

TEXAS EDUCATION TODAY



News from the Texas Education Agency

SEPTEMBER 2010

SUPPLEMENTAL SCIENCE

Due to budget and time constraints, board modifies its call for science materials

Although a predicted state budget deficit of as much as \$21 billion looms for the next biennium, State Board of Education members in September continued to take actions to position themselves to buy new instructional materials should they get legislative permission to do so.

During the 2012-2013 biennium, the state is scheduled to purchase new English language arts books, pre-kindergarten materials, and English as a Second Language materials as part of

Proclamation 2011 and supplemental science books at a cost of approximately \$545 million. This cost is in addition to the \$393 million needed for continuing contracts.

The state's budget crisis makes it difficult to predict when a complete science adoption for grades K-12 will occur. Earlier this year, the board indefinitely postponed that adoption because of its

◆ See **TEXTBOOKS**, page 4

DESEGREGATION

After 40 years, Texas' statewide desegregation order has finally been lifted

Texas' 40-year-old statewide school desegregation lawsuit has come to an end for all districts, except nine that were originally involved in the lawsuit.

"In the decades since that order, we have come together in one unified public school system to serve all our students. Today, African American, Hispanic and white children sit side by side in classrooms. There is every reason to celebrate both what Judge Justice and what two generations of Texans have accomplished to educate all of our children since then," Commissioner of Education Robert Scott said.

In 1970 when this lawsuit, known as Civil Action 5281, was filed in federal district court in Tyler, many Texas districts were already plaintiffs in their own individual desegregation lawsuits. Civil Action 5281 originally dealt with a complaint of racial segregation in nine all-black public school districts and surrounding all-white school districts, as well as the role of the Texas Education Agency in supporting segregation.

However, the litigation grew into a lawsuit impacting the entire state. Judge William Wayne Justice, who oversaw the lawsuit until his death, ordered TEA to assume responsibility for desegregating Texas public schools, which in 1970 were educating about 2.5 million students, 15.2 percent of

which were African American and 21.3 percent were Hispanic.

The judge prohibited public schools from assigning students to schools based on race, from discriminating in extracurricular activities and personnel practices, and from operating segregated bus routes. Because of this ruling, the state has closely monitored these practices for years.

But as of Sept. 27 when the latest ruling was issued by Judge Michael Schneider, all districts except the nine that remain a party to the case are no longer under any obligation to report student transfers or submit real property conveyances for approval to TEA.

The agency is also no longer required to monitor district boundary changes, transportation, extra-curricular activities, or staff and student assignment for purposes of the order.

The court retains jurisdiction over nine districts because those districts were consolidated with the original nine segregated districts and thus remain parties to the litigation. This status in no way implies any wrongdoing by those districts. The agency will coordinate with the Texas Attorney General's Office and the nine districts to complete their removal from the litigation. The school districts that remain parties to this litigation are: Buffalo ISD, Colmesneil ISD, Daingerfield ISD, Fairfield ISD, Malakoff ISD, Nacogdoches ISD, Oakwood ISD, Smithville ISD, and Whitewright ISD

As this lawsuit comes to a close, the public school population looks very different than it did when this litigation began. By 2010, Hispanic students make up 48.6 percent of the student body, while white students make up 33.3 percent of the total enrollment. Fourteen percent of the student body is African American. Asian Americans are 3.7 percent and Native Americans are 0.04 percent of the total enrollment.

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TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Six finalists announced for Teacher of the Year award

Six outstanding Texas educators who have a combined 127 years of teaching experience have been chosen as finalists in the Texas Teacher of the Year program.

The six finalists – three elementary and three secondary school educators – were selected from the 40 regional Teachers of the Year from each of the state’s 20 education service center areas. The finalists now contend for the honor of being named Texas Elementary Teacher of the Year and Secondary Teacher of the Year.

The finalists for Elementary Teacher of the Year are:

Rachael Brunson, a teacher at Great Oaks Elementary School in the Round Rock Independent School District;

Daniel Leija, a fifth-grade teacher at Esparza Elementary School in San Antonio’s Northside ISD;

Donalyn Miller, a language arts teacher at Trinity Meadows Intermediate School in Keller ISD.

The finalists for Texas Secondary Teacher of the Year are:

Jane Dunn, a chemistry teacher at Little Cypress-Mauriceville High School in the Little Cypress-Mauriceville Consolidated ISD;

Beth Huckabee, a biology teacher at Flour Bluff High School in the Flour Bluff ISD;

Melissa Wafer-Cross, an English teacher at Lubbock High School in the Lubbock ISD.

The winners will be announced at an Oct. 15 luncheon at the AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center at 1900 MLK Blvd. on the University of Texas-Austin campus.

The top two teachers will receive a \$5,000 cash prize, a technology package valued at more than \$16,500, a computer, a trophy, a travel allowance and other prizes. A \$500 cash prize is awarded to the remaining 38 regional Teachers of the Year.

“Our 40 regional Teachers of the Year have served Texas in the classroom for a combined 541 years. Their record of service to our children is remarkable. The newcomers and veterans alike show a commitment to lifetime learning. They are constantly looking for new ways to present material and to incorporate the latest developments into their classrooms,” said Commissioner of Education Robert Scott.

“The six finalists for the top award are those kinds of teachers that students remember long after they have left their classroom. Their impact has been far reaching; their excitement contagious. On behalf of the Texas Education Agency and parents across this state, I thank you for your commitment to our children,” he said.

In their award application, the six finalists talked about their background, their community involvement, philosophy of teaching and their thoughts about current education trends.

Elementary Education Finalists

As a child, Round Rock’s Rachael Brunson found school to



Rachael Brunson

be a place of refuge from her impoverished home life. “I can say, without reservation, that I would not have achieved nearly as much in my life without the encouragement of a handful of teachers who looked past my tattered exterior and found my spark. Why teaching?” Now having taught for 13 years, she says, “I want to be the person who ignites their spark. I am teaching and motivating children to be change agents in the world.”

Brunson incorporates service learning into her classroom. Last year, her class developed a water conservation project during which they researched issues related to water such as availability, pollution, water treatment and conservation. She also organized the MLK Day of Service on her campus in which more than 200 participants helped to beautify the Great Oaks school grounds and made special pillows for patients at the Dell Children’s hospital.

Daniel Leija of Northside is a former Air Force veteran and



Dan Leija

licensed vocational nurse, who says “preparing for combat situations and war zones was nothing compared to facing 21 kindergartners my first morning as a teacher.” But with help from a mentor teacher, he and his students flourished that first year. Now having taught for a decade, he says, “My classroom serves as an oasis for students of all grade levels to enjoy. Science artifacts and pets

abound throughout the room for students to explore and handle.” Around his school, Leija is known as “Dan, Dan, the Science Man.” Each Monday, he conducts science experiments that are broadcast to classrooms all over his campus. He says he always reinforces the connection between a concept and real-world applications so students can relate to the learning. When asked what he does for a living, Leija says, in part, “I am a teacher. I have answered my nation’s call to redefine the future. I am a coach, mentor, counselor and friend, fully prepared to take the necessary steps to make each student’s dream become a reality.”

Like Leija, Donalyn Miller took a circuitous route before



Donalyn Miller

becoming a teacher, having worked for a decade as a hotel and restaurant manager and bookkeeper. She has now taught eight years and has written a book called *The Book Whisperer*, which describes her beliefs about teaching reading. To encourage reading over the summer, Miller began Trinity Meadows’ annual Book Swap in which students bring books they have finished and are willing to swap for other books.

◆TEACHER OF THE YEAR *continued*

Miller says, “While my professional training prepared me for many things – designing lessons, implementing best practices, working with other teachers – it never prepared me for the fierce, territorial love and concern I feel for the children in my care. These children – brilliant, loving, flawed, hurting and needy – come into my classroom every year....I am forever, their teacher.”

Secondary Education Finalists



Jane Dunn

Jane Dunn of Little Cypress-Mauriceville says, “As a teacher, my job is to prepare students for their future by providing them with a first class education.” As a high school chemistry teacher, she can see some immediate results of her work. A few years ago, 27 honor graduates were introduced during the high school graduation ceremony and 16 of those had chosen to pursue a chemistry-related major in college. “This indicated to me that I had been successful in at least giving them the confidence needed to take another chemistry course and at most making them consider chemistry as a career choice,” she said.

During her 22-year teaching career, Dunn has found that “when a student is convinced that a teacher really cares about their well-being, they are much more motivated to learn.”



Beth Huckabee

Beth Huckabee of Flour Bluff still loves her job even after 39 years of teaching. “I love watching the ‘light go on’ when a student understands a difficult Physics concept or makes a connection with previous material in Biology or Anatomy and Physiology. I love that each day and each student is different. After 39 years, I still get up every morning looking forward to going to school, and I am a little sad in May when the school year ends.

“In science, we are seeing more alternatively certified teachers. Often they are hired at the last minute and are not prepared emotionally or educationally to teach high school science. As a veteran teacher and head of the science department, I believe it is my duty to mentor these new teachers and help them adjust to the rigors of teaching,” Huckabee said.



Melissa Wafer-Cross

Melissa Wafer-Cross has taught for 35 years, working in high schools, education service centers, the Peace Corps and the Lubbock County jail. “The men and women who really made me a teacher... were the inmates of the Lubbock County Jail. For two years, I taught the GED classes at the jail; those classes were microcosms of many classrooms I’ve been in over the

years. I learned to adapt to a classroom with students of differing abilities, to listen honestly and give relevant feedback; to assess student goals and move forward with a plan.”

Wafer-Cross teaches literature. “I believe that exploring the stories of those who live near us and those who live far away creates a bond between us that is stronger than our differences. That is why I teach literature. I understand that my English class may be the last English class some of the students take during their school careers, so it is important to me that they learn to express their ideas cogently, to listen open-mindedly, to respond intelligently, and to write clearly.”

AP/IB Teacher Training Reimbursements

Teachers attending AP/IB and Pre-AP/Pre-IB training between September 1, 2009, and August 31, 2010, are eligible to apply for reimbursement from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for up to \$450 for the registration/tuition of the training. The application and more information may be found at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=3822>.

Some important things to remember when applying for the reimbursement:

- Only authorized 30-hour **subject-specific** training will be reimbursed.
- Training is only reimbursed every other year.
- Authorized training must have been provided by the College Board, International Baccalaureate Organization, Laying the Foundation, or Springboard.
 - Teacher applications should be submitted to a campus or district contact who will compile the applications for the TEA. Teacher applications should not be sent to TEA.
 - AP teachers must teach a course that has been authorized by College Board through the course audit system.
 - IB teachers must teach at an authorized IB school; candidate school teachers are not eligible for the reimbursement.

Pre-AP/Pre-IB teachers must teach a course that goes beyond the TEKS in depth and complexity; is appropriately rigorous to prepare students to be successful in AP/IB courses; is part of a vertically-aligned series of courses that ends with a specific approved AP or authorized IB course; and is listed on the 2010 Potentially Eligible TTR Courses chart.

For more information, e-mail gted@tea.state.tx.us or call Debbie Gonzales or Rose Duarte at 512-463-9581.

AP RESULTS

Texas experiences increase in Advanced Placement program

More Texas students are taking Advanced Placement (AP) tests and more students are earning top scores on the exams.

Results released by the College Board, which owns and operates the AP testing program, show that 179,320 Texas students in public and private schools took AP exams in 2010. That represents a 12.8 percent increase over 2009. There was an 18.1 percent increase in Hispanic students in this state who took AP exams and a 17.3 percent increase for African-American students.

Many students took multiple AP exams last spring. Texans took 325,571 exams, an increase of 13.1 percent over 2009. Five years ago, 224,168 tests were taken by Texas students. The vast majority of tests are taken by public school students.

“We are seeing incredibly strong growth in the AP program. Students are realizing that they are better prepared for college when they take rigorous courses such as AP classes, and it could save them money in the long run,” said

Commissioner of Education Robert Scott.

Students receive a score of 1-5 on an AP test. Many universities will award course credit for scores of 3, 4 or 5, but the scores needed to obtain course credit vary from university to university.

Of the tests taken by Texans, 153,539 earned a score of three or higher. That represents an 11 percent increase over the previous year. The percentage of African-American students who earned a

high score increased by 20 percent, while Hispanics had a 16 percent increase in scores of 3-5.

The five exams most frequently taken by Texas students are English Language and Composition; U.S. History, English Literature and Composition; World History and Spanish Language.

Below is testing information disaggregated by student groups. It includes both public and private school students.

Student group	# of Test Takers	# of Exams Taken	# Scoring 3-5
Asian-American	17,248	39,674	24,968
Change from 2009	11.9%	12.6%	12.9%
African-American	13,469	22,050	5,284
Change from 2009	17.3%	18.3%	19.9%
Hispanic	65,993	107,299	35,456
Change from 2009	18.1%	18.9%	16.4%
White	72,434	136,903	79,101
Change from 2009	6.1%	5.8%	6.1%

◆ TEXTBOOKS *continued*

price tag of at least \$347 million.

As a stop gap measure, the board voted to purchase supplemental science material that contains newly revised curriculum standards for biology, chemistry, physics and Integrated Physics and Chemistry (IPC) only. The material will all be provided electronically. This action deleted earlier plans to purchase supplemental science material for grades 5-8 as well.

Because of the extensive changes to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills in grades 5-8 and a tight delivery schedule, it was felt that publishers would have a difficult time preparing the needed material by the May 2011 due date.

The board has begun re-examining the entire textbook adoption schedule to

determine whether there is a way to get costs under control.

Normally, the Permanent School Fund, often referred to as the children’s textbook fund, generates enough money to pay for new instructional materials. But the international financial crisis caused the value of its holdings to decline drastically in 2008. The fund didn’t produce enough money to cover the entire cost of purchasing new material so it was necessary to use federal stimulus funds, along with state funds, to pay for the books.

The fund has now made a dramatic resurgence and the board expects it to

generate \$1.566 billion over the next two years, more than enough to pay for new textbooks. (See related story on page 11.) However, state law requires the Texas Legislature to appropriate that money back to the Texas Education Agency in order for it to be spent on new materials.

Commissioner of Education Robert Scott said TEA will amend its budget request to lawmakers and seek funding for new textbooks. It will likely be May 2011 before it is clear whether lawmakers are willing to approve the expenditure for instructional material.



PRESIDENTIAL MATH & SCIENCE AWARDS

Six Texas finalists announced for Presidential Awards

Six Texas teachers have been named finalists for the prestigious Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) program.

The 2010 PAEMST program recognizes kindergarten through sixth grade mathematics and science teachers whose innovative methods bring teaching to life in the classroom.

The Texas finalists in elementary mathematics are:

Elizabeth Hudgins is a fifth grade teacher at Eanes Elementary School in Eanes ISD and has eight years of teaching experience.

Lorene Wallace is a first grade teacher at Bryker Woods Elementary School in Austin ISD and has six years of teaching experience.

Stephanie Weaver is a third grade teacher at Shadycrest Elementary School in Pearland ISD and has 14 years of teaching experience.

The Texas finalists in elementary science are:

Nancy Douglas is a fifth grade teacher at Andrews Elementary School in Austin ISD who has 18 years of teaching experience.

Martha McLeod is a fifth grade teacher at Fulton 4-5 Learning Center in Aransas County ISD who has 18 years of teaching experience.

Kent Page is fifth grade teacher at Carnahan Elementary

School in Northside ISD and has 10 years of teaching experience.

PAEMST is the highest recognition that a mathematics or science teacher may receive for exemplary teaching in the United States. The National Science Foundation administers PAEMST on the behalf of The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy.

To achieve recognition through this program, a teacher first must be nominated for the award. A state panel of master teachers, specialists and administrators reviews the applications and chooses the most outstanding mathematics and science teachers for the National Science Foundation to consider for state finalist status. These state finalists will be recognized by the State Board of Education.

After the initial selection process at the state or territorial level, a panel of distinguished scientists, mathematicians, and educators may select one mathematics and one science teacher from each state and U.S. jurisdiction for the national award. National winners receive \$10,000, an all expense paid trip for two to Washington, D.C. to attend recognition events and professional development opportunities, and a citation signed by the President of the United States.

Next year, outstanding math and science educators teaching in grades 7-12 with five years or more of teaching experience are eligible. For more information, go to <http://www.paemst.org>.

TEACHING MATERIALS

Free supplementary educational materials available on iTunes U

Free, supplementary educational content that can be accessed on-the-go is now available on the Texas Education site on iTunes U.

“iTunes U will easily and efficiently distribute Texas-based educational materials to teachers, parents and students statewide, and will help improve Texas education and secure our position as the best place to live and work in the years to come,” Gov. Rick Perry said when he unveiled the site in August. “The quality of education in Texas is steadily improving as we continue to combine tried and true teaching methods with new technology to achieve educational success.”

Texas Education on iTunes U will allow teachers to access professional development and support materials, while giving students access to information to help with understanding concepts or conducting additional research on a subject area. Additionally, iTunes U will serve as a venue for state agencies and non-profit organizations to post their educational content.

The site is maintained by the Texas Education Agency, which is now one of about a dozen state education agencies with a presence on iTunes. To reach the site, go to iTunes and click on the tab at the top of the page called iTunes U, then click on

the quick link called K-12 and select Texas Education.

“Texas Education on iTunes U represents another addition to Texas’ efforts to put rich and relevant content into the hands of our teachers, students and the public at large,” Commissioner of Education Robert Scott said. “iTunes U gives the state a dynamic platform to provide content on-the-go.”

Perry also announced a challenge for math educators to generate professional development content, such as videos or podcasts, focusing on algebra readiness for Texas Education on iTunes U. This will create an online resource to help teachers ensure their students master the curriculum or better understand a concept.

Texas Education on iTunes U expands Project Share, a collaborative effort with the New York Times and Epsilon LLC, which will enable the creation and delivery of high quality professional development in an interactive and engaging eLearning environment. The online platform, unveiled this spring, also provides access to online resources, online course content, academic networking and professional learning communities. The Project Share initiative currently supports more than 167,000 teacher accounts, and the website (www.projectsharetexas.org) will link directly to Texas Education on iTunes U.

HEROES FOR CHILDREN

State Board honors school volunteers at September meeting

The State Board of Education honored 15 volunteers from school districts across Texas with the Heroes for Children award at their September meeting.

The honorees are selected by the board members and recognized for volunteering their time, talents and skills to help improve the public schools in their communities.

Several of these individuals have shared their personal and material resources with public school children for decades. Their service is self-motivated, often by the desire to inspire at-risk students to stay in school or to improve the morale of teachers and staff. Not only do these unsung heroes raise students' self-esteem, they contribute to the academic success of the children whom they mentor.

A description of the contributions each Hero for Children has made to Texas school children appears below.

Sarah Ramos, SBOE District 1. Ramos is a volunteer at J.C. Martin Elementary School in the Laredo Independent School District. Ramos, who volunteers about 120 hours a month, works with the school's Language Proficiency Advisory Committee, is a representative for the Student Health Advisory Committee, the Student Handbook Revision Committee, the Parent Advisory Committee, serves as the Parent-Teacher Council President, and is a parental advisor for Serving Children and Adolescents in Need (SCAN). Plus, she serves as homeroom mom and assists by providing decorations for classroom activities.

Lydia Gomez, SBOE District 2. Gomez is a volunteer at Los Encinos Special Emphasis School in the Corpus Christi ISD. Gomez helps organize school functions such as author's teas, talent shows, family nights, field day, book fairs, award ceremonies, field trips and other campus functions. She rolls up her sleeves to sew, make games, laminate materials, run errands, decorate, does cafeteria duty, and has dedicated her life to volunteering.

Roland A. Champagne, SBOE District 3. Champagne, a volunteer at Cambridge Elementary School in the Alamo Heights ISD, has been a volunteer for 10 years and his main goal is to assist in the education of at-risk children. He does this by connecting with each student, finds their true interests and helps them develop confidence as writers. He shares his enthusiasm for books, artifacts, newspapers and magazine articles, using these to motivate children to excel. He has worked with many teachers and mentored many students during his tenure at Cambridge.

Caronetta Jones, SBOE District 4. Jones has been a volunteer in the Houston ISD for more than 30 years. In 2010, she was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by the district for her advocacy and dedication to education. Jones has served as president of the HISD Council of PTAs. She actively collaborates with school staff on ways to increase parental involvement and promotes school improvements in partnership with the PTA.

Charlie Kimmey, SBOE District 5. Kimmey, a volunteer with the Temple ISD, has dedicated himself to improving the lives of children. He often goes above and beyond his role as executive director for the Ralph Wilson Youth Clubs of Temple. Kimmey operates various programs through the club, including a Boys Club, Girls Club, afterschool program, summer program and sports program. He is also an active member of the Temple ISD Wildcat Mentor Board and has donated his time and facilities to host and feed more than 75 student mentees with their mentors for Wildcat Mentor Program activities.

Christine Mycio-Spring, SBOE District 6. Spring is currently a volunteer at Benfer Elementary School in Klein ISD. She previously volunteered at Epps Island Elementary where she was an active member of the PTO and was the parliamentarian/historian. She was recently named a "Klein Friend of Freedom" for outstanding volunteer service and student advocacy. Spring works with small groups of young students every day who need assistance with reading skills. She helps with and coordinates school celebrations, field days and teacher appreciation events.

Felipe Santiago Flores, SBOE District 7. Every day, just after the last bell rings, Flores can be found in front of Edison Middle School in Port Arthur ISD, wearing a bright orange safety vest, assisting students as a traffic control volunteer. He directs traffic and helps monitor students waiting for their parents. His tireless volunteer service helps keep the students safe and also gives them a positive interaction with a caring adult at the end of each school day. His passion and generosity led the school personnel to name Flores Volunteer of the Year for 2010.

Martha Garrett, SBOE District 8. Garrett is a volunteer at Texas High School in the Texarkana ISD. Garrett serves as the 2009-10 Texas High School VIPS College Resource Center Coordinator. She helps students coordinate with their advisors to determine required testing and courses and to secure financial aid. Garrett also works with students in the THS College Resource Center helping them define their goals and explore college choices. She coordinates KUDER career testing and organizes the teacher appreciations for the campus.

Adriana Flores, SBOE District 9. Flores serves as a member of the AVID Site Team, where she provides insight to educators on how best to serve students and the Hispanic community. She also works to translate documents previously only available in English. Because of Flores' work, parents have easy access to information about college applications, the SAT and ACT tests, the FAFSA, the Texas Grant, scholarships and college readiness.

George Wagner, SBOE District 10. Wagner has been a volunteer in the Georgetown ISD since 1997. Wagner mentors on average three to five children a year; spending about four years with each child. He also is a volunteer at the Boys & Girls Club and the Head Start Center. Wagner is a member of the



Public school volunteers recognized as Heroes for Children include (front row, l to r): Mary Henderson, Lydia Gomez, Sarah Ramos, Martha Garrett, Caronetta Jones, and Charlie Kimmey. Back row (l to r): Christine Mycio-Spring, Roland Champagne, George Wagner, Nannette Vick, Clarence Saunders, and standing in for Margaret Talkington, Lubbock Independent School District representative Nancy Sharp. Not pictured: Felipe Santiago Flores, Adriana Flores, and Marcia Garcia.

Georgetown Partners in Education, serving as a board member for six years and recruiting and training hundreds of new mentors and tutors throughout the community.

Marcia Garcia, SBOE District 11. Garcia, a volunteer in the Springtown ISD, is actively involved in many education-related organizations such as the PTO, the Springtown Educational Foundation, Athletic Booster Club, concession stand committee and the bond planning committee. She has also been instrumental in the development and organization of the Springtown ISD Spirit Shop, which brings in revenue for the benefit of school-related organizations. She strives to continually promote educational opportunities for all students.

Clarence Saunders, SBOE District 12. Saunders, a volunteer in the Irving ISD, works with and mentors students on both elementary and high school campuses, challenging students to be the best they can be. He has personally organized a curriculum for his mentoring sessions that addresses character issues, such as integrity, honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, and personal responsibility. Saunders is a member of the Parent Advisory Council for MacArthur High School and participates in the student intern training experience program for Jack E. Singley Academy.

Nannette Vick, SBOE District 13. Vick has been a volunteer in Lancaster ISD for more than 35 years. She has served as a

PTA member at the local, district and state levels, and has been on numerous committees such as the LISD Strategic Planning, Budget, Campus Advisory and Bond Committee as well as the Lancaster Education Foundation Board of Directors. She is currently completing a two-year term as president of the Pleasant Run Elementary School PTA, which she began 35 years ago.

Mary Henderson, SBOE District 14. Henderson is a volunteer at Nettie Baccus Elementary School in Granbury ISD. She works in the school's graphics lab making copies, binding books, cutting out projects, laminating and much more. She organized and coordinates the Baccus Country Store. The store sells items to students who use Baccus Bucks that they earn for good citizenship and behavior. Henderson is a volunteer who works year-round. She often spends her summers collecting items for classroom use in the coming school year.

Margaret Talkington, SBOE District 15. Talkington has been a mentor, friend and catalyst for success for countless children and young adults in Lubbock. For 35 years, this education advocate has sponsored a local style show to raise money for scholarships for young women. Well into her nineties, Talkington still provides financial support and volunteers as an inspirational speaker at the girls school that bears her name: The Margaret Talkington School for Young Women Leaders in Lubbock ISD.

SUCCESSFUL SCHOOLS

25 Texas schools win 2010 Blue Ribbon Schools award

Twenty-five Texas schools were named 2010 Blue Ribbon Schools award winners by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). The award honors schools that achieved academic excellence or made significant progress in closing the achievement gap.

Since its creation in 1982 by then Secretary of Education Terrel H. Bell, this prestigious program has honored more than 6,300 of America's most successful schools, including more than 500 Texas schools. The Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools.

The schools are selected based on one of two criteria:

- schools that dramatically improve student performance to high levels on state tests;
- schools whose students achieve in the top 10 percent of their state on state tests.

The schools recognized for Dramatic Improvement are:

Beaumont ISD – Dr. Carrol Thomas, superintendent
Ogden Elementary – Wayne Wells, principal

Bloomington ISD* – Bradley S. Williams, superintendent
Bloomington Elementary – Israel Salinas, principal

Corpus Christi ISD – D. Scott Elliff, superintendent
Marvin Baker Middle – Darla Reid, principal

Houston ISD – Dr. Terry B. Grier, superintendent
Albert Sidney Johnston Middle – Dave Wheat, principal

The schools recognized for high performance are:

Alief ISD* – Dr. Louis B. Stoerner, superintendent
Alief Kerr High – Greg Freeman, principal

Dallas ISD – Dr. Michael Hinojosa, superintendent
H.S. Thompson Learning Center – Kamalia Cotton, principal
James B. Bonham Elementary – Sandra Fernandez, principal

Glasscock County ISD* – Steve Long, superintendent
Garden City High – Ken Hoskins, principal

Houston ISD – Dr. Terry B. Grier, superintendent
J.P. Cornelius Elementary – Karen Jackson, principal
James Burrus Elementary – Jesse Woods, Jr., principal
Oak Forest Elementary – Scott Pollack, principal
Briar Meadow School – Peter Heinze, principal

Jacksonville ISD* – Dr. Joe Wardell, superintendent
West Side Elementary – Sandi Jones, principal

La Vega ISD* – Dr. Sharon M. Shields, superintendent
La Vega Elementary – Shaunte Stewart, principal

The winning Texas schools were recommended by an intra-agency committee at the Texas Education Agency that examined student achievement statistics for the more than 8,000 public school and charter campuses in the state. The schools selected have demonstrated success in closing the achievement gap and each school has an economically disadvantaged population of 40 percent or greater. Schools that receive the award serve as models of best practices for schools across the state.

After being identified by the state, the schools competed in a rigorous application process through the USDE.

Schools that receive the prestigious award will be recognized at the Blue Ribbon Schools conference in Washington, D.C. on Nov. 15-16 where each recipient will receive a plaque and a flag signifying their status as a Blue Ribbon School.

Hurst–Eules–Bedford ISD – Dr. Gene Buinger, superintendent
Central Junior High – Jonathan James, principal
Hurst Junior High – Lesli Guajardo, principal

Jacksonville ISD* – Dr. Joe Wardell, superintendent
Fred Douglass Elementary – Amber Penn, principal

Richardson ISD – Dr. Kay E. Waggoner, superintendent
Lake Highlands Junior High – Veronica Escalante, principal

Scurry–Rosser ISD* – Chris Couch, superintendent
Scurry-Rosser Middle – J.R. Proctor, principal

Lone Oak ISD* – Eddie White, superintendent
Lone Oak Elementary – Judy Steadham, principal

Mason ISD* – Pam Kruse, superintendent
Mason High – Chris Habecker, principal

Richardson ISD – Dr. Kay E. Waggoner, superintendent
Dover Elementary – Brona Comeaux–Hudson, principal

South Texas ISD – Dr. Marla M. Guerra, superintendent
South Texas High School for Health Professions – Barbara Heater, principal

The Varnett School* – M. Annette Cluff, superintendent
The Varnett School – East Campus in Houston– Twilet Alexander, principal

United ISD* – Roberto J. Santos, superintendent
Trautmann Elementary – Cynthia Rodriguez, principal

* This is the first Blue Ribbon School nomination for the district.

SAT/ACT RESULTS

Significant increase in number of students taking SAT, ACT

Texas' efforts to create a college-going culture are reaping benefits as the state experienced a significant increase in the numbers of students taking the SAT and ACT.

Texas led the nation with largest increase in the number of public school students who took the SAT, according to the College Board. Texas public schools had 123,154 graduating seniors who took the college admissions test, which is a 10,678 student increase over the participation rate for the Class of 2009.

When private school students are included, 148,102 Texas students took the SAT, a 6,369 student increase over 2009 participation rates. That represents the country's largest year-over-year increase in test takers. It also represents the highest percentage increase of any state with more than 10,000 test takers.

The ACT test experienced a similar leap in test takers. ACT reported that 92,615 Texas members of the Class of 2010 took the ACT, compared to 82,640 members from the Class of 2009. Much of the increase is attributed to a fee waiver that allows low-income students to take the test for free.

When underclassmen are considered as well, a total of 188,209 Texans took the ACT this year, an increase of 18 percent over the previous year.

"Texas has worked to increase the college-going culture, and this is proof that students are responding. The Class of 2010 had large increases in the number of students taking both the SAT and the ACT admission exams," said Commissioner of Education Robert Scott.

Another spike in participation is expected next year because the state paid for more than 56,800 members of the Class of 2011 to take either the SAT or ACT.

Even with the large increase in participation, members of the

Class of 2010 earned the highest mathematics and science scores posted on the ACT in the past decade. They earned an average

score of 21.4 on the math section, an increase of .1 and a science score of 20.9, an increase of .3. The score on the reading section of the exam was 20.8, while the score on the English exam was 19.7.

The ACT is comprised of four sections, English, mathematics, reading and science, and each section is scored on a scale of 1-36. In addition to receiving individual scores for each section, students also receive a composite score, which is an average of the four sections.

The overall composite score for Texas test takers remained steady at last year's record high score of 20.8.

Among Texas public school students who took the SAT, every major student group, except white students, increased their scores on either two parts of the exam or all three. The SAT is divided into three

sections –critical reading, mathematics and writing.

The average score for the state's public school students was 481 on the critical reading section, 504 on the math section and 469 on the writing exam. A perfect score on each section of the SAT is 800.

The top five universities receiving scores from Texas SAT test takers who are in public or private school, are:

1. University of Texas, Austin
2. Texas A&M University, College Station
3. Baylor University
4. Texas Tech University
5. Texas State University, San Marcos

SAT Results

	Number of Test Takers	Critical Reading	Math	Writing
Texas-public schools	123,154	481	504	469
Change from 2009	9.50%	0	0	-1
Nation-public schools	1,114,273	498	511	488
Change from 2009	2.10%	1	1	1
Texas-all schools	148,102	484	505	473
Change from 2009	4.50%	-2	-1	-2
Nation-all schools	1,547,990	501	516	492
Change from 2009	1.20%	0	1	-1

ACT Results

Year	English	Math	Reading	Science	Composite
2010	19.7	21.4	20.8	20.9	20.8
2009	19.9	21.3	20.9	20.6	20.8
2008	19.8	21.2	20.9	20.5	20.7
2007	19.5	20.8	20.6	20.4	20.5
2006	19.4	20.6	20.5	20.3	20.3
2005	19.3	20.3	20.3	20.2	20.2
2004	19.4	20.3	20.5	20.2	20.2
2003	19.3	20	20.3	20.1	20.1
2002	19.3	20.1	20.3	20.1	20.1
2001	19.6	20.2	20.5	20.3	20.3

State Board Actions

The State Board of Education met September 24 and took the following actions.

FIRST READING

At first reading and filing authorization, the board:

- Approved the review of rules that specify requirements for continuing education for school board trustees and nominating trustees for military reservation school districts and Boys Ranch Independent School District.
- Approved minor modifications to the Principles of Technology course that may satisfy the physics graduation requirement to align with end-of-course assessment requirements.

IN OTHER ACTION

In other actions, the board:

- Voted to ratify the purchases and sales of the investment portfolio of the Permanent School Fund (PSF) for the months of June and July 2010 in the amounts of \$788,767,527 and \$442,413,098, respectively.
- Directed that the PSF staff acquire an updated list of scrutinized companies doing business in the Sudan from the Texas Comptroller, determine whether any of the companies on the list are held by PSF portfolios, inform any company on the list of its status, and send written communication to encourage the company to cease its scrutinized business.
- Approved updates to *The Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders*.
- Approved the following personal financial literacy materials: Bank of America, *Your Financial Future-Level 3*; ClearPoint Financial Solutions, Inc., *Financial Firsts*; Council for Economic Education, *Financial Fitness for Life, Learning, Earning and Investing and Your Credit Counts*; Film Ideas, Inc., *Biz Kid\$, FI Channels: Financial Literacy Streaming Service*, and *Life Skills Series*; Junior Achievement, *JA Finance Park*; Red & Black Books, L.L.C., *What I*

Learned About Life When My Husband Got Fired!; TG (Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation), *Financial Literacy Coordinator*; and Wells Fargo, *Hands On Banking-El futuro en tus manos*.

- Voted to move forward with requesting applications for mathematics and fine arts Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) review committee members and delay the review of Languages other than English TEKS until 2012.
- Approved penalties for textbook publishers that failed to correct factual errors in instructional materials adopted under Proclamation 2004. The following textbook publishers were assessed a penalty: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill in the amount of \$5,000; and Pearson Prentice Hall in the amount of \$10,000.
- Adopted two per capita apportionment rates for the 2010-2011 school year contingent on future board action. The rate will be \$466 if the board acts to distribute proceeds from the Permanent School Fund to the Available School Fund. The rate will be \$216 if the SBOE does not act to distribute proceeds to the Available School Fund.
- Voted to execute agreements with Angelo, Gordon & Co. necessary to make an investment commitment on real estate of up to \$75 million in AG Core Plus Realty Fund and up to \$50 million in AG Realty Fund, subject to continued due diligence.
- Voted to issue a Request for Proposal for a Risk Parity Discretionary Manager for the Texas Permanent School Fund subject to approval of amendments.
- Took no action on new rules by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) for requests for preliminary criminal history evaluations. House Bill (HB) 963, 81st Texas Legislature, 2009, requires state licensing agencies to adopt rules necessary to administer requests for preliminary criminal history evaluations. The new subchapter provides procedures that allow for administering and responding to requests for preliminary criminal history evaluations. This item also amends 19 TAC §230.436 to provide a nonrefundable fee for a request for preliminary criminal

IN OTHER ACTION, *continued*

history evaluation as authorized by HB 963.

- Took no action on amendments to SBEC rules that allow the Marketing Education: Grades 8-12 certificate to be obtained through certification by examination and would allow either a school district or an educator preparation program to review and approve the required two years of work experience.
- Took no action on SBEC rules that clarify that assignment criteria are specified in 19 TAC §231.1, Criteria for Assignment of Public School Personnel, and that remove expired provisions. The amendments also add a new certificate for Speech: Grades 7-12, to be issued no earlier than Nov. 1, 2010; and expand the certificates issued for Languages other than English (LOTE) by adding four new certificates for Hindi, Italian, Turkish, and Urdu in Early Childhood-Grade 12, to be issued no earlier than Nov. 1, 2010.
- Took no action on revisions updating the SBEC rules regarding the certification of appraisers of educators employed in Texas public schools.

- Narrowly approved a resolution dealing with the balanced treatment of religious groups in textbooks.
- Enjoyed a performance by the Stephen F. Austin High School Classical Guitar Ensemble from the Austin Independent School District.



State Board of Education chair Gail Lowe and SBOE member Cynthia Dunbar stand with band director Corey Bergdorf and the Stephen F. Austin Classical Guitar Ensemble.

PERMANENT SCHOOL FUND

Rebound of PSF allows board to make \$2.6 billion pay out

Because of careful and prudent investments, the State Board of Education in September was able to take a series of actions that will provide \$2.6 billion in funding for the state's budget.

The action comes at an opportune time because state officials are looking for ways to fill a budget shortfall of \$18 billion to \$21 billion during the next biennium.

During their recent board meeting, board members set a distribution rate to the Available School Fund that is expected to generate \$1.566 billion for the 2012-2013 biennium.

The board agreed that the distribution rate from the Permanent School Fund to the Available School Fund would be an amount equal to 3.5 percent of the trailing 16 fiscal quarters proceeding the regular session of the state legislature for the 2012-2013 biennium.

The board, by law, must set a distribution rate every two years. However, in taking this action, board members noted that "the distribution is intended to satisfy our constitutional duty to set aside a sufficient amount of funds to provide free textbooks."

Funds generated by the Available School Fund must be used to provide textbooks and per capita funding for each public school student. Although the board, through its stewardship of

the Permanent School Fund, generates enough money to pay for new textbooks, the Legislature must directly appropriate the money back to the Texas Education Agency in order for the textbooks to be purchased.

The predicted budget deficit and a 10 percent budget cut that has been required of all state agencies have clouded the possibility of future textbook purchases. The board's action was an attempt to remind lawmakers that the fund generates more than enough money to cover the purchase of the books.

That wasn't the case for fiscal year 2010 because of the sudden decline of the stock market. The fund generated only \$60.7 million to be used for the purchase of instructional materials or per capita payments. Federal stimulus funds were used to buy new textbooks.

However, due to the Permanent School Fund's resounding rebound during the past year, the board agreed to provide a "catch-up payment" to the Legislature of \$1.092 billion this year. When combined with the payment last year of \$60.7 million, the fund will provide a total two-year payment of \$1.15 billion.

The Permanent School Fund, an endowment created in 1854, now has a fair market value of \$22.6 billion.

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NEW CHARTERS

State board approves seven new charter schools

The State Board of Education approved seven new charter schools in September, bringing the total number of open-enrollment charters authorized under Chapter 12, Subchapter D of the Texas Education Code to 211. Current law limits the total number of Subchapter D open-enrollment charters to 215.

The newest charter schools are expected to open in school year 2011-2012.

Granted a charter were:

- Arrow Academy Charter Schools, with hubs in Brazosport, Bryan, Dallas and Houston;
- Compass Academy Charter School in Odessa;
- The High School for Business and Economic Success in Houston;
- Newman International Academy of Arlington;
- Leadership Prep School in Frisco;
- Premier Academy of Learning in La Marque; and
- William A. Lawson Institute for Peace and Prosperity – Texas Southern University

(WALIPP-TSU) in Houston.

Charter schools were first established in Texas in 1995 and are subject to fewer state laws than other public schools. They are designed to ensure fiscal and academic accountability without undue regulation.

The approval of the open-enrollment charter schools will provide new avenues for local restructuring, flexibility, innovation, and choice options for parents and students.

Like school districts, charter schools are monitored and accredited under the statewide testing and accountability system.

According to the Texas Education Code, the purposes of charter schools are to: improve student learning; increase the choice of learning opportunities within the public school system; create professional opportunities that will attract new teachers to the public school system; establish a new form of accountability for public schools; and encourage different and innovative learning methods.