

DATE:	November 14, 2019
SUBJECT:	Application Process Opens for Joining the System of Great Schools Network
CATEGORY:	System of Great Schools
NEXT STEPS:	Submit letter of interest and attend informational webinar

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is excited to announce the launch of the application process for Texas school districts to join the 2020 cohort of the System of Great Schools (SGS) Network.

SGS Network Overview

The SGS Network started in 2017 to dramatically improve outcomes for Texas students. The network is designed to build the capacity of school districts to create high-quality, best-fit school options for their students and to annually increase the number of students attending highly rated schools and reduce the number of students attending poorly rated schools. We're looking for the next cohort of bold and visionary leaders.

TEA helps SGS districts achieve those goals by supporting the design and implementation of several inter-related strategies, including:

- **Setting the Right North Star Goal:** Districts will set a primary goal of all students having access to a high-quality best fit school
- **Conducting an Annual Portfolio Planning Process:** Districts will conduct an annual analysis of school performance and community need and demands and use that analysis to develop action plans to redesign, restart, partner, or create new schools
- **Taking Bold Action to Create and Expand Great Options:** Districts will build pipelines of internal educator teams and external partner operators to plan and execute school actions and then conduct an annual Call for Quality Schools to rigorously vet plans and partners for school actions
- **Empowering Families through School Choice & Access Supports:** Districts will increase in-district choice and support families to understand, enroll, and access great schools
- **Creating New Organizational Structures:** Districts will create an Office of Innovation

Districts selected to the join the SGS Network will receive:

- Consulting support from an experienced executive advisor to help each district plan and execute an individualized SGS strategy aligned to the district's specific context
- Access to model policies, process guides, tools, and resources designed to accelerate implementation of the SGS strategy, as well as the development of new schools and models
- Membership in a professional learning community of superintendents and senior staff that come together regularly to build understanding of the SGS strategy, enhance leadership skills, and create connections across districts
- High quality professional development programming to build the capacity of staff in existing or newly created Offices of Innovation

- Opportunity to access SGS-related funding opportunities, such as those provided through Senate Bill 1882 and related grant programs, and be connected to supportive philanthropic partners

Thirteen districts are currently members of the SGS Network, ranging in size from Galveston ISD (13 schools) to Lubbock ISD (51 schools) to San Antonio ISD (94 schools) and Fort Worth ISD (146 schools). SGS districts have designed and launched numerous new schools, including early childhood centers, innovative district schools, district-charter partnerships, and replications of existing successful district schools. Also, the first cohort of SGS districts has generated impressive academic gains, seeing a 47% increase in the number of high performing campuses and a 34% reduction in the number of low performing campuses since joining the network.

Eligible Applicants

All Texas districts interested in pursuing the goals listed above are eligible to apply to join the SGS Network.

Informational Webinars and Letter of Interest

Date	Event
November 21	SGS Informational Webinar #1
December 10	SGS Information Webinar #2
January 10	Letter of Interest

Districts that want to learn more should submit a Letter of Interest (LOI) by completing this [online form](#). Once LOIs are received, the System of Great Schools District Support team will contact district leadership to provide further details about the network, application requirements, and share the application with districts.

Additionally, informational webinars will be held on November 21, 2019 and December 10, 2019. Webinars will review the SGS strategy, SGS Network benefits and expectations, the application process and will include time to ask questions. Please email sgs@tea.texas.gov to reserve your seat at either webinar. Webinars will also be recorded for those who may not be able to attend.

For additional information or assistance, please contact the SGS team at sgs@tea.texas.gov.

We are so grateful for the hard work you do every day for the children of Texas. We look forward to partnering with you to continue to improve outcomes for kids.