

Leadership Team Times

March 2008

Nine copies of this publication will be mailed monthly to the superintendent secretary to be included in the board packets.

Training & Events



SPRING FORWARD

Whether you plan to celebrate Women's History Month, St. Patrick's Day, or Easter this month, don't forget to turn your clocks ahead by one hour as we return to Daylight Saving Time March 9. You don't want to be late for that next board meeting!

As always, if you have feature ideas or run across information you'd like to share with your peers, send it to Lisa Carothers at lisa.carothers@tasb.org. And remember that the current issue of *Leadership Team Times* can be accessed each month at LTS.tasb.org.

DOES YOUR BOARD MAKE THE GRADE?

Three years ago, the TASB Board of Directors created Good Governance Matters—a program that recognizes boards that make a concerted effort to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of governance in their districts. So far, boards of six ISDs have earned the recognition: Big Spring, Castleberry, Northside–Bexar County, Richardson, San Antonio, and Weatherford. These boards have incorporated all 24 best practices from the *TASB Board Effectiveness Audit* into standard operations on an ongoing basis. They also met criteria for student achievement, increased TAKS participation, and financial accountability.

Does your board make the grade? To learn more about the program, go to tasb.org and click on "Good Governance." To download a copy of the *TASB Board Effectiveness Audit* and get your board started on improving its governance

effectiveness, go to LTS.tasb.org and click on "Resources Overview." Incorporating all 24 practices from the audit can be challenging. But it is work that board members from the six districts above will tell you is worth the effort for improved governance performance.

Take a look. And by all means, let LTS know if your board makes the grade.

PLANNING THE BUDGET OR BUDGETING THE PLAN?

Last month's issue emphasized the importance of discussing the board's and superintendent's assumptions about budget priorities before the superintendent begins to build next year's budget. Another important point to discuss is funding for initiatives or projects in the district and campus improvement plans. In many districts, the site-based advisory committees meet at the beginning of the school year to review results from last year's AEIS indicators, develop performance objectives that are targets for the next AEIS report, and develop plans for reaching those targets. Since this planning happens after the current fiscal-year's budget is adopted, there may be improvement initiatives recommended in the plans that are not funded in the current budget. While next year's budgets are being prepared, now is a good time to review those improvement plans again to make sure that any resources needed to fully implement improvement efforts are included in budget plans for next year. (*more*)

CONVENTION:

Program submissions will be accepted February 1–March 14. Go to tasa.tasb.org for details.

WEBINARS:

March 6 and 24, School Board Candidate Workshop
April 8, Preparing to Select a President and Other Board Officers
May 19, Quick Tips for New Board Members

SUMMER LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE:

Housing and registration open April 1.

TASB SPRING WORKSHOPS:

March 26, Kingsville
April 22, Lubbock and Wichita Falls
April 23, Houston and Stephenville
May 7, Alpine
May 8, Uvalde
May 13, Commerce
May 14, Canyon and Temple
May 15, Abilene and Nacogdoches
May 16–17, South Padre
May 21, Victoria
TBA, El Paso and Huntsville

For a complete list of training and events, or to access more details on any of the information referenced, go to LTS.tasb.org.



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For major improvement efforts, districts often work on a two-year or longer planning cycle. That is, some major changes recommended in the district and campus improvement plans may not be fully implemented until the year after the plan is developed. If major improvement objectives and plans were included in the district and campus plans at the beginning of the school year, be sure to ask the superintendent to explain how the resources needed for long-term improvement initiatives are included in the budget. If they cannot be included, the superintendent should update the board on what effect that will have on the district's ability to reach its stated targets.

TIMELY RESOURCES

- *A Guide for School Board Candidates*: Publication that summarizes the duties of a school board member and procedures for seeking an elected board position.



*Making a Difference
Becomes Limitless*

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

As a school trustee, have you ever wished you had a network of colleagues from across the state that you could contact to review ideas about school policy or governance, or just to have a peer to help you through tough times? How many times have you wished you could have a greater influence on education policy in Austin or Washington, D.C.?

If these wishes sound familiar, TASB invites you to submit an application to become a member of a specialized leadership development program designed by school board members for school board members. The program is Leadership TASB. Applications are accepted annually from May 1 through July 1. For more information on Leadership TASB or to reserve an application, contact leadershiptasb@tasb.org.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

by Kay Douglas, LTS senior consultant

With the political season abuzz, this is a perfect time to think about the board's role in advocacy on the local, state, and federal levels. In recent months, I have assisted a number of boards in doing annual self-evaluations. In every case, when we looked at the issue of advocacy, the board gave themselves the lowest possible grade and indicated the need for improvement. With all of the duties a board has, it is easy to put advocacy on the back burner. The problem is that, while boards are busy juggling all their responsibilities, decisions are being made on the state and federal levels that have a huge effect on their districts.

The good news is that TASB is advocating on your behalf year round. In the winter of even-numbered years, when the Legislature is not in session, TASB Governmental Relations staff travels the state to ask board members which issues are important in their districts and regions.

Although most of the Grassroots Meetings have passed, you can stay connected to the process by going to tasb.org/issues/sban to join the School Board Advocacy Network. This **free** membership allows you to receive timely updates on what is happening on the state and federal levels and offers tips on contacting your legislators. The ability to influence your legislator while a bill is being considered, before he or she actually votes, will make you a stronger advocate for the children of your district.

Go to tasb.org and click on "Issues + Advocacy" for other tips on how to stay current and how to help you keep your community informed.

Reminders

ITEMS YOU MAY WANT TO CONSIDER AS AGENDA CALENDAR ACTIVITIES:

- Submit an application to present at Convention. Details available at tasa.tasb.org.
- Submit application to participate in Leadership TASB (due July 1).
- Submit requests for SLI housing and registration (opens April 1).

DATES TO REMEMBER

- **Celebrating Educational Opportunities for Hispanic Students**, April 25–27, San Jose, California
- **SLI South**, June 12–14, San Antonio
- **SLI North**, June 19–21, Fort Worth
- **TASA/TASB Convention**, September 26–28, Dallas

Contact Us

Leadership Team Times is produced by the TASB Leadership Team Services (LTS) division. For more information about LTS and its training opportunities and services, go to LTS.tasb.org, or contact Lisa Carothers at lisa.carothers@tasb.org with questions or comments.