

TASB 2016-18 Advocacy Agenda Priorities

As Adopted September 24, 2016

- TASB advocates for a transformational, top-to-bottom reform of the school finance system by developing a simplified and sustainable plan that provides for resources that promote educational excellence for all Texas students.
- TASB supports a sustainable, equitable school finance system that provides substantially equal access to similar revenue per student at similar tax effort, adjusting for disparate property values throughout Texas.
- TASB advocates for additional support, to include adjustment of weights and allotments, for educationally disadvantaged students, English language learners, and other students at risk of dropping out.
- TASB advocates for an updated transportation funding formula to address the current and increasing costs of transportation and maintaining vehicles to increase student safety.
- TASB advocates for a study of and funding formula change for the true cost of educating a child to post-secondary readiness that takes into account the geographic, demographic, and size diseconomies of scale among Texas school districts.
- TASB advocates for the increase of the guaranteed yield for the Existing Debt Allotment and Instructional Facilities Allotment programs and an increase in per-student funding for the New Instructional Facilities Allotment.
- TASB advocates for an assessment and accountability system that values student growth and achievement over standardized, high-stakes testing. The system should:
 - Focus on measuring and rewarding student growth rather than punitive sanctions;
 - Reduce the emphasis on high-stakes tests, especially for grades 3–8;
 - Be developmentally appropriate;
 - Reduce testing redundancy;
 - Provide a fair and understandable system for illustrating school performance that does not rely on simple labels such as A through F

- Given the transition to the Every Student Succeeds Act, TASB advocates for increased opportunities for school districts to implement local initiatives, such as Districts of Innovation, and prevention of measures that reduce or remove governance of districts from locally elected school boards.
- TASB advocates for increased state support of or flexibility in selecting active and retired teacher healthcare programs.
- TASB advocates for innovations in school district taxing authority that allow school boards more flexibility to raise and lower taxes within a voter-approved limit.
- TASB advocates for a comprehensive evaluation of the costs and related benefits of potential legislation that identifies the total cost burden on local taxpayers and state funding to fully support mandates.
- TASB advocates for strict adherence to the Texas Constitution's mandate for a system of public free schools, which precludes the funneling of public tax dollars to private institutions or individuals by means of vouchers, tax credits, education savings accounts, and/or any other mechanism.