

Advocate

Texas State Teachers Association/National Education Association

SPRING 2005



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Brownsville Educators
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A Shortcut that Shortchanges Us All

When we think back to our school days, most of us remember the tremendous impact that really good teachers had on our education.

Likewise, today's parents and students know that nothing is more important to children's education than having those good teachers in our classrooms.

With that understanding, when the Legislature addresses education during this session, our most important priority must be allocating resources fairly to make sure we have skilled teachers in every Texas classroom.

The governor, along with some legislators and business leaders, suggests changing the way we pay teachers through a system that rewards only the "good" teachers with salary increases.

House Bill 2, the 138-page education reform bill filed by Rep. Grusendorf (R-Arlington), contains, among other horrors, a merit pay plan to be determined by each individual school district to provide incentive raises to teachers whose "added value" includes student achievement on TAKS scores.

At first blush, that idea might sound reasonable enough, but in the real world, the devil is in the details. Instead of rewarding "good" teachers, their so-called incentive plan would more likely drive many qualified, experienced teachers from our classrooms.

As appealing as it might sound, "incentives" for individual teachers or campuses would fail our children and would not accomplish the goal of making all our schools successful.

Instead of focusing on teaching and learning, experience with similar incentive or "merit" programs in Texas and other states shows they fail because they use standardized test scores to pit teacher against teacher, administrator against teacher, principal against principal.

In the real world, student performance is influenced by a wide range of personal factors as well as what students have learned over time and from many teachers, not just what the student learns from one teacher in the current school year on a certain campus.

Determining teacher compensation through a competitive model based on student test scores in any given year fails miserably as a valid way to identify and reward educators for their teaching ability.

The reason is simple: Educational excellence requires a collaborative effort among teachers and principals to exchange ideas and share best practices with their colleagues on other campuses in order to help all children do their best.

Recent incentive pay proposals have amounted to no more than a shortsighted excuse to shortchange the vast majority of Texas teachers, including thousands of "good" teachers who would receive no salary increase.

Texas teacher pay is more than \$6,000 below the national average and has slipped from 26th to 32nd among states, ranking dead last among the 15 most populous states. The last state teacher salary increase was approved in 1999.

Currently, more than 53,000 teachers are not appropriately certified to teach in their as-

signed field — a shortage of qualified teachers primarily caused by retention, not supply.

An inherently arbitrary "incentive pay" system that helps only a fraction of Texas teachers and leaves the majority with nothing will only make the shortage of "good" teachers worse. A similar system failed in Texas before.

Like the proposed incentive pay plans, the "Career Ladder" of the 1980s offered limited state funds to reward a limited number of teachers. The Legislature abolished it in 1993 because funds were not available to reward all the good teachers who qualified for the rewards. Many good teachers left the profession, and bitterness over that failed plan lingers today.

The proponents of incentive pay for teachers propose a political shortcut that leads down a dead-end street. Instead of a plan that would reward only a few teachers arbitrarily deemed "good," we should invest sufficient resources in proven programs and teacher compensation to encourage dedicated teachers to stay in the classroom and a talented pool of potential teachers to enter the profession.

All parents want good teachers for their children. Every taxpayer deserves that much. Incentive pay should be considered only after we have met that basic goal.

There is no shortcut to educational excellence, and we can't afford to shortchange our children and those they will remember all their lives for the things they learn in their classrooms.




In the real world, student performance is influenced by a wide range of personal factors as well as what students have learned over time and from many teachers



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PRESIDENT
Donna New Haschke

VICE PRESIDENT
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E.C. Walker

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Richard Kouri

EDITOR
Debbie Mohondro

PRODUCTION TECHNICIAN
Susan Martin

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER
Leann Kloesel

ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY
Adriana Montoya

SECRETARY/ADVERTISING
Nichole Lowery

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Texas State Teachers Association
National Education Association
316 West 12th St., Austin, TX 78701
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TSTA President Donna New Haschke, with pollsters Ed Goeas and Paul Harstad, explains the results of the bipartisan poll to the media at TSTA Headquarters in Austin.

Texas Voters Say Fund What's Working

Texas voters continue to place the education of our children as the highest priority for state government, a new poll shows. Voters – and even more so, parents – give rave reviews to the improvements in our schools owing to the education standards

and accountability reforms passed by the state legislature.

The survey results also show that Texans want the state to take more responsibility for the education of our children by continuing to increase state education standards and funding. Voters affirmed their willingness to invest more tax money in an education program they know is working, including spending the money needed to get the best teachers.

The poll was commissioned by TSTA and conducted jointly by a Republican pollster, Ed Goeas of The Tarrance Group, Inc., and a Democratic pollster, Paul Harstad of Harstad Strategic Research, Inc.

KEY SURVEY FINDINGS

► Public education remains the top priority for the state government: 42% choose it as the

most important issue for state government. Voters choose public education by 12% over health care (30%) and are more than three times as likely to choose public education as they are to choose holding the line on taxes (13%).

► Voters are seeing a return on their investment in our public schools. Two-thirds of Texas voters say our public schools are either starting to improve or have improved and need to continue to do so.

This sentiment crosses partisan lines, shared by 63% of Republicans, 70% of Democrats and 67% of Independents. Additionally, 77% of public school parents say they have seen improvements.

► Proof the state's investment in our schools is working is indicated by the fact that 86%

“When you get outside the Capitol, Texans understand what is most important in good schools and what we need to do to make them even better. Their message to those inside the Capitol is clear: invest resources in the programs that make our classrooms a better place to learn, and don't make things worse by ‘fixing’ things that aren't broken. They understand that ‘reform’ doesn't mean throwing out programs that work.

“A strong, bipartisan consensus exists among Texas voters on how to improve public education. Overwhelmingly, Texans believe good teachers, small classes, discipline and safety, and up-to-date textbooks and teaching materials are essential to meeting high standards for academic achievement.”

—TSTA President Donna New Haschke

of parents with children in school give their child's school an A or B rating (A = 48% and B = 38%). These high marks show that overall parents are pleased with the current education standards.

► Voters see the returns on our investments in standards and accountability for our schools, and they would like to continue funding education improvements. In fact, when voters are asked to make a trade-off, 62% prefer to avoid cutting funding for public schools while 27% prefer to avoid raising state taxes.

► More than twice as many Texans want a larger state role in education, rather than a smaller role. Half the voters (51%) feel state government should take a larger role in education, 24% feel that the state government should maintain its current role, and just 22% want a smaller state role.

► Voters want to increase education standards and funding. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of Texas voters say they would like to see an increase in state education standards, while only 5% want state ed-

ucation standards decreased. Correspondingly, nearly three-fourths (72%) of voters would like to see state funding for public education increased, while only 5% want state education funding decreased.

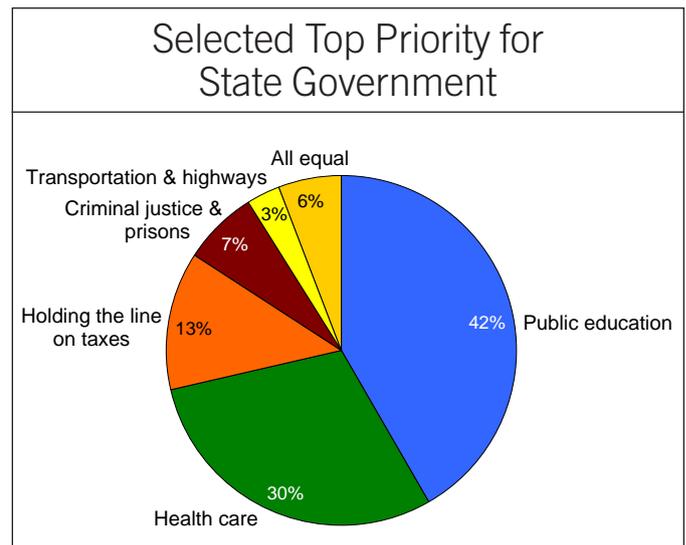
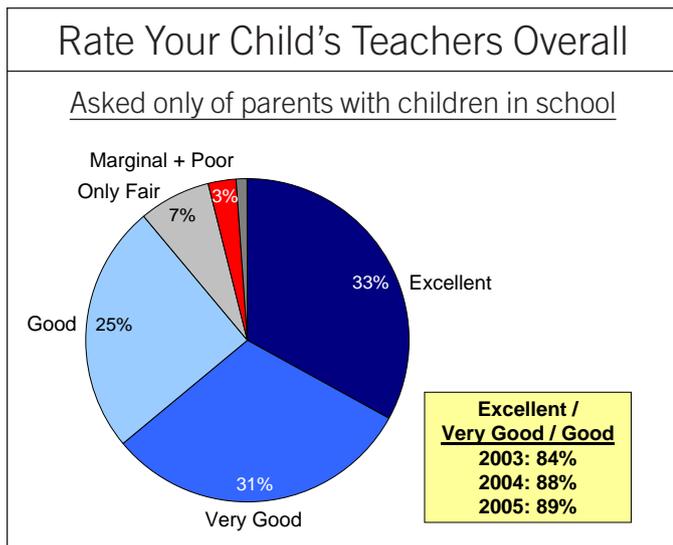
► Voters would like to see the proven education reforms fully funded rather than trying alternative approaches such as performance based funding. When voters are given two statements regarding funding for Texas' education programs, 62% of voters choose the response of "these reforms are working and we should fully fund them to further improve public education through smaller class sizes, higher state standards, and better teacher pay" over a message stating, "we should take a different approach and instead move to a system that gives funding and rewards for schools and teachers who show improved student performance as measured by tests" (28% choose this message).

► Throughout the survey, parents and voters repeatedly acknowledge the value of

teachers as the single most important factor in determining the quality of our children's education. Fully 89% of parents rated their child's teachers as excellent or good. When asked to volunteer the most important factor in a good public school, a 59% majority of voters mention teachers first, compared to other factors such as curriculum, safety, materials, administration, test performance, and all other factors. And, when asked to choose the most important of four factors that contribute to a quality education, a decisive 45% plurality chose paying teachers enough to attract quality, certified teachers.

This survey was commissioned by the Texas State Teachers Association and conducted jointly by The Tarance Group, Inc., and Harstad Strategic Research, Inc. It was conducted by telephone January 6-12, 2005, among 802 registered voters throughout Texas. The margin of error associated with a sample of this type is plus-or-minus 3.5% at the 95% confidence level.

Public education remains the top priority for the state government: 42% choose it as the most important issue for state government.





TSTA's Lobby Team: E.C. Walker, Adriana Montoya, Ann Heuberger, Nichole Lowery, Richard Kouri, Leann Kloesel, Shanna Weisfeld, Jack Kelly, Donna New Haschke, Jeanette Rodriguez, and Tim Bacon.

TSTA: HB 2 is Not What the Public Wants

We have been pushing relentlessly to get the word out about what Texans want to have happen with their schools, as evidenced by poll results, and what some legislators are trying to do to the schools, in direct opposition.

First, we held news conferences in Austin, Abilene, Beaumont, Brownsville, Bryan, Dallas, El Paso, Lubbock, San Antonio, and Tyler on the poll results.

Next, we held two briefings at TSTA Headquarters for legislators and their staff members on the poll—one for Republicans, conducted by Republican pollster Ed Goeas, and the other for Democrats,

conducted by Democratic pollster Paul Harstad—to allow them to review the data and ask questions of the pollsters.

Then we turned our efforts to fighting HB 2, the education reform bill by Rep. Kent Grusendorf that defies all the findings of our bipartisan poll on what the public wants.

For example, HB 2 gives incentive pay instead of an across-the-board pay raise. When asked if we should “move to a system that gives funding and rewards for schools and teachers who show improved student performance as measured by tests,” only 28% of those polled said yes.

We held a briefing for freshman House members on the problems with HB 2. We trained 150 TSTA Legislative Cadre members to mobilize and organize our members for the coming fight over HB 2. And our staff has testified numerous times and worked day and night to explain our concerns to legislators.

At press time at the end of February, we were expecting the bill to reach the House floor soon. Please check our web site to keep abreast of what's happening in the legislature (www.tsta.org) and sign up to receive our electronic newsletter, *the Briefing*, while you're there.

What does the public want? We have the data in hand: the results of a bipartisan poll conducted in January. And we're spreading the word.

TSTA's Legislative Agenda

TSTA provided legislators with a booklet outlining our agenda in detail. The following is a synopsis.

Our public schools have made tremendous progress over the last decade. Today, we are challenged to continue that progress and build on our success as changes are made in our school finance system. Texas cannot stand still or turn away from successful, proven programs in the name of "reform," because we cannot afford to let our students lose ground. Moving forward requires vision and the will to commit the necessary resources to take public education to the next level.

Leadership and courage were necessary to bring about the changes that created better schools. If our schools are going to continue to improve—and they must—this legislature must look past partisanship, past short-sighted political opportunism, past simple solutions to complex problems, and have the vision and will to do what is right for the public schoolchildren of Texas. Texans understand that we can no longer afford to shortchange our schools.

Salaries: Texas teachers rank 32nd in the nation in average teacher salaries and are \$6,000 below the national average. We must move to at least the national average if we are going to end the teacher shortage and be competitive in the marketplace for certified teachers. When selecting a career, college students consider earning potential. Fewer than 10% of the districts in Texas pay teachers with 30+ years of experience a salary of \$50,000 or more.

Benefits: The legislature made a good start on addressing health insurance. We must finish the task of providing health insurance that covers the cost of employees and 50% of family coverage. Too many employees saw salary increases wiped out by increases in the cost of family health care coverage.

Working Conditions: Students benefit when teachers have more time to teach. Teachers need less paperwork, fewer meetings, and more time to plan and collaborate. Numerous studies have shown that working conditions are a primary factor in teacher attrition. Legislation mandating a reduction in paperwork and limiting the number of meetings is essential to giving teachers time to prepare.

Mentoring: According to State Board for Educator Certification data, one-third of new teachers quit after the first year and 50% leave by the fifth year. Data from the Texas Beginning Educator Support System and similar projects shows that an effective mentoring program can reduce first year attrition rates to less than 10%. The legislature should compensate mentors and provide release time for them to work with new teachers.

Maintain High Standards for Certification: Some people believe public education can address the shortage of certified teachers by relaxing certification standards. That might be a tempting short-

term fix, but it would be a long-term disaster for public school children and the teaching profession. Teaching has become an increasingly difficult profession. Most individuals who leave the profession do so because of an inability to deal with the myriad of issues and problems they are confronted with in their classrooms. That's why legislators must work for higher standards and teachers who are prepared with a better understanding of how to teach—including practical experience—before entering

the classroom. Texas should financially reward those individuals who obtain National Board Certification by voluntarily holding themselves to much higher standards.

Rights for Education Support Professionals: For too long our hardworking education support professionals have lacked basic due process rights. ESP's should have the right to know why they are being discharged, the right to respond to claims made against them, and the right to basic fairness in the work place.

FACE OFF

Governor Rick Perry

"I want our best and brightest teachers to be paid salary incentives as high as \$7,500 a year when they rekindle the love of learning among children too often left in the shadows of success."

"Excellence should not be rewarded the same as mediocrity; otherwise, mediocrity becomes its own incentive. When money follows results, we will get more for our money."

"Achievement incentives work. With the right incentives, we can encourage more students to take our hardest course of study, the distinguished achievement program, and improve student performance on the TAKS test. We should also reinstate end-of-course exams in subjects like algebra, biology, English and history, and allow schools to offer these exams on an optional basis, with incentives tied to student results." (State of the State Address, January 26)

TSTA President Donna New Haschke

"When it comes to our state commitment to education, we not only can do better, we must do better. We must do better than paying a few teachers a \$7,500 bonus if we are serious about getting qualified, certified teachers in every Texas classroom, especially classrooms in low performing schools. We cannot attract and retain the best and the brightest to the teaching profession unless we substantially increase the salaries of Texas teachers, which lag behind the national average by over \$6,000."

"Texas ranks 34th in the nation in per pupil expenditures for instruction. We must do better than simply rewarding those schools and teachers who teach to the test. And we must do better than just keeping up with enrollment growth in our schools, which is how most of the \$7 billion 'new' dollars were spent over the past six years. We will not do better without an honest commitment to substantially increasing funding for proven programs that have improved student performance in our public schools."



Social Security: a Bill and a Petition

NEA has three priorities for Social Security legislation in the 109th Congress:

- ▶ Oppose any efforts to privatize Social Security;
- ▶ Ensure that public employees who are enrolled in and have paid into other retirement security plans are not mandated to participate in Social Security; and
- ▶ Repeal unfair offsets—the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision—that deny earned Social Security benefits to many public employees.

Offsets: NEA, working closely with Members of Congress, secured the re-introduction of legislation to completely repeal both the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision. The new bill was

introduced by Representatives McKeon (R-CA) and Berman (D-CA) and has the number H.R. 147. The bill already has over 150 bipartisan cosponsors.

Texas cosponsors are Ralph Hall, Ron Paul, Ruben Hinojosa, Chet Edwards, Randy Neugebauer, Charles Gonzalez, Henry Bonilla, Lloyd Doggett, Michael Burgess, Solomon Ortiz, Gene Green, Eddie Bernice Johnson, and John Carter. If your Member of Congress is not on the list, ask him or her to become a cosponsor. Keep up to date on action on the offsets at www.nea.org/lac/socsec/offsets.html.

Privatization: More than 21,000 people have signed NEA's petition urging Congress to protect Social Security benefits and to oppose

any proposal to divert money from Social Security to create private stock market accounts. The tremendous response, an NEA record, reflects a spreading distrust of the Bush Administration's proposal for privatizing and, ultimately, destabilizing the 70-year-old retirement program.

Meanwhile, the steady drumbeat of alarming information about the privatization plan continues. The latest: A young worker would lose 30 percent or more in guaranteed benefits, according to the Social Security Administration and other groups. That adds up to as much as \$152,000 in retirement benefits lost in the 20 years after retirement, according to a study by the Center for Economic and Policy Research.

More than 21,000 people have signed NEA's petition urging Congress to protect Social Security benefits and to oppose any proposal to divert money from Social Security to create private stock market accounts.

NEA believes that we must preserve a strong retirement security system to protect America's hard-working families. Traditional public pension plans and Social Security are under increasing attack from those who would privatize these essential safety nets. Sign the petition at www.nea.org/lac/socsec/index.html.

Offset Advisory for New Employees: NEA has long argued the need for the Social Security Administration and employers to advise employees in jobs not covered by Social Security of the impact of offsets on their Social Security benefit entitlement. Now employers in non-Social Security districts must alert new employees affected by Social Security offsets.

Section 419(c) of Public Law 108-203, the Social Security Protection Act of 2004 requires state and local government employers to disclose the effect of the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset Provision to employees hired on or after January 1, 2005 in jobs not covered by Social Security. These employees also must sign a statement that they are aware of a possible reduction in their future Social Security benefit entitlement.

Employers do not have to create the notice. The Social Security Administration has produced form SSA-1945, Statement Concerning Your Employment in a Job Not Covered by Social Security for new employees to sign. This form, along with instructions for its use, can be found at www.socialsecurity.gov/form1945.

Texas Teachers, Students Lose Ground

It has been a tough decade for Texas teachers and public schools, according to a report released by the National Education Association.

In 2000-2001, Texas was 26th in the nation in average teacher salaries. In 2003-04, the average teacher salary dropped to 32nd—\$6,232 below the national average.

Even worse news for Texas teachers: while their average salary increased \$2,122 over the last three years, their out-of-pocket cost for health in-

surance went up \$2,400.

In 2000-2001, Texas ranked 26th in per pupil expenditures for instruction. In 2003-04, Texas dropped to 34th and now spends \$873 less than the national average per pupil for instruction.

"The numbers show what we already knew to be true—this has been a very difficult decade for the Texas public schools and teachers," TSTA President Donna New Haschke said. "We have seen a dramatic drop in the re-

sources that are going for instruction, and Texas teachers are worse off financially than they were four years ago.

"When the legislature deals with school finance, they must address these issues in crafting a solution," Haschke said. "We have too many classrooms staffed by inappropriately certified teachers, and our schools lack the resources they need to succeed. Any plan that passes must solve these problems or it will fail our students."

Volunteer to be on a TSTA Committee

The TSTA president is charged with appointing individuals to a number of Association statewide and special committees and task forces each year. All members are eligible to serve in these appointed positions; if you are interested in volunteering some time to serve in these appointed positions, please let the TSTA president know by submitting the form below to TSTA, President's Office, 316 W. 12th St., Austin, TX 78701; or faxing to 512-486-7053 by May 27, 2005.

TSTA's statewide committees are in the following areas: Community and Instructional Advocacy, Legislative and Political Advocacy, and Constitution, Bylaws, and Elections.

Other task forces and special committees are formed from time to time, such as the current task force on collective bargaining. Please indicate your particular area of interest and expertise whether or not it is listed above.

You may also recommend a colleague for consideration for an appointed position.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Ph. _____ School Ph. _____

Social Security Number _____

Local Association _____ TSTA Region _____

Classification _____ Ethnic Status _____

Home Email _____

School Email _____

Local Activities _____

State/Regional Activities _____

Please mark the appropriate boxes below:

CIA LPA CBE Other _____



Andrea Hinckson of Senator Rodney Ellis' staff, Representative Garnet Coleman, Marjorie Wall, Jay Levin, and Representative Scott Hochberg.

Legislators Honor Retiring TSTA Lobbyists

Senator Rodney Ellis and Representative Garnet Coleman sponsored a reception at the Capitol for TSTA Governmental Relations Director Jay Levin and Governmental Relations Specialist Marjorie Wall on January 27.

Legislators, staff members, lobbyists, and others connected with the legislature came by to honor them for

two decades of fighting for public schools—and public school employees—and acting as a resource to legislators on education-related issues.

Both Levin and Wall worked for TSTA for 25 years, the last 20 as lobbyists. Prior to coming to Austin, both were on TSTA's field staff, Wall in Dallas and Levin in Houston.

Among the highlights of

their 20 years: TSTA's Political Action Committee grew into one of the top non-profit PACs in the state; numerous bills to benefit public school employees—including duty-free lunch, planning and preparation periods, class size limits for K-4, and state-funded health insurance—passed; and literally hundreds of bills that would have harmed schools, school employees, and the schoolchildren of Texas were defeated.

“Educational employees in Texas owe both of these individuals their gratitude for the hard work they have done over the last 20 years,” TSTA Executive Director E.C. Walker said. “A lot of good bills have passed and bad bills have died as a result of their efforts. They have done a tremendous job for Texas public schools and public school employees, and they will be sorely missed.”

TEA Hires Test Security Expert

Texas Education Agency has hired an outside testing expert, Gregory Cizek, to review its test security measures. Cizek is a professor of educational measurement and evaluation at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the author of several books on testing, including *Detecting and Preventing Classroom Cheating*.

Bringing in a testing expert was one of Commissioner Shirley Neeley's promises in January, in response to media reports of cheating in several schools. In addition, she pledged to remind educators of the severe consequences tied to altering test documents and to build a tracking system to help the agency monitor testing irregularities.

“We have zero tolerance for cheating,” Neeley said at a press conference in January. “The few who would attempt to cheat on the TAKS or other state tests shortchange students and undermine the credibility of our state's testing program.”

Texas tests about three million students in grades 3-11 each year. “The vast, vast majority of teachers and administrators are honest, honorable, conscientious people who would never dream of helping their students cheat on a test,” Neeley said. “Their personal code of honor would not permit it.”

How Do Teacher Unions Affect American Education?

We recently came across the following study, “A State-by-State Analysis of the Impact of Collective Bargaining among Teachers on Student Performance” by Howard Nelson and the Institute for Wisconsin’s Future. Here’s the executive summary (bold added); for the whole report, go to www.wisconsinfuture.org/publications/education/Unions.pdf.

During this 1996 electoral season, public schools and teachers’ unions have been repeatedly attacked...as the cause of intellectual and moral decline among American youth. **These largely undocumented assertions are situated in the context of a campaign to provide vouchers for privatized education and create a dual educational system in which more children are in private schools.**

To evaluate these claims, the Institute for Wisconsin’s Future initiated an updated review of the impact of collective bargaining among teachers on the performance levels of school children. This study examines the impact of collective bargaining along with that of region, family income, race, school spending and levels of private school attendance. The focus of the study is the relationship between high, medium and low levels of unionization among teachers and student test scores on the SAT College Entrance exams and the NAEP

fourth grade reading tests in a state-by-state comparison.

The results of this study demonstrate clearly that student performance on the tests is significantly better in states with high levels of unionization with all other variables held constant. Average student scores on the SAT exams are 43 points higher in states where over 90% of teachers are unionized than in states where less than 50% of the teachers are covered by collective bargaining or meet-and-confer agreements. Furthermore, when collective bargaining is removed from the analysis, scores drop in all states. Those factors found to be significantly related to poor performance are: low household income, race (which is correlated with other measures of socio-economic deprivation), large class size, high absenteeism, and higher rates of private school attendance.

Our findings accord with numerous earlier research studies which show that collective bargaining among teachers does not harm student school performance. In the last ten years, school performance among all children has been improving. Differences in performance occur more between states than over time periods. **In fact, report after report demonstrates that unionization is associated with more stable, productive school**

environments with higher test scores. The underlying causes of poor performance among children are primarily socio-economic factors in children’s lives and the lack of adequate educational resources.

Public education faces serious problems but teachers organizing to secure decent wages and working conditions is not one of them. Growing poverty,

social instability, high rates of mobility and household disorganization devastate children’s lives. Governmental cuts in resources for school hiring, teacher training and educational resources have led to larger class size, inadequate educational materials

and reduced programming in many schools. Increased learning disabilities and behavior problems compound the problems in more crowded classrooms. Advocates of privatized education claim they will improve student performance by “breaking the educational monopoly of public schools and teachers’ unions.” Data from this study demonstrates that “breaking the unions” will hurt, not help students’ performance.

Report after report demonstrates that unionization is associated with more stable, productive school environments with higher test scores.



TSTA Officers to be Elected at State Convention



For the first time ever, the TSTA President and Vice-President will be elected by delegates to the TSTA House of Delegates. Last year, we elected the NEA Director, Place 1, at the HoD, but this will be a first for President and Vice-President, based on a bylaw change approved in 2002.

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

Registration will be open Friday, April 15, from 7 a.m. until the end of the first General Session (usually between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m.). On Saturday, registration will open again at 6:30 a.m. Regional caucuses are scheduled from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m., with voting from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. If you plan on registering on Saturday morning, be sure to allow yourself plenty of time to register and vote.

Both incumbents, Donna New Haschke as President, and Ann Heuberger as Vice-President, are running for re-election. Both have challengers. Below are the statements from all of the candidates for TSTA President and TSTA Vice-President.

PRESIDENT

Donna New Haschke

Professional Training: University of Texas at Austin, BS in Elementary Education, minor in English, 1972; Southwest Texas State University, M.Ed. additional hours



Professional Experience: Clear Creek ISD, teacher, Seabrook Intermediate School, 6th and 8th grades, 1992-97; Austin ISD, teacher, sixth grade English/language arts, elementary and middle school levels, 1972-92

Professional Education Associations: Clear Creek Educators Association, TSTA/NEA, National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), Texas Educators Caucus (TEC)

Offices Held: TSTA President, 2002-04; TSTA Vice President, 1997-2002; TSTA Region 12 President, 1996-97; Clear Creek Educators Association President, 1993-95, and President Elect, 1993-95; Austin Association of Teachers President, 1985-88, and Vice President, 1983-85

Campaign Statement: When I took office two years ago, I said, "There is much work to be done and I know that alone I can accomplish very little. But if we work together we can create a vibrant, growing organization that can meet the challenges we face."

You responded to that call to action and what a great two years it has been for TSTA. We are now focused on creating a more powerful TSTA that can effectively organize around a progressive agenda that represents the interests of all educational employees. As a result, our membership is up and we are concentrating resources on providing support to local associations so they can become stronger and more effective.

I ask for your continued support for building a TSTA that has the power to achieve our goals of improving schools for our students and better benefits for the employees who serve them.

Be sure to bring your credentials with you and arrive in plenty of time to register and vote.

PRESIDENT

Bayardo Arellano

Professional

Training: Enterprise State Jr. College, AS, 1986; The University of the State of NY, BS, 1993; A&M at Commerce, M.Ed., 2000



Professional

Experience: Dallas ISD, 2nd, 3rd, 4th grade bilingual, 1994-present

Professional Education Associations:

NEA-Dallas, TSTA, NEA

Offices Held: not applicable

Campaign Statement: Fellow teachers, I am 110% Democrat. I will never hide my colors as our current President does. I am running because she has failed us. She has allowed her personal political views to cloud what is in the best interest for the educators in our state. I am running because of her lack of support for candidates that have a chance to defeat Republican incumbents. In my book all teachers are important, even our teacher assistants. Once you elect me, as your new president our organization will undergo some much needed changes such as the Staff Development Section, Help Desk and others. The second reason why I am running is because I am disgusted with the way we endorse our State Reps. We have yet to endorse Ruby Woolridge. Who is she? She is a TSTA member that has the guts to run against Texas Public Education Enemy #1.

VICE-PRESIDENT

Ann J. Heuberger

Professional

Training: East Tennessee State University, BS, 1968-72; University of Georgia, Masters of Education, 1976-78; Sam Houston State University and Texas A&M University, additional studies



Professional Experience: College Station ISD, librarian, 1980-2002; Cobb County (Georgia) public schools, elementary media specialist, 1975-80; Bristol, Virginia City Schools, junior high librarian, 1972-75

Professional Education Associations: College Station Education Association/ TSTA/NEA, Texas Library Association

Offices Held: NEA Board of Directors, 1996-2002; NEA Lib./Info./Tech Caucus Vice Chair, 1997-2001; TSTA Vice President, 2002-present; TSTA Board of Directors, 1993-present; TSTA/Region 25 President 1993-96, and Vice President, 1992-93; TSTA/District VI President, 1990-92, and Vice President, 1988-90; College Station Education Association President, 1985-86 and 1992-94; Vice President, 1984-85; Association Rep, 1982-85 and 1986-92; Membership Chair, 1995-2001.

Campaign Statement: As Vice-President I have been part of an exciting era in the history of TSTA. We have accomplished a membership increase and a balanced budget with an emphasis on organizing and increased accountability for the first time in many years. To continue this progress we must build strong, effective locals; develop continual leadership training; continue to recruit and retain members; and go beyond mobilizing to organizing. I ran for Vice-President "Committed to the Future" of our great organization and I stand by that commitment. My vision continues to be that TSTA is the respected voice we can and should be; that TSTA continues to fight to protect and enhance the rights of our members while we ensure that every child has the quality education they deserve; and that TSTA directs the course of public education in Texas. I want to continue serving as your Vice-President and ask for your support.

VICE-PRESIDENT

J.B. Richeson

Professional

Training: Baylor University, BA, 1969; University of Texas at San Antonio, MA, 1986



Professional

Experience: Northside ISD, teacher, Anson Jones MS, 1969-89; San Antonio ISD, teacher, Edison HS, 1989-92; San Antonio Teachers Council, 1992-96, President; San Antonio ISD, teacher, Harris MS, 1996-99; San Antonio Teachers Council, President, 1999-2003; San Antonio Alliance, Co President, 2003-present

Professional Education Associations: NEA, TSTA, AFT, TFT, San Antonio Alliance of Teachers and Support Personnel

Offices Held: Northside Independent Teachers Association President, 1985-86; TSTA District XX President; San Antonio Teachers Council President, 1992-96 and 1999-2003; San Antonio Alliance Co President, 2003-present

Campaign Statement: TSTA deserves a leader who will focus attention on the future. While I have been a proud member of TSTA since my first year of teaching and have seen many positive changes, I have also noted a membership decline from over 100,000 to the present numbers. What TSTA needs is a leader who acknowledges our proud history while focusing energy on recruiting new members. There is no reason why Texas cannot have a strong organization of 200,000 educators working together with parents in every community to ensure that all children receive high quality educations from well-compensated public school employees. TSTA needs leaders who will use imagination and creativity to recapture its position as the pre-eminent voice for educational employees in Texas. I am that leader. Vote for J.B. Richeson for TSTA Vice President.



Seeing the Potential



From bottom left: Julio Martinez, Jill Graves, Joseph de la Garza, Albert Alegria, Mary Lopez, Diana Villarreal, Dora Maribel Perez, Patrick Gabbert, and George Borrego.

Way down on the Mexican border is a local association whose story is known throughout Texas and even other NEA states.

“When we go to national meetings, people know who we are,” Association of Brownsville Educators President Albert Alegria said, shaking his head. “It’s amazing.”

It’s really not so surprising when you consider that this local association has almost doubled, going from 625 to 1,120 members, in nine months. And it’s still growing.

“All of a sudden, the administration is listening to us,” Alegria, who is on the In-School Suspension staff at

Besteiro Middle School, said. “There is power in numbers. They see we’re united.”

A \$1,800 pay raise and new uniforms for the school police force are just two of the gains this year and “pay raises and benefits look very good for next year,” said Alegria, who attends all the school board and budget meetings.

“We’ve had 14 or 15 meetings with the superintendent at lunch,” he said. “Last time, we brought an agenda of 12 items; the superintendent immediately checked off four of them and said, ‘I’ll talk to my people about these.’ We have our ups and downs with the administration but we have

very good dialogue and eventually we come to consensus.”

Another benefit of the local’s growth: AOBEB has its own office now and its own staff person, as of February 1—Tom Puntureri, who retired from TSTA staff in January.

Puntureri said the membership surge wasn’t the overnight miracle it may seem. Groundwork was laid last year, he said, when Alegria was vice president and George Borrego was president. They implemented the plan last summer.

“Albert was so energized, he practically devoted his summer to recruiting. He didn’t take a vacation,” Borrego said.

Although he clearly plays a crucial role, Alegria insists AOBÉ's success comes from the team effort. "When I became president in July, I surrounded myself with people who saw the potential," he said, "and it's just taken off." As a group, they also are a living endorsement of the many excellent programs offered by the association at the local, state, and national levels.

►Take Borrego, who was AOBÉ president for four years. An economics teacher at Porter, he loves recruiting and politics and handles consultation for AOBÉ. He also serves on TSTA's Legislative Cadre, a statewide network of members who have been equipped by TSTA with the skills and knowledge to set their membership in motion at a moment's notice. Training for this year's cadre took place in Austin in February.

One program he's proud of starting when he was president brings the experience of TSTA to the University of Texas at Brownsville, which has a strong TSTA-Student Program. Three times this semester, Dr. Paul Henley of TSTA's Teaching and Learning staff will speak to the student teachers about the real issues they'll face in the classroom; in February, the session was on "Defensive Teaching." When the students graduate and begin to teach, they'll know AOBÉ is the group they want to join.

►Doubling the size of the local has brought growing pains, particularly in communications. That's where Julio Cesar Martinez, a technology sup-



port teacher at Besteiro Middle School with a master's in computer technology, comes in. He recently created a web site to reflect the local's progressive image at www.aobe.us. A bonus: any member who wants it can have a personal email address through the site. Communicating with members through a private email account frees them to talk about politics or anything else without fear of reprisal.

►Patrick Gabbert is a graduate of the TSTA Ambassador Academy, a program that's being offered for the fourth time this summer and getting rave reviews. "The Academy was a great experience. They know how to bring out the leadership skills in you," he said.

"You leave with a plan of action for your local association. We have the ideas in hand, all written down. It's just a matter of getting home and putting it into action." Gabbert said he's applied what he learned not

only to his job as AOBÉ vice president but also to his job in the school district police department.

►Dora Maribel Perez and Joseph de la Garza plan to take advantage of the advocacy and grievance training AOBÉ is offering locally. They are eager to move up in the organization.

"Dora brought me on board," said de la Garza, who serves on the police force with Perez. "We started having meetings and recruiting people left and right. We've come to have better communication with the chief of police and security; he's an AOBÉ member, too." Perez hopes to be the next AOBÉ member to attend the Ambassador Academy.

►Association representatives Diana Villarreal and Mary G. Lopez have discovered that it's a lot more fun working as a team at Yturria Elementary. "Having two people working together on a campus, that really helps. One person can

"We never miss an opportunity to recruit. Never. Wherever there are teachers and other employees, we're there."

“Think of recruiting as year-round. Be visible, let them know you’re there.”

feel isolated but working together, it’s fun and you see more results,” Villarreal said.

The women knew Alegria from when he worked at their school. “We ran into him at a school board meeting and he signed us up on the spot,” Villarreal said. “His enthusiasm spills over. No one had ever asked me to join the association before. I wanted to be part of the team that flies!”

Besides being the association representatives for their school, they agreed to chair the AOB social committee. “As the school counselor and librarian, we both had experience setting things up,” Villarreal said. “We had a meeting after school, attended by Albert and Tom. We typed up notices and put up a sign in the teacher lounge. We didn’t let anybody go by without grabbing

them and taking them into the library for the meeting. We had a lot of people there listening and we recruited 21 new people.”

Keeping in touch with your members is key to being a successful association representative, they believe. “I have mailing labels for all our members in my computer, ready to go,” Villarreal said. “We download things from the internet to put in their boxes. Other staff members are seeing the things that are happening with AOB.”

► Treasurer Jill Graves, who serves on the state TSTA Board of Directors, said AOB is forming a grievance cadre—a team of members who will be equipped to handle grievances for their colleagues. “We have 17-19 members so far,” she said.

The first round of training was in February.

Her advice to a local that wants to grow? “You need to think of recruiting as year-round,” Graves, a teacher at Rivera High School, said. “Be visible, let them know you’re there. They need to know who they can come to.”

AOB’s goal for next year is to increase communication with members and with the city, county, and others so they can work together on common concerns, such as bond elections.

“We will continue to grow,” Gabbert said. “That’s a given.”

“We never miss an opportunity to recruit. Never,” said Alegria. “Wherever there are teachers and other employees, we’re there. In the beginning, there was a lot of competition. Before long, it faded away. We are the only game in town.”

Secrets to Building Your Local Association

- Never miss a chance to involve members or send them to a conference or training.
- Never miss an opportunity to recruit. Any time teachers and other employees gather, be there.
- Be visible. Let employees know you’re there. They need to know who they can come to.
- Send a couple of people each year to the Ambassador Academy and watch the energy grow. www.tsta.org/inside/calendar/05application.pdf
- Find out what skills your members can bring to the association and utilize them.
- Ask one of your members to start a web site for your local association. Help is available in NEA’s members-only Newsletter Resources area. <https://www.nea.org/membersonly/newsletters/index.html>
- Think of recruiting as a year-round activity.
- Is there a university in your city? Contact the local chapter of TSTA-Student Program and offer to share your expertise with student teachers. www.tsta.org/inside/student
- Remember that association work should be fun. Try having two association representatives on each campus or forming a committee to handle the newsletter.
- A lot of people say they have never been asked if they’d like to join. Ask!



NEA Representative Assembly

July 1-6, 2005, Los Angeles Convention Center

The 2005 NEA Representative Assembly will be held at the Los Angeles Convention Center in downtown Los Angeles, California. The Texas Delegation to the 2005 NEA Representative Assembly will be housed at the Renaissance Hollywood Hotel in Hollywood, California. The hotel is surrounded by Grauman's Chinese Theatre and borders the Walk of Fame and Kodak Theatre. Additionally, the hotel is next

to Hollywood and Highland, a retail district offering movie theaters, live entertainment, shopping and restaurants. Texas delegates attending the NEA Representative Assembly will want to view TSTA's website, www.tsta.org, for up-to-date information on the delegate Night Out event.

Transportation

The hotel is thirteen (13) miles from the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX)

and eight (8) miles from the Burbank Airport.

Cab fares are approximately \$40 from LAX and \$22 from the Burbank Airport. Cab

fares to the Los Angeles Convention Center, where the NEA Representative Assembly will be held, are approximately \$15 to \$20. Travel time for Texas

NEA-RA Information

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Delegate Vest Ordering Form	p. 23

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

delegates to the Los Angeles Convention Center is approximately forty (40) minutes in rush hour traffic and approximately twenty-five (25) minutes during non-rush hours.

If attendees are driving, the hotel provides valet parking at the rate of \$22 and event parking at the rate of \$10 an hour for up to four (4) hours. City parking lots are available within five (5) minutes of walking to the hotel; however, the cost varies (\$2 and up).

Car Rental

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

Hotel Reservations

The lodging form is located on page 23. Friday, May 20, 2005, is the deadline for receiving the form in the Center for Executive and Governance. It is very important that you submit your lodging request forms as early as possible. All rooms will be

assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Maryland delegates will also be housed at the Renaissance Hollywood Hotel.

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

Delegates and guests MUST include a credit card number or check with their reservation for one night's deposit in order to guarantee your reservation. If an incomplete credit card number or no credit card and/or check are submitted, reservations will not be made.

Texas Caucus Meetings

The first Texas Caucus meeting is scheduled for Friday, July 1, at 1:00 p.m. All Texas Caucus meetings will be held at the Renaissance Hollywood Hotel. Additionally, delegates must register at the Texas Caucus meeting and with NEA. Registration at the Texas Caucus meetings will begin thirty (30) minutes prior to the beginning of the meeting.

Please review the Tentative Meeting Event Schedule for the registration times with NEA.

Texas Night Out

TSTA is again coordinating for the Texas delegates a "Night Out" on July 1. As possible options are currently being researched, delegates may monitor the TSTA web site for the most up-to-date information on the "Night Out" event. Delegates will also receive information regarding the event with other delegate information in early May. It is estimated that the cost for Texas delegates to attend the Night Out event will be approximately \$30.

Clustering to Elect NEA Delegates

Delegate allocations are based on NEA membership as of January 15, 2005. NEA local affiliates are allocated delegates on a ratio of one (1) delegate for each 150 (or major fraction thereof) active, NEA life, and educational support members of NEA. Thus, local associations with 75 or fewer NEA members must cluster to elect an NEA delegate. If your local association has 75 or fewer NEA members and is interested in clustering to elect an NEA delegate, you will need to contact the Center for Executive and Governance for

assistance. Members wishing to cluster are encouraged to contact the Center as soon as possible so that elections may be held. Please submit in writing the request to cluster by mailing the request to TSTA, Center for Executive and Governance, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, Texas 78701 or fax the request to 512-486-7053.

The Texas Tradition

Texas delegates capture the eyes of the entire nation at each NEA Representative Assembly. The uniform for all Texas delegates will be a Texas Vest or Texas Shirt (Texas Flag with a white star on the right front side of the vest or shirt) with white or navy blue pants/shirt/dress/shorts (no stone washed jeans). Delegates may order the "Texas Vest" by submitting in writing to TSTA's Center for Executive and Governance. An order form is printed on page 23. TSTA will not accept phone orders. Deadline for receipt of all Texas Vest orders is Friday, May 13. The cost for the Vest is \$37.50 with the check being made payable to TSTA. The Vest will be available for pickup at the first Texas Caucus meeting on July 1. All Texas delegates are expected to wear the official "uniform" on the days that the NEA Representative Assembly is in session (July 3-6).

TENTATIVE NEA MEETING EVENT SCHEDULE

The schedule outlines all of the activities of the 2005 NEA Convention. Information packets will be mailed to all Texas delegates in early May. The first Texas delegation meeting is scheduled for July 1 at 1:00 p.m.

Pre-Convention Schedule

Sunday, June 26

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

Monday, June 27

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

Tuesday, June 28

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

Wednesday, June 29

7:30 a.m.–8:30 a.m.....Women's Issues Hearing
 8:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.....Student Leadership Conference
 8:30 a.m.–3:00 p.m.....Joint Conference on Concerns of
 Women and Minorities
 8:30 a.m.–6:00 p.m.....NEA–Retired Annual Meeting
 9:00 a.m.–12:00 noonThe NEA Fund for Children and
 Public Education Meeting
 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.....National Council of Urban
 Education Associations Meeting
 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.....Constitution, Bylaws and Rules
 Committee Meeting
 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.....Resolutions Editing Committee
 Meeting
 1:30 p.m.–5:00 p.m.....National Council of State Education
 Associations Meeting
 4:00 p.m.–5:30 p.m.....Constitution, Bylaws & Rules
 Committee Meeting w/ Candidates
 for NEA Office

Thursday, June 30

8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Men's Issues Meeting
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Candidates Interview Day
 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.....Resolutions Committee Meeting
 11:15 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Board of Directors Meeting
 3:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m.....Credentials Committee Meeting

Friday, July 1

8:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m.....Open Hearing on Resolutions
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Campaigning; Exhibits
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Credentials Committee Meeting
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Delegate, Successor Delegate,
 Non–Delegate Registration
 9:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m.....Read Across America Mardi Gras
 Read-In
 1:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m.....Read Across America Mardi Gras
 Read-In
 1:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.....**Texas State Delegation Meeting**
 4:00 p.m.–5:30 p.m.....Special Interest Caucus Meetings
 4:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.....National Council for Higher
 Education Conference
 4:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.....National Council for Educational
 Support Professionals

7:00 p.m.–10:30 p.m.....Special Guests' Dinner
 Evening.....**Texas Night Out**

Saturday, July 2

All Day.....Campaigning
 7:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m.State Delegation Meetings
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Delegate, Successor Delegate,
 Non–Delegate Registration
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Exhibits
 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.....Credentials Committee Meeting
 10:00 a.m.–12:00 noonOpen Hearing on Budget &
 Strategic Planning
 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.....Resolutions Committee Meeting
 Noon–1:00 p.m.Special Interest Caucus Meetings
 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.....Legislative Open Hearing
 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.....Open Hearing on Constitution,
 Bylaws and Rules
 2:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.....Elections Committee Meeting
 5:00 p.m.Board of Directors Meeting
 6:30 p.m.–10:00 p.m.....Human and Civil Rights Awards
 Dinner

Convention Schedule

Sunday, July 3

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

Monday, July 4

7:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m.State Delegation Meetings
 8:30 a.m.–12:00 noonVoting for Officers
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Credentials Committee Meeting
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Non–Delegate Registration
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Non–Profit Fundraising Activities
 9:30 a.m.–10:00 a.m.....Special Interest Caucus Meetings
 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Representative Assembly
 LUNCH BREAKSpecial Interest Caucus Meetings

Tuesday, July 5

7:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m.State Delegation Meetings
 8:30 a.m.–12:00 noonVoting on Amendments and Runoff
 Elections (if necessary)
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Credentials Committee Meeting
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Non–Delegate Registration
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Non–Profit Fundraising Activities
 9:30 a.m.–10:00 a.m.....Special Interest Caucus Meetings
 10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.....Representative Assembly
 LUNCH BREAKSpecial Interest Caucus Meetings

Wednesday, July 6

7:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m.State Delegation Meetings
 9:00 a.m.–12:00 noonNon–Delegate Registration
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Credentials Committee Meeting
 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.....Non–Profit Fundraising Activities
 9:30 a.m.–10:00 a.m.....Special Interest Caucus Meetings
 10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.....Representative Assembly
 LUNCH BREAKSpecial Interest Caucus Meetings

Voting for State Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly

PLEASE NOTE: There is an important change this year in the manner in which TSTA elects State Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly. Except for TFA, Delegates will be elected by AOT, not individual Regions.

In past years, ballots for State Delegates were specific for each Region. However, this year, because of the variance in the size of our Regions, such an election process would not meet the one-person, one-vote requirement of NEA. There is one ballot that everybody marks, for the Category II delegates (supervisory and Active Life Active candidates). There is one ballot that only members of Texas Faculty Association (TFA) mark.

The rest of the ballots are divided by Area Organizing Teams (AOT). Members in Regions 1A, 1B, 1C and 1D mark the AOT 1 ballot. Members in Regions 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D and 2E mark the AOT 2 ballot. Members in Regions 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 3E and 3F mark the AOT 3 ballot. Members in Regions 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D and 4E mark the AOT 4 ballot.

There is a special insert in this magazine with a return envelope and the ballot. In the return address portion of that envelope you will find printed either "TFA" or your AOT. Also printed there is a code designating your membership category. If your envelope shows only the membership category and does not have an AOT or TFA, then you are eligible to vote only on the Category II ballot. Everybody else should vote both on the Category II ballot and the appropriate AOT or TFA ballot. If you believe your envelope is incorrect, then call TSTA immediately (877-ASK-TSTA) and ask for Sandra Solimine.

If you are not sure which TSTA Region or AOT is yours, check the return address portion of the envelope; your AOT should be printed there. Find the ballot for your AOT (or TFA). The number of delegates for each AOT is determined on the basis of the one-person, one-vote principle. The ballot for your AOT will tell you how many votes you may cast. 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, the name(s) must be for members in the correct AOT.

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

In order to encourage more members to vote, some locals may be collecting the sealed envelopes and mailing a group of envelopes together. This is acceptable, but you still must seal your ballot in the special envelope. Check with your local President to see if your local is doing this. 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 29, 2005. If the ballot is not in the provided envelope, your vote will not be counted.

Some of the candidates run-

ning for State Delegate provided statements that you will find in this issue of the Advocate. TSTA policy provides for printing statements from those candidates who file such a statement before the established deadline. TSTA policy also provides that any candidate may have an observer present when the Elections Committee canvasses the ballots on April 30 at the TSTA building in Austin. Please contact Connie Roccato or Sandra Solimine at 877-ASK-TSTA if you are a candidate and want an observer.

Candidate Statements

Below is a listing of candidates who provided statements.

Category 2

- ▶Bobbie Duncan, Caucasian. My experiences as an active member and now as a retiree qualify me to represent you on active and retired issues. I appreciate your vote.
- ▶Jerry R. Watkins. 48 years TSTA/NEA member; Fort Worth Education Association Past President; Currently Regional President of Ft. Worth area TSTA-R;

TSTA-R BoD; TSTA-R Budget and Audit Committee.

TFA

No Nominees

AOT 1

- ▶Yolanda C. Molina, Hispanic. Having served in different capacities in TSTA/NEA has given me the knowledge, not only to be a good member but also a good leader.
- ▶Eliza M. Garcia, Hispanic. I would like to represent you as a delegate from Region 1C to the 2005 RA, and be your infor-

mant on the issues presented.

- ▶Barbara Franklin, American Indian/Alaska Native. Region: (1986-present) Treasurer, At-Large Director, Past Regional President. School: PTA, Site Based Committee, Bond Committee, Mediation Committee. Active in community, church and other organizations.
- ▶Alejandra G. Rodriguez, Hispanic. A local president (LEA); spokesperson before school board meetings; Region HoD dele-

The Delegate Story

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

Once we receive notification of the number of state delegates to be elected, TSTA Board policy controls how we will allocate those delegates. This year, because of the small number of members in a couple of TSTA Regions, we can no longer allocate delegates by Regions and still pass the one-person, one-vote test applied by NEA. Instead, most of the delegates are allocated based on the Area Organizing Teams (AOT).

TSTA is allocated 35 state delegates for the 2005 NEA RA. One of those is reserved for the state Vice-President (the State President also is an automatic delegate, but does not count against our total allocation). Based on proportional representation, two delegates must be elected as "Category 2" delegates, representing supervisors and NEA Active Life Active members. Since TFA is not a part of any AOT, and their numbers do entitle them to elect one state delegate, one delegate was allocated to TFA. That leaves 31 state delegates to be allocated by AOT.

Local associations are allocated one delegate for each 150 active and educational support NEA members or major fraction thereof. Locals with fewer than 76 NEA members may cluster to form delegate units. Presidents of locals that have 76 or more members should receive from NEA in late February the number of delegates to be elected to the 2005 NEA Representative Assembly with an accompanying form that is due at TSTA by April 10 and a copy of guidelines to assure proportional representation by educational position. Local presidents should send the state and NEA copies of the local delegate report forms to TSTA as soon as possible after they conduct their local NEA delegate elections or by April 10.

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.

gate; State delegate at national conventions; serve on Community & Instructional state committee.

AOT 2

- Felecia Owens, Black. I am active in my local as the Executive Board Secretary and on the state Community and Instructional Advocacy Committee and the Legislative Cadre Team.
- Brenda Urps-Williams, Black. I am a former president and co-president of my local. I have also been a region president and am currently region vice-president.
- Bruce Banner, Caucasian. As Education Austin's vice president representing Classified Employees, I have led several initiatives for ESPs, including winning experience and overtime pay and fighting at-will employment.
- Robert C. Fierro, Hispanic. NEA Resolutions has been rewarding. I look forward to being part of Team Texas at the NEA-RA. I need your vote to continue serving you.
- ReLaine Reeves, Caucasian. Has been a member of Education Austin since it's formation; is on the Executive Board; participates on Lobby Days

and speaks at school board meetings.

- Daniele R. Starling, Caucasian. Experience and loyalty—Daniele Starling, actively involved, dedicated Ambassador and Officer of R-2D, Round Rock, and formerly Hays, seeks your support as represented TSTA Delegate.
- Rita Haecker, Hispanic. I have served as TSTA Region 2E President and also serve as NEA Director for Texas. I would appreciate your continued support.
- Delia Camacho, Hispanic. As NEA Women's Caucus chair, I understand the duties and responsibilities of serving as an elected delegate to the NEA-RA. Your vote is greatly appreciated!

AOT 3

- Winifred Jackson, Black. TSTA member since 1989. Currently serve as Region 3F President, Longview Educators Association President, and on TSTA Advisory Committee to the TSTA Board of Directors.
- Becky Cerliano, Caucasian. A member of TSTA/NEA since 1975, local leader beginning 1980, Regional Secretary since 1992, President of a new local since 2004, Lobby Cadre since inception.
- Stephen Smallwood,

American Indian/Alaska Native. Having served as building representative, local president, state board member, and NEA director and representative assembly steering committee member, I offer my experience to TSTA.

- Susan Streetman. Reporting for duty! Local Executive last 14 years; Newsletter editor 8 years; FTA sponsor 16+ years; Regional Secretary 4 years; 3 State committees.
- Sarah Simoneaux, Caucasian. What could be better than representing the great state of Texas.
- Lucy Reza-Morales, Hispanic. TSTA: Have served on/as CIA, CB&E, Elections Chair, Women's Caucus Chair. AEA: Have served as Secretary, President and chaired various committees.
- Dolly Texada Spencer, Black. I have actively served in various capacities as a member and association leader for many years. I seek your vote for NEA delegate, 2005.
- Lorraine Klim-Drew, Caucasian. I am on my local board and learning much in my first five years of teaching and would like to continue to expand my knowledge.

AOT 4

- Sharron K. Geeslin, American Indian/Alaska Native. Membership Chair, Klein Education Association; Members recruiter, Klein Education Association; AR; Frisco Education Association Recruiter, half of Transportation; HoD; Know Your Rights; Chapter 37. Thanks.
- Charline Ray, Black. Texas PTA Lifetime Membership; Past President Brown MS; Dallas Museum of Arts; "Art of Looking" Teacher; Sunny South Earth Program; Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.
- Louise Watkins, Asian. Currently: NEA Board of Directors, NEA Asian-Pacific Islander Caucus Chair. Past: Fort Worth Education Association President, TSTA BoD member and Regional President; 25 year TSTA member.
- Eula M. Axe, Caucasian. I've been a local and regional president and have chaired the TSTA Budget Committee. I believe that I can represent our rank and file members.
- Dale D. Kaiser, Caucasian. The NEA is the most democratic organization in the world. I would consider it an honor to represent Texas at the RA.

HOTEL REGISTRATION FORM FOR NEA CONVENTION DELEGATES

July 3–6, 2005 • Renaissance Hollywood Hotel

Complete all requested information and return to TSTA by May 20, 2005. Check-in time 4:00 p.m.—Check-out time 11:00 a.m.

DO NOT CONTACT THE HOTEL DIRECTLY

RENAISSANCE HOLLYWOOD HOTEL

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_____ Single room (1 person—1 bed).....\$135.00
_____ Double room (2 people—2 beds).....\$135.00
_____ Triple room (3 people—2 beds)\$145.00
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_____ Rollaway (___ people @ \$10 per additional person)

Cut-off date for ALL rooms and room rate is May 20, 2005. All rooms are subject to a 14% occupancy tax (subject to change).
Rooms not booked through TSTA may be charged at the hotel rack rate.

I will arrive (June/July) _____, 2005 at _____ (a.m./p.m.) and I will depart July _____, 2005.

Name: _____

Address, City, State, Zip: _____

Day phone: _____ Evening phone: _____

Home email: _____ School email: _____

List ALL individuals per room (one name per line) and accommodations desired:

Circle Room Type	Room No. 1	Circle Room Type	Room No. 2
Single 1.	_____	Single 1.	_____
Double 2.	_____	Double 2.	_____
Triple 3.	_____	Triple 3.	_____
Quad 4.	_____	Quad 4.	_____

First night's room and tax is due upon receipt of reservation. Deposits can be made by major credit cards or check.
Make check payable to the Renaissance Hollywood Hotel

Approved major credit card: _____ Exp. date: _____

Credit card #: _____ Name on card: _____

Return to: TSTA Organizing Center for Executive and Governance, 316 W. 12th St., Austin 78701, fax 512-486-7053

TEXAS VEST ORDER FORM

NEA Representative Assembly, July 3-6, 2005

NUMBER OF UNISEX VESTS BEING ORDERED AT \$37.50 PER VEST:

SMALL: _____ MEDIUM: _____ LARGE: _____ XL: _____ 2XL: _____ 3XL: _____ 4XL: _____

IF YOU WISH TO SPECIFY AN EXACT SIZE, PLEASE COMPLETE BELOW:

CHEST: _____ WAIST: _____ HIPS: _____ BASE OF NECK TO WAIST: _____

All vests will be available for pick up at the first Texas Caucus meeting on July 1.

Total amount included: \$ _____

Name: _____

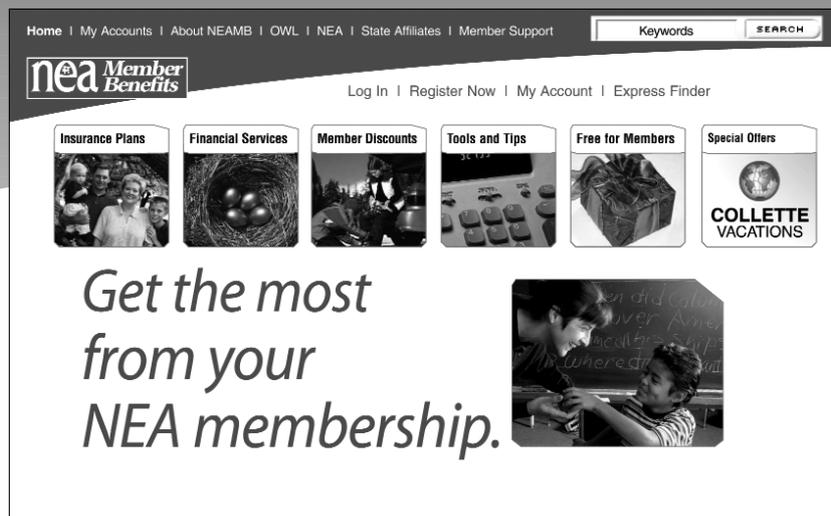
Address, City, State, Zip: _____

Day phone: _____ Evening phone: _____

Home email: _____ School email: _____

ORDERS AND CHECKS, PAYABLE TO TSTA, MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN MAY 13, 2005:
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Texas Faculty Association members Sasha Tarrant of Brazosport College and Eddie Weller of San Jacinto College South organize lobbying efforts for Community College Day. Both are history professors and directors of the honors programs at their respective colleges.

Community College Day Brings 1,100 to Austin

Texas Faculty Association member Sasha Tarrant of Brazosport College put together information booklets and ran the registration table for the first Texas Community College Student Day February 17.

“I helped get the word out about the event and put together some materials that would be helpful for them,” Tarrant said. “Having participated in TSTA Lobby Day, I had a sense of what they’d need.”

The lobby day, organized

by Texas Junior College Student Government Association, brought about 1,100 students, faculty, and staff to the Capitol.

“The students organized it. When I found out they were doing it, I wanted to be a part of it,” Tarrant said. “If there’s something going on, I have a tendency to get involved. With this turnout, it’s got to have an impact.”

Their issues: 1. Students are being adversely affected by

recent budget cuts and cannot absorb more tuition hikes. 2. Funding for community colleges must be increased by \$357.9 million to offset recent cuts, cover unprecedented increases in students and for the state to fund employee benefits.

WHAT’S HAPPENING AROUND THE STATE

►A team of members was trained in December to be “I Can Do It” trainers. “I Can Do It” is an exciting classroom management system that offers educators a systemic way to improve classroom management. The copyrighted program is available to school districts in conjunction with the district’s TSTA/NEA local association. The total length of the training is 7.5 hours. If you would like to know more about this program, please contact TSTA Teaching and Learning at 877-ASK-TSTA.

TSTA-Retired Plans Summer Leadership Conference

TSTA-Retired will have its Summer Leadership Conference June 8-10 at the MCM Grande Hotel-Fun Dome in Odessa. Registration is 5-6 p.m. on Wednesday, followed by a reception and games; Thursday and Friday there are workshops and a tour of Odessa. The conference ends with lunch on Friday.

With your conference registration fee and hotel room, you get two lunches and a dinner, a hot breakfast buffet, evening beverage, and shuttle to and from the airport. Room rates, for one to four people per room, are \$67 for an outside room or \$72 for an inside room, plus state and local taxes.

For more information, phone TSTA-Retired President Eddie Spence at 432-366-3580 or email her at walted@cableone.net. Conference registration is due June 1.

► In February, 150 members of TSTA's **Legislative Cadre** were trained to mobilize and organize members for the fight over HB 2.

► The **Texas Tech University chapter of TSTA-Student Program** hosted their annual Scholastic Book Fair on the second floor of the College of Education February 21- 25, 8 a.m.-6 p.m. They will also be hosting a Read Across America party on Wednesday, March 2, from 7:30-8:30 p.m. at Mahon Public Library, with refreshments, activities, and lots of reading.

► **Texas Future Teachers of America**, TSTA's affiliate for high school students who plan to teach, held its annual state convention February 4-5 in Austin. The group has many exciting projects going on, including the Share-A-Book Project.

► **TSTA-Student Program** will hold its convention April 8-9 at the Radisson Hotel in Austin.

► This summer, TSTA will hold the fourth annual **Ambassador Academy**. Applications, along with other documents, are due April 25 to Rosie Castillo. Check www.tsta.org/inside/calendar/05application.pdf for details or email rosiec@tsta.org.

► **Clinton Gill**, who teaches fourth grade at Whiteside Elementary in Lubbock ISD and is a member of the Lubbock Education Association, received a scholarship check from the Security Benefit Group Charitable Trust. The trust helps members of the education community reach their personal and professional goals through ongoing education



One of the teams of members that came to Austin to be trained as "I Can Do It" trainers.

and is also the underwriter of the NEA Valuebuilder Program. TSTA members interested in receiving a scholarship application can email their mailing address to Liz Picone at Lpicone@neamb.com.

► **AOT 2** sponsored a membership recruitment contest last fall based on a points system. The following individuals, all from Clint, won: Carmen Ladesma, a Southwest Airline ticket and an NEA travel package; Irma Contreras, \$100 and an NEA travel package; Rosa Dominguez, an NEA travel package; and Maria Buhaya, \$50.

► **Frances Fair**, a math teacher for grades 9-12 at the Academy of Creative Education, received the 2004 Trinity Prize for Excellence in Teaching. She received a crystal apple and \$2,000 check during a surprise visit to her classroom. Hers is the only school with three Trinity winners—Fair in 2004, principal Mary Jo McLaughlin in 1986 and Lyn Belisle in 2002.

► NEA has awarded 24 grants totaling more than \$12,000 to student-led initiatives

through **Youth Leaders for Literacy**, a joint program of NEA and Youth Service America (YSA) to help youth direct their enthusiasm and creativity into reading-related service projects. www.nea.org/readacross/volunteer/yllwinners05.html. Two grant winners were from Texas:

In Longview, the **Spring Hill Leaders Core** is holding its "Tales of Teddy" project March 2-April 15 to encourage elementary students needing additional help with reading to meet with them for one hour a week. Each week will have a variety of activities based on a reading theme. The final week's theme is "Teddy Get Ready" in which each student participating in the reading project will receive a stuffed teddy bear that they stuff, dress, and name.

In San Antonio, the **Peer Assistant Leadership Students (PALS) Book Club** has created a bilingual reading project to help all pre-k through third graders in a community that lacks bookstores and a local library. The project will feature guest readers, family reading activi-

ties, and book celebrations.

► A team from the Houston area has received an **NEA Learning and Leadership Grant**. Team members are Sandi Capps and Michaelann Kelley of Eisenhower High School, Cheryl Craig of University of Houston, Paul Gray of Region IV Education Service Center, and Allison Hamacher of Drew Academy. These grants support efforts to engage in high-quality professional development to improve student success. Descriptions of all the grants appear on the NEA Foundation web site, www.neafoundation.org.

Each of these grants is supported in part by Staples through its **Recycle for Education** program, which raises funds nationwide for public education and to preserve the environment. Staples donates \$1 to the NEA Foundation and other public education charities designed by NEA state affiliates for every eligible inkjet and laser tone cartridge recycled at any of its 1,100 locations nationwide. Each dollar raised is returned to the state of origin.



Jason Hillman, vice president of the Klein Education Association, was part of the first group of private individuals in the United States to “buy a trip to weightlessness.” Check the National Space Society web site at www.nss.org for information on parabolic flights or call 202-429-1600.

A Trip to Weightlessness

My students and I had been working on a project with the Clear Lake Area Chapter of the National Space Society and NASA as a part of the science club at Hildebrandt Intermediate School here in Klein. When the project was placed on hiatus due to the space shuttle disaster and subsequent events, there was still funding allocated for it. The Clear Lake Chapter of the National Space Society used the funding to purchase a \$2,500 ticket for me to fly on the first commercial zero gravity flight!

The flight was a magnificent experience. The night after, I woke up clinging to the mattress. I thought that I was floating!

The flight took off from Burbank, California and flew

over the Pacific for two hours. We flew a total of 17 parabolas. From normal earth gravity (1g), we flew several parabolas at 1/3g, which is like being on the surface of Mars. We moved to 1/6g which is like being on the surface of the Moon. These are the really fun ones, because you fall enough to gain your bearing and then you can gently push up and take off again!

Then comes the fantastic experience of zero-g. This is unlike anything that I have ever experienced. Complete freedom of movement. We spent more time in zero-g on this flight than Alan Shepard, the first NASA astronaut, did on his first flight in the 60s.

I met interesting people. Peter Diamandis, founder of

the X-Prize (<http://xprize.org>), and Brian Bennie, the pilot of SpaceshipOne (www.scaled.com) that took the X-Prize, were on board. Rod Roddenberry, son of Star Trek creator Gene Roddenberry was on the flight as well.

I met Astronaut Buzz Aldrin, also. He was on board for the flight, suited up and ready to go, then we had a delay and he had to keep his schedule and be elsewhere. George Whitesides, executive director of the National Space Society (<http://nss.org>) was on the flight. He is a dynamic individual with great vision for the future of education in space development. We talked of building student involvement in the NSS.

The NSS-Clear Lake Chapter—Doug Hall, Kim Hall,

Murray Clark, Robbie Gaines, Francis Govers, and Marianne Dyson, who was one of the first women to work at NASA's mission control—have been supportive of educational efforts through my school and classroom in

KISD; four of them, Doug, Kim, Murray, and Robbie, were on the flight.

Klein ISD generously paid for the flight to and from Houston to support the experience; without the support of the KISD ad-

ministration, this would have been impossible!

TSTA RULES!

—Jason Hillman

In the photo: Jason Hillman (wearing ball cap) with the other members of the first private parabolic flight in the United States.

The Law's the Law

In 1973, when Inez Somers was 24 years old and teaching seventh and eighth grade reading in Aldine ISD, she was fired. The school district had a policy that required pregnant teachers to resign and she refused.

Her superintendent was quoted in the Houston Post as saying, "...we felt that a teacher who was seven or eight months pregnant didn't need to be in the classroom, particularly in secondary schools. This is a personal opinion, but a person at that stage has a number of problems. The teacher is not feeling as well. Her clothes get tight; she's not as comfortable. She has to use the restroom more often. There is a possibility of slipping on the wet cement walk. And with rambunctious youngsters around, they could bump a door into her. Particularly in the junior highs, there are going to be remarks among students."

TSTA took the case all the way to the Fifth Circuit Court and won. Inez is currently a teacher in Alvin, as is the daughter born of that pregnancy, Sissy Coe, who taught throughout her own two pregnancies. Here's Inez's story in her own words.

We had just bought a home and I had to work. I wasn't showing but I was already seven months pregnant. I went in after Christmas vacation and told the principal I was pregnant. He said, "Just don't tell anybody. School will be out soon." I said, "No, the baby's due in March."

He just went crazy. He said, "I can't stand pregnant women, they're always sick, their personalities change, they're always crabby..." and he ordered me out of the building right then and there. He wouldn't even let me go back to my classroom; he sent somebody to get my purse.

I had almost perfect attendance. They had no idea I was even pregnant. How could he say that? It's not that I wasn't doing my job. He said he liked everything about my classes.

I called TSTA. They sent someone out right away to talk to me, and they supported me all the way. They were always there.

We appealed to the 5th Circuit. I'll never forget walking into the court room and the judge said, "Pay her," and that was it. He said, "The law's the law," and that was the end of the case.

Somers v. Aldine set the precedent for pregnant teachers to be able to teach.

I couldn't afford a lawyer; they could've done anything to me. But TSTA was behind me all the way. TSTA is the one to join.



—Inez Somers



Are You “Highly Qualified”?

After nearly three years of bipartisan work, Congress reauthorized the landmark federal special education law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

NEA gave qualified support to the final reauthorization bill. Given its overall positive impact for students with disabilities and special education professionals, the bill’s passage ensures no further delay in addressing NEA member needs in serving students with disabilities. Concerns, however, remain.

NEA was an insistent voice throughout the debate and negotiations. Early in the process, NEA successfully thwarted attempts to insert voucher programs in the bill. Through the consistent feedback from NEA members and state affiliate leaders, NEA focused several key changes on improved services and learning, rather than additional paperwork and process.

The resulting bill:

- ▶ Significantly increases support for professional development;
- ▶ Aims to reduce burdensome paperwork;
- ▶ Provides new flexibility in meeting the “highly qualified” teacher requirements legislated in the ESEA/“No Child Left Behind” Act;
- ▶ Simplifies and better balances discipline procedures while continuing to protect fundamental civil rights of students with disabilities;
- ▶ Enhances educators’ ability to provide early intervention for struggling students; and
- ▶ Provides fair ways to reduce litigation between parents and schools.

Challenges remain, however. There is no extension on the timeline for meeting the federal “highly qualified” teacher provisions. NEA argued that special educators licensed according to state requirements should be deemed

highly qualified according to the federal standard.

While the reauthorization provides new flexibility not provided special educators under the original NCLB mandate, the “highly qualified” teacher provisions under the new law are problematic.

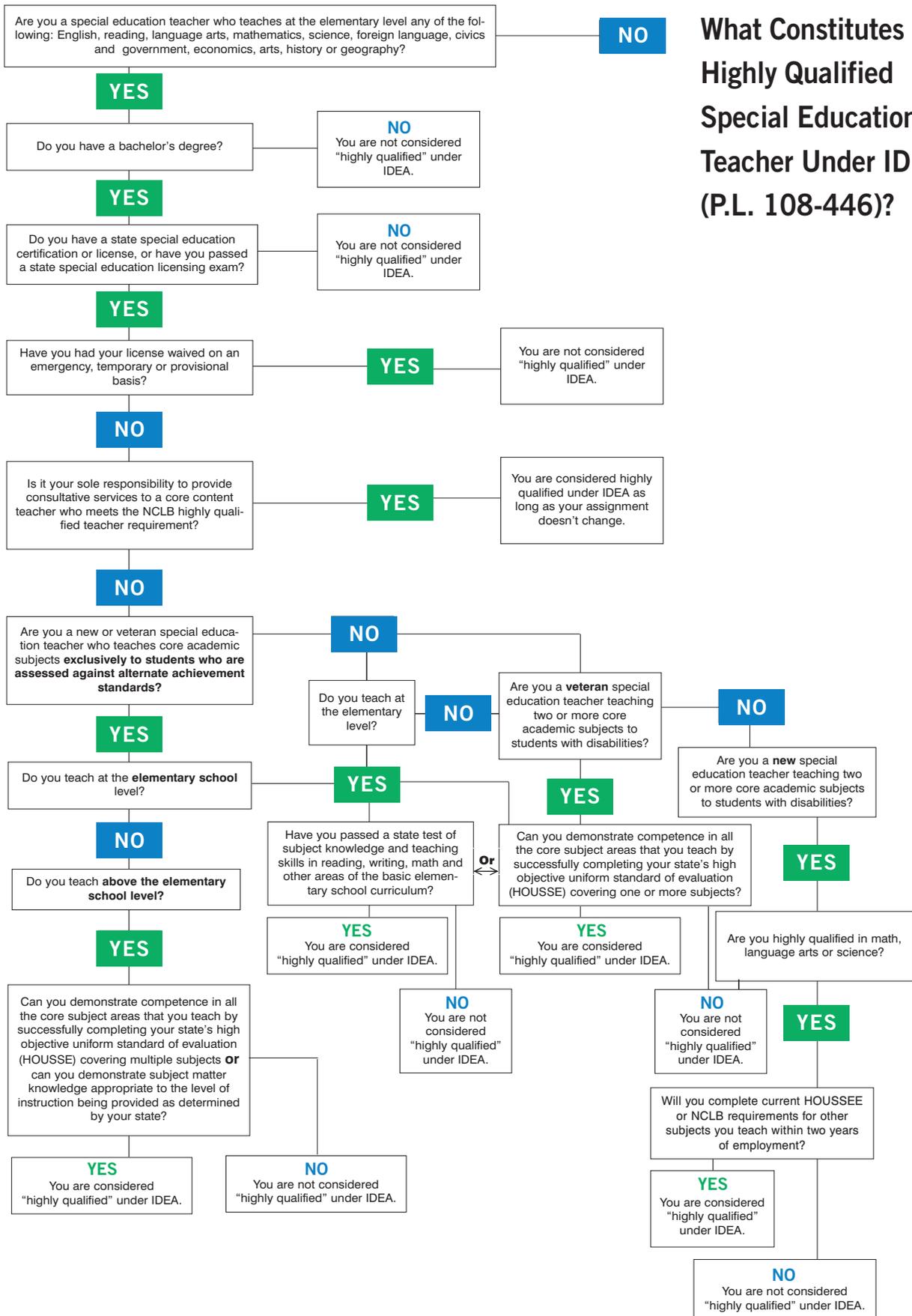
In addition, the legislation provides a seven-year timetable and a formula for achieving full funding of the federal share of special education, but without a guarantee to appropriate the funds. The funding issue remains on the table.

The next step requires that the U.S. Department of Education develop regulations for implementing the new law. This rule-making process will be key to ensuring that supportive provisions written into the law are implemented effectively. NEA is already at work.

Details of the changes for special education teachers are posted at www.nea.org/specialed/reauthorization.html.

To try to simplify what constitutes a “Highly Qualified” special education teacher under the new act, NEA and the National Association of State Directors of Special Education have jointly developed the chart on the next page.

What Constitutes a Highly Qualified Special Education Teacher Under IDEA (P.L. 108-446)?





Tips to Help You Get the Most From Your Money

Q: When our son was born, we named my sister as both godmother and guardian of our child. Now our son is 14, my sister has remarried and our son doesn't like her husband. We don't have confidence in her husband's ability to manage our son's college money if something were to happen to us. What should we do?

A: Naming a guardian for children is one of the most difficult tasks you face as a parent. Perhaps you could look at your situation as an opportunity to open family discussions about teenage issues like getting a job, dating, sports, choosing a college and paying for it. Certainly you wouldn't want someone to tackle the responsibility of helping your child make these decisions if they do not understand and share your values.

The money you leave to your child should be left in his name, in a trust that he will be entitled to receive at

age 21. Name a trustee to manage the trust until your son receives control of it. The trustee should be a person other than the guardian of your child. You should talk this through with your son, with the person you name as guardian and the person you name as trustee.

The toughest part of your decision is how to tell your sister that you are changing guardians. But you must do that for your child's sake.

Q: A neighbor claims that our dog bit her child. She took her child to the pediatrician and sent us the bill for \$150. We didn't see our dog bite her child and we don't believe it did. Should we submit the bill to our insurance company?

A: This is a potentially large issue and you should address it carefully. No one wants to believe his dog is vicious. But if your dog did bite the child, you have a large liability, particularly if the dog might bite someone else.

Be honest with yourself. Has your dog bitten anyone before? Do you keep the dog tied up? Do you warn people that the dog is dangerous? Does it lunge and growl at people? How is your dog viewed in your neighborhood? Do neighbors complain about the dog? Are other neighbors likely to believe that your dog bit a child?

Dog bites are very serious.

The property/casualty insurance industry paid \$345.5 million in claims for dog bites in 2002, up from \$250 million in 1995, according to dogbitelaw.com, a web site with information on the issues compiled by Kenneth Phillips, a lawyer and expert in dog-bite law. Ancient law established the "one-bite rule," which says that each dog has one bite "for free" but after that the owner is liable because he knows that his dog is capable of biting. In fact, many states have revised the "one-bite law" so that the owner might be liable even for the first bite.

That said, you don't want to just take someone's word for it. Were there any witnesses to the alleged dog bite? You should try to establish whether your dog may have bitten the child. If so, you will need to take extreme caution in the future.

Have a discussion with your neighbor. Don't be defensive and angry. Try to establish what happened. If you believe the dog may have injured the child, apologize and pay the bill yourself. It's true that homeowner's insurance covers you for liability issues like this. But many people have a broad misunderstanding about insurance coverage. They believe that damage coverage and liability coverage are somehow "free." In other words, you don't pay for it. That's simply not true.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mary Rowland is a nationally known business and finance writer. The former personal finance columnist for the *New York Times* and former co-host of a nationally syndicated radio

show, Rowland is the author of several investment books and speaks regularly to consumers and financial planners about investing and personal finance.

E-mail your personal finance question to moneyquestions@neamb.com. Questions with broad appeal will be answered in future columns.

Homeowner's insurance does cover you for liability. But the insurance company can drop you for any reason. Often homeowner's insurers drop a client after a claim. It's best to have a high deductible and take care of the smaller claims yourself.

It's most important, though, to settle this issue with the neighbor, to satisfy yourself on whether it is possible that your dog bit her child and to make certain that she is satisfied that you have taken care of the issue. When my son was young, he went to a friend's house, came home and told me that the dog bit him. My son is very knowledgeable about animals. He said that when he turned his back on the dog, it began to growl. He turned back to face it and it nipped him. I called the friend's mother, who said it was not a real bite because it had not broken the skin. I let it go but would not allow my son to sleep over at this boy's house again unless the dog was kept in the basement.

Q: What is a credit score?

A: A credit score is a number, calculated by a computer, that is used to evaluate your creditworthiness. The computer compares certain things about you — like how much money you earn, how long you've been using credit, whether you've made payments on time — to other groups of people who have repaid their loans. In this way, the computer allows a lender to make a prediction of whether you will repay the loan.

Supporters of credit scoring argue that it allows certain

For more information about financial issues, visit www.neamb.com

Another good reason to visit: NEA members can register anytime during the month of April 2005 in the Free Giveaways area of the NEA Member Benefits web site (www.neamb.com) for a chance to win a vacation package with free car rental and luggage set.

The getaway consists of a three-day, two-night stay at a deluxe hotel/resort for two adults (with up to two children sharing the same room) at over 300 locations in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Bahamas, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The package also features breakfast for two each morning (where available); emergency roadside assistance the week you travel; a four-day car rental certificate compliments of Alamo (some restrictions may apply); and a stylish luggage set. Giveaway entry begins on April 1 and ends on April 30, 2005. No purchase necessary to enter.

people to get credit even though they have no credit history. For instance, a recent MBA graduate would be likely to get a car loan because the computer would kick out a score that indicates recent MBA grads repay their debt.

The downside is that you might be denied credit by a computer because it has your data scrambled up or because you hold too many credit cards or move around a lot.

No one knows exactly what data goes into a credit score. But we do know that holding fewer credit cards is better than holding more. Paying on time is a must. In "The Ultimate Credit Handbook," Gerri Detweiler says, "The more you look like other people who pay their bills on time, the more likely it is the computer will approve your application."

Stability at home and on the job and good payment history raise your score. The scoring system looks at how close you are to the limits on your cards, what you spend money on and how much you ask for in cash advances.

Q: I'm having money troubles with my teen. She

doesn't want to work but does want to buy things.

A: Teaching my kids about money is one of the most challenging jobs I've had as a parent. And that's my business! My children have good values, study habits, compassion and so forth. But they sometimes seem to lack good money sense.

I've had the best luck with forcing them to budget — for whatever it is they care about. My daughter, who is a freshman in college this year, got a budget for clothes when she was a high school freshman. She began to shop discount stores and garage sales rather than Bloomingdale's and Macy's. She's a better person for it, she's cultivated some money savvy and she looks more interesting, too.

My teenage son is a musician. He doesn't much care about new clothes. But I can get his attention if I tell him he can get a guitar if he earns and saves a certain amount of money. I also try to get them to understand how to think about how much money they need and how to stretch it out. My son asked for money on the first day of the county fair. I asked him how many

days he would be going, how much he expected to spend each day, whether he was planning to buy food, whether he paid for his girlfriend or she paid her own way. Then I asked him to estimate how much he'd need for the entire six days and told him he couldn't come back and ask for more.

Q: What percentage of income should be spent on rent?

A: A rule of thumb is no more than 25 percent of take-home pay should go for rent. Obviously, that's not a hard and fast number. Some cities — Boston, San Francisco, New York — have very high rents. But it's a good place to start.

Perhaps it's worth mentioning that when you apply for a mortgage, bankers look to see what percentage of your gross (before-tax) monthly income will go to mortgage payments as well as taxes and home insurance. That number should fall roughly in the 25 to 30 percent range. Mortgage payments are a bit different than rent because homeowners reap some tax benefits that may make the payments less costly over time than they first appear.



Amendments and Editorial/Extraneous Language Change to Consider at the 126th Annual TSTA Convention

April 15-16, 2005 • Renaissance Austin Hotel

If you are a delegate to the 2005 TSTA Convention, you will be voting on four proposed amendments and one editorial/extraneous language change to TSTA's Bylaws. The amendments are printed below, for your review prior to arriving at the convention. Wording in brackets with strikethrough ~~⌋~~ reflects current language to be deleted and items **bolded** and underlined reflect insertion of proposed new language.

Other information about convention housing and transportation appeared in the winter 2004 *Advocate* and is available on the TSTA web site, www.tsta.org. Further information about the convention will be mailed directly to delegates.

PROPOSED BYLAWS AMENDMENTS

► Wording in **bold** and underlined—proposed additions.

► Wording in [~~brackets with strikethrough~~]—proposed deletions.

1 INTENT: To allow all new teachers signed up during an NEO/NTO to join at the new-to-the-profession dues amount.

Article III Members
Section 2 Qualifications and Conditions of Membership

A. Active Members

2. Dues—Insert a new paragraph “d.” as follows and reletter all subsequent paragraphs:

2. Dues

d. Persons new to a district and enrolled during that district's New Employee Orientation or New Teacher Orientation shall pay one-half (1/2) of active member dues during their first year in that district.

Maker: NEA-Dallas Board of Directors

Rationale of the Maker: The time period that our locals have to interact and recruit new members during NEO/NTO's is increasingly becoming shorter. To insure that an employee is not only new to the district, but also to the profession, requires a more in-depth interview than time is allowing.

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

Financial Impact: Substantial negative financial impact unless amended as recommended by CB&E. See below for further explanation of financial impact.

CB&E Recommends: Opposition unless amended as suggested below.

CB&E Suggested Amendment: Amend the proposed new paragraph by adding at the end of the paragraph the following: “, unless they were a TSTA member the previous year.”

Rationale for the Amendment: CB&E recognizes the difficulties that led to the suggested Bylaw change, but TSTA does not know when a new member enrollment form arrives

whether it came from an NEO/NTO or some other recruiting effort. Attempts to ascertain that information would be more problematic than the locals face in their task. What TSTA can easily tell is whether a new-to-the-district enrollee was a TSTA member in another district the previous year. Allowing those who were members the prior year to sign at the half-dues amount would have a substantial negative impact on finances. We estimate that as many as 1,000 TSTA members change districts each year, which could result in a loss of \$120,000 (based on 2004-05 dues) to TSTA.

Vote Required for the Amendment: Simple Majority by Voice Vote

Financial Impact of the Amendment: The amendment would eliminate most of the negative financial impact of the proposed Bylaw change. There would still be some negative impact to the Association by allowing many who are not new-to-the-profession to join at one-half dues.

CB&E Recommends: Support for the amendment and support for the Bylaw change if amended.

2 INTENT: To allow Regions that are comprised of a single local the option of meeting minimum standards and compliance without having to always create duplicate structures and records. Also to require annual filing of Bylaws for all Regions.

Article IV Affiliate Structure
Section 2. Regional Affiliates

C. Minimum Standards of Compliance for regional affiliates:

Sub-section I.
For Regions with More Than One Local

The regional affiliate shall:

9. Submit by June 1 annually a list of officers and [~~if changes were made and a copy was not previously submitted to TSTA, a revised~~] **a copy of the current** bylaws and/or constitution;

Sub-section II.
For Regions with Only One Local

The regional affiliate shall:

1. Comply with all parts of subsection I. paragraph A. of this section except for numbers 1, 8 and 12.

2. Adopt an annual planned activity budget; the budget for the local will suffice as long as it provides for and separately tracks income and expenses for the Region.

3. Submit an annual audit as provided in I. below

D. House of Delegates

1. Composition

The Regional House of Delegates shall be composed of:

a. All elected regional officers, Regional Board of Directors and Board of Directors members;

b. Local affiliate delegates shall be elected on the ratio set by each region's governing document provided the ratio maintains the one-person/one-vote principle.

Delegates shall be allocated on the number of Active, Educational Support

Professionals, and Life members holding membership in the local affiliate on **January 15 immediately preceding the House of Delegates** [~~May 31 of the preceding year except as provided in Article VIII, Section 2. A. of these Bylaws~~].

Major fraction shall be used in allocation of delegates. Locals not allocated a delegate based on the above ratio, but which maintain annual officers and meet the requirement under Article IV, Section 1, C, 11, shall be allocated one (1) delegate to the Regional House of Delegates;

2. Regions with a single local may have a separate Regional House of Delegates or may designate an existing governing body of the local to function in that capacity. If the Region has a separate Regional House of Delegates, then all of the provisions of paragraph D. 1. shall apply. If the Region designates an existing governing body, such as the local Board or Association Representative Assembly, then that body must meet all of the requirements of one-person, one-vote, open nominations, secret ballot, proportional representation and ethnic minority guarantees as specified in TSTA Bylaws, and Regional Officers, if not otherwise a member of the body, shall be added when

that body is functioning as a Regional House of Delegates. The House of Delegates whether a separate body or the existing local governing body shall adopt regional bylaws consistent with these bylaws.

3. Purposes

The Regional House of Delegates shall:

a. Adopt regional bylaws and/or constitution consistent with these Bylaws;

b. **Except as provided in c.** ~~e[~~F~~]~~lect a regional president who shall serve on the State Board of Directors, a regional vice president who shall serve as the alternate to the State Board of Directors, other regional officers, and at-large Regional Board of Director members as required. In the event that there is only one nominee for a position, the balloting may be waived, and the nominee declared elected.

c. **Single local Regions may elect officers at a Regional House of Delegates (or through the existing governing body designated to function in that capacity), through an all-member ballot, or at an all-member meeting called for that purpose. In any case, all requirements of one-person, one-vote, open nominations and secret ballot must be met. In the event that there is**

only one candidate for a position, secret balloting may be waived, and the candidate declared elected.

- d. Receive reports and act on recommendations of the regional officers, Regional Board of Directors and regional standing and special committees;
- [d]e. Act as the highest decision-making body of the region except when these Bylaws give exclusive powers to the Regional Board of Directors or officers; and
- [e]f. Conduct other appropriate business.

E. Regional Board of Directors

4. For a single local Region, the Executive Committee or Executive Board of the local, or other similar body, as designated in the Regional Bylaws shall function in the capacity of the Regional Board of Directors. If any of the persons elected to hold Regional Office are not otherwise a member of the group designated to function as the Regional Board of Directors, then they shall become full members of that body when it is acting in its capacity as Regional Board of Directors. If the Regional Board of Directors does not have either sufficient ESP or supervisory or ethnic minority members to meet representation requirements based on membership, then the

Regional House of Delegates, or the body functioning in that capacity, shall elect enough members of the underrepresented group to meet those requirements. Each member of the Regional Board of Directors shall have one vote, except that if the make-up of the group serving in that capacity is such that each having one vote would violate the one-person, one-vote standard, then the Board shall use a weighted vote upon request by any Board member.

G. Grants

Regional affiliates in compliance with minimum standards shall receive a one thousand dollar (\$1,000) governance grant. In addition, each region shall receive a grant, as determined by the state Board of Directors, to be no less than one dollar and twenty-five cents (\$1.25) of each Active membership and sixty-three cents (\$0.63) of each Educational Support Professional membership paid by the members of the region. Each region may request project grant funds for specific organizing and membership promotion through policies established by the Board of Directors. Sparsity grants, not to exceed \$1,250, may be requested by qualifying regions. Except for those regions qualifying for sparsity grants, the total amount of money that a region may receive shall not exceed four thousand dollars (\$4,000). For those

regions approved for sparsity grants, the total amount of money they may receive shall not exceed five thousand two hundred fifty dollars (\$5,250). TSTA will provide a \$1000 grant to regions showing for the calendar year January ~~[31]~~ **15th**, FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) membership increase of 50 members compared to previous January ~~[31]~~ **15th** FTE membership numbers. Payment to be made to the region on August 1.

I. In order to make more efficient and effective use of members' time, and to avoid needless duplication of effort, a Region with a single local may specify in its bylaws whether the Region will open a separate bank account for the Region, or use the local's bank account, providing that Region revenue and expenses are tracked separately. Likewise, the Region may adopt and approve a separate plan and budget, or may use the local plan and budget for that purpose, provided the local plan and budget specifies and tracks the separate use of Region money. If the Region chooses to use the local option, then a copy of the local audit shall fulfill the requirement to submit an annual audit. If the Region chooses to adopt and approve a separate plan and budget, then the Region must submit an annual audit by October 31 following the close of each fiscal year.

Maker: Constitution, Bylaws and Elections Committee

Rationale: It is difficult and

often unnecessarily burdensome for a TSTA Region that is comprised of a single local to meet the standards for TSTA Regions as they currently exist. For one example, the Regional Board of Directors is to consist of the Presidents of all locals in the Region – which creates a single person Board of Directors, clearly not what was envisioned by the Bylaws. This proposed amendment allow options for easing those burdens while still maintaining the same standards required of all Regions.

The purpose of requiring an annual filing of Regional Bylaws, even if not amended, is to ensure that TSTA always has the most recent version.

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

Financial Impact: None

CB&E Recommends: Support

3 **INTENT:** To use current year membership data as of January 15 to allocate delegates to the TSTA and Regional House of Delegates and to determine at-large TSTA Board positions.

Article IV Affiliate Structure
Section 2 Regional Affiliates

D. House of Delegates

1. Composition

- b. Local affiliate delegates shall be elected on the ratio set by each region's governing document provided the ratio maintains the one-person/one-vote principle. Delegates shall be allocated on the number of Active, Educational Support Professionals, and Life members holding membership in the local affiliate on **Janu-**

ary 15 immediately preceding the House of Delegates [~~May 31 of the preceding year except as provided in Article VIII, Section 2. A. of these Bylaws~~]. Major fraction shall be used in allocation of delegates. Locals not allocated a delegate based on the above ratio, but which maintain annual officers and meet the requirement under Article IV, Section 1, C, 11, shall be allocated one (1) delegate to the Regional House of Delegates;

Article VII Board of Directors
Section 5. Election

- B. The state House of Delegates shall elect by plurality vote sufficient supervisory at-large members to guarantee supervisory membership on the Board of Directors proportionate to the supervisory membership in TSTA as of [~~May 31 of the preceding year~~] **January 15 immediately preceding the House of Delegates.**
- C. The state House of Delegates shall elect by plurality vote sufficient ethnic-minority at-large members to guarantee ethnic-minority membership on the Board of Directors at least proportionate to the ethnic-minority membership in TSTA as of [~~May 31 of the preceding year~~] **January 15 immediately preceding the House of Delegates.**
- E. The state House of Delegates shall elect by plurality vote sufficient Educational Support Professional at-large members to guarantee

educational support professional membership on the Board of Directors proportionate to the educational support professional membership in TSTA as of [~~May 31 of the preceding year~~] **January 15 immediately preceding the House of Delegates.**

Article VIII The State House of Delegates
Section 2 Allocation of Delegates
Section 2. Allocation of Delegates

- A. Local Affiliates
Local affiliates shall elect one (1) delegate for each fifty (50) members or major fraction thereof based on the local affiliate's Active, Life, and Educational Support Professional membership on [~~May 31 of the year~~] **January 15** immediately preceding the state House of Delegates. [~~Any local may apply by January 15 to the Executive Director to qualify for additional delegates based on membership growth. Upon receipt of such application, the Executive Director shall determine if the local is entitled to additional delegates based on the membership as of January 15 and shall notify the local whether or not it qualifies for additional delegates. In such instances, the Executive Director shall make a similar calculation to determine the appropriate number of delegates for the Regional House of Delegates and shall notify the local and the Regional President of the result.~~] Locals not allocated a delegate based on the above ratio but which maintain annual officers and meet the requirement under Article IV, Section 1, C, 11, shall be

allocated one (1) delegate to the state House of Delegates. New locals that have affiliated after the [~~May 31~~] **January 15** deadline shall **not be entitled to representation at the state House of Delegates until the following year** [~~have representation based on their membership one hundred twenty (120) days prior to the state House of Delegates~~].

- C. Texas State Teachers Association-Student Program Members
The Texas State Teachers Association-Student Program members shall elect one (1) delegate for each seventy-five (75) members or major fraction thereof based on unified membership in TSTA/NEA on [~~May 31 the year~~] **January 15** immediately preceding the state House of Delegates. The number of Texas State Teachers Association-Student Program members who are elected delegates from eligible locals will be subtracted from the number of statewide delegates to be elected. Student members who are eligible to run for and vote in local chapter elections are ineligible to run for and vote in the student delegate statewide elections.
- D. Substitute Teacher Members
Substitute Teacher members referenced under the provisions of Article III, Section 2, D, 2, a, shall elect one (1) delegate for each one hundred fifty (150) members or major fraction thereof based on unified membership in TSTA and local affiliates where eligible on [~~May 31 of the year~~] **January 15** im-

mediately preceding the state House of Delegates.

- E. TSTA-R Members
TSTA-R members shall elect one (1) delegate for each seventy-five (75) members or major fraction thereof based on unified membership in TSTA-R and NEA-R on [~~May 31 of the year~~] **January 15** immediately preceding the state House of Delegates. The number of TSTA-R members who are elected delegates from eligible locals will be subtracted from the number of statewide delegates to be elected. TSTA-R members who are eligible to run for and vote in local elections are ineligible to run for and vote in the TSTA-R delegate statewide elections.
- F. TFA Members
TFA members shall elect one (1) delegate for each fifty (50) members or major fraction thereof based on unified membership in TFA/TSTA/NEA based on [~~May 31 of the year~~] **January 15** immediately preceding the state House of Delegates. The number of Texas Faculty Association members who are elected delegates from eligible locals will be subtracted from the number of statewide delegates to be elected. Texas Faculty Association members who are eligible to run for and vote in local chapter elections are ineligible to run for and vote in the Texas Faculty Association delegate statewide elections.

Maker: 2004 TSTA House of Delegates, NBI CB&E-1

Rationale: To use the latest possible membership numbers for allocating these positions.

NEA already uses the January 15 date for allocating delegates to the NEA RA, so this will bring consistency and the numbers are readily available in time for allocating delegates and At-Large Board positions. Using more recent membership numbers will ensure a more accurate reflection of the appropriate representation for TSTA members.

Vote Required: Simple Majority

Financial Impact: None

CB&E Recommends: Support, but also recommends the following Amendment be adopted to the proposed Bylaw Amendment before voting.

Amendment Intent: Use March 1 as date for allocation of TSTA-SP Delegates to TSTA House of Delegates, and allow election of TSTA-SP Statewide Delegates at the TSTA-SP Convention.

Amend Proposed Bylaw Amendment 1 by deleting January 15 from Paragraph C of Article VIII, Section 2 and replacing it with March 1 and by adding the following sentence at the end of that same Paragraph:

TSTA-SP may choose to elect statewide delegates at its convention.

Maker: Constitution, Bylaws and Elections Committee

Rationale: Many students join the TSTA-SP at the beginning of the second semester and most of those are not entered by the January 15 deadline. Allocating delegates on the March 1 numbers will more accurately reflect SP membership. Electing statewide delegates at the TSTA-SP convention will allow those voting to know who they are electing.

Vote Required for the Amendment: Simple Majority by Voice Vote

Financial Impact: None

CB&E Recommends: Support of the Amendment and Support of the proposed Bylaw as amended

4 INTENT: To confirm Board authority to adopt a policy denying the seating of delegates to the TSTA House of Delegates from locals that are delinquent in transmitting dues to TSTA.

Article VIII, House of Delegates Section 2. Allocation of Delegates

Add new paragraph G. as follows:

G. The TSTA Board of Directors shall establish a policy setting forth the circumstances under which delegates from a local or TFA shall not be seated at the House of Delegates based on delinquency in transmittal of dues to TSTA. Such policy shall also provide that, Section 1 of this Article notwithstanding, Regional Presidents or Regional Vice Presidents shall not be seated if the delegation from their local is denied seating under this provision.

Maker: Constitution, Bylaws and Elections Committee on recommendation of the Parliamentarian for the 2004 TSTA House of Delegates.

Rationale: Board already has established such a policy. The Parliamentarian for the 2004 TSTA House of Delegates suggested that, according to Roberts Rules, it would be clearer to have a Bylaw specifically granting such authority to the Board. A review of NEA Bylaws shows a similar Bylaw allowing NEA to deny seating of delegates for a state that is delinquent.

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

Financial Impact: Failure of this amendment could make it more difficult for TSTA to collect dues having a negative financial impact on the Association.

CB&E Recommends: Support

PROPOSED EDITORIAL AND EXTRANEOUS LANGUAGE

INTENT: To change the name of the Constitution, Bylaws and Elections Committee to the Credentials, Bylaws and Elections Committee and to insert the new name in each place where the previous name appears in the TSTA Bylaws.

The name appears in the following places in the Bylaws:

Article IX, Section 1. A. 2; Section 1. A. 3.; Section 1. B. 3.; and

Article XIII, Section 1. B.; Section 1. C.; Section 2. A.; Section 4. A.; Section 4. B.

In each place, if this editorial change is approved it will read:

Credentials, Bylaws and Elections Committee

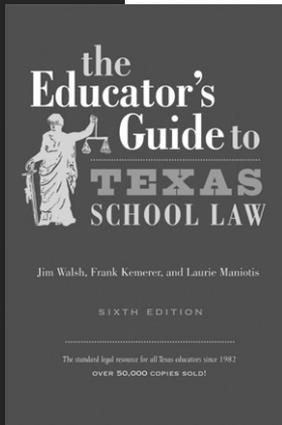
Maker: Constitution, Bylaws and Elections Committee, on recommendation of the Parliamentarian for the 2004 TSTA House of Delegates.

Rationale: TSTA has not had a Constitution in some years, and does not anticipate having one. The Bylaws specify that the Credentials and Elections Committees for the House of Delegates shall be selected from this Statewide Committee, so the name Credentials, Bylaws and Elections Committee accurately reflects the purpose of the committee.

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

Financial Impact: None

CB&E Recommends: Support



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2004-05 ENROLLMENT FORM

Please return this completed form to your Association Representative or mail to TSTA Membership Department, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, Texas 78701-9516. If you have questions, call **877-ASK-TSTA** or email **asktsta.org**.

NAME			SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER			DATE OF BIRTH		
ADDRESS			LOCAL ASSOCIATION			HIRE DATE		
CITY		STATE	ZIP		NAME OF ISD			
EMAIL AT HOME				CAMPUS/WORKSITE				
EMAIL AT WORK				POSITION (I.E. CLASSROOM TEACHER, LIBRARIAN, BUS DRIVER, ETC.)				
AREA CODE HOME PHONE		AREA CODE WORK PHONE		ETHNICITY <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Spanish Origin) <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> Black				

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ANNUAL DUES AND CONTRIBUTIONS	AMOUNT
	1. Professional Dues—TSTA/NEA (Active)	\$377.00
	Professional Dues—New to the profession	\$257.00
	2. Substitute Dues—Full-time	\$278.25
	Substitute Dues—Part-time	\$135.00
	3. Educational Support Dues—Full-time	\$196.50
	Educational Support Dues—Part-time	\$101.00
	4. NEA Fund for Children and Public Education (suggested amount \$15.00)	
	5. TSTA-PAC (see disclaimer below)	\$ 9.00
	6. Region Dues	
	7. Local Association Dues	
	TOTAL	

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

METHOD OF PAYMENT

____ 1 Cash/Check ____ 2 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 will notify School District officials of the annual dues amounts for all levels of the Association each year.

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

Send to: home email address work email address

DISCLAIMER: The TSTA Political Action Committee (TSTA-PAC) and National Education Association Fund for Children and Public Education collect voluntary contributions from Association members and use these contributions for political purposes, including, but not limited to, making contributions to and expenditures on behalf of friends of public education who are candidates for federal office. Contributions to TSTA-PAC and The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education are voluntary; making a contribution is neither a condition of employment nor membership in the Association, and members have the right to refuse to contribute without suffering any reprisal. Although the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education requests an annual contribution of \$15, this is only a suggestion. A member may contribute more or less than the suggested amount, or may contribute nothing at all, without it affecting his or her membership status, rights, or benefits in NEA or any of its affiliates.

Contributions or gifts to The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education, TSTA-PAC and local PACs are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

Federal law requires political committees to report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of \$200 in a calendar year.

Federal law prohibits The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education from receiving donations from persons other than members of NEA and its affiliates, and their immediate families. All donations from persons other than members of NEA and its affiliates, and their immediate families, will be returned forthwith.

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

Annual membership dues to NEA include \$4.55 for NEA Today, \$2.50 for NEA-Retired and/or \$17.00 for the Higher Education publications. The NEA publication(s) received by members are based on membership category. Annual membership dues to TSTA include subscription to the TSTA Advocate. Membership is open only to those who agree to subscribe to the goals and objectives of the Association and to abide by its constitution and bylaws.

Former student member?
 YES NO

MEMBER SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____ LOCAL ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE _____



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