

**April 2016***A report on the April 2016 meeting of the TASB Board of Directors  
Austin, Texas***2015–16 TASB Officers****Bret Begert**

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**Commissioner Meets with TASB Board**

Texas Commissioner of Education Mike Morath met with TASB Directors prior to the Board's April meeting in Austin. The discussion centered on new requirements in state law regarding A–F ratings of campuses and districts and the five domains of accountability. Morath specifically probed the group on expectations and asked, "How do we know if we are making a difference for our kids?" The commissioner also expressed interest in working with the TASB Board throughout the year.

Directors were updated on activities of the [Texas Commission on Next Generation Assessments and Accountability](#). This 15-member body has held two meetings to gather background on the state's current assessment and accountability systems and hear testimony on how those systems affect our public schools and students. TASB was asked to share its position on the assessment and accountability systems by the commission's chair Andrew Kim, Comal ISD superintendent.

TASB's communication in part explained that Association members have made student assessment and school accountability advocacy priorities, supporting assessment and accountability systems that value student growth

and achievement over standardized, high-stakes testing.

“We strongly support the continued efforts of TEA and the state legislature to create an accountability system that can be used to meet both federal and state requirements in order to reduce confusion of parents, educators, and other community members when reviewing the multiple accountability ratings applied to districts and schools. With the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act, the commission plays a crucial role in making necessary recommendations to our state legislature ahead of the 85th Legislative Session to achieve the goal of one, clear accountability system,” said Lee Lentz-Edwards, chair of the TASB Legislative Committee and president of the Kermit ISD school board.

## Legislative Updates

Staff outlined issues of interest for the April State Board of Education (SBOE) meeting. The SBOE last met at the end of January to consider requirements for the issuance of superintendent certificates, state adoption and distribution of instructional materials, and high school equivalency test providers.

[Districts of Innovation](#) also were discussed by the TASB Board. Some school districts have formally adopted a resolution to begin the process to become a District of Innovation, while others will do so soon. The District of Innovation concept is embodied in House Bill 1842, passed by the 84th Legislature, that gives traditional school districts most of the flexibilities available to open-enrollment charter schools in Texas.

## Business/Education Initiatives

Registration for the upcoming [Business/Education Forums](#) is open. Trustees

are encouraged to attend and bring business leaders from their areas at no cost. The forums were established to give business and community groups an opportunity to join education leaders in discussing the most effective approaches to partnering for student success.

For the 2015–16 school year, Business/Education Forums are set in the Houston area and San Antonio. Other locations will be announced as schedules are finalized.

**April 20 in Region 4**—hosted by Cypress-Fairbanks ISD at the Berry Center, 8877 Barker Cypress Road, Cypress, Texas 77433. Lunch speaker is Scott McClelland, president of H-E-B’s Houston division.

**May 5 in Region 20**—hosted by Northside ISD at the Northside Activity Center, 7001 Culebra Road, San Antonio, Texas 78238. Rep. Jimmie Don Aycock is the lunch speaker.

In its second year, the [Business Recognition Program](#) has an improved online submission form, and the presentation packet has been redesigned and expanded, including the designation of repeat honorees.

The annual recognition program was established by TASB to celebrate the important support provided in local communities, express appreciation to those who stand up for schools, and encourage more businesses and community groups to participate in this sort of community service. Districts are encouraged to submit names of valued partners every school year. The names do not roll over into the list for the current school year, and districts can submit as many names as they would like.

## Member Survey Report

Meeting member needs is key to fulfilling TASB’s mission. The annual TASB

Member Survey helps this effort by monitoring satisfaction with services, identifying the pressing needs of members for the future, and tracking the makeup of trustees across the state.

The survey has polled board members and superintendents since 2000. In 2015, the survey also focused on obtaining data to update the TASB Strategic Plan on a five-year horizon. This year, the survey was modified again to be useful for ongoing strategic planning updates.

Responses were representative of all regions and district enrollment sizes, based on TEA data. School board members identified themselves as:

- 57 percent male and 43 percent female
- 75 percent Caucasian, 18 percent Hispanic, 6 percent Black, and 1 percent Other
- 58 percent in the over 50 years of age range and 32 percent aged 40–50

Survey participants rated the Association's performance on a five-star scale. Each of the following measures averaged between 4.02 and 4.39 stars:

- Customer service
- Program cost
- Program quality
- Innovation
- Overall value

Members shared where they believe TASB should focus efforts in the next five years when asked how the Association can better serve them or meet emerging needs. The top five in order were:

- School finance
- Advocacy

- Promoting public education
- Training
- Standardized testing

## Convention Heads Back to Houston

The [2016 TASATASB Convention](#) will return in September to the George R. Brown Convention Center, which is undergoing some major changes of benefit to attendees. The lobby space in front of the exhibit halls will be one contiguous space. The city also is adding new restaurants in front of the convention center. There are a few new hotels as well, so most attendees will be able to stay in the downtown area.

Additionally, the exhibit hall floor plan is more interesting this year. TASA and TASB Member Services will be placed in the front of the hall and serve as a greeting area. There are two 20' aisles and one 30' aisle, which should help facilitate traffic flow and networking.

## Advocacy Agenda Preparation

The 2016 Grassroots Meetings ended Thursday, March 3. Participant evaluations from the meetings were generally positive. Overall, participation was significantly more than in 2014. At the meetings, each region selected representatives to the Legislative Advisory Council (LAC), which will take the regional priorities and merge them into a draft statewide [legislative program](#). The first LAC meeting is scheduled for April 16 in Austin, and the second LAC will take place June 16 in San Antonio during the TASB Summer Leadership Institute.

## Micciche and Reitmeier Join Board

Dan Micciche of Dallas ISD has been elected to an interim large-district seat, representing Region 10, position C. He fills the vacancy on the TASB Board of Directors that was created when Mike Morath became Texas education commissioner. Micciche will begin a full three-year term at the close of the TASATASB Convention in September. In addition, Georgan Reitmeier of Klein ISD was elected to fill an interim seat on the TASB Board, representing Region 4, position A.

[Micciche](#) has served on the Dallas ISD school board for three-and-a-half years. He is a partner at the law firm of Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld in Dallas and joined the firm immediately after graduating from law school in 1981.

[Reitmeier](#) has been involved with Klein ISD for 30 years, serving more than 15 years as a parent volunteer and 15 years as an employee with the Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) Keep Pace program.

## Upcoming Meetings

### ***TASB Risk Management Fund Members' Conference***

The TASB Risk Management Fund's [2016 Members' Conference](#) will be held April 24–26 at the Hyatt Regency in Austin and is free for all Fund members. Sessions will include a variety of risk management hot topics, such as firearms on campus, workers' compensation, and Title IX.

Opening speaker Beth Ziesenis will help set the audience up for success during her session, providing technology tips to make life easier. Whether you just purchased your first iPhone or you have all of the latest technology, this session will provide motivation for career and home life. New this year, conference attendees will be invited to collaborate on issues impacting their organizations while enjoying a cup of coffee or breakfast together during the Learning Talk

Over Coffee.

## ***Spring Workshops***

An official sign of spring is the start of TASB's spring training workshops held each year. [Sixteen workshops](#) are set in conjunction with the education service centers, area school boards associations, and colleges/universities across the state. Beginning on April 6 in Kingsville and continuing through May 25 in Huntsville, the range of topics and attendees is vast. The Victoria workshop will have the largest number of TASB staff-led sessions, with a total of seven topics being presented.

Across all workshops, the most popular sessions are *Top 10 Questions Board Members Should Ask about the Budget; Legislative Advocacy for Public Schools; Legal Update on Personnel, Student, and Governance Issues;* and *Hot Policy Topics All Board Members Should Know About.*

Registration for all workshops is open.

## ***NSBA Advocacy Institute***

The National School Boards Association (NSBA) has rescheduled its [Advocacy Institute](#) for June 12–14, 2016. The premier conference for federal school board advocacy will take place at the Marriott Marquis in Washington, DC. The revamped conference is designed to help participants develop a keen understanding of why effective advocacy requires strong collaboration across policy, media, and judicial spectrums. Registrations confirmed for the February event will be honored in June.

## **In Other Action, the Board Approved:**

- Authorizing the executive director to finalize and execute the license and endorsement agreements with the [Mexican-American School Board](#)

[Members Association](#) and the [Texas Caucus of Black School Board Members](#)

- Amendments to the 2015–16 budget
- Engagement of audit services for 2015–16
- Changes to TASB Board policies on computer resources, expense reimbursement, Nominations Committee operational guidelines, and award of trustee continuing education credit
- Updating and consistency changes to TASB Board policies on appointments

The next meeting of the TASB Board of Directors is July 30 in Grapevine, Texas.

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