

VOTE FOR NEA DELEGATES • DETAILS ON TSTA, NEA CONVENTIONS • HOW TO LISTEN

Advocate

Texas State Teachers Association/National Education Association

Spring 2010

Rethinking school lunch

First Lady's initiative aims
to end childhood obesity
in a generation

EQUITY 101

A simple explanation of how school
finance equity works and why it matters

VOTE
BALLOT
INSIDE



Take the challenge

This is the most critical role you can take as a TSTA citizen: to ensure that we elect the candidates who support our mission of educating every student in Texas. By **Rita Haecker**, TSTA President

This political election cycle will have ramifications for all education employees in Texas for many years to come.

I have a challenge for you.

Take the time to find out which candidates are strong on the issues that affect you and your students. Then become a political activist.

This is the most critical role you can take as a TSTA citizen: to ensure that we elect the candidates who support our mission of educating every student in Texas.

Every decision about the quality of our students' education and your benefits is made by a political body at some level. No Child Left Behind, end-of-course testing, how many kids you have in your class, how good your health care is — every one of those decisions is a political decision, and that is why you must be involved in politics.

TSTA members screen candidates at every level to ensure they are strong on our issues and share our

vision of public education. They ask themselves "where does this candidate stand on educational issues?" You'll find their answers in

Board of Education or your local school board.

Candidates need to know that our members are

now. Volunteering your time and energy also will make us visible and influential when those candidates are elected.

We will never raise the millions of dollars that our opponents can raise, but we can be a driving force in every campaign in the state if we are organized.

As an individual, the time and energy you give to our endorsed candidates is crucial; joining forces with your fellow TSTA members as a continuing contributor to TSTA-Political Action Committee, you extend your influence by helping candidates get their message to the public.

In both ways, you help elect officials who will have the ability to make key decisions on issues such as school finance, teacher pay and due process for all school employees.

The time to get involved is now! Let's organize and unite to become a political force to be recognized in our state.



Every decision that affects our classrooms and our benefits is made by a political body at some level.

our list of endorsements at www.tsta.org.

You can be a vital resource to campaigns, whether for governor, Congress, the Texas Legislature, the State

committed to volunteering at all levels of the political process. The state elections may not be until November, but those candidates can use your help



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NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
316 West 12th St., Austin, Texas 78701
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10 things you should know



1 WHY YOU SHOULD VOTE FOR BILL WHITE

By now, you know that TSTA is endorsing Bill White for governor, but if you live outside of the Houston area, you may not know much about him. This article from Texas Monthly magazine tells a lot about the former Houston mayor, his accomplishments and his character. www.billwhitefortexas.com/2009/11/the-great-white-hope.html or www.tsta.org



2 WHITE VISITS TSTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Watch clips from gubernatorial candidate Bill White's visit to the TSTA Board of Directors. www.youtube.com/watch?v=769jW80EM0 or www.tsta.org

3 STAAR TO REPLACE TAKS

In the 2011-12 school year, State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, or STAAR, will replace the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills. STAAR will be used for the 12 end-of-course assessments mandated in 2007 and the new grade 3-8 assessments mandated in 2009. Students in the graduating class of 2015, who are currently in seventh grade, will be the first students who must meet the end-of-course testing requirements as well as pass their classes to earn a diploma.



4 TSTA IS ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

We have 400 followers on Twitter (twitter.com/txstateteachers) and almost 200 fans on Facebook (www.facebook.com/texasstateteachersassociation). And at least one local TSTA association, San Angelo, has started its own Facebook page. Join in!

5 DO YOU BLOG?

We are looking for members who blog or would like to blog about their daily adventures in education. Contact debbiem@tsta.org.



6 CONFUSED ABOUT GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS?

Texas Education Agency has a chart that compares the three graduation plans (ritter.tea.state.tx.us/curriculum/SBS-GradReqs2010_2011.pdf) and a letter that explains the recent changes (ritter.tea.state.tx.us/taa/stanprog012510.html).



7 STATE OF TEXAS CHILDREN: NOT SO GOOD

"Texas still ranks among the 10 states with the highest rate of child poverty in the nation, as it has for every year since 2000," the Center for Public Policy Priorities reports in the newly issued The State of Texas Children: Texas KIDS COUNT Annual Data Book. www.cppp.org/category.php?cid=10



9 PENALTIES FOR PUBLIC SERVICE, THE VIDEO

NEA has produced a video called "Penalties for Public Service" to address the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision that impact many teachers' Social Security incomes. www.youtube.com/watch?v=XeVDDbTfFW0 or www.tsta.org

8 NOMINATE A FRIEND OF EDUCATION

You have until April 2 to nominate an individual or organization for NEA's highest honor, the Friend of Education Award. This award recognizes an individual or organization whose leadership, actions or support have significantly benefited education, education employees or students on a national scale. www.nea.org/grants/awards/31223.htm



10 DON'T MISS THE BALLOT

There's a ballot in the center of this issue of the Advocate for state delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly. Flip to page 20.





What's your dream? We have a grant for that

Do you have a great idea for strengthening teaching and learning if only you had the funds to implement it? A summer institute you would love to attend but there's no money? We have two grants to help.

The NEA Foundation's \$5,000 Student Achievement Grants improve the academic achievement of students by engaging them in critical thinking and problem solving that deepen their knowledge of standards-based subject matter and improve their habits of inquiry, self-directed learning and critical reflection. The goal is to fund and share successful strategies to educate and prepare children for bright and rewarding futures.

Learning & Leadership Grants fund high-quality professional development experiences — such as summer institutes or action research — or collegial study, including study groups, action research, lesson study or mentoring experiences for faculty or staff new to an assignment. Grants are \$2,000 for individuals and \$5,000 for groups engaged in collegial study.

To learn more or apply for one of these grants, visit www.neafoundation.org. Here are examples of projects that have been funded in Texas in 2009 and 2010.

Student Achievement
Patricia Franco, El Paso teacher, grades k-3
Hulbert Elementary School

Franco and partners seek to raise state assessment scores among minority students in the area of science. They will collaborate with teachers on a weekly basis, and students will be engaged in critical thinking and problem-solving skills to enhance their science experiences and academic knowledge.

Kyle Voge, Austin science teacher grades 10-12, Akins High
Voge will implement a rocket science curriculum through the career and tech education department. Students will spend the first semester of the course learning about the basics of rocket flight, utilizing hands-on, project-based ac-

tivities. The second semester will be devoted to the design, construction and flight of a large rocket that can carry a load of one pound exactly one mile.

Blair Williams, Midway director of orchestras grades 5-12, Midway ISD
Williams and partners will implement a curriculum of improvisation instruction with middle school and high school orchestra students. Students will learn to improvise short melodic passages freely over a harmonic structure. After completing the 12-week curriculum, students will work with an artist-in-residence on developing appropriate melodic

shape, jazz style and string techniques applicable to jazz.

Lydia Renfro, Austin science teacher, grade 7 Gorzycki Middle School
Renfro and partners will create a native habitat and a weather station. The outdoor laboratory will directly teach students how to acquire, record, process and evaluate data for scientific research and discussion; skills that are only developed and reinforced through hands-on learning. Given the opportunity to explore and experiment, students will develop a greater understanding of the natural world and become more conscientious stewards of the Earth.

Learning & Leadership
Dr. Nadine Kalin, Denton assistant professor University of North Texas
A study group will conduct a review of literature, survey of students and analysis of best practices within other doctoral programs in order to develop and implement a pilot orientation course to meet the needs of doctoral students as they prepare to become higher education faculty. The study group will share results with other faculty and post activities on the department website.

Stephanie Baird, Arlington ESL teacher, grade 1 Roquemore Elementary
Baird will receive instruction on intervention strategies for lower socioeconomic students at a Ron Clark Academy

Workshop. She will learn innovative and out-of-the-box successful methods to create a “family” in her classroom, full of motivated, disciplined and inspired students. Baird will also learn how to develop a collaborative team with her first grade staff.



TSTA PR SPECIALIST
JOE BEAN DIES

TSTA Public Relations Specialist Joe Bean died Dec. 24 at age 51.

Before working for TSTA, he was an editorial writer and columnist at the San Antonio Express-News, the opinion page editor at the Muskogee (Okla.) Daily Phoenix and Times-Democrat and the editorial page editor at the Victoria Advocate.

He also taught for several years at Concordia Lutheran College in Austin.

Bean graduated from Concordia Lutheran College in Seward, Nebraska with a BA in history and from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He later earned a master's degree in journalism from the University of Texas.

He will be greatly missed by his TSTA/NEA family.

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One more thing before you go

Can I be required to participate in summer events? Do I have to pay for missing textbooks? Can I quit? TSTA's General Counsel answers your end-of-year questions. **By Joey Moore**



You've done it! Well, almost. The end of the year is in sight. Before you head off for that well-deserved vacation, there are just a few things to remember.

DO I HAVE TO PAY FOR THAT?

It never fails. At the end of the year, things that were in your classroom in September are no longer there in May. Equipment that was functional in the fall is worthless in the spring. Many times, teachers are asked to pay for missing teacher editions, equipment—even students' missing books. There are limits, though, on what a district can require a teacher to pay for.

A school district cannot require an employee who has acted in good faith to pay for a textbook, electronic textbook or technological equipment that is damaged, stolen, misplaced or not returned. However, it has become more common for school districts to make an agreement with employees in which the employee assumes financial responsibility

for equipment used off of school property in exchange for the privilege of using the equipment for personal use.

For example, many school districts provide teachers with laptops. If the district wants the teacher to be financially responsible for the laptop should something happen to it, the district and the teacher must enter a written agreement, and the teacher has to be able to use the laptop for personal business. In that case, the teacher could be held financially responsible for the laptop.

Similarly, a school district cannot require a district employee who acts in good faith to pay for or replace property belonging to a student or other person, if the property was in the employee's possession because of an incident that occurred within the scope of the employee's job duties. Assume a teacher confiscates a student's cell phone because the district policy prohibits students from having cell phones in the classroom. The teacher puts the phone in his desk and locks the drawer. Later another student breaks into the desk and steals the phone. The teacher cannot be required to pay for or replace the phone. The key here is that the employee must be acting in good faith—for example, taking efforts to secure the phone—and the incident must be within the scope of the employee's duties.

I'M NOT COMING BACK THIS TIME. REALLY.

School districts normally begin sending out contracts for the upcoming school year in the spring. Even if you think you might want to work at another district next year, you should go ahead and sign the contract.

Teachers, and most other employees with a contract, have the right to unilaterally resign from their school district as long as they do so not later than the 45th calendar day before the first day of instruction.

It is better to sign your contract with the district now and have a position in case you are not able to secure a position in a different district. Your current job may not be your dream job, but it may be better than no job.

Ironically, though, coveted positions seem to pop up after that 45-day window has closed. A teacher who seeks to resign from a district less than 45 days before the first day of instruction must be released from his or her contract by the district. In some districts, teachers are released from their contract as long as the district has a replacement. That can be difficult, however, if you are in an area of acute shortage, such as math, science or special education.

Walking away from a contract without being released by the district is construed as "contract abandonment." The typical penalty for abandoning one's contract is a one-year suspension of the teacher's certificate. In order for the Texas Education Agency to suspend a teacher's certificate for abandonment, the school district in question must make a finding

that "good cause" did not exist for the teacher to walk away. Thus, moving 500 miles because your spouse got a new job would be good cause, where taking a job in a neighboring district for higher pay normally will not be considered good cause.

IT'S THE SUMMER! DO I HAVE TO DO THAT?

Teachers and other employees who sign a contract with school districts agree to work for the district for a set amount of time. Some contracts

specify a set number of days (187, 197, 202) and others specify the length of the contract in months. Regardless, teachers are paid for the days they work or days that they use paid leave. Thus, teachers cannot be required to participate in events that fall outside their contract.

The Commissioner of Education has examined this issue and found that teachers have the right to decline duties that occur on non-contract days if they disagree with the rate of pay. If you are being directed to work on days that fall outside your contract, make sure you contact the TSTA Help Center at (877) ASK-TSTA for assistance.

Enjoy your summer! We look forward to assisting you and your local associations soon.

Joey Moore is TSTA's General Counsel and Director of Legal Services.

If you are being directed to work on days that fall outside your contract, make sure you contact the TSTA Help Center at (877) ASK-TSTA for assistance.

Changing the way America eats

When Michelle Obama planted a vegetable garden shortly after she moved into the White House, it wasn't just a photo opportunity for the media. She's serious about healthy living.

In February, she introduced her **Let's Move campaign**, whose goal is to end childhood obesity within one generation. It's a comprehensive approach:

- Offer parents the tools and information they need to make healthy choices for their kids
- Get healthier food into our nation's schools
- Ensure that all families have access to healthy, affordable food in their communities
- Increase opportunities for kids to be physically active, both in and out of school

President Obama created a task force on childhood obesity the same day and charged it with developing an interagency action plan within 90 days.

He said the First Lady will lead a national public awareness effort and engage all sectors—public, nonprofit and private—as well as

youth and parents. “But to meet our goal, we must accelerate implementation of successful strategies that will prevent and combat obesity.... To succeed, these efforts must be strategically targeted, and accountability should be clear.”

The Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy will chair the task force, which includes the Secretaries (or senior official designees) of the Interior, Agriculture, Health and Human Services, Education and Management and Budget, as well as the Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff to the First Lady and the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy.

“Across our country, childhood obesity has reached epidemic rates and, as a result, our children may live shorter lives than their parents,” President Obama said at the Feb. 9 signing of the Presidential Memorandum.

“Nearly one third of children in America are overweight

or obese, a rate that has tripled in adolescents and more than doubled in younger children since 1980,” he said. “One third of all individuals born in the year 2000 or later will eventually suffer from diabetes over the course of their lifetime, while too many others will face chronic obesity-related health problems such as heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer and asthma.”

He said Let's Move “builds on effective strategies, engages families and communities and mobilizes both public and private sector resources.”

And it ties in to the President's proposed budget, released Feb. 1, which includes “**\$10 billion over 10 years for a strong Child Nutrition and WIC reauthorization.**”

Speaking at a National Press Club luncheon Feb. 23, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack highlighted the Obama Administration's priorities for this year's reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act, and he advocated for a rapid passage.

“More than 60 years since Harry Truman created the National School Lunch Program, our efforts to provide children with healthy meals have grown so that



today, in schools across America, over 31 million children will receive school lunch with the help of the USDA,” Vilsack said.

“But no matter how many children we reach, we are doing them a disservice if we are not offering them meals that help them achieve at the highest level. Reauthorization must substantially improve the nutritional quality of the meals being served to our children and play a central role in the Let's Move campaign's effort to solve childhood obesity in a generation.

“A recent Institute of Medicine study commissioned by USDA sounded an alarm about the nutritional value

of school meals,” he said. “The study concluded that our children are eating too much sugar, salt and fats and too few fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products. This mix may help explain why one-half of the calories consumed by children ages 6-11 in this country are ‘empty’ calories.”

Vilsack said the USDA is working “as aggressively as possible” to implement the Institute of Medicine's dietary guidelines. “That is why I am calling on Congress to increase the reimbursement rate for the National School Lunch Program, to help schools purchase the whole grains, fruits, vegetables and low-fat

and fat-free dairy products that our children need to grow strong and healthy.”

Although the budget hasn't passed and the task force report hasn't been delivered, **many of the changes called for in the Let's Move initiative already are underway.**

Serving healthier food in schools

- The Healthier U.S. School Challenge establishes rigorous standards for schools' food quality, participation in meal programs, physical activity and nutrition education. Over the next school year, the plan is to double the number of schools that meet the Challenge and



add 1,000 schools each of the following two years.

- Major school food suppliers have voluntarily committed to meet the Institute of Medicine's recommendations to decrease the amount of sugar, fat and salt in school meals; increase whole grains; and double the amount of produce they serve within 10 years.

Helping parents make healthy family choices

- By the end of this year, the Food and Drug Administration will begin working with retailers and manufacturers to adopt nutritionally sound and consumer friendly front-of-package labeling.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics, in collaboration with the broader medical community, will educate doctors and nurses about obesity and ensure they regularly monitor children's body mass index, provide counseling for healthy eating early on and write a prescription for parents laying out the simple things they can do to increase healthy eating and active play.
- Major media companies, such as the Walt Disney Company and NBC, will increase public awareness

through public service announcements, special programming and marketing.

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture will release a 2.0 version of the food pyramid that will help consumers put the dietary guidelines into practice.

Accessing healthy, affordable food

- More than 23 million Americans, including 6.5 million children, live in low-income urban and rural neighborhoods that are more than a mile from a supermarket. A proposed \$400 million a year investment to help bring grocery stores to underserved areas and help places such as convenience stores and bodegas carry healthier food options could eliminate these "food deserts" within seven years.

- The President's 2011 Budget proposes an additional \$5 million investment in

the Farmers Market Promotion Program which provides grants to establish and improve access to farmers markets.

Increasing physical activity

- The President will name new members to the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, housed at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The council will be charged with increasing participation in the President's Physical Fitness Challenge and with modernizing and expanding it, so that it is consistent with the latest research and science.
- The President will challenge both children and adults to commit to physical activity five days a week for six weeks.

- The U.S. Department of Education will work with Congress to create a Safe



and Healthy Schools fund as part of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act this year. This fund will support schools with comprehensive strategies to improve their environment, including efforts to get children physically active in and outside of school, and improve the quality and availability of physical education.

- Professional athletes will promote "60 Minutes of Play a Day" through sports clinics, public service announcements and more.

Partnership for a healthier America

Recognizing that government cannot solve this challenge alone, the Partnership for a Healthier America will bring together the public and private sectors, other or-

ganizations, business and thought leaders, the media and states and local communities to make "meaningful and measurable commitments" to fighting childhood obesity. Michelle Obama is the honorary chair.

As the President signed the Presidential Memorandum, the White House blog reported that he said, "It's done, honey," and she responded, "Now we work."

A later entry reveals why she feels so strongly about the cause.

"These words—'overweight' and 'obese'—they don't tell the full story," she said. "This isn't just about inches and pounds or how our kids look. It's about how our kids feel, and how they feel about themselves. It's about the impact we're seeing on every aspect of their lives."

RENEGADE LUNCH LADY

Not everyone is happy with the school lunch news from the White House. Chef Ann Cooper, nutritional director for the Boulder Valley school district in Colorado, says it's just not enough.

"It makes you feel really good, but there's no policy and no money," Cooper said in an online question-and-answer session Feb. 24, complaining that the proposed increase adds up to half an apple. She said she does appreciate the visibility the White House is creating for school lunch programs, though.

Cooper is a leader in the movement for fresh, local foods in schools and the founder of the Lunch Box Project, whose website offers schools guidance on making the transition to a made-from-scratch cooking program.

"We know that by educating our kids about the importance of healthy eating there's a direct impact on the health of families," the Lunch Box website says. "Kids are like sponges. They take the knowledge they learn in the cafeteria, the school garden and biology classes back to the dinner table once a positive association with healthy food is created within their school."

In the online session, Cooper contrasted what she calls the "typical school lunch" of chicken nuggets, tater tots, canned green beans, fruit cocktail and chocolate milk — "food that was never touched by human hands" — with what she served that day: chicken pot pie (turkey gravy made locally, peas, carrots, chicken and a biscuit), salad, fresh fruit and organic milk.

Her website includes a legislative action center that encourages lunch box advocates to ask Congress to invest \$1 more in every child.

"Millions of kids every day eat lunch, and sometimes breakfast, at school. Yet the U.S. Department of Agriculture invests only \$2.68 on average per day for each student's school lunch. We are growing a generation of Americans who think healthy food is cheap food and who don't have the skills to make better decisions about what they eat." www.lunchboxadvocates.org



The essential importance of equity

As long as some in the state are allowed to access much higher levels of our common resources than others, the commitment to the common good is vacated and the resulting diminished dedication to our common cause fails us, one and all. **By Paul Colbert**

Many in Texas do not understand why equity is so important, including residents of districts that would benefit from an equitable system.

Essentially, there are two fundamental aspects of school finance equity—equity for taxpayers and equity for students. Each is crucial to a school finance system that is fair for all Texans.

The story told in the table illustrates the difficulty presented by Texas’ over-reliance on property taxes to fund public education. The property-poor district (PISD) is one of over 100 districts with taxable values at or below \$100,000 per student. The property-wealthy district (WISD) is one of more than 60 districts with taxable values at

or above \$1 million per student.

PISD can set its maintenance and operations (M&O) tax rate at the maximum \$1.17 and will raise only about 15 percent of the amount WISD can raise at \$0.80. Plus, WISD has access to nearly \$4,000 per student more with its \$0.37 of remaining capacity; PISD has none. Clearly, without substantial state aid, there can be no decent education program in the vast majority of Texas communities.

EQUITY FOR TAXPAYERS

Deservedly, we laud the original Edgewood I decision as the basis for educational equity in Texas. In essence, the Texas Supreme Court ruled unanimously that:

- 1) Texas’ Constitution made funding an “efficient” system the duty of the Legislature.
- 2) To be efficient, funding must be equitable.
- 3) Pure equity is “equal yield for equal effort,” that is, a penny of tax effort provides the same revenue per student (after permissible adjustments for student and district cost differences).

Note the focus on ensuring that taxpayers’ similar efforts have similar results. Additionally, taxpayer equity is imbedded in state law. State policy—Sec. 42.001(b) of the Education Code—says, “The public school finance system of this state shall adhere to a standard of neutrality that provides for substantially equal access to similar revenue

per student at similar tax effort.” One purpose of the Foundation School Program—Sec. 42.002(b)—is to provide “substantially equal access to funds to provide an enriched program.” “Equal access” is another way of saying “equal yield for equal effort.”

Why taxpayer equity is important: Under the current system, the PISD in our example might receive enough state aid to reach a total of \$5,600/pupil (some receive less than that), or only about 70 percent of what the WISD would raise, despite having a tax rate nearly 50 percent higher than the wealthy district—a far cry from “similar revenue for similar effort.”

The economic impact of these factors is significant. If a company is looking to move to or expand operations in that county, it will surely choose the district with the low tax rate that can also provide smaller class sizes and a greater ability to hire the best teachers for the children of its employees.

The Supreme Court observed that this could cause a death spiral for the poorer district as more and more of the property wealth concentrates in its low-tax, high-yield neighbor. It would cost the state additional money to prop up the districts with the declining tax bases as more of the state’s property wealth shifts to low-tax-rate districts, which the Court found to be “inefficient.”

Economically, state policy that allows large portions of the state to wither is extremely shortsighted.

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS

In Edgewood I, the Court recognized that providing exactly equal money per child might not provide equal educational results and permitted differences in funding meant to recognize student and district cost differences that are beyond the district’s ability to correct.

District	Taxable Value Per Student	M&O Tax Rate	Local Revenue Per Student	Pennies of M&O Tax Rate Left
Property Wealthy (WISD)	\$1 million	\$0.80	\$8,000	37
Property Poor (PISD)	\$100,000	\$1.17	\$1,170	0

The Legislature went even further, in words if not in deeds. In Sec. 1.002 (Equal Educational Services or Opportunities) of the Education Code, it requires that “An educational institution...shall provide equal opportunities to all individuals within its jurisdiction or geographical boundaries.” The State Policy further states that “each student enrolled in the public school system shall have access to programs and services that are appropriate to the student’s educational needs and that are substantially equal to those available to any similar student.” The first purpose of the Foundation School Program is “to provide each eligible student a basic instructional program and facilities suitable to the student’s educational needs,” implying that different students may have different needs that should be recognized.

The importance of student equity has been recognized in law; actually providing for it has been the problem.

Why student equity is important: There are fewer and fewer jobs for students with only a “basic” education. The economy of the entire state depends on significantly increasing the knowledge and skills of a much greater percentage of students than required in the past. Money spent now generates higher future revenue and lower future costs to state government. It creates a healthier economy that provides greater overall wealth. A piece of a bigger pie is a bigger piece.

Failure to provide for student equity also has a negative impact in a system

that permits significant taxpayer inequity. Without state assistance, PISD with the \$10 yield per penny per student requires 10 additional pennies of effort to provide for each \$100 of ignored cost differences. The wealthy district can cover the cost with a single penny.

WHY IS EQUITY SO IMPORTANT?

The number one reason equity is so important is quite simple. As the writers of our State Constitution recognized, educating the general population must be a function of the state because without a “general diffusion of knowledge,” our system of government, economy and way of life fail.

When everyone has an “equal” interest in the education of everyone, the commitment to use our common resources for the good of all will prevail. As long as some in the state are allowed to access much higher levels of our common resources than others, the commitment to the common good is vacated and the resulting diminished dedication to our common cause fails us, one and all.

Paul Colbert is a public affairs and policy consultant in business, strategic planning and problem solving. He was first elected to the Texas House of Representatives in November 1980 and represented District 132 in Houston until 1992. He served as chair for Budget and Oversight of the Public Education Committee and as a member of the Appropriations Committee for eight years. This article is reprinted with permission from the Equity Center’s January/February 2010 edition of News & Notes.

NEA Representative Assembly

July 1-6, 2010 • New Orleans, Louisiana



The 2010 NEA Annual Meeting and Representative Assembly (RA) will be held during the first week of July at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, La. The RA is NEA's highest decision-making body. Delegates to the RA debate issues that impact American public education, elect top officers and set association policy.

Delegates to the RA are elected both locally and statewide (see state ballot and voting information in this issue). Texas delegates attending the 2010 NEA RA will receive an information packet in early May. Information and updates regarding the RA also will be posted on the TSTA website.

LODGING

The Doubletree New Orleans is the official Texas Delegation hotel. Nestled between the French Quarter and the Arts/Warehouse district, the hotel is conveniently located to a variety of shopping, dining and entertainment venues.

The nightly room rate is \$149 single occupancy or \$169 double occupancy, plus taxes and fees (currently 13% plus a \$2 daily occupancy fee). If more than two people share a room, a \$20 fee per additional person will apply.

Hotel check-in time is 3:00 p.m. Check-out time is 12:00 p.m. Limited valet parking is available at the hotel on a first-come basis for \$35/day. Daily self-parking is available across the street at the Canal Place Mall for \$15/day, which includes overnight parking but no in-out privileges. The daily check cashing limit for personal checks is \$50 and must include the guest name and address on the check. Persons intending to pay cash for their lodging expenses should be prepared to pay all room, tax and, if

applicable, parking fees at check in. The hotel has a limited number of smoking rooms available on a first-come basis. All other sleeping rooms and all public areas are non-smoking.

Reservations should be made through TSTA's Center for Executive and Governance (CEG) rather than through the hotel in order for delegates to be included in the TSTA room block. The reservation form is included at the end of this article. The deadline to submit your reservation to TSTA is May 20, 2010.

Completed reservation forms MUST include the first night's deposit. Please either provide your credit card (not debit card) information on your reservation form or enclose with your form a check for the total cost of one room night made payable to Doubletree New Orleans. If an incomplete credit card number and/or no credit card or check is submitted, your reservation will not be made. Deposits are refundable for cancellations if notice is given to the hotel at least 72 hours before your scheduled arrival.

All rooms will be assigned on a first-come, first-serve basis. Delegates should submit their reservation forms as soon as possible to ensure space in the TSTA room block at our guaranteed rate. Delegates who do not have a roommate but would like to share lodging expenses may

indicate this on the reservation form. Although a roommate cannot be guaranteed, TSTA will attempt to pair delegates who request such assistance.

TRANSPORTATION

The hotel is about 16 miles from the New Orleans airport. Shuttle fare between the airport and downtown is approximately \$38 round trip or \$20 one way using Airport Shuttle. Visit www.airport-shuttleneworleans.com or call 866-596-2699 for reservations. Please make advance arrangements for special needs. Estimated cab fare one way is \$33. Transportation to/from the hotel and convention center will be provided. Estimated travel time between the hotel and convention center, depending on traffic, is about 15 minutes.

TEXAS CAUCUS MEETINGS

All Texas Caucus meetings will be held at the Texas Delegation hotel. The first Texas Caucus meeting will be Thursday, July 1 at 1:00 p.m. Thereafter, the Texas Caucus will meet at 7:00 a.m. daily from July 3-6. Morning meetings will include coffee service and/or a light break. NOTE: Delegates must register at both the Texas Caucus meeting and with NEA. Registration at the first Texas Caucus meeting will begin 30 minutes before the start of the meeting. Please review the Tentative NEA Meeting

Event Schedule for the NEA registration times.

CLUSTERING TO ELECT NEA DELEGATES

Delegate allocations are based on NEA membership as of January 15, 2010. NEA local affiliates are allocated delegates on a ratio of one delegate for each 150 (or major fraction thereof) active, NEA life and educational support members of NEA. Local associations with 75 or fewer NEA members must cluster to elect an NEA delegate. If your local has 75 or fewer NEA members and is interested in clustering to elect an NEA delegate, contact the TSTA CEG as soon as possible so that elections may be held. Submit your written request to cluster by email to sandras@tsta.org, by fax to (512) 486-7053, or by mail to TSTA Center for Executive and Governance, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, Texas 78701.

TEXAS TRADITION

Texas delegates capture the eyes of the entire nation at each NEA RA by dressing uniformly in Texas flag attire. All Texas delegates should wear a "Texas" vest or shirt—i.e. Texas flag design with a white star on the right front chest—and white or navy blue pants/skirt/shorts.

All Texas delegates are expected to wear the official "uniform" on the days the NEA RA is in session (July 3-6).

TENTATIVE NEA MEETING EVENT SCHEDULE

The schedule outlines all of the activities of the 2010 NEA Convention. Information packets will be mailed to all Texas delegates in early May. The first Texas delegation meeting is scheduled for July 1 at 1:00 p.m.

PRE-CONVENTION SCHEDULE

Saturday, June 26
8:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. NEA Student Leadership Conference

Sunday, June 27
8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Ethnic Leaders Meetings
8:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. NEA Student Leadership Conference
noon-5:00 p.m. NCUEA Meeting
2:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m. NEA-Retired Annual Meeting

Monday, June 28
8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. NEA Student Leadership Conference
8:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m. NEA-Retired Annual Meeting
9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. NCUEA Meeting
9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Joint Conference on the Concerns of Minorities and Women
9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Resolutions Editing Committee Meeting
4:15 p.m.-5:15 p.m. Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee Hearing
5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. Women’s Issues Hearing

Tuesday, June 29
8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. NEA Student Leadership Conference
8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Joint Conference on the 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.-noon National Education Employees Assistance Fund Annual Meeting
9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. NCUEA Meeting
9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Constitution, Bylaws and Rules Committee Meeting
9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. UniServ Referral Center
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 and Rules Committee Meeting with Candidates for NEA Office

Wednesday, June 30
9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Candidates Interview Day
9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. UniServ Referral Center
9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Resolutions Committee Meeting
10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.. Read Across America
1:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting
3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Credentials Committee Meeting

Thursday, July 1
8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m.. Open Hearing on Resolutions
9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. UniServ Referral Center
9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Exhibits; Campaigning
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
1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. **First Texas Caucus Meeting** (new delegate orientation 1:00-1:30 p.m.)
2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m. Sexual Orientation/Gender Identification Committee Open Hearing
3:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m. National Council for Education Support Professionals
4:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. National Council for Higher Education Membership Meeting

4:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m. Special Interest Caucus Meetings
7:00 p.m.-10:30 p.m. Special Guests’ Dinner
TBD. Outreach Service Project

Friday, July 2
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
ALL DAY Campaigning
TBD. Outreach Service Project

CONVENTION SCHEDULE

Saturday, July 3
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
ALL DAY Campaigning

Sunday, July 4
7:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m.. State Delegation Meetings
8:30 a.m.-noon Voting for Officers
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
LUNCH BREAK. National Council for Education Support Professionals

Monday, July 5
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

Tuesday, July 6
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

July 1-6, 2010 • Doubletree New Orleans • New Orleans, LA

Complete all requested information and return to TSTA by **May 20, 2010**. Check-in time 3:00 p.m.—Check-out time 12:00 p.m.

DO NOT CONTACT THE HOTEL DIRECTLY

(PLEASE PRINT)

DOUBLETREE NEW ORLEANS	ROOM RATE
(Texas Delegation Hotel)	_____ Single room (1 person—1 bed)\$149.00
300 Canal Street	_____ Double room (2 people—2 beds)\$169.00
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130	_____ Triple room (3 people—2 beds).....\$189.00
Phone: (504) 581-1300	_____ Quad room (4 people—2 beds).....\$209.00
Fax: (504) 212-3141	

Cut-off date for ALL rooms and room rates is May 20, 2010. All rooms are subject to an additional 13% tax and \$2 daily occupancy fee.
Rooms not booked through TSTA may be charged at the hotel rack rate.

I will arrive (June/July) _____, 2010 at _____ (a.m./p.m.) and I will depart July _____, 2010.

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. _____

_____ I do not have a roommate but am interested in sharing accommodations with another delegate.

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 **Doubletree Hotel**. Should cancellation be necessary, you must advise the hotel 72 hours before your scheduled arrival date. If the hotel 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

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 for Category II delegates, one for a Statewide delegate, and one Delegate District ballot. Please read this before marking your ballots.

TSTA has completed all calculations for allocating State Delegates for the NEA RA and has 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 two Category II delegates on a statewide basis, one other delegate on a statewide ballot, and 43 State Delegates from eight Delegate Districts.

All members should mark the ballot for Category II delegates (supervisory and Active Life Active candidates). Every eligible member should mark the ballot for Statewide delegate; the TSTA Vice President is an automatic candidate for this slot, and one other person also filed.

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, 1D, 1E, 2C, 2F, 4A and TFA should mark the Delegate District 1 ballot. Members in Region 1C mark the Delegate District 2 ballot. Members in Regions 2A and 2D mark the Delegate District 3 ballot. Members in Region 2B mark the Delegate District 4 ballot. Members in Regions 2E and 3E mark the Delegate District 5 ballot. Members in Regions 3A, 3B, 3C and 3D mark the Delegate District 6 ballot. Members in Regions 4B, 4C and 4E mark the Delegate District 7 ballot. Members in Region 4D mark the Delegate District 8 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. If you did not receive a ballot, call TSTA immediately (877-ASK-TSTA) and ask for Sandra.

In the return address portion of the envelope most members will find printed “Del Dist” followed by some

number up to 8; this indicates the Delegate District in which you should vote. Also printed is a code designating your membership category. If your envelope does not have a Del Dist designation, then you are eligible to vote only on the Category II ballot. Everyone 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, call TSTA immediately (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 two). Next, mark the Statewide ballot (vote for one). 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 write-in candidate must be a member in a Region included in

that Delegate District. We do encourage write-in votes, as it provides an alternate pool in case plans change for those printed on the ballot.

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.**

In order to encourage more members to vote, some locals collect the sealed envelopes and mail a group of envelopes together. This is acceptable, but you still must seal your ballot in the special envelope before you turn it in.

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 23, 2010. If the ballot is not in the provided envelope, your vote will not be counted.

This issue of the Advocate includes brief statements from many of the candidates for State Delegate. TSTA policy provides for printing statements from those candidates who file such a statement before the established deadline. TSTA policy also permits any candidate to have an observer present when the Elections Committee canvasses the ballots on April 24 at the TSTA headquarters in Austin. Please contact Carol or Sandra at 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 state 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 NEA notifies us of the number of state delegates to be elected, TSTA Board policy controls how we will allocate those delegates. 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. One delegate must be elected statewide in order to provide a method for the TSTA Vice President to seek election as a delegate.

TSTA is allocated 46 state delegates for the 2010 NEA RA. Based on proportional representation, two delegates must be elected as “Category II” delegates, representing supervisors and NEA Active Life Active members. After setting aside one delegate for the statewide ballot, we looked at different ways to combine Regions in order to meet the one-person, one-vote requirements while electing the remaining 43 state delegates. As the numbers worked out, we were able to stay with only one delegate on the statewide ballot, keep the two delegate positions for the Category II ballot, and divide the other 43 delegates among eight Delegate Districts as shown on the ballot.

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 2010 NEA RA 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 both 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 877-ASK-TSTA or by email at sandras@tsta.org.

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.

Each of the 46 elected State Delegates will be eligible to receive a \$250 stipend. Although this amount is only a small percentage of the total cost for a delegate, TSTA is pleased to be in a position to provide some financial assistance. TSTA Board Policy FP-12 sets out the caucus and RA attendance expectations delegates must meet in order to receive the stipend.

BALLOTS MUST BE RECEIVED AT TSTA HEADQUARTERS IN AUSTIN BY 5 P.M. ON FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 2010.

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

Category 2

- Jerry Watkins. Dedicated to advancing the TSTA agenda. TSTA-R Region 4C President. Fort Worth Education Assn., Past President. Past TSTA/NEA delegate.
- Joe J. Bernal, Ph.D., Hispanic. Retired public school educator, served 10 years on the State Board of Education and eight years as a Texas Senator and State Representative.
- Dr. Gwendolyn Samples, Black. Houston ISD Community Liaison (former teacher, Teaching Academy Coordinator, Partnerships Coordinator, and ExCET committee member) asks for your vote.

Statewide

- Jason Hillman, Caucasian. As the TSTA Vice President, I've worked with you to advance our statewide agenda. We are seeing results! TSTA's membership is at a 13-year high!

Delegate District 1 (Regions 1A, 1B, 1D, 1E, 2C, 2F, 4A, TFA)

- Oscar Tullos. Born in Brownsville, Texas; Master's Degree-1975—Educational Administration; US Army—Vietnam—Bronze Star; Retired Justice of the Peace; High School Teacher; "Justice For All."
- Elizabeth Claire Anderson, Caucasian. I will work for you! Local president, 2009 Ermalee Boice Instructional Advocacy/NEA Teaching Excellence Awardee and Ambassador Academy graduate. I Choose the TSTA Way!
- Katharine Ashby, Caucasian. I am a mother, Social Studies teacher, and NEA Caucus of Young Educators chair. I Believe in TSTA/NEA and what we do.
- Stephen Smallwood, American Indian/Alaska Native. I offer my experience as local, state and national leader to promote TSTA's position at the Representative Assembly. I am committed to TSTA.
- Lois Stephens, Black. Active member over 30 years. Local Vice President. Past 4 years President. MLTP graduate. Black Caucus. Sect. ESP caucus. Served as State and National Delegate.

- Becky Cerliano, Caucasian. In 35 years in TSTA, I've been involved at all levels: local president, regional secretary, state committee. Let me continue to serve in New Orleans.

- Cristela Pena, Hispanic. TSTA, AOB Region 1A—Brownsville, Texas; Educator for twenty-nine years. Employed by Brownsville Ind. School District, Brownsville, Texas—Porter HS—At Risk Counselor.

- Linda Winfrey, Caucasian. As an educator, member of TSTA for 36 years and local leader for 20, I wish to also be involved at the national level.

Delegate District 2 (Region 1C)

- Ernest Davila, Hispanic. Passionate, energetic educator, 11 years; driven to serve others to help themselves; involved in TSTA activities as Legislative Political Advisory Committee Chair.
- Cynthia S. Davila, Hispanic. 31 years experience as an educator in Texas. 16 years as a secondary classroom teacher and 15 years so far as a Guidance Counselor.

Delegate District 3 (Regions 2A, 2D)

- Norma De La Rosa, Hispanic. I'm eager to again represent members at NEA so that their voice is heard. I pledge to work hard for you as an active participant.

Delegate District 4 (Region 2B)

- Robert C. Fierro, Hispanic. Previous NEA-RA Delegate. I am committed to serving all TSTA members at the NEA-RA. I need your vote to continue serving you.
- Gilbert F. De La Rosa, Hispanic. I ask for your vote again to represent you at NEA. As an active participant, I will work hard and ensure your voice is heard.

Delegate District 5 (Regions 2E, 3E)

- Debra Y. Ward, Black. Presently an employee of Beaumont ISD where she taught elementary students at Fletcher

Elementary for 12 years and has been the Title I Curriculum Coordinator.

- Paul Ledet, Black. I graduated from Lamar University with certifications in English, Government, and Sociology. I have been teaching for thirteen years.

Delegate District 6 (Regions 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D)

- Melody Nelson, Black. I am currently a 4th grade teacher at Lantern Lane Elementary in Fort Bend ISD.
- Davey G. Vela, Hispanic. I have been to the past 25 RA's. I have the experience to do a great job for you on the floor of the RA.

- Henry Adeoye, Black. As an educator, I work tirelessly for issues that benefits teachers and students. Let me be your voice at the next NEA-RA in New Orleans.

- Diane Wilkerson, Caucasian. I am currently Vice President of Region 3D serving under President David Vela. I teach 6th grade science at Grangerland Intermediate in Conroe.

Delegate District 7 (Regions 4B, 4C, 4E)

- Dennis G. Thomas, Black. I'm the VP of my local, and I have been working for the association for over 15 years in various capacities in three states.

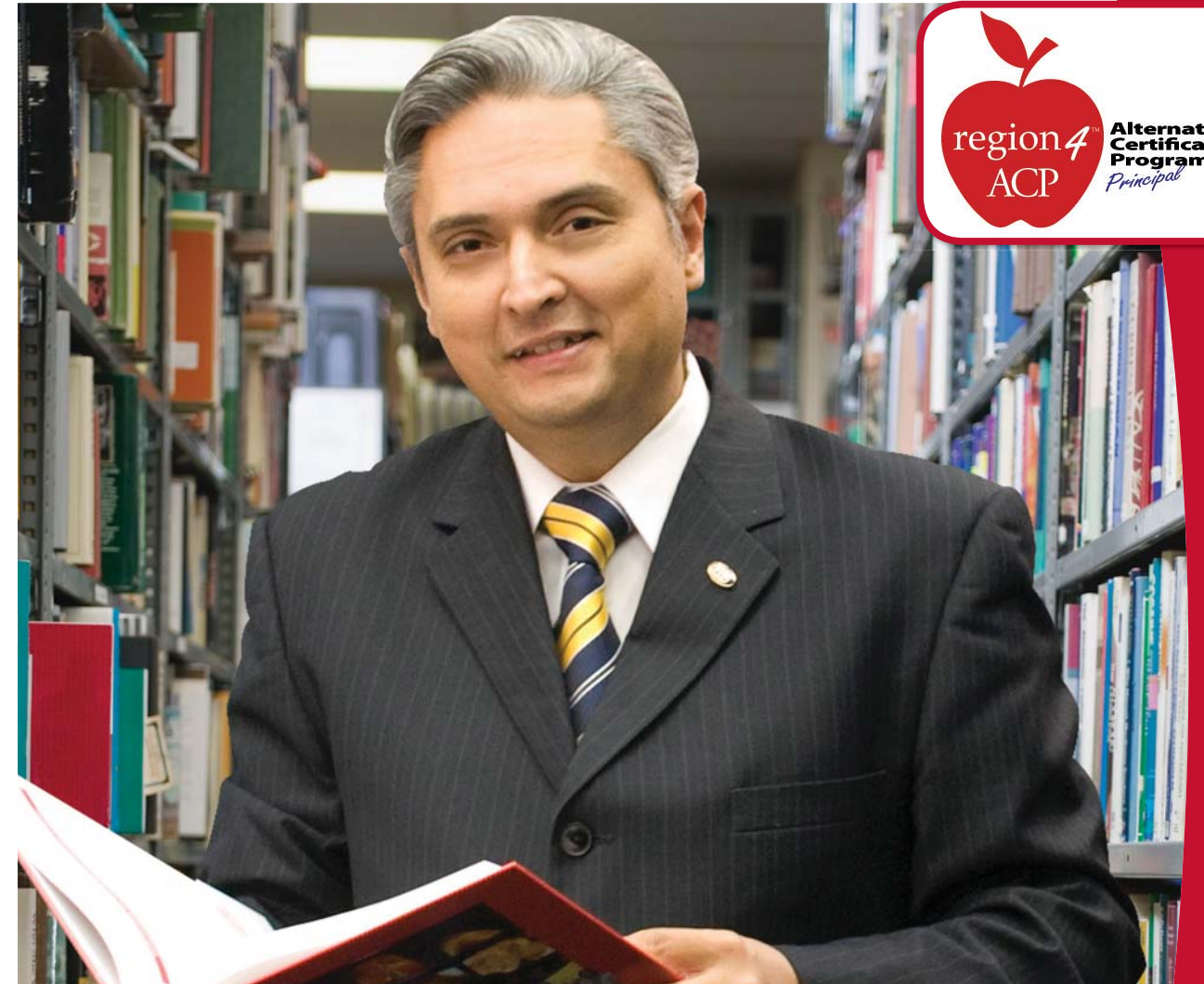
- Eula Axe, Caucasian. Experienced delegate. Have served in a variety of capacities at the RA, including Sign Committee Chair. I am willing to work and represent you.

- Louise Watkins, Asian. Past and current experience: NEA Board of Directors; NEA Minority Affairs Committee, Co-Chair; TSTA BoD member; Fort Worth Education Assn., Past President, Current treasurer, BoD.

Delegate District 8 (Region 4D)

- Ernest Walters, Jr., Black. I am a 67 years young Afro-Am male. I have a BA degree in political science. I'm still dedicated to learning as much as possible.

Teachers, are you ready for the next level in your career?



If you are a certified teacher and would like to become a principal or central office administrator, go with the leader in Texas: Region 4 **Principal Certification** Online. Visit **www.Region4ACP.net** to find out more.

Commit to the future of Texas. Teach. Lead.

Internships must be conducted in Texas.

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The lost art of listening

Learn to listen effectively and you will better understand your students and colleagues. **By Dr. Paul Henley**

Listening—really listening—to either a child or adult helps him feel heard, understood, important, valued, respected and cared about.

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel,” the poet Maya Angelou once said.

Too many times, conflicts arise because two or more people simply fail to listen to one another. Recent research finds that feedback is most effective when teachers listen to their students, learning how they make sense of their learning experiences.

Here are some basic techniques that can help you listen effectively to understand others.

KNOW YOURSELF

When you listen to others, you first need to know how you

will naturally respond to what you hear. Are you a logical, decisive person who leads with her head or an intuitive, globally-thinking teacher who wears her heart on her sleeve? Do you work from past experience, focus on the future or “live in the moment,” considering primarily the issues right in front of you now?

Much can be learned from asking a simple question: when I hear a new idea, do I first ask why this is worth hearing or how would something like that work?

LISTEN MORE. TALK LESS.

There is always the temptation to interrupt so you can tell the other person something you think is vitally important. In most cases it isn’t, at least not at that point.

Jason Heiser is a classroom coach in Pennsylvania. He told the National Staff Development Council, “I always thought I

was a good listener, but as I coached...I began wondering if I was not giving people a chance to ask me the questions on their minds. As much as I want to talk and share what I know, I had to learn to listen. There’s something in listening that’s greater than coming in and showing people.”

Once you have placed yourself in the conversation, you should focus on doing more listening than talking. Ed Brodow, a motivational speaker on negotiation, uses a 70 percent listening, 30 percent talking rule. When speaking with another person, check yourself to see if you follow that guideline.

LEARN ACTIVE LISTENING

It’s not enough that you’re listening to someone—you want to be sure that they know you’re listening. Active listening is the art of communicating to the other person that you’re hearing their every word. You have to WANT to become a good listener; the vast majority of human beings would rather speak than listen.

This does not mean that you simply repeat what they are saying to you. Rather, you take the time and effort to respond to what they’re saying in a way that shows the person you have internalized what they have just said. Ask for clarification if needed. This will clear up any misunderstanding you have.

Make sure when you are actively listening, you acknowledge and validate the feelings of the other person or people. Emotion often holds more significance than facts, whether you are engaged in an argument or not.

Brenda Power of Choice Literacy wrote an essay regarding a new technique — simply telling the other person that she or he is right. Two words, “You’re right,” can make a world of difference. The thing is, most of the time everyone is right at some level. There are people who would argue that the sky isn’t blue. They’re right. It’s gray. It’s orange. It’s black. It depends on where you are. It depends on what time you look up.

Nelson Mandela, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, illustrates this strategy: “I have always endeavored to listen to what each and every person in a discussion had to say before venturing my own opinion. Oftentimes, my own opinion will simply represent a consensus of what I heard in the discussion.”

Are you willing to commit to a new way of communication to learn more of others?

WHAT THEY’RE NOT SAYING — LISTENING FOR NONVERBAL MESSAGES

The other person may be communicating with you via body language. You need to understand these messages to

fully decode what the other or others are telling you.

When you are speaking, if a person stands closer to you, he may be interested in your words. If a person is mirroring your movements, it usually indicates strong agreement. If your listener’s posture has a passive tone, leaned back and shifting, she may not be interested in what you are saying. Tilted heads generally mean that the other person is interested, and if the head is tilted forward it may indicate a form of empathy or sympathy. For a list of 25 different body language signals, go to <http://listverse.com/2007/11/08/25-examples-of-body-language>.

Make sure your own body language says what you want it to say as well. Body language doesn’t interrupt a conversation, but it may be just as effective as what is being said.

Holistic health pioneer Rachel Remen may have put it best: “The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention. A loving silence often has far more power to heal and to connect than the most well-intentioned word.”

Dr. Paul Henley is a teaching and learning specialist on the TSTA staff.

Active listening is the art of communicating to the other person that you’re hearing their every word. You have to WANT to become a good listener; the vast majority of human beings would rather speak than listen.

Membership grows to 700 in Dallas County



PHOTOS BY DALE KAISER

TSTA President Rita Haecker was in Dallas in February to visit members and recruit new ones at three Dallas County Schools (DCS) Service Centers—Richardson, Don Shields and Pat Raney.

While in town, she also sat in on the NEA-Dallas DCS Member Advocacy Team

meeting and met with DCS Superintendent Dr. Rick Sorrells.

NEA-Dallas began organizing in DCS in the fall of 2003 with two members: the late Elnora Brantley and Verbena Nedd. In 2010, DCS membership in NEA-Dallas surpassed the 700-member mark.



SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS MEET IN AUSTIN

TSTA held a conference for education support professionals at Austin's Reagan High School in November. Photos from two earlier ESP conferences in Socorro and Donna were in the winter issue of the Advocate.



PHOTOS BY SUSAN SALINAS



Former TSTA President Donna New Haschke, retired Texas Federation of Teachers President John Cole and TSTA President Rita Haecker at the Education Austin gala.

EDUCATION AUSTIN CELEBRATES 10 YEARS WITH GALA

Ten years ago, the Austin local associations of TSTA and the Texas Federation of Teachers decided to merge. A team representing the locals and their state and national affiliates created Education Austin, our first merged local association.

At a gala and silent auction in December, Education Austin honored those team members - Rita Haecker, Louis Malfaro, Julie Bowman, Donna New Haschke, Carmen Quesada, John Cole, Brenda Urps and Mark Chaiken - and announced the creation of scholarships to help high school students go to college.

TSTA-RETIRED NEWS

Officers: The TSTA-Retired (TSTA-R) officer election was in progress at press

time, via U.S. Mail. For the position of secretary, the following persons filed: Richard “Dick” Wilgoren of Round Rock, Paul Haupt of El Paso and Bobbie Duncan of Odessa. Ballots were due at the TSTA-R office by March 4, following the instructions on the ballot.

For the position of treasurer, Jo Ann Peschel of Houston was the only candidate to file. When only one person files for a position, the TSTA-R Bylaws state that he or she is automatically elected, so no balloting will be necessary. Congratulations to Jo Ann Peschel for reelection to a second two-year term as treasurer.

Delegate Elections: Elections were also underway for delegates to represent TSTA-R members at the TSTA House of Delegates and at the NEA Representative Assembly.

Ballots were due at the TSTA-R office by March 4.

Meetings: The TSTA-R Annual Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday, April 14-15 at the Embassy Suites Hotel, Spa and Convention Center in San Marcos. Two days of activities are planned for your enjoyment; watch for details in the spring issue of TSTA-Retired Reporter.

There will be business to conduct, workshops to enhance our living styles and games to enjoy. The hotel is a short distance from the outlet mall, so there is shopping and plenty of fun. With your FREE registration, you will receive all meeting materials and a group dinner. You must let us know you plan to attend for planning purposes. Make your hotel reservations by calling (512) 392-6450 and letting the hotel know you

are a part of the TSTA group. Please do not make your reservations online.

The TSTA House of Delegates follows the TSTA-R Annual Meeting on April 16-17 at the same hotel. Activities include business, fun, games, social networking and shopping. Plan to be there!

The NEA-Retired Eastern Region Conference is April 20-22 in Asheville, North Carolina. Registration is online at www.nea.org/retired. Have your credit card available to register. With your registration, you will receive all conference materials, an evening reception, two breakfasts and one lunch. Plan to donate to PAC and the Jack Kinnaman Scholarship Fund. See the NEA-Retired “This Active Life” magazine for more information.

The NEA-Retired Annual Meeting is June 27-29 at the Sheraton Hotel in New Orleans. Registration is online at www.nea.org/retired. We will elect a President, a Vice President, and representatives to the NEA Resolutions Committee and the NEA-R Advisory Committee.

Who’s that lady: In the upcoming edition of NEA’s “This Active Life” magazine is a feature article on longtime retiree and former TSTA-R President Letha Grace McCoy of Burleson. The article is about Live Steam Trains, one of her favorite pastimes that she shares with her husband Gary.

—Johnetta Williams, TSTA-R President

DEER PARK

Campaigning in Deer Park

Jocelyn Jones, TSTA Political Action Committee chair and Deer Park Education Association president, presents a PAC check to Dan Huberty, candidate for state representative in District 127. Also in the photo are Sam Blackman, TSTA staff, and Gordon Gauthier, TSTA Region 3C president.



WRL

Learning at Western Region Leadership

TSTA members Noel Candelaria of Ysleta, Gracie Oviedo of San Antonio and Rae Nwosu of Austin talked with NEA Vice President Lily Eskelsen and President Dennis Van Roekel at the NEA Western Region Leadership Conference in Mesa, Arizona, in January.



SAN ANTONIO

Tailgating in San Antonio

At its first tailgate party, Southwest Educators Association TSTA/NEA built solidarity and talked to members about all the ways the association can assist them. TSTA President Rita Haecker and Vice President Jason Hillman attended the event, held before the homecoming football game.



ABILENE

Parading in Abilene

Education Abilene participated for the first time in the Abilene Parade of Lights. “We were the only teacher organization to have a float in the parade,” Martin Diaz said. “It was televised on a local TV channel, and as our float made it past the camera, a commentator read a prepared description of Education Abilene/TSTA/NEA’s achievements and goals.”





131st Annual TSTA Convention Delegate Voting and Registration

Delegates attending the 2010 TSTA annual convention will elect one NEA Director for Texas—NEA Director, Place 1. The race is contested. Delegates will also elect TSTA Board At-Large members and will vote on twelve proposed bylaws amendments, which are included in this issue in their entirety.

Delegates are elected at the local level, except for certain supervisory delegates elected regionally and voting members of the TSTA board who are automatically delegates because of their position. All delegates must have their credentials and a picture ID with them in order to vote. Registration opens Friday, April 16, from 7:00 a.m. through close of the first General Session, and re-opens Saturday, April 17, at 6:30 a.m. Delegates planning to arrive on Saturday should allow plenty of time to register and vote. Voting begins Saturday at 8:30 a.m. Delegates must have completed registration and be in the voting line no later than 9:30 a.m. to be eligible to cast their ballot.

Information about lodging and a preliminary schedule of events appeared in the Winter Advocate and is available on the TSTA website, www.tsta.org. Updates to this information (including the Delegates Casino Night ticket information)

will be posted on the website. The convention hotel is holding a room block for TSTA attendees. Delegates are responsible for making their own hotel reservations. The housing deadline is March 24, 2010.

This year's "Delegates' Night Out" event at the TSTA House of Delegates is a Casino Party beginning at 8:00 p.m., Friday, April 16 at the Embassy Suites San Marcos. Tickets at the door are \$25, but you may pre-purchase tickets at a \$15 early-bird discount rate. Pre-purchased ticket orders must be received at TSTA with payment by March 26, 2010. Each ticket includes entry to the event, a starter set of chips to play a variety of casino games, wrist band for in-out privileges and access to the DJ dance mix. For more information about the convention, visit the TSTA website or contact Carol McCord at carolm@tsta.org.

Election information begins on the next page.

NEA DIRECTOR PLACE 1



RHONDA GAIL SCHELL

Professional Experience: Beaumont ISD, 1991-present, inclusion teacher; Tarkington ISD, 1990-91, sixth grade math teacher; Beaumont ISD, 1989-90, reading teacher 6th-8th

Professional Education Associations: TSTA/NEA, TSTA Women's Caucus, NEA GLBT Caucus, Alpha Delta Kappa, National Science Teacher Association, BABSE, NABSE, Who's Who Among America's Teachers

Offices Held: NEA Director, Texas, Place 2, 2006-09; NEA-RA Board Steering Committee, 2008, 2009; Beaumont Teachers Association, president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, consultation committee chair, 2003-09, association rep; TSTA Region 3E, president, vice president, secretary; TSTA BOD-Advisory, 2002-05; TSTA-RA chair, NEA Fund for Children and Public Education; TSTA Women's Caucus, chair, vice chair, treasurer; NEA Women's Caucus, membership secretary, current

Campaign Statement: During the three years that I was your NEA Director, I worked collaboratively with NEA Directors from across the country, as well as state and NEA leaders, to bring TSTA's concerns to our senators and representatives. Just as our nation is undergoing change - together we can successfully define and mold our own changes for our children, for education, and for NEA.

As we continue our efforts at the national level to restructure NCLB and IDEA, it is important to have a strong leader who understands our needs, is willing to fight for everyone and is able to communicate the NEA positions and needs to TSTA. I am passionate about what is best for our children and what is best for their education.

I humbly ask for the opportunity to serve as your NEA Director. With your support, together we will continue to make Education the most important issue in Washington.



FRANCES H. SMITH

Professional Training: University of Houston, 12/91, Ed.D; University of Wyoming, 7/75, MA; University of Iowa, 2/69, BA

Professional Experience: Cy-Fair ISD, 8/92-present, English-secondary teacher; University of Houston, 2/81-2/90, teaching assistant; Ponca City, Okla. School District, 6/77-2/80, reading teacher-junior high; Laramie, Wyo., School District #1, 8/72-6/76, English-secondary teacher; Dept. of Defense/Germany, 9/70-2/72, GED teacher

Professional Education Associations: Delta Kappa Gamma, 33 years; TSTA, 18 years

Offices Held: Cy-Fair TSTA, vice president, 2000-2002, and president, 2002-present; TSTA Region 3B, president, 2006-10; TSTA BOD, 2006-present; NEA, director, 2008-present

Campaign Statement: As your TSTA and NEA Director, I continually represent you well - locally, statewide, and nationally - as an advocate for our students and you, our members. Locally, I have developed a strong relationship with our superintendent as one who is supportive of education, yet continually advocating for our teachers and ESPs. We help elect strong board members who ask for our help. My speeches at board meetings are noticed by the community at large and constituents acknowledge my contributions. I have represented Region 3B for four years as a state director and work well with the other leaders. We have built a board which focuses on issues to support and solve. As your NEA Director, I have strived to represent Texas as someone who will always represent you honestly and professionally, with your interests as a priority. When I go to Washington, I work for you.

Proposed Bylaws Amendments

Wording in **Bold and Underlined** — Proposed Additions
Wording in ~~[Brackets with Strikethrough]~~ — Proposed Deletions

1 INTENT: To establish standards for due process procedures for Locals and to offer Locals the option of forwarding charges to TSTA for disposition.

ARTICLE IV Affiliate Structure

Section 1. Local Affiliates

C. Minimum Standards of Compliance for active local affiliates

An active local affiliate shall:

Guarantee due process to members in matters of censure, suspension, or expulsion and to officers in matters of impeachment and removal, **as provided below in Paragraph G. of this Section:**

G. Each local affiliate may choose to provide due process to members and officers by providing in its bylaws a Hearing Committee and procedures that meet the standards set forth below or by transferring any such charges to TSTA. If, at the time any charges are initiated, provisions in the local bylaws do not meet these standards or such actions as required by those provisions have not been taken, then due process shall be provided through written notification of the charges to the TSTA Executive Director, which charges shall be handled as specified in paragraph 1. h. below.

1. Due Process for Local Officers
a. In matters concerning the impeachment of any officers, local bylaws shall provide for a Hearing Committee of three members to be appointed by the President with the approval of the Board at the first meeting of each new Board. No member of the Hearing Committee may be an officer or member of the Board. The approved minutes of this board meeting shall reflect the appointments and approval.

b. The bylaws shall provide that impeachment charges against an officer may only be brought through a petition setting forth the specific allegations of nonfeasance, misfeasance and/or mal-

feasance for which removal is sought. The petition must be signed by 1) at least fifty percent (50%) of the Board or 2) the greater of five (5) members or ten percent (10%) of the active members or 3) if the local has ten or more officially recognized association representatives, by at least fifty percent (50%) of those representatives. The petition shall designate one petitioner as the contact person for the petitioners.

c. Such petitions shall be filed with the President, except that if the charges are against the President, then the petitions shall be filed with the Vice-President. The President or Vice President, within five days, shall verify that the signatures have met the above threshold and, if so, immediately transmit a copy of the petition to the Executive Director of TSTA, who shall direct the TSTA General Counsel to provide a written opinion as to whether the charges, if proven, would rise to the level of nonfeasance, misfeasance or malfeasance.

d. While awaiting the written opinion of the General Counsel, the President or Vice-President shall request the Regional President to designate a person to contact both the petitioners and the charged officer to attempt an intervention to mediate the conflict. To be successful, the mediation must result in a written agreement that includes either the withdrawal of the charges or the resignation of the officer. The agreement may include such other agreements entered into in order to resolve the matter, provided such agreements are not in conflict with any laws or local, state or national bylaws.

e. If there is no mediated agreement by the time the written opinion of the General Counsel is received, the President or Vice President may allow one addi-

tional week for an agreement to be reached. If no agreement is reached in that time, then the charges shall be transferred to the Hearing Committee for any appropriate action, which shall include a hearing before any action may be taken against the impeached officer. The decision of the Committee shall be rendered in writing no more than sixty (60) days after receipt of the charges and shall be binding on all parties. All members of TSTA shall cooperate with any investigation or hearing. The Hearing Committee may request assistance from TSTA by contacting the TSTA President or Executive Director. TSTA shall provide such requested assistance as is reasonable.

f. At any hearing, the impeached officer may be represented, including representation by Counsel.

g. If the Hearing Committee fails to render an opinion within the specified time, at the written request of the petitioners to the TSTA Executive Director the charges shall be transferred to TSTA for disposition as provided in paragraph h below.

h. Each Regional President shall provide the names of two members who are not serving as local officers from his or her Region to the TSTA President at the first meeting of each new TSTA Board. These members shall be contacted by TSTA to determine if they are willing to serve in the capacity set forth below; if they are not willing to serve, the Regional President shall present the name of another member until two members from the Region agree to serve. The TSTA Board of Directors shall adopt a policy setting forth procedures that will be followed in the naming of these members and in their selection, as appropriate and necessary, to serve on a TSTA Committee on Local Officer

Impeachments. The Policy shall provide for the appointment of five names from this pool to serve in the event any local officer impeachment charges come to TSTA under Section 1. G. of this article or paragraph 1. g. of this Section. If at the end of the process established by Board Policy, the Local Officer Impeachment Committee finds against the impeached officer, said officer shall have fifteen (15) days to file an appeal on procedural grounds only with the TSTA Board by notifying the TSTA President in writing. The TSTA Board shall consider the appeal at its next meeting; however, if the Local Officer Impeachment Committee recommended removal from office, then the charged officer shall be suspended from duties pending the outcome of the appeal.

2. A member who fails to adhere to any of the conditions for membership shall be subject to censure, suspension or expulsion. Any local, by vote of a majority of the governing board, may submit a request for such action to the TSTA Hearing Committee by providing such request in writing to the TSTA Executive Director, along with the reasons for the request. The Executive Director shall submit the request to the TSTA Hearing Committee for disposition as provided in Article XI of the TSTA Bylaws.

Maker: CB&E Committee

Rationale: Some local leaders fear that dealing with impeachment charges through a local hearing committee likely will cause a split in the local. This amendment offers the option for locals to refer such charges to TSTA for disposition by Local Officer Impeachment Committee, which is established. The amendment also establishes standards to ensure due process as already required by TSTA bylaws.

Vote Required: Two-thirds

Financial Impact: The financial impact would depend on how often locals refer local officer impeachments to TSTA for disposition by the Local Officer Impeachment Committee. Our best estimate is that this would be an infrequent occurrence in any year, and many years would not occur at all. The likely cost to TSTA for each such Hearing would be between \$2,000 and \$2,500 per hearing.

CB&E Recommends: Support

2 INTENT: To permit additional Regional Alternates for TSTA Board meetings.

ARTICLE IV Affiliate Structure

Section 2. Regional Affiliates

D. House of Delegates

3. Purposes

The Regional House of Delegates shall:

b. Except as provided in c. elect a regional president who shall serve on the State Board of Directors, a regional vice president who shall serve as the alternate to the State Board of Directors, other regional officers **who may, if designated by the President, represent the Region at TSTA Board meetings in the absence of the President and Vice-President**, and at-large Regional Board of Director members as required. In the event that there is only one nominee for a position, the balloting may be waived, and the nominee declared elected.

And, further:

ARTICLE VII Board of Directors

Section 7. Vacancies

B. The regional vice president shall be the alternate Board of Directors member. **In the event that neither the president nor vice president is able to attend a Board meeting, the president may designate in writing either the regional secretary or treasurer to represent the region at that Board meeting.**

Maker: NBI CB&E-3 at TSTA 2009 House of Delegates

Rationale: To make it less likely that a Region will go unrepresented at any TSTA Board meeting.

Vote Required: Simple Majority (50% plus 1 vote)

Financial Impact: Potential of minimal additional costs to cover expenses of other alternates when neither Regional President nor Vice President can attend meeting. Estimated at less than \$2,000 per year.

CB&E Recommends: Support

3 INTENT: To recognize changes in TSTA-R Bylaws and structure.

ARTICLE IV Affiliate Structure

Section 4. TSTA-Retired ~~[Program]~~

A. Organization

1. A statewide affiliate for retired members of TSTA shall be organized.
2. **The TSTA-Retired Affiliate** ~~[This association shall]~~ **may** recognize local **and/or regional** affiliates of retired members as **provided in the TSTA-R Bylaws** ~~[requested]~~.

Maker: CB&E Committee

Rationale: Several years ago, TSTA-R amended its bylaws to provide for local or regional affiliates of TSTA-R members. Prior to that, the TSTA Bylaws provided that TSTA could recognize such affiliates, but none had ever sought recognition (because none had been organized). This bylaw change incorporates the current reality that TSTA-R now recognizes local and regional affiliates of TSTA-R.

Vote Required: Two-thirds

Financial Impact: None.

CB&E Recommends: Support

4 INTENT: To clarify language about qualifications and terms for members of the TSTA Board of Directors and to limit secret votes by board members only to votes cast in required elections.

ARTICLE VII Board of Directors

Section 1. Board of Directors

B. Meetings

4. The Board of Directors may cast secret ballots only ~~[upon matters pertaining to personnel, to the purchase of real estate, and]~~ in elections required of the Board of Directors;

Section 3. Qualifications

Board of Directors members shall:

- ~~A. Serve as a regional president;~~
- ~~B. Be actively engaged in the education profession within the state at the time of election, except if a TSTA-R member of the Association and the president of the Texas State Teachers Association Student Program;~~
- ~~C. Have held Active, TSTA-R, TFA, or any combination of Active, TSTA-R and TFA or Life membership in TSTA for at least three (3) consecutive years preceding election unless serving as the president of the Texas State Teachers Association Student Program;~~
- ~~D. Be employed, except for TSTA-R and Texas State Teachers Association Student Program members, as nonsupervisory~~

~~members unless elected as a supervisory-at-large member;~~

~~E. Be employed, except for TSTA-R and TSTA-SP members, within the region during the term of office unless elected as an NEA Director, supervisory-at-large member or ethnic minority at-large member; and~~

~~F. Maintain membership status and educational position in TSTA during term of office except for the president of the Texas State Teachers Association Student Program.]~~

A. Be actively engaged in the education profession within the state at the time of election, except for the President of TSTA-R and the President of TSTA-SP, who shall maintain membership and office in those respective groups.

B. Have held Active, TSTA-R, TFA or any combination of Active, TSTA-R and TFA membership for at least the three (3) consecutive years preceding election, or be a Life member of TSTA, except for the President of TSTA-SP.

C. Be a nonsupervisory member unless elected as a supervisor-at-large to the Board, except for the TSTA-R and TSTA-SP Presidents.

D. Be employed within the represented region if serving on the Board as a regional president.

E. Maintain membership status and educational position during term of office if serving as an at-large board member.

Section 4. Term of Office

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

B. **At large Board members and Board members elected by a Regional House of Delegates shall not serve more than two consecutive terms, except that time served completing an unexpired term shall not count in applying this limit.**

[If elected to office by a Regional House of Delegates, the member shall not be eligible to serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in office except as defined in C, and D, below.]

~~C. No member shall be eligible for reelection if such election by a Regional House of Delegates will extend tenure in office for more than four (4) consecutive years except if elected to fill a vacancy, the un-~~

~~expired term shall not be considered in the four (4) year limitation in office.~~

~~D. Members elected at large shall not be eligible to serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in that office.]~~

E. **For each NEA Director from Texas,** ~~[F]~~ the term of office on the TSTA Board of Directors ~~[for any NEA Director from Texas]~~ shall begin on the first July 15 following the~~[if]~~ election to the position and shall end on July 14 of the year in which the~~[if]~~ term on the NEA Board of Directors ends.

Maker: CB&E Committee

Rationale: Members who elect board members have a right to know how they vote on important issues that come before the board, with the only exception being when the board is voting to elect someone to a position. The other changes are clarifying in nature and do not make substantive changes.

Vote Required: Two-thirds

Financial Impact: None

CB&E Recommends: Support

5 INTENT: Correct the omission of cluster delegates from the composition of TSTA House of Delegates.

ARTICLE VIII The State House of Delegates

Section 1. Composition

The state House of Delegates shall be composed of the President, the Vice President, the voting members of the Board of Directors, the Directors, the Regional Presidents, or Regional Vice Presidents upon written notification to TSTA of the Regional President's inability to attend, and the delegates elected by the local affiliates, **by clusters**, by TSTA-R members, by the Texas State Teachers Association-Student Program members and TFA members.

Maker: CB&E Committee

Rationale: If cluster delegates are elected, they are seated as a part of the House of Delegates and should be listed under the composition.

Vote Required: Two-thirds

Financial Impact: None

CB&E Recommends: Support

6 INTENT: To follow the lead of the NEA by requiring proportionate membership to qualify for a delegate to the TSTA House of Delegates.

ARTICLE VIII The State House of Delegates

Section 2. Allocation of Delegates

A. Local Affiliates
Local affiliates shall elect one (1) delegate for each fifty (50) members or major fraction thereof based on the local affiliate's Active and Life membership on January 15 immediately preceding the state House of Delegates. ~~[Locals not allocated a delegate based on the above ratio but which maintain annual officers and meet the requirement under Article IV, Section 1, C, 10, shall be allocated one (1) delegate to the state House of Delegates.]~~ New locals that have affiliated after the January 15 deadline shall not be entitled to representation at the state House of Delegates until the following year.

Maker: CB&E Committee

Rationale: Delegates to the TSTA HoD are allocated on the basis of one for each 50 members or major fraction thereof. It is unfair to allow locals with fewer than 26 members to have a delegate just representing a very small local. As with the NEA RA, TSTA already provides that smaller locals can cluster to get to the number required to elect a delegate, so every member still can be represented and can run for a delegate position.

Vote Required: Two-thirds

Financial Impact: None

CB&E Recommends: Support

7 INTENT: To provide for TSTA to conduct Cluster elections for delegates to the TSTA HoD.

ARTICLE VIII The State House of Delegates

Section 2. Allocation of Delegates

B. **TSTA** ~~[Regional Presidents]~~ may arrange for ~~[Regional]~~ Cluster Delegates to be elected by those ~~[Regional]~~ members who are not members of a local~~[,]~~ or who are members of a local **not** eligible for **a (only one (1))** delegate ~~[but chooses to participate in the cluster rather than electing a delegate]~~. Such delegates shall be allocated on the same basis as local affiliate delegates.

Maker: CB&E Committee

Rationale: Given the logistics of conducting a cluster election while ensuring open nominations and secret ballots across multiple locals, it is much easier for TSTA to conduct

such elections than it is for a Regional President to do so.

Vote Required: Two-thirds

Financial Impact: Shifts minimal expense from Region to State. Cost of a Cluster Election is less than \$100 per election

CB&E Recommends: Support

8 INTENT: To provide greater flexibility around statewide committees by reducing the size of most such committees and allowing the Board to create a greater number of them.

ARTICLE IX Committees

Section 1. Statewide Committees

The following statewide standing committees are hereby established: TSTA Political Action Committee (TSTA-PAC); Credentials, Bylaws and Elections Committee; and Legislative Committee. The TSTA President shall appoint chairs and all members of statewide standing committees, including those established pursuant to paragraph E. of this section, with approval by the Board of Directors. All terms shall be for two years, with terms staggered so that as nearly as possible one-half of the terms expire each year. No member shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms and, after serving two consecutive terms, may not be reappointed until being off the committee for at least four years. Time served if appointed to fill an unexpired term shall not apply to the two-term limit. The President shall issue annual charges for each statewide standing committee, including those established pursuant to paragraph E of this section.

A. CB&E

- 1. The Credentials, Bylaws and Elections committee shall be composed of nine members. Five members shall be appointed in odd years, and four members shall be appointed in even years.**
- 2. This committee shall receive all amendments to these Bylaws and put them in the proper form for submission to the Board of Directors and House of Delegates. This committee shall serve as the Elections Committee for all TSTA statewide elections including those held at the annual House of Delegates. The President shall select three members of this committee to serve as the Credentials Committee for the annual House of Delegates and**

name one of those as chair of that committee. The Credentials Committee shall rule on the seating of any delegate and on any challenges to the election of local delegates. The President shall select three members of this committee to serve as the Elections Committee for the annual House of Delegates, and name one of those as chair. The Elections Committee shall conduct all elections at the House of Delegates and shall certify the results to the House of Delegates. The remaining three members shall be the Bylaws Committee, with one named as chair by the President. The chair shall present any proposed amendments to the House of Delegates and all three members shall be available to answer questions about the amendments.

B. TSTA-PAC

- 1. The TSTA-PAC shall consist of one member from each TSTA Region and one member from each TSTA State Affiliate. The President of each Region or State Affiliate, or his or her designee, shall be the alternate for that Region or Affiliate.**
- 2. The TSTA-PAC shall adopt the necessary governing documents to function as a Political Action Committee in Texas, including the endorsement of candidates. These governing documents and any amendments to such shall also be approved by the TSTA Board of Directors. The TSTA-PAC shall receive and disburse funds for political action through a PAC Treasurer designated by the TSTA Executive Director. The TSTA President shall chair this committee.**

C. Legislative

- 1. The Legislative Committee shall be composed of eleven members.**
- 2. This committee shall research issues of importance to education employees and students in Texas and shall propose for adoption by the TSTA House of Delegates a Legislative Program recommending state legislative actions related to those issues.**

D. In addition to the statewide standing committees established by this Article, the Board of Directors shall, by Policy, establish such other statewide standing committees as it deems essential to achieving the mission of TSTA. The policy shall state the purpose and ap-

propriate number of members for each committee established by policy.

E. Statewide standing committees may be organized and assigned by the President into subcommittees.

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.

[TSTA shall have the following statewide committees: Legislative and Political Advocacy, Community and Instructional Advocacy, and Credentials, Bylaws and Elections.]

A. Composition

- 1. All committee members and chairpersons shall be appointed by the President subject to approval by the Board of Directors unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws.**
- 2. The composition of all committees except Credentials, Bylaws and Elections shall be:**
 - a. One member from each TSTA region;**
 - b. One member from each TSTA state affiliate;**
 - c. The regional president or his/her designee shall be the alternate committee member for that region;**
 - d. The state affiliate president or his/her designee shall be the alternate committee member for that state affiliate; and**
 - e. Members from even-numbered regions shall be appointed in even-numbered years. Members from odd-numbered regions shall be appointed in odd-numbered years.**
- 3. The Credentials, Bylaws and Elections committee shall be composed of nine members. Five members shall be appointed in odd years, and four members shall be appointed in even years.**
- 4. Terms on a statewide committee shall be two years. No member shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms on a statewide committee. If appointed to fill a vacancy, the unexpired term shall not apply to the two-term limitation.**
- 5. A committee member absent for two meetings during a term shall be replaced by an appointee of the President.**

B. Purpose

1. Legislative and Political Advocacy
~~This committee shall coordinate those activities dealing with legisla- tion, the endorsement of candidates, and the collection and disbursement of PAC funds.~~
2. Community and Instructional Advocacy
~~This committee shall coordinate these activities dealing with internal and external communications and community relations and activities dealing with instruction and profes- sional development.~~
3. Credentials, Bylaws and Elections Committee
~~This committee shall receive all amendments to these Bylaws and put them in the proper form for sub- mission to the Board of Directors and House of Delegates. This committee shall serve as the Elections Commit- tee for all TSTA statewide elections including those held at the annual House of Delegates. The President shall select three members of this committee to serve as the Credentials Committee for the annual House of Delegates and name one of those as chair of that committee. The Creden- tials Committee shall rule on the seat- ing of any delegate and on any chal- lenges to the election of local delegates. The President shall select three members of this committee to serve as the Elections Committee for the annual House of Delegates, and name one of those as chair. The Elec- tions Committee shall conduct all elections at the House of Delegates and shall certify the results to the House of Delegates. The remaining three members shall be the Bylaws Committee, with one named as chair by the President. The chair shall pre- sent any proposed amendments to the House of Delegates and all three members shall be available to answer questions about the amendments.~~

C. Organization

1. The members of the Community and Instructional Advocacy Committee shall also be the members of the State Board of Education Contact Team.
2. The Legislative and Political Advo- eacy Committee shall also function as the TSTA PAC. The committee shall adopt the necessary Standing Rules to function as the TSTA PAC and any amendments to such rules must be adopted by the TSTA Board of Direc-

~~tors. The TSTA PAC shall receive and disburse funds for political action through a Texas State Teachers Asso- ciation Political Action Treasurer des- ignated by the Executive Director. When the Legislative and Political Ad- vocacy Committee is functioning as the TSTA PAC, the President shall be the chair. The members of the Leg- islative and Political Statewide Com- mittee shall also be members of the Political Activist Team.~~

3. Statewide Committees may be orga- nized and assigned by the President into subcommittees.

Section 2. Special Committees

~~Special Committees may be initiated by the President, Board of Directors or state House of Delegates, and one such special commit- tee shall be the Minority Affairs Committee.]~~

Maker: CB&E Committee

Rationale: This keeps the CB&E Committee (recently changed) intact, changes the L-PAC into just the PAC (keeping repre- sentation from each Region and State Affili- ate), and establishes a Legislative Commit- tee to develop the Legislative Program. It also allows the board to establish other statewide committees as appropriate. By having more and smaller committees, it al- lows the committee members to probe more deeply into specific topics. This should help the Association to develop cadres of members with better understand- ing of current education issues, thus allow- ing for the committees to provide better guidance for TSTA. By allowing the board to establish (and end) committees, rather than doing so in the bylaws, it allows greater flex- ibility to put the resources of the Association into the appropriate places, as those places change over time.

Vote Required: Two-thirds

Financial Impact: The three committees continued or created in the bylaw amend- ment represent about a \$4,500 savings over the current committee structure. How- ever, the expectation is that the TSTA Board will establish additional committees of vary- ing sizes. Costs for a face-to-face committee meeting requiring an overnight stay are be- tween \$300-\$350 per person. With smaller committees, the expectation is that it would be easier to use alternative means of meet- ing, including webinars, conference calls, or even video conferencing. Still, there will be additional costs associated with this amend- ment. If we estimate seven additional com- mittees that average seven members and calculate one face-to-face meeting and two

alternative meetings for each committee, taking into account the initial \$4,500 sav- ings, the extra costs would be between \$15,000 and \$20,000.

CB&E Recommends: Support

9 INTENT: To clarify meaning of non- supervisory and add a definition of “ed- ucational position” as used in the TSTA By- laws.

ARTICLE XII
Parliamentary Authority and Definitions

Section 2. Definitions

- A. Classroom teacher:
Classroom teacher shall mean any per- son who is certified, where required, who devotes a majority of the school day to classroom teaching or to allied work with students, and who is not required to possess an administrator or supervisory certificate.
- B. Supervisor and administrator:
Supervisor and administrator shall mean any person who has continuing authority to hire, transfer, discipline, or dismiss or otherwise direct employees or to effec- tively recommend any of the foremen- tioned actions unless the exercise of such authority is routine or clerical in nature and does not call for independent judgment; or is solely exercised in re- gard to a secretary, aide, or personal as- sistant; or is because he or she partici- pates in a peer review program that involves the person in the occasional evaluation of employees.

- C. Nonsupervisory:
Nonsupervisory shall mean **Active**-Edu- cational Support Professional and **Ac- tive-Professional** members who are not supervisors. ~~[TSTA-R members shall be classified as nonsupervisory.]~~

M. Educational Position
As used in these Bylaws, this term means those positions defined in A., B., and C. above.

Maker: CB&E Committee

Rationale: The current definition of non- supervisory incorrectly implies that the term applies only to ESP members and incor- rectly applies the term to TSTA-R members. Educational Position is used in the bylaws, but not defined, which can lead to confu- sion.

Vote Required: Two-thirds

Financial Impact: None

CB&E Recommends: Support

10 INTENT: To clarify that Executive Of- ficers are actively engaged in the ed- ucation profession.

ARTICLE XII
Parliamentary Authority and Definitions

Section 2. Definitions

- L. Executive Officer:
Any elected officer employed full-time by TSTA or one of its affiliates. **Such per- sons shall be deemed to be actively en- gaged in the education profession while serving as an Executive Officer.**

Maker: CB&E Committee

Rationale: Same as Intent.

Vote Required: Two-thirds

Financial Impact: None.

CB&E Recommends: Support

11 INTENT: To allow withdrawal of a pro- posed amendment closer to the House of Delegates.

ARTICLE XIII
Amendments

Section 4. Withdrawal of Proposed Amend- ments

- A. Request for withdrawal of proposed amendments shall be submitted in writ- ing to the Credentials, Bylaws and Elec- tions Committee **no later than March 1 [at least ninety (90) days prior to the state House of Delegates].**
- B. Requests for withdrawal of proposed amendments that meet the **March 1 [90 day]** requirement may be granted by the Credentials, Bylaws and Elections Committee prior to being published as required above in Article XIII, Section 1. D. or, after such publication by the state House of Delegates, if such requests meet one of the following requirements:
 1. If originally proposed by a member(s), the request shall be signed by person(s) proposing the amendment;
 2. If originally proposed by an affiliate, the request shall be signed by an elected officer and approved by at least a majority of the members of the highest governing body of the affili- ate;
 3. If originally proposed by the Board of Directors, the request shall be signed by at least sixty percent (60%) of the members of that body, based on a weighed vote;
 4. If originally proposed by a TSTA Com- mittee, the request shall be signed by

sixty percent (60%) of the members of the committee(s) submitting the amendment.

Maker: NBI CB&E-2, 2009 TSTA House of Delegates

Rationale: To allow makers of proposed by- laws to see what other amendments are being proposed by CB&E and what posi- tions the Board of Directors takes on pro- posed amendments prior to deciding whether to go forward with or withdraw a proposed amendment. In most years, the current 90 day deadline comes before the board meetings that review the CB&E Re- port and in many cases, even before the final CB&E meeting.

Vote Required: Simple majority (50% plus 1 vote)

Financial Impact: None

CB&E Recommends: Support

12 INTENT: To extend the deadline for locals to file audits if the audit is conducted by an independent outside CPA auditor.

ARTICLE IV
Affiliate Structure

Section 1. Local Affiliates

- C. Minimum Standards of Compliance for active local affiliates
- An active local affiliate shall:
8. Establish and adhere to appropriate financial and operational standards consistent with the standards set forth in Board Policy, including ethi- cal conduct, internal controls and conflict of interest policies to protect resources of the local. Conduct a yearly audit of financial transactions and transmit a copy of this audit to TSTA by October 31 following the close of the prior fiscal year; **except that for those locals required by pol- icy to engage an outside auditor or auditing firm the deadline to trans- mit the audit shall be December 15.**

Maker: Gracie Oviedo, San Antonio Alliance

Rationale: Following the direction of the House of Delegates in a Bylaw Amendment adopted last year, the TSTA Board of Direc- tors has standards for local affiliates regard- ing financial matters. One provision requires locals above 1,000 members or with a bud- get of over \$250,000 to use an outside au- ditor to complete the audit required to be filed with TSTA. This takes much longer to complete than using an audit committee and makes it virtually impossible to meet

the October 31 deadline established long ago for all locals.

Vote Required: Three-fourths (3/4)

Financial Impact: No impact

CB&E Recommends: Support

NOTE ON EDITORIAL AMENDMENTS (STYLE CHANGES)

At the suggestion of President Rita Haecker, the TSTA CB&E Committee added an extra meeting this year in order to complete a more thorough review of all of the TSTA By- laws. One result is a larger than usual num- ber of proposed amendments. In reviewing the bylaws, the Committee also noticed a number of style inconsistencies in terms of the use of parallel construction, numbers, and various punctuation marks. The com- mittee decided to recommend establishing a style standard and then update the bylaws based on that standard. The committee chose to follow the American Psychological Association (APA) style standards. We recom- mend that the House of Delegates approve this style standard as an editorial change. If approved, this will become the standard for style for the TSTA Bylaws, and, in the fu- ture, each printing of the bylaws after amendments will be done using this style.

TSTA BOARD AMENDMENTS TO THE PROPOSED BYLAWS AMENDMENTS

At the February 6, 2010, TSTA Board of Di- rectors meeting, the board voted to offer the following amendments to the Proposed By- laws Amendments for consideration at the TSTA House of Delegates.

The TSTA Board recommends amending Proposed Bylaw Amendment 1 as follows: **(1)** at G.1.a insert in the first sentence “or more” between the words “three” and “members”; **(2)** at G.1.a delete the sentence “No member of the Hearing Committee may be an officer or member of the Board.”; and **(3)** at G.1.h. in the first sentence change the phrase “who are not serving as local of- ficers” to “who may or may not be serving as local officers.”

The TSTA Board recommends amending Proposed Bylaw Amendment 4 by replacing the sentence at Section 1.B.4. with the fol- lowing: “The Board of Directors may have secret ballots for elections by the Board and for no other purpose.”

The TSTA Board will offer these amend- ments on the floor of the House of Dele- gates on Friday afternoon.

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2009-10 ENROLLMENT FORM

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

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

EMAIL AT HOME

EMAIL AT WORK

AREA CODE

HOME PHONE

AREA CODE

WORK PHONE

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

LOCAL ASSOCIATION

NAME OF ISD

CAMPUS/WORKSITE

POSITION (I.E. CLASSROOM TEACHER, LIBRARIAN, BUS DRIVER, ETC.)

DATE OF BIRTH

HIRE DATE

✓	ANNUAL DUES AND CONTRIBUTIONS	AMOUNT
	1. Professional Dues—TSTA/NEA (Active)	\$444.00
	Professional Dues—New to the profession	\$303.00
	2. Educational Support Dues—Full-time	\$234.50
	Educational Support Dues—Part-time	\$122.50
	3. NEA Fund for Children and Public Education (suggested amount \$15.00)	
	4. TSTA-PAC (see disclaimer below)	\$ 9.00
	5. Region Dues	
	6. Local Association Dues	
	TOTAL	
NOTE: Membership must include local and region dues if eligible.		

ETHNICITY

☐ American Indian/Alaska Native

☐ Black

☐ Hispanic

☐ Caucasian (not of Spanish Origin)

☐ Asian

☐ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

☐ Unknown

☐ Multi-ethnic

☐ Other

Ethnicity information is optional and failure to provide it will in no way affect your membership status, rights or benefits in NEA, TSTA or any of their affiliates. This information will be kept confidential.

METHOD OF PAYMENT

PAYROLL DEDUCTION AUTHORIZATION (BELOW)

I hereby authorize the _____ School District to deduct the total amount of the annual obligation as set by the appropriate Association governance bodies in _____ equal payments in order to pay my dues to the professional associations and organizations listed and for political action contributions indicated. The authorization will continue in effect for this school year and future years, including any increase that may occur, until I give written notice to the local by September 15 to revoke. I further authorize any unpaid annual balance to be deducted from my final check. The Local Association or TSTA/NEA will notify School District officials of the annual dues amounts for all levels of the Association each year.

Please check if you would like to receive TSTA's electronic newsletter, the TSTA Briefing, which is distributed by email at least once a week.

Send to: ☐ home email address ☐ work email address

The TSTA Political Action Committee (TSTA-PAC) and the National Education Association Fund for Children and Public Education collect voluntary contributions from Association members and use these contributions for political purposes, including, but not limited to, making contributions to and expenditures on behalf of friends of public education who are candidates for federal office. Contributions to TSTA-PAC and The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education are voluntary; making a contribution is neither a condition of employment nor membership in the Association, and members have the right to refuse to contribute without suffering any reprisal. Although The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education requests an annual contribution of \$15, this is only a suggestion. A member may contribute more or less than the suggested amount, or may contribute nothing at all, without it affecting his or her membership status, rights, or benefits in NEA or any of its affiliates. Contributions or gifts to The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education, TSTA-PAC and local PACs are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. Federal law requires political committees to report the name, mailing address, occupation, and name of employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of \$200 in a calendar year. Federal law prohibits The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education from receiving donations from persons other than members of NEA and its affiliates, and their immediate families. All donations from persons other than members of NEA and its affiliates, and their immediate families, will be returned forthwith.

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

Former student member?
☐ YES ☐ NO

Annual membership dues to NEA include \$5.40 for NEA Today, \$3.25 for NEA-Retired, \$3.25 for Tomorrow's Teacher and/or \$19.75 for the Higher Education publications. The NEA publication(s) received by members are based on membership category. Annual membership dues to TSTA include subscription to the TSTA Advocate. Membership is open only to those who agree to subscribe to the goals and objectives of the Association and to abide by its constitution and bylaws.

Dues payments are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. Dues payments (or a portion) may be deductible as a miscellaneous itemized deduction.

Legal Liability Coverage: Members of TSTA/NEA are automatically covered by \$6 million for most legal claims (\$300,000 for civil rights claims) while acting in the scope of employment. \$1 million is underwritten by the AIG Companies or successor provider selected by NEA. \$5 million excess is underwritten by United National Ins. Co., an A.M. Best Rated A+ (superior) carrier or successor provider selected by TSTA. Coverage is subject to the terms, conditions and exclusions of the policies which are available to members upon request by calling the TSTA Help Center at 877-ASK-TSTA. Notice required by Art. 21.54 of the Texas Insurance Code: These insurers may not be subject to all the laws and regulations of Texas. The insurance solvency guarantee fund may not be available to you or to TSTA.

Employment Defense: To be considered for legal services for job protection, membership is required for at least 30 days before the member knew or should have known of the events or occurrences leading up to the action complained about. Pre-existing conditions will not be pursued, except by discretion of TSTA.

MEMBER SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____ LOCAL ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE _____

For the latest news, go to www.tsta.org.

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