

Blended Learning Grants Riders 40 and 76

General Description:

Blended Learning Grants support school districts and open-enrollment charter schools with the design and implementation of high-quality blended learning models to promote Pre-K through 8th grade math and reading and language arts (RLA) achievement. Blended learning is an innovative classroom model that combines online instruction with face-to-face, teacher-led instruction to differentiate and accelerate instruction for all students. Grantees participate in **Math Innovation Zones (MIZ)** and/or the RLA Blended Learning Grants to align their operational, academic, and staffing models with evidence-based practices through methodical performance management and continuous improvement cycles. When implemented with high fidelity, blended learning has resulted in strong academic gains across many Texas districts.

Goals and Objectives:

The primary goals of Blended Learning Grants are to:

- Increase **student achievement** in math and RLA; and
- Optimize the **academic return on investment** with an effective use of technology to augment teacher effectiveness.

Additionally, the grant programs aim to achieve the following outcomes:

- Increase **high fidelity student usage of online curriculum** to meet research-based targets; and
- Enact **high quality design and implementation** of blended learning models that increase student engagement and teacher satisfaction.

Impact on Student Achievement:

High-fidelity implementation of blended learning models has led to increased student academic achievement on STAAR. For example, students participating in blended learning through MIZ moved **to meets and masters levels in STAAR at a rate three times higher than the statewide increase in 2019**.

Additionally, MIZ districts – which have a higher percentage of economically disadvantaged students (72.3%) – have **closed achievement gaps** with districts that have an average percentage of economically disadvantaged students (60.2%) from 2017-2022.

Authority:

Texas Education Code (TEC) Sections 28.020 and 29.924

Funding:

The General Appropriations Act, Article III, Riders 40 and 76, 87th Texas Legislature

Funding for FY2022 and FY2023 (Riders 40 and 76, 87th GAA):

Blended Learning Grants to School Districts (Rider 76)	\$12,000,000
Blended Learning Grants to School Districts (Rider 40)	\$3,245,897
Blended Learning Design and Implementation Evaluation (Rider 40)	\$704,290
Implementation Performance Management Tool (Rider 40)	\$508,728
Outcomes-based Financing Support (Rider 40)	\$150,000
Total Projected Expenditures:	\$16,608,915

Blended Learning Grants Overview

Key Supports

- **Math Innovation Zones (MIZ)** were established by the 85th Legislature in 2017
- **Blended Learning Grant Program** was established by HB3 in the 86th Legislature to scale successes in blended learning

Current Scale

- **39** LEAs have completed the 4-year program for math and/or RLA
- **114** LEAs are currently in planning or execution phases
- **25-50** new LEAs are anticipated for the 2023-2024 school year through Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities (LASO)

Impact To-Date

63% of students at the lowest level of math achievement who used approved adaptive software with fidelity increased their achievement level, compared to only 40% of matched students. (*Zearn, 2022*)

52% of 2021-2022 implementing campuses earned an MIZ designation indicating rigorous, high-fidelity implementation of blended learning.