



# Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops

THE PUBLIC POLICY VOICE OF THE CHURCH

September 8, 2020

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### REGULAR MEMBERS

Daniel Cardinal DiNardo  
ARCHBISHOP OF GALVESTON-  
HOUSTON

Gustavo García-Siller, M.Sp.S  
ARCHBISHOP OF SAN ANTONIO

Patrick J. Zurek  
BISHOP OF AMARILLO

Joe S. Vásquez  
BISHOP OF AUSTIN

David L. Toups  
BISHOP OF BEAUMONT

Daniel E. Flores  
BISHOP OF BROWNSVILLE

W. Michael Mulvey  
BISHOP OF CORPUS CHRISTI

Edward J. Burns  
BISHOP OF DALLAS

Mark J. Seitz  
BISHOP OF EL PASO

Michael F. Olson  
BISHOP OF FORT WORTH

James A. Tamayo  
BISHOP OF LAREDO

Robert M. Coerver  
BISHOP OF LUBBOCK

Steven J. Lopes  
BISHOP OF PERSONAL ORDINARIATE  
OF THE CHAIR OF ST. PETER

Michael J. Sis  
BISHOP OF SAN ANGELO

Joseph E. Strickland  
BISHOP OF TYLER

Brendan J. Cahill  
BISHOP OF VICTORIA

## CONSULTATIVE MEMBERS

ALL OTHER TEXAS BISHOPS

Jennifer Carr Allmon  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Texas State Board of Education  
William B. Travis Building  
1701 N. Congress Avenue, Austin, Texas

Submitted via email to: [teks@tea.texas.gov](mailto:teks@tea.texas.gov); [sboesupport@tea.texas.gov](mailto:sboesupport@tea.texas.gov)

Dear Texas State Board of Education,

My name is Rachana Chhin. I am the Legislative Counsel for the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops, the public policy voice of the Roman Catholic Church in Texas. I respectfully request to change my testimony from commenting on to testifying against the proposed SBOE K-12 TEKS curriculum.

First, we do not believe that the SBOE should pass these TEKS standards because doing so violates the intent of TEC 28.004 that requires consideration of “local community values” and the consideration of “recommendations of the local school health advisory council” before changing the district’s “health education curriculum or instruction.” If the SBOE does adopt TEKS that include these new standards, they must also change Texas Administrative Code Chapter 74.1 (b-6) to allow school district discretion to omit or delete TEKS.

Second, we believe parents are the primary educators of their children and this right and responsibility must be respected in any sexuality education that is presented. While schools are called to carry out an important mission in education, we believe they do not substitute the role of parents but, rather, complement it. Thus, we would prefer that all parents be provided access to the curriculum in advance and be given the opportunity to opt-in rather than opt-out.

Third, we insist that sex education must consider the totality of the person, including the physiological and psychological specificity of young people, their neurocognitive growth and maturity, and accompany this development in a healthy and responsible way. Therefore, we express concerns that the TEKS do not adequately prohibit graphic depictions of sexual activity or prevent teachers and school districts from adding inappropriate content.

Finally, while we do not support these new health TEKS being passed, we are grateful that the SBOE reinforced abstinence as the only 100% method to avoid risks and for rejecting harmful and inappropriate suggestions that encourage abortion access as a right or that would promote gender ideology. Thank you.

Sincerely,

/s/ Rachana Chhin

Legislative Counsel, Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops