

May 28, 2026

Mr. Matias Segura
 Austin Independent School District
 4000 S. I-H 35 Frontage Road
 Austin, Texas 78704

Re: Texas Partnership Benefits Submission

Dear Superintendent Segura,

This letter is to inform you that Austin ISD’s application for Texas Partnership (SB 1882) benefits outlined in Texas Education Code (TEC) §11.174 **has been denied** for the following partnerships due to lack of operating partner capacity necessary to successfully turn around the campuses referenced below:

Campus Name	Partnership Organization	CDCN
Burnet Middle School	Texas Council for International Studies	227901046
Dobie Middle School	Texas Council for International Studies	227901055
Webb Middle School	Texas Council for International Studies	227901053

Campus Status

Since the 2018-2019 school year, Burnet Middle School, Dobie Middle School, and Webb Middle School have been annually issued either an unacceptable or Not Rated academic accountability rating per TEC, Chapter 39. In addition to the most recent ratings received by these campuses, the consecutive count of unacceptable ratings for all three campuses is four consecutive years. Based on the academic performance at all three campuses, Burnet, Dobie, and Webb Middle Schools are considered Turnaround Partnerships by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), with specific requirements for such partnerships established in rule in 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §97.1079. Consequently, Austin ISD must submit additional evidence as part of its application for benefits regarding operating partner capacity.

Campus Name	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
Burnet MS	F	NR: Disaster	NR: Disaster	NR: SB 1365	F	F	F
Dobie MS	F	NR: Disaster	NR: Disaster	NR: SB 1365	F	F	F
Webb MS	F	NR: Disaster	NR: Disaster	NR: SB 1365	F	F	F

Criteria for Campuses Whose Last Preliminary or Final Overall Performance Rating Was Unacceptable

Since the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 1882, 85th Regular Session, 2017, TEA has established rules in 19 TAC §97.1079 with additional criteria that the commissioner considers when determining whether to approve an application for benefits for a campus whose last preliminary or final overall performance rating was unacceptable. TEA refers to this type of campus as a *turnaround partnership* while a campus with an acceptable rating at the time of application for benefits is referred to as an *innovation partnership*. Fewer criteria apply to proposed partners when innovation partnerships are pursued. In 2018, the additional criteria for a turnaround partnership included evidence that the proposed operating partner has the capacity to operate the campus, including the following: an educational plan; the capacity of the operating partner’s board and leadership team; and, if applicable, the operating partner’s previous history operating campuses, as well as evidence or an assurance that the operating partner has or will have the dedicated staff capacity to operate or oversee the operation of a campus.

In March 2020, after two application for benefits cycles and evidence of low student success from previous turnaround partnerships, TEA amended 19 TAC §97.1079 to raise the criteria for turnaround partnership campus operating partners, including the requirement that each district applicant “must demonstrate evidence that the operating partner has the capacity necessary to successfully turn around campuses.” TEA phased in these criteria over multiple years, providing school districts with time to identify and recruit operating partners. For partnership benefits for campuses authorized under TEC, Chapter 12, Subchapter C, that were approved for the 2020-2021 or 2021-2022 school year, evidence was required that the operating partner has staff in leadership positions with at least three years of experience managing campuses to academic success.

For all campuses approved for the 2022-2023 school year and thereafter, in addition to all other criteria for Texas Partnership benefits, 19 TAC 97.1079(e)(9)(D)(ii) states “evidence must be provided that the operating partner:

- (I) Has been in existence for at least three years prior to undertaking the management of the district campus;
- (II) Has managed multiple campuses for multiple years; and
- (III) Has a track record of managing campuses to academic success or has significantly improved the academic performance of campuses.”

Texas Council for International Studies

Austin ISD has proposed the non-profit organization Texas Council for International Studies (TCIS) as the operating partner for Burnet, Dobie, and Webb Middle Schools. TCIS only meets two of the three additional criteria required for a turnaround partnership operating partner and, therefore, does not qualify as an operating partner with the capacity necessary to successfully turn around campuses. To make this determination, TEA evaluated the district’s Texas Partnerships Benefits Application submitted on March 31, 2026, along with an application submission supplement submitted on May 1, 2026. Information provided in the submission supplement did not change the evaluation of TCIS’s academic track record.

Requirement (I): Has been in existence for at least three years prior to undertaking the management of the district campus – Meets Requirement – In Existence for Seven Years

The Texas Council for International Studies was created as a non-profit organization in 2019 to support the general improvement of education for Texas International Baccalaureate (IB) students and schools. TCIS facilitates implementation of IB programs through partnership agreements with IB schools and districts. TCIS then provides IB program development, IB professional training, curriculum planning, marketing campaigns, and scholarship programs.

Requirement (II): Has managed multiple campuses for multiple years – Meets Requirement – Managed 16 Campuses Since the 2019-2020 School Year

TCIS has managed the following 16 campuses across three school districts since the 2019-2020 school year. Of these 16 campuses, only five campuses were rated D or F at the time of authorization by a school district indicating limited turnaround school experience.

San Antonio ISD – Operated Since 2019-2020

Briscoe Elementary School

Burbank High School

Fenwick Academy*

Harris Middle School*

Huppertz Element School* (Closed at the End of the 2023-2024 School Year)

Jefferson High School

Woodlawn Academy*

Woodlawn Hills Elementary School*

Longview ISD – Operated Since 2020-2021

Clarence W Bailey Elementary School

Foster Middle School

Hudson PEP Elementary School

Judson STEAM Academy

Longview High School

Ned E Williams Elementary School

Edgewood ISD – Operated Since 2021-2022

Roy Cisneros Leadership School for Boys

Las Palmas Leadership School for Girls

*Campuses with an asterisk were rated D or F in the year prior to operation of the campus by TCIS

Requirement (III): Has a track record of managing campuses to academic success or has significantly improved the academic performance of campuses – Does Not Meet Requirement

As identified by Superintendent Segura's March 31, 2026, letter sent with the district's application for Texas Partnership (SB 1882) benefits, parts of TCIS's academic performance track record are uneven. A review of TCIS data indicates TCIS has failed to demonstrate a track record of managing campuses to academic success or a track record of significantly improving the academic performance of campuses.

Managing Campuses to Academic Success – Does Not Meet as Multiple Campuses Have Worse Performance Along with Multiple Campuses that Have Multiple Consecutive Years of Unacceptable Ratings

Of the 16 campuses operated by TCIS, 11 campuses were rated A – C prior to operation of the campus or had no prior rating. For these 11 campuses, only five campuses improved their rating. Two maintained their rating. Of the remaining four: two campuses, Clarence W Bailey Elementary School and Ned E Williams Elementary School, have worsened by dropping a letter grade since TCIS's operation of the campus. Another campus, Roy Cisneros Leadership School for Boys, has worsened by dropping from a C rating before the partnership to a three-year consecutive F-rating. And one additional campus, Las Palmas Leadership School for Girls, launched as a new school without a prior rating and currently has a three-year consecutive F-rating. This failure by TCIS to manage Roy Cisneros Leadership School for Boys and Las Palmas Leadership School for Girls to academic success has had the inverse impact for Edgewood ISD of adding two more campuses that require a turnaround.

Significantly Improved the Academic Performance of Campuses – Does Not Meet for A Majority of D or F Rated Campuses

Of the 16 campuses operated by TCIS, five campuses were rated D or F prior to operation of the campus. For these five campuses, a majority of the campuses, Huppertz Elementary School, Woodlawn Academy, and Woodlawn Hills Elementary, either have a worse rating or failed to improve over the time period that TCIS operated the campuses. Two of the five campuses have improved, with one of these campuses requiring more than two years to improve to a C rating, which is outside of the time period of the pause in accountability sanctions provided by Texas Education Code (TEC), §11.174.

Execution of Partnership Contract Between AISD and TCIS

While TEA has denied Texas Partnerships benefits outlined in TEC, §11.174, for Burnet, Dobie, and Webb Middle Schools, this denial does not preclude or prevent the partnership contract from proceeding as executed between Austin ISD and TCIS.

For additional information or assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out with questions.

Sincerely,

Marian L. Schutte

Marian L. Schutte
Associate Commissioner
Department of Authorizing and Policy