6705 Braeburn Drive

Dallas, Texas 75214

April 11, 2018

Dan Micciche

President, Board of Trustees

Dallas Independent School District

9400 North Central Expressway

Dallas, Texas 75231

Michael Hinojosa, PhD

Superintendent

Dallas Independent School District

9400 North Central Expressway

Dallas, Texas 75231

Dear President Micciche, Members of the Board, and Dr. Hinojosa:

Dr. Hinojosa gave a presentation to the Texas Commission on Public School Finance on February 22, 2018 heralding the success of Dallas ISD’s Teacher Excellence Initiative as well as the Accelerating Campus Excellence (ACE) program for identifying and retaining highly effective teachers, placing them at low performing schools, closing the achievement gap and removing the school(s) from Improvement Required (IR) status.

Dallas ISD implemented the Intensive Support Network (ISN) program one year after ACE in 2016. The ISN program was not mentioned in the presentation to the Commission.

One concern about the data presented is that the analysis used only shows the growth of students crossing the cut point for “approaches” and “meets” standards on the STAAR exam. This is a highly limited analysis given it ignores those students above and below the cut point that grew or declined in achievement but never moved across the cut point threshold. A superior analysis that allows all students to be included is the average scale score, which we have done and the detailed report is attached. The best analysis of the ACE and ISN program impact would be measuring the growth of a cohort of individual students who had consistent treatment intervention. Unfortunately we do not have access to this level of data.

The success of the ACE program is almost entirely defined by the performance of students at two elementary campuses. In five of the seven ACE campuses the performance of students did not exceed the performance of similar ISN campuses to any meaningful extent. This suggests it is premature to tout ACE as a success and premature to attribute any individual ACE campus success due to the movement of highly effective TEI teachers to the ACE campuses.

Rather, the results of both ACE and ISN campuses compared to other IR campuses indicate extra resources have an impact on student performance at these low performing campuses.

The cost of these programs is significantly different. The *Dallas Morning News* reported that ACE implementation at 6 campuses was $5.4 million (1). DISD reported the cost of ISN implementation at 17 campuses was $2.2 million (2).

We suggest that the two ACE campuses that did show outstanding performance need to be further studied and those students need to be tracked to see if the performance is sustained. Additionally, a detailed ethnographic study of instructional practices, attitudes, and learning environment at these two campuses should be performed before continuing to roll out ACE.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Dryden, Ph.D. Lori Kirkpatrick

1. <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/education/2017/02/08/dallas-isd-plans-close-two-schools-expand-turnaround-program>

2. <https://thehub.dallasisd.org/2016/03/22/proposed-intensive-support-network-to-replace-imagine-2020-program/>