

# Advocate

Texas State Teachers Association/National Education Association

SPRING 2007

## Educator Astronaut Prepares for June Launch



VOTE  
BALLOT  
INSIDE

# THE TESTING DEBACLE CONTINUES



When asked about the amount of emphasis on state testing of students in their community, 60% of voters and 65% of public school parents in a recent poll said there is too much.

Last November when word got out that bills filed in the 80th Legislative Session might include proposals for end-of-course exams to replace TAKS for secondary students, our members took notice! A subcommittee of our secondary teachers on the TSTA Board of Directors met with Public Affairs Director Richard Kouri to express their concerns, ask questions, and give input about this proposed legislation. Would the exams replace final exams? Would they be in addition to finals? If a student passes all course work but barely fails the final, would the student fail to graduate? How much would the end-of-course exam count? Would it truly replace the TAKS completely? Would the end-of-course exam instead of TAKS meet the federal testing requirements in the No Child Left Behind (ESEA) legislation? The group concluded that the devil would be in the details, and we did not possess enough of them to take a position on behalf of the association.

Now we know that several bills have indeed been filed, and we will study them thoroughly and seek the opinions of our experts, our secondary teacher members, who will be most directly affected by the changes.

Our Association has a long-held position to oppose high stakes testing. The notion that a single test given on one day will be used to make critical education decisions for our students—retention, promotion, graduation—is inherently flawed and just plain wrong! Of course, we acknowledge that end-of-course exams could be used as a component of a more authentic assessment system, but we don't have enough information yet to make that determination.

TSTA has set its legislative priorities for the 80th Session, as outlined on our website, and we are meeting with legislators to share them. One of the most important of all is to bring back a common sense approach to TESTING! Replace high stakes tests with a broad-based assessment process that uses multiple measures to assess student achievement in a way that allows teachers to focus on students' educational needs. Resist misguided efforts that will make the problem worse by basing student advancement solely on an increased number of high stakes tests.

Texas voters agree. When asked about the amount of emphasis on state testing of students in their community, 60% of voters and 65% of public school parents in a recent poll said there is too much. Texans do not want to eliminate the state testing program, but they are open to improvements that increase the time spent on student learning and to use the testing to help diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of students. (See news section for details on the January poll.)

Our legislators must share our vision of great public schools for all children in Texas. One way to ensure this would be the end of high stakes tests, a comprehensive curriculum, and expansion of music, arts, foreign languages and other "non-tested" subjects. Also needed are techniques for dropout prevention, counseling, and providing for the diverse needs of all students throughout their academic experience.

Yes, this is a tall order, but do our children deserve less?

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



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Advocate

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# Texans Know It's Not 'Mission Accomplished'

**Overwhelming bipartisan majority supports more state funding for public schools and teacher pay; opposes incentive pay schemes; wants less emphasis on standardized testing**

*On February 12, TSTA issued the results of the latest poll of Texas voters to the Capitol press corps as well as reporters in several locations across the state. Here is TSTA President Donna New Haschke's statement:*

Last spring the legislature, facing a court order and the threat that Texas schools could shut down, adopted a school finance plan that was hailed by some as a solution. However, an overwhelming majority of Texans believe the school finance plan adopted last year was no more than a band-aid to keep our schools open.

TSTA commissioned a poll of 802

Texas voters that was conducted during the week of January 22-25, 2007 by two nationally known pollsters, Republican Ed Goetas of The Tarrance Group and Democrat Paul Harstad of Harstad Strategic Research. On issue after issue, the survey found that Republicans, Democrats and Independents shared the same priorities for our public schools.

An overwhelming majority—81% of Texans—believes that the school finance plan passed last year by the legislature was at best a first step, and that there is more work to be done to fully fund public education. And a 71% ma-

jority agreed that “the school finance plan was only a temporary band-aid because all of the new state tax dollars were dedicated to property tax relief...” compared to only 21% who thought “the school finance plan passed in the special session accomplished its mission of fully funding public education, providing teachers with a pay raise....”

As it turns out, the majority of Texans know exactly what is going on. The proceeds from the new business tax were dedicated to property tax relief last year, but the new tax isn't even paying for the tax cuts, much less generating revenue for education. Regardless, state leaders continue pushing budget proposals that emphasize property tax relief at the expense of important education priorities. In fact, the proposed Legislative Budget Board budget reduces funding for:

- the extended year program that helps students at risk of dropping out or who have failed the TAKS test already;
- the Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs for our top students;
- the Texas Reading, Math and Science initiatives;
- Early Childhood Readiness programs;
- the Student Success Initiative;
- pre-kindergarten early start programs;
- and it repeals the \$500 salary supplement (health care stipend) for education support professionals.

Until we have a reliable, long-term funding source for our children's schools, no one should say "mission accomplished"; there is still important unfinished business to do before public education is properly funded.

The specific poll findings are remarkable in another respect: Texans' opinions about the importance of public education and what we must do to keep improving our schools have remained very consistent over the five years we have conducted similar polls.

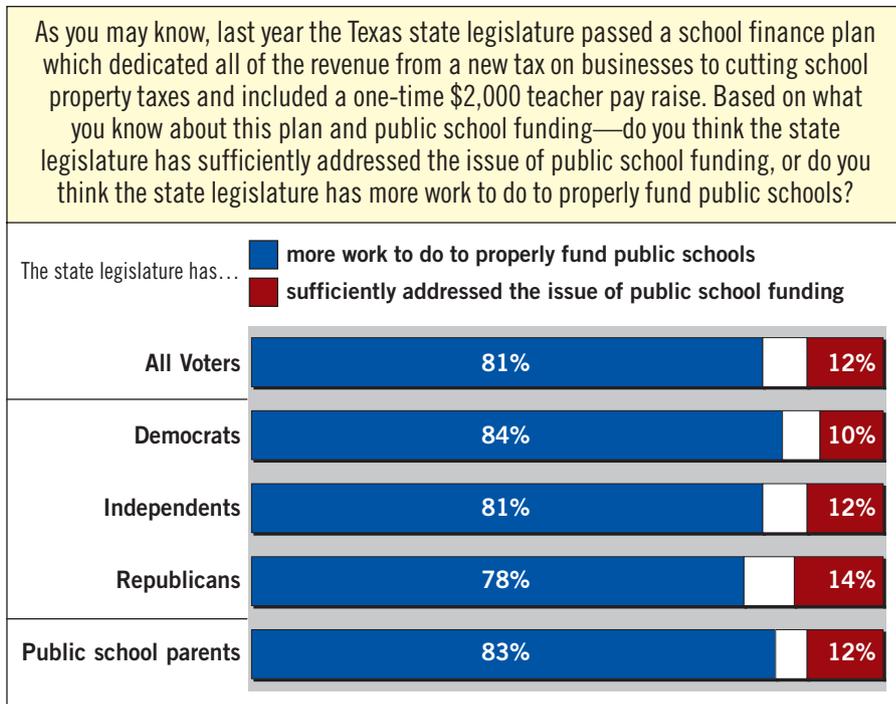
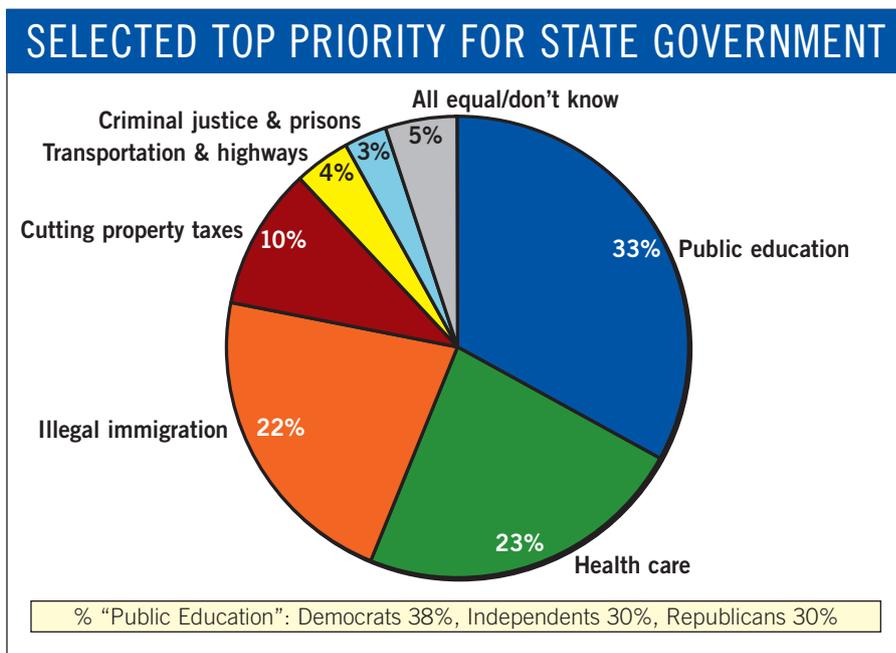
- Texans continue to identify public education as the top priority (out of six possible priorities) for state government. In fact, more than three times as many Texans (33%) consider public education our top priority, compared to only 10% who chose cutting property taxes, which is clearly the singular budget priority of the Governor and legislative leaders. Voters also chose public education by 10 points over health care (23%) and illegal immigration (22%).
- Voters want more state money invested in public education and believe teacher pay falls short. Two-thirds of voters would like to see state funding for public education increased, while 24% would like to see funding kept the same, and only 5%

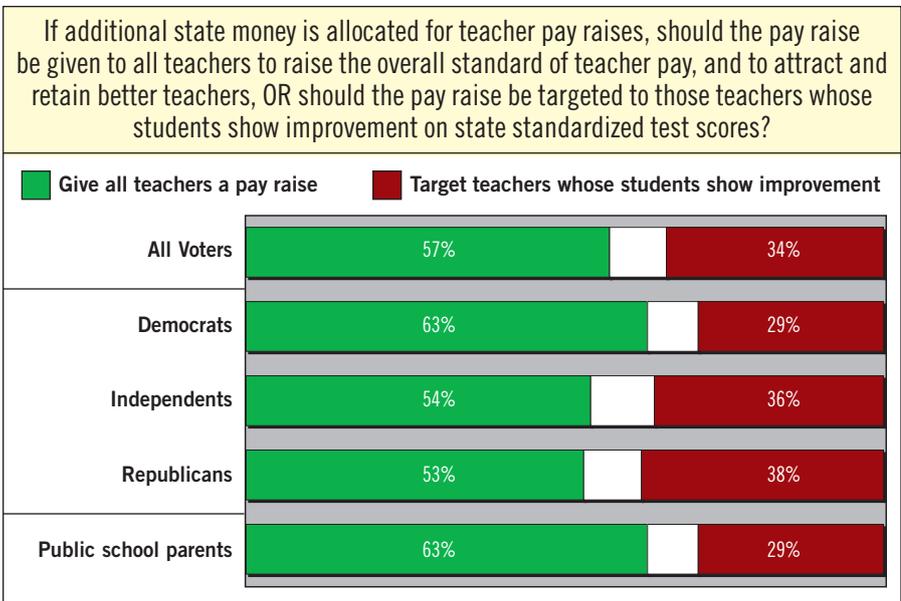
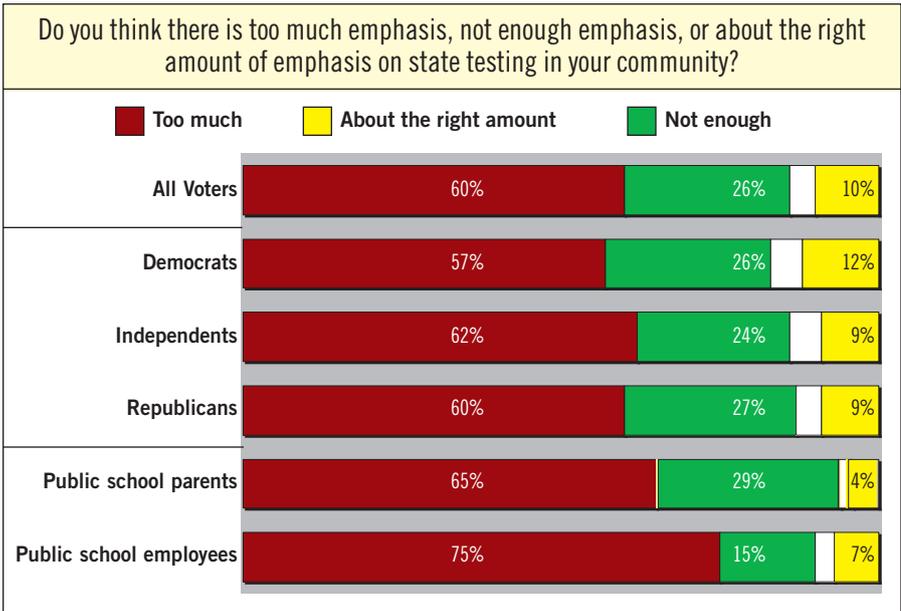
want state education funding decreased. Likewise, 67% believe teacher pay falls short and, by a 57%-34% margin, they say teacher pay increases should be given to all teachers instead of targeting them to teachers based on student performance on standardized test scores.

- A 60% majority of voters believes too much emphasis is given to standardized testing, compared to 26% who say it's the right amount of emphasis,

and 10% who say there's not enough emphasis. Although a majority (53%-41%) opposes eliminating state testing, 65% of public school parents say there is too much emphasis on state testing.

- Texans strongly believe changes should be made in the state testing system to let students spend more classroom time learning and let teachers spend less time teaching to the test; standardized tests should be





Founded in 1983, the Quorum Report is a nonpartisan newsletter on Texas politics and government that describes itself as “a multi-dimensional news, information and gossip source for the politically involved.” Harvey Kronberg, who was dubbed “the Capitol’s most astute observer” by former Lt. Governor Bob Bullock, is the writer, editor, and publisher. Although parts of the report are available only by subscription, you can sign up at [www.quorum-report.com](http://www.quorum-report.com) for free news flashes.

Kronberg discussed the forces behind recent gubernatorial and legislative elections, including the strategies of pro-voucher money man James Leininger of San Antonio. Of 23 million voters in Texas, only 4.3 million voted in the last general election, Kronberg said, and only 600,000 voted in the last Republican primary. Leininger’s strategy, he believes, is to take the fight to the primary level, where a \$1 million contribution can more easily buy an election, “trying to undermine and make irrelevant the general elections.”

Senator Whitmire, who chairs the Criminal Justice Committee and has spent 33 years in the Texas legislature, thanked TSTA members for their help. “I have a good voting record largely because of your members in the Houston area working with me and your profes-

used primarily to help diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of students instead of being a singular factor in graduation and advancement, voters believe. Texans favor a wide range of changes in the current testing system, but scaling back the importance of passing standardized tests to allow factors like classroom performance and grades to carry more weight in determining advancement and graduation received the highest favorable rating, with 82% supporting—and 60% strongly supporting—such a change.

The message from Texans is clear: last year, the legislature’s school finance plan represented, at best, a first step.

Should the legislature adjourn this year without taking a second or third step toward addressing public education funding as a top priority, they will have failed to meet the needs of the school children of Texas and the expectations of their constituents.

**‘WE COULDN’T DO IT WITHOUT YOU’**

More than 300 participants in TSTA’s January Legislative Issues Conference heard Sen. John Whitmire, Harvey Kronberg of the Quorum Report, and NEA President Reg Weaver; welcomed newly elected legislators at a reception; and went through intensive training on how to impact the 80th session of the legislature.



sional staff in Austin,” he said. “I want to thank you, not only for what you’ve done for my career but I want to go a step further and thank you for the hundreds of others, some successful and some not, that you’ve made a difference in their campaigns. We couldn’t do it without you.”

Whitmire said that, although he had not served on an education committee, criminal justice is inextricably linked.

“There are consequences to students not having access to the proper resources in public schools,” he said, noting that the average education level of Texas’ 153,000 inmates is six and a half years. “We’re either going to spend money on the front end, for early intervention of young people and school children, or we’re going to spend it on the back end” on prisons, he said.

Shifting to current issues in the legislature, Whitmire warned that, “The voucher proposals are nothing but an attack on public education. They say they want to help people have choice. They have nothing but contempt for public education. Their kids are in private school and they don’t give a damn about the kids you and I care about in our community.”

Whitmire said he had fought for education for decades but he didn’t have

“the understanding and passion” until his daughter went into teaching for a couple of years. “I saw her leaving early and working weekends. I saw the struggle. She used to come home and tell me about her colleagues, single mothers, who had to decide if they were going to make the car payment or pay the rent. I have listened to teachers, I’ve had you knock on doors for me, I’ve been involved, but I didn’t understand until I lived with a school teacher,” he said.

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#### Legislative Issues Conference Photos

Opposite page, top: NEA President Reg Weaver (right) thanks Keith Dauphiney and Marjorie Snuggs of Alief for their work to boost membership. Bottom: Legislative cadres work on strategy. This page, left: Rep. Joe Heflin and Sen. John Whitmire chat with TSTA President Donna New Haschke. Top right: Rep. Donna Howard. Bottom right: Rep. Joe Farias with Michelle Hickman of Harlandale and TSTA Vice President Ann Heuberger.

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## Insider Tips on Lobbying

In a panel discussion at the Legislative Issues Conference, Rep. Mark Strama offered some tips for more effective lobbying:

- Know the bill number and where the bill is. Your association can give you that information.
- Make sure you know as much as the person you’re lobbying about the issue.
- It’s best if you knew the legislator before they were a legislator, if you helped in their campaign. Working in a legislator’s campaign is when you really get their attention.
- It is my job to be more responsive to the people I represent.
- If you give us a broad and generic goal, you have no way of holding us accountable. Be specific about something measurable you want from legislators. Don’t make it so broad they can say yes and you’ll never know if they meant it.



## THE POINT SYSTEM: HOW IT AFFECTS BUS DRIVERS

In Texas, as in most other states, the Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) point system was created as a way of tracking bad drivers in a consistent manner. “Points” were applied to a driver’s record for certain traffic violations, and those who accumulated too many points were penalized accordingly, for example by a license suspension.

Then it was recognized that this same point system could also be used to make money for the states. Some, including Texas, have adopted a traffic violations tracking system which applies financial “surcharges” on drivers who accumulate a certain number of points. To cut to the chase, these drivers must then pay a huge additional penalty every year for three years!

### Texas Driver Responsibility Program

In Texas, this program is called the Driver Responsibility Program (DRP); enacted by the 78th Legislature as HB 3588, it is located in Texas Transportation Code Chapter 708. (For a Q&A, see <https://www.msb-gila.com/ePay/Faq.aspx#a1#a1>.)

Now, not all violations incur points. A speeding ticket for traveling 10% or less over the speed limit is not counted, and seat belt violation tickets also do not count, though child safety seat violations do.

But the bad news is that Texas’ DRP has created a system with a relatively low point count before heavy, continuous penalties start kicking in—just six points in three years. And Texas doesn’t care which offenses result in how many points: A moving violation is two points. A moving violation resulting in

an accident is three points.

Besides the huge multiple fines under the DRP program, four moving violations in 12 months or seven moving violations in 24 months will also get your license suspended. The more serious violations do not charge points, but that’s not necessarily a good thing because of “Conviction-based Surcharges,” which are discussed below.

Where the state would formerly just suspend your license for habitual traffic violations, drivers now risk paying increasingly heavy fines on an annual, repeating basis by catching more points.

### What Can It Cost You?

The sky’s the limit to what citations can cost you in fines. If you choose to defend yourself in court, you can pay substantial legal fees as well. In general, any serious traffic violation, such

as a DWI or violations that put you over the 6-point limit in three years, will cost you several thousand dollars over the next three years.

For example, with a moving violation, drivers will have to promptly pay the fine for that ticket, whatever the cost. Usually, that would be the end of it except for lingering damage to insurance ratings and the potential of license suspension if the points pile up.

But if drivers accumulate six points on their licenses by the end of the year, then they'll have to also pay a \$100 "assessment surcharge." And that amount increases by \$25 for every point over six. For each year that drivers have six or more points still on their licenses, they will have to pay the \$100 fee again, plus \$25 for each point over six.

### Conviction-based Surcharges

For criminal traffic offenses, Texas applies what it calls "Conviction-Based Surcharges" that essentially let the state fine you annually for the same offense for three years. This is not part of the point system itself, but a separate system that is triggered for the following group of traffic offenses. These range from what could be considered a minor glitch to the truly serious and dangerous transgressions:

Driving while intoxicated, intoxication assault, and intoxication manslaughter (serious):

- First-time offense: \$1,000
- Second or subsequent offense: \$1,500
- DWI with a Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) of 0.16 or higher: \$2,000

Other surchargeable violations (not serious, but still expensive):

- Failure to maintain financial responsibility (DWLI): \$250
- Driving while license invalid: \$250
- Driving without a license: \$100

Please note that these "surcharges" add up and are payable each year for three

years. For example, that 0.16 or greater BAC will cost \$6,000—on top of the initial fine, court costs, legal fees, etc.

### The Cost to School Bus Drivers

School bus drivers in Texas can lose their jobs if they accumulate too many points. In Austin ISD, for example, 10 or more MVR points in three years will result in the bus driver's termination. Driving a school bus on a suspended commercial drivers license (CDL) will also result in the firing of the bus driver.

This is where the DRP and how it is designed and implemented creates a real hazard for school bus drivers. The DPS notifies drivers by US mail if they have received a citation and are assessed a surcharge. If bus drivers have moved and not updated their addresses on their driver's licenses, they can miss getting their notices. If the surcharge is not paid on time, the state will suspend the bus driver's CDL and the suspension notice will also be sent through the mail. These circumstances can and have led to school bus drivers unknowingly driving on a suspended license and thus endangering their employment, as well as their driving records and pocketbooks.

TSTA recommends that all school bus drivers update changes to their addresses with DPS immediately and keep an eye on their MVR points. And drive safely and defensively, which is the best way to stay out of the clutches of the state of Texas and the DRP.

Happy motoring!

—Bruce Banner, vice president for classified employees, Education Austin

## SOCIAL SECURITY FAIRNESS ACT REINTRODUCED

Keep up with the progress of NEA's Social Security Fairness Act, which was reintroduced in January. The bill, HR 82/S 206, would repeal both the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision. Watch NEA's Legislative Action Center for updates: [www.nea.org/lac/socsec/offsets.html](http://www.nea.org/lac/socsec/offsets.html).

Here in Texas, Sen. John Carona (R-Dallas) and Rep. Ruth Jones McClen-don (D-San Antonio) have filed companion bills for TSTA to increase state funding to TRS from 6% to 7% of payroll and provide a 4% annuity increase for retirees. The bills are SB 425 and HB 1105.

## VOLUNTEER FOR A COMMITTEE

The TSTA President is charged with appointing individuals to a number of statewide and special committees, including task forces, each year. All members are eligible to serve. The committees are Community and Instructional Advocacy, Legislative and Political Advocacy, and Credentials, Bylaws, and Elections. Other task forces and special committees are formed from time to time; please indicate your particular area of interest or expertise whether listed or not. You may also recommend a colleague for consideration.

Send your request to Connie Roccato at [connier@tsta.org](mailto:connier@tsta.org) or 316 West 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701 or call 877-ASK-TSTA.

## Early Enrollment Begins April 1!

Take advantage of the spring early enrollment program to sign up current school employees who currently are not TSTA/NEA members. Check with your local president for more details.

**PERSONAL DATA:** Born November 28, 1951, in Fresno, California. Married to Clay Morgan. They have two sons.

**ORGANIZATIONS:** National Education Association; Idaho Education Association; National Council of Teachers of Mathematics; National Science Teachers Association; International Reading Association; International Technology Education Association; Challenger Center for Space Science Education.

**EXPERIENCE:** Morgan began her teaching career in 1974 on the Flathead Indian Reservation at Arlee Elementary School in Arlee, Montana, where she taught remedial reading and math. From 1975-1978, she taught remedial reading/math and second grade at McCall-Donnelly Elementary School in McCall, Idaho. From 1978-1979, Morgan taught English and science to third graders at Colegio Americano de Quito in Quito, Ecuador. From 1979-1998, she taught second, third, and fourth grades at McCall-Donnelly Elementary School.

**NASA EXPERIENCE:** Morgan was selected as the backup candidate for the NASA Teacher in Space Program on July 19, 1985. From September 1985 to January 1986, Morgan trained with Christa McAuliffe and the Challenger crew at NASA's Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas. Following the Challenger accident, Morgan assumed the duties of Teacher in Space Designee. From March 1986 to July 1986, she worked with NASA, speaking to educational organizations throughout the country. In the fall of 1986, Morgan returned to Idaho to resume her teaching career. She taught second and third grades at McCall-Donnelly Elementary and continued to work with NASA's Education Division, Office of Human Resources and Education. Her duties as Teacher in Space Designee included public speaking, educational consulting, curriculum design, and serving on the National Science Foundation's Federal Task Force for Women and Minorities in Science and Engineering.

Selected by NASA in January 1998 as the first Educator Astronaut, Morgan reported to the Johnson Space Center in August 1998. Following the completion of two years of training and evaluation, she was assigned technical duties in the Astronaut Office Space Station Operations Branch. She then served in the Astronaut Office CAPCOM Branch, working in Mission Control as prime communicator with on-orbit crews. More recently, she served in the Robotics Branch of the Astronaut Office. Morgan is assigned to the crew of STS-118, an assembly mission to the International Space Station. The mission is scheduled for June 28.



## EDUCATOR MORGAN IS

*How would you describe the mission to kids and what your role and duties are on the flight?*

Exciting, interesting, amazing, and fun. We are going to the International Space Station to help finish building it. In our cargo bay, or in the back end of the shuttle, we're taking up a couple of big pieces that are part of the station. One is part of the support structure that's going to hold more of the solar arrays, and one



# ASTRONAUT BARBARA S GOING TO SPACE

is the stowage platform that's going to hold a bunch of spare equipment that will be used eventually on station. We're also going to take up, it's kind of like a small room that's cram-packed full of stuff, full of equipment and supplies for our crew members who are living and working aboard the International Space Station. We'll be transferring all the things over that they need and bringing the things that they don't need back home with us.

I'll have many different duties, so I'll just tell you about a couple of them. I'll be one of the robotic arm operators, so I'll be using the space shuttle arm and the space station arm to help us move some of these pieces of equipment as we attach them onto the station. And I'll be helping on the flight deck, coming home, or during what we call "entry" of the space shuttle back to Earth, and helping with everything we do to make sure we come back home safely.

*Kids always love spaceflight. What should they pay particular attention to on your flight? What should they be looking for? And ultimately, what do you think they're going to learn from this mission?*

What I really want them to do is to pay attention to themselves and to look very deep within themselves and dig up all the questions that they have about our world, our universe, and about space exploration.

Because this is all about learning, and we're here to help and we want to know from them—what is it that they really want to know and learn? Because this is their future and it's open-ended for them. I also hope that they'll see an ordinary person doing the things that they can be doing. It's all about learning and exploring, and we want them to come with us.

*As the mission nears, after all of these years, after all of the trials, after all of the tribulations, what is it about the mission that you're most excited about now?*

I'm actually excited about going up and doing the work. We've been training really hard. There's been so much to learn to be able to do our jobs well. And so, I'm really excited about going up and doing our jobs, and doing them well. And I'm excited about experiencing the whole spaceflight, seeing Earth from space for the very first time and experiencing weightlessness and what that's all about—seeing what it's like living and working on board the International Space Station.

*You've stuck with this goal to fly as an educator in space for two decades and through two enormous tragedies that have affected you personally. What is it that motivates you? Why have you stuck with this—over all of this period of time—to accomplish this singular goal?*

(Teachers) have patience and they have perseverance. That's what allows them to do their job so well. I can't think of anything more important to all of us than our

kids and their future. And to me, space exploration is all about open-ended, never-ending opportunities for our young people. That's what my motivation has been, to help keep the world of opportunities open for our kids.

*Is there a difference between “Educator Astronaut” and the “Teacher in Space”—which was the moniker that was attached to this concept, this program, to begin with?*

Both the “Educator Astronaut” and the “Teacher in Space” are teachers. And, they experience space, and then they share that experience through a teacher's perspective and through the eyes, the ears, the hearts, the minds of teachers. The educator astronaut is also a fully trained astronaut who does the jobs, does the duties that an astronaut does.

*Why did you sign up to do this in the first place all those many years ago?*

I was sitting at home. It was after school. The President came on the news and an-

nounced that they were going to send a teacher in space. I shot straight up and said, “Wow!” As you know, teachers all across the country did! What a great opportunity! Because as teachers, we're always looking for opportunities to bring the world to our classroom, to gain more experiences, gain more knowledge about our world so that we can make our classroom a better place for our kids. And, it was a tremendous opportunity, and, as all teachers, we don't pass up those opportunities.

*That summer day in 1985 when you and your fellow candidates were at the White House and Christa McAuliffe was announced as the Teacher in Space, you were announced as her backup, what feelings did you have? What was going through your mind as you represented educators around the world?*

We were all really excited and really thrilled to be doing what we were doing. Christa was, is, and always will be our “Teacher in Space,” our first teacher to fly. She truly knew what this was all

about—not just bringing the world to her classroom—but also helping ... helping to show the world what teachers do and what all the good teachers do across our country day in and day out.

*In the months that you were training here at the Johnson Space Center and down at the Kennedy Space Center for the flight, what did you learn from her? What did Christa learn from you that you both mutually benefited from as the launch approached?*

Well, as teachers we do a lot of teaming in our classrooms and in our grade levels and in our discipline levels. So, at least from my perspective, it was very much like being in our class, being back in our classrooms and being able to share the experience with each other to get the most out of it. I learned a tremendous amount from Christa. She was a great representative of the teaching profession. Of the many things I learned, I learned how to pay attention. It's a lesson that I still need to keep reminding myself of—how to pay attention to the things that are really important and to let the other things that aren't so important go. What was most important to Christa were her students and people and their integrity and much, much more.

*Do you think of the training days back in 1985 leading up to January of '86 in a fond way? Are the memories still strong after all this time?*

You know, it hasn't been a long time. It still feels like just yesterday. As we go through training now, those memories still are there with me. For example, when we go flying in the T-38s (and we do that every week)... I always remember the very first flight I had with Mike Smith and how he showed me what it's like to do barrel rolls and how to fly lazy eights and how to fly in formation with another plane and how, at that time, I knew absolutely nothing about flying. And I'll never forget after Mike showed me a few of these things and he said, “OK, Barb, it's your turn, push the stick.”



Astronauts Dafydd R. Williams (left) representing the Canadian Space Agency, Barbara Morgan and Richard A. Mastracchio, all STS-118 mission specialists, get ready for a mission training session.

You can fly the jet from either the front cockpit or the rear cockpit. And, I said, "Which way?" And, he said, "Any way you want. It's your plane. Take it." And I was shocked by that, and flew some barrel rolls and, you know, realized that Mike had just opened up a whole new world of opportunities for me. Those were opportunities that have carried into today, as we learn as crewmates to fly and communicate with each other and to communicate with our air traffic control and to do everything that we need to do both in the T-38s and in spaceflight.

*We talked about the trials and the tribulations. Certainly the tribulations have been well documented over the past two decades, most recently the Columbia accident. After that, after all of this, and after reliving the Columbia accident and all of the memories and the shadows of Challenger all over again, did it cause you at all to rethink your goal to fly in space, and to fly as an educator to carry out this long-standing dream of yours, of Christa, of your fellow educators?*

Both Challenger and the Columbia have caused me to think, and it caused all of NASA to think. First of all, it caused us to think about what are we doing wrong, and how can we make it better. How can we make spaceflight safer? Because it is risky business, but we want to make it as safe as we can. All the astronauts, all of NASA, have been working really hard and will continue to work hard to try to make spaceflight as safe as we can possibly make it. It also caused me to really think, both Challenger and Columbia, about what's really important. Kids learn a lot from watching adults. It's not just what we say, but it's what we do. And, kids were watching to see what the adults do in a terrible, terrible situation. What I thought was really important for kids to see is that we figure out what's wrong, we fix it, and we move on, and we keep the future open for our young people. And I just thought that that was really important, and feel that's really important today. I'll feel that's important forever.



Barbara Morgan, attired in a training version of her shuttle launch and entry suit.

*What's been the biggest challenge in the sustenance of the single-minded purpose of what you're here for, what you knew you wanted to do from the very beginning, from that very day that you watched the President on TV offer the opportunity?*

The reason for doing it is what keeps me going, so it's not something that I've had to think about a lot. Our kids and our future—there's nothing more important than that and keeping their future open-ended. That's something that's just part of us. But that's what being a teacher is all about; it's the same thing that keeps you going in the classroom. The classroom is a really challenging environment. If you think about it, you've got up to 30 individuals that you're building a team with, but each of those individuals comes with different motivations, different learning styles, different backgrounds, different personalities. Your job as a teacher is to help create an environment and work

with each one of those young people so that they can reach their full potential. There's nothing more challenging than that. It's something you do day after day after day. You look to the end result, but you work at it every day. You get so involved in the everyday activity that you don't think about how long it's going to take. That's exactly what it's been like training for space and training for these missions as well.

*How does your family feel about what you've done, how you've stuck with it, why you've stuck with it? What kind of a support system is in place in your family to go through two decades of this singular goal of yours?*

Well, my family knows that space exploration is really important. My husband and both our boys would love to fly, too. Our kids are concerned about the risk, of course, as is my husband, as anyone would be. But, they know this is important.



David L. Williams from United Space Alliance was on-hand to assist Morgan with a mission training session at the Space Vehicle Mockup Facility.

***After all these years, do you still consider yourself a teacher who could walk back in the classroom tomorrow and pick up where you left off?***

You know that question always kind of makes me laugh! People don't ask the physician astronauts or the engineer astronauts or the chemists: "Are you still a chemist? Are you still a physician?" or "Are you still an engineer?" Yes, I'm still a teacher and look forward to eventually going back in the classroom. I do know teaching is tough and challenging. And there's a skill to it, just like everything else. You have to keep up with that. I'm going to need to sharpen my skills again, take some classes, and go observe a lot of my colleagues and work hard to get back into it to be able to do as good a job as I can.

***Your crew patch has a lot of symbolism affixed to it. One of the things that I noticed almost immediately was an object that looks very much like an Olympic torch next to your name. What is it? What does it represent?***

I'm really glad you asked about our patch, because it's something I'm very

proud of. I think we all are. That is the flame of knowledge, that torch that carries the flame of knowledge. If you look closely at the patch, you'll see the trajectory or the orbit that the shuttle is taking as it circles around the astronaut symbol that's going up to the International Space Station and beyond. That orbit emanates from that flame of knowledge. It's education, it's great education, that propels all of what we're doing in space exploration and as we learn more about our universe. That's so important because to us one of the primary purposes of all these missions is gaining knowledge, and it's gaining knowledge through exploration. The other thing that's near and dear to our hearts is that flame of knowledge really is there to honor teachers and students everywhere.

***Teachers are not exactly the best-paid people in the world. It's not a profession that people go into thinking they're going to walk away wealthy. What is it that draws somebody like you to teaching? What is the benefit that you derive from teaching?***

Teaching is its own reward. It's challenging. It's inspiring. It's invigorating. And,

it's rewarding to create an environment where you are trying to help every single individual in that environment come together as a family and also reach his or her best, greatest potential. It's an enormous responsibility, it's an enormous challenge and it's enormously rewarding.

***What is it about your background as a kid that drew you to want to or even consider doing this? What's your education background that might have drawn you into this?***

All through growing up, because I've loved learning and because I think I really respected and loved my teachers, I had always thought I would probably be a teacher. But by the time I got to high school, I realized that—at least at that time for young women—pretty much what seemed open to us was to either be a nurse or a teacher. It was something I fought very, very hard. I also really loved the sciences and was interested in that. Through college I was a human biology major. But one of my very favorite classes was the physiology of the brain. Doing that, and taking some psychology classes and learning about learning. Learning how people learn and long-term memory, short-term memory, things like that all kind of led back to learning and teaching. And I thought, "If I'm really interested in this, where is a better place to learn about learning and help with learning, and help do something for other people, which was something that I had hoped to do, than being in a classroom?" So, it kind of went full circle. I thought, "This is probably where I belong." And that's how I ended up there. And, it was the right choice.

***Did you have just an inherent interest in space? Did you follow the Neil Armstrong thing that so many astronauts say propelled them to want to specifically become an astronaut?***

Absolutely. I was always interested in looking up at the stars when we'd go camping and as a Girl Scout. My folks, when we were very young, got us a little

telescope for Christmas, and we had that out and would look up at the stars. I was always interested in what's out there. And then, yes, as the space program was being born, we were glued to the TV when we first landed on the moon and the flights leading up to that. That was very much a part of my growing up. I didn't even consider that that would be something that I could do. Part of that, too, was because of the opportunities then for women. I'm so glad now that's not the case anymore.

***You're sort of a recruiting poster for education. But for people who are either about to go off to college or are in college or are not quite certain about what they want to do for a profession, why would somebody want to be a teacher?***

We depend on the future, and the future is those kids who go to school every day. We need teachers. We need folks who want to and are motivated and inspired to go in and do the challenging, hard work and rewarding work of helping people reach their full potential. So I would say, "Go for it! You'll love it!"

***Do you get letters from kids and from other teachers around the nation?***

I get lots of letters and they ask about everything under the sun. All the questions are there, and they're always good questions. In addition to those questions, what I love about them is they all include very, very kind words of support.

***You've been handed a pretty big load on this flight. It's a lot of work and it's a complex mission. How complicated is this whole thing about building a space station?***

It is really complicated. That's one of the real joys, seeing how it's all put together. It's not just when we talk about space missions, it's not just the crew that's going up. I wish we could put everybody who has everything to do with this mission, and anything to do with putting this mission together—it's been worked on for several years now—if we could maybe take them all outside here by the pond at the Johnson Space Center, and

we would have to have so many wide-angled lenses to do a panorama to show all the people that have everything to do with this mission. Every one of those people is really key to making it all work. At the end we get to kind of do the finishing touches. But all they're doing is just helping get ready for the next step, and the next step, and the next step. What I am most excited about is those next steps that will get us back to the moon and to learn how we can really live and, for a longer term than just a short little trip, to really work and live for a long duration and then go on to Mars. I hope I live long enough to go beyond Earth as to watch well beyond Mars.

***What kind of a mark do you think you will have left on education when this is all said and done?***

NASA's been doing excellent education, both on the ground and from orbit. By "education" I mean providing opportunities for students and teachers to get involved and to both experience and to contribute

to space exploration goals. This is just one of many, many steps along the way. I really look forward to coming back and helping with what comes next, and what comes next, and what comes next. Education is never-ending. It can get better and better and better.

***Do you feel as if your mission will be the punctuation mark that will close the story of the Challenger accident and, in turn, bring closure to you personally and to a lot of people who are looking to see Christa McAuliffe's legacy finally fulfilled?***

Christa McAuliffe's legacy is open-ended. Every teacher's legacy is open-ended. I know people will be looking at this and remembering Challenger, and that's a good thing. They will also be thinking about all the people—teachers and other people—who have been working really hard and will continue working really hard to carry on the work that Christa was doing. I'm happy about that.

—interview and photos courtesy of NASA



Morgan and Christa McAuliffe preview some experiments in zero gravity in 1985.



# NEA Representative Assembly

**June 30-July 5, 2007 • Pennsylvania Convention Center • Philadelphia, PA**

The 2007 NEA Representative Assembly will be held at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia, PA. The Texas Delegation to the 2007 NEA Representative Assembly will be housed at Renaissance Philadelphia Airport Hotel.

## NEA-RA INFORMATION

- Tentative Meeting Schedule . . . p.18
- Hotel Reservation Form . . . . . p.19
- How to Vote . . . . . p.20
- Candidate Statements . . . . . p.22
- Special Thanks . . . . . p.23

**Your ballot and return envelope for State NEA Delegates are inserted between pages 20 and 21.**

Texas delegates attending the NEA Representative Assembly will want to view TSTA's website, [www.tsta.org](http://www.tsta.org), for up-to-date delegate information including lodging, travel, and Texas' "official uniform" information. If you wish to view the hotel, the website is <http://marriott.com/property/property-page/PHLBR>.

### Transportation

The hotel is located eight and a half (8.5) miles from the Pennsylvania Convention Center with the Airport located one (1) mile from the Renaissance hotel.

Cab fares from the hotel to the Convention Center are approximately \$25 and from the airport to the hotel is \$15.

Travel time for Texas delegates on the NEA Shuttle Bus to the Pennsylvania Convention Center is approximately thirty (30) minutes in rush hour traffic and approximately fifteen (15) minutes during non-rush hours.

If attendees are driving, the hotel provides complimentary parking. Delegates may also take the Hotel Shuttle to the Airport and catch the Metro. The Metro system is run by SEPTA (<http://www.spta.org/>) which

also runs the high speed rail line and a local bus (Owl bus). The Owl bus and subway run 24 hours a day.

### **Car Rental**

Receive discount car rental rates by logging onto TSTA's web site and clicking on Member Benefits to request a rental car identification card or by calling TSTA's Member Benefits office at 800-364-8622. Delegates will need a rental car identification card in order to receive discounted car rental rates with Advantage, Alamo, Avis, Budget, Dollar or Hertz. Please call early enough for TSTA to provide you with the card by return mail.

### **Hotel Reservations**

The lodging form for the Renaissance Philadelphia Airport Hotel is a part of this article. Friday, May 25, 2007, is the deadline for receiving the form in the Center for Executive and Governance. It is very important that you submit your lodging request forms along with one night's deposit made payable to the hotel as early as possible. All rooms will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. The dollar amount of personal checks that you may cash each day at the hotel is \$25 with the amount of traveler's checks being \$200. Members who will be paying cash for their lodging must pay for their entire stay (\$176.67 per night for single/double including taxes—add \$15 for each additional person after two) as well as \$30 per day for incidentals upon check-in.

Delegates and guests MUST include a credit card number or check payable to the Renaissance Philadelphia Airport Hotel with their reserva-

tion for one night's deposit in order to guarantee their reservation. If an incomplete credit card number or no credit card and/or check are submitted, reservations will not be made. Check-in time is 3 p.m. with check-out being at noon. If a reservation must be cancelled, it will require a 48 hour notice in order to avoid delegates paying a one-night lodging fee.

Mail lodging forms to the attention of TSTA, Organizing Center for Executive and Governance, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, Texas 78701 or fax them to 512-486-7053. Do not contact the hotel directly. Reservations must be made through the Executive and Governance Center with reservations being made through the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The hotel is a smoke-free hotel and does not allow pets except service animals for persons with disabilities.

### **Texas Caucus Meetings**

The first Texas Caucus meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 30, at 1:00 p.m. All Texas Caucus meetings will be held at the Renaissance Philadelphia Airport Hotel. Additionally, delegates must register at the Texas Caucus meeting and with NEA. Registration at the Texas Caucus meetings will begin thirty (30) minutes prior to the beginning of the meeting. Please review the Tentative Meeting Event Schedule for the NEA registration times.

### **Texas Night Out**

TSTA is again researching the possibility of coordinating a "Night Out" event for Texas delegates on June 30. Delegates may monitor the TSTA web site for the most up-to-date information.

### **Clustering to Elect NEA Delegates**

Delegate allocations are based on NEA membership as of January 15, 2007. NEA local affiliates are allocated delegates on a ratio of one (1) delegate for each 150 (or major fraction thereof) active, NEA life, and educational support members of NEA. Thus, local associations with 75 or fewer NEA members must cluster to elect an NEA delegate.

If your local association has 75 or fewer NEA members and is interested in clustering to elect an NEA delegate, you will need to contact the Center for Executive and Governance for assistance. Members wishing to cluster are encouraged to contact the Center as soon as possible so that elections may be held. Please submit in writing the request to cluster by mailing the request to TSTA, Center for Executive and Governance, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, Texas 78701 or fax the request to 512-486-7053.

### **The Texas Tradition**

Texas delegates capture the eyes of the entire nation at each NEA Representative Assembly. The uniform for all Texas delegates will be a Texas Vest or Texas Shirt (Texas Flag with a white star on the right front side of the vest or shirt) with white or navy blue pants/shirt/dress/shorts (no stone washed jeans).

TSTA has a limited supply of 3 XL and 4 XL Vests. The cost for the Vest is \$37.50 and may be ordered by calling 800-324-5355, ext. 1543.

All Texas delegates are expected to wear the official "uniform" on the days that the NEA Representative Assembly is in session (July 2-5).

# TENTATIVE NEA MEETING EVENT SCHEDULE

**The schedule outlines all of the activities of the 2007 NEA Convention. Information packets will be mailed to all Texas delegates in early May. The first Texas delegation meeting is scheduled for June 30 at 1:00 p.m.**

## Pre-Convention Schedule

### Monday, June 25

8:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m. . . . . Student Leadership Conference

### Tuesday, June 26

8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Ethnic Leaders Meetings  
 8:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m. . . . . Student Leadership Conference  
 Noon–5:00 p.m. . . . . National Council of Urban Education  
 Associations Meeting  
 2:00 p.m.–5:30 p.m. . . . . NEA-Retired Annual Meeting

### Wednesday, June 27

8:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. . . . . Student Leadership Conference  
 8:30 a.m.–6:00 p.m. . . . . NEA–Retired Annual Meeting  
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . National Council of Urban Education  
 Associations Meeting  
 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. . . . . Joint Conference on Concerns of  
 Minorities and Women  
 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. . . . . Resolutions Editing Committee Meeting  
 4:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m. . . . . Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee  
 Hearing

### Thursday, June 28

7:30 a.m.–8:30 a.m. . . . . Women’s Issues Hearing  
 8:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m. . . . . Student Leadership Conference  
 8:30 a.m.–3:00 p.m. . . . . Joint Conference on Concerns of  
 Minorities and Women  
 8:30 a.m.–6:00 p.m. . . . . NEA–Retired Annual Meeting  
 9:00 a.m.–noon . . . . . The NEA Fund for Children and  
 Public Education Meeting  
 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. . . . . National Council of Urban Education  
 Associations Meeting  
 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. . . . . Constitution, Bylaws and Rules  
 Committee Meeting  
 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. . . . . Resolutions Editing Committee Meeting  
 1:30 p.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . National Council of State Education  
 Associations Meeting  
 4:00 p.m.–5:30 p.m. . . . . Constitution, Bylaws & Rules  
 Committee Meeting w/ Candidates for  
 NEA Office

### Friday, June 29

9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Candidates Interview Day  
 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. . . . . Resolutions Committee Meeting  
 11:15 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Board of Directors Meeting  
 3:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Credentials Committee Meeting

### Saturday, June 30

8:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m. . . . . Open Hearing on Resolutions  
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Campaigning; Exhibits  
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Credentials Committee Meeting  
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Delegate, Successor Delegate,  
 Non–Delegate Registration  
 9:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m. . . . . Read Across America  
 1:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m. . . . . Texas State Delegation Meeting  
 4:00 p.m.–5:30 p.m. . . . . Special Interest Caucus Meetings  
 4:00 p.m.–5:30 p.m. . . . . IDEA Forum  
 4:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m. . . . . National Council for Higher Education  
 Conference  
 4:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m. . . . . National Council for Educational  
 Support Professionals  
 7:00 p.m.–10:30 p.m. . . . . Special Guests’ Dinner

Evening . . . . . **Texas Night Out** (tentative)

### Sunday, July 1

All Day . . . . . Campaigning  
 7:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m. . . . . State Delegation Meetings  
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Delegate, Successor Delegate,  
 Non–Delegate Registration  
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Exhibits  
 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. . . . . Credentials Committee Meeting  
 10:00 a.m.–noon . . . . . Open Hearing on Budget & Strategic  
 Planning  
 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. . . . . Resolutions Committee Meeting  
 Noon–1:00 p.m. . . . . Special Interest Caucus Meetings  
 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m. . . . . Legislative Open Hearing  
 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m. . . . . Open Hearing on Constitution, Bylaws  
 and Rules  
 2:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m. . . . . Elections Committee Meeting  
 5:00 p.m. . . . . Board of Directors Meeting  
 6:30 p.m.–10:00 p.m. . . . . Human and Civil Rights Awards Dinner

## Convention Schedule

### Monday, July 2

All Day . . . . . Campaigning  
 7:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m. . . . . State Delegation Meetings  
 9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m. . . . . Exhibits  
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Credentials Committee Meeting  
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Non–Delegate Registration  
 9:30 a.m.–11:00 a.m. . . . . Special Interest Caucus Meetings  
 11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Representative Assembly  
 Friendship Night

### Tuesday, July 3

7:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m. . . . . State Delegation Meetings  
 8:30 a.m.–noon . . . . . Voting for Executive Committee and  
 NEA Board At-Large positions  
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Credentials Committee Meeting  
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Non–Delegate Registration  
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Non–Profit Fundraising Activities  
 9:30 a.m.–10:00 a.m. . . . . Special Interest Caucus Meetings  
 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Representative Assembly  
 LUNCH BREAK . . . . . Special Interest Caucus Meetings

### Wednesday, July 4

7:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m. . . . . State Delegation Meetings  
 8:30 a.m.–noon . . . . . Voting on Amendments and Runoff  
 Elections (if necessary)  
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Credentials Committee Meeting  
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Non–Delegate Registration  
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Non–Profit Fundraising Activities  
 9:30 a.m.–10:00 a.m. . . . . Special Interest Caucus Meetings  
 10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. . . . . Representative Assembly  
 LUNCH BREAK . . . . . Special Interest Caucus Meetings

### Thursday, July 5

7:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m. . . . . State Delegation Meetings  
 9:00 a.m.–noon . . . . . Non–Delegate Registration  
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Credentials Committee Meeting  
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. . . . . Non–Profit Fundraising Activities  
 9:30 a.m.–10:00 a.m. . . . . Special Interest Caucus Meetings  
 10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. . . . . Representative Assembly  
 LUNCH BREAK . . . . . Special Interest Caucus Meetings

# HOTEL REGISTRATION FORM FOR NEA CONVENTION DELEGATES

June 30-July 5, 2007 • Renaissance Philadelphia Airport Hotel • Philadelphia, PA

Complete all requested information and return to TSTA by **May 25, 2007**. Check-in time 3:00 p.m.-Check-out time is noon.

**DO NOT CONTACT THE HOTEL DIRECTLY**

(PLEASE PRINT)

**RENAISSANCE PHILADELPHIA AIRPORT HOTEL**

(Texas Delegation Hotel)  
500 Stevens Drive  
Philadelphia, PA 19113  
Phone: 610-521-5900  
Fax: 610-521-8954

**ROOM RATE**

\_\_\_\_\_ Single room (1 person—1 bed) .....\$151.00  
\_\_\_\_\_ Double room (2 people—2 beds) .....\$151.00  
\_\_\_\_\_ Triple room (3 people—2 beds).....\$166.00  
\_\_\_\_\_ Quad room (4 people—2 beds).....\$181.00  
\_\_\_\_\_ Rollaway (\_\_\_ \$20 per additional person)

Cut-off date for ALL rooms and room rates is May 25, 2007. All Rooms are subject to an 8% sales tax and 9% state tax.  
Rooms not booked through TSTA may be charged at the hotel rack rate.

I will arrive (June/July) \_\_\_\_\_, 2007 at \_\_\_\_\_ (a.m./p.m.) and I will depart July \_\_\_\_\_, 2007.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Day phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Home email: \_\_\_\_\_ School email: \_\_\_\_\_

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.	_____

First night's room and tax is due upon receipt of reservation. Deposits can be made by major credit card or check.  
Make check payable to **Renaissance Philadelphia Airport Hotel**. Should cancellation be necessary, you must advise the resort 48 hours prior to your arrival date. If the resort is not advised, you will be responsible to pay for space held.

Approved major credit card: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. date: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return to: TSTA Organizing Center for Executive and Governance, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701, fax 512-486-7053**

## MISCELLANEOUS HOTEL INFORMATION

- Complimentary shuttle service from the airport is available on request. Taxi fare is estimated at \$10 each way.
- On-site parking is available for hotel guests.
- The Sanctuary Restaurant offers contemporary regional fare, including juicy steaks, fresh seafood, pasta, healthy entrees and sandwiches and is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner.
- Trophies Lounge is open for lunch and dinner.
- Room service is available from 6:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
- In room coffee maker, hairdryer, iron and ironing board.
- Complimentary coffee available in the hotel lobby.
- Fitness room available.

# Voting for State Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly

**PLEASE NOTE:** Most members will mark three ballots this year for State Delegates to the NEA RA. One is for Category II delegates, one will be a Statewide Ballot and one will be a Delegate District Ballot. Please read this before marking your ballots.

We have completed all of the calculations for allocating State Delegates for the NEA RA and have divided the state into Delegate Districts, based on TSTA Regions, in a manner that maximizes our opportunity to elect a full delegation while still complying with the NEA one-person, one-vote requirements. As explained in The Delegate Story on the facing page, we will be electing three Category II delegates on a statewide basis, three other delegates on a statewide ballot and 35 State Delegates from eight Delegate Districts.

First, there is one ballot that everybody marks, for the Category II delegates (supervisory and Active Life Active candidates). Next, there is a Statewide Ballot with the TSTA Vice President at the top of the ballot as an automatic candidate and a total of three delegates to be elected on this ballot. Again, every eligible member should mark this ballot.

The rest of the ballots are divided into Delegate Districts in a manner to

meet the NEA requirements for equal representation based on the one-person, one-vote principle. Members in Regions 1A, 1B and 1C should mark the Delegate District 1 ballot. Members in Regions 1D, 3A, 3C and 3E mark the Delegate District 2 ballot. Members in Regions 2A and 2B mark the Delegate District 3 ballot. Delegate District 4 ballot should be marked by members in Regions 2C, 2E and 3F. The Delegate District 5 ballot should be marked only by members in Region 2D. Members in Regions 3B and 3D should mark the Delegate District 6 ballot. Members in Regions 4A, 4C and 4D should mark the ballot for Delegate District 7. The final district is Delegate District 8 and members in Regions 4B, 4E and TFA should mark this ballot. The ballot will list the Regions in each Delegate District.

There is a special insert in the magazine with a return envelope and the ballot. In the return address portion of that envelope most members will find printed Del Dist followed by

some number up to 8; this is the indication of the Delegate District in which you should vote. Also printed is a code designating your membership category. If your envelope shows only the membership category and does not have a Del Dist designation, then you are eligible to vote only on the Category II ballot. Everybody else should mark three ballots: the Category II ballot, the Statewide Ballot and the appropriate Delegate District ballot. **If you believe your envelope is incorrect, then call TSTA immediately (1-877-ASK-TSTA) and ask for Sandra.**

Check the return address portion of the envelope to determine which Delegate District ballot you should mark. First, mark the Category II ballot (vote for three), next the Statewide Ballot (vote for three). Then, find the ballot for your Delegate District. The number of delegates for each Delegate District is determined on the basis of the one-person, one-vote principle. The ballot for your Delegate District will tell you how many votes you may cast. On all three ballots, you may vote for the printed name(s), or you may write in a name and vote for the write-in. In order for write-in votes to be counted on the Delegate District ballot, the name must be for a member in one of the Regions included in that Delegate District.

**BALLOTS MUST BE RECEIVED AT TSTA HEADQUARTERS IN AUSTIN BY 5 P.M. O**

Once you have marked your ballot, separate it from, and seal it in the, envelope provided. **The printed information on the envelope verifies for the Elections Committee your right to vote, so you must return your ballot in this envelope. If you lost or didn't get a ballot, call TSTA immediately (1-877-ASK-TSTA) and ask for Sandra.**

In order to encourage more members to vote, some locals may be collecting the sealed envelopes and mailing a group of envelopes together. This is acceptable, but you still must seal your ballot in the special envelope before you turn it in. Check with your local President to see if your local is collecting and mailing ballots.

**Whether you mail it yourself or your local collects and mails envelopes, ballots must be RECEIVED at TSTA headquarters in Austin by 5 p.m. on Friday, April 20, 2007. If the ballot is not in the provided envelope, your vote will not be counted.**

Some of the candidates running for State Delegate provided statements that you will find in this issue of the Advocate. TSTA policy provides for printing statements from those candidates who file such a statement before the established deadline. TSTA policy also provides that any candidate may have an observer present when the Elections Committee canvasses the ballots on April 21 at the TSTA building in Austin. Please contact Connie or Sandra at 1-877-ASK-TSTA if you are a candidate and want an observer.

## THE DELEGATE STORY

NEA Bylaws and policies determine the allocation of delegates to the NEA RA. TSTA is allocated one delegate for every 1,000 NEA active and educational support members. Allocation and election of these delegates must comply with the NEA requirements about open nominations, secret ballots and the one-person, one-vote principle.

Once we receive notification of the number of state delegates to be elected, TSTA Board policy controls how we will allocate those delegates. Again this year, because of the variance in the number of members across TSTA Regions, we can not allocate delegates only to individual Regions and still pass the one-person, one-vote tests applied by NEA. Instead, we have combined Regions into Delegate Districts in a way to maximize the likelihood of filling all delegate slots while still complying with the one-person, one-vote requirement. From the beginning this year, we knew that one delegate would have to be elected statewide in order to provide a method for the TSTA Vice President to seek election as a delegate.

TSTA is allocated 41 state delegates for the 2007 NEA RA (see page 25). Based on proportional representation, three delegates must be elected as "Category II" delegates, representing supervisors and NEA Active Life Active members. We then set aside one delegate for the statewide ballot and looked at various combinations of Regions that would meet the one-person, one-vote requirements. As the numbers worked out, we had to add two more delegates to the statewide ballot. So we allocated 3 delegates to the Category II ballot, 3 to the Statewide Ballot and the remaining 35 State Delegates to be elected in Delegate Districts.

Local associations are allocated one delegate for each 150 active and educational support NEA members or major fraction thereof. Locals with fewer than 76 NEA members may cluster to form delegate units. Presidents of locals that have 76 or more members should receive from NEA in late February the number of delegates to be elected to the 2007 NEA Representative Assembly with an accompanying form that is due at TSTA by April 10 and a copy of guidelines to assure proportional representation by educational position. Local presidents should send the state and NEA copies of the local delegate report forms to TSTA as soon as possible after they conduct their local NEA delegate elections or by April 10. Members from locals of 75 or fewer members also may seek election as "cluster" delegates. If you are interested in this option, please contact Sandra Solimine at 1-877-ASK-TSTA.

One of the core values for both NEA and TSTA is appropriate representation for ethnic minority members. Locals are encouraged to seek and elect ethnic minorities as delegates to help TSTA meet our goals for ethnic minority representation.

# CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

## Category 2

- Ramon Abarca, Hispanic. During 38 years of my professional career I have been actively involved in local and regional associations of TSTA. I attended TSTA and NEA conventions.
- Bobbie Duncan, Caucasian. My experiences as an active member and now as a retiree qualify me to represent you on active and retired issues. I appreciate your vote.
- Ignacio Salinas, Jr., Hispanic. Superintendent of Schools at Benavides I.S.D. I ask for your vote to serve as a delegate to the NEA RA in 07.
- Eddie Spence, Caucasian. I served as Vice-President and President of TSTA-Retired, each for four years. Keeping up with changes in education is very important to me. Vote Eddie.
- Jerry R. Watkins. Dedicated to advancing the TSTA agenda; TSTA-R Region 4C President; Fort Worth Education Association, Past President; Past TSTA/NEA delegate.

## Statewide

- Ann Heuberger, Vice President of the Texas State Teachers Association.

## Delegate District 1 (Regions 1A, 1B, 1C)

- Linda L. Estrada, Hispanic. Legislative Cadre 2003-present; Secretary 2002-2004; 2003 Ambassador Graduate; Vice President for Para-Professionals/Local 2004-Present; Regional Secretary since July 2006.
- Eliza M. Garcia. Presently, local vice-president and member of TSTA/NEA for over twenty-five years. I would like to represent you as a region delegate to the 2007 RA.
- Yolanda C. Molina, Hispanic. Representing you this Summer at the RA will be a Privilege. As an NEA BoD I will represent you with Pride and Honor.

## Delegate District 2 (Regions 1D, 3A, 3C, 3E)

- Sandra Bridges-Crockett, Black. Mem-

ber of professional association 20+ years. Served as local treasurer and executive director. NEA State Delegate, 1997. Willing to represent and serve.

- Hannah Gigliotta, Caucasian. I am a social studies teacher at Nederland High School. I would like to become more involved on all levels of TSTA/NEA.
- Kevin Lovelady, Caucasian. I am a teacher at Nederland High School and serve as Vice-President of the Nederland Teachers Association. I am also a 2006 TSTA/NEA Ambassador.
- Dolly Texada Spencer. When I began teaching I became an active TSTA/NEA member, serving on committees and in elected offices. Currently, I am the Secretary of Region 3C.

## Delegate District 3 (Regions 2A, 2B)

- Gilbert F. DeLaRosa, Hispanic. I have represented TSTA/Texas at the NEA-RA as a delegate for several years. I would appreciate your vote of confidence. Cast your vote for Gilbert DeLaRosa.
- Norma DeLaRosa, Hispanic. I have represented TSTA/Texas at the NEA-RA as a delegate for several years. I would appreciate your vote of confidence. Cast your vote for Norma DeLaRosa.

- Robert C. Fierro, Hispanic. Previous NEA Resolutions member. NEA Delegate since 1998. I need your vote to continue serving you as a member of Team Texas at the NEA-RA.

## Delegate District 4 (Regions 2C, 2E and 3F)

- Rebecca Cerliano. I bring 32 years of experience at all levels, and wish to continue to represent the concerns of Texas teachers in Philadelphia.
- John Duncan. Your vote is greatly appreciated!
- Winifred Jackson. I have been an active member of TSTA for many years

serving in various leadership roles from region president, local president to building representative.

- Stephen Smallwood, American Indian/Alaska Native. As a local president with state and national experience I am committed to enthusiastically serving all TSTA members at the Representative Assembly.

## Delegate District 5 (Region 2D)

- Wayne Ward. Proud member of TSTA/NEA. I am a high school mathematics teacher. I have often spoken at past NEA RAs about issues of concern for Texas.

## Delegate District 6 (Regions 3B, 3D)

- Brenda Igwe, Black. My goal for seeking election as a state delegate is to help fellow teachers receive a fair voice in educational concerns at their local campus.

## Delegate District 7 (Regions 4A, 4C, 4D)

- Nikki C. Rawlins, Black. Greetings, I am Nikki Rawlins, a seven year Special Education teacher with the Dallas ISD. I have one son, Max who is in Eighth grade.
- Louise Watkins, Asian. NEA Board of Directors member; NEA Minority Affairs Committee, Co-Chair; Past TSTA Board of Directors member; Fort Worth Education Association, Past President.

## Delegate District 8 (Regions 4B, 4E, TFA)

- Eula Axe, Caucasian. Having served as local president, regional president, on a variety of state committees, and chaired the budget committee, I want to represent Texas.
- Russell Bryant, Caucasian. I have represented TSTA in many capacities including state delegate to the NEA/RA. I would appreciate your continued support to represent you in Philadelphia.
- Doris Hill. I am a 2002 TSTA Ambassador. I am reorganizing the Grand Prairie local and would be honored to represent you at the RA. Thanks.

## SPECIAL THANKS TO NEA VICE-PRESIDENT DENNIS VAN ROEKEL

The 41 state delegates allocated to Texas for 2007 represent a gain of four delegates over last year. We gained two of those delegates because of our growth in membership. However, the other two delegates we gained because of the diligence of NEA Vice-President Dennis Van Roekel. NEA Bylaws provide for a different method of counting members from merged (NEA/AFT) locals in non-merged states—unless the local merger occurred prior to September 1, 1999. TSTA has five locals that are merged, but four of the five merged after that cut-off date. One merged local, Education Austin, finished its merger during the summer of 1999, but was not granted "official" recognition by the NEA as a merged local until after September 1, 1999.

The NEA typically treats the date that a vote is taken by the Executive Committee to grant a certificate as the date of affiliation for a local or any change in local status. Thus, under the various policies of NEA, the official date for Education Austin becoming a merged local came after September 1, 1999. Because of this, whenever we have contacted the staff charged with calculating the delegate allocation, the "official" word we have always received has been that delegates from that local only count as one-half for purposes of allocating state delegates.

Last November at a meeting of the National Council of State

Education Associations (NCSEA—a group that all NEA state affiliates belong to), TSTA Executive Director E. C. Walker happened to be in a small group discussion that also included NEA Vice-President Dennis Van Roekel. When the group finished a little early, E. C. took the opportunity to try one more time to explain (to one more person) why we thought it was unfair that it was the date when the NEA Executive Committee voted that was controlling on whether the deadline was met or not. We have always argued that we thought that what should control was when all the votes here in Texas were taken and when all of the paperwork arrived at NEA—after that, it was beyond our control.

As a matter of fairness, Dennis indicated that he agreed with us and that he would check into it. In fact, Vice-President Van Roekel did return to the NEA offices and check into the matter. It took a little time to find all the files and track down all the paperwork, but when they did, they found that all of the paperwork that Education Austin and TSTA were responsible for had been received by NEA before the deadline.

We received a letter in early January informing us that beginning with this year, the members in Education Austin will count at full strength when allocating delegates for the NEA RA—thus adding two additional state delegates for TSTA! Thanks, Dennis!

# Education Grants - Apply Now!

The NEA Foundation and Farmers Insurance have joined with the Texas State Teachers Association to offer Learning & Leadership and Student Achievement grants to public school educators in the Lone Star State.

- **Learning & Leadership Grants - \$2,000 and \$5,000**

Opportunities for teachers, education support professionals, and higher education faculty and staff to engage in high-quality professional development and lead their colleagues in professional growth. The grant amount is \$2,000 for individuals and \$5,000 for groups engaged in collegial study.

- **Student Achievement Grants - \$5,000**

Improve the academic achievement of students by engaging in critical thinking and problem solving that deepen knowledge of standards-based subject matter. The work should also improve students' habits of inquiry, self-directed learning, and critical reflection.

**Applications must be received by June 1, 2007.**

For guidelines, applications, and eligibility requirements, visit [www.neafoundation.org/grants](http://www.neafoundation.org/grants)

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## HOD Delegates to Elect NEA Director

For the third time in the four years since we shifted the voting for NEA Director to the TSTA House of Delegates, we will have a contested election. The first two contested elections were very close—both decided by one vote. We encourage all elected delegates to attend the HoD to help make this and other important decisions facing TSTA.

In order to help ensure a smooth election process, we encourage delegates to arrive in plenty of time to register and vote. Delegates must have their credentials and a picture ID with them in order to vote.

Registration will be open Friday, April 27, from 7 a.m. until the end of the first General Session (usually between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m.). On Saturday, registration will open again at 6:30 a.m. Regional caucuses are scheduled from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m., with voting from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

If you plan on registering on Saturday morning, be sure to allow yourself plenty of time to register and vote. You must have **completed registration** and be in the voting line no later than 9:30 a.m. to ensure that you will get to cast your ballot.

**BE SURE TO BRING YOUR CREDENTIALS AND PHOTO ID WITH YOU AND ARRIVE IN PLENTY OF TIME TO REGISTER AND VOTE.**



**Rita C. Haecker**

**Professional Training:** University of Texas-Austin, 1988, BS in Education; University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2004-07, MS in Union Leadership and Administration

**Professional Experience:** Austin ISD, 1988-2002, 1st grade bilingual teacher

**Professional Education Associations:** National Council of Urban Education Associations, Texas Association for Bilingual Education, National Hispanic Institute Alumni, National Association for Bilingual Education, NEA Hispanic Caucus

**Offices Held:** Education Austin Vice President 2002-07; Austin Association of Teachers Vice President 2000-02; Austin Area Association for Bilingual Education President 1999-2007; Texas Association for Bilingual Education Legislative Chair 2003-05; TSTA Board of Directors Region 2E President 2000-04, CIA Committee Vice Chair 1998-99; National Education Association Texas Resolutions Member 2001-04, NEA Director for Texas 2004-07

**Campaign Statement:** It has been an honor to represent Texas for the last three years as your NEA Director and three years as a member on the NEA Resolutions Committee. Leaders at the national level must have a wealth of knowledge and expertise about the issues that affect their members and their students.

As Vice President of Education Austin, I have been dedicated to supporting my members in their professional development as TSTA/NEA leaders. I have worked to increase membership for teachers and ESPs in our state. I have shared my knowledge about issues such as healthcare, pensions and the No Child Left Behind Law in my visits to locals across Texas. I will continue to lobby Congress and the Senate for adequate funding for all our students and employees in our Public Schools.

I ask for your support in reelecting me to be your NEA Director for Texas, Place 1.



**Reagan Hawkins**

**Professional Training:** University of Texas-Austin, 1994-98, BS Radio-Television-Film; Lamar University-Beaumont; 1999-01, Post-Bac/Masters Credit

**Professional Experience:** Port Arthur ISD, 2000-02, classroom teacher; Nederland ISD, 2002-present, classroom teacher

**Professional Education Associations:** Texas Speech Communication Association, National Federation of State High School Associations, National Forensics League/Texas Forensics League, Mid-County Performing Arts Company

**Offices Held:** Nederland Teachers Association Vice President 2003-04 and 2005-06, President 2005-06 to present; Texas State Teachers Association Ambassador 2004 to present; National Education Association Elections Committee Member 2004-06, Resolutions Committee Member 2006-present.

**Campaign Statement:** Time is a powerful force and TSTA/NEA is at a critical crossroads.

We should always be proud of who we are and where we came from. For our association to have been a leader in the past is a great accomplishment. But to continue to be the leaders in our field that we are and were, we can't rest on our laurels. For our association to remain viable, we must be forward thinking, cutting edge and future relevant.

It's all about time.

To achieve our goals, we must be open to new ideas, open to a fresh approach. And we must never forget that when we fight our battles and speak for our agenda, we do it with one goal in mind: a brighter future for our children, a brighter future for our country.

Reagan Hawkins—a new face, new ideas, a fresh breeze from the gulf.



## PROPOSED BYLAWS AMENDMENTS

**1** INTENT: To remove the Mission Statement from the Bylaws so that it can be amended at any time by any House of Delegates without prior notice to the membership.

ARTICLE II, Mission

~~{The Texas State Teachers Association will unite, organize and empower public education advocates to shape public education in Texas thus providing a quality public school for every child.}~~

**The House of Delegates shall have authority to create and amend a free-standing Mission Statement for the Texas State Teachers Association.**

**Maker:** 2006 House of Delegates, CB&E 2

**Rationale of the Maker of the NBI:** A mission statement needs to be a living document that reflects the climate of the times. Having the mission statement in the bylaws burdens us with the procedures of amending bylaws. In order to keep a current message, the mission statement should be a free-standing document.

**Vote Required:** Simple Majority

**Financial Impact:** None

**CB&E Recommends:** Opposition

**Rationale for Opposition:** The explanation by the makers does not accurately reflect the purpose of a mission statement, nor the understanding that guided the development of our mission statement. A mission statement should contain the aspiration of the reason for our existence and reflect our core values; it should answer the question "Why do we exist?" It is not something that should change easily or often and it should not change at all without prior notice to the members. For those reasons this Committee believes the

# Amendments to Consider at the 128th Annual TSTA Convention

April 27-28, 2007 • El Paso Convention Center

If you are a delegate to the 2007 TSTA Convention, you will be voting on ten (10) proposed amendments to TSTA's Bylaws. The amendments are printed below, for your review prior to arriving at the convention. Wording in brackets with strikethrough ~~[ ]~~ reflect current language to be deleted and items **bolded** and underlined reflect insertion of proposed new language.

Other information about convention housing and transportation appeared in the winter 2006 Advocate and is available on the TSTA web site, [www.tsta.org](http://www.tsta.org). Further information about the convention will be mailed directly to delegates.

Wording in **Bold and Underlined** — Proposed Additions

Wording in ~~[Brackets with Strikethrough]~~ — Proposed Deletions

mission statement should remain in the Bylaws and this proposed Amendment should be defeated.

**2** INTENT: To clarify the application of certain membership qualifications and restore the original purpose of providing a membership mechanism for executive officers.

ARTICLE III, Members

Section 2. Qualifications and Conditions of Membership

There shall be nine (9) classes of membership: Active-Professional, Life, Active-Educational Support Professional, Substitute, Student, Staff, TSTA-R, Subscriber, and Reserve.

A. Active-Professional Members

1. Qualifications

- a. Active-Professional members shall:
  - 1) Be employed in a professional capacity in a public school and hold a Texas teaching certificate or credentials appropriate to the respective professional duties; or
  - 2) Hold a regular appointment on a Texas college or university faculty; or
  - 3) Hold a position in a private educational institution that would require a Texas teaching certificate if employed in a like position in a public school; or
  - 4) Serve under contract for a full year as a substitute teacher; or
  - 5) Serve as an **executive** officer of TSTA or one of its affiliates.

And, further:

C. Active-Educational Support Professional Members

1. Qualifications

- Active-Educational Support Professional members shall:
  - a. Be employed by an educational institution and not eligi-

- ble for Active membership; or
- b. Serve as an **executive** officer of TSTA or one of its affiliates; and
- c. Maintain membership in the National Education Association and the TSTA local affiliate when eligible under the constitution or bylaws of the local affiliate; and
- d. Support the goals and objectives of TSTA and abide by these Bylaws.

And, further:

ARTICLE XII, Parliamentary Authority and Definitions

Section 2. Definitions

**L. Executive Officer:**  
**Any elected officer receiving compensation from TSTA or an affiliate to serve as a full-time officer.**

**Maker:** Credentials, Bylaws and Elections Committee

**Rationale:** There was a time when members serving full-time as compensated officers for NEA and state affiliates continued to be employed by school districts and, thus, continued to meet qualifications for membership. However, over time, many districts refused to allow that to continue and, following the lead of NEA, TSTA amended its Bylaws to allow those officers to continue to qualify for membership without being employed by a district. Unfortunately, when NEA added the word “executive” to the language, TSTA did not make that additional change. That leaves the wording in these sections much broader than the original intent—so that, in fact, it currently applies to many whose status has changed through retirement or even leaving the education profession completely. This amendment will return these sections to the original intent to provide continued qualification for membership for

members serving full-time as a compensated officer for TSTA and its affiliates.

**Vote Required:** Two-Thirds (2/3rds)

**Financial Impact:** None

**CB&E Recommends:** Support

**3** INTENT: To put a cap on the annual increase in dues while changing from the second preceding year to the preceding year for the average salary that will determine the dues amount in order to put dues increases nearer in time to salary increases that drive them.

ARTICLE III, Members

A. Active-Professional Members

2. Dues

- a. Active-Professional members shall pay annual dues rounded off to the nearest dollar in the amount of six-tenths (6/10) of one percent (1%) times the average classroom teacher salary in Texas for the ~~second preceding year; except that for the 2002-03 membership year, the annual dues shall be the same as for the 2001-02 membership year~~ **preceding year, except that no annual increase in dues shall exceed twelve dollars (\$12).**

C. Active-Educational Support Professional Members

2. Dues

- a. Active-Education Support Professional members shall pay annual dues rounded off to the nearest dollar amount of six-tenths (6/10) of one percent (1%) times the average salary the ~~second~~ preceding year, except hourly employees shall pay a prorated amount derived from the above computation based on the number of months worked. If figures are

not available to determine the average salary the [second] preceding year, Active-Education Support Professional dues shall be no less than one-half (1/2) the dues of Active-Professional members.

**Maker:** Credentials, Bylaws and Elections Committee

**Rationale:** TSTA dues are driven by the average teacher salary in Texas, so that dues will rise as salaries rise. When the formula was first established, the dues were tied to the second preceding year in part because it took longer to gather the data to determine the average salary. With the advent of computers and the internet, we now can determine the average salary in time to use the average from the preceding year, which also puts any increase in dues closer to the increase in average salary. However, we also have seen in the last 20 years or so that the average salary does not rise steadily—instead, it increases minimally for a few years, then takes a substantial jump when the legislature finally acts. The result is that dues also rise slightly (\$2-\$4) each year and then suddenly jump \$20 or more in a single year. By putting a cap on the annual increase, this will allow any future big increases (including the one already coming thanks to the pay raises this year) to be phased in more gradually.

**Vote Required:** Two-Thirds (2/3rds)

**Financial Impact:** There are two ways to look at the financial impact, and both must be based on assumptions. One is the impact on the dues amount paid by members for each year and the other is the impact on the total dues revenue anticipated by TSTA for each year. In both cases, the net effect of the proposed change would be to cause dues increases and additional dues revenue to occur one year earlier. We already know the average salary for

2005-06 (\$41,743) and 2006-07 (\$44,615, subject to minor adjustments), but we must make assumptions for future years. Assuming a 1.5% increase for the next two years (a little below what it was for the two years prior to the larger jump this year), the averages for 2007-08 would be \$45,284 and for 2008-09, \$46,190. Using the 1.5% assumption, without the proposed amendment TSTA dues would be \$250 for 2007-08; \$268 for 2008-09 and \$272 for 2009-10. In order to make “apples to apples” comparison of the impact on additional revenue, we will hold constant the current number of Active-Professional and Active-ESP at the January 3, 2007 numbers of 31,306 and 9,399 respectively. In order to be sure the numbers reflect only the impact of the amendment, we also will assume that all of those members pay full dues for the appropriate category, with no half-time, new-to-the profession or organizing dues (even though this will overstate the projected additional revenue). On that basis, without a change, TSTA dues would be \$250

and we would anticipate additional revenue of \$144,022 for 2007-08. With the change based on a 1.5% assumption, dues for 2007-08 would be \$258 producing additional revenue of \$432,066. For 2008-09, without a change, TSTA would anticipate dues of \$268 and additional revenue over 2007-08 of \$540,082. With the change the 1.5% assumption would produce dues of \$270 and additional revenue of 2007-08 of \$396,060. For 2009-10, with no change and the 1.5% assumption, dues would be \$272 with new revenue of \$144,022. With the change and a 1.5% assumption dues would be \$277 and additional revenue would be \$252,038. For simplicity these amounts are summarized in tabular form below. What the table demonstrates is that the change in years moves any dues increase and revenue gain one year earlier, while the cap on the annual increase produces a smoother transition when big increases are going to occur.

**CB&E Recommends:** Support

	Professional Dues Rate		Increased Revenue
	Amount	Increase	
<b>2007-08</b>			
Current Formula	\$250.00	\$4.00	\$144,022
With Bylaw Change	\$258.00	\$12.00	\$432,066
Impact of Bylaw Change		\$8.00	\$288,044
<b>2008-09</b>			
Current Formula	\$268.00	\$18.00	\$540,082
With Bylaw Change	\$270.00	\$12.00	\$396,060
Impact of Bylaw Change		\$2.00	-\$144,022
<b>2009-10</b>			
Current Formula	\$272.00	\$4.00	\$144,022
With Bylaw Change	\$277.00	\$7.00	\$252,038
Impact of Bylaw Change		\$5.00	\$108,016
<b>Three Years Total</b>			
Current Formula		\$26.00	\$828,126
With Bylaw Change		\$31.00	\$1,080,164
Impact of Bylaw Change		\$5.00	\$252,038

**4** INTENT: To provide for the TSTA-Student Program to be competitive with other student groups that do not charge dues for student teachers in order to increase student membership.

ARTICLE III, Members

Section 2. Qualifications and Conditions of Membership

E. Student Members

2. Dues

Student members shall pay annual dues of five dollars (\$5); except that student members who first join during the school period when they begin student teaching shall pay no annual TSTA dues.

**Maker:** 2006 House of Delegates, CB&E 1, Part 1

**Rationale:** With at least two other groups giving free membership to student teachers, it is increasingly difficult to recruit student members. The hope is this will allow us to recruit them and, once they are student members, they will continue to join when they become teachers.

**Vote Required:** Simple Majority

**Financial Impact:** If we assume that one-half of our student members join for the first time as they begin student teaching, then there would be lost revenue to TSTA of about \$2,000. However, all of that money is allocated to be spent on the Student Program, so the Budget Committee (and TSTA Board) would have to decide whether to shift money from another source to replace this money. Further, if membership increases significantly, there could be a substantial increase in the cost of maintaining the Student Program, but it is impossible to project how much of an increase and it would be subject to action by the Budget Committee and TSTA Board.

**CB&E Recommends:** Support

**5** INTENT: To clarify that locals are expected to collect and remit any imposed regional dues in the same manner as state and national dues.

ARTICLE IV, Affiliate Structure

Section 1. Local Affiliates

C. Minimum Standards of Compliance for active local affiliates

An active local affiliate shall:

4. Require all Active members to maintain membership in the region, state and national associations where eligible and remit dues to the state and national associations and to the appropriate region if that region imposes dues;

**Maker:** 2006 House of Delegates, CB&E 4

**Rationale:** Since TSTA Bylaws require unified local, regional, state and national membership, any imposed regional dues should be treated the same as state and national dues, with the local collecting and remitting all appropriate dues.

**Vote Required:** Simple Majority

**Financial Impact:** None

**CB&E Recommends:** Support

**6** INTENT: To enhance local association development and power by authorizing the Board to adopt a policy linking all or a part of the dues rebate for locals to the local adopting a plan to advance toward becoming a full-capacity local.

ARTICLE IV, Affiliate Structure

Section 1. Local Affiliates

C. Minimum Standards of Compliance for Active Local Affiliates

An active local affiliate shall:

- 11. Adopt and work to implement an annual plan to advance toward becoming a full-**

**capacity local as specified by the TSTA Board of Directors;**

re-number current 11. as **12.** and current 12 as **13.**

F. Grants

~~Local affiliates in compliance with minimum standards shall receive a three percent (3%) grant of the membership dues paid to TSTA by Active and Educational Support Professional members of the local affiliate to be used for organizing and membership promotion. The Board of Directors may adopt a policy that permits local associations to receive interim grants. For every FTE (Full Time Equivalent) membership increase in the local association, the local will receive \$5.00 per every FTE member increase. TSTA will use the numbers from the previous calendar year, January 31 to the current calendar year of January 31, to award them payments on August 1 for membership increases.~~

- 1. Local affiliates in compliance with minimum standards shall receive a three percent (3%) grant of the membership dues paid to TSTA by Active and Educational Support Professional members of the local affiliate to be used for organizing and membership promotion. The Board of Directors shall adopt a policy allowing locals that do not meet all standards of compliance to earn incentive grants.**
- 2. The Board of Directors may adopt a policy to provide grants for locals that achieve membership growth, not to exceed \$5 per each FTE (Full Time Equivalent) annual member increase.**

**Maker:** Credentials, Bylaws and Elections Committee as directed by 2005 House of Delegates in approving recommendations included in the Report of Collective Bargaining Task Force; referred back to CB&E for further work by the 2006 House of Delegates.

**Rationale:** In order to achieve Collective Bargaining for education employees in Texas, the CB Task Force, in Recommendation 2, called on TSTA to develop a continuum for locals to follow in order to achieve enough power at the local level to get the local school board to implement an exclusive consultation policy. Recommendation 2, as approved by the 2005 House of Delegates, also called on appropriate governing bodies to take steps to link progress on this continuum to receiving grants and rebates. This proposed amendment would change the name of the “local continuum” to “full-capacity local” and would require the Board to adopt a policy creating the links between progress and rebates. By authorizing the Board to do this through policy, rather than making the Bylaws more specific, it will allow the Board to take into consideration the different issues facing different locals relating to such factors as potential numbers, size and geography and more easily to make necessary adjustments over time. The change in the membership growth incentive is needed because the increasingly complex dues structure makes it difficult to determine a straight-forward “FTE” increase. Allowing the Board to deal with this through a policy will make it easier to deal with that complexity—and to ease the administrative burden of this grant.

**Vote Required:** Simple Majority

**Financial Impact:** The financial impact on TSTA will be determined by how many and which of the locals currently meeting the minimum standards continue to do so and by the language in the policy adopted by the Board. Since the intent of the Amendment is to help locals build power and strength, it is anticipated that any savings to TSTA generated by some locals no longer receiving a grant would be offset by increased expenditures on behalf of those locals that do move toward becoming full-capacity locals, resulting in minimal financial impact on TSTA.

**CB&E Recommends:** Support

**7**INTENT: If filing closes on September 15 with at least two candidates having filed, so that there is an expectation of a contested election for an office, but withdrawal(s) subsequently leave(s) only one candidate for that office meaning there would be no contested election, this would provide an opportunity for open nominations to ensure that the expected contested election could still occur.

ARTICLE V, Officers

Section 4. Nomination and Election

A. Any qualified member seeking the office of President and Vice President shall file in writing with the Executive Director no later than September 15, **except that if, after September 15, the withdrawal of a candidate from either race leaves fewer than two eligible candidates in that race, then open nominations for that office from the floor of the House of Delegates shall be taken as the first order of business of the House of Delegates.**

**Maker:** Credentials, Bylaws and Elections Committee

**Rationale:** Currently, if the filing deadline passes with at least two persons having filed for an office, there is an expectation that there will be a contested election for that office. However, if the subsequent withdrawal of one or more candidates leaves only one filed candidate, that contested election would not occur. This Amendment would remedy that situation by allowing open nominations in order to ensure that the expected contested election could still occur. This would not apply so long as at least two candidates remain on the ballot (since there would still be an election) or if no candidate remained (paragraph C. deals with this contingency) or if filing closes with only one filed candidate (who would be declared elected under paragraph B.).

**Vote Required:** Two-Thirds (2/3rds)

**Financial Impact:** None

**CB&E Recommends:** Support

**8**INTENT: To have NEA Directors start and end terms on TSTA Board at the same time as other Board members.

ARTICLE VII, Board of Directors

Section 4. Term of Office

A. The term of office for Board of Directors members shall be two (2) years except for the president of the Texas State Teachers Association-Student Program **and NEA Directors from Texas.**

**E. The term of office on the TSTA Board of Directors for any NEA Director from Texas shall begin on the first July 15 following their election to the position and shall end on July 14 of the year in which their term on the NEA Board of Directors ends.**

**Maker:** Credentials, Bylaws and Elections Committee

**Rationale:** Currently, NEA Directors from Texas begin their terms on the TSTA Board on September 1, when they start their terms on the NEA Board. However, the TSTA Board Retreat, which is to provide training and team building for the new Board, is in July—and the first Board meeting of the new Board occurs at the retreat. This would allow all new Board members to start together and would allow the incoming Director to vote and participate in the Board meeting (when elections are held for various positions for the new year).

**Vote Required:** Two-Thirds (2/3rds)

**Financial Impact:** \$500-\$600 per new NEA Director to cover the cost of attending the Board Retreat.

**CB&E Recommends:** Support

**9** INTENT: To establish the Minority Affairs Committee as a special TSTA Committee.

ARTICLE IX, Committees

Section 2. Special Committees

Special Committees may be initiated by the President, Board of Directors or state House of Delegates, **and one such special committee shall be the Minority Affairs Committee.**

**Maker:** Minority Affairs Committee

**Rationale:** Currently, the Minority Affairs Committee (MAC) exists only by virtue of a TSTA Board of Directors Policy. While MAC is satisfied with this Board Policy, we have a concern that a future Board could decide not to continue the Committee. Therefore, we would like to amend the Bylaws to ensure that the Minority Affairs Committee will continue to exist, especially as the population of Texas continues to become more diverse.

**Vote Required:** Two-Thirds (2/3rds)

**Financial Impact:** Since this Committee already has been established by Board Policy, there would be no financial impact.

**CB&E Recommends:** Support

**10** INTENT: To clarify the language for ensuring due process to members and officers through the Hearing Committee and to ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place and appropriate options available to the Hearing Committee.

ARTICLE XI, Due Process

Section 3. **Considering and Disposing of Charges** [Hearing Procedures]

A. Within ten (10) days of having received the charges, the Executive Director shall notify by **appropriate means and with proof of delivery** [~~registered mail~~] the affiliate or the person of the charges.

B. [~~The charges shall be heard by the~~

~~Hearing Committee no sooner than fourteen (14) days nor more than twenty one (21) days after notification.~~

~~C. The affiliate or person charged shall have the right to be heard and represented by counsel.~~

~~D. The affiliate or person charged shall notify the Executive Director, within ten days of receipt of said notification of charges, of a request for a hearing before the Hearing Committee. If no such request is received, the Hearing Committee shall vote to expel at a time scheduled that is conducive with the next scheduled state Board of Directors meeting.]~~  
**The affiliate or person charged shall have the right to be heard by the Hearing Committee and/or be represented by counsel before the Hearing Committee.**

**C. The affiliate or person charged shall have ten (10) days from the receipt of the notification of charges to request a hearing before the Hearing Committee. If such a hearing is requested, it shall be scheduled no sooner than fourteen (14) days nor more than twenty-eight (28) days after receiving said request. The person(s) who brought the charges shall be notified of the time and place of the hearing and shall have the right to present to the Hearing Committee. The Hearing Committee shall have the right to request the presence of any TSTA member that the Committee believes could provide information relevant to the charges.**

**D. If no hearing is requested within the permitted time frame, then the Hearing Committee shall schedule a meeting in conjunction with the next scheduled meeting of the TSTA Board of Directors. At that meeting, the Hearing Committee shall review all information regarding the charges and any response to**

**the charges. In anticipation of the meeting, the Hearing Committee may request the Executive Director to gather any additional information that the Committee believes would be relevant to the charges.**

E. [Additional Procedures]  
Procedures for conducting hearings shall be established by the Hearing Committee.

**E. At the completion of the hearing, if requested, the Hearing Committee may immediately meet in Executive Session and render a decision, or may adjourn and reconvene at an appropriate time in the future to meet in Executive Session and render a decision. If no hearing is requested, then the Hearing Committee shall render a decision after the review called for in paragraph D. of this Section. The Committee may impose any of the remedies outlined in Section 1, Paragraph B. or such other penalty as the Committee deems appropriate.**

**G. Within five (5) days of the decision of the Hearing Committee, the Executive Director shall notify in writing, by appropriate means and with proof of delivery, the charged affiliate or person and those bringing the charges of the decision of the Hearing Committee.**

**Maker:** Hearing Committee

**Rationale:** The current language is not clear and, in some instances, would appear to require the Hearing Committee to take actions that may not be justified. This Amendment would clarify the language, make all of the timelines fit and ensure that due process is protected.

**Vote Required:** Two-Thirds (2/3rds)

**Financial Impact:** There could be some slight increase in expenses if hearings are requested, but it is not possible to estimate how much.

**CB&E Recommends:** Support



# Helping a Fellow Educator



University of Houston-Clear Lake officers

Gaby De La Cruz suffers from Arnold-Chiari Malformation, which causes part of the cerebellum to protrude through the bottom of the skull into the spinal canal. It's a life-threatening condition; at times he takes morphine to control the pain.

His mother Beth had to leave her teaching position in Pasadena ISD so she could take him for treatments at the University of Chicago, where they spend weeks at a time.

Gaby's nine-year-old sister Claribeth suffers from a milder version of the

same disease but so far, it can be controlled with medication.

"Our local historian, Allison Binnicker, ran across this story in her local paper and contacted me about helping the family," Leigh Anne Meeks, president of TSTA-Student Program, said. "I guess you could say the University of Houston-Clear Lake's chapter of TSTA-SP has adopted this family and made their plight our cause."

Through a basket raffle, a book fair, and a silent auction, the chapter raised about \$1200. They also took donations



out what type of professional development it was able to provide its employees and managers. Over the course of several conversations, NEA-Dallas arranged for TSTA and NEA staff to come in and conduct a pilot training to help different employee groups begin the process of strengthening communication between the groups. Over the course of two days, association staff trained 70 employees in two different locations.

The Myers-Briggs training allowed participants to gain deeper insight into what drives their response to and interaction with other people; the session on Crucial Conversations afforded all participants the opportunity to understand the benefit of using crucial conversations to ensure that the communication process is ongoing and beneficial to the needs of the organization.

The training focused on using the Myers-Briggs to better understand yourself and using that knowledge of self to better communicate with others through the use of crucial conversations. NEA staff conducting the training included Kim Anderson, Betty Jeung, Hazel Loucks, and Phadra Williams with the support of TSTA staff facilitators Charles Axe, Janna Connolly, Sandra Hudson, and Bryan Weatherford. TSTA President Donna New Haschke and NEA-Dallas President Dale Kaiser offered greetings to all participants along with Dallas County Superintendent Ric Sorrells. NEA-Dallas Organizational Specialist Sandra Hudson and Dallas County Schools Executive Director of Human Resources Rex Cole spearheaded the collaboration that has resulted in Dallas County establishing a basis for professional development for all of its employees.

Over 500 employees of the Dallas County Schools are members of NEA-Dallas, TSTA, and NEA.

of money and gifts for the family's Christmas. Meeks said that in December, they presented the family with a \$1000 cashier's check, nearly \$200 in books from the book fair proceeds, and every item on their Christmas wish lists.

Binnicker said the mother, who is single, used the cashier's check for rent because her trips to Chicago with Gaby left her unable to work anywhere for almost two months. "She said it was a true blessing and I think the money came in the nick of time," Binnicker said.

"Everyone involved in the UHCL chapter feels it is the least we can do for a fellow educator who is facing the most difficult struggle of her life – trying to save the lives of both her children," Meeks said.

Read more about this very courageous

boy and his family — whose motto is "failure is not an option" — at [www.carepages.com/stories-of-inspiration/pediatric-illness/gaby-soi.jsp](http://www.carepages.com/stories-of-inspiration/pediatric-illness/gaby-soi.jsp).

### NEW OFFICE FOR SOCORRO!

Socorro Education Association celebrated the opening of its new offices with a December open house. Beginning this school year, Glenda Hawthorne (bottom left photo with TSTA Executive Director E.C. Walker) is a full-time release president, which means she works full time for the local association.

### DALLAS PARTNERSHIP ESTABLISHED

Dallas County Schools is an independent transportation district providing bus service to students who live in most of Dallas County. Recently, Dallas County approached NEA-Dallas to find



### A DAY TO THANK SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

Education Support Professionals Day is the Wednesday of American Education Week, which this year was November 12-18. Region 1A held its annual National ESP Day Recognition Event in which each of five local associations recognized one exemplary support professional member. Region 1A also recognized Ernesto Salinas (right) as their ESP of the Year. The event was held at the Best Western Palm Aire in Weslaco. George Borrego (left) and Yolanda Molina (fourth from right) were the masters of ceremony.



### DEER PARK HONORS TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

Deer Park Education Association President Jocelyn Sanders presents plaques to the 2006-07 Deer Park ISD Teachers of the Year at the association's fall meeting. Also during the meeting, TSTA Organizational Development Specialist Sam Blackman presented an employment rights workshop entitled "Hey! Can They Do That?"

### STUDENTS: MEET THE NATIONAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR!

The planning for the TSTA-Student Program State Convention March 23-25 was going strong at press time. TSTA-SP President Leigh Anne Meeks predicted they would have a total of six different workshops to choose from for three workshop sessions, and nearly all would apply to every certification level.

"We will have our usual award opportunities, and we'll vote for new state and district officers, present some New Business Items at our House of Delegates, host an Usborne Book Fair, have tons of fun at our first-ever movie night on Friday evening, and have a few exciting announcements along the way," Meeks said. Members will also have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to meet and hear the 2006 National Teacher of the Year, Kimberley Oliver, speak at their Awards Banquet.

If your local is in need of some literature to help with membership recruitment, the Student Program now has a flyer available. Email Lori Buckner at [lorib@tsta.org](mailto:lorib@tsta.org) to request a supply.

### RETIRED: LEGISLATIVE, ASSOCIATION NEWS

The position of TSTA-R Secretary is vacant. If you are interested in being appointed to the position, please notify President Pauline Dixon (11924 Oberlin Drive, Dallas, Texas 75243, 972-226-1681, [paulined6201@yahoo.com](mailto:paulined6201@yahoo.com)) by Friday, April 13, 2007. The appointment is filling an unexpired position for a term ending on July 14, 2008. A short resume needs to be included. The appointment will be made by President Dixon with the approval of the Board of Directors at the April 18 meeting.

The 80th Texas Legislature is in session! One of the top legislative priorities for TSTA/TSTA-Retired is working to protect and enhance the Teacher Re-

tirement System. Bills are on the floor to increase the state matching funds and give the retired a cost of living increase. Please read the TSTA Briefing electronic newsletter and [www.tsta.org](http://www.tsta.org) to keep updated. If you have email, the Briefing is the fastest way to get information; sign up on the TSTA website. NEA's Social Security bills that would eliminate the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision are being debated in Washington; check [www.nea.org/lac](http://www.nea.org/lac) for updates.

The TSTA-R state convention will be on April 18, 2007. Registration will start at 2:00 p.m. The Convention will convene at 2:30 p.m. with the Banquet at 5:30 p.m. The meetings will be at the TSTA Building, 316 West 12th Street in Austin. All TSTA-Retired members are delegates and invited to attend. There is no registration fee but please RSVP to Kara Knorpp at 512-476-5355 or 877-ASK-TSTA or [karak@tsta.org](mailto:karak@tsta.org) by Friday, April 13, 2007.



### NEA'S WESTERN STATES MEET

Shown in the photo are participants in NEA's Western Regional Minority Leadership Training Program and the NEA directors for Texas. The January training program preceded the annual Western Regional Leadership Conference, which was held this year in Overland Park, Kansas.



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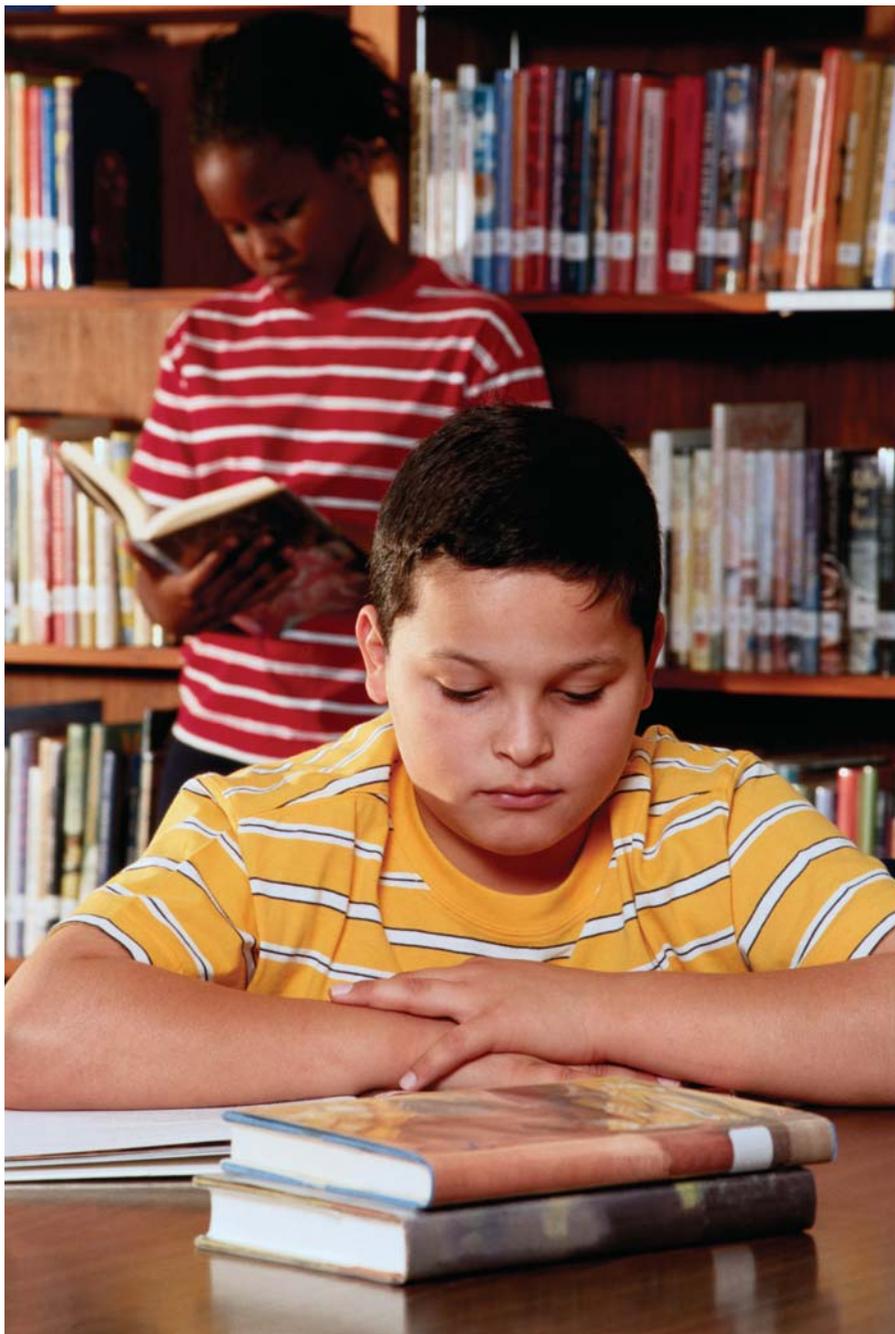
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# Boys: They're Just Different

BOYS DO NOT COMPARE FAVORABLY WITH GIRLS IN READING AND WRITING. AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL, THE SITUATION CAN BECOME EXACERBATED THROUGH A DEARTH OF RELEVANT AND INTERESTING LITERATURE.



Gender inequalities are now considered by both state and national accountability standards. Rarely, however, does research point to the sources of differentials and potential solutions. The problems of boys in schools, especially in reading and writing, have become the focus of recent study. This article attempts to explore some of the causes and cures of what *Newsweek* calls, “The Boy Crisis.”

Boys do not compare favorably with girls in reading and writing. The problem likely starts in the lower grades. The majority of students needing reading intervention are boys. One key reason for this is that boys have not fully developed that portion of the brain that is devoted to linguistic skills. By third grade, the brain development has equalized, and the boy usually has a good chance at becoming a strong reader. Unfortunately, the new accountability standards may be worsening the problem. It has become crucial that boys are functional readers at an earlier age. Remedial work sends negative messages to younger boys. People like to do what they are good at, and the current system discourages younger boys by pressuring underdeveloped brain systems.

Once boys reach the secondary level, the situation can become exacerbated

through a dearth of relevant and interesting literature. While younger boys have interesting series to read, like the Captain Underpants, Bunnica, and The Teacher from the Black Lagoon, adolescent boys are just now finding a body of literature that interests them.

The issue may come from a supply-demand perspective. Since fewer boys are reading and buying books, publishing companies limit the numbers of titles that cater to adolescent boys. Since the selection is smaller, it lessens interest from boys. Eleven of the past 16 Newberry Award winning authors were female, and even some prominent male writers gear their work toward girls.

The Harry Potter series speaks to this. Before publishing her first volume, the publisher feared that the target audience of young boys might be reluctant to buy books written by a female author. They requested that author Joanne Rowling use two initials, rather than reveal her first name. As she had no middle name, she chose K from her grandmother's name Kathleen, as the second initial of her pseudonym.

Many adult men cite comic books as their first positive reading experiences. Since boys develop spatial abilities rather quickly, such abilities should be tapped to improve reading skills and encourage reading as a positive activity. The Boondocks, the Spiderman series, and City of Glass are examples of graphic novels.

Another issue involves teaching techniques. Generally, boys learn differently than girls. According to Judith Kleinfeld, professor of psychology at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks, "we have reason to believe that many boys thrive in education environments that emphasize competition, structure and authoritative discipline. Such education has become unfashionable

and may not be appropriate for most students."

Working from this line of thinking, successful strategies from other teachers focus on identity development and physical activity. Relevant activities include poetry "slams." In these activities, readers perform poems that are "judged" on a numeric scale by randomly picked members of the audience. Eventually, the poems could be those written by the "slammers." Thus, the activity could aid both reading and writing skills. Role playing, either as individuals or as small groups, help identity. Like other acting activities, role playing can involve physical aspects, including costumes and blocking.

Finally, project learning has shown some positive results. Chuck Wahle in Ellensburg, Washington used web page development as a tool to develop reading skills. Each student was required to create a highly-developed web page regarding an area of interest. Outside advice was actively solicited from anyone willing to give it. Students were responsible for their information, as well as their site development. Reading became an integral part of a larger activity. In this way, reading played a role similar to that in real life.

In previous years, research indicated that girls were achieving less than boys in mathematics and science courses. Focus and resources shifted to correct/lessen that problem. The issue has shifted to reading now, and boys are the new girls. It's now important that education professionals focus new attention and resources toward improving the reading aptitudes (and, thus, reading scores) of adolescent boys.

—Dr. Paul Henley, *TSTA Teaching and Learning Specialist*

## Recommended Reading

### Books

- *Bud, Not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis
- *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton
- *The Covenant with Black America* by Tavis Smiley

### Series

- The Harry Potter Series by JK Rowling
- The Inheritance Trilogy (Eragon, Eldest) by Christopher Paolini
- A Series of Unfortunate Events Series by Lemony Snicket
- Mysteries by Agatha Christie

### Authors

- Walter Dean Myers
- Gary Paulsen
- Louis Sachar
- Mildred D. Taylor

### Short Story and Non-Fiction Collections

- *Guys Write for Guys Read* by Jon Scieszka
- *In Short: A Collection of Brief Creative Nonfiction* by Judith Kitchen and Mary Paumier Jones

### Other Types of Materials for Adolescent Boys

- [www.newsoftheweird.com](http://www.newsoftheweird.com)
- Poetry, especially from poetry slam competitions, which speak to the learning styles of many adolescent boys

### Graphic Novels

- *The Boondocks* by Aaron McGruder
- *City of Glass* by Paul Auster

### Additional Resources for Teachers

- "Reading Don't Fix No Chevys": *Literacy in the Lives of Young Men* by Michael W. Smith and Jeffrey D. Wilhelm
- *Teaching Reading to Black Adolescent Males* by Alfred Tatum
- *I Read It But I Don't Get It* by Cris Tovani
- The What Works Series by National Staff Development Council ([www.nsd.org](http://www.nsd.org))



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# Protect Your Good Name!

Somebody would love to take out a loan in your name, charge a vacation to you, even mortgage your home. Here's how to stop them:



**The good news:** Banks, major retailers and the FBI have become more vigilant in fighting ID theft. **The bad news:** The use of stolen personal information to obtain credit cards, loans, etc., has become a massive black market industry with an annual take of more than \$55 billion. Even worse, the Internet keeps spawning ever more diabolical ways to scam.

#### **Guard your Social Security number with your life.**

Question anyone who asks for it. Organizations that need it are employers, government agencies, credit card companies, banks, and car dealerships, which work with banks to provide financing. If a health insurance company uses it for your ID, request that a random code be used instead.

**Fight viruses and spies.** Guard your home computer by installing software (such as McAfee or Norton) that includes virus protection, antispyware, and a firewall that updates automatically and regularly.

**Do not bail out the prince of Nigeria!** He is not in jail and you won't be lavishly rewarded for your assistance. Any lottery offers, invitations to earn millions working from home, or strangers' tales of woe should be deleted.

**Don't get attached.** An incoming email attachment can install spy ware on your computer allowing the sender to watch your every keystroke (including those you use to log onto your bank's website). Never open attachments from unfamiliar senders.

**Don't give credit where credit's not due.** To ensure that no one has opened a new account or taken out a loan in your name, check your credit report once a year; doing so is free at [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com). (It's safe to give your Social Security number to this site.)

**Never use password as a password.** If you do a lot of banking and bill-paying online, use different passwords for each account and change them every 90 days.

**Take action.** If you think you have been a victim of identity theft, go to [www.ftc.com](http://www.ftc.com) to report a claim.

**Smells Phishy!** According to a 2005 survey, more than 4 million people were scammed by phishing emails. How it works: You receive an email that appears to be from your bank, credit card company, the government, or another legitimate business (eBay, Amazon.com, PayPal). The message warns that your account information needs updating. After clicking on a hyperlink, you are directed to a website that looks like the company's and told to enter your log-in and password; once you do, phishers have what they need to transfer funds, make purchases, create fraudulent checks, and impersonate you to scam others.

**How to avoid:** Be suspicious. Legitimate businesses never use email links to send customers to a website asking for personal or financial information. If you receive such a message, call the institution using a number you already have or open a new browser window and contact the company via their web address. Check the FBI's scam alert site: [www.fbi.gov/cyberinvest/escams.htm](http://www.fbi.gov/cyberinvest/escams.htm).

**NEW! NEAMB ID THEFT RESOLUTION SERVICE:** TSTA members that are NEA Auto Insurance (APlus) policyholders, and everyone in their household, will have automatic access to this free service. Victims of identity theft should call Customer Service at 800-800-9410. A personal advocate will be assigned to your case and will guide you through the process of restoring your identity, credit, and good name. See [www.aplus.com/idtheft.html](http://www.aplus.com/idtheft.html) for additional information on reducing risk. Note: This is a service, not insurance coverage.

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