

**July 2016***A report on the July 2016 meeting of the TASB Board of Directors  
Grapevine, Texas***2015–16 TASB Officers****Bret Begert**  
President**Charles R. Stafford**  
President-Elect**Teresa Flores**  
First Vice-President***Vacant***  
Second Vice-President**Karen Freeman**  
Secretary-Treasurer**Andra Self**  
Immediate  
Past President

## Looking Ahead to the 85th Texas Legislature

Laying the groundwork for the next legislative session, the TASB Board took a critical look at the state's budgetary health and its potential impact on school funding. During the months ahead, school board members must stand up and increase their advocacy efforts on behalf of the more than 5 million students in our public schools.

Proponents of vouchers and the privatization of public schools are already speaking out. Trustees are urged to address business groups, write opinions and letters to the editor, and use social media to spread the message that public schools are doing outstanding things in districts large and small. Most legislators will be back in their districts in August. Reach out to your elected representatives and provide information that will help them better understand the challenges facing public education.

TASB Directors and staff will continue to rally community and business support for pro-education issues and oppose legislative positions that are harmful to our schools. In addition, Association leaders are working with school funding experts to structure an adequate, equitable, and lasting school finance solution.

## ***2016–18 Advocacy***

TASB's Delegate Assembly also has a key role in shaping the Association's Advocacy Agenda for the coming biennium. That body will approve proposed changes to the TASB Cornerstone Principles and have final say on legislative priorities and resolutions that will guide the Association. The Advocacy Agenda is a two-year action plan focusing the efforts of the TASB Board of Directors, Association staff, and the more than 1,000 local school boards that constitute TASB. Adoption of the Advocacy Agenda Priorities and changes to the Cornerstone Principles will require a two-thirds vote of the delegates present and voting on September 24; adoption of Advocacy Resolutions will require a majority vote of delegates present and voting.

## **Set Your Sights on Houston**

The annual [TASATASB Convention](#) is returning to Houston. Most attendees will be housed in the downtown area because several new hotels have been added. Additionally, there is a large block of rooms at the Westin in the Galleria for those who enjoy that area. [Preregistration](#) for the September 23–25 event at the George R. Brown Convention Center ends September 9, and [housing deposits](#) are due August 26.

### ***General Sessions***

Texas Commissioner of Education Mike Morath will kick off the first general session. Other [keynotes](#) will be Simon Bailey, known for teaching influencers how to improve themselves and change the world, and Richard Gerver, cited for his transformative approach to leading change and innovation.

[Thought Leaders](#) (previously called Distinguished Lecturers) will include:

- Mike Robertson, a motivational speaker, helping attendees “think outside

- of the box’ when developing pro-public schools presentations
- Tom Gardner, founder of The Motley Fool, providing updated financial information in an entertaining and engaging way
  - TEA Deputy Commissioner of Governance A.J. Crabill, sharing his commitment to improving school governance and opportunities for all Texas schoolchildren
  - Texas Commissioner of Higher Education Raymund Paredes, detailing the need for increased collaboration and alignment among K–12, higher education, and the workforce
  - Mary Fertakis, a school board member from Tukwila, Washington, discussing race, equity, barriers, and disparities

In addition, trustees can enhance the experience with the [Convention mobile app](#). With resources for attendees, speakers, and exhibitors, it will help you build and track your schedule and stay up-to-date on changes and announcements.

## Nominations Report Approved

A slate of TASB Officers was recommended by the Nominations Committee and favorably voted upon by the Board for submission to the Delegate Assembly. At the conclusion of Convention, current President Bret Begert of Fort Elliott CISD will become immediate past president; current President-Elect Charles R. Stafford of Denton ISD will become president.

Four other Officers will be elected by the 2016 Assembly and take their positions at the end of Convention. For those seats, the TASB Board recommends the following:

- President-Elect: Teresa Flores, Ingleside ISD
- First Vice-President: Jim de Garavilla, Silsbee ISD
- Second Vice-President: Lee Lentz-Edwards, Kermit ISD

- Secretary-Treasurer: Jim Rice, Fort Bend ISD

## Regional Winners Announced for Superintendent of the Year

[Sixteen superintendents won regional honors](#) in TASB's annual Superintendent of the Year (SOTY) award program and will advance to the state competition. The SOTY program has recognized exemplary superintendents for excellence and achievement in educational leadership since 1984. Regional superintendents of the year nominated by regional selection committees are:

- Marla Guerra, South Texas ISD, Region 1
- Suzanne Nelson, Tulosso-Midway ISD, Region 2
- Angi Williams, Galena Park ISD, Region 4
- Jay Killgo, Vidor ISD, Region 5
- Jason Marshall, Palestine ISD, Region 7
- Don Jefferies, Greenville ISD, Region 8
- Jeff McClure, Henrietta ISD, Region 9
- David Harris, DeSoto ISD, Region 10
- Marcelo Cavazos, Arlington ISD, Region 11
- Robin Battershell, Temple ISD, Region 12
- Cathy Lauer, Nixon-Smileley CISD, Region 13
- Shaun Barnett, Stamford ISD, Region 14
- Bill Wiggins, Plemons-Stinnett-Phillips CISD, Region 16
- Dewitt Smith, Wink-Loving ISD, Region 18
- José Espinoza, Socorro ISD, Region 19
- Greg Gibson, Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City ISD, Region 20

The state committee will interview regional winners in Austin August 26–27 and select five state finalists. The Superintendent of the Year will be announced

September 23 at the TASATASB Convention in Houston.

## **New Director Joins Board**

Henry Dibrell of Katy ISD begins a three-year term, representing TASB Region 4E on the TASB Board of Directors. Dibrell, who has served on the Katy ISD Board since May 2011, devotes time to the Katy High School Band Booster Club and mentors and coaches flag football athletes at CrossPoint Church in Katy.

A graduate of Leadership TASB, Dibrell is a current fellow with the Center for Reform of School Systems and member of the Blue Key National Honor Fraternity, where he received the Dean Nicolus Award. One of his most recent endeavors has been the start-up of Campaign Crate, a political consulting firm. Dibrell also was recently elected to the board of the new Katy Pachyderm Club. Dibrell is a 10-year resident of Katy and a licensed minister. He holds a bachelor's degree in marketing from Northwestern State University.

## **Leadership TASB Class**

This year's Convention will be the first meeting for members of the new [Leadership \(LTASB\)](#) class, which was announced at the summer Board meeting. LTASB is a specialized leadership development program for Texas school trustees. Participants who complete all required elements of the yearlong program graduate with a unique designation recognized by TASB.

## **Federal Stipend Program Opens August 1**

Once again, TASB is offering a stipend for school board members interested in attending the National School Boards Association (NSBA) Advocacy Institute. Beginning August 1, [applications will be accepted](#) for the 2016 stipend, and all

current trustees are encouraged to apply. The institute gives trustees the opportunity to learn more about federal issues impacting school districts and to meet with federal legislators and staff to discuss federal policy pertaining to public education.

About 60 school board members and district officials from Texas went to Washington, DC, this year to attend the conference. Of those, 26 school board members were awarded a stipend to pay for the cost of registration. This stipend program was started to encourage one trustee from each of the state's 36 congressional districts to attend.

Interested trustees must apply [online](#) no later than **Friday, September 9, 2016**. If you have questions about the Institute or application process, contact [Rubén Longoria](#), 512.478.4044.

## Interim Legislative Activity

TASB Directors were updated on the most recent State Board of Education meeting and several interim meetings of interest to school board members. Foremost among them is a Senate Education Committee hearing scheduled for August 16 on school board governance and training. TASB has been invited to testify during that hearing. The Senate Education Committee also met August 3 to consider a comprehensive performance review of all public schools, digital learning, and voucher programs enacted in other states.

## Business/Education Initiatives

### *Business Recognition Program*

Staff is busy concluding the 2015–16 year of the [Business Recognition Program](#), a program designed to help districts honor the beneficial relationships

with businesses and other community groups that support schools, teachers, and students. Program participation has already more than doubled in its second year, with a total of more than 2,000 businesses and community groups recognized to date. [The names are posted on tasb.org](http://tasb.org), and the summer “[Good News](#)” issue of *Texas Lone Star* magazine has been mailed to each honoree.

### ***Business/Education Forums***

The first Business/Education Forum was hosted in Austin in spring 2015. For 2016, the [Forums](#) are moving to other locations across the state:

- Region 20—Northside ISD hosted a Forum May 5.
- Region 4—Cypress-Fairbanks ISD will host a Forum October 24.
- Region 11—Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD will holds its Forum November 16.

The San Antonio Business/Education Forum was coordinated by the Go Public team and was hosted in the Northside ISD Activity Center. The morning program featured a panel discussion about the San Antonio Works initiative and a panel of four school/business partnerships from various districts describing the unique aspects of their working relationships. At noon, the Honorable Jimmie Don Aycock spoke about public education in Texas. The day wrapped up with an afternoon presentation about the Go Public campaign.

Registration for the Forum hosted by Cypress-Fairbanks ISD will open in late August.

Additional Forums in other locations are being discussed and will be announced when details are finalized.

## **Community Engagement**

The Board approved dissolution of Engage™, a subscription-based program aimed at assisting districts meet the community engagement requirements of HB 5. The community engagement resources it offered (such as survey samples and educational articles) will be available to members for free through the TASB website and in member training events.

TASB will continue to provide community engagement information, including a new column in *Texas Lone Star* magazine spotlighting effective engagement strategies and additional education offerings on engagement, through the Communications and Leadership Team Services divisions.

## Entity Board Updates

Reports on key activities of the various TASB affiliated entity boards were presented to the Board. All five of the interlocal entities, as well as TASB, have recently received endorsements from the Mexican-American School Board Members Association and the Texas Caucus of Black School Board Members.

### ***TASB Risk Management Fund***

The [TASB Risk Management Fund](#) offers liability, workers' compensation, auto, property, unemployment compensation, and data breach/privacy coverage to TASB members. It is one of the oldest and largest risk pools in the nation. The Fund has 1,055 total members, and 949 are school districts. In addition, the Fund boasts a renewal rate of 97 to 99 percent in all programs, and 92 percent of TASB's members participate in at least one program.

Financial strength of the Fund continues to grow. Members' equity stands at \$200 million as of August 31, 2015, with assets totaling more than \$336 million. Response has been positive to the Fund's expanded coverage for data/privacy breach and for flood and equipment breakdown, all at no cost to members.

Ninety-nine percent of Fund members indicate satisfaction with Fund coverage and service delivery.

### ***Lone Star Investment Pool***

TASB launched the [Lone Star Investment Pool](#) in 1991 with a simple goal: to make the job of managing public funds easier. Since then, Lone Star has grown to more than \$8.8 billion in average annual assets and has expanded to serve a new generation of decision makers.

Lone Star, distributed by [First Public, LLC](#), administers three funds with a focus on safety, liquidity, and yield. Each fund has earned Standard & Poor's highest rating (AAA), which meets the standards set by the Public Funds Investment Act, and each is marked-to-market daily to ensure districts always have up-to-date investment valuations.

### ***Purchasing Cooperative***

With more than 2,700 members, [The Local Government Purchasing Cooperative](#) continues to thrive. Membership includes 1,024 Texas school districts, 754 municipalities, 249 Texas counties, 105 public universities and community colleges, and 587 other Texas governmental agencies. Celebrating 17 years of service in January 2016, the Cooperative was created to increase the purchasing power of government entities and to simplify their purchasing by using a customized electronic purchasing system, called [BuyBoard®](#).

During 2015–16, the Cooperative Board approved a rebate distribution totaling \$5.8 million. This action, a result of continuing growth in the Cooperative's annual purchasing volume and membership, brings the total amount rebated since 2006 to approximately \$26 million.

### ***TASB Energy Cooperative***

Over the past year, the [TASB Energy Cooperative](#) Board took action on one fuel pool, selected propane and natural gas suppliers, and approved a sharing agreement with the National Purchasing Cooperative (d/b/a National BuyBoard).

Transportation Fuel Program—Participants in the transportation fuel pool can accurately budget fuel expenditures and decrease the effects of market volatility. Amidst the ever-changing cost of gasoline, the fuel program allows participants to lock in a fixed per-gallon cost for gasoline and diesel over the term of the contract and purchase fuel at market prices to meet immediate needs.

Electricity Procurement Program—With the electricity pool, participants can meet bidding requirements for electricity procurement and earn a competitive rate for their load. This allows them to maximize buying power by pooling with other entities and to budget with certainty through fixed energy prices.

### ***TASB Legal Assistance Fund***

The [Legal Assistance Fund](#) (LAF) provides support to school districts that are defending legal challenges with the potential to affect public schools statewide. LAF is in strong financial condition and proud of its retention and growth in membership. LAF had net assets of \$334,428 as of May 31, 2016, and membership totaled 758 as of July 30, 2016.

Since the last report to the TASB Board, LAF received 14 requests for assistance. The LAF Board approved all of those requests. LAF also filed 13 *amicus curiae* briefs in jurisdictions including the Texas Attorney General, Texas Courts of Appeals, the Texas Supreme Court, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, and the US Supreme Court. In addition, LAF has played an important role in securing favorable outcomes in several significant court cases affecting public schools.

### ***TASB Benefits Cooperative (TASB Supplemental Employee***

## ***Benefits Board)***

The first full year of the new [Benefits Cooperative program](#) structure provided various insurance offerings, Section 125 cafeteria plan administration, common remitter services, employee enrollment assistance, other employee benefits services, and a number of new providers.

Approximately 36,000 employees from 37 school districts acquired standalone lines of insurance coverages. Six districts representing more than 18,000 employees utilized medical plan consulting services provided through the Benefits Cooperative. Six school districts utilized all services provided under the new structure, covering more than 5,000 employees with 15 different carriers.

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

- Minutes from April 2, 2016, Board meeting
- Nominations Committee's recommendation to leave the TASB Officer position of second vice-president vacant for the remainder of the 2015–16 TASB Board year
- Organizational scorecard revision
- 2016–17 budget and staff compensation plan
- Banking and investment resolution
- 2016–21 TASB Risk Management Fund affinity and license agreement
- 2016–21 Lone Star Investment Pool affinity and license agreement
- 2016–21 TASB Risk Management Fund service agreement
- 2015–16 TASB Risk Management Fund service agreement amended fee addendum
- 2016–17 TASB Risk Management Fund service agreement fee addendum
- 2016–19 TASB Legal Assistance Fund service agreement

- 2016–17 TASB Legal Assistance Fund service fee
- 2015–16 budget amendments
- Proposed bylaws amendments for submission to the Delegate Assembly
- Board policy changes on expense reimbursement, insurance for the Association and Board, investments, and staff retirement plan

The next meeting of the TASB Board of Directors is September 22 in Houston.

Editor: [Barbara Williams](#)

TASB Communications