



2023


Texas Association of School Boards
Annual Report

A LEGACY OF
EXCELLENCE,

A FUTURE OF
POSSIBILITY

A special edition of
Texas Lone Star Magazine

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The Texas Association of School Boards promotes educational excellence for Texas schoolchildren through advocacy, visionary leadership, and high-quality services to school districts.

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A special edition of TASB's *Texas Lone Star* magazine
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Dan Troxell • TASB Executive Director
Tiffany Dunne-Oldfield • TASB Deputy Executive Director
Laura Tolley • Managing Editor
Shu-in Powell • Graphic Designer
Lalo Garcia • Photographer
360 Press Solutions • Printer
Contributors: Leslie Trahan, Beth Griesmer, Sylvia Wood, Joan Randall, Mary Ann Lopez, Theresa Gage-Dieringer

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SHARING SUCCESS STORIES

Magazine highlights district achievements

by Laura Tolley

Welcome to the 2022-23 TASB Annual Report, a special edition of *Texas Lone Star* magazine devoted to providing our members with an overview of the important programs, services, and solutions offered by TASB this past year.

Throughout the year, the pages of *TLS* have included many stories about what TASB is doing to help school board members and their districts best serve the schoolchildren of Texas — whether it's a message from a TASB leader, a column from one of the Association's departments, or a feature story about a certain program. Part of the magazine's mission is to keep our members informed about everything TASBeans are doing to help your district further its goals.

Another primary goal for *TLS* is to shine a positive light back on districts' efforts to provide the best education possible to their students. *TLS* staff members, including myself, reached out to the furthest corners of the state this year in search of these meaningful stories — and y'all certainly delivered.

Compelling district stories

One of the more emotional stories came from Lumberton ISD Superintendent Tony Tipton, who wrote a column in the May 2023 issue about efforts to improve safety in his Southeast Texas district in the wake of the Robb Elementary School shootings in Uvalde. I recently asked Tipton what compelled him to write the "One District's Safety Journey" column.

"I'm not sure how to explain it, but the Uvalde tragedy hit me so hard that it almost broke me, and I'm hundreds of miles away," he wrote to me. "Thinking of our kids in that situation is my worst nightmare, by far.

"I am a teacher and a mentor, and I love sharing my experiences and learning," Tipton continued. "All our kids are all our kids. If something we do can potentially keep ANY kids safe, then I'm here for it. That's why I wrote the article. Not for notoriety but hopefully to help someone else."

I believe he speaks for many of us who seek to share important education stories within the education world in Texas. We're not focused on the byline; we're in awe of the school leaders and staff members who are dedicated to the kids they serve. In touting their efforts, we also hope their stories will inspire and inform others who are always looking for new ways to help their students.

Another one of those stories was "Strategic Change" by staff writer Mary Ann Lopez. The August feature focused on Jim Hogg County ISD's team of eight and how it works together to improve academic achievement throughout the small rural district, which serves about 1,074 students in South Texas.

Superintendent Susana P. Garza, selected to lead Jim Hogg County ISD in 2017, told Lopez that she got positive feedback from peers and other school district officials about the story. The Texas Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents also re-published the article, prompting additional people to reach out to the superintendent.

"My Region One ESC [education service center] had me present on it at our August RAC [Regional Advisory Committee] meeting and some of my superintendent friends had some finance questions about our investments, and they have moved forward with my recommendations and are positively impacting their bottom financial line," Garza wrote.

A June story titled "In the Zone" by staff writer Beth Griesmer featured the Rural Schools Innovation Zone program involving three rural South Texas districts: Brooks County, Freer, and Premont ISDs. The story prompted a lot of interest in the program, which provides more college and career opportunities to students, said RSIZ Executive Director Michael Gonzalez.

This fall, the RSIZ expanded to include Agua Dulce and Benavides ISDs. In addition, the Permian Basin Innovation Zone launched in October with McCamey, Buena Vista, Grandfalls-Royalty, and Crane ISDs. "The *Texas Lone Star* article was a beacon, illuminating the pioneering work of RSIZ," he said. "Its publication ignited a wave of publicity, making our mission and achievements more accessible and understandable to a broader audience."

I'm not exaggerating when I write that it's that kind of feedback that really makes our day around here at *TLS*. We believe it's vital to tout the great achievements in public education today in Texas, at least a few of them anyway. But if we also help inspire other districts, even just a little bit, we feel honored.

That reminds me, if your district has a great story to tell, or if you want to write an article for our "District Voices" column, *TLS* wants to hear from you in 2024! I can be reached at laura.tolley@tasb.org, and you can also contact tls@tasb.org.★

Laura Tolley is managing editor of Texas Lone Star.

COMMITMENT



Photo courtesy of Jim Hogg County ISD

Jim Hogg County ISD Superintendent Susana P. Garza poses with a group of students who were part of the district's strategic planning committee. The district's story ran in the August issue of *TLS*.



Photo courtesy of RSIZ

RSIZ Executive Director Michael Gonzalez visits with students at the Next General Medical Academy in Freer ISD. A story about the RSIZ ran in the June issue of *TLS*.



Photo courtesy of Lumberton ISD

Lumberton ISD Superintendent Tony Tipton, third from left, poses with other district leaders. Tipton's column on improving school safety ran in the May issue of *TLS*.

CELEBRATING TOGETHER

The holiday season is a time to enjoy and to learn

by Armando Rodriguez

As we immerse ourselves in the warmth of the holiday season, I am honored to extend my heartfelt greetings to the entire TASB membership. This is a time when joy and unity intertwine. And amid this celebratory period, I find it crucial to reflect on the unique diversity that shapes the fabric of our great state.

Texas is a tapestry woven with the vibrant threads of diverse cultures, a unique land where various communities coexist, each contributing its own distinct colors to the overall pattern of our society. This is what makes our state a truly exceptional and dynamic place to live and learn.

For many, including myself, the holidays evoke memories of gatherings with family and friends, moments filled with warmth, laughter, and, undoubtedly, the aroma of tamales and arroz con gandules [rice with pigeon peas] wafting through the air.

These traditions hold a special place in our hearts, forming the foundation of our celebrations. Growing up in Canutillo, I remember with joy how luminarias would line the banks of the Rio Grande and the trails of the Franklin Mountains, providing a warm, guiding light throughout the borderland region for us all.

United in purpose

These cherished memories remind me of the importance of embracing family members, friends, colleagues, and community members who care for us and support us throughout the year.

I feel a sense of unity with all of you who have spent the past year working hard to help all Texas public schoolchildren have access to the best education possible so that they may thrive now — and later as adults.

We live all over Texas and we have different backgrounds, but we are united in our commitment and dedication to our students' public education. That is our purpose as school board members, and I am grateful for all you have done to accomplish this important mission.

Many traditions this season

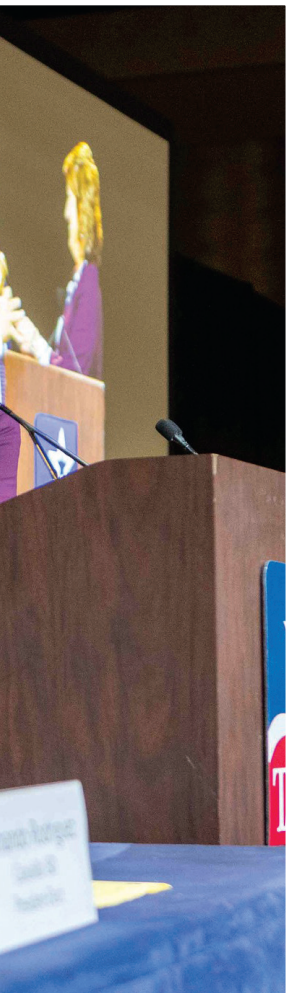
This time of the year also is a reminder that our state is more than just one single tradition or heritage. It's a blend of myriad cultures and customs, each with its unique way of commemorating this joyous season.

As Texans, we have the privilege of learning from and embracing the rich range of traditions that have been brought to our state by the diverse communities that proudly call this state our home.

From the vibrant celebrations of Diwali to the solemn observations of Hanukkah, from the colorful festivities of Kwanzaa to the joyous Christmas traditions, each community adds its own distinct flavor to the collective



At txEDCON23 TASA | TASB Convention, Debbie Gillespie (right) hands the gavel to new TASB President Armando Rodriguez. Gillespie is now TASB Immediate Past President.



Photos by TASB Media Services

meaning of unity, peace, and togetherness during this time of the year. It's in this diversity that we find strength and beauty.

As TASB President, I encourage us all to embrace this opportunity to learn about and appreciate the diverse customs and celebrations that enrich our communities. It is through understanding and respect for one another's traditions that we can truly foster an inclusive and welcoming environment within our schools and beyond.

The holiday season offers us wonderful opportunities to expand our understanding and appreciation of all the ways this time of year is special. It's a time to celebrate the uniqueness of our differences, finding common ground and building bridges that unite us as Texans.

Our differences are what make us stronger, and our unity amid this diversity is what makes us truly Texan. May this holiday season bring us closer together, celebrating the rich range of traditions that make Texas a beacon of opportunity and inclusivity.

Wishing you and your families a joyous holiday season filled with the warmth of togetherness and the richness of diverse traditions.

¡Felices fiestas y próspero año nuevo!★

Armando Rodriguez, a Canutillo ISD trustee, is 2023-24 president of TASB.



TASB President Armando Rodriguez at TASB Delegate Assembly.



Armando Rodriguez (center) celebrates his swearing-in as TASB President with fellow Canutillo ISD board members and other school officials, including Superintendent Pedro Galaviz (far right).

TASB'S 2022-23 YEAR IN REVIEW

TASB's programs and services helped Texas public school districts succeed on many levels for their students in the 2022-23 fiscal year. From providing expert training and guidance to enhancing services to launching new initiatives, the Association continued its dedication and commitment to public education across Texas. Here are highlights of TASB's efforts this past year.



Board Development Services

In March, TASB Board Development Services launched the Texas Trustee Institute, an immersive learning experience offering new trustees support as they begin their board service. TTI training sessions were held at Summer Leadership Institute and at txEDCON23 TASA | TASB Convention, with about a total of 340 trustees participating.

Board Officer Institute, which provides training opportunities and one-on-one coaching for trustees either seeking a board role or those in board officer positions, was offered during SLI and Convention.

Leadership TASB, the preeminent leadership training program for trustees, celebrated its 30th anniversary. After completing their capstone project presentations, the 24 members of the LTASB Class of 2023 cohort celebrated their graduation at SLI in Fort Worth.

During the 2022-23 fiscal year, TASB also provided in-person training for 5,092 trustees from 859 districts for a total of 60,569 earned credit hours.

Meanwhile, the TASB Online Learning Center continued to provide trustees and other district officials with a simple way to get the critical training they needed. Through the OLC:

- 1,221 trustees from 508 districts completed virtual classes.
- 557 nontrustees also completed OLC courses.
- 3,037.25 credit hours were earned.

The top three courses, among trustees were:

- Child Abuse Prevention
- Advocacy 101
- Understanding School Finance — 2022 update

Several new OLC courses launched during the year, including:

- Outside the Boardroom: A Choose-Your-Own-Adventure Game
- Special Education 101 for Board Members
- Advocacy 201: Knowing the Game
- Superintendent Evaluations: A Comprehensive Guide

OLC also launched courses for nontrustees, including Asbestos 2-Hour Awareness Training, Providing Exceptional Customer Service, and Special Education 101 for General Education Teachers. OLC also hosted the Fall Legal Seminar series in December 2022 and January 2023.

Community College Services

TASB's Community College Services provided legal and policy education and resources to help colleges respond to several significant legal changes, including those from the legislative session. In addition to FAQs published on TASB College eLaw, Community College Services provided training at several state and regional events, most significantly the Texas Association of Community College Attorneys Annual Conference, presented in partnership with TASB. A bill summary book was also published, covering approximately 300 bills impacting the colleges.

This year, the team began work on two new policy local-



Photo by TASB Media Services

Aldine ISD students perform at txEDCON23 TASA | TASB Convention.

ization projects, bringing the total number of colleges that maintain their board local policies with Community College Services to 42 of the 50 Texas community colleges.

Governmental Relations

TASB Governmental Relations was actively engaged this year with the 88th regular session and multiple special sessions of the Texas Legislature. Most of the work focused on protecting public schools and students from burdensome legislation as the Legislature addressed issues ranging from private school vouchers to public school safety and security.

Trustees from around the state also participated in updating TASB's 2022-24 Advocacy Agenda, with about 450 board members coming together at Delegate Assembly this fall to review and approve updates to priorities recommended by trustees serving on the Legislative Advisory Council and additions to resolutions submitted by 37 member boards. The updated Advocacy Agenda developed by trustees will guide the association until the 2024 Delegate Assembly.

TASB GR also hosted the inaugural Texas Federal Advocacy Conference in early February in Washington, D.C. About 80 school board members from across the state attended the event. On the first day, attendees heard from U.S. Rep. Nathaniel Moran, R-Texas; Anne DeCesaro, education policy director for the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee; Peggy G. Carr, commissioner from the National Center for Education Statistics; Mark Rickling, senior policy advisor for U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett, D-Texas; and Roberto J. Rodríguez, assistant secretary for planning, evaluation, and policy development for the U.S. Department of Education. On the second day, attendees traveled to the U.S. Capitol to meet with elected officials and their staff members. TASB GR will be continuing the event on an annual basis after receiving overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees.

Legal Services

TASB Legal Services attorneys reviewed education legislation passed during the multiple legislative sessions this year, including 264 bills from the regular session. The team summarized approximately 237 bills to help members understand the

implications of legislative changes. Legal Services attorneys presented at numerous events, such as txEDCON23 TASA | TASB Convention, TASB Administrative Professionals Conference, Governance Camp, Council for School Attorneys Post-Legislative Seminar, School Law Boot Camp, Spring Workshops, Summer Leadership Institute, and Fall Legal Seminars. The online TASB School Law eSource had more than 75,000 views and continued to grow with six new topics added and updates to 42 resources. For members looking to stay on top of legal topics relevant to their district, Legal Services published nine editions of the *School Law Update* newsletter. In the past year, TASB Legal Services has received more than 3,200 calls on topics ranging from school district personnel to student discipline and from open meetings to school district elections.

Policy Service

TASB Policy Service added the Governance and Management Library to Policy Online® in April. This new feature houses model publications and policy resources in one convenient place, including the *Model Student Handbook*, *Model Student Code of Conduct*, policy alerts, and legal tips for policy development.

Policy Service also completed two customized TASB-initiated policy manual updates, processed 1,899 district-initiated local updates, and completed Policy Review Sessions for 80 districts.

To help districts stay current on legislative changes and update their codes of conduct and student handbooks, Policy Service issued Policy Alerts and hosted five interactive webinars. The *Model Student Handbook* and *Model Student Code of Conduct* webinars had more than 400 attendees, and the webinar on using Policy Alerts to maintain district policy had more than 115 attendees.

Policy Service also provided in-person training and educational opportunities at the Summer Leadership Institute, multiple Spring Workshops, and TASB Conference for Administrative Professionals.

In addition, the quarterly *Policy Spotlight* newsletter published eight articles on different subjects, including attendance for credit, class rank, and new legislation. These articles were viewed by members more than 6,000 times.

Benefits Cooperative

The TASB Benefits Cooperative™ continues to offer districts the TASB benefits health, dental, and vision plans. This year, the Benefits Cooperative helped more than 55 school districts make an informed decision about which health plan to choose for their employees and continued to help districts that are trying to decide whether to stay with their current health care provider or move to another one.



BoardBook

BoardBook Premier® is an all-in-one, web-based meeting preparation software that helps meeting managers organize materials, communicate with attendees, conduct meetings, and document the results. The platform boosts meeting efficiency, improves collaboration, and enhances communication with board members, other meeting attendees, and the public. BoardBook focuses on the customer experience, and its January customer satisfaction survey found an increase for the second year in a row. BoardBook currently serves more than 1,700 customers across North America.



Executive Search Services

For the 2022-23 fiscal year, Executive Search Services assisted 17 districts in finding a new superintendent. Of the 17 districts, three were large districts, eight were medium, and

six were small. Mock Interview Workshops were held, one in February and one in July. Both events drew a total of 37 candidates. The ESS team participated in conferences, including those held by the Mexican American School Boards Association, National Association of Superintendent Searchers, American Association of School Administrators, Texas Council of Women School Executives, TASA Midwinter, Governance Camp, Summer Leadership Institute, and txEDCON23 TASA | TASB Convention. In addition, of the 16 completed superintendent searches, 23 school board members responded to an ESS satisfaction survey distributed after the search process, with 100% responding that they were very satisfied with ESS.

Facility Services

TASB Facility Services worked with approximately 700 districts on environmental, energy, and planning projects this year. The multiyear Planning Membership assists districts with effectively identifying deficiencies and maintaining and planning for the future of their facilities. Membership includes access to the online TASB Facility Dashboard, where districts can see detailed information on their facilities and track needed improvements.

Facility Services also made progress on transforming the OnSite Environmental Database into an online Asbestos Management Plan portal where Facility Services' Environmental Program members are able to view compliance-related information. The new AMP software was rolled out to members in fall 2023.

A new long-term relationship with E3, Texas' leader in public school energy efficiency projects, was established that will provide additional detail into district HVAC and related building systems. A new TASB Facility Dashboard software system is under development and will be available to members in spring 2024.



Attendees at SHARS 2023, held in May in Austin, participate in a fun exercise.

In addition, a cellular connectivity program was approved and is in its initial stages. ConnectED Texas assists districts in identifying tower site opportunities on school properties and marketing them to wireless carriers, resulting in increased connectivity, safety, security, and the potential for much-needed income for districts.

HR Services

TASB HR Services continued to provide members with new resources to ensure they have the tools needed to do their jobs well. A new administrator guidebook was developed and published, *The Administrator's Guide to Designing and Managing Pay Systems*. Five new sections were added to the HR Library with resources designed specifically to aid community college members. HR Services kept subscribers current with information posted after the regular legislative session and changes to work-site postings.

Participation in HR Services' surveys increased this past year:

HR Services Survey	Participation Rate 2022-23	Compared to 2021-22
TASB/TASA Superintendent Survey	70%	up 3 points
District Personnel Salary Survey	57%	up 6 points
Community College Salary Survey	66%	down 2 points
Extra-Duty Stipend Survey	56%	up 4 points
HR Surveys	39%	down 2 points

In addition, statewide trainings offered by HR Services increased this year by 37.5% to 16 from 2021-22, and local and regional training offerings increased by 14% to 29. The total number of HR Services trainings (includes HR Academy, Advanced HR Seminar, and statewide, local, and regional trainings) increased this year to 45, up two from a year ago. And HRX page views for the year were 384,508, an increase from 369,728 views in 2021-22. Overall, HR review services, consulting, and employee surveys increased by more than 9% this year.

Special Education Solutions

The School Health and Related Services (SHARS) program has evolved in recent years. The Special Education Solutions team spent most of the year helping member districts comply with new SHARS policies — policies meant to strengthen the program but ones that have proven to be difficult to implement. The team communicated the changes and helped school districts come under compliance using its *SHARS Matters* newsletter and webinar series, client bulletins, one-on-one virtual walkthroughs, and at the 2023 SHARS Conference.

In the last year, with TASB's expert guidance and support, clients received more than \$100 million in SHARS reimbursements. The funding issues schools across the state are facing make SHARS dollars more important now than ever before. Special Education Solutions will continue to help districts by creating original resources and providing unparalleled customer support so that every dollar that comes into districts stays within the districts.

Student Solutions

The TASB Student Solutions program membership totals 283 — 281 districts and two education service centers — that receive products and services from TASB for special population students.

This annually renewing membership includes valuable resources such as special education and Section 504 operating procedures, and timely, relevant training opportunities. In 2022-23, Student Solutions added emergent bilingual, dispute resolution, and cameras in the classroom model operating procedures to the products available to members.

Student Solutions continued to support districts in the special populations areas (special education, Section 504, emergent bilingual, and gifted and talented) with customized services. This year, Student Solutions increased the number of services provided to districts, including full program reviews, workload staffing analyses, and capacity building, which includes professional development and executive coaching.

First Public

First Public®, a subsidiary of TASB, is the administrator of the Lone Star Investment Pool and the TASB Benefits Cooperative, which offer investment and benefits management services to school districts, municipalities, higher education, and other local governments across Texas. Both programs reported exciting growth and innovation during the 2022-23 fiscal year.



Lone Star Investment Pool

The Lone Star Investment Pool™ reached \$18.4 billion in average annual assets, peaking at \$22.8 billion, while continuing to provide competitive investment pool rates for school districts. This was the 12th consecutive year of Lone Star growth and the ninth straight year of reaching a new all-time high in average assets.



Risk Management Fund

The Risk Management Fund serves the risk management needs of more than 1,000 school districts, community colleges, education service centers, and other public education entities in Texas. The Fund is one of the oldest, largest, and most successful risk pools in the U.S. and will celebrate its 50th anniversary in January 2024. Over the past year, the Fund served members' needs through its first-ever Cybersecurity Grant, which awarded \$500,000 to more than 170 members and launched a year-long School-Based Law Enforcement residency program focused on helping members manage risks associated with ensuring the safety and security of their students and staff. Along with outstanding risk management resources and programs, the Fund excels in its claims service. In 2023, the Fund earned the "High Tier Performer" designation for the ninth consecutive time after the Texas Department of Workers' Compensation's Performance Based Audit. The Fund is one of only two workers' compensation claims teams that has earned the highest designation every year the audit has been conducted. Next year, the Fund will focus on helping its members manage their property risks and the increasing cost of coverage due to uncertain and severe weather.



KEY PROGRAMS EXPANDED

BuyBoard

The Local Government Purchasing Cooperative, BuyBoard®, celebrated 25 years in January 2023. The year 2022-23 was another one for the record books, with more than \$1.7 billion in purchases made by cooperative members. This was an increase of almost 12% over the previous fiscal year's total. The record-setting \$10.8 million in rebates distributed for the 2022-23 fiscal year went to 1,322 cooperative members — the largest number of members to receive rebates in a given year since BuyBoard's inception.



Energy Cooperative

TASB Energy Cooperative™ signed up 61 members within the electricity program, consisting of individual contracts and the electricity pool. This brought the total contracted volumes to 129,125 MWh on an annual basis and 555,827 MWh over the life of the agreements. There continues to be a high level of volatility in the electricity market which reflects the risk factors associated with the variability of both wind and solar and the consistency of distribution. With natural gas at some of its lowest prices, there are still prices in the \$60-\$70/MWh range, a direct result of factoring in that variability. TASB Energy Cooperative fuel program members purchased gasoline, diesel, and propane products amounting to 6,029,544 gallons under the fixed-rate program and 8,226,302 gallons under the spot program, which is a 15% increase over last fiscal year. The spring fuel pool concluded with 46 members participating for a total of 2.3 million gallons. Above-average volatility continued throughout the year, and while volatility has decreased, prices continued to escalate throughout the year. This enhances the benefits of the program as members are able to lock in consistent prices throughout the year.



Photos by TASB Media Services

Attendees at TASB Governance Camp, held in March in Galveston.

Governance Camp

The 2023 Governance Camp, held March 1-4, had more than 600 attendees, including nearly 200 students, who gathered in Galveston to share stories, learn from each other, and make new friends from across the state. There also was a pre-conference event that focused on the main aspects of school safety. The Camp featured more than 40 governance and leadership sessions and a full day of Student Voice sessions and exhibits. The student exhibitors also shared their educational experiences in a round-robin style conversation dubbed a pep rally. The Camp ended with a special two-hour interactive workshop led by Adolph Brown — author, educator, researcher, and keynote speaker — that involved trustees and students sitting and working together.

Spring Workshops

TASB has co-hosted these regional events with local universities, school districts, and education service centers since the Association was formed in 1949. In 2023, staff worked with various site coordinators to deliver 16 in-person Spring Workshops between March and May. From El Paso to Wichita Falls, Lubbock to South Padre Island, more than 900 trustees and administrators from across the state participated.

Summer Leadership Institute

More than 3,300 new and veteran education leaders attended Summer Leadership Institute in San Antonio, June 14-17, or Fort Worth, June 21-24, to strengthen their governance, leadership, and teamwork skills so they can better serve their communities and improve student outcomes. General session speakers for both locations were Chris Bashinelli, who shared how he uses social media to build bridges between cultures; Michele Gay, co-founder of Safe and Sound Schools, who told the story of losing her youngest daughter Josephine in the Sandy Hook school shooting; and Eric McElvenny, a veteran and

amputee endurance athlete. At each location, attendees had the opportunity to attend more than 100 sessions as well as the required EISO/SBI566 training. TASB's Governmental Relations team also offered its annual Post-Legislative Conference.

txEDCON23 TASA | TASB Convention

The largest convening of Texas public education decision-makers gathered for txEDCON23 at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center in Dallas, Sept. 29-Oct. 1. A total of 5,660 school board members, superintendents, and other education leaders from across Texas came together for informative sessions, spirited panel discussions, and inspirational student performances from Poteet, Frisco, and Aldine ISDs. Many attendees also helped pack 2,000 hunger and hygiene kits, which were distributed to local area school districts by United Way of Metropolitan Dallas. This was the fifth year a community give-back component has been incorporated into Convention, allowing the event to leave a positive footprint in the community where it is held.

Highlights included inspiring presentations by Ken Williams, a nationally recognized trainer, speaker, coach, and consultant in leadership, instructional equity, and social culture; Damon West, criminal justice professor, philanthropist, internationally recognized keynote speaker, and the best-selling author of *The Coffee Bean: A Simple Lesson to Create Positive Change*; and Meagan Johnson, who speaks to audiences all over the world on how they can motivate and manage different generations in the workforce. With more than 150 concurrent sessions, attendees had the opportunity to learn about a wide variety of topics, including school safety, teacher recruitment and retention, student academic performance, and district culture, to name a few. Of those who responded to the txEDCON23 evaluation, 87% indicated they felt better prepared to serve the public schoolchildren of Texas and felt energized about working with their board and superintendent, and 89% said they felt inspired to improve student learning in their district.★



TASB staff welcome attendees to the TASB Conference for Administrative Professionals, held in October in Austin.

2022-23 YEAR IN REVIEW: AT A GLANCE

TASB is honored to serve its members through a range of services and programs. Here are a few highlights of the 2022-23 year at the Association.



TASB Board Development Services launched the Texas Trustee Institute, an immersive learning experience offering new trustees support as they begin their board service. A total of 340 trustees attended TTI training sessions at Summer Leadership Institute and txEDCON23 TASA | TASB Convention.



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More than 3,300 new and veteran education leaders attended **Summer Leadership Institute** in San Antonio, June 14-17, or Fort Worth, June 21-24, to strengthen their governance, leadership, and teamwork skills so they can better serve their communities and improve student outcomes.



TASB Facility Services worked with about 700 districts on environmental, energy, and planning projects this past year. Through the TASB Facility Dashboard, members can see detailed information on their facilities and track needed improvements.



Statewide trainings offered by **HR Services** increased this year by 37.5% to 16 compared to last year, and local and regional training offerings increased by 14% to 29 from 2021-22. HR review services, consulting, and employee surveys offered by HR Services increased by more than 9% this year.



One regular session and multiple special sessions of the Texas Legislature kept **TASB Governmental Relations** busy this past year. The team's work focused on protecting public schools and students from burdensome legislation. Also, about 80 school board members attended TASB GR's inaugural Texas Federal Advocacy Conference in Washington, D.C.



To help districts stay current on legislative changes and update their codes of conduct and student handbooks, **Policy Service** issued Policy Alerts and hosted five interactive webinars. The *Model Student Handbook* and *Model Student Code of Conduct* webinars had more than 400 attendees, and the webinar on using Policy Alerts to maintain district policy had over 115 attendees.



For the Local Government Purchasing Cooperative, **BuyBoard®**, the past year was another one for the record books, with more than \$1.7 billion in purchases made by cooperative members. This was an increase of almost 12% over the previous fiscal year's total. Also, a record-setting \$10.8 million in rebates was distributed to 1,322 cooperative members.



TASB Energy Cooperative™ signed up 61 members within the electricity program, consisting of individual contracts and the electricity pool. This brought the total contracted volumes to 129,125 MWh on an annual basis and 555,827 MWh over the life of the agreements.



The **Special Education Solutions** team spent most of the year helping member districts comply with new SHARS policies. The team communicated changes and helped school districts come under compliance using its *SHARS Matters* newsletter and webinar series, client bulletins, one-on-one virtual walk-throughs, and at the 2023 SHARS Conference.



TASB Community College Services provided training at several state and regional events, most significantly the Texas Association of Community College Attorneys Annual Conference.



TASB Executive Search Services assisted 17 districts in finding a new superintendent. Mock Interview Workshops were held, one in February and one in July, drawing a total of 37 candidates.



At **TASB's Governance Camp** in March, more than 600 people attended, including nearly 200 students. The attendees gathered in Galveston to share stories, learn from each other, and make new friends from across the state.



The **txEDCON23 TASA | TASB Convention** in Dallas attracted 5,660 school board members, superintendents, and other education leaders from across Texas who came together for informative sessions, spirited panel discussions, and inspirational student performances from Poteet, Frisco, and Aldine ISDs.



The **TASB Risk Management Fund's** first-ever cybersecurity grant program awarded \$500,000 to more than 170 members. The Fund also launched a year-long School-Based Law Enforcement residency program focused on helping members manage risks associated with ensuring the safety and security of students and staff.

ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

Building support through relationships

by Beth Griesmer

Bryan Holubec will tell you he's the last person who thought he would be selected as TASB's 2022-23 Advocate of the Year. "I'm looking around the room at my role models," the Thrall ISD board president said, describing his experience at the School Board Advocacy Network luncheon during the txEDCON23 TASA | TASB Convention Sept. 29 in Dallas. "I wanted to see the facial expression when one of their names was announced as the winner."

If only Holubec could have seen the look of utter surprise on *his* face when his name was called.

Holubec is the third recipient of the Advocate of the Year award, which was established in 2021 to recognize those trustees who speak up strongly for Texas public schools. "It is a privilege to be a part of the people in this room," a stunned Holubec told the SBAN members as he accepted the award.

"We can all agree this has been a particularly difficult legislative session for public schools and the special sessions that have followed," said Dan Troxell, TASB's executive director. "Public school advocates stepped up to lend their voice for our students, generating almost 170,000 emails, phone calls, posted on social media, or testified supporting funding for our schools and opposing vouchers.

"Bryan Holubec went above and beyond as a member of SBAN during the legislative session by regularly showing up, being involved, and really connecting with legislators and staff," Troxell said.

Holubec, who has been on the Thrall ISD board since 2011, looks at advocating as a long-term strategy. "We've got to have a relationship with our representative," he said. "Advocacy is not a one-day deal. It's a long-term deal. It's not going to stress me out if I don't meet the person. I don't have expectations that it has to go this way or I'm a failure."

Holubec is a relationship builder and a storyteller when it comes to advocacy. "I'm not going to try to change the way they vote," he said about meeting with legislators. "I'm going



Photo courtesy of Thrall ISD

TASB Executive Director Dan Troxell presents Bryan Holubec, Thrall ISD board president, the award for the 2022-23 Advocate of the Year at Thrall ISD's board meeting Oct. 18.



Photos by Beth Griesmer

Left photo: The Central Texas trustees pose in the rotunda before they head off for their first appointment of the day. From left: James Matlock, Hutto ISD; Chuy Zárate and Alicia Markum, Round Rock ISD; Bryan Holubec, Thrall ISD; Kim Cousins, Dripping Springs ISD; Trish Bode, Leander ISD; Chevonne Lorigo-Johst and Jean Mayer, Pflugerville ISD; Laura Clark, Westlake ISD; and David Koempel, a senior consultant with TASB Board Development Services.

to try to change the way they feel and hope they vote their conscience.”

Advocacy begins at home

Holubec’s advocacy journey started in 2021 when Texas House district lines were redrawn in Williamson County, a decision that changed representation for his 854-student district. Holubec went to a campaign event to meet the Republican nominee for House District 52, Caroline Harris. He wore his signature Thrall ISD purple and invited Harris to visit the district.

“It’s not just about going to the Capitol,” said Holubec. “Two years ago, I went to the Capitol twice and I didn’t open my mouth once.”

Holubec continued to build a relationship with Harris after she was elected. “The end result of the whole mentality of building a relationship is to help her understand public schools,” he said. “When she has a question about public schools, she calls me.”



Photo above: Getting in the door to meet with Texas legislators is one of Holubec’s strengths. “Don’t underestimate the relationship with the person who answers the phone,” he said. “They will pass your message on if they like you.”

The group met with Catherine Knepp, director of public education for Sen. Brandon Creighton, (R-Conroe), chair of the Senate Committee on Education. “I know we are not going to solve this today,” she told the group after hearing their talking points on educational savings accounts.

Knepp gave the group “homework” to bring back truancy policies from their districts. “Let’s work on better solutions to that problem.” Holubec said the assignment is something the group can leverage later to schedule a meeting with the senator.

Photo below: The trustees regroup in the Capitol cafeteria to strategize for the next meeting.



Photos by Beth Griesmer

Over the last two years, Holubec has used that personal approach to further develop his advocacy efforts.

"Bryan is a natural advocate. He has been advocating for his district before ever setting foot in Austin by inviting local legislators and candidates to meet with him on education issues and to visit Thrall ISD events and campuses," said Dax González, division director of TASB Governmental Relations. "There is no greater advertisement for public schools and students than to see them in person."

Holubec stresses the importance of voting, first and foremost, especially in the primaries. He recommends those interested in advocacy to reach out to their legislators and invite them to attend a football game or other event in their district.

"We are breaking down those barriers one person at a time," said Holubec.★

Beth Griesmer is a staff writer for Texas Lone Star.



Left photo: House Public Education Committee Chairman Brad Buckley, R-Killeen, (far right) spent close to an hour with the group talking about the third special session and public school funding. Again, Holubec's friendly perseverance with staff helped to get the meeting scheduled. "My ability to get those two meetings scheduled probably goes back to the random interactions I've had with those offices over time," Holubec said.



A larger group of trustees met at the Capitol Sept. 18. Dax González, division director of TASB's Governmental Relations, talks to the group.

ADVOCACY WARRIORS

Trustees say promoting public education is a passion

by Laura Tolley

Bryan Holubec, Thrall ISD board president, was named TASB's 2022-23 Advocate of the Year, but so many trustees across the state advocated for their students and schools this year. In fact, there were some outstanding efforts that are also worthy of recognition.

"The Legislative Advisory Council members who were elected to sit on the TASB Board's Legislative Committee have grown those positions over the past few years and have put forth tremendous effort in Austin and back home," said Dax González, division director of TASB Governmental Relations.

Trish Bode, a Leander ISD trustee, Paola Gonzalez, a Pasadena ISD trustee, and Heather Sheffield, an Eanes ISD trustee, continue to expand the LAC's advocacy efforts and profile, Gonzalez said.

"The LAC reps on the Legislative Committee have really taken their advocacy to the next level," he added. "Trish, Heather, and Paola have moved beyond helping develop the TASB Advocacy Agenda to actually advancing the agenda at the Texas Capitol."

Alief ISD Board President and TASB Board Director Darlene Breau also deserves high praise for planning an advocacy trip to the Capitol for staff, trustees, parents, and others to urge state legislators to support public education and Alief ISD, he said.

"A lot of our advocacy efforts focus on connecting trustees with their legislators, but Darlene did what we wish we could: she brought a busload of parents, staff, trustees, and others to Austin to show how the whole community rallies behind Alief ISD. Seeing a group of parents, educators, and trustees walk into the office has a tremendous impact on legislators," González said.

TASB asked each trustee questions about their advocacy efforts and commitment to spread the word about the importance of public education in Texas. Their answers have been lightly edited.

Q: Why did you get involved with TASB's public school advocacy efforts? What issues inspire you?

A: My inspiration came from the TASB Grassroots Meetings. It was the discourse between educated trustees with a variety of experiences from a variety of districts, sharing their frustrations over an environment that was not supporting public education. Unfunded mandates and erosion of local control were certainly a main point of discussion some



Trish Bode, Leander ISD trustee

time ago; while these concerns have only intensified, new ones have grown. The issues that inspire me are any issues that support and serve connecting students to their passion, unleashing their learning potential and clarifying the role trustees must fill in order to ignite students' ability to transform their part of the world.

— *Trish Bode, Leander ISD trustee*

A: I feel that it is critical for me to support TASB's public school advocacy efforts as they address the issues that are important to me as a career educator, parent, and community member who pays school taxes. Public schools are the cornerstone of every community in Texas.



Darlene Breaux, Alief ISD board president

I am inspired by the idea that in public schools, every student has access to a free education regardless of their ZIP code, learning ability, or behavior. As a publicly elected official, I am held accountable by the community who elected me. Their vote of confidence is what inspires me to do my very best for all students. — *Darlene Breaux, Alief ISD board president*

A: I got involved during the TASB Grassroots Meetings. I saw the power of becoming involved at a local level with other school board members in my region and was inspired to keep the momentum going. As a mental health professional, I am inspired to improve the mental



Paola Gonzalez, Pasadena ISD trustee

health of our students, teachers, and staff. We often look at student outcomes and numbers, but if students and teachers are not receiving the mental health support they need, they will not perform their best. Students and teachers are often stressed by high stakes testing and unrealistic expectations. Supporting their mental health is key! Although I've been told we are not in the "mental health business," I believe we are in the whole child "business." I'm inspired to improve student and staff programming around mental health and improving overall student outcomes. — *Paola Gonzalez, Pasadena ISD trustee*

A: I originally got involved with advocacy as a PTA member back in 2012 (my oldest child was in kinder-

garten) when I learned about recapture and the massive cuts to education that had just happened in 2011. Then, when my daughter was diagnosed with dyslexia in 2014 (which was two years later than it should've been), I doubled down and even started paying attention to SBOE [State



Heather Sheffield, Eanes ISD trustee

Board of Education] meetings. I had also been making calls to legislators for years anytime the founders of Texans Advocating for Meaningful Student Assessment told me to. In 2016, my family moved to Austin, and I jumped into public education advocacy almost full time. In 2017, I testified against vouchers and was quoted in the *Texas Tribune*. Sadly, six years later, I'm still advocating for our public schools and fighting against vouchers but now as a trustee. I ran for school board in 2019 because I love our public schools in Texas and want to make them the best they can be to serve ALL of our students. — *Heather Sheffield, Eanes ISD trustee*

Q: What advice do you have for aspiring advocates about getting involved in the advocacy process?

A: Identify an educational issue that you are passionate about and determine how you can become engaged in bringing more awareness to the issue. It is very important to get to know your representatives and those who are serving on the [House and Senate] education committees. Be proactive with contacting their offices and establishing yourself as a resource. During the legislative session, be sure to follow the bills you are interested in and provide your feedback by contacting offices and even going to Austin and testifying. — *Breaux*

A: Do it! Get involved! You're not alone! I'll help you! As many trustees will tell you, I am more than happy to meet anyone and help them navigate the Capitol. I'll teach anyone how to use TLO [Texas Legislature Online] or help edit testimony [for a legislative hearing]. I love going with other trustees to visit their legislators, and I'm happy to support anyone who shows up for our students and the amazing staff who teach and love them. — *Sheffield*

A: Just jump in! I invite you to join in at the grassroots level and speak to issues that are important in your district and community. Even if you miss out on the Grassroots Meetings, join us at the Capitol in Austin. TASB staff and other trustees would be happy to show you the ropes and help you advocate for your district. — *Gonzalez*

A: You are enough. Your voice does make a difference. You have stories and experiences that mean you are equipped to get engaged and educate. Don't tell other districts' stories or other trustees' stories; share your own. Know your data, the stories, and your district well so you can share. Information is key, so if you don't know SBAN [School Board Advocacy Network] or get Dax's updates, sign up post haste. Advocating includes finding common ground, finding friends, and finding ways to amplify your voice. Your students need your voice to help elevate their voice. — *Bode*

Q: What do you enjoy most about the advocacy process?

A: I love when the hard work pays off and great bills get passed and become law or when bad bills die! I love when a legislator changes their mind, or even just learns a little, because they hear us talk about supporting our students. — *Sheffield*

A: I love meeting new, like-minded trustees from across the state. Despite the differences in our districts, we all have similar issues and can help advance our priorities together. There is strength in numbers! — *González*

A: Relationships. I am so honored for the opportunity to connect with the most amazing people who have a heart for the public education students in Texas. I must also admit, I do love good policy. Policy that doesn't make winners and losers but policy that finds common ground and articulates how we are going to work together. — *Bode*

A: What I enjoy most about the advocacy process is having the opportunity to bring the voices of our staff, students, and the community to the legislative process. Being able to engage with and influence policy for the betterment of them makes me proud that they know they have a voice in Austin who is willing to go to bat for the issues that most impact them. — *Breaux*★

Laura Tolley is managing editor for Texas Lone Star.

ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES IN 2024

• Texas Federal Advocacy Conference

Make plans to attend the second annual TASB Texas Federal Advocacy Conference, which will be held Feb. 12-13, 2024, in Washington D.C. The conference will feature influential speakers and panel members who will discuss the latest developments in federal education policy. Attendees also will meet with legislators at the U.S. Capitol.

To register and find more information about this conference, go to tasb.org/legislative/events and click on the Texas Federal Advocacy Conference link.

• Grassroots Meetings

During the first quarter of even-numbered years, TASB holds Grassroots Meetings in locations around Texas. At these meetings, attendees discuss issues of importance to school districts that will be crafted into TASB's Advocacy Agenda priorities, which guide the Association during the legislative session. Attendees also will elect representatives to the TASB Legislative Advisory Council. LAC members will consolidate the list of proposed priorities from the Grassroots Meetings and recommend a final list of Advocacy Priorities to the TASB Board. Four LAC members elected by their peers will serve on the TASB Legislative Committee.

2024 Grassroots Meetings Schedule

Austin (Region 13) — Jan. 10
Amarillo (Region 16) — Jan. 11
Edinburg (Region 1) — Jan. 11
Lubbock (Region 17) — Jan. 16
Kilgore (Region 7) — Jan. 18
Pittsburg (Region 8) — Jan. 18
Odessa (Region 18) — Jan. 23
San Angelo (Region 15) — Jan. 23
Richardson (Region 10) — Jan. 24
El Paso (Region 19) — Jan. 25
Waco (Region 12) — Feb. 6
Houston (Region 4) — Feb. 7
Beaumont (Region 5) — Feb. 8
Corpus Christi (Region 2) — Feb. 8
Wichita Falls (Region 9) — Feb. 20
Abilene (Region 14) — Feb. 20
Fort Worth (Region 11) — Feb. 21
San Antonio (Region 20) — Feb. 21
Victoria (Region 3) — Feb. 22
Huntsville (Region 6) — March 7

To find out more information about the Grassroots Meetings, go to tasb.org/legislative/events and click on the Grassroots Meetings link.★

TASB 2023-24 OFFICERS

The 2023-24 officers for TASB were elected during the Association's 2023 Delegate Assembly, which was held Sept. 30 in Dallas.



Armando Rodriguez
President

Rodriguez is serving his fifth term on the Canutillo ISD Board, where his fellow trustees have elected him as president, vice-president, and secretary. He has the distinction of being one of the youngest people ever to be elected

to office in El Paso County. Rodriguez is a Leadership TASB graduate and Master Trustee.

A graduate of Canutillo High School and The University of Texas at El Paso, Rodriguez is one of the founding members of the Canutillo Alumni Foundation for Education — the only organization specifically designed to award scholarships to Canutillo graduates.

Rodriguez's work on behalf of students extends beyond El Paso. He is involved with a variety of education and community boards in Texas and nationally. He currently serves on the board of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund.

Other previous leadership positions include serving as chair of the National Hispanic Council of School Board Members and secretary of the National School Board Action Center. Rodriguez has also served as president of the Mexican American School Boards Association and president of the Far West Texas School Boards Association.

Professionally, he is the business development manager of Hellas Construction, Inc.



Rolinda Schmidt
President-Elect

Schmidt has served on the Kerrville ISD Board since 1996 and has held the positions of board president, vice-president, and secretary.

A graduate of San Jose State University with a bachelor's degree in social services, Schmidt is a managing

partner in her family-owned-and-operated commercial real estate development and management company.

Before serving as a trustee, she was involved in campus PTOs and was a board member and volunteer for the Kerrville Public School Foundation. Schmidt has been actively involved in local youth education programs, including the Salvation Army, Boys and Girls Club, Rotary Club Foreign Exchange Student Program, Head Start, and the Kerrville ISD sixth-grade outdoor education program. She was named Families and Literacy's 2014 Champion of Education.



Tony Hopkins
First Vice-President

Hopkins has served on the Friendswood ISD Board since 2008 and was elected to his fourth four-year term in 2020. Hopkins currently serves as board president. He is a Leadership TASB graduate and a Master Trustee. Hopkins has served

on the TASB Board since March 2018.

Hopkins was the president of the Gulf Coast Area Association of School Boards for 2019-20 and 2020-21 and is active in the TASB grassroots process. He is president of Four Creek Investments LLC, an independent energy consulting and investment firm, and serves as chief financial officer of 11 companies.

Hopkins earned a bachelor's degree from Lamar University and a master's degree from Rice University.



Mary Jane Hetrick
Second Vice-President

Mary Jane Hetrick is in her third term on the Dripping Springs ISD Board of Trustees, currently serving as vice-president after serving two years as president. She is a 2017 Leadership TASB graduate and Master Trustee. She received a bachelor's

degree in business administration from The University of Texas-Pan American (now UT-Rio Grande Valley), a master's

degree in public administration and certificate in nonprofit management from Auburn University at Montgomery (AUM), and a doctorate in public administration and public policy from Auburn University.

Hetrick's professional experience includes working as an adjunct professor for AUM, TROY University, and Austin Community College. In 2014, she founded a nonprofit consulting business.

Active in her community, Hetrick was honored by the Dripping Springs Chamber of Commerce with the Hometown Hero award in 2020. She serves on the Dripping Springs Education Foundation Board, the Foster Village Board, and is co-founder and vice-president of Patriots' Hall of Dripping Springs.



Dan Micciche
Secretary-Treasurer

Micciche was elected to the Dallas ISD Board in 2012 and reelected in 2015 and 2018. He served as board president from 2016 to 2018 and is current first vice-president.

He recently retired from the law firm of Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld. He joined the firm after his graduation from law school in 1981. During his time with Akin Gump, he started and chaired a school partnership program with James W. Fannin Elementary School in Dallas. The program won the State Board of Education's highest award for community partnerships in 2011. He received the No Kid Hungry Award from Share Our Strength in 2014 and The Closing the Gap Award from Leadership ISD in 2017.

He received his undergraduate degree from Stony Brook University in New York and his law degree from the University of Chicago Law School. He has been recognized by *D Magazine* as one of the Best Lawyers in Dallas and by *Texas Monthly* as a Super Lawyer.

Micciche's civic and charitable activities include serving on the boards of the American Red Cross Dallas, Texas C-BAR (Community Building through Attorney Resources), and American Foundation for the Blind-Southwest Region. He previously served on the School Finance Task Force of the Greater Dallas Chamber and on the State Bar of Texas Board. He was a member of the Comptroller's Tax Advisory Group under three different comptrollers.



Debbie Gillespie
Immediate Past
President

Gillespie served on the Frisco ISD Board from 2011 to 2023. She was first elected to the TASB Board in 2014.

After graduating from Southwest Texas State University, she worked in interior design and fashion merchandising before accepting a job at Dell Corporation, where she worked in customer service, configuration management, and policy and procedures. She moved to Frisco with her family in 1995 and became an active community volunteer.

Gillespie was a longtime volunteer with Frisco Family Services and Starwood Neighborhood Association. She was a volunteer and held various officer-level positions in the following organizations: Frisco ISD Council of PTAs, multiple local PTA boards, PTO board, Frisco High School Band Boosters, National Charity League (NCL), and Young Men's Service League (YMSL). NCL and YMSL gave her and her children the opportunity to serve wonderful organizations such as Make-A-Wish Foundation, Shoes for Orphan Souls, Operation Kindness, Susan G. Komen, Prison Ministries, Hopes Door, North Texas Food Pantry, and Frisco Miracle League.

She is currently an active volunteer with Frisco Fastpacs and Frisco Women's League, as well as a vocal advocate in legislative agendas for several local organizations. However, she is most passionate about advocating for public education for all students in Texas.

She is a 2014 graduate of Leadership TASB (LTASB), a member of the LTASB Alumni Association, and an Honorary Life Member of PTA.

TASB BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023-24*

REGION 1A

Jesus Amaya, Los Fresnos CISD

REGION 1B

Sylvia Sánchez Garza, South Texas ISD

REGION 2

Moises Alfaro, Mathis ISD

REGION 3

Margaret Pruett, Victoria ISD

REGION 4A

Rose Avalos, Aldine ISD

REGION 4B

Darlene Breaux, Alief ISD

REGION 4C

Tony Hopkins, Friendswood ISD
(TASB First Vice President)

REGION 4D

Angela Lemond Flowers, Houston ISD

REGION 4E

Rebecca Fox, Katy ISD

REGION 4G

Kristen Malone, Fort Bend ISD

REGION 5

Nicholas Phillips, Nederland ISD

REGION 6A

Beth Prykryl, New Caney ISD

REGION 6B

Theresa Wagaman, Conroe ISD

REGION 7

Tony Raymond, Sabine ISD

REGION 8

Thomas Darden, Cooper ISD

REGION 9

Mark Lukert, Wichita Falls ISD

REGION 10A

Tricia Ikard, Maypearl ISD

REGION 10B

Linda Gooch, Sunnyvale ISD

REGION 10C

Dan Micciche, Dallas ISD
(TASB Secretary-Treasurer)

REGION 10D

Kevin A. Carbó, Mesquite ISD

REGION 10E

John Classe, Frisco ISD

REGION 11A

Julie Cole, Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD

REGION 11B

Quinton "Q" Phillips, Fort Worth ISD

REGION 11C

Justin Chapa, Arlington ISD

REGION 11D

Steven Newcom, Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD

REGION 12

Mildred Watkins, La Vega ISD

REGION 13A

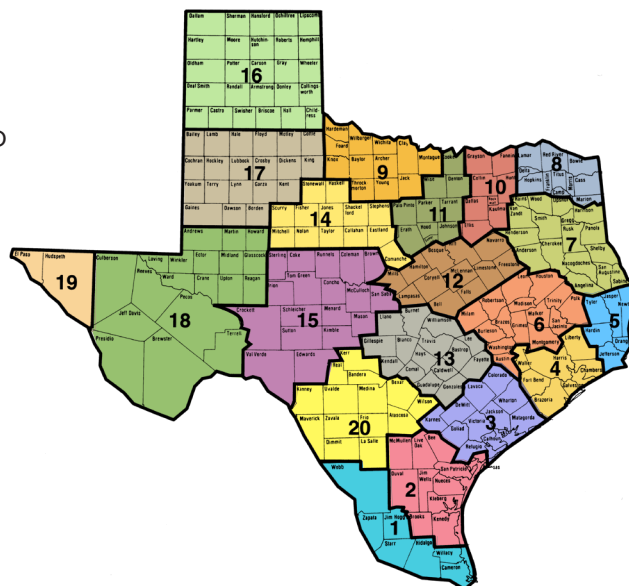
Lynn Boswell, Austin ISD

REGION 13B

Mary Jane Hetrick, Dripping Springs ISD
(TASB Second Vice President)

REGION 13C

Kathy Major, Liberty Hill ISD



REGION 14

Greg Welch, Clyde CISD

REGION 15

Raymond P. Meza, San Felipe Del Rio CISD

REGION 16

Cindy Spanel, Highland Park ISD-Potter County

REGION 17

Carlos Bentancourt, Slaton ISD

REGION 18

Steve Brown, Ector County ISD

REGION 19

Cynthia Najera, Socorro ISD

REGION 20B

Carol Harle, Northside ISD-Bexar County

ESC 19, ESC REPRESENTATIVE

David Sublasky

*There are vacancies for Regions 4F, 20A, 20D, and 20E.

TASB STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDING AUGUST 31, 2023

Revenue

		Percent of Total
TASB Membership Fees	\$4,623,821	5%
Risk Management Services	30,694,531	35
First Public	8,816,947	10
Business Services	21,448,968	24
Member Services	7,334,519	8
Policy & Legal Services	5,957,952	7
Communications, Marketing & Events	3,837,271	4
Royalties	5,160,109	6
Other	1,193,718	1

Total Revenue

89,067,836

100%

Expenses

		Percent of Total
Employee Compensation and Benefits	\$56,957,214	66%
Purchased and Contract Services	16,812,008	20
Supplies and Materials	1,214,669	1
Other Operating	6,655,146	8
Depreciation and Amortization	4,507,091	5

Total Expenses

86,146,128

100%

Change in Net Assets from Operations

2,921,708

Non-Operating Activities:
Net Investment Income

2,838,980

Change in Net Assets

\$5,760,688

TASB has expendable net assets of 42.4 percent of annual operational expenditures as of August 31, 2023.
These figures are subject to Board approval.

TASB ACTIVE MEMBER BENEFITS

TASB Active Members are the boards of Texas public school districts and education service centers. Active Members have voting privileges and access to many benefits. As a nonprofit, TASB is able to provide services to our members with their needs in mind and lessen the burdens of government.

Legal Assistance



- **Assistance from TASB Legal Services** staff by phone or via alerts and advisories
- **School Law eSource**, an online library of legal resources
- **On-call assistance** through the members' 800 number on topics related to Texas public education

Professional Development



- **Tracking of board training credit** through the CECRS (Continuing Education Credit Reporting System)
- **Member rates on events**, including Governance Camp, Summer Leadership Institute, and txEDCON TASA | TASB Convention
- **Access to special training opportunities**, such as spring training workshops, webinars, and courses in the Online Learning Center

Support of Public Education



- **Texans for Strong Public Schools**, a public campaign to educate and mobilize advocates to contact lawmakers in support of Texas public schools
- **Business Recognition Program**, celebrating businesses and organizations that support their local public schools
- **Student Video Contest**, an opportunity for districts and students to showcase their schools
- **School Board Recognition Month**, highlighting the importance of school boards in our communities

Products & Services



Through TASB and its affiliated entities, Active Members have **access to an extensive variety of services and products**. Some services are priced separately, allowing members to choose the services that best fit their local needs. Members may choose to take advantage of additional fee-based programs like Policy Service, HR Services, Special Education Solutions, Student Solutions, and Facility Services. Members also have access to affiliated entity programs, such as the BuyBoard®, TASB Risk Management Fund, TASB Benefits Cooperative, and TASB Energy Cooperative, based on their eligibility criteria.

News & Resources



- **Online resources through tasb.org**, offering exclusive content on current public education topics
- **TASB Talks**, podcast featuring interesting conversations with Texas education experts
- **Texas Lone Star**, member magazine available in print and online
- **The Star**, member newsletter providing up-to-the minute news and deadline information
- **Board Briefs**, newsletter reporting on activities of the TASB Board of Directors
- **TASB Store**, special member pricing on TASB publications, videos, and gift items
- **Opportunities to connect** with TASB on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram

Member Voice



- **Participation in grassroots advocacy** and building TASB's Advocacy Agenda
- **Legislative Advisory Council (LAC)**, merges regional priorities into a statewide action plan
- **Delegate Assembly**, annual meeting to consider issues for the Advocacy Agenda, elect TASB leadership, and determine overall direction of the Association
- **School Board Advocacy Network**, tools, training, and special legislative alerts to assist in advocacy efforts
- **Nonpartisan advocacy** on behalf of TASB members before the Texas Legislature, the State Board of Education, the Texas Education Agency, and other regulatory agencies (*TASB spends less than 20 percent of membership fees on advocacy. Fees paid by education service center boards do not include advocacy.*)
- **Legislative Report**, newsletter providing legislative updates on the state and national levels

TASB KEY EVENTS IN 2024

School Board Recognition Month
January

Grassroots Meetings
January-March

TASB Conference for Administrative Professionals (Austin)
Feb. 8-9

Texas Federal Advocacy Conference (Washington, D.C.)
Feb. 12-13

Governance Camp (Galveston)
Feb. 28-March 2

Spring Workshops
March-May

Summer Leadership Institute
San Antonio: June 12-15
Fort Worth: June 19-22

txEDCON24 TASA | TASB Convention (San Antonio)
Sept. 27-29

LTASB CLASS OF 2024

Cohort builds connection during first session

by Mary Ann Lopez

Gathering in Dallas during txEDCON23 TASA | TASB Convention, the 33 members of the Leadership TASB Class of 2024 kicked off their yearlong journey. The group began creating connections and building excitement as they prepared for the in-depth work ahead, diving into what it takes to lead effectively, examining best practices, and learning research-based techniques for leading school improvement efforts.

For 30 years, experienced school board members — who were ready to take their understanding of education governance to the next level — have found the tools and support they've needed through LTASB. More than 900 graduates have completed the program since its inception in 1993.

This year's LTASB class includes board members from districts ranging in size from 229 enrolled students to a district with more than 100,000 students. The districts also represent the state's geographic vastness, with participants from far West Texas to the Gulf Coast.

A.D. Jenkins, an Irving ISD board member in his 11th year of board service, said one of the reasons he is participating in LTASB is to get a better perspective of what is happening in school districts across the state.

"I want to see how others do it," he said, adding that, "as a senior board trustee, people look to me for leadership. I want to challenge myself to be a better leader."

LTASB's mission is to help school board members from across Texas become better leaders and advocates for public education. Trustees accepted into the program learn and grow together, becoming part of a supportive network of school board members, each aiming to expand their leadership skills and knowledge of effective school board governance.

The goal for the first session was to explore the foundations of leadership, team building, and re-visioning leadership, said Robert Long III, division director of TASB Board Development Services and the LTASB program manager.

"We have an amazing cohort of board members who through their service have shown their dedication to their district and their students," Long said. "Through LTASB, these trustees will gain an even deeper understanding of board governance and advocacy, which in turn will allow them to maintain focus on every trustee's North Star: student achievement."

For Amy Thomas, a Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City ISD board member, student academic achievement and success are her passions. As the new LTASB class began making introductions and building fellowship, learning each other's "why" for participating, Thomas said she hopes to further her knowledge of governance. Several trustees on her board participated in LTASB and shared their struggles and experiences, which inspired her.

"I am out of my comfort zone," Thomas said, "But I've taken it on and stepped up to the plate."

The LTASB cohort will take several field trips, visiting districts across the state. The first one was to El Paso in November. The others are:

- Feb. 15-17, 2024, in Corpus Christi
- April 11-13, 2024, in Houston
- June 19-22, 2024, in Fort Worth at TASB Summer Leadership Institute, which will be the culmination of the program and the cohort's graduation ceremony.

At Convention, the cohort heard from then-TASB President Debbie Gillespie and facilitators, including LTASB alumni, and a retired Marine Corps sergeant. Much of the session one discussion focused on teamwork and team building. In addition, the group attended Convention general sessions.

During the group's dinner session, a few members of the LTASB Alumni Board shared that through the program, they made lasting friendships and connections. More importantly, they let the members of the newest cohort know they can expect to be challenged and to learn and to grow, which will allow them to do great things at their districts.

"It will be a sacrifice and it will be some work, but it will be worth it," said Mathis ISD Trustee Angie Trejo, a member of the LTASB Class of 2017 and the LTASB Alumni Board president.

The trustees, as part of a team, will work on a capstone project that will culminate with a presentation at SLI.

Nicole Nolen, a board member at Gregory-Portland ISD, said she is looking forward to learning more about advocacy and building a larger network of trustees doing the same work. "I didn't have anybody to bounce ideas off of," Nolen said. "I'm excited about that."★

Mary Ann Lopez is a staff writer for Texas Lone Star.

Leadership TASB Class of 2024



- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| 1. Brittany Bennett
S&S CISD |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. Stephanie Blanck
Georgetown ISD | 3. Marvin Bobo
Lovejoy ISD | 4. Jeri Chambers
Plano ISD | 5. Felix Chavez
Hutto ISD | 6. Laura Clark
Eanes ISD | | |
| 7. Temeika Durden
Manor ISD |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8. Camille Eckersley
Bluff Dale ISD | 9. Katie Farias
Southside ISD | 10. Russ Garner
Comal ISD | 11. Paola Gonzalez
Pasadena ISD | 12. Cornelius Hambrick
LaPoynor ISD | | |
| 13. Tammy Hawkins
Ector County ISD |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14. Tricia Ikard
Maypearl ISD (TASB Director) | 15. Eladio Jaimes
Harlingen CISD | 16. A.D. Jenkins
Irving ISD | 17. Yvonne Johnson
Shepherd ISD | 18. Chris Kovatch
Orangefield ISD | | |
| 19. Kea Lynn Lewis
Crosby ISD |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20. Sandra Licon
San Elizario ISD | 21. Natasha McDaniel
Spring ISD | 22. Nicole Nolen
Gregory-Portland ISD | 23. Gopal Ponangi
Frisco ISD | 24. Lance Redmon
Katy ISD | | |
| 25. Corinne Saldaña
Northside ISD |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 26. Alison Busse-Savage
Lyford CISD | 27. Paul Shanklin
Aldine ISD | 28. Kendall Smith
Lancaster ISD | 29. Amy Thomas
Schertz-Cibola-Universal City ISD | 30. Barbara Townsend
Granbury ISD | | |
| 31. Pam Watts
Midway ISD |  |  |  | | | |
| 32. AlexAndrea Zamarripa
Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD | 33. Paul Zoch
Bridge City ISD | | | | | |

TRUSTED SERVICE

TASB celebrates 75th anniversary, looks to 2024

by Dan Troxell

On behalf of the entire TASB team, I want to express our gratitude for trusting us to serve you and your schools every day. Our mission, now more than ever, is relevant and meaningful: to promote educational excellence for Texas schoolchildren through advocacy, visionary leadership, and high-quality services to school districts.

Although public education has faced tough challenges this year, I was inspired to see public education leaders across Texas come together on important issues to champion our students and schools. This past year, I witnessed an engaged, organized, and united alliance of Texas public education groups and individuals dedicating time and effort to advocate for funding to increase teacher salaries and to protect our schools from special interest groups. Building on this momentum, I know that Texas public school leaders will continue a wide range of efforts to make Texas public schools the best they can be for the children.

With this in mind, we look ahead to the opportunities that the new year will bring: a year filled with promises of growth and innovation, and opportunities to support, improve, and advocate for our public schools.

We also are honored to note that 2024 will mark TASB's 75th anniversary — three quarters of a century of steadfast service to public schools across the state.

We will mark this important milestone with a series of stories in *Texas Lone Star* about the Association and its unwavering dedication to help improve public education in Texas. We are proud of our service to you.

As we honor the past, we also will be focusing on the future as we implement new initiatives to better serve you, our members.

We will be introducing a new website and modernized brand. TASB is committed to serving its members efficiently and effectively, and investment in our website and technology is key to ensuring our continued success.

The new **tasb.org**, set to launch in early 2024, will feature innovative design and an infrastructure that's built to support the ever-changing needs of our members. Most



TASB Executive Director
Dan Troxell

importantly, you'll be able to find the information you need quickly and easily.

The redesigned website isn't our only step toward the future. We are also refreshing our brand with a new look that respects our strong history and our collective passion for public education. This rebrand signifies our commitment to being a member-focused, data-driven, and digitally intelligent organization. Our new logo reflects who we are, our purpose, and our ongoing commitment to members.

Yet while our look may change, you can rely on TASB to be a strong, skilled support system in 2024, just as it has been since its inception in 1949. You can always count on us to provide high-quality services, robust training, attentive member support, and resources to help you excel.

Although we are looking forward to exciting changes next year, we also know the year will come with its own challenges. As always, advocacy for our members remains paramount.

TASB's grassroots advocacy process kicks off in the early months of every even-numbered year. I encourage you to attend your region's Grassroots Meeting, where our members lay the groundwork for the legislative issues we will tackle at the Capitol and beyond. This work has never been more important, and I hope all of you will take part. You can find a schedule of Grassroots Meetings on page 21.

In closing, I want to say thank you to all of our members. Leading TASB is an inspiring job because I get to see the tireless efforts of the more than 7,000 locally elected school board members who volunteer to make their schools and communities better places. I am truly grateful for the work you do.★

Dan Troxell is executive director of TASB.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 100% ATTENDANCE TEAMS AT txEDCON23 TASA | TASB CONVENTION!

TASB applauds the 85 school districts listed below that sent 100% of their leadership teams to Convention in Dallas.

Alice ISD	Gregory-Portland ISD
Alief ISD	Harts Bluff ISD
Allen ISD	Hawkins ISD
Anthony ISD	Henrietta ISD
Aquilla ISD	Hereford ISD
Arlington ISD	Highland Park ISD (Potter County)
Beaumont ISD	Hudson ISD
Belton ISD	Hutto ISD
Big Sandy ISD	Irving ISD
Brooks County ISD	Judson ISD
Bruceville-Eddy ISD	La Feria ISD
Bryan ISD	Lamesa ISD
Canadian ISD	Liberty-Eylau ISD
Channelview ISD	Little Elm ISD
Channing ISD	Lone Oak ISD
China Spring ISD	Lubbock ISD
Clear Creek ISD	Lubbock-Cooper ISD
Coppell ISD	Mansfield ISD
Corsicana ISD	Marlin ISD
Crockett ISD	McGregor ISD
Crowley ISD	McKinney ISD
Dripping Springs ISD	Milford ISD
Duncanville ISD	Montgomery ISD
Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD	Morton ISD
Eastland ISD	Nederland ISD
Ector County ISD	New Braunfels ISD
Ector ISD (Fannin County)	Northwest ISD
Florence ISD	O'Donnell ISD
Frisco ISD	Overton ISD



Bryan ISD's team of eight was one of the many Texas school districts that sent 100% of their leadership teams to txEDCON23 TASA | TASB Convention. From left: Bryan ISD Superintendent Ginger Carrabine and board members Mark McCall, Julie Harlin (board president), Felicia Benford, David Stasny, Ruthie Waller, Deidra Davis, and Leo Gonzalez II.

Peaster ISD	Southwest ISD
Pewitt CISD	Spring ISD
Plains ISD	Springtown ISD
Plainview ISD	Teague ISD
Rains ISD	Tomball ISD
Robstown ISD	Trenton ISD
Roosevelt ISD	Troy ISD
Royse City ISD	West Orange-Cove CISD
Sabine ISD	West Rusk County CISD
San Perlita ISD	Whitney ISD
Seagraves ISD	Wildorado ISD
Silsbee ISD	Ysleta ISD
Sivells Bend ISD	
Slidell ISD	
Southside ISD	



Texas Association of School Boards
P.O. Box 400
Austin, Texas 78767-0400

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celebrate!**

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Early 2024