

BREAKOUT SESSION PROGRAM

Statewide Advisor Training | September 24-25, 2026

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

10:15-11:15 AM

More Than a Sponsor: Understanding the Role of the TSA Chapter Advisor – Pamela Cook, Executive Director

Maple Room | *Audience: All*

What does it really mean to be a TSA Chapter Advisor? This session will dissect the many roles advisors play in building and sustaining a successful TSA chapter. Explore the advisor's responsibilities as an educator, mentor, facilitator, organizer, communicator, and advocate while understanding where student leadership should take the lead. We'll examine the responsibilities that come with managing a chapter, supporting student officers, preparing for competition, maintaining compliance, and creating meaningful leadership experiences. Whether you're a brand-new advisor or a TSA veteran, this session offers a fresh look at one of the most important roles in the TSA experience.

Beyond Competition: Far West Texas Technology & Engineering Day – Cody Logsdon, FWTTSA President & State Officer Coordinator

Mesquite Room | *Audience: Region Reps*

Discover how the Far West Texas Region is creating excitement about TSA before competition season even begins! Designed for Regional Representatives and Regional Executive Board members, this session will showcase Far West Texas TSA's annual Technology & Engineering Day—a field-day-style experience that engages students in fun, hands-on STEM challenges. Learn how the event serves as both a powerful TSA recruitment tool and an opportunity for students to build skills and confidence in preparation for Regional Competition. Explore the event structure, activities, and strategies that could be adapted to create a similar experience in your own region.

Regional Data Management: Getting the Details Right – Emily Gresham, Data Manager

Pecan Room | *Audience: Data Manager & Region Rep*

Designed for all Regional Data Managers, this session will cover the essential information needed to manage regional TSA data accurately, securely, and on time. We'll review basic data requirements and procedures, important dates and deadlines, and expectations for handling and protecting student and chapter information. Learn best practices for maintaining accurate records, communicating with chapters, meeting Texas TSA reporting requirements, and protecting the privacy of the data entrusted to you. Whether you're new to the role or returning for another year, this session will help keep your region's data organized, compliant, and competition-ready.

11:20 AM-12:20 PM

Dollars & Sense: Building a Strong Regional Budget – Ricky Broussard, Texas TSA Board of Directors

Maple Room | *Audience: Region Rep*

Designed for Regional Representatives and Regional Executive Board members, this session will cover the fundamentals of creating, managing, and sustaining a financially healthy Regional Association. Learn the basics of association treasury management, including developing an annual budget, establishing financial controls, tracking income and expenses, maintaining accurate records, and providing appropriate financial reporting to the Executive Board. We'll also explore strategies for planning for competition expenses, setting fees, building reserves, and making responsible financial decisions that support the region's long-term stability and its members.

From Chapter Leader to State Officer: Preparing Students for the Next Step – Rachelle Ferguson, State Officer Coordinator

Mesquite Room | *Audience: All*

Is one of your chapter officers ready to take their TSA leadership experience to the next level? This session will equip Chapter Advisors with the information and tools needed to identify, prepare, and support students interested in running for a Texas TSA State or Area Officer position. Learn about candidate expectations, the election process, advisor responsibilities, and how to help students develop the leadership, communication, professionalism, and commitment needed to serve beyond the local chapter. Help your emerging leaders understand what it takes to make the leap from chapter leadership to representing Texas TSA.

Take Flight: Discover the REC Foundation Aerial Drone Competition – Raul Torres, REC Foundation

Oak Room | *Audience: All*

Take STEM learning to new heights with the REC Foundation Aerial Drone Competition! In this REC Foundation-led session, discover how students combine drone piloting, programming, teamwork, problem-solving, and communication in an exciting competition environment. Learn about the program's four missions—Teamwork, Autonomous Flight, Piloting, and Communications—and how each challenges students to develop both technical and career-ready skills. Advisors will get an introduction to the competition structure, resources, and opportunities available to help bring aerial drone competition to their TSA chapter.

1:05-2:05 PM

Chapter Management: Making TSA Part of the Classroom – Shyla Vire, Texas TSA Board of Directors

Mesquite Room | *Audience: All*

Build a stronger TSA chapter by making TSA an intracurricular part of your CTE program! This session will explore practical strategies for integrating TSA activities into classroom instruction and engaging all students—not just those who attend competitions. Learn how to incorporate the Statesman Degree and National TSA Achievement Program into your classes, organize and maintain chapter records, and create opportunities for students to participate throughout the year. We'll also discuss strategies for collaborating with other CTE teachers on your campus to expand participation and build a comprehensive, sustainable TSA chapter.

Texas TSA Robotics: What's New for 2026–2027 – Raul Torres, REC Foundation

Oak Room | *Audience: All*

Get ready for the 2026–2027 Texas TSA Robotics Competition! This session will provide an overview of the partnership between Texas TSA and the REC Foundation and what advisors need to know to prepare their teams for competition. Learn about this year's annual robotics game, allowable robot formats and platforms, competition requirements, and the pathway for teams to qualify for the Texas TSA State Conference. Whether you are new to TSA Robotics or returning for another season, this session will help you understand the competition structure and get your teams ready to compete.

Tier 1 Data Manager Training: Building a Strong Foundation – Emily Gresham, Data Manager

Pecan Room | *Audience: Data Manager*

Designed specifically for new Regional Data Managers and regions receiving Tier 1 support, this session provides the foundational training needed to successfully manage your region's conference and competition data. Learn how to navigate the regional data system, manage registration and contest setup, follow Texas TSA data procedures and best practices, and meet critical deadlines throughout the competition season. We'll also review the Tier 1 support structure, available training resources, and how to work with your Texas TSA Data Manager mentor. Leave with the tools, resources, and confidence you need to successfully manage your region's data.

2:10-3:10 PM

Power Up Your TSA Chapter with Pitsco

Maple Room | *Audience: All*

Discover how Pitsco Education can help bring TSA competitive events to life in your classroom and chapter! This vendor-led session will showcase hands-on resources, equipment, and solutions that support a variety of TSA competitive events, including drones, dragsters, robotics, and more. Explore ways to connect classroom learning with competition preparation while giving students meaningful STEM experiences throughout the year. The session will also highlight available grant and funding opportunities that may help schools bring new equipment, technology, and competitive event resources to their programs.

2:10-4:15 PM

TSA 101: Building Blocks for New Chapter Advisors – Pamela Cook, Executive Director

Mesquite Room | *Audience: New Advisors*

New to TSA? Start here! Designed specifically for new Chapter Advisors, this session will provide the essential building blocks you need to get your TSA chapter off to a strong start. Learn the basics of affiliation, chapter organization, student membership, competitive events, conferences, important deadlines, advisor responsibilities, and where to find the resources you need throughout the year. We'll break down the TSA experience into manageable pieces, answer those "I'm new—what do I do first?" questions, and help you leave with a clearer roadmap for successfully navigating your first year as a TSA Advisor.

2:10-3:10 PM

National Competitive Events: What's New for 2026–2027 – Kristin Rausch, NQE Manager

Oak Room | *Audience: All*

The National TSA Competitive Events Guide has a fresh new look for 2026–2027! Join us for a guided tour of the new High School Competitive Events Guide, including events that received a facelift, exciting new events, and events being retired. We'll also take a closer look at how to navigate and interpret competitive event rules, identify important requirements, and understand the scoring rubrics. Whether you're a seasoned TSA advisor or new to competitive events, this session will help you confidently guide your students from the rulebook to competition day.

TSA Roundtable: Your Questions, Our Conversation – Ricky Broussard, Texas TSA Board of Directors

Maple Room | *Audience: All*

Have questions about TSA? Bring them to the table! This interactive TSA Roundtable is an open-forum session driven by the questions, challenges, and topics that matter most to attendees. A panel of experienced TSA leaders will be available to answer questions, share perspectives, clarify procedures, and discuss practical solutions to issues advisors encounter throughout the year. With no predetermined agenda, you help shape the conversation. Whether your questions involve chapter management, competitive events, regional or state activities, policies, or simply “How do other chapters handle this?”—this is your opportunity to ask, listen, share, and learn from the collective TSA experience in the room.

New Year, New Rulebook: Navigating the 2026–2027 Texas TSA Rules – Jeff Taylor, Contest Director & Emily Gresham, Data Manager

Oak Room | *Audience: All*

New year, new format! The 2026–2027 Texas TSA Rulebook has been redesigned to make it easier for advisors to find, understand, and apply the information they need throughout the year. This session will walk you through the new format, highlight important updates and changes, and show you where to find key policies, procedures, deadlines, and competition requirements. Learn how to navigate the Rulebook more efficiently, understand which rules apply to your chapter, and avoid common mistakes. Start the year informed and confident about the rules that guide Texas TSA participation.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

8:00-9:00 AM

Fuel Your Chapter: Fundraising Breakfast with Ozark Lollipops – Craig Battles, Ozark Lollipops

Maverick Room | Audience: All

Start your Friday morning with breakfast and some fresh ideas for funding your TSA chapter! Sponsored by Ozark Lollipops, this session will explore how fundraising can help chapters offset the costs associated with TSA participation, including competition expenses, student travel, registration, and other chapter activities. Learn how Ozark Lollipops can provide a simple fundraising option for your students and chapter while hearing practical ideas for turning fundraising efforts into meaningful financial support. Come enjoy breakfast, discover a potential fundraising partner, and take home a new way to help make the TSA experience more affordable for your students.

9:00-10:00 AM

Power Up Your TSA Chapter with Pitsco

Maverick Room

Discover how Pitsco Education can help bring TSA competitive events to life in your classroom and chapter! This vendor-led session will showcase hands-on resources, equipment, and solutions that support a variety of TSA competitive events, including drones, dragsters, robotics, and more. Explore ways to connect classroom learning with competition preparation while giving students meaningful STEM experiences throughout the year. The session will also highlight available grant and funding opportunities that may help schools bring new equipment, technology, and competitive event resources to their programs.

9:00-11:05 AM

Tier 2 & 3 Data Manager Training: Taking Control of Your Regional Data – Emily Gresham, Data Manager & Carissa Clohessy, UTE Data Manager

Uvalde Room | Audience: Data Manager

Designed for experienced Regional Data Managers receiving Tier 2 or Tier 3 support, this session will move beyond the basics and focus on successfully managing your region's registration and competition data. Review system setup, contest configuration, registration management, data verification, critical deadlines, and Texas TSA best practices and expectations. We'll also discuss the responsibilities that shift from the State Data Manager to the Regional Data Manager at each support tier and how to make the most of the training, resources, and technical support available throughout the year.

9:00-10:00 AM

Unique to Texas Projects: From Entry to Evaluation – Jeff Taylor, Contest Director & Emily Gresham, Data Manager

Wilson Room | Audience: All

Take the mystery out of preparing projects for Texas TSA's Unique to Texas Project Events! This session will walk advisors through the ins and outs of entering, documenting, and preparing student projects for competition. Learn what documentation is required, how projects should be presented, and what evaluators are looking for during the judging process. We'll also highlight common mistakes and pitfalls that can cost students valuable points—or keep a great project from reaching its full potential. Leave with a clearer understanding of the process and practical tips to help your students arrive at competition prepared and ready for evaluation.

10:05-11:05 AM

Regional Governance 101: Building a Strong & Compliant Region – Pamela Cook, Executive Director

Real Room | *Audience: Region Rep*

Designed specifically for Regional Representatives and Regional Executive Board members, this session will provide an overview of the governance responsibilities that come with operating a Texas TSA Regional Association. Learn about Regional Charter requirements, updating and maintaining regional bylaws, minimum governance standards, and essential fiscal responsibilities. We'll break down what Regional Executive Boards need to have in place, why these requirements matter, and how good governance protects both the region and Texas TSA. Leave with a clearer understanding of your region's responsibilities and the steps needed to maintain a strong, accountable, and compliant organization.

Unique to Texas: On-Site Events – Thea Drake, UTE On-Site Coordinator

Wilson Room | *Audience: All*

Discover the competitive events you'll only find at Texas TSA! This session will provide an overview of the Unique to Texas On-Site Events, including event formats, specifications, equipment requirements, and what students should expect on competition day. Advisors will gain a better understanding of how these events are structured, what students need to bring, and how to prepare teams for success. Whether you're exploring these events for the first time or looking to expand your chapter's participation, this session will help you navigate the opportunities that make Texas TSA competition unique.

10:10-11:10 AM

Beyond Competition: Building Student Leadership & Achievement – Texas TSA Area & State Officer Team

Maverick Room | *Audience: All*

TSA is about more than competitive events—it's an opportunity for students to grow as leaders, set goals, and be recognized for their achievements. This session will explore practical strategies and activities Chapter Advisors can use to create meaningful leadership opportunities within their chapters. Learn how to incorporate the National TSA Achievement Program and Texas TSA Statesman Degree into your chapter's Program of Work, while helping students build the skills and experiences that prepare them for future opportunities. We'll also discuss the Texas TSA Scholarship Program and how advisors can help students position themselves for recognition and scholarships.

11:10 AM-12:10 PM

Competition Ready: Tips & Tricks for Success – Texas TSA State & Area Officer Team

Maverick Room | *Audience: All*

Success in TSA competition starts long before competition day! This session will help advisors and students learn how to read competitive event rules and rubrics strategically, identify exactly what judges are looking for, and recognize the details that can make the difference between earning points and receiving a rules violation. Explore common pitfalls to avoid, strategies for using the rubric as a competition-preparation tool, and resources available to help students strengthen their entries. Leave with practical tips you can take back to your chapter to help students compete more confidently, avoid preventable mistakes, and put their best work forward.

Tech Tools for Regional Competition: Work Smarter Behind the Scenes – Emily Gresham, Data Manager

Uvalde Room | *Audience: Data Manager & Region Rep*

Designed for Regional Representatives and Regional Data Managers, this session will explore the technology tools that can make managing a Regional Competition more efficient from registration through results. Get an overview of tools such as Looker, DLG Resources, JudgePro, AnswerWrite, and more, and learn how each can support different pieces of the competition-management process. Discover practical ways to use technology to organize information, support judges, manage testing and evaluation, troubleshoot competition-day needs, and streamline regional operations. Come ready to discover tools that can save time, reduce headaches, and help your Regional Competition run smoothly.

On the Road with TSA: Tips & Tricks for Managing Student Travel – Carissa Clohessy, UTE Data Manager

Wilson Room | *Audience: All*

Taking students on the road doesn't have to feel like a competitive event of its own! This session will share practical, tried-and-true strategies for managing student travel with both middle and high school groups. Learn how to set clear expectations for students and parents before departure, organize paperwork and communication, manage transportation and lodging logistics, keep track of a large group, and stretch your meal budget without sacrificing the experience. From planning and packing to curfews and contingency plans, you'll leave with ideas to make your next TSA trip safer, smoother, and a lot less stressful.

1:00-2:00 PM

TSA Roundtable: Your Questions, Our Conversation – Ricky Broussard, Texas TSA Board of Directors

Maverick Room

Have questions about TSA? Bring them to the table! This interactive TSA Roundtable is an open-forum session driven by the questions, challenges, and topics that matter most to attendees. A panel of experienced TSA leaders will be available to answer questions, share perspectives, clarify procedures, and discuss practical solutions to issues advisors encounter throughout the year. With no predetermined agenda, you help shape the conversation. Whether your questions involve chapter management, competitive events, regional or state activities, policies, or simply "How do other chapters handle this?"—this is your opportunity to ask, listen, share, and learn from the collective TSA experience in the room.

Stand Out! Creating Competition Portfolios & Displays That Get Noticed – Shyla Vire, Texas TSA Board of Directors

Real Room | *Audience: All*

First impressions matter! Learn how to create polished, professional portfolios and displays that showcase your students' work and help their projects stand out in National TSA Competitive Events. This session will explore practical strategies for organizing content, creating strong visual hierarchy, selecting effective graphics, and presenting information in a way that is both attractive and easy for judges to navigate. Advisors will leave with ideas they can take back to the classroom to help students transform their competition materials from simply meeting the requirements to making a memorable impression.

Work Smarter, Not Harder: Managing Your TSA Chapter with Google Sheets – Carissa Clohessy, UTE Data Manager

Uvalde Room | *Audience: All*

No data experience required! Discover how simple Google Sheets and Google Forms can take the stress out of managing a growing TSA chapter. This entry-level session will introduce user-friendly systems for tracking members, managing competitive event entries, collecting student information, organizing projects, and keeping chapter records in one place. Learn from a system successfully used to manage a chapter that grew from just 10 students to more than 100 students and 200 projects annually. Attendees will receive hands-on training, practical tips, and ready-to-use templates that can be adapted for their own chapters.

Behind the Scenes: Managing a Successful Regional Competition – Kristin Rausch, NQE Manager

Wilson Room | *Audience: Region Rep*

A successful Regional Competition doesn't just happen—it takes planning, organization, communication, and a whole lot of moving parts! Designed specifically for Regional Executive Committees and Regional Contest Directors, this session will share practical strategies for planning and managing a regional competition from start to finish. Led by the Executive Director of Gulf Coast TSA, attendees will gain real-world insight into competition logistics, event management, staffing and volunteers, communication, scheduling, and troubleshooting. Learn proven practices from one of Texas TSA's regional associations and take home ideas you can adapt to make your own Regional Competition run more efficiently and effectively.