January 17, 2014

TO: Elementary Principals
FROM: Sylvia R. Reyna, Ph.D., Chief of School Leadership
SUBJECT: Thriving Minds Summer Camp/Wallace Foundation Study Overview

The Dallas ISD, in partnership with Big Thought, and public school districts in four other cities were selected by The Wallace Foundation, one of the nation’s largest foundations dedicated to education, to participate in a national summer-learning demonstration study.

Wallace has provided a four-year grant to support one of our district’s summer learning programs, the Thriving Minds Summer Camp (TMSC). In summer 2013, a cohort of 2,058 third graders applied to participate in the summer learning demonstration, which is exploring how summer learning can improve long-term educational outcomes and help close the achievement gap between low-income children and their more affluent peers. The 3rd grade students selected to participate in the study were students identified as likely to not qualify to attend summer school under the district’s policy. Therefore, this was an opportunity to engage more students in a quality summer learning program.

All applicants were randomly assigned to either the Treatment Group or Control Group for the study:

- 1,029 students were enrolled in TMSC as part of the Treatment Group, and are asked to attend the camp during the summers of 2013 and 2014, and
- 1,029 were placed in a Control Group that did not attend the TMSC but were given information about alternate summer programs offered by the District or in the community (and will be given similar information for summer 2014).

Recruitment Timeline

There are three types of students eligible to attend TMSC:

1. Current fourth grade students assigned to the Treatment Group for the Wallace summer learning study
2. Students in 21st century after-school program at Cycle 6 and Cycle 7 campuses (15 campuses total)
3. Students at select campuses recommended to attend summer school per EIE local policy
Recruitment for Thriving Minds Summer Camp will occur in three (3) phases:

1. **February 3 – March 31, 2014 (postmarked)**: Recruitment of 4th Grade Treatment Group students for the Wallace summer learning study

2. **April 1 – June 6, 2014**: 21st Century students at Cycle 6 & 7 campuses (conducted by 21st Century site managers)

3. **May 1 - June 6, 2014**: Students recommended for summer school per EIE local policy

**Student recruitment packets for 4th graders in the Wallace study Treatment Group will be sent to campuses by Friday, Jan. 31, 2014.** Your delivery will include a list of students at your campus who are assigned to the Treatment and Control groups for the study, as well as FAQ to assist you and your staff in answering questions from parents. **You’re required to designate a “Summer Camp Coordinator” for your campus who can serve as a point person to distribute the packets to students and answer questions from parents.**

**Please send the name, position and contact information of your designated summer camp coordinator to Crystal Rentz, Coordinator for School Leadership, no later than **Friday, January 24, 2014** to crentz@dallasisd.org.**

Packets will need to be distributed to Treatment students during the week of Feb. 3. Representatives from The Concilio, a local community organization, will be conducting follow-up phone calls and home visits with parents to ensure they have received the materials and to answer any questions.

Each recruitment packet will include a business reply envelope for parents to return their completed registration form to Big Thought for processing. A representative from The Concilio will be contacting your designated Summer Camp Coordinator on a weekly basis to collect any forms that are returned to campus. The Concilio representative will continue to liaison with you and your assigned Summer Camp Coordinator throughout the spring semester regarding students in both the Wallace study Treatment and Control Groups.

**Control Group Students**

In order to maintain the fidelity of the study results, it is imperative that students assigned to the study’s **Control Group** not attend the Thriving Minds Summer Camp.

Letters will be sent home to students in the Control Group in early April, reminding them of their participation in the study and their ineligibility to attend camp this summer as part of the study. As was done last year, a list of free and low-cost summer programs will also be provided to these students in the spring.

Please note that any Control Group student that meets EIE local policy and is recommended to attend summer school will be permitted to attend camp and will not be turned away because they are also a Control Group student. He/she will have an opportunity to apply in May.

3700 Ross Ave.
Dallas, TX 75204
(972) 925-3700
www.dallasisd.org
Dear Parent/Guardian of [Student Name]:

We are excited to welcome your child back to the 2014 Thriving Minds Summer Camp program. Since your child was part of last year’s summer camp (even if your child could not attend last summer), [Student Name] already has a spot in this summer’s camp. You don’t need to apply. All you have to do is fill out the registration form. Now’s your chance to enroll during our “Early-Bird Registration” to secure a spot for summer 2014!

Based on feedback we received from students and parents, we’ve made exciting new changes to the program for this summer. Thriving Minds Summer Camp will run from June 30 to July 31, 2014, from 7:45 a.m. to 6:45 p.m., Monday through Friday. Every day, three hours will be dedicated to music, dance, theater and other enrichment activities. And Dallas ISD teachers will provide academic instruction that fits every child’s learning level.

Campers also will have opportunities to take part in special guest performances and other fun activities during the camp.

Transportation, as well as a daily breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack also are provided at no cost to participants.

“Early-Bird Registration” runs from January 20 through March 31, 2014. As an added bonus, the first 500 students to return their applications will receive two free tickets in late April to attend a special Thriving Minds event at the Perot Museum of Nature and Science hosted by Big Thought.

To enroll, simply fill out the enclosed enrollment form. You can mail it back to us in the envelope provided; no postage is needed. Make sure to postmark your Summer Enrollment form by March 31, 2014.

Once your application is received, you’ll receive a confirmation postcard. A summer welcome packet with information on transportation and additional program details will be sent in mid-May.

If you have questions about the program, please call (XXX) XXX-XXXX or visit with your school’s counselor or summer camp coordinator. Thriving Minds Summer Camp is a great chance for your child to have fun this summer and keep learning. We hope you will register today.

Sincerely,

Jaime Sandoval
Director of Summer Learning and Extended Day Services
Dallas ISD

Greg MacPherson
Director of Programs
Big Thought
Big Thought and Dallas ISD are offering a fun academic and enrichment camp designed to help boost your child's skills and get ready for the next school year.

Morning: Instruction in Language Arts/Social Studies, Science and Math by certified Dallas ISD teachers.

Afternoon: Enrichment classes such as Music, Visual Art, Theater & more!

Transportation to the camp site and breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack are included.

Your child does not need to apply. Just fill out the registration form. Registration form must be postmarked by March 31, 2014.

For more information, call XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Big Thought  Dallas Independent School District  ACE
This registration form is for 4th Grade Wallace Study Students ONLY

Dallas ISD is part of a national study to understand how summer learning helps children do better in school. The study is for 4th grade students. What we learn will help us and children across the nation. Your child is an important participant in this ongoing study. If you have questions regarding the research study, please contact Catherine Augustine at cataug@rand.org or 412-683-2300 x4998. If you have questions regarding the camp, please contact your school counselor.

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<th>Camp Site</th>
<th>Feeder Schools</th>
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Student’s Name: ____________________________

Last Name:
First Name:
Middle Initial:
Grade:
ID#: ____________________________

Home School: ____________________________

Address:
Street: ____________________________
City: ____________________________
State: ____________________________
Zip Code: ____________________________

Date of Birth: ____________________________

Gender: □ Male □ Female

Health Concerns: ____________________________

Father’s/Guardian Name: ____________________________
Home Phone: ____________________________
Cell: ____________________________

Email: ____________________________

Mother’s/Guardian Name: ____________________________
Home Phone: ____________________________
Cell: ____________________________

Email: ____________________________

Emergency Contact 1: ____________________________
Relationship: ____________________________
Emergency Contact Phone: ____________________________

Emergency Contact 2: ____________________________
Relationship: ____________________________
Emergency Contact Phone: ____________________________

Parent Signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

Please return registration form in enclosed business reply envelope.
Registration forms must be postmarked by March 31, 2014.
2014 Thriving Minds Summer Camp • Elementary Schools

Frequently Asked Questions From Treatment Group Parents

(Current fourth grade students assigned to the Treatment Group for the Wallace summer learning study)

1. What is Thriving Minds Summer Camp?
Thriving Minds Summer Camp (TMSC) is a high-quality summer program that mixes academics and fun enrichment activities designed to help your child succeed in 5th grade and beyond.

2. What activities will my child do each day?
Children will work on their reading, writing and math skills with certified Dallas ISD teachers, as well as take part in a fun mix of activities such as theater, dance, music, visual arts and other enrichment activities.

3. How will this help my child?
Research shows that over the summer, children forget many of the things they learned in school the previous year. This camp will make sure your child does not forget what they're learning in 4th grade and do better in the 5th grade. It's the perfect opportunity to keep your child's mind and body active!

4. How much does it cost?
There is no cost for this program. Transportation and meals (breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack) are also included.

5. How long is the camp?
The camp will run from June 30 to July 31, 2014 from 8 a.m. to 3:45 p.m., Monday through Friday.

6. Where is the camp located?
The camp locations are not finalized yet, but this will be determined in the next days and communicated to all parents in the enrollment packets that will be distributed the first week of February. Transportation will be provided to all campsites.

7. How does transportation work?
Transportation will be provided by Dallas ISD to the campsites. A summer welcome packet with information on transportation and additional program details will be sent in mid-May to parents. Information about bus routes will also be available on the district's website in May.

8. Who are the adults supervising the children?
Certified Dallas ISD teachers and professional community artists supervise the program and use a curriculum designed to be interactive and fun.

9. Is this for children who are falling behind and not doing well in school?
No. Thriving Minds Summer Camp is designed to help all children do better in school.

10. How do I apply for my child to attend the camp?
To enroll, simply fill out the enrollment form. You can mail it back to Big Thought in the envelope provided; no postage is needed. Make sure to postmark your child's enrollment form by March 31, 2014. Enrollment forms should be mailed to Big Thought, 1409 South Lamar Street, Suite 1015, Dallas, TX 75215.
11. Where can I get an application form?
Students selected to participate in the Thriving Minds Summer Camp 2014 though the Wallace study will receive an enrollment packet to take home the first week of February. If your child is currently enrolled in a 21st Century Thriving Minds After-School program, they will receive enrollment materials in April. Should your child be recommended to attend Dallas ISD summer school, you will have the opportunity to enroll for the camp beginning in May.