

Background on the Texas State Board of Education's Reading List Proposal

In 2023, the Texas Legislature passed HB 1605, which requires the SBOE to provide a list of mandatory readings for each grade level in public schools. The Texas Education Agency's (TEA) [proposed list of literary works](#) was presented in the SBOE's January 2026 meeting. The list includes 13 passages from the Protestant Christian Bible (except for one outdated Jewish translation) and none from other faith traditions. Objections to the list led the SBOE to postpone its vote on adoption to its April meeting. The literary list will be considered on **Tuesday, April 7**, according to the draft agenda (but this may change).

There are multiple problems with this list:

- The state requiring students of all and no faiths to read exclusively from the Protestant Christian Bible (except for one outdated Jewish translation) is a violation of religious freedom. It is an endorsement of one religion at the expense of others. Teaching of faith belongs to families, not the state.
- Additionally, students whose parent(s)/guardian(s) decide to withdraw them from the religious materials under SB12 are forced to choose between valuable instructional time and protecting their religious freedom. This reading list will arbitrarily divide students and coerce them to believing only one faith tradition is legitimate.
- The number of readings is too long for a teacher to meaningfully teach every material in addition to other curriculum needs. The list will require teachers to sacrifice substantive engagement and ignore students' specific needs in favor of quick, surface-level coverage.
- It strips away local control of education. Communities know best as to what their students should learn and teachers should have the autonomy to teach what they believe is most helpful for their classes.

An alternative list was proposed by Member Will Hickman. You can find it [here](#). While it is an improvement from the original list, it still contains exclusively Protestant Christian Bible passages and is too lengthy for teachers.

There are also important changes being considered to the social studies curriculum on **Monday, April 6**. You can learn more [here](#).

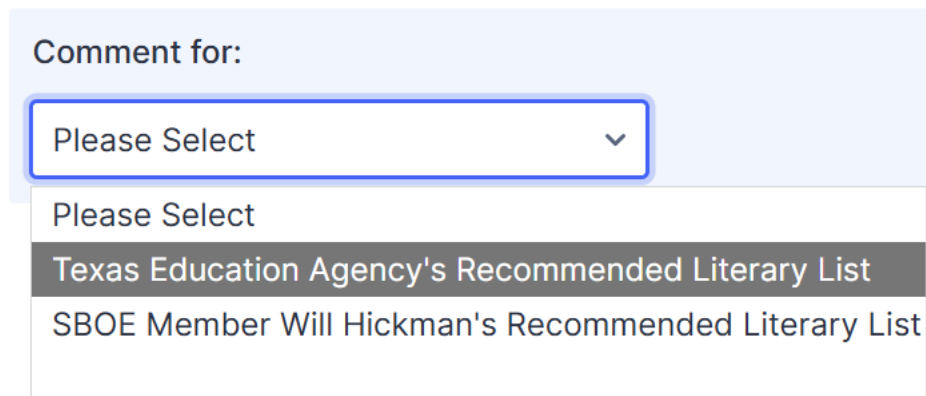
How You Can Take Action:

Join our statewide multifaitth coalition by telling the SBOE to reject the TEA's proposed reading list. You can take action in two important ways:

1. Submit a public comment voicing your concern over the reading list. Instructions are below with a template comment. The public comment window is open until **Saturday, April 4**.
2. Join us to testify in Austin on **April 7**. The SBOE may change the date to some other day the week of April 6, but we will have confirmation soon. [Let us know if you'll join us](#) and we'll keep you updated, including with transportation options.

Submit Public Comments on the Reading List

1. Access the SBOE Informal Comments form with this link: [SBOE Informal Comments](#)
2. Fill out your information, including first and last name, city, state, ZIP code, and email.
3. Click "Comment for" and select "Texas Education Agency's Recommended Literary List." After you select it, a text box will appear where you can enter your comment.



Comment for:

Please Select

Please Select

Texas Education Agency's Recommended Literary List

SBOE Member Will Hickman's Recommended Literary List

4. Enter your comment in the text box that will appear after selecting which reading list you are commenting on. **You can find a sample comment on the next page.**
5. Submit your comment! Remember that the deadline to submit a public comment is **April 4**.

Stay in Touch

- Learn more about our campaign and available resources [here](#)
- Sign up to testify in Austin [here](#)

I'm writing as a **[teacher/parent/guardian/student/community member/taxpayer]** who is deeply concerned with the TEA's proposed reading list. Exclusively highlighting Christianity (and one outdated Jewish translation) as religious content in the list is a violation of religious freedom. Additionally, required readings are too long for any one class to teach alongside other content.

[Share your concerns with the reading list here. Insert your personal story:

- **Why are you as a teacher/parent/guardian/student/community member/taxpayer opposed to the reading list?**
- **Refer to the talking points on Page 1 for references**
- **Write this as 1-2 paragraphs]**

The SBOE is tasked with supporting our teachers in the crucial education of our students and preparing them as good stewards of our democracy. This TEA reading list does not accomplish that goal. I urge you to reject it.

Thank you for your time and service to our schools. I appreciate all that you do for our students and community.