

**2017–18 TASB Officers****Teresa Flores**

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*A report on the October 2017 TASB Board of Directors Meeting and highlights of the 2017 TASB Delegate Assembly*

*Dallas, Texas*

## Hurricane Harvey Recovery

An underlying focus at the October Board of Directors meeting centered on the challenges and difficulties districts are experiencing in the wake of Hurricane Harvey. TASB staff members continue to answer questions and work with school districts to help in their efforts to recover from the severe damage and flooding that resulted. Many directors shared stories about the tremendous outreach that was extended by school districts to school districts to help students, staff, and communities return to some form of normalcy.

At Convention, a special strand of sessions on Hurricane Harvey recovery were livestreamed for those unable to attend and were recorded for use on [TASB's Online Learning Center](#). The videos also can be viewed on the [TASB Facebook page](#).

- **TEA Hurricane Harvey Response**

Leo Lopez, chief school finance officer, and Candace Stoltz, director of school safety (Texas Education Agency)

- **Expert Review on Recovery after Hurricane Harvey**

Joy Baskin, director of Legal Services; Amy Campbell, director of HR Services; Andrea Sheehan, BuyBoard® attorney; and Troy Winslow,

director of auto, liability and property claims administration for the TASB Risk Management Fund (all TASB staff)

- **FEMA: Navigating Federal Red Tape after Disaster Strikes**

Charles Mikeska, assistant superintendent for finance and operations, JoAnna Macik, accountant, and Shea Gutierrez, accountant (West ISD)

- **Responding to Harvey: Start Right to End Right**

Association for Learning Environments (A4LE)

- **Storm Responders**

Greg Smith, superintendent, Paul McLarty, deputy superintendent of business and support services, and Elaina Polsen, executive director of communications (all from Clear Creek ISD), and Rick Morris, partner, Rogers, Morris & Grover, L.L.P.

In addition, TASB has compiled a list of resources on the [Association website](#), and new ones will be added as they are identified.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all TASB members and their families, school district staff, students, parents, and community members affected by Hurricane Harvey. We continue to be inspired by your tremendous leadership and commitment to your communities during this difficult time.

## **Legislative Update/Free Legislative Summary**

The Texas Legislature completed its first called session on August 15. Among issues targeted by Governor Greg Abbott were property tax reform, a mandatory \$1,000 teacher pay raise, vouchers for special needs students, flexibility in hiring and retention of teachers, a commission to study school finance reform, bathroom regulation, and dues checkoffs for teacher organizations.

The governor got about half of his issues passed, and only one significant bill affecting public education passed. House Bill 21 creates a \$150 million

hardship grant program to assist districts facing steep declines in state funding, sets aside \$40 million for grant programs to assist students with dyslexia and autism, provides \$212 million to assist retired educators in paying for health insurance premiums under TRS-Care, gives \$60 million to charter schools to compensate for the lack of explicit facilities funds, puts \$60 million into the Existing Debt Allotment, begins to eliminate the small-school-district penalty, and creates a commission to study school finance.

NOTE: All Association members can download the [Legislative Summary for TASB Members 2017](#) for free. Prepared by TASB Legal Services and Governmental Relations, it highlights key issues addressed during the regular and first called session of the 85th Texas Legislature.

## New TASB Leaders Take the Helm

Association [officers](#) and directors have been chosen to lead TASB in the coming year. President Teresa Flores, Ingleside ISD, and Immediate Past President Charles R. Stafford, Denton ISD, are automatic succession offices. The remaining slate of officers, as presented by the TASB Nominations Committee and TASB Board, was elected by the 2017 Delegate Assembly on October 7. All assumed their positions at the close of Convention.

- 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

Directors elected to three-year terms (2017–20), filling expired terms:

- Region 4B, Charles Cunningham, Humble ISD
- Region 4D, Rhonda Skillern-Jones, Houston ISD
- Region 4H, Rose Avalos, Aldine ISD

- Region 8, Thomas Darden, Cooper ISD
- Region 10D, Donald Gant, DeSoto ISD
- Region 11B, Christene Moss, Fort Worth ISD
- Region 13B, Will Streit, Leander ISD
- Region 14, Greg Welch, Clyde CISD
- Region 15, Raymond P. Meza, San Felipe Del Rio CISD
- Region 20A, Rolinda Schmidt, Kerrville ISD
- Region 20B, Karen Freeman, Northside ISD-Bexar County

Elected to two-year terms (2017–19), filling vacancy:

- Region 2, Moises Alfaro, Mathis ISD
- Region 4E, George Scott, Katy ISD

Elected to one-year term (2017–18), filling vacancy:

- Region 1A, Patricia O’Caña-Olivarez, Mission CISD

## **Advocacy Efforts to Support Schools**

This session, TASB took new steps to increase advocacy efforts on behalf of Texas public schools. A legislative advertising campaign was launched to generate support for public education funding and opposition to school vouchers. This initiative relied heavily on the use of social media to reach the most people in a cost-effective manner.

The hub of the campaign was an advocacy website that allowed individuals to learn about and take action on school privatization and funding issues. During the six-month campaign, TASB generated 34,340 letters to legislators. Of those letters, 14,615 supported funding for public education, and 19,725 expressed opposition to school vouchers.

The campaign continued through the monthlong special session. More than 15,000 letters were submitted to legislators during the special session—13,887 urging legislators to oppose vouchers and 1,156 asking legislators to support more funding for Texas public schools.

## Update on Senate Bill 1566

Directors were updated on Senate Bill 1566, signed into law by Governor Abbott on June 15. This legislation has multiple provisions related to Texas school governance.

Among its provisions, SB 1566 authorizes a school board to require the district's CFO or CAO (chief academic officer) to appear and provide testimony to the board in open or executive session. It specifies that districts shall comply with a trustee information request within 20 days. The bill requires the Texas Education Agency, upon request of the district board of trustees, to create a website that allows board members to compare the district's academic achievement with other districts.

In addition, SB 1566 changes school board training credit requirements:

- Minutes of the last meeting of the board held before an election must reflect whether each trustee has met or is deficient in meeting required training. If one or more trustees is deficient, the district must post that on its website and maintain the posting until the required training is met.
- Each trustee must complete biennially at least three hours of training on evaluating student academic performance. This training must be research-based and support the oversight role of the board for improving academic performance. This training must be completed within 120 days of election/appointment and can be completed up to six months in advance.

The bill also requires the commissioner to develop a board improvement and evaluation tool to be used upon request of the board, and the commissioner may require boards to use the tool if they have schools in ongoing improvement requirement status.

## **Goffney Wins Superintendent of the Year Award**

La Tonya Goffney, chief executive of Lufkin ISD, was named [Superintendent of the Year \(SOTY\)](#) by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) on October 7 in Dallas. She was selected for the prestigious award from a group of state finalists that included the following:

- Robert Jaklich, Victoria ISD, Region 3
- Thomas Randle, Lamar CISD, Region 4
- Judd Marshall, Mount Pleasant ISD, Region 8
- Jim Vaszauskas, Mansfield ISD, Region 11

Also at Convention, Coahoma ISD, Region 18, was named [2017 Outstanding School Board](#) by the Texas Association of School Administrators. Amy Jacobs serves as superintendent. In addition, finalist Honor Boards included the following:

- Galena Park ISD, Region 4, Angi Williams, superintendent
- Hardin-Jefferson ISD, Region 5, Shannon Holmes, superintendent
- Mansfield ISD, Region 11, Jim Vaszauskas, superintendent
- Royse City ISD, Region 10, Kevin Worthy, superintendent

## **Advocacy Institute Stipends Awarded**

A total of 32 trustees received stipends to participate in the [2018 Advocacy Institute](#) February 4–6 in Washington, DC. Trustees representing 28 of the 36 Texas congressional districts will gain information and updates on important

legislation impacting public education at the federal level. According to a new TASB policy, the stipend is paid directly to a member district as reimbursement for conference registration.

The stipend program was initiated in 2007 to boost trustee participation at the annual institute sponsored by the National School Boards Association (NSBA). The goal is to encourage at least one trustee from each congressional district in Texas to attend.

## Grassroots Meetings

[TASB Grassroots Meetings](#) will begin in December. Board members are urged to participate and help create an Advocacy Agenda that truly reflects the critical priorities of districts across the state.

At these meetings, the region's member districts develop Advocacy Priorities and elect representatives to the Legislative Advisory Council (LAC). The LAC then studies results of the regional meetings and develops a set of priorities with statewide impact for consideration by the TASB Board and 2018 Delegate Assembly.

An online survey will be distributed in November to school trustees possessing e-mail addresses registered with TASB. Their answers will help identify issues to kickstart discussion at the meetings. The survey includes explanations of issues contained in the questionnaire so board members can familiarize themselves before making selections.

Following is the schedule of the upcoming Grassroots Meetings, in order by date:

- Amarillo, December 7 (Region 16)
- Austin, January 10 (Region 13)

- Victoria, January 16 (Region 3)
- Alpine, January 23 (Region 18)
- Kilgore, January 24 (Region 7)
- Midland, January 24 (Region 18)
- Mount Pleasant, January 25 (Region 8)
- Houston, February 7 (Region 4)
- Beaumont, February 8 (Region 5)
- Lubbock, February 8 (Region 17)
- Abilene, February 13 (Region 14)
- Corpus Christi, February 21 (Region 2)
- Richardson, February 21 (Region 10)
- San Angelo, February 22 (Region 15)
- El Paso, February 27 (Region 19)
- Wichita Falls, February 27 (Region 9)
- Fort Worth, February 28 (Region 11)
- San Antonio, February 28 (Region 20)
- Edinburg, March 7 (Region 1)
- Waco, March 7 (Region 12)
- Huntsville, March 8 (Region 6)

## Upcoming Training

### ***Texas School HR Administrators Academy***

The [2017 Texas School HR Administrators Academy](#) is set for October 30–31 at the Austin Marriott North. Co-sponsored by TASB HR Services and the Texas Association of School Personnel Administrators, the HR Academy provides new administrators with the information and resources they need to meet the challenges of a career in HR.

### ***Fall Legal Seminars***

TASB Legal Services attorneys hit the road in November for the [Legal Seminar Series](#). The training begins in Austin on November 3, and then the attorneys will travel to Commerce on November 8, Nacogdoches on November 9, Abilene on November 14, Amarillo on November 16, and South Padre Island on November 18. Topics will include the role of the individual board member, bullying and hazing, preventing sexual abuse of public school students, district websites and online data, and legislative and legal updates.

### ***TASB Conference for Administrative Professionals***

This school year, the [conference](#) will be hosted October 19–20 and February 22–23 in Austin at TASB Headquarters. This event offers intensive training and networking opportunities for administrative support personnel at the district level.

An early-bird session will be hosted again this year on the day before the conference and will focus on "the basics" of elections, policy, school HR, BoardBook®, and school finance. The early-bird sessions are for new personnel and those who would like a refresher on common topics.

### ***TASB Risk Management Fund—Title IX Symposium: Theory and Practice***

A [daylong symposium](#) on Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1972 will be held on November 15 at TASB Headquarters in Austin. School districts and community colleges will learn the history of Title IX through the foundational case law, receive an update on recent litigation trends and relevant state legislation, and hear legal experts discuss the role of the Title IX coordinator.

Participants also will receive practical advice on surviving complaints and litigation from the perspective of a former Office of Civil Rights (OCR) attorney and an experienced litigator. This event is offered to members of the TASB Risk Management Fund and is provided at no cost.

## In Other Action, the Board Approved:

- Minutes for the July 29 Board of Directors meeting
- Members of the 2017–18 Nominations Committee
- Changes to board policy on expense reimbursement

The next meeting of the TASB Board of Directors is December 2 at TASB Headquarters in Austin.

Editor: [Barbara Williams](#)

TASB Communications