TEPSA
Texas Elementary Principals & Supervisors Association

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#WeLeadTX

Round Rock ISD Educator Named 2026 NAESP National Outstanding Assistant Principal of the Year for Texas

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AUSTIN, TX –By nurturing a culture of trust, accountability, and shared ownership, Mandi Vogel has significantly improved instruction and student engagement at Blackland Prairie Elementary in Round Rock ISD. Her outstanding instructional leadership and dedication to the success of all students have earned her recognition as the 2026 NAESP National Outstanding Assistant Principal of the Year for Texas by the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA).

“We are proud to celebrate Mandi’s commitment to advancing student learning and teaching excellence,” TEPSA Executive Director Harley Eckhart said. “Her collaborative leadership approach has fostered a culture of growth where both students and teachers feel supported and actively involved in their learning journey.”

A key focus of Vogel’s role as a campus administrator is building leadership capacity. She has collaborated closely with teachers to enhance campus systems for maximum effectiveness. To ensure that every student receives timely, targeted support, Vogel spearheaded a comprehensive overhaul of the Student Support Team (SST) process. This involved developing clear protocols, enhancing the use of progress monitoring tools, and creating reliable data review systems alongside teachers. The new systemic approach has been described by teachers as actionable, supportive, and aligned with student needs, resulting in measurable student growth and academic improvement. Additionally, Vogel worked with teachers to establish a clear, step-by-step Professional Learning Community (PLC) process. This revamped PLC framework has encouraged deeper collaborative discussions among teachers, enhanced instruction, and ensured alignment in purpose, practice, and progress across the campus.

Vogel has also reinforced systems to guarantee that all students have opportunities to take on leadership roles within the campus. Since 2018, the school has proudly maintained its status as a Lighthouse campus. Student leadership roles are aligned with the 8 Habits framework, promoting ownership, communication, and service among students. As a result, students across all grade levels contribute to a positive, productive community, with teachers noting an increase in student engagement.

“Ms. Vogel's impact extends beyond systems and structures. She is a trusted instructional leader and thought partner for teachers…She leads with both expertise and empathy, balancing high expectations with genuine care for staff and students alike. Her ability to translate complex data into actionable next steps has strengthened instruction and improved outcomes for students with diverse learning needs,” Jesica Borunda, Blackland Prairie Elementary Principal, wrote in her recommendation letter.

Vogel will be recognized at the TEPSA Legacy Celebration Dinner, Monday, June 8 at the Round Rock Kalahari. She will also be featured on the NAESP 2026 Class of National Outstanding Assistant Principals webpage.

The NAESP National Outstanding Assistant Principal of the Year for Texas award is sponsored by TEPSA in coordination with the National Association of Elementary School Principals. The award recognizes assistant principals who have demonstrated a positive impact on students and learning. Criteria include:

- A commitment to excellence and exceptional leadership as evidenced by student achievement and programs designed to meet the academic and social needs of all students.
- Firmly established community ties and respect from teachers, students, and the community.

- Exceptional leadership in a particular school program.

TEPSA is proud to have Horace Mann supporting the Texas program.

“Mandi’s reputation precedes her! A true go-getter who leads with purpose, acts with urgency, and makes a lasting impact every single day with her staff and students!” Lori Gray, Horace Mann Agency Consultant said.

Horace Mann is the largest national multiline insurance company focusing on educators’ financial needs. Horace Mann provides insurance specifically designed for educators. Horace Mann offers auto, home, life, and retirement products as well as supplemental products. In addition, Horace Mann enhanced their offerings with the student loan forgiveness platform and the recent addition of HMScore that allows educators free credit monitoring and coaching. Founded by Educators for Educators® in 1945, the company is headquartered in Springfield, Illinois. For more information, visit horacemann.com.

TEPSA, whose hallmark is educational leaders learning with and from each other, has served Texas PK-8 school leaders since 1917. Member-owned and member-governed, TEPSA represents more than 6,000 members who direct the activities of more than 3 million PK-8 schoolchildren.

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