

Advocate

Texas State Teachers Association/National Education Association

FALL 2005

LOOK INSIDE
FOR YOUR
MEMBERSHIP CARD

HURRICANES

Hurricanes Impact Texas!

**“Our goal is to do everything within our power
to help public school employees and their students
recover as quickly and completely as possible.”**

NEA President Reg Weaver

Hurricane Grants • Growing Frustration Over NCLB • Member Advocacy Teams

Your Membership Card Is More Than Just A Piece of Plastic!



It's time now to do something for YOU! The plastic card that is your proof of membership is enclosed in this issue of the *Advocate*.

You called and emailed your legislators many times over the last several months; you are well into the school year and working hard for the students you serve; now it is time to take care of you, and your membership card and TSTA/NEA Member Benefits can help to make that happen!



**"Ben, I want to say one word to you.
Just one word....Plastics!"**

—The Graduate

Educator Access gives you access to discounts at more than 80,000 locations! There's a link on our website, www.tsta.org. Log onto the TSTA members only section with your ID number that is printed on your membership card. After browsing through their nationwide discounts, browse the online directory of local participating merchants by entering the city or zip code where you are. You'll instantly receive a list of discounts and special offers in your area.

And don't forget to visit the Member Benefits menu on www.tsta.org to review all of the TSTA discounts and services available to you. The NEA member benefits website is another valuable resource at www.neamb.com. There is a host of benefits from discounts on such things as your car insurance, to personal interest loans for college tuition to online quotes for car buying, to financial tips. The member benefits program stretches the buying power of every dollar you earn!

Here's another idea to brighten up your fall, sharpen your professional skills and have some fun with your colleagues, as well. The annual TSTA Educational Issues Conference is right around the corner! It's November 4-6 at the Omni Austin Hotel Southpark. Sessions are planned on TAKS Writing, Math and Science; Gifted and Talented; First

Year Survival; Testing Skills; "I Can Do It" Training and much more. Log on to www.tsta.org for information or reservations.

Thanks again for being a member of TSTA/NEA, the best organization for teachers and school employees in Texas and the nation. I hope you are having a great year!



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Administration Sneaks Vouchers into Hurricane Proposal

The Bush Administration on September 15 released a proposal to funnel as much as \$488 million of hurricane relief dollars to private school vouchers.

“The Department of Education proposal to provide funding for the public schools that are taking in the children who had to evacuate is a step in the right direction,” TSTA President Donna New Haschke said. “Unfortunately, at a time when we need to be focused on our children’s education, the administration insists on engaging in partisan politics. Clearly, the Republican leadership is attempting to use the disruption and devastation of Hurricane Katrina to promote a school voucher scheme. We are confident a bipartisan majority of Congress will reject this proposal and adopt legislation that will make sure that the children of Louisiana receive the first class public education they deserve.”

“At this time, the most urgent need is to restore a sense of normalcy for the more than 300,000 students displaced by the storm. It is just simply not the time to open up a policy debate on vouchers,” NEA President Reg Weaver said.

“It is opportunistic and inappropriate to raise the voucher debate at this time,” he said. “Vouchers don’t repair or rebuild neighborhood schools that have been devastated by this storm or provide traumatized children with access to comprehensive services they and their families need. We need to look at real, long-term solutions -- not risky band-aid fixes that won’t do anything to help these kids find the normalcy they’ll need to help them heal. NEA will continue to work with leaders in Congress in a bipartisan way to ensure that the real needs of students are met -- for classrooms, educators, textbooks, school supplies, counseling and in many cases, clothes.”

As we went to press, legislation had not yet been seen on this issue.

NEW REPORTS FIND GROWING DISCONTENT WITH NCLB

Two recent research reports find the public and many state legislatures perceive No Child Left Behind as more harmful than helpful to public education.

“NCLB Left Behind: Understanding the Growing Grassroots Rebellion Against a Controversial Law” documents the NCLB-related backlash in the form of anti-NCLB legislation (21 states), opting out/waivers/exemptions (40 states), litigation (four cases, with more in the offing), NCLB unfunded-mandate cost studies (21 states), and NCLB school failure rate studies (including one in Massachusetts predicting that NCLB will “flunk” 74-90% of the state’s public schools over time).

The 37th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public’s Attitudes Toward the Public Schools reveals that the public likes NCLB’s goals, but rejects the strategies used to implement those goals, which is consistent with NEA’s long held position on NCLB.

In fact, the more people know about the law’s impact on classroom instruction, the less they like it, according to the Phi Delta Kappa poll. In this year’s poll, the grades the public assigns to their public schools remain as high as ever.

For details on both of these reports and more NCLB information, visit www.nea.org/esea.

The Dog Ate My Bill

It's been said that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result.

Four times, through one regular session and three special sessions, the Texas Legislature came down to essentially the same two bills, one an "education reform" bill and the other a tax bill to fund it. Four times, they wisely rejected the bills.

Then they came out looking for someone to blame for their inability to solve Texas' school finance problems. The Governor blamed the Speaker. The House blamed the Senate, and the Senate blamed the House. Even school superintendents were blamed before it was over.

Shortly after the third special session, Governor Perry announced he would use his "executive authority to implement key education reforms that the Texas Legislature has failed to pass."

He directed Texas Education Agency to write rules that would require school districts to spend 65% of their budgets on instruction.

His order directed the Commissioner of Education to design and implement a new financial accountability and reporting system for Texas schools. "My executive order will give taxpayers the accountability they deserve because it opens every school district's financial books to public scrutiny," Perry said.

The Governor's proposal is an attempt to draw attention away from his inability to solve the issue and from the fact that Texas' public schools are woefully underfunded. Sixty-five percent of inadequate is still inadequate.

But TSTA's concern over his proposal runs a bit deeper than that....

Honest!
HB 2 would
have passed
but...



THE 65% SOLUTION: IT'S NO SOLUTION

What you may not know is Perry was following the orders of a national movement called First Class Education. Their goal is, by 2008, to have all 50 states and the District of Columbia mandate that 65 cents of every education dollar be spent "in the classroom."

Who's behind this movement? Patrick Byrne, CEO of Overstock.com, who contributed \$50,000 in 2004 to All Children Matter, the pro-voucher PAC that worked to defeat Utah state legislators who voted against tuition tax credits.

George Will wrote the following about him: "(Warren) Buffett also advised him (Byrne) to ask himself this: If you had a silver bullet, what competitor would you shoot, and why? Byrne says he would shoot the National Education Association — the largest teachers union. Byrne ... relishes the prospect of the 65 percent requirement pitting teachers against other union members who are in the education bureaucracy."

Also behind the movement is Grover Norquist, leader of the national anti-tax movement. He made the first endorsement of the First Class Education concept on the group's website.

Their purpose is described in an internal memo that the *Austin American Statesman* secured, which states: "While voucher and charter school proposals have great merit, large segments of the voting public—especially suburban, affluent women voters—view these ideas as an abandonment of public education. Women in particular want public education fixed, not replaced. Once additional fixing and funding of public education can be achieved via the 1st Class Education proposal, target segments of voters may be more greatly predisposed to supporting voucher and charter school

proposals, as Republicans address the voting public with greater credibility on public education issues.”

The first meeting of the taskforce to design and implement a new financial accountability and reporting system for Texas was postponed until October 19 because of Hurricane Katrina. The commissioner also established a second taskforce of “taxpayers.” We will be closely monitoring their actions.

Please sign up for the Briefing or visit www.tsta.org to keep up with the latest on this debate.

TEXAS TEACHER OF THE YEAR: TWO MEMBERS MAKE FINALIST LIST

Two of the finalists for the Texas Secondary Teacher of the Year are TSTA members: Joy Killough, an Advanced Placement biology teacher at Westwood High School in Round Rock ISD, and Karen Shepherd, a biology teacher at Plano Senior High School in the Plano ISD.

These outstanding teachers were chosen from a field of 40 Teachers of the Year in their respective education service center area. They now advance to the final round of judging in October, when the Texas Elementary Teacher of the Year and the Texas Secondary Teacher of the Year will be selected from among the finalists. In addition, one of those two teachers will be selected as the Texas nominee for the prestigious National Teacher of the Year honors, which will be announced by the Council of Chief State School Officers next April.

The finalists, along with the other 34 Regional Teachers of the Year, will be honored at a luncheon on October 29 at the Marriott at the Capitol in Austin. Each Regional Teacher of the Year will receive a \$500 cash prize as well as an award commemorating their achievement. The two educators chosen as Texas Teachers of the Year will receive \$5,000 in cash prizes, a \$15,000 technology package, plus awards and other mementos.



NEA Foundation Honors One of the Best: James Harris

Their goal is “to honor educators who exemplify the best that public schools have to offer.” Only five educators in America are chosen for this honor from the NEA Foundation and the Horace Mann Companies, and TSTA’s own James Harris is one of them.

The Horace Mann–NEA Foundation Awards for Teaching Excellence carry a \$10,000 award. Harris is also a finalist for The NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence, which will be announced at the foundation’s annual gala December 9 in Washington, DC. That award carries an additional \$25,000.

Nominated by TSTA, Harris is a seventh- through ninth-grade resource/special education English teacher at Atkins Junior High School in Lubbock. In April, he received TSTA’s Ermalee Boice Instructional Advocacy Award.

After 37 years in the classroom, he still strives every day to make a difference for his special education students. Many students come to his classroom as reluctant learners. They leave at the end of the year with their heads held high, knowing that they can learn and do anything that they want, because they have had the support of a teacher who genuinely cares about them.

Harris provides a vision for success for all of his students and believes that they can achieve anything. He says, **“I always tell my students that they must make a choice to be really successful, and I will support their choice.”** Harris goes the extra mile for his students, whether by providing additional academic help or purchasing clothing for students in need. Through engaging and hands-on lessons, he constantly makes learning relevant to his students’ lives. He says, “I think of every

child as a bundle of potential and then strive to find every possible way to develop that potential. In special education, I believe every child is unique and has unique needs.”

For Harris’ students, taking part in the community teaches them invaluable life skills, such as learning how to meet and greet people. He engages his students in service learning projects throughout the community and involves them in activities such as a local pancake festival, where students cook for and serve the community.

Harris has solicited local companies to donate free services to help his students learn. For example, **he convinced a local private airline to give his students rides to help them understand geographical concepts.** Harris feels that utilizing the resources in the community and connecting the students with the community help to encourage positive feelings and dispel any negative perceptions about middle school students. Harris also teaches certification courses at Lubbock Christian University and reaches out to his students—future teachers—about issues of professionalism and activism.

For over 20 years, Harris has been active in the education association, representing the professional rights of school employees at the local, state, and national levels. He served as president of the Lubbock Educators Association for three terms and is still an officer. He was a regional vice president in TSTA and served on the Legislative Cadre and State Committee on Media Relations for TSTA/NEA.

Always one to speak his mind, Harris has written numerous op-eds and letters to the editor, and testified at the state legislature. As part of a legislative team within TSTA, **he is able to reach hundreds of colleagues daily via emails to keep them up to date on legislative issues.** He has worked on various committees for the Lubbock

ISD and Texas Education Agency. In his school building, he serves as department chair of special education and works with 23 staff members to ensure the needs of students are met.

“I know James Harris to be an excellent teacher whose students respect and revere him highly for his professionalism, proficiency of subject matter, and his caring and concern for their welfare in every regard,” TSTA President Donna New Haschke said.

Throughout his teaching career, Harris has received many awards and distinctions, including the Ermalee Boice Instructional Advocacy Award at the State House of Delegates, the Rotary Club’s Paul Harris Fellow, Friend of Education Award by the Deans of Higher Education in the State of Texas, Secondary Clinician of the Year from Lubbock Christian University, and the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Texas Tech University’s College of Education.

He was one of the first teachers to be appointed by then-Governor George W. Bush to the State Board for Educator Certification and the first teacher ever elected as chairperson.

Harris holds an Honorary Doctorate of Humanities from Howard Payne University, a Master of Arts from Texas Tech University, and a Bachelor of Arts from Howard Payne University.

WHAT IS THE NEA AWARD?

The NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence was created in 2000 to recognize, reward, and promote excellence in teaching and advocacy for the profession, and to honor public education and the dedicated members of the NEA. Every spring, the NEA’s state and direct affiliates submit nominations for this prestigious award. From these nominees, five finalists are selected to receive The Horace Mann-NEA Foundation Awards for Teaching Excellence, which include \$10,000 each. In addition to funding these awards, the Horace Mann Insurance

Company provides financial support for each finalist to attend the gala. The NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence recipient, announced at the event, is selected from the five finalists and receives an additional \$25,000 and a personalized commemorative gift.

Horace Mann provides auto and homeowners insurance, retirement annuities, life insurance and other financial solutions. It was founded by educators for educators in 1945 (see www.horacemann.com).

Visit www.neafoundation.org for more information on the foundation, the awards, and the gala.



ESP NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The 2006 NEA Education Support Professional National Conference will be March 10-12 at the Wyndham Philadelphia at Franklin Plaza in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Pre-conference trainings will be offered for Presidents/Leaders March 8-9, and for Emerging Leaders, Family/School/Community, and Diversity March 9-10.

Training sessions and workshops will empower ESP members with the skills and information they need to: assist with closing the achievement gap, organize, build stronger locals, promote membership recruitment, enhance professional development and student achievement, and establish strong internal and external relationships.

Watch www.nea.org/esphome for more information.



TSTA's Member Advocacy Web

In the TSTA family, there are numerous local affiliates that receive and handle many routine “working condition” problems and grievances on behalf of their local members, such as salary disputes, assignments, appraisals, and adverse administrative meetings. The Association of Brownsville Educators, the Socorro Education Association, NEA-Dallas, Education Austin, the San Antonio Alliance, and the Ysleta Teachers Association to name a few, have Member Advocacy Teams, many of them trained by TSTA legal staff. These local Member Advocacy Teams are able to handle and resolve many garden-variety working condition issues by using their superior skills, local contacts and influence.

In many other TSTA locals, such as Laredo, Pasadena, Edgewood, Port Arthur, Alief, Longview, San Elizario, and Ector County, there are strong local leaders who are trained and fully capable to process working condition issues for local members. When and where available and appropriate, TSTA seeks to have member issues resolved by trained local members. This creates

and sustains local power and effectiveness by improving the local’s visibility, reputation and clout.

When a local Member Advocacy Team or local leader needs back-up and assistance, or when any member needs an answer, the TSTA Organizing Center for Legal Services and Member Advocacy includes a toll-free TSTA Help Center (877-ASK-TSTA) open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on school days. The TSTA Help Center may also be reached by email by going to www.tsta.org and clicking on the Help Center link. The TSTA Help Center is staffed by two lawyers and one paralegal and receives in excess of 15,000 phone calls and emails per year. When the TSTA Help Center needs back-up, TSTA has four litigating lawyers on staff who handle dozens and dozens of serious and complicated legal issues for TSTA members around the state.

The following are a few examples of the types of cases where the TSTA Member Advocacy Teams, leaders, Help Center or legal staff were involved:

46-YEAR DALLAS VETERAN WINS CONTRACT AFTER ALLEGATIONS FIZZLED

In November 2004, an NEA-Dallas member who has taught for approximately 46 years — the last 15 years in Dallas ISD — was accused of mistreating school children. She was placed on paid administrative leave. Child Protective Services conducted an investigation and found no evidence of any wrongdoing. Nevertheless, the teacher remained on leave pending the outcome of the district's investigation of the allegations. Thereafter, she was reassigned to a different elementary school effective February 2005. Almost immediately thereafter her new building principal suggested that the teacher should submit her resignation (to be effective at the end of the 2004-05 school year) and the district would place her on paid leave until the end of that school year; or, if she chose not to resign, her principal would recommend the termination of her employment. The teacher refused to submit her resignation because she believed she had done nothing wrong. Through the help of the TSTA Help Center and legal counsel, this matter has been amicably resolved. The district did not try to terminate her employment, and instead gave her a new two-year contract.

NORTH EAST ISD ALLOWS TEACHERS TO KEEP OLDER AND MUCH BETTER CONTRACT

In May of 2005, the North East ISD (San Antonio) informed its continuing contract teachers that they needed to sign a new continuing contract or it would be assumed that they intended to resign from the 2005-06 school year. North East Teachers Association (NETA/TSTA) members called the TSTA Help Center with questions and complaints. TSTA legal staff determined that the new continuing contract was suspect in many ways and provided fewer rights than older continuing contracts that many NETA members had. TSTA legal staff also concluded that continuing contract teachers cannot be directed to sign a new contract. Working closely in tandem with the NETA leaders, a grievance was filed by TSTA legal staff to object to the new contract and to object to the directive that it be signed. Before the first grievance hearing, the NEISD sent another message to all teachers that they did not have to sign the new contract after all, and that their old (and much better) continuing contract would remain in place.

COURT SAYS CANUTILLO CAN'T HAVE PLANNING PERIOD OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL DAY

The members of the Canutillo Educators Association/TSTA filed a grievance against the district because the teachers' planning and preparation period was scheduled outside the instructional day, a violation of the Texas Education Code. TSTA legal staff assisted. The CISD dismissed the grievance saying it was untimely filed. On appeal to the Commissioner of Education, without reaching the merits, the Commissioner agreed with the CISD. Refusing to give up, TSTA legal staff then appealed the Commissioner's Decision to Travis County District Court, which reversed the Commissioner. The case has now been remanded to the Commissioner for further consideration.

CORSICANA SPEECH THERAPIST GETS FULL STIPEND

A TSTA member who is a diagnostician in Corsicana ISD is also a certified speech therapist. The district required her to perform the speech therapy duties on her campus for the entire 2004-05 school year. But because the diagnostician was not a "full time" speech therapist, the district concluded that she was not entitled to the full speech therapist stipend. The member called the TSTA Help Center for advice and assistance. TSTA legal staff concluded that her situation was probably a violation of school board policy and filed a grievance on her behalf. After the grievance hearing, the school reversed itself and granted the diagnostician the full speech therapist stipend.

CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS EMPLOYEE MAY NOT BE PENALIZED FOR TAKING LEAVE

A maintenance department veteran in Cypress-Fairbanks ISD (Houston) was denied a promotion, evaluated poorly, and given a warning based on "excessive absences." Since he was a TSTA member, he called the TSTA Help Center for support. "Excessive absences" was not defined in district policy or the employee handbook, and the member had used his accrued leave for most of the absences. TSTA legal staff filed a grievance on his behalf, arguing that an employee may not be penalized for invoking his statutorily granted leave. As a result, he received his promotion and pay raise, and the district has reconsidered its evaluation policy regarding absences.

If your local is ready to form a Member Advocacy Team to handle routine, garden variety, employment disputes for local members, or if you as a local leader want to become more effective in providing these kinds of services, contact the TSTA Help Center at 877-ASK-TSTA to arrange for training or for more information.

DALLAS ESP GETS NEW EVALUATION

The NEA-Dallas Member Advocacy Team referred a member to the TSTA Help Center for assistance. The member works as a Facility Supervisor for Dallas ISD. With the assistance of TSTA legal counsel, the member filed a grievance contesting his year-end summative evaluation and a growth plan. It is historically difficult to prevail in an appraisal grievance, unless it can be shown that the school district did not follow the law. After a hotly contested evidentiary hearing in which TSTA provided legal representation, the district's hearing officer held that the district had not complied with the law and/or board policy with regard to his evaluation. The evaluation was changed to "Proficient" which has enabled the member to receive his merit pay increase for the new school year.

NY TIMES, TEXAS MONTHLY EXAMINE MOTIVES IN CASE OF BLOOMBERG COACH

Merry Stevens was proposed for termination by the Bloomberg ISD in the 2004-05 school year for allegedly "losing her temper" and leaving campus without permission. TSTA legal staff assisted her in her defense of these allegations. It became obvious during pre-hearing procedures that the real reason was discrimination based on her sexual orientation and not her conduct. Indeed, she was one of the district's most respected teachers and had taken the girl's basketball team to the State Championships. Ultimately the case was settled when Stevens agreed to have her two-year contract bought out by the school district. Because of the significant press coverage which the case garnered, including a piece written in *Texas Monthly* and the *New York Times*, and in numerous other news sources nationwide, three of the BISSD board members involved in the proposal to terminate Stevens lost their Board seats in the next election.

HVAC TECHNICIAN FIRED FOR MOVING FURNITURE AT FACULTY'S REQUEST

An HVAC Technician and TSTA member employed by the Conroe ISD was accused of misappropriating CISD property and was fired. As is the case with most education support professionals, he was an at-will employee not protected by a contract. As such, he could be fired for any reason or no reason. TSTA legal staff filed a grievance on his behalf to object to the termination. During the lengthy hearing it was learned that the member had moved two stools from one campus to another at the request of a faculty member. Prior to the stools being moved they had sat collecting dust in a storage closet. The CISD Board decided to reinstate his job, but without back pay.

TSTA INVESTIGATION COUNTERS PARENT COMPLAINT, RETURNS FABENS TEACHERS TO CLASS

Two teachers and TSTA members at Fabens ISD were targets of a parent complaint alleging they used inappropriate physical force in restraining a special needs child. The teachers were placed on leave. TSTA conducted its own investigation and provided advocacy for the teachers during the process, even though usually teachers are not permitted to participate in the investigatory process. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Board of Trustees determined that no misconduct had occurred and returned the teachers to work.

'TSTA WAS THERE FOR ME IMMEDIATELY! WHO DOESN'T WANT THAT?'

A teacher/coach in Cotulla ISD called the TSTA Help Center in May 2005 concerning a grievance that a parent had filed against her and the Athletic Director. The parent had also distributed copies of the grievance around town. After reviewing the parent's grievance and the local parental complaint policy, the TSTA Help Center staffer informed the superintendent that the grievance had not been timely filed according to policy and that the district had no obligation to conduct a hearing on the matter. In a follow-up conversation with the superintendent, the TSTA Help Center explained why the complaint lacked merit, and also informed the superintendent that TSTA would be standing behind the coach throughout this ordeal. Prior to the level one meeting, the principal informed our member that the grievance had been withdrawn. The coach wrote TSTA to say, "TSTA was there for me immediately! Who doesn't want that? They never got tired of me calling them or vice versa. Again, I can't say enough but thank you and God bless!"

The TSTA Organizing Center for Legal Services and Member Advocacy can be reached by:

- toll-free number at **877-ASK-TSTA**, which is the TSTA Help Center, open **7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on most school days**
- email by going to **www.tsta.org** and clicking on the Help Center link

Texas Capitol Ornament



Tenth in the series of annual collectible ornaments, the 2005 ornament depicts the six seals of Texas proudly displayed in the Capitol's gabled pediment. Layered in 24k gold and presented in a handsome velour-lined gift box, the cost is \$18.40 including tax, S&H. Proceeds support Capitol preservation and education projects.

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The Houston Astrodome at night as thousands of evacuated residents of the Gulf Coast found temporary shelter. Photo by Rachelle Omenson

IT'S ABOUT HELPING...

They've seen things no child should have to see. At night in their dreams and by day in response to the questions of well-meaning strangers, the children who weathered Hurricane Katrina relive their memories: the surging water, people clinging to rooftops and trees, buildings swept away, pets left behind, bodies floating in the water, looters with guns.

One child told his teacher about watching his grandfather swim through the fetid water with his grandmother, who cannot swim, clinging to his back. Another boy reported, matter-of-factly, that when his mother returned to

check on their New Orleans home, she found it swarming with fruit flies and maggots.

With the resiliency of childhood, they've begun to resume their lives, some basking in the attention, others hesitant and a little suspicious, wondering why so many adults are suddenly so interested in them.

Texas opened its arms, welcoming more than 60,000 students into its schools. Class size limits and requirements for immunization records were waived; shelters at football stadiums and convention centers were added to bus routes;

school cafeterias fed whole families. Children shared their toys while parents and teachers collected money. Almost everyone rose to the occasion, with the possible exception of a few politicians who used the confusion to try to sneak private school vouchers into an aid bill.

Ironically, as the *Advocate* went to press, the Texas Gulf Coast, refuge to more than 3,000 students, was bracing for an equally dangerous storm, Hurricane Rita. Evacuees were being relocated for the second time in a month, along with the people who had taken them in.

We are proud of the many stories of members who reached out to evacuees; here are a few of those stories, taken from www.nea.org.

SOMEONE WHO'S BEEN THERE

When parents arrived at Oak Creek Elementary in Spring ISD, not only were they met with welcoming smiles and offers of assistance of all kinds, they were also greeted personally by someone with whom they could easily relate—fellow New Orleans evacuee Katie Perez.

A former Oak Creek teacher, as well as NEA member, Perez resigned last spring to move with her husband to New Orleans where he'd been transferred and where she grew up and still had lots of family. But when Hurricane Katrina barreled toward their new home, the couple evacuated back to Houston. Many of Katie's family members also evacuated to Houston and are now staying at the Perez's house, which they had not yet sold and is still furnished.

Because they've been through the same experience, the evacuated parents feel comfortable sharing their stories with Perez and are glad their children have someone they can talk to and who can help them feel safe and secure.

To ensure that Perez receives the same

kind of concern and generosity, the Oak Creek staff took up a collection to help her and her family with their immediate needs. But what Perez is perhaps most grateful for is the opportunity Oak Creek provided that allowed her to get back to work and back to a routine, and she advises displaced educators and NEA members to try to do the same.

"Try to get involved with the nearest school in the area where you've evacuated," she said. "Stay active, and know that arms are open to you."

WHAT TSTA/NEA STANDS FOR

When Maxine Guidry, president of the TSTA affiliate in Galveston, found out evacuees from New Orleans were arriving in her district, she sent out an email to members, asking if they could find a way to pitch in. The response was immediate: "I can host a family." "I'll wash their clothes." "If anyone needs babysitting, they can call on me." That was in addition to the outpouring of donations of money, clothing, toiletries, food, toys, books, and school supplies.

"It's just about helping," said Guidry, a seventh grade teacher at Stephen Austin Middle School in Galveston. "That's what TSTA/NEA stands for."

GIVING—AT HOME AND SCHOOL

Carolyn Mays, assistant principal of Oak

Creek Elementary and TSTA/NEA member, grew up in New Orleans and went back to visit often. When the floodwaters devastated the 9th Ward, 44 members of her family lost everything. "That was our home," she said.

But she is undeterred by nearly constant scenes and stories of desperation. After the school day ends, she works tirelessly to help her displaced relatives find the assistance they need. And the minute she walks through the school doors the next morning, her full-time attention is on the newly enrolled evacuated children. With so many of her own family going through the same experience, Mays said she has a special affinity for the evacuated children and is ensuring that the whole school is ready to "hang out that welcome mat."

"These are America's children," Mays said. "They may have moved from one state or city to the next, but they all need our help. They're all our children."

"TSTA/NEA stands for excellence in education, and we know that every educator has to be feeling what we're feeling," Mays added. "These children and their families have been traumatized. They need all of us—the NEA family and educators nationwide—to reach out to them."



Maxine Guidry



Katie Perez



Carolyn Mays

PHOTOS BY SAM PIERSON

ALLOWING THEM TO FEEL

Carol Burke-Neale, special education teacher and TSTA/NEA member at Oak Creek Elementary in Spring ISD, is working to assess the new students' reading levels so they can be placed in the appropriate classes. Burke-Neale gave a bright new fourth grader named Paige a story to read that happened to be about a student who was one of the first to desegregate a school in his community.

"What do you think this student was feeling?" Burke-Neale asked Paige.

Paige replied that the new student was probably scared, and probably worried that his teacher might be mean. She thought he might also worry about "what color" the other students would be, and what they would be like.

By assessing Paige's reading skills with this kind of story, Burke-Neale was allowing her to indirectly express her fears and anxieties about her own recent experiences.

Burke-Neale believes that educators should be careful about accentuating the disaster and singling out the evacuees as different from other students. At the same time, the children need to make new friends and know that they are welcomed.

Excerpts from the online reports of Cindy Long, NEA staff writer, for www.nea.org



Carol Burke-Neale with Paige

NEA IS THERE FOR MEMBERS

When Hurricane Katrina hit, NEA jumped into action, announcing that it would raise \$1 million to go directly to students, teachers and school employees who were affected. When Hurricane Rita struck shortly thereafter, they expanded the fund to include her victims, as well.

"Our goal," said NEA President Reg Weaver, "is to do everything within our



NEA President Reg Weaver visits with children at Mae Smythe Elementary in Pasadena.

power to help public school employees and their students recover as quickly and completely as possible."

School is an important aspect of helping students regain some sense of normalcy in their lives, Weaver said. "We can't let ourselves be complacent when it comes to educating these students. It's vital to their health and well-being that they attend school and continue their learning."



Schools across Texas held drives

On the NEA web site at www.nea.org, you can find out how the hurricanes have affected educators and children nationwide and what you can do to help. Bulletin boards on the site allow NEA members to exchange information, resources and aid.

NEA's other hurricane relief efforts have included:

- Deploying staff to states that were impacted by the hurricane, as well as states with large numbers of displaced families, to help with recovery, relief and rebuilding efforts for children, teachers, school employees and parents.
- Working with business partners to develop joint relief projects to benefit schools in need of rebuilding and schools taking in displaced students.
- Advocating for flexibility from the federal government in addressing the issues that arise from the rapidly changing shifts in school populations.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RESPONDS TO NEA CONCERNS

When disaster struck in the form of Hurricane Katrina, NEA President Reg Weaver immediately contacted Education Secretary Margaret Spellings to offer NEA's assistance. He also shared NEA's new concerns over No Child Left Behind.

"Until these children, their teachers, districts and families gain their footing under



Evacuees in Galveston

these extremely difficult circumstances, I encourage you to implement the provisions in NCLB that deal with the impact of natural disasters on testing and AYP," Weaver urged Spellings.

"We would also ask that states such as Texas and others who are not physically affected by Hurricane Katrina, yet are receiving these children, be granted the same levels of flexibility and not be adversely affected or otherwise penalized for accepting these children and students into their school systems. And finally, educators in these affected areas have been preparing to meet the provisions of NCLB associated with highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals. Many of these talented and committed individuals will now be unable to fulfill their requirements due to this natural disaster. I would implore you to please extend the circle of flexibility to include these provisions."

On September 7, Weaver and the NEA Government Relations staff were invited to a meeting called by Spellings. She assured him that the Department would give as much flexibility as possible in helping schools that are taking in homeless children, citing as an example the "highly qualified" teacher rules. She also promised flexibility on the use of funds and fund transfers. She said she understood the "anxiety" about the need for

additional flexibility and intends to be reasonable "to the nth degree."

Spellings said that states and schools obviously need more money, both for those directly hit by the hurricane and those now receiving students, and she would be "very aggressive in getting education its fair share."

HOW TO GET HELP

If you or your students were impacted by

needs, including housing, food, clothing and other personal needs. Public schools that have enrolled the students affected by the storm—estimated at 60,000 students in Texas as a result of Katrina alone—can apply for funds to help purchase school supplies, textbooks and other materials needed to accommodate increased enrollment. The NEA grants are also available to public schools and their employees to

assist displaced children with personal needs such as clothing.

Grant applications are available online at www.tsta.org. From the home page, click on "Hurricane Information." You can also call NEA's toll-free hotline, 866-247-2239.

Many other organizations are offering assistance. Visit www.tsta.org for a list.

HOW TO GIVE HELP

If you would like to contribute to NEA's Hurricane Relief Fund, NEA has a toll-free

number (866-247-2239) for donations and can accept credit card donations online. If you would prefer to contribute by check, you can do so by sending a check made out to NEA HIN Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund to the NEA HIN Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund, Suite 216, 1201 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036.

All of the money raised will go directly to those in need.



Hurricane relief: Principal Peggy Henson received \$5,000 for Smythe; TSTA got \$100,000.

Hurricanes Katrina or Rita, help may be available. NEA has presented TSTA with \$100,000 to go directly to students, teachers, and school employees in Texas who've been affected by the hurricanes. The money comes from NEA's \$1 million Hurricane Relief Fund.

Public school employees personally impacted by the hurricanes are eligible to apply for the grants to meet various



Sherrie Matula and Aayilah in Pasadena



Cortez came to Pasadena from New Orleans



Imari with President Donna New Haschke

EMAILS FROM OUR MEMBERS

EVERYTHING WAS LOST, EVEN PHOTOS

The first families appeared just three days after the hurricane. With few records, the enrollment process was long and tedious. Our cafeteria fed all the children and parents lunch that day.

They desperately needed car seats. There simply wasn't room for those when whole families piled into cars to evacuate. Calls and letters to the parents went out that day. By the next morning, we provided a new backpack full of school supplies to each student and car seats for all the infants and toddlers.

One of our faculty members has a son who works at an athletic shoe store. She purchased a new pair of sneakers for each child. I was able to secure free day-care for two of the preschoolers. One of our faculty members said she was wanting some new furniture anyway, so she emptied practically her whole house for the families at our school.

Everything was lost, even their family photos. Picture day was last week. Life-touch Studios did their school picture packages for free, even for the infants and toddlers at home. The mothers just shook their heads in amazement and smiled with gratitude. We did as well.

Our fifth graders go to camp in Oklahoma week after next. We have even had par-

ents donate enough to pay the \$170 tuition per student for the fourth and fifth graders to go with us. Others have donated everything they will need to take, including the suitcases.

Tragedies bring out the best and the worst in people. But, for the most part we all have a personal connection to someone affected by this. It happened so close to home. Too often we forget that life isn't about what we can get out of it; it is all about what we can give back.

—Janet Gadd, Technology Facilitator,
Owen Elementary, Lewisville ISD

BULLDOGS STICK TOGETHER

Borger Middle School Bulldogs are teaming up with the Houma, Louisiana Middle School Bulldogs, and one of our retired teachers is taking the money that we collect to go toward the purchase of clothing, school supplies and books. The kids are really pouring their hearts into this project.

—Loretta Wheeler, President, Borger
Educators Association

YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN THE SMILES

We met them at the door with book bags full of supplies, a school shirt, and a teddy bear. You should have seen the smiles on the faces of the kids and the parents. Even though the size of our

school (953 kids and 107 staff) was a bit intimidating, we were able to make them feel very welcome.

We are putting out information packets that can be obtained at the hotels upon check in, and baskets of survival needs for the families upon enrollment. We are working with businesses to provide meals at restaurants for these families and getting them clothing, etc. This is what school families are for.

—Price Brown, Principal, Oak Creek
Elementary, Spring ISD

A REAL HOMECOMING

During the first week of the hurricane crisis, we collected canned foods and other necessities to send to New Orleans. That week we also collected \$1400 from donations at our first pep rally to buy gift cards for these students to use for their personal needs.

This is our Taylor Homecoming week, and we wanted all of our new students to join in and feel that they are part of the fun. They have received a Taylor spirit shirt which students and faculty will be wearing on Friday. Also, they are receiving a free Homecoming football game ticket and a ticket to the Homecoming dance. Students have collected formal dresses for the students to wear.

—Jan Adam, Taylor High School, Katy ISD



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WS481005



HOUSTON

Brighter Day at the Shelter

For one day, things were just a little brighter for kids at the Star of Hope shelter for the homeless in Houston. The local TSTA-Student Program chapter participated in the University of Houston-Clear Lake's Community Outreach Day, painting faces, reading stories, and playing games with children at the shelter. "The day went very well," said President Leigh Anne Meeks, who is also the TSTA-SP State Secretary. "The children really enjoyed the face painting and games we provided. All of our volunteers said they felt great about spending time with the children and the families at the center, and the families were very grateful and appreciative of our efforts."

IN THE PHOTO: UHCL Chapter Vice President Louann Thurman, far right, and Secretary Leah Pounds, second from right, with others on Community Outreach Day.

CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS

No Fans Here, Either

Folks in Cypress-Fairbanks ISD aren't too happy with No Child Left Behind, local Cy-Fair TSTA/NEA President Dr. Frances H. Smith discovered after addressing the topic at a local school board meeting. "After I finished, there was a break, and all the board members, our superintendent, my principal, the director of secondary English, and a local reporter all came up to me, shook my hand, and told me they were impressed with what I had to say," Smith said. "The reporter told me he'd taped the speech and asked if he could reprint it. Needless to say, we were all delighted."



UNITED

Another NCLB Plaintiff

United ISD held a news conference August 18 to announce that it is a plaintiff in *Pontiac v. Spellings*, the first national lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Education for its implementation of the so-called No Child Left Behind law; the suit was filed by NEA and a diverse group of schools in April. Several school boards, including Ysleta ISD, have passed resolutions in support of the lawsuit.



UPDATE ON NCLB LAWSUIT
Barring other delays, oral arguments will be heard **October 19**. Visit www.nea.org for the latest news.

Government lawyers formally responded June 29 by seeking to dismiss the lawsuit on technical grounds, rather than addressing the merits of the case. The government's formal motion was not filed until July 25. NEA then filed a response explaining why the case should not be dismissed. The Education Department was allowed several days to respond and, barring other delays, oral arguments will be heard October 19.

IN THE PHOTO: United Superintendent Roberto Santos, with NEA President Reg Weaver and TSTA President Donna New Haschke at his right, at the news conference.



YSLETA

Insurance and Salary Gains

"We organized, held a press conference, and spoke to the board members in order to keep the employees of this district from having to pay the highest insurance hike in Ysleta's history," Ysleta Teachers Association board member Arlinda Valencia reports. "We were heard, and the board decided to put more money into the plan in order to make it a more reasonable increase. YTA was also successful in getting the best pay increase in the El Paso Area. We told the school board and the administration that we needed to stay competitive or we were going to start losing good qualified teachers. After several meetings we are happy to announce that we are once again the highest paid teachers in the area. Without YTA, this would not have happened."

THE MORE THEY KNOW, THE LESS THEY LIKE IT

Two recent research reports find the public and many state legislatures perceive NCLB as more harmful than helpful to public education.

For more on "NCLB Left Behind: Understanding the Growing Grassroots Rebellion Against a Controversial Law" and the 37th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools, see the News section.

Thanks to YTA, Valencia says, employees are getting an additional \$125 a month now, or \$1500 a year, and the monthly increase for employee/spouse insurance coverage was cut from \$105 to \$16 for employee/spouse, from \$93 to \$15 for employee/children, and from \$140 to \$19 for employee/family.

Ysleta ISD also has joined the list of school districts that have passed resolutions in support of NEA's lawsuit over No Child Left Behind.

IN THE PHOTO: The YTA Board with YISD Superintendent Hector Montenegro; YTA President Teri Sanchez is holding the NCLB resolution.

SOCORRO

Award-winning Author Visits

Socorro Education Association partnered with Socorro ISD to bring award-winning children's author Olivier Dunrea to the district in May. Dunrea is the author and/or illustrator of *Ollie*, *Ravena*, *Eppie M. Says*, *The Broody Hen*, *Fergus and Bridey*, and many other books that have won both art and literary awards for juvenile fiction. Dunrea spoke at the SISD Literary Anthology Banquet, an event started in 1987 by SEA member Holly Braden.

Elementary and middle school students submit entries in poetry, essay, human historical biography, short story, and personal narrative; high school students also submit plays, literary criticism, and satire.

Three top entries are selected for each grade and each genre at each campus, then district level winners are chosen. A published anthology is presented to each of the first place winners at the annual banquet.

IN THE PHOTO: Author Olivier Dunrea visits with Socorro students.



LITERARY ANTHOLOGY

Back in 1987, TSTA member Holly Braden had the idea for what has become an annual districtwide event.

Meet Haley Eska



Haley Eska, a senior at Baylor University in Waco, is this year's president of the TSTA-Student Program, TSTA's affiliate for college and university students who plan to teach.

This is a special year for TSTA-SP because it's celebrating its 50th anniversary! TSTA-SP's executive board meets three times a year: once in the summer to plan; a second time in January, to help with the annual convention of Texas Future Teachers of America, TSTA's group for high school students; and a third time during the TSTA-SP state convention in the spring.

We visited with Haley when she returned to school in August.

HALEY'S TEAM



Vice President
Kimberley Stephenson
Lamar University



Secretary
Leigh Anne Meeks
University of Houston-Clear Lake



PAC/Legislative
Lionel Austin
El Centro College

I got involved in TSTA-Student Program because: of my mom. I started out at San Jacinto College-Central in Pasadena, where my mother, Sherry Eska, is an advisor for the local TSTA-SP organization. In my first year of college, my mother convinced me to be a local officer in the organization. I transferred to Baylor University, where I was state secretary for two years and now state president. I don't think my mom ever thought I would take it this far!

The best thing about TSTA-SP is: the vast amount of information available.

One thing that's fun about being president is: This summer was the first time I've ever been to the NEA Representative Assembly, and it's just crazy! The NEA-Student Program meets before the RA, and every year, we go to a local school and fix it up. I did the bulletin boards and cleaned up the library. We did a lot of landscaping and painted all the rooms; it looked like a completely different school when the kids came in the next day. We join with the retired people on that project, which is always

fun. It's nice to hear how things were back in their day and what they've been through.

One thing that's hard about being president is:

It's impossible for me to get away from student teaching to visit with our chapters all over the state. What's really great, though, is there are TSTA local associations and regions out there that are helping us. The TSTA locals in Ysleta and Socorro are doing a lot with our chapter at UT-El Paso, helping them write grants and really helping them with membership.

Sherrie Matula, president of TSTA's Region 3C, suggested that we do our professional development together, so we're actually having a joint workshop in November for first-year teachers and student members. It's helping a lot in that district, to have that level of professional development alongside experienced teachers. I wish every TSTA local and region would go in with their SP group like that!

My goals for my year as president are: to increase membership and answer every question the members

can come up with. I am really excited for the upcoming year. A lot of people come into our organization their senior year. One of our main goals this year is to catch the freshmen and sophomores. We want the longevity. If we have someone who's been in four years, they can really change around a local, as opposed to a senior who leaves after one year.

I plan to be: a middle school English teacher. Every time I tell people that I will teach middle schoolers, I get the "poor woman" face, but I have to say I love this age and all the drama it includes. It is a great honor to help adolescents begin their search for the person they will become.

If I could choose where to teach: I'd choose the Pasadena area, because that's my home town, and there are so many school districts in that area. I want to get my masters in counseling while I'm teaching, and I hope to do that at the University of Houston.

I decided to become a teacher because: I come from a long line of teachers. I chalk

it up to genetics. I see college students all the time who have no clue what they're going to do with their lives. I'm so blessed that I knew in third grade what I wanted to do. It's never changed for me.

If I couldn't be a teacher: I'd be in advertising.

I'm really excited about: going to Australia in November for a month to do student teaching. Eight of us are going to a small village outside of Brisbane. I've never been out of the country, not even Mexico, so I figured I'd go as far as possible!

My hobbies are: outside of teaching and the organization, I like to watch movies, shop with friends, and collect sports memorabilia.

My greatest accomplishment so far has been: becoming TSTA-SP President, of course!

Want to get involved with TSTA-Student Program? Contact Haley Eska at hmeska@msn.com or Paul Henley, TSTA coordinator for the student program, at paulh@tsta.org or call 877-ASK-TSTA.



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Texas A&M University



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Aurora Vasquez
University of Texas-El Paso



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University of Texas-Arlington



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10 Things

I Want You to Know About Me



Pauline Dixon of Dallas is TSTA-Retired's new state president. Prior to retiring, Dixon was active for many years in TSTA and NEA, but for the benefit of those who may be new to the association, we asked her to list 10 things our readers should know about her. Here's her response:

1. I love people.
2. I worked for Dallas ISD for 32 years before retiring in 2000.
3. I was the teacher of the year for both Hill and Florence Middle Schools and a runner-up for DISD.
4. I was the 2002 Democratic nominee for Congress for District 32.
5. I served on the TSTA Board of Directors for six years.
6. I was an NEA Director for Texas.
7. I was president of Classroom Teachers of Dallas (now NEA-Dallas).
8. I graduated from East Texas State University with a Masters in educational administration; from Bishop College with a Bachelors in math and history; and from high school in Pittsburg, Texas as the valedictorian at age 15.
9. I have chaired many, many committees.
10. My other interests are the garden club, civic league, parliamentary procedure, and politics.

Shown by the Umlauf sculpture in TSTA's courtyard: Eddie Spence, Richard Wilgoren, Letha Grace McCoy, Bobby Southwood, and Pauline Dixon.

OFFICERS INSTALLED

The TSTA-Retired Officers for 2005-2006 are Pauline Dixon, President; Letha Grace McCoy, Vice President; Richard Wilgoren, Secretary; Bobby Southwood, Treasurer; and Eddie Spence, Past President.

DUES STRUCTURE CHANGES

Pre-Retired-Retired Life Membership for NEA-Retired is \$100 and for TSTA-Retired is \$250. The NEA-Retired Life Membership is increasing to \$200 in September 2006, so now is the time to purchase your Life Memberships. The total package for Life Memberships in NEA-Retired/TSTA-Retired is \$350. Next year, the price will be \$450. All retired members must be members of the national and state organizations. Please direct questions to Nina Armstrong, TSTA-Retired, 512-476-5355 or 877-ASK-TSTA, toll free.

NOMINATIONS ARE DUE

Nominations are currently in order for the following positions:

- TSTA-Retired Secretary and TSTA-Retired Treasurer (see form below)
- TSTA/NEA-Retired Delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly (see page 29)
- Retired At-Large Delegate to the TSTA House of Delegates (see page 30)

All elections will take place February-March 2006. If you are interested in serving, you are invited to complete the form and return it by January 16, 2006 to TSTA-Retired, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701. You must be a Retired Active Member.

The Secretary and Treasurer offices are for two-year terms, beginning with the 2006-07 term. Members may nominate themselves or other members. Feel free to make additional copies of the form to nominate for more than one office. Please remember that you must obtain written permission from your nominee (see form).

TSTA-R NOMINATION FORM

Check box beside office this nomination is for: ☐ TSTA-Retired Secretary ☐ TSTA-Retired Treasurer

QUALIFICATIONS: Must be an active member of TSTA-Retired and NEA-Retired

Nominee's name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone _____ Work phone _____

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the above information is true and correct.

Nominee's signature _____

Nominator's name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone _____ Work phone _____

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the above information is true and correct.

Nominator's signature _____

Completed forms must be received by 5:00 p.m., January 16, 2006, at TSTA-Retired, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701.



You Say It's Your Birthday?

"In my classroom we celebrate birthdays in a fun and memorable way. Whenever one of my students has a birthday, I read a poem from a book with a collection of 'birthday poems,' and the class sings 'Happy Birthday' as I play the kazoo. Afterwards, I pop a confetti-filled balloon over the birthday girl/boy's head. The children love it. A 'Birthday Bear' and a 'Happy Birthday' flag are displayed on their desk for the day. The bear holds their gift of a special pencil. Of course, any summer birthdays are celebrated the last few days of school. During the summer I fill the balloons and store them in a zip-lock bag. Be sure to fill a few extra. The children will insist on popping a balloon over their teacher's head on his/her birthday."

—Cindy Merrill, second grade teacher in Virginia Beach, Virginia

HAPPY ½ BIRTHDAY!

"I make sure everyone's birthday is special by recognizing children's half birthdays. If a child has a birthday during the summer vacation, we celebrate the half birthday (you could do the same thing with off track times). I give each child a birthday card no matter when the day is celebrated, but I write '1/2' between the words Happy and Birthday. I make computer stickers on address labels for: 'Today Is My Birthday!' with a birthday cake graphic. I also make some that say 'Yesterday' and 'Tomorrow' to take into consideration weekend or holiday birthdays, and I give each child a birthday pencil."

—Jeanette Newquist, a first grade teacher at Lincoln Elementary in Tulare, California



BINGO REVIEW

"The game of Bingo provides an excellent way to review concepts in many different academic disciplines. In my mathematics classroom, we have a new name for Bingo. We call it 'Euler,' in honor of the great Swiss mathematician. At the top of a piece of paper, prepare a numbered list of 24 concepts, definitions, formulas, equations, etc., and then a 5 by 5 Bingo grid (with a free space in the middle). Ask your students to randomly place the numbers 1-24 in the Bingo grid. Once each student's card is filled in, the game begins."

E U L E R				
22	16	8	12	23
14	7	3	19	6
9	21	●	4	15
18	20	1	17	11
2	10	13	5	24

Read clues which correspond to one of the 24 concepts, definitions, formulas, equations, etc. Continue reading clues until a student gets an 'Euler.' The winning student must then read back both the items they checked off and the clue that went with the item. This activity really helps students discover what they do not know. I recently used 'Euler' with equations and graphs. The list on the paper contained 24 equations. My clues were graphs on the overhead graphing calculators. Students had to match each graph to a particular equation. Be creative and try adapting 'Euler' to your curriculum and grade level."

—John Failor, a high school math teacher at Traverse City Central High in Traverse City, Michigan



BEHAVIOR BUCKS

"I adopted this system from my sister who is also a teacher and it works great! At the beginning of each nine weeks, each child receives \$25 in play money. Anytime they break a classroom or school rule, they are charged a fee. Breaking rules that **COST** them include such things as not returning homework, disrespect to the teacher or peers, abusing computer limits, etc.

"At the end of the nine weeks, I have a celebration. I charge a fee such as \$10 as a cover charge. Then I assign prices to the amenities like \$2 for popcorn, \$1 for pop, \$4 to read a book to the class, \$5 to be the teacher for 30 minutes, and the kids just love this. They are not allowed to lend money to friends, and I have truly seen a change in the behavior of my kids. Those that do not have enough money for the cover charge are the waiters and waitresses and believe me in the fact that they are so jealous of the others that they make sure they are **NOT** the servants at the next party. Parents have loved this idea and even come in on reward days to help out and join the fun. The kids **EARN** the right to keep their money and the end result is worth all the money in the world!"

—Nancy Morrison, a third grade teacher at Elkhart Elementary in Elkhart, Kansas

WHERE DID WE GET THESE GREAT IDEAS?

From **NEA's Works4Me**, where members exchange classroom tips! Sign up to receive weekly emails, review the archives, or submit your own ideas by visiting the **Members & Educators** area of the newly revamped and expanded www.nea.org.

AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK

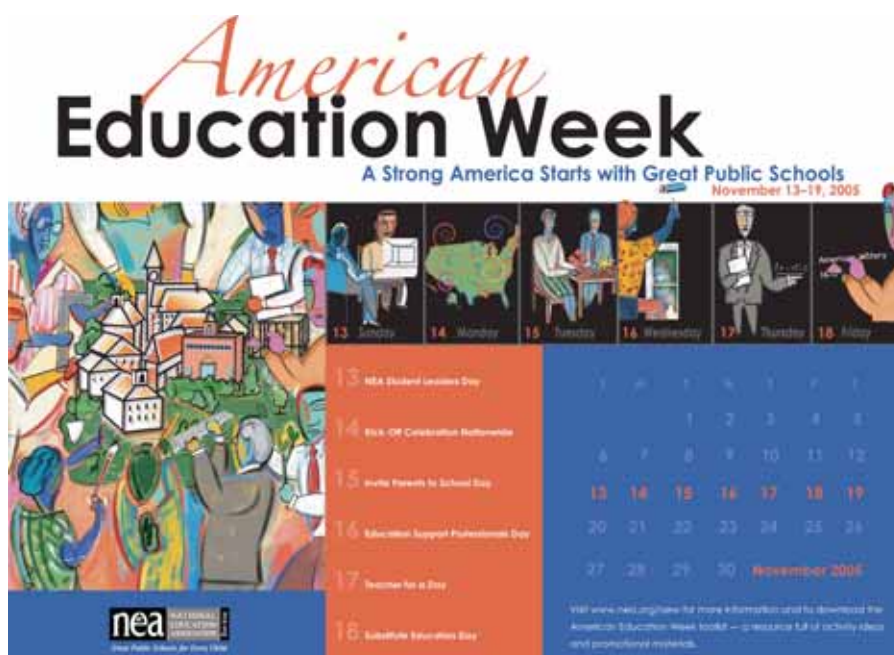
American Education Week is November 13-19; its 2005 theme, "A Strong America Starts with Great Public Schools," highlights the importance of bringing together teachers, school staff, parents, students, and communities in a unified effort to build great public schools.

It also reflects NEA's vision of calling upon America to provide public school students with quality schools so that they can grow, prosper, and achieve in the 21st century, in turn, creating a strong America.

New Resources and Materials: To assist you in your AEW planning, NEA offers an online toolkit with a wide variety of activity ideas, resources, templates, and downloadable materials—including a color poster—at www.nea.org/aew.

Celebration Days: This year, we are suggesting individual celebration "theme" days for each day of the week. Here's a suggested calendar: In addition to Education Support Professionals Day on November 16 and Substitute Educators Day on November 18, other days you may want to consider celebrating are listed below.

- Monday, November 14: AEW Nationwide Kick-off Celebration. Kick-off AEW with a high profile event to reinforce our theme and preview the week's activities.
- Tuesday, November 15: Invite Parents to School Day. Encourage parents to spend the day with their child at school to emphasize the importance of parental involvement.
- Wednesday, November 16: Education Support Professionals Day. Honor contributions of and strengthen support and respect for these colleagues.
- Thursday, November 17: Teacher for a Day. Invite community leaders to "teach for a day" to underscore the critical role communities need to play in public education.
- Friday, November 18: Substitute Educators Day. Its purpose is to encourage increased respect for substitute education employees; to advocate for all school substitutes to receive wage and health benefits for those who work most to all of a full school year; to receive genuine, continuous professional development in the art of substitute teaching; and to provide a reminder for school staff on effective practices to prepare for, welcome, and support substitute educators.



COMING UP

TSTA/NEA EVENT DATES

NOVEMBER

- 4-6 TSTA Educational Issues Conference, Omni Austin Hotel Southpark
- 12 TSTA Community & Instructional Advocacy & Credentials, Bylaws & Elections and Minority Affairs Committee Meetings, TSTA Headquarters
- 13-19 American Education Week
- 16 National ESP Day

DECEMBER

- 2 TSTA Advisory Committee Meeting, TSTA Headquarters
- 2-4 TSTA Board of Directors Meeting, TSTA Headquarters

JANUARY

- 7 TSTA Legislative and Political Advocacy Committee Meeting, TSTA Headquarters
- 19-20 NEA Western Regional Minority Leadership Training Seminar, Omaha Hilton, Omaha, NE
- 20-22 NEA Western Regional Leadership Conference, Omaha, NE
- 27-28 TSTA Advisory Committee Meeting, TSTA Headquarters
- 28-29 TSTA Board of Directors Meeting, TSTA Headquarters

FEBRUARY

- 24-25 Texas Future Teachers of America State Convention

MARCH

- 2 NEA's Read Across America
- 4-5 NEA Higher Education Conference
- 10-12 NEA ESP Conference, Philadelphia, PA
- 31-April 2 NEA-Retired West Regional Conference, Sheraton St. Louis City Center, St. Louis, MO

APRIL

- 1-2 NEA-Retired West Regional Conference, Sheraton St. Louis City Center, St. Louis, MO
- 7-8 TSTA-Student Program Convention, Red Lion Hotel, Austin
- 26-27 TSTA-Retired State Convention, Austin
- 27 TSTA Advisory Committee and TSTA Board of Directors meetings, Renaissance Austin Hotel, Austin
- 28-29 TSTA State House of Delegates, Renaissance Austin Hotel, Austin



Know Someone Who's Outstanding?

Many of our outstanding TSTA/NEA members, regional and local associations, communities, businesses, organizations, and individuals who are friends of education deserve honors and awards. TSTA is accepting nominations for awards contained in this article.

For details and/or a nomination form for an award, contact the Center for Executive and Governance (877-ASK-TSTA, ext. 1510). Nominations are to be submitted to the Center for Executive and Governance, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701.

Friend of Education Award: recognizes either (1) an individual or a major single accomplishment or career effort which has greatly impacted Texas education and which achieves some aspect of educational progress with which TSTA agrees; or (2) an organization/company outside the field of education which has made an outstanding contribution in the field of education. Any TSTA member, local association,

region, or other recognized group (e.g., statewide or special committee or caucus) may make nominations. A letter or memorandum of nomination should be submitted, accompanied by a biographical statement providing details about the major single accomplishment or career effort supporting the worthiness of the individual or organization/company to receive this award. Nominations must be received no later than November 30, 2005.

Frank J. Tejada Award for Public Service: recognizes an individual for service at the state or national political/legislative level on behalf of public school children or educational employees of Texas. Nominees must be elected or appointed officials who are not currently employed full-time by a school

district. Nominations must be received no later than November 30, 2005.

Professional, Human, and Civil Rights Awards: recognize Texas educators, local associations, regional associations and individuals who are friends of education for distinguished service and contributions in promoting and/or encouraging professional and human rights activities. Categories of awards are: Individual, Special, Mickey Leland Memorial, and the Willie Velasquez Memorial. Nominations must be received no later than February 1, 2006.

NEA Human and Civil Rights Award: TSTA also encourages regional and local affiliates or individuals to nominate an individual, organization and/or a region or local affiliate for an NEA Human and Civil Rights Award.

For further information on the individual award categories and forms, you may view NEA's website at www.nea.org/annualmeeting/hcrawards or write NEA Human and Civil Rights, 1201 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036-3290 (202-822-7705). Nominations must be postmarked no later than December 15, 2005.

Ermalee Boice Instructional Advocacy Award: recognizes, rewards and promotes teaching excellence. Through this award, teaching excellence, public education, and the NEA's dedicated members are honored. A nomination packet must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on February 1, 2006. The recipient of this award will be submitted as TSTA's nominee for the NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence.



26TH ANNUAL CONVENTION & EXPOSITION

Austin Convention Center

February 6-10, 2006

It's a Jungle
Out There!
We Can Help
You Find
the Way.

Texas Computer Education Association

- ▶ **700 exhibitor booths** – featuring the finest and latest products
- ▶ **165 workshops** – hands-on knowledge by top presenters
- ▶ **350 free sessions** – the most relevant subjects
- ▶ **Technology Village** – educational technology up close and personal
- ▶ **Wild, Wild Casino Night ... 'What Happens Here Stays Here'** featuring 'Sauce'

HENRY WINKLER

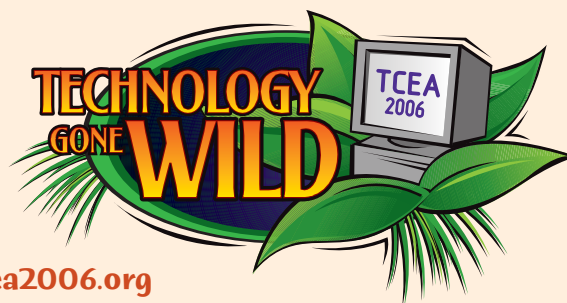
Opening Keynote

Former TV star of "Happy Days" and noted comedic and serious actor will share his own struggles with learning as a child and into adulthood.



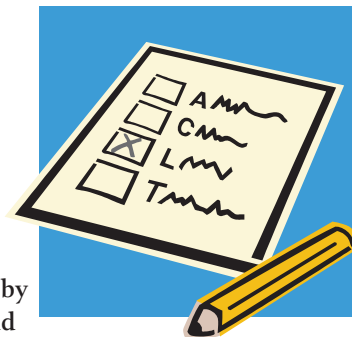
AUSTIN CITY LIMITS

Visit the set of the nationally famous TV show and see "The Fighting Brothers McCarthy."



www.tcea2006.org

National Delegate Elections



Let's go to Orlando for the 2006 NEA Representative Assembly (RA) July 2-5. Pre-RA meetings and workshops begin on June 25. The first Texas caucus will be on June 30 with the Texas event being held that evening.

The exact number of delegates from Texas will be determined by our TSTA/NEA membership as of January 15, 2006. TSTA will be allocated one state delegate for every 1,000 Active (teacher or ESP) and Active Life Active NEA members, and locals will be allocated one local delegate for every 150 members, or major fraction thereof.

NEA has established a policy of encouraging ethnic-minority representation reflective of the ethnic make-up of the state's population. The goal for TSTA is to elect at least 48 percent of our total delegation from among our ethnic-minority members. We cannot accomplish this goal unless all of our leaders and caucuses help recruit ethnic-minority candidates to run for delegate positions at both the state and local levels.

There is no funding from TSTA for state delegates. Some regions and a few locals provide some funding for state delegates.

Below you will find some of the specific requirements and timelines for election of state and local association delegates. Anyone with questions about the elections, or needing other information about the process, should contact Sandra Solimine at TSTA, 877-ASK-TSTA, ext. 1514 or email sandras@tsta.org.

Please note that we cannot determine until after January 15 exactly how many state delegates we will elect or exactly how we will elect them. This year, at least one state delegate will be elected on a statewide ballot. The remaining state delegates will be allocated to individual regions or to clusters of regions or, possibly, statewide. They will be allocated in a manner to comply with NEA rules on one-person, one-vote, and in accordance with TSTA policy.

STATE DELEGATES

The *Advocate* containing ballots for the election of State Delegates should be received by members by March 31, 2006. Deadline for return receipt of ballots at TSTA is April 21, 2006 by 5 p.m.

NEA requires that all elections for state and local delegates must be conducted by open nominations and secret ballots. At the end of this article you will find a nomination form to seek election as a State Delegate to the 2006 NEA RA. If you would like to run for a delegate position, please complete the form (or a copy of it) and return it to TSTA.

The form must be received by the Center for Executive and Governance at TSTA no later than January 16, 2006, in order for your name to appear on the printed ballot.

Each candidate for State Delegate is entitled to have his or her name published in the *Advocate*, along with a statement of 25 words or less detailing his/her professional association involvement.

NEA also requires proportional representation for supervisory and non-supervisory members. In order to insure this is not violated, supervisory members are not eligible to run for State Delegate as outlined above. Instead, all Supervisory members are eligible to run in a separate election for Category 2 State At-Large Delegate (which also includes NEA Active Life Retired members). In addition, Supervisory members who also are members of a local may run in the statewide Supervisory Cluster election unless their local is not a part of that cluster. Locals are removed from this cluster only if their inclusion would cost the local a non-supervisory delegate. Locals will be notified in February if they have been removed from the cluster.

Supervisory members desiring to seek election as a delegate should complete and return the Nomination Form (marking the appropriate box to run for a Category 2 delegate) along with the 25-word statement. Those Supervisory members that return the form and who are eligible to run in the Supervisory Cluster will automatically be included on the ballot for that election as well.

Again, if you have questions please call Sandra Solimine at 877-ASK-TSTA, ext. 1514, or sandras@tsta.org.

LOCAL DELEGATES

Since local associations are allocated one delegate for each 150 NEA members or major fraction thereof, a local must have at least 76 members (teacher, ESP and life) to qualify for a delegate. Locals with fewer than 76 members may cluster together for the purpose of electing local delegates. If you are a member in one of these smaller locals and would like to be a delegate, please contact Sandra Solimine as described above.

NEA will notify locals in mid-February of the number of delegates allocated for each local. Locals will be provided official NEA forms for reporting data about local delegates and alternates ("successor delegates"). **Those completed forms must be received by TSTA no later than April 10, 2006 in order to insure proper credentials at the NEA RA.** Locals must

conduct an election that provides for open nominations and secret ballots. That can be done either by delivering a nomination form to each member (using a local newsletter is permissible), then insuring each member gets a ballot with the names of those returning the form, or by holding an all-member meeting, with proper notice to each member, and accepting nominations at the meeting, then voting by secret ballot.

RETIRED DELEGATES

TSTA-R/NEA-R delegates are elected in two elections with different eligibility requirements. Members may run in only one of these elections. Someone who was an NEA Active Life

member while teaching but who is currently retired, may seek election as a Category 2 State At-Large delegate by completing and returning the Nomination Form and marking the appropriate box. A separate Nomination Form is provided for TSTA-R/NEA-R members to seek election as a TSTA-R/NEA-R delegate. Those who are otherwise eligible to run in both elections may file in only one election. The deadline for submitting this form (an election statement of 25 words or less) is January 16, 2006. For this election, delegates are allocated one delegate for the first 50 TSTA-R/NEA-R members and an additional delegate for each additional 1,000 TSTA-R/NEA-R members.

NOMINATION FORM

NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY TSTA/NEA-RETIRED DELEGATE POSITIONS—JULY 2-5, 2006

Deadline for receipt at TSTA Headquarters is January 16, 2006, 5:00 p.m. (This form is also available online at www.tsta.org)

(Circle One: Mr. Ms.) Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Home Phone _____ Day Phone _____
 Email _____ Social Security No. _____

ETHNIC GROUP: (Check all that apply)

- ☐ American Indian/Alaska Native ☐ Asian ☐ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander ☐ Multi-ethnic
☐ Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ Caucasian (not of Spanish Origin) ☐ Other _____
☐ Check here if you do not want your ethnicity printed
☐ Enclosed is my election statement of 25 words or less which will be sent with the ballot. (Note: If your statement exceeds 25 words, it will be cut at 25 words.)

Send by U.S. Mail or FAX (512-486-7043) to: TSTA-Retired, 316 W. 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701

Signature of Nominee _____

NOMINATION FORM

2006 NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY STATE DELEGATES

Deadline for receipt at TSTA Headquarters is January 16, 2006, 5:00 p.m. (This form is also available online at www.tsta.org)

NOMINEE FOR: (Check one)

- ☐ State At-Large Delegate: Category 1—Teacher, ESP or other Non-supervisor
☐ State At-Large Delegate: Category 2—Administrator or NEA Active Life Retired*
☐ Statewide Supervisory Cluster—Supervisors who are members of a local association**

*NEA Active Life Retired—NEA Active Life member while teaching and now retired

**Supervisory members whose local chooses not to participate in the cluster are not eligible to run in this election.

(Circle One: Mr. Ms.) Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____
 Email _____ Social Security No. _____
 Local Association _____ TSTA Region _____ Work Site _____
 Position (Teacher, Principal, ESP, etc.) _____ ☐ Supervisory ☐ Non-Supervisory

ETHNIC GROUP: (Check all that apply)

- ☐ American Indian/Alaska Native ☐ Asian ☐ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander ☐ Multi-ethnic
☐ Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ Caucasian (not of Spanish Origin) ☐ Other _____
☐ Check here if you do not want your ethnicity printed
☐ Enclosed is my election statement of 25 words or less which will be published in the spring *Advocate*. (Note: If your statement exceeds 25 words, it will be cut at 25 words.)

Send by U.S. Mail or FAX (512-486-7053) to: Sandra Solimine, TSTA, Organizing Center for Executive and Governance, 316 W. 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701

Signature of Nominee _____

TSTA State Convention Delegate Elections

State delegate allocations for local associations (including TFA) to the April 28-29, 2006 TSTA House of Delegates will be mailed to local presidents on January 23.

Delegates are allocated to locals in a ratio of one (1) delegate for every fifty (50) members or major fraction based on the local's Active, Life and ESP membership on January 15, 2006. The policy regarding election of delegates, forms and timelines will accompany the allocation. If a local wishes to conduct their election for delegates, they may do so and keep a list of delegates in the order of votes received. When the local delegate allocation is received by the local, then the top vote getters who are delegates are listed as delegates and the remaining vote getters are listed as alternates.

Contact Sandra Solimine in the Organizing Center for Executive and Governance at 877-ASK-TSTA, extension 1514, or sandras@tsta.org if you have questions regarding the elections.

ATTENTION, RETIRED MEMBERS:

According to the TSTA Bylaws retired at-large delegates for the state House of Delegates are allocated to TSTA-Retired/

NEA-Retired members. The number of at-large TSTA-R delegates will be based on TSTA-Retired membership as of January 15, 2006. In order to run for a TSTA-R at-large delegate position, a candidate must be a member of TSTA-R and NEA-R.



These at-large retired delegates are allocated in the ratio of one (1) delegate to every seventy-five (75) members or major fraction thereof.

Nomination forms must be received by January 16, 2006.

Ballots for the election will be sent to members on February 10, 2006. The deadline for returning ballots to TSTA Headquarters is March 16, 2006.

Any retired member who is a TSTA-R/NEA-R member may nominate himself/herself or another qualified member for a retired delegate position.

NOMINATION FORM

RETIRED AT-LARGE DELEGATE POSITIONS TSTA HOUSE OF DELEGATES—APRIL 28-29, 2006

The deadline for receipt of this nomination form at TSTA's Headquarters is January 16, 2006
(This form is also available online at www.tsta.org)

(Circle One: Mr. Ms.) Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Day Phone _____

Email _____ Social Security No. _____

ETHNIC GROUP: (Check all that apply)

☐ American Indian/Alaska Native ☐ Asian ☐ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander ☐ Multi-ethnic
☐ Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ Caucasian (not of Spanish Origin) ☐ Other _____

☐ Check here if you do not want your ethnicity printed

☐ Enclosed is my election statement of 25 words or less which will be sent with the ballot.
(Note: If your statement exceeds 25 words, it will be cut at 25 words.)

Send by U.S. Mail or FAX (512-486-7043) to: TSTA-Retired, 316 W. 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701

Signature of Nominee _____

TSTA/NEA

Texas State Teachers Association/National Education Association

877-ASK-TSTA • www.tsta.org

2005-06 ENROLLMENT FORM

Please return this completed form to your Association Representative or mail to TSTA Membership Department,
316 West 12th Street, Austin, Texas 78701-1892. If you have questions, call **877-ASK-TSTA**.

<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>			
NAME			SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER			DATE OF BIRTH			
<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>			
ADDRESS			LOCAL ASSOCIATION			HIRE DATE			
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>						
CITY	STATE	ZIP	NAME OF ISD						
<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>						
EMAIL AT HOME			CAMPUS/WORKSITE						
<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>						
EMAIL AT WORK			POSITION (I.E. CLASSROOM TEACHER, LIBRARIAN, BUS DRIVER, ETC.)						
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	ETHNICITY						
AREA CODE	HOME PHONE	AREA CODE	WORK PHONE	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaska Native				<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Spanish Origin)	
				<input type="checkbox"/> Asian				<input type="checkbox"/> Multi-Ethnic	
				<input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander				<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	
				<input type="checkbox"/> Black				<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
				<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic					
<small>Ethnicity information is optional and failure to provide it will in no way affect your membership status, rights or benefits in NEA, TSTA or any of their affiliates. This information will be kept confidential.</small>									
METHOD OF PAYMENT									
PAYROLL DEDUCTION AUTHORIZATION (BELOW)									
I hereby authorize the _____ School District to deduct the total amount of the annual obligation as set by the appropriate Association governance bodies in _____ equal payments in order to pay my dues to the professional associations and organizations listed and for political action contributions indicated. The authorization will continue in effect for this school year and future years, including any increase that may occur, until I give written notice to the local by September 15 to revoke. I further authorize any unpaid annual balance to be deducted from my final check. The Local Association or TSTA/NEA will notify School District officials of the annual dues amounts for all levels of the Association each year.									
_____ Please check if you would like to receive TSTA's electronic newsletter, the <i>TSTA Briefing</i> , which is distributed by email at least once a week. Send to: <input type="checkbox"/> home email address <input type="checkbox"/> work email address									

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ANNUAL DUES AND CONTRIBUTIONS	AMOUNT
	1. Professional Dues—TSTA/NEA (Active)	\$383.00
	Professional Dues—New to the profession	\$261.50
	2. Educational Support Dues—Full-time	\$200.00
	Educational Support Dues—Part-time	\$103.25
	3. NEA Fund for Children and Public Education (suggested amount \$15.00)	
	4. TSTA-PAC (see disclaimer below)	\$ 9.00
	5. Region Dues	
	6. Local Association Dues	
	TOTAL	

DISCLAIMER: The TSTA Political Action Committee (TSTA-PAC) and National Education Association Fund for Children and Public Education collect voluntary contributions from Association members and use these contributions for political purposes, including, but not limited to, making contributions to and expenditures on behalf of friends of public education who are candidates for federal office. Contributions to TSTA-PAC and The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education are voluntary; making a contribution is neither a condition of employment nor membership in the Association, and members have the right to refuse to contribute without suffering any reprisal. Although the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education requests an annual contribution of \$15, this is only a suggestion. A member may contribute more or less than the suggested amount, or may contribute nothing at all, without it affecting his or her membership status, rights, or benefits in NEA or any of its affiliates.

Contributions or gifts to The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education, TSTA-PAC and local PACs are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

Federal law requires political committees to report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of \$200 in a calendar year.

Federal law prohibits The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education from receiving donations from persons other than members of NEA and its affiliates, and their immediate families. All donations from persons other than members of NEA and its affiliates, and their immediate families, will be returned forthwith.

"I decline to contribute to TSTA-PAC and I understand this will not in any way affect my membership status or rights." _____ INITIAL _____

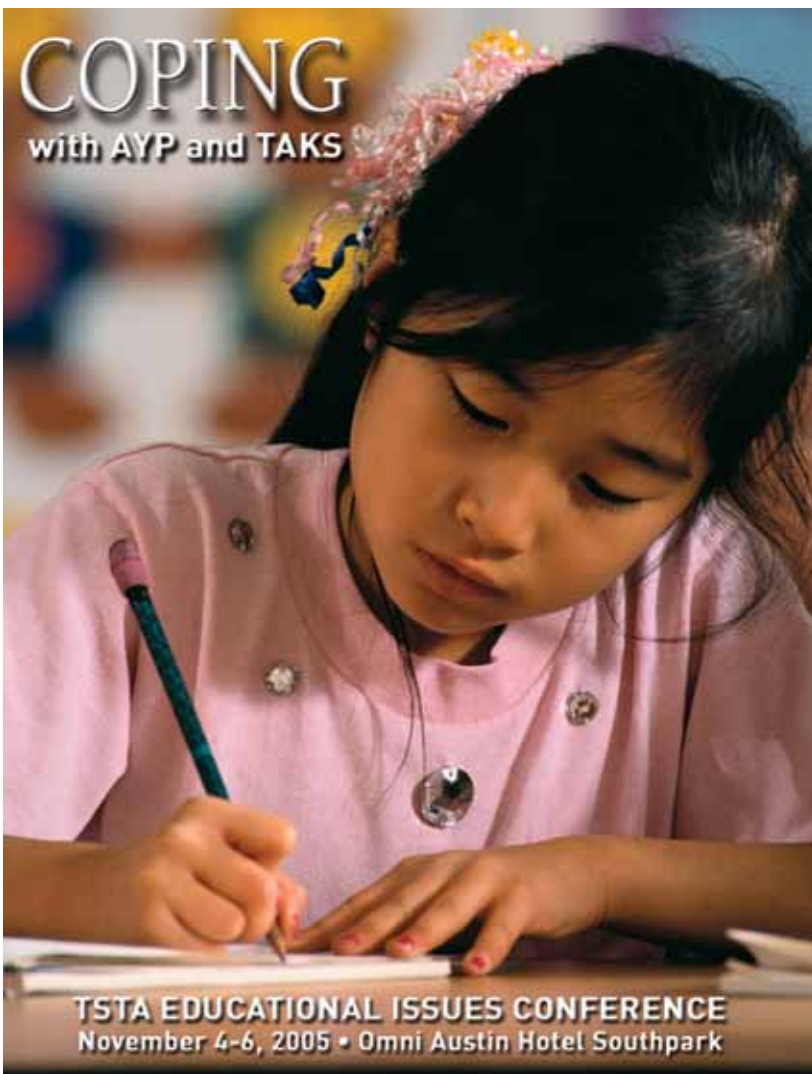
Annual membership dues to NEA include \$4.60 for NEA Today, \$2.55 for NEA-Retired and/or \$18.00 for the Higher Education publications. The NEA publication(s) received by members are based on membership category. Annual membership dues to TSTA include subscription to the TSTA Advocate. Membership is open only to those who agree to subscribe to the goals and objectives of the Association and to abide by its constitution and bylaws. To be eligible for TSTA legal defense funding, a member must have been a TSTA/NEA local member at least thirty (30) calendar days before the member knew or should have known of the events or occurrences upon which the action complained of is based. Exception may apply to first year employees who are members.

Former student member?
_____ YES _____ NO

MEMBER SIGNATURE

DATE

LOCAL ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE



Mark the Date!

The TSTA Educational Issues Conference, previously known as the Critical Issues Conference, is set for November 4-6 at the Omni Austin Hotel Southpark, 4140 Governor's Row (near the corner of IH 35 and Ben White Blvd.).

Instructional sessions related to TAKS, AYP, legislative and legal issues will be offered.

Go to www.tsta.org to download a registration form and for more information on the conference sessions.

REGISTRATION FEES:

- \$119 for regular registration (post-marked by October 28, 2005)
- \$149 for walk-up registration
- \$199 registration fee for non-members
- Students are half price

HOTEL RATES:

\$80—single; \$99—double/triple/quad

Reservations may be made directly with the Omni Austin Hotel Southpark, 512-448-2222 or the Central Reservations line, 1-800-THE-OMNI (843-6664). The cut-off deadline for reservations is Friday, October 21.

Please share this copy of the *Advocate* with others

Texas State Teachers Association

316 West 12th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

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