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President’s Message

Kids These Days

Being a school board member isn’t always an easy or straight-forward job. What is easy is getting caught up in test scores, data, politics, legislation, personalities, budget wars, unfunded mandates, ever-changing standards and other people’s mistakes. Sometimes we have to step back and say that the most important job we have as school systems, as communities, as a state and as a country is to give our children the knowledge and skills that they need to succeed. There can be different schools of thought on what skills and knowledge are vital, but one of the principles that our country holds dear is the importance of educating ALL children to the best of our ability.

We have continued to make strides to make the "all" more inclusive. We have worked to make our education system work for children that have physical, mental and learning disabilities. We have worked to remove barriers and develop strategies for those that are differently abled. We have addressed barriers that existed based on race, gender and socio-economics.

Kids these days aren’t like they were even 10 years ago. When they go home for the day, many of our students face situations that make learning difficult or impossible. We need to make sure we are addressing these barriers as we would any other barrier to learning.

I wish there wasn’t a need to look at caring for, understanding, and educating kids that have suffered multiple traumas in their lives. I wish our conversations weren’t so often about mental health. I wish our budgets didn’t have to expand to include rigorous safety plans. But today’s reality is different and we need to do what it takes to prepare today’s students for a bright future.

There are about 975,222 different stories in classrooms in our state. No two of them are alike. Each one enters a classroom with a special set of needs. Public schools are the only place where we can level the playing field, open our doors to everyone and make sure each child has the opportunity to succeed.

Our job as school board members is to balance all the issues our schools face and make sure we are putting our students first with our policies, our advocacy and our budgets. As we look at the mountain of education legislation filed this year, it is important that we tell the stories of our students and their needs. It is important that we tell the story that in public education all means all, and that is what makes this country great.

Find the issues that you are passionate about and lend your fire to them. We as individuals can’t do it all, but we can speak where we know our voices are strong. Thank you for serving. The work you do can truly change lives. Do your best and be proud.

“Our job as school board members is to balance all the issues our schools face and make sure we are putting our students first with our policies, our advocacy and our budgets.”
Executive Note

Education in Tennessee is a function of the state. The authority for its operation is found in the Tennessee constitution. But the constitution does not outline the framework of organization and administration of a public school system. This responsibility is placed in the hands of the legislature. The legislature established the State Board of Education, the Tennessee Department of Education and local boards of education to oversee public schools.

Article IX, Section 12 of the Tennessee Constitution specifically states: “The General Assembly shall provide for the maintenance, support and eligibility standards of a system of free public schools.” Tennessee is legally and morally obligated to support our constitutionally mandated System of public schools because, as the framers of our constitution put it, “The State of Tennessee recognizes the inherent value of education and encourages its support.”

Through the operation of local boards of education, the control of public schools is kept close to the people of the community where it belongs. School boards ensure that the hopes, ideals and aspirations parents have for children will become a reality and that the community, state and nation will continue to thrive and prosper.

Public education is a significant determining factor in the future of everyone. Public education must not be allowed to become a tool of any single group or person. Education exists to serve all people equally.

We all want our school boards to do their very best to educate children to their highest potential and then send them out to take their place in a free society. This is the American tradition…the American ideal.

There are 1,822 schools in Tennessee providing hope for 975,222 children. Hope comes in many forms in our public schools and can be witnessed throughout the schools through caring principals, teachers, school counselors, cafeteria and maintenance personnel and administrative staff. All these individuals work together to provide a clean, welcoming and exciting learning environment full of possibilities for students. Possibilities that can lead to solid careers, scholarships to college and a better life. An environment full of hope.

Tennessee public schools raise our citizens out of poverty and ignorance and make them solid, responsible, taxpaying members of our community. Citizens who care about their communities and want the very best for their own children. Thoughtful citizens who understand and observe the rule of law. Education makes that difference.

As a state, we must not drift apart. We must instead invest in efforts to help us grow together. We need to focus our attention on continuing to improve our public education system by embracing educational reforms that work thus, raising the learning level for all children. There is little chance that economic opportunities will improve among key segments of our population if we don’t stay focused on providing quality education for all.

“School boards ensure that the hopes, ideals and aspirations parents have for their children will become a reality and that the community, state and nation will continue to thrive and prosper.”

Dr. Tammy Grissom
TSBA Executive Director
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Students Debate Issues Facing Public Education

On March 5th, 2019 TSBA hosted its Student Congress On Policies in Education (SCOPE) conference, which gives students a voice on public education issues that are currently faced by school boards. This year’s conference was held at Middle Tennessee State University. Approximately 349 high school students from across the state participated in mock school board sessions where they assumed the roles of school board members, school officials, parents, students and concerned citizens. The sessions were led by school board members and other educational leaders from across Tennessee.

Mock School Board Meetings

During the mock school board meetings, student volunteers served as school board members, a superintendent or as concerned citizens. The mock school board meeting considered amending the Student Welfare Policy to provide one mental health counselor per 500 students, but no less than one per school. The five school boards who submitted their meeting results voted in support of the policy.

Should the Board policy provide one mental health counselor per 500 students?

100% SUPPORT

0% OPPOSE
During the afternoon session, each group elected one student to represent them in the debates. Every group was designated as either being pro or con, and the students were required to formulate arguments to support their position. TSBA selected the following policies for debate:

1. High school graduation requirements shall include several pathways/options (college and career, industry credentials, etc.) that allow students to graduate with a regular high school diploma.

2. Students shall have the option of substituting club sports for physical education requirements.

3. Fighting on school grounds or during school activities shall be a zero-tolerance offense.

4. For purposes of honors recognition at graduation, the board shall use the Latin System (i.e. summa cum laude, magna cum laude, and cum laude) instead of selecting a valedictorian and salutatorian.

Each policy was represented by two students advocating for the Pro position and two advocating for the Con position. The following pages display the students’ responses to these policy statements.
High school graduation requirements shall include several pathways/options (college and career, industry credentials, etc.) that allow students to graduate with a regular high school diploma.

Fighting on school grounds or during school activities shall be a zero-tolerance offense.

For purposes of honors recognition at graduation, the board shall use the Latin System (i.e. summa cum laude, magna cum laude, and cum laude) instead of selecting a valedictorian and salutatorian.
2020 SCOPE OFFICERS

(L-R): 1st Vice President Rishi Pillai, Nolensville High School, Williamson County; President Charlotte Lange, Rossview High School, Clarksville-Montgomery County; 2nd Vice President Ty Youngblood, Greeneville High School, Greeneville

2019 SCOPE Leaders

- Dr. Versie Ray Hamlett
  Superintendent
  Humboldt

- Dr. Chris Marczak
  Superintendent
  Maury County

- Julie Bennett
  TSBA Southeast
  District Director
  School Board Member
  Marion County

- Dr. Andrea Anderson
  School Board Member
  Bedford County

- Dr. Russell Dyer
  Superintendent
  Cleveland

- Bobby Cox
  Superintendent
  Warren County

- Shelli Dodson
  School Board Chairman
  Sequatchie County

- Jimmie Garland
  TSBA Mid-Cumberland
  District Director
  School Board Member
  Clarksville-Montgomery County

- Dr. Clint Satterfield
  Superintendent
  Trousdale County

- Candy Morgan
  TSBA East
  District Director
  School Board Member
  Maryville

- Noah Smith
  School Board Member
  Campbell County

- Scott Gillenwaters
  School Board Member
  Anderson County

- Celeste Gammon
  School Board Member
  Putnam County

- Diane Neeley
  School Board Member
  Bedford County

- Wendell Wainwright
  School Board Member
  Fayette County

- Greg Dawson
  School Board Member
  Sequatchie County
The 2019 TSBA Day on the Hill was a great success. The event took place at the DoubleTree Hotel in Nashville on February 18 and 19. TSBA was pleased to have over 300 school board members and superintendents in attendance, many of whom met with their Representatives and Senators following the event. TSBA members play an essential role in advancing our Legislative Agenda and facilitating progress in public education.

TSBA President Kathy Hall welcomes Day on the Hill attendees

The Honorable Glen Casada, Speaker of the House of Representatives, speaks at Day on the Hill

Oak Ridge School Board Members and Sumner County visit with Senator Haile at TSBA Day on the Hill
TSBA President and Johnson City Board Member, Kathy Hall, welcomed all attendees with opening remarks. TSBA Deputy General Counsel, Ben Torres, gave a briefing on TSBA legislation and positions. Guest speakers included the Honorable Glen Casada, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Senator Ferrell Haile. Newly appointed Commissioner of Education, Penny Schwinn, also attended and introduced herself to the TSBA membership.
TSBA has two policies that address school board member behavior, the Boardsmanship Code of Ethics (1.1061), and the Code of Ethics (1.106). So why do we recommend two policies that deal with board member behavior? Wouldn’t it be easier to just combine these two documents into one policy? Not really and to explain why we need to look back at the origin of both documents.

The Boardsmanship Code of Ethics has been around for decades and its purpose has always been to be a guide for board members as to how they may best conduct themselves when interacting with the various stakeholder groups in the school district. It specifically addresses key principles board members should keep in mind when dealing with and making decisions regarding the children, the community, teachers and personnel, other board members, the director of schools, and even the board member herself/himself. Adoption of this policy is optional but is required if a board is seeking to become a TSBA Board of Distinction! There is no enforcement mechanism built into this policy because it is not required by law. It is an aspirational guide to help school board members effectively conduct themselves in their official capacity.

The Code of Ethics policy came into being after the Tennessee Waltz scandal hit Capitol Hill in 2006. The General Assembly quickly and decisively passed an ethics law to address the behavior of all elected officials. Initially, board members were covered by whatever policy had been adopted by their funding body. But in 2008 the law was modified to give school boards the authority to create and adopt their own policy. Our base policy has been vetted by the State and is on file with the ethics commission. The new ethics laws required a policy to address the following areas:

- Disclosure of personal interest in voting matters;
- Disclosure of personal interest in non-voting matters; and
- Acceptance of gifts and other things of value.

The law also authorizes the school district to create a School District Ethics Committee to investigate alleged violations of THIS Code of Ethics or of any state law governing ethical conduct, but not the Boardsmanship Code of Ethics.

The similarity in the names of these two policies causes confusion with some of our boards who want to convene an ethics committee to investigate a breach of the Boardsmanship policy. This is not consistent with the law and any breach of the Boardsmanship policy should be addressed by the full board in a regular or special meeting or in a work session.

Our policy department is considering changing the name of policy 1.1061 to Boardsmanship Code of Conduct. We believe that it more accurately describes the original intent of the policy and that the name change would cut down on the confusion. If you have thoughts or an opinion on this proposed change, email us and let us know.
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YOUR ANSWERS TO LEGAL QUESTIONS

Ask an Attorney

During the last quarter, these are some of the questions asked of attorneys in our legal department. We thought it might be helpful to share our answers.

Question: Are boards required to adopt a policy on the new Course Access Program?

Answer: Boards are required to have a policy on course access program appeals (“The governing body of a home LEA shall develop a policy for hearing appeals from denials of course access and course enrollments.”). A policy on the appeals process would be necessary if a student chose to enroll in a course access program and was denied enrollment. Since any student could potentially choose to enroll in these courses, we recommend that all boards adopt a policy on this process.

Question: Can the chair end a board meeting on his/her own, or does this require a vote of all board members?

Answer: Any member can make a motion to adjourn a meeting. However, this motion must be voted on and pass in order to end the meeting.

Question: Is the board required to collect tuition from non-resident students who are wishing to enroll in the school district?

Answer: No – the board isn’t required to collect tuition from a non-resident student. Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-3003 states that “tuition and fees may be charged by any county to pupils not residing in that county”. Therefore, whether or not tuition is collected is at the discretion of the board.

Question: Due to a recent change in state law, parents are required to receive notice prior to any mental health screening of students. Is the board required to maintain a policy on these screenings?

Answer: Local boards are not required to maintain a policy on mental health screenings. If a district offers these types of screenings, we recommend that the district place this information regarding the required notice in an administrative procedure so that the appropriate staff can notify parents.
**Question:** If a student's cell phone is confiscated during the school day, can the school district keep the cell phone for a certain amount of days as a punishment?

**Answer:** Due to potential legal concerns, we recommend against holding a student's cell phone for longer than the end of the school day. We recommend that if a student's cell phone is taken that it be held until a parent/guardian can pick it up.

**Question:** The board is wishing to adopt a policy on bereavement leave. What should we take into consideration when creating this policy?

**Answer:** State law doesn't contain specifics as to how local boards should create bereavement policies; therefore, local boards are free to set their own policies on this. If the district has engaged in collaborative conferencing, however, it is important to take into consideration the district's memorandum of understanding (MOU). We recommend looking to the MOU since this agreement may specify what the bereavement policy must contain.

**Question:** We have a retired teacher who is wanting to become a substitute teacher. Is this retired teacher required to undergo a background check?

**Answer:** Yes – a background check would need to be done before this retired teacher began substitute teaching. Due to changes in state law, background checks are required for all applicants, employees, contract workers, and volunteers of the school district.

**Question:** Is the school district required to wait for the local attorney general to act before disciplining a student for a zero-tolerance offense?

**Answer:** The school district is not required to wait for the local attorney general to take any action. Disciplining a student for a zero-tolerance offense is separate from any action the local attorney general takes.
Fourteen school board members from across Tennessee met with Senators Alexander and Blackburn and other Congressmen during the National School Boards Association’s Advocacy Institute that was held from January 27-29 in Washington, D.C. The delegation from Tennessee included:

- Sue Anderson, Warren County
- Allena Bell, Franklin Special
- Jimmie Garland, TSBA District Director, Clarksville-Montgomery County
- Kathy Hall, TSBA President, Johnson City
- Carolyn Ingram, Cleveland
- Civil Miller-Watkins, Fayette County
- Robin Newman, Franklin Special
- Peggy Pesterfield, Cleveland
- Dawn Robinson, Cleveland
- Sally Spencer, Fayette County
- Tim Stillings, Franklin Special
- Dr. Dale Viox, Arlington
- Wendall Wainwright, Fayette County
- Bill Zechman, Warren County
- Dr. Tammy Grissom, TSBA Executive Director
- Bill Torres, TSBA Deputy General Counsel
Tennessee’s delegates were joined by over 800 public school advocates from across the country. Two days of programming sessions, panel presentations, and breakouts covered critical issues affecting public education. Institute sessions provided attendees with insights and resources to ramp up their advocacy strategies and to help them prepare for their Hill meetings with their Congressional representatives. The 2020 Census and its impact on student count and school funding, the importance of workforce readiness, Title IV, and the vital need for a modernized and fully funded Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) were some of the issues covered at the Institute.

U.S. Education Secretary Betsy Devos and Senator Lamar Alexander were featured speakers on the second day of the Institute. Other featured speakers included Dr. Norman Ornstein; presidential historian, Jon Meacham; and president and founder of the Ogilvy Center for Behavioral Science, Chris Graves. Senator Pat Roberts and House Representatives Steve Womack and Donna Shalala provided remarks during the Congressional Luncheon.
Sumner County Schools strives to successfully prepare students for life after graduation, and that work was recognized earlier this year by Tennessee Governor Bill Lee. On February 8, Sumner County Schools hosted its 5th Annual CTE Day to celebrate progress made in Career and Technical Education (CTE) over the past year. Sumner County Schools was honored to have the newly-elected Governor join us for lunch to speak about the importance of CTE and discuss some of the legislative initiatives he plans to announce to improve CTE in the state. During his address, Governor Lee stated that he would like to see high schools throughout the state “look a lot more like Sumner County high schools.” Governor Lee also spoke about the unique relationship in Sumner County between the private sector, community leaders, and the education system, all of whom were represented at CTE Day, and how he would like to see that replicated across the state.

About 35 of the district’s 115 high school CTE teachers were invited to attend, along with school administrators, business and industry partners, School Board members, local Chamber of Commerce Directors, and personnel from local postsecondary institutions. Food for CTE Day was catered by the Culinary Arts program at Gallatin High School, with the students not only cooking the food, but also attending CTE Day to serve the food as well.
CTE Day boasts a variety of speakers that discuss the state of CTE in Sumner County and the outlook of CTE in our geographic area. Speakers for this year’s event included Dr. Del Phillips, Director of Schools for Sumner County Schools; Chase Moore, CTE Coordinator for Sumner County Schools; Angela McChesney from the Portland campus of TCAT-Nashville; Kevin Harrison with TCAT-Hartsville; and a keynote address from Deana Ivey, Executive VP and Chief Marketing Officer for the Nashville Convention and Visitors Corporation. CTE Day also had two high school seniors share their experiences with CTE and the impact it has had on their educational careers – Emily Hickman, HOSA President at Beech High School, and Bill Mouchette, DECA President at Station Camp High School.

Over the past few years, Sumner County has placed an emphasis on expanding the early postsecondary opportunities (EPSOs) that are available to students through CTE classes. In our district, these opportunities include dual enrollment courses, dual credit opportunities, AP classes, and industry certifications. During the fall of 2018, Sumner County already experienced tremendous growth over the entire 2017-2018 school year. In the fall of 2018, CTE students earned 187 industry certifications, compared to 123 during the previous school year. In addition, 46 students passed a dual credit exam in the fall of 2018, compared to 40 throughout the entire prior school year.

Sumner County Schools is looking forward to continuing their work with local postsecondary institutions and business/industry partners to expand what we are able to offer our students. Sumner County Schools wants to ensure we are properly preparing our students to be successful after graduation from high school, in whatever path they choose to take.
Maury County Public Schools (MCPS) is taking a creative new approach to reforming three high-poverty, low-performing elementary schools through school-wide arts integration. The district is using the power of art and visual media to transform the way school feels and the way the students feel about school to improve student learning and outcomes. The initiative is designed to impact instruction, culture, and curriculum. It is in year 1 of a 3-year program and the schools are really embracing the model and already seeing promising results.

This project is the brainchild of the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, Dr. Ron Woodard. “Our vision is to utilize the arts integration model as a thematic focus to transform persistently low-performing schools.” Maury County believes that a strong emphasis on standards-based instruction coupled with increased student engagement will produce higher academic outcomes.

“Our vision is to utilize the arts integration model as a thematic focus to transform persistently low-performing schools.”
Woodard stated that the thematic focus aligns the scope of the project to all academic disciplines while leveraging the support of a strategic business/industry partner. For this project, Maury County Public Schools sought the help of Crayola through their new CreatED national arts integration project.

Crayola has created a platform to build “Creatively Alive” schools through arts integration. The Crayola Education Division has partnered with Maury County Public Schools to develop a creative leadership vision and building creative capacity through a series of professional learning sessions, coaching guidance, and classroom application projects. This approach is designed to cultivate teacher leadership, positive climate and culture, 21st Century learning skills (creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, communication), and instill new approaches to reach diverse learners. The CreatED model helps educators communicate the benefits of creative thinking to families and learning communities as well.

In addition to partnering with Crayola, the district has also partnered with the Tennessee Arts Commission. The district secured a grant for $55,000 to implement the model in three of its schools through the ARTS360 grant over the course of three years. “We are very grateful and humbled by the support that the TN Arts Commission has provided for this project. We are seeing much more engagement in our classrooms and lives are being transformed by this model”, said Woodard. Maury County is hoping that these three schools will be transformed into national model demonstration schools for Arts Integration. Maury County is definitely on the move and we can’t wait to see what will happen next.

“We are very grateful and humbled by the support that the TN Arts Commission has provided for this project. We are seeing much more engagement in our classrooms and lives are being transformed by this model”, said Woodard.
Each year Covington High School HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America) designs a community awareness project. This year the team chose to focus on the negative effects of e-cigarettes such as juuling and vaping because of the growing popularity of e-cigarettes among teenagers and young adults. The team discovered that the Food and Drug Administration referred to juuling/vaping as an epidemic, and the Centers for Disease Control has deemed it a public health concern.

According to the 2018 National Youth Tobacco Survey, vaping among high school students has increased by 78% and middle school usage by 48%. Along with national statistics, CHS’s student body was surveyed with results showing that 20% of the students admitting to juuling, although participation may be much higher.

The Health Law Center has labeled teenagers as a “guinea pig generation” because of the unknown long-term health effects of e-cigarette usage.
Because of these alarming statistics, the students decided to develop their project around educating students ages 11-18 on the detrimental effects of juuling. "Don’t be a Human Guinea Pig: Say No to Juuling" became the title of their campaign. A partnership was developed with the Drug Free Tipton Coalition, which provided funding for necessary materials.

The team began promoting their campaign in various ways: awareness ads on the local radio station, t-shirt giveaways, social media campaigns, community outreach meetings, distributing stress bolts, and offering student education programs. In order to make sure the target youth audience was reached, an educational anti-vaping/juuling program was presented to the students in the high school as well as the feeder middle school. Rack cards were distributed and school call-outs were made to middle school parents in Covington encouraging them to talk to their students about the dangers of juuling.

While speaking to the students about the negative health effects of e-cigarettes, the team noted that e-cigarettes were not considered a disciplinary infraction among students. After reviewing the student handbook, they discovered that the discipline procedures policy referenced tobacco, but did not specifically mention e-cigarettes, vaping, or any nicotine devices. Policy change became their primary focus. After discussing their concerns and desire for a policy and handbook change with Superintendent Dr. John Combs in December 2018, the students were invited to present before the School Board in January. During this impactful presentation, Board members were shown samples of e-cigarettes, vaping, and juuling devices, and the potential health dangers associated with usage was discussed. The team proposed alternative wording to the discipline policy to include “nicotine and vaping devices.” HOSA members were invited to attend the February Board meeting where this groundbreaking policy change was unanimously approved on emergency reading. The Board expressed gratitude to the HOSA team for their hard work in raising awareness of this potential health risk to our youth.
Milan Special School District is proud to share our unique, hands-on learning opportunity for our students. We would like to introduce you to the Bulldog Cafe! Within Milan High School’s campus, we have created a fully functional specialty coffee shop that is managed by our students with special needs. The goal of the Bulldog Cafe is to increase the number of students transitioning from Comprehensive Development Classrooms to positions of paid employment within the community as they transition from school to work.

A partnership composed of Milan High School, local businesses, community organizations and State agencies (Transition from School to Work) has been created for the purpose of developing a personalized career pathway that meets the needs of students with disabilities to prepare them to be competitive in the local job community for paid employment.

Students are introduced to specialty drink preparation concepts, terminology and practices in a modern commercial kitchen. Fundamental techniques and skills are taught with an emphasis on safety, sanitation, proper equipment operation and maintenance, food preparation skills and teamwork. We want to ensure our students are equipped with the skills necessary to obtain and maintain employment.

MHS students with special needs have had opportunities in the past to be placed in food service or hospitality settings. In the real world work environment, the students were immediately submerged into the fast-paced schedule that was overwhelming. Co-workers did not always have the time to support the students in the transition from school to work that met the needs of individual students. Educators and families have expressed the concerns for a "middle training ground" for students…a step between the special education classroom and the real work setting.

MHS is excited to create this learning opportunity for students at the Bulldog Cafe. The Bulldog Cafe is accessible to all students in which they can gain the entry-level skills for food services and hospitality. Two MHS employees/job coaches educate and train the students by providing initial one-on-one training with the purpose of increasing student work skills. As the students exhibit attention to task and mastery of work skills, the supervisors reduce modeling and phase back to allow for student independence that will carry over to future job settings.

The Bulldog Café provides students with placement for job training in food and beverage preparation, customer service, social skills, universal precautions, health department requirements and job safety guidelines. Students have the opportunity to work daily in the Bulldog Cafe to promote social integration, productivity, and maximum use of a person’s skills and abilities.
The Tennessee School Boards Association held its Leadership Conference and Annual Convention on November 1-4, 2018 at the Opryland Resort and Convention Center in Nashville, TN. Almost 700 school board members, superintendents and business leaders attended this year’s event. The theme was “Transforming Education with Technology.”

During the four-day event attendees had the opportunity to attend two pre-convention workshops focusing on legal and legislative issues, 28 clinic sessions, an Exhibit Hall with 67 vendors, and an awards ceremony celebrating the achievements of individual school board members and school districts. Speakers included HK Derryberry and Jim Bradford; Jan McInnis, comedienne; Alberto Carvalho, Superintendent Miami-Dade County Public Schools; and Adam Bellow, Educational Technologist.
CONVENTION
SNAPSHOT

“ANYONE’S IMPOSSIBLE CAN BECOME EVERYBODY’S INEVITABLE.”
-ALBERTO CARVALHO
Each year at TSBA’s Annual Convention, the Association honors a school board for their excellent service by awarding them the designation of School Board of the Year. This award is reserved for the school district which goes above and beyond in the quest to provide the best education possible for their children.

To be considered for this award, a board must be nominated and show evidence of the following criteria by providing supporting materials:

- Must have met all the standards to be a TSBA Board of Distinction
- Policy (developing, application, monitoring)
- Long-range planning
- Board efforts to promote quality education including involvement with the legislature, Congress, city/county commission, State Board of Education, community and staff
- Board development activities (including boardsmanship award levels for each member)
- Relationship with the media
TSBA was honored to name the Johnson City Board of Education as the School Board of the Year. Members of the Johnson City Board of Education are:

- Tim Belisle, Chairman
- Tom Hager
- Kathy Hall
- John Hunter
- Jonathan Kinnick
- Richard Manahan
- Dr. Steven Barnett, Director of Schools

The Johnson City school board’s ability to work together and go beyond their expected responsibilities has proven that they are fully dedicated to the success of all the students they serve. Johnson City Schools’ vision is to be a progressive school system that is globally competitive in all areas. All students have an equal opportunity to learn and be successful while meeting high expectations and are provided the resources to be healthy, productive citizens, and lifelong learners.

Some of the many accomplishments by the 2018 School Board of the Year include:

- Has a standing policy committee that meets six times a year to review sections of the policy manual
- Has a strategic plan with the following five goal areas: student achievement; internal and external school funding; health and wellness; communication collaboration and involvement; and effective use of technology.
- In 2015, the board initiated a plan that embraced a gradual transformation to digital learning environments for students
- Has increased teacher capacity through funding a digital teacher leader academy
- Has provided funding to achieve a 1:1 device ratio in grades three through twelve
- Received “Reward School” status for five schools and seven schools earned a “level 5” for academic growth
- Was one of eleven districts that earned a Level 5 in each subject area TVAAS composite
- Was ranked in the top ten statewide in eight of nine state-identified achievement categories
- Was one of the 23 districts across the state to average a 21 or above on the ACT
- Ranked #1 in the first core district for PreK and Kindergarten portfolio scores
- Collaborated with City commissioners to locally fund over $750,000 annually for “response to intervention” academic services to students
- Had five high school seniors named National Merit Finalists
- Worked with Rep. Matthew Hill and Sen. Crowe to pass legislation providing state funding for RTI services
- Was the first system in the U.S. to fully sustain their safe schools-healthy students grant with local funds
- Worked with city commissioners to locally fund school resource officers in every school
- Worked with city commissioners to fund a $480,000 annual partnership with a local community health organization for full-time therapists and case managers in all schools to provide students additional mental health services
- Added a communications specialist position to work more closely with media
- Created a twitter account for each school
- Earned TSBA Board of Distinction
- Involved regularly in TSBA and NSBA meetings
Each year during its Annual Convention, TSBA announces the All Tennessee School Board and the Tennessee School Board Member of the Year/C. Hal Henard Distinguished Service Award winner. Members of the board are selected by a panel of judges. The All Tennessee School Board criteria includes:

- Must have achieved Level IV boardmanship award;
- Quality of service with emphasis on the previous 12 months;
- Participation in board development activities with emphasis on the previous 12 months;
- Specific accomplishments of the local board of education during the nominee’s term on the board; and
- Leadership activities at the local, regional, or state level.

The All Tennessee School Board nominee receiving the highest collective ranking by the judges is the recipient of the Tennessee School Board Member of the Year/C. Hal Henard Distinguished Service Award and serves as chairman of the All Tennessee School Board. This is the highest recognition given by TSBA to a board member. This year’s recipient is Faye Heatherly, Campbell County.

Faye Heatherly of Campbell County was named the 2018 Tennessee School Board Member of the Year /C. Hal Henard Distinguished Service Award Winner and will serve as Chairman of the All Tennessee School Board. Faye is the 36th person to receive this award. “To say she has a servant’s heart will never do this lady justice. She goes above and beyond what is expected of her in everything she does and attempts to do. Never have I met a more enthusiastic, energetic or dedicated lady. She is an inspiration to me. She is one of those people you meet that brings out the best in you and others around you”, stated a fellow school board member. Her Director of Schools stated, “as a knowledgeable individual, she always assumes the responsibilities of improving public education. Her experience and commitment to go above and beyond for her community and school system should be commended. I have never known a more genuine advocate for public education.”

Richard Manahan of Johnson City was named to the All Tennessee School Board. “Mr. Manahan has been an outspoken advocate for equitable school funding and increased teacher salaries. Through his dedication our system continues to attract and retain some of the most qualified and effective teachers, which has led our system to rank as one of the most successful systems in the state,” stated a fellow Johnson City board member.
Eight members earn master school board member status

Eight school board members recently earned the designation of Master School Board Member, which is the highest level in TSBA’s Boardsmanship Program. TSBA offers the master school board member award to members who invest their time and effort into becoming more informed and more effective school board members. The award is given for participation in activities outside of local school board obligations.

Alicia Barker, Franklin Special
Kim Cravens, Putnam County
Robert Eby, Oak Ridge
Dawn Fry, Putnam County

B.J. McCoy, Rhea County
Glenn McNish, Sr., Lenoir City
Phyllis Townsend, Lewis County
Wendall Wainwright, Fayette County
The TSBA Scholars Circle Award recognizes school board members who have achieved the Level V Master School Board Member designation, and have attained 900 or more boardmanship points in the TSBA Boardmanship Program. At the 2018 Convention, the winners of this award were:

- Kathy Hall, Johnson City
- Bill Graham, Dayton City

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

Kingsport City EXCEL Program

The 2018 Award for Excellence in Education Program winner is the Dobyns-Bennett High School "Excellence in a Creative Environment (EXCEL)" program from the Kingsport City school district. The EXCEL program provides students with an innovative approach to personalized learning where technology, an engaging curriculum and a supportive culture creates conditions for success.

STUDENT RECOGNITION AWARD

Presley Connor, Chester County

Each year TSBA honors a student who has achieved distinction in the areas of academics, community leadership, and engagement. The winner of the TSBA Student Recognition Award is Presley Connor of Chester County. Currently a senior at Chester County High School, Presley has maintained a 4.0 grade point average while actively participating in several volunteer opportunities. She launched a community service group called the "Text Less, Live More Campaign; is a member of the CCHS Student Health Council and created a campaign to fight tobacco use; developed the "Kindness Cards" idea; volunteers at the Chester County Soup Kitchen; serves as the Tennessee State Beta Secretary; serves as the Student Health Council chairman; is a 4H Healthy Living Ambassador; is a member of the National Students Against Destructive Decisions organization and is a member of the Future Teachers of America.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION AWARD

Mark and Theresa Catron, Bedford County

The 2018 winner of the TSBA School Volunteer Recognition Award is Mark and Theresa Catron of Bedford County. This husband and wife team have been an amazing part of the Liberty School family for many years. They serve as the president and treasurer of the PTO and as officers in the PATS booster club.
SCHOOL OF THE YEAR
for Excellence in Architectural Design

The TSBA School of the Year Award for Excellence in Architectural Design recognizes architectural firms and school boards for their excellence in design. Awards were granted in three categories this year including new school construction of elementary and high school, renovation, and the People’s Choice award, which was selected by TSBA membership. Nominees who wished to be considered for the award were asked to submit details on the following criteria: cost efficiency, aesthetics, energy and environmentally conscious design, flexibility expandability and size and development of site.

New Construction
Elementary School
Metro/Davidson County Board of Education in recognition of Eagle View Elementary School
By EOA Architects

New Construction
High School
Collierville City Board of Education in recognition of Collierville High School
By Renaissance Group & Fleming Architects

Renovation
Wilson County Board of Education in recognition of Wilson County Administrative & Training Complex
By Kaatz, Binkley, Jones & Morris Architects

People’s Choice
Elementary School
Gibson County Special Board of Education in recognition of South Gibson Elementary School
By Kaatz, Binkley, Jones & Morris Architects
Opening General Session

Manny Scott

An original Freedom Writer whose story is told in part in the 2007 hit movie, Freedom Writers, Manny Scott has energized almost two million leaders, educators, volunteers, and students worldwide with his authentic, inspiring messages of hope. On the road up to 300 days per year for the last two decades, Manny Scott is on a mission. By age 16, Manny’s story was almost over: His father was incarcerated, he missed 60-90 days of school annually from 4th to 9th grade, he dropped out of school at age 14, he lived in 26 places by age 16, and his best friend was brutally murdered. Sensing that the end of his life was near, Manny sat down on a park bench, and considered how he would make others feel the depth of despair and anger roiling in his soul. He says, “When I look back, I now see that I was heading down a path that would have destroyed me.” Then, several individuals entered his life and helped him turn the page. He returned to school and ended up in the back of Erin Gruwell’s English class—a group now known worldwide as the Freedom Writers, portrayed in the 2007 hit MTV movie. She and several others helped Manny go from Fs and Ds to As and Bs. They helped him become the first person in his family to graduate from high school and go to college.

Through very hard work, and with the help of others, Manny is now living the life of his dreams. In 2007, he founded Ink International, Inc, an education consulting firm that has empowered nearly two million people to improve the quality of not only their own lives, but also the lives of those around them. He has helped hundreds of organizations raise student achievement and leader effectiveness in 49 states and five continents; and, he has helped prevent thousands of dropouts and suicides. He is now happily married, a doting father of three, a pilot, a Ph.D. student, and one of the nation’s most sought-after speakers.

Closing General Session

Derek Voiles

Dr. Derek Voiles is a Reading Language Arts and English as a Second Language teacher at Lincoln Heights Middle School in Morristown, Tennessee. For the past 8 years, Dr. Voiles has focused on increasing student literacy and advocating for educational opportunities that support the needs of all students. Dr. Voiles holds a Bachelor’s Degree in English-Literature and a Master’s Degree in Teaching English as a Second Language from Carson-Newman University, an Education Specialist Degree in Instructional Leadership from Lincoln Memorial University, and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from East Tennessee State University. In addition to classroom teaching, Dr. Voiles has served as a member of Commissioner McQueen’s Teacher Advisory Council, a State Collaborative on Reforming Education Teacher Fellow, a Regional Content Coach for the Tennessee Department of Education, as well as a member of the Tennessee Educational Equity Coalition Steering Committee. He has been recognized as Tennessee’s 2017 Teacher of the Year and is currently a School Ambassador Fellow with the United States Department of Education.
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TSBA is proud to announce the new District Data Dashboard. TSBA designed the dashboard to assist local boards of education in preparing their students for relevant pathways of success and ensuring that their strategic plans are not only focused on strengthening college readiness but also career readiness. The District Data Dashboard consists of the following:

1. District Demographic Data
2. District and Regional Labor Market Information and Statistics
3. District Academic Information
4. District Financial Information

With this information, boards can implement a strategic plan that directly meets local workforce needs and drives economic development. The District and Regional Labor Market Information and Statistics use the National Career Clusters framework recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Boards can use this data to develop academic, career and technical courses and training that address their local industry and occupational needs.

Boards can use the District Academic and Financial Information to align their curriculum and expenditures to labor market needs. This allows boards to establish a direct link between their educational programs and their local economy.

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DonorsChoose.org was founded in 2000 by Charles Best out of his Bronx history classroom as a way to fight education inequity. The nonprofit was built with the idea that people would want to help public school teachers get extra resources for their classrooms, if they could see exactly where their dollars were going.

When passionate district leaders team up with innovative teachers, DonorsChoose.org is also a place where the public can support broader district goals. Funding from individual donors and partners like SONIC Drive-In has helped Mrs. Modrow’s Chattanooga elementary students flex their STEM skills with a Dash and Dot Robot, and provided dozens of students access to engaging technology devices in Ms. Porsha’s middle school classroom in Rutherford.

Over the last 19 years, DonorsChoose.org has generated $800 million from more than 3 million donors for public school classrooms, and our community has given more than $12 million to classroom projects from Tennessee teachers. Unlike other crowdfunding platforms, the DonorsChoose.org team works hard to inspire funders from outside teachers’ personal networks — in fact 75% of all donations come from donors and organizations who don’t personally know the teacher they’re supporting.

Because DonorsChoose.org is dedicated solely to supporting public school classrooms, the platform is designed to address the specific transparency, accountability, and safety needs of administrators, students, and teachers. The DonorsChoose.org team has partnered with organizations like the NSBA to ensure the platform is setting the bar for best practices.

**Financial transparency and accountability**
Crowdfunding sites should send resources directly to verified schools, instead of depositing cash into teachers’ personal bank accounts. DonorsChoose.org goes a step further than this, also giving school board members free, automatic reporting on the resources delivered to their district as well as other resources for administrators: https://www.donorschoose.org/districttools.

**Support for internal materials and supplies controls**
Resources received through crowdfunding platforms should become school property so they can continue to benefit students. The best crowdfunding sites notify principals when items are being shipped to schools, and provide line-by-line reporting to districts upon request resulting in clear documentation. DonorsChoose.org follows these policies, along with offering free reporting.

**Student safety and privacy**
Crowdfunding sites used by teachers must have mechanisms and protocols for protecting student privacy and the ability to work with districts to meet their individual needs. The DonorsChoose.org team reviews every project before they’re posted to the site, ensuring student safety.

When board members, principals, and district leaders align with teachers on how DonorsChoose.org projects can support the school’s strategic imperatives and goals, the opportunities for student learning are endless. Whether you’re looking to boost STEM learning, build libraries with culturally relevant texts, or even host engaging speakers for students, DonorsChoose.org can help you achieve your goals, as it has done for over 1,500 schools across Tennessee.
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Johnson City Schools district administrators believe their success from implementing mental health programs will encourage districts across the state to find a model that will work for them. The district of 8,000 students has sustained services that are used by almost 20 percent of their students, while helping to enhance their community’s approach to mental health.

After receiving a HEROES federal grant in 2009, the district had the opportunity to expand on their existing mental health programs and security in their schools. But before the administrators decided how to spend those funds, they wanted to figure out how to sustain the services. Far too often, Dr. Greg Wallace, Johnson City Schools Supervisor of Mental Health and Safety, said he would see beneficial programs disappear when the federal funds were gone. Wallace noted that the cohesive approach to mental health from the school system and city should help provide confidence to other districts to find a model that works for them.

“Any type of mental health support in the schools is invaluable and a good investment in a school’s future,” Wallace said.

Johnson City Schools currently budgets $480,000 toward mental health services, while the City has allotted funds and resources for 14 well-trained Johnson City Police officers to serve as SROs for the 11 schools. The district worked with local not-for-profit Frontier Health to essentially staff mini-mental health clinics in their schools, which provide students and their families with immediate mental health assistance.

Another valued tool has been educating teachers and staff about mental health issues. In January, Johnson City Schools hosted their inaugural Tri-Cities Regional Education Summit on ACEs - Trauma-Informed Care which was sponsored by Ballad Health. Other items that were sustained after their value was uncovered include a career coach and social worker at the Science Hill High School alternative education program, along with an at-risk middle school program. The district has also seen beneficial results from their RTI-B program, which has extensively cut down on the number of discipline referrals and allowed their principals to set the tone for the academic rigor in their schools.

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By Collin Brooks, Johnson City Schools Communication Specialist
M I S S I O N
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It starts with Tennessee school board members

Every year, the Tennessee School Boards Association compiles demographic data from school boards across the State. Members range in age from under 25 to over 65, from newly elected members to over 20 years of service, and receive various levels of compensation. Despite the diversity, there is one constant – a passion for the success of the next generation.

School Boards represent the will of the community and play a central role in defining their district’s vision. Boards largely decide what schools are. What schools are largely determines what the next generation will be. For good reason, board membership has gained recognition as the one of the community’s highest honors.

Why Are School Boards Necessary?

- School Boards keep the public schools in the possession of the public rather than central government, professional educators, or private companies.
- School Boards are a check on a propriety interest of the professional and thus, carry out the American precept of checks and balances.
- School Boards afford a means for debating varying points of view in formulating school policy.
- School Boards allow representatives of the community to become well-informed and govern the schools in the best interest of the community.
975,222 Students

984 Board Members

1,817 Schools

AGE

<25 0.04%
25-35 0.6%
36-45 26%
46-55 27%
56-65 25%
65+ 15%

328 female

656 male

Annual Compensation Range: $0 - $26,454

LENGTH OF SERVICE

57% <5 Years
22% 5-10 Years
14% 11-20 Years
5% >20 Years
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### 2019 TSBA Board Member Survey Results

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"It comes down to what your priorities are, and if public education is about kids, then every decision we make should be focused on the question of 'Is this good for a child?' And that should be the driving focus and the priority when we decide what our policies should be and what our laws should be."
The Tennessee School Boards Association, in partnership with the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents (TOSS), Tennessee Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (TASCD) and the Tennessee Educational Technology Association (TETA), is proud to announce the creation of the Tennessee Digital Learning Project (TDLP).

Our vision is to embrace the potential offered by digital technology for the delivery of content in the classrooms of Tennessee and engage students with a delivery method that inspires their natural curiosity and parallels the world in which they function outside the classroom.

We believe that we all must work together to:

• Ensure that the culture and structure of our schools view the technologies that make our digital world possible as opportunities and tools that can help us in educating our students in and outside the school.
• Embrace the potential of new technologies and make optimum use of the digital devices and connections that are prevalent today to make learning vibrant and stimulating for all.
• Embrace the potential of learning anywhere, anytime, any path and any pace.

Tennessee Digital Resources Library

Find Good Digital Content For Your Classroom

TN Digital is a library of FREE, quality content that is aligned to standards for our teachers and students.

To access this library please visit, www.tndigital.org.
Exciting changes are coming to the Tennessee School Plant Management Association! My name is Debbie Shedden, and I am proud to announce that I have been named as the new Executive Director of TSPMA. Many of you know me from my continuing role as a school board member for Hawkins County, and also having served as the 2016 President of the Tennessee School Boards Association. It is an honor to lead an organization that provides leadership and collaboration for school facility managers across Tennessee that certainly play an integral role in having an influence on public school K-12 education.

What does TSPMA do?

- TSPMA provides professional development for facility managers
- TSPMA promotes leadership through exchanging data, information, and ideas
- TSPMA leads policymakers to improve the educational environment
- TSPMA conducts an annual state conference with vendors, training, and seminars relevant to current issues additionally hosts two one-day conferences, as well as local district meetings
- TSPMA shares information on energy and money-saving programs for districts
- TSPMA realizes the importance of education, and last year granted six, $1,000 scholarships to graduating high school seniors meeting qualifying criteria

This only touches on the many benefits that this organization provides to school facility managers. In each of the above statements, the words that resound are PROVIDES, PROMOTES, LEADS, CONDUCTS, SHARES, REALIZES - all words that emphasize support. In the near future, I look forward to personally contacting every school superintendents and every facility manager in our state, and discussing needs and issues relevant to each district, and how TSPMA can provide assistance.
**MAY**

1. TSBA Student Recognition & School Volunteer Recognition Award Deadline
   - Johnson City

7. SBA School Law
   - Johnson City

10. Board Secretaries' Workshop
    - TSBA Headquarters

13. SBA School Law
    - TSBA Headquarters; Distance Learning Sites: Lauderdale County and Hawkins County

21. SBA School Law
    - Jackson

27. Memorial Day
    - TSBA Closed

31. TSBA Board of Directors' Meeting
    - TSBA Headquarters

**JUNE**

4. SBA Board Policy & Operations
   - Johnson City

7. SBA Board Policy & Operations
   - TSBA Headquarters

20. SBA Board Policy & Operations
    - Memphis

28. TSBA Summer Law Institute
    - DoubleTree, Jackson

**JULY**

1. TSBA District Director Application Deadline

4. Fourth of July
   - TSBA Closed

19-20. TSBA Summer Law Institute
   - Park Vista, Gatlinburg

**AUGUST**

30. Award Deadline:
    Award for Excellence in Education Program

**SEPTEMBER**

1. TSBA Officer Application Deadline

2. Labor Day
   - TSBA Closed

3. Southeast Fall District Meeting

5. South Central Fall District Meeting

12. Southwest Fall District Meeting

15. Award Deadline: Level V Portfolio

16. Northeast Fall District Meeting

17. East Fall District Meeting

19. Upper Cumberland Fall District Meeting

23. Delta Fall District Meeting

24. Northwest Fall District Meeting

26. Mid Cumberland Fall District Meeting

27. TSBA Board of Directors' Meeting
    - TSBA Headquarters

30. Deadlines: School Board of the Year Award, All TN School Board/C. Hal Henard Award, School of the Year Award
Affiliates

TENNESSEE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

(A) - Architecture | (BS) - Business Services | (EM) - Energy Management | (B) - Benefits | (C) - Construction Management
(I) - Instructional Support | (B/G) - Building/Maintenance | (E) - Equipment/Supplies | (T) - Technology/Software

-- PREMIER --

Public Risk Insurors (B)
Butch Twyman: 615.369.0646

-- PLATINUM --

American Fidelity Assurance Company (B)
Scott Long: 931.374.5091

US Able Life (B)
Geoff Haussin or Doug Davis:
615.823.5943, 615.823.5953

Washington National Insurance Company (B)
Nashville - Nick Barattini: 615.200.9212
Knoxville - Tammy Rodgers: 865.850.4290
Chattanooga - Spencer Collins: 423.762.2525
Murfreesboro - Tom Winfree: 615.476.1392

-- GOLD --

Education Networks of America (T)
Mark Sunderhaus: 615.312.6188

Education Solutions Services/ESS (BS)
Liz Strunk: 865.888.9244
Beck Facilities Services (B/G)
Josh McCallister: 731.514.6349

Benefit Planning Advisors (B)
Joe Moore: 615.504.1201

Central Technologies, Inc. (T)
Monica Farner: 615.477.4900

Energy Systems Group, LLC (EM)
Russ Nelson: 423.534.8242

Five Points Benefits Solutions, LLC (B)
James Smith: 615.791.0404

HFR Design, Inc. (A)
Beth Meadows: 615.370.8500

Kaatz, Binkley, Jones & Morris Architects (A)
Jason Morris: 615.754.5393

Liberty Mutual Insurance (B)
Landon Smith: 704.759.7911

For more information on becoming a TSBA Business Affiliate, contact Jenna Zwan at jzwan@tsba.net or 615.815.3905.

Hewlett Spencer, LLC (A)
Jamie Spencer: 615.804.2571

Key Risk a W.R. Berkley Company (B)
Chad Rayburn: 865.951.4428

Lewis Group Architects, Inc., P.C. (A)
Todd J. Brang: 865.584.5000

Merit Construction, Inc. (C)
Buddy Heins: 865.966.4100

Michael Brady, Inc. (MBI). (A)
Bill Steverson: 865.584.0999

Nyhart (BS)
Suraj Datta: 317.845.3594

Oliver Little Gipson Engineering, Inc. (A)
Tim Little: 931.454.9940

Orcutt | Winslow (A)
Alex Ruiz: 615.298.2525

Snap! Raise (BS)
Troy Ritchie: 206.536.6183

TLM Associates, Inc. (A)
Ginger French: 731.988.9840

Upland Design Group, Inc. (A)
Brian Templeton: 931.484.7541

AdvancED Tennessee. (I)
Dr. Connie J. Smith: 615.430.3065

Community Tectonics Architects, Inc. (A)
Don Shell: 865.637.0890

Entegrity (EM)
Rick Vance: 501.766.4208
Happy Retirement, Randy!

Randy Bennett joined the TSBA team in 1996 and is retiring on June 30, 2019. We can’t thank him enough for his 23 years of service and his thoughtful, steady approach to solving any problem large or small for our boards of education. Randy has served as our Deputy Executive Director and General Counsel for the last several years and has truly made a lasting impact that has changed the association for the better in so many ways. We will miss you very much, but wish you the best in retirement! Thanks for everything!