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November 8, 2013

Julie Woestehoff
Executive Director, Parents United for Responsible Education

Dear Ms. Woestehoff:

We are in receipt of your recent inquiry about our participation in the Illinois Shared Learning Environment (ISLE) which you submitted on behalf of PURE, More Than a Score, and five other organizations.

The CEO has requested that I reach out and respond to your query. We understand a similar letter was provided to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) as the owner of ISLE. As a local education agency, we continue to work with and receive guidance from the State Board about ISLE. In fact, we have some of the same questions you do. While discussions with ISBE are still ongoing and many outstanding questions remain, at this time we can address several of the key points outlined in your letter.

Chicago Public Schools (CPS), as a Race to the Top (RTTT) district included within ISBEs state RTTT grant, is required to participate in the data integration process of ISLE. We agreed to this participation as part of the Program Assurances included in the RTTT grant application. The district's involvement with ISLE beyond the data integration piece is still to be determined in conversation with ISBE. No specific plans for participation have been outlined.

With regards to data security, it is our understanding per ISBE that ISLE is fully compliant with state and federal student privacy laws and that we, as a district, will continue to own, manage, and control access to our student data, just as we do now.

CPS is actively and continuously engaged with ISBE to ensure data security and privacy. This includes collaborating on the "ISLE Privacy and Security Policy" which, per ISBE, is targeted to be finalized by the end of this calendar year.

Additionally, the timeline for implementation including initial data uploads, parent engagement and staff professional development is still being discussed with ISBE. Roll-out is not anticipated to be any sooner than spring of 2014. Immediate costs are covered under the RTTT grant funding. Potential recurring costs are still being determined.

As many of the details of this work are still under discussion, we commit to providing you an update by the end of the calendar year. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "L. Tidmarsh", is positioned above a horizontal line.

Lachlan Tidmarsh
Chief Information Officer