



## **Verso Educational App Adopted By Texas K-12 District; Teacher Says, ‘I’ve Had Kids Come Alive In Amazing Ways’**

*Classroom Tool Supports Teachers, Allows Students  
to Learn More Deeply, Have Independent Voice*

DENTON, Texas – Dec. 11, 2014 – [Denton Independent School District](#), located 25 miles north of Dallas, announced this week it has adopted the [Verso app](#), which activates learning using authentic student voice as a driver for deeper, personalized learning. The new, simple-to-implement K-12 educational app is emerging in U.S. classrooms after earning acclaim and honors in Australia and other countries during its first year.

With the Verso app, which works on any device, students are asked to submit their own independent responses to challenges (designed by their teacher) before gaining access to their peers’ responses. The ability to participate anonymously encourages all students in a classroom setting to actively participate – a feature applauded by Kevin Zahner, a history teacher at Denton High School.

“It’s safe to say that at least 20 or 30 percent of the students who will participate with Verso wouldn’t otherwise do so,” said Zahner, who was introduced to the app last spring as a pilot user. “With an environment that is anonymous, the more reserved students are now willing to take a risk and put themselves on the line both from an intellectual and emotional standpoint, and let their classmates evaluate their responses without knowing who said it.”

Zahner said he became sold on the Verso app when he witnessed examples of his quieter students gaining confidence and self-esteem by consistently participating in challenges he posed to the class.

“I’ve had kids come alive in amazing ways,” he said. “I had one young girl who never said one word in class, and then became an active participant just like that. It gives every student a voice — that quality right there sold me on Verso.”

Dr. Mike Mattingly, assistant superintendent of curriculum & instruction, said his district became intrigued with Verso, and its pedagogy-first approach, after it was successfully piloted in select high school and middle school classrooms.

“From a district perspective, we’re always looking for tools that help get us to the student outcomes we’re pointed toward,” Dr. Mattingly said. “Verso is easy for students to use, and our teachers are getting wonderful feedback from it, which helps inform them of where to take the class next.”

Dr. Mattingly envisions that Verso will dramatically help his counselors when they are teaching classes and faced with a controversial topic, such as bullying.

“We can get a lot of true feelings out there on the table since the students can respond in a safe, independent manner, and not just mimic what someone else has said,” he said. “We can start making headway and know better how to deal with the issues at hand.”

An elementary school principal in the Denton district says she is using Verso to improve professional development access by providing her teachers with a “flipped learning” experience.

“Bottom line, Verso helps to support my effectiveness as a leader, and in turn provides a format that is likewise more engaging and efficient for my staff,” said Debbie Cano, principal, McNair Elementary. “As my campus grows in its understanding and integration of Verso, I will have real-time data reflecting student engagement and the impact and success of individual classrooms and teachers. I see Verso's effect potential as limitless.”

With an enrollment of 27,000, Denton ISD offer three comprehensive high schools, seven middle schools, 22 elementary schools, two early childhood centers, an alternative high school, an advanced technology complex and other specialized schools and centers.

Verso is in use by 3,000 K-12 schools globally. The app is free, available through iTunes, Google Play and most popular browsers, and works on any mobile device. For more information about the app, visit [VersoApp.com](http://VersoApp.com). Developed by top engineers from both Melbourne and San Francisco, the Verso app was launched nearly a year ago in Australia.

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**Media Contact**

Doug Thompson  
Thompson Drake Public Relations  
541.322.9345 | office  
541.419.4471 | cell  
[doug@thompsondrake.com](mailto:doug@thompsondrake.com)