Awards and Honors Ceremony
Heroes for Children

Mission

Heroes for Children advocates for, and provides financial and social assistance to families with children (0-22 years of age) battling cancer.
TASP
86th Legislative Session Update

Marty De Leon -- Escamilla & Poneck, LLP

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Stephanie Barbre, Ph.D., LSSP
Objectives

1. Participants will be able to identify important legislative activities in 2018 pertaining to LSSPs.
2. Participants will learn about TASP’s involvement in legislative activities and the issues advocated for by the organization.
3. Participants will be able to identify the four broad legislative platform issues adopted by TASP for Texas’s 86th Legislative Session.
Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council (TBHEC)

- HB 2698 (2017) proposed TBHEC
- HB 2896 died on the House Calendar last session
- Tex. Legislature renewed TSBEP for 2 more years
- Sunset Commission recommends establishing TBHEC

Proposed TBHEC Council includes:
- Marriage Family Therapists
- Professional Counselors
- Psychologists
- Social Workers

Looking ahead to the 86th Session:
- Who will file the bill for 86th session?
- Will the bill look exactly like HB 2698?
- Will psychologists share a seat on the council?
School Safety at the Capitol

Sante Fe ISD Tragedy has led to busy summer at Capitol

- Governor’s “School and Safety Firearm Action Plan” – 40pts
- Increase Law Enforcement Presence
- Train More School Marshals
- Provide Active Shooter Training
- Harden Campuses
- Provide Mental Health Evaluations
- Increase Mental Health First Aid
- Provide Behavioral Threat Assessment Programs
- Improve & Expand On-Campus Counseling Resources
Asking Legislature for $54.5M School Safety

The Safe and Healthy Schools Initiative is built upon a multi-tiered systems of support framework and grounded in 4 primary pillars:

1. **Mental Health Supports**: access to counseling resources, mental health professional networks, threat assessment protocols, and teacher and administrator training on mental health needs.

2. **Positive School Culture**: character education, positive behavior supports and interventions, trauma-informed education, restorative discipline practices, suicide prevention, resiliency, anti-bullying, and anti-cyber-bullying.

3. **Facility Safety**: facilities hardening and the presence of School Resource Officers (SROs) and school marshals on a campus.

4. **Emergency Response Coordination**: police collaboration, drills, training on crisis and emergency response, and notification protocols.
## Safe and Healthy Schools Initiative: Funding Breakdown

### Mental Health Supports and Positive School Culture Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Amount</th>
<th>FTEs</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$2.0M</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Focus on codifying best practices, providing sample tools, resources, and effective models, providing technical support, and managing statewide grants (includes IT needs).</td>
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<tr>
<td>$20M</td>
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<td>Grants ($20M) for programs with the ultimate goal of ensuring students on every campus across the state have access to needed behavioral health services through innovative, proven programs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>$5M</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Grants to the Regional Education Service Centers (ESCs) to support one FTE at each ESC, to provide local support, directed by the service center but advised by TEA staff and guided by the self-assessment results and TEA audit findings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>$10M</td>
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<td>Mental Health First Aid, Telemedicine, trauma-informed care, and coordination of access to mental health professionals, including creation and maintenance of regional and local provider lists.</td>
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### Facility Safety and Emergency Response Coordination

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<th>Purpose</th>
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<tr>
<td>$10M</td>
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<td>Matching Grants to LEAs for facility hardening activities as a result of their self-assessment and audit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>$2.5M</td>
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<td>Grants to Texas School Safety Center to coordinate/conduct Emergency Response audits and identify LEA need for facility or school safety improvements.</td>
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### School Health and Safety Pilot Grants

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<tr>
<td>$5M</td>
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<td>Pilot grants for innovative programs to increase school health and safety.</td>
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</table>
School safety big topic at the state and national level

- Governor Abbott tasked committees with finding ways to increase school safety----fast.
- Opportunities to increase awareness and build relationships

Legislative liaison played important part in TASP’s advocacy

- Organized meetings with influential offices
- Kept us informed of upcoming committee hearings
  - Why is this important?
- Secured invitations for testimony at committee hearings and stakeholder discussion
  - Public vs. Invited Testimony
TASP School Safety Advocacy

May
❖ House Public Health Committee Hearing--Public testimony

June
❖ Meetings with Senate and House Public Education Committee Directors
❖ House Public Education Committee & Public Health Committee Hearing--TASP board members provided invited testimony
July
❖ Meetings with Lt. Gov. Education Policy Advisor, Governor’s Office, Rep. Huberty’s Office
❖ Governor’s School Safety Stakeholder Discussion--TASP was invited and participated
❖ Senate Select Committee on Violence in Schools and School Security--TASP board members provided invited and public testimony
TASP School Safety Advocacy

Message:

- Implement SEL curriculum and screening
- LSSP Ratios/Shortage
- Differentiate roles of school counselors, LSSPs, and diagnosticians
- Provide feedback on TWITR
- Research-based school safety strategies

- Title change
- PREPaRE Training
- Increase access to mental health services in schools--free up counselors and LSSPs to work with mental health needs, hire more mental health professionals
What is a legislative platform?

An official position on legislative issues that utilizes the organization’s mission and values and guides the organization’s advocacy efforts.
Which of the following issues do you feel should be TASP's #1 priority for the 2019 Legislative Session?

185 responses

- School psychologist/LSSP shortage: 31.4%
- LSSP respecialization: 19.5%
- Allow use of "School Psychologist" professional title: 15.7%
- Increased funding for LSSP positions: 22.2%
- Promotion of Social/Emotional Learning (SEL): 8.1%
- LSSP representation in proposed Behavioral Health Executive Council...
Membership Survey Data

Top Concerns:

1. Increased funding for LSSP positions
2. LSSP Shortage
3. Representation in TBHEC
4. Allow use of “School Psychologist” title
Platform Issue #1: TASP supports legislation that equips school districts with access to appropriate school-based mental and behavioral health services to improve school climate and student outcomes.

- Supports the Sunset Committee’s recommendation for the consolidation of TSBEP into the Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council (TBHEC)
  - Equitably represent every licensee group
  - No one professional group hold more power/influence over another
  - TASP seeks to collaborate with the legislature and other stakeholders in the development/operation of TBHEC
- Title change from LSSP to School Psychologist
- Codify the national practice model into the occupational and/or educational codes to uphold best practices
- Have legislature require districts to identify a School Psychological Services department to address the behavioral and mental health needs of students
- RemEDIATE the shortage for all school-based mental health professionals, including LSSPs. Additional money for training programs, loan forgiveness, respecialization
Platform Issue #2: TASP supports legislation that equips school districts with access to appropriate school-based mental and behavioral health services to improve school climate and student outcomes.

- TASP believes students, families, and school personnel would benefit from the adoption of specific and comprehensive Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) benchmarks to be added to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and mandate districts to adopt a SEL curriculum.
Platform Issue #2: TASP supports legislation that equips school districts with access to appropriate school-based mental and behavioral health services to improve school climate and student outcomes.

- TASP supports increased access to mental health for students, families, and school personnel.
  - TASP believes students, families, and school personnel should have access to universal behavioral/mental health screenings that examine complete mental health.
Platform Issue #3: TASP supports legislation that promotes best practices for safe and supportive schools
Platform Issue #3: TASP supports legislation that promotes best practices for safe and supportive schools

- Increase physical AND psychological safety of students, while balancing practices that may be considered “hardening” of schools
- Inclusion of school psychologists in school safety legislation and ensuring evidence-based school safety resources/practices
- Codify requirements for evidence-based school crisis/threat teams and procedures related to crisis training, mental health first aid training, and crisis response
Platform Issue #3: TASP supports legislation that promotes best practices for safe and supportive schools

- Oppose arming educators except for appropriately trained law enforcement professionals and increase law enforcement only when balanced by access to mental health professionals
- Add legislation and funding for schools to promote anti-bullying policies and practices
- Eliminate corporal punishment
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<th>Last Name</th>
<th>City</th>
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Platform Issue #4: TASP supports legislation that supports school districts in being sensitive, competent, and aware of the needs of diverse student and family populations.
Platform Issue #4: TASP supports legislation that supports school districts in being sensitive, competent, and aware of the needs of diverse student and family populations.

- Supports resources, funding, and trainings to better address the knowledge and skills needed for school personnel and school psychologists to address diverse student needs
- Legislation and policies to increase and support Restorative Practices in reforming disciplinary procedures
- Provide additional training and funding for trauma-informed care of students in schools
The State of School Psychology in Texas

A Review of the LSSP shortage and Contributing Factors During the 2017-2018 School Year
The NASP recommended ratio is **1 school psychologist for every 500-700 students, not to exceed 1,000 students.**

The ratio is dependent on the needs of the system.

In systems with student populations requiring intensive special needs, the ratio **should be even lower** (NASP; 2010).
Why now?

- Santa Fe Tragedy ➔ Moment of Action

- Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data and staff FTE and salary reports obtained from the Texas Education Agency (TEA; 2017).

- The student enrollment totals are based on district profile data collected on Snapshot Date, which was October 27, 2017.
Limitations of the Data

- Does not include LSSPs that contract with districts
- Does not consider individual job duties (administrative, supervisor, coordinator, etc.)
- Only includes LSSPs classified as LSSPs
- 42.35 psychological associates, not included in this data
During the 2017-18 school year, Texas schools
- Educated 5,399,682 students
- Employed 1,933.84 LSSPs

State Ratio
1: 2,792
4x NASP Upper Limit Recommendation
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<th>Area/Region</th>
<th>Student Enrollment</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
<th>Employed LSSPs</th>
<th>Average Salary</th>
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<td>Region 4- Houston</td>
<td>1: 2,450</td>
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<td>1,212,397</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Region 7-Kilgore</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Region 12- Waco</td>
<td>1: 3,324</td>
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<td>Student Enrollment</td>
<td>Ratio</td>
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<td>Salary</td>
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<td>Salary</td>
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<td>Region 5- Beaumont</td>
<td>83,754</td>
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<td>Region 19- El Paso</td>
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<td>Salary</td>
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<td>169,729</td>
<td>1: 2,897</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Region 17- Lubbock</td>
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<td>18.99</td>
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<td>Region 14- Abilene</td>
<td>58,867</td>
<td>1: 4,205</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>$49,199.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Longitudinal Ratio Data from 2014-2018

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LSSPs Employed</strong></td>
<td>1,699</td>
<td>1,733</td>
<td>1,849</td>
<td>1,934</td>
<td>+235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Students Enrolled</strong></td>
<td>5,232,065</td>
<td>5,299,728</td>
<td>5,359,127</td>
<td>5,399,682</td>
<td>+ 3.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ratio</strong></td>
<td>1: 3,079</td>
<td>1: 3,058</td>
<td>1: 2,898</td>
<td>1: 2,792</td>
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</table>
Number of Professionals Employed in Texas Public Schools During the 2017-2018 School Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Educational Diagnosticians</th>
<th>School Counselors</th>
<th>LSSPs</th>
<th>Social Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># Employed</td>
<td>4,108</td>
<td>12,536</td>
<td>1,934</td>
<td>750</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Salary</td>
<td>$64,683</td>
<td>$63,973</td>
<td>$63,802</td>
<td>$58,449</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
So, hypothetically, even if all 6,042 diagnosticians were LSSPs, we would still need an additional 1,672, for a total of 7,714, to meet the upper limit of the NASP recommendation of 1:700.

It’s not going to happen overnight
TSBEP FY17

- 3,518 individuals held an active license to practice school psychology

- Only 1,933.84 were employed by districts (55%)

- Where are the other 45%?
Deanna Clemens, TEA, completed her own data collection on the number of LSSPs residing in each county in Texas. Data was collected from TSBEP in September 2017. This data is not part of a formal TEA report; however, she was kind enough to share it with us. Thanks, Deanna!
### Number of New Licenses Issued by TSBEP between 2016-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Psychologists</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisionally Licensed Psychologist</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Psychological Associate</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Specialist in School Psychology</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals:</strong></td>
<td>770</td>
<td>708</td>
<td>740</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contributing Factors

- Training Programs
  - 20 in Texas, many are in close proximity
- Trainers and Faculty Shortage
- Recruiting
- Visibility
- Competing Professions and Salaries
- Title
- Limited Access to Students in General Education
- Retention and Burnout
Remediating the shortage issue is not simple
Multi-faceted, multiple issues
What do we need to do?
- Increase school psychology faculty?
- Training programs more feasible/accessible to working professionals?
- Respecialization tracks?
- Partnerships with ESCs, school districts, Train-and-Place in underserved areas?
What we want to explore next:

- # of diags, counselors, LSSPs in each district and compare salaries
- # of SPED students relative to the # of LSSPs and diags,
- # of students with ED and AU relative to the # of LSSPs
- How does the role of LSSPs vary across the regions?
- How many unfilled positions are going unfilled in districts and training programs?
- Respecialization options, partnerships, grants, alternative license to practice while pursuing coursework, recruiting efforts, visibility, other advocates (parents)
Political Climate

- Texas House Republican Caucus wants to pick new speaker
- Speaker Straus criticized as **TOO MODERATE**
- Texas House currently has 95 Republicans and **55 Democrats**

To be Speaker, a State Rep. needs ONLY **76 votes**

- Tex. Republican Caucus will vote by **secret ballot**
- Vote is **non-binding**

- Question: how does this vote change much?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Dates of Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 12</td>
<td>First day to pre-file legislation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 7</td>
<td>First day of session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 7</td>
<td>Comptroller delivers BRE (budget for next 2 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 8</td>
<td>Last day to file bills for session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 27</td>
<td>Last day of session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 16</td>
<td>Last day to veto bills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 26</td>
<td>Bills become effective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>