



To the Administrator Addressed

Commissioner Mike Morath

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DATE:	December 13, 2018
SUBJECT:	Request for Competitive Letters of Interest (LOI) for Reading Excellence and Academies Development (READ) Grant Opportunity
CATEGORY:	Grant Opportunity
NEXT STEPS:	Partner across campuses, local educational agencies (LEAs), Education Service Centers (ESCs), and/or non-profit organizations to establish Reading Academies cohorts.

The following information should be shared with ESCs, LEAs, non-profit organizations, and campus level leaders who are interested in improving K-5 literacy outcomes.

Grant Overview

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) seeks to award grants to ESCs, LEAs, and/or non-profit organizations to support reading professional development for teachers from kindergarten to grade 5. Grants awarded will range between \$200,000 – \$230,000 per grantee for a 15-month period, from May 2019 – August 2020.

Senate Bills 925 and 972 of the 84th Texas Legislature, 2015, establish literacy achievement academies for teachers of kindergarten through third grade and reading-to-learn academies for teachers in fourth and fifth grade. Reading Academies include both literacy achievement academies and reading to learn academies. This initiative creates updated, year-long statewide professional development academies for teachers who provide literacy instruction to students in kindergarten through grade 5. The goal of the Reading Academies is to grow teachers' knowledge, understanding, and systematic use of effective, research-based, and scientifically validated reading instruction methods for students.

Revamped academies incorporate feedback from previous participants and focus on the fundamentals of reading instruction with ample opportunity for teacher practice throughout the year. These updated academies provide professional development on the best instructional practices for teaching literacy, including using high-quality curricular resources. Academies will be structured with an engaging, blended learning model that includes digital and in-person content delivery over a period of 15 months beginning with 5-days of professional development in July, called the Summer Summit. Development sessions continue in October, January and March. Participants will also receive one-on-one instructional coaching.

The purpose of this READ grant is for ESCs, LEAs or non-profit organizations to establish cohorts of kindergarten through grade 5 literacy teachers and school and district leadership serving students within a similar context or local community.

TEA will award READ grants to complete the following tasks:

Task 1: Convene a cohort of reading teachers;

Task 2: Provide coaching support;

Task 3: Provide logistics support to cohort

Eligible Applicants

ESCs, LEAs and/or non-profit organizations that support reading instruction are eligible to apply for this grant opportunity. Non-profit organizations must provide proof of their 501(c)(3) tax exempt status and federal tax ID number at the time of application. TEA aims to select approximately 30 grantees across the state. Applicants may apply for and be granted funding to convene one or more cohorts. Depending on the number and quality of applications, TEA aims to choose at least one cohort per region in order to diversify the impact of the grant.

Project Description

Grantees are responsible for securing cohort participants and identifying and hiring an eligible literacy coach. These coaches should be literacy experts who will both lead training sessions and serve as an instructional coach. Each cohort should contain approximately 60 K-5 teachers. Each teacher participant will be eligible for a stipend of \$1,500, administered separately. Additionally, at least one instructional leader from each campus represented in the cohort and at least one academic leader from each LEA represented in the cohort will also be a part of the group.

Coaches will attend additional TEA led training. Additionally, coaches will support teachers through both virtual assignment review and virtual sessions as needed during the school year. Coaches will observe and provide feedback to each teacher in their cohort at least three times in the first semester and three times in the second semester. While grantees will not be planning the 5-day Summer Summit, nor will they be responsible for managing the stipends or Summer Summit travel reimbursements for participants, they are responsible for ensuring participants are present and attend. Grantees are responsible for logistically coordinating coaching visits and convenings in October, January and March.

Application, Review, and Award Process

READ Request for Competitive LOI Posted here: <https://tea.texas.gov/curriculum/academies/>

January 10, 2019	READ Webinar January 10, 2019 at 2:00 pm CT. Register here: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8280173974423726083 First day to submit written questions about <i>READ</i> . Send questions to readinginitiative@tea.texas.gov subject "READ Questions"
January 18, 2019	Last day to submit written questions about <i>READ</i> to readinginitiative@tea.texas.gov subject "READ Questions"
January 25, 2019	Responses to written questions posted here: https://tea.texas.gov/curriculum/academies/
February 1, 2019	Optional Notice of Intent: https://tea.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1FCFnH00JTGt9at
March 1, 2019	READ Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Submit application to readinginitiative@tea.texas.gov , subject "READ LOI <INSERT NAME OF ESC, LEA, or NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION APPLYING>"
March 2019	Finalists will be notified by TEA to complete a Request for Application (RFA).
March – May 2019	RFA Evaluation and Negotiation Process
May 2019	Notices of Grant Awards (NOGAs) issued. <i>READ</i> activities begin.