

### Abstract

The Texas Center for Educator Excellence (TxCEE), housed at the Region 18 Education Service Center (ESC 18), submits the Self-Directed Professional Learning Project (SDPLP) for consideration in the *Education Innovation and Research (EIR) Early-Phase Competition*. Through the proposed SDPLP, ESC 18-TxCEE will address two Absolute Priorities: **(1) Demonstrates a Rationale;** and **(3) Teacher-Directed Professional Learning**. The SDPLP will provide streamlined processes that allow teachers to select, participate in, and reflect on professional learning (PL) opportunities that constitute at least 80% of their state-mandated professional development time, with the overarching goal of building and testing a PL program that gives teachers control over their own PL experiences and improves student math achievement for high needs students in the state. In this context, high needs is classified as districts serving larger proportions of economically disadvantaged students than in the state as a whole. The participating pilot district (Los Fresnos CISD) has a 78% economically disadvantaged student population, versus 61% statewide. Given challenges in math achievement both nationally and in the state, self-directed professional learning opportunities for math teachers is the key lever this project will draw upon to affect improvements in mathematics teaching and learning among participating districts, schools, teachers and students.

The project employs a pilot study followed by a two-cohort randomized control trial (RCT) that includes altogether 19,440 students with 486 teachers teaching in grades 3 to 8 across 54 schools in Texas. The evaluation will focus on producing research findings that meet **What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations**, and will provide rich information on the implementation of SDPLP to enhance knowledge regarding the contexts under which self-directed PL succeeds. The SDPLP has established support from the following partners: American Institutes for Research (AIR) and Los Fresnos Consolidated Independent School District.