



NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2025

Volume XXXIV

No 4

Updated March 1, 2025

OUR 34TH YEAR OF SERVICE TO SMALL SCHOOL BANDS IN TEXAS

PRESIDENTS COLUMN

ANGIE LISS

What a wonderful experience TMEA was! (I could have done without the Arctic blast, but that's Texas weather for you!)



I thought the ATSSB All-State concerts were some of the most outstanding concerts we have had. The Symphonic and Concert Band performances were fantastic, and if you didn't stick around for the Jazz concert, then you missed a great time! Such fabulous musicians in each performing group. Thank you to everyone who played a part in making that happen: audition chair Kristi Flusche, sectionals organizer Christina Smith, Symphonic Organizers Zachary Sims & Bana Estes, Symphonic Apprentices Justin Mauldin & Hugh Grubbs, Concert Band Organizers Elliott Ayo & Chase LeBlanc, Concert Band Apprentices John Bratton & Darshan Jhaveri, Jazz Band Organizer & Apprentice Michael Childs & Devin Sipes, and of course our Jazz Chair, Brian Donnell. The work they each do is invaluable, and I can't express how much I appreciate the time and effort they put into making the experience the best it can be for the students. Thank you as well to all those who helped lead sectionals on Thursday morning. You had a lot of music to cover, but wow, the results of your work were evident in those wonderful concerts!

Congratulations to the newest members of our ATSSB Executive Board: President-Elect Brian Sours, 3A Representative Jim Best, 1A Representative Jesus Perez, 1C Representative Kristi Flusche, and 2A Representative Justin Mauldin. I look forward to working with each of these individuals as we serve the students and directors of ATSSB. I also want to thank those who are leaving the board. It has been my honor to serve alongside 1A Representative Brian Tillman, 3A Representative Bonnie Anderson, and Past-President Matt Knight. I especially want to thank Matt for all he has done both for our organization and for me personally as I step into the role of president. He truly has a heart for our organization and our students, and I respect his opinions and treasure his advice more than he can know.

Thank you as well to Rodney Bennett for his leadership over the past two years as president, as well as to the other members of the executive board: 4A Representative Marc Nichelson and 2C Representative Christina Smith.

Congratulations again to our newest member of the ATSSB Hall of Fame, Mr. Carl Idlebird. What an amazing career and an even more amazing man. I loved hearing the biography and anecdotal information shared about him and seeing his family nod knowingly at each word. He is such an example for each of us to follow! Thank you, Carl, for your outstanding contributions to your students, your profession, and our organization!

And last but not least, none of this happens without the leadership of our amazing Executive Secretary, Kenneth Griffin. He is the man with the plan and the one who keeps all of us straight!

If you weren't in the ATSSB General Session to hear the report from the state board meeting, I'm happy to tell you we have been able to accomplish several things, including the purchase of each set of the jazz audition music, slightly restructuring the instrumentation of the all-state bands to allow for the addition of three alto saxophone players in each band, the creation of the Kenneth Griffin Exemplary Band Program Award, and the creation of the ATSSB Outstanding Contributor Award. You will soon see information about these two awards on our website. If you have any questions about any of these things, don't hesitate to reach out, and I'll fill you in on the details!

Brian and I are in the process of getting members appointed to each of the committees necessary for our organization. Be on the lookout for a couple of Google Form questionnaires. One form will be for you to express your interest in serving. There are many opportunities to serve at all levels of our organization, and we want you to be involved! The other form will be asking for your opinion on the creation of designated tracks for color instruments rather than the open track we currently use. Please take the time to fill these out so that we can make the best decisions possible. We value your input.

I am so proud of our organization and am incredibly honored to serve you as president. I am an email, text, or phone call away, so do not hesitate to reach out if you have questions, concerns, or fresh ideas. I am excited to see all we can do together!



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, TX 77019.

You may also contact us on our Web Site (www.atssb.org) or email the Editor (Marc Nichelson) at mnichelson@atssb.org 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 is accepted for the ATSSB Quarterly Newsletter. The Newsletter is published online

each September, December, March, and June. See our advertising policy and costs:
<https://www.atssb.org/files/execsec/AdPolicy.pdf>.



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PRESIDENT-ELECT COLUMN

BRIAN SOURS

First and foremost, I want to say how honored and humbled I am to be voted in as President-Elect. While I enjoyed representing 2A for over 5 years, I am very much excited about what the future holds. I understand and appreciate the trust you are placing in me to help ensure that ATSSB remains a strong and innovative advocate for small school bands throughout the state.

I would like to congratulate our incoming Executive Board members, Kristi Flusche (1C Representative), Jim Best (3A Representative), Jesus Perez (1A Representative), and Justin Mauldin (appointed 2A Representative). I would also like to wish the outgoing Executive Board members the best of luck as they begin their next journey: Matt Knight (outgoing Immediate Past-President), Bonnie Anderson (outgoing 3A Representative), Brian Tillman (outgoing 1A Representative), and Jenny Bartley (outgoing 1C Representative). They all served ATSSB faithfully while on the Executive Board, and I'm thankful to call them my friends. I also look forward to continuing to work with Marc Nichelson (4A Representative), Christina Smith (2C/3C Representative), Angie Liss (President), Rodney Bennett (Immediate Past-President), and Kenneth Griffin (Executive Secretary).



It was great to see so many of you at TMEA this year! In the 16 years I've been a member of ATSSB, I have never seen the business meeting as full as I saw it this year. I was glad to see so many people at the meeting who voted, learned about new business, and supported those who received an OPS award. Additionally, it was great to see everyone who supported the Hall of Fame induction of the very deserving Carl Idlebird! I think I speak for a lot of band directors when I say that Carl Idlebird has been an inspiration for so many directors in our state. Seeing such high attendance at our business meeting shows the strength of our organization. I hope business meetings continue to be as well-attended as we saw this past TMEA Convention.

Many of you have completed UIL Solo & Ensemble Contest and are fully transitioned to UIL Concert & Sight Reading Evaluation preparation. Some bands are still making the final decision about what they will perform. Some bands will be evaluated this coming week, and some have already performed, received a rating, and are moving on to other spring performances. Regardless of where you are in the season, I hope you and your students have grown (or will grow) from the process. I still stand firm that the spring semester, full of Solo & Ensemble and Concert & Sight Reading performances, offers the best growth opportunities for our ensembles overall. And after all, growth, not a rating, should be the ultimate goal.

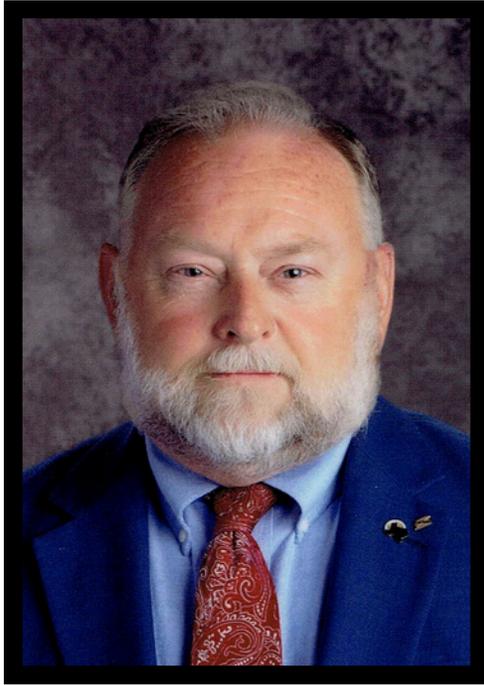
I'll end on a personal note. Thank you to those who attended our Honor Band concert. As musicians and music educators, our audience is our inspiration, so we greatly appreciated it. After the last 12 months, which included three performances in San Antonio (TMEA Invited Ensemble, UIL State Marching Band Finals, and Honor Band), a performance in Chicago (The Midwest Clinic), and preparing 12 concert pieces during marching season, I am very much ready to slow down a little bit. I hope you all have a great spring semester, and I wish you all the best of luck at Concert & Sight Reading Evaluation!



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PAST PRESIDENT COLUMN

RODNEY BENNETT



Where did January and February go?! It does not seem possible we are already in March. The ATSSB All-State Symphonic and Concert Bands were both absolutely fantastic, and the All-State Jazz Ensemble concert was amazing. The conductors of the All-State ensembles: Dr. J. Eric Wilson (Director of Bands – Baylor University) – Symphonic Band, Mr. Dustin Seifert (Director of Bands – Eastern New Mexico University) – Concert Band and Mr. Ronald Wilkins (Freelance Artist from New York City) – Jazz Ensemble. These gentlemen did a masterful and inspiring job with each band.

ATSSB continues to commission new works for concert band and jazz ensemble. The 2025 ATSSB All-State Symphonic Band premiered “Tachyon” by esteemed composer Julie Giroux. During their concert, the All-State Jazz ensemble premiered “Playas Sing, Singas Play,” composed by clinician Ron Wilkins. These two fine compositions will be welcome additions to the repertoire for the respective ensembles.

Most of us will have recently completed UIL Solo & Ensemble Contest and hopefully your students had successful performances and became better musicians. UIL Concert & Sight-reading contests (evaluations) are underway with the first contest on February 26. Best wishes for inspiring musical performances.

The ATSSB All-State seating auditions would not happen without the work of Kristi Flusche (Groesbeck MS), the All-State Chair Auditions Coordinator. She did a masterful job of organizing the auditions and providing timely information to the judges and monitors. A special thank you to all the ATSSB members who served as monitors and judges for the all-state seating auditions; you are the ones who made the audition experience a success for our students. I would be remiss if I did not shout out to Colin Anderson and Marc Nichelson for their work in the office on the computer side of the auditions to keep everything running smoothly. Also, I'd like to thank Christina Smith for coordinating the All-State section rehearsals and each section teacher who gave up time during the convention to work with the students. The work you did helped make the performances outstanding musical events.

Congratulations to all of the ATSSB Outstanding Performance Series winners. Your performances inspire us to continue improving our bands and making beautiful music. If you have not participated in the OPS competition, consider entering and letting others hear the outstanding work being done in the small schools of Texas.

I want to acknowledge the expiring term members of the ATSSB Executive Board: Jenny Bartley – IC Representative from Grand Saline; Brian Tillman, IA Representative from Irion County; and Bonnie Anderson –3A Representative from Littlefield. A special thanks to Past-President Matt Knight of Abernathy for his service and guidance through the last six years. Each of these outstanding educators has positively influenced ATSSB, and your service is greatly appreciated. Congratulations to President Angie Liss and our new President-Elect Brian Sours from Tenaha. The following board members were elected serve: IC Representative Kristi Flusche from Groesbeck and 3A Representative Jim Best from Mineola. Thank you for willingness to serve ATSSB. We have an outstanding executive board that always has the best interests of our students, directors, and the ATSSB organization in mind when making decisions.



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PAST PRESIDENT COLUMN

RODNEY BENNETT

We had the fifth ATSSB Hall of Fame installation following the General Membership meeting on February 14. Our single inductee for 2025 is Carl E. Idlebird from Somerville. Mr. Idlebird is an icon in the Texas band world and most deserving of this honor. Congratulations to you and your family for all you have done for the small school bands of Texas.

ATSSB is in great hands with the leadership of President Angie Liss, Executive Secretary Kenneth Griffin, and members of the State Executive Board.

I am very humbled to have served as President of ATSSB from 2023-2025. It was a tremendous honor, and I thank the membership for their trust. I look forward to continuing to serve the association on the Executive Board as Immediate past President.



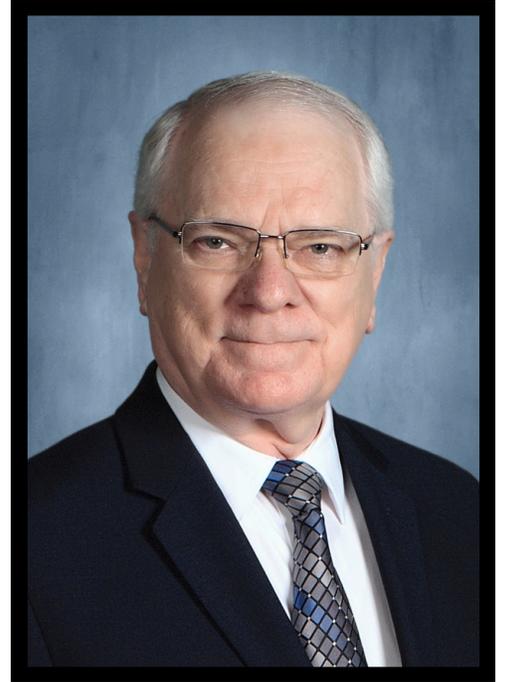


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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY COLUMN

KENNETH GRIFFIN

THE ATSSB ALL-STATE BANDS JUST KEEP GETTING BETTER! WHAT A THRILL IT WAS TO WATCH THE CLINICIANS MAKE THEIR MAGIC WITH OUR STUDENTS. EACH OF THEM WAS SO COMPLEMENTARY OF THE STUDENTS, THEIR WORK ETHIC, ATTENTION, AND DESIRE TO EXCEL AND LEARN. THAT IS WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT!



To ATSSB band directors who encouraged their students to audition at the region level, only to continue working with them to compete at the Area level, then plan and arrange for their trip to San Antonio for the All-State Band – and serve as adjudicators at all levels, taking their students to the auditions and getting them home again safely – all have a special place in my heart after seeing the result of their efforts! Keep it up!

To our Region Coordinators who secured audition sites, arranged for judging panels, assigned directors to the panels with links to the audition software, oversaw the adjudication process, paid expenses for site hosting, maintenance, and cleanup, reported results and filed paperwork after the auditions, and maintained ATSSB membership at the region level all year – KUDOS for a job well done. We obviously could not have this wonderful ATSSB All-State Band experience we just saw without you! Members, please take a moment to thank your Region Coordinators for sharing their time and talents to ensure your region is represented to its fullest capacity each year.

To the five Area Coordinators (Mike Bartley, Area North; Joe Hewitt, Area East; Marc Nichelson, Area Central; Steven Rash, Area South; and Don Summersgill, Area West) who planned the Area auditions, secured a host site, assigned directors to panels and links to the audition software, oversaw results, reported results, paid for all associated costs, oversaw the distribution of Area patches, collected Area fees... and much more in the background – THANK YOU for your service, and may we as members and Region Coordinators do all in our power to make your life easier by volunteering and showing up as required for all we are assigned to do at Area!

To All-State Organizers (Justin Ketner, Organizer Consultant; Zachary Sims, Symphonic Band Organizer; Justin Mauldin, Symphonic Band Apprentice Organizer; Bana Estes, Symphonic Band Percussion Organizer; Hugh Grubbs, Symphonic Band Apprentice Percussion Organizer; Elliott Ayo, Concert Band Organizer; John Bratton, Apprentice Band Organizer; Chace LeBlanc, Concert Band Percussion Organizer; Darshan Jhaveri, Apprentice Concert Band Percussion Organizer; Michael Childs, Jazz Organizer; and Devin Sipes, Apprentice Jazz Organizer): Thank you for giving up most of your convention time getting the physical needs of each group ready to go, securing music folders and stuffing each with the assigned music, rehearsal schedules, and anything else the clinician wants included, arranging for stand name tags so the clinician can call on students by name, securing equipment not provided by TMEA, arranging for the well-being of the students at all times, overseeing each rehearsal to make sure students are there and cooperating with the clinicians... and much more in the background.

To Kristi Flusche and the Groesbeck staff and Marc Nichelson: Thank you for running a smooth chair audition office on Wednesday evening and to Christina Smith for coordinating the Section Teaching Staff for leading sectional rehearsals on Thursday morning. Thanks also go to the teachers of the jazz sectionals on Thursday afternoon.

To TMEA for hosting the audition processes on their servers, arranging for hotel space for students and their chaperones, securing and organizing the Convention Center for clinics and rehearsals, and, most importantly, the final concerts... and much more in the background. Many thanks for so many years of dedicated service from Frank Coachman, Deputy Director; Andrew Denman-Tidline, TMEA Information Technologist; Kay Vanlandingham; Karen Cross; and the entire TMEA staff in Austin for their tireless efforts on behalf of the TMEA membership and ATSSB.

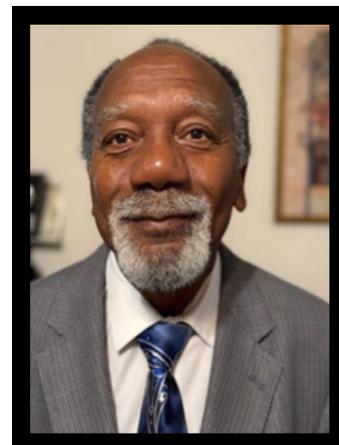
To ATSSB leadership: President's Committee Rodney Bennett, Angie Liss, and Matt Knight; Class Representatives Jenny Bartley, Christina Smith, Brian Tillman, Brian Sours, Bonnie Anderson, and Marc Nichelson; State Jazz Coordinator Brian Donnell; OPS State Chair Collin Anderson; Webmaster and Newsletter Editor Marc Nichelson... and so many others who stepped up to lead the way when asked. It has been a pleasure working with these directors this year. Things have gone so smoothly for so long; it may be easy to slip into a reverie of complacency... but we must not do that! We need to be forward-thinking: what can we do to make the All-Region, Area, and All-State experience better for our students? We welcome all suggestions for improvement. Just shoot an email to me or any officer with your thoughts, complaints, suggestions, etc. We promise to do our best to implement whatever steps are necessary to make ATSSB responsive to its membership and its students.

A big THANK YOU to all these people plus the unnumbered hundreds who did things in the background to make all levels of ATSSB work seamlessly throughout the year.

It was a true delight to serve as the emcee for the ATSSB Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony following the General Session on Friday. We are indeed fortunate to count among our esteemed small-school band directors a remarkable individual whom I hold in the highest regard: Carl Idlebird!

Carl E. Idlebird
ATSSB Hall of Fame
Class of 2025

For a deeper glimpse into Carl's extraordinary legacy, you may visit the ATSSB Hall of Fame Web page:
https://www.atssb.org/files/ATSSB-Hall-of-Fame/Idlebird_HofF_page.pdf



Interesting fact about the 2025 All-State Bands: The bands include 22 freshmen (up from 12 last year), 48 sophomores (down from 49 last year), 96 juniors (up from 87 last year), and 140 seniors (down from 158 from last year).

Outstanding Performance Series - Be sure to check out the OPS web page carefully regarding the process for 2025. The process should be much smoother since we will be using the TMEA Honor Band process to receive and adjudicate OPS entries. We are working toward making all winning recordings available online since the time we stopped producing CDs, so keep an eye on the website (and an email announcement) regarding those links when they become available (CDs are no longer produced).

Interesting fact about the 2025 All-State Bands: The bands included 88 females and 218 males.

APPLICATION - There is a Membership Application in this Newsletter and on the Website that you can download and use or give to your assistants or to share with neighbors. Membership renewal reminders are not sent, so use the one available online or linked here to join as soon as you can in the new budget year (although we surely do appreciate all the scholarship contributions you make when you join after October 1!). Remember that dues are \$50. The \$25 late fee will continue to be added after October 1, so if you want to avoid the late fee, get your dues paid as soon as possible (you can use a school PO at any time, a check or money order, or your credit card online). Marc Nichelson is working on an app to allow you to monitor and update your own profiles through our website and to perhaps use that link to pay your dues for the coming year.

Interesting facts about the 2025 All-State Bands: West Plains (Amarillo) had 10 students make All-State; Aubrey, Commerce, Davenport (San Antonio), and Raymondville had 7 students make All-State; Canyon, Hidalgo, and Randolph had 5 students make All-State; six schools had 4 students make All-State; sixteen schools had 3 students make All-State; thirty-five schools had 2 students make All-State; and one hundred eleven schools had 1 student make All-State. In all, 176 different schools are represented in the ATSSB All-State Bands.

PAL - The Prescribed Audition List includes all known (and SARC-approved) errata to date on each of the etude pages. The scales are up to date on the website, including the State Board mandated statement that scales are to be played "as written" and that "scales shall be performed in order without delay between scales" - so be careful your students play a whole note at the end of each scale and not finger through the scale before performing it without delay. Be sure you are using the current data from the Website since an Update will not be mailed or passed out at TBA like we used to do (remember that the Website is the official document). We will be using YEAR E in the PAL for auditions in 2025-26. Watch the Website for the Year E Update. Links will be updated as they become available.

Interesting facts about the 2025 All-State Bands: Of the 306 students selected for ATSSB All-State, 7 were from class 1A schools (2.29% - up from 3 last year), 20 were from class 2A schools (6.54% - down from 24 last year), 108 from class 3A schools (35.29% - down from 109 last year), and 171 from class 4A schools (55.88% - up from 168 last year).

This year, recordings of the ATSSB All-State Bands will be available as a link online at no cost. As soon as the recordings have been mastered and edited, the links will be posted on the ATSSB website. You may still order plaques and T-shirts from the event through Pepwear at www.pepwear.com/atssb. You may also order the large 10" All-State patch from this office (\$10 each includes shipping). Use the order forms in this Newsletter or online to get yours today: <https://atssb.org/files/LargePatchOrder.pdf>

Use your contacts at colleges and universities across Texas (and beyond) to make sure that they give scholarships (all expenses paid) to ATSSB All-State students and tuition scholarships to ATSSB Area students for their summer band camps like some colleges do.

Interesting facts about the 2025 All-State Bands: Of the 306 members, each of the 22 regions had an average of 14 students in the band. One region had 29 (the most) and one region had 1 (the least).

Remember that Region Officers serve a two-year term, so if elections need to be held in your regions, go through the process in place to elect them. Be sure to let me know if you replace a Region Coordinator for 2025-26 in your Spring Meeting. I need to have their name as soon as possible for our plans for 2025-26 (call me at 713-874-1151 and leave a message). Your Region Coordinator is your region's representative on the State Board of Directors, which makes all the decisions for you regarding ATSSB matters. Make sure they or a proxy attend each SBOD meeting. It would also be nice if each Region Coordinator brought a mandate of opinion from region members so votes could be representative of each region of the state. Keep an eye on your region's page and volunteer to help keep it up to date if you are into web publishing and would like to help. The ATSSB State Board will send each Region a Fall Agenda, listing items each Region needs to address, so watch for those items.

A new scholarship was introduced this year when the State Board approved the creation of the Jeannie Griffin Memorial Scholarship to honor the late wife of Executive Secretary Kenneth Griffin. This year's \$1,000 scholarship was awarded to Ellie Hale from Liberty High School. Ellie is a member of the Liberty Band and Choir program and was a member of this year's TMEA All-State Small School Mixed Choir. Justice Gonzalez from Lubbock Estacado was awarded the Bruce Kenner Memorial Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000.

Seniors Parker Arnett, Wills Point 4A Clarinet; Seth Atkinson, Tyler Grace Community School 4A String Bass; Sofia De Leon, Hidalgo 4A Clarinet; Alyssa Delgado, Queen City 4A Clarinet; Zachary Frausto, Cameron Yoe 3A Percussion; Oscar Garcia, Raymondville 4A Flute; Justice Gonzalez, Lubbock Estacado 4A Trumpet; Sami Hicks, Maypearl 3A Clarinet; Ian Lawler, Benbrook All Saints' Episcopal 4A French Horn; Jordan Medina, Fort Worth Carter-Riverside 4A Bass Trombone; Emily Miller, Mineola 3A Flute; Ray Qi, Trinity School of Midland 4A Oboe; Uriel Rivera, Hidalgo 4A Bass Trombone; Lily Stephens, Amarillo West Plains 4A Clarinet; Aditi Vikram, Addison Greenhill School 3A Clarinet; and Luke Williams, Pleasant Grove 4A Trombone each received the \$500 ATSSB All-State Band Scholarship for making the band three of their four years in high school. Seniors Liam Donaghy, New Diana 4A Bass Trombone; Jacob Ortiz, Canyon 4A Percussion; and Brenna Ware, Canyon 4A Clarinet each received the \$2,000 ATSSB All-State Band Scholarship for making the band all four years in high school.

These senior scholarship recipients were given a plaque in a brief ceremony between the performances of the Concert and Symphonic Bands. Since 1992, \$527,000 in scholarships have been awarded to 625 individuals.

Interesting facts about the 2025 ATSSB All-State Band: Over the last thirty-three years, 8,476 students have been awarded All-State honors by ATSSB.

In your spring meetings, be sure to nominate state officers for next year: Class 2C/3C, 2A, and 4A Representatives to the State Board of Directors 2026-2028.

My thanks to all of you for what you have done to make ATSSB what it is today.



MARCH 2025 NEWSLETTER

STATE JAZZ COORDINATOR COLUMN

BRIAN DONNELL

Congrats to the All-State Jazz Band for a fantastic performance! From the first notes of the opener to the audience scat singing in the commission piece by our clinician, Mr. Ron Wilkins, the students put on quite a show!

There were 1,277 students who participated in the audition process from Region to Area and All-State Jazz Band, culminating with the 21 who performed at the concert. Of those 21 members, 15 are from 4A schools and 6 are from 3A schools. There were 3 schools that had 2 students in the band.

News about the audition music

The State Board approved the purchase of all 5 sets of audition music from Mattei Music Services. That means that all of the music, copyrights, and related files are now owned by ATSSB. This will allow us greater flexibility as we move forward.

Related to this, I have a committee looking at the audition music for Set A (for the 2026-2027 school year), and if you'd like to work on that with me, shoot me an email and I will be in touch.



ATSSB Year E
Complete File
Set

\$80.00

Add to cart

The music for All-State Jazz Set E is now available for purchase on the ATSSB website. These files are copyrighted by ATSSB and are not to be sent to anyone else or posted on any school or region website.



There is one corrected backing track and one corrected alto sax part posted on the jazz page for Set E. www.atssb.org/jazz is the place to find all the information you need for the jazz process.

Thanks to Mattei Music Services for their partnership with ATSSB over the past 20 years!

It continues to be an honor to serve our small school students and directors. Have a great spring semester!

Brian Donnell

bdonnell@atssb.org



MARCH 2025 NEWSLETTER

ATSSB STATE CHAIR AUDITION COORDINATOR KRISTI FLUSCHE

Greetings ATSSB members! I would like to take a moment to thank all who participated in the ATSSB auditions in San Antonio. From the panel chairs who selected cuts, to the judges and monitors, to the various directors from around the state who helped set up rooms, thank you. And, finally, to the directors who volunteered to judge and monitor the auditions, thank you for your time listening to and guiding our students during the audition process. There were many positive things that took place this year that we can build upon to make the ATSSB All-State experience memorable for all involved. I am happy to be asked to serve as the audition chair coordinator and look forward to serving ATSSB in the future. Wishing everyone a successful year as we move forward.

Kristi Flusche

Flute (4A)

Chair: Stephanie Haffner, West Rush JHS
Cristalina Burse, Tahoka HS
Ryan Chambers, Farmersville JHS
Heather Scoggins, Ropes HS
S.Mae Trevino-Mendez, Santa Gertrudis Academy HS
Monitor: Jennifer Willis, Navasota JH/HS

Flute (3A)

Chair: Danette Conard, Mountain Valley HS
Johanna Balboa, Fredericksburg HS
Allison Bryant, Monahans HS
Giselle Cavazos, Port Isabel Early College HS
Johanna Reynolds, Gatesville HS
Monitor: Caitlin Hamer, Pittsburg HS

Oboe & Bassoon (4A/3A)

Chair: Wylie Gore, Robinson HS
Paul Auttonberry, Elkhart HS
Luis Hernandez, Canyon HS
Pamela Langley, AC Jones HS
James Trammell, Valley Mills HS
Monitor: Tim Edins, Hamilton HS

B-flat Clarinet (4A)

Chair: Crystal Senzig, Riesel HS
Pat Crofton, Anderson-Shiro HS
Alle Holcomb, Denver City HS
Andrew Kjer, Anahuac HS
Carroll Rhodes, Seagraves HS
Monitor: Melissa Morton, Simms Bowie HS

B-flat Clarinet (3A)

Chair: Brandon Garmon, Gilmer HS
John Gaertner, Kilgore HS
Emily Hathaway, Henderson HS
Michelle Palmer, Salado HS
Justin Vance, Lorena HS
Monitor: David Andrus, Water Valley HS

Alto, Bass, Contrabass Clarinet (4A/3A)

Chair: Jessica Carter, Industrial JHS
Keith Davis, Maypearl HS
Michelle King, Beckville HS
Eleanor Macias, Barbara Bush MS
Lee Smith, Sanger HS
Monitor: Wes Canaday, Elkhart HS

Alto, Tenor, Baritone Saxophone (4A/3A)

Chair: Brian Tillman, Irion County HS
Austin Nestler, Whitesboro HS
Kevin Sutton, Pleasant Grove HS
Michael Tucker, West Hardin HS
Elizabeth Wilson, Franklin HS
Monitor: Eduardo Solis, Pleasanton HS

Trumpet (4A)

Chair: Daniel Balkema, Pilot Point HS
Raymond Mendez, Santa Gertrudis Academy HS
Jasper Miranda, Poteet HS
Eliu Santos, Iola HS
Neal Woolworth, Franklin HS
Monitor: John Miller, Floydada HS

Trumpet (3A)

Chair: Craig Haynie, Henderson HS
James Carter, Dumas JH
Scott Cross, Farmersville HS
Scot McPhetridge, Springtown HS
Gary Owens, Retired
Monitor: Ramon Sanchez, Carrizo Springs HS

E Horn (4A/3A)

Chair: Joseph Hewitt, Chapel Hill HS
Scott Bostwick, Christoval HS
Sherry Marshall, Port Aransas HS
Jeff Parma, Tarkington HS
Whitney Sims, Shiner HS
Monitor: Adah Ketner, Winona HS

Tenor Trombone (4A/3A)

Chair: Gary Winner, Andrews HS
Fred Alonzi, Pilot Point HS
James Beeson, Bosqueville HS
Josh Porter, Robinson JH
Chris Witt, Gilmer JH
Monitor: Andy Thompson, Union Grove HS

Euphonium/String Bass (4A/3A)

Chair: Nathaniel Tubbs, La Vega HS
Wyatt Boswell, Forsan HS
Larry Firmin, Industrial HS
David Rogers, Hale Center HS
Alexis Wells, Springtown MS
Monitor: Garrett Laird, Cuero HS

Tuba (4A/3A)

Chair: Jose Sanchez, Gatesville HS
Dago Gonzalez, Mineola HS
John Kennon, Shelbyville HS
Jason Levin, Caldwell HS
Veronica Tagle, Holliday HS
Monitor: Travis Dent, Rosebud-Lott HS

Percussion (4A)

Chair: Tony Dorsey, Edgewood HS
Joseph Gonzalez, Shallowater ISD
Brenna Gournay, Pilot Point HS
Chelsea Hoffman, Lyndon B. Johnson HS
Tony Lopez, Greenhill School
Monitor: Stephanie Saldana, Nazarene Christian Academy

Percussion (3A)

Chair: Alyson Holley, Eagle Mountain HS
Haley Spencer, Fredericksburg HS
Matt Nelson, Clifton HS
Eric Rath, Canyon HS
Faiza Saleh, Van HS
Monitor: Matthew Lorick, Nursery ISD

Contest Office

Collin Anderson, Groesbeck HS
Marc Nichelson, China Spring HS



MARCH 2025 NEWSLETTER

OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE SERIES

COLLIN ANDERSON

Congratulations, once again, to all our 2024 season winners who received their plaques at TMEA recently. It is always an honor and privilege to get to present those awards and shake the hands of the directors.

There are a number of changes for the 2025 season that will be coming, so check the OPS Webpage and READ all pertinent information carefully. The entry portal will look quite different, while much of the process will remain the same or very similar to the last several years. I have requested permission to postpone the opening of the entry portal from March 1st in order to finalize some details in the new format, so check back regularly until the entry portal has opened. Descriptions, screenshots, and/or a training video will be added to the OPS Webpage to help you navigate the new entry process, but it will be, in many ways, much easier this time around.



We will continue the non-varsity pilot competitions for the 2025 season. The addition of these two categories of the competition was met with great approval, and I am sure it will grow this year. It most likely will move away from being a pilot after this competition, provided the numbers remain the same or increase. As a reminder, all 1C-3C middle schools will compete together in the MS non-varsity category, and all 1A-4A high school non-varsity groups will compete in the HS category. Details regarding the competition will be on the OPS webpage as well as in the OPS Handbook, linked at the bottom of the OPS webpage.

The entry deadline is Saturday, May 24, by 11:59 pm. All portions of your OPS entry (signed verification form, audio uploads, and payment) must be completed by this time. Be sure to get your purchase orders in EARLY so that you are not fighting with your business office to get the payment in on time. You can always pay online on the ATSSB website if needed.

Region adjudication will be completed and entries certified to Area by midnight on Saturday, June 7. Area adjudication will be completed and entries certified to State by midnight on Saturday, June 21. State adjudication will be July 25 at the Texas Bandmasters Association convention in San Antonio. A judging matrix of regions and areas will be available on the OPS webpage once decided.



MARCH 2025 NEWSLETTER

OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE SERIES

COLLIN ANDERSON

Editing of any recording to be submitted is not allowed, except to remove any vocal announcements at the beginning (particularly a March selection) that could identify the name of the competing school and/or to remove applause following a piece.

The traditional Certification of Advancement forms may look quite different, as we are still working out some details regarding the new online process, but you will be notified following each level of competition regarding results.

I do want to send my sincerest thanks to Frank Coachman for his hard work in getting the new OPS Entry Portal up and running for me/us. Please convey your thanks to him as well when possible; it was a lot of time and effort that he invested in getting this done for ATSSB.

As always, if there are questions or issues while entering OPS, call, text, or email me! 903-390-3271/opsstatechair@gmail.com

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you and our fantastic organization as the OPS State Chair.

A FEW OF OUR OPS AWARD WINNERS





MARCH 2025 NEWSLETTER

2C/3C REPRESENTATIVE

CHRISTINA SMITH

It is my hope that your TMEA was informative and reinvigorated you for the Spring Semester. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who shared their time and talent with the students in the ATSSB All State Symphonic Band and the ATSSB All State Concert Band.

State Organizers

Concert Band Organizer (Apprentice) John Bratton
Concert Band Organizer Elliot J. Ayo
Concert Band Percussion Organizer Chace LeBlanc
Concert Band Percussion Organizer (Apprentice) Robert Check
Symphonic Band Organizer (Apprentice) Justin Mauldin
Symphonic Band Organizer Zachary L. Sims
Symphonic Band Percussion Organizer (Apprentice) Hugh Grubbs
Symphonic Band Percussion Organizer Bana Estes
State Jazz Coordinator Brian Donnell
Jazz Ensemble Organizer Michael Childs
Jazz Ensemble Organizer (Apprentice) Devin Sipes
Band Organizer Consultant Justin Ketner
All State Chair Audition Manager Kristi Flusche
All State Sectional Rehearsal Coordinator Christina Smith



All State Symphonic Band Section Teachers

Flute Christy Henson Region 1 Area West
Clarinet Crystal Senzing Region 8 Area Central
Low Clarinet Anna Muella Region 16 Area West
Saxophones Kevin Sutton Region 4 Area East
Trumpet Sarah Thompson Region 4 Area East
Horn Odis Bonner Region 24 Area North
Trombone/Euphonium Dane Richardson Region 7 Area North
Tuba/Bass TB/String Bass Jacob Hille Region 24 Area North

All State Concert Band Section Teachers

Flute Brittany McCulloch Region 6 Area West
Clarinet Andrew Kier Region 10 Area East
Low Clarinet Aaron Noland Region 16 Area West
Saxophones Joshua Chessher Region 11 Area South
Trumpet Kara Wallace Region 3 Area North
Horn David Cardona Region 15 Area South
Trombone/Euphonium Collin Anderson Region 8 Area Central
Tuba David Rogers Jr. Region 16 Area West



MARCH 2025 NEWSLETTER

1A REPRESENTATIVE

JESUS PEREZ

Greetings to all my small school band colleagues. It is my honor to step in as the 1A representative. I consider it a privilege to serve alongside some very distinguished educators. I am grateful for the leadership and dedication of Brian Tillman, who has served and advocated for the needs of small school bands throughout his tenure as 1A representative and for many years prior.



This time of year can present a unique set of challenges and opportunities. As we enter the spring, I encourage you to “check in” with directors in your area, especially if they are newer to the profession. Lend an ear to listen to a recording of someone’s band, but also let them vent to you about the frustrations of not seeing the full band due to the seemingly innumerable extracurricular outings. The smaller the school, the more amplified this problem seems to be. Teach the students you do have in class, and you’ll be in much better shape to address the issues in those few precious rehearsals when you are fortunate enough to have most of your band in rehearsal.

During our OPS report at the ATSSB meeting, I was amazed to hear that the OPS contest grew to over 900 entries in 2024. I encourage you all, especially my fellow 1A directors, to participate in the OPS contest. There are several regions with 1A band programs that had little to no participation. This would be a tremendous opportunity for good “PR” with your community. There are several 1A band programs that do not participate in UIL but may still submit recordings from approved invitationals, provided that the submissions follow the PML guidelines.

Best wishes at your spring contests!



MARCH 2025 NEWSLETTER

2A REPRESENTATIVE

JUSTIN MAULDIN



I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as the ATSSB 2A State Representative! Congratulations to Brian Sours as the new President-Elect, and thank you to Angie Liss and the Executive Board for a warm welcome. It is an honor to represent my colleagues at this level, and I hope you will reach out and let me know how I can do just that!

For those who do not know me, my name is Justin Mauldin, and I am the Director of Bands for Sundown ISD in Sundown, TX. I am in my 6th year in Sundown and my 20th year of teaching, and just like you, I get to teach the best kids around! I've been married to Amber, the girl of my dreams, for 18 years, and we have three boys: Daniel (16), Carter (12), and Will (10). My favorite thing right now is having all three of my boys in class every day!

Best wishes to all as you help your students prepare solos, ensembles, and concert programs! Some of us are in the thick of it with those events looming in the coming weeks, while others may have just chosen a program and will perform later in April. Either way, thank you for what you do for your students, your school, and your community! What we are able to instill in the minds, and more importantly the hearts, of our young people is valuable in a way that cannot be measured. I will never forget the influence that my band directors had on me, nor will your students forget the influence that you have on them!

Enjoy your Spring Break, whenever that may be! Remember to relax and recharge...take care of yourself, your family, and most importantly, your spirit. I read something recently that I personally need to consider: "Everything changes when you realize that the best version of yourself is not a future version, but a daily choice." May we all strive to be the best version of ourselves so that we can serve our students every day.



MARCH 2025 NEWSLETTER

WEBMASTER COLUMN

MARC NICHELSON



As we turn the page into March, I'm reminded of how busy this time of year always is. From the hustle and bustle of preparing for contests to the excitement of upcoming performances, it's a time when our commitment to excellence shines brightest. I want to take a moment to express my gratitude to all of you—our members—for your hard work, your dedication to students, and your passion for music education.

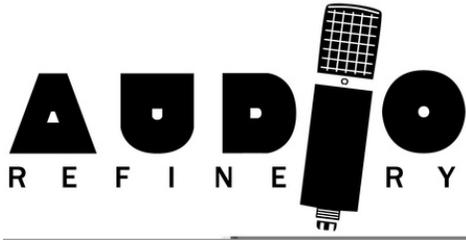
The Association of Texas Small School Bands (ATSSB) continues to grow, and we're stronger than ever because of each of you. This month's newsletter highlights some of our association's most exciting updates, upcoming events, and helpful resources for your programs. Whether you're tackling administrative tasks, planning spring performances, or preparing for region contests, this newsletter is packed with support and encouragement as we close out another Spring Semester.

Website Projects Currently in the works:

1. Site Layout and Woocommerce Update. Also looking at integrating a search function for easy location of information you need.
2. If you know of any business that would be interested in beginning an advertising relationship with us, please have them contact me at mnichelson@atssb.org.
3. Job Board Upgrade and Membership services area of the website is currently in the works!
5. I am also looking at digital media/site based locations (video clinics, podcasts, clinics at local schools, and even zoom hangouts) to continue adding opportunities for directors not only use our contests but have more wonderful resources given through our website. If you know of anything we can add PLEASE LET ME KNOW!

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got pride



Chenille Patches
Rehearsal Hall Banners
Performance Banners
Awards

State Board of Directors

Meeting

7:05 a.m., February 13, 2025 Menger Hotel Minuet
Room

Present: Region 22 Coordinator Anthony Alvarado, Class 3A Representative Bonnie Anderson, Region 2 Coordinator Daniel Balkema, Class 1C Representative Jenny Bartley, Past-President and Region 3 Coordinator and Area North Coordinator Mike Bartley, President Rodney Bennett, Region 14 Coordinator Charles Cabrera, Region 1 Coordinator James Carter, Region 11 Coordinator Leo Garza, Region 12 Coordinator Nichele Gonzales, Region 9 Coordinator Trent Graves, Past-President Eric Gray, Executive Secretary and Founding Charter Member and Hall of Fame Member Kenneth Griffin, Region 21 Coordinator Craig Haynie, Region 29 Coordinator Brian Hecimovich, Region 10 Coordinator Russell Hopkins, Region 15 Coordinator Benjamin Keltner, Region 7 Coordinator Josh Kidd, Region 16 Coordinator and Immediate Past-President Matt Knight, President-Elect and Region 24 Coordinator Angie Liss, Region 18 Coordinator Ann Lowes Mueller, Region 8 and Area Central Coordinator and Webmaster Marc Nicholson, Region 23 Coordinator John Pritchett, Region 13 Coordinator Rod Rodriguez, Class 2C/3C Representative Christina Smith, Class 2A Representative Brian Sours, Past-President and Hall of Fame Member George Strickland, Region 4 Coordinator Jay Sutton, Class 1A Representative Brian Tillman, Past-President and Charter Member and Hall of Fame Member Robert Vetter, Region 5 Coordinator Joe Walker, and Past-President John Young. Attending as guests were OPS State Chair Collin Anderson, State Jazz Coordinator Brian Donnell, Area East Coordinator Joe Hewitt, TMEA Band Division Vice-President Mike Howard, UIL Assistant Music Director Gabe Musella, and Area South Coordinator Steven Rash. **Not present:** Past-President Brandon Brewer, Founding Charter Member John Gibson, Past-President Jim Jones, Founding Charter Member and Past-President and ATSSB Hall of Fame Member Michael Marsh, Region 6 Coordinator Brittany McCulloch, Past-President Steven Moore, Past-President and Charter Member Ronnie Page, Founding Charter Member and Past-President and 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, Area West Coordinator Don Summersgill, and Past-President Rob Toups.

Meeting called to order at 7:05 a.m. by Rodney Bennett.

The Invocation was given by George Strickland.

The Oath of Office was given by Kenneth Griffin.

Mr. Bennett suspended the agenda to introduce TMEA Band Division Vice-President Mike Howard who spoke to the Board. He thanked the Board for inviting him and said he was a product of small schools and is appreciative of the work done in small schools across the state. He congratulated Brian Sours and Tenaha and Heath Nall and West Plains for their Honor Band appearances here which drew a round of applause. He noted that the invited group was C.H. Yoe from Cameron under the direction of Jon Schriver, noting that there is a May 1 deadline for applications and a June 1 deadline for material submissions for the program for next year and that if anyone would like to serve on the invitation committee to let him know since he was forming the committee right after TMEA. He noted that the US Herald Trumpets would be performing this year. The TMEA Band Division meeting will discuss adjustments in the Honor Band process which is under review.

Mr. Bennett then introduced UIL Assistant Director of Music Gabe Musella who brought us an update of UIL news:

- The sightreading pilot was used in all regions this past year and will again next year. 96% of directors were in favor of the new procedure.
- Key signatures used in sightreading were released in January.
- The updated Prescribed Music List which had numerous additions in Grades 1, 2 and 3 will be released September 1.
- The State Mariachi Contest will be in Seguin with 97 registered to participate.
- The Instrumental Chamber Music Competition will be in Bastrop again. Winds and string events at this competition will be separated this year.
- Marching Band adjudication sheets are updated and will be used this next fall. If anyone has input regarding marching rules and policies to submit them to the Marching Band Advisory Committee.
- There will be an additional hour of rehearsal added to the week for full week breaks taken by schools (but not shorter breaks).

Minutes of the SBOD meeting July 25, 2024, as printed in the September Newsletter were approved after a motion by Joe Walker and a second by Josh Kidd.

Heard reports of Standing Committees:

President-Elect and SARC Chair Angie Liss noted that the SARC discussed many updates and revisions to the Prescribed Audition List brought by Christina Smith which will be completed and shared before the Executive Committee finalizes them in time for the Year E Update.

She then reported Mattei Music Services was going to retire and wanted to sell the jazz audition music copyrights and files. After Brian Donnell related the details, the SARC moved to purchase the entire catalogue for \$20,000 which would include all copyrights, all digital files and related material. Kenneth Griffin seconded, and motion passed unanimously.

Motion by committee to reduce the number of string basses and alto clarinets to 2, with 1 in each band. After a second by Joe Walker, discussion centered around other instrumentation needs, but Ms. Liss noted we could not do anything about other needs until or unless we addressed string bass and alto clarinet. Motion was called and passed unanimously.

Motion by committee to phase out alto clarinet auditions by the fall of 2029, second by George Strickland. After discussion about the year to terminate, the question was called. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by committee to add 3 alto saxophones to each band, second by Joe Walker. Motion carried unanimously.

She then reported the SARC discussion regarding realigning the color instruments to be Class specific, but that discussion is still ongoing.

Immediate Past-President Matt Knight related that the Past-President Committee had no report.

Collin Anderson gave the OPS Report:

- The OPS Steering Committee has made the recommendation to continue the pilot for two separate non-varsity tracks for the 2024-2025 OPS season
- Probst Audio only charged \$200 to set up links for the winning entries in the 2024 OPS and is looking to stream all previous OPS winners. Collin is helping with artwork and the older CD files are already mastered so should be easy to stream. He reported that Frank Coachman is committed to

finalizing the OPS entry and adjudication process using the Honor Band system which should simplify the process considerably this year.

Brian Donnell gave the Jazz Report: He noted that everything was going well with the jazz clinic and that Ron Wilkins was doing a great job with the students. He wants to get a committee to look at Years A and B and that Year E music for next fall will be available from the ATSSB website soon. He asked that Region Coordinators go over the checklist and send Form 8, Form 9 and checks, noting he received a combination of all three but rarely all three!

Marc Nichelson gave the Website Report: He noted that the resume page was broken and that he will be looking at that soon. He encouraged all region and area coordinators to get and use the @atssb.org email address and that he would be happy to help them set it up and to just email him for help. He noted that many times ISD servers will not forward or receive certain emails if not in their domain, so we need to keep all ATSSB business under the atssb.org site where possible.

President's Report by Rodney Bennett:

He thanked all present for their work for ATSSB, especially Region and Area Coordinators. He expressed his thanks to Kenneth Griffin and the rest of the Executive Committee and related what a pleasure it had been for him to serve as President. He noted especially his chance to represent ATSSB at the State Marching Contest when presenting trophies to the participants and winners. He noted that this was his last meeting to preside over as President and that it had been a privilege to serve. He received a round of applause when he finished.

Executive Secretary's Report by Kenneth Griffin:

- SCHOLARSHIP REPORT: Value of portfolio was \$211,328.69 as of December 31. Dividends are reinvested into the brokerage account each month. We have 16 3-year recipients this year = \$8,000 and 3 4-year recipients this year = \$6,000 for a total of \$14,000 in scholarships awarded this year. Since 1995, 625 individuals have been awarded ATSSB Scholarships totaling \$527,000.
- KENNER SCHOLARSHIP REPORT: Value of portfolio was \$12,635.80 as of December 31. Dividends are reinvested into the brokerage account each month. We have given eleven \$1,000 scholarships since starting it 11 years ago.
- GRIFFIN SCHOLARSHIP REPORT: Value of portfolio was \$11,346.48 as of December 31. Dividends are reinvested into the brokerage account each month. We give the first \$1,000 this year.
- COMMISSION FUND REPORT: Value of portfolio was \$48,203.16 as of December 31. Dividends are reinvested then funds withdrawn to pay for commissions each year.
- PROGRAM FUND REPORT: Value of portfolio was \$24,927.53 as of December 31. Dividends are reinvested then funds withdrawn to pay for All-State programs each year. This fund was established with a gift from the Elmer and Anita Schenk Family Trust.

There was no old business.

Under new business:

Kenneth Griffin moved, and Angie Liss seconded that the two active Founding Charter Members (Elmer Schenk and Michael Hardy) be given an Honorary Life Membership in ATSSB to acknowledge their contributions to the beginnings of ATSSB and their commitment to ATSSB after retirement. Motion carried unanimously.

Benjamin Ketner moved, and Marc Nichelson seconded that we establish the Kenneth Griffin Exemplary Band Program Award to recognize outstanding band programs in ATSSB Middle School/Junior High School and High Schools. He listed the details regarding nominations and criteria, including a deadline for nominations, timelines for consideration, selection and presentation of awards. After a long discussion

regarding the best deadlines and presentation times, the motion passed unanimously with the stipulation that the committee (Past-Presidents and additional appointed members as needed) will come up with the specific deadlines and presentation dates by TBA this summer, hoping for a 2025-26 launch of the award. Motion carried unanimously.

Matt Knight moved, and Mike Bartley seconded that we establish an ATSSB Outstanding Contributor Award to honor outstanding members of ATSSB and/or those outside the organization who have contributed to the success and growth of small school bands in Texas. A committee to oversee this award would be led by the Immediate Past-President and four committee members appointed by the President. Motion passed unanimously.

Mike Bartley moved, and Josh Kidd seconded noted that we increase the reimbursement allotment from \$5 to \$6 per student entered at Area. Motion passed unanimously.

Kenneth Griffin polled the Region Coordinators to see which regions help percussion ensemble auditions this year. Of the ones present, 7 responded that they did. Joe Walker asked if anything were being done to pursue ATSSB getting an All-State Percussion Ensemble. Mr. Bennett explained the process and where we were in our dealings with TMEA regarding that issue.

Ann Lowes Mueller asked if organizer stipends could be increased. Mr. Griffin noted that we give a token honorarium to all organizers, but we also pay organizers (but not apprentices) all expenses related to attending the convention that their schools do not cover. Ms. Liss noted she would make sure that was addressed. She also asked that Region Coordinators make sure they handle the region entries with care, sorting the entries to check to see if a school marked all entries as Region Only or entered all their students in a different track.

Joe Walker moved, and Jay Sutton seconded that the time and place of the General Session is to be set for 2:30 p.m. on Friday, February 14, 2025, in CC214. Motion passed.

There was no other new business.

Under Region reports:

Region 1: No report.

Region 2: No report.

Region 3: No report.

Region 4: No report.

Region 5: No report.

Region 6: No report.

Region 7: No report.

Region 8: Congratulated Brian Tillman and Bonnie Anderson and Jenny Bartley on their retirement.

Region 9: Needs some Region patches from this year.

Region 10: No report.

Region 11: No report.

Region 12: No report.

Region 13: No report.

Region 14: No report.

Region 15: Congratulated Brian Sours for the Tenaha band's performance at Mid-West (round of applause).

Region 16: Again, mentioned Bonnie Anderson and her 46 years of service as a band director (round of applause).

Region 18: Congratulated Carl Idlebird for his induction into the ATSSB Hall of Fame (round of applause).

Region 21: No report.

Region 24: Needs 1 MS patch (Mr. Griffin told her to email him and he would send her one).

Region 29: No report.

Under Area reports:

Area North: No report.

Area East: No report.

Area West: Matt Knight noted Don Summersgill was home recovering from a series of strokes. He was doing better and was expected to make a full recovery.

Area South: No report.

Area Central: No report.

Mr. Bennett adjourned the meeting at 8:35.

Minutes of the February ATSSB General Session

The General Session of ATSSB met in CC214 on Friday, February 14, 2025, with more than 500 in attendance. President Rodney Bennett called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. and Michael Copeland from Stanford gave the invocation.

Mr. Bennett introduced candidates for the office of Class 1C Representative to the State Board of Directors: Kristi Flusche from Groesbeck and Stephanie Haffner from West Rusk. He asked for nominations from the floor and, hearing none, Collin Anderson spoke for Kristi Flusche and Christina Smith spoke for Stephanie Haffner.

He then introduced candidates for the office of President-elect: Marc Nichelson from China Spring and Biran Sours from Tenaha. He asked for nominations from the floor and, hearing none, Angie Liss spoke for Marc Nichelson and John Young spoke for Brian Sours.

Ballots were then cast.

The minutes of the General Session July 26, 2024, were approved as printed in the September Newsletter after a motion by Kyle White from Grand Saline and a second by Steven Rash from Odem.

There were no Special Committee reports.

Under the SARC report, President-Elect Angie Liss thanked her committee members: Mike Bartley – Canton, Robin Weatherman - Burkburnett MS, Steven Rash - Odem HS, and Jon Schriver - Cameron Yoe HS. Also attending was President Rodney Bennett – Olney, Immediate Past President Matt Knight – Abernathy, State Jazz Coordinator Brian Donnell – Addison, Christina Smith – Center, and Joshua Kidd – Graham.

- ATSSB Rules and Procedures need to be updated and the SARC is continuing to sift through all the documents to bring them up to date. The revisions should be ready in time for the Year E Update sometime this spring.
- String Bass and Alto Clarinet: Each instrument has been reduced from 5 to 2, with the top alto clarinet and string bass going to the Symphonic Band and the second going to the Concert Band.
- Added 3 alto saxophones to each band.
- Look for a poll of the membership coming soon regarding color instrument numbers and auditions for those instruments. We are looking into tracking those instruments into 3A and 4A only.

Matt Knight, Chair of the Past-President Committee, had no report (to a round of applause).

State Jazz Coordinator Brian Donnell thanked the State Board for purchasing all five sets of the jazz audition music, files and copyrights from Mattei Music Services since they were retiring. We now have complete control over the jazz audition music. He wants to look at Year A and B and would like to get a committee together to do that, asking the membership to let him know if someone would like to serve on that committee to just email him. He noted that the All-State Jazz Ensemble was having a good time with Ron Wilkins and suggested the membership stop by rehearsals when they could. He noted the concert was at 1:00 tomorrow. There are two links on the Jazz page online for a corrected alto sax part and the backtrack for auditions that removes 16 measures of rest from the beginning for the auditions. He also noted that the jazz audition music files are usually ready for purchase right after TMEA, but he asked

for a week or so to give ATSSB time to settle copyrights and file access before the music and tracks are available for purchase on the ATSSB website. They are no longer available from Mattei Music Services.

Webmaster Marc Nichelson reported that he knows about the resume page on the job board being broken. He just has not had time to fix it but will on return from the convention. He asked the membership that if they see something that needs repair to let him know so he can fix it. The site is too large for one person to keep up with all the links, but it is relatively easy to fix once he knows about it.

OPS State Chair Collin Anderson noted that the Pilot MSNV (1C-3C) track and a Pilot HSNV (1A-4A) track for the 2024 school year was very successful and will continue in 2025. He visited with Don Thoede, original OPS State Chair from 1997 when it started until 2017, and told him the 2024 OPS had 980 entries from 325 schools, he was surprised but pleased. Participation and interest have really increased over the past few years and is becoming much more competitive. He noted that the OPS process will use the TMEA Honor Band process this year thanks to Frank Coachman implementing it for ATSSB this year which should really streamline the entry and adjudication process.

The 2024 Outstanding Performance Series winners and runners-up were announced and awards presented to the directors.

Mr. Bennett noted that all actions taken by the State Board had been reported already by previous speakers, but added two items the State Board approved:

ATSSB Outstanding Contributor Award beginning in 2026. See website for details, but it is to be awarded to those who are not necessarily in ATSSB but who have contributed to the overall success of small school band programs in Texas.

The Kenneth Griffin Exemplary ATSSB Band Program Award recognizing outstanding ATSSB MS/JH and HS band programs each year. See website for details.

Executive Secretary Kenneth Griffin gave his report:

SCHOLARSHIP REPORT: Value of portfolio was \$211,328.69 as of December 31.

Dividends are reinvested into the brokerage account each month. We have 16 3-year recipients this year = \$8,000 and 3 4-year recipients this year = \$6,000 for a total of \$14,000 in scholarships awarded this year. Since 1995, 625 individuals have been awarded ATSSB Scholarships totaling \$527,000..

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Dividends are reinvested into the brokerage account each month. We have given eleven \$1,000 scholarships since its inception.

GRIFFIN SCHOLARSHIP REPORT: Value of portfolio was \$11,346.48 as of December 31.

Dividends are reinvested into the brokerage account each month. We are giving the first \$1,000 scholarship this year.

PROGRAM FUND: Value of portfolio was \$24,927.53 as of December 31. Dividends are paid to ATSSB to pay for All-State programs each year. This fund was established with a gift from the Elmer and Anita Schenk Family Trust.

COMMISSION FUND: Value of portfolio was \$48,203.16 as of December 31. Dividends are paid to ATSSB to pay for commissions each year.

There was no old business.

Mr. Bennett then announced the result of the ballot: Class 1C Representative 2025-2027 is Kristi Flusche from Groesbeck; President-Elect 2025-2027 is Brian Sours from Tenaha.

Mr. Griffin then announced the recipient of the 2025 Bruce Kenner Memorial Scholarship in the amount of \$1000: Justice Gonzalez from Lubbock Estacado. The recipient of the first Jeannie Griffin Memorial Scholarship in the amount of \$1000: Ellie Hale from Liberty.

Mr. Bennett recognized Jenny Bartley, Brian Tillman and Bonnie Anderson for their service on the Executive Board with individual plaques. President-Elect Angie Liss presented Rodney Bennett with a plaque and Past-President pin recognizing his service as ATSSB President for the last two years.

Mr. Bennett then adjourned the meeting to the ATSSB Hall of Fame Induction and Kenneth Griffin, who presided over the induction of Carl E. Idlebird into the ATSSB Hall of Fame.