



**Texas Association of School Boards**  
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*Serving Texas Schools Since 1949*

November 4, 2021

Hon. Mayes Middleton  
Texas House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, Texas 78768-2910

Representative Middleton:

Thank you for contacting the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). TASB respectfully offers the following response to your Nov. 2, 2021, letter:

As has been our longstanding tradition in Texas, public school districts and their locally elected school boards stand ready to update district practices and local policies to ensure full compliance with all new education laws set forth during a legislative session.

In fact, here at TASB we help school boards and the districts they serve with this important work through our highly regarded TASB Policy Service and TASB Legal Services. These dedicated professionals work hard to ensure that school districts have the information and resources needed to comply with all state laws, including House Bill (HB) 3979 and Senate Bill (SB) 3.

We see no conflict with this work and the new TASB Statement of Belief adopted by the TASB Delegate Assembly on Sept. 25, 2021. The TASB Delegate Assembly, which includes hundreds of elected school board members from across the state, approved the addition of this new statement by more than a two-thirds vote.

As was eloquently articulated on the floor of the TASB Delegate Assembly, “eradicate systemic racism” was included in the statement to reinforce the critical need for school boards to actively work to remove barriers to student success when they exist in Texas public schools. In the thoughtful discourse on this agenda item, it was clear that the inclusion of this language was focused on making Texas public schools stronger through a focus on excellent, equitable outcomes for all students.

Furthermore, in the presentation and discussion of this agenda item, there was absolutely no discussion or mention of any action in relation to this statement that would impede a public school district from fully complying with HB 3979 and SB 3. In fact, the inclusion of “promoting dignity and mutual respect” in the statement complements the language used in these new legislative bills.

As a reminder, public schools — both here in Texas and across the nation — are required by both federal and state educational accountability systems to actively work to close achievement gaps when they exist. These concerted efforts began 20 years ago with the “No Child Left Behind”

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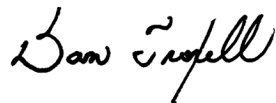
Rep. Middleton – TASB

(NCLB) legislation led by former President George W. Bush, and continue today under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Of course, while closing achievement gaps may require added supports for certain student groups, that doesn't mean that resources should be taken away from other student groups. The goal of excellent, equitable outcomes for all Texas children can be attained if the appropriate supports and resources are provided to districts, schools, and frontline educators. That's the goal.

Lastly, we want to make clear that TASB has no regulatory authority over school districts and does not set the standards for what is taught in classrooms across the state. Rather, we are a private, non-profit membership organization focused on supporting school governance and providing cost-effective services to school districts. Our goal has always been to promote educational excellence for Texas public schoolchildren, and we remain committed to ensuring all students across our great state have the opportunity to grow, learn and achieve so they are college- and career-ready when they graduate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dan Troxell".

Dan Troxell, Ph.D.  
Executive Director