

March 29, 2018

TO THE ADMINISTRATOR ADDRESSED:

SUBJECT: Request for Competitive Letters of Interest for Math Innovation Zones Pilot Grants

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is actively seeking participation from school districts and open-enrollment charter schools in the Math Innovation Zones initiative as established by Section 28.020 of the Texas Education Code. Interested school districts and open-enrollment charter schools should submit a Letter of Interest (LOI) in the template included in Attachments 1 and 2 to TEA **by April 27th, 2018 at 5pm CDT**. This request for competitive Letters of Interest provides information on the initiative, requirements for participation, and steps to respond to the LOI request.

Based on LOI submissions, two types of potential grantees will be identified:

- **Math Innovation Zones Pilot Grants** - Up to five school districts and open-enrollment charter schools will be eligible to apply for Math Innovation Zones Pilot grants **between \$250,000 and \$500,000**. Grantees will be expected to design and launch a math blended learning program for one or more Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) or Kindergarten (K) through 8th Grade feeder patterns. Grantees must meet Fidelity of Implementation requirements and scale the program across the full feeder pattern in four years. To support grantees in the pilot program, TEA will establish a Technical Assistance Network. School districts and open-enrollment charter schools may use grants to fund technical assistance, software (from the State Approved Providers of Blended Mathematics Instruction list), hardware, infrastructure upgrades, and blended learning specific personnel related to the program. Grantees will have access to Round 2 grants of **up to \$100,000** if they meet Fidelity of Implementation requirements.
- **Exploratory Math Innovation Zones** - Up to ten additional school districts and open-enrollment charter schools will be selected as Exploratory Math Innovation Zones. These school districts and open enrollment charter schools may still choose to launch Math Innovation Zones, but they will not receive first round grant funding. Exploratory Math Innovation Zones will still have access to negotiated technical assistance rates and be included in the Math Innovation Zones learning community. They will also remain eligible for Round 2 grants of **up to \$100,000** based on fulfillment of the Fidelity of Implementation requirements.

Next Steps:

Notice of Intent to Submit LOI: Interested districts and open-enrollment charter schools are requested (although not required) to submit a notice of intent to apply by **5pm CDT on Tuesday, April 10th**. To submit, a district or open-enrollment charter school should send an email to specialprojects@tea.texas.gov with the subject line: **MIZ – LOI Intent to Submit - <DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL NAME>** (ex. MIZ – LOI Intent to Submit – TEXAS ISD).

Questions: Questions regarding this Request for Letters of Interest should be emailed to specialprojects@tea.texas.gov with the subject line: MIZ – LOI Questions. All questions must be submitted by **5pm CDT on Friday, April 13th, 2018**.

Webinar: Questions will be answered in a live webinar on **April 17th, 2018 at 10:30am CDT**. Further information regarding the webinar including a link to participate can be found on the [Math Innovation Zones webpage](#). A recording of this webinar will be posted to the Math Innovation Zone webpage shortly after the conclusion of the webinar.

LOI Submission: When finished, please send the completed Letter of Interest response forms to specialprojects@tea.texas.gov with the subject line: **MIZ LOI - <DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL NAME>** (example: MIZ LOI - TEXAS ISD). Responses are due by **Friday, April 27th, 2018 at 5pm**.

Achievement in math in Texas public schools is central to the strategic priority of Building a Foundation of Reading and Math at TEA and we look forward to supporting school districts and open-enrollment charter schools in the launch of this program.

Thank you,

Penny Schwinn
Chief Deputy Commissioner for Academics
Texas Education Agency
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701

Attachments related to the request for Letters of Interest:

[Attachment 1: Request for Letters of Interest for Pilot and Round 2 Grants for Math Innovation Zones](#)

[Attachment 2A: Response Form: District or Charter School Network Information](#)

[Attachment 2B: Response Form: District or Charter School Qualitative Questions](#)

[Attachment 2C: Response Form: School Specific Qualitative Questions](#)

[Attachment 2D: Scoring Rubric](#)

[Attachment 3: Detailed Technical Assistance Overview](#)