



commit! Our Kids. Our Tomorrow.

Dear Friends,

Roughly one year ago today, the process of forming a regional partnership to address our educational challenges began. Led by a 20-member Strategy Committee, we decided upon our scope (Dallas County), what we would measure (11 outcomes from Kindergarten readiness to post-secondary completion) and what areas we would target first (early childhood and college enrollment). We gathered the data, which only highlighted the urgency of the effort further. And then we began traversing the 1,000 square miles within Dallas County to bring partners and leaders into the fold.

Today we're proud to say that our community has responded. Six school districts and their boards of trustees, collectively educating over 250,000 students, have joined the Commit! Partnership. Numerous higher ed institutions, as well as Head Start and some of our region's largest employers and most generous foundations, have also enlisted in the cause.

As important as these 40+ institutions, individual leaders have stepped up to guide the work by joining various Support Councils focused on Early Childhood, K-12, Higher Ed/Workforce, Human Capital, Advocacy and Data. Together with our Leadership Council members, Commit! has enlisted over 65 individuals to attack the work, bringing their expertise and resources to bear. Other leaders will join over time, and it is our hope that we will soon have upwards of 100 individuals, reflective of our community and committed to the transformational impact of education, guiding this effort.

Five weeks ago we convened our first Advocacy Council. This week we will kick off our first Early Childhood Council.



Fall Headlines

- 1) [The Partnership Takes Root: Get the latest on the formation of the Commit! Partnership.](#)
- 2) [Policy Roundtable Seeks Shared Voice in Austin: Learn how local organizations are getting ready for the 83rd Legislative session.](#)
- 3) [Dallas Region Commits to Kindergarten Readiness: Read how local districts and childcare centers came together to focus on data and quality in early childhood education.](#)
- 4) [Learning from Harlem: Mayor, City and District bring home lessons for southern Dallas.](#)
- 5) [Introducing Stories of Impact: Read and watch our first case study on school and community partnerships.](#)

In two months we will launch a website to help recruit human capital talent nationally to Dallas.

It's an exciting and promising time to be in the midst of this effort. But we've only just begun.

Warmest Regards,

Todd Williams
Executive Director, Commit!

News and Events

Click [here](#) to see upcoming news and events regarding the Commit! initiative and collective impact in our region.

The Partnership Takes Root

[▲ Back to top](#)



If you're familiar with the student achievement data we've been sharing over the past several months, then one thing is probably clear: no single entity can solve the education crisis facing our region. We are impacted as a community, and we must address it as a community.

That's why Commit! exists: to build and support a partnership of organizations willing to work together in a fundamentally new way on behalf of all kids, cradle to career. Over the past few months.. [Read More >](#)

Policy Roundtable Seeks Shared Voice In Austin

[▲ Back to top](#)



On October 11, education organizations impacting Dallas County kids joined together for the Inaugural Dallas Education Advocacy Roundtable. Hosted by Commit!, the Dallas Regional Chamber, United Way of Metropolitan Dallas and Childcare Alliance, the event provided a forum for local education organizations to submit and present policy briefs for community feedback. After months of planning, the roundtable included four panels: Childhood Education, Traditional K-12 Education, Alternative K-12 Education and Supplements to Learning featuring a total of eighteen policy presentations. The audience.. [Read More >](#)

Dallas Region Commits to Kindergarten Readiness

[▲ Back to top](#)

Research shows that early childhood development is the most telling indicator of a child's future success. Yet, we have historically struggled to act on that research because student data is rarely tracked during pre-Kindergarten years. But now that Dallas area school districts and childcare centers have enrolled more children in Texas' Kindergarten Readiness System (KRS) than any other region in the state, we have a new opportunity to take action.. [Read More >](#)



Learning From Harlem

[▲ Back to top](#)



Commit! team member Ashley Bryan recently had the opportunity to see collective impact in action on a visit to the Harlem Children's Zone with a team from Mayor Rawlings' office, City Councilwoman Carolyn Davis and Dallas ISD Trustee Bernadette Nutall. Harlem Children's Zone represents one of the earliest examples of collective impact, an approach to solving community-level challenges in a highly collaborative way.

Led by Geoffrey Canada (of Waiting for "Superman" fame), HCZ exists to transform the Harlem community by "doing whatever it takes to educate children and strengthen the community" through a tightly interwoven system of supports that carries a child from cradle to career. The HCZ model for community.. [Read More >](#)

Introducing Stories of Impact

[▲ Back to top](#)

Everyday, unsung heroes are making a difference in the lives of our kids. Teachers, parents, nonprofits, businesses, faith-based organizations and community members dedicate their time and resources to help children realize their full potential. At Commit!, we believe stories of impact must be shared so that powerful ideas don't stay secret.

So, we are excited to launch Stories of Impact, a series of case studies that highlights best practices and innovative initiatives that are moving the needle for kids in our community. Check out our inaugural story of impact [here](#).



★ News and Events

▲ [Back to top](#)

- Jeanne Whitman, former Headmistress of The Hockaday School and former VP of Development at SMU, has joined the Commit! team as a volunteer in support of our community engagement and development efforts.
- Hoblitzelle Foundation and JPMorgan Chase have joined a growing list of financial supporters investing in the power of collective impact.
- Strive brought together Commit! and over 65 similar efforts from across the country for its 2012 Cradle to Career Network convening in Milwaukee. Highlights [here](#).
- On November 27, Commit!, City of Dallas, Dallas ISD, Dallas Regional Chamber, Dallas Childcare Alliance and Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas will host a luncheon with U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. Register [here](#).
- On November 29, Children At Risk will host a Legislative Agenda Lunch addressing a number of topics, including education reform. Register [here](#).
- On December 4, the next Literacy Speaks event will feature Refugee Writers. Free registration [here](#).





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