

Chapter 102. Educational Programs

Subchapter EE. Commissioner's Rules Concerning Pilot Programs

§102.1051. Financial Literacy Pilot Program.

- (a) Program purpose. In accordance with the Texas Education Code (TEC), §29.915, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) shall establish and implement a financial literacy pilot program to provide students in participating school districts with the knowledge and skills necessary as self-supporting adults to make critical decisions relating to personal financial matters.
- (b) Application. School districts must submit a letter of interest to the TEA division responsible for curriculum, including a commitment to use the curriculum designated by the pilot and to participate in any training required by the pilot. No more than 100 school districts will be selected to participate in the program. If more than 100 letters of interest are received, districts will be selected to reflect the following criteria:
 - (1) balance between large and small districts;
 - (2) representation of the various geographic regions of the state; and
 - (3) representation of the overall demographics of the state.
- (c) Notification. The TEA will notify each applicant in writing of the selection or non-selection for participation.
- (d) Implementation. Districts shall participate in training and use materials identified in accordance with the TEC, §29.915(c).
- (e) Evaluation. Each participating district shall report information on implementation of the program to the TEA in accordance with requirements specified by the commissioner of education.
- (f) Funding. Implementation of the pilot is contingent upon sufficient funding in accordance with the TEC, §29.915(e).

Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §102.1051 issued under Texas Education Code, §29.915.

Source: The provisions of this §102.1051 adopted to be effective June 11, 2006, 31 TexReg 4612; amended to be effective May 6, 2010, 35 TexReg 3496.

§102.1055. Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program.

- (a) Definitions. The following words and terms, when used in this section, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.
 - (1) Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program--A pilot program established and implemented by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in accordance with the Texas Education Code (TEC), §29.096. The pilot program is to provide eligible school districts with financial grants to implement a local collaborative dropout reduction program. Only an eligible school district may apply for funding under this program and must serve as the fiscal agent for the pilot program. A school district awarded a grant under this pilot program shall coordinate the delivery of research-based intervention services and programs among local entities such as local businesses, local government or law enforcement agencies, nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, and institutions of higher education to comprehensively reduce the dropout rate in the community and to increase the job skills, employment opportunities, and continuing education opportunities of students who might otherwise have dropped out of school.
 - (2) Collaborative partner--A collaborative partner is a public or private entity which participates in a Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program and contributes to collaborative efforts through the provision of funds, services, personnel, and/or in other ways deemed appropriate to assist in reaching program goals. Collaborative partners may include, but are not limited to, entities such as

school districts, local businesses, other local governments or law enforcement agencies, nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, and institutions of higher education.

- (3) Lead educational staff member--A person working as part of the Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program that is responsible for program coordination, outreach, recruitment, and other activities necessary to implement and manage the program. The lead educational staff member may be a full- or part-time paid staff person, or the position may be filled by a volunteer. The lead educational staff member may be an employee of the district awarded a grant under this program, or an employee/volunteer from one of the partners in the local collaborative.
 - (4) Outreach--Activities designed to raise awareness and provide information, solicit participation and/or contributions, recruit students and other stakeholders, and involve the local community in collaborative initiatives.
 - (5) School district--For the purposes of this section, the definition of school district includes an open-enrollment charter school.
 - (6) Shared services arrangement (SSA)--A shared services arrangement is an agreement between two or more school districts and/or education service centers that provides services for entities involved.
- (b) Eligibility.
- (1) In accordance with the TEC, §39.358, a school district is eligible to apply for funding under the Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program if the district exhibited during each of the three preceding school years characteristics that strongly correlate with high dropout rates.
 - (2) Eligibility for participation in the Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program will be determined annually by the commissioner of education based on the latest available data and research and in accordance with the TEC, §29.096, and eligibility criteria outlined in the TEC, §39.358.
 - (3) An eligible school district may enter into an SSA in order to apply for grant funds. An SSA is limited to no more than ten eligible districts. A school district may submit or be a member of an SSA for no more than one Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program grant application. A collaborative partner, other than a school district, may be included in more than one SSA.
 - (4) An education service center (ESC) established under the TEC, §8.001, is not eligible to apply as a fiscal agent for an SSA but may be a collaborative partner with eligible districts.
 - (5) An eligible school district which submits a single grant application on behalf of itself and several other school districts participating in an SSA agrees to serve as the fiscal agent for the grant and will be held responsible for all compliance and audit recoveries.
- (c) Application.
- (1) An eligible school district must apply through the request for application (RFA) process to participate in the Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program.
 - (2) Eligible applicants must meet all deadlines, requirements, and guidelines outlined in the RFA.
 - (3) An eligible school districts that applies to participate in the pilot program must identify and include in its application:
 - (A) the source(s) of matching funds from the participating collaborating partners as specified in the grant application; and
 - (B) a description of how the program will be sustained beyond the life of the grant funding.
- (d) Notification. The TEA will notify each applicant in writing of its selection or non-selection for participation in the Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program.
- (e) Local collaborative agreement.

- (1) Each eligible school district selected to participate must submit a copy of a local collaborative agreement, such as a memorandum of understanding, to the TEA prior to implementation of the pilot program.
- (2) The local collaborative agreement must include the minimum standards specified in the TEC, §29.096(e), and a detailed description of the following:
 - (A) the source(s) of matching funds;
 - (B) how matching funds will be used by the pilot program;
 - (C) a description of the services, activities, commitments, assurances, responsibilities, obligations, and understandings of each collaborative partner; and
 - (D) decision-making procedures between the school district and collaborative partner(s).
- (f) Use of funds.
 - (1) In accordance with the TEC, §29.096, the entire amount of a grant awarded under the Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program must fund programs in adherence with guidelines and requirements provided in the RFA.
 - (2) A school district participating in the Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program may allocate no more than 15% of total project funds, which include the state grant award and local match, for administrative expenses. Of the amount used for administrative costs, no more than 5.0% may be state grant award funds. Up to an additional 10% may be matching funds, but in no case can administrative costs exceed 15% of the total project funds. A school district may use in-kind contributions for administrative expenses. In-kind contributions may include the use of facilities, office space, and equipment and the provision of administrative services and supplies.
 - (3) Allowable costs include, but are not limited to:
 - (A) costs associated with implementing the local Collaborative Dropout Reduction Program in the following four service areas: workforce skill development, academic support, attendance improvement, and student and family support services; and
 - (B) costs associated with a designated lead educational staff member to conduct outreach activities designed to identify and involve eligible students as well as public and private entities to participate in the program.
- (g) Conditions of pilot program operation. Each school district operating an approved Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program must operate the program in accordance with the TEC, §29.096, and the requirements outlined in the RFA and must:
 - (1) coordinate the delivery of research-based intervention services and programs among local entities such as local businesses, local government or law enforcement agencies, nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, and institutions of higher education to comprehensively reduce the dropout rate in the community and to increase the job skills, employment opportunities, and continuing education opportunities of students who might otherwise have dropped out of school;
 - (2) serve students in Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 or any combination thereof;
 - (3) comply with all deadlines, requirements, and assurances established in the RFA;
 - (4) provide services in the areas of workforce development, academic support, student and family support services, and attendance improvement;
 - (5) serve a minimum of students (as specified in the grant application) per grant period; and
 - (6) designate governance responsibilities to a school district official for the purposes of managing the implementation and operation of the pilot program.
- (h) Program evaluation. Each school district operating an approved Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program must comply with evaluation procedures established by the commissioner as detailed in the RFA.

- (i) Revocation.
 - (1) The commissioner may revoke participation in a Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program and require the school district that received an award to repay some or all of the grant award based on any of the following factors:
 - (A) noncompliance with requirements and assurances outlined in the RFA and/or the provisions of this section and the TEC, §29.096;
 - (B) failure to meet performance measures specified in the RFA; or
 - (C) failure to provide accurate, timely, and complete information as required by the TEA to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot program.
 - (2) A decision by the commissioner to revoke authorization of a grant award is final and may not be appealed.
- (j) Recovery of funds. The commissioner may audit the use of grant funds and may recover funds against any state provided funds.

Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §102.1055 issued under Texas Education Code, §29.096.

Source: The provisions of this §102.1055 adopted to be effective July 31, 2008, 33 TexReg 5927.

§102.1057. Intensive Reading or Language Intervention Pilot Program.

- (a) Program purpose. In accordance with the Texas Education Code (TEC), §29.094, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) shall establish and implement a pilot program in which a participating local education agency (LEA) provides intensive reading or language intervention to participating students.
- (b) Application. LEAs shall submit applications in accordance with instructions provided by the TEA through the request for application (RFA) process. The following terms apply to each LEA applicant seeking participation in the pilot program.
 - (1) Eligible LEAs will be determined to be eligible based on a review of Grade 3 statewide assessment scores in reading.
 - (2) LEA campuses that are awarded grants under this program shall select an intensive reading or language intervention program from the TEA Commissioner's List of Approved Providers, which shall be determined through a competitive process.
 - (3) The LEA shall be responsible for ensuring that funds flow to campuses that serve students in Kindergarten-Grade 2 as appropriate.
 - (4) Participating LEA campuses shall administer pre- and post-tests to students served, including but not limited to, the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) or Tejas LEE and program benchmarks.
- (c) Notification. The TEA shall notify each applicant in writing of the selection or non-selection for participation.
- (d) Approved products. In order to be selected by a participating LEA campus for use in providing intensive reading or language intervention, a program must:
 - (1) be neuroscience-based;
 - (2) have scientifically validated methods;
 - (3) include scientifically based reading interventions or instructional tools that have been proven to accelerate language acquisition and reading proficiency for struggling readers;
 - (4) include a sufficient quantity and quality of professional development to train teachers and administrators in successful implementation and use of the program;
 - (5) include explicit ties to the student expectations in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills;

- (6) incorporate repeated assessment of student proficiency that informs classroom instruction; and
- (7) include the ability to administer benchmark measures at the beginning and end of the program.
- (e) Implementation. Participating LEA campuses shall purchase a product from the Commissioner's List of Approved Providers, participate in required professional development, and implement the program in accordance with the TEC, §29.094, to serve eligible/targeted students.
- (f) Evaluation. Each LEA must comply with evaluation procedures established by the commissioner of education as detailed in the RFA.
- (g) Funding. Implementation of the pilot is contingent upon sufficient funding in accordance with the TEC, §29.094, and the General Appropriations Act.

Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §102.1057 issued under Texas Education Code, §29.094.

Source: The provisions of this §102.1057 adopted to be effective August 18, 2010, 35 TexReg 7060.

§102.1058. Reading Excellence Team Pilot Program.

- (a) Eligibility for participation. The commissioner of education shall determine a school district's or open-enrollment charter school's eligibility to participate in the Reading Excellence Team Pilot Program based on the following:
 - (1) a school district's or open-enrollment charter school's performance on a reading instrument administered in accordance with the Texas Education Code (TEC), §28.006(c); or
 - (2) a school district's performance on a Grade 3 reading assessment instrument administered under the TEC, §39.023(a), relative to other districts in the district's region.
- (b) Selection of districts.
 - (1) Education service centers (ESCs) selected to administer the pilot program by the commissioner shall establish an application deadline for school districts and open-enrollment charter schools to request assignment of a reading excellence team.
 - (2) The ESCs shall prioritize the assignment of reading excellence teams to the lowest performing school districts and open-enrollment charter schools that apply for assistance, as measured by the reading instruments referenced in subsection (a)(1) and (2) of this section.
 - (3) After assignment of reading excellence teams under the initial application, if any capacity to assign reading excellence teams remains, the ESCs may accept additional applications and provide reading excellence team support to additional school district and open-enrollment charter school applicants based on the lowest performing school districts or open-enrollment charter schools, as measured by the reading instruments referenced in subsection (a)(1) and (2) of this section.
- (c) Qualifications for reading instruction specialist. A reading instruction specialist must have:
 - (1) significant expertise in reading instruction with a minimum of three years of classroom teaching experience;
 - (2) experience in providing instruction directly related to the curriculum in Chapter 110 of this title (relating to Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for English Language Arts and Reading), specifically in kindergarten-Grade 3; and
 - (3) knowledge of developmentally appropriate and research-based strategies for students in kindergarten-Grade 3.
- (d) Assignment of reading excellence teams. ESCs shall assign reading excellence teams upon prioritization of the applications and in accordance with this section and the TEC, §28.0061.
- (e) Requests for student achievement data. Participating school districts and open-enrollment charter schools will comply with requests for student achievement data made by reading excellence teams or their sponsoring ESC that will assist in monitoring the implementation as well as the effectiveness of the overall pilot program. The sponsoring ESC shall adopt procedures to ensure compliance with applicable state and

federal privacy laws. The sponsoring ESC shall comply with requests for student achievement data made by the Texas Education Agency.

Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §102.1058 issued under Texas Education Code, §28.0061 and §12.104(d).

Source: The provisions of this §102.1058 adopted to be effective September 26, 2016, 41 TexReg 7482.