

May 31, 2017

TO THE ADMINISTRATOR ADDRESSED

Re: Competitive Letter of Interest (LOI) for Physical Fitness Character Education Expansion Pilot Grant Program

TEA is preparing to award Physical Fitness Character Education Expansion Pilot grants to Texas public schools. These grants are scheduled to be awarded for implementation beginning with the start of the 2017-2018 school year pending signature of the General Appropriations Act for fiscal years 2018 and 2019. Selected grantees will be awarded up to \$50,000 in 2017-2018 and up to \$50,000 in 2018-2019.

Program Description

The Physical Fitness Character Education Expansion Pilot Grant Program is intended to provide funding for middle or junior high schools and the high school campuses they feed into to expand a physical fitness character education program to additional campuses within a district currently implementing the program. The goal of this pilot program is to improve academic and nonacademic outcomes for participating students. Programs to be expanded deliver physical education instruction and character education lessons to students in grades 6-12 and may be used through the grant program to satisfy high school physical education credit requirements. This grant program is designed to track participating students to measure the program’s impact on academic achievement, attendance, discipline, physical fitness, and other factors.

Schools receiving a Physical Fitness Character Education Expansion Pilot grant must agree to implement the grant program for a minimum of four academic years and provide 100% matching funds (up to \$50,000 per year) to implement the grant program each year in Year 1 and Year 2. Program implementation will include the following:

	State Grant Funding	Local Funding
2017-2018	Up to \$50,000	100% match up to \$50,000
2018-2019	Up to \$50,000	100% match up to \$50,000
2019-2020		100% of program cost using locally determined funding
2018-2019		100% of program cost using locally determined funding

LEAs may use gifts or donations as a source of matching funds and as a source of funding in Year 3 and Year 4. Non-cash or in-kind contributions may not be used to meet the matching funds requirement. Federal funds may not be used as a source of matching funds. All matching funds must be used to support budgeted project costs during the grant period.

Grant recipients must also meet the following criteria:

- Use grant award and matching funds to partner with an appropriate organization to establish the physical fitness character education program at new middle or high school campuses
- Agree to dedicate a classroom to be used to implement the physical fitness character education program
- Ensure that a minimum of 150 students and a maximum of 225 students per campus participate in the physical fitness character education program through completion each year
- Provide program-related data, including student-level information, to TEA upon request
- Assess participating students' physical fitness levels using the Fitnessgram assessment at the beginning and end of the program period and report those results to TEA

The physical fitness character education program may be implemented either as part of the regular instructional day or before or after school. High school campuses will receive approval of the physical fitness character education program as a category II private or commercially sponsored physical activity program. This approval will permit a student to earn credit toward state physical education graduation requirements for completion of the program.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are school districts that currently have one or more middle schools participating in a physical fitness character education program. Eligible applicants have at least one campus with enrollment of at least 50% of students identified as at-risk and/or that has high rates of disciplinary incidents.

Applications must be submitted by the school district or charter school on behalf of one or more campuses. A school district or charter school may use a single application to apply on behalf of multiple campuses.

Application, Review, and Award Process

Interested districts/schools are asked to complete the attached application and task activity plan templates and return to curriculum@tea.texas.gov by 5:00 p.m., CDT, Friday, June 23, 2017.

Please include the following in your response:

- Name and contact information for the primary contact throughout the application, review, and award process
- A proposed timeline for meeting grant requirements (template attached)
- A proposed budget (template attached)
- Signed provisions and assurances (attached)

TEA staff will review, score, and notify awardees by June 30, 2017. (A copy of the scoring rubric is also attached.) Awardees will then be required to complete a brief online application. TEA, staff will be available to provide assistance and information throughout the application process.

For planning purposes, schools will receive confirmation of award of grant funds in July 2017.

For information or assistance, please contact the Curriculum Standards and Student Support Division by phone at (512) 463-9581 or by email at curriculum@tea.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

Monica Martinez
Associate Commissioner
Standards and Support Services

Attachments:

Template A: Physical Fitness Character Education Expansion Grant Application
Template B: Physical Fitness Character Education Expansion Grant Task Activity Plan
Provisions and Assurances
Scoring Rubric