

In State Tuition for Public School Students

The Texas Catholic Conference *supports efforts to ensure students who attend Texas public schools have access to in-state college tuition.*

We cannot insist too much on the duty of giving foreigners a hospitable reception. It is a duty imposed by human solidarity and by Christian charity, and it is incumbent upon families and educational institutions in the host nations. *(Pope Paul VI, On the Development of Peoples)*

A Texas Bishop Speaks:

"Those who benefit from in-state tuition are talented, intelligent, and dedicated young persons who know only the United States as their home. They can become future leaders of our state, provided we are wise enough to provide them the opportunity to pursue their dreams. "



-Bishop Michael Pfeifer, Diocese of San Angelo

Church Teaching

- ★ In God's plan, every man is born to seek self-fulfillment, for every human life is called to some task by God. At birth a human being possesses certain aptitudes and abilities in germinal form, and these qualities are to be cultivated so that they may bear fruit. By developing these traits through formal education of personal effort, the individual works his way toward the goal set for him by the Creator. *(Pope Paul VI, On the Development of Peoples)*
- ★ The unjust inequalities in the possession and use of material goods are accompanied and aggravated by similarly unjust inequalities in the opportunity for culture. Every human being has a right to culture, which is the specific mode of a truly human existence to which one gains access through the development of one's intellectual capacities, moral virtues, abilities to relate with other human beings, and talents for creating things which are useful and beautiful. From this flows the necessity of promoting and spreading education, to which every individual has an inalienable right. *(Instruction on Christian Freedom and Education)*
- ★ Regulating immigration according to criteria of equity and balance is one of the indispensable conditions for ensuring that immigrants are integrated into society with the guarantees required by recognition of their human dignity. Immigrants are to be received as persons and helped, together with their families, to become a part of societal life. *(Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church, 298)*
- ★ To fulfill the mandate she has received from her divine founder of proclaiming the mystery of salvation to all men and of restoring all things in Christ, Holy Mother the Church must be concerned with the whole of man's life, even the secular part of it insofar as it has a bearing on his heavenly calling. Therefore she has a role in the progress and development of education. *(Pope Paul VI, Declaration on Christian Education)*

Resources

- ★ **Justice for Immigrants** (USCCB) (www.JusticeForImmigrants.org)
- ★ **The Dream Act** (USCCB) (www.usccb.org/mrs/dream.shtml)
- ★ **Migration and Refugee Services** (USCCB) (www.USCCB.org/mrs/)
- ★ **Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope** (USCCB) (www.usccb.org/mrs/stranger.shtml)

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The Texas Catholic Conference promotes the Catholic teaching that all people have a right to an education and that a true education aims at the formation of the human person in the pursuit of his or her ultimate end and of the good of the societies of which each person is a member, and in whose obligations, as an adult, each will share. Therefore we oppose any efforts to reduce access to education for immigrants and we support efforts to ensure that students who attend Texas public schools are eligible for in-state tuition, as a means of making higher education more accessible to Texas primary and secondary school students.

Offering In-State tuition to Texas' public school students is a strategy in "Closing the Gaps: Texas' Plan for Higher Education," a Plan for Higher Education intended to close the gaps in higher education rates across Texas by 2015.ⁱ

Current In-State Tuition Criteria for Higher Educationⁱⁱ

In 2005, the State Legislature passed Senate Bill (S.B.) 1528, which made residency requirements essentially uniform for all students, regardless of their legal status. As of Fall 2006, anyone who has lived in Texas for three years before graduating or receiving a diploma equivalent from a high school, and has also lived in the state for a year prior to enrollment in college, qualifies for in-state tuition as a Texas resident. Any student who is not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident still must sign the affidavit concerning permanent residency.

The Federal Dream Act

Federally, the Texas Catholic Conference, in conjunction with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, supports the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act, known as the DREAM Act. This legislation would make a difference in the lives of undocumented youth who were brought to the United States by their parents and now, because of their lack of legal status, face obstacles to their future. By removing such barriers, the DREAM Act permits immigrant students to pursue a promising future through college education or military service. The DREAM Act applies to young persons who entered the United States before the age of fifteen, have been physically present in the United States for five years, and have earned a high school diploma. The bill would also repeal federal restrictions that limit the ability of states to offer them in-state tuition. The bill would apply to students in both public and private schools, including Catholic schools. Young persons would become eligible for permanent legal status upon completion of two years of college or two years of honorable service in the military. Approximately 65,000 youth per year would benefit from the DREAM Act.ⁱⁱⁱ

(Last updated August 17,, 2010, 82nd Legislative Session)

ⁱ "Closing the Gaps: the Texas Higher Education Plan." [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board](http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/reports/PDF/0379.PDF).
<www.theccb.state.tx.us/reports/PDF/0379.PDF>.

ⁱⁱ Combs, Susan. "Education." [Undocumented Immigrants in Texas](http://www.window.state.tx.us/specialrpt/undocumented/3education.html). Dec. 2006. Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.
<www.window.state.tx.us/specialrpt/undocumented/3education.html>.

ⁱⁱⁱ USCCB Office of Media Relations, 6 April 2009 Press Release on The Dream Act,
<www.nccbuscc.org/comm/archives/2009/09-075.shtml>.