

April 30, 2015

Dear Honorable DISD Board Chair and Trustees:

We stand behind Mike Miles, and we humbly ask you to take whatever action is necessary to retain him as superintendent of the Dallas Independent School District. Any vote to terminate his services would gravely damage the performance and perceptions of a district we care deeply about.

As long-time community and city leaders, we have worked hard to make Dallas a city that our citizens are proud to call home. We know that each of you, as DISD trustees, is an integral member of that team. We are grateful for your service.

The DISD's performance is critical to our city's formula for success. We believe the decision that you make today will be one of the most important in Dallas history. Here are some of the reasons why it would be a mistake to fire Mike Miles:

1. We believe our children are getting a better education today than before Mr. Miles was hired.

- Overall proficiency of all students on all tests at the Final Recommended level is up 3 percent since the 2011-12 school year, before the current administration arrived.
- Over the last two years, 74 percent of all DISD elementary schools have higher proficiency across all tests and grades vs. 22 percent of schools that are down. That is a ratio of greater than 3 to 1.
- We are seeing a historical high in the percentage of students taking the SAT and ACT.

2. Our district is in better financial shape than before Mr. Miles was hired.

- Fund reserves are at an all-time high.
- Following nearly a decade of non-compliance, Dallas ISD is once again receiving \$18 million annually in federal E-rate funds.
- Our most challenged feeder patterns have been identified for additional resources as part of Imagine 2020 and are seeing positive initial academic results to date.
- The Dallas Education Foundation was re-established and is raising substantial dollars from the philanthropic community, members of which have a renewed belief in supporting our public schools.

3. The progress you have made in new and successful policies would be easily undone if DISD made a change now. We would go backwards after so much hard work.

- Teacher vacancies at the beginning of the academic year were at a historical low (18 vacancies vs. ~800 historically).
- Substantial Pre-K expansion is underway.
- Substantial school choice program is underway.
- Robust principal evaluation and accompanying compensation system passed.
- Robust teacher evaluation and accompanying compensation system passed.

4. Management changes should be done carefully, after examining how our students are performing against our state counterparts. These are not decisions that should be made prematurely or for personal or political reasons. Those performance results will come later this year. The prudent thing is to wait for that critical information.

5. Removing Mr. Miles would put DISD in a precarious position to attract and retain a blue chip caliber executive to replace him. Voting tomorrow to terminate him will send a clear signal to any potential candidate that our city doesn't want to make real change for the better.

We are not naive to some concerns that a few of you have with some of Mr. Miles' actions, but the board should not act because of any one management decision. Action should be taken based on the most important questions: Are we going in the right direction for the future of our children? Are our children improving at a faster rate than in years past?

We are confident the results will show they are. We call on you to re-dedicate yourselves to working with Mr. Miles for the betterment of our children and our city. To do otherwise would risk sending a signal that the board is not serious about reform and remains more captive to adult interests impacted by Mike Miles' initiatives than doing right by students. As trustees you are leading our city through tumultuous times, but you are also overseeing one of the most important transformations in our lifetimes. For that, we will join Dallas citizens and schoolchildren in eternal gratitude. Please keep the dream alive.

Sincerely,



Mayor Michael S. Rawlings
City of Dallas




Tom Leppert
Former Mayor of Dallas



Tennell Atkins
Mayor Pro Tem – District 8



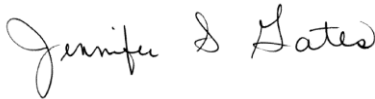
Rick Callahan
Council Member- District 5



Dwaine R. Caraway
Council Member – District 4



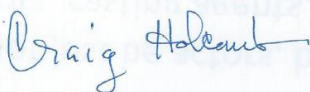
Carolyn R. Davis
Council Member – District 7



Jennifer Staubach Gates
Council Member – District 13



Scott Griggs
Council Member – District 1



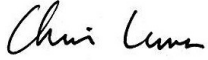
Craig Holcomb
Former Council Member



Sheffield Kadane
Council Member – District 9



Philip Kingston
Council Member- District 14



Chris Luna
Former Council Member



Adam Medrano
Council Member – District 2



Mary Poss
Former Council Member



Lee M. Kleinman
Council Member – District 11



Ann Margolin
Former Council Member – District 13



Omar Narvaez
Dallas County Schools Trustee