



## RAUL YZAGUIRRE SCHOOLS FOR SUCCESS

February 18, 2019

Dear Parents and Community of Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success

Subject: Assignment of Accreditation Status to the Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success

Each year, the Texas Education Agency reviews the financial management practices of all public and charter school districts to ensure that state-funded districts are held accountable for how well they are managing their finances and that they are taking steps to improve their practices. The TEA's Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) is designed to encourage better management of financial resources for maximum instructional impact on students, and the rating assigned directly affects the district's state accreditation status. This letter is to inform you that the accreditation status of the Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success (RYSS) is **Accredited-Warned**, based on its FIRST rating of "F – Substandard Achievement" in 2016- 2017 & 2017-2018.

**Accredited-Warned** means that RYSS exhibits deficiencies in performance that, if not addressed, will lead to probation or revocation of the charter school's accreditation status. We, at RYSS and its parent organization The Tejano Center for Community Concerns, take this performance assessment very seriously. To address the identified areas of deficiency in financial management practices and to raise its rating to Accredited, the organization has taken and continues to work on the following steps:

- The RYSS Superintendent of Schools was assigned as interim president/CEO of The Tejano Center to oversee finances in July 2017, after the previous President and CEO retired. Prior to the interim assignment, the RYSS Superintendent never managed nor oversaw finances until July 2017 because the district's finances are managed wholly by The Tejano Center.
- Upon a thorough review of the management practices then in place, the Interim President/CEO immediately found a need to outsource financial oversight of RYSS to TEA's Region 4 Educational Service Center's Finance Department.
- Under this new arrangement, all discretionary expenditures were reviewed and restricted.
- Outdated, ineffective contracts were reviewed, terminated, and renegotiated.
- Inefficient and ineffective procedures in payroll, purchasing, and accounts payable were reviewed and reorganized. Procurement processes were adopted to ensure purchasing transparency.
- The purchasing system was changed in 2017 to require multi-tiered authorizations to ensure that no unauthorized purchases could be made with local or grant funds.
- All overtime for eligible employees continues to be monitored closely.

Under law, if the current accreditation concerns for RYSS are not addressed, the district may be lowered to an accreditation status of Accredited-Probation or Not Accredited-Revoked. A Not Accredited-Revoked status could mean that the TEA no longer recognizes RYSS as a Texas

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charter school and the district could also be subject to additional accreditation sanctions as referenced in statute and rule.

Furthermore, charter districts that fail to meet academic accountability, financial accountability or any combination thereof for three of the preceding school years meet the default closure provisions under Texas Education Code 12.115(c) and are subject to closure.

If you need more information regarding the assignment of accreditation statuses to charter schools and districts, you may go to the TEA website at <http://www.tea.texas.gov/accreditedstatus/>. This website will provide you with background information as well as links to the Texas Education Code and current commissioner's rules related to accreditation.

If you have additional questions regarding the assignment of the **Accredited-Warned** status of RYSS or if you would like additional information about the district's ongoing improvement efforts, please contact me at 713-640-3789 or via email at [adriana.tamez@tejanocenter.org](mailto:adriana.tamez@tejanocenter.org).

Again, we at RYSS take our state accreditation status and our performance very seriously. On behalf of the entire RYSS organization, I can assure you that RYSS is working diligently to improve its finances and its accreditation rating to Accredited for the benefit of the students entrusted in our care.

Sincerely,

Adriana Tamez  
RYSS Superintendent  
Interim President/CEO