

# TEXAS EDUCATION TODAY

MAY 2010



Trinity High School Harmony Show Choir from Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD  
News from the Texas Education Agency

## STATEWIDE NUMBERS

# Preliminary TAKS results show increasing passing rates

Preliminary results from the 2010 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) show that passing rates on the standard test rose at grades 3-5 and 7-11 and that an overwhelming majority of the Class of 2011 passed the exit-level state exams required for graduation.

“These test results provide proof that students and teachers worked hard this year and that the reforms we have implemented are working,” said Commissioner of Education Robert Scott. “The high scores also show that Texas students are ready for the more challenging assessment program, the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR), which will begin in 2012.”

Results released today by the Texas Education Agency show that scores on the English-language version of TAKS declined slightly at sixth grade and on the eighth-grade reading test due to upward adjustments in the passing standards.

### HIGH SCHOOL

Students must pass TAKS tests in English language arts, mathematics, social studies and science, along with their courses, in order to earn a diploma from a Texas public high school.

Among this year’s junior class, 98 percent passed the social studies test, 93 passed the English language arts test, 91 percent passed the science test and 89 passed the math test. Students made particularly strong gains in mathematics and science over 2009 performance levels. These passing rates represent gains of

one point in social studies, one point in English, six points in science and eight points in mathematics over 2009 passing levels.

Overall, 82 percent of the juniors passed all tests taken, compared to 75 percent who did so in 2009. Of those who didn’t pass all exams this year, most failed only one test. They will have four more

opportunities to pass the TAKS before graduation.

“This year’s juniors are the first class that must meet the state’s 4x4 requirement, which requires them to earn four credits of English, mathematics, science and social studies. A growing number of today’s high school students are also taking rigorous Advanced Placement and dual enrollment classes, which provides them with a strong foundation in the core curriculum. All these efforts are paying off and benefitting our students,” Scott said.

Sophomores posted particularly strong gains in comparison to the previous year’s 10th grade class. This year, the passing rates were 90 percent on English language arts, 74 percent on mathematics, 93 percent on social studies and 74 percent on science. Overall, 64 percent of the students passed all tests taken, as compared to 55 percent who did so last year. This means that most 10th-grade students are on track to pass their exit-level TAKS exams next year.

Freshmen showed marked improvement in their passing rates with 92 percent passing the reading test and 70 percent passing the mathematics test. Sixty-nine percent passed all tests taken, as compared to 65 percent who did so last year.

“If graduation rates improve as the TAKS scores did, we should be on track to see a rise in recognized and exemplary accountability ratings for high schools later this summer,” Scott said.

State accountability ratings will be released July 30.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL AND VERTICAL SCALE ADJUSTMENTS

At eighth grade, the passing rates were 91 percent for reading, 80 percent for mathematics, 95 percent for social studies and 78 percent for science. Students must pass the eighth-grade reading and math tests in order to be promoted to high school.

The passing rates were up one to six points on all the tests, with the exception of reading. The reading passing rate in 2009 was 93 percent.

The eighth-grade reading exam is one of four tests in which the passing standards were increased, making it harder to pass the

### Inside this Issue

Social Studies.....	2
TAKS scores continued.....	3
CTE certification.....	4
Electronic textbooks .....	5
Katrina study.....	6
State Board Actions.....	7
Student data grant.....	8

## CURRICULUM

## State Board approves new social studies standards

After an intense and grueling review, the State Board of Education approved new social studies curriculum standards on a series of 9-5 votes on May 21.

The final votes came after two days of lengthy debate in which the board considered 213 amendments to the standards for kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. New standards for the high school economics course passed on a 14-0 vote.

The updated standards, known as Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, will be effective with the 2010-2011 school year. During that year, educators will receive training on the new standards and will write curriculum guides. The new standards will then be used in classrooms beginning in the 2011-2012 school year.

Work on the social studies curriculum began in January 2009 and attracted intense international attention and comment. Standing-room-only crowds watched as the board debated many sensitive topics.

Among the amendments that were approved that attracted considerable debate were these standards:

- Analyze Abraham Lincoln's ideas about liberty, equality, union and government as contained in his first and second inaugural addresses and the Gettysburg Address and contrast them

with the ideas contained in Jefferson Davis's inaugural address. (8<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History);

- Examine the reasons the Founding Fathers protected religious freedom in America and guaranteed its free exercise by saying that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, and compare and contrast this to the phrase "separation of church and state." (Government);

- Explain instances of institutional racism in American society. (Sociology);
- Discuss the solvency of long term entitlements such as Social Security and Medicare. (U.S. History since 1877).

The board also voted to add a direct reference to the election of President Barack H. Obama and to require World History students to explain the political philosophies of individuals such as Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson also continues to be referenced in a number of other TEKS.

It will take weeks to update the standards to reflect all the amendments. A final version of the approved standards will be posted here <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=3643> later this summer.

## OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

## High school juniors taking up state's offer for free SAT or ACT exam

By mid-May, more than 70,000 Texas high school juniors had taken the state up on its offer to take the SAT or ACT for free.

Thanks to funding from the Texas Legislature, the Texas Education Agency contracted with ACT and The College Board, which oversees the SAT testing program, to make free tests available this spring and early summer to juniors enrolled in the public schools. This is part of a larger effort to increase college preparation efforts in the state.

At least 70,041 juniors obtained the necessary voucher in order to register for a free test. Students who had already registered for the April ACT or May SAT before the program was announced can apply to the testing companies for a reimbursement so the total number of state-financed tests could increase. There are 310,070 members of this year's junior class.

"This program provides a great opportunity for our high school juniors. It saves their families money and erases one of the financial hurdles that could keep some students from pursuing their college dreams," said Commissioner of Education Robert Scott.

The standard fee to register for the ACT plus its writing exam is \$47. The standard fee for the SAT is \$45.

Among the Class of 2009, which is the most recent data available, 112,485 Texas public school students took the SAT and about 74,000 public school students took the ACT. Some of

those students took both admissions tests.

In addition to the state-funded admissions testing, Texas' new college preparation program allows a school district to work with the vendors to offer an eighth-grade test this year and eighth- and 10<sup>th</sup>-grade tests next year. So far, 90,484 eighth-grade students have participated in this state-sponsored program.

These norm-referenced exams can be used to diagnose the academic strengths and weaknesses of students as they prepare for college. Each vendor also will provide professional development to districts in the use of this data to improve instruction and raise student achievement.

The ACT's eighth-grade test is called EXPLORE and covers English, reading, mathematics and science. ACT's 10<sup>th</sup>-grade test called PLAN covers the same core subjects, which are also the subjects tested on its college admissions exam.

The SAT's eighth-grade test, called ReadStep, covers reading, mathematics and writing. SAT's 10<sup>th</sup>-grade test is called the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). This test measures reading, mathematics and writing skills.

Students who take these exams tend to score substantially higher when they take the college admissions exams.

◆ TAKS SCORES *continued from page 1*

## *Increase in TAKS passing rates the result of hard work and educational reforms*

tests this year, because of the implementation of a vertical scale. As required by state law, vertical scales were developed in 2009 for TAKS reading and mathematics tests for grades 3-8. With a vertical scale, a student's scores can be compared from grade to grade to determine academic growth. This requires a steady increase in difficulty of the test from grade to grade.

In developing the vertical scale, it was necessary to raise the passing standard for the sixth and eighth grade reading tests, as well as for the Spanish-language math tests for grades 3 and 4.

In no case were the passing standards lowered when implementing the vertical scale.

While the passing rate for the eighth-grade reading test showed a two-point drop using the new passing standard, the passing rate would have been 95 percent if the old standard remained in place. That would have meant a two-percentage point increase in the passing rate under the previous standard.

At sixth grade, the passing rates were 86 percent on the reading test, 82 percent on the math test with 76 percent of students passing all tests taken. This represents a one percentage-point increase over the 2009 math test results. However, there was a five-point decline on the reading test because of adjustments made due to implementation of the vertical scale. If the old passing standard had remained in place, the passing rate on the reading test would have been 91 percent.

Seventh grade saw no impact from the implementation of the vertical scale. Passing rates for this grade were 86 percent on reading; 81 percent on mathematics, and 95 percent on writing. Seventy-four percent of students passed all tests taken.

### **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Fifth-grade students must pass the reading and math TAKS in order to be promoted to the next grade. This year 85 percent of the students passed reading on the first try and 86 percent passed the math test on the first try. Eighty-eight percent of the students passed the science test.

A small number of students took the TAKS in Spanish. Among these students, 73 percent passed reading, 44 percent passed math and 51 percent passed science.

At fourth grade, 86 percent passed reading, 88 percent passed math and 92 percent passed writing. Overall, 78 percent passed all tests taken in English.

Among the fourth-grade students who took TAKS in Spanish, 83 percent passed reading, 72 percent passed math and 94 percent passed writing. The fourth-grade Spanish math test was

one of the tests impacted by the introduction of the vertical scale. If the old standard had remained in place, 81 percent would have passed the math test.

At third grade, which is the first grade in which TAKS is administered, 92 percent passed reading and 86 percent passed mathematics. There is no longer a state-mandated promotion requirement attached to the third-grade reading test.

Among the third-grade students who took the exams in Spanish, 85 percent passed reading and 73 percent passed math. The passing requirements were increased on this year's Spanish math test because of vertical alignment. If the old standard had remained in place, 80 percent of the students would have passed the math test.

### **GRADUATING SENIORS**

Graduation ceremonies are under way across the state this week. Ninety percent of the Class of 2010 passed all exit-level TAKS tests taken, meeting the state's testing requirement. The Class of 2009 had a passing rate of 86 percent by the end of their senior year.

Since the Class of 1987, Texas seniors must pass state-mandated tests, as well as their classes, in order to receive a diploma from a public high school.

Students have five opportunities to pass the exit-level TAKS in their junior or senior year. The vast majority pass on their first attempt.

Among the Class of 2010, the cumulative passing rate on the tests as of the April 2010 test administration was 97 percent on English language arts, 92 percent on mathematics, 98 percent on social studies and 94 percent on science.

Those who have not yet passed the tests may continue to take the tests until they do pass. Once they have completed all graduation requirements, a diploma is issued.

It is up to each school board to decide whether students who have not met all graduation requirements may participate in commencement ceremonies.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Additional information about test results for Texas students will be posted at [http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index3.aspx?id=3631&menu\\_id=793](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index3.aspx?id=3631&menu_id=793).

At this point, TEA only has statewide results. Scores for local districts and schools can be obtained from your local school district or charter holder.

## CERTIFICATION

## Proposed rule may allow current CTE certified teachers to teach new courses

Hiring certified teachers to fill Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses approved for the fourth credit of math and science in Texas high schools just got a little easier following action by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) in April.

According to the board's proposed new rules, teachers holding certification in a variety of current CTE courses may be able to teach the new courses.

The proposed rule is now posted for public comment in the Texas Register. Following the 30-day comment period, the tentative rules will be back before the SBEC for action on June 18.

After final approval, the rules will be sent for review by the State Board of Education (SBOE) in July. If there are no objections from the State Board of Education, the rules will be effective for the 2010-11 school year.

### CTE OFFERINGS CHANGE

House Bill 3485, 80<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, required the SBOE to identify CTE courses that satisfy the fourth mathematics or science credit required for the recommended and distinguished graduation plans.

During the State Board of Education's review of all the CTE curriculum standards, the number of CTE courses was reduced from more than 600 to 190 by eliminating outdated courses, combining duplicate courses, incorporating innovative courses, and creating new courses. The courses are grouped into 16 career clusters.

The SBOE adopted new Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Career and Technical Education in July 2009, with implementation planned for the 2010-2011 school year.

Also in compliance with HB 3485, the SBOE approved amendments to the state's graduation requirements, which added additional courses that may satisfy a fourth mathematics and science credit requirement.

The new graduation requirements allow Mathematical Applications in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources, if successfully completed prior to Algebra II; Engineering Mathematics; and Statistics and Risk Management to count for the fourth mathematics credit under the Recommended High School Program.

The graduation requirements allow Engineering Mathematics, and Statistics and Risk Management to count for the fourth mathematics credit under the Distinguished Achievement Program.

The new graduation requirements also allow Advanced Animal Science, Advanced Biotechnology, Advanced Plant and Soil Science, Food Science, and Forensic Science to count for the fourth science credit under the Recommended High School Program and Distinguished Achievement Program.

New rules also allow the CTE Professional Communications course to satisfy the speech graduation requirement and the CTE

Principles and Elements of Floral Design course to satisfy the fine arts graduation requirement.

### CERTIFICATION TESTS

Texas Education Agency staff determined that there were no certification tests to match the courses in the 16 CTE clusters. There are currently seven CTE tests that may be modified to match the new CTE TEKS and there are nine additional exams that will need to be developed.

Curriculum staff is also working on developing 90 clock hours of professional development to prepare certified teachers for teaching the new CTE clusters.

The certification assignments are applicable only to the CTE courses listed above that count toward the fourth year math and science. All other math and science courses, such as biology and algebra, still have the standard certification requirements.

The new rules allow for more flexibility for districts in assigning teachers to the approved fourth year courses.

For example, to teach the fourth year science course, Advanced Animal Science, a teacher can hold the following certifications:

- any agriculture certificate;
- any secondary biology certificate;
- any secondary science or science composite certificate;
- Life Science, grades 8-12;
- Master Science Teacher, grades 8-12; or
- science, grades 8-12.

Anyone teaching this course will be required to participate in TEA approved training prior to teaching effective with the 2012-13 school year. Anyone teaching the course in 2010-11 and/or 2011-12 will have 12 months from the date the training is first offered to complete the state required training.

The same is true for the designated math courses. For instance, a person teaching Statistics and Risk Management can hold the following certifications:

- any business or office education certification;
- any secondary mathematics certificate;
- Business Education, grades 6-12;
- Master Mathematics teacher, grades 8-12;
- mathematics, grades 8-12;
- mathematics/physical science/engineering, grades 8-12; or
- physics/mathematics, grades 8-12.

The same training requirements must also be met.

To view the proposed rules in depth, click on <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=3840> and then follow the links under Proposed Amendment to 19 TAC Chapter 231, Assignment of Public School Personnel, §231.1, Criteria for Assignment of Public School Personnel.

## INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

## Commissioner approves first ever list of electronic textbooks

A new chapter is being written for the way Texas students will receive their textbooks. For the first time ever, the commissioner of education has adopted a list of electronic textbooks, expanding the options of instructional materials that school districts and charter schools may select for purchase.

An “electronic textbook” is defined as computer software, interactive videodisc, magnetic media, CD-ROM, computer courseware, online services, or other electronic means that conveys information to the student and contributes to the learning process.

The commissioner has placed three products on the approved list of electronic textbooks for English Language Proficiency Standards. These are *Standards2Strategy* by A+RISE, *ELLevate* by McGraw Hill-Glencoe, and *Longman Keystone* by Pearson Longman.

Products that fall under Proclamation 2010 and Proclamation 2011 are currently being reviewed for consideration. Those submissions include: English language arts, reading, literature, Spanish language arts, Spanish reading, English as a Second Language, and speech. The review process is expected to be completed this month with the approved list of products available to school districts in July.

With the passage of House Bill 4294 in 2009, schools are required to provide a classroom set of instructional materials. The new law allows school districts to purchase electronic textbooks

and the technological equipment necessary to support them or any textbook or material approved by the State Board of Education. Previously, school districts were limited to state-approved textbooks, which are mostly traditional paper books, unless they were willing to pay out of pocket for other types of instructional materials.

If a school district or charter school selects an electronic textbook on the commissioner’s list, the state pays for the cost of the electronic textbook. Based upon the cost of the electronic textbook selected, the district may generate textbook credits which are equal to 50 percent of the difference between that cost and the maximum cost established for a textbook for that subject and grade level.

Supporters of the law believe that electronic textbooks will be less expensive than traditional textbooks and the savings can provide schools with additional textbook credits that could be used to buy laptop computers or electronic readers for every student.

Some critics of the new delivery mode fear that electronic textbooks approved by the commissioner evade the public input provided by the textbook adoption process of the State Board.

However, the law requires that submissions for electronic textbooks be reviewed and recommended by a panel of experts in the subject area of the textbook or materials, and it requires the commissioner to provide the State Board of Education an opportunity to comment before the materials are placed on the approved list.

In addition, the electronic textbooks and instructional materials placed on the approved list must:

- be aligned with current research in the subject area of the textbook or materials;
- cover each part of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and indicate the percentage of each essential knowledge and skill covered; and
- include appropriate training for teachers.

To view the proposed commissioner’s rules on electronic textbooks, go to <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/commissioner/proposed/0410/ch66-ltrprop.html> and click on the link for new 19 TAC Chapter 66, State Adoption and Distribution of Instructional Materials, Subchapter AA, Commissioner’s Rules Concerning the Commissioner’s List of Electronic Textbooks and Instructional Materials; Subchapter BB, Commissioner’s Rules Concerning State-Developed Open-Source Textbooks; and Subchapter CC, Commissioner’s Rules Concerning Acceptable Condition of Public School Textbooks, Electronic Textbooks, and Technological Equipment.

The proposed rules are expected to go into effect July 18.

### GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

## SBOE approves P.E. substitution for certain CTE work-based courses

Based on a constituent’s petition request, the State Board of Education approved a slight but important adjustment to the state’s high school graduation requirements in May.

The board voted to allow students who successfully complete a two- or three-credit career and technical education work-based training course prior to the 2011-2012 school year to count the class toward physical education graduation requirements.

Recent updates to the graduation requirements had eliminated students’ ability to receive a P.E. substitution for these CTE classes, which caused some upperclassmen to be without the required P.E. credits.

The board’s recent action allows these students to receive the credit they believed they would receive when they began these multi-year CTE programs.

## RESEARCH

## Katrina students show strong gains after four years in Texas schools

A recently released study found that students who relocated to Texas because of Hurricane Katrina have made significant academic progress during the past four years and are performing slightly better than a demographically and economically matched set of Texas students.

When compared with all Texas students, the Katrina students perform as well or better than the Texas students on reading performance and the gap in math performance narrowed substantially.

“I was so proud of the Texas public schools when they took in the students who evacuated their homes because of Hurricane Katrina. But I am even more proud of these schools and our educators because they have made a real and lasting difference in the lives of these children,” said Commissioner of Education Robert Scott.

When Hurricane Katrina slammed into coastal states in August 2005, creating major damage across the southern United States, 46,504 evacuees from Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida suddenly enrolled in Texas public schools.

Texas schools opened their doors and provided not only academic services but clothing, counseling and other services to the children.

Recently, research staff at the Texas Education Agency examined how a subset of students who remained in Texas fared academically after four years in the Texas public schools.

The study looked at Katrina students who were in grades 3, 5 and 8 in 2006 and still enrolled in Texas schools in 2009, and compared them to students enrolled in Texas schools who matched the group based on gender, ethnicity, economic background, and by geographic region. Additionally, the researchers looked for Texas students who had Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) scores similar to the evacuees in 2006. Along with this matched student comparison, the researchers also compared the Katrina students to all Texas test takers.

The students’ performance on the TAKS was tracked and studied from 2006 to 2009.

In 2006, the percentage of Katrina students in the study passing the TAKS reading test was 80 percent for the third-grade group, 63 percent for the fifth-grade students and 71 percent for the eighth-grade students. After four years of Texas education, the percentages of Katrina students in the study who were passing the TAKS reading tests rose to 93 percent for the third-grade cohort, 94 percent for the fifth-grade cohort and 91 percent for the eighth-grade cohort.

In 2006, the percent of Katrina students who passed the TAKS math test was 67 percent for the third-grade cohort, 61 percent for the fifth-grade cohort and 48 percent for the eighth-grade cohort. By 2009, the percentage of these student groups passing TAKS math tests was 75 percent for the third-grade cohort, 73 percent for the fifth-grade cohort and 69 percent for

the eighth-grade cohort.

Results indicated that, in general, the performance of Katrina students across the four years in which those students were educated in Texas was slightly better than the performance of the comparable set of Texas students.

The timing of the hurricane may have resulted in many of the Katrina students being educated less than a full year in Texas and the stress of the experience may have led those students to perform poorly that first year, the study said.

“The improved performance of the Katrina students over the last three years of the study relative to their matched peers may also reflect the recovery of these students, the increased stability in their schooling, the commitment of additional state and federal funding to meet the needs of students and families impacted by Hurricane Katrina and the focused attention of Texas educators on this specific population of students,” according to the study.

Over the four years of the study, the average reading performance of Katrina students increased so that the passing rates for these students was similar to or better than the average performance for all test takers in 2009. In mathematics, the achievement gap between the Katrina students and the Texas students in 2006 was larger than the performance gap in reading. By 2009, the gap in mathematics performance narrowed substantially but lagged behind the performance of all test takers.

“All Texans can be proud of our service to these students,” Scott said.

To view the report in its entirety, go to <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/resources/studies/KatrinaAnalysis2010.pdf>.

### SCIENCE TEXTBOOK UPDATE

The state’s looming budget deficit, estimated to be \$18 billion in the next biennium, caused the board to postpone issuing textbook Proclamation 2012, which would call for the purchase of new kindergarten through 12th grade science instructional materials. The science materials were estimated to cost \$347 million, which would be in addition to the \$888 million in funding that must be requested to cover already approved new English language arts materials, continuing contracts and freight.

Instead, board members decided to purchase supplemental instructional materials that only cover new science curriculum standards for science classes offered in grades 5, 6, 7 and 8, as well as biology, chemistry, physics, and Integrated Physics and Chemistry. It is particularly critical to provide the high school materials because the state’s new end-of-course exams will be built on the updated science standards adopted last year.

The board agreed to allow publishers to submit bids on a per-student, per-teacher or statewide license basis.

## State Board Actions

The State Board of Education met May 21 and took the following actions.

### FIRST READING

At first reading and filing authorization, the board:

- Approved technical edits to the rules for special education instructional arrangements and settings, and clarified changes to state and federal regulations.
- Approved the repeal of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for high school Career and Technical Education, career development and science courses that were effective in 1998, to incorporate new rules that are effective with the 2010-2011 school year.
- Approved updates to various sections within Chapter 74, Curriculum Requirements, Subchapter C, Other Provisions as a result of the statutorily required four-year review of rules. The section pertains to programs such as correspondence courses, innovative courses and programs, honors courses and others.

### SECOND READING

At second reading and final adoption, the board:

- Approved revisions to the rules for Adult Basic and Secondary Education to reflect changes resulting from the General Appropriations Act, Senate Bill (SB) 1, Article III, Rider 46, 81st Texas Legislature, 2009. The revisions ensure that adult education providers are in compliance with new procedural and reporting requirements.
- Approved amendments modifying the policies for administration of the Bond Guarantee Program to comply with requirements related to the recent decision of the Internal Revenue Service to reopen the program and to align with the policies of the intercept program to provide credit enhancement for school district bonds. The amendment also modifies the existing limitations on access to the guarantee and adds explanations of the actions that would follow a default by a school district. Under the amendments, the board increased the multiplier from 2.5 percent to 3 percent to allow for more bond capacity. This 0.5 percent increase will allow for an estimated two years worth of capacity in the program. Board members also approved retaining the \$2,300 application fee.
- Amended and updated the Code of Ethics of the Permanent School Fund (PSF).

### IN OTHER ACTION

In other actions, the board:

- Ratified the purchases and sales of securities executed in the portfolio of the PSF for the month of February 2010 in the amounts of \$262,933,624 and \$163,427,082, respectively.
- Approved a list of innovative courses for a three-year period that includes: PeaceKeepers: School Team Mediation; Peers Accepting Learning and Sharing I & II; StrengthBank® for High Schools: A Relationship Skills Initiative I-IV; and Script Your Life for Leadership.
- Approved a publisher's request to substitute a newer version of its currently adopted elementary mathematics textbook. The Math Learning Center was granted permission to substitute its currently adopted Mathematics, Grade 5, Elementary School product entitled Texas Bridges in Mathematics, with a new version, Bridges in Mathematics, Grade 5.
- Agreed to review the rules pertaining to the requirements for school districts relating to: budgeting, accounting, financial reporting, and auditing; Texas Education Agency (TEA) audit functions; adoption by reference of the Financial Accountability System Resource Guide; and the uniform bank bid and depository contract.
- Approved real estate investments of \$100 million each with INVESCO Core Real Estate – USA, and UBS Trumbull Property Fund to invest in real estate subject to contract negotiation and due diligence.
- Voted to issue a request for proposal for an Absolute Return Discretionary Separately Managed Account Fund-of-Hedge Funds manager.
- Took no action on a review of the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) rules pertaining to certification of educators from other countries. This review will update the rules to reflect current law and add specificity to the requirements relating to the issuance of a Texas educator certificate based on certification from another country.
- Took no action on a repeal of the SBEC rules dealing with a principal assessment deleted as a result of House Bill (HB) 200, 81st Texas Legislature, 2009.
- Enjoyed a presentation by the Trinity High School Harmony Show Choir from the Hurst-Euless-Bedford Independent School District.

**STATE BOARD OF  
EDUCATION**

Gail Lowe.....Chair  
Lampasas, District 14

Lawrence Allen, Jr...Vice Chair  
Houston, District 4

Terri Leo.....Secretary  
Spring, District 6

Rene Nuñez.....  
El Paso, District 1

Mary Helen Berlanga.....  
Corpus Christi, District 2

Rick Agosto.....  
San Antonio, District 3

Ken Mercer .....  
San Antonio, District 5

David Bradley.....  
Beaumont, District 7

Barbara Cargill .....  
The Woodlands, District 8

Don McLeroy.....  
College Station, District 9

Cynthia Dunbar .....  
Richmond, District 10

Patricia Hardy .....  
Fort Worth, District 11

Geraldine Miller.....  
Dallas, District 12

Mavis B. Knight.....  
Dallas, District 13

Bob Craig.....  
Lubbock, District 15

Robert Scott.....  
Commissioner of Education

**Texas Education Today**  
is available electronically on the web at:  
<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=276>

For information about this  
publication, contact:  
Division of Communications  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 North Congress Avenue  
Austin, Texas 78701-1494  
(512) 463-9000  
[www.tea.state.tx.us](http://www.tea.state.tx.us)

Copyright © 2010. Texas Education Agency. All Rights Reserved. This publication is provided to schools and educators in the State of Texas, and may be used and distributed by schools and educators in the State of Texas for their educational and informational purposes only. Prior express written authorization from the Texas Education Agency must be obtained for any other distribution, use, copying, or sales.

Texas Education Agency  
1701 North Congress Avenue  
Austin, Texas 78701-1494  
CC# 130-001

First-Class Mail  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Austin, TX  
Permit No. 3326

**STATEWIDE LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEMS GRANT**

**Texas wins \$18.2 million grant for Texas Student Data System**

Texas has been awarded a three-year \$18.2 million federal grant to build upon the state's efforts to design and implement the Texas Student Data System, a next generation longitudinal data system.

The Texas Student Data System will deliver relevant and actionable data to parents and educators to continually improve student performance while alleviating the data collection burden on school districts and improving data quality.

The Texas Legislature and the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation have previously committed significant resources to modernize the state's public education data management system to enable Texas to examine students' progress from early childhood, beyond schooling and into their careers.

To date, more than 2,000 Texas educators have participated in defining requirements for the Texas Student Data System.

Texas is one of 20 states to be awarded a Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) grant, funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. The state

will receive the second highest grant amount in the nation. New York will receive the most with \$19.7 million.

"Texas has made a tremendous commitment to providing more timely and useful information to teachers, principals and parents to improve student achievement," said Robert Scott, commissioner of education. "This is the next step in our ongoing efforts to ensure that Texas students and educators have every resource available to succeed."

SLDS grants were authorized by the Educational Technical Assistance Act of 2002, and the first grants were awarded in 2005. Last year, Congress expanded the program to include not only K-12 data systems but also to provide links with pre-K, postsecondary and workforce data. The 2009 ARRA grantees were selected in a competition based on the merit of the applicants' proposals and the funding available for the program.

In total, \$250 million was awarded this year through the SLDS grant competition.

For further information about the Texas Student Data System, please visit <http://www.texasstudentdatasystem.org/>.