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Dear Client:

**The sometimes-bitter, push-pull battle between public schools and charter schools is ongoing in Austin and around the state. South of here, in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, a *public school district* is considering a plan that could give its campuses more flexibility and funding – by adopting some *charter school-like* policies. This is one to watch.**

Immediately after our deadline this week, the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo (PSJA) public school district teachers will vote on a plan that will create an Innovative Management Organization, or IMO. If adopted, PSJA superintendent **Daniel King** says the IMO approach could result in additional funding for the school district.

Stay with me now. The non-profit IMO will operate as an independent contractor to PSJA and will be responsible for delivering services to the district. King calls this a way to **merge the benefits of having charter status with the current public school system**. How will it work?

To achieve a middle ground, King proposes holding the IMO responsible *not* for fully running the campus, but *for creating methods in which teachers and staff are more involved in the decision-making of their campuses*, according to the *McAllen Monitor*.

**The IMO will be overseen by its own governing board and operate as a separate entity from the district.** It will hire its own executive director. If this plan is implemented district-wide, it would partner with 5-7 IMOs.

It gets complicated and maybe even a bit convoluted. Space prevents us into delving too deeply into the pros and cons. But King estimates this plan would bring in about **\$906 additionally per child, per year, and if it is district-wide, it would mean \$28 million annually**. This approach is made possible by Senate Bill 1882, passed by the Legislature.

Long a supporter of charter schools and frequent critic of public school operations, the Texas Public Policy Foundation praises this approach, saying not only would it **result in more education dollars for the Valley, but it should also provide improved opportunities for teachers and better student outcomes. It bears watching.**

**Speaking of schools and the Texas Legislature, Governor Greg Abbott garnered national attention this week when he unveiled a 40-page proposal to prevent school shootings. In doing so, he mentioned he may need to call a special session of the legislature to enact some of his recommendations. His plan has its critics; most claim it doesn't go far enough. However, in today's climate, school shootings will likely stay Topic-A on many agendas.**

Much of what Abbott is proposing will require action by the Texas Legislature. Since the next regular session does not even start until next year, **a special session would be required if the governor wants to have his recommended steps in place when the school year begins in August/September.**

Lieutenant Governor **Dan Patrick** and House Speaker **Joe Straus** have **interim Senate and House committees considering legislative remedies as we speak.** But only the governor can call a special session to enact any legislation.

By law, a special session can be called on short notice (though it needs lead-up time to make happen). **Special sessions are limited to 30-day durations**, though lawmakers can quit at any time. **And, legislators can consider only items identified by the governor.**

But, with recent Texas school shootings so much on the minds of Texans, **Austin may need to be ready for legislators to descend here this summer.**

**Saying the three and a half years he served as UTSystem Chancellor were “among the most meaningful and most fulfilling of my life,” Bill McRaven used the occasion of his last day in office Thursday, 5/31/18, to call attention to individuals and the work of the 14 higher education units in the UTSystem.**

As a Navy Admiral who headed up the US military Special Forces Unit, and is a former Navy SEAL himself, McRaven said **“the men and women who have worked shoulder to shoulder with me at System are, with no hyperbole, the finest team I've ever been a part of.”**

High praise indeed from the man who spent 37 years guiding some of the **most elite and highly-trained units in the military.** It culminated with the dangerous and extremely well-executed killing of the mastermind of the attack on the US Twin Towers, **Osama bin Laden.**

McRaven announced he was giving up the Chancellor's post months ago, citing health as part of his decision. So, now what? **After leading a nomadic life for 37 years, the UTAustin journalism graduate and his wife Georgeann have a new house in Austin. He'll be teaching at UTAustin starting next spring.** And as an acclaimed writer, you can bet he'll spend some time at his computer putting his journalism education and experience to good use.

**So, the new TexasA&M football coach Jimbo Fisher got a whopping, history-making, 10-year, \$75 million contract five months ago. But it hasn't been signed yet, even though he's been working full-time since then. What's going on in Aggieland?**

Today's big-time football head coaching contracts are full of "extras" and "perks" that really sweeten the pot (as if \$75 million were not enough). According to *The Texas Tribune*, it's those niggling employment agreement details filling out about 30 pages that take time. Details for instance, such as **complimentary flight time on private jets, complicated licensing deals, personal cars** (plural), **exclusive club memberships, 6-figure performance bonuses**, etc.

Don't fret for Jimbo (good name for a Texas Aggie coach, huh?). Even though there is no official signed contract yet, he has a **signed memo of understanding that started slapping the agreed salary into his bank account right away.**

**Last year, almost 14 million people traveled through Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA). This record number of travelers should be alleviated somewhat by the 9-gate terminal expansion nearing completion. But, this number of ABIA air travelers is expected to double – that's right, double – within the next 20 years. What's going on to be able to handle a crowd of 25-to-30 million flyers using the airport? Planning is underway.**

Airport officials are in the midst of a Master Plan workshop, gathering input. The third of four input sessions will be held next week. To the City of Austin's credit, **it is doing more than just trying to figure how many additional gates will be needed in the future.**

**"People enjoy and respect that our airport feels like Austin; everything from the music to the food to the atmosphere within the terminal, and we want to ensure that our new plans continue to make ABIA the airport of choice for Central Texas,"** said **Lyn Estabrook**, ABIA's Project Management Supervisor.

**"Our anticipated growth over the last few years has required us to build the support services and build the infrastructure to support that growth,"** explained ABIA's **Jennifer Williams**. So, what's involved? ABIA referenced new terminal spaces, relieving congestion and mobility improvement.

Importantly, consideration will be given to future runway opportunities. Right now, there are two runways. **ABIA officials indicated that, though an additional runway is not an immediate need, it is in the airport's interest to plan for a third runway to meet future growth.** This is crucial to planning.

For more info about the Master Plan, you can go to [www.ABIAMasterPlan.com](http://www.ABIAMasterPlan.com). In the meantime, check out the next item about an amazing number of new non-stop flights.

**Summertime is just beginning. It is obviously a big travel time. No need to belabor the point. There's no need to reinforce the fact that Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA) will be impacted quite heavily. And, now you also have a big-time reminder of the growing importance of Austin's airport – the huge number of *new* non-stop flights at ABIA.**

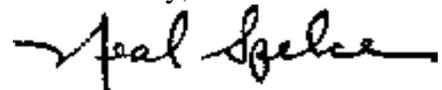
There are more new non-stop destinations available for Austin area travelers at ABIA for summer 2018 than were available in summer 2017. In fact, it's phenomenal. Count 'em. **A 2018 summertime ABIA traveler has 17 more non-stop options than did the 2017 traveler.** Look at the new 2018 non-stop destinations and the airlines that operate them.

**London, England Gatwick Airport** – Norwegian Airlines  
**Punta Cana, Dominican Republic** – Vacation Express (starts June 4)  
**Buffalo, New York** – Frontier Airlines  
**Charleston, South Carolina** – Frontier Airlines  
**Columbus, Ohio Rickenbacker Airport** – Allegiant Air (South Terminal)  
**Columbus, Ohio John Glenn International** – Frontier Airlines  
**Jacksonville, Florida** -- Frontier Airlines  
**Little Rock, Arkansas** – ViaAir (South Terminal)  
**Milwaukee, Wisconsin** – Frontier Airlines  
**Oklahoma City, Oklahoma** – ViaAir (South Terminal)  
**Omaha, Nebraska** – Frontier Airlines  
**Ontario, California** – Frontier Airlines  
**Providence, Rhode Island** – Frontier Airlines  
**Reno, Nevada** – Frontier Airlines  
**Sacramento, California** – Southwest Airlines  
**Tucson, Arizona** – ViaAir (South Terminal)  
**Tulsa, Oklahoma** – ViaAir (South Terminal)

And this doesn't even count **Sun Country Airline's** seasonal non-stop service to Cancun.

**Dr. Louis Overholster's** fear of flying is triggered every time he sees the word "Terminal."

Sincerely,



Editor/Publisher