

Request for Letters of Interest for Math Innovation Zone Pilot Grants

Webinar Questions and Responses

TEA received many similar questions regarding a few different categories of questions. Given the repetition of questions, TEA has developed comprehensive responses for the following categories. Questions necessitating a more specific response follow.

Category: **Criteria 3, Performance Results and Economic Indicators**

There were many questions regarding Criteria 3: Academic Performance and Economic Indicators. Although TEA will prioritize campuses where at least 75% of students are Approaching Grade Level or above on 3rd-8th grade STAAR results **AND** campuses serving a high number of students eligible for free or reduced lunch, Letters of Interest will be evaluated on the bundle of schools proposed to become a Math Innovation Zone. Although preferred, a submission **does not** require all schools proposed in the feeder pattern to meet these performance results and economic indicators. Justification and context should be added by proposers, if necessary.

Category: **Submissions for Math Innovation Zones**

From school districts and open enrollment charter schools, TEA is solely interested in the content of the responses to the questions presented in Attachments 2A, 2B, and 2C. Respondents should use the following guide to ensure proper submission of forms.

<u>Form</u>	<u>How many to submit?</u>
<u>Attachment 2A: District Information</u>	Submit one per Letter of Interest; Use the separate tabs if proposing multiple feeder patterns to participate in Math Innovation Zones
<u>Attachment 2B: District or Charter School Qualitative Questions</u>	Submit one per Letter of Interest
<u>Attachment 2C: School Specific Qualitative Questions</u>	Submit one per school proposed

For example, if a district is proposing;

- 2 separate feeder patterns:
 - Feeder Pattern A has 1 middle school and 2 elementary schools
 - Feeder Pattern B has 1 middle school and 3 elementary schools

The full proposal for this district should include:

- 1 Attachment 2A form with **TWO** tabs of information included, one for each feeder pattern
- 1 Attachment 2B form
- 7 Attachment 2C forms, one for each school proposed

Category: **Criteria 1, Current Blended Learning Outcomes**

Letters of Interest should include the submission of evidence of successful outcomes with blended learning within the district or open-enrollment charter schools (not necessarily in the proposed Math Innovation Zone), in at least one full grade, within one school in any subject. This evidence must be student outcomes data (STAAR results, formative assessment results, results specific to the online curriculum program, etc...) relevant to the blended learning program.

Category: **Criteria 2, Feeder Pattern**

TEA is open to creative feeder pattern approaches to scale the changes necessary to promote student participation and achievement in Algebra I in 8th grade. If a district or open enrollment charter school chooses a feeder pattern approach that is different than the feeder pattern described in Attachment 1 of the Request for Letters of Interest, the district or charter school should justify the approach in the Letter of Interest. If a respondent chooses to apply for more than one feeder pattern, the respondent should identify each feeder pattern in the separate tabs provided in the excel spreadsheet of Attachment 2A.

Although school districts and open-enrollment charter schools may apply for up to three separate feeder patterns, TEA may award all, some, or none of the proposed feeder patterns proposed for Math Innovation Zones.

Category: **Criteria 4, Dedicated Project Manager**

Districts and open-enrollment charter schools participating in Math Innovation Zones must designate and provide a **district-level project manager** who will be available to dedicate **at least 50 percent** of his/her time to implementing the Math Innovation Zone plan, beginning in the early summer of 2018. This person should be identified and described in the Letter of Interest and may be a current employee or new employee in the district. Math Innovation Zone grants may be used to fund the salary of this employee.

TEA anticipates that the management involved in a successful implementation of Math Innovation Zones will use 50% of the time of a full-time employee. Upon awarding of the grant, the district project manager and TEA personnel will develop and sign a memorandum of understanding which commits each party to several norms with regard to communication, expected effort, and action items. The district project manager will not be required to submit time and effort logs.

Category: **Use of State Approved Software Vendor**

Districts and open-enrollment charter schools participating in Math Innovation Zones will be **required to** select a math online curriculum program from the Math Innovation Zones State Approved Software Vendor List as required by Section 28.020 of the Texas Education Code for the grades involved with Math Innovation Zones. The selected software vendors are: ST Math, Reasoning Mind, IXL Math, and Imagine Math. TEA and the Design and Implementation Support vendor will work with Math Innovation Zones to select a software program that best meets the needs the district or charter school.

Category: **Use of Funds**

Through Pilot Grants and Round 2 Grants, districts and charter schools may use funds to pay for **any** expenses related to the implementation of Math Innovation Zones in the awarded grades of the awarded feeder patterns. Funds must be used towards an expense in service of the Fidelity of Planning or Fidelity of Execution criteria. The proposed budget will be submitted to TEA after district/charter selection as a Math Innovation Zone Pilot Grant site.

Category: **Timeline**

Letters of Interest for Math Innovation Zones are due on April 27th, 2018 at 5pm CDT. Before selection, districts or charter schools may be asked to participate in an interview with TEA.

Category: **Waiver for Technical Assistance Network**

Individual Math Innovation Zones will work directly with TEA staff to obtain a waiver for technical assistance. This process will be determined at a later date.

Miscellaneous Questions

<u>Question</u>	<u>Response</u>
When and how would the proposed budget be submitted to TEA? Is the budget submitted with the LOI response?	The proposed budget will be submitted to TEA after district/charter selection as a Math Innovation Zone Pilot Grant site.
If you apply for multiple feeder patterns, is it possible to win one for one feeder pattern and not another?	Although school districts and open-enrollment charter schools may apply for up to three separate feeder patterns, TEA may award all, some, or none of the proposed feeder patterns proposed for Math Innovation Zones.
If a district is not selected for one of the top five monetary awards, can the district be eligible for the networking technical assistance and round 2 grants with a vendor other than the ones listed in the approved provider list?	All Math Innovation Zone exploratory districts and charters are required to use a State Approved Software Vendor in the grades participating in Math Innovation Zones. Exploratory districts and charters may use a technical assistance vendor that is not included on the state approved technical assistance vendor list however they will be held to the same level of quality of deliverables as all other districts. The value in the Technical Assistance Network is access to experts that understand the expectations of a high-fidelity plan. Therefore, all Math Innovation Zones are expected to utilize the Technical Assistance Network as needed to achieve fulfillment of Fidelity of Implementation requirements.
Can you clarify which distinctions will be given at the end of the academic year? Is that just the	When a District and/or Charter meets both Fidelity of Planning AND Execution Requirements, it becomes a Designated Math Innovation Zone and

Distinguished designation or also the initial Pilot/Exploratory designations?	is eligible for a Round 2 Grant of up to \$100,000. Fidelity of Implementation will be assessed over the course of the school year and "Provisional Math Innovation Zones" that meet Fidelity of Implementation Requirements will be recognized as a "Designated Math Innovation Zone" at the end of the academic year. NOTE: an error was made in the webinar. The term "distinguished" was used to refer to a "designated" Math Innovation Zone.
Are we required to use the STAAR data from the TEA report or are we allowed to use our data? Or data aggregates STAAR and EOC data. Some students take Algebra I EOC for example in 8th grade.	Letters of Interest should include STAAR data where applicable. If other relevant data exists, a Letter of Interest should include this data in the provided sections.
Do you plan on answering questions that were submitted ahead of time during this webinar? Isn't that why we sent them?	Yes, the responses to these questions can be found on the Math Innovation Zones webpage .
Does the teacher learning activities have to be full day trainings or can they be after school professional development sessions, online professional development ?	Math Innovation Zone sites must submit evidence of meaningful learning to fulfill fidelity of execution requirements. A meaningful learning experience can be a variety of professional development structures, including but not limited to: district or vendor-led classroom observations 1:1 blended learning coaching sessions meaningful workshops excellent school visits to high quality blended learning programs.
Will the negotiated technical assistance provider amount be specified after the RFQ is completed this spring?	As a component of the Request for Qualifications for the Math Innovation Zones Technical Assistance Providers, respondents will submit costs for tasks associated with the technical assistance.
I'm a bit unclear on the timeline regarding the phases/rounds of the grant. Can you break down the grant timeline by school year? Ex - In 2018-19 five districts will be Pilot MIZ's and expending \$500k in funds, etc.	2018-2019 School Year - 5 MIZ Districts receive up to \$500,000 pilot grants - 10 MIZ Districts named as exploratory districts - ALL MIZ Districts work to fulfill Fidelity of Implementation Requirements Summer 2019

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Round Two Grants of up to \$100,000 awarded to Pilot Grant MIZ sites and/or Exploratory MIZ sites that achieve Designated status based on Fidelity of Implementation <p><u>2019-2020 School Year</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- ALL MIZ Districts work to fulfill Fidelity of Implementation Requirements
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