



## **Texas Association of Supervisors of Mathematics**

**CONTACT: Nancy Siefken  
512-658-2731**

For Immediate Release April 6, 2006

### **Texas Classroom Groups Mark April Math Month with Warning that the State is Falling Behind, Call for New Teaching Materials**

AUSTIN, Texas —Three of the state’s leading educational organizations have marked the observance of National Math Awareness Month in April with a warning that Texas is falling behind in its ability to compete in today’s global economy because of math education deficiencies. The Texas Association of Supervisors of Mathematics (TASM), along with the Texas Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the Textbook Coordinators Association of Texas all called for full funding of new math instructional materials as authorized by the State Board of Education.

“The observance in April of *Math Awareness Month* is a timely opportunity to warn the people of Texas that we are endangering the economic future of the state because of our shortcomings in math education,” said Jim Wohlgehausen, Ph.D, president of TASM.

He said that current outdated instructional materials do not equip students to pass today’s TAKS tests and be prepared for careers in engineering or technology.

Wohlgehausen pointed to data showing abysmal math performance of U.S. students compared to other countries, along with our declining mathematics and science results in Texas as students advance to high school. He said that in 2003, U.S. performance in mathematics literacy among 15-year-old students was lower than the average performance by 20 of 28 other countries.

“We are mortgaging our future by not preparing Texas students to be competitive in today’s global economy,” he continued.

Wohlgehausen noted that Texas high tech industries are particularly concerned about the future.

-more-

“We are told by aerospace executives that they are seeing an entire generation of skilled engineers moving toward retirement,” he said. “And they don’t see their qualified replacements coming through our educational system. If math and science education is not improved, we are facing a major crisis.”

Wohlgehausen pointed to recent emphasis on mathematics by national leaders.

“Both President George W. Bush and Education Secretary Margaret Spellings have stressed the need for increased emphasis on math studies in the classroom to enable our students to compete in the global economy,” said Wohlgehausen.

He noted that as recently as Feb. 9, Secretary Spellings told the U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee in Washington, D.C. that “we must raise the bar” in math instruction.

Wohlgehausen called for full funding by the Legislature of the State Board of Education’s proclamation 2004, which authorized new math textbooks and other instructional materials for classrooms next year.

“We can’t raise the bar unless we have the new instructional tools authorized by the State Board of Education,” he said. “Texas cannot afford a repeat of last year’s tragic embarrassment of up-to-date textbooks sitting in the warehouse because the Legislature fails to appropriate the money to pay for them.”