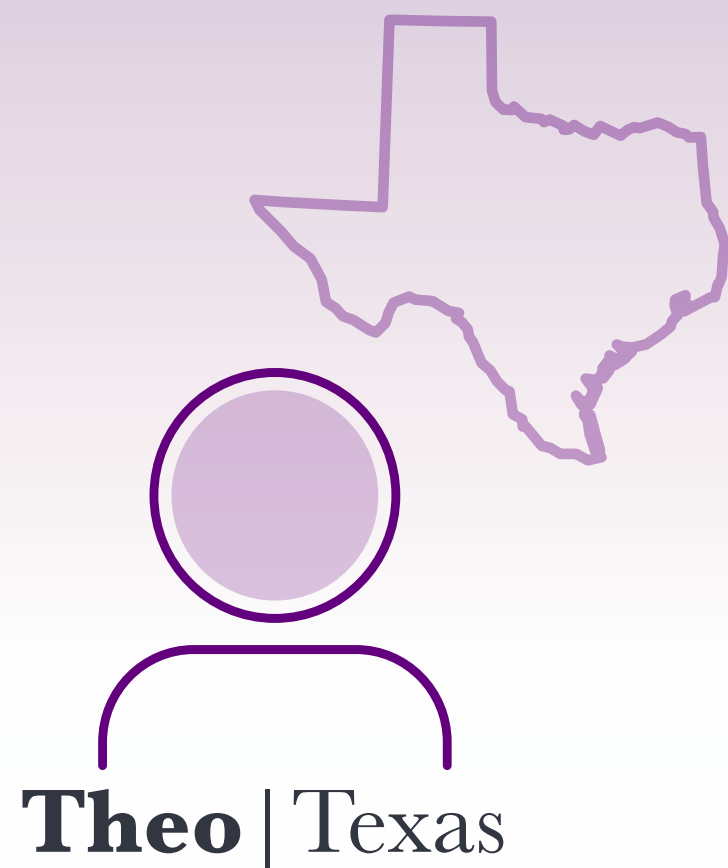


COVID Constituency

Engaging Public Voices to Shape Tomorrow's Schools



“(Transformational change) means that the quality of one’s life changes, and a better support system is created...(going forward) allow kids to have more of their educational experience at home, since some kids thrive when at home.”

Theo is a father of three boys in Texas. Throughout the pandemic, he expressed concern about the transition to remote learning, especially how the initial lack of organization adversely impacted learning experiences for his boys.

Theo looks at the transition to remote learning from several angles. He sees a silver lining, as he gets to spend more time with his family and have more activity nights with those who are closest to him. Conversely, he recognizes that the absence of an in-person learning environment is detrimental to those seeking additional support; Theo’s son, who lost a good friend during the COVID-19 pandemic, did not receive the additional support that could have been available if he had access to in person learning. He also acknowledges that there has been a collective trauma for everyone.

Theo wants to see several changes in the education landscape. For one, he believes teachers do not get paid enough, stressing that in many cases, teachers play the role of both teacher and counselor. Additionally, he would like to increase accessibility to good teachers through development of an online system where students can ask academic and non-academic questions to teachers at any time. In terms of curriculum, there is a desire for increased quality across districts; Theo thinks his boys are being exposed to quality curricula, the family had to move districts to access said curricula.

Ultimately, Theo is a believer in the power of technology in complementing the educational experience. He wants all schools to have the most advanced technology for learning, and he would like to see schools to devote more time to teaching students computer programming, since the jobs of the future require those skills.