



2026-2028 TFN STRATEGIC PLAN

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HOW WE GOT HERE: A NEW CHAPTER FOR TFN

In 1995, Cecile Richards founded Texas Freedom Network to counter the influence of the religious right in public education. Now, 30 years later as we step into our new chapter, that founding mission remains at the heart of who we are.

Over the decades, Texas has changed significantly, and TFN has grown alongside it to meet the needs of our community. We've broadened our issue areas, deepened our investment in youth organizing and leadership development, and are building a model rooted in the real needs of the communities we serve. That growth reflects both our strength and our responsiveness.

In 2025, with new executive leadership and a comprehensive strategic planning process, TFN took the opportunity to ask an essential question: How do we build the most durable, long-term power for Texans?

Our staff worked to analyze what we do best and how we are uniquely positioned to lead. The goal was to identify how we can focus our energy and resources to go deeper rather than wider.

This plan is both a reflection of who we are and a commitment to how we move forward.

Honoring Our Founding Work:

ROOTED IN OUR FOUNDING WORK

Public education and religious freedom remain critical frontlines in the fight for democracy. TFN is explicitly naming and confronting Christian Nationalism as a defining challenge of this political moment.

LEADERSHIP AT THE CENTER

We are deepening our investment in leadership development across all programs, ensuring young people, faith leaders, and grassroots organizers are equipped to be powerful advocates for democracy.

BUILDING LONG-TERM POWER

We are shifting from reactive advocacy to proactive base-building. This will allow us to invest in the long-term organizing infrastructure Texas needs to sustain democratic progress.

CULTURE & COMMUNITY FIRST

Strengthening organizational culture and recommitting to combating anti-Blackness are top priorities and essential to the sustainability of our work.

OUR VISION & MISSION

TFN VISION

We envision a Texas where our communities come together to organize, lead, and govern — ensuring freedom, equitable public education, and a Texas that truly serves all.

TFNEF MISSION

Texas Freedom Network Education Fund educates, organizes, and builds civic leadership across Texas to fight for democracy, reclaim public education and religious freedom, and harness community power.

TFN MISSION

TFN builds political power to create a more just and equitable Texas free from far-right extremism.

TFN STRATEGIC PILLARS (FIRE)

Our strategic pillars define the values and priorities that guide how we show up in every piece of our work. Every decision TFN makes is grounded in FIRE.

F

FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY

Fight extremism, disinformation, and religious coercion through civic education, youth engagement, political advocacy, and coalition organizing.

I

INSPIRE & EMPOWER CIVIC LEADERS

Develop and educate Texan leaders – especially youth, faith leaders, and grassroots organizers – to become influential advocates for progressive values.

R

RECLAIM THE NARRATIVE

Shift public understanding of democracy, freedom, education, and faith by challenging extremism and amplifying values-based, data-informed stories & research that unify communities and assert our message of an inclusive democracy.

E

EMBOLDEN A SUSTAINABLE MOVEMENT

Build long-term progressive power by collaborating with grassroots partners, strengthening coalitions, enhancing internal infrastructure, and aligning narrative and strategy to transform systems.

These pillars are not aspirations; they are our operating commitments.

OUR THREE ISSUE ANCHORS

These are the substantive arenas where TFN has built deep expertise, credibility, and infrastructure over the decades. They reflect TFN's broader theory of change about how durable democratic power is built and defended in Texas.

1. Public Education & Teach the Truth

This Work Includes:

- Curriculum standards (TEKS & textbooks)
- Science and climate education
- Sex education
- Inclusive and representative history and social studies standards
- Church-state separation in public schools
- Censorship and book bans
- Private school vouchers and privatization efforts
- School board engagement and elections

Why TFN Leads Here:

TFN has a 30+ year history as a watchdog of the religious right and advocate for inclusive public education. This work sits at the intersection of youth leadership, democratic participation, and the fight for truthful, representative education for every Texas student.

2. Religious Freedom / Countering Christian Nationalism

This Work Includes:

- Church-state separation
- Religious overreach in public education and government institutions
- Misuse of religion to restrict rights or access
- Exposing Christian Nationalism in public institutions
- Engaging and mobilizing faith leaders

Why TFN Leads Here:

TFN's founding mission was to defend religious freedom for all Texans. This work counters the use of religion as a tool for political control, censorship, and exclusion.

3. Democracy & Civic Engagement

This Work Includes:

- Voter registration and Get Out the Vote (GOTV) efforts
- Youth leadership development and organizing pipelines
- Election access
- Redistricting and representation issues
- Barriers to youth civic engagement

Why TFN Leads Here:

TFN's greatest strength in protecting our democracy is developing long-term civic participation and youth leadership. We are uniquely positioned to mobilize young Texans in the moments, institutions, and campaigns that shape civic power for generations.

OUR COALITION & COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS

Beyond our three core anchors, TFN remains deeply committed to issues that intersect with our mission and matter deeply to the communities we organize alongside. In these areas, we show up in partnership and solidarity. TFN will support organizations that lead in these areas while contributing our unique strengths.

Reproductive Freedom & Abortion Access

TFN will continue building faith-based leadership on reproductive justice through our Just Texas program, and will allow our partners to lead on statewide reproductive policy and legal advocacy. TFN's role will be to contribute our strength in organizing and community mobilization.

LGBTQIA+ Equality

LGBTQIA+ equality is deeply connected to TFN's mission. We see this intersection especially in censorship efforts, public education, and religious freedom advocacy. TFN is committed to showing up strongly in these spaces, defending the freedom of all Texans to live openly and fully.

Climate Justice

Climate justice is a top concern for the young Texans we organize alongside, many of whom have experienced a failing energy grid and increased vulnerability to extreme weather. While partners lead on climate and environmental policy, TFN builds informed, engaged community leaders connecting local action with State Board of Education advocacy.

College Campus Censorship & Anti-DEI

Attacks on higher education, academic freedom, and DEI initiatives connect directly to TFN's work to defend public education and support youth leadership. We will engage where these issues intersect with civic power-building, censorship, and the fight for inclusive learning environments.

General Democracy Work

TFN will continue engaging in the fight for our democracy even beyond our youth organizing lane — including election access, anti-authoritarianism, and redistricting — at moments where the political landscape demands collective action and where TFN can contribute meaningfully to the broader movement.

Immigrant & Community Rights

Texas communities see varying challenges depending on their makeup, from attacks against our immigrant neighbors to over-policing of our diverse families. TFN recognizes the need for better criminal justice reform and immigration policy in order to obtain the Texas we envision. Our organization will amplify the efforts of our partners who specialize in these policy areas, and engage as capacity allows as the work intersects with our core issue anchors.

We're creating this framework to define how we contribute most sustainably and strategically. Texas' political landscape continues to evolve rapidly, and there will be moments that require urgent action and collective response. Our commitment to the communities impacted by these issues will not waver. In those moments, TFN will work in partnership with allied organizations, while remaining grounded in our long-term strategy and role within the movement ecosystem.

EVALUATION & MEASURING IMPACT

SIX PATHWAYS TO POWER

Texas Freedom Network measures success by whether we are building durable power, not simply by counting activities or outputs. Our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) track progress toward real-world influence across our Issue Anchors. Our KPIs are organized around six Pathways to Power, which reflect how movements grow, win, and sustain impact over time.

Across each of our issue anchors and coalition commitments, we ask: Who gains power? Where is that power exercised? And how does this work scale beyond one cycle? These questions keep TFN accountable to building the long-term infrastructure that Texas's progressive movement needs.

DEMOCRACY & ELECTORAL POWER

How does civic and electoral engagement in this issue area shift who participates, who decides, and who holds power?

LEADERSHIP PIPELINE & MOVEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

How does this work develop people who can exercise power inside the institutions shaping this issue?

ADVOCACY & CO-GOVERNANCE

How does organized community participation translate into sustained influence over policy and decision-making power related to this issue?

COMMUNICATIONS, NARRATIVE & BRAND

How does narrative change public understanding, legitimacy, and momentum for this issue—and weaken opposing power?

COALITION ALIGNMENT & MOVEMENT ECOSYSTEM

How does alignment with partners strengthen collective power on this issue without diluting TFN's unique lane?

ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH, CULTURE & SUSTAINABILITY

How does TFN's internal capacity enable long-term, effective power-building on this issue across cycles?

OUR DECISION-MAKING FRAMEWORK:

EVERY STRATEGY MUST ANSWER YES TO AT LEAST ONE:

- Does this advance a TFN issue anchor?
- Does this build durable civic power?
- Does this strengthen TFN's unique lane?

EVERY TACTIC MUST ANSWER:

- Who gains power from this work?
- Where is that power exercised?
- How does this scale beyond one cycle?

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE THIS PLAN A REALITY



Every goal in this plan depends on the generosity of people like you who believe in a better Texas where people have governing power. Your gift – at any level – puts this strategy into action.

DONATE TODAY!

Become a Freedom Fighter

