



# Texas Association of Community Schools

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TACS Zoom Meeting Summary  
Meeting with TACS and Sara Leon & Associates  
Friday, September 25, 2020  
11:00 AM

## **Commissioner Call 9-24-2020**

There will be no Commissioner call next week due to the TASA/TASB conference, therefore TACS will also not hold our call. However, if there is any new information after his speech at TASA/TASB next week, we'll send something out promptly to keep you all updated.

We attend the Region 15 RAC meetings each Friday as well and there was a lot of discussion about remote learning today. Crystal had a long talk with one of our members about how challenging this year has been so far and how tired staff are trying to work with kids remotely and in person, especially in small districts. Some schools have started to move away from the remote learning option (unless quarantined) and into an on-campus only learning environment. Today we will be addressing some of the updated questions and answers to the asynchronous plans.

During the Q&A of his talk yesterday, he did specifically address districts that want to completely do away with remote learning; the Commissioner did say that remote learning has never been mandatory. He again reminded districts that the student is free to go pursue remote learning at another district and your ADA will be affected. It's a good idea to submit your asynchronous plan in case you have to close due to a COVID case or public health order; that way, you won't lose your minutes and your funding. You will want to follow the asynchronous rubric they've provided and we'd recommend working with TEA staff when designing your plan since the FAQs online can be confusing. Visit the [TEA Asynchronous and Synchronous webpage](#) for more information.

The commissioner then talked more about Operation Connectivity and the bulk orders. Currently 100% of iPads have shipped, 116,000 Chromebooks are shipping out, and all hotspots will be delivered by next week. Dell products are delivering by the end of October. There will be a webinar for those who participated in the bulk order program on September 29<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM. Phase 2 of Operation Connectivity will be about fixed internet solutions at a low cost.

Regarding the FCC 2022 increased bandwidth (E-rate specific): there are 984 districts that are Category 1 districts. If you are one of those districts, you can amend your application through mid-October.

## **Changes to the Waivers, Finance, and Grants Card**

Only 130 schools have completed the application for CRF money being handled by TDEM. You can learn more about those funds at [Texas Department of Emergency Management \(TDEM\) Coronavirus Relief Fund \(CRF\) FAQ](#).

There have been updates to the [SY 20-21 Attendance and Enrollment FAQ](#).

**Question 6:** If students are allowed on campus but are still engaging in remote instruction with the teacher of record without a qualified teacher or aide present in the classroom who is assigned to support the students, does this count as on-campus attendance?

No. In order to count as on-campus attendance, students must receive instructional support from staff who have the capacity and expertise to provide academic support specific to the student's grade level and content area. If students are on-campus and engaging in remote instruction with no on-campus instructional support specific to their grade level and content areas, then that would be considered remote instruction and would need to follow all remote instruction requirements, including marking the students as RA-Present or RS-Present for funding purposes.

**Question 7:** Can I establish a phased return to on-campus instruction to ensure my public health procedures are fully up and running?

If a school system believes it is best for the health and safety of students and staff to continue to restrict access to on-campus instruction beyond the first four weeks of their instructional calendar, they must submit a board approved waiver request to TEA to access the second four-week transition window. The board must take action to authorize this waiver by specific vote and cannot otherwise delegate the waiver application to the superintendent. The waiver application must include an indication as to the local public health conditions that the LEA believes would warrant a faster end to the transition period.

During this transition period, LEAs are still required to allow all students to access on campus instruction who come from households without internet access or appropriate remote learning devices. In the event a board extends the initial four-week transition, at least some on campus instruction must be provided each day during the extended transition period. All parents who want on campus instruction must be provided that on campus attendance for their students at the immediate conclusion of the transition period (as opposed to the end of the first grading period, when parents otherwise choose remote instruction). The procedures used by the LEA to limit access to on campus attendance during this period should be clearly communicated to families in advance. (This answer is pretty detailed in the guidance – see pages 7 and 8 for the full answer).

**Question 11:** How will LEAs take attendance for students who are receiving instruction at home?

The instructional method will dictate how you take attendance. If the remote synchronous instructional method is utilized, then the LEA will use an official attendance time documented in the teacher's daily schedule, and the teacher will take attendance from students in virtual attendance to mark students as remote synchronous present or absent.

If the remote asynchronous instructional method is utilized, students would be marked remote asynchronous present or absent based on whether the student was engaged through one of the approved asynchronous engagement methods on that day. The entry of this attendance into local student information systems does not need to occur daily and typically would not happen the same day, as the information as to whether engagement occurred might not be available until the following day.

**Question 24:** How are high school teachers supposed to track daily student engagement as required for asynchronous instruction when they have 150+ students every day?

Student engagement must be tracked for two different purposes, funding and course credit. Tracking ADA requires one measure of student engagement per day, not one measure of student engagement per day per course. In order for students taking high school credit courses to be awarded course credit, a district will need to be able to determine that the student was in attendance for at least 90% of the days each course is offered. Determination that a student has met the minimum attendance for course credit requirement is made locally and engagement for this purpose does not need to be recorded daily.

**Question 25:** Are teachers required to post remote asynchronous attendance each day or can campus clerks assist in posting attendance for students who engage through the remote asynchronous instruction method?

LEAs can develop a process for recording asynchronous attendance that lessens the load of asynchronous attendance-taking on teachers as much as possible. This can be done by allowing campus clerks to post remote asynchronous attendance after reviewing the asynchronous engagement data. There is no requirement that remote asynchronous attendance must be posted in the SIS on the same day the engagement occurs. LEA's are free to develop policies and procedures that work best on their campuses.

### **Academics Card**

TEA has updated some dates on the [SY 20-21 College Prep Assessments: SAT, ACT, TSIA, AP/IB](#) guidance.

### **Texas Educators Card**

TEA has added the [SY 20-21 Certification Assignment Flexibility Guidance](#) for districts who may be dealing with possible scenarios in which teachers need temporary permits or certification waivers with charts showing which avenues would work best in your situation.

### **General Support Card**

Only one question was added to the [SY 20-21 Discipline Guidance](#).

**Question 9:** What behavior location code should our LEA report for a discipline incident involving a student in a remote learning environment such as Zoom?

Use behavior location code '03' (Off Campus, but at a school sponsored or school related activity) when reporting incidents that occur during off-campus remote instruction.

### **Instructional Continuity Card**

[Letter of Intent submissions up through 9/23/20](#) have been posted.

### **Public Health Orders Card**

They've added a new document called the [DSHS Texas Public Schools Data Display FAQ](#). This brief document gives you more info on the COVID case reporting data.

There was just one minor change in the [SY 20-21 Public Health Guidance](#) to correct a place where TEA forgot to change "test confirmed" to "lab-confirmed" results.

TEA has added just one question to the [SY 2020-2021 COVID-19 Public School Case Reporting Instructions and FAQ](#).

**Question 13:** We have a staff person that tested positive for COVID-19, but they were only in an administrative building. Do I need to report them on my campus form? No. Only report staff that were present on that campus.

### **Texas Home Learning**

There are a few upcoming webinars:

- THL 3.0: Reading Language Arts Materials Overview (K-8) - September 30 2020: [Register Here](#)
- THL 3.0: Adopting and Getting Started with PhD Science TEKS Edition (K-5) September 29 2020: [Register Here](#)
- THL 3.0: Adopting and Getting Started with Eureka Math TEKS Edition (K-5) October 1 2020: [Register Here](#)

They will also be researching hold harmless data points and what that will look like.

### **To the Administrator Addressed Updates**

The following new Texas Education Agency Correspondence has been posted at the TEA website:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Division</b>
2020-09-24	<a href="#">Federal Funding Formula Adjustments Eligible to Open-Enrollment Charter Schools Experiencing Significant Enrollment Changes</a>	Federal Fiscal Compliance and Reporting
2020-09-24	<a href="#">NEW 2019-2020 Near-final Summary of Finances Report</a>	State Funding
2020-09-24	<a href="#">Industry-Based Certification Reimbursements Update and Information: Deadline Extension</a>	Career, College, and Military Preparation
2020-09-24	<a href="#">Texas Home Learning 3.0: Texas College Bridge-Online College</a>	School Programs

	<a href="#">Preparatory Courses and Student Advising</a>	
2020-09-24	<a href="#">Results Driven Accountability</a>	Special Populations

### **HB 3**

TEA info sent to superintendents on September 11th. Survey information from Qualtrics was included:

As you may know, House Bill 3 (HB 3) created a new spending requirement related to compensation increases for school years when the basic allotment increases, as outlined below.

Texas Education Code, Section 48.051(c):

percent of any year-over-year entitlement gains: 75 percent for compensation increases to classroom teachers, librarians, nurses and counselors, with increased compensation for veteran teachers. 25 percent may be used for other employee categories except administrators

TEA issued a [To the Administrator Addressed \(TAA\) on June 11, 2019](#) as well as an [HB 3 in 30 video](#), explaining how districts should consider making these calculations to meet this requirement. As a part of this requirement, districts required all local education agencies (LEAs) to report to the Legislature on these salary or wage increases as a result of funding from HB 3.

HB 3, Section 5.008.

Not later than December 1, 2020, each school district shall submit to the legislature a report on salary or wage increases provided to district employees under Section 48.051(c), Education Code, as added by this Act, for the 2019-2020 school year. The report must include for each salary or wage increase:

- (1) the employee 's position at the school district; and
- (2) the amount of the increase.

TEA is offering to assist LEAs with this statutory reporting requirement. TEA will then compile the information in this survey and report it to the Legislature on behalf of each LEA that submits this survey.

Should a district choose not to report their compensation increases through this survey, they still must meet the statutory reporting requirements by submitting this information to the Legislature. Feel free to email [HB3info@tea.texas.gov](mailto:HB3info@tea.texas.gov) if you have any questions on this.

### **Important Due Dates:**

**Asynchronous Plan:** **October 1, 2020**

**Beginning of Year Assessments Registration deadline:** October 9, 2020

**Beginning of Year Assessments Administration deadline:** October 16, 2020

### **Other Announcements/Trainings**

“ESC-2 Fall Personnel Services Symposium:” Sara Leon & Associates in conjunction with ESC-2 will present an in-depth, interactive workshop on critical topics of legal concern related to personnel management issues in the COVID-19 era for public school human resources administrators, principals, and superintendents. October 6<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM. Register [here](#).

Additionally, new Title IX requirements went into effect on August 1<sup>st</sup>. All staff must be trained. A question came up about Eduhero training meeting that requirement. The one-hour training can be met by Eduhero; however, the additional

training for administrators and investigators cannot be met by their training at this time. TASB has training and Sara Leon & Associates also have videos of the training that will meet the requirements if you were unable to go through the trainings earlier. A question was asked about the timeline – the new requirements are already in effect, so it is best to get the training done ASAP. Crystal will be researching any firm deadline.

TACS has updated our website. If you now visit our COVID page, we have added some [school resources including sample plans and videos](#).

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*Disclaimer: This information is accurate as of September 25, 2020. It is intended for informational and educational purposes only, and is not a substitute for legal advice.*