

TABPHE White Paper 2017

Legislative Issues Impacting Higher Education: Regarding Equity, Access & Affordable Education

TABPHE Mission: *The Texas Association of Black Personnel in Higher Education (TABPHE) is a statewide, voluntary, educational association that represents all levels of higher education and serves as a voice for Black faculty, staff, students and administrators in order to ensure a better educational system for all. TABPHE provides an avenue for professional development opportunities that enrich higher education personnel and improve the quality of their professional growth.*

TABPHE's vision *is to ensure that the higher educational system in the state of Texas provides equitable opportunities and advancement for Black personnel, while fostering a positive environment for Black students to successfully matriculate.*

TABPHE Legislative Priorities

We support legislation to rein in increased tuition, fees and other costs at all institutions of higher education and allowing community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees in teacher education to decrease costs for Texas students.

We support the continuation of the Hazlewood benefits for sons and daughters of veterans. The Hazlewood Act is a State of Texas benefit that provides qualified veterans, spouses, and dependent children with the benefit of college tuition exemption.

We oppose the decreases in state funding, disproportionately impacting educational costs for middle- and low-income families. Middle- and low-income families become strapped with loan burdens both during their students' college matriculation and upon degree completion. Education should not add to the financial burden of struggling families. Education should help first-generation family members to break the cycles of poverty, debt and low-wage employment. The ramifications are:

- The families of many first-generation, low-income students and students with disabilities generally have a need for more financial assistance and support services.
- The institutions undertake the burden for tuition. Low- and middle- income families will share more of this burden.
- This means that fewer families will be able to afford or absorb the cost of sending their children to college.

- The fewer college-educated citizens within the state, the less likely the state is to develop new economies, niche markets and sustain a strong infrastructure.
- Education, from pre-K to post-secondary, is one of our state's single most important investments when it comes to ensuring the success and continued thriving of Texas and Texans.
- This also hinders the 60X30TX goal, that 60 percent of "Generation Texas" will have a postsecondary credential or degree by 2030.

We support the in-state tuition for Texas Dreamers at public institutions, by opposing any legislation that would modify or eliminate House Bill 1403. Allowing undocumented immigrant students to pay in-state tuition would be an investment in the economy and future well-being of the State.

We support legislation that focuses on *Student Safety on College Campuses*. It is important to review whether instances of discrimination, sexual harassment, and assault are being properly reported and investigated at Texas' public institutions of higher education.

We oppose any efforts to repeal the top 10% Law, which allows most high school students graduating in the top ten percent of their schools to attend any state college or university.

We oppose any measure that restricts or prohibits minority access to needed financial aid and Texas grants that should be fully restored.

We support *College Readiness* supplemental programs and partnerships that provide students resources and access to institutions of higher education.

- The state should achieve equity in the availability of high school endorsements, dual-credit course options, and early college high school programs across public high schools.

We support Ethnic Studies curriculum in Texas public schools.

- All students should have the opportunity to be exposed to curricula and texts that acknowledge the contributions of historically underrepresented communities. This should include but not be limited to: Native-American Studies, Mexican-American Studies, African-American Studies, and Asian-American Studies.

For further information on TABPHE, please go to our website at www.tabphe.org or call the TABPHE Executive Director, Dr. Rod Fluker at (512) 852-4344; mail at: TABPHE State Office, 401 Congress, Suite 1540, Austin, Texas, 78701