

A Report
on the
Implementation of the
Career and Technical Education
Weighted Funding Pilot Program

*A Report to the 83rd Texas Legislature
from the Texas Education Agency*

January 1, 2013

*Submitted to the Governor,
Lieutenant Governor,
Speaker of the House of Representatives, and
Members of the 83rd Texas Legislature*

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Statutory Authority and Requirements of the Pilot Program

House Bill (HB) 3485, 80th Texas Legislature, 2007, added Texas Education Code (TEC), §42.154 (a-1), providing for the establishment of a pilot program under which participating school districts are entitled to additional funding for each student receiving career and technical education (CTE) instruction in grade eight.

TEC, §42.154 (a-1) states, “Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the commissioner shall develop and implement a pilot program under which a school district is entitled to additional funding for each student receiving career and technology instruction in grade eight. The commissioner shall select not more than five school districts for participation in the pilot program. In selecting school districts for participation, the commissioner shall consider school districts that can provide services under the program at the least cost. For each full-time equivalent student in grade eight in average daily attendance in an approved career and technology education program, a school district participating in the program under this subsection is entitled to an annual allotment equal to the adjusted basic allotment multiplied by a weight of 1.35. Funds allocated under this subsection, other than an indirect cost allotment established under State Board of Education rule, must be used in providing career and technology programs in grade eight under Sections 29.182, 29.183, and 29.184. A school district is entitled to an allotment under this subsection for each school year through the completion of the 2011-2012 school year.”

Background Information

TEC, §42.154 provides for a CTE allotment. For each full-time equivalent student in average daily attendance in an approved CTE program in grades 9-12 or in CTE programs for students with disabilities in grades 7-12, a district is entitled to an annual allotment equal to the adjusted basic allotment multiplied by a weight of 1.35.

The state adopted CTE content standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), in 1998 and CTE instructional materials in 2003. HB 3485 (referenced above) also required the State Board of Education (SBOE) to revise the CTE TEKS. The SBOE adopted revisions to the CTE TEKS in July 2009. The revisions included career development courses for middle school.

CTE Weighted Funding Pilot Objective

The pilot objective was to provide participating school districts with CTE weighted funding for four years for students participating in CTE in grade eight. The pilot was to be an avenue to gain a snapshot of the effectiveness of funding CTE programs with a weight of 1.35 in grade eight.

Eligible Districts / Participating Districts

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) issued a Request for Statement of Interest (RFSOI) with a closing date of March 28, 2008 (see Appendix III). All public school districts and charter schools were eligible to submit a statement of interest (SOI). TEA selected districts with uniquely different pilot program goals, and varying sizes and

geographic locations, from among 47 applications received. The five districts TEA chose for participation are Denton ISD, Edinburg CISD, Frenship ISD, Jacksonville ISD, and Pleasanton ISD.

Description of Participating Districts

The selected pilot districts represent large and urban, medium-sized, and small and rural districts across the state. At the time of submission, the districts gave their participating 8th grade populations as follows:

- Denton ISD 435
- Edinburg CISD 764
- Frenship ISD 393
- Jacksonville ISD 53
- Pleasanton ISD 297

Evaluation of the CTE Weighted Funding Pilot

According to the specifications of the RFSOI and SOI, “data will be collected by TEA over the four-year pilot period, and a report describing the effectiveness of the pilot program will be provided to the legislature by January 1, 2013.” In addition, the SOI required the districts to commit to full participation for the duration of the program, and to evaluate and provide information throughout the pilot to assist with the TEA report.

In order to gain a snapshot of the effectiveness of funding CTE programs with a weight of 1.35 in grade eight, TEA reviewed the pilot program funding that participating districts received over the four year period. TEA also surveyed the five participating districts at the end of the program.

Results from the Evaluation of the CTE Weighted Funding Pilot

A review of the funding data shows:

- more than \$2 million flowed to the five school districts
- more than 50% of eligible 8th graders participated in the pilot program
- districts earned more than 1,000 CTE full-time equivalent student credits*

(See attached funding report in Appendix II for further details.)

The program survey responses from the five participating districts show that the districts rated the program as having a strongly positive impact on their CTE programs.

Pilot districts experienced a positive impact on teachers. Four districts reported the ability to add new teachers and one district was able to maintain staffing levels from the previous year as a result of the additional weighted funding. Districts provided professional development for teachers as a result of the additional funding. Districts

* TEC 42.154(b) provides statutory authority by specifying that “Full time equivalent student means 30 hours of contact a week between a student and career and technology education program personnel.” One FTE represents many students, depending on the length of time a course is offered.

also experienced a positive impact on student participation. Examples of student impact include the following.

- Added STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) camps and college and career camps
- Increased interest and participation / enrollment in high school CTE
- Increased career awareness
- Increased dual credit possibilities

As a result of CTE weighted funding for 8th graders districts were able to implement the following additional CTE courses. The level of implementation is indicated in parentheses, if indicated.

- Principles of Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources (middle school)
- Principles of Information Technology
- Touch System Data Entry
- Professional Communications
- Business Information Management I (middle school)
- Project Lead the Way—Gateway to Technology, innovative course (high school)
- Principles of Hospitality and Tourism
- Exploring Careers (middle school and high school)
- Horticulture Science
- Career Investigation

Districts were asked to identify any enhanced student outcomes that occurred as a result of CTE weighted funding for 8th graders. Pilot districts reported an increase in high school credits they awarded to students in middle school which, in turn, resulted in a greater number of certifications students achieved at the high school level. Districts also reported an increase in student awareness of scholarship and college applications and greater participation in career exploration. Finally, districts saw an increase in career awareness among their students.

Additional changes or enhancements that districts were able to implement as a result of the CTE weighted funding for 8th graders include better equipment and upgraded technology, assistance with transportation costs, and an increase in career and technical student organization (CTSO) participation. Participants also indicated that participation in the pilot enabled them to keep up with rapidly changing technology that is used in business.

Four of the five districts reported that student performance measures were positively impacted as a result of participation in the pilot. The fifth district reported that student performance was high prior to participation in the pilot. Specific performance measure improvements that participants listed include a decrease in the district dropout rate, an increase in the promotion rate, and an increase in the graduation rate.

Two districts reported an increase in the number of certifications students earned. One district also reported that student participation in the Principles of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources and the Horticulture Science courses significantly increased science state assessment scores.

All five districts reported that participation in the pilot had a positive impact students' transition to high school. Districts indicated that students were able to engage in exploration of career options earlier in their academic careers. Districts also reported that grade 8 students' increased acquisition of high school credit fostered a better transition to high school.

When asked about the impact on specific programs of study, districts reported a 25% increase in participation in a 10th grade engineering program and a 25% increase in a high school advanced media program. Participants also reported increased high school enrollment in the areas of business, law enforcement, health science, and STEM.

When asked whether the CTE weighted funding for 8th graders impacted districts' guidance and counseling programs, including college and career readiness efforts, respondents indicated that foundational CTE courses at grade 8 produced better implementation of programs of study and greater college and career awareness.

Complete responses to the program survey can be found in Appendix I.

Conclusion

The five districts that participated in the CTE weighted funding pilot program reported entirely positive results. The evaluation responses indicate that district staff members believe they were successful in meeting the program's goals of using their funds to enhance the size, scope, and quality of their CTE programs. Extension and/or expansion of the pilot may provide additional information to further explore the impact of CTE weighted funding at the middle school level and inform policy decisions.

Appendix I

Weighted Funding Survey Questions with Responses (5 of 5 Districts)

Question 1: List and briefly explain the 3–5 major ways that having weighted CTE funding for 8th graders impacted your CTE program.

Response 1

The foundation in CTE experience in 8th grade has positively impacted students', parents', and core teachers' understanding of career and technical education. This foundation has shown a major increase in student interest in participating in in-depth studies through CTE coherent sequences in high school. Our 8th grade students receive extensive career awareness / study through the career exploration course. The impact through studies in this course has generated a real sense of importance of continued 21st century career awareness inclusion / discussion through all 8th grade courses.

Response 2

Having weighted CTE funding allows us to teach students with up-to-date technology. It also gives the teachers continuous learning opportunities, which allows us to stay up to date with current trends in career and technology education.

Response 3

- a. Pilot program STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) / Engineering program at the middle school level
- b. Transition to new CTE courses
- c. Maintain level of staffing

Response 4

We were able to add teachers to teach additional CTE courses. The two courses that we added were Principles of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, and Business Information Management I. Students developed a greater interest in CTE courses, and we had increased participation in the high school programs. Adding the two teachers allowed the high school program to develop greater diversity, and having an 8th grade CTE program allowed our students to develop a stronger foundation for our CTE courses.

Response 5

Enrollment in CTE courses increased significantly. Students and parents participated in college and career readiness camps and STEM camps. Students began with a focused pathway before high school allowing students more opportunities for dual enrollment in high school. Professional development for teachers increased.

Question 2: Which CTE courses did your district implement as a result of weighted CTE funding for 8th graders?

Response 1

Career Exploration for high school credit
Principles of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources
Horticulture Science

Response 2

Keyboarding
Digital Design and Media Production
Broadcast Media
Advanced Broadcast Media
Career Investigations

Response 3

Project Lead the Way – Gateway to Technology (GTT), innovative course
Principles of Hospitality and Tourism

Response 4

Business Information Management I
Principles of Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources

Adding these two courses at the 8th grade level enabled our students to advance to higher level courses in high school.

Response 5

Principles of Information Technology
Touch System Data Entry
Professional Communications

Question 3: Did enhanced student outcomes occur as a result of weighted CTE funding for 8th graders? If so, please identify the outcomes, including any student certifications.

Response 1

Our 8th grade enrollment has resulted in increased student participation in career development events, leadership teams, Greenhand* awards (tripled at 8th grade). Teachers explained that students in the 8th grade CTE program developed finer public speaking skills and showed a greater sense of responsibility.

The CTE students have taken on community service and school improvement projects with great pride. At high school, our students who benefited from the 8th grade CTE experience during this pilot have focused plans for career and college. Our counselors report CTE students showing increased attention to scholarships and college applications in the freshman and sophomore classes.

Adding the high school courses at junior high allows students to engage in a more comprehensive study of the CTE cluster, and / or allows a greater opportunity to explore other areas of interest in CTE.

Response 2

Keyboarding was a high school credit in the past, but learning the skill helps students who use a computer in other classes. Proficient typing allows students to accomplish work faster and prepares students for their future careers. Students are prepared for high school computer classes.

* TEA note: The FFA issues Greenhand degrees as recognition of specific achievements. See <https://www.ffa.org/programs/degrees/Pages/GreenhandDegree.aspx> for more information.

Students are able to apply the skills that they have learned in Digital Design, Broadcast Media, and Career Investigations in other academic areas. The CTE program gives students a strong foundation in computer skills and career preparation.

Response 3

- a. Awareness of non-traditional career options
- b. Increased opportunities for middle school students to earn high school credit

Response 4

Our students were able to take advanced classes earlier at the high school level because they had the opportunity to take Business Information Management I and Principles of Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources as 8th grade CTE students. This gave the students a better opportunity to gain certifications at the high school level.

Response 5

Students and parents participated in college and career readiness camps and STEM camps. Students learned about 6-year graduation plans and dual enrollment courses as well as postsecondary opportunities available to each program of study. The number of certificates increased.

Question 4: Were budgetary changes / enhancements possible as a result of weighted CTE funding for 8th graders? If so, please identify the changes / enhancements (consider the following categories: career and technical student organization (CTSO) participation, personnel, equipment, professional development, travel, etc.).

Response 1

The pilot program funding allowed for a complete upgrade including current curriculum and improved equipment, including two computer carts.

The 8th grade courses are located in regular classrooms and students do not have the advantage of a shop or greenhouse. We purchased in-classroom mobile plant grow units for horticulture and planted a campus garden.

We also purchased a small incubator for animal science and shared the science labs for extended projects.

Our teachers were given more opportunity for professional development, and funds were used for student registrations for CTSO participation and competition events.

Response 2

The funding allows us to keep up to date with technology such as Macs and HD digital cameras for broadcast and computer programs like Photoshop for Digital Design.

With these funds we are also able to buy other equipment for the classroom like scanners, iPads, and microphones.

The funding also allowed us to stay up to date with technology trends by attending the TCEA (Texas Computer Education Association) conference each year in Austin.

Response 3

- a. Enhanced STEM / engineering labs
- b. Provided equipment to implement Gateway to Technology (GTT)
- c. Provided GTT instructor training
- d. Provided travel for middle school students to work jointly with high school students on a rocket project

Response 4

As a result of the weighted CTE funding for 8th graders, our school was able to add personnel, which led to diversity in course selection for our students. Our student participation increased and our number of certifications increased at the high school level. This program has been a big part of our increased success at the high school level.

Response 5

Campus CTE teachers were provided with upgraded technology such as Promethean boards. The funding provided additional professional development for teachers and college and career readiness oriented camps for students. More college / university visits occurred.

Teachers were provided with instructional materials and resources to expand current CTE programs such as robotics, the mother/daughter program, the Aggies Reaching Out[†] program, and the tech prep program.

Question 5: Were student performance measures impacted by weighted CTE funding for 8th graders?

Three districts answered yes

Two districts answered no

Question 6: If you answered no to question 5 above, please explain.

Response 1

No measurable impact. FISD (Frenship ISD) consistently performs above the state average on student performance measures.

Response 2

During this time, we were able to maintain our current level of programs and staffing. We have seen an increase in the number of students enrolled in our STEM pathway and will continue to see a greater impact with the implementation of three middle schools this year and four middle schools next year.

Response 3: N/A

Question 7: If you answered yes to question 5 above, which of the following student performance measures were impacted by weighted CTE funding for 8th graders?

67% of districts reported dropout rate impacted

67% of districts reported promotion rate impacted

67% of districts reported graduation rate impacted

[†] TEA note: Aggies Reaching Out is an outreach program of Texas A&M University that mentors underrepresented 8th graders. See <http://lead.tamu.edu/aro.html> for more information.

33% of districts reported completion rate impacted
67% of districts reported statewide assessment success rate impacted
One district also reported an increased number of certifications

Question 8: If you identified performance measures above, explain how each measure was impacted by weighted CTE funding for 8th graders.

Response 1

We believe the hands-on projects in our CTE courses and the science focus from the Principles of Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources course and the horticulture course significantly impacted our increased science state assessment scores. We also have seen an improvement in our promotion rate since the pilot program began, having only 1 student retained in 2011-12.

Response 2

The funding enabled the students to get involved in CTE courses while in the 8th grade. This is a pivotal time in the student's life and it is a time when they can be easily influenced. By capturing their interest with the CTE program, the students have developed a greater interest in school and we believe that it has lowered our dropout rate and increased our graduation rate for these students. Many of our students were able to achieve multiple certifications in high school because of the opportunity to participate in CTE courses in the 8th grade.

Response 3

Dropout rate decreased, promotion rate increased, graduation rate increased, completion rate increased

Statewide assessment success rate: Edinburg CISD is a TEA Recognized School District

9. Did weighted CTE funding for 8th graders impact students' transition to high school? If so, please describe.

Response 1

Participating in the pilot program placed an emphasis on the CTE program in 8th grade, including the transition into high school, and made teachers and counselors more aware of CTE requirements. Counselors reported that registration is more focused and students have a better understanding of 4-6 year plans, CTE offerings, course sequence, career clusters, interest surveys, college opportunities, and career awareness.

Response 2

Yes, students who take a CTE class are better prepared for high school, college, or a career path. Many students start working in high school, and classes like Career Investigations teach them appropriate work behavior, how to manage time, and how to budget money. Career Investigations also helps students learn what career choices are possible, and what classes they might need to take in high school.

Classes like Keyboarding make students proficient in typing, which carries over into other classes as well as future careers. Digital Design gives students a better understanding of computers, critical thinking, and problem solving. Broadcast Media gives students a creative aptitude, strong background in computer and technology applications, and proficient skills in oral and written communication.

When teachers are working with students who have had a CTE class, they can focus more on their subject content and less on how to use the technology.

Response 3

- a. Increased awareness of the STEM pathway
- b. Increased awareness of emerging technologies
- c. Increased opportunity for high school credit at the middle school level
- d. Allowed students to explore pathways earlier

Response 4

The weighted CTE funding for 8th graders had a direct impact on these students' transition to high school. The transition was much easier for these students because they had already developed a bond with their teachers during the 8th grade.

They also developed interest in programs and participated in programs that were available to them in a more advanced setting at the high school. The high school transition for these students was smoother because of the foundation that was developed in 8th grade. This foundation paved the way for these students to take more advanced courses earlier in their high school career.

Response 5

Students earned high school elective credits, giving them schedule opportunities for dual enrollment and high level electives for certifications. Students transitioned with a greater knowledge of being college and career ready when they graduate high school.

Question 10: Did weighted CTE funding for 8th graders impact developing / increasing / implementing programs of study? If so, please describe.

Response 1

The weighted funding specifically provided for the development of the Exploring Careers course with current curriculum and computer technology. The weighted funding enhanced and improved the curriculum and equipment for the Principles of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources and horticulture classes. The funding also provided for an added class and teacher certification; however, before this class could be implemented we, like other schools, were faced with budget challenges and the teacher was assigned to other classes.

Response 2

Media programs in the 8th grade continue to feed the media program in the high school. Students can move seamlessly into the high school program.

Response 3

- a. The largest impact is through the STEM pathway. We saw about a 25% increase in our enrollment in our 10th grade engineering program.
- b. Increase in the number of students earning high school credit at the middle school

Response 4

The weighted CTE funding for 8th graders made it possible for us to hire 2 teachers for our 8th grade program. These teachers also helped implement new programs at the high school to give our students the opportunity to experience greater diversity in their CTE course selection.

Response 5

As result of student camps, high school CTE enrollment increased in several career pathways: Business, Law Enforcement, Health Science, and STEM. [The school] acquired student test prep materials for high school ACT/SAT, as well as training for CTE teachers.

Question 11: Did weighted CTE funding for 8th graders impact your district's guidance and counseling program, including college and career readiness efforts? If so, please describe.

Response 1

Our counselors were an active part of the 8th grade CTE pilot program. Our guidance / counseling members work with campuses to sponsor annual career fairs, community business speakers, and college information meetings for parents. We did not specifically use pilot program funds for these activities, but the emphasis placed upon being part of the pilot program made everyone aware that college and career readiness efforts were expected.

Response 2

Yes, by offering students career study in the 8th grade, the counselors in both the middle schools and the high school can better serve the individual students' needs by developing a course of study that meets their needs.

Response 3

- a. Career guidance is provided at a K-12 level throughout Denton ISD.
- b. Provided an opportunity to talk to students about STEM, nontraditional pathways, colleges and careers
- c. We are able to maintain the high level of career counseling that we currently have in our district.
- d. Explore CTSO (career and technical student organization) competition options for our middle school programs

Response 4

Teacher positions that were funded with weighted CTE funds counseled with students about pathways, career choices, and college opportunities. These teachers also helped students fill out scholarship applications. These teachers were able to assist our district guidance and counseling program in working with these students.

Response 5

The district acquired a college and career readiness supervisor. Six year plans were put in place with TSTC (Texas State Technical College) and STC (South Texas College). Counselors held more parent college and career readiness sessions during the day and evenings.

Question 12: What are your overall impressions about the benefits / usefulness / effectiveness of weighted CTE funding for 8th graders?

Response 1

Participating in this program was extremely beneficial for the students, teachers, and administration. We were focused on the CTE program and its requirements, not only allowing for the development and improvement of the CTE classes in 8th grade, but also for the awareness of the overall program through high school and beyond.

This pilot program taught us as teachers, administrators, and students that this foundation at the 8th grade is so important, as it meets with the interest level and development level of the student to see the value of the next step – high school courses – and the foundation high school provides to college and career. Our students truly appreciated the 8th grade CTE courses, enjoyed being able to participate in the classes, and took such pride in participating in the organizations and competitions. Thank you for allowing us to be part of this pilot.

Response 2

The funding allows us to prepare students for high school and for future careers. Technology is constantly changing and it is important to stay current with the technology that is being used in the professional world, not the technology that was current 5 years ago. The CTE funding allowed us to purchase the needed tools and take the necessary classes to stay current with technology.

Response 3

Again, the funding provided an opportunity for our students at the middle school level to have an academically rich CTE STEM experience. It provided a continued level of commitment to our students in pathway options, career counseling, and career and college exploration. It provided the opportunity to expand and enhance our current level of STEM labs and provided staff development for our middle school STEM instructors.

Response 4

The weighted CTE funding for 8th graders has benefited our program in several ways. One is that it developed a stronger foundation for our high school CTE programs and allowed our high school students to take more advanced CTE courses. Our 8th grade program has proven to be useful by increasing the effectiveness of our high school program through diversification.

Response 5

This funding allowed for technology upgrades, specialized camps, and college visits. It provided for materials for hands-on activities and helped fund parent meetings and teacher staff development. Therefore, ECISD's (Edinburg Consolidated Independent School District) students, teachers, and parents have all been impacted positively. The district has college and career readiness initiatives starting at the kindergarten level through high school to ensure that students are graduating with 21st century skills.

Question 13: What are your overall impressions about any negative effects of weighted CTE funding for 8th graders?

Response 1: none

Response 2: I cannot think of any negative effects.

Response 3: I am unaware of any negative effects at this time.

Response 4: We did not experience any negative effects from our weighted CTE funding for 8th graders.

Response 5: There aren't any negative effects.

Appendix II
CTE 8th Grade Weighted Pilot Funding Summary

School Year	CDN	District	CTE FTE's	Count of Students		Count of Regular Education 8th	% of Eligible Students
				Estimated funding	that participated in the pilot	grades Students that were Eligible to participate in the pilot	that participate in the pilot
2008-2009	061901	Denton	55.824	\$127,619	587	1324	44.3%
2009-2010	061901	Denton	118.562	\$288,297	899	1466	61.3%
2010-2011	061901	Denton	10.171	\$24,316	113	1499	7.5%
2011-2012	061901	Denton	6.711	\$16,482	98	1538	6.4%
2008-2009	108904	Edinburgh	116.102	\$229,903	1495	1941	77.0%
2009-2010	108904	Edinburgh	108.991	\$229,219	1391	2040	68.2%
2010-2011	108904	Edinburgh	206.455	\$423,010	1555	2082	74.7%
2011-2012	108904	Edinburgh	208.406	\$483,775	1575	2101	75.0%
2008-2009	152907	Frenship	21.997	\$42,001	256	477	53.7%
2009-2010	152907	Frenship	23.621	\$48,745	256	464	55.2%
2010-2011	152907	Frenship	33.986	\$70,026	220	504	43.7%
2011-2012	152907	Frenship	5.700	\$12,061	212	514	41.2%
2008-2009	037904	Jacksonville	15.607	\$28,367	107	277	38.6%
2009-2010	037904	Jacksonville	15.859	\$30,555	100	296	33.8%
2010-2011	037904	Jacksonville	14.363	\$27,621	143	327	43.7%
2011-2012	037904	Jacksonville	22.008	\$43,377	141	337	41.8%
2008-2009	007905	Pleasanton	26.837	\$50,923	181	220	82.3%
2009-2010	007905	Pleasanton	21.877	\$45,673	166	223	74.4%
2010-2011	007905	Pleasanton	21.614	\$43,388	163	260	62.7%
2011-2012	007905	Pleasanton	8.451	\$18,356	77	232	33.2%
			1,063.142	\$2,283,712	9735	18122	50.9%

Appendix III

Request for Statement of Interest (RFSOI)

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY (TEA)

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION
WEIGHTED FUNDING
PILOT PROGRAM

Authorized by
TEC §42.154

Texas Education Agency
William B. Travis Building
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, TX 78701-1494

Dated Material---Open Immediately

Closing Date—**March 28, 2008**

RFSOI 701-210-08-051

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PART I - REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF INTEREST

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY (TEA)

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

WEIGHTED FUNDING

PILOT PROGRAM

September 1, 2008 – November 31, 2012

I. PURPOSE OF THE REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF INTEREST (RFSOI)

House Bill (HB) 3485, 80th Texas Legislature, 2007, added the Texas Education Code (TEC), §42.154 (a-1), providing for the establishment of a pilot program under which participating school districts are entitled to additional funding for each student receiving Career and Technical Education (CTE) instruction in grade eight. The goal in accordance with HB 3485 is to develop and implement a statewide pilot program of up to five districts to determine the effectiveness of extending a funding weight for students participating in CTE programs in grade eight. To implement this law, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) will conduct a four-year CTE Weighted Funding Pilot Program. Eligible participants of this RFSOI are public school districts and charter schools. The evaluation tool for the pilot will be developed by each participating district in collaboration with TEA. For each school year of the pilot, the participating districts will receive for each full-time equivalent student in grade eight in average daily attendance in an approved CTE program, an annual allotment equal to the adjusted basic allotment multiplied by a weight of 1.35.

Expectations for the pilot include:

- The commissioner shall develop and implement a pilot program in which participating school districts are entitled to a funding weight of 1.35 for students participating in a CTE program in grade eight.
- The commissioner shall select not more than five school districts for participation in the pilot program.
- A school district may apply to the commissioner to participate in the pilot program. In selecting school districts for participation, the commissioner shall consider school districts that can provide services under the program at the least cost. The commissioner shall select for participation school districts from rural, medium-sized, and urban areas of the state.
- A participating school district shall annually report to TEA the progress and effectiveness of the pilot program.

In addition to requirements specified in law, pilot programs should address:

- Increasing the academic rigor of CTE courses in grade eight
- The advantages/disadvantages of a CTE funding weight in grade eight

- The impact of grade eight CTE programs in meeting the needs of special populations
- Determining the extent to which students are provided opportunities to effectively plan for college and career
- Evaluate districts that focus their CTE programs on high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations in new and emerging fields
- Measure the effect of districts that facilitate the student's transition from secondary to postsecondary education
- Make observations of CTE programs of sufficient size, scope, and quality to be effective

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Texas Education Code §42.154 provides for a CTE allotment. For each full-time equivalent student in average daily attendance in an approved CTE program in grades 9-12 or in CTE programs for students with disabilities in grades 7-12, a district is entitled to an annual allotment equal to the adjusted basic allotment multiplied by a weight of 1.35.

The state adopted CTE content standards in 1998 and CTE instructional materials in Proclamation 2001. HB 3485 requires the SBOE to adopt new state standards for CTE by November, 2009.

The Curriculum Division website provides useful information related to CTE program standards (see <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/cte/>).

III. STATEMENT OF INTEREST INFORMATION

A. REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF INTEREST

This Request for Statement of Interest provides the opportunity for Texas school districts and charter schools to notify the agency of their willingness to participate in the CTE Weighted Funding Pilot Program. Participating districts, in collaboration with TEA, will identify the parameters for measuring the effectiveness of the pilot program.

From the schools submitting a Statement of Interest, the Texas Education Agency will select up to five districts to participate in the pilot program. In order to be considered, districts must make a commitment to participate in the pilot program the full four years.

Data will be collected by TEA over the four-year pilot period, and a report describing the effectiveness of the pilot program will be provided to the legislature by January 1, 2013.

B. ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

All public school districts and charter schools are eligible to submit a Statement of Interest (SOI). Actual selection and participation of districts will be aimed at producing uniquely different pilot program goals of varying sizes and geographic locations.

C. PROJECT FUNDING

CTE state weighted funds for students participating in CTE in grade eight are available for the selected districts through this RFSOI process. Districts should already have the infrastructure needed to offer CTE courses in grade eight.

D. PROJECT OBJECTIVE

TEA will conduct a four-year CTE Weighted Funding Pilot Program. The pilot objective is to provide participating school districts with CTE weighted funding for students participating in CTE in grade eight. The pilot will be an avenue to gain a statewide snapshot of the effectiveness of funding CTE programs with a weight of 1.35 in grade eight.

NOTE: All findings from this project, positive and negative, will be reported, and the agency does not guarantee statewide implementation of CTE weighted funding for students participating in CTE programs in grade eight.

E. STATEMENT OF INTEREST SCHEDULES

Each Statement of Interest must include both Schedule A and Schedule B, completed according to the following instructions.

Schedule A: District Information and Interested Schools (Refer to Pages 6, 7, and 8.)

This schedule will be used to provide district information and a listing of schools in priority order that are willing to participate in the pilot.

Schedule A includes:

- District Contact Information
- CTE Contact—identify and designate a CTE contact person who will be the single point of contact for all interactions at the district level
- District CTE Information
 - a. List Career Clusters offered by the district
 - b. List of CTE courses offered in 9-12
 - c. Enrollment in CTE courses in grades 9-12
 - d. List of CTE courses offered in grade 8
 - e. Enrollment in CTE courses in grade 8
- District Commitment (Signatures)

Schedule B: Conditions of Participation

This schedule should address the following criteria:

1. Description—share your district goals and objectives for participating in the pilot program
2. Use of Funds—provide a description of how the additional CTE weighted funds for grade eight will be utilized to support the goals of the pilot program
3. Specifications—describe how the effectiveness of the pilot program will be measured and the anticipated results

4. District Commitment to Pilot—share the district’s commitment to participate for the duration of the pilot program; describe the district’s willingness to evaluate and complete any information throughout the duration of the pilot to assist with the TEA report to the legislature
5. Study Benefit—describe how your district will use the pilot as a tool for improving the size, scope and quality of it’s CTE program

IV. CONDITIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF STATEMENT OF INTEREST AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

STAPLE EACH COMPLETE COLLATED SET OF THE STATEMENT OF INTEREST IN THE TOP LEFT CORNER. DO NOT BIND THE STATEMENT OF INTEREST IN A NOTEBOOK OR FOLDER. WHEN THE SETS ARE READY TO BE SENT TO THE TEA, THE DISTRICT SHOULD HAVE SIX (6) IDENTICAL AND COMPLETE COLLATED SETS. EACH OF THE SIX (6) SETS MUST CONTAIN ONE SCHEDULE A AND ONE SCHEDULE B.

In order to be considered for participation, the following conditions will apply.

- A. Statement of Interest that address only part of the requirements contained in this Request for Statement of Interest will not be considered for participation in the project.
- B. The Texas Education Agency reserves the right to reject any and all Statements of Interest and to negotiate portions thereof.
- C. The Texas Education Agency reserves the right to select the Statement of Interest containing the best offer considering the outcomes desired.
- D. The participant shall furnish such additional information that the Agency may reasonably require.
- E. The Texas Education Agency shall not be liable for any costs incurred in the preparation and submittal of the Statement of Interest.
- F. The Texas Education Agency will notify each participant in writing of the selection or non-selection to participate. All copies of all Statement of Interest, except for three (3) copies of the selected Statement(s) of Interest, will be destroyed unless the participant notifies the Texas Education Agency in writing within forty-five (45) days of the date on the selection/non-selection letter that the Statement of Interest is to be returned to the participant at the participant’s expense.

NOTE: The Agency reserves the right to make specific selections from among all qualified school districts. Completion of this Request for Statement of Interest does not obligate the agency to select the school district.

V. **PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING STATEMENT OF INTEREST**

Facsimile transmissions (FAX) of Statement of Interest will not be accepted under any circumstances.

A. **RECEIPT OF STATEMENT OF INTEREST**

The deadline for receipt of Statement of Interest for the TEA CTE Weighted Funding Pilot Program is no later than **5:00 P.M.** on **March 28, 2008**. The Statement of Interest must be submitted to:

Karen Batchelor
State Director, Career and Technical Education
Texas Education Agency
1701 North Congress Avenue
Room 3-121
Austin, TX 78701

B. **NUMBER OF COPIES OF STATEMENT OF INTEREST**

An original plus five (5) identical copies of the Statement of Interest must be submitted for a total of six (6) sets. The schedules in each set must be in the following order: first, one Schedule A; second, one Schedule B. At least one (1) copy of Schedule A must contain original signatures of the person authorized to bind the participant in this written agreement.

C. **PILOT STARTING DATE**

It is anticipated that the pilot will begin no earlier than September 1, 2008. Data collection for the pilot projects may continue through November 31, 2012.

VI. **ASSISTANCE TO PARTICIPANTS**

A. **CLARIFYING INFORMATION**

Any person wishing to obtain clarifying information about this Request for Statement of Interest should contact:

career@tea.state.tx.us

Please read the entire RFSOI. Often the answer to your question is contained in the RFSOI. Frequently Asked Questions will be posted at the following website: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/cte/ctepilotprogram>, as needed.

B. **REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

All inquiries for additional information must be made in writing to:

career@tea.state.tx.us

VII. EXPECTED SEQUENCE OF EVENTS - CRITICAL DATES

February 29, 2008	Posting of Request for Statement of Interest
March 28, 2008	District Statement of Interest applications due to TEA
April, 2008	Selection of pilot sites announced
Pilot Begins	September 1, 2008
1 st Year Funds Available	October 2008
1 st Year Evaluation Due	October 2009
2 nd Year Funds Available	October 2009
2 nd Year Evaluation Due	October 2010
3 rd Year Funds Available	October 2010
3 rd Year Evaluation Due	October 2011
4 th Year Funds Available	October 2011
4 th Year/Final Evaluation Due	October 2012
Pilot Ends	November 31, 2012
Final Report to Legislature	January 1, 2013

It should be noted that all of these dates may vary slightly, as conditions require.

VIII. SELECTION CRITERIA

Statement of Interest submitted by districts will be reviewed by TEA to determine if they meet the selection criteria listed in this section. Up to five districts will be selected to participate in the pilot program. Selection will be determined based on: the goals of the pilot as determined by the district; representation from large urban, medium-sized, and small, rural districts across the state; and the funding amount for the pilot program.

Review of Statement of Interest will begin as soon as possible after receipt. Each Statement of Interest will be reviewed by a panel to determine the capability of the participant to satisfy the requirements of the pilot program.

All required components of this Request for Statement of Interest must be addressed. Each district submitting SOI will be notified in writing of selection to participate in the pilot program.

Particular attention will be give to the following selection criteria:

1. Ensuring that pilot programs representing a variety of goals are selected.
2. Ensuring that schools of varying sizes and geographic areas participate in the pilot.

Additional Required Information:

1. Description—district goals and objectives for participating in the pilot program
2. School Contact—a CTE contact person who will be the single point of contact for all interactions at the district
3. District Support—indication that the district has the infrastructure needed to offer CTE courses in grade eight

4. District Commitment to Pilot—the district commitment to full participation for the duration of the program; the district’s willingness to evaluate and provide information throughout the pilot to assist with the TEA report to the legislature
5. Technical Support and Training—description of how district will provide ongoing technical assistance and training to staff for the duration of the pilot program
6. Study Benefit—description of how your district will use the data to enhance the size, scope and quality of it’s CTE program

**PART 2 - REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF INTEREST
SCHEDULES**

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

**CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION
WEIGHTED FUNDING
PILOT PROGRAM**

September 1, 2008 - November 31, 2012

Schedule A: District Information

District Contact Information

District's Name: _____

Country-District Number: _____

Education Service Center Region: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

District CTE Contact for the Pilot: _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone: _____

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION
WEIGHTED FUNDING
PILOT PROGRAM

September 1, 2008 - November 31, 2012

Schedule A: District Information

District CTE Information

1. List of Career Clusters offered by the district
2. List of CTE courses offered in 9-12
3. Enrollment in CTE courses in grades 9-12
4. List of CTE courses offered in grade 8
5. Enrollment in CTE courses in grade 8

District Commitment (Signatures)

I understand that work on the pilot program will begin September 1, 2008. My district will cooperate with the Texas Education Agency to provide requested data within the timeframes specified by the Agency and will participate in the evaluation of the pilot. My district will collect data and report this information as requested by the agency and provide reports to the State of Texas on a regular and as needed basis. The beginning date of the pilot is September 1, 2008 and the ending date is November 31, 2012.

On behalf of:

School District's Name

I hereby certify that Schedule B attached to this request is correct to the best of my knowledge, and I agree to the conditions as listed in this Statement of Interest and in this Conditions of Participation.

Superintendent Signature

Date

Superintendent Typed Name

Date

REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF INTEREST

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION
WEIGHTED FUNDING
PILOT PROGRAM

September 1, 2008 - November 31, 2012

Schedule B: Conditions of Participation

Please refer to Page 5 for instructions for completing this schedule.