

TSBA Services

About TSBA

The mission of the Tennessee School Boards Association is to assist school boards in effectively governing school districts. Through the years, TSBA has helped school boards and their members reach their highest potential through association programs, meetings and services.

In 1953, the Tennessee legislature officially recognized TSBA as “the organization and representative agency of the members of school boards of Tennessee” and authorized TSBA to provide services through membership dues paid by school boards. All services of TSBA are designed to help school boards and their members to better serve the children in their school system.

Legislative Advocacy

TSBA keeps a constant watch over all legislation and State Board of Education Rules and Regulations affecting local school districts. In addition to serving as an advocate for local school boards of education on Capitol Hill, the Government Relations Department provides members with current and relevant legislative information. A legislative newsletter, is published weekly during the legislative session.

Legal Services

TSBA has experienced school law attorneys on staff to answer the questions of board members, superintendents and other school administrators regarding interpretations of statutes, court rulings and policies. TSBA’s legal department presents a School Board Academy School Law module annually. There is no charge to the participating school board member.

Policy Services

The TSBA Policy Department provides subscribers with statutorily and regulatory compliant board policies. The TSBA Policy Service is a member of the American Association of State Policy Services, which provides access to a wide variety of policy information from other states. The policy department provides model policies, consultations, and assistance in writing new policies tailored to meet the needs of each district.

Communications Services

TSBA’s communications department keeps members informed about the latest state and national education trends. The Journal, a bi-annual magazine, and BoardTalk, an online newsletter, keep Tennessee board members updated on what’s happening with other school boards across the state. A wealth of valuable information is housed on TSBA’s website. Board members can register and find information about upcoming meetings, and get the latest news from the legislative section. Additionally, the department produces training materials for school board members, distributes press releases when board members attend TSBA events, and works with school system public relations personnel to help create a better understanding of public education.

Labor Relations

TSBA provides assistance to school boards in all areas of labor relations. TSBA can walk a system through the process of initiating collaborative conferencing as well as assist a system with the do's and don'ts of conducting collaborative conferencing. If a system has a proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with educators, TSBA can review the MOU and provide guidance to the legalities and/or best practices involved. Also, districts can call on TSBA for direction with fair labor standards, teacher tenure, dismissal proceedings, and evaluations.

Board Retreats

For school boards striving to increase their effectiveness as a corporate board, TSBA conducts board retreats and evaluations. Each school board should participate in an annual retreat that includes time for planning, assessment and board development activities. SBA will conduct such retreats or portions of them upon request.

Board Evaluation Services

School boards can find assistance from TSBA in the assessment process. TSBA will provide an evaluation instrument to be completed by each board member; tabulate the final results and develop a summary of comments; report the results of the evaluation at a retreat; and conduct a team building session to identify areas in which the board excels and areas needing improvement.

Superintendent Evaluations

For school boards needing assistance in evaluating their superintendent, TSBA will distribute the evaluation instrument to each board member and collect, compile and analyze the results. A written report of the evaluation will be presented to the board and superintendent.

Superintendent Searches

Local boards of education may choose a Superintendent Search Service consisting of a complete search or one that has been customized to fit the needs of the particular board. Through this service, all or any portion of the process of finding candidates for a school system's superintendent position will be provided by TSBA on a cost basis. TSBA does not participate in the selection process but will be available to advise on how to proceed with an offer, as well as the features of an employment contract.

Approved Training Courses

In 1990, the Tennessee Legislature mandated that school board members attend training. State Board of Education Rules and Regulations require that every board member participate in a one-time, 14-hour orientation and seven hours of training annually. TSBA provides the training in five core modules: Board/Superintendent Relations, Advocating the Board's Vision, School Law, Policy/Board Operations and School Finance; and other electives such as planning, team building and online modules on various topics.

Awards and Recognition Programs

TSBA promotes school boards and their members continuously. TSBA offers the following recognition programs: Boardmanship Award Program; Scholars' Circle; Board of Distinction; School Board of the Year; School Board Member of the Year/C. Hal Henard Distinguished Service Award; All Tennessee School Board; Award for Excellence in Educational Program; and School of the Year. For a description of each of these award programs, visit our website at www.tsba.net. TSBA also promotes School Board Week each year by obtaining a declaration from the governor and preparing and distributing public service announcements in print format.

Annual Events

Legislative and Legal Institute

Each February, TSBA holds a legislative seminar in Nashville that will focus on a number of issues. Attendees will gain insight on how the General Assembly operates, receive an update on pending legislation, and discuss legal issues impacting school districts.

SCOPE

The Student Congress on Policies in Education (SCOPE) gathers more than 300 high school students from across the state for debate and discussion of controversial topics and developing school board policies that relate to those topics. It's an all-day session held in March.

Board Secretaries Conference

In May, TSBA presents a conference geared to the school board/superintendent secretary. Through networking, secretaries find better, quicker, easier ways to complete the essential functions of their key position and establish a valuable group of contacts for the future. Board Secretaries are members of the Tennessee Association of Board Secretaries.

Summer Law Institute

The TSBA Legal Department presents a Summer Law Institute, offered twice (June and July) each year, focusing on current legal issues in education and updates on legislation.

Fall District Meetings

Each September, meetings are held in the nine state developmental districts to focus on legislative and legal issues and current education "hot" topics.

Board Chairman Seminar

A workshop focusing on the duties, responsibilities and leadership characteristics required of a board chairman is held each October.

Leadership Conference

The annual Leadership Conference is designed to provide board chairmen with the necessary tools to work effectively with the superintendent, other members of the board, the local funding agency and the public to improve student achievement. It is held just prior to the Annual Convention in November.

Convention

The Annual Convention is one of the largest education meetings in Tennessee, attracting national and state education leaders as speakers and clinic participants. Convention activities are spread across three days. The convention is held in November.