

# TEXAS EDUCATION TODAY



News from the Texas Education Agency

MAY 2008

## TEXAS ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

### New English language arts and reading curriculum standards approved

A less repetitive, more grade-level specific set of English language arts and reading curriculum standards will go into use in Texas classrooms in the fall of 2009 after having been approved by the State Board of Education May 23 on a 9-6 vote.

The process of revising the 1997 standards began in 2005. Hundreds of teachers, numerous experts, national facilitators, and State Board of Education members worked on many drafts of the document over that time.

The standards ultimately approved by the board represent a blending of a document crafted by teacher work groups, with the help of facilitators from StandardsWork, and another version that contained suggested revisions from teachers. Many of the same teachers worked on both documents.

“This document is a very good one. We know our teachers will use it. We hope you will embrace this document,” board member Barbara Cargill, R-The

#### Comparison of 1997 TEKS to 2008 Adopted TEKS

1997 TEKS	2008 Adopted TEKS
Four Strands: Listening and Speaking, Writing, Reading, Viewing and Representing	Five Strands: Listening and Speaking, Writing, Reading, Oral and Written Conventions, Research
Viewing and Representing a separate strand	Media Literacy embedded in the Reading strand
Research embedded in both the Writing and Reading strands	Research now a separate strand
Grammar and Conventions embedded in the Writing strand	Oral and Written Conventions now a separate strand
Reading metacognitive comprehension skills embedded in Reading strand	Reading metacognitive comprehension skills removed from the body of the TEKS, placed in the introduction referring to a “figure” in the appendix;  Delineation of the reading genres more precisely stated in the standards: poetry, drama, literary nonfiction, expository text, procedural text
Introduction addressed English Language Learners	Introduction amended to more fully address needs of English Language Learners

Woodlands, said.

Other board members expressed strong concerns about being asked to approve a draft document that emerged on the final day of deliberations. Consequently, the board agreed to go through the document page by page, spending several hours looking at the latest revisions.

The often contentious, extensively debated adoption process ultimately resulted in standards that put more emphasis on the teaching of grammar than do the existing Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

Also in a departure from the existing standards, the board agreed to provide Texas teachers with a list of “reading resources websites” that provides a compilation of reading materials, which teachers may use at their own discretion.

Passage of the English language arts and reading TEKS now creates a ripple effect throughout the Texas education system. Professional development on the new standards will be provided to teachers during the next school year.

New textbooks and other instructional material based on the new TEKS will go into the classrooms in the fall of 2010 and 2011. State standardized tests will ultimately reflect the new curriculum framework.

Work continues on standards for other curriculum areas.

Teams of teachers are now working on revising curriculum standards for science and career and technical education. Teams will soon be appointed to begin work on social studies standards.

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**NEW BUSINESS AWARD**

**SBOE creates program to honor businesses that support education**

Since 1994, the State Board of Education has honored volunteers in public schools through the Heroes for Children Program. Now the board is beginning a new program to honor those businesses that support and encourage their employees to work with students and volunteer in the state’s 8,000-plus public schools.

The Employers for Education Excellence (EEE) Award, enacted in Senate Bill 1433 (80th Legislative Session), is designed to honor employers who implement a policy to encourage and support employees who actively participate in school activities. The bill was sponsored by Sen. Leticia Van de Putte, D-San Antonio, and Rep. Patrick Rose, D-Dripping Springs.

Any employer in the state of Texas is eligible to apply, including private businesses or corporations, non-profit organizations, state and governmental agencies, and educational entities who have at least one employee and meet the criteria.

“This is great recognition for all those companies and businesses that allow and encourage their staff members to mentor students, provide tutoring, assist with special projects, and volunteer in many other ways in our public schools,” said Commissioner of Education Robert Scott.

“Many times these volunteers can make a real difference in whether a child succeeds. This is one small way to say thank you to those companies that make it possible for employees to take time from the workday to help schoolchildren,” Scott added.

Employers will be eligible to receive an award at one of three levels: bronze, silver, or gold. Eligibility is based on the business meeting the following criteria:

- (1) **Bronze** for an employer that implements a policy to encourage and support employees who attend parent-teacher conferences;
- (2) **Silver** for an employer that:
  - (a) meets the requirements of bronze; and
  - (b) implements a policy to encourage and support employees who volunteer in school activities;
- (3) **Gold** for an employer that:
  - (a) meets the requirements of silver; and
  - (b) implements a policy to encourage and support employees who participate in student mentoring programs in schools.

The program requires a business to submit an application to the Texas Education Agency. The application forms are available upon request by e-mailing

[EIP@tea.state.tx.us](mailto:EIP@tea.state.tx.us).

Applications will be accepted from June 1 through July 31 of each year. The commissioner of education will review the applications and make recommendations to the SBOE regarding businesses that should receive an award and the level of recognition. The SBOE may approve or modify the commissioner’s recommendation.

The SBOE will honor the recipient(s) of an EEE Award by presenting the recipient(s) with an award that includes the level of recognition and other appropriate information.

The awards will be valid for three years. At the end of three years, a business may reapply for the same level of recognition, or for a higher level if they meet the criteria.

The complete application must be submitted by July 31 to:

*Texas Education Agency  
Department of State Initiatives  
EEE Award  
1701 Congress Avenue, Room 5-120  
Austin, Texas 78701*

For additional information, e-mail [EIP@tea.state.tx.us](mailto:EIP@tea.state.tx.us) or call the Division of Educator Initiatives and Performance at (512) 936-6060.

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## TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

# 2008 TAKS scores show steady progress at most grades

Consistent with their past performance, the vast majority of Texas' eighth-grade students met state promotion requirements with 95 percent passing the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) reading exam and 75 percent passing the mathematics test.

This is the first year that eighth-grade students must pass the math and reading TAKS to be promoted to ninth grade. But this represents the third time this group of students have been required to meet promotion requirements that are part of the state's Student Success Initiative. They were required to pass the third-grade reading exam and the fifth-grade reading and mathematics TAKS tests in order to move to the next grade.

Results from the second administration of the eighth-grade math exam were not available at press time but should raise the cumulative passing percentage on that test above the current 75 percent before the school year's end. The reading results reported are cumulative totals for the first and second administration.

"We have set high expectations for this group of students and each year they meet or exceed them. A high percentage of the students have passed the reading test and we expect the math passing rate to rise substantially when results from the second test administration are reported, if past trends are any guide," said Commissioner of Education Robert Scott.

One more testing opportunity exists for those students who are still trying to master the exams. The eighth-grade math test will be given again on July 1 and the reading exam will be given on July 2.

Additionally, 90 percent of the eighth-grade class passed the social studies TAKS while 68 percent passed the science TAKS. These figures includes results from both the standard TAKS and TAKS (Accommodated), which is a form of TAKS for students served by special education who meet the eligibility requirements for certain specific accommodations.

TAKS (Accommodated), as required by federal law, tests students served by special education on material at the grade level in which they are enrolled. Test results reported this year include both TAKS and TAKS (Accommodated) results. TAKS results reported in 2003-2007 are for TAKS only because TAKS (Accommodated) was not a testing option until 2008.

### THIRD GRADE AND FIFTH GRADE

Ninety-three percent of third-grade students have passed the reading TAKS on their first or second try. This is the exam, available in English or Spanish, that they must pass to meet the state's

promotion requirements.

Results released May 30 show that 83 percent of the 314,376 third graders who took the mathematics test in English passed on the first administration. Seventy-seven percent of the 26,769 students who took the math test in Spanish passed it.

Fifth-grade students must pass both the reading and math exams in order to be promoted. During the first and second test administration, 90 percent passed the reading exam in English or Spanish. During the first administration of the mathematics TAKS given in English, 83 percent of the students passed. Among the 5,233 students who took the math test in Spanish, 48 percent passed.

Any third or fifth-grade student who has not yet passed the reading test may retake it July 2. Any fifth-grade student who has not passed the mathematics test may retake it July 1.

Under Texas law, any student who has not met the promotion requirements in grades 3, 5 and 8 is retained, unless his or her family appeals the retention to a Grade Placement Committee made up of the principal, teacher and parent. Parents should contact their local school to begin the appeal process.

Along with math and reading, fifth-grade students also take a TAKS science exam, which 81 percent mastered. Thirty-seven percent performed so well on the test that they earned a Commended Performance notation. Among the students tested in Spanish, 35 percent passed the science exam.

### FOURTH GRADE

Overall, 83 percent of fourth-grade students passed either the TAKS or TAKS (Accommodated) reading test. Eighty-four percent of the students passed the math TAKS or TAKS (Accommodated), while 91 percent met the passing standard on the TAKS or TAKS (Accommodated) writing exam.

When only the scores on the TAKS are considered without including scores on TAKS (Accommodated), scores appeared very stable with 84 percent of the students passing the reading test in both 2007 and 2008 and 86 percent passing the mathematics test both years. Passing rates on the writing test rose to 93 percent, compared to 91 percent last year.



◆ TAKS SCORES *continued from page 3*

## *Promotion requirements begin this year for current eighth-grade students*

The passing rates for students who tested in Spanish were 75 percent for reading, 74 percent for mathematics and 90 percent for writing. When just TAKS scores in Spanish are examined, the passing rates this year were within two points or less of last year's passing rates.

### **SIXTH GRADE**

Sixth-grade students showed strong performance with 91 percent of the 315,668 students passing the reading test in English and 45 percent of the students earning Commended Performance.

Eighty percent of students passed the mathematics test, with 37 percent achieving Commended Performance.

When just TAKS results are compared between this year and last year, passing rates on the math test rose from 79 percent to 83 percent. There was a one percentage point increase on the reading exam on the standard test.

Many students have already graduated from bilingual or English as a Second Language programs by sixth grade so only 1,370 students took the sixth-grade reading test in Spanish. This group had a 50 percent passing rate and a 21 percent Commended Performance rate on the reading test. Of the 1,246 students who took the math test in Spanish, 38 percent passed and 11 percent achieved Commended Performance. Sixth grade is the last year that a state test is offered in Spanish.

### **SEVENTH GRADE**

Seventh-grade students were most proficient on the writing exam, with 90 percent passing and 33 percent receiving Commended Performance. Eighty-four percent of the students passed the reading test and 76 percent passed the math exam.

When TAKS (Accommodated) results are excluded, passing rates increased by 2 percentage points on TAKS reading and by 3 percentage points on the math test as compared to last year, while passing rates declined by one percentage point on the writing test.

### **NINTH GRADE**

Eighty-four percent of high school freshmen mastered the reading test but just 60 percent passed the math test. When 2007 and 2008 results for TAKS only are compared, results on the reading test increased from 86 percent to 87 percent, while the mathematics passing rates rose from 60 percent to 63 percent.

### **TENTH GRADE**

Sophomores take TAKS tests in four subject areas. Their passing rates were 86 percent in English language arts, which is a combined reading and writing test; 63 percent in mathematics, 88 percent in social studies and 64 percent in science. A greater number of students - 32 percent - achieved Commended Performance on the social studies test than on the other three subject-area tests.

When TAKS test results only are compared from year to year, this class showed strong improvement. The passing rates on English language arts rose from 84 percent in 2007 to 89 percent this year. Math passing rates increased from 63 percent to 65 percent. Social studies passing rates improved from 86 percent last year to 90 percent in 2008, while science passing rates went from 58 percent last year to 66 percent this spring.

### **ELEVENTH GRADE**

Texas students must pass four exit-level tests, which are first given in 11th grade, along with their classes, to be eligible to earn a state diploma. The Class of 2009 is well on its way to meeting its testing requirements.

Ninety percent of the students passed the English language arts exam, while 95 percent met the standard on the social studies examination. Eighty percent of the students passed the science test and 79 percent passed the mathematics test.

When TAKS results are compared excluding the new TAKS (Accommodated) test, this year's 11th grade students had passing rates that were one to five percentage points higher on the four tests than did last year's high school juniors.

Overall, 71 percent of the 11th graders passed all the TAKS or TAKS (Accommodated) exams they took this year. Those who failed one or more tests will have four more opportunities to take the tests between now and the end of their senior year.

"Our test results show that this has been a year of strong and steady growth for millions of our students. I'm thankful for all the effort the students, their teachers, administrators and parents have put into making this a successful and productive year," Scott said.

### **TWELFTH GRADE**

By the end of May, 86 percent or 216,210 members of the Class of 2008 had passed all tests taken, fulfilling one of the major graduation requirements. There are 35,053 students who have taken the exit-level exams at least once, but who have not yet passed one or more exit-level exams.

While still a significant number, it does represent an improvement over 2007 results. Among the Class of 2007, 204,187 students or 84 percent of the class had passed exit-level TAKS tests, while 40,160 students had not yet passed one or more tests.

The state does not have data available to determine how many of the students who have failed the tests also lack the necessary course credits required for graduation.

Those who have passed all the required state tests may continue to retake the tests until they pass them. Once they have met course and test requirements, they will be issued a high school diploma.

Detailed summaries of state-level results may be found at [www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/reporting/](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/reporting/).

**SENATE BILL 1031****End-of-course exams being developed for 2011 implementation**

Five online end-of-course exams will be available for voluntary use next school year.

During a May briefing before the State Board of Education, Texas Education Agency staff said end-of-course exams for Algebra I, geometry, biology, chemistry and U.S. history will be available for voluntary use during the 2008-2009 school year. End-of-course exams for physics and world geography will be added during the 2009-2010 school year.

Schools can use the results as a benchmarking tool or to replace a final exam, but as long as the end-of-course assessments are voluntary, the local school district would determine how or if the scores are used.

Beginning with the freshman class of 2011-2012, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test for grades 9-11 will be phased out and replaced with end-of-course exams, a move mandated by Senate Bill 1031.

Along with the seven tests that are mentioned above, TEA is developing five additional end-of-course assessments.

The following high school courses will ultimately be assessed with end-of-course tests: English I-III, Algebra I and

II, geometry, biology, chemistry, physics, world geography, world history, and U.S. history.

Students in grades 3-8 will continue to be assessed with TAKS.

In order to graduate under the new testing requirements, students must obtain a cumulative score that totals 210 for the three tests in that subject area. For example, to meet the requirements for science, students could receive a score of 75 in biology, 70 in chemistry, and 65 in physics to earn a cumulative score of 210. Each end-of-course test will be scored on a scale of 0 to 100. Any score below 60 would not count toward the cumulative score.

Students scoring below 70 will receive accelerated instruction and have the opportunity to re-test. Students scoring below 60 are required to retake the test but are not required to retake the course if they passed the class. Those graduating on the minimum high school plan will only be required to take end-of-course tests for courses in which they are enrolled.

In addition to meeting gradu-

ation requirements, end-of-course exams will also count towards the final grade in the course. The end-of-course exam will be worth 15 percent of the student's final grade in the course. If a student re-takes the end-of-course exam, the school does not have to use the score from a subsequent administration in order to calculate the student's final grade in the course.

As more information becomes available on end-of-course testing, updates will be posted at [www.tea.state.tx.us/student\\_assessment/admin/eoc/index.html](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student_assessment/admin/eoc/index.html).



*The Martin Luther King Jr. Learning Center Ballroom Dance Team from the Dallas Independent School District performed during the State Board of Education meeting. Additional photos can be viewed in the photo gallery at [www.tea.state.tx.us/comm/gallery.html](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/comm/gallery.html).*

**ONLINE EDUCATION****TEA identifies partners in Texas Virtual School Network**

The Texas Education Agency has announced key partnerships with local education service centers and a number of other entities in the launching of the Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN).

TxVSN, which was authorized by the Texas Legislature in 2007, will provide online courses through the Internet to students throughout Texas. Classes are scheduled to begin in the spring of 2009.

The partners in the effort are:

- Region 10 Education Service Center (ESC) in Richardson in collaboration with the Harris County Department of Education will serve as headquarters for network operations.
- Region 4 Education Service Center

in Houston, which will review electronic courses and ensure they meet state standards.

- Five professional development providers who will train educators who will teach electronic courses through the network. These five providers are the Education Development Center, Inc.; ESC Region 4; ESC Region 11 in Fort Worth; Harris County Department of Education; and Texas A&M University Center for Distance Learning Research.

The first online courses for grades 9-12 will be reviewed for the network beginning in summer 2008. The courses will be assessed against the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills curricu-

lum standards and the National Standards for Quality Online Courses endorsed by the North American Council for Online Learning.

A list of the initial approved course offerings will be available in the fall of the 2008-2009 school year. A schedule will be developed for the ongoing review process for additional courses and professional development providers.

Information about course offerings, approved professional development providers and participation in the TxVSN will be posted online at [www.tea.state.tx.us/technology/txvsn](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/technology/txvsn). Questions about the TxVSN should be sent to [txvsn@tea.state.tx.us](mailto:txvsn@tea.state.tx.us).

## State Board Actions

The State Board of Education met May 23 and took the following actions.

### FIRST READING

At first reading and filing authorization, the board:

- Voted to update current rules to reflect statutory changes resulting from House Bill 2411, 80th Texas Legislature, regarding the Uniform Bank Bid and Depository Contract.
- Adopted the review of rules related to home-rule school district charters and open-enrollment charter schools that address the application, selection procedures and criteria, annual reports on governance, optional provisions for contracting and purchasing, and applicability to public senior college or university charters.

The board also approved for first reading and filing authorization amendments related to the application, selection procedures and criteria, and the annual report on open-enrollment charter governance. The amendments further reflect a statutory correction and modify the annual governance reporting requirements.

### SECOND READING

At second reading and final adoption, the board:

- Postponed action on the proposed new rule to add requirements for the teaching of an elective course on the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and the New Testament and their impact. The proposal must be reviewed by the attorney general to ensure that the curriculum requirements comply with the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Because the results of the attorney general's review have not yet been received, the board postponed action on this item.
- Approved an amendment modifying the definition of advanced courses to align the rule with new legislation in TEC 33.081 that narrows the number of courses that may be exempt from "No Pass, No Play" requirements. Courses that are exempt from the passing grade requirement for students to be eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities include: all Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses; honors and dual credit courses in the subjects of English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, and languages other than English.

### IN OTHER ACTION

In other actions, the board:

- Voted to contract with Strasburger & Price, LLP to provide fiduciary and transactional counsel services for the Permanent School Fund (PSF) and authorized the commissioner of education to execute the contract subject to approval of the attorney general.

- Ratified the purchases and sales of the investment portfolio of the PSF for the months of February and March 2008 in the amount of \$1,671,978,039 and \$1,564,491,888, respectively.

- Approved amendments to Proclamation 2010 to add the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for English Language Arts and Reading, Grades K-1; Reading, Grades 2-5; Reading (Electives), Grades 6-8; Literature, Grades 6-12; AP English Language, English Literature; and IB Language Studies, Standard and Higher Level. The amendments will also make changes to the ESL materials included in the proclamation by moving ESL K-8 to Proclamation 2011 and including ESOL I and II and teacher materials addressing English Language Proficiency Standards for Grades 9-12. Proclamation 2010 was approved by the SBOE in November 2007. Instructional materials submitted under Proclamation 2010 are scheduled for adoption by the SBOE in November 2009.

- Approved Proclamation 2011 to advertise for bids on new instructional materials to be used by school districts and open-enrollment charter schools beginning in school year 2011-2012. The proclamation includes English Language Arts, grades 2-8; Spanish Language Arts, grades 2-6; Speech, grades 6-8; English I-IV; English as a Second Language (ESL), grades K-8; Prekindergarten Systems; Spanish Prekindergarten Systems; Spelling (consumable), grades 1-2; Spelling (nonconsumable), grades 3-6; and Handwriting (consumable), grades 1-3.

- Approved requests from three publishers to substitute newer versions of their instructional materials. The board approved Perfection Learning Corporation's request to substitute 38 Basic Speech Experiences; Bedford, Freeman & Worth Publishing's request to substitute Chemistry in the Community and Physics for Scientists and Engineers; and Scholastic Inc.'s request to substitute Scholastic Spelling, Texas Teacher's Editions, Grades 1 and 2.

- Approved the renewal of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program (CCVYP) as an innovative course beginning with the 2008-2009 school year.

- Voted to hire a real estate advisor to provide expertise and advice related to the PSF investment strategy of a real estate portfolio.

- Approved the review of rules for 19 TAC Chapter 129, Student Attendance, Subchapter A, Student Attendance Allowed, and Subchapter B, Student Attendance Accounting. Subchapter A addresses free attendance and Subchapter B addresses re-

quirements for student attendance accounting for state funding purposes.

- Voted to issue a request for proposal for a private equity specialist advisor and/or a fund of funds manager.
- Approved amendments to the Code of Ethics of the PSF regarding campaign contributions and business or financial transactions.
- Voted to waive the conflicts of interest disclosed in the PSF's Absolute Return Request for Proposal responses provided by Goldman Sachs Hedge Fund Strategies, LLC; Grosvenor Capital Management L.P.; Mesriow Advanced Strategies Inc.; K2/D&S Management Co., LLC; and Blackstone Alternative Asset Management LP. The waiver was granted in accordance with Texas Administrative Code Chapter 33.5(g)(4).
- Took no action on revisions to 19 TAC Chapter 232, General Certification Provisions. The revisions reflect current law and add specificity to the requirements relating to types and classes of certificates issued, certificate renewal, and continuing professional education requirements. The board postponed action until July on revisions to chapters §232.4 Probationary Certificates and §232.5 Temporary Teacher Certificates, which clarify requirements for these certificates.
- Took no action on amendments to rules for certification for specific assignment eligibility for the holders of the Early Childhood-Grade 4, Early Childhood-Grade 6, Grades 4-8, Grades 8-12, and Early Childhood-Grade 12 certificates.

## State Board honors service of former Commissioner Shirley Neeley



*The official portrait of former Commissioner Shirley J. Neeley was unveiled during the May State Board of Education meeting. Dr. Neeley was education commissioner in Texas from 2004 to 2007. Additional photos can be viewed in the photo gallery at [www.tea.state.tx.us/comm/gallery.html](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/comm/gallery.html).*

## State Board for Educator Certification briefs

As the school year winds to close, fingerprinting of certified and non-certified individuals continues throughout Texas. As of May, 22,600 certified individuals have undergone criminal history background checks based on submission of their fingerprints. Of those, 5 percent have had a criminal history report returned, with 7 percent of those showing a felony conviction. Of the 13,000 non-certified background checks performed, 12 percent returned a criminal history, of which 28 percent reported a felony conviction.



The State Board of Educator Certification is taking a look at the number of certificates currently issued to determine which ones are still viable. Currently the board issues 144 certificates, but only has tests for 83 subjects. According to staff research, 61 of the certificates are no longer issued to first time teachers, but are still issued for renewal. Certificates for 21 specialty areas are now obsolete since those areas are no longer under certification rules and for two of the certificates, there are no tests available to certify applicants.



To protect certified individuals from one more potential avenue for identity theft, the Educator Credentialing division of the Texas Education Agency is discontinuing the use of a person's social security number on their certificate. Instead, the agency will issue a TEA identification number. When a certified individual requests a change to their certificate, such as adding a certification area, requesting a copy of their certificate, changing addresses or requesting to have a new certificate issued, the new one will have the TEA ID number. The existing certificates will remain as is until the educator requests another one.

**Texas Education Agency**  
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CC# 130-001

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**PERMANENT SCHOOL FUND**

## Bond Guarantee Program saves Texas school districts millions

Texas school districts are saving millions of dollars each year on new buildings, repairs and land purchased to meet growing student enrollments – all thanks to the Bond Guarantee Program that is part of the Permanent School Fund.

Up to 2.5 times the cost value of the \$24.1 billion PSF can be used to back bonds floated by local school districts. This kind of superior backing gives districts AAA bond ratings, meaning they get the best interest rates.

According to Holland Timmins, the PSF's chief investment officer, the bond program saves school districts in Texas approximately \$110 million to \$120 million a year.

As of Aug. 31, 2007, a total of 767 school districts had outstanding bonds guaranteed by the school endowment. The total amount of bonds backed is \$47 billion and the total allowable bond guarantee capacity is \$56 billion.

Since last August, Texas voters have approved

more than \$14 billion in school bonds. To meet the growing demand for bond guarantee capacity, Gov. Rick Perry and Texas Education Commissioner Robert Scott have been working to increase the bond guarantee limit. A final decision will be made by the Internal Revenue Service.

### **SBOE selects real estate investment advisers**

The State Board of Education voted at its May meeting to select Courtland Partners, Ltd., of Cleveland, Ohio, to provide expertise and advice regarding investment of Permanent School Fund assets in real estate.

In 2006 the board decided to include a 6 percent allocation to the real estate asset class. The distribution from the PSF for the 2008-2009 biennium is expected to be \$1.4 billion.