## STATE SPOTLIGHT | EQUALITY FLORIDA

Florida has become the right-wing test market for extremist policies and anti-LGBTQ attacks—and we are the resistance.

Right now, we're facing anti-LGBTQ rhetoric and discrimination at a level we haven't seen since Anita Bryant's nationwide crusade in the 1970s.

Governor Ron DeSantis's insatiable national ambitions include a strategy of igniting culture wars and manufacturing hysteria about LGBTQ children and parents. He has revived the dangerous lie that LGBTQ people pose a threat to children simply by existing, he has weaponized every level of the state government against LGBTQ young people and families, and he has emboldened right-wing extremists with his reckless rhetoric.

During the 2022 legislative session, we sounded the alarm on DeSantis's censorship and surveillance agenda—bringing an international spotlight and ensuring his name became synonymous with the Don't Say LGBTQ law. We've mobilized thousands of people to take action against the state agencies that are stripping away access to life-saving healthcare for transgender Floridians. When student leaders across the state led school walkouts, we amplified their voices and created places for parents willing to fight to make schools safe for their children.

During the 2022 elections, we built a coalition that successfully defended the majority of Florida's large urban school districts from an extremist takeover and flipped three boards to control by a pro-LGBTQ, race and gender-inclusive, majority: Flagler, Osceola, and Seminole.



Despite the far-right insurgency, today 1,387,558 Florida students attend classes in a school district controlled by elected officials who believe in LGBTQ inclusion and honest conversations about history.

As 2023 arrives, we are working to ensure fair-minded Americans understand the threat DeSantis poses, not just to Florida, but to the nation. These are dangerous times, where rhetoric turns to violence and where politicians will place targets on the most vulnerable among us if it means more votes or more donors. We must be clear-eyed about the costs of this dangerous agenda, and we must be connected and equipped to fight back.



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