

January 11, 2020

Mike Morath
Commissioner of Education
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Avenue
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Morath:

I am pleased to offer my support for Dr. Nathan Balasubramanian's efforts to found a 7Cs Academy charter elementary school in San Antonio, Texas.

While I haven't known Dr. Balasubramanian for long, I've been very impressed by his enthusiasm and vision. He is an experienced teacher, administrator, and curriculum expert. He is passionate about bringing a holistic model of education to an underserved student population. And he has already laid a solid foundation for an educational community that will benefit the lives of San Antonio students and their families for years to come.

Educators across the country are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of nurturing and supporting students, not just intellectually and academically, but as *whole persons*. Dr. Balasubramanian's 7Cs framework, which explicitly and meaningfully addresses issues such as *character, collaboration, and communication*, strikes me as well-suited to serve students' social and emotional needs. Its focus on *competences, critical thinking, creativity, and citizenship* suggest that it is also well-suited to address the intellectual formation of students. This combination of ethical and epistemological emphases is a promising way of securing attention to the full range of students' needs and capacities.

I am also impressed by Dr. Balasubramanian's interest in serving the neediest of San Antonio's students. Unlike some charter schools across the country, the 7Cs Academy will not be a school that caters to the elite. Dr. Balasubramanian has intentionally chosen to locate the school in an area that is economically disadvantaged and has the greatest need for good schools.

Having founded a successful charter school designed around a character-based educational model (www.ivalongbeach.org) in my own community in Long Beach, CA, I know the challenges of opening a new charter school. Dr. Balasubramanian seems to me to have what it takes to meet these challenges. Again, he's driven and energetic. He has a desire to see children succeed and flourish. While he is motivated by an educational ideal, his approach is also highly practical and evidence-based.

I look forward to continuing to support Dr. Balasubramanian and the 7Cs Academy. I expect very good things to come from his efforts.

Sincerely,



Jason Baehr
Professor of Philosophy