



Texas Association of School Boards

Legal Services

P.O. Box 400 • Austin, Texas 78767-0400 • 512.467.3610 • 800.580.5345 • legal.tasb.org • legal@tasb.org

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Board Training Announcement after Suspension

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On March 30, 2020, Commissioner Mike Morath temporarily waived board training requirements in Texas Education Code section 11.159 and 19 Texas Administrative Code section 61.1 until September 1, 2020. On August 10, 2020, the commissioner [updated](#) and extended the board training waiver until January 31, 2021. This temporary suspension period provided board trustees additional time to complete their continuing education requirements due to impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now that the board training waiver has expired on January 31, 2021, board members must have all of their [continuing education requirements](#) completed by the time of a district's board meeting in 2021 for the [announcement of continuing education of board members](#). This article reviews the effect of the commissioner's board training waiver in 2020 and discusses how to address its expiration and announce board member's continuing education requirements in 2021.

Effect of the Training Suspension Period From March 30, 2020 – January 31, 2021

For the period from March 30, 2020 – January 31, 2021, trustees were provided a temporary suspension from being delinquent as to their continuing education requirements that would otherwise have been due during that timeframe. This waiver did not mean that trustees were excused from completing their training requirements. Rather, the waiver provided trustees temporary relief from deadlines to complete their continuing education requirements, to the extent trustees opted to take advantage of the suspension period through January 31, 2021.

Board Training Announcement Not Required in 2020

Normally, absent a waiver by the commissioner, the continuing education announcement for board members must be made at the last regular meeting of a board before an election of trustees. This announcement covers each board member's completion, delinquency, or exceeding of training requirements. If there had not been the waiver by the commissioner in 2020, May election districts would likely have made their board training announcements at an April 2020 board meeting and November election districts at an October 2020 board meeting. Instead, districts were not required to make their board training announcements in 2020.

Board Training Announcement in 2021 Collectively Covers the Years 2020 and 2021

Even though board training announcements were not required in 2020, trustees remained responsible for completing and subsequently reporting their yearly continuing education requirements that were not announced in 2020. Consequently, a trustee's training requirements from both 2020 and 2021 should be collectively covered by the 2021 announcement—assuming a trustee's district did not voluntarily opt to make a training announcement in 2020.

To avoid a delinquency, trustees must complete those training requirements from both 2020 and 2021 that are due at the time of the 2021 training announcement. For May trustee election districts, the announcement will likely occur at a board meeting in April 2021 and for November election districts, at a board meeting in October 2021 as determined by the last regular meeting before an election of trustees.

For example, for the training requirement of additional continuing education hours, consider a trustee elected in May 2019 in a May election district. This first-year trustee must complete 10 hours of additional continuing education during that trustee's annual training year from May 2019 – April 2020. For the same trustee's second year of service, the trustee must complete 5 hours of additional continuing education for the next annual training year covering May 2020 – April 2021.

The trustee's district did not make a training announcement in April 2020 due to the Commissioner's waiver, but the district will be making an announcement at an April 2021 board meeting. By the time of the April 2021 announcement, this trustee will be reporting as to a required total of 15 hours of additional continuing education, covering 10 hours from the May 2019 – April 2020 period, and 5 more hours from May 2020 – April 2021 period.

Please note that this is one example involving a single board member in one training area for a district that did not announce board training in 2020 as result of the commissioner's waiver. Each trustee's continuing education requirements must be individually addressed as to each area of required training based on a trustee's date of election or appointment, the date of completion of prior training when applicable, and the timing of the annual training announcement.

Remember that board members must complete training hours in seven continuing education training areas at the times required by state law and rules. At the time of the April 2021 announcement, the board president will announce as to all training areas to the extent applicable to each current trustee during the two-year timeframe from May 2019 – April 2021.

Trustees Elected on November 3, 2020 Have One Year to Complete Their Annual Additional Continuing Education Hours

Due to the impacts of COVID-19, most May election districts postponed their May 2, 2020, trustee elections to November 3, 2020. These May districts will return to their regular trustee election schedule in 2021. The board training announcement will also return to normal, most likely at an April 2021 regular board meeting before the May 1, 2021, trustee election. Trustees elected on November 3, 2020, have inquired if their annual additional continuing education hours must be completed by the time of the April 2021 board training announcement, which would cut in half the normal year period to complete those hours.

The board training rule provides that additional continuing education hours must be completed in a one-year period which is determined by the anniversary date of a board member's election or appointment to the board. Consequently, those trustees elected on November 3, 2020, should be provided a full one year-period to complete their additional continuing education hours until November 3, 2021. If these trustees have not completed their additional continuing education hours by April 2021 the board training announcement should not report a deficiency as to those hours. Instead, that April 2021 announcement should reflect that those trustees have the additional time to complete their annual additional continuing education hours.

For additional information on board member training requirements, see [Texas School Board Member Continuing Education](#), and on the training announcement, see [Board President Annual Announcement on Continuing Education of Board Members](#).

This document is continually updated at tasb.org/services/legal-services/tasb-school-law-source/governance/documents/board-training-announcement-after-suspension.pdf. For more information on school law topics, visit TASB School Law eSource at schoolawesource.tasb.org.

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