



THE HONORABLE CURTIS M. LOFTIS, JR.

State Treasurer

January 12, 2021

The Honorable Harvey S. Peeler, Jr., President of the Senate
213 Gressette Building
Columbia, SC 29201

The Honorable James H. Lucas, Speaker of the House
506 Blatt Building
Columbia, SC 29201

RE: Teach for America Program—Report of the Inspector General

Dear President Peeler and Speaker Lucas:

This letter is to express my profound concern regarding South Carolina's continued expenditures on the Teach for America ("TFA") program.

Since I began researching the TFA program, I have found little information regarding its effectiveness on the quality of classroom education students receive. Despite this apparent lack of results, TFA has received \$23,000,000 in state appropriate funds since the 2012-2013 Fiscal Year. Because of that, I asked the Inspector General to review the Teach for America – South Carolina Program.

The Inspector General Report should be disheartening to anyone who believes in importance of education and accountability. The following are a few highlights from the report:

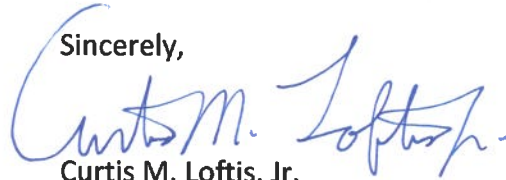
- The cost to the state for a TFA teacher is 100 times more than the cost to produce a teacher through the Program of Alternative Certification for Educations ("PACE"), which is administered by the South Carolina Department of Education (\$26,785.71 per teacher (TFA) vs. \$274.63 per teacher (PACE) based on FY 2019-20 figures).
- In addition to the state appropriations that TFA receives, local districts pay TFA between \$4,500 and \$5,500 a year per teacher on top of the salary and benefits paid to the teacher. (During FY 2019-20 TFA received \$402,500 from school districts, making the total amount receive \$3,402,500.)
- TFA has failed to provide proof of advancement or student improvement—yet claimed it—citing failure to receive data from the school districts as a barrier to doing a

comprehensive review, while the IG states that the data is readily available from the South Carolina Department of Education.

- Much of the funding is sent to TFA's "Park Avenue" corporate headquarters in New York City at 315 W 36th Street, New York, NY. (During FY 2019-20 TFA paid \$851,000 of its total expenditures to the national TFA.)

For your convenience, I am enclosing a copy of the report. The Department of Education's alternative certification program, PACE produces many more teachers at a fraction of the cost to the state. I implore you to consider this when making important funding decisions this year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Curtis M. Loftis, Jr." The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Curtis M. Loftis, Jr.

State Treasurer of South Carolina

cc: The Honorable Henry McMaster, Governor
The Honorable Molly Spearman, Superintendent of Education
The Honorable Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr., Chairman, Senate Finance
The Honorable Greg Hembree, Chairman, Senate Education
The Honorable G. Murrell Smith, Jr., Chairman, House Ways and Means
The Honorable Merita A. Allison, Chairman, House Education and Public Works
Ellen Weaver, Chairman, Education Oversight Committee