



Texas Association of School Boards

P.O. Box 400 • Austin, Texas 78767-0400 • 512.467.0222
12007 Research Blvd. • Austin, Texas 78759-2439 • www.tasb.org

Serving Texas Schools Since 1949

March 23, 2010

Dear Senator Shapiro, Representative Eissler, and Members of the Committee:

The Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) provides the following information to supplement the testimony of Mr. Chris Szaniszlo, TASB's Associate Executive Director for Business Services. Mr. Szaniszlo will participate as an invited witness on the panel on "State level efficiency structures."

Sincerely,

Jackie Lain

Associate Executive Director for Governmental Relations
Texas Association of School Boards



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Programs TASB Offers to Help School Districts Realize Cost Efficiencies

TASB offers a myriad of services to help districts realize cost-efficiencies. Each service was developed to meet an identified district need. Following is a brief description of the services:

BoardBook® is a web-based software application that helps districts assemble board meeting packets in a consistent, efficient manner and to conduct paperless board meetings. This helps subscribing districts cut meeting preparation time in half while reducing paper usage. BoardBook users report a 50 percent reduction in the number of packets they print and mail for board meetings and work sessions. BoardBook also helps meeting participants easily access meeting materials and keep them organized in accordance with the agenda.

HR Services provides member districts with training and consulting services in the areas of compensation, HR department operations, staffing reviews, and employee surveys, with the goal of identifying possible efficiencies. HR Services members have access to an on-line resource library with information and discussion on HR management and compliance topics, model forms and handbooks, and over 140 sample job descriptions. HR Services also provides HR DataCentral, which is the most comprehensive benchmarking tool for salaries and stipends for more than 120 common school district jobs, as well as HR data on teacher turnover, absence rates, and HR department budgets and staffing.

Local Government Purchasing Cooperative (BuyBoard®) enables school districts to save money on services, supplies and equipment, while streamlining the purchasing process. The Local Government Purchasing Cooperative awards competitively procured contracts on behalf of its members. BuyBoard saves districts the time and expense of undertaking the competitive procurement process; enables districts to find a wide range of well-known brands on one website, and leverages the purchasing power of more than 3,000 members, allowing districts to purchase products at a lower cost. Participating districts share in the profits of this cooperative. In 2009, BuyBoard remitted \$2.2 million to participating districts at the end of the year.

Lone Star Investment Pool is an interlocal created to allow districts to come together to invest their funds, which saves districts in transaction costs, drives down management fees, and saves districts staff time.

OnSite™ Facilities Services provides districts with facility-related staffing and planning assistance and custodial unitization studies.

OnSite™ Energy Services oversees an energy aggregation program that provides districts with a cost-effective way to purchase electricity and fuel.

Policy Service offers districts expert assistance with local policy development and maintenance through Policy On Line®, the online publication of individual school board's local policies. This online publication of districts' local policy manuals facilitates the distribution of school board policies and saves school districts administrative time, copying, and postage costs.

The TASB Risk Management Fund is a collective, not-for-profit self-insurance program (also known as risk pool) formed to provide risk coverage for Texas school districts in the areas of Workers' Compensation; Property, Auto Liability; Auto Property Damage; School Professional Legal Liability; General Liability and Unemployment Compensation. Collective self-insurance is often a cost-effective alternative to commercial insurance for school districts because of the homogeneity of risks and the non-profit status of a risk pool. The Fund focuses on helping districts reduce their liability risks through comprehensive training and education and loss prevention services. The Fund's commitment to "giving back" has saved member school districts millions of dollars through Loss Prevention Grants, Membership Experience Credits, Coverage Credits for attending training, and other initiatives, such as the award of over 400 Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) to member districts at no charge.

SMART Medicaid Services helps school districts bill Medicaid for services eligible for reimbursement under the School Health and Related Services (SHARS). SHARS has been an important revenue source for school districts. TASB's SMART program assists districts with audit preparation and provides a technical assistance hotline for participating districts.

Supplemental Employee Benefits Program provides school districts with group term life and long-term disability benefits. TASB also offers a district-sponsored automobile/homeowners insurance program and Section 125 plan administration, both of which are district-sponsored but employee-paid services.