



Home > Legislative > TASB Advocacy Agenda > Resolutions

TASB Advocacy
Agenda

Call for
Resolutions

Cornerstone
Principles

Priorities

Resolutions

TASB Legislative
Advisory Council

TASB 2020–2022 Advocacy Agenda Resolutions

As Amended September 25, 2021 by the TASB Delegate Assembly

Accountability and Assessments

TASB advocates for legislation that repeals the notion of rating schools or districts on an A–F scale and supports a rating system that places more emphasis on local accountability.

TASB advocates for an accountability system that does not apply the same sanctions to campuses and districts that receive a D rating over two consecutive years as the sanctions applied to F-rated campuses.

TASB advocates for an accountability system in which the Texas Education Agency informs school districts about accountability standards no later than the beginning of the school year in which the standards are to be applied.

TASB advocates for the modification of the current accountability system to increase the weight of the community-based measures for district and campus ratings.

TASB advocates for the availability of state assessments in a student's home language through secondary for recent immigrants and students in dual-language programs.*

TASB advocates for the official state definition and tracking of long-term English language learners.*

Charter Schools and Privatization of Public Education

TASB advocates for a review and approval process to prevent an oversaturation of charter schools in particular geographic areas.

TASB advocates for legislation that prevents the use of the Permanent School Fund to back charter school bonds with a low underlying rating.

TASB advocates for legislation that requires charter schools to accept all students who wish to enroll, including students with a documented history of discipline problems.

TASB advocates for legislation that would require the commissioner to consider, at a minimum, whether a charter holder has achieved the representations and goals included in its initial charter application.

TASB advocates for legislation that provides state funding for charter schools at a per-student funding level that is no greater than that of the school districts where they are located.

TASB advocates for transparency and notice requirements in charter applications and amendment requests, including specific locations of proposed new campuses, sufficient notice and opportunity for analysis and public comment, and a fiscal note including a charter's cost to the state, impact on local districts, and cost of anticipated enrollment growth over ten years.

TASB opposes any efforts to force school districts to sell or lease district property to charter schools.*

TASB advocates for increased oversight by the State Board of Education over charter school applications, financial accountability, and academic accountability.*

TASB advocates for legislation that would require the commissioner, before granting an expansion, to consider, at a minimum, whether a charter holder had achieved the representations and goals included in its initial charter application.*

TASB advocates for legislation that excludes charter schools with an enrollment of 5,000 or more from receiving the small and midsize allotment.*

COVID-19 Pandemic

TASB advocates for no reductions in state funding due to COVID-19.

TASB advocates for ceasing the administration of STAAR™ (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) standardized testing for the 2020–21 and 2021–22 school years and affording school districts the opportunity to utilize locally developed diagnostic assessment or universal screeners.

TASB calls upon the Texas Legislature to designate “broadband internet access” as an essential utility for the State of Texas by supporting a statewide approach to connect all Texas families to broadband and providing funding so that school districts may update their technology infrastructure for wider access and faster communication to counter the disruptions caused by COVID-19 and other future natural disasters and emergencies.

Due to the funding pressures created by COVID-19, TASB advocates for the removal or delay of the requirement established by House Bill 3 (86th Session) that all kindergarten through third-grade teachers, including special education teachers, and principals must attend a “teacher literacy achievement academy” by the 2022–23 school year.

TASB advocates for district accountability based on industry-based certification be waived due to the unknown factors caused by COVID-19.

TASB advocates that the 90 percent attendance rule for class credit or final grade be waived for the 2020–21 school year.

TASB advocates for the extension of the educator certification waiver created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic for an additional year.

TASB advocates for additional funding to preserve staff during economic recovery.

TASB advocates for the postponement of School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) ratings for the 2020–21 year.

TASB advocates all retired school personnel be authorized to substitute in a vacant position for up to 90 school days instead of the current 20.

TASB supports using student enrollment in the calculation of the weighted average daily attendance instead of the current “seat time” attendance reporting.

TASB opposes federal waivers on the CARES Act funding that would allow the state to reduce its maintenance of effort, i.e., that allows the state to supplant its funding with federal funds.

TASB calls upon the Texas Legislature to amend current law to authorize school districts to provide their own full remote learning opportunity for their students without limited credit options.

TASB advocates for waiving the requirement in Texas Education Code § 44.008 for districts to submit their annual audit within 150 days of the end of their fiscal year.

TASB advocates for allowing school districts to count as present for purposes of average daily attendance students who receive online instruction during extended absences.

TASB advocates for K–12 public schools to remain “in-person” and not be entirely replaced by a virtual learning platform, except when it would threaten the health and safety of students or staff.

TASB advocates for accountability changes that take pandemic-related school closures into consideration.*

TASB advocates for legislation to fund the implementation of industry-standard safety measures and protocols, to include COVID-19 mitigation, counseling services, and mental health programs, for all school districts to benefit all students.*

TASB advocates for the Legislature to continue to work with local school districts to identify and address student needs during and after disasters, such as access to technology, broadband services, mental health resources, meals, social services, and remediation upon returning to school.*

Governance

TASB advocates that trustees of independent school districts maintain all powers and duties to govern their respective school districts if not otherwise outlined in statute and that those rights should be preserved and protected from any state agency or other entity that would substitute its judgment for the lawful execution of those powers and duties by trustees of independent school districts.

TASB opposes legislation that increases ballot language requirements, limits dates upon which elections may be held, or creates additional requirements for voter-approved tax rate elections and bond elections, such as voter turnout thresholds.

TASB calls upon the commissioner of education, State Board of Education, and Texas Education Agency to collaborate with public education stakeholders when drafting legislation and rules to enact policy that is in the best interest of students and schools.

TASB advocates for legislation that will ensure the authority to make decisions regarding district consolidation will remain with local school districts.

TASB advocates for legislation that requires that local boards of trustees have discretion over the spending of any additional funding dedicated to compensation of district staff.

TASB opposes adding measures or initiatives that would designate use of Foundation School Program funding for mandated programs thereby lessening local discretionary funding per pupil.

TASB advocates for ceasing the crossing of district boundaries to transport students into another district without interlocal agreements.

TASB advocates for the continuation of the Texas Tax Code Chapter 313 as currently allowed by state statute and extending the current expiration date of the program.

TASB advocates for removing “transfer annually” from Texas Education Code § 25.036 and adding language making school transfer agreements terminable at any time by either the district or parent.

TASB advocates for an extension of the option to allow school boards to move their election dates to November elections.*

TASB advocates for legislation that protects district of innovation law.*

TASB advocates for legislation that would allow school districts to use low-bid purchasing for goods.*

TASB supports legislation that would allow school districts utilizing solar systems to use batteries to store power.*

TASB advocates for limiting additional required training for trustees and consolidating training related to safety and security into a single, three-hour session that must be conducted every three years.*

TASB advocates for the requirement of state legislators to meet with their local school boards or vice versa at least twice per biennium.*

Instructional Materials and Curriculum

TASB advocates for legislation that adequately funds the Instructional Materials Allotment (IMA) to ensure districts are able to meet increasing costs and adequately fund required materials adoptions. Legislation also should be explored that would serve to tie funding under IMA to the State Board of Education proclamations that are issued. Finally, the statute governing IMA should be revised to include an element of permanency as the current language leaves funding to the whim of each legislative session.

TASB calls upon the Texas Legislature to require that the State Board of Education streamline the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. Limiting standards for each subject at each grade level to what can be taught prior to state-mandated tests within the given school year.

TASB advocates for a requirement to allow the use of open education resources in agreements and memorandums of understanding between local education districts and institutions of higher education regarding textbooks and educational resources for dual-credit programs.

TASB advocates for the inclusion of industry-based and military professionals in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) streamlining process for the purpose of TEKS prioritization and alignment with the goal of college, career, and military readiness for all students.

TASB advocates that all students have access to an equitable delivery of music, dance, theatre, and visual arts education taught by certified fine arts educators.

TASB advocates for public internet and Wi-Fi throughout the community.*

TASB advocates for legislation that would allow school districts flexibility in the use of Technology and Instructional Materials Allotment funds to support digital transformation.*

TASB supports that the responsibility for setting curriculum standards and reviewing and adopting instructional materials should remain with the State Board of Education.*

TASB advocates for transferring the remote teaching and learning skills acquired during the pandemic to situations where students are home due to illness or injury and allowing these remote learning situations be counted the same as if the student was attending in person.*

TASB advocates for a curriculum that does not limit its instruction and discussions about current events, American and Texas history, and Government.*

Public School Finance

TASB advocates for increased sustainable state revenue sources to ensure the continued financial support to school districts provided by House Bill 3 (86th Session).

TASB advocates for legislation that reviews modifications made to the state maximum compressed tax rate outlined in House Bill 3 (86th Session).

TASB advocates for legislation that improves funding for facilities, such as through the Existing Debt Allotment, Instructional Facilities Allotment, and New Instructional Facilities Allotment, to include a higher percentage of students and so that funding is provided for fast-growth districts.

TASB advocates for greater transparency of district tax revenue by creating a separate line item in each taxpayer's bill that shows the portion of district maintenance-and-operations tax revenue recaptured by the state.

TASB advocates for the Texas Legislature to share the cost of funding public schools by providing at least 50 percent of the Foundation School Program formula funding.

TASB advocates for modifying the property value study to increase the margin of error from 5 percent to 10 percent and, if the local appraisal roll value is deemed invalid, to allow a school district to qualify for a grace period if the appraisal district made a good faith effort to appraise at market value.

TASB supports legislation that exempts public school buses from paying tolls for use of toll roads operated by the state and regional mobility authorities or their contractors.

TASB advocates for legislation that supports the use of the rainy day fund to limit cuts to the Foundation School Program.*

TASB advocates for a formula-driven mechanism or index, to be implemented annually, to increase the basic allotment to keep up with the additional inflationary pressures in public schools.*

TASB advocates for legislation that would create an index adjusting the basic allotment for the biennium based on the average statewide property value per student enrolled.*

TASB advocates for legislation that would ensure that all federal funding for Texas schools reaches Texas schools as intended and without interference or delay from the state.*

TASB advocates for adequate funding and support for special education to include higher pay and specialized training for special education paraprofessionals, as well as education for board members, staff, students, and community members about the challenges faced by students in special education.*

TASB advocates for legislation that protects school district fund balances.*

TASB opposes providing funding or bonuses to school districts under the Foundation School Program on the basis of students' performance on a statewide test.*

TASB advocates for a plan to increase school funding over time to provide an amount by 2030 that equals, at a minimum, the national per-student funding average.*

TASB advocates for legislation requiring an independent study on geographic variations in resource and education costs due to factors beyond the control of districts.*

TASB advocates for a study to determine whether the current law providing transportation funding for students living more than two miles from campus should be adjusted.*

Student Issues

TASB advocates for full funding for statewide, universal, high-quality, full-day prekindergarten programs to include facilities.

TASB advocates for adequate funding and support for special education.

TASB advocates for the protection of vulnerable student groups, such as English language learners, those with special needs, or those from low-income families who tend to feel the brunt of education cuts, and ensure that any cuts made to education do not fall disproportionately on these high-need student groups.

TASB advocates for legislation that examines current student enrollment growth and considers adjusting the basic allotment and/or special program weights to adequately fund the educational needs of special populations to include those with limited English proficiency, special needs, economic disadvantage, or factors that qualify them as at risk.

TASB advocates for an assessment system that recognizes students who have successfully completed advanced coursework and prohibits the administration of state exams for courses completed in previous grades by those students.

TASB advocates for an equitable education environment for Texas students and supports an exemplary education that values diversity of race, culture, natural hair, gender, learning ability, and socioeconomic background in an environment that is equitable for all students and free of stereotypical expectations to ensure both a physically and mentally safe environment.*

TASB advocates for adequate funding to provide students more robust college and career counseling by reducing the counselor-to-student ratio.*

TASB advocates for legislation to study the cost of conducting universal vision and hearing screenings for public school students, as well as the resources needed to conduct the screenings.*

Teacher and Staff Issues

TASB advocates for choice of healthcare insurance providers.

TASB calls upon the Texas Legislature to increase state funding of TRS-ActiveCare and TRS-Care so that the benefits for and contributions from district employees are equivalent to state employees under the Employees Retirement System of Texas.

**Added by the 2021 Delegate Assembly*

TASB and Member Highlights

[Membership Benefits](#)
[Advocacy Agenda](#)
[TASB Board of Directors](#)
[Key Contacts](#)
[TASB Careers](#)

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[Supporting Texas Public Schools](#)
[About School Boards](#)

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[TASB News Releases](#)
[Events Calendar](#)
[Texas Lone Star For Media Contacts](#)

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