

RAISESM
YOUR HAND TEXAS

2015
IN
REVIEW



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LETTER FROM THE CEO

One of the most frequent questions I am asked during casual conversations, while serving on conference panels, and in media interviews is “What one thing would you do to improve public education?” It sounds like such a simple question. But if what you seek is real reform, real transformation, real reinvention of public education, there is no silver bullet.

But there is a seemingly simple answer about what makes the real difference between high-performing schools (and districts) and all others:

- ✓ A great teacher in front of every classroom
- ✓ A strong principal at the helm of every school
- ✓ Sufficient resources for programs — like high-quality pre-kindergarten and curriculum for English Language Learners — proven to advance student achievement
- ✓ Freedom to innovate to meet the needs of all students.

How you pursue and achieve these realities is the tough part. That is why we invest in leadership development, school turnaround programs, and objective research that helps inform our legislative advocacy positions, based on proven best practices, not ideology.

Raise Your Hand Texas® has sponsored more than 10 percent of all principals in Texas for programs run by the Harvard Graduate School of Education and the Jones Graduate School of Business at Rice University. This year, we launched a new blended learning initiative to teach school leaders how to best educate 21st century learners while



maximizing existing technology and streamlining resources. And we were thrilled to support legislators’ efforts during the past two sessions that serve to both strengthen and set high expectations for all public schools.

The year 2015 was a productive one. I hope you’ll take a few minutes to flip through our first-ever annual report, then visit our new website to share your thoughts and consider joining Raise Your Hand® to help support and improve public schools for all students.

There remains much to do.

Onward,

David Anthony
CEO
Raise Your Hand Texas

“ There is a place in America to take a stand: it is public education. It is the underpinning of our cultural and political system. It is the great common ground. Public education after all is the engine that moves us as a society toward a common destiny... It is in public education that the American dream begins to take shape. ”

Tom Brokaw
Television journalist and author

“ If the education and income gaps can be bridged, Texas will be able to capitalize fully on the advantages of having a young, multi-cultural, and multi-lingual workforce and will be well positioned for competitive success as a major international player on the world stage and as a model for all of America as the twenty-first century unfolds. ”

Stephen L. Klineberg, Ph.D.
Founding Director, Kinder Institute for Research
Rice University

“ Transformational success always starts with transformational leadership, whether in the statehouse, the board room, or the schoolhouse. ”

Jean S. Desravines
CEO
New Leaders

“ The kids today are wired differently. They learn differently. They’ve been bombarded with smartphones, tablets, computers, and TV. They have a shorter attention span, and schools need to adjust to that. ”

Abbe Lester
Principal
Jarrell Middle School
Raise Your Hand Texas Alumna ('14)



KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2015: Growth and Expansion

REINVENTING PUBLIC EDUCATION ...

By developing 21st century leaders

Leaders Matter. Research reveals the two most effective influencers of student achievement, within schools, are great teachers and strong principals.

That's why in 2015, Raise Your Hand continued its tradition of investing millions of dollars in developing high-performing school leaders. School leadership is the ideal level at which to scale substantive change. Inspired, empowered, and enlightened principals can have a tremendous impact on our state's 335,000 public school teachers, thereby improving outcomes for our vastly diverse 5+ million students. We partnered with some of the most prestigious educational organizations in the state and the nation with a primary goal of inspiring visionary leadership to transform the Texas public school system.



EXISTING PROGRAMS



\$500,000

TOTAL 2015 INVESTMENT



73 PRINCIPALS
SPONSORED



HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION (HGSE)

Continuing our seven-year partnership with the Harvard Graduate School of Education, we sponsored 73 Texas principals to attend weeklong professional development summer courses taught by world-class faculty at one of the most respected graduate schools of education in the country.



Lindsay Harris 

Humbled. Challenged. Changed. Grateful. Thanks [@RYHTexas](#) [@hgse](#) for the opportunity of a lifetime for this educator!



\$350,000

TOTAL 2015 INVESTMENT
(up from \$200,000 in 2014)



41 PRINCIPALS
SPONSORED



RICE UNIVERSITY EDUCATION ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM (REEP)

The year 2015 marked the fifth year of our relationship with the REEP program, a year-long business fellowship designed for K-12 educators wanting to learn how to apply business theories to the public school setting. We expanded the program, providing scholarships for 41 principals (up from 26 principals in 2014).

NEW PROGRAM



RAISING BLENDED LEARNERS

As part of our commitment to supporting innovative and potentially groundbreaking curriculum in public schools, we launched Raising Blended Learners — a \$5 million demonstration initiative to scale blended learning throughout Texas schools.



Teela Watson

@ESCRegion11 @azleisd Superintendent Dr. Ray Lea leading a team through #raisingblendedlearners @RYHTexas



\$5,000,000

TOTAL 2015-18 INVESTMENT

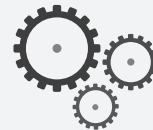


\$2,500,000

GRANT FUNDING FOR **FIVE** DEMONSTRATION SITES ACROSS THE STATE



INTENSIVE PROJECT MANAGEMENT SUPPORT FOR **20 SEMIFINALISTS**



TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR **ALL 75 SEMIFINALISTS**

Blended learning refers to the blend of online learning and brick-and-mortar schooling. Blended learning takes place when students learn at least in part online, with some element of student control over the time, place, path, and/or pace of their learning, while also enjoying the benefits that come with education at a physical school.

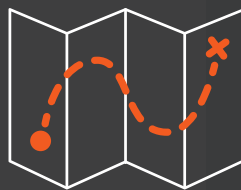
— Christensen Institute



TIME



PLACE



PATH



PACE



Raise Your Hand worked with Heather Staker, co-author of *Blended — Using Disruptive Innovation to Improve Schools*, to structure and launch the blended learning grant competition to schools and districts across the state.



Seventy five semifinalist school and district teams attended one of four workshops Raise Your Hand coordinated across the state. The two-day workshops modeled a blended learning environment for participants, who received training and support for developing their business plan proposals. Five grant winners will be announced in 2016. Twenty additional teams will receive project management support to implement blended learning pilots. All semifinalists will receive technical support.

Learn more about Raising Blended Learners: RaiseYourHandTexas.org/Blended

NEW GRANTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

New Leaders

NEW LEADERS

New Leaders, led by CEO Jean Desravines and Board Chair Christopher M. Chadwick, president and CEO of The Boeing Company, is a national nonprofit that collaborates with districts, charter management organizations, and states to offer three-year leadership curriculum to teachers, aspiring principals, and freshmen principals. New Leaders has trained more than 1,600 education leaders nationwide.



TEACHING TRUST

The Teaching Trust is an innovative model for school leadership focused on developing principals, teachers, and leadership teams by equipping them with the skills required to improve instructional practices and advance student achievement. Rosemary Perlmeter, co-founder and CEO, previously helped launch Uplift Education, one of the first and most successful charter school operators in Texas, and for 15 years prior served as an executive with Zale Corporation.



\$1,300,000

TOTAL 2015-18 INVESTMENT



DEVELOPS **TEACHERS,**
ASPIRING PRINCIPALS,
AND **NEW PRINCIPALS** TO
LEAD CHALLENGED CAMPUSES
IN **ARLINGTON ISD**



\$5,100,000

TOTAL 2015-18 INVESTMENT



SUPPORTING
PRINCIPALS IN THE
DALLAS AREA



Learn more about our programs and grants:
RaiseYourHandTexas.org/Programs.



\$1,500,000
TOTAL 2015-18 INVESTMENT



DEVELOPING **NEW**
AND **EXPERIENCED**
TEACHERS IN **HOUSTON**



\$910,000
TOTAL 2015-18 INVESTMENT



EXECUTIVE COACHING
FOR PRINCIPALS ACROSS
26 CAMPUSES

RELAY/GSE

GRADUATE SCHOOL of EDUCATION

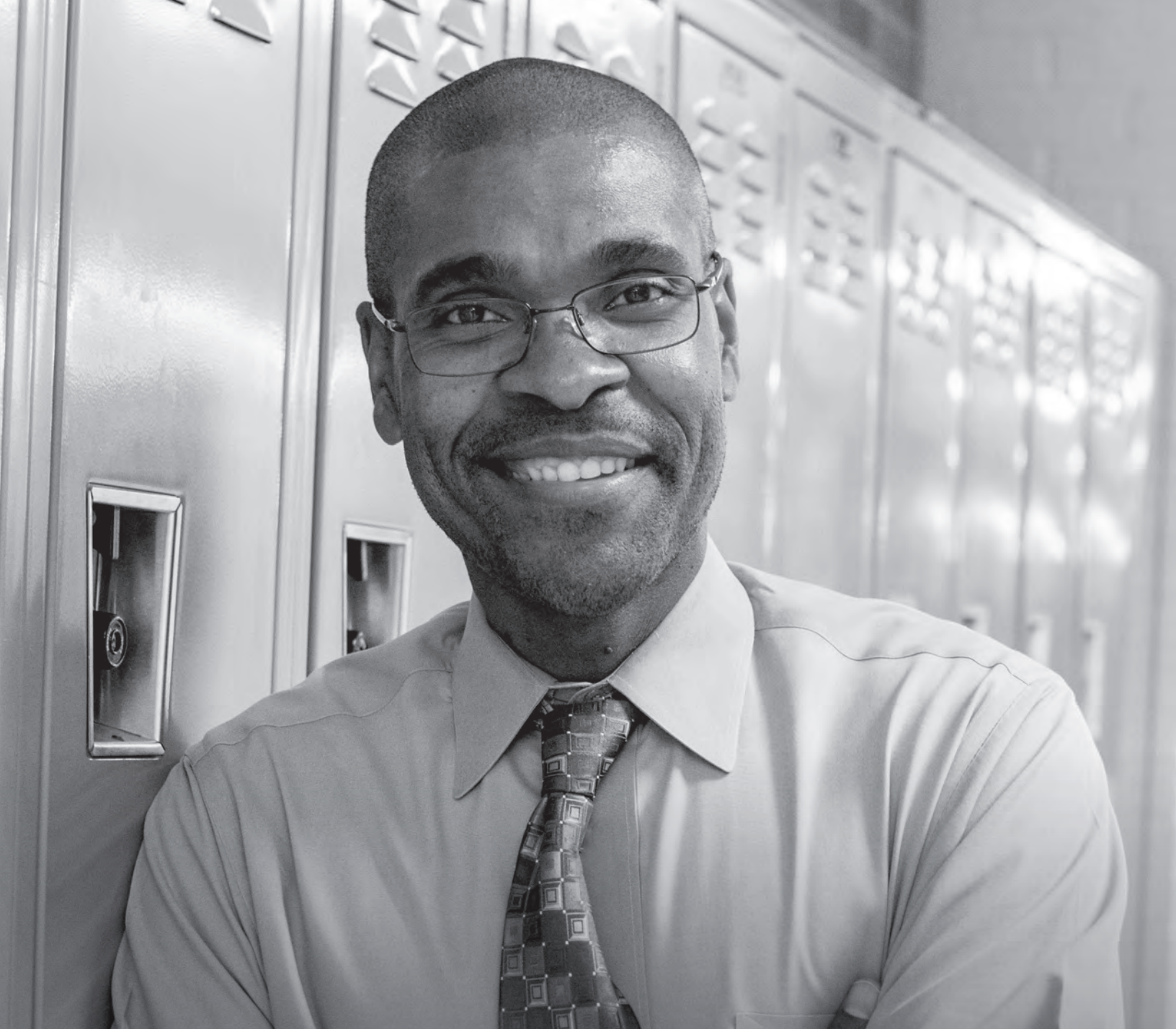
RELAY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Raise Your Hand partnered with the Relay Graduate School of Education in Houston to administer a competency-based program in Texas that provides graduate-level classes to certified teachers, and certification for teaching residents and novice teachers.



E3 ALLIANCE/ICLE

Raise Your Hand partnered with E3 Alliance, a regional collaborative to increase economic outcomes by aligning education systems, and the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE) to provide executive coaching to school leaders in the Central Texas region (Austin, Hutto, and Lockhart) to enhance and expand their organizational and instructional leadership skills. E3 President and CEO Susan Dawson is a Texas technology entrepreneur, business, and civic leader. Previously, Raise Your Hand engaged ICLE to support principals in the Arlington, Lamesa, and Lubbock independent school districts.



“ My REEP experience helped me develop some tools, resources, practices, and approaches that allow me to look at my work from the perspective of a CEO, and not just a traditional campus principal. ”

Dr. Bryan Williams

Principal, Spring Branch Elementary School

Spring Branch ISD

Raise Your Hand Alumnus ('14)

125

PRINCIPALS SPONSORED FOR THE
RICE UNIVERSITY EDUCATION
ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM (REEP)

SINCE 2011

Check out stories of people and organizations reinventing Texas public education for the future: RaiseYourHandTexas.org/Stories



CAMPUS TO CAPITOL 2015 LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM

Each year, Raise Your Hand Texas hosts a two-day leadership symposium for alumni of the leadership development programs we sponsor. At the conference, participants receive professional development credit by attending instructional sessions led by some of the world's most respected and provocative education scholars. The 2015 Annual Leadership Symposium marked the inaugural "Campus to Capitol" component, where Raise Your Hand shuttled 325 principals to the state capitol to meet with their legislators.

1. Over 300 principals converge on the State Capitol. **2.** Alumna Sandy Whitlow leads colleagues in a round-table discussion. **3.** Nancy Gutierrez, NYC Leadership Academy, speaks on turn-around schools. **4.** Alumnus Edwin Hood shares his take-away from his visit with legislators. **5.** Finnish educator and scholar, Pasi Salhberg, Harvard Graduate School of Education, delivers the keynote.

REINVENTING PUBLIC EDUCATION ...

By researching 21st century best practices

Building on our distinction as a non-partisan, research-driven organization, Raise Your Hand in advance of the 84th Legislative Session conducted or commissioned several research pieces — all of which were made available for download on our website, and distributed to members of the legislature, policy influencers, and stakeholder groups.



Download our research papers, policy briefs, and position papers:
raiseyourhandtexas.org/research.

RESEARCH REPORTS

- ✓ **Pre-Kindergarten for the Modern Age: A Scalable, Affordable, High-Quality Plan for Texas**; Robert C. Pianta, Ph.D. and Catherine Wolcott, M.Ed.; Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning, University of Virginia
- ✓ **Supporting School Turnaround: Lessons for Texas Policymakers**; Kerstin Carlson Le Floch, Ph.D., Managing Researcher; American Institutes for Research
- ✓ **Educator Data System: Creating a Talent Engine for Texas Public Schools**; Education First
- ✓ **Texas Innovation Schools: A Pathway to Success for Autonomous Schools in Texas**; James S. Liebman With Jamie Alter, Sarah Begeman, Zahreen Ghaznavi, Adi Goldiner, Jill Grossman, and Chris Wilds; Columbia University

POLICY BRIEFS

- ✓ **The Case Against School Vouchers: The Texas Miracle Depends on Strong Public Schools, Not Unproven Gimmicks**
- ✓ **Parent Trigger Laws: Is the Game Worth the Candle?**

POSITION PAPERS

- ✓ **High-Quality, Full-Day Pre-K: The Foundation for Success**
- ✓ **Virtual Education in Texas: Accountability Must Accompany Access**
- ✓ **School Vouchers: Not Good for Texas**

REINVENTING PUBLIC EDUCATION ...

By advocating for sound 21st century policy

Building on the legislative successes of the previous session, including House Bill 5 (graduation paths & assessments) and Senate Bill 2 (charter school oversight), Raise Your Hand continued to promote education reform during the 84th Legislative Session. We supported the efforts of legislators to advance student learning and school innovation, increase student choice within the public school system, and strengthen access, transparency, local autonomy, and democratic accountability.

84TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION PRIORITIES

- ✓ **High-quality, full-day pre-k** — Raise Your Hand supported legislation and funding to improve pre-k quality and expand opportunities for eligible 4-year-old students. House Bill 4 passed as a positive first step toward this long-term goal.
- ✓ **Free schools to innovate** — Raise Your Hand supported public school autonomy and innovation, and freeing schools from the burdens of a highly centralized, compliance driven state education system. House Bill 1842 passed, allowing traditional school districts to operate with the same freedoms granted to charter schools. State law now allows for the creation of “districts of innovation” that can exempt themselves from many state requirements with a two-thirds vote of the board of trustees and approval by the district-level decision making committee. While providing crucial freedoms for districts, the bill preserves local control as school boards remain subject to voter control and accountability.
- ✓ **Chronically low-performing schools** — Raise Your Hand supported providing swift and targeted interventions for struggling campuses. House Bill 1842 strengthens the school turnaround process, setting a firm deadline for improvement. Campuses failing to improve must be closed or the school board replaced. This system preserves local control of the turnaround process and holds elected trustees responsible for results.
- ✓ **Vouchers** — Raise Your Hand opposed all voucher and neo-voucher proposals that would have diverted taxpayer funds from public schools to private entities not accountable to the public. No voucher bills were passed by the Texas Legislature in 2015.
- ✓ **Educator data system** — Raise Your Hand supported creating systems to provide legislators, educators, and parents access to necessary information about educator performance, training, and preparation programs. Senate Bill 892 would have taken first steps to address issues regarding teacher credentials and preparation programs. It passed the Senate and House Public Education Committee, but was not considered by the full House.
- ✓ **A-F Accountability ratings** — Raise Your Hand opposed A-F ratings without a corresponding accountability system that fairly measures campus performance. House Bill 2804, as passed, included significant enhancements to accountability inputs from the original bill.



Read more about our 2015 legislative priorities:

raiseyourhandtexas.org/advocacy



NEW LOOK, RENEWED COMMITMENT

The marked evolution and recent expansion of our organization demanded a comprehensive identity redesign.

We introduced a more dynamic look and feel to match our aspirational vision for the future of public education and the impact of our advocacy and leadership programs.

We overhauled our website to reflect a bold, immersive, and mobile responsive multimedia design, with a more engaging user experience.



RAISE YOUR HAND STAFF
DOUBLED IN 2015

GREATER IMPACT THROUGH GROWTH

After relocating our headquarters to Austin in 2014, Raise Your Hand more than doubled our personnel in 2015, particularly in the areas of marketing, research, and government relations.



700

PRINCIPALS SPONSORED FOR THE
PRINCIPALS' CENTER AT THE
**HARVARD GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**
SINCE **2008**

“

Unlike any other training I've attended, my time at Harvard fed, challenged, and encouraged me, and through large and small group discussions, collaboration with colleagues, reading and reflection, and instruction from knowledgeable Harvard professors, I grew tremendously both as a person and as an educator.

”

Chris Altman

Principal, Margaret Wills Elementary

Amarillo ISD

Raise Your Hand Alumnus ('09, '12)




RAISESM
YOUR HAND TEXAS

IF YOU BELIEVE ...

- ✓ Our public schools are the best, and only, entities equipped to prepare all 5 million+ Texas students who make up the future workforce and civic leaders of our state
- ✓ Decisions about our schools should be made as close to the students as possible
- ✓ Tax dollars must remain within the transparent, accountable, and inclusive public school system

JOIN US.



REINVENTING EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY TAKES **ALL OF US.**

Add your name as a supporter and subscribe to receive news, updates, and stories about the people and issues that are transforming public education.

[RaiseYourHandTexas.org/Support](https://www.raiseyourhandtexas.org/support)

“

The question is, how do we think differently to create human-sustainable organizations that really help kids?

”

Terry Chadsey

Executive Director

Center for Courage & Renewal

“

It isn't that everyone has to learn different things, although eventually our interests will take us in different directions. But in terms of the things we want all people to learn ... personalized learning is finding the best ways to engage with people with different interests, passions and ways of thinking.

”

Sir Ken Robinson

English author, speaker, and international advisor

“

Everywhere I went, in every country, people complained about their education system. It was a universal truth and a strangely reassuring one. No one was content, and rightly so. Educating all kids to high levels was hard, and every country — every one — still had work to do.

”

Amanda Ripley

Author

The Smartest Kids in the World: And how they got that way

“

The founding generation explicitly tied public education to the basic happiness of the people — and to freedom. Now, more than ever, we need to rally around Texas' public schools.

”

Ken Starr

President and Chancellor

Baylor University



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