

TEXAS ALTERNATIVES

- Conference Highlights •
- Positive People Power! •
- Diane Allison Tilly •
- Educators Take Aim at Social Security Offsets •
- Awards, Scholarships, Recognitions, and New Appointments •
- Scholarship Awards •
- What's in the Works for the 2007 TAAE Annual Conference •
- Success Newsletter •
- Legislative Report •
- Did You Know News •

TEXAS ASSOCIATION FOR ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

So... Many TAAE Contributors to Thank....

If you were at the Omni Hotel in San Antonio from February 2-4, you know what an incredible TAAE Annual Conference we presented to our membership. The enthusiasm and commitment to what we do was very infectious. I had a number of participants tell me this was the best conference they had ever attended. A very special thank you goes to **Carmen Moreno**, TAAE vice president and conference chair, **Doug Hardy**, conference co-chair from Perryton, and **Christine Jackson**, Judson ISD, who made the session posters, the members of the 2006 conference committee, new website guru **Dianne Davis** from Amarillo, the **TAAE Board of Directors**, TAAE committee chairs and **Joe McCullough**, TAAE Executive Director. The planning and teamwork were obvious.



Linda Kelley - TAAE President

Activities at the conference started with three bus tours to area campuses. Each staff from Karen Wagner High School, Judson Learning Academy, Northeast Alternative High School and Business Careers High School opened their doors to over 175 conference attendees. These tours are always well received at each conference. It's good to see what others are doing, and I would like to thank these campuses for being so generous with their time and information.

I hope you were able to attend our featured workshops and keynote addresses. If not, you missed a great opportunity to learn new ideas and be inspired. **Jay Burcham of the Provenio Group** who provided us with "food for thought" as he presented the featured workshop on Thursday entitled "Meeting Behavioral Challenges: Changing Behaviors and Teaching to Learn." He certainly was a knowledgeable speaker.



Clarence Alberts addressing conference attendees

Clarence Alberts, an administrator for Judson ISD and a conference committee member, arranged for our keynote speaker on Thursday night. The Honorable Ruth Jones-McClendon, State House Representative from District 120, welcomed us to San Antonio and encouraged each of us to continue our special service to alternative students in our state. The Friday keynote speaker, Naomi Shihab Nye, returned to our conference this year following an appearance a number of years ago. She made us laugh, cry, think about the state of acceptance in the world and remember our own childhood moments as she read from her collection of poetry. I hope she will return again to a future conference.

While there were several highlights at the conference, one of my personal favorites was the entertainment at the reception on Thursday night that was arranged by Clarence Alberts of Judson ISD. The Judson Mexican Folk Dancers were such a special treat. Their charm, fancy footwork and beautiful costumes brought a standing ovation. After watching them perform, I felt like I have two left feet and absolutely no rhythm.



Keynote Naomi Nye addressing TAAE members



Judson Mexican Folk Dances performers

Again this year, we had a successful silent auction and drawings to help raise funds for the Taylor Marceau Scholarship Fund. Art students from Spring Branch School of Choice, under the direction of art teacher **Joanne Frimel**, once again donated art pieces for auction. A special thank you goes to Principal **Lee Ann Lockard** for sharing her students' talents with us once again this year. The Taylor Marceau family made a very generous contribution to the auction by bidding on and purchasing two of the art pieces for \$500 each. This money will be added to the generous donations of members who bid on and purchased the artwork in the auction. Thank you for helping us continue to give scholarships to our students.



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Contents

President's Report1
Positive People Power5
Life Time Member Award5
Diane Allison Tilly.....6
Linda Talley's Success Newsletter6
Education Insider6
Success Newsletter.....7
TAAE Salutes the 2006 16th Annual Conference7
2006 16th Annual Conference Pictorial Hi-lights8
Did you know Knews?.....10
Thank you to Exhibitors.....12
Thank you to Committee Volunteers.....12
TAAE Executive Directors Report...13
Mark your TAAE Calendars.....13
2006-2007 Conference Committee.....14
TAAE 2007 Scholarship Application15

Editorial Statement

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Presidents Message Continued ...



Student ceramics and artwork are conference hi-lights



(L-R) April Coker, Kay Panamarenko, Lisa Metzler, and standing Carmen Moreno

As always, the workshop presenters brought new ideas for sharing. It is always disappointing when we have sessions cancelled, but most of those that were presented received high marks in the evaluations. If you missed the presentation made by the students from Allison-Steele Alternative School, Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City ISD, under the supervision of their social studies teacher, **Jeffery Hunt**, you missed a real treat. They came in full costume and put on quite a show for those attending the workshop. I hope you stayed on Saturday for the featured workshops presented by **Vicki Phillips**, **David Manning** and **Betty Coon**, **Jay Burcham** and **Leslie Lee** and **Jim Hutson**. I know many of you had to leave on Friday but hopefully, you can plan to stay for Saturday at the 2007 conference in Austin. Special thanks go to the great group of facilitators who helped introduce the workshop speakers throughout the conference.

One of the most special and touching events of the 2006 conference had to be the TAAE Dedication Luncheon held on Friday. At this luncheon we honored the lives of **Taylor Marceau** and **Diane Allison Tilly**. Taylor was a former alternative student at the ACE Academy in Northeast ISD in San Antonio and he is the namesake for our Taylor Marceau TAAE Scholarship. Diane was a teacher at the Robbins Academy in the Alamo Heights Independent School District who was tragically murdered in November of 2004.



Scholarship Winner Mayra L. Casarez



Diane Tilly's teacher memories and story told by Carolyn Wallock and former students.

The number of items in the same prize drawings increased from 2005. Thank you to everyone who made donations for such a great cause. Items included food, electronics, autographed pictures and CDs by celebrities and beauty baskets. Once again, the conference committee members and others worked hard to find many of these donations. Have you any ideas for donations for next year?

Did you like the t-shirts we had for sale? **Kay Panamarenko**, Chapter Liaison, made arrangements with a special education teacher **Kim Wine** from the Clifton Center in Austin ISD to have the t-shirts made by her students. A gentleman staying at the hotel from North Carolina asked me if he could purchase one for his wife, a former Texas teacher, who is teaching in an alternative school in North Carolina. Didn't the phrase on the shirt tell our story? We don't leave them behind!

As always, the workshop presenters brought new ideas for sharing. It is always disappointing when we have sessions cancelled, but most of those that were presented received high marks in the evaluations. If you missed the presentation made by the students from Allison-Steele Alternative School, Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City ISD, under the supervision of their social studies teacher, **Jeffery Hunt**, you missed a real treat. They came in full costume and put on quite a show for those attending the workshop. I hope you stayed on Saturday for the featured workshops presented by **Vicki Phillips**,



Food baskets, TV's, blender, CD's and more make for great TAAE give-a-ways



Betty Coon and David Manning both past TAAE presidents return for presentations



Diane Tilly Bench presentation



Marceau Family presenting Taylor Marceau Scholarship Awards and receiving the TAAE "Friend of Alternative Education Award"

Steve, Eva and Shanna Marceau, Taylor's father, mother and sister, provided the original seed money for the TAAE Taylor Marceau Scholarship Fund that has provided over \$13,000 in continuing education scholarships for alternative students in Texas since 2000. Following the heart-felt comments from Steve Marceau and the announcement and presentation of the four scholarship recipients of 2006 by Awards and Scholarships Chair **Monica Taylor**, the Marceau family was presented with the award of "Friend of Alternative Education." Wasn't it great to have three of the four scholarship winners and their families present to receive the scholarships and meet the Marceaus?

Kay Panamarenko introduced **Denise Scioli** of the Alternative Learning Center, Austin ISD, who presented a student-made bench in Diane Allison Tilly's memory to school representative **Carolyn Wallock** of the Robbins Academy SA. A garden at Robbins Academy has been developed for placement of the bench. Special moments came when former students of Dianne Tilly shared their personal reflections about this special teacher.



Scholarship Winner Lathia D. Goolsby



Scholarship Winner Dana Hill.



Scholarship Winner America Lopez (Teacher Accepting)

Presidents Message Continued ...

Other awards presented at the luncheon included "Administrator of the Year," **Dr. Leslie Schueckler** of College Station, "Teacher of the Year," **Olivia Benford** of Buel High School in Pharr ISD, "Best Practices" to teacher **Sucki Woodward** of the Academy at Hays and principal **Bud Box** of Floresville Alternative Center, "Friend of TAAE" to **Nancy Rinehart** and **Corey Green** of TEA, and Life Membership Award to **Carmen Moreno**.



Lynn Lee TAAE Past president giving Dr. Leslie Schueckler TAAE "Administrator of the Year Award"



April Coker giving Olivia Benford the TAAE "Teacher of the Year Award"



Linda Kelly gives Sucki Woodward the TAAE "Best Practice Award"



Keith Adams presents Nancy Rinehart of TEA the TAAE "Friend of Alternative Education Award"

Another special presentation was provided by **Peggy Little** of Marble Falls at the closing session on Saturday. If you were not present, you missed Peggy's wonderful PowerPoint presentation showing alternative students from all across Texas. If you sent pictures of your students, thank you. What a treat! Thanks Peggy for all your hard work!

Did you know that over 39 people volunteered to serve on TAAE committees for 2006? Thank you for volunteering to be a part of the ongoing activities of this association. Not all of the committees will be as active as others during the year, but we are working on having increased involvement. Some of you were on committees in 2005 and informed me you were never contacted. For that, I apologize and promise we will try to do better this year. Having so many members involved is new for us and we have learned a lot this year. We will be working to set up those committees as soon as possible. All committees will have chairs and TAAE board members who are responsible for the activities of each committee.



Parliamentarian Ron Stinson swears in April Coker/VP, Kay Panamarenko/Membership-Liaison, Leslie Schueckler/Secretary.

As a final note, let me say welcome to the new secretary for the TAAE Board, **Leslie Schueckler**. She was elected to replace April Coker, who was elected to serve as vice president at the general membership meeting on Saturday at the conference. April will be filling the huge shoes left by Carmen Moreno, who is leaving the board as vice president and chair of the conference for at least the last six years. Isn't it great that we have such talent in our membership?

I hope to see you in Austin in 2007 !!!!!

Linda Kelly
TAAE President

CONGRATULATIONS !!! TAAE AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS 2006 Taylor-Marceau Scholarship Winners

Latisha Goolsby

Alternative Learning Program
Goosecreek I.S.D.
Baytown, TX

America Lopez

Options High School at Lamar Academy
McAllen, TX

Mayra Cavazos

Teenage Parenting Program
Pharr-San Juan-Alamo I.S.D.
Pharr, TX

Dana Hill

Allison Steele Enhanced Learning Center
Schertz, TX

Service Award Winners

Administrator of the Year: **Leslie P. Schueckler**, College Station I.S.D.

Educator of the Year: **Olivia Benford**, Pharr-San Juan-Alamo I.S.D.

Friends of Alternative Education:

Texas Education Agency **Nancy Rinehart** and **Cory Green**

Lifetime Membership: **Carmen Moreno**

Best Practice: The Grow and Prosper Project at the Academy at Hays, Hays I.S.D.

POSITIVE PEOPLE POWER!

* helping others to fulfill their dreams by providing thoughts,
Published every Tuesday, when I'm in town, and read in over 30 countries around the world.

All of the great achievers of the past have been visionary figures; they were men and women who projected into the future. They thought of what could be, rather than what already was, and then they moved themselves into action, to bring these things into fruition. - Bob Proctor

WHAT TEACHERS MAKE!

The dinner guests were sitting around the table discussing life. One man, a CEO, decided to explain the problem with education. He argued, "What's a kid going to learn from someone who decided his best option in life was to become a teacher?" He reminded the other dinner guests what they say about teachers:

"Those who can, **do**. Those who can't, **teach**."

To stress his point he said to another guest; "You're a teacher, Susan. Be honest. What do you make?"

Susan, who had a reputation for honesty and frankness replied, "You want to know what I make?"

"I make kids work harder than they ever thought they could. I make a C+ feel like the winner of the Congressional Medal of Honor. I make kids sit through 40 minutes of study hall in absolute silence."

"You want to know what I make?"

I make kids wonder.

I make them question.

I make them criticize.

I make them apologize and mean it.

I make them write.

I make them read, read, read.

I make them show all their work in math and perfect their final drafts in English.

I make them understand that if you have the brains, and follow your heart, and if someone ever tries to judge you by what you make, you must pay no attention because they just didn't learn."

Susan paused and then continued.

"You want to know what I make?"

'I MAKE A DIFFERENCE.'

What do you make?"

Check Out Jim's Website. www.JimGentil.com



Carmen Moreno...
TAAE VP/Conference Chair 6
Years/Teacher/Administrator/and
now Life Time TAAE Member

You watch them lifted by the wind and assure them someday they will fly. Finally they are airborne. They need more string and you keep letting it out; but with each twist of the ball of twine, there is a sadness that goes with joy. The kite becomes more distant and you know it won't be long before that beautiful creature will snap the lifeline that binds you two together and will soar, free and alone. Only then do you know that you did your job.

Fellow educators: continue doing your job letting the string out little by little. Stand proud for you are the lifelines for so many of our students who otherwise would never be able to soar. Thanks for the work you do.

Comments on Receiving the Life Time Member Award by Carmen Moreno

How do I begin to express the depth of my gratitude to my colleagues for their believing that I deserve such recognition? I've been associated with this organization since the early 1990's and have chaired the conference six years. I can sincerely say that it has been an incredible learning experience for me and a privilege to be given the opportunity to work with so many great and committed educators from all over the state of Texas. I couldn't have done this without the many, many districts from throughout the state that have tirelessly continued to support our organizations efforts. TAAE will always be a part of me and I will continue to articulate its mission every opportunity I have. Thank you, Merci, Grazie, Muchisimas Gracias, Abrazos, Carmen Moreno.

Comments from the Conference Chair.....by Carmen Moreno

Are we not truly The Lifeline For Student Success? Our 16th Annual Conference was an acknowledgement of the incredible work that our Alternative Educators are doing everyday to insure our students that we are there for them regardless of their past experiences and behaviors.

Comments from our participants like "Always the best source of professional development for alternative ed teachers" and "Every topic was done to perfection" exemplifies our alternative educators thirst for continuous learning in their fields of expertise. As Erma Bombeck wrote: Children are like kites. You spend a lifetime trying to get them off the ground. You run with them until you are both breathless. They Crash. They hit the rooftop. You patch and comfort, adjust and teach.

Diane Allison Tilly

7/6/1946 - 11/22/04

This year's conference was dedicated in memory of **Diane Allison Tilly**. Diane was the lead teacher at **Robbins Academy**, an academic alternative school, in the **Alamo Heights School District**.

In November 2004, Diane was tragically raped and murdered. Educators and students from across the state mourned her death, trying to come to grips with the senseless act of violence.



Bench created by Austin ISD students attending the Alternative Learning Center

Students and staff from Robbins Academy attended the conference luncheon to accept a bench dedicated in memory of Diane from staff representing the Alternative Learning Center in Austin ISD. The bench is now housed in the Diane Tilly Memorial Butterfly Garden built on the grounds of the Robbins campus. The touching ceremony gave way to tears as students from Robbins Academy spoke to TAAE members attending the luncheon.



The 2 S's I am referring to here are: self-esteem and self-efficacy. The more you have one of them the more you have of the other. Self-esteem is how much you like yourself. Self-efficacy is how effective you feel you are accomplishing tasks or goals. There is a connection between the 2 because the more you like yourself, the better you do things and the better you do things, the more you like yourself. These 2 are critical to improving productivity and relationships.

If time management seems to be an issue with you, check these 2 out for yourself. If high self-esteem and high self-efficacy aren't part of your strong core, time as well as work as well as relationships will always be a challenge for you.

How do you raise your self-esteem?

1. Stop the negative self talk.
2. Only be around people who love and support you. If this is not an option at work, limit your interaction with negative people at work. Yes, you have to work with them and carry your load, however, you don't have to socialize with them, take breaks with them, etc.
3. Start affirming how much you like yourself every day! Do it 100 times a day. Wake up in the morning telling yourself how much you like yourself and how you love your body, mind, etc.
4. Treat yourself very, very well. This includes eating, exercising, etc.

How do you raise your self-efficacy?

1. Break projects down into baby steps.
2. Take a baby step.
3. Celebrate after completing each step.

EDUCATION INSIDER

April 14, 2006

Educators Take Aim at Social Security Offsets; Let Us Hear From You About Your Activities

Beginning this week through April 21, thousands of NEA members are contacting their members of Congress and spreading the word about the pressing need for the federal government to repeal the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision laws, which unjustly deprive hundreds of thousands of retired and soon-to- retire educators of retirement benefits.

The Government Pension Offset reduces the amount of the Social Security spousal benefit a public employee can receive. So, an educator who worked his or her whole career in public service while his or her spouse worked at a private company and paid Social Security is only eligible for a small percentage of the Social Security benefit his or her spouse earned after he or she dies.

The Windfall Elimination Provision changes the formula used to figure benefit amounts — reducing an individual's own Social Security benefits earned while working in a job covered by Social Security. For instance, low-paid public employees who move from a private sector career into teaching could lose up to half of their Social Security benefits.

SHARE YOUR ACTIVITIES WITH US

We need your help so that we can follow up with federal elected officials and share with them the results of the Nationwide Call to Action. It's simple and it's fast. Go to <http://www.nea.org/lac/socsec/images/reportform.pdf> and fill out the report back form.

SUCCESS

NEWSLETTER

You may think your job or your spouse or the traffic, boss, economy, stock market, etc stresses you out. That's simply not true! It's you who stresses you out! Trust me on this one! It's how you perceive the job, spouse, traffic, boss, economy that causes you stress. If you had no fear about any of the above, would they cause stress? I don't think so!

So how do you change your perception of stress? Many people use exercise, meditation, yoga, and other not so healthy ways to handle or counter act stress. But the real winners over stress are those who change their attitude around stress.

Stop letting others, as well as yourself, "get by" with behaviors that are unacceptable. Don't let it simmer, speak up and deal with it right now!

Stop getting sucked into compulsive behavior just because someone else is fretting. Let them have their stress. It's not yours! Recognize when you are getting sucked in and then take the high road. For example, when my mother used to call me and complain about how bad the stock market was doing and how poorly her portfolio was doing and asked if I wasn't just as upset, I simply said that I was not participating in worrying about my portfolio or the stock market—that's what I paid my investment manager to do. When a friend calls and complains about how terrible technology is, I simply say, "you'll get better with it."

You see you get to choose your attitude around issues that can cause you stress. If you choose the monster attitude, you will get stressed out. If you choose an angel attitude, stress will never call at your door, or if s/he calls, you won't be home. Whenever I feel a little stress knocking at my door, I begin to repeat an affirmation, "I am open and receptive to receiving my highest good right now!" And I keep repeating that till stress leaves my door. The trick is that I had to choose my attitude of being open to my good coming in vs. stress and I will always choose my good. What about you?

TAAE Salutes All Those That Made the 2006 16th Annual Conference a Great Success!

THANKS TO OUR 2006 CONFERENCE FACILITATORS:

- A-2 **Debby Millican**, ACT Program, Cypress Fairbanks ISD
- A-3 **Jack Mullen**, Alternative Ed Programs, College Station ISD
- A-4 **Randi Born**, Falls Career High School, Marble Falls ISD
- A-5 **Susan Martin**, Judson Learning Academy, Judson ISD
- A-6 **Dent Felix**, Top of Tx Alternative Ed Center, Perryton ISD
- A-7 **R. Matthew Clark**, Magnolia ISD
- A-8 **Kay Panamarenko**, Hays
- A-9 **Laurie Rath**, Alternative Ed Program, College Station ISD
- A-10 **Gabriele Simpson**, Judson Learning Academy, Judson ISD
- A-11 **Chelsea Goodwin**, Perryton ISD
- A-12 **Joseph Carter III**, Camelot Schools, Houston ISD
- A-13 **Jody Gougler**, Alternative Ed Programs, College Station ISD

Session B

- B-1 **Eva Duncan**, John H. Wood Charter Schools System
- B-2 **Annette Trementozi**, Judson Learning Academy, Judson ISD
- B-3 **Jan Page**, Top of Texas Alt Education Center, Perryton ISD
- B-4 **Chad Gardner**, Alternative Ed Program, College Station ISD
- B-5 **Peggy Little**, Principal, Falls Career H/S, Marble Falls ISD
- B-6 **Ludi Martin**, Principal, Top of Tx Alt Ed Ctr, Perryton ISD
- B-7 **Jemila Pujadas**, Alternative Ed Programs, College Station ISD...
- B-8 **Dr. George Luck**, Waco ISD
- B-9 **Elizabeth Lynn**, Harlandale Alt.Center, Harlandale ISD
- B-10 **Ken Oden**, Spring Branch ISD

Session C

- C-1 **Suzanne Selinger**, Houston Alternative District, Houston ISD
- C-2 **Leslie Dorobek**, Alternative Ed Prog., College Station ISD
- C-3 **Tammy Lewis**, PEP Coordinator, Top of Texas Alternative Education Center, Perryton ISD

- C-4 **Jerry Wright**, Arlington ISD
- C-5 **Karen Steele**, Alternative Ed Programs, College Station ISD
- C-6 **Evelyn Stone**, Garland Alternative Education Center,
- C-7 **Nellie Westfall**, Migrant Coordinator, Top of Texas Alternative Education Center, Perryton ISD
- C-8 **Connie Grossman**, Arlington ISD
- C-9 **Dana Jumper**, BAC Prog., Top of Tx Alt.Ed. Cntr, Perryton
- C-10 **Leslie Schueckler**, Principal, Alt. Ed.Prog-College Station ISD

Session D

- D-1 **April Coker, Sec./TAAE, Operation Graduation, Lindale ISD**
- D-2 **Lynn Lee**, Amarillo Texas
- D-3 **Kay Panamarenko**, Hays, ISD
- D-4 **Rudy Herrera**, Treasurer TAAE, Seguin ISD
- D-5 **Liza Metzler**, Matthews Alternative HS, Lubbock ISD
- D-6 **David E. Young**, Bryan ISD
- D-7 **Elizabeth Lynn**, Harlandale Alternative Cntr, Harlandale ISD
- D-8 **Mildred Nicks**, Principal, Community Services, Houston ISD
- D-9 **David Young**, Director , Bryan ISD
- D-10 **Dena Frieda**, DAEP Principal, Bryan ISD
- D-11 **Jesus Hernandez**, Principal, Bryan ISD
- D-12 **Philip Johanson**, Instructional Guide, Bryan College ISD
- D-13 **Patricia Neeley**, Teacher DEAP, Bryan ISD

Saturday Workshops:

- Workshop # 1 – Keith Adams, Mesquite Academy -
- Workshop # 2 – April Coker, Lindale High School -
- Workshop # 3 – Rudy Hererra, Mercer Bloomer Learning Center –
- Workshop # 4 – Lynn Lee – Amarillo, Tx.



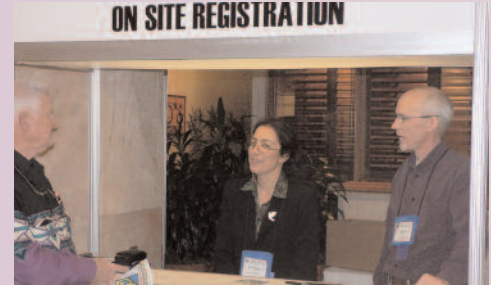
2006 TAAE Annual Conference



Conference Committee Volunteer's



Susan Rinehart teaches TEA Accountability always a hot topic



Registration desk run by staff Veronica and Frank James



Exhibitor for the ladies... jewelry...



TX Army National Guard – Karen Hix and former Alt Ed Teacher



Perryton, Tx , Top of TX, AEC come as a school team to SanAntonio



Saturday grand prize CASH CARD to Walmart a big hit with TAAE members



April Coker gives coveted country star prize CD to young admirer



Rudy Hererra TAAE's Treasurer and Silent Auction Announcer



Kay Panamarenko addresses TAAE audience



Mike Horton, Founder of CHAMPS Program in Perryton seen teaching skills



Naomi Shihab Nye with son signing autographed books for members



Linda Kelly – TAAE President, addressing TAAE Members



TAAE participants are fed well during Thursday and Friday receptions

Conference Pictorial Hi-lights



Ms. Gabrielle Foster of Judson ISD presents her kids Mexican Folklore performances



TAAE Exhibitors all touch the business side of attending the TAAE conferences supplying much needed information and technology



TAAE Business meeting is full during elections and TAAE website presentation



Tiered seating and executive chairs presented some classes with great comfort

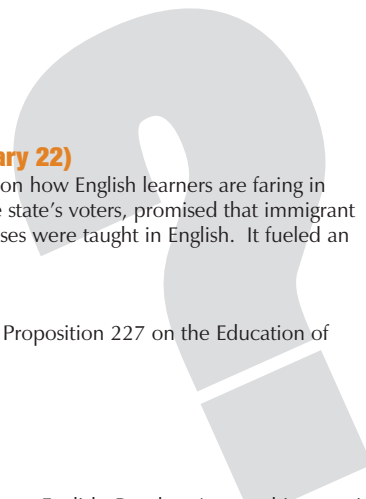


TAAE drawing table on public view and up for grabs with the right ticket



Three buses and 4 schools in SA get buses loaded up and rolling on Thursday AM

DID YOU KNOW NEWS?



No Benefit Found in English-Only Instruction (San Francisco Chronicle, February 22)

Teaching overwhelmingly in English, as mandated by 1998's Proposition 227, has had no impact on how English learners are faring in California, a state-mandated study has found. The ballot measure, approved by 61 percent of the state's voters, promised that immigrant children and others who don't speak English at home would assimilate much faster if all their classes were taught in English. It fueled an emotional debate about how to best educate the state's growing immigrant population.

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2006/02/22/MNGSUHCJF51.DTL>

You can read the entire American Institutes for Research report "Effects of the Implementation of Proposition 227 on the Education of English Learners, K-12" at

<http://www.air.org/news/documents/227Report.pdf>

(please note that this is a large PDF file and may take some time to open)

No-Excuses Education (San Antonio Express-News, February 15)

The odds are stacked against the children here. About seven of 10 children begin school speaking no English. But there's something special going on in Hidalgo. In Hidalgo, every 3-year-old has access to free, full-day pre-kindergarten with a certified teacher. Students leave elementary school fluent in two languages.

<http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/education/stories/MYSA021206.01A.hidalgo.34f1b33.html>

Bill Requires Telling Students of Online Risk (The Washington Times, February 17)

Virginia teachers would warn children about Internet predators and offer students Web safety instruction under a measure that's expected to pass the Virginia General Assembly. The bill would allow schools to develop lesson plans that warn children about giving personal information or posting photographs of themselves on Web sites.

<http://www.washtimes.com/metro/20060216-103651-2944r.htm>

20 States Ask for Flexibility in School Law (The New York Times, February 22)(free registration required)

The federal Education Department has agreed to review requests from 20 states to alter significantly the way they measure student progress under the No Child Left Behind Act. The move comes as the number of schools across the country deemed substandard under that law grows by the thousands.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/22/education/22testing.html>

McKeon to Seek Opinions on NCLB Reauthorization (Education Week, February 22) (free guest registration required, with a limit of two articles per week)

The new chairman of the House Education and the Workforce Committee says that he plans to do a lot of listening when it comes to the No Child Left Behind Act. Rep. Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, R-Calif., who was named chairman of the education panel on February 15 by the House Republican Conference, said he plans to hold hearings on the education law, both in Washington and around the country, as well as roundtable discussions to seek bipartisan input before its scheduled reauthorization next year.

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2006/02/22/24chair.h25.html?levelId=1000>

Censorship Ruling Upheld (Chicago Tribune, February 22) (free registration required)

The U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal from former student journalists at Governors State University, letting stand a lower court ruling that could allow college administrators to censor student publications. The appeals court decision applies to public college newspapers in Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/southsouthwest/chi-0602220165feb22,1,1254407.story>

Students Flex Rights to Understand Responsibility

(The Washington Post, February 21)

Students at Fairview Elementary School in Modesto, California, thought the ravioli served at lunch tasted so yucky that they circulated petitions to get it off the menu — and won. Lesson learned: Kids sometimes do get to pick what they eat. A small but growing number of schools have begun to inculcate students in the fundamentals of democratic freedom by teaching and practicing the principles of the First Amendment.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/02/20/AR2006022000970.html>

Teachers Call FCAT Pay Plan Divisive (St. Petersburg Times, February 21)

As thousands of Florida teachers brace for this year's FCAT, state education officials are poised to vote on a plan that would link their pay to student scores. The Board of Education is expected to approve a proposal that would give some teachers a bonus equal to 5 percent of their salary. Touted by Education Commissioner John Winn as a way to "attract and keep the best and brightest teachers," the plan is being attacked by the state's teachers union, which has filed a legal challenge. NCTE member Jennifer Canello is quoted in this article.

http://www.sptimes.com/2006/02/21/State/Teachers_call_FCAT_pa.shtml

Reading between the Lines on Tests Can Uncover Trouble (*USA Today*, February 13)

When test graders around the nation pore over student essays this spring, they'll be looking for more than just writing clarity or good grammar. They'll be keeping an eye out for signs of child abuse, depression, and threats of violence. It's become common practice among states to flag what some call "alert papers" because they contain signs of potentially troubling behavior by or against students.

http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2006-02-13-essays-danger_x.htm

Bush Education Policy Called "Uneven" in Study (*Houston Chronicle*, February 14)

President Bush's signature education policy has in some cases benefited white middle-class children over blacks and other minorities in poorer regions, a Harvard University study indicates. Political compromises forged between some states and the federal government have allowed schools in some predominantly white districts to dodge penalties faced by regions with larger ethnic minority populations, the study said.

<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/headline/nation/3657102.html>

Read the Harvard University study, "The Unraveling of No Child Left Behind: How Negotiated Changes Transform the Law," at

http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/research/esea/nclb_unraveling.php

Governor Bush Wants High Schools to Have Majors, Minors (*St. Petersburg Times*, February 15)

Governor Jeb Bush and Republican legislative leaders last week unveiled a middle and high school reform plan that closely follows recommendations made by Florida's High School Task Force. It includes a proposal for high school students to focus on major and minor subjects as college students do. Students would be required to take four years of English or language arts and four years of math instead of only three of each to graduate.

http://www.sptimes.com/2006/02/15/State/Bush_wants_high_school.shtml

Author Says She's Flattered by Controversy over Book (*Portland Press Herald*, February 15) (free registration required)

The author of the 1993 best-seller *Girl, Interrupted* says she is "honored" that the book has become the focus of controversy at Orono High School. In response to a parent's complaint, the book was temporarily pulled from a ninth-grade English curriculum. It was reinstated following a review by a committee made up of the principal, a teacher, the librarian, and a community member.

<http://pressherald.maine.com/news/state/060215interrupted.shtml>

English Class Explores Experimental Writing (*The Western Herald*, February 14)

A new approach to English creative writing has sparked an interest in many students at Western Michigan University, according to Jason Olsen, a graduate teaching assistant for experimental writing in WMU's English department. Over the course of this semester, a class of 33 students has been divided into two groups to devise writing projects based on the exploration of innovative forms of publication, Olsen said. Instead of writing on traditional 8-1/2-inch-by-11-inch sheets of paper, he said students are encouraged to write on other various objects.

<http://www.westernherald.com/vnews/display.v/ART/2006/02/14/43f1180ca9778>

English Fluency Rate Causes Concern (*Los Angeles Times*, February 16)

English proficiency remained stagnant among nonnative students in California last year, and most who did achieve fluency weren't given more challenging course work to prepare them for college, according to a state study released last week. "We clearly need to look at why this gap is occurring and determine how to address it," said state Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell. It's not enough to have English learners master the language, he said. "They also must . . . have full access to the school curriculum to be successful."

<http://www.latimes.com/news/education/la-me-english16feb16,0,3094129.story?coll=la-news-learning>

Read more about the results of the California English Language Development Test at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr06/yr06rel19.asp>

Dyslexic Children Given a Helping Hand on TAKS (*Houston Chronicle*, February 15)

Thousands of Texas children with dyslexia will be given extra time and help to finish the state-mandated reading test next week — accommodations that educators hope will provide a more accurate measure of the academic ability of children with the common learning disability. Developed in Houston, the testing approach is thought to be one of the most progressive efforts nationally to help children with dyslexia perform to the best of their ability on standardized tests.

<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/metropolitan/3660299.html>

Mars Students Participate in National Event (*Cranberry Journal*, February 15)

Many teachers refer to Dr. Seuss as a literary genius. In honor of Dr. Seuss's birthday, Mars Area Primary Center will join many other schools across the nation celebrating Read Across America Day on Thursday, March 2.

<http://www.gatewaynewspapers.com/cranberryjournal/58144>



THANK YOU TO OUR EXHIBITORS!

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TAAE Recognizes and Thanks the 2005-2006 TAAE Conference Committee Volunteers



TAAE Conference Committee Volunteers!

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TAAE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

By Joe McCullough

The 2006 TAAE Annual Conference in San Antonio was a huge success this year and it's due in great part to many, many hours and personal dedication by TAAE's Board, Staff, Conference and Volunteer Committee members who make the TAAE conferences a joy to attend each year. San Antonio was yet another example of creating an atmosphere of learning, fun and serious dedication to alternative kids in Texas. It's the passion for the kids and the dedication of our teacher/presenters who bring life and cohesion to what could be a boring few days of educational learning. The TAAE conference always rises above the morass of boredom as we strive for enthusiasm and excitement. Each year it's about the learning curves and processes developed from year to year through hands-on training and teachers who "understand" where their kids are coming from. It's this passion and understanding that places TAAE conferences on the high road to success...AMEN! Ok...I won't preach to the choir but... that feeling comes but only once a year and that happens at the TAAE annual conference. If you missed out this year start planning now for next.

MARK YOUR TAAE 2007 CALENDAR!

TAAE'S 2007 ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION
"THEME: "TOGETHERWE MAKE A DIFFERENCE"

Crowne Plaza Hotel
February 8th – 10th, 2007
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512-323-5466.

Hotel Rates: \$85 Single/Double \$105/Triple \$115/ Quad \$125

WHAT'S IN THE WORKS FOR THE 2007 TAAE ANNUAL CONFERENCE? A SUPER... CONFERENCE!

TAAE has been in negotiations since last year with the **Annual Balancing Education and Juvenile Justice Conference along with Special Education Partners and TEA**. Their conference usually held in September of each year, with TEA is now in the planning/creation stages of a SUPER conference which includes all alternative education entities under one roof annually. TAAE the largest of the conferences will include educational tracks and presenters which will address the needs of all entities and perform a "one stop shopping" of sorts for all alternative professions. This new "alternative teamwork" educational format will address specifics as well as creative aspects of everyone working in alternative fields of knowledge. TAAE will continue to partner with the Texas Classroom Teachers Association, Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education, Texas Education Agency, and the office of Attorney General. The Texas Association for Alternative Education is strongly committed to serving these needs and challenges of all professions for many years to come. We also hope to make it more affordable for all agencies to send staff to one SUPER conference and get the exposure of three alternative professions. **SPECIAL NOTE: The Balancing Education Conference will not be held in 2006 so please adjust your juvenile justice and special education budgets and schedules for the TAAE conference dates listed above.**

"Together...We Make A Difference" the theme of the 2007 TAAE Conference in Austin will become a reality soon and materials for the combined conference will be out in early September. We have already begun working with our partners to make this new venture and challenge a wonderful reality and we hope we will earn your support and appreciation.



2006 -2007 CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

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DEADLINE MAY 31, 2006

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Fax: (_____) Phone: (Wk): (_____)

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E-mail addresses of all other presenters: E-mail (1): _____

E-mail (2): _____ E-mail (3): _____

I do not mind if my contact information is reprinted in the On-site Program and TAAE Web site.

A. CONFERENCE PRESENTATION

1. This presentation is most suitable for (check all that apply)

- Elementary Middle School High School Chapter 37
 School of Choice Technical Administrative Curriculum & Instruction
 Discipline Centers Licensed Professional Counselors

2. Title of Presentation: _____

(Please submit an additional form if more than one topic.)

Type of Program: Information Application Instruction

3. A brief description or summary of session (NOTE: All or part of this description will be used in the conference program; use attachments if necessary.) TAAE reserves the right to select those presentations that are curriculum/TAKS based and provide teachers with skills and information that can be immediately transferred to the classroom.

4. Presenter(s) Listing (Brief bio of each presenter—not to exceed six sentences each; use attachments if necessary.)

5. Audio/Visuals Needs (Limit one please.)

- VCR & Monitor Overhead Projector Screen Flip Chart Slide Projector/Screen
 Screen Audio cassette player I will bring my own equipment I have no equipment needs
 I will bring my own PowerPoint equipment

(Limit one please. TAAE will be charged an average of \$75 per day per piece of equipment. NOTE: Power Point LCD presentations/equipment/computers must be supplied by schools or presenters due to high costs. INTERNET CONNECTIONS FOR POWERPOINT ARE \$100 AT HOTEL.)

B. CURRICULUM BASED WORKSHOPS: (ALL CONFERENCE ATTENDEES INVITED TO PARTICIPATE!)

I would like to present a session discussion on Saturday morning. (Two-hour workshop)

Topic: _____

Attendees are to bring 50 copies or a Web site location for materials to be downloaded. The purpose of these sessions is to provide teachers with actual lessons that are curriculum/TAKS based.

This presentation is most suitable for (check one from each category):

- Grade Level: Elementary Middle School High School
Curriculum: Math Science Social Studies English Service Learning

Other (please explain): _____

C. FACILITATOR

Facilitators are a very important part of our conference. Facilitators will be selected to introduce and facilitate the session they are assigned. It is important that all people interested in being a facilitator are strongly committed to doing the job.

I would be interested in facilitating at one of the sessions and in helping to monitor for TAAE.

This form may be copied or duplicated on the computer or downloaded at taae.org. Please print neatly or type.

2007 PRESENTER CONTRACT

On behalf of myself and my copresenters, should this abstract be selected. I/we agree that:

1. Participation in this program does not exempt presenters from paying full registration fees if attending other conference sessions.
2. Individual submitting this proposal and signing this form agrees to receive all conference correspondence and accept responsibility for conveying conference-related information to copresenters.
3. Unless checked at the end of this statement, TAAE may videotape and/or audiotape this entire presentation (no partial taping), including videotape and audiotape excerpts, and distribute the tape for educational purposes with no remuneration or reimbursement to presenter(s). A complimentary audiotape will be available to the presenter(s) upon request. Proceeds from sales of these tapes will go for conference scholarships.

Do not audiotape or videotape my/our session.

4. Appropriate "Releases of Confidential Information" have been obtained for all client materials that will be used or recorded as part of this presentation. The responsibility for protecting client confidentiality rests with the presenter(s).
5. Prior approval must be received from TAAE for any surveys or data collection at the Annual Conference.
6. Individuals submitting or included within this proposal have agreed to be present in Austin, TX, during the hour and date assigned to this presentation at the 2007 TAAE Conference, and conduct this proposed presentation according to the conditions listed above.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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