

AUSTIN RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 9, 2026

Theme: GET OUT THE VOTE!

WELCOME—WE ARE SO GLAD YOU ARE HERE!

When you arrive at the gymnasium, enjoy refreshments, reconnect with old friends, and meet new ones. Find a table and take a seat. Today's theme is GET OUT THE VOTE! Each table group is encouraged to create a VOTE pumpkin, and a prize will be awarded later this morning.

9:45 a.m. Meeting called to order	Dr. Marsha Gray
Pledge to the U.S. and Texas flags	Andrea Ramirez
Moment of Inspiration	Bernadine Eaton

Program

Introduction of our Guest Speaker	Joe Ramirez

KAIROS INTERNATIONAL PRISON MINISTRY
Diane DuTeil, Prison Ministry – Lockhart Prison for Women
Diane is a member of ARTA

After the presentation, continue working on your **Get Out to Vote** Project and take breaks as needed.

Recognition of Perfect Attendance for 2025–2026	
Membership Drawing	Lois Mayes

Business Meeting

Minutes from September 11, 2026	Marcia Caldwell
Treasurer's Report, September 2026	Tony Dishner
Membership Committee Report	Terry Morganti-Fisher
Technology Committee Report	Judy Wallace
Legislative Committee Report	Joe Ramirez
Member Benefits	Laura Grayson
ARTA Foundation	Glenda Black Linda Harvey
Vote on Standing Rules Amendments	Marilyn Gregory
AMBA	Jessica Marchi-Andrews
Door Prizes	Catherine van Zanten
Adjourn	Dr. Marsha Gray

LUNCH AT OLIVE GARDEN AT 8833 BURNET ROAD

TRTA Photo Policy: Full text is located in today's meeting packet

Austin Retired Teachers Association
Meeting Highlights, September 11, 2026
In Person at Faith Lutheran Church and on Zoom

Joyce Clendennen, ARTA Historian

ARTA President Dr. Marsha Gray called the meeting to order and asked members to complete a puzzle activity.



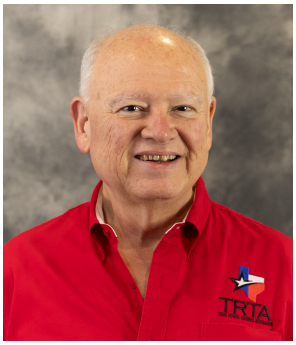
Ellen Bell led the pledges of allegiance to the United States and Texas flags.



TRTA Associate Director Brock Gregg presented "Priorities for the 90th Legislature: Restore TRS to Actuarial Soundness, Deliver Benefits (COLA), and Fund TRS-Care."



Congratulations to TRTA District 13 President Joe Ramirez for serving on TRTA's Board of Directors 2026-2028.



Marilyn Gregory announced proposed amendments to the ARTA Standing Rules.



Kristen Marstaller takes the TRTA theme to heart and adds her piece to the puzzle.



A fantastic new tradition for Austin RTA members is a luncheon after our meetings. This month, 18 members met at El Mercado for a delicious lunch.



Maria Martinez confirmed her voter registration with Harishini Ernest.



Austin Retired Teachers Association
Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting
Friday, September 11, 2026
Via In person/Zoom

The regular monthly meeting of the Austin Retired Teachers Association was held September 11, 2026, in person and via Zoom. In attendance there were 100 in person and 12 present on Zoom for a total of 112 attendees.

GATHERING

Call to Order/Announcements: President Dr. Marsha Gray called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m. She made the general announcements about cell phones, for members to take breaks as needed as there would not be a scheduled break, and reminded members about the lunch gathering following the meeting located at El Mercado.

Pledges of Allegiance to the U.S. and Texas flags: Ellen Bell led the pledges.

Moment of Reflection 9/11: President Dr. Marsha Gray read a reflection, and music was played.

PROGRAM: Dr. Gloria Cisneros Lenoir introduced the speaker. Brock Gregg, Associate Director, TRTA, gave an update about what is happening in TRTA and suggested ways to get people talking about retired teachers. He used the acronym ACE, which stands for Advocacy, Community, and Engagement. TRTA does not endorse candidates for elections, but TRTA's action is to educate candidates about retired teachers' needs and concerns. Gregg stated members need to help chapters grow and to educate the public about the need to keep the *defined benefit* plan in place. He recommended all retired teachers should visit the TRTA website at trta.org to view benefits, check out the *TRTA Asks: What's Next* podcast, an Apple Podcast, and subscribe to *The Inside Line*, TRTA's free e-newsletter.

BUSINESS and COMMITTEE REPORTS

Approval of May 8, 2026, Minutes: The minutes were approved as printed.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Tony Dishner reviewed his report, which will be filed for audit.

Proposed 2026-2027 Budget: Treasurer Tony Dishner asked members to look at the proposed budget in the meeting packet. The membership voted to approve the budget as written.

Audit Report: Anne Hyzak announced the Audit Committee met this summer and audited the ARTA treasurer reports, which they found correct. The foundation's treasurer reports were also audited and were found correct. The motion coming from the committee to approve the budget review audit was approved by member vote.

Membership Report: Terry Morganti-Fisher reported that after a summer of committee members emailing, calling, and sending letters to collect dues, the current number of paid members is 625.

Technology Committee Report: Judy Wallace reported that the GoDaddywebsite was creating issues with what ARTA needs. The domain Wild Apricot would provide more advantages for the organization. Wallace and Morganti-Fisher will begin transferring data in order to begin service with Wild Apricot starting in December.

Legislative Committee Report: Dr. Gloria Cisneros Lenoir urged members to check with *VoteTexas.gov* website to check their registration status, and to vote early and in person.

TRTA Children's Book Project: Past President Norma Jost is now leading the project and asked members to bring book donations to the meetings. She said at least 1,300 books are needed.

Volunteer Services/Community Involvement Committee: President Dr. Marsha Gray announced she will be chairing the committee along with her husband Garland.

Social Committee: Barbara Wilson will be chairing the committee and gave her thanks to the members who brought today's treats and asked members to sign up for next month.

Courtesy and Yearbook Committees: Marilyn Gregory said at least 39 members had joined ARTA since the yearbook deadline, so she plans some form of supplemental information. The first section of the Yearbook is available as an electronic copy on the ARTA website.

Standing Rules Committee: Marilyn Gregory referred to the three proposed amendments to the ARTA Standing Rules as published in the *Newsette*. The election will be at the October meeting.

In Memoriam: Glenda Beck and Linda Harvey thanked the members for foundation contributions and introduced the memorial to ARTA members who passed away since the last meeting or their information was received. A complete list is in the *ARTA Newsette*.

Door Prizes: Catherine van Zanten awarded 15 door prizes.

Adjournment: President Dr. Marsha Gray adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.

_____ _____

Marcia Caldwell, Secretary Marsha Gray, President

AUSTIN RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

TREASURER'S REPORT

September 1–30, 2026

A+ Checking		
Initial Month Balance	$ 19,513.61	
Deposits	$ 1,275.79	
Expenses	$ (3,186.95)	
Ending Balance	$ 17,602.45	$ 17,602.45
Member Savings		
Initial Month Balance	$ 566.49	
Dividend	$ 4.37	
Ending Balance	$ 570.86	$ 570.86
Money Market		
Initial Month Balance	$ 2,176.82	
Income/expenses	$ 0.63	
Ending Balance	$ 2,177.45	$ 2,177.45
Start-Up Certificate	$ 1,000.00	$ 1,000.00
12 month Certificate		
Initial Month Balance	$ 2,436.61	
Dividend	$ 7.79	
Ending Balance	$ 2,444.40	$ 2,444.40
24 Month Certificate		
Initial Month Balance	$ 2,423.74	
Dividend	$ 7.25	
Ending Balance	$ 2,430.99	$ 2,430.99
TOTAL		**$ 26,226.15**

Tony Dishner
Treasurer



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By the time you receive this *ARTA Newsette*, the weather will have cooled, and we will be looking forward to the wonderful celebrations of the fall season.

Before reviewing our past accomplishments and looking to the future, let us discuss the upcoming election. Since the 1930s, public school employees have benefited from a defined benefit retirement plan, the most cost-effective and reliable source of retirement security for retirees. ARTA joins TRTA in supporting this principle. TRTA has set three legislative priorities:

- **Restore TRS to actuarial soundness**. Salary increases in 2025 added $5 billion to TRS's unfunded liabilities, jeopardizing the fund's long-term stability and putting permanent cost-of-living adjustments further out of reach. As inflation erodes purchasing power, Texas public education retirees bear the cost.
- **Provide a meaningful benefit increase.** Texas public education retirees rely on modest, fixed pensions that inflation is steadily eroding. On average, TRS benefits have fallen 30% behind inflation. In the upcoming legislative session, lawmakers should approve a state-funded stipend, cost-of-living adjustment, or 13th check. All options should remain under consideration.
- **Fully fund TRS-Care.** TRTA supports full biennial funding at statutory rates, affordable premiums, and effective use of health care dollars to provide participants with high-quality care.

As you speak with candidates before the 90th Legislature convenes, ask whether they support the defined benefit retirement plan that ensures public school employees receive dependable, lifelong benefits. Postcards will be available for writing and mailing to candidates and legislators.

Membership matters. We need 100,000 members statewide to ensure decision-makers hear our voices. Act now: join or renew your membership at the Austin Retired Teachers Association website at **https://www.austinrta.org/membership**.

We encourage members to volunteer and report their hours to Marsha or Garland Gray. Count the time when you leave home until you return.

At our November meeting, we will recognize veterans. Members may bring a veteran's memorabilia to display. Scrapbooks, flags, uniforms, weapons are among the items we would like to display. We will also have postcards for you to write a note to a veteran at the Veterans Hospital.

THINK POSITIVE…BECOME INVOLVED!

Dr. Marsha Gray
ARTA President, 2026-2028

TRTA PHOTO POLICY

At public TRTA events (such as convention), including at the local, district, and state levels, photos may be taken by TRTA staff and/or volunteers. TRTA may use likenesses of its members in photographs, videos, or other digital or social media ("photo") in its publications, including web-based publications, without payment or other consideration. If a TRTA member wishes not to be photographed, recorded, or appear in TRTA promotional items, the member should avoid any cameras in the area.

This should be in your directory, on every printed agenda, and/or posted at a sign-in table, and/or posted on screen if using technology projection, and/or announced at the beginning of meetings for every TRTA event you host or participate in.

WELCOME, NEW ARTA MEMBERS!

Welcome to the first-time ARTA members who joined after our September 11 regular meeting! Your fellow members are honored that you are now part of our organization. Soon, we will invite you to a special brunch where you will enjoy "yummy" treats, meet our executive board, and, hopefully, find a new "home" as a retired educator.

We have opportunities for you to become involved. Activities are directly involved in ARTA through committee work and activities and far

beyond with service to our community that you might consider joining. Do not hesitate to contact me at **marsha_gray@att.net** if you have questions about ARTA and opportunities for self and others, I will be glad to talk with you about ARTA and the promises it holds for each of us.

- Aida Alanis
- Don Beaver
- Becky Dement
- Bernadine Eaton
- Dawne Young

Dr. Marsha Gray
ARTA President

ARTA MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
Our charge: Recruit, Retain and Regain

• **Recruit**—Do you know someone who has retired from the Austin, Del Valle, Eanes, Lago Vista, Lake Travis, Manor, Leander, or Pflugerville Independent School Districts? As we approach the 2027 legislative session, a strong membership gives TRS retirees a stronger collective voice in advocating for our retirement benefits. **Please invite a retired friend or colleague to join ARTA and share our membership information with them.**

• **Retain**—Thank you to everyone who has already renewed! Fewer than 100 members still need to renew their ARTA membership. If you are one of them, please renew today. Dues may be paid online at https://austinrta.org/membership or at an ARTA meeting.

• **Regain**—We are also reaching out to **at-large TRTA members**—retirees who have paid their state TRTA dues but are not currently paying local ARTA dues. We hope to welcome many of them to ARTA.

Exciting News! Later this fall, we'll be transitioning to a new online platform that will make paying your dues easy peasy. Stay tuned!

Terry Morganti-Fisher & Bonnie Cross
Chair & Co-Chair, Membership Committee

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

A drawing will be held at the October meeting to award a $15 paid ARTA dues for one year. The winner needs to pay TRTA dues. In 2025-2026, 26 members had perfect attendance. Three on the list are past ARTA presidents who already have dues paid by the ARTA treasurer each year. Twenty-three are eligible for the drawing:

Wendy Abel	Mary Alice Hatchett
Glenda Black	Heidi Langan
Wayne Bowen	Gloria Lenoir
Linda Burns	Lois Mayes
Marcia Caldwell	Elizabeth Newell
Craig Campbell	Diane Rogers
Trisha Davis	Terry Tannert
Tony Dishner	Catherine van Zanten
Sandy Doughty	Judy Wallace
Pat Emmert	Patty Young
Marsha Lyons-Gray	Gladys Havel (PP)
Laura Grayson	Norma Jost (PP)
Linda Harvey	Rosemary Morrow (PP)

Lois Mayes
Chair, Identification Committee

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Bonnie Cross, ARTA Membership Commiittee Co-Chair

Bonnie attended Austin College in Sherman, Texas, where she met a group of people during her first-day orientation who became dear friends, including her future husband.

After graduating from Austin College with her master's degree in elementary education, she began teaching fifth grade at Metz Elementary. Bonnie says that her first principal, Jose Flores, was an amazing mentor. Along with a talented Metz team and support from AISD instructional coordinators, she had the opportunity to create and implement a school-based resource center, a Title I reading lab, and student enrichment classes.

In 1986, Bonnie joined Casis Elementary as a second-grade teacher. She later took a part-time role as a math coach at Mathews Elementary. When the grant ended, she joined Bryker Woods Elementary as a fourth-grade math teacher and, during COVID, taught fifth-grade math online before retiring in 2021. Her career came full circle, beginning and ending in fifth grade. Throughout her years with AISD, she treasured the opportunities and experiences that created lasting memories of wonderful students and families, outstanding administrators and counselors, dedicated faculty and staff, and supportive coordinators. She is especially

grateful for the lifelong friendships she formed and continues to enjoy visiting with her school families and friends.

Bonnie currently serves ARTA as Co-Chair of the Membership Committee. ARTA is fortunate to have such a dedicated and caring person in this position.

Catherine van Zanten, ARTA Door Prizes

Catherine supports ARTA members at the door prize table by gathering wonderful prizes they can take home and enjoy. She reminds me of one of my favorite cousins; now I know why. Catherine is from Lafayette, Louisiana. Her parents were educators, musicians, and faculty members at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Her father played horn and taught lower brass, band, and various music education courses. Her mother, a college librarian and pianist, accompanied Catherine's cello-playing sister.

Catherine attended the University of Illinois, LSU, and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. She has bachelor's and master's degrees in violin performance and a teaching certificate from Sam Houston State University.

She continues to offer private violin lessons in her home studio. Her favorite teaching position was with Aldine ISD in Houston, where she and her teaching partner, Dawn, taught school-based Suzuki violin classes to pre-K and kindergarten students. Catherine says Dawn embodied the ideal teaching partner by supporting her and genuinely caring for both her and the children.

Catherine and her husband moved to Austin in 2005 to be near their son and daughter-in-law. She taught orchestra at Murchison Middle School and retired in 2008, believing her family was settled nearby; however, their son, Johan, and his Polish wife later moved to England and then Germany. They stay in frequent contact by phone and visit in person annually. Their daughter, Jeanne, and her husband also moved to Austin before relocating to San Antonio.

Catherine enjoys playing chamber music with friends (I see a program in our future), going to yoga classes, reading detective stories, and working around the yard.

Dr. Marsha Gray
ARTA President

ARTA STANDING RULES COMMITTEE

Members will vote on three amendments to the ARTA Standing Rules at the October regular meeting. They will go into effect immediately upon adoption.

1. Add to Rule 4 (Meetings) the following: <u>4.1.2 A quorum for the transaction of chapter business shall be the members in attendance in person and online provided it is a regularly scheduled meeting or one that has been properly called.</u>

Robert's Rules state that if a quorum is not included in the rules, it will by default be a majority of the entire membership attending the meeting. The amendment will limit the quorum to the number to however many are actually in attendance without regard to the total membership number.

2. Clarify language in Rule 6.2 (Election procedure): Strike ~~A majority of those present shall elect~~. Insert: <u>The election will be decided by a majority of those present and voting.</u>

3. Add to Rule 8.2 (Responsibilities of the Executive Board) the following responsibility: <u>f. be empowered to alter the budget after its adoption by the membership to deal with contingencies that may develop.</u>

This responsibility will give flexibility to amending budget line items during the year. Otherwise, the membership has to vote on any changes in amounts allocated to a specific category.

Jane Garner
Chair, ARTA Standing Rules Committee

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Help ARTA spread the word!

The Communications Committee is seeking free advertising opportunities/placements in local print and digital newspapers and in neighborhood newsletters. We want to reach retired public school personnel from Austin, Del Valle, Eanes, Lago Vista, Lake Travis, Leander, Manor, and Pflugerville Independent School Districts. Many do not realize we represent all these districts. We want to change that perception. With the upcoming elections that can have such an impact on our retirement, we need retirees and the public in general to know about the importance of our organization. Please Help!

If you have a contact or lead for a local publication, please email Judy Wallace at judywallace66@gmail.com.

Judy Wallace
Chair, Communications Committee

TRTA CHILDREN'S BOOK PROJECT

We collected 239 books at the September meeting. Way to go ARTA!!

Last year, ARTA and our partnering schools donated an amazing 1,303 BOOKS!

LET'S BEAT THAT RECORD THIS YEAR!

Please bring your new or gently used children's books to our upcoming ARTA meetings. Every book helps put a book into the hands of a child!

A special **THANK YOU to Barbara Wilson** for collecting our books in October while I'm away. We appreciate you, Barbara!

KEEP THOSE BOOKS COMING!

See you in November!

Norma Jost
TRTA Children's Book Project Coordinator
Bonnie Elliot. Co-Chair

ARTA FOUNDATION

Your ARTA Foundation needs your financial support. Donations are down, and we just have October, November, and December to collect donations totaling $16,800 to fund our fourteen spring 2027 scholars. In memory of their mother, a generous donation from Julia Mellenbruch's son Larry and daughter Mary Ann Meigs will cover the continuing scholarships.

Honor a friend's birthday or donate in their memory. Make your foundation a part of your charitable giving for the year. It is a 501(c)(c3) so it's tax deductible.

Each year several members have funded a complete scholarship, and we name the scholarship for them and ask them to write their scholar a personal letter. Consider doing that!

Thanks in advance for giving a future educator a hand up.

Glenda Black
President, ARTA Foundation

MEMBER BENEFITS COMMITTEE

The primary focus of TRTA chapters across the state is to make members aware of the importance of protecting our current TRS retirement benefits. Currently, members have a DEFINED BENEFIT Plan guaranteed by the Texas Constitution. In the upcoming January 2027 session, the Texas Legislature may consider changing the DEFINED BENEFIT plan to a DEFINED CONTRIBUTION plan. Members need to be aware of the differences in the two plans and be pro-active in protecting our current plan.

A comparison of the plans is as follows:

DEFINED BENEFIT PLAN: (current plan)

- Guaranteed for life
- Managed by TRS investment professionals
- Generates a predictable, steady retirement income
- Sole income for most Texas retirees (most did not pay into Social Security)
- Allows for retirement on a predetermined and predictable formula
- Rewards years of service and stability
- Provides secure disability and survivor benefits based on individual years of service and established formula.
- Is a selling point for recruiting and training educators for the future

DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PLAN: (proposed plan)

- Employees set aside a fixed percentage from each paycheck
- Companies often match the employee contribution
- The employee selects how to invest the contribution to the pension plan, typically via mutual funds
- The employee, not the employer, bears the risk or reward of the market's fluctuation. The TRS pension trust fund is the sixth largest pension fund in the U.S. and pays out one billion dollars in monthly annuity payments. Investments make over 60% of the pension fund. As of August 25, 2025, the fund is not actuarially sound, which means a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) is not possible until the fund is actuarially sound. The last COLA for TRS members who retired before September 1, 2020, came about after voters approved passage of Proposition 9 in the November 2023 election.

TRTA members are asked to contact their Texas legislative representatives and request they protect our DEFINED BENEFIT plan and make the TRS pension fund actuarially sound. **For more benefits information,** check your email inbox for TRS emails containing links to the *TRS NEWS*, a digital magazine of useful information for both retired and active members of TRS. If you are not receiving these emails, log in to your TRS portal and update or enter your email address to ensure you are receiving all the latest updates on benefits and informative events offered by TRS. (**http://www.trs.texas.gov/**)

Laura Grayson & Lucia Facundo
Chair & Co-Chair, Member Benefits Committee

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

At a September 23, 2026, Zoom session, Tim Lee met with all 20 district legislative committee chairs to inform them that TRS annuitants have options for COLAs or 13th checks that could be paid out of funds other than the TRS pension plan. He reinforced that it is essential that TRTA members use the time before the November 3 General Election to get legislative candidates on record regarding their positions on supporting additional benefits for TRS retirees. Candidates can become aware that we vote. Candidates want our support at the ballot box.

After we learn who the winning candidates are in the November 3rd election, Tim said TRTA would begin a campaign to educate legislators on the most immediate legislative priorities important to TRS annuitants. Visibility of retirees will be helpful. We can ask about what being actuarially sound looks like, retirees' eroding purchasing power, and the inflationary impact on the COLA.

Tim relayed that TRTA asked Dr. Ray Perryman, an economist and state demographer, to produce an economic impact report on the Texas Teachers Retirement pension plan. We will hear more about that after the November General Election. The Perryman Report is a comprehensive report that is not threatening but will assist us in making the pension plan solvent and help retirees who are 30% behind on inflation.

We have shared the candidates running in our area in past reports. Some ARTA members and Legislative Committee members have adopted incumbents and candidates to continue relationships with them by meeting and communicating with them. We want incumbents and candidates to be aware of the TRTA Priorities for the 90th Legislative Session beginning in January 2027. We need to know if they support public education and our TRTA priorities. After the election in November, we need to continue communicating and educating legislators about our priorities as they prepare for the session in January and then continue collaborating with them throughout the session.

If anyone wants to help our outreach to candidates, please let Gloria Lenoir or Joe Ramirez know. We would love your help.



Important Dates for the Nov. 3 Election

(https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/important-election-dates.shtml#f4-1-4)

- Monday, Oct. 19, 2026: First day of early voting by personal appearance
- Friday, Oct. 23, 2026: Last day to apply for ballot by mail (received, not postmarked)
- Friday, Oct. 30, 2026: Last day of early voting by personal appearance
- Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2026, (Election Day) at 7:00 p.m. if carrier envelope is not postmarked, or Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2026, (next business day after Election Day) at 5:00 p.m. if carrier envelope is postmarked by 7:00 p.m. at the location of the election on Election Day (unless overseas or military voter deadlines apply)

Gloria Cisneros Lenoir & Joe Ramirez
Chair & Co-Chair, Legislative Committee

DISTRICT 13 HOLDS A SUCCESSFUL FALL CONFERENCE

106 members from all 14 chapters in District 13 gathered at the San Marcos Activity Center on September 15, 2026, for its annual Fall Conference. The conference theme followed TRTA President Frana Patterson's theme "Add Your Piece to the Puzzle."

The conference began with the unveiling of District 13's first-ever district-wide banner that includes the names of all 14 chapters and TRTA's motto, "The Voice for All Public Educators." Earlier this summer, the district officers announced a contest inviting each

chapter to submit a design, with the winning chapter receiving $100 for its general fund. Six chapters submitted entries. Congratulations to New Braunfels RTA for submitting the winning design!

After the Grand Roll Call of the 14 chapters, Austin RTA President Marsha Gray delivered the inspirational moment. This was followed by a presentation from TRS Chief Benefit Officer Barbie Pearson, who discussed the current state of our pension system being actuarially unsound and other potential impacts to our annuity and healthcare systems. She also reminded members that they can access their own TRS documents by creating an online account at the My TRS Member Portal: **https://www.mytrs.texas.gov/MbrSelfService/SSSALogin.action**.

Following a moving video tribute created by Highland Lakes RTA Second Vice-President Jan Robin that honored all District 13 members who passed away during the last membership year, TRTA Secretary/Treasurer Karen Hoelscher spoke in place of Tim Lee and reemphasized the serious issues facing the TRS fund balance and the future possibility of TRS annuitants being changed from a defined benefit retirement plan to a defined contribution plan. She recommended strategies for advocating with state legislative candidates before the November 3 election takes place. She also stressed that we must build our numbers so that our elected officials know that we are not complacent or indifferent when it comes to advocating for what rightfully belongs to TRS retirees.

New District 13 Technology Chair Randy Moczygemba from New Braunfels RTA shared strategies for using enhanced technology to facilitate work within each chapter. He showed how the Heyzine technology tool can be used to create an online District 13 leadership directory: **https://heyzine.com/flip-book/54f92609dc.html#page/1** and created an online photo directory of all members who attended the conference: **https://heyzine.com/flip-book/11147ef89e.html.** Chapters can use the electronic flipbook strategy to create online yearbooks and important leadership manuals for their members.

Members attending were assigned to sit with fellow officers and committee chairs where they shared strategies and made connections throughout the day. Each table group was given a jigsaw puzzle to complete and shared the "One Win-One Ask-One Connection" discussion strategy of communicating the successes and challenges their chapters face. They discovered that each puzzle had missing pieces that were at other tables and then shared this same discussion strategy with people at these other tables who had their missing pieces before taking them back to complete their puzzles.

The afternoon business meeting focused on growing membership numbers in each chapter, addressing the TRTA Legislative Priorities for the 90th legislative session, and using retirement education committees to collaborate with local school districts to support both students and teachers in each district. Members donated over $1,500 to the Texas Retired Teachers Foundation (TRTF). AMBA District Manager Brad Franchione also highlighted the numerous benefits that TRTA members can take advantage of through their state membership.

The conference concluded with the "Show Me The Money!" door prize drawing, where members whose names were drawn selected mystery envelopes that contained anywhere from $5.00 to $50.00.

Please make plans to attend next year's Fall Conference on **Wednesday, September 15, 2027**, at the San Marcos Activity Center from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Joe Ramirez
President, TRTA District 13, 2024-2028



CONDOLENCES TO TRTA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TIM LEE

TRTA remembers and celebrates the life of Martha Lee, a beloved TRTA member, longtime supporter of public education, and mother of TRTA Executive Director Tim Lee. Martha was a woman of strong faith who loved her family, championed public education and TRTA, and encouraged those around her to keep fighting the good fight. We are grateful for the many years she was part of the TRTA family and extend our deepest condolences to Tim and his family. Please join us in remembering Martha and celebrating her remarkable life.

Martha Ann Lee, 81, of Springfield, Illinois, passed away at 11:15 a.m., Saturday, September 5, 2026, at Springfield Memorial Hospital She was born November 21, 1944, in West Frankfort, Illinois, and married Edwin Lee on November 9, 1969.

Survivors include her husband; two sons, Brian (Darcie) Lee of St. John's, FL, and Timothy (Nichol) Lee of Dripping Springs, TX; five grandchildren; and one brother, David of Centralia, IL. She was preceded in death by her brother, Samuel, of Las Vegas.

To all who knew Martha, she was a loving wife, mother, and friend. After graduating from West Frankfort Community High School, she worked for the Illinois Secretary of State. She took time off to raise her two sons and later returned to work, managing the music department at Berean Bookstore, serving as a receptionist at the American Heart Association, and then spending nearly 25 years as a cashier at Walgreens.

A graveside service was held Thursday, September 24, 2026, at 11:30 AM at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery in San Antonio, TX.

In lieu of flowers, TRTA invites you to honor Martha's memory by considering a donation to our charitable arm, the Texas Retired Teachers Foundation (TRTF). To donate, please click here: **https://www.trtf.org/donate**. Members in Austin RTA may also donate to the ARTA Scholarship Foundation by going to **https://austinrta.org/arta-foundation**.

ARTA members may also mail cards to Tim and his family at the following address:

Tim Lee, TRTA Executive Director
313 E. 12th St., Suite 200
Austin, TX 78701-1957

TRTA Communications Committee,
supplemented by Joe Ramirez, TRTA Board of Directors and District 13 President



PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

ARTA Standing Rules

October 9, 2026

Current	*Amendment Text*	*As Amended*
RULE 4—MEETINGS 4.1 Chapter There shall be at least five (5) chapter meetings between September and May. Dates and location may be changed as necessary by the Executive Board. 4.2 Electronic	Insert: 4.1.1 A quorum for the transaction of chapter business shall be the members in attendance in person and online provided it is a regularly scheduled meeting or one that has been properly called.	RULE 4—MEETINGS 4.1 Chapter **4.1.1** There shall be at least five (5) chapter meetings between September and May. Dates and location may be changed as necessary by the Executive Board. **4.1.2 A quorum for the transaction of chapter business shall be the members in attendance in person and online provided it is a regularly scheduled meeting or one that has been properly called.**
6.2 Election procedure The nominating chair will report the slate of officers at the regular January meeting. Officers shall be elected at the regular February meeting by voice vote unless nominations are made from the floor (with the consent of the nominee). In this case voting shall be by secret ballot. At hybrid meetings, members attending virtually have the same rights as those who are physically present. A majority of those present shall elect. If circumstances prevent an in-person meeting, election of officers may be conducted electronically.	Strike: ~~A majority of those present shall elect~~. Insert: The election will be decided by a majority of those present and voting.	**6.2 Election procedure** The nominating chair will report the slate of officers at the regular January meeting. Officers shall be elected at the regular February meeting by voice vote unless nominations are made from the floor (with the consent of the nominee). In this case voting shall be by secret ballot. At hybrid meetings, members attending virtually have the same rights as those who are physically present. **The election will be decided by a majority of those present and voting**. If circumstances prevent an in-person meeting, election of officers may be conducted electronically.
8.2 Responsibilities The Executive Board shall: a. approve the appointments of the Historian, Parliamentarian, Editor of the *ARTA News*, the TRTF Representative, and chairs of all committees; b. establish or dissolve standing committees as needed; c. transact business of ARTA between regular meetings, subject to these Standing Rules; d. have the power to make recommendations at regular meetings of ARTA; e. establish a process for selection of delegates to TRTA conventions.	Insert: f. be empowered to alter the budget after its adoption by the membership to deal with contingencies that may develop.	**8.2 Responsibilities** The Executive Board shall: a. approve the appointments of the Historian, Parliamentarian, Editor of the *ARTA News*, the TRTF Representative, and chairs of all committees; b. establish or dissolve standing committees as needed; c. transact business of ARTA between regular meetings, subject to these Standing Rules; d. have the power to make recommendations at regular meetings of ARTA; e. establish a process for selection of delegates to TRTA conventions. **f. be empowered to alter the budget after its adoption by the membership to deal with contingencies that may develop.**



2026–2027 Membership Form

AUSTIN RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION (ARTA)
ANNUAL ARTA & TRTA MEMBERSHIP DUES—Supporting *ALL* Retired School Personnel
in Austin, Del Valle, Eanes, Lago Vista, Lake Travis, Manor, Leander, and Pflugerville ISD

To be a member of ARTA, you must ***ALSO*** be a member of the *TEXAS RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION (*TRTA) Please pay *BOTH* your membership dues online at our ARTA Website:
https://austinrta.org/membership
or
IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO USE THE ARTA WEBSITE, please complete this form *AND SEND IT WITH* a check payable to ***ARTA*** for **$50.00**

If your TRTA membership dues are deducted monthly or annually by TRS, TRTA or AMBA, please *COMPLETE THIS FORM AND SEND IT WITH* a check payable to ***ARTA* for **$15.00**

QUESTIONS ABOUT PAYMENT: DADISHNER@ATT.NET

Mail to: **Tony Dishner, ARTA Treasurer**
2218 Speidel Drive
Pflugerville, TX 78660-5067

NAME_____

PHONE_____

STREET ADDRESS_____

CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE_____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

Please ***CIRCLE*** your preference:

Do you want to be contacted by the ARTA Telephone Tree for meeting reminders? **YES** **NO**

Do you want your phone number and address listed in the ARTA Yearbook? **YES** **NO**

Do you want to receive a printed copy of the ARTA yearbook? **YES** **NO**

Do you want to receive printed copies of the ARTA newsletters? **YES** **NO**

For new members only: Please list the name of your recruiter: _____

If you would like to pay by credit card, please provide your card information below:

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date:_____ CVC Code: _____

Select the amount: ☐**$52.00** ($50.00 dues + $2.00 fee) ***OR*** if you have your TRTA membership dues deducted monthly or annually, please pay ☐**$17.00** ($15.00 dues + $2.00 fee)

For treasurers' use only:

TRTA Member#	Payment Date:	Payment Amount:
_____	_____	☐ Check #_____
		☐ Cash _____
		☐ Credit Card/Debit_____