

April, 2023



The Mu Tauker

The Mu Tauker editor Lavonne Dennis
lavonnedennis1@gmail.com

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International promotes professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education.

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International

Texas State Organization

Area 1 Chapter 307 Mu Tau Chapter

Cedar Creek Lake Area

Leading Women Educators Impacting Education Worldwide

Nancy's Notes

Dear Mu Tau Sisters,

It seems like forever since we last met, but at least we are in a beautiful new season! I love spring, enjoying the longer days, spending more time outside, and listening to the birds as I drink my morning coffee on the back porch. I watch the trees with new leaf growth seeming to explode overnight and the so colorful wildflowers growing along the side of the road. I enjoy the smell of a freshly mowed yard even when I am the one mowing. I am not fond of the sniffing and sneezing of spring allergies, and I do not like the thunderstorm warnings. I do remember the stress of this time of year when I was teaching. However, I knew we were getting close to the end of the school year.

When everything is in full bloom, the colors are vibrant, giving me a new energy. The spring season is also a season of renewal. It is a wonderful time to reflect on your Mu Tau membership. Our chapter has an amazing group of women that I am very proud to call my sisters. We will be inducting two new members on Monday, and I am sure they will add so much to our fantastic group. I hope all of you will be able to attend the induction and dinner at First Presbyterian Church in Mabank.

I wish all of you a very Happy Easter, and I look forward to seeing everyone at our meeting on April 10th.

—Nancy



Happy Easter!



JOURNEY
Which way will you go?

Mu Tau Meeting

Monday, April 10, 2023

4:45 PM

First Presbyterian Church

112 West Mount Vernon Street

Mabank

Hostesses: Kim Johnson; Janice Sutton, Mindy Sutton, Jean Robinson, Janice Beasley

Meaningful Moments

Tara Sapp

Program: Mu Tau Induction

Dinner \$10.00 per person

Mu Tau Projects

Little Free Libraries

Boxtop\$ for Education

Mu Tau Scholarship

Schools for Africa

SEE

Forever Families

Find us: <http://dkgtxmutau.weebly.com>

Webmaster Pam Gromley

www.dkg.org

www.dkgtexas.org



Mu Tau calendar 2022-2023

April 10, 2023	Induction of new members
May 8, 2023	DKG Founders Day, Tri-County Library
June 14-17, 2023	94th TSO Convention, McAllen, TX
July 18-22, 2023	International Conference, Phoenix, AZ

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Mu Tau Dollars and Cents

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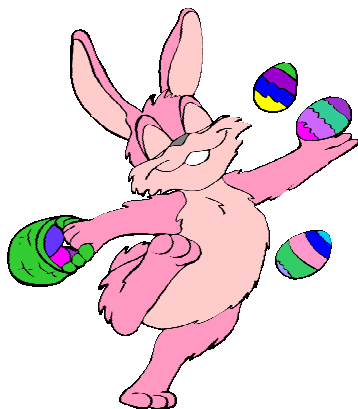
The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International

Mu Tau Chapter

Treasurer's Report April 1, 2023

BALANCE 2-1-2023	\$1,843.25
Deposits	00.0
Total Available	\$1,843.25
Disbursements :	00.00
Statement Fees (Feb. & Mar.)	8.00
Total Disbursements	\$8.00
BALANCE 4-1-2023	\$1,835.25

Libby Horton, Mu Tau Treasurer



Easter's on its way!



Mu Tau Executive Board 2022-2024

President

Nancy McDonald

First Vice President

Mindy Sutton

Second Vice President

Beverly Hart

Recording Secretary

Mary Ann Gregg

Corresponding Secretary

Angela Barton

Treasurer

Libby Horton



Parliamentarian

Janice Sutton

Immediate Past President

Monica Fortenberry

The Mu Tauker Editor

Lavonne Dennis



Earth Day April 22.

Minutes of the Mu Tau Chapter Meeting

Tri-County Library, Mabank, Texas

February 13, 2023, 5:00 pm

The February meeting of the Mu Tau Chapter of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International was called to order by President Nancy McDonald at 5:02 pm. Members present were Lavonne Dennis, Monica Fortenberry, Mary Ann Gregg, Beverly Hart, Libby Horton, Barbara Jedlicka, Nancy McDonald, Jean Robinson, Tara Sapp, Janice Sutton, and Pam Gromley.

Hostesses Mindy Marder, Monica Fortenberry, and Tara Sapp provided refreshments.

The minutes of the November and December regular meetings and the January executive board meeting were approved as printed in the February ***Mu Tauker***. There were no comments on the Treasurer's Report as printed in ***The Mu Tauker***; it will be filed for audit. Libby Horton and Janice Sutton will meet with the rest of the Finance Committee; they will set the budget in April.

There was no Chapter Correspondence or Old Business.

New Business: a reminder for the February 26th reception for Deborah Thomas, former State Treasurer, was given.

Next, two items pertaining to ASTEF were mentioned. First, it is time to decide on chapter projects so applications for funding can be made. Second, each chapter has been asked to supply at least two gift cards by June 1st for the Mystery Mania event during convention. Gift cards can be in the amount of \$15.00 to \$100.00.

More convention information: Rooms are open for convention, June 14-17. Libby Horton has a space available in her room and is looking for a roommate.

News about candidates for membership: Pam Gromley will create a voting tool so that we may cast our ballots online for the two candidates. April 10, 2023, is the Induction Ceremony and dinner if the candidates decide to join. The Induction Ceremony and dinner will take place at the First Presbyterian Church in Mabank, Texas. This is a change from our published calendar. Please note: **First Presbyterian Church, 112 West Mount Vernon Street, Mabank, Texas 75147.**

Monica Fortenberry asked about Forever Families and whether we would do a project this spring. Nancy McDonald will ask Allison Partridge.

Libby Horton presented a book review on ***Pioneer Woman Educator***, the story of Annie Webb Blanton as written by Debbie Mauldin Cottrell.

Mindy Marder and Monica Fortenberry won door prizes.

President Nancy McDonald adjourned the meeting at 6:04 pm.

Mary Ann Gregg, Recording Secretary

Nancy McDonald, President



94th TSO Convention. McAllen, Texas. June. 2023

Mu Tau birthdays

March

Mary Ann Gregg, 3/4

Shela Koskelin, 3/4

Sheila Lewis, 3/10

April

Tara Sapp, 4/25

Trudy Watson, 4/17



Heads up for Mu Tau Induction Ceremony

April 10, 2023 First Presbyterian Church Mabank

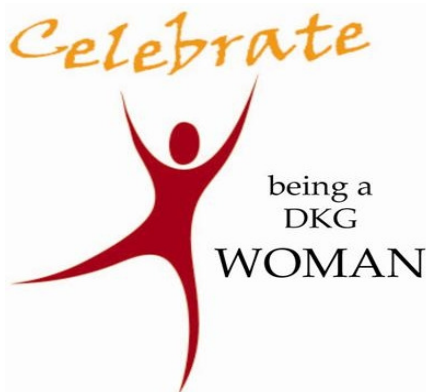
4:45 pm

If your name is here, you have a job to do.

Induction Speakers: Beverly Hart; Mindy Sutton, Mary Ann Gregg, Libby Horton, Janice Sutton, Nancy McDonald

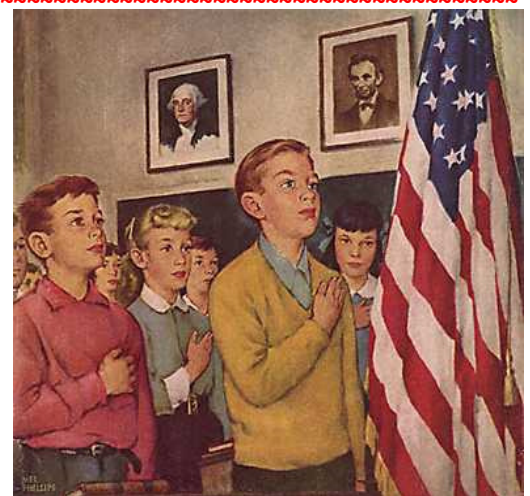
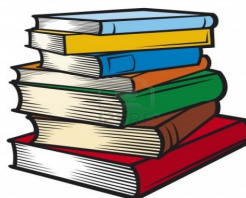
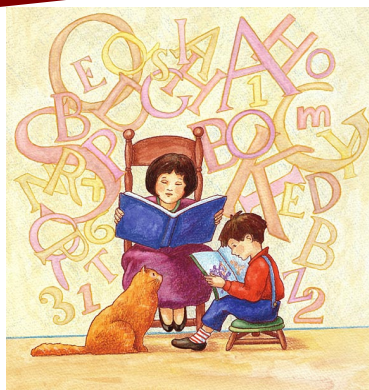
Inductees and their Sponsors: Alison Neighbors sponsored by Mary Ann Gregg and Angelya Saine sponsored by Monica Fortenberry

Hostess Committee: Kim Gregory Johnson, chair; Janice Sutton, Mindy Sutton, Jean Robinson, Janice Beasley



Note: Boxtop\$ help our schools help our kids. **Boxtop\$** are now to be submitted by photos from your smart phone.

**BOXTOP\$ for
education**



Donate **used** books to help stock Mu Tau's Little Free Library at Northpark.

Bring the books to Beverly Hart. Reading helps people in our communities to become better readers and perhaps better citizens.

Accountability 2023: The New A-F System As We Know It Today

By Angela Barton, Ed. D.

Wow, the times in education have certainly changed! As a student in school I took the TAAS test. Honestly, at that time I had no idea of the importance of the test at all. I remember my parents taking me to a New Kids on the Block concert the night before the test. Great parenting,+ right? Ha ha, my parents have always been the best parents, but it was just a different time. I ended up throwing up on my test booklet that next day, and it was so “secure” that they sent it off to be scored anyway. They said I passed, but that is questionable even to this day.

I am finishing my twentieth year in education, and what is required every year of teachers, administrators, et al., is unbelievable to those who are not in the system. When I began teaching, we were still in the days of TAKS, and the high-stakes testing at that time was scary to a new teacher: **me!** Once I learned the system and had processes in place, such as response to intervention, data monitoring, etc., we learned how to help our students meet the expectations of passing. Note the word **passing**. For a principal during the days of TAKS, it was stressful, but the game was clear, and we knew what it took to be successful.

When the current A-F system came about five years ago, educators went into a big uproar. They felt that labeling campuses and districts with a letter grade did not show the full picture of their success. The first year we were given “what-if grades.” Once we all learned the system, we rose to the occasion again. We were told that the system would remain stagnant for five years and then it would be refreshed.

2022-2023 is now the refresh season for schools and districts. The state has provided countless “To the Administrator Addressed” letters, webinars, face-to-face sessions, etc. over the past two years in order to communicate, train, and seek feedback. This really has been the first time that stakeholders have had this much opportunity to share their thoughts, and oh, they have! There have been some adjustments made by feedback, but many of the requirements of the system are either mandated by the federal government or are in place because of state legislative requirements.




I could write a book about the A-F system for 2022-2023, but there would be no point, because there already is one! It is called the **Accountability Handbook**. The draft version has been out, but the final version comes after we have already tested in the spring. It works that way every year, which makes it difficult to know the expectations for schools. Look at a few of the major changes this year:

Still the same:

Calculating an Overall Rating: Methodology

We use the higher score between *how much students know and can do* (Student Achievement) or *how much better students are doing than last year or than peers in similar districts/campuses* (School Progress) and weight it at 70%.

We then weight *how well districts and campuses are closing performance gaps* among different student groups (Closing the Gaps) at 30%.

Better Of:		Plus:
Student Achievement	School Progress	Closing the Gaps
 <p>Evaluates the performance across all subjects for all students, on STAAR, College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) indicators, and graduation rates.</p>	 <p>Measures outcomes in two areas: number of students that grew at least one year academically and the achievement of students relative to districts or campuses with similar economically disadvantaged percentages.</p>	 <p>Uses disaggregated data to demonstrate differentials among racial or ethnic groups, socioeconomic backgrounds and other factors.</p>
70% of Total Grade		30% of Total Grade

Unchanged from 2018.



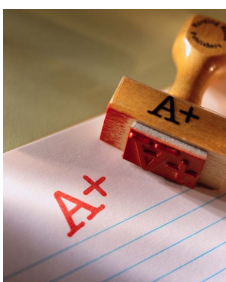
- The overall rating for campuses/district will remain the same (Better of Student Achievement or School Progress=70% and Closing the Gaps 30%)
- 100% of Student Achievement for Elementary & Middle Schools is still STAAR
- 40% is STAAR, 40% is CCMR-College, Career, Military Readiness & 20% is Graduation Rates for HS and the District

New:

- 100% Online Assessments Required
- STAAR Redesign for All Subjects/Grade Levels (This means that only 75% of questions can be multiple choice questions. RLA, Science, & SS will all have constructed response questions. RLA grades 3-EOC will all have an extended constructed response question.)
- To be an A for CCMR, you now have to have a cut score of an 88, where it was a 60. This is huge! To meet CCMR, you can have only so many students utilize the sun-setting IBC's-industry-based certifications, which were just updated this year. CCMR is a lagging data point, so our CCMR is actually based on 2021 graduates, so there is nothing we can do to change it at this point for 2023.
- Under the Academic Growth category, districts can now get an additional .25 point per student who did not meet the past year but passed this year. This is a positive addition, because it can only help us, not hurt us.
- The Closing the Gaps domain changed the most. In the past they looked at 14 different student groups and the minimum size was 25. Now it is 4 groups (All students, Two Lowest Performing Racial/Ethnic Groups from the prior year, and High Focus Group, which includes economically disadvantaged, emergent bilingual, SPED, and highly mobile, and the minimum size is 10.
- The district's rating has been heavily influenced in the past by the high school rating, because it also includes the CCMR and graduation rate, which are typically high for high school campuses. Now they are calculating it differently. The district rating will be proportionally balanced to the number of students who are at campuses that serve students in grades 3-12. Their intention is to give a truer picture of how the district is doing.



I probably have lost you by this point, but I hope not! This is all so overwhelming, and I just gave you the highlights of the changes. I've been in the administration office now for six years, and it just seems that our expectations of educators in general are becoming impossible to meet because of the number of mandates/expectations that are put on them. What we do is so important to the lives of our students, and it is crucial that we remember our *why*, which is *them*. When we remember that and celebrate the successes of our students and our work, then we will be just fine!



Member Spotlight

Angela Barton: A Special Bond



Google says that the role of a mentor is to provide guidance, advice, feedback, and support to the mentee. I think the relationship means so much more. In education, mentoring makes such a difference in the success or failure of a new teacher. New teachers come in so energized and happy about changing the world, and oftentimes they inspire the experienced educators to have that same feeling every August just as if it were their first year.

I've been so very blessed to have the best mentors throughout my career. My first mentor as a brand new teacher was Mrs. Laverne Norman. Mrs. Norman was not only my mentor, but she had also been my kindergarten teacher. She was my biggest cheerleader as I began my new adventure. I cannot tell you how many hours we spent together discussing classroom management, organizing my classroom, and planning the most engaging lessons for my students. With twenty years of experience now, I look back and realize how truly blessed I was at that time to have her in the very beginning. So many times we have gone shopping in thrift stores, watched movies, and had the best meals together. She has made me a cheese ball so many times in August to help get me through the first week of school because she knows that is my favorite! When I graduated with my doctoral degree, she was at my graduation. Mrs. Norman & Me When I was in labor, she stayed there until the wee hours of the night until she knew that my baby and I had made it through safely. To this day we still make a point to see each other around the holidays and breaks, and we truly feel like family. Our bond has meant so much not only to me but also to my family.



Having a mentor like Mrs. Norman has always inspired me in my twenty years to give back to others in the field. I could never measure up to what she has done for me, but it is important to me that I give it my best. Gone are the days of mentoring where you make sure they know how to use the copier, learn the systems of the campus, and just leave positive notes. So many of our new teachers are coming in where they need so much more. We have to be there for them in the good and bad times. We have to lift them up and be a non-judgmental, listening ear when they need it. We have to remind them of our *why* and inspire them to keep loving what they do! Each year in my role I am blessed to get the opportunity to train new teachers *and* their mentors. I tear up each time I tell my story of Mrs. Norman, but I do it each year because I want each of them to be a Mrs. Norman!

Mrs. Norman & Hunter (my daughter)



MU TAU BUDGET 2023-24**(Proposed)****Estimated balance on hand July 1, 2023 \$500.00****ESTIMATED INCOME:****Dues**

Active members 29 @ 100.00 \$2,900.00

Honorary members (2) no dues

Total income from dues \$2,900.00

Induction Fees (\$10.00 per new member)

Scholarship Fees (\$1.00 per active/reserve member) included

Honors Chapter Scholarship Fund (\$1.00 per member) included

Fund Raising

Miscellaneous

Total Estimated Income \$2,900.00**Total Available for Budget \$3,400.00****ESTIMATED EXPENSES:****State and International Expenses:**

Active membership dues (29 @\$60 each) \$1,740.00

State scholarship fees required 29 @\$.20 each) 5.80

Honors Chapter Scholarship Fund (\$1 per member) 29.00

ASTEF Projects Fund (\$1 per member) 29.00

Leadership Seminar Fund 29.00

Other Contributions 100.00**Total State and International Expenses \$1,932.80****Local Chapter Expenses:**

Webpage expenses 20.00

Induction/installation flower fund 25.00

International Conv./Conf. expenses 100.00

Donation to Tri-Co Library 150.00

Transfer to Mu Tau Scholarship Fund 40.00

Printing expenses 20.00

Membership Comm. Expenses 30.00

Program/hostess/guest expenses 100.00

State convention expenses 200.00

Supplies/jewelry 20.00

Yearbooks 20.00

Bank expense 48.00

Door prizes 80.00

Projects 200.00

Miscellaneous 150.00

Total Local Chapter Expenses 1,203.00**Total Estimated Expenses= \$3,135.80****Leaving a Balance of \$264.20**