Rider 53: Texas Gateway and Online Resources

A Report on Expenditure and Performance Data

Submitted to the Legislative Budget Board and Office of the Governor

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Rider 53 required the Commissioner of Education to allocate $7,500,000 in each fiscal year of the 2018-2019 biennium from funds appropriated in Strategy A.2.1, Statewide Educational Programs, to support online educator and student resources. The Commissioner was required to set aside funds for the following purposes:

a. $3,000,000 in each fiscal year of the 2018-19 biennium for the hosting, and maintenance of online educator and student educational resources and the secure provisioning of user accounts

b. $1,500,000 in each fiscal year the 2018-19 biennium for the Lesson Study Initiative which include teacher development of best-practice lessons and supporting tools

c. $2,000,000 in each fiscal year of the 2018-19 biennium to reimburse districts for costs related to students taking On Ramps Dual Enrollment courses

d. $1,000,000 in each fiscal year of the 2018-19 biennium to reimburse district costs related to professional development provided by UTeach and other providers, focused on improving blended-learning teacher preparation

As required by Rider 53, this report includes a program overview, information on program impact and effectiveness, and a program expenditures summary for each of the following four programs authorized under this rider.

- Texas Gateway Content Management and Development Platform
- Texas Lesson Study
- University of Texas (UT) at Austin OnRamps Dual-enrollment Courses
- UTeach and UT High School Blended Learning

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Program Overview

The Texas Gateway is a content management and delivery system (CMDS) through which the Texas Education Agency (TEA) provides free online resources (e.g., lessons, courses, professional development) to teachers, students, and parents. Originally launched in 2009 as Project Share, the initiative now allows districts and open-enrollment charter schools to access and use TEA-created content through their own local systems. Parents and students also have full access to the Texas Gateway. Professional development courses hosted on the Texas Gateway are available to practicing and pre-service Texas teachers.

All content hosted on the Texas Gateway is reviewed by TEA staff. Content is searchable by Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), keyword(s), subject, grade level, and audience and is organized in the following formats:

- Resource – A resource is a single, TEKS-aligned instructional piece (e.g., explanation, activity, assessment). Teachers can insert a resource into an existing lesson.

- Binder – A binder is a collection of resources that, when sequenced together, form a linear series of related lessons. A teacher can assign a binder to a student as part of an instructional unit.

- Course – A course is a structured, linear series of lessons that provide information, practice, and assessment. A teacher can enroll in a course to meet professional development requirements and to earn continuing professional education (CPE) credits.

- Book – A book is a collection of binders sequenced to form units and chapters that can be used like a traditional textbook for a course. Individual lessons and units can also be accessed for supplemental use.

Program Impact

Gateway Resources currently include content in the following subject areas:

Content/Subject Area	Resources*	Binders	Books	Lesson Study	Courses	Total
Math	382	30	3	27	8	450
Reading Language Arts	605	45	0	26	6	682
Science	402	34	6	11	4	457
Social Studies	28	0	2	3	3	33
CTE	9,500**	15	0	0	277	9,792**
Early Childhood	112	0	0	0	0	112
EL Support	62	0	0	0	18	80
Fine Arts	17	0	0	0	1	18
Technology Applications	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	11,108**	124	11	67	317	1855

*Courses are developed from resources, so course resource items are included in this count.
** This is an estimate because of the way CTE resources and related attachments are currently set up.

The Texas Gateway also houses the following non-subject specific resources:

- Starting the Conversation
- Flashing Lights – Community Safety Education Act (Senate Bill 30) Educator's Guide and Video
- Cybersecurity Tips and Tools
- Restorative Discipline Practices in Texas
- Response to Intervention (RtI)

- Classroom Connectivity Initiative
- Overcoming College Prep Obstacles with Texas GEAR UP
- Red Ribbon Curriculum
- Texas Education on iTunes U
- Texas Educator Ethics Training Trainer Resource

In 2017-2018 there were 138,419 total enrollments in Texas Gateway online courses. Educators enrolled in the following courses:

Bloodborne Pathogens
English Language Learner (ELL) Foundations: Assessment & Data Driven Instruction
ELL Foundations: Effective Instructional Strategies & Routines
ELL Foundations: Guidance & Support for ELLs
ELL Foundations: Second Language Acquisition
English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) Academy
ELPS for Administrators
Implementing the ELPS in ELA & Reading
Implementing the ELPS in Math
Implementing the ELPS in Science
Implementing the ELPS in SS
Revised Fine Arts TEKS
Revised Math TEKS Grades 9-12 Achieving Fluency and Proficiency
Revised Math TEKS Grades 9-12 with Supporting Documents
Revised Math TEKS Grades 9-12: Applying the Mathematical Process Standards
Revised Math TEKS Grades 9-12: Completing the Gap Analysis
Revised Math TEKS Grades K-8 Achieving Fluency and Proficiency
Revised Math TEKS Grades K-8 with Supporting Documents
Revised Math TEKS Grades K-8: Applying the Mathematical Process Standards
Revised Math TEKS Grades K-8: Completing the Gap Analysis
Science Academies for Grades K-4, Part 1
TEA Science Safety for Elementary
TEA Science Safety for Middle School
TEA Science Safety for High School
Texas Adolescent Literacy Academy Tiers I
Texas Adolescent Literacy Academy Tiers II & III
Texas Dyslexia Identification Academy: Dyslexia Foundations
Texas Lesson Study Facilitator Training
Texas Middle School Fluency Assessment: Administering & Interpreting Results
Title III Early Childhood Education for English Learners
Title III Enhancing Instruction Opportunities for Immigrant Students
Title III, Part A Services for Non-Profit Schools
Title III, Part A: Strengthening & Increasing Parental Outreach
Texas Primary Reading Inventory
Introduction to Accommodations and Modifications in CTE Classrooms
The Revised CTE TEKS (one course for each of the 16 career clusters)
CTE Work-Based Learning
TEKS CTE for Administrators and Counselors
The Revised CTE TEKS: Career Development
CTE 101: Career and Technical Education in Texas

The following courses had the highest enrollments in the 2017-2018 school year:

Texas Dyslexia Identification Academy	26,121
English Language Learner (ELL) Foundations	23,361
English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) Academy	21,793
Science Safety Training	14,674

Program Effectiveness

As part of the 2018 survey of customer service, respondents were asked about the Texas Gateway. Of those respondents who have accessed the Texas Gateway, approximately 78% agreed that the online training was easy to access, useful, clear, understandable, and in a good format for their learning style. Almost three-fourths (72%) agreed they would recommend the online educator training to their colleagues (with 9% disagreeing).

Program Expenditures

Appropriation	FY 2018	FY 2019
	$3,000,000	$3,000,000
CMDS Use of Funds		
CMDS License	$2,000,000	$2,000,000
TEKS Repository Maintenance	$ 120,000	$ 120,000
Gateway Courses Service Contract and Course Enrollment Fees	$ 655,546	$ 745,000
Enhancements and New Features		$ 288,454
Contract Close Out		$ 71,000
Total	$2,775,546	$3,224,454

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Program Overview

Lesson Study is a job-embedded professional development opportunity in which teachers work collaboratively to develop, teach, and revise research-based lessons founded on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The program aims to improve teacher effectiveness, share best practices, improve student outcomes, and provide a platform to demonstrate mastery within the teaching profession.

In the 2016–2017 academic year, Texas Lesson Study (TXLS) was piloted in six education service center (ESC) regions. In year two of implementation, the program expanded to 16 total regions. For the 2018–2019 academic year, 17 regions are receiving funding for this program; however, educators across the state will have access to the TXLS training as well as technical support.

Program Impact (2017–2018)

The table below includes the program participation data for the 2017–2018 school year.

Stakeholder	Number of Participants
ESCs	16
Districts	60
Campuses	110
Teachers	702
Students	24,735
TX Gateway TXLS Users	14,980

Legend:
- ESC 6 Hub
- ESC 10 Hub
- ESC 13 Hub
- ESC 14 Hub
- Other
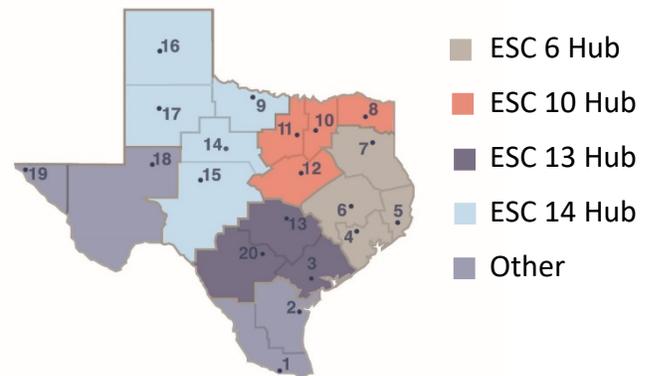
Program Effectiveness

Student Impact

Lesson Study teachers administer a pre- and post-assessment to students on the specific objective for their designed Research Lesson. On average, students scored a 48 percent on the pre-assessment and 75 percent on the post-assessment, resulting in an **average increase of 27 percentage points**.

Students were also given a survey about the Research Lesson, and **90 percent of students** reported understanding most or all of the lesson.

Teacher Impact

For teachers participating in Lesson Study, the turnover rate is three percent (3%) lower than the state average.

Teachers completed a self-efficacy survey before and after participating in the Lesson Study process. Teachers reported gains in the following transferable skills:

- Crafting good questions for students
- Using a variety of assessment strategies
- Providing alternate examples to alleviate confusion
- Implementing alternative strategies in the classroom

Teachers also reported higher levels of
- confidence in teaching abilities,
- collaborative time with colleagues,
- expertise in the content area taught, and
- comfortability in discussing classroom with others.

Texas Lesson Study has given teachers a fresh look at what the true meaning of a Professional Learning Community is and does. Teachers have learned the value of doing research on a topic and incorporating that research into their lesson design to create the best first teach for a topic. I believe this project will be life changing for teachers who participate.
—Dr. Cazilda Steele, Secondary Curriculum and Instruction Executive Director, Katy ISD

Program Expenditures

Appropriations	FY 2018	FY 2019
	$1,500,000	$1,500,000
Use of Funds Through Four ESC Contracts		
Providing Lesson Study Professional Development services and support	$1,058,268	$1,058,000
Creating and editing videos of the Research Lessons	$150,578	$151,000
Developing the Lesson Study resources on the Texas Gateway	$126,688	$127,000
Collecting and reporting data	$164,466	$164,000
Total	$1,500,000	$1,500,000

Rider 53(c): OnRamps

Program Overview

The Texas Education Agency entered into an interagency contract with The University of Texas (UT) at Austin to reimburse school districts for costs related to students taking OnRamps dual-enrollment courses.

The purpose of the OnRamps program is to provide an affordable and convenient UT experience for Texas students regardless of their location or their college plans. It also increases the number and diversity of students who engage in learning experiences aligned with the expectations of leading research universities.

Designed by UT faculty, the college-level courses allow students to earn both high school and college credit if they successfully meet the college course requirements. Local high school teachers who are trained by UT faculty teach the courses in conjunction with UT faculty. Three kinds of teacher training opportunities are provided as part of the program: pre-professional learning, one-day workshops each fall and spring, and two-week summer residential institutes. Additionally, OnRamps teachers are mentored throughout the year by UT faculty.

Program Impact

In the 2017–2018 school year, OnRamps offered the following dual-enrollment courses:

- Research and Writing
- Math
- Discovery PreCalculus
- Mechanics, Heat, and Sound
- Electricity and Magnetism
- Earth, Wind, and Fire: Introduction to Geoscience
- Statistics
- US History 1492–1865
- US History Since 1865
- Reading and Writing the Rhetoric of American Identity
- Thriving in our Digital World - Computer Science

During the 2017-2018 school year, 15,149 students at 140 campuses in 74 districts participated in OnRamps courses. Additionally, 331 teachers participated in OnRamps.

In the 2018–2019 school year, OnRamps offers the following dual-enrollment courses:

- Arts and Entertainment Tech
- Chemistry
- College Algebra
- Computer Science
- English 1301
- Geoscience
- History 1301
- Physics I
- Physics II
- Precalculus
- Statistics

During the 2018-2019 school year, participation nearly doubled with 29,407 students at 313 campuses in 151 districts participating in OnRamps courses. During this school year, 928 teachers are participating in OnRamps.

Rider 53(c): OnRamps

Program Effectiveness

As of May 2018, OnRamps students have earned more than 11,700 semester credit hours combined from UT Austin or Texas Tech University in courses that count toward the Texas Core Curriculum courses.

OnRamps has generated a combined 11.3 million dollars in potential college-tuition fee savings annually for Texans, based on the average tuition cost at a Texas, public, four-year institution for 2018–19.

Program Expenditures

Appropriation	FY 2018		FY 2019	
	$2,000,000		$2,000,000	
Use of Funds	2018 Cost	2018 Budget*	2019 Cost	2019 Budget*
Student Tuition	$295	$1,999,970.98	$295	$1,999,980.00
Total		$1,999,970.98		$1,999,980.00

*Due to rapid growth in program participation, funding was available for only a portion of student tuition in this biennium.

Districts were reimbursed $132.02 per student in 2018; $111.11 per student is budgeted in 2019.

Rider 53(d): Blended Learning

Program Overview

Blended learning is an instructional model that leverages technology to assist teachers in diagnosing student prior knowledge, differentiating academic paths for each student, and adjusting lesson execution based on real-time information about student mastery on a given student expectation. The blended learning professional development opportunity reimburses district costs related to professional development provided by The University of Texas—UTeach Science Program and The University of Texas—UT High School, focused on improving blended-learning teacher preparation. These providers were selected under a request for qualifications (RFQ) process.

Local educational agencies (LEAs), which include school districts and open-enrollment chart schools, were able to participate in this program starting on April 24, 2018.

Program Impact

The table below indicates program participation for summer 2018 and the 2018–2019 academic year. For the 2018–2019 academic year, the data only include those who have signed up for the program before December 31, 2018. Participation is likely to increase significantly before July 31, 2019.

Stakeholder	Summer 2018 Participants	2018–2019 Academic Year
Districts	13	32
Campuses	17	82
Educators	33	340

Program Effectiveness

Since the program is in the early stages of implementation, UTeach and UT High School have obtained only preliminary data.

UTeach: Teacher Readiness Presurvey

All teachers in the UTeach Blended Learning course series completed a K–12 Blended Teacher Readiness Assessment. The results of the presurvey indicated that 61% of teachers do not have experience teaching blended learning courses and 87% of teachers have not taught online courses. However, 87% of teachers feel somewhat or extremely comfortable integrating digital tools in the classroom.

UT High School

Six district leaders submitted blended learning readiness and implementation plans and 18 participating educators completed the readiness self-assessment survey. Most district leaders rated their districts as *average* (five out of 10) in their readiness to implement blended learning programs, while educators rated themselves slightly lower with a *low-average* (four out of 10) readiness rating.

The results of the blended learning implementation plans show that most district leaders have comprehensive plans in place, which include clear objectives for blended learning with targeted instructional models and well-planned technology and teacher support. Plans for technology access to support blended learning included student to computer ratios at 1:1, computer carts, computer labs, Wi-Fi access, and technology staff to assist teachers.

Rider 53(d): Blended Learning

Program Expenditures

Appropriations	FY 2018	FY 2019
	$1,000,000	$1,000,000
Use of Funds for the Two Providers		
Blended learning training	$24,750	$1,116,488
Educator stipends	$16,500	$842,262
Total	$41,250	$1,958,750