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THE HISTORY OF THE TEXAS CHAPTER, NATIONAL SCHOOL  
PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION, INC.

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the  
North Texas State University in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

By

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Denton, Texas

December, 1976

HFW

Shatto, Leslie L., The History of the Texas Chapter, National School Public Relations Association, Inc. Master of Science (Public School Administration), December, 1976, 70 pp., bibliography, 86 titles.

The purpose of this study is to report information relevant to the history of the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association. Sources of information include interviews with chapter leaders, related books and articles, letters concerning chapter matters, newsletters, and chapter documents and reports.

The chapter was first chartered in 1962 under the name of the Lone Star Chapter and remained active through the 1966-67 year. A period of inactivity was experienced during the 1967-68 year, and in July, 1968, efforts began to reactivate the organization under the name of the Texas Chapter.

Today the chapter is an active organization serving the national association, professional school communicators, other state educational organizations, and the citizens of Texas.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Whether a public relations program for a school district is under the direction of a specialist, the superintendent, or another assigned administrator, few educators today will deny the need for an effective school public relations program. Ten years ago, Edward J. Neumeier wrote an article entitled "School PR Comes of Age," in which his basic purpose was to point out the need for a well-planned, well-organized school public relations program. His closing statement was, "Maturity has not yet been reached, by a good deal. But school public relations is, gradually, coming of age" (5, p. 474).

Rumblings of the need for school public relations were being heard nationally as early as 1963. In his address given at a national conference, Arthur H. Rice, for many years editor of Nation's Schools, began,

The Number One problem of public education in the next twenty years will not be the curriculum, nor will it be programmed instruction and teaching machines, and not even the shortage of classrooms and classroom teachers. The BIG question will be: Will our citizens support the kind of public education that is essential in our form of society (4, p. 7)?

He went on in his speech to recommend the addition of a public relations program for education that he defined as "an organized factual information service for the purpose of

keeping the public informed of its educational program," as well as the addition of public relations specialists to the administrative teams of school districts and other educational agencies.

Educators are not the only ones who see the need for increased efforts in the area of school public relations. In 1964, Robert P. Knight of Texas A & M University conducted a survey in 68 randomly selected Texas communities. His findings revealed that 100 per cent of the radio respondents, 87 per cent of newspaper respondents, and 86 per cent of the superintendents polled indicated they favored a school information position in some form. Sixty-five per cent of the television stations, 58 per cent of the radio stations, and 52 per cent of the newspapers wanted more "public information" help from schools. Forty-nine per cent of the superintendents said they did not have enough help with their task of informing the public (3).

School board members, the figures who often have the final say on the financing of a school public relations program, are apparently also changing their attitudes toward being more in favor of the school public relations program. Herbert W. Hoover, a school board member, in Columbus, Indiana, wrote an article in which he said that until recently, his attitude, as a school board member, had been that a public relations man in his system would be "excess baggage," but

that experience had changed his mind. He wrote,

If you simply are maintaining the status quo, of course, there is no need for a PR program. . . . But when you start building a new school, changing curriculum, adding blacks to your teaching staffs, redistricting, sending upper income children to lower income schools, and paying teachers an almost respectable wage, then a public relations program is a must (1, p. 34).

The overriding feeling concerning the need for school public relations is in some ways summed up by a statement taken from a letter written in the late 1960's by Jerome G. Kovalcik, assistant superintendent of the New York City public schools. Kovalcik wrote,

The improvement of education for all children will depend primarily upon the degree of public understanding and support of our schools. School public relations must be considered as essential to school administration as are instruction, pupil services and other programs (7, p. 24).

#### Purpose of This Study

With the emergence of the growing field of school public relations there has emerged a national organization, the National School Public Relations Association, to help meet the needs of those persons most directly involved in school public relations. Beginning in 1959, individual state chapters of the National School Public Relations Association began being chartered. In July, 1975, 43 state chapters of the National School Public Relations Association had been chartered (2). The Texas chapter was chartered in September, 1962, and it is the purpose of this thesis to gather information

relevant to the history of this Texas chapter and to report it in an organized written form. To this point, there has been no organized written history of this chapter of the National School Public Relations Association. Such a record is needed in order for current and future members of the Texas chapter of the National School Public Relations Association, to have a deeper understanding of the association to which they belong.

It is not the intent of this thesis to provide an all inclusive list of either the developments or activities of this Texas chapter, but rather to describe major developments and major activities that are of significance to the history of this statewide organization.

#### Sources of Information and Methods of Data Collection

Numerous interviews have been conducted to obtain the information needed to develop this history. Among those persons contacted for information and interviewed include early presidents, Don Matthews, J. J. Pearce, E. A. Savage, and Paul L. Pearson, and more recent presidents, Virginia Cutter, Bob F. Newbill, Don Agnew, Jerry Smith, Jack Daniels, and Rodney B. Davis. Other persons who have played, or are playing, major roles in the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association, and who were interviewed include L. P. Sturgeon and Lloyd Bell of the Texas State Teachers Association, Larry Ascough, a recent president of

the National School Public Relations Association, Allen Lewis, current president-elect of the chapter, and Veda Williams, a past historian for the chapter. A lengthy interview was also conducted with Paul R. Hensarling of Texas A & M University, who has been a key figure in the organization and development of the Texas chapter of the National School Public Relations Association. Hensarling described his association with the chapter by saying, "I have never been an officer of the group; I'm more like its godfather." Some information relevant to the early years of the chapter was obtained from the remaining records of Lorene Roby who died in December, 1969. Roby was the secretary-treasurer of the early chapter from 1962 to 1966, and president during the years 1966-67 and 1967-68. These records were in the possession of her son, Bill Choice of Houston, Texas. Much information was acquired from the office of the National School Public Relations Association headquartered in Arlington, Virginia. Kenneth J. Gelms of the Beverly Hills Unified School District provided a copy of a history he developed in May, 1976, on the Southern California Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association.

#### Names of the Chapter

It is important to explain that throughout its years of development, the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association has had several names. Between



the years of 1962 and 1968, the chapter was called the Lone Star Chapter and in 1969 the name was changed to the Texas Chapter. The association is also often referred to as the Texas School Public Relations Association. The official name of the organization as of June, 1976, when the chapter adopted its Articles of Incorporation, is Texas Chapter, National School Public Relations Association, Inc. (6). For the most part, this paper refers to the group by the name which the chapter was using at that time during its development.

#### Organization of Thesis

An attempt has been made to organize the following chapters in a way that the reader can best understand the development of the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association. Chapter II focuses on the time period of 1962-68 and discusses the early years of the chapter when it was named the Lone Star Chapter. Chapter III focuses on the development of the chapter since 1969 when the name was changed to the Texas Chapter, and Chapter IV provides a description of the activities of this organization since 1969. The final chapter of this thesis summarizes the history of the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association since its initiation in 1962 and discusses some of the prospects for the future of the organization projected by current and past chapter leaders.

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## CHAPTER II

### THE LONE STAR CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION

#### 1962--A Beginning

When Don E. Matthews, assistant superintendent in charge of special services for the Dallas Independent School District, was serving as president of the National School Public Relations Association during the 1961-62 year, there was no Texas chapter of the National School Public Relations Association. He concluded his year as National School Public Relations Association president at the annual national convention held in July, 1962, in Denver, Colorado. It was at this meeting that the Texas delegates met and began the process of forming and organizing a Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association (1). On September 1, 1962, a Lone Star Chapter charter was submitted to the national organization (5). The eleven charter members, the office they held in the Lone Star Chapter, and their professions are as follows:

President:	Don E. Matthews, assistant superintendent, Dallas Independent School District
Vice-President:	Elden B. Busby, deputy superintendent, Fort Worth Independent School District
Secretary-Treasurer:	Lorene Roby, executive secretary to superintendent, Spring Branch Independent School District

Member,  
Executive Board: L. P. Sturgeon, director of public relations, Texas State Teachers Association

W. H. Byrd, assistant superintendent, Lufkin Public Schools

Robert E. Durrett, Jr., public relations coordinator, Ector County Independent School District

H. W. Goodgion, superintendent, Denison Independent School District

Member: Ray Asbury, director of pupil accounting and information, South Park Independent School District

Bonnie Harford, public relations chairman, CTD, Dallas Independent School District

Mary K. Herolz, director of public relations, Spring Branch Independent School District

Nancy Miller, special services assistant, El Paso Public Schools

The Lone Star Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association was officially launched on September 30, 1962, at the banquet of the Texas Association of School Administrators and the Texas Association of School Boards Convention held in Austin. At this time, National School Public Relations Association president, Lee Demeter, awarded the charter to Lone Star Chapter president, Don Matthews (8). In a letter to the charter members from Matthews dated September 7, 1962, he wrote, ". . . our purpose is to help bring about harmony of understanding between the schools of Texas and their publics."

The first by-laws of the Lone Star Chapter were adopted also in September, 1962. These by-laws established the official name of the organization and set forth its objectives as being to (1) establish a clear philosophy, (2) develop effective techniques, and (3) promote sound educational practices for a school public relations program in Texas. The by-laws were actually a pre-printed form provided by the National School Public Relations Association that had blanks to be completed to identify the individual chapter. The officers of president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer were established and an executive committee was to be the governing body of the chapter and was to consist of the elected officers of the chapter. The by-laws declared that the dues were to be determined by the chapter's executive committee. Membership dues for the first year were \$5, and a membership drive was conducted by means of sending a letter encouraging membership in the Lone Star Chapter to persons in the state who possessed a subscription to any of the services offered through the National School Public Relations Association. In this letter dated September 10, 1963, and signed by Matthews, the four aims of the organization were stated. He wrote:

The organization has several aims, all of which should be of benefit to public education within the Lone Star State. It is envisioned as a service organization to other educational groups to do those jobs in school public relations which the parent organization may find difficult to do. The local chapter plans to supply materials and some leadership in the direction of good school-community relations.

A third possible area is the matter of training educators in a conscious effort in improving school-community relations throughout the entire state. At the same time, we hope to acquire a nucleus of trained PR experts who could be used as consultants and speakers by other educational organizations.

The first year, apparently the only service that was actually provided was a package of PR materials collected from various parts of the country and sent to members. In a letter, Matthews referred to these packages of materials and wrote,

If you get just one idea that will enhance your own public relations program, our first year of organization will have been worthwhile. Next year, we are looking forward to being able to supply you with more material and services (6).

The 1963-64 officers were elected at a chapter meeting held October 25, 1963, in Fort Worth, Texas. The newly-elected officers were H. W. Goodgion of Denison, president; T. P. White of Anahuac, vice-president; and Lorene Roby of Houston, secretary-treasurer. In other business action at the October 25, 1963, meeting, a one-day drive-in workshop was set for February 8, 1964, at North Texas State University. A second item of business concerned organizing a clearing house of public relations matters on an exchange basis for chapter members (7).

At this time, there were 57 dues paying members in the Lone Star Chapter, most of whom were superintendents. It is interesting to note that according to L. P. Sturgeon, director of the division of public relations of the Texas

State Teachers Association, a survey was made in 1962 of all school districts in Texas relative to what they were doing in public relations and who was in charge of the program. In a letter to Roy K. Wilson, secretary-treasurer of the National School Public Relations Association, dated August 30, 1963, Sturgeon wrote:

In about ninety per cent of our school districts, the superintendent himself claims to be the public relations coordinator, and I presume that this is true. In order to strengthen and improve school-community relations, it seems then that we must work with and through the superintendents themselves.

The drive-in seminar at North Texas State University was held and more than 100 superintendents and school public relations people were in attendance. Similar PR seminars were scheduled to be held at the University of Houston on April 11, 1964, and at Texas Tech University on May 9, 1964 (9). However, apparently the April seminar was not held at the University of Houston as it was not reported as were the other two in the annual report submitted by Goodgion in May, 1964. The chapter membership reported at that time was "about sixty members" (2).

Officers for the 1964-65 year were elected in September at the Texas Association of School Administrators and the Texas Association of School Boards Convention. The officers were J. J. Pearce of Richardson, president; E. A. Savage of Beaumont, vice-president; and Lorene Roby of Houston, secretary-treasurer (10). In March, 1965, Pearce reported to the

national office that workshops had definitely been scheduled at East Texas State University on March 27, and at the University of Houston on May 8, and that one had tentatively been set for June 16 at North Texas State University. He also reported that attempts were being made to set up a workshop at the University of Texas in Austin sometime in the summer, but plans had not been finalized at that point (11). In his final report as president to the national office, Pearce listed four one-day conferences held by the Lone Star Chapter. These conferences included East Texas State University on March 27, 1965; the University of Houston on May 8, 1965; Texas A & M University on August 12, 1965; and the Texas Association of School Administrators and the Texas Association of School Boards Conference on September 20, 1965, where officers for the following year were elected. The officers elected to serve during 1965-66 were E. A. Savage of Beaumont, president; J. Herman Reed, vice-president; and Lorene Roby, secretary-treasurer. Pearce also noted that plans were in the making to develop the theme of the annual conference of the Superintendent, County Superintendent and Supervisors of the State of Texas around the public relations theme. He explained that this was a three-day conference to be held on the campus of Texas A & M University at College Station (12).

This conference was held the following June at Texas A & M University and the theme was "School-Community Relations"



with a companion title "Communications Lead to Understanding, Cooperation, Progress." According to Paul R. Hensarling who is now professor emeritus at Texas A & M University, there were twelve discussion sessions on public relations and there were over 500 registered participants. Hensarling wrote, "This probably is the largest group the chapter has ever had in a conference it sponsored" (4).

In addition to this conference, Savage reported two drive-in seminars as other major activities occurring during his presidency. One was held in cooperation with Pan American College in Edinburg on February 25, and the other was held in cooperation with East Texas State University in Commerce on March 25 (13).

In September, 1966, the chapter held a general meeting in conjunction with the Texas Association of School Administrators and the Texas Association of School Boards Convention and elected as president Lorene Roby, who had recently moved from Houston to College Station to do graduate work at Texas A & M University.

In the annual chapter report for 1966-67, Roby reported the chapter had 114 members and had sponsored one drive-in workshop. This workshop was held December 5, 1966, at Texas A & M University, and the theme was "Building the Foundation for New Programs Through School Public Relations." During this year, members of the Lone Star Chapter also presented several sessions at the School Administrators and Supervisors

Conference held June 12-14, 1967, at Texas A & M University (15). Two of these presentations were entitled "Interpreting New Programs to Staff and Community" and "The Need for a New Image for Public Relations" (4).

#### 1967 and 1968--Problem Years

Roby was re-elected president for the 1967-68 year which records appear to indicate was the weakest year of the chapter's existence. According to Hensarling, the decline of the Lone Star Chapter was the result of members becoming too reliant on Roby to assume total responsibility for directing the affairs of the organization. However, during this year Roby was heavily involved in graduate work and was meeting a deadline of August, 1968, to complete her master's thesis in order to be able to assume a fulltime teaching position as a member of the Texas A & M University faculty. Roby was unable to devote large amounts of time to the Lone Star Chapter and as a result, the activities of the chapter decreased significantly, Hensarling recalled (3). E. A. Savage expressed similar feelings in a letter when he commented on Roby's busy schedule with the two jobs, one at A & M and the presidency of the Lone Star Chapter (14).

The annual chapter report for the 1967-68 year was completed by Paul L. Pearson of Fort Worth from information he received over the telephone from Roby on June 7, 1968. In this report, it was indicated that Pearson had been elected in February, 1968, to assume the presidency of the chapter

on July 1, 1968, for the 1968-69 year. It is not clear at what meeting Pearson was elected president, as the report indicates that no meetings of the chapter were held that year except for "one telephone meeting." Other information reported was that the chapter had 105 members and had not conducted a membership drive during the year.

By July, 1968, it was apparent to Pearson and other chapter members that the activity of the Lone Star Chapter was at an all-time low. At the 1968 National School Public Relations Association convention held in San Francisco, California, Texas delegates met to discuss the future of the state chapter. Persons attending this meeting apparently thought a fresh start was in order and made the decision to begin calling their group the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association. Activity remained rather low for the remainder of the 1968-69 year. At the conclusion of the year, Pearson submitted the 1968-69 annual chapter report. In response to an item which read, "Describe the most significant chapter activity during the year," Pearson wrote, "We managed to stay alive! We haven't given up." Also in the report, Pearson noted there were only 15 active members in the chapter.

#### 1969--A New Beginning

Officers for the 1969-70 year were elected at the School Administrators and Supervisors Conference at Texas A & M University on June 10, 1969. The officers elected included

Virginia Cutter of Austin, president; Virginia Hogan of Spring Branch, vice-president; K. Darrell West of San Antonio, secretary treasurer. In his letter to the National School Public Relations Association dated June 13, 1969, reporting the election of the new officers, Pearson, who had been nominated to be president for the 1969-70 year, explained he had withdrawn his name from nomination because he had been appointed principal of a new school in his district. In this letter, he wrote, ". . . you can readily see that I'll just not be able to give the time necessary to the continued reactivation of TSPRA. However, Virginia Cutter, I believe, will have the time and certainly the ability and enthusiasm to do so." Apparently, Pearson gave an accurate prediction in his letter because the following year the activity of the chapter began to increase significantly.

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### CHAPTER III

#### DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEXAS CHAPTER, NATIONAL SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION

At the mid-winter business meeting in Austin on January 8, 1970, the members present recommended a Constitution for adoption which was approved by majority vote of the chapter members in March of that year (2). This Constitution included the same provisions outlined in the original by-laws except that it established the name of the organization as the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association. Another set of by-laws were adopted that first year, with the only change from the original by-laws being the change in name from the Lone Star Chapter to the Texas Chapter (1).

In June, 1972, an amendment to Article IV of the by-laws was made making membership in the National School Public Relations Association a requirement for active membership in the Texas chapter. The amendment also provided that associate membership would be open to those who were not members of the national association. In effect, the amendment, created two classifications of membership--active and associate--to be differentiated in that the associate member could not vote in chapter matters or hold office in the organization (15). In March, 1973, the by-laws were amended to provide for the

positions of president-elect and for the separation of the secretary-treasurer position into two positions. An amendment was also made to allow officers to take office on or before April 1, rather than July 1 as was provided for in the original by-laws, and to establish the fiscal year of the Texas chapter as July 1 through June 30 (16). At the time the Executive Committee voted on the by-law changes, it was pointed out that an informal policy acted upon by the Nominating Committee was that leadership of the chapter would alternate from year to year between educators such as superintendents and professional public relations specialists serving the educational field (16). This practice was abandoned with the election of the 1976-77 officers, when persons elected to fill the positions of both president and president-elect were public relations specialists.

The by-laws were again amended in February, 1975. Nine amendments were made affecting five articles. Major changes included notice that the organization would also be known by the initials TSPRA, standing for Texas School Public Relations Association, the establishment of three membership classifications, the establishment of the positions for six regional vice-presidents instead of an At-Large Executive Committee, and the establishment of the position of executive secretary. Minor changes were made which spelled out the procedures for voting, the filling of vacancies and the removal from office, established dues amounts and legitimized action already taken

concerning appreciation awards (19). Previous action provided that appreciation awards would be presented annually to all members of the Executive Committee and to whomever else the Executive Committee might designate at the annual chapter meeting.

The membership classifications established provided for professional, associate and honorary membership. Professional membership is open to any person who has full- or part-time responsibilities in the field of educational communication and public relations or who teaches courses in the educational communication field and who is also a member of the National School Public Relations Association. Professional membership includes voting privileges and the right to hold office. Associate membership is available to any person who is not a member of the National School Public Relations Association. Associate membership does not include voting privileges nor the right to hold office. Honorary membership may be bestowed by the president and/or Executive Committee to non-members of the chapter who are deemed worthy of such recognition. Such memberships shall be life-long and shall carry no other special privileges (10).

The amendment pertaining to the regional vice-presidents provided that the persons filling these positions be members of the Executive Committee along with the president, president-elect, treasurer and executive secretary. The vice-presidents



represent separate geographic areas which coincide with telephone area codes 806, 915, 512, 713, 214 and 817. It is their responsibility to coordinate all membership drives in their respective areas and to provide the president with a written report of area activities each month for the chapter newsletter.

The executive secretary is a member of the Executive Committee without voting privileges. It is this person's responsibility to be chairman of the membership committee, serve as the National School Public Relations Association state coordinator, conduct the annual publications contest, write and edit the chapter newsletter in consultation with the president, coordinate preparation of the annual National School Public Relations Association chapter award entry, serve as a clearinghouse for all mailings to the association, keep records of chapter meetings, and assist in handling correspondence and other matters relating to the chapters written documents (10). The executive secretary receives a small salary and receives an allowance to cover office supplies and mailing expenses.

The Constitution was amended by mail ballot in August, 1975, to reflect these changes. Also, three additional objectives appeared in this Constitution. These were to (1) help cover major in-state conventions with written reports, (2) encourage improvement of PR practices in Texas schools, and (3) improve PR in the classroom (10). The Constitution

also established that the Executive Committee would meet in conjunction with the Joint Convention of the Texas Association of School Boards and School Administrators, the Mid-Winter Administrative Conference, the Texas State Teachers Association Annual Convention, and the Texas A & M Educational Leadership Conference (10).

Bob F. Newbill of the Texas State Teachers Association served as president of the Texas chapter during the 1970-71 year. In the 1970-71 annual chapter report to the National School Public Relations Association, the group reported 49 active members consisting of 27 public relations specialists (or persons with similar titles), 15 superintendents and seven other members representing college professors, education service center personnel and others.

The following year Don Agnew, director of information services for the Grand Prairie Independent School District, served as president. The chapter reported having 83 active members during the 1971-72 year. At the July, 1971, meeting of the Executive Committee, it was voted to petition the Texas State Teachers Association for affiliate status and the \$10 fee check was issued (13). In the January, 1972, Texas chapter newsletter, a notice was published that the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association had been approved by the Executive Committee, Texas State Teachers Association, as an affiliate member of that organization. The first amendments to the by-laws were made during

that year.

Ron Whitlock, coordinator of public information for the Corpus Christi Independent School District, took over the presidency during the early summer of 1972 for the 1972-73 year. Only three years after its reactivation, the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association was rated as the best chapter in the nation. This award was determined by scrap books submitted by the state chapters for competition. The "Chapter Award for Distinguished Merit" was presented at the national seminar in St. Louis, Missouri, on the night of July 13, 1972 (5). In a letter to his fellow officers concerning the award, Whitlock wrote, "This great honor points to the fantastic job that has been done during the past year by Don Agnew and the other officers who served so admirably" (20).

Later that summer, the Executive Committee met on August 5, 1972, at the Palacio del Rio Hotel in San Antonio. The primary purpose of this meeting was to set goals and objectives for the coming year and to structure a committee system for the implementation of these goals. The two priority goals determined by the committee were to increase membership and to expand services. It was decided that a major thrust should be made to expand membership by making a special effort to attract such groups as professors of school public relations courses in colleges, persons involved in communications in education service centers, superintendents

principals and other administrative personnel (14).

Six committees were established and chairmen appointed. The committees included membership, publicity, university relations, finance, workshop, and long-range planning. Each committee had a co-chairman and six members were selected from the chapter's membership in hopes of encouraging more involvement among members (14). The efforts to expand membership during the 1972-73 school year were quite successful and drew an additional 50 members, making the total membership 127 (8).

Available records of the 1973-74 year indicate that the Texas chapter was quite active during the year, but that little of developmental significance occurred. Under Forrest Watson as president, the membership of the chapter reached 133 which was the largest membership in the history of the association. In July, 1973, the chapter received second place recognition in the competition for the Chapter Award For Distinguished Merit (17).

The following year, Jerry Smith of Plano was elected president and in December, 1974, the 1974-75 membership was reported to be 82 (11). Smith was asked if he knew any reasons why the membership declined during the 1974-75 year, and he explained that the previous year when Watson was president, many of the school administrators from his district joined the association and did not rejoin the

following year (7). Major by-law changes were approved in February, 1975, during Smith's presidency, and as a result, the Constitution was updated in August of the same year. At the Denver, Colorado, national convention, the chapter received an honorable mention in the Outstanding Chapter Award competition (7).

Jack B. Daniels of Miranda City took office on April 1, 1975, for the 1975-76 year and the membership list that year listed a total of 85 members (12). One of the first major issues to arise was the question of whether to continue affiliation with the Texas State Teachers Association which had recently unified with the National Education Association. Questions concerning the affiliation were first articulated officially in June, 1975, at the regular meeting of the Executive Committee at College Station. At that time, officers expressed grave doubts about continued affiliation with the Texas State Teachers Association-National Education Association. The questions persisted at a similar meeting of the officers in San Antonio in September and through the fall of 1975 (18).

At the request of Daniels, TSTA-NEA affiliate relations director John H. Lovelady attended the January, 1976, meeting of the Executive Committee in Austin. At that meeting, Lovelady spoke at length about the obligations of affiliation to both parties under the TSTA-NEA Constitution. When questioned about the provision of the constitution requiring

officers of affiliate organizations to be members of TSTA-NEA, Lovelady responded that this particular provision was not strictly enforced. He added, that he was not speaking with authority on future postures that might be assumed by TSTA-NEA. Following Lovelady's presentation, the officers of the Executive Committee voted to take no action on affiliation until a later date.

The matter of affiliation was brought to the attention of chapter officers in Fort Worth in March, 1976. At that time, Daniels read a letter addressed to him from TSTA-NEA. The letter stated that current chapter affiliation with TSTA-NEA continued through the school year 1975-76. The letter also indicated that, beginning with school year 1976-77, unified membership with TSTA-NEA would be mandatory for all members of the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association if affiliation was to continue. At the Fort Worth meeting, chapter officers voted to submit the matter of affiliation to the membership of the chapter.

Following that meeting, Daniels received a letter from Lovelady listing the names of 1975-76 chapter officers who were not members of TSTA-NEA. Lovelady enclosed membership cards in his letter and requested that Daniels have the named officers join TSTA-NEA so that affiliation "will not remain in jeopardy" (18).

Current president Rodney B. Davis of Dallas took office

in April, 1976, after the decision had been made to submit the matter of affiliation to the membership of the chapter. He appointed an ad hoc committee consisting of Ellen Anderson of Austin, Jerry Smith of Plano, and Allen Lewis of Houston, to prepare a series of "pro" and "con" arguments regarding affiliation. This paper was prepared and sent to members by mail on April 29, 1976, with a ballot on which members were to vote concerning continued affiliation with TSTA-NEA (18).

Results of the vote were totaled May 10, 1976, and 58 members voted to discontinue affiliation, while 20 members voted to continue. The return represented over three-fourths of the membership. Following the vote, a letter notifying the Texas State Teachers Association-National Education Association that the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association no longer desired affiliate status was sent to Lovelady. Current president Rodney B. Davis said the association will no longer hold an annual meeting in conjunction with the Texas State Teachers Association-National Education Association Annual Convention and that the Constitution will soon be amended to reflect this change (3).

One of the most recent developments of the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association occurred in June, 1976, when the Executive Committee adopted the Articles of Incorporation which were prepared by Abilene attorney C. G. Whitten. These articles exempt the chapter

from franchise tax and from federal income taxation as being a corporation organized and operated exclusively for educational purposes (9). With the adoption of these articles, the name of the organization became Texas Chapter, National School Public Relations Association, Inc. The purpose for which the corporation is organized is to support strictly educational undertakings. The purposes are outlined as follows:

1. Establish a clear philosophy, develop effective techniques, and promote sound practices for an educational public relations program in Texas.
2. Aid all professional educators to promote the progress of education.
3. Help cover major in-state educational conventions with written reports.
4. Develop and maintain high standards of professional ethics.
5. Encourage improvement in PR practices in Texas schools.
6. Aid professional educators in contributing a voice of direction in matters of education.
7. Improve public relations in the classroom.
8. Aid in contributing to the education of all children, while being accountable to the school systems and to the public.
9. Do all things necessary and proper to aid in the solution of problems of the schools and the community which affect professional educators.
10. Study, recommend, and facilitate priorities for school and community action in areas of education.
11. Work directly and indirectly, either alone or in conjunction with or in cooperation with other persons, institutions or organizations, to do any or all legal acts and things in furthering and improving the educational process in our schools and



communities for the quality education of all children.

12. In general, to do all things and to exercise all rights and powers permitted to non-profit corporations organized under the laws of the State of Texas, to foster or attain the aforementioned purpose. (9).

At the July, 1976, National School Public Relations Association Convention held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the Texas chapter received a citation for "outstanding professional service" to the National School Public Relations Association (4). Membership as of late September, 1976, was 65 members, but executive secretary Dick Smith said he expects membership to increase significantly throughout the year, as he felt that many past members had merely been slow in submitting their 1976-77 dues. At the close of the 1975-76 year, membership had reached a total of 102 members, and Smith said he expects a total of at least that many members again this year (6).

A final item worth mentioning in regard to the development of the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association is that in the eight years since its reactivation, the chapter has had two members serve as presidents of the National School Public Relations Association. During the 1971-72 year, Lloyd Bell of the Texas State Teachers Association served as National School Public Relations Association president, as did Larry Ascough of the Dallas Independent School District during the 1975-76 year.

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## CHAPTER IV

### ACTIVITIES OF THE TEXAS CHAPTER, NATIONAL SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION

It might be expected that a school public relations association would conduct seminars, workshops and conferences in the area of public relations for education, and certainly the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association has been involved in numerous such events. However, these activities are only one of numerous projects undertaken by this chapter since its reactivation in 1968. Other significant projects of the chapter have been publishing a chapter newsletter, producing Convention Reporters for other educational organizations in the state, developing a Handbook for School Communications in conjunction with the Texas Education Agency, and attempting to initiate state legislation which would provide specific funding for communications specialists at the school district level. The chapter has also sponsored annual publications contests for its members, arranged for the 1977 national convention of the National School Public Relations Association to be held in Houston, Texas, and has agreed to finance the printing of a membership directory for the National School Public Relations Association. Most recently, the chapter has become involved

in providing service to the Texas School Management Team, and is in the process of developing a massive public information campaign to inform the people of Texas about the critical need for reform in state school finance. The activities which will be described in this chapter are not all of the activities sponsored by or participated in by the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association, but rather some of the most significant ones which have played a major role in the chapter's history.

#### Conferences, Seminars and Workshops

Members of the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association have presented numerous sessions on the topics of school public relations, and most of these sessions have been held in conjunction with the meetings of other state educational organizations. For the past six years, the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association in cooperation with the Texas Education Agency, has sponsored a session on school public relations at the School Administrators Advisory Conference on Education held each January in Austin, Texas. In 1971, the session topic was "School System PR--The Total Look," followed in 1972 by "The Administrator and Public Relations." "Strengthening Communication Between School and Community" was the 1973 topic, followed by "Developing A School Communications Program" in 1974, and "Accountability--Keeping the Public

Informed" in 1975. The 1976 session was entitled "Communication and Collective Negotiations," and the topic selected for 1977 is "Releasing Test Scores: Problem or Opportunity" (5). For the past two years, the Texas chapter has held a one-day workshop for chapter members in conjunction with the School Administrators Advisory Conference and in January, 1977, the conference will be expanded into a two-day event (9).

From the time of its reactivation until 1975, the Texas chapter met in conjunction with the School Administrators and Supervisors Conference held each June at Texas A & M University. During most of these conferences, the Texas chapter conducted sessions on topics relating to school public relations. Paul R. Hensarling, professor emeritus at Texas A & M University, said the Texas chapter sponsored and conducted discussion groups at four of the conferences between the years of 1969 and 1975. The topics of these discussion groups included "Dissemination: Key to Change" in 1969, "Planning Your Public Relations" and "PR Standards, Code of Ethics, and NSPRA Services" in 1970, "Public Relations: Problem Prevention" and "Confidence and Communication" in 1972, and "Communication Channels Create Public Support" in 1975 (7). Other records indicate that in 1971, John A. Gillean, retiring president of the National School Public Relations Association, presented a session entitled "Accountability...Here It Comes, Ready or Not," (10) and that in 1973 a session was conducted

for conference participants (11). Also, in 1973, the Texas chapter sponsored an exhibit of outstanding printed and audio-visual communications produced by Texas schools (20).

Since 1971, chapter members have attended the Joint Conference of the Texas Association of School Boards and Texas Association of School Administrators held each Fall in San Antonio for the purpose of producing a Convention Reporter for that event. Beginning in 1974, chapter members have presented sessions relating to school public relations at this conference. The 1974-75 annual chapter report reveals that at the conference held in October, 1974, in San Antonio, chapter members Larry Ascough, Forrest Watson, Norman Hall, Lloyd Bell, Bob Newbill and Jerry Smith conducted public relations sessions. At the 1975 and 1976 conventions, Texas chapter members presented a series of mini-clinics on school public relations topics. Also, at the 1976 conference, the Texas chapter co-sponsored a full-day workshop entitled "Communication and PR for the School Board Member" with the National School Public Relations Association (1).

In addition to sessions presented in conjunction with conferences of other state educational organizations, the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association has sponsored some workshops that have been held separate from other meetings. The most significant of these workshops, according to Virginia Cutter of the Texas Education Agency, was a workshop which was held May 6, 1973, and

was co-sponsored by the Texas chapter and the Texas Education Agency. Don Bagin, a professor from Glassboro College in New Jersey and a nationally recognized authority on school communication, presented a one-day workshop concerning an individual approach to strengthening school communications (4).

In March, 1973, the chapter approved funds for materials to be used in workshops on "Organizing A School District Public Information Program" and "The Role of a Principal in a Public Information Program." The development of these workshops which were presented in individual school districts was an outgrowth of the efforts of the Texas chapter Workshop Committee under Norman Hall of Andrews (16). A regional seminar entitled "Making School Communications Work For You" was sponsored by the National School Public Relations Association and the Texas chapter on October 31 and November 1, 1973, in Arlington, Texas. Workshop consultant was Joseph L. Davis, assistant superintendent of the Columbus, Ohio, Public Schools (14).

Other seminars sponsored by the group include one entitled "PR in the Classroom--Parent Responsibility and Pupil Recognition" presented by Jerry Smith of Plano at the Texas State Teachers Association meeting held in March, 1973, in Houston (16). "Is Your Communication Showing?", a workshop for educators, was presented November 29, 1973, at a District 6 meeting of the Texas Association of School Administrators and Supervisors Conference in January, 1974.



In March, 1974, the chapter sponsored a session for teachers at the annual Texas State Teachers Association meeting in Dallas. Jewel Howard, incoming president of the Texas State Teachers Association, was the featured speaker who made an address on public relations for the school employee, with special emphasis on her experiences as a classroom teacher. It was reported that the session was so large, that the room had to be changed to accomodate the overflow crowd (17).

#### Publications

Before 1972, communication with chapter members was basically attempted only through letters and memos sent from officers. In January, 1972, the chapter published its first newsletter under the name of Texas Chapter News. The newsletter had no title plate except for the symbol and type borrowed from the chapter's letter stationery, and as a result, subsequent issues were published under different names. The March, 1972, issue was titled Spring News and the June, 1972, issue carried the name TSPRA Action. During the following years, the newsletter was published periodically with some issues being in newsletter format with headlines and illustrations, and others merely being in the form of a typed letter with the title TSPRA News typed at the top. These newsletters were edited at times by the secretary-treasurer of the organization, and at other times, by the president or another officer. When Dick Smith was appointed

executive secretary for the chapter in June, 1975, it became his responsibility to edit the chapter newsletter in consultation with the chapter president (12). In September, 1975, the newsletter was published under the name of TSPRA Update, the publication name which is currently being used. While a chapter newsletter has not been published on a regular schedule, several periodic newsletters have been produced each year since 1972 and distributed to the chapter membership.

One of the major service projects and the largest fund-raising project of the Texas chapter has been the production of Convention Reporters for the Annual Administrators Conference held at Texas A & M University and the joint meeting of the Texas Association of School Administrators and the Texas Association of School Boards held in San Antonio. Each Convention Reporter provides a session-by-session report of a conference. The Texas chapter appoints an editor and chapter members attend each conference session and write a report about the session. The first Convention Reporter produced by the group was at the 1971 Joint Convention of the Texas Association of School Administrators and Texas Association of School Boards in San Antonio. Chapter member Preston Clark was the editor. A Convention Reporter has been produced for this conference by the Texas chapter every year since 1971, and editors have been Chet Hunt in 1972, Dick Smith in 1973, Ellen Anderson in 1974, Bonnie Ellison in 1975, and Vaughn Aldredge in 1976 (4). The chapter normally receives

between \$1.50 and \$2.50 per book. Originally, contracts for Convention Reporters stipulated a minimum number of books to be produced, but during the 1974-75 year, arrangements were made to have a set fee for the Convention Reporter included in the conference registration.

Convention Reporters were produced by the Texas chapter at the Annual Administrators Conference at Texas A & M University during the years 1972-1975. A Convention Reporter was not done by the Texas chapter in 1976 due to decreasing conference enrollment. An agreement could not be reached regarding the minimum number of copies of the book to be produced. Serving as editors of the 1972-1975 Convention Reporters for the Annual Administrators Conference were chapter members Marg Wightman in 1972, Leo Lambert in 1973, Rodney Davis in 1974, and Allen Lewis in 1975 (4).

One of the largest joint efforts between the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association and the Texas Education Agency was the production of a 35-page Handbook for School Communication. At the August 5, 1972, Executive Committee meeting, it was voted that the Texas chapter would join with the Texas Education Agency in devising guidelines which would be made available to school districts in an effort to assist them in developing school communication programs. Six members of the Texas chapter served on the writing team committee. These members were Gordon Downum, Jane Griffis, Sara Harris, Ronald K. Lindsay, Forrest Watson

and Ron Whitlock. The handbook, which is Texas Education Agency Bulletin 741, made its public debut at the Mid-Winter Conference for School Administrators in January, 1974, and later during the month, a copy was sent to all chapter members and to all superintendents, Council of Communicators members, deans of schools of education, State Board of Education members, and Texas Education Agency staff (6). In conjunction with the handbook, a workshop package was produced. This package was developed by the Workshop Committee of the Texas chapter under the direction of Norman Hall and served as the vehicle for introducing the handbook. One part of this workshop was an 11-minute slide/tape program, a copy of which was sent to each of the 20 regional education service centers in the state (6).

#### Attempts To Sponsor Legislation

In his June 5, 1972, letter to chapter members, Don Agnew, chapter president, wrote that several members had suggested that the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association might wish to sponsor legislation which would make the post of information officer a part of any district's central staffing with appropriate financial support from the state. He continued in his letter to say that a proposal was being drafted in regard to this suggestion. Later that month at an Executive Committee meeting, officers unanimously adopted a resolution to be submitted to the Texas

State Teachers Association. This resolution read:

WHEREAS, public education is a compelling interest of the people of the State of Texas;

WHEREAS, the public Schools of the state of Texas spend in excess of \$2,750,000,000 of taxpayers' money annually;

WHEREAS, said taxpayers have the right to be fully informed as to the operation of their Public Schools;

WHEREAS, it is the obligation of the Public Schools to make this information readily available to its citizens;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the members of the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association act in accord to respectfully request that the position of Public Information Officer be included as a position at the appropriate pay grade level in keeping with local pay schedules in the State Central Staffing plans for the major school districts of the State of Texas (15).

In 1974, the State Board of Education reviewed a two-page document entitled "Allocations of Funds For Communications Specialists Under The Foundation School Program," which they did not approve. The proposal was divided into the areas of desired conditions, present conditions, recommended legislation and cost estimate. Under "Desired Conditions," the following point was made:

Principles and Standards for Accrediting Elementary and Secondary Schools adopted by the State Board of Education defines the need for a well-coordinated communication program in the following terms: "There is a community setting conducive to the operation of a high quality education program." Evidence that the public is kept informed on the school program is one measure of such a setting.

This section continued to recommend standards for full-time

professional communications staff according to the size of student enrollment and designated the qualifications needed by a communications specialists. It also said, "In 'Accountability in Education...an exploration of the possible,' a handbook for school board members, the Texas Association of School Boards (1974) recommends that each school district with 3,000 ADA have a full-time person in information dissemination." In the "Present Conditions" section, it is pointed out that many Texas school districts are unable to support a communications program, and that currently the Texas State Public Education Compensation Plan does not provide specifically for allocating funds for communications specialists. A survey conducted in 1972-73 of a sampling of school districts in the state indicated that fewer than one-half of the districts had a school communication program under way, and almost one-half said there was no staff assigned responsibility for communication. The "Recommended Legislation" section read, "It is recommended that legislation be enacted which would provide for a communications specialist to be allocated according to guidelines established by the State Board of Education." The "Cost Estimate" section estimated that 100 full-time communications specialists could be added the first year if Texas State Public Education Compensation Plan funds were available and that 250 would be employed within three years. This section continued, "Under the present salary

schedule for an Administrative Officer V, the cost to the state for the first year would be \$1,930,320 and the third year projected cost would be \$3,447,000."

On April 16, 1976, the State Board of Education was again approached with a plan of providing state funding for communications specialists. This time, the topic appeared on a list of 55 Tentative Legislative Proposal Topics submitted by the Texas Education Agency. On the list, the topic read "Provide through the Foundation School Program a basic staffing allocation to local school districts and regional education service centers for communication specialists." According to Virginia Cutter, director of dissemination for the Texas Education Agency, the State Board of Education is most supportive of the communication specialists' role and now feels that under the present funding structure school districts have the flexibility to provide such a position. "They feel like to mandate such a position would decrease the local school district's ability to recognize existing needs and to provide programs to meet these needs," Cutter said. She continued to say,

Currently, the flexibility is provided for a school district to employ a communications specialist, and I think now it should be the purpose of the Texas Chapter of NSPRA to inform school district of this opportunity, provide information regarding the need for a communications program, and encourage local school districts to employ communications specialists (4).

### Publications Contest

The Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association sponsored its first publication contest in January, 1975. In a September, 1974, letter addressed to communicators, Jerry Smith, Texas chapter president, wrote, "This contest is intended to recognize outstanding publications produced by Texas educational institutions and to encourage improvement of all publications." Participants in the contest also had an option of paying an extra fee and having their work critiqued by one of the three judges. Contest categories were school district newsletter, staff newsletter, general information brochure, teacher information brochure, student handbook, dedication brochure, budget report, school board report and annual report. Publications were judged on the total student enrollment basis of 0-10,000; 10,000-25,000; 25,000-50,000; and regional education service centers and the Texas Education Agency. Awards were given to the top publications in each category in each classification.

Some changes were made in the contest at the Second Annual Publications Contest. A non-print media category was added, and the number of awards was reduced to make the contest more qualitative (18). The Third Annual Publications Contest will be held in Austin in January, 1977. Additional categories of bond issue campaign package, special purpose publication, and newspaper supplement or story printed as submitted by the district, will be added to the 1977 contest. Also, the



budget report category will be expanded to include tax reports (8).

### Services to the National Organization

The 1977 convention of the National School Public Relations Association will be held in Houston. In order to promote the convention and encourage attendance, the members of the Texas chapter conducted numerous activities at the 1976 convention held in Philadelphia. In a July 29, 1976, letter to chapter members, Rodney Davis, chapter president, explained the activities of the Texas chapter at the Philadelphia convention. He wrote:

From the East Coast to the West Coast, NSPRA members are still talking about the Texas "Howdy" and reception held July 15 at Philadelphia's Marriott Inn. Needless to say, it was one event that other chapters will be trying to "top" for several years.

What we did was to hire a western singing group called the "Philadelphia Cowboys" to play at the closing banquet at the end of the seminar. After several country numbers (including "Going Back To Houston"), seminar participants sat back and listened to a brief speech. Following the talk, the Philadelphia Cowboys struck up the song, "Rhinstone Cowboy," and your president--wearing chaps and boots with spurs and followed by several TSPRAs including Dick Glancy who carried a shovel--rode into the Marriott banquet facility atop an Appaloosa horse named "Apache." It was quite a sight, everyone told me, and the NSPRA group gave us a standing ovation. We then showed our slide/tape production on Texas, handed out Tony Lama leather boot key chains and gave honorary Texas name badges and two Stetson hats to NSPRA officers.

The 1977 Houston convention will run from Monday, July 13, through Thursday, July 16. Some of the plans the Texas chapter has made include on Monday night hosting a Texas

reception, on Tuesday night having a ranch party with beer, barbecue and family games, and on Thursday night hosting the annual banquet. Wednesday night is being held open for optional events (13). Other activities being considered for the Houston convention include a three-hour college credit public relations workshop, a golf tournament, a tour of different companies' public relations programs, providing convention displays, and hosting various family outings after the convention (3).

A project currently being undertaken by the Texas chapter is one that will provide some recognition of the chapter at the national level. At the June 19, 1976, Executive Committee meeting, officers voted to pay the printing cost of the National School Public Relations Association membership directory and appropriated \$500 for the project. The directory will be 22 pages and will have the Texas chapter logo on the back (13). Approximately 1,200 copies will be printed (19).

#### New Projects

Two major activities of the Texas chapter were introduced at the September 25, 1976, Executive Committee meeting in San Antonio. These projects include offering chapter support and services to the Texas School Management Team and designing and implementing a massive public information campaign to inform the people of Texas about the critical need to reform school finance in the state (9).

The Texas School Management Team is comprised of six state organizations whose functions are the management of Texas schools. One function of this organization is to conduct two-day seminars at the local school district level to educate local district management teams in ways and means of bringing about structured two-way communication to promote improved employee relations. According to Robby Collins of the Texas School Management Team, the seminar currently is lacking a component which provides step-by-step instruction in ways of developing a communications program, and he is hopeful that the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association will develop a model for the school communications program and help implement this model through the seminars (2).

"Project Inform" is the name that has been given to the campaign to inform the people of Texas of the critical need for reform in school finance. The Texas chapter voted to allocate \$1,000 for the initial planning and development of the campaign which will be planned by a task force which will be appointed by the president on the basis of expertise and geography. Possible components of the campaign include audio-visual presentations, brochures, a speakers bureau, a plan for getting state educational leaders before the public via the broadcast media, a news media blitz, an advertising campaign, and/or a letter writing campaign. In the original

proposal dated September 16, 1976, submitted by Larry Ascough of Dallas, it was written:

The first step would be to contact the leaders of the major educational organizations asking for their endorsement of and participation in this effort. In effect, it wouldn't be TSPRA's effort alone . . . we would be the PR agency for the educational leadership of the state. This means that once our plan is put together, we would ask that representatives of the other groups, join our task force for modification of the plan and for final implementation.

The Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association has sponsored and participated in numerous activities since its reactivation in 1968. In addition to providing numerous seminars, workshops and conferences, the chapter has participated in activities and sponsored projects that have been of service to members of the school public relations profession, other state educational organizations, the National School Public Relations Association, and finally, the people of Texas.

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## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND A LOOK TO THE FUTURE OF THE TEXAS CHAPTER, NATIONAL SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION

#### The Chapter Since 1962

The need for an organized school public relations program has been emerging since as early as 1959 when the first state chapter of the National School Public Relations Association was chartered (9). In 1963, Arthur H. Rice gave a talk at a national convention in which he pointed out that the biggest problem in public education in the next twenty years will be whether citizens will support the kind of public education that is essential in our form of society. His recommendation to combat this problem was the addition of a public relations program for education (13). Other literature has indicated that educators, school board members, and the media, including radio, television and newspapers, all recognize the need for a school public relations program.

The National School Public Relations Association is an organization which emerged to help meet the needs of those persons most directly involved in school public relations. In September, 1962, the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association received its charter (11). Two months earlier, the Texas delegates to the National School

Public Relations Association convention in Denver, Colorado, met and began the process of forming and organizing a Texas chapter (7). The chapter had eleven charter members and these members adopted the first by-laws in September, 1962. The primary service provided by the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association during its first year of existence was the distribution of a package of public relations materials collected from various parts of the country to chapter members (10).

Services rendered by the Texas chapter during the years of 1963 to 1967 were primarily in the form of one-day drive-in workshops held on college campuses and focusing on topics relating to school public relations. The Texas chapter also presented sessions on school public relations at the Administrators and Supervisors Conference at Texas A & M University in 1965-67.

The Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association began experiencing a period of inactivity during the 1967-68 year. Paul Pearson of Fort Worth was president during the 1968-69 year, and at the national convention of the National School Public Relations Association held in San Francisco in 1968, he and other Texas delegates met to discuss the future of the state chapter. At this time, the group began to be called the Texas Chapter rather than the Lone Star Chapter. Activity of the Texas chapter remained rather low



for the remainder of the 1968-69 year, but began to increase during the 1969-70 year.

In January, 1970, the chapter had a mid-winter business meeting in Austin and the members present recommended a Constitution for adoption which was approved by majority vote of the chapter members in March of that year (4). Another set of by-laws was adopted that year, with the only change from the original by-laws being the change in name from the Lone Star Chapter to the Texas Chapter (2). Amendments to the by-laws have been made several times. In June, 1972, an amendment was made concerning membership requirements, and in March, 1973, the by-laws were amended to provide for the position of president-elect and for the separation of the secretary-treasurer position into two positions. Also at this time, an amendment was made to allow officers to take office on or before April 1, rather than July 1 as was provided for in the original by-laws, and to establish the fiscal year of the Texas chapter as July 1 through June 30. The by-laws were again amended in February, 1975. Nine amendments were made affecting five articles. Major changes included notice that the organization would also be known by the initials TSPRA, and the establishment of three membership classifications, positions for six regional vice-presidents instead of an At-Large Executive Committee, and the position of executive secretary. Minor changes were made which spelled out the procedures for voting, the filling of vacancies and

the removal from office, established dues amounts, and legitimized action already taken concerning appreciation awards (24).

The Constitution was amended by mail ballot in August, 1975, to reflect previous by-law changes and three additional objectives of the organization were added in the Constitution. The Constitution also established that the Executive Committee would meet in conjunction with the Joint Convention of the Texas Association of School Boards and School Administrators, the Mid-Winter Administrative Conference, the Texas State Teachers Association Annual Convention, and the Texas A & M Educational Leadership Conference (17).

At the July, 1971, meeting of the Executive Committee, it was voted to petition the Texas State Teachers Association for affiliate status (18). In January, 1972, Texas chapter newsletter there was published a notice that the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association had been approved by the Executive Committee, Texas State Teachers Association, as an affiliate member of that organization.

In July, 1972, the Texas chapter received the "Chapter Award for Distinguished Merit" at the national convention of the National School Public Relations Association held in St. Louis, Missouri (12). The award indicated that the Texas chapter had been rated as the best chapter in the nation as determined by scrapbooks submitted for competition by the state chapters.

The following year, the chapter structured a committee system to implement goals of the chapter. At this point, the two priority goals of the chapter were to increase membership and to expand services. Committees were established to serve in the areas of membership, publicity, university relations, finance, workshop and long-range planning (19).

During the 1973-74 year, the membership of the chapter reached 133 members. This is the largest the membership has ever been. In July, 1973, the chapter received second place recognition in the competition for the Chapter Award for Distinguished Merit sponsored by the National School Public Relations Association (22). The following year, the chapter received an honorable mention in the Outstanding Chapter Award competition at the national convention in Denver, Colorado (14).

The question of whether to continue affiliation with the Texas State Teachers Association, which had unified with the National Education Association was first articulated officially in June, 1975, at the regular meeting of the Executive Committee (23). The question persisted at similar meetings, and in April, 1976, a position paper was prepared and sent to members with a ballot on which to vote concerning continued affiliation with Texas State Teachers Association-National Education Association (23). Results of the vote were totaled May 10, 1976, and 58 members voted to discontinue affiliation,

while 20 members voted to continue. Following the vote, a letter notifying the Texas State Teachers Association-National Education Association that the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association no longer desired affiliate status was sent.

In June, 1976, the Executive Committee adopted the Articles of Incorporation which were prepared by Abilene attorney C. G. Whitten. These articles exempt the chapter from franchise tax and from federal income taxation as being a corporation organized and operated exclusively for educational purposes (16). With the adoption of these articles, the name of the organization became Texas Chapter, National School Public Relations Association, Inc.

At the July, 1976, National School Public Relations Association convention held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the Texas chapter received a citation for "outstanding professional service" to the National School Public Relations Association (5).

In the eight years since its reactivation, the Texas chapter has had two members serve as president of the National School Public Relations Association. During the 1971-72 year, Lloyd Bell of the Texas State Teachers Association served as National School Public Relations Association president, as did Larry Ascough of the Dallas Independent School District during the 1975-76 year.

The activities of the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association since its reactivation in 1968, have been numerous. Members of the Texas chapter have presented numerous sessions on the topics of school public relations, most of which have been held in conjunction with the meetings of other state educational organizations. Also, the Texas chapter has sponsored some workshops that have been held separate from other meetings.

Another activity of the group has been the publication of a chapter newsletter. The first newsletter was published in January, 1972, and while a chapter newsletter has not been published on a regular schedule, several periodic newsletters have been produced each year since 1972 and distributed to chapter members.

One of the major service projects and the largest fund-raising project of the Texas chapter has been the production of Convention Reporters for the Annual Administrators Conference held at Texas A & M University and the joint meeting of the Texas Association of School Administrators at the Texas Association of School Boards in San Antonio. Each Convention Reporter provides a session-by-session report of a conference. At the San Antonio conference, the Texas chapter has produced a Convention Reporter every year since 1971 and at the Administrators Conference at Texas A & M University, one was produced during the years 1972-75 (2).

One of the largest joint efforts between the Texas chapter and the Texas Education Agency was the production of a 35-page Handbook for School Communication. Six members of the Texas chapter served on the writing team committee, and copies of the handbook were sent to all chapter members, superintendents, Council of Communicators members, deans of schools of education, State Board of Education members, and Texas Education Agency staff (3).

The Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association has made several attempts to sponsor legislation which would make the post of information officer a part of a school district's central office staff with appropriate financial support from the state. At a June, 1972, Executive Committee meeting, officers unanimously adopted a resolution regarding legislation for the school communications specialist post to be submitted to the Texas State Teachers Association (21). In 1974, the chapter submitted a two page document entitled "Allocations of Funds For Communications Specialists Under The Foundation School Program" to the State Board of Education for review. This proposal was not approved. On April 16, 1976, the topic appeared on a list of 55 Tentative Legislative Proposal Topics submitted by the Texas Education Agency to the State Board of Education. According to Virginia Cutter of the Texas Education Agency, the State Board of Education is most supportive of the communications specialists' role

and now feels that under the present funding structure, school districts have the flexibility to provide such a position. She said, "They feel like to mandate such a position would decrease the local school district's ability to recognize existing needs and to provide programs to meet these needs" (2).

In an attempt to recognize outstanding publications produced by Texas educational institutions and to encourage improvement of all publications, the Texas chapter began sponsoring publications contests in January, 1975. The contest is an annual event held each year in conjunction with the chapter's annual workshop held in Austin in January.

The 1977 convention of the National School Public Relations Association will be held in Houston from Monday, July 13, through Thursday, July 16. In order to promote the convention and encourage attendance, the members of the Texas chapter conducted numerous activities at the 1976 convention held in Philadelphia. Some of the plans the Texas chapter has made for the 1977 convention include hosting a Texas reception, having a ranch party, and hosting the annual banquet (20). Other activities are also being considered.

A project currently being undertaken by the Texas chapter is one that will provide some recognition of the chapter at the national level. The chapter is paying the printing cost of a 22-page National School Public Relations Association

membership directory which will have the Texas chapter logo on the back cover.

Two major activities of the Texas chapter were introduced at the September 25, 1976, Executive Committee meeting in San Antonio. These projects include offering chapter support and services to the Texas School Management Team and designing and implementing a massive public information campaign to inform the people of Texas about the critical need to reform school finance in the state (15). It is planned that Texas chapter members will develop a model for the school communications program and help implement this model through seminars conducted by the Texas School Management Team. The chapter voted to allocate \$1,000 for the initial planning and development of the campaign to inform citizens of the need for reform in school finance. This campaign has been named "Project Inform" and the chapter will be working with other major educational organizations on the project.

#### A Look to the Future

The activities and projects sponsored by the Texas chapter have been of service to members of the school public relations profession, other state educational organizations, the National School Public Relations Association, and the people of Texas. The future of this organization, as seen by current and past leaders of the chapter, holds continued service to educational communicators and other educators as



well as increased responsibility in the management function of education.

Current president Rodney B. Davis does not see immediate large growth of the chapter membership, but rather steady and constant growth. Davis explained that he feels the field of school public relations is growing for two primary reasons. Davis reasoned that as school districts continue to grow, so do their communications needs and as school affairs become more complex, the taxpayers need additional interpretation of events. "For example," Davis pointed out, "in recent years, schools have been faced with extremely complex problems in the areas of desegregation, school finance, Title IX and the Open Records Law, just to name a few. It is impossible to expect the average citizen to understand such areas without the aid of explanation and interpretation on the part of the school district" (6). Davis also feels that the chapter is becoming better known among state educators and that its role is being more accepted in the area of school management as is demonstrated by its recent involvement with the Texas School Management Team.

Virginia Cutter, a past chapter president, also thinks the Texas chapter is now beginning to play a bigger role in school management. "I think now we are beginning to see the school communications specialists playing a larger role in educational decision-making, rather than merely reporting

decisions," she said (2). Another past president, Don Agnew, agrees that the field is growing steadily and that the importance of the role of the school communications specialists is increasing. "I believe in the future, districts will be spending more and more money in the area of community relations and communications," Agnew said. "However," he cautioned, "much of the future of the position of the school communications specialist in Texas will depend upon the action taken by the legislature in the area of school finance" (1).

Jerry Smith of Plano, also a past president, said that while he feels the field is growing, he thinks a few districts may eliminate the position of communications specialist as they begin to feel more pressure from inadequate school finance. He also recognizes that some internal conflicts within the chapter could possibly lead to two chapters forming in the state, one centered around the Dallas area and another around the Gulf Coast grouping (14).

Other leaders do not foresee a splitting of the chapter, but do express they see a need for increased services more at a local level. Paul R. Hensarling, professor emeritus at Texas A & M University, said he believes the chapter should try to coordinate services through the 20 Regional Education Service Centers in the state. He would recommend the chapter organizing a coordinating committee for each region in the state (8). Cutter also sees this as a possibility and said

that she felt increased services to administrators should be offered at the regional level (2).

Other functions seen for the Texas chapter by its leaders include Davis foreseeing the chapter assuming increased responsibility in the area of educating administrators and others to the need for strong school public relations programs (6). Also, Cutter thinks the annual publications contest will become increasingly sophisticated (2).

While the chapter leaders foresee different things for the future of the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association, they seem to share a feeling that the field of school communication specialists is growing steadily. These leaders also believe that as a result of this growth, the Texas Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association will grow and will be faced with providing additional services and fulfilling expanded roles in Texas education.

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