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Fund Members Recognized for Innovation

(AUSTIN) – Winners of the annual Texas Association of School Boards' (TASB) Risk Management Fund Innovation Award recently received \$1,000 each to be used toward their risk management efforts. Fund members recognized include the following independent school districts (ISDs): Boerne, Brady, Falls City, Garrison, Mesquite, Texarkana, and Winters. Also recognized were Education Service Center Region XI in Fort Worth, Galveston College, and Harlingen Consolidated ISD. Representatives were presented with their awards and checks at the Fund Members' Conference April 20 in Austin.

“Established by the TASB Risk Management Fund Board in 2004, this award is a special way of recognizing Fund members who have demonstrated innovation and success in risk management initiatives, products, or programs. Applications are rated on cost effectiveness, originality, transferability for use by other Fund members, and ability to address current needs at the overall member level. Recipients of the Innovation Award set an excellent example of timely, creative, and effective approaches to risk management that we hope other Fund members will emulate,” said Dubravka Romano, TASB associate executive director.

Among winning entries were Boerne's information campaign to reduce a problem of cars running the school bus loading lights; Brady's successful training of district bus drivers to deal with student discipline issues; Falls City's nutrition awareness program that benefitted district employees, students, and the community; and the Garrison Safety Watch and Awareness Team that addressed truancy, underage drinking, and other risky student behaviors.

Other innovative ideas were Mesquite's safety audit tools for school campuses, kitchens, and district buildings; Texarkana's online monthly crisis management plan drills to ensure proper protocols are followed; and the wellness challenge held for six weeks in Winters to encourage improved diet and exercise habits for district employees.

Also honored were the emergency response team organized in Region XI that consists of 10 employees all certified in CPR, first aid, and use of automated electronic defibrillators; a disaster recovery plan implemented with an agreement between Galveston College and Progressive Fire and Flood; and a comprehensive employee wellness program in Harlingen that features seven activities organized by various teams throughout the year.

The TASB Risk Management Fund is the largest and premier provider of risk management coverage in the state of Texas. The Fund provides coverage through its unemployment compensation, workers' compensation, and property/casualty programs. Services range from loss prevention and free member training events to online resources, grant programs, and claim forms. More than 1,100 school districts, education cooperatives, junior colleges, education service centers, and county appraisal districts participate in one or more of the Fund's programs.

TASB is a voluntary nonprofit association established in 1949 to serve local public school districts. School board members are the largest group of publicly elected officials in the state. The districts they represent serve more than 4.6 million public school students.

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