**A welcome message from**

**TREA President - Randy Willis**

I would like to personally welcome each of you to the *Texas Rural Education Association’s 29th Summer Conference*. Our conference theme: “A Guiding Light During Stormy Times” represents the absolute best of our association and our members during an unparallel school year that none of us could have ever imagined. It was amazing to see how our Educational Leaders and *School Districts* adapted, remained resilient, and responsive to the educational needs of our students and rural communities. TREA and our members confronted challenges and met those challenges during a time of historical nation-wide issues and a global pandemic that has been unprecedented in most our lifetimes. Our world of Education Leadership is critical to the future of our state and local communities in which to work/study/play/grow the next generation of Texans. TREA will continue to meet and bring inspired people, such as yourselves, together in forums like this, to ensure that our association and its members remain on the cutting edge of delivering high quality public education.

I would like to give you an idea of what you can expect and what we hope to achieve over the next few days. School Board Members will have the opportunity to receive leadership training throughout this conference. Educational leadership sessions will also be available for the superintendents, district leaders, campus leaders, as well as teachers. All our sessions will be centered around best practices for rural schools by rural school practitioners. It is our hope that this conference will be a guiding light of resources and leadership opportunities to help pilot you through these challenging times that we face in educating our students.

Before I close, I would like to thank each of you for attending our conference and for bringing your expertise to our gathering. You, as school district leaders, have the vision, the knowledge, and the experience to help us pave our way into the future. You are truly our greatest asset today and tomorrow, and we could not accomplish what we do without your support and leadership. Throughout this conference, I ask you to stay engaged, keep our association proactive, and help us shape the future of Texas rural education. I personally encourage each of you to continue to be a steady guiding light for your community and we at TREA will continue to support your leadership. With over 400 lighthouses shining throughout Texas, we could not have a brighter future for our students and rural schools. My personal respect and deep appreciation go out to each of you and all that you do for the rural school students in Texas.

Randy Willis

President, Texas Rural Education Association

Superintendent, Granger ISD (Retired)