

February 9, 2017

TO THE ADMINISTRATOR ADDRESSED:

SUBJECT: Texas Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (T-STEM) Designation (2017-2018 School Year)

This letter is to inform school districts and open-enrollment charter schools of an upcoming opportunity to apply for a T-STEM Academy designation for 2017-2018. Information and timelines are provided below.

T-STEM Designation

T-STEM Academies are schools designed to improve instruction and academic performance in STEM related subjects in secondary schools (grades six through twelve, or grades nine through twelve). Under the authority of Texas Education Code (TEC), §39.235 and Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §102.1093, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has developed a designation process for T-STEM Academies. The designation process ensures that districts operating T-STEM campuses maintain the integrity of the model and effectively incorporate elements of the T-STEM Design Blueprint.

In accordance with TAC §102.1093, the designation process is required for all existing and proposed T-STEM Academies. Schools that receive the T-STEM designation will receive a number of benefits, including:

- 1) Access to Technical Assistance
Designated T-STEM Academies will be provided a leadership coach who visits the campus to provide technical assistance in the design and implementation of the academy based on the T-STEM Blueprint (contingent on legislative appropriation).
- 2) Participation in T-STEM Convenings
Special events hosted by TEA provide opportunities for T-STEM Academy administrators to provide input on policies and procedures that impact T-STEM Academies.
- 3) Membership in the T-STEM Network
Opportunities are provided for principals, teachers, and students in designated T-STEM Academies to share best practices through conferences and technical assistance sessions. Membership in the T-STEM Network also allows T-STEM Academy staff to access online resources, professional development, and webinars.
- 4) Recognition as an Approved T-STEM Academy
T-STEM Academies will receive various forms of media recognition including, but not limited to: identification on TEA's website as a state-approved T-STEM Academy, and recognition in press releases.

Applying for T-STEM Designation

The T-STEM designation application is available online at the following address:
thetrc.org/TSTEM2017/.

- Applications must be submitted to TEA through the online application interface **on or before Friday, March 31, 2017 at 5:00 pm CST** in order to be eligible for designation as a T-STEM Academy during the 2017-2018 school year. The TEA anticipates notifying each applicant of its approval status to operate as a designated T-STEM Academy by June 2017.

Application Technical Assistance

- The T-STEM application for 2017-2018 is an online, web based application.
- A technical assistance webinar will be held during the application window to provide information regarding the full T-STEM designation application.
- The technical assistance webinar is not required; however, attendance is **strongly** encouraged and will provide potential applicants the ability to learn how to access and navigate the online, web-based application system.
- A recorded version of the webinar will be available for individuals unable to attend the live webinar.

Date/Time	T-STEM Academy Designation Overview and Technical Assistance Webinar
<p>Wednesday, February 22, 2017 10:00 am – 12:00 pm</p> <p>Webinar Registration https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6446665752432404738</p>	<p>The webinar provides an opportunity to learn about the T-STEM Academy designation requirements including benefits and application requirements. An overview of the online designation system will be provided.</p> <p>Representatives of designated T-STEM Academies, and districts or charter schools planning on applying, are encouraged to attend.</p>

Additional Assistance Completing the Application

- The current 121 designated T-STEM Academies may contact their T-STEM coaches and should incorporate information from the self-assessment conducted in 2017.
- New applicants may contact tstem@tea.texas.gov