

A Brief History of Private Schools Interscholastic Association (PSIA)

PSIA was born out of multiple requests from parents of private and home-schooled students while the organization's founder served as Director of Academic Development for the University Interscholastic League (UIL) in Austin. The overarching goal of academic competition, however, remains similar to that established by both the UIL and the PSIA charter members—the improvement of schools and individuals through the pursuit of excellence in academic competition.

Private Schools Interscholastic Association, Inc. (PSIA) was formed in August, 1997, in Austin, Texas, by Patricia Wisdom and Bruce Walters. In October, 1997, the organization received official corporation status. In January, 1998, the Internal Revenue Service granted non-profit corporation standing to the organization, and 31 Texas private schools joined together to create a Central zone for competition. These schools in the order in which they joined PSIA are . . .

1. East Texas Christian School, Lumberton
2. ★ **Saint Michael Catholic School, Weimar**
3. Congregation Beth Israel, Houston
4. Dallas Baptist University Lab School, Dallas
5. Dallas Christian School, Mesquite
6. Angelo Catholic School, San Angelo
7. John Paul II Catholic School, Houston
8. ★ **Saint Patrick Catholic School, Dallas**
9. ★ **Saint Austin Catholic School, Austin**
10. The North Hills Charter School, Irving
11. Second Baptist Academy, Houston
12. ★ **Saint Joseph Elementary Sch, Amarillo**
13. ★ **Holy Cross Catholic School, Amarillo**
14. Saint Louis Catholic School, Waco
15. Renaissance Charter School, Irving
16. Saint Paul's Episcopal School, Waco
17. East Texas Christian Academy, Tyler
18. ★ **The Village School, Houston**
19. ★ **Immanuel Lutheran School, Giddings**
20. Saint Stephen's Episcopal School, Austin
21. SS Cyril & Methodius Catholic Sch, Granger
22. Saint Anthony Cathedral Sch, Beaumont
23. Grace Christian Academy, Killeen
24. Pantego Christian School, Arlington
25. ★ **All Saints Episcopal School, Tyler**
26. ★ **Brentwood Christian School, Austin**
27. Sacred Heart Catholic School, Conroe
28. ★ **Saint Mary's Catholic School, Temple**
29. Saint Philip Catholic School, El Campo
30. ★ **Trinity Lutheran School, Spring**
31. The Regis School, Houston

★ **PARTICIPATED ALL 25 YEARS**



The first PSIA competition was held at Baylor University in Waco on the last weekend of April, 1998. In 1999, the PSIA State Advisory Board, made up of 10 private school administrators and lead teachers from across the state, was established. A North and South Zone was established. St. Michael in Weimar was the State Champion for these first two years of competition.

By 2000, PSIA had grown to 150+ schools, and schools were divided into "A" and "AA." Two State tournaments were held at Southern Methodist University in Dallas for "AA" and Texas Christian University in Fort Worth for "A." In 2001, TCU became the dedicated host university of PSIA State.

Administered by thousands of volunteers, PSIA now provides an extracurricular academic program for private, parochial, charter, and home-school students in grades 1-8. The curricula includes 20 skill categories, producing 62 grade-level appropriate contests: Art, Calculator Applications, Creative Writing, Dictionary Skills, Impromptu Speaking, Information Skills, Listening Skills, Maps, Graphs & Charts, Mathematics, Modern Oratory, Music Memory, Number Sense, One-Act Play, On-Site Drawing, Poetry/Prose Interpretation, Ready Writing, Science, Spelling, Storytelling, and Vocabulary.

Approximately 45,000 students in Texas will participate in PSIA spring District competition in 2022. 3000+ of those students will advance to State at TCU from 24 District Meets by winning first or second place in individual events.

In its 25th anniversary year, interest in an extracurricular academic program for private and charter elementary and middle school students remains strong, and the addition of Executive Director, Douglas Ray, Jr., will ensure the program's flourishing continuance. In addition, membership fees paid by schools serve to partially defray the cost of providing contest materials and facilities for competition, writing curricula and tests, and mailing information to more than 500 Texas private schools.

Research confirms that providing extracurricular educational opportunities produces student incentive and higher academic achievement. For example, middle schools that participated in UIL academic activities for a minimum of two years were found to score significantly higher on the state-mandated Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) tests (Walters, 1998).

PSIA is pleased to offer this most comprehensive extracurricular academic program in the nation to all private, parochial, charter and grade 1-8 home schools in Texas. We believe that participation makes a lifelong difference for many of these students.