

Texas State Teachers Association/National Education Association

ADVOCATE

Spring 2014

How can one person make a difference?

Organize your campus. Circulate a petition.
Volunteer in a campaign. Tell your story.



**VOTE
BALLOT
INSIDE**

Change begins with you, the local educator



For several years now, there has been a huge disconnect — to put it mildly — between the professional educators in our schools and many of the policymakers in Austin who claim to know what is best for our students but don't have a clue.

The governor and the legislative majority have chosen to ignore the real education experts and have eagerly promoted a series of unproven gimmicks — standardized testing, charter schools, private school vouchers, and virtual learning — promoted by self-styled “reformers” whose primary interest is not educating children, but enriching themselves with tax dollars diverted from neighborhood schools.

The real education experts, people like you and me, know better. We know that the keys to successful learning include strong early childhood education programs, small class sizes, appropriately trained and certified teachers, and a fair and adequate school finance system. Instead, the powers

that be in Austin have slashed school funding and watched as school employees lost their jobs, class sizes swelled, and pre-kindergarten programs were placed on the chopping block.

Texas is changing. We won't stay strong and proud unless we work to develop real solutions that meet today's challenges. And now, finally, we have a way to make that happen with strong candidates for governor and lieutenant governor, Wendy Davis and Leticia Van de Putte. You can read about them in more detail on page 4 of this issue of the Advocate, but rest assured they mean what they say.

Senator Davis and Senator Van de Putte are champions for public schools, educators, and students, and they have the records to prove it. And, once promoted to the state's highest two offices, they will immediately start repairing the damage to our classrooms and delivering what educators and students need.

But they can't get there without you, your colleagues at your schools and bus barns, your friends, your families, and your neighbors. To be successful, their campaigns have to bubble up from grassroots Texans, people like you who truly appreciate the value of our public schools and what they mean for our children's future.

It's up to us, real educators, to give the only legitimate “education candidates” for governor and lieutenant governor a solid foundation of campaign support. Talk to your co-workers. Remind them what is at stake. Organize social media campaigns, make phone calls, and volunteer to help out in your communities for the Davis and Van de Putte campaigns. And please, contribute what you can afford to TSTA PAC, which is supporting both candidates.

We can differ on other issues, but, as educators, we recognize that education and the future of Texas' public schools are the most important issues in this year's election. And public school employees must lead the way to real, positive change in Austin. Davis and Van de Putte fought against the budget cuts in 2011. Davis filibustered against them. And both played leadership roles in the Senate in getting most of the funding restored last year. But much more still needs to be done.

Davis' first education plank put teachers first. She proposed a plan for encouraging more of our brightest college graduates to become educators, and she began a conversation about raising teacher pay in Texas to the national average. Under the current leadership in Austin, we are \$8,000 below average.

Davis also has proposed strengthening early childhood education and boosting college and career readiness for high school students. With Van de Putte, she will have a strong partner in advancing those plans.

Davis' opponent, Greg Abbott, and all of the candidates seeking the Republican nomination for lieutenant governor promise to continue entertaining school privatization schemes while ignoring educators. Abbott continues to defend the inadequate and unfair school funding system, including the \$5.4 billion in cuts imposed by the legislative majority three years ago.

It has been a long time since Texas voters had choices that were so clear-cut for the state's top two offices. Change is way overdue, and change has to start with you.

—Rita Haecker, TSTA President



GREAT START, GREAT TEXAS: On Feb. 13, Sen. Wendy Davis was joined by Sen. Leticia Van de Putte and San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro in Harlandale ISD to promote her plan to expand pre-K, support intensive reading programs in early grades, and foster community partnerships. Also joining Davis were Harlandale Education Association President Cathy Stein and San Antonio Alliance President Shelley Potter, shown in the photo.

Columns

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TSTA endorses the “Education Candidates,” Wendy Davis and Leticia Van de Putte; more than 300 people rally at the Capitol for accountability; at a Teacher Retirement System board meeting in Corpus Christi, local leaders from Central Texas put the health care crisis in human terms.

10 NEA CONVENTION

Everything you need to know about the Denver meeting is here, including a tentative schedule and hotel form. Stapled in the center of this issue is the ballot you will use to vote for state delegates.

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Learn about the candidates for TSTA president, TSTA vice president, and NEA director before you vote at the April House of Delegates in San Marcos. Also printed in this section is a proposed bylaws amendment.

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In this issue are articles about the NEA vice president's visits to Austin; national recognition for El Paso Teachers Association, Marisa Maher of Dripping Springs, and Courtney Wellman of College Station; the Beaumont/Pt. Arthur banquet for support professionals; the student/retired mentoring project; and more from the TSTA Board of Directors, Laredo-United, Region 1B, Harlandale Education Association, Del Valle Education Association, TSTA-Conroe, TSTA Student Program, TSTA Retired, and NEA Member Benefits. Every day, TSTA members and local associations are advocating for public education. Share your stories and photos at deb-biem@tsta.org.

30 IN THE CLASSROOM

Are issues with duty-free planning periods, class size, and professional development impeding your teaching effectiveness? Here's how you can start to take back your profession.

ADVOCATE

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Advertising: If you would like to advertise, contact us at 512-476-5355, ext. 1251 or email leannk@tsta.org.

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VICE PRESIDENT
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Education candidates: the choice is clear

By Clay Robison, Public Affairs Specialist

Rarely have Texas educators been given such clear-cut choices for our state's top two offices as they have in this year's election. TSTA is supporting state Senators Wendy Davis and Leticia Van de Putte for governor and lieutenant governor because they have strong legislative records of advocating for public schools, teachers, and students. They know Texas' future begins in the

classroom, and they listen to the real experts — educators — in setting educational priorities.

Their records provide a sharp contrast to the records of Greg Abbott and whoever the Republican nominee for lieutenant governor will be. Abbott and all four Republican candidates for the No. 2 office promise to perpetuate

a record of neglecting public education and ignoring the needs of educators in favor of costly, unproven school privatization schemes.

Even as he seeks higher office, Abbott, the state attorney general, continues spending tax dollars to defend an inadequate, unfair, and unconstitutional school finance system from which the



legislative majority slashed \$5.4 billion in 2011. Thousands of classrooms are overcrowded, and educational opportunities for thousands of children are being diminished as Abbott continues his courtroom fight against several hundred Texas school districts, their students, teachers, and parents.

ACTIONS PROVE THEY'RE THE EDUCATION CANDIDATES

Davis and Van de Putte fought against the school budget cuts. Davis filibustered against them. And both led the effort in the Senate last year to restore about 80 percent of the formula funding cut in 2011.

"TSTA is proud to endorse Senator Wendy Davis for governor and Senator Leticia Van de Putte for lieutenant governor because both have worked tirelessly at the Capitol to give every Texas child the opportunity to succeed. They are the real Education Candidates," said TSTA President Rita Haecker.

"When others defended cuts that harmed our neighborhood schools,

these two senators fought successfully to restore funding for public education. Too many candidates give education lip service, but Wendy Davis and Leticia Van de Putte are true champions for students, parents, and teachers," Haecker added.

Abbott's idea of an education fact-finding tour early in his campaign was to visit with carefully selected charter school and online education operators, who want to siphon state tax dollars from neighborhood schools where the vast majority of Texas children will continue to be educated.

Davis' first education plank was focused on teachers. She proposed a plan to open up a pipeline for more first-rate teachers for Texas and for beginning a discussion of raising teacher pay to national standards.

"She put us first," Haecker said. "Wendy Davis' first education policy plank recognized that we must invest in great teachers to meet the challenges facing Texas today."

Davis also has worked to increase benefits for retired teachers. During last year's legislative session, she found money in the state budget to provide about two-thirds of retired teachers with their first cost-of-living increase in more than a decade. And Van de Putte strongly supported her effort.

Both also worked to successfully reduce the number of standardized tests for high school students, giving teachers more time to teach and students more time to learn. They worked to give the Texas Education Agency the tools to make charter schools more accountable, and they ensured quality control standards and course-load limits for virtual school operators.

"Great teachers, great schools, and access to affordable education are essential to Texas' economic future," Davis said, acknowledging TSTA's endorsement. "It's time for a governor who knows the way to attract jobs is to ensure that we open the doors of educational opportunity — not close them."

EDUCATION WAS KEY TO THEIR SUCCESS

Davis knows firsthand the importance of that opportunity, because education, along with her own perseverance, clearly has been key to her success. After growing up with a single mom and becoming a divorced mother herself at 21, Davis worked hard to graduate at the top of her class at Texas Christian University, becoming the first member of her family to earn a bachelor's degree. She then earned a degree from Harvard Law School.

Along the way, she remained heavily involved in raising her two daughters, a truth that has been twisted by the mischaracterizations and outright lies of her opponents. Under often difficult circumstances, she successfully juggled family with education, realizing that fulfilling her own educational goal was critical to a successful future not only for herself, but also for her daughters.

After serving nine years on the Fort Worth City Council, she was elected in 2008 to the state Senate, where she has been a strong advocate for public education, health care, and other programs critical to Texas families.

Van de Putte, a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin College of Pharmacy, has been a practicing pharmacist since 1980. She is a former Kellogg Fellow at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. She is married, the mother of six, and grandmother of six.

Van de Putte, who is Hispanic, has represented San Antonio and Bexar County in the state Senate since 1999 and served 10 years in the Texas House before that. As a legislator, she has been a strong advocate for children, veterans and their families, quality public

education, and economic development. She is a former president of the National Conference of State Legislatures and the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators and is a member of the Senate Education Committee.

"I believe that education is the key to success — for our students and our state," Van de Putte said. "That is why I have consistently worked to ensure that all Texas students have access to a high quality public education. As a senator, I fought against damaging cuts to our public schools and promoted instructional rigor while appropriately limiting an overreliance on standardized testing."

Van de Putte was President Pro Tempore of the state Senate during the 2013 regular legislative session, was the ceremonial Governor for a Day last May 4, and was named to Texas Monthly magazine's 10 Best Legislators list at the conclusion of the session.

OTHERS IGNORE NEEDS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The March 4 Republican primary had not yet been held when the Advocate went to press. But all four candidates for the GOP lieutenant governor's nomination were ignoring the real needs of public schools in their campaigns.

Incumbent David Dewhurst claimed Texas teachers are paid a "very fair salary," despite the fact that teacher pay in Texas is more than \$8,000 below the national average. Moreover, 44 percent of Texas teachers take extra jobs during the school year to make ends meet. And, despite being underpaid, Texas teachers spend, on average, about \$700 out of their own pockets for classroom supplies each year, according to a TSTA survey conducted by Sam Houston State University.

Another candidate, state Senator Dan Patrick, wants to divert tax dollars from neighborhood schools to private schools and private charter school operators.

And Dewhurst, Patrick, and the other two candidates — Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson and Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples — support teaching creationism in public schools, despite the fact that the U.S. Supreme Court declared the teaching of creationism unconstitutional in 1987 because it "impermissibly endorses religion."

Abbott and the Republican candidates for lieutenant governor have been campaigning for a small group of voters who put ideology over the needs of public schools and school children.

Davis and Van de Putte are running to meet the needs of children, their families, and their schools.

Education is the only issue on which TSTA evaluates and endorses political candidates, TSTA Public Affairs Director Ed Martin said.

"We can't overemphasize the importance of having candidates who are listening to educators and working with us to develop policy proposals and deliver a pro-public education message," he added. "We work to provide educators the support they need to make sure every Texas student has the opportunity to succeed."

So do Davis and Van de Putte.

This issue of the Advocate went to press before the four Republican candidates squared off in their party's March 4 primary. But Van de Putte stood head and shoulders above any of the GOP contenders with her education record and priorities.



Rallying for accountability

More than 300 people braved icy winds in December to take part in a rally at the state Capitol that was organized by TSTA, NEA, Education Austin, NEA's National Council of Urban Education Associations, Texas American Federation of Teachers, LULAC, NAACP, University Leadership Institute, Sierra Club, and Workers Defense Project.

NEA Vice President Lily Eskelsen Garcia, Secretary Treasurer Becky Pringle, and Executive Director John Stocks were in the crowd at the "Texas Hold 'Em Accountable" rally, which called attention to the failing report cards of U.S. Senators Ted Cruz and John Cornyn and Representatives John Carter and Roger Williams on issues critical to Texas families, including public education, health care, immigration reform, voting rights, and labor issues.

"We're here to turn up the heat on officeholders in Austin and Washington who have left millions of Texans out in the cold," TSTA President Rita Haecker said. "Education cuts in

Austin left Texas school funding \$3,000 per pupil below the national average — 49th among the states. And federal cuts demanded by so-called leaders like Ted Cruz will leave almost half a million students out in the cold, without career and technical training, without special education support, without English language learning opportunities.

"How cold hearted must a senator be to promote his career by shutting down the government and cutting off help for our veterans and kids in Head Start? Today, we're here to turn up the heat on officeholders in Austin and Washington who freeze out the people they are supposed to represent," Haecker said. "They work for us, and we will hold them accountable." Get involved at www.gpsnetwork.org.

SOLIDARITY FOREVER: Nelson Linder, NAACP; Montserrat Garibay and Ken Zarifis, Education Austin; TSTA President Rita Haecker; NEA Vice President Lily Eskelsen Garcia and NEA Secretary Treasurer Becky Pringle (right photo); and NEA Executive Director John Stocks (top left photo).

Health care

Leaders put it in human terms

Bus drivers, teaching assistants, and other support professionals in Del Valle couldn't afford to take the day off to travel to Corpus Christi to explain to the Teacher Retirement System board how high health insurance costs affect them, so their local president, Michelle Cardenas, did it for them.

Cardenas described how her teaching assistant, who has life-threatening illnesses, can't afford to see a doctor or buy the diabetes medication and sleep apnea machine she needs.

"What is she supposed to do?" Cardenas asked. "Do you buy your medicine or pay your water bill?"

Katie Plemmons broke down in the middle of testifying. "I love teaching," she said, "but I'm considering leaving because my husband and I want to start a family, and with ActiveCare I, prenatal care is not covered."

Cardenas, Plemmons, and Brenda Dominguez of Del Valle, Susan Seaton of San Marcos, and Stacy Stoll of Killeen

made a strong impression at the Feb. 12 hearing with their heartfelt testimony. They also were among the organizers of a press event the preceding weekend in Austin to announce TSTA's "Fair Share" health care campaign.

TSTA was the only education association represented at the hearing by active teachers and educational employees, which made quite an impact on the board.

"As you heard earlier today from several of our members, the recent premium increases for TRS ActiveCare have caused severe financial hardship," TSTA Vice President Noel Candelaria told the board. "Many of our members received no salary increases during the last three years, only to be given a marginal pay raise this year that was swallowed up by these premium increases. So it's no secret that our members are suffering financially."

The local leaders presented an oversized valentine that asked TRS to "Have a Heart" when it comes to premium increases. The valentine contained thousands of petition signatures asking for lower premiums.

Chair David Kelly came from behind the table, walked over to read and accept the valentine, and thanked the leaders for their commitment to their profession.

The leaders thanked the board for agreeing to not raise premiums now, in the middle of the school year, and asked that they do everything possible to prevent a premium increase in 2014-15.

TSTA also asked the board to join us in

asking the legislature for additional funding for ActiveCare and TRS Care. The legislature has not increased the minimum state contribution to TRS ActiveCare in over a decade, while the cost of health care has skyrocketed. Employees now carry 57 percent of the burden for their own health coverage,

and many cannot afford to keep the coverage levels they need.

TRS Executive Director Brian Guthrie said TRS has the responsibility to properly educate our elected officials at the legislature so they can make the right decision on health care funding.



TRS HEARING: Central Texas TSTA leaders Stacy Stoll, Brenda Dominguez, Katie Plemmons, Michelle Cardenas, and Susan Seaton testified in Corpus Christi on health care concerns.

Stories from the heart

"Five of my older siblings became teachers in public schools, so it was natural that I followed suit. They told me, 'Save up for a house, save up for a car,' but I never thought — they never thought — I should be told, 'Save up for your health insurance.'" — Brenda Dominguez

"I'm here on behalf of our ESPs — that's our bus drivers, our (teaching assistants), our cafeteria workers, our custodians. My personal TA can't afford to go to the doctor. She went three months without her diabetes medicine because she couldn't afford it. She's been diagnosed with sleep apnea. She can't afford the sleep apnea machine, and you know with sleep apnea, you have the chance you can die in the middle of the night. What is she supposed to do? Do you buy your medicine or pay your water bill? Please partner with us so we can make a change, because it's not fair to these people — who are driving home our babies, who are taking care of those babies, who are making this world a better place — that they cannot take care of their own health issues." — Michelle Cardenas

"We can't keep people in the profession and part of it is monetary concerns. People can't afford to stay in the profession. I love teaching, but I'm considering leaving because my husband and I want to start a family and with ActiveCare I, prenatal care is not covered. Instability is terrible for our students. We would like your voice to ally with ours as we look for more affordable options for our teachers." — Katie Plemmons



Information for NEA delegates

Here's everything you need to know about the 2014 NEA Convention and Representative Assembly July 1-6 in Denver, Colorado



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) and TSTA websites for updates.

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

LODGING

The official hotel for the Texas Delegation is the **Hilton Garden Inn Denver Downtown**. Located downtown, the hotel is right across the street from the Colorado Convention Center. 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 \$169 single/double occupancy, \$179 triple occupancy, and \$189 quadruple occupancy,

plus taxes and fees (currently 14.75%). **The deadline to submit your reservation to TSTA is May 15, 2014.**

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 Garden Inn Denver Downtown. If an incomplete credit card number and/or no credit card or check is submitted, your reservation will not be made.

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 \$31 for valet. Room service is available from 6:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. Guest room amenities include complimentary wireless internet, microwaves, mini-refrigerators, and sofa beds. 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 guarantee a roommate for every request, but we will attempt to pair delegates who ask for such assistance.

TRANSPORTATION

From **Denver International Airport**, cab fare to the hotel is about \$60. Super Shuttle is providing NEA members with discounted rates. Use code NEA14 when booking.

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 Tuesday, July 1 at 1:00 p.m. Thereafter, the Texas Caucus will meet at 7:00 a.m. each day of the RA. 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, 2014. 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 Center for Executive and Governance by April 10, 2014. Submit your written request to cluster **by email** to: neochac@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, 2014.

TENTATIVE NEA MEETING EVENT SCHEDULE

PRE-CONVENTION SCHEDULE

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

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

Saturday, June 28
 8:00 am-5:00 pm Ethnic Leaders Meetings
 9:00 am-5:00 pm NEA-Retired Annual Meeting
 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

Sunday, June 29
 5:30 am-4:30 pm NEA Student Leadership Conference
 9:00 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

Monday, 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
 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

Tuesday, 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
 3:30 pm-4:30 pm Open Hearing — Policy Statement (if necessary)
 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

Wednesday, July 2
 7:00 am-9:00 am State Delegation Meetings
 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-1:00 pm Special Issues 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-2:00 pm Sexual Orientation/Gender Identification (SOGI) Committee Hearing

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

Thursday, 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

Friday, 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

Saturday, 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

Sunday, 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, 2014 • Hilton Garden Inn Denver Downtown • Denver, Colorado

Complete all requested information and return to TSTA by May 15, 2014. Check-in time 3:00 p.m.—Check-out time 12:00 p.m.

DO NOT CONTACT THE HOTEL DIRECTLY

(PLEASE PRINT)

HILTON GARDEN INN DENVER DOWNTOWN

(Texas Delegation Hotel)
 1400 Welton Street
 Denver, Colorado 80202
 Phone: 303-603-8000
 Fax: 303-825-2255

ROOM RATE

_____ Single room (1 person—1 bed)..... \$169.00
 _____ Double room (2 people—2 beds) \$169.00
 _____ Triple room (3 people—2 beds) \$179.00
 _____ Quad room (4 people—2 beds) \$189.00

Cut-off date for ALL rooms at TSTA room rate is May 15, 2014. All rooms are subject to an additional occupancy tax, currently 14.75%.
 Rooms not booked through TSTA may be charged at the hotel rack rate.

I will arrive (June/July) _____, 2014 at _____ (a.m./p.m.) and I will depart July _____, 2014.

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 Garden Inn Denver Downtown. 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 2014 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 requirement. 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 District 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 on the ballot. The Delegate Districts are:

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

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 five (5); 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 Neocha Campbell.**

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 18, 2014. 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 Neocha Campbell 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 2014 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 five 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 2014 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 Neocha Campbell at 877-ASK-TSTA or by email at neochac@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 18, 2014.

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS (statements limited to 25 words)

STATEWIDE

Noel Candelaria, Hispanic.

CATEGORY II

- Ignacio Salinas, Hispanic. I ask for your vote to represent Texas at the NEA/ RA this year. Thanks for your support.

- Dale Kaiser, Caucasian. I would be happy to represent you and ensure our issues are addressed by the NEA RA.

DELEGATE DISTRICT 1 (REGIONS 1B, 1D, 3A, 3C, 4A)

- Wendy Bozarth, Caucasian.

- Shannon Isaac, Black. Under 35 member, currently serving as a local secretary.

- Winifred Jackson, Black. An advocate for public education. TSTA Board of Director, Local President, NEA MLTP Trainer, NEA Resolution Committee, state delegate and Campus Leader.

- Lois Stephens, Black. Served as local presi-

dent and ESP caucus Secretary. Local, State and Regional delegate. A long time advocate for public education. Member of ESP committee.

DELEGATE DISTRICT 2 (REGIONS 2B, 2D, 3D)

- Robert 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.

- Patricia Candelaria, Hispanic. I ask for your support to represent Texas as delegate to ensure our voice is present at NEA to lead our profession!

DELEGATE DISTRICT 3 (REGIONS 1C, 2E, 2G, 3B, 4C)

- Ovidia Molina, Hispanic. Hello TSTA! I am the president for Region 3B and I'm asking for your vote as a state at-large delegate to the 2014 NEA RA.

- Dorian Prier, Black. I proudly serve my local

as Director of Middle and Intermediate Schools. I also serve on the Communication and Community Relations Committee.

- Talia Wynne, Black.

DELEGATE DISTRICT 4 (REGIONS 1E, 3E, 4B)

- Doris Hill, American Indian/Alaska Native. I would be very honored to go and represent you at the representative assembly.

- Norma Waters, Hispanic. Longtime advocate of GEATSTA/NEA. Served on Board of Directors, local and region; Vice-President, Secretary local. True privilege to be your delegate.

DELEGATE DISTRICT 5 (REGIONS 1A, 2A, 2C, 2F, 4D, TFA)

- Vivian D. Bryant, Black.

- Mary Deniece Smith, Black.

- Chris Tullis, American Indian/Alaska Native/ Caucasian.

- Sheila Walker, Black.



a child has many feelings...



hunger shouldn't be one of them.

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Remove this ballot to vote for state delegates to the 2014 NEA Representative Assembly

Ballot must be received at TSTA Headquarters by April 18, 2014, 5:00 p.m.



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TSTA HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Delegate voting and registration

Delegates attending the 135th TSTA annual convention at the Embassy Suites in San Marcos will elect the TSTA President, TSTA Vice President, and NEA Director for Texas, Place 3. These races are contested. If necessary, elections for TSTA Board At-Large members will be held as well. Finally, delegates will vote on one proposed bylaw amendment, which is included in this issue in its 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 11, from 7:00 a.m. through

the close of the First Business Session, and re-opens Saturday, April 12, 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 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 12. The proposed bylaw amendment follows on page 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.

CANDIDATES FOR TSTA PRESIDENT

DALE KAISER

Professional Training

- LSU-Shreveport, 1993, B.A., Secondary Education, pursued hours towards Masters in Liberal Arts.
- LSU-Shreveport, 1986, B.A., Political Science

Professional Experience

- Dallas County Schools, 2010-present, Employee Relations Manager
- Dallas ISD-Skyline HS, 2000-2003, Social Studies Teacher-Coach
- Webster Parish schools-Minden HS, 1993-2000, Social Studies Dept. Chairman, Teacher-Coach

Professional Education Associations

- NEA-Dallas/TSTA/NEA
- Texas Association of School Board Officials (TASBO)

Offices Held

- CTD (Classroom Teachers of Dallas) Association Representative, 2001-03
- CTD Board of Directors, 2002-2003
- CTD President, 2003-2004
- NEA-Dallas President, 2004-2010
- TSTA Region 4d President, 2004-2006
- TSTA Board of Directors, 2004-2006
- TSTA Board of Directors Budget Committee, 2005-2006
- TSTA Board of Directors Advisory Committee, 2004-2005
- TSTA HoD Host Committee, 2008
- NEA Resolutions Committee-Alternate, 2005-2006

Campaign Statement

Together WE will...

Together we will value what each of us has to contribute. When we invite everyone to the conversation, we:

- Engage the hearts and minds of a variety of members;
- Gain a rich diversity of perspectives;
- Develop solutions that benefit all members.

Together we will welcome all stakeholders to the table. When we expand our outreach, we:

- Establish greater credibility;
- Build coalitions to better defend schools and employees;
- Become recognized as the Voice of Public Education in Texas.

Together we will defend the dream, fulfilling the promise of providing meaningful educational opportunities to all students. When we stand together for public education, we:

- Safeguard our schools and the educators who work in them;
- Place educators at the center of educational reform;
- Create schools that unleash the genius and passion of students;
- Use innovation and collaboration to bring change.

Together we will make Texas better for us all.



NOEL CANDELARIA

Professional Training

- University of Texas at El Paso, May 2002, BIS (Education)
- Sul Ross State University, Present, Masters in Educational Leadership
- Sul Ross State University, June 2008, Instructional Leadership Development Certified (ILD)
- Sul Ross State University, April 2009, Professional Development & Appraisal System Certified (PDAS)

Professional Experience

- Texas State Teachers Association, 7/2011-Present, Vice-President
- Ysleta Independent School District, 9/2003-6/2011, Special Education Teacher (Behavior Unit)
- Ysleta Independent School District, 2000-2002, Educational Aide III
- Ysleta Independent School District, 1998-2000, Substitute teacher

Professional Education Associations

- Ysleta Teachers Association
- Texas State Teachers Association
- National Education Association
- National Association of Special Education Teachers
- National Council of Urban Educators Association

Offices Held

- TSTA/NEA Vice-President, July 2011-Present
- TSTA/NEA Board of Director, January 2009-Present
- TSTA/NEA Board of Directors Advisory Committee, July 2010-Present
- TSTA/NEA Executive Director Screening Committee, 2010-2011
- TSTA/NEA Strategic Planning Committee, July 2010-June 2011
- TSTA/NEA Region 2B President, January 2009-June 2011
- Ysleta Teachers Association TSTA/NEA President, January 2009-June 2011
- TSTA/NEA Region 2B Vice-President, July 2005-December 2008
- Ysleta Teachers Association TSTA/NEA Vice-President, July 2005-December 2008
- Ysleta Teachers Association TSTA/NEA Association Representative, 2003-2005

Campaign Statement

As your Vice-President, I have been an integral part of leading our transformation in TSTA/NEA with a vision to lead our profession. Together with my dedicated and focused leadership, we will shape the future of public education in our great state. Leading our profession and building a TSTA/NEA of tomorrow requires my style of leadership, which is committed to your leadership development, building key relationships, and using technology to provide our members with the tools and resources that will build and develop effective campus and worksite leaders. I have led the development of our TSTA/NEA mobile app, which will become an instrumental organizing tool to connect our members. I am focused on our TSTA-Student Program, developing and empowering our future educators and leaders. I ask for your support to elect me as your next TSTA/NEA President, and together, we will lead the transformation of public education in Texas. Visit www.facebook.com/ElectNoelC



CANDIDATES FOR TSTA VICE PRESIDENT

IVIDIA MOLINA

Professional Training

- University of Houston, 1993-2003, Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies
- Minor in Psychology
- Specializations in Spanish and History

Professional Experience

- Alief ISD, 2003-present, Teacher: ESL Language Arts / Literature; U.S. History; 7th and 8th grades

Professional Education Associations

- NEA Member
- TSTA Member
- Alief TSTA/NEA Member
- TSTA Hispanic Caucus

Offices Held

- Local Secretary, Alief-TSTA/NEA, 2007-2009
- Local Delegate to the Local and National meetings for Alief-TSTA/NEA, 2007
- Local Delegate to the Local, State and National meetings for Alief-TSTA/NEA, 2008-2013
- Region Secretary, Region 3B Texas State Teachers Association, 2008-2010
- Local President, Alief-TSTA/ NEA, 2009-2013
- Region President, Region 3B Texas State Teachers Association, 2010-2014
- State TSTA Advisory Board Member, 2013-2014
- Local Treasurer, Alief-TSTA/NEA, 2013-2015
- State TSTA/NEA Hispanic Caucus Vice Chair, 2013-2015

Campaign Statement

Hello TSTA!

My experiences in life, as a parent, teacher, and a TSTA/NEA member and local leader can be summed up in three words:

- **Leadership:** Good leaders must be good listeners and work well with others. I appreciate it when members talk about what, how, and why things should happen.
- **Integrity:** I am a person that can be trusted, with member concerns as well as the financials of the association. I take all of my duties seriously and give 100% in all that I do.
- **Perseverance:** Life has taught me to never give up... to speak up for myself, to stand up for what is right, and to help others.

I am asking for your support and vote for the Texas State Teachers Association Vice President position. If elected Vice President, I will work diligently to advance our great association.

Elect Ovidia Molina for TSTA Vice President!



RAE NWOSU

Professional Training

- Austin Community College
- Texas State University
- National Labor College

Professional Experience

- Austin ISD, 1995-2008, clerical
- Austin ISD, 2012-current, clerical

Professional Education Associations

- Education Austin, TSTA, NEA

Offices Held

- Education Austin Board of Director, 2001-2012
- Education Austin Treasurer, 2004-2008
- Education Austin Vice President, 2008-2010
- Education Austin Co President, 2010-2012
- Region 2E Vice President, 2008-2010
- Region 2E President, 2010-2012
- TSTA Board of Directors, 2010-current
- NEA Board of Directors, 2011-current

Campaign Statement

As a local, State and National Leader, I consider myself to be a good listener and strong advocate for all members Certified and ESP's alike. My experiences have enabled me the opportunity to work with a diverse group of people, from US Senators and congressmen to the custodians in my building. Respect for all opinions has always been something I not only preach but practice. I believe in everyone having the opportunity to be heard by sharing what they can bring to the table and encouraging members to become involved in the association through their expertise and passion. I have always believed that when you work in the best interest of members, you will never go wrong. I am that person that will step out on the ledge for members at all levels.

I will continue contributing my fighting spirit, respect and solidarity to the missions and goals of TSTA.



CANDIDATES FOR NEA DIRECTOR PLACE 3

LINDA ESTRADA

Professional Training

- UTPA, 1993-1994

Professional Experience

- Donna ISD, 1987-present, Computer Lab Manager/PE Assistant/Clerk/Secretary

Professional Education Associations

- Donna TSTA/NEA/Region 1E

Offices Held

- Donna TSTA/NEA Secretary, 2003-2005
- Donna TSTA/NEA Vice President/ESP, 2005-2009
- Donna TSTA/NEA President, 2009-Present
- Region 1A TSTA/NEA Secretary, 2004-2006
- Region 1A TSTA/NEA Vice President, 2006-2008
- Region 1E TSTA/NEA Vice President, 2008-2010
- Region 1E TSTA/NEA President, 2010-Present
- TSTA Board of Director ESP-at-Large, 2007-2010
- TSTA Board of Director, 2010-Present
- TSTA Advisory Committee, 2012-Present
- TSTA ESP Committee Chair, 2011-Present
- TSTA ESP Caucus President, 2009-2010
- TSTA Hispanic Caucus Secretary, 2012-2013
- NEA Leaders for Tomorrow, Class of 2010
- NEA Advisory Committee on Membership/ESP Sub Committee, 2011-Present

Campaign Statement

If YOU believe that together we can make a change then Stand up for Public Education! Together we can fight to protect our public schools! It is our charge and responsibility to educate and nurture our student to ensure that each one of them has equal opportunity for success. We can make a big difference by providing all school districts with the necessary funding to provide quality education programs. Together we can improve our work environment by demanding respect, dignity and professionalism for all school employees. Times are changing and we need to stand firm to enforce our legal and moral rights! As advocates we should stand up for every single member who is being mistreated. We should always keep in mind that "an injury to one is an injury to all." I feel greatly privileged to be a part of TSTA/NEA.



BARBARA DAVIS-STALEY

Professional Training

- University of Texas @ Tyler, 1982, Kindergarten Endorsement
- Wiley College, 1978-1981, BS, Elementary Education

Professional Experience

- Tyler ISD, 1993-present, Teacher: Kindergarten, 1st, 3rd, 4th grades; Reading Recovery
- New Diana ISD, 1982-1993, Kindergarten Teacher

Professional Education Associations

- Texas State Teachers Association/National Education Association
- NEA Black Caucus
- TSTA Black Caucus
- Tyler Education Association/ TSTA/NEA

Offices Held

- Tyler Education Association President, 2003-present
- Tyler Education Association Vice-President, 2002-2003
- Tyler Education Association Treasurer, 2000-2002
- Region 4A Vice President, 2011-present
- Region 4A President, 2007-2011
- TSTA Board of Directors, 2007-2011
- TSTA Advisory Committee, 2008-2011
- TSTA Community, Instructional, Advocacy Committee, Co-Chair/Chair, 2006/2007
- NEA Black Caucus Western Region Director, 2004-2008
- NEA Resolutions Committee, 2009, 2011

Campaign Statement

I welcome an opportunity to contribute to the work of NEA and its affiliates in a leadership position. I have been a dedicated long-term member of TSTA/NEA and have been an active participant in annual conventions and conferences over the years. If elected, I would bring to this position the knowledge I have gained in various leadership roles. My experiences as local, state, and national leader has afforded me the opportunity to build nurturing collaborative relationships and coalitions to benefit all members. If elected as a NEA Director, I would use my leadership experience to focus on issues that affect public education and ways to help NEA best meet the needs of all its members.

I ask for your support and vote to elect me as NEA Director Place 3.



PROPOSED TSTA BYLAWS AMENDMENT

Wording in **bold and underlined** proposed additions. Wording in [~~brackets with strikethrough~~] proposed deletions.

1 INTENT: To require locals that do not have an outside auditor to turn in their bank statements and credit card statement for the prior fiscal year along with the local audit.

Article IV Section 1. C. Minimum Standards for Functioning, Active, and Full Capacity Locals

j. Establish and adhere to appropriate financial and operational standards consistent with the standards set forth in Board Policy, including ethical conduct, internal controls, and

conflict of interest policies to protect resources of the local; and 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 policy to engage an outside auditor or auditing firm, the deadline to transmit the audit shall be December 15. **Locals not required to have an outside audit done must submit their credit card and bank statements for the prior year.**

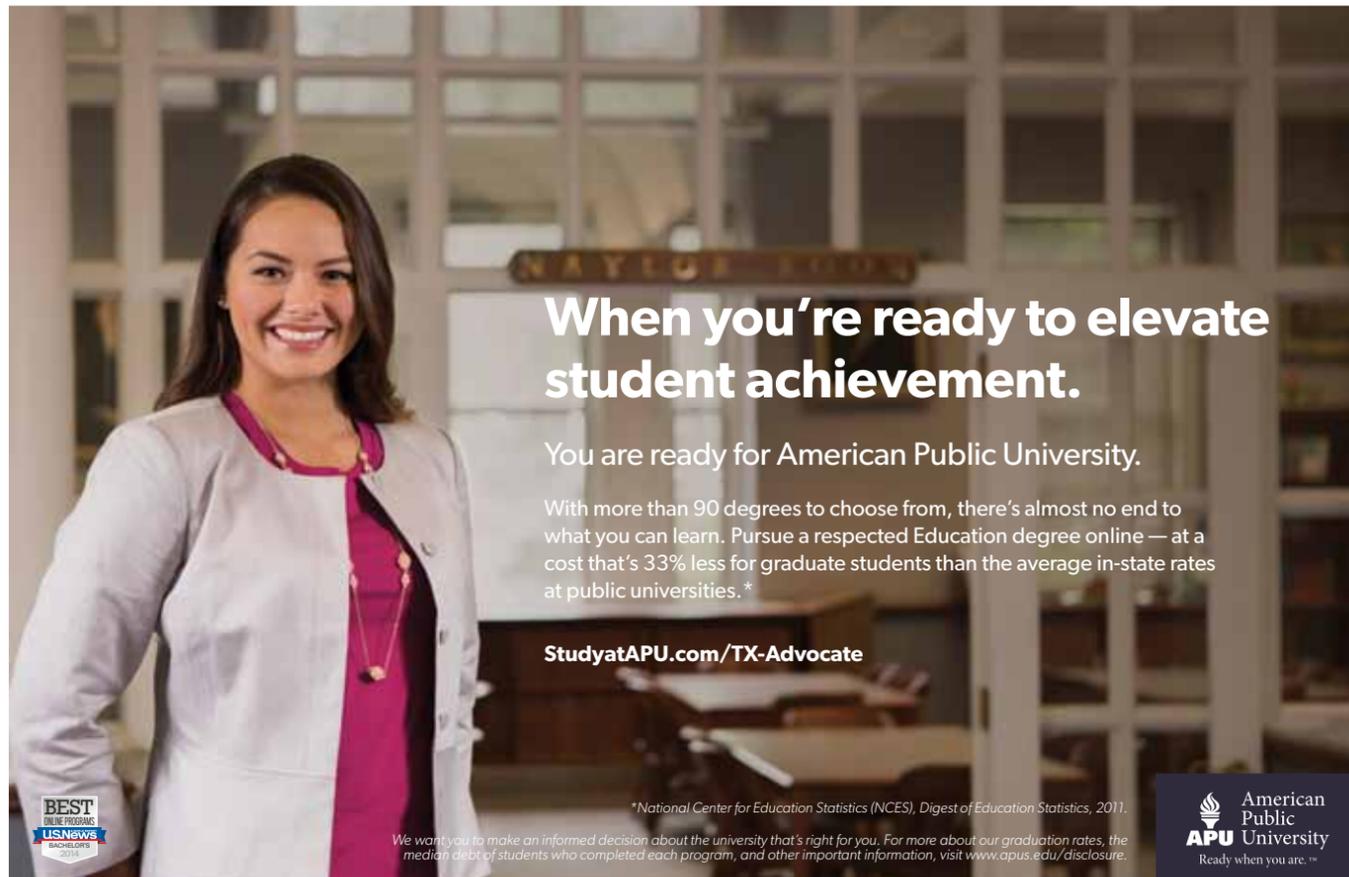
Maker: TSTA Board of Directors.

Rationale: For several years TSTA has been taking steps to protect the financial interests of the members of the organization. This additional step will allow for deeper analysis of local association finances and make earlier detection of any potential problems possible.

Financial Impact: No financial impact.

Vote Required: 2/3rds vote

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*National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Digest of Education Statistics, 2011.

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EP480214



Real education reform: NEA points to Austin school

VISITING LANIER: Austin City Councilmember Mike Martinez and NEA Vice President Lily Eskelsen Garcia talk with students; Education Austin Vice President Monserrat Garibay, Rep. Donna Howard, Martinez, TSTA President Rita Haecker, Lanier Principal Katherine Ryan and Librarian Emily Hirsch, Education Austin President Ken Zarifis, and TSTA Vice President Noel Candelaria stand with Garcia as she presents a check from NEA.

For American Education Week in November, NEA urged prominent community members to visit a local school to raise their awareness of the challenges of teaching and the needs of students.

NEA Vice President Lily Eskelsen Garcia, who visited Austin for AEW, invited Rep. Donna Howard and City Council member Mike Martinez to join her, TSTA President Rita Haecker, and Education Austin President Ken Zarifis at Austin's Lanier High School.

Lanier drew the attention of NEA's Raise Your Hand Campaign for its "good ideas, smart policies, and successful programs." Its 1,600 students come from 65 countries and roughly 95 percent qualify for a free or reduced lunch, but in the past six years, Lanier's graduation rate has risen from 54 percent to 90 percent.

The school merges rigorous academics with a strong arts curriculum and a career and technical education program that ranges from cosmetology to video production. Its "twilight school" allows students to make up credits in the evening.

"So many people told us, 'You have to go see Lanier, because it is one of the best high schools in the country,'" Garcia said in NEA Today magazine. "The staff is amazing and the students here get to learn everything they need to graduate and succeed."

"This is a school that is doing what it needs to do to help students succeed. Politicians don't know what is best for these kids. These educators know what works and they're doing it," Martinez was quoted as saying in the same article.

Garcia's second stop in Austin was a forum at the University of Texas, "A Conversation about Reform and Accountability." Others on the panel were Haecker, Zarifis, and Dr. Julian Vasquez Heilig, UT associate professor of educational policy and planning. Topics included equitable funding, community involvement, tests, demographic diversity, great teachers/great schools, charter schools, and curriculum and diploma plans.

El Paso local wins civil rights award

Congratulations to the El Paso Teachers Association, winner of NEA's Rosena J. Willis Memorial Award!

EPTA President Norma de la Rosa will accept the award at the NEA Human and Civil Rights Awards Dinner July 2 in the Mile High Ballroom of the Colorado Convention Center in Denver.

She said EPTA won the award for its Social Justice Forum in January 2013. "Our goal was to get the parents and community involved in their schools and in their children's education so that a cheating scandal as never seen before — targeting Hispanic, high poverty, and ELL learners — never happens again," she said.

Rosena J. Willis (1926-1970) was a teacher and NEA staff member who led efforts to merge NEA with the American Teachers Association and help state and local affiliates develop programs to ensure the inclusion of ethnic and racial minority members in the work and leadership of the association.

In her memory, NEA presents an annual award to the affiliate with the most effective or improved human and civil rights program — a state affiliate in odd-numbered years and a local affiliate in even-numbered years.

Tickets to the dinner may be purchased online for \$75 beginning April 1. Visit www.nea.org/hcawards for details and to learn about the other Human and Civil Rights Awards.



TSTA BOARD DONATES BOOKS TO HOSPITAL

In December, the TSTA Board of Directors donated books to the library at Dell Children's Hospital in Austin. TSTA President Rita Haecker and Vice President Noel Candelaria delivered the books, which were collecting during the Board's Dec. 7 meeting at headquarters.



LAREDO-UNITED RECOGNIZED FOR BOND EFFORTS

Laredo-United TSTA was recognized by United ISD for its work in passing a crucial bond election in November. Overcrowding has been a big concern, and the \$408.7 million will be used to construct and renovate facilities. The local also was instrumental in passing bonds in Laredo ISD.



BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP

Pete Gallego, a member of Congress from Alpine, visited with TSTA Region 1B members in January. He and his aide, Mathew Hall, plan to keep abreast of public education issues through an ongoing relationship with TSTA local associations.



'THANK TEACHERS' NOW ON BUSES

Harlandale ISD teacher Carilu Hernandez was featured in television spots for TSTA's "Thank Teachers" campaign, which encouraged parents and teachers to work together to help children reach their dreams. The campaign is now featured on San Antonio buses, too.



DEL VALLE VISITED BY NEA LEADER

On her way to the airport after visiting an Austin high school and the University of Texas for American Education Week (see related story on page 24), NEA Vice President Lily Eskelsen Garcia stopped by a meeting of the Del Valle Education Association.



CONROE DRIVE SUPPORTS TROOPS

TSTA-Conroe organized a "Support the Troops Drive" at Conroe High School, Conroe Ninth Grade Campus, Peet Junior High, and Sally K. Ride Elementary. Food, toiletries, supplies, money, and other items were collected for troops overseas.



Celebrating support professionals

Education Support Professionals Day, the Wednesday of American Education Week, draws attention to the professionals other than teachers who make sure students have what they need to succeed in school every day, including transportation, nutritious meals, and safe and comfortable schools.

This school year, the biggest ESP Day celebration was staged by Port Arthur Teachers Association and Beaumont Teachers Association who held a joint banquet.

Speakers at the Nov. 20 dinner included Merwyn Scott, NEA director of minority community organizing and partnerships; TSTA President Rita Haecker; and TSTA Vice President Noel Candelaria.

Haecker and Candelaria are shown in the photo above with Beaumont Superintendent Dr. Timothy Chargois and Pt. Arthur Superintendent Dr. Mark Porterie.

For more information on American Education Week, see www.nea.org/aew.

TSTA: leading the profession and advocating for education employees



Marisa Maher, a teacher and coach in Dripping Springs, received the California Casualty Award for Teaching Excellence at the NEA Foundation's 2014 Salute to Excellence in Education Gala in Washington, D.C. Phylicia Rashad, best known as Clair Huxtable on "The Cosby Show," hosted the event. Articles by and about Maher ran in the summer and fall issues of the Advocate. See neafoundation.org for more on the awards and to watch the video.



Courtney Wellman, president of the TSTA local association in College Station, is one of 12 recipients of the 2013 Outstanding Teaching of the Humanities Award, which recognizes exemplary contributions in teaching, curriculum development, and extracurricular programming. She teaches English and journalism at College Station High School. See www.humanitiestexas.org for details on the award.



Elizabeth Gonzalez was honored by Harlandale Education Association for her exceptional service as an association representative. "Elizabeth assists members with concerns, talks to colleagues about becoming part of the TSTA family, makes sure members receive their thank you gifts, and shares the latest news about what is happening in Harlandale ISD and HEA/TSTA," local president Cathy Stein said.



Clinton Gill, a staff member and former TSTA Student Program president, helped the Lubbock Avalanche-Journal newspaper put together a survey that revealed many local teachers must moonlight to make ends meet. Teachers who work two to four jobs said they stay in the field to make a difference, but some are now forced to consider a career change. <http://tsta.org/news-center/education-news#moon>



Judgment-free mentoring

It's the perfect match: retired teachers, who have experience and the time to share it, with student teachers who are trying to apply what they've learned in college to a real classroom.

The TSTA Intergenerational Mentoring Project teams TSTA Retired members with TSTA Student Program members who are in their student teaching semester. Students say that, because their mentors are outside of the school structure and do not grade them, they feel less inhibited about asking for help.

The project, which is funded by grants from the NEA student and retired programs, began last year at the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL)

and expanded this spring to the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP).

To learn how to be more effective in their roles, mentors and mentees are trained annually; UHCL teams were trained by TSTA staff member Sam Blackman and professors Dr. Jana Willis and Dr. Ron Klinger in January, and UTEP teams were trained by retired NEA staff member Gene Grooms in February. TSTA staff members Clinton Gill and Gerald Haschke are assigned to work with the student and retired groups, respectively.

If you have field-based students and/or student teachers, please encourage them to sign up for the TSTA/NEA Student Program at www.neastudents.org.



UPCOMING STUDENT EVENTS

Outstanding student chapters will be recognized at the TSTA Student Program's annual Convention and House of Delegates, March 21-23 at Austin's Omni Southpark Hotel. Members will elect state officers and gain professional development and leadership skills during the event.

The NEA Student Program Summer Leadership Conference will meet in Denver June 28-July 1, prior to the NEA Representative Assembly. Texas student members attend every year and participate in Outreach to Teach, a student-led program in which active, retired, and student members work together to give a local school a makeover.

NEWS FROM TSTA RETIRED

TSTA Retired President Louise Watkins submitted the following report.

Elections: In February, elections were held for retired delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly and TSTA House of Delegates, and for state secretary and treasurer. Results were not known at press time.

Annual Meeting: The 23rd Annual Meeting will be at the Embassy Suites Hotel in San Marcos on April 9-10, immediately preceding the TSTA House of Delegates April 11-12. Registration is \$25 and includes dinner April 9 (see the form on this page). There will be a business session and workshops. We hope that many of our retired members will join us for the conference.

NEA Retired Organizing Conference: The annual NEA Retired Organizing Conference is March 25-27 at the Westin Hotel by the Houston Gal-

leria. The theme is "Raise Your Hand: Commit, Recruit Retired, Act." Registration is \$85; the form is on www.nea.org/retired. Since TSTA Retired is hosting the conference, we want to have a good turnout from Texas.

Fundraiser: Our major fundraiser is the annual quilt raffle. The drawing will be held during the TSTA House of Delegates. This year's super queen-sized quilt has a beautiful, one-of-a-kind Texas theme; a photo of it ran in the Winter 2013 Advocate. Tickets can be purchased for \$2 from any TSTA Retired board member.

Continuous Membership Committee: On Jan. 29, a committee of TSTA and TSTA Retired leaders met to begin a discussion on Continuous Membership for TSTA Retired. The committee was established through a new business item passed at the 2013 House of Delegates.



See what NEA Member Benefits can do for you!

Claudia Rueda, a member of the TSTA Student Program at the University of Texas at El Paso, won a \$500 Visa gift card in the NEA Member Benefits' new member giveaway in December.

"I was ecstatic when I found out I had won the holiday shopping spree," she said. "As a new member to the association, I would like to reach out to others to register because next time it can be them."

The early childhood generalist makes time for the association in spite of her unbelievable schedule.

"I work full time as an admission coordinator at a mental health facility and attend school full time at the University of Texas at El Paso," Rueda said. "With so much going on and with four children of my own, life can be pretty hectic, but winning the NEA Member Benefits sweepstakes has alleviated some of my worries."

If you are new to TSTA/NEA, visit www.neamb.com/welcome to preview your benefits, then watch your mailbox for the personal code that will unlock them all. On your customized home page you can enter the bimonthly sweepstakes and find resources geared toward new members, including articles, lesson plans, classroom tips, and exclusive discounts.

While you're there, don't forget to sign up for \$15,000 of no-cost introductory life insurance coverage and select a free, one-year magazine subscription!

TSTA RETIRED ANNUAL MEETING REGISTRATION FORM

Embassy Suites, San Marcos April 9-10, 2014

PLEASE PRINT and use a separate form for each individual. Mail your form so that it reaches TSTA Retired by April 1. Mail to: TSTA Retired, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701, Attention: Ashley Alexander.

FIRST NAME MIDDLE LAST

ADDRESS

CITY ZIP

AREA CODE PHONE

EMAIL ADDRESS

A NON-REFUNDABLE REGISTRATION FEE of \$25 must accompany this form. A late registration or on-site registration is \$35. Please note: The registration fee covers the entire event.



How to take back your profession

Have you ever walked on broken glass? Every day, teachers walk on the shards of a profession hampered by incessant meetings, increasing class size, rising standards coupled with declining resources, and less time to plan for instruction.

The glass may be swept to the side sometimes, but seldom is it swept away. The best example of “broken glass” in the teaching profession is time, as it touches on everything teachers do. Here are three big pieces of “glass” associated with time and what can be done to sweep them away.

DUTY-FREE PLANNING PERIOD

The duty-free planning period is seldom duty-free or used for planning. Meetings with administrators, curricular specialists, and teams push planning time into teachers’ personal time. Planning

and preparation, though, are essential to success in any profession, and teachers need to take it back. Section 21.404 of the Texas Education Code guarantees teachers a 450-minute duty-free planning period within each two-week period, and it cannot be less than 45 minutes during the instructional day.

How to take it back:

- **Educate.** Blow up the language in district policy (the DL Legal section of your school board policy) and post it in the teachers’ lounge, over the copying machines, and other places where people will see it. Put together

a fact sheet about duty-free planning to post on your local association website, Facebook page, or Twitter stream.

- **Enforce.** When your planning period is taken, it’s a violation of state law and policy (see DL Legal in your school board policy) and may be remedied by a grievance. Contact the TSTA Help Center (877-ASK-TSTA) for information or support – and be sure to act in a timely fashion.
- **Organize.** Chances are you’re not the only teacher having this problem. It may be widely felt and deeply felt

by all teachers. Work with your local TSTA staff to bring light to this issue, enforce current policy language, and secure stronger policy language in your district.

CLASS SIZE

Class size may not seem like a “time” issue but it is. Class sizes are increasing and more students need individualized support, which adds to the amount of planning and preparation time teachers need. Inclusion has moved some students with disabilities into the general education classroom, even though there are insufficient support and services due to funding cuts. Class size guarantees can be waived and there are no limits for upper elementary, secondary schools, special education classrooms, or electives.

How to take it back:

- **Educate.** Your community and your school board need to understand how class size impacts student achievement. It is well documented and one good source is www.classsizematters.org, a nonprofit, nonpartisan clearinghouse for information on the benefits of smaller classes. Sharing this information begins the conversation.
- **Enforce.** If widespread inclusion is impacting classrooms and there are violations under IDEA 2004, your local association may decide to file a complaint with the Texas Education Agency — but don’t take this lightly. It requires a lot of legwork to gather data.
- **Organize.** Class size matters for children, too. Organize to secure policy

Many more pieces of broken glass lay scattered across the teaching profession. Start by sweeping away the “time” shards, and you will find it easier to sweep away the other pieces.

language that addresses class size across grade levels and content areas, including limits on the number of students with disabilities that can be in a general education class at any time. Contact me at bryanw@tsta.org for a policy guideline to help with this.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Effective professional development is embedded within the work and, preferably, the school day. If it’s important then it should not be treated as an add-on at the end of the day, the end of the week, or the end of the school year. It should also be relevant to the goals of the campus and the needs of the teachers. But how often does this happen?

How to take it back:

- **Educate.** Professional development serves a purpose to enhance teacher effectiveness but more days spent getting the same professional development serves no valid purpose. Educate teachers and decision-makers about the types of professional development available for teachers via technology. This also gives teachers more options and the opportunity to access training at a time convenient for them, not the school district.
- **Enforce.** Remember site-based decision-making teams? Check policy BQB LEGAL in your district’s policy

manual. This committee has approval authority over planning for staff development needs and can be a source of power to secure broad-based professional development. Get your members on this committee.

- **Organize.** Check your contract: Are you required to work 187 days or 10 months? The 10-month contract expands the amount of time districts can require teachers to work, including participation in professional development. Get rid of it – you can get the school board to change the language of the contract back to 187 days.

Requiring teachers to work longer without compensation presents two excellent organizing issues. Some local associations across the state succeeded in removing the language and replacing it with the traditional 187-day language. The second issue is organizing around salary issues to ensure fair compensation for teachers; after all, time has a value component.

Many more pieces of broken glass lay scattered across the teaching profession. Start by sweeping away the “time” shards, and you will find it easier to sweep away the other pieces — and begin to take back your profession.

—*Bryan Weatherford, Teaching and Learning Specialist*

Texas State Teachers Association

316 West 12th Street
Austin, Texas 78701



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“This organization IS our stability. This organization IS our support. This organization IS our voice. When we feel the system might be crumbling or at least weakening around us, the NEA is our fortress. So much is accomplished through our government and policy thanks to this group. Due to the diligence and integrity of those involved, I have hope and optimism for the future of our professional and educational well-being.”

— Marisa Maher, Dripping Springs Education Association, winner of the California Casualty Award for Teaching Excellence