

SRCL Mini-Grants to Evaluate the Quality of Student Writing Using the ELA Guidebook Tasks

The LDOE will provide 10 mini-grants, up to \$15,000.00 each for a total of \$150,000.00, through a competitive application process, for the purpose of using the ELA guidebooks to support instruction. The grant opportunity is open to all LEAs. *SRCL federal regulations require that the grant address the ELA Guidebook culminating writing tasks.*¹

Purpose

To prepare a team of teachers to score and analyze student writing in a way that informs ongoing teaching.

Need

LEAs, schools, and teachers use writing tasks to measure student learning, but have concerns about consistency and quality of scoring. This project will help teachers develop precise use and application of rubric criteria so that each writing piece receives a similar score regardless of who scores it. In addition, teachers will build a deeper understanding of the expectations of their student writing tasks to inform the instructional choices they make in their classrooms.

Outcomes

Participants will achieve the following:

- Use protocols to consistently score student writing based on rubrics aligned to the standards
- Develop meaningful student learning targets focused on writing
- Develop a plan to replicate training in their schools and LEAs

Grant Criteria

- LEAs must select a six-member team to participate: Five ELA teachers from grades 2, 6, and 9 (teachers can be from different schools) **and** an Instructional Leader.
- LEAs must choose one of the two professional development options below.
- Teachers must teach two (2) units from the LDOE ELA Guidebooks and score the respective culminating writing tasks. Names of the units will be announced to grant recipients on May 24.
- The team must plan to scale and replicate the training in their LEA for *at least* 30 teachers total across the respective grade bands, K–2, 3–5, 6–8 and 9–10, by June 1, 2017.
- The LEA must share scored writing with the department for future work and resources.

Timeline

- Application Release: April 26
- Application Due Date: May 10
- Awards Announced: May 24 (pending BESE approval at June meeting)
- Project Timeframe: July 1, 2016–June 30, 2017

Grant Application (LEAs must prepare an application following these guidelines.)

Page 1

- LEA's name
- Names, titles, email addresses, phone number(s) and signatures of the five participating teachers and the Instructional Leader approving their participation in the project
- Signature of the LEA superintendent approving the application

Page 2

- 1-page narrative describing the LEA's scaling plan, to include at a minimum the goals, project activities, timeline, and number of teachers and grade levels that will be impacted

¹ SRCL funds were used to build the ELA Guidebooks. Federal permission was granted to use SRCL funds for this specific activity to support instruction statewide using the ELA Guidebooks.

Page 3

- Budget table with estimated costs for project activities based on Allowable Expenses below

Page 4 (Required only for LEAs choosing Professional Development Option 1)

- 1-page description of the LEA’s training and support plan

Appendix

- Attach two anonymous student writing samples—one weak and one strong—from each of the five teachers, with a description of the writing task

Professional Development Options (LEAs must choose one of the following options).

Option 1	Option 2
<p>LEA develops professional development plan, which may include use of a vendor.</p> <p>LEAs must provide a 1-page description of the training plan to meet the outcomes listed above, which should include at a minimum the name of the trainer(s) or vendor, description of training days and training content, and a description of coaching support to help teachers transfer new learning into practice.</p>	<p>LEA chooses LDOE Vendor-sponsored professional development, which includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 days of training during the year to include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 days kickoff training (1 day for Instructional Leaders immediately followed by 1 day for instructional leaders and teachers the week of July 25) - 1 day follow-up training in October - 1 day follow-up training in February; and • 10 virtual collaboration sessions for the Instructional Leader. <p>Locations and specific dates TBD.</p> <p>LEAs must use grant funds to pay the LDOE vendor \$11,000.00 for services above for the size of the team noted above.</p>

Allowable Expenses

- Costs for professional development (must select one of the options above)
- Unit texts from text portal
- Substitute pay for participating teachers to participate in project activities
- Stipends for participating teachers to conduct project activities outside school day
- Travel expenses to attend trainings
- Printing costs

Formatting and Submission Guidelines

- Use Arial, Calibri, Cambria, or Times New Roman, single-spaced 12-point font
- Use tables when possible to save space
- Number all pages
- Ensure LEA’s name is on each page
- Email application by 5:00 p.m. on May 10 to Jill Slack at jill.slack@la.gov

Contacts for Grant Questions and Application Support

Jill Slack at jill.slack@la.gov or Whitney Whealdon at whitney.whealdon@la.gov