

# ATSSB Newsletter

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In our 36th year serving Texas small school bands

## Greetings from ATSSB!

ATSSB enjoyed another exciting and productive year in 2025-26. It was evident from the number of members we had in our thirty-fifth year (1466, up from 1423 in the previous year) and from the quality of the 2026 ATSSB All-State Bands that our organization has maintained our original goal to be "sensitive to the needs and interests of small school band programs in Texas." Most small schools in Texas that have band programs are participating members of the Association.

The All-State Band Clinic was a positive one. Dr. Richard Mark Heidel from the University of Iowa led the Symphonic Band. Randall Standridge, clinician and composer, led the Concert Band, premiering **RETURN TO THE IMAGINARIUM** he wrote on commission from ATSSB. Tito Carrillo from Texas State University led the Jazz Ensemble, premiering **TAKE A HIATUS** he wrote on commission from ATSSB..

We invite you to join ATSSB and hope that we can help you achieve your goals this year. You can download the application from the ATSSB website (<https://www.atssb.org/files/execsec/App.pdf>). You can also open the application online and enter your data using your computer before printing it. Or you can use the online application process to join and use your credit card to pay dues (<https://www.atssb.org/atssb-membership-application-form/>). A membership card and receipt will be emailed to you and your name added to the roster of your ATSSB Region Coordinator so you can be kept up to date on ATSSB activities. If you wish to have students participate in ATSSB activities this year, you must also become a member of TMEA (<http://www.tmea.org>) because the two organizations have unified the audition process for membership in Texas All-State Bands.

We hope you will get actively involved in ATSSB - or at least communicate your desires and suggestions to the State Board of Directors through your Region Coordinator (or directly to the Executive Committee).

We start our thirty-sixth year of service to small-school bands, growing together as unified small-school band directors, and we want you to be a part of it. Thank you for your continued support.

## President's Column

by Angie Liss



ANGIE LISS

Please take a few minutes to make sure your memberships are current. Membership is necessary for participation in our audition process, and taking care of it now is much easier than discovering there's a problem when an entry deadline is staring you in the face. While you're there, double-check your contact information as well. Future-you will appreciate current-you taking care of this now.

And finally, my regular reminder: Find some "not band" moments. I know how difficult that can be this time of year. There is always another set to clean, another email to answer, another score to study, another prop to finish, another rehearsal plan to write, and another problem that feels as though it absolutely must be solved tonight. But if I've learned anything over the years, it's that most of them can wait. Go eat dinner somewhere

without discussing the opener. Watch a football game where you don't care whether the band is covering down. Spend time with your family. Sit on the porch. Read something that doesn't have drill coordinates printed on it. Take a nap. Go to church. Play with the dog. Watch something ridiculous on Netflix. Do something occasionally that reminds you that you are a person who directs a band—not simply a band director who occasionally gets to be a person.

Our students deserve directors who care deeply about what we do. They also deserve directors who are healthy, rested—or at least marching-season rested—and able to maintain a little perspective when things inevitably go sideways. Because they will go sideways. A prop will break. A bus will be late. A student will fail. Someone will forget their shoes. The weather forecast will change six times. A student who has successfully marched the same move for three weeks will suddenly have absolutely no idea where Set 27 is. And somehow, we'll fix it. We always do. And if we don't? The sun will still come up tomorrow. There will be another rehearsal, another opportunity, and another chance to figure it out. You will still be the person you were before that rehearsal, performance, or contest went sideways.

Give yourself permission to take care of yourself, too.

So here's to another marching season: great performances, safe rehearsals, renewed memberships, manageable wet-bulb readings, cooperative weather, functional props, buses that arrive on time, students who remember their shoes, and plenty of moments along the way that have absolutely nothing to do with band.

As always, I'm just an email, text, or phone call away.

Here's to a great fall, everyone!

A stylized, cursive handwritten signature of Angie Liss in black ink.

## Executive Director's Column

by Kenneth L. Griffin



KENNETH GRIFFIN

**2026 OPS** Things just seem to get better and better for the Outstanding Performance Series. OPS State Chair Collin Anderson did a great job organizing the process and overseeing the State Adjudications at TBA. Congratulations to the participants and winners this year.

**ATSSB HALL OF FAME** Initiated at the 30th Anniversary Luncheon during the 2021 ATSSB All-State Clinic in Melissa, members are inducted in February during the ATSSB General Session if selected from nominations received by the previous November 1. See the [Hall of Fame Guidelines](#) and [Nomination Form](#) online if you would like to nominate someone for this prestigious honor.

**LOST CARD?** If you have misplaced your new ATSSB membership card, you can go online to retrieve it and your receipt. Just go to <https://www.atssb.org/membership/> to type in your last name, then the last four digits of your Social Security number. You will get a pdf file of your card and receipt. Should you have any problem accessing it, email me and I will get it to you promptly ([atssb@att.net](mailto:atssb@att.net)).

**STATE OFFICERS** President-Elect, Class 1C, 1A and 3A Representatives are up for election. Nominee biographies will be published online in the December Newsletter and voting will take place electronically in January to select the top two candidates (unless one person wins the majority of the electronic votes). Look for a link to vote through your professional email address you listed when you joined or renewed this year. Ballots will be sent out the second week of January for all four of these positions. If there is no clear winner, the top two receiving votes will be on a runoff ballot the fourth week of January..

**Want to serve as an ATSSB officer?** Volunteer to help in region band auditions (as a judge, a clinic host, clinic organizer, etc.) and respond positively when asked to run for a region office. Your service will encourage members to nominate you for state office (Class Representative or President-Elect). If you would like to serve in an appointed leadership role (Area Coordinator, OPS State Chair, State Chair Audition Coordinator, State Jazz Coordinator, All-State Band Organizer, etc.), let the President know via email of your interest in the position. If you would like to be considered for the appointed position of Executive Director, notify the President who will inform the Executive Committee of your interest, then when the position is up for review (at TBA in odd years so that will take place in 2027), your name will be submitted to the Executive Committee for consideration. Just so you know, the Executive Committee is charged with this review every two years, but is also charged with replacing the Executive Director in case of a vacancy for any reason.

**ONLINE ENTRY** Remember that entries for all-region band auditions (jazz, middle school or high school) must be done online. Go to the TMEA website ([www.tmea.org](http://www.tmea.org)), click on DIVISION, then BAND, then AUDITION ENTRY, then DIRECTOR LOGIN, then follow the prompts. You should end up on your profile page which will also list available competitions in which you are eligible to enter students. If a contest is not listed, contact your Region Coordinator to see why not (or when it will be available). **CAUTION DIRECTORS AND STUDENTS: Read all data regarding entries!**

**AUDITIONS** As you send in entries to ATSSB all-region auditions, remember that students from schools in class 1A, 2A and 3A are auditioning in the 3A Track to All-State and students in class 4A are auditioning in the 4A Track. This includes color instruments for the first time (there will be no 4A students in the Concert

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Band). If you have a class 1A, 2A or 3A student who wishes to take the 4A Track - or any student wishing to take the 5A or 6A track - they **MUST** submit a Track Selection Form with their first audition entry (whether it is to ATSSB or TMEA). **Remember that this year, we are only selecting 1 alto clarinet and 1 string bass for each Track, with alto clarinet auditions for All-State phasing out by the 2029-2030 audition year.** After Area, the second chair alto saxophone, second chair euphonium, first chair alto clarinet, and first chair string bass in each Track will record their Area etudes. Sunday after Area, a panel of judges will select 3 euphoniums and 3 alto saxophones in each Track to add to the sections at State. Another panel will select one alto clarinet and one string bass in each Track. Also new this year: Percussionist will have selected their preference for being in the All-State Percussion Ensemble or the All-State Band, with an additional percussion selected to State at Area. After Area, percussionists will receive a link to audition material with a two-week window to practice then record the audition. A panel of judge will rank each Track and the first five in each Track who indicated they wanted to be in the Percussion Ensemble will be placed in that chair order by Track. Also, please realize that since we are aligned with TMEA regarding auditions, directors will be held accountable regarding the policies and procedures which include an obligation to judge at region and area auditions.

**TRACKING** Students advancing to Area will be designated by the Track they selected (4A or 3A). The number allowed to advance in each Track is listed online as "All-State Band Profile". The region auditions determine the Area Candidates from each of the regions in the state. Be sure you are aware of eligibility requirements and that you have taken care of all of the necessary paperwork (ATSSB membership, TMEA membership, region entry fees, forms completed, etc.) in advance of auditions. Please see the updated ATSSB Officers and Organizers in this Newsletter (and keep up with changes online) and contact your Region Coordinator if you have any questions regarding auditions. If you are already a member of ATSSB for 2026-27, your name and address is in your Region Coordinator's database and you will be receiving emails regarding these auditions.

**JAZZ** This process remains unchanged. See the current Year A Update online:  
<https://www.atssb.org/files/PAL-Files/yeaupdate2027.pdf>

**ADVANCING PAST REGION** If you have students who are selected to audition at the ATSSB Area auditions January 9, 2027, be sure to pay the \$25 Area fee to ATSSB (they do not owe this to TMEA) or they will not be allowed to audition at the Area level. All students who audition at Area will receive an Area patch. No forms are necessary at the Area auditions. If you have a student make State, they will receive a link to TMEA from which they will download documentation required for All-State participation.

**WEBSITE** Webmaster Brian Hecimovich has done a great job managing the website, coming up with a redesign and efforts to streamline the site for more efficient use. It is a treasure trove of information and forms needed for all aspects of the ATSSB audition and competition experience, so check it out and keep track of all updates as they are announced, especially the catch-all page:  
<https://www.atssb.org/executive-secretary/atssb-a-to-z/>

**SCHOLARSHIPS** The two levels of ATSSB All-State Band scholarships require nothing of students except to make the band three of their four years in high school (\$500 Scholarship) or all four years of high school (\$2000 Scholarship). We now have two scholarships seniors can apply for: the \$1000 Bruce Kenner Memorial Scholarship and the \$1000 Jeannie Griffin Memorial Scholarship. All applicants will be considered for both scholarships, but for the Jeannie Griffin Memorial Scholarship, preference will be given to students who additionally have choral or piano backgrounds. Make sure your senior bandsmen are aware of these scholarships and, if interested, have them apply before January 9, 2027 at:  
<https://www.atssb.org/scholarships/>

Best wishes for a successful fall semester. Please let me know if there is anything ATSSB can do to help you in your task.





## President-Elect's Column

by Brian Sours



BRIAN SOURS

### WHEN CHALLENGES COME, EMBRACE THE OPPORTUNITIES.

The start of the school year brings many challenges. Sometimes students decide band isn't their "thing" anymore (maybe even first chair players). Then there's the need to adjust our plans and rehearsals around the many students that are shared with other activities. And now, with the new Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) requirements, we have yet another obstacle.

### CHALLENGES ARE ALWAYS PART OF THE JOB.

Ultimately, these "hurdles" are always going to be a part of the small school band director's day-to-day planning, but it doesn't have to always be negative.

- If students elect to get out of band, focus on the growth of those who remain.
- If students are missing due to other activities, refine the skills of those in front of you. With a smaller teacher-to-student ratio, you



may catch something you didn't before.

- When WBGT forces us indoors, innovate and get better in other ways that put student safety first—fundamentals in the gym, tone quality through long tones and lip slurs, and more.

The WBGT readings are there to protect us from the harsh Texas summer heat, not to keep us from teaching are students altogether.

### EMBRACE THE OPPORTUNITIES.

So, rather than keeping attention on all the negatives, try to embrace the positives.

I know, I know, easier said than done, but trying is always more helpful than complaining.



### OPS: A CHANCE TO SHINE.

It was great to see everyone at TBA and to see the full room at our business meeting. TBA buzzes each year as directors wait to see how their recordings place at the State Outstanding Performance Series (OPS) contests. The OPS contest is one of the best opportunities for small school bands to show the hard work happening behind the scenes. Area-qualifying, state-qualifying and state-winning bands get to boast with pride in their communities—as they should! Competition should never be the main purpose of music education, but having this additional motivational tool encourages our programs to grow stronger and more musical. It is human nature to be driven by competition, and competition breeds improvement and innovation. To those OPS state-qualifying and winning bands, I say congratulations! Promote your bands as much as possible which makes small school bands stronger!



### SARC & ETUDE UPDATES.

Lastly, the SARC and State Board did approve new Year B Percussion Etudes at TBA to be reviewed by the membership, so please look them over. If you see needed edits or revisions on these new etudes, please email me at [bsours@atssb.org](mailto:bsours@atssb.org). We will vote on final approval at the TMEA Convention in February. While reviewing these new etudes, please be sure to review the PAL on the ATSSB website for the audition procedures for the inaugural ATSSB All-State Percussion Ensemble. The State Audition Review Committee (SARC) is dedicated to the betterment of our audition process. If you, or any other ATSSB member, see an issue with our current audition process or audition etudes, please reach out to me. As chairperson, I will bring it in front of the SARC for discussion and a vote. If changes are approved, they will be brought before the ATSSB State Board for consideration. If you have seen something that will make the audition process smoother, again please email me at [bsours@atssb.org](mailto:bsours@atssb.org). Send suggested changes/revisions soon so the SARC can discuss them and bring your concerns to the ATSSB State Board at TMEA in February 2027.



*Brian Sours*

## Immediate Past-President's Column

by Rodney Bennett



**RODNEY BENNETT**

A new school year is here and for most of us we are well into the first grading period and back to the routine of rehearsals and classes. Summer camps in the rear view mirror and now the “real work” has started. Marching season – learning drill, first marching shows, and for some, the bus trips. We tell our students that the goal for the first show is to: “Get on the field, do something positive musically and visually, get off the field, and no one gets hurt”. I am happy to report that we accomplished that goal and more the first game performance.

It is my sincerest wish that all of you have a productive and successful marching band season. So many lessons can be learned just from this one musical activity – team work, precision, physical strength, mental acuity, leadership, work ethic, and so many other positive aspects. Enjoy the marching band process, learning, student growth and weekly accomplishments.

Congratulations to all the concert bands that received honors in the OPS competition. Special thanks goes to Collin Anderson for his dedication and commitment to this event. Also a big thank you to all who served as panel chairs and adjudicators for the state level of OPS.

Let me also congratulate all the directors and their respective bands who participated in the TMEA Honor Band process. The 4A State Honor Band – Davenport HS – Michael Lehmann, 2A State Honor Band - Rivercrest HS – Elliot Ayo – Director. We are looking forward to hearing your outstanding ensembles perform at the convention in February.

As this school year begins to unfold and move forward, I realize how fortunate we are that we have the opportunity to teach band at our respective schools and have a positive impact in the students’ lives. We will still experience challenges, but we strive to create exciting performances and learning opportunities for our students and audiences. Do your best to stay healthy and energetic for your students.

Please be sure to check out all the information regarding auditions. Remember that Jazz Band tryouts are just around the corner, so get your dues paid and your students entered by the deadline date. Also refer to the ATSSB website for audition materials and errata.

I would be remiss if I did not congratulate the recipients of the inaugural ATSSB Outstanding Contributor Award: Mr. Eric Gray, Mr. Barry Hurt, Dr. Charles Trayler, and Mr. Jerry Whorton. These gentlemen have been mentors, friends and colleagues for so many of us in ATSSB, your dedication to the small school band programs has helped shape what our bands can achieve. Thank you all you have done for so many.

It is with deep honor and pride that I am able to serve ATSSB on the Executive Board as Immediate Past President. Please do not hesitate to contact me if can be of service to you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rodney Bennett", with a stylized flourish at the end.

## Class 1A Representative's Column

by Jesus Perez

Greetings!

As we kick off the new school year, I want to take a moment to congratulate David Andrus from Water Valley HS, Amanda Johnson of Leverett's Chapel HS, and Juliana Wild from Dodd City on your accomplishments in the State OPS Contest! You continue to raise the standard in our classification. Once again, I was able to sit in on most of the 1A concert listening session, and I was amazed at how far our classification has come in just a few short years. Bravo!



**JESUS PEREZ**

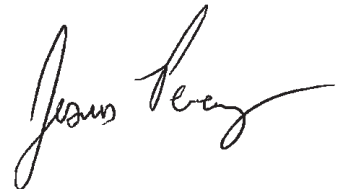
A special shout-out to Juliana Wild and the Dodd City Band for being selected as the TMEA 1A/2A Honor Band Runner-Up! This is a truly amazing accomplishment and a reminder that fine music teaching and high-level achievement are possible at every grade level and in every classification. I thoroughly enjoyed your band's musicality and expression!

There are many colleagues who are beginning a new chapter in their careers. Although the scenery may have changed, many of the constants remain: long days, hot weather, students quitting, and the never-ending challenge of coordinating with other extracurricular activities.

I encourage each and every one of you to be flexible in your approach. Avoid trying to change too much too soon, and celebrate the wins, however small they may be. Additionally, students may not be as interested in hearing about your previous band position as you might think they are. Be selective in your language and tone, and be mindful of your students' past experiences with other directors. Trust takes time to build. Some students, especially older ones who might have experienced previous transitions, may be more resistant to change and take longer to win over.

Find positive ways to contribute to the school's culture. As a byproduct of fostering a more constructive learning environment, you will also see dividends from other stakeholders including staff, administrators, and community members.

Best wishes to you all this year! May your travels be safe and all of your deadlines met!



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The ATSSB Newsletter is the official publication of the Association of Texas Small School Bands. Any correspondence should be addressed to ATSSB; 2117 Morse Street; Houston, Texas 77019. You may also contact us on our Web Site ([www.atssb.org](http://www.atssb.org)) or email the Editor (Kenneth Griffin) at [atssb@att.net](mailto:atssb@att.net) or call 713-874-1151. Letters to the Editor will be published as space permits if signed and verified, although writers may remain anonymous by request. Advertising rates are available at <https://www.atssb.org/files/execsec/AdPolicy.pdf>.

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## **Class 3A Representative's Column**

by Benjamin Keltner

Let's be Thankful and Grateful!

This time of year it is easy to feel overwhelmed...Trying (and failing) to keep the band hall organized, check out forms, music, on the spot repairs, kicking off your beginner classes, working around and through scheduling problems, communicating with parents, and Marching Band!

Each situation is unique, whether you are a new teacher, or veteran; Lone staff member or staff teammate, YOU can make a difference! Through experience, I am reminded that when you approach your program with a sour or frustrated attitude, you're most likely gonna get a sour/frustrated response at rehearsal or Gameday. We have the power to inject positivity into a tough situation.

This week, when issues occur due to changes that you were not expecting, or the students are not performing their best or up to our standard, take a quick second... breath and find something positive. Be an «Ubaldo Uplifter,» not a «Debbie Downer!» Be Prepared for class and rehearsal, move quick, get LOTS of reps, Give the kids feedback when they do 1 thing well...not just when something is wrong!

I have found that light hearted sarcasm goes a long way in lightening the mood with some humor :-). Our Bearkat Band is learning about “la Chancla” and to be “Awesome,” not “A’Possum.”

Finally, Remember it takes YEARS to build a positive culture; conversely, it can be torn down in 1 minute

“A Generous Person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.” Proverbs 11:25

Thank God and the little people in your life!



Benjamin J. Keltner  
Raymondville ISD  
ATSSB Region 15/28 Coordinator  
ATSSB 3A State Representative



**BENJAMIN KELTNER**

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## **Class 4A Representative's Column**

by Jay Sutton

As another school year gets underway, I want to wish every 4A band program across Texas a successful and rewarding season. I know firsthand how quickly the fall calendar fills with rehearsals, football games, contests, eligibility, travel, equipment, and the countless details required to keep a band program moving forward. In the middle of that busyness, I hope we remember what matters most: providing meaningful experiences that help our students develop confidence, discipline, leadership, and a sense of belonging.

This year begins a new UIL realignment cycle, with 4A schools ranging from 550 to 1,304 students. That wide range means our programs can look very different in terms of enrollment, staffing, budgets, facilities, and community expectations. However, we share many of the same challenges and the same commitment to creating outstanding opportunities for our students. Part of



**JAY SUTTON**  
(Continued on page 9)



my responsibility as your 4A State Representative is to ensure that the full range of our programs is heard and represented.

One important change affecting all marching bands this year is the implementation of the required UIL Wet Bulb Globe Temperature guidelines. Beginning August 1, WBGT monitoring and the corresponding activity modifications became mandatory for all outdoor UIL athletic and marching band activities. These procedures may require adjustments to rehearsal length, hydration breaks, equipment use, or even whether outdoor rehearsal can continue.

While these requirements may create many additional logistical challenges, student safety must remain our highest priority. Directors should work closely with campus administrators, athletic trainers, and coaches to ensure that everyone understands the procedures, that appropriate monitoring and documentation are taking place, and that the required emergency and rapid-cooling resources are available. This is also another reason that strong communication across campuses is so important, especially in 4A schools where many of our students participate in multiple activities.

The 2026 marching season also brings another exciting opportunity for our classification. The 4A Area Marching Contests are scheduled for October 31, followed by the 4A State Marching Band Contest on November 11 at the Alamodome. I know programs across the state are working toward a wide variety of goals. Some are hoping to make a return trip to San Antonio, while others are building a new culture, developing younger students, increasing membership, or completing a competitive production for the first time.

Whatever your program's goals may be, remember that a successful season is not defined by one rating, ranking, or contest result. Success can be found in the student who discovers a place to belong, the young director who gains confidence, the section that learns to hold one another accountable, and the program that takes a meaningful step forward. Competitive excellence is worth pursuing, but the people we develop along the way will always be our greatest accomplishment.

I am honored to serve as your 4A State Representative, and I want to be a resource for you. If you have a concern, question, idea, or issue that should be brought before ATSSB leadership, please reach out. I may not always have an immediate answer, but I will do everything I can to listen, help, and connect you with the right resources.

Have a great season, support the directors and programs around you, celebrate every step of progress, and never lose sight of the tremendous impact you have on your students!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jay Sutton', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Jay Sutton**

**ATSSB 4A State Representative**  
**[jsutton@atssb.org](mailto:jsutton@atssb.org)**

## **\$1000 Bruce Kenner Memorial Scholarship**

The ATSSB State Board of Directors created the \$1000 Bruce Kenner Memorial Scholarship in 2014 and twelve students have already been selected to receive the \$1000 award. The 2026 recipient is Caleb Atkins from San Antonio Davenport High School. Applications are now being accepted from seniors in ATSSB schools interested in getting a teacher certificate and teaching band in a public or private school. Applicants have until January 9, 2027, to apply with the scholarship recipient being announced at the ATSSB General Session February 12, 2027.



**in memory of  
Bruce Kenner**

Mr. Kenner was a band director in small schools all over Texas for 30 years and a proud member of ATSSB. His family wanted to continue his passion and love of music, teaching, and helping students for years to come. They wanted to honor him with this scholarship.

Seniors may apply by filing out an online application, attaching a resumé and statement. Applications will be reviewed by a committee which will select 3-5 finalists, from which the ATSSB Executive Committee will select the recipient.

If you have a senior in your band interested, have them complete the application at:  
<https://www.atssb.org/scholarships/>

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## **\$1000 Jeannie Griffin Memorial Scholarship**

The ATSSB State Board of Directors created the \$1000 Jeannie Griffin Memorial Scholarship in 2024 to honor the late wife of ATSSB Executive Director Kenneth Griffin. Applications are now being accepted from seniors in ATSSB schools interested in pursuing a degree in music education. The 2026 recipient was Hailo Garia from La Feria High School. Applicants have until January 9, 2027, to apply with the scholarship recipient being announced at the ATSSB General Session February 12, 2027. Preference will be granted to students who additionally have choral or piano backgrounds, but all students will be considered.



**in memory of  
Jeannie Griffin**

Mrs. Griffin was a Sweepstakes-winning high school choir director who majored in piano and organ performance and was a major contributor behind the scenes helping Mr. Griffin keep ATSSB running smoothly.

Seniors may apply by filing out an online application, attaching a resumé and statement. Applications will be reviewed by a committee which will select 3-5 finalists, from which the ATSSB Executive Committee will select the recipient.

If you have a senior in your band interested, have them complete the application at:  
<https://www.atssb.org/scholarships/>

**State Jazz Coordinator's Column**  
by Brian Donnell



**BRIAN DONNELL**

I assume everyone is having a great beginning to the school year!

The region jazz auditions are quickly approaching across the state. If you or your students have questions about the music or process, start by visiting the jazz page at [www.atssb.org/jazz](http://www.atssb.org/jazz)

Highlights from the jazz page:

equipment setup and tips may be found in the student and director tabs  
forms are in the region coordinator tab

info about listening panels for area/state is in the area coordinator tab  
sheet music and backing tracks for the improv piece, Bags' Groove can be found on the What's New tab.

Our ability to use Bags' Groove is made possible by the cooperation with the Milt Jackson estate and the management office of Reesie Music. They were terrific to work with!

Each region has the autonomy to run its jazz audition as it deems best for its students. Some regions require all 4 songs, some just 3. While some include the improv piece, others choose not to have the students improvise. But for Area recordings, all four songs must be recorded with the backing tracks and be recorded in accordance with the rules page. Talk to your region coordinator to make sure you and your students understand the process.

Rules page is here: <https://www.atssb.org/files/pal-files/pal27.pdf>

This year's clinician is Mr. John Wojciechowski, who is also composing this year's commission piece. You can read more about Mr. Wojciechowski at [www.jwojojazz.com](http://www.jwojojazz.com)

Wishing you and your students a wonderful fall season!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B Donnell', written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brian Donnell  
[bdonnell@atssb.org](mailto:bdonnell@atssb.org)

## OPS State Chair Column

by Collin Anderson

I want to offer my gratitude to all who made the 2026 Outstanding Performance Series competition season a great success! Without the Region and Area Coordinators and those who judge at each level, OPS cannot function. Thanks to each of you that helped complete the season by giving of your time and energy. I want to continue to offer my appreciation to Frank Coachman for helping us develop the current entry portal and adjudication system that greatly streamlines the process for RCs, ACs, and myself. And, as always, thanks go to our illustrious Kenneth Griffin who does so much behind-the-scenes work in all things ATSSB, but helps me in numerous ways throughout the OPS process each year.



**COLLIN ANDERSON**

The competition continues to grow each year, as more and more great band programs provide us with fantastic recordings. This season gave us 434 performing ensembles, up from 402, and 1206 total pieces entered into the contest, up from 1116. Wow! The continued growth of the competition is amazing!

CONGRATULATIONS to all our winners at the state competition held in San Antonio during Texas Bandmasters Convention in July! Plaques for our winners and 1st runners-up will be presented at the ATSSB General Session during the TMEA conference in February. Certificates are available on the OPS Webpage for download for all state participants, runners-up, and winners in each class and category.

As always, it is an honor and pleasure to serve the members of ATSSB as the State Chair of the Outstanding Performance Series. Thank you to the State Board of Directors and you, the membership, for entrusting me with this opportunity to serve our great organization.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Collin Anderson".

ATSSB OPS State Chair

Director of Bands and Fine Arts, Groesbeck ISD

903-390-3271

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## State Board of Directors Meeting

7:15 a.m., July 16, 2026

Menger Hotel Minuet Room

**Present:** Region 22 Coordinator Anthony Alvarado, Region 2 Coordinator Daniel Balkema, Immediate Past-President Rodney Bennett, Region 14 Coordinator Charles Cabrera, Region 1 Coordinator James Carter, Region 6 Coordinator Brittany Cole, Region 3 Coordinator Marty Filip, Class 1C Representative Kristi Flusche, Region 11 Coordinator Leo Garza, Past-President Eric Gray, Executive Director and Founding Charter Member and Hall of Fame Member Kenneth Griffin, Region 29 Coordinator and Webmaster Brian Hecimovich, Region 10 Coordinator Russell Hopkins, Past-President Jim Jones, Region 15 Coordinator and Class 3A Representative Benjamin Keltner, Region 7 Coordinator Josh Kidd, Region 16 Coordinator and Past-President Matt Knight, President and Region 24 Coordinator Angie Liss, Past-President Steven Moore, Region 18 Coordinator Ann Lowes Mueller, Region 9 Coordinator Jeff Parma, Class 1A Representative Jesus Perez, Region 23 Coordinator John Pritchett, Region 12 Coordinator Nichele Rios, Region 13 Coordinator Rod Rodriguez, Region 8 Coordinator Jose Sanchez, Class 2A Representative Zachary Sims, Class 2C/3C Representative Christina Smith, President-Elect Brian Sours, Past-President and ATSSB Hall of Fame Member George Strickland, Region 4 Coordinator and Class 4A Representative Jay Sutton, Charter Member and Past-President and ATSSB Hall of Fame Member Robert Vetter, and Region 5 Coordinator Joe Walker. Attending as non-voting guests were OPS

(Continued on page 13)



State Chair Collin Anderson, State Jazz Coordinator Brian Donnell, UIL Assistant Music Director Gabe Musella, Area South Coordinator Steven Rash, TMEA Band Division Vice-President Kim Shuttlesworth, Area West Coordinator Don Summersgill, and Area East Coordinator Andy Thompson. **Not present:** Past-President and Area North Coordinator Mike Bartley, Past-President Brandon Brewer, Founding Charter Member John Gibson, Founding Charter Member Michael Hardy, Region 21 Coordinator Craig Haynie, Charter Member and Past-President and ATSSB Hall of Fame Member Michael Marsh, Past-President and Charter Member Ronnie Page, Founding Charter Member and Past-President and ATSSB Hall of Fame Member Fred Pankratz, Past President Gary Robbins, Founding Charter Member and Hall of Fame Member Elmer Scheck, Past-President and Charter Member Don Stockton, Past-President Rob Toups, and Past-President John Young.

Mrs. Liss called the meeting to order at 7:15 a.m.

Jesus Perez gave the invocation, and the Oath of Office was led by Executive Director Kenneth Griffin.

Mrs. Liss suspended the agenda and asked TMEA Band Division Vice-President Kim Shuttlesworth for a report since she had to leave to meet with TMEA Honor Band judges.

- She thanked ATSSB for inviting her to address the Board and noted that she was from small-school band roots, recalling numerous humorous anecdotes regarding her career. She noted the 1A/2A and 4A Honor Bands would be selected today.
- She reported that there were seven committees meeting for Convention Preparation and that Jose Sanchez was on one committee that considered 334 band proposals among 1100 submitted overall.
- The Rubric Committee for Honor Band is meeting with Benjamin Keltner on the committee and was piloted in today's Honor Band adjudications. The Pilot Headphone Process for 5A/6A is used where one judge openly hears the adjudication with public attendance while the other 4 judges are sequestered with earphones listening and judging in rotation with different files starting at different times so no one band must be first or last in the adjudication.

Mrs. Liss then called on UIL Assistant Music Director Gabe Musella who gave a UIL report:

- He thanked the SBOD for inviting him on behalf of Dr. Brad Kent.
- The Sightreading Instruction Pilot will remain for this year, becoming permanent in 2027-28.
- The updated Prescribed Music List will be released September 1 with substantial additions and deletions, so check it out carefully as you prepare for 2026-27.
- Marching Band physical examinations and director certifications were due July 1, noting Rank 1 issues.
- Heat safety plan requirements are in effect as of August 1.
- The inaugural UIL State Jazz Festival will be March 6 in the Austin area.

Mrs. Liss then called on Collin Anderson, OPS State Chair to give a report so he could go meet with OPS judges.

- There were 1200 total individual entries this year from 434 different ensembles.
- He noted that there were some disqualifications for not completing the required steps (entry documentation, file uploads, or payment of OPS fees) and that he hopes to follow up more carefully next year to see if we can avoid any disqualifications in the future.
- He hopes to get the OPS Handbook updated soon so everyone can understand and follow the entry protocols ("OPS Handbook for Dummies").

**Minutes of the SBOD meeting** February 12, 2026, as printed in the March Newsletter were approved after a motion by Joe Walker and a second by Rod Rodriguez.

Mrs. Liss then introduced Steven Moore who gave a **NAMMB report**:

- This is the 7<sup>th</sup> year NAMMB has united with UIL to have a State Military Marching Contest. It will be at McLean Stadium in Waco October 27-28.
- There will be two college exhibition performances. One by Stephen F. Austin State University and the other by Baylor University
- He noted that Longview High School will be an exhibition performance at a clinic here at TBA.

Heard reports of **Standing Committees**:

Hall of Fame Chair Kenneth Griffin noted there were two nominations to date and that nominations will be

accepted until November 1 for the Class of 2027 to be inducted in February.

Rodney Bennett had no report from the Past-President Committee.

Brian Donnell gave the Jazz Report. He was excited that John Wojciechowski, noted Illinois jazz sax player, educator and clinician, will be leading the 2027 ATSSB All-State Jazz Ensemble. He thinks all of the clinicians we have had have been the greatest ever and invites everyone to attend a jazz rehearsal to see they get the jazz concepts across. He noted that there will be one big change for this year: Region Coordinators will submit one name for each instrument to their Area Coordinator by September 28. Area Coordinators will have filled out a specific list of judges for the State Jazz Coordinator to set the contest up.

President-Elect and **SARC Chair Brian Sours** thanked the members of his SARC: Eric Rath, Steven Rash, Elliott Ayo, Zach Sims, David Andrus, Bobby Castillo, and Brandon Manuel. Also serving as advisors were Christina Smith, Angie Liss, Brian Donnell, Rodney Bennett, and Kenneth Griffin. After a discussion regarding the Year B percussion etudes, Joe Walker moved and Jim Jones seconded to send the proposed etudes to Region Coordinators for member input before adopting them in February for 2027-28. Motion carried.

Brian Hecimovich gave a **Website Report**: The process to order jazz files online works well, but the software immediately sends the files to the purchaser's downloads folder with no confirmation window. The ability to change that is difficult but he will keep working on it. For orders that are held for check or Purchase Order, there is a manual process to send the files that works well with one exception that we have found to date. He is working on a project to videorecord the small-school related clinics at TBA and post them on our YouTube channel. He encouraged everyone to report missing or broken links so they can be fixed quickly.

#### **President's Report by Angie Liss:**

- She noted vacancies filled by appointment, such as Jose Sanchez as Region 8 Coordinator and Andy Thompson as Area East Coordinator.
- She expressed excitement about our inaugural All-State Percussion Ensemble with Dr. Brian Zator. Noting ATSSB has commissioned a former ATSSB All-State student to write a piece for the percussion ensemble at Dr. Zator's request. Robert Sheldon will be the Symphonic Band clinician, one of her favorite composers and clinicians. Jeremy Strickland will be the clinician of the Concert Band, serving 30 years after he was a member of the ATSSB All-State Band
- She reported on the TMEA Task Force that met earlier this summer, mapping out the future for TMEA and music education in the years to come. There were 20 people, including TMEA division chairs and ATSSB representatives. There is uncertainty about funding and advocacy, but issues were discussed and solutions offered. She noted that many large schools from rural areas in attendance looked to ATSSB for how they had addressed the issues they were facing that TMEA large schools in the metropolitan areas are not.
- She thanked the Board for their service and for allowing her the opportunity to serve.

#### **Executive Director's Report by Kenneth Griffin:**

- He apologized for not having ribbons and pins at the convention this time around and told anyone wanting one to email him and he would mail them.
- Remember that dues are only \$50 now - many are selecting the \$75 late fee option online - causing refunds that costs us PayPal fees.
- **SCHOLARSHIP REPORT:** Value of portfolio was \$233,945.97 as of January 30. Dividends are reinvested into the brokerage account each month. We have 23 3-year recipients this year = \$11,500 (with one more possible - student who made first 3 years but did not audition for 4th - they must apply) and 6 4-year recipients this year = \$12,000 for a total of \$23,500 in scholarships awarded this year. Since 1995, 647 individuals have been awarded ATSSB Scholarships totaling \$554,000.
- **KENNER SCHOLARSHIP REPORT:** Value of portfolio was \$39,703.44 as of January 30.

- Dividends are reinvested into the brokerage account each month. We have given twelve \$1,000 scholarships since its inception.
- **GRIFFIN SCHOLARSHIP REPORT:** Value of portfolio was \$39,104.51 as of January 30. Dividends are reinvested into the brokerage account each month. We are giving the second \$1,000 scholarship this year.
  - **PROGRAM FUND:** Value of portfolio was \$26,968.97 as of January 30. Dividends are reinvested into the brokerage account each month and funds withdrawn to pay for programs as needed. This fund was established with a gift from the Elmer and Anita Schenk Family Trust.
  - **COMMISSION FUND:** value of portfolio was \$13,482.41 as of January 30. Dividends are reinvested into the brokerage account each month and funds withdrawn to pay for commissions as needed.
  - **ATSSB continues to innovate.** We are initiating a Mentoring Program - please use it (my name will be on it - call on me!). The Past-President Committee is tasked with member welfare and is already actively recognizing outstanding small-school band programs, outstanding contributors to ATSSB, and is looking into promoting a music academic all-state program for our band students. If you have ideas for innovation, please share them with your leadership - or better yet, volunteer to serve on a committee to help advance ATSSB advocacy.

There was no old business.

Under new business:

**Matt Knight** moved and **Jay Sutton** seconded that the Fall Region Agenda Items be approved. Motion passed.

**Rod Rodriguez** moved and **Josh Kidd** seconded that the bid to record the 2027 All-State bands be accepted. Motion passed.

**Rod Rodriguez** moved and **Matt Knight** seconded that to extend the PepWear Merchandising Agreement for another five years. Motion passed..

**Rod Rodriguez** moved and **Brian Hecimovich** seconded that the ATSSB General Session be set for Friday, July 17, 2026, at 2:15 PM in CC213. Motion passed.

**Joe Walker** moved and **Brian Sours** seconded that we purchase a service to run the state officer elections electronically. Motion passed.

**Mrs. Liss** brought up the subject of mentorship and called on **Eric Gray** to discuss ATSSB establishing a core mentor program. Mr. Gray spoke at length regarding the efforts of Phi Beta Mu, TMEA, WBDA and others, noting many of them do not follow through and if so, only to their core schools. He thought we should establish a strong ATSSB mentor program since we have so many qualified and unselfish directors who could share their time and expertise to help young directors in small school succeed. Mrs. Liss named Mr. Gray as Chair of the ATSSB Mentoring Program, noting it would be prominent on our website once it is set up and functioning. She also noted the two clinics ATSSB was sponsoring at TBA: **Unleashing Potential and Maximizing Small School Success** with a panel of Eric Gray, Sherry Poteet, Brian Sours, and Nathan Templeton. Also **Leveling Up from Assistant to Asset: Maximizing Your Impact as an Assistant Director** with a panel of Shannon Rios, Alexa Sanchez and Whitney Sims.

There was no other new business.

Under **Region reports:**

Region 16 Coordinator Matt Kight noted that Bonnie Anderson was being inducted into the Phi Beta Mu Hall of Fame. He also noted that Barry Morgan from Lubbock Cooper passed away.

There were no **Area reports**

Mrs. Liss **adjourned** the meeting at 8:35 a.m.

## Minutes of the February ATSSB General Session

The General Session of ATSSB met in CC213 on Friday, July 17, 2026, with approximately 105 in attendance. President **Angie Liss** called the meeting to order at **2:15 PM** and **Ben Keltner** gave the invocation.

Mrs. Liss introduced the head table: Executive Director Kenneth Griffin, President-Elect Brian Sours, 2C/3C Representative Christina Smith, 4A Representative Jay Sutton, 2A Representative Zachary Sims, 3A Representative Ben Keltner, 1A Representative Jesus Perez, 1C Representative Kristi Flusche, Immediate Past-President Rodney Bennett, and herself as President.

The **minutes** of the General Session February 13, 2026, were approved as printed in the March Newsletter after a motion by **Brian Beeson** and a second by **Kyle White**.

There were no Special Committee reports.

### Under Standing Committee Reports:

**President-Elect Brian Sours** thanked his **SARC** for their work this year: Eric Rath, Steven Rash, Elliott Ayo, Zachary Sims, David Andrus, Bobby Castillo, and Brandon Manuel. Also serving as advisors were Angie Liss, Brian Donnell, Rodney Bennett, and Kenneth Griffin. He noted the SARC had approved Year B percussion etudes commissioned from Adam Bruce and the State Board had voted to send them to the Regions for discussion before final acceptance in February for use in 2027-28..

**Rodney Bennett**, Chair of the Past-President Committee, reported that the committee had been busy, noting the active Past-Presidents working with him were Eric Gray, Bob Vetter, Jim Jones, Mike Bartley, Matt Knight, and George Strickland – all of whom served on the Exemplary ATSSB Band Program Award Committee. Serving on the ATSSB Outstanding Contributor Committee were Matt Knight, Bob Vetter, Jim Jones, and active member Brian Beeson.

OPS State Chair **Collin Anderson** reported that he was happy to serve ATSSB as OPS State Chair. He noted the 2026 OPS had 1206 total individual entries this year from 434

different ensembles. He recognized those who had helped with judging, monitoring or support, then read the list of winners and runner-up in each class:

- Class 1C 1st Place Concert Winner - Anahuac Middle School, Morgan Contreras, Director
- Class 1C 2nd Place Concert Winner - River Road Middle School, William Scott, Director
- Class 1C Concert Runner-Up - Cameron Junior High School, Sarah Vajgert, Director
- Class 1C March Winner - Redwater Junior High School, Brandon Martindale, Director
- Class 1C March Runner-Up - Winnsboro Junior High School, Eric Shimanek, Director
- Class 2C/3C 1st Place Concert Winner - Moore Middle School, Heather McHenry, Director
- Class 2C/3C 2nd Place Concert Winner - Floresville Middle School, John Villafranco, Director
- Class 2C/3C Concert Runner-Up - Spring Hill Junior High School, Kirk Wells, Director
- Class 2C/3C March Winner - Moore Middle School, Heather McHenry, Director
- Class 2C/3C March Runner-Up - West Plains Junior High School, Braden Lefevre, Director
- Class 1A 1st Place Concert Winner - Water Valley High School, David Andrus, Director
- Class 1A 2nd Place Concert Winner - Dodd City High School, Juliana Wild, Director
- Class 1A Concert Runner-Up - Dodd City High School, Juliana Wild, Director
- Class 1A March Winner - Water Valley High School, David Andrus, Director
- Class 1A March Runner-Up - Leverett's Chapel High School, Amanda Johnson, Director
- Class 2A 1st Place Concert Winner - Union Grove High School, Andy Thompson, Director
- Class 2A 2nd Place Concert Winner - Rosebud-Lott High School, Jordan Sundermann, Director
- Class 2A Concert Runner-Up - Overton High School, Preston Parker, Director
- Class 2A March Winner - Union Grove High School, Andy Thompson, Director
- Class 2A March Runner-Up - Hemphill High School, Lynette Hunger, Director
- Class 3A 1st Place Concert Winner - Raymondville High School, Benjamin Keltner, Director
- Class 3A 2nd Place Concert Winner - West Rusk High School, Grady Haffner, Director
- Class 3A Concert Runner-Up - Florence High School, Peter Acosta, Director
- Class 3A March Winner - Commerce High School, Kara Wallace, Director
- Class 3A March Runner-Up - Whitesboro High School, Austin Nestler, Director
- Class 4A 1st Place Concert Winner - Davenport High School, Michael Lehmann, Director
- Class 4A 2nd Place Concert Winner - Celina High School, Jon Weddle, Director
- Class 4A Concert Runner-Up - Alvarado High School, Patrick Dietz, Director

(Continued on page 17)



- Class 4A March Winner - Alvarado High School, Patrick Dietz, Director
- Class 4A March Runner-Up - North Lamar High School, Austin Snow, Director
- High School Non-Varsity 1st Place Concert Winner - Lindale High School, Susan Scott, Director
- High School Non-Varsity 2nd Place Concert Winner - Davenport High School, Marli Dority, Director
- High School Non-Varsity Concert Runner-Up - Celina High School, Jacob Hille, Director
- High School Non-Varsity March Winner - Celina High School, Jacob Hille, Director
- High School Non-Varsity March Runner-Up - Davenport High School, Michael Lehmann, Director
- Middle School Non-Varsity 1st Place Concert Winner - Danville Middle School, Nichele Rios, Director
- Middle School Non-Varsity 2nd Place Concert Winner - Gilmer Junior High School, Sarah Thompson, Director
- Middle School Non-Varsity Concert Runner-Up - Kennedale Junior High School, Milton Alvarez, Director
- Middle School Non-Varsity March Winner - Davenport High School, Michael Lehmann Director
- Middle School Non-Varsity March Runner-Up - Spring Hill Junior High School, Alexa Silver Director

State Jazz Coordinator **Brian Donnell** was unable to attend, so Mrs. Liss reported for him:

- November 14 will be the Area Jazz Adjudication date. Volunteer to judge with your Region Coordinator. New this year, Area Coordinators will assemble panels from the submitted names from Region Coordinators.

**Mrs. Liss** noted actions taken by the State Board:

- Accepted the bid of Probst Audio to record the 2027 All-State concerts.
- Extended the PepWear Merchandise Agreement for another five years.
- Approved purchase of an on-line voting provision for ATSSB state offices.
- Established a Mentoring Program under the chair of Eric Gray
- She was excited about the 2027 clinic with the inaugural ATSSB All-State Percussion Ensemble and listed the clinicians that were under contract, especially noting Jeremy Strickland will lead the Concert Band 30 years after he was a member of the ATSSB All-State Band in 1997.

**Executive Secretary's Report** by Kenneth Griffin:

- He reminded the members that dues were \$50 until October 1.
- SCHOLARSHIP REPORT: Value of portfolio was \$233,945.97 as of January 30. Dividends are reinvested into the brokerage account each month. We have 23 3-year recipients this year = \$11,500 (with one more possible - student who made first 3 years but did not audition for 4th - they must apply) and 6 4-year recipients this year = \$12,000 for a total of \$23,500 in scholarships awarded this year. Since 1995, 647 individuals have been awarded ATSSB Scholarships totaling \$554,000.
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There was no old business.

Under new business, presentation of the inaugural ATSSB Outstanding Contributor Award was made to Eric Gray, Barry Hurt, Charles Traylor and Jerry Whorton

Mrs. Liss then adjourned the meeting at 2:50 PM.

## ATSSB All-State Band Scholarship Fund

Value of scholarship fund 7-31-25 .. \$ 221,735.19\*\*

### RECEIPTS

|                                     |                             |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 394 Memberships after 10-1 .....    | \$ 9,850.00                 |
| Individual donations received ..... | \$ 50.00                    |
| Licensee royalties .....            | \$ 22,109.05                |
| <b>TOTAL RECEIPTS .....</b>         | <b><u>+\$ 32,009.05</u></b> |

### EXPENDITURES:

|                                 |                             |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Scholarships paid .....         | \$ 21,000.00                |
| Scholarship plaques .....       | \$ 852.60                   |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES .....</b> | <b><u>-\$ 21,582.60</u></b> |

Value of scholarship fund 7-31-26 .. \$ 243,388.29\*\*

### Scholarships awarded Fiscal Year 2026:

20 3-Year \$500.00 scholarships  
6 4-Year \$2,000.00 scholarships

\*\*Value of fund fluctuates with market, but fund pays dividends per share per month regardless of stock value. Dividends are reinvested in the fund. Money is withdrawn from the fund to pay expenses as needed.

**Bruce Kenner Memorial Scholarship Fund** value as of 7-31-26 ..... \$ 29,050.99\*\*

**Jeannie Griffin Memorial Scholarship Fund** value as of 7-31-26 ..... \$ 27,427.22\*\*

**Commission Fund** value as of 7-31-26 ..... \$ 58,630.88\*\*

**Elmer and Anita Schenk Family Trust Program Fund** value of fund as of 7-31-26 ..... \$ 26,019.61\*

\*Funds are reinvested then withdrawn to pay for programs each year as needed.

## ATSSB FINANCIAL REPORT

July 31, 2026 - end of fiscal year 2025-2026

Amount in checking account 7-31-24 ..... \$ 200,256.99

### RECEIPTS:

|                                             |                             |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Area fees .....                             | \$ 54,025.00                |
| Commission Fund transfers .....             | \$ 29,500.00                |
| Dues .....                                  | \$ 72,670.00                |
| Jazz fees .....                             | \$ 12,880.00                |
| Jazz files .....                            | \$ 13,040.00                |
| Late fees (paid to Scholarship) .....       | \$ 9,850.00                 |
| OPS fees .....                              | \$ 70,286.77                |
| Licensee royalties (paid to Scholarship) .. | \$ 22,109.05                |
| Miscellaneous receipts .....                | \$ 27,026.20                |
| Patches .....                               | \$ 18,863.86                |
| Scholarship transfers .....                 | \$ 29,387.00                |
| <b>TOTAL RECEIPTS .....</b>                 | <b><u>\$ 359,637.88</u></b> |
| <b>AVAILABLE FUNDS .....</b>                | <b><u>\$ 559,894.87</u></b> |

### EXPENSES:

|                                   |              |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| All-State expenses .....          | \$ 24,581.98 |
| Area expenses .....               | \$ 18,891.20 |
| Audit .....                       | \$ 1,650.00  |
| Commission Fund .....             | \$ 12,215.00 |
| Elections .....                   | \$ 48.44     |
| Executive Committee .....         | \$ 735.30    |
| Executive Secretary stipend ..... | \$ 62,000.00 |
| Hall of Fame .....                | \$ 89.03     |

|                                        |                              |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Internet .....                         | \$ 820.44                    |
| Jazz Ensemble expenses .....           | \$ 7,040.00                  |
| Jeannie Griffin Scholarship .....      | \$ 1,085.00                  |
| Kenner Scholarship .....               | \$ 35.00                     |
| Office expenses .....                  | \$ 5,586.10                  |
| Officer & Org. Expenses .....          | \$ 6,837.40                  |
| OPS expenses .....                     | \$ 41,753.57                 |
| Outstanding Contributor Award .....    | \$ 359.80                    |
| Patches .....                          | \$ 20,642.48                 |
| PayPal fees .....                      | \$ 4,289.83                  |
| Postage .....                          | \$ 67.89                     |
| Programs .....                         | \$ 1,631.00                  |
| Refunds .....                          | \$ 2,005.00                  |
| Scholarship transfers out .....        | \$ 43,099.78                 |
| Scholarships paid .....                | \$ 21,838.67                 |
| State Board of Director expenses ..... | \$ 2,852.60                  |
| TBA expenses .....                     | \$ 2,544.00                  |
| Telephone .....                        | \$ 485.05                    |
| TMEA .....                             | \$ 135.00                    |
| Website .....                          | \$ 1,734.76                  |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES .....</b>            | <b><u>-\$ 285,054.32</u></b> |

### BALANCE:

Amount in checking account 7-31-26 ..... \$ 274,840.55

# 2026-2027 ATSSB Officers and Organizers

|                                                            |                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Angie Cavender Liss, Howe (2025-2027) .....                | President                  |
| Brian Sours, Tenaha (2025-2027) .....                      | President-Elect            |
| Rodney Bennett, Olney (2025-2027) .....                    | Immediate Past-President   |
| *Kenneth L. Griffin, Houston (appointed 2025-2027) .....   | Executive Director         |
| Kristi Flusche, Groesbeck (2025-2027) .....                | Class 1C Representative    |
| Christina Smith, Center (2026-2028) .....                  | Class 2C/3C Representative |
| Jesus Perez, Cross Plains (2025-2027) .....                | Class 1A Representative    |
| Zachary Sims, Shiner (2026-2028) .....                     | Class 2A Representative    |
| Benjamin Keltner, Raymondville (appointed 2025-2027) ..... | Class 3A Representative    |
| Jay Sutton, Pleasant Grove (2026-2028) .....               | Class 4A Representative    |

## Region Coordinators

|                                  |                                |                                        |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 1 James Carter, Dumas            | 8 Jose Sanchez, Palestine      | 15/28 Benjamin Keltner, Raymondville   |
| 2/31 Daniel Balkema, Pilot Point | 9/33 Jeff Parma, Cleveland     | 16 Matt Knight, Abernathy              |
| 3/20 Marty Filip, Quinlan        | 10/19 Russell Hopkins, Jasper  | 18/26 Ann Lowes Mueller, La Grange     |
| 4 Jay Sutton, Pleasant Grove     | 11 Leo Garza, Carrizo Springs  | 21 Craig Haynie, Henderson             |
| 5/30 Joe Walker, Godley          | 12 Nichele Rios, New Braunfels | 22 Anthony Alvarado, Clint             |
| 6 Brittany Cole, Pecos           | 13/17 Rod Rodriguez, Stafford  | 23/27 John Pritchett, Bellville        |
| 7 Josh Kidd, Graham              | 14 Charles Cabrera, Robstown   | 24/25 Angie Liss, Howe                 |
|                                  |                                | 29/32 Brian Hecimovich, Fredericksburg |

The SBOD (enclosed by the border) includes as voting members the following active Founding Charter Members(\*) who are not presently serving as officers: \*John Gibson (Founder), \*R. Michael Hardy, \*Michael Marsh, \*Fred Pankratz, and \*Elmer Schenk. Serving as ex-officio members of the SBOD are Past-Presidents Mike Bartley, Brandon Brewer, Eric Gray, Jim Jones, Matt Knight, Steven Moore, Ronnie Page, Gary Robbins, Don Stockton, George Strickland, Rob Toups, Robert Vetter, and John Young.

## Area Coordinators, Area Audition Sites (Regions encompassed) - Site Telephone

|                                  |                                                                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Area <b>West</b> Coordinator:    | Don Summersgill, Levelland HS (1,6,16,22) - 806-789-3551 (cell) |
| Area <b>North</b> Coordinator:   | Mike Bartley, Ranchview HS (2,3,7,24) - 972-989-0363 (cell)     |
| Area <b>East</b> Coordinator:    | Andy Thompson, Lindale HS (4,9,10,21) - 903-316-8808 (cell)     |
| Area <b>Central</b> Coordinator: | Joe Walker, Robinson HS (5,8,18,23,29) - 903-780-7971 (cell)    |
| Area <b>South</b> Coordinator:   | Steven Rash, Calallen HS (11,12,13,14,15) - 361-537-6191 (cell) |

|                                                                  |                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| All-State Band Organizer Consultant .....                        | Justin Ketner, Winona       |
| All-State Symphonic Band Organizer .....                         | Mark Belding, Santo         |
| All-State Symphonic Band Apprentice .....                        | Austin Nestler, Whitesboro  |
| All-State Symphonic Band Percussion Organizer .....              | Joshua Leslie, Amarillo     |
| All-State Symphonic Band Percussion Apprentice .....             | Austin Nestler, Whitesboro  |
| All-State Concert Band Organizer .....                           | Mandy Keene, Ganado         |
| All-State Concert Band Apprentice .....                          | Taylor Bates, Van           |
| All-State Concert Band Percussion Organizer .....                | Aidan McCarty, North Lamar  |
| All-State Concert Band Percussion Apprentice .....               | Taylor Bates, Van           |
| All-State Jazz Ensemble Organizer .....                          | Chris Partridge, Boyd       |
| All-State Jazz Ensemble Organizer Apprentice .....               |                             |
| All-State Percussion Ensemble Organizer .....                    | Darshan Jhaveri, Rivercrest |
| All-State Percussion Ensemble Organizer Apprentice .....         |                             |
| All-State Band Seating Tryout Organizer and Office Manager ..... | Kristi Flusche, Groesbeck   |
| All-State Band Section Rehearsal Coordinator .....               | Christina Smith, Center     |
| ATSSB State Jazz Ensemble Coordinator .....                      | Brian Donnell, Addison      |
| ATSSB Outstanding Performance Series State Chair .....           | Collin Anderson, Groesbeck  |

## Dates to Remember

JAZZ ENSEMBLE REGION AUDITIONS must take place between the second Saturday in September and the third Saturday in October.

AREA JAZZ deadline for Area recordings is 11:59 pm the third Saturday of October.

JAZZ ENSEMBLE DESIGNATED SET ADJUDICATIONS are to take place on Saturday, November 7, 2026.

AREA CERTIFICATION DEADLINE December 12, 2026; Dual certification selection deadline December 15, 2025.

AREA: Saturday, January 9, 2027.

ALL-STATE CLINIC: February 10-13, 2027.

Jeremy Strickland (Tyler Junior College) – CONCERT BAND

Robert Sheldon (Composer and Clinician) – SYMPHONIC BAND

**AWAKENINGS** by Robert Sheldon (Commissioned by ATSSB)

John Wojciechowski (Woodwind Artist, Composer and Educator) - JAZZ ENSEMBLE

**UNTITLED** by John Wojciechowski (Commissioned by ATSSB)

Dr. Brian Zator (East Texas A&M University) - PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

**UNTITLED** by Carmen Lopez (Commissioned by ATSSB)

ALL-STATE CONCERT Saturday, February 13, 2027: Concert Band at 9:00 a.m. in the Lila Cockrell Theatre; Symphonic Band after the Concert Band in the Lila Cockrell Theatre; Jazz Ensemble at 1:00 p.m. in the Hemisfair Ballroom 1 of the Convention Center. Percussion Ensemble at 3:00 p.m. in the Hemisfair Ballroom 2 of the Convention Center.

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