

February 11, 2011

Dr. William Powers, Jr., President  
The University of Texas at Austin  
Main Building 400  
PO Box T  
Austin, Texas 78713-8920

Dear Dr. Powers:

*U.S. News and World Report* has forwarded to me your letter of February 2, 2011, in which you state that you decline to participate in our joint review of the nation's education schools. You state that NCTQ does not recognize "the best practices and, in particular the best new practices, in teacher preparation."

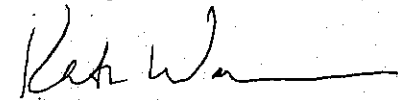
Although I may not be able to persuade you to reconsider this decision, I do think it is important that you know the facts that led to such tension between us and your deans that, I would imagine, was a factor in their gaining your approval not to participate. The issue was never about our inability to accommodate UTeach's "innovative practices," of which we have been longtime fans and continue to be. (That favorable impression was certainly conveyed in our awarding UT Austin one of the highest grades in the state in the review that was released on April 29, 2010. A press release mentioning this award is attached.)

In fact, the deans did not like the fact that we were quite critical of the practice of shortchanging the subject matter preparation of high school science teachers. We learned that UTeach was graduating high school science teachers deemed technically qualified to teach biology in Texas high schools even though they had taken as few as two courses in biology. The practice is a product of a deeply flawed state certification system.

We visited the UT campus on January 22, 2010 to try to resolve the tension. In a private lunch with Michael Marder and Larry Abraham, they admitted to us that this practice did not meet the standards of UT Austin, but that they felt compelled to allow it to continue. It seems Texas principals want teachers trained under this kind of certification because it gives them greater flexibility in how they assign science teachers while not violating any state or federal laws about the qualifications that teachers must have.

We ultimately decided to shift much of our criticism of this certification route to the state, but were never able to repair the hurt feelings of administrators. Some paperwork supporting this sequence of events is attached.

Sincerely,



Kate Walsh  
President

cc: Dr. Larry Faulkner, Houston Endowment  
Mr. Alexander Kress, Akin Gump LLC  
Ms. Lauren Winchester, Editor-in-Chief, *The Daily Texan*  
Ms. Melissa Taboada, Reporter/Columnist, *Austin American-Statesman*  
Mr. Brian Kelly, Editor, *US News and World Report*



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