



ANNUAL REPORT
2019-2020



The University of Texas
University Charter School



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
UNIVERSITY CHARTER SCHOOL
2019–2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT **Dr. LaToya Smith**

Dear University of Texas Charter School System Family,

This year, more than ever, we owe the administrators, teachers and staff at UT Charter School (UT-UCS) our gratitude. They navigated a difficult year while maintaining high standards for academic excellence and providing the support our students needed during the pandemic. The System's model Social and Emotional Learning initiative was key to making sure students felt safe during an uncertain time, even as they found their lives disrupted by COVID-19.

I have been the vice president for Diversity and Community Engagement for less than a year now, but I quickly learned of UT Charter School System's value to our Longhorn community and to underserved students across the state. Dr. Melissa Chavez and the entire UT-UCS team have nurtured a culture that enables students and families to participate in a supportive learning community that brings out the very best in every child, regardless of their ability or background. You will learn more about the UT-UCS mission and accomplishments in this year's annual report. The report is a reflection of the teaching and learning that every campus in the system is known for and demonstrates why the university values UT-UCS so much.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "LaToya C. Smith".

Dr. LaToya C. Smith

*Vice President for Diversity and Community Engagement
Professor of Practice, College of Education, The University of Texas at Austin*



MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Melissa Chavez

Dear UT University Charter School Families, Partners and Supporters,

The past two academic years have been challenging for our students, in addition to facing the personal barriers that are already in the lives of many of our students. Our teachers have been thoughtfully trained in working with students who are in trauma. This past year, in addition to academics, we focused on teaching the skills to build their resiliency.

Resiliency is the ability to overcome challenges, learn from them and bounce back as a wiser individual. Our teachers brought resiliency to the classroom by showing grace to our students, their peers and themselves when mistakes were made. Our teachers and administrators worked extremely hard to create safe learning spaces for our students. Safe learning spaces build a foundation of academic, social and emotional support for our students that allow them to grow and thrive in the classroom.

We are sincerely grateful to our families and our partners who have entrusted UT University Charter School with the education of their children. We are committed to bringing effective education to our students and providing them with a safe place to learn.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa M. Chavez". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Melissa M. Chavez, Ph.D.

*Associate Vice President and Superintendent,
The University of Texas Charter School System,
The University of Texas at Austin*

TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Mandi Ruffin



Mandi teaches special education at our Texas NeuroRehab Center campus and serves as our district's Educational Technology Specialist. She earned her Master's Degree from The University of Texas in Instructional Technology and has been instrumental during our district's transition to online learning.

Many of the nominations from her peers pointed to her organizational skills and technical support while migrating to Microsoft Teams.

One such nomination stated: "Her dedication to her craft is unmeasured. In the classroom, she is continually adjusting instruction to meet the diverse needs of her learners. Each six weeks, they all show academic and social emotional growth. She makes herself available to the district for ed tech needs and presents trainings on new technology for the classroom. When preparing for remote learning, Mandi was instrumental in ensuring our campus and district were ready to learn virtually."

In addition to nominations for her teaching abilities, a fellow teacher nominator stated: "Mandi bridged the IT gap for us." Mandi developed and deployed training to students, teachers, and facility staff members on over 20 curriculum resources and communication platforms. Through these trainings and department meetings, she brought an educational perspective to IT discussions and an IT perspective to curriculum meetings.

UT University Charter School is grateful to have Mandi on our team and so happy to share that she is the Teacher of the Year!

ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR

Michelle Meister



Michelle Meister has been with UT-UCS for 15 years and serves as the executive principal of the Methodist Children's Home (MCH) in Waco. During the past two tumultuous years, all of our campuses have seen many firsts. Implementing COVID-19 testing for all staff and students was challeng-

ing and had to be implemented quickly. Working with Assistant Superintendent Leal, Michelle and her team launched our district's first program model and helped fine-tune it so the other campuses could quickly follow suit.

At the end of the 2020 school year, Michele led teachers and MCH staff on a "Teacher Parade" across the MCH campus. This event connected students and staff with the students who had been unable to be with one another due to quarantine. Everything Michelle does, her actions and decisions, are all laser-focused on the students. Her dedication to the students and their health and well-being is absolutely the most important thing to her. Her faculty and the campus climate at MCH reflect this priority.

Because of her dedication to our students, that is why Michelle Meister is the Administrator of the Year.

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

Christeen McMahon



UT-UCS's Rookie of the Year Award is presented annually to a teacher, librarian or interventionist who is new to our district, but their work embodies our motto: Teaching to the Spirit of Every Child. This year's award goes to Christeen McMahon.

Christeen is the English Language Arts and Social Studies teacher at Cedar Crest Hospital who came on board during the pandemic, but was able to build a great classroom community. In her nominations, her peers wrote that Ms. McMahon worked hard to build positive relationships with not just the students, but the faculty and facility staff as well. Her nominations also highlighted her flexibility and successful implementation of new technologies—qualities that are very valuable to our school district.

Congratulations Christeen McMahon on being the UT-UCS Rookie of the Year, and we are excited to see what your future holds!



STAFF OF THE YEAR

Bree Davison



Bree Davison is new to UT-UCS but not new to education. One of the duties Bree assists with is the coordination of ARDs for multiple North Texas campuses. ARDs are meetings that are held with students, parents, teachers and administrative staff to determine whether or not a student qualifies for special education services and to develop the Individual Education Program for eligible students.

Bree was nominated, in part, because of her dedication to the students and to ensuring that everything the ARD Committee may need is ready so meetings are student-centered and efficient. Additionally, Bree's nominators noted that she "encourages staff to grow and become more proficient in all things SPED (special education)," which ultimately serves all students. Another nominator wrote: "She is GREAT at training teachers and explaining the WHY to her campuses."

Bree's dedication to the students and her fellow teachers is why she is the UT-UCS Staff of the Year.

FACILITY PARTNER OF THE YEAR

Texas NeuroRehab

Annually, UT-UCS recognizes a facility partner that has worked with our district to incorporate education as a priority in their program and strengthened our partnership to benefit the students we both serve. This year, we would like to recognize as our facility partner of the year as Dr. Ed Prettyman and the Texas NeuroRehab Center (TNC).

TNC is a specialized treatment facility that provides complex medical and brain injury rehab for ages 13 years and older and neuropsychiatric treatment for youth. TNC's campus is a residential program where youth (ages 8 to 17) are provided with services to meet their complex medical, behavioral, social and educational needs. TNC has been a partner with UT-UCS since 2002.

As TNC was planning their response to the pandemic and quarantine, their staff included UT-UCS staff and Principal Kris Ann Schmidt in the planning so that the educational need of our students would be continuously met. In this time of disruption and change, the solid partnership between our programs ultimately provides our students with the foundation they need to become successful.



Campus Locations

Annunciation Maternity Home (Georgetown)
Austin Oaks (Austin)
Cedar Crest Hospital (Belton)
Clearfork Academy (Fort Worth)
DePelchin-Richmond (Richmond)
George M. Kozmetsky School (Restricted Location)
Georgetown Behavioral Health Institute (Georgetown)
Helping Hand Home for Children (Austin)
High Point (San Antonio)
Laurel Ridge (San Antonio)
Methodist Children's Home (Waco)

Munday (Restricted Location)
Olympia Hills Gymnastics (Buda)
Pathfinders Ranch (Driftwood)
Pathways 3H (Mountain Home)
Safe Haven Youth Ranch (Hempstead)
Seton Home/St. PJ's (San Antonio)
Settlement Home (Austin)
SJRC Texas (Bulverde)
The Refuge for DMST (Restricted Location)
Texas NeuroRehab Center (Austin)
University High School (Austin)
Unlimited Visions Aftercare (Houston)

For a complete description of our campuses visit:
<https://utcharter.org>

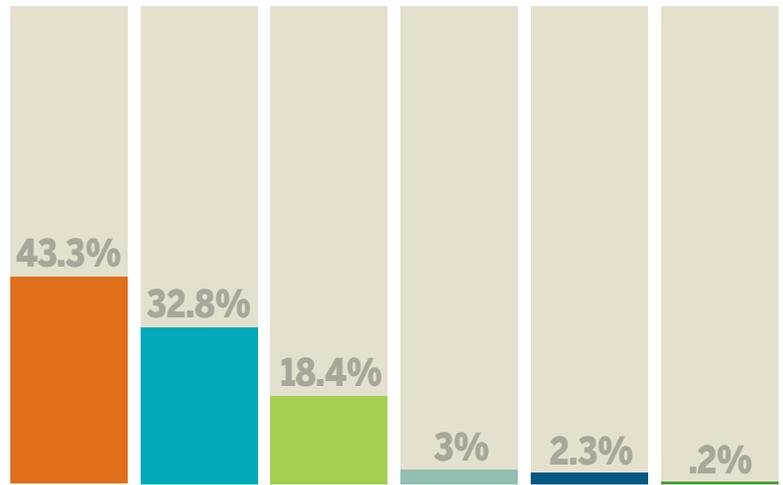
REVENUE & EXPENSES

| | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| State Funding | 88% |
| Federal Funding | 12% |
| \$11,405,591 | 100% |



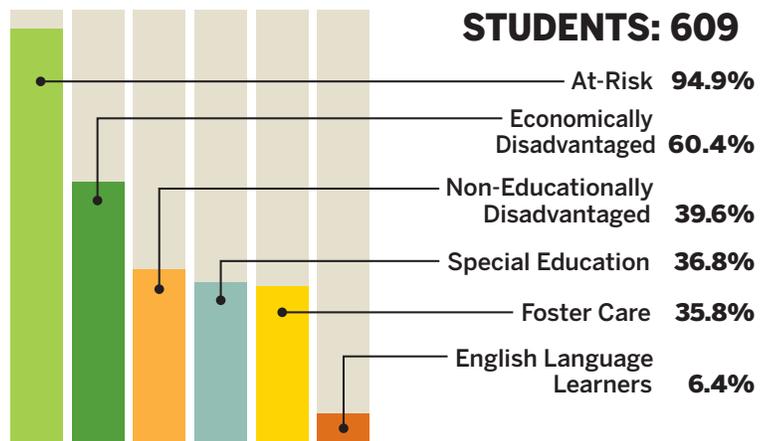
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|--|-------------|
| Instruction | 60% |
| School Leadership | 13% |
| General Administration | 9% |
| Guidance, Counseling and Evaluation Services | 6% |
| Curriculum and Staff Development | 5% |
| Data Processing Services | 3% |
| Development | 2% |
| Maintenance and Operations | 2% |
| \$10,611,662 | 100% |

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS



- 43.3% White
- 32.8% Hispanic
- 18.4% African American
- 3% Multiethnic
- 2.3% American Indian
- .2% Asian

STUDENT POPULATION



Data based on 2019-2020 Texas Academic Performance Report available from the Texas Education Agency.



The University of Texas University Charter School

UT-UCS MISSION

The University of Texas–University Charter School's mission is to provide access to effective educational opportunities for unique learners by creating safe environments and holding high expectations for all.

UT-UCS VISION

In full partnership with our communities, the University of Texas–University Charter School's vision is to provide the best educational system for students with specialized learning needs in unique settings where each student will achieve academic, social and emotional success.

VISIT US ONLINE
<https://utcharter.org>

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS–UNIVERSITY CHARTER SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD

Jennifer W. Maedgen, Ph.D., Chair
Linda Addicks
David Anderson

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Judith Loreda, Ph.D.

Jessica Toste, Ph.D.
Melissa M. Chavez, Ph.D.,
Superintendent (*Non-Voting*)



The University of Texas at Austin
Division of Diversity and
Community Engagement

The University of Texas University Charter School System is a unit within the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement at The University of Texas at Austin.