

Texas Legislature Special Session

The Texas Legislature ended the Special Session one day early in a stalemate over property tax reform. The House gaveled out Sine Die Tuesday evening and the Senate followed suite around 10pm. Governor Abbott and Lt. Governor Patrick have stated that property tax reform is one of their top priorities, and some Senators are calling for a second special session to address this issue.

SB 1 requires voter approval when larger local governments raise property taxes. The Senate set the rollback rate at which local governments would be required to hold elections to ratify property tax increases at 4%. The House version set that rate at 6%.

The House substituted their property tax reform bill for SB 1, and sent it back to the Senate where the bill's author refused to concur in the amendments, and requested a conference committee. The House sponsor stated there was no time to appoint conferees due to House rules. Therefore, if property tax reform is to happen during this Special Session, the Senate must accept the House's version of SB 1.

The 30-day Special Session ends Wednesday, August 16, and to date, lawmakers passed and the Governor signed the required "sunset" legislation extending several state agencies, and a bill to address mail-in ballot fraud. Bills regulating do-not-resuscitate orders, abortion reporting requirements and insurance and local annexation also passed and were sent to the governor's desk. Lawmakers also passed a school finance reform bill.

Teacher Pay & Retirement Benefits

Gov. Abbott included a teacher pay raise of \$1,000 on the agenda, with the expectation that school districts would fund the raise from existing budgets. School districts, teacher groups and others strongly opposed this unfunded mandate. The House and Senate approached this issue very differently, with the Senate refusing to appropriate any money from the Rainy Day Fund, and the House willing to do so.

The Senate passed **SB 19** which would transfer \$193 million from the Health and Human Services Commission budget to TEA to fund a bonus program for classroom teachers, and \$212 million from HHSC to the Teacher Retirement System to reduce participant costs.

The House bill, **HB 20** does not include a bonus program, and appropriates \$212 million from the Rainy Day Fund for the Teacher Retirement System.

The Senate did not take up HB 20, so when the House Appropriations Committee considered SB 19, members substituted the language from HB 20. That version of SB 19 went to the House floor but time ran out on passing the bill and returning it to the Senate.

However, funding to reduce costs to participants in the Teacher Retirement System's health care program was included in the final school finance bill, HB 21 which was passed by both the Senate and the House.

School Finance Reform

Initially, the special session agenda item directed legislators to create a commission to study the school finance system. However, Gov. Abbott added immediate school funding reform to the agenda at the beginning of the special session.

The House wanted to put more money into public schools immediately and reform funding formulas. Their main school finance reform bill, **HB 21** would increase the base per-student funding the state gives to school districts, gradually remove an existing financial penalty for school districts smaller than 300 square miles, and create a \$200 million grant program to help school districts that rely on the Additional State Aide for Tax Reduction (ASATR) program that is set to expire. It comes with a \$1.8 billion price tag.

The Senate followed the governor's original agenda item and passed **SB 16** which creates a commission to study the issue. The House passed an amended version of the bill that requires 15 commission members rather than 13, and provides more specific direction on the make-up of the commission. If the Senate accepts those amendments, SB 16 will go to the Governor for signature.

The Senate passed **HB 21** Monday, stripping out \$1 billion, putting \$351 million into public schools to help small rural schools and students with special needs, and giving \$212 million to the Teachers Retirement System's health insurance program to help lower participant's costs. This is funded by deferring payments to health care companies providing Medicaid.

On Tuesday, the House reluctantly agreed to the Senate's version of HB 21, accepting these changes. This bill is on its way to the Governor's desk.

Bathroom Bills

The Senate passed **SB 3** requiring political subdivisions, public school districts and open-enrollment charter schools to require individuals to use multiple-occupancy bathrooms and changing facilities based on their biological sex. The bill also prohibits local ordinances or policies relating to the designation or use of a multiple-occupancy restroom or changing facility. The bill was sent to the House July 27 and was not referred to a committee.

On the House side, two bathroom bills were introduced, and referred to the State Affairs Committee. **HB 46** prohibits political subdivisions, including public school districts, from adopting an ordinance regulating access to multiple-occupancy restrooms or changing facilities. **HB 50** specifically prohibits school boards from adopting a policy regulating access to bathrooms.

Rep. Byron Cook, chairman of the State Affairs Committee stated he did not see a reason to hold hearings on these bills, so that these bills are dead, once again.

Union Dues Deduction

SB 7, passed by the Senate, would prohibit public employees who are in labor unions or other associations from having their dues automatically withdrawn from their pay checks. It applies to public school teachers, corrections officers and other government employees but exempts firefighters, police officers, EMS and charitable organizations.

The bill was sent to the House July 27 and has not been referred to a committee. **HB 156** on this same issue was introduced and referred to the House State Affairs committee.

Depending on what happens with the property tax reform bill, Governor Abbott could decide to call another special session to address those key issues that were not passed during this special session. As of this publication, he has not issued any statements indicating what he might do.

Leadership Programs

2017 TALL Texans

The 24th annual Texas Accelerated Library Leaders seminar, better known as the TALL Texans Leadership Development Institute, was held at the Montserrat Retreat Center July 16-20. This program brings 24 competitively-selected members of the Texas library community together for four days of intensive leadership training, covering topics like strategic planning, risk-taking, power and influence, diversity and inclusion, and a wide variety of communication skills from coaching to community advocacy. Participants are drawn from all types of libraries. Nationally-known consultant Maureen Sullivan and her husband Jack Siggins, retired librarian from George Washington University, are the primary instructors, along with six mentors drawn from the top levels of library administration. 2017 mentors were Roosevelt Weeks, Houston Public Library; Jennifer LaBoon, Fort Worth ISD; April Kessler, Bizlogie, Inc.; Diane Graves, Trinity University; Nicole Cruz, Sharyland ISD; and Janet Bickel-Burton, Texas Woman's University.

TALL Texans Class of 2017

Katherine Adelberg, Library Development, Texas State Library
Yolanda Botello, Youth Services, Mansfield Public Library
Rory Elliott, Collections Merchandising, Texas State University
Jacob Galindo, Library Instruction, University of Texas El Paso
Allyssa Guzman, Digital Scholarship, University of Texas at Austin
Chad Hetterley, Technical Services, Desoto Public Library
Claire Hogg, Central High School, San Angelo ISD
Janna Hوجلund, Octavia Fields Branch, Harris County Public Library
Jennifer Jimenez, Reference, Del Mar College
Linda Kay, Ridgeview Middle School, Round Rock ISD
Bethni King, Children's Services, Georgetown Public Library
Laura Magana, Richland High School, Birdville ISD
Maurine Nichols, Technical Services, University of Texas Medical Branch
Elizabeth Ponder, Instruction & Information Services, East Texas Baptist University
Sara Pope, Children's Services, Houston Public Library
Danny Ramos, Padron Elementary School, Austin ISD
Alexia Riggs, Dean of Libraries, Howard Payne University
Lorraine Roussin, Judson High School, Judson ISD
Mellissa Sanchez, Highlands Elementary School, Fort Bend ISD
Joanna Stone, Parr Library, Plano Public Libraries
Valerie Tagoe, Wilson High School, Dallas ISD
Theresa Tongio Holden, Director, Palestine Public Library
Beth Vizzini, Circulation, West Texas A&M University
Hillary Volkmann, Black Elementary School, Aldine ISD

Congratulations to this year's TALL Texans!

The TLA TALL Texans Leadership Development Institute is sponsored in part by DEMCO and Midwest Tape.

Executive Leadership Immersion

The Texas Library Association hosted the Executive Leadership Immersion, led by Dr. Julie Todaro, on July 30-August 3 at the Omni Barton Creek Resort. This program enhances the particular skill sets needed by top library directors and administrators in all types of institutions.

The 2017 seminar focused on innovation, risk-taking, and persuasion, as well as development of real-world projects from the participants' libraries. A dozen veteran leaders from academic, public, and school libraries addressed the class on topics ranging from staff realignment and materials reorganization, to advocacy and culture change.

This year's participants were:

Ian Barba	Texas Tech University
Sherra Bowers	Texas Library Association
Suzanne Byke	University of Texas at Arlington
Ruth Chiego	San Antonio Public Library
Laurie Covington	Houston Public Library
Jenny Flores	Lubbock ISD, Estacado High School
Julie Fuller	Lubbock ISD, Hardwick Elementary and Bowie Elementary
Jose Singleterry	Pharr Memorial Library
Angelia Hall Johnson	San Antonio ISD
Djuina Hammett	Houston Public Library
Elizabeth Hensley	Aldine ISD, Aldine Education Center
Shelley Holley	Frisco Public Library
Megan Hopkins	Fort Bend County Libraries, Sienna Branch Library
Kate Horan	McAllen Public Library
Elizabeth Howard	Texas Wesleyan University
Kimberly L. Johnson	Texas Woman's University
Susan Kaufman	Houston Public Library, Clayton Library Center
Carolyn Manning	Wimberley Village Library
Brenda McClurkin	University of Texas at Arlington
Lori Meek	Magnolia ISD, Willie E Williams Elementary
Katie Musick Peery	University of Texas at Arlington
Mark Pumphrey	El Paso Public Library
Kevin Schuck	University of Texas at Arlington
Teresa Stover	Texas A&M University-Texarkana
Jeff Taylor	Fort Bend County Libraries, Sugar Land Branch
Kelly Visnak	University of Texas at Arlington

The TLA Executive Leadership Immersion is sponsored in part by DEMCO, Learning Express, and the Tocker Foundation.

Leadership Launchpad: A New Program for Beginning Librarians

The Texas Library Association will roll out the newest addition to library leadership training in Texas - Leadership Launchpad. One day seminars are being planned around the dates of TLA District meetings. These events, aimed at new librarians with less than 5 years of professional experience, will cover introductory topics such as types of leadership, assessing personal leadership style, crucial

communication skills, influencing, and planning for personal leadership development. Dates and locations to be announced soon!

TLA NEWS

2018 TLA Annual Conference Shifts to New Dates

The TLA Executive Board has approved a change in the 2018 Annual Conference dates to April 3-6 in Dallas. This change was necessitated by a shift in STAAR testing dates as recently announced by the Texas Education Agency.

After learning that the April 10-13 dates were in direct conflict with the new testing dates, TLA staff immediately contacted the City of Dallas to determine if there was any flexibility in the schedule. We were pleased to learn on Friday, August 6 that another group agreed to exchange dates with TLA.

Changing conference dates is a very complex undertaking. Contracts for the convention center and for TLA's 11 hotels will be amended in the next few weeks. Existing exhibit booth contracts, speaker contracts, etc. will subsequently be revised.

Please rest assured that if you have already made your hotel reservations your rooms will be secured for the April 3-6 dates. OnPeak, our housing vendor, will be reaching out mid-September with information regarding adjusting and re-confirming all reservations that have already been made. For anyone looking to make a new hotel reservation please wait for the housing website to re-open mid-September. If you have any questions or concerns please reach out to txla@onpeak.com. Please add onPeak as well as TLA to your safe sender list (whitelist) to ensure that you receive future emails.

TLA conference dates are set 10 years in advance of an annual conference, and TLA makes every effort to avoid the STAAR testing schedule. TLA has been in contact with the TEA Student Assessment Division and the Commissioner of Education to confirm that the new dates are in fact the final dates, and to urge consistency in scheduling future test dates.

Moving the 2018 TLA conference date is preferable to being in conflict with STAAR which would make it difficult for many school librarians to take advantage of the professional development opportunities offered at a TLA conference.

SXSW PanelPicker Deadline: Friday, August 25

Texas Library Association and Texas State Library and Archives Commission are teaming up to bring a Powered Libraries panel to SXSW, [The Power of Libraries, Partnership, and Place](#). The panel will discuss how libraries have strategically poised themselves by investing in essential services, such as literacy programs, communal meeting spaces, and technology "petting zoos" that provide opportunities to explore 3-D printers, among other tools. The program will also delve into how libraries are preparing for the future and how others can emulate the adaptive nature of libraries.

[Cast your vote](#), leave a comment, and show your support before voting closes on Friday, August 25 (11:59 PM CT)!

Powered Libraries Video Premiere Schedule

Starting August 9th, tune into poweredlibraries.org weekly as Powered Libraries (a TLA initiative) [unveils](#) a new video each Wednesday leading up to Power Up at Your Library Week, October 1-7. That's eight library video spotlights over the span of eight weeks. In each video, viewers will see creative programming in action, hear dedicated librarians share vital stories, and learn about how Texas libraries are forming powerful partnerships and adopting innovative practices.

The video premiere schedule:

- August 9 | [Midland County Public Libraries](#)
- August 16 | [The University of Texas at El Paso Library](#) (C. L. Sonnichsen Special Collections)
- August 23 | Austin ISD Buford the Book Bus
- August 30 | Tom Green County Library System - Stephens Central Library STEAM Central
- September 6 | El Paso Public Library Sow. Grow. RepEat. Seed Library
- September 13 | McDonald Observatory Library
- September 20 | Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Tribal Empowerment Library
- September 27 | Marathon Public Library

Update: Federal Library Funding

On July 19, the U.S. House Appropriations Committee passed an FY2018 spending bill that fully funds the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), and the Innovative Approaches to Literacy program (IAL) at current levels. The bill provides a \$20 million increase for the National Library of Medicine (NLM).

- \$231 million for IMLS, including LSTA
- \$27 million for IAL
- \$413.9 million for NLM

The full House will consider the bill when members of Congress return from their summer recess after Labor Day. The Senate is expected to begin deliberations on a spending bill after recess.

The August recess is a perfect time to engage with local elected officials, and share the interesting and exciting programs your library provides. Invite them to a library program or event. Visit them in their district offices and share information on the impact you have on your community. Those local connections and stories are essential to our continued success! Check out our online [Advocacy Primer](#) for ideas and feel free to contact Wendy Woodland, wendyw@txla.org with any questions.

Thank You to Our Donors!

The Texas Library Association appreciates the support and donations from individuals and foundations which help advance the association's mission to promote, support, and improve library services in Texas.

CONTRIBUTIONS | July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

Luminary Society (\$50,000+)

- Charles and Dana Rooks for a planned giving bequest

Champion (\$2,000 - \$49,000)

- Janis Roberson: Wayne Williams Fund, Pat Smith Endowment for Excellence
- Tocker Foundation: Membership, Executive Leadership Immersion, Annual Conference

Pillar (\$1,000-\$1,999)

- Carol Bartz: Pat Smith Endowment for Excellence, TLA Disaster Relief Fund for Texas, Executive Leadership Immersion
- Sherilyn and David Bird Family Charitable Fund: Pat Smith Endowment for Excellence
- Exxon-Mobile Foundation-Matching Gift Programs: Pat Smith Endowment for Innovation, TLA Disaster Relief Fund for Texas

Partner (\$750-\$999)

Guardian (\$500-\$749)

Promoter (\$250-\$499)

- Danielle Plumer: Pat Smith Endowment for Excellence
- The RK Culinary Group: Pat Smith Endowment for Excellence

Mentor (\$100-\$249)

- Sharon Amastae: TLA Disaster Relief Fund for Texas
- Steven Brown: Pat Smith Endowment Fund for Innovation
- Suzanne Byron: New Member Round Table Endowment Fund
- Maribel Castro: Pat Smith Endowment Fund for Innovation
- Joe Dahlstrom: Pat Smith Endowment Fund for Innovation
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- Jo Guidice: Pat Smith Endowment Fund for Innovation
- Patrick Heath: Pat Smith Endowment Fund for Innovation
- Jennifer LaBoon: Pat Smith Endowment Fund for Innovation
- Craig and Monika Llorens: Excellence Fund for Libraries and Learning
- Michael Maraldo: Acquisitions and Collection Development Round Table
- Patrick Margaret: Pat Smith Endowment Fund for Innovation
- Dale McNeill: Pat Smith Endowment Fund for Innovation, Acquisitions and Collection Development Round Table, District 06, Electronic Resources & Serials Management Round Table, Gay, Lesbian, Bi-Sexual, Transgender Round Table, Intergalactic Dance Club Round Table, Interlibrary Loan and Resource Sharing Round Table, Small Community Libraries Round Table
- Kelly Melody: Pat Smith Endowment Fund for Innovation
- Michael Mendez: Tall Texans Institute
- Catherine Park: Elizabeth Crabb Fund
- Vera Reynolds: Excellence Fund for Libraries and Learning
- Gleniece Robinson: Pat Smith Endowment Fund for Innovation
- Dana Rooks: Pat Smith Endowment Fund for Innovation
- Patricia Smith: Pat Smith Endowment Fund for Innovation
- Herman Totten: Pat Smith Endowment Fund for Innovation

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- Sandra Waltmon: Pat Smith Endowment Fund for Innovation
- Roosevelt Weeks: Pat Smith Endowment Fund for Innovation

Patron (\$50-\$99)

- Deneitra Hutchinson: Children's Round Table
- Phi Tran: Digital Libraries Round Table

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Executive Director Search Update

The TLA Search Committee met on August 7-8 to conduct Skype interviews with eight candidates for Executive Director. After the interviews, the search committee identified four candidates as finalists. The finalists will be interviewed in Austin on August 24. In addition to the interviews, they will tour the TLA headquarters and meet with staff. A selection recommendation is anticipated to be made to the Executive Board by the end of the month.

TLA President and Search Committee Chair Ling Hwey Jeng praised the diverse candidate pool as outstanding and exciting, and thanked members, and committee and unit chairs who submitted interview questions. Sharon Amastae, Yvonne Chandler, Jennifer LaBoon, Susan Mann, Gloria Meraz, and Dana Rooks served as members of the search committee.

TLA Coloring Book Fundraiser a Success

Thank you to everyone that purchased a TLA Coloring Book this year! Almost \$3,000 was raised to benefit the TLA Disaster Relief Fund. Curated by Texas librarians, the one-of-a-kind books feature over 60 images donated by nationally-recognized illustrators and Texas artists.

We are offering the remaining coloring books for half price (\$10 for a set of two books) for a limited time. Visit the [TLA Store](#) and stock up – these make wonderful and unique gifts! If there are any books remaining, we will donate any remaining books to area retirement homes, assisted living centers, senior centers, and hospitals.

Fall 2017 District Meetings

The following is information available as of August 7.

District 1	September 23 Abilene Public Library
District 2	September 26
District 3	October 6 Austin Community College, Eastview Campus 8am – 4pm
District 4	November 3 University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Edinburg Campus
District 5	October 14 Texarkana College, Truman Arnold Center 9am – 3pm
District 6	October 21 El Paso Community College, Northwest Campus Library <i>Sponsored by the Border Regional Library Association (BRLA), TLA District 6 and REFORMA-El Paso Chapter</i>

District 7	September 29 Texas Woman's University Blagg-Huey Library Registration opens at 9am
District 8	October 14 University of Houston, M.D. Anderson Library 9am – 2pm
District 9	October 28 Lubbock
District 10	October 14 Harlan High School, San Antonio

Corporate Members

We thank our [corporate members](#) for their investment in TLA and Texas libraries. See some [examples](#) of initiatives facilitated through our corporate partnerships that are making a large contribution to Texas libraries.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Continuing Education Corner

All webinars will be recorded. A link to the recording will be sent to all registrants (i.e. you may want to register even if you know you cannot attend the live event). All webinars will carry Continuing Education credit; some also have CE credit available for viewing the recording. See individual descriptions for details.

September 28 | 1pm (Free webinar)

Financial Literacy for Students and Young Consumers Get an introduction to Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Office of Students and Young Consumers. They provide free materials and content for programs to help young people to understand money. [REGISTER](#)

LIBRARY NEWS

Texas Gov. Abbott Officially Declares October 1-7, Power Up at Your Library Week

On July 21, Texas Governor Greg Abbott signed a certificate officially declaring October 1-7, 2017 as Power Up at Your Library Week (Power Up Week). As a part of Power Up Week all types of libraries statewide are invited to showcase innovation, creative programming, and dynamic leadership by organizing events geared to promote technology, innovation, creativity, and literacy in their respective communities.

A dedicated [Ideas Shared](#) webpage is available for event planning, and the [2017 Power Up Toolkit](#) offers programming ideas encouraging libraries to partner with dignitaries, stakeholders, community members, staff, students, and networks to promote the power of libraries. Once an event has been established during October 1-7, librarians are encouraged to officially [register](#) and complete a short form about their Power Up Week events. For more information, visit www.poweredlibraries.org.

Draft ESSA State Plan Available for Public Comment

On July 31, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) released the draft Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) [consolidated state plan](#) for Texas for public comment. The comment period runs through Tuesday, August 29, 2017, and comments can be submitted via email at essa@tea.texas.gov. [Download](#) the draft ESSA consolidated state plan for Texas

Highlights of the draft plan:

- Alignment of state and federal policies – specifically in the areas of accountability and school improvement.
- Maximizing flexibility afforded Texas school districts to provide services needed for students.
- Strengthening the state’s commitment and support for our most vulnerable populations (including migrant, foster care, homeless, and economically disadvantaged students).
- Reinforcing the state’s commitment to the 60x30 plan (developed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board) by aligning long-term academic goals to having 60 percent of students prepared to earn a certificate or degree by the year 2030.

TEA will submit the state plan to the U.S. Department of Education for final approval in September. For more information about ESSA implementation in Texas, visit the [TEA ESSA webpage](#).

Members of the Texas Association of School Librarians (TASL)- TLA Legislative Committee Joint Task Force on ESSA are reviewing the draft state plan to provide input on where and how effective school library programs can support the state's goals and objectives. If you have any questions, please contact Wendy Woodland, TLA director of communications, via [email](#) or call 512.328.1518.

Public Libraries Apply for Media Literacy @ Your Library Pilot Program

The American Library Association (ALA), in collaboration with the Center for News Literacy at Stony Brook University, invites public libraries to apply for [Media Literacy @ Your Library](#), a pilot program that will train library workers to help their adult patrons become better news consumers.

In this six-month learning and prototyping project, ALA and the Center for News Literacy will work with teams from five public libraries to adapt existing media literacy training materials to serve the needs of public librarians and the communities they serve.

Read the [guidelines](#) for Media Literacy @ Your Library or [apply online](#). Applications must be received by September 11, 2017.

Austin’s New Central Library Grand Opening Scheduled

The grand opening for the new 200,000 square foot Central Library is schedule for October 28. The new space includes a rooftop garden, cooking demonstration area, special events center, reading porches, and a gallery space featuring local and national artists. The library offers flexible and blended spaces, state-of-the-art technologies and collections displayed to encourage discovery.

NAMES IN THE NEWS

- **Michelle Cooper**, library media specialist at White Oak Middle School, was one of three *Tech & Learning* Leaders of the Year.
- **Karin Gerstenhaber** has been promoted to associate director of the Tocker Foundation.
- **Irena Klaic** is the new head librarian at Austin Community College's Pinnacle Campus.
- **Dionne Mack** was promoted to El Paso Assistant City Manager. **Mark Pumphrey** is the acting El Paso Public Library Director.
- **Jennifer Peters** will be the new Director of Library Development at the Texas State Library and Archives Commission when **Deborah Littrell** retires in August.
- **Manya Shorr** will become the director of the Fort Worth Public Library September 5. She was previously director of public service for the District of Columbia Public Library.
- **Roosevelt Weeks** has been named Director of Austin Public Library beginning September 11. He has been deputy director of administration at the Houston Public Library.

Deceased

- **Virginia Louise Howle** of Mineola, TX passed away in July.
- **Donna MacKinney** passed away in June.
- **Madge Weatherby** passed away in June.