**2018–2019 Recommended Use of Funds**

**Close and Consolidate Low-Performing Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEA Strategic Priority:</th>
<th>#4—Improving Low-Performing Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statutorily allowable use of funds:</td>
<td>Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs—Schoolwide Programs: Supplemental programs or activities that strengthen the academic program of the school, targeting specific, identified needs and providing students, particularly those failing, or at risk of failing to meet standards, opportunities to meet State academic standards.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Summary**

TEA is committed to improving low-performing schools and supporting LEAs in school improvement efforts. One of the school improvement efforts available to schools is to close and consolidate low-performing schools. Under this initiative, LEAs would collaborate with a school redesign/design partner to develop a comprehensive closure plan and close the school.

**LEA Financial Commitment** (estimated start-up and annual costs)

**Start-Up Costs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel salaries, wages, and benefits</td>
<td>$50,000-$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General supplies and materials</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting services</td>
<td>$150,000-$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous operating expenses</td>
<td>$0-$50,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Annual, Ongoing Costs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel salaries, wages, and benefits</td>
<td>$50,000-$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General supplies and materials</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting services</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous operating expenses</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

※ When possible, TEA staff has estimated costs by major expenditure categories used in the ESSA Consolidated Application and the Expenditure Reporting (ER) System. Costs, such as locally-determined salaries, benefits, and wages, could not be estimated.

**Project Description**

Research has shown that when a school is closed and its students enroll in a higher performing receiving school those students can experience significant learning gains. LEAs should analyze existing low performing schools and decide if there are nearby schools that have shown success with educating a similar study body. If so, districts should consider closing the persistently low performing schools and helping students enroll in the higher performing schools. LEAs could offer supports to students and families to navigate the enrollment process. LEAs could give support to the receiving school(s) by bolstering the school academic and social and emotional learning programming, redesigning transportation routes, or other operational activities.
Goals and Student Achievement Objectives

The goal of this recommended initiative is to offer students enrolled in persistently low-performing campuses access to high-quality learning environments through a quality closure and consolidation plan. Closure and consolidation plans should support an effective transition of students enrolled in persistently low-performing campuses to better schooling options by ensuring intentional community outreach and engagement as well as the strategic deployment of students support services (academic tutoring, summer bridge programming, monitoring displaced students, etc.). A clear vision for staff implications and later facility use should be outlined in the closure/consolidation plan. Student achievement will be directly impacted by the receiving campus. LEAs should, as part of planning process, ensure displaced students are enrolled in highly rated receiving campuses.

Expected Outcomes

The list below offers a sample of expected outcomes from successful initiatives formatted as SMART goals (the percentage of _______ will increase from X% to Y% by Z (target date) or the number of ______ will increase from X to Y by Z):

- The percentage of students working at or above grade level on a specific STAAR content area assessment will increase from X% to Y% by Z.
- The percentage of students graduating career or college reading will increase from X% to Y% by Z.
- The percentage of parents that say they are satisfied with school climate or academic instruction, as documented in parent surveys, will increase from X% to Y% by Z.
- The number of highly effective teachers assigned to the specific school in need of comprehensive or targeted support will increase from X to Y by Z.
- The number of students attending schools in need of comprehensive support will decrease to X from Y by Z.
- The number of students attending schools in need of targeted support will decrease from X to Y by Z.
- The percentage of students enrolled in Improvement Required schools (Texas accountability system) will decrease from X% to Y% by Z.

How Will Success Be Measured and Data Sources Available

The success of a campus closure or consolidation is ultimately measured by decreasing the number and percentage of students in persistently struggling schools by ensuring the receiving schools outperform the closed campus. The receiving campus(es) and respective LEA will receive A-F* report cards offering data for assessing the quality of the initiative. LEAs should also track student-level data from the state assessment year-to-year to monitor the campus charter performance and develop a value-add measure for student performance. LEA and school-level data is also available in Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR). Status updates on the new A-F accountability system are available at: TEA Student Testing & Accountability Website.

Training or Support TEA Offers

The Division of System Support and Innovation (DSSI) will offer support, resources, and training related to pairing with a redesign partner to close and consolidate a school. These services are expected to be available to LEAs in 2018. DSSI also offers competitive grant opportunities for LEAs with strong redesign plans focused on closing specific low-performing schools. For more information, please visit The Division of System Support and Innovation's web page. In addition, the twenty regional educational service centers (ESCs) offer training and other resources for IR schools, and schools in need of comprehensive or targeted support, previously known as Priority and Focus schools.

TEA collaborates with the Texas Center for District and School Support to provide TAIS training and guidance publications. More information is available on the TCDSS web site.
The authorizing authority for federal funds is Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 [As Amended by ESSA Through P.L. 114–95, Enacted December 10, 2015]. Per ESSA, LEAs are required to meet the following statutory requirements:

- Give a description of LEAs required School Support and Improvement Activities.
- Align other Federal, State, and local resources to carry out the activities supported with these funds.
- Change practices and policies to offer operational flexibility for effective implementation of campus improvement activities.
- Use a rigorous review process to recruit, screen, select, and evaluate any external partners with whom the local educational agency will partner.
- An assurance that each school the local educational agency proposes to serve will receive all the State and local funds it would have received in the absence of these funds.

Program Duration, Timeline, Significant Milestones

The program duration for transforming a campus could range from one to three years and should include a full planning year prior to closure. The planning and development of a strong school closure plan is critical to an effective transition for students, community members, and campus staff. Ideally, a campus redesign partner should be identified the year prior to closure to support the planning and implementation of closure/consolidation plan. The LEA should aim to offer a full planning year prior to campus closure to create a smooth and effective transition for all involved parties.

Staffing Requirements for LEAs

The LEA may not need to hire an added staff person, but should consider budgeting for community engagement support, academic support services, and/or data analysis. LEAs should consider engaging a campus redesign partner to develop and implement a strong closure plan.

Resources*

- The Fordham Institute's [School Closures and Student Achievement](#)
- The University of Chicago's [When Schools Close](#)
- [The Center on School Turnaround](#)
- [The School Turnaround Learning Community](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education Office of School Turnaround](#)

TEA Contact Information

Joe Siedlecki, Associate Commissioner  
Department of Improvements, Innovations, and Charters  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 North Congress  
Austin, TX 78701  
Email: joe.siedlecki@tea.texas.gov

* TEA is giving the following information or link for reference purposes only, and TEA’s provision of the information or link does not in any way constitute an endorsement by TEA.