

January 06, 2021

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

The Honorable
Dr. Keven Ellis
Chair of the State Board of Education
1701 N. Congress Avenue
Austin, TX 78701

Letter of support for 7C Academy

Dear Commissioner Morath and Dr. Ellis:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of support for 7Cs Academy, a proposed preschool through eighth grade high-quality, open-enrollment charter school in San Antonio.

As a scientist studying inequality and its psychological and social consequences for the society, I am acutely aware of the need for well-rounded high-performing charter schools are for San Antonio students and their families.

I have spoken to Dr. Balasubramanian in depths about this evidence-based approach to enrich the curriculum and provide a well-rounded education to students. I have been impressed by his enthusiasm and his knowledge for pragmatic approaches to character education. I am also truly delighted by the initiative to integrate state-of-the art insights from educational and behavioral sciences, guided by a group of world's leading academic scholars on character education, human development and wisdom that Dr Balasubramanian has gathered around this project.

These days, there is a lot of cheap talk about 'soft skills,' often used half-heartedly as a cover for deeper systemic issues, without much attention to evidence-based advances in educational and psychological sciences. As a Director of Wisdom and Cultural Laboratory—the world's leading scientific group on the scientific study of wisdom, I have spent the last decade evaluating ways to provide a robust scientific foundation for development of about ways to foster wisdom-related competences such as critical thinking, social skills, creativity, or civic concerns. Here, I see 7C

Academy stand out. Dr. Balasubramanian's proposal directly builds on scientific insights with a particular attention to rounded education, especially for students in need.

I recommend 7Cs Academy without reservation and truly believe that authorizing this school will provide San Antonio students and their families another pivotal high-quality educational opportunity.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at +12265006923 or igrossma@uwaterloo.ca.

Sincerely,

Igor Grossmann, Ph.D.

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