989. 15 districts are created from which SBOE members are selected, with members serving staggered four-year terms.

**1987-1988:** Originally, the board was scheduled to be elected from the 15 newly created districts in the 1988 general election. However, in 1987, the Legislature proposed a referendum to let voters decide whether the board should remain an appointive body.

The results, voters supported the decision by 52.4 percent to return to an elected board.

In **1989**, the number of state board members increased from 21 to 27 due to congressional reapportionment. The Legislature passed House Bill 72 in 1984, which replaced the elected State Board of Education (SBOE) with a 15-member appointed board to serve until January 1, 1989. House Bill 72 also created 15 districts from which SBOE members were selected and reduced the terms of board members to four years.

The selection of SBOE members was divided into two steps. The first step was to create a Legislative State Board of Education with a 10-member panel of elected officials from the Legislature, including three nominees from each of the 15 districts. The second step, the governor also chose one nominee from each district as that district's appointee, who then had to be confirmed by the Senate. This nominee takes the name of chairman of the board or president of the board.

**1995:** Revisions and legislative changes occurred once again, including SB1 enacted by Ratliff-Republican/Sadler-Democrat, which had significant impacts on the decision-making process, power structures, and curriculum standards within the Texas education system.

### **A Dynamic Interplay of Power and Influence**

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Before 1995, the Texas State Board of Education (SBOE) held the authority to implement legislative policy for the public school system in Texas. However, the enactment of SB1 in 1995 resulted in significant changes, redefining the dynamics of power within the Texas education system.

The recent changes made by the legislature reflect a bold attempt to increase the commissioner's authority in overturning decisions made by the SBOE. This includes the establishment of a State Board of Educators Certification (SBEC) appointed by the governor, with expanded powers held by individuals who are not accountable to the public. Furthermore, the restructuring of the roles and responsibilities of the SBOE by the legislator, in conjunction with the commissioner of education and the State Board of Educators Certification, represents an extensive and concerning transformation in the structure, composition, and authority of the SBOE. Consequently, there is substantial confusion regarding which entity holds jurisdiction over the district's decline.

Despite these significant changes, serious concerns linger regarding the impact of these extreme amendments and referendums on the Texas educational landscape. Of particular concern are the issues stemming from problematic legislation that has been moving forward since 1995. These include disputes over districts' constant failures, the presence of **Social Emotional Learning**, issues of **indoctrination** and **grooming, and sexually explicit content** within educational materials. These are just a few of the endless problems we face in Texas today.

## **The Role of the Texas State Board of Education**

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Efforts to expand the jurisdiction of the SBOE, such as through House Bill HB1605, have been met with concerning limitations, reflecting a governance process deeply entrenched in constitutional mandates and poorly done legislative actions. It is crucial to emphasize that the responsibility for determining the composition of the SBOE and its powers and duties, including the oversight of the Permanent School Fund (PSF), **firmly falls in the hands** of the Legislature and the state's governor.

The challenge facing education today is not rooted in the personal narratives circulated by individuals with vested interests, but rather in legislative decisions and the constitutional framework. It is crucial to dismiss **misleading** accounts targeting members of the state board of education, including Pam Little, Pat Hardy, Evelyn Brooks, Dr. Young, Will Hickman, Keven Ellis, and Tom Maynard. As parents we should focus on the true sources of the current challenges in order to create meaningful progress in education.

The authority of the State Board of Education (SBOE) has undergone significant changes over the years, particularly due to legislative actions like Senate Bill 1 by Ratliff/Sadler in 1995. This bill redefined the extent of the SBOE's influence and control over school district's textbook adoption. Moreover, the Texas Education Code delineates 34 specific powers and duties, underscoring the constraints on the SBOE's influence across various facets of the state's education system.

Despite the challenges posed by various poorly done policies, including the restrictions under HB1605, the SBOE continues to play a pivotal role in shaping certain aspects of the state's educational framework. This is evident through its authority to establish state standards, curriculum, and graduation requirements, as well as to set performance standards for student assessments and oversee the investment of the PSF. Vigilance is crucial, as there are concerns about globalist political entities aiming to replace the conservative board with individuals who could advance the political agenda, potentially jeopardizing our inherent God-given rights.

We must be attentive to the use of keywords like **empowerment and choice**, and push for real change to correct the root causes affecting our education system.

The history of the Texas State Board of Education is a testament to its dynamic evolution, shaping the landscape of education policy and governance in the state. Through its ever-changing structure, composition, and authority, the SBOE has continuously responded to the diverse needs of Texas's education system. This ongoing evolution reflects a deep commitment to ensuring that the voices of educators, parents, and communities are heard, making it a crucial and vibrant institution in the state's educational framework.

Despite being a topic of increased concern and debate, the SBOE's adaptability and responsiveness have been and should continue to be instrumental in driving positive changes in Texas education for generations to come.

**The fight for our children's freedom and rights is crucial. As parents, we have the power and responsibility to uphold the essential Principles of Liberty of America. These principles, outlined in the Declaration of Independence, emphasize that all unalienable rights, liberties, and freedoms come from the creator as Natural Law, not from global rulers or the government. It is our duty to ensure that our children have the opportunity to fulfill their constitutional rights and pursue their dreams. This is a pivotal moment to safeguard the sovereignty of the people and the limited role of law, as well as to uphold the values of a republic government with the separation of powers, checks and balances, and majority rule, while protecting minority rights. It is our collective obligation to prevent a globalist takeover and preserve the exceptionalism of America for the future generations.**

### **The Limits of State Board of Education's Authority: What Lies Beyond Legislative Grant**

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- No power to make changes on what school districts or charter schools can do
- No power over sexually explicit content in school district's libraries
- No power over school district's operational rules
- No power over district's mask mandates, policies and procedures
- No power over teacher's certifications
- No power over misconducts by district's staff
- No power over any issues happening in school districts that affect every child and home in Texas
- No powers over what independent public school districts and/or charter schools do or say

**All these issues belong to the Texas Education Agency, the school districts, and their school board members.**

### **The Challenges of Our Education System**

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The issues in our education system can indeed be traced back to poorly crafted legislation and the influence of paid political leadership. This is not a new phenomenon, but rather a longstanding issue that has only worsened over time due to the lack of understanding of the root causes and potential solutions. Governor Abbott himself acknowledged the **influence of certain grassroots movements** that "**move the political needle,**" indicating the complex interplay of factors at play.

The future of our education system hinges on our ability to confront the historical context and political influences that have led to its current state. Only by understanding and addressing these factors can we begin to rectify the immense challenges created by corruption and misguided policies.

## **How Can We Fix a Broken System?**

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Engaging and taking action are crucial steps to shape the future of education in our state. Each of us has the opportunity to contribute through our unique skills, be it through research, public speaking, policy writing, or community engagement. There are several ways to get involved:

### Participate in Meetings

Join your school board and state board of education meetings. This is an effective way to stay informed and have your voice heard on important matters.

### Advocacy at the Texas Capitol

Stand up and represent at the Texas Capitol, contributing to the call for action on education-related issues.

### Educate Yourself

Stay informed about all issues at the state and local levels. Understanding the issues is the first step towards effecting positive change.

### Support Parents

Offer support to parents in understanding the processes of addressing policy issues and presenting arguments at school boards, the state board of education, and with the legislature.

Failure to engage in these critical matters only perpetuates the status quo and limits the progress of our nation. Let's work together to create a more balanced and honest education field, where education truly paves the way to a brighter future for everyone.

### **Sources:**

- Texas State Historical Association
- Texas Education Code TEC, Sec. 31.023., TEC, Sec. 7.102
- The Texas Constitution 1876
- SB1 by Ratliff/Sadler, 74th Legislature 1995