

EYES ON THE BOARD



A Union of Professionals

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STATE AND SCHOOL BOARD UPDATE

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STATE BOARD STILL DELIBERATING ON GRADUATION STANDARDS

Members of the State Board of Education are expected to decide on the final shape of proposed graduation standards by the time they adjourn on Friday, January 31, but debate continues in the meantime. The key issue of the role of Algebra II remains unresolved. On the one hand, SBOE members, guided by legislative intent, do not want to make Algebra II a requirement for graduation. On the other hand, the legislature and SBOE have left Algebra II in place as a gauge of college readiness and as a hurdle for automatic college admission of students who graduate in the top 10 percent of their

class. Given this continuing role of Algebra II as a gateway course for college, Texas AFT and civil-rights organizations have testified, the state must take responsibility for ensuring equitable access to the qualified teachers and the resources needed for all students to have a fair shot at taking and passing Algebra II.

The notion that Algebra II deserves to be a continuing criterion of college readiness or a gateway course was strongly challenged in testimony by Dr. Uri Treisman, a highly respected math educator from the University of Texas at Austin. Treisman testified that neither Algebra II in high school nor the standard college course in algebra is

really necessary for post-secondary or career success for the vast majority of students. Just one out of 100 students ever goes beyond that college course in algebra, he asserted, and it would be better to emphasize skills such as statistical analysis in a college-prep math course that would help prepare students for what they need on most career paths. Treisman stressed that educators at all levels should work with business and industry representatives to decide on the content of suitable college-prep courses. He also echoed a key point made in Texas AFT's testimony, urging SBOE members to plan to revisit soon whatever new standards they adopt this week, because we are all still feeling our way in the transition to new graduation standards.



See more at: <http://texasaftblog.com/hotline/?p=3526#sthash.M4kAEIhj.dpuf>

MORE INFORMATION

ROBERT G. PORTER SCHOLARSHIP

As part of the Robert G. Porter Scholars Program, AFT offers \$8,000 scholarships to four high-achieving high school seniors who are the dependents of AFT members. And 10 grants of \$1,000 each are available to AFT members from all divisions who seek to implement ideas for their union about the role union members can play in collectively reclaiming the promise of a more just society for all. **Applications are now available online at: <http://www.aft.org/benefits/scholarships/>**

This year's winners will be announced by June 30 and will be recognized at the AFT convention, July 11-14, in Los Angeles. **The deadline for submitting the 2014 application to AFT is March 31.**

MCALLEN AFT LOCAL SCHOLARSHIPS

There are four (4) scholarships.

Two (2) are for members who want to go back to school.

The other two (2) are for graduating seniors--class

of 2014. These are Due April 15, 2014

MCALLEN ISD REGULAR BOARD MEETING JANUARY 27, 2014

All Board members were in attendance.

Many items were approved at the last meeting.

There were two items pulled from the last agenda.

The Renewal and Revision of Expenditures of Previous Board Agenda for I Instructional supplies, Furnishings, Equipment, Materials and Miscellaneous Items was approved 7-0.

The December Budget Amendment for Fiscal Year July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014 was approved 7-0.

The next school board meeting is February 10, 2014.

Many awards were given. Those honored were Elementary Science Fair District Winners and a Proclamation Regarding National School Counselor Week.

MCALLEN ISD REGULAR BOARD MEETING, JANUARY 13, 2014

All MISD Board members were present.

The new Perez Elementary School Assistant Principal is Carla Walk. The new Secondary Social Studies Coordinator is Clarissa Abbott.

School District received \$15,000+ from the 2013 American Electric Program (AEP) Texas SCORE Program--saving energy.

The approval of Halff Associates, Inc. for Design Services for the Veterans Memorial Stadium Project and Authorization to Negotiate an Agreement was pulled from the agenda.

GENERAL INFORMATION

We called our attorney, Martha Owen, on January 20, 2014 regarding our step case against MISD. The judge hearing our case in Travis County (Austin) on January 9, 2014 had taken our case under advisement. That means still no decision at this time.

