TASB Advocacy Agenda Priorities

As adopted by the 2026 Delegate Assembly.

Public education is strongest when those who shape it work together. Texas Trustees encourage state policymakers and school boards to nurture a productive, collaborative relationship — one that honors the distinct but complementary roles each plays in pursuit of a common goal: ensuring every child has access to exceptional public schools.

Trustees recognize that the Texas Legislature faces the challenging task of balancing a broad range of statewide priorities and offers this agenda in the spirit of partnership and shared purpose. Public schools are the backbone of our communities, the engine of our economy, and the foundation upon which the future of our state is built.

Texas Trustees — the individuals Texans elect to govern their public schools — developed these priorities through regional grassroots meetings, deliberation through a committee elected by fellow Trustees, and a final vote of Trustees representing hundreds of school boards from across the state.

With this understanding, Trustees call upon the 90th Texas Legislature to prioritize the following:

Maintaining Safe Places to Learn and Work: School Safety and Security

Texas Trustees call upon the state to build upon its existing partnership with school districts by funding school safety and security through sustainable, dedicated, and formula-based funding that fully covers the actual and ongoing costs of all state-mandated and recommended protocols, as well as growing demands being addressed by schools statewide.

Trustees advocate for enhanced support and resources for the following:

- School security personnel and law enforcement
- Behavioral and mental health support
- Transportation safety requirements
- Equipment, training, and compliance related to safety
- Facility and infrastructure improvements required to maintain safe learning environments

Reaching Every Student: Special Education

Public schools are proud to open their doors to every student. The commitment to serve each child well — regardless of background, ability, or need — is one of public education's greatest strengths, and it deserves the full backing of the state. Texas faces a growing shortage of specialized professionals needed to fulfill that commitment, and intentional investment in this workforce is an investment in Texas students.

Trustees advocate for:

- Full reimbursement for the actual costs of providing the individualized support students are entitled to by state and federal law
- Increasing the special education full individual and initial evaluation allotment under state law to reflect the actual cost of each evaluation
- Meaningful, long-term investment in recruiting, retaining, and developing the specialized professionals who serve students with disabilities — including diagnosticians, therapists, and paraprofessionals

Building the Educational Workforce: Recruitment and Retention

Texas Trustees advocate for continued work to recruit and retain our state's educational workforce. More work is needed to increase compensation for all educators and school district employees, to expand the educational workforce in Texas, and to retain the workforce required to support student success.

Trustees urge the Legislature to:

- Review and reform educator compensation allotments — including the Teacher Incentive Allotment and Teacher and Staff Retention Allotments — to ensure funding structures support sound local staffing decisions driven by student need
- Reduce certification barriers, such as reciprocity with other states, and fees
- Strengthen TRS and healthcare benefits through increased state contributions
- Direct a comprehensive actuarial study of TRS solvency that fully accounts for the long-term fiscal impact of recent legislative changes — including the Teacher Incentive

Allotment, Teacher and Staff Retention Allotments, and Education Savings Account program
- Preserve local control over compensation decisions to meet district workforce needs

Supporting Those Closest to Students and Communities: Local Control

Texas Trustees call upon the Legislature to strengthen local control and governance, recognizing that Texas school districts serve an increasingly diverse and ever-evolving student population — with some communities experiencing rapid growth and others facing enrollment decline — and that each requires the flexibility and long-term capacity to meet its community's unique needs.

Trustees urge the Legislature to:

- Restore local discretion to direct funding and operational decisions in response to community needs
  Uphold local discretion over curriculum decisions by ensuring that funding structures and incentives support that authority
- Preserve school boards' freedom to select their own associations, service providers, and training and advocacy partners
- Prevent new restrictions on bond elections and VATREs, and ensure that ballot language requirements are truthful and accurate
- Retain district control over property funded by local taxpayers
- Provide clear statutory definitions of agency authority over school takeovers and other matters to ensure consistent and predictable implementation for school districts
- Require early notification, meaningful consultation, and input from affected school districts before approving major data center developments or related infrastructure agreements, including full disclosure of potential impacts on school district finances, water and electricity resources, and infrastructure, while ensuring that development-related costs are not shifted to school districts or local taxpayers.

Enhancing Transparency and Accountability

Texas Trustees advocate for a rigorous, consistent accountability system that measures student outcomes and financial transparency equally across all schools receiving public funds and urges the following reforms to strengthen that system for all Texas students:

- Expand the stability protections established in state law to cover all components of the accountability system — including assessment instruments, indicators, weightings, eligible industry-based certifications, career and technical education pathways, and through-year growth measures — ensuring that no changes within a five-year window narrow pathways, raise barriers, or make it more difficult for students and districts to succeed, so that students, families, and districts have the time needed to meaningfully plan and invest in a consistent system, while preserving flexibility to expand options and opportunities mid-cycle
    - Ensure that changes to accountability components take effect with student cohorts who have sufficient time remaining in their K-12 journey to benefit from district adjustments — not with students who are already in high school, where meaningful program changes become increasingly difficult and disruptive
- Ensure that student and school success is evaluated through a holistic view of student experience, opportunity, and achievement — not solely through standardized assessments
- Remove statutory authority that allows a single campus' performance to trigger consequences for an entire district, and prevent A-F labels from following children from one school to another.
- Extend the assessment exemption for emergent bilingual students to ensure that results more accurately reflect student content knowledge rather than solely the pace of their English language acquisition
- Align TEA accountability ratings with parental rights and state law so that school districts may partner with parents related to student participation in standardized assessments and accelerated instruction without penalty
- Require full transparency in the recapture system, including public reporting on how recapture dollars are collected and distributed, ensure that all recapture funds are directed exclusively to public school districts, and reinstate the early payment discount
- Require state reporting on the impact to recapture of increased student mobility caused by school choice programs including ESAs and charter schools

- Require that fiscal notes for all education legislation identify whether a bill creates a new mandate on school districts and specify whether that mandate is fully funded, partially funded, or unfunded — including a detailed accounting of all associated costs and the specific funding source or allotment designated to cover them

Clearing the Path: Streamlining Statutory Provisions and Agency Rules

Texas Trustees advocate for greater specificity and clarity in statutory provisions, recognizing that legislation that leaves room for interpretation can result in agency rules that extend beyond what the Legislature envisioned, creating unintended burdens on school districts, students, and families. Likewise, Trustees encourage a sustained effort to identify and remove regulatory red tape that diverts time, attention, and resources away from students.

Trustees urge the Texas Legislature — and in some instances Congress and relevant state and federal agencies — to:

- Fully fund all state and federal legislative and regulatory requirements
- Streamline, clarify, and repeal outdated or burdensome statutes and agency rules affecting public schools that do not demonstrably improve outcomes for students
- Review recently enacted laws and related rules to ensure practical implementation aligned with student and parent needs and legislative intent
- Conduct comprehensive and regular reviews of all state mandates imposed on school districts, evaluating each for cost, effectiveness, and continued necessity, with a presumption toward repeal or consolidation of those that are unfunded, duplicative, or no longer aligned with current educational needs
- Require that the Texas Education Agency's four-year rule review process under state law expressly evaluates the fiscal and operational impact of each agency rule on school districts and require that all other state agencies identify and disclose, as part of their rulemaking and periodic review processes, whether a proposed or reviewed rule has a fiscal or operational impact on public schools, ensuring that effects on school districts are not overlooked

Leveling the Playing Field

Texas Trustees call upon the Texas Legislature to ensure that no school receiving public funds operates without comparable accountability for student outcomes and responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

Trustees urge the Legislature to:

- Enact legislation requiring all public, private, and charter schools receiving state funding to meet identical standards for academic accountability, financial transparency, and reporting, and to comply with agency rules and regulations related to pre-K-12 education
- In instances where the Legislature determines that a provision is an unnecessary burden on any type of school receiving public funds, remove it for all rather than creating sector-specific exemptions
- Require that fiscal notes for legislation creating new requirements for public schools explicitly state whether those requirements apply equally across all school types receiving public funds and, if not, provide a clear justification for the disparity

Investing in the Future of Texas

Texas Trustees advocate for fully funded and consistent investments in programs and services that yield meaningful returns — stronger student outcomes, a skilled Texas workforce, and thriving communities — including but not limited to:

- School safety and security
- Special education
- Full-day pre-kindergarten and early learning
- Student workforce development
- School nurses, counselors, and other student support professionals
- Enrollment-based funding
- Transportation

Moreover, Trustees advocate for the Legislature — in collaboration with the TEA and Comptroller — to ensure hold harmless provisions function as intended and school districts receive the funding intended when legislation was passed.

Texas Trustees stand ready to work alongside the 90th Texas Legislature in pursuit of these priorities, confident that a collaborative approach — one that draws on the expertise of local school boards and the vision of state leadership — will produce the strongest possible outcomes for Texas students, families, and communities.