



TexLine

TLA*
TEXAS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

We are more than halfway through the 88th Texas Legislative Session, which ends May 29. The Texas Library Association is [tracking 37 bills](#), which is the largest number of bills filed that would directly affect Texas libraries that we've seen in many years.

In the past month, TLA members and staff have met with legislative staffers, hosted a legislative briefing for staff from several House and Senate offices, testified at hearings on HB 900 and SB 13, submitted written testimony on SB 18, and presented a virtual information session for vendors that sell to school libraries on legislation that would negatively impact their business.

[HB 900](#) by Representative Patterson, the R.E.A.D.E.R. Act (restricting Explicit and Adult-Designated Educational Resources) was included as one of the Speaker of the House Dade Phelan's legislative priorities. The bill:

- Requires the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) to establish collection development standards, approved by the State Board of Education (SBOE), that would be mandatory for all school districts.
- Defines sexually explicit material and sexually relevant material.
- Requires book vendors (any entity that sells library materials to school libraries) to rate any material meeting those definitions.
- Books rated sexually explicit cannot be purchased.
- Requires written parental consent (opt-in) before allowing students access to material rated sexually relevant.
- Protects school district employees from liability for any claim or damage resulting from vendor's violation of rating requirements.

The House Public Education Committee heard the bill on March 21 and passed it March 28. It is expected to be considered by the full House soon.

[SB 13](#) by Senator Angela Paxton was included in Lt. Governor Dan Patrick's list of priority legislation. The bill:

- Requires districts to give parents the option to receive a notice each time their child checks out something from the school library.
- Requires TSLAC to develop standards for school libraries that prohibit acquisition of harmful materials (defined in Penal Code) and demonstrate commitment to compliance with federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) that must be approved by SBOE.
- Requires school board to approve all library materials to be purchased, prior to ordering.
- Establishes reconsideration policies and procedures for all districts to follow.
- Establishes Local School Library Advisory Councils to assist districts in ensuring local community values are reflected in school library collections. Councils will recommend:
 - Policies and procedures for purchasing library materials.
 - Library materials appropriate for each grade.
 - Removal of any library materials that are determined to be harmful or inconsistent with local community values.
 - Actions to be taken by districts in response to challenges to library materials.

The Senate Education Committee heard the bill on March 30 and it was left pending in committee. We expect the committee to pass the bill and for it to be scheduled for the full Senate soon.

[SB 18](#) by Senator Brandon Creighton was also part of Lt. Governor Dan Patrick's priority list of legislation. The bill:

- Prohibits public institutions of higher education from granting tenure or any type of permanent employment status.
- Faculty currently employed or under contract on Sept. 1, 2023 that have tenure retain it provided they remain continuously employed or under contract with that institution.
- Authorizes Board of Regents to establish an alternate system of tiered employment status for faculty that clearly defines each position and requires each faculty member to undergo annual performance review.

The Senate Subcommittee on Higher Education heard the bill on March 30, and it was left pending in committee.

Thank you to all TLA members who are responding to calls for action, contacting elected officials, testifying in support of libraries, providing supporting resources and information, and sharing insights into how specific bills could affect Texas libraries. You are making a difference!



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