



March 8, 2023

The Honorable Glenn Youngkin
Office of the Governor
PO Box 1475
Richmond, VA 23218
Via Email: [REDACTED]

Re: Investigation Request into Thomas Jefferson High School for Science & Technology's TJ Partnership Fund and Donations from Chinese Government-Linked Entities

Dear Governor Youngkin:

This is a request to investigate the relationship between Fairfax County Public Schools, the TJ Partnership Fund, and funding by Chinese government-linked entities. Parents Defending Education is a national grassroots organization with many members who are parents of children in Fairfax schools. Our members are concerned about past and current funding streams into the TJ Partnership Fund from foreign entities, and the access to school facilities and documents that may have been granted to said parties in exchange. PDE requests that the State conduct a formal investigation, either by the State Inspector General pursuant to Va. Code § 2.2-309 or other means that the State deems appropriate.

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science & Technology is often ranked as the best high school in the nation because of its STEM-focus and rigorous workload for gifted learners. Its current pursuit of equity (versus equality of opportunities) has also made it the subject of an ongoing investigation by the Attorney General.¹

This institution bears the prestigious title of a Governor's School Program. The Virginia General Assembly specially funds the school with a "Governor's School Add-On," in addition to other funding.²

The TJ Partnership Fund, a 501(c)3, solicits donations for the high school above and beyond the state and federal funding which the school receives. According to its website, the Fund pursues its mission by "engaging in partnerships with, and soliciting private donations from, corporations, parents, alumni, and friends of TJ in the STEM community who recognize TJ's status as a leader in STEM education."³ On the website, the Fund disclaims any direct affiliation with the high school.⁴ Yet in reality, the two are intertwined. The offices for the TJ Partnership Fund, including its Director, are located inside the front office of the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science & Technology. All calls to the TJ Partnership Fund are routed directly through the main office line of the Thomas Jefferson High School. And until 2020, all TJ Partnership Fund employees had Fairfax County Public School ("FCPS") email addresses.

¹ New Release, Office of the Attorney General (January 9, 2023), <https://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/2521-january-09-2023-attorney-general-miyares-expands-civil-rights-investigation-to-fairfax-county-public-schools-system> (last accessed March 1, 2023).

² "Purpose and Mission," Virginia Department of Education, <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/specialized-instruction/governor-s-schools> (last accessed March 1, 2023)

³ "Mission and History," TJ Partnership Fund, <https://www.tjpartnershipfund.org/about/mission-and-history> (last accessed Feb. 28, 2023).

⁴ *Id.*



According to “Back-to-School” newsletters, published by the TJ Partnership Fund, Chinese government-linked entities have donated at least \$1,000,000 to the TJ Partnership Fund to promote Chinese interests over the past 10 years. These Chinese government-linked entities include Tsinghua University High School,⁵ the Ameson Foundation,⁶ and Shirble Holdings Limited Group.⁷ These donations were secured through the “Campaign for TJ.” In exchange for their donations, high level donors had access to students, teachers, staff and employees through donor and student visits to the campus.⁸ Investments from Chinese government-linked entities funded travel for current and former Thomas Jefferson High School faculty to Beijing.⁹

A 2014 TJ Partnership Fund newsletter said that Thomas Jefferson High School would be used as a model for expansion for the Beijing-based school and described plans for “research collaborations.”¹⁰ The newsletter said that Tsinghua made “a significant contribution to the Campaign for TJ to ensure that TJ will remain on the cutting edge of research, education, collaboration, and outreach....”¹¹ Another newsletter noted that Tsinghua University High School was in the highest tier of donors to the Campaign for TJ, contributing at least a quarter of a million dollars as of June 30, 2016.¹² And in 2018, the TJ Partnership Fund reported that its highest donor was Shenzhen-based Shirble, contributing more than half a million dollars in 2018.¹³

We ask that the Office of the Governor of Virginia promptly investigate foreign funding to the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science & Technology through the TJ Partnership Fund, act swiftly to remedy any unlawful policies and practices, and order appropriate relief.

Thank you for your prompt assistance with this request for investigation and resolution. Please contact me for further information.

Sincerely,

Caroline Moore
Vice President
Parents Defending Education

⁵ “Back-to-School 2014” Newsworthy Newsletter, TJ Partnership Fund, https://www.tjpartnershipfund.org/uploaded/photos/Newsletters/TJPF_Newsletter_2014_Back-to-School.pdf (last accessed Feb. 28, 2023).

⁶ “Back-to-School 2016” Newsworthy Newsletter, TJ Partnership Fund, https://www.tjpartnershipfund.org/uploaded/photos/Newsletters/TJPF_Newsletter_2016_Back-to-School.pdf (last accessed Feb. 28, 2023).

⁷ “Annual Report 2018,” TJ Partnership Fund (April 12, 2018), https://www.tjpartnershipfund.org/uploaded/Annual_Report_WEB_Revised_April_12.pdf (last accessed Feb. 28, 2023).

⁸ “March 2015,” Newsworthy Newsletter, TJ Partnership Fund, https://www.tjpartnershipfund.org/uploaded/photos/Newsletters/TJPF_Newsletter_Spring_2015.pdf (last accessed March 5, 2023).

⁹ “Back-to-School 2014” Newsworthy Newsletter, *supra*.

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² “Back-to-School 2016” Newsworthy Newsletter, *supra*.

¹³ “Annual Report 2018,” *supra*.