



TSTA NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 15, 2026

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New top leaders take office for Texas State Teachers Association

A new president, Linda Estrada, and new vice president, David Ring, took office today as the top leaders of the Texas State Teachers Association, vowing to continue TSTA's advocacy for policies that strengthen public schools and give every student an opportunity to succeed.

The new leaders were elected by delegates to TSTA's annual House of Delegates meeting in April. Estrada, who served as the union's vice president for the past six years, succeeds former President Ovidia Molina, who was term limited. Ring, an economics and government teacher in Lubbock-Cooper ISD, has been a longtime teacher and TSTA leader in West Texas.

A former elementary school secretary in Donna ISD in the Rio Grande Valley, Estrada is the first education support professional to become TSTA president.

Among TSTA's top priorities under her leadership, she said, will be more state funding for public schools and imposing limits on, or outright killing, the state's new taxpayer-funded voucher program for private schools, which debuts this fall.

"Gov. Greg Abbott and legislative leaders have no reason to brag, as they do, about the too-little, too-late funding they provided for public schools last year," Estrada said. "It was the first noticeable increase in state funding for public education in six years and didn't even keep up with inflationary losses to school districts. Many districts are still trying to address budget deficits with cuts to important programs and school closures."

Estrada added, "At the same time, Abbott rammed through the Legislature the voucher bill, which will cost taxpayers and public schools \$1 billion this year and billions more in the future, if it is not killed or sharply curtailed."

Texas still trails the national average in per-student funding by nearly \$5,000, the National Education Association has reported.

Ring called for more respect for teachers and an end to political attacks from state leaders who should value the tireless work of educators in preparing today's young people for the future.

"Teachers must be free to teach the truth – warts and all – about our history and culture," Ring said. "We demand an end to the politicization of our classrooms, interference that tells us what we can and cannot teach. We also demand an end to policies that discriminate against some of our students. We want to ensure that every student – regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation or religion – feels welcome and respected in our public schools."