

February 23, 2017

Dear Superintendent:

Throughout my first year, I've been witness to some incredible district efforts to provide the highest quality educational opportunities for our students. As part of TEA's strategic planning process, we have attempted to identify how we can modify our operations to more effectively support and empower districts and campuses across Texas.

As a result, TEA is launching two new initiatives that may be of interest to some districts:

A System of Great Schools

This spring, TEA will launch the System of Great Schools (SGS) Technical Assistance Network. This is an optional technical support program, that is designed with a cohort model allowing interested districts to apply and participate.

Districts that join the network will be provided with intensive system-level supports intended to:

	1. Support educators to design and lead high-quality schools;
	2. Empower families with high-quality options and informed choices; and
	3. Focus central office on high leverage oversight, innovation, and support.

Districts that pursue the SGS strategy will design and implement a continuous improvement process that annually evaluates school quality, parent demand, and neighborhood needs to take strategic actions to improve schools and provide parents with the programs they desire. A detailed description and application can be found at <http://tea.texas.gov/DSSI>.

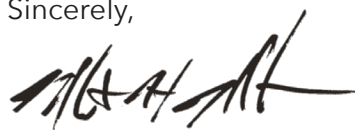
Transforming Schools and Creating New Options

Additionally, TEA will develop and manage new grant programs. These competitive grants will support school districts to take actions to provide students in persistently low-performing schools with better options, whether through redesigning existing schools, replicating existing schools that serve students well, or supporting groups of schools with intensive supports. These efforts must provide the school leadership teams with the operational flexibility necessary to succeed.

The goal, as always, is to provide educational environments that maximize student outcomes. Expect more details in the future, as these grant opportunities become available.

It's important to note that while we want to establish interest and awareness, these programs may not be appropriate for every district at this time. Please review the attached information and, if you have any questions, contact the Division of System Support and Innovation at DSSI@tea.texas.gov.

Sincerely,



Mike Morath
Commissioner of Education