

UT PERMIAN BASIN STEM ACADEMY

TASK FORCE PRESENTATION

MARCH 5, 2020

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The Task Force requests that you hold all questions until the end of the presentation.

Options evaluated based on 3 primary objectives

1. Retain Students, Teachers, and Staff.
2. Retain STEM Project-Based Instructional Model.
3. Establish Long-term Plan of Action for Permanent Facilities.

At a Glance-- Comparison of Options

Objective	Retain Students/Staff	Retain STEM Instructional Model	Facilities plan
Stand Alone (sub chapter D)	<u>Not Guaranteed</u> —require lottery – unless there is an approved waiver	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u> (must find backing or funds first)
Merge with existing charter (e.g., Compass)	<u>YES (Partial)</u> -Students- through technical maneuver; Staff/Teachers—not guaranteed	<u>Not Guaranteed-</u> could be negotiated and integrated into expansion amendment	<u>YES</u> (charter entity responsible to finance or pay for facilities)
ECISD Subchapter C (1882)	<u>YES</u> (as best understood at present—grandfather students in without lottery and retain teachers/staff—per Dr. Muri); Contract-Based	<u>YES</u> (contingent—per Dr. Muri, would require board approval and contract/charter)	<u>YES</u> (ECISD responsible to finance or pay for facilities)
Remain UTPB Charter	<u>YES</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u> (UTPB has no debt capacity or funding available)

Become a Stand-Alone Charter

Subchapter D: Description/Facts

▶ **Facts**

- ▶ Start over with a new charter.
- ▶ Unless TEA issues a waiver and allows STEM to transition from a Sub E to a Sub D, this would require a new application.
- ▶ There may be some grant based funding for a new charter.
- ▶ Without a waiver, a lottery could be required, but we could use a technical maneuver.

Become a Stand Alone Charter

Subchapter D – Pros/Cons

Pros

- ▶ STEM's Project-Based Learning model kept intact.
- ▶ Autonomy (HR, purchasing, programs, etc.).
- ▶ Ability to expand (sites, grade levels, area served, enrollment, etc.).
- ▶ Ability to issue bonds for new buildings.
- ▶ Possibility of limited start-up funding (competitive).
- ▶ Possibility of limited new facilities funding.

Cons

- ▶ Requires a new student lottery (unless approved waiver or approved technical maneuver).
- ▶ Start over with a new charter not connected to UTPB.
- ▶ Requires a new application (unless waiver granted). TEA approved very few new charters in 2019.
- ▶ Funding must be available before application (including facilities).
- ▶ Limited grant funding may not be enough to offset start up costs.
- ▶ Lose employee benefits.

Merge with Existing Charter Description/Facts

Facts

- ▶ The STEM Academy would be transitioned to an existing charter entity.
- ▶ Would require charter amendments to accommodate for any changes of substance to how the “host” charter school operates. Agreements based on negotiations between UTPB and the “host” charter school.
- ▶ Two Options
 - ▶ Option A – UTPB relinquishes charter and no longer operates the school. The subchapter E charter (university-run charter) would have to close and replaced with an expansion of a subchapter D charter (the charter partner) (Siedlecki)
 - ▶ Option B – UTPB remains the charter holder, but would have charter partner be the Educational Service Provider (i.e., party to run and manage the school). School must retain UTPB name. (Under review by TEA) – This option would not provide the long-term plan for the facilities.

Merge with Existing Charter - Pros/Cons

Pros

- ▶ Existing students could transfer through approved technical maneuver. (KIPP Texas successfully used this maneuver.)
- ▶ Provides long-term plan for facilities. (Entity would be responsible to finance or pay for facilities.)
- ▶ High level of engagement with their current community.
- ▶ Heavy presence of extracurricular activities.
- ▶ They are interested in the possibility of being able to draw on the expertise of UTPB faculty.
- ▶ Reasonable assurances that agreements would be honored because of the expansion approval process.

Cons

- ▶ Teacher/staff transition not guaranteed, but may be negotiable.
- ▶ STEM Project-Based Learning model not guaranteed, but may be negotiable.
- ▶ Not able to add significant new facilities for some time.
- ▶ Our current advisory board will dissolve.

ECISD 1882 Subchapter C

Description/Facts:

Facts

- ▶ Based on rules for 1882 and feedback from multiple contacts, this option appears to offer a path to secure and honor all of the primary objectives (Denman & Siedlecki, TEA).
 - ▶ Keep the students, teachers (staff), model, and identify long term facilities.
 - ▶ This includes students from outside ECISD (e.g. students zoned to MISD).
- ▶ 1882 mechanism for increased attendance-related funding per student (will increase under the new charter by \$515 per student).
- ▶ School is eligible to apply for a competitive grant of up to \$900,000.
- ▶ All transition points would be negotiated in advance and must be approved by UT system, TEA, UTPB, and ECISD.
- ▶ Negotiated agreements would be codified in a legally binding contract; differentiating it from regular ECISD schools. This can address any management aspect of the school's operation (e.g., HR, Food Services, Instruction, etc.).
- ▶ Development of a Performance Contract that outlines required measurable performance targets for school.
- ▶ New changes to 1882 have offered a smoother transition to and operation of 1882 campuses.
- ▶ Requires establishment of a 501(c)(3) to serve as the non-profit operator.
- ▶ Charter transitions from being held by UT System to ECISD (authorizer) but would be governed (operated) by the 501(c)(3).

Become an ECISD Charter

Subchapter C - Pros/Cons

Pros

- ▶ Structured support of a district (e.g., curriculum, bilingual).
- ▶ Back office support services from the district (as per negotiated terms (e.g., transportation, food service, sports, fine arts)).
- ▶ Lessons learned from a partner 1882 campus already in ECISD
- ▶ Operator has initial, final and sole authority over curriculum decisions, educational programs for specific student groups, calendar and daily schedule, use of assessments, and campus budget.
- ▶ Support of existing district structure and policies to the extent the non-profit operator elects to accept. There is a large degree of contract-protected autonomy
- ▶ Terms protected by mutually negotiated, TEA approved contract
- ▶ Legal protections to preserve autonomy when the terms of the performance contract are met.
- ▶ Keep the students, teachers, staff, model, and secure sustainable and long-term facilities.
- ▶ ECISD Financial Rating – A+.

Cons

- ▶ Need a very detailed contract.
- ▶ Prior challenges with the new 1882 roll out (recent changes to the state's rules with 1882 should address many of those challenges).
- ▶ If the terms of the Performance Contract are not met by the Charter, it is possible that the district could take corrective action up to and including eventual closure. (**This is currently true of TEA** and the accountability system – the difference is the source of the decision based on mutually agreed to goals.)
- ▶ Almost all “Pros” will depend on how the contract is written and cannot be considered guaranteed until the contract is written and approved.
- ▶ Voiced community concerns and perceptions regarding ECISD.

Remain UTPB Charter on Campus: Description/Facts

▶ Facts

- ▶ Requires a plan and funds for permanent structures – UTPB has no debt capacity or funds to construct permanent facilities to replace the portable buildings.
- ▶ STEM Academy would remain a UTPB Charter.
- ▶ Retains students.
- ▶ Retains teachers and staff.
- ▶ Continues Project-Based Instructional model.

Remain UTPB Charter On Campus - Pros/Cons

Pros

- ▶ Students/Teachers/Staff remain intact.
- ▶ STEM Project-Based Learning model kept intact.
- ▶ Employment benefits remain intact.
- ▶ Connection of academy to campus life.
- ▶ Relationship with professors.
- ▶ Access to university student volunteers.
- ▶ Student pride and excitement to be involved with everything from athletics to individual departments.

Cons

- ▶ Funding estimated between \$20 and \$40 million needed to build permanent structures.
- ▶ UTPB lacks debt capacity to ensure funding.

Stand Alone Charter Questions

Questions

- ▶ What are the deadlines to begin the process of applying for a new charter?
- ▶ Who would carry the 501(c)(3)?



Merge with Existing Charter Questions

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Questions/Comments

- ▶ All transition points would have to be negotiated in advance and must be approved by TEA and charter entity.
- ▶ Charter is the contract for how the school will be structured with TEA.
- ▶ Can we develop a timeline for transition if both parties continue to believe this is viable?



1882 ECISD Charter Questions

Questions

- ▶ What exceptions are possible to waitlist and lottery requirements?
 - ▶ e.g., Can UTPB employees continue to be exempt from lottery and waitlist requirements?
- ▶ What possibilities exist related to UTPB employee benefits under the possible transition scenarios?
- ▶ Will there be fees for students not zoned to an ECISD school?
- ▶ Who will establish and maintain the 501 (c)(3)?

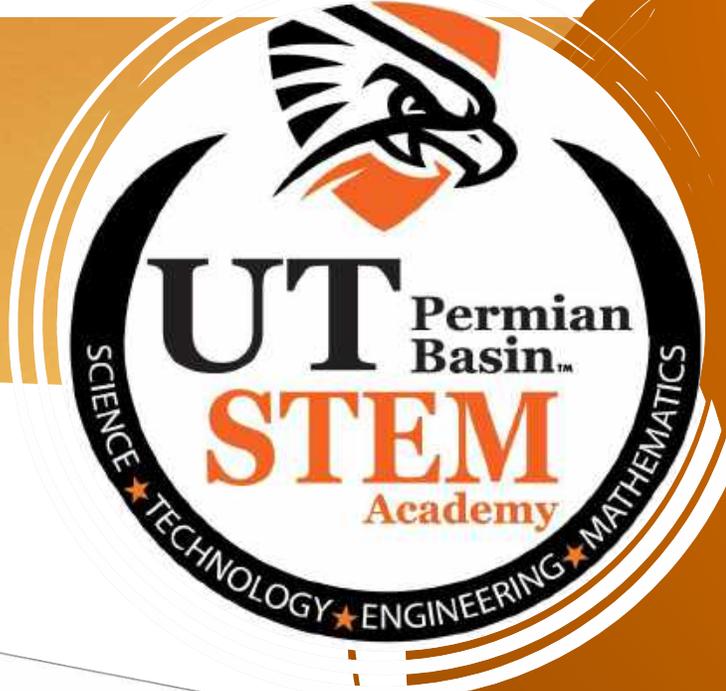
Remain UTPB Charter Questions

Questions/Comments

- ▶ This option would only be possible if funding is available for permanent facilities.
- ▶ If land and/or buildings are donated, could the charter remain with UTPB but at an off-campus site? If so, how would this work logistically?
- ▶ To what extent is it likely that donor funding would be available to raise the \$20-\$40 million needed to provide permanent facilities on the UTPB campus?
- ▶ Is phasing of facilities viable under this option? If so, how much funding/pledges would need to be secured before the first phase could move forward?

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Thank you

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