

System of Great Schools Network Application

Due January 18, 2019

The System of Great Schools (SGS) Network exists to support school districts across Texas interested in pursuing the SGS strategy. A program description can be found on the [TEA website](#) and at our website: systemofgreatschools.org. **Please thoroughly review the program description prior to the completion of this application.**

The goal of the SGS strategy is to increase the number of a district's students in great schools every year. To achieve that goal, SGS districts:

- **Manage School Performance:** Create and execute an annual school performance and action planning cycle
- **Expand Great Options:** Create an Office of Innovation to help introduce new, high-quality schools via expanding your best performers and partnering with innovative operators
- **Improve Access to Options:** Make it easier for families to understand and access the district's school options

To support districts in their SGS work, TEA provides comprehensive system-level supports. These supports include:

- 200 hours of support from an experienced executive advisor
- Increased access to SGS-aligned grant opportunities
- Quarterly convenings with Superintendents and Senior Staff in the SGS cohort
- A dedicated case manager at TEA
- Opportunity to be matched with supportive state and local funders

All Texas districts are welcome to apply to the SGS Network, though TEA will select no more than six districts to join the Network in 2019. Members will be selected based on their willingness to pursue the SGS strategy.

The application process is as follows:

Date	Event
December 7	Application Released
December 14	SGS Webinar #1
December 21	(Optional) Letter of Interest Due
January 8	SGS Webinar #2
January 18	Applications Due
February 1	Interview Invitations Sent
March 1	Districts Notified of Selection

Districts selected for the Network are expected to fully participate in the program. Required activities include meeting regularly with your matched Executive Advisor, preparing and executing a roadmap for implementing SGS in your district, attending SGS's annual Summit (held in June each year), and providing TEA with regular feedback designed to continuously improve the program.

Email your completed application to sgs@tea.texas.gov by January 18, 2019 to be considered for the program. You can also send any questions you may have about SGS to sgs@tea.texas.gov and the team will be in touch.

Thank you so much for your interest in SGS. We look forward to reviewing your application!

1. Why does your district want to implement an SGS strategy?

2. Why is now the right time for your district to implement an SGS strategy?

3. Does your district have a strategic plan? Yes No

a) If yes, please include a link to the plan below and list the district's 3-5 most significant strategic priorities.

b) If no, please share what you believe is your district's theory of action.

4. Has your district replicated, created, restarted, redesigned, or closed any schools in the past 3-5 years to improve the overall quality of the district's academic options? If so, please describe the actions and whether the district worked alone or in partnership with another organization.

a) If your district has not taken any of the actions above, what is your district's willingness to take these actions going forward?

5. Self-assessment of district's current status on [SGS levers](#)

Manage school performance

i) Does your district have a common set of metrics upon which all schools are evaluated? Yes No

ii) If yes, does this evaluation take place on an annual basis? Yes No

iii) If yes, does this annual evaluation determine the strategic school actions the district will take the following year?

(ex: consolidating or replacing low-performing schools, expanding or replicating high-performing schools, partnering with another organization to provide needed expertise) Yes No

iv) If yes to any of the above, please submit documents demonstrating your school performance evaluation process and explain your performance evaluation process in greater detail here.

Expand great options

i) In the past 3 years, has the district launched any new schools, including early childhood partnerships? Yes No

ii) In the past 3 years, has the district closed and consolidated or replaced any low-performing schools? Yes No

iii) In the past 3 years, has the district expanded (either in grade levels or in seats per grade) any high-performing schools? Yes No

iv) Has your district authorized any new in-district (Subchapter C) charters? Yes No

v) Has your district converted any existing campuses into an in-district charter? Yes No

vi) If yes to any of the above, please provide more details about the way your district has taken action to expand school options for families.

Improve access to options

i) Does the district provide families with an online enrollment system?

If yes, please include the link to the website under question (v) below. Yes No

ii) Does the district allow parents to enroll their children in schools other than their neighborhood school? Yes No

iii) If yes, does the district enable parents to both research enrollment options and enroll online? Yes No

iv) If students can attend a school other than their neighborhood school, does the district provide transportation to the district school of the family's choosing? Yes No

v) If yes to any of the above, please include your link to your enrollment portal and/or provide more details about your district's enrollment policies and process.

Create the organizational structure and policies necessary to implement SGS

i) Does your district practice student-based budgeting? Yes No

ii) Does the district grant principals full autonomy over hiring and evaluating their staff? Yes No

iii) If yes to any of the above, please include additional information about the autonomies that are granted to your schools.

6. Can your district demonstrate local support from philanthropic organizations for implementing the SGS strategy, specifically for raising funds to create new schools and/or build talent pipelines?

7. Are there any state grant opportunities that your district plans to pursue to support your SGS work? If yes, which grant opportunities is your district most interested in and why?

8. SGS Network participants find that they are best-positioned to fully implement an SGS strategy when they commit to the following practices. Please mark which ones your district is willing to commit to.

a) Open and staff an Office of Innovation with at least one FTE to oversee the SGS work. Yes No

b) Put out a "Call for Quality Schools" to identify organizations the district will partner with to replicate, create, restart or redesign a school. These efforts are supported through the TX Partnerships program. Yes No

c) Adopt model authorizing policies to become an effective in-district charter school authorizer. Yes No

9. Contact Information

a) Name of person completing application

b) District name

c) Contact person email address

d) Contact person phone number