

December 21, 2012

The Honorable Rick Perry, Governor of Texas
The Honorable David Dewhurst, Lieutenant Governor of Texas
The Honorable Joe Straus, Speaker of the House of Representatives
Members of the Texas Legislature

In accordance with Texas Education Code §7.056(j), please find attached the initial report of the Texas High Performance Schools Consortium. Consortium members have been working diligently since their first meeting two months ago, and I appreciate their efforts.

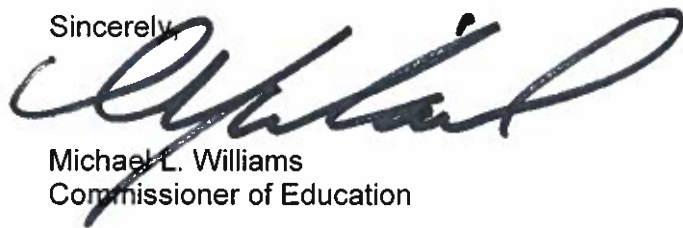
Please note that the report's content reflects solely the views and recommendations of the Consortium members. In anticipation of a broader conversation during the upcoming legislative session regarding assessment, accountability, and graduation requirements, I have chosen neither to endorse nor reject the report's recommendations at this time.

The report includes background information on the Consortium and its members, as well as an update on their work thus far. I would like to highlight:

- Appendix B, "Waiver Requests for the Texas High Performance Schools Consortium," (pages 20-22) reflects the most substantial portion of the report for purposes of consideration by the Governor and the Legislature.
- While requests 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, and 8 would require legislative action, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has the necessary authority to address in whole or part requests 4, 6, and 9.
- Request 10 asks TEA to pursue a waiver of No Child Left Behind's federal accountability requirements, which I plan on formally requesting in the coming weeks. This waiver request would be subject to approval by the United States Department of Education.

I look forward to our upcoming dialogue on these and other important issues facing our public schools.

Sincerely,



Michael L. Williams
Commissioner of Education