

Advocate

Texas State Teachers Association/National Education Association

FALL 2006

Carole Keeton Strayhorn

'I will put educators
and children first'

Consultation win:
big raise in Austin

New plan for your
personal legal needs

A poster for
your classroom

INSIDE
YOUR
MEMBERSHIP
CARD

Short Term “Fix” Will Test the Future of Texas Public Schools



Looming like an iceberg below the surface in a public relations fog, high stakes testing threatens to sink years of progress in Texas schools.

Welcome to the '06-'07 school year! I hope you've had an exciting and fulfilling school start. The summer started off with a bang that may turn out to be a whisper after all.

In June, Governor Perry signed House Bill 1, an election year school finance fix almost certain to become a long term headache for Texas schools. By shortchanging schools and raising the stakes on standardized tests, the politicians who wrote this plan have again failed the test of leadership.

Instead of a long term school finance solution, this “plan” offers a divisive scheme that will reward some schools and teachers and punish others based on student performance on standardized tests. As valuable programs are dropped from Texas classrooms because of standardized tests, a majority of Texans believes test-driven education provides neither accountability nor a better learning environment.

This year, while parents and educators were distracted by an out-of-balance school finance plan that prevents any new state tax revenue from being spent for public schools, House Bill 1 became the vehicle for a new top down system driven by test scores and formulas that will take away local control and radically ratchet up the stakes on standardized testing.

For example, the Commissioner must develop a system to determine how much growth every student taking the TAKS test should make in a year. Given that state bureaucrats cannot talk with 300,000 teachers and 4 million children and their parents about student “growth,” this will be measured by an equation using TAKS test scores. Another provision requires the state to send in outside management teams to take over neighborhood campuses deemed academically unacceptable based on test scores.

House Bill 1 also allocates over \$300 million for merit pay plans based primarily on student performance on standardized tests. Instead of using the funds allocated for a merit pay plan that will reward less than 20% of all teachers, that \$300 million could have provided an additional \$1,000 pay raise to every teacher to attract and keep qualified teachers in our kids' classrooms.

Certainly, educators welcomed the modest pay raise that leaves us only \$4,500 below the national average, but it's no wonder you feel shortchanged by a test-driven merit pay plan that cut over \$400 million from funds the legislature set aside last year for education, despite having an \$8.2 billion surplus and \$4 billion in new taxes.

A single standardized test was never intended to do more than give teachers a diagnostic snapshot of a student, but now it is being used to run a school system of 4.4 million children. I spent 25 years in the classroom, and I loved the challenge of teaching children whose progress cannot be characterized by a single standardized test score.

Obviously, the folks who wrote House Bill 1 haven't spent much time in a classroom. Today, looming like an iceberg below the surface in a public relations fog, high stakes testing threatens to sink years of progress in Texas schools – progress that the Governor boasts about on the one hand, but threatens with the pen that signed House Bill 1 with the other.

Now, more than ever, we have an opportunity to make a difference with our vote. Walk the walk, and talk the talk. Our recommended candidates need your support in dollars and volunteer hours. Moreover, they especially need your vote and other votes you can influence. Remember, as we've said repeatedly, “Until the players change, the script stays the same.” Vote on November 7!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Donna".



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Announcing TSTA's January Legislative Issues Conference; our roster of recommended candidates in the November election; news about incentive pay, the lottery, TRS contributions, and more.



FEATURE

8 Carole Keeton Strayhorn: One Tough Teacher

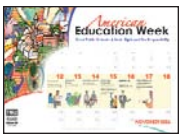
A passion for public education has been the cornerstone of gubernatorial candidate Carole Keeton Strayhorn's political career. You're going to like her "Great Schools" Plan.



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Advocate

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Governor to TRS: Cut State Contribution



At a recent meeting, the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) Board received a number of reports on future funding requirements. Currently, the state pays the constitutional minimum of 6% to TRS and employees pay 6.4%.

Governor Perry and the Legislative Budget Board told TRS to cut their Legislative Appropriation Request to 5.6%, which is below the minimum required by the constitution and would require a constitutional amendment.

The TRS Board will be asking for a 7.19% contribution rate. The difference between the two rates, which is approximately \$1.3 billion, will have to be included as an “exceptional items” request. All allocations would have to go to the pension fund if the 7.19% is not received, so there would be no funding for TRS-Care. TRS reported that if the state contributes 1% of public education payroll for retiree health care, no supplemental funding should be necessary before 2010. TSTA will be working hard to increase the state’s contribution to at least 7.19%.

\$8 Billion from the Lottery?

You’ve seen the billboards and heard the ads about the Texas Lottery’s “\$8 Billion for Texas Education.” What’s the real story?

In 1991 the Texas legislature created the lottery. Despite popular belief when this fund was created, it was not dedicated to fund public education. The money—after paying for prizes, administration, etc.—simply went into the General Revenue, and a portion of the General Revenue was used to fund the state’s share of the cost of public education.

In 1997, in response to the continuing public outcry that lottery money was supposed to be used for public education, the legislature passed a law directing that lottery revenue would be dedicated to fund public education. The net effect of that change was zero new dollars for public education.

Why? Funding for public education is determined by a set of formulas. Every dollar generated by the lottery simply reduces the amount the state has to pay out of General Revenue. The lottery did not increase the amount of money going to public education by one cent; it just reduced the amount of money that was taken from the General Revenue. On average, the lottery generates \$1 billion a year in revenue; multiply that by eight years and you get the \$8 billion referred to in the ad.

Bottom line? If you want to play the lottery, go ahead, but don’t do it because you think the money you are losing is going to increase funding for public schools.

Incentive Pay: Not Much of an Incentive

As we went to press, rules for the Texas Educator Excellence Incentive Pay Program had been drafted by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), and the grant application and frequently asked questions were online. Applications were due to TEA by October 5.

An analysis of the statutes, rules, grant and FAQ clearly shows that this incentive pay program is not much of an incentive to the teachers of Texas.

For a campus to be eligible to receive incentive pay in the current school year, it must be ranked by TEA in the top half of economically disadvantaged students enrolled at a campus and also be rated exemplary or recognized.

The data used to qualify a campus for incentive pay in 2006-07 is from the 2004-05 school year. The teachers at an eligible campus must qualify based on the requirements of the plan in the 2006-07 school year, even though the school was awarded the money for work done in 2004-05. In other words, two years later, the people who will benefit will not necessarily be the ones who did the work. There is no indication of what year’s data will be used in the future for qualifying eligible campuses.

There is absolutely no way for a campus to grieve or appeal its failure to be eligible for this incentive pay grant.

Another clear gap is in the campus incentive plan and the process by which it is developed, which must start at the campus level. Each campus-level decision-making body must create its own plan.

For more on the Incentive Pay Program, see www.tsta.org/news/current/hb1page.shtml. All TEA material related to HB 1 can be found at www.tea.state.tx.us/HB1.

Secretary of Education Can't Eliminate HOUSSE Yet

On June 2, NEA President Weaver called on Secretary of Education Spellings to reverse a policy she announced in May that mandated states to limit the use of HOUSSE after the end of the 2005-06 school year. In addition to our letter, several members of Congress and several chief state school officers also protested this limitation.

On September 5, the Secretary issued a letter to all states' chief state school officers that essentially acknowledges that US DOE does not have the authority to eliminate HOUSSE. It says the department will pursue its efforts to phase out HOUSSE through the ESEA reauthorization process but for now is simply "encouraging" states to eliminate HOUSSE.

Public Opinion Low on NCLB, Vouchers

In the new Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes toward the Public Schools, six of 10 Americans who are familiar with the No Child Left Behind Act believe it has had no effect on schools or has actually harmed them. Also, the percentage of respondents favoring vouchers dropped to 36 percent from 38 percent. Complete results can be found at: www.pdkintl.org/kapapan/k0609pol.htm#major.

No Textbook Funds for Technology

The Texas Attorney General has issued an opinion that hardware and other equipment cannot be purchased using

funds set aside for textbooks, including electronic textbooks, as the funds must be used exclusively for the purpose of conveying information, including curriculum content, to students.

Texans Elected to NEA Posts

At NEA's annual convention, Shirley Howard of Midland and Yolanda Molina of Mercedes were reelected to three-year education support professional at-large positions on the NEA Board of Directors. Gordon Gauthier of Deer Park, Reagan Hawkins of Nederland, and Chris Tullis of Dallas were elected to the NEA Resolutions Committee, which prepares and presents to the Representative Assembly resolutions that are proposed for adoption.

Attention, Delegates!

Here's a quick review of dates and expenses for members who are attending TSTA's 2007 State House of Delegates and the 2007 NEA Representative Assembly.

Turn to page 28 for election information on NEA state and retired delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly. Delegate information for State and Regional Houses of Delegates will be mailed to local presidents sometime in October. For further information, contact the Center for Executive and Governance at 800-324-5355, ext. 1510 or email connier@tsta.org.

April 27-28, 2007 State House of Delegates, El Paso: The Camino Real Hotel will host delegates to TSTA's State House of Delegates. The hotel is adjacent to the Convention Center which is the site for the State House of Delegates proceedings April 27-28. Lodging expense at the hotel is \$85 single/double plus 15.5% tax (\$13.18) totaling \$98.18 per night (each additional per-

son is \$15—3 or more to a room). Complimentary shuttle service is provided to and from the airport. Parking for guests is \$5 a day. The hotel is adjacent to the El Paso Museum of Art and Insights Museum, six blocks from the Mexican border, four blocks from the Union Train Station and 15 minutes from the El Paso airport.

July 2-5, 2007 NEA RA, Philadelphia, PA: The First Texas Caucus meeting is scheduled for June 30 at the Texas Delegation hotel. Texas' delegates will be staying 1 mile from the airport at the Renaissance Philadelphia Airport Hotel. The hotel provides shuttle service to and from the airport with the airport area having a tram/subway into downtown Philadelphia. Lodging expense at the hotel per night is \$151 single/double plus 8% hotel tax (\$12.08) and 9% state tax (\$13.59) totaling \$176.67 for single or double (each additional person is \$15—3 or more to a room). Taxi service to or from the airport is \$15. The hotel provides complimentary parking. Taxi expenses are at the 2005 rate. A taxi to or from the Convention Center is \$25 (8.5 miles to Convention Center).

Congratulations to Teacher of the Year Finalists

Congratulations to TSTA members Dana Boyd and Susan Gowens, who are finalists for Texas Elementary Teacher of the Year. Boyd is a second-grade teacher at Dolphin Terrace Elementary in Ysleta ISD, and Gowens is a second-grade teacher at Flour Bluff Primary School in Flour Bluff ISD. www.tea.state.tx.us/press/toyfinalists06.html

TSTA's Legislative Issues Conference

If you are interested in politics and public policy, the only place to be January 5-7 is the TSTA Legislative Issues Conference.

The 80th session of the Texas Legislature will be only two days away when the TSTA Legislative Issues Conference kicks off in Austin at the Hilton Austin Airport Hotel.

- Get the latest on what happened in TSTA's "Campaign 2006: Changing the Players."
- Find out what we will be dealing with in the 2007 legislative session.
- Come participate in workshops featuring well-known experts in their fields.
- Visit with some politicians as well.

Sessions

Taxes, economic development and funding for schools (NEA Staff): Ninety percent of public school funding comes from state and local governments. NEA looked at 30 year trends in state and local tax structures and economic development policies and found that those structures and policies actually undermine the capacity to invest in public schools. We refer to those structures and policies collectively as TEF: T for tax structures, E for economic development policies and F for funding for schools. CPE credit

Defending neighborhood public schools—the politics and policies behind efforts to privatize education (Kathy Miller, Executive Director, Texas Freedom Network): Learn about the failures of voucher schemes across the country and discover new ways that anti-public education forces are working to siphon scarce resources away from neighborhood public schools. Vouchers, virtual vouchers and privatized management schemes will be discussed. CPE credit



Now that they passed it, how are they going to pay for it? The unfunded promises of HB 1 (Dick Lavine, Senior Fiscal Analyst, Center for Public Policy Priorities): HB 1, the school-finance bill passed in the recent special session, may have promised more than the state can actually deliver. The official fiscal note estimates for the session show that the new revenue raised by the session will fall \$10.5 billion short of paying for the costs of HB 1 in the coming 2008-09 state fiscal biennium. CPE credit

When can I afford to retire...or am I just going to die at my desk? (Jack Kelly, TSTA Center for Public Affairs): This session will cover the latest issues regarding the Teacher Retirement System and Social Security. CPE credit

School finance fundamentals (Lynn Moak, Partner, Moak, Casey & Associates LLP): Now that the court case and the special sessions are over, how will the new finance system work and what changes may be considered by the coming legislative session? CPE credit

No Child Left Behind update (Joel Packard or other NEA Staff) CPE credit

TSTA politics 101: endorsements and engagement (Jack Kelly, TSTA Center for Public Affairs): Everything you ever wanted to know about the endorsement process, TSTA-PAC, why and how to engage in the political process, and successful strategies for local involvement in campaigns.

Winning school board elections (Lisa Nentl-Bloom, NEA Organizational Specialist): Everything you ever wanted to know about winning school board elections. Why and how to engage in school board elections, and successful strategies for local involvement in campaigns.

Continuing Professional Education Credit

TSTA is an approved continuing professional education provider. For those individuals who are on renewable certificates and need continuing professional education, all but two of the workshops (as indicated above) can be taken for credit.

Hotel Reservations

The conference is at a new location; all activities will be at the Hilton Austin Airport Hotel at 9515 New Airport Drive in Austin. The hotel is located off Hwy. 71, near the Austin Bergstrom International Airport. Go to the Hilton website (www.webeventplanner.com/directory/hiltonaustinairport) for directions. Hotel reservations must be received by the Hilton by December 15 to guarantee occupancy and the TSTA rate. The rate for a single or double room is \$79; a triple room is \$89; and a quad room is \$99 plus local taxes and fees (currently 15%). To make reservations please call 800-584-5091 or 512-385-6767 or download a hotel reservation form from the TSTA website. If you check out prior to the scheduled checkout date, you will incur an early departure fee.

Conference Registration

Please look for the conference registration form on the TSTA website, www.tsta.org, in the right column. Download it, complete it, and send it, along with the appropriate payment, to TSTA, Attention: Lori Buckner,

316 West 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701. TSTA cannot guarantee that you will be registered for the sessions of your choice if your conference registration form is received at TSTA Headquarters after December 20. If your registration form is postmarked

by December 1, you qualify for an Early Bird Special of \$99 for each participant. For registration forms postmarked beginning December 2, the fee is \$129, and on site registration will be \$159. Non-members may register for \$199.

November 2006 Election Recommendations

TSTA Political Action Committee recommends the following candidates in the General Election.
For a complete list, including Congressional candidates, go to the Members Only section of www.tsta.org.

Governor

Carole Keeton Strayhorn

Texas Senate

01 Kevin Eltife (I)
13 Rodney Ellis (I)
14 Kirk Watson
15 John Whitmire (I)
19 Carlos Uresti
22 Kip Averitt (I)
25 Jeff Wentworth (I)
29 Eliot Shapleigh (I)

Texas House

001 . . . Stephen Frost (I)
003 . . . Mark Homer (I)
007 . . . Tommy Merritt (I)
008 . . . Sharon Cade Davis
011 . . . Chuck Hopson (I)
012 . . . Jim McReynolds (I)
014 . . . Fred Brown (I)
016 . . . Brandon Creighton
017 . . . Robby Cook (I)
019 . . . Mike "Tuffy" Hamilton (I)
021 . . . Allan Ritter (I)
022 . . . Joe Deshotel (I)
023 . . . Craig Eiland (I)
027 . . . Dora Olivo (I)
031 . . . Ryan Guillen (I)
032 . . . Juan Garcia
033 . . . Solomon Ortiz, Jr.
034 . . . Abel Herrero (I)
035 . . . Yvonne Gonzalez Toureilles (I)
036 . . . Kino Flores (I)
037 . . . Rene Oliveira (I)
038 . . . Eddie Lucio III

039 . . . Mando Martinez (I)
040 . . . Aaron Pena (I)
041 . . . Veronica Gonzales (I)
042 . . . Richard Raymond (I)
043 . . . Juan Escobar (I)
044 . . . Edmund Kuempel (I)
045 . . . Patrick Rose (I)
046 . . . Dawanna Dukes (I)
047 . . . Valinda Bolton
048 . . . Donna Howard (I)
049 . . . Elliott Naishtat (I)
050 . . . Mark Strama (I)
051 . . . Eddie Rodriguez (I)
052 . . . Karen Felthausen
054 . . . Jimmie Don Aycok
057 . . . Jim Dunnam (I)
069 . . . David Farabee (I)
071 . . . Susan King
072 . . . Drew Darby
074 . . . Pete Gallego (I)
075 . . . Chente Quintanilla (I)
076 . . . Norma Chavez (I)
077 . . . Paul Moreno (I)
078 . . . Patrick Haggerty (I)
079 . . . Joe Pickett (I)
080 . . . Tracy King (I)
083 . . . Delwin Jones (I)
085 . . . Joe Heflin
090 . . . Lon Burnam (I)
093 . . . Paula Hightower Pierson
094 . . . Diane Patrick
095 . . . Marc Veasey (I)
099 . . . Charlie Geren (I)
100 . . . Terri Hodge (I)
101 . . . Thomas Latham
102 . . . Harriet Miller

103 . . . Rafael Anchia (I)
104 . . . Roberto Alonzo (I)
106 . . . Katy Hubener
107 . . . Allen Vaught
109 . . . Helen Giddings (I)
110 . . . Barbara Mallory Caraway
111 . . . Yvonne Davis (I)
116 . . . Trey Martinez Fischer (I)
117 . . . David Leibowitz (I)
118 . . . Joe Farias
119 . . . Robert Puente (I)
120 . . . Ruth Jones McClendon (I)
123 . . . Mike Villarreal (I)
124 . . . Jose Menendez (I)
125 . . . Joaquin Castro (I)
129 . . . Sherrie Matula
131 . . . Alma Allen (I)
133 . . . Kristi Thibaut
134 . . . Ellen Cohen
137 . . . Scott Hochberg (I)
139 . . . Sylvester Turner (I)
140 . . . Kevin Bailey (I)
141 . . . Senfronia Thompson (I)
142 . . . Harold Dutton Jr. (I)
143 . . . Ana Hernandez (I)
145 . . . Rick Noriega (I)
147 . . . Garnet Coleman (I)
148 . . . Jessica Farrar (I)
149 . . . Hubert Vo (I)

State Board of Education

01 Rene Nunez (I)
09 Maggie Charleton
15 Bob Craig (I)

(I) = incumbent

One Tough Teacher

Before she was the state comptroller...

Before she was the state railroad commissioner...

Before she was the mayor of Austin...

Before she was the Austin school board president...

Carole Keeton Strayhorn was a teacher at McCallum High School in Austin. And she's never forgotten it.



Carole Kouton
www.OneToughGrandma.com
Strayhorn
for Governor
GOVERNOR FOR ALL TEXANS

Che Kouton
www.OneToughGrandma.com

Strayhorn
for Governor
GOVERNOR FOR ALL TEXANS

TSTA



Carole Keeton
Strayhorn:
"Texas is great
but we can
do better"

A passion for public education has been the cornerstone of Carole Keeton Strayhorn's political career. In 2003, when Governor Rick Perry was bragging about his "no-tax-increase budget," Comptroller Strayhorn had another name for it: balancing the state budget on the backs of school-teachers and children.

She issued a special report on "The Cost of Underpaying Texas Teachers" the following year. Two years later, teacher pay is still her top priority.

"I'm calling for a \$4,000 across-the-board increase now for every teacher, an automatic adjustment each biennium, and a \$2500 bonus for every teacher on a campus that moves from low performing to academically acceptable," Strayhorn tells every

group she addresses. "With that and a good retirement plan, we'd have no shortage of teachers."

She is urging Texans to put politics aside and come together for the sake of our children. "We're at a critical crossroads. I do not believe Rick Perry believes in public schools. He has consciously and deliberately undermined our public schools," she says. "I'm a 67-year-old grandmother and I'm not looking for a career in politics. I'm looking for a future for our kids and our state."

Below, Carole Keeton Strayhorn speaks out on the issues.

On why she's running for Governor

Our children don't hold fundraisers, don't hire lobbyists, and don't make political contributions. That means in today's Austin they are pushed to the bottom of the pile.

We are at a critical crossroads in this state: we are either going to have public education or we are not. What the Austin crowd is doing today is mean-spirited and for a special few. They have consciously and deliberately dismantled and undermined our public schools by attacking our teachers and our administrators. Systematically and with intent, they have stripped teachers and educators—retired and active—of vital benefits and services.

Mandates signed into law pushed millions and millions of dollars in costs to local school districts, districts that got not one penny of new money to pay for these mandates.

And systematically, money has been taken out of teachers' and educators' pockets—active and retired—and put into programs like the Governor's special-interest slush funds, wasting

hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars, including \$50 million to study mice. A major chunk of those taxpayers' dollars went directly to a company owned by two of the Governor's big contributors.

This is not only a failure of leadership. This is a threat to our constitutional responsibility to provide the best education for every child in our public schools.

On vouchers

The Governor has turned his back on public schools while embracing a voucher system as the only viable alternative—to a public school system that he has abandoned.

My bottom line: Vouchers are off the table, and not only for now. Vouchers are off the table in Strayhorn Administrations. As Governor, I will veto any plan or any legislation that puts a single dollar into any voucher program, period.

On Texas' future

Our state's future tax base and fiscal well-being depend directly on a highly educated work force.

Let's be honest: we have got to say out loud we need more dollars for education and more of each education dollar going directly into the classroom with the teachers and the students where it belongs.

The number of schoolchildren in Texas is expected to grow by about 2% a year. That's 75-80 thousand new students a year. That's like adding one Houston ISD every three years.

We are 50th in the United States—dead last—in the percentage of Texans 25 years and older having a high school education.

Texas was the only state in the nation

to cut average per student expenditures in 2005; we rank 40th in the nation, down from 25th in 1999.

The Governor's patchwork education proposals, packaged in lofty titles, won't fool the people of Texas. It is a sham to preach excellence and deliver mediocrity.

Under this Governor's administration the state's contribution to the retirement system has not kept pace with the need. Active and retired principals, teachers and school employees paid \$254 million more for co-pays, prescriptions and doctor visits the last two years. Healthcare premiums increased, costing school districts and employees \$543 million more over the same two years. Not only were you not helped in meeting rising healthcare costs, money was actually taken out of your pockets under this Governor.

And they have made it punitive to hire those most qualified to come back and help in our schools and in our classrooms—our retired teachers and principals.

Any educator starting in Texas after September 2007 who wants to retire before age 60 will have their annuities reduced 5% for each year they are under age 60. Instead of looking for ways to increase future annuities, they have limited future annuities by basing them on the highest five years of salary rather than the highest three years. They are not listening.

On teacher pay

Our Texas teachers are underpaid and underappreciated. I recently updated my special report on "The Cost of Underpaying Texas Teachers." We are losing \$13.8 billion each year underpaying Texas teachers. Thirty-seven thousand teachers are leaving

"I'm a 67-year-old grandmother and I'm not looking for a career in politics. I'm looking for a future for our kids and our state."

the classroom every year for better pay or simply quitting. Turnover is highest where teacher pay is lowest.

It costs to recruit and retrain new teachers. At least 50,000 students are dropping out of school every year; add in the cost of welfare and incarceration and we are losing \$13.8 billion each year underpaying Texas teachers.

The first thing I will do is give every teacher a \$4,000 across-the-board pay raise right now, fully funded by the state, with a competitive automatic pay increase every two years just to get us to the mid-way point in these United States.

I will fully restore the \$1,000 health-care supplements to all Texas educators and school employees, and pay \$2,500 bonuses to all teachers in low-performing schools that raise rankings to academically acceptable or better.

I will provide state-funded stipends for quality teachers who mentor new teachers.

If we had better salaries, health insurance and a good retirement plan, we'd have no shortage of certified teachers in Texas.

Rick Perry touts a pay for performance system. If this state had a true pay for performance system in place, teachers and educators would be the highest paid workers in Texas and this Governor would be the lowest. In fact, Rick Perry would owe us money back.

On retired teacher pay

Retired teachers continue to lose benefits and are unfairly treated compared to other state employees.

I will bring educators, financial professionals and representatives from the Teacher Retirement System and the Employee Retirement System to the table to get parity between the two retirement systems.

On standardized testing

What is most important is not how well any given school district performs compared to another school district, or this school to that school. What is important is how each child progresses each year.

We must fundamentally rethink the way we are using our tests to gauge the quality of education our children are receiving and are retaining.

We will flip the TAKS test from the spring to the fall to make it a truly diagnostic test. Teachers will know up front where each child really is academically, and then they can spend the rest of the year doing what they do best—teaching, really teaching—so students can really learn and really retain.

On leadership

You have a right to expect straight talk from your leaders. They should not tell you that you are getting a tax cut when they are really taking more of your money and hitting you with the largest tax increase in Texas history. Our governor and his Austin crowd have proposed and imposed the largest tax increase in our state's history, and it includes an unconstitutional income tax on partnerships and unincorporated associations to boot.

It leaves the largest hole in Texas history. We will be a staggering \$23 billion short of funds needed to pay for the promised property tax cuts over the next five years by official Comptroller calculations; the

Carole Keeton Strayhorn's "Great Schools"

Improve our Public Schools and Make Sure Children Are Really Learning

- Flip the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills from the end to the beginning of the school year where that will allow teachers to teach and students to really learn and really retain.
- Reinstate the Texas School Performance Reviews.

Recruit and Retain Quality Teachers

- Give each teacher a \$4,000 across-the-board pay raise now, fully funded by the state, with a competitive plan in place in five years to get Texas to the midway point in the United States.
- Fully restore the \$1,000 health care supplement to all Texas school employees.
- Increase retired teacher benefits and increase the state's contribution to these benefits and have parity between the Teacher Retirement System and the Employee Retirement System.

Provide Long-term Reliable Funding for Schools

- Use \$8 billion in long-term Strayhorn Solutions to provide a stable, reliable, permanent funding base for schools and reinstitute the Texas Performance Reviews to find savings across state government.
- Veto any legislation or plan that includes a single dollar for vouchers.

Make Higher Education More Affordable and Accessible

- Implement her TexasNextStep plan that allows every high school graduate to attend a two-year public community college with the state picking up the tab for tuition, fees and books.
- Impose tuition locks that will freeze tuition rates for college students at the level when they first enter college until tuition rates decrease.
- Allow college students to purchase textbooks tax free.

Legislative Budget Board says it is \$25 billion short.

Imagine, it took a court order to make the Governor of Texas finally do something, and what he did still does not work.

The Governor's law provides a paltry pay increase for teachers, and a pittance of property tax relief that will evaporate almost immediately. The Governor has promised you a \$2,000 property tax cut, but don't go rushing to the mailbox October 1st because it will not be there.

It's at best \$52 this year for the average homeowner. One more Coca-Cola a week out of the vending machine. For virtually all senior citizens 65 years and older: zero property tax cut this year.

The Governor has pushed the problem to the local level, punted the problem just past the November election, and postponed only temporarily additional court action.

For that one can of Coca-Cola we are going to get out of the vending machine each week, we are going to be paying more for virtually everything we do, from dry cleaners to barber shops, beauty shops, lawn services, and doctors.

A leader acts with real solutions to real problems. And a leader tells the people of Texas the truth.

On TexasNextStep

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics says that by the year 2030, 60% of Texans will only have a high school diploma or less.

I have a plan called TexasNextStep. I want every Texas high school graduate to have the opportunity to go on to two years at a public community college or technical college with the state picking up the tab for tuition, fees, and books.

I want Texas to have the most educated workforce in the nation. I'd rather spend \$2,500 a year educating a young Texan than \$16,000 a year incarcerating that young Texan. We can make sure every Texas high school graduate has an opportunity for two years of college for \$150 million a year.

The Governor has \$300 million in his taxpayer-funded, corporate-welfare slush fund, and he gave \$50 million of it to two of his largest contributors to study mice.

As Governor, I will eliminate this special interest slush fund—and I will eliminate the millions of your tax dol-

lars going to DC lobbyists. And that would more than pay for Texas-NextStep. This is the common-sense plan we need to give our most precious resource—our children—the education they deserve to compete in this new century.

On children's welfare

Texas is great, but we can do better.

Our Texas economy is number 6 in the world on a per capita basis, but Texas ranks second in these United States on the number of children living in poverty — 1.4 million children. We ought to be ashamed.

Texas is dead last in the number of children who have health insurance in the United States. Since September 2003, 211,928 more children have been dropped from the Children's Health Insurance Program; that's a 41.8% drop. These are not welfare recipients, these are hard-working Texans. That's unconscionable. I am disappointed that we have not solved school finance but I am heartbroken that we have not fully restored children's health insurance.

This state is abdicating its responsibilities in education and health-care. Ignoring state challenges is creating local crises. We have got to cut skyrocketing local property taxes. The state has got to pick up more of the tab and we've got to have equity.

What we all need from government is less, not more. Less regulation, less taxation. In a Strayhorn Administration there will be no unfunded state mandates. Perry's so-called 65% Rule is a huge unfunded state mandate. A one-size-fits-all approach does not work.

Plan

it will become a true diagnostic test

automatic pay increase every two

between the Teacher Retirement Sys-

chools that includes video lottery

munity college or technical college

ge until graduation unless tuition



NEW AND IMPROVED: TSTA/NEA Attorney Referral Program

Eligible members are entitled to two, free 30-minute consultation sessions and a 30% discount on normal hourly rates

The TSTA Attorney Referral Program (ARP) has been updated and revised! To promote it, we are running a special from now through May.

TSTA has identified attorneys throughout the state who have agreed to handle certain personal legal matters at a substantially reduced rate. We now have over 30 lawyers across the state in Amarillo, Austin, Beaumont, Brownsville (and the lower Rio Grande Valley), Bryan/College Station, Corpus Christi,

the Dallas/Fort Worth area, El Paso, the greater Houston area (from Cy-Fair to Galveston), Longview, Lubbock, and San Antonio ready to assist you with your personal legal needs. We are frequently adding more lawyers and we hope to have more geographical locations covered in the near future.

These lawyers have agreed to offer their services at a 30% discount off of their normal hourly rates. Some have also agreed to provide some

routine services at a discounted flat rate.

During any membership year (from September 1 to August 31), eligible members are entitled to two, free 30-minute consultation sessions with any of these Association-approved attorneys. The consultations are basically a free time for you to assess the attorney, and for the attorney to assess your case. Many attorneys charge a consultation fee, but not the ones in the TSTA ARP.

Here are some of the personal legal matters that may be covered in the program:

- Consumer Protection
- Corporate and Commercial Matters
- Criminal Defense and Traffic Violations
- Family Law (divorce, custody, adoption, etc.)
- Labor/Employment
- Mediation
- Personal Injury
- Real Estate
- Wills/Estates

Not all of the attorneys in the TSTA ARP handle all of these areas of the law, but most do.

As a way of promoting the newly revamped TSTA ARP, TSTA has negotiated with some of the lawyers to provide a special deal on a “Directive to Physicians” and a “Medical Power of Attorney.”

Directive to Physicians—If you are at least 18 years old, of sound mind, and acting on your own free will, you

may, in the presence of two qualified witnesses, sign a “Directive to Physicians” concerning your own care. The Directive (made famous by the Terri Schiavo case in Florida—and sometimes called a “Living Will”) allows you to instruct your physician not to use artificial methods to extend the natural process of dying. If you sign the Directive, you must tell your physician; ask that it be made part of your medical record. Before signing the Directive, you may ask advice from anyone you wish, including your attorney.

From now until the end of May, many attorneys in the TSTA ARP will prepare a Directive to Physicians for you for \$40! (Attorney participation varies by geographical region.) If this is something that you have been meaning to do, now is the time to act.

Medical Power of Attorney—A Medical Power of Attorney allows you to designate someone to make health care decisions for you when you are unable. If you are at least 18 years old, of sound mind, and acting on your own free will, you may sign a “Medical Power of Attorney” concerning your own care in the presence of two qualified witnesses.

There is a chance in your lifetime that you may be seriously injured, ill, or otherwise unable to make decisions regarding your health care. If this should happen, it would be helpful to have someone who knows your values and in whom you have trust to make such decisions for you.

The person you select should be knowledgeable about your wishes, values, and religious beliefs, and be someone in whom you have trust and confidence. Although you are not required to designate an alternate person, you may do so. The alternate person(s) may make the same health care decisions as the designated person. From now until the end of May, many attorneys in the TSTA ARP will prepare a Medical Power of Attorney for you for \$60! (Attorney participation varies by geographical region; call for verification.)

Also, in addition to the Directive to Physicians and the Medical Power of Attorney, many attorneys will provide a simple will for about \$150 to \$250, depending on geographical location. Others will provide a will package that includes a Directive to Physicians and a Medical Power of Attorney for \$250 to \$350.

Participating attorneys must agree to discuss fees before they render services. They must be willing to accept payment of their fees by installment payment plan or by credit card, and they must be willing to meet with you before or after school hours.

Of course, court costs, filing and services fees, and attorney out-of-pocket expenses are not discounted.

To find a TSTA ARP lawyer near you and his or her discounted fee schedule, email the TSTA Help Center by going to www.tsta.org and clicking on the Help Center banner; or call the TSTA Help Center at 877-ASK-TSTA.

Special rates on a Directive to Physicians (Living Will) and Medical Power of Attorney through May 31, 2007.



Edu

Great Pub

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Student Leaders Day

Aspiring teachers are convening in Denver, Colo., to celebrate the beginning of American Education Week.



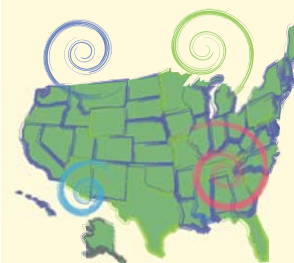
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13

National Kick-Off Celebration

Join NEA in kicking off American Education Week 2006!



20

27

Invite Parents

Invite parents in school for a first at their children



American Education Week

Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility

T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14 National School Day Go into the school to get a first-hand look at the school day.	15 Education Support Professionals Day Celebrate the secretaries, classroom aides, maintenance workers, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, nurses and others who provide invaluable services year round.	16 Educator for a Day Encourage community leaders to serve as "educators for day" for a hands-on school experience.	17 Substitute Educators Day Honor the educators who are called to act as substitutes in the temporary absence of regular classroom teachers.	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	NOVEMBER 2006	



Education Austin President Louis Malfaro and Austin ISD Superintendent Pat Forgione shake hands after signing the consultation agreements.

CONSULTATION WORKS!

Education Austin wins 11.8% increase for teachers and classified employees plus fully paid employee health insurance



Education Austin officers and staff.

Education Austin and Superintendent Pat Forgione have reached a two-year consultation agreement which, including state increases, will mean a 7.5% pay raise for the current school year and a 4% raise next year for all Austin ISD teachers and staff; compounded, the raise totals 11.8%.

It's a testament to the effectiveness of the consultation process. Months of hard work by Education Austin negotiators working with the AISD administration—and by Education Austin members working to elect new school board and legislative candidates—paid off. The raises apply equally to certified and classified employees.

“AISD has seized an opportunity to make a sound investment in the teachers and staff of our district,” said Education Austin President Louis Malfaro. “High teacher turnover has plagued the district in recent years, with a disproportionate number of teachers leaving our most challenging schools. This two-year commitment sends a message to our teachers and staff that we want you to stay in AISD and keep up the great work!”

Education Austin and the administration also agreed on a number of other items, including a continued commitment by the district to fully fund employee health insurance for this year and next, and an agreement to restore elementary art, music, and physical education class sizes to a reasonable level. AISD has agreed to hire 30 more teachers beginning in 2007 to restore cuts made in the 2003-2004 budget collapse.

Other Salary Proposal Wins

In recent months, Socorro Education Association, Hays Educators Association, Waco TSTA/NEA and College Station Education Association all delivered well-researched salary presentations to their respective school boards.

The result so far? In Hays CISD we won an 8% increase for education support professionals, while in Socorro we achieved a \$1000 pay raise for teachers above the state mandated \$2500 and 8% for support staff.

TFA Stops Cuts at UT Medical Branch

Actions taken by the new Texas Faculty Association chapter at The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston have prompted the administration to back away from making cuts in the salaries of many tenured professors. Read more at <http://tfaonline.net>. TFA is TSTA's affiliate for higher education faculty and staff.



Student President: 'I Can Make a Difference'

"Why would I enter the field of education if I didn't think things were going to get better?" Leigh Anne Meeks, the new president of the TSTA-Student Program, said.

Although the student group had kids in mind when they came up with this year's TSTA-SP theme—"Building Tomorrow by Educating Today"—it applies equally well to what Leigh Anne hopes to accomplish by communicating with her fellow future teachers and the public.

"I'm just one little person. I can't walk into the Capitol building and tell them what they should do for the kids. But as a member of TSTA, I can make a difference," Leigh Anne, who is shown bottom left in the photo with her University of Houston-Clear Lake local officers, said. "I firmly believe that everybody needs to hear what we're facing in education because I can't imagine people not wanting to get involved if they knew."

"When I was little, I wanted to teach. Teaching was about having all the answers," Leigh Anne continued. "Today it's so much more. It's about teaching respect and self esteem and confidence. A lot of students don't get that at home. Life has changed—society has changed—so teachers have had to change. It's a tremendous responsibility to be a teacher."

As schools and society have changed, so has the face of the "typical" student teacher. Leigh Anne is 36 years old and has three children, ages 14, 10, and 5. "I've lived some life," she said. "Prior to coming back to school, I worked in the private sector, but this is where my heart is. This is what I want to do."

One of her goals this year is for each district president to visit a college or university that doesn't have a TSTA-SP chapter and help them start one. "The district officers will be reaching out to all the locals this year and making themselves available, and I'm going to be available, too," Leigh Anne said. Another goal is to encourage TSTA active and student local associations to work more closely together.

"I see TSTA-SP as the foundation for the professional program," Leigh Anne said. "I want people to see what a valuable asset we are to the professional association."

If you would like to get involved with the student program, drop Leigh Anne an email at leighanne21@ev1.net. She'd love to hear from you!



Nashville to Host ESPs

The 2007 NEA Education Support Professional National Conference will be March 9-11 at the Renaissance Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee.

Preconference sessions are on March 7-8 for presidents and leaders and on March 8-9 for emerging leaders, family/school/community, and diversity. Watch www.nea.org/esphome/members/espconf07.html for details.



MEET JANET GADD

Ronnie Ray Education Support Professional Advocate of the Year

You might think that a technology specialist spends the day sitting in a lab. Not so at B.B. Owen Elementary School in The Colony.

Janet Gadd is recognized districtwide as an indispensable part of the education team, helping teachers to integrate technology into their classrooms and streamline their daily tasks. In 2005, she was named district Technology Specialist of the Year.

"She never makes anyone feel less because they need help with their computers, programs, scheduling, laptops, etcetera," said former Owen principal Marilyn Spence, who hired Janet.

Due to Janet's influence, 95% of the teachers on her campus have received a laptop and laser printer for their classroom and personal use.

Janet is wherever the staff needs help: teaching second grade because the teacher is sick and no substitute can be found; doing the televised morning announcements when the usual staff are out of the office; volunteering for additional training on new software so she can support the special education department; taking students into the lab to reinforce the design techniques the art teacher is using; creating flyers and certificates on a moment's notice.

And it doesn't stop when the bell rings. Janet hosts laptop study groups for teachers after school; holds computer camps so Scouts can earn their technology badges; takes fifth graders to an environmental camp in Oklahoma each summer; opens the lab for family technology nights and family music nights; and serves on the school's building leadership and crisis prevention teams.

"Janet is a team player," Spence said. "She will do whatever it takes to make a difference in the day of every staff member. We are a stronger school with Janet Gadd on our staff."

Janet's enthusiasm for taking an active role naturally led her to TSTA. "I joined the first week on the job," she said. "Every professional should be an active part of the professional association that represents their career."

Janet is the membership chair and vice president for the Lewisville Education Association; she's a continuing contributor to the TSTA and NEA political action committees, has assisted with fundraising at the last two Representative Assemblies, and is secretary of the TSTA Democratic Caucus. She is also part of the TSTA Legislative Cadre.

"I make it a point to be informed, involved and interested in people and issues that affect public schools," Janet said. "I steadfastly believe it's not what I can get out of this life, but what I give back that makes a difference."

News from TSTA-Retired

- Pauline Dixon and Letha Grace McCoy, retired delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly, helped to celebrate the 50th year of the merger of NEA and the American Teachers Association. Texas was one of the original states to support the merger. TSTA-Retired members Bobbie Duncan and Lillie Carswell joined TSTA President Donna New Haschke on the stage during the special program. The NEA and ATA merger helped to lead the way for a more inclusive United States.
- Governor Perry and the Legislative Budget Board have asked the Teacher Retirement System to reduce the state contribution. This reduction would be below the minimum amount required by the state constitution. TSTA and TSTA-Retired are working for at least a 7.19% increase for the state contribution in the next legislative session. (www.tsta.org/news/current#Governor)

- NEA and NEA-Retired are continuing to work to protect retiree health care benefits. A new accounting standard calls on governments and school districts to determine the value of the retiree health care benefits that have been promised to active and retired workers. (<http://connect.nea.org/comp/retireehealth-care.htm>)
- TSTA has endorsed a list of candidates that are friendly to educational issues. Please remember to VOTE in November for the candidates on page 7.
- Mark your calendars for the NEA-Retired Western Regional Conference, which will be in Austin April 20-22, 2007. Watch for articles in *This Active Life* for more information. These conferences are very informative. The registration fee includes several meals.
- The TSTA-Retired State Convention and TSTA State Convention will be in El Paso, April 25-28, 2007. Please check the *Advocate* and our website at www.tsta.org for updates.

Nominations Are Due

Nominations are currently in order for the following positions:

- TSTA-Retired President and TSTA-Retired Vice President (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 26)

All elections will take place February-March 2007. If you are interested in serving, you are invited to complete the form and return it by January 16, 2007 to TSTA-Retired, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701. You must be a Retired Active Member.

The President and Vice President offices are for two-year terms, beginning with the 2007-08 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 below).

TSTA-R NOMINATION FORM

Check box beside office this nomination is for: ☐ TSTA-Retired President ☐ TSTA-Retired Vice President

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, 2007, at TSTA-Retired, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701.



What Leads to Quality?

Learn more about the KEYS Initiative at www.nea.org/schoolquality and www.keysonline.org

What, exactly, makes a great school great? You know an outstanding school when you see it, but what would you tell someone to do if they wanted to replicate it?

“Great Public Schools for Every Child” is more than a slogan at NEA. In 1989, NEA researchers identified the conditions a school must have in place for students to achieve at the highest levels:

- Shared understanding and commitment to high goals
- Open communication and collaborative problem solving
- Continuous assessment for teaching and learning
- Personal and professional learning

- Resources to support teaching and learning
- Curriculum and instruction

The result of this ground-breaking research was the Keys to Excellence for Your Schools (KEYS) Initiative. KEYS is a tool that can help with school improvement plans as well as meeting the challenges of the No Child Left Behind Act.

KEYS is a survey tool that lets schools measure for themselves the extent to which quality indicators are present, and a process that brings educators, parents and the community together to improve their local schools.

The KEYS program is a proven yardstick

for checking a school's organizational profile and climate in areas like staff interaction, decision making, and parent-community support. With that data in hand, school staff, parents, and administrators can then focus on what issues they want to address together, and what they want to change.

KEYS 2.0, a revision of the original document, is based on five years of research and input from colleagues who have used the KEYS principles. It is not a “quick fix” for raising student achievement. The initiative entails the application of a basic problem-solving process that includes:

1. Assessment to identify the symptoms.
2. Analysis and data interpretation to seek the root causes of the problem.
3. Essential conversations to reach understanding and consensus that will lead to a plan or strategy.
4. Implementation of the action plan that includes professional development.

5. Monitoring and evaluation to assess progress made and to modify plans as necessary.
6. Staff development.

KEYS 2.0, in short, is part of an action research cycle that school communities lead to achieve and sustain continuous improvement. School readiness for reform is critical to the long-term success of KEYS.

If your school is ready to undertake the initiative, take the survey at www.keysonline.org. NEA will provide you with your School Data Report, which includes your school's average scores and the degree of consensus among your colleagues. You will be able to compare your scores to the average of all schools in the pilot.

The online guide has five sections—about the guide, the introduction, the KEYS, a section on sustaining and deepening school improvement efforts, and appendices, which include a section on basic skills for facilitating school change. Throughout the guide are “success stories” from school districts that have successfully used the KEYS principles.

Hundreds of schools have used KEYS. Recently, participants in three of those schools—Spruce High School cluster in Dallas; East August Middle School in Georgia; and Davis Unified School District in California—came together in Washington, D.C. for the Quality Schools-KEYS 2.0 Conference.

Attending from the Dallas area were: Wanda Huckaby, principal of Comstock Middle School; Woodrow Austin, community liaison from Douglass Elementary; Spruce High School past principal Keith Heath and KEYS 2.0 coordinator Sherry Caldwell; NEA-Dallas President Dale Kaiser; NEA Director Ginny Evans; and TSTA staff members Sandra Hudson, Mel Stubblefield, and Bryan Weatherford.

Learn how to put your school on the road to quality and improved student achievement at www.keysonline.org.



Visit Our New Online Teacher Lounge

Discuss NEA's popular Works4Me email newsletter and share your practical classroom and workplace tips at the Works4Me Lounge, <https://www.nea.org/works4me>. Here are a few of the tips TSTA/NEA members have received by email from Works4Me recently:

MEETING PAPERWORK DEADLINES

“Put a pen in your staff mailbox. When you pick up your mail, check through it quickly and see if there are any forms for you to fill out and sign, etc. If so, grab the pen from your box, fill them out and turn them in to the appropriate person's box immediately whenever possible. This technique will greatly reduce your pile of paperwork and keep you well ahead of deadlines. Someone shared this tip with me early in my career and it has proven to be one of the best time management and paper management tips I ever received!”

GETTING-TO-KNOW-YOU

“On the first day of school I encourage my third grade students to look into my Magic Mirror (a sparkly framed mirror that is attached to the chalkboard with heavy duty magnets) to see Mrs. Jones's Favorite Student. They giggle and smile when they realize that each one of them is, obviously, my very favorite! Sometimes students are simply amazed to see themselves. It's always a lot of fun and everyone feels special.”

PICTURE BOOKS

“Here is a tip that I use for getting to know my students. For a first day homework assignment, I send home a small picture album (the plastic ones that come back when you develop pictures). Each child is to put in ten pictures that show their family, pets, favorite activities, etc. When they bring the albums back, they have the opportunity to share their book with the class. Every child loves to show pictures and even the shy ones have something to discuss. This helps all of us get to know more about each other. I save the albums to use for my Student of the Week board. After they've had their turn, I return the album and pictures to the student. This activity is great for opening week and gets the parents involved and participating right away.”

STUDENT SURVEY

“With 150 students, it's hard to get to know their names quickly. I start off the year with a student survey. The questionnaire is copied double sided, has a space for a student picture, and asks students questions about themselves, favorite books, interests and other information that helps me get to know them. I have a student helper go around the room and take a digital picture of each child. After school I print all the pictures on the school computer. On the second day of class, I have the students find their picture and glue it to the box on the front of the form. I take the surveys home over the weekend and study their names. To prepare for back-to-school night, the students place this survey and a letter they've written to their parents in their writing folder. After back-to-school night, the surveys go into a 3 ring binder on the bookshelf. With 150 students on our team, the students really enjoy reading about their classmates all year long!”



Honoring Excellence

TSTA recognizes outstanding members, regional and local associations, communities, businesses, organizations, media representatives, and individuals through its various awards programs.

Look for “Awards” in the right column of the homepage, www.tsta.org, or, unless otherwise noted, contact the Center for Executive and Governance at 877-ASK-TSTA, ext. 1510, for details and nomination forms for the following awards.

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 bio-

graphical 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.

Frank J. Tejeda 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.

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.

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, go to www.nea.org/annualmeeting/hcraawards; write NEA Human and Civil Rights, 1201 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036-3290; or call 202-822-7705. Nominations must be postmarked no later than December 15.

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

TSTA/NEA EVENT DATES

NOVEMBER

- 1 Instructional Awards Deadline for submitting plan
- 12-18 American Education Week
- 15 National ESP Day
- 30 Friend of Education and Frank J. Tejeda Awards Deadline
- 30-Dec 1 TSTA-Retired Board, TSTA Headquarters
- 30-31 NEA Executive Committee, Washington, DC

DECEMBER

- 1-3 TSTA Board of Directors, TSTA Headquarters
- 4-5 NEA Executive Committee, Washington, DC
- 8-9 NEA Board of Directors, Washington, DC

JANUARY

- 5-6 TSTA Legislative Conference, Hilton Austin Airport Hotel, Austin
- 7 TSTA Legislative and Political Advocacy Committee, Austin
- 11-12 NEA Western Region Minority and Leadership Training Seminar, Overland Park, KS
- 12-14 NEA Western Region Leadership Conference, Overland Park, KS
- 12-13 NEA All Committee Weekend, Washington, DC

5:00 p.m. on February 1. The recipient of this award will be submitted as TSTA's nominee for the NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence, so individuals who are applying for the Boice award should comply with the guidelines provided for the NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence (www.neafoundation.org).

Ronnie Ray ESP Advocate of the Year Award recognizes a TSTA educational support professional whose activities reflect the contributions of ESP to public education and show outstanding accomplishments in one or more of the following areas: innovations to support the day-to-day educational process; professional achievements in his/her classification; involvement in the promotion of public education in the community; involvement in local, state, or national association; and enhancement of ESPs' image in his/her

association, work site, or community. Nominations are accepted from regions and/or local affiliates. For a nomination form and nomination guidelines, contact the Center for Executive and Governance by email (connier@tsta.org) or by calling 1-800-323-5355, ext. 1510. The deadline for submitting nominations is September 30. Nominees must have been an educational support professional member of TSTA for three years (as of January 15) whose activities reflect contributions to public education and show outstanding accomplishments.

School Bell Awards recognize outstanding media coverage of education issues and events. Awards are presented at our annual state convention. The deadline for nominations is January 31. Download the instruction booklet and nomination form at our website. For more information, contact

TSTA's Center for Public Affairs at 877-ASK-TSTA.

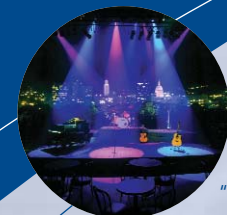
Pride in Communications Awards recognize outstanding local/regional association newsletters and web sites. Entries are judged on the extent to which the local and/or regional association programs are identified and explained. Entry forms must be received by March 1 by TSTA's Center for Public Affairs, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701.

Instructional Awards recognize local associations for activity and accomplishments, encourage all locals to enhance their level of activity and accomplishment, and incorporate certain strands of the NEA's Priority Schools Initiative into local association planning. Go to http://www.tsta.org/teaching/current/instructional_awards.shtml or contact TSTA's Center for Teaching & Learning at 877-ASK-TSTA for details.

Begin the Journey ... Into the Next Dimension

Texas Computer Education Association
27th Annual Convention & Exposition

Austin Convention Center



Inspiring Speakers

Opening Keynote Erin Gruwell, revolutionary English teacher, author

Super Sessions

More than 450 sessions and hands-on workshops

Texas-Sized Events

Austin City Limits and Thursday Social with band, "Texas Unlimited"

Out of This World Exhibits

Over 700 Exhibit Booths showcasing cutting edge educational technology

Mark your calendar for **February 5-9, 2007.**



www.tcea2007.org

TSTA State Convention Delegate Elections

State delegate allocations for local associations (including TFA) to the April 27-28, 2007 TSTA House of Delegates will be mailed to local presidents on January 22.

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 Professional, Life and Active ESP membership on January 15, 2007. The policy regarding election of delegates, forms and timelines will accompany the allocation. If a local wishes to conduct its election for delegates prior to January 15, it 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 Govern-

nance 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

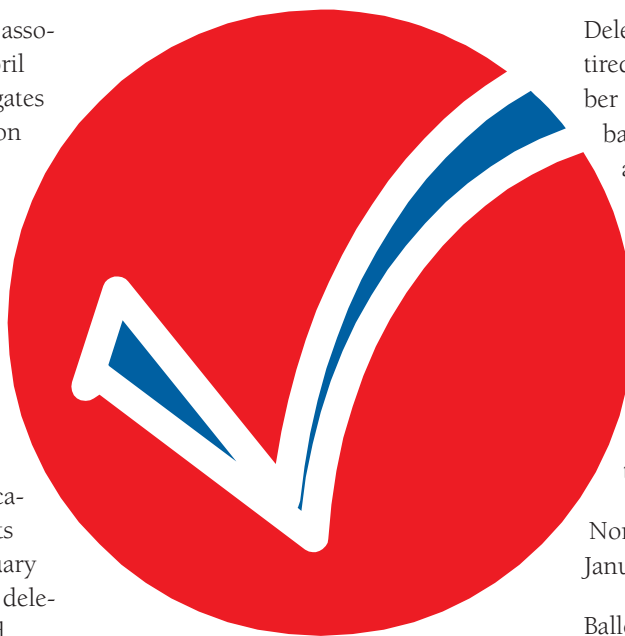
Delegates are allocated to TSTA-Retired/NEA-Retired members. The number of at-large TSTA-R delegates will be based on TSTA-Retired membership as of January 15, 2007. In order to run for a TSTA-R at-large delegate position, a candidate must be a member of TSTA-R and NEA-R.

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, 2007.

Ballots for the election will be sent to members on February 9, 2007. The deadline for returning ballots to TSTA Headquarters is March 15, 2007.

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 27-28, 2007

The deadline for receipt of this nomination form at TSTA's Headquarters is January 16, 2007 (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 biographical sketch 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.)
☐ Check here if you will be a first-time delegate

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

Signature of Nominee _____



HOG-TIE SOME SAVINGS



**FIND your new
TSTA membership card
in the MIDDLE of this magazine.**

Your TSTA membership card can save you up to 50% on the things you buy every day. From apparel and electronics, to hotel stays and cruises, you'll save BIG at places like:

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LOFT

Coldwater Creek



SCHOLASTIC
Teacher Store

COLD STONE
CREAMERY

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Walt Disney World
RESORT

Q
Quiznos

AVON.com

UNIVERSAL
Orlando
RESORT

Ready to start saving?

HERE'S WHAT YOU DO:

- Remove your membership card from the middle of this magazine.
- Log on to www.tsta.org and click "members only."
- Enter your member number to activate your card.
- Start saving!



National Delegate Elections

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, 2007. Deadline for return receipt of ballots at TSTA is **April 20, 2007** 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 2007 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, 2007, 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 biographical sketch of 25 words or less, which may include ethnic status.

NEA also requires proportional representation for supervisory and non-supervisory members. In order to insure this is not violated, supervisory mem-

bers 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 (Active 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

Let's go to Philadelphia for the 2007 NEA Representative Assembly (RA) July 2-5. Pre-RA meetings and workshops begin on June 25. The first Texas Caucus meeting will be on June 30.

The exact number of delegates from Texas will be determined by our TSTA/NEA membership as of January 15, 2007. TSTA will be allocated one state delegate for every 1,000 Active (Professional 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, and it is most important that the elected delegates attend the RA.

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

("successor delegates"). **Those completed forms must be received by TSTA no later than April 10, 2007 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 members may run as either retired delegates or state delegates. The two elections have different eligibility requirements. (1) The Retired Delegate Nomination Form is for a TSTA-R/NEA-R member who seeks election as a TSTA-R/NEA-R delegate. (2) A retired member who was an NEA Active Life member while teaching may seek election as a Category 2 State At-

Large delegate by completing and returning the State Delegate Nomination Form and checking the Category 2 box. Those who are eligible to run in both elections must choose; they may file in only one election. The deadline for submitting a nomination form (and an optional biographical sketch of 25 words or less) is January 16, 2007. 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.

RETIRED DELEGATE NOMINATION FORM

NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY TSTA/NEA-RETIRED DELEGATE POSITIONS—JULY 2-5, 2007

Deadline for receipt at TSTA Headquarters is January 16, 2007, 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 biographical sketch 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.)
☐ Check here if you will be a first-time delegate

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

Signature of Nominee _____

STATE DELEGATE NOMINATION FORM

2007 NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY STATE DELEGATES

Deadline for receipt at TSTA Headquarters is January 16, 2007, 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 biographical sketch 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.)
☐ Check here if you will be a first-time delegate

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 _____



We're helping make members' lives better— from the first day—right through retirement.

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TSTA/NEA

Texas State Teachers Association/National Education Association

877-ASK-TSTA • www.tsta.org

2006-07 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"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
				<input type="checkbox"/> Black				<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
				<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic				<input type="checkbox"/> Multi-ethnic
				<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Spanish Origin)				<input type="checkbox"/> Other
				<input type="checkbox"/> Asian				
<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)			\$391.00					
Professional Dues—New to the profession			\$268.00					
2. Educational Support Dues—Full-time			\$203.50					
Educational Support Dues—Part-time			\$105.50					
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								
NOTE: Membership must include local and region dues if eligible.								

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 \$4.65 for NEA Today, \$2.60 for NEA-Retired and/or \$19.00 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 _____



ANN RICHARDS

1933-2006

TEACHER, GOVERNOR, ADVOCATE FOR THE CHILDREN OF TEXAS
SHE WAS ONE OF US.

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