

A RESOLUTION OF THE IMPACTED SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN HUNT COUNTY OPPOSING THE APPLICATION BY A&M COMMERCE STEM LABORATORY ACADEMY TO THE TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY FOR AN OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOL

WHEREAS, the school districts in Hunt County have been advised, through the receipt of a standard form letter, of an application by “A&M Commerce STEM Laboratory to the Texas Education Agency (“TEA”) for an open-enrollment charter school, and

WHEREAS, the University never reached out to the area school districts to express concerns about the educational offerings or needs currently not being addressed, and

WHEREAS, the charter school would be located in Greenville, Texas, Hunt County. School districts partially or fully located in Hunt County include 11 school districts (Bland ISD, Boles ISD, Campbell ISD, Cumby ISD, Caddo Mills ISD, Celeste ISD, Commerce ISD, Lone Oak ISD, Greenville ISD, Quinlan ISD, Wolfe City ISD); and

WHEREAS, the charter school will be duplicating services, programs and learning opportunities that already exist within the impacted schools, thus diverting financial resources towards the management and operation of another district and away from the classrooms across Hunt County, and

WHEREAS, given the issues with the charter school not providing transportation in a very rural county, and the ability of the open enrollment charter school to selectively enroll/retain students, the school will not provide an option for all students, only those at the top of the socioeconomic scale who can travel the 10-30 miles each way to the charter school location, and

WHEREAS, the impacted school districts are concerned about the following issues related to charter schools:

- Open-enrollment charter schools are not required to be open to all students. Local districts are obligated to serve all students living within the boundaries of the district – regardless of learning disability or physical disability, felony convictions (Chapter 37 violations), economic disadvantage, race, creed, or religion.
- Public charter schools may choose not to serve special needs students if they do not have the staff or program appropriate for the child’s disability. A public school district **MUST** provide the Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for the student or contract for the appropriate services.
- The attrition rate in charter schools across the state has been determined to be approximately 40 percent, which means only 2.3% of the students who leave a traditional school for a charter school actually complete their education in that school of choice.
- If charter schools fail to meet the needs of a student or the student becomes a discipline problem, the charter can decide to no longer accept that student and traditional school district must re-enroll the student, and are then held accountable for that student, but have lost critical instructional time to ensure adequate academic progress.

WHEREAS, Texas A&M University-Commerce is the largest provider of teachers and administrators in this region of Texas

WHEREAS, most stakeholders agree that the key to a quality education is the educator in the classroom responsible for student learning and mastery of content.

WHEREAS, if Texas A&M University Commerce has concerns about the quality of educational programs in area public schools, perhaps they should look inward at their teacher preparation programs and their graduates' ability to enter the classroom ready to teach to help increase student performance and teach the Texas TEKS.

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED BY THE IMPACTED SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN HUNT COUNTY:

1. We hereby oppose Texas A&M Commerce STEM Laboratory Academy's application to the TEA for an open-enrollment charter school to be located in Greenville, Texas, Hunt County, Texas.
2. Each superintendent in the impacted school districts has made a recommendation to their Board of Trustees to file a "statement of impact" indicating that the proposed open-enrollment charter school is expected to have a selective impact on the students their school district.

IN EXECUTION HEREOF, THIS THE _____ day of _____ 2015.

Blake W. Cooper
Superintendent
Commerce ISD

Ted Oats
President, Board of Trustees
Commerce ISD