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Texas Education Agency receives grants from America's Promise Alliance and State Farm Insurance to host summit addressing high school dropout crisis

AUSTIN – Commissioner of Education Robert Scott announced today that the Texas Education Agency has received a \$25,000 grant from America's Promise Alliance (APA), the nation's largest partnership alliance working on behalf of children and youth, to host a Statewide Dropout Prevention Summit in Austin Nov. 10.

Texas' summit will be one of at least 100 the Alliance is sponsoring across the country over the next two years as part of its dropout prevention campaign, which aims to reduce the nation's alarmingly high school dropout rate and better prepare young people for college, work and life. The commissioner is hosting the America's Promise Alliance Statewide Dropout Prevention Summit along with key sponsor, State Farm Insurance.

"This summit will bring the nation's leading research experts and key stakeholders together to discuss and develop a plan of action that addresses this important issue in a unified way as we've never done before," said Scott. "We're grateful to APA and State Farm Insurance for their support in making this summit a reality."

The APA Summit will be held at the Austin Hyatt at Town Lake from noon to 5 p.m. Nov. 10. The summit will be held in conjunction with the Texas High School Project's (THSP) 4th Annual Education Conference.

This research-based summit will include presentations from the nation's leading experts on dropout prevention as well as showcase Texas schools which employ evidence-based strategies highlighted in national research studies.

Highlights include:

- a presentation by Dr. Mark Dynarski and Dr. Roberto Agodini of the What Works Clearinghouse at the Institute for Education Services (IES) regarding its recently released "Practice Guide on Dropout Prevention";
- Mel Riddile with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) who will discuss his experience turning around J.E.B. Stuart High School, a low-performing school in

Virginia into a model of academic success for high school students identified at risk of dropping out;

- Dr. Sharon Vaughn, director of the Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk at the University of Texas at Austin, who will discuss specific academic intervention strategies for students struggling in reading and Dr. David Chard, SMU to discuss strategies in math;
- Chris Barbic, head of schools of YES Preparatory Academy to discuss application of these interventions at the campus level; and,
- Texas school leaders from various campuses across Texas which encompass the strategies in the IES Practice Guide and can share how those practices have translated into success.

“There is nothing more important for Texas than to focus on than our young people, and one of the best success indicators is earning a high school diploma,” the commissioner said. “We all agree that this issue is vital and this summit will allow policymakers the opportunity to discuss our high school dropout crisis with state and national experts as they prepare for the upcoming legislative session.”

For more information, or to register for the APA Statewide Dropout Prevention Summit, send an email to: everystudentgraduate@tea.state.tx.us. Deadline to register is Oct. 31, capacity is limited to 500 and there is no cost to attend the APA Summit.

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