



Texas Smart Schools to Present at National Education Conference

COLLEGE STATION, November 21, 2017—The Texas Smart Schools Initiative has been recognized for its work on school fiscal responsibility with an invitation to Dr. Lori Taylor, Principal Investigator for the project, to present at the 2017 National Summit on Education Reform in Nashville, Tennessee, at the end of November. This will be the 10th annual summit sponsored by *ExcelinEd*, an organization launched by Jeb Bush to promote education reform that achieves high-quality, student-centered education with measurable results.

Taylor, a recognized expert on the variations in the cost of education and the determinants of school district efficiency, will be on a panel addressing *What's New in Education Funding? Tools for Policymakers*. She is also Director of the Mosbacher Institute for Trade, Economics and Public Policy at the Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University.

Schools nationally are faced with the need to balance tight finances with ongoing improvements in student success. The Texas Smart Schools Initiative hopes the conference will provide the opportunity to inspire others to use its methods to identify school districts and campuses that produce high academic progress while maintaining cost-effective operations. According to Taylor, “the key to understanding and improving schools and school districts is being able to make fair and helpful comparisons among them. We recognize that differences in student body and geography clearly affect both student performance and cost. TXSmartSchools.org uses recognized statistical methods to create better, more apples-to-apples, comparison measures for both performance and spending. We see this an essential tool for educators who are seeking to learn from the best practices of similarly situated schools.”

The Texas Smart Schools Initiative combines academic progress and real expenditure measures to create a one to five star “Smart Score” rating, which gives an accurate picture of schools and districts that are getting the maximum student progress in return for each taxpayer dollar. TXSmartSchools.org enables anyone to access Texas school and district-level data free of charge. Schools performing at the top will be affirmed in their academic and budgetary decisions, while others will have the opportunity to learn from their top performing peers.

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To visit us on the web go to TXSmartSchools.org. For more information, contact the Texas Smart Schools Initiative at (979) 458-3015 or info@txsmartschools.org.