

Advocate

Texas State Teachers Association/National Education Association

WINTER 2005



KAREN SHEPHERD
Teacher of the Year

Together We Will Make the Change

In October the Speaker of the House put out his interim House Public Education Committee Charges and made it clear that he was pushing ahead with an agenda of vouchers, merit pay, and rolling back current benefits and contract standards. He refuses to listen to the education community or even the majority in the House that rejected this plan in the Second Special Session. We have work to do before the legislature convenes again.



Local presidents and members of TSTA's Legislative and Political Advocacy Committee have been screening and interviewing candidates for several weeks now as part of the grassroots process we use to recommend candidates to our members. These recommendations go to the full LPAC Board on January 8. If the LPAC concurs, we will inform our members, begin to assist in their campaigns, and donate to their campaigns.

We expect an unprecedented number of primary election races this cycle, and TSTA will be involved in 25-40 of them. Visibility of teachers and school employees in these races is crucial. We must have members not only working in the campaigns but actively seeking voters from among community and family members and friends and getting out the vote on Election Day. Our 500,000 education employees in this state could carry most of these elections if we work collectively!

Of course all campaigns need volunteers and money. We must have both!

Did you know that TSTA has one of the top-ranked political action committees in the state, even though only a small percentage of our members donate to our Continuing Contributor program? We are, of course, prohibited by law from using member dues for political purposes, so we have our own PAC of which we are very proud.

Like it or not, money is crucial in politics, and we must be there to support our friends and fight our enemies. That's how politics works. If you would like to join the ranks of those who make things happen, send an email now to our PAC staff liaison, Adriana Montoya, at adrianam@tsta.org, and she will send you the easy-to-complete form immediately. You will receive a TSTA-PAC shirt that you can wear proudly as proof that you're making a difference.

Remember: Until the players change, the script stays the same. Same old gridlock, same old lip service about improving school funding and salaries, same old band-aid on a seriously wounded system. Let's change it! Together we will!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Donna". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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Coping with a Flawed System

Dr. Linda McNeil, co-director of the Center of Education at Rice University, was impressed with the long list of workshops offered at the TSTA Educational Issues Conference, which was entitled, “Coping with TAKS and AYP.”

“I marvel at your program and the creativity here, as you all try to figure out: are there some ways to hold onto authentic teaching? Are there some ways to really engage kids?” McNeil, the keynote speaker for the November event, said.

“We never agreed to a system that has a completely different value structure, a completely different language, a completely different set of purposes,” she said. “We’ve had this accountability system for 11 years, since the summer that Rod Paige made all the Houston principals ... go on the performance based business model that made their job security dependent on standardized test scores. The unfortunate business model they picked was Enron—base everything on a single indicator that’s easily manipulated and carry your losses and debts on another set of ledgers. It led to the ‘by any means necessary’ approach to spiking the scores.”

If the system were working as claimed, Texas would be leading the nation; instead, McNeil said, Texas students have not done well by recognized measures, including ACT and SAT scores, and we are among the bottom three states on the number of 19-year-olds enrolled in higher education.

It has left us with a “watered-down” curriculum, she said, because curriculum dollars

LOSING KIDS: McNeil has gathered data on how many youth are leaving school early, who they are, where they are, and what factors are driving these losses. www.tsta.org/news/current/losingkids.shtml

are being used to buy test preparation materials and too much instructional time is spent practicing for the test.

“We have a system we all know to be perverse. I actually ask teachers: Tell me how the accountability system has enriched the intellectual life of your classes. It’s a serious question. Has the implementation of the accountability system made more of your teachers want to stay in teaching, especially your brighter colleagues?”

“We are in a very strange educational system which, by the force of law, is making us do things we know aren’t appropriate and keeping us from doing some things we know are good for children,” McNeil said. “You can’t talk about child development under a standardized system. Standardization, by definition, means you’re reducing the kids to one single common denominator. We can’t talk about multiple intelligences. We can’t talk about their social and emotional development.”

“We model ethical behavior to our kids,” she said. “When a teacher says, ‘I know this isn’t real math, but this is what you have to do to pass the state test,’ we’re saying that sometimes you’ve got to cut corners. Sometimes you don’t stand up for what you believe.”



Lubbock special education teacher James Harris, one of five teachers to be awarded the NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence, talked at the conference about his interview for the award.

“One of the questions they asked me was, ‘If you were given this position and it became your job to speak to the legislature, what is the one burning issue you’d speak to them about?’ I didn’t have to think long about that one. I believe in America and everything it stands for. What makes us great is our ideals and our institutions,” Harris said. “Every great country fell not because of an enemy but because they turned inward; they destroyed their own institutions.

“In America today, we are taking the institutions that brought us to greatness and degrading them. Today, many of our elected leaders talk about privatization of our public schools,” he said. “This is a form of destruction of an institution that has helped every American child have the opportunity to reach their dreams. Folks who want to privatize our schools are the same folks that believe learning in children can be produced like a computer chip; they believe in profit over development of individual differences, and they lack confidence in the very people who dedicate their lives to helping children, the teachers.”



TSTA President Donna New Haschke talked about TSTA’s political frustrations. “On issue after issue, the Speaker and his allies have made it clear that there will be no compromise, no attempt to negotiate a solution to the school finance crisis,” she said. “The Governor has spent his time engaging in an attempt to direct attention away from his failures and the real problems facing our public schools.”

Now the Governor has directed Texas Education Agency to create a merit pay plan for teachers, which flies in the face of legislative intent. “The various versions of merit pay that appeared in different versions of HB 2 all had two things in common. One was tying pay raises to standardized test scores and the second was that none of them became law,” Haschke said. **“If the Governor really cared about the hard working teachers of Texas, he would get behind an across-the-board teacher pay raise** proposal that would move all teacher salaries to at least the national average rather than proposing a 5% solution that rewards only a handful of teachers and leaves 95% of our teachers behind.”

Haschke urged all members to get involved in the upcoming elections and become continuing contributors to TSTA’s political action committee.



NEA Executive Committee member Becky Pringle, a middle school science teacher from Pennsylvania, echoed Haschke’s call to collective action. “The proudest vote I’ve ever cast was the vote for NEA to sue the federal government” over No Child Left Behind, Pringle said. “We said someone has to stand up for our children, someone has to say no.”

She said the current accountability system is “unrealistic, inflexible, punitive, and dooms our schools to failure.

“To paraphrase Plato, if you think you are too good and too smart to be involved in politics, you will be ruled by those who are neither good nor smart,” Pringle said. “If we as educators don’t stand up, who will?”

If you’re ready to get involved, call TSTA at 877-ASK-TSTA and ask how you can help elect friends of education and contribute to TSTA’s political action committee. Visit www.tsta.org in January to see our recommended candidates for the March elections.





Unions Boost Student Achievement

The presence of teacher unions is positively correlated with higher student achievement on the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) and the American College Test (ACT), according to a study presented in the Winter 2000 Harvard Educational Review.

In “Do Teacher Unions Hinder Educational Performance? Lessons Learned from State SAT and ACT Scores,” researchers Brian Powell, Lala Carr Steelman, and Robert M. Carini compared states that are strongly teacher unionized with those that are not and found a clear link between teacher unions and higher state performance on certain standardized tests. This pattern holds even when other factors such as family income, parental education, gender, geographic region, and race are considered.

“Teacher unions have been demonized by their critics and canonized by their advocates for years,” says Powell. “Many people assume teacher unions adversely affect students’ performance, but this assumption hasn’t, for the most part, been tested. Our study seriously challenges this assumption.”

The Harvard Educational Review is a leading journal on educational research read by researchers, educators, and administrators around the world. www.gse.harvard.edu/hepg

To request a copy of the article, please call (617) 495-3432.

At Will? TSTA Can Help

If you are an educational support professional who is an at-will employee, TSTA can help. At-will employment is the basic employment doctrine in Texas which says that an employee may be fired without notice for any reason or no reason. Most employees in Texas are at-will employees, with no contract and very little legal protection. In the school district context, ESPs are usually at-will. Teachers and other professionals have contracts. An at-will employee may not be fired for an illegal reason, such as discrimination based on race, age, disability, religion, national origin, and gender, among others.

The at-will doctrine subjects ESPs to injustice in the workplace regardless of years of service or job performance. It also makes ESPs second-class employees despite the indispensable services they perform for students, schools and districts.

Although there is no law requiring an ESP to be given broader employment rights or to be hired under a contract, it is certainly not illegal for a school district to do so. ESPs can achieve employment protection by being made “just cause” employees at the local level by contract or by appropriate language in board policy or your employee handbook.

TSTA can help you to organize locally around these issues. Contact your local president or the TSTA Help Center at 877-ASK-TSTA.

Important Notice on Elections

Watch closely for the next issue of the *Advocate*. Ballots for electing TSTA state delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly will be printed in that issue. You should receive your next issue by late March, and the deadline for the marked ballot to be received at TSTA Headquarters is 5 p.m. CDT, Friday, April 21.

Candidates Announce for NEA Director

Nominees for NEA Director for Texas, Place 2 are Winifred Jackson, Longview Educators Association; Evelina Loya, Ysleta Teachers Association; and Rhonda Gail Schell, Beaumont Teachers Association.

The filing deadline was September 15 with the election to be conducted at the State House of Delegates in Austin in April. Candidate statements and biographical information will appear in the spring 2006 *Advocate*.



SBOE: It's on the Air

State Board of Education meetings and its meetings of the Committee of the Whole are now broadcast live over the internet. A link to the audio cast will appear on the Texas Education Agency's homepage and the SBOE web pages only on days when broadcasts are occurring. Those links are: www.tea.state.tx.us and www.tea.state.tx.us/sboe/. Electronic versions of the agenda are available at: www.tea.state.tx.us/sboe/schedule.

School Finance and Reform Watch

Perry Orders Incentive Pay for Teachers: Once again, Gov. Rick Perry is attempting to get, by executive order, what the legislature refused to give him.

In November he issued an executive order directing Education Commissioner Shirley Neeley to establish a new incentive-based pay system for Texas teachers who succeed in economically disadvantaged schools.

Under Perry's directive, schools that serve a large population of economically disadvantaged students that show marked improvement in student performance will be eligible for a grant of at least \$100,000. Local school officials will have discretion to distribute the grant to the teachers they determine are having the greatest impact.

"By dictating that the Texas Education Agency must create a merit pay plan for teachers, the Governor has once again chosen to ignore the will of the legislature and impose his whim on the public schools of Texas," TSTA President Donna New Haschke said.

The incentive pay program will be funded by \$10 million in discretionary federal funds, providing \$100,000 grants to 100 campuses statewide. Perry said he will ask the Legislative Budget Board to authorize another \$25 million in funding, which would expand the program to an additional 250 campuses.

Commissioner Says 65% Rule Will Take Effect in 06-07: Meanwhile, Neeley has announced that the rule requiring school districts to spend 65% of their budget on instruction — Perry's first attempt at overriding the legislature by executive order — will take effect in the 2006-07 school year.

Two task forces on the issue had held hearings at press time and were expected to meet jointly at least once more to consider input. TSTA Executive Director E. C. Walker testified against the proposal in one of the hearings, pointing out that 65% of inadequate is still inadequate and that TSTA believes counselors, librarians and nurses should be included in instructional expenditures; see www.tsta.org/news/current/65%25.shtml for more. Neeley indicated that she will propose a rule sometime in the next six months, then a hearing will be held on it.

Interim Charges of the House Public Education Committee: Hint: #1 is vouchers, #4 is contracts and all teacher benefits, and #6 is merit pay. See the whole list at <http://www.tsta.org/legislative/update/index.shtml>.

Court Expected to Rule Soon: At press time, in mid-November, a court ruling on Texas' school finance system was expected any day. Please check www.tsta.org for an update.

Tax Group to Develop School Finance Plan: The Texas Tax Reform Commission, headed by John Sharp, held its first meeting in November. The committee is charged with developing proposals to modernize the state tax system, provide long term property tax relief, and develop sound financing for Texas public schools.

Dewhurst, Craddick to Form Joint Committee on Reforms: Lt. Governor Dewhurst and Speaker Craddick have agreed to form a joint House and Senate committee to consider state public school reforms before the third special legislative session of 2005-06 is called.

Please check www.tsta.org for updates on these and other stories.



What Type of Contract Do You Hold?

WHAT ARE YOUR BASIC EMPLOYMENT, DISMISSAL, AND NONRENEWAL RIGHTS UNDER YOUR CONTRACT?

A review of the three types of teacher contracts:

CONTINUING CONTRACTS:

A continuing contract is as close to K-12 tenure as we have in Texas. A continuing contract ceases to exist only if the employee resigns, retires, or is lawfully dismissed. Despite the efforts of some school districts, TSTA believes that a continuing contract teacher cannot be made to relinquish his or her older continuing contract in order to sign a less favorable continuing contract or a term contract. A teacher proposed for dismissal from a continuing contract always has the right to a fair, impartial hearing before an independent hearing examiner. (We refer to this type of hearing as a “subchapter F”

hearing, referring to Chapter 21, subchapter F of the Texas Education Code).

Subchapter F hearings were created in state law in 1996. While no process is perfect, subchapter F hearings are the best and fairest method for determining good cause because the hearing examiner is not a school district employee, and the teacher is afforded certain discovery and subpoena rights which tend to level the playing field.

Since there is technically no end to a continuing contract until resignation, retirement, or dismissal, there is no renewal period for a continuing contract. Thus any dismissal would occur during the contract term. Only a small percentage of Texas school districts offer

continuing contracts to teachers, and many of those are phasing them out for new teachers.

TERM CONTRACTS:

The vast majority of Texas school districts offer term contracts. A term contract is for a time certain, usually one or two years. If a teacher is proposed for termination during the contract term, the employee is entitled to the same subchapter F proceeding described above. If a term contract teacher is proposed for nonrenewal at the end of the contract term, he or she is entitled to written notice from the board of the proposed nonrenewal at least 45 days before the last day of instruction. If the board does not timely provide this notice, the teacher is automatically re-

newed for the next school year. Upon receipt of the notice, the term contract teacher has 15 days to request a nonrenewal hearing before the school board concerning the nonrenewal.

A school board nonrenewal hearing is a tough place to win a nonrenewal case, because the school board members have already voted to approve the proposed nonrenewal. If the board embraces the administration, the teacher will find it most challenging to change the board members' minds. While most school board members claim to be impartial in such proceedings, most are not. They have received calls at home about the teacher, they have had private discussions about the teacher with the superintendent and/or principal and are inclined to support the administration; and as mentioned earlier, they have already approved the recommended nonrenewal. Some boards limit the hearing to one or two hours.

With that said, in some circumstances nonrenewal hearings can be fruitful for teachers, with or without board impartiality. They can, on occasion, allow a teacher to expose illegalities perpetrated by the district, which may be reviewed on appeal. The hearing can also be a very cathartic process for some teachers. Win, lose or draw, they get their "day in court" before the school board and get to make the administration answer some tough questions.

PROBATIONARY CONTRACTS:

Now we turn our attention to our colleagues employed on probationary contracts. We start with the proposition that a teacher new to a district, and a teacher who was previously employed by a district who returns to the district after a two-year lapse, must be employed on a probationary contract for at least one year. However, a district may employ an experienced teacher or principal on a term contract. For brand new teachers, the probationary period can actually last up to four years. For a teacher who has taught in five of the

last eight school years, the probationary period can only last one year.

After the probationary period, the school district must place the employee on a term or continuing contract, or else dismiss the employee.

Are probationary contracts really that bad? On a day-to-day basis, a probationary contract teacher is entitled to all the rights and privileges of employment that all teachers have (e.g., state minimum salary schedule and any applicable local schedules; 30-minute duty-free lunch; five days of personal leave and any applicable local leave; 450 minutes of planning and prep time every two weeks; right to resign without board approval if done in writing at least 45 days before the first day of instruction). In fact, the wording of a probationary contract may not differ at all when compared to a term or continuing contract. Additionally, a probationary contract teacher proposed for dismissal during the contract term is entitled to the subchapter F hearing referred to previously.

As you can see, a probationary contract

is a lot better than no contract. So what's the catch? The only difference between a probationary and term contract is the nonrenewal procedure at the end of the contract term. Like the term contract teacher, the probationary teacher is also entitled to notice of nonrenewal 45 days before the last day of instruction, but that is all. Most notices simply state words to the effect of, "The board has chosen not to rehire you next year. Your contract has been terminated at the end of the term." Unlike the term contract teacher, the probationary teacher has no opportunity for a board hearing and cannot appeal the board's decision to the Commissioner on substantive grounds.

If you are sought to be dismissed or your contract nonrenewed, there are very short timelines that must be adhered to in order to challenge the action. Please call the TSTA Help Center at 877-ASK-TSTA immediately if you receive a notice of proposed or recommended nonrenewal or termination.

—TSTA General Counsel Kevin Lungwitz

LEGAL BRIEFS

- TSTA legal staff has filed a federal lawsuit against the Brownsville ISD on behalf of 12 BISD cafeteria managers and members of the Association of Brownsville Educators/TSTA. The lawsuit alleges that the cafeteria managers were denied their rights under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the federal law that provides for overtime pay for non-professional workers for work performed in excess of 40 hours per week. The suit is pending in federal court in Brownsville, Texas.
- A TSTA building representative in Edgewood ISD contacted the TSTA Help Center in May 2005 because she and several other TSTA members on her campus had been placed on growth plans by the principal due to their student failure rate. The teacher indicated there was no documentation to support the employees' placement on growth plans. The TSTA Help Center contacted the local association president and coordinated a strategy. The TSTA Help Center wrote the grievance and the local president took it to the central administration to informally discuss the issue. The local president was able to resolve the issue at the informal level and all TSTA members on the campus were removed from the growth plans.
- The Longview Educators Association contacted the TSTA Help Center with a complaint that the LISD was making teachers work during their duty-free lunch during TAKS testing. TSTA Legal Staff has opined that TAKS testing is not a valid reason for denying teachers their 30-minute duty-free lunch. In a shining example of team work, the TSTA Help Center wrote the grievance and the LEA president filed it and presented it. In response, the LISD stopped the practice and promised not to continue it in future years.



KAREN SHEPHERD

Teacher of the Year

Karen Shepherd—Plano Senior High School science department chair, advanced placement biology and research science teacher, LASER sponsor, and TSTA member—talks about education and what it's like to be named the Texas Teacher of the Year.

Surprised?

I almost wrecked. They said, “We’ll call you either way. If the commissioner is the one who calls you, it means you won.” We were driving to Galveston to visit my parents, and I saw the 512 area code on my cell phone. I thought, “Here it is.” And when I heard, “Hi, Karen, this is Shirley,” I just burst into tears, and I said, “You have to wait a minute because I’m trying to drive and cry at the same time.”

My essays are from the heart. When I went to the interview—which is pretty scary, one person interviewed by 10 or 11 people—I thought, “I’m just going to be me,” so I had a great time and enjoyed answering the questions. I even sang to them; that was kind of scary. My husband was like, “What were you doing? They were laughing so hard I could hear them down where I was sitting.”



They made me ride in the homecoming parade, and I thought, “How silly am I going to look riding in the parade and waving to people?” But if I could give one moment, out of all the moments I’ve had so far, to every teacher, it would be that one.

I don’t know how many times I cried, because people would read the sign on the car and start cheering. It was just amazing! My curriculum director, who was driving, said, “Let’s do it again, that was fun!”





It was one of those pivotal points. You always hear that your words really do have an impact. We were at the 2000 International Science and Engineering Fair, and we rode on the bus with students from all over the country. It was a great year for us, and as my students were getting off the bus, I was saying, “You’ve done great, you’ve had a great day, go have fun,” and literally the next kid stopped. I didn’t know him. He said, “Excuse me, ma’am, you haven’t greeted ME.” My kids would not let me sit down until I had greeted everyone.

It left me wondering. A lot of the time we think our AP and high level kids don’t need to hear that, but all learners, whether they’re Harvard-bound or workforce-bound, need a positive word. I constantly am telling my students that they’re doing a great job and giving them little stickers. They love their little stickers. Big, burly football players will ask for a sticker. We all need positive words. We get so focused on the learning and what’s going on in our classrooms that we sometimes forget to say, “I appreciated you today. I liked what you did. Good work!”

Sometimes you think nobody really cares about teachers. I know our communities appreciate us, but not every teacher gets to feel what I felt that day.

How many times have I thought about writing a letter to a teacher I had or my kids had to say thank you, and I’ve never gotten it done? We all need to do that more.

It doesn’t have to be flowers or cookies; just “thank you and I appreciate you” makes our day.





If I ruled the world, I would find some way to take into account something other than just test scores, because when the focus is so much on one thing, the things we do to achieve those goals are frightening. We lose sight of what is important, which is learning.

First off, I would not exempt all the special education kids, but I would show the progress that they've made. Right now, we're pushing and pushing and pushing to get them exempted, so they don't negatively affect our report card. I would love to see an accountability system that looks at what those children have gained rather than, "Did we hit the bottom line number?"

I would love to see taken into account all of our kids in science fair that have made it to competition, and all of our kids in speech that have made it to competition, and all of our band and orchestra kids that have come home with high division ratings.

I would love for someone to come see our cluster concept in band, where we start them as sixth graders who have never played an instrument and by Thanksgiving they are playing beautiful songs.

All the beautiful artwork I see when I walk down the hall: none of that is factored into our report card, and it's all very much about who we are.



"Karen has set up several community outreach projects to promote science to younger students, particularly those with limited English who may not fully understand the opportunities in that field.

"For the last two years, she has taken students to several schools to present experiments and talk to students in order to develop their understanding of science.

"Karen and the LASER Club have worked with those young students to develop and complete science fair projects. While the success of the program was a boon for science, Karen was even more delighted to see her own students learn about the power and reward of helping others."

—Dr. Doyle Dean, principal of Plano Senior High (right, with Superintendent Otto)





ENTHUSIASM

Enthusiasm is contagious! Singing, dancing, and even crying with my students helps keep them engaged in the learning process. The result is a place where they can take risks and soar.

LIFELONG LEARNING

I am a lifelong learner who encourages my students to adopt this philosophy. In science this is a matter of survival because they will compete in an ever-changing technologically advanced world. Knowing where to find answers, knowing how to perform research, and recognizing what is fact or fiction are all vital skills necessary for success in the real world. Facts students learn in class may become outdated, but if the skills they learn serve them for the rest of their lives, then I have earned the right to be called teacher, guru, mentor, counselor, and educator.



MUTUAL RESPECT

If students are to care about learning, they must know in their hearts that you care for them. Given mutual respect and concern, students believe that they can master anything.

If students are to care about learning, they must know in their hearts that you care for them. Given mutual respect and concern, students believe that they can master anything.



I'll be here a long time. Maybe not as long as my teaching partner—she turns 80 this spring and is in her 48th year of teaching—but I'll be here. When I try to think of what to give up, I don't want to give up my research kids and I don't want to give up my AP biology kids. I love it all. I don't want to be in curriculum; I don't want to be a principal.

I want to be in the classroom. I love the day-to-day interaction.





Making the Choice to Be More

You barely have time to eat and sleep. Why would you choose to spend some 200 hours pursuing an advanced teaching certification that is strictly voluntary?

More than 40,000 teachers in America can answer that question. They have successfully completed the rigorous certification process that leads to National Board Certification (NBC).

NEA was among the founding organizations that established the National Board in 1987 and remains one of its strongest supporters.

NEA President Reg Weaver and two NEA Executive Committee members, Becky Pringle and Michael Marks, serve on its board of directors.

One reason for the Association's support is that NEA members attest to the positive effects the NBC process has on their teaching practices. They say it led them to internalize National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) standards, analyze their own teaching in relation to those standards, and reflect on the impact of their teaching strategies on student learning.

Is there research on NBC?

At a time when more emphasis is being placed on staffing high-needs schools with quality teachers, new research shows that National Board Certified teachers use more effective teaching strategies.

Student assessments used by teachers who have achieved NBC yielded results that were more closely tied to learning goals than the work of non-NBC teachers, according to a study released in July.

"NBPTS is committed to studying this issue in depth because **one of the valuable aspects of having more than 40,000 NBCTs nationwide is the opportunity to capture what our most accomplished teachers do well,**" said NBPTS President and CEO Joseph A. Aguerreberre.

The report, “Investigating the Classroom Assessment Literacy of National Board Certified Teachers,” was conducted by a team of researchers from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Western Region Education Service Alliance and the Assessment Training Institute.

Another recent study, which examined the impact on student achievement, found that NBC teachers developed and implemented instructional plans and assignments aimed at fostering deeper student understanding. According to researchers from Appalachian State University, **students taught by NBC teachers achieved deeper learning than students of non-board certified teachers.**

The study, “Examining the Relationship between Depth of Student Learning and Teacher National Board Certification Status,” examined the teaching practices of 64 teachers in 17 states.

Additional studies confirming the effectiveness of NBC teachers include:

- Research by CNA Corporation in November 2004 found that students of NBC teachers did a measurably better job than other ninth and tenth graders on year-end math tests in Miami-Dade County (Fla.) Public Schools. All else being equal, teachers who had achieved NBC helped their students achieve larger testing gains than did colleagues without the certification.
- Research by Arizona State University in September 2004 found that students of NBC teachers outperformed students of non-NBC teachers on the Stanford-9 Achievement Test, with learning **gains equivalent on average to spending more than an extra month in school each year.**
- Research by the University of Washington and the Urban Institute in March 2004 found that students of NBC teachers experienced year-end testing improvements that averaged 7 to 15 percent more than their peers.

Who is eligible? All eligibility requirements must be met before you submit your application—and **failure to make sure you meet the requirements can be expensive.** If NBPTS determines that you do not meet the eligibility requirements, you may be eligible to receive a refund of a portion of your fee, but the \$300 materials fee will not be refunded.

You must submit proof that you meet the following education, employment, and licensure requirements:

1. Possess a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution.
2. Have completed three years of successful teaching in one or more early

childhood, elementary, middle, or secondary school(s). Note that applicants for ECYA/School Counseling must have completed three years successfully serving as a school counselor in one or more early childhood, elementary, middle, or secondary school(s) to meet the employment eligibility prerequisite. (See www.nbpts.org for a list of activities that do not count.)

3. Hold a valid state teaching license (or meet the licensure requirements established by your state for a “school counselor” and hold that valid license if applying for the ECYA/School Counseling certificate) for each of the three years of employment you verify.



WHERE CAN YOU GET HELP?

- Go to www.nbpts.org for all the details on how to become a candidate.
- NEA and AFT put together a notebook of tips and strategies to help applicants. Go to www.nea.org/nationalboard/index.html and download the Candidate Guide.
- NEA members can apply for a low interest loan to help cover the full assessment fee for National Board Certification. For more information, call 800-545-4094 or visit the NEA Member Benefits website at www.neamb.com/loans/loanbc.jsp.

Read Across America

Reading is vitally important, especially in science. A scientist has to read to stay current; if you don't stay abreast of your reading, in two months you'll be behind. I really wish our kids would read more. I know how much they're required to read for class; there are not that many hours left to read for fun. I give them a list of books I love and tell them I hope they'll read them some day.

—Texas Teacher of the Year Karen Shepherd (see www.tsta.org for Karen's must-read list)

Teachers' Top 10 Books

1. Charlotte's Web by E. B. White (9-12 years)
2. The Polar Express by Chris Van Allsburg (4-8 years)
3. Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss (4-8 years)
4. The Cat in the Hat by Dr. Seuss (4-8 years)
5. Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak (4-8 years)

Kids' Top 10 Books

1. Harry Potter (series) by J. K. Rowling
2. Goosebumps (series) by R. L. Stine
3. Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss
4. The Cat in the Hat by Dr. Seuss
5. Arthur (series) by Marc Brown
6. Charlotte's Web by E. B. White
7. Shiloh (trilogy) by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

6. Love You Forever by Robert N. Munsch (4-8 years)
7. The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein (All ages)
8. The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle (Baby-Preschool)
9. Where the Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls (Young Adult)
10. The Mitten by Jan Brett (4-8 years)

8. Hatchet by Gary Paulsen
9. Holes by Louis Sachar
10. The Giver by Lois Lowry



See www.nea.org/readacross for more book lists and ideas and resources for setting up your own NEA's Read Across America celebration!



Making Dreams Come True

If you've got a great idea for a school project and you need funding, the NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education at www.nfie.org just might fund it. Ask these teachers, whose grants were announced in October!

\$5,000 to develop "Hiding Places," a project in which students learn about the habits of animals. Students will select an animal to research and read stories and articles about animal habits. A resident visual artist from Young Audiences of Southeast Texas, a local arts education organization, will work with teams to create a classroom book, written and illustrated by the students, who work with partners to create pages. Students also will create tiles which illustrate animal habits and will be displayed as a mural in the school hallway. *Thelma Eller, a K-3 reading coach at Fletcher Elementary School in Beaumont, and her partners Lori Douresseau and Debra Guidry*

\$5,000 to form a learning group to create campus-based science teacher resource centers. Each campus will host six students whose work will be assessed and teachers will engage in book study using books chosen by students. Lessons will be recorded and photos posted on teacher websites to compile a library of materials for future reference. *Penny Ghinaudo, a 9-12 science teacher at Wagner High School in San Antonio, and her partners Jari Kimberly Grantham, Lanette Miller, and Mary Real*

\$5,000 to implement "The Stop Six Drama Project" to introduce and engage students in performing arts and technology. Students will participate in theatrical productions using unique set designs and special effects created by blue screen technology, computer animation, and computer graphics. By participating in structured activities such as role-playing, script reading and analysis, live and taped broadcasts, set and costume design, and improvisation, students will be exposed to the history and culture of theater. *Elisabeth Ivy, a 6-8 English and drama teacher at Dunbar Sixth Grade Center in Fort Worth, and her partner Christopher Smith*

Every printer cartridge recycled at Staples by Dec. 31 generates \$1 for grants like these!



IN THE PHOTO: TSTA-Retired President Pauline Dixon (left) confers with NEA Executive Committee member Becky Pringle at the TSTA Educational Issues Conference.

TSTA-Retired: The repeal of the Social Security Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision continues to be a priority of NEA and NEA-Retired. More congressional members are sharing our concerns about GPO/WEP. TSTA and TSTA-Retired are working to help Texas school employees. For more information, contact TSTA-Retired, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701, or call 877-ASK-TSTA. A few reminders:

- ▶ NEA-Retired life membership dues increase September 1, 2006. Purchase your Life memberships for \$350 (\$250 for TSTA-Retired plus \$100 for NEA-Retired). Active members can purchase pre-retired memberships.
- ▶ Mark your calendar for our TSTA-Retired State Convention. It will be held at the Austin LaQuinta on MOPAC North on April 26-27. All retired members are delegates to our convention and invited to attend. The NEA-Retired vice president will be one of our guest speakers.
- ▶ TSTA-Retired members should be keeping a record of their volunteer hours for recognition at the retired convention.
- ▶ All nomination forms for delegates to the NEA and TSTA conventions, and the TSTA-Retired secretary and treasurer positions are due January 16, 2006. Ballots will be mailed February 10 and should be returned to TSTA-Retired by March 16, 2006.

More congressional members are sharing TSTA and TSTA-Retired's concerns about the Social Security Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision.

TSTA-Student Program:

CLASS Grants are the NEA-Student Program's answer for two of today's most vital needs: building community support for public education and addressing critical educational and social problems that face our communities. NEA provides grants of up to \$1,000 to support the efforts of student chapters that want to launch CLASS projects. Examples of local projects that have received grants: a book drive, a fundraiser for school supplies and materials, after-school tutoring, working with a center for at-risk children, and participating in adult learning programs.

www.nea.org/student-program/programs/class.html

**TSTA-Student
Program's State
Convention will be
April 7-8 in Austin at
the Red Lion Hotel.**

Education Support Professionals:

January 15 is the deadline to register for the 2006 NEA ESP Conference. The meeting will be March 10-12 at the Wyndham Philadelphia Hotel at Franklin Plaza in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Pre-conference workshops are March 8-10. This conference is a great opportunity for ESP members to develop new skills and learn more about relevant, important issues. Training sessions and workshops empower ESP members with the skills and information they need to assist with closing the achievement gap, organizing, building stronger locals, promoting membership recruitment, enhancing professional development and student achievement, and establishing strong internal and external relationships.

www.nea.org/esphome/members/espsconf06.html

CLASSROOM TIPS



UGANDA

Help Make Storybooks

The Memory Project is looking for students in writing and art classes to make books for children living amidst a war in Uganda. To escape the danger, some 40,000 village children flock to the cities every night, where they sleep in shelters or on sidewalks. Each morning, they walk miles back to their villages to go to school or work. While striving to survive the war, the children of Uganda also struggle to hang onto childhood.

With the books, the Memory Project hopes to provide momentary peace of mind and help the children learn to read in English. The project is open to students at any level. www.thememoryproject.org/childrensbooks



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

NEA has released a comprehensive reading list of 100 titles that celebrate African American heritage, tradition, and achievement.

www.nea.org/readacross/resources/afambooks.html



FREE MATERIALS

Print Your Own Calendar

Children's author/illustrator Jan Brett has 3,535 pages of free activities, coloring pages, and projects waiting for you. Among them is a 2006 calendar (click on Activities Pages); flash cards and other reading and math tools; e-post-cards and regular cards; and arts and crafts projects. www.janbrett.com

THE ARTS

Art and Music Sparkers

March is both Youth Art Month and Music in Our Schools Month, a good time to draw attention to the value of the arts in our schools. A few ideas:

Check out “@rt sparkers,” ideas that “excite the synaptic nerves in your brain and stir your imagination.” They're simple ideas—drawing like a cat, painting a family portrait, creating a mask—to jump start kids' brains. www.arts.ufl.edu/art/rt_room/index.html

Have elementary students make bean tambourines (paper plates with beans stapled inside) or shakers (rice-filled plastic eggs taped shut) to provide rhythmic accompaniment as you read aloud to them. For example, on *Green Eggs and Ham*, the kids would shake their instruments whenever the words of the title pop up.

Take kids on the Sounds of Music Scavenger Hunt. www.education-world.com/a_lesson/hunt/hunt067.shtml

A DAY OF SERVICE

The King Day of Service on January 16 honors the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by applying his teachings to community service that helps solve social problems. That service may meet a tangible need or a need of the spirit. Here are some ideas for projects students can do.

www.mlkday.org

- Remove graffiti from a building and paint a mural
- Build a playground
- Participate in a neighborhood watch
- Bring meals to homebound neighbors
- Register bone marrow and organ donors
- Arrange a health fair
- Teach seniors how to surf the Internet
- Devise crafts projects for children in hospitals
- Make a public space accessible to the disabled
- Serve meals at a homeless shelter
- Hold a workshop on Dr. King's life



READING

Get Ready to Celebrate!



NEA's Read Across America Day is coming soon!

March 2 is Dr. Seuss' birthday; on or near that date,

NEA encourages all Americans to spend a day showing kids the importance of reading. Find ideas for your own celebration at www.nea.org/readacross; pull the centerspread out of this issue of the *Advocate* and display it in your classroom; share your ideas and inspire others on the Pledge to Participate page at www.nea.org/readacross/pledge.html!

Three Texas projects made the list of "50 of the coolest events that took place for NEA's Read Across America in 2005" on the web site:

The Huebner Huskies of Huebner Road Elementary in San Antonio held their annual IDITAREAD program with frozen treats for kids who achieved their reading goals.

Longview high school student Jennifer Winzenburg launched a special project for KidsRadio Mania, KDPS FM88.1, the Radio Reading Reviews. Jennifer traveled to local schools and interviewed students about their favorite books.

The Spring Hill Leaders Corporation in Longview celebrated reading through a project called "Tales of Teddy" that kicked off on March 2 and ended at the close of the school year. They read to special needs elementary students for one hour a week. Each week had a reading theme accompanied by various activities. The final theme was "Teddy Get Ready" where each student stuffed, dressed, and named their own new reading bear.

HOLOCAUST

Free Teaching Kit for Grades 8-12

"One Survivor Remembers" tells the story of Gerda Weissmann Klein's six-year ordeal in Nazi labor camps and a forced death march. Though her experience was horrifying, Klein also remembers wonderful acts of decency and normalcy, testaments to the greatness of humanity.



The free kit, which can be ordered at <http://tolerance.org/teach/resources/survivor.jsp>, includes:

- A 40-minute Oscar-winning documentary film by Kary Antholis, available in VHS or DVD format, with closed-captioning;
- A collection of primary documents, drawn from Klein's personal collection;
- A resource booklet including a Holocaust timeline; and
- A teacher's guide with standards-based lesson plans.



TSTA AMBASSADOR ACADEMY, CLASS OF 2005

We're Looking for Tomorrow's Leaders!

If you want to:

- gain knowledge of the Association,
- discover more about yourself as an individual,
- learn problem-solving skills, and
- utilize those skills in your local association,

you're exactly what we're looking for! And we've got just the program to bring out your potential: the TSTA Ambassador Academy.

We're currently putting together the fifth class of Ambassadors, who will be trained July 10-14. To apply, you must have worked in the public school system less than 10 years and be willing to become an active leader.

If you are selected, you'll spend a week in Austin, being trained by TSTA and NEA staff—and having fun!

You'll build your communication and decision-making skills and learn about the Association's structure through NEA's acclaimed Personal Assessment Leadership Skills (PALS) program.

You'll experience the inner workings of the state Association and get to know the staff at TSTA Headquarters.

You will develop a plan of action, which will enable you to use your skills in your local association.

And you'll build relationships with Ambassadors from across the state.

When you return home, you'll be expected to become an active leader in your local and implement the goals

you set for yourself at the Academy. It can be a life-changing experience. But don't take our word for it! Take a look at the testimonials online at www.tsta.org/inside/calendar/ambassador.shtml.

Questions? Call 877-ASK-TSTA and ask for Nina Armstrong or email her at ninaa@tsta.org; or contact Susan Salinas at susans@tsta.org, or Yolanda Gonzalez at yolandag@tsta.org.

If you're ready to apply, print or download the application at the link above or ask Nina Armstrong (see above) to mail you one. Please email, fax or mail the application and letters of recommendation so that they will be received at TSTA, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701 by May 19, 2006.

Apply to be a TSTA Ambassador; it's an experience you'll never forget!

Western Leadership Goes to Omaha

NEA's Western Regional Leadership Conference is January 20-22 in Omaha, Nebraska; the Minority Leadership Training Seminar precedes it on January 19-20.

The leadership conference is "designed to further enhance the knowledge of K-12 teachers, education support professionals, higher education, student and retired members."

This year's theme is "Great Public Schools: Organizing for Action."

Among the sessions: growing effective leaders, building effective locals, and expanding our influence.

Other states in our region are Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Utah, and Wyoming.

You can register online through Friday, January 13. The registration fee of \$150 covers all group meals, breaks, and conference materials.

Please visit NEA's web site for a schedule, conference registration, and hotel reservation information.

www.nea.org/members/wrlc.html



One of the things to see while in Omaha is the historic Durham Western Heritage Museum, which was built in 1931 by the Union Pacific Railroad.

TSTA/NEA EVENT DATES

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

MAY

- 7-13 Teacher Appreciation Week
- 8 National Teacher Day

JUNE

- 2-3 TSTA Advisory Committee Meeting, TSTA Headquarters
- 3-4 TSTA Board of Directors Meeting, TSTA Headquarters
- 26-28 NEA-Retired Annual Meeting, Orlando, FL
- 30 First Texas Caucus Meeting and Texas Delegates Night Out, Orlando, FL



127th Annual TSTA Convention

April 27-30, 2006 • Renaissance Austin Hotel • Austin

The 2006 TSTA Annual Convention will be held at the Renaissance Austin Hotel (Arboretum area—Northwest Austin) on April 27-30, 2006. The TSTA Board of Directors will meet on April 27. All events will take place at the hotel with the House of Delegates meeting being held in the Grand Ballroom (Atrium level of the hotel) on April 28-29.

If you are interested in being a delegate, please contact your local president to get details on when and how delegates are elected in your local. Regional presidents may cluster members without a local or in small locals that choose not to elect a delegate.

Call the Center for Executive and Governance (800-324-5355 or 877-ASK-TSTA, extension 1510 or 1514) if you have questions about the convention and/or items in this article. Information about TSTA's State Convention meeting will be located in the Upcoming Events Calendar section of TSTA's web site at www.tsta.org.

We will be sending detailed information about the schedule, transportation, and lodging at a later date, but some items need to be touched on in this article, even though the convention is still months away. One important item is the housing form. While we can mail a packet to folks after they are elected covering most information, the only way we have to get the **Hotel Reservation Form** to delegates in time for them to meet the deadline is to include it in this article. If you are planning on being a delegate (or think you might be), please read the following paragraph carefully and use the form at the end of this article to make your reservation.

Housing

A room block is being held at the Renaissance Austin Hotel. Reservations are to be made directly with the hotel. Please complete the lodging form found at the end of this article. **April 7** is the deadline for hotel reservations. After that date, rooms not reserved in the TSTA block will be released and reservations will be processed upon availability. Please note: The hotel **DOES NOT** have to honor the convention rate after April 7, 2006.

Registration

Registration and certification of delegates will occur on the Atrium level of the hotel on April 28-29. Exact times for registration will be posted on the TSTA web site closer to the Convention and will be mailed to delegates. While any member is welcome to attend the HoD and Convention, only those delegates with proper badges are allowed in the designated delegate section and voting area. If you are an alternate delegate moving to delegate status, you will need to contact your local president to be sure a Delegate Change Report was mailed to the TSTA Organizing Center for Executive and Governance. If after April 16 you are moved from an alternate delegate to a delegate status, you will need to bring the Delegate Change Report signed by your local president with you to the registration desk.

Regional and Caucus Meetings

Regions and Caucuses that choose to use the hotel meeting space to conduct business meetings need to make arrangements through the Organizing Center for Executive and Governance.

Professional Development Workshops

Several workshops, including professional development workshops with continuing education credits, are being planned and will be offered during the convention on educational and association issues. These workshops will be offered on Friday, April 28.

Ground Transportation

The airport is 17.1 miles from the hotel. Ground transportation is available via SuperShuttle van or taxicab. Details will be provided to delegates, along with information on discounted car rentals available through TSTA/NEA Member Benefits. The Renaissance Austin Hotel provides complimentary

self-parking. Valet parking is available.

Open Hearings

Open hearings will be conducted Friday, April 28, on: Proposed 2006-07 TSTA Budget; Proposed Bylaws Amendments; Proposed Legislative Program; and Proposed NEA Resolutions. Other topics may be scheduled as well.

Make plans to attend the Summit for Local Presidents on Sunday, April 30, 9:00 a.m.

HOTEL RESERVATION FORM

TSTA 127th Annual State Convention

April 27-30, 2006 • Renaissance Austin Hotel • Austin

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL REQUESTED INFORMATION AND RETURN TO THE HOTEL BY FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 2006.

Check-in time for the hotel is 3:00 p.m. and check-out time is 1:00 p.m.

RENAISSANCE AUSTIN HOTEL

(TSTA Headquarters Hotel)
9721 Arboretum Blvd., Austin, TX 78759
Telephone: 512-343-2626 or 800-228-9290
FAX: 512-343-6364

Room Rate

___ Single room (1 person—1 bed).....\$129.00
___ Double room (2 people—___1 bed, ___2 beds).....\$134.00
___ Triple room (3 people—2 beds).....\$154.00
___ Quad room (4 people—2 beds).....\$154.00

Cut-off date for ALL rooms and room rates is April 7, 2006. All rooms are subject to a 15% room tax.

I will arrive April _____, 2006 at _____ (a.m./p.m.) and will depart April _____, 2006.

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Day phone: _____ Evening phone: _____

Email: _____ Fax: _____

LIST ALL INDIVIDUALS PER ROOM (ONE NAME PER LINE) AND ACCOMMODATIONS DESIRED:

| Circle Room Type | Room No. 1 | Circle Room Type | Room No. 2 |
|------------------|------------|------------------|------------|
| Single 1. | _____ | Single 1. | _____ |
| Double 2. | _____ | Double 2. | _____ |
| Triple 3. | _____ | Triple 3. | _____ |
| Quad 4. | _____ | Quad 4. | _____ |

A deposit equal to the first night's room rate per room is due three (3) weeks prior to arrival. Room deposit can be made by major credit cards or check and is **refundable up to 24 hours prior to arrival.** This will assure your reservation. Should cancellation be necessary, **you must advise the hotel 24 hours prior to your arrival date.** If the hotel is not advised, you will be responsible to pay for space held.

Approved major credit card: _____ Credit card #: _____

Exp. date: _____ Name in which credit card is issued: _____

Election of TSTA At-Large Board Of Directors Members

One of the "core values" for TSTA is that certain groups (minorities and ESPs) should be insured an appropriate voice in the organization, while other groups (administrators) should not be allowed to have influence beyond their numbers. TSTA has adopted Bylaws and policies to insure that the organization operates in a way that reflects this value.

As specified in the Bylaws, we do a calculation each January 15 to determine what proportion of our membership is in each of those three (3) categories so we can make appropriate decisions about Board elections. Based on recent membership numbers, TSTA membership shows 25.3% of our members as ethnic minorities, 15.5% as ESPs and 3.7% as supervisory. If those percentages hold true on January 15, 2006, since our Board has 25 members that count for this purpose (President, Vice President, Regional Presidents and NEA Directors for Texas), that would mean TSTA would need at least seven (7) minorities, four (4) ESPs and one (1) supervisor.

Even when we have the January 15 numbers, TSTA cannot know until after the regions complete their elections at the regional houses of delegates whether or not TSTA will need to have at-large elections for minority and/or ESP Board members. However, in order to be prepared, TSTA must seek nominations now. The elections (if necessary) will be held at the 2006 House of Delegates on April 29. The persons elected will serve July 15, 2006 through July 14, 2008.

TSTA currently has three (3) ESP at-large Board members and one (1) ESP serving as a regional president; all four (4) of these terms continue until July 14, 2007. Based on this fact and the current percentage of ESP members, it appears unlikely that we will need an ESP at-large election, though we cannot know with certainty until after January 15, 2006. The same is true for the minority at-large Board election. While we cannot know for sure until we have the January 15, 2006, membership numbers and the results of the elections for Regional Presidents, based on the number of minority Board members whose terms will continue, it appears unlikely that we will have to hold an election for any minority at-large Board members.

We still must be prepared by seeking nominations now. For the supervisory at-large position, it does appear likely we will need to hold an election. The current supervisory at-large member of the Board has a term that will expire on July 14, 2006. Unless our supervisory membership falls below the threshold to qualify for continuing the at-large position (which we will not know until January 15), we will need to hold that election.

Based on all of the above, we are including the nomination form for all three positions. If you are interested in running for any of these positions, in the event the position you are interested in actually requires an election, please complete the form and mark the appropriate box.

The TSTA Board of Directors Policy EP-6 stipulates that all nomination forms must be mailed to TSTA by **CERTIFIED MAIL WITH RETURN**

RECEIPT REQUESTED, FAXED, OR DELIVERED IN PERSON WITH A RECEIPT ISSUED BY TSTA BY THE DEADLINE ESTABLISHED EACH YEAR IN THE ELECTION TIMELINE ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

as stated below. *Nomination forms that are received through the regular mail will not be accepted and will be returned to the sender.*

Based on TSTA's Bylaws, TSTA will mail a packet detailing the responsibilities of a Board member to each person who files a nomination form. The packet also will contain a form the candidate must sign and return stating the candidate has read the packet and will accept the responsibilities if elected. The candidate statement form does not have to be returned with the nomination form, but must be signed and returned before ballots are distributed and within the timeline as stated in this article.

Please make sure that the NOMINATION FORM with this article is COMPLETELY filled out and SIGNED by the nominee. In order to comply with the approved election timeline, candidates will need to comply with the following timeline:

March 28 (Tuesday)—Nomination Form postmark deadline if mailed by certified mail with return receipt requested

March 30 (Thursday)—Nomination Form receipt deadline of 4:45 p.m. CST for filing by fax or in person

April 21 (Friday)—Deadline for receipt of flyers to be included in delegate packets

April 21 (Friday)—4:45 p.m. CDT deadline for receipt of signed statement by candidate

April 29 (Saturday)—Election to be held at the TSTA State House of Delegates

April 29 (Saturday)—Runoff Election (if necessary) at the TSTA State House of Delegates

Qualifications:

- Be actively engaged in the education profession within the state at the time of election
- Have held Active, ESP or TFA, or any combination of Active, ESP, TFA or life membership in TSTA for at least three (3) consecutive years preceding the election
- Be actively employed as a non-supervisory member (except for the supervisory position) and for the ESP position, be a member in the ESP category
- Maintain membership status and educational position in TSTA during term of office
- Sign and return the form accepting the responsibilities of a Board member

If mailing a nomination form, send by certified mail with return receipt to TSTA's Center for Executive and Governance, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, Texas 78701 or fax to 512-486-7053. Hand delivered nomination forms must be received by the Center for Executive and Governance with a hand written receipt being issued. Questions are to be directed to the Center for Executive and Governance by calling 877-ASK-TSTA, ext. 1514 or 1510, or emailing sandras@tsta.org or connier@tsta.org.

NOMINATION FORM

TSTA Board of Directors Ethnic Minority, Educational Support or Supervisory At-Large Positions

- I am filing for an ethnic minority position and certify that I am a non-supervisory member of TSTA.
 I am filing for an educational support position and certify that I am a non-supervisory member of TSTA.
 I am filing for a supervisory position and certify that I am a supervisory member of TSTA.

(Circle One: Mr. Ms.) Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Day Phone _____

Email _____ SSN. _____

Local Association _____

Work Site _____ TSTA Region _____

Position _____ School District _____

ETHNIC GROUP: (Please Check)

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

When mailing by certified mail, the nomination form must be postmarked on or before **March 28, 2006** with return receipt requested. Mail to: TSTA, Center for Executive and Governance, 316 West 12th Street, Suite 510, Austin, Texas 78701

If faxing or delivering in person, the nomination form must be received on **March 30, 2006 by 4:45 p.m.**

CST by TSTA's Center for Executive and Governance with a return receipt being issued. Fax to 512-486-7053 or hand deliver to Suite 510 at TSTA Headquarters, 316 West 12th Street in Austin.

Signature of Nominee _____



Creative Online Resources for Quality Education: Free Trial from Now Through the End of March!

- Daily news articles to bring current events to your classroom
- Daily activities to develop student research skills and enrich cultural literacy
- In-depth resources for multicultural, diversity and minority studies
- Resources for scientists, mathematicians, inventors
- Resource library for authors and illustrators at all levels
- Online almanac for every day of the school year
- Calendar of world holidays, anniversaries and special events
- Guides for over 1,000 instructional topics
- Guides for all countries and the 50 states, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico
- Background information for lesson plans and units
- Email lists on over 100 instructional topics
- Much, much more!

The K-12 Teaching & Learning Center is a fantastic resource for Black History Month and National Women's History Month! Want free access for both?

Go online now at www.k12tlc.net/trial/tsta.htm and register for your free account through the end of March!

After the free trial, subscriptions are only \$30 a year for TSTA/NEA members.

Need investments?
Need to protect your family?
Need a retirement plan?
Need a personal loan or credit?
Need a money market account?
Need a mortgage?
Need a little help?



Here at NEA Member Benefits we are dedicated to helping members get a handle on their most important financial responsibilities by offering superior products and outstanding service. The buying power of 2.7 million NEA members is what makes it possible to negotiate excellent group rates and special deals on programs and services tailored to your needs. To find out about programs suitable for you and your family, call 1-800-637-4636. Visit us anytime at www.neamb.com.

nea *Member Benefits*

www.neamb.com

HELPING MAKE MEMBERS' LIVES BETTER

Call 1-800-637-4636, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (or Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) ET
or visit our **Web Site** at www.neamb.com

CO4812C



Nominate your Media for a School Bell Award!

Community understanding and support for public education have been significantly advanced by Texas newspapers and local radio and television stations through their interpretation of issues affecting public schools in our state.

TSTA takes pride in sponsoring the annual TSTA School Bell Awards competition to recognize these outstanding contributions.

Local associations will receive forms and instructions to submit entries in the various classifications and categories listed below.

Entries must have been aired or pub-

lished Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2005 and must be received no later than midnight, Jan. 31, 2006 at the TSTA Organizing Center for Communications and Public Relations, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, Texas 78701. First place winners in each category will receive prestigious School Bell trophies to be awarded at the 2006 TSTA convention.

CLASSIFICATIONS

NEWSPAPERS

A. Dailies

- 1. Circulationover 100,000
- 2. Circulation.....99,999-50,000
- 3. Circulation.....49,999-25,000
- 4. Circulation.....under 25,000
 - Metro or Suburban Market
 - Medium or Small Market
- 5. Political Cartoon

B. Semiweekly

- 1. Metropolitan or Suburban Market
- 2. Medium or Small Market

C. Weekly

- 1. Metropolitan or Suburban Market
- 2. Medium or Small Market

D. Magazine

- 1. Monthly
- 2. Weekly

RADIO

- A. County population.....over 100,000
- B. County population.....99,999-25,000
- C. County population.....24,999-10,000
- D. County population.....under 10,000

TELEVISION

- A. Metropolitan Market
- B. Other: _____
- C. Special Consideration

NOTE: Television Metropolitan Market includes Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio, El Paso, Austin and Corpus Christi. All other stations will compete in the second classification.

CATEGORIES

PRINT MEDIA

- 1. Outstanding continuous coverage of education news, increasing public understanding of school achievements, problems and programs
- 2. Outstanding feature story interpreting school programs and education issues
- 3. Outstanding collection of feature stories or a single topic interpreting school programs and education issues
- 4. Outstanding feature series interpreting school programs and education issues
- 5. Outstanding editorial interpreting school achievements, issues, and needs
- 6. Outstanding collection of editorials interpreting school achievements, issues, and needs
- 7. Outstanding continuing column interpreting school programs and education issues
- 8. Outstanding special supplement featuring special events and educational programs
- 9. Outstanding regular supplement featuring special events and educational programs

- 10. Outstanding magazine article featuring stories interpreting school programs and education issues
- 11. Outstanding political cartoon
- 12. Special consideration
Description: _____

RADIO TELEVISION

- 1. Outstanding continuous coverage of education issues and events
- 2. Outstanding locally produced single program interpreting school programs or education issues
- 3. Outstanding locally produced program series interpreting school programs or education issues
- 4. Outstanding station editorial interpreting school achievements, issues and needs
- 5. Outstanding collection of station editorials interpreting school achievements, issues and needs
- 6. Special consideration
Description: _____

THE ADDICTED BRAIN

A Seminar for Teachers

Instructor: Donna Israel, Ph.D., L.P.C.

The seminar registration period is from 8:15 AM to 8:45 AM. The seminar will begin at 9:00 AM. A lunch (on own) break will take place from 12:00 PM to 12:50 PM. The course will adjourn at 4:00 PM, when course completion certificates will be distributed.

- **The Brain and Addiction:** What Brain Structures Are Affected? What Chemical Changes Occur?
- **Four Basic Components of Addiction:** Pleasure; Loss of Control; Compulsion; and Denial. How Does Each Play a Role?
- **Simple and Complex Addiction:** Is There a Difference? Are There Separate Treatment Strategies for Each?
- **Food Addiction:** Can Eating Really Be an Addiction? The Genetic Basis of Overeating and Obesity. Similarities between Hunger and Craving Drugs?
- **Are Eating Disorders Just a Female Problem?** Men and Binge-Eating Disorder.
- **The Dopamine Connection:** The Brain, Neurotransmitters, and Food Addiction. Can Just Seeing and Smelling Food Create Addictive Brain Chemistry?
- **The Debate on Chemical and Food Allergies:** Possible Causative Factors in Psychosis, Depression, ADHD, Chronic Fatigue, Migraine, and Arthritis.
- **Do It Yourself Care?** Can Alcohol, Nicotine, and Drug Addiction Be Cured Without Professional Help? Some Successful Strategies.
- **Alcohol Addiction:** Is it a Biological, Behavioral, Family, or Cultural Problem? Or All of the Above?
- **Alcohol and the Brain:** How Alcohol Affects Brain Structure and Function.
- **The Link Between Alcohol Consumption and Stress.** Does Alcohol Addiction Result in Permanent Physiological Stress and Elevated Stress Hormones?
- **Alcohol Addiction and the Brain:** Neuronal and Neurotransmitter Changes That Occur with Prolonged Alcohol Abuse. Effects on GABA, Glutamate, and the Phenomenon of Neuroadaptation.
- **Alcohol and Sleep.** How Alcohol Use and Abuse Affects the Five Stages of Sleep. Is Alcohol a Good Sedative?
- **Maternal Drinking and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.**
- **Psychiatric Co-Morbidities of Alcohol Addiction.** Detecting Addiction to Alcohol? Using a Special 10-Question Test.
- **Alcohol Withdrawal Syndrome:** Is It Similar to Withdrawal from Valium, Librium, Xanax, Ativan, and Phenobarbital? What Happens in the Brain During Withdrawal. Does Drug Addiction Cause Permanent Brain Changes?
- **Opiate Addiction:** What Happens in the Brain? Is Narcotic Withdrawal Commonly Life-Threatening? Recovering From Drug Addiction.
- **The Effectiveness of Drug Addiction Programs:** What Are the Necessary Components of a Good Program? Which Treatment Models Work Best? Why Can't Most Drug Addicts Quit on Their Own?
- **Are Teens and Adults Increasingly Abusing Prescription Drugs?**
- **Controversy:** Can Patients Really Get Addicted to Coffee, Soft Drinks, and Chocolate. How Much Caffeine Is Too Much?
- **Smoking Addiction:** How Addictive is Nicotine? How Does It Affect the Brain? Can Nicotine Use Result in a Psychiatric Disorder?
- **What Really Works** in Helping Smokers Quit? Hypnosis? Nicotine Replacement Therapy? Nicotine Antagonist Drugs? Antidepressants? Anti-Anxiety Drugs? Acupuncture? Group or Individual Counseling? Physician Advice? Workplace Programs? Doing It On Your Own?

TUITION:

\$79.00 per person with pre-registration. (\$94.00 at the door if space remains.) Tuition includes a syllabus. *Group pre-registration rate: \$74.00 per person. To qualify, 3 or more registrations must be submitted together. Please list names of all registrants.*

TO REGISTER:

Please complete and return the registration form below. Or register toll-free with Visa or MasterCard by calling 1-800-937-6878. This number is for registrations only. The completed form may also be faxed to (925) 687-0860.

MEETING TIMES & LOCATIONS

DALLAS, TX

Sat. Jan. 21, 2006
9:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Doubletree Hotel Dallas
4099 Valley View Lane
Dallas, TX

HOUSTON, TX

Sat. Mar. 18, 2006
9:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Houston Hobby Airport Marriott
9100 Gulf Freeway
Houston, TX

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Donna Israel (Ph.D., L.P.C.) is a scientist specializing in the areas of aging, brain-body medicine, obesity management, women's health, and hypertension. In the areas of wellness and biochemistry, she has published more than 20 peer-reviewed articles and authored or contributed to more than 25 books.

Dr. Israel is a licensed professional counselor, has provided therapy to over 10,000 individuals, and frequently speaks to audiences of health professionals.

(INR reserves the right to change instructors without prior notice.)

ACCREDITATION

INR (Institute for Natural Resources) is an Approved Continuing Professional Education Provider and has CPE Number 500381 from the Texas State Board of Education. Participants can receive 6 Continuing Professional Education Units (CPEs) by completing this course. INR's Tax Identification Number is 94-2948967.

Professionals other than teachers have been invited to attend this seminar.

Please check course date:

_____ Sat., Jan. 21, 2006 (Dallas, TX)
_____ Sat., Mar. 18, 2006 (Houston, TX)

REGISTRATION FORM

(This registration form may be copied.)

Please return form to:
INR
P.O. Box 272027
Concord, CA 94527-2027
TOLL-FREE: 1-877-246-6336
TEL: (925) 609-2820
FAX: (925) 687-0860

Please print:

Name: _____ Profession: _____

Home Address: _____ Professional License #: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Lic. Exp. Date: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ Work Phone: (____) _____ Employer: _____

Please enclose full payment with registration form. Check method of payment. E-Mail: _____

_____ Check for \$ _____ (Make payable to INR)

_____ Charge the amount of \$ _____ to my _____ Visa _____ MasterCard

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____
(enter all raised numbers)

Signature: _____

CODE: ADB-P1660-T-AD

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**.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|--|-------|------------------------|-----|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|-----------|--|--|
| NAME | | | SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER | | | DATE OF BIRTH | | | | | |
| ADDRESS | | | | | | LOCAL ASSOCIATION | | | HIRE DATE | | |
| CITY | | STATE | | ZIP | | NAME OF ISD | | | | | |
| EMAIL AT HOME | | | | | | CAMPUS/WORKSITE | | | | | |
| EMAIL AT WORK | | | | | | POSITION (I.E. CLASSROOM TEACHER, LIBRARIAN, BUS DRIVER, ETC.) | | | | | |
| AREA CODE HOME PHONE | | | AREA CODE WORK PHONE | | | ETHNICITY <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Spanish Origin) <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-Ethnic <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | | | | |

| <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 | |

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.

**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 *TSTA Briefing*, which is distributed by email at least once a week.
Send to: home email address work email address

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 _____



One person = one vote

One person, joined with others in a common cause = victory

This March, make a difference. Work in campaigns.
Become a TSTA-Political Action Committee contributor.
Vote and take your friends with you.

Support the candidates who believe in
America and public education.

Helping Change the Players



Please share this copy of the *Advocate* with others

Texas State Teachers Association
316 West 12th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

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Texas State
Teachers Assoc.