



Texas Association of School Psychologists
Official 86th Texas Legislative Session Platform

Approved by the

TASP Executive Board

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The following document outlines the legislative platform of the Texas Association of School Psychologists for the 86th Texas Legislative session. The 86th Texas Legislative session provides an important opportunity to significantly address issues related to education and the practice of school psychology.

The TASP legislative platform is to assist elected representatives with the information and perspective they will need during the session. This platform is meant to address issues that may be debated during the legislative session, as well as specific issues that are critical to the goals and objectives of the TASP's vision, mission, and goals.

This legislative platform was developed with these guiding principles:

1. TASP supports legislation that reinforces data-based decision making in effort to continuously improve system practice, procedures, and outcomes.
2. TASP supports legislation that fosters collaborative relations with communities, families, and agencies to ensure students are successful in school, at home, and throughout life.

Additionally, the following have informed this legislative platform:

TASP's Vision Statement:

School psychologists are partners to ensure all children succeed in school, at home, and throughout life.

TASP's Mission Statement:

The Texas Association of School Psychologists is a professional organization that supports and advocates for school psychologists having a positive impact on school systems to improve academic skills, social-emotional functioning, and mental-behavioral health for all students.

TASP's Core Values:

Advocacy: TASP engages in actions and activities that seek to positively influence outcomes directly affecting the lives of the students, families, and schools we serve.

Collaborative Relationships: TASP partners with allied organizations, agencies, and others to develop and achieve shared goals.

Continuous Improvement: TASP sets challenging objectives and measures the effectiveness of organizational processes.

Diversity: TASP embraces individual, cultural, and other contextual differences in our own interactions and as they shape students' development.

Excellence: TASP promotes the highest standards for service delivery and resource deployment.

Integrity: TASP is committed to honesty and to treating others with dignity and respect.

Student-Centered: TASP supports goals and activities focused on the needs of students and their families.

Visionary Leadership: TASP leads with enthusiasm and confidence, while working pragmatically in the present and striving toward an optimistic future.

This document includes positions on issues of significance to school psychologists in Texas. Individuals seeking additional explanation are encouraged to contact the TASP Executive Board members or Ms. Cassandra Hulseley - TASP Government and Public Relations Chair (govtrelations@txasp.org).

TASP PLATFORM ISSUE #1

TASP supports legislation that maintains the independent practice of school psychology and upholds best practices in the delivery of school psychological services.

- TASP supports the Sunset Committee's recommendation for the consolidation of Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists into the Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council (TBHEC);
 - TASP expects that this agency will equitably represent every licensee group within the practice of psychology;
 - TASP expects that the TBHEC would ensure that no one professional group holds power or more influence over that of another group; and
 - TASP seeks to collaborate with the Texas Legislature and other stakeholders in the development and operation of the TBHEC to ensure the informed development and regulation of the practice of psychology within the state of Texas.
- TASP requests that legislators approve a change in title from Licensed Specialist in School Psychology to School Psychologist to better identify and recognize school-based psychological practitioners in Texas.
- TASP requests that legislators codifying the national practice model as identified by the National Association of School Psychologists into the Occupational Code and Education Code of Texas to uphold best practices related to school-based psychological services.
- TASP requests that the legislature require all school districts to identify a School Psychological Services department to address the behavioral and mental health needs of students in the state of Texas.
- TASP supports legislation involving funding, training, and procedures that support the recruitment, retention, and maintenance of school psychologists in Texas schools.
 - TASP requests additional monies for grants/scholarships to train school psychologists.
 - TASP requests for additional monies to be considered for loan forgiveness of school psychologists.
 - TASP supports legislative activities that provide funding and support for the respecialization of closely related professionals to become school psychologists.

TASP 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 screening behavioral/mental health screenings that examine complete mental health.

- TASP believes that the legislature should consider lowering of age consent requirements for students' rights to consent to mental health services.
- 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.

TASP PLATFORM ISSUE #3

TASP supports legislation that promotes best practices for safe and supportive schools.

- TASP supports increasing the psychological and physical safety of students in school, while balancing practices that may be considered “hardening” of schools (e.g., metal detectors, increased arming of school personnel, live shooter drills).
- TASP supports the inclusion of school psychologists in school safety legislation and ensuring evidence-based school safety resources/practices.
- TASP supports codifying the requirements for evidence-based school crisis/threat teams and procedures related to crisis training, mental health first aid training, and crisis response.
- TASP does not support the arming teachers or administrators and believes that only those appropriately trained law enforcement professionals should be allowed to be armed on school campuses.
- TASP supports additional legislation and funding for school to promote anti-bullying policies and practices.
- TASP supports the elimination of corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure in school settings.

TASP 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.

- TASP recognizes the issue of disproportionality of students related to the identification of disabilities and disciplinary referrals and supports resources, funding, and trainings to better address the knowledge and skills needed for school personnel and school psychologists to adequately address the needs of diverse students.
- TASP supports legislation and policies that would increase and support Restorative Practices in reforming disciplinary procedures within Texas schools.
- TASP supports legislation and policies that provide additional training and funding for trauma-informed care of students in Texas schools.