



TCSA Board Member

Richard Baumgartner

Richard Baumgartner is the Founder and Director of Rise Academy, a charter school located in Lubbock, TX that began operations in September 1999. A few years after graduating from Kalamazoo College in 1984 with a B.A. in political science, Baumgartner began his career in education as a teacher trainee with renowned educator Marva Collins at her school in Chicago. Baumgartner taught for several years under Collins and gained valuable experience in instructional delivery, curriculum design, and multi-grade strategies. Drawing from his educational experience in Chicago, Baumgartner returned to his hometown of Kalamazoo, Michigan in 1995 where he and his then-wife worked to create Northside Preparatory School. The school opened in September 1996 as the city's first charter school in the low-income, minority community of Kalamazoo. Despite early evidence of academic success under his leadership, Baumgartner was separated in 1997 from the very school which he created due to persistent board conflict.

In early 1998 Baumgartner began the efforts to establish Rise Academy in Lubbock. Since the academy began evaluation under the Texas rating system, Rise has been rated "Exemplary" or a school of "Distinction" numerous times and has expanded to include grades pre-k through 8th. Currently Rise Academy enrolls about 265 students.

Baumgartner has served as a Small Schools representative from the Membership Council of TCSA and has been active on the advocacy committee with TCSA on behalf of Texas charter schools.