



### **TCWSE Mission**

***Our mission is to build and sustain a diverse community of women educational leaders dedicated to promoting equity and excellence through renewal, mentoring, and career advancement support.***

### **February 2026**

*"She was beautiful, but not like those girls in the magazines. She was beautiful, for the way she thought. She was beautiful for the sparkle in her eyes when she talked about something she loved. She was beautiful, for her ability to make other people smile, even if she was sad. No, she wasn't beautiful for something as temporary as her looks. She was beautiful, deep down to her soul. She is beautiful."*

*~F. Scott Fitzgerald*

### **Lifting Up...**

***Happy February!*** This month's focus is about **loving** what we do. Of course, February is the month of Valentine's Day and **love**, most often agape **love** and thinking about the significant others that we cherish in our lives. This can also be a time in the dull of winter, to stop and reflect on what we **love** in our careers. Are we on the right path? One way to combat stress is to step away from it and reflect on what you truly do **love** about the job you are in today! No job is perfect but there are always good things to see...the children, the people, the mission, the difference you are making. In a way, it's time to smell the Valentine roses related to our current positions. I've always believed that part of being a campus or district leader charged me with helping others see their impact as well. When others around us feel trusted, respected and valued, they naturally are more dedicated. This month is a good time for the personal reflection of your **love** for your job and to ask yourself if you are facilitating that reflection for

*those who work with you. It starts with the leader!*



### **Christie Whitbeck, Executive Director**

Check out this issue for: **conference reflection and photos, a survey link for those who were able to attend, future event dates in our regions, a special short video** to be reminded of the power of TCWSE as your "back-up" singers (you can use this for your own leading, too), a new **Scripture** of the month focused on love and more! While we work in competitive fields, we must be women who lift each other up! Nothing can be more powerful than connecting with a colleague to help us listen, grow and be inspired! For questions about TCWSE contact Dr. Christie Whitbeck, Executive Director at [christiewhitbeck@yahoo.com](mailto:christiewhitbeck@yahoo.com) or [TCWSEexecdir@gmail.com](mailto:TCWSEexecdir@gmail.com).

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## President's Message

**Dear TCWSE Members,**

**Take Flight: Claim Your Power. Elevate Your Impact.**

*A Leadership Journey with Sonja A. Brown*

**February: Cleared for Takeoff – Lessons from Our 2026 Conference**

Welcome to this month's President's Message in our *Take Flight: Claim Your Power. Elevate Your Impact* series. Each month, I will share reflections, insights, and encouragement designed to support you as a woman leader and strengthen our collective work through TCWSE.

Our 2026 Annual Conference in January was more than an event. It was a gathering of purpose, passion, and possibility. It reminded us why TCWSE exists: to create access for all, to amplify voices from every corner of experience, and to prepare women leaders to rise with confidence and clarity.

From powerful keynote moments to meaningful focus sessions and authentic connections, this year's conference reflected the strength of our community. We witnessed what happens when women leaders come together with open minds, shared values, and a commitment to growth. We honored our history, engaged the present, and boldly embraced the future.

One of our strategic priorities as an organization is to ensure that TCWSE remains responsive to the needs of our members. That is why, for the first time, we launched a comprehensive post-conference survey. Your feedback is not a formality. It is a leadership tool. It informs our planning, sharpens our programming, and strengthens our accountability to you.

Another priority is leadership development across generations and career stages. Our conference demonstrated the power of cross-generational collaboration and mentorship. Whether you are new to executive leadership or a seasoned professional, TCWSE is committed to providing pathways for continued growth, learning, and influence.

As we move forward from this conference, I encourage you to take intentional next steps. Reflect on one idea you gained and apply it in your work. Reach out to one connection you made and nurture that relationship. Volunteer for one opportunity that stretches your

leadership capacity. Growth happens when inspiration meets action.

This month, I encourage you to complete the conference survey (see below), participate in upcoming professional learning opportunities, and remain engaged with your local and state TCWSE networks. Your voice, your presence, and your participation are essential to our collective success.

Thank you for your leadership, your service, and your continued commitment to this organization. Together, we will keep rising, supporting one another, and shaping the future of educational leadership across Texas.

With gratitude and purpose,

**Sonja A. Brown**

Pilot, Texas Council of Women School Executives

*"Impact grows when reflection turns into action."*

*If you attended the conference, please take a few minutes and complete the survey below:*

<https://bit.ly/TCWSE2026ConferenceFeedbackSurvey>



**Our Conference was a Huge Success Despite the Weather  
See Highlights Below  
More Photos are on the Website**

### ***Board and Regional Rep Meeting***



### ***Check-In, Registration and T-Shirts***



*T-Shirts sponsored by Larry Lewis with The Impact Institute*

***Take Flight Theme Sets the Tone  
Thanks to Crystal Romero-Mueller for Leading Decor and her  
Fabulous Committee***







***Welcome Aboard from the Board!***  
***(not pictured Sharon DeLoach)***



***Keynote Speaker Cherish Pipkins***  
***"Every Day Is An Interview"***



*Reception and Reuniting*





***Hallelujah for Sunrise Service with Tina Seaman***



***Executive Director Dr. Whitbeck Shares Goals and Vision for TCWSE***



***TCWSE is nearly 700 members strong!  
Completed our 501(c)(3) - Special thanks to Geneva Jones and Associates  
Working towards National Status by 2028!***

TCWSE is here to serve and assist you along your career and leadership journey. Enjoy this short Instagram clip showing how important your "backup singers" can be in building your confidence and how much they get inspired in return from being a part of another person's success. In this 3-minute rehearsal, Broadway singer, Keala Settle, is rehearsing her lead song, "This is Me" for the movie The Greatest Showman. Notice the strength she gains from the beginning to the end. TCWSE is here to be your backup singers, and you are our star! *Note: Think leadership-can you use this concept in your leadership today?*

[https://www.instagram.com/reel/DG1stBhpm1x/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_button\\_share\\_sheet](https://www.instagram.com/reel/DG1stBhpm1x/?utm_source=ig_web_button_share_sheet)

***Meaningful Sessions Outstanding Presentations Throughout***











***Newcomers Get Special Welcome  
Led by Regina Sims***





***Special Award Recipients***



***Margaret Montgomery Leadership Award  
Dr. Martha Salazar-Zamora***



***Bravo Award Region 4 Jennifer Petru***



***Bravo Award Region 5 Amanda Hawk***



***Bravo Award Region 7 Dr. Marla Sheppard***



***Bravo Award Region 13 Angela Gamez***



***Bravo Award Region 20 Tanya Tate***

***Ann Halstead Scholarship Recipient Alicia Martin  
(Not Pictured)***

***Leadership Panel  
Leading Through Turbulence with a Safe Landing  
Moderator: Dr. Martha Salazar-Zamora  
Panel: Kristen Walls, Dr. Dana Bashara, Dr. Christie Whitbeck***





*Door Prizes Always a Delight*



***Mentors Meeting Mentees***





***Would you like to mentor a fellow member or be mentored?  
Contact Dr. Whitbeck***

### ***Annual Female Superintendent Summit***



***Welcome and Greetings***



***Superintendents 0-3 Years Experience***



***Superintendents 3-7 Years***



***Superintendents 7 Years and Beyond!***

***Thank you to our Vendors and Sponsors  
They had fun, too!***





**TAKE FLIGHT**  
TCMPS 2026  
Claim Your Power. Elevate Your Impact.

**2026 Conference Sponsors**

**President's Circle**

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Population and Survey Analytics  
Quill.org  
Rural Youth Mental Health  
Responsive Learning  
Scholastic Education  
Sirius Education Solutions  
Weatherhead Consulting & Development

**Silver Sponsor**

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***Keynote Speaker Jill Siler  
"Executive Presence"***



***Passing of the Baton  
President Martha Salazar Zamora to President Sonja Brown  
New Officers  
President***





***2026-27 Board  
(not pictured Sharon Deloach and Paula Patterson)  
Past Presidents***



***Always Time for Silent Auction and Shopping***





***Closing Final Group Picture  
Saturday, January 23, 2026  
Great Flight Ladies!***

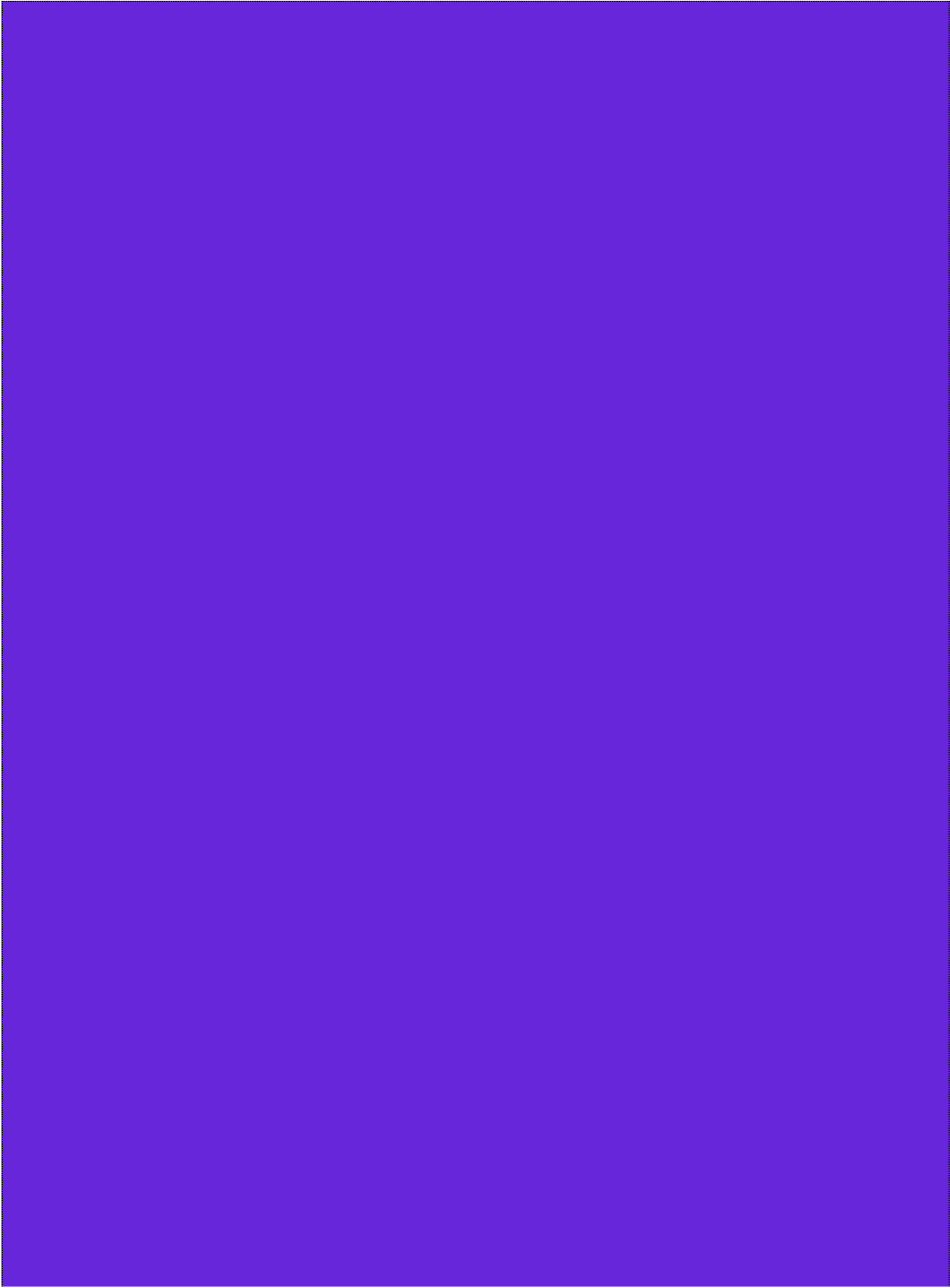


***Mark your calendars now for 2027 January 22 and 23, 2027***

***What's Ahead?***

***Check out the Exciting Regional Events Across our State!***

***Note: Region 13 Book Study Open to All.....Get Involved at Your Region  
Level or Join With Other Women Leaders in Texas***



**THE POWER OF WE!**



**R4TCWSE Spring Conference**  
**March 28, 2026**  
**8:00am-1:00pm**  
**Null Middle School**

Rising Together



## TCWSE REGION 6 CONFERENCE

**FREE  
ENTRY!**

\*Please Register

At the conference, we will have a day of networking, learning, and empowerment for you! Sessions include:

- AI - The Executive "Easy Button"
- Power of a Personal Brand
- The Happiness Advantage: Leading with Positivity and Purpose
- How Women Rise: Changing for the Better

\*Lunch is Provided.

Monday, March 30th



9:00 am-1:00 pm



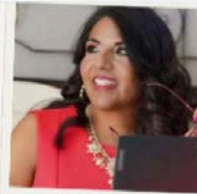
1520 Lone Star Parkway  
Montgomery, TX 77316



For More Information Contact:  
[amy.busby@misd.org](mailto:amy.busby@misd.org)

**REGISTER NOW**





Guest Speaker  
Veronica Sopher

SAVE THE DATE:  
SPRING MEETING  
& CONNECTION

Join us for lunch, connection, and an incredible guest speaker and topic:

Veronica Sopher  
"Imposter Syndrome:  
Erasing the Myths"

When: Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> 11-2pm  
Where: Region 13 Service Center



REGIONAL COUNCIL  
TOWSE  
Connection and  
Professional Growth



Mentorship



WOMEN

Who

LEAD

# Book Study

**Women Who Lead:** Insights, Inspiration, and Guidance to Grow as an Educator (Your blueprint on how to promote gender equality in educational leadership and end the broken rung once and for all.)

SPRING 2026  
FEB-JUNE

[SIGN UP HERE](#)



**JOIN US!**



TCWSE Region 13

## REGION 17 REGIONAL MEETING *RSVP*



### Empowerment Luncheon

Texas Council of Women School Executives

Noon-1:30 pm

May 8, 2026

Texas Tech Credit Union  
6319 79th, Lbk, Tx 79424

### RSVP at the link below:

<https://forms.gle/3LEFCutVYMNDtL0e9>

### ***Let's Celebrate Each Other***

*Do you know of a female colleague who has been recognized or recently promoted? Send their name and recognition or new position information to Dr. Christie Whitbeck at [TCWSEexecdir@gmail.com](mailto:TCWSEexecdir@gmail.com) for possible inclusion in the next newsletter.*

### ***Scriptures of the Month***

*The scriptures below reflect thoughts of **love** during this month of February*

- **1 Corinthians 16:14** – "Let all that you do be done in love".
- **Colossians 3:14** – "Above all, be loving. This ties everything together perfectly".
- **Romans 12:9-10** – "Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love".
- **Proverbs 10:12** – "Hatred stirs up trouble, but love forgives all offenses".
- **1 John 4:18** – "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear...".
- **John 13:34-35** – "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one

another".

- **Romans 13:10** "Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law".

## 2025-26 TCWSE Regional Representative List!

*Reach out to your TCWSE Regional Representative to get involved  
in your regional TCWSE Chapter*

To find a list of TCWSE Regional Reps <https://tcwse.org/> or see below:

***Reach out to your TCWSE Regional Representative to get involved  
in your regional TCWSE Chapter***

- Region 1 [Michelle DeWitt](#) - Superintendent - Lyford CISD  
Region 2 [Dela Castillo](#) - Chief Financial Officer- Beeville ISD  
Region 3 [Melissa Gonzales](#) - Superintendent Refugio ISD  
Region 4 [Paula Patterson](#) - Superintendent - Crosby ISD  
Region 5 [Bridget Kirby](#) - Assistant Superintendent- Silsbee ISD  
Region 6 [Amy Busby](#) - Asst. Superintendent of Student Serv.- Montgomery ISD  
Region 7 [Misti Smith](#) -Director of Federal and State Programs - West Sabine ISD  
Region 8 [Melissa Reid](#) - TSL Coach - Region 8 ESC  
Region 9 [Carla Hennessey](#) - Superintendent- Montague ISD  
Region 10 [April Estrada](#) - Deputy Executive Director- ECS Region 10  
Region 11 [Cathy Sewell](#) - Deputy Executive Director- ESC Region 11  
Region 12 [Tiffany Spicer](#) - Superintendent - Waco ISD  
Region 13 [Alicia Maphies](#) - Director of Curriculum and Instr. - Dripping Springs ISD  
Region 14 [Chanda Bloch](#) - Superintendent- Hamlin Collegiate ISD  
Region 15 [Mandy Traylor](#) - Superintendent- Veribest ISD  
Region 16 [Kelly Legg](#) - Assistant Superintendent- Dumas ISD  
Region 17 [Cicely Alexander](#) - Director of Counseling- Lubbock ISD  
Region 18 [Michelle Rinehart](#) - Superintendent- Alpine ISD  
Region 19 [Blanca Cruz](#) - Human Resources Director- San Elizario ISD  
Region 20 [Stacia Snyder](#) - Principal- Smithson Valley High School- Comal ISD

TCWSE Membership is open! Go through the TASA portal and be sure your TCWSE membership is current!  
Remember to keep your contact information current so we can stay in touch! Questions about joining or renewing?  
Please contact Debbie Craig, TASA Coordinator, Membership & Registration Services 512.477.6361 or 800.725.8272.

[Click here](#) to submit your Regional News and Photos.

"You can love people without leading them, but you cannot lead people without loving them"  
~John Maxwell



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**Our mailing address is:** [TCWSEexecdir@gmail.com](mailto:TCWSEexecdir@gmail.com)

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