

# Advocate

Texas State Teachers Association/National Education Association

Spring 2013

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OUR MESSAGE IS SIMPLE

# Kids, not cuts

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INSIDE



# Start the conversation and keep it going

TSTA has one basic message for our legislators: Kids, Not Cuts.

Our core message is short on words, but it says a lot about our priorities — restoration of funding for classrooms over special interest tax breaks, real teaching and learning over standardized testing, and strong support for public schools over private school vouchers and other privatization schemes.

Your TSTA Public Affairs staff delivers that message daily to legislators at the Capitol, but those legislators need to hear from you, our members, back in their districts. The private school lobby and their education “experts” who never set foot in a classroom are well-funded, and they are putting on a full-court press. But you vote, and you are the real education experts, and legislators need to hear from you.

The privateers don't want to restore the \$5.4 billion cut from public school budgets two years ago. Instead, they want to tap into an \$8.8 billion surplus and an \$11.8 billion Rainy Day Fund balance — more than \$20 billion of taxpayers' money — to pay for private school vouchers and give tax breaks to corporate special interests.

The future of our local public schools is at stake, and so are educators' jobs. Remember, the cuts already have cost at least 25,000 school employees, including 11,000 teachers, their jobs. So every member of TSTA has a strong personal interest in the outcome of the legislative debate, and every member of TSTA needs to help spread our Kids, Not Cuts message.

Take the message into your buildings. Encourage other TSTA members and your colleagues in your schools and in your bus barns to spread the message to parents, friends, and families. Contact TSTA for flyers and petitions that will help you start the conversation. Call, email, or visit your local legislators to demand that they vote for school children, not privatization. Remind your state senator and state representative that you vote and you will remember their votes on education issues when you vote on Election Day.

TSTA will send you email alerts when critical votes are scheduled or anticipated and when contacting your legislators is essential. (And when you download the new TSTA app, you will find a “Push Notifications” field at the bottom that allows you to receive alerts on your mobile device.)

If you don't know who your state senator and state representative are, click on this link and type in your address to learn who they are and how to contact them: <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/Home.aspx>.

Member engagement in local action does more than get your legislators' attention. It also gets the attention of your colleagues and co-workers and shows them the value of joining an organization that leads on the issues that impact our schools and our jobs.

Read the article on pages 6-9 of this Advocate to learn more about our Kids, Not Cuts campaign and about education proposals being considered by legislators. Start the conversation and keep it going until your local legislators understand what Kids, Not Cuts is all about and vote for public schools.

Rita Haecker, TSTA President

## Advocate

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How to contact us: Call 877-ASK-TSTA, visit [www.tsta.org](http://www.tsta.org), or write us at TSTA, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, Texas 78701. Please send address changes to the attention of Membership Records or [membershiprecords@tsta.org](mailto:membershiprecords@tsta.org).

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### 19 DENNIS VAN ROEKEL

#### A conversation with your NEA president

In this candid interview, Dennis Van Roekel, the former Phoenix math teacher who now leads NEA, talks about TSTA's success and the issues facing public education. He will be our keynote speaker at the April 12-13 TSTA House of Delegates in Houston.

### 29 STATE COMMITTEES

#### Finding solutions for local concerns

TSTA's eight state committees are hard at work on the issues and concerns members have identified in their local schools, from making school board policy changes to improving communication.

### 4 UPFRONT

#### News from the Legislature — and a new way to get it

TSTA President Rita Haecker speaks at the Save Texas Schools press conference; NEA research shows Texas at 49th in student funding; Rep. Donna Howard says there's more support for public education in the legislature than you may think; TSTA reveals its new app.

### 6 SCHOOL FUNDING

#### Consistent, persistent, and local

The math is on our side, and so is the Texas Constitution. But the governor and the legislative majority will continue to shortchange our public schools and our children's futures if educators don't step up and demand that local legislators do the right thing for public education.

### 10 NEA CONVENTION

#### Delegate's guide to the NEA Convention

NEA delegates, here is the latest information on the Representative Assembly in Atlanta this summer. You'll discover where the Texas caucus meetings are, how to dress, and when to “cluster.” Included are a tentative schedule for convention and pre-convention events, and a form for reserving your hotel room.

### 14 YOUR BALLOT

#### Vote for NEA State delegates here

Between pages 16 and 17 is a ballot that you will complete and mail, using the enclosed envelope. Find out about the categories of delegates and how they are allocated, then vote. Some candidates submitted statements, which are printed in this section.

### 18 TSTA CONVENTION

#### Information on voting and registration

In addition to all the new business items, you'll vote on two things at the state convention in Houston: proposed bylaws amendments, which are printed here, and an NEA director. The two candidates have submitted information about themselves as well as campaign statements.

### 24 ADVOCACY IN ACTION

#### Advancing education every day

El Paso leads a two-day community forum for social justice; Pflugerville becomes the first Texas district to offer health benefits for domestic partners; the Intergenerational Mentoring Program matches student and retired members; Rep. Donna Howard talks to student delegates about the importance of activism; Del Valle wins fair notice of nonrenewal; plus more from Austin, Laredo, San Benito, Harlandale, Brownsville, and TSTA Retired.



# What do the cuts mean to our kids?

"This morning, I want to take you behind the numbers to talk about what it means in the classroom when the state cuts education funding while enrollment is growing and schools are laying off teachers and support personnel," TSTA President Rita Haecker told the media at the Capitol press conference that kicked off the Save Texas Schools March and Rally Feb. 23. More than 10,000 parents, educators, and other concerned community members attended the rally.

Haecker stood with Scott McCown, the state district judge who presided over all public school finance cases from 1990-2002 and is now executive director of the Center for Public Policy

Priorities; superintendents; and school board members at the event.

"You all have heard about the \$5.4 billion that the legislative majority cut from public schools two years ago. What you may not know is that state support for public education has dropped by \$1,062 per student over the last two years," she said. "About 600,000 Texans work in our public schools, and during just the first year of the cuts, 25,000 of them, including 11,000 teachers, lost their jobs. At the same time, 80,000 more students enrolled in Texas schools.

"Even in tough times, teachers do their best every day to give all their students the opportunity to succeed. But for too

many teachers, budget cuts mean larger classes, and that means less time to give students the attention and one-to-one instruction they need. In many districts, teacher aides were laid off, and that piles more work on a teacher and takes away precious time needed to prepare, tutor, and teach.

"Then there's the STAAR test and paperwork — and buying things for your classroom out of your own pocket, because the school can't provide as much for your classroom," Haecker said. "Cuts to student success, dropout prevention, and pre-K, coupled with less time to teach, make it harder for teachers to provide the critical attention to students who need to develop learning skills in the early years, and to students who face special challenges in the critical middle school to high school transition.

"When the legislature cuts public education by \$1,062 per pupil, more than dollars are cut. Opportunity is cut. Morale is cut. And kids are cut. Sixty percent of the children in Texas public schools are economically disadvantaged. And these kids, and all the other kids, are our future.

"They can succeed. They just need the opportunity," Haecker said. "The state has the money in the bank. Now is the time for kids, not cuts."

## NEA: Texas now ranks 49th in student funding

As President Haecker noted, funding for Texas public schools has plunged by \$1,062 per student, measured in spending per average daily attendance, since the Legislature slashed \$5.4 billion from public education two years ago.

Texas now ranks 49th among the states and the District of Columbia in that category, according to research compiled by NEA. Only Arizona and Nevada spend less per child on education. The figures are based on state budgetary data.

In the current school year, per pupil spending in Texas is \$8,400, more than \$3,000 less than the national average of \$11,455. Texas spent \$9,462 per child in 2010-2011, the last school year before the deep budget cuts.

The average annual teacher's salary in Texas also has decreased by \$528 since 2010-2011. The average Texas salary is now \$48,110, more than \$8,000 below the national average of \$56,383. Texas now ranks 38th in that category.

"The cuts in per pupil funding are shameful because they hurt our students. Texas must do better for the five million children who attend our public schools," Haecker said. "The state doesn't need to raise taxes to restore education funding. We have an \$8.8 billion surplus and a Rainy Day Fund balance of \$11.8 billion, and there is no good reason for the Legislature to wait another year or two for a court order, instead of restoring cuts that cost 25,000 teachers and school employees their jobs, forced students to learn in thousands of overcrowded classrooms, and eliminated funding for pre-K and dropout prevention programs that keep students on track."

## Rep. Donna Howard: 'That money belongs to education'

"We do value you and what you do, and I hope we will make decisions at

the Capitol this year that actually demonstrate that to you," Rep. Donna Howard, D-Austin, told students and advisors at the TSTA Student Program Convention in February.

She talked about the "cuts only" mentality of the 2011 legislative session, which led to massive education cuts. "People who feel that we're inefficient, or somehow not providing what we need to provide in education, don't understand what's really going on here. You and the people who have been involved in teaching our kids stepped up to the plate and did what needed to be done even in adverse conditions. We can't sustain that, though, and the fact is we came back this session and found the predictions were wrong, and we actually have a surplus of \$8.8 billion.

"I would suggest to you that one of the reasons we have a surplus is we didn't fund education last time," Howard said. "Many of us would say that money belongs to education."

Howard said some of her colleagues want to wait until the school finance lawsuit is decided a year from now, but "There are many of us at the Capitol right now — and I will say it's both Republican and Democrat — I happen

to be a Democrat but there's a lot of Republicans who actually do support public education and recognize that the cuts to their community have consequences and want to see us get some money back into public education. So even though there are some that are not for it, there are groups of us that are working on trying to find ways to restore some of those funds in the current budget in this current school year."

She encouraged the students to follow the session online; track bills; call, write, and email legislators; and testify. "I encourage you to pay attention to what we do, and if you have an opinion, express it. You can have a voice right now, you can participate right now, in the things you care about.

"We do value you and what you do, and I hope we will make decisions at the Capitol this year that actually demonstrate that to you," Howard concluded.

The left column of <http://tsta.org/issues-and-action/take-action-state-level> has links that will enable you to track bills, watch the legislature live, discover who your representatives are and how to contact them, and more.

### WE HAVE A SURPRISE FOR YOU AT YOUR APP STORE

Wherever you are, the new TSTA mobile app provides access to valuable resources. You no longer need your computer to join TSTA, get information about upcoming events, or find tips for your classroom. The TSTA app makes all that and much more available on your smart phone or tablet.

You can sign up to receive alerts, read insider commentary on the Grading Texas blog, and access discounts available exclusively to TSTA/NEA members. The TSTA app is your portal to all the resources available from the nation's largest education union, the National Education Association, as well as TSTA's Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Flickr pages.

# Are they ready to learn?

By **Clay Robison**, TSTA public affairs specialist

To restore funding for our students, our legislative efforts must be consistent, persistent — and local.

The math is on our side, and so is the Texas Constitution. But the governor and the legislative majority will continue to shortchange our public schools and our children's futures if educators don't step up and demand that our local legislators do the right thing for public education.

That is why TSTA is launching Kids, Not Cuts, encouraging local action built on the foundation laid by our statewide Stop the Cuts campaign, which last year collected thousands of petition signatures demanding that Gov. Rick Perry call a special session to restore the \$5.4 billion cut from public

education in 2011. The governor rejected our plea and now he is defying the vast majority of Texans by saying he would rather enact special interest tax cuts instead of adequately funding public schools.

### **\$20 BILLION READY TO SPEND**

With a much-improved financial outlook for state government, TSTA is asking its local affiliates to keep the pressure on their state representatives and state senators. Tell them in no uncertain terms that educators, parents, and voters back home will hold them accountable next Election Day for their votes on public school bud-

gets, high-stakes testing, private school vouchers, and other issues impacting their local schools, educators, and students.

The key is consistent and persistent personal communication between educators and their local legislators throughout the legislative session.

"When they are in Austin, legislators are used to having their arms constantly pulled by special interest lobbyists," said Ed Martin, TSTA's public affairs director. "But when they hear from 10 voters back home, that gets their attention. When they hear from

**"There is no free lunch. We either want increased standards and are willing to pay the price, or we don't." — Judge John Dietz**

25 or 30 local voters, that really gets their attention."

The numbers are large but the math is simple. The Legislature, according to official projections from the state comptroller, has an \$8.8 billion surplus and a Rainy Day Fund balance of \$11.8 billion to help write the next state budget. That is more than \$20 billion — billion with a "b" — of already collected tax dollars

that could be spent to restore the \$5.4 billion cut from public schools two years ago, close a big hole in the Medicaid budget, and meet other critical state needs. And all those tasks could be accomplished without collecting one single dime in additional taxes.

### **JUDGE: SCHOOL FUNDING IS INADEQUATE, INEQUITABLE**

The sense of urgency was highlighted



in early February when state District Judge John Dietz of Austin ruled that state government was not appropriating enough money to schools to accomplish their job and was distributing funds in an inequitable and unconstitutional manner. Dietz's ruling followed 12 weeks of testimony in a lawsuit that more than 600 school districts had brought against the state, challenging the school finance system.

"There is no free lunch. We either want increased standards and are willing to pay the price, or we don't," Dietz said.

Most educators probably know someone or some program hurt by the cuts, which amounted to more than \$500 per student. During the 2011-2012 school year alone, more than 25,000 school employees — including 11,000 teachers — lost jobs, and thousands of classrooms — including 8,400 in K-4 alone — were overcrowded. The state quit funding full day pre-kindergarten and important dropout prevention programs, forcing some districts to cut efforts that keep students in school. Others cut electives, and some charged students to ride the school bus.

Meanwhile, enrollment in Texas public schools has swelled by about 170,000 students since the cuts were imposed.

Yet, the governor and his legislative allies have refused to take advantage of the improved economy and state government's multibillion-dollar windfall to do the right thing and begin repairing the damage to local schools. Instead, the governor has proposed spending part of the largess — your

tax dollars — to give tax cuts to special interest and corporate supporters in the business community. And he and some legislative leaders want to siphon even more tax dollars from public education for private school vouchers and other privatization schemes.

**HOW LONG MUST STUDENTS WAIT?**

Members of the legislative majority also were unmoved by Dietz's finding that the school finance system was inadequate for all Texas students and particularly unfair to children in poorer school districts. Their plan was to appeal the judge's decision and delay any

action on changing school funding for at least another year.

Texas children shouldn't have to wait that long. But they will if we and others who value public schools don't get involved.

Many TSTA members joined parents and other public education advocates at the Save Texas Schools rally at the State Capitol on Feb. 23 to demonstrate our support for strong, adequately funded local schools. That was a strong statement, but it was "just the launching pad" for an effective campaign, said

*“Legislators are used to having their arms constantly pulled by special interest lobbyists, but when they hear from 10 voters back home, that gets their attention.” — Ed Martin*



SAVE TEXAS SCHOOLS: Education Austin Vice President Montserrat Garibay speaks; Diane Ravitch, former U.S. assistant secretary of education, is to her right. On this page, TSTA Student Program members hold signs, and Michelle Cardenas, president of the Del Valle local, talks to the media. On the opposite page are members from San Marcos and Pflugerville.

Patrick Harvey, TSTA's director of affiliate and leadership development.

TSTA members need to follow that up with personal meetings with their local legislators as votes on key educational issues arise. Make clear how educator-constituents expect lawmakers to vote and why, and let them know you will be watching and recording their votes all session and will be voting next Election Day.

**THE PLAN: KIDS, NOT CUTS**

TSTA will be sending out legislative updates to its members all session, as well as special alerts when major votes are anticipated. If you don't know who your state representative or state senator is, go to the following link, then type in your address: [www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/Home.aspx](http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/Home.aspx).

"In simplest terms," Harvey said, "the Kids, Not Cuts message is, 'I want my local legislator to do the right thing for our public schools.'"

The campaign, Harvey added, also can be an effective organizing tool because it will be centered on issues that really matter in educators' professional lives, issues on which educators themselves can work to make a difference. TSTA also encourages its members to recruit parents and other stakeholders in their local communities to deliver the same message to their legislators.

Here are the key elements of the Kids, Not Cuts message.

**Classrooms, not corporations:** In 2011, the legislative majority slashed public school funding by more than \$500 per student. The cuts cost 25,000 school employees — including

11,000 teachers — their jobs and left thousands of students in overcrowded classrooms. Pre-K and other dropout prevention programs also suffered funding cuts. Now, the state has an \$8.8 billion general revenue surplus and \$11.8 billion in the Rainy Day Fund. That is enough money to restore education cuts and other essential needs without raising taxes. The priority should be on education, not on tax cuts for corporate special interests.

**Teaching, not testing:** High-stakes standardized testing reduces classroom time needed for teaching and learning and corrupts our schools by reducing education to a test score. It is time to put the brakes on the STAAR testing regime before it breaks another child. The Legislature must cut back on tests, allow teachers to spend more time teaching, and eliminate test-based compensation for educators.

As of this writing, the state Senate has approved a bill — its first of the session — to repeal the requirement that scores on end-of-course (EOC) exams count toward 15 percent of high school course grades. House Public Education Committee Chairman Jimmie Don Aycok of Killeen also has filed a bill that would end the requirement. Aycok's legislation would reduce the number of EOC exams from 15 to five and would change the school accountability system. Several other respected legislators have also filed testing reform legislation, and you can follow these bills on TSTA's Bill Tracker at [www.tstaweb.net/BillTracking.html](http://www.tstaweb.net/BillTracking.html).

These developments have occurred in response to the strongly expressed op-



*“In simplest terms, the Kids, Not Cuts message is, ‘I want my local legislator to do the right thing for our public schools.’” — Patrick Harvey*

position of educators and parents to an unfair, out-of-control testing and accountability regime. But the fight still is far from over. So keep up the pressure, beginning with your local legislators.

**Public, not private:** Instead of restoring education cuts, some lawmakers, including Senate Education Committee Chairman Dan Patrick of Houston, want to create a "voucher tax loop-hole" to allow corporations to avoid paying taxes that fund public schools. Instead, they would contribute money to pay for so-called "scholarships" for private school vouchers. These vouchers would cut support for public schools.

Patrick and other advocates of this privatization scheme like to call it a "choice" program. In reality, however, vouchers would offer no choice for the vast majority of Texas students because they still would be educated in public schools, which would be hurt by the loss of tax dollars. Moreover, studies have shown that voucher programs in other states have not improved student performance.

We know the message. Now it is our job to share it with our local legislators and make sure they understand how important it is to us — now and during the next election season.

# Information for NEA delegates

Here's everything you need to know about the 2013 NEA Convention and Representative Assembly July 1-6 in Atlanta, Georgia



Delegates to the Representative Assembly (RA), the Association's highest decision making body, debate issues impacting American public education, elect top officers, and set association policy. They are elected both locally and statewide (see state ballot and voting information in this issue).

If you are a delegate, this article explains how to reserve a hotel room, which airport is closest, when the Texas Caucus meets, and how to register. Please watch the NEA ([www.nea.org/ra](http://www.nea.org/ra)) and TSTA websites for updates.

Also, all delegates will be emailed a packet from the Center for Executive and Governance (CEG) with the most up-to-date Texas delegation convention information.

## LODGING

The official hotel for the Texas Delegation is the **Hilton Atlanta**. Located downtown, the hotel is within walking distance of the Georgia Aquarium, CNN Center, varied shops, and many restaurants. The hotel connects by a covered skybridge to the rapid transit system, MARTA. Please make your reservations through TSTA's Center for Executive and Governance rather than the hotel so you can be included in the TSTA delegate room block.

The room rate per night is \$163 single/

double occupancy, \$173 triple occupancy, and \$183 quadruple occupancy, plus taxes and fees (currently 8%).

**The deadline to submit your reservation to TSTA is May 15, 2013.**

## Completed reservation forms MUST include the first night's deposit.

Please provide either your credit card (not debit card) information on the reservation form or enclose with your form a check for the total cost of one room night (including taxes and fees) made payable to: Hilton Atlanta. 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 with notice to the hotel by 6:00 p.m. the day of your scheduled arrival.

Hotel check-in time is 3:00 p.m. Check-out time is 12:00 p.m. Daily parking rates are \$22 for self-park and \$30 for valet. Room service is available from 6:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. The daily check cashing limit for personal checks is \$50. If you intend to pay cash for your lodging expenses, be prepared to pay all room, tax, and, if applicable, parking fees at check in. This is a smoke-free hotel.

All rooms will be assigned on a first-come, first-served 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. TSTA cannot guaran-

tee a roommate for every request, but we will attempt to pair delegates who ask for such assistance.

## TRANSPORTATION

From **Hartsfield Jackson International Airport**, cab fare to the hotel is about \$30. The hotel connects by skybridge to the MARTA rapid transit system; NEA will provide MARTA passes for each delegate to use to travel to and from the hotel and convention center. This is a MARTA-only hotel, so NEA will not be providing bus service for delegates.

Delegates who need special transportation assistance should pre-register with the NEA as physically challenged delegates.

## TEXAS CAUCUS MEETINGS

All Texas Caucus meetings will be at the Texas Delegation hotel. The first Texas Caucus meeting will be Monday, July 1 at 1:00 p.m. Thereafter, the Texas Caucus will meet at 7:00 a.m. each day of the RA (July 3-6). Morning meetings will include coffee service and a light break.

**NOTE:** Delegates must register at the Texas Caucus meeting **and** register with NEA at the convention center. 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 Jan. 15, 2013. 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 may 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, submit a local cluster election request form (printed in the Fall Advocate), or contact the TSTA CEG by April 10, 2013. Submit your written request to cluster **by email** to: [anezkac@tsta.org](mailto:anezkac@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 — with white or navy blue pants, skirt, or shorts. All Texas delegates are expected to wear the official "uniform" on the days the NEA RA is in session (July 3-6).

## Remember

- Make your room reservation through TSTA's Center for Executive and Governance, not the hotel.
- You must include one night's deposit or your room reservation will not be made.
- The deadline to submit your room reservation to TSTA is May 15, 2013.

# TENTATIVE NEA MEETING EVENT SCHEDULE

## PRE-CONVENTION SCHEDULE

**Wednesday, June 26**  
 5:30 pm-10:00 pm ..... National Council of Urban Education Associations Meeting

**Thursday, June 27**  
 8:00 am-5:00 pm ..... National Council of Urban Education Associations Meeting

**Friday, June 28**  
 6:00 am-5:00 pm ..... NEA-Retired Annual Meeting  
 8:00 am-5:00 pm ..... Ethnic Leaders Meetings  
 9:00 am-5:00 pm ..... National Council of Urban Education Associations Meeting  
 9:00 am-6:00 pm ..... Resolutions Editing Committee Meeting  
 2:30 pm-8:30 pm ..... NEA Student Leadership Conference

**Saturday, June 29**  
 5:30 am-4:30 pm ..... NEA Student Leadership Conference  
 6:00 am-5:00 pm ..... NEA-Retired Annual Meeting  
 9:00 am-2:30 pm ..... National Council of Urban Education Associations Meeting  
 9:00 am-4:00 pm ..... Constitution, Bylaws and Rules Committee Meeting  
 9:00 am-6:00 pm ..... Joint Conference on Concerns of Minorities and Women  
 9:00 am-6:00 pm ..... Resolutions Editing Committee Meeting  
 1:30 pm-5:00 pm ..... National Council of State Education Associations Meeting  
 4:00 pm-5:30 pm ..... Constitution, Bylaws and Rules Committee Meeting with Candidates for NEA Office  
 4:15 pm-5:15 pm ..... Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee Hearing  
 5:00 pm-6:00 pm ..... Women's Issues Hearing

**Sunday, June 30**  
 7:30 am-8:30 pm ..... Student Leadership Conference  
 8:30 am-3:00 pm ..... Joint Conference on Concerns of Minorities and Women  
 8:30 am-6:00 pm ..... NEA-Retired Annual Meeting  
 9:00 am-5:00 pm ..... Candidates Interview Day  
 9:00 am-6:00 pm ..... Resolutions Committee Meeting  
 3:00 pm-6:00 pm ..... Board of Directors Meeting  
 3:00 pm-5:00 pm ..... Credentials Committee Meeting  
 4:00 pm-10:00 pm ..... National Council for Education Support Professionals Executive Meeting

## CONVENTION SCHEDULE

**Monday, July 1**  
 Annual Meeting (Delegate Registration and Policy Hearings Begin)  
 8:30 am-10:00 am ..... Student Leadership Conference  
 9:00 am-11:00 am ..... Open Hearing on Resolutions  
 9:00 am-5:00 pm ..... Registration: Delegates, Successor Delegates, and Non-Delegates  
 9:00 am-5:00 pm ..... Exhibits  
 9:00 am-5:00 pm ..... Credentials Committee Meeting  
 10:00 am-3:30 pm ..... State Delegation Meetings  
 1:00 pm-4:00 pm ..... FIRST TEXAS CAUCUS MEETING  
 2:30 pm-3:30 pm ..... Sexual Orientation/Gender Identification (SOGI) Committee Hearing  
 3:30 pm-5:30 pm ..... National Council for Education Support Professionals  
 4:00 pm-5:30 pm ..... Special Interest Caucus Meetings  
 4:00 pm-6:00 pm ..... National Council for Higher Education

Membership Meeting  
 6:00 pm-10:00 pm ..... Special Guests' Dinner  
 All Day ..... Campaigning  
 TBD ..... Outreach Service Project

**Tuesday, July 2**  
 9:00 am-5:00 pm ..... Registration: Delegates, Successor Delegates, and Non-Delegates  
 9:00 am-5:00 pm ..... Exhibits  
 9:00 am-6:00 pm ..... Credentials Committee Meeting  
 10:00 am-noon ..... Open Hearing on Strategic Plan and Budget  
 10:00 am-4:00 pm ..... Special Forums and Sessions  
 10:00 am-4:00 pm ..... Resolutions Committee Meeting  
 Noon-1:00 pm ..... Special Interest Caucus Meetings  
 1:00 pm-3:00 pm ..... Legislative Open Hearing  
 1:00 pm-3:00 pm ..... Open Hearing on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules  
 2:00 pm-4:00 pm ..... Elections Committee Meeting  
 4:30 pm ..... Board of Directors Meeting  
 6:30 pm-10:00 pm ..... Human and Civil Rights Awards Dinner  
 All Day ..... Campaigning  
 TBD ..... Outreach Service Project

**Wednesday, July 3**  
 7:00 am-9:00 am ..... State Delegation Meetings  
 9:00 am-5:00 pm ..... Credentials Committee Meeting  
 8:30 am-5:00 pm ..... Non-Delegate Registration  
 9:30 am-10:00 am ..... Special Interest Caucus Meetings  
 10:30 am-5:00 pm ..... Representative Assembly  
 1:00 pm-5:00 pm ..... Non-Profit Fundraising Activities  
 All Day ..... Campaigning

**Thursday, July 4**  
 7:00 am-9:00 am ..... State Delegation Meetings  
 8:30 am-noon ..... Voting for Officers  
 9:00 am-5:00 pm ..... Credentials Committee Meeting  
 9:00 am-5:00 pm ..... Non-Delegate Registration  
 9:00 am-5:00 pm ..... Non-Profit Fundraising Activities  
 9:30 am-10:00 am ..... Special Interest Caucus Meetings  
 10:00 am-5:00 pm ..... Representative Assembly  
 Lunch Break ..... Special Interest Caucus Meetings  
 Lunch Break ..... National Council for Education Support Professionals

**Friday, July 5**  
 7:00 am-9:00 am ..... State Delegation Meetings  
 8:30 am-noon ..... Voting on Amendments and Runoff Elections (if necessary)  
 9:00 am-5:00 pm ..... Credentials Committee Meeting  
 9:00 am-5:00 pm ..... Non-Delegate Registration  
 9:00 am-5:00 pm ..... Non-Profit Fundraising Activities  
 9:30 am-10:00 am ..... Special Interest Caucus Meetings  
 10:00 am-6:00 pm ..... Representative Assembly  
 Lunch Break ..... Special Interest Caucus Meetings

**Saturday, July 6**  
 7:00 am-9:00 am ..... State Delegation Meetings  
 9:00 am-noon ..... Non-Delegate Registration  
 9:00 am-3:00 pm ..... Non-Profit Fundraising Activities  
 9:00 am-5:00 pm ..... Credentials Committee Meeting  
 9:30 am-10:00 am ..... Special Interest Caucus Meetings  
 10:00 am-6:00 pm ..... Representative Assembly  
 Lunch Break ..... Special Interest Caucus Meetings

## HOTEL REGISTRATION FORM FOR NEA CONVENTION DELEGATES

July 1-6, 2013 • Hilton Atlanta • Atlanta, Georgia

Complete all requested information and return to TSTA by May 15, 2013. Check-in time 3:00 p.m.—Check-out time 12:00 p.m.

**DO NOT CONTACT THE HOTEL DIRECTLY**

(PLEASE PRINT)

### HILTON ATLANTA

(Texas Delegation Hotel)  
 255 Courtland Street, NE  
 Atlanta, Georgia 30303  
 Phone: 404-659-2000  
 Fax: 404-221-6368

### ROOM RATE

\_\_\_\_\_ Single room (1 person—1 bed) .....\$163.00  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Double room (2 people—2 beds) .....\$163.00  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Triple room (3 people—2 beds) .....\$173.00  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Quad room (4 people—2 beds) .....\$183.00

Cut-off date for ALL rooms at TSTA room rate is May 15, 2013. All rooms are subject to an additional occupancy tax, currently 8%.  
 Rooms not booked through TSTA may be charged at the hotel rack rate.

I will arrive (June/July) \_\_\_\_\_, 2013 at \_\_\_\_\_ (a.m./p.m.) and I will depart July \_\_\_\_\_, 2013.

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 Hilton Atlanta. No deposit refund will be issued for any cancellation made within 72 hours of 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: Jan Parks, TSTA Center for Executive and Governance, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701, fax 512-486-7053

The schedule outlines all of the activities of the 2013 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.

# Voting for state delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly

Most members will mark three sections of the ballot this year for State Delegates to the NEA RA — one for Category II delegates, one for a Statewide delegate, and one for Delegate District delegates. Please read this before marking your ballot.

TSTA allocates State Delegates for the NEA RA based on TSTA Regions in a manner that maximizes our opportunity to elect a full delegation while complying with the NEA one-person, one-vote requirements. This year we will be electing two Category II delegates on a statewide basis, one other delegate on a statewide ballot, and 42 State Delegates from six Delegate Districts.

All members should vote for Category II delegates — i.e. supervisors and retired Life members as defined in the NEA Bylaws. Every eligible member should vote for the Statewide delegate. The TSTA Vice President is an automatic Statewide candidate, and no other person filed.

The remainder of the ballot is divided into Delegate Districts in a manner to meet NEA requirements for equal representation based on the one-person, one-vote principle. The ballot will list the Regions in each Delegate Dis-

trict and will indicate the number of delegates that can be elected in that Delegate District. Members should vote only in the Delegate District that includes their Region, and should not mark any other Delegate District ballot. The Delegate Districts are:

- Delegate District 1 (Regions 1A and 1D);
- Delegate District 2 (Regions 1B and 1C);
- Delegate District 3 (Regions 2E, 3A, and 3B);
- Delegate District 4 (Regions 2C, 2F, 3C, 3D, 4B, and TFA);
- Delegate District 5 (Regions 2A, 2B, 3E, 4A, and 4C);
- Delegate District 6 (Regions 1E, 2D, 2G, and 4D).

**There is a special insert in this magazine between pages 16 and 17 with a return envelope and the ballot. If you did not receive a ballot, call TSTA immediately (877-ASK-TSTA) and ask for Anezka Carmona.**

In the return address portion of the envelope most members will find printed “Del Dist” followed by some number up to six (6); 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 in the Category II section. Everyone else should mark three sections: 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 Anezka Carmona.**

Check the return address portion of the envelope to determine which Delegate District you should mark. First, mark Category II (vote for two). Next, mark the Statewide section (vote for one). Then, find the section for your Delegate District. The section for your Delegate District will tell you how many votes you may cast.

On all three sections, 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. Eligible members who receive votes but are not elected as a delegate will be placed on our alternate list.

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 19, 2013. 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 19 at the TSTA headquarters in Austin. Please contact Anezka Carmona 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 cannot 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 our opportunity to fill all delegate slots while still complying with NEA standards. 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 45 state delegates for the 2013 NEA RA. Based on proportional representation, two delegates must be elected as “Category II” delegates, representing supervisors and retired Life members as defined in the NEA Bylaws. 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 principle in electing the remaining 42 state delegates. We were able to meet all necessary requirements by dividing the 42 delegates among the six 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 by early February the number of delegates to be elected to the 2013 NEA RA, a local delegate report form, and a copy of guidelines to assure proportional representation by educational position. Local presidents must send the local delegate report forms to TSTA by April 10. Members from locals of 75 or fewer members also may seek election as “cluster” delegates. The Local Cluster Election Request form (printed in the Fall Advocate) is due to TSTA by April 10. If you have questions, please contact Anezka Carmona at 877-ASK-TSTA or by email at [anezkac@tsta.org](mailto:anezkac@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.

Elected State Delegates are 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 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 19, 2013.**

## CANDIDATE STATEMENTS (\*statements limited to 25 words)

### STATEWIDE

No submissions with statement

### CATEGORY II

No submissions with statement

### DELEGATE DISTRICT 1 (REGIONS 1A, 1D)

Bonnie Reyes, Hispanic. Currently I am a 4th year educator at SAISD. I am working on my Masters and PhD in education there after.

### DELEGATE DISTRICT 2 (REGIONS 1B, 1C)

No submissions with statement

### DELEGATE DISTRICT 3 (REGIONS 2E, 3A, 3B)

Joyce Roberta "J.R." Miller-Alper, Caucasian. Activist and Advocate for Association for twenty-six years. Assist new delegates, represent local and state at caucuses and on NEA-RA floor. Please support J.R.

### DELEGATE DISTRICT 4

(REGIONS 2C, 2F, 3C, 3D, 4B, TFA)

- Suzie Tyson, Black. 13 years of experience. Certifications: K-8 all subjects, ESL, Gifted and Talented Currently. I am also the Social Studies Skills Specialist and the 5 and\*
- Norma L. Waters, Hispanic. Longtime Advocate of GEA/TSTA/NEA. Served on Board of Directors Locally and Regionally; Secretary, Vice-President Locally. True privilege to be your Delegate.

### DELEGATE DISTRICT 5

(REGIONS 2A, 2B, 3E, 4A, 4C)

- Becky Cerliano, Caucasian. Please allow me to again put my 37 years of membership/leadership experience to use on your behalf. Thanks for your continued support.
- Robert C. Fierro, Hispanic. NEA

Resolutions Committee. Previous NEA-RA Delegate. I am committed to serving all TSTA members at the NEA-RA. I need your vote to continue serving you.

- Stephen Smallwood, American Indian-Alaska Native. Advocacy and instruction are critical topics at NEA/RA. As a veteran member, I offer my experience to further the national mission of TSTA.
- Lois Stephens, Black. Served as local leader and ESP caucus Sect. Local, State and Regional delegate. A long time advocate for public education.

### DELEGATE DISTRICT 6

(REGIONS 1E, 2D, 2G, 4D)

Hazel Lee Robinson, Black. Hazel Robinson, a Waco ISD librarian at Tennyson Middle School. She has been a dedicated member and Association Representative of Waco TSTA-NEA since 1990.



## Making a Difference.

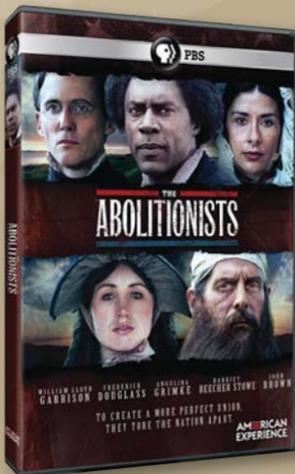
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## Remove this ballot to vote for state delegates to the 2013 NEA Representative Assembly

Ballot must be received at TSTA Headquarters by April 19, 2013, 5:00 p.m.



**TSTA HOUSE OF DELEGATES**

# Delegate voting and registration

Delegates attending the 134th TSTA annual convention at the Hyatt Regency Houston will elect the NEA Director for Texas, Place 1. This race is contested. If necessary, elections for TSTA Board At-Large members will be held as well. Finally, delegates will vote on three 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, cluster delegates, 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 12, from 7:00 a.m. through close of the first General Session, and re-opens Saturday,

April 13, 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](http://www.tsta.org). Updates to this 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 11. Proposed bylaws amendments and election information follow on pages 21-22.

**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. Delegates must present their credentials (badge and ribbon) and a photo ID to vote.**

## TSTA WELCOMES NEA PRESIDENT DENNIS VAN ROEKEL

Come hear NEA President Dennis Van Roekel, our keynote speaker, at approximately 3:00 p.m. on Friday, April 12. A recognized leader in public education, Van Roekel is a member of the U.S. Department of Education's Equity and Excellence Commission; has addressed national summits; is a frequent guest at the White House; and has discussed education issues with leading publications and networks, including C-SPAN, MSNBC, The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Education Week, and TIME.

He taught high school mathematics for 23 years in Phoenix, where he was state and local president. Below, Van Roekel talks about TSTA's success, his 18-year tenure, testing, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.



**TSTA has made significant changes in the last five years to increase the capacity of local affiliates by changing to a culture of organizing. What do you think are the major factors that have contributed to our success?**

When we talk about capacity, we're talking about our ability to mobilize members and leverage the strength of our membership at the grassroots level. Organizing is the way we develop that capacity.

A great example is the election we just experienced. Of course, our efforts were important in terms of the outcome of the races. But they were also important because we were able to identify members who were willing to become activists ... we were able to use their enthusiasm about the election to persuade them to become activists. We identified issues they care about. And we built an architecture to engage them — online platforms, specific actions they could take.

Now we can't just let that go dormant until the next election. Maintaining an organizing culture means keeping those activists engaged and continuing to use issues to draw in more members. And of course that requires strategic vision and leadership, to remain focused and recognize opportunities.

**As you know, TSTA has devoted a great amount of organizational focus to developing a leadership pipeline. Our president, Rita Haecker, also co-chairs the NEA Leadership Development Committee with NEA Vice President Lily Eskelsen. If we are going to continue to grow effective association leaders at the local, state, and national levels, what are the competencies and skills we need to help those leaders develop, how do we help them develop those competencies and skills, and why are they so critical?**

A few years ago at one of our discussions about leadership and transformation, we talked about how organizations require different qualities from leaders at different stages in the life of the organization.

Fifty years ago we had leaders who risked their jobs, even risked going to jail, to win bargaining rights. Then for many years we needed good stewards who could keep us on course during a period of growth but relative stability. Now we are in another period of great change, so I think we need to look for leaders who embrace change, while still valuing the traditions and principles for which NEA has always stood.

We are looking to continuously improve our leadership offerings, and we are now working to define, as an organization, what leaders should know and be able to do. We must be more than “Association leaders.” We must be leaders in our professions and be seen as education leaders.

**Over the last four years, NEA has invested considerable resources in Texas. Why is Texas a good investment for NEA?**

When you look at the demographics of the state, and our current membership, there is an enormous potential for membership growth in Texas. Again, we must have the vision to see what can be, not only what already is.

In Texas, you have leaders who do have that vision. Rita (President Haecker) has done a tremendous job building a culture of organizing in Texas. Your leaders are not constrained by the way things have been; they can see what might be — and they’re willing to work to get there. And the leadership at NEA has enjoyed great working relationships with them.

Our visions are in sync, we work together well, and there is a tremendous potential for growth. So the investment makes sense for a lot of reasons.

**You have held an elected position in NEA governance for 18 years. What accomplishments are you most proud of from your tenure?**

We have endured the most difficult economy in almost a century, and I honestly believe we have not only survived but emerged in a stronger position for the future than we were five years ago. We have learned a lot about how to fight back when our members are under attack and how to do it more effectively.

Part of that has been building stronger partnerships within the labor movement, because I don’t believe we can have a prosperous middle class in this country unless labor has a strong voice.

But we haven’t been content to play defense. We realized that we must take control of our own profession. And we’re moving decisively in that direction. Our Priority Schools Campaign, our training of teachers who work with English language learners (ELLs), is part of this effort. The report by the

Commission on Effective Teachers and Teaching was an important milestone. And the best is yet to come. We will become an organization that helps our members do what matters most to them: help students succeed.

**In the last year, we have seen a great amount of pushback from parents, educators, and students on standardized testing. Where do you see the debate over testing headed?**

Testing has always been part of education. We’re not against tests, but we are against test abuse — using tests for the wrong purpose, or a purpose for which they were not designed or intended.

I think more and more people are realizing that the emphasis on tests was a mistake, and it is having unintended consequences. People are familiar with that concept, that when you attempt to impose a simple fix on a complex system (and our education system is complex), the results might not be at all what you expected. And that’s what we have seen with the testing.

So I hope we will be able to pull back from the misguided emphasis, the “abuse” of tests. At the same time, we must continue to support efforts to develop measurements that are more accurate.

**Do you think the Elementary and Secondary Education Act will be reauthorized this year? What do you think will be the impact on public education?**

The U.S. Senate committee held a hearing the other day in which they talked about the waivers that have been granted. The waivers were helpful, because they allowed states to avoid some of the worst unintended consequences of No Child Left Behind. But they are a stopgap measure.

We don’t need a band-aid, we need surgery. We need to fix the law. We must move away from the misguided emphasis on multiple choice tests and look at the more comprehensive transformation that needs to occur in so many schools.

So I hope they do reauthorize it this year — NEA will push for that to be done — but it must be done right. We can’t afford — our students can’t afford — for them to get it wrong again.

## PROPOSED TSTA BYLAWS AMENDMENTS

**1** INTENT: To establish the process by which a local becomes and sustains its status as a single local Region.

Article IV Section 2. Regional Affiliates

A. Organization

**1.** Regional affiliates shall be established by the Board of Directors and shall be composed of the members of TSTA within the geographical boundaries set for the region. In the event a regional affiliate is divided, the assets will be divided on a per member basis.

**2. Any local that exceeds 1,500 members on January 15 shall become a single local Region on July 15 of that year. Any single local Region that drops below 1,500 members on January 15 for two consecutive years will cease to be a single local Region on July 15 of the second year in which membership fell below 1,500.**

**Maker:** TSTA House of Delegates through 2012 NBI-CBE 1 as proposed by the Standing Committee on Governance and Compliance and adopted by delegates in April 2012.

**Rationale:** Some time ago, the TSTA Board established a Special Board Committee to study and report on the Purpose of TSTA Regions. This Purpose of Regions Committee submitted its report to the Board of Directors in September 2011, and the Board referred the report to this Committee to review and propose appropriate actions based on the report. This proposed Bylaw stems from the

recommendation of that Special Board Committee. If a local with over 1,500 members is a part of a Region that contains other locals, that local will dominate and control the Region. While the other smaller locals are able to express opinions, decisions inevitably will be dictated by the large local on any matter of interest to that local. It also is inevitable in such situations that either the interests of the large local or the interests of the smaller locals will not be well-represented at TSTA Board of Directors meetings. The solution suggested to this dilemma by the Special Board Committee and now recommended in this Bylaw is that when a local reaches 1,500 members, that local be removed from any TSTA Region and given a position on the TSTA Board of Directors. This will benefit both the large locals and the smaller locals by removing the dominance of the large local from the Region while still providing a voice on the Board for the large local.

**Financial Impact:** No financial impact. The creation and elimination of Regions can have a positive or negative impact on the budget.

**Vote Required:** 50% plus 1 vote

**CB&E Recommends:** Support

**2** INTENT: To extend the number of terms that can be served by the TSTA President and Vice-President from two to three.

Article V Section 3. Term of Office

A. The term of office for President and Vice President shall be three (3) years or until successors are elected. The

President and Vice President shall serve for no more than ~~two (2)~~ **three (3)** terms in the office to which elected.

**Transition proviso: Terms currently served shall count against the three (3) term limit established by this amendment.**

**Maker:** James Harris

**Rationale:** In the past 11 years, TSTA has been evolving from a service organization to an organizing culture to ensure its strength and relevance in the professional lives of every member. Continuity and stability in leadership are critical elements in the success of any organization, especially in TSTA where the very future of public education in Texas is at risk. This amendment would provide the members an opportunity to maintain strong leadership at the state level to lead the organization during these difficult times.

Delegates to this HOD have set precedence in recent officer elections by electing non-incumbent candidates to lead the organization based on a vision of creating an organizing culture in our association. In the last twenty years, TSTA has evolved to changing times by going from a one-year term, to two-year terms and now three-year terms along with increasing the number of terms to a two term limit. As part of the

organizing culture, our state leadership has adopted and implemented the Leadership Pipeline to encourage, develop, and enhance the leadership in the organization, with opportunities at the campus, local, regional, state, and national level for members to utilize their leadership skills to advance the vision and mission of the organization and still provide an opportunity to seek a state leadership position every three years.

The past president served a total of twelve years as a state leader with two terms as Vice-President and two terms as President. Our current President, if elected to a third term if this amendment passes, would have nine years as a state leader. Currently NEA officers are eligible to serve as an elected national leader for up to 18 years if they so choose and get elected by the membership for concurrent terms. As a democratic, member driven organization with a fair and comprehensive election process, no incumbent has any guarantees of re-election. This amendment provides an opportunity for the House of Delegates to continue or change the course of the organization’s vision through its elected leadership every three years while providing the continuity necessary to deal with more complex internal and external issues in our organization and profession.

Wording in **Bold and Underlined**  
Proposed Additions

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

**Financial Impact:** None

**Vote Required:** 2/3rds

**CB&E Recommends:** Support

**3** INTENT: To make the terms of Regional Presidents consistent with the terms of TSTA officers.

Article VII Section 4. Term of Office

A. The term of office for Board of Directors members shall be ~~two (2)~~ **three (3)** years except for ~~[TSTA Officers]~~ **At-Large Board members**, the president of the Texas State Teachers Association-Student Program and NEA Directors from Texas.

**Transition proviso: Regional Presidents and Vice Presidents elected in 2014 and thereafter shall serve three (3) year terms.**

**Maker:** TSTA House of Delegates through 2012 NBI-CBE 1 as proposed by the Standing Committee on Governance and Compliance and adopted by delegates in April 2012.

**Rationale:** This was a proposal that came out of the Special Board Committee to study and report on the Purpose of TSTA Regions that was referred to the TSTA Governance Committee. Regional Presidents and Regional Vice Presidents will now have terms the same length as the TSTA Officers and NEA Directors. Further, it would allow the Presidents in single local regions to serve terms closer in length to their terms as local presidents.

**Financial Impact:** None

**Vote Required:** 50% plus 1 vote

**CB&E Recommends:** Support

## CANDIDATES FOR NEA DIRECTOR PLACE 1



**FRANCES H. SMITH**

**Professional Training**

- University of Houston, 12/91, Ed.D
- University of Wyoming, 2/75, MA
- University of Iowa, 2/69, BA

**Professional Experience**

- Cy-Fair ISD, 1992-present, English-secondary teacher
- Ponca City, OK, 1977-1980, Reading-secondary teacher
- Laramie, WY, 1972-1976, English-secondary teacher

**Professional Education Associations**

- Delta Kappa Gamma and TSTA/NEA

**Offices Held**

- Cy-Fair TSTA vice president, 2001-2003
- Region 3B president, 2006-2010
- Cy-Fair TSTA president, 2003-present
- NEA Director, 2008-present

**Campaign Statement**

As a TSTA/NEA proven leader, I always see our TSTA members, at all levels, to be the focus of a leader's work. As senior NEA Director, I have strived to be knowledgeable, well spoken, and aggressive on issues that affect public education. Our members are the heart of our association. As Team TSTA, together we fight for our rights, support each other, and stand strong. In Washington, D.C., I have faithfully represented Texas on Capitol Hill with both the House and Senate, the Western Region Board, and the NEA Board. Public education is under attack. We have to rise to the occasion to defend it. Being your voice at the NEA has allowed me to represent all members: teachers, ESP, higher ed, retired, and students. I will continue to be professional, to look to the future, and to always have your best interests at heart.



**ANGELA M. DAVIS**

**Professional Training:**

- Wiley College, 1983-1987, BS — Computer Science
- Wiley College, 1988-1990, BS — Elementary Education

**Professional Experience**

- Garland ISD, 1990-1999, Teacher: 2nd, 3rd, and 5th grades
- Dallas ISD, 1999-2011, Teacher: Gifted Talented: 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades

**Professional Education Associations**

- Texas State Teachers Association/National Education Association
- National Council of Urban Education Associations
- NEA-Dallas
- National Alliance of Black School Educators

**Offices Held**

- NEA-Dallas Association Representative, 2004-2011
- NEA-Dallas Secretary, 2005-2008
- NEA-Dallas Treasurer, 2008-2011
- NEA-Dallas President, 2011-present
- Region 4D Treasurer, 2006-2008
- Region 4D President, 2008-present
- TSTA Board of Directors, 2008-present
- TSTA Advisory Committee, 2011-2012
- TSTA Black Caucus Vice Chair, 2010-present
- TSTA Black Caucus Secretary, 2009-2010
- NEA Black Caucus Western Region Director, 2008-present
- NEA Employee Advocacy Committee Member, 2011-present

**Campaign Statement**

The key to a successful organization begins with transparency, and the heart to do what is truly right. As public education faces many challenges, you need a leader who will address these challenges with integrity, commitment, and dedication for a quality public education. Texas needs an NEA director to communicate the concerns of all TSTA members and be an advocate for students and public education.

My experiences as both a local and regional leader have afforded me the opportunity to make a difference for members, public education, and our students. As a member of the NEA Employee Advocacy Committee and Western Region Director of the Black Caucus, I have built valuable coalitions to benefit all members. I have been given the opportunity to grow in my profession and gain knowledge to strengthen my local and region and empower all members.

I ask for your support and vote for NEA Director.

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When you're ready, visit [StudyatAPU.com/tx-advocate](http://StudyatAPU.com/tx-advocate)



\*APUS Alumni Employer Survey, January 2011-December 2011  
We want you to make an informed decision about the university that's right for you. For more information about the graduation rate and median debt of students who completed each program, as well as other important information-visit [www.APUS.edu/disclosure](http://www.APUS.edu/disclosure)





# Social justice: a call to action in El Paso

**“What we need is a new way of thinking. We need to stop thinking that success for a child looks like a number on a standardized test.”**

How do we stop the social injustices inflicted upon students and their teachers, particularly in the border region? Budget cuts deny students the resources they need to succeed; high-stakes standardized tests encourage administrators to cheat on children’s futures; alleged school “reforms” cripple classroom creativity; and the politicization of immigration, economic, and language issues punish children for reasons beyond their control.

TSTA members and legislators in El Paso invited parents, students, and other concerned community members to address these issues at “Social justice in public education: a call to action from ground zero,” a public forum in January. “Ground zero” comes from the Texas Education Agency finding that El Paso ISD reported fraudulent data to inflate accountability scores; the agency appointed a board to oversee management of the district in December.

Some 400 concerned citizens attended the forum. “What we need is a new way of thinking,” NEA Vice President Lily Eskelsen, the keynote speaker, told participants. “We need to stop thinking that success for a child looks like a number on a standardized test.”

Others leading the two-day search for solutions included Sen. Jose Rodriguez, Reps. Joe Moody and Marisa Marquez, TSTA President Rita Haecker and Vice President Noel Candelaria, El Paso Teachers Association President Norma De La Rosa, Dr. Kathy Staudt and Dr. Elena Izquierdo of the University of Texas at El Paso faculty, and local school administrators.



## Del Valle wins fair notice of nonrenewal

Thanks to the lobbying and organizing efforts of Del Valle Education Association, their school board voted unanimously to create a local board policy which provides teachers a written guarantee that they will be notified regarding contract renewal/nonrenewal at least 45 days before the last day of instruction. Several local member activists spoke at the board meeting.

Previously, the policy stated renewal notification would be “in accordance with law,” so when state law changed, permitting districts to give only 10 days of notification prior to the last day of instruction, teachers were left vulnerable.

SOCIAL JUSTICE FORUM: TSTA Vice President Noel Candelaria, TSTA President Rita Haecker, and NEA Vice President Lily Eskelsen in main photo; El Paso Teachers Association President Norma De La Rosa, who organized the event, bottom center photo; day two “listening and action” sessions.



## AUSTIN TEACHER ON BRITISH TV

Tessa Chapman, chief correspondent with Channel 5 News in London, interviewed Education Austin member David Dupont in January about safety in schools. Dupont teaches government at Crockett High School in Austin ISD.



## BUILDING A BETTER AR SYSTEM IN LAREDO

Laredo association representatives attended training this winter to learn how they could be more effective in their roles. Adding fun to the event was a contest for best bulletin board design; the winning team won TSTA USB drives.



## LISTENING IN SAN BENITO

San Benito maintenance department employees were visited by TSTA President Rita Haecker in February. Haecker and Vice President Noel Candelaria are constantly on the road to hear members’ thoughts and concerns — not an easy task in a state the size of Texas.



## GO, VESTAL!

Teachers at Vestal Elementary in Harlandale ISD (San Antonio) have organized their campus and now are 91 percent strong in teacher membership! Here, members meet with TSTA Vice President Noel Candelaria (second from left, back row).



## STUDENT TEACHERS SIGN UP IN BROWNSVILLE

Seventy of 76 spring semester student teachers at the University of Texas at Brownsville joined the Association of Brownsville Educators/TSTA at a breakfast in January. The soon-to-be-teachers received tips for the first year, information on TSTA’s member benefits, and suggestions for curtailing bullying.



# Pflugerville ISD makes history

**“We’ve worked really hard in this district to teach our students that every person has value and deserves to be treated with dignity.”**

By a 5-1 vote in December, the Pflugerville ISD Board of Trustees reaffirmed the district’s decision to offer health benefits to domestic partners. It is the first Texas school district to do so.

“We’ve worked really hard in this district to teach our students that every person has value and deserves to be treated with dignity,” trustee Carol Fletcher told the Austin American Statesman. “It means everyone. There are no exceptions to our policy. This is just good business.”

“I believe that the teacher down the hall from me should be able to get the same benefits that I get for my wife and my child,” Pflugerville Education Association (PEA) President August Plock said at the hearing, which drew more than 200 educators, parents, and other community members. Plock was one of several PEA members to speak, along with TSTA General Counsel Joey Moore, a parent in the district.

PEA created a Facebook page and an online petition on change.org to increase community awareness. Signed by some 1,200 people, the petition urged the board to reaffirm its decision: “Your decision was recommended by the PISD insurance committee because it is fair, financially sound, and supportive of the district’s efforts to recruit and retain the best educators. Don’t yield to pressure from those who would politicize a sound employment policy.”



## Keeping new teachers in the profession

TSTA is stepping up to help Texas retain its beginning teachers. The Intergenerational Mentoring Program, funded by an NEA grant to TSTA-Retired, has begun with a pilot project at the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL).

In January, volunteers from the TSTA Student Program chapter at UHCL and area TSTA-Retired members were trained and paired.

“The aim of the program is for the mentors to be supportive of the mentees and to understand there are no grades to be dispensed,” TSTA-Retired President Johnetta Williams said. “We call it the ‘not your ordinary mentoring program.’”

“The retirees will mentor the future teachers through their last years in college and first few years of teaching,” Clinton Gill, staff liaison to the TSTA Student Program, said. “Research shows that many new teachers leave the profession within the first five years, but there’s a higher retention rate for those who were effectively mentored as beginning teachers. We hope this support network will help us keep good teachers in the classroom in Texas.”

## News from TSTA-Retired

### ELECTIONS

Since Louise Watkins of Aledo was the only candidate to file for president, in accordance with the TSTA-Retired Bylaws (Article II, Section 1) secret balloting was waived, and she was declared elected. She assumes office on July 15.

Elections were in progress for vice president and an unexpired, one-year term for secretary at press time. Clarence F. Phinisee of Dallas, Rose Champion of Brownsville, and Ysrael Valencia of El Paso filed for vice president. Katherine F. Milano of The Woodlands and Ivette I. Gonzalez of El Paso filed for secretary. Elections for delegates to represent TSTA-R at the TSTA House of Delegates and NEA Representative Assembly also were underway. Ballots for all elections were due at TSTA Headquarters March 7.

### QUILT FUNDRAISER

TSTA-Retired member Gail Dunham and her friend Rhonda Kessler designed and created this year’s quilt using TSTA- and NEA-themed T-shirts. The quilt is a 77-inch square, suitable for use as a wall hanging or large throw (see the photo in the fall Advocate). Proceeds from this fundraiser will go toward general TSTA-R expenses. Tickets are available from regional presidents for \$2. The drawing will be on April 13 at the TSTA House of Delegates in Houston. You need not be present to win. For additional information or tickets, call 214-236-3646 or email townview@swbell.net or legrbrmc@att.net.

### NEA-RETIRED ORGANIZING CONFERENCE

The NEA-Retired 2013 Organizing Conference on March 21-23 is open to all members. It replaces the two regional conferences and is designed to align NEA-Retired with the Strategic Goals and Core Services of NEA. The meeting will be at the Doubletree Hotel at Universal Studios in Orlando. Register at [www.nea.org/retired](http://www.nea.org/retired). Your \$85 nonrefundable registration fee covers conference materials, an evening reception, two continental breakfasts, and one lunch. You will have the opportunity to donate to the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education PAC and the Jack Kinnaman Scholarship Fund. See the latest issue of This Active Life magazine for details or call 202-822-7103.

### TSTA-RETIRED ANNUAL MEETING

TSTA-Retired’s annual meeting is April 10-11 at the downtown Hyatt Regency Houston, and all retired members are welcome. On the agenda: business, workshops, and rekindling friendships. Late registration may still be available for \$35 per person; please call Sarah Kang at 800-324-5355 for information. Registration includes materials and a group meal. Rooms are \$155 plus tax (17 percent at press time) for single, double, triple, or quad.

### TSTA HOUSE OF DELEGATES

TSTA’s House of Delegates follows the TSTA-R Annual Meeting on April 12-13 at the same hotel. Retirees will have 21 elected delegates. An underground mall with shops and restaurants is within walking distance. See the winter Advocate for details.



# The importance of being involved

**“I hope that you will not only stay engaged as a student but, once you become a teacher, that you will be engaged in your professional organization on a continuing basis, because I promise you it will make a difference.”**

“It’s extremely important that you are choosing to be engaged now and recognizing that, as a student, there are things that you can learn about your profession, and there are ways to be connected to have a larger voice in what goes on,” Rep. Donna Howard (D-Austin) told delegates to the TSTA Student Program Convention at Austin’s Omni Southpark Hotel Feb. 15-17.

Howard said the students’ involvement reminded her of her own days as a student of nursing. “Even though I never had a strategic plan to become a state representative, I’ve always been engaged in the process. (I recognized) I can be a part of something more by joining a group that shares my values and the concerns that I have.

“The fact that you’re here now I think is very encouraging,” she said, “and I hope that you will not only stay engaged as a student but, once you become a teacher, that you will be engaged in your professional organization on a continuing basis, because I promise you it will make a difference.” Howard is shown in the photo above with TSTA staff liaison Clinton Gill and TSTA-SP President Brandon Swaringim.

Delegates also heard from TSTA President Rita Haecker and NEA Student Program Chair David Tjaden. During his term as chair, which ends in July 2014, Tjaden hopes to “strengthen the voice of student members in the arena of political action, extend the outreach of service to communities, and help ensure that every future teacher has the skills and resources to provide the greatest education to our PreK-12 students.” Read more about him at [www.nea.org/student](http://www.nea.org/student).

The following were elected as state officers for 2013-2014: president, Brandon Swaringim, University of Houston (currently filling an unexpired term as president); vice president, Cara Chavez, and secretary, Lauren Kern, both Texas Tech University.

## Committees: finding solutions for local concerns

In a state the size of Texas, how do you insure the individual member’s voice is heard?

“Our state committees are a big piece of our connection to our members,” TSTA President Rita Haecker said. “They are working on the issues our members have identified in local schools today, the same issues addressed in our strategic goals: advancing the teaching profession, member advocacy and school board policy, legislative issues, special education, education support professionals, communication, and political action.

“For the issues that local leaders see members most concerned about or challenged by, we are finding solutions and sharing knowledge,” Haecker said. “Our state committees are also a model for local associations to follow; we would like to have them replicate the structure across the state.

“For example, special education is a huge issue. A lot of teachers are not prepared. We have a committee that is talking about what we can do to help those teachers in their classrooms. Some of our younger members are serving on a committee to advance the teaching profession. They are discussing how we can help keep teachers in the classroom, and what we, as an organization, can do to improve the profession,” she said.

The education support professionals (ESP) committee plays a huge role in the association, because ESP membership has doubled, from 7,000 five years ago to 14,000 now, Haecker said. “This committee is looking at school board policies local associations can pass to improve working conditions, job duties, and due process rights. They are also recommending ways that TSTA can help ESPs grow into leadership roles in their profession and their association.”

One change you will see at the state convention in April, as a result of this committee’s work, is TSTA will recognize an ESP in each region. “Out of all our members, this group gets the least recognition. We’re going to change that,” Haecker said.

TSTA’s state committees are member-led, and they focus on the issues that members have told us are important; we have two other state committees that deal with compliance and the constitution, bylaws, and elections. Each committee includes a nonvoting Board of Directors liaison for advice and support.

Delegates to the state convention in Houston will hear the committees’ progress reports. If you or someone you know is interested in serving on a state committee, email Anezka Carmona at [anezkac@tsta.org](mailto:anezkac@tsta.org), including a description of what you believe you or your nominee would bring to the committee. Committee members for 2013-2014 will be selected at the Board of Directors’ summer meeting.



COMMITTEES SHOWN AT LEFT ARE: Education Support Professionals; Constitution, Bylaws, & Elections; Member Advocacy & School Board Policy; Communications & Community Outreach; Legislative; Compliance; and Special Education. Not shown is the Political Action Committee. See our Flickr page, [www.flickr.com/photos/tstapublicaffairs/sets](http://www.flickr.com/photos/tstapublicaffairs/sets), for more photos.

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A Saturday night is a must.

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**2012-13 ENROLLMENT FORM**

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

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH (M/D/Y): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ LOCAL ASSOCIATION: \_\_\_\_\_ HIRE DATE (M/D/Y): \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ NAME OF ISD: \_\_\_\_\_

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AREA CODE HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ AREA CODE CELL PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ANNUAL DUES AND CONTRIBUTIONS	AMOUNT
1. Professional Dues—TSTA/NEA (Active) Professional Dues—New to the profession	\$470.00 \$325.00
2. Educational Support Dues—Full-time Educational Support Dues—Part-time	\$252.50 \$136.50
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 DUES AND CONTRIBUTIONS**

**NOTE: Membership must include local and region dues if eligible.**

**ETHNICITY/GENDER**

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

Gender:  Male  Female

*This 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.

**FOR STAFF/LOCAL USE ONLY**  
**ISSUE CAMPAIGNS**

CAMPAIGN ISSUE \_\_\_\_\_ ACTION REQUESTED \_\_\_\_\_

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. Only U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents may contribute to the NEA Fund. Contributions to the NEA Fund 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

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:** Professional liability insurance is underwritten by the AIG Companies or successor provider selected by Nautilus Insurance Company, a subsidiary of W.R. Berkley Corporation (Berkley), or successor provider selected by NEA. 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. 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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