



Board Briefs

Report on the July 2010 meeting of the TASB Board of Directors
San Antonio, Texas

Advocacy Agenda Advances

Priorities that will provide critical direction to TASB leaders and staff next legislative session were approved by the Board for consideration at the September Delegate Assembly. In addition, the Board considered 73 resolutions submitted by districts. During the Assembly at the TASA/TASB Convention in Houston, priorities and resolutions will be presented to trustees from across the state. The following priorities, recommended by the Legislative Advisory Council and approved by the Board, represent the high-commitment, high-profile action plan for the Association. Priorities include:

TASB believes Texas public schools do more than educate students for tomorrow's workforce; the role of Texas school districts is to prepare all students for success in life. TASB believes school districts most effectively and efficiently serve students when school boards have local control over resources to address student, staff, and community needs.

TASB supports a school finance system that:

- Provides districts with an adequate amount of state and local funds to prepare students to achieve rigorous academic goals, covers districts' rising operating costs, and funds state and federal mandates;
- Gives school boards local control over the tax rate and access to more golden pennies without voter approval;
- Provides formula-funding to close the equity gap among districts as soon as possible; and
- Attributes statewide property value growth back to the school finance system.

TASB supports state funding that includes, but is not limited to:

- Career and technology (CTE) courses, beginning in middle school, that allow students to meet the state's graduation requirements;
- Free prekindergarten programs either for a full-day or for more student groups, at local district option;
- Curricular interventions and programs to help at-risk students; and
- Construction and renovation of public school district facilities to meet the state's growing student population.

TASB opposes the diversion of taxpayer dollars to private schools, including vouchers, tuition tax credits, and other such programs funded with public tax dollars.

TASB opposes the use of the Permanent School Fund for open enrollment charter school facilities.

In light of the state deficit, legislators are looking for ways to trim the budget. Since public education makes up the greatest portion of the state's discretionary spending, K-12 education is a prime target for budget cuts. To protect public schools from severe cuts, all school boards and superintendents must tell their state legislators and local communities what state aid cuts will mean for their districts. Resources to aid school board members in their advocacy pursuits before the Legislature reconvenes are being finalized and will be shared with local districts.

Nominations Report Approved

A slate of TASB officers was recommended by the Nominations Committee and elected by the Board for submission to the Delegate Assembly. At the conclusion of Convention, current President Sarah Winkler of Alief ISD will become immediate past president; current President-Elect Sylvester Vasquez Jr. of Southwest ISD will become president.

Four other officers will be elected by the 2010 Assembly and take their positions at the end of Convention. For those seats, the TASB Board recommends the following:

President-Elect: Gary Inmon, Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City ISD
Vice-President: Viola Garcia, Aldine ID
Vice-President: Faye Beaulieu, Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD
Secretary-Treasurer: Andra Self, Lufkin ISD

Convention Coming Soon

The countdown is on for the 50th annual TASA/TASB Convention in Houston, September 24–26. First and second general session keynote speakers will be author Daniel Pink and former NFL All-Pro Emmitt Smith. Gubernatorial candidate Bill White has accepted the invitation to talk at the third general session, and Governor Rick Perry has not yet responded. Distinguished lecturers include economist Todd Buchholz, education correspondent and author John Merrow, and Commissioner of Education Robert Scott.

At this year's small district seminar, a finance update will be followed by panel discussions on facilities and technology. TASB is again organizing two off-site field trips: one to Rice University to discuss college readiness with admissions officials and the other to the Hilton-University of Houston Hotel and Conference Center. There is no additional charge for the field trips, but space is limited.

A new feature at Convention this year is investment officer training. A full day of classes will satisfy training requirements and offer in-depth investment and finance content.

Federal Relations Network

Stipends are available to pay for registration to the annual Federal Relations Network (FRN) conference in Washington D.C., February 6–8, 2011. FRN gives board members a chance to learn about national issues impacting school districts and meet with federal legislators and staff to discuss U.S. policy on public education. The annual conference is sponsored by the National School Boards Association.

Interested board members can download an application at www.gr.tasb.org. The goal is to award a stipend to one trustee from each of the 32 congressional districts.

Selection of stipend recipients will be based on:

- Previous attendance at FRN
- Participation in and or graduation from Leadership TASB
- Participation in regional grassroots meetings
- Service on the TASB Legislative Advisory Council, TASB Legislative Committee, or TASB Board of Directors or affiliated entity board.

In addition, the selection committee will review the applicant's rationale for attending the FRN Conference and need for the stipend. Applications must be returned to TASB Governmental Relations on or before close of business Friday, September 10.

Leadership TASB

This year's convention will be the first meeting for members of the new Leadership TASB class, which was announced at the Board meeting. LTASB is a specialized leadership training program for Texas board members. Graduates of the year-long program who complete assigned projects receive statewide recognition for their efforts. Trustees who will participate in the 2010–11 class have been notified by TASB staff.

Discussion continues on the formation of a Leadership TASB alumni association. A review committee of past graduates is moving ahead to create a group that can provide scholarship support, share information on best board practices, and facilitate networking opportunities, among other things. Further details will be shared at the Leadership TASB reunion meeting during Convention.

Online Executive Searches

TASB Executive Search Services has launched a new and improved Web-based application that enhances its executive recruitment program. The new software, called Appli™, includes superior search management components and incorporates new technology for the superintendent/CEO search field. One advantage is that all applications follow a standard format for ease of reading. Trustees know where to find the answer to a question, and it's in the same place for each application. Also, the information stays on the server making it much easier to access data when a need arises. Other advantages of using an automated application process include:

- Eliminates paperwork associated with the search
- Reduces the administrative time associated with searches, providing savings in money and personnel
- Cuts down on storage space and file cabinets
- Complies with federal disclosure and authorization requirements for background checks

Regional SOTY Winners

Since 1984, TASB has honored outstanding Texas administrators for achievement and excellence in district leadership. This year, 18 education service centers received nominations from local school districts for the Association's annual Superintendent of the Year (SOTY) award program. A state selection committee, composed of TASB Directors, will interview the following superintendents August 27–28 in Austin.

Region 1	Leonel Galaviz, Valley View ISD
Region 2	Arturo Almendarez, Calallen ISD
Region 4	Alton Frailey, Katy ISD
Region 5	Rodney Cavness, Evadale ISD

Region 6	Eddie Coulson, College Station ISD
Region 7	Greg Wright, Hallsville ISD
Region 8	Gary VanDeaver, New Boston ISD
Region 9	Danny Taylor, Burkburnett ISD
Region 10	Jeffrey Turner, Coppell ISD
Region 11	David Faltys, Carroll ISD
Region 12	Harold Ramm, Groesbeck ISD
Region 13	James Hartman, Marion ISD
Region 14	Shane Fields, Albany ISD
Region 15	Carol Ann Bonds, San Angelo ISD
Region 16	Larry Appel, Dumas ISD
Region 17	Rick Teran, Hale Center ISD
Region 18	Steven Long, Glasscock County ISD
Region 19	Poncho Garcia Jr., Fabens ISD

This group will be narrowed to five finalists who will be interviewed again at Convention. The statewide winner will be announced Sunday at the third general session in Houston; all regional winners and state finalists also will receive recognition at that time.

Cash Back Program

Local public school districts are being sought for a fundraising pilot that will begin this month. Participating school districts would receive cash back for purchases that parents and community members make through online retailers. Free to districts and users, the program provides a Web link to hundreds of online retailers. When parents or others click through the Web site to do their regular online shopping, a portion of whatever they buy from the retailers is sent as a “cash back” bonus to the campus or district.

Once the pilot is complete, TASB will study feedback from participating districts and review the program’s overall effectiveness and benefit to Association members. Districts interested in participating in the pilot should contact Nancy Cotton nancy.cotton@tasb.org or Marie Jones marie.jones@tasb.org

Energy Cooperative Report

During the completion of a successful pilot program, the TASB Energy Cooperative Board approved a fixed-rate transportation fuel program as an ongoing service to members. TASB, as the administrator of the Energy Cooperative, recently aggregated fuel quantities for 10 school districts to achieve beneficial pricing for diesel and regular unleaded gasoline over a one-year period. The Cooperative plans to award another pool this fall.

Currently, the Cooperative has 190 members participating in the electricity procurement program. Total electricity usage

for June 2009 through May 2010 was approximately 617 million kilowatt-hours, up from 575 million in 2008–09.

Purchasing Cooperative Update

The Local Government Purchasing Cooperative continues to thrive, with current membership at more than 3,200 members. That total includes 1,019 Texas school districts, 567 Texas municipalities, 224 Texas counties, 85 public universities and community colleges, and 310 other Texas governmental agencies.

Online registered vendors and manufacturers total 14,000, and there are more than 1,200 awarded vendors in 27 general commodity groups. Purchasing volume for September 2009 through June 2010 was \$510 million, representing an increase of about 16 percent over last year.

Recent bids were awarded for fueling systems, awards and personal recognition products, water/wastewater pumps and motors, and contractors for regional statewide job order proposals.

All of the commodities awarded on the BuyBoard® have been competitively procured according to Texas law so members can meet all their purchasing needs in one place, receive competitively priced products and services, and forgo the time-consuming bid process. The purchasing cooperative is endorsed by the Texas Municipal League, Texas Association of Counties, and Texas Association of School Administrators.

Upcoming Training

HR Services—TASB offices, Austin

September 15, Wage and Hour Rules for Public Schools

September 16, Rules of Engagement—Determining Employment Status

Fund Fall Regional Seminars

The TASB Risk Management Fund kicks off its fall seminar series September 30 in Austin. Additional seminars will be October 7 in Richardson and October 28 in Houston (Katy). Topics include certificates of insurance and required coverage from contractors, special auto liability coverage issues, and workers’ compensation sessions on internal injury investigations and tools for mitigating the cost of high-dollar claims. These day-long seminars are free for Fund members who preregister online and include complimentary meals and continuing education opportunities.

In Other Action, the Board Approved:

- TASB 2010–11 budget
- Advocacy priorities and resolutions proposed for the 2010–12 Advocacy Agenda
- Amendments to Board policy on the Nominations Committee operational guidelines and exhibits
- Grassroots Advocacy Process policy and exhibits
- Amendments to Board policy on expense reimbursement and exhibit
- Proposed amendments to TASB bylaws for presentation to the Delegate Assembly
- Proposed staff bonus policy
- 2009–10 executive director performance evaluation
- 2010–11 executive director employment agreement and deferred compensation agreement
- TASB Legal Assistance Fund 2010–13 administrative services agreement and 2010–11 service fees
- Texas Center for Educational Research 2010–11 service agreement fee addendum
- TASB Risk Management Fund 2010–11 service agreement fee addendum
- TASB Risk Management Fund 2010–11 sponsorship and license agreement
- Lone Star Investment Pool 2010–11 sponsorship and license agreement
- Local Government Purchasing Cooperative 2010–11 sponsorship and license agreement
- Amendments to investments, compensation procedure, and managing director compensation procedure policies

The next meeting of the TASB board of Directors is September 23 in Houston.

Editor: Barbara Williams
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When you need help...

