

Another school year is well underway! We have almost completed two months of school and I hope everyone has settled into the new school year with minimum difficulty. The intent of this correspondence is to update you with information from the recent Executive Committee (EC) meeting as well as provide updates on current happenings in our organization.

The Executive Committee met 26-27 September in Dallas at the Hilton Anatole, conference hotel for this coming June. All believe the venue will make for a great conference since most every conference event can be done at the hotel. Exceptions are rodeo, golf, and bowling; these events will be conducted off-site. A conference schedule was developed after careful consideration of the comments received from the Corpus Conference. Additionally, the TASBT president and representatives from the Vendor Advisory Board participated in the planning process. Our conference schedule for next June is shown below.

| Thursday, 25-JUN | | Friday, 26-JUN | | Saturday, 27-JUN | |
|------------------|---|----------------|---|------------------|--|
| AM | Cert Class (10am-5pm) | AM | Rodeo Meetings Rodeo Cert Classes TASBT Classes | AM | Retiree Breakfast TAPT Opening TASBT Classes |
| PM | Cert Classes (2pm-5pm) | PM | Cert Classes TASBT Classes Golf Bowling | PM | Pre-Trade Show 12-2 Trade Show 2-6 Cert Classes (3pm-6pm) Award Banquet (7-?) |
| Sunday, 28-JUN | | Monday, 29-JUN | | Tuesday, 30-JUN | |
| AM | Church Cert Classes TASBT Classes | AM | Cert Classes TAPT Sessions x 3 | AM | Honoree Breakfast TAPT Closing |
| PM | Cert Classes TASBT Classes | PM | Cert Classes TAPT Sessions x 3 Chapter Officers Meeting | PM | |

As you review the conference schedule please note that the EC has worked to include a maximum number of certification class opportunities in support of the Master Official program certification program. The EC has attempted to minimize the conflicts between training opportunities. On Monday, 29 June, there are Certification Classes and Breakout Sessions offered at the same time. The Breakout schedule will be published by 1 March to assist folks in determining which training schedule will be most beneficial for them.

Costs, especially food costs, make up a significant portion of any conference and this coming year will be no different. Just so you understand the magnitude of this issue here some typical costs for a conference hotel: Dinner meal: \$55 to \$65 per plate, Breakfast meal: \$40 to \$45, gallon of coffee: \$85 to \$95. Then, on top of those costs, a 20-25% service fee is added. Also, you cannot bring in your own food—you must use what the conference center provides. Since this year is no different budgeting for these events becomes a balancing act. After a review of past conference food costs it was determined by the EC to

adjust conference registration costs for this coming year to cover more of the meal expenses. Registration costs for members were increased to \$175 and for Rodeo participants to \$150. This Increase in the Rodeo registration fee also brings full conference registration benefits to Rodeo participants.

The CENTEX Chapter hosted a weekend mini-conference the first weekend in October at San Marcos. The leadership presented an exceptional program and we saw an increase in participation by our vendors. One of the presenters at the conference, Michelle Ramm, provided an excellent perspective of actions in a Transportation Department when faced with a terrible crisis. I have asked Michelle to repeat the presentation at our June conference and she has agreed. These sessions offer great opportunities for training and networking. The next session is an offering of certification classes and will be conducted at Frisco ISD on 24-25 January, 2015. The next mini-conference has been scheduled by the Gulf Coast Chapter for February 9, 2015, at League City with TAPT and TASBT certification classes scheduled for 7 and 8 February. There are multiple opportunities throughout the school year for training. Our certification program is continually expanding to incorporate new topics—just another one of the many ways we go about Making Tomorrow a Better Day. Look for the June certification classes to be posted soon. Also, if you are working towards the Master Official certification, please go to our web site and review the work requirements identified in the Certification Handbook that are associated with this certification level; there is much more than just the class requirements.

The list of EC approved Committee Chairs is included with this letter. If you see an area where you would like to serve, contact that chair and offer your services. Some may already have enough help but please check if you are interested.

Upcoming Events

On Monday, 20 October, we will recognize our School Bus Safety Poster winners at a ceremony in the Capital Building. Many thanks to our Poster Committee and our Poster Sponsor, Rush Bus, for making the entire poster event an exciting opportunity for our students.

Our Legislative Committee is working to see if they can get the legislature to reinstate the exemption that bus drivers once held when they were considered for TRS purposes as a “critical shortage” and could return to work as a bus driver one month after retirement without forfeiture of retirement benefits. Without this exception, bus drivers must wait for a full year to return to a full time position without loss of TRS retirement benefits.

Also, our School Bus Funding Committee is developing a document outlining the shortfalls in school bus funding and providing some viable solutions that would improve that funding. The plan is to find a champion(s) to carry the issue and also provide the information to all of our legislators.

A Word to Affiliated Chapters

Make sure you have provided Pam with a list and contact information of your Chapter officers. In exchange for this information she will send your chapter a couple of gift certificates good for TAPT certification classes. Use these as raffle items or however you desire. Also let her know your meeting schedule (dates and locations) for the current year.

Be sure your annual dues are paid. They are due to Pam on October 1st and past due on December 31st each year. The Affiliate Chapter dues are \$1 per member or \$25 if your chapter has less than 25 members.

Take a look around you in your district. Who is that driver or mechanic or supervisor that you could just not do without? We all have folks like that, so please take some time to nominate them for a TAPT employee award this year. Nomination forms and instructions are available on the TAPT web site and the window for nominations is January 1st through April 15th.

Other Comments

A Call for Candidates has been issued. Check out the web site for the listing of positions available this year and then find a place to run for an office. Service on the EC is both rewarding and educational. I challenge you to look at yourself and determine where you can assist our organization and then do it. These are the things that I had in mind when came up with our theme of "Making Tomorrow a Better Day." Our organization is always working towards that goal thanks to members like you and vendors who care passionately about what we do daily for the safety of school children.

In the event everyone has not heard, our organization has a tough announcement to make. Pam has advised the Executive Committee that she wants to "cut back" in her position as the Executive Secretary for our organization. She still wants to lend her expertise to assist the new Executive Secretary. Given that, we are advertising for the position of TAPT Executive Secretary. If interested in the position, go to the link on the TAPT web site to review the job description. If applying, complete the application and attach your letter of interest and your resume. Applications will be accepted through November 30th and interviews are scheduled to be conducted during the January Executive Committee meeting the last weekend in January (in the Dallas area).

Please send any comments you may have to me at joe@tapt.com

TAPT: Making Tomorrow a Better Day



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Enclosure – Committee Chair List