



The  
Holdsworth  
Center

2022 IMPACT REPORT

# Purpose & Persistence







“It’s too small to say that I’ve grown here. Holdsworth has awakened me. I came into this program experiencing my role as a job and was considering leaving education. *My work with Holdsworth helped me realign to my purpose and calling.*”

**LACY STARNES**

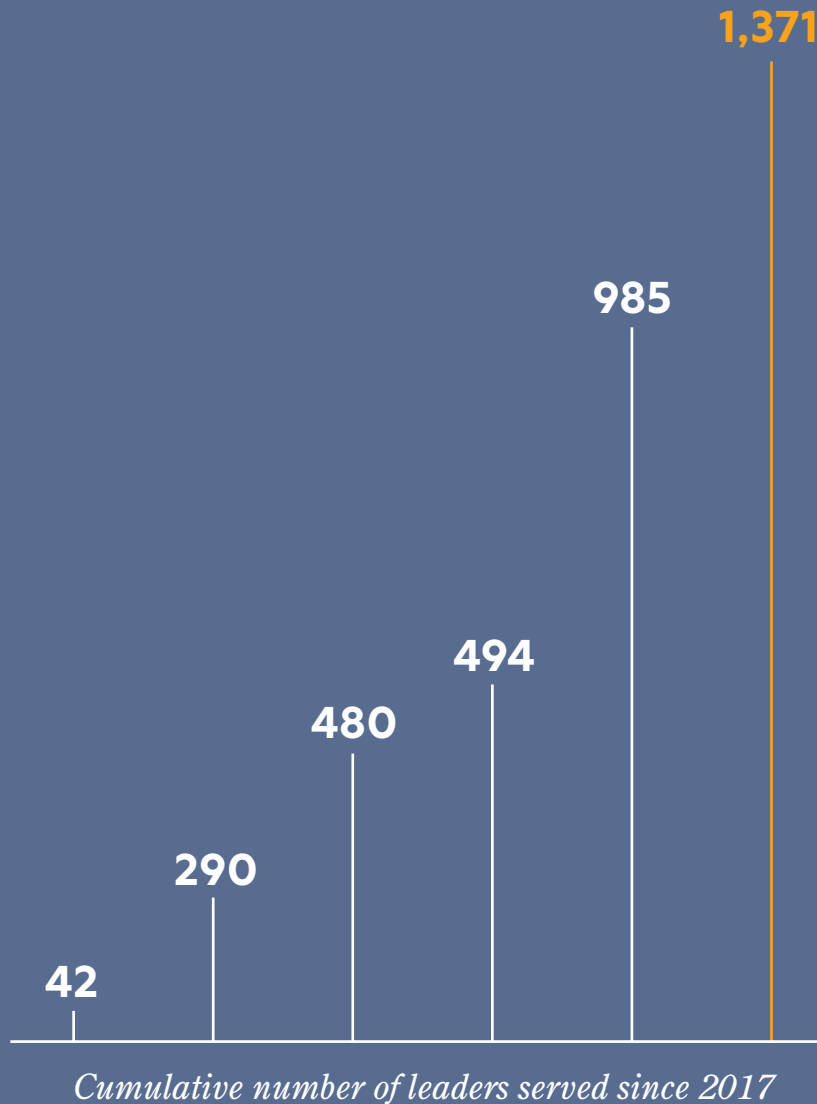
Assistant Principal | Mesquite ISD

# OUR WORK

Driven by the belief that great leaders can push student achievement levels to new heights, The Holdsworth Center partners with Texas public school districts to help educators become experts at leadership and to grow stronger leaders within their own systems.

Founded in 2017 by H-E-B Chairman Charles Butt, Holdsworth makes investments within districts and brings educators from across Texas to learn at its Campus on Lake Austin, a one-of-a-kind place dedicated to the idea that public education matters.





Since our founding in 2017,  
***The Holdsworth Center***  
***has served 1,371 educators***  
across 50 public school  
districts in Texas.



# 2022

Ask any educator and you're likely to hear that 2021-22 was the hardest year of their career. A COVID surge over the holidays, persistent staffing shortages and learning gaps all made for a perfect storm.

*But they did what educators do. **They persisted.***

We're proud to have supported 867 of those public educators in 2022 alone through our leadership programs and are encouraged by early signs of impact.

- **33** districts are working on strengthening their leadership pipeline with help from Holdsworth.
- Nearly **750** school leaders in more than **220** schools are building leadership skills and learning to create positive change for students.
- **26** early-career superintendents are receiving support and growing as leaders as they navigate unprecedented challenges in a high-stakes role.







Teachers, assistant principals, principals, administrators, superintendents and other school leaders have told us that their work with Holdsworth *was like finding a port in the storm.*

With time and space to reflect, envision the big picture and strengthen their skills, they left empowered and refreshed, their hope renewed.

Investing in educators does make a difference. And not just for them, but for all the **staff, students, families and communities** they influence with their example.

“An investment in one is an investment in many. As a leader in a school with 2,300 students, I can impact every single student through the activities I lead and the professional development I create for teachers.”

**JAIME DURAN**

Coach Specialist | Mesquite ISD



“It’s not a training. It’s not a professional development. It is an experience. *Holdsworth has helped change me, to help change my campus.* I feel like I have a toolkit I can use every time I go back on my campus to have a positive impact on student outcomes.”

**AISLEY ADAMS**

Holdsworth Alum | Aldine ISD



# A YEAR OF IMPACT



In our latest survey, **100 percent of alumni** who responded said they were stronger leaders because of the skills gained through Holdsworth and were more effective at leading change and delivering excellent and equitable outcomes for students.



As a result of the investments we've made in districts, **100 percent of superintendents** surveyed rate their leadership pipeline as stronger after partnering with Holdsworth for at least three years.



Despite all the challenges of the past two years, **84 percent of schools** in our program made significant progress toward an ambitious student impact goal they set and worked to achieve in 2022.

An outline map of the state of Texas is centered on the page. A small orange dot with a grey circular shadow is located in the eastern part of the state, indicating the location of McNeill Elementary.

# McNeill Elementary

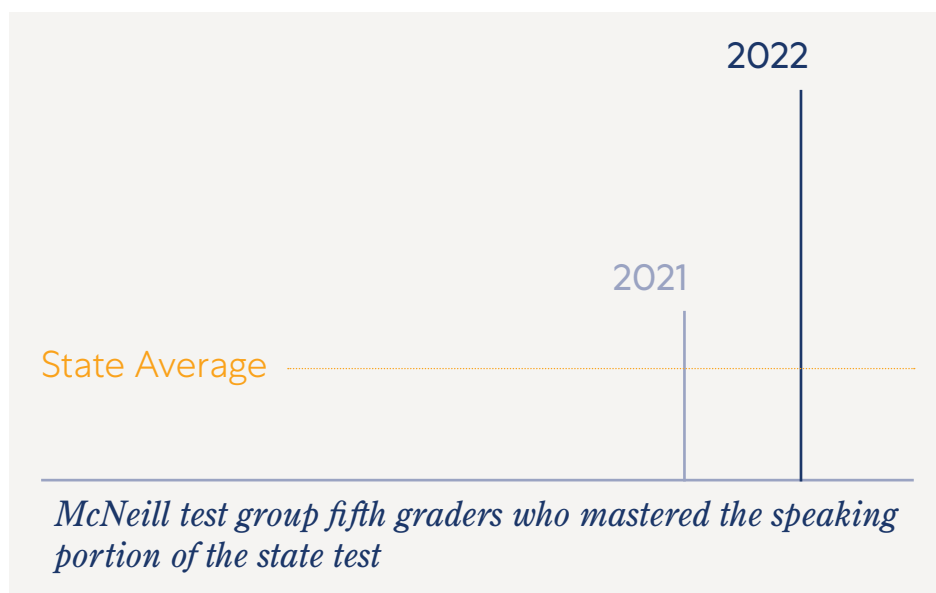
Lamar CISD

# Little changes lead to big results

Over 40 percent of students at this elementary school in the Houston area are non-native English speakers, mirroring a statewide trend. ***By 5th grade, less than 10 percent were mastering the speaking portion of the state test for non-native speakers.***

Using methods taught through Holdsworth, leaders identified root causes and inspired teachers to incorporate more “turn and talk” opportunities during class.

The percentage of targeted 5th graders who aced speaking on the state test rose from nine to 23 percent, plus 83 percent reached mastery on the STAAR reading test. ***In 2022, McNeill earned an A rating from the state accountability system and earned five of six possible distinctions.***







“When we saw the big picture student results, I started sobbing. I couldn’t believe the huge impact this project had on all of our kids.”

**TONI SCOTT**  
Principal | Lamar CISD



**Arlington ISD**

# Preparing for a big job

In Arlington ISD, there are nearly three educators who are ready – truly ready – for every principal opening. **Most Texas school districts have less than one.** Research shows that schools with effective principals have higher retention rates for high performing teachers\*. Strong principals also improve a school's learning climate, especially in high poverty schools.

## ***How did Arlington ISD build such a robust pipeline of strong, ready leaders?***

Five years of focused work through the Holdsworth Partnership to create systems to identify, prepare and support leaders across their district.



\*Source: Bartanen, B. (2020). Principal Quality and Student Attendance. *Educational Researcher*, 49(2), 101–113. Grissom, J. A., & Bartanen, B. (2019). Strategic Retention: Principal Effectiveness and Teacher Turnover in Multiple-Measure Teacher Evaluation Systems. *American Educational Research Journal*, 56(2), 514–555.







“We could not have done this work alone without our Holdsworth District Support Team, who really held our hands and guided our thinking. And Holdsworth helped push our thinking beyond where we were, to where we wanted to be.”

**DR. A. TRACIE BROWN**

Chief Schools Officer | Arlington ISD

# Santos Livas Elementary

## Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD

At this elementary school in the Rio Grande Valley, Principal Rodrigo Hernandez and his team noticed that when emerging bilingual students reached 5th grade, they stopped making progress on speaking skills, and some even regressed.

Introducing more speaking opportunities during class and via an audio recording app helped the team reach a goal set through the Holdsworth program – **55 percent of 5th graders made progress on the speaking portion of the state test, up from 29 percent the previous year.**

“Our journey is far from over. We must get every student in every grade level to show growth in every domain. One of the most important things we learned during our time with Holdsworth is that it takes ALL of us to create an impact.”

**RODRIGO HERNANDEZ**

Principal | Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD





# Rolling Meadows Elementary

## Judson ISD

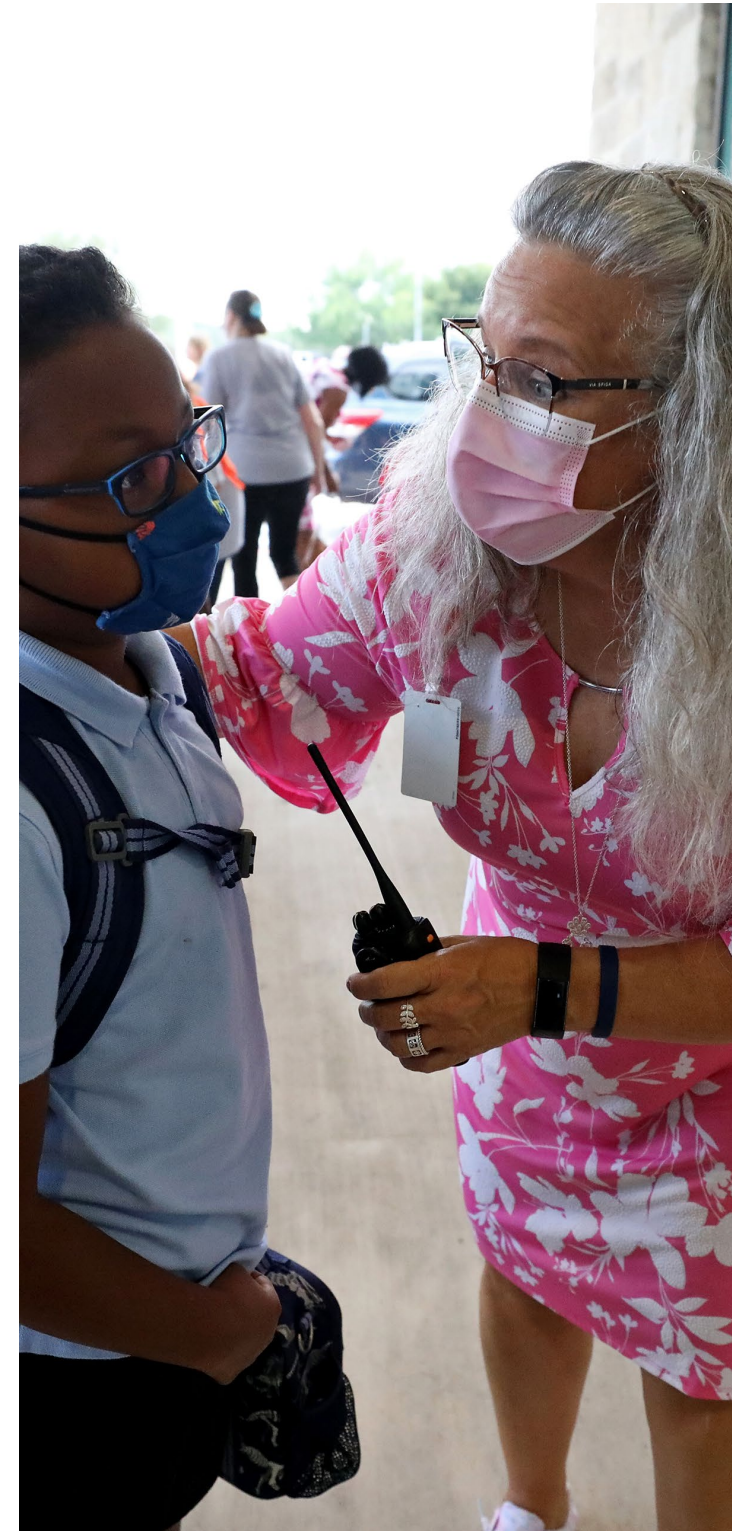
At this diverse school in San Antonio, leaders discovered that too many 3rd graders in special education were not mastering grade-level content. After trying several change strategies, Principal Michelle La Rue and her team began to move the needle by focusing on small group instruction and extended planning time for teachers.

The changes had a much broader impact than expected – the share of all 3rd graders meeting grade level expectations in comprehension ***increased by over 10 percentage points.***

“The collaboration amongst staff, the vulnerability we showed and the way that we interact and look at problems now was the biggest growth for us through the Holdsworth experience.”

**DWAN JOSEPH**

Academic Trainer | Judson ISD







# PROGRAMS

In our three programs, superintendents, principals, teachers and other educational leaders engage with some of the nation's top experts in their fields from a variety of sectors, including preK-12 and higher education, government and business.



**Holdsworth Partnership**



**Leadership Collaborative**



**Superintendent Leadership Program**



## Holdsworth Partnership

Launched in 2017

This multi-year investment is designed to help school districts grow a strong bench of outstanding leaders at all levels, with a focus on sitting and aspiring principals.

Teams of leaders are given the inspiration, tools and resources needed to grow through our 2-year District Leadership Program and Campus Leadership Program. A cornerstone of our model is a Holdsworth team of consultants who are embedded within districts to build best-in-class talent development systems.

“I wish every school in Texas had the opportunity to go through this program because the ways it has changed me, my leaders and my school are innumerable. Imagine if the impact could be spread statewide.”



**CLAUDIA CARSON**

Coach Specialist | Mesquite ISD





## Leadership Collaborative

Launched in 2021

This 18-month experience is designed to support districts in building a strong bench of aspiring principals who are ready to step into school leadership positions when they arise.

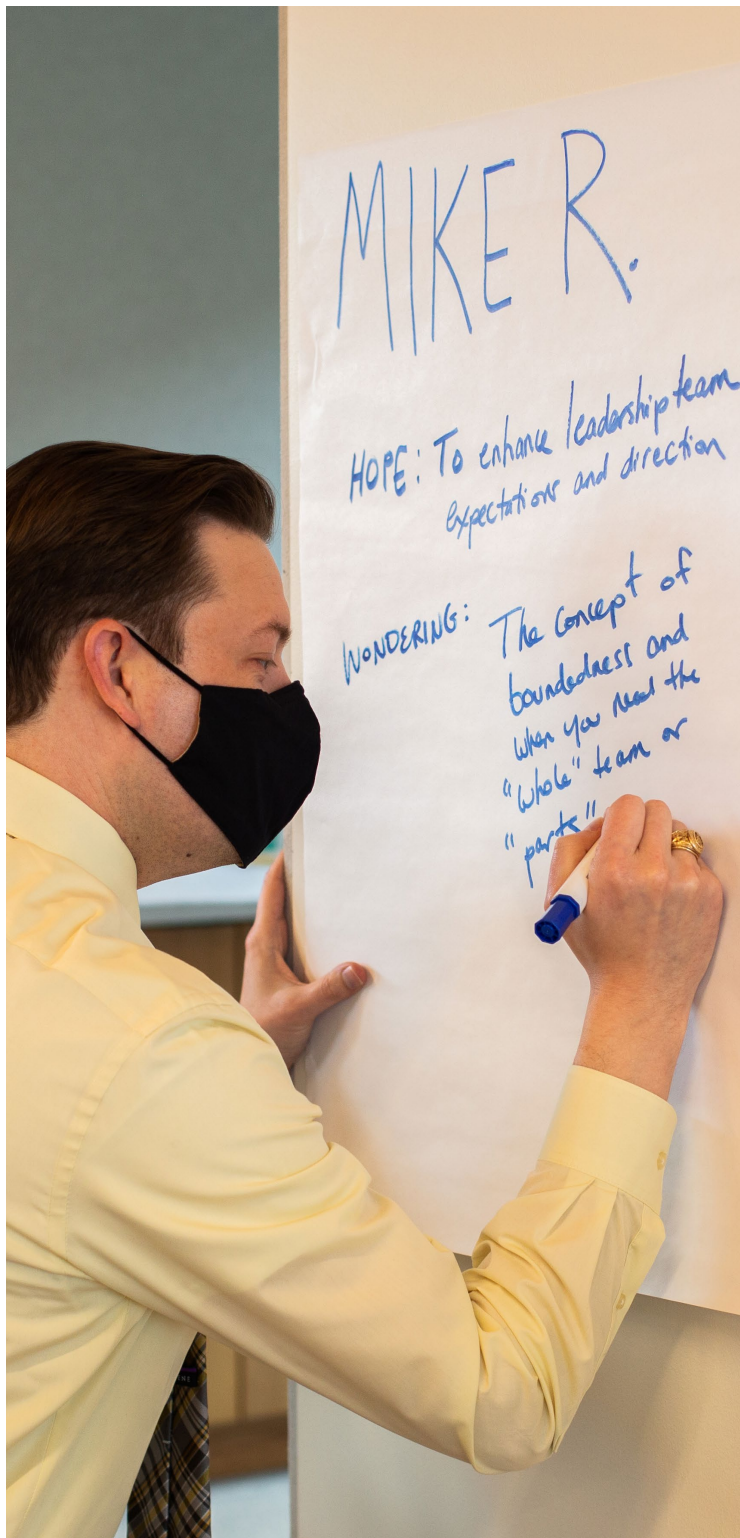
A team of three – the superintendent and two district leaders – work with Holdsworth staff to define what great leadership looks like in their district and use this definition to design systems to strengthen and sustain their school leadership pipeline.

“Holdsworth gives us the time and expertise to inspect our systems and make them stronger. The collaboration has made Tomball ISD a better district.”



**DR. MARTHA SALAZAR-ZAMORA**  
Superintendent | Tomball ISD





# Superintendent Leadership Program

Launched in 2021

This program addresses the rising complexity of the superintendent role amid unprecedented challenges in public education -- a trend that is pushing more leaders to exit the profession.

This 18-month experience provides development in the most challenging, high-stakes, and high-leverage aspects of the superintendent's job, as well as support from a network of peers and executive coaching from Holdsworth's superintendents-in-residence.

"Holdsworth is the best professional growth opportunity and collaborative atmosphere I've ever been part of. This is absolutely the best thing that I've experienced not just for me, but for us as a district."



**MIKE MARTINDALE**

Superintendent | College Station ISD

# OUR SUPPORTERS

We are grateful to our community of supporters who have joined our efforts to make long-term, sustainable improvements within our Texas public schools by investing in Holdsworth.



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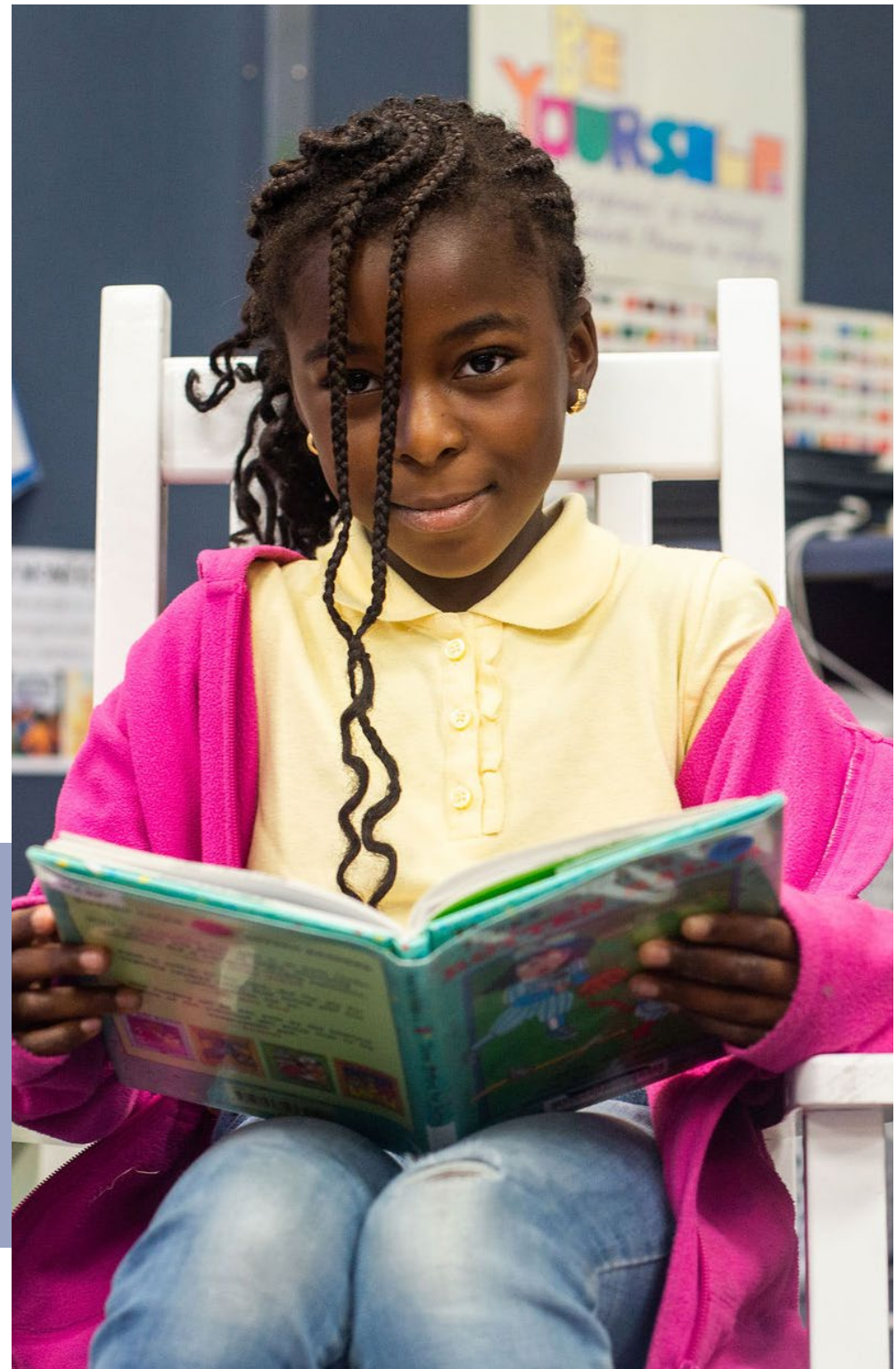
Since our founding in 2017, we have benefitted from the support of our founder, Charles Butt, whose generous contributions launched The Holdsworth Partnership, helped expand our program offerings and funded our permanent home, the Campus on Lake Austin—a restorative learning environment that reflects the importance of Texas educators and the work they do.

As we continue to grow, we are looking for strategic partners to join us by providing new programs that help even more districts and educators across the state create excellent and equitable student outcomes for all students.

## JOIN US!

To learn more about The Holdsworth Center or make a gift, visit [holdsworthcenter.org](https://holdsworthcenter.org) or reach out to:

Bryan Rubio | Director of Development  
[brubio@holdsworthcenter.org](mailto:brubio@holdsworthcenter.org)





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