

The Education Trust in Texas advocates for an equitable education for Black and Latino students, and students from low-income backgrounds, who, for far too long, have gone underserved. We believe in centering the voices of Texas students and families, especially those most impacted by educational inequity, as we work alongside them for the better future they deserve.



The Education Trust
IN TEXAS

What We Do

WE BRIDGE POLICY AND COMMUNITY:

We seek to influence policy in Texas by learning from and partnering with youth, families, educators, community-based organizations, civic and business leaders. Our goal is to drive an inclusive conversation about how every Texan can benefit from an education system that better serves students of color and students from low-income backgrounds, pre-K through college and career.

We work with advocates across Texas to:

- Draw attention to inequities that disproportionately impact underserved students across the state
- Equip partners with actionable and accessible tools to advance better educational outcomes and opportunities for underserved students
- Advocate for policies and practices that improve opportunities and outcomes for students of color, linguistically diverse students, students from low-income backgrounds, and students with disabilities
- Learn from and partner with students, families, educators, and communities to build capacity and collective will for educational equity and justice

What We Believe

- **WE BELIEVE** that the equitable allocation and use of resources — people, time, and money — enables all children to reach empowering goals, no matter their race, ZIP code, or income.
- **WE BELIEVE** that all students thrive when they have access to effective and diverse teachers and safe and inclusive learning environments.
- **WE BELIEVE** that high-quality early-learning environments set a critical foundation for children's development and academic success.
- **WE BELIEVE** that a postsecondary degree is essential to achieving social and economic mobility, yet our systems do not equitably prepare and support students to enroll in, afford, and complete college.
- **WE BELIEVE** that school and district accountability systems have the potential to serve as a powerful tool to help close opportunity gaps and achieve equity.

At The Education Trust, we are fierce advocates for the high academic achievement of all students — particularly those of color or living in poverty. We are equity-driven, data-centered, and student-focused.

JUDITH CRUZ

TEXAS ASSISTANT DIRECTOR,
HOUSTON REGION



Judith manages and executes policy goals and advocacy activities within the Houston region in collaboration with the Texas State Director. She supports a network of partners across the Houston region and coordinates advocacy around shared policy priorities to advance educational equity for students of color and students from low-income backgrounds.

Judith has over 20 years of experience as an educator, nonprofit leader, and volunteer in public schools. She began her career in Teach for America and continued teaching for a decade — in DC Public Schools, in Houston Independent School District, and as a founding teacher that created Liberty High School for nontraditional students in southwest Houston. She has served in her community as a member of the Board of Directors of the Eastwood Civic Association and Houston A+ Challenge, multiple Houston ISD committees, and was co-founder and president of her neighborhood school's PTA. She also worked at DiscoverU, a Houston nonprofit whose mission is to broaden the worldview of underserved youth through experiential learning experiences. While there, Judith oversaw the expansion of the program into middle schools and developed parent engagement, volunteer, and alumni programming.

As a native Texan and the daughter of a Guatemalan immigrant, Judith earned a B.A. in Latin American Studies from the University of Texas at Austin and a Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction, Bilingual Special Education from George Washington University. She currently serves as a trustee and former board president of Houston ISD.

Issue Expertise / Speaker & Interview Topics

- Preparing and retaining effective and diverse educators
- Improving college and career readiness outcomes and funding
- Funding and resource allocation at the district level
- Board governance focused on student outcomes

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