March 24, 2014

To: Molly Bennett and Jessica Stites, In These Times

Dear Molly and Jessica,

The Metrics Project Grant Committee met today. I’m sorry to say that your proposal was not accepted for funding.

We admired your initiative in rounding up four other outlets to co-publish the piece. However, since two of the oulets, AlterNet and Truthout, are aggregators, the committee wondered whether that coordinated posting would have happened anyway—the researchers are particularly looking to ensure that these collaborations are “new, unforeseen” interventions, so that they can measure what happens against what would have happened.

Researchers were also concerned that two of the five outlets reposting are not Media Consortium members because researchers have only been tracking TMC members over time—that would not be a problem in a larger collaboration, but with only 5 outlets, having two that are not TMC members poses a bigger hurdle for the researchers.

Finally, the committee has been going back to all applicants and asking for a more detailed marketing plan. In your case, there is no time to create that plan given that the publication date is upon us.

For all these reasons, we cannot accept your proposal. That said, the entire committee is very eager to see more stories on education and we encourage you to submit a new proposal for our next round.

Jo Ellen Green Kaiser, Media Consortium

Shay Totten, Chelsea Green

Ben Schneer, Harvard (Metrics Project Researcher)