



# THE SGS BULLETIN (No. 2)

BUILDING SYSTEMS OF GREAT SCHOOLS ACROSS TEXAS

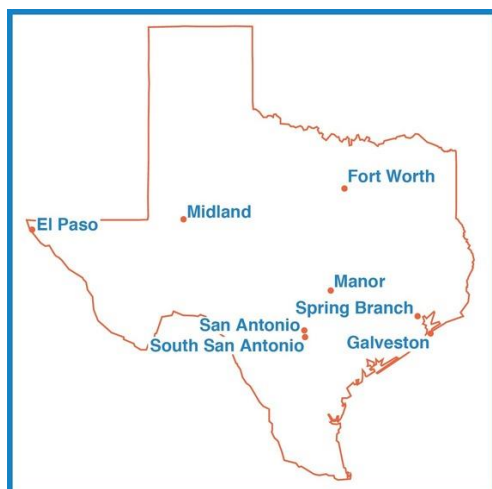
## FROM THE SGS TEAM!

### *New School Year, New Opportunities*

We welcome all the SGS districts back for a new school year. A new school year presents new opportunities for innovation. TEA and the System of Great Schools team will focus on supporting districts to remain committed to a continuous improvement mentality.

### *Maintaining Momentum: SGS Implementation Roadmaps*

What comes next? We encourage you to maintain the momentum coming out of the SGS Summit by working closely with your Executive Advisors on crafting your SGS Implementation Roadmaps over the next couple of months. Your Roadmap, which is one of the few required deliverables of SGS member districts, should lay out the SGS Levers that you intend to tackle first. **The Roadmaps will 1) focus district efforts, 2) help inform the SGS team how to support district's efforts, and 3) support the further development of the SGS professional learning community.** Please submit your Roadmaps to TEA by **Friday 10/6**. Contact [Mike Herschenfeld](#) if you have any questions or concerns.



### Important SGS Deadlines

*\*Note: Deadlines are listed by date (with topic & point of contact in parentheses). Only important upcoming deadlines are listed here. Longer-term deadlines are listed in the division updates on the following pages.*

#### **October 6<sup>th</sup>**

(SGS; Mike Herschenfeld)

SGS implementation roadmaps due to TEA. See division updates for additional information

### Other Important TEA Deadlines

#### **September 11<sup>st</sup>**

(Grants; Cory Green)

ESSA Consolidated Applications due to TEA.

Several other grants have been extended to this date as well. See below.

### *Hurricane Harvey*

#### Resources for affected districts

We have included links to several of the many organizations organizing assistance for those affected by the hurricane.

**To donate to the American Red Cross:**

<https://www.redcross.org/donate/donation>

**To donate to the Salvation Army:**

<http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/volunteer/>

**South Texas Blood & Tissue Center:**

<https://southtexasblood.org>

**Texas Diaper Bank:**

<https://texasdiaperbank.networkforgood.com/projects/33717-change-a-life>

**National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD):**

<https://www.nvoad.org/hurricane-harvey/hurricane-harvey-how-to-help/>

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## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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### *Technical Assistance and Pre-Approved Vendors*

In addition to the support provided by your Executive Advisor, each SGS member districts can access up to \$30,000 in services from a pre-approved list of vendors that have expertise in specific SGS levers. The list of pre-approved technical assistance providers, with a brief description of their expertise and experience, can be found on the [SGS webpage](#).

**To access these services an SGS member district must submit their SGS Implementation Roadmap** and then request services through a short application. Contact Mike Herschenfeld at [mike.herschenfeld@tea.texas.gov](mailto:mike.herschenfeld@tea.texas.gov) for more information.

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## TIMELY TOPICS

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### *Transformation Zone Webinar*

TEA is hosting a webinar next week on **Thursday, 9/14 from 10 to 11:30am CT** to share information about Transformation Zones and a related planning grant opportunity. Transformation Zones group multiple schools that are low-performing together and provide these schools with flexibility over people, time, money, and academic program. Zones are supported by a dedicated leadership or support team that guides aggressive strategies to improve schools. These strategies could include partnering with charter or school management organizations to operate the schools, matching schools with high quality school support or redesign organizations, or related activities. We encourage you to register for the webinar.



### *El Paso District/Charter Partnership Event*

We encourage SGS member districts to explore and attend an upcoming event that is being organized by an El Paso area funder group, CREEED, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The “High Performing Schools Summit” will occur in El Paso on September 20-21. The purpose of the event is to explore paths for improving student outcomes; learning about opportunities for in-district partnerships between charter school operators and traditional school districts; and the need to develop a teacher talent pipeline for the region. Several high performing charter operators and other reform organizations will be in attendance.

CREEED will make a detailed agenda available in the coming days.

If you are interested in attending, you can register at <http://events.gatesfoundation.org/d/ktq7nn>  
Note that eligible expenses will be reimbursed by the Gates Foundation.

## SGS DISTRICT UPDATES

### [El Paso ISD](#)

#### → **School Performance Framework**

EPISD is revising its campus tiering system to be more closely aligned with the state accountability system.

#### → **School Chooser**

District has contracted with SGS vetted vendor, Tembo Inc., to develop a school chooser to make it easier for families to understand and navigate their school and program options.

#### → **School Redesign**

EPISD has contracted with SGS vetted vendor, School Empowerment Network, to develop an overall strategy for innovative school models and redesign.

### [Fort Worth ISD](#)

#### → **Strategic Plan 2.0**

Working to identify an external organization for support around creating a new strategic plan this fall, which will include a steering committee will incorporate the three district academic priorities identified through last year's facilities master planning process (3rd grade reading, middle school math, and college and career readiness) as well as SGS levers.

### [Galveston ISD](#)

#### → **SY17-18 strategic plan priority work**

Among the many strands of work laid out in GISD's strategic plan, 6 actions have been prioritized for this school year, including and alongside the priority SGS strands. The priority strategic work for SY17-18 includes overcoming learning gaps, enhancing the employee value proposition for educators, and deepening community collaborations to support the whole child.

#### → **School performance framework**

Work on the School Performance Framework kicked off with a discussion at a recent Board meeting, asking the open-ended question of Board members about how they define good schools and good schooling. A working group is being established to drive this evidence-based work forward.

### [Midland ISD](#)

#### → **Continued Groundwork**

Superintendent Riddick is gearing up for a Listen and Learn tour with Midland parents, families and the community kicking off in mid-September.

#### → **Innovation Team Launch**

Initial SGS Lever 1 and 2 work is underway following the launch of the new cross-functional MISD Innovation Team. The Innovation Team's initial focus is building shared values for a School Performance Framework, and supporting initial work on partner engagement efforts in Midland.

#### → **[Midland on the Move](#)**

MISD has developed a district website dedicated to their System of Great Schools Implementation.

### [South San Antonio ISD](#)

#### → **Board Endorsement of SGS Strategy**

Following an initial priority to align the board on the districts SGS focus, the board expressed unanimous support for the district's direction with its SGS work.

#### → **Strategic Priorities**

SSAISD is now focusing on three strands of work: 1) crafting its implementation roadmap; 2) developing a comprehensive school performance framework; and, 3) supporting school leaders in designing new middle school models. Specifically, SSAISD has begun to study other SPFs and has crafted plans to launch a community wide conversation about the purpose, audience, and implications of introducing an SPF into their system.

#### → **School Redesign**

To support its new middle school program design, SSAISD has collected 1200 survey responses from parents/guardians about their hopes and aspirations for new program models. Principals and design teams will now use family perspective to guide their design process.

### [Spring Branch ISD](#)

→ The Spring Branch team continues to explore the best way to create a comprehensive performance and accountability system that displays their commitment to personalization and also provides information about the overall effectiveness of their schools and school system – both at the campus and student level. They have begun exploring other models and methods of visualization, including connecting with the team in Indianapolis to learn from their work. Additionally, Spring Branch is working to clarify the alignment between its district-wide strategic plan and the SGS levers.

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## RESOURCE ROUND UP

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### *School Closure Study 2017, CREDO at Stanford University*

Stanford University's Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) recently released a comprehensive report titled [Lights Off: Practice and Impact of Closing Low-Performing Schools](#). This report systematically examined closure of low-performing public schools in both the charter and traditional public-school sectors. "We looked at the important question of whether children whose schools have been closed for poor performance do better or worse in their new schools. We looked at closure in both charter and traditional public schools. In our view, this question is increasingly important as both charter authorizers and traditional school districts consider whether closure is a good strategy for trying to increase educational opportunities for students," said Dr. Chunping Han, Quantitative Research Analyst for CREDO at Stanford University.

**Big takeaway for SGS districts:** This research shows that if you:

1. Close chronically low-performing schools;
2. Increase the number of, or access to, high-performing schools;
3. **Ensure students from closed schools get into higher-performing schools\***; then
4. Student outcomes will improve.

\*Students from closed schools placed in a similar school are shown to decrease in achievement.

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## TEA DIVISION UPDATES

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### *System Support and Innovation*

#### → **System of Great Schools Toolkits and Website**

Within the next 2 weeks we will be launching a website dedicated to SGS. This website will initially contain a complete tool kit for lever one, resources, and access to a "members only" portal for engaging in collaborative discussion and sharing. Over the next several months, additional toolkits and resources for the remaining levers will be added.

#### → **Replicating Great Options Pilot Program**

An appropriations rider in the last regular Legislative session provided TEA with funds to pilot the replication of existing high performing district schools. Our team is currently developing this pilot program and will seek to support 3-5 districts that want to create a new Subchapter C school management organization to manage the replication of existing successful campuses. More details will be provided in forthcoming SGS Bulletins.

#### → **School Redesign Grant**

The purpose of the [school redesign grant](#) competition is to provide districts with resources to develop and implement aggressive school redesign initiatives in Title I low-performing schools. **Congratulations** to the following SGS districts that applied for, and were awarded, a school redesign grant: Galveston ISD (Weiss MS), San Antonio ISD (Page MS), El Paso ISD (Hart ES).

For questions regarding these competitive grants, contact Doug Dawson: [doug.dawson@tea.texas.gov](mailto:doug.dawson@tea.texas.gov)

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## [Grants Compliance and Oversight](#)

### → **Application Deadlines Extended**

Due to the severe hardship created by Hurricane Harvey for many local educational agencies, the Texas Education Agency is extending the due date to September 11, 2017, for the following grant applications:

- 2017-2018 ESC IDEA-B Sensory Impairments
- 2017-2018 ESC State Gifted and Talented
- 2017-2018 ESC Title I, Part C Migrant Basic Services Grant Application
- 2017-2018 ESC Title III, Part A Basic Services Grant Application
- 2017-2018 ESSA Consolidated Federal Grant Application
- 2017-2018 IDEA-B Discretionary Other 1, 2, 3, and 4 Consolidated Application
- 2017-2018 Special Education Consolidated Grant Application
- 2017-2018 Special Education ESC Liaison Grant Application
- 2017-2018 Title I, Part B Carl D Perkins Institutions Grant Application
- 2017-2018 Title I, Part C Carl D Perkins Career and Technical Education Act Grant Application
- Other grant-related deadlines will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

For questions on applications, please contact the Grants Administration Division at [grants@tea.texas.gov](mailto:grants@tea.texas.gov) or (512) 463-8525.

### → **[3 Month Grants Calendar](#)**

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## [School Improvement](#)

### → **Guidance and Resources for IR Campuses and Districts**

The Division of School Improvement has released new guidance and resources for IR campuses and districts. These enhanced resources are a part of the agency's coordinated approach to supporting continuous improvement efforts and are intended for our partners on campuses, in districts, at Education Service Centers (ESCs), and in the Professional Service Provider Network. Intervention calendars, requirement documents, webinars, and training modules can be found on the division's [state accountability intervention webpage](#). Please feel free to contact the division at 512-463-5226 for additional support.

Contact Lizette Ridgeway for more information: [lizette.ridgeway@tea.texas.gov](mailto:lizette.ridgeway@tea.texas.gov)

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