



For Immediate Release
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Communities In Schools of Central Texas joins the Texas T-Stem Coalition in proposal to turnaround Consuelo Mendez Middle School

(AUSTIN, TEXAS) Communities In Schools of Central Texas (CISCT) joined a group of accomplished university educators to submit a turnaround plan proposal for Mendez Middle School. The proposal was submitted to Austin ISD on April 3rd, and if accepted, CISCT would be collaborating with the Texas T-Stem Coalition, and together with family and community stakeholders' input, would revamp Mendez Middle School to better meet the needs of students and the Dove Springs community, utilizing the T-STEM Blueprint model.

Students are at the center of the proposal that will address the achievement gap and opportunity gap. If selected, the team would work to exceed state accountability standards at Mendez Middle School using a proven structure and methods that have been successful in 130 other schools across the state.

Proposal Overview:

- The T-STEM Academy model uses a hands-on, Project-Based Learning approach which is highly engaging.
- The T-STEM blueprint has been approved by the Texas Education Agency for school turnaround.
- Teachers would be intensively trained and supported throughout the year by UTeach Master Teachers.
- Students would learn STEM at a deeper level, and also be well-prepared in all their subjects.
- Communities In Schools would enhance its Integrated Student Supports on the Mendez campus, including further engagement of parents, expansion of counseling availability, and providing supports and training for teachers to enhance their understanding of and effectiveness with students.

"I believe this approach will get our Mendez students to meet and eventually exceed standards, as well as maximize their future learning and earning opportunities. The Mendez community needs and deserves to be fully engaged in the turnaround of their school, which is situated in the heart of Dove Springs," says Suki Steinhauser, Chief Executive Officer of Communities In Schools of Central Texas.

ABOUT COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS

- At CIS, we help students with immediate needs like food and clothing, and more complex challenges that require counseling and mentoring. With CIS on campus, teachers can focus on teaching, and students can focus on learning.
- This year, CIS of Central Texas has full-time programming on 66 local elementary, middle, and high school campuses.
- The power of Communities In Schools:
 - Our staff works inside K-12 public schools daily.
 - We work in partnership with teachers and school administration.
 - Among the students who receive our most intensive supports, 99% of students stay in school, and 84% improve grades, attendance or behavior. **Additional information can be found at ciscentraltexas.org.**