

March 15, 2015

Dear TASB Directors,

As part of the recent TASB Policy Service Update 101, we became aware of the proposed change to BE (LOCAL) that would eliminate the word "trustee" from board policy. While isolated to this one specific policy, we believe that the proposed change sets a course that should be a concern to all of us as trustees. A quick search of board policy and the Texas Education Code shows that this change touches many policies and statutes. The intent to describe school boards as a board of "trustees" in Chapter 11 of the Texas Education Code is not absent; by statute, it is clear that we are not described as school board "members."

Without question, the terms school board "member" and "trustee" are interchangeable in both conversation and in print; however, the value and symbolic meaning between the two terms are miles apart. The term "trustee" refers to individuals elected by local communities across Texas with duties and responsibilities explicitly defined by statute and bound on a foundation of community trust.

Attached is an email sent to Jim Crow last week. Subsequent to forwarding this correspondence to you, the two of us took the opportunity to speak with Mr. Crow and shared our views on the proposed change. We appreciate his willingness to foster this important conversation with you.

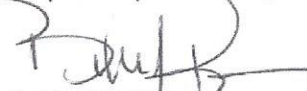
For the most part, updates to school district policy do not usually rise to the level of concern like this one. With history and value surrounding the word "trustee," the proposed change for elimination should not be taken lightly or ignored. We sincerely hope that this issue is one that resonates with each of you as trustees.

As TASB directors and among your numerous obligations, protecting the role of the trustee in public education is respectfully acknowledged. Regarding the symbolic value of the term trustee, you have a unique opportunity to change the course of history that is currently set in a direction that, if left to its own accord, will never be reversed – the loss of the most important word that best defines and describes each one of us – the word "trustee."

Please consider this request from us to discuss this issue and to support rescinding the recommendation of systematically removing the word "trustee" from policy or any other public document. As elected stewards, our shared duties and responsibilities suggest that we should not only support the continued use of the word "trustee" but should also actively communicate and promote the value of this designation to over 7,000 school board trustees in Texas.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to TASB in support of trustees across the State of Texas.

Respectfully submitted,



Bobby J Rigues

Trustee – Alledo ISD

Master Trustee – LTASB Class of 2009



Craig Rothmeier

Trustee – Carroll ISD

Master Trustee – LTASB Class of 2010

President – North Texas Area Association of School Boards