

Text of Proposed Amendment to 19 TAC

Chapter 33. Statement of Investment Objectives, Policies, and Guidelines of the Texas Permanent School Fund

Subchapter A. State Board of Education Rules

§33.65. Bond Guarantee Program for School Districts.

- (a) Statutory provision. The commissioner of education must administer the guarantee program for school district bonds according to the provisions of the Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 45, Subchapter C.
- (b) Definitions. The following definitions apply to the guarantee program for school district bonds.
 - (1) Annual debt service--Payments of principal and interest on outstanding bonded debt scheduled to occur between September 1 and August 31 during the fiscal year in which the guarantee is sought as reported by the Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) of Texas or its successor, if the district has outstanding bonded indebtedness.
 - (A) The annual debt service will be determined by the current report of the bonded indebtedness of the district as reported by the MAC of Texas or its successor as of the date of the application deadline.
 - (B) The annual debt service does not include:
 - (i) the amount of debt service to be paid on the bonds for which the reservation is sought; or
 - (ii) the amount of debt service attributable to any debt that is no longer outstanding at the application deadline, provided that the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has sufficient evidence of the discharge or defeasance of such debt.
 - (C) Solely for the purpose of this calculation, the debt service amounts for variable rate bonds will be those that are published in the final official statement, or if there is no official statement, debt service amounts based on the maximum rate permitted by the bond order or other bond proceeding that establishes a maximum interest rate for the bonds.
 - (2) Application deadline--The last business day of the month in which an application for a guarantee is filed. Applications must be submitted electronically through the website of the MAC of Texas or its successor by 5:00 p.m. on the last business day of the month to be considered in that month's application processing.
 - (3) Average daily attendance (ADA)--Total refined average daily attendance as defined by the TEC, §42.005.
 - (4) Bond--A debt security issuance approved by the attorney general, issued under the TEC, §45.003 or §45.004, to provide long-term financing with a maturity schedule of at least three years.
 - (5) Bond Guarantee Program (BGP)--The guarantee program that is described by this section and established under the TEC, Chapter 45, Subchapter C.
 - (6) Bond order--The order adopted by the governing body of a school district that authorizes the issuance of bonds and the pricing certificate, if any, establishing the terms of the bonds executed pursuant to such order.
 - (7) Combination issue--An issuance of bonds for which an application for a guarantee is filed that includes both a new money portion and a refunding portion, as permitted by the Texas Government Code, Chapter 1207. The eligibility of combination issues for the guarantee is limited by the eligibility of the new money and refunding portions as defined in this subsection.

- (8) Enrollment growth--Growth in student enrollment, as defined by §129.1025 of this title (relating to Adoption by Reference: Student Attendance Accounting Handbook), that has occurred over the previous five school years.
- (9) Nationally recognized investment rating firm--An investment rating firm that ~~[is, or is part of, Standard & Poor's, Moody's, or Fitch and]~~ is designated by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission as a nationally recognized statistical rating organization (NRSRO) and is demonstrating that it has: ~~[This paragraph expires September 1, 2015.]~~
- (A) had its current NRSRO designation for at least three consecutive years;
 - (B) provided credit ratings to each of the following:
 - (i) fifteen or more fixed income securities denominated in United States dollars and issued during the immediately preceding three years; and
 - (ii) ten or more school districts in the United States; and
 - (C) a documented separation of duties between employees involved in credit analysis and employees involved in business relationships with clients.
- (10) New money issue--An issuance of bonds for the purposes of constructing, renovating, acquiring, and equipping school buildings; the purchase of property; or the purchase of school buses. An issuance of bonds for the purpose of constructing teacher or student housing is not eligible for the guarantee for new money. Eligibility for the guarantee for new money issues is limited to the issuance of bonds authorized under the TEC, §45.003. A new money issue does not include the issuance of bonds to purchase a facility from a public facility corporation created by the school district or to purchase any property that is currently under a lease-purchase contract under the Local Government Code, Chapter 271, Subchapter A. A new money issue does not include an issuance of bonds to refinance any type of maintenance tax-supported debt. Maintenance tax-supported debt includes, but is not limited to:
- (A) time warrants or loans entered under the TEC, Chapter 45, Subchapter E; or
 - (B) any other type of loan or warrant that is not supported by bond taxes as defined by the TEC, §45.003.
- (11) Notes issued to provide interim financing--An issuance of notes, including commercial paper notes, designed to provide short-term financing for the purposes of constructing, renovating, acquiring, and equipping school buildings; the purchase of property; or the purchase of school buses. For notes to be eligible for the guarantee under this section, the notes must be:
- (A) issued to pay costs for which bonds have been authorized at an election occurring before the issuance of the notes;
 - (B) approved by the attorney general or issued in accordance with proceedings that have been approved by the attorney general; and
 - (C) refunded by bonds issued to provide long-term financing no more than three years from the date of issuance of such notes, provided that the date of issuance of notes will be determined by reference to the date on which the notes were issued for capital expenditures and the intervening date or dates of issuance of any notes issued to refinance outstanding notes will be disregarded.
- (12) Refunding issue--An issuance of bonds for the purpose of refunding bonds, including notes issued to provide interim financing, that are supported by bond taxes as defined by the TEC, §45.003. Eligibility for the guarantee for refunding issues is limited to refunding issues that refund bonds, including notes issued to provide interim financing, that were authorized by a bond election under the TEC, §45.003.
- (13) Total debt service--Total outstanding principal and interest on bonded debt.

- (A) The total debt service will be determined by the current report of the bonded indebtedness of the district as reported by the MAC of Texas or its successor as of the date of the application deadline, if the district has outstanding bonded indebtedness.
- (B) The total debt service does not include:
 - (i) the amount of debt service to be paid on the bonds for which the reservation is sought; or
 - (ii) the amount of debt service attributable to any debt that is no longer outstanding at the application deadline, provided that the TEA has sufficient evidence of the discharge or defeasance of such debt.
- (C) Solely for the purpose of this calculation, the debt service amounts for variable rate bonds will be those that are published in the final official statement, or if there is no official statement, debt service amounts based on the maximum rate permitted by the bond order or other bond proceeding that establishes a maximum interest rate for the bonds.

(c) Data sources.

- (1) The following data sources will be used for purposes of prioritization:
 - (A) projected ADA for the current school year as adopted by the legislature for appropriations purposes;
 - (B) final property values certified by the comptroller of public accounts, as described in the Texas Government Code, Chapter 403, Subchapter M, for the tax year preceding the year in which the bonds will be issued. If final property values are unavailable, the most recent projection of property values by the comptroller, as described in the Texas Government Code, Chapter 403, Subchapter M, will be used;
 - (C) debt service information reported by the MAC of Texas or its successor as of the date of the application deadline; and
 - (D) enrollment information reported to the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) for the five-year time period ending in the year before the application date.
- (2) The commissioner may consider adjustments to data values determined to be erroneous or not reflective of current conditions before the deadline for receipt of applications for that application cycle.

(d) Bond eligibility.

- (1) Only those combination, new money, and refunding issues as defined in subsection (b)(7), (10), and (12), respectively, of this section are eligible to receive the guarantee.
- (2) Refunding issues must comply with the following requirements to retain eligibility for the guarantee for the refunding bonds, except that subparagraph (C) of this paragraph does not apply to a refunding issue that provides long-term financing for notes issued to provide interim financing.
 - (A) As with any district applying for approval for the guarantee, the district issuing the refunding bonds must meet the requirements for initial approval specified in subsection (g)(2)(A) of this section.
 - (B) The bonds to be refunded must have been:
 - (i) previously guaranteed by the Permanent School Fund (PSF) or approved for credit enhancement under §61.1038 of this title (relating to School District Bond Enhancement Program);
 - (ii) issued on or after November 1, 2008, and before January 1, 2010; or

- (iii) issued as notes to provide interim financing as defined in subsection (b)(11) of this section.
 - (C) The district must demonstrate that issuing the refunding bond(s) will result in a present value savings to the district and that the refunding bond or bonds will not have a maturity date later than the final maturity date of the bonds being refunded. Present value savings is determined by computing the net present value of the difference between each scheduled payment on the original bonds and each scheduled payment on the refunding bonds. Present value savings must be computed at the true interest cost of the refunding bonds. If the commissioner approves refunding bonds for the guarantee based on evidence of present value savings but at the time of the sale of the refunding bonds a present value savings is not realized, the commissioner may revoke the approval of the bonds for the guarantee.
 - (D) The refunding transaction must comply with the provisions of subsection (g)(4)(A)-(C) of this section.
- (3) If a district files an application for a combination issue, the application will be treated as an application for a single issue for the purposes of eligibility for the guarantee. A guarantee for the combination issue will be awarded only if both the new money portion and the refunding portion meet all of the applicable eligibility requirements described in this section. As part of its application, the applicant district must present data that demonstrate compliance for both the new money portion of the issue and the refunding portion of the issue.
- (4) If the commissioner determines that an applicant has deliberately misrepresented information related to a bond issue to secure a guarantee, the commissioner must revoke the approval of the bonds for the guarantee.
- (e) Determination of PSF capacity to guarantee bonds.
- (1) Each month the commissioner will estimate the available capacity of the PSF. If necessary, the commissioner will confirm that the PSF has sufficient capacity to guarantee the bonds before the issuance of the final approval for the guarantee in accordance with subsection (g)(3) of this section. The calculation of capacity will be based on a multiplier of three and one-fourth times the cost value of the PSF. The commissioner may reduce the multiplier to maintain the AAA credit rating of the PSF. Changes to the multiplier made by the commissioner are to be ratified or rejected by the State Board of Education (SBOE) at the next meeting for which the item can be posted.
 - (2) The SBOE will establish an amount of capacity to be held in reserve of no less than 5.0% of the fund's capacity. The reserved capacity can be used to award guarantees for districts that experience unforeseen catastrophes or emergencies that require the renovation or replacement of school facilities as described in the TEC, §44.031(h). The amount to be held in reserve may be increased by a majority vote of the SBOE based on changes in the asset allocation and risk in the portfolio and unrealized gains in the portfolio, or by the commissioner as necessary to prudently manage fund capacity. Changes to the amount held in reserve made by the commissioner are to be ratified or rejected by the SBOE at the next meeting for which the item can be posted.
 - (3) The net capacity of the PSF to guarantee bonds is determined by subtracting the amount to be held in reserve, as determined under paragraph (2) of this subsection, from the total available capacity, as described in paragraph (1) of this subsection.
- (f) Application process and application processing.
- (1) Application submission and fee. A district must apply to the commissioner for the guarantee of eligible bonds or the credit enhancement of eligible bonds as authorized under §61.1038 of this title by submitting an application electronically through the website of the MAC of Texas or its successor. The district must submit the information required under the TEC, §45.055(b), and this section and any additional information the commissioner may require. The application and all additional information required by the commissioner must be received before the application will

be processed. The district may not submit an application for a guarantee or credit enhancement before the successful passage of an authorizing proposition.

- (A) The application fee is \$1,500.
 - (B) The fee is due at the time the application for the guarantee or the credit enhancement is submitted. An application will not be processed until the fee has been remitted according to the directions provided on the website of the MAC of Texas or its successor and received by the TEA.
 - (C) The fee will not be refunded to a district that:
 - (i) is not approved for the guarantee or the credit enhancement; or
 - (ii) does not sell its bonds before the expiration of its approval for the guarantee or the credit enhancement.
 - (D) The fee may be transferred to a subsequent application for the guarantee or the credit enhancement by the district if the district withdraws its application and submits the subsequent application before the expiration of its approval for the guarantee or the credit enhancement.
- (2) Application prioritization and processing. Applications will be prioritized based on districts' property wealth per ADA, with the application of a district with a lower property wealth per ADA prioritized before that of a district with a higher property wealth per ADA. All applications received during a calendar month will be held until up to the 15th business day of the subsequent month. On or before the 15th business day of each month, the commissioner will announce the results of the prioritization and process applications for initial approval for the guarantee, up to the available net capacity as of the application deadline, subject to the requirements of this section.
- (A) Approval for guarantees will be awarded each month beginning with the districts with the lowest property wealth per ADA until the PSF reaches its net capacity to guarantee bonds.
 - (B) Approval for guarantees will be awarded based on the fund's capacity to fully guarantee the bond issue for which the guarantee is sought. Applications for bond issues that cannot be fully guaranteed will not receive an award. The amount of bond issue for which the guarantee was requested may not be modified after the monthly application deadline for the purposes of securing the guarantee during the award process. If PSF net capacity has been exhausted, the commissioner will process the application for approval of the credit enhancement as specified in §61.1038 of this title.
 - (C) The actual guarantee of the bonds is subject to the approval process prescribed in subsection (g) of this section.
 - (D) An applicant school district is ineligible for consideration for the guarantee if its lowest credit rating from any nationally recognized investment rating firm as defined in subsection (b)(9) of this section is the same as or higher than that of the PSF.
- (3) Late application. An application received after the application deadline will be considered a valid application for the subsequent month, unless withdrawn by the submitting district before the end of the subsequent month.
- (4) Notice of application status. Each district that submits a valid application will be notified of the application status within 15 business days of the application deadline.
- (5) Reapplication. If a district does not receive approval for the guarantee or for any reason does not receive approval of the bonds from the attorney general within the time period specified in subsection (g)(4) of this section, the district may reapply in a subsequent month. Applications that were denied approval for the guarantee will not be retained for consideration in subsequent months.
- (g) Approval for the guarantee; district responsibilities on receipt of approval.

- (1) Initial and final approval provisions.
 - (A) If, during the monthly estimation of PSF capacity described in subsection (e)(1) of this section, the commissioner determines that the available capacity of the PSF is 10% or less, the commissioner may require an applicant school district to obtain final approval for the guarantee as described in paragraph (3) of this subsection.
 - (B) If the commissioner has not made such a determination:
 - (i) the commissioner will consider the initial approval described in paragraph (2) of this subsection as both the initial and final approval; and
 - (ii) an applicant school district that has received notification of initial approval for the guarantee, as described in paragraph (2) of this subsection, may consider that notification as notification of initial and final approval for the guarantee and may complete the sale of the applicable bonds.
- (2) Initial approval.
 - (A) The following provisions apply to all applications for the guarantee, regardless of whether an application is for a new money, refunding, or combination issue. Under the TEC, §45.056, the commissioner will investigate the applicant school district's accreditation status and financial status. A district must be accredited and financially sound to be eligible for initial approval by the commissioner. The commissioner's review will include the following:
 - (i) the purpose of the bond issue;
 - (ii) the district's accreditation status as defined by §97.1055 of this title (relating to Accreditation Status) in accordance with the following:
 - (I) if the district's accreditation status is Accredited, the district will be eligible for consideration for the guarantee;
 - (II) if the district's accreditation status is Accredited-Warned or Accredited-Probation, the commissioner will investigate the underlying reason for the accreditation rating to determine whether the accreditation rating is related to the district's financial soundness. If the accreditation rating is related to the district's financial soundness, the district will not be eligible for consideration for the guarantee; or
 - (III) if the district's accreditation status is Not Accredited-Revoked, the district will not be eligible for consideration for the guarantee;
 - (iii) the district's compliance with statutes and rules of the TEA; and
 - (iv) the district's financial status and stability, regardless of the district's accreditation rating, including approval of the bonds by the attorney general under the provisions of the TEC, §45.0031 and §45.005.
 - (B) The following limitation applies to applications for new money issues of bonds for which the election authorizing the issuance of the bonds was called after July 15, 2004. The commissioner will limit approval for the guarantee to a district that has, at the time of the application for the guarantee, less than 90% of the annual debt service of the district with the highest annual debt service per ADA, as determined by the commissioner annually, or less than 90% of the total debt service of the district with the highest total debt service per ADA, as determined by the commissioner annually. The limitation will not apply to school districts that have enrollment growth, as defined in subsection (b)(8) of this section, of at least 25%, based on PEIMS data on enrollment available at the time of application. The annual debt service amount is the amount defined by subsection (b)(1) of this section. The total debt service amount is the amount defined by subsection (b)(13) of this section.

- (C) The commissioner will grant or deny initial approval for the guarantee based on the review described in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph and the limitation described in subparagraph (B) of this paragraph and will provide an applicant district whose application has received initial approval for the guarantee written notice of initial approval.
- (3) Final approval. The provisions of this paragraph apply only as described in paragraph (1) of this subsection. A district must receive final approval before completing the sale of the bonds for which the district has received notification of initial approval.
- (A) A district that has received initial approval must provide a written notice to the TEA two business days before issuing a preliminary official statement (POS) for the bonds that are eligible for the guarantee or two business days before soliciting investment offers, if the bonds will be privately placed without the use of a POS.
 - (i) The district must receive written confirmation from the TEA that the capacity continues to be available before proceeding with the public or private offer to sell bonds.
 - (ii) The TEA will provide this notification within one business day of receiving the notice of the POS or notice of other solicitation offers to sell the bonds.
 - (B) A district that received confirmation from the TEA in accordance with subparagraph (A) of this paragraph must provide written notice to the TEA of the placement of an item to approve the bond sale on the agenda of a meeting of the school board of trustees no later than two business days before the meeting. If the bond sale is completed pursuant to a delegation by the board to a pricing officer or committee, notice must be given to the TEA no later than two business days before the execution of a bond purchase agreement by such pricing officer or committee.
 - (i) The district must receive written confirmation from the TEA that the capacity continues to be available for the bond sale before the approval of the sale by the school board of trustees or by the pricing officer or committee.
 - (ii) The TEA will provide this notification within one business day before the date that the district expects to complete the sale by official action of the board or of a pricing officer or committee.
 - (C) The TEA will process requests for final approval from districts that have received initial approval on a first come, first served basis. Requests for final approval must be received before the expiration of the initial approval.
 - (D) A district may provide written notification as required by this paragraph by facsimile transmission or by email in a manner prescribed by the commissioner.
- (4) District responsibilities on receipt of approval.
- (A) Once a district is awarded initial approval for the guarantee, each issuance of the bonds must be approved by the attorney general within 180 days of the date of the letter granting the approval for the guarantee. The initial approval for the guarantee will expire at the end of the 180-day period. The commissioner may extend the 180-day period, based on extraordinary circumstances, on receiving a written request from the district or the attorney general before the expiration of the 180-day period.
 - (B) If the bonds are not approved by the attorney general within 180 days of the date of the letter granting the approval for the guarantee, the commissioner will consider the application withdrawn, and the district must reapply for a guarantee.
 - (C) If applicable, the district must comply with the provisions for final approval described in paragraph (3) of this subsection to maintain approval for the guarantee.
 - (D) A district may not represent bonds as guaranteed for the purpose of pricing or marketing the bonds before the date of the letter granting approval for the guarantee.

- (h) Financial exigency. The following provisions describe how a declaration of financial exigency under §109.2001 of this title (relating to Financial Exigency) affects a district's application for guarantee approval or a district's previously granted approval.
- (1) Application for guarantee of new money issue. The commissioner will deny approval of an application for the guarantee of a new money issue if the applicant school district has declared a state of financial exigency for the district's current fiscal year. The denial of approval will be in effect for the duration of the applicable fiscal year unless the district can demonstrate financial stability.
 - (2) Approval granted before declaration. If in a given district's fiscal year the commissioner grants approval for the guarantee of a new money issue and the school district subsequently declares a state of financial exigency for that same fiscal year, the district must immediately notify the commissioner and may not offer the bonds for sale unless the commissioner determines that the district may proceed.
 - (3) Application for guarantee of refunding issue. The commissioner will consider an application for the guarantee of a refunding issue that meets all applicable requirements specified in this section even if the applicant school district has declared a state of financial exigency for the district's current fiscal year. In addition to fulfilling all applicable requirements specified in this section, the applicant school district must also describe, in its application, the reason financial exigency was declared and how the refunding issue will support the district's financial recovery plan.
- (i) Allocation of specific holdings. If necessary to successfully operate the BGP, the commissioner may allocate specific holdings of the PSF to specific bond issues guaranteed under this section. This allocation will not prejudice the right of the SBOE to dispose of the holdings according to law and requirements applicable to the fund; however, the SBOE will ensure that holdings of the PSF are available for a substitute allocation sufficient to meet the purposes of the initial allocation. This allocation will not affect any rights of the bond holders under law.
- (j) Defeasance. The guarantee will be completely removed when bonds guaranteed by the BGP are defeased, and such a provision must be specifically stated in the bond order. If bonds guaranteed by the BGP are defeased, the district must notify the commissioner in writing within ten calendar days of the action.
- (k) Bonds issued before August 15, 1993. For bonds issued before August 15, 1993, a school district seeking the guarantee of eligible bonds must certify that, on the date of issuance of any bond, no funds received by the district from the Available School Fund (ASF) are reasonably expected to be used directly or indirectly to pay the principal or interest on, or the tender or retirement price of, any bond of the political subdivision or to fund a reserve or placement fund for any such bond.
- (l) Bonds guaranteed before December 1, 1993. For bonds guaranteed before December 1, 1993, if a school district cannot pay the maturing or matured principal or interest on a guaranteed bond, the commissioner will cause the amount needed to pay the principal or interest to be transferred to the district's paying agent solely from the PSF and not from the ASF. The commissioner also will direct the comptroller of public accounts to withhold the amount paid, plus interest, from the first state money payable to the district, excluding payments from the ASF.
- (m) Bonds issued after August 15, 1993, and guaranteed on or after December 1, 1993. If a school district cannot pay the maturing or matured principal or interest on a guaranteed bond, the commissioner will cause the amount needed to pay the principal or interest to be transferred to the district's paying agent from the PSF. The commissioner also will direct the comptroller of public accounts to withhold the amount paid, plus interest, from the first state money payable to the district, regardless of source, including the ASF.
- (n) Payments. For purposes of the provisions of the TEC, Chapter 45, Subchapter C, matured principal and interest payments are limited to amounts due on guaranteed bonds at scheduled maturity, at scheduled interest payment dates, and at dates when bonds are subject to mandatory redemption, including extraordinary mandatory redemption, in accordance with the terms of the bond order. All such payment dates, including mandatory redemption dates, must be specified in the bond order or other document pursuant to which the bonds initially are issued. Without limiting the provisions of this subsection, payments attributable to an optional redemption or a right granted to a bondholder to demand payment on a

tender of such bonds according to the terms of the bonds do not constitute matured principal and interest payments.

- (o) Guarantee restrictions. The guarantee provided for eligible bonds under the provisions of the TEC, Chapter 45, Subchapter C, is restricted to matured bond principal and interest. The guarantee applies to all matured interest on eligible bonds, whether the bonds were issued with a fixed or variable interest rate and whether the interest rate changes as a result of an interest reset provision or other bond order provision requiring an interest rate change. The guarantee does not extend to any obligation of a district under any agreement with a third party relating to bonds that is defined or described in state law as a "bond enhancement agreement" or a "credit agreement," unless the right to payment of such third party is directly as a result of such third party being a bondholder.
- (p) Notice of default. A school district that has determined that it is or will be unable to pay maturing or matured principal or interest on a guaranteed bond must immediately, but not later than the fifth business day before maturity date, notify the commissioner.
- (q) Payment from PSF.
 - (1) Immediately after the commissioner receives the notice described in subsection (p) of this section, the commissioner will instruct the comptroller to transfer from the appropriate account in the PSF to the district's paying agent the amount necessary to pay the maturing or matured principal or interest.
 - (2) Immediately after receipt of the funds for payment of the principal or interest, the paying agent must pay the amount due and forward the canceled bond or coupon to the comptroller. The comptroller will hold the canceled bond or coupon on behalf of the PSF.
 - (3) Following full reimbursement to the PSF with interest, the comptroller will further cancel the bond or coupon and forward it to the school district for which payment was made. Interest will be charged at the rate determined under the Texas Government Code, §2251.025(b). Interest will accrue as specified in the Texas Government Code, §2251.025(a) and (c).
- (r) Bonds not accelerated on default. If a school district fails to pay principal or interest on a guaranteed bond when it matures, other amounts not yet mature are not accelerated and do not become due by virtue of the school district's default.
- (s) Reimbursement of PSF. If payment from the PSF is made on behalf of a school district, the school district must reimburse the amount of the payment, plus interest, in accordance with the requirements of the TEC, §45.061.
- (t) Repeated failure to pay. If a total of two or more payments are made under the BGP or the credit enhancement program authorized under §61.1038 of this title on the bonds of a school district, the commissioner will take action in accordance with the provisions of the TEC, §45.062.