



Board Briefs

*A report on the October 2009 meeting of the TASB Board of Directors • Houston, Texas
Plus highlights of the 2009 Delegate Assembly, George R. Brown Convention Center*

Advocacy Issues Addressed

Refinements to the 2008–10 TASB Advocacy Agenda were approved in Houston by the Delegate Assembly, composed of board members from districts across the state. Representing the voices of their local boards, these delegates provide direction to Association leaders and staff and ensure that TASB is clearly communicating critical issues to legislators and other decision makers.

Delegates amended the previous set of advocacy priorities by deleting the priority regarding teacher salaries and benefits, rolling the technology priority into the adequacy priority, and changing the priority on dropout rates to address reaching out to children at the prekindergarten level. The remainder of the priorities is identical to those adopted last year. These high-profile, high-commitment objectives serve as a two-year action plan to guide TASB's advocacy efforts; they are combined with resolutions from individual districts that delegates also approved.

TASB soon will begin work to develop the 2010–12 Advocacy Agenda. The first step will occur in November when the Association conducts an online survey to give board members an opportunity to identify the legislative issues they and their school districts consider priorities. Survey recipients will be asked to rank the “hot topic” issues in order of importance to their districts, suggest a position for TASB to take on each issue, and add other issues of importance. Responses then will be aggregated regionally and presented as a starting point for discussion at grassroots meetings.

Grassroots Advocacy meetings begin in January and include dinner at no cost. Go to www.gr.tasb.org for complete details. Dates and locations by region are as follows:

- Region 1Edinburg, February 18
- Region 2Corpus Christi, February 10
- Region 3Victoria, February 4
- Region 4Houston, February 10
- Region 5Silsbee, February 9
- Region 6Huntsville, February 9

- Region 7Kilgore, February 24
- Region 8Mount Pleasant, February 23
- Region 9Wichita Falls, February 18
- Region 10.....Richardson, February 17
- Region 11.....Fort Worth, February 24
- Region 12.....Waco, February 4
- Region 13.....Austin, January 27
- Region 14.....Abilene, February 15
- Region 15.....San Angelo, February 16
- Region 16.....Amarillo, January 28
- Region 17.....Lubbock, February 4
- Region 18.....Alpine, February 22
- Region 18.....Midland, February 23
- Region 19.....Fabens, February 25
- Region 20.....San Antonio, January 28

Delegates Elect TASB Leadership

Association officers and directors were approved by delegates to lead TASB in the coming year. President Sarah Winkler, Alief ISD, and Immediate Past President Robert Seward, Mesquite ISD, are automatic succession offices. The remaining slate of officers, as presented by the TASB Nominations Committee and TASB Board, was elected by the 2009 Assembly. All assumed their positions at the close of convention.

- President-Elect: Sylvester Vasquez Jr., Southwest ISD
- Vice-President: Gary Inmon, Schertz-Cibola-Universal City ISD
- Vice-President: Viola Garcia, Aldine ISD
- Secretary-Treasurer: Faye Beaulieu, Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD

Directors elected by actions of the regions

The following were elected by receiving endorsements from a majority of the active TASB members in their regions. These directors took office at the end of convention.

- Elected to three-year terms (2009–12) filling expired terms:
 - Region 1: Position A: Gloria Casas, La Feria ISD
 - Region 3: Pamela Stehle, Nordheim ISD

Region 4, Position A: Katherine Hanson, Tomball ISD
Region 4, Position F: Lida Woodul, Cypress-Fairbanks ISD,
large district member
Region 5: James R. de Garavilla, Silsbee ISD
Region 11, Position C: Gloria Peña, Arlington ISD, large
district member
Region 19, Position B: Marty Reyes, Ysleta ISD
Region 20, Position E: Sandy Hughey, North East ISD,
large district member

Elected to two-year term (2009–11) filling an unexpired term:
Region 4: Position G: Sonal Bhuchar, Fort Bend ISD, large
district member

Nominated by the Nominations Committee

Elected to three-year terms (2009–12) filling expiring terms:
Region 4, Position C: Benny May, Barbers Hill ISD
Region 10, Position A: Karen Ellis, Richardson ISD
Region 11, Position D: Faye Beaulieu, Hurst-Eules-
Bedford ISD
Region 13, Position C: Vernagene Mott, Pflugerville ISD
Region 17: Wes Naron, Plainview ISD

Filling vacancies for three-year terms (2009–12):
Region 12: Susan Thames, Connally ISD
Region 18: Lee Lentz-Edwards, Kermit ISD

Superintendent of the Year Named

TASB's Member Services Committee conducted interviews with the five state finalists for the annual Superintendent of the Year (SOTY) award. The winner, Oscar Rodriguez of Mission CISD, was announced October 3 at the TASA/TASB Convention. Other state finalists included Mark Henry of Galena Park ISD, ESC 4; Ray Braswell, Denton ISD, Region 11; Rose Cameron, Copperas Cove ISD, Region 12; and Jesús Chávez, Round Rock ISD, ESC 13.

Serving more than 15,000 students, Rodriguez has led Mission CISD for four years, and has 30 years of experience in education administration. Rodriguez earned a bachelor's degree at the University of North Texas and a master's degree in education at Stephen F. Austin State University. He has been active in the local United Way, Chamber of Commerce, Mission Economic Development Association, and Leadership Mission. SOTY candidates are chosen for their dedication to improving educational quality, board-superintendent relations, student achievement, and commitment to community support and involvement in public education.

Online Learning Center

New courses covering superintendent evaluation, performance goals, and evaluation instruments have been added recently to TASB's Online Learning Center (OLC). Currently the OLC offers 10 fee-based courses for continuing education credit and four free podcast series of interest to board members on governance, legal, and policy issues.

Courses are designed around audio and video presentations, with increased opportunities for interaction with course instructors. Members can sign up now and receive updates about more new courses as they become available.

Federal Relations Network

A total of 32 board members will receive stipends to participate in the Federal Relations Network (FRN) Conference in Washington, D.C., in February. The TASB Board created the FRN stipend program to help boost participation at the annual conference and pay registration costs for selected applicants. This year TASB received 47 applications representing 25 congressional districts. The goal is to select a board member from each of the 32 congressional districts in Texas to attend the event, coordinated each year by the National School Boards Association.

Transportation Fuel Program

OnSite™ Energy Services, in conjunction with the TASB Energy Cooperative, is developing a program to help districts manage transportation fuel costs. This new fixed-rate fuel program will allow school districts to lock in a portion of their gasoline and diesel costs, decreasing the volatility of fuel expenditures.

Fuel quantities of participating districts will be pooled to achieve beneficial pricing and allow districts to more effectively and predictably budget for transportation fuels. A pilot was successfully completed this summer, and the next pool is targeted for market in early 2010.

In other OnSite activities, a free one-day energy seminar is set for December 8 in Fort Worth at the Omni Hotel. Industry experts will cover important information pertaining to school energy management. Topics include performance contracting, alternative energy, management tools, and legislation.

BoardBook® Enhancements

More than 575 school districts and other entities currently use BoardBook, also offered out of state through partnerships with 12 state school board associations. BoardBook added a record number of new accounts for the 2008–09 fiscal year, which included 71 TASB members, three entity accounts in Texas, one entity account in Canada, and 60 out-of-state accounts. This electronic web-based application allows users to streamline the preparation of board meeting notices, agenda packets, and meeting minutes, and, if desired, to conduct paperless board meetings.

Rollout of a new version of BoardBook will begin in November. The recent upgrade includes a more sophisticated search feature, spell-check options, and the ability to reorder agenda items. The enhanced program was demonstrated at convention and training sessions with BoardBook compilers began this month.

Web Site Redesign

Visitors to TASB's web site (www.tasb.org) will notice a new look, with enhanced features and streamlined organization. Visitors can customize the main page to provide items of greatest interest, and navigation choices have been simplified to make it easier to move around the site.

University Partnerships Initiative

Fifteen university-based superintendent preparation programs have accepted an offer from TASB to teach a class on superintendent/board relationships and board roles and responsibilities. The intent is to teach superintendent aspirants what they can expect from their future employers, introduce them to the language board members use, and develop a relationship between the superintendent aspirants and TASB.

TASB Leadership Team Services has conducted eight classes and four others are pending. Several other universities indicated a desire to participate, but their graduate programs are web based with limited face time with students. TASB is working to be included on their schedules for the new semester.

TCER Report

The first interim report to evaluate new Texas charter schools was released in July by the Texas Center for Educational Research (TCER). It presented findings from spring 2008 surveys of school leaders, teachers, and students in new charter schools, as well as results from a phone survey of parents of students attending new charter schools.

Overall, surveyed parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with their student's new open-enrollment charter school. Ninety-four percent of parents were either satisfied or very satisfied with their choice of schooling. Parents said they considered educational programming and teacher quality most important in the decision to enroll their child in a new open-enrollment charter school. Other factors parents considered important included the school's academic reputation and approach to discipline, as well as the teaching of moral values.

Mark Your Calendar

Risk Management Fund Fall Seminars

Free seminars for Fund members are set for October 13 in Tyler, October 20 in Katy, and October 28 in Arlington.

Topics will cover safety, security and emergency management, workers' compensation claim reporting and legislative changes, unemployment compensation, and auto liability. Preregistration and meals are free to Fund members.

HR Services

Upcoming training at TASB headquarters in Austin is open to public and charter schools and community colleges:

Fundamentals of Pay Systems: October 14

Controlling Complex Pay Systems: October 15

Staffing Controls for Public Schools: November 17

Also set is the **Texas School HR Administrators Academy**, November 2–3, Austin Marriott North.

Superintendent Secretaries Training Conference

October 22–23, Austin, TASB headquarters

Online registration is open. The program includes information on recent legislative developments, nepotism in schools, maintaining HR records, policy updates, and dealing with difficult people.

Fall Legal Seminars

The best school law training available is coming soon. Staff attorneys will hit the road and offer in-depth training on timely legal issues for new and experienced board members, administrators, and school attorneys. Check the TASB training calendar for full details:

November 10, Commerce

November 11, Nacogdoches

November 13–14, South Padre Island

November 17, Abilene

November 19, Amarillo

November 21, San Marcos

In 2010, seminars are set:
February 4, El Paso (Fabens)
February 9, Tyler

Free OnSite Energy Seminar

December 8, Fort Worth, Omni Hotel

E-mail energy@tasb.org to register.

In Other Action, the Board Approved:

- Election of the 2009–10 Nominations Committee
- Amendments to board policy on appointments, audits, and nominations committee operational guidelines
- Second amended TASB Energy Cooperative service agreement and sponsorship and license agreement
- Minutes for the July 25, 2009, Board of Directors meeting

The next meeting of the TASB Board of Directors is November 14 in Austin.

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When you need help...

