**QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS:**
THE PRELUDE PREPARATORY CHARTER APPLICATION IN BEXAR COUNTY
September 5, 2020

**Overview: Prelude Preparatory Charter School** has submitted a charter application to TEA to open a new charter school in Bexar County (Texas) serving grades PK-8 with an enrollment of 720 students at capacity. Prelude is affiliated with Building Excellent Schools, an out-of-state organization funded by the Walton Foundation that promotes charter growth across the United States. The independent school districts most affected are Southwest, South San Antonio, and Harlandale. This is Prelude’s second attempt to open a charter school in Texas.

**Revenue loss for public school districts:** At a minimum, Bexar County public school districts will lose an estimate of up to **$6.5 million** revenue annually once Prelude is at maximum enrollment capacity. Over ten years Bexar County districts would lose an estimate of up to **$49 million** in revenue (*based on average estimated per student revenue loss*).
 **Fiscal cost to the state:** Because the charter funding advantage gives a charter school a $1,664 per student larger funding entitlement than South San Antonio ISD, Prelude will cost the state an additional **$2,793,923**in its first five years and **$8,484,802** in the first ten years over the cost of enrollment of the same students in South San Antonio ISD.
 **QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Prelude’s special population projections fall well below area campuses by as much as 33%.** Many campuses in the primary geographic boundary serve much higher percentages of students identified as English Leaners (EL), economically disadvantaged, special needs, and at-risk than Prelude plans to serve. For example, while **Prelude projects serving just 17% ELs**, several **individual campuses in the targeted zip code serve between 40% and 53% ELs**.

**There is little evidence of community support for Prelude.** The public meetings were poorly attended. **Three of the four meetings had just 6, 8 and 13** attendees, respectively. The fourth, which provided free breakfast and coloring books, attracted slightly more at 36.

**Prelude’s Curriculum does not fully align to the SBOE standards.** The selected **social studies curriculum** for grades 3-5, Core Knowledge, **does not align to the TEKS**. The Superintendent of Prelude, indicated that she would be conducting the alignment. Although she has a background in curriculum, her resume indicates limited TEKS experience, several years working with Common Core, and no clear experience in social studies. Technology applications and theater are not addressed at all in the charter application, and health is only mentioned in passing.

**Prelude’s application employs a deficit lens regarding its projected population.**  As TEA staff pointed out in the capacity interviews, word choice matters, and Prelude’s emphasis on developing “smart and good people” assumes a savior mentality and ignores the very rich cultural capital that its students will already possess.

Application: <http://castro.tea.state.tx.us/charter_apps/content/downloads/Nocdn/25-19.pdf>