

**2016–17 TASB Officers**

*A report on the July 2017 TASB Board of Directors Meeting  
Austin, Texas*

**Charles R. Stafford**

President

**Teresa Flores**

President-Elect

**James de Garavilla**

First Vice-President

**Lee Lentz-Edwards**

Second Vice-President

**Jim Rice**

Secretary-Treasurer

**Bret Begert**

Immediate

Past President

**Legislators Back in Austin**

The 85th session of the Texas Legislature ended in May with little accomplished on the significant education issues of school finance and accountability. Round two quickly came as the governor called a special session. He identified 19 issues for consideration after a key state agency sunset bill passed. Early in the special session, he also opened the door for more school finance action and added the issue of increased benefits for retired teachers.

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. We need to maintain—and increase—the pressure on Texas lawmakers to fund public schools, say no to vouchers, and protect local control of elected officials. School board members are urged to keep up the fight as the days of the special session quickly wind down.

**Social Media Strengthens TASB's Voice**

Advocacy efforts during the regular session were greatly enhanced through TASB's legislative advertising campaign. The campaign focused on two specific

issues: increased funding for public schools and opposition to private school vouchers. It's important to note that all voucher bills were defeated in the regular session.

During the six-month campaign, TASB generated 34,340 letters to legislators from 11,996 registered members. There already has been a strong response to TASB's social media advocacy efforts during the special session with more than 7,730 letters against vouchers sent to state lawmakers.

It's easy to send a letter. Just visit [Texans for Strong Public Schools](#). Watch for legislative updates and alerts from TASB Governmental Relations and for action messages on our Facebook page ([facebook.com/tasbpage](https://facebook.com/tasbpage)) and on Twitter ([@tasbnews](https://twitter.com/tasbnews)). Rally friends, colleagues, neighbors, family members, and coworkers to take action as well.

## 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 the TASA/TASB Convention, current President Charles R. Stafford of Denton ISD will become immediate past president; current President-Elect Teresa Flores of Ingleside ISD will become president.

Four other Officers will be elected by the 2017 Assembly and take their positions at the end of Convention. For those seats, the TASB Board recommends the following:

- President-Elect: James de Garavilla, Silsbee ISD
- First Vice-President: Lee Lentz-Edwards, Kermit ISD
- Second Vice-President: Jim Rice, Fort Bend ISD
- Secretary-Treasurer: Ted Beard, Longview ISD

# Set Your Sights on Dallas

The annual [TASATASB Convention](#) is returning to Dallas October 6–8 at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center. [Preregistration for the event](#) ends September 22, and [housing deposits](#) are due August 25.

Among the [keynote speakers](#) are:

- John Quiñones, broadcast journalist and author, first general session;
- Hill Harper, award-winning actor, best-selling author, and philanthropist, second general session;
- Jamie Volmer, award-winning champion of public education and author of *Schools Cannot Do It Alone*, third general session

[Thought Leaders](#) will include the following:

- Troy Hutchings, senior strategic advisor for Educational Testing Service (ETS) and nationally renowned subject matter expert in the area of educator ethics
- John Tanner, founder of Test Sense, writer, educational thinker, and passionate advocate for excellence in schools
- Richard S. Kaplan, president and CEO of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas and expert on current economic conditions and implications for monetary policy
- Linda Abraham Silver, recently appointed as the Eugene McDermott chief executive officer of the Perot Museum of Nature and Science
- Mike Morath, Texas education commissioner

In addition, attendees can enhance their convention experience with the [mobile app](#). The app will help you build and track your schedule and stay up to date on changes and announcements.

## **Tribune CEO to Keynote Delegate Assembly**

Evan Smith of *The Texas Tribune* will join the [2017 Delegate Assembly](#), sharing his insights on the 85th legislative session and the special session. This year's Assembly is set for October 7 during the TASATASB Convention in Dallas. Local boards are urged to select their representatives for the Assembly; each local board may appoint one delegate and one alternate. Visit [delegate.tasb.org](http://delegate.tasb.org) for registration details.

## **Regional Winners Announced for Superintendent of the Year**

[Nineteen superintendents have won regional honors](#) in TASB's annual [Superintendent of the Year \(SOTY\) award program](#) and will advance to the state competition:

- Arturo Cavazos, Harlingen CISD, Region 1
- Maria Vidaurri, Robstown ISD, Region 2
- Robert Jaklich, Victoria ISD, Region 3
- Thomas Randle, Lamar CISD, Region 4
- Scott Campbell, East Chambers ISD, Region 5
- Denise Monzingo, Rockdale ISD, Region 6
- LaTonya Goffney, Lufkin ISD, Region 7
- Judd Marshall, Mount Pleasant ISD, Region 8
- John Chapman, Ennis ISD, Region 10
- Jim Vaszauskas, Mansfield ISD, Region 11
- Marcus Faulkner, China Spring ISD, Region 12
- Tommy Hooker, Thrall ISD, Region 13
- Jason Cochran, Eastland ISD, Region 14
- Wes Beck, Early ISD, Region 15
- Donna Hale, Miami ISD, Region 16

- Julee Becker, Slaton ISD, Region 17
- Amy Jacobs, Coahoma ISD, Region 18
- Jeannie Meza-Chavez, Tornillo ISD (now with San Elizario ISD), Region 19
- Jeff Cottrill, Knippa ISD, Region 20

The state committee will interview regional winners August 26–27 in Austin and select five state finalists. The Superintendent of the Year will be announced October 7 at the TASATASB Convention in Dallas. The SOTY program has recognized exemplary superintendents for excellence and achievement in educational leadership since 1984.

## **Scott Joins TASB Board**

George Scott, a board member in Katy ISD, has joined the TASB Board to fill the large district interim seat, Region 4E. His nomination also serves to elect him to a two-year term on the TASB Board that will begin at the close of Convention in Dallas.

A Katy ISD board member since May 2016, Scott has more than 40 years of service in public policy research, with a particular focus on public education issues. During his career, he has worked in journalism and political media relations and led a major nonprofit public policy research organization. In addition to public education, Scott performed or directed analysis of local governmental activities in municipal, county, community college, transportation, and local healthcare entities.

## **Board Development Updates**

TASB has launched XG Board Development, a new five-session, whole-board learning experience to strengthen essential perspectives, build governance capacity, and equip boards to act confidently with a focus on improving student

performance.

The Board was informed that SB 1566, passed in the regular legislative session, adds a requirement that all school board members participate biennially in a three-hour training on the board's role in student outcomes. The bill requires the commissioner of education to create a research-based board evaluation tool that boards may use for self-evaluation and make student performance dashboards available for boards upon request. Additionally, the bill authorizes the commissioner to require school boards to attend mandated training as part of conditional IR (improvement required) plan approval.

## Changes Made to Federal Stipend Program

Once again, TASB is offering a stipend for school board members interested in attending the [National School Boards Association \(NSBA\) Advocacy Institute](#) in February 2018. The institute allows trustees 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.

At the July Board meeting, changes to the annual program were adopted. The new stipend policy states that a school board may nominate a trustee and alternate to represent the district and its US congressional district. The school district will be responsible for paying the trustee's registration fee to attend, and TASB will reimburse the district for that registration.

Interested school boards should submit the [stipend nomination form](#) by Friday, **September 29**, to [Rubén Longoria](#).

## Student Video Contest a Success

TASB received 118 videos submitted by public school students from 83 districts for the [2016–17 Student Video Contest](#). This year marked the third contest and

the first time entries were submitted from all 20 ESC regions.

Information about the videos was shared with state lawmakers when the gallery of videos was posted. Videos were judged in three categories: elementary, middle/junior high, and high school. In each category, a first-place (\$5,000) and second-place (\$2,500) winner was selected. Congratulatory presentations were made at local school board meetings in the winning districts this spring. So far this year, the videos have attracted more than 63,000 views.

## Online Learning Center Launches New System

Summer Leadership Institute marked the official rollout of the new [TASB Online Learning Center \(OLC\)](#). Powered by Absorb, the new learning management system embodies the TASB strategic plan by accommodating single sign-on, systems integrations, and member engagement. Among the new features:

- Integration with the member's myTASB login;
- Flexible, intuitive design;
- Responsive access from mobile devices, as well as computers;
- Growing course catalog

As a future enhancement, a TASB team is working to integrate OLC course completions with TASB's Continuing Education Credit Reporting Service. Scheduled for completion later this year, this will increase efficiency in processing and documenting board member credits.

## Leadership TASB Class Announced

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

yearlong program graduate with a unique designation recognized by TASB.

## Television Spots to Air through August

Last year, TASB worked with the Texas Association of Broadcasters (TAB) to place “Outstanding Schools” spots on Texas television and radio stations during the back-to-school time frame. The outcome was so successful that a similar effort was launched this year.

TASB is providing spots from the “I’m Not Old Enough” campaign for a six-week period July 10–August 26, utilizing the same TAB program. The goal is to create positive conversation about public school advocacy during the special session and back-to-school time frame. Please be watching for these spots, which will run on television and radio in English and Spanish.

## Board Hears Entity Updates

Reports on key activities of the various TASB affiliated entity boards were presented to the Board at its summer meeting. All five of the affiliated entities that are interlocal agencies, as well as TASB, are endorsed by 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.

With almost 1,100 members, the Fund is the second largest risk pool in the nation and by far the single largest provider of risk management coverage and services for Texas school districts. More than 98 percent of Fund members renew coverage year after year, and the Fund continues to focus on strategic

growth where appropriate. In addition, the financial strength of the Fund continues to grow. Members' equity stands in excess of \$200 million as of June 30, 2017, with assets totaling just under \$340 million.

The satisfaction indicators from Fund members on the annual member survey is a point of significant pride for the Fund Board and TASB staff. For the fourth year in a row, no less than 99 percent of Fund members report that they are satisfied or highly satisfied with their Fund membership and the service they receive.

### ***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 \$9.5 billion in average annual assets and has expanded to serve a new generation of decision makers and constantly strives to provide innovative services.

Lone Star, distributed by [First Public, LLC](#), serves government entities and administers three diverse 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 2,775 members, [The Local Government Purchasing Cooperative](#) continues to thrive. Membership includes 1,024 Texas school districts, 766 municipalities, 249 Texas counties, 105 public universities and community colleges, and 632 other Texas governmental agencies. Celebrating 18 years of service in January 2017, 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 2016–17, the Cooperative Board approved a rebate distribution totaling \$6.9 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 \$33.5 million.

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

Over the past year, the [TASB Energy Cooperative](#) Board took action on two fuel pools, explored solar power for schools, and added propane to the cooperative.

- **Transportation Fuel Program:** Participants in the transportation fuel pool can accurately budget fuel expenditures and decrease the effects of market volatility. Amidst ever-changing costs, the fuel program allows participants to lock in a fixed rate for propane, gasoline, and diesel over a period of time 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’s activities are directed by a seven-member board comprising the chief officers of TASB, the Texas Association of School Administrators, and the Texas Council of School Attorneys.

Since the last report to the TASB Board, LAF received eight requests for assistance, and all were approved by the LAF Board. LAF also filed eight *amicus curiae* briefs, including the Texas court of appeals, Texas Supreme Court, and

US Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. In addition, LAF has played an important role in securing favorable outcomes in several significant court cases affecting public schools on such topics as prayer before school board meetings, damages under Title IX, and administrative reassignments.

### ***TASB Benefits Cooperative***

The [TASB Benefits Cooperative](#) provides school districts and their employees with a variety of employer-paid and employee-paid benefits such as healthcare, life, long-term disability, dental, vision, and Section 125 products and plan administration.

In the second full year of its newly revised program, the Benefits Cooperative streamlined enrollments through technology and audio/video functionalities, focused on quality carriers and coverage offerings, and explored retirement plan third-party administration services. Forty school districts, representing approximately 46,000 employees, participate in the program. The Benefits Cooperative is administered by TASB's wholly owned subsidiary, [First Public](#), which is licensed with the Texas Department of Insurance.

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

- Minutes from April 1, 2017, TASB Board of Directors meeting
- 2017–18 budget
- TASB Benefits Cooperative Bylaws notice waiver
- Designation of net assets for future repairs or improvements to TASB's headquarters building
- 2017–22 TASB Energy Cooperative affinity and license agreement
- 2017–18 TASB Risk Management Fund service agreement fee addendum
- 2017–18 TASB Legal Assistance Fund service fee

- 2016–17 budget amendments
- New Board policy on Association regions
- Proposed Bylaws amendments for submission to the Delegate Assembly on resolutions deadline and standing committees appointments and maximum membership
- Proposed changes to the 2016–18 Advocacy Agenda Priorities for submission to the Delegate Assembly
- Proposed 2016–18 Advocacy Agenda resolutions for submission to the Delegate Assembly
- Board policy changes on mentoring program, campaigning protocol, Nominations Committee operational guidelines, expendable net assets, and audits and internal controls

The next meeting of the TASB Board of Directors is October 5 in Dallas.

**Editor:** [Barbara Williams](#)

**TASB Communications**