

Local Trustee Participates in Leadership Program



(Austin) - Whitney Halsell, trustee from Crowell ISD, joined 33 other school board members from across Texas February 21-23 in Harlingen for the third session of the Leadership TASB (LTASB) class of 2019. Selected by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB), the group is participating in a yearlong education leadership study program. These trustees represent school districts of all sizes, with student populations of 114 to 215,408, and reflect a similar range of property wealth.

Participants who complete all required elements of the study will graduate earning Master Trustee status. This is the highest designation recognized by TASB.

The session theme was Where Leadership Happens Amidst Controversy, and trustees started with a visit to Harlingen CISD. The LTASB class toured Lee Means Fine Arts Academy, Cano Freshman Academy, and Harlingen School of Health Professions.

Also, on February 21, the class visited La Posada Providencia, a shelter for asylum seekers in San Benito. Thursday concluded by hearing Enrique Morones, founder of Border Angels in San Diego, California. On Friday, the day began by hearing a presentation by agents from the US Border Patrol and a tour of a portion of the border fence separating Mexico and the United States.

In the afternoon, LTASB participants conducted interviews of people in the McAllen area hearing how the locals viewed border safety and the impact of immigration in the public schools. In preparation for the session in the Rio Grande Valley, the class prepared asylum seeker bags, which contained personal items for those who have been granted asylum, and are leaving to begin their new life with a sponsor in the United States. More than 80 bags were delivered to Treasure Hills Presbyterian Church in Harlingen where the bags will be distributed as needed. The session concluded on Saturday with team presentations on books selected by the class members.

Other Leadership TASB sessions are scheduled for Tyler, April 11-13, and Fort Worth, June 20-22. Each session has a unique theme that builds on the previous session and features nationally recognized experts in the fields of leadership development and education. Teams also work throughout the year on extended learning assignments between meetings. Created in 1993, Leadership TASB has more than 800 graduates to date. TASB is a voluntary, nonprofit association established in 1949 to serve local Texas school boards.

School board members are the largest group of publicly elected officials in the state. The districts they represent serve more than 5.3 million public school students.