

Texas Education Today

News from the Texas Education Agency



TEA launches redesigned website

Commissioner of Education Michael Williams announced on Nov. 10 the launch of a redesigned website for the Texas Education Agency. The new-look TEA website brings many added features designed to be visually appealing and more user-friendly.

"Our website redesign project aimed at much more than just making the site look nicer," said Commissioner Williams. "For more than a year, we have been working

internally and with stakeholders outside the agency for a design that helps get people to what they are looking for quickly."

Commissioner Williams noted that while the previous TEA site design was functional and provided access to a lot of valuable information, the ongoing feedback from users centered on the difficulty in locating specific information.

◆ [See Website, page 2](#)

2014 final accountability ratings

Over 1,200 school districts and charters, and more than 8,500 campuses received the final 2014 state accountability system ratings from TEA. [[complete story on page 3](#)]

Recommendations to 84th Texas Legislature

The State Board of Education recently adopted its legislative recommendations, which call for additional funding or authority in several areas. [[complete story on page 5](#)]

Employers for Educational Excellence named

Gold, Silver and Bronze awards were given to 10 Texas businesses for their ongoing support and commitment to Texas public schools. [[complete story on page 8](#)]

TEA email addresses changing

This month, email addresses for TEA employees will transition from the current format of Firstname.Lastname@tea.state.tx.us to the shorter Firstname.Lastname@tea.texas.gov. [[complete story on page 11](#)]

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Social Media – TEA



TEA listservs

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TEA

Texas public school enrollment climbs again in 2013-2014

Enrollment in Texas public schools continues to climb, growing by 19 percent over the past decade and by more than 59 percent over the past 26 years, according to a new report released by the Texas Education Agency.

The TEA report, Enrollment in Texas Public Schools 2013-2014, documents the ethnically and culturally diverse populations that are increasingly attending the state's public schools. In 2013-2014, statewide enrollment increased from the previous year by 1.5 percent. With an enrollment of 5,151,925 in 2013-2014, the student body was as follows:

| 2014 Student Body Populations | |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| Group | Percentage |
| Hispanic | 51.8 |
| White | 29.5 |
| African American | 12.7 |
| Asian | 3.7 |
| Multiracial | 1.9 |

The percentages of enrollment accounted for by Asian, Hispanic, and multiracial students increased from 2012-2013 to 2013-2014. The percentage accounted for by African-American students stayed the same. The percentage accounted for by white students decreased.

Other highlights from the report include:

- Texas public school enrollment during the 2003-2004 school year was 4,328,028 students. By 2013-2014, total enrollment

has increased by 823,897 students or 19 percent.

- In 2013-2014, Grade 1 at 409,333 students had the highest enrollment followed by Grade 9 at 408,202 students. In each of the preceding 10 years, Grade 9 had the highest enrollment of any grade.
- The percentage of students receiving bilingual or English as a Second Language (ESL) instructional services increased from 14 percent in 2003-2004 to 17.1 percent in 2013-2014.
- Across regional education service centers, Region 4 (Houston) served the largest proportion of the state's total enrollment (22.3 percent) in 2013-2014.
- According to national figures, public school enrollment in Texas increased by 20.1 percent between 2001 and 2011. This was more than five times the increase in the United States (3.9 percent) over the same time period.
- According to national figures, the proportion of Texas public school enrollment accounted for by Hispanic students increased from 41.7 percent in 2001 to 50.8 percent in 2011. Nationally, the proportion of public school enrollment accounted for by Hispanic students increased from 17.1 percent to 23.7 percent during that same time period.

The complete TEA enrollment report, Enrollment in Texas Public Schools 2013-2014, is available at tea.texas.gov/acctres/enroll_index.html.

Website continued

The updated TEA website provides clearer avenues to information, creates dropdown menus to the most accessed data, and pulls together information areas (regardless of which TEA department produces the information) to help users get a complete picture of an issue or program. In

addition, TEA has committed to making each area throughout the site easier for everyone to understand with text in plain language.

In addition to a new design, the TEA website can now be accessed via a shorter URL. Visit the TEA website at tea.texas.gov.



TEA

Final 2014 accountability ratings released

The Texas Education Agency on Dec. 3 released the final 2014 state accountability system ratings for more than 1,200 school districts and charters, and more than 8,500 campuses. The final ratings are issued following an appeals process provided to districts and charters that contested the district or campus ratings originally announced in August.

Under the final 2014 ratings, 90 percent of school districts and charters across Texas have achieved the rating of Met Standard. Districts, campuses, and charters receive one of three ratings under the state's accountability system: Met Standard, Met Alternative Standard, or Improvement Required. School district ratings (including charter operators) by category in 2014 are as follows:

| RATING | DISTRICT | CHARTER | TOTAL | PERCENT |
|---------------------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|---------------|
| Met Standard/Alternative | 949 | 158 | 1,107 | 90.2% |
| Met Standard | 949 | 124 | 1,073 | 87.4% |
| Met Alternative Standard | 0 | 34 | 34 | 2.8% |
| Improvement Required | 76 | 34 | 110 | 9.0% |
| Not Rated | 0 | 10 | 10 | 0.8% |
| Data Integrity Issues | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| TOTAL | 1,025 | 202 | 1,227 | 100.0% |

The 2014 ratings are based on a system that uses various indexes to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the performance of a district or charter and each individual campus throughout the state. The performance index framework includes four areas: Student Achievement, Student Progress, Closing Performance Gaps, and Postsecondary Readiness.

State accountability ratings were originally announced by TEA in August. The Texas Education Code requires the Commissioner of Education to provide a process for local districts or charters to challenge an agency determination of the accountability rating. School district appeals are first carefully reviewed by an external panel before being sent to Education Commissioner Michael Williams for a final decision.

The Texas Education Agency received 90 school district and campus level appeals in 2014 compared to 85 in 2013.

One of the 29 school district appeals was ultimately granted by the Commissioner. The final district rating for the Meadowland Charter School in Boerne was changed from Improvement Required to Met Alternative Standard.

Seventeen of the 61 campus appeals were granted by the Commissioner. The campus appeals granted in 2014 include the following:

◆ See **Ratings**, page 4



Ratings continued

| DISTRICT | CAMPUS | AUGUST RATING | FINAL RATING |
|---------------------------|---|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Abilene ISD | Sam Houston SAC | Improvement Required | Not Rated |
| Aldine ISD | Lane School | Improvement Required | Not Rated |
| Austin ISD | International High School | Improvement Required | Met Alternative Standard |
| Bryan ISD | Crockett Elementary School | Improvement Required | Met Standard |
| East Central ISD | Harmony Elementary School | Improvement Required | Met Standard |
| Floresville ISD | Floresville High School Academy | Improvement Required | Not Rated |
| Garland ISD | Pathfinder Achievement Center | Improvement Required | Not Rated |
| Grand Prairie ISD | South Grand Prairie High School 9th Grade Center | Improvement Required | Met Standard |
| Grand Prairie ISD | William B. Travis Elementary School | Improvement Required | Met Standard |
| Hudson ISD | Stubblefield Learning Center | Improvement Required | Not Rated |
| Judson ISD | Judson Evening High School | Improvement Required | Not Rated |
| Meadowland Charter School | Meadowland Charter School | Improvement Required | Met Alternative Standard |
| Promise Community School | New Neighbor Campus (Houston) | Improvement Required | Not Rated |
| San Antonio ISD | Gates Elementary School | Improvement Required | Met Standard |
| Tyler ISD | Wayne D. Boshears Center For Exceptional Programs | Improvement Required | Not Rated |
| Wall ISD | Fairview Vocational Training | Improvement Required | Not Rated |

The rating for one campus was revised because of data integrity issues. The final rating for Coahoma Junior High School in Coahoma ISD was changed from Improvement Required to Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues.

Under the final 2014 state accountability system, campus ratings (including charter campuses) by category and school type are as follows:

| RATING | ELEM | MIDDLE | HS | MULTI | TOTAL | PERCENT |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|---------------|
| Met Standard/Alternative | 4,116 | 1,511 | 1,389 | 269 | 7,285 | 85.0% |
| Met Standard | 4,116 | 1,504 | 1,175 | 246 | 7,041 | 82.1% |
| Met Alternative Standard | 0 | 7 | 214 | 23 | 244 | 2.8% |
| Improvement Required | 438 | 141 | 98 | 56 | 733 | 8.5% |
| Not Rated | 70 | 53 | 276 | 156 | 555 | 6.5% |
| Data Integrity Issues | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.0% |
| TOTAL | 4,624 | 1,706 | 1,763 | 481 | 8,574 | 100.0% |

To view the 2014 state accountability ratings for districts, charters, and campuses, visit the Texas Education Agency website at ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/account/2014/index.html.



SBOE

Recommendations to the 84th Texas Legislature



In anticipation of the 2015 legislative session which opens Jan. 13, the State Board of Education recently adopted its legislative recommendations which call for additional funding or authority in several areas.

The five legislative recommendations, in priority order, are:

1. "As part of the General Appropriations Act, set aside an amount equal to 100 percent of the annual distribution made by the Permanent School Fund to the Available School Fund and place it in the instructional materials fund and (request that lawmakers) not reduce the funding from the other components of the school finance formulas in a similar amount."

The board would like the money produced from the Permanent School Fund to be used entirely to pay for instructional materials, as the Texas Constitution requires the state to provide free textbooks to public school children. Because 50 percent of this money is now used to provide a per student allotment to each district, the board included a hold harmless provision to indicate that it doesn't want other state funding components cut.

2. "Appropriate funds to assist local school districts in increasing the number of school guidance personnel especially at the secondary level (middle and high school) where preparation for graduation under House Bill 5 (83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session) is necessary."

This follows up on an April request the board sent to lawmakers asking for additional funding for counselors. The counselor-to-student ratio in

2013 was 469:1. The American School Counselors Association recommends a ratio of 250:1.

3. "Ensure sufficient legislative appropriations to increase staffing at the Texas Education Agency, particularly in the curriculum division, to provide adequate personnel to oversee and support the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills review and implementation process and the textbook adoption process."

In the 2012-2013 appropriation process, the Texas Education Agency's general revenue administrative budget was reduced by 41 percent, resulting in the elimination of 372 positions. This reduction heavily impacted staffing in all parts of the agency.

4. "Return functions of the State Board for Educator Certification to the State Board of Education so the public is represented by elected officials, not appointed officials."

Prior to the 1995 creation of the State Board for Educator Certification, the SBOE established and oversaw rules dealing with teacher certification. Now SBEC creates the rules, which come to the SBOE for review. However, the SBOE cannot modify a proposed rule; it can either only accept it as presented or veto it.

The Texas Sunset Commission has also proposed eliminating SBEC but it suggests giving the Commissioner of Education the authority over certification areas.

5. "Allocate funds to the State Board of Education to support the creation and implementation of a long-range plan as required by Texas Education code §7.102(c)(1)."

A nine-member ad hoc committee of the board is recommending the creation of a long-range plan for public education. However, no funding has been set aside specifically for the development of the plan.



TEA

Texas Safe Schools Week provides important reminder

As part of Texas Safe Schools Week (Oct. 19-25), the Texas Education Agency (TEA) advised that everyone in education – including students, parents, teachers, administrators, coaches and staff – plays a critical role in identifying and reporting improper educator-student relationships.

Local school district superintendents are statutorily required to report such incidences to TEA and local law enforcement agencies (in those cases where potential criminal charges are involved). Any report of an inappropriate relationship should be taken seriously, handled appropriately at the local level, and reported to TEA to assure proper sanctions and safeguards can be taken for the protection of students in all Texas districts.

“Anyone reporting such an incident to local school administrators – especially students and parents – must be confident that their report will be investigated fully and impartially,” said Commissioner of Education Michael Williams. “Everyone who works with students in schools across our state holds a position of trust that should never be called into question.”

TEA investigates reports of inappropriate educator-student relationships, working with school district officials as well as local law enforcement. Over the past three school years, the number of investigations opened by TEA staff specifically on allegations of inappropriate relationships has increased, from 141 in 2009-10 to 179 in 2013-14. Under the state penal code, a school district employee commits a second-degree felony if he or she engages in sexual contact with a student who is not their spouse, even if that student is 18 years of age.

A person who serves as the superintendent of a school district or the director of an open-enrollment charter school, private school or regional education service center is required by law to promptly notify

TEA or the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) in writing of any educator misconduct that results in termination or resignation.

If a termination or resignation is based on an act of misconduct, a superintendent must report the situation to TEA

within seven days.

A settlement with a departing employee does not alter the superintendent’s responsibility to report the information. A superintendent who fails to report the required information within the statutorily-required seven days faces possible sanctions including

reprimand, suspension or revocation of the superintendent’s certificate.

The Texas Educators’ Code of Ethics provides rules for standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents and members of the community. The Code specifically calls on teachers to refrain from inappropriately communicating with students through the use of social media. Over recent years, electronic communication (such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication) has provided a private method to contact students during and after school hours.

“Anyone reporting such an incident to local school administrators – especially students and parents – must be confident that their report will be investigated fully and impartially.”

~ Commissioner Michael Williams.

◆ See **Relationships**, page 7



Relationships *continued*

Parents play an essential role in helping to monitor any communication via social media directly to their child. While group communication (such as to an entire class regarding homework, changes in practice times to all athletic team members) can serve a valid purpose, direct emails, texts or instant messaging to students should be discouraged at both the school and parental level. Many local school districts have adopted social media policies to clearly define appropriate uses of modern communication technology.

TEA has produced a series of training videos regarding the ethical behavior of all personnel on school campuses. The training videos are available for district use. The TEA website also has an area dedicated to TEA's and SBEC's role and responsibilities in overseeing the conduct of Texas educators. In addition, anyone seeking to review a superintendent's responsibilities in reporting inappropriate relationships can view them here.

Texas Safe Schools Week is held annually in conjunction with the national America's Safe Schools Week. To read the Governor's Safe School Week proclamation, the joint Texas Education Agency-Texas School Safety Center proclamation or to learn more about Texas Safe Schools Week topics, visit the Texas Education Agency website at www.tea.texas.gov or the Texas School Safety Center website at txssc.txstate.edu/.

SBOE

SBOE adopts instructional materials

The State Board of Education voted in November to adopt new instructional products for social studies, fine arts and high school mathematics courses.

This action makes 316 state-reviewed and approved instructional products available for use in Texas schools beginning with the 2015-2016 school year. This includes 89 social studies products, 55 high school math products and 172 fine arts products.

The board deleted six social studies products offered by publisher WorldView Software from the commissioner's list of recommended material. A Holt McDougal high school government book was also withdrawn from consideration by its publisher, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

While districts have many options today as they select textbooks from approved lists or the open market, most materials are still purchased off the list of materials approved by the board. The list of materials approved under Proclamation 2015 can be found at tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=25769819152&libID=25769819261.



The 2014 National History Day contest winners were recognized at the Nov. 21 SBOE meeting in Austin. Board members Sue Melton-Malone, SBOE District 14; Ken Mercer, SBOE District 5 and Chair Barbara Cargill, SBOE District 8, congratulate the winners. Students recognized were (not in photo order) Matthew Broussard of Impact Early College High School in Goose Creek ISD; Jake Brien, Hannah Edwards, Jessie Loehr, Max Mitchell and Keith Teague of One Day Academy in Austin; Paige Dupuy and Brigitte Eichenberg of Atlas Academy in Waco ISD.



SBOE

10 Employers for Education Excellence named

The State Board of Education has named 10 Texas businesses as the 2014 Employers for Education Excellence (EEE). From the U.S. Army to a grocery store, these employers and their staffs are recognized for their ongoing support and commitment to Texas public schools.

"I would like to congratulate, and thank, these businesses on being named Employers for Education Excellence," said Barbara Cargill, chair of the State Board of Education. "Each is to be commended for the valuable support and many resources they and their employees provide to our Texas public schools."

The EEE Awards are given in three categories – Gold, Silver and Bronze. For the 2014 award, six companies received a gold award, three received a silver award and one company received a bronze award.

Winners in the Gold Award category have implemented policies that: encourage and support employees who attend parent-teacher conferences; encourage employees to volunteer in school activities; and support employees that participate in student mentoring programs.

The 2014 EEE recipients are:



Gold Award

BASF Corporation – Freeport

The BASF Corporation in Freeport is well known in the community for supporting more than 50 non-profit organizations in the Freeport area and partnering with the Brazosport ISD. Employees donate more than 500 hours a year volunteering as tutors, educators, coaches, mentors and more. The BASF Responsible Care Outreach Team, in partnership with the local community college, has sponsored the "Responsible Care Week" for area fifth graders for the past 22 years. The program educates students about careers in industry, science, technology, engineering, math and more. More than 1,000 students and their teachers spend the week participating in workstations featuring a pilot plant lab, maintenance lab and Process Education Training Plant. In addition, an average of 50 BASF employees engage with students on a weekly basis through tutoring, mentoring and education programs.

Brookshires – Red Oak

For the past two years, the Brookshire Grocery Store in Red Oak has been a proud supporter of the Red Oak ISD in Ellis County. The company actively encourages its employees (many of whom are students) to participate and volunteer in the local school events. In addition, the store provides both monetary and material donations to many of the district's programs. More than 15 percent of the store's employees are often found mentoring and helping with various district activities. The store provides support for the Red Oak ISD Special Olympics, the annual Back-to-School Fair, athletics, the annual talent competition, Teacher Appreciation Week and has membership on the Red Oak ISD Education Foundation.

Complex Community Federal Credit Union – Odessa

Since 2008, Complex Community Federal Credit Union in Odessa has actively supported the Ector County ISD. Company employees have participated in many of the district's projects and programs, and provided support to the Education Foundation

◆ See **Employers**, page 9



Employers *continued*

of Odessa. The credit union has been a major supporter of, and instrumental in the success of, the program Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) in many different ways. That support includes providing an annual motivation speaker, teaching financial literacy planning sessions and providing teacher supply scholarships along with other activities. Credit union staff have taught, in total, more than 2,700 hours to 4,900 ECISD students in the areas of financial lending, budgeting, delayed gratification, check writing, savings and investments, FAFSA and setting college goals.

HNTB Corporation - Dallas

HNTB is a nationally recognized engineering, architectural and planning firm with offices nationwide. Of the 107 employees within the Dallas/Plano office, 13 employees volunteer with the Yvonne A. Ewell Townview Magnet Center in the Dallas ISD's School-2-Business (S2B) program. During the 2013-14 school year, the volunteers donated more than 750 hours to the program. Through the program, which runs from January to May, students are given an assignment and follow through on the project from start to finish. During the 2013-14 school year, the S2B program involved students in designing improvements to an existing transit station on a proposed extension on one of the Dallas Rapid Area Transit lines. The program is designed to provide students with a hands-on approach and a basic understanding of engineering design, project development, project management and more.

Raytheon - McKinney

Raytheon is a partner with the McKinney ISD not only in name, but also in its continued student support. The district-business partnership exposes students to 21st century leadership skills that are critical to workforce success. Through partnership programs, students gain technical knowledge to participate in learning modules. Collaborative

efforts between teachers and Raytheon volunteers provide opportunities for students to learn about the application of math and science while gaining visibility into the corporate world and networking with professionals in a technical field. Among the many areas and events where Raytheon partners with McKinney ISD are: National Engineer Week, Engineering is Elementary, LASER – Leadership and Science Ensures Results, Math MovesU, campus robotics programs and judging science fairs.

U.S. Army – Fort Hood

For the better part of two decades, Fort Hood has partnered with several area school districts, including the Killeen ISD, through the Adopt-A-School (AAS) program providing mentorships to thousands of students. The program's mission is to routinely contribute military resources and services to the Killeen-area schools to nurture the intellectual, emotional, social and physical growth of the children in the greater Fort Hood area. Every year, Fort Hood's AAS program dedicates 3 percent or more of its active duty workforce to tutoring, coaching, and mentoring local students. This effort equates to more than 20,000 dedicated man-hours. Fort Hood, through Brigade/Battalion/Unit/Club support, has 106 unique adoptions in Central Texas, of which 52 are in the Killeen ISD alone. Activities regularly include: student reading programs, field days, fine arts activities, holiday celebrations, pen pal programs, recycle initiatives, athletic events, vocational training, media support and special events.



Silver Award

Insperty - Kingwood

Insperty, a national organization that provides human resource services to small and medium-sized businesses, has consistently provided

◆ See **Humble ISD**, page 10



Humble ISD *continued*

outstanding volunteer services and dedication to the Humble ISD. For more than 15 years, Insperity employees have been long-time volunteers and committed community partners to the district. In the 2013-14 school year, Insperity donated more than \$200,000 to the district, while 65 percent of their employees volunteered in the district. In addition to aiding teachers, volunteers serve as mentors, host job shadowing days, serve as science fair judges, engage with the Parent-Teacher Organizations and other school-based programs. The company is also a major supporter of the Humble ISD Education Foundation and hosts several fund-raising activities throughout the year including a golf tournament, barbecue cook-off and the Foundation's annual gala.

Smart Financial Credit Union - Houston

Smart Financial Credit Union encourages and supports staff participation in the many community service activities in the Houston area. Employees are encouraged to participate in programs that will improve the quality of life for the community at large, including programs within the Houston ISD and its campuses. Through creating effective partnership events, initiatives, volunteer opportunities, financial and in-kind donations, the company believes it has positively impacted student achievement. In one example, students at Lamar High School, through a student-run branch of the credit union, are able to learn first hand about saving and managing money, balancing checkbooks and budgeting. In addition, the company participated in the Houston ISD's Back-to-School Fest impacting all 295 Houston ISD campuses, its more than 200,000 students and 15,000-plus teachers and staff members.

Wells Fargo - Wichita Falls

About 15 percent of the employees at the Wells Fargo Bank in Wichita Falls participated in a new reading initiative last year in the Wichita Falls ISD. The program, Read 2 Learn, is designed to ensure

that all children are reading at grade level by the end of third grade. The company's employees meet and read to an assigned student one to three times a week. The program was launched in October 2013 and at the end of the 2013-14 school year, Wells Fargo had 196 children enrolled with 350 volunteers participating. According to the Wichita Falls ISD, the Wells Fargo Bank supplied the most volunteers from a single business to the Wichita Falls ISD program.



Bronze Award

Little River Healthcare - Rockdale

Recognized with a Bronze Award is Little River Healthcare, a partner with the Rockdale ISD in Rockdale. Since joining in partnership with the district, the Little River Healthcare and its staff have worked consistently to implement the Little River Healthcare School Based Clinics. In the beginning, the clinics served district staff only. After providing information to parents and gaining parental consent, the clinics began serving students with basic healthcare needs. One of the services the clinic provides are free school physicals, including echo cardiograms for all student athletes. The clinic and its staff are also valuable supporters of the district's band and athletic booster clubs, and the school health advisory council.

The EEE award was established in 2007 by the Texas Legislature to honor Texas employers who encourage and support staff participation and voluntarism in the public schools.

Any Texas employer is eligible to win the award, including private companies, nonprofit organizations, and state, local, federal and educational entities. Recognized businesses receive a plaque and the EEE designation is recognized for three years.



TEA

TEA email addresses changing

In November, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) officially launched a revised version of the agency website. This launch brought with it a new and shorter website URL: tea.texas.gov.

As part of the next phase in this transition, the agency is moving to utilize that shorter URL within every agency email address.

Beginning Dec. 15, 2014, TEA email addresses will transition from the current format of Firstname.Lastname@tea.state.tx.us to the shorter Firstname.Lastname@tea.texas.gov.

Please note that any email your district receives from TEA staff will begin coming from "@tea.texas.gov" on that date. "I want to stress that

both the old email format and new email format will still work in communicating with our agency staff. However, I would encourage changing to the new and shorter format as soon as possible," Commissioner of Education Michael Williams said.

In addition, please alert your IT department of this transition to allow the new domain of "@tea.texas.gov" through any spam filters your district may have.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the email transition or have comments regarding the new agency website, please feel free to contact TEA Communications at teainfo@tea.state.tx.us (through Dec. 14), teainfo@tea.texas.gov (beginning Dec. 15) or calling (512) 463-9000.

Firstname.Lastname@tea.texas.gov

**With a 'tip of the hat'....**

Members of the State Board of Education give a "tip of the hat" in farewell to member Mavis Knight, District 13, as she retires from her SBOE duties. Knight, in green hat, served from 2002 to 2014. The November 2014 SBOE meeting was her last.



TEA

TEA releases superintendent TELL survey highlights

Earlier this year, the Texas Education Agency conducted the Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Texas Survey aimed at gathering input from the state's superintendents.

The TELL Texas Survey is part of House Bill 2012 passed last year by the Texas Legislature, which requires TEA to develop an online teaching and learning conditions survey to be administered statewide biennially to teachers, principals, counselors and other school-based professional staff. The anonymous survey is aimed at providing valuable data for schools and districts to use in improvement planning.

During the course of the survey period (Aug. 14–Sept. 12), 332 (or approximately 27 percent) of superintendents in the state responded to the survey. A third of those who responded to the survey have more than a decade of experience as a superintendent.

Superintendents were asked to respond to specific statements regarding: time allocation; facilities and resources; community support and involvement; managing student conduct; teacher leadership; and school leadership in their district over the past two years.

| Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Survey Highlights | |
|---|---|
| 99 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: | School environments in this district are safe. |
| 94 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: | Central office has streamlined procedures to minimize educators' time on non-instructional tasks. |
| 94 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: | Teachers are actively involved in district decision making about educational issues. |
| 88 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: | Class sizes are reasonable such that teachers have the time available to meet the needs of all students. |
| 87 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: | Parents/guardians are influential decision makers in schools in this district. |
| 82 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: | The reliability and speed of Internet connections in this district are sufficient to support instructional practices. |
| 77 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: | Schools across my districts have sufficient numbers of licensed staff to meet the educational needs of our students. |
| 75 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: | The non-instructional time provided for teachers in this district is sufficient. |

The survey was administered by the New Teacher Center (NTC), a national organization that has conducted similar surveys in other states. Earlier this year, NTC conducted a similar TELL survey that included teachers, principals, assistant principals other education professionals (such as school counselors, school psychologists or social workers).



Survey highlights can be found at tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/News_and_Multimedia/Press_Releases/2014/TEA_releases_TELL_survey_highlights/.

For more information about the 2014 TELL Texas Survey, please visit www.telltexas.org.



SBOE

Summaries of SBOE actions can be found online

The State Board of Education met Nov. 18 – 21, 2014. Summaries of actions taken by the SBOE can be found on the Texas Education Agency's website at tea.texas.gov/sboe/actions/.

SBOE

Student performance



The Junior Thespians from McCowan Middle School in the DeSoto ISD performed a condensed version of their one-act play for the November 2014 SBOE meeting in Austin. The troupe is under the direction of Yolanda Hanspard, director of theater arts.



Texas Education Today may be found online at tea.texas.gov/communications/tet.aspx

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